

As Introduced

**133rd General Assembly
Regular Session
2019-2020**

H. B. No. 643

Representative Howse

A BILL

To enact sections 1501.50, 1546.40, 1546.41, 1
1546.42, 1546.43, and 1546.44 of the Revised 2
Code to create the Outdoor Rx Program and the 3
Outdoor Learning Grant Program in the Department 4
of Natural Resources and to make an 5
appropriation. 6

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That sections 1501.50, 1546.40, 1546.41, 7
1546.42, 1546.43, and 1546.44 of the Revised Code be enacted to 8
read as follows: 9

Sec. 1501.50. (A) The director of natural resources, or 10
the director's designee, shall establish an outdoor learning 11
grant program. The program shall provide grants to city, local, 12
and exempted village school districts for outdoor learning 13
programs for fifth and sixth grade students. Grants awarded 14
under this section shall be funded using appropriations made by 15
the general assembly for such purpose. 16

(B) The director shall adopt rules in accordance with 17
Chapter 119. of the Revised Code regarding all of the following: 18

(1) The process by which a school district may apply for a 19

<u>grant;</u>	20
<u>(2) The form and content of a grant application;</u>	21
<u>(3) The manner in which grants shall be awarded and distributed;</u>	22
<u>(4) The number of grants to be awarded, and the duration and amount of each grant;</u>	23
<u>(5) The requirements that a grant recipient shall satisfy in order to renew the grant;</u>	24
<u>(6) Any other requirements necessary to implement the grant program.</u>	25
<u>(C) The director, or the director's designee, shall develop a curriculum and materials for an outdoor learning program for fifth and sixth grade students that may be used by any district that receives a grant under this section. However, a district shall not be required to use the curriculum and materials as a condition of receiving or renewing a grant under this section.</u>	26
<u>Sec. 1546.40. (A) As used in sections 1546.40 to 1546.44 of the Revised Code:</u>	27
<u>(1) "Applicant" includes a state agency, local government, organization, or individual.</u>	28
<u>(2) "Outdoor therapy program" means a program that includes any of the following activities:</u>	29
<u>(a) Outdoor recreation;</u>	30
<u>(b) Outdoor environmental and ecological studies;</u>	31
<u>(c) Agricultural resource-based activities;</u>	32

(d) Resource conservation, stewardship, or restoration. 46

"Outdoor therapy program" does not include a program that 47
involves activities that may be perceived to lobby or advocate 48
for political purposes; activities that are not in compliance 49
with local, state, or federal laws; or organized sports. 50

(B) The chief of the division of parks and watercraft 51
shall establish the outdoor Rx program. Under the program, the 52
division of parks and watercraft shall provide grants to 53
applicants to fund outdoor therapy programs serving the citizens 54
of this state. The outdoor Rx program advisory committee created 55
under section 1546.41 of the Revised Code shall assist and 56
advise the chief of the division of parks and watercraft in the 57
development and administration of the program. 58

Sec. 1546.41. (A) There is hereby created the outdoor Rx 59
program advisory committee to assist and advise the chief of the 60
division of parks and watercraft in the development and 61
administration of the outdoor Rx program established under 62
section 1546.40 of the Revised Code. The committee shall consist 63
of seven members appointed as follows: 64

(1) Four members appointed by the chief, one from the 65
business community, two from outdoor organizations, and one 66
member that the chief deems sufficient to ensure the diversity 67
of the committee membership; 68

(2) One member appointed by the director of veterans 69
services; 70

(3) One member appointed by the director of environmental 71
protection; 72

(4) One member appointed by the director of health. 73

(B) Each appointing authority shall make initial 74
appointments to the committee not later than thirty days after 75
the effective date of this section. Of the initial members 76
appointed by the chief, two shall serve two-year terms and two 77
shall serve three-year terms. The initial member appointed by 78
the director of health shall serve a two-year term. The initial 79
member appointed by the director of veterans services and the 80
initial member appointed by the director of environmental 81
protection shall serve a three-year term. Thereafter, all 82
members shall serve three-year terms. 83

(C) Each member shall hold office from the date of 84
appointment until the end of the term for which the member was 85
appointed. An appointing authority shall fill a vacancy of a 86
member appointed by that authority by appointing a new member 87
within sixty days after the vacancy occurs. A member appointed 88
to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term 89
for which the member's predecessor was appointed shall hold 90
office for the remainder of that term. A member shall continue 91
in office subsequent to the expiration date of the member's term 92
until the member's successor takes office. Members of the 93
committee may be reappointed. 94

(D) Members of the committee shall be residents of this 95
state and shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses 96
incurred in attending committee meetings and in the performance 97
of their official duties. 98

(E) The department of natural resources shall furnish 99
clerical, technical, legal, and other services required by the 100
committee in the performance of its duties. 101

Sec. 1546.42. (A) The outdoor Rx program advisory 102
committee, in conjunction with the chief of the division of 103

parks and watercraft, shall develop an outdoor Rx program 104
application form to be used by applicants for program grants. 105
The form shall include a space in which an applicant shall 106
describe the outdoor therapy program for which a grant is 107
sought. An applicant shall submit a complete application form to 108
the committee in order to be eligible for grant consideration. 109

