



Program Update

Water and Natural Resources Committee

September 11, 2025

Dr. Robert Stokes



*A Division of the Energy,
Minerals & Natural
Resources Department*



OUR MISSION:

Protect and enhance natural and cultural resources, provide first-class recreational and educational facilities and opportunities, and promote public safety to benefit and enrich the lives of visitors



LWCF Overview

Established in 1964, LWCF is a federal funding program that supports outdoor recreation, land conservation, and public access to nature.

Goals:

- Expand parks, trails, and recreation facilities
- Protect natural and cultural landscapes
- Promote equitable access to outdoor spaces
- Support local, state, and tribal projects through pass-through grants

New Mexico's Role: State Parks Division serves as the designated agency to market the program, manage applications, and coordinate with federal partners.



LWCF Funding Mechanism

Funding Source:

- Permanently funded through federal offshore oil and gas leasing revenues
- No taxpayer dollars used

How Funds Are Distributed:

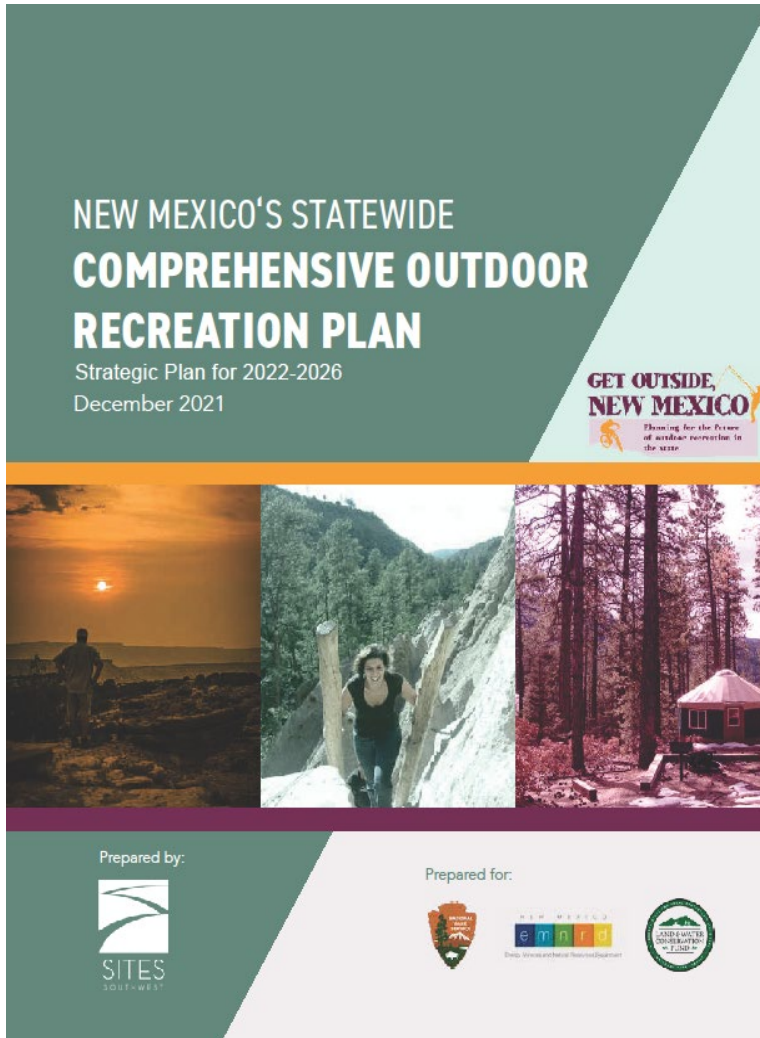
- Stateside Program includes:
 - Formula Grants based on state population
 - Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) for underserved urban areas
 - States must maintain a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) to remain eligible

How Communities Access Funds:

- Municipalities, tribal governments, and state subdivisions apply through New Mexico State Parks
- State Parks develops the SCORP, sets annual application and scoring processes, and works with NPS and other states
- New Mexico's LWCF team includes:
 - State Liaison Officer: Ben Shelton, EMNRD Deputy Cabinet Secretary
 - Alternate SLOs: Robert Stokes and Nav Khalsa



