



## Thank you for \$120 Million in WWRP Funding

- The record-setting \$120 million allocated by the Legislature in 2023 is an important investment in our outdoors.
- This funding went to over 100 projects across the state, building local parks, preserving wildlife habitat, sustaining working lands, and restoring damaged ecosystems.
- At a time when recreation is rapidly increasing and our environment is facing growing challenges, this investment is critical.
- **We express our deep gratitude to the Legislature for this critical funding!**

## Equity Positions at State HEAL Agencies

- Requests the legislature appropriate funding for each HEAL agency to hire a dedicated staff person to ensure CCA-funded grant programs from that department address equity properly.
  - HEAL Agencies = Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Ecology, Health, Natural Resources, Transportation, and the Puget Sound Partnership.
- One of the Environmental Justice Council recommendations for Climate Commitment Act (CCA) investments
- This funding would be great for equity work moving forward and for consistency between agencies on this work. Additional context can be found at [this link](#), under Section 9 “Reducing Barriers to Grant Programs”.
- **The Governor’s budget included \$253,000 for the Dept. of Commerce, but not all HEAL Agencies.**

## Community Forests Program Funding

- Last year, the funding appropriated by the legislature left out two projects on the list
- If these projects, Hoquiam Community Forest and Lagoon Point Community Forest, do not receive funding this year, we may lose the opportunity to protect hundreds of acres of forestland that provides critical habitat and recreational access, in addition to support for local economies.
- RCO is requesting \$5.78 million in Supplemental Capital Budget funding for Community Forests Grant program. The Washington Association of Land Trusts also supports this request.
- **The Governor’s supplemental capital budget included \$5.78 million for this program.**

## Collective Agreements for WDFW Volunteer Partnerships

- This bill gives express authority for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to develop contracts and agreements with organizations for volunteer work on WDFW-managed lands.
- Many organizations already help out in trail maintenance and habitat maintenance – this would ensure that both DFW and those orgs (like WTA to name one) would be protected from liability through protections in the contracts and agreements.
- **SB 5785**, Sponsors: Warnick, Shewmake, Liias, Mullet, Nobles, Saldaña, Van De Wege

## Parks RX Pilot Programs

- Seeking a directive that the Department of Health establish three (3) or more pilot "Parks Rx" programs in the Puget Sound, Eastern Washington, and SW Washington.
  - Working directly with healthcare providers, Park Rx makes it easy for providers to prescribe parks and natural areas to their patients in a clinical practice setting.
- This builds from a DOH study indicating that Parks Rx programs would add **health care and quality of life** value to Washingtonians, particularly those from lower-income and historically disadvantaged communities.
- We support **SB 5095/HB 1718**, as requested by Metro Parks Tacoma and the WRPA.
  - Senate Sponsors: Nobles, Lovelett, Cleveland, Hasegawa, Keiser, Liias, Nguyen, Randall, Saldaña, Salomon, Shewmake, Trudeau, Van De Wege, Wilson, C.
  - House Sponsors: Rule, Mena, Leavitt, Paul, Bronoske, Lekanoff, Reed, Pollet, Timmons

## Renewing and Updating the Outdoor Economic Study

- The last update to the Economic Analysis Of Outdoor Recreation In Washington State occurred in April of 2020 and used pre-pandemic data. An update to the study is crucial to capture the boom and surge in outdoor recreation.
- **The Governor's budget included the \$150,000 funding request from RCO in in his budget.**

## Forest Health Restoration Investment

- Eastern Washington's forested landscapes face a forest health crisis. WDFW has made significant progress towards restoration of 100,000 acres over the past several biennium, with over 23,000 acres treated to date, but work remains.
- Unfortunately, only \$4 million of WDFW's \$6 million request was funded by the legislature in the 2023 legislative session.
- **The Governor's budget included the \$2 million in operating funding.**

## Reinvesting Account Revenue to Support State Parks

- This bill puts interest from State Parks generated revenue back into funding State Parks.
- Interest revenue will fund the Parks Renewal and Stewardship Account, the Snowmobile Account, the Winter Recreation Program Account, and the Parkland Acquisition Account based on how the revenue was originally earned.
- **SB 5902**. Sponsors: Van De Wege, Liias, Mullet, Nobles, Saldaña, Wagoner

## Establishing a DNR Recreational Fee System

- This bill allows Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to establish a permit and fee system for activities on DNR lands, similar to State Parks and WDFW.
- This will increase transparency, allow smaller organizations to reserve space and use land more clearly, and give DNR more data for managing how much impact is happening to the land.
- More information can be found under **HB 2165/SB 6043**
  - Senate Sponsors: Salomon, Muzzall, Saldaña, Van De Wege
  - House Sponsors: Kloba, Waters, Reeves