



GOVERNOR'S BLUE RIBBON PARKS & OUTDOOR RECREATION TASK FORCE | FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNOR INSLEE

September 19, 2014

***"We want our children to
experience, enjoy, learn about,
and become lifetime stewards
of Washington's magnificent
natural resources."***

- Governor Jay Inslee

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation, the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office is pleased to submit this final report to Governor Inslee. It represents thoughtful engagement throughout the six-month process and over 3,700 comments gathered from stakeholders and citizens from across the State. The 29 members were supported by the Recreation and Conservation Office and their consultant partners. We wish to thank Governor Inslee, task force members, stakeholders, and the public for their time and commitment to this process. The collective insight and perspective is captured in this report.

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Cover Photo: Courtesy of YMCA, June 2013.

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***Outdoor recreation
begins at our
front door.***

Setting the Context

Why focus on the outdoors?

Outdoor recreation begins at our front door: Riding off on our bicycle, tossing the ball with neighborhood kids, and walking with friends and perhaps an eager furry companion. From this gateway, our recreation pursuits grow with organized sports, family camping trips, and adventures in the outdoors on foot, horses, mountain bikes, and motorized vehicles. Outdoor recreation strengthens families and builds communities. It fosters physical and mental fitness and health. It builds self-esteem, teaches problem solving and leadership skills, enhances environmental awareness, and provides enjoyment and spiritual fulfillment. Outdoor recreation is therapeutic, providing an escape from stressful daily life.

Outdoor recreation is not just fun and games. Outdoor recreation is essential to who we are and our quality of life, and it strengthens our sense of what it means to be a community.

The benefits of outdoor recreation are more than personal. They affect all of society, translating into reductions in health care costs, reductions in absenteeism in the work place, and decreases in juvenile crime. Recreating outside leads to people placing a value on natural places and believing it is important to keep them available for today's and future generations.

Outdoor recreation also is a huge stimulus to our state's economy. Buying those walking shoes, backpacks, bicycles, fishing rods, boats, skis, and snowmobiles provides thousands of jobs in manufacturing, wholesaling, and retailing. The economic contribution to Washington from the outdoor recreation is significant, estimated at \$22.5 billion annually by the Outdoor Industry Association. Travel for recreation boosts the economy of gateway communities through the purchase of gas, food, accommodations, outfitting, and other services.

Why act now?

We stand poised at a critical moment in time. We can, and must act now to ensure the stewardship of our parks and public lands, to inspire our children to live a life grounded in recreation in the great outdoors, and to nurture a vital and growing business sector. This was the premise when Governor Jay Inslee established the Blue Ribbon task force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation. We journeyed around the state, listened to hundreds of people who took time out of their busy lives to show up and speak, and read thousands of comments submitted via e-mail and through an online town hall.

What we heard universally confirmed the importance of acting now before the very qualities that make Washington the great state we love are lost. Everything we stand to gain from bold, transformational initiatives is also everything we stand to lose if we do not demonstrate leadership and a commitment to:

Healthier people – Experiencing and recreating in the outdoors contributes to both mental and physical health for everyone from our children to returning veterans and aging Baby Boomers.

Stronger communities – Communities that invest in parks, trails, and other outdoor spaces offer the quality of life that helps every resident thrive, and gives them a competitive edge in the quest for business creation, recruitment, and retention.

A thriving economy – From research to manufacturing to retail sales to services, an entire business spectrum rests on the quality of our parks, public lands, and recreational opportunities. Not only does recreation support direct employment, it also serves as a star attraction for recruitment of new businesses and the talented workforce needed to build every business sector. Washington residents essentially receive a "second paycheck" in the form of our unparalleled outdoor recreation opportunities.

This is why the task force asks Governor Inslee and the Legislature to invest attention and state funding to protect and enhance the value of outdoor recreation. Washington simply would not be Washington without its great outdoors and abundant recreational opportunities.

Challenges and Opportunities

Washingtonians from every part of the state and from every background share our passion for the outdoors and for all that the outdoors contributes to our economy and quality of life. We heard from thousands of residents that we must not take this for granted. If we do, our personal health, our businesses, our cities and towns, and our entire state will suffer the consequences. Future generations will ask us how we could have wasted such an incredible opportunity. And it is incredible. Washington is one of the most beautiful states in the nation and showcases a wide and wild profusion of mountains, forests, grasslands, islands, beaches, parks, and every type of water, from lakes and rivers to the Puget Sound and the Pacific Coast. Our outdoor spaces inspire us to move, to gaze, to explore, and to experience.

That is, the outdoors inspire us if we can find time and access; if we have the means to travel safely and conveniently; if we have had the opportunity to learn to camp, fish, snowshoe, ride a horse, bike, snowmobile, or climb; and if those places are open and available rather than closed for lack of maintenance. These are the threats we heard while identifying the strengths and opportunities that abound.

The threats are quite real. Washington is growing rapidly on every front, placing a strain on outdoor spaces already stressed by financial and policy constraints that threaten our recreation infrastructure and outdoor programs.

When we began our work, we knew some of the challenges to the future of our parks and outdoor spaces. We expected to identify barriers that keep people from getting outdoors, issues of coordination between levels of government, and opportunities lost and assets diminished by lack of funding. What we did not realize fully was the extent to which we also would discover an economic powerhouse—the outdoor engine of the Washington economy.

Washington's Outdoor Assets

Just as we invest in education and transportation, we must recognize that Washington's outdoors—and our enjoyment of it—represents one of the state's most significant assets. Businesses choose to locate and grow here, talented and hardworking people choose to live and contribute here, in no small part because they get an extra return on their investment every day from our outdoor spaces and our natural assets. Our parks and outdoor opportunities make people healthy and provide jobs across the state.

FINANCIAL UNCERTAINTY PUTS STATE PARK'S LEGACY AT RISK

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, in a 2012 report, stated "financial uncertainty puts State Park's legacy at risk." (*Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission in State of State Parks 2012, a report to the Office of Financial Management*)

The report points out the decline in state general fund support from \$94 million in the 2007-09 budget, to only \$14 million in the 2013-15 budget. This resulted in reductions in park personnel and services and an increase in the backlog of maintenance work. Revenues from the Discover Pass were intended to make up the difference, but revenues have not lived up to expectations.

One of the common themes we heard is that providing outdoor recreation opportunities should be seen as an essential government service—as important as providing transportation, police and fire protection. And there are many ways that federal, state, and local governments can improve those services to make them easier to access, more available to users, as well as more attractive to people who, for whatever reason, are not taking advantage of them. Improving services and removing barriers to outdoor recreation will require a range of actions, including providing strong leadership to change policies and programs administered by public recreation providers and shifting state funding priorities. Some actions can and should be accomplished soon, while others will require additional planning to be implemented in the next 3 to 5 years.

A Call to Action

To increase the participation in outdoor recreation and the resulting social and economic benefits, the task force identified five priority action areas, and within those action areas twelve high priority near-term actions. In addition to these high-priority actions, the report includes recommendations for long-term actions and recommendations for federal lands.

Grow the outdoor recreation economy

- **ACTION 1** – Designate and support outdoor recreation as a specific industry within Washington’s economic development strategy and create an outdoor recreation sector lead position within the Department of Commerce.

Lead the way to outdoor recreation

- **ACTION 2** – Establish an outdoor recreation coordinating council consisting of federal, state, nonprofit and private sector representatives to serve as the state’s cross-agency leader on outdoor recreation.

Inspire an outdoor recreation culture

- **ACTION 3** – Provide funding for the No Child Left Inside grant program.
- **ACTION 4** – Incorporate outdoor recreation into the kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12) core curriculum in physical education, scientific inquiry, technology, environmental and physical sciences, and public service.
- **ACTION 5** – Diversify appointees to state boards and commissions whose work connects with outdoor recreation.

Open more outdoor recreation opportunities

- **ACTION 6** – Enact the marine tourism legislation

Sustain our outdoor recreation assets

- **ACTION 7** – Retain the Discover Pass until a long-term, dedicated funding source can replace Discover Pass revenues. In the mean time, continue to improve the administration of the Discover Pass to improve service to the customer and enhance revenues.
- **ACTION 8** – The task force recommends the following sources of revenues to meet the needs of State Parks, Department of Natural Resources and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and to support the actions recommended in this report: an annual motor home and travel trailer excise tax; a sales tax on bottled water; and the watercraft excise tax.
- **ACTION 9** – Fund the Youth Athletic Facilities grant program. Bond funds should be used for this capital investment.
- **ACTION 10** – Retain current law (Revised Code of Washington 82.46) and repeal the sunset clause, so that the real estate excise tax can continue to be used for local parks maintenance. This law is scheduled to sunset December 31, 2016.
- **ACTION 11** – Continue to fund and protect current outdoor recreation grant programs, including the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Boating Facilities Program, Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicles Account, and others administered by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board.
- **ACTION 12** – Remove the 23-cent cap on the portion of the gas tax attributed to off-road recreation that is transferred to the dedicated accounts for off-road vehicles (Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities program), boating (Boating Facilities Program), and the snowmobiling grant program.

Priority Action Areas

1 | Grow the Outdoor Recreation Economy

Outdoor recreation is a major contributor to Washington's economy. A study conducted by the Outdoor Industry Association in 2012 found that outdoor recreation in Washington resulted in \$22.5 billion in consumer expenditures, producing 227,000 jobs, and generating \$1.6 billion in state and local tax revenues¹. An economic study currently under way using different methodology provided a conservative, preliminary estimate of \$20.4 billion in direct recreation-related expenditures². For perspective, the gross domestic product for Washington State in 2012 was \$376 billion. These revenues and jobs flow in part from Washington companies that design, develop, and sell products that make it easier and more enjoyable to get outside. The state's innovators include the creative minds at these gear and apparel companies. Just as important, much of the revenue and many of the jobs supported by outdoor recreation stem from the attractiveness of our outdoor destinations. Frequently, those outdoor destinations—those great places to play and the associated jobs—are in or near rural communities.

Data on consumer spending is gathered and reported by the state and federal government, categorized by industry sector. Data on outdoor recreation must be disentangled from other sources. For example, retail sales data are categorized by the type of business, so sales data from department stores are reported as a single number. Thus it is not possible to separate sales of, for example, kitchen appliances and sporting goods. To quantify spending associated with outdoor recreation requires determining the recreation-related portion of sales from a number of different industry sectors, including restaurants, gas stations, lodging facilities, sporting goods, and department stores. Nationally, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and some states are separating travel and tourism spending. In Washington, economic data on outdoor recreation businesses is estimated using visitation counts, special surveys, and econometric modeling.

ACTION 1 – Designate and support outdoor recreation as a specific industry within Washington's economic development strategy and create an outdoor recreation sector lead position within the Department of Commerce.

Given the size and role of the outdoor recreation sector, the task force strongly recommends that Washington State designate outdoor recreation as a specific industry within Washington's economic development strategy. Just as Washington is a world leader in information technology and aerospace, and just as it seeks to cultivate world leadership in other sectors, our state can be a world leader in outdoor gear and apparel design and development, as well as in providing world class outdoor experiences. By placing outdoor recreation among the top tier of state

¹ Outdoor Industry Association, 2012.

² Earth Economics in a letter to the Recreation and Conservation Office, September 9, 2014. The final report is due December 31, 2014.

sectors, policymakers not only will acknowledge its appropriate place, but also can begin to work with the private sector to evolve economic development strategies that more deliberately grow employment and outdoor businesses. This deliberate approach to growing the sector should work hand-in-glove with efforts of the Washington Tourism Alliance to promote in-state, domestic, and international travel and tourism.

To accomplish this, a sector lead staff position should be established at the Department of Commerce. The sector lead would provide support and technical assistance to existing and new outdoor recreation businesses to grow this valuable sector and would represent the Department of Commerce on the outdoor recreation coordinating council proposed below.

Outdoor recreation related tourism is an important economic driver. Many states—particularly in the West—are stepping up their marketing and promotion of outdoor recreation opportunities. Examples include Colorado (www.colorado.com), Utah (www.utah.com), Montana (<http://visitmt.com>), Arizona (www.visitarizona.com), Oregon (<http://traveloregon.com/7wonders/>), and Nevada (<http://travelnevada.com>.) Washington's many and diverse outdoor wonders are equally, if not more compelling, and deserve to be touted. Coordination and improvement of marketing and promotion by supporting the tourism marketing programs of the Washington Tourism Alliance, and establishing an outdoor recreation sector lead position at the Department of Commerce position are suggested as one objective of the outdoor recreation coordinating council.

The task force estimates the cost to support an outdoor recreation sector lead within the Department of Commerce for the 2015-2017 biennium will be \$275,000.

Recommendations for the Future

The task force's subcommittee on economic development (see Appendix VII) conducted extensive outreach among business interests and user groups across the state. Those conversations yielded a range of more detailed and sometimes longer-term objectives. For instance, an intensified focus on growing the outdoor recreation economy would include:

- Providing assistance to smaller towns in planning, designing, building, and marketing outdoor recreation opportunities in their area, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations when appropriate.
- Continuing to educate public officials that recreation can be a key contributor to the economic well-being of Washington and generates important benefits for public, community, and environmental health.
- Increasing and better coordinating the promotion of Washington's many, diverse recreation opportunities to attract more travelers from overseas, across the nation, and within Washington, and to show that our amazing quality of life is a great reason to build businesses and families here. Utah offers a good example.

2 | Lead the Way to Outdoor Recreation

The task force finds a huge need for communication and coordination across local, state, federal, tribal, and nongovernmental providers of outdoor recreation lands, facilities, and programs. In addition, there is a need to collaborate with public health and healthcare providers to promote outdoor recreation as a way to improve health and reduce medical costs, and with educators involved in physical and outdoor education.

ACTION 2 – Establish an outdoor recreation coordinating council consisting of federal, state, nonprofit and private sector representatives to serve as the state's cross-agency leader on outdoor recreation.

The task force recommends that the State of Washington establish an outdoor recreation coordinating council consisting of representatives from state and federal recreation land management agencies, the Departments of Health and Commerce, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and private and nonprofit providers of tourism and recreation-related services, including the Washington Tourism Alliance.

The coordinating council would be staffed by an outdoor recreation executive coordinator. The executive coordinator would communicate and coordinate across jurisdictional boundaries and among all types of recreation service providers. The executive coordinator would act as a convener and administrator for the coordinating council, and in addition, establish and administer an advisory group composed of recreation professionals and people representing a wide range of outdoor recreational activities and interests. The coordinating council and advisory group would:

- Better coordinate the promotion of Washington's diverse outdoor recreation opportunities to help attract more travelers from out of the country, across the nation, and within Washington, and to show that our amazing quality of life is a great reason to build businesses and families here.
- Work with the Washington Tourism Alliance and other tourism organizations to feature outdoor recreation opportunities in their marketing and promotional efforts and support their overall tourism marketing programs.
- Collaborate with public health and healthcare providers to promote outdoor recreation as a way to improve health and reduce healthcare costs.
- Collaborate with primary and secondary education providers to help integrate outdoor education into the core curriculum and physical education programs.
- Collaborate with non-governmental organizations that provide outdoor recreation experiences to underserved communities and help these organizations be more effective.
- Work with transportation and urban planners to create healthier, greener, bikable, and walkable communities and address access to recreational opportunities.

- Work with state agencies beyond those already involved in recreation, to instill an outdoor recreation approach to meeting specific agency goals wherever possible.
- Guide conservation and habitat investments in ways that also support outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Work with state, federal, and private land managers to address barriers to accessing recreation lands. Some examples include permit limitations for commercial and nonprofit groups and events, access passes, road closures, and other barriers to recreation.
- Work with federal, state, and local recreation, urban, and transportation planners to address social, demographic, economic, and cultural trends in outdoor recreation in Washington.
- Provide the organizational mechanism to oversee the further refinement and implementation of this action plan, as requested in the Governor's Executive Order.
- Advocacy, beyond facilitating the coordination of marketing and promotional efforts, would be left to non-governmental organizations.
- The task force estimates the cost to support the executive coordinator and administer the outdoor recreation coordinating council for the 2015-2017 biennium will be \$500,000.

EXAMPLE: IDAHO RECREATION AND TOURISM INITIATIVE

The Idaho Recreation and Tourism Initiative (IRTI) is a coalition of six state and five federal agencies, three nonprofit associations and the University of Idaho. Its main purpose is to develop partnerships to improve recreation and tourism services. A steering committee comprised of one representative from each partner agency governs the IRTI, with the coordinator housed in the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.

An important product of the IRTI was a memorandum of understanding, signed by each of the partner agencies and entities, that documents how they will work together to achieve the agreed-to recreation and tourism goals.

IRTI led in the development of "Be Outside Idaho" (BOI), an organization "which includes over 150 partners—federal, state, and municipal agencies, and private organizations and businesses. Its mission is to connect children with nature in Idaho, from backyards to mountaintops. BOI includes a website, www.beoutsideidaho.org, which serves as a clearinghouse for all kids and nature activities throughout the state."

3 | Inspire an Outdoor Recreation Culture

The task force finds that Washington state youth and other underserved populations, such as racial and ethnic minorities, the economically disadvantaged, people with disabilities, veterans, and the elderly, are not getting outdoors. The reasons include lack of knowledge of outdoor recreation opportunities, busy schedules, competition with indoor activities, lack of programs and events targeted at underserved populations, and lack of recreational opportunities that meet today's needs in a society undergoing significant social, demographic, and economic changes³.

Reasons for not participating in outdoor recreation also include barriers such as cost, lack of transportation, and difficulty in obtaining permits for group access and events on federal land.

To inspire an outdoor recreation culture, the task force recognizes it is important to involve families, not just individuals. Young people often experience the outdoors for the first time with their parents. Conversely, young people who experience the outdoors through school and other programs provide incentives for the entire family to engage in outdoor recreation. Programs that attract all family members can instill a life-long love of the outdoors and an understanding of the importance of outdoor recreation to their physical and mental fitness.

It is also essential that state government lead by example in its appointments to highly visible outdoor recreation leadership positions and state boards and commissions. The diverse faces of Washington need to be reflected in these important roles.

YOUTH PROGRAMS: COLUMBIA VALLEY GIRLS ON THE RUN

Columbia Valley Girls on the Run, serving Chelan County, is an affiliate of Columbia Valley Community Health and is an Independent Council of Girls on the Run International, which has a network of over 200 councils across the United States and Canada. "Girls on the Run is a transformational physical activity based positive youth development program for girls in 3rd-8th grade. We teach life skills through dynamic interactive lessons and running games. The program culminates with the girls being physically and emotionally prepared to complete a celebratory 5k running event. The goal of the program is to unleash confidence through accomplishment while establishing a lifetime appreciation of health and fitness." (<http://columbiavalleygotr.org/>)

INVOLVING FAMILIES: NORTH CENTRAL ATV CLUB

The North Central ATV (All Terrain Vehicle) Club has over 200 family memberships and provides activities for all ages and abilities. In addition to family riding events, the club provides education on responsible riding on public lands, engages in campground cleanups, trail maintenance, and search and rescue operations, and facilitates activities for people with disabilities.

³ Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, 2013. *Outdoor Recreation in Washington: The 2013 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*.

ACTION 3 – Provide funding for the No Child Left Inside grant program.

As an immediate, high priority action, the task force recommends that the Washington State Legislature fund the No Child Left Inside grant program at or above the previous funding level. The purpose of this program is to provide grants for outdoor environmental, ecological, agricultural, or other natural resource based education and recreation programs serving youth. The program was enacted by the Washington State Legislature in 2008, which provided \$1.5 million for the 2007-2009 biennium. With this initial allocation, the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission provided grants to 25 organizations.

In all, the commission received 238 applications requesting more than \$8.6 million. The program has not been funded since then. The task force recommends that the Legislature provide \$2 million to fund the No Child Left Inside grant program for the 2015-2017 biennium and to continue to support the program in the future.

ACTION 4 – Incorporate outdoor recreation into the kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12) core curriculum in physical education, scientific inquiry, technology, environmental and physical sciences, and public service.

The task force also strongly recommends that outdoor education be included in K-12 core curriculum, incorporating physical education, scientific inquiry, technology, environmental and physical sciences, and public service. The outdoors is humanity's first classroom, laboratory, and gym. Children turning over rocks to examine worms or playing tag among the trees are expressing an innate interest in understanding and enjoying our natural environment. As society becomes more urbanized, and our environmental challenges more severe, it is critical that our education system use the outdoors to feed into and grow our children's intellectual and physical maturation.

INNOVATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS: TAHOMA HIGH OUTDOOR ACADEMY

Started in 2004, Tahoma High teachers developed a yearlong course that combines science, language arts and physical fitness. Students study river ecology and engage in fly-fishing, hiking, mountain biking, trail building, tree planting and rock climbing. Activities combine writing, scientific investigation and physical education. (*Tahoma High School Course Catalog, 2014-2015*)

ACTION 5 – Diversify appointees to state boards and commissions whose work connects with outdoor recreation.

The task force strongly recommends that the growing diversity of Washington's population be reflected in appointments to leadership positions at agencies and on the state boards and commissions whose work directly addresses or intersects with outdoor recreation. When all the residents of Washington see themselves in these roles, they will increasingly see Washington's great outdoors as something that belongs to, and is valued by, all of us. In particular, the task force asks that the Governor focus attention on the appointees to the State Parks and Recreation Commission, the State Fish and Wildlife Commission, and the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board. There are other opportunities as well at the Departments of Health, Transportation and Early Learning.

Recommendations for the Future

In addition to the recommended near-term actions—lead the way to outdoor recreation, and inspire an outdoor recreation culture—the task force developed other, longer term recommendations to promote outdoor experiences and increase environmental awareness for youth, families, and adults, and to provide incentives and opportunities for populations under-represented in outdoor recreation participation.

- Ensure integration of outdoor recreation into physical education programs in Washington schools, providing teachers with resources to connect an outdoor curriculum to the state-mandated Common Core learning standards. Evaluate and address the extent to which school districts are waiving the state-mandated health curriculum.
- Establish, market, and promote events for youth—with a particular focus on diverse audiences, minority populations, and ethnic groups—in partnership with State Parks, schools, local parks agencies, and nongovernmental program providers.
- Increase promotion of programs such as Fish Washington, which help retain and enhance fishing and hunting opportunities.
- Offer start-up matching grants or challenge grants for establishing youth outdoor recreation programs or events in all corners of the state, with the goal of getting more kids outside and getting more kids exposed, perhaps for the first time, to the joys of recreating outside.

EXAMPLE: PACIFIC EDUCATION INSTITUTE

Pacific Education Institute (PEI) "expands students' opportunities to learn in outdoor settings throughout Washington State. Students apply math, science, art, and social studies skills to field investigations outdoors and in their classrooms. PEI's rigorous research-based approach assures that students are 'learning by doing'. PEI works with school districts around the Puget Sound and engages students in action projects. Students integrate their learning in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) with real world projects that contribute to their sustainable future."

The task force also observed that the military community in Washington State is an underserved population in regards to accessing outdoor recreation and outdoor-based therapeutic programs. Improved access to outdoor recreation and recreation programs will result in physical and mental health benefits for veterans, active duty service members, and their families.

The task force endorses the idea of a *Washington Military Community Outdoor Recreation and Therapeutic Initiative: Boots in the Woods*. The Boots in the Woods campaign would consist of a partnership between local, state, and federal government, nongovernmental organizations, and the military community to implement a comprehensive outdoor recreation and therapeutic program. A centralized organization would provide a broad range of services, research, and community involvement in support of Washington State veterans, active duty personnel, National Guard and reserve service members, and their families. Specific recommendations were developed at the second annual Military Families and Veterans Action Summit⁴ in 2014 at IslandWood, a nonprofit organization dedicated to outdoor education, and are posted on the task force Web site under Boots in the Woods. See Appendix VII for details.

BACKGROUND: WASHINGTON STATE'S MILITARY COMMUNITY

The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs reports 602,272 veterans living in Washington State, with 461,678 (77%) being wartime vets, of which about 5% date back to World War II. In addition, there are 69,125 active duty military personnel and 19,474 reservists.

⁴ <http://islandwood.org/military-families-and-veterans-action-summit>

4 | Open More Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

The task force finds that there is a need to reduce or remove barriers to accessing recreational opportunities and to improve the predictability and ease of accessing recreation opportunities and recreation lands. Barriers include state tax policy; federal permitting for group access and events and for commercial outfitters; access fees; road closures on federal and state lands; and closure of private lands—primarily timberlands—to fishing and hunting.

ACTION 6 – Enact the marine tourism legislation.

As a short-term objective, the task force encourages the Washington State Legislature to enact the proposed marine tourism legislation. This bill would change the state tax policy to encourage owners of large boats to recreate for longer periods of time in Washington waters. A study undertaken by the Northwest Marine Trade Association showed that this would have a net positive economic impact on state tax revenues.

Recommendations for the Future

The task force noted a number of barriers to accessing outdoor recreation opportunities, on both public and private land that should be addressed in the future:

- Lack of easily accessible information
- Fees, passes, and tax policy
- Permit requirements
- Closures of private land and some public land
- Government planning

Information

The task force recommends making access to public recreation lands easier and more predictable, for example by providing information on hunting seasons and closures of land, gates, roads, and trailheads that is easily accessible and easier to understand. Cross-agency coordination of providing this information could be an objective of the recommended outdoor recreation coordinating council and advisory group.

BACKGROUND: MARINE TOURISM BILL

Currently, a boat owned by an out-of-state business must pay sales and use taxes if the boat stays in Washington more than 60 days. This creates a disincentive for business-owned boats to come to Washington and stay for business or pleasure. The Marine Tourism bill (SB 5241 in the 2014 legislative session) would extend the availability of a use permit to an out-of-state business, allowing its vessel to remain in Washington for up to six months without paying sales and use taxes. This bill would encourage out-of-state business boat owners to visit and stay in Washington harbors longer.

LOSS OF EQUESTRIAN TRAIL ACCESS

Currently, "Since I joined BCHW 20 years ago, I have witnessed the loss of literally thousands of miles of equestrian-use trails around the state. Citing lack of funds, the U.S. Forest Service has eliminated scores of trails by simply failing to maintain them. It is the same story with virtually every public land management agency in the State." Trygve Culp, President, Back Country Horsemen of Washington

Fees, passes, and tax policy

Many of the people submitting comments to the task force indicated that the Discover Pass is inconvenient to buy and can be a barrier to recreating on state lands. The task force recommends considering the following:

- Provide a single pass good for all state and federal recreation parking areas. Consider a windshield sticker or pass placed on the vehicle's dashboard; make it transferrable; and offer it as part of a vehicle tab renewal in addition to existing points of sale.
- Use independent contractors to sell and market the Discover Pass in bulk, more broadly, and at more outlets.
- Improve the experience of purchasing the Discover Pass by making it more simple, quick, convenient, and available before arrival at recreation sites.
- Convert one-day pass buyers to annual pass customers.

Washington State Parks and the Departments of Natural Resources and Fish and Wildlife are looking to these and other ideas for implementation in 2015.

Permit requirements

Obtaining permits for group use of federal recreation lands for events or for commercial outfitters can be a barrier to recreational activities on these lands. These issues are discussed in the "Recommendations for Federal Lands" section below. Leadership on addressing these problems is a suggested objective of the state outdoor recreation coordinating council and advisory group recommended in the "Lead the Way" section above.

Land closures

Private lands and some public lands are closing to public use due to liability concerns such as dumping of trash, road damage, fires, and property destruction. Some private landowners are responding by closing their gates or requiring high-priced permits for recreational access, even if it means waiving their liability immunity. The task force recommends the state work with private landowners to address problems and provide more incentives for them to allow public access, including modifying the state recreational immunity statutes. This could be coordinated by the proposed state outdoor recreation coordinating council and advisory group. Access issues associated with national forest road closures are addressed in the "Recommendations for Federal Lands" section below.

Government planning

Transportation, local parks⁵, and planning agencies can enable and improve recreation through sensible planning, regulation, and investment. The task force recommends enhancing transportation investments that serve recreational purposes by evaluating permitting processes, encouraging cross -jurisdictional planning, and including access to recreational opportunities as a goal of the transportation system across all modes. An example would be planning for safe walking and biking routes to schools and parks. Planners should explore creative partnerships and opportunities with cities, counties, tribes, and private land owners to identify new opportunities to expand access to recreation.

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE: OLYMPIC DISCOVERY TRAIL

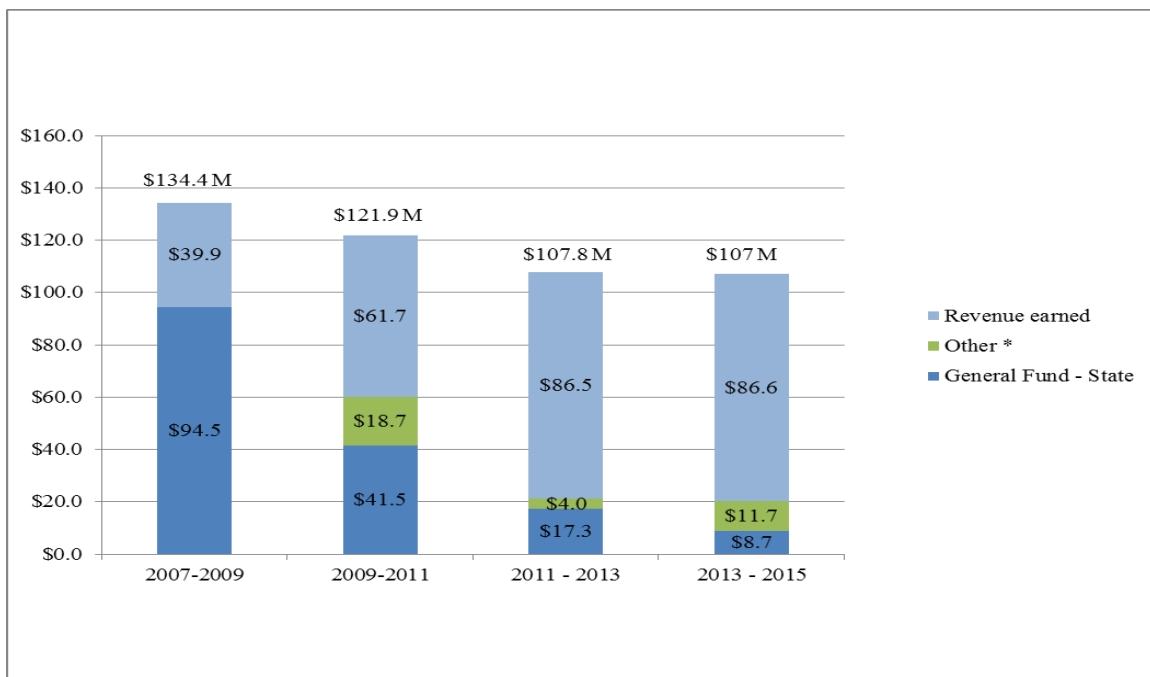
The Olympic Discovery Trail, the westward end of a larger cross-state trail system, will span approximately 130 miles from Port Townsend to Forks, connecting 4 cities and over 20 parks. About 60 miles, mostly paved, are completed. The trail's planning and construction involved close cooperation of multiple public and private partners, including active involvement of several tribal governments. Clallam County recognizes the importance of the trail as a recreational opportunity, but also as an important part of the county's transportation infrastructure. The county's Public Works Department manages the trail and the trail is part of the county's six-year Transportation Improvement Plan.

