

# Our Land, Our Water, Our Heritage

LWCF in ILLINOIS

HELP PROTECT ILLINOIS' QUALITY OF LIFE BY SUPPORTING FULL FUNDING FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

## LWCF Funded Units in Illinois

### Federal Program

Chautauqua NWR  
Crab Orchard NWR  
Cypress Creek NWR  
Emiquon NWR  
Jefferson Expansion NMem  
Kaskaskia NWR  
Lewis and Clark NHT  
Lincoln Home NHS  
Meredosia NWR  
Midewin NTGP  
Shawnee NF  
\*Upper Mississippi River NWR  
\*Mark Twain NWR

**Federal Total** \$ 54,000,000

**Forest Legacy Program** \$ 2,500,000

**State Program**  
Total State Grants \$ 157,000,000

**Total** \$ 213,500,000  
\*multistate project



[www.lwcfcoalition.org](http://www.lwcfcoalition.org)

## LWCF Success in Illinois

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has provided funding to help protect some of Illinois' most special places and ensure recreational access for hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities. Illinois has received approximately \$213.5 million in LWCF funding over the past five decades, protecting places such as the Lincoln Home National Historic Site, Shawnee National Forest and Cypress Creek and Emiquon National Wildlife Refuges.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP) grants are also funded under LWCF, to help protect working forests. The FLP cost-share funding supports timber sector jobs and sustainable forest operations while enhancing wildlife habitat, water quality and recreation. For example, the FLP contributed to places such as the Byron Rock River project in Ogle County and the Oblate/La Vista project in Madison and Jersey Counties. The FLP assists states and private forest owners to maintain working forest lands through matching grants for permanent conservation easement and fee acquisitions, and has leveraged approximately \$2.5 million in federal funds to invest \$3.5 million in Illinois' forests, while protecting air and water quality, wildlife habitat, access for recreation and other public benefits provided by forests.

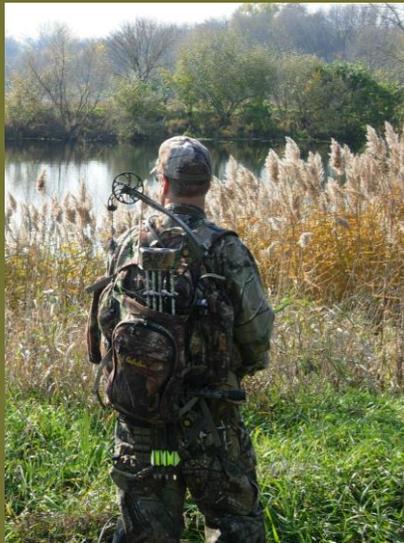
LWCF state assistance grants have further supported hundreds of projects across Illinois' state and local parks including Indian Boundary Park in the West Ridge neighborhood of Chicago and Washington Park on the South Side of Chicago.

## Economic Benefits

Active outdoor recreation is an important part of the Illinois economy. The Outdoor Industry Association has found that active outdoor recreation generates \$9.5 billion in consumer spending in Illinois, 204,000 jobs which generate \$6.7 billion in wages and salaries, and produces nearly \$1.6 billion annually in state and local tax revenue. Further, the U.S. Census reports that each year 3.6 million people hunt, fish, or enjoy wildlife-watching in Illinois, contributing \$2.4 billion in wildlife recreation spending to the state economy.



Tour at Lincoln Home NHS Credit: NPS  
Top: Upper Mississippi NWR Credit: USFWS



Hunting at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie  
Credit: USFS

LWCF is a simple idea: that a portion of offshore drilling fees should be used to protect important land and water for all Americans. These are not taxpayer dollars. Unfortunately, the promise of LWCF has been broken. The program is authorized to receive up to \$900 million each year—but most of these funds have been diverted elsewhere. Now is the time to fix this and ensure that funds retained in the LWCF account are used for their intended conservation and recreation purposes.

