



September 12, 2018

Representative DelBene, Representative Heck, Representative Herrera-Beutler,
Representative Jayapal, Representative Kilmer, Representative Larsen, Representative Smith,
Senator Cantwell, Senator Murray
U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C.

Re: FY 2019 U.S. Forest Service's Legacy Roads and Trails Program

Dear Honorable Washington Delegation Members,

The members of the Washington Watershed Restoration Initiative (WWRI) coalition are writing to express our concern about the exclusion of the U.S. Forest Service's Legacy Roads and Trails program in the Fiscal Year 2019 Interior Appropriations bills. As the legislation currently stands, Legacy Roads and Trails will disappear into the U.S. Forest Service's general road maintenance budget. Legacy Roads and Trails projects will once again be forced to compete with the general road maintenance work from a budget that already is grossly insufficient. This defeats the original purpose of the Legacy Roads and Trails program and will add to the growing backlog of needed road restoration. Creating these targeted funds to address the backlog has been a priority supported by the State's natural resources agencies and the Governor's office for over a decade.

The impetus for the Legacy Roads and Trails program came from the members of our coalition in Washington State over a decade ago. The purpose was to address the highest priority threats to water quality and salmon habitat on national forest lands in Washington and across the nation. With your support over the years, the funds have successfully been targeted to improving fish passage, building new bridges, upgrading trails, stormproofing needed roads and decommissioning unneeded roads. The Legacy Roads and Trails program has played an important complementary role to the Forest Service's general road maintenance program by focusing on the most critical watershed restoration needs.

With a shrinking Forest Service road budget and no funding for Legacy Roads and Trails, we will see a greater loss of access as roads unravel and an even further decline in our already stressed salmon populations and waterways.

As champions of this program for many years, please ensure funding is restored in FY 2019 to at least the past appropriation level of \$40 million.

Thank you.

For more information, see: [Mile by Mile – Ten Years of Legacy Roads and Trails Success](#)

Sincerely,
WWRI coalition

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