

U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley
Oregon Programmatic Request Form for FY 2019 Appropriations

Organization Information

- Requesting Organizations: [Back Country Horsemen of America \(BCHA\)](#) and [Pacific Crest Trail Association \(PCTA\)](#)
- Contact's Name at Organization: [Randy Rasmussen, BCHA](#); [Mark Larabee, PCTA](#)
- Contact's Email: WildernessAdvisor@bcha.org, mlarabee@pcta.org
- Contact's Phone: [541.602.0713 \(Rasmussen\)](#), [503.880.5987 \(Larabee\)](#)

Program/Activity Information

- Subcommittee: [Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies](#)
- Department: [Agriculture](#)
- Agency: [U.S. Forest Service](#)
- Account: [Capital Improvement and Maintenance \(CMTL-Trails\)](#)
- Program/Activity: [Recreation, Heritage and Wilderness](#)
- Program Description: [The Forest Service provides sustainable recreation programs that support rural economies, meaningful outdoor experiences, and improve access. The Forest Service will maximize the return of funding investments by increasing volunteerism, improving customer service, increasing partnerships and working to “right size” recreation assets. Source: USDA FY 2019 Budget Justification, U.S. Forest Service](#)
- Line Number/ (PE) Line Item/ (PE) Line Item Title (if applicable): *(Defense related request only)*

Funding Information Regarding Program/Activity

- What was the program funding level included in FY2018 enacted bill (if applicable)? [Senate recommended: \\$81.553M \(includes \\$2M for Legacy Trail Remediation\)](#)
- What is the program funding level requested in the President's FY2019 budget (if applicable)? [\\$12.065M](#)

Request for Program/Activity

- Program/Activity Funding Level Requested (if applicable): [\\$100M](#)
- Program/Activity Report language requested (if applicable): [The Committee recognizes that additional funding is necessary in light of the recently passed National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act \(PL 114-245\), which requires the agency to develop a strategy and the necessary procedures and oversight in order to significantly increase the role of volunteers and partners in National Forest System trail maintenance.](#)
- Brief explanation of and rationale for the funding or language:

[House Committee report 114-770 states the following: “CBO estimates that efforts to double volunteer participation in such activities would cost \\$3 million a year over the 2017–2021](#)

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period, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts.” The estimate reflects increased personnel costs associated with the development of a national volunteer strategy, volunteer recruitment and training, processing of volunteer agreements, mobilization/transportation and oversight in the field, monitoring to ensure work performed meets agency/safety standards, recordkeeping and reporting to Congress on the effectiveness of the strategy.

Additional Information

- The National Forest System trail system has over 158,000 miles of trails, including over 32,000 miles in designated wilderness areas, and serves more than 50 million visitors annually.
- The trail system contributes to the \$10.3 billion of Gross Domestic Product and 143,000 full-time and part-time jobs supported annually by the U.S. Forest Service’s Recreation, Heritage, and Wilderness program.
- Trails and trail bridges represent nearly \$300 million of the agency’s \$5.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog.
- Trails ensure productive and sustainable use of National Forest System lands by local communities and millions of hikers, equestrians, mountain bikers, hunters, fishermen, and other visitors annually. The Forest Service is the lead agency responsible for the administration of six National Scenic and Historic Trails, including the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail.
- The ambitious goal contained within PL 114-245 to “increase trail maintenance by volunteers and partners by 100 percent” within five years (Sec.4(b)(5)) can only be realized if the agency is provided sufficient resources to plan, implement and monitor requirements of the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act.
- Today, when the public’s use of trails on federal public lands is at an all-time high, is the time to invest in the development of new partnerships—including corporate partners and America’s growing outdoor recreation industry—to develop mechanisms that leverage volunteer input and federal and private dollars in order to develop a national trail system that is recognized as being socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.

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