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**AJR-27 The Land and Water Conservation Fund.** (2015-2016)

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**Assembly Joint Resolution No. 27**

**CHAPTER 197**

Relative to the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

[ Filed with Secretary of State September 21, 2015. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AJR 27, Levine. The Land and Water Conservation Fund.

This measure would urge the Congress of the United States to permanently reauthorize and fully fund the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund in order to maintain and preserve land and water resources.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) was created by Congress in 1965 as a bipartisan commitment for protection of natural areas, water resources, cultural heritage, and outdoor recreational opportunities throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, Over the 50 years since the LWCF was created, billions of dollars in funding have been provided to protect valuable land and water resources, including, but not limited to, parks, forests, rivers, lakes, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. These investments have resulted in the permanent protection of nearly five million acres of public lands and working landscapes; and

WHEREAS, Despite being chronically underfunded, the LWCF has had several positive conservation and recreation impacts throughout the country, has protected lands in each state, and has supported over 41,000 state and local park projects; and

WHEREAS, Since its inception, the LWCF has delivered over \$2 billion to California, and has provided hundreds of millions of dollars more for projects through its matching fund program; and

WHEREAS, The LWCF has helped conserve some of California's most treasured and iconic natural resources in each region of the state, including, but not limited to, Lake Tahoe, the Mojave Desert, Point Reyes National Seashore, the Headwaters Forest Reserve, the San Diego and Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuges, working forests in the Sierra Nevada, and Central Valley wetlands; and

WHEREAS, The LWCF has provided funding for outdoor recreational and park programs benefitting underserved youth and others in urban and rural communities throughout the state, and has established a critical federal partnership with state and local parks and communities; and

WHEREAS, Forest Legacy Program grants are also funded through the LWCF to protect working forests, which support jobs and sustainable forest operations and enhance wildlife habitat, water quality, and recreation. The Forest Legacy Program grants have

provided \$12 million in federal funds, which along with matching funds have provided a total of \$62 million in investments in California forests; and

WHEREAS, The LWCF is critical to the quality of life in California. The LWCF protects watersheds and drinking water supplies; provides sustainable jobs in urban and rural communities; protects the economic asset that federal, state, and local public lands represent; conserves natural areas, wildlife habitats, and open space from urban parks to large landscapes; improves access for sportsmen, sportswomen, and recreationists to natural lands; stimulates local economies and jobs that support tourism and outdoor recreation sectors; preserves wetlands, forests, and watersheds; and provides state and local grants to support healthy communities; and

WHEREAS, According to the Outdoor Industry Association, active outdoor recreation supports \$85.4 billion of consumer spending and 723,000 jobs in California, which annually generates \$27 billion in wages and salaries and \$6.7 billion in state and local tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, The United States Census Bureau reports that each year 7.4 million people engage in outdoor recreation in California, which contributes over \$8 billion of wildlife-related recreation spending to the state economy; and

WHEREAS, Despite the LWCF's successes, many more lands and resources remain vulnerable and in critical need of investment, and many urban and rural populations remain underserved; and

WHEREAS, The LWCF will expire if not reauthorized by Congress before September 30, 2015; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature urges Congress to permanently reauthorize and fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, and to the author for appropriate distribution.