

Recreation and Education



URBAN PARKS AND RECREATION RECOVERY PROGRAM, LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE, SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EDUCATION AND 21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS PROGRAM

Subcommittee: Interior, Environment and Related Agencies

Request: Appropriate full authorized funding for the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program or other comparable federal programs, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Sustainable Communities Initiative, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program Education and the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program.

Community Value:

The *Urban Park and Recreation Recovery (UPARR) matching grant program* is administered by the National Park Service and provides funding to urban localities for rehabilitation of critically needed recreation facilities and encourages systematic local planning and commitment to continuing operation and maintenance of recreation programs, sites and facilities. In Phoenix, UPARR funds have been leveraged to support youth programs including Junior Lifeguard training; mentorship programs; X-tattoo, a program that provides laser removal of visible gang tattoos for at risk youth and adults; Park Ranger Cadets; and River Rampage, an outdoor adventure program for at-risk youth and youth with significant disabilities. In addition, the city of Phoenix has leveraged more than \$1 million in UPARR funds since 1991 to renovate Hayden, Central and Verde parks with ADA modifications, restrooms and playground equipment.

The *Urban Revitalization and Livable Communities Act* was introduced into Congress in November 2009 to provide federal funding for urban parks and recreation. The act authorizes spending \$445 million over 10 years in grants to state and local governments and nonprofits to rehabilitate existing parks facilities and construct new ones. The program would be administered by HUD.

The *Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) matching grant program* is administered by the National Park Service to assist states and local governments in acquiring land for parks and building recreation facilities on public lands. LWCF is the only federal program to support the acquisition and development of open space for local parklands and outdoor recreation facilities.

Lands and waters purchased through the LWCF are used to provide recreational opportunities and clean water, preserve wildlife habitat, enhance scenic vistas, protect archaeological and historical sites and maintain the pristine nature of wilderness area



Since 1965, LWCF funds have provided support to more than 90 projects at nearly 65 Phoenix park or preserve locations. Projects included land acquisition, development of parks and park improvements such as picnic and play areas, lighted ball fields, sports complexes, restrooms and swimming pool renovations. These venues provide vital opportunities for Phoenix community members of all ages to be active. For example, in 2006 the number of hikers that climbed Camelback Mountain and Piestewa Peak outnumbered the massive crowds attending the eight sold-out Arizona Cardinals home games.

The *Sustainable Communities Initiative* is a multi-agency partnership between the departments of Transportation, Housing and Urban development, and the Environment Protection Agency to better coordinate federal transportation and housing investments and identify strategies to give American families more choices for affordable housing near employment opportunities; provide additional transportation options to lower transportation costs and shorten travel times; and improve the environment and provide safer, livable communities.

The *Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Education Grant Program* is administered through the United States Department of Agriculture and provides funds to the Arizona Department of Economic Security for grants to local government agencies. In Phoenix, this matching grant program funds nutrition education for youth at Phoenix Afterschool Center (PAC) program sites, community centers and special events.

The *21st Century Community Learning Centers Program* helps communities establish or expand centers that provide extended learning opportunities for students and related services for their families. States make competitive awards to school districts, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations and public agencies for projects that primarily serve students in high poverty schools.

Background:

The Urban Park and Recreation Recovery program was established in 1978, authorizing \$725 million to provide matching grants and technical assistance to economically distressed urban communities. UPARR has not been funded since 2002.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund was created by Congress in 1964. In 1977, Congress increased the LWCF to \$900 million for fiscal year 1978 and subsequent years. However, funding for the LWCF grants program has averaged approximately \$100 million per year since inception, with a peak of \$369 million in 1975. Over the last 20 years, annual appropriations have decreased to a low of zero funding in 1982 and 1996 to 1999. The city of Phoenix has received more than \$10 million in LWCF grants since 1965. The most recent grant to the city of Phoenix was received in 2003 in the amount of \$154,560.

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