



LWCFCoalition.org

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Congress Inexplicably Lets Critical Conservation Program Expire

Failure to Act on LWCF Needlessly Puts Vital American Landscapes and Community Priorities at Risk

WASHINGTON – Congress today failed to save the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) – America’s most important program for protecting parks, forests, watersheds and open spaces – from expiring, despite broad bipartisan majorities supporting permanent reauthorization and repeated calls for congressional leaders to take action. Tom Cors, Director of Government Relations for Lands at The Nature Conservancy and a national spokesman for the LWCF Coalition issued the following statement:

“With this expiration, Congress has broken its longstanding commitment to all Americans and the places we love, a promise made over 50 years ago to reinvest offshore energy revenues in conservation and recreation access for all. This is a sad day for everyone who cares about our national parks and public lands, wildlife, trails, irreplaceable historic sites, and public access to outdoor recreation.

“For more than 50 years, LWCF has been our best tool for protecting treasured outdoor spaces from irreversible damage and loss, creating recreation opportunities that benefit communities, improve public health and boost local economies. All these benefits come at no cost to the American taxpayer, making it not only effective, but universally popular.

“Despite these diverse benefits and the heroic efforts of a bipartisan group of lawmakers in both chambers to get LWCF permanent reauthorization and dedicated, full funding, the failure of Congress of act now will needlessly put these lands and waters at greater risk. This is an avoidable crisis, and one that can be easily remedied. There are majorities in both the House and Senate who would vote for a permanent solution for LWCF if leaders would simply allow a vote. Bipartisan champions of the program, as well as thousands of constituents and stakeholders across the country, have repeatedly called on congressional leaders to take action, and yet the clock has run out.

“The outdoor recreation industry, governors, mayors, sportsmen, small business owners, conservation leaders, landowners, ranchers, farmers, and millions of Americans are united in the

push for permanent reauthorization and full, dedicated funding for LWCF because it works. We will not stop until Congress abides by the will of the people. We will not stop until we save LWCF.”

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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, wildlife refuges and recreation areas at the federal, state and local levels. For 50 years, it has provided critical funding for land and water conservation projects, recreational construction and activities and the continued historic preservation 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 a trillion dollars annually to the U.S. economy, supporting 9.4 million jobs.

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, historical preservationists 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 conserved using LWCF funds, visit www.lwcfcoalition.org.