

# Our Land, Our Water, Our Heritage

AMERICA DEPENDS ON THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

## OUTDOOR RECREATION LEGACY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM AND THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

### **Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program:**

Established by Congress in 2014 and administered through the National Park Service, the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program (ORLP) is funded by the LWCF State and Local Assistance Program. This grant program helps urban communities address outdoor recreation deficits by supporting projects in cities and urbanized areas that create new outdoor recreation spaces, reinvigorate already existing parks, and form connections between people and the outdoors.

ORLP provides grants directly to cities and localities, giving easier access to necessary funding and bypassing the state granting process. Grants are matched at a minimum 1:1 ratio, at least doubling the impact of the federal investment in these communities, with a priority given to projects located in economically disadvantaged areas and places lacking in outdoor recreation opportunities. Grants for project proposals range in size from \$250,000 to \$750,000, and planning grants can be up to \$75,000. The grant is open to state and local government agencies and federally recognized Indian tribes. ORLP is the only federal program focused exclusively on supporting parks and outdoor recreation opportunities in cities.

### **Land and Water Conservation Fund**

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a simple idea: to invest a small portion of federal offshore drilling fees towards protecting important land, water and recreation areas for all Americans. LWCF is paid for using a very small percentage of offshore oil and gas drilling receipts. These are not taxpayer dollars. However, the promise of LWCF remains elusive. Each year the authorized amount of \$900 million from offshore royalties is deposited in the LWCF account in the federal treasury – yet far less has been appropriated to LWCF annually. In fact, more than \$17 billion of those funds have been diverted, vanishing into the general revenue stream with no accountability on where the money was actually spent. As a result, LWCF has been funded far below the authorized level.

Despite chronic underfunding, LWCF has had positive conservation and recreation impacts throughout the country, supporting public land protection and outdoor recreation opportunities at the federal, state and local levels. These investments also provide significant boosts to tourism, jobs and local economies.



Montbello Open Space Park in Denver, CO  
Credit: TPL Archive



## Benefits of ORLP funding:

- Creating and improving local parks in economically disadvantaged areas and places lacking in outdoor recreation
- City parks are an essential component to attracting and retaining a strong workforce and spurring local investment
- Conserves natural areas, wildlife habitat and open space in urban parks
- Promotes active, healthy lifestyles and gets kids and families outdoors
- Supports recreational access sites and open spaces in denser urban areas
- Promotes the development of new or enhanced partnerships in urban communities across the nation



[www.lwcfcoalition.org](http://www.lwcfcoalition.org)

## Distribution of ORLP Funds

Currently, two sets of ORLP funding awards have been distributed to communities hoping to improve close-to-home access to the outdoors. The first round of grants, awarded in 2015, gave a total of \$2.9 million towards eight pilot projects. Communities and partners matched that money totaling \$6.1 million in funding. Grants went to projects such as the Three Mile Creek Greenway Project in Mobile, AL, the Thomas Cully Park Development in Portland, OR, and the Belle Isle Park Athletic Complex Renovation in Detroit, MI. In 2017, the second round of grants were awarded to 22 projects for a total of \$13.3 million in funding. With matching grants from local governments, private firms, and non-profit organizations, \$34.5 million were provided to these projects. The second round of funds continued the work of supporting projects that plan, build, and enhance parks and other outdoor recreation facilities in underserved communities, including the North Camden Waterfront Park in Camden, NJ, the Buffalo Bend Hidalgo Park Greenway in Houston, TX, and the Skyway Park Revitalization in King County, WA. Below is a table of the second round of ORLP grants that were awarded in 2017.

## ORLP Grants Awarded in 2017

State	Project Title	Federal Amount
Alaska	Development of Muldoon Town Square Park	\$750,000
California	Bay View Park Playground Improvement Project	\$375,225
California	Bay Point Wetland Restoration and Public Access Project	\$750,000
Connecticut	Renovation of Colt Park Athletic Fields	\$750,000
Delaware	Father Tucker Park Playground and Spray Pad	\$306,447
Georgia	Enota Park Development	\$600,000
Iowa	Comiskey Park Development	\$508,000
Maryland	Youth Campground Improvements in Gwynns Falls Leakin Park	\$750,000
Michigan	Belle Isle Park Multi-Use Looped Trail Development	\$750,000
Minnesota	Lincoln Park Restoration	\$750,000
Missouri	Clary-Shy Park Urban Demonstration Farm	\$400,000
Missouri	Sparta Court Soccer Fields	\$450,000
New Jersey	North Camden Waterfront Park	\$750,000
New Jersey	Jesse Allen Park	\$750,000
North Carolina	Central Plaza John Chavis Memorial Park Revitalization	\$747,600
Ohio	Manhattan Marsh park Development	\$475,000
Texas	Edward Rendon Sr Metro Park – further development	\$750,000
Texas	Buffalo Bend Hidalgo Park Greenway	\$750,000
Vermont	New Neighborhood Park on Burlington's Waterfront Land Acquisition	\$500,000
Washington	Skyway Park Revitalization	\$369,626
Washington	Swan Creek Park Trail Network	\$750,000
Wisconsin	Burnham Park Redevelopment Project	\$399,255