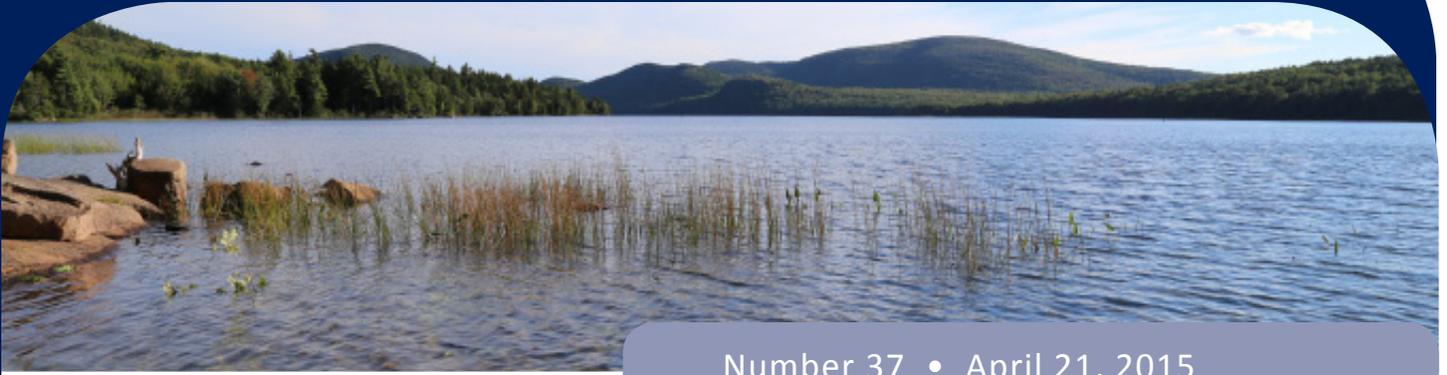


# FRIENDS OF ACADIA Advocacy Alert



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**PLEASE ASK CONGRESS TO SUPPORT THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF) AND ACADIA'S LAND ACQUISITION PROJECTS IN THE FY 2016 FEDERAL BUDGET.**

## **In a nutshell...**

If President Obama's FY 2016 budget passes as written, almost \$2.5 million would be directed to Acadia National Park from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for important land acquisition projects. This funding would help the park acquire valuable privately held wetland and lakeshore habitats that are inholdings within the park. Congress needs to hear from constituents that we value land protection at Acadia and that it has great benefits by protecting wildlife habitat and conserving outstanding scenery for future generations to enjoy. Congress will discuss LWCF funding this Wednesday, April 22, so now or any time in the next few weeks is a good time to speak up!

## **Background on LWCF**

LWCF was established by Congress in 1965 to balance the extraction and sale of federal natural resources—offshore oil and gas—with the permanent protection of important lands and waters and access to recreation for all Americans. LWCF is authorized to receive a very small percentage of Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) revenues—\$900 million a year from revenues that typically exceed \$6 billion annually.

Each year, the President prepares a budget that recommends LWCF funding for priority land acquisition projects in national parks, national forests, wildlife refuges, etc. This year, Acadia's land projects are ranked 23rd on the list for national parks. Friends of Acadia is asking your assistance to ensure that Congress appropriates sufficient LWCF funds (at a minimum, President Obama's budget request, but ideally the full \$900 million) to ensure that Acadia's projects happen this year!

## **Background on Acadia's Priority Land Acquisition Projects**

FY 2016 LWCF appropriations could fund three high priority projects for Acadia protecting a total of 76-acres of important shorefront and wetland habitat within its boundary. These projects include a parcel in the Fresh Meadow/Northeast Creek ecosystem in Bar Harbor which is critical for preserving water quality of Northeast Creek and enhancing wildlife connectivity to other conserved lands in the region. A parcel on the shore of Round Pond in Mount Desert would help preserve shoreland habitat and scenery on one of Acadia's quietest ponds. And a third parcel is currently under conservation negotiations which would protect additional lakefront habitat and important scenic views.

Friends of Acadia and Maine Coast Heritage Trust have been in a long-standing partnership to acquire



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priority privately held parcels inside park boundaries and to hold them until Acadia National Park receives LWCF funds to purchase them and incorporate them into the park as was originally intended when Congress established the park boundaries. FOA and MCHT's funding is then revolved into future land acquisition projects for the park.

### **Action You Can Take**

Please contact your members of Congress to encourage them to appropriate robust funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Make sure they know that Acadia's land acquisition projects are included in the President's budget request and would be funded were Congress to approve the levels he recommended.

### **Talking Points**

- Land conservation at Acadia improves wildlife habitat and recreation. Acadia National Park exists in a highly fragmented landscape because the park was created from private land donations. Many of the remaining privately-held parcels inside park boundaries (including the three in the FY 2016 budget) will connect with other conserved lands, protecting wildlife corridors.
- Talk about why you value land conservation at Acadia. Are you worried about development at the edges of the park? Do you like the fact that land protection at Acadia will keep the park undeveloped for future generations to enjoy?
- The Land and Water Conservation Fund is an asset to Acadia National Park. When Congress established the park boundaries in 1986, there were privately-held parcels inside the park that Congress intended to be purchased by the National Park Service as willing sellers came forward. Three of these parcels are now available for Acadia to purchase and will be an important legacy to give to the next generation. LWCF is critically needed to deliver on Congress' intent.
- LWCF helps Acadia National Park improve administrative efficiency and reduce costs. Consolidating private in-holdings into the park reduces park boundary lines, thus reducing park resources (such as staff time) needed to monitor those boundaries.
- Talk about the importance of funding our national parks and public lands. Please remind Congress that public land acquisition is what created "America's Best Idea," the national parks. Some members of Congress are advocating for using a portion of LWCF to cover other pressing national park issues, such as the backlog of maintenance projects. Public land acquisition—a gift to the next generation—should not suffer because Congress has not adequately funded the maintenance and operating needs of the national parks.

To find your members of Congress, go to: <http://www.usa.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml>

To reach Senator Susan Collins: Washington office: 202-224-2523 (phone); 202-224-2693 (fax)  
Via email (online form): <http://www.collins.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/email>

To reach Senator Angus King: Washington office: 202-224-5344 (phone); 202-224-1946 (fax)  
Via email (online form): <http://www.king.senate.gov/contact>

To reach Representative Bruce Poliquin: Washington office: 202-225-6306 (phone); 202-225-2943 (fax)  
Via email (online form): <https://poliquin.house.gov/contact>

To reach Representative Chellie Pingree: Washington office: 202-225-6116 (phone); 202-225-5590 (fax)  
Via email (online form): <https://pingree.house.gov/contact/email-me>

For more information and to let us know about your discussions with members of Congress, please contact Friends of Acadia Conservation Director Stephanie Clement at 207-288-3340 or [stephanie@friendsofacadia.org](mailto:stephanie@friendsofacadia.org).