

Fight DC Legislation, Salmon Advocates Say

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As the lead elements of this fall's run begin to arrive in Northwest waters, salmon advocates are warning that legislation in Congress threatens stocks in the region and are [urging sportsmen](#) to support a tweak to the 2012 Department of the Interior appropriation that would strike an "extinctions rider" in the bill that wouldn't allow more species to be ESA listed or critical habitat for them identified.

The amendment is sponsored by Washington's Rep. Norm Dicks, whose [name has made](#) these [blog pages](#) in [the past](#), and a fellow Democrat, Mike Thompson of California.

"Please add your voice to support Congressman Norm Dicks' efforts to protect the laws that protect salmon, sport fishing and the industries they sustain!" said Liz Hamilton, executive director of the Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association, in an email blast late yesterday.

As the debate over the debt ceiling rages, this is yet another front in partisan D.C. battles. The appropriation, part of [HR 2584](#), specifically goes after the Environmental Protection Agency and contains \$27 billion in spending for the next fiscal year, 7 percent less than the 2011 version — itself a big drop from the year before — and 13 percent less than what President Obama wanted, according to a [Seattle Times story](#) being circulated by email today.

"It contains the lowest level of spending in the Land and Water Conservation Fund in more than 40 years," Dicks said, according to [Roll Call](#).

A hugely popular program across political and regional lines and races, the LWCF has channeled \$513 million to Washington and \$254 million to Oregon, which has been used for fishing and hunting access and to purchase wildlife habitat, among many other uses since the fund's creation in 1965.

Funds come from royalties on offshore gas and oil drilling, though those themselves have been tapped for other uses.

"Frankly, many of the cuts in this bill are just plain common-sense — particularly when it comes to the Environmental Protection Agency. The reductions and provisions in this bill were made with very good reason — to rein in unparalleled, out-of-control spending and job-killing over-regulation," said House Appropriations chairman Harold "Hal" Rogers, a Kentucky Republican.