



American Trails

Advancing trails for those who build, maintain, use, and dream of trails...

May 24, 2020

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2164 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

American Trails Board

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PO Box 491797
Redding, CA 96049-1797
Phone (530) 605-4395
Fax (530) 867-9014
trailhead@americantrails.org
www.AmericanTrails.org

Dear Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves:

American Trails represents trail users from across the country. We are writing to request that HR 5797, "The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Full Funding Act of 2020" sponsored by Congressman Welch of VT and Congressman Curtis of UT be included in the transportation reauthorization bill currently being drafted in your committee. Without Congressional approval before September 30th, the program is at risk of going dormant, creating a huge void for recreational trail development and maintenance funding.

For more than a quarter-century the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) has been the key source of funding for recreational trails across all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Based on the "user-pay, user-benefit" model of the Highway Trust Fund, the RTP is funded from gas taxes paid by nonhighway recreational vehicles. The RTP is currently funded at \$84 million annually but it is estimated that federal gas taxes paid by nonhighway recreational vehicles amounts to more than \$270 million annually. HR 5797 would correct this inequity and return more of the gas tax dollars for off-road recreation.

It is worth noting that the RTP provides funding for motorized and non-motorized trails alike and is administered by the states who select the projects to fund. By law, 30% of the funding goes to motorized trails, 30% goes to non-motorized trails, and 40% goes to mixed-use trails in the states. To see funding projects in each state, you can visit <https://arra-access.com/states/> and click on the state you're interested in. You will also find other informative materials on the site that highlight the great work that has been done with trails across the country, thanks to your past support.

Thank you for your consideration. It is absolutely critical that HR 5797 be included in the upcoming transportation reauthorization bill.

Sincerely,

Mike Passo
Executive Director, American Trails