

**Arizona Wildlife Federation • Arkansas Wildlife Federation • Association of Northwest Steelheaders • Colorado Wildlife Federation • Connecticut Forest and Park Association • Conservation Coalition of Oklahoma • Conservation Council for Hawaii • Conservation Federation of Missouri • Conservation Northwest • Delaware Nature Society • Earth Conservation Corps • Environmental Advocates of New York • Environmental Council of Rhode Island • Environmental League of Massachusetts • Florida Wildlife Federation • Georgia Wildlife Federation • Idaho Wildlife Federation • Indiana Wildlife Federation • Iowa Wildlife Federation • Kansas Wildlife Federation • Kentucky Waterways Alliance • Louisiana Wildlife Federation • Michigan United Conservation Clubs • Minnesota Conservation Federation • Mississippi Wildlife Federation • Montana Wildlife Federation • National Aquarium • National Wildlife Federation • Natural Resources Council of Maine • Nebraska Wildlife Federation • Nevada Wildlife Federation • New Hampshire Audubon • New Jersey Audubon • New Mexico Wildlife Federation • North Carolina Wildlife Federation • North Dakota Wildlife Federation • Ohio Conservation Federation • PennFuture • Planning and Conservation League • Prairie Rivers Network • Sociedad Ornitológica Puertorriqueña • South Carolina Wildlife Federation • South Dakota Wildlife Federation • Southeast Alaska Conservation Council • Tennessee Wildlife Federation • Texas Conservation Alliance • Vermont Natural Resources Council • Virgin Islands Conservation Society • Virginia Conservation Network • West Virginia Rivers Coalition • Wisconsin Wildlife Federation • Wyoming Wildlife Federation**

September 16, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
House Speaker  
1236 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
House Minority Leader  
2468 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Senate Minority Leader  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, and Minority Leaders Schumer, and McCarthy:

As affiliate organizations of the National Wildlife Federation, and on behalf of our millions of members and supporters devoted to conservation and the outdoors, we write to support full-funding, this year and beyond, of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Funding LWCF at the authorized level of \$900 million each year is vital to conserve fish and wildlife habitat, and expand outdoor opportunities for hunters and anglers, across the country. We encourage Congress to commit FY20 resources to this goal, and seek opportunities to quickly pass the Land and Water Conservation Fund Permanent Funding Act, (S. 1081, H.R. 3195), to provide permanent full-funding for the program.

Congress created the Land and Water Conservation Fund in 1964, and intended it to be funded at its authorized level—which since 1978 has been \$900 million annually. Unfortunately since the program’s inception, Congress has delivered on that promise just twice. Many billions of dollars have been redirected to pay for unrelated budget items.

H.R. 3195 and S. 1081 would ensure that \$900 million each year is expended only for projects benefitting conservation, outdoor recreation and access—at no cost to American taxpayers. The bipartisan nature of these bills is overwhelming and merits attention. Allocating the full amount this year and passing permanent funding would finally and fully realize the full potential of what this program could, and should, be. It would also reflect the bipartisan consensus that this is the right thing to do for LWCF.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is one of America’s most successful wildlife conservation and recreation programs. It has made a positive impact on all fifty states, and nearly every county in our country. Its success in enhancing recreational opportunities is recognized at famous fishing sites such as the Madison River in Montana, family recreation spots such as the Great Sand Dunes in Colorado and famous hiking spots such as the Appalachian Trail which passes through fourteen states from Georgia all the way to Maine. Each of our organizations has a similar project with its own story to tell, and a new story waiting to be told by future generations

Remarkably, nearly 10 million acres of our public lands are land-locked and currently unavailable to the public because they are isolated by private inholdings or other issues. Full, dedicated, permanent funding would allow for more LWCF purchases to secure permanent access, connect existing public lands, and create expanded parking and trailhead access for the public. It is the only way to ensure that the acquisition-for-access centerpiece of the program, which is crucial to the sporting community, continues to grow. The Land and Water Conservation Fund is the primary funding source for acquisition and conservation of new public lands essential to sustaining our outdoor traditions and safeguarding fish and wildlife habitat.

We are grateful that in February, Congress overwhelmingly supported permanent reauthorization of LWCF. It is now time to deliver on the full promise and potential of this beloved conservation program to keep outdoor traditions, and fish and wildlife, within reach for future generations. Congress can do that by appropriating \$900 million for the program this fall and by expeditiously approving bipartisan bills in the House and Senate that would make this commitment permanent.

We appreciate Congress’ past support of LWCF. It is time for that support to be reflected in FY20 appropriations and passage of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Permanent Funding Act.

We appreciate your consideration of this matter. Please don’t hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

Arizona Wildlife Federation

Connecticut Forest & Park Association

Arkansas Wildlife Federation

Conservation Coalition of Oklahoma

Association of Northwest Steelheaders

Conservation Council for Hawaii

Colorado Wildlife Federation

Conservation Federation of Missouri

Conservation Northwest  
Delaware Nature Society  
Earth Conservation Corps  
Environmental Advocates of New York  
Environmental Council of Rhode Island  
Environmental League of Massachusetts  
Florida Wildlife Federation  
Georgia Wildlife Federation  
Idaho Wildlife Federation  
Indiana Wildlife Federation  
Iowa Wildlife Federation  
Kansas Wildlife Federation  
Kentucky Waterways Alliance  
Louisiana Wildlife Federation  
Michigan United Conservation Clubs  
Minnesota Conservation Federation  
Mississippi Wildlife Federation  
Montana Wildlife Federation  
National Aquarium  
Natural Resources Council of Maine  
Nebraska Wildlife Federation  
New Hampshire Audubon  
New Jersey Audubon  
New Mexico Wildlife Federation  
Nevada Wildlife Federation  
North Carolina Wildlife Federation  
North Dakota Wildlife Federation  
Ohio Conservation Federation  
PennFuture  
Planning and Conservation League  
Prairie Rivers Network  
Sociedad Ornitológica Puertorriqueña  
South Carolina Wildlife Federation  
South Dakota Wildlife Federation  
Southeast Alaska Conservation Council  
Tennessee Wildlife Federation  
Texas Conservation Alliance  
Vermont Natural Resources Council  
Virgin Islands Conservation Society  
Virginia Conservation Network  
West Virginia Rivers Coalition  
Wisconsin Wildlife Federation  
Wyoming Wildlife Federation  
National Wildlife Federation