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During California Visit, Secretary Haaland Announces New Investments to Create Public Parks, Expand Recreation Opportunities, and Restore Outdoor Ecosystems

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Funding from President Biden's Investing in America agenda will improve recreational opportunities for local communities along the San Francisco Bay

\$58.3 million in new funding from the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program will increase equitable outdoors access for underserved communities

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SAN FRANCISCO — Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland visited the San Francisco Bay Area today, where she highlighted how historic funding from President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program are helping to restore our nation’s lands and waters through locally led, landscape-scale restoration projects, while also improving equitable access to the outdoors.

Secretary Haaland visited the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, which is receiving \$2 million from President Biden’s Investing in America agenda to improve recreational opportunities for local communities along the San Francisco Bay. Working with partners, including Tribes and local youth advocacy groups, the Refuge will identify the trails most at-risk from climate change and ensure they remain a community asset in the face of rising sea levels. This work will benefit local, traditionally underserved communities, as well as the greater Bay Area by securing connections along the 500-mile Bay Trail system - a critical transportation network for non-motorized transportation in the dense urban core. In addition, the Service received \$4.69 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), building on the President’s commitment to secure additional lands for public access by expanding the Refuge.

In February 2024, the Department [announced](#) \$157 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that will support 206 ecosystem restoration projects in 48 states, Washington, D.C., and the U.S. Territories and will advance the Department’s ongoing work across several restoration and resilience programs. Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda, the Department is stewarding an overall \$2 billion over five years in new investments to put people to work restoring our nation’s lands and waters. To guide these historic investments, in April 2023, the Department [unveiled](#) the Restoration and Resilience Framework to catalyze coordination and drive transformational outcomes across our existing programs and initiatives.

Secretary Haaland also announced \$58.3 million in grant funding for communities in 11 states across the United States — including San Francisco — to create new parks and trails or fund substantial renovations to existing parks through the ORLP program.

The ORLP program, established in 2014 and funded through the LWCF, enables urban communities to create new outdoor recreation spaces, reinvigorate existing parks, and form connections between people and the outdoors in economically underserved communities. The city of San Francisco is receiving more than \$8 million to revitalize park blocks that offer various outdoor recreation amenities to the public.

Earlier this year, the Department launched a [tour](#) to hear directly from local stakeholders on the need to connect communities with access to the outdoors and encourage state participation in the ORLP program. The program helps advance President Biden's [America the Beautiful initiative](#), a locally led, voluntary conservation and restoration effort that aims to address the nature and climate crises, improve equitable access to the outdoors, and strengthen the economy. Providing safe outdoor spaces for communities that are park-deprived is one of six areas of focus. The ORLP program also helps advance the Administration's [Justice 40 initiative](#) which aims to have 40 percent of the benefits of federal funding flow to disadvantaged communities.

Since its inception in 1965, the LWCF has funded \$5.2 billion to support more than 45,000 projects in every county in the country. The LWCF supports increased public access to and protection for federal public lands and waters — including national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and recreation areas — and provides matching grants to state governments for the acquisition and development of public parks and other outdoor recreation sites.

Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Round 6b Selected Projects

California

City of Redding - \$3,500,000

Reimagining South City Park

The City of Redding, California, will reimagine South City Park by layering a variety of uses including a playground and spray fountain, entry and activities plaza, flexible greenspace, pickleball courts, a skate plaza, basketball court, lounge areas, climbing features, a walking loop, updated lighting and landscaping, a dog area, and improvements to existing restrooms, the baseball field, and bocce ball courts.

City and County of San Francisco - \$8,124,800

Buchanan Street Mall Renovations

The City of San Francisco, California, will renovate three of the five park blocks that comprise Buchanan Street Mall. Renovation of the other two blocks were supported by a previous ORLP grant. The three blocks will provide many amenities including a performance stage and seating areas, a picnic and barbeque area, multiple playgrounds, an adult and senior exercise area, a half court for multi-sports, lighting, landscaping, and information kiosks.

City of Madera - \$659,640

Tozer Park Construction Grant

The City of Madera will use funds to develop both active and passive recreational opportunities in Tozer Park, in Madera, California, including new playground with equipment, a picnic shelter with seating and grills, landscaping and irrigation, a parcourse trail/track, exercise equipment, adult and child half-or multi-use courts, miniature soccer/multi-use fields, and tennis/pickle ball courts.

