



November 14, 2017

Tony Tooke, Chief  
United States Forest Service  
1400 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20250

**RE: National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act - Implementation**

Dear Chief Tooke:

Congratulations on your appointment to lead the Forest Service. We appreciate your commitment to enhancing partnerships regarding trail maintenance and look forward to working with you in your new capacity. We write to call your attention to a vital issue regarding trails on our national forests.

As you know, last year Congress passed the **National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act** to improve national forest trail maintenance and increase the role of volunteers and partners in trail maintenance activities. The Act requires USDA to identify nine to 15 locations for priority trail maintenance accomplishments by May 2017.

Although the Forest Service gathered public input earlier this year, it has yet to announce the priority areas for increased trail maintenance. The delay is holding implementation of this much-needed legislation.

We respectfully request that you act quickly to ensure that the priority areas for trail maintenance is released as expeditiously as possible so that other aspects of Trails Act implementation are set in motion.

We support your top priorities for the agency, particularly those regarding shared stewardship, partnerships and volunteerism, and enhancing recreation opportunities and access. We look forward to rolling up our sleeves and working with you to increase our collective capacity to accomplish work on the ground and address the trail maintenance backlog. Identifying the agency's priorities for trail maintenance is the first step to completing that important work.

Sincerely,

Freddy (Barbara) Dunn, Chairman  
**Back Country Horsemen of America**  
59 Rainbow Rd.  
East Granby, CT 06026

*Continued...*



Kate Van Waes, Ph.D., Executive Director  
**American Hiking Society**  
8605 Second Ave.  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Julie M. Broadway, CAE<sup>®</sup>, President  
**American Horse Council**  
1616 H Street NW, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC 20006

David Wiens, Executive Director  
**International Mountain Bicycling Association**  
PO Box 20280  
Boulder, CO 80308

Gary Werner, Executive Director  
**Partnership for the National Trail System**  
222 S. Hamilton St., Suite 13  
Madison, WI 53703

Paul Spitler, Director of Wilderness Policy  
**The Wilderness Society**  
1615 M Street NW  
Washington, DC 20036