



peopleforbikes™



Senator Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader
 Senator Chuck Schumer, Minority Leader
 Congressman Paul Ryan, Speaker of the House
 Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader
 Senator Thad Cochran, Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
 Senator Patrick Leahy, Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations
 Senator Lisa Murkowski, Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, & Related Agencies
 Senator Tom Udall, Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment & Related Agencies
 Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen, Chair, Committee on Appropriations
 Congresswoman Nita Lowey, Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations
 Congressman Ken Calvert, Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, & Related Agencies
 Congresswoman Betty McCollum, Ranking Member, Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, & Related Agencies

Senator John Culberson, Chairman, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies
 Senator Jose Serrano, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies
 Senator Richard Shelby, Chairman, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
 Senator Jeanne Shaheen, Ranking Member, Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
 Senator Lamar Alexander, Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
 Senator Dianne Feinstein, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
 Congressman Mike Simpson, Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy, Water Development, and Related Agencies
 Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy, Water Development, and Related Agencies

Dear Congressional Member:

The outdoor recreation industry is a large and important part of the nation’s economy, with economic activity estimated at \$887 billion annually. Our industry is diverse, including activities as diverse as hunting and fishing, trail sports of all types, camping and downhill skiing, wildlife and bird watching, horseback riding, boating and more. These activities constitute the largest contributor to the nation’s GDP for federally-managed lands – but also occur and stimulate economic activity on private lands.

As you determine a path forward to restore and rebuild the recent devastation caused by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, the outdoor recreation industry asks for your focus on recreational infrastructure throughout the process. While reestablishing recreational opportunities are important to

return a sense of cultural normalcy to these affected states, outdoor recreation is also an important economic driver. Restoring and improving recreational access and facilities will help provide necessary and important economic recovery in the U.S., specifically in Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico.

Extreme high water, strong winds and surge from these storms caused exponential damage to bridges, boat ramps, docks, piers and navigational aids as well as erosion and structural damage to recreational facilities and access points in our local, state and national parks. The damage is not just of recreational importance, but also of public safety.

The recent hurricanes revealed the need for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) projects to be re-evaluated and the necessary repairs and upgrades expedited to preserve life and property. Concerns over the integrity of the Addicks and Barker Reservoirs in Houston led the USACE to implement controlled releases, flooding adjacent homes and neighborhoods and damaging associated recreational areas.

In Florida, the Herbert Hoover Dike (Dike) surrounding Lake Okeechobee (Lake) was recently listed as one of the most vulnerable structures in the country, prompting calls for evacuations south of the Lake in advance of Hurricane Irma's approach over breach and flood concerns. Subsequent high water levels in the Lake and continued questions about their effect on the Dike's integrity resulted in the USACE discharging the high water to the east and west – to already burdened and sensitive coastal estuaries. The repetitive discharges from Lake Okeechobee highlight the need for full federal support to accelerate comprehensive Everglades restoration and mitigate this ongoing threat to the state's recreational industry.

The time is now for federal action and appropriation to restore, secure and enhance our recreational infrastructure. Collectively, the outdoor recreation industry's \$887 billion nationwide economic impact supports 7.6 million jobs. It also provides over \$65 billion in federal tax revenue and more than \$52 billion in state tax revenue.

Encompassing diverse activities ranging from hunting and fishing to trail and water sports and off-roading, the outdoor recreation industry is an important economic engine and social component of our nation. In Florida, the sportfishing industry alone generates \$9.6 billion in economic impacts and supports over 128,000 jobs and is integral to the cultural identity of the state as the "Fishing Capital of the World."

Recreational infrastructure should be a key component of hurricane recovery, and our industry offers its assistance and expertise to evaluate, promote and assist with recovery and restoration. Thank you for your strong commitment to these areas as they rebuild.

Sincerely,

American Horse Council
American Recreation Coalition
American Sportfishing Association
Association of Marina Industries

BoatU.S.

International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association

Marine Retailers Association of the Americas

Motorcycle Industry Council

ARVC - National Association of RV Parks & Campgrounds

National Marine Manufacturers Association

National Park Hospitality Association

National Shooting Sports Foundation

Outdoor Industry Association

PeopleForBikes Coalition

Pure Fishing

Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association

The National RV Dealers Association

Recreation Vehicle Industry Association

Specialty Equipment Market Association

Specialty Vehicle Institute of America