

**Land Trust Alliance
Federal Policy Update
September 9, 2025**

Congress:

Funding the federal government

Congress returned from recess the first week of September. One of their top priorities is to fund the federal government beyond September 30, 2025. The House and Senate appropriations committees are moving appropriations bills including the bill to fund the Departments of Agriculture, Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Forest Service with funding levels for conservation programs and agencies at amounts that are significantly higher than the Administration's budget request. However, there are big differences between the House and Senate funding levels that need to be reconciled.. There are calls for passing a short-term continuing resolution before the end of September to provide additional time for negotiating the appropriations bills, but many are concerned that the country will once again be facing a government shutdown. The Alliance will keep our members posted on progress to fund the federal government through fiscal year 2026.

Action alert: We urge Alliance members to contact your congressional delegations to underscore the importance of the programs they utilize to advance their work.

Farm Bill

The latest extension of the 2018 Farm Bill expires on September 30, 2025. Despite an ongoing commitment from House and Senate Agriculture Committee Chairs G.T. Thompson from Pennsylvania and John Boozman from Arkansas to get it done, it is highly unlikely Congress will pass a bill by the end of the month. While there is an urgent need to pass an extensions, some pressure is off Congress due to the Reconciliation Bill addressing key "safety net" provisions for producers by increasing reference prices for the commodity title and increasing crop insurance. In addition, many of the Farm Bill conservation programs – including the easement programs – are funded with mandatory funding so they can continue to move forward through the end of the year. The potential government shutdown could complicate implementation of the programs if the Administration decides to shut down all non-emergency functions at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Potential government shutdown aside, Chairs Thompson and Boozman are talking to Ranking Members Angie Craig and Amy Klobuchar, both from Minnesota, to understand minority priorities for the next Farm Bill and to see if they can reach an agreement. The House Agriculture Committee still intends to use the bill that passed out of committee last May as the base for the next Farm Bill. The bill language as it stands, puts our community in a good place as it reflects the vast majority of our Farm Bill recommendations. There is also strong support for our recommendations in the Senate.

Action alert: Please contact your congressional delegations and to urge Congress to pass a Farm Bill that reflects the Alliance priorities including the establishment of the Forest Conservation Easement Program with mandatory funding this year.

Great American Outdoors Act



While the Great American Outdoors Act provided permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the provision to provide funding for the maintenance backlog at the National Park Service through the Legacy Restoration Fund expires on September 30, 2025. There are bipartisan efforts in the House and Senate to extend the LRF through September 2031 with increased funding levels which would be paid for through various means including a potential new “surcharge” on foreign visitors.

Executive Branch:

President Trump has issued over 200 executive orders and directives since taking office in January 2025. Since the passage of the Reconciliation bill, he issued Executive Orders to make it more difficult to site wind and solar on federal lands in response to the provisions in the Reconciliation Bill that extended the wind and solar tax credits to July 2026. The Executive Orders were followed by actions from the Secretaries of Interior, Agriculture and Treasury that put a focus on the maximum energy generated per unit of land which could make it very difficult to site wind or solar on federal lands.

In addition, the President issued EO 14432: [Improving Oversight of Federal Grantmaking](#), which requires agency heads to designate a senior political appointee to be responsible for establishing a process for the review of new funding opportunity announcements and to review discretionary grants to “ensure they are consistent with agency priorities and the national interest.” In addition to review and approval by one or more senior agency appointees it requires continued coordination with the Office of Management and Budget. The EO also requires future agreements to include a provision to allow the termination of agreements that are no longer in the best interest of the nation.

On August 28, 2025, he issued a [Memorandum for the Attorney General](#) to consult with the heads of executive departments and agencies to ensure Federal grant funds are not being used for lobbying activities in support of political candidates or parties and to provide a report of progress of the investigation within 180 days of issuing the memorandum.

On September 4, 2025, Interior Secretary Doug Burgum issued Secretarial Order 3442; Land and Water Conservation Fund Implementation by the Department of the Interior which among other things places restrictions on the allocation of LWCF funds, requires written support from state and local governments for all federal LWCF projects and makes nonprofit organizations ineligible for acquisitions under a hardship or emergency situation.

Action alert: The LWCF coalition strongly opposes the SO - here is [a link](#) to materials to take action.

States:

The Administration and the Reconciliation Bill have pushed responsibility and cost for many programs including nutrition, Medicaid, education and emergency response down to the states and this is having a significant impact on state budgets.

Action alert: Contact decision makers at all levels of government to underscore the importance of conservation funding and why it is a strong investment and should not be cut.