



July 2, 2020

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

RE: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Grant Application #20-1433

Dear evaluation committee members,

On behalf of The Mountaineers, please accept our letter of support for Washington State Parks' acquisition of the Mt. Washington Trail property, an inholding in the Olallie State Park in the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area. The property includes exceptional rock climbing opportunities that have been cherished by Mountaineers members and utilized by Mountaineers courses and trips.

The Mountaineers, based in Seattle, Washington and founded in 1906, is a nonprofit outdoor education, conservation, and recreation organization whose mission is "to enrich the community by helping people explore, conserve, learn about and enjoy the lands and waters of the Pacific Northwest and beyond." The Mountaineers Books publishing division expands the mission internationally through award-winning publications including instructional guides, adventure narratives, and conservation photography. 1,600 skilled volunteers lead 3,200 outdoor education trips and courses annually for 14,000 members. Our youth programs provide over 10,000 opportunities each year for children to get outside. We are a passionate, engaged, and knowledgeable community that cares about the outdoors, and protects the outdoor experience for current and future generations.

Securing public access to the Mt. Washington Climbing Area and Mt. Washington Trail is important to The Mountaineers and our members. Since 2011, over 1000 Mountaineers participants and nearly 150 separate trips have utilized the numerous climbing areas at Exit 38. This includes our youth summer camps and Mountain Workshop trips, which bring urban youth out to Exit 38 to teach rock climbing skills. Thousands more Mountaineers members climb regularly at Exit 38 or hike the Mt. Washington Trail as part of Mountaineers trips or personal trips. The area is a popular destination due to its proximity to Puget Sound population centers.

The Mountaineers is pleased to join Access Fund, local climbing organizations, and outdoor industry partners in supporting this keystone conservation project. We have committed \$1,000 in matching funds towards WWRP support.



This grant will ensure that this valuable recreational and educational resource is permanently protected. Moreover, the project will preserve this landscape of forest, waterfalls, wildlife habitat, and scenic beauty for future generations. The Mountaineers is grateful to Washington State Parks, The Trust for Public Land, and the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust for their work to acquire the Ollalie Thompson inholding and is fully supportive of this project. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Betsy Robblee  
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