



## TRIP report indicates high fatality rates and deficiencies on rural roads

By [Allison Barwacz](#) | July 16, 2014

According to a report by [TRIP](#), a national non-profit transportation research group based in Washington, D.C., crashes and fatalities on rural roads are nearly three times as high than on other roads.

The report, entitled, "[Rural Connections: Challenges and Opportunities in America's Heartland](#)," also emphasizes the poor conditions of rural roads throughout the country. In 2013, 12 percent of the nation's rural bridges were deemed structurally deficient and 10 percent were functionally obsolete.

"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," says Kathleen Bower, AAA Vice President of Public Affairs. "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."

In addition to this, increased agricultural production and oil and gas field developments result in increased traffic on rural roads that weren't built to sustain heavy loads, making them unsafe for drivers.

"So many of our industry's manufacturing facilities and their workers are located in rural America, where they depend on safe and efficient roads for their livelihoods," says Rick Patek, group president of [Astec Industries](#) and 2014 chairman of the [Association of Equipment Manufacturers](#) (AEM).

The report offers a number of recommendations for improving America's transportation system, including improving access and connectivity in America's small communities and rural areas, improving rural traffic safety, and improving the condition of rural roads, highways and bridges.

By following through with TRIP's advice, rural areas will improve economically, says Will Wilkins, the executive director of TRIP. However, with federal transportation legislation on hold, these rural communities could face unemployment and economic decline.