⁵ Local parks are park and recreation services offered by a city, county, metropolitan park district, port district, park and recreation district, or other government entity below the state level.

5 | Sustain Our Outdoor Recreation Assets

The task force examined the revenue sources and funding needs for operations of recreation lands, facilities, and programs provided by the State Parks and Recreation Commission and the Departments of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and Natural Resources (DNR). Some funding for general operation, maintenance, and special programs comes from the state General Fund, but during the past decade, the Legislature has shifted funding for these three agencies to revenues based primarily on user fees from passes, permits, and licenses. Overall funding for general operations has dropped substantially. State Parks' budget, for example, has been reduced from \$134 million in the 2007-09 Biennium to \$107 million in the 2013-15 biennium. During that time, General Fund contributions to the overall budget dropped from about 70 percent to about 8 percent (Table 1).

Table 1: State Park Revenues



*Other does not include dedicated funds (winter recreation, boating safety, roads, etc.). Other does include:

2009-11 - Recreation Resource Account, Non-highway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program Account

2011-13 - Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account

2013-15 - Litter tax

The Discover Pass is a major source of revenue for operation of State Parks and recreation lands managed by DNR and WDFW⁶. The Discover Pass provides visitors access to parks, trails, wildlife and natural areas, heritage sites, and water access points managed by the three agencies. The pass went into effect July 1, 2011. An annual pass costs \$30 and a daily pass \$10. At the time of its inception, biennial revenues from pass sales were projected at \$64 million (\$32 million per fiscal year), but actual income is about half that amount. Revenues have increased from the first year of implementation, from \$15.7 million in Fiscal Year 2012 to a projected \$17 million in Fiscal Year 2015. The Discover Pass program is now projected to earn close to \$40 million a biennium, the 5th highest generating state day use access pass program in the country. Details about State Parks revenue sources, including the Discover Pass, are provided in Appendix VII.

As a result of declining revenues, funding necessary to operate and maintain existing parks and recreation sites is inadequate. Planned and deferred maintenance and adequate staffing to meet customer demands are just two of the largest deficiencies. Table 2 shows the projected gap between available funding at current revenue rates and General Fund levels and how much funding is needed to operate and maintain recreation sites to adequately address maintenance and staffing.

Table 2: Estimated Operating Funding Gap

Agency	2015-17 Biennium	2017-19 Biennium	2019-21 Biennium
State Parks	\$54 million	\$64 million	\$64 million
WDFW	\$12.4 million	\$12.4 million	\$12.4 million
DNR	\$6.1 million	\$6.1 million	\$6.1 million
Total	\$72.5 million	\$82.5 million	\$82.5 million

⁶ 84 percent of Discover Pass revenues go to State Parks, and 8 percent each to DNR and WDFW.

The task force considered a number of possible new revenue sources for state parks and recreation lands, facilities, and programs. The task force's funding subcommittee provided three approaches (see the full report of the Meet Future Recreation Needs subcommittee in Appendix VII). The proposed sources and anticipated revenues are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Possible Revenue Sources for State Outdoor Recreation Programs

Anticipated Revenues (\$)						
Revenue Source	FY 2016	FY 2017	2015 - 17	2017 - 19	2019 - 21	Notes
\$5 car registration fee	29,879,500	30,530,000	60,409,500	62,916,500	64,584,000	Based upon WSDOT June 2014 Revenue Forecast www.ofm.wa.gov/budget/info/June14transpovol2.pdf
Apply vehicle fee and Discover Pass option to new vehicles	217,854	217,854	435,708	435,708	435,708	Assumes 350K new vehicles sales + 350K out of state vehicle registration with 2.73% purchase annual Discover Pass with 38% through DOL
Modify Discover Pass to include transaction fee	2,018,750	2,018,750	4,037,500	4,250,000	4,356,250	Assumes 70% of annual passes sold by State Parks. Imposes \$5 transaction fee on annual passes and \$1 fee on daily pass by \$1. Assumes 5% reduction in sales for first biennium and 5% increase in 2019-21.
Adjust Discover Pass for inflation	1,543,750	1,543,750	3,087,500	3,250,000	3,412,500	Increases annual DP by \$2.5 and daily pass by \$1. Assumes 5% reduction in sales for first biennium and 5% increase in 2019-21.
0.5 % Annual Motor Home / Travel Trailer Excise Tax	8,932,000	10,378,000	19,310,000	22,505,000	24,435,000	63,000 motor homes, average payment is \$96.76, 114,000 travel trailers at \$37.56.
Extend Current Litter Tax Diversion	5,000,000	5,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	
Divert Watercraft Excise Tax	17,424,000	17,424,000	34,848,000	34,848,000	36,590,400	
Re-impose sales tax on bottled water	22,300,000	24,200,000	46,500,000	46,500,000	46,500,000	
Retain a portion of NOVA, snowmobile and boat gas tax (assumes 5¢ gas increase)	2,856,000	2,846,000	5,712,000	5,692,000	5,673,000	Assumes it is distributed through existing mechanisms for existing uses.

Funding Recommendations: The Discover Pass

The task force observed what appears to be significant public discontent with the Discover Pass based on confusion on when it is required, where it can be purchased, the cost, perceptions of draconian enforcement, and confusion about federal versus state requirements. The most frequent written comments received by the task force pertained to dissatisfaction with the Discover Pass and a recommendation to abolish it. People testifying at task force meetings also expressed their dissatisfaction with the Discover Pass. This was especially noted in Wenatchee, where it appears that use of the Confluence State Park by locals has dropped off due to need for the Discover Pass.

Task force members strongly believe that providing outdoor recreation opportunities is an essential government service because of the tremendous social, health, and economic benefits to not only participants in outdoor recreation, but to their families, communities, and the state as a whole. It is hard to find another public good that provides such a wide array of immediate and long-term public value. The task force recognizes that individual users of public outdoor recreation facilities should, in some instances, meet some of the costs necessary to support the lands, facilities, and programs being used. However, requiring everyone using state parks or other state recreation land to pay for a pass is an impediment to some people, and is contrary to the goal of getting more people, especially underserved populations, outdoors. The task force believes that the financing of State Parks and the recreation facilities and programs managed by DNR and WDFW is too heavily dependent on user fees, but until a more suitable alternative is adopted, the Discover Pass is necessary to keep state recreation lands open and facilities and programs operating.

ACTION 7 – Retain the Discover Pass until a long-term, dedicated funding source can replace Discover Pass revenues. In the meantime, continue to improve the administration of the Discover Pass to improve service to the customer and enhance revenues.

Funding Recommendations: New Revenue Sources

The task force identified the following funding levels needed to implement the actions recommended in this report:

Program	Needed
State Recreation Facilities, Services and Programs	\$ 72,500,000
Outdoor Recreation Coordinating Council	\$ 500,000*
Recreation and Tourism lead, Dept. of Commerce	\$ 275,000*
No Child Left Inside	\$ 2,000,000
Total	\$ 75,275,000

**Preliminary Estimate*

ACTION 8 – The task force recommends the following sources of revenues to meet the needs of State Parks, DNR and WDFW and to support the actions recommended in this report: an annual motor home and travel trailer excise tax; a sales tax on bottled water; and the watercraft excise tax.

The task force recommends re-enacting a 0.5 percent excise tax on motor homes and travel trailers and dedicating the revenues to funding the recommendations in this report. This recommendation is based on recreational vehicle owners' use of state recreation lands and facilities and recognizing that boat owners pay a similar tax—the watercraft excise tax. The task force also recommends re-enacting the sales tax on bottled water, dedicating some or all of these revenues to the recommendations in this report.

The task force recognized that state parks and recreation lands provide many benefits to citizens across the state whether they utilize these lands and facilities or not. In addition, the Legislature has limited the revenue generating capability of State Parks, by providing free and reduced camping and moorage fees for persons with disabilities, limited income seniors, foster families, veterans and other groups. As a result of these programs, the task force felt that general taxpayer support from the state General Fund was the most appropriate source to support these programs.

Revenues from the watercraft excise tax are currently deposited directly in the state General Fund. As a way to designate state General Fund support, the task force recommends allocating these revenues to support the actions proposed in this report. In addition to supporting social programs, many of the facilities, services and programs provided by State Parks, DNR and WDFW are specifically for boaters, and use of facilities accessed by water do not require a Discover Pass. Although there would be a net loss in General Fund revenues, the task force strongly believes that this loss is more than justified based on the tremendous social, health and economic benefits of outdoor recreation discussed above.

If all three of these funding recommendations are adopted, there is the potential for an estimated \$100 million in revenues for the 2015-2017 biennium.

Additional Funding Recommendations

ACTION 9 – Fund the Youth Athletic Facilities grant program. Bond funds should be used for this capital investment.

ACTION 10 – Retain current law (Revised Code of Washington 82.46) and repeal the sunset clause, so that the real estate excise tax can continue to be used for local parks maintenance. This law is scheduled to sunset December 31, 2016.

ACTION 11 – Continue to fund and protect current outdoor recreation grant programs, such as the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Boating Facilities Program, Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicles Account, and others administered by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, and grant programs that have a recreation component such as Department of Transportation funding for trails, improved highway corridors, public transportation, and other contributions to access.

ACTION 12 – Remove the 23-cent cap on the portion of the gas tax attributed to off-road recreation that is transferred to the dedicated accounts for off-road vehicles (Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities program), boating (Boating Facilities Program), and the snowmobiling grant program.

BACKGROUND: YOUTH ATHLETIC FACILITIES GRANT PROGRAM

This program provides funds to acquire, develop, equip, maintain, and improve community athletic facilities. The focus of the program is to meet the needs of people through age 18 who participate in sports and athletics. Recreation and Conservation Office administers this competitive grant program.

Recommendation for the Future

In addition to these recommended near-term actions, the task force developed other, longer term recommendations:

- The Legislature should provide stable, long-term funding for Washington's state parks and other state recreation lands, facilities and programs, recognizing that they provide essential public services and should be supported primarily by General Fund revenues, with user fees supporting services that are primarily of benefit to the user.
- Promote expanded use of metropolitan parks districts⁷ to provide an additional funding source for local, regional, and state park systems.
- Enhance concession and lease revenues on State Parks (\$300,000 to \$400,000 annually by 2020).
- Expand recognition of donor and sponsorship programs for operation and maintenance at State Parks to other state lands consistent with Chapter 86, Laws 2014.

BACKGROUND: METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICTS

Metropolitan Park Districts (MPD) (chapter 35.61 RCW) offer more fiscal capacity and flexibility with property tax levies and debt limits than parks and recreation districts (chapter 36.69 RCW) or park and recreation service areas (RCW 36.68.400). There are currently 17 MPDs in the State. The most recent are the Seattle MPD (2014), Chuckanut Community Forest and Recreation District (2013), Tukwila Pool MPD (2011), Shelton MPD, William Shore Memorial Pool Park District (Clallam County), and Village Green MPD (Kitsap County) in 2010.

⁷ Revised Code of Washington 35.61.

Other Observations and Recommendations

The public presented many good ideas to the task force as it traveled around Washington State. Highlighted below are some innovative ideas taking place in local communities that the task force observed could be effective elsewhere in the state.

Local partnerships

The task force found that coordination by local groups could be a very effective way to increase participation in outdoor recreation by all segments of the community, resulting in improvements in participants' health, contributions to the local economy, and enhancement of the overall quality of life. Coordination includes event planning, advocacy, fundraising, promotion, and marketing. The task force heard examples of partnerships between recreation organizations, schools, conservation organizations, public land managers, and the business community. Such partnerships can build success on local enthusiasm and be tailored to local interests, needs, and facilities.

For example, in the Wenatchee Valley, the need for open communication between the many entities involved in outdoor recreation was a driving force behind the creation of the Wenatchee Valley Outdoor Alliance in 2014. The proposed alliance vision statement is "Educating, promoting, celebrating the outdoors wonders of the Wenatchee Valley." Among other activities, the alliance helps coordinate events between organizations to prevent scheduling conflicts, which can affect availability of hotel rooms and volunteers, and over stress resources.

Volunteers

The task force observed the importance of volunteers in making facilities and programs successful. Washington State Parks reports that in 2013, volunteers contributed about 231,600 hours, valued at more than \$3.2 million. Volunteers performed a variety of tasks, including registering campers, ensuring that campsites were available and clean for incoming campers, maintaining firewood supplies, raising and lowering flags, conducting routine maintenance, and leading interpretive and Junior Ranger programs.

Many outdoor organizations have volunteering as a central part of their mission. For example, Back Country Horsemen reports volunteering 57,348 hours to public land management agencies in 2012, with 23,316 hours of that total spent doing trail work. Members perform maintenance activities, such as brushing and cleaning trail drainage structures. They also undertake complex projects, like the 2013 Goodwin Meadow bridge project in the William O. Douglas Wilderness and the Table Mountain fire recovery projects in the Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest.⁸

⁸ The Trailhead News, March / April 2014.

Friends group have provided volunteer assistance, event planning, and fundraising. The Bridle Trails Park Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization established to "protect, preserve, maintain and enhance Bridle Trails State Park," entered into a 40-year agreement with State Parks to provide half of the annual net operating cost of operating the park in exchange for assurance from State Parks that the park would remain open.⁹ The foundation promotes good stewardship, raises funds, maintains strong partnership with State Parks management, and stages community and educational events.

Land trusts

Land trusts can be important in providing recreational opportunities on lands preserved by the trusts for the purposes of conserving habitat and historic and cultural sites, and protecting open space. For example, the Chelan Douglas Land Trust has been instrumental in preserving land in the Wenatchee Foothills, providing trails and opportunities for people to connect with nature through wildlife viewing and hiking.¹⁰ Land trusts that acquire land in fee with conservation grants from the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program are required to provide public access.

Sports tourism

The task force observed that sports tourism, generally in the form of special athletic events, provides significant economic benefit to communities and to the state as a whole. For example, the North Olympic Discovery Marathon, held on the Olympic Discovery Trail between Sequim and Port Angeles, attracted 2,200 participants (most from Washington and Canada) this year.¹¹ Transportation staff in the area report that whereas previously Washington bicyclists crossed into Canada to ride the trails there, increasing Canadians now come into Washington to ride the Olympic Discovery Trail. Sports tourism in Wenatchee contributed an estimated \$7.4 million to the local economy, including \$2.4 million from events on seven sports fields.¹²

⁹ Bridle Trails Park Foundation, www.bridletrails.org

¹⁰ Elliott Scull, in a presentation to the Task Force on July 7, 2014.

¹¹ Michelle Little, Port Angeles Marathon Association, presenting to the Task Force on August 19, 2014.

¹² Matt Kearney, Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce, presenting to the Task Force on July 7, 2014.

Ideas from other states: The Children's Bill of Rights

Twenty states have adopted a Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights, including Oregon and California on the West Coast.¹³ California's Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights is endorsed by numerous organizations and government entities. It states that every child should have the opportunity to:



- Play in a safe place
- Explore nature
- Learn to swim
- Go fishing
- Follow a trail
- Camp under the stars
- Ride a bike
- Go boating
- Connect with the past
- Plant a seed

Development of a children's outdoor bill of rights could be an early effort of the outdoor recreation coordinating council and advisory group proposed under "Lead the Way to Outdoor Recreation" above.

¹³ California Roundtable on Recreation, Parks and Tourism, www.calroundtable.org/cobor_nationally.htm

Recommendations for Federal Lands

The task force repeatedly heard concerns about management of federal lands. The task force recognized the limited ability of Washington State to affect federal land management policy, but did identify several issues concerning federal recreation permits, road closures, and in general the lack of coordination between state and federal agencies providing outdoor recreation opportunities. The task force appreciates that these issues are primarily the result of declining budgets for the federal land management agencies and resulting decreases in staffing and funding for maintenance and operations. The task force recommends that the Governor's Office or the proposed state outdoor recreation coordinating council and advisory group work with federal agencies and Washington's congressional delegation to address the issues below.

Single multi-entity access pass

The task force urges Congress to reauthorize legislation that allows federal land managing agencies to enter into agreements with governmental and nongovernmental entities to provide a single multi-entity pass to recreate on state and federal lands in Washington. The Governor's Office or the proposed state outdoor recreation coordinating council and advisory group could take the lead in developing multi-agency agreements.

BACKGROUND: MULTI-ENTITY PASSES

Federal law (16 USC § 6804(e)) allows federal agencies that manage federal land to enter into agreements with governmental and nongovernmental entities to establish a single pass to access recreation lands, sharing the costs and benefits. The law will sunset in 2014. An example of a single use pass on the west coast is the Oregon Pacific Coast Passport. The pass provides access to all state and federal parks along the Oregon Coast. An annual Passport costs \$35, and a 5-day vehicle passport costs \$10.

Forest road closures

Federal land managers are limiting access to public lands by road closures and budget cuts to protect the environment. These closures affect recreation access and especially impact the local gateway communities adjacent to the closed recreation lands. The task force recommends that this issue be addressed by the proposed state outdoor recreation coordinating council and advisory group.

Permitting

Nonprofit organizations provide opportunities for new participants to engage in outdoor activities. Nonprofits seeking access to U.S. Forest Service land now are being treated as commercial users, a category which requires a Special Use Permit. But it is virtually impossible to obtain these permits. In addition, nonprofit event organizers find getting the necessary permits daunting. These problems disproportionately affect low-income, minority, and disadvantaged youth populations because they are most likely to access outdoor recreation through nonprofit programs. Commercial guiding and outfitting services, important for attracting recreationists from out-of-state, also find obtaining permits problematic.

The task force recommends the outdoor recreation coordinating council and advisory group work with the Forest Service to:

- Revise permit rules to exempt 501(c)(3) groups from commercial use permit requirements. This would align with legislation being introduced at the federal level in the coming months. Non-profit groups still would be subject to local group size limits where applicable.
- Establish an entity that offers a streamlined permitting service for outdoor recreation events. This would give event organizers "one-stop shopping" to ascertain what permits are necessary and then receive expedited processing of the permits.
- Streamline commercial recreation permitting process.

Conclusion and Executive Order Crosswalk

Washington State offers a tremendous variety of outdoor recreation. There is something for everyone: hiking, walking, competitive sports, bicycling, swimming, boating, hunting, fishing, camping, horse-back riding and many others. Governor Inslee provided the task force an opportunity to promote Washington's diverse recreational opportunities and the many businesses that support those adventures.

Task force members came away with a greater appreciation for one another's interests. Members formed new relationships. They found common ground on the recommendations included in this report. Yes, there are many challenges to getting more people outdoors and engaging them in outdoor recreation pursuits. However, there is real opportunity to build on the initial work forged by the task force and continue to explore together how to get more people to engage in the beauty of Washington's outdoors. To that end, Table 1 summarizes the priority actions and future recommendations in relation to Governor Inslee's executive order.

The members of the task force stand ready to assist Governor Inslee with implementation of the recommendations in this report. The time is now to move forward and build on the work already accomplished through the executive order. Implementation of the recommendations will go a long way to increase participation in outdoor recreation and support small, medium, and large businesses that rely on the outdoor recreation economy.

Table 1: Executive Order and Task Force Recommendations Crosswalk

Executive Order	Task Force Near Term Action
Support and expand outdoor recreation jobs, businesses, and tourism across the state	<p>Action 6 – Enact the marine tourism legislation.</p> <p>Action 1 – Designate and support outdoor recreation as a specific industry within Washington's economic development strategy and create an outdoor recreation sector lead position within the Department of Commerce.</p> <p>Future Recommendation: Provide assistance to smaller towns in planning, designing, building, and marketing outdoor recreation opportunities in their area, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations when appropriate.</p>
Promote outdoor recreation experiences and increase environmental awareness for youth, families, and adults.	<p>Action 3 – Provide funding for the No Child Left Inside grant program at \$2.5 million for the 2015-2017 biennium.</p> <p>Action 4 – Incorporate outdoor recreation into the kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12) core curriculum in physical education, scientific inquiry, technology, environmental and physical sciences, and public service.</p> <p>Action 5 – Diversify appointees to state boards and commissions whose work connects with outdoor recreation.</p> <p>Action 9 – Fund the Youth Athletic Facilities grant program.</p> <p>Action 10 – Retain current law (Revised Code of Washington 82.46) and repeal the sunset clause, so that the real estate excise tax can continue to be used for local parks maintenance. This law is scheduled to sunset December 31, 2016.</p>

Action 11 – Continue to fund and protect current outdoor recreation grant programs, such as the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Boating Facilities Program, Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicles Account, and others administered by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, and grant programs that have a recreation component such as Department of Transportation funding for trails, improved highway corridors, public transportation, and other contributions to access.

Action 8 – The task force recommends the following sources of revenues to meet the needs of State Parks, DNR and WDFW and to support the actions recommended in this report: an annual motor home and travel trailer excise tax; a sales tax on bottled water; and the watercraft excise tax.

Action 12 – Remove the 23-cent cap on the portion of the gas tax attributed to off-road recreation that is transferred to the dedicated accounts for off-road vehicles (Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities program), boating (Boating Facilities Program), and the snowmobiling grant program.

Future Recommendations

- Ensure integration of outdoor recreation into physical education programs in Washington schools, providing teachers with resources to connect an outdoor curriculum to the state-mandated Common Core learning standards.
- Evaluate and address the extent to which school districts are waiving the state-mandated health curriculum.
- Establish, market, and promote youth events—with a focus on diverse audiences, minority populations, and ethnic groups—in partnership with State Parks, schools, local parks agencies, and nongovernmental program providers.
- Offer start-up matching grants or challenge grants for establishing youth outdoor recreation programs or events in all corners of the state, with the goal of getting more kids outside and getting more kids exposed, perhaps for the first time, to the joys of recreating outside.
- Promote expanded use of metropolitan parks districts⁷ to provide an additional funding source for local, regional, and state park systems.

Support Washington-based businesses' use of Washington's quality of life and outdoor recreation experiences in recruiting and retaining talented employees as well as in attracting new businesses to the state.

Future Recommendations

- Enhance transportation investments that serve recreational purposes by evaluating permitting processes, encouraging cross-jurisdictional planning, and including access to recreational opportunities as a goal of the transportation system across all modes.
 - Continue to educate public officials that recreation can be a key contributor to the economic well-being of Washington and generates important benefits for public, community, and environmental health.
 - Increase and better coordinate the promotion of Washington's many, diverse recreation opportunities to attract more travelers from overseas, across the nation, and within Washington, and to show that our amazing quality of life is a great reason to build businesses and families here.
-

<p>Develop long-term sustainable funding sources for Washington State Parks and other outdoor recreation lands and infrastructure managed by the departments of Fish and Wildlife and Natural Resources.</p>	<p>Action 7 – Retain the Discover Pass until a long-term, dedicated funding source can replace Discover Pass revenues. In the meantime, continue to improve the administration of the Discover Pass to improve service to the customer and enhance revenues.</p> <p>Future Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide stable, long-term funding for Washington's state parks and other state recreation lands, recognizing that they provide essential public services and should be supported primarily by General Fund revenues, with user fees supporting services that are primarily of benefit to the user. • Provide a single pass good for all state and federal recreation parking areas. • Use independent contractors to sell and market the Discover Pass in bulk, more broadly, and at more outlets. • Improve the experience of purchasing the Discover Pass by making it more simple, quick, convenient, and available before arrival at recreation sites. • Convert one-day pass buyers to annual pass customers. • Enhance concession and lease revenues on State Parks (\$300,000 to \$400,000 annually by 2020). • Expand recognition of donor and sponsorship programs for operation and maintenance at State Parks to other state lands consistent with Chapter 86, Laws 2014.
<p>Recommendations for establishing an organizational mechanism to oversee implementation of the action plan and for promoting long-term outdoor recreation.</p>	<p>Action 2 – Establish an outdoor recreation coordinating council consisting of federal, state, nonprofit and private sector representatives to serve as the state's cross-agency leader on outdoor recreation.</p>

Appendix I | Executive Order 14-01



STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 40002 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0002 • (360) 902-4111 • www.governor.wa.gov

EXECUTIVE ORDER 14-01

**ESTABLISHING A BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE
TO DEVELOP A TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY FOR
OUTDOOR RECREATION IN WASHINGTON STATE**

WHEREAS, we want our children to experience, enjoy, learn about, and become lifetime stewards of Washington's magnificent natural resources; and

WHEREAS, maintaining access to, and facilities in, our state parks and state recreation lands managed by the departments of Fish and Wildlife and Natural Resources, as well as the entire network of local, state, federal, and private lands that make Washington an outdoor recreation mecca important to the state's citizens and the tourism industry; and

WHEREAS, Washington's stunning parks, outdoor recreation opportunities, and quality of life are an important incentive for attracting new businesses and retaining all types of employers to the state; and

WHEREAS, outdoor recreation activities in Washington directly support 227,000 jobs and consumers spend \$22.5 billion on outdoor recreation equipment, apparel, lodging, and other services, generating \$1.6 billion in state and local tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, outdoor recreation such as camping, hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, boating, hiking, off-roading, cross-country and downhill skiing, mountain and road biking, scuba diving, surfing, horseback riding, and more strengthen the social and cultural fabric of communities and provide important and valuable contributions to urban and especially rural economies across the state; and

WHEREAS, Washington State Parks, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Department of Natural Resources have seen significant reductions in funding to operate, maintain, and make capital investments in campgrounds, boat launches, and trails, resulting in a continuing maintenance backlog; and public lands managed by federal and local agencies, including the United State Forest Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Parks Service face similar operating, maintenance, and capital investment backlogs;

WHEREAS, the state lacks strategies for transforming its approach to outdoor recreation to ensure that this sector is properly recognized as contributing to the economy, creating and sustaining jobs, improving public health, and immeasurably improving the quality of life that Washingtonians cherish;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Jay Inslee, Governor of the state of Washington, do hereby create the Washington Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

The Task Force shall use a holistic strategy to develop an action plan and issue recommendations to manage, transform, better leverage, or develop Washington's outdoor recreation assets and state programs to increase outdoor recreation activities as well as promote the jobs and businesses associated with outdoor recreation. The strategy, action plan, and recommendations shall:

1. Support and expand outdoor recreation jobs, businesses, and tourism across the state;
2. Promote and expand recreational fishing and hunting opportunities as a way of advancing local economies;
3. Promote outdoor recreation experiences and increase environmental awareness for youth, families, and adults;
4. Support Washington-based businesses' use of Washington's quality of life and outdoor recreation experiences in recruiting and retaining talented employees as well as in attracting new businesses to the state;
5. Develop long-term sustainable funding sources for Washington State Parks and other outdoor recreation lands and infrastructure managed by the departments of Fish and Wildlife and Natural Resources.

This action plan shall also include recommendations for establishing an organizational mechanism to oversee implementation of the action plan and for promoting long-term outdoor recreation. The Governor shall appoint fifteen (15) voting members to the Task Force, representing a diverse and statewide profile of both the public and private sectors from the following stakeholder groups:

1. Outdoor Recreation Business
2. Tourism
3. Environmental Organizations/Environmental Education
4. Sportsmen/Sportswomen
5. Environmental Education
6. General Business
7. Local and Federal Recreation Agencies
8. Outdoor Recreation Participants

The following state agencies shall designate representatives to participate as nonvoting members:

1. Department of Fish and Wildlife
2. Department of Natural Resources
3. State Parks and Recreation Commission
4. Recreation and Conservation Office
5. Department of Commerce
6. Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
7. Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
8. Office of Financial Management

The Governor shall also invite one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the Senate and one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the House of Representatives to participate as nonvoting members.

The Governor shall designate one of the voting members as the chair of the Task Force. Non-governmental members of the Task Force may be reimbursed for travel and meeting expenses at the discretion of the Task Force. The Recreation and Conservation Office shall provide staff support and administer all contracts and expenses for the Task Force.

The Task Force is encouraged to hold public meetings across the state to solicit input and collect information on regional priorities and suggestions for state action.

The Task Force shall complete its draft plan and recommendation by September 1, 2014. The Task Force shall complete its final plan and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature by September 19, 2014.

The Task Force shall expire on December 31, 2014.

This executive order shall take effect immediately.

Signed and sealed with the official seal of the state of Washington on this 19th day of February, 2014, at Olympia, Washington.

By:

/s/

Jay Inslee
Governor

BY THE GOVERNOR:

/s/

Secretary of State

Appendix II | Task Force Bios

Member Biographies

Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation

VOTING MEMBERS

Barb Chamberlain, Task Force Co-Chair

Executive Director, Washington Bikes

Barb Chamberlain has been the executive director for Washington Bikes since 2012. Washington Bikes (formerly the Bicycle Alliance of Washington) works to grow bicycling statewide through public policy, education, support for local advocates, and promotion of bike travel and tourism. As a result Washington has been ranked the top bicycle-friendly state in the nation 6 years in a row by the League of American Bicyclists. Before joining Washington Bikes, Ms. Chamberlain spent 14½ years with Washington State University Spokane as director of communications and public affairs, playing an active role in community and economic development. She served on numerous boards in the Spokane region. Her community service included 2 years as chair of Friends of the Falls, a nonprofit focused on thoughtful activation of the Spokane River Gorge through recreation and conservation projects, and 3 years on the board of the Empire Health Foundation, which focuses on reduction of childhood obesity as its top priority. The youngest woman ever elected to the Idaho State House and Senate, she served 4 years in the Idaho Legislature, receiving high marks from the Idaho Conservation League.

Doug Walker, Task Force Co-Chair

Retired CEO of WRQ, Inc. and Chair of The Wilderness Society

For 25 years, Doug Walker was the founding partner and chief executive officer of WRQ, an integration software company that served Fortune 500 companies and had customers in 51 countries. He is an active supporter of charitable, environmental, and community organizations. Currently, Mr. Walker is the chair of the Governing Council of The Wilderness Society and vice president of The American Alpine Club. He also serves on the boards of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Seattle Parks Foundation, Conservation Lands Foundation, Forterra, University of Washington College of the Environment, William D. Ruckelshaus Center Advisory Board, Sierra Club Foundation, and Outdoor Alliance. Doug is an avid hiker and mountain climber and a year-round bicycle commuter.

Marc Berejka

Director Government and Community Affairs, REI

Marc Berejka has served as REI's first, full-time government affairs professional since 2011. REI is a national outdoor retail cooperative, with more than 5 million active members and annual sales exceeding \$2 billion. REI's mission is to "inspire, educate and outfit people for a lifetime of outdoor adventure and stewardship." Mr. Berejka guides REI's engagement in policy matters at the federal and local levels. This includes advocacy on issues that affect retailers in the outdoor recreation sector, such as main-street business regulation, Internet sales, and international trade. And it includes efforts to assure REI's current and future members can continue to enjoy outdoor recreation – whether that be recreating close to home or at the nation's many outdoor destinations. Mr. Berejka also oversees REI's community grants program, which annually distributes several million dollars to hundreds of local, regional, and national organizations that help sustain the country's recreation infrastructure. Before joining REI, Mr. Berejka served as technology policy advisor to then-Secretary Gary Locke at the U.S. Department of Commerce. Before that, he worked for 12 years in various public policy roles at Microsoft, both in Washington D.C. and in Washington State, and he spent the first part of his career as a telecommunications attorney. He holds a law degree from Georgetown University and a bachelor of arts degree from Princeton University.

