



October 29, 2020

Recreation and Conservation Office  
P.O. Box 40917  
Olympia, Washington 98504-0917

**RE: 20-2313 WRRD CLIMBING RANGER EDUCATION PROGRAM;  
20-2301 WRRD WILDERNESS AND BACKCOUNTRY - ENCHANTMENTS EMPHASIS;  
20-2316 WRRD DEVELOPED & DISPERSED RECREATION;  
20-2250 TRAIL MAINTENANCE FRONTCOUNTRY; AND  
20-2245 TRAIL MAINTENANCE WILDERNESS**

To Whom It May Concern:

We write to express continued support of the Wenatchee River Ranger District (WRRD) Climbing Ranger Education Program (20-2313) and the Wilderness and Backcountry Education and Enforcement (20-2301), as well as critical maintenance proposals for frontcountry trails, Wilderness trails, and dispersed recreation sites (20-2250, 20-2245, and 20-2316). All five proposals promote education of Washington's climbing community and help protect the climbing environment.

The WRRD encompasses many rock climbing and mountaineering destinations of local, regional and international significance; a few of which are Mount Stuart and the massifs of Prusik, Dragontail, and Colchuck Peaks. There are also countless other smaller crags and rocks in the district that have climbing history dating back 70 years. Washington climbers visit WRRD every season of the year, whether to climb rock, ice, boulders, or alpine objectives across the district.

Since 2012, WRRD's climbing ranger education program has participated and co-hosted several volunteer events, taught climbing-specific Leave No Trace seminars, made hundreds of contacts in the field, cleaned up countless climbs and staging areas, worked with partners to install a climbing information bulletin board, fencing, and temporary toilet facilities at a popular parking and bouldering area, and developed a WRRD Climbing Education Plan. All of this is done in a collaborative process with Leavenworth Mountain Association, Access Fund, Washington Climbers Coalition, American Alpine Club, Northwest Mountain School, The Mountaineers, and the Forest Service. We hope the WRRD Climbing

Education Program will continue to produce positive results in protecting the environment, creating a safe, positive recreational experience, and protecting NOVA opportunities.

The Enchantments and Stuart Range of the Alpine Lakes Wilderness of the WRRD continue to grow in popularity and use across all Wilderness recreational users. As WRRD struggles to meet the growing demands of this cherished Wilderness area, continued support from RCO for the Wilderness and Backcountry Education proposal will provide critical education of climbers and other recreational user groups in popular wilderness recreational areas.

Critical maintenance of trails, trailheads, dispersed recreation, and Wilderness must accompany education and enforcement programs to effectively address the growing needs and impacts of recreational users. In 2020, the Access Fund Conservation Team, Leavenworth Mountain Association, Washington Climbers Coalition, Washington Alpine Club, Mountain Madness, She Jumps, and Never Stop Moving supported the WRRD with critical trail work on the Snow Lakes Trail above Nada Lake. The Forest Service blasting crew and our trail crews completed rock work to make this Wilderness trail passable by stock to Snow Lakes, which will enable the WRRD to conduct future critical stewardship in the Enchantments. We support the necessary maintenance proposals for WRRD trailheads, dispersed sites, Wilderness trails and frontcountry trails.

The climbing community as a group is conscientious of access and environmental issues in the areas that they recreate. When resources are available to educate them, they can be one of the most thoughtful and proactive user groups in terms of preservation and impact minimization. We are excited about the potential of these programs to preserve the quality of outdoor experiences for all future users of the WRRD, including climbers. We believe that the money granted for these programs would be very well spent preserving and improving the nature of our public lands and the experience one can get from it. We look forward to supporting WRRD with volunteer, outreach, and educational support.

Sincerely,

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