

An open letter to the Senate and House on LWCF

Dear members of the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives,

As Congress works on an economic stimulus package in this time of public health emergency, the below listed local elected officials hope you will invest in our parks, public lands, and outdoor recreation in recognition of their importance to our economy and to our communities' well-being, through full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).

In the weeks and months to come, our nation's parks, trails, and outdoor spaces will be integral to our nation's coping and recovery. Great parks and green spaces make stronger, healthier communities. Everyone deserves

access to the outdoors and the countless benefits parks provide. America's public lands bring us peace of mind and generate economic revenue—both will be critically needed to recover from the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Our national, state and local parks, trails and public lands are a critical economic driver for communities big and small, urban and rural, across the nation. Across the nation, the travel and tourism industries have been taking a hit in the current crisis. Investing now in full funding for LWCF will help with a strong long-term recovery for gateway communities and states that rely on visitors to public lands. Specifically:

America's outdoor recreation economy supports over 7.6 million jobs, contributes over \$887 billion in annual economic output, and serves as the life-

blood for countless communities across the country.

Every dollar spent on LWCF returns \$4 in economic value from natural resource goods and services alone—over and above the economic benefit of the outdoor recreation economy and tourism.

Broadly-supported, bipartisan LWCF legislation was already in the queue for Senate floor time before coronavirus upended the calendar—it is directly relevant, ready to go, and makes sense for Congress to include in a stimulus package if possible and appropriate.

Investing in our public lands, and providing full, permanent funding for LWCF is a low-cost economic stimulus that will pay big dividends for communities across America. Please include full and permanent LWCF funding in the stimulus package. Chairwoman Liz Archuleta, Board of Supervisors, Coconino County Vice Mayor Adam Shimoni, City of Flagstaff

Mayor Stephanie Irwin, Town of Pinetop-Lakeside San Xavier District Chair Austin Nunez, Tohono O'odham Nation

And 100+ more mayors, councilmembers and others from the West. For a full list, see azdailysun.com.

Doubling down on Barotz Land and Water Conservation Fund view

I'd like to double down on Cecilia Barotz's comments regarding the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) in the April 30 *Daily Sun*.

As I hike and/or ride my bike on the trails of Arizona, including the Arizona National Scenic Trail, I am constantly remind of what absolute treasures these pathways through the woods truly are. Many miles of these routes have been constructed for

our enjoyment utilizing dollars from the LWCF.

Full and permanent funding of the LWCF makes economic sense for our community as Ms. Barotz has pointed out. But it also makes emotional sense as an investment in our collective well-being that we derive from use of our trails and parks.

BRUCE BELMAN
Flagstaff

TODAY IN HISTORY

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Today is Sunday, May 10, the 131st day of 2020. There are 235 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:
On May 10, 1924, J. Edgar Hoover was named acting director of the Bureau of Investigation (later known as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or FBI).
On this date:
In 1611, Sir Thomas Dale arrived in the Virginia Colony, where, as deputy governor, he instituted harsh measures to restore order.

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