Joshua Brandon

Military Organizer, Sierra Club Outdoors

Joshua Brandon is the military organizer for Sierra Club Outdoors, where he pursues his passion of leading the military community in the outdoors in a variety of roles ranging from mountaineering and therapy to conservation and advocacy. Originally from Cleveland Ohio, Mr. Brandon is a graduate of The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina. He served as an army infantry officer from 2002 to 2012, which included three combat tours in Iraq where he was awarded the Silver Star and two Bronze Stars with Valor Device. In 2010, he founded the Hound Summit Team, a veteran and combat wounded mountaineering team, and in 2013 he joined Veterans Expeditions on the board of directors. He also serves as the American Alpine Club's Cascade Section chair.

Russ Cahill

Retired State Parks Manager, Washington and California

Russ Cahill is a retired parks manager and lifetime outdoorsman. He served as a national park ranger in California, Alaska, Hawaii, and Washington D.C., and was director of both the Alaska state parks and California state parks systems. He has worked in Washington State natural resources and parks since 1980 and was the first executive director of the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition. After a stint as the deputy director for the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Mr. Cahill retired and since has served as a member and chair of the Washington State Fish and Wildlife Commission and a member of the Washington State Parks and Recreation

Commission. Mr. Cahill has been a member of the Audubon Society and The Nature Conservancy, where he was a member and chair of the Washington and Alaska board. He is married to Narda Pierce, commissioner of the Washington Supreme Court. They enjoy birding, kayaking cross-country skiing, and fishing. His children, grandchildren, and two great grandchildren are all Washington and Alaska park users.

Dale Denney

Owner and Outfitter, Bearpaw Outfitters

Dale Denney's family is a sixth generation northeast Washington family that hunts, shoots, fish, boat, attend rodeos, rides horses and recreational vehicles, sightsees, and likes to travel. He started outfitting hunters while at the same time working 2 years in the oil drilling industry and 17 years in all aspects of an industrial manufacturing company from handling raw materials to testing new products and traveling extensively representing the company. The outfitting business grew and by 1995, Bearpaw Outfitters became a fulltime endeavor, which now outfits hunters and anglers in four western states. During their 38 years in business, Bearpaw Outfitters has been featured on numerous outdoor television shows. Mr. Denney promotes hunting, fishing, and other recreational pursuits and is an active member of many conservation and industry organizations, donating several hunting trips annually to these groups. He has facilitated student internships and helped organize the purchase and remodel of the closed Colville Fish Hatchery, which now operates as a non-profit collaborative fisheries science and vocational learning center where high school students gain credits, knowledge, and experience raising fish to benefit the resource and community. Mr. Denney and his wife Tara (who also guides hunters at times) have three adult children. In their spare time, they enjoy family barbecues, reunions, community functions, and adventure vacations.

Patty Graf-Hoke

Executive Director, Visit Kitsap Peninsula

Patty Graf-Hoke is the executive director of the Visit Kitsap Peninsula. She has a 35-year career as a communications professional, assisting regional and international clients in the public and private sectors. Before being selected executive director in 2009, Ms. Graf-Hoke was chief executive and financial officer of a full-service advertising and public relations firm in Seattle and a private marketing and public relations consultant. As executive director of the Visit Kitsap Peninsula, Ms. Graf-Hoke has worked with public and private groups to establish the 371-mile Kitsap Peninsula Water Trails, which was adopted by the Washington Water Trails Association and is slated to be officially designated a National Water Trail by the Department of Interior. Ms. Graf-Hoke has a successful history of working with recreation organizations, local businesses, and government agencies to identify opportunities to collaborate and create shared economic and environmental benefits. She is a native of Washington State and grew up hiking and camping in the Cascade and Olympic Mountains, exploring caves along the Columbia River, and cleaning Washington's ocean beaches. After raising four children on the Kitsap Peninsula, she and her husband, Bill, now live in

the Manette District in Bremerton and continue to enjoy outdoor activities locally and on road trips around the United States and overseas.

George Harris

Chief Executive Officer, Northwest Marine Trade Association

George Harris is president and chief executive officer of the Northwest Marine Trade Association, which is the oldest and largest regional marine trade association in the country. Founded in 1947, the Northwest Marine Trade Association represents more than 700 companies engaged in the recreational boating industry, including boat dealers, boat brokers, marinas, boatyards, recreational fishing businesses, boat and boating accessory manufacturers, and retailers and suppliers of boating accessories and services. Its mission is to grow and promote recreational boating in the Northwest. The Northwest Marine Trade Association produces the Seattle Boat Show, the West Coast's largest boat show, each January. Mr. Harris has been at the Northwest Marine Trade Association since 1999, and has served as its boat show director and vice president. In 2009, he was promoted to president and chief executive officer. Before joining the Northwest Marine Trade Association, he spent 8 years with Connelly Skis as a product and sales manager. He is a lifelong boater and angler, certified scuba instructor, graduate of Michigan State University, and 2009 graduate of Seattle Chamber of Commerce – Leadership Tomorrow. He lives in Seattle with his wife, Lisa, and their two daughters.

Connor Inslee

Chief Operating Officer and Program Director, Outdoors for All

Connor Inslee is the chief operating officer of Outdoors for All Foundation, an organization that provides outdoor recreation opportunities for people with disabilities. Mr. Inslee has 6 years of experience administering diverse adaptive recreation programs including cycling, kayaking, rock climbing, canoeing, and Nordic and alpine skiing. He is an avid skier, kayaker, and sailor, and also serves on the board of the Washington Water Trails Association and leads environmental education-based kayak tours. Before joining Outdoors for All, Mr. Inslee worked as a kayak instructor and guide throughout the Pacific Northwest, as a wilderness therapy instructor in Idaho, and a ski patroller at Stevens Pass.

John Keates

Director, Facilities, Parks, and Property Director at Mason County Parks

John Keates is the director of Mason County's Facilities, Parks, and Property Department. From 1982 to present, Mr. Keates has worked with city and county parks and recreation organizations, and has been department head for 21 years. He holds a bachelor of arts degree in parks and recreation management from Western Washington University. He has been an avid off-road motorcyclist for 45 years and an active hiker, cross-country skier, runner, bicyclist, and hunter.

Ben Klasky*Chief Executive Officer, IslandWood*

Ben Klasky is the president and chief executive officer of IslandWood, a nonprofit organization that provides environmental education to more than 150 schools throughout Washington annually. Based on Bainbridge Island, IslandWood's 255-acre headquarters hosts some of the most environmentally sustainable buildings in the world. Many of the low-income kids served by IslandWood have never spent time in the outdoors before. Mr. Klasky and his team are working to expand IslandWood's programs throughout Washington State and onto the national stage. Before to joining IslandWood, he served as the executive director of Net Impact, a global network of thousands of people with master in business administration degrees committed to using the power of business to address social and environmental issues. Mr. Klasky is the co-founder of Camp Galileo, the largest set of day camps in the San Francisco Bay Area, with 23 campuses throughout northern California. His career ranges from advising Fortune 500 leaders as a management consultant at Deloitte, to fundraising as a development director at Teach for America, to teaching third grade in a severely under-resourced school district in Louisiana. He holds a master in business administration and a master in education from Stanford University. Mr. Klasky has been an active volunteer throughout his life – having led outdoor trips for children from New York's Harlem and Chinatown neighborhoods and having served on numerous boards. He spends his free time restoring a cabin with his wife on Puget Sound, and chasing after his 5- and 7-year-old boys.

Noah McCord*Leader, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Youth Council*

Noah McCord is on the Youth Council for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and a senior at Capital High School in Olympia. He has developed an interest in and understanding of the public process surrounding parks and outdoor recreation by participating on the Olympia Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee. An avid outdoor enthusiast, Mr. McCord believes strongly in the various benefits of outdoor recreation for youth and young adults, and hopes to promote participation in outdoor recreation across all ages by identifying and targeting factors that stand in the way of Washington residents' knowledge of and access to their outdoor resources. He also is chair of the Thurston Regional Fields and Recreation Planning Committee, an effort of the PARC Foundation of Thurston County.

Dan Nordstrom*Chief Executive, Officer Outdoor Research*

Dan Nordstrom is the chief executive officer and owner of Outdoor Research, a manufacturer of equipment and apparel dedicated to the pursuit of human-powered adventure. Outdoor Research is based in Seattle and employs more than 150 people in all phases of product development and manufacture. Before his purchase of Outdoor Research, Mr. Nordstrom spent 17 years as part of the

management team of the Nordstrom department store chain. He served as co-president for 4 years with responsibility for menswear, investor relations, information technology, credit, and catalog and Internet sales. Following that, he spent 3 years as chief executive officer of Nordstrom.com, building what is now the largest branded fashion apparel Web site in the world. Mr. Nordstrom is married with three sons aged 25, 22, and 17. He graduated from the University of Washington with a bachelor of arts degree in economics and a master of business administration degree. On a good day he's either climbing or skiing.

Spencer Olson

Communications Hub Director, Fuse Washington

Spencer Olson is the communications hub director of Fuse Washington. He is a fourth generation Washingtonian and a native of Pierce County. Having grown up in the Puget Sound region, Mr. Olson had an early and active childhood hiking and snowshoeing around Mount Rainier, skiing in the Cascade Mountains, and generally enjoying the tremendous outdoor experiences in his community's backyard. At Fuse Washington, he manages a statewide communications capacity building and technical assistance program integrating narrative and storytelling techniques into policy and advocacy conversations. Before joining Fuse, Mr. Olson worked with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth in Washington, D.C. in the fight against HIV and AIDS and organized around the country on several environmental campaigns, working with organizations including the Natural Resource Defense Council, CREDO Action, and Energy Action Coalition. Mr. Olson is a graduate of George Washington University with a double major in environmental studies and geography.

Tom Reeve

National Leadership Council Chair, Trust for Public Land

Tom Reeve is chair of The Trust for Public Land's National Leadership Council, sits on its National Board of Directors and is the former chair of its Washington State Advisory Board. Mr. Reeve is past president of the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition board and serves on the National Council of the Land Trust Alliance. He was active in the community efforts that resulted in the 2013 presidential creation of the San Juan Islands National Monument. The Reeve family lives on its Lopez Island farm, which is protected by land preservation agreements. Mr. Reeve spent 18 years at Microsoft working in a variety of technical and management jobs. Joining Microsoft when he was young, some of his jobs included managing teams focused on consumer software, internal tools, international software versions, the Works business, media production, and the MSN.com portal site. Born and raised in Honolulu, Mr. Reeve earned his bachelor degree from Harvard University.

Shiloh Schauer

Executive Director, Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce

Shiloh Schauer is the executive director of the Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce. Recognized in 2010 by the Wenatchee Business World as one of the best and brightest leaders under the age of 35, Ms. Schauer is the epitome of passion, purpose, and persistence. A Wenatchee native, she graduated from Wenatchee High School and Wenatchee Valley College, serving as student body president at both schools. She then attended Eastern Washington University, earning a bachelor of art degree in social work. Ms. Schauer topped 75 candidates from around the nation to lead the Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce as it launches new tourism promotions and seeks to boost economic development. Before leading the chamber, Ms. Schauer spent ten years working for the Washington State Senate. She believes servant leadership creates authentic relationships and stronger communities. Her leadership capabilities, years of experience cultivating, maintaining, and improving relationships with individuals, community organizations, and government entities are just some of her strengths. Ms. Schauer is the fourth generation owner of her family's pear orchard in Sunnyslope. She and her husband, Andrew, enjoy riding motorcycles and they have a collection of vintage Japanese motorcycles. She volunteers her time working with high school leaders in the summer at Mount Adams Leadership Camp, and she is a classroom volunteer for Wenatchee High School's Associated Student Body.

Louise Stanton-Masten

Executive Director, Washington Tourism Alliance

Louise Stanton-Masten is executive director of the Washington Tourism Alliance, a statewide organization formed to sustain Washington State tourism following the closure of the state tourism office in 2011. The Washington Tourism Alliance mission is to advocate, promote, develop, and sustain the economic well-being of the Washington tourism industry. Ms. Stanton-Masten previously served as president and chief executive officer of the Everett Area Chamber of Commerce and as business development director for the Economic Alliance Snohomish County. Before that, she founded and managed a planning and public policy consulting firm providing services to local, regional, and state government clients throughout the Pacific Northwest. Ms. Stanton-Masten has been a Washington State resident since 1983. She serves on the board of directors of the Future of Flight Foundation and the Mukilteo Community Orchestra. She has a bachelor of science degree from the University of Vermont, a master degree in urban planning and policy from the University of Illinois, and is a graduate of the U.S. Chamber's Institute for Organization Management.

NON-VOTING AGENCY MEMBERS

Allyson Brooks

Director, Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Allyson Brooks is the state historic preservation officer and director of the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, the sole agency in state government devoted to archaeological and cultural resource issues. Dr. Brooks is the state's primary advisor on archaeological and cultural and historic preservation issues as well as the Main Street program. Before coming to Washington State, Dr. Brooks was the historian and historic archaeologist for the Minnesota Department of Transportation. While in Minnesota, she was a planning commissioner for the city of Chanhassen. She has worked as an archaeologist for the state of South Dakota, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, and various consulting firms. Ms. Brooks has conducted archaeological excavations of prehistoric and historic sites in Alaska, Maine, Maryland, Nevada, New York, South Dakota, Virginia, and Wyoming. She has given numerous public presentations around the nation on archaeological and historic preservation issues.

Jim Cahill

Senior Budget Analyst, Office of Financial Management

Jim Cahill is the senior budget assistant to the Governor for natural resources at the Office of Financial Management. He began working for the Office of Financial Management in 1987, but also served 4 years as the finance director for the Puget Sound Partnership, before returning to the Office of Financial Management in 2011. His current duties include advising the Governor and the Office of Financial Management director on the budget and related issues for the natural resource agencies in Washington State. He served on the 1992 State Wildlife and Recreation Lands Management Task Force, which examined long-term funding sources for the operation and maintenance of state lands and has a long history working on parks, outdoor recreation, and habitat acquisition funding programs. Jim graduated from the University of Puget Sound with a bachelor of art degree and the University of California, Berkeley with a master degree in public policy. He is an avid cross-country skier and road biker as well as a hiker and occasional surfer.

Kaleen Cottingham

Director, Recreation and Conservation Office

Kaleen Cottingham was appointed to lead the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office in 2007. During her career, she has worked for four governors and the elected Public Lands Commissioner in a variety of management and advisor positions. She got her start in Olympia serving as legal counsel for several Senate committees. She also practiced law and provided strategic advice on natural resource and land use issues. Ms. Cottingham received her bachelor of science degree in forest resources from the University of Washington and her law degree from the

University of Puget Sound School of Law, now part of Seattle University. Ms. Cottingham, who was born and raised in Washington, resides in Olympia.

Nick Demerice

Director External Affairs, Commerce

Nick Demerice is the director of external affairs at the Washington State Department of Commerce. He joined the department in 2006 and is responsible for communications, policy development, research, and governmental affairs. Before entering state service, Mr. Demerice worked in non-profit management, for a member of congress, and a former governor. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Washington in political science and lives in the Olympia area with his family.

Brock Milliern

Recreation Manager, Department of Natural Resources

Brock Milliern is the statewide manager of recreation for the Washington State Department of Natural Resources. He started his career in 1999 with the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, where he worked as both a park aide and park ranger, and he has continued to work in recreation and conservation throughout his career. Before coming to the department last year, he worked for the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department in various positions including stewardship and sustainability manager, where he oversaw programs such as green infrastructure, volunteer coordination, and urban food systems. He has a bachelor's degree in outdoor recreation from Western Washington University. Mr. Milliern is married to Mindie and they have a 3-month-old son Dylan. On weekends, you can find them spending time with friends and family, hiking, biking, backpacking, and exploring the beaches in Ocean Shores.

Rodger Schmitt

Commissioner, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

Rodger Schmitt was appointed to the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission in 2009, where he has served as secretary, vice-chair, and chair. Mr. Schmitt also has served on the Jefferson Land Trust's board of directors for 8 years and as its operations director. He has been secretary, treasurer, and vice-president for a number of committees during his time with the land trust. He continues to serve on the Governance Committee in addition to the Resources Board of the Jefferson Land Trust. Mr. Schmitt retired from the federal government in 2003 with 34 years of experience in natural resource and outdoor recreation work. He ended his professional career as the director of recreation for the Bureau of Land Management, providing leadership to the bureau's recreation program with responsibility for all outdoor recreation programs and policy development for visitor services, interpretation, recreation management information system, land use permitting and management, recreation fees, wild and scenic river use and management, and planning and accessibility.

Joe Stohr

Deputy Director, Department of Fish and Wildlife

Joe Stohr is the deputy director of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. He was born and raised outside of Yakima and earned his bachelor of science degree in fisheries and a master of science degree in health physics and radiological sciences from the University of Washington. He spent the early part of career with Washington Departments of Health and Ecology as staff lead studying health impacts to the public from historic Hanford operations followed by management of state regulatory programs during the Hanford transition from nuclear weapons production to environmental cleanup. Mr. Stohr served as a Department of Ecology program manager for the Oil and Hazardous Substance Spill Prevention and Response program and the Water Rights Program and as a water policy advisor for two directors.

Becky Wallace

Agriculture Program Supervisor, OSPI

Becky Wallace is supervisor of the Career and College Readiness Department's Agriculture Sciences Education Program in the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. She has the privilege of serving as the state advisor to the Future Farmers of America Association in Washington. The Washington association is a youth leadership organization that includes more than 7,000 high school students enrolled in agricultural education courses throughout the state. As program supervisor, she oversees the agriculture sciences programs in the state, which have more than 15,000 high school students enrolled in natural resource and environmental services and management courses. A graduate of Washington State University, Ms. Wallace enjoys taking in the beauty of our state with her 4-year-old daughter, and is a passionate advocate for agriculture and education.

NON-VOTING LEGISLATORS**Representative Vincent Buys**

Washington State House of Representatives

Vincent Buys is serving his second term representing the 42nd District. He grew up on a dairy farm outside of Lynden and graduated from Bellingham Technical College. He has studied abroad in Europe and participated in missions to Africa, Mexico, and Haiti. Representative Buys has worked for Intel and Horizon Air and currently owns and operates his own company, Dutchman Construction. He serves on three House committees and is the ranking Republican on the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. Along with his legislative committees, Representative Buys is an appointed member of the Washington State Building Code Council. He is involved with many community groups including Toastmasters, the Whatcom Young Professionals, the Northwest Business Club, and the Lynden Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, he is very involved with Starfish

Ministries, a non-profit organization that provides assistance to people in Haiti through schools, feeding programs, and by drilling wells in impoverished communities to bring them clean water.

Senator Linda Parlette

Washington State Senate

Senator Linda Parlette was elected to the state House of Representatives in 1996 and 1998, and the state Senate in 2000, 2004, 2008, and 2012. She represents Washington's 12th Legislative District and is the fourth generation in her family born and raised in Central Washington. Senator Parlette graduated from Washington State University with a bachelor of science degree in pharmacy. Senator Parlette was selected by her peers in 2004 to be the Senate Republican Caucus deputy leader. In 2006 she was elected caucus chair, the number two leadership role in the caucus, and was reelected to this role in 2008, 2010, and 2012. Senator Parlette serves on four standing Senate committees: Health Care, Rules, Ways and Means, and Natural Resources and Parks. Senator Parlette's experience as a pharmacist serves as a good foundation for her work on health care issues and her work as an orchardist helped her understand first-hand the importance of agriculture in the state, and the needs of small businesses owners. In 2008, Senator Parlette received the Farm Bureau's "Legislator of the Year" award and the Washington Agriculture and Forestry Association's Stu Bledsoe Leadership Memorial Award, given each year to leaders who make a difference in their communities. She is a ten-year recipient of the Association of Washington Business' "Cornerstone" award and in 2006 received the National Federation of Independent Business's "Legislator of the Year" award. When the Legislature is not in session, Senator Parlette resides in Wenatchee with her husband Bob. Together they have five grown children and three granddaughters.

Senator Kevin Ranker

Washington State Senate

Senator Kevin Ranker possesses an extensive and diverse background developing and advancing public policy, community development strategies, and conservation initiatives both in the United States and internationally. For several years he has focused his expertise on the advancement of coastal and ocean policy with a particular emphasis on the combination of coastal economic development, energy policy, and conservation. Senator Ranker has advanced key legislation focused on climate, energy, coastal and marine management, transportation, agriculture, and equal rights. Legislative highlights include the sponsorship and co-sponsorship of comprehensive marine management, oil spill response and preparedness efforts, and landmark legislation making Washington the seventh state to recognize full marriage equality. Senator Ranker served as a San Juan County commissioner and was a senior fellow at the Ocean Foundation. In 2011, he received a White House appointment to serve as an advisor to President Barack Obama's National Ocean Council. He is the vice president of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region, a partnership of ten states and Canadian provinces that works to increase economic well-being; coordinate energy, economic, and environmental strategies; and enhance the competitiveness of the region. He lives on

Orcas Island with his wife and daughter while his son proudly serves in the U.S. Navy. Senator Ranker is an avid runner, sailor, paddler, fisherman, and surfer.

Representative Steve Tharinger

Washington State House of Representatives

First elected in 2010, Representative Steve Tharinger is a former three-term Clallam County commissioner and small business owner who represents the 24th Legislative District. He is a past member and chair of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board, and has served on several state planning efforts from watershed planning to biodiversity. He is a state-certified volunteer mediator and past treasurer of the United Way of Clallam County. He is a member of the Sequim Sunrise Rotary and received the Clallam County Community Service Award in recognition of his long-standing community involvement. Representative Tharinger graduated with a bachelor of art degree from Colorado College and resides in Sequim with his wife, Yvonne.

Appendix III | Task Force Charter

Washington Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation Task Force Charter

TASK FORCE PURPOSE

The purpose of the Washington Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation (task force) is to carry out Governor Inslee's Executive Order 14-01. The task force will develop a strategy, action plan, and recommendations to manage, transform, and leverage Washington's outdoor recreation assets and state programs. The strategy, action plan, and recommendations will focus, but not be limited, to the items listed in the Governor's Executive Order 14-01.

OUTCOME

The task force will complete a draft plan that includes strategies, actions, and recommendations to manage, transform, and leverage Washington's outdoor recreation assets and state programs by September 1, 2014. The final plan will be submitted to the Governor and the Legislature by September 19, 2014.

MEMBERSHIP

Members – Voting

The task force will be made up of 17 voting members appointed by the Governor. The voting members represent a diversity of outdoor recreation interests. Appointed members include:

- Barb Chamberlain, co-chair – Executive Director, Washington Bikes
- Doug Walker, co-chair – Retired CEO of WRQ, Inc. and Chair of The Wilderness Society
- Marc Berejka – Director Government and Community Affairs, REI
- Joshua Brandon – Military Organizer, Sierra Club Outdoors
- Russ Cahill – Retired Director, California State Parks
- Dale Denney – Owner and Outfitter, Bearpaw Outfitters
- Patty Graf-Hoke – Executive Director, Visit Kitsap Peninsula
- George Harris – Chief Executive Officer, Northwest Marine Trade Association
- Connor Inslee – COO & Program Director, Outdoors for All
- John Keates – Director, Mason County Facilities, Parks and Trails Department
- Ben Klasky – Chief Executive Officer, Islandwood
- Noah McCord – Leader, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Youth Council
- Dan Nordstrom – Chief Executive Officer, Outdoor Research
- Spencer Olson – Communications Hub Director, Fuse
- Tom Reeve – National Leadership Council Chair, Trust for Public Land

- Shiloh Schauer – Executive Director, Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Louise Stanton-Masten – Executive Director, Washington Tourism Alliance

The Governor invited four non-voting members representing the Legislature and eight representing state agencies:

Legislature – Non-Voting

- The Honorable Vincent Buys – Representative
- The Honorable Linda Parlette – Senator
- The Honorable Kevin Ranker – Senator
- The Honorable Steve Tharinger – Representative

State Agencies – Non-Voting

- Dr. Allyson Brooks – Director, Archeology and Historic Preservation
- Jim Cahill – Senior Budget Analyst, Office of Financial Management
- Kaleen Cottingham – Director, Recreation and Conservation Office
- Nick Demerice – Director External Affairs, Department of Commerce
- Brock Milliern – Recreation Manager, Department of Natural Resources
- Rodger Schmitt – Commissioner, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
- Joe Stohr – Deputy Director, Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Rebecca Wallace – Program Supervisor Agriculture, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

Co-Chair Roles and Responsibilities

The Governor designated two voting members of the task force as co-chairs. The role of the co-chairs is to preside over task force meetings; work with the project lead and facilitator to develop meeting agendas; if necessary, appoint subcommittee members (see *Committees*); and serve as spokespersons for the committee. At least one of the co-chairs will attend each meeting.

Task Force Member Roles and Responsibilities

Members are expected to attend designated task force meetings. Not all voting members are expected to attend each meeting. Members will attend meetings based on location, interest, and the number of members needed. Each meeting must have at least eight of the 17 voting members in attendance. Voting members may participate in meetings electronically as long as that option is available and participation meets requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act.

Committees

Committees may be appointed by the co-chairs to advance the work of the task force. The purpose of the committees is to carry out the work for which they have been formed, and to make recommendations to the full task force. The committees shall consist of task force

members and may also include staff and other participants. Non-task force members of committees may not vote. The co-chairs of the task force shall appoint committee chairs, to be selected from the task force members of the committee. No more than 7 voting members of the task force may participate on a committee. Committee chairs are responsible for reporting on committee activities to the full task force.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Contracts, expenses, administration, and staff support shall be provided by the RCO.

MEETINGS

The task force will hold public meetings and will solicit input and collect information from interested parties from across the state. All scheduled meetings of the task force will follow the open public meetings act requirements as defined in 42.30 RCW, and all information prepared for the task force will be available on the RCO Web site, which can be found at www.rco.wa.gov/boards/TaskForce.shtml.

Locations

The task force will hold at least five meetings throughout the state. The meetings will be held in the following cities or general regions:

- Olympia
- Port Angeles
- Seattle
- Spokane
- Wenatchee

Schedule

Each meeting will be scheduled for approximately four hours. The first meeting of the task force is scheduled for Wednesday, April 9 in Olympia. Additional meetings will be held during the following time periods:

- Monday, May 5 (at REI in Kent)
- June 9-13
- July 7-11
- August 18-22 (officially adopt the draft plan for public comment)
- September 16 via telephone (if needed)

Facilitation

RCO contracted with two organizations to support the task force. Cascade Interpretive Consulting will be our lead facilitator and the Athena Group will lead public outreach and engagement.

MEETING PROCEDURE AND PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The task force shall strive for consensus on matters and issues that are brought before it. In the absence of consensus, a vote may be taken and majority and minority reports shall be included in the record. When formal task force action is necessary, such action will be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order*.

COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS

All voting members of the task force will be reimbursed for travel and meeting expenses at the discretion of the task force.

WEB SITE

The RCO has created a web page specific to the task force on the RCO Web Site. It can be found at: www.rco.wa.gov/boards/TaskForce.shtml. Task force information, i.e., the executive order, members, charter, minutes and meeting materials will be posted on the web site, along with relevant reports, studies and other reference material provided to the task force. Information about public involvement will also be posted on the web site.

RECORDS

The records of the task force are subject to the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, 42.56 RCW. Minutes of the task force meetings shall serve as the official record of the meetings and shall be made available upon request. The task force shall determine the scope and content of the minutes. Meeting minutes will be posted on the task force web site.

PRODUCT / OUTCOME

The task force will complete a draft plan that will include strategies, actions, and recommendations to manage, transform, and leverage Washington's outdoor recreation assets and state programs by September 1, 2014. The final plan will be complete and submitted to the Governor and the Legislature by September 19, 2014.

The draft plan and recommendations will be approved by the task force at the August meeting and posted on the task force web site from September 1 to September 12, 2014. Public comment will be solicited and considered for inclusion in the plan and recommendations. If public comment requires substantial changes, a conference call will be scheduled on September 17, 2014 for final approval of the plan and recommendations.

TERM

The task force expires on December 31, 2014.

Appendix IV | Task Force Meeting Summaries

Blue Ribbon Parks and Outdoor Recreation Task Force | www.rco.wa.gov

April 9, 2014 Meeting Summary

The Task Force successfully launched in March and hosted the first of six meetings on April 9 at the Cherberg Building on the Olympia capitol campus. The objectives were to introduce Task Force members, staff and consultants; hear from the Governor about his expectations; discuss Task Force roles; hear from partner agencies; review state laws that pertain to government committees; set up organizing rules; and plan future meetings.

The meeting was well attended: Gov. Jay Inslee set the forward-looking tone with his opening remarks, encouraging full engagement of members, stakeholders and staff. Fifteen of the 17 voting members participated (Dan Nordstrom and Louise Stanton-Masten were unable to attend), along with all 12 non-voting members and 34 members of the public. Six people gave public comment. Visit the [Task Force web page](#) for meeting materials, the TVW webcast, and upcoming meeting dates.

Key Outcomes

- Key topics and themes identified for upcoming Task Force meetings
- Four Subcommittee topics confirmed: (1) economic development, (2) get more people outdoors, (3) meet future recreational needs, and (4) state role in providing outdoor recreation
- Subcommittee member participation discussed
- Six stakeholders provided public comment

Governor's Opening Remarks

Governor Inslee arrived early to visit with members and citizens before the meeting, then set the tone for this six-month engagement with his opening remarks. He asks the Task Force to help achieve three goals:

1. In light of lost parks and recreation funding, infrastructure and staff resources, ***figure out how to put our state parks on a stable, sustainable course for next 100 years*** in a way that provides universal access. This is a heritage issue.
2. ***Maximize the potential of our parks and public infrastructure to get more people outside*** and generate increased recreation and tourism revenue for the state. Washington's tourism industry offers a wealth of untapped opportunities and growth potential.
3. ***Increase number of hours and days our children spend outdoors.*** It's estimated that one third of our kids will be exposed to pre-diabetic conditions by the age of 35 unless something changes. Let's provide more exercise opportunities for kids.

Introductions & Context

Members introduced each other in an interactive activity led by Task Force facilitator, Chuck Lennox. Next, co-chairs, Barb Chamberlain and Doug Walker, led a review of the Charter and Rules of Conduct; all members present adopted the documents as is, with no changes. Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) Director Kaleen Cottingham, RCO and Governor's Office staff, and agency partners then provided context through a series of presentations (see [Task Force web page](#)):

- Executive Order 14-01, establishing the Task Force
- Administrative details
- Existing studies and research
- State outdoor recreation programs and funding
- Local parks and outdoor recreation programs

Public Comment

Karen Daubert, Washington Trails Association: I urge the Task Force to think broadly, creatively. Good news is that more kids are getting outside. We have seen a 10 percent increase in Washington Trails Association volunteer hours every year—more youth are becoming involved. When I consider what outdoor recreation means to me, I think “connections”.

Doug Levy, Outcomes by Levy: I helped get the Big Tent initiative up and running. Forming this Task Force is a watershed moment. Outdoor recreation equals: incredible range of business opportunities; public health benefits; alternative transportation business opportunities; crime prevention; and tourism. We need to do a better job of capitalizing on business opportunities and increasing economic development. We need to leverage and promote our amazing outdoor assets. The access question is important. We also need to consider funding cuts and protecting existing funding. Task Force should consider ways to catalyze access, improve maintenance and operation of existing resources, and create an easily accessible process for public involvement.

John Gifford, Pacific Northwest Ski Areas Association: Task Force should represent winter sports and consider issues associated with this particular type of outdoor recreation. This billion dollar industry accounts for 76,000 annual jobs and is a significant economic driver in Washington state.

Debbie Emgee, City of Snohomish: The city of Snohomish is interested in partnering with the Task Force.

