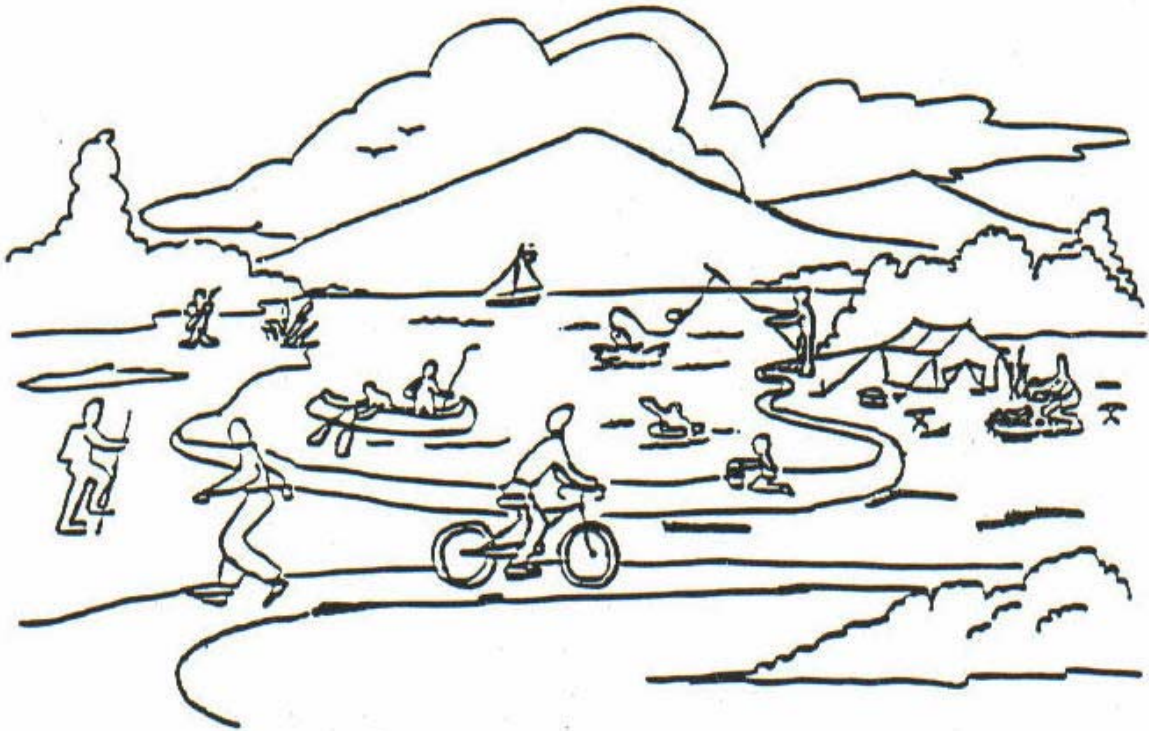


# LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

## STATE OF ALASKA

### INFORMATION BOOKLET

FY'08 Grant Cycle



## FORWARD

This booklet was written to give interested individuals and agencies a brief overview of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant program. The material presented here will answer many of the initial questions about the program. For further information, please contact:

State of Alaska  
Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation  
Grants and Administration  
550 W 7th Avenue, Suite 1380  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3561

E-Mail: [carole.gray@alaska.gov](mailto:carole.gray@alaska.gov) 907-269-8694  
Fax: 907-269-8907

The following is required to complete a Preliminary Application:

Qualifying Criteria Checklist  
Preliminary Application for Acquisition Projects **AND/OR**  
Preliminary Application for Development Projects  
Staff Evaluation Committee Rating Form  
Alaska's Outdoor Legacy, Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation  
Plan, 1997–2002, Chapter 6, LWCF Component

All forms and other information required to complete a Preliminary Application can be accessed through the Alaska State Parks website. Go to [www.alaskastateparks.org](http://www.alaskastateparks.org) and select "Grant Programs" then select "Land and Water Conservation Fund".

