



Water Policy Interim Committee

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64th Montana Legislature

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Sept. 3, 2015

Sen. Jon Tester
311 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Sen. Steve Daines
320 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Rep. Ryan Zinke
113 Cannon House Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Sen. Tester, Sen. Daines, and Rep. Zinke,

The Water Policy Interim Committee of the Montana Legislature strongly urges your support of S. 338 and H.R. 1814 to reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The fund has been used often in Montana to protect land and water and to support park projects. In 50 years, about \$540 million has been spent in Montana to protect places such as our national forests, the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem, Glacier National Park, and the Rocky Mountain Front. The fund has also created many hiking and biking trails, community parks, and playgrounds.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund also has produced measurable economic benefits. Grants have protected timber sector jobs and sustainable forest operations, while enhancing wildlife habitat, water quality, and recreation in places such as the Kootenai River watershed and the north Swan River Valley. Maintaining and protecting land and water for outdoor recreation has generated thousands of jobs and billions in consumer spending across Montana.

For these reasons and many more, the Water Policy Interim Committee hopes Congress can quickly act on this important legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

WATER POLICY INTERIM
COMMITTEE 2015-16

Sen. Bradley Maxon Hamlett, chairman

September 3, 2015

Exhibit 9

Our Land, Our Water, Our Heritage

LWCF IN MONTANA

HELP PROTECT MONTANA'S QUALITY OF LIFE BY SUPPORTING FULL FUNDING
FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

LWCF Funded Units in Montana

Federal Program

Bear Creek Flats/Blackfoot River
Beaverhead River
Bitterroot NF
Blackfoot River Watershed/SRMA
Blackfoot Challenge
Chain of Lakes RMA/L&C NHT
Charles Russell NWR
Custer NF
Beaverhead/Deerlodge NF
Devils Elbow/Missouri River
Elkhorn/Ironmask
Flathead NF
Gallatin NF/GYE
Garnet Ghost Town
Grant-Kohrs NHS
Helena NF
Kootenai NF
Lewis & Clark NF
Lolo NF
Meeteetsee Spires ACEC
Montana Legacy
Completion
Rattlesnake NRA
Red Rock Lakes NWR



www.lwcfcoalition.org

LWCF Success in Montana

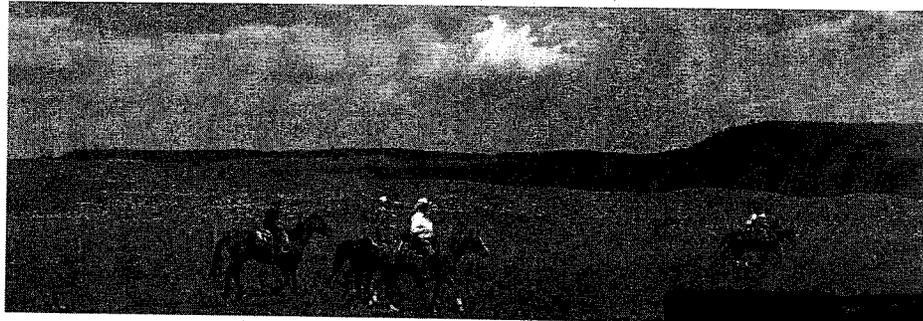
The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has provided funding to help protect some of Montana's most special places and ensure recreational access for hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities. Montana has received approximately \$540 million in LWCF funding over the past five decades, protecting places such as the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, Rocky Mountain Front, Glacier National Park and numerous other landscapes.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP) grants are also funded under LWCF, to help protect working forests— supporting timber sector jobs and sustainable forest operations while enhancing wildlife habitat, water quality and recreation at places such as Kootenai River watershed in northwest Montana and the North Swan River Valley. The Forest Legacy Program 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 \$52 million in federal funds to invest \$101 million in Montana'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 Montana's state and local parks including Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park, Lone Pine State Park in Flathead County and hundreds of fishing access sites across the state.

