LAND & WATER CONSERVATION FUND PROGRAM

2021 Application Cycle
WHAT IS THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF)?

As one of America’s oldest and most successful conservation programs, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) was created by Congress in 1965 to preserve, create and ensure access to outdoor recreation facilities to strengthen the health of all Americans. With strong bipartisan support over the past 50 years, LWCF has helped fund public land acquisitions, preserve and restore critical wildlife habitat, create more outdoor recreation opportunities on America’s public lands, generated greater hunting and fishing access, preserved historic sites, and supported state and local parks, trails, ballfields and swimming pools in nearly every county in America.
• **Federal Land & Water Acquisitions**—National Parks, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, BLM, and USFS can acquire new lands and waters and creates additional access to these areas for outdoor recreational purposes. By law, 40% of LWCF funds go to this program.

• **State Assistance Matching Grants**—States can use LWCF funds for recreational planning, acquiring land and water and developing outdoor recreational facilities. A federal match is available for up to 50% of the costs of a project and the state has 3 years to spend the money. Money has to be used for outdoor recreation. By law, 40% of LWCF funds to the stateside program.

• **Other Federal Programs**—USFS Forest Legacy Programs and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund also receive a percentage of LWCF funds.
How much funding is there for LWCF annually?

- In the summer of 2020, Congress passed The Great American Outdoors Act, which guarantees that LWCF will be fully funded at $900 million a year. Passage of The Great American Outdoors Act into law was a major accomplishment since LWCF had been chronically underfunded over the program’s history (often receiving less than $450 million annually) and LWCF was only fully funded twice over the past 50 years. Along these lines, of the $38 billion in total revenues for LWCF’s history, only $17.5 billion were ever appropriated to LWCF (less than ½). The money that was not appropriated to LWCF by Congress was simply spent on other things. The Great American Outdoors Act put a stop to this chronic underfunding and ensures that America’s public lands, parks, wildlife habitat and other outdoor recreation areas have the resources they deserve.
Each year, LWCF funds are apportioned to the states by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior through the National Park Service. Under a formula set out in the LWCF Act, each state receives an equal amount of funding annually. The DOI Secretary may further appropriate additional funding based on the state’s population as well as other state recreational needs. Each state has 3 years to obligate these funds to different projects. State agencies, U.S. territories, local governments—including cities, counties, towns and municipalities—and federally recognized Native American Tribal governments are all eligible to apply for an LWCF state grant to assist with their outdoor recreation projects.

LWCF grants are available for 50% of the total project cost. This state assistance program is a reimbursement program meaning the awarded governmental agency is required to submit reimbursement receipts to the National Park Service via their State Liaison Officer during the project period in order to receive the amount allotted to them.
Each state has a State Liaison Officer that works with the local community and provides assistance with the application process. Once a local governmental entity applies for a grant the application is then evaluated by the state and reviewed by the National Park Service. Applications are evaluated based on how well a given project addresses an outdoor recreation priority and the goals identified in the state’s Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Each proposal is then ranked based on how that proposal meets the state’s priorities as well as on the technical merits of the project, previous outdoor program performance, availability of funding, project readiness and a site visit/inspection. Top ranking proposals are then reviewed by DOI and funded until there is no more money to be allocated for that given year. In addition to reviewing incoming projects, every five years the State Liaison Officer must also conduct a compliance visit to each LWCF state funded site to ensure that the site continues to be used for its original purpose of outdoor recreation.
LWCF Responsibility is perpetual!

- **Project sponsors.** Only States may apply directly to NPS for LWCF assistance. However, funds may be made available through the States to political subdivisions of the state and other appropriate public agencies. Proposed projects may be sponsored by a state agency or a public agency of a subordinate unit of government. All eligible project sponsors, including those that have other than public outdoor recreation purposes, **must be able to commit its resources to the perpetual stewardship of the Fund-assisted public outdoor recreation area pursuant to Section 6(f)(3) of the LWCF Act.**

- Property acquired or developed with LWCF assistance shall be retained and used for public outdoor recreation. **Any property so acquired and/or developed shall not be wholly or partly converted to other than public outdoor recreation uses without the approval of NPS pursuant to Section 6(f)(3) of the LWCF Act and these regulations.** The conversion provisions of Section 6(f)(3), 36 CFR Part 59, and these guidelines apply to each area or facility for which LWCF assistance is obtained, regardless of the extent of participation of the program in the assisted area or facility and consistent with the contractual agreement between NPS and the State.
LWCF in Idaho

- State agencies, cities, counties, recreation districts, and school districts eligible
- Funds from off-shore oil leases
- Land acquired or developed must be used for outdoor recreation in perpetuity
- Funds provide lands and facilities for outdoor recreation
- 50% match required
- Must provide a project boundary map that includes all property associated with the site receiving funding
- Alternate year funding for state/local government
- Approximately $2 million available
The complete SCORP can be found on the IDPR website:
http://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/scorp2018
Contact for All LWCF projects

- Kathy Muir, Alternate State Liaison Officer
- Kathy.Muir@idpr.idaho.gov
- (208) 514-2431 office
- (208) 608-8186 cell
Contact staff for help. We are available for one-on-one training!

Enter application in SMApply! electronic system - DEADLINE January 29, 2021

Advisory Committee review/scoring (March)

Typically NPS awards new projects October 1

Submit Application to the National Park Service (NPS) Late June/Early July

IDPR Park Board Approval (May)
Grants and Funding

IDPR Grants and Funding

The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation provides a variety of funding programs and grants to government entities in Idaho for the provision of equipment and for the creation and renovation of outdoor recreational facilities. For more information about individual grant programs, check out the tabs to the left.

Grant Rules
Rules governing the administration of the IDPR State and Federal Grant Funds

Grant Manual and Application
FY 2023 Recreational Grant Program Guidance

Funding Programs

https://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/grants-and-funding
Separate training for navigating application system
Other Training and Resources

- IDPR Grant Programs/Rules
- Navigating Survey Monkey
- Apply!
- Application Tips and Guidelines
Any Questions