

KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION

SUPPORT FOR THE REAUTHORIZATION OF THE LAND & WATER CONSERVATION FUND

Whereas, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a simple idea: that a portion of offshore drilling fees should be used to protect important land and water for all Americans; and

Whereas, the LWCF is authorized to receive up to \$900 million each year - but most of these funds have been diverted elsewhere¹; and

Whereas, even with the fraction of authorized funding that's been available, LWCF has had positive conservation and recreation impacts in Kansas and throughout our country; and

Whereas, recent polling found that voters think this is more important than ever in the light of the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico³; and

Whereas, nearly nine in ten voters indicated that they thought oil and gas fee revenue should continue to be used for the LWCF³; and

Whereas, nine in ten voters oppose any diversion of funding from the LWCF – and most of that number would like to see money from past diversions replaced³; and

Whereas, most voters (85%) clearly oppose any future diversion of money from the Fund – a majority that cuts across all segments of the electorate³; and

Whereas, LWCF investments protect clean drinking water supplies, support jobs and local economies, reduce fire-fighting costs, and conserve our common heritage and natural areas for wildlife, recreation, and for our children and grandchildren to enjoy⁵; and

Whereas, even while providing all these public benefits, LWCF is not funded by taxpayer dollars; and

Whereas, active outdoor recreation is an important part of the Kansas economy where 544,000 sportspersons and 816,000 wildlife watchers combine to spend \$839 million annually on wildlife-associated recreation²; and

Whereas, outdoor recreation is an integral part of the American outdoor recreation economy, which contributes \$730 billion annually to the U.S. economy, supports 6.1 million American jobs (1 out of every 20 jobs in the U.S.), and stimulates 8 percent of all consumer spending, according to the Outdoor Industry Association⁴; and

Whereas, Kansas has received approximately \$55 million in LWCF funding over the past four decades, protecting places such as the Flint Hills Conservation Area, Marais des Cygnes National Wildlife Refuge and Brown vs. Board of Education National Historic Site¹; and

Whereas, to date no member of Kansas' congressional delegation has signed on to this year's Dear Colleague letter to cosponsor or support LWCF reauthorization²; and

Whereas, if permanently funded at the authorized level of \$900 million a year, the LWCF will

help ensure our quality of life, from the water we drink to our enjoyment of the great outdoors.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Kansas Wildlife Federation assembled during its annual meeting, February 21, 2015 in Hays, Kansas, urges Kansas' congressional delegation to work to keep the promise of the Land and Water Conservation Fund; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that KWF strongly recommends Kansas' congressional delegation work to pass legislation to ensure full, dedicated funding of \$900 million each year and replace funds from past diversions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Kansas Wildlife Federation provide this resolution to the Kansas congressional delegation, the Secretary of the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, the CEO of the National Wildlife Federation and the Executive Director of the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies.

¹ <http://lwcfcoalition.org/files/FY15/Kansas.pdf>

² <http://www.lwcfcoalition.org/kansas.html>

³ <http://www.lwcfcoalition.org/usa-conservation.html>

⁴ http://www.nasorlo.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/4pg_Fact_Sheet_Kansas2.pdf

⁵ <http://waso-lwcf.nrc.nps.gov/public/index.cfm>