Economic Benefits

Active outdoor recreation is an important part of the Montana economy. The Outdoor Industry Association has found that active outdoor recreation generates \$5.8 billion annually in consumer spending in Montana, supports 64,000 jobs across the state which generate \$1.5 billion in wages and salaries and produces \$403 million annually in state and local tax revenue. Further, the U.S. Census reports that over 950,000 people hunt, fish or watch wildlife in Montana each year, spending over \$1.1 billion on wildlife-related recreation.



Above: Horsebackriders in the Rocky Mountain Front
Top: Rocky Mountain Front

Rocky Mountain Front
 Rye Creek
 Upper Missouri WSR
 West. Montana Project/
 Blackfoot
 Western Montana Project
 Lewis and Clark NHT
 *Bighorn Canyon NRA

Approximate Federal Total \$414,000,000

State Program

Approximate Total Stateside

Grants \$ 38,000,000

Forest Legacy Program:

Approximately \$ 52,000,000

Habitat Conservation Grants (Sec. 6):

Approximately \$ 36,000,000

Approximate Total \$540,000,000

*Multi-State Project

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.

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LWCF in Montana

Rocky Mountain Front

The US Fish & Wildlife Service recently purchased an easement using LWCF on a 12,130 acre ranch – the largest US Fish & Wildlife Service easement in the lower 48 states – that protects critical grassland grizzly bear and bird habitat. The conservation of this multi-generational family ranch also accomplished protection on 17 miles of riparian habitat along the Teton River, extending from the Mountains onto the plains. LWCF dollars were matched in excess of 2:1 by private funds, and will be recycled into the local economy through the continuation of this traditional agricultural operation. Home to 3 million acres of large cattle ranches and prime grizzly bear habitat, the Rocky Mountain Front boasts over 150,000 acres of ranches with conservation easements (many used LWCF) and another 100,000 acres of current easement demand “in the pipeline.”

Montana and the Fiscal Year 2016 President’s Budget:

Below is information regarding Montana’s projects recommended for LWCF funding in the President’s Fiscal Year 2016 budget. These projects enhance recreation and conservation, protect clean water, often reduce management costs resulting in savings to the agencies, and support jobs and economic vitality across Montana’s communities.

Agency	State	Project	Funding Request	Representative
BLM	MT	Madison River SRMA	\$ 8,300,000	Zinke
BLM	MT	Lewis & Clark NHT	\$ 4,750,000	Zinke
USFWS	MT	Red Rocks Lake NWR	\$ 1,000,000	Zinke
USFWS	MT	Montana Refuges	\$ 3,000,000	Zinke
NPS	MT	Big Hole NB	\$ 300,000	Zinke
USFS	MT	CLP: High Divide - Beaverhead/Deerlodge	\$ 1,525,000	Zinke
USFS	MT	CLP: High Divide - Gallatin	\$ 2,000,000	Zinke
USFS	MT	CLP: National Trails - Continental Divide NST	\$ 255,000	Zinke
USFS	MT	CLP: High Divide - Beaverhead/Deerlodge NF	\$ 200,000	Zinke
USFS	MT	Jenkins Gulch - Helena	\$ 560,000	Zinke
USFS	MT	Montana Legacy Completion - Flathead	\$ 2,000,000	Zinke
FLP	MT	Trumbull Creek Watershed	\$ 6,500,000	Zinke

The Fiscal Year 2016 President’s Budget:

Below is a list of investments recommended for LWCF funding in the President’s Fiscal Year 2016 budget. The Montana projects above are included within these budget totals. The President has proposed to fully fund LWCF at \$900 million, which includes the following allocation of funds among projects and programs:

2016 President's Request

Bureau of Land Management:

Federal Projects: \$93.3 million

Sportsmen & Recreational Access: \$10 million

US Fish & Wildlife Service:

Federal Projects: \$164.7 million

Sportsmen & Recreational Access: \$2.5 million

National Parks Service:

Federal Projects: \$171 million

Sportsmen & Recreational Access: \$9.5 million

American Battlefield Protection Grant Program: \$13.5 million

US Forest Service:

Federal Projects: \$127.6 million

Sportsmen & Recreational Access: \$5 million

State Grants:

NPS State and Local Assistance Grants: \$100.1 million

NPS Urban Parks and Recreation Fund: \$25 million

Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund: \$100 million

Forest Legacy Program: \$100 million

For more information:

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