

February 28, 2013

The Mountaineers Advocacy Roadmap

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Directors – The Board sets the direction for The Mountaineers engagement with policy and planning initiatives through strategic planning and the adoption of public lands conservation policies that define the scope of engagement for the organization. The Board’s Executive Committee is the primary forum for decision-making and may be engaged by staff on select advocacy issues.

Executive Director – The Executive Director is The Mountaineers’ chief executive officer responsible for approving advocacy position recommendations from staff and volunteers within the scope of the Board’s defined priorities. The Executive Director is the primary spokesperson and decision-maker.

Public Lands Programs Manager - The Public Lands Programs Manager (Manager) directs and facilitates The Mountaineers’ engagement with policy and planning efforts. The Manager prioritizes issues and efforts according to the resources and capacity available and is responsible for making policy position recommendations to the Executive Director.

Outdoor Advocacy Advisory Council –The Outdoor Advocacy Advisory Council (Council) provides guidance and council to the Executive Director and Public Lands Programs Manager as needed for complex or controversial issues. The Council serves as a resource for problem-solving and conflict-resolution forum for policy-related issues (ex. responding to a member’s objection to an advocacy position).

The Managing Committee – The Managing Committee includes representatives from each Branch of The Mountaineers. The Council or Manager may consult the Managing Committee to gain Branch-level perspectives on particular issues.

Outdoor Advocate Volunteers – Volunteers assist with a range of policy-related efforts. They may conduct research, analyze policy issues, write briefs and articles, organize events, conduct outreach or represent The Mountaineers’ interests at meetings. Volunteers work with the Public Lands Programs Manager to advance organizational priorities.

Policy flow chart

Policy issues – Sources include partner organizations, volunteers, members or land managers.

Public Lands Programs Manger applies filter to issue/topic:

- Relevant to The Mountaineers' mission, strategic plan and conservation priorities?
- Directly affects public lands where Mountaineers activities occur?
- Can the issue be addressed with resources available to the organization?

If NO,
no action

If YES, but
controversial

Outdoor Advocacy Advisory Council
Reviews & makes recommendation
to staff

If YES, Manager researches & analyzes
issue, recommends action

Executive Director
Approves letters and official position
statements on behalf of The Mountaineers

Membership Outreach: Public Lands Manager uploads policy statements and letters to website, topics are covered in magazine, web and email communications.

Example #1: Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest (OWNF) Plan Revision

Policy issue– Opportunity to respond during public comment period to the Proposed Action for the OWNF Forest Plan Revision during winter of 2011-2012. (*Actual ongoing policy issue for The Mountaineers*)

Public Lands Programs Manger applies filter to issue/topic:

- Relevant to The Mountaineers' mission, strategic plan and conservation priorities?

YES. The OWNF Forest Plan revision has implications for the management of wilderness and roadless areas, as well as recreational access to popular destinations.

- Directly affects public lands where Mountaineers activities occur?

YES. The OWNF is second only to Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie NF as a destination for The Mountaineers outings and courses.

- Can the issue be addressed with resources available to the organization?

YES. By collaborating with partner organizations that have a similar stake in the results of the Forest Plan revision, we can have a meaningful impact on the results of the planning effort.

Manager researches & analyzes issue, attends meetings, participates in discussions with partners to draft comment letter.

Executive Director
Approves and signs official
comment letters on behalf
of The Mountaineers

Membership Outreach: Manager uploads policy statements and letters to website, topics are covered in magazine, web and email communications.

Example #2: Yellowstone Bison Management

Policy issue— A member requested that The Mountaineers compose a letter to the National Park Service requesting non-lethal management of bison that stray outside park boundaries. (*Actual member request from Olympia member in 2011*)



Public Lands Programs Manger applies filter to issue/topic:

- Relevant to The Mountaineers' mission, strategic plan and conservation priorities?

NO. Wildlife management is related but peripheral to our emphasis on public lands.

- Directly affects public lands where Mountaineers activities occur?

NO. While the Greater Yellowstone is undoubtedly a cherished landscape for many members, it is not a destination for our outings and courses.

- Can the issue be addressed with resources available to the organization?

NO. Given the scope of the issues and the lack of expertise and context for the problem, we are less likely to influence the outcome.



No action

Example #3: Proposed National Recreation Area in Teanaway Valley

Policy issue– A partner organization requests that The Mountaineers support the congressional designation of National Recreation Area (NRA) on the National Forest lands in the Teanaway Valley. The proposal emphasizes access & opportunities for both motorized and non-motorized recreation and some wilderness additions. There are varying opinions about the proposal in the conservation and recreation communities. *(Based on an actual public lands proposal-in-progress that The Mountaineers have offered preliminary comments on and may desire to take a formal position on in the future.)*



Public Lands Programs Manger applies filter to issue/topic:

- **Relevant to The Mountaineers' mission, strategic plan and conservation priorities?**

YES. The NRA proposal affects the backcountry experience on public lands in Washington.

- **Directly affects public lands where Mountaineers activities occur?**

YES. The Mountaineers have a long history of climbing, scrambling and hiking in the Teanaway Valley and currently conduct field trips for Scrambling and Naturalists in the proposed NRA.

- **Can the issue be addressed with resources available to the organization?**

YES. The Mountaineers is a clear stakeholder in the matter and has the ability to influence the outcome of the proposal.



Potential controversy:

The draft proposal includes an emphasis on continued access for motorized recreation (dirt bikes, jeeps and snowmobiles) in areas where there are documented conflicts with non-motorized recreationists as well as wildlife. There is potential conflict between The Mountaineers' wilderness and backcountry values and the NRA intent.



Outdoor Advocacy Advisory Council

Reviews proposal, background materials & makes recommendation to staff



Staff considers input, chooses whether to take action or to seek further input from the Executive Committee or Board.