



QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Date: 08 October 2019
To: Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
From: Jacob Pries, Policy Intern
Re: Support for S. 1081

On behalf of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA), we would like to state our support for S. 1081 and respectfully request you move this bill onto the Senate floor for consideration. The QDMA is a national nonprofit wildlife conservation organization dedicated to ensuring the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat and our hunting heritage. The QDMA has over 60,000 members nationwide and our membership includes hunters, landowners and natural resource professionals. S. 1081 calls for the full and dedicated funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The benefits of LWCF touch every state and citizen. The \$900 million that is congressionally authorized to be dedicated to the program comes out of off-shore oil and gas drilling royalties and does not cost tax-payers anything.

The white-tailed deer hunting culture runs deep in American history and the full funding of LWCF allows for this deeply rooted culture to thrive. Whitetails are the most popular big game animal in the U.S., and whitetail hunters are the foundation of a nearly \$67 billion hunting industry. According to the National Shooting Sports Foundation, approximately three of every four hunters pursue whitetails and according to the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, sportsmen and women support 1.6 million jobs. The wild spaces that so many white-tailed deer hunters enjoy are made possible by the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The experiences garnered by gaining access to these spaces are invaluable. Fully funding LWCF would ensure that those experiences are maximized for generations to come. LWCF funding has contributed to the maintaining of some of the country's true national gems such as the Flathead National Forest, Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, Mark Twain National Forest, Chattahoochee National Forest, and Daniel Boone National Forest to name just a few of the many.

Under the purview of LWCF is the Forest Legacy Program (FLP). This is a grant matching program that supports state and private management of forests. At QDMA, we believe it is critical to engage in responsible forest management for the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat, and our hunting heritage. Unfortunately, due to the underfunding of LWCF, the demands of this program are not currently being met. According to the LWCF Coalition, the demand for FLP funding from states is around \$155 million per year and the program only receives \$57 million. The inadequate funding could potentially lead to the lack of forest resiliency to devastating diseases and wildfires. This effect goes far beyond the forest itself, as 2.5 million jobs depend directly on the continuing health of these forests. This program has contributed to the preservation of 2.58 million acres of working forest lands and must be adequately supported to ensure the continued existence of so many facets of the American way of life including the deeply rooted tradition of white-tailed deer hunting. Passing this out of the committee is the next crucial step in wildlife conservation and we ask that you take that step. We would like to sincerely thank you for your time, consideration, and dedicated service to this country.

Respectfully,

Jacob Pries
Policy Intern
Quality Deer Management Association