



## The Land and Water Conservation Fund is Permanently Funded!

Janelle Paciencia

**Working together, we have achieved a remarkable victory:** full and permanent funding at \$900 million per year for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)! This feat, achieved through the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act, follows the historic permanent reauthorization of LWCF in early 2019. Republicans and Democrats came together in the Senate (73-25) and the House (310-107) to support our nation's primary program to strengthen communities and ecosystems through conservation and improved access to the outdoors.

Thanks to your support, The Wilderness Society co-led a national LWCF coalition for many years, directing a coordinated strategy involving hundreds of organizations. We relied on you, our staff on the ground in communities across the nation, our coalition partners, and conservation champions in

Funding from LWCF has enabled states to leverage resources and rise to the challenge of providing enough open space to sustain vibrant, healthy communities for residents and visitors alike. Including in Idaho, where important LWCF dollars have allowed climbers of all ages to access the more than 1,000 climbing routes within the City of Rocks National Reserve, Idaho (above).

Congress to keep pressing forward through complex negotiations and to generate critical public support.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is an extraordinary success story—protecting iconic landscapes and local parks in all 50 states at no cost to taxpayers. Since it was enacted in 1964, it has been used to pay for everything from improving your favorite trail; to ensuring public access to a great

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## Dear Public Lands Champion,

Thanks to you, The Wilderness Society and our partners have achieved another historic victory!

The Great American Outdoors Act, signed on August 4, established full and permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).

Even while being woefully under-resourced for more than 50 years, LWCF has protected wild places in nearly every county in the U.S. Now, it will be an even more powerful program to ensure that everyone has access to nature. This victory also shows once again that conserving and enjoying our shared outdoors spaces is something that brings people together, even in these dividing times.

Protecting public lands, especially wilderness, has never been more urgent and important. Thanks to you, we can look to LWCF to play a larger role than ever before in this vital work.

Together, we are **uniting people to protect America's wild places!** Thank you so much for your tremendous support!

Jamie Williams  
President



Mason Cummings

## Robert Marshall Council

Named for conservationist and Wilderness Society co-founder Bob Marshall, our Robert Marshall Council members, just like you, want to make a meaningful difference for wilderness.

Learn more about how to create your legacy:

**1-888-736-4897**

**[giftplanning@tws.org](mailto:giftplanning@tws.org)**

**[wilderness.org/giftplanning](http://wilderness.org/giftplanning)**

## The Wilderness Society recognizes Native Americans and Indigenous peoples as the longest serving stewards of the land.

To learn more visit:

**[wilderness.org/landacknowledgment](http://wilderness.org/landacknowledgment)**



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The Wilderness Society meets all standards as set forth by the Better Business Bureau/Wise Giving Alliance.

[bbb.org/charity](http://bbb.org/charity)

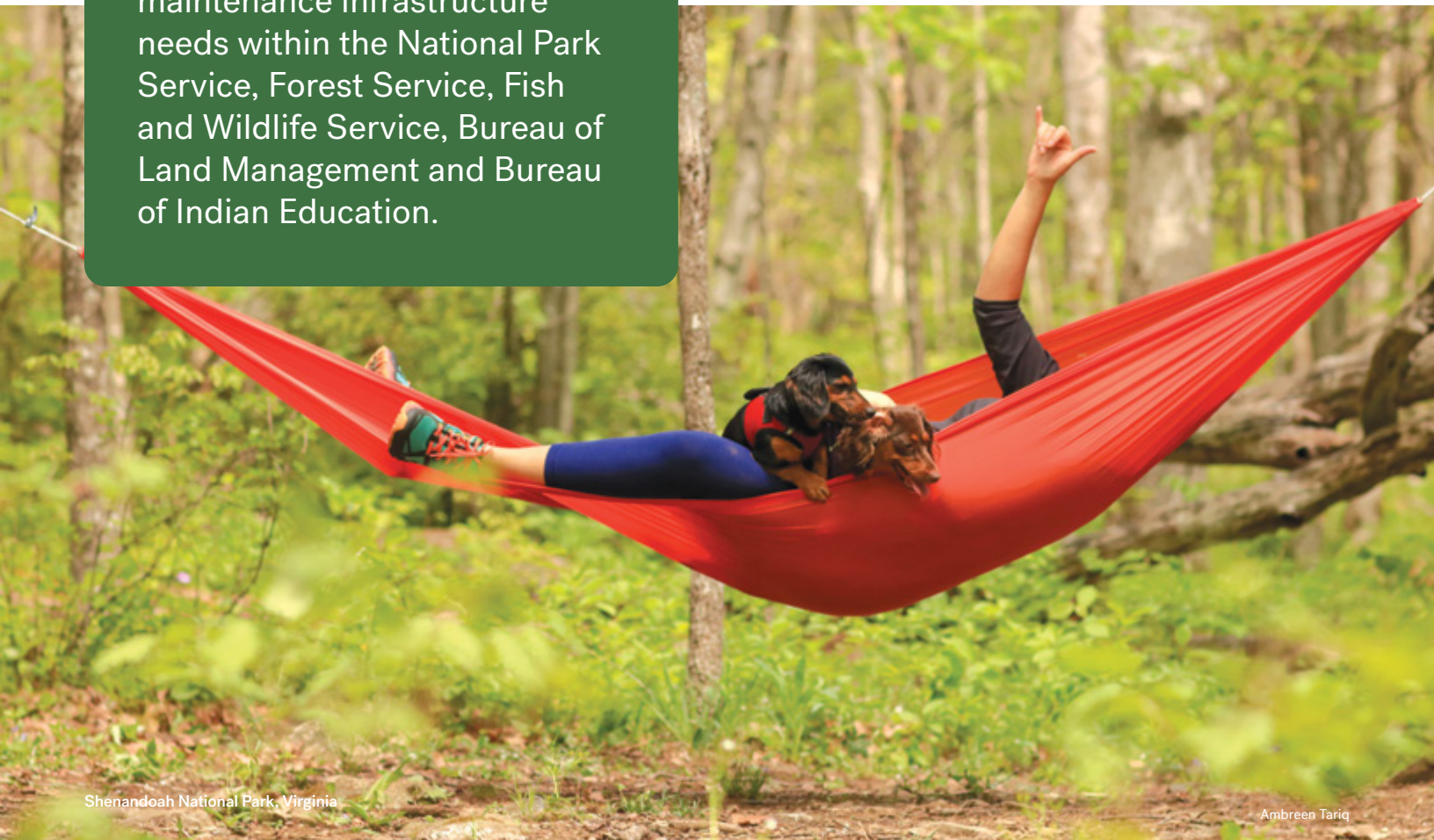
trout stream; to protecting iconic national parks from development; to investing in neighborhood soccer fields and swimming pools.

Despite its promise, low and unpredictable funding inhibited the program's true potential. But now, the Land and Water Conservation Fund can be an even more powerful way to help communities address some of our most pressing environmental challenges. It

will support the recovery and growth of our outdoor recreation and tourism economies, while also creating more and safer outdoor spaces for people in every community—especially communities that lack access to quality parks and opportunities to experience the benefits of time spent in nature. And it will help us protect a network of connected landscapes that are essential for a livable future, for people and wildlife. Because of you, we have an unprecedented opportunity and deep obligation to use LWCF to make meaningful progress toward these vital goals while protecting our most treasured places.

It is especially poignant that our leaders responded to people's need for access to nature at a time of such suffering for our nation. In communities all across the country, millions of us have been reminded of the power of nature to bring us solace, strength and joy. And when we come together, we can protect our planet and our future.

**The Great American Outdoors Act**, signed on August 4, 2020, also allocates \$9.5 billion over five years from energy development revenues on public lands and waters to address the most pressing maintenance infrastructure needs within the National Park Service, Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Indian Education.



Shenandoah National Park, Virginia

Ambreen Tariq

# The Legal Fight for Public Lands

You have stood by our legal team through four years of harrowing assaults on iconic wildlands and bedrock conservation laws by the Trump administration. Thanks to you, more than 70 percent of all the court rulings in our cases since Donald Trump took office have gone in our favor. Over and over again, federal judges are finding the administration's attempts to justify their drastic reversals of established policy "arbitrary and capricious."

The last line of defense for public lands is in the courts. Our eight-member legal team is skillfully managing nearly 70 lawsuits, each with multiple partners, to defend the places we cherish and the very framework of laws that protect public lands.

## Recent Victories

**Badger Two-Medicine:** On June 16, a federal court ruled in favor of cancelling the final lease that would allow drilling in the Badger-Two Medicine area in northwestern Montana, just south of Glacier National Park. The land is culturally sacred to the Blackfeet Nation, with whom we have been working for decades to eliminate unlawful oil and gas leases. Shortly after this ruling, Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) introduced legislation on July 22 to permanently protect the 127,000-acre Badger-Two Medicine Traditional Heritage Area from oil and gas leasing and other development.

**Methane Waste Prevention Rule:** On July 15, a federal judge invalidated the Trump administration's rollback of the Methane Waste Prevention Rule. Enacted in 2016, this rule reduces waste and pollution from oil and gas development on public and tribal lands by requiring companies to use proven, low-cost technologies to reduce the gas released through venting, flaring and leaks. The primary component of that gas is methane, a greenhouse gas 87 times more powerful than carbon dioxide. It is the third loss in court for the administration on this issue.

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska



## Sustaining Critical Fights

**The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge:** On August 17, the Department of Interior released its Record of Decision (ROD) authorizing oil and gas lease sales throughout the coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge. The administration wants to hold a lease sale before President Trump's first term ends. The Gwich'in Steering Committee filed a lawsuit to challenge this ROD on August 24 and was joined by The Wilderness Society and other partner organizations. We have worked intensively for the last three years to build a strong record that will support our case in court. We are determined to keep drilling rigs off the fragile coastal plain.

**Attack on NEPA Regulations:** On July 29, we filed suit to challenge the White House's attack on the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which requires all federal agencies to weigh the environmental impacts of actions they perform, fund or approve. Regulations stemming from the law mandate transparency, opportunities for public participation, and consideration of alternatives for proposed projects.

This unprecedented move by the administration will eliminate safeguards that protect the air we breathe and the water that comes out of our faucets. Because NEPA gives people an opportunity to make their voices heard about projects in their own backyards, it is a vital law that protects communities from pollution by industrial development on public lands.

## We Will Prevail

With your sustained support, we will continue to face down the multi-billion-dollar oil, gas, mining and timber industries to defend America's natural heritage for future generations. We are prepared to keep fighting in the courts and, if given the opportunity to work with a conservation-friendly administration, leverage our current litigation to achieve lasting conservation gains.



Thanks to you, **more than 70 percent** of all the court rulings in our cases since Donald Trump took office have gone in our favor.

Your Support in Action

So many reasons to  
love wild places.  
So many ways to  
help save them.



Red Cliffs National Conservation Area, Utah

Michelle Craig

Think about all the ways wilderness touches your life—especially in a year like this one when our access to nature has been even more important to our daily lives. Imagine what this year would have been like without the benefits of nature to sooth us.

Then, think about what you can do today to create a lasting future for the wild places you love.

### **Become an Advocate for Wilderness.**

This dedicated group is leading the fight to preserve wild places by making annual gifts of \$1,000 or more and enjoys special benefits and opportunities. Visit [wilderness.org/advocate](https://wilderness.org/advocate) to learn more today.

### **Check out donor advised funds.**

Experience the giving power (and tax benefits) of a private foundation without the complexity. Visit [wilderness.org/DAF](https://wilderness.org/DAF) to learn more.

### **Make a gift of stock.**

Almost as easy as writing a check, visit [wilderness.org/stock](https://wilderness.org/stock) for updated transfer information and talk to your financial advisor today.

### **Join Friends of Wilderness.**

Visit [wilderness.org/monthly](https://wilderness.org/monthly) and let your recurring support help sustain our work all year long. It's easy for you and a great way to protect the places you love!

### **Shop at AmazonSmile.**

When you shop at AmazonSmile and choose The Wilderness Society as your charity, we get a small donation at no cost to you!

## Gar Duke and Nicole Friend

Like many parents, outdoor education experts Gar Duke and Nicole Friend often wonder about what the world is going to look like when their six-year-old son grows up. “The challenges we face right now are pretty overwhelming at times,” admits Gar, “but my hope is that after all this struggle, there will be some celebration to witness.”

That belief in a better future is what drove Gar and a friend to create the Montana Wilderness School, a non-profit outdoor education organization based in Bozeman, in 2013. The co-founders set out to build a unique program with a financial aid component, which strives to “level the playing field” by making immersive wilderness expeditions accessible to Montana youth from all walks of life. “We’ve never turned away a participant because of financial need, and that emphasis sets us apart” says Gar.

The school was on track to attain record enrollment in 2020, when COVID-19 suddenly canceled half of their programs. Determined to continue, they worked hard to safely launch several expeditions before the season ended. “It felt more important than ever this year to be able to serve as many kids as possible. Our youth need opportunities to form deeper connections to the natural world—not just for their physical and



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mental wellness, but also because the future of conservation depends on it,” insists Gar.

To complement their shared love of giving back to the next generation, Gar and Nicole are focused on making conservation an important piece of their own philanthropy. Their personal support of The Wilderness Society is driven by appreciation for the toughness and perseverance that staff have brought to key fights, like the effort to save the Land and Water Conservation Fund. But the work to eliminate

illegally issued oil and gas leases from the Badger-Two Medicine area has resonated with them the most. “To see The Wilderness Society as a major partner standing up with the Blackfeet Nation and doing everything possible to protect one of the last sacred spaces we have left in the Northern Rockies—it reflects our values and makes us very proud to be supporters,” says Gar.



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Marc Adamus

## **December 31 Deadline: All Donations TRIPLE MATCHED!**

Your tax-deductible year-end gift will be matched by a generous supporter, up to our \$1.5 million goal.

Give now to TRIPLE your impact for America's wild places!

**[wilderness.org/match](https://wilderness.org/match)**



Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska

Peter Mather