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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT of NATURAL and CULTURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION of PARKS and RECREATION
172 Pembroke Road Concord, New Hampshire 03301
Phone: (603) 271-3556 Fax: (603) 271-3553
Web: www.nhstateparks.org

August 31, 2022

The Honorable Karen Umberger, Chairman
Fiscal Committee of the General Court
and
His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu
and the Honorable Executive Council
State House
Concord, New Hampshire

REQUESTED ACTION

Pursuant to RSA 14:30-a, VI, authorize the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) to amend Fiscal Committee item # FIS 21-143 approved on June 8, 2021 and G&C item #93 approved on June 16, 2021 to re-purpose \$5,135,000 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) between and among projects for the purpose of infrastructure investments to the State of New Hampshire's Parks and Recreation and State Land Reservation system and to transfer prior year carry forward funds in and among classes within the accounting unit in the amount of \$2,237,001 in order to better align the funding to be appropriated consistent with how the funding will be used, effective upon Fiscal Committee and Governor and Council approvals through June 30, 2023. 100% Federal Funds.

Funds are to be budgeted in account 03-035-035-351510-24670000 ARPA DNCR Capital Project Fund as follows:

Class-Account	Class Description	FY23 Current Adjusted Authorized	Requested Action	Revised FY23 Adjusted Authorized
000-400338-16	Federal Funds	\$21,764,682		\$21,764,682
	Total Revenue	\$21,764,682	\$0	\$21,764,682
020-500200	Current Expenses	\$138	(\$138)	\$0
022-500255	Rents-Leases Other Than Sta	\$638,800	(\$630,000)	\$8,800
029-500290	Intra-Agency Transfers	\$100,000	(\$100,000)	\$0
030-500311	Equipment New Replacement	\$2,863	(\$2,863)	\$0
037-500173	Technology-Hardware	\$1,500	(\$1,500)	\$0
038-500175	Technology-Software	\$1,500	(\$1,500)	\$0
039-500180	Telecommunications	\$1,000	(\$1,000)	\$0
040-500800	Indirect Costs	\$35,793		\$35,793
041-500801	Audit Fund Set Aside	\$2,257		\$2,257
042-500620	Additional Fringe Benefits	\$10,000		\$10,000
048-500226	Contractual Maint Build-Grn	\$500,000	(\$500,000)	\$0
059-500117	Temp Full Time	\$200,000		\$200,000
060-500601	Benefits	\$100,000		\$100,000
102-500731	Contracts For Program Servi	\$1,000,000	(\$1,000,000)	\$0

103-502664	Contracts For Op Services	\$19,170,831	\$2,237,001	\$21,407,832
	Total Expenses	\$21,764,682	\$0	\$21,764,682

EXPLANATION

In 2021, the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources was authorized to accept and expend \$22,654,407 of federal funds made available pursuant to US Treasury 31 CFR Part 35, RIN 1505-AC77, the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF) established under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), in order to allow New Hampshire State funding for capital improvements to the State Park system and State Land reservation infrastructure as allowable uses of SFRF funds to respond to directly the public health emergency and as aid to an impacted industry within tourism, travel and hospitality.

Specifically, the list of funded projects was approved as follows:

Project Funding Specifics:

Mt Washington Water System Upgrade \$1,020,000

- Continue to offer visitor services at the Sherman Adams Building to over 300,000 visitors who hike the mountain or travel to the summit privately run Cog Railway or Auto Road and support the Mt. Washington Observatory museum and research.

Roofing and Repairs \$1,550,000

- Address deferred maintenance across the park system to ensure parks continue to be safe and available to the public and maintain the integrity of the structures. In addition to roofing, provides resources to: repair system failures such as water, septic and heating; make utility upgrades; and address non-reimbursable storm damage.

