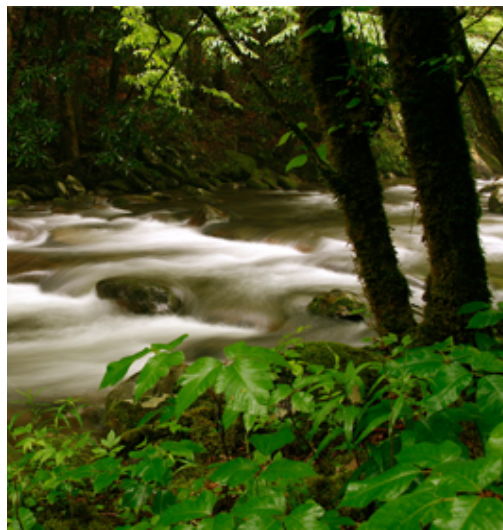




Conservation Funding and Working with Congress: Using the Best Science and Economics to Support our Environment

Alan Rowsome, Senior Director of Government Relations for Lands



The Wilderness Society

- Founded in 1935
- Wildlands designation and responsible renewable energy development
- 150 staff nationwide
- Ecologists, grassroots organizers, economists, land planners, advocates
- My specific work



Case Studies



- **Antiquities Act Defense**
- **The Land and Water Conservation Fund**



Case Study I - Antiquities Act Defense



- What is the Antiquities Act?
- Why is it under attack?
- Why we have to defend it
- Mechanics of HR 1459
- How we worked the vote
- Outcomes/lessons learned/next steps

What is the Antiquities Act

- 1906 law by President Theodore Roosevelt
- 137 National Monuments created
- Many later become Parks – Grand Canyon, Zion, Acadia, Olympic
- Designed to allow the President to act when Congress does not to protect crown jewels of our nation
- Used sparingly but effectively to create Monuments that are economically stimulative and environmentally prudent

Why is it under attack?

- Seen by some as a Presidential overreach
- Seen as being done against the wishes of the local community
- Should be subject to Congressional approval
- Law is 100 years old and needs updating
- Argument is that land which is developed or leased for fossil fuel extraction is more profitable than protecting that place
- President Obama has named 10 monuments and is likely to name more in the next three years



Why we have to defend it




- The last two Congresses have been the worst ever for Wilderness in history
- Presidential proclamation is one of the only ways we can protect special places
- Bedrock environmental law that has paid huge dividends
- Need this authority as an incentive for Congress to act

Mechanics of HR 1459

- House this week brought up Rep. Bishop's bill – HR 1459 for a vote
- Would enforce the NEPA process on monument designations
- Would only allow one monument per state per Presidential four year term
- Would mandate that Congress uphold any monuments designations by the President within three years or the monument reverts back to its previous status



How We Worked The Vote

- Timeline of the week
 - Catering the message
 - Surrogates
 - Media hits
 - Phone banking
 - Electoral pressure
- 

Timeline of the week

- Knew on 3/20 that HR 1459 would be voted on
- Bill went to House Rules Committee this past Tuesday – amendments and terms of engagement
- Floor speeches and general debate on Wednesday afternoon
- Votes on amendments and final passage Wednesday early evening



Catering The Message



- 250 House offices to reach out to
- Some urban, some rural, some affluent, some poor, some western, some eastern
- Each office needed a different message and talking points
- Other side was working these members as well with their message
- Election year politics – who's in a tough race?

Using surrogates

- Frequently the environmental community isn't the best messenger, so we use:
 - Sportsmen
 - Veterans
 - Rights groups
 - Latino and African American groups
 - State and local elected officials
 - Chambers of Commerce and tourism boards