Jim King, Citizens for Parks and Recreation: I'm skeptical that we'll only get a report out of this process. Legislative non-voting members are key to the Task Force to help with buy-off and creating momentum. The Task Force needs user-group buy-off. There are a wealth of user-groups in the state and they need to feel ownership of Task Force recommendations. For example, Puget Sound is the number one location for scuba diving. Learn the history and build on what's already been done—the Task Force is just writing the latest chapter; this effort isn't new. Kids are key in this effort.

Sarah Mendonca, citizen: Utilize the Millennials! We are ready to recreate and spend!

Planning Upcoming Task Force Meetings

Facilitator Chuck Lennox lead a discussion about issues members would like to consider and learn more about at future Task Force meetings. The following was captured on flip charts:

For Further Consideration & Discussion

- How to integrate the issues
- State's role in liability issues
- Barriers to recreation – permitting, regulations, liability
- How to provide support (recreation, economic development, etc.) for Oso area?
- Definition of outdoor recreation
- Can we have a transformational approach – alternative narratives (reflecting voices of different recreational experiences from a broad perspective)
- Keep this central, framing question in mind as the Task Force moves forward: how do we define "outdoor recreation"? Our work begs that question and we haven't yet defined a shared understanding. A second item to consider: encourage everyone to look past and outside their agency boxes. The list of state roles is defined almost entirely by agencies and that is not how the average citizen thinks about recreation.

What do members want to learn?

Desired Topics and Outreach

- History of the issues
- Successful lessons learned about funding
- Tourism's role
- Engaging the tribes
- Outreach to diversify the voice for recreational needs
- Challenges to access
- How state agencies can (and do) collaborate with business and the private sector
- How can we reach out to other interests
 - Provide standardized methods/materials/language for this process
 - Gathering consistent information
 - Guidelines from RCO on talking points and feedback structure
 - Provide legal guidance about who/how we can talk to
 - How to direct people to feedback channels
 - Develop distribution lists for gathering feedback
- What are the budget implications of our recommendations
- Link the Heritage Community to outdoor recreation since heritage tourism is outdoors
- New ideas and innovation – what's out there
- Military families
- Non-traditional stakeholders
- Infrastructure's impact on outdoor recreation
 - Add Washington State Department of Transportation to the table – access to outdoor recreation and road conditions

- Elevate the issue
- Rethink how we provide services – Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission and Interpretation
- Relocation attraction – measuring quality of life index – Commerce testing a new tool
- Measuring our success
- Liability Issues
 - Whatcom County example – Department of Natural Resources
 - Access to water liability issues
- Marketing and information about outdoor recreation
 - Access for youth to adults
- Technology as a solution and a connection to different audiences
- Outlook (forecasting) for outdoor recreation – what are the trends

Proposed Subcommittee Topics & Themes

1. Economic Development

- Supporting the outdoor recreation industry
- Supporting rural and gateway communities
- Supporting urban communities (integrate throughout the subcommittees)
- Marketing: tourism, attracting new and relocating businesses, in-migration and quality of life, what already exists

2. Get More People Outdoors

- Getting kids outdoors
- Increasing participation of underserved populations
- Outdoor education
- The recreation and health connection

3. Meet Future Recreation Needs

- Funding + Capital Funding (integrate throughout the subcommittees)
- Meeting the needs of underserved populations
- Providing opportunities for a changing demographic
- Adapting to new trends in outdoor recreation
- Work with private landowners to expand opportunities

4. State Role in Providing Outdoor Recreation

- State Parks
- Department of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Washington State Department of Transportation – access to sites
- State role in local parks and communities
- State role in recreation provided by non-profit or private entities
- State role/relationship on federal recreation issues

Next Steps & Action

Co-Chairs

- Confirm subcommittee membership assignments
- Divide up subcommittees (two each) and check in with subcommittee chairs periodically to coach and mentor them through the process.

RCO & Consultant Partners

- Designate chairs for the three remaining subcommittees
- Distribute guidelines and timeline to subcommittees to help them get started
- Launch web forum for public engagement and comment
- Provide outreach materials for stakeholder group distribution

RCO Staff

- Confirm Task Force meeting dates and locations through September 2014
- Post meeting summary

Blue Ribbon Parks and Outdoor Recreation Task Force
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May 5, 2014 Meeting Summary

The second of six Task Force meetings was held on May 5 at REI Corporate Headquarters in Kent. The objectives were to gather public comment; launch the four Task Force subcommittees; and review public outreach and engagement process and tools. The meeting was well attended: Fourteen of the 17 voting members participated (George Harris, Tom Reeve and Doug Walker were unable to attend), along with 11 of 12 non-voting members (Senator Ranker was unable to attend) and at least 45 members of the public.

Twenty-one people provided comment, many of whom submitted additional material for Task Force member review. Three themes emerged from the public comment: (1) the importance of amplifying and fostering the connection between outdoor recreation, the environment, and improved human health; (2) the need for sustained funding to support employment, infrastructure, operations and maintenance, and access to outdoor recreation facilities statewide; and (3) leveraging underutilized economic development opportunities in the state's outdoor recreation sector. There are missed opportunities related to tourism, marketing and improved infrastructure; examples include the recreational fishing and boating sectors. Visit the [Task Force Web page](#) for meeting materials and upcoming meeting dates.

Key Outcomes

- **Task Force subcommittee structure and assignments confirmed.** Next steps related to topics and outreach identified by each group. Subcommittees asked for more direction and deadlines regarding process. Co-chairs and staff will outline the process and forward to subcommittee leads. View the [Subcommittee members and themes](#) online.
- **21 people provided public comment.**
- **Online engagement tool, www.engageoutdoorwashington.com, launched.** Task Force members requested refinements to improve the Web site's functionality and impact. Stakeholders and members of the public encouraged to participate in the online dialogue. Interested parties are also welcome to submit comments via email to meg.oleary@rco.wa.gov.

Opening Remarks

Marc Berejka, Task Force member and REI Director of Government and Community Affairs opened the meeting, and Catherine Walker, REI Senior Vice President and General Counsel welcomed attendees to the REI corporate headquarters. City of Kent Mayor Suzette Cooke's opening remarks served as a reminder of the cultural diversity in Washington state, how that diversity shapes how we recreate, and thus the infrastructure needed to support it—particularly

in highly diverse communities like Kent. She asked us to consider the importance of retrofitting our cities and communities for increased recreating.

Updates & Subcommittee Structure

Co-chair Barb Chamberlain led a brief round of introductions of members not present at the first meeting. Next, she introduced Task Force subcommittee leads, reviewed subcommittee expectations, and asked how members were involving others in subcommittee work. RCO staff offered to help set up conference calls for subcommittee meetings and reminded the group about [existing reports available](#) on the Task Force Web site that could help advance subcommittee work.

Public Comment

Comments are summarized and listed in the order presented at the meeting.

1. **Carrie Hite, Washington Recreation & Park Association:** Protect recreation funding. Leverage tourism/marketing to promote recreation. Reward preventative efforts on health care/obesity prevention (make investments up front). Make outdoor recreation and programs eligible use for gang prevention. Youth Athletic Facilities need to be funded in 2015-2017. Capital shows immediate results, and protecting these investments, including operations and maintenance, is crucial. Remove lid on dedicated accounts that diverts money to Motor Vehicle Fund. Minimize/eliminate liability risk that hinders parks/schools field-sharing partnerships. Reauthorize use of Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) for operations and maintenance.
2. **Dale Scott, Coastal Conservation Association:** Encourage and support sportfishing and leverage economic development opportunities. At one time, Washington state was known as the salmon fishing capital of the world; now anglers often travel out of state for salmon and steelhead fishing. Explore implications of Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife's growing reliance on license fee revenue. Increase number of fishing licenses sold rather than increasing fees.
3. **Bill Becker, Washington Environmental Council:** Importance of connection between the environment, outdoor recreation and economic development in Washington state.
4. **Sam Baraso, Willamette Partnership:** Link between public health, outdoor recreation and nature is an important component of economic development, especially rural. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has noted that your zip code determines more of your health than you genetic code.
5. **Martha Comfort, Northwest Marine Trade Association:** Importance of supporting the boating and marine industry in Washington state.
6. **Bob Ranzenbach, Recreation Boating Association of Washington:** Importance of fostering the boating and marine industry in Washington state. Recreational boating sector wants fair return on the taxes they contribute to the state economy. Boats are the only vessels in the state that pay a percentage-based excise tax to the state general fund.

Seattle Boat Show brings hundreds of thousands of visitors to the state, yet Washington offers no promotional nor marketing assistance. Consider benefits of Vancouver, British Columbia's tax-free option for extended stay boaters.

7. **Dwight Jones, Northwest Marine Trade Association:** Importance of fostering the boating and marine industry in Washington state.
8. **John Cochran, Cochran Consulting:** Connection between health, environment and outdoor recreation. Engaging individuals in healthy outdoor activities needs to start where people live and work, and for many, that means in cities or urban areas.
9. **Rob Smith, National Parks Conservation Association:** Encourage the state to fully engage in studies led by the National Park Service to consider restoration of the grizzly bear to remote areas of the North Cascades. Support designation of new National Park Service areas. Support establishment of Manhattan Project National Historical Park at Hanford. Approve Mountains to Sound National Heritage Area.
10. **Glenn Glover, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance:** Cost efficiency.
11. **Sarah Krueger, University of Washington School of Environmental & Forest Services:** Connection between outdoor recreation and public health.
12. **Amy Brockhaus, Mountains to Sound Greenway:** Benefits of outdoor recreation and need for sustained funding.
13. **Benjamin Greuel, The Wilderness Society:** Importance of the connection between conservation and recreation.
14. **Karen Daubert, Washington Trails Association:** Outdoor recreation and trail statistics in Washington state; need for forwarding thinking and trails funding; consider a single park pass that provides access throughout the state.
15. **Carol Shaw, Washington State Parks Foundation:** Advocacy for greater state funding to ensure sustainability of state parks system.
16. **Randall Olson, Cairncross & Hempelmann Attorneys at Law:** How urban recreation, transit oriented design and smart growth can support and foster outdoor recreation.
17. **Don Price, Bridle Trails Park Foundation:** Using the Bridle Trails Park Foundation experience as a model for the Task Force (e.g., sustained funding for outdoor recreation).
18. **Martin LeBlanc, IslandWood:** Importance of promoting and supporting youth and outdoor recreation. In particular, support for No Child Left Inside Act, which hasn't received funding for several years.
19. **Jim Richards, Washington Wildlife & Recreation Coalition:** Increase state funding for outdoor recreation.
20. **Tom Bugert, Washington Wildlife & Recreation Coalition:** Increase state funding for outdoor recreation.

21. **Dayle Wallien, National Forest Foundation:** Recreation on national forest land and the National Forest Foundation mission to engage the public in enjoyment and maintaining the health of our national forests.

Engage Outdoor Washington Web Site Demo

The Recreation and Conservation Office launched www.engageoutdoorwashington.com on [May 1, 2014](#). This online engagement tool is intended to encourage statewide dialogue and provide focused comments and ideas related to specific questions posed by the Task Force. During the next four months, The Task Force will prompt viewers with questions falling under several key focus areas as part of an online forum. Anyone is welcome to track the dialogue; if they want to submit ideas and comments, they must register. Activity on the site has been increasing steadily. As of Monday morning, May 5, the site logged 1,005 unique site visits, 147 ideas, and 194 comments.

Members expressed concern about the way the first question was posed on the new Web site, and asked the staff to consider adding a disclaimer that reminds viewers that questions and topics posted may not necessarily represent the opinions of all Task Force members. Members also considered the best way to post and sort questions so that the public can easily navigate to the topics of most interest (e.g., tagging key words). Members agreed that each subcommittee will develop Web site questions, and staff will help time the release of those questions to leverage and amplify subcommittee outreach.

Subcommittee Discussions

The four subcommittees met to discuss topics they plan to focus on; how they will approach stakeholder outreach and encourage public comment; and how best to structure subcommittee member dialogue and communication. Visit the [Task Force Web site](#) for a list of subcommittee members and themes. Highlights from the breakout group discussions follow:

Economic Development

Themes include: supporting outdoor recreation industry; rural and gateway communities; urban communities; and marketing and tourism. This subcommittee will explore ways to promote Washington in general and rural gateway communities in particular. They will schedule weekly conference calls.

Get More People Outdoors

Themes include: getting kids outdoors; increasing participation of underserved populations; outdoor education; and the recreation and health connection. This subcommittee will explore ways to get kids and underserved communities outdoors, get parents outdoors in order to support and encourage their kids' outdoor recreation; permit and fee reform; access; and building awareness (i.e., marketing) of what outdoor recreation opportunities exist.

Meet Future Recreation Needs

Themes include: funding, including capital and private; meeting the needs of underserved populations; providing opportunities for a changing demographic; adapting to new trends in

outdoor recreation; and work with private landowners to expand opportunities. This subcommittee will explore outreach tools and approaches, for example, surveys.

State Role in Providing Outdoor Recreation

Themes include: state agencies focused on outdoor recreation (e.g., state parks, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Fish & Wildlife, Department of Transportation); state role in local parks and communities; state role in recreation provided by non-profit or private entities; and state role/relationship on federal recreation issues. This subcommittee will encourage stakeholders to become active with www.engageoutdoorwashington.com, submit comments, and attend Task Force meetings.

Next Steps & Action

Task Force Co-Chairs

- Work with staff and facilitator to develop more specific guidance on subcommittee roles and deadlines.
- Work with the four subcommittee leads to develop topic related questions to post on the www.engageoutdoorwashington.com. Staff will help ensure the timing of these questions support and leverage each subcommittee's research and outreach.

RCO & Consultant Partners

- Revise www.engageoutdoorwashington.com Web site to improve ease of navigation, comment tracking and functionality.

RCO Staff

- Confirm Task Force meeting dates and locations through September 2014
- Post meeting summary
- Ongoing subcommittee support

Blue Ribbon Parks and Outdoor Recreation Task Force
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June 10, 2014 Meeting Summary

The third of six Task Force meetings was held June 10 at the Washington State University Riverpoint campus in Spokane. The objectives were to share progress made by the four Task Force subcommittees and gather public comment. The meeting was well attended: Thirteen of 17 voting members participated (Joshua Brandon, Connor Inslee, Dan Nordstrom and Tom Reeve were unable to attend), along with 8 of 12 non-voting members (Allyson Brooks, Rep. Buys, Jim Cahill and Sen. Ranker were unable to attend) and 27 members of the public.

Three central themes emerged from the 18 people who provided public comment: (1) the desire to revisit permit and fee structures that support outdoor recreation; (2) need for increased and improved access, in all its forms; and (3) the need for increased funding to support parks and outdoor recreation infrastructure, operations and maintenance, and staffing levels. Stakeholders pointed out missed opportunities related to youth recreation, tourism and marketing, wildlife viewing, and the state's recreational fishing and boating sector. Visit the [Task Force Web page](#) for meeting materials and upcoming meeting dates.

Key Outcomes

- **Task Force subcommittees continue to generate a wealth of insight.** Each subcommittee have met several times and engaged their broader stakeholder groups for additional perspective. Their focus now turns to developing recommendations for the final Task Force report due to Governor Inslee in September. View the [Subcommittee members and themes](#) online.
- **Eighteen people provided public comment and added to our collective dialogue.**
- **www.engageoutdoorwashington.com continues to encourage public involvement.** To date, we have received nearly 26,000 page views, 6,000 unique site visits, and 300 comments. Top three themes include access, hunting/shooting/fishing, and park infrastructure. New questions generated by the Task Force subcommittees are posted weekly through mid July. Participation is encouraged. Interested parties are also welcome to submit comments via email to meg.oleary@rco.wa.gov.

Opening Remarks

Washington State University Spokane Chancellor, Lisa Brown, welcomed attendees to the Riverpoint campus, and Avista Regional Business Manager, Latisha Hill, highlighted Spokane's outdoor recreation opportunities, including the successful [Huntington Park redevelopment](#).

Task Force Subcommittee Updates

Economic Development Subcommittee

Subcommittee members are developing recommendations related to: improving **access** to, and **affordability** of, outdoor recreation; **improving cross agency coordination**; **motivating the next generation** to play outdoors; **promoting the outdoors**; and **funding**.

Get More People Outdoors Subcommittee

Subcommittee members are developing recommendations related to: **Reinstating No Child Left Inside** (proven program for matched funding); **Access** (if parks are permanently closed, or access is unpredictable due to lack of funding or maintenance, then people are less likely to recreate in those areas); **Diversity** (Permits are designed for families *not* for groups like YMCA or Boys and Girls Clubs. Consider elders and those with physical challenges. Consider military and veterans. Consider youth. Consider issues of affordability, i.e., Discover Pass; **Marketing** (Support public recreation events that get people outside. Work with schools to get kids to motivate parents. Use high schoolers to develop marketing materials.)

Meet Future Recreation Needs Subcommittee

Subcommittee members are exploring these approaches to filling gaps in local and state outdoor recreation resource management: **Increase earned revenue** (e.g., differential pricing and enhanced marketing); **Capture or increase broad-based taxes** (e.g., dedicated sales tax or mandatory license tab surcharge); **User-oriented taxes** (e.g., 2% rental car fee or sales tax on outdoor recreation equipment); **Leverage donations and lotteries** (e.g., increase donation threshold or leverage lottery revenues); **Local park districts** (e.g., Metropolitan Park Districts or prevent sunset of current law allowing Real Estate Excise Tax to be used by local parks for park maintenance); and **Enhance partnerships** (e.g., enhance partnerships between state agencies and local governments).

State Role in Providing Outdoor Recreation Subcommittee

Subcommittee members are focused on five ideas: ways to **improve access** to land and facilities for outdoor recreation; **issues regarding users fees; improving predictability and reliability** of recreational facilities and programs; **developing new and improved programs** to get more people outside, especially kids; and **enhancing advocacy and promotion** around benefits of outdoor recreation.

Task Force Round Robin

George Harris: Boating facilities are under-used because of Department of Revenue policies. Consider increasing per day fish limit to encourage recreational fishing. State's role is to offer more opportunities for boaters and anglers—especially those traveling from out of state.

Spencer Olson: What is our broader narrative for outdoor recreation in Washington state? What is the story for the experiences we're providing? We need to establish a consistent voice. State's role is tourism and marketing.

Shiloh Schauer: Wenatchee is the launching pad for many outdoor recreation opportunities. Consider how business can help increase outdoor recreation, and how the Discover Pass impacts that.

John Keates: Youth athletics program needs funding. Maintain general funds for outdoor recreation.

Brock Milliarn: Improve access to State Department of Natural Resources land. Historically, DNR hasn't been seen as a recreation program, yet they are. DNR's job is to improve access by uncovering barriers.

Rep. Steve Tharinger: My role is to listen to the challenges presented by the Task Force and see how to address the barriers in the legislature.

Dale Denney: As a citizen, I'm grateful to the Governor for creating this Task Force.

Nick Demerice: We have an opportunity with the state's outdoor industry cluster (e.g., outfitters and guides). We need to talk about quality of life as a selling point and an economic development driver in Washington. Quality of life is a key factor in attracting new talent and business to our state.

Marc Berejka: Government coordination related to outdoor recreation access and funding is key. We also need to get our collective narrative right; it should be highly visible. Consider how to coordinate Recreation and Conservation Office's final report to the Governor with a more engaging marketing piece.

Becky Wallace: State's role is to implement Task Force recommendations and incorporate in the K-12 system. Consider opportunities for student designed graphics for the final report to the Governor.

Patty Graf-Hoke: Help convince people that what's good for the environment is good for people. Outdoor recreation is as important as aerospace in Washington. Focus on local parks; most people recreate within one mile from home. State role is to consider how we allocate funds, for example, are there efficiencies regarding outdoor recreation services? Look to private sector for leverage and support.

Sen. Linda Parlette: Re-open road from Stehekin to North Cascades Park. Eastern Washington residents should have same access to the park as those on the west side of the state. Let's be realistic and maintain a consistent voice with our Task Force recommendations.

Noah McCord: Let's get youth involved in outdoor activities. Make sure we're including all demographics. Outdoor recreation is becoming cool again among youth and their experiences are being shared via social media. Let's include Department of Health in this conversation. Consider creating a central online source for the state's outdoor recreation opportunities. Events are #1 way to increase youth involvement.

Doug Walker: Let's create concrete results. Leverage the outdoor industry. Build a stronger outdoor recreation economy in Washington. Fund a state tourism office. Establish recreation based economy templates for rural communities. Department of Transportation has a key role in improving and maintaining roads and access.

Barb Chamberlain: Outdoor recreation is not just an amenity; it's a core part and driver of the state economy. Encourage bicycle tourism—people eat in every town!

Kaleen Cottingham: In the past decade, we've seen a shift from general fund support for outdoor recreation, to a user pay system. Need to communicate this shift, why it occurred, and how to address it. Many don't understand why roads are being closed in recreation areas. Look at ways to communicate with public and engage them in helping to find solutions.

Joe Stohr: Improve operation of state fish hatcheries. These fish are central to local economies and outdoor recreation. We're at a crossroads with selective fishing and the Endangered Species Act. Consider funding challenges for hatchery research.

Russ Cahill: The 'pursuit of happiness' is my favorite inalienable right. An economic study is critical to put a real value on outdoor recreation. The last one was conducted in 2000. Outdoor industry and tax related spending is a cash cow in our state. We need to feed and milk the cow.

Rodger Schmitt: Funding is critical. Need something more all-encompassing than the Discover Pass. Need to educate youth about the outdoor ethic; will the next generation have that ethic?

Ben Klasky: Outdoor education exponentially increases kids' comfort in the outdoors, and therefore increases their outdoor activity.

Louise Stanton-Masten: Tourism is a \$17.6 billion industry in Washington. It's fourth after food, agriculture, software and aerospace. Would like better understanding of economic impact of all the sub groups within the outdoor recreation sector. Private sector needs to coordinate with public sector to promote travel and tourism.

Staff Updates

Economic Study: Contactor has been selected and research is underway. Final study due by December 31, 2014.

Engage Web Site, www.engageoutdoorwashington.com: To date, we have received nearly 26,000 page views, 6,000 unique site visits, and 300 comments. The average participant is male, 47 years old, and lives in one of three postal codes—98501, 98502 or 98512. Top three themes include access, hunting/shooting/fishing, and park infrastructure. New questions generated by the Task Force subcommittees will be posted weekly through mid July. Interested parties are also welcome to submit comments via email to meg.oleary@rco.wa.gov. Some Task Force members recommended that all remaining questions should be posted at once to encourage more participation. Staff will revisit the schedule and increase the number of questions posted each week.

Task Force Schedule: Task Force draft recommendations due to Recreation and Conservation Office by July 15. Final Task Force recommendations due by August 15. Staff will create a template to facilitate = development of subcommittee recommendations.

Public Comment

Comments are summarized and listed in the order presented at the meeting.

1. **Ken Carmichael, Riverside State Park Foundation:** Shouldn't limit fees to users only, because the general public benefits as a whole from our outdoor recreation resources. We should all contribute to the expenses; the burden of supporting parks shouldn't just be on the users.
2. **Caren Hubbard, Riverside State Park Foundation:** Outdoor recreation for all citizens.
3. **Brad McQuarrie, Mt. Spokane Ski & Snowboard Park:** Winter recreation and getting youth outside. Mt. Spokane Ski Area, a non-profit concessionaire of Washington State Parks, is the highest revenue generating concession in the state park system. We have a unique perspective and invite Task Force members to contact us for further discussion.
4. **Jaime Brush, citizen:** Distinction between driving to a recreation area and just biking locally. By simply changing your transport mode to biking, you are recreating outside. Make it safe (e.g., biking infrastructure), and make it easy (e.g., encourage walkable school planning so kids can bike/walk to school rather than be driven).
5. **Lucinda Whaley, Washington State Parks Commission:** We're in this together—local, state, federal. State parks revenue has fallen, 1/3 staff has been lost, and there is a substantial deferred parks maintenance backlog. Need general funding on operating and capital projects side.
6. **Mike Petersen, The Lands Council:** Now that our economy is improving, we need to invest in our state parks again. Mt. Spokane recreation area would be great event venue and revenue generator in the off season when the parking lot is empty.

7. **Stan Brogdon, Coastal Conservation Association:** Salmon fishing is not just a salt water activity. 40 percent of fishing licenses are purchased in eastern Washington. Recreational fishing and related manufacturing is key economic driver and revenue source. Make recreational fishing an economic priority, promote conservation through harvest management, and improve/upgrade hatchery operations.
8. **Eric Sawyer, State Park Foundation & Sports Commission:** Need solution for state park funding. Continue to establish K-12 outdoor recreation curriculum. Make sure kids are exposed to encourage a lifetime of outdoor activity.
9. **Don Hoch, Washington State Parks:** June is Great Outdoors month nationwide. Join us for the June 14 event on the Olympia capitol campus. Governor Inslee will speak at the event.
10. **Dave Waldron, Washington state outfitters & guides:** Read an excerpt from the outfitter and guides' Code of Ethics. Performance standards to ensure safety and quality of experience.
11. **Chris Guidotti, Washington State Parks:** Keep parks open and accessible to all. Discover Pass is a barrier. We talk about parks as a product or business instead of a value. Put parks on a path to sustainable legacy for all.
12. **Eric Bakken, 49° North Mountain Resort:** Focus on access, funding and motivating folks to get outside. Increase promotion of outdoor recreation in Washington.
13. **Tom Bugert, Washington Wildlife & Recreation Coalition:** Consider this as you prepare the final report to Governor Inslee: Outdoor recreation is an incredibly diverse sector/industry—highlight this (it's business and much more). Highlight what we already do well—its an opportunity to celebrate.
14. **Dave Spurbeck, citizen:** Importance of access and opportunity for youth and people new to outdoor recreation. Work with private land owners to continue providing public access to their land.
15. **Wanda Clifford, Inland Northwest Wildlife Council:** Price of various permits is a barrier to getting outside. Many can't afford it. Consider affordability in your recommendations.
16. **Madonna Luers, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife:** Public events are important to encourage outdoor recreation.
17. **Bart Haggin, citizen:** Get seniors outdoors. More money is spent by bird watchers than by hunters/fishers. Need to acknowledge and support bird watching and wildlife viewing opportunities.
18. **Gary Douvia, Coville Hatchery:** Create more opportunities for youth recreation and education. For example, hatchery and youth education. Our program offers credit/certificates, nature trails, opportunities for research, and a successful example of a self supporting public-private partnership.

Next Steps & Action

Task Force Co-Chairs

- Ongoing subcommittee support as they draft their recommendations

RCO Staff

- Create a template to facilitate development of subcommittee recommendations.
- Revise schedule for posting questions on Engage Web site. Increase weekly number and consider ending questions by July 15 when subcommittee draft recommendations are due.
- Post public comment template on Recreation and Conservation Office Task Force Web site.
- Post meeting summary and provide ongoing subcommittee support.

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July 8, 2014 Wenatchee Task Force Meeting Summary

The fourth of six task force meetings was held Tuesday, July 8 on the Wenatchee Valley College campus in Wenatchee. The objectives were to discuss priority recommendations emerging from the four subcommittees, gather public comment, and review task force report process and timeline.

Task force members Shiloh Schauer and Senator Linda Parlette along with Wenatchee Valley College administrators and City of Wenatchee Mayor Frank Kuntz welcomed participants. The meeting was well attended: 14 of the 17 voting members participated (Dale Denney, Ben Klasky, and Spencer Olson were unable to attend), along with 8 of 12 non-voting members and at least 35 members of the public.

From the 27 public comments at the task force meeting, the following key themes emerged: (1) importance of fostering public-private partnerships; (2) improving access to outdoor recreation; and (3) increasing youth involvement in outdoor recreation. Visit the [task force Web page](#) for meeting materials and upcoming meeting dates.

On Monday evening, July 7 task force members hosted a public listening session. The purpose was to accommodate Wenatchee area stakeholders who were unable to attend the daytime task force meeting the following day. The gathering is summarized below on Page 5.

Key Outcomes

- **Task force subcommittees continue to develop recommendations.** Draft submittals due to the Recreation and Conservation Office by July 15, and final recommendations due by July 31.
- **35 public comments received:** Eight people shared comments and personal stories at the July 7 listening session. Twenty-seven shared comments at the July 8 task force meeting.

Guest Speaker: Healthiest Next Generation

Lisa Rakoz, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's Healthiest Next Generation Program supervisor, began with a startling statistic: One in five children are overweight by age 6, and obese children are more likely to be obese as adults. A 2012 Washington State Healthy Youth Survey uncovered the percentage of students in our state that did not meet the recommendations for 60 minutes of physical activity daily: 44 percent of 8th graders, 49 percent of 10th graders, and 53 percent of 12th graders.

Lisa summarized key state fitness education gaps:

- Consistency across the state: Meeting requirements (minutes, waivers, certified) and funding
- Elementary physical education specialists
- Access to information (What is really happening in physical education?): Certified physical education teachers, class size, number of classes in the gym, professional development

She then highlighted key state fitness education opportunities:

- Partnerships
- Health and fitness cadre
- Let's move, active schools

- Comprehensive school physical activity programs
- Safe routes to school
- Higher education and pre-service teachers
- Grants and other funding sources
- Health and fitness connections to the common core state standards

Subcommittee Presentations

Before the presentations, co-chairs set the tone by reminding members to focus on transformative recommendations that go beyond just a report. Doug Walker mentioned the Mountains to Sound Greenway and Barb Chamberlain mentioned the Olmsted Brothers' plans (influential landscape design firm in the U.S., founded in 1898 by brothers John Charles and Frederick Law Olmsted), as examples of this kind of innovative, creative thinking. As Barb said, "don't color in the lines!"

Economic Development (Marc Berejka, subcommittee lead): Primary lesson is that outdoor recreation and parks generate an array of economic benefits across the state. With more concerted effort and better intra-governmental coordination, we can unlock even more potential. To bring the Governor's Executive Order to life, we need to: (1) reduce barriers to outdoor access through targeted regulatory reform and investments, (2) increase and better coordinate promotion of Washington's many, diverse recreation opportunities; (3) continue to educate public officials that recreation can be a key contributor to the economic well-being of Washington; and (4) create an office of the outdoor recreation tsar that can work cross-agency to maximize the many indirect economic benefits of recreation.

Get More People Outdoors (Ben Klasky, subcommittee lead): Dan Nordstrom presented preliminary recommendations: (1) access and awareness: People need up to three parking passes to recreate outdoors; it's confusing knowing which one to use. Need to streamline the Discover Pass process; (2) liability reform: Increasingly difficult to access private lands because of liability issues. Colorado instituted recreational use act to limit liability. It was truly transformative and a good precedent; opened up opportunities not available 30 years ago; (3) access to quality outdoor resources: Lack of maintenance decreases interest in getting outdoors. Public-private partnerships could be one solution; and (4) most outdoor recreation land in Washington is federal, so this task force's influence is limited. State should have voice in management of federal lands. State of Utah "Fabulous 5" marketing is great example. Expand Recreation and Conservation Office's role engaging with federal agencies managing federal outdoor resources. State tourism office closed a few years ago. Washington Tourism Alliance is taking on that role with only \$1 million budget (for comparison, Montana has a \$20 million budget).

