



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY STATE LEGISLATIVE REQUEST FORM

1. NAME OF DEPARTMENT

Miami-Dade County Park and Recreation Department (MDPR)

2. DEPARTMENT CONTACT PERSON(S), ADDRESS, TELEPHONE AND FAX NUMBERS, & E-MAIL ADDRESS

**Jack Kardys, Director
Park and Recreation Department
275 N. W. 2nd Street,
Miami, Florida 33128
Phone 305-755-7903
Fax: 305-755-7946
Email: Kardys@miamidade.gov**

3. NAME OF LEGISLATIVE ISSUE REQUEST

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Program

4. DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION OF ACTION NEEDED – (Include whether change is legislative or administrative in nature)

Support the recommendations of the Outdoor Resources Review Group (OORG), a national advisory group convened to focus on the future needs of our nation for outdoor recreation and conservation of natural resources.

5. STATEMENT OF CURRENT PROBLEM THAT THE LEGISLATIVE CHANGE IS INTENDED TO ADDRESS (Please include information that will help us advocate on the County's behalf)

The LWCF Program has never been adequately funded since its authorization by Congress in September 1964. Congress should permanently dedicate funding for the LWCF at the highest historical authorized level (\$900 million a year) adjusted for inflation—that is, no less than \$3.2 billion annually—with a share guaranteed to the states and, in turn, to urban areas. This financial support is needed to protect natural, historical, ecological, cultural, and recreational resources around the country.

6. IMPACT OF CHANGES TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY (What does the proposed legislation do and how does it address the current problem? Are there other alternatives to addressing the problem? What are the pros and cons of the legislation?)

The Land and Water Conservation Fund program provides funds to acquire new grants to local governments.

7. INTERDEPARTMENTAL IMPACTS (Describe potential impacts on other departments)

8. BACKGROUND

LWCF is a competitive program which provides grants for acquisition or development of land for public outdoor recreation use. Current structures and funding for outdoor resources are insufficient to meet the needs of a growing population. Other equally important objectives are also compromised by the lack of sufficient, dedicated funding: ensuring that states and communities receive a fair share of support; improving planning, cooperation, and coordination within the Department of the Interior and across the federal government; and enabling the country to meet new challenges through public-private partnerships.

9. PROPOSED LANGUAGE (Attach or insert a draft of proposed changes to Florida Statutes)

N/A

10. LIST ANY KNOWN ORGANIZATION OR GOVERNMENT ENTITY THAT WOULD SUPPORT THIS PROPOSED CHANGE.

Florida Recreation and park Association; All local governments

12. PRIORITIZE YOUR REQUEST NUMERICALLY

FLORIDA RECREATION & PARK ASSOCIATION, INC.

September 25, 2009

The Honorable Charlie Crist
Governor, State of Florida
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor Crist,

The Florida Recreation and Park Association would like to share with you the recently released report of the Outdoor Resources Review Group (ORRG) and urge your support for those recommendations that will have a positive impact on the citizens of our state.

The ORRG is a national advisory group convened by honorary co-chairs, Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) focusing on the future needs of our nation for outdoor recreation and conservation of natural resources. In early 2008, Senator Alexander and Senator Bingaman addressed a group of 17 leaders and stakeholders in conservation, recreation, and state and local government. As a privately funded effort, they collectively embarked on a series of bipartisan meetings and workshops to assess the priorities and challenges for our nation in protecting and enhancing our national outdoor recreation resources. Such a serious look at national needs had not been undertaken for the past twenty years when the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors conducted such a review in the mid 1980's.

The impetus for this review by these national leaders was clear: The Land and Water Conservation Fund, the primary vehicle for federal and state acquisition of park and recreation lands and funding source for outdoor recreation, has never been adequately funded since its authorization by Congress in the 1960's. The ORRG looked at challenges and at long-term solutions for stable, sustainable funding to support the national needs for public hunting and fishing, public lands, urban parks, close-to-home recreation, and conservation finance. Their final report contains a concise summary of the major issues and challenges facing our nation with regards to conservation and needs for outdoor recreation resources, as well as a set of 10 major recommendations on how to address these challenges. The report identifies appropriate roles for government, the private-sector, and non-profit organizations in meeting the challenges.

