LWCF Success in Tennessee

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has provided funding to help protect some of Tennessee’s most special places and ensure recreational access for hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities. Tennessee has received approximately $221.4 million in LWCF funding over the past five decades, protecting places such as Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park, Cherokee National Forest, Chickasaw National Wildlife Refuge and Shiloh National Military 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 Cumberland Mountain in Franklin County and Chickamauga Creek in Marion County. The FLP matching grants for permanent conservation easement and fee acquisitions, and has leveraged approximately $33 million in federal funds to invest in Tennessee’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 Tennessee’s state and local parks including Big Hill Pond State Park in McNairy County, Fall Creek Falls State Park, Panther Creek State Park in Hamblen County and Roan Mountain State Park in Carter County.

Economic Benefits

Active outdoor recreation is an important part of the Tennessee economy. The Outdoor Industry Association has found that active outdoor recreation contributes more than $21.6 billion annually to Tennessee’s economy, supports 188,000 jobs across the state which generate $6.5 billion in wages and salaries and produces $1.4 billion annually in state and local tax revenue. Further, the U.S. Census reports that each year over 2.8 million people enjoy hunting, fishing and watching wildlife across Tennessee, contributing $2.3 billion to the state economy from wildlife recreation spending.
LWCF in Tennessee

Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park

Created at the request of Civil War veterans in 1890, this park protects important Civil War sites in and around the city of Chattanooga, including Lookout Mountain, Missionary Ridge, Moccasin Bend, and the Chickamauga Battlefield. LWCF investments of more than $10 million - through National Park Service land acquisition inside the park and using American Battlefield Protection Program grants outside the park boundaries - have ensured the permanent protection of important historic sites that are also part of Chattanooga’s enviable network of open space. Protected lands that have benefited from LWCF funds include the sites of several key battles fought during a pivotal period in late 1863: Billy Goat Hill, where Union General William T. Sherman camped before the Battle of Missionary Ridge; a portion of the Wauhautchie Battlefield; and multiple properties on Lookout Mountain, site of the famed “Battle Above the Clouds.”

Fiscal Year 2020 Agency Priority Project List for Tennessee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Delegation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NPS</td>
<td>Big South Fork National River &amp; Recreation Area</td>
<td>$850,000</td>
<td>Alexander, Blackburn/Fleischmann, Rose</td>
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<td>FS</td>
<td>Tennessee Mountain Trails &amp; Waters; Cherokee</td>
<td>$4,000,000</td>
<td>Alexander, Blackburn/Roe, Fleischmann</td>
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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.