The historic Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) was an extraordinary achievement that will not only rebuild our crumbling roads, bridges, and airports, but also improve the infrastructure behind our beloved natural resources and the outdoor recreation experiences they provide.

These meaningful investments in transportation, mitigation of and adaptation to climate change’s impacts on our public lands and waters, rural development, and natural infrastructure have the potential to connect more people to the outdoors and strengthen the outdoor recreation economy, which generated $689 billion in economic output and created 4.3 million jobs in 2020, despite public land closures and restrictions necessary to fight COVID-19. BIL funds will help this rapidly growing industry continue to create jobs, remain globally competitive, and ensure we recover from the impacts the pandemic had on workforce, local communities, our health, and our quality of life while preparing for and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

To help these funds produce the most good for the greatest amount of people, the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable – the nation’s leading coalition of outdoor recreation entities representing more than 110,000 American outdoor businesses and the full spectrum of outdoor activities – has collected recommendations from across recreation industry segments to help the Administration decide how to spend this money, and highlight current issues these funds can help solve quickly.

Together, we can ensure all Americans have access to safe, quality outdoor recreation experiences for generations to come.
Background

At a time of historic demand for boating, the boating community is actively losing access points across the West and limiting the potential for the boating industry to help local economies recover. As water levels continue to drop, access to aquatic recreation is threatened. For example, due to low water levels, three of the five public boat ramps at Lake Mead are closed and two are operating at reduced capacity. Lake Powell is one of the busiest tourist destinations in the country with a half-billion-dollar tourism industry, however record-low water levels have left a majority of public boat launches totally closed or partially opened.

As a result, recreation access and tourism are dropping. Declining water levels are putting the $27 billion boating economy that supports nearly 100,000 jobs and 6,000 marine businesses at risk.

NPS has invested $57 million from 2002-2022 to extend launch ramps, create new parking areas, extend utilities, relocate docks, and reposition navigational aids. Estimates suggest that $14 million with every four-foot decrease in lake elevation will be needed to maintain access.

Recommendations

- Infrastructure projects that rebuild and increase access to existing recreation opportunities should be prioritized, as well as those that limit the effects of invasive species on the natural environment.

- In addition to larger health and safety concerns, Congress and the Administration should consider economic impact from lost access as they look to develop funding and management solutions.

- Increased extreme weather events like severe storms, hurricanes, and floods, are making marina and boat dealer businesses and products susceptible to damage, highlighting the need for investment in disaster-resilient infrastructure and mitigation techniques.

- Proper stormwater and sewer systems are imperative for marinas and boating businesses, as runoff from the businesses adjacent to salt and freshwater resources may contain cleaning chemicals or materials used for the repair of vessels. Consider strategies and investments to support stormwater and sewage systems at boating locations.

- $100 million in BIL for resilient recreation infrastructure would be well spent toward making boating access more resilient in the face of increasing environmental impacts, such as future drought and the progressively decreasing runoff associated with a warming climate.

“Recreational boating is the largest conventional outdoor recreation activity in the nation at $30.8 billion. The investments made by the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will be key to continuing the significant economic contribution boating makes to the U.S. economy. With more extreme weather events, more people using public accesses, and more people than ever on our waterways, increased investments in our outdoor recreation infrastructure is critical to keep the recreational boating industry strong and supporting American jobs and communities.”

- Matt Gruhn, President, Marine Retailers Association of the Americas

“With new boat sales and consumer interest in the boating lifestyle reaching historic levels, the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act could not have come at a more pressing time for the American-made recreational boating industry. From reauthorizing the $750 million Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund to providing incentives for marine manufacturers to develop next generation propulsion systems, this legislation is already paying dividends for the entire recreational boating ecosystem, and we look forward to working with President Biden and his administration on implementing the full scope of this bill.”

- Frank Hugelmeyer, President, National Marine Manufacturers Association
### Background

The impacts of climate change are bearing down on the winter outdoor sports industry, presenting a material threat to its communities, ski areas, and the future of the industry that drives over $79 billion in consumer spending annually. Warmer, shorter winters and inconsistent seasons have resulted directly in the loss of revenue and jobs and ultimately, business closures - especially those small businesses in tourist-dependent mountain resort communities and ski areas that are the backbone of the industry. To us, snow is currency, and with every below-average and inconsistent winter, our industry and the communities in which we live and work face devastating impacts.

While many winter outdoor sports businesses are already setting ambitious science-based emissions targets and reducing their carbon footprints, the private sector cannot do this alone. The federal government can help drive the systemic change that will accelerate our progress on this issue.

### Recommendations

- The rise in demand for outdoor recreation requires investments in parking lots, access roads, visitor services, trailhead improvements, facility maintenance, EV infrastructure, and federal employee affordable workforce housing to ensure high-quality experiences.

- Ski areas face severe wildfire threat due to drought, warming temperatures, extreme wind events, and increased lightning brought by climate change. Infrastructure investments should prioritize projects that enhance the resiliency of ski areas and ski communities (e.g., water-related investments and wildfire risk reduction related to recreation infrastructure); increase access to recreation; and enhance visitor experiences.

- With shifting winter seasons, decreasing snowpack, more rain on snow events, rising snow lines and warming temperatures, ski areas will need to make more snow to produce reliable and consistent conditions and remain open. Investments in water infrastructure and water storage will be critical for the future of ski areas and the entire mountain economies that depend on them.

- Given the significant level of infrastructure investments on the forests, ski areas should be considered “high priority” in federal agency spending on wildfire risk planning, reduction, and restoration.

- BIL investments toward collaborative fire risk planning and coordination in and around ski areas among all stakeholders are critical for prevention, response, suppression, and evacuation.

- Large-scale hazardous fuels reduction projects are in need of federal funding. Fire breaks and defensible space must be created to protect buildings, chairlift lines, and other facilities at ski areas.

- Develop mass- and clean energy-transit options and ski area access roads, particularly as public demand for recreation increases. Parking capacity needs to be increased in high use areas adjacent to ski areas, and EV charging infrastructure in rural and mountain areas is also critical.

- Create new and extend existing green energy tax incentives making wind, solar, and nuclear power less expensive for companies, communities and households.

- Expand consumer subsidies for solar panels, energy-efficient appliances, and EVs.

- Invest in research into technology that would capture carbon after it has been emitted.

"Facing the impacts of a changing climate and increasing demand for outdoor recreation, the ski industry is appreciative of the investments that will be made through the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Federal investments in water and transportation infrastructure and reduction of wildfire risk will boost the resiliency of ski areas and the mountain communities that depend on them."

- Kelly Pawlak, President & CEO, National Ski Areas Association

- Chris Steinkamp, Head of Advocacy, Snowsports Industries America
**Background**

Our national parks, forests, and public lands campgrounds provide iconic outdoor recreation experiences and generate billions of dollars for local economies. Repairing and maintaining them is a smart investment, and will create additional infrastructure-related jobs, as well as preserve visitor access and resources for future generations of outdoor stewards.

The $1.7 trillion infrastructure bill recognizes the importance of modernizing campgrounds, roads, bridges, wastewater facilities and EV infrastructure at a time when more Americans than ever before are discovering the health benefits that come from RV camping with friends and family. RVIA supports greater access to outdoor spaces for all, along with recognizing environmental concerns and adapting to future visitors and technologies.

Many national park campgrounds were not designed to meet NPS standards for safety, accessibility, or basic infrastructure. Passage of the infrastructure bill occurred at a critical time given the massive demand for camping and the recent launch of NPS's Second Century Campground Strategy.

**Recommendations**

- **$100 million to restore recreation sites, including campgrounds like Joshua Tree's Black Rock Canyon Campground.** The campground's original design did not address the potential threat of flooding, and this poor drainage design has led to deterioration of the campground's infrastructure and surrounding areas.

- **$7 billion in FLTP, NSFLTP, and other funding should supplement GAOA funding and focus on the deteriorating roads, bridges, and vital infrastructure that visitors and local communities rely on.**

- **$7.5 billion investment to deploy publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure on and around public lands.**

- **$65 billion to fund broadband deployment, especially in areas where RVers frequently travel.**

---

**CAMPING/RV**

“Access to safe and modern campgrounds on and around public lands is essential for the great outdoors and the $114 billion RV industry. The unprecedented funding in BIL is critical to efforts for sustainable campground modernization and development of EV infrastructure to support the next generation of park visitors and vehicle/RV technology. As BIL is implemented, we ask that focus is placed on modernizing deteriorating infrastructure while deploying EVs to support the $689 billion outdoor recreation economy.”

- Craig Kirby, President, RV Industry Association

**Background**

Archery hunters in pursuit of quality public hunting experiences require a robust system of safe and reasonable access to public recreation areas including those that provide urban, backcountry, and wilderness opportunities.

**Recommendations**

- Infrastructure projects that improve roads, trails, parking areas, campsites, and connectivity to provide reasonable motorized and non-motorized access on public lands for hunting are priorities for the archery and hunting industry.

- Improvements and expansion of static and 3-D archery range facilities are needed to meet the growing demands for community and scholastic shooting programs, as well as for a well-dispersed citizenry of archery hunters.

- Improved range and hunting access as well as improvements in the use of technology for delivering real-time geo-referenced attributes and customer engagement, including property boundaries, access points, and communication notices, will greatly assist the recreational community and help to deliver economic benefits to a broad distribution of rural economies.

“Archery hunters desire an improved system of roads, trails, and campsites that provide reasonable access on public lands including those in pursuit of backcountry and wilderness experiences. Additionally, use of technology for modernizing customer engagement and delivering geo-referenced attributes to the public will not only benefit industry participants but will collectively serve to deliver economic benefits to a broad distribution of rural economies.”

- Dan Forster, Vice President & Chief Conservation Officer, Archery Trade Association
Background

With 55 million anglers, the recreational fishing industry supports 825,000 jobs and contributes $125 billion to the economy. Through the federal excise tax on fishing equipment, license purchases, and donations, anglers contribute $1.6 billion annually to conservation efforts. During the COVID-19 pandemic, recreational fishing participation increased and so did the use of fishing infrastructure. Increased use of existing boat ramps, piers, and other access sites puts a strain on these facilities and can create access challenges for anglers through longer wait times, lack of parking spaces, and overcrowding.

In addition, increased fishing participation brings with it a need to ensure healthy fisheries and aquatic systems. Nonpoint source pollution, habitat fragmentation and degradation, poor water quality, and invasive species continue to impact freshwater and saltwater fisheries, deterring anglers from fishing. While more Americans fished in 2020 than in any other year on record, fishing access is limited by sparse and deteriorating piers and boat launches, as well as limitations to shoreline access.

The BIL directs support and funding to natural resources-related infrastructure management, ecosystem restoration, public lands access, and fish passage through a variety of programs including $1 billion in funding through DOT and NOAA for culvert removal and replacement and $200 million to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife to restore aquatic passage. Through the BIL, $100 million in funding through DOI and the Department of Agriculture represents a significant investment in access points and recreational infrastructure.

Recommendations

- Prioritize infrastructure projects that maintain, expand, and create new access points and restore aquatic systems to ensure recreational fishing benefits anglers, the economy, and the environment.
- The National Fish Habitat Partnership is an ideal program for directing BIL investments to restore aquatic systems through on-the-ground projects in conjunction with states, tribes, and local communities.

CONCESSIONAIRES

“Investing in outdoor recreation is more than ever a win-win proposition given that Americans need the benefit of outdoor recreation like never before and the outdoor recreation industry is a key part of supporting the national economy. The bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is playing a critical role in providing both mental and economic benefits to all Americans.”

- Marily Reese, Executive Director, National Forest Recreation Association

- “BIL’s investments in fisheries conservation and access reflect the growing recognition among policymakers that outdoor recreation in general, and recreational fishing specifically, is a major economic driver. With fishing participation on the rise, this bipartisan infrastructure package will support Americans’ ability to get on the water and enjoy all the positives fishing provides, both individually and to the nation.”

- Mike Leonard, Vice President of Government Affairs, American Sportfishing Association

Recommendations

- Firebreaks are crucial to protecting infrastructure from the increasing damages from wildfires, but often are too costly for a specific park or forest to create.
- Many water systems are very outdated even though they are crucial to most campgrounds and other developed recreation sites. Because these systems usually must meet local ordinances even though they are on federal land, if they fail, the entire site often must be closed.
- Roads and gates are vital to allowing the public to access and the agencies to control sites and have been significantly impacted by severe weather events.
- Electric infrastructure is needed to meet the demands of many of today’s campers including those traveling by electric vehicle.
- Many restroom facilities at campgrounds and developed sites are need of major overhauls.

- Cell phone coverage, particularly in high use areas, is extremely important to protect the safety of the visitors by ensuring recreation providers and the public can contact local emergency services when needed.
Background

Drought, wildfires, and extreme weather events have rendered thousands of miles of backcountry trails inaccessible, and the resources available to reopen these areas have been helpful but insufficient compared to the extensive maintenance backlog facing public lands. If trails are not made accessible in a timely fashion, an office or agency may choose to decommission the trail rather than restore it.

Thousands of miles of trails and access opportunities in wildfire- and drought-stricken locations, as well as those impacted by severe weather such as blowdowns due to high-wind events, are rendered inaccessible every year.

In Wilderness areas, these trails can only be cleared with hand tools, rendering the resources to open them back up insufficient with current strategies.

Recommendations

- Many DOI sites provide some of the few outdoor access opportunities for underserved youth, and the trail maintenance backlog is decreasing these access opportunities.
- Coordinated volunteer efforts often only provide trail maintenance to the first few miles of trail near a trailhead. Longer-term service projects, in backcountry, wilderness, and other designated areas, should be prioritized as much as possible.

About ORR:

The Outdoor Recreation Roundtable promotes the growth of the outdoor recreation economy and outdoor recreation activities. We educate decision makers and the public on balanced policies that conserve public lands and waterways and enhance infrastructure to improve the experience and quality of life of outdoor enthusiasts everywhere. Advancing these values is critical to growing outdoor recreation in the United States, which already accounts for $689 billion in annual economic output coming from the activities of America’s 144 million outdoor enthusiasts.