Meet Future Recreation Needs (Jim Cahill, subcommittee lead): Summarized gaps in the operating and capital budgets supporting our state recreation resources for the three main agencies (Department of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wildlife, and State Parks). Preliminary recommendations to bridge the gap in the operating budget include: (1) increase earned revenues; (2) increase broad-based taxes or fees, for example a mandatory \$5 or \$10 fee; (3) increase recreation-related taxes; (4) increase use of local park districts, for example, metropolitan park districts; (5) prevent sunset of current law allowing real estate excise tax to be used for park maintenance; and (6) enhance partnerships.

State Role (Doug Levy, subcommittee lead): State's role in legislation to help foster outdoor recreation. Preliminary recommendations include: (1) access, which could mean statutory or administrative changes; trail maintenance, especially trash pick-up and avoiding dumping on public recreation lands; local partnerships to increase all-weather recreation opportunities; (2) increase number of outdoor recreation events, giving small investments to support small events and increasing participation by youth; (3)

connecting outdoor education to STEM—ensure that environmental education qualifies as part of STEM; (4) allow for increased marketing of outdoor resources; and (5) formal analysis of user fees.

Public Comment

Comments are summarized and listed in the order presented at the meeting.

1. **John Gifford, Pacific Northwest Ski Areas Association:** Get school kids involved in outdoor recreation. How do we get businesses involved? Need improved access to outdoor recreation, including permits and transportation. Recreation and tourism should be linked; work together to promote the state's outdoor resources.
2. **Mike Kaputa, Chelan County Natural Resources Department:** The County just acquired a large area in the Stemilt Basin, as a result of a years-long partnership building effort. But now our challenge is providing access and planning for future uses on the 4,000 acres of the Stemilt Basin property. Increase public-private partnerships.
3. **Priyanka Bandyopadhyay, Washington State Parks Foundation:** Need sustainable funding for state parks. Current overall funding is down by 20 percent, and 30 percent less than we need to maintain our park resources. Need committed roadmap to increase and secure funding. Fees and other revenue sources alone won't provide required stability.
4. **Josh Jorgensen, Mission Ridge Ski & Snowboard Resort:** Important community outdoor recreation resource. Providing free ski days for kids. Need cooperation and unifying values among state agencies regarding land use, demonstrating value of outdoor recreation in Washington. Opportunity for state to harness and use private groups and volunteers to increase and foster outdoor recreation.
5. **Kirsten Hewitt, Professional Snowsports:** Opportunity to partner with schools, get kids off campus and outdoors.
6. **Allison Williams, City of Wenatchee:** Important that state and local agencies work across jurisdictions. Encourage cooperation among entities. Encourage economic development clusters that increase outdoor recreation opportunities. Need regional funding sources.
7. **Bob Gillespie, Wenatchee Valley Outdoor Alliance:** Young students can't get outside efficiently. School liability, funding, budgets, and "teaching to test" are key barriers. Link outdoor recreation and education, encouraging lifelong outdoor recreation.
8. **Sally Brawley, Eastmont Metropolitan Park District:** Lacking Americans with Disabilities Act access in parks and playgrounds for kids and parents.
9. **Dwight Keegan, park ranger, Lake Chelan State Park:** Discover Pass is a barrier for some, especially teachers and educators working to bring more kids outside.
10. **Sharon Soelter, park ranger, Alta Lake State Park:** Need to improve quality of park facilities through increased funding for maintenance.
11. **Nancy Warner, resident:** Loop Trail in Wenatchee is example of one transformative idea leading to others. Creating that trail led to better water and land management, community health, and much more. Leadership is key element in improving outdoor recreation in Washington.
12. **Elliott Scull, former state parks commissioner:** Emphasize importance of state parks in communities and the role they play in improving the environment in our state.

13. **Spencer King, North Central ATV Club:** We have over 200 family memberships and offer high school scholarships. We're partnering with search and rescue efforts and helping with trail maintenance. Be aware that some small towns rely on motorized recreation for economic sustenance. Pro recreation for all.
14. **Matt Kearny, Wenatchee Valley Sports:** Need county-level economic data related to outdoor recreation. Numbers talk.
15. **Gus Bekker, El Sendero:** Continue generating winter outdoor recreation opportunities.
16. **Jim Harris, Grant County Public Utilities District:** Need more public-private partnerships. Continue to sell our quality of life to corporations seeking to headquarter in Washington.
17. **Larry Tobiska, Wenatchee Row & Paddle Club:** Create more opportunities to get kids outside.
18. **Penelope Tobiska, North Central Washington Audubon Society:** We're reaching out to the public with our programs. Cooperating with many other state and local groups to provide birding opportunities. Need to improve and enhance natural areas. Birding is accessible to all ages, and provides a great way to get outdoors.
19. **Carin Smith, veterinarian:** Increase no-fee, designated off-leash dogs parks. For some, walking their dog is the only outdoor activity they get.
20. **Deb Miller, Pybus Kids Century:** Kids not meeting minimum outdoor activity requirement. Build a culture of active living. Fund neighborhood level to promote and support active living.
21. **Nancy Smith, Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce:** Understand the valuable economic development opportunities generated when outdoor recreation is fostered and supported.
22. **Mary Bean, Okanagan Wenatchee National Forest:** As a federal agency, we are stewards of the land. Some of our key funding comes from state grants. Recreation and Conservation Office is a great supporter of our recreation program.
23. **Craig Larsen, Port of Chelan County:** Helping create the conditions for economic development and outdoor recreation through private investment and job creation in the county.
24. **Hana Butler, Washington State University Chelan County Extension Office:** I believe in getting our high school students outside. Building health, skills, and confidence. Community collaboration is key.
25. **Andy Dappen, Wenatchee Valley Outdoor Alliance:** Partnerships are key. How do we develop more programming, for example, leadership and mentoring that help get more kids outside?
26. **Hanne Beener, Chelan-Douglas Land Trust:** Diverse state and local partnerships are key. Make sure trails are maintained.
27. **Brad McQuarrie, Mt. Spokane Ski Area:** Need funding for more park rangers. Managing and enforcing Discover Pass takes up too much time, not best use of rangers' time. They could be interpreting and educating.

RCO Staff Updates

- **Outreach Update** (Meg O'Leary): With only two months left to develop the final report to the Governor, we're shifting gears from gathering information and comments to developing the recommendations. To date we've received thousands of public comments via e-mail and www.engageoutdoorwashington.com. We've posted 17 questions—including four from each

subcommittee—online. As of July 7, the Web site is closed to new questions and comments. RCO will distribute the final Web site comment summary to task force members by July 10. Interested parties are welcome to e-mail general comments to meg.oleary@rco.wa.gov until August 19. The draft report will be available for a 10-day public comment period in late August.

- **Task Force Final Report Process and Timeline** (Jim Fox): Subcommittee draft recommendations are due to RCO by July 15. Staff will have report ready for task force member approval at the August 19 meeting in Sequim. Members will receive the draft for review before the meeting. Meantime, subcommittees will continue to meet and refine their recommendations.

Next Steps and Action

Task Force Co-Chairs and Subcommittee Leads

- Tues, July 15: Submit draft recommendations to RCO (5 preferred; 10 maximum)
- Tues, August 19, 4-8 p.m.: Task Force meeting, Dungeness Suite of the Sequim Holiday Inn Express, 1441 E. Washington St., Sequim

RCO and Consultant Partners

- Wed, July 9: Post meeting summary
- Thurs, July 10: Distribute final summary of Web site public comment
- August: Prepare draft report
- August through September: Ongoing subcommittee support

July 7, 2014 Public Listening Session Summary

On July 7, task force members hosted an evening public listening session. The purpose was to accommodate Wenatchee area stakeholders who were unable to attend a daytime task force meeting the following day. Both 15 task force members attended, along with 5 staff and at least 40 citizens.

Introductions

- Shiloh Schauer, task force member, and Steve Robinson, executive director of the Pybus Public Market welcomed participants.
- Co-chair Doug Walker reiterated the task force purpose and the following members introduced themselves: Marc Berejka, Jim Cahill, Russ Cahill, Barb Chamberlain, Kaleen Cottingham, Patty Graf-Hoke, John Keates, Brock Milliarn, Senator Linda Parlette, Tom Reeve, Shiloh Schauer, Rodger Schmitt, Louise Stanton-Maston, Joe Stohr, and Representative Tharinger.
- A short video, [We are Wenatchee](#), was shown.

Public comment

1. **Elliott Scull, Chelan-Douglas Land Trust:** Preserving the Wenatchee foothills. Convened a community strategy to preserve foothills from residential construction and maintain easily accessible recreation close to town. Maintain adequate trailheads with minimum impact on neighbors. Saddlerock is now a city park and we're developing a trailhead.
2. **Marlen Mendez, Columbia Valley Community Health:** Serving Chelan and Douglas past 40 years. Increasing access to healthcare. Getting people outside on the trails. For many Latinos, barriers exist around perception, lack of experience outdoors, and lack of information about what to wear. Organized series of hikes for our patients in partnership with the land trust (who provided a bilingual guide). Now we're seeing more young families outside.

3. **Norma Gellegos, Team Naturaleza:** Worked for Head Start for many years. Now teaching citizenship classes. Encouraging Latinos to get outdoors. Data shows that Latino kids are not exposed to, or interested much, in natural sciences because of various socio-economic barriers such as transportation, comfort level outside, and knowledge about appropriate clothing. We're organizing fishing and snowshoe trips for all ages and creek clean up projects.
4. **Deb Miller, Community Choice Century Link:** Encouraging healthy activities and promoting active living. Looked at population and health data for Wenatchee Valley and found that one in four adults are obese. Kids are inside too much, with no outdoor activity. Created Pybus Kids Century, incentivizing kids to ride the loop as much as possible during 2 months. Program runs May through October with more than 120 kids participating. Goes beyond getting kids active, want access to parents to encourage their outdoor activity. Transportation barriers exist, for example, driving kids to safe biking area. Recreation can seem like a luxury because of lack of time. Pybus Kids Century is an example of leveraging existing local resources and opportunities.
5. **Marylou Guerrero, Chelan County resident:** Recovering from Nature Deficit Disorder. Limited experience with outdoor world (shared story of challenge of walking 10-mile river loop). At the time, I was overweight and out of shape. Started running 1 minute longer each day. After 10 months of training, I finished my first marathon.
6. **Joel Rhyner, Run Wenatchee:** We started a local running club 18 months ago. We were seeking community and had these goals for the club: It needs to be free, open to everyone, and consistent (we'll be there every week). First run was in January, and despite the cold and snow, we had 50 people. Word spread through social media. We now average 200 runners per run. Partnering with local businesses. Host runs right downtown. Family friendly—dogs, strollers, scooters, and wheelchairs. Seeing increase in Latino involvement. In addition to weekly runs, we host events and races throughout the year benefiting local organizations such as food banks.
7. **Matt Kearny, Wenatchee Valley Sports, division of Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce:** Formed in 1999. Providing funding to help kids play organized sports. \$7.4 million generated through local sports tourism spending—money coming into community from outside (races, tournaments, etc.)—significant in the valley. The current Recreation and Conservation Office economic study is drilling down to county level and we're looking forward to the results. Lack of soccer fields in Wenatchee. Not fulfilling the need and demand. Confluence State Park is a good example of an underused state park; great opportunity for a soccer complex, revenue generator, and strong community builder.
8. **Andy Dappen, Wenatchee Valley Outdoor Alliance:** Web site covering outdoor activities within 1 hour of Wenatchee. Asked ourselves how we could better coordinate and communicate outdoor recreation opportunities locally, and how we could partner more effectively. Hosted a summit 6 months ago, invited leaders of outdoor agencies, groups, non-profits, and businesses—asked how we could be more strategic in getting people outdoors and connecting them with the land for health and conservation. Partnerships are key. Through this alliance, we've identified outdoor recreation areas to focus on and leverage. Need better economic data to approach elected leaders—if they see numbers, it's easier to gain advocates. How do we create programs that address barriers to outdoor recreation? Programs are more important than more infrastructure.

Ice Cream Social

Local ice cream was served following the presentations, giving people a chance to mingle with task force members and RCO staff.

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August 19, 2014 Sequim Task Force Meeting Summary

The fifth of six task force meetings was held Tues, Aug 19 at the Holiday Inn Express in Sequim. The objectives were to discuss and reach consensus on priority recommendations. Earlier that afternoon, task force member and State Representative Steve Tharinger hosted a public listening session. The purpose was to share examples of successful local parks and outdoor recreation programs with members. The gathering is summarized below on page 6.

State Rep. Steve Tharinger and Bert Wirta, CEO of Wirta Hospitality Worldwide and operator of Sequim's Holiday Inn Express welcomed members to the Olympic Peninsula. The task force meeting was well attended: Fifteen of the 17 voting members participated (Connor Inslee and Ben Klasky were unable to attend), along with 8 of 12 non-voting members and at least 30 members of the public.

From the 20 public comments given, the following key themes emerged: (1) support for recreational fishing; (2) support for eliminating the Discover Pass; and (3) support for the Maritime Tourism bill. Visit the [task force Web page](#) for the meeting summary.

Key Outcomes

- **Task force priority recommendations begin to coalesce.** The insights and priorities gathered from the small group discussions and roundtable remarks provide solid direction for Recreation and Conservation Office staff as they prepare the draft and final reports.
- **20 public comments gathered**, representing Olympic Peninsula residents, small business owners, avid outdoorsmen and women, and outdoor recreation advocacy groups.

RCO Staff Updates

Report outline, schedule and process (Jim Fox): Recreation and Conservation Office staff continue work on the draft report, incorporating recommendations submitted by the four task force subcommittees in mid-July, and the thousands of public comments gathered since April. The draft report will be distributed to members and posted on the [task force Web page](#) for a 10-day public comment period beginning Tues, Aug 26. The draft report is due to the Governor Thurs, Sep 4 and the final by Fri, Sep 19.

Task Force Priority Recommendations Survey (Meg O'Leary): Highlights include:

- 17 of 29 task force members (58%) participated
- Top 3 priorities overall
 - Option 1 – Grow: Designate “outdoor recreation / tourism” as a specific industry cluster. (82%)
 - Option 1 – Lead: Designate a state liaison, with staff if necessary. (76%)
 - Option 4 – Grow: Increase and better coordinate the promotion of Washington's many, diverse recreation opportunities in order to attract more travelers from overseas, across the nation and within Washington. (76%)

- Revenue priorities
 - 1st choice, Revenue Option A: Focus on Vehicles, Watercraft Excise Tax and Discover Pass adjustment (35%)
 - 2nd choice, Revenue Option C: Eliminate the Discover Pass, but backfill and enhance with other revenue sources (24%)
 - 3rd choice, Revenue Option B: Focus on Litter Tax, Sales tax on Bottled Water and RV/Travel Trailer Excise Tax (18%)

Review & Discuss Recommendations

Members gathered in six small groups to discuss and prioritize recommendations. Groups were asked to respond to the following questions:

1. Based on what you have seen, heard and read to date, what are your small group's top recommendations for the final report?
2. Are there any recommendations that can be combined?
3. Is there anything missing from our meetings or comments that should be added to the draft report?

Small Group Report Back

Group 1 (Patty Graf-Hoke, facilitator): We re-read the Governor's task force charter in relationship to the draft recommendations. We propose separating the draft recommendations into two parts: policies and funding. Many existing access issues could provide increased revenue and new economic development opportunities, but they are tied to policy changes. Felt strongly that the Governor's Office needs to take the lead on moving these policies forward, and establish a go-to person to answer ongoing questions and act as a liaison at the federal level. Consolidate separate recommendations for youth, military and underserved; it should be a single "families" category. It's about providing access for families to increase outdoor recreation. Give more consideration to public-private funding opportunities because there just aren't enough state funds. If the Discover Pass is eliminated, we would support a 1% tax on bottled water. Leverage it with a "watering your parks" marketing campaign. Eliminating the Discover Pass would help increase tourism revenue.

Group 2 (Jim Cahill, facilitator): We endorse the first two survey recommendations (designate "outdoor recreation/tourism" as a specific industry cluster, and designate a state liaison, with staff if necessary) as high priorities, though they need to be fleshed out. When considering revenue, we need to ask what's politically and fiscally possible. We support Revenue Option B with variances. Emphasize access issues on state and federal lands. Incorporate environmental education into STEM. How can we use STEM and other existing programs to increase youth outdoor recreation and their connection to the environment?

Group 3 (Dan Nordstrom, facilitator): Two key themes: (1a) Funding is critical, because nothing will come of this effort without it. Consider a comprehensive Outdoor Economy initiative to roll up a group of funding mechanisms to cover the existing gap plus additional to create a best in class state outdoor recreation infrastructure, participation and tourism destination. (1b) Discover Pass is a failure. Number one mentioned issue to be fixed in public comments. There are many ways to sustain the revenue associated with a parking fee by improving the execution of the Discover Pass from a consumer's perspective. (2) Create an Office of Outdoor Economy and Recreation to sustain these task force efforts and priority issues over time. The new office should live at the Washington State Department of Commerce as a new sector because of the economic development, tourism, and inter-agency

coordination components. Designate one person who is accountable at the Governor's Office level for inter-agency coordination. There should be a board of advisors attached to this office to provide guidance, support and accountability. (3) Add outdoor curriculum requirement for K-12. This can be incorporated into existing STEM efforts where the outdoors becomes the basis of investigation, integrated with PE, or be added as a stand-alone.

Group 4 (Spencer Olson, facilitator): Focus on revenue sources. Modify Discover Pass, make the Discover Pass transferrable and more accessible, and create more incentives for its use. Bottled water tax could be a great source of revenue. Establish more information about outdoor recreation opportunities statewide. Designated a state liaison to support and grow our outdoor recreation resources.

Group 5 (Louise Stanton-Masten, facilitator): Established a new outdoor recreation division under the existing Recreation and Conservation Office to carry out goals of the task force. Need strong, visible, responsible staff. Re-establish No Child Left Inside and encourage grantees to seek matching funds. Establish outdoor recreation events with focus on underserved, diverse audiences in partnership with agencies and non-profit organizations. Integrate outdoor recreation into science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education. Provide resources for schools to carry this out. Develop an outreach campaign within the military community focused on outdoor recreation benefits. What could the Veterans Administration do to help? Perhaps online resources? Provide a single pass for all outdoor recreation in the state. Use www.experiencewa.com to provide information on obtaining the single pass. Support a hybrid of revenue options, for example the \$5 fee on car registration and new vehicle purchase tax. Transaction fees should reflect inflation. Need funding for youth activities. Designate outdoor recreation as a specific industry cluster, and identify an agency who is responsible for overall coordination.

Group 6 (Marc Berejka, facilitator): Final report needs a short statement up front saying why this task force and their recommendations matter. For example, include stories from the Wenatchee listening session or task force members themselves. Include pictures and inspiring text to capture the reader's imagination. Remove barriers to outdoor recreation access. For the body of the report, boil down recommendations to create policy directions and strategies that have enduring, longer-term. In the appendix, include specific policy prescriptions and shorter-term priorities. Instead of focusing on the cost of charging people to get outside, think holistically about the benefits (e.g., not just in form of revenue from Discover Pass). Think about community, health, education and environmental benefits and values. The Discover Pass discourages outdoor recreation. Our current pass system is broken. Include Jim the three revenue options in the final report appendix. We propose 3 elements for the final report: 1) inspiration, 2) policy and strategies, and 3) options in appendix.

Emerging Themes & Priorities

Full consensus was not reached, though the following common themes did emerge from the small group discussions. The Recreation and Conservation Office will use them, along with the task force subcommittee recommendations and public comment, as a guide in drafting the report. They include:

Lead the Way to Outdoor Recreation

- Designate an outdoor recreation advocate within a state agency
 - Focus on partnerships, coordination, tourism, access barriers, recreation information

Inspire an Outdoor Recreation Culture

- Provide more opportunities for youth and families
 - Underserved, low income, minorities, military

Fund Outdoor Recreation Facilities and Programs

- State funding – 1% tax on bottled water, modify the Discover Pass
- Local funding – real estate excise tax, watercraft excise tax, Youth Athletic Facilities

Incorporate the Outdoors in Education

- Require outdoors experience in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) and physical education curriculum
- No Child Left Inside

Public Comment

Comments are summarized and listed in the order presented at the meeting.

1. **John Albiso, Coastal Conservation Association:** Recreational fishing is a key industry and source of state revenue and economic development. Need to look to other states and B.C. and make recreational fishing a priority. Manage fisheries for long-term sustainability.
2. **Linda Palumbo, Straitside Resort / Clallam Bay Sekiu Chamber:** Sportfishing is a critical source of income for our families, businesses, and outfitters. Let's return this state to the world-class fishing destination it once was. Use license fees to support sportfishing.
3. **Pat Neal, Hoh River Guide Association:** People move to Sequim to fish and crab. People move from across the country to settle here. One measure of our quality of life is how we treat our children. Only place kids have to fish is a pond. Local rivers—Hoh and Dungeness—are closed to fishing. It's our right to harvest hatchery fish. Two lumber mills have closed down in the area. Discover Pass imposes too many fees.
4. **Scott Fink, area resident:** Grew up in the Sequim / Poulsbo area. Avid outdoorsman. Expand trails for trail bike and motorcycles and decrease restrictions. We bike in Oregon because they have fewer restrictions.
5. **Don Hoch, Washington State Parks:** Review the Governor's priorities for the task force, which include establishing a stable funding source for state parks. We're coming out with a new Discover Pass. There are at least 40 other states that have an annual pass. The pass supports many social services. The pass wasn't a failure; the legislators had unrealistic expectations.
6. **Tom Bugert, Washington Wildlife & Recreation Coalition:** Please consider including the following language in your report to Governor Inslee on the findings of the Task Force. We believe it is important for the task force to highlight the importance of existing strategies that make Washington a leader in our outdoor legacy: *"Protect and preserve nationally recognized outdoor recreation grant programs and enable them to keep pace with growth: Washington State already benefits from highly successful recreation grant programs such as the Boating Facilities Program, the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, the Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account, the Youth Athletic Facilities program; and the Non-highway Off-road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) Program. Ensuring these programs keep pace with growing populations and rising real estate and costs will continue to yield economic, health and environmental benefits for Washington's citizens and visitors to our state."*
7. **Tom O'Keefe, American Whitewater:** Enhance our whitewater resources. Leverage public-private partnership opportunities. Agree that we should have a point person in the state for outdoor recreation. User fees are a barrier to getting outside. Private lands are important to outdoor access.

8. **Peter Schrappen, Northwest Marine Trade Association:** Support Marine Tourism bill; it's provides important support to rural areas. Consider gas tax dollars that aren't refunded. Protect this account. Discrepancy between gas tax dollars (lift the artificial lid). Create predictable fishing seasons.
9. **Paul Nursey, Tourism Victoria, British Columbia:** Collaborate regionally and drive more visitation for our mutual benefit in British Columbia, the Pacific Northwest, and beyond. 30% of visitors to B.C. also visit other areas in Canada and the U.S., so we all benefit from investment for and improvements to outdoor recreation opportunities. Support border clearance.
10. **Andrew Stevenson, Peninsula Trails Coalition:** Funding for outdoor recreation in rural areas is decreasing. We need state non-motorized transportation system that connects network to better serve the people. Want people outdoors? We need better infrastructure.
11. **Dan Tatum, Olympic Peninsula Salmon Derby:** The Derby creates a great deal of business for local businesses. Sportfishing is a critical industry for local economy.
12. **Ryan Gedlund, Swain's General Store:** Fishing represents 8% of our annual sales. 90% of people are confused about the Discover Pass and where they're allowed to recreate, especially for recreational fishing and hunting.
13. **Brian Menkal, Brian's Sporting Goods:** Sequim is a hot spot for retirees. Recreational fishing is a key industry in our state. Fishing up here is what the film 'Twilight' is to Forks, WA in terms of economic development.
14. **Karen Ridings, Port Townsend Chamber of Commerce:** Support Maritime Tourism bill. Maritime industry and trades are critical to local livelihoods, economic development and tourism.
15. **Jim Heckmann, Gold Star Marin:** Support Maritime Tourism bill. When you engage in this effort, the economic development incentives are key. For example, when boats are repaired in Port Townsend, it generates economic benefits—jobs and support for other local businesses and suppliers.
16. **John Floberg, Washington State Parks Foundation:** Review the Governor's priorities for the task force, which include establishing a stable funding source for state parks. Ensure state parks are featured as springboard and foundation in the final report.
17. **Ed Bowen, west-end outer-coast resident:** Word about this task force process didn't come to us out here until yesterday. The outreach process has been ineffective. Task force Web site doesn't provide much material. Need to address the Governor's "north coast deed," number 683177, which relates to keeping property open to fishing and the agreement for interagency consultation and coordination in the event of any land management or access policy changes.
18. **Pearl Rains Hewett, area resident:** Our family has lived in Clallam County for over 90 years. State parks here are not affordable or friendly. Our family goes to Idaho to camp and fish because it's easier to recreate outside there. We've received tickets for not displaying the Discover Pass correctly.
19. **Larry Crockett, Port of Port Townsend:** Support Maritime Tourism bill. Recreation and Conservation Office boating accounts return important economic value to rural areas.
20. **Craig Hunter, local firewood lot owner:** Consolidate outdoor recreation passes. There are too many and it's confusing to people. Address the lack of public restrooms and showers; they need

to be attended and kept clean. Address lack of clear burn ban information. We just need one regulation, not multiple.

Next Steps and Action

Task Force Co-Chairs and Subcommittee Leads

- **Fri, Sep 5: Task Force member reimbursements are due:** Send the original signed reimbursement form along with receipts for July, August and September to meg.oleary@rco.wa.gov. We are no longer accepting reimbursements prior to July 1, 2014.
- **Tues, Sep 16, 9:00-11:00 am:** Final Task Force meeting at the Mountaineers, 7700 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle.

RCO and Consultant Partners

- Wed, Aug 20: Post meeting summary
- Tues, Aug 26: Distribute and post draft report for 10-day public comment period
- Thurs, Sep 4: Draft report due to the Governor
- Fri, Sep 19: Final report due to the Governor

August 19, 2014 Listening Session Summary

Task force member and State Rep. Steve Tharinger hosted an afternoon public listening session prior to the regular task force meeting. The purpose was to share examples of successful local outdoor recreation and tourism programs with members. The stories emphasized the incredible potential of leveraging Washington State's outdoor recreation resources for local and statewide benefit, and beyond. Twelve task force members attended, along with at least 15 citizens.

Presentations

1. **Rich James, Clallam County Public Works / Olympic Discovery Trail.** Shared the story of the development of the [Olympic Discovery Trail](#). It spans 130 miles from Port Townsend to La Push. The trail is a major highway for non-motorized travelers, spanning the entire peninsula. There are plans to connect it to the Burke-Gilman Trail in Seattle and eventually to points in eastern Washington.
2. **Michelle Little, North Olympia Discovery Marathon:** This [annual event](#) offers full and half marathon routes from Sequim to Port Angeles along Olympic Discovery Trail. Michelle cited statistics from '[Runners World](#)' about the benefit of creating and maintaining outdoor recreation opportunities for runners, including the obvious health benefits, money spent on equipment, support for local businesses, and the boost to local tourism revenue.
3. **Christina Pivarnik, City of Port Townsend:** Discussed development of the [Olympic Peninsula Tourism Commission](#), which is a cooperative. It is the marketing group representing the Olympia Peninsula and provides a wealth of information for residents and tourists alike, including places to stay, outdoor recreation destinations and local events.
4. **Dave Robison, Fort Worden State Park:** Discussed the steps in creating a Public Development Authority at [Fort Worden State Park](#). Fort Worden is an economic engine, though it is also the most expensive park in the state to maintain. There is a high maintenance obligation with the various elements, including historic buildings, camping, and conferences. State financial woes have stymied the ability to stay ahead of facility needs and operational development. Visitation

has remained fairly flat over the last 10 years, with the biggest decrease in 2011 coinciding with the implementation of the Discover Pass.

5. **Mary McCluskey, City of Poulsbo Parks & Recreation:** Support local parks operations and maintenance. We have 15 parks in Poulsbo that serve 10,000 residents, with only 2 maintenance staff. Our parks are a great economic development driver and we want this to continue. Limited tax base is challenge. Our repair and maintenance backlog is \$230,000. Reinforced the Washington Recreation & Parks Association recommendations to: Preserve existing dedicated fund for outdoor recreation; increase marketing for our outdoor recreation assets; re-establish Youth Athletic Facilities program; increase state and local funding for park maintenance and operation; and fix the artificial lid on how much revenue goes to the “non-highway purpose” dedicated accounts.
6. **Matt Tyler, Jefferson County Parks & Recreation:** We are dealing with closed campgrounds due to lack of funding for necessary capital improvements and maintenance backlog. Reinforced the Washington Recreation & Parks Association recommendations noted above.
7. **Doug Coutts, South Whidbey Parks & Recreation:** Our maintenance backlog is \$300,000, which represents 30% of our annual operating budget. We face a projected \$50,000 shortfall this year, yet we are asked to do same level or more of operation and maintenance with little money. Reinforced the Washington Recreation & Parks Association recommendations noted above.

Blue Ribbon Parks and Outdoor Recreation Task Force

www.rco.wa.gov

September 16, 2014 | Seattle Task Force Meeting Summary

The sixth and final task force meeting was held Tue, Sep 16 at The Mountaineers in Seattle. The objectives were to discuss the revised report sent to members for review on Sep 11, and reach consensus on the final report due to the Governor on Sep 19. There was no public comment period. Mountaineers Executive Director Martinique Grigg, together with Cheryl Fraser, Seattle Parks and Recreation Director of Regional Parks and Strategic Outreach, welcomed participants. Eleven of the 17 voting members attended. Marc Berejka, Dale Denney, Patty Graf-Hoke, Connor Inslee, Noah McCord, and Shiloh Schauer were unable to attend. Six of the 12 non-voting members participated. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife regional director Bob Everett attended on behalf of non-voting member Joe Stohr. Non-voting members Rebecca Wallace, Rep. Vincent Buys, Sen. Linda Parlette, Sen. Kevin Ranker, and Rep. Steve Tharinger were unable to attend. At least 15 citizens and stakeholders were present.

Key Outcomes

Task force members proposed and reached agreement on the following five recommendations. These will be reviewed once more by co-chairs and incorporated in the final report. The amount of taxes represented in these five recommendations totals \$100 million.

1. **Discover Pass (Improve):** Is the task force in support of retaining the Discover Pass with improvements (not specified)? This represents no additional Discover Pass projected revenues other than the existing projections (3% increase per year from current level—\$40 million in projected Discover Pass revenues). Yes, a majority of voting members supports this.
2. **Bottled Water Excise Tax (Reimpose):** The state used to have a bottled water tax, but it dropped off when the candy and soda tax was implemented. Does the task force support re-imposing/reinstating the bottled water sales tax earmarked to fund the recommendations of this task force? Yes, a majority of voting members supports this. This represents approximately \$46 million more in the 2015-17 biennium.
3. **Motorhome / RV Excise Tax (Reimpose):** Is the task force in support of reimposing this excise tax? Yes, a majority of voting members supports this. This represents approximately \$19.4 million more in the 2015-17 biennium.
4. **Watercraft Excise Tax (Existing):** There was general discussion of the benefit of having State General Fund support to compensate State Parks for revenues lost due to discounts provided by the legislature for camping and the Discover Pass to disabled veterans, foster homes, seniors, etc. Does the task force support diversion of the existing watercraft excise tax (entire bucket) currently deposited into the State General Fund to fund the recommendations of this task force? Yes, a majority of voting members supports this. This represents approximately \$34.6 million in 2015-17 biennium (dedicated transfer from the General Fund-State).

