

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 13, 2016

Jonathan B. Jarvis  
Director  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

RE: Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program

Dear Mr. Jarvis:

We write in support of the application submitted by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) on behalf of the City of Hartford, Connecticut to the National Park Service (NPS) under the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program (ORLP). Funding from this program would allow DEEP to restore athletic fields in Hartford's Colt Park, which is part of the recently authorized Coltsville National Historical Park.

Colt Park, located in the Sheldon/Charter Oak neighborhood, is Hartford's go to spot for outdoor activity, providing numerous recreational opportunities for an underserved population that is isolated from a large swath of state parks and facilities. With a rich history dating back to the mid-nineteenth century, Colt Park is the centerpiece of the Coltsville Historic District and future Coltsville National Historical Park. More than 250,000 people visit Colt Park each year for its array of athletic fields, playgrounds, and decorative features. However, Colt Park is becoming less of a destination for recreation due to its poor soil, lack of drainage, and years of excessive wear and tear.

The City of Hartford has developed a plan to restore Colt Park to its greatness and attract even more residents and tourists. Hartford requests \$750,000 in matching funds from NPS to re-grade Colt Park's athletic fields, replace the soil, create proper drainage, and update the park's infrastructure. This project complements numerous local and statewide plans for conservation and development, including the Connecticut State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). ORLP funds would allow the city and state to begin the process of restoring Colt Park into a world class urban park and destination.

We fully support the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the City of Hartford's efforts to expand access to outdoor activity for all people, especially those with limited recreational opportunities. This project fully complements the National Park Service's goals of preserving America's heritage and providing urban areas with outdoor spaces.

Therefore, we respectfully request your careful consideration of DEEP's application. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

  
RICHARD BLUMENTHAL  
United States Senate

  
CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY  
United States Senate

  
JOHN B. LARSON  
Member of Congress