



February 12, 2025

Senator June Robinson, Chair
Senator Derek Stanford, Vice Chair, Operating
Senator Noel Frame, Vice Chair, Finance
Senator Chris Gildon, Ranking Member, Operating
Senator Nikki Torres, Assistant Ranking Member, Operating
Senate Ways & Means Committee
311 John A. Cherberg Building
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Dear Senators Robinson, Stanford, Frame, Gildon, and Torres:

Outdoor Alliance Washington writes to express our strong support for funding to continue the “State-Tribal Recreation Impacts Initiative” (STRII). STRII is the ongoing collaborative process between state agencies and Tribal Nations to improve the management of outdoor recreation, better protect natural and cultural resources, and preserve protected Tribal rights on state lands.

Outdoor Alliance Washington is a network of member-based organizations representing the human powered outdoor recreation community in Washington and the thousands of Washingtonians who climb, paddle, mountain bike, hike, and enjoy coastal recreation on our state’s public lands and waters. Our members include American Whitewater, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, The Mountaineers, Surfrider Foundation, Washington Climbers Coalition, and Washington Trails Association.

We respectfully request that you fund the following operating budget requests for the STRII in the 2025-2027 biennium budget:

- **WDFW:** \$3.4 million for Tribal capacity grants open to and equally distributed to all applying Tribal governments who wish to engage in the State-Tribal Recreation Impacts Initiative process (included in SB 5167/HB 1198).
- **WDFW:** \$984,000 for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s participation in the STRII, specifically their work to create a statewide data management system with DNR and Parks to make informed management decisions that meet conservation goals for public lands, and collaborate with Tribal governments (included in SB 5167/HB 1198).



- **State Parks:** \$724,000 for Washington State Parks' participation in the STRII, specifically their work to create a statewide data management system and partner with GOIA to identify and award the STRII facilitation contract (included in SB 5167/HB 1198).
- **DNR:** \$637,000 for Washington Department of Natural Resources to provide additional scientific assessment and data management support for the creation of a statewide data management system (not included in SB 5167/HB 1198).

Given the state's budget challenges, we recognize that legislators must make hard decisions while putting together the 2025-2027 operating budget. While our request does not include all the funding for STRII originally requested, it would allow the agencies and Tribes to continue to make progress towards addressing our shared concerns about the impact of outdoor recreation and other stressors on the sustainability of natural and cultural resources. At a minimum, we respectfully request that you provide the level of funding included in SB 5167/HB 1198, the 2025-27 Operating Budget bills (\$1.7 million for the agencies and \$3.4 million for Tribal capacity grants).

Washington's state-managed lands and shorelines provide valuable opportunities for residents and visitors to access the outdoors and support vibrant communities through better health, well-being, jobs, and economic benefits. We respect and share an appreciation for protecting and maintaining our shared lands and waters in partnership with Tribes and Indigenous peoples. The outcomes and processes produced by the STRII process will help create a more sustainable future for Washington's outdoors and the tribal rights and cultural lifeways of its first stewards.

Outdoor Alliance Washington strongly supports maintaining funding for the STRII and believes that this process is critical to the future of sustainable outdoor recreation, protection of natural and cultural resources, and protection and exercise of treaty and tribal rights. For the initiative to succeed, it is essential that the State of Washington provide resources to support Tribal governments for their meaningful engagement in the STRII.

Thank you for including more than \$5 million in the 2023-25 state operating budget to help land managers better protect natural and cultural resources and address tribal concerns about recreation impacts to state lands. The funding secured in the last biennium led to the creation of the STRII in 2023. Since then, the STRII has facilitated legislative, technical, and administrative work between the State and Tribal Nations, but on-going resources are critically needed to continue this process and the important work and progress it is making.

Thank you for your previous support of STRII funding and for considering these important requests in the 2025-27 operating budget. Together, we can achieve a more sustainable future for Washington's public lands and the natural, cultural, and recreational resources they provide.

Sincerely,




Betsy Robblee
Washington Policy Manager
Outdoor Alliance

Cc:

Louis Geltman, Vice President for Policy and Government Relations, Outdoor Alliance
Thomas O'Keefe, Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director, American Whitewater
Eddie Espinosa, Executive Director, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance
Peter Steelquist, Washington Policy Manager, Surfrider Foundation
Betsy Robblee, Conservation and Advocacy Director, The Mountaineers
Taylor Luneau, Board Member, Washington Climbers Coalition
Michael DeCramer, Policy & Planning Manager, Washington Trails Association

