



LWCFCoalition.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 4, 2015

CONTACT: Justin Bartolomeo

202-789-4365

jbartolomeo@hdmk.org

LWCF Coalition Commends Senator Heinrich for Leadership on Key Conservation Programs

Heinrich Legislation Reauthorizes LWCF, PILT and SRS

Washington, DC – The LWCF Coalition today commended Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM) and Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR), Tom Udall (D-NM), Ed Markey (D-MA), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Chris Coons (D-DE), Gary Peters (D-MI), John Tester (D-MT), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Angus King (I-ME), and Patrick Leahy (D-VT) for introducing legislation to reauthorize critical conservation programs. The bill would permanently reauthorize the landmark Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, which over its 50 year history has come to be recognized as America’s most important conservation and outdoor recreation program. Without action by Congress, the program’s current authorization will expire shortly after Congress returns from its August recess.

The legislation also ensures that LWCF receives the full \$900 million authorized for the program each year. Annual LWCF allocations are currently subject to the appropriations process, which at present provides only one-third of the amount deposited in the trust fund each year. A provision to ensure funding for access for hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation pursuits is also included in the bill.

The Heinrich proposal also ensures full funding for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and the Secure Rural Schools Act (SRS) programs, two critical programs that benefit rural America.

The following statement can be attributed to Alan Rowsome, Senior Director of Government Relations for Lands at the Wilderness Society and Co-Chair of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Coalition:

“The LWCF Coalition commends Senator Martin Heinrich for his leadership and steadfast commitment to America’s outdoors and rural communities. LWCF and PILT work in tandem to support our local communities by securing the permanent protection of critical lands and access to outdoor recreation. Reauthorizing these programs ensures that the conservation and management of America’s public lands is coordinated with the needs of local communities. The LWCF Coalition looks forward to working with Congress to ensure the Land and Water Conservation Fund remains a dedicated source for the protection of our irreplaceable natural, historic, cultural and outdoor landmarks.”

###

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 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 a trillion dollars annually to the U.S. economy, supporting 9.4 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 the reauthorization and 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.org