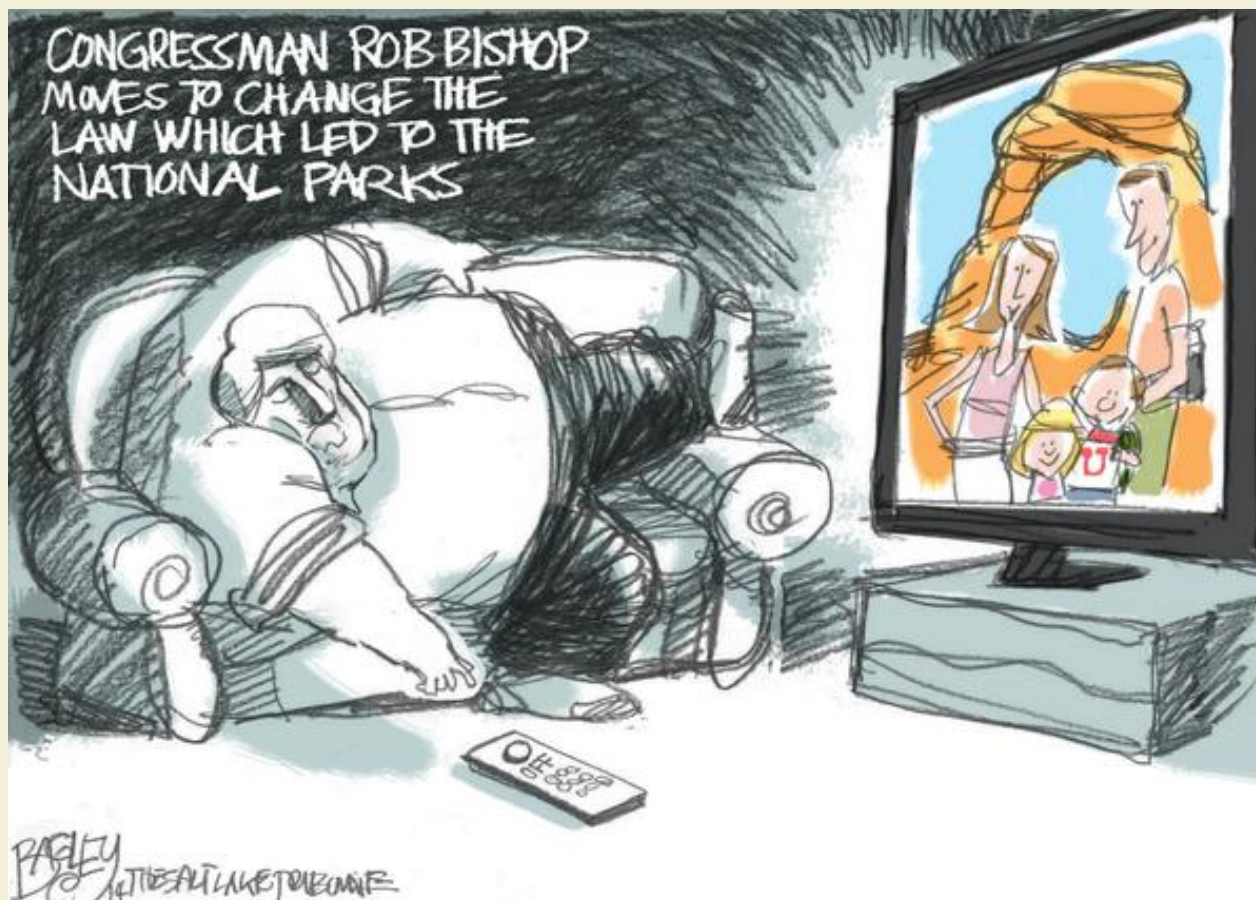
Media Hits



- Op Eds and LTEs around the country
 - Ted Roosevelt IV
 - Former Secretaries of Interior
 - Ed Boards
 - Conservation Leaders
 - Getting news in specific papers where we knew we had swing votes



Media Hits



Phone banking

- 15 critical swing votes were phone banked
- People from your district calling you to vote the right way
- Deluge an office
- Had to strategically place resources



Electoral Pressure

- Donors and politically connected advocates calling offices
- League of Conservation Voters and other groups threatening to score the vote
- Ads being run urging voters to watch how the member will vote
- Urging opponents in primaries and general elections this fall to use this vote as fodder

Member Example #1

- Representative Dave Reichert (R-WA)
 - Has public lands in his district
 - Moderate Republican willing to buck party
 - Has bills pending in House Nat Resources Committee
 - We used surrogates, media hits, local economic data, GIS mapping, and polls to secure his vote
 - Ultimately he took courageous vote against his party to uphold the Antiquities Act
 - Will be thanked publicly and receive electoral support




Member Example #2

- Representative David Joyce (R-OH)
 - Has no public lands in his district
 - Conservative Republican willing who likes to hunt, fish and recreate outdoors – supports Great Lakes restoration funding
 - We used surrogates (sportsmen), media hits, local economic data, demographics
 - Ultimately he stood with the party to restrict the Antiquities Act
 - Will see negative press and his opponent this fall will receive electoral support






Final Outcome

- 
- HR 1459 passed by a vote of 222-201
 - 10 Republicans opposed, 3 Democrats supported
 - Ultimately there were only 20-25 true swing votes
 - Lobby efforts on both sides were significant
 - Promises were made to wavering House Republicans to stick with the party vote
 - Half of them still bucked the party
 - We learned valuable lessons about what are the most compelling arguments to use with certain offices
 - Symbolic vote because the Senate will not move



Lessons Learned

- 
- We need better economic data in many Republican districts
 - We need better ecological data on endangered species, migratory patterns, and visitation to public lands
 - We need more diverse voices willing to speak out
 - We need a culture in Washington that isn't fearful of vote retribution
 - Ultimately we are stronger for going through this vote, but at what cost?

