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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Environmental Learning for Kids Awarded Great Urban Parks Campaign Grant**

*Major grant award will support new Denver park and green infrastructure project*

**Denver, CO., August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016** – Environmental Learning for Kids has been selected by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) to receive a [Great Urban Parks Campaign](#) grant in the amount of \$437,500. The Great Urban Parks Campaign is a collaborative initiative of NRPA and the American Planning Association (APA). Environmental Learning for Kids is one of four organizations awarded the grant, which supports the development of green infrastructure in America's urban parks.

The grant award issued to Environmental Learning for Kids will be used to help build the Montbello Open Space Park project, in partnership with Denver Parks and Recreation and The Trust for Public Land. Utilizing green infrastructure techniques designed to innovatively manage stormwater, the Montbello Open Space Park project will restore 5.52 acres of undeveloped land to a diverse upland native shortgrass prairie benefiting biological resources, and serving as an outdoor educational site for Environmental Learning for Kids' science-based programs and activities.

"I'm so proud that out of more than 200 applicants, Denver was selected as one of four cities in the nation to receive this prestigious award," Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock said. "The partnership and commitment shown by Denver Parks and Recreation, Environmental Learning for Kids and The Trust for Public Land has been tremendous, and it will transform the Montbello Open Space Park into a premiere destination for families, students and visitors to learn, play and discover the richness of our natural environment."

"The Montbello Open Space Park will be an inspiration to our youth and families," said Loretta Pineda, Executive Director for Environmental Learning for Kids. "This project will bring community and nature together to positively impact Montbello's vibrant and diverse neighborhood."

"We are proud to be a part of the creation of Montbello's first open space park," said James R. Petterson, The Trust for Public Land's Colorado State Director. We believe that this project, designed with the local community, will help inspire Montbello's kids and families to get outside, explore and connect with nature, all within a 10-minute walk of their homes."

“We are honored to support this exciting project, as it will help us showcase the environmental, social and economic benefits of green infrastructure in urban parks nationwide,” said Barbara Tulipane, NRPA President and CEO. “Undoubtedly, the project will make a positive difference in the community – providing additional green space for residents to connect with one another and nature.”

“Parks play an important role in creating communities of lasting value,” said Carol Rhea, FAICP, APA President. “Incorporating green infrastructure into new or existing parks will enhance each community, making them more sustainable, equitable, and resilient for current and future generations.”

Green infrastructure in parks provides an affordable and environmental friendly solution to many of the grey infrastructure challenges facing urban areas, while providing increased access to nature and outdoor recreation for residents.

The Great Urban Parks Campaign aims to improve environmental and social outcomes in underserved communities through green infrastructure projects in local parks. Additionally, the Campaign will result in the development of training resources for park, planning and green infrastructure professionals to improve equity through green infrastructure.

Funding for the Great Urban Parks Campaign grant was provided by The JPB Foundation.

For more information about the Great Urban Parks Campaign, visit [www.nrpa.org/greeninfrastructure](http://www.nrpa.org/greeninfrastructure).

To learn more about the benefits of green infrastructure in urban parks, [watch this video](#).

### **Environmental Learning for Kids**

Environmental Learning for Kids (ELK) is a Denver-based, 501(c)3 organization established in 1996 to address the growing need to introduce and educate Colorado’s urban youth about science, leadership, and careers. Nineteen years later, ELK continues to provide strong educational support, good role models, and opportunities for positive community action for youth, helping them to become engaged, productive, and successful members of society. For more information about ELK please visit [www.elkkids.org](http://www.elkkids.org).

### **The Trust for Public Land**

The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come. Millions of people live near of a Trust for Public Land park, garden, or natural area, and millions more visit these sites every year. To support The Trust for Public Land and share why nature matters to you, visit [www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org).

### **City and County of Denver Parks and Recreation**

Denver Parks and Recreation (DPR) facilities are unrivaled in the Rocky Mountain West. The DPR system spans over a 148-year history, from the first park created in 1868 to nearly 20,000 acres of urban parks and mountain parkland today. For more information, visit [www.denvergov.org/parksandrecreation](http://www.denvergov.org/parksandrecreation)

**The National Recreation and Park Association** is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of more than 50,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit [www.NRPA.org](http://www.NRPA.org). For digital access to NRPA’s flagship publication, Parks & Recreation, visit [www.parksandrecreation.org](http://www.parksandrecreation.org).

**The American Planning Association** is an independent, not-for-profit educational organization that provides leadership in the development of vital communities. APA and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, are dedicated to advancing the art, science and profession of good planning – physical,

economic and social — so as to create communities that offer better choices for where and how people work and live. Members of APA help create communities of lasting value and encourage civic leaders, business interests and citizens to play a meaningful role in creating communities that enrich people's lives. APA has offices in Washington, D.C., and Chicago. For more information, visit [www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org).