



November 21, 2022

Governor Jay Inslee
 Office of the Governor
 PO Box 40002
 Olympia WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee,

The 68 undersigned conservation, recreation, and wildlife organizations strongly urge you to include funding for the trust land transfer (TLT) program in the Governor’s budget in order to implement DNR’s TLT revitalization process. Trust land transfer addresses many of your priority issues, including carbon sequestration, outdoor recreation, salmon and orca recovery, and more – it deserves your full support. As you may recall, TLT is a land management tool that is used to reposition economically under-performing state trust lands and conserve land with ecological and/or public benefits. DNR is seeking \$25 million in the capital budget for TLT and we urge you to include the full amount in your budget.

Since its inception in 1989, the TLT program has preserved more than 128,000 acres of state trust land for fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, education, and other community uses. Some of the state's most treasured places like Mt. Si, Blanchard Mountain, and Deception Pass State Park have benefitted from TLT. At the same time, DNR has also sustained and improved potential economic future returns for schools and local governments. The legislature has historically shown strong support for this conservation tool, investing over \$880 million in TLT over 30 years.

Commissioner Franz and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) are making trust land transfer revitalization a major priority for the next legislative session and TLT's inclusion in your budget would send a strong message to the legislature that TLT is worth supporting. At the request of the legislature, DNR has worked closely with stakeholders over the last two years to modernize TLT. DNR has identified several reforms to improve the program in its twin goals of conserving priority trust land and improving financial returns to beneficiaries.

DNR proposed reforms include:

- Clear, consistent rules for eligibility, including nominating and prioritizing projects
- Dropping the 80/20 rule to invest more funding in replacement land and allowing all types of trust land to be considered for TLT
- Transparent "best interest of the trust" analysis to clearly show the value to beneficiaries
- Improved consultation with tribal governments and increased attention to the needs of overburdened communities

These improvements will improve the public's trust in TLT by increasing transparency and predictability for stakeholders. They also allow DNR to better manage assets to improve returns to beneficiaries, a major theme of DNR's recent effort to transform the state's trust land portfolio.

DNR undertook several new steps this year as part of a pilot project to test the new eligibility and prioritization processes. DNR asked its regions to nominate potential TLT parcels from around the state. It then did a best interest of the trust analysis to ensure trust beneficiaries would gain from the project while also conducting outreach to tribes and affected taxing districts. Finally, DNR facilitated a work group that prioritized a list of 10 TLT projects for funding consideration. The 10 projects represent a diverse array of state trust lands that are better off outside of revenue-generating status. If funded by the legislature, they will be perpetual recreation areas, salmon and wildlife habitat, and sites for research and education. The 10 projects are:

- Eglon (Kitsap County and 23rd LD) – 707 acres
- Devils Lake (Jefferson County, 24th LD) - 415 acres
- Upper Dry Gulch (Chelan County, 12th LD) – 3,023 acres
- Chapman Lake (Spokane County, 9th LD) – 542 acres
- Morning Star (Snohomish County, 12th LD) – 1,071 acres
- West Tiger (King County, 5th LD) – 99 acres
- Lake Spokane Campground (Stevens County, 7th LD) – 305 acres
- Blakely Island (San Juan County, 40th LD) – 184 acres
- Moses Lake Sand Dunes (Grant County, 13th LD) – 648 acres
- Rustler's Gulch (Pend Oreille County, 7th LD) – 40 acres

Trust land transfer is but one of many needed protections for our state forests. However, it represents a significant investment in conservation and public services – a win-win-win that is not often found in state programs. With your support, we can protect the places that Washingtonians love while preserving the revenue stream that pays for necessary services. Keeping this program alive and functional is critical for the future of conservation in Washington.

We urge you to provide full funding to TLT in the Governor’s budget in the 2023 legislative session.

