

Back Country Horsemen of America
*Cascadia Wildlands *Conservation Northwest *Defenders of Wildlife*
*North Cascades Conservation Council * Olympic Forest Coalition * Olympic Park Associates*
*Pilchuck Audubon Society * The Lands Council * The Mountaineers * The Wilderness Society*
*Washington Trails Association * Washington Wild * Western Environmental Law Center*
*WildEarth Guardians * Winter Wildlands Alliance*

September 8, 2020

The Honorable Representative Derek Kilmer
U.S. House of Representatives
1410 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Subject: Thank you: U.S. Forest Service - Legacy Roads and Trails Remediation Program (HR 7273)

Dear Representative Kilmer,

We want to thank you for introducing H.R. 7273 *To Provide for the Forest Service Legacy Roads and Trails Remediation Program* along with Representative Schrier. We are also happy to see the program included in the *Moving Forward Act* (H.R. 2). These are big steps forward in our combined efforts to reinstate a program that has been instrumental in restoring healthier watershed conditions in national forests.

As you know, although the Legacy Roads and Trails program is a national program and has benefitted visitors to national forests and improved waterways across the U.S., the seed really sprouted in Washington State. Representative Dicks, Washington State Department of Ecology and many conservation and recreation organizations came together in 2007 and found a solution to a growing problem. The Forest Service was overwhelmed, underfunded and couldn't keep pace with the need to address forest road problems. Until 2018, the Legacy Roads and Trails program allowed for progress by storm-proofing roads visitors used, reclaiming unneeded roads, restoring fish passage and improving trails – all with the goal of clean water, improved salmon habitat and reliable access. Local contractors who have worked on these projects underscore the program's value.

Even with its strong Washington State history of success, we have struggled to make headway in D.C. over the last few years. We have seen the work stop in the forests we work, live and recreate in. Thanks to you, there is renewed hope that the Legacy Roads and Trails program can once again be an essential component to meet the Forest Service's commitments.

We are grateful for your effort championing this program and are here to help you move it forward.

Thank you,

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