Investments in State Parks \$20,000,000 - Itemized as follows:

- Mt. Washington Sewage Treatment Plan replacement **\$3,000,000**
- Mt. Washington, Sherman Adams Building repair and emergency doors **\$1,475,000**
 - o Continue to offer visitor services at the Sherman Adams Building to over 300,000 visitors who hike the mountain or travel to the summit by the Cog Railway or Auto road.
 - o Maintain integrity of building to support Sherman Adams Building to support public services and make improvements to ensure compliance with life safety codes.
- Cannon Mountain Station Sewage Treatment System **\$1,200,000**
 - o Continue to offer visitor services and support private concessionaire's operations at the Tram Summit building in Franconia Notch State Park.
- Franconia Notch, Highway signs and message boards **\$100,000**
 - o Install missing signage, upgrade existing signage, and install message boards to communicate safety and venue messaging to park visitors and hikers.
- Ft. Stark, General improvements **\$615,000**
 - o Redevelopment and improvement projects including security and safety improvements such as grate repair and fencing, entrance and parking lot improvements, 2 family bathrooms in a new building adjacent to the OMS building, extension of municipal water service to the toilet building, a new septic system for the toilet building, demolition of the harbor entrance control post building, and the cleaning and securing of bunker tunnels, rooms, and entryways.
- Rye Harbor, Ragged Neck upgrades **\$250,000**
 - o Design, engineering and preliminary site work for facility upgrades to bathroom, pavilion and cottage.
- Campgrounds (As listed below) - **\$7,787,000**

- Entails replacement of obsolete infrastructure, addition of infrastructure, expansion of campsites and supporting facilities (i.e. bathhouses) to support existing visitors and meet the demand for camping experiences.
 - o Greenfield, Water system distribution/piping replacement, move electrical wires underground \$270,000
 - o Hampton Beach RV Park Electric Upgrades \$347,000
 - o Ellacoya RV Park Electric Upgrades \$475,000
 - o Jericho Mountain RV dump station tie in to existing leach field \$85,000
 - o Crawford Notch, Dry River Campground expansion \$1,480,000
 - o Pawtuckaway, Big Island expansion, 25 new sites \$390,000
 - o Bear Brook, Catamount Pond area horse campground \$695,000
 - o Mollidgewock, 1/2 mile road to access high ground of park, with new tent and cabin sites, park office and visitors center \$2,640,000
 - o Jericho Mountain new camping area near beach, cabins and RV sites \$1,405,000
- Coleman Lodges, Sprinkler system and renovations \$800,000
 - o Entails renovation of buildings at former youth services site to make available for overnight stays by motorized and non-motorized visitors and accommodate events. Investment supported by the Local Chamber of Commerce.
- Bear Brook, Bear Hill Camp revitalization \$2,400,000
 - o Entails renovation of former 4-H camp buildings to provide additional access to overnight stays at the park, support family and group outings and other events in the "Pods" and dining hall; and preserve historically significant buildings.
- Fire Tower Renovation and Reconstruction - \$2,373,000

Since that time, much of the project planning and design work has been completed allowing the next phase of project development to proceed. However, relative to the Campground infrastructure investment development plan, it has been determined that these previously listed efforts must be re-prioritized in response to a revision of cost estimates based on a completed feasibility study that was performed through contracted services.

Specifically, when DNCR submitted our initial ARPA request for State Parks, we included estimates based on preliminary concepts of what campground expansion might entail before any official feasibility study was made, and DNCR anticipated that future changes to project budgets may be necessary in order to adapt to the results of feasibility studies. Moreover, inflation and supply chain impacts as a result of the pandemic have had a significant impact on the actual costs of these and other projects.

Utilizing ARPA SFRF funding, each potential campground project has now been fully assessed and a more strategic evaluation has been developed and utilized. These studies provided new information about topography, availability of utilities, and a careful consideration of the needs and opportunities in each park. These plans are an important asset that will guide future investment in our Park System more broadly.

- DNCR now requests to re-allocate the funding from the following campground expansion projects:
- Bear Brook, Catamount Pond area horse campground - \$695,000
- Bear Brook, Bear Hill Camp revitalization - \$2,400,000
 - o Entails renovation of former 4-H camp buildings to provide additional access to overnight stays at the park, support family and group outings and other events in the "Pods" and dining hall, and preserve historically significant buildings.
- Crawford Notch, Dry River Campground expansion - \$1,480,000

The above highlighted projects have been selected as those that are proposed for elimination based on costs concerns in order to prioritize other projects at this time and operating within ARPA SFRF timelines and requirements. In some instances, alternative sources of funding may be able to be utilized to complete projects that will no longer be completed with ARPA SFRF funding.