(B) The committee shall review submitted applications and 110
evaluate each application in accordance with division (C) of 111
this section. After evaluating an application, the committee 112
shall forward the application to the chief and shall make a 113
recommendation to the chief as to whether the application should 114
be approved and whether grant money should be disbursed to the 115
applicant. The chief shall make the final decision regarding the 116
issuance of a grant to an applicant. 117

(C) In evaluating applications, the committee shall give 118
preference to proposals that: 119

(1) Utilize veterans for at least fifty per cent of 120
program implementation or administration; 121

(2) Contribute to healthy lifestyles through outdoor 122
recreation and sound nutrition; 123

(3) Maximize the number of participants who can be served, 124
particularly participants who are veterans or who are recovering 125
from substance abuse or physical or mental trauma; 126

(4) Provide for partnership with either public or private 127
entities; 128

(5) Provide for innovative ways to increase the 129
availability and use of outdoor recreation facilities; 130

(6) Include ongoing program evaluation, assessment, and 131

<u>reporting of program effectiveness;</u>	132
<u>(7) Commit matching and in-kind resources;</u>	133
<u>(8) Use state park and other natural resource venues and personnel as a resource;</u>	134
<u>(9) Encourage community involvement;</u>	135
<u>(10) Encourage sound environmental practices;</u>	136
<u>(11) Provide an opportunity to experience the outdoors directly and an opportunity to understand nature and the natural world;</u>	137
<u>(12) Make use of research-based, effective environmental, ecological, agricultural, or other natural resource-based therapy;</u>	138
<u>(13) Demonstrate innovative approaches to outdoor-based therapy;</u>	139
<u>(14) Include any other criteria established by the chief of parks and watercraft.</u>	140
<u>(D) The chief may do all of the following regarding the program:</u>	141
<u>(1) Require applicants to make a matching contribution to a program proposal to be eligible for a grant;</u>	142
<u>(2) Award partial grant money for one or more elements of a proposal;</u>	143
<u>(3) Require grant recipients to submit a report, in accordance with any policies and procedures established by the chief, regarding the success of a funded program and any accounting information;</u>	144
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(4) Take any other actions the chief determines is 158
necessary for the implementation and administration of the 159
outdoor Rx program. 160

Sec. 1546.43. (A) There is hereby created the outdoor Rx 161
program fund consisting of money appropriated to it and gifts, 162
grants, donations, or money from any source. 163

(B) The division of parks and watercraft shall use money 164
in the fund for awarding grants to applicants for purposes of 165
the outdoor Rx program and for the administration of the 166
program. 167

Sec. 1546.44. Not later than November 1, 2021, and 168
annually thereafter, the chief of the division of parks and 169
watercraft shall submit a detailed financial report to the 170
speaker of the house of representatives and to the president of 171
the senate that includes all of the following information 172
pertaining to the twelve months immediately preceding the 173
report's submission: 174

(A) The total amount of money that was deposited into the 175
outdoor Rx program fund created in section 1546.43 of the 176
Revised Code; 177

(B) The total amount of money that was disbursed from the 178
fund; 179

(C) A description of the processes used to determine which 180
applicants were awarded grants under the outdoor Rx program; 181

(D) A description of the process used to disburse such 182
grants; 183

(E) The names of grant recipients and the amount that each 184
recipient was awarded; 185

(F) A description of the outdoor therapy programs that 186
were funded under the outdoor Rx program; 187

(G) Any other information that the chief determines is 188
necessary to include in the report. 189

Section 2. All items in this section are hereby 190
appropriated as designated out of any moneys in the state 191
treasury to the credit of the designated fund. For all 192
appropriations made in this act, those in the first column are 193
for fiscal year 2020 and those in the second column are for 194
fiscal year 2021. The appropriations made in this act are in 195
addition to any other appropriations made for the FY 2020-FY 196
2021 biennium. 197

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A	DNR DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES				
B	General Revenue Fund				
C	GRF	725459	Outdoor Learning Grants	\$ 0	\$ 12,000,000
D	GRF	725460	Outdoor Rx Program	\$ 0	\$ 12,000,000
E	TOTAL GRF General Revenue Fund			\$ 0	\$ 24,000,000
F	TOTAL ALL BUDGET FUND GROUPS			\$ 0	\$ 24,000,000

OUTDOOR LEARNING GRANTS 199

The foregoing appropriation item 725459, Outdoor Learning 200
Grants, shall be used by the Director of Natural Resources to 201

support the Outdoor Learning Grant Program created in section	202
1501.50 of the Revised Code.	203
OUTDOOR RX PROGRAM	204
The foregoing appropriation item 725460, Outdoor Rx	205
Program, shall be used by the Director of Natural Resources to	206
support the Outdoor Rx Program created in section 1546.40 of the	207
Revised Code.	208
Within the limits set forth in this act, the Director of	209
Budget and Management shall establish accounts indicating the	210
source and amount of funds for each appropriation made in this	211
act, and shall determine the form and manner in which	212
appropriation accounts shall be maintained. Expenditures from	213
appropriations contained in this act shall be accounted for as	214
though made in the main operating appropriations act of the	215
133rd General Assembly.	216
The appropriations made in this act are subject to all	217
provisions of H.B. 166 of the 133rd General Assembly that are	218
generally applicable to such appropriations.	219