



INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN BICYCLING ASSOCIATION

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(Boulder, Colo. July 27, 2017) On July 26, Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Representative Rob Bishop (R-UT) introduced the bipartisan Recreation-Not-Red-Tape Act (RNR), a bill the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) enthusiastically supports as it aims to improve mountain biking and outdoor recreation access on our public lands and grow the outdoor economy.

“On behalf of mountain bikers and our outdoor allies who value our public lands for their natural and scenic value and for healthy, active outdoor recreation, I would like to thank Senator Wyden and Representative Bishop for coming together to introduce the RNR Act. These public servants see the value these designations provide for people, communities and landscapes,” said Dave Wiens, IMBA Executive Director.

IMBA and Outdoor Alliance have worked with Senator Wyden’s office to shape key components of the RNR Act. A version of the bill was introduced in the 114th Congress but lacked bipartisan support and therefore died with the end of President Obama’s term in office. This bill has been improved and simplified, and importantly, has garnered more diverse bipartisan interest.

Mountain bikers should be particularly encouraged by five components of the RNR Act:

- 1) Establishing National Recreation Areas (NRA) as a more uniform system of designations with a specific inventory and recommendation process. IMBA supports NRAs as a viable, bike-friendly protection designation and the expansion of NRAs means potential for more places to ride.
- 2) Directing federal agencies to develop a Volunteer Enhancement Initiative to encourage and promote greater volunteerism. This will help IMBA chapters better engage with these agencies to maintain trails and address the federal trail maintenance backlog.

- 3) Expanding recreation opportunities by identifying highly seasonal locations and building new recreation assets. For example, some ski areas on public land sit idle in the summer, some lakes only provide water-based recreation yet have adjacent land for trails. This will lead to more trails in exciting new places.
- 4) Requiring all federal agencies like the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service to coordinate uniform management of trails that cross agency boundaries. This will lead to more well-maintained trails and more opportunities for long-distance routes.
- 5) Adding "recreation" to the missions of more federal land management agencies including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation. This new mission focus could lead to increased partnerships with these agencies and new trail development opportunities.

"At a time when mountain biking continues to grow in popularity, it's great to see forward-thinking policy like the RNR Act. This bipartisan bill recognizes the value of more flexible land protection designations like National Recreation Areas, the benefits of including 'recreation' in the missions of more land management agencies, and how expanding seasonal recreation can strengthen local economies. Ultimately, the RNR Act will help improve public access to trails for mountain bikers and other recreationalists," said Aaron Clark, IMBA Conservation Manager.

IMBA will continue to work with its chapters, members and partners to build support for the RNR Act and demonstrate to legislators that mountain bikers support this legislation. It is a common sense, proactive, bipartisan solution that highlights the importance of outdoor recreation and will improve trail access on our public lands.

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