

FEDERAL LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

Securing \$ for Investments in our Economy, our Communities, our Health

FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE IS AVAILABLE IF WE ACT!

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is a federal program that doubles Alaskan investments in trails, campgrounds, cabins, parks and playgrounds, boat launches and other outdoor recreation infrastructure. The program is available to state, local and tribal governments. Those entities have the option to work closely with non-profit partners. Since 1965, the LWCF program has delivered over \$40 M in federal funds for 350 Alaska outdoor recreation projects all over Alaska (see map below). **We need your help to ensure Alaska does not leave its share of LWCF dollars on the table.**

STEPS NEEDED TO PUT LWCF FUNDS TO WORK IN ALASKA

1. Legislature approves receipt authority to receive federal LWCF funds.
2. Legislature allocates funding (later reimbursable) for LWCF in-state administrative costs.
3. State and/or local governments secure the required 50% project matching funds (cash, land, labor) for qualifying outdoor recreation projects.

HOW CAN YOU HELP? Work with the Legislature to Approve the Governor's Recommended Budgets for DNR.



WHY IT MATTERS: JOBS, BUSINESSES & HEALTH

\$412 BILLION

Outdoor recreation is the "Sleeping Giant of The US Economy," providing 2.2% of the total annual US GDP, larger than fishing, farming, forestry, utilities, or telecommunications.¹

+ \$137 MILLION

Extra spending if even just half of visitors added "ONE MORE DAY" (OMD) to their AK trip.²

>\$126 M STATE & \$88 M MUNICIPAL REVENUES

generated annually by AK visitor industry through taxes and fees; funding a wide range community services.³

HEALTH & HAPPINESS GAP

2020 saw overflowing trails, parking lots & campgrounds; use more than doubled at most State Park locations. We need to address the \$60 M maintenance backlog⁴ & fill the growing gap between our current infrastructure and the expanding demand for outdoor recreation, and make it easier for Alaskans to be active, healthy, and happy outside.

TRAIL USERS SPEND MORE, STAY LONGER

International tourists to New Zealand who participate in walking & hiking spend \$3600/trip vs. \$2800 spent by all holiday visitors; average stay in New Zealand is 19 days; in AK 9 days.⁵

OPPORTUNITIES TODAY: SPECIFIC ACTIONS NEEDED NOW

This fall, Alaska relinquished \$615,000 in LWCF dollar (and an equal, in-hand match) intended to improve boat launches and other State Park outdoor recreation infrastructure. Action is needed so we do not again “leave money on the table”.

What’s at Stake, as of January 27, 2021

- \$3.4M in pending 2019 and 2020 LWCF dollars (combined);
- \$2.5M in 2021 LWCF dollars – the larger annual amount confirmed to be available annually each year due to the recent passage of the Great American Outdoors Act.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Approve the Governor’s recommended AK FY2021 DNR Supplemental Budget

(for a combination of Federal FY 2019 & 2020 LWCF)

- \$3.4 M in federal receipt authority
- \$900,000 in state funding to cover administrative in-direct and State match for federal funds

2. Fill the vacant position in DNR’s Division of Parks to administer the LWCF

3. Approve the Governor’s recommended AK FY2022 DNR Budget *(for FFY 2021 LWCF)*

- \$3.5 M in federal receipt authority *(coincidentally nearly same amount as two pending years combined)*
- \$2.205 M in state funding to cover administrative costs, the State of AK’s half of the required match (the other half to be matched by local/tribal governments), and help support the update of the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

4. Establish a short-term task force to examine and implement ways to:

- more efficiently administer and leverage all federal outdoor recreation funding programs
- remove barriers so accepting federal funds is automatic, as it is in most other states.
- establish new, sustainable sources of outdoor recreation matching funds



WE NEED YOUR HELP! FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Alaska Trails (working with Alaska Outdoor Alliance and other partners)

<https://www.alaska-trails.org/alaska-trails-initiative>

References:

¹ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. (2018-2020). Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account

² Alaska Trails, using Alaska Visitor Statistics Program VII <https://www.alaskatia.org/marketing/alaska-visitors-statistics-program-avsp-vii>

³ Tourism Revenues, ATIA <http://www.tourismworksforak.org/industry-data.html>

⁴ State of Alaska, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

⁵ For visitors coming by air, participation grew from 38% in 2011 to 46% in 2016; for cruise visitors, from 20% to 26%. AVSP VII - Section 5 Visitor Activities; length of stay: New Zealand Tourist Special Interest Report; Walking and Hiking, 2014



LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND IN ALASKA

INVESTMENTS IN OUTDOOR RECREATION: RECREATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND LAND ACQUISITION

LWCF Awards by District / Area 1966-2017

Total: \$40M