5. **Outdoor Recreation Coordinating Council (New):** Does the task force support establishing a leadership position with a coordinating council composed of state, federal and local officials; the private sector; and non-profits to serve as the state's lead on outdoor recreation? The intent is to let the Governor decide where this leadership position would reside. Yes, a majority supports this.

Next Steps

- **Thu, Sep 18:** Task force co-chairs will review final draft before submittal to the Governor.
- **Fri, Sep 19:** Final task force report due to the Governor. It will be posted on the task force Web page shortly thereafter: <http://rco.wa.gov/boards/TaskForce.shtml>
- **Tue, Sep 23, 7:00 AM:** Governor announces the final report at the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition annual breakfast (Seattle Westin, 1900 5th Avenue).
- **Mon, Sep 29, 9:00 AM:** Task force final report briefing: Joint Work Session with House Environment Committee and the Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government and Information Technology (John L. O'Brien Building, Olympia – House Hearing Room A).

Appendix V | Background Information

Appendix V | Background Information

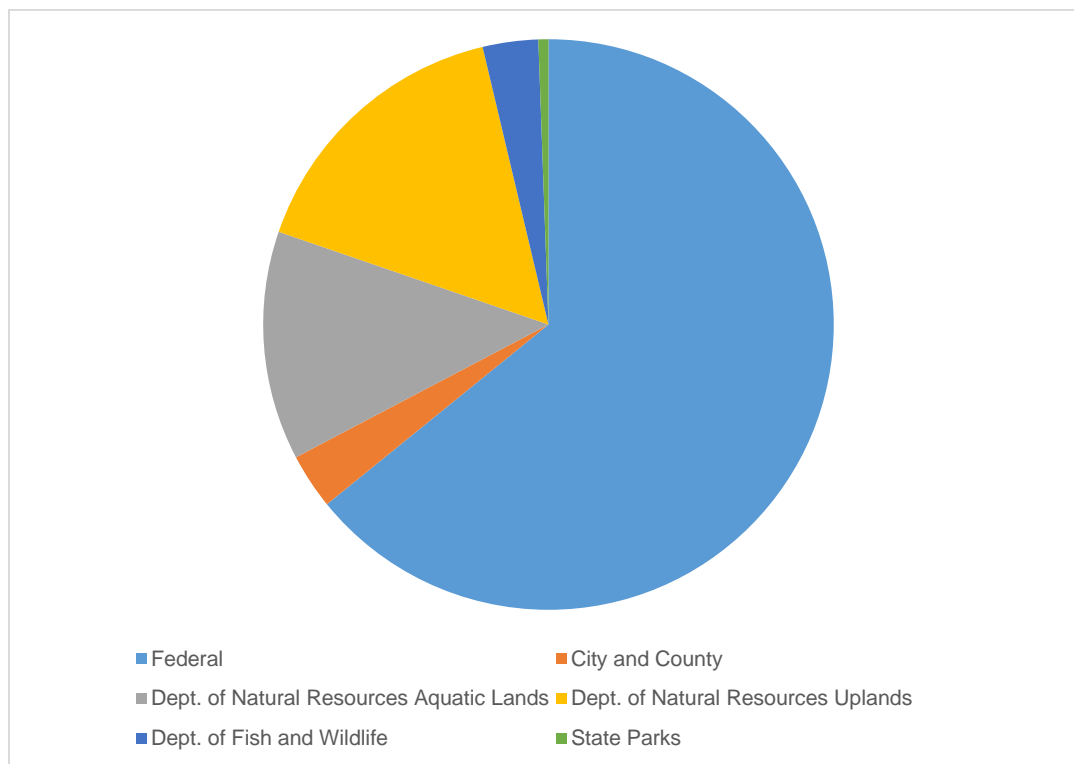
Washington's Recreation Land Base

Washington State is comprised of 19,805 acres of public land, about 52 percent of the state's total land area¹. Much of this land is available to some form of outdoor recreation. Figure 1 shows the public land ownership by state and federal agencies. Private lands also offer outdoor recreation opportunities such as water parks, golf courses, ski areas, and some private timber and ranch land.

Nearly all federally owned land and about 18 percent of state-owned land is available for outdoor recreation.

Water bodies offer outdoor recreation opportunities, too. About 6.8 percent of Washington's total area² consists of water bodies, primarily inland and coastal.³ Inland waters include nearly 800 lakes⁴ and 70,439 miles of rivers and streams.⁵

Figure 1: Public Land Ownership in Washington State – Natural Resource & Recreation Lands



¹ Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, 2014. Washington Public Lands Inventory.

² Total area equals total land area plus total water area.

³ U.S. Census Bureau, 2012. Statistical Abstract of the United States.

⁴ Washington State Department of Ecology

⁵ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Recreation Economy

According to an Outdoor Industry Association study, people spent \$22.5 billion on outdoor recreation for gear, vehicles, trips, and travel-related and other expenses in Washington in 2012⁶. This spending generated 227,000 direct⁷ jobs, \$7.1 billion in wages and salaries and \$1.6 billion in state and local tax revenues. Washington's gross domestic product for 2012 was \$376 billion.⁸

An assessment of spending associated with specific recreational activities is currently underway for Washington State but the data will not be available in time for this report. However, estimates for recreation-related spending for hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, boating, and visitation to national parks is available (Table 1). Note that adding these spending figures together would result in double counting of the data. For example, recreational boating is often associated with fishing, so adding these expenditures would result in some spending being counted twice.

Table 1: Recreation-related Expenditures in Washington State

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Expenditures (\$ billions)</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Reference</i>
Hunting	0.36	2011	⁹
Fishing	1.03	2011	¹⁰
Wildlife viewing	3.17	2011	¹¹
Recreational boating	1.3	2012	¹²
National park visitation	0.430	2012	¹³
Recreation on Department of Interior lands *	0.66	FY 2013	¹⁴

* Includes lands managed by the National Park Service

⁶ Outdoor Industry Association, 2012. The Outdoor Recreation Economy: Washington.

⁷ Direct jobs include jobs directly generated from recreation spending, not jobs generated from the "multiplier" or "ripple" effect of spending by people employed in recreation-related jobs.

⁸ U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

⁹ U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau. 2011 *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation: Washington*.

¹⁰ *ibid*

¹¹ *ibid*

¹² National Marine Manufacturers Association, 2012. *2012 Recreational Boating Economic Study*.

¹³ Thomas, C., C. Huber, and L. Koontz. 2014. *2012 National Park visitor spending effects: Economic contributions to local communities, states, and the nation*.

¹⁴ U.S. Department of the Interior, 2014. *U.S. Department of the Interior Economic Report FY 2013 Draft*.

Park Passes in Other States

The Discover Pass contributes about \$14 million per fiscal year to the Washington State Parks budget, about 27% of all revenues. The Task Force compared the Discover Pass to park passes in eight other states. Table 2 summarizes the results.

Table 2: Park Passes in Other States

<i>State</i>	<i>Daily Resident</i>	<i>Daily Non-Resident</i>	<i>Annual Resident</i>	<i>Annual Non-Resident</i>	<i>Annual Resident Senior</i>	<i>2-Year</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Coverage</i>
New York	\$6 - \$10		\$65				Annual pass is a sticker on side window. Decal on License Plate for 3 and 5 year passes. Lifetime passes received license plate.	180 State Parks, 55 DEC forest preserves. Also sells 3 year (\$165), 5 year (\$260) and Lifetime (\$750) passes.
Connecticut	\$9 - \$13	\$15 - \$22	\$67	\$112	\$0			30 Plus Parks and 5 forest.
Michigan	NA	\$9	\$11	\$31			Annual pass decal on License Plate. Daily and nonresident pass is a window sticker.	63 Parks, 210 Recreation Areas, 1,339 Natural Areas. Required for camping. Provides discounts at 1,000+ retailers in the state.
Minnesota	\$5	\$5	\$25	\$25				Additional vehicle is \$18.
Wisconsin	\$7	\$10	\$25	\$35	\$10		Window sticker	75 plus State Parks
Idaho	\$5	\$5+	\$10	\$40		\$20	License plate	30 Parks. Required for camping.
Oregon	\$5	\$5	\$30	\$30		\$50	Hang tag	Required at 26 Parks. Not required for camping.
California	\$8 - \$12	\$8 - \$12	\$75 - \$195	\$75 - \$195	\$20		Hang tag	Some discounts for Peak and non-peak day use. Senior Pass is for non-peak times.
Washington	\$10	\$10	\$30	\$30			Hang tag	124 State Parks, 33 state wildlife areas, 143 recreation sites. Not required for camping at State Parks.

Appendix VI | Public Outreach

Appendix VI | Public Outreach

On behalf of the task force, the Recreation and Conservation Office wishes to thank the public for their ongoing engagement throughout the five-month information gathering process. Public and stakeholder involvement created the conditions for rich dialogue and helped task force members consider a wide range of ideas and perspectives as they crafted their recommendations to Governor Inslee.

Public Comment: Task Force Meetings

Interested parties were invited to share their comments and perspectives at five task force meetings, and their participation was outstanding. At least one hour was provided during each meeting, and over the course of five months we gathered 100 comments representing a range of concerns including frustration related to park passes and permits—most notably the Discover Pass, outdoor recreation access and infrastructure, park funding, health, outdoor recreation education, and state agency responsibility. In addition, presentations at the task force meetings provided examples of successful programs that build local partnerships and develop innovative approaches to involve more people in outdoor recreation.

Public Comment: Email Submissions

The Recreation and Conservation Office received nearly 400 comments from the public via email. In addition, the four task force subcommittees gathered numerous comments from their individual stakeholder groups. Common themes included the need to prioritize the economic and revenue benefits of recreational fishing (83 emails); promote fish conservation through harvest management (75 emails); improve and enhance hatchery and fishing access infrastructure (72 emails); recreational boating (41 emails); support of the Marine Tourism legislation (10 emails); sustainable funding for outdoor recreation; improving and streamlining fees, permits and passes; including more references to motorized and equestrian recreation; and improving access to outdoor recreation land. (See *Public Comment Record* following this summary.)

Engage Outdoor Washington Web Site

On May 1, 2014 the task force launched an online town hall, www.engageoutdoorwashington.com, to encourage statewide dialogue about how to improve Washington's outdoor recreation opportunities and provide focused ideas related to questions posed by the task force. The Recreation and Conservation Office consultant partners, The Athena Group and MindMixer, developed the online tool and provided summaries and participant statistics.

The online town hall Web site was announced through a series of emails sent from the Recreation and Conservation Office recreation database and shared further via Facebook, Twitter, Google and LinkedIn.

New questions were posted on a regular basis through July 7. Over the course of three months, there were 37,000 page views, 8,000 site visitors, and more than 750 people who took time to submit 3,200 comments and nearly 1,000 ideas. The top three themes included improving and streamlining access to outdoor recreation land; permits and passes; hunting, shooting and fishing; and park infrastructure. Many participants voiced frustration about the requirement to register in order to comment—many felt the Web site registration was a barrier to access. Seventy-three percent of Web site participants were male and the average age was 47. The Web site remains accessible for public view through September 19, at which time task force members will submit their final report to the Governor and the site will go offline.

Public Comment Record

Copies of public comment letters and emails follow.

Date	Name	Topic / Theme	Comments on Aug 26 Draft Report Submitted to RCO via Email
26-Aug-14	Carin Smith - citizen	Federal roads and lands	<p>I object to inclusion of forest roads as a means of so-called 'improving access.' (See page 16.) The opening and creation of forest roads, as you know, is a complicated matter that has huge environmental impacts. As a recreation user I do NOT need more forest roads open in order to access public lands. There are already plenty of roads. What's more, putting this discussion under a new or separate entity from the current Forest Service plan seems to create another complicating layer—how many entities will it take to make a forest plan? In fact our local roads that are open, are not being maintained as it is! They operate as de-facto dump sites! Come on over and I'll show you some trash piled up on FS roads. These areas are not being used to recreate, they are being used to dump.</p> <p>Please do not include potential opening of FS roads in your plan. This is not necessary and it will make the current complicated system even more complicated.</p>
26-Aug-14	James Yap - Snohomish County Parks & Recreation	Local parks	<p>I would like to add a comment pertaining to acquisition and developing especially for local park category. Some park developments are in areas (especially urban areas) where, to meet traffic concurrency, frontage improvement is necessary for development. This development triggers some of the properties be dedicated to roads during the permitting processes. With the scarcity of available urban land, it is extremely difficult to find land to meet the value and function as prescribed in the RCO policies within the urban areas. A recommendation is to rewrite the said policy by not requiring a conversion of use when such development necessitate dedication of land to the Right of Way as required by the regulations/code. As frontage improvement is required, it should be considered as part of the development and should fall under the conversion policy. It is a benefit to the public and should be viewed as such.</p>
27-Aug-14	James Eychaner - citizen	New government office	<p>The draft report is highly disappointing. Most of the concepts presented are at least 26 years old, and have as little chance of success now as they did in 1988.</p> <p>The key error is to suggest that a new government entity or office, whether an agency or individual, will somehow solve a variety of problems. This approach is lazy and naïve. Lazy because it represents citizens via so-called user groups refusing to accept their responsibility to make change in government through the Legislature. Citizens must work directly with the Legislature to achieve most of the goals of the draft. Instead of engaging in the hard work of communicating with the Legislature in a coordinated, focused manner, session-to-session, year end and year out, recreationists appear to want a small agency or individual in some kind of office attempt that work for them. It is naïve to think that a state-employed person or office, independent or housed within another small agency, could have meaningful influence with the Legislature. Chances are that the person or office will be sufficiently engaged in simply keeping itself alive in an already overworked, underfunded, and complex government environment.</p> <p>Buried in the report is the consistent success of the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition. The Coalition has been successful for exactly the obvious approach I have pointed to above. A report rewritten to reflect the success of the Coalition and finding lessons and better proposals in its model would vastly improve the report's chances of having any influence at all.</p> <p>The report has many other weaknesses and deficiencies. Not the least is the economic assertions. The economic analysis fails to acknowledge that expenditure on outdoor recreation is non-essential spending from the discretionary portion of personal or household budgets. These personal or household budgets have been funded through other primary economic activity: that is, without income from jobs with entities from Microsoft to the local bakery, there would be little or no money spent on outdoor recreation.</p> <p>In short, if I had commissioned the report, I would be asking for a complete rewrite. Or my money back.</p>
27-Aug-14	Dale & Vickie Sienknecht - citizens	Discover Pass	<p>I just wanted to make a comment on one problem I see with the Discover Pass. This mainly relates to families who have multiple vehicles that are used to participate in different sports, and family members who don't all do the same thing on a given day. Case in point: My husband and I have a pickup, a sport ute, and a Honda Element. The Element has our kayak racks mounted on it, so we have to use that for kayaking. Our pickup is used to haul the trailer for my husband's 4-wheeler. The sport ute is often used when we want to go hiking someplace because the seats are more comfortable for long drives. On a given day, my husband will go out 4-wheeling, and I will go kayaking, or he will go kayaking and I will go hiking. There are only 2 of us using these three vehicles, yet we would have to buy 2 Discover passes to be legal. It seems like we should be able to buy one Discover Pass, but if we go take out two different vehicles that day, we both can't take the pass. Is there a way to address this problem?</p>
27-Aug-14	Bob Gillespie - Wenatchee Valley College	Youth and outdoor recreation education	<p>I would like to compliment the task force on a job well done. My suggestion would be to include outdoor recreation opportunities from cradle to the grave in this Report. I would like to see outdoor recreation educational opportunities and experiences included in College and University curriculums similar to the core curriculum for K through 12. Also I would like to see outdoor recreation opportunities included in continuing education programs at the Colleges and Universities of Washington. I think we would be remiss if we do not offer these recreational opportunities to students and community members beyond the 12th grade.</p>

27-Aug-14	Rich James - Clallam County Transportation Program Manager	Olympic Discovery Trail	<p>I was glad to see the Olympic Discovery Trail listed in a side bar as an example of a successful recreation project that generates revenues to the local economy.</p> <p>One point I was trying to make in my presentation was the active involvement of several tribal governments in construction of the trail. Tribes are a major player in the recreation and transportation sector and this should be brought out in the report. Tribes are financing segments of the trail and other recreation and transportation related projects in the County using their own resources. They have an interest in supporting trails and other transportation projects because these projects support access to tribal businesses including their casinos and provide an additional recreation activity for patrons of their businesses. Trails are also utilized by tribal members to aid their individual health and reduce their cost of health services needed.</p> <p>One additional point related to long distance regional trails is that they tie together parks in rural locations making them more accessible and adding a user group to these parks that may not otherwise have been inclined to visit them. Trail users passing through parks on a regional trail can be a source of income to the park if camping is allowed.</p>
27-Aug-14	Scott Chapman - RCO	Projected revenue	On page nine, the way I am reading it is that the Projected Revenue was \$64 million but actual revenue was only \$15.7 or about ¼ of what was expected.
27-Aug-14	Josh Weiss - Washington State Association of Counties	Real Estate Excise Tax	<p>Thank you for your hard work and dedicating in developing recommendations on outdoor recreation in Washington. I am writing to express particular support for permanently allowing the use of Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) dollars for operation and maintenance of local facilities. Even under favorable economic circumstances, it is a challenge for counties to find the resources to operate and maintain recreational and other public facilities. This situation has only been exacerbated by the Great Recession when all fund sources have been reduced. It is simply illogical that a county is able to fund new facilities while being unable to maintain what has already been built.</p> <p>Earlier this year, the Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) asked the Municipal Research Services Corporation (MRSC) to gather information on the use of REET, including using REET for operations and maintenance. The results of this survey are attached for your information as you deliberate on final recommendations. One interesting finding is that parks and recreation facilities are one of the top uses of both REET 1 and REET 2. The survey also revealed how important county and city managers view the ability to use REET dollars for operation and maintenance.</p> <p>On behalf of the Washington State Association of Counties, please include this idea in your final recommendations. In order for counties to meaningfully contribute to the state's outdoor recreation opportunities, it is vitally important that they have a stable and consistent fund source for the operation and maintenance of outdoor recreation and other county facilities.</p>
27-Aug-14	Doug Levy - Task Force subcommittee lead (though not an official voting member)	Removing the lid on non-highway accounts and cover photo	<p>1) The report notes that specific longer-term recommendations will also be in Appendix VII – but that is, for now, blank. Do you know when we will see information listed within this Appendix and others? One reason I ask is that both my parks and boating folks recommended the idea of “removing the lid” on the non-highway-purpose accounts. It isn't in the near-term or longer-term recommendations in the printed report – our hope would be that it could be in the appendices;</p> <p>2) For the final report it might be good to acknowledge the work of the Subcommittees and Subcommittee Chairs. In my case, I'm hardly a glory hog but it would be good to at least mention the work product that contributed to the full body of Task Force recommendations.</p> <p>3 One thing I noted with the cover photo that I thought I would pass along, as a suggestion for revision before finalizing: It's an adorable picture of six little kids. But they're all Caucasian. Perhaps not the message you want leading into a report that speaks, in part, to the importance of reaching out to diverse and minority populations and groups.</p> <p>Overall, this is a very good report.</p>
28-Aug-14	Doug Walker - Task Force Co- Chair	Removing barriers to access and cover photo	<p>I think the report draft looks extremely good! The cover picture is nice. But it seems a problem that only white children are depicted. This should be changed.</p> <p>I liked the division of actions together with categories.</p> <p>The "Setting the Context" section is quite good. Great work!!!!</p> <p>One important item in the report is the issue of "removing barriers". In testimony, we constantly heard about barriers that are in place that block our citizens from gaining access to recreation. In "setting the context", the removal of barriers should be called out. This is also a place for leadership from the Governor. It was good to see "removing barriers" was included in defining the role for a state agency on recreation as well as other places.</p>

28-Aug-14	Russ Cahill - Task Force member	Underserved populations and cover photo	<p>Look on the bottom of page 4 an "r" missing from underserved making it undeserved which is a whole different kettle of fish. Also, the initial photo is reflective of the ethnic make-up represented on the task force; not that of the state.</p> <p>My reading of the draft is that it is pretty good but here are some shortcomings as I see them.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The initial action items make some sense, but they will be seen by those who don't read the whole thing as more important. Do we care more about tax breaks for wealthy and corporate boat owners than potential closing of State Parks? Up front we need to make a brief strong statement that action is needed now to address the funding shortfall coming up in this next biennium. 2. I would include the Governors Office in the short list of places for a coordination office. I think Commerce is a bad choice. It has no leverage on any of the state agencies involved and would be widely ignored by commission headed agencies and DNR. (My opinion) 3. A paragraph explaining the leakage of boat taxes to the general fund should be coupled with a note on taxes for R.V.s. It would show that as user generated revenue and a call for fairness. 4. Although it's an uncomfortable subject, the fact that the Gov. Appointed commissioners are not representative of the ethnic makeup of the state, (all are white) is an indicator that we are not really serious about serving the underserved.
28-Aug-14	Brock Milliern - Task Force member	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 1)	<p>This letter is to provide some input on the "Governor's Parks and Outdoor Recreation Task Force—Draft Report." First, let me express my admiration for Jim that he was able to pull together the report under such pressure and short timeframe. There are several aspects of the report that capture the momentum and collaboration of the committee members; however, there are a few I have concerns about.</p> <p>Action #1 was an idea clearly supported by the Task Force from the very beginning of the process. My only concern is that the report calls out "an office" and that has led some people who contacted DNR to believe that there is a new department being proposed. If possible, it would help to clear up the intent of this action item.</p> <p>Actions 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, and 9 appeared to have clear and unopposed support from the beginning of the task force. Ideas geared toward getting people outside seemed of particular interest, and I am enthused that the draft document includes "No Child Left Inside" as a targeted, realistic opportunity.</p> <p>While many of the ideas brought forward by Task Force members and the public are captured in this document, there were some issues that I have concerns over. First and foremost, the voting members of the Task Force never appeared to actually vote on anything. The list of actions comes out of ideas that were heard, subcommittee meetings, and a survey—but the concrete action of deciding what to take forward was never carried out by the members on the Task Force. This appears to have left us with actions and other items called out in the report that quite possibly do not belong.</p> <p>While I do not intend to highlight every instance that I believe should not be encompassed in the report, because some instances are benign, I would like to capture some of higher concern. Action #6 implores state agencies to assess and "rebalance" the public investment in regards to our operating model. This appears to beg the question, "What does the public want?" I would argue an important question to ask, and yet when paired with the example provided in the report of the "Fort Worden Development Authority Business Plan" it gives me cause for concern. As I recall, this business plan had one or two mentions during one meeting of the Task Force, and yet it appears as an endorsed concept in the report. As I know Fort Worden, this model probably works well, but as it pertains to other landscapes there would be significant shortcomings. Above all, I do not believe this concept was endorsed by the Task Force.</p> <p>Recommendations around passes and access were also of particular concern in the report. Creating a pass good on all Federal and State lands was an idea addressed repeatedly throughout the duration of the Task Force. It would set better expectations of the possibilities if the report made mention of the exceptionally difficult undertaking it would be to fulfill this goal. Mention of the expiring federal law helps point to one of the difficulties of this task, but it should be more strongly stated. I do not know how many other states have taken advantage, but I would guess it is very few.</p>

	Brock Milliern - Task Force member	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) The Discover Pass was talked about at length and I do think it is important to capture the downside of the pass; however, the importance of the Discover Pass to state recreation lands is not accurately depicted in this report. Without it, many--if not most state lands would have been closed down during the great recession. The Discover Pass is the only identified funding source that can survive a downturn in the economy, which is why 2011 was the second time in less than a decade that saw a day-use fee implemented at State Parks--this should be explicitly stated in the report. My last Discover Pass concern is that the report states, "Revenues are divided between the three agencies." While technically true, I believe this leads the reader to assume an even division of funds. DNR and WDFW receive 8% each while State Parks receives 84%--this should be transparently captured in the report.</p> <p>The last area of concern is the mention of Metropolitan Park Districts (MPD). As I recall, this received mention at one meeting. We heard from a person who supported it and one who realized it would not work in his geographic area. Seattle Parks was pointed at as recent success story for an MPD. This was a highly controversial issue in Seattle that barely garnered enough support to pass. In no way did the Task Force have the time or make the effort to appropriately vet this idea and it should not be included in the report as "high priority near-term action." If it is to make it into the report, it should be as a possible solution for local governments to support park systems--not as a high priority.</p> <p>Thanks for taking my comments into consideration. I suspect Jim will continue to receive comments up until and even after the final report is published--which will make his job an ever expanding and difficult task. Best of luck!</p>
28-Aug-14	Steven Worthington - citizen	Hunting	<p>I am not a hunter but was a bit surprised to see no mention of it in the Outdoor Recreation Task Force policy changes. Nor was there any mention of outdoor shooting range development. Hunting Works for America is educating the public and policy makers to the value of hunters to the economy of states that embrace the program. There are \$228 million in state and local taxes generated in Wisconsin, a new member to this program and \$4 billion in ripple effect dollars. Hard to ignore one would think.</p> <p>I also question private timber owners closing thier land when they get a very sizable real estate tax break for growing timber with the caveat that the property stay accessible to the public for recreation, then charge a large fee to access it.</p>
29-Aug-14	Megan Duffy	Distinction between water-dependent and nonwater dependent	<p>The distinction between water-dependent and nonwater dependent uses is important to the public interest. Bellingham Bay Community Boating Center's facilities are not water-dependent and thus do not warrant the discounted rent that is available to water-dependent uses (uses that can only be situated on the waterfront).</p>
31-Aug-14	Don & Alice Prince - Friends of Washington State Parks	Funding for Washington state parks	<p>The primary issue threatening the health, maintenance, and access to our state's outdoor resources is FUNDING! In particular, our Washington State Parks. (1) There is no need or value for another study on state parks funding - other than for political purposes. (2) State Parks Commission should develop criteria that would be used to identify any park that might require further reduced services or potential closure in the event park operating funds drop below a given threshold. (3) State Parks "Friends Groups" are well suited to fill the need for important and value added programs. (4) State Parks should aggressively identify partners who are willing to provide ongoing operational funding for our state parks organization and/or specific parks facing reduced services and possible closure.</p>

1-Sep-14	David Given - retired National Park Service manager	Funding (Part 1)	<p>As a retired National Park Service manager, I read with interest the subject report. I would note in passing that the NPS could never have rushed through a project such as this with such limited opportunities for public input, but perhaps that is a good thing. My comments are as follows.</p> <p>1. I agree wholeheartedly with the statement on page 2 that providing outdoor recreation opportunities should be seen as an essential government service—as important as providing transportation, police and fire protection. I do not, however, believe that the recommendations of the report adequately support this idea.</p> <p>2. To remedy this, the report should be specific in recommending how this obligation will be funded. I have some reservations (see #3) that the rebalancing recommended as near term priority action # 6 will be successful. I would recommend the \$5 car registration fee considered by the task force. While I'm sure this will be difficult to achieve politically, this really strikes me as "put up or shut up" situation - either you mean that outdoor recreation is an essential service and fund it as such or you shouldn't say that it is an essential service just because that's a nice thing to put in a report on outdoor recreation.</p> <p>3. The priority action #6 recommendation to review and rebalance public expenditures on outdoor recreation considering whether expenditures are going towards essential, important, or value added services sounds good on paper but will likely fail on at least 2 counts. The first is straightforward - there isn't enough public money going into the system now to adequately provide for even the essential services, so rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic isn't going to do much good. The second is more insidious. This relates to a tendency take an idea that works well on a small scale, as this may be doing at Fort Worden, and impose it on a much larger system without recognizing the implications and the barriers that may not exist on the smaller scale. As a park manager, I would love the proposed system as it is pretty easy to justify that your top priorities are essential and your lower priorities are important or value added. While this is not difficult to deal with in one management unit, where the park manager can resolve any conflicts between his/her subordinates, what happens when you get different, perhaps competing, agencies involved, or different park and refuge managers put the same types of functions in different funding categories and the public notices (which they will) and starts asking questions?</p> <p>I would recommend dropping priority action #6 and funding outdoor recreation as recommended in #2.</p>
	David Given - retired National Park Service manager	Funding (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) 4. I am also skeptical about priority action #1, establishing an office to serve as the state's cross-agency leader on outdoor recreation. The cynic in me says that, despite often voiced concerns about the size of government and its cost, you can pretty much count on any task force report like this to recommend setting up a new office or agency. The advocates for the task force topic generally believe that their topic isn't getting proper attention and that this can be fixed by creating a government entity to focus on their area of interest. Government employees who sympathize believe that if this new group is created, they can be freed from all those things they hate doing to concentrate on helping the cause they believe in. Government managers see a new office as more staff, more money, and more influence. It is usually preferable to assign duties within existing organizations and hold managers accountable for successful completion of the highest priority work through their annual performance standards.</p>

2-Sep-14	John Keates - Task Force member	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 1)	<p>1. Should there be a section for definitions at the start? For example, I believe that "local parks" should be explained. Many readers won't know what that means. A definition could be park and recreation services offered by a City, County, Metropolitan Park District, Port District, or any government entity below the state level. A definition of metro park district is probably needed as well.</p> <p>2. Page 5, third bullet down. Could add "address barriers to accessing public and private recreation lands." Could also add examples for access limitations; due to lack of maintenance funding, lack of staffing, fear of lawsuits, garbage dumping, and policy prohibiting motorized use – expectation that users walk in, bike in, etc. Not everyone has the ability to walk 5-10 miles and those people then lose access rights.</p> <p>3. Great example of North Central ATV Club – but where is it located?</p> <p>4. Page 9, Discover Pass. At the bottom it says that "revenues are divided between the three agencies, but it does not say how? I believe it is 8% DNR, 8% WDFW, and 84% state parks. For a \$30 Discover Pass this means only \$2.40 goes to DNR and \$2.40 to WDFW. I heard constantly from trail users they thought the discover pass is unfair because for the ratio that divides the revenues. For example, a person that only uses his/her discover pass to use DNR land pays \$30 and receives a \$2.40 return. This is one of the major reasons people don't like the Discover Pass.</p> <p>5. Page 10. I suggest adding a bullet recommending the artificial cap on the fuel tax be raised from 23 cents to 37cents to fund Boating Facilities, NOVA, and Snowmobile Program.</p> <p>6. Page 11, bullet #2. Here and other spots in the plan where cooperation or partnerships are recommended please don't forget to remember local parks agencies.</p> <p>7. Page 12, under information. I would suggest adding not only cross-agency coordination but also communicating with out of state agencies. I think "lessons learned" from other state have value here. States that seem to really do well with outdoor recreation include Oregon, Idaho, and Utah. This is especially true for motorized recreation.</p> <p>8. Page 12 #2 at the bottom. Under Fee's, Passes, and tax Policy. The single pass concept. I think the single pass is a great idea, but getting back to my recommendation #4 I think it's unfair to expect users to buy one pass and not have options. If a one pass option were formulated, it would be wise to give people the freedom to select and pay for the type of access they want and not have to pay one size fits all.</p> <p>9. Page 14, bullets on sustaining our outdoor recreation assets. Add the information about removing the "Lid" on fuel tax, same as my bullet #5.</p>
	John Keates - Task Force member	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) 10. Page #14. Metropolitan Park Districts. An issue facing Metro Park Districts seems to be something called "compression." The Shelton Park District is facing this and it has to do with falling real estate values. Not sure that it should be mentioned in the report or what the solution would be, other than a rebound in real estate values. I think some previous legislation might have been proposed to deal with this. It's a threat to the viability of MPD's.</p> <p>11. Page 16, Forest Road Closures, the example we heard in Sequim on the road closed due to a road wash out ten years ago I thought was a telling example of access problems. One item that hasn't been mentioned here that I'd like to suggest is in instances where roads are gated or closed an option might be a policy of encouraging road to trail conversions, this is being done very successfully in the Snoqualmie Pass area. In many places the Forest Service is plainly gating roads, not maintaining roads, and even removing long established roads from maps.</p> <p>Other – possible to add in somewhere????</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to complete a comprehensive study of capital needs for outdoor recreation facilities. • Examination of inventory of trail miles for all forms of recreation and compare that to expected population growth to anticipate and plan for new trail miles needed to meet future demand. • Any discussion on funding needs to should not be confined to one level, i.e state government. Remember just about every level is facing funding challenges. • As with the above bullet, marketing and promotion should include activities at the local level as well as the state level. Sports tournaments are a great example of recreation with a big economic return benefit.

