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News for Immediate Release

April 14, 2011

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Conrad Anker Asks Congress to Reverse Cuts in Land and Water Conservation Fund

More than 6.5 million U.S. jobs dependent on LWCF's investment in public lands and water

April 14, 2011...Washington, DC - [Conrad Anker](#), world-renowned alpine climber -- who discovered lost explorer George Mallory's body on Mt. Everest -- will testify before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, the Environment and Related Agencies on April 15 in support of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The fund is facing increased budget cuts. Supported by offshore oil and gas leasing revenues – not taxpayers' dollars – the LWCF ensures all Americans have access to local community parks and playgrounds and the vast expanses of federal public lands.

“LWCF enhances access to the outdoors for active recreation and keeps the doors open to the outdoor industry, which contributes \$730 billion to the economy each year,” said Conrad Anker, who manages the athlete department for [The North Face](#) and appears on behalf of the [Land and Water Conservation Fund Coalition](#), a broad-based coalition of conservation, recreation, environment, business, historic and cultural organizations working to secure full and dedicated funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

“If we are serious about creating jobs and getting the economy back on track, conservation spending on LWCF is not only wise, but an essential investment,” said Anker. “It reaps immediate and tangible benefits in our communities across the tourism, service and outdoor recreation sectors.”

The outdoor industry is one of America's fastest growing sectors. In addition to contributing more than \$730 billion to the American economy each year, it generates \$88 billion in annual state and federal tax revenue. More than 6.5 million American jobs are supported by the active outdoor recreation economy.

Anker's testimony in support of LWCF comes at a critical time, as Congress is preparing to write the FY 2012 budget for federal agencies that oversee natural resource and outdoor recreation programs.

In the recently negotiated FY 2011 budget, LWCF experienced significant cuts that will affect outdoor recreation projects and jobs in communities across the country.

Anker will testify in favor of reversing these cuts.

“In this time of fiscal challenges, LWCF is an investment that simply cannot be deferred. Not only does it protect our most cherished, singularly American places, but at the same time it produces enormous, direct, tangible economic returns to communities across the country,” said Anker.

“As we all commit ourselves to America’s economic recovery, as LWCF’s offshore oil and gas revenues continue to flow into the treasury, and as land-use pressures increasingly jeopardize the economic, recreational, and other public values of our nation’s outdoor resources, now is the time for LWCF. I therefore respectfully ask that you restore the cuts to this vital program.”

“The outdoor industry is fortunate to have a strong advocate in Conrad Anker on behalf of preserving recreation venues for all Americans,” said Amy Roberts, vice president of government affairs at [Outdoor Industry Association](#). “LWCF touches every community in America, investing in our national recreation infrastructure, local and urban parks, and providing access to our public lands, rivers, and beaches, so important to getting families, especially underserved youth, active and outdoors. The LWCF stateside program alone has funded over 41,000 projects that promote healthy, close-to-home recreation.”

Created by Congress in 1965, LWCF was a bipartisan commitment to safeguard natural areas, water resources and our cultural heritage, and to provide recreation opportunities to all Americans. National parks like Rocky Mountain and the Great Smoky Mountains, as well as national wildlife refuges, national forests, Civil War battlefields, cultural and historic sites, rivers and lakes, working ranches and forests, community parks, trails, and ball fields in every one of our 50 states are permanently protected for Americans to enjoy thanks to federal funds from LWCF.

“Even in these tough economic times, when families need to cut back on spending, people are willing to invest in outdoor recreation,” said Anker. “Families understand that being outdoors is a wise investment that reaps benefits to their healthy and well being. In turn, this spending supports jobs and drives economic vibrancy in our communities.”

[The Land and Water Conservation Fund Coalition](#) is an informal partnership working together to support full and dedicated funding for LWCF. The coalition includes hundreds of local, state and national business, recreation, private landowner and conservation organizations across the country. Congress created the LWCF in 1964 to guarantee America’s natural, historical and outdoor recreation heritage. In 1968, Congress authorized an income stream for LWCF from offshore oil and gas leasing revenues. The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, the Environment, and Related Agencies is chaired by Representative Mike Simpson (R-ID).

About Conrad Anker:

In May of 1999, as a member of the Mallory & Irvine Research Expedition, Conrad discovered the body of George Mallory, the preeminent Everest explorer of the 1920s. The disappearance of Mallory and Sandy Irvine on their summit bid in June 1924 is one of climbing’s great mysteries, and Conrad’s discovery and analysis of the find has shed new light on the pioneering climbs of the early expeditions. Conrad graduated from the University of Utah and lives in Bozeman, Montana, with his

wife and three sons. He is a board member of the Conservation Alliance, the Alex Lowe Charitable Foundation and the Montana State University Leadership Institute. Conrad has worked with The North Face for 27 years and focuses his efforts on outdoor participation, youth engagement and corporate sustainability. Conrad has been recognized for his work and climbing ability by the American Alpine Club with the Underhill Award (2002) and the David Brower Conservation Award (2010). In 2008 the University of Utah bestowed Conrad with the Distinguished Alumni Award.

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