



TREASURE STATE RESOURCES ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA

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TREASURE STATE RESOURCES ASSOCIATION NEWS March, 2019

2019 Montana Legislative Session Transmittal Update

We have reached the “official” midway point of the 2019 Montana Legislative Session. All general bills (those deemed “non-revenue” bills) had to pass from their originating chamber to the other house. While the session seemed to get off to a slow start, committees picked up the pace and the introduced bill number count has exceeded 600 in the House of Representatives. The Montana Senate wrapped up its first half on Wednesday, February 27th and will return on Thursday, March 7th. The House finished on Friday and will return for their first floor session on March 11. The Appropriations Committee members will return earlier to continue their work.

Due to TSRA’s diverse membership, we have followed a wide range of bills. The following is a list of bills for which TSRA has offered testimony to date:

House Bill 32: Introduced by Rep. Willis Curdy – An act revising laws related to Aquatic Invasive Species Programs; Requiring an Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Pass for Operation of Vessels; Establishing Fees; Revising Prevention Pass Fees for Anglers and Providing for Transfers of General Fund: Heard February 4, 2019 before House Natural Resources. TSRA testified in support. The bill was forwarded from the Environmental Quality Council following a study process during the interim to identify a long term source of funding for actions intended to prevent the spread of invasive species that would devastate Montana’s

economy. All those testifying supported the program, but opponents had a difference of opinion about the funding sources. Another AIS bill, HB 411, was heard in House Natural Resources on February 22. It does not include general fund dollars and reverts to placing costs on hydro facilities. Various proposals will likely be combined in one version that will advance further in the process.

House Bill 34: Introduced by Rep. Jim Keane – An Act Providing a Statutory Appropriation for Good Neighbor Forestry Accounts: This bill gives the Department of Natural Resources authority to spend private contributions and revenue from qualifying timber sales to manage timber resources, including those on national forests, in a productive manner. TSRA supports the bill. HB 34 has passed the House and is awaiting a hearing in the Senate Natural Resources Committee.

House Bill 70: Introduced by Rep. Ray Shaw – An Act Increasing the Amount of Timber Allowed for Sale Under Commercial Permits: The bill standardizes the size of green timber and salvage projects under commercial permits to allow for more efficient operation. TSRA supports the bill. The bill has passed out of the House of Representatives and the Senate Natural Resources Committee and awaits action on the Senate floor.

House Bill 193: Introduced by Rep. Mary Ann Dunwell – An Act Revising the Regulation and Taxation of Large Emission Sources in Montana; Establishing the Montana Climate Action Act ...Establishing a Carbon Tax: The bill provided authority for the state to assess a carbon tax on emissions and distribute revenue generated to a variety of programs. TSRA opposed the bill. Montana would have been the first state to pass such a tax, although other states have adopted a cap and trade approach. Opponents noted the chilling effect on jobs in Montana, as well as the regressivity of the measure as it translates into rate increases for consumers. The bill was tabled by the House Taxation Committee.

House Bill 241: Introduced by Rep. Andrea Olsen – An Act Requiring Public Utilities to Develop a Plan Articulating Options, Timelines and Challenges for the Procurement of 100% Renewable Energy.... The bill purported to simply engage the legislature and the private sector in a dialogue about progress in advancing renewable energy. It was not clear whether the sponsor intended the bill to require a formal plan for procuring “100% renewable energy resources” by June, 2020. TSRA opposed the bill, along with utility representatives and others who noted energy providers are already growing their use of renewables but want to maintain options for keeping a balanced portfolio that includes fossil fuels. The bill was tabled by the House Energy and Telecommunications Committee.

House Bill 271: Introduced by Rep. Bridget Smith – An Act Generally Revising the Major Facility Siting Act and Establishing Requirements for Certain Pipelines: The measure would have had the effect of vacating the MFSA certificate held by Keystone XL pipeline by reducing the effective time period from 10 to 7 years. TSRA opposed the bill, stating it would send the

wrong message to anyone wanting to invest in Montana knowing we could “change the rules of the game” at any time. The bill was tabled by the House Natural Resources Committee.

House Bill 403: Introduced by Rep. Barry Usher – An Act Revising the Coal Gross Proceeds Tax Rate on Coal Mined from an Underground Mine: The bill was heard February 19, 2019 in the House Taxation Committee. The bill extends the current reduced gross proceeds tax rate assessed against the value of the coal mined from a new underground mine for another ten years. The extension would be helpful to the coal industry given the current uncertainty in the market. TSRA supported the bill.