2-Sep-14	Barbara Mayer - citizen	Passes and permits (Part 1)	<p>The best suggestion is to combine all the various passes into one, but even then I fear it leaves our state as one unfriendly to visitors. I follow the blog of a fulltiming RV'er, and after one visit to Washington where she was annoyed and befuddled by the myriad of passes, she did not come back. Paying to camp in State Park campgrounds and then not being allowed to pull into another one for lunch was one noted problem- one that has annoyed me, too- and having a paid-for pass not good for stopping to hike was also annoying. I don't know how many times I have decided not to go somewhere due to the need for a trail pass or forest pass (I have a Discover pass.)</p> <p>For me, as a resident, the biggest drawback to the Discover pass is that it offers absolutely nothing to the person who pays to camp in the parks. It should at least allow the extra car to park overnight (instead of just in the daytime- what good is that to a camper?) Campers are invested in keeping parks open and would like to support the Discover pass but it is of very little value to us.</p> <p>Action #1: Establish a new office.</p> <p>Are you kidding me? We have to pay more to use parks so that you can add more employees and another office? There are people now who could do this job without a new office being created.</p> <p>"Inspire an outdoor recreation culture." Washington already has an outdoor recreation culture. Stop making it harder to access.</p> <p>Action #6 and #7 are in opposition. Fund youth athletic facilities? Talk about value added. There are other sources for funding athletics. Parks should be about nature and outdoors, not about sports. In fact, funding anything related to K-12 education is contradictory. Other sources should fund education. Not our parks money.</p> <p>Table 2, proposed sources of revenue...</p> <p>The Discover pass isn't popular now. Increasing its price isn't going to help!</p> <p>RV owners already pay when we use the parks. We also pay a tax to register our vehicles here in the state (in my case, pay AGAIN as the vehicle had previously been registered here- sales tax has now been paid at least 3x on my tiny TT). Why should we bear the burden of paying more than the increased camping fees and the taxes we already paid?</p>
	Barbara Mayer - citizen	Passes and permits (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) Things not even mentioned in the report: improve management of campgrounds. Start with making the majority of cabins, yurts, etc, pet friendly so that they don't sit empty most of the time (except weekends) in the summer. At the least, allow an RV or tent with pets outside the yurts. In one case a disabled friend of mine could not use the ADA accessible yurt because it was not pet friendly (one was, but was booked and the available yurts were not pet friendly, the pet friendly one available was not accessible.)</p> <p>Stop paying for maintenance people to blow leaves off woodland trails and pressure walk park roads while people are trying to enjoy the park.</p> <p>We have some of the best state parks in the country. Having them is already a benefit to every single person in the state. Paying through the nose to use them just results in under-use.</p>
2-Sep-14	Jon McAninch - citizen	Hunting and shooting	I find it very disturbing that your draft report on outdoor recreation does not include hunting or shooting. Why?
2-Sep-14	Marc Berejka - Task Force member	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations	Specific edits to draft report submitted in a separate document.

2-Sep-14	Kim Abel - League of Women Voters of Washington	State park funding	<p>The League of Women Voters of Washington is disappointed that the report does not give appropriate emphasis to what we see as an obligation of the state; that is to adequately fund and maintain our public recreational lands, especially State Parks.</p> <p>The League feels that the number one priority on the list of Near-Term Actions should be the creation of a predictable, reliable, and sustainable funding mechanism for the protection of our State Parks as public assets. Based on the words of the Governor's Executive Order 14-01, we expected this Task Force to actually propose a specific mechanism. The example given by the Task Force of using the Fort Worden business plan seems cumbersome and does not meet the criteria of predictable, reliable and sustainable. It does not translate into a revenue stream. If the Task Force wants this report to do more than sit on a shelf, it needs to find a specific, workable solution to the funding crisis facing State Parks.</p> <p>The last bullet item in the summary list to increase participation in outdoor recreation is too brief a reference to assets. This does not convey the important obligation of the state to manage and maintain State Parks and other public recreation lands at the high level that makes them attractive destinations. This stewardship is an obligation of the State to both the donors of the land and the general public.</p> <p>We strongly agree with the statement on page 2, as heard in public comment, that "providing outdoor recreation opportunities should be seen as an essential government service – as important as providing transportation, police and fire protection."</p> <p>Near-Term Actions: The League cannot support any of the nine Near-Term Actions recommended by the Task Force until the most outstanding needed action - funding State Parks – is addressed in specific terms and given highest priority.</p> <p>Office on Outdoor Recreation: The League holds a position in support of "comprehensive planning, acquisition, development and preservation of parks, open spaces and green belts both public and private, to provide a wide variety of facilities for all age groups." However, the League cannot support the creation of a new office before addressing the acute need for funding the lands for which our State is already responsible. In terms of coordinating and promoting tourism, that effort should come through the Department of Commerce's focus on small business.</p> <p>The League urges the Task Force to re-visit their recommendations with the purpose of earnestly addressing the crisis that lack of funding has inflicted on our State's treasured park system.</p>
2-Sep-14	Joyce Francis - Fort Worden Advisory Committee	Funding and cross-agency leadership	<p>FWAC was created by Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission in 1973 to provide assistance and recommendations for the development and operation of Fort Worden State Park. In this capacity, FWAC members have followed the progress of the Governor's Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation with keen interest, while individual members have participated in the Task Force proceedings.</p> <p>FWAC members would like to offer the following comments on the Draft Report:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Priority of Outdoor Recreation - On page 2, the report notes, "One of the common themes we heard is that providing outdoor recreation opportunities should be seen as an essential government service--as important as providing transportation, police and fire protection." FWAC strongly endorses this statement and would like it see it reflected far more strongly in the final report, moving to the forefront of the "Setting the Context." 2. Funding Outdoor Recreation - Once we agree that providing outdoor recreation opportunities is an essential government service, sufficient funding to sustain Parks becomes a core goal. FWAC members were sadly disappointed to find that the Task Force failed to make specific recommendations on additional funding. While we support the continuation and reinstatement of funding noted in the report's Actions #2, #7, #8, & #9, these will not come close to closing the estimated \$82 million a biennium gap between current funding and what is needed to operate and maintain state recreation opportunities. The Draft Report fails both to reference the size of this gap and to offer any specific recommendations to address it while skirting around the edges through minor issues. If the Task Force's 29 members in a six-month process cannot directly address this "elephant in the room," what hope do we have of the Governor and legislature paying attention! Alternately, if these 29 members agree that recreation is an essential government service, they should be willing to identify and advocate for a sustainable funding solution. 3. Cross-Agency Leader on Outdoor Recreation - In light of the failure on the part of the Draft Report to address sustainable funding, it is distressing to note that Action Item #1 is to create another state office. There is no evidence offered that current agencies are lacking in communication and coordination, however there is ample evidence that they are lacking in resources. In a climate of rapidly diminishing resources, it is surely resource competition that impedes coordination, and a new office will not remove this impediment. 4. In sum, FWAC members wish to convey that it would be a great waste of the Task Force's months of effort to put forward a final report that does not make specific recommendations for sustainable funding.
3-Sep-14	Mike Peters - StormwaterRx	Marine tourism	Just wanted to thank you for taking the time to include this bill in the coming years plans...Keep up the good work!

3-Sep-14	Ron Davis - citizen	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations	<p>Action #1, it is not necessary to create a new agency to perform these tasks. The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board and its staff are already required by law to carry out these functions through RCW 79A.25.</p> <p>Action #1: Require other state agency's that directly or indirectly provide recreation lands to make decisions based upon state priorities called for in SCORP, the state boating, trails and other plans. These plans are the "state's" comprehensive plan for recreation, not just the for the Recreation and Conservation Office.</p> <p>Action #1: A shortage of recreation lands? Make all lands acquired with state and federal assistance available to the public for appropriate public recreation, including those acquired by non-profit organizations. Allow limited restrictions when properties contain sensitive archeological and cultural resources, and rare and endangered plant and animal species that could be harmed.</p> <p>Action #5: Amend the GMA statute to require outdoor recreation as an element in GMA plans. It would require jurisdictions to plan locally for and create service standards for their communities.</p> <p>Action #6: Have Recreation and Conservation Office Recreation Planners and the Habitat Lands and Coordinating Group help analyze overlapping management boundaries between the natural resource agencies, look for opportunities for sharing management, staff and maintenance resources. Consider aligning agency regional boundaries to help facilitate and streamline agency operations and management decisions.</p> <p>(pg. 11) What are "start-up matching grants" and "challenge matching grants" and how are they different from each other?</p> <p>Regarding Barriers to Access (pg. 12): Often it is that the public does not know or is not aware which lands are available for public recreation. The Public Land Inventory should help, although most properties acquired by Non-government Organizations with public funds are not included in the inventory. Why is this?</p> <p>Government Planning (pg. 13): Require public access easements on property acquired using public funding to achieve local or state goals called for in Shoreline Master Plans, Local Comprehensive Plans, State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, State Transportation Plans, etc...</p>
3-Sep-14	Recreational Boating Association of WA and the Northwest Marine Trade Association	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations	<p>We at the Recreational Boating Association of Washington (RBAW) and the Northwest Marine Trade Association (NMTA) collectively serve as the voices of, and the 'Chamber of Commerce' for, recreational boating, and have been actively engaged in your Task Force process. We want to first give a huge shout-out and thanks to all of you for the countless hours of time, dedication and outreach these past several months to the critical task of recommending a strategy for how to better provide access to, promote, fund, and capitalize on the spectacular outdoor recreation assets we enjoy in Washington State.</p> <p>We have reviewed your Draft Report, including your nine recommended near-term actions, and are in agreement with many of the key recommendations you have made and reinforced. We would specifically like to underscore the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We appreciate the Task Force including a priority recommendation around protecting and preserving the dedicated recreational accounts we already have in place. We of course have spoken to you at multiple Task Force meetings about the vital role played by the Recreation Resource Account, funded in the state capital budget as the Boating Facilities Program. Thank you for this recommendation – please retain it as a near-term recommendation; • We also particularly appreciate the near-term recommendation calling for action on the Marine Tourism Bill. This has been a high priority for our organizations, one led by the NMTA and strongly supported by the RBAW. Please retain it as a near-term recommendation; • We had suggested to the Task Force, and heartily agree with, the idea of creating a special Office of Outdoor Recreation. Please retain this as a near-term recommendation; • It is our understanding that as RCO staff rounds out the verbiage for the Draft Report, that you intend to include a recommendation to remove the 23-cent 'lid' on depositing non-highway-purpose fuel tax proceeds into the dedicated recreational accounts for boating ("Boating Facilities Program"), off-road vehicles ("NOVA"), and snowmobiles. We believe it is inappropriate and perhaps even illegal for the state to continue to divert 14.5 cents of these fuel tax proceeds into the Motor Vehicle Fund. We hope you will indeed include this recommendation in a high-profile way; • Lastly, we have reviewed some of the proposed options for sustainably funding State Parks and other natural resource agencies. We continue to believe the state should do a better job of funding these agency operations through the General Fund, as systems such as State Parks are for the general good of all of us. We have pointed to the unfairness of the Watercraft Excise Tax (WET) as something that only boaters continue to pay. We note that the Draft Report contains potential options for re-directing some existing WET revenue, and for potentially asking others to pay a similar excise tax. We frankly will need some time to talk this over with our Members and plan to be back in touch with state agency contacts in the near future. <p>In summary, we want to again thank you for your body of work and your dedication over these past several months. We hope you will take to heart the recommendations above for retaining key recommendations, and for incorporating the removal of the 23-cent 'lid' as noted above.</p>
3-Sep-14	Patty Graf-Hoke - Task Force member	Report cover photo	<p>Since there are no other photos in the report, as a PR professional, it seems it would be best if the cover reflected more diversity in both users and geography, at least with regard to urban areas and ethnicities.</p>

3-Sep-14	Greg Figg - Spokane Winter Knights	Funding for snowmobiling	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to review the above report and provide comments. I am commenting on this draft report as the President of the Spokane Winter Knights Snowmobile Club. We represent about 350 snowmobilers in NE Washington. In looking through the draft report I notice one of the ideas presented on Page 15 is to retain a portion of the NOVA funds to fund other forms of outdoor recreation. In regard to the snowmobile account, these funds come from the users in the form of snowmobile license fees and a gas tax revenue sharing formula. These funds are then transferred into the State Parks Winter Recreation Program. Retaining a portion of these fees for other uses will leave the snowmobile program underfunded which will affect the quality of the program that remains. This has been something that we have worked very hard to correct by recently raising fees to bring the program back to a reasonable level. It should also be noted that cross country skiers, snowshoers, and dog sleds can also be found using our trails in many locations.</p> <p>For these reasons we would request that the snowmobile funds not be reduced for other programs.</p>
4-Sep-14	Peter Mayer - Recreation and Conservation Funding Board	RCO "serve as the state's cross-agency leader on outdoor recreation" (Part 1)	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft report of the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Task Force. I applaud this important work and appreciate the time and dedication of the Task Force leads, staff liaisons and members for their thoughtful deliberations yielding this preliminary report and action plan to transform Washington's outdoor recreation assets and state programs. This is critically important work and I thank those who have facilitated the Governor's request for this report.</p> <p>As I reviewed the draft and the August 19, 2014 Task Force Meeting Summary (Sequim), the need for a lead entity to communicate, coordinate and advocate for outdoor recreation across governmental and non-governmental organizations and recreation providers was clearly noted as a high priority. In fact, 5 of the 6 Group Facilitators at the Sequim meeting reported back the need for a "go-to person", to "designate a state liaison", and to "create an Office of Outdoor Recreation" or "establish a new outdoor recreation division".</p> <p>While the draft report recommends that an "office" be established "to serve as the state's cross-agency leader on outdoor recreation" and further noted "should be located within either the Department of Commerce or the Recreation and Conservation Office, or a hybrid of both agencies", I urge the Task Force to affirm these responsibilities as uniquely and almost exclusively as those of the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) and recommend to the Governor that the RCO be adequately funded to carry out many of these existing and current RCO responsibilities.</p> <p>I have attached a matrix that aligns the Task Force near-term actions associated with "Lead the Way to Outdoor Recreation" (Action#1- Establish an office to serve as the state's cross-agency leader on outdoor recreation) and the existing authorizing legislation for the RCO and the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB), as well as the relevant sections of the RCFB's Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Together, they support the notion that the citizens of the State already have an "Office of Outdoor Recreation"- known today as the Recreation and Conservation Office!</p> <p>Outdoor recreation planning, coordination, tourism and commerce are all inextricably linked. In fact, it should be noted that the Director of the Department of Commerce was one of the 6 state agency representatives called out to initially serve on the "Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation" (now RCFB)- created by voter approval of Referendum 11 and Initiative 215 in November 1964. And while RCO may currently lack some of the marketing expertise to fulfill what is envisioned with Action #1 and #5 (Designate "outdoor recreation" as a specific industry within Washington's economic development strategy), with adequate funding and resources it could either more fully develop this skill set or collaborate with other state agencies/offices- particularly Department of Commerce- or the private sector to bolster such efforts. I strongly encourage and support the designation of "outdoor recreation" as a specific industry cluster within Washington's economic development strategy.</p>
	Peter Mayer - Recreation and Conservation Funding Board	RCO "serve as the state's cross-agency leader on outdoor recreation" (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) Furthermore, by most accounts the economic impact of outdoor recreation is significant and to better quantify the economic contribution of our natural assets and recreation amenities, the RCO has been directed to conduct a study with the assistance of Earth Economics. RCO's familiarity and well established reputation with outdoor recreation position it well to commission and guide such work. This is yet another example of the information, studies and research that the RCO is already charged with facilitating and employing which can simply be better leveraged from a marketing and promotions standpoint.</p> <p>The inherent synergy that can come from the recreation planning, tourism promotion and economic development activities within a singular agency is provocative and persuasive, particularly given the strong reputation and leadership of the RCO. Lastly, affirming RCO as the cross-agency leader enables an existing highly effective and accomplished agency with diverse outdoor recreation expertise and planning experience to "hit the ground running"- no new bureaucracy or governmental entity to create and a successful track record of interagency and private sector collaboration. Prompt actions and effective progress toward implementation of recommendations could occur for the benefit of all Washingtonians.</p> <p>In summary, I urge the Task Force specifically recommend to the Governor that the Recreation and Conservation Office "serve as the state's cross-agency leader on outdoor recreation" and for adequate resources be conveyed to support fulfilling its current and as needed, expanded charge.</p>
4-Sep-14	Martha Comfort - Washington Boating Alliance	Marine tourism	<p>Thank you for your hard work and excellent list of recommendations. I wholly support your list. I would ask that you stand firm in your support for the Recreational Resource Account and the Marine Tourism Bill. These are important components to fostering healthy outdoor recreation and important to the growth of this sector.</p>

4-Sep-14	Peter Schrappen - Northwest Marine Trade Association	Marine tourism	<p>On behalf of Marine-Tourism-Bill coalition, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to you, your colleagues on the task force and staff for the time and energy you put into this project.</p> <p>You have already heard from each of us on the importance of recreational boating as it relates to economic development and quality of life. Thank you for advancing our priority and in essence making our priority your priority. Specifically, the fourth recommendation in your report "Adopting the Marine Tourism Bill" is one that we'd like to see move forward.</p> <p>This coalition consists of big cities and smaller communities. We are all tied together by the water and the marine trades and careers that are bolstered when boats and tourists are here in Washington state.</p> <p>Attached are a compilation of the letters of support you have already received. Please keep this priority in your final report and do not hesitate to reach out to any of those on this email for stories, facts and figures on the importance of a thriving maritime economy.</p>
4-Sep-14	Scott Helker - Krogen Express Yachts, Bering Yachts, and Helmsman Trawlers	Marine tourism, designating specific industry cluster, funding	<p>First — terrific work. The Draft report is a clear statement from the Task Force. I am a principal in two Washington businesses (Waterline Boats LLC, and Megaboat LLC dba Helmsman Trawlers) that are solely focused on selling the marvels of Washington outdoor recreation, and specifically access to our unique and extraordinary aqueous gems. So I am very pleased to see recognition and support for the societal (significantly including the economic value) of outdoor recreation.</p> <p>Second — I value the inclusion of three Action Items in the draft plan that are near-and-dear to the boating community and to the marine-related business community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action #4 Enacting Marine Tourism legislation — thoughtful and specific action to promote broad-based economic activity • Action #5 Designating "outdoor recreation" as a specific industry in Washington's economic development strategy — Washington is blessed with this unique opportunity that in recent decades has sadly been shadowed Action #9 Funding and protecting outdoor recreation grant programs — specifically the Boating Facilities Program to direct boating funds to their intended purpose of growing and supporting boating
4-Sep-14	Tom Reeve - Task Force member	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 1)	<p>Most of my feedback is structural. I think most of the points that need to be made are in there, but that they could be structured to be more impactful.</p> <p>Executive Summary I'd like the executive summary to do a better job explaining motivation/benefits and introducing the major themes of our findings. The executive summary should be something that still reads true in 5 years, while the action steps will be old-news by then.</p> <p>I'd bring a bunch of "setting the context" section into the summary and drop the actions steps. Speak to the importance and impact of outdoor recreation and list our five priority action areas. State that we have both near-term and long-term actions proposed for each, which will be found in the report. The only action item that rises to the executive summary level might be creation of the czar's office.</p> <p>Highlighting Priority Action Areas The "Priority Near-Term Actions" section currently serves two purposes – it fleshes out what the five bullet points (p. 3) mean as our action areas and it proposes some of the actions. I feel the action area descriptions are worth pulling out into a separate section. I'd propose the table of contents have a new entry, so it would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Summary • Setting the Context • Priority Action Areas • Recommended Near-term Actions (still organized by action areas) • Recommended for the future (still organized by action areas) <p>This would also help solve a problem with the current near-term section where the action items take up most of the volume of the section and serve to de-emphasize our key focus on the action areas.</p> <p>Formatting of proposed actions The near-term action items are numbered, colored, etc. while the "future" actions are described in prose. I'm personally a fan of the latter, but the inconsistency seems to de-emphasize the future work needlessly. Frankly, I didn't see the rationale for some stuff (e.g. permit requirements) being future and others (e.g. youth athletic facilities) being near-term. Maybe we should merge the sections and, if necessary, call out some (the 9) as key initial steps. Part of my concern is that if you label stuff as "future," the legislature will be more likely to kick those cans down the road. I'd rather they saw the whole menu as things they could work on today if they see a recommendation that excites them.</p>

	Tom Reeve - Task Force member	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) Additional Potential Actions</p> <p>I had thought that we were going to have an appendix which included the additional actions proposed by/in the committees. I'm not sure that "links to subcommittee reports" (appendix VII) captures that without some clear intro matter noting that there are many useful recommendations in those reports that provide additional actions that the state could take in addition to the 9 highlighted in this report.</p> <p>Within "Setting the context"</p> <p>It is mentioned later, but I think that economic health deserves to be included in the first paragraph. In essence, this is serving as a summary of what follows, but neglects the economic benefits.</p> <p>The paragraph on direct spending on outdoor recreation seems to ignore the businesses involved in hosting recreation – fishing guides, climbing guides, kayak tours, ski areas, etc. [Winter sports do seem under-represented overall.]</p> <p>"Inspire our children to live a life grounded in experiencing recreation in the great outdoors" is too 'spiritual.' Can we speak directly to our kids health, etc? The first mention of attracting businesses and families is too far down – after we talk about threats. We need to list those toward the front.</p> <p>Other text feedback</p> <p>There were several times (notably near the bottom of p. 4, but elsewhere as well) where I felt we over-emphasized underserved communities. Our goal is to encourage outdoor recreation by all Washingtonians, including underserved communities, and I'd say it that way. Don't let people off the hook in getting better-off kids out from in front of their Xboxes. Another example is at the bottom of p. 8, where we talk about "financial barriers to underserved populations" rather than barriers, financial or otherwise, that keep Washingtonians from recreating outdoors.</p> <p>Near the bottom of p. 4 we talk about working with NGOs "to help the organizations be more effective." I disagree. We are working with them to get all Washingtonians outdoors.</p> <p>In the near-term "Grow the Outdoor Recreation Economy" (p. 7) we only talk about the direct spending, not the indirect benefits (e.g. attracting employers, families, etc.). We could add a sentence recognizing that the OIF data is just a subset of the true economic benefits. We might also add impact to the OIF numbers by stating the size of other known sectors (e.g. Aerospace, Software, Fishing, whatever). The second paragraph in this section, about "data on consumer spending" didn't seem to add anything toward making our points – I'd cut it. Also in this section, there seemed to be a paragraph after Action #5 that should be moved to before the action description – the marketing and promotion isn't part of Action #5, but rather part of the overall description that preceded the action.</p>
	Tom Reeve - Task Force member	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 3)	<p>(Cont'd from Parts 1 & 2 above) In the Idaho sidebar, we use the word "lead" when I think we mean "led."</p> <p>Sidebar</p> <p>The sidebars in the report are a nice way of adding info, but come across as a bit random. I'd do two things: 1) Make sure they more clearly indicate why they are relevant to the section they adjoin (e.g. the North Central ATV Club could state something about how it inspires outdoor rec and the multi-entity pass seems a couple paragraphs late). 2) You can make the sidebars feel more consistent by labeling some as examples and some as background. E.g. "Example: Tahoma High Outdoor Academy" and "Background: Marine Tourism Legislation." You could even have different color bars next to the sidebar titles to make the two types seem more visually distinct.</p> <p>I couldn't figure out if "Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights" was background for an action we didn't explicitly propose or something else. And I thought the "Military Community" sidebar didn't add interesting background to the text.</p>
4-Sep-14	Dan Moore - Washington Tourism Alliance board member	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations	<p>I was an ad hoc member of the task force's subcommittee on Economic Development. I am also a board member of the Washington Tourism Alliance (WTA). The WTA is the only statewide entity marketing and promoting travel and tourism to Washington State. My background in tourism is in the outdoor recreation and adventure travel sectors. The work of this task force is very important to the work I have been engaged in over the last decade.</p> <p>Overall, I was quite impressed with the ability of this report to capture the key elements of the task force. There is one clear item I feel strongly should change:</p> <p>Page 4, Action #1, Bullet 1</p> <p>This needs to mention partnering with the WTA. A way to say this could be:</p> <p>"Work with tourism organizations, such as the Washington Tourism Alliance, and local Destination Marketing Organizations to better integrate outdoor recreation opportunities in tourism development and marketing"</p> <p>Any statewide effort to market outdoor recreation to travelers and tourists should be coordinated with the WTA. Additionally, I replaced the phrase "upgrade tourism marketing..." as it is not clear what is meant by upgrading. I think the way I rephrased above captures the initial intent of the statements while adding in the WTA as the logical partner for the state in this effort.</p>

4-Sep-14	Jim Goldsmith - Washingtonians for Wildlife Conservation	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 1)	<p>Washingtonians for Wildlife Conservation (WWC) is a coalition of individuals and groups that serves as focal point of public involvement for the benefit of Washington State conservationists, sportsmen, and sportswomen. WWC has many member and supporting organizations with a combined reach to thousands of Washington citizens. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on these very important recommendations to the Governor from the Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation.</p> <p>The approach to reviewing and commenting on the draft recommendation report to the Governor are done by page number and topics in order to facilitate bringing your attention to specific topics.</p> <p>PDF page 7: Executive Summary: Near-Term Actions.</p> <p>Comments: The page numbers referenced in the Near-Term Actions do not always correspond to the page number the action is actually on. WWC comments on action items of particular interest will be presented throughout this comment letter.</p> <p>Report page 2; PDF page 10. Grammar suggestions in 3rd paragraph: Change: "We heard from thousands of residents that we must not take this for granted." To "We heard from thousands of residents; we must not take this for granted." Delete: "And it is incredible."</p> <p>Report page 4; PDF page 12. Refer to: "ACTION #1: Establish an office to serve as the state's cross-agency leader on outdoor recreation." Suggested additional bullet item to capture an important mission characteristic of the proposed new "office". Equally represent all outdoor recreational activities without preference or prejudice. Typo in bullet item 4: "undeserved" should be "underserved".</p> <p>Report page 5; PDF page 13. Refer to the 3rd bullet item: "Work with state and federal land managers to address barriers to accessing recreation lands ..." This is one of the most significant barriers we face. Road closures on public lands by federal and state land management agencies are occurring at an alarming rate. Methods of road closures and decommissioning vary widely from gates or barriers at road entrances to total destruction and removal of the road bed from the landscape. Unfortunately, that latter of the two occurs far too often. The "Roads to Trails" concept promoted by Congresswoman Jamie Herrera Beutler at the federal level is an excellent approach to preserving access into our public lands while keeping the road bed available for reconstruction if needed for fire prevention, timber harvesting, or other needed access uses. Decommissioning/destruction of roads is a waste of access opportunity and it has significant associated costs.</p>
	Jim Goldsmith - Washingtonians for Wildlife Conservation	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) Refer to the 1 paragraph: "The office would act as a convener and administrator for an advisory committee composed of government, non-profit and private recreation providers, tourism alliances, and recreation businesses, which would meet on a regular basis and host an annual Outdoor Recreation Summit." To give additional credibility and the desired mission characteristic of equally representing all outdoor recreation user groups to the proposed "advisory committee", slightly different wording might be appropriate. The proposed "advisory committee" sounds very much like the current Big Tent Outdoor Coalition. Including the outdoor recreation user groups is an essential component of the "advisory committee" if it is to be non-partisan, fair, and without preference or prejudice toward any segment of the outdoor recreation community.</p> <p>Change to: "The office would act as a convener and administrator for an advisory committee composed of government, non-profit and private recreation providers, tourism alliances, recreation businesses, and organizations representing outdoor recreation user groups, which would meet on a regular basis and host an annual Outdoor Recreation Summit."</p> <p>Report page 6; PDF page 14. Refer to: "ACTION #3: Include outdoor recreation into the K-12 core curriculum incorporating physical education, scientific inquiry, technology, environmental and physical sciences and public service." Introducing youth to outdoor recreation is extremely important. This should include education regarding the positive economic impact of all outdoor recreational activities. If this is to be done in schools as part of their curriculum, then it must be done equally and fairly without preference or prejudice toward any particular outdoor recreational activities. For example, hunting, fishing, and horseback riding should be a part of the introduction to outdoor activity education just as much as mountain biking, hiking, and camping. This does not mean the schools would sponsor actual activities, they would merely be exposing the youth to the fact that the opportunities exist, and they would do this without preference or prejudice. The concept of "Without preference or prejudice" is critical to the success of everything the task force is attempting to do; please keep this in mind.</p> <p>Refer to: "Open More Outdoor Recreation Opportunities" Barriers to outdoor recreational opportunities need to be addressed aggressively or all of the task force efforts will be a moot point. One item in this section should be addressed delicately because it deals with private property rights. Washington is somewhat unique in that it has very large areas of timberland that are privately owned. Much of this land was acquired at a time when public access for hunting and fishing may have been commonplace and welcomed. However, times have changed, but the fact that it is private property has remained the same. The state should carefully, judiciously, and being cognizant and respectful of private property rights, negotiate public access to private property for the purposes of hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities. Special tax statuses/incentives and relief of liability should also be considered as part of any negotiations. Educating the public about being respectful and good stewards of private property will be a significant part of continued access to private property.</p>

