



LWCFCoalition.org

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An Epic Win for Conservation in America

Senate Votes to Make America's Most Important Conservation and Recreation Program Permanent

Washington, D.C. – Conservation leaders from across the country today celebrated the passage of legislation in the US Senate that would permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The provision was included in the Energy Policy Modernization Act, which passed the Senate on a vote of 85-12. Today's Senate action marks the first vote in history by either the House or the Senate to make the landmark conservation law permanent, meaning that, if the bill is enacted into law, every future generation will continue to enjoy the enduring values and unmatched majesty of our national parks, forests, wilderness, coastlines, mountains, working lands, rivers, historic sites and recreation areas.

In addition, the Senate voted decisively against the harmful Lankford amendment that would have placed unnecessary restrictions on land conservation and significantly weakened LWCF's central conservation mission. The amendment was defeated on a bipartisan vote of 34-63.

"This is a great day for conservation in America. The Senate has voted to make America's most important conservation and recreation program permanent, enshrining a simple promise made to the American people more than 50 years ago – that proceeds from public resource extraction will be dedicated to the protection of our greatest natural parks and outdoor places," said Alan Rowsome, Senior Director of Government Relations for Lands at the Wilderness Society and Co-Chair of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Coalition.

"The LWCF Coalition is extremely grateful to Energy Committee Chair Lisa Murkowski and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell for their bipartisan conservation leadership and tenacity," added Rowsome. "Their legislation recognizes the importance of public lands, outdoor recreation and tourism to the health and vitality of both urban and rural communities across America and the key role that LWCF plays in the outdoor economy."

LWCF is the only federal program dedicated to the continued conservation of our national, state, and local parks, forests, wildlife areas, and wilderness. From irreplaceable civil war battlefields to key public outdoor recreation access to working forests, this program has long been at the heart of efforts to protect the lands and waters that sustain public recreation, economic vitality, and community character all across America. More than 1,000 conservation organizations from every state in the union have made permanent LWCF reauthorization the centerpiece of a multi-year advocacy campaign.

As the House and Senate work to resolve differences between their two energy bills, the LWCF Coalition will work with Senate and House Champions on both sides of the aisle to ensure that LWCF's permanent reauthorization is signed into law this year.

About the Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, signed into law on September 3, 1964, established a dedicated and permanent means for the conservation and protection of America's irreplaceable natural, historic, cultural and outdoor landmarks. LWCF is the only federal program dedicated to the continued conservation of our national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, wilderness, civil war battlefields, as well as creating and developing state and local parks. It is rightly characterized as America's most important conservation program.

LWCF does not use any taxpayer dollars – it is funded using a small portion of revenues from offshore oil and gas royalty payments. Outdoor recreation, conservation and historic preservation activities support 9.4 million jobs and contribute more than a trillion dollars annually to the U.S. economy.

About the LWCF Coalition

The LWCF Coalition is the umbrella group of more than 1,000 state and local land owners, small businesses, ranchers, sportsmen, veterans, outdoor recreationists and conservation organizations working to protect America's public lands and safeguard our shared outdoor heritage for future generations.

The Coalition is united in its advocacy for the reauthorization and full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which will ensure the continued conservation of our national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, wilderness, civil war battlefields, as well as state and local parks. For more information on LWCF and the places in each state protected by LWCF funds, visit www.lwcfcoalition.org.