The following projects will receive re-allocated ARPA SFRF funds:

- Jericho Mountain new camping area near beach, cabins and RV sites - **reallocating \$1,895,000, bringing the total ARPA investment to \$3,300,000.**
- Mollidgewock, 1/2 mile road to access high ground of park, with new tent and cabin sites, park office and visitors center – **reallocating \$120,000, bringing the total ARPA investment to \$2,760,000**
- Pawtuckaway, Big Island expansion, 25 new sites – **reallocating \$2,560,000, bring to the total ARPA investment to \$2,950,000.**

Additional project reallocation details can be found below.

Jericho Mountain: Originally, we considered a new camping area on the peninsula to the west of the beach. In addition, we wanted to consider the possibility of an ATV campground near the south end of the dam. The terrain at the peninsula site turned out to be rough and rocky. While the setting for a campground was spectacularly scenic, it would have been difficult to create a loop road to link the sites and the number of feasible sites would have been less than 10. The site at the south end of the dam had good terrain but the cost of bringing in electricity, water and constructing a septic system was prohibitive. More importantly, in discussions with the regional manager and the park staff it came out that the public demand that was not being met at Jericho was the demand for RV campsites. The feasibility study revealed that there was terrain suitable for developing RV campsites to the east of the existing event area. The preferred plan we settled on allowed for 32 “premium sites” which will be suitable for RVs as well as other types of camping.

Mollidgewock: Our preliminary concept at Mollidgewock was to supplement the existing campsites along the river with additional sites located along a new highland park road. In this case the concept was good. The configuration of the highland road turned into a loop which minimized the need for road construction. Some of the less desirable sites along the river were eliminated allowing the remaining sites more space and privacy. One stretch of river front was set aside as common space so campers with sites in the highland loop would have access to the river without walking through other campers’ sites.

Pawtuckaway: At Pawtuckaway, the preliminary concept was to build-out the one campground loop road from the original park layout that had never been developed. It seemed to be a logical and inexpensive way to expand the campground. However, the terrain in that area was in a boulder field with several wet areas that would have limited the number of feasible campsites. In the course of the site investigation by the SE Group an alternative area for campsites was identified that was much more favorable for development. The area would allow 35 sites, most with a water view which would make them highly desirable to campers.

Next, DNCR’s ARPA funding allocation included funds for park utility system upgrades at Jericho, Ellacoya and Greenfield state parks.

DNCR requests permission to consolidate the funds allocated to these projects and apply them to the Greenfield water and electrical systems upgrade. Recent increases in construction costs mean that the funds currently allocated for the Greenfield work are insufficient. However, there are good reasons not to go forward with the other two projects. It would make sense to incorporate the Jericho dump station with the campground expansion planned for that park and already included in the cost estimate for that project. At Ellacoya, we have learned that Eversource will require a payment in the range of half a million dollars to bring the level of power that would be required for the RV park electrical upgrade to that site. That unexpected cost puts the Ellacoya project financially out of reach. We ask that the funding intended for the Jericho dump station and the Ellacoya RV park be redirected to the Greenfield water and electrical systems upgrade so that that project can go forward.

The following projects will receive re-allocated funding originally designated for certain park utility system upgrades to be consolidated to a single location as follows:

- o Ellacoya RV Park Electric Upgrades **\$475,000**
- o Jericho Mountain RV dump station tie in to existing leach field **\$85,000**

The cumulative total of these funds of \$560,000 will be allocated to the Greenfield, Water system distribution/piping replacement and electrical underground wiring upgrades bring to total allocated for this project to **\$830,000**.

Funds are budgeted as follows:

Class 020 – Current Expenses – Appropriation reduction due to these class funds no longer being needed for this purpose

Class 022 – Rents – Leases – Appropriation reduction due to drastically reduced need for equipment rental and leasing for site work with own force labor

Class 029 – Interagency Transfers – Appropriation reduction due to these class funds no longer being needed for this purpose

Class 030 – Equipment – Appropriation reduction due to these class funds no longer being needed for this purpose

Class 037 – Technology, Hardware – Appropriation reduction due to these class funds no longer being needed for this purpose

Class 038 – Technology, Software – Appropriation reduction due to these class funds no longer being needed for this purpose

Class 039 – Telecommunications – Appropriation reduction due to these class funds no longer being needed for this purpose

Class 048 – Contractual maintenance Buildings and Grounds – Appropriation reduction due to these class funds no longer being needed for this purpose

Class 102 – Contracts for Program Services – Appropriation reduction due to these class funds no longer being needed for this purpose

Class 103 – Contracts for Operational Services – Appropriation increase due the project work being contracted services to perform various facility and infrastructure work.

