

# Minnesota

Our Land, Our Water, Our Heritage

#SaveLWCF

America's most important conservation and recreation program will expire in less than a year unless Congress acts. For 52 years, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has protected national parks and open spaces in every corner of the United States. But in less than 52 weeks, it could be gone forever and along with it, future protection of the places we love.

[LWCF](#) has invested more than \$245 million to protect Minnesota's outdoor places, increase sportsmen's access, and to build close to home parks. From national wildlife refuges and working forests to ball fields and community parks, LWCF has protected Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, the Northern Tallgrass Prairie, Voyageurs National Park, Chippewa-Superior National Forests, and Saint Croix National Scenic River.

Minnesota's \$16.7 billion [outdoor recreation industry](#) is an economic powerhouse – supporting 140,000 jobs which generate \$4.5 billion in wages and salaries and produces \$1.4 billion annually in state and local tax revenue.

## Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness

The Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW), located in the northern third of Superior National Forest, is an outdoor recreation paradise featuring more than 1,200 miles of canoe routes, 11 hiking trails, and 2,000 designated campsites. Embedded throughout the BWCAW are approximately 82,400 acres of Minnesota School Trust lands. The Superior National Forest was awarded \$4 million in LWCF funding in this year's federal budget for the first phase of an effort to purchase these lands, which would expand recreational opportunities and improve management. This project will provide a resolution to a decades-old land conflict by allowing the state to acquire working forestlands outside of the National Forest that will generate revenue for Minnesota's schools and contribute to the local timber economy. This multi-year effort aims to protect 50,000 acres within the BWCAW, incorporating valuable lakefront lands and expanding opportunities for outdoor recreation, including hiking, canoeing, camping, and fishing.



*The Boundary Waters,  
Credit: The Conservation Fund/Hansi Johnson*

**“The LWCF will be a critical tool in protecting the integrity of one of the world's last great wild places, with an added benefit of supporting revenue for Minnesota public schools. An outstanding outcome for both people and nature.”**

**– Steve Hobbs, Minnesota State Director for The Conservation Fund**

## Koochiching-Washington Forest Legacy Project

The Koochiching-Washington Forest Legacy Project received over \$9 million in LWCF funding to protect 136,606 acres. This ecologically diverse area includes coniferous forest and peatland, 13 lakes, more than 90 ponds, 43.5 miles of rivers and streams, as well as 18,971 acres of wetlands. The conservation easements in place on Koochiching-Washington Forest Legacy Project lands allow for sustainable logging, supporting mills in International Falls, Bemidji, Duluth, and Grand Rapids. Outdoor recreation opportunities include fishing, hiking, camping, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing. The area also includes prime lands for hunting ruffed grouse.



*Koochiching Forest, Credit: Minnesota DNR*

**#SaveLWCF to protect the places we love in Minnesota!**

[www.lwcfcoalition.org/lwcf52weeks/](http://www.lwcfcoalition.org/lwcf52weeks/)