

# Equine Land Conservation Resource

Advancing the conservation of land for horse-related activity.



Dear Conservation Partners,

While debate over taxes remains focused on the Senate, now is a great time to ask your Representative to help secure appropriations for land conservation.

## **Urge Your Representative to Sign a Letter Supporting LWCF and Forest Legacy**

It is great news that President Obama sought \$620 million for the Land and Water Conservation Fund in his Fiscal Year 2011 Budget request, an increase of \$167 million over this year. But the President's budget request is just that -- a request to Congressional appropriators -- and it's up to us to ensure that Congress feels compelled to provide that funding.

You can help by asking your Representative to sign-on to a Dear Colleague letter being circulated by Representatives Chris Murphy (D-CT), Jim Gerlach (R-PA), Rush Holt (D-NJ), Jim McGovern (D-MA) and Peter King (R-NY) seeking \$425 for the Federal LWCF program, \$175 million for the LWCF stateside program and \$150 million for the Forest Legacy Program:

- Please call the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask for your Representative.
- Ask for the staff member who handles Natural Resource issues and urge them to sign the letter supporting increased funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
- Offer to email them a [copy of the letter](#) and indicate they can sign by contacting Jesse Young in Rep. Murphy's office (5-4476) or Lauryn Schothorst in Rep. Gerlach's office (5-4315).
- [Click here](#) to see if they signed [last year's LWCF letter](#) (typed list on page 9) and if so, thank them when seeking their renewed support.

These programs have historically been the most significant federal sources of funding to support land conservation. [LWCF](#) funds acquisition of federal park, forest, wildlife refuge and other public lands and matches state funding for park acquisition and development. The [Forest Legacy Program](#) provides grants to purchase conservation easements or

fee acquisition on environmentally important forest lands that are threatened with conversion to non-forest uses. [Click here](#) for talking points.

With 137 [House](#) and 46 [Senate](#) signers, last year's letters really made a difference in securing even more funding than the President's request. This year's Senate letter is expected soon and we'll share it with you as soon as it's available.

### **Senate Likely to Pass 1-Year Extension of Easement Incentive This Week**

The alphabet soup of "jobs" bills volleying back and forth between the House and Senate sure can be confusing, but we wanted you to know a one-year extension of the [enhanced easement incentive](#) is in the mix and appears increasingly likely in the weeks ahead.

The conservation easement enhanced benefits extension, along with 70 other expired provisions, such as the [IRA Charitable Rollover](#), is included in the [American Workers, State and Business Relief Act](#) (H.R. 4213), informally known as the "second jobs bill." It's widely expected this bill will pass the Senate sometime this week, but some hurdles remain. You may recall the House passed "extenders" of expired tax provisions back in December, but they will need to vote again on the Senate version. It's unclear whether they'll simply accept these changes, or send back changes of their own (as happened with the first "jobs bill" last week).

We need to continue showing our Senators and Representatives how important a permanent enhanced tax incentive is for land conservation in your community. Right now is a great time to [invite](#) them to see the work you're doing over the upcoming recesses: March 27-April 11 and May 29-June 6.

### **Rep. Sander Levin (D-MI) Named Interim Chair of Ways & Means**

On February 26th, the House ethics committee issued a report admonishing Ways & Means Committee Chairman Charles Rangel (D-NY) for accepting gifts of Caribbean travel. In the tumultuous week since, Rep. Rangel agreed to temporarily relinquish his Chairmanship to California Representative Pete Stark, who, just 24 hours later, passed the gavel to Michigan Representative Sander Levin.

Last September, after years of hard work by New York land trusts, Congressman Rangel agreed to become a co-sponsor of the house easement incentives bill, H.R. 1831.\* Unfortunately, Acting Chairman Sander Levin is one of three Ways & Means Democrats who have never co-sponsored legislation to make the enhanced easement incentive permanent. The Land Trust Alliance is working with Michigan land trusts to change his mind in the months ahead. Michigan horsemen who want to assist are encouraged to do so. Now more than ever, we need your help identifying any relationships your organization or its board members have with Rep. Levin and other senior [Ways & Means Democrats](#). Please let Deb or Carol know of relationships that your organization may have.

Thank you!

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