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**Bipartisan Group Introduces Legislation to Boost Funding for Recreational Trails**

*Bipartisan bill would update funding formula and provide at least $250 million to support recreational trails.*

WASHINGTON – Representatives Peter Welch (D-Vt.), John Curtis (R-Utah) and Angie Craig (D-Minn.) today introduced legislation that will more than double funding for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP).  Since 1991, RTP has provided funding to states to develop and maintain outdoor recreational trails, allowing millions of Americans and their families to enjoy activities such as hiking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and 4-wheel driving.

**“Our nation has unparalleled natural beauty that provides year-round opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors,”** said Rep. Welch. **“Boosting funding for this important program will ensure that future generations will experience the joy of hiking and exploring our scenic trails for many years to come.”**

**“The Recreational Trails Program has created countless opportunities for motorized recreation and human-powered experiences,”** said Rep. Curtis. **“This bill will ensure that future generations get to visit the great outdoors, while supporting local economies and jobs, especially throughout rural areas.”

“I’m excited to introduce the Recreational Trails Full Funding Act of 2020 with Rep. Welch to make sure folks have quality trails to enjoy Minnesota’s four seasons for hiking, cross country skiing and taking their ATV’s out,”** said Rep. Craig. **“Not only will this bill invest in these opportunities right now, but it also makes sure future generations of Minnesotans and visitors can experience the beauty of the Minnesota River Valley and our well-traveled trails from Zumbrota to Cottage Grove.”**

The bill will more than double RTP funding to at least $250 million. The program is modeled after the Highway Trust Fund and is funded through taxes paid on gasoline used to fuel snowmobiles, ATVs, and other recreational vehicles that do not use highways. The program is currently funded at $84 million annually, which is substantially less than is collected in taxes on fuel used by these vehicles.

The Recreational Trails Full Funding Act of 2020:

* requires the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to estimate the amount of gas taxes paid by non-highway recreational users. The current estimate is more than a decade old, but suggests that those users pay more than $270 million.
* increases RTP funding to $250 million or the mandated new FHWA estimate, whichever is higher.
* Increases the transparency of the programs funded.

The legislation is also cosponsored by Reps. Annie Kuster (D-N.H.), Mike Simpson (R-Idaho) and Chris Stewart (R-Utah).