Connecticut

City of Bridgeport - \$1,062,454

The Sliver by the River Development Project, Phase 1

The City of Bridgeport, Connecticut, will use funds for Phase I of the Sliver by the River Redevelopment Project. It will feature a kayak launch, floating dock, nature playground, shade pavilion, multi-use open lawn, terraced lawn with seating, benches, and trees and native plantings that help cool the air and reduce the urban heat island.

Indiana

South Bend Venues Parks and Arts - \$7,500,000

Kennedy Park Rehabilitation Project

South Bend Venues Parks and Arts will bring new life to Kennedy Park in South Bend, Indiana, by introducing an outdoor aquatic facility, picnic pavilions, walking paths, educational naturalized landscaping, playground, athletic fields/courts, and improved access for the surrounding neighborhood.

Kentucky

Waterfront Development Corporation - \$10,000,000

Waterfront Park Phase IV

The Waterfront Development Corporation will complete Phase IV of the Louisville, Kentucky, Waterfront Park project along the Ohio River. Funds will support the transformation of a long-neglected area by providing green space and recreational amenities including an observation pier, plazas, green spaces, trees, and riverbank stabilization.

Michigan

City of Detroit - \$1,300,000

Patton Park Cohesion and Enhancement

The City of Detroit, Michigan, will use ORLP grant funds to significantly improve Patton Park by constructing a new entry plaza, upgrading the existing playground, adding new play areas, enhancing the picnic area, redesigning parts of the park to reduce heat island effects, and providing improved access to the park.

New Jersey

City of Paterson - \$4,900,000

The City of Paterson, New Jersey, will transform Westside Park by restoring tennis and basketball courts and public restrooms, installing a multipurpose athletic complex, and a wide array of new spaces for gathering, playing, relaxing, and enjoying nature including new boat launch, and an expanded path system.

New York

New York City - \$6,000,000

Spring Creek Park Revitalization

New York City Parks will create multiple access points to, and renovate, Spring Creek Park North, on the Brooklyn/Queens border. The plans include over 4,500 feet of trails, lighting, benches, and signs to ensure a safe and welcoming environment.

North Carolina

City of Raleigh - \$845,258

Walnut Creek Park -Bailey Gateway Project

The City of Raleigh, North Carolina, will use grant funds to create the Bailey Drive Gateway at Walnut Creek Wetland Park. The project will reclaim a vacant and overgrown area on the southside of the park that is currently under-utilized and provides no recreational benefits to the local community. The improved site will also provide residents with direct, safe pedestrian access to existing public amenities north of Walnut Creek.

Pennsylvania

City of Bethlehem - \$747,966

Friendship Park Rehabilitation

The City of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, will rehabilitate Friendship Park by providing a central public lawn, a new main entrance and two additional entrances, a fountain splash plaza, upgrades to existing play structures, a shade structure and picnic area, a new basketball court, and a pathway system.

South Carolina

City of Florence - \$8,927,097

Levy Park Renovation

The City of Florence, South Carolina, will redevelop the aging Levy Park. The planned physical and facility improvements include a full renovation/reconfiguration of the existing sports fields and courts, development of multi-use walkways, ballfields, playgrounds, fitness equipment, landscaping, and parking.

Texas

City of Laredo - \$3,799,966

Zacate Creek Green District Corridor Project

The City of Laredo, Texas, will develop the 22-acre Zacate Creek Green District Corridor. Proposed elements include creating new hiking/biking trails, shared-use paths, a new trail head entrance, designated parking areas, open-air visitor center with restrooms and a bike and kayak rental station, pedestrian bridges both new and restored, amphitheater restoration, benches, water fountains, tables, bike repair stations, community garden, landscaping, and embankment stabilization.

Virginia

City of Richmond - \$1,000,000

Broad Rock Creek Park Project

The City of Richmond, Virginia, will use funds to create a nature park at Broad Rock Creek by repairing the bridge, developing trails, building roads, restrooms, adding park amenities including wayfinding, kiosks, benches, water fountains, and trash cans.

Applications are being accepted now in Grants.gov for the next round of funding through April 30, 2024.

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