If federal funds are no longer available, general funds will not be used.

Respectfully submitted,

 (LSM)

Sarah L. Stewart
Commissioner

ⁱ Table of changes to projects by activity code to show net effect by project relative to reallocation requests. Transfer of Funds request is applicable to all projects.

Activity Code	Project Description	Current Budget	Change	New Budget
00FRF602PH3501A	Roofing and Repairs	\$1,550,000		\$1,550,000
00FRF602PH3501B	Mt Wash Sherman Adams Bld Repairs	\$1,475,000		\$1,475,000
00FRF602PH3501C	Franconia Notch Signs	\$100,000		\$100,000
00FRF602PH3501D	Ft Stark Improvements	\$615,000		\$615,000
00FRF602PH3501E	Rye Harbor Ragged Neck	\$250,000		\$250,000
00FRF602PH3501F	Hampton RV Electric Upgrades	\$347,000		\$347,000
00FRF602PH3501M	Coleman Lodges Renovations	\$800,000		\$800,000
00FRF602PH3501O	Fire Tower Renovation and Reconstruction	\$2,373,000		\$2,373,000
00FRF602WB3501A	Mt Wash. Water Upgrade	\$1,020,000		\$1,020,000
00FRF602WB3501B	Mt Wash Sewage Treatment	\$3,000,000		\$3,000,000
00FRF602WB3501C	Cannon Mt Sewage Treatment	\$1,200,000		\$1,200,000
Project Eliminations				
00FRF602PH3501G	Elacoya RV Electric Upgrades	\$475,000	(\$475,000)	\$0
00FRF602PH3501H	Dry River Campground Expansion	\$1,480,000	(\$1,480,000)	\$0
00FRF602PH3501N	Bear Hill Camp Revitalization	\$2,400,000	(\$2,400,000)	\$0
00FRF602PH3501J	Bear Brook Horse Campground	\$695,000	(\$695,000)	\$0
00FRF602WB3501E	Jericho RV Dump Station	\$85,000	(\$85,000)	\$0
Project Expansions				
00FRF602PH3501K	Mollodgewock Expansion	\$2,640,000	\$120,000	\$2,760,000
00FRF602PH3501L	Jericho Camping Expansion	\$1,405,000	\$1,895,000	\$3,300,000
00FRF602PH3501I	Pawtuckaway Camping Expansion	\$390,000	\$2,560,000	\$2,950,000
00FRF602WB3501D	Greenfield Water System	\$270,000	\$560,000	\$830,000
Grand Total All Projects		\$22,570,000	\$0	\$22,570,000

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DIVISION of PARKS and RECREATION
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May 28, 2021

The Honorable Ken Weyler, Chairman
Fiscal Committee of the General Court
State House
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu
and the Honorable Executive Council
State House
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

REQUESTED ACTION

1. Pursuant to RSA 14:30-a, VI, authorize the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) to accept and expend \$22,654,407 of American Rescue Plan (ARP) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (FRF), for the purpose of infrastructure investments to the State of New Hampshire's Parks and Recreation and State Land Reservation system, effective upon Fiscal Committee and Governor and Council approval for the period July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023. **Funding Source: 100% Federal Funds**
2. Pursuant to the provision of RSA 124:15, I, Positions Restricted, and subject to approval of item 1 above, authorize DNCR to establish one full-time temporary position using ARP FRF in support of infrastructure investments into the State Parks and Recreation Systems and State Land Reservation system effective upon Fiscal Committee and Governor and Council approval for the period July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023. **100% Federal Funds.**

Funds are to be budgeted in FY2022 and FY2023 in the following account:

03-35-35-XXXXXX-24XX0000 – ARPA DNCR Capital Project Funds

Class	Description	FY22-FY23 Adjusted Authorized	Requested Action	FY22-FY23 Revised Adjusted Authorized
000-40XXXX		\$0	(\$22,654,407)	(\$22,654,407)
	TOTAL REVENUE	\$0	(\$22,654,407)	(\$22,654,407)
020-500200	Current Expenses	\$0	\$2,000	\$2,000

022-500257	Rent - Leases Other than State	\$0	\$649,000	\$649,000
029-500290	Inter-Agency Transfers	\$0	\$100,000	\$100,000
030-500300	Equipment New Replacement	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000
037-500177	Technology - Hardware	\$0	\$1,500	\$1,500
038-500173	Technology - Software	\$0	\$1,500	\$1,500
039-500180	Telecommunications	\$0	\$1,000	\$1,000
040-501587	Indirect Costs	\$0	\$82,150	\$82,150
041-500801	Audit Fund Set Aside	\$0	\$2,257	\$2,257
042-500620	Additional Fringe Benefits	\$0	\$10,000	\$10,000
048-500226	Contractual Maint. B&G	\$0	\$500,000	\$500,000
059-500117	Temp Full Time	\$0	\$200,000	\$200,000
060-500602	Benefits	\$0	\$100,000	\$100,000
102-500731	Contracts for Program Services	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
103-502664	Contracts for Oper Service	\$0	\$20,000,000	\$20,000,000
	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$0	\$22,654,407	\$22,654,407

EXPLANATION

Pursuant to US Treasury 31 CFR Part 35, RIN 1505-AC77, the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund (FRF) established under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allows New Hampshire State funding for capital improvements to the State Park system and State Land reservation infrastructure as allowable uses of FRF funds to respond to directly the public health emergency and as aid to an impacted industry within tourism, travel and hospitality. Additionally some of these projects are also allowable as water or sewer infrastructure improvements.

A Declaration of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic was issued by Governor Sununu and the President on 3/13/20 followed by the Governor's Emergency Orders:

New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu has ordered all businesses and other organizations that do not provide Essential Services to close their physical workplaces and facilities to workers, customers, and the public and cease all in person operations as of 11:59PM on March 27, 2020,

Exceptions to the order included getting out doors and outdoor recreation:

New Hampshire residents shall stay at home or in their place of residence with the following exceptions (among others):

Leaving home to get fresh air or exercise....

Leaving home for outdoor recreation...

State Parks and state park employees were also an exception to the order:

The services identified in EXHIBIT A are hereby designated as "Essential Services."

Additional services may be designated as Essential and added to EXHIBIT A.

Exhibit A included:

Workers who support the operation, maintenance and public safety of state parks, forests, wildlife management areas, water supply protection lands, and other critical natural resources

In a memo sent to Parks staff on April 3, 2020 to encourage employees as they were opening up their facilities at a time when many other state employees were working from home, the following quote was shared from Pennsylvania State Parks:

In these times of mental, physical and economic distresses, our direct access to nature and its proven restorative properties is more important to us, and more worthy of safeguarding than ever.

Staff were also reminded in the memo that:

We are caring for the public in a time of need. While medical professionals have been charged with maintaining physical health during this crisis, we have been charged with maintaining our citizens' mental health.

NH State Parks saw unprecedented visitation when the pandemic began. For example, on March 21st, the parking lot at headquarters at Monadnock State Park was overflowing with 400 cars (representing approximately 1,000 hikers headed onto a single trail). The first day of spring was March 19th.

In spite of limitations on the number of campground sites that were available even after the 50% limitation was lifted, campground occupancy was up 7% over the previous year's overall, up 14% in August and 35% in September! These increases occurred even though five campgrounds were closed due to lack of staff, campground capacity limitations were still in place, only existing reservations were honored for cabins and dry camping was not permitted at Hampton South RV Park.

In spite of limiting capacity in the day use parks to support social distancing through the entire season (up to 50%) and stay at home messaging for out of state visitors, day use visitation was greater than previous years for the sites that were open. For example, visitation was only 9% off previous years at Sunapee State Park Beach even though we were limiting visitation on any given day to 50% capacity.

Many Parks visitors were very pleased with their experience last year:

"All of the park staff members were wonderful! They were always around and very helpful. I felt safe during our stay, as they were very aware of and keep up with safety procedures."

