

TRIP Report: America's Rural Roads and Bridges Have Significant Deficiencies, High Fatality Rates

	STATE	Percent Rural Roads in Poor Condition	STATE	Percent Deficient Rural Bridges	STATE	Fatality Rate Rural/All Other Roads
1	Connecticut	35	Pennsylvania	25%	South Carolina	3.99 / 0.68
2	Rhode Island	33	Rhode Island	25%	Florida	3.35 / 0.95
3	West Virginia	33	Iowa	22%	West Virginia	2.8 / 0.99
4	Hawaii	32	South Dakota	21%	Texas	2.76 / 1.03
5	Michigan	32	Oklahoma	20%	Arkansas	2.71 / 0.87
6	Kansas	30	Hawaii	19%	Tennessee	2.68 / 0.95
7	Oklahoma	29	Nebraska	19%	Arizona	2.66 / 1.11
8	Maine	28	North Dakota	17%	Kentucky	2.64 / 0.78
9	Mississippi	25	Maine	16%	California	2.61 / 0.63
10	Arkansas	23	Louisiana	16%	Pennsylvania	2.6 / 0.91
11	Missouri	23	Missouri	15%	Oklahoma	2.52 / 0.92
12	Washington	22	New Hampshire	15%	Hawaii	2.48 / 0.89
13	New Mexico	21	Mississippi	14%	North Carolina	2.44 / 0.64
14	Alabama	21	North Carolina	14%	Montana	2.4 / 0.95
15	Vermont	21	New Jersey	14%	North Dakota	2.33 / 0.77
16	Alaska	20	Wyoming	14%	Kansas	2.26 / 0.74
17	New Hampshire	18	New York	14%	South Dakota	2.21 / 0.74
18	Virginia	18	Michigan	14%	Ohio	2.15 / 0.63
19	Wisconsin	17	West Virginia	13%	New York	2.13 / 0.59
20	Pennsylvania	17	California	13%	Indiana	2.09 / 0.56

America's rural heartland is home to nearly 50 million people, and its natural resources provide the energy, food and fiber that support the nation's economy and way of life. But, a new report finds that the nation's rural transportation system, which is critical to the nation's booming agriculture, energy and tourism sectors, is in need of modernization to address deficient roads and bridges, high crash rates and inadequate connectivity and capacity.

The report, ["Rural Connections: Challenges and Opportunities in](#)

[America's Heartland"](#), was released today by [TRIP](#), a national non-profit transportation research group based in Washington, D.C. It defines "rural America" as counties that lack an urban area of at least 50,000 in population or lack a large commuting flow to an urban county.

The report finds that traffic crashes and fatalities on rural roads are disproportionately high, occurring at a rate nearly three times higher than all other roads. In 2012, non-Interstate rural roads had a traffic fatality rate of 2.21 deaths for every 100 million vehicle miles of travel, compared to a fatality rate on all other roads of 0.78 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles of travel. Rural traffic fatality rates remain stubbornly high, despite a substantial decrease in the number of overall fatalities.

"More than 46 million Americans live in rural and less densely populated areas of the country where their primary mode of transportation is a personal vehicle," stated Kathleen Bower, AAA Vice President, Public Affairs. "Motorists expect and deserve safe, well-maintained roads and bridges no matter if they are traveling on the Interstates or rural roads. Congress must act quickly to provide a sustainable solution for the federal Highway Trust Fund to ensure that states can continue to make necessary infrastructure investments that will benefit all travelers."

Deteriorating Conditions

In addition to disproportionately high traffic fatality rates, the roads and bridges in rural America have significant deficiencies. In 2012, 15% of the nation's major rural roads were rated in poor condition and another 40% were rated in mediocre or fair condition. In 2013, 12% of the nation's rural bridges were rated as structurally deficient and 10% were functionally obsolete.