

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 10, 2011

SUPPORT THE RECREATIONAL LANDS SELF-DEFENSE ACT

Dear Colleague,

Last Congress, an overwhelming majority of lawmakers supported efforts for citizens to exercise their Second Amendment right to bear arms on National Park/National Wildlife Service lands. Legislation was signed into law that allows an individual to possess an assembled or functional firearm in any unit of the National Park Service or National Wildlife Refuge System provided that the individual is not otherwise prohibited from possessing the firearm or breaking other State laws.

After passage, it was discovered that regulations were still in place prohibiting the right to bear arms on lands owned and operated by the Army Corps of Engineers. The Army Corps owns 7.6 million acres or 11,800 sq miles and manages another 4.1 million acres of area, making it the largest federal provider of water-based outdoor recreation in the nation. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers property includes 400 lakes and river projects, 90,000 campsites and 4,000 miles of trails.

Immediately after the national parks language became law, the Army Corps of Engineers issued the following release: "Public Law 111-024 does not apply to Corps projects or facilities. The passage of this new law does not affect application of Title 36 regulations...It will continue to prohibit loaded concealed weapons on Corps properties regardless of the new law and notwithstanding any contrary provisions of State law. It remains Corps policy that we will not honor State-issued concealed weapon permits on our facilities and that District Commanders do not have discretion under 36 C.F.R. § 327.13(a)(4) to create blanket exceptions to this policy." This policy preempts state regulatory frameworks for transporting and carrying firearms, thus invalidating concealed weapons permits and other state laws that allow law-abiding citizens to transport and carry firearms.

Gun owners need to be able to exercise their Second Amendment rights when they are legally camping, hunting, and fishing on Army Corps property. **The Recreational Lands Self-Defense Act** would prohibit the Secretary of the Army from enforcing any regulation that keeps an individual from possessing firearms on Army Corps of Engineer Water Resource Development project. This is a bipartisan effort that would put an end to the patchwork of regulations that govern different lands managed by different federal agencies. Please note that this language **would not** change the current legal prohibition of guns (18 U.S.C. 930) and dangerous weapons in Federal facilities such as the Corps Head Quarters, Engineering Research Facilities, and lock and dam buildings.

Please contact Corry Marshall in Rep. Gibbs office at corry.marshall@mail.house.gov or Nathan Robinson in Rep. Altmire's office at nathan.robinson@mail.house.gov to sign on as a cosponsor.

Sincerely,



Bob Gibbs
Member of Congress



Jason Altmire
Member of Congress