

Our Land, Our Water, Our Heritage

LWCF in NEBRASKA

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

LWCF Funded Units in Nebraska

Federal Program

Agate Fossil Beds NM
Boyer Chute NWR
Homestead NM
Niobrara NSR
Rainwater Basin WMA
Scotts Bluff NM

Federal Total \$ 7,100,000

Forest Legacy Program

\$ 383,000

Habitat Conservation (Sec. 6)

\$ 2,200,000

State Program

Total State Grants \$ 45,500,000

Total \$ 55,183,000

LWCF Success in Nebraska

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has provided funding to help protect some of Nebraska's most special places and ensure recreational access for hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities. Nebraska has received approximately \$55 million in LWCF funding over the past five decades, protecting places such as the Rainwater Basin Wildlife Management Area, Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge and Agate Fossil Beds National Monument.

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 Pine Ridge Forest in Dawes County. 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 \$380,000 in federal funds to invest \$1.3 million in Nebraska's 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 Nebraska's state and local parks Ponca State Park in Dixon County and Walnut Grove Park in Omaha.

Economic Benefits

Active outdoor recreation is an important part of the Nebraska economy. The Outdoor Industry Association has found that active outdoor recreation generates \$5 billion in consumer spending in Nebraska, 49,000 jobs which generate \$1.6 billion in wages and salaries, and produces \$318 million annually in state and local tax revenue. Further, the U.S. Census reports that each year over 750,000 people hunt, fish, or enjoy wildlife-watching in Nebraska, contributing \$640 million in wildlife recreation spending to the state economy.



School group at Homestead NM Credit: NPS
Top: Boyer Chute NWR Credit: USFWS



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LWCF in Nebraska

Scotts Bluff National Monument

The Scotts Bluff National Monument is a 3,000 acre park located in Western Nebraska. Scotts Bluff rises 800 feet above the North Platte River and was used as a path marker for the Oregon, California, Pony Express, and Mormon Trails. Today, the park helps teach us about the experience of the people that crossed the Plains on these trails. There are many bicycle, car and walking trails that allow visitors to see the remnants of the old trails. The Park's Oregon Trail Museum and Visitor Center has the world's largest collection of paintings by William Henry Jackson, a painter and photographer famous for his depictions of the American West.

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. Under this proposal, funding for federal land conservation at America's National Parks, National Forests, National Wildlife Refuges and other public lands would be slashed as much as 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, Nebraska's conservation and outdoor recreation needs could be put on hold or lost forever.

FY17 Enacted vs. FY18 Budget Request Comparison

Agency/Program	FY17 Enacted Funding	FY18 President's Budget
National Park Service	\$42,023,000	\$14,856,000
Bureau of Land Management	\$31,416,000	\$3,609,000
U.S. Forest Service	\$54,415,000	\$7,000,000
Fish and Wildlife Service	\$49,995,000	\$17,051,000
Sec. 6 Habitat Conservation	\$30,800,000	\$0
Forest Legacy Program	\$62,347,000	\$0
Highlands Conservation Act	\$10,000,000	\$0
American Battlefield Protection	\$10,000,000	\$8,481,000
State & Local Assistance	\$110,006,000	\$3,043,000



Recreation at Niobrara NSR
Credit: NPS

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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