

THE SITUATION



The **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)** is a critical conservation tool that protects open spaces and promotes recreation throughout the country.

WHEN WAS THE LAW ENACTED?

Since being established in 1965, **LWCF has conserved iconic landscapes in every state and is responsible for more than 40,000 state and local outdoor recreation projects** such as playgrounds, urban parks, refuges, and baseball fields. Unlike many other programs, LWCF is already paid for. **LWCF funds are derived from oil and gas receipts** paid to the federal government by energy companies that extract publicly-owned resources from the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS).

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Congress has failed to realize LWCF's full potential. Each year \$900 million from offshore royalties is deposited in the LWCF account in the federal treasury – yet more than \$17 billion of those funds have then been diverted elsewhere. On top of Congress failing to fully fund the program each year, the current LWCF authorization expires in 2018.

WHY SHOULD AMERICANS CARE?

Hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, paddling and other outdoor recreation activities - all supported by LWCF - contribute a total of \$646 billion annually to the economy and support 6.1 million American jobs. In fact, a bipartisan poll found 88% of voters support continuing to set aside offshore oil and gas drilling fees into the LWCF and 85% of Americans want LWCF to be fully funded.

WHAT'S CONGRESS DOING?

On September 30, 2015, Congress allowed the authorization for LWCF to expire for the first time in 50 years. Fortunately, the program was eventually reauthorized. However, the current authorization expires again in 2018. Without further action by Congress, the nation's most successful conservation program could disappear.



After 50 years of success, **LWCF deserves permanent authorization.** Permanent authorization would provide much-needed certainty and prevent LWCF from becoming a victim of political paralysis.



House Republicans, led by Natural Resources Committee Chairman Rob Bishop (R-Utah), **want to weaken LWCF and take money away from conservation.**



LWCF is extremely popular and **there is a broad coalition of organizations working to ensure it remains successful.**

HOW DO WE MOVE FORWARD?

Ranking Member Raúl M. Grijalva (D-Ariz.) introduced a bill with 209 bipartisan cosponsors that permanently reauthorizes LWCF. Also, **85 Senators voted in favor of a legislation that included permanent reauthorization of LWCF.**

THE FACTS

98% of U.S. counties have used LWCF to **protect land and establish new parks** over the course of the program (Wilderness.org)

\$3 billion in LWCF grants to states has **leveraged more than \$7 billion** in non-federal matching funds (LWCF Coalition)