

Good morning Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Grijalva and members of the committee.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Bill Bryan, and I am the Director of State Parks for the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. In addition, I am secretary-treasurer of the National Association of State Park Directors (NASPD), and I serve on the board of the Missouri Park and Recreation Association. I also am Governor Nixon's duly-appointed state liaison officer responsible for overseeing the Stateside Assistance Program under the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

I am here today to support restoring a commitment of 45% of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) appropriation to the Stateside Assistance Program. This commitment will help strengthen communities, enhance economic development, and make Americans happier and healthier.

I have worked for the State of Missouri in a variety of capacities supporting public lands for more than 25 years – including six years in my current position. In that role, I have helped Missouri communities assess their outdoor recreation needs and assisted them with the grant process. I have been responsible for oversight of project construction and with follow-up to ensure the 6(f) boundaries stay intact. I've participated in many groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings. But most importantly, I am a Missourian who understands the importance of affordable, close to home outdoor recreation opportunities. These opportunities in rural central Missouri

where I live and work, as well as those throughout our state, help me connect with my family through outdoor activities, and I want to make sure the same precious experiences are available for many generations to come.

My experience with state and local parks has helped me understand how important they are not only locally, but also nationally. Parks offer affordable opportunities for relaxing; spending meaningful time with family and friends; building healthy bodies and minds; and bringing communities together for celebration, reflection and healing. I have come to understand the role of our parks in preserving and conserving our delicate environment and in contributing to the economy of our cities, counties and states. I enjoy my work because nearly every day, I get to watch people enjoying outdoor activities like playing, relaxing, holding hands, strolling, wildlife-watching, biking, fishing, exercising, camping and watching a sunset.

As our state's liaison officer for the State Assistance Program, I recognize and appreciate the vital role this program plays in support of our nation, states and communities. For state and local governments, the LWCF State Assistance Program is the only federal matching grant program targeted to outdoor recreation that funds recreation projects like ballfields, playgrounds and swimming pools. The funds help develop, acquire and improve outdoor recreation in parks and protected areas. Since 1965, the LWCF State Assistance Program has supported more than 42,000 projects that run the gamut from open space to trails, neighborhood playgrounds, swimming pools, camping facilities and ball fields. The

State Assistance Program has benefitted nearly every county in the U.S.

States select high-priority state and local projects using criteria from their Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans, or SCORPs, as required in the LWCF Act. The SCORP's are one of the many ways to assure that state and local stakeholders along with constituents help shape the recreation landscape within the State Assistance Program. Each state is required to conduct an Open Project Selection Process (OPSP). OPSP, which is developed by each state, provides public knowledge of the grant process, ensures all state and local applicants are aware of the availability and process of obtaining equitable LWCF grants, provides a measureable link through published selection criteria and assures the distribution of LWCF assistance. Statewide plans, along with the state's ability to partner with key decision-makers like governors, county commissioners, city managers, local parks and recreation professionals and stakeholders like mothers and fathers, trail and bike enthusiasts and volunteer support groups, are crucial to ensuring that the needs of each state and community are met.

The State Assistance Program funds are allocated through the National Park Service, for specific projects, and state and local project sponsors must provide at least a 50 percent match. As a result, state and local sponsors are invested in the outcome of each project. The stateside money is apportioned to the individual states using an established formula. The formula allocates some of the money on an equal basis across all states and territories,

with the remainder apportioned based on needs; needs are determined, in part, based on the state population. Projects are then tracked until completion and inspected every five years by the State Liaison Officer (SLO) or his/her designee to assure compliance in perpetuity. Originally 60% of the funds in LWCF were specifically designated for state and local projects. The remaining 40% was for federal agency land acquisition. In 1976, LWCF was changed to remove the 60% guarantee of funding for the State Assistance Program. Since FY 2004, the State Assistance Program has averaged only 12.5% of the total appropriation, while the federal land acquisition and other federal programs have received 87.5% of the funding.

While every state has its own stories about the importance of the Land and Water Conservation Fund State Assistance Program, I want to share a little about our experiences in Missouri.

Since 1965, the State Assistance Program provided approximately \$85 Million to support over 1300 projects reaching every Missouri county. Over the years, the amount appropriated to the State Assistance Program has dwindled. Missouri was allocated \$804,122 in FY14 and \$793,056 in FY15. However, the National Park Service reported the average annual need for recreation facilities development in Missouri over the last three fiscal years was \$558,202,913. Accordingly, the LWCF distribution is about 0.1% of the total need.

The State Assistance Program has helped fund projects such as:

- Parks and playgrounds critical to rebuilding the devastated Joplin community following the deadly F5 tornado in 2011.
- The Ava Skatepark which provides relevant recreation for rural youth in a small Ozark community.
- Inclusive playgrounds accessible for people with different levels of ability in communities large and small across the state.
- The Northwest Missouri Outdoor Classroom at Northwest Missouri State University.

