



STATE OF WASHINGTON

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State Recreation and Conservation Grants Available *New grants offered for farmland, riparian protection*

OLYMPIA – The state is accepting applications for grants to build parks, protect wildlife habitat and provide for a host of outdoor activities, the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation announced today.

Included in the list of grants available are two new categories in the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program for the preservation of farmland and riparian areas. The farmland preservation grants, available to counties and cities, are aimed at preserving economically viable farmlands and enhancing the ecological functions on those lands.

The riparian protection grants, available to state agencies, counties, cities, tribes and local organizations, are aimed at protecting, enhancing and restoring riparian habitat, which is land adjacent to water bodies, such as estuaries, lakes, wetlands and streams.

“We’re very excited about these two new grant categories,” said Laura Johnson, director of the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation. “Some of the state’s best farmland is disappearing to accommodate new housing or other development. These grants may help stop the loss of farms, preserve local economies, and give farmers another resource to protect their way of life. There’s also a large need to protect land near the water, land which often is a vital resource for wildlife.”

The Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation offers nine grant programs that run the range from building parks and boating facilities, to renovating shooting ranges, to protecting wildlife habitat. Since beginning in 1964, the agency has granted more than \$783 million in grants for nearly 4,000 projects statewide.

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“These grants come from a variety of sources – the federal government, state funding, and user fees,” Johnson said. “Competition for these grants is always high. These grants are an important source of funding for local governments, tribes and community organizations to provide places for people to recreate and wildlife to live.”

This year, the agency is offering grants in the following categories:

- Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account – Grants to acquire, restore or improve aquatic lands for public purposes.
- Boating Facilities Program - Grants to acquire, develop or renovate boating facilities, including launching ramps, transient moorage and support facilities.
- Boating Infrastructure Grants – Grants to develop recreational transient boating facilities, targeting boats 26 feet and larger.
- Land and Water Conservation Fund – Grants to acquire land and develop outdoor facilities, including parks, trails and wildlife lands, for the public.
- National Recreational Trails Program – Grants to maintain and develop trails that provide a backcountry experience. Environmental education and trail safety programs also are eligible.
- Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities – Grants to develop and manage recreation opportunities for bicyclists, equestrians, hikers, off-road vehicle riders, and other users of backcountry trails and non-highway roads.
- Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program – Grants to acquire and develop parks, water access sites, trails, critical wildlife habitat, natural areas, and urban wildlife habitat, and to preserve farmland and protect riparian areas.

Workshops for people interested in applying for grants are being held in **Ellensburg, Federal Way, Mount Vernon, Pasco, Snohomish, Spokane and Vancouver**. Letters of intent to apply for grants are due March 15 with applications due May 1. For more information on the agency, the workshops or its grant programs, visit the Web site: www.iac.wa.gov.

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