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## **American Water Charitable Foundation and NRPA Award \$150,000 to Support Local Nature-Based Play Area**

**VOORHEES, N.J., (Sept. 26, 2018)** – The American Water Charitable Foundation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization created by American Water, the nation’s largest publicly traded water and wastewater utility company, today announced it is awarding \$150,000 in grant funding to support a local nature-based play area in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

“This water-centric park improvement project will give residents of all ages the opportunity to enjoy, learn about and appreciate the environment and especially our critical natural resource, water, in a fun and engaging way,” said Laura Martin, president of the American Water Charitable Foundation. “We are proud to further American Water’s ongoing commitment to being good stewards of the environment and bettering the communities where our employees and our customers live, work and play through this grant program.”

The revitalization of East Lake Park in Chattanooga will include new lake front access with an outdoor classroom to host to local schools and groups providing environmental education around water stewardship and provide a gathering spot for the local community to enjoy the lake’s natural beauty. A nature-based playground will also be constructed to engage children and their families.

This project was chosen based on several criteria including water components, play value, education value, proximity to Tennessee American Water’s service area, project parameters, use of natural play materials, and opportunities for American Water employee volunteer involvement.

“East Lake Park is a special place where communities can gather for a peaceful afternoon in the park or give nearby schools educational opportunities for its students,” Chattanooga Mayor Andy Berke said. “We are grateful for the American Water Charitable Foundation and Tennessee American Water providing this grant that will allow us to enhance the park’s natural beauty and amenities.”

This grant is part of the Foundation’s Building Better Communities signature grant program, administered by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The program is designed to enhance the quality of life in the communities the company serves. The program is focused on parks, as they are critical to preserving natural resources that have real economic benefits for communities. Specifically, this initiative concentrates on building or enhancing nature-based playgrounds and play spaces for children, and will connect and educate people on environmental stewardship practices related to water and other natural resources.

“NRPA is proud to partner with the American Water Charitable Foundation to increase opportunities for children and families to experience nature and the outdoors,” said Lori Robertson, NRPA director of conservation. “Ensuring people everywhere have the opportunity to engage in physical activity and explore nature is essential to building healthier, stronger communities and creating the next generation of environmental stewards.”

During the last four years, the Foundation has awarded 12 NRPA grants to American Water communities in California, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and looks forward to adding this project, along with others, to its Building Better Communities initiative.

For more information about the *Building Better Communities* program, visit <https://amwater.com/corp/customers-and-communities/american-water-charitable-foundation/signature-program>.

### **About American Water**

With a history dating back to 1886, American Water is the largest and most geographically diverse U.S. publicly traded water and wastewater utility company. The company employs more than 7,100 dedicated professionals who provide regulated and market-based drinking water, wastewater and other related services to an estimated 14 million people in 45 states and Ontario, Canada. American Water provides safe, clean, affordable and reliable water services to our customers to make sure we keep their lives flowing. For more information, visit [amwater.com](http://amwater.com) and follow American Water on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

### **About the American Water Charitable Foundation**

Established in 2010 with a founding contribution from American Water, the American Water Charitable Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that provides a formal way to demonstrate the company's ongoing commitment to being a good neighbor, citizen, and contributor to the communities where American Water and its employees live, work and operate. The Foundation helps support American Water employee-identified nonprofit endeavors. More information can be found online at [amwater.com/corporate-responsibility](http://amwater.com/corporate-responsibility).

### **About the National Recreation and Park Association**

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that all Americans have access to parks and recreation for health, conservation and social equity. Through its network of 60,000 recreation and park professionals and advocates, 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).

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