"Just keep up the good work. We really appreciated the effort and commitment required by everyone to pull off a safe experience for our family during these most trying times!"

"One of the best campgrounds I have ever been to. The cleanliness was really impressive."

Parks are a key economic driver. Estimates are that over half of visitors are from out of state – in some parks as high as 90% - supporting our tourism industry. Park investment can result in corresponding business investment. OHRV businesses to support visitors to Jericho Mountain State Park and the investments across the boulevard from the recently redeveloped Hampton Beach State Park are just two examples.

In a December 2017 survey report by Stay Work Play, three of the six reasons why young professionals (age 20-40) stay in New Hampshire are: the Quality of the Environment; the Quality of Parks and Recreation Areas; and, the Proximity To Outdoor Recreation Areas Results from an image perception research conducted for the NH Division of Tourism and Development indicated: "...it is clear that New Hampshire is strongly perceived as a beautiful outdoor destination." The state parks are an essential

component of the tourism, hospitality and travel industries in New Hampshire. Visitors to the state parks also utilize other aspects of the tourism, hospitality and travel industries. In fact, one of the four purposes of the state park system under state statute (RSA 216:1) is *"To encourage and support tourism and related economic activity within the state."* RSA 216-A:3-f also requires that the directors of parks and travel and tourism consult on parks promotion and *"This program shall be coordinated with the state's general tourism promotion efforts."*

The purpose of the request for investment in state parks is to ensure facilities are in a condition to be open and providing services to the public, to increase the capacity at campgrounds to meet demand, to accommodate RV's, and to provide a safe experience for the increasing numbers of visitors. This investment will also directly impact local restaurant and lodging facilities, performing arts venues and other tourist attractions that suffered great financial loss throughout the state by attracting visitors and bolstering the overall economy.

Project Funding Specifics:

Mt Washington Water System Upgrade \$1,020,000

- Continue to offer visitor services at the Sherman Adams Building to over 300,000 visitors who hike the mountain or travel to the summit privately run Cog Railway or Auto Road and support the Mt. Washington Observatory museum and research.

Roofing and Repairs \$1,550,000

- Address deferred maintenance across the park system to ensure parks continue to be safe and available to the public and maintain the integrity of the structures. In addition to roofing, provides resources to: repair system failures such as water, septic and heating; make utility upgrades; and address non-reimbursable storm damage.

Investments in State Parks \$20,000,000 - Itemized as follows:

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 - o Continue to offer visitor services and support private concessionaire's operations at the Tram Summit building in Franconia Notch State Park.
- Franconia Notch, Highway signs and message boards **\$100,000**
 - o Install missing signage, upgrade existing signage, and install message boards to communicate safety and venue messaging to park visitors and hikers.
- Ft. Stark, General improvements **\$615,000**
 - o Redevelopment and improvement projects including security and safety improvements such as grate repair and fencing, entrance and parking lot improvements, 2 family bathrooms in a new building adjacent to the OMS building, extension of municipal water service to the toilet

building, a new septic system for the toilet building, demolition of the harbor entrance control post building, and the cleaning and securing of bunker tunnels, rooms, and entryways.

- Rye Harbor, Ragged Neck upgrades **\$250,000**
 - o Design, engineering and preliminary site work for facility upgrades to bathroom, pavilion and cottage.
- Campgrounds (As listed below) - **\$7,787,000**
 - Entails replacement of obsolete infrastructure, addition of infrastructure, expansion of campsites and supporting facilities (i.e. bathhouses) to support existing visitors and meet the demand for camping experiences.
 - o Greenfield, Water system distribution/piping replacement, move electrical wires underground \$270,000
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 - Coleman Lodges, Sprinkler system and renovations **\$800,000**
 - o Entails renovation of buildings at former youth services site to make available for overnight stays by motorized and non-motorized visitors and accommodate events. Investment supported by the Local Chamber of Commerce.
 - Bear Brook, Bear Hill Camp revitalization **\$2,400,000**
 - o Entails renovation of former 4-H camp buildings to provide additional access to overnight stays at the park, support family and group outings and other events in the "Pods" and dining hall, and preserve historically significant buildings.
 - Fire Tower Renovation and Reconstruction - **\$2,373,000**

In 1937 the NH Forestry Commission evolved into the NH Forestry and Recreation Commission. This change was significant in that it signaled the importance of recreation to our NH economy and it embraced the importance of multiple use natural resource management. From this date forward, our fire towers and staff have evolved to offer much more than the basic detection of wildfires.

