

Trails and Park Infrastructure

Since inception of our Conservation Loan program, we've been devoted to helping our partners protect, create and expand access to recreational opportunities; acquire and install both land- and water-based trails; and facilitate opportunities for children of all ages to play and learn in nature. We've financed over \$90 million in recreation projects, assisting our partners in protecting more than 20,000 acres for recreation and public access.



Lassen Park Foundation - Lassen Volcanic National Park, California

In 2016, the Lassen Park Foundation, which provides charitable support for Lassen Volcanic National Park in Northern California, planned to construct a youth campground at the park. The campground would serve as a basecamp for young people from underserved communities who lack the experience and the resources to make a wilderness camping trip possible. But a portion of the construction funding was not going to be awarded for several months, which would delay the camp build-out for over a year. Eager to move forward, the Foundation reached out to the Conservation Loan program for a \$75,000 loan, which bridged the time gap and moved the project forward.

In summer 2017, the new Volcano Adventure Camp opened, and Lassen Park Foundation served over 800 young people, more than double the number from previous years. Kids from as far away as Florida came to the camp to explore the wilderness, have fun and experience adventure like never before.



Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County - San Luis Obispo, California

Pismo Preserve sits on 900 acres of rolling hills and quiet oak-studded canyons overlooking Pismo Beach and iconic U.S. Highway 101, on land owned by the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County. The Octagon Barn, a historic early 20th century structure that is a symbol of the county's rich agricultural history, is just a few miles north. The Conservancy staff and board has big plans for both sites that will improve public recreational access and they turned to us for financial help. The Conservation Loan program provided

“After four years of planning and fundraising, our Volcano Adventure Camp construction project in Lassen Volcanic National Park was about to be delayed another year due to the timing of an approved gift. The Conservation Fund made it possible for us to move forward as planned and complete the camp in late 2016—just in time to celebrate its grand opening during the 100th anniversary of the park and the National Park Service. The results are amazing!”

- Jennifer Finnegan, Executive Director, Lassen Park Foundation

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a \$500,000 loan to the Conservancy to bridge reimbursement grants and allow the group to maintain momentum and manage cash flow during major infrastructure investments, including the construction of trail networks, improvements to bring the sites into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and other public access amenities. Once complete, the Preserve will provide 11 miles of world-class mountain biking, horseback riding and hiking trails, and the restored Octagon Barn will be an event space, agricultural museum, and hub for three regional bicycle and pedestrian trails.



Vermilion County Conservation District – Vermilion County, Illinois

Across the country, land trusts, trails groups, municipalities and conservation districts are converting abandoned rail corridors into recreational bike and walking trails. In east-central Illinois, the counties of Vermilion and Champaign are collaborating on an ambitious effort to create the 24.5-mile Kickapoo Rail Trail between east Urbana and Kickapoo State Park.

We helped the trail become a reality with a nearly \$600,000 loan to Vermilion County Conservation District for their bargain-sale purchase of an almost 12-mile segment of the proposed trail. They paid back the loan with a combination of grants and the resale of a portion of the trail within state park boundaries to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. When construction is complete, the Kickapoo Trail will transform the region's trail system.

“The Kickapoo Trail has been 20 years in the making, but it hasn't gotten off the ground until recently, thanks, in part, to the loan from The Conservation Fund. This trail is the first of its kind for the area, and we're excited to see what new opportunities it can bring for tourism and our economy.”

- Ken Konsis, Executive Director, Vermilion County Conservation District

“The Octagon Barn Center and the Pismo Preserve projects literally would not be where they are today without The Conservation Fund. The Center and the Preserve will serve our community for generations to come, and we are incredibly grateful to the Fund's team for making both projects possible.”

- Kaila Dettman, Executive Director,
Land Conservancy of San Luis
Obispo County

About The Conservation Fund

At The Conservation Fund, we make conservation work for America. By creating solutions that make environmental and economic sense, we are redefining conservation to demonstrate its essential role in our future prosperity. Top-ranked for efficiency and effectiveness, we have worked in all 50 states since 1985 to protect nearly 8 million acres of land.

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