



U.S. Department of the Interior News Release

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Secretary Haaland Announces \$150 Million to Create Public Parks, Expand Recreation Opportunities in Urban Areas

Grant program will help states, local communities create close-to-home outdoor recreation experiences

WASHINGTON — The Department of the Interior today announced that the National Park Service will distribute \$150 million to local communities through the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) grant program. The program, established in 2014, enables urban communities to create new outdoor recreation spaces, reinvigorate existing parks, and form connections between people and the outdoors in economically underserved communities.

The announcement comes on the heels of the Biden-Harris administration's newly launched "[America the Beautiful](#)" initiative to support locally led, voluntary conservation and restoration efforts that address the nature and climate crises, improve equitable access to the outdoors, and strengthen the economy. Providing safe outdoor spaces for communities that are park-deprived is one of six areas of focus identified in the report.

"Every child in America deserves to have a safe and nearby place to experience the great outdoors," said **Secretary Deb Haaland**. "The Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership program is a crucial tool to advancing environmental justice and ensuring equitable access to nature and its benefits. Working together with state and local governments to ensure green spaces promotes the health and welfare of urban communities."

The ORLP program, funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), is a nationally competitive grant program that delivers funding to urban areas — jurisdictions of at least 50,000 people — with priority given to projects located in economically disadvantaged areas and lacking in outdoor recreation opportunities.

"The National Park Service is proud to help people enjoy the outdoors, get active and make lasting memories in their 400 plus national parks across the country," said **Shawn Bengé, National Park Service deputy director for operations exercising the delegated authority of the NPS Director**. "To help create more equitable access to the outdoors, we have opened the ORLP grant program to more communities by removing the cap on the number of proposals states can submit on behalf of local jurisdictions and by increasing the maximum grant from \$1 million to \$5 million."

Funding applications are now being accepted in [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) through September 24. States may apply for the grants, whether on behalf of themselves or eligible urban jurisdictions. Interested jurisdictions should contact their state lead agency for LWCF. A list of contacts can be found at LWCF's [contacts page](#). Project sponsors must match the grant award 1:1 with non-federal dollars. A total of \$150 million in funding is available during this grant cycle.

Since its inception in 1965, the LWCF has funded \$4 billion worth of projects in every county in the country. Last year, Congress permanently funded the LWCF at \$900 million per year with wide bipartisan support. At no cost to taxpayers, the LWCF [supports](#) increased public access to and protection for federal public lands and waters — including national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and recreation areas — and provides matching grants to state governments for the acquisition and development of public parks and other outdoor recreation sites.

For more information about the program and these ORLP grants, please visit NPS's [Land and Water Conservation Fund page](#).

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