

Mississippi

Our Land, Our Water, Our Heritage



LWCF Funded Places in Mississippi

Federal Units

- Bienville NF
- Bogue Chitto NWR
- Dahomey NWR
- Delta NF
- Grand Bay NWR
- Gulf Island NS
- Hillside NWR
- Holly Springs NF
- Holt Collier NWR
- Homochitto NF
- Mississippi Sandhill Crane NWR
- Morgan Brake NWR
- Natchez NHP
- Natchez Trace Parkway
- NFs in Mississippi
- Panther Swamp NWR
- Private John Allen NFH
- Shiloh NMP
- Theodore Roosevelt NWR
- Tombigbee NF
- Vicksurg NMP

Federal Total \$112,942,648

State Programs

Forest Legacy Program \$8,660,000

American Battlefield Protection Program \$4,215,167

Stateside \$54,966,270

Total \$180,784,085

LWCF Success in Mississippi

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has provided funding to help protect some of Mississippi's most special places and ensure recreational access for hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities. Mississippi has received approximately \$180.8 million in LWCF funding over the past five decades, protecting places such as the Mississippi Sandhill Crane National Wildlife Refuge and the Natchez National Historical Park.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP) grants are also funded under LWCF, to help protect working forests. The FLP cost-share funding supports timber sector jobs and sustainable forest operations while enhancing wildlife habitat, water quality and recreation. For example, the FLP contributed to places such as the Escatawpa River Conservation Corridor in Jackson County and the Pascagoula River Conservation Lands. The FLP assists states and private forest owners to maintain working forest lands through matching grants for permanent conservation easement and fee acquisitions, and has leveraged approximately \$8.7 million in federal funds to invest in Mississippi's forests, while protecting air and water quality, wildlife habitat, access for recreation and other public benefits provided by forests.

LWCF state assistance grants have further supported hundreds of projects across Mississippi's state and local parks including Pops Ferry Causeway Park in Biloxi and Calling Panther Lake in Copiah County. Additionally, the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program (ORLP), has annual funding opportunities for city park projects in economically disadvantaged areas.

Economic Benefits

Active outdoor recreation is an important part of Mississippi's economy. The Bureau of Economic Analysis has found that outdoor recreation generates \$3.4 billion in value added to Mississippi's economy, 33,731 homegrown jobs, and accounts for 2.4% of the state's economy. Further, the U.S. Census reports that each year 1.3 million people hunt, fish, or enjoy wildlife-watching in Mississippi, contributing over \$1.1 billion in wildlife recreation spending to the state economy.





LWCF in Mississippi

Gulf Islands National Seashore

Offshore islands with snowy-white beaches, sparkling blue waters, fertile coastal marshes, and maritime forests draw visitors from across America to this 160-mile seashore. Recreational activities range from exploring 19th Century forts to hiking in the designated wilderness areas of Horn and Petit Bois Islands. The Gulf Islands National Seashore was originally protected in 1971, and recently the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund has helped a broad public coalition extend protection to more coastal islands. Gulf Islands National Seashore is very popular destination, averaging almost 3.5 million annual visitors each of the past ten years.



LWCF is a simple idea: that a portion of offshore drilling fees should be used to protect important land and water for all Americans. These are not taxpayer dollars.

Unfortunately, for 55 years the promise of LWCF was broken as \$22 billion was diverted from the program.

The **Great American Outdoors Act** ended the diversion and ensures that LWCF's permanently authorized \$900 million is used for conservation and recreation projects each year.

LWCF supports the acquisition of land and conservation easements to **protect our national parks, wildlife refuges, forests, trails, and BLM sites**, grants funds to the states for local and state park needs, protects critical wildlife habitat, watersheds and recreational access, and conserves working farms, ranches and forestlands that enhance local economies.



www.lwcfcoalition.org

Status of the Land and Water Conservation Fund

In August 2020, permanent, dedicated funding for LWCF was secured through the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) – ensuring that each year the \$900 million deposited into the LWCF account is directed to conservation and recreation priorities; however, in FY24 Congress backtracked on that promise when they rescinded \$94 million of unobligated LWCF funding (\$89M from the NPS State & Local Assistance Program & \$5M from BLM). GAOA has not eliminated the backlog of LWCF priorities that are waiting in line as nearly all LWCF programs remain oversubscribed - each year the LWCF supplemental project list includes about \$200 million in urgent needs that are authorized to use this funding. To support these critical projects, unspent LWCF funding should be reallocated to the states by the Secretary of the Interior (per the LWCF Act) or reprogrammed by Congress to LWCF sub-programs with outstanding funding need. If funding is rescinded rather than reallocated or reprogrammed, landowners and communities miss out on LWCF funding, and these critical priorities could be lost forever.

FY25 Budget Update: The Biden Administration's FY25 budget proposal included detailed LWCF priority project lists and balanced program allocations, as well supplemental project lists over and above LWCF's current \$900 million funding level. [Click here to view a map of past LWCF projects](#)