

Municipal/State/Federal Grants

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Public Financing

Grants are funds given to states and municipalities by the federal government to run programs within defined guidelines.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (est. 1964)

One of the biggest impacting funds of municipal, state and federal open space grants is the National Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) program. It uses offshore oil leasing revenues to provide matching grants to state and local governments for the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities. It also pays for additions to the federal recreation estate legacy. 60% is used for the state grant program, while 40% is used for federal land acquisition. Additionally, it stimulates non-federal investments in the protection and maintenance of recreation resources. All grants require a minimum percent match by a non-federal partner. An example is the \$500,000 LWCF grant for the Libby Farm project in Massachusetts, matched by more than \$1 million from the William P. Wharton Trust, Fields Pond Foundation, and the Town of Stoughton. This successfully acquired the 81-acre farm, a high priority location within 630 acres of existing conservation land.

LWCF State Grant funds peaked in 1979 at \$370 million. Under Reagan, all state LWCF grants were cut to \$167 million (from \$490 million), and subsequently funding was cut from 1996 through 1999. Congress revived it in 2000 w/ 41 million; 2001 w/ 90 million; and 2002 w/ 144 million. Ultimately, this dry period revealed the "failure to develop a constituency", as governors, mayors, and environmental groups did not actively oppose the cuts.

Grant types include: **Planning** grants to States to develop the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP); **Acquisition** grants for the acquisition of lands or interests in land; **Development or Redevelopment** grants to enhance projects with new or rebuilt recreation facilities; or **Combination** which includes both acquisition and site development. To apply, every State must prepare a regularly updated SCORP that includes a set of project-ranking selection criteria. States receive allocations of grant funds based on a national formula (i.e.: determining factors such as state population). Potential applicants contact their state agency office to find out about local application deadlines, state priorities, selection criteria, and required documentation.

Today, LWCF funds are appropriated through the **Land Conservation, Preservation, and Infrastructure Improvement (LCPII) Fund** (est. 2000). This fund provides monies for LWCF and other conservation spending, but requires yearly appropriations from Congress and expires after FY2006. The legislation set aside \$12 billion from FY01 through FY06 in a special "conservation spending" budget category. LCPII funding is still subject to annual appropriations, but unlike LWCF, the funds cannot be diverted.

The LCPII also provides funds for:

State Wildlife Grants

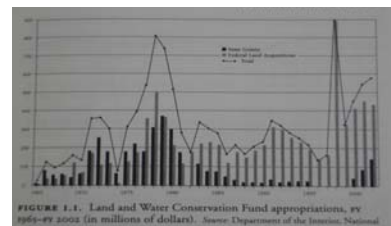
Matching grants for design and implementation of habitat and wildlife conservation plans to help states conserve and restore decline native species before listing under the Endangered Species Act is required.

Cooperative Endangered Species Fund

Grants to state for species and habitat conservation on non-federal lands for species listed or proposed under the Endangered Species Act.

"Parks and recreation in America depend on LWCF. Without it, many of our nation's parks would simply not exist. Coast to coast and border to border, the Fund is accomplishing exactly what it was established for in 1964 – \$3.6 billion for park and recreation projects in 98% of our nation's counties."

~ Fran Mainella, Director,
National Park Service



source:
McQueen + McMahon, 2003.

Land and Water Conservation Fund 2004 Achievements

Grant Dollars
\$97,038,581

Matching Dollars Leveraged
\$125,638,600

Recreation Areas Funded
645

New Acres Permanently Protected
40,881

Previously Protected Acres with New Recreation Improvements
306,206

“The Land and Water Conservation Fund has long supported public health through the development of active recreation facilities and resource conservation. Local LWCF-aided investments— parks, trails for walking and cycling, recreation fields – are the backbone of livable communities. These projects also help create jobs through appropriate development for public access and use, and recreation and park management.”

~ John Thorner, Executive Director, National Recreation and Park Association

Forest Legacy

Grants to state to help private landowners preserve working forest lands that might otherwise be lost to development.

North American Wetlands Conservation Fund

Acquisition, restoration, and enhancement of fragile wetlands that promote flood control, increase water quality, improve wildlife habitat, provide public recreation, sustain our cultural heritage, among others.

Historic Preservation Fund

Matching grants to the National Trust for Historic Preservation and to all 50 states and U.S. territories.

Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR)

Provides matching grants and technical assistance to economically distressed urban communities to develop close-to-home recreational opportunities.

Urban and Community Forestry

Matching grants and technical assistance to communities to protect and maintain natural landscapes, with an emphasis on the urban forest canopy.

Other grants include:

Community Development Block Grants

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program (est.1974), is a federal grant under HUD that can be used to assist non-entitlement local governments with open space land acquisition projects. In order to be eligible a project must meet all applicable CDBG regulations and result in significant employment and/or benefit for low and moderate-income persons.

Indirectly Related Federal/State Funds

Another mechanism is joining with other Federal initiatives and extracting grant money available in other programs. *North Carolina’s Clean Water Management Trust Fund* allows local governments, state agencies and conservation nonprofits to apply for grants for projects aimed at the protection, clean up and conservancy of the state’s natural waters. The acquisition of riparian buffers (or easements of these properties) and the establishment of greenways have qualified for this program. *Historic preservation grants* may also be utilized for acquisition of historic sites or corridors. *Air quality grants* from DOT may be used to create bike or walking opportunities that are also part of a commuter transportation system.

RESOURCES

McQueen, Mike and Edward McMahon. Land Conservation Financing. Washington: Island Press, 2003.

Whiddon, Alycen, et. al. Open Space Acquisitions and Management Opportunities in the City of Atlanta and Adjacent Jurisdictions. Georgia State University, 2003. http://www.researchatlanta.org/FullReports/03_OpenSpace.pdf

Land and Water Conservation Fund - State Assistance Program, 2004 Annual Report. National Park Service. http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/LWCF_04_rev.pdf