This program receives Federal funds from the National Park Service. Regulations of the U.S. Department of the Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental Federally Assisted Programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or handicap. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility operated by a recipient of Federal assistance should write to:

Director, Equal Opportunity Program  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

## SECTION I - INTRODUCTION TO THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

### OVERVIEW

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a federal grant program administered by the National Park Service (NPS) through the State of Alaska, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR), Grants and Administration Section. This program can provide up to 50% matching funds (less State administrative fee) for the acquisition and/or development of outdoor recreation facilities.

### LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Authority for the program is vested in the "Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965", which Congress passed in 1964 under Public Law 88-578. The Act created a grants-in-aid fund "...to assist in preserving, developing and assuring accessibility to all citizens of the United States of present and future generations...such quality and quantity of outdoor recreation resources as may be available and are necessary and desirable for individual active participation..." and "... to strengthen the health and vitality of the citizens of the United States...".

### FUNDING

The grantees share of the project costs may come from sources such as: local appropriations or bonds, in-kind use of equipment, material, labor and administration, or the donation from a private source of labor, land or materials. Please note, the value of land owned by the project sponsor is not eligible to be used as part of the sponsor's match.

This is a reimbursable grant program. The grantee will not receive a cash grant at the time of project approval. The grantee must pay the costs and will be reimbursed for up to 50% of the eligible costs (less State Administrative fee). Interim billings as often as monthly.

### STATE ADMINISTRATIVE FEE

In addition to the direct costs incurred by the grantee, the State adds up to a 12% administrative fee to the **TOTAL** budget. This fee covers the costs associated with initiating the project, monitoring the development and/or acquisition and providing on-site inspections per NPS requirements, in perpetuity. The administrative fee is collected by the State from the federal share, prior to forwarding payment to grantee.

## SECTION II - ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

### ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

In general, state, regional or local governments with the authority to provide park and recreation services on public land are eligible to apply for LWCF assistance.

If an applicant has an active LWCF grant, billings must be current, the project must be on schedule, and any audit problems must be resolved to be eligible to apply for a new grant. Entities who have received LWCF grants in the past may apply for a new grant if there are no outstanding compliance problems with the previous grants.

### ELIGIBLE APPLICATIONS

Applications with a federal share of no less than \$100,000 and no more than \$500,000 are accepted. Only one application per entity will be accepted per funding cycle.

Applicants are encouraged to phase large projects. Projects that include many segments of development can be separated into phases.

Even if the application is only one phase of a multi-phased project, the application must result in a usable recreation facility. As an example, suppose a sponsor wants a park, that when complete, would include a parking area, restroom, ball field and picnic area. To comply with our request to phase, the sponsor decides to break down the development of the park into two phases. It would be acceptable to have the first phase include the parking area and ball field, and second phase include the restroom and the picnic area. This would be acceptable because the first phase would result in a usable recreation facility. If, for example, the sponsor wanted the first phase to be the parking area and restroom facilities, because there will be no usable recreation outcome from this combination of facilities, this type of phasing would not be eligible. If you have questions regarding the possibility of phasing your large project, contact the grants staff.

### PROJECT LAND OWNERSHIP

For development projects, **the project sponsor must own the land on which the development is to take place. Land that is leased is not eligible for development assistance.**

## STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

Per LWCF program requirements, all projects approved for funding must meet an outdoor recreation priority need as identified in the current Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation develops this plan every five years. Check the LWCF component of the most current SCORP to see if your proposal is identified as a priority need. Occasionally the need for a certain type of facility exists in a community, but, because this same type of facility is not a statewide need, it is not identified as a priority need in the SCORP. Unfortunately, because the project is not identified in the SCORP as a priority need, it cannot be considered for LWCF funding. While disconcerting, this is the only way to assure that the limited LWCF monies provide for the most pressing statewide needs.

### DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

The following lists are summaries of the types of facilities either eligible or ineligible for assistance under the LWCF program. These are not all inclusive lists. We recommend you contact the grant staff for further information should your proposal not fit one of the specific categories listed below.

