

Our Land, Our Water, Our Heritage

AMERICA DEPENDS ON THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

Healthy land. Clean water. These basic necessities of life are more and more at risk due to population growth, development, climate change and pollution. Ensuring our health, and that of future generations, now depends on how well we protect our natural world.

We can help save America's land, water and our quality of life with legislation that guarantees permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

This program helps protect some of America's most important natural areas:

- National parks and forests
- Land by rivers, lakes and oceans
- Working farms and ranches
- Fish and wildlife refuges
- Neighborhood parks

The impacts of the program support:

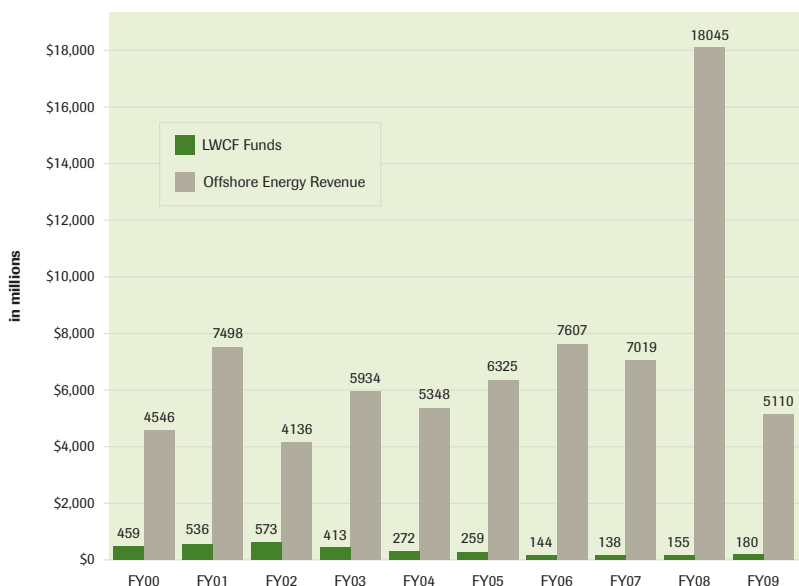
- Clean water supplies
- Jobs and local economies
- Fire-fighting cost reduction
- Our common heritage of natural areas for wildlife, recreation and enjoying nature



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The Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge is part of almost a half million acres of conserved land in northeastern North Carolina. The refuge is a popular recreational area and home to special animals, including the red wolf, which was successfully reintroduced into the wild. Money from the Land and Water Conservation Fund also has a positive impact on the economy. More than 500 million people visit national parks and monuments, wildlife refuges, and recreational sites each year. Outdoor recreation provides millions of jobs and contributes \$730 billion annually to the U.S. economy.

LWCF Funds and Offshore Energy Revenue FY00-FY09



The Land and Water Conservation Fund's goal is to balance the loss of one natural resource—offshore oil and gas—by using a portion of drilling fees to protect important land and water elsewhere. But despite an increase in energy production, funding for land and water protection has been low and unpredictable. The program is authorized to receive a small percentage of offshore oil and gas fee revenue—up to \$900 million a year—but most of these funds have been diverted elsewhere. With America losing 3 million acres of land to development each year, it is now critical that we guarantee permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

◀ In 2009, the Department of the Interior collected \$5 billion from offshore energy production, but only \$180 million, or about three percent of that revenue, was set aside to protect America's land and water.



Great Egret at Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge
© Debbie Crane

Americans strongly support protecting our land and water:

- More than 80 percent of the public supports using funds from oil and gas fees to help preserve our natural areas.¹
- More than three-quarters of voters believe we can continue to protect the environment while strengthening the economy.²
- Voters strongly support public investments in conservation. Over the past decade, voters have passed statewide and local open space ballot measures at an overall rate of 73 percent.³

North Carolina Depends on the Land and Water Conservation Fund

If funded at \$900 million a year, the Land and Water Conservation Fund can help ensure our quality of life, from the water we drink to our enjoyment of the great outdoors. It will support jobs in tourism and recreation, save working farms and ranches, and boost local economies.

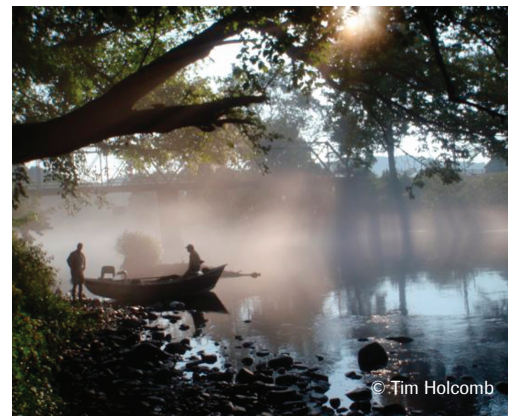
In North Carolina, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has provided approximately \$180 million over the past four decades to protect our natural areas, including the southern Appalachians and the North Carolina coast. With the increasing threats of development and climate change, additional protection of our natural resources is needed to ensure healthy land and clean water for future generations.

NORTHEASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

More than 500,000 acres of wildlife habitat are protected by ten national wildlife refuges in Northeastern North Carolina, but much of that land will be lost or dramatically altered by climate change. New lands must be acquired to link refuges vulnerable to the effects of sea level rise, such as Alligator River and Mattamuskeet, to less vulnerable refuges, such as Pocosin Lakes and Roanoke River, helping wildlife escape rising sea levels and continuing to provide outstanding recreational opportunities.

SOUTHERN APPALACHIANS

The 2.4 million acres in Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests contain outstanding recreational resources for fishing, hunting, hiking, birding, whitewater paddling and other nature-oriented activities. The U.S. Forest Service report titled *National Forests on the Edge* ranked the Nantahala-Pisgah National Forests as fourth in the nation with respect to threats from development around its edges, making additional land acquisition a high priority.



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“I have been lucky enough to make a career of facilitating outdoor recreation, primarily as a fly fishing guide. As a guide, water quality and overall quality of the environment is of paramount importance. Trout is the species of fish that we target most often, and trout require the cleanest and coldest water to thrive. Therefore, if the quality of the environment decreases, my profession and salary decrease as well. I support full funding of the LWCF to ensure continued protection of the environment around sensitive trout streams and across North Carolina.”

– Tim Holcomb,
Western North Carolina Fishing Guide

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¹ Lake Research Partners, 2009

² Nature Conservancy poll, FM3 and Public Opinion Strategies, 2009

³ The Trust for Public Land, LandVote.org Database, www.landvote.org