House Bill 415: Introduced by Rep. Joe Read – An Act Prohibiting the State from Implementing any Federal Greenhouse Gas Regulatory Program: While it may not have been the sponsor’s intent, the bill had the effect of impacting the state’s ability to implement the Clean Air Act for which we currently have primacy. TSRA opposed the bill because we believe it is more effective to work with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality rather than the EPA. The bill was tabled by the House Natural Resources Committee.

House Bill 417: Introduced by Rep. Marvin Weatherwax: An Act Generally Revising Criteria used to Revoke or Suspend a Certificate Issued Under the Montana Major Facility Siting Act: The bill was another measure also aimed at the Keystone XL pipeline, but also exposed other entities holding a MFSA Certificate to a potential challenge for the “discovery of significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns”. There was no definition or clarification concerning what would be deemed significant, laying the groundwork for potential litigation. TSRA opposed the bill. It was tabled in the House Natural Resources Committee.

House Bill 438: Introduced by Rep. Tom Woods: An Act Generally Revising Energy Laws, Establishing Restructuring Requirements for Montana’s Electric Utility Industry: Simply put, this measure sought to “re-deregulate” electrical utilities in Montana. Despite the massive failure of the earlier attempt at deregulation, Rep. Woods brought the bill because he felt that the current structure has “made it difficult for small, innovative sources of alternative power to develop, such as community solar-power projects.” TSRA was among the many opponents to the bill. It was tabled in the House Energy, Technology and Federal Relations Committee.

House Bill 441: Introduced by Rep. Kerry White: An Act Eliminating Timber Conservation Licenses for State Lands: The measure proposes to eliminate the current conservation license option available for state timber sales. When a sale is offered, timber companies offer bids, but an individual or individuals can also bid to purchase a conservation license that provides some revenue to the state trust, but precludes harvest of the timber. That has only been fully exercised for a small buffer zone of timber between state and private land. However, that option is being considered again for a current timber sale near Bozeman, now the subject of litigation. If the conservation license is awarded, it would preclude management of a much larger acreage, leaving the dead and dying timber in place and potentially creating a further risk for fire. If a

conservation license is awarded, not only would timber not be harvested, but the related economic benefits from harvest activity would not be generated. The bill has passed the House and has been transmitted to the Senate.

House Bill 452: Introduced by Rep. Windy Boy: An Act Generally Revising Laws Related to Consultation of Tribes Regarding Impacts to Heritage Properties: The bill extended requirements for consultation concerning permitted activities beyond state lands to include private property. As defined in the bill, "heritage property" included the ancestral homelands of each state and federally recognized tribe for which there is a tribal government in Montana. Tribal historic preservation officers would take a more active role outside the reservation, creating the potential for delays in projects. TSRA opposed the bill, along with representatives from agricultural organizations and industry groups. The measure was tabled in the House State Administration Committee.

House Bill 464: Introduced by Rep. Jasmine Krotkov: An Act Establishing a Hazardous Materials Response and Preparedness Task Force: Similar to a measure introduced in the 2017 Session, the bill would have established a task force to look at issues associated with improving capacity at the local level for responding to hazardous materials spills and report to the state administration interim committee in 2020. However, the duties outlined for the task force seemed to narrow the focus of study to railroad derailments as opposed to a broader look at potential sources and solutions. The PSC would had a role in the study, but the task force would have been attached to the Department of Transportation. TSRA opposed the bill, noting that the goal of looking at ways to improve the ability of rural communities to respond to incidents was worthwhile, but creating a new task force was duplicative of the mission of the State Emergency Response Commission, creating inefficiency by not using the existing resources and expertise currently available. The bill was tabled by the House Natural Resources Committee.

Senate Bill 28: Introduced by Sen. Tom Richmond - An Act Revising the Tax Rate for Certain Incremental Oil Production; Removing the Price Trigger for New or Expanded Tertiary Production: This bill provides more certainty for those making a significant investment in projects that will breath new life into existing oil fields, generating more revenue for the state. Currently the tax rate is based on the price of west Texas intermediate crude and can vary, making planning for capital investments a challenge. Tertiary production will be taxed at a fixed rate of 5.8%. TSRA supported the measure. The bill has passed both the House and Senate and has been signed into law by the Governor.