#### Eligible Development Projects:

- master planning for a specific recreation area (in conjunction with development of equal or greater cost at same site)
- outdoor sports and play fields
- picnic facilities
- camping facilities
- tot lots
- neighborhood parks
- boating facilities
- fishing facilities (if for sport fish access, must have previously applied for and been turned down by Dingell-Johnson program)
- hunting facilities
- winter sports facilities
- community gardens
- rehabilitation of existing outdoor recreation facilities (provided deterioration is not due to lack of maintenance or repair)
- landscaping
- support facilities such as restrooms, parking areas, fences, roads within the park area, utilities, etc., when included in a project with outdoor recreation development
- covered or sheltered facilities are eligible only under very limited circumstances – contact LWCF grant administrator prior to completing an application

#### Ineligible Development Projects:

- running tracks and athletic fields used primarily for interscholastic sports
- tourist facilities primarily for economic development rather than outdoor recreation
- fairgrounds, livestock and produce exhibits
- professional sports facilities
- facilities that contribute to primarily indoor recreation use
- roads constructed outside the boundaries of the recreation area
- projects that conflict with private enterprise

#### ACQUISITION PROJECTS

#### Eligible Acquisition Projects:

- land for outdoor recreation activities
- waterfront property or the acquisition of water bodies themselves
- land for creating water-based public outdoor recreation opportunities
- areas that provide special recreation opportunities such as flood plains or wetlands
- land for natural areas and preserves, and outstanding scenic areas

#### Ineligible Acquisition Projects:

- historic sites or structures
- museums or archaeological excavation sites
- land to help meet a public school's minimum site size requirements
- areas to be used primarily for semi-professional or professional arts and athletics
- areas to be used solely for game refuges or fish production purposes
- land to be used mainly for the construction of indoor recreation facilities
- sites containing luxury lodges, motels, and similar elaborate facilities
- caretaker or park ranger residences

#### ELIGIBLE COSTS

In order to be eligible for reimbursement, all project expenditures, including donations, must take place **after** the project is approved by NPS and **prior to** the expiration date of the grant.

The following types of expenditures are normally eligible for reimbursement:

- site planning and engineering, including construction supervision
- demolition
- construction costs
- fixed equipment such as play apparatus, backstops, basketball standards, etc.
- permanent and temporary project signs
- acquisition costs (not to include the cost of appraisals or title insurance)

### **SECTION III - GRANTEE COMMITMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **RETENTION AND USE**

Property acquired or developed with LWCF funding assistance **must be retained and used solely for outdoor recreation, in perpetuity**. A covenant must be attached to the title of any LWCF-assisted site, reserving use of the site **strictly** for outdoor recreation. Any property acquired or developed with LWCF monies may not be wholly or partly converted to anything other than public outdoor recreation uses without the **prior** approval of the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior and the Director of Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. Such approval will be given only if other property and facilities of at least equal fair market value and of reasonably equivalent usefulness, quality and location is substituted.

#### **FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Grantees are required to keep accurate records of project expenditures and be accountable for all funds and assets. It is the responsibility of the grantee to submit accurate and timely financial billings and to retain documentation relative to those billings.

While a project is active, if the grantee receives more that \$25,000 in total federal assistance during a fiscal year, they must have an agency-wide audit that complies with the federal Single Audit Act of 1984. Required audits will be performed at the grantees expense, and all audit exceptions must be satisfactorily resolved.

#### **PROPERLY OPERATED AND MAINTAINED**

During development, the project is subject to inspection by the State and/or the National Park Service yearly. After completion, the project must be inspected every five years at a minimum.

Adequate operation and maintenance is the responsibility of the grantee. The facilities

must be attractive and inviting for public use. Supervision must be adequate to meet the type of use. Health and safety problems are to be corrected immediately. All facilities must be clean and open for general park use. Facilities cannot be kept locked and opened only for special occasions. They must be opened at reasonable hours and times of the year, according to the type of area or facility.

