

Land and Water Conservation Fund: *Unleashing & Growing Conservation Funding*

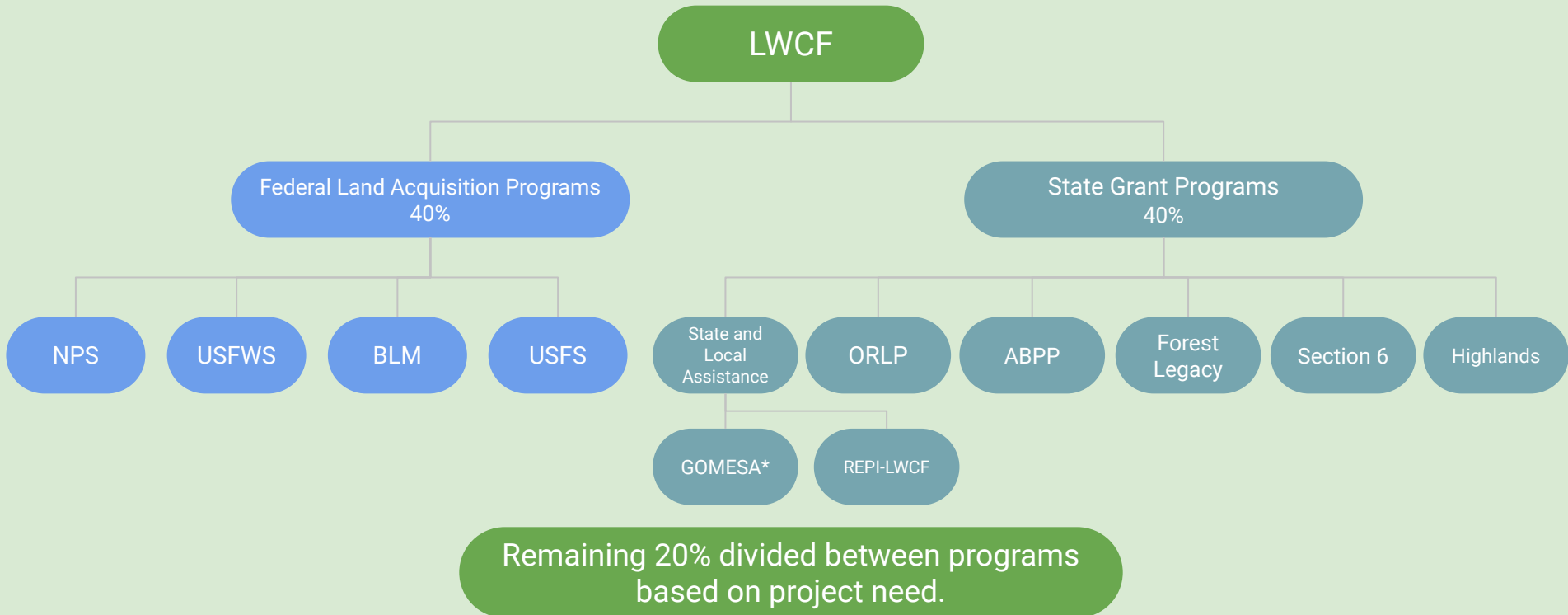


Lesley Kane Szynal, Executive Director, Outdoors
America & Chair of the LWCF Coalition



LWCF Programs

Funding Allocations Authorized by Congress






**99% of LWCF Projects
Provide Recreation
Access**



**100% of LWCF-funded
USFS & Forest Legacy
Projects Protect Water
Resources**




**100% of LWCF-funded
BLM, USFWS, USFS, &
Forest Legacy Projects
Protect Critical Wildlife
Habitat**



**100% of LWCF-funded
ORLP Grants go to
Underserved
Communities**



**87% of LWCF-funded
BLM, USFWS, USFS, &
Forest Legacy Projects
Protect Access**



**Forest Legacy Program:
\$1.05B has Leveraged
\$1.19B from Non-Federal
Sources**

Protect, Implement, & Grow LWCF+



- Protect against efforts to reopen LWCF (even well intentioned efforts).
- Keep LWCF in LWCF (avoid rescissions) and reprogram funding.
- Overcoming roadblocks/eliminating bad policies from previous Administration:
 - Solving the appraisal bottlenecks USDA/DOI.
 - Consistent policies for work with non-profit partners.
- Create efficiencies to increase the pace and scale of LWCF projects on an annual basis.
- Grow agency staffing - foundation for future.
- Implementation of new conservation funding (IRA/BIL).



Grow Conservation Funding LWCF+

- **\$900 million is a floor, not a ceiling.** Inflation adjusted **\$3.9 billion.**
- LWCF oversubscribed with ready-to-go, unmet needs in every program.
- Coalition working to increase LWCF in Budget and Appropriations process (members asking for \$450M).
- New conservation funding (LWCF programs and beyond) has been enacted, with additional legislative efforts underway.



Forest Legacy/Inflation Reduction Act



- Forest Legacy Program (FLP):
 - Established by Congress in 1990.
 - Administered by US Forest Service
 - Assists states and private forest owners to maintain working forest lands through conservation easements and fee acquisitions.
 - Funded by LWCF.
- OAC led effort to secure an additional \$700 million for FLP in the Inflation Reduction Act in 2022.
 - Large landscapes.
 - Tribal collaborations.
 - Small/family tracts.
- First round of awards announced in June 2023 & second round closes May 2024.

Outdoors for All Act/ORLP



- LWCF-funded Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program invests in outdoor recreation opportunities in underserved communities.
- The Outdoors for All Act would codify the ORLP program and:
 - Provide direct access to LWCF for Tribes (population requirement waived for tribes).
 - Include smaller communities.
 - Allow for a match waiver (not included in EXPLORE Act).
- **Outdoors for All just passed the House as part of the EXPLORE Act!**
- We are also working to recommend administrative changes to ORLP that will simplify & improve the application process to lessen the burden on communities that are applying for funding.



THANK YOU!

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New OAC-led Grants Available This Year

CELCP - IIJA: Up to \$284M

- Up to \$284M secured for the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.
- Supports coastal land acquisition.
- Funding over 5 years.
- 2 grant rounds completed.

FLP/Inflation Reduction Act: \$700M

- Targeting additional \$700M to complement regular annual FLP.
- Large landscapes.
- Tribal collaborations.
- Small/family tracts.
- First round announced in June.

LWCF-REPI Partnership Challenge: \$80M

- Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program.
- Announced at White House Conservation Day.
- DOD REPI projects around military installations.
- REPI is the only federal program eligible to use as match for LWCF stateside.