America’s outfitters united in support for AORA, America’s Outdoor Recreation Act

The outdoor recreation experience provider community is united in its support for modernizing the permitting process and authority for facilitated recreation providers operating on public lands. The process of applying for, sustaining, or expanding a recreation for permittees ranges from arduous to impossible. Federal land management agencies acknowledge the need to modernize the permitting process. America’s Outdoor Recreation Act of 2022, and in particular the provisions of the Simplifying Outdoor Access for Recreation Act, within it, effectively address this problem. Due to the growing need to provide more facilitated outdoor recreation opportunities for people from all walks of life, the need for this bill has always been clear and its provisions have always been popular.

- 104 Outdoor Recreation Groups Support the SOAR Act provisions within AORA.
- 11 House Republicans, 16 House Democrats, 9 Senate Republicans, 6 Senate Democrats, and 1 Senate Independent all cosponsored the SOAR Act in previous congresses. It has always had broad, bipartisan, bicameral support.
- Previous iterations of the SOAR Act provisions within AORA have passed both the House Natural Resources and Senate Energy and Natural Resources committee unanimously. SOAR has passed the House through unanimous consent.

In 2022, The SOAR Act was wholly incorporated into a bill co-sponsored by the Democratic chairman and ranking Republican of the Senate ENR Committee and passed the committee unanimously. The SOAR Act provisions within America’s Outdoor Recreation will do much to ensure that outfitters have the appropriate regulatory landscape in place to ensure that their outdoor operations can be viable, affordable, and administratively predictable.

The SOAR Act provision within AORA will:

- Reauthorize outfitter and guide permitting authority for the Forest Service, the BLM, the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Reclamation under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) so those agencies can keep permit fees;
- Authorize agencies to develop categorical exclusions for permitting processes under certain conditions;
- Authorize, but not require, one permit to be issued when a trip crosses multiple agency boundaries;
- Eliminate fees based on goods and services delivered and consumed off federal lands;
- Set the standard permit fee at 3% of gross, while maintaining the option for an agency to charge a flat fee;
- Authorize the use of permit fees for permit administration and streamlining processes as well as for related recreation infrastructure and other purposes consistent with the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act;
- Ensure that the federal agency use review policies will not unreasonably penalize outfitters for unused days on their permits by reallocating their permitted days to other users;
- Authorize provisional permits for new uses and provide for (but not require) conversion to long term permits when appropriate;
- Direct agencies to streamline permitting processes
- Reform cost recovery by giving a 50-hour credit for each permit when a group of permits is renewed and provide waivers to the cost recovery requirement.

These provisions combine to create opportunities for both agencies and permitted outdoor experience providers to become more effective partners, better directing our focus on our shared interest: connecting people from all walks of life with America's incredible public landscapes through authentic outdoor experiences.

**SOAR Act Supporters**

Aerie Backcountry Medicine  
Alaska Alpine Adventures  
Alaska Guide Collective  
Alpenglow Expeditions  
America Outdoors Association  
America Walks  
American Alpine Club  
American Alpine Institute  
American Camp Association  
American Fly Fishing Trade Association  
American Hiking Society  
American Horse Council  
American Institute for Avalanche Research and Education  
Research and Education Association  
American Mountain Guides Association  
American Sportfishing Association  
Angler's Covey  
Appalachian Mountain Guides Archery Trade Association  
Association for Experiential Education  
Association of Marina Industries  
Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education  
Avid4 Adventure  
Big City Mountaineers  
Chicks Climbing and Skiing  
Choose Outdoors  
Colorado Mountain School  
Colorado River Outfitters Association  
Colorado Wilderness Corporate and Teams  
Colorado Wilderness Rides and Guides  
Cottonwood Gulch Expeditions  
Dude Ranchers Association  
Estes Park Rock Climbing  
Exum Mountain Guides  
Grand Canyon River Outfitters Association  
Grand Teton River Guides  
Idaho Backcountry Guides  
Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association  
Idaho Mountain Guides  
Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association  
International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association  
Kent Mountain Adventure Center Las Cruces Green Chamber of Commerce  
Los Alamos Mountaineers  
Middle Fork Outfitters Association Moab Desert Adventures  
Montana Alpine Guides  
Montana Mountaineering Association  
Montana Outfitters and Guides Association  
Montana Wilderness School  
Mountain Skills Rock Guides  
Mountain Trip  
Nantahala Outdoor Center  
National Association of RV Parks & Campgrounds  
National Association of Therapeutic Schools and Programs  
National Marine Manufacturers Association  
National Outdoor Leadership School  
National Shooting Sports Foundation  
New Mexico Council of Guides and Outfitters  
New Mexico Wild  
New River Mountain Guides  
No Barriers USA  
North Carolina Outward Bound School  
Open Lands Consulting LLC  
Oregon Outfitters and Guides Association  
Outdoor Alliance  
Outdoors Alliance for Kids  
Outdoor Industry Association  
Outdoor Recreation Roundtable  
Outdoor Research  
Outward Bound USA  
Peak Mountain Guides  
Red River Adventures  
REI  
Rising Tide Associates  
RV Dealers Association  
RV Industry Association  
San Juan Mountain Guides  
San Luis Valley Great Outdoors  
Santa Fe Climbing Center  
Sawtooth Mountain Guides  
Seneca Rocks Climbing School  
Sierra Mountain Center  
Sierra Mountain Guides  
Sierra Mountaineering International  
Siskiyou Outdoor Recreation Alliance  
Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals  
Specialty Equipment Market Association  
Suntoucher Mountain Guides  
The Mountaineers  
The Mountain Guides  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
The Wilderness Society  
Transforming Youth Outdoors  
Utah Guides and Outfitters Association  
Vette Mountain Guides  
Washington Trails Association  
West Virginia Professional River Outfitters  
Western River Expeditions  
Western Spirit Cycling  
Wilderness Education Association  
Worldwide Outfitters and Guides Association  
Wyoming Outfitters and Guides Association  
YMCA of Greater Seattle  
YMCA of Los Angeles  
YMCA of the USA