

Eight Illinois Communities To Receive Nearly \$2.4 Million For Local Outdoor Recreational Opportunities

January 17 2024 1:10 PM



SPRINGFIELD – Eight Illinois communities will share nearly \$2.4 million in grants to expand access to outdoor recreation, Gov. JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) announced today.

The grants come from the National Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and will be administered by IDNR. The LWCF program can provide up to one-

half of a project's funds, and when combined with the investment of local matching funds will support more than \$5.4 million in local park land acquisitions statewide.

"IDNR is excited to play a small role in helping these exciting outdoors projects become reality," said IDNR Director Natalie Phelps Finnie. "Conserving and protecting our land, water, and recreational opportunities is critical ensuring future generations have access to nature and the outdoors."

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 was enacted to help preserve, develop, and ensure access to outdoor recreation facilities to strengthen the health of U. S. citizens. The law created the Land and Water Conservation Fund in the U.S. Treasury as a funding source to implement its outdoor recreation goals. The LWCF program receives its revenue from federal oil and gas leases on the Outer Continental Shelf.

Grant recipients include:

City of Calumet City – \$375,000 (Cook County)

Plans are to acquire 9.27 acres of land to expand Blues Water Run, which is currently a seven-acre park that includes a dog park, an entertainment venue, restroom facilities, a canoe/kayak launch, and general park activities.

Campton Township – \$750,000 (Kane County)

Acquisition of a 130-acre site known as the Goldenstein Farm, which was identified more than 20 years ago by Campton Township as a priority for acquisition for public open space because of its old-growth woods, potential for prairie and wetland restoration, and wildlife habitat, and trail connections between multiple sites to expand public use of parks. The addition of this site would create a more than 1,000-acre corridor of habitat between Campton Township Parks/Open Space and the Kane County Forest Preserve District.

Elba-Salem Park District – \$10,000 (Knox County)

Plans are to acquire 4 acres of adjacent property that is no longer being used as a railroad and add it to the current park consisting of approximately 6.35 acres. This adjacent property will need to be excavated to make it flat and usable. Adding 4 acres to the park will provide needed space to put in a gravel parking area, plant trees, and expand recreational opportunities in the future.

Genoa Township Park District – \$102,800 (DeKalb County)

The project includes acquisition of a 10-acre parcel of farmland adjacent to existing parkland to allow for the expansion of the park district's largest, most visited park and meet demand outlined in the park district's 2020-2025 Comprehensive Master Plan.

Village of Minooka – \$125,000 (Grundy County)

Acquisition of 0.95 acres adjacent to Veterans Park. Multi-use paths will be connected through the expanded park to create an extension of the existing Mondamin/Wapella path system. The remaining park area will be developed as open green space and provide a buffer between the neighborhood and the industrial buildings to the south.

Plainfield Township Park District – \$200,000 (Will County)

Plans are to acquire 6.5 acres of property along the DuPage River to connect existing sections of the DuPage River Trail. The trail is identified by the Will County Bikeway plan as serving a transportation function by connecting populations and employment centers in Will County. The DuPage River Trail will ultimately provide connectivity between Naperville and Channahon, connecting downtowns, employment centers, regional retail, and parks and recreation areas. This project will be a vital link between the existing multi-use trails at Riverside Parkway and Sunset Park/Hammel Woods along the DuPage River corridor.

Wauconda Park District – \$750,000 (Lake County)

Acquisition of 4.4 acres along Bangs Lake that had been a privately owned marina and the only access point on the lake that can accommodate daily boat launches. Bangs Lake is a 306-acre natural glacier lake in the Fox River watershed that is a regional destination for boaters and anglers. Acquiring the property will enable the park district to preserve public access to the lake for future generations. The district intends to continue marina operations, including boat slips, daily launches, and rentals for boats, kayaks, and paddleboards. Site improvements will address disabled accessibility, parking, boat slips, and appearance of the site.

Wheaton Park District – \$60,000 (DuPage County)

Acquisition of a 0.78-acre parcel on the south side of Lincoln Marsh. The parcel is approximately 30 feet wide by 1,000 feet long and is currently improved with two sections of path that connect to the Lincoln Marsh.