

Who is NCEL?

- Nationwide network of over 1,200 legislators from all 50 states and both major parties
- Created by and for state legislators
- Serves as a connector for legislators to collaborate across the country
- “Remote environmental staff”



Who is MRLC?

- NCEL created the Mississippi River Legislative Caucus (MRLC) to build the capacity of state legislators to more effectively address
 - Nutrient Pollution
 - Flood Resilience
 - Outdoor recreation and access
 - Soil health
 - Sustainable Agriculture
 - Environmental Justice



Land, Water, and Conservation Fund

- A federal program that supports the protection of federal public lands and waters
- Provides matching grants to state and tribal governments for the acquisition and development of public parks and other outdoor sites
- In order to qualify, every State must prepare and regularly update a statewide recreation plan (SCORPS)



Land, Water, and Conservation Fund

- New legislation known as the Great American Outdoors Act was recently signed into law.
 - Ensures \$2 billion a year for LWCF
- Many of the public lands projects funded by the LWCF in the Mississippi River Valley have lessened the impacts of 2019-2020 flooding, functioning as natural flood infrastructure.
- These systems can mitigate floods and storm surges, filter pollutants, and provide habitat for endangered species.



Land, Water, and Conservation Fund

- [LWCF background](#)
- [Grants - The State Side](#)
- [How States Plan and Select Projects](#)
- [FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE MANUAL](#)
- [State Contact List](#)



Additional Flood Mitigation Resources

- [State Flood Mitigation Revolving Loan Fund Act of 2019](#) - [Bipartisan](#) federal bill introduced to use FEMA funding to provide states low-interest loans to help communities prepare for and adapt to flooding.
- [Farm Bill Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program \(CREP\)](#) - As part of [USDA's Conservation Reserve Program](#) under the Farm Bill, CREP allows states to utilize federal funding to identify its conservation priorities and ultimately pay farmers an annual rental rate to set aside sensitive or damaged land (i.e., wetlands or buffer areas) on their farm for conservation.