Sincerely,

Tom Uniack
Executive Director
Washington Wild

Patricia A. Jones, PhD
Executive Director
Olympic Forest Coalition (Quilcene)

Robert Kaye
Chair, Conservation Committee
North Cascades Audubon Society (Bellingham)

Mariska Kecskes
Associate Organizer
Sierra Club, Washington Chapter

Joseph Bogaard
Executive Director
Save Our Wild Salmon Coalition

Becca Gray and Nate Schons
Owners
Island Hoppin’ Brewery (Orcas Island)

Phil Fenner
President
North Cascades Conservation Council

Peter Bahls
Executive Director
Northwest Watershed Institute (Port Townsend)

Arthur Campbell
President
North Central Washington Audubon Society
(Wenatchee)

Rick McGuire
President
Alpine Lakes Protection Society

Chris Gerston
Owner
Backcountry Essentials (Bellingham)

John Bridge
President
Olympic Park Associates

Larry Lober
President
Greater Bellingham Running Club (Bellingham)

Mark Boyar
President
MidFORC Coalition

Amy Brockhaus
Deputy Director
Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust

Michelle Connor
President & CEO
Forterra

Renée C Paradis
Board Member
Washington Kayak Club

Dave Werntz
Science and Conservation Director
Conservation Northwest

John Marti
Owner
Lowercase Brewing

Brian Stan
Co-Founder
Old Stove Brewing

Mike Town
Founder
Friends of Wild Sky

Sarah Shaffer
Executive Director
Wenatchee Outdoors

Ryan Talbott
Pacific Northwest Conservation Associate
WildEarth Guardians

Jack Guinn
Owner
Hellbent Brewing Company

Taylor Robertson
Marketing & Sales Director
Werner Paddles

Mari & Will Kemper
Owners
Chuckanut Brewing Co (Burlington)

Matthew Lawrence
Owner
Camp Colvos Brewing (Vashon Island)

Janet Strong
President
Grays Harbor Audubon Society (Montesano)

Susan Saul
Conservation Chair
Vancouver Audubon Society

CaraMia and Kevin Murry
Owners
Hot Cakes

Sarah Dyrdaahl
Northwest Regional Director
American Rivers

Kurt Larson
President
Silver City Brewery (Bremerton)

Timothy Coleman
Executive Director
Kettle Range Conservation Group (Republic)

Craig Nobley
General Manager
Lighthouse Roasters

Molly Doran
Executive Director
Skagit Land Trust (Mount Vernon)

Carol Price
Co-president
Kitsap Environmental Coalition

Kelsey, Ben, Liz & Craig Curran
Owners
Watershed Pub & Kitchen

Tom Glade
Board of Directors
Evergreen Islands (Anacortes)

Timothy Manns
Chair, Conservation Committee
Skagit Audubon Society (Mount Vernon)

Jennie Goldberg
Director
League of Northwest Whitewater Racers

J. Michelle Swope
Washington Regional Coordinator
Native Fish Society

Levi Wyatt
Corporate Social Responsibility Manager
Yakima Chief Hops, Inc. (Yakima)

William E. Derry
President
Pilchuck Audubon Society (Snohomish)

Justin Allegro
Policy Director
The Nature Conservancy in Washington

Betsy Robblee
Conservation & Advocacy Director
The Mountaineers

Molly Whitney
Executive Director
Cascade Forest Conservancy (Vancouver)

Caitlin Singer
Quality & Sustainability Coordinator
Georgetown Brewing Company

Curt Soper
Executive Director
Washington Association of Land Trusts

Megan Birzell
Washington State Director
The Wilderness Society

Thomas O'Keefe, PhD
Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director
American Whitewater

Colin Lenfesty-Jason Daugherty
Owner/Head Brewer-Sales & Operations Manager
Holy Mountain Brewing Co

Gabe Epperson
Executive Director
Whatcom Land Trust

Justin Gerardy
Owner
Standard Brewing/Sovereign Brewing

Jen Barker
Proprietor
Terramar Brewing & Distilling (Edison)

Yvonne Krause
Executive Director
Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance

Paul Fish
President
Mountain Gear, Inc (Spokane)

Devon Richardson
Giving & Sustainability Manager
MiiR

Kelly Jiang/ Paul Winterstein
Chair of Advocacy Committee/ Executive Director
Issaquah Alps Trails Club

Andrea Imler
Advocacy Director
Washington Trails Association

Bill Taylor
Vice President
Taylor Shellfish

Susan Chatlos- Susor
President
Friends of Heybrook Ridge

Brian Strumke
Owner
Stillwater Artisanal

Richard Tucker/ Sarah Spaeth
Executive Director/ Director, Conservation &
Strategic Partnerships
Jefferson Land Trust (Port Townsend)

Steve Aguilu
President
Wenatchee Valley Fly Fishers

Layne Carter
Operations Manager
Aslan Brewing Co. (Bellingham)

Steve Erickson
Restoration Ecologist
Whidbey Environmental Action Network

Robert Thorpe
Conservation Chair
Washington Fly Fishing Club