LWCF Success in Maryland

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has provided funding to help protect some of Maryland’s most special places and ensure recreational access for hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities. Maryland has received approximately $231.8 million in LWCF funding over the past five decades, protecting places such as the Assateaque Island National Seashore, Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, Monocacy National Battlefield and the C&O Canal National Historic Park.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP) grants are also funded under LWCF, to help protect working forests. The FLP cost-share funding supports timber sector jobs and sustainable forest operations while enhancing wildlife habitat, water quality and recreation. For example, the FLP contributed to places such as the Broad Creek in Dublin and the Coastal Bay project in Snow Hill. The FLP assists states and private forest owners to maintain working forest lands through matching grants for permanent conservation easement and fee acquisitions, and has leveraged approximately $4.6 million in federal funds to invest in Maryland’s forests, while protecting air and water quality, wildlife habitat, access for recreation and other public benefits provided by forests.

LWCF state assistance grants have further supported hundreds of projects across Maryland’s state and local parks including Conquest Waterfront Preserve in Queen Anne’s County and Seneca State Park in Montgomery County.

Economic Benefits

Active outdoor recreation is an important part of the Maryland economy. The Outdoor Industry Association has found that active outdoor recreation generates $14 billion in consumer spending in Maryland, 109,000 jobs which generate $4.4 billion in wages and salaries, and produces nearly $951 million annually in state and local tax revenue. Further, the U.S. Census reports that each year over 2.7 million people hunt, fish, or enjoy wildlife-watching in Maryland, contributing over $1.6 billion in wildlife recreation spending to the state economy.

Support full and permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
LWCF is a simple idea: that a portion of offshore drilling fees should be used to protect important land and water for all Americans. These are not taxpayer dollars. Unfortunately, the promise of LWCF has been broken. The program is authorized to receive up to $900 million each year—but most of these funds have been diverted elsewhere. Now is the time to fix this and ensure that funds retained in the LWCF account are used for their intended conservation and recreation purposes.

LWCF supports the acquisition of land and conservation easements to protect our national parks, wildlife refuges, forests, trails, and BLM sites, grants funds to the states for local and state park needs, protects critical wildlife habitat, watersheds and recreational access, and conserves working farms, ranches and forestlands that enhance local economies.

LWCF in Maryland
Piscataway Park - Mt. Vernon Viewshed
The view across the Potomac from Mount Vernon was first targeted for protection as a pilot project to protect parklands from suburban sprawl. Piscataway Park was conceived in 1952 to preserve the river view as it existed during George Washington’s day. Since that time, numerous organizations have joined in partnership with the NPS to ensure the protection of the historic viewshed. Federal LWCF funding provided to Piscataway Park has allowed the NPS, the Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association, private conservation groups, willing landowners, and other partners, to protect 232 acres of critical shoreline since 1995. Other area properties have been protected but several remain vulnerable to development or other view-spoiling uses.

Fiscal Year 2020 Agency Priority Project List for Maryland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Delegation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NPS</td>
<td>George Washington Memorial Parkway</td>
<td>$1,395,000</td>
<td>Cardin, Van Hollen/Raskin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Status of the Land and Water Conservation Fund
In 2019, permanent authorization of LWCF was secured as part of S. 47, the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act. Passage of the Dingell Act ensures that LWCF no longer faces the uncertainty of potential expiration, and that the unique structure and inflow of funds to LWCF is protected. The focus is now on permanent full funding for LWCF – ensuring that each year the $900 million deposited into the LWCF account actually goes towards conservation and recreation priorities. Over the 55 years of the program, over $22 billion has been diverted from LWCF to other, unknown purposes. That means that our public lands, waters, and historic sites have been put in peril. As open space continues to shrink, LWCF investments become even more critical to providing the outdoor opportunities for all future generations.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Permanent Funding Act – S. 1081 and H.R. 3195 – have passed through their respective committees and are ready for floor votes in both chambers.

**LWCF Appropriations FY2000-FY2020**

Note - All approximate totals derived from appropriations bills
- Forest Legacy Program & Sec. 6 funded from LWCF starting in 2004