

TENNESSEE CITIZENS FOR WILDERNESS PLANNING  
Newsletter 101 (Action Call 80B), April 20, 1979

YOUR ACTION NEEDED TO PREVENT DISASTROUS SLASH IN LAND & WATER CONSERVATION FUND

Proposed budget cuts could practically eliminate the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) -- the source of funding for: (a) federal land acquisition for authorized park lands (national parks, seashores, wild & scenic rivers, etc.); and (b) matching grants to states for programs such as natural areas, rivers, trails, etc. Not only would these cuts be terribly harmful, but they are also totally meaningless in terms of the country's economy: no \$\$ would be saved, since the LWCF is money already available (derived from offshore oil-drilling lease fees totalling over \$2 billion annually) which is earmarked by law for parkland acquisition purposes (thus cannot be used for anything else). Postponing acquisition will actually cost more because of inflation. If the Administration and Congress wanted to save real money, they could do so by limiting the amount to be spent on pork barrel water projects (see below).

The following little table tells the horror story of the proposed LWCF cuts. Please note that what is being considered is not only a reduction in the 1981 budget, but also a rescision of the budget we're already living under in the current fiscal year

	<u>Fiscal 1981</u>
Level authorized under LWCF legislation	\$900 million
Administration's original request (January)	580 million
Administration's revised request	233 million (cut by 61% from the January proposal)
Congress: { House Budget Committee proposal	290 million
{ Senate Budget Committee proposal	0 (!)
	<u>Fiscal 1980</u>
Budget passed in 1979	\$509 million
Amount left after proposed rescision (of \$251 million)	258 million

The Administration-proposed cuts for 1981 would affect federal programs and state grants about equally; while the rescision for 1981 would hit the state grants somewhat harder, proportionally.

tear off →      ← add his/her name

.....

The Hon.  
House Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative

Please do everything you can to restore the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) at least to the \$580 million level initially recommended by Pres. Carter for FY1981. In addition, please oppose any rescision of FY1980 appropriations for this Fund. Several important Tennessee projects requiring land acquisition would be severely affected by the proposed cuts; and postponing the acquisition to a later time makes poor economic sense because of the rapid escalation in the cost of land.

Cutting the LWCF will not save the taxpayer a penny and will not help balance the budget, since the Fund does not come from appropriations, but is already held in trust (coming from offshore oil revenues) and is strictly earmarked. In contrast, real savings could be achieved by limiting the spending for water projects (e.g., putting a \$30 million FY1981 ceiling on the 18 biggest would save over \$560 million).

I hope you will be in the forefront of the effort to restore the Land & Water Conservation Fund.

Sincerely yours,

Here is what the cuts would mean in the state of Tennessee. The major federal acquisition to be affected would be the Obed Wild & Scenic River, at a time when, after long delays, the acquisition program is finally getting underway. On the state level, the rescission would withdraw already appropriated funds of \$4.3 million (\$2.8 for statewide conservation programs, \$1.5 for county programs) involving some 30 projects, such as Savage Gulf, all scenic rivers, trails, Big Hill Environmental Center, etc. etc. State programs that would be directly impacted by the 1981 proposed cuts include the Short Mtn. State Natural Area, French Broad Scenic River, Pinson Mounds, Mtn. Lake Natural Area, etc. etc.

Arguments. These specific examples make excellent arguments to use with your Senators and Representative. Other points you can make: (1) LWCF cuts do not save the taxpayer a penny, and do not help balance the budget: the fund comes from offshore oil revenues already held in trust, not from new appropriations, and it cannot be used for any purpose other than that for which it is earmarked. (2) Since land prices are greatly subject to inflation, postponing acquisition makes poor economic sense. (3) No other parts of the budget are being slashed to the same proportional extent as the LWCF (50% and 100% by the House and Senate committees, respectively). By contrast, water project pork barrels are being cut only 5%; increasing the cuts there would bring about a real saving, in contrast to the illusory one in the case of the LWCF.

X WHAT YOU CAN DO: Write immediately to your US Senators and Representative (Senate Office Bldg., Wash. DC 20510; or House Office Bldg, DC 20515), or, even better, send a mailgram, or call (Sen. Sasser 202, 224-3344; Sen. Baker 224-4944; Rep. Quillen 225-6356, Duncan 225-5435, Bouquard 225-3271 or Oak Ridge 576-1977, Gore 225-4231, Boner 225-4311, Beard 225-2811, Jones 225-4714, Ford 225-3265; or call the Congr. switchboard, 202, 224-3121, and ask for the desired office). Sen. Sasser is particularly important because he is on the Appropriations Committee. If you cannot possibly do any of the above, please at least tear off the strip below, as well as the one on the inside of the cover sheet of this NEWSLETTER; fill in your Representative's name, sign both letters, add your address below the signature and mail both letters TODAY (or give them to a friend if you are taking other action yourself).

#### HIGH PARK SERVICE OFFICIAL TO TALK AT TCWP MEETING MAY 14

Be sure to mark your calendar today for the evening of Wednesday, May 14, when Dr. Richard Curry, Special Assistant to the Director, National Park Service, will speak at a TCWP-sponsored meeting, Oak Ridge Public Library Auditorium, 7:30-9 p.m. His subject will probably concern threats to the National Park System, but look in the next NEWSLETTER (a week from now) for details. Dr. Curry will go out in the field (Obed and B.S. Fork) during the days of May 14 and 15. Get in touch with Lee Russell (482-2153) if you want to come along. [See inside cover sheet for another event]

Senator Jim Sasser  
Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Sasser:

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I hope you will be in the forefront of the effort to restore the Land & Water Conservation Fund.

Sincerely yours,

Note ↘

↑ tear off  
Be sure to sign and add  
your address below  
signature

DON TODD TO LEAD FROZEN HEAD WILDFLOWER HIKE. Be at the Frozen Head ranger station at 9:30 a.m. EST, Saturday, April 26, if you want to see one of the best displays of wild flowers growing in one of the most beautiful mountain areas of the Southeast. Don promises to lead a leisurely hike, but if anyone insists on a strenuous one, another leader will also be available.

Act TODAY on the Land & Water Fund!

TENNESSEE CITIZENS FOR  
WILDERNESS PLANNING

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