



**National Park Foundation**  
**Land Conservation Program**  
**Revolving Loan Fund**

The Land Conservation Loan Program is NPF's conservation loan program, making low-interest loans for land acquisition projects for National Park sites. Interested applicants should contact [lands@nationalparks.org](mailto:lands@nationalparks.org) to inquire whether the project is a good match for the NPF loan program. Once pre-approved, applicants will receive instructions via email on how to formally submit an application.

**Background**

Protecting the lands of the National Park System through acquisition is more critical than ever, but the process can be delayed by a lack of timely funding. The **National Park Foundation's** (NPF) Revolving Loan Fund steps in to offer flexible financing as well as sustained and expert technical assistance to nonprofit partners to secure key land protection priorities for the **National Park Service** (NPS).

**AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROTECT THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM**

America's National Park System represents one of the nation's most compelling innovations – setting aside over 85 million acres of extraordinary landscapes and historic sites stewarded by NPS for the benefit of the public. However, there are over 2 million acres of privately owned land within the boundaries of national parks. These inholdings within the National Park System are vulnerable to private development and have been prioritized for acquisition by NPS as willing sellers emerge.

With the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act in 2019, federal funding was made permanently available to purchase land within national parks, enhancing safeguards for priority land that could otherwise be subject to incongruous land uses. However, the process for NPS to obtain the federal funds for acquisition can take several years to complete. In today's fast-paced real estate market, landowners may not be able to wait that long, and as a result, key inholdings in parks are lost to private sales and subsequent development. This time gap between when a private inholding becomes available on the market and when NPS is able to complete its purchase can be closed by a nonprofit partner using a bridge loan to acquire and hold the property, giving NPS the time it needs to complete the acquisition.

## **A NEW LOAN PROGRAM JUST FOR NATIONAL PARK PROTECTION**

In partnership with NPS, NPF has launched the Revolving Loan Fund – a low-interest bridge loan program to help the agency’s nonprofit partners, such as land trusts and friends groups, move confidently and quickly to pre-acquire and secure key lands on behalf of NPS. When NPS purchases the land from the nonprofit partner, the proceeds from the sale repay the NPF loan and revolve into the next loan.

NPF, NPS’ official nonprofit partner, has been a conservation leader since its founding, and the Revolving Loan Fund is designed to invest in and amplify the success of a larger network of conservation partners. What makes the Revolving Loan Fund unique is NPF’s ability and commitment to strengthen the impact and build the capacity of the nonprofit park partner community.

### **Eligibility**

Projects will be considered that require a loan of up to \$1M for a nonprofit partner to acquire a vulnerable property from a willing seller. The loan may cover the entire purchase price of the property or may comprise part of a larger funding plan to acquire the property.

This exciting new program offers loans at a low cost, typically 0-1% interest, for up to three years. For potential projects to qualify for financing, NPS must be the eventual owner of the property, ensuring its protection in perpetuity.

Priority will be given to projects under imminent threat that contain extraordinary natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources, as well as to nonprofit organizations that lack access to low-interest loans.

### **Additional support**

Thanks to a partnership with industry expert LegacyWorks Group (LWG), NPF will help grow the technical capabilities of smaller groups that exist to support our national parks:

- As part of the loan program, pilot projects will have access to a consultant to coach potential borrowers through the application process, conservation strategies, deal structuring, raising additional loan funds, and partnership building.
- NPF and LWG will assist with coordinating with NPS to shepherd a local project through the agency’s regional and national acquisition processes.
- Park partners will also be offered funding for pre-acquisition costs like due diligence (gathering and analyzing information before a transaction is made) in the form of

Catalyst Grants. These grants can cover title work, surveys, environmental assessments, and other necessary items that may otherwise pose a financial hurdle.

### Applying

If your organization is interested in applying for a loan to conserve priority lands within national parks, please request an initial consultation with NPF's lands staff and a copy of the application materials. If your project receives preliminary approval, you will be able to submit a formal application including a letter of support from the park superintendent, organizational financial information, and detailed project information. Please contact [lands@nationalparks.org](mailto:lands@nationalparks.org) for more information.