**Section 3090.60 Project Evaluation Standards**

a) Application Scoring

The following criteria will be used by the Department for evaluating and ranking grant applications. Each criteria indicates the weighting that will be given to that criteria.

1) Projects of high need (20%), taking into account:

A) Trail significance − the estimated users that will be attracted to the trail/trail site; will it potentially be of interstate, State, regional or local importance;

B) Geographic distribution – will the proposed project, considering the trail type and proposed users of the trail or site, be the first in the county, area or region; and

C) Population served.

2) Project concept and quality (55%), taking into account:

A) Project type. The following will be considered in the priority listed:

i) acquisition of land for new trails/trail sites;

ii) initial development of trails/trail sites;

iii) additional development of existing trails/trail sites; and

iv) renovation of existing trails/trail facilities;

B) Trail length;

C) Proposed project cost per mile;

D) Diversity of trail use;

E) Scenic quality of the trail corridor or the trail site;

F) Availability of necessary amenities/support facilities, such as drinking water, restrooms and parking; and

G) Project sponsor maintenance capabilities and projects having the most long-term, stable management potential.

3) Environmental suitability of the proposed trail/trail site (5%).

4) Local support for the proposed project (5%).

5) Local financial contribution (5%).

6) Overall program suitability (10%).

b) Penalty Factors − Deduct up to 25%

Consideration is given to the applicant's past performance in completing Department grant projects or unresolved project violations, maintenance history of existing sites, and administrative considerations (such as application completeness and response time during the application process).