



July 24, 2017

The Honorable Ron Wyden
United States Senate
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Wyden:

The Wilderness Society thanks you for introducing the Recreation Not Red-Tape Act (RNRT) of 2017. We write today to express our support for the legislation, which will significantly enhance recreation opportunities on America's federal lands and waters. As you know, the bill will do the following:

1. Improve the recreational outfitter-guide permitting systems of the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service;
2. Establish a system of National Recreation Areas that will be managed to maximize recreation opportunities;
3. Allow the U.S. Forest Service to retain a portion of the permit fees paid by ski area operators on the National Forests;
4. Prioritize recreation by including recreation performance metrics in land manager evaluations; and
5. Make it possible to pay recreation fees and obtain recreation passes for federal lands and waters on line.

We support most provisions of the bill but have some concerns about the implications of ski area fee retention. We support fee retention in principle, so long as it does not result in a reduction of the agency's appropriated funding. If appropriated funding will be reduced to offset retained ski area fees, the net effect of fee retention will be negative, because the agency will have less funding available to manage recreation. As you work your way through the legislative process, we urge you to ensure that ski area fee retention will be new revenue for the agency and will not have an adverse effect on yearly agency appropriations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Sanford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paul Sanford
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The Wilderness Society
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