



April 23, 2024

Maritime Washington
1204 Minor Ave
Seattle, WA 98101

Re: Washington Water Trail Association's 2024 Grant Application

Dear Maritime Washington Grant Selection Panel,

On behalf of The Mountaineers, please accept this letter of support for the Washington Water Trails Association's 2024 Maritime Washington Grant Program application.

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." 1,200 skilled volunteers lead 3,200 outdoor education trips and courses annually for more than 16,000 members across our seven Puget Sound region branches. We are a passionate, engaged, and knowledgeable community that cares about the outdoors and protects the outdoor experience for current and future generations. We are also committed to ensuring equitable and sustainable recreation access to the Northwest's public lands and waters.

Mountaineers sea kayaking trips often use Washington Water Trail Association (WWTa) and Cascadia Marine Trail (CMT) sites across all seasons for overnight camping on multi-day paddling adventures, as well as for breaks on day trips. These sites also offer aesthetic value as natural shorelines, provide opportunities to view marine wildlife, and provide paddlers solace and connection to nature. Paddlers from across our branches care deeply about the unique opportunities offered by the Washington Water Trail and Cascadia Marine Trail.

The Mountaineers is excited about WWTa's proposal to develop and publicize a series of Maritime Heritage trails, linking together several regionally adjacent Cascadia Marine Trail sites and other popular Puget Sound paddling sites. Increasing education, outreach, and storytelling opportunities across these water trails will honor our shared maritime culture – especially the history, cultural traditions, and reserved rights of the Indigenous peoples who have stewarded the lands and waters of Salish Sea since time immemorial.

Thank you for considering our full support of the funding and development of these Maritime Heritage trails. Please let me know if there is anything else The Mountaineers can do to support this effort.

Sincerely,



**THE
MOUNTAINEERS**

7700 Sand Point Way NE
Seattle, WA 98115

www.mountaineers.org

Betsy Robblee
Conservation & Advocacy Director
betsyr@mountaineers.org