While the primary role of the Forest Fire Lookout has always been fire detection, our staff are cognizant of the fact that they are providing much more in today's complex and changing world. NH Fire towers have become landmarks and destinations for hikers and recreation enthusiasts. Similar to a lighthouse protecting ships from a rocky coastline, fire towers serve as a beacon of light in the forest. Whether you are a fire tower historian or simply a hiker seeking to cross off another peak from your bucket list, fire towers have seen a resurgence of support and interest throughout the country, with thousands of visitors hiking to the sites in New Hampshire annually. The reasons are many; solitude, personal renewal, self-achievement, beautiful scenery, immaculate views, experience nature, and in general, a sincere appreciation for responsible stewardship of our natural resources.

In 2005, NH initiated a Fire Tower Quest program to reward hikers who visit our 15 active fire towers. If they visit 5 of them and record the date of each visit they can return the visitor register and they will receive a certificate of achievement and a complimentary Tower Quest patch. This program has experienced continued interest from hikers and family groups with over 250 individuals completing the quest by visiting at least 5 of the Fire Towers during the 2020 season. We expect this interest and program growth to continue as more people choose to recreate outdoors and become aware of the program.

With the investment of \$2 Million NH's Fire Tower Quest program will have opportunity to grow in popularity-taking some pressure off of other, more widely known hiking destinations that have become overcrowded.

Before we can push for more Fire Tower activities, we must make some structural upgrades. 7 of the 15 fire towers have been identified as needing comprehensive work for continued staff and visitor safety and enjoyment. With some restoration work, 7 historic tower watchman's cabins have been identified as locations we could rent out to the public as overnight destinations. Additional maintenance and repairs to assure access and availability for outdoor adventurers are anticipated and would be covered in this overall "Fire Tower Restoration Project".

Funds are budgeted as follows:

- Class 020 – Current Expenses – office supplies, paper and printer ink for staff and own force labor supply needs to support program
- Class 022 – Rents – Leases – Equipment rental and leasing for site work with own force labor
- Class 029 – Interagency Transfers – Funding of DD&M staff support in Commissioner's Office
- Class 030 – Equipment – Office furniture for staff
- Class 037 – Technology, Hardware – laptop, monitors and docking station for staff
- Class 038 – Technology, Software – standard software required for new staff
- Class 039 – Telecommunications – phone for new staff
- Class 040 – Indirect Expenses per agency approved Indirect Cost rate
- Class 041 – Audit Fund Set Aside – at a rate of .01%
- Class 042 – Additional Fringe Benefits – post retirements costs for staff
- Class 048 – Contractual maintenance Buildings and Grounds – Maintenance projects
- Class 059 – Temp Full Time – for one temporary full-time position requested above
- Class 060 – Benefits – for temporary full-time position requested above
- Class 102 – Contracts for Program Services – Contracted professional services as needed to support architectural and engineering design
- Class 103 – Contracts for Operational Services – Contracted services to perform various facility and infrastructure work.

The following information is provided in accordance with the Comptroller's instructional memorandum dated September 21, 1981:

1) List of Personnel involved:

One full-time temporary Public Works Project Manager II Position # 9TXXXX

2) Nature, need and duration:

The period of performance runs until December 31, 2026.

3) Relationship to existing agency programs: Supports ongoing Design, Development and Maintenance project program

4) Has similar program been requested of the Legislature and denied? No

5) Why wasn't funding included in the agency's budget request?

It was not known that these funds would be available at the time the agency established its FY22/FY23 biennial budget.

6) Can portions of the grant funds be utilized for other purposes?

These funds can only be used for the purpose of the grant award.

7) Estimate the funds required to continue these positions:

The plan is for this position to be funded through FY25, the estimated cost for years FY24 and FY25 is \$150,000.

8) Geographic Area Served:

Statewide

9) Sources of Funds:

American Rescue Plan State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

In the even that Federal Funds become no longer available, General Funds will not be requested to support this program.

Respectfully submitted,



Sarah L. Stewart
Commissioner