



May 18, 2022

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
1111 Israel Road SW
Tumwater, WA 98501-6512

Re: WA DNR Upper 92 Road Sno-Park Project Future Funding Proposal

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of The Mountaineers, I am writing to express our support for Washington Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) funding proposal to re-establish parking at the Upper 92 Road Sno-Park in the Elbe Hills State Forest.

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.

More than 1,200 Mountaineers volunteers lead 3,200 outdoor education trips and courses annually for our more than 15,000 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.

Winter recreation has always been an important aspect of our programming, and the Mount Tahoma ski huts and trails located within Elbe State Forest provide important ski, snowshoe, and other winter recreation access for Mountaineers courses and activities. The area is used by four of our seven branches (Seattle, Tacoma, Olympia, and Foothills), and for both youth and adult programs. In the last three winter seasons alone, we've led 13 cross-country skiing and snowshoeing trips in the Mount Tahoma Trails Association area.

The success of our trips depends on reliable parking and access from 92 Road Sno-Park. The existing 30 parking spaces fill up quickly during weekends, as day-use visitors and overnight hut reservation guests compete for the limited number of spaces. The Mountaineers encourages Washington State Parks to fund this project to help meet the needs of current and future winter recreation enthusiasts by improving access to Elbe Hills State Forest.



**THE
MOUNTAINEERS**

7700 Sand Point Way NE
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www.mountaineers.org

Thank you for considering this important proposal.

Sincerely,

Betsy Robblee
Conservation & Advocacy Director

The Mountaineers

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