

Florida

Our Land, Our Water, Our Heritage



LWCF Funded Places in Florida

Federal Units

- Apalachicola NF
- Archie Carr NWR
- Big Cypress NP
- Biscayne NP
- Canaveral NS
- Cedar Keys NWR
- Chassahowitzka NWR
- Crocodile Lake NWR
- Crystal River NWR
- Everglades Headwaters NWR & Conservation Area
- Everglades NP
- Florida Panther NWR
- Fort Caroline NM
- Great White Heron NWR
- Gulf Islands NS
- Hobe Sound NWR
- J. N. Ding Darling NWR
- Lake Wales Ridge NWR
- Lake Woodruff NWR
- Lower Suwannee NWR
- Matlacha Pass NWR
- Merritt Island NWR
- National Key Deer Refuge
- Ocala NF
- Okefenokee NWR
- Osceola NF
- Pelican Island NWR
- Pine Island NWR
- Pinellas NWR
- St. Johns NWR
- St. Marks NWR
- St. Vincent NWR
- Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve

Federal Total \$673,587,225

LWCF Success in Florida

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has provided funding to help protect some of Florida's most special places and ensure recreational access for hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities. Florida has received approximately \$861.4 million in LWCF funding over the past five decades, protecting places such as Everglades National Park, Big Cypress National Preserve, Canaveral National Seashore, Florida National Scenic Trail, and Ding Darling and St. Marks National Wildlife Refuges.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP) grants are also funded under LWCF, to help protect working forests. The FLP cost-share funding supports timber sector jobs and sustainable forest operations while enhancing wildlife habitat, water quality and recreation. For example, the FLP contributed to places such as the Northeast Florida Timberlands in Clay County. The FLP assists states and private forest owners to maintain working forest lands through matching grants for permanent conservation easement and fee acquisitions, and has leveraged approximately \$25.3 million in federal funds to invest in Florida's forests, while protecting air and water quality, wildlife habitat, access for recreation and other public benefits provided by forests.

LWCF state assistance grants have further supported hundreds of projects across Florida's state and local parks including Cape Florida State Recreation Area in Dade County, Caspersen Beach in Sarasota County, and Paynes Prairie State Preserve in Alachua County. Additionally, the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program (ORLP), has annual funding opportunities for city park projects in economically disadvantaged areas.

Economic Benefits

Active outdoor recreation is an important part of Florida's economy. The Bureau of Economic Analysis has found that outdoor recreation generates \$52.4 billion in value added to Florida's economy, 465,853 homegrown jobs, and accounts for 3.6% of the state's economy. Further, the U.S. Census reports that each year 7 million people hunt, fish, or enjoy wildlife-watching in Florida, contributing over \$8.1 billion in wildlife recreation spending to the state economy.

State Programs

Forest Legacy Program	\$25,342,709
Habitat Conservation (Sec. 6)	\$12,844,679
Stateside	\$149,638,203

Total **\$861,412,816**

LWCF is a simple idea: that a portion of offshore drilling fees should be used to protect important land and water for all Americans. These are not taxpayer dollars.

Unfortunately, for 55 years the promise of LWCF was broken as \$22 billion was diverted from the program.

The **Great American Outdoors Act** ended the diversion and ensures that LWCF 's permanently authorized \$900 million is used for conservation and recreation projects each year.

LWCF supports the acquisition of land and conservation easements to **protect our national parks, wildlife refuges, forests, trails, and BLM sites**, grants funds to the states for local and state park needs, protects critical wildlife habitat, watersheds and recreational access, and conserves working farms, ranches and forestlands that enhance local economies.



www.lwcfcoalition.org

LWCF in Florida

Big Cypress National Preserve and Everglades National Park

In FY 2012, Big Cypress National Preserve and Everglades National Park received \$30 million in LWCF funding. Funding for Big Cypress will protect land that is essential to the water quality of South Florida. Through its protection and restoration as wetlands, this land will improve water quality by acting as a protective buffer between natural and urban areas and will also serve as a water storage area. Funding for the Everglades will ensure the continuation of the Florida Everglades Restoration Project, a massive undertaking by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other stakeholders to restore the natural flow of water in the Everglades ecosystem. Restoring this piece of America's heritage has provided crucial protection to wildlife, increased access to outdoor recreation, promoted smart growth by reducing sprawl, and helped local economies through increased tourism revenues.

Fiscal Year 2025 Agency LWCF Project List for Florida

Agency	Project	Amount	Delegation
USFWS	Everglades to Gulf Conservation Area (proposed)	\$2,000,000	Rubio, Scott/Webster, Buchanan, Steube, Donalds, Diaz-Balart
USFWS	Everglades Headwaters NWR/CA	\$8,000,000	Rubio, Scott/Soto, Donalds
USFWS	St. Marks NWR	\$1,500,000	Rubio, Scott/Dunn
USFWS	Okefenokee NWR*	\$5,000,000	Rubio, Scott/Cammack
FLP	Avalon Woodlands Ravines	\$3,705,000	Rubio, Scott/Dunn



Status of the Land and Water Conservation Fund

In August 2020, permanent, dedicated funding for LWCF was secured through the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) – ensuring that each year the \$900 million deposited into the LWCF account is directed to conservation and recreation priorities; however, in FY24 Congress backtracked on that promise when they rescinded \$94 million of unobligated LWCF funding (\$89M from the NPS State & Local Assistance Program & \$5M from BLM). GAOA has not eliminated the backlog of LWCF priorities that are waiting in line as nearly all LWCF programs remain oversubscribed - each year the LWCF supplemental project list includes about \$200 million in urgent needs that are authorized to use this funding. To support these critical projects, unspent LWCF funding should be reallocated to the states by the Secretary of the Interior (per the LWCF Act) or reprogrammed by Congress to LWCF sub-programs with outstanding funding need. If funding is rescinded rather than reallocated or reprogrammed, landowners and communities miss out on LWCF funding, and these critical priorities could be lost forever.

FY25 Budget Update: The Biden Administration's FY25 budget proposal included detailed LWCF priority project lists and balanced program allocations, as well supplemental project lists over and above LWCF's current \$900 million funding level. [Click here to view a map of past LWCF projects](#)