



The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Chair
Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Chair
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment and
Related Agencies

The Honorable David Joyce
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies

Dear Committee Chairs and Ranking Members:

On behalf of the millions of diverse trail users our collective organizations represent, we thank the Senate and House Appropriation Committees for meeting with and responding to our request for prioritizing trail inclusive funding in the FY22 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations legislation.¹ As discussions between the House and Senate are underway to reconcile the legislation for final passage, and enactment, we request that final legislation include the preferred funding levels and report language outlined below..

Trails are the gateway to nearly every facet of outdoor recreation, including fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, camping, and more. A failure to maintain and manage our nation’s trails stymies economic growth and access to healthy outdoor recreation.

Forest Service

Program: Capital Improvement and Maintenance, Trails
Department: US Department of Agriculture
Agency/Account: Forest Service, Capital Improvement and Maintenance, Trails

¹ Testimony of American Hiking Society to the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, <https://americanhiking.org/advocacy/testimony-of-kate-van-waes-executive-director-american-hiking-society-before-the-senate-interior-appropriations-subcommittee-fy22/>; Testimony of American Hiking Society to the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee <https://americanhiking.org/advocacy/testimony-of-kate-van-waes-executive-director-american-hiking-society-before-the-house-interior-appropriations-subcommittee-fy22/>;

Funding Requested: \$29.35M We appreciate both the House and Senate providing increased funding to Capital Improvement and Maintenance, Trails, including an increase for National Scenic and Historic Trails. In order to support adequate funding for all Forest Service trails, we urge the committees to consider an additional increase to \$29.35M, including no less than \$11.5M for national scenic and historic trails funding (House, 118)

Report Language Requested:

- (House, 118) “National Scenic and Historic Trails.—The Committee directs the Forest Service to continue to provide specific trail operation, maintenance, and construction funding and accomplishment data for the national scenic and historic trails in future budget justifications. The Committee recommends no less than \$11,500,000 for national scenic and historic trails funding.

Pacific Crest Trail.—The Committee strongly urges the Service to make needed safety updates to the Pacific Crest Trail, a historic scenic trail, that stretches over 2,600 miles from the border with Mexico to the border with Canada, allowing constituents to safely enjoy nature and history.”

- *Amended* (Senate, 112): “The bill provides \$23,000,000 for Trails. ~~Of the funds provided, \$8,000,000 is for trail operation, maintenance and construction on National Scenic and Historic Trails,~~ [replace with House report language above] including not less than the enacted level for the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail.

Volunteer groups, Tribal organizations, and non-profit partners are integral to the trail building and maintenance required for the 159,000 miles of trails on National Forest System lands, including more than 10,000 miles of nationally designated scenic, historic, and recreation trails. The Committee supports the Forest Service’s 10-Year Trail Shared Stewardship Challenge and continuing the Trail Stewardship Partner Funding Program to facilitate these efforts. The Committee is aware of the growing need to sustain and increase the capacity for resilient trail building within the outdoor recreation community. The Forest Service is encouraged to collaborate with regional training centers that provide resources for training trails stewards responsible for the maintenance of trails for public use and is further encouraged to focus on maintaining geographical diversity in its partnerships.”

Program: Recreation, Heritage & Wilderness

Department: US Department of Agriculture

Agency/Account: Forest Service, Recreation, Heritage & Wilderness

Funding Requested: \$71.241M (House, 114)

Report Language Requested:

- (Senate, 107) Within the funds provided, \$1,000,000 is included for the Office of Recreation, Heritage and Volunteer Resources—Travel, Tourism and Interpretation Program to continue implementation of the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience [NATIVE] Act (Public Law 114–221) and to engage with Tribes, Tribal organizations and Native Hawaiian organizations to promote sustainable native tourism activities, “..and \$3,000,000 is included to support infrastructure and trails development and to build the capacity of local user groups and partnership organizations, to be divided equally between National Recreation Areas administered by the Forest Service and established after 1997.”...

