



America Outdoors Association Bulletin

RNR Bill Introduced by Wyden and Bishop

Bipartisan Letters to Congress on J-1 Visa Restrictions. Call Your Members of Congress Today!

August 1, 2017

Join us in Reno
December 4-7 for
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Conference

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Conference Info

RNR Bill Introduced by Wyden and Bishop

Senator Wyden's Recreation Not Red Tape bill has been introduced in the Senate and the House. While their interest in recreation and the intent is good, the bill creates issues for recreation on federal lands that need to be adjusted before AOA can support the bill.

AOA had attorneys at Holland & Hart review the language. A summary of their findings can be found below. They did not review all aspects of the bill.

As noted in the attached memorandum, at least initially we identify potential concerns for AO and its members' interests as concerns the proposed National Recreation Area System (including the overlay of a single-purpose designation on lands otherwise open to multiple uses, including recreation; requirements for the development of management plans that have become a touchpoint for litigation in other situations; an increased requirement (over last year's version of the legislation) to manage NRAS units to "maximize" the "protection and enjoyment of the remarkable recreational values" for which the unit was designated, and to "protect the natural features of the System unit that support recreation," which standards ironically could lead to reduced recreational use levels and authorizations in the name of "protecting" these areas; and creating a list of NRAS "eligible" areas which then may have interim management standards similar or equivalent to congressionally designated NRAS units, such as for WSAs or wild and scenic study rivers).

Also, the Act would limit the situations where prior NEPA analyses could be applied to streamline permitting by providing that such prior analyses could not be used where there is a potential for significant environmental effects, even if those effects were previously evaluated and disclosed in the prior analysis. And the private-sector volunteer enhancement programs are oddly limited, beyond current practices, to those situations where the Forest Service or BLM actually monitors the volunteer activities both during the project and afterwards. This additional requirement could limit the availability of volunteer stewardship projects for trail maintenance, boat launch improvements, and other facilities that help both the outfitted and non-outfitted public access public land recreation opportunities. It is unclear why that restriction is included in the current version of the legislation.

Bipartisan Letters to Congress on J-1 Visa Restrictions. Call Your Members of Congress Today!

If you use foreign exchange students for summer work, it is time to step up to help defend the program. See the note below we received from Summer Work Travel Advocacy. The note from SWTA starts below:

The "Buy American and Hire American" Executive Order directed various federal agencies to review all employment-based visa programs. Behind closed doors, this working group has proposed substantial changes to the Summer Work Travel (SWT) program that could severely damage it, and ultimately make the program unworkable.

Two weeks ago, 34 Members of Congress delivered a letter to Secretary of State Rex Tillerson. This necessary defense of the SWT program outlined the value of these participants to your business and community and above all to our nation's public diplomacy efforts. The letter also demonstrated the bipartisan support the program enjoys in the House of Representatives.

Now a similar effort is underway on the other side of the Capitol. Senator Ron Johnson (R) of Wisconsin and Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D) of New Hampshire have drafted a similar letter and are urging their colleagues to sign on. **We are asking employers and industry groups to call or write their Senators right away, ask them to sign on the Summer Work Travel letter to Secretary Tillerson. It's an easy call and sending emails takes no more than two minutes.**

[Call your Senators](#)

[Write your Senators](#)

America Outdoors Association
PO Box 10847
Knoxville, TN 37939

Phone: 865-558-3595
americaoutdoors.org

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America Outdoors Association Staff

Julie Kahlfeldt

David L. Brown
Hilary Wickes
Sheryl Pless
Nancy Lewelling

Contact

Title

Executive Director

Vice President of Government Affairs
Marketing and Communications Specialist
Financial Administrator
Technical Administrator

info@americaoutdoors.org

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P.O. Box 10847, Knoxville, TN 37939