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Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Grant Funding Awarded to Improve Bille Park

Rural Recreation and Tourism Grant To Add New Features

Paradise, CA, 08/23/2022 - On Monday, California State Parks announced that the Paradise Recreation and Park District (PRPD, District) would receive new funding for their proposal to enhance Bille Park. Funding will be provided from voter-approved Proposition 68 funds allocated to the Rural Recreation and Tourism (RRT) grant program

The Bille Park enhancements include new walking/hiking trails, an adventure playground, a high-ropes course, bike flow tracks, a pump track, a native plant demonstration garden, and parking.

Applications for funding were extremely competitive. The State of California received 80 proposals requesting \$182.3 million in funding for the RRT grant program, but with total funding for this grant cycle capped at \$23 million dollars, only 14 proposals were awarded funding.

State Parks Director Armando Quintero wrote, "I look forward to seeing the projects come to fruition and for Californians to start enjoying them. Spending time in the outdoors not only helps us connect with our communities, but it can also support our mental and physical health. A healthier California is good for all of us."

District Manager, Dan Efseaff was elated by the funding announcement and noted, "This is another great win for Paradise and the Ridge. Our Board, Staff, and partners have diligently worked to transform the community into a wonderful place to live and recreate and the funding from the State of California provides a great investment into our community, especially youth."

He added "With the work from the Town of Paradise to develop better, bike friendly roads to Bille Park, this gives an amazing destination for residents to enjoy and develop new skills."

District Chair Al McGreehan said, "It's great to see the hard work of our staff deliver and we look forward to bringing citizen ideas to life for the community."

In 2018 California voters approved a \$4 billion-dollar general obligation bond called the “Parks, Environment, and Water Bond Act of 2018”. Since Proposition 68 was approved in 2018, the Paradise Recreation and Park District has been awarded \$7,848,798 in Prop 68 funding for various projects throughout the District.

The proposal for the project noted the benefits of parks to improve health outcomes, increase economic benefits, and help reduce fire risks. The District supports parks as safer options to shelter, and provide wildfire risk reduction buffers if well-maintained. The COVID-19 pandemic also demonstrates the importance of parks. Since the Camp Fire, the District has aggressively pursued grant opportunities to develop new parks and enhance existing parks for the District residents.

District Manager Efseaff commented, “Proposition funding cycles usually have short life-cycles, and we must push to fund new parks and amenities that have a lasting legacy for the community.”

He added, “I appreciate the efforts of staff, partners and particularly the public who provided input on their dreams for Bille Park..”

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Since 1948, the Paradise Recreation and Park District provides recreation facilities and programs to the residents of Paradise, the Butte Creek Canyon area, and the unincorporated communities of Magalia/Paradise Pines and Concow/Yankee Hill. The District serves 50,000 people living in a 170-square mile area and manages nearly 500 acres of park land and facilities.

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