

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

April 12, 2013

The Honorable Michael K. Simpson  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Interior,  
Environment and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable James P. Moran  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior,  
Environment, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Simpson and Ranking Member Moran,

We are writing to express our strong support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and urge you to allocate robust funding to this valuable program in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. The entire suite of LWCF programs protects natural resource lands, outdoor recreation opportunities, and working forests at the local, state, and federal levels. These programs ensure that critical wildlife habitat, hunting and fishing access, state and local parks, Civil War battlefields, productive forests, and other important lands are protected for current and future generations. Investments in LWCF also support public land conservation and ensure access to the outdoors for all Americans, in rural communities and cities alike.

As you know, LWCF uses no taxpayer dollars. Instead, LWCF funds are primarily derived from oil and gas receipts paid to the federal government by energy companies that extract publicly-owned resources from the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). Congress created LWCF in 1965 as a bipartisan promise to return precious resources back to the American public by using these funds that accrue to the U.S. Treasury to be spent specifically for conservation and recreation purposes. Unfortunately, over the near 50-year history of LWCF these funds have been diverted from their original conservation purpose. This lack of appropriate budgeting has created a large backlog of conservation needs, and has led state, local and federal land management agencies to postpone or cancel many important projects.

Despite this history of underfunding, LWCF remains the premier federal program to conserve our nation's land, water, historic, and recreation heritage. Inadequate LWCF funding jeopardizes access to public lands for hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities. This, in turn, has an adverse impact on America's outdoor recreation, conservation, and preservation economies, which contributes \$1.06 *trillion* to the nation's economy each year and supports 9.4 million American jobs (1 out of every 15 jobs in the U.S.).

In these very difficult economic times, investing in LWCF is an important way to grow our economy. LWCF is a driver for jobs and the revitalization of local communities. LWCF

provides an entire suite of conservation tools to address national, state, local and regionally-driven priorities across the country. These include working lands easements that keep farmers and ranchers as stewards of the landscape that provides their livelihoods, and working forest projects through the Forest Legacy Program keep timberlands forested and accessible and provide jobs in our rural communities.

The companion LWCF State Grants Program provides crucial support for state and local park acquisitions in cities, counties, and rural towns as well as recreational facilities and trail corridors. The Stateside program is the government's primary investment tool for ensuring that children and families have access to close-to-home recreation. The LWCF stateside program has funded over 41,000 projects including sports fields, outdoor recreation facilities and trails touching all fifty states.

Support for LWCF among the American public persists at an incredibly strong and consistent level. Ninety percent of hunters from every geographic region and every political persuasion support LWCF. This broad support extends to support among voters in general.

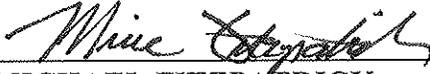
Americans remain extremely invested in protecting their local landscapes -- on Election Day 2012, new land protection initiatives were approved in states and districts that voted both Republican and Democratic, that will generate \$2 billion in new state and local conservation funding. LWCF funding leverages and complements these state and local conservation dollars.

We look forward to working with the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies in the coming months to ensure that the suite of LWCF programs are adequately funded in FY 2014 so that the federal government can maintain its commitment to conservation and recreation. As Americans continue to visit our nation's forests, parks, historic battlefields, and wildlife refuges, we urge you to provide the funding levels necessary to ensure these opportunities exist everywhere in our great Nation.

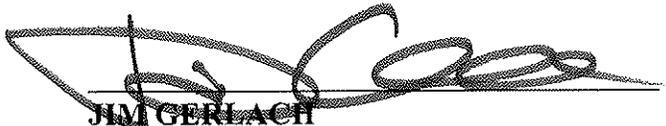
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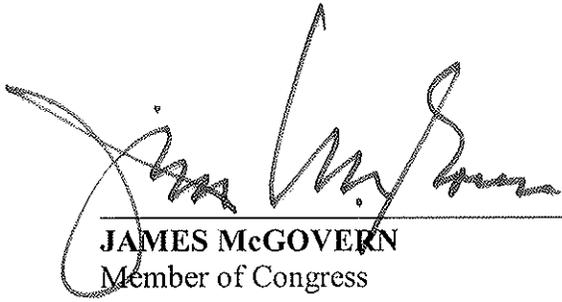
Sincerely,

  
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**MIKE THOMPSON**  
Member of Congress

  
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**MICHAEL FITZPATRICK**  
Member of Congress

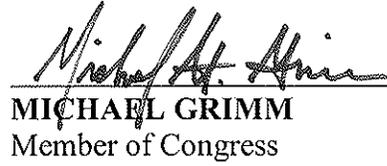
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**RUSH HOLT**  
Member of Congress

  
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**JIM GERLACH**  
Member of Congress

