

# NACPRO



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION OFFICIALS

*An Affiliate of National Association of Counties and the National Recreation and Park Association*

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The Honorable Raul M. Grijalva  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Natural Resources  
1511 Longworth House Office Bldg  
Washington, DC 20515

March 30, 2015

Re: LWCF Reauthorization and State Assistance Program

Dear Chairman Bishop and Representative Grijalva:

The National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials (NACPRO) represents county park and regional park district interests across the country. NACPRO has long been a strong supporter and advocate for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), particularly the stateside of the program. Unfortunately the stateside of the program, which could produce significant and lasting benefits for recreationists at the local level has long been minimized and ignored.

We respectfully request your support for: 1) the reauthorization of the LWCF including full, permanent funding; and 2) with fair and equitable treatment for the State Assistance Program of no less than 40% guaranteed funding for formula grants to the states for active outdoor recreation.

In recent weeks we have followed a flurry of discussions and proposals related to the reauthorization of the funds. As a result, NACPRO deems it important that we clearly state our position on the reauthorization of the LWCF.

Foremost, the issue of fairness in how LWCF dollars are being distributed is lost in the current discussion over the reauthorization. While the vast majority of recreation use occurs in city, county and state parks, the LWCF has only been providing about 13% of overall funding to the very program – State Assistance - - which impacts people where they live and recreate most.

The State Assistance Program is consistently listed as a key tenant of the LWCF program. We value preserving and providing access to our national treasures for all to enjoy, but we want to remind you that many treasured areas are NOT located on federal property. And, many federal properties are not as readily accessible to a majority of the population.

Chairman Bishop  
Ranking Member Grijalva

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In spite of its gross lack of support, the State Assistance allocations have been administered very successfully to virtually every community and county across the country. The respective state and local partners frequently go well beyond the required one-to-one match for stateside grants and primarily use the funding for park development purposes.

Described as the most effective conservation and outdoor recreation effort in America and widely recognized as visionary legislation in 1965 when LWCF was authorized, the Act describes the allocation as such:

*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](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/STATUTE-78/pdf/STATUTE-78-Pg897.pdf)

Through legislative changes and diversions, the State Assistance portion of the fund in recent years averages 13% with the balance going primarily to federal land acquisitions. We recognize the considerable competing priorities, but an honest review will confirm the effectiveness, the demand and the appropriateness of providing a fair and balanced allocation that resembles the original intent of the law. With outer continental shelf (OCS) revenues (the funding source for LWCF) topping \$9 billion this past year, it appears there is adequate funding for both the stateside of the LWCF program as well as other programs vital to local and county governments. In general, NACPRO is open to supporting other appropriate uses of OCS revenue so long as the stateside is fully funded.

NACPRO fully supports permanently and robustly reauthorizing LWCF State Assistance funding to enable planning, acquisition, development and rehabilitation of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities at the state, county and local levels.

Permanent reauthorization of LWCF, with a dedicated, balanced and equitable funding of the State Assistance allocation, will have tremendous impact today, and for generations, in meeting the intent of the original Act.

Finally, NACPRO leadership has a vast background in both the LWCF program and providing passive and active recreation opportunities at the local, regional and state level. We are pleased to offer assistance in refining the LWCF program for greater success in the future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Scott Bangle, President  
National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials