

**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</u><br><u>distributed;</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 22<br>23                               |
| <u>(4) The number of grants to be awarded, and the duration</u><br><u>and amount of each grant;</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 24<br>25                               |
| <u>(5) The requirements that a grant recipient shall satisfy</u><br><u>in order to renew the grant;</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 26<br>27                               |
| <u>(6) Any other requirements necessary to implement the</u><br><u>grant program.</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 28<br>29                               |
| <u>(C) The director, or the director's designee, shall</u><br><u>develop a curriculum and materials for an outdoor learning</u><br><u>program for fifth and sixth grade students that may be used by</u><br><u>any district that receives a grant under this section. However,</u><br><u>a district shall not be required to use the curriculum and</u><br><u>materials as a condition of receiving or renewing a grant under</u><br><u>this section.</u> | 30<br>31<br>32<br>33<br>34<br>35<br>36 |
| <u>Sec. 1546.40. (A) As used in sections 1546.40 to 1546.44</u><br><u>of the Revised Code:</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 37<br>38                               |
| <u>(1) "Applicant" includes a state agency, local government,</u><br><u>organization, or individual.</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 39<br>40                               |
| <u>(2) "Outdoor therapy program" means a program that</u><br><u>includes any of the following activities:</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 41<br>42                               |
| <u>(a) Outdoor recreation;</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 43                                     |
| <u>(b) Outdoor environmental and ecological studies;</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 44                                     |
| <u>(c) Agricultural resource-based activities;</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 45                                     |

(d) Resource conservation, stewardship, or restoration.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(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 |

(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

198

|   | 1                                   | 2                              | 3    | 4  | 5          |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------|----|------------|
| 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