



Western Local Elected Officials React to the Great American Outdoors Act Passage in The House; Time for the President to Sign The Bill

Critical Investment in Jobs, the Economy, and Our Public Lands Advances

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Durango, CO - In response to the U.S. House of Representatives passing the [Great American Outdoors Act](#) today, a piece of bi-partisan legislation that will fully and permanently fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and provide much needed funding for the crippling \$12 billion deferred maintenance backlog at our national parks, [The Mountain Pact](#) gave these statements:

THE MOUNTAIN PACT

Anna Peterson, Executive Director of The Mountain Pact, said, “In the West, we know firsthand how important our public lands and the great outdoors are to our communities, small businesses, and visitors. We’re so thankful to the House leadership for bringing home one of the biggest conservation laws in recent history for the American people. The passage of the Great American Outdoors Act is a huge win for our communities as they work to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and serves as a powerful public lands legacy for future generations.”

ARIZONA

Jamie Whelan, Council Member, City of Flagstaff, Arizona, said, “We are so thrilled that the House has passed the Great American Outdoors Act today and with it, full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund which, for over 50 years, has had bipartisan support; does not rely on taxpayer funds; and provides one of the best returns on investment in all of government. Thank you to Representative O’Halloran for his leadership on this issue.”

CALIFORNIA

Devin Middlebrook, Council Member, City of South Lake Tahoe, California, said, “Thank you to Congress for passing the Great American Outdoors Act which will fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund. In California alone, LWCF invested almost \$2.5 billion. It has contributed to projects in our community like the Campground by the Lake and Bijou Park. The program is truly a win-win for voters and our land alike.”

COLORADO

Mayor Hunter Mortensen, Town of Frisco, Colorado, said, “For over five decades, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has invested approximately \$278.6 million in the state of Colorado, protecting some of the state’s most special places and helping to ensure recreational access for hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities. Thank you to Representative Neguse for all of his work to get this done.”

Sonja Macys, Council Member, City of Steamboat Springs, Colorado, said, “Thank you to Congress for passing the Great American Outdoors Act, which includes full and permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). In Steamboat Springs LWCF has provided funding for many popular local attractions such as our iconic ski area, Howelsen Hill and the Yampa River Core

Trail. Throughout Colorado, I can only imagine the good it has done for outdoor recreation. This bipartisan effort is truly a win-win for the public and our public lands.”

County Commission Chair Kathy Chandler-Henry, Eagle County, Colorado, said, “Since 1967, Eagle County has received more than \$1.7 million in LWCF funding for more than 15 local projects including the new Eagle River Park, boat ramps on the Colorado River, and the Rio Grande Trail, which connects the City of Glenwood Springs to the City of Aspen through the Roaring Fork Valley. It’s likely we could never have done these fantastic projects without LWCF funding. We thank Congress for including full and permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund in the Great American Outdoors Act.”

Mayor P.T. Wood, City of Salida, Colorado, said, “We are excited Congress has passed the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA). The GAOA will enhance our environment, public spaces, economy and fully funds the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) which pays for projects like Salida’s Milk Run Trail. We thank Congress for passing the Great American Outdoors Act and securing funding for local community projects.”

Mayor Sarah Smith-Hymes, Town of Avon, Colorado, said, “As the Mayor of a mountain community, I’ve seen how Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars have flowed back into Avon and improved our public parks and trails. These funds have greatly benefited our community and the White River National Forest, our country’s busiest. We are thrilled that Congress has finally passed the Great American Outdoors Act, which will fully and permanently fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Thank you to Representative Neguse for his leadership on this issue.”

IDAHO

Mayor Hyrum Johnson, City of Driggs, Idaho, said, “The Great American Outdoors Act will sustain the outdoor recreation industry that helps so many of our towns and businesses thrive. Equally important, it will preserve the cultural heritage of public lands for generations to come. Thank you to Congress for passing it now - so our public lands can help us recover from COVID-19. A special thanks to Congressman Mike Simpson (ID) for his sponsorship and support for this important legislation.”