  
JAMES McGOVERN  
Member of Congress

  
DAVID REICHERT  
Member of Congress

  
G.K. BUTTERFIELD  
Member of Congress

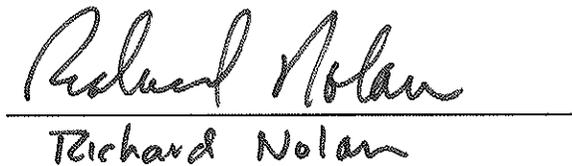
  
MICHAEL GRIMM  
Member of Congress

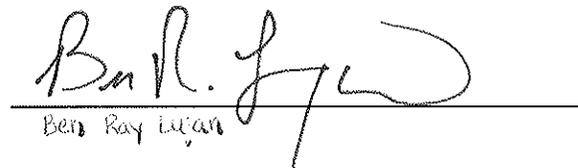
  
Bennie Thompson

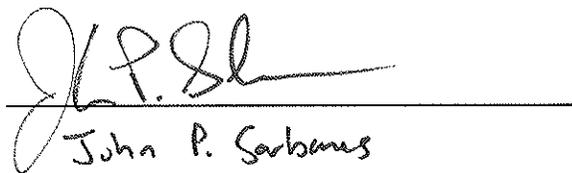
  
Gene Green

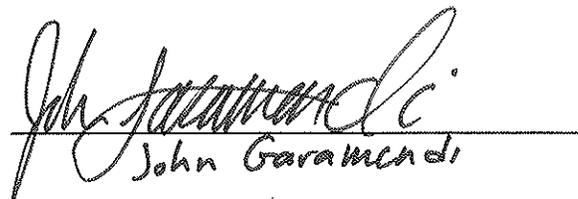
  
Paul D. Tonko

  
Steve Israel

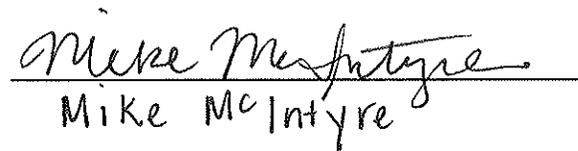
  
Richard Nolan

  
Ben Ray Lujan

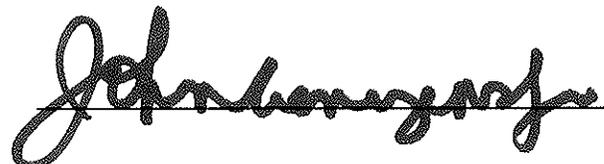
  
John P. Sarbanes

  
John Garamendi

  
DORIS O. MATSUI

  
Mike McIntyre

  
Frank Loblundo

  
John Conaway

Melvin L. Wood

Paul Weber

Chaka Fattah  
Chaka Fattah

Cardyn Mc. Carthy

James Weber

Barbara Lee

Steve Thorne

Brad Johnson

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Samuel Miller

Ken A. Waxman

John Garamendi  
John Garamendi

Bill Pasull Jr.  
Bill Pasull Jr.

John L. ...  
John L. ...

John ...  
John ...

Wm. Lacy Clay M.C.  
Wm. Lacy Clay (MO-02)

Alcee L. Hastings  
ALCEE L. HASTINGS

C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger  
C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

Earl ...  
Earl ...

Rosa L. DeLauro  
ROSA L. DELAURO

Louise Kuybal-Allard  
Louise Kuybal-Allard

Steve Cohen  
Steve Cohen

John ...  
John ...

Alvin ...  
Alvin ...

Carol ...  
Carol ...

David Price

Howard Coble

Sheila Jackson Lee

Sheila Jackson Lee

Stephen F. Lynch

Stephen F. Lynch

Alan H. Cox

Rick Lasser

Jerrold Pradler

Jim McDevitt

W. J. ...

D. Bristow

Sam Farr

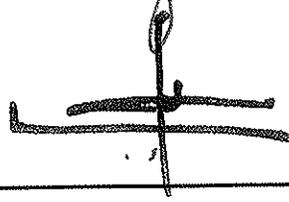
Earl Blumen

Ed Duff

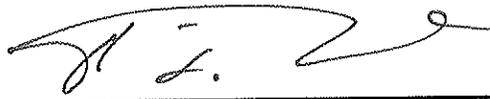
José CASTRO

Michelle dujar Gulen

~~Sam East~~



Mike Doyle



Wm. Lacy Clay m.c.

Paul White

Yvette D. Clarke

Elizabeth Turner

Aik Sahall

Cecilia Brown

Terri Swell

Ad Datto

Menny Heck

Bill Owens

Ann

Suzanne D. Breen

Bruce J. Schum

Kimberly K. Kuty

MP

Ann M. Kuster

Leonora Lence

David N. Ciullini

Jim Langwin

Bob Brady

Don Payne, Jr.

Kurt Schroder

John

Frederica S. Wilson

John S. Dore II

John Sp...

Bobby Scott

Greg M. King

Joe K.

Allyn G. Smith

Joe King

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Steve Horsford

Ed Ball

Michael C. Capen

Matthew A. Capen

John King

Joe King

John C. Capen

Am

Raul M. Hijalero

Ron Kind

Moosh Forkano

J M Put

Gudy Chu

Susan A Davis

Dave Lockhart



Carol Shea-Potter

Juan Vargas

Doug Peters

Jane Huff

Niki Vargas

CPT

Michael H. Michael

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Edward J. Markey

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Eliot L. Engel

John Smith

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Rinda J. Green

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Tulsi Gabbard

Gini Smolwicz

Dina Titus

Kamran Basse

M. V. G.

Mark E. Tompkins

Fah Verbeke

Jim Van Pelt

Suzanne Bonamici

Y. K. Spaff

Monty

John

Tin Tin

David Schoor

Frank Pullen

Delia Wasserman

Keith Simon

Joe Courtney

Charles B. Rangel

SMR

Marcia L. Judge

Richard E. Paul

Lewis

Patricia Mula