

September 26, 2018

The Honorable Senator Amy Klobuchar
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Representative Timothy
Walz
2313 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Representative Jason Lewis
418 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Representative Eric Paulsen
127 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Representative Betty
McCollum
2256 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Senator Tina Smith
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Representative Keith Ellison
2263 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Representative Tom Emmer
315 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Representative Collin
Peterson
2204 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Representative Rick Nolan
2366 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

September 26, 2018

Re: Congressional Action Needed to Reauthorize and Fully Fund The Land And Water Conservation Fund

Dear Members of the Minnesota Delegation,

We the undersigned businesses write today to urge you to take action to reauthorize and fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).

As business owners in Minnesota rely on access to public lands and recreation for economic prosperity, we know the critical importance of LWCF in providing access to open spaces to hunt, fish, hike, swim and recreate. Access made possible by LWCF has strengthened and diversified our economies by simultaneously increasing visitation and bringing businesses of all types to our high quality of life communities.

LWCF is an invaluable component of the recreation economy throughout the nation aiding both rural and urban economies, and to lose such an effective program would be a great loss to the country. We urge you to vote to reauthorize this program and to fund it to its full capacity.

For more than five decades, LWCF has contributed to projects in every state in the nation and supported more than 41,000 state and local parks. Without the LWCF, sportsmen and recreationists would not have access to countless natural areas, urban parks, water resources, and cultural sites. Over the life of the fund, Minnesota has received approximately \$249 million in LWCF funds, which has helped protect places like Voyageurs Park National Park, the Superior and Chippewa National Forests, Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, and much more. These projects help support our state's [\\$16.7](#) billion outdoor recreation economy.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is an essential tool to help communities build diverse economies that will attract 21st century businesses who seek high quality of life. Future revenues depend on professionals, business owners, and employees who can position themselves wherever they choose. Communities throughout the nation are investing in recreation assets because they know that companies and entrepreneurs want to locate in areas with access to the outdoors. Public land, and the quality of life it affords, are the currency of the 21st century. The LWCF has provided access to irreplaceable lands and improved outdoor recreation opportunities in nearly every county in the nation. The need and effectiveness of the fund is simply indisputable.

In addition to reauthorization, we urge you to fund LWCF to its full capacity. The program is authorized to receive approximately \$900 million in offshore royalties each year. And yet, the funds continue to be diverted elsewhere year after year. This action does a great disservice to communities of all types who stand ready to leverage federal grant dollars with state and local matching funds.

As business owners, we support the economic power of LWCF and believe the fund is powerful, effective, and poised to bring growth to our communities for many years to come. We urge you to vote for LWCF's reauthorization and fully fund this vital economic driver.

Sincerely,

Piragis Northwoods Co.
Steve Piragis
Ely, MN

Pilgrim Paddles
Jeff Pilgrim
Rochester, MN

Sawbill Canoe Outfitters
Clare & Dan Shirley
Tofte, MN

Broken Paddle Guiding Company
Michael Anderson
Wabasha, MN

Wintergreen Northern Wear
Paul & Susan Schurke
Ely, MN

Great Lakes Northern Outfitter
David Burke
Minneapolis, MN

Wintergreen Dogsled Lodge
Paul & Susan Schurke
Ely, MN

Hungry Jack Outfitters
David Seaton
Gunflint Trail, MN