



National Association of State Park Directors

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February 4, 2015

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman
The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: LWCF Reauthorization, Stateside Allocation

DIRECTORS

Ben Ellis
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Bill Bryan
MISSOURI

Phil Gaines
SOUTH CAROLINA

Craig Whipple
VERMONT

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Senator Cantwell:

We noted with great interest the discussions last week on the Senate floor regarding the proposed amendments for the reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

What sometimes gets lost in the talking points is the significant impact that LWCF has provided the state parks – the some 8000 distinct park areas in all 50 states. Portions of available stateside allocations have been administered very successfully to virtually every local community across the country. The respective local partners frequently overmatch stateside grants.

This is to respectfully request due consideration be given for fair and equitable allocation of the fund as you consider permanent reauthorization of LWCF. Described as the most effective conservation effort in America and widely recognized as visionary legislation in 1965 when LWCF was authorized, the original allocation designated was:

SEC. 4. (a) ALLOCATION.—There shall ...

(i) the appropriation therein made shall be available in the ratio of 60 per centum for State purposes and 40 per centum for Federal purposes, ...

www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/STATUTE-78/pdf/STATUTE-78-Pg897.pdf

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Lewis Ledford
NORTH CAROLINA (ret.)

With legislative changes and diversions, the Stateside portion of the fund in recent years averages just over 12%. We recognize the considerable needs, but a due review will confirm the effectiveness, the demand and the appropriateness of providing a fair and balanced allocation that meets the original intent of the law.

The Honorable Murkowski
The Honorable Cantwell
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America's State Parks provide wonderful outdoor recreation experiences and unique historical, scientific and environmental education opportunities. LWCF has been a key reason for the vast diversity – from the expansive mountainous landscape in Alaska to a coral reef in Florida to the world's longest stalactite formation in an Arizona cavern to locations where European settlers first came to America and much more. The mosaic of the natural resources, the cultural fabric of America, and the splendor of its beauty are enjoyed by 730 million state park visitors annually. State Parks provide important contributions to the nation's environment, heritage, health, and economy.

Permanent reauthorization of LWCF, with balanced and equitable funding of a stateside allocation, will have great impact today, and for generations, in meeting the purposes of the original Act. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lewis R. Ledford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lewis" being the most prominent.

Lewis R. Ledford, Executive Director
National Association of State Park Directors

cc: Members, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee