



July 22, 2020

Recreation and Conservation Office  
P.O. Box 40917  
Olympia, Washington 98504-0917

**RE: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Grant Application #20-1433**

Dear evaluation committee members,

The 26 undersigned conservation organizations, local businesses and elected officials are writing to support Washington State Parks' acquisition of the Mt. Washington Trail property, an inholding in the Olallie State Park in the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area. This is an important opportunity to protect a popular climbing and hiking destination in the future and provide management for sustainable outdoor recreation, scenic values and wildlife habitat.

Many of our organizations have supported sustainable recreation opportunities on Washington's public lands including the Mt. Baker Snoqualmie National Forest and within our state park system. According to the Outdoor Industry Association, each year in Washington, outdoor recreation generates \$26.2 billion in consumer spending and 200,000 direct jobs. The steady flow of visitors is critical to the economies of local communities like North Bend, Snoqualmie and Issaquah. Visitors stop to spend money on meals, buy groceries, purchase gear, sign up for paddling, horseback riding, backpacking, mountain biking or other recreational trips, and stay overnight at hotels and vacation rentals in towns that are the gateways to our public lands.

Olallie State Park is in the heart of the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area. Each season, thousands of hikers and rock climbers unknowingly traverse this private property on their way to Mt. Washington's stunning summit or on route to one of its many prized climbing destinations. This 150-acre inholding contains about one mile of the Mt. Washington Trail, whose summit offers views of Mt. Rainier and the Cedar River Watershed. In attracting hikers to this property, the trail relieves pressure on nearby popular hiking trails and provides a hiking only route to the peak of Mt. Washington, reducing conflicts with mountain bikers on the adjacent Olallie Trail. Moreover, it provides access to the Mt. Washington Climbing Area, one the most popular rock climbing areas in the region, with over 70 sport climbing routes. While the landowner currently allows public access, there is no formal agreement in place to ensure continued public access, nor is an alternative access point possible due to the area's topography. Given that the property is expected to change hands in coming years, it is important to act now to ensure the protection of this public resource into perpetuity.

With this grant, Washington State Parks, along with The Trust for Public Land and the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, will at long last secure permanent public access for the Mt. Washington Trail and the Mt. Washington Climbing Area for all Olallie State Park users. The project will ensure that this iconic landscape of forest, waterfalls and wildlife habitat is protected. This project is truly unique within the Mountains to Sound Greenway, and will benefit hikers, rock climbers, and other visitors throughout the region.

We are pleased to support Washington State Parks' acquisition of the Olallie Thompson inholding.

Sincerely,

Tom Uniack  
Executive Director  
Washington Wild

Mary Lou Pauly  
Mayor  
City of Issaquah

Barbara de Michele  
Cit Councilmember  
City of Issaquah

Amy Brockhaus  
Deputy Director  
Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust

Rick McGuire  
President  
Alpine Lakes Protection Society (ALPS)

Lara Zahaba  
Co-Owner | Marketing & Communications  
Stoup Brewing

Annalise Wille  
Co-Founder  
Women for Wild Lands

Kathleen S Gobush  
Mt Baker-Snoqualmie Forest Lead  
Conservation Northwest

Yvonne Kraus  
Executive Director  
Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance

Haley Keller  
Co-Owner  
Peddler Brewing Co

Mark Burr  
Co-founder/General Manager  
Jellyfish Brewing Company

Lindsay Frickle  
Executive Director  
Issaquah Alps Trails Club

Craig Nobley  
General Manager  
Lighthouse Roasters

Matt Larson  
Mayor  
City of Snoqualmie

Stacy Goodman  
City Councilmember  
City of Issaquah

Mike Town  
State Forest Committee Member  
Sierra Club- WA Chapter

Kelsey, Ben, Liz & Craig Curran  
Owners  
Watershed Pub & Kitchen

Phil Fenner  
President  
North Cascades Conservation Council

Jack Guinn  
General Manager/Co-Owner  
Hellbent Brewing Company

Mark Boyar  
President  
Middle Fork Outdoor Recreation Coalition (MidFORC)

Tony Ridgeway  
Board President  
Flying Bike Cooperative Brewery

Charlie Clark  
Director of Impact  
MiiR

Raymond Kwan & Barry Chan  
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Tom O'Keefe  
Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director  
American Whitewater