MONTANA

Mayor Chris Mehl, City of Bozeman, Montana, said, “We’re so thrilled Congress has passed the Great American Outdoors Act and fully funded the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Since 1964, almost \$500 million in LWCF funding has been invested in public spaces, access and outdoor recreation in Montana. In Bozeman alone, LWCF made some of our beloved outdoor recreational places possible like Bogert, Cooper, Lindley, Burke, and Sundance Springs Parks; our municipal swimming pool; and more. Today’s passage is a historic victory, which will continue this invaluable legacy in our community and across the country.”

Commissioner Juanita Vero, Missoula County, Montana, said, “Missoula County has benefited from Land and Water Conservation Fund grants, which have protected acres upon acres of lands and waters, local public playgrounds, and community ballfields. We are so thankful to Congress for passing the Great American Outdoors Act to help ensure that we continue to have these important public places today - and many more - for future generations.”

NEVADA

Vice Mayor Devon Reese, City of Reno, Nevada, said, “The Great American Outdoors Act will help sustain our state’s vital outdoor recreation economy, which is the reason for the success of so many of our small towns and businesses.”

NEW MEXICO

Commissioner Anna Hansen, Santa Fe County, New Mexico, said, “The Great American Outdoors Act will not just build community in our state but will also bolster our economy by finally fully and permanently funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund and addressing the longstanding national park maintenance backlog. Thank you, Congress!”

Renee Villarreal, Council Member, District 1 City of Santa Fe, New Mexico, said, “Thank you to Congress for passing The Great American Outdoors Act and fully funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund. We applaud you for investing in our parks, public lands, and outdoor recreation in recognition of their importance to our economy, and to our communities’ wellbeing.”

OREGON

Barb Campbell, Council Member for the City of Bend, Oregon, said, “We Oregonians cherish our public lands. Programs like the Land and Water Conservation Fund are critically important for protecting those lands. We are thrilled to finally see permanent funding thanks to today’s House passage of the Great American Outdoors Act.”

UTAH

Mayor Emily Niehaus, from the City of Moab, Utah, said, “I am grateful for the passing of the Great American Outdoors Act, which will help to maintain our shared public lands and create stronger and more resilient communities. Our nation’s public lands and waters are our future, and this Act is an investment that brings us all together under the common goal of public land stewardship.”

Mayor Andy Beerman from Park City, Utah, said, “Today we celebrate the passage by the House of one of the most important conservation bills in decades. Protecting America’s public lands has broad, popular support and will boost the American economy. The Land and Water Conservation Fund has been one of America’s best conservation programs bringing together both sides of the aisle with five decades of bi-partisan support and thousands of local parks, and trails, and ballparks to show for it. We thank the House for passing this important piece of legislation and look forward to it being signed by the president.”

Mayor Harris Sondak, Town of Alta, Utah, said, “Many don’t realize that Alta is mostly located on federal land. We depend on reliable governmental partners, including the U.S. Forest Service, for effective services for our residents and visitors. The Land and Water Conservation Fund helps make that happen. We support the passage of The Great American Outdoors Act, which will promote physical, environmental, and economic health in Alta and across the state.”

WASHINGTON

Mayor Sally Ranzau, Town of Winthrop, Washington, said “America’s public lands bring us peace of mind and generate economic revenue - both are critical if we’re going to recover from the devastating economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The passage of The Great American Outdoors Act today is a historic moment. I thank Congress for getting it done.”

WYOMING

Commissioner Mark Newcomb, Teton County Commission, Wyoming, said, “Huge thanks to Congress and especially those visionaries who crafted this legislation. The Great American Outdoors Act will fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund, ensuring that we have a secure source of funds to protect important outdoor resources that build community, strengthen economies and, during the pandemic, have proven to be important than ever.”

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Founded in 2014, [The Mountain Pact](#) is an organization that works with over fifty mountain communities in all eleven states across the American West to empower them to build resilience in the face of economic and environmental stresses through a shared voice on federal policy related to climate, public lands, and outdoor recreation