

Talkin' Basics

DNR Funding Sources for Conservation & Recreation Land & Water Conservation Program

AUGUST, 2003

Overview. The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a program established by Congress in 1964 to create parks and open spaces, protect wilderness, wetlands, and refuges, preserve wildlife habitat, and enhance recreational opportunities. From parks to playgrounds, wilderness to wetlands, bicycle paths to hiking trails, LWCF has helped communities nationwide acquire nearly seven million acres of parkland, water resources, and open space. LWCF has also underwritten the development of more than 37,000 state and local park and recreation projects. The program provides funds through off shore oil and gas drilling lease proceeds. In most years the funds are divided among the states using a formula based primarily on population.

The fund has two main components :

1. A federal program that funds the purchase of land and water areas for conservation and recreation purposes within our nation's four federal Land management agencies - Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management
2. A state matching grants program that provides funds to states through the governor for statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation planning, developing, and acquiring land and water areas for state and local parks and recreation areas.

In Wisconsin the state matching grants program is administered by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). We have funded over 1800 state and local government land acquisition and development projects with the over \$68 million received since the program's beginnings.

Contacts: For questions about the LWCF program and to submit project proposals: Leslie Gauberti, Land & Water Conservation Fund Program Manager, Bureau of Community Financial Assistance, 267-0497; e-mail: leslie.gauberti@dnr.state.wi.us. Leslie is the State Liaison Officer; the Administrator for the Division of Customer Assistance & External Relations (CAER) is also a State Liaison Officer. Vance Rayburn is currently Administrator for CAER. State liaison officers have the authority to represent and act for the State in dealing with the National Park Service for purposes of the LWCF program.

State Eligibility. To be eligible for matching funds, every state must prepare and regularly update a statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan (SCORP). SCORPs include inventories or assessments of current recreation resources (local, state, and federal) within a state, identify needs and new opportunities for recreation improvements, and set forth a five-year action agenda to meet the goals identified by citizens and elected leaders. The National Park Service then approves this plan. Wisconsin's most recent SCORP covers 2000-2005. All project applications submitted must be in accord with the priorities listed in the action plan.

To make the connection between the SCORP and actual project proposals, the department has developed a project selection process that contains a set of project ranking selection criteria and a timetable for

funding availability and application deadlines. Local government applications are due to DNR region offices May 1 each year. Then they are reviewed, scored and ranked according to the project selection criteria so that the top-ranked projects (up to the total amount available that year) are chosen for funding. The selection process for state projects follows a similar time frame and process. Project proposals are then submitted to the National Park Service for formal approval and obligation of federal funds.

Project Sponsor Eligibility. Local governments and state agencies, including the University of Wisconsin System.

Matching Grants Program - Levels of Assistance. Eligible sponsors may receive a grant for up to 50% of the total project costs. The project sponsor's match may consist of cash payments, use of force account, donations of labor, materials, services and land for projects. Donations must be consistent with program rules and be identified at the time of application.

Funds Available. The amount allocated to Wisconsin is divided 50/50 between State sponsored projects and grants to local governments.

LAND & WATER CONSERVATION FUND ALLOCATIONS 2000-2003					
	FFY 2000	FFY 2001	FFY 2002	FFY 2003	TOTAL
CATEGORIES					
State Projects	\$ 350,434.50	\$ 785,576	\$ 1,250,245	\$ 835,192	\$3,221,448
Local Government Projects	\$ 350,434.50	\$ 785,576	\$ 1,250,245	\$ 835,191	\$3,221,447
Administrative Costs		\$ 64,180	\$ 64,569	\$ 62,784	\$ 191,533
TOTALS	\$ 700,869	\$ 1,635,332	\$ 2,565,059	\$ 1,733,167	\$6,634,427

Eligible Types of Projects.

Land Acquisition Projects: areas with frontage on rivers, streams, lakes; areas that provide special recreation opportunities such as floodplains, wetlands, and areas adjacent to scenic highways; natural areas and preserves and outstanding scenic areas where the objective is to preserve the scenic or natural values, including areas of physical or biological importance and wildlife areas; land within urban areas for day-use picnic areas, neighborhood playgrounds, and parklands in general. Ineligible projects: historic sites, sites for museums, areas to be used solely for fish production or game refuges, sites mainly for the construction of indoor facilities; agricultural land for preservation in ag purposes.

Development Projects: support facilities necessary for the use and enjoyment of outdoor recreation areas, including construction, renovation, site planning, demolition, site preparation, architectural and engineering services; sports and playfields, picnic facilities, trails, swimming facilities, boating facilities, fishing & hunting facilities, winter sports facilities, camping facilities, exhibit facilities that provide opportunities for the observation or interpretation of natural resources located on the recreation site or in its immediate area; habitat restoration; renovation of facilities.

SCORP Planning: activities focused on developing the SCORP; all planning projects must be part of a Department comprehensive SCORP development effort. Note: The SCORP is required to be updated every five years. Ineligible projects: studies aimed at promoting tourism, or other State economic activities; individual area master plans, economic feasibility studies, architectural and engineering studies.