Jim Goldsmith - Washingtonians for Wildlife Conservation	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 3)	<p>(Cont'd from Parts 1 & 2 above) Refer to: "ACTION #4: Enact the Marine Tourism legislation." Use tax and excise tax have negative effects on the commodities or services they are applied to. These types of taxes should be reviewed across the board to identify those that are applied to specific goods or services for the sole purpose of generating revenue for the government, but are also having negative effects on the economy.</p> <p>Report page 7; PDF page 15. Refer to: "Grow the Outdoor Recreation Economy"</p> <p>There are several studies and reports available regarding the economic impact of hunting and fishing that include details about retail sales, salaries and wages, jobs, and taxes (federal, state, and local). For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The Benefits to Business from Hunting and Fishing Excise Taxes o Hunting and Fishing: Bright Stars of the American Economy o Economic Impact of Hunting and Target Shooting in America o AMERICA'S SPORTING HERITAGE: Fueling the American Economy o Hunting In America an Economic Force For Conservation o THE HUNTER AND CONSERVATION o The Outdoor Recreation Economy o The Outdoor Recreation Economy : Technical Report on Methods and Findings o Pittman-Robertson Excise Tax – Fast Facts o TARGET SHOOTING IN AMERICA – MILLIONS OF SHOOTERS, BILLIONS OF DOLLARS o 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation o Washington – The Outdoor Recreation Economy (This is an overall report, but good to see) <p>Report page 9; PDF page 17. Refer to the Discover Pass discussion: The Discover Pass is a sore topic for many people. The requirement for passes and permits to access our public lands and waters has become excessive, confusing, and costly. Please take the time to read this report: Funding Public Recreation With the Discover Pass: Policy and Practicality. Please pay close attention to "Section 1 - Goal = Rescind or combine the pass" on page 7. Particular attention should be paid to the distribution of the Discover Pass funds. Hunters and anglers (fishers) are most likely the primary purchasers of the Discover Pass; however, most of them recreate on DNR and WDFW land that that only gets 8% each of the funding. The other 84% goes to State Parks land that is closed to hunting. The Discover Pass was created to support State Parks; however, it is likely that the primary payers are not the primary users of the State Parks. State Parks should be supported by all state residents; the burden should not be imposed on a few outdoor recreation user groups. A list of some passes and permits that burden outdoor recreation user groups is included below for illustration purposes.</p>
Jim Goldsmith - Washingtonians for Wildlife Conservation	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 4)	<p>(Cont'd from above)</p> <p>Washington State Passes/Permits that we are aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discover Pass <input type="checkbox"/> WDFW Land Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Investment Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Sno-Park Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Moorage Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Filming Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Use Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Special Activities Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Off-Road Vehicle Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Trailer Parking Permit <p>Federal Land Access Passes/Permits that we are aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass (Interagency) <input type="checkbox"/> Wilderness Permits <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Northwest Forest Pass or National Forest Day Pass <p>Report page 10; PDF page 18. Refer to: "ACTION #8: Retain current law (RCW 82.46) and repeal the sunset clause, so that the real estate excise tax can continue to be used for local parks maintenance. This is scheduled to sunset December 31, 2016." Excise taxes are typically placed on goods or services to discourage use of those goods or services such as tobacco or alcohol; these items are linked with many illnesses and subsequent costs to society as a whole. In the case of the excise tax on fuel, the funds are supposed to be used to support the transportation infrastructure and also to recognize the pollution of the environment due to the burning of the fuel. In very basic terms, excise taxes will have negative effects on the goods or services to which they are applied. It does not make economic sense to continue with a burdensome tax on the transfer of real estate when the real estate market is severely depressed and in a struggle to recover. The excise tax on real estate transfers should have been repealed long before this; let this tax sunset. As mentioned before: Use tax and excise tax have negative effects on the commodities or services they are applied to. These types of taxes should be reviewed across the board to identify those that are applied to specific goods or services for the sole purpose of generating revenue for the government, but are also having negative effects on the economy.</p> <p>Report page 12; PDF page 20. Refer to: "Opening More Outdoor Recreation Opportunities – Barriers to access" Road closures and decommissioning/destruction of roads that access our public lands is a primary barrier to accessing our public lands. Since this barrier to access is so significant, it should be listed as well. Refer to: "Fees, passes, and tax policy" Please refer to the prior discussion regarding the Discover Pass, and other passes and permits (Report page 9; PDF page 17).</p> <p>Report page 13; PDF page 21. Refer to: "Land Closures" Please refer to the prior discussion regarding access to private property (Report page 6; PDF page 14; "Open More Outdoor Recreation Opportunities").</p>

	Jim Goldsmith - Washingtonians for Wildlife Conservation	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 5)	<p>(Cont'd from above) Report page 14; PDF page 22. Refer to: "Growing the Outdoor Recreation Economy" Add another bullet item: Encourage local government entities such as County Commissions and City Councils to promote outdoor recreation opportunities and rural development versus discouraging development and economic growth due to excessive and oppressive regulations, fees, and taxes.</p> <p>Report page 15; PDF page 23. Refer to: "Table 2: Possible Revenue Sources for State Outdoor Recreation Programs" Please refer to the prior discussions regarding the negative effects of use taxes and excise taxes (Report page 6; PDF page 14; "ACTION #4: Enact the Marine Tourism legislation.") and (Report page 10; PDF page 18; "ACTION #8). In addition to those comments, adding a tax on bottled water for the sole purpose of generating revenue for the government is discriminatory. Any additional tax on fuel will tend to have negative effects on the economy as well. The cost of fuel affects virtually every aspect of our lives. The cost of fuel is already a significant factor in slowing the overall economic recovery.</p> <p>Report page 16; PDF page 16. Refer to: "Single multi-entity access pass" This is an excellent idea. There are far too many passes or permits required depending on which land management agency is involved and which specific piece of land is being accessed. People are confused and end up needing to purchase multiple passes in order to avoid being cited for not having the correct pass. The current situation is not easily navigated and it tends to be expensive. The current situation discourages people from participating in outdoor recreational activities. It should be noted that hunters and anglers (fishers) already contribute significantly to the financial support of the outdoor recreation infrastructure and management of our wildlife resources via their hunting and fishing licenses, tags, stamps, special endorsements, etc. Discounted or free access passes to public lands and waters should be considered for these user groups.</p> <p>Refer to: "Forest road closures" Please refer to the prior discussion regarding road closures (Report page 5; PDF page 13; "Work with state and federal land managers to address barriers to accessing recreation lands ...".)</p>
4-Sep-14	Barb Chamberlain - Task Force Co-Chair	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations	<p>I agree with refining so it doesn't jump back and forth. Knowing of some recommendations I thought they were missing until I found them later. I agree that the executive summary lacks the punch and sense of opportunity and urgency we want to convey. All good thoughts here on the need to emphasize some points more/sooner and balance the language on underserved populations with some "all of WA" usage. Executive summary should emphasize urgency, importance, opportunity, top-level themes. Setting the Context section feels more like that. We promised to include ALL ideas received that were actionable in an appendix; the reference to 40 sounds like the subcommittee semifinalists only. My comments on behalf of Washington Bikes--less formal than usual due to my travel--</p> <p>P. 4 under new office roles--final bullet on transportation and phasing should also mention addressing transportation access to recreation given changing demographics.</p> <p>P. 6 and 12-13--need to address transportation barriers, explicitly including mention of incomplete and unsafe bike access to parks and other recreational opportunities. Also need transit service to include recreation access in its route planning as our seniors stop driving and many young people choose not to start.</p> <p>On p. 12 under the "information" subhead the items mentioned as needing better information should clearly be understood as examples, not an exhaustive list. For example, information on bike trails and access to roads, trailhead closure, etc. is an information need that should be met to increase recreation. The state bike map has not been updated since 2008 and is not available in print form.</p> <p>On p. 13 under "Government Planning" subhead--this section should mention everyday recreation achieved through biking and walking. It can refer to opportunities to leverage Safe Routes to School and expand that idea to talk about Safe Routes to Parks and the Outdoors.</p> <p>P. 11 Not clear whether Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights is proposed for adoption. We would support this. To inspire an outdoor culture, an additional point we should have made sooner: the state could expand funding for the bicycle/pedestrian middle school curriculum funded through WSDOT and OSPI to reach more students. At the current rate of funding it would take 33 years to reach all 295 school districts in the state.</p> <p>P. 14 correction: Olympic Discovery Trail will be nearly 140 miles long when completed.</p> <p>I would add more about highlighting the opportunity to grow recreation through transportation project planning for complete, comfortable connections to and throughout Washington's towns and green places.</p>

4-Sep-14	Washington Recreation and Park Association	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 1)	<p>Thank you for the hundreds of hours of time, attention, and outreach you have devoted these past several months to a labor of love that we share with you: how to better recognize, promote, capitalize on, and integrate the outdoor recreation treasures that make Washington the great state it is. These comments are on behalf of the Washington Recreation and Park Association (WRPA), a 501(c)(3) professional organization with some 1,500 public agency and private sector members dedicated to parks and recreation services.</p> <p>We have reviewed your Draft Report, including your nine recommended near-term actions, and would emphasize the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We very much appreciate the Task Force recognizing the value of local parks and recreation and particularly appreciate and urge that you retain the near-term recommendations that are in keeping with our suggestions to all of you. In particular, that includes Action 1 regarding the establishment of a special Office of Outdoor Recreation; Action 2 regarding funding for the No Child Left Inside program; Action 5 to designate outdoor recreation as a specific industry cluster; Action 7 to properly fund the Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF) program; Action 8 to reauthorize and make permanent the flexible use of local Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) proceeds so that cities and counties, at their discretion, may use these funds toward maintenance and operation of parks and recreation facilities; and Action 9 to preserve funding for current recreation accounts and programs that serve the state so well. • More specifically on Action 1, while we recognize that the Department of Commerce is devoted to economic development and tourism efforts, we would point to a number of current statutes and obligations related to outdoor recreation, overall mission, legal authorities, trails planning, etc. (see RCWs 79A.25.020; 79A.25.005; 79A.35.020; 79A.25.120; 79A.25.170; and 79A.25.820) that make RCO uniquely positioned and aligned to lead a focused Office of Outdoor Recreation. While we are expressing a preference to direct RCO to take this on, we believe the most important outcome is to ensure a strong, ongoing, and high-profile Cabinet-level role for an Office that makes outdoor recreation a key player in economic development, business recruitment and retention, healthy and active communities, promotion of events, and more; • In conjunction with the Office of Outdoor Recreation, we hope that some sort of Citizen Advisory Committee be established to help guide, monitor and make recommendations for the work done by the Office of Outdoor Recreation. Ideally, this advisory committee should be made up of recreation professionals and outdoor recreation users to keep the focus on the development and betterment of outdoor recreation; • We appreciate, and ask you to extend into your final report, the philosophy that your recommendations should assist with funding, accessing, and promoting outdoor recreation at all levels and as a system;
	Washington Recreation and Park Association	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) • We appreciate the longer-term recommendations that focus on assisting smaller towns with planning, designing, building, and marketing efforts, and that speak to expanding the use of Metropolitan Park Districts (MPDs) as a funding mechanism for local parks and recreation. Please retain these as you develop the final report and recommendations;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We appreciate and agree with the recommendations that focus on making the Discover Pass work better, and make it easier to purchase, and integrate it if possible into a one-pass system; • We agree with the emphasis on educating the Legislature and the public on the economic importance of outdoor recreation as a key contributor to our economic well-being. Your report includes the very powerful results of the 2012 Outdoor Industry Association report on how critical outdoor recreation is to this state's diverse economy. We would also suggest you reference the Legislature's direction to RCO to study and better quantify the benefits outdoor recreation brings to the Washington State economy; • We understand that as you fill out and finalize this report, the Task Force intends to integrate a recommendation to remove the artificial 23-cent 'lid' on depositing non-highway-purpose fuel tax proceeds into the dedicated recreational accounts for boating ("Boating Facilities Program"), non-highway off-road vehicles ("NOVA"), and snowmobiling. It makes no sense to have 14.5 cents of the 37.5 cents in non-highway fuel tax proceeds siphoned into the Motor Vehicle Fund. We ask you to make this 'fix it' recommendation a prominent one. • We note that you have listed a series of sustainable funding options for State Parks and other resource agencies, and would ask that you emphasize with the Governor and the Legislature the need to responsibly fund these agencies, so that a top-flight State Parks system does not deteriorate; • Finally, while we appreciate the emphasis in your report on serving minority and diverse populations, we also ask that the state not overlook the role outdoor recreation needs to play in serving a rapidly-growing 'Baby Boomer' population. Our Members point out that the 65 and older segment of the U.S. population exceeded 40 million in the 2010 Census and grew faster than the U.S. population as a whole. Providing a full spectrum of parks and recreation and overall outdoor recreation services to this population segment will be more and more critical in coming years. <p>Again, please accept our thanks and appreciation for your work and time these last several months. We ask that you retain Actions 1, 2, 7, 8, and 9 that are an outgrowth of many of our recommendations; we ask that you add the "fix the 23-cent lid" item; we ask that you ensure a strong role for RCO and outdoor recreation in any recommended "Office of Outdoor Recreation"; we ask for a strong statement on sustainably funding State Parks; and we ask that you incorporate language on the outdoor recreation economic benefits study and on the important role of serving the 65-and-over population going forward.</p>

4-Sep-14	John Gifford - Pacific Northwest Ski Areas Association	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 1)	<p>The Pacific Northwest Ski Areas Association (PNSAA) is a non-profit trade association representing the interests of ski and snowboard facilities in Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Northern California and Alaska. The Association's 35 member ski areas –mostly recreation providers operating on state and federally managed land –collectively host an average 5.5 million visits annually.</p> <p>On behalf of the PNSAA Board of Directors, I write to provide comment on the draft report containing your recommendations to Governor Inslee. First of all I want to recognize and express appreciation to all of you for the work you have done and contribution of time for public hearings related to the development of the report. Thank you for your contribution to this very important initiative. You are to be commended for distilling a wide diversity of comments and interests into nine near-term actions and 40 other viable actions.</p> <p>PNSAA is in general agreement with all the actions as presented in the document, in particular those that support the growth and economic benefits of outdoor recreation in the state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of an office to serve as the state's cross-agency leader on outdoor recreation. • Include outdoor recreation into the K-12 core curriculum. • Designation of outdoor recreation as a specific industry cluster. • Increase and better coordinate the promotion of Washington's many, diverse recreation opportunities. <p>With all due respect to the task force's work and the draft recommendations made in the report, there are several items which weren't addressed that I feel should be.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access to all outdoor recreation opportunities within the state. While there is ample discussion addressing the issues with the Discover Pass used for accessing State Parks, there is little discussion regarding improvements in gateway access to other recreational locations. This includes highway conditions and traffic issues, environmentally friendly multimodal transportation programs and creative ways to get youth and underprivileged, disadvantaged individuals into the outdoors. 2. Coordination and streamline the environmental analysis process between governmental agencies (within the state government and with other governmental bodies such as county, federal and tribal) for proposed actions on public land under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). Where possible eliminate the redundancies requested by the varying agencies and improve timeliness of the review process so business can better react to changing market dynamics and consumer needs.
	John Gifford - Pacific Northwest Ski Areas Association	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) 3. Opportunities for private-public partnerships in providing outdoor recreation opportunities for the public and growing the sector as an economic engine. With the number of private businesses in the state involved in providing outdoor recreation activities or manufacturing/selling related merchandise this seems to be a missed opportunity to form synergetic relationships that achieve a common goal –"develop Washington's outdoor recreation assets and state programs to increase outdoor recreation activities as well as promote the jobs and businesses associated with outdoor recreation."</p> <p>4. Recognition that Washington State offers year-round outdoor recreation that rivals other regions in the United States and Canada. While there are substantial examples and references regarding spring, summer and fall outdoor activities and parks in the recommendations, scant mention of winter sports is referenced. In fact, only a couple of mentions of motorized winter sports (snowmobile) and one mention of snowshoeing were noted, but nowhere was alpine downhill skiing/snowboarding or cross-country skiing mentioned. Non-motorized Winter sports are a big part of the state recreation offering, particularly important because it is at a time of year when other recreational pursuits aren't as readily participated in because of weather. With more than 2.2 million visits annually at 19 developed, managed winter recreation facilities generating a total annual economic output of \$727 million annually, this seems a significant oversight not to at least be mentioned. In fact, according to the Washington State Recreation and Conservation, Outdoor Recreation in Washington SCORP issued May 2013: 31% of Washington residents participate in Snow & Ice Recreation Category. Participation in category activities include: Skiing 10%, Snowboarding 7%, Snowshoeing 7% and Cross Country Skiing 5%. 2.3% of the residents indicated skiing as a recreation activity which they would like to do more of in Washington. Given the scope of participation in a category of outdoor recreation at a time of the year when other outdoor recreation activities are limited, for winter sports not to be mentioned in the recommendations is an unfortunate oversight.</p> <p>Again, the level of work, time and thought that has been put into the Task Force's draft report is evident and very much appreciated. PNSAA is in general agreement with the recommend actions. The comments presented in this letter are intended to further strengthen the recommendations and illustrate the year-round availability of outdoor recreation activities in Washington State with the inclusion of winter sports. Thank you for taking the time to fully consider the comments provided. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions or desire further clarification.</p>

4-Sep-14	Gary Berndt - Kittitas County Commissioner	Lack of County Commissioner representation on Task Force	<p>I have just completed a short review of this report and generally I am able to be supportive of many areas of this Draft. As a Kittitas County Commissioner whose County enjoys I-90 access to our County and its 72% public lands where 4 seasons outdoor recreation is a key industry for us, I feel it's important to note what seems to be a process flaw in this report. There was no County Commissioner representation on this Task Force and state agencies do not report or have an accountability to the businesses that depend on the very thrust of this report. It seems significant that Counties need to be invited to participate. All of the impacts are first felt at the local level. The East slope Cascade Counties are heavily dependent on the access to public lands and public waters, but we need to have some input locally rather than simply being subjected to decisions of others.</p> <p>I felt the need to initiate a County committee on public access to public lands to work with public agencies to review access and also purchase of private lands. Our committee meets monthly to review with agencies planned actions and activities and recommends to the full Board of Commissioners any positions that are of interest or concern to the County. This includes the current Naneum to Columbia Planning by DNR and WDFW, the Teanaway Community Forest plan to be completed next year, and projects proposed by the Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest. There is also a small Parks and Recreation District that struggles to have finances as they work to develop "sno" parks and facilitate easements for trail development.</p> <p>I am very happy to see the position that recreation is a key industry elevated to statewide significance and I appreciate very much the concept to remove barriers to access. The multi agency approach to permits is a great concept as well.</p> <p>There are approximately 5 million people who live "just a pass away" from all the sun, 4 seasons, and public lands, but a key element for long term success will be the tie between public lands and waterways to communities and private lands. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this important endeavor.</p>
4-Sep-14	Louise Stanton-Masten - Task Force member	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 1)	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide my comments on the Draft Report. It has been a privilege to serve as a member of the Governor's Task Force, joining with our diverse group of individuals who represent the many aspects of the outdoor recreation industry, state agencies and elected officials.</p> <p>As a participant in the Parks and Outdoors Recreation Task Force I am concerned that the Task Force has moved forward to recommend initiatives that include attracting travelers while our state does not have an approved funding model for a statewide tourism effort. In my short tenure with the Washington Tourism Alliance I am convinced that an integrated tourism program is the only long-term solution, and believe that the Task Force should support the Washington Tourism Alliance's efforts to establish sustainable funding for tourism marketing and promotion.</p> <p>I have had the opportunity to travel throughout Washington and to meet with tourism industry businesses, organizations and community leaders. I believe that the ability to leverage resources will enable all tourism business sectors to prosper. Addressing just the marketing of outdoor recreation and our state parks will not go far enough on its own.</p> <p>The Washington Tourism Alliance is an organization tasked with maintaining some of the state's tourism assets following the closure of the state tourism office in 2011. It is committed to establishing a long-term, sustainable tourism funding model. Washington State Parks and the outdoor recreation industry should be poised to support and participate in such a statewide tourism effort.</p> <p>In reviewing the Draft Report, I direct my comments to the recommendations for Action # 1: "Establish an office to serve as the state's cross-agency leader on outdoor recreation." Two of the initiatives that are identified in this action item have specific relationship to the work of the Washington Tourism Alliance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Increase and better coordinate the promotion of Washington's diverse outdoor recreation opportunities to attract more travelers from out of the country, across the nation and within Washington, and to show that our amazing quality-of-life is a great reason to build businesses and families here." • "Work with tourism organizations to upgrade tourism marketing to more explicitly feature outdoor recreation opportunities similar to what is done in Utah." <p>As the state looks to implement these recommendations it will be critical to coordinate outdoor recreation promotion with the statewide tourism marketing of the Washington Tourism Alliance. Thus, I am suggesting that the final report include specific reference to the Washington Tourism Alliance, with a recommendation that the state work in a coordinated manner with the Washington Tourism Alliance to promote outdoor recreation and support overall tourism marketing programs.</p>
	Louise Stanton-Masten - Task Force member	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) I encourage on on-going dialogue with the Washington Tourism Alliance as the state moves forward with the recommendations of the Task Force. While the Washington Tourism Alliance Board of Directors has not formally weighed in on the Task Force recommendations, I believe that it will be critical to engage individual members of the Task Force as well as industry representatives and the various state agencies that have a role in the outdoor recreation industry to support the Washington Tourism Alliance.</p> <p>In summary, I thank you for all of the work and dedication that has gone into the Task Force recommendations. I ask that you specifically include the Washington Tourism Alliance in the final report recommendations. By collaborating with the Washington Tourism Alliance, the state can leverage resources to most effectively market outdoor recreation, drawing residents and visitors to take advantage of these attractions.</p>

4-Sep-14	Rudy Classen - citizen	Funding and public comment process	<p>From what I could determine this document is very vague and leaves much to be determined at a later day which is very troubling. The lack of time to respond is very troubling also. I would hope that the state funding that has been decreased during the past decade of even longer would be restored which end the need for the Discovery Pass. Increasing the cost of this pass will only decrease the number of passes sold and will decrease the number of folks enjoying our great outdoors which is the opposite of your stated goals.</p>
4-Sep-14	Linda & Randy Driscoll - Premier Polaris dealership	ATV (Part 1)	<p>Premier Polaris is the largest-stocking Polaris dealership in Washington state, representing approximately 10,000 ORV (off-road vehicle) enthusiasts that are interested in preserving access to our public lands, increasing recreation-based revenue for Washington's rural communities, and fostering a new culture of responsible ORV riding. We are members of the Sky Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Port-to-Pass Recreational Innovation Zone and a statewide collaborative that led to the passage of ESHB 1632 (regulating the use of off-road vehicles) in 2013 and HB 2151 (the Washington State Trails Act) in 2014. We would like to offer the following comments re: the Governor's Parks & Outdoor Recreation Task Force Draft Report.</p> <p>1. We support the Task Force's recognition that outdoor recreation is a major contributor to Washington's economy. Nationally, consumers spend \$646 billion annually in outdoor recreation – nearly double what they spend on pharmaceuticals, motor vehicles/parts, gasoline/other fuels, or household utilities.* Recreation-based revenue is especially important for Washington's rural communities. * Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Personal Consumption Expenditures by Type of Product, based on available 2010 data. Motorized recreation generates tremendous revenue for states with pro-motor policies and OHV trail systems, e.g. Arizona = \$4.25 Billion; Tennessee = \$3.43 Billion, Colorado = \$1.028 Billion. Source: www.nohvcc.org/Tools/Library/ItemsOfInterest/EconomicImpact.aspx</p> <p>2. Please include motorized outdoor recreation. Washington's motorized community has paid to play for decades. In the 1970s, the motorized community voluntarily agreed to register their vehicles with the funds going to dedicated accounts (NOVA, Snow) for motorized trail development, maintenance and grooming. Despite this, motorized access in Washington state has dwindled to nearly nothing:</p> <p>a. Washington state had 300 OHV/ORV recreation sites in the '70s; today there are fewer than a dozen OHV areas.</p> <p>b. Approximately 70% of Washington's land is managed by state or federal agencies, yet Washington's National Forests and State Parks have extremely restricted motorized OHV/ORV access.</p> <p>Not everyone is physically able to climb mountains or hike 30 miles in a day; motorized recreation allows access for America's aging baby boomers and wounded warriors. In fact, under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II, the Department of Justice (DOJ) has ruled that individuals with mobility disabilities are allowed to use "other power-driven mobility devices" (OPDMD) on trails on state or local government lands.</p> <p>3. We support the Discover Pass as a way to fund recreational lands, and agree with the Task Force's recommendation that a single pass good for all state and federal recreation parking areas would reduce or eliminate confusion about what pass is needed for the various recreation landscapes.</p>
	Linda & Randy Driscoll - Premier Polaris dealership	ATV (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) 4. We ask the Task Force to remove the retention of a portion of the NOVA, snowmobile and boat gas tax as a possible revenue source for state outdoor recreation programs. These are dedicated accounts, voluntarily given for motorized and multi-use trail development, maintenance and grooming. Diverting funds to programs without motorized access will break faith with the motorized community.</p> <p>5. We support the Task Force's recommendation for more coordination between local, state and federal land managers in regard to road closures and access to public lands, and appeal to the Task Force for help coordinating with the Pacific Northwest Region (Region 6) of the US Forest Service re: implementation of ESHB 1632. ESHB 1632 created a new class of vehicle – a wheeled all-terrain vehicle (WATV) – and expanded the ability of WATV drivers to drive on Washington state roads with speed limits under 35mph.</p> <p>a. The bill's intent was to allow WATVs on all roads in Washington's State and National Forests (as is currently allowed in neighboring states) in order to simulate recreation-based revenue and to increase quality of life. The bill's language was modeled after legislation from neighboring states. Last fall we learned that Region 6 of the USFS was taking a policy position that WATVs are not allowed in national forests in our state, citing 36 CFR, parts 212.50 re: Road System Management.</p> <p>b. § 212.52 outlines a public involvement process for designating National Forest System roads and trails for motorized vehicles.</p> <p>c. § 212.53 requires the USFS to "coordinate with State, county and other local government entities...when designating National Forest System roads, National Forest System trails and areas on National Forest System lands."</p> <p>d. We believe that the public involvement process as outlined in § 212.52 is appropriate for non-modified ATVs and UTVs, but that it is not necessary for WATVs because they are a new class of vehicle, modified and licensed for on-road use.</p>
4-Sep-14	Stephen Streufert - NatureBridge, Olympic National Park	Support funding for No Child Left Inside	<p>Congratulations on a fine report, detailing important ideas and suggestions for inspiring a culture of outdoor recreation in Washington State. Of special note, I'm strongly in favor of Action #2 that supports funding for the No Child Left Inside grant program. Having seen the strong impact that this program had in 2007-2008, I'm confident in the value of funding that supports programs that connect children to positive outdoor experiences, especially those that link out-of-class learning with in-class content.</p>

4-Sep-14	Martinique Grigg - The Mountaineers	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 1)	<p>The Mountaineers thanks all the members of the Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation and the Recreation and Conservation Office for engaging the public, compiling recommendations, and completing the draft report. This is no easy task to take on in such a short timeline. We would like to reiterate the points we supported in the letter as part of Outdoor Alliance Washington, and add our support of the points outlined in the Federal Lands section.</p> <p>The mission of The Mountaineers is to enrich the community by helping people explore, conserve, learn about and enjoy the lands and waters of the Pacific Northwest and beyond. Formed in 1906, we have been getting people of all ages outside safely and responsibly for over 100 years. We are passionate about building a community of people who are knowledgeable and care about the outdoors. We work to preserve the wild backcountry where we play for many generations to come. From the Outdoor Alliance Washington comments:</p> <p>We would like to further acknowledge our support for the following Task Force recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing an office to serve as the state's cross-agency leader on outdoor recreation • Establishing a single multi-entity pass to recreate on state and federal lands in Washington • Addressing the issue of permitting for commercial users and nonprofit organizations • Outlining of alternative revenue sources for outdoor recreation programs • Continuing to fund and protect current outdoor recreation grant programs <p>We recognize that the report can only summarize the diverse range of recommendations. However, we would like to see further information or greater acknowledgement of the following topics:</p> <p>Land Closures (pg 13): While this section acknowledges closures on some public lands, the recommendations only address private lands. Incentives, such as public-private partnerships on state lands to support stewardship and access, can be a viable solution on public lands as well. This topic is addressed in part on federal lands regarding road closures, but similar road closures that hinder recreational access also exist on state lands. Regarding incentives for private landowners, while some nominal fees for allowing access on private lands may be appropriate, the state's recreational use statute is designed to encourage free public access on private land. Providing the same level of liability protection for landowners that charge fees may undermine this purpose.</p> <p>Government Planning (pg 13): Planning is a key component of managing public lands and recreation. We ask that the Task Force recommend that planners also partner with nonprofit organizations. Collectively, our organizations bring decades of experience in planning, recreational improvements, and user education as well as significant outreach support to Washington's growing human-powered recreational base.</p>
	Martinique Grigg - The Mountaineers	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) Seek greater opportunities for partnerships with nonprofit organizations to leverage outdoor recreation resources: We recommend that the Task Force highlight the importance of strengthening partnerships with outdoor recreation organizations. Outdoor Alliance Washington's organizations provide substantial support to state land agencies that manage recreational opportunities. The possibility exists to increase these partnerships. For example, the broad priority near-term actions under "Inspire an Outdoor Recreation Culture," (pg 11) "Sustainable Our Outdoor Recreation Assets" (pg 7) could include recommendations to work with nonprofit organizations who are already providing outdoor recreation content (such as online hiking, biking, climbing and kayaking information) and programs (such as trail maintenance and youth engagement in the outdoors) that get people and kids outside. Partnering with nonprofit organizations can leverage limited resources and minimize duplicative efforts statewide.</p> <p>Further, The Mountaineers expresses our support of the three main suggestions made in the Federal Lands section of the draft report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We share concern for how road closures on federal land not only affect recreational access, but can also affect the recreation economies of gateway communities. We have been involved in supporting the recreation economy of Darrington, as well as being involved in the Big Tent coalition, as these issues are important to our organization. • Even the most in-tune recreationists are often confused by what pass is needed for outdoor recreation areas. Coordination with all land managers in Washington to create a single pass would improve people's outdoor experiences as well as encourage more people to get outside. • As this report makes clear, the outdoors is a foundation of our state. Access, or lack thereof, to get folks outside negatively affects the outdoor experience here. We enthusiastically support the Task Force's recommendations around permitting on Forest Service lands here in Washington State. <p>Lastly, we would like to enthusiastically support the No Child Left Inside grant program and outdoor recreation as part of Washington's K-12 core curriculum, as we undertake significant youth programming and work in partnership with a lot of Seattle schools. Thank you for considering our second round of input and we sincerely appreciate your leadership in transforming Washington's outdoor recreational assets and state programs.</p>

4-Sep-14	Outdoor Alliance Washington (via Katherine Hollis)	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 1)	<p>The Access Fund, American Alpine Club, American Whitewater, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, The Mountaineers, Washington Climbers Coalition and Washington Trails Association - all human-powered recreation organizations in Washington State - come together as a coalition on issues relating to recreation, access and conservation. As the group Outdoor Alliance Washington, we represent more than 34,000 members who recreate on public lands.</p> <p>We thank all the members of the Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation and the Recreation and Conservation Office for engaging the public, compiling recommendations, and completing the draft report. This is no easy task to take on in such a short timeline. We would like to further acknowledge our support for the following Task Force recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing an office to serve as the state's cross-agency leader on outdoor recreation • Establishing a single multi-entity pass to recreate on state and federal lands in Washington • Addressing the issue of permitting for commercial users and nonprofit organizations – we enthusiastically support the recommendations on Forest Service permitting for commercial and nonprofit organizations • Outlining of alternative revenue sources for outdoor recreation programs • Continuing to fund and protect current outdoor recreation grant programs <p>We recognize that the report can only summarize the diverse range of recommendations. However, we would like to see further information or greater acknowledgement of the following topics:</p> <p>Seek greater opportunities for partnerships with nonprofit organizations to leverage outdoor recreation resources: We recommend that the Task Force highlight the importance of strengthening partnerships with outdoor recreation organizations. Outdoor Alliance Washington's organizations provide substantial support to state land agencies that manage recreational opportunities. The possibility exists to strengthen these partnerships. For example, the broad priority near-term actions under "Inspire an Outdoor Recreation Culture," (pg 11) "Sustainable Our Outdoor Recreation Assets" (pg 7) could include recommendations to work with nonprofit organizations who are already providing outdoor recreation content (such as online hiking, biking, climbing and kