7. “September 3, 1964,” President’s Daily Diary, Box 2, LBJ Presidential Library, Austin, TX.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

WHAT IS THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND?
The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) takes a portion of royalties energy companies pay the government for extracting publicly owned offshore oil and gas from the Outer Continental Shelf. The government then takes those revenues and reinvests them in the conservation of our federal, state, and local public lands and natural resources.

HOW DOES THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT USE THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND?
The federal government uses the fund to acquire and protect pockets of private lands within our national parks, forests, refuges, trails, Bureau of Land Management lands, and in other places. The “stateside” of LWCF is distributed to all 50 states, DC, and the territories by a formula based on population, among other factors.

WHY IS THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND IMPORTANT?
Over its 50-year history, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has protected more than seven million acres of land and supported more than 41,000 state and local park projects. The LWCF has protected land in 98 percent of United States counties.

IS THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND SECURE?
Although the Land and Water Conservation Fund is authorized to receive up to $900 million per year, Congress nearly always diverts the funds for other uses. This often leads to inadequate funding for vital conservation projects.

Despite inadequate funding, LWCF remains the premier federal program to conserve our nation’s land, water, historic and recreation heritage.

LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMIES
The Land and Water Conservation Fund contributes to the overall health and economic strength of local communities.

- LWCF is vital for public access to outdoor recreation
  More than 42,000 grants totaling over $4 billion have supported protection of three million acres of recreation lands and over 29,000 recreation facility projects on the state and local levels. Funding supports conservation efforts by the four federal land management agencies: National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Forest Service.

- LWCF is an important economic driver
  The Land and Water Conservation Fund supports jobs and the revitalization of local communities. The Department of the Interior estimates that the $214 million spent on land acquisitions in 2010 returned more than double that investment, supporting an estimated $442 million in economic activity and about 3,000 jobs.

- LWCF attracts other kinds of funding
  Over the life of the program, more than $3 billion in LWCF grants to states has leveraged more than $7 billion in nonfederal matching funds.

- LWCF returns are greater than the investment
  Research has found that every $1 of LWCF funds invested results in a return of $4 in economic value from natural resource goods and services alone.

Sources: The Wilderness Society, U.S. Forest Service