LWCF funds are **not** available for operation and maintenance costs. After completion of the grant, all subsequent costs are to be borne solely by the grantee.

### ACCESSIBILITY OF PARK

**The area or facility must be available for use by all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, creed, national origin or place of residence.**

**The park must be developed and maintained so that it is accessible to persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities must be able to participate in park activities.**

All LWCF facilities must be designed & constructed in conformance with 1) the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (P.L. 90-480) and the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards ([www.access-board.gov/ufas](http://www.access-board.gov/ufas)), or 2) the Department of the Interior regulations on Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (43 CFR Part 17) and the Minimum Guidelines and Requirements for Accessible Design as issued by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (ATBCB), 36 CFR Part 1190 ([www.access-board.gov/ada-aba](http://www.access-board.gov/ada-aba)).

### REQUIREMENTS

It is the responsibility of the grantee to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, as well as LWCF program requirements in the acquisition and/or development of a LWCF-assisted site.

### LOCAL PLAN

Applicants must have a local planning document that identifies the proposed outdoor recreation area as a need in the community. There must be some evidence and documentation that thought has been given to the short or long-range outdoor recreation needs of the community and that this specific proposal is rated in the plan as a high priority need. Further, public input into the plan and community support for the proposal must be documented. Need and support may be documented in several ways such as copies of completed outdoor recreation preference surveys, minutes of public meetings which detail those in attendance and their comments, etc.

## **SECTION IV - ADMINISTRATION**

### **STATE RESPONSIBILITY**

The Director of the State of Alaska, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (DPOR) is appointed by the Governor to serve as the State Liaison Officer (SLO) for the LWCF program in Alaska. The SLO is responsible for the administration of the program. Potential participants must contact the State on all matters relating to the program.

DPOR Grants and Administration section is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the LWCF program. All questions regarding the program should be directed to the grants staff.

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

DPOR will contact all boroughs and communities listed in the Alaska Municipal Officials Directory in writing to notify them of the available funding. If the entity is interested in applying for a grant, the first step is to complete the Qualifying Criteria Checklist. If the proposed project satisfies the criteria on the checklist, the entity should complete a preliminary application.

Please remember this is only the preliminary application. More detailed information as required by the National Park Service will be requested for those projects that are prioritized high enough to receive funding.

### **PROJECT SELECTION**

The completed Qualifying Criteria Checklist and the Preliminary Applications will be evaluated by the Staff Evaluation Committee (SEC) and assessed a point score based on various LWCF program requirements.

Prioritization of the applications will be based upon the SEC score outcome. The Outdoor Recreation and Trails Advisory Board will review the prioritized list. The State Liaison Officer has final approval of the application ranking.

## APPLICATION INITIATION

Unfortunately, we do not usually receive apportionment sufficient to fund all applications requesting grant assistance. Therefore, the prioritization as approved by the SLO is used to determine which applications receive funding.

The final step of this process is to complete the application packages. Using the priority list, only the projects above the anticipated funding level will be asked to complete the remaining documents required by NPS. The complete application packages will be forwarded to the National Park Service for final approval.

## PROJECT ACTIVATION

No development or acquisition costs incurred prior to NPS grant approval will be eligible for reimbursement under the program. It is important to note that **until a project is officially approved by NPS, no title to land can be taken, nor development initiated.**

The grant will have a specific period of time in which the acquisition and/or development must be completed. This grant period is usually two construction seasons, unless otherwise requested and justified by the grantee.

## POST-COMPLETION RESPONSIBILITIES

The grantee is solely responsible for adequate maintenance and operation of the completed facility. The site must be maintained to satisfy accessibility standards. In addition, **the property acquired or developed must be dedicated for strictly outdoor recreation use by covenant attached to the title of the property, and the property may be used only for outdoor recreation purposes, in perpetuity.** See Section III of this booklet, and consult the DPOR grants staff for further information on post-completion responsibilities of the project sponsor.