These projects and challenges are not unique to Missouri. Urban communities like Wichita, in neighboring Kansas, would benefit from the creation of the Community Improvement through Innovation, Engagement, and Support Program, which would aid park development and open spaces for urban citizens. In 2011, the City of Wichita completed a comprehensive plan and a detailed analysis of its park and recreation acquisition and development needs. During the SCORP process, comparisons were made with the rest of the state's recreation needs. The City of Wichita ranked 12% lower than the remainder of the state. Wichita is an example of how the State Assistance Program funds are helping to create new outdoor recreation opportunities and stimulate economic vitality in or near urban areas.

In conclusion, on behalf of the State of Missouri and the National Association of State Park Directors, the allocation

of 45% to the LWCF State Assistance Program is a positive step toward re-invigorating the original intent of this landmark legislation. This increased share means that potentially over \$300 million more--which would be matched locally--would be spent around the nation on state and local projects to serve rural and urban constituents alike, support economic development, and help Americans live happier, healthier lives

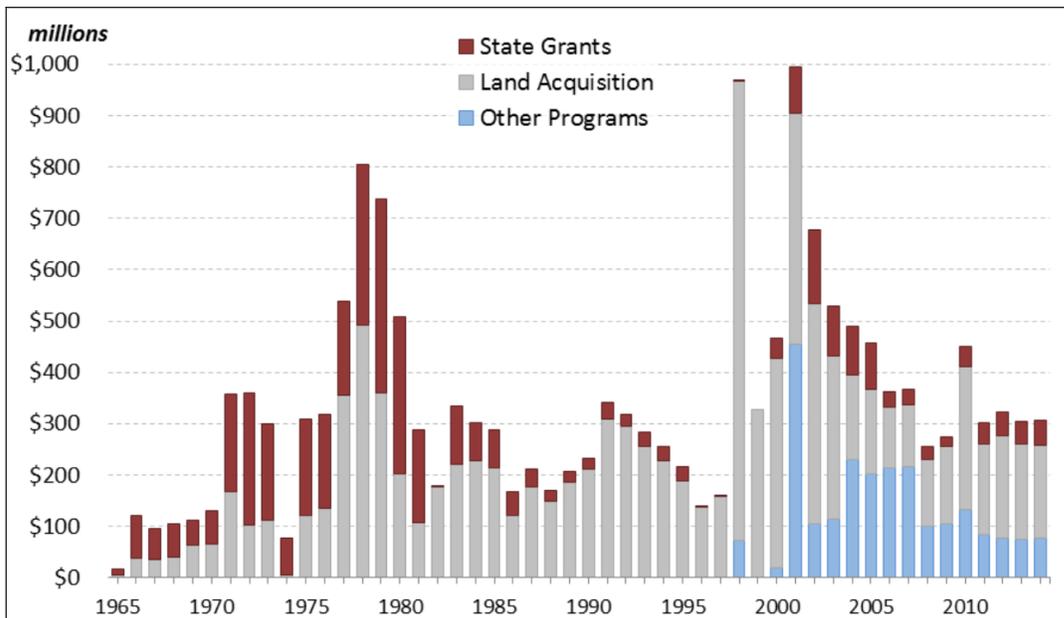
Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

Attachment 1

Distribution of LWCF Appropriations. This chart readily identifies the decline of state assistance grants since LWCF was established in 1965. It is taken from Land and Water Conservation Fund: Overview, Funding History, and Issues. <https://www.fas.org/sqp/crs/misc/RL33531.pdf> Congressional Research Service, Carol Hardy Vincent, October 2014. It provides a thorough and objective review of LWCF.

Land and Water Conservation Fund: Overview, Funding History, and Issues

Figure I. LWCF Appropriations, FY1965-FY2014



Source: The primary source for these data is the DOI Budget Office, at <http://www.doi.gov/budget/budget-data.cfm>. See the entry for "Land and Water Conservation Fund Receipts: MS Excel Spreadsheet." Data updated on March 5, 2014.

Notes: The graph does not reflect \$76 million provided for the transition quarter from July 1, 1976, to September 30, 1976. Also, dollars are not adjusted for inflation.

Attachment 2: The Unmet Need for LWCF State Assistance Program:

Here is the statement on unmet need produced and published in the most recent National Park Service Annual Report on the State Assistance Grant Program published in 2012 (these figures were reported by states and territories to NPS). This would indicate that any argument that states would not be able to match, spend and manage dramatic increase in LWCF State Assistance is not valid:

The National Need for LWCF Funding \$18.58 Billion in 2012 for state and local parks agencies.

