

**Talking Points: FY 2014 LWCF Appropriations**

**Action:**

Call your **Representative** and tell them to oppose the House version of the FY 2014 Interior appropriations bill which eliminates funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), including funding for the LWCF State Assistance Program.

Call your **Senators** and urge them to support the draft FY 2014 Interior appropriations bill which provides funding for the State Assistance Program as well as the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR).

To contact your Senators and Representative, **call the Capitol switchboard at 202.224.3121 and ask to be connected to your Senators’ and Representative’s office. Once connected, ask to speak to the staff person who handles Interior appropriations.**

**Background:**

There are vast differences between the House and Senate FY 2014 Interior appropriations bills, and Members of Congress in both chambers need to hear from constituents on this issue.

**House DOI Numbers are Pitiful**

The House of Representatives’ version of the DOI bill reduces spending on natural resources by 14 percent compared to FY 2013. Most concerning is that it zeros out the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) including the State Assistance Program - a vital source of funding for state and local park and recreation infrastructure.

The House Appropriations Committee began consideration of the DOI spending bill on July 31, has not yet completed action on it- which leaves a window of opportunity to influence the bill.

**Senate DOI Numbers are Generous – By Comparison**

While the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee has not yet begun deliberating its version of the FY 2014 appropriations bill, it recently published a “DRAFT” DOI spending bill which does provide funding for conservation programs.

The Senate bill does provide funding for conservation programs, and closely aligns with the President’s budget request by providing approximately $5.9 billion more than the House bill- inclusive of $45 million for the LWCF State Assistance Program. The Senate bill also provides $10 million for the Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery (UPARR) program which has not received funding since FY 2002.

 **Message to your U.S. Representative:**

* Please oppose the House FY 2014 Interior appropriations bill which – for the first time in the nearly five-decade history of the program – eliminates funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and its State Assistance Program.
* These cuts will do real harm to the places all Americans care about and depend on – our parks and recreation spaces – especially those close-to-home which make our communities safer and healthier.
* By zeroing out the LWCF, you are taking much needed funding and jobs away from states and local communities.
* The LWCF isn’t paid for with taxpayer dollars, but with a small portion of revenues from offshore oil and gas leases. Therefore, it is budget neutral.
* The LWCF State Assistance Program provides matching grants to the states for use in the development of local, public outdoor recreation projects, and has provided funding for over 41,000 local park and recreation projects in every Congressional District in America.
* According to the Outdoor Industry Association, outdoor recreation activities contribute a total of $646 billion annually to our national economy and directly support over 6 million jobs.  The $646 billion consumers spend annually on outdoor recreation is nearly equal to the amount spent on pharmaceuticals and gasoline – COMBINED.[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Now is the time to invest in states and local communities, rather than cheat them out of much needed funding. Please ensure that the FY 2014 Interior appropriations bill includes funding for the LWCF and the LWCF State Assistance Program.

**Message for your U.S. Senators:**

* I urge you to support the continued funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund’s (LWCF) State Assistance Program and funding for the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR) as proposed by the Senate Interior Appropriations Committee.
* The Interior spending measure being proposed by the Senate Appropriations Committee includes $45 million for the LWCF State Assistance Program and $10 million for UPARR.   Both of these programs support the development and enhancement of places all Americans care about and depend on – namely close-to-home parks and open space, which make our communities safer and healthier.
* Both the State Assistance Program and UPARR have been grossly underfunded for more than a decade and represent the only federal programs dedicated to local, close-to-home, public outdoor recreation.
* According to the Outdoor Industry Association, outdoor recreation activities contribute a total of $646 billion annually to our national economy and directly support over 6 million jobs.  The $646 billion consumers spend annually on outdoor recreation is nearly equal to the amount spent on pharmaceuticals and gasoline – COMBINED.[[2]](#footnote-2)
* Now is the time to invest in states and local communities by showing your support for the spending measures that include funding for the LWCF State Assistance Program and the UPARR.
1. Outdoor Industry Association – The Outdoor Recreation Economy 2012. Take It Outside for American Jobs and a Strong Economy. (February 2013) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Outdoor Industry Association – The Outdoor Recreation Economy 2012. Take It Outside for American Jobs and a Strong Economy. (February 2013) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)