

Appalachian Trail Conservancy * American Association for Nude Recreation * American Council of Snowmobile Associations * American Motorcyclist Association * American Recreation Coalition * American Trails * Association of Partners for Public Lands * Big Bend Conservancy * BlueRibbon Coalition * Coalition to Protect America's National Parks * Conservation Legacy * The Corps Network * Destination Marketing Industry Association * East Bay Regional Park District * Equine Land Conservation Resource * Friends of Acadia * International Association of Snowmobile Administrators * International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association * National Forest Recreation Association * National Marine Manufacturers Association * National Parks Conservation Association * National Park Hospitality Association * National Ski Areas Association * National Wildlife Federation * Outdoor Industry Association * Professional TrailBuilders Association * Recreation Equipment, Inc. * Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association * Recreation Vehicle Industry Association * SnowSports Industries America * Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals * The Student Conservation Association * U.S. Travel Association * United States Tour Operators Association * The Wilderness Society

October 27, 2015

Dear Chairman and Members of the Federal Lands Subcommittee:

We write in strong support of strengthening and reauthorizing the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA). Several of the proposed revisions to FLREA implement our shared goal of enhancing recreation opportunities on public lands and waters, going farther than simply authorizing fee collection and retention, and we applaud this effort. We believe that there can be broad support for this legislation.

We are pleased to offer comments on and recommended modifications regarding the discussion draft recently made available. We request that this letter be submitted for the record as official comments to the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands hearing occurring on October 28, 2015.

FLREA is vital to providing recreation services to visitors of America's public lands and waters and offers an important opportunity for bipartisan action broadly supported by the conservation, recreation and tourism communities. If allowed to expire, federal land agencies would lose approximately \$300 million annually in revenues dedicated to visitor services. The National Park Service alone would see a drop in its resources of approximately \$190 million a year.

We support language in the legislation that allows agencies to adjust passes with inflation and implement convenient and efficient ways of collecting fees. In addition, we support efforts to require more transparency in fee use. We do urge the subcommittee to be mindful of additional administrative costs that might result.

The proposed requirement for Congressional approval for new or increased fees is of considerable concern. We encourage effective oversight of the fee program by Congress but urge a less burdensome process than included in the current proposal. One option might be to replace the requirement for Congressional approval with effective notification, solicitation of comments and suggestions, reporting of public comments to the Congress and a reasonable waiting period prior to implementing any fee changes.

In addition, we appreciate the subcommittee's commitment to consider additional amendments to the discussion draft. Below are some additional suggestions:

1. Require the Secretary of the Interior to investigate and experiment with differential pricing to encourage non-peak visitation to parks.
2. Encourage the Secretary of the Interior to investigate the use of new technologies and marketing partnerships, including international pass sales, by consulting with technology and marketing industry leaders.
3. Direct an increase in the cost of the senior pass which has not been increased for some 20 years.
4. Encourage federal agencies that participate in FLREA to expand opportunities for sale of passes and reservations through tourism and recreation-related outlets.
5. Require the National Park Service to reevaluate and consider an increase to the commercial tour pricing structure. Announcement of a new pricing should be made no less than one year prior to implementation.

This legislation is critical to the success of efforts underway to welcome more Americans and international visitors to enjoy appropriately public lands and waters as supplementary sources of agency funding. We continue to support Congress providing adequate general appropriations for core operations and construction to serve visitors to the Great Outdoors.

Many of the recreation, conservation, travel and tourism organizations signing this letter will address specific issues of importance to each in testimony and other communications to the committee, but collectively we express our support for the Subcommittee's actions to improve and reauthorize FLREA and also offer to assist in refining the current draft to broaden its support, appeal and effectiveness.

We look forward to working with you to strengthen this legislation to ensure safe and unforgettable experiences for all visitors to our national parks. We believe this is an opportunity for action which underscores the broad and bipartisan support for parks and the Great Outdoors in the Congress and across the nation.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

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American Council of Snowmobile Associations
American Motorcyclist Association
American Recreation Coalition
American Trails
Association of Partners for Public Lands
Big Bend Conservancy
BlueRibbon Coalition
Coalition to Protect America's National Parks
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Destination Marketing Industry Association
East Bay Regional Park District
Equine Land Conservation Resource
Friends of Acadia
International Association of Snowmobile Administrators
International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association
National Forest Recreation Association
National Marine Manufacturers Association
National Parks Conservation Association
National Park Hospitality Association
National Ski Areas Association
National Wildlife Federation
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cc: Chairman Rob Bishop and Ranking Member Raul Grijalva