PARK AND RECREATION NEEDS

THE NATIONAL NEED FOR LWCF FUNDING

\$18.58 BILLION IN 2012

Every year, the National Park Service asks each state partner to estimate the total cost of all needed outdoor recreation facility development and parkland acquisition projects at the state and local level that cannot be met with available funding.

With this chart, we seek to demonstrate a consistent picture of this national demand. Forty-nine of our 56 partners reported that available funding met less than 10 percent of their financial need (three were non-reporting). The total national need was \$18,579,534,260 in 2012.

Estimating the unmet need remains a work in progress. The NPS continues to encourage states to look beyond the simple sum of unfunded outdoor recreation projects submitted for LWCF grants in a given year to also include unfunded recreation projects from other sources that would be eligible for LWCF had they applied.

"The positive impact of these projects is tremendous. They help our communities in so many ways, from getting kids outdoors to bringing in more visitors, which in turn helps our local restaurants and stores, to, putting it simply, just making people happy."

Kevin Stankiewicz, Recreation & Trails Grant Coordinator,
North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department

Photo: Blood Run Nature Area, South Dakota
Credit: Mick Zerr

Photo: Colver Bluff State Park, Kansas
Credit: Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism

2012 LWCF UNMET NEEDS

State	2012 LWCF Apportionment*	2012 Unmet Need**
Alabama	\$661,462	\$75,790,000
Alaska	\$382,840	\$49,587,589
Arizona	\$840,738	\$162,700,000
Arkansas	\$527,176	\$231,716,346
California	\$3,611,990	\$4,850,000,000
Colorado	\$736,226	\$625,000,000
Connecticut	\$641,555	\$87,000,000
Delaware	\$402,433	\$12,250,000
Florida	\$1,883,182	\$32,129,870
Georgia	\$1,048,483	\$123,000,000
Hawaii	\$447,771	\$2,000,000
Idaho	\$442,394	\$4,222,729
Illinois	\$1,455,215	\$669,382,200
Indiana	\$832,300	\$510,000,000
Iowa	\$553,685	\$249,500,000
Kansas	\$553,236	\$523,366,800
Kentucky	\$631,891	\$9,000,000
Louisiana	\$694,679	\$215,068,823
Maine	\$413,507	\$34,500,000
Maryland	\$817,632	\$79,909,000
Massachusetts	\$917,810	\$17,229,602
Michigan	\$1,142,556	\$370,000,000
Minnesota	\$739,427	\$128,500,000
Mississippi	\$528,326	\$90,000,000
Missouri	\$788,962	\$2,093,050,638
Montana	\$398,392	\$200,000,000
Nebraska	\$471,385	\$98,500,000
Nevada	\$541,960	\$15,300,000
New Hampshire	\$425,179	\$103,555,400
New Jersey	\$1,127,109	\$301,567,215
New Mexico	\$490,219	\$239,400,000
New York	\$2,035,726	\$1,345,964,742
North Carolina	\$986,125	\$1,378,948,051
North Dakota	\$378,419	\$100,000,000
Ohio	\$1,284,987	\$23,714,406
Oklahoma	\$608,113	\$4,580,640
Oregon	\$635,687	\$5,314,495
Pennsylvania	\$1,369,972	\$24,300,000
Rhode Island	\$426,717	\$4,722,500
South Carolina	\$653,074	\$220,000,000
South Dakota	\$385,952	\$26,250,000
Tennessee	\$788,841	\$1,500,000,000
Texas	\$2,302,679	\$86,723,981
Utah	\$552,373	\$376,000,000
Vermont	\$369,515	\$10,000,000
Virginia	\$941,715	\$870,126,170
Washington	\$871,242	\$241,200,000
West Virginia	\$452,475	\$44,195,063
Wisconsin	\$764,558	\$15,000,000
Wyoming	\$371,921	\$500,000
American Samoa	\$50,015	NR
District of Columbia	\$98,619	\$20,000,000
Guam	\$50,043	NR
Northern Marianas	\$50,014	NR
Puerto Rico	\$611,467	\$20,250,000
Virgin Islands	\$50,028	\$58,518,000
TOTAL	\$42,239,997	\$18,579,534,260

Attachment 3: LWCF State Assistance Program Fact Sheet

P A R K A N D R E C R E A T I O N F A C T S H E E T

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF) STATE AND LOCAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

LWCF: LWCF State and Local Assistance BACKGROUND

In 1965, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) was enacted to help preserve, develop and ensure access to outdoor recreation facilities for the purpose of strengthening the health of U.S. citizens.

Congress created LWCF to meet the nation's growing need for access to close-to-home outdoor recreation. The money for the fund comes not from taxes, but primarily from oil and gas lease revenues derived from federal lands. This helps balance the environmental impacts associated with resource extraction by ensuring that new parks and open spaces are accessible to all Americans.

