

American Hiking Society • American Trails • American Motorcyclist Association • Back Country Horsemen of America • Equine Land Conservation Resource • International Mountain Bicycling Association • National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance • Partnership for the National Trails System Rails-to-Trails Conservancy + 168 Organizations and Entities

Chair Murkowski, Ranking Member Merkley, and members of the subcommittee, on behalf of American Hiking Society, and the organizations listed below, representing millions of trail users, we urge you to build on your FY26 work by increasing trails and recreation management funding. This investment is vital to our national economy and the nonprofit partners who currently shoulder the majority of trail maintenance. As federal staffing changes shift more responsibilities onto NGOs, these partners are forced to do more with less support. Increased funding is essential to offset inflation, cover rising operational costs, and ensure these crucial federal partnerships continue.

Summary of Requests

Forest Service:

- *Capital Improvement and Maintenance (CMTL), Trails at \$24M*
 - Report Language: Non-governmental partners play an outsized role in the maintenance of Forest Service Trails completing over 60% of all maintenance based on 2025 Forest Service data. The Forest Service is directed to utilize funding to increase financial support of these partnerships to address maintenance needs given current agency staffing and capacity.
 - Report Language: In order to support adequate funding for all Forest Service trails and to avoid a reduction in the existing budget for non-National Scenic and Historic Trails managed by the Forest Service, increases for non-National Scenic and Historic Trails should occur in parity with the rate of increases for National Scenic and Historic Trails.
- *\$70M to fund Recreation, Heritage & Wilderness (echoing request of Outdoor Alliance)*
- *At least \$6M to fund Legacy Roads & Trails, including the Trail Stewardship Grant Program—Legacy Roads & Trails.*
 - Report Language: The committee supports continued funding for the National Forest System Trail Stewardship Trail Partner Funding Program. The Forest Service has had a successful Trail Stewardship Partner Funding program in place since 2017 that leverages federal funding by 6:1.

Bureau of Land Management:

- *National Conservation Lands, National Scenic and Historic Trails at \$11.496M*
- *National Conservation Lands at \$78M (echoing request of Conservation Lands Foundation)*

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

- *Refuge Visitor Services at least \$76M;*
- *Branch of Transportation & Data Management - Headquarters*
 - Report Language: National Partnerships are an important component to maintain trail infrastructure across Fish and Wildlife Service sites. The Department shall continue to support National Partnerships in the Branch of Transportation & Data Management and across Headquarters and prioritize funding to leverage these partnerships.

National Park Service:

- *Rivers, Trails, & Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program at \$13.47M (echoing request of American Rivers)*
- *Park Service Operations for the National Trails System at a minimum of \$18.856M*
- *Volunteers in Parks programs at \$7.717M*
- *Visitor Services sub-activity, Youth Partnership Programs at \$14.665M*
- *Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program, at \$130M*

US Geological Survey:

- *\$1.5M to fully fund the National Digital Trail Project (NDTP)*

Forest Service Recommendation:

National Forests provide 159,000 miles of heavily used trails of all types, but this vital public resource is severely underfunded and understaffed. Currently, over half of the trail system requires maintenance. A December 2025 Forest Service report revealed a 15-year low in accomplishments, with maintained miles dropping by 22% and trails meeting standards falling by 19%. Without immediate action, the agency warns of irreversible infrastructure loss, restricted public access, diminished economic benefits to rural communities, and severely degraded trust from both partners and the public.

Program: Capital Improvement and Maintenance, Trails

FY27 Funding Level Requested: \$24M

FY26 Enacted Level: \$22M

Department: US Department of Agriculture

Agency/Account: Forest Service, Capital Improvement and Maintenance, Trails

Report Language requested:

- Non-governmental partners play an outsized role in the maintenance of Forest Service Trails completing over 60% of all maintenance based on 2025 Forest Service data. The **Forest Service is directed to utilize funding to increase financial support of these partnerships** to address maintenance needs given current agency staffing and capacity.
- In order to support adequate funding for all Forest Service trails and to avoid a reduction in the existing budget for non-National Scenic and Historic Trails managed by the Forest Service, **increases for non-National Scenic and Historic Trails should occur in parity with the rate of increases for National Scenic and Historic Trails.**

Program: Recreation, Heritage & Wilderness

FY27 Funding Level Requested: \$70M to fund Recreation, Heritage & Wilderness;

FY26 Enacted Level: \$45M

Department: US Department of Agriculture

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

Program: Legacy Roads & Trails

FY27 Funding Level Requested: \$6M at a minimum

FY26 Enacted Level: \$6M

Department: US Department of Agriculture

Agency/Account: Forest Service, Legacy Roads & Trails

Report Language Requested: The committee **supports continued funding for the National Forest System Trail Stewardship Trail Partner Funding Program.** The Forest Service has had a successful Trail Stewardship Partner Funding program in place since 2017 that leverages federal funding by 6:1.

