



# American Discovery Trail Society

*Making connections coast-to-coast*

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The Honorable Eric Holcomb  
Governor, State of Indiana  
200 W. Washington St., Room 206  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

The Honorable Andy Beshear  
Governor, State of Kentucky  
700 Capitol Avenue, Suite 100  
Frankfort, KY 40601

August 1, 2022

Dear Governors Holcomb and Beshear,

I am writing today on behalf of the American Discovery Trail Society to express our concern about the current I-69 ORX Bridge Project Design Plan and our hope that the current plan will be updated to make it possible for cyclists and pedestrians to safely cross the Ohio River.

We share the concerns of other organizations, including Indiana Trails, Evansville Trails Coalition, Bicycle Indiana, and Adventure Cycling, regarding the accessibility of this project and the need for a safe Ohio River crossing in the region for cyclists and pedestrians.

The American Discovery Trail is America's first coast-to-coast trail. It has been recommended in a National Park Service study as the first in a new category of National Discovery Trails to be added to the National Trails System. It provides the backbone of the National Trails System by supplying connections that are otherwise missing—connecting five national scenic trails, 12 national historic trails, 39 national recreation trails, and many other local and regional trails.

The American Discovery Trail is all about connections—and having pedestrian and bicycle access to the I-69 crossing of the Ohio River is a critical component to connecting people to trails. The American Discovery Trail is in the Indiana State Trails plan as a “Visionary Trail” and crosses the route of I-69. In addition to the American Discovery Trail, having a critical hiking and bicycling link would connect other important nonmotorized routes, including Adventure Cycling's Underground Railroad Route, U.S. Bicycle Route 76, and the Evansville and Warrick County trails systems.

Outdoor recreation, trail use, and tourism are important economic drivers to a successful economy. Transportation projects should be designed with this in mind. Public dollars should be invested in infrastructure that encourages people to get outside on foot and bicycle.

There are many examples of major river crossings that accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists, including the I-74 River Bridge across the Mississippi River and the I-95 Woodrow Wilson Bridge across the Potomac River.

Including bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is indisputably possible from an engineering perspective. We are asking that current plans be revised to ensure that individuals using all common transportation methods have access to safe routes to travel.

Sincerely,

*Eric Seaborg*

Eric Seaborg  
President