NM's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)



- The current 2022–2026 SCORP complements and supports LWCF outdoor recreation efforts
- Provides recommendations to guide outdoor recreation to achieve a common vision for outdoor resources in NM
- New Mexico State Parks was awarded an LWCF Planning Grant for \$150,000 for the 2027-2032 SCORP, currently in the early stages of development
- To learn more about the SCORP and to download a copy of the final report, go to: <https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/spd/statewide-comprehensive-outdoor-recreation-plan-scorp/>



NM's Annual Apportionments from NPS

Every year, each state and territory receives notice of apportionment from the NPS-LWCF to use for project awards over three federal fiscal year cycles

For the last five years, New Mexico has been allocated:

- 2021: \$3,328,933
- 2022: \$3,057,906
- 2023: \$3,193,100
- 2024: \$3,510,000
- 2025: \$4,650,000

Total: \$17,739,939 Average: \$3,547,987 per year

Since 2021, we've reallocated through Formula grant awards:




- \$5,926,620 (\$1,708,336 for three State Park projects and \$4,218,284 for thirteen community projects, with more pending NPS approval)

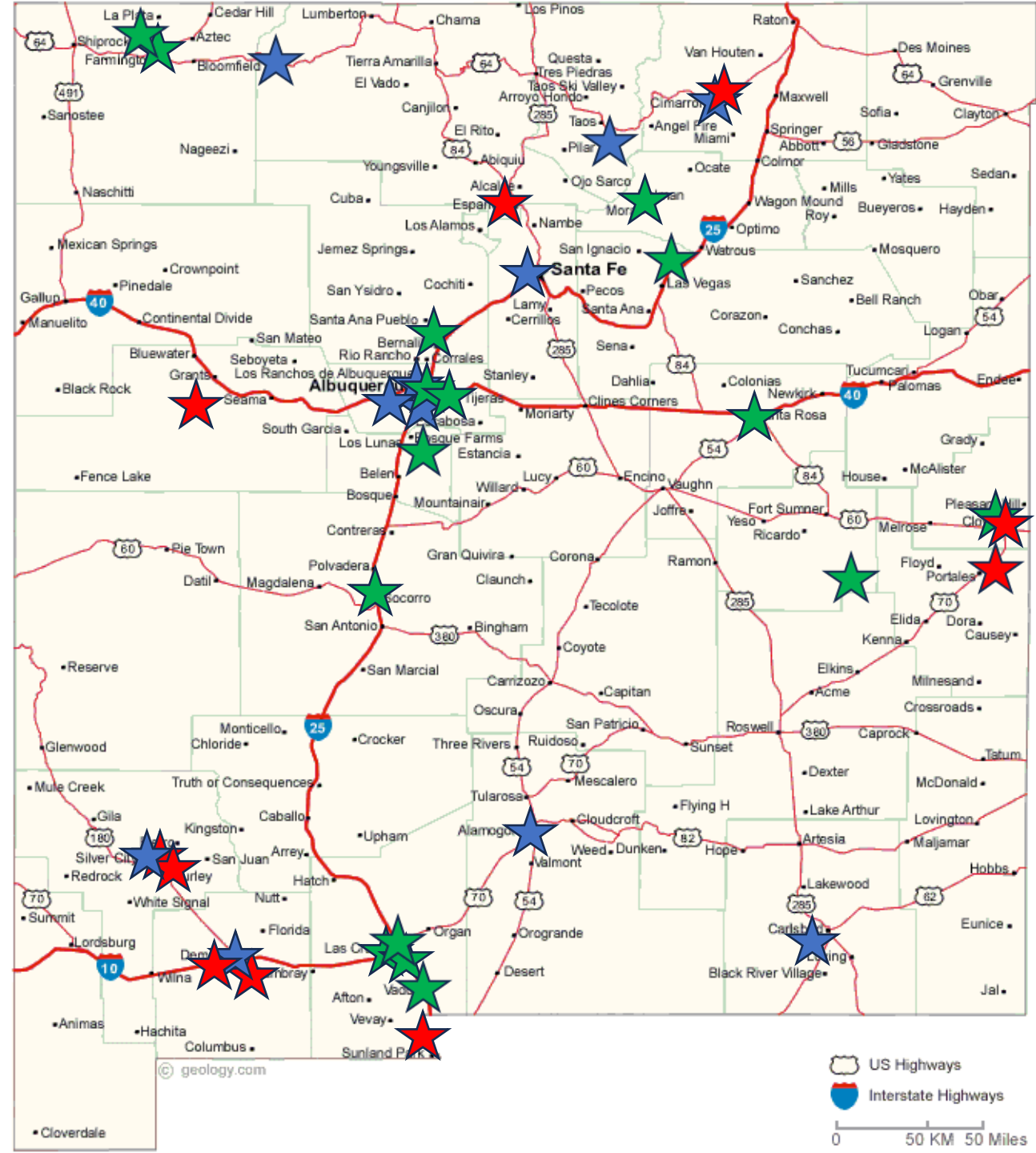
For the 2021-2025 application periods, we've received:

