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July 20, 2011

The Honorable Jim Costa  
1314 Longworth HOB  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Costa:

In the coming weeks, the U.S. Congress will once again be examining Federal budget allocations for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The City of Lemoore is writing to encourage you to continue to show dedication and leadership on this important issue and oppose any further spending reductions to this invaluable program.

Over the last four decades, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has been a pivotal source of funding and investment for local economies, including those spread throughout the Central Valley. LWCF funds have gone a long way in preserving our historic, cultural, and natural landscapes, while at the same time providing much needed economic stimulus to local economies. But over the history of the program, more than \$17 billion of the outer continental shelf oil and gas revenues deposited into LWCF have been diverted and NOT spent as the LWCF Act intended.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund has been an invaluable resource to the Central Valley since its inception. During these past four decades, LWCF grants have generated over \$2 billion for state and federal projects to ensure that future Californians will have an opportunity to enjoy the abundant natural treasures that California has to offer. In your congressional district, LWCF has provided approximately \$3.4 million dollars of funding. These funds have helped our communities protect our lands, clean water supplies, wildlife habitats, recreational spots, public spaces, and above all, the Central Valley's unique cultural heritage and way of life. Specifically, it has helped fund projects such as Arvin Park and Recreation Center, Heritage Park in the City of Lemoore, The Mendota Wildlife Area, Shafter Community Park and Corcoran Community Park.

For those Central Valley communities that depend on a thriving outdoor recreation and tourism industry, LWCF investments are a necessary resource to help keep our communities strong and prosperous. Funding that goes towards the creation of a new state park means more jobs for residents and more activity for locally-owned businesses. In addition, the construction of a reservoir for boating, jet-skiing, fishing, and other outdoor recreational purposes could qualify for a LWCF stateside grant. Construction of such a reservoir could also help our local agriculture community.

*"In God We Trust"*

Accessible wildlife habitats, hiking trails, camp grounds and other public lands mean an influx in business for local restaurateurs, hotel owners, and outdoor recreation retailers. Statewide, outdoor recreation spending is a substantial contributor to California's economy, contributing upwards of \$46 billion annually, while supporting over 408,000 jobs and generating \$28.1 billion in annual retail sales.

Even more, local investments from the Land and Water Conservation Fund have provided the necessary means for preserving the Central Valley's unique way of life and a cultural identity dating back centuries. For decades, millions of families have come to the Central Valley to enjoy its bounty of land, climate and natural beauty. However, maintaining this delicate balance with nature rests on the assurance that programs like the Land and Water Conservation Fund will be sustained with adequate funding to ensure that our public lands, habitats, national, state and local parks continue to be a resource enjoyed by all.

We appreciate your commitment to preserving all that makes the Central Valley a wonderful place to live, learn, and grow. By ensuring this important Federal program is adequately funded to meet the needs of our shared conservation priorities, your support will make a difference for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Willard J. Rodarmel  
Mayor