



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

**CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU**  
Governor

February 3, 2021

The Honorable Shannon Estenoz  
Principal Deputy Secretary  
Fish Wildlife and Parks  
Department of Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington DC 20240

Dear Deputy Secretary Estenoz:

On January 20, 2021, the State of New Hampshire received notice from the National Park Service (NPS) of the State's FY2021 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program apportionment. Unlike the usual notices of previous years, this notice included details of dramatic programmatic changes implemented by the previous administration just prior to its departure. These changes were imbedded within revisions to the LWCF Federal Financial Assistance Manual, Volume 69 as directed by Secretary's Order 3388.

Secretary's Order 3388, signed by then Secretary David Bernhardt, eliminates the States' authority to individually prioritize the allocation of LWCF "state side" program funds. Such prioritizations in the past have been established by each State every five years within a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The SCORP is a requirement of a State's eligibility to participate in the program. The changes in Order 3388 deviation will have significant adverse impacts to the State's ability to meet the outdoor recreation needs of our citizens and visitors in the state by setting federal determined priorities and by eliminating the ability to fund critical state and local infrastructure projects. It is irresponsible to provide access to public lands and not provide adequate infrastructure to support that access, including investment in parking lots and restroom facilities, especially with unprecedented demand for outdoor experiences.

New Hampshire has a long history of understanding and effectively managing the relationship between outdoor access, natural resource values, overall quality of life, and most importantly the related economic benefits. Our current SCORP was developed with this in mind, focusing on priorities that provide connections between people to the outdoors; consistent stewardship and conservation; education, ethics and benefits; and state and local economic vitality. The New Hampshire Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, which formally manages the State's LWCF program and whose Commissioner acts as official State Liaison Officer to the NPS for

the program, operates on the State's recognition of the immersed roll that outdoor recreation plays in both our local and State Parks. Since 1965 it has facilitated the granting of over 650 state and local project, totaling more than \$42,000,000.00 in direct funding. These funds have helped develop new State Parks, expand current recreation resource offerings, provide local match for close-to-home park development and has helped shape our current outdoor recreation economy. Without assistance from the LWCF program as we know it today, the strength and character of New Hampshire would not be the same.

Revisions to the LWCF Federal Financial Assistance Manual, Volume 69 as directed by Secretary's Order 3388 would have eliminated the majority of the projects we have completed since the beginning of the program in New Hampshire, in both State Parks and local communities and would eliminate 100% of the projects currently pending for submittal and approval by the NPS. On behalf of the residents and guests of the State of New Hampshire, I am requesting that you immediately repeal SO 3388 and the associated program manual revisions and restore the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) as approved and funded in the agreed to omnibus bill. Across the country, and especially in New Hampshire, well planned and developed outdoor recreation resources and opportunities have provided priceless havens for residents and guests. The current global pandemic has served to reinforce this proven concept as people everywhere are flocking to the great outdoors as never seen before. By historically following SCORP priorities, New Hampshire has been well positioned to respond to and accommodate for this unfortunate challenge. Please help restore the LWCF State and Local Assistance Program guidance so that we can continue to do what we do best.

Sincerely,



Christopher T. Sununu  
Governor

CC: National Governor's Association