LWCF supports the acquisition of land and conservation easements to protect our national parks, wildlife refuges, forests, trails, and BLM sites, grants funds to the states for local and state park needs, protects critical wildlife habitat, watersheds and recreational access, and conserves working farms, ranches and forestlands that enhance local economies.



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## LWCF in Illinois

### Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge

The Cypress Creek NWR provides resting, nesting, and feeding habitats for a variety of birds and other wildlife. The Cache River and Cypress Creek Wetlands includes 91 percent of Illinois' high-quality swamplands and some of the oldest trees east of the Mississippi River. LWCF funds aid in the efforts to preserve, restore and manage the wetlands and bottomland forest of the Refuge. Visitors to the Cypress Creek NWR can utilize the many recreational opportunities available, such as hiking, fishing, hunting, canoeing, wildlife watching, and environmental education.

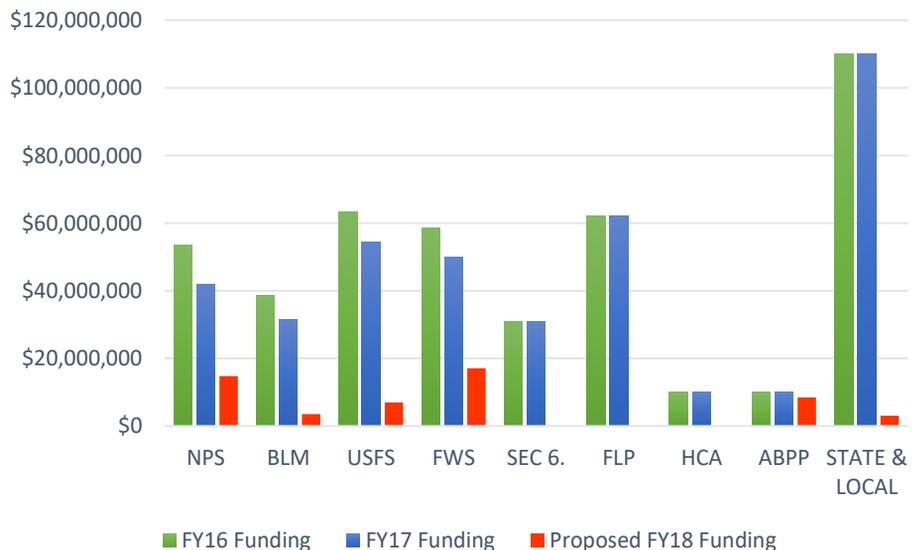
### The Fiscal Year 2018 President's Budget:

The President's Fiscal Year 2018 Budget proposal would virtually eliminate the Land and Water Conservation Fund, reducing the program's budget by nearly 85% from this year's enacted level. Individual federal agencies' budgets for conservation at our National Parks, National Forests, National Wildlife Refuges and other public lands would be drastically cut up to 89%. State grant programs to support local recreation facilities, state parks, wildlife habitat and other community conservation priorities would also be largely wiped out. Working forest protection—which opens up public access and protects drinking water supplies while still keeping jobs in the woods—is eliminated altogether.

Without robust LWCF funding in FY 2018, Illinois' conservation and outdoor recreation needs could be put on hold or lost forever.

The chart below illustrates the proposed cuts to LWCF in comparison to the funding levels appropriated to the program in FY 2016 and FY 2017.

## LWCF Funding FY16, FY17, and proposed 84% cut in FY18



**Abbreviations** NPS: National Park Service, BLM: Bureau of Land Management, USFS: U.S. Forest Service, FWS: Fish & Wildlife Service, Sec. 6: Habitat Conservation Grants, FLP: Forest Legacy Program, HCA: Highlands Conservation Act, ABPP: American Battlefield Protection Program

Note - All approximate totals derived from appropriations bills  
- Forest Legacy Program & Sec. 6 funded from LWCF starting in 2004