

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Program Fact Sheet

The LWCF Program is administered nationally by the U.S Department of the Interior's National Park Service. Annual appropriations of federal funds are made to the states to provide 50% matching grants for general public outdoor park, recreation and conservation projects. DCNR currently uses its LWCF appropriations for grants to political subdivisions. The Department will determine which grant projects will be funded through this funding source.

Projects funded through the LWCF Program must be identified in or further a specific goal of the [2020-2024 Pennsylvania Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan](#).

- Development: Rehabilitation of existing public parks, trails, and recreation areas focusing on the development of outdoor recreation amenities and waterway access.
- Acquisition: Acquisition of properties to support future public outdoor recreation opportunities.

Eligible Applicants – Only political subdivisions (municipalities and municipal agencies), counties, state agencies and school districts are eligible to receive LWCF funding. Non-profit organizations are **not** eligible applicants.

Eligible Project Types – LWCF funding may be used for land acquisition or development. If your project is selected as a candidate for LWCF funding, grant approval will be delayed due to additional review and approval by the National Park Service.

1. **Land Acquisition** – Grants may be for the acquisition of public municipal park, recreation, conservation and open space lands, as well as for acquisition of natural and scenic resources, such as streams, floodplains, steep slopes, wetlands, forest lands, water resources, watersheds and botanical sites.
 - The only acquisition cost eligible for reimbursement under a LWCF grant is land value.
 - A federal Yellow Book appraisal report is required if the project is selected for LWCF funding consideration. Refer to the [DCNR Appraisal Policy](#) for additional information.
2. **Development** – Grants may be for any public outdoor recreation project. An eligible project such as a large-scale recreation complex may include: swimming pools, playgrounds, playfields and paved courts, as well as the installation of utilities, park roads, landscaping, comfort stations and other support facilities related to the outdoor use of the project site. The applicant must own the site.

A Good LWCF project is –

1. A previously funded LWCF site.
2. A land acquisition or single-site development project with a total project cost of \$500,000 or more.
3. A site with no environmental/historical/archeological issues.
4. Sites to be developed or acquired for public outdoor park and recreation must be maintained in public recreation in perpetuity.
5. One where the grantee can accept financial reimbursement after the project is completed.
6. One where the applicant is not required to start the project immediately as there is additional time and paperwork involved.
7. One where applicants have demonstrated good grant administrative capacity.
8. One where the applicant can provide a 50% or greater CASH match; there may be additional costs associated with the project that are not eligible for reimbursement under a LWCF grant.