Senate Bill 48: Introduced by Sen. Tom Richmond on behalf of the MT. Department of Environmental Quality: An Act Generally Revising Variances to Water Quality Standards for Pollution Dischargers: The bill gives dischargers more options for seeking a variance from water quality standards in Montana, using criteria established by the EPA. The bill had been substantially amended from its introduced version, largely at the request of environmental groups. TSRA stood as an opponent to bill, noting our support for the measure but asking for

one additional amendment. We asked that the rulemaking authority be given to the department, as opposed to the board of environmental review. EPA holds the final authority in granting any variance and it seemed an unnecessary step to have rules go through the BER. At the request of the sponsor, the bill was amended to make the change. The bill has passed the Senate and will be heard in the House Natural Resources Committee on March 22. TSRA will support the bill in its present form.

Senate Bill 97: Introduced by Sen. Frank Smith - An Act Generally Revising Laws Related to Common Carrier Pipelines....Revising Time Limits for Voiding Certain Certificates Under the Major Facilities Siting Act: The bill was also aimed at vacating the MFSA Certificate held by Keystone XL Pipeline. It reduced the effective time period from 10 to 7 years. TSRA opposed the bill, again citing concerns with offering predictability to folks wanting to do business in Montana. The bill was tabled by the Senate Natural Resources Committee.

Senate Bill 189: Introduced by Sen. Dick Barrett: An Act Revising Taxation....Revising the Regulation and Taxation of Large Electrical Generating Emission Sources: The bill is a somewhat unique approach to reducing the burden of property taxes for low income and other specific categories of taxpayers. To pay for the loss of revenue collected, the bill would impose a tax on carbon emissions from facilities generating electricity. TSRA opposed the bill due to additional costs imposed on electrical generation that would be borne by ratepayers. The bill was amended to make changes to some of the property tax relief provisions to reduce the impact on state revenue. That action required a new Fiscal Note be requested. The measure is awaiting further action by the Senate Energy Committee.

Senate Bill 190: Introduced by Sen. Mike Phillips: An Act Generally Revising the Regulation of Carbon Emissions in Montana, Requiring the Board of Environmental Review to Adopt Rules and Fees for the Reporting and Quantification of Carbon Emissions; Establishing Carbon Emission Targets: The bill would have established a schedule for reducing carbon emissions and authorized the Department of Environmental Quality to create a plan for meeting the reduction targets. DEQ would be authorized to collect fees assessed against emissions in order to pay for the program. TSRA opposed the bill, noting establishing targets without understanding the details of the plan or its impacts on operational costs would create more uncertainty for energy producers and likely increase costs for consumers. SB 190 was tabled by the Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee.

Senate Bill 278: Introduced by Sen. Tom Richmond: An Act Revising Public Utility Cost Recovery for Coal-Fired Generation and Related Transmission...Allowing for an Increased Interest in Coal-Fired Generation: The bill provides the structural framework for an entity such as NorthWestern Energy to purchase a larger interest in Colstrip Units 3 and 4, potentially extending operation of the facility well into the future. The bill sparked a great deal of discussion at its initial hearing in the Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee before being passed on to the full Senate. Because of the transmittal crunch, the bill was subsequently

amended in the Senate Finance and Claims Committee to add a fee, making it a “revenue bill” and giving a longer timeline to address concerns. TSRA supported the measure, noting it offered a potential solution to protecting jobs at Colstrip and continued generation of reliable, predictable electrical power.

Senate Bill 299: Introduced by Sen. Mike Lang: An Act Revising Laws Related to Sage

Grouse: As introduced, the bill codified language in the Governor’s Executive Order that launched the Sage Grouse program, making it clearer that activities such as maintenance activities for existing wellheads were exempt from oversight by the sage grouse conservation program. It also provided for waivers from compensatory mitigation requirements for projects that addressed public safety. Prior to being heard in the Senate Natural Resources Committee, various stakeholders worked with the Governor’s office to make changes that struck some of the language, pointing to provisions in the current mitigation policy that offered the same considerations. Per protocol, TSRA appeared as an opponent to the bill because we supported the bill with the amendments being requested. The Senate Natural Resources Committee made the amendments to the bill and moved it to the Senate floor. The bill passed the Senate and will be heard in the House Natural Resources Committee on March 25.

