

August 13, 2021



COALITION FOR RECREATIONAL TRAILS

Co-Chairs:

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The Hon. Peter Welch
 The Hon. John Curtis
 The Hon. Michael Simpson
 The Hon. Rick Larsen
 The Hon. Chris Stewart
 The Hon. Derek Kilmer
 The Hon. Steve Stivers
 The Hon. Tom O'Halleran
 The Hon. Richard Neal
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 The Hon. Pramila Jayapal
 The Hon. Michael Doyle
 The Hon. Brendan Boyle
 The Hon. Zoe Lofgren
 The Hon. Chrissy Houlahan
 The Hon. Mary Gay Scanlon
 The Hon. Darren Soto
 The Hon. Conor Lamb

Dear Members of Congress:

America's recreational trails community deeply appreciates your efforts to bring outstanding trail opportunities to every community in America and for your advocacy of partnerships among all trail enthusiasts, federal and state and local agencies, conservation and recreation and tourism organizations and businesses. Your sponsorship of HR 1864 outlined the appropriate path to build on the RTP – Recreational Trails Program -- that has made possible more than 30,000 projects across the USA since 1991, successes using some of the federal gas tax collected from nonhighway recreational activities. FHWA estimated just last month that these activities yield more than \$281,000,000 annually in federal tax.

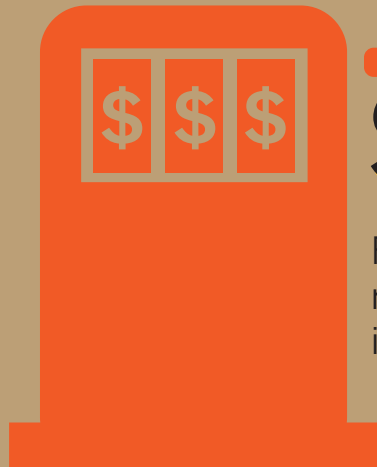
Unfortunately, the Congressionally directed FHWA estimate was long delayed, delivered to Congress after release of the final text of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework. Despite strong and bipartisan support for inclusion of a boost in RTP funding led by Senators Klobuchar and Risch, the Senate ended consideration of all amendments and left RTP annual funding at \$84,000,000 – less than 30% of the appropriate. Attached are documents justifying the Senate amendment and your own HR 1864, which would have produced \$250,000,000 annually for RTP.

America's recreational trails cannot endure static funding for the next 5 years. COVID has caused tens of millions of Americans to use trails in dozens of ways – on foot, on bikes, on skis, on horses, on snowmobiles and OHVs and motorcycles and 4x4s to access public lands and enjoy healthy outdoor fun. We invite your help in pursuing needed funding during the negotiations underway on Capitol Hill and with the Administration. We believe there are solutions, under your leadership. We thank you for your active support. Examples of the success of the RTP program in your states are documented at www.rectrails.org.

Adventure Cycling Association	International Mountain Bicycling Association	People for Bikes
American Council of Snowmobile Associations	International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association	Professional Trail Builders Association
American Hiking Society	Motorcycle Industry Council	Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
American Horse Council	National Association of State Park Directors	Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association
American Motorcyclist Association	National Association of State Trail Administrators	Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association
American Trails	National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council	SnowSports Industries America
Americans for Responsible Recreational Access	National Park Hospitality Association	Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals
Back Country Horsemen	National Recreation and Park Association	Specialty Equipment Market Association
BlueRibbon Coalition/ShareTrails.org	Off-Road Business Association	Specialty Vehicle Institute of America
The Corps Network	Outdoor Recreation Roundtable	Sporting Goods Manufacturers
Equine Land Conservation Resource	Partnership for the National Trails System	Student Conservation Association
International Association of Snowmobile Administrators		Tread Lightly!
		United Four Wheel Drive Associations

The Recreational Trails Program

Improving America's Trails Since 1991

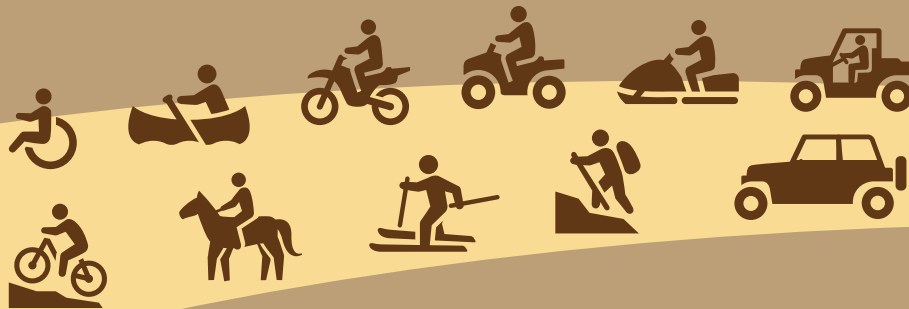


\$281+M

Paid annually in federal taxes by non-highway recreational users.



From FHWA report to Congress on 7/29/21. Non-highway recreational fuel is taxed at 18.4 cents/gallon and deposited into the Highway Trust Fund.



\$84M

Appropriated annually for all trails.



**HIGHWAY
TRUST FUND**

Recreational Trails Program

- ◆ Over 30,000 projects funded.
- ◆ Benefiting tens of millions of motorized and nonmotorized trail users.
- ◆ Administered by states (20% match required from states).
- ◆ Trail users receive less than 30% of the taxes they pay.
- ◆ Applies user pay-user benefit principle of Highway Trust Fund to recreational trails.

Support the Klobuchar/Risch Amendment # 2616!



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- In 1991, Congress concluded that federal fuel tax paid on nonhighway recreational activities should be used to build and maintain trails benefitting all activities, motorized and nonmotorized and not be refunded as inappropriate user fees.
- On July 29, 2021, FHWA reported that federal taxes paid on gasoline purchased to fuel motorcycles, ATVs, side-by-sides, snowmobiles, and other recreational vehicles generate more than \$280,000,000 annually. Just \$84M annually -- less than 30% of the taxes are now being returned to aid trails.
- This amendment would maintain the percentage of funding the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) receives as part of Transportation Alternatives. RTP would not increase its share of overall funding and this amendment would not divert \$1 billion from TA. Since 2012, the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) has been part of the Transportation Alternatives set aside of larger federal highway programs with RTP funding at, or greater than, 9% of total TA set aside funding. The increase in RTP funding for the next five years would continue the 9% funding level – RTP would not increase its share of TAP funding. The total increase in RTP funding for the next five years would be \$228,000,000 –9% of TA’s growth.
- Without passage of the amendment, nonhighway recreational activities will underwrite \$1.2 billion of other infrastructure projects. Even with the passage of the amendment, nonhighway recreational activities will only get the benefit of 46% of the taxes it generates – meaning \$900,000,000 will be used for other surface transportation programs.

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