

OUTDOOR ALLIANCE

June 30, 2026

Rep. Tom Tiffany
Chair, Federal Lands Subcommittee
House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Joe Neguse
Ranking Member, Federal Lands Subcommittee
House Committee on Natural Resources
1332 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: July 1st Federal Lands Subcommittee legislative hearing

Chairman Tiffany, Ranking Member Neguse, and members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of the human-powered outdoor recreation community, thank you for the opportunity to provide input on July 1st's Subcommittee hearing on legislation affecting federal public lands.

Outdoor Alliance is a coalition of ten member-based organizations representing the human powered outdoor recreation community. The coalition includes Access Fund, American Canoe Association, American Whitewater, International Mountain Bicycling Association, Winter Wildlands Alliance, The Mountaineers, the American Alpine Club, Colorado Mountain Club, Surfrider Foundation, and Runners for Public Lands and represents the interests of the millions of Americans who climb, paddle, run, mountain bike, backcountry ski and snowshoe, and enjoy coastal recreation on our nation's public lands, waters, and snowscapes.

Our comments on specific bills before the Subcommittee are below.

H.R. 9248, Recreation Permitting Improvement Act



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Outdoor Alliance opposes the Recreation Permitting Improvement Act, which would add “recreation” to the list of sectors eligible for streamlined permitting under Title 41 of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST 41).

Passed in 2015, FAST 41 establishes a federal process to improve the speed, predictability, and transparency for the permitting and construction of certain major infrastructure projects. Covered projects are overseen by the Federal Permitting Council, which coordinates federal permitting, establishes permitting timelines, and provides for public transparency via an online dashboard. Covered projects are subject to a two-year statute of limitations and any plaintiffs challenging a covered project must have raised their specific concern during an official comment period.

While we support H.R. 9248’s intent of accelerating permitting for federal recreation projects, we are concerned that the FAST 41 process is only available to very large, costly projects most likely to have significant environmental and social impacts. The FAST 41 process generally requires a total investment of more than \$200 million, which is far higher than the investments required for trail systems, parking areas, river put-ins, and other recreation infrastructure improvements advanced by Outdoor Alliance member organizations and others in the recreation community. Even larger infrastructure projects like visitor centers and road upgrades likely fall well below this threshold. Projects that do exceed \$200 million in investments are likely to cause major changes to public lands, recreation use patterns, and environmental values. Outdoor recreationists rely on the NEPA process to ensure that federal decision makers adequately take these values into account. Projects requiring more than \$200 million deserve thorough consideration under NEPA and should not receive preferential treatment and permit streamlining through FAST 41.

H.R. 7254, To amend the National Trails System Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility of designating the Bay Area Ridge National Scenic Trail, and for other purposes.

Outdoor Alliance supports H.R. 7254, which would require a feasibility study for designating the Bay Area Ridge Trail (BRT) as a National Scenic Trail. The BRT is a planned 550-mile multi-use trail connecting public lands and urban areas surrounding the San Francisco Bay Area. More than 400 miles of the trail are



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currently open to the public, and local partners are actively working to complete the route. Due to its proximity to a large urban population center, the BRT provides important opportunities for outdoor recreation access, including for individuals without the means to travel long distances to other public lands in California. A feasibility study is the appropriate next step for helping federal agencies determine whether the BRT qualifies for National Scenic Trail status and whether the designation might enhance the trail's benefits for local communities and visitors.

* * *

Thank you for considering our community's input. We look forward to working with you to protect and enhance outdoor recreation opportunities on America's federal public lands.

Best regards,



Louis Geltman
Vice President for Policy and Government Relations
Outdoor Alliance

cc: Adam Cramer, Chief Executive Officer, Outdoor Alliance
Heather Thorne, Executive Director, Access Fund
Beth Spilman, Executive Director, American Canoe Association
Clinton Begley, Executive Director, American Whitewater
Kent McNeill, CEO, International Mountain Bicycling Association
David Page, Executive Director, Winter Wildlands Alliance
Tom Vogl, Chief Executive Officer, The Mountaineers
Ben Gabriel, Executive Director, American Alpine Club
Madeline Bachner Lane, Chief Executive Officer, Colorado Mountain Club
Chad Nelsen, Chief Executive Officer, Surfrider Foundation
Kathleen Baker, Executive Director, Runners for Public Lands

