



# **Western Asset Core Plus Bond Fund**

## **Class I: WACPX Class A: WAPAX**

## Commentary | as of September 30, 2025

## **Key Takeaways**

- Markets: During the third quarter, volatility in both equity and Treasury markets remained relatively subdued. Risk
  assets performed well, with the S&P 500 Index reaching new highs and credit spreads tightening. US job growth
  weakened in August, with nonfarm payrolls rising by 22,000 jobs—lower than July's upwardly revised figure of 79,000
  (from 73,000). The Federal Open Market Committee lowered its policy rate by 25 bps at its September meeting, setting
  the target range for the federal funds rate at 4.00% to 4.25%.
- Contributors: The portfolio's duration positioning was among the largest contributors to performance.
- Detractors: The portfolio's high-yield corporate bond and bank loan exposures were headwinds for returns.
- Outlook: U.S. financial conditions are largely supportive, which, alongside fiscal loosening and solid household balance sheets, points toward a positive foundation for growth. Headwinds remain, including doubts over the state of the U.S. labor market, core inflation lingering close to 3% and the potential lagged impact of tariffs. This backdrop should keep the Federal Reserve on a rate-cutting path, albeit with a cautious view of the inflation outlook.

Fund Characteristics	Fund
Distribution Frequency	Monthly
30-Day SEC Yield (Class I)—With Waiver	4.82%
30-Day SEC Yield (Class I)—Without Waiver	4.81%

#### **Performance Review**

- The portfolio's duration positioning and exposure to investment-grade corporate securities were among largest contributors to performance, as spreads tightened.
- The portfolio's non-U.S. developed market positioning had minimal impact on performance.
- Structured product exposure was largely beneficial, led by non-agency mortgage-backed securities (NARMBS), commercial MBS (CMBS), asset-backed securities (ABS) and collateralized loan obligations (CLOs).
- An allocation to investment-grade corporate bonds was rewarded as spreads tightened.
- Yield curve positioning was a detractor from performance, largely due to an overweight to the 5-year part of the curve.
- The portfolio's emerging market exposure had a positive impact on returns as USD-denominated spreads tightened.

#### Outlook

- Western Asset's outlook remains constructive, though we recognize that growth momentum is tempered by uncertainty in
  areas such as inflation, central bank policy, geopolitics and fiscal sustainability.
- Fiscal vulnerabilities and persistent inflation may see the yield curve steepen further. European growth is expected to benefit
  from German and E.U. fiscal support with the European Central Bank judging the eurozone economy to be "in a good place."
- We continue to focus on disciplined, fundamental, relative value investing, seeking pockets of opportunity in fixed income
  while remaining mindful of technical and macroeconomic risks.

#### Average annual total returns and fund expenses (%) - as of September 30, 2025

			Without Sales Charge							With Maximum Sales Charge							Expenses		Sales Charges		Inception
Class	CUSIP	Ticker	3-Mo	YTD	1-Yr	3-Yr	5-Yr	10-Yr	Inception	3-Мо	YTD	1-Yr	3-Yr	5-Yr	10-Yr	Inception	Gross	Net	Initial Charge CD	SC	Date
Class I	957663503	WACPX	1.96	6.83	2.60	5.32	-1.44	2.06	4.73	1.96	6.83	2.60	5.32	-1.44	2.06	4.73	0.54	0.45	_	_	7/8/1998
Class A	957663461	WAPAX	1.86	6.55	2.22	4.93	-1.81	1.68	2.09	-1.95	2.58	-1.59	3.60	-2.65	1.24	1.77	0.82	0.82	3.75	_	4/30/2012
Benchmark	_	_	2.03	6.13	2.88	4.93	-0.45	1.84	_	2.03	6.13	2.88	4.93	-0.45	1.84	_	_	_	_	_	_

### Benchmark(s)

Benchmark = Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate Index

Performance data quoted represents past performance, which does not guarantee future results. Current performance may be lower or higher than the figures shown. Principal value and investment returns will fluctuate, and investors' shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than the original cost. Performance would have been lower if fees had not been waived in various periods. Total returns assume the reinvestment of all distributions and the deduction of all fund expenses. Returns with sales charge reflect a deduction of the stated maximum sales charge. An investor cannot invest directly in an index, and unmanaged index returns do not reflect any fees, expenses or sales charges. Returns for periods of less than one year are not analyzed. All classes of shares may not be available to all investors or through all distribution channels. For current month-end performance, please visit franklintempleton.com.

Gross expenses are the fund's total annual operating expenses as of the fund's prospectus available at the time of publication. Actual expenses may be higher and may impact portfolio returns. Net expenses reflect contractual fee waivers, expense caps and/or reimbursements, which cannot be terminated prior to 12/31/2026 without Board consent. Additional amounts may be voluntarily waived and/or reimbursed and may be modified or discontinued at any time without notice.

**During periods of rising inflation, fund yields can vary significantly from month-to-month and may not be repeated.**Maximum sales charges have been updated as of August 15, 2022, please refer the Fund's prospectus for more information.

#### What are the Risks?

All investments involve risks, including possible loss of principal. Fixed income securities involve interest rate, credit, inflation and reinvestment risks, and possible loss of principal. As interest rates rise, the value of fixed income securities falls. Low-rated, high-yield bonds are subject to greater price volatility, illiquidity and possibility of default. Derivative instruments can be illiquid, may disproportionately increase losses, and have a potentially large impact on performance. International investments are subject to special risks, including currency fluctuations and social, economic and political uncertainties, which could increase volatility. These risks are magnified in emerging markets. Asset-backed, mortgage-backed or mortgage-related securities are subject to prepayment and extension risks. Active and frequent trading may increase a shareholder's tax liability and transaction costs. These and other risks are discussed in the fund's prospectus.

#### **Glossary**

A collateralized loan obligation (CLO) is a single security backed by a pool of debt.

**Duration** is a measure of the sensitivity of a bond's price to changes in interest rates.

The **federal funds rate** is the interest rate at which a depository institution lends funds maintained at the Federal Reserve to another depository institution overnight. Also known as the "fed funds rate".

The **S&P 500 Index** features 500 leading U.S. publicly traded companies, with a primary emphasis on market capitalization. Source: © S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC. All rights reserved. The **yield curve** shows the relationship between yields and maturity dates for a similar class of bonds.

#### Important Information

The information provided is not a complete analysis of every material fact regarding any country, market, industry, security or fund. Because market and economic conditions are subject to change, comments, opinions and analyses are rendered as of the date of this material and may change without notice. A portfolio manager's assessment of a particular security, investment or strategy is not intended as individual investment advice or a recommendation or solicitation to buy, sell or hold any security or to adopt any investment strategy; it is intended only to provide insight into the fund's portfolio selection process. Holdings are subject to change.

The **Bloomberg US Aggregate Index** is comprised of investment-grade, U.S. dollar-denominated government, corporate, and mortgage- and asset-backed issues having at least one year to maturity. Source: Bloomberg Indices.

Important data provider notices and terms available at www.franklintempletondatasources.com. All data is subject to change.

The **30-day SEC yield** is calculated using the net income (interest and dividends) per share earned over a trailing 30-day period (annualized), divided by the fund's share price at the end of that period. It may not equal the fund's actual income distribution rate, which reflects the fund's past dividends paid to shareholders.

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Before investing, carefully consider a fund's investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses. You can find this and other information in each prospectus, or summary prospectus, if available, at www.franklintempleton.com. Please read it carefully.

