

July 22, 2018

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chair
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rob Bishop
Chair
Committee on Natural Resources
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Raúl Grijalva
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: AWCP support for Land and Water Conservation Fund reauthorization and funding

Dear Chairs Murkowski and Bishop and Ranking Members Cantwell and Grijalva,

As hunting, fishing, and wildlife conservation based organizations and businesses, our members depend on publicly accessible lands and waters where they can participate in the long-standing traditions of hunting and fishing. Loss of access is commonly cited as the top reason sportsmen and women stop hunting and fishing, and 36 percent of all American hunters depend on public lands for their sporting access. That's why we are writing to request your active support for reauthorizing one of the most important public access and habitat conservation programs in existence – the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).

LWCF has improved habitat and provided public access for hunting and fishing across America for more than fifty years. Better yet, the program is budget-neutral, relying on revenue generated by the success of America's energy sector, not taxpayer dollars. Since 1964, LWCF has impacted over 5 million acres of public lands, invested over \$16 billion in conservation and outdoor recreation, established new public fishing areas, opened previously inaccessible public lands and enabled strategic acquisitions of new lands for the benefit of hunters, anglers and every other citizen. The program also can be used to help conserve wildlife migration corridors and other important seasonal habitats. Such outcomes do more than simply carry forward culturally important pastimes – hunting and fishing are big business in America and constitute a vital pillar of the \$887 billion annual outdoor recreation economy.

Despite the program's decades-long record of proven success, time is running out to renew LWCF. Without timely action by both chambers, its authorization and funding will expire on September 30, putting future public access and habitat conservation projects at risk. We urge you to pass permanent reauthorization of LWCF with full, dedicated annual funding.

The clock is ticking, and American sportsmen and the businesses that serve them are depending on you to reauthorize the LWCF. Doing so is critical to the continued growth of America's outdoor economy and our nation's hunting and fishing heritage.

Sincerely,

- Archery Trade Association
- Bear Trust International
- Catch-A-Dream Foundation
- The Conservation Fund
- Delta Waterfowl
- Houston Safari Club
- Izaak Walton League of America
- Mule Deer Foundation
- National Association of Forest Service Retirees
- National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative
- National Deer Alliance
- National Shooting Sports Foundation
- National Wildlife Federation
- National Wild Turkey Federation
- North American Grouse Partnership
- Pheasants Forever
- Public Lands Foundation
- Quail Forever
- Quality Deer Management Association
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- Ruffed Grouse Society
- Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
- Wild Sheep Foundation
- Wildlife Forever
- Wildlife Management Institute
- The Wildlife Society