Senate Joint Resolution 6: Introduced by Sen. Mike Cuffe: A Joint Resolution Requesting that Montana’s Congressional Delegation Introduce Federal Legislation to Return

Management of the Montana Grizzly Bear Population to the State: TSRA was among a host of proponents for the resolution pointing to the success of grizzly bear recovery efforts in Montana and the need to give management responsibility to the state so that concerns of ranchers and farmers, hunters, and local residents could be more fully considered. The Resolution passed the Senate and will be heard in the House Fish, Wildlife and Parks Committee after transmittal.

Coming in the Second Half...Working with the Montana Petroleum Association over the interim, TSRA and a broad range of interests crafted a proposal to restrict the use of drones over “critical infrastructure”. That bill will be carried by Rep. Julie Dooling and should be introduced soon. The measure focuses on defining what is considered “critical infrastructure” and does not propose changes to other existing statutes such as those governing privacy.

House Passes HB 625 as “Insurance Policy” for Potential Court Decision

As the first half of the Session drew to a close, Rep. Bill Mercer brought HB 625 forward as an “insurance policy” for the state should a pending court ruling throw out the use of nutrient water quality variances. All the arguments are completed in the matter of the Upper Missouri Waterkeeper v. USEPA (Defendant) and MT DEQ, TSRA, MT League of Cities and Towns, and National Association of Clean Water Agencies (Intervenors) pending in US District Court (Great Falls). All parties are waiting for the Judge’s decision, one that could determine whether the Clean Water Act allows for the issuance of any variances from water quality standards.

Montana was a leader in establishing numeric water quality standards for nitrates, but in recognition that those standards could be technologically unachievable and/or very costly to meet the state built in a safety valve by virtue of recognizing a variance from the standard that could extend up to 20 years. Variances have been particularly helpful to local municipalities. If the Judge rules that variances aren't allowed, Montana would be faced with very stringent water quality standards for nitrates that likely could not be met.

HB 625 would walk the state's nutrient program back to the narrative water quality standards that existed prior to adoption of the numeric nutrient standards with a goal of giving the state a vehicle to address a detrimental ruling by the District Court. It has passed the House and will await action in the Senate until such time as the court rules. Because TSRA is an intervenor in the court case, we did not testify on the bill.

In Helena for a hearing? TSRA Weekly Legislative Breakfast Meetings will resume Thursday, March 14th at 7:00 am.

As a reminder, TSRA holds legislative breakfast meetings during the session at 7:00 am. each Thursday morning at the **Montana Association of REALTORS®** office in the downstairs conference room. That is located at One South Montana Avenue, just across the street that runs behind the Capitol. TSRA arranges for breakfast to be available. These meetings offer an opportunity to learn more about pending legislation, as well as seek assistance with specific bills from others involved in the process.

Comment Period Opens on Draft Custer Gallatin EIS

Source: U.S. Forest Service

Taking the next step in the forest plan revision process on the Gallatin Custer Forest, the Forest Service released the draft Environmental Impact Statement on March 1. The public can comment on the document until June 5, 2019. Following the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, comments will be reviewed, changes may occur and a final environmental impact statement is expected early 2020.

To learn more about the document or the forest planning process, those interested have the option of attending one of the upcoming public meetings. Those are set for:

April 3 – Bozeman, MT from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Hilton Garden Inn

April 4 – West Yellowstone, MT from 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. at West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce (30 Yellowstone Ave.)

April 8 – Ashland, MT from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at TRECO (Tongue River Electric Cooperative, (2435 Hwy 212, Ashland, MT)

April 9 – Camp Crook, SD - from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Camp Crook Community Center (203 Main Street, Camp Crook, SD)

April 10 – Billings, MT – from 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at Bighorn Resort Broso/Bighorn Rooms (1801 Majestic Lane, Billings, MT)

April 11 – Red Lodge, MT from 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Roosevelt Center Community Room (519 S. Broadway Ave, Red Lodge, MT)

April 22 – Big Timber, MT from 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the Sweet Grass County Extension Office (515 Hooper Street, Big Timber, MT)

April 22 – Livingston, MT from 5:30 p.m. at the Yellowstone Pioneer Lodge (1515 W. Park Street, Livingston, MT)

April 23 – Cooke City, MT from 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the Cooke City Chamber of Commerce Community Room (206 W Main Street, Cooke City, MT)

April 23 – Gardiner, MT from 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. at the Gardiner Community Center (209 W. Main Street, Gardiner, MT)

As a reminder, forest plans lay the groundwork for future management decisions that address uses of the forest including motorized recreation access, timber harvest, and grazing leases. Public input is critical and TSRA members are encouraged to take a look at the document and offer their comments.