Case Study II

- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
 - What is the program?
 - Tale of two narratives
 - Budget chaos
 - Building support
 - Outlook for the future
 - Lessons learned

What is LWCF?

- Strategic land acquisition program
 - Adds key acres to state parks, national parks, wildlife refuges, forests, BLM lands, battlefields
 - Connects trails systems and creates recreational access
 - State grants program provides local parks and outdoor recreation infrastructure
 - Provides flexibility to land owners wanting to conserve land
 - Easements to save working forests, ranches, farming way of life





What is LWCF?



- Funded by fees paid to federal government from oil/gas industry
 - Not even taxpayer dollars
- Created in 1960s by Kennedy/Johnson
- An asset for an asset
- Supposed to get \$900 million per year
- Chronically underfunded by Congress
- Conservation \$ lost = \$17 billion
- Still many success stories

Tale Of Two Narratives

- Small minority of Republicans say we can't afford LWCF
 - Takes land away from private citizens
 - Federal government intrusion
 - We don't need more public lands
 - Should drill or develop instead
 - Bad economic choice
- That small minority is influential enough to stop funding increases for LWCF

Tale Of Two Narratives

- Vast majority of Republicans and Democrats support LWCF
- Good investment in local communities
- Helps make ecosystems/wildlife healthy
- Provides access for hunting/fishing and other outdoor pursuits
- Creates sustainable, livable communities
- Saves \$ down the road
- Protects clean water resources



LWCF Budget Chaos

- 
- Land and Water Conservation Fund
 - 2012 President's Request : \$900 million
 - 2012 House Proposed Level : \$90 million
 - 2012 Senate Proposed Level : \$350 million
 - ***2012 Final Funding Level : \$322 million***
 - 2013 President's Request : \$450 million
 - 2013 House Proposed Level : \$66 million
 - 2013 Senate Proposed Level : \$370 million
 - ***2013 Final Funding Level : \$305 million***
 - 2014 Presidential Request : \$600 million
 - 2014 House Proposed Level : \$0
 - 2014 Senate Proposed Level : \$350 million
 - ***2014 Final Funding Level : \$300 million***

Building Support For LWCF

- Inside the Beltway
- In District/Local Communities
- Tools/Strategies
- Pulling It All Together

Inside the Beltway

- Author legislation – S. 338
 - Add co-sponsors; build champions
- Dear Colleague letters
 - Member to member outreach
- Utilize DC Media market
 - Where obscure issues get more attention
- Work the budget process
- Fend off attacks – amendments
- Briefings/Fly-ins
- Traditional Lobbying

S. 338 – LWCF Authorization and Funding Act of 2013



- Bill provides full funding for LWCF at \$900 million annually
- Organizing tool to build support
- Likely will never get voted on specifically
- Could be included in much larger legislation
- 40 Senate co-sponsors and counting
- Led by Walsh (D-MT) and Burr (R-NC)
- Momentum builds for action as members join



Administration/White House

- Push President's Budget to support LWCF
- Enlist Department of Interior to advocate for their own program
- Get latest information about projects and opportunities from NPS/FWS/USFS/BLM
- Ensure that LWCF is part of the President's conservation legacy
- Get Administration officials on the ground



In District/Local Communities

- State fact sheets – It's about place
- Individual project stories
- Success stories – invite decision makers to events
- Missed opportunities
- State letters
- Local press
- Polling





Tools/Strategies



- Website: LWCFCoalition.org
- Social media
- Videos
- Utilization of different voices
 - Hunters/Ranchers/Farmers/State-local officials
- Economic reports
 - Outdoor Industry Association
 - Headwaters Economics
 - Sonoran Institute
 - Other commissioned studies



Outlook For The Future



- Support continues to build for LWCF
- Funding levels staying flat
 - No small feat
- Biding our time for the right political opportunity
- Fighting off attempts to weaken the program in amendments or other bills
- Pushing the White House/President to get more engaged
 - Second term gives you hope
- Positioned well for success

Lessons Learned/Conclusion

- Patience is a virtue
- Incremental gains must be celebrated
- Build the foundation of support over time
- Never miss an opportunity to highlight priorities
- Slowly marginalize your opposition in DC and at home
- Never let your guard down
 - Every bill is an opportunity but also a threat
- Wait for perfect moment to push positive outcome



Keeping In Touch



Alan Rowsome
Senior Director of Government Relations
The Wilderness Society
alan_rowsome@tws.org