



LWCFCoalition.com

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LWCF Coalition Statement on FY20 Appropriations

WASHINGTON – *The following statement can be attributed to Jonathan Asher, Government Relations Director at The Wilderness Society and a spokesman for the LWCF Coalition:*

“The \$495M proposed for LWCF in Fiscal Year 2020 represents the highest appropriation for LWCF in the last 17 years and is once again a firm rejection of the President’s harmful proposal to fund the program at less than zero. These dollars will benefit communities across the country with urgent needs for conservation and recreation access. The bill also includes important language to ensure the administration provides Congress with accurate and timely information about priority projects. We are sincerely grateful to the many members of Congress who have worked tirelessly to increase LWCF funding for the communities and public lands that depend on this cornerstone conservation program.

“At the same time, we are disappointed that nearly half of all LWCF dollars deposited in the trust fund this year will again be diverted elsewhere. These funds are vital to address now-or-never needs ranging from local parks to our nation’s most iconic crown-jewel landscapes, and the ongoing diversion of these funds underscores the critical need for full and dedicated LWCF funding. With a growing need for conservation funding to address critical natural resource challenges and expand access to the outdoors, continued underfunding of LWCF is short-changing the American people.

“By voting overwhelmingly earlier this year to reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund permanently at \$900 million annually, Congress displayed its strong commitment to uphold the promise to invest in the conservation and recreation America’s communities need. LWCF funds have been specifically put aside from offshore oil and gas drilling royalties, intended as a reasonable conservation offset for energy development. The LWCF Coalition will continue to work with our many champions on Capitol Hill to pass the LWCF Permanent Funding Act, ensuring that these funds will at long last be used for their intended purpose, honoring that promise to all Americans.”

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About the Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is America's most important conservation program, responsible for protecting parks, trails, wildlife refuges and recreation areas at the federal, state and local level. For more than 50 years, it has provided critical funding for land and water conservation projects, access to recreation including hunting and fishing, and the continued historic preservation of our nation's iconic landmarks from coast-to-coast.

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 contribute more than \$887 billion annually to the U.S. economy, supporting 7.6 million jobs.

About the LWCF Coalition

The LWCF Coalition is comprised of more than 1,000 state and regional conservation and recreation organizations of all sizes, land owners, small businesses, ranchers, sportsmen, veterans, the outdoor recreation industry and conservationists working together to protect America's public lands and safeguard our shared outdoor heritage for future generations.

The Coalition is united in its advocacy for full, dedicated 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, working lands and state and local parks. For more information on LWCF and the places in each state that LWCF funds have protected, visit www.lwcfcoalition.org.