



The **Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition** is Washington's **chief advocate for local conservation and recreation projects** across the state. For 30 years, we have been the steadfast champion for the **Washington Wildlife & Recreation Program (WWRP)**, joining diverse voices for our great outdoors. In addition to the WWRP, we support select other legislative efforts to increase recreation and habitat lands and ensure equitable access for all Washingtonians.

FULL FUNDING for Washington Wildlife & Recreation Program

- **The Coalition asks the Legislature for Full Funding** for the WWRP in the 2023-25 Capital Budget for outdoor recreation and conservation projects around the state. This would total to be approximately **\$158 million in Capital Budget funding**.
- Use of Washington's outdoor spaces is at **an all time high**, as state residents raced for outdoor spaces to have safe, healthy fun during the COVID19 pandemic. With demand for outdoor recreation rising and state population continuing to grow, acquiring new spaces and increasing services and maintenance is **critical** to keep them safe and well maintained.
- The WWRP grant program is **crucial for conservation** across the state to preserve habitat and mitigate the environmental impact of our growing population and the rise in usage of parks, trails and natural spaces due to outdoor recreation. We must take care of the ecosystems that sustain us, and provide funding for restoration for **the future of Washington's outdoors**.
- Investment is critical for our **economy**, for our **environment**, for **working lands**, and for **critical fish and wildlife habitat** around the state.

Planning & Access Grants to Address Equity

- Planning for parks and recreation projects can be a complicated, confusing, and time-intensive process. That means it is especially challenging for **smaller and under-resourced communities**, including **communities of color and rural communities**, to plan for recreation and conservation projects.
- This is an issue of **equity** and one highlighted in the recently completed **equity review**.
- More funding should be allocated for this work, as there is demonstrated demand and because the RCO Planning for Recreation and Access program serves as a **key data source and learning opportunity** to carry on the equity review recommendations brought forward.
- We encourage the Legislature to provide an **additional amount of up to \$10 million in Capital Budget funding** to fully fund Planning for Recreation Access Grants.