Bureau of Land Management Recommendation:

The BLM manages 13,468 miles of trails over 245 million acres—more land than any other federal land management agency. These lands contain a variety of ecosystems and landscapes that often provide the public less structured but nonetheless diverse recreational opportunities. BLM recreation resources and visitor services support strong local economies. More than 120 urban centers and thousands of rural towns (comprising 64 million people) are located within 25 miles of BLM lands.

Program: National Conservation Lands, National Scenic and Historic Trails

FY27 Funding Level Requested: \$11.496M

FY26 Enacted Level: \$11.248M

Department: Bureau of Land Management

Agency/Account: National Conservation Lands, National Scenic and Historic Trails

Program: National Conservation Lands

FY27 Funding Level Requested: \$78M

FY26 Enacted Level: \$59.135M

Department: Bureau of Land Management

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

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Recommendation:

Managing over 2,500 miles of trails, including across 15 National Scenic and Historic Trails and 44 National Recreation Trails, the FWS requires expanded, dedicated funding through Refuge and Visitor Services and the Branch of Transportation & Data Management. We specifically request funding and report language to support "Infrastructure-National Partnerships" within the Branch of Transportation & Data Management - Headquarters. These nonprofit cooperative agreements are vital for leveraging limited FWS resources to address essential trail maintenance and construction across the system.

Program: Visitor Services

FY27 Funding Level Requested: \$76M

FY26 Enacted Level: \$74.5M

Department: Department of Interior

Agency/Account: Fish and Wildlife Service, Visitor Services

Program: Branch of Transportation & Data Management - Headquarters

Department: Department of Interior

Agency/Account: Fish and Wildlife Service, Branch of Transportation & Data Management-Headquarters

Report Language requested: National Partnerships are an important component to maintain trail infrastructure across Fish and Wildlife Service sites. The **Department shall continue to support National Partnerships in the Branch of Transportation & Data Management and across Headquarters and prioritize funding to leverage these partnerships.**

National Park Service Recommendation:

National parks, and the world-class experiences their 18,844 miles of trails provide, are one of the most unifying forces in America. Well-maintained trails improve the quality of visitor experiences and enhance visitor safety.

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

FY27 Funding Level Requested: \$13.47M

FY26 Enacted Level: \$13M

Department: Department of Interior

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

Report Language requested: Within, National Recreation and Preservation, \$13.47M for the Rivers, Trails, & Conservation Assistance program.

Program: National Trails System, Park Service Operations

FY27 Funding Level Requested: \$18.856M

FY26 Enacted Level: \$18.856M

Department: Department of Interior

Agency/Account: National Park Service, Park Service Operations

Report Language requested:

- Within, Park Service Operations, \$18.856M for administration of the National Trails System.
- National Trails System.-The Committees understand the importance of providing adequate funding for the development and maintenance of the National Trails System for future generations to enjoy. The Committees urge the Service to continue its efforts to develop National Scenic and Historic Trails, not limited to supporting construction and maintenance projects and volunteer coordination efforts.

Program: Volunteers in Parks

FY27 Funding Level Requested: \$7.717M

FY26 Enacted Level: \$7.717M

Department: Department of Interior

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

Report Language Requested: The committee recommends funding through Volunteers in Parks be provided for volunteer support of the National Trails System, National Rivers, and National Park Service trails.

Program: Youth Partnership Programs

FY27 Funding Level Requested: \$14.665M

FY26 Enacted Level: \$14.665M

Department: Department of Interior

Agency/Account: National Park Service, Visitor Services

Report Language Requested: The committee recommends funding through the Youth Partnership Programs be provided for support of the National Trails System, National Rivers, and National Park Service trails.

Program: Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership

FY27 Funding Level Requested: \$130M

FY26 Enacted Level: \$125M

Department: Department of Interior

Agency/Account: National Park Service, State Conservation Grants

Report Language Requested: The committee recommends funding through the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program be provided for support of trails.

US Geological Survey Recommendation:

To support the DOI's mission of expanding outdoor access, the USGS National Digital Trails Project provides three essential resources: the TRAILS web tool for identifying network connectivity, a nationwide public-domain digital database, and a mobile maintenance protocol that leverages external apps to share real-time maintenance data with land managers.

Program: National Digital Trail Project

FY27 Funding Level Requested: \$1.5M

FY26 Enacted Level: \$1.35M

Department: U.S. Geological Survey

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

Respectfully,

American Hiking Society • American Trails • American Motorcyclist Association • Back Country Horsemen of America • Equine Land Conservation Resource • International Mountain Bicycling Association • National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance • Partnership for the National Trails System Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and

Alliance for Morris County Parks
American Chestnut Land Trust
American Discovery Trail Society
American Endurance Ride Conference
American Horse Council Inc
American Quarter Horse Association
American Society of Landscape Architects
Appalachian Mountain Club
Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Arizona Trail Association
Arundel Conservation Trust
B.I.K.E.S. Club of Snohomish County
Back Country Horsemen of Oregon
Backcountry Horsemen of America
Back Country Horsemen of Kansas & Kansas Horse Council
Back County Horsemen of Minnesota
Bay Area Ridge Trail Council
Biggest Little Trail Stewardship
Bitterbrush Broads Chapter of the Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Build Lebanon Trails
California Mountain Biking Coalition
Cascade Volcanoes Chapter,
Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Catskill Center for Conservation and Development
Central New Hampshire Indivisible

