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BUREAU OF OUTDOOR RECREATION :

A NEW SOURCE OF FUNDS ?

The BOR may be an alternative for those who were counting on FHA backing

By WILLIAM LOOMIS

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The blow to the construction of golf courses dealt by the Federal Government's Farmers Home Administration cancellation of its grant program (see "Washington Cuts Back FHA Loans," January GOLFDOM, page 69) may have been partially offset by the Interior Department's Bureau of Outdoor Recreation.

The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation each year parcels out to the various states, the District of Columbia and the territories a healthy chunk of money to spend on recreational facilities, including golf courses.

For the Federal Government's fiscal year 1970, now in progress, the BOR has \$58.9 million to give to the states and territories for recreational facilities. This is a whopping \$16 million increase over last year. This money is prorate among those entities that are eligible. For example, New York and California both get around \$3.5 million whereas American Samoa gets \$88,701.

This money can be used for golf courses. But the courses must be public to be eligible for Federal funds. In addition, the Federal money can be used only for the ac-

quisition of land and construction of the course. Clubhouses and other buildings are not eligible for the funds.

Who gets the funds is up to the states and territories. Any group that wants to build a public course must take their case to state recreation authorities. If they approve the proposal, it is sent to the Interior Department in Washington for approval by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation.

The Interior Department is in favor of allowing local authorities to use Federal money to build golf courses. Says one official, "After all they are an important form of recreation and they are attractive if they are landscaped properly."

However, Interior officials concede that in most states construction of golf courses has been undersold to state recreation authorities. Says another Federal official, "Golf courses don't seem to get a very high priority, although many states have gotten money for individuals and communities to construct them.

"Certainly, there is no hostility in Washington to the building of golf courses with these funds, so long as the states approve them," adds the official. □



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