If you have questions about the revision process, call Mariah at 406-587-6735 or email <mailto:cgplanrevision@fs.fed.us>

Board of Environmental Review Extends the Comment Period for Proposed Changes to Circular DEQ-7 (Groundwater Standards)

On February 8th, the Board of Environmental Review approved DEQ's request to extend the comment period on controversial changes to groundwater standards (MAR Notice No. 17-403).

The rulemaking consists of six new groundwater human health criteria to be added to Department Circular DEQ-7. The six criteria are for: diallate; dioxane, 1,4-; iron; manganese; perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS); and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA). Since these are groundwater criteria, all were derived under the assumption that exposure is through drinking water only (no accounting for exposure through consumption of fish is made).

As reported earlier, from the perspective of TSRA's members, the most significant concerns with the rulemaking have to do with iron and manganese. It is not clear how those changes might impact future permitting or reclamation requirements. We are seeking input from toxicology experts and others to determine if the studies used to substantiate the standards offer adequate scientific justification for the proposed change. Adoption of the new standards would put Montana out ahead of federal requirements, although changes are anticipated from EPA for drinking water in the near future.

The DEQ will hold another public hearing on the proposed changes on March 19, 2019 at 2:00 p.m. in Room 111 of the Metcalf Building (DEQ) in Helena. Written comments are due by 5:00 p.m. on March 25, 2019. A copy of the rule notice can be found on Montana DEQ's website.

Second Stewardship Account Grant Cycle Starting

Source: Montana Sage Grouse Conservation Program

The Montana Sage Grouse Oversight Team (MSGOT) has opened its second grant application cycle for conservation projects to benefit sage grouse and sage grouse habitat.

"Habitat conservation is a key component of Montana's conservation strategy, especially on private lands where most of Montana's sage grouse live," said Carolyn Sime, Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program Manager. "The purpose of these grants is to maintain, enhance, and restore sage grouse habitats, while at the same time creating mitigation sites that can be used to offset impacts of development elsewhere."

The 2015 Montana Legislature created the grant opportunity when it passed the Greater Sage Grouse Stewardship Act. Approximately \$3.2 million is available. Priority will be given to projects involving partnerships between public and private entities, as well as projects that leverage matching funds. Qualifying projects must be located at least in part on land in designated sage grouse habitats. Higher priority will be afforded to projects located in Montana's Core Habitat Areas, but projects in General Habitat and the North Valley Connectivity Area that have high resource values will also be considered.

Sime noted potential projects could include reduction of conifer encroachment; restoration or improvement of sagebrush health; restoration of cropland to grazing lands; incentives to reduce conversion of native sagebrush rangelands to other land uses; conservation leases and conservation easements having a minimum duration of 15 years. MSGOT especially welcomes applications for projects that restore or enhance sage grouse habitats or that engage private landowners who ordinarily would not participate directly in mitigation or other habitat conservation opportunities.

Conservation agencies and organizations are eligible to receive funds. Organizations and agencies must hold and maintain conservation easements or leases or be directly involved in sage grouse conservation activities approved by MSGOT. Private citizens are not eligible to receive funds directly and should work with a sponsoring agency or organization.

The application process entails a Pre-Proposal review of the project by the Program. This requires would-be applicants to determine key details in advance to make sure it conforms to requirements of the Stewardship Act and the grant opportunity. This step also allows the Program to review potential projects and provide feedback to would-be applicants to help them

decide whether to submit a more detailed Complete Application for MSGOT's formal consideration.

Completed Pre-Proposal Forms must be received by March 30, 2019, via email at <mailto:sagegrouse@mt.gov>

Details on the application process are available on the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program web site at <https://sagegrouse.mt.gov.grants.html>. Also two conference calls to answer questions on the application process will be hosted by Program staff on Thursday, March 7, 2019 from 12 – 1 p.m. and on Friday, March 8, 2019 from 9 – 10 a.m. The call-in number for both sessions is (406) 449-7478, with Conference ID number 2307#.

