



**LWCFCoalition.com**

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## **Trump Administration Fails to Meet Key LWCF Deadline**

The LWCF Coalition, representing thousands of groups across the country, issued the following statement regarding implementation of the Great American Outdoors Act:

“It has now been several days since the Trump Administration was required to send FY21 LWCF program allocations and priority lists to Congress and they have still failed to do so. We are disappointed by the Administration’s inexplicable inability to comply with the requirements in the Great American Outdoors Act, ignoring clear congressional direction and needlessly delaying time-sensitive projects,” said Bill Lee, Senior Vice President of Policy, Advocacy and Government Relations at The Trust for Public Land and spokesperson for the LWCF Coalition. “For the countless communities, local partners, and willing-seller landowners depending on these investments, this is a really troubling failure.”

“All across the country, a broad array of win-win, ready-to-go conservation and recreation projects are waiting in line for the LWCF funding promised by the Great American Outdoors Act. The Administration sent up priority lists this past spring that they could have used as the basis for the GAOA required list, to keep these projects on track and to fully allocate LWCF as Congress directed (see examples below). Instead, the Administration has kicked the can, raising questions about their seriousness in implementing full funding of LWCF and leaving treasured places hanging in the balance. That is precisely the problem the Great American Outdoors Act was enacted to remedy, and is the reason that law passed with such overwhelming bipartisan support.

“We’re heartened by the response of bipartisan Congressional champions of LWCF, including House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Raul Grijalva as well as Senators Martin Heinrich, Michael Bennet and Steve Daines, and we join them in urging compliance with the law, which gives the final say to Congress in the appropriations process. We implore Congress to finish the job, and to deliver 100% of this year’s LWCF funding to the places that need it, by moving swiftly to consider existing priority lists and enact its own allocations for LWCF in the FY21 Appropriations bill as explicitly contemplated in the Great American Outdoors Act.

“The Administration has already sent Congress a list of vetted, ready-to-go projects which show the incredible power of LWCF. Each and every one of these projects not put forth by the Administration *today* is a huge missed opportunity, adding to a vast backlog of unmet needs across the country. These projects provide innovative conservation solutions that bring communities together and deliver innumerable benefits: clean water, wildlife habitat, parks and trails, sustainable timber operations that keep jobs in the woods, hunting and fishing access, climate resilience, public health and outdoor recreation for all Americans, no matter where they live.” Here are just three examples, out of hundreds of pending projects:

- In its 132 mile journey, the Blackfoot River runs through some of the most productive fish and wildlife habitat in the Northern Rocky Mountains. For decades, private landowners, conservationists, and the community have come together through the Blackfoot Challenge to protect the area. LWCF funding is a critical piece needed to continue a long standing project that will enhance public access to high value recreational lands. \$3.3M was included for the Bureau of Land Management to take this on in the LWCF FY21 project list sent to Congress last May.
- LWCF funding is needed to connect separated federal parcels in Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, ensuring additional river access for recreational purposes as well as snowmobile access. The LWCF FY21 project list sent to Congress last May included \$380,000 to protect wetlands and low, marshy areas known for their wildlife habitat. Connectivity between the federal and state open-space recreation areas is important to the outdoor traditions and tourist economy of Maine.
- LWCF funds are needed to protect working forestlands in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed via conservation easements, protecting critical headwaters of the Potomac that supply more than 6 million people with water. Due to its proximity to Washington DC, the area is faced with significant developmental pressure. Keeping the land as it is supports the local timber and tourism industries. \$2.1M for the South Fork/Lost River Forest Legacy Project in West Virginia was included on the LWCF FY21 project list sent to Congress in May.

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

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is America's most important conservation program, responsible for protecting parks, wildlife refuges and recreation areas at the federal, state and local level. For 50 years, it has provided critical funding for land and water conservation projects, recreational construction and activities 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 the umbrella group of more than 1,000 state and local land owners, small businesses, ranchers, sportsmen, veterans, outdoor recreationists and conservation organizations working to protect America's public lands and safeguard our shared outdoor heritage for future generations.

The Coalition is united in its advocacy for full 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, as well as state and local parks. For more information on LWCF and the places in each state that have been protected using LWCF funds, visit [www.lwcfcoalition.com](http://www.lwcfcoalition.com).