



February 3, 2026

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

John A. Cherberg Building

P.O. Box 40466

Olympia, WA 98504-0466

Re: Operating Budget Funding to Support the State-Tribal Recreation Impacts Initiative (STRII)

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

Thank you for your work on the Senate operating budget amidst an extremely challenging fiscal environment. Given the state's ongoing budget challenges, we recognize that legislators must make hard decisions while putting together the 2026 supplemental operating budget.

Outdoor Alliance Washington writes to express our strong support for continued investment in the "State-Tribal Recreation Impacts Initiative" (STRII). We urge inclusion of funding to support Tribal participation, third-party facilitation, and sustained engagement by Washington's land and wildlife agencies in the STRII process, including \$2.125 million (CCA) for Tribal capacity grants and \$172,000 (CCA) for facilitation services, in your 2026 supplemental operating budget.

The State-Tribal Recreation Impacts Initiative (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. 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. As a network of organizations representing more than 75,000 climbers, hikers, mountain bikers, whitewater paddlers, and coastal recreationists, we

recognize the importance of studying and mitigating impacts from outdoor recreation on public lands in a way that supports Tribal rights and cultural lifeways.

Governor Ferguson's proposed 2026 supplemental operating budget includes \$2.125 million in the Department of Fish and Wildlife's budget for one-time funding for Tribal capacity grants to support the engagement of Tribes in the STRII process. The budget also includes \$172,000 to continue third-party facilitation services of the STRII process in State Parks' budget. Both of these requests are proposed to be funded by Climate Commitment Act dollars.

We support these funding requests, as investments in facilitation of – and Tribal participation in – STRII, are key to maintaining a thriving process and securing meaningful outcomes to protect and sustain the health of Washington's state lands. The proposed funding also honors the formal request, voiced by Tribal leaders through the Centennial Accord process, for meaningful engagement with state agencies regarding recreation planning and impacts. We urge you to include this funding in your 2026 supplemental operating budget.

We also encourage the Committee to consider dedicated funding to support continued engagement by Washington State Parks, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Department of Fish and Wildlife in the STRII process. These agencies carry the responsibility of representing the State's interests and obligations in government-to-government dialogue with Tribal Nations, including stewardship of public lands and management of outdoor recreation on behalf of Washington's residents. Without dedicated funding, their ability to participate meaningfully in this work is extremely limited. We urge the Committee to consider sustained support for agency engagement in STRII as this collaborative process continues.

Outdoor Alliance Washington strongly supports STRII funding 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.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Betsy Robblee  
Washington Policy Manager, Outdoor Alliance  
Conservation & Advocacy Director, The Mountaineers



Thomas O'Keefe  
Director of Policy & Science  
American Whitewater



Eddie Espinosa  
Executive Director  
Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance



Peter Steelquist  
Washington Policy Manager  
Surfrider Foundation



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, and Washington Trails Association.

