



## **DoD Legacy Park Rx Day Award Announcement** **Connecting Military Communities to Public Lands to Improve Readiness** **and Support the Military Mission**

The National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF), with funding support from the Department of Defense (DoD) Legacy Resource Management Program, is provide up to \$2,000 to engage military installation participation in the National Park Service's *National Park Rx Day*. National Park Rx Day celebrates spending time in nature for improved health. Led by healthcare providers and health professionals, National Park Rx Day commemorates the importance of people connecting with natural environments to improve their physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. This year National Park Rx Day will be observed on Saturday, April 25, 2020. DoD Legacy Park Rx Day hosts will curate events to engage service members, their families, retirees, and veterans in activities that promote stewardship, leadership, and partnership in the historic preservation of military lands while connecting people to nature for health benefits. Eligible projects will incorporate activities that promote safety and occupational health; physical, social, and emotional health; and/or environmental health. Successful applications will incorporate health promotion activities that support military readiness and the military mission using NEEF's *Public Lands Engagement: Health & Wellness in Nature*.

### ***Background***

Human activities, natural disasters, extreme weather events, and a host of other factors take a toll on our public lands, threatening the health and well-being of the people and wildlife who depend on them. Of major importance is the viability of land and space for military personnel to establish readiness to perform missions. The lands military installations occupy are critical in supporting the military mission. Regardless of specialization, installations are a part of the enterprise that prepares, deploys, and sustains servicemen and women.

Equally critical to supporting the military mission is protecting the health of the US Armed Forces, ensuring those who serve are in good health. Promoting healthful behaviors can positively impact the well-being of service members and improve their physical activity, nutrition, weight, and overall ability to sustain the demands of military life.

### ***Project Objective***

Addressing the overall physical and mental well-being of servicemen and women and their families is paramount for military readiness. Maintaining high physical standards and endurance for personnel is essential to perform and carry out the military mission. Obesity, personal injury, and behavioral health disorders are growing health concerns across the nation and a potential threat to military services. Nature experience, an open source, can serve as a catalyst to directly impact mental and physical performance, thereby improving mission readiness. Through organized fitness activities such as land marches, guided hikes or runs, kayaking, pickup basketball games, or yoga, nature provides a vast landscape to support conditioning and training policies/physical fitness requirements that will engage diverse service personnel and lead to flourishing careers in military services.

In partnership with the DoD Legacy Resource Management Program, NEEF is offering opportunities for military installations to participate in curated National Park Rx Day celebrations promoting health activities to ensure access to sustainable resources while protecting human health and the environment. These actions will help to improve the overall health of installation communities.

### **Grant Goals**

1. Promote spending active time in nature to improve the physical health and fitness of military personnel and to bolster required training completion rates.
2. Promote spending time in nature to enhance mind, body and spirit and contribute to the overall mental health and resilience of military personnel and their families.

### **Grant Guidelines and Timeline**

Applicants can request up to \$2,000 in grant funds.

- Application Opens: January 29, 2020
- Application Closes: February 19, 2020
- Grant Period: April to May 2020
- Final Report Due: June 30, 2020

### **Eligibility**

1. Applicants must be a Department of Defense installation site that is open to the public for recreation, including lands managed by the US Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, National Guard, or Navy. Lands managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers are not eligible for Award funds.
2. Applicants will host an event in April or May. Preference will be placed on those who host events on National Park Rx Day, Saturday, April 25, 2020.
3. Applicants must incorporate messaging and an activity from NEEF's *Public Lands Engagement: Health & Wellness in Nature* into the proposed projects (information provided on the application).
4. Applicants must register events on National Park Service Park Rx Day site (link [here](#)).

### **Strong Applications Will Include the Following**

1. Describe the purpose and benefits of proposed project to the military installation, including why the activity is needed, what the post-grant benefits will be, and how the proposed project will support the readiness of America's military installations.
2. Describe how health education and health promotion will be integrated into the proposed event, and how the applicant will educate and engage the volunteers/installation community on the healthful benefits of nature. Drawing from NEEF's Health Activity Guide, the applicant will be expected to lead a health-related activity during the event.
3. Describe the project team, including partnerships with community-based organizations, schools, health care organizations, or others involved in the proposed project. Detail the roles and involvement of each organization cited in the application.
  - a. Applicants interested in partnering with a nearby National Park should [use the Park Finder search function](#) on the NPS website.

If you have any questions or problems, please contact us at [grantsadmin@neefusa.org](mailto:grantsadmin@neefusa.org).