



Our Land, Our Water, Our Heritage

AMERICA DEPENDS ON THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE FULL AND DEDICATED FUNDING OF THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) was created by Congress in 1965 and is authorized to receive \$900 million annually from a portion of the federal revenues from oil and gas leasing of the Outer Continental Shelf. Unfortunately, most of these funds have been diverted elsewhere and the program has been woefully underfunded. With America losing 3 million acres of land to development each year, and on the heels of the disastrous oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, now is the time to keep the promise of LWCF and guarantee full and dedicated funding of at least \$900 million annually.

Americans strongly support protecting our land and water. A May 2010 national public opinion survey found that more than three-quarters (77%) support funding LWCF at \$900 million a year. In addition, 86% of the public believes revenues from federal oil and gas leasing should continue to be used to fund the LWCF, and a striking 85% say this is more important today in light of the spill in the Gulf of Mexico.



www.lwcfcoalition.org

S.2747, the Land and Water Conservation Authorization and Funding Act of 2009

The Land and Water Conservation Authorization and Funding Act of 2009, S.2747, was introduced on November 6, 2009 by Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) and Senator Max Baucus (D-MT). This legislation is simple and straightforward: it would permanently reauthorize the existing Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) that will otherwise expire in 2015, and make \$900 million available annually to LWCF as dedicated funding.

H.R. 3534, the Consolidated Land, Energy and Aquatic Act of 2009

The Consolidated Land, Energy and Aquatic Resources (CLEAR) Act, H.R. 3534, was introduced on September 8, 2009 by Representative Nick Rahall (D-WV), Chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee. While addressing a wide range of energy issues, the bill's Title IV provision would permanently authorize the existing Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), making \$900 million available annually to LWCF as dedicated funding.

Both legislative vehicles, S. 2747 and Title IV of H.R. 3534 are intended to finally fulfill the promise made decades ago for LWCF to provide a consistent and adequate source of ongoing federal investment in parks, forests, wildlife refuges, trails, recreation lands, and historical and cultural resources across the nation.

Comprehensive Energy Legislation and LWCF

In light of the tragic oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, Congressional leaders have expressed added urgency to enact comprehensive energy legislation this session. As the principal source of federal dollars for protecting land and ensuring America's recreational heritage, full and dedicated funding for the LWCF should be included in any energy package considered by Congress. In fact, LWCF is the only account intended to provide a specific conservation benefit from federal energy development. Now, more than ever, is the time to ensure that LWCF becomes a true dedicated fund to prevent these receipts from being diverted to unrelated spending and protect our land, water and recreation heritage.

For more information about these legislative initiatives, including current cosponsors and supporting organizations, see www.lwcfcoalition.org.

There is near unanimity that the Land and Water Conservation Fund is more important in light of the recent Gulf oil spill.



■ More important ■ Less important



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A family playing in Escondido, California



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Child playing along the Chattahoochee River, GA



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The LWCF federal program has protected millions of acres across our national parks, national wildlife refuges, national forests, national historic and scenic trails, wild and scenic river corridors, and Bureau of Land Management lands. The LWCF state assistance program has helped to provide thousands of state and local parks, trails, and recreation facilities for Americans to enjoy in every state in the nation.

The Value of the LWCF Investments:

- Local economies are made more vibrant and resilient by the natural and cultural amenities and the abundant recreational opportunities provided by proximity to parks and public lands.
- Active outdoor recreation including hunting, fishing, camping, climbing, hiking, paddling, backcountry skiing, mountain biking, wildlife viewing, and other activities contributes a total of \$730 billion annually to the economy, supporting 6.5 million jobs (1 of every 20 jobs in the U.S.) according to the Outdoor Industry Foundation.
- Outdoors activity promotes good health, mitigates obesity, connects families and communities, and enhances the quality of life for all Americans.
- Protection of water supplies the old-fashioned way through watershed, forest, and wetland conservation, is the most cost-effective way to ensure clean and adequate water supplies for communities.
- Hunting and fishing is an economic building block in our national economy generating more than 1.6 million jobs and more than \$2 billion annually in business earnings and wages. In 2006, more than \$70 billion was generated in sportsmen-related retail sales, according to the Congressional Sportsman Foundation.
- Land acquisition and protection along the forested-development edge of our communities is an essential tool to reduce fire-fighting costs and allow agencies to implement better fire prevention management.
- As human activities accelerate the impacts of climate change, we must conserve and connect large, healthy ecosystems and habitats to make sure that biological systems stay resilient.
- The protection of America's most treasured natural places benefits our national heritage and conserves them for our children and grandchildren.

For more information:

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