

Our Land, Our Water, Our Heritage

AMERICA DEPENDS ON THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

Healthy land. Clean water. These basic necessities of life are more and more at risk due to population growth, development, climate change and pollution. Ensuring our health, and that of future generations, now depends on how well we protect our natural world.

We can help save America's land, water and our quality of life with legislation that guarantees permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

This program helps protect some of America's most important natural areas:

- National parks and forests
- Land by rivers, lakes and oceans
- Working farms and ranches
- Fish and wildlife refuges
- Neighborhood parks

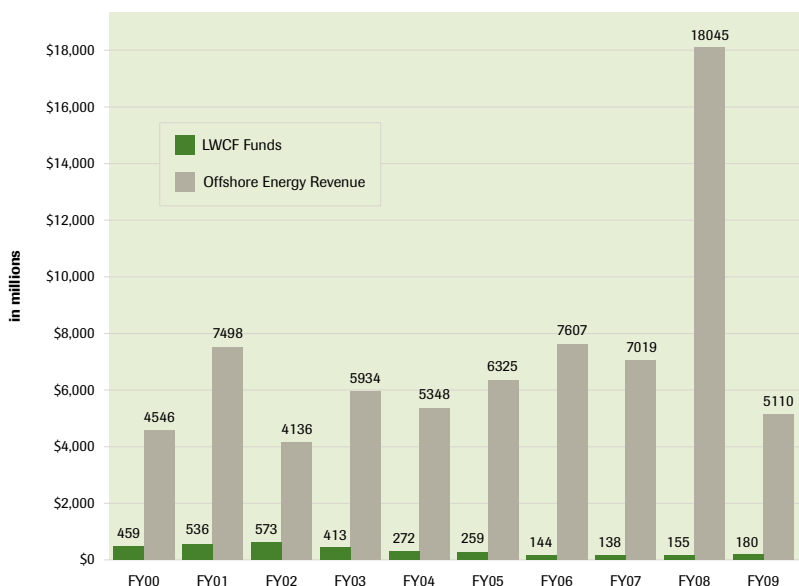
The impacts of the program support:

- Clean water supplies
- Jobs and local economies
- Fire-fighting cost reduction
- Our common heritage of natural areas for wildlife, recreation and enjoying nature



The Land and Water Conservation Fund protects land and water for nature and people. Money from the program also has a positive impact on the economy. More than 500 million people visit national parks and monuments, wildlife refuges, and recreational sites each year, helping local economies. Outdoor recreation provides millions of jobs and contributes \$730 billion annually to the U.S. economy. Above: A cattle ranch in the Rocky Mountain Front Conservation Area in Montana © Jeff Van Tine

LWCF Funds and Offshore Energy Revenue FY00-FY09



The Land and Water Conservation Fund's goal is to balance the loss of one natural resource -off-shore oil and gas - by using a portion of drilling fees to protect important land and water elsewhere. But despite an increase in energy production, funding for land and water protection has been low and unpredictable. The program is authorized to receive a small percentage of offshore oil and gas fee revenue - up to \$900 million a year - but most of these funds have been diverted elsewhere. With America losing 3 million acres of land to development each year, it is now critical that we guarantee permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

◀ In 2009, the Department of the Interior collected \$5 billion from offshore energy production, but only \$180 million, or about three percent of that revenue, was set aside to protect America's land and water.



Hells Canyon National Recreation Area along the Oregon-Idaho border © Rick McEwan

Americans strongly support protecting our land and water:

- More than 80 percent of the public supports using funds from oil and gas fees to help preserve our natural areas.¹
- More than three-quarters of voters believe we can continue to protect the environment while strengthening the economy.²
- Voters strongly support public investments in conservation. Over the past decade, voters have passed statewide and local open space ballot measures at an overall rate of 73 percent.³

EVERY STATE DEPENDS ON THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

From the Grand Canyon National Park to the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has helped protect some of America's most treasured places. Over the past four decades, it has provided more than \$13 billion for land and water protection across every state and several of the territories.

If permanently funded at the authorized level of \$900 million a year, this program will help ensure our quality of life, from the water we drink to our enjoyment of the great outdoors. The Nature Conservancy strongly supports legislation for this full and permanent funding, including the Land and Water Reauthorization and Funding Act of 2009 (S. 2747) and the Consolidated Land, Energy, and Aquatic Resources Act of 2009 (H.R. 3534).

VALUE OF THE FUND

- Protection of America's most treasured natural places benefits our national heritage and the livelihoods of our children and grandchildren
- Protection of water the old-fashioned way through watershed, forest and wetland conservation is the most cost-effective way to ensure clean and adequate water supplies
- Visitor-driven business is important to local communities surrounding national parks and other public lands
- Hunting and fishing have become an economic building block in our national economy generating more than 1.6 million jobs and more than \$76 billion in sportsmen-related activities, according to the Congressional Sportsmen Foundation
- Wildlife-related recreation generates \$122 billion annually, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Pine Brooks Falls, Salmon River, in the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge in Connecticut © Alden Warner

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¹ Lake Research Partners, 2009

² Nature Conservancy poll, FM3 and Public Opinion Strategies, 2009

³ The Trust for Public Land, LandVote.org Database, www.landvote.org