



LWCFCoalition.com

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** September 24, 2019

**CONTACT:** Justin Bartolomeo

(202) 789-4365

[jbartolomeo@hdmk.org](mailto:jbartolomeo@hdmk.org)

## **LWCF Coalition Statement on Senate Interior Appropriations**

**WASHINGTON** – *The following statement can be attributed to Jonathan Asher, Government Relations Director at The Wilderness Society and a spokesman for the LWCF Coalition:*

“By voting overwhelmingly to reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund at \$900 million annually earlier this year, Congress made a strong statement to uphold the promise to invest in the conservation and recreation America’s communities need. Shortly thereafter, the House proposed \$524 million in LWCF funding for Fiscal Year 2020 — a firm step in the right direction. In that light, the \$465 million funding level announced by the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee today is somewhat of a disappointment.

“As we await further details on the LWCF funding proposed in the bill, we do know this amount would represent at modest increase of \$30 million over current-year funding, which certainly would allow some community-driven, now-or-never projects to move forward this year. However, \$465M is far below the levels approved by the House and would leave a growing backlog of important conservation and recreation needs unmet.

“LWCF funds have been specifically put aside from offshore oil and gas drilling royalties, intended as a reasonable conservation offset for energy development. Yet year after year, on average more than half these funds have been diverted, only to vanish into the general revenue stream with no accountability. Inconsistent and unpredictable funding for LWCF continues to undermine rather than empower communities to address their long-term needs and maximize the impact of their conservation and recreation investments by planning for the future with certainty. Congress needs to pass the LWCF Permanent Funding Act to fulfill the promise made to the American people more than 55 years ago, and affirmed overwhelmingly last March.”

“The LWCF Coalition will continue to work with our many champions on Capitol Hill to ensure that full amount is ultimately spent as intended on urgent priorities in communities all across the country. We urge House and Senate members to the highest possible funding levels for LWCF as the FY2020 process continues.”

###

## **About the Land and Water Conservation Fund**

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is America's most important conservation program, responsible for protecting parks, trails, wildlife refuges and recreation areas at the federal, state and local level. For more than 50 years, it has provided critical funding for land and water conservation projects, access to recreation including hunting and fishing, and the continued historic preservation of our nation's iconic landmarks from coast-to-coast.

LWCF does not use any taxpayer dollars – it is funded using a small portion of revenues from offshore oil and gas royalty payments. Outdoor recreation, conservation and historic preservation activities contribute more than \$887 billion annually to the U.S. economy, supporting 7.6 million jobs.

## **About the LWCF Coalition**

The LWCF Coalition is comprised of more than 1,000 state and regional conservation and recreation organizations of all sizes, land owners, small businesses, ranchers, sportsmen, veterans, the outdoor recreation industry and conservationists working together to protect America's public lands and safeguard our shared outdoor heritage for future generations.

The Coalition is united in its advocacy for full, dedicated funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which will ensure the continued conservation of our national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, wilderness, civil war battlefields, working lands and state and local parks. For more information on LWCF and the places in each state that LWCF funds have protected, visit [www.lwcfcoalition.org](http://www.lwcfcoalition.org).