



January 5, 2021

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

RE: Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Mt. Si and Middle Fork Education (20-2131 EDU)

Dear evaluation committee members,

The Mountaineers write to express our support for the Washington State Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) proposal to fund a backcountry educator to patrol trails and distribute educational materials throughout the spring and summer season in the Middle Fork Snoqualmie Valley.

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.

The Middle Fork Snoqualmie Valley is a very important area to our members for our hiking, scrambling, trail running, and rock climbing trips and courses close to the greater Seattle area. With its mountain peaks, alpine lakes, old-growth forests, whitewater rivers and strong native trout runs all located within an hour's drive of downtown Seattle, the Middle Fork Snoqualmie Valley is one of the most significant outdoor recreation destinations, not only for our volunteer-run trips and courses, but also for other outdoor activities like whitewater kayaking & rafting, fishing, swimming, picnicking, walking, mountain biking, cycling, and horseback riding.

After the completion of the Middle Fork Road reconstruction project in the fall of 2017, the valley is now more accessible than ever before. These positions will provide high quality and sustainable recreation along the river, both up in the Middle Fork Valley and down near the Cities of North Bend and Snoqualmie, for users of all ages. The Mountaineers support this educational project in order for DNR to



**THE
MOUNTAINEERS**

7700 Sand Point Way NE
Seattle, WA 98115

www.mountaineers.org

provide year round education to the visiting public as well as protect investments and access for future generations.

Thank you for your consideration of this important proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Betsy Robblee'.

Betsy Robblee
Conservation & Advocacy Director
betsyr@mountaineers.org