

## TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT RECREATION GRANTS PROGRAM

The Texas Parks & Wildlife Department administers several grant assistance programs to communities for a variety of recreational purposes. These include:

The **Local Park Grant Program** administers grants that provide 50% matching (reimbursement) funding assistance to acquire property and/ or to develop **outdoor** and **indoor** public recreation facilities. Applications are restricted to local units of government (i.e., cities, counties, water districts and MUD's) and applicants must agree to permanently dedicate project areas for public recreational use and to operate and maintain facilities. For communities less than 500,000 in population, maximum grant awards for outdoor projects are limited to \$500,000 per project. The outdoor grant reviews for eligible applicants are made twice per year with January 31 and July 31 application deadlines. Indoor grant reviews are made once per year with a July 31 application deadline and have a maximum grant award of \$750,000. Large cities and counties with populations over 500,000 must apply to the newly created **urban outdoor and urban indoor** grant programs. The deadline for the urban outdoor program is once a year on February 28 and has an award limit of \$1,000,000. The annual deadline for the urban indoor grant program is July 31 with the exception of 2009 which will have an additional special deadline of January 31 and has an award limit of \$930,000. In addition, grants are also available to **small communities**, providing 50% matching (reimbursement) funds with a \$75,000 maximum award per project to eligible local governments with a population of 20,000 or less. Small community grants are awarded once a year with an annual January 31 application deadline. The Department also reviews grant applications for **regional** projects when funds are available. Regional grants may include several public agencies and within adjoining communities for a unique project that serves to meet public recreation needs at a regional level. The source of funds for these programs is the Texas Recreation and Parks Account (TRPA) and the Large County and Municipality Parks and Recreation Account, which receives a portion of the state sales tax on certain sporting goods. Supplemental funds may also be used from the States apportionment of the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund when funds are available.

The **Community Outdoor Outreach Program (COOP)** provides grants of \$5,000 - \$50,000 to tax exempt organizations and local governments to introduce underserved persons to the programs and facilities of the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. Sponsors can use funds to buy outdoor recreational equipment, food, instructional materials, lease transportation, etc. for outdoor environmental educational programs. Application deadlines are February 1<sup>st</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup>. The funding source for COOP grants is also from the Texas Recreation and Parks Account.

The **Recreational Trail Program** provides up to 80% matching grants with a \$200,000 limit to local government and not-for-profit entities to construct and improve public recreational trails. This program is funded by a portion of the federal gas tax generated by off-highway recreational vehicles such as motorcycles and ATVs. The program provides funding assistance for both motorized and non-motorized trail projects. Applications are due May 1<sup>st</sup> each year, and projects are reviewed and ranked by the State Trails Advisory Board.