Dear Senator Bennet and Senator Gardner:

As local elected officials, we are accountable for overseeing efficient and responsive local governments and services for our citizenry in the great state of Colorado. To that end, we need as many tools in our toolbox as possible. The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a must-have tool in our toolbox for local communities, and we are writing today to ask for permanent reauthorization and full funding of this valuable program.

For over 50 years, LWCF has played a critical role in providing funding for conserving national parks and forests, rivers, farms and ranches, fish and wildlife, access for hunters and recreationists, trails, state and local parks, and recreational facilities throughout Colorado and the nation.

LWCF plays a key role with state and local governments to provide resources for local recreation facilities such as parks, playgrounds and sports fields, but also critical preemptive programs including wildfire and flood mitigation. For example, LWCF matching funds enabled the town of Lyons, Colorado, to rebuild and extend its St. Vrain Corridor Trail, which suffered nearly $50 million in damages in the devastating floods of 2013. The restoration efforts were significant, not only to quality of life for residents, but in supporting the community’s recreation economy, as Lyons’ parks can draw some 2,000 people on a typical summer weekend.

Whether Coloradans and visitors are fishing, mountain biking, hiking in the wild, enjoying a picnic in the park with the family, or watching their kids play soccer at the local field, it's likely the Land and Water Conservation Fund played a key role in protecting and providing access to their recreational opportunities locally and across the state.

Outdoor recreation on public lands is integral to the culture and economics of western mountain communities. In a study released earlier this year, the Outdoor Industry Association found that the outdoor recreation economy provides 229,000 jobs in Colorado, $28 billion in spending, $9.7 billion in wages and salaries, and $2 billion in tax revenue. Without funding from LWCF for the further protection and enhancement of America’s public lands, the economic success and cultural vitality of local communities will be at risk, and the outdoor recreation industry’s significant contribution to the nation’s economy will suffer.

Simply put, the Land and Water Conservation Fund is a federal program that works and is a tool that we as local elected officials need and appreciate.

Funding for this program runs out at the end of September 2018. Moreover, the President’s Fiscal Year 2018 Budget proposal would virtually eliminate LWCF, reducing the program's budget by nearly 85 percent from this year’s enacted level.

We thank you for your support of LWCF and request that you continue your bipartisan efforts to see that the program is permanently reauthorized and continues in perpetuity at its fully authorized amount of $900 million.

Please call on us to assist you in your efforts to get LWCF over the finish line.
Signed,

Alan Apt
Nederland Town Trustee

Herb Atchison
Mayor, City of Westminster

Keith Baker
Chaffee County Commissioner

Jonathan Baumover
Nederland Town Trustee

Chelsea Behanna
Lafayette City Councilor

Shannon Bird
Westminster City Councilor

Bennett Boeschenstein
Mayor Pro Tem, City of Grand Junction

Phil Chamberland
Gunnison County Commissioner

Kathy Chandler-Henry
Eagle County Commissioner

Steve Child
Pitkin County Commissioner

Polly Christensen
Mayor Pro Tem, City of Longmont

Patti Clapper
Pitkin County Commissioner

Jolon Clark
Denver City Councilor

Kristin Conrad
Nederland Town Trustee

Jim Dale
Golden City Councilor

Cindy Domenico
Boulder County Commissioner

Monica Duran
Wheat Ridge City Councilor

Deb Gardner
Boulder County Commissioner

Erin Gigliello
Breckenridge Town Councilor

Stacie Gilmore
Denver City Councilor

Julie Gustafson
Nederland Town Trustee

Dana Gutwein
Lakewood City Councilor

Eva Henry
Adams County Commissioner

Alison Hiltz
Aurora City Councilor

Mary Hodge
Adams County Commissioner

Jonathan Houck
Gunnison County Commissioner

Nancy Jackson
Arapahoe County Commissioner

Leah Johnson
Loveland City Councilor

Elise Jones
Boulder County Commissioner

Robin Kniech
Denver City Councilor
Gwen Lachelt  
La Plata County Commissioner

Kristopher Larsen  
Nederland Town Trustee

Amy Martinez  
Englewood City Councilor

Dallas Masters  
Nederland Town Trustee

Tim Mauck  
Clear Creek County Commissioner

John Messner  
Gunnison County Commissioner

Julie Mullica  
Northglenn City Councilor

Ann Mullins  
Aspen City Councilor

Crystal Murillo  
Aurora City Councilor

Steve O'Dorisio  
Adams County Commissioner

Emma Pinter  
Westminster City Councilor

Greg Poschman  
Pitkin County Commissioner

James Rawsthorne  
Nederland Town Trustee

Rachel Richards  
Pitkin County Commissioner

Charlie Richardson  
Aurora City Councilor

Jill Ryan  
Eagle County Commissioner

Jordan Sauers  
Northglenn City Councilor

Anita Seitz  
Westminster City Councilor

Kara Silbernagel  
Pitkin County Manager

Kathryn Skulley  
Westminster City Councilor

Marjorie Sloan  
Mayor, City of Golden

Chaz Tedesco  
Adams County Commissioner

Casey Tighe  
Jefferson County Commissioner

Laura Weinberg  
Golden City Councilor

Dick White  
Durango City Councilor

Jenny Willford  
Northglenn City Councilor

Heidi Williams  
Mayor, City of Thornton

Stacy Suniga  
Greeley City Councilor

Josh Zygielbaum  
Thornton City Councilor