Interested parties may also schedule a one-on-one call with Program staff. To schedule a call, send a request to <mailto:CSime2@mt.gov> Complete applications will be due in early May 2019.

It's Back – New York Rep. Carolyn Maloney Introduces 5-State Wilderness Bill Again

Source: E&E News, February 26, 2019 By: Scott Streater

New York Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney has reintroduced sweeping legislation to permanently protect 23 million acres of inventoried roadless areas as congressional designated wilderness, and also establishes what Maloney's office describe in press materials as a system to "connect biological corridors" used as migration routes for plants and animals. The "Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act" – which targets roadless lands in what the bill text refers to as the "bioregion" of Idaho, Wyoming, Montana, Oregon and Washington – is among the largest wilderness bills, if not the largest, ever proposed in the Lower 48 states.

Maloney has sponsored similar versions of the bill, under the same title, in each congressional session since 2007, and each time, the legislation has failed to gain much traction.

Maloney's office argues that the bill is needed to counter the "overemphasis on resource extraction" on public lands by the Trump administration. "Economic instability and high unemployment in rural, resource-dependent communities is a common result of overexploitation of these lands," her office said.

It's not clear what the prospects of success are for the latest iteration of the legislation, even with Democrats regaining control of the House.

Infrastructure Bill Next Front In Forest Policy Fight

Source: E & E News, February 26, 2019 By: Marc Heller

The next scuffle over managing the nation's forests may come in a bill that's usually connected with roads and bridges. Advocates for more intensive management are going to push Congress to include forests – including access roads – in an infrastructure measure that could total hundreds of billions of dollars.

“The forest itself, trees, are infrastructure that we need to value broadly for all kinds of purposes,” Christopher Topik, director of the forest conservation program and policy at the Nature Conservancy said during a forest policy forum sponsored by the Pinchot Institute for Conservation. “We also need to be thinking about what infrastructure we do need in the forests.”

The Nature Conservancy is linking up with groups such as the Federal Forest Resource Coalition to push for forest improvement, including selective thinning, reforestation and restoration of forest roads that have fallen into disrepair.

Versions of an infrastructure bill offered by lawmakers such as Sen. Rob Portman (R-Ohio) haven't included forests, Topik told E&E News.

National forests are crisscrossed by roads built during the heyday of timber production decades ago. The timber cut is a fraction of those levels now, and industry sources say it's not likely to return to previous heights. Still, roads provide access for recreation and firefighting, and the Forest Service also aims to boost the timber cut.

Roads have fallen into disrepair. The Department of Agriculture's undersecretary for natural resource, James Hubbard, said the Forest Service faces an infrastructure backlog of \$5.2 billion, mostly in roads. Other backlogs persist in areas such as maintaining trails.

Topik said his organization is distributing a fact sheet to congressional offices, making the case for including forests as a “green infrastructure” element in the broader package.

“We want to have funding that helps us have resilient forests, to treat that as well as we treat a highway,” Topik said. The Forest Service has around 260,000 miles of roads that are open, plus 100,000 miles that are closed, he said.

Adding forests to a bill normally devoted to highways and bridges is a new approach, although some paved roads in national forests receive limited funding through the national Highway Trust Fund, Topik said.

An infrastructure bill could provide opportunities for a wide range of needs, **Sen. Steve Daines (R-Mont)** told E&E News. The highest priority on public lands is in the backlog in national parks, he said, but the Forest Service needs to catch up on road maintenance as well.

Pulling together needs on public lands as well as highways, bridges and ports sounds like a commonsense idea, Daines said. "I think there will be an appetite to look at that," he said.

Upcoming Events/Dates

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| May 14-15, 2019 | Montana Mining Association, Fairmont Hot Springs Resort |
| June 12-15, 2019 | Montana Stockgrowers Mid-Year Meeting, Miles City, MT |
| June 19-20, 2019 | TSRA 2019 Annual Meeting Holiday Inn Downtown, Missoula, MT |
| August 27-29, 2019 | Montana Petroleum Association Annual Meeting Billings, MT |

If you don't want to receive the TSRA Newsletter, please let me know. If you want to share with others in your company or organization, please do so. The mission of the Treasure State Resources Association is to promote and enhance the Montana Way of Life through responsible resource development.