

Since 2012 NHHHC has tried to get your support to save the RTP monies for trail maintenance. The call to talk to your Legislators over the past years has been numerous. It is not over yet. So please keep the conversations going to keep this program for the benefit of equine trails with our next target date of October 31, 2015.

NHHHC thanks the Coalition for Recreational Trails and the Equine Land Conservation Resource for there efforts!

Coalition for Recreational Trails writes:

**Subject: RTP Makes It Through the U.S. Senate -- Thank You!!**

Dear Members of the CRT and CRT Council of Advisors: We are delighted to tell you that the U.S. Senate has just passed its multi-year transportation bill with a 65-34 vote. **The provisions affecting the Recreational Trails Program were left alone.** The amendments from Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) that would have eliminated RTP . which we asked you to help stop . were not brought up for consideration.

While it's difficult to track exactly, we have heard that volumes of calls opposing Sen. Lee's amendments were received by Senate offices. Thank you so much for your tremendous help!

Moving forward, the Senate has also just passed (91-4) the three-month extension of the current transportation legislation that the House had already passed. October 31, 2015 is now the new deadline for the House to pass its own multi-year transportation bill (or something else!). We'll be sure to let you know if other challenges to the RTP surface as the action moves to the House of Representatives.

Thanks again for all the great help.

Marianne Wesley Fowler and Derrick A. Crandall

Co-Chairs, Coalition for Recreational Trails

### **Past History:**

ELCR writes:

ELCR is working with our Conservation Partners, Coalition for Recreational Trails and the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, on the reauthorization of the Transportation Alternatives Program, which includes the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) under the Transportation Bill. The RTP is important to all recreational users of trails including HORSEMEN and WOMEN.

Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) has filed an amendment (S.A. 2280) to the Senate transportation bill, the DRIVE Act. His amendment would **eliminate** the Transportation Alternatives Program within which the Recreational Trails Program is housed. The Senate began DRIVE Act consideration last night with a procedural vote that clears the way to bring the bill up **as early as the weekend of July 25/26.**

## Efforts to reauthorize the Recreational Trails Program currently underway

Efforts to reauthorize the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) are currently ongoing by the Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT).

The [Recreational Trails Program](#) (RTP) was created in 1991, applying the "user-pay/user-benefit" philosophy of the Highway Trust Fund, returning federal gasoline taxes paid by off-highway recreationists. RTP is the foundation for state trail programs across the country. Project categories eligible for funding are many and varied, giving states the flexibility they need to administer state trail programs.

The [Coalition for Recreational Trails](#) (CRT) is an organization of national and regional trail-related groups, working together to build awareness and understanding of the RTP, and ensure that the program continues to receive adequate funding. The most recent reauthorization of RTP came through the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), signed in 2012, with dedicated annual funding of \$85 million for Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014 as a setaside from the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).

With the expiration of MAP-21, efforts to reauthorize RTP are once again underway. Transportation funding was recently extended to July 31 due to lack of agreement on a long-term funding fix in Congress.

A six-year surface transportation reauthorization bill was announced by U.S. Senator Jill Inhofe, chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, on June 23, titled the "Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy Act" ("DRIVE"). The legislation would maintain TAP funding at \$850 million per year (currently \$819 million). It also continues RTP as a "set-aside" fund within TAP. As far as RTP and trail advocates are concerned, this is a win for the program, as the proposed bill does not change anything regarding the Recreational Trails Program.

For more information and the latest news regarding RTP, visit [AmericanTrails.org](http://AmericanTrails.org).



ELCR is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization that relies entirely on charitable donations. All contributions are tax deductible. For more information, contact ELCR at 859.455.8383 or [information@elcr.org](mailto:information@elcr.org).

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Thank You All

Please consider joining NHC and your local equine trail groups. Your membership is important for the running of these organizations and communication.

NHC affiliated trails groups are Derry Trails Riders and Monadnock Happy Trails Assoc.