

Haslam, TDEC Award More Than \$17 Million for Local Parks and Recreation

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Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam and Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) Commissioner Bob Martineau today announced a series of grants totaling more than \$17 million to help fund parks and recreation projects in Tennessee communities.

“These grants are very competitive so I applaud our local officials for their hard work on behalf of their communities,” Haslam said. “Our goal at the state level is to make Tennessee the very best place to live, work and raise a family, and I want to thank local officials for their partnership in making these grants happen and achieving that goal.”

TDEC will award \$15.8 million in Local Park and Recreation grants to 55 different communities, as well as \$1.9 million in Recreational Trails Program grants for a total of 12 parks and communities across Tennessee.

“Local parks and recreation areas provide opportunities to gather, experience nature and enjoy outdoor activities,” Martineau said. “We’re grateful to be able to help fund these projects, which will pay dividends for our communities now and in the future.”

About the Local Parks and Recreation Fund

The Local Parks and Recreation Fund grant program was established by the General Assembly in 1991 to provide local governments with funds to purchase land for parks, natural areas, greenways and recreational facilities. The funds also may be used for development of trails and projects in parks, natural areas and greenways. All LPRF grants require a 50 percent match by the recipient.

Grant recipients were selected through a scoring process with careful consideration given to the projects that met the selection criteria and expressed the greatest local recreation need.

About the Recreational Trails Program

The Recreational Trails Program is a federally-funded program established to distribute funding for diverse recreation trail projects. The funds are available to federal, state and local government agencies, as well as nonprofit organizations that have obtained IRS 501 (c) (3) status and have a written trail management agreement with the agency that owns the property where the trail project is located.

Recreational Trails Program grants may be used for non-routine maintenance and restoration of existing trails, development and rehabilitation, trailside or trailhead facilities such as restrooms, kiosks and parking lots, construction of new trails and land acquisition for recreational trails or corridors.

Funding for RTP grants is provided by the Federal Highway Administration through the Fixing Americans Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015. TDEC administers this grant program for the state. The maximum federal share for each project is 80 percent, with RTP grant recipients providing a 20 percent match. Grant recipients were selected through a scoring process with careful consideration given to the projects that met the selection criteria and expressed the greatest local recreation need.

Van Buren County Mayor Greg Wilson announced that Van Buren County will receive \$220,000 in development of The Van Buren County Community Park at the Burritt College site which will include an Amphitheater and walking track in phase 1 of reclamation of the Burritt College grounds.