

April 11, 2019

Senator Lisa Murkowski, Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC, 20510

Senator Tom Udall, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Udall:

For more than 50 years, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State Assistance Program has supported access to outdoor recreation in communities in every county across the country. These outdoor resources have protected millions of acres of local land and have helped support local economies in every State and Congressional District. For the upcoming fiscal year, our organizations are asking for full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund in accordance with the law as passed in 1965. For FY 2020, full funding would be \$900 million, of which we would ask for the state assistance program to receive 40 percent.

In the absence of the program receiving full funding, we respectfully ask that the Subcommittee adhere to the recently enacted John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management and Recreation Act and provide the state assistance program with 40 percent of the overall appropriated funding for LWCF with no less than \$175 million of discretionary spending for the state assistance program (which includes \$25 million for the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program and \$4,006,000 for National Park Service administration). As you know, projects funded under the state assistance program are shovel-ready infrastructure projects. Federal dollars are matched with local money that is available and waiting for federal investment.

Additionally, in accordance with the Dingell Act, we support funding the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund, Forest Legacy, State, Tribal Wildlife Grants and other programs that fall outside of the scope of the state grant program and federal acquisition program with the 20 percent of LWCF funding not specifically guaranteed to federal acquisition and state assistance grants. Including these programs as part of the 40 percent guarantees for state assistance and federal acquisition would result in devastating cuts to the federal acquisition and state assistance programs and would therefore run counter to the guarantees in the recently enacted law.

Our organizations were pleased by the wide bipartisan support for LWCF reauthorization and we know that without your leadership it would not have become law. We are grateful to you for your long-standing commitment to investing in the future of conservation and recreation and we look forward to working with the Subcommittee to realize the full potential of the state assistance program so that we may continue to provide access to outdoor recreation for all Americans.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our request,

Sincerely,

National Recreation and Park Association
National Association of State Outdoor Recreation Liaison Officers
National Association of State Park Directors
Alaska Recreation & Park Association
Ohio Parks and Recreation Association
Missouri Park & Recreation Association
North Dakota Recreation and Park Association
Florida Recreation and Park Association
North Dakota Recreation and Park Association
Massachusetts Recreation and Park Association
Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society
Georgia Recreation & Park Association
Arlington Recreation Department