A one-page outline of the recommendations is attached. The entire report can be viewed at <http://www.orrgroup.org>

We believe that the citizens of Florida would benefit tremendously by implementation of the recommendations of the ORRG report and we therefore urge your support. Congress will discuss an energy bill that would provide full, dedicated funding to the Land and Water Conservation Fund at the maximum level authorized by Congress. This action would provide hundreds of millions of dollars to the states in LWCF state assistance funding, and which would, if enacted, significantly benefit our state.



PRESIDENT
T. Michael Stavres, CPRP

PRESIDENT ELECT
Don Decker, CPRP

PAST PRESIDENT
Jimi Sheets, CPRP

VICE PRESIDENTS
Chip Potts, CPRP
Greg Scott, CPRP
Julia Thompson, CPRP
Lucille Kreider, CPRP

REGION DIRECTORS
Kathy Cahill, CPRP
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Jeff Moffitt, CPRP
Lanie Sheets, CPRP

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FLORIDA RECREATION & PARK ASSOCIATION, INC.



Specifically, we would like to request that you contact our Members of Congress to indicate your support for implementation of the recommendations of the ORRG report that would benefit our state and to give your support for full, dedicated funding for LWCF in the soon-to-be-introduced Energy bill. Additionally, we ask that you assist in garnering support among your colleagues in the National Governor's Association for full funding for LWCF.

As the Administration and Congress consider how to implement the recommendations of this influential advisory group, we think it very important that our state affirms our interest in and support for these far-reaching recommendations. We request your support for the ORRG report recommendations, and that you urge our federal representatives to support full, dedicated funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund in upcoming energy legislation. Such dedicated funding will provide measurable benefits to our citizens in protecting our natural resources and providing healthful opportunities for outdoor recreation for all our citizens. We thank you for your anticipated support and your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

T. Michael Stavres, CPRP
President
Florida Recreation and Park Association

Attachment: Key Recommendations

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Key Recommendations of the Outdoor Resources Review Group (ORRG)

ORRG's research has shown that there are multiple opportunities to bring about lasting change and the group offers the following eight recommendations:

1. Congress should permanently dedicate funding for the LWCF at the highest historical authorized level (\$900 million a year) adjusted for inflation—that is, no less than \$3.2 billion annually—with a share guaranteed to the states and, in turn, to urban areas. The ultimate target should be \$5 billion a year by no later than 2015, the 50th anniversary of the Fund, reflecting continued inflation and future population growth. This financial support is needed to protect natural, historical, ecological, cultural, and recreational resources around the country.
2. To overcome fragmentation among multiple programs at multiple levels, geospatial planning tools should be fully utilized to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency with which the LWCF and other public and private funds are spent.
3. Public and private organizations should aggressively promote recreation and nature education for America's youth so as to engage them early in realizing the lifelong health and other benefits from participating in outdoor activities. The National Park Service, for example, should extend the finding of its pilot program to encourage physical activities in the parks. This program should serve as a model for state and local park systems to promote outdoor activities in close-to-home settings. Youth conservation corps and similar federal and state programs merit expansion.
4. Federal, state, and local agencies should continue to promote and support private sector stewardship through public-private partnerships, joint funding, extended tax benefits for conservation easements, and other incentives.
5. Federal and other public agencies, as the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management are doing, should elevate the priority for regional- or landscape level conservation in their own initiatives and through partnerships across levels of government, and with land trusts, other nonprofit groups, and private landowners to conserve America's treasured landscapes.
6. A new nationwide network of Blueways and water trails along rivers and coastal waterways should be established through public-private partnerships among federal, state, and local agencies, nonprofits and private landowners.
7. Any national program to reduce greenhouse gases should include funding to adapt resource lands and waters to the ecological impacts of climate change. As climate change increases the pressure on the public lands to develop renewable and conventional energy resources and transmission capacity, funding also will be needed to reconcile growing conflicts over resource use and mitigate impacts where they cannot be avoided in project design.
8. Current structures and funding for outdoor resources are insufficient to meet the needs of a growing population. Other equally important objectives are also compromised by the lack of sufficient, dedicated funding: ensuring that states and communities receive a fair share of support; improving planning, cooperation, and coordination within the Department of the Interior and across the federal government; and enabling the country to meet new challenges through public-private partnerships.