



October 31, 2016

To: Arizona Congressional Delegation

Re: Land and Water Conservation Fund Reauthorization and Permanent Funding

On behalf of Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation (AZSFWC) and 24 of our member organizations, we urge you to support the bipartisan agreement to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) that passed the Senate this past April as part of the Energy Policy Modernization Act.

For over 50 years, the LWCF has provided critical funding for land and water conservation projects, outdoor recreation access, and the continued preservation of our Nation's historic, cultural and iconic landmarks. Without question, Arizona is home to some the most astounding natural treasures in the world — landscapes that take your breath away. Since its' inception, the LWCF has provided over \$200 million in Arizona to protect places such as the Grand Canyon and Saguaro National Parks, Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Coconino National Forest, San Pedro National Conservation Area, and other Federal lands popular with sportsmen and tourists. Equally important are the LWCF matching grants that have enabled local communities across the state to create trails, parks, playgrounds, urban wildlife refuges, greenways and other recreational facilities, like the Payson municipal pool or Prescott's Willow Lake facilities.

The LWCF is paid for with non-taxpayer dollars. Congress made a commitment to the American public that a small portion of revenues from offshore oil and gas drilling would go to outdoor recreation and conservation, as an offset for the depletion of resources that belong to us all. While pursuing America's energy independence, we are also creating tourism jobs and close-to-home recreational opportunities. Preserving our ability to enjoy and access these public lands and waterways in Arizona does more than foster healthy outdoor recreation and protect our quality of life—it grows our economy.

Locally and nationally, critical parks, trails, wildlife, and recreation projects are counting on the LWCF, one of America's most important conservation and recreation programs, for funding this year and in the future. Some Arizona specific projects that were recommended for LWCF funding in FY2016 included the Ironwood Forest National Monument, Agua Fria NM, Saguaro National Park and the Fossil Creek recreation area.

For the first time, permanent authorization of the LWCF was included in the language passed by the Senate as part Title V of the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2016 (S. 2012). We now have an opportunity to ensure the future of LWCF funding by making this provision into law—an opportunity which must not be missed! This language was a

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commonsense bipartisan compromise crafted by Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Lisa Murkowski and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell. It addresses concerns about the program in a balanced and reasonable way, keeping the oversight role of Congress intact and maintaining the flexibility of the program to address current and future needs.

Title V also creates a new National Park Maintenance and Revitalization Fund that is over and above LWCF—NOT taking authorized dollars away from LWCF—from offshore energy revenues. This agreement addresses critical needs for our public lands by improving existing facilities and resources and protecting the integrity of those parks and lands from incompatible development with LWCF investments. The proposal also supports wildlife habitat protection, other conservation and outdoor recreation needs across the country and further guarantees funds for sportsmen's access by incorporating the Making Public Lands Public proposal.

We urge you to include the Senate passed bipartisan LWCF compromise in any bill that emerges from the Energy Conference Committee or as part of another package in the closing weeks of this Congress. It is critical that the compromise language be kept intact, and any efforts to weaken these provisions be opposed.

Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation is a 501c-3 organization dedicated to wildlife, habitat conservation work and educating sportsmen on related issues. Our member organizations reach across the spectrum of hunting, angling and outdoor recreation groups from all over Arizona. Our organization supports the LWCF because it: 1) expands recreation access for hunting, fishing, and other public use, 2) provides critical funding for state and local recreation and conservation projects, and 3) is a vital investment in safeguarding and enhancing the economic asset that our federal, state and local public lands represent.

For half a century, bipartisan support of LWCF has helped to meet a broad spectrum of conservation needs across America. In that same spirit and with so much at stake, we urge you to speak up and vote in support of full, permanent, and dedicated funding of LWCF in this critical reauthorization year.

Thank you!

Yours in Conservation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Unmacht", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jim Unmacht  
President



**AZSFWC Member Organizations supporting Reauthorization and Permanent Funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund**

Anglers United  
AZ Antelope Foundation  
AZ Bass Federation Nation  
AZ Big Game Super Raffle  
AZ Catfish Conservation Association  
AZ Chapter National Wild Turkey Federation  
AZ Chapter Safari Club International  
AZ Council of Trout Unlimited  
AZ Deer Association  
AZ Desert Bighorn Sheep Society  
AZ Elk Society  
AZ Flycasters Club  
AZ Houndsmen  
AZ Outdoor Sports  
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers  
Coconino Sportsmen  
Mohave Sportsman Club  
Outdoor Experience 4 All  
SRT Outdoors  
The BASS Federation  
TRCP  
Xtreme Predator Callers  
White Mountain Lakes Foundation  
1.2.3.Go...

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