

September 12, 2014



Flagstaff Biking Organization
PO Box 23851
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trails@flagstaffbiking.org

Member of Congress Anne Kirkpatrick
First Congressional District of Arizona
405 N Beaver St.,
Suite 6
Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Dear Representative Kirkpatrick-

We are writing to express our support of H.R. 4886: National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act of 2014 introduced by Rep. Cynthia Lummis (R-WY) and Rep. Tim Walz (D-MN).

Background

Flagstaff Biking Organization (FBO) is a group of cyclists who came together to “promote bicycling as a safe and attractive means of transportation and recreation in Northern Arizona.” Our initial project was to put on a Bike to Work Week for our community in May 2002. Building on the success we started to expand our efforts to keep people informed of cycling related issues and galvanize support for better and safer facilities, trails, and trail access. We have a successful and ongoing 12+ year relationship with the Coconino National Forest, Coconino County and the City of Flagstaff, including a Memorandum of Understanding to work cooperatively to provide for non-motorized trails opportunities in the Flagstaff area. Please see <http://www.flagstaffbiking.org> for more information on our organization.

Most of our members recreate in the Coconino National Forest surrounding Flagstaff. Please consider our comments as generally representative of our 200 + paid members’ concerns.

Need for this Legislation

We have been working extensively with the Coconino National Forest for over a decade

as volunteers building and maintaining trails. This legislation directly addresses many issues that we encounter through this partnership.

This bill provides improvements for the way that liability is handled for volunteers and organizations like ours. Currently liabilities significantly complicate the ways that volunteers can work on behalf of our public lands.

Additionally this bill helps distribute liability for the USFS rather than focus the impact of a single claim on one unit, which can be catastrophic for recreation programs.

We are also strongly in favor of the additional emphasis that this bill places on the need for recreation management and the important role that recreational users can play in maintaining *their* resources.

This bill leverages the enthusiasm of the millions of public lands users and owners into a cost-effective multiplier for executing part of the hundreds of millions of dollars in trail maintenance necessary each year on our National Forest Trail Systems.

We request that you sign on to the “Dear Colleague” letter, requesting your support to the legislation that would provide a solution to the National Forest System trail maintenance backlog along with highlighted user experience and preservation of unique public landscapes.

Thank you for your consideration-

Anthony Quintile
For the Board of Flagstaff Biking Organization