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## **LWCF Coalition Applauds Department of the Interior's Major Investment in Local Parks and Recreation**

Washington, D.C. – The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Coalition is excited about the [Department of the Interior's announcement](#) allocating \$58.3 million in funding to support the revitalization and creation of new local parks in 14 communities across the United States. Redding, San Francisco, and Madera CA; Bridgeport, CT; South Bend, IN; Louisville, KY; Detroit, MI; Paterson, NJ, New York City, NY; Raleigh, NC; Bethlehem, PA; Florence, SC; Laredo, TX; and Richmond, VA are set to benefit from this substantial investment that will enhance outdoor recreation opportunities and improve the quality of life for locals, tourists, recreationists and more.

This commitment, made possible through the LWCF-funded Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program, underscores the Department of the Interior's commitment to promoting community engagement with the great outdoors. This announcement marks **one of the most substantial grants, more than double last year's**, since the inception of the ORLP program.

*The LWCF Coalition and supporting organizations lauded the announcement:*

**Lesley Kane Szyal, Chair of the LWCF Coalition**, said, "We enthusiastically celebrate the Department of the Interior's efforts to expand greenspace in underserved neighborhoods. The LWCF Coalition commends the investment facilitated by the LWCF-funded ORLP Program, promising meaningful enhancements in the quality of life for residents of Redding, San Francisco, Madera, Bridgeport, South Bend, Louisville, Detroit, Paterson, New York City, Raleigh, Bethlehem, Florence, Laredo and Richmond. This essential support highlights the

importance of green spaces, local parks, and recreational infrastructure in fostering vibrant, healthy, and resilient communities. We remain committed to working hand-in-hand with the Department of the Interior and community leaders nationwide to maximize the impact of these pivotal investments."

**Rue Mapp, Founder and CEO of Outdoor Afro** lauded the announcement, saying, "The Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program is about expanding access to nature in communities where people need it the most, which is our mission as well. At Outdoor Afro, we celebrate Black leadership in nature, and help lead the way for inclusion in outdoor recreation, nature, and conservation for all, and we helped fight for permanent, dedicated funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund to bring more ORLP and other LWCF-funded conservation and recreation access to everyone. It's exciting to see the fruits of our labor hitting the ground now, and to see the commitment of both Congress and the Administration to strengthening LWCF investment in underserved communities through ORLP. There's more work to do, and we are here for it."

"The Park District has been a strong advocate for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) since its inception in 1964," **states East Bay Regional Park District General Manager Sabrina Landreth**. "LWCF grants have been vital in improving equitable public access and expanding parklands in the East Bay, including at Bay Point Regional Shoreline, Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline and Point Pinole Regional Shoreline. The Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program has provided another tool in the toolbox to address urgent conservation priorities and existing inequities through targeted investments. As we experience the growing impacts of climate change on our communities, it is crucial we continue investing in this work."

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### **About the Land and Water Conservation Fund**

LWCF is America's most important conservation program, responsible for protecting parks, wildlife refuges and recreation areas at the federal, state and local level. For over half a century, it has provided critical funding for land and water conservation projects, recreational construction and activities and the continued historic preservation of our nation's iconic landmarks from coast-to-coast. LWCF does not use any taxpayer dollars – it is funded using a small portion of revenues from offshore oil and gas royalty payments. Outdoor recreation, conservation and historic preservation activities contribute more than \$778 billion annually to the U.S. economy, supporting 5.2 million jobs.

### **About the LWCF Coalition**

The LWCF Coalition is the umbrella group of more than 1,000 state and local landowners, small businesses, ranchers, sportsmen, veterans, outdoor recreationists, and conservation organizations working to protect America's public lands and safeguard our shared outdoor heritage for future generations. For more information on LWCF and the places in each state that have been protected using LWCF funds, visit [LWCFCoalition.org](http://LWCFCoalition.org).