



# National Recreation and Park Association

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Media Contact:**

Lauren Hoffmann

703.858.2151

[lhoffmann@nrpa.org](mailto:lhoffmann@nrpa.org)

@NRPA\_News

**National Recreation and Park Association Identifies National Economic Value of Local Parks**

*With the expiration of the Land and Water Conservation Fund just days away, numbers come at critical time*

**Ashburn, VA. – Sept. 23, 2015** — The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is set to expire in just one week’s time and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) calls on Congress to take swift action to permanently reauthorize this landmark law and equitably fund the State Assistance Program that supports local parks and outdoor recreation to improve quality of life and that even drives local economies.

For 50 years, the nation’s local and regional public parks have benefited from the LWCF State Assistance Program. Now, for the first time, there is also definitive proof that supporting public and regional parks with LWCF makes strong economic sense. According to preliminary findings of a new economic impact study commissioned by NRPA, the nation’s local and regional parks generate nearly \$140 billion in economic activity per year and support nearly 1 million jobs.

“These numbers should be a wake-up call to the elected officials in Congress that they must act now to protect the nation’s local parks and recreation,” says Barbara Tulipane president and CEO of NRPA.

“We’ve always known that local parks contribute to healthier communities, bring diverse populations together and support environmental conservation and stewardship. Now, we also know for a fact that local parks contribute significantly to the economy, further solidifying their essential value as important public assets that deserve support and recognition.”

NRPA wants Congress to reauthorize the law with full and permanent funding, and allocate 40 percent guaranteed funding to the State Assistance Program. The State Assistance Program funds close-to-home public recreation resources in nearly all counties in America.

More than 40,000 outdoor public recreation projects have been supported by the LWCF State Assistance Program. These investments — made with no taxpayer dollars — permanently protect outdoor recreation resources that are used by people of all ethnic groups, all income levels and all ages on a daily basis throughout the year. They give the public the opportunity for improved quality of life and health and wellness, and preserve open space and so much more.

The LWCF is a critical program that supports parks and outdoor recreation, but more importantly enables all people to experience the benefits of parks. Now is the time for Congress to reauthorize this important, landmark law.

For more information about the importance of LWCF, especially the State Assistance Program, and to take action, visit [www.nrpa.org/advocacy-engage/](http://www.nrpa.org/advocacy-engage/).

### **About the Economic Impact Study Findings**

The Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University in Virginia conducted the economic impact study for NRPA. The numbers quantify and show that parks are economic drivers for local communities in addition to their value in providing environmental and conservation benefits, health and wellness, and quality of life improvements. More detailed, final findings will be available in late fall. An executive summary and highlights of the preliminary findings are available at [www.nrpa.org/ParkEconReport](http://www.nrpa.org/ParkEconReport).

### **About The National Recreation and Park Association**

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of 50,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit [NRPA.org](http://NRPA.org). For digital access to NRPA's flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit [ParksAndRecreation.org](http://ParksAndRecreation.org).

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