Lasting Impact on Local Economies and Quality of Life

The **LWCF State Assistance Program** requires states and local communities to match the federal investment dollar-for-dollar. Since 1965, the **LWCF State Assistance Program** has:

- Provided over \$4 billion to states, territories and local communities. Combined with the local match, **LWCF State Assistance** funds have yielded a total investment of more than \$8 billion.

NRPA POLICY POSITION

- Support the reauthorization of the LWCF, including full and permanent funding.
- Protect the interests of states and local communities by providing fair and equitable treatment for the **State Assistance Program** of no less than 40% guaranteed funding for formula grants to the states for active outdoor recreation. This is the same amount required by law to be allocated to the LWCF federal land acquisition program.
- In absence of authorizing legislation, exercise discretionary appropriations authority to allocate at least 40 percent of the total LWCF funding in FY16 to the **State Assistance Program**, with a dedicated amount being provided to the "Outdoor Recreation Legacy Program" competitive grant initiative.
- .

- Funded more than 42,000 local and state projects in every county in America.

That Continued Impact is At-Risk

- LWCF funding to states and local communities has steadily declined from \$376 million in 1979 to \$45 million in FY14.

- From 1965–1976, 60 percent of LWCF appropriations went to the **State Assistance Program**.
- Since 1988, only 13 percent of LWCF appropriations have gone to the **State Assistance Program**.

WHY CONGRESS SHOULD ACT

Creating Jobs and Stimulating the Economy

The outdoor recreation industry is one of the nation’s most important economic drivers.

- The **LWCF State Assistance Program** stimulates active outdoor recreation, which contributes \$646 billion annually to the economy, supporting 6.1 million jobs, as well as generating nearly \$40 billion in federal tax revenue.¹
- More American jobs depend on trail sports (768,000) than there are lawyers (728,000) in the U.S.¹
- Americans spend more annually on bicycling gear and trips (\$81 billion) than they do on airplane tickets and fees (\$51 billion).¹
- Americans spend nearly as much on snow sports (\$53 billion) as they do on Internet access (\$54 billion).¹
- 20 new jobs are created for every \$1 million invested in park and recreation conservation projects such as those funded through **LWCF State Assistance**.²
- The 725 million annual visits to America’s state park system — a recipient of **LWCF State Assistance** funding — contribute \$20 billion to local and state economies.³

Every State and Territory Annually Receives Funding

States do not have to compete against other states for funding. Each year, a set percentage of **LWCF State Assistance** funding is equally distributed to the states and territories. Remaining funds are then allocated based on population.

Available To and Used By Every American

While not every community has a national park, every community has local outdoor recreational resources. These parks are used by people of all ethnic groups, all income levels and all ages on a daily basis throughout the year. **LWCF State Assistance** funding ensures close-to-home public recreation resources with parks and projects located in every county in America.

Wise Use of Federal Funds With No Deficit Impact

- LWCF is budget neutral, having been authorized with a dedicated offshore oil and gas leasing revenues for nearly five decades. *revenues for 2013 alone totaled \$9 BILLION*
- States and localities are required to match federal funds dollar-for-dollar on local park and recreation projects, thereby creating more jobs.
- Land used for **LWCF State Assistance** projects must remain in recreation use. Federal, state and local investments remain available for future generations.

¹ Source: Outdoor Industry Association 2012
² Political Economy Research Institute University of MA
³ National Association of State Park Directors

“Protecting America’s parks, waters and trails isn’t just about the land. It’s about protecting the economy, the communities and the people whose lives depend on having the ability to play outside.”

-Outdoor Industry Association

FISCAL YEAR	TOTAL LWCF*	LWCF State Assistance	TOTAL LWCF	ASSISTANCE WOULD HAVE RECEIVED WITH A 40% ALLOCATION
FY11	\$300,761,000	\$40,000,000	13.3%	\$120,304,400
FY12	\$322,517,000	\$45,000,000**	13.9%	\$129,006,800
FY13	\$305,479,000	\$39,934,400	13.1%	\$122,192,000
FY14	\$305,043,000	\$45,000,000***	14.7%	\$122,417,000

*Source: Dept. of Interior LWCF funding history (www.doi.gov/budget/upload/LWCFRECEIPTS.xls)

** In FY12, the final conference appropriations bill provided \$45 million for the LWCF State Assistance program. However, an across the board government funding cut resulted in that number being reduced to \$42,138,000 which is the amount apportioned to states.

*** In FY14 LWCF State Assistance funding totaled \$45m, which included \$42m in formula grants to the states and \$3m in "competitive" grants.

(Date: March 2015)