

# Rec Sports Spotlight: Rec and parks moving forward on projects

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By Mike Nortrup Times Correspondent

The county's recreation and parks department should have a bit more money to spend this year, and some major park projects will begin moving forward.

Program Open Space (POS) funding from the State of Maryland, which provides about 90 percent of the funding for park acquisition and renovation, was up to \$500,000 this fiscal year which ends June 30, said County Department of Recreation and Parks Administrator Jeff Degitz. He estimates that POS might rise to about \$548,000 in the next fiscal year which begins this July.

That of course is a big improvement over the low of \$166,000 the county got in fiscal 2010 although not remotely as high as the \$3.6 million it received in the heady, pre-recession days of 2007.

The funding increase allows Carroll to move on two major park projects that have rested in the pipeline awhile. Degitz says that construction could begin this year on the first phases of both Krimgold and Leister parks.

The 135-acre **Krimgold Park**, located on Woodbine Road, is a major facility that will ultimately include five ponds, pavilions, walking trails and a children's playground.

There will also be nine ball diamonds and multipurpose fields. The facility will serve primarily the Freedom and Winfield recreation councils, and the fields should be welcome additional resources for their ever-growing recreation programs.

Krimgold's first phase will include roads and parking lots plus passive recreation features that include a pavilion, picnic tables and walking trails. Construction should begin when the weather breaks and the passive features could be open next year.

There will also be four athletic fields. The fields, which require a year for the grass to establish itself, should be available for use in two-three years, Degitz said...

...Meanwhile, the South Carroll area has a continuing need for more ball fields. The county has purchased nine acres along Salem Bottom Road across from the Winfield Elementary School, and Degitz says this parcel could hold two ball diamonds.

He explained that he has discussed with the Winfield Recreation Council the possibility of the Council's raising the \$250,000 to \$300,000 needed to design and build the diamonds. If it is unable to do so, the project would have to await future funding from the county.

Of course the entire structure of the county's recreation budget depends on what the State does with Program Open Space funding. At the moment, the Maryland General Assembly has serious budget issues. It could cut the state budget, and Degitz is aware of the implications.

"Money is still tight. We're reliant on the state, and if it tightens its belt, it filters down to the counties," he said.