Program: Legacy Roads & Trails

Department: US Department of Agriculture

Agency/Account: Forest Service, Legacy Roads & Trails

Funding Requested: \$40M in a restored budget line item (Senate, 112)

Report Language Requested:

- (Senate, 112) Legacy Roads and Trails.—The bill provides \$40,000,000 for Legacy Roads and Trails in a restored budget line item. The Committee assented to the request in fiscal year 2018 to consolidate this program with other capital improvement programs with the understanding that the program's outcomes would be part of the overall prioritization of capital improvement projects, and that Legacy Road and Trail accomplishments would continue to be tracked so the Committee could verify that qualified projects were indeed being completed. However, due to a lack of transparency and data, the Committee is reinstating the Legacy Roads and Trails program as a separate budget line item for road and trail repair, maintenance and storm-proofing, fish passage barrier removal to support aquatic habitat quality and connectivity required to recover and sustain federally threatened and endangered species, sensitive species, and species of conservation concern, and road decommissioning, especially in areas where roads may be contributing to water quality problems in streams and water bodies which support these species or community water sources. The Committee further directs the Service to include accomplishment data to accompany the annual budget submission, including miles of roads improved and maintained, miles of trails improved and maintained, miles of roads decommissioned, miles of streams restored, number of bridges fixed, number of bridges and culverts constructed, and number of jobs created, and to provide such information for fiscal years 2017 through 2021 to the Committee within 45 days of enactment of this act.

Program: Capital Improvement and Maintenance

Department: US Department of Agriculture

Agency/Account: Forest Service, Capital Improvement and Maintenance, Construction Projects

Report Language Requested:

- (Senate, 113) \$5,770,000 for bridge and trailhead improvements on the Iditarod National Historic Trail, Chugach NF

BLM Recommendation:

Program: Bureau of Land Management Trails Funding

Department: Bureau of Land Management

Agency/Account: Trails (various accounts)

Funding Requested:

- (House, 13) Recreation Management: \$9.397M for National Scenic and Historic Trails (\$3M increase from FY21 enacted)
- (House, 11) Rangeland Management: \$0.068M (\$68,000) for National Scenic and Historic Trails
- (House, 12) Cultural Resource Management: \$1.057 for National Scenic and Historic Trails
- (House, 13) Wildlife Habitat Management: \$0.192M for National Scenic and Historic Trails
- (House, 13) Aquatic Habitat Management: \$.132M for National Scenic and Historic Trails
- (House, 14) Transportation and Facilities Management: \$1.012M

Report Language Requested:

- (Senate, 15) Budget Structure.—The Committee believes that the Bureau could benefit from changes to its current budget structure to make it more transparent and comprehensible to the public. *For instance, the funding for congressionally-designated national trails and wild and scenic rivers is scattered across multiple programs, making it difficult to track resources and*

workload accomplishments both internally and externally, or to leverage partner contributions. The Bureau should consider a budget restructure that better aligns its funding with the contemporary multiple use mission and increased emphasis on its role as a resource conservation agency, such as a dedicated trails budget line item or including congressionally-designated rivers and trails as component subactivities within National Conservation Lands.

- (Senate, 18) National Trails.—The Committee appreciates the Bureau’s dedication to improving access and a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion on the National Trails System. In coordination with its trail partners, the Bureau is directed to update exhibits at its trail interpretive centers to reflect these themes and provide a project list within 120 days of enactment of this act. Funding for the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail and Iditarod National Historic Trail should be maintained at not less than the enacted level.
- (House, 11) Rangeland Management: The recommendation also provides \$457,000 for National Wild and Scenic Rivers and \$68,000 for National Scenic and Historic Trails.
- (House, 12) Cultural Resource Management: Cultural Resource Management.—The Committee recommends \$21,595,000 which includes \$450,000 for the Civilian Climate Corps and \$92,000 to transition to a zero emission fleet. The recommendation also provides \$820,000 for National Wild and Scenic Rivers and \$1,057,000 for National Scenic and Historic Trails.
- (House, 13) Wildlife Habitat Management: Wildlife Habitat Management.—The Committee recommends \$158,972,000 which includes \$70,000,000 for sage grouse conservation activities, \$31,000,000 for threatened and endangered species, \$19,667,000 for plant conservation and restoration, and \$595,000 to transition to a zero emission fleet. The Committee also provides \$427,000 for National Wild and Scenic Rivers and \$192,000 for National Scenic and Historic Trails.
- (House, 13) Aquatic Habitat Management: Aquatic Habitat Management.—The Committee recommends \$73,702,000 which includes \$3,188,000 for restoring landscape connectivity and function; \$3,475,000 for conserving and restoring lands to combat climate change; \$5,895,000 for improving water resources; \$2,383,000 for decision support for adaptive management; and \$229,000 to transition to a zero emission fleet. The recommendation also provides \$952,000 for National Wild and Scenic Rivers and \$132,000 for National Scenic and Historic Trails.
- (House, 13) Recreation Management: Recreation Management.—The Committee recommends \$95,136,000 for Recreation Management, \$18,407,000 above the enacted level and \$3,635,000 above the budget request. The recommendation includes a total of \$367,000 to transition to a zero emission fleet, \$3,947,000 for National Wild and Scenic Rivers and \$9,397,000 for National Scenic and Historic Trails. The increase of \$3,000,000 for National Scenic and Historic Trails may be used for interpretive centers and to support iconic trails such as the Pacific Crest Trail.
- (House, 14) Transportation and Facilities Management: Transportation and Facilities Maintenance.—The Committee recommends \$78,724,000 for Transportation and Facilities Maintenance, \$1,055,000 above the enacted level and equal to the budget request. The recommendation provides \$1,220,000 for National Wild and Scenic Rivers and \$1,012,000 for National Scenic and Historic Trails.

