

December 12, 2008



**COALITION
FOR
RECREATIONAL
TRAILS**

1225 New York Avenue, NW
Suite 450
Washington, D.C. 20005
202-682-9530
FAX 202-682-9529

The Honorable Barack Obama
President-elect of the United States
451 Sixth Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001

Dear President-elect Obama:

The undersigned organizations urge you to support the incorporation of \$300 million in funding for local trail projects through the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) in the economic-stimulus package now being readied for action in early 2009. This program is administered by the Federal Highway Administration but is unusual in its design and benefits.

Additional funding for the RTP program represents an extraordinary opportunity. The funding distribution process is in place and proven, having successfully completed in excess of 10,000 projects across the nation over the past decade. The distribution process involves state DOTs and natural resource agencies as well as in-place citizen advisory committees, and a network of organizations that will leverage available funding with cash and in-kind support. Quality, eligible projects exist now, and the backlog of these projects exceeds available, traditional funding under SAFETEA-LU by a ratio of at least 3:1. Experience shows that selected projects can be underway very quickly and that most are completed within a year. This funding would attack unemployment swiftly, and rely upon small businesses across the nation. In part, this is because the projects are typically under \$50,000 – even though the economic impact of these projects is often great because they improve access to public lands and waters and support both local tourism and recreation businesses, as well as healthy lifestyles. In addition, most of these projects are already included in planning that meets NEPA and other requirements. Examples of the projects which will be funded through this action are found at www.funoutdoors.info.

We believe that actions to boost RTP-funded projects will achieve both immediate economic stimulation and strategic investments that will help transform American communities and lifestyles for long-term success, including energy efficiency and improved health. For additional information, we invite you to contact one of the Co-Chairs of the Coalition for Recreational Trails: Marianne Fowler (marianne@railstotrails.org) or Derrick Crandall (dcrandall@funoutdoors.com).

Thank you for your leadership in addressing our nation's economic challenges.

Sincerely,

Adventure Cycling Association*
Alaska Trails
America Bikes
American Council of Snowmobile Associations
American Endurance Ride Conference*
American Horse Council

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American Motorcyclist Association
American Recreation Coalition
American Trails
Americans for Responsible Recreational Access
Association of Pedestrian and Bicycling Professionals*
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 Recreation and Park Association
National Wildlife Federation*
Partnership for the National Trails System*
Pennsylvania Off-Highway Vehicle Association*
Pennsylvania State Snowmobile Association*
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association
Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association
Specialty Vehicle Institute of America
Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association
Trails 2000
Tread Lightly!, Inc.
United Four Wheel Drive Associations*

* Added to list of signatories 12/15/08 – 12/17/08

