

OUTDOOR ALLIANCE WASHINGTON

April 7, 2025

Representative Timm Ormsby, Chair
Representative Mia Gregerson, Vice Chair
Representative Nicole Macri, Vice Chair
Representative Travis Couture, Ranking Minority Member
Representative April Connors, Assistant Ranking Minority Member
Representative Joshua Penner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member
Representative Joe Schmick, Assistant Ranking Minority Member
House Appropriations Committee
John L. O'Brien Building
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Dear Representatives Ormsby, Gregerson, Macri, Couture, Connors, Penner, and Schmick:

Thank you for your work on the House operating budget amidst a constrained budget environment. 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.

We are concerned that the House operating budget does not include funding for STRII, which would be a significant setback to this collaborative effort to address our shared concerns of the growing impact of outdoor recreation and other stressors on the sustainability of natural and cultural resources. A lack of funding would slow down or even pause the work, limit meaningful Tribal engagement, and delay needed initiatives to protect resources currently being impacted by high visitor use levels.

We respectfully urge you to fund State Parks and WDFW Recreation Impacts at the Senate proposed level of \$724,000 and \$984,000, respectively. This funding would enable State Parks and WDFW to participate in STRII, create a statewide data management system, and fund the STRII facilitation contract. While this funding does not include all the funding originally requested for STRII, it would allow the agencies and Tribes to continue to make progress towards enduring efforts to protect natural and cultural resources and better respect Tribal rights.



Given the state's budget challenges, we recognize that legislators must make hard decisions while putting together the 2025-2027 operating budget. However, we were disappointed that the requested \$3.4 million for Tribal capacity grants to participate in the STRII process was not included in the Senate or House operating budgets. The Governor's budget included this funding in WDFW's budget using revenues from the Climate Commitment Act. For the initiative to succeed, it is essential that tribes experiencing adverse effects from outdoor recreation have the capacity to work with state land managers and contribute their knowledge and expertise towards lasting solutions for improving management and protecting state lands. The nature of this work requires participation by Tribal technical staff whose efforts are already stretched very thin. **Please consider providing \$3.4 million in Climate Commitment Act funding for Tribal capacity grants for all federally recognized Tribal governments who wish to engage in the STRII process.**

Thank you for your previous support of STRII funding and for considering these important requests in the 2025-27 operating budget. 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. 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

Our Organization:

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.

