



October 28, 2020

Tor Bell
Field Programs Director
Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust
2701 First Avenue, Suite 240
Seattle, WA 98121

Dear Mr. Bell,

I am writing on behalf of Access Fund, The Mountaineers, and Washington Climbers Coalition to express our strong support for the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust's *Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail Maintenance 2021* grant application (#20-2281) which has been submitted to the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office.

Our organizations and the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust have worked collaboratively to improve and maintain recreational trails at popular climbing areas in the Greenway such as the Far Side crags out of the Dirty Harry's Peak Trailhead and Little Si within the Mount Si Natural Resources Conservation Area. This project builds on that commitment and will provide opportunities to share the load of maintenance associated with an increase in recreation at and around popular climbing areas.

There are more than 1,000 miles of wildland trails within the Mountains to Sound Greenway. These trails (many accessible year-round) are among the most heavily used in Washington state, with more than 3,000,000 people living within a 45-minute drive of Greenway trails. Several of the trails to be maintained through this project see well over 150,000 hikers annually. Trail maintenance funding has dwindled through the years and has resulted in a significant trail maintenance backlog. Highly-concentrated public trail use amplifies this backlog, leading to environmental damage and creating significant public safety concerns. Support from the Recreational Trails Program is crucial to the ongoing trail maintenance work in the Greenway.

Access Fund, The Mountaineers, and Washington Climbers Coalition have long supported the Mountains to Sound Greenway and the collaborative efforts to improve recreational access in the Middle Fork and across the Greenway. This proposal represents a significant enhancement of recreational access opportunities to the spectacular Mountains to Sound Greenway and we strongly support it.

Sincerely,

Joe Sambataro, Northwest Regional Director

Access Fund

joe@accessfund.org

accessfund.org

Ashley Siple, President

Washington Climbers Coalition

ahsiple@gmail.com

washingtonclimbers.org

Betsy Robblee, Conservation & Advocacy Director

The Mountaineers

betsyr@mountaineers.org

mountaineers.org