

March 3, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate

Dear Major Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer,

On behalf of our millions of members, we greatly appreciate your leadership to conserve our nation's natural resources and expand outdoor recreational opportunities.

We are extremely supportive of passing the Land and Water Conservation Fund Permanent Funding Act (S.1081) and the Restore Our Parks Act (S. 500). We are heartened by both the broad bipartisan support for these important conservation measures and the president's tweet of strong support yesterday, which combined make us optimistic that these bills will be signed into law.

Land and Water Conservation Fund Permanent Funding Act (S. 1081 by Senators Manchin and Gardner): The Land and Water Conservation Fund has helped conserve some of the most important lands in our nation for hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation. We appreciate your collective leadership in securing permanent authorization for the program earlier last year through the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (S.47), which also included the Making Public Lands Public provision that requires that at least 3% of the funds be used to expand opportunities for hunting, fishing, and other sporting activities. We urge the Senate to finish the job and secure permanent, dedicated full funding for LWCF to expand hunting, fishing, and other recreational opportunities and conserve important wildlife habitat.

Restore Our Parks Act (S.500 by Senators Portman and Warner): Repairing the crumbling roads, trails, stands, blinds, piers, campsites, parking lots, boat ramps, and other recreational infrastructure is essential to the millions of Americans who hunt, fish, hike, camp, climb, and otherwise enjoy our public lands. We support the Restore Our Parks Act and we support dedicating a small portion of the funds towards restoring recreational infrastructure for National Wildlife Refuges (7.5%), National Forests (7.5%), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands (5%), and the Bureau of Indian Education (5%). This is essential, because the vast majority of America's sportsmen and sportswomen hunt and fish on National Wildlife Refuges, National Forests, and BLM lands (which collectively host more than 261 million visitors per year), in part due to the legal limitations and management prescriptions that preclude hunting and fishing at many National Parks.

Enacting the Land and Water Conservation Fund Permanent Funding Act and the Restore Our Parks Act will expand outdoor recreational opportunities for millions of hunters and anglers, while spurring local economic development in communities across the country. Thank you for all that you do for America's outdoor heritage.

Sincerely,
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Boone and Crockett Club
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Delta Waterfowl
Ducks Unlimited
Mule Deer Foundation
National Shooting Sports Foundation
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
The National Wildlife Federation
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partners
Wild Sheep Foundation