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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**April 18, 2024****State Parks supports \$1.38 million for outdoor recreation upgrades**

LWCF grants enhance sites in four New Mexico communities

SANTA FE – New Mexico State Parks Division, part of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD), announces [Land and Water Conservation Fund \(LWCF\)](#) grants totaling \$1.38 million.

“These grants represent our commitment to improving outdoor spaces for all New Mexicans,” said State Parks Director **Toby Velasquez**. “Through LWCF funding, we're creating lasting improvements that benefit generations to come.”

The LWCF awards currently being announced are from the program’s 2021 application period. The approved grant recipients and projects are:

- The Town of Bernalillo, \$265,421.20 for improvements to Rotary Park.
- The City of Carlsbad, \$200,000 to build an outdoor exercise area at the Alejandro Ruiz Senior Center.
- The City of Farmington, \$755,425 for Phase I construction of the new Juniper Basin Bike Park.
- The City of Santa Rosa, \$158,783 for construction of the Park Lake Pedestrian Bridge over El Rito Creek.

The LWCF Program, administered by the National Park Service (NPS), is focused on making outdoor recreation spaces more accommodating to residents. The LWCF Program includes the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program, a nationwide competitive grant program focusing on disadvantaged communities in urban areas.

Each year, the NPS asks state agencies to vet and recommend projects in their areas to receive grants from the LWCF Program. NPS must then approve those projects before the funds are allocated.

The State Parks Division was also recently informed that an ORLP grant of \$858,644 has been awarded to the Officer Daniel Webster Park in Albuquerque.

New Mexico State Parks will submit an anticipated \$2,848,803 in 2022 LWCF funding requests to NPS by the end of July 2024 and an additional anticipated \$1,639,309 in 2023 funding requests in early 2025. In addition to these projects, the division has also received two ORLP applications for the current open ORLP application period totaling \$2,931,573.

The 2024 LWCF grant application period is anticipated to open in late summer. Counties, municipalities, public school districts, soil and water conservation districts, and tribes are encouraged to apply for an anticipated \$3 million in funding available for eligible projects within New Mexico. For more information on the program email Program Coordinator Neal Denton at Neal.Denton@emnrd.nm.gov or visit our website at emnrd.nm.gov.

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