Central/Eastern Oregon
Bitterbrush Broadband/ Great
Old Broads for Wilderness
Champion Local Schools
Chemeketans
Cincinnati Off-Road Alliance (CORA)
City of Fitchburg
Clean, Healthy, Educated, Safe & Sustainable Community, Inc.
CLEAR TRAILS
Colorado Mountain Bike Association
Concerned Off-Road Bicyclists Association
Conservation Minnesota
Continental Divide Trail Coalition
County Line Riders of Catalina
Cross New Hampshire Adventure Trail
Dehen Jackets, Inc.
Delaware River Greenway Partnership
Deschutes Trails Coalition
Dickinson County Trails Board
El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association
Elizabeth River Trail Foundation
Equine Trail Advocates
Erie Cattaraugus Rail Trail
Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance
Fairbanks Cycle Club
Florida Trail Association
ForeverGreen Trails
Franconia Inn & Outdoor Center
Friends of Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument

Friends of Grand Rapids Parks
Friends of Millbury Nature Trails
Friends of NC Mountains-to-Sea Trail
Friends of Nevada Wilderness
Friends of the Breitenbush Cascades
Friends of the Columbia Gorge
Friends of the Corry Junction Greenway Trail
Friends of the Lost Coast
Friends of the Mount Vernon Trail
Friends of Wisconsin State Parks
Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy
Great Old Broads For Wilderness, Rogue Band
Green Infrastructure Center Inc
Groveland Trail Heads
Headwaters Trails Alliance
Hiking Trails for America
Hoosiers for a health.
Idaho Trails Association
Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance
Interior Alaska Trails Newsletter
Interior Trails LLC
Iron Ore Heritage Recreation Authority
Jan Onan Carolina Mountain Club
Kennebunkport Conservation Trust
Kingdom Trail Association
La Veta Trails
Lake Ray Roberts Equestrian Trails Association

Lincoln City Parks and Recreation
Linn County, Iowa Conservation Board
Los Padres ForestWatch
Lowelifes Respectable Citizens' Club
Lucky Seven LLC
Ludlow Area Sport Trails
Mad River Path Association
Maine Recreation & Park Association
Maine Trail Riders Association, Inc
Mar-Mac Human Powered Trails, Inc
Massachusetts Audubon Society
Maui Bicycling League
Misha Golfman
Missourians for Responsible Transportation
Mount Wilson Bicycling Association
Mountain Surf Creative LLC
MROSD
National Coast Trail Association
National Washington
Rochambeau Revolutionary Route Association
Nevada All-State Trail Riders, Inc.
Nevada Outdoor School
New York-New Jersey Trail Conference
NH Rail Trails Coalition
Nordic Ski Club of Fairbanks
North Country Trail Association
Northern Colorado Back Country Horsemen
Northwest Trail Alliance

Northwest Trail Riders Association
Northwest Youth Corps
Northwestern Ohio
Rails-to-Trails Assn., Inc.
npGreenway, Friends of the
North Portland Greenway
NW Illinois Trail Advocates
Oregon Equestrian Trails
Oregon Interscholastic Cycling League
Oregon Trails Coalition
Oregon Woods, Inc.
Oregon-California Trails Association
Outdoor Alliance
Overmountain Victory Trail Association
Pacific Crest Trail Association
Pacific Northwest Trail Association
Potomac Bridle and Hiking Trail Association
Public Lands Alliance
Rails to Trails of Wayne County
Ohio
Red Line Parkway Initiative
Rocktree Trails
Rogue River Greenway Foundation
Rossville Community Foundation
Routt County Riders
Salish Sea Broadband, Great
Old Broads for Wilderness
Salmonberry Trail Foundation
San Luis Valley Great Outdoors
Santa Monica Mountains Fund
Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition
Sisters Trails Alliance
Sitka Trail Works

Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals
Sourdough Chapter of the Back country Horseman of Oregon
Southeast Greenway Campaign
Southwest Montana Mountain Bike Association
Tacoma Washington Bicycle Club
The Corps Network
The Great Outdoors Fund
The Intertwine Alliance
The Mountaineers
The Santa Fe to Taos Trail
The Vermont Mountain Bike Association
The Vermont Trails and Greenways Council
The Wilderness Society
The Wild Regerative
Tillamook Offroad Trail Alliance
Top City Trails Alliance
Trail Access Project
Trail Riders of Today
Trailkeepers of Oregon
Trinidad Trails Alliance
Trust for Public Land
Ukiah Valley Trail Group
Upper Gila Watershed Alliance
Ventana Wilderness Alliance
Vermont Huts Association
Virgin Islands Trail Alliance
Visit Eau Claire
Waldport Chamber of Commerce
Washington Trails Association
West Virginia Land Trust
Western States Trail Foundation
Wildlife for All
Wyo Trail FAIRIES
Wyoming Pathways