- 2021: 13 Formula applications (two were from Pueblos), 1 ORLP (selected and funded by the NPS)
- 2022: 14 Formula applications
- 2023: 5 Formula applications
- 2024: 7 Formula applications (3 from the Town of Taos), 2 ORLP (one selected by NPS); awaiting reviews by NPS for funding
- **2025: Application period open from August 8, 2025, through January 6, 2026**

2021-Present Formula and ORLP application locations

- 2021: 13 Formula, 1 ORLP
- 2022: 14 Formula
- 2023: 5 Formula
- 2024: 7 Formula, 2 ORLP
- 2025: Applications now

-  In Process or pending award
-  Awarded
-  Withdrawn





Mallette Park Improvements Red River, NM

- Awarded 2024, project in progress
- **Scope:** Install and replace fencing and shade structures
- **LWCF Funding:** \$20,700
- **Total Project Cost:** \$41,400





Sedillo Park Lighting Improvements Socorro, NM

- Project completed August 2025
- **Scope:** Demolish and remove older poles and lights, and dispose of existing electrical panels; install energy-efficient LED light poles, and replace electrical wiring
- **LWCF Funding:** \$342,504
- **Total Project Cost:** \$797,908





Recent Updates:

- State of New Mexico Apportionment for Federal FY2025 is \$4,640,000
- Senate Bill 169 - *LWCF State Supplemental Match Fund* - \$8,000,000 available to provide LWCF matching funds to eligible applicants
- State Parks oversees this state program, and applicants can easily apply for these matching funds in the current LWCF application





THE LAND & WATER CONSERVATION FUND

FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR NEW MEXICO COMMUNITIES TO ENHANCE
OUTDOOR RECREATION PLACES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a federal grant opportunity from the National Park Service and is administered by the states. In New Mexico, the Energy, Mineral, and Natural Resources Department- State Parks Division manages the LWCF program. Project matching grants of up to \$500,000.00 are available, and the State Supplemental Match Fund (SB169), can assist with applicant match, for eligible communities. To learn more, join a webinar!

Monday, September 15, 22, 29, 2025

Part A- 2:00 PM

*How Can the Land & Water Conservation Fund Serve My
Community?*

Part B 3:00 PM

*The Ins and Outs of the New Mexico Land & Water Conservation Fund
Application Process*

To register, contact: Nav Khalsa, LWCF Program Coordinator
nav.khalsa@emnrd.nm.gov



To learn more...

- Contact Nav Khalsa, LWCF Program Coordinator:

Nav.Khalsa@emnrd.nm.gov

- Attend an upcoming LWCF Informational Webinar- the same information will be shared at each session.

Monday, September 15, 22 & 29, at 2:00 PM

Email Nav to register!