

## ELCR Joins the Coalition for Recreational Trails in Supporting Section 1514 of America's Transportation Infrastructure Act of 2019



COALITION  
FOR  
RECREATIONAL  
TRAILS

As one of the many organizational members of the Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT), ELCR participates in advocacy for equestrian and all trails through CRT as they monitor legislation that impacts the trails community. Recently we signed a letter to the United States Senate in support of a mandated, periodic study of funding raised through a Nonhighway Recreational Fuel Study, which will give Congress a realistic look at our Recreational Trails Program and what that Program does for our equestrian and recreational community.

Things to Know about the programs developed under US and Internal Revenue Code:

- The Highway Trust Fund was established in 1986;
- The Nonhighway Recreational Fuel Tax refers to taxes from fuel used in vehicles on recreational trails or backcountry terrain; and
- The Recreational Trails Program (RTP), largely funded through the Nonhighway Recreational Fuel Tax.

Here is the body of the letter sent to Congress:

“The nation’s recreational trails community strongly supports Section 1514 of America’s Transportation Infrastructure Act of 2019, mandating a Nonhighway Recreational Fuel Study. This study is needed to allow Congress to assess the contributions of the Recreational Trails Program to our nation and strategies to continue and expand this contribution. Since its creation by ISTEA in 1991, the Recreational Trails Program has enabled more than 24,000 projects and programs to be completed under federal/state/local/private partnerships leveraging the available funding and contributing to our economy, to the nation’s health and safety, and to greater access to our public lands and waters.

We deeply appreciate the Committee’s support for trails and its response to the request for inclusion of this provision by a bipartisan group of U.S. Senators.”

To see the full letter and short description of the legislation, continue reading on following pages. The letter indicates the participating member organizations and the depth of their commitment to funding and bettering our trails.



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Letter of Support for RTP Fuel Funding Study - July 29, 2019

Honorable John Barrasso, Chairman  
 Honorable Tom Carper, Ranking Member  
 Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
 Honorable Ben Cardin  
 Committee on Environment and Public Works  
 United States Senate  
 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators:

The nation's recreational trails community strongly supports Section 1514 of America's Transportation Infrastructure Act of 2019, mandating a Nonhighway Recreational Fuel Study. This study is needed to allow Congress to assess the contributions of the Recreational Trails Program to our nation and strategies to continue and expand this contribution. Since its creation by ISTEA in 1991, the Recreational Trails Program has enabled more than 24,000 projects and programs to be completed under federal/state/local/private partnerships leveraging the available funding and contributing to our economy, to the nation's health and safety, and to greater access to our public lands and waters.

We deeply appreciate the Committee's support for trails and its response to the request for inclusion of this provision by a bipartisan group of U.S. Senators.

**Adventure Cycling Association  
 American Council of Snowmobile Associations  
 American Hiking Society  
 American Horse Council  
 American Motorcyclist Association  
 American Trails  
 Americans for Responsible Recreational Access  
 Back Country Horsemen of America  
 Bikes Belong  
 BlueRibbon Coalition  
 The Corps Network  
 Equine 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 Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council  
 National Recreation and Park Association  
 Outdoor Recreation Roundtable  
 Partnership for the National Trails System  
 People for Bikes  
 Professional Trail Builders Association  
 Rails-to-Trails Conservancy  
 Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association  
 Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association  
 SnowSports Industries America  
 Specialty Vehicle Institute of America  
 Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association  
 Student Conservation Association  
 Tread Lightly!  
 United Four Wheel Drive Associations**

SEC. 1514. NONHIGHWAY RECREATIONAL FUEL STUDY.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) HIGHWAY TRUST FUND.—The term “Highway Trust Fund” means the Highway Trust Fund established by section 9503(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(2) NONHIGHWAY RECREATIONAL FUEL TAXES.—The term “nonhighway recreational fuel taxes” means taxes under section 4041 and 4081 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 with respect to fuel used in vehicles on recreational trails or backcountry terrain (including vehicles registered for highway use when used on recreational trails, trail access roads not eligible for funding under title 23, United States Code, or back country terrain).

(3) RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM.—The term “recreational trails program” means the recreational trails program under section 206 of title 23, United States Code.

(b) ASSESSMENT; REPORT.—

(1) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act and not less frequently than once every 5 years thereafter, as determined by the Secretary, the Secretary shall carry out an assessment of the best available estimate of the total amount of nonhighway recreational fuel taxes received by the Secretary of the Treasury and transferred to the Highway Trust Fund for the period covered by the assessment.

(2) REPORT.—After carrying out each assessment under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Finance and Environment and Public Works of the Senate and the Committees on Ways and Means and Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report that includes—

(A) to assist Congress in determining an appropriate funding level for the recreational trails program— (i) a description of the results of the assessment; and (ii) an evaluation of whether the current recreational trails program funding level reflects the amount of nonhighway recreational fuel taxes collected and transferred to the Highway Trust Fund; and

(B) in the case of the first report submitted under this paragraph, an estimate of the frequency with which the Secretary anticipates carrying out the assessment under paragraph (1), subject to the condition that such an assessment shall be carried out not less frequently than once every 5 years.

(c) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out an assessment under subsection (b)(1), the Secretary may consult with, as the Secretary determines to be appropriate—

(1) the heads of—

(A) State agencies designated by Governors pursuant to section 206(c)(1) of title 23, United States Code, to administer the recreational trails program; and

(B) division offices of the Department;

(2) the Secretary of the Treasury;

(3) the Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration; and

(4) groups representing recreational activities and interests, including hiking, biking and mountain biking, horseback riding, water trails, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-highway motorcycling, all-terrain vehicles and other offroad motorized vehicle activities, and recreational trail advocates.