

Our Land, Our Water, Our Heritage

AMERICA DEPENDS ON THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

LWCF PROTECTS AMERICA'S BATTLEFIELDS, HISTORIC, AND CULTURAL SITES

To truly understand who we are as a country and to learn from the history of our triumphs and challenges, we must preserve places that showcase the many cultures and the history that define the American experience. From the homes and birthplaces of presidents, writers and civil rights leaders, to Civil War battlefields, pioneer forts, sites of American ingenuity and invention, paleontological sites, and Native American cultural sites, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) helps to ensure that current and future generations understand what has shaped our nation. LWCF funds the acquisition of land within the boundaries of battlefields and other historic sites via the National Park Service, and the land outside the boundaries of existing battlefields through the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP).

LWCF is a unique conservation program that has its own funding source. LWCF does not receive taxpayer money; instead its funding comes from revenues generated by off shore energy development. Annual appropriations from Congress, however, lag far behind the fund's deposits, leaving many key battlefield and other historical needs unmet. The only way to assure adequate federal funding for battle-field protection is to bolster LWCF.

Approximately half of the units of the National Park System were specifically designated to protect our nation's most important historical, archeological and cultural sites. Battlefield protection projects have preserved Civil War sites such as Vicksburg, Shiloh, Antietam, Gettysburg and Harper's Ferry, and Revolutionary War locales such as Minute Man National Historic Park. Culturally important areas from Canyons of the Ancients National Monument and Nez Perce National Historic Park to the Martin Luther King and the John Muir National Historic Sites have also been protected through LWCF. The homesites of some of our nation's great presidents like George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Harry Truman have benefited along with the Lewis & Clark, El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and Oregon National Historic Trails, and historically significant locations such as Scotts Bluff National Monument in western Nebraska.



Martin Luther King NHS, GA has received over \$2.9 million in LWCF funds
Credit: Peter Beney

Our history helps us shape our future, and while many of the most indelible images of American history are already forever protected, others are at the precipice of being lost forever. The National Park Service reported in 2007 that of the 677 identified sites associated with the Revolutionary War and War of 1812, as many as 335 sites have been lost, destroyed, or extremely fragmented. The protection of these sites is critical to educating current and future generations. Continued LWCF funding is necessary to protect those places and those cultures that tell our unique American story.



Spotlights in American History

Flight 93 National Memorial, PA

After learning that hijacked airplanes were used in attacks at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, the passengers of United Flight 93 made a heroic decision to fight back against the terrorists that had taken over their own plane. Working together, they fought for control of the plane, which ultimately crashed into a vast meadow in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Little more than a year after the attacks, the Flight 93 National Memorial Act was passed by Congress, designating the site as a national memorial managed by the National Park Service. It is the only national park unit commemorating the events of that infamous day. LWCF contributed \$10 million to protect the "Field of Honor" as a permanent tribute to the brave passengers of Flight 93 and a place where we can reflect on the valor of individuals who heroically stopped the terrorist attack on the U.S. Capitol.



Flight 93 National Memorial Credit: NPS

Brown V. Board of Education National Historic Site, KS

The Monroe Elementary School was one of four African-American segregated schools in Topeka, Kansas. In 1951, a student from Monroe, and her father, Oliver Brown, became plaintiffs in a legal battle over racial segregation in schools. In 1954, the historic Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision determined that the segregation of schools was unconstitutional. The Monroe School closed its doors in 1975, due to declining enrollment, and was slated for destruction in the 1980s until local and national advocates banded together to save it. The school was designated a national historic landmark in 1991, and in 1992 President George H.W. Bush signed legislation establishing the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site. The National Park Service used LWCF funds to purchase the school and now administers it as an interpretive center illustrating the integral role that the Brown v. Board of Education decision played in the civil rights movement.



Brown v Board NHS, KS Credit: Phil Schermeister



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