

# Washington Recreation & Park Association

## 2025 Legislative Agenda

### Top Priorities

- **Thank the legislature and advocate for sustaining and augmenting funding that is making a difference in local communities:**
  - Washington Wildlife & Recreation Program (WWRP)
    - Keep funding at \$150M or better.
  - Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF) - support for full funding at new grant limits.
  - Community Outdoor Athletic Facilities (COAF) funding – support and maximize funding of the \$25M allocated and seek opportunities for funding closer to the original \$42M full funding rate.
  - No Child Left Inside (NCLI) – Renew and continue with Operating funds.
  - Recreation Access Grant – Renew and continue with Operating funds and include a cohort grant program WRPA is authorized and funded to facilitate.
- **Raise awareness and potentially seek a legislative fix to resolve incongruity in RCW 43.63A.135 which narrows the purpose of the Youth Recreational Facilities Grant Program administered by the Department of Commerce to preclude eligible applicants from applying:** The stated objective is to prioritize and assist nonprofit youth organizations in acquiring, constructing, or rehabilitating (indoor) facilities, resulting in the Department of Commerce not opening the application process to all eligible parties (like local governments). WRPA is seeking to clarify that ‘public agencies’ are eligible to apply for these grant funds, which will only cover 25% of project costs.
- **Support advancement of efforts to increase the current 1 percent property tax limit:** WRPA will partner with local government organizations, associations, and other coalition partners in strongly supporting a badly needed modernizing of the 1 percent property tax limit, increasing to 3 percent, so that local jurisdictions have the option to increase their budgets to keep up with rising costs of services.

### Track/Monitor

- **“Active Transportation” components of the ‘Move Ahead Washington’ transportation package, and other pending Transportation Packages:** WRPA will continue to closely track the priorities and funding/phasing of “active transportation” components of the Move Ahead Washington package, and other pending transportation packages that will be discussed. WRPA wants to ensure that local parks officials are part of the discussion on how these funds are deployed at the local level in support of trails and projects that extend out of the road right of way for safe routes to schools, parks and other business and community centers that can reduce local travel.

- **Monitor legislation that recognizes the role parks and recreation providers can play in helping to close the gap in early learning** and school age childcare by streamlining licensing requirements, especially in shared facilities.
- **Support advancement of Play Equity Initiatives to improve safety, quality and equity in youth and school sports.** Monitor activities of the King County Play Equity Coalition for statewide benefit.
- **Changes to tax and fee collections** that could positively or negatively impact park districts.
- **Support recreational immunity fixes,** and monitor Keystone or landmark cases, legal action, and other issues that can affect the profession. Recent legal ambiguity has led to increased risk of liability on providers of public recreation and should be addressed to avoid financial loss by entities providing public access for public recreation.