

Three Steps to Acquiring Surplus Federal Land

The National Park Service or federal agency disposing of property may notify a community if surplus federal land is available for acquisition through the Federal Lands to Parks Program. The National Park Service then works with the community as it follows three steps:

1. Notification

Within 20 days of a “notice of availability” stating a parcel is surplus, a state or local government wishing to acquire the property for park and recreational use must notify the National Park Service in writing of its interest.

2. Application

The state or local government must submit an application to the National Park Service which shows:

- The *need* for the property for park and recreational use.
- The *capability* of the applicant to operate and maintain the property for public park and recreational use.
- The *suitability* of the property for the proposed public park and recreational use.
- The *program of utilization* for the property which describes the proposed public park and recreational use, provides a site plan and assesses environmental impacts of proposed uses.

If the application is satisfactory, the National Park Service requests the property from the federal disposal agency, and advocates on behalf of the community and its request.

3. Getting Ownership

The National Park Service conveys the property to the state or local government with deed conditions. Then the National Park Service periodically monitors the use and development of the land and facilities to ensure that they are managed according to the terms and conditions of the deed and approved use plan. The monitoring helps ensure continued public access, recreational use, and stewardship of resources.

Bringing Parks to People



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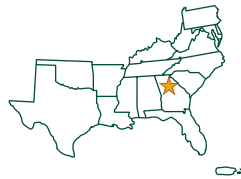
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Federal Lands to Parks Program

Providing Surplus Federal Lands for Public Parks and Recreation





FEDERAL LANDS TO PARKS

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Through the Federal Lands to Parks Program, the National Park Service transfers surplus federal land to communities, generally at no cost, for public park and recreational use. More than 1,600 properties, totaling approximately 170,000 acres, have been conveyed to state and local governments for public park and recreational use since 1949.

Federal Lands to Parks Program helps communities by:

- Identifying land and facilities eligible for acquisition.
- Identifying important natural, cultural, and recreational resources.
- Assisting communities to complete the application.
- Advocating on behalf of the community for acquisition of appropriate land.
- Ensuring permanent public recreational use and stewardship of the land conveyed.



What is surplus federal land?

Surplus federal land is real property owned by the United States of America that is no longer needed to serve purposes of the federal government. This real property does not include public domain, national forest, or national park lands.

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Who can acquire surplus federal land?

Only states, counties, municipalities, and similar government entities may acquire surplus federal land through the Federal Lands to Parks Program. No preference is given to any particular level of government. Private and nonprofit organizations are not eligible to acquire surplus federal land through the Federal Lands to Parks Program, but they may act as advocates for its acquisition by state and local governments.

What types of surplus federal land may be available?

A great variety of land may be available from any department of the federal government, including military bases, U.S. Coast Guard stations, and Army Corps of Engineers water control projects. A state or local government may acquire all or portions of the surplus federal land that is suitable or may be restored for public park and recreational use. The land may be located in rural or urban

areas and consist of open space, forests, wetlands, lakes, or shorelines. The land may also contain existing recreation facilities, such as athletic fields, basketball and tennis courts, fitness centers, playgrounds, and swimming pools. The area of land acquired may range from less than an acre to thousands of acres.

How may the land be used?

Land acquired through the Federal Lands to Parks Program, as a public benefit conveyance, must be used for public park and recreational use in perpetuity. It may be developed for a single or multiple recreational activities, such as hiking, biking, camping, picnicking, hunting, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, swimming, boating, tennis, golf, and playing organized sports. If appropriate, the land may remain undeveloped for passive recreational use as long as it is open to the public.

What does the land cost?

The National Park Service conveys land through the Federal Lands to Parks Program, generally at no cost, in return for the benefits derived by its public use. The applicant, however, is responsible for the costs of preparing the application which include, for example, the preparation of land surveys and site development plans. By acquiring property through the Federal Lands to Parks Program, the applicant promises to commit the funds necessary to properly develop, operate, and maintain the property for public park and recreational use in perpetuity.

