Providing Recreation andConserving Washington’s Rich Natural Heritage

The Legislature created the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program in 1990 as a way to accomplish the following two goals:

- Acquire valuable recreation and habitat lands before they are lost to development.
- Develop recreation areas for a growing population.

These goals remain important today because Washington’s population has grown by 58 percent since 1990 and is expected to grow another 15 percent to nearly 9 million people by 2040.¹

Today the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program is the state’s largest grant program for local parks and many other types of outdoor recreation. Grants fund local and state parks, trails, and water access areas. In addition, grants fund conservation of rare and unique wildlife habitat as well as working farms and forests.

The investment reaps rewards. Outdoor recreation in Washington generates about $26.5 billion in expenditures and supports 264,000 jobs, rivaling the aerospace industry.² In Washington, 1 in 17 jobs is tied to outdoor recreation spending.

A Proud Legacy

The Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program is unique in the nation for its variety of funding categories and competitive evaluation process. In addition, grant recipients only may buy land sold willingly by landowners. All land acquired or developed with these grants must remain in recreation or conservation status forever, protecting the State’s investment and ensuring Washington’s rich natural heritage remains intact.
Ensuring Only the Best Projects are Funded

The grant process is open and competitive. The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board accepts applications in even-numbered years. Committees, made up of people experienced in recreation and conservation issues, score projects based and submit ranked lists to the board for consideration. The board then submits prioritized lists of projects to the Governor and Legislature for approval and funding.

Categories of Grants

**RECREATION**
- Local parks
- State lands development and renovation
- State parks
- Trails
- Water access

**CONSERVATION**
- Critical habitat
- Natural areas
- Riparian protection
- Urban wildlife habitat
- State lands restoration and enhancement

**WORKING LANDS**
- Farmland preservation
- Forestland preservation

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February 2021