

A scenic view of a coastline. In the foreground, a dirt path leads through lush green grass and ferns towards a sandy beach. The ocean is visible in the middle ground, with waves breaking on the shore. In the background, there are forested hills and a cloudy sky. The text "Land & Water Conservation Funded Trails" is overlaid in the center of the image.

Land & Water Conservation Funded Trails

LWCF Projects on Annette Islands Reserve

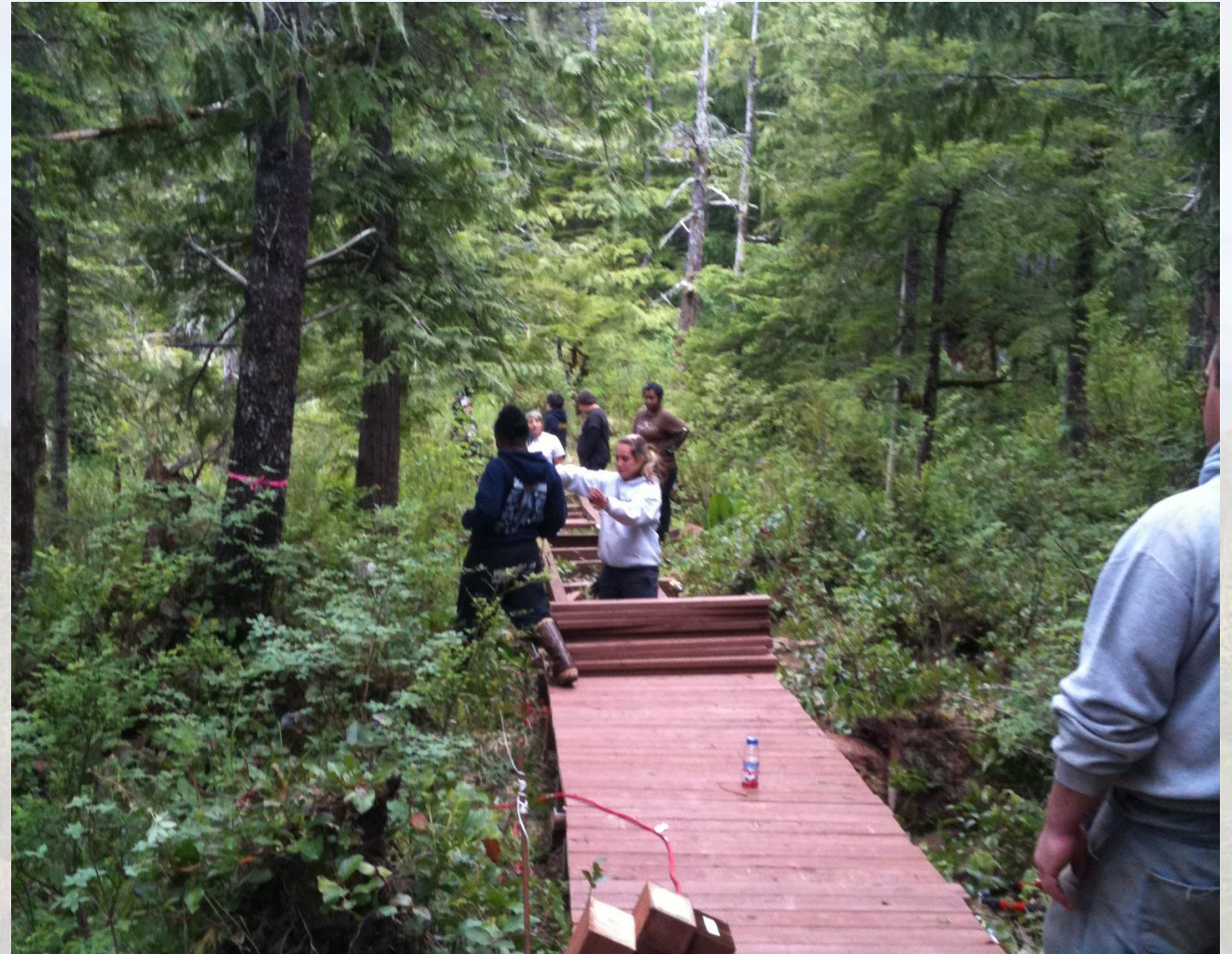
LWCF Projects on AIR

Our first project was in 2011 on the Skaters Lake Trail. However it wasn't our first time applying for a LWCF grant. To be honest, we had applied twice before. On our third attempt we finally got it all together and were successful in our application.

I really appreciate the pre-proposal application, this helps you know if your project has been selected to submit a full application.

We learned that the key was to closely study and refer to the most current SCORP and community Strategic and relevant planning documents.

We wrote each application as stand alone project and yet demonstrated that we are able to connect as a phased trail system.



Proposal Process

Key elements to the success of this project is leveraging community support and partners.

The Annette Island School District School to Work youth program has participated in this project from the beginning. The sweat equity and youth ownership continue to be essential.

From the initial trail development and improvement to the Skaters Lake Trail, MIC went on to develop an historical plan for a complete trail system called the Cedars Trail

We needed to be sure to adhere to the RFP, make sure we addressed each of the criteria.

We needed to demonstrate a sound knowledge to the SCORP and local plans

And demonstrate current or at least recent efforts to ensure community interest and engagement via surveys or other methods.



Since 2011 we have been successful in getting approved for three more grants to complete this trail system.

As a tribal organization, MIC met all of the eligibility requirements.

These projects would not be possible without the support from the LWCF and the partnership with the AISD.

The AISD pays the youth through a separate program and allows MIC to use their labor as in-kind match for this project.



These trails are a vital component of a community wide health and wellness initiative. This map shows the exact number of miles in this part of the trail.

Additional considerations

As MIC has authority over all of the lands on the Reserve, no land acquisition was necessary, therefore all funds could be dedicated to the project itself. MIC did make it a matter of tribal record that those lands would be set aside for recreation under the LWCF agreement in perpetuity

It is essential to keep good records, as reporting must be sufficient to justify the reimbursement of project funds. However, we found the reporting process to seamless when you keep good records.

We are still working on Phase III of the Cedars Trail and are excited to work with our youth again this summer.



Conclusion

Metlakatla loves this program and we hope that funding for this essential program continues.

All of us need to have safe and exciting access to the great outdoors! It is essential for our mental and physical health and wellness, for our connection to nature and brings us such contentment and satisfaction.

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