

RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

- The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) was created by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), reauthorized in 1998 as part of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and reauthorized again in 2005 through the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) .
- The legislation applies the “user-pay/user-benefit” philosophy of the Highway Trust Fund to return monies paid on fuel used for nonhighway recreation to the states for trail projects.
- Eligible projects include: maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails; development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages for recreational trails; purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment; construction of new recreational trails (with specific requirements when federal land is involved); acquisition of easements and fee simple title for recreational trail corridors; and assessment of trail conditions. State administrative and educational program costs are capped at 7% and 5% respectively. States are encouraged to work with qualified youth conservation or service corps.
- Under ISTEA, a total of \$37.5 million was made available for the program. Under TEA-21, \$270 million in funding was available over six years. SAFETEA-LU provided \$370 million in funding over five years. Funding is apportioned to the states as follows: 50% divided equally among eligible states; 50% divided among eligible states in amounts proportionate to the degree of nonhighway recreational fuel use in each of those states during the preceding year.
- Thirty percent of funds are to be spent for uses relating to motorized recreation; 30% are to be spent for uses relating to nonmotorized recreation. In addition, 40% shall be used for projects that facilitate diverse recreational trail use within a recreational trail corridor, trailside or trailhead.
- The Recreational Trails Program has had a dramatic and positive impact on the quality of life in America through thousands of projects nationwide and through new cooperation among diverse trail enthusiasts, government officials at the federal, state and local levels, and national organizations in the conservation, recreation, and transportation fields. We also now understand better the role of RTP-aided trails in the nation’s campaign to attack inactivity and obesity.
- ***As Congress develops the next national surface transportation program, the Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT) urges the following modifications to the Recreational Trails Program:***
 - 1) ***increase funding to \$550 million over five years:*** \$90/100/110/120/130 million;
 - 2) ***provide \$2.5 million in funding for a USDOT study of nonhighway recreational fuel use;***
 - 3) ***adjust allowed FHWA administrative expenses*** to 1% of actual available annual funding;
 - 4) ***simplify funding provisions for projects on federal lands***, incorporating provisions applicable to federal lands highway projects;
 - 5) ***offer states a new incentive for adopting provisions parallel to the Recreational Trails Program***, where state motorfuel taxes attributable to nonhighway recreation go to trail projects;
 - 6) ***recommit to and codify provisions encouraging use of youth conservation corps and volunteers;***
 - 7) ***exempt RTP projects from review by Statewide and Metropolitan Transportation Planning processes;*** and
 - 8) ***establish clear guidelines on permissible donations.***

3/2/09

COALITION FOR RECREATIONAL TRAILS

The Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT) is a federation of national and regional trail-related organizations. Its members work together to build awareness and understanding of the Recreational Trails Program, which returns federal gasoline taxes paid by off-highway recreationists to the states for trail development and maintenance. CRT was formed in 1992 following the passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) to ensure that the National Recreational Trails Fund (now known as the Recreational Trails Program or RTP) established by that legislation received adequate funding. During the six years of ISTEA, CRT worked to ensure that program was continued and strengthened as part of the ISTEA reauthorization process. Following the 1998 passage of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and the 2005 approval of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), both of which significantly increased RTP program funding, CRT's efforts have been focused on supporting its continued, effective implementation and its extension and enhancement through the next round of transportation legislation.

National Members

**Adventure Cycling Association
America Bikes
American Council of Snowmobile
Associations
American Hiking Society
American Horse Council
American Motorcyclist Association
American Recreation Coalition
Americans for Responsible Recreational
Access
American Trails
Back Country Horsemen of America
Bikes Belong
BlueRibbon Coalition
The Corps Network
Equestrian Land Conservation Resource
International Association of Snowmobile
Administrators
International Mountain Bicycling
Association
International Snowmobile Manufacturers
Association**

**The League of American Bicyclists
Motorcycle Industry Council
National Association of Recreation
Resource Planners
National Association of State Trail
Administrators
National Bicycle Greenway
National Recreation and Park Association
Partnership for the National Trails System
Professional Trail Builders Association
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association
Recreational Vehicle Off-Highway
Association
SnowSports Industries America
Specialty Vehicle Institute of America
Sporting Goods Manufacturers
Association
Student Conservation Association
Trail Mix Incorporated
Tread Lightly!
United Four Wheel Drive Associations**