

THE MOUNTAINEERS ADVOCACY AGENDA

Advocating to protect public lands and the outdoor experience



Mountaineers on the descent from Sahale Peak. Photo by Heather DeVries.

Mountaineers have always been fierce advocates for the natural world. Early Mountaineers advocated to protect lands and waters of the Pacific Northwest, including Olympic National Park, North Cascades National Park, and the Alpine Lakes Wilderness.

Today, our donor-funded conservation work empowers our staff and more than 16,000 members to speak up on behalf of the natural landscapes that make our adventures possible.

Why Advocacy

Without conserved lands and waters, climate-resilient landscapes, and sustainable access to these places, our organization and the opportunities we provide would cease to exist.

What We Advocate For

We [advocate](#) for conservation and recreation policies that protect public lands and responsible recreation access. The Mountaineers advocacy agenda prioritizes four key issue areas: landscape conservation, climate action, public lands funding, and sustainable and equitable outdoor access.

What We Prioritize

We protect the landscapes and ecosystems where we recreate and the outdoor experiences these places provide.

- The majority of our focus is on national public lands including national forests and parks, as nearly two-thirds of Mountaineers outdoor activities take place on federal lands.
- We engage strategically on issues affecting Washington's state-managed lands and waters.
- We rarely engage in county and local issues, and only where multiple Mountaineers programs and priorities intersect.

How We Advocate

From Washington state to Washington D.C., we educate, organize, and lobby to influence public policy and land management by:

- Shaping solutions-oriented legislation that protects public lands and the outdoor experience.
- Investing in relationships with legislators, land managers, and tribes.
- Engaging in land planning processes and public comment opportunities.
- Leading and participating in partnerships and coalitions to amplify our impact.
- Empowering outdoor enthusiasts to take action on current issues.



Top: Dungeness River Valley, Olympic National Forest. Photo by U.S. Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region. **Bottom:** Mountaineers staff and partners lobbying in Washington, D.C.



ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

| | WHY | HOW | WHAT |
|---|---|---|---|
| Landscape Conservation | Mountaineers rely on conserved public lands and waters for our outdoor adventures and the many other benefits they provide | <p>Advocate for administrative and legislative protections for public lands and waters while maintaining and improving sustainable recreation access</p> <p>Advocate against precedent-setting efforts to sell off or develop federal lands</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wild Olympics Wilderness and Wild & Scenic Rivers Act • Protect Washington's Roadless Areas • Northwest national forest planning |
| Public Lands Funding | In the face of intensifying climate change impacts, a significantly reduced federal land manager workforce, and increasing recreational use, public land managers need robust funding to protect our natural spaces | Advocate for robust state and federal funding to support operations, deferred maintenance, recreation planning, and capital projects and respond to impacts from federal agency workforce reductions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and federal land management agency appropriations • Great American Outdoors Act Legacy Restoration Fund Reauthorization • Land & Water Conservation Fund and Washington Wildlife & Recreation Program funding |
| Sustainable & Equitable Outdoor Access | When we connect people to place, we build advocates for public lands and the outdoor experience | Advocate for sustainable and equitable outdoor recreation access to public lands and waters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the EXPLORE Act and the SOAR Act • State and federal sustainable recreation policy • No Child Left Inside funding • Federal and state land planning processes |
| Climate Action | The climate crisis is an existential threat to the future of our organization and the planet | Advocate for state and federal climate policy that makes public lands and waters part of climate solutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defending the success of the Inflation Reduction Act and Washington's Climate Commitment Act • Advocate for investments to decrease the carbon footprint of Mountaineers facilities and operations |





Mountaineers enjoying a sunny paddle in the Salish Sea. Photo by Cathie Frizalone.

Why We're Effective

The Mountaineers is uniquely positioned to have an outsized advocacy impact. What sets us apart from similar organizations?

- **Authenticity:** We speak with an authentic voice. Our community of outdoor enthusiasts has a personal connection to place that makes them powerful advocates for conservation.
- **Nonpartisan:** We have a reputation for being moderate, pragmatic, and for working across party lines, increasing our ability to get things done.
- **High Engagement:** When we ask our community to speak up, they take action in high numbers, making policymakers take notice.
- **Amplified Impact:** Our authentic engagement is backed by strong partnerships and deep policy expertise. We team up with like-minded organizations to achieve wins we couldn't on our own.

How to Get Involved

Your voice is powerful!

Sign up for Conservation Currents. We share current advocacy issues and action alerts in our [monthly newsletter](#).

Take action. Our [action alerts](#) make it easy for you to personalize and send a message to your representatives.

Learn more. Learn more about conservation and advocacy through our [conservation eLearning courses](#) and our [Conservation 101](#) series blog posts.

Support this work. [Make a donation](#) to protect public lands and the outdoor experience.

"There's a reason why The Mountaineers is one of REI's most enduring partners. The Mountaineers is a preeminent outdoor education and recreation organization in the Pacific Northwest, and is well respected for its mission to help people explore and protect the outdoors. As one of the only recreation organizations in Washington state who actively engages in federal public land management issues, The Mountaineers is a unifying force for the larger outdoor recreation community."

—Alicia Harive, Head of Community and Government Affairs, REI Co-op



Climbing trip to Frenchman Coulee, Columbia Basin Wildlife Area, Vantage, WA. Photo by Steve McClure.

"Climate change, chronic underfunding of land managers, and sweeping cuts to the federal agency workforce are impacting our special outdoor places. We need more Mountaineers to advocate to protect our public lands and waters, the climate, and the outdoor experience. The power of your personal connection to the outdoors can help provide a more sustainable future for new generations of outdoor enthusiasts."

—Roger Mellem, Chair, Mountaineers Conservation & Advocacy Committee



THE MOUNTAINEERS

Helping people explore, conserve, learn about, and enjoy the lands and waters of the Pacific Northwest and beyond.