Program: National Conservation Lands

Department: Bureau of Land Management

Agency/Account: Bureau of Land Management, National Conservation Lands

Funding Requested: \$69.491M (Senate, 19)

FWS Recommendation:

Program: Visitor Services

Department: Department of Interior

Agency/Account: Fish and Wildlife Service, Visitor Services

Funding Requested: \$92.737M (House, 22)

Report Language Requested:

- (House, 22) The recommendation includes \$92,737,000. The recommendation provides \$12,500,000 for Urban Wildlife Conservation, an increase of \$7,000,000 above the enacted level, and \$78,237,000 for general program activities that will enhance recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing, and watching wildlife, and put young people to work improving America's land, waters, and infrastructure. With a national wildlife refuge located within a one-hour drive of nearly every major metropolitan area, this increase for urban refuges enables the Service to improve access and engage new audiences in outdoor recreation and conservation. The Service is encouraged to work with partners to support year-round environmental education for youth and adults of all ages living in urban settings.

NPS Recommendation:

Program: Rivers, Trails, & Conservation Assistance (RTCA)

Department: Department of Interior

Agency/Account: National Park Service, National Recreation and Preservation

Funding Requested: At least \$11.971M (Senate, 38), unless House funding higher (not identified in bill)

Report Language Requested:

- (Senate, 38) Natural Programs.—The Committee recommends \$17,452,000 for natural programs, an increase of \$1,489,000 above the enacted level and \$1,000,000 above the budget request. Funding is provided at the requested level for the Chesapeake Gateways and Trails program and at *\$11,971,000 for Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance*.

Program: National Trails System

Department: Department of Interior

Agency/Account: National Park Service, Park Service Operations

Funding Requested: At minimum, increase funding by \$1.462M (House, 31)

Report Language Requested:

- (House, 31) The recommendation includes a program increase of \$1,462,000 for the National Trails System.
- (Senate, 37) National Trails System.—The Committee understands the importance of providing adequate funding to develop and maintain the National Trails System for future generations to enjoy. The Committee urges the Service to continue its efforts to support construction and maintenance projects and volunteer coordination efforts, including activities in support of non-unit National Scenic Trails.

Program: Volunteers in Parks/Youth Partnership Programs

Department: Department of Interior

Agency/Account: National Park Service, Visitor Services/Park Partnership Support Functions

Report Language Requested:

- (Senate, 35) Visitor Services: The recommendation provides \$7,711,000 for funding volunteers in parks programs, interpretation and education programs, and youth partnership programs and not less th[an]] enacted level for the Indian Youth Service Corps.

Program: Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership

Department: Department of Interior

Agency/Account: National Park Service, State Conservation Grants

Funding Requested: \$115M (House, 165)

Program: Racial Justice and Equity

Department: Department of Interior

Agency/Account: National Park Service, Operation of the National Park System

Report Language Requested:

- (Senate, 33) Racial Justice and Equity: The funding recommendation includes, in accordance with the budget request, an increase of \$5,000,000 for the African American Civil Rights Network, \$1,396,000 to establish a program to coordinate nation-to-nation Tribal liaisons, and operational increases across a number of important park units including the Birmingham Civil Rights and Freedom Riders National Monument, the *Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail*, the Pullman National Monument, and the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site.

Program: Appalachian National Scenic Trail

Department: Department of Interior

Agency/Account: National Park Service, Operation of the National Park System

Report Language Requested:

- *Amended* (Senate, 36) Appalachian National Scenic Trail: Appalachian National Scenic Trail.—The Appalachian National Scenic Trail is a 2,194-mile linear park stretching through 14 states and 88 counties—more than any other unit of the National Park System. The Appalachian National Scenic Trail draws visitors from all over the United States and the world, bolstering the economy of the communities around the Trail. *The strength of the equal partnership between the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and the federal government is essential to the Trail's continued success.* The Committee is aware that the Trail is experiencing increased visitation and encourages the Service to include sufficient resources in future budget requests to meet its expanded visitor services, law enforcement, compliance, and land acquisition requirements.

Program: Construction

Department: Department of Interior

Agency/Account: National Park Service, Construction

Report Language Requested:

- (Senate, 40) \$10M for Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail, Selma Interpretive Center Rehabilitation

Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account (ORSA)- Commerce, Justice Science

Program: Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account

Department: Department of Commerce

Agency/Account: Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

Funding Requested: \$1.5M (House, 20/Senate, 15)

US Geological Survey

Program: National Digital Trail Project

Department: U.S. Geological Survey

Agency/Account: U.S. Geological Survey, Core Science Systems

Funding Requested: \$1.5M (Senate, 50)

Report Language Requested:

- (Senate, 50) The recommendation includes \$1,500,000 for the National Digital Trails project.

Multi-Agency

Program: Allocation of Funds National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund Fiscal Year 2022

We thank the committees and support the inclusion of all trail projects, including the National Trails System projects identified below, as part of the National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund Fiscal Year 2022 project list, including:

- \$115K for Iditarod National Historic Trails in Chugach NF (Senate, 158/House, 153)
- \$124K for North Country Trail Anyway Trail Bridge Replacement w/ Legacy Restoration Fund (GAOA) (Senate, 156/House, 154)
- \$255K for Trail Bridge Replacement Project North Country National Scenic Trail and Manistee River Trail. (Senate, 156/House, 154)
- \$50K for Appalachian National Scenic Trail and Long Trail Shelter and Privy Improvements.(Senate, 157/House, 153)
- \$48K for Arizona National Scenic Trail Maintenance in Coconino NF (Senate, 158/House 154)
- \$330K for Pacific Crest Trail Access Roads Bridges Trails in Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie NF (Senate, 160/House 155)
- \$310K for Arizona National Scenic Trail (AZT) Deferred Maintenance in Southwestern Region Regional Office (Senate, 165/House, 160)
- \$2.6M for Pacific Crest Trail Region 4, Region 5, Region 6 National Deferred Maintenance.(Senate, 168/House 163)

Program: Allocation of Funds: Land and Water Conservation Fund Fiscal Year 2022

Report Language Requested:

- (Senate, 172/House 167) \$1.9M Ice Age National Scenic Trail
- (Senate, 171/House 165) \$600K for Arizona National Scenic Trail (Coke Ovens)

Program: Civilian Climate Corps

Report Language Requested:

- (Senate, 5) Civilian Climate Corps: In carrying out projects on public lands that would directly or indirectly prevent, prepare for, or respond to economic, environmental, or public health consequences resulting from climate change, the Secretaries shall to the greatest extent practicable maximize the involvement of existing partnership programs including the Public

Lands Corps, the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps, the Youth Partnership Program, and the Indian Youth Service Corps and other qualified youth or conservation corps as defined in section 203(11) of the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1722(11)); *use non-profit wilderness and trails stewardship organizations*; and consult with public lands stewardship organizations for the purpose of identifying appropriate projects, activities, and workforce development outcomes.

Thank you for considering the above requests. For additional information please contact Tyler Ray, American Hiking Society, tray@americanhiking.org, Valerie Rupp, Partnership for the National Trails System, valerie@pnats.org; Mike Passo, American Trails, mikepasso@americantrails.org, Randy Rasmussen, Back Country Horsemen of America, WildernessAdvisor@bcha.org; or Randy Welsh, National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance, randy@wildernessalliance.org.

Sincerely,

American Hiking Society
American Trails
Back Country Horsemen of America
National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance
Partnership of the National Trails System