

Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FTLFA) Reauthorization

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Since its enactment in 2000, the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA) has provided funding to conserve fish and wildlife habitat and to expand opportunities for hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation.

The 111th Congress has an opportunity to reauthorize FLTFA, which is scheduled to expire in 2010.

Current Law: In July 2000, President Clinton signed bipartisan legislation to provide for U.S. Forest Service management of the Baca Ranch and to establish the Valles Caldera Preserve, in New Mexico. The Baca Ranch bill also included the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA) which established a special account to fund the acquisition of important private inholdings and edgeholdings in the 11 western states and Alaska. Funded through BLM land sales authorized under the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA), FLTFA has generated over \$100 million in revenue. The Departments of Interior and Agriculture have approved nearly \$49.4 million in funding to protect over 11,700 acres throughout the West.

Based on the principle of “land for land,” FLTFA funds key land acquisitions in units of the National Landscape Conservation System, National Parks, National Forests, National Wildlife Refuges, and other designated areas. To complement the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, DOI and USDA have implemented FLTFA and acquired key inholdings. Unfortunately, FLTFA’s authority expires in July 2010.

Opportunity for the New Congress: By reauthorizing the current law, the new Congress will help ensure that FLTFA will continue to fund agency land acquisition priorities. Our organizations support the current law and reauthorization principles:

1. Maintain the “land for land” principle that is in the current law.
2. Make the authorization permanent.
3. Allow for proceeds from the sale of lands identified in BLM land use plans that were completed after 2000 to be spent on land purchases and to allow the agencies to use FLTFA funds to acquire inholdings within any designated area, regardless of when the area was established.

In addition, we recommend that the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture delegate the approval of FLTFA funds to sub-cabinet officials in order to streamline the approval process.

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