



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **A Broken Promise to the American People: Congress Fails to Renew the Wildly Successful Land and Water Conservation Fund**

ALBANY, N.Y. – Public lands are one of our greatest treasures. Parks & Trails New York, a statewide nonprofit advocacy organization, is stunned by the failure of Congress to renew America’s most successful land conservation and recreation program.

New York State alone has received approximately \$319 million from the LWCF over the past five decades. From urban parks to world-class destinations like Letchworth State Park that protect magnificent landscapes and bring tourism dollars to upstate communities, nearly all New Yorkers have benefitted from the LWCF.

Funded with proceeds from offshore oil and gas drilling, the LWCF costs taxpayers nothing. It pumps money gained from natural resource extraction into conservation that benefits all New Yorkers.

“Congress let the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) expire yesterday, just as the LWCF celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> year of conservation success,” said PTNY Executive Director Robin Dropkin. “Since 1965, the LWCF has been dedicated to the continued conservation of our iconic national and state parks, forests, wildlife refuges, wilderness areas, and historic sites. The LWCF has also funded the development of local parks, connected urban youth to nature, increased hunting and angling access, helped to protect endangered species, and protected water quality.”

“For 50 years, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has kept this simple promise to the American people: When we drill for offshore oil and gas, which belongs to all Americans, we put a little of the proceeds aside as a conservation offset,” Dropkin said. “This gives back to all Americans something lasting and meaningful—protecting the parks and nature that we hold dear. The expiration of the LWCF breaks that trust. Starting today, offshore oil drilling will continue, but the American public won't see a penny of that revenue for reinvestment in conservation and recreation.”

“The LWCF has kept America’s \$646 billion recreation economy alive, all while costing taxpayers nothing,” said Dropkin. “Parks & Trails New York joins millions of Americans in expressing its disbelief that Congress has allowed the power to go out on America’s most successful conservation program. We will continue to work with our partners across New York and the nation to ensure a renewed commitment to permanent funding for the LWCF.”

**About Parks & Trails New York:** Parks & Trails New York is the leading statewide advocate for parks and trails, dedicated since 1985 to improving the health and quality of life of all New Yorkers by working with community organizations and municipalities to envision, create, promote, and protect a growing network of parks, greenways and trails throughout the state for all to use and enjoy. For more information, visit [www.ptny.org](http://www.ptny.org).

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