



National Recreation and Park Association

LWCF & FY 13 Appropriations

Continuing Resolution:

- Prior to adjourning for the elections cycle, Congress passed a Continuing Resolution (CR) which will keep the government running through March 27, 2013 at FY12 levels.
- Much uncertainty surrounds when Congress will actually address the FY13 appropriations bills since, when Congress returns, it must deal with averting an 8.2% across the board cut which was mandated by the sequester, and must also decide what to do about the tax cuts due to expire at the end of the year.
- These issues are likely to take up much of the lame duck session and must be resolved before the end of the 112th Session of Congress in December.

FY 13 Funding Levels:

- The Senate "draft" FY13 appropriations bill released on September 25, 2012 provides \$378 million to LWCF (17% increase).
- While other programs within LWCF saw an increase, the State Assistance program's funding was maintained at the FY12 level - \$45 million.
- Of the \$45 million, \$42,138,000 will be allocated to the states with the remainder going to administrative expenses. This is the same amount allocated to the states in FY12.
- The Senate bill also specifies that zero State Assistance dollars are to be used for a DOI competitive grant program.
- The bill passed earlier this year by the House Interior Appropriations Sub-committee effectively zeroed out the State Assistance Program by providing just over \$2 million dollars for program administration.
- As of the time of writing, indications are that the Senate will not vote on its bill, and we will not see the Interior bill move as a stand-alone as is normally the case. The more likely scenario is that the Senate and the House will meet in conference to work out the differences in the Interior and other bills, and ultimately the Interior bill will move as part of an omnibus appropriations bill (a package of several appropriations bills).
- NRPA advocacy efforts during the lame duck will focus on those likely to be conferees on the omnibus bill. While conferees for the FY13 appropriations bill have not yet been named, FY12 conferees included:

Conferees on the part of the Senate: Mr. Johnson of South Dakota, Mr. Inouye, Ms. Landrieu, Mrs. Murray, Mr. Reed, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Pryor, Mr. Tester, Mr. Leahy, Mr. Kirk, Mrs. Hutchison, Mr. McConnell, Ms. Murkowski, Mr. Blunt, Mr. Hoeven, Mr. Coats, and Mr. Cochran.

Conferees on the part of the House: Rep. Hal Rogers, Rep. C.W. Bill Young, Rep. Jerry Lewis, Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen, Rep. Robert B. Aderholt, Rep. Jo Ann Emerson, Rep. Kay Granger, Rep. Mike Simpson, Rep. John Culberson, Rep. Ander Crenshaw, Rep. Denny Rehberg, Rep. John R. Carter, Rep. Norm Dicks, Rep. Peter Visclosky, Rep. Nita Lowey, Rep. Jose Serrano, Rep. Rosa DeLauro, Rep. James Moran, Rep. David Price, and Rep. Sanford Bishop.

Averting the Sequester

- In 2011 Congress passed the Budget Control Act of 2011. The Act required the formation of a deficit reduction committee (a.k.a. the “Super Committee”) and charged the committee with finding ways to reduce the deficit by approximately \$1.5 trillion over a ten year period.
- As a result of the committee’s failure to reach agreement on how to reduce the deficit, an automatic 8.2% across the board the cut for spending programs is set to go into effect on January 1, 2013.
- Many economists fear this reduction in federal spending coupled with the potential for reduced income if current tax cuts are allowed to expire could send the country over the “fiscal cliff”.
- Both parties and the President agree we must avert the sequester by finding another way to reduce the deficit.
- Serious consideration is being given to using some form of a 2010 proposal put forth by the Simpson/Bowles Commission (also a bipartisan group) as the vehicle to do this.
- Consideration of any form of the Simpson/Bowles proposal could put LWCF at risk since the Simpson/Bowles proposal recommended Congress zero out the LWCF. (see below)

“Reduce land acquisition under the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Annual funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has typically been around between \$250 million and \$450 million. However, the President’s request for FY2011 is \$619 million, up from last year’s \$263 million allocation – a 135 percent increase. The LWCF is used almost exclusively for land acquisition for both federal and state land management agencies, while many argue that the federal government and states have difficulty managing the land they already own. That budget cannot, however, be used for maintenance. The federal government already owns 650 million acres that it has struggled to maintain. So while we continue to experience a maintenance backlog between \$13.2 and \$19.4 billion, Congress is seeking to acquire even more land. By not funding this account until the maintenance backlog has been decreased less than \$1 billion, the federal government will save just under \$300 million each year.”

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