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Franklin County to Receive State Grant for Wade Park Boat Launch Improvements

OLYMPIA – Franklin County commissioners will receive a \$450,000 symbolic check Wednesday for a state grant to improve the Wade Park boat launch.

Jeff Parsons, of Leavenworth, one of the five citizen members of the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC), will present commissioners with a giant check at their meeting at 9:45 a.m., Feb. 15, in commission chambers, Franklin County Annex, 412 West Clark, Pasco.

The boat launch project was the top ranked local project competing statewide in the Boating Facilities Program, managed by the IAC. A total of 17 projects requested a combined total of \$5.3 million in state funding. The IAC was able to award grants to only seven projects, totaling \$1.7 million, because of limited funding.

Franklin County will use the grant to develop the boat launch area at the west end of Wade Park. Development will consist of a new boat ramp, courtesy float, bulkhead, and gangway. Work also will include grading and paving of a staging area and parking lot, graveling an overflow parking area, landscaping, lighting, trail work and signs. All areas will be accessible to people with disabilities.

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“Washington has more than 250,000 registered boats plying its waterways,” Parsons said. “We must ensure that we are providing good services to those boaters so that we can preserve the recreational and commercial boating opportunities in Washington.”

The Boating Facilities Program was created in 1964 by a voter-approved initiative. The program provides grants for projects that acquire, develop and renovate boating facilities, including launching ramps, transient moorage and support facilities on both freshwater and saltwater. Money for the grants comes from a portion of the motor vehicle gasoline tax paid by boaters.

Since 1965, the IAC has awarded more than \$86 million to local and state governments for 552 projects statewide to accommodate boaters. In addition, the program has a map of all public boat launch ramps in the state, which is on the agency’s Web site at: www.iac.wa.gov/maps.

The program is successful because grant recipients have contributed another \$56 million or a 35 percent match of the total project costs. Franklin County and the City of Pasco are teaming up on this project and contributing \$150,000 in funding, donations and donated labor.

The IAC was established in 1964 to finance recreation and conservation projects throughout the state. For more information on the agency or its grant programs, visit the Web site: www.iac.wa.gov.

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