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LWCF Coalition Statement on President Biden’s FY 2025 Budget Announcement

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Coalition released the following statement from Lesley Kane Szynal, Chair of the LWCF Coalition, recognizing the President’s commitment to the Land and Water Conservation Fund in his FY25 budget announcement:

“The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and its many benefits are critical to preserving America’s most treasured landscapes and bolstering our local and national outdoor recreation economies. Maintaining LWCF’s time-tested success, as a bipartisan program that effectively delivers for all of America, requires robust, ongoing investment. We are heartened by the President’s LWCF FY25 budget, which will put these funds to work – consistent with the underlying LWCF statute’s allocation requirements among federal efforts and a suite of state and local grants – to complete hundreds of locally driven, vetted conservation and recreation access projects across the country, including many iconic priorities specifically identified in the budget request.

The LWCF Coalition appreciates the crucial investments this budget is proposing for LWCF, from the Pacific Crest Trail and the Golden Gate and Santa Monica Mountains NRA’s in California to the Rachel Carson and Petit Manan NWRs along the coast of Maine; from Montana’s Rocky Mountain Front and Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming to Chickamauga & Chattanooga National Military Parks in Tennessee and Georgia, and [the newly-created Everglades to Gulf Conservation Area in Florida](#); and including working forest projects in

Vermont, Oklahoma, Arizona, and near Utah's Zion National Park. We thank President Biden for his continued commitment to address these and other priorities with the \$900 million in dedicated LWCF funding provided under the Great American Outdoors Act.

We are also pleased to see \$8 million for Tribes included in the Administration's LWCF proposal, which dovetails with the Coalition's efforts and those of our congressional champions to allow tribes to receive direct LWCF funding through the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) program. The Outdoors for All Act, recently passed by the House Natural Resources Committee as part of the EXPLORE Act and similarly passed by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee last spring as part of America's Outdoor Recreation Act, will precisely provide the avenue Tribes need to access these funds. We are excited to see this positive momentum and look forward to working to enact this important legislation and secure these funds.

Once again, the President's Budget highlights the need for additional conservation investment across the country by including a supplemental list of LWCF priorities above and beyond those that would receive funding at the \$900 million level for LWCF. These represent just a fraction of the identified conservation and recreation needs that remain unmet without additional discretionary LWCF funding – funding supported by LWCF Coalition partners and a strong bipartisan group of legislators. Unfortunately, Congress compounded this funding shortfall in FY24 when it rescinded over \$90 million in prior-year LWCF appropriations, all of which could easily have instead been reallocated to urgent ready-to-go project needs that now could be lost forever. The rescission was a tragic mistake that cannot be allowed to happen again.

We look forward to continuing our work with the many bipartisan LWCF supporters in Congress, and we urge them and their colleagues to sustain LWCF into the future by protecting existing funds, meeting the FY25 LWCF request in the President's budget, and providing the additional LWCF funds we need to conserve and enhance these special places across the country."

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About the Land and Water Conservation Fund

LWCF is America's most important conservation program, responsible for protecting parks, wildlife refuges and recreation areas at the federal, state and local level. For over half a century, it has provided critical funding for land and water conservation projects, recreational construction and activities and the continued historic preservation of our nation's iconic landmarks from coast-to-coast. LWCF does not use any taxpayer dollars – it is funded using a small portion of revenues from offshore oil and gas royalty payments. Outdoor recreation, conservation and historic preservation activities contribute more than \$778 billion annually to the U.S. economy, supporting 5.2 million jobs.

About the LWCF Coalition

The LWCF Coalition is the umbrella group of more than 1,000 state and local landowners, small businesses, ranchers, sportsmen, veterans, outdoor recreationists and conservation organizations working to protect America's public lands and safeguard our shared outdoor heritage for future generations. For more information on LWCF and the places in each state that have been protected using LWCF funds, visit [LWCFCoalition.org](https://www.LWCFCoalition.org).