

#I Can See LWCF FROM FLORIDA

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is America's premier federal program that reinvests offshore energy revenue into conservation to ensure that we all have access to the outdoors. Whether it is a local community park or playground, or the vast expanses of our federal public lands, Congress created the LWCF over a half-century ago to guarantee America's natural, historical and outdoor recreation heritage.

TELL YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS ABOUT YOUR CONNECTION TO THESE LWCF PLACES NEAR YOU.

Project overviews courtesy of the LWCF Coalition. lwcfoalition.com

Project Name/Unit: Florida National Scenic Trail (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, NPS)

LWCF Contribution: \$18 million

Stakeholders Involved: Florida Trail Association

Keywords/Characteristics (eg. rec access, drinking water, consolidating maintenance): Recreation access, water resource protection, habitat conservation, consolidating maintenance, finishing our parks/trails

Short Description: The Florida National Scenic Trail (commonly known as the Florida Trail) currently offers more than 1,100 miles of long distance hiking, from Big Cypress National Preserve in the south to Gulf Islands National Seashore in the northwest panhandle, crossing three national forests and the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge. Because of the variety of environments along the trail, from swamps and beaches, to forests and rivers, activities such as biking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, paddling, camping, and hunting are encouraged. The trail is within easy access of many of the nation's most densely populated communities and is hailed as a great escape into the outdoors for adventurers. Since the trail was founded in 1966, over \$18 million in LWCF funding has been invested in trail lands, but 300 miles of trail are still in limbo and need protection. The Florida Trail is awaiting funding for the protection of 29 acres, to fill trail gaps and protect shoreline areas along the Suwannee and Withlacoochee Rivers.



Florida National Scenic Trail
Credit: USFS

Project Name/Unit: St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

LWCF Contribution: \$11 million

Stakeholders Involved: The Nature Conservancy

Keywords/Characteristics (eg. rec access, drinking water, consolidating maintenance): Recreation access, wildlife habitat, water resource protection

Short Description: The St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, one of the oldest refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System, was established in 1931 to provide wintering habitat for migratory birds. It encompasses over 70,000 acres spread out between Wakulla, Jefferson, and Taylor counties, and about 43 miles along the Gulf Coast of northwest Florida. The refuge includes coastal marshes, islands, tidal creeks and estuaries of seven north Florida rivers, and is home to a diverse community of plant and animal life. The refuge also has strong ties to a rich cultural



St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge
Credit: USFWS

past, and is home to the St. Marks Lighthouse, which was built in 1842 and is still in use today. Over \$11 million in LWCF funding has been used to invest in St. Marks NWR, continuing the tradition of conservation in Florida.

Project Name/Unit: Big Cypress National Preserve (NPS)

LWCF Contribution: \$219,824,000

Keywords/Characteristics (eg. rec access, drinking water, consolidating maintenance): Recreation access, water resource protection, wildlife protection, development pressure

Short Description: Big Cypress National Preserve has received over \$219 million in LWCF funding. Funding for Big Cypress protected land that is essential to the water quality of South Florida. Through its protection and restoration as wetlands, this land will improve water quality by acting as a protective buffer between natural and urban areas and will also serve as a water storage area. Restoring this piece of America’s heritage has provided crucial protection to wildlife, increased access to outdoor recreation, promoted smart growth by reducing sprawl, and helped local economies through increased tourism revenues.



Hiking in Big Cypress National Preserve
Credit: NPS

Project Name/Unit: Everglades National Park (NPS)

LWCF Contribution: \$208,050,000

Keywords/Characteristics (eg. rec access, drinking water, consolidating maintenance): Recreation access, water resource protection, wildlife habitat, working ranchlands

Short Description: LWCF has protected the Everglades from its headwaters in the ranchlands upstate to its outflow in Florida Bay by investing in Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area and Everglades National Park. Almost one million visitors experience the Everglades every year. Over \$200 million in LWCF funding has gone to the Everglades, ensuring the continuation of the Florida Everglades Restoration Project, a massive undertaking by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other stakeholders to restore the natural flow of water in the Everglades ecosystem. Restoring this piece of America’s heritage has provided crucial protection to wildlife, increased access to outdoor recreation, promoted smart growth by reducing sprawl, and helped local economies through increased tourism revenues.



Everglades National Park
Credit: NPS

Project Name/Unit: Everglades Headwaters Conservation Area (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

LWCF Contribution: \$19,591,000

Keywords/Characteristics (eg. rec access, drinking water, consolidating maintenance): Recreation access, wildlife habitat, water resource protection, working ranchlands

Short Description: Eight million people and countless species of animals call the Everglades ecosystem home— challenging the resources of this iconic natural system that supplies water for the residents of south Florida. Over five decades, conservation partners have protected more than 360,000 acres, mostly within a 170-mile swath of working cattle ranches, longleaf pine savannas and seasonal wetlands in the northern end of the system. Coupled with long-term LWCF-supported conservation efforts in the southern part of the watershed at Everglades National Park, the conservation of working ranches at the watershed headwaters is key to maintaining the entire ecosystem. Conservation partners are looking to conserve an additional 300,000 acres of public and private lands that will help ensure the return of the “river of grass.”

Project Name/Unit: Caspersen Beach in Sarasota County (NPS state and local assistance)

LWCF Contribution: \$1,750,000

Keywords/Characteristics (eg. rec access, drinking water, consolidating maintenance): Recreation access, coastal preservation, development pressure

Short Description: Situated in Sarasota County, one of the top destinations for vacationers every year, Caspersen Beach is a conservation gem in a highly developed region. Known locally as the best place to hunt and find shark teeth, LWCF funding has allowed for the preservation of the natural integrity of the beach, while still allowing for exceptional coastal recreation access.

Project Name/Unit: Florida Panther Habitat Conservation (Sec. 6 RLA Habitat Conservation grant - state grant program)

LWCF Contribution: \$1.5 million

Keywords/Characteristics (eg. rec access, drinking water, consolidating maintenance): Habitat conservation

Short Description: This project is a conservation easement to protect the habitat of the Florida Panther, one of our nation's great cats and at risk of being federally listed as an endangered species - a status the Florida Panther once had but was brought back from the brink of extinction due to concerted efforts to protect habitat. The Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund provides funding to states and territories for species and habitat conservation on non-federal lands; local partners match at least 25 percent of project costs. Recovery Land Acquisition (RLA) grants provide states and landowners an opportunity to protect habitat essential to listed species as a problem-solving alternative to the regulatory process; grant funds are matched by states and non-federal entities to acquire these habitats from willing sellers in support of approved species recovery plans.



Florida Panther
Credit: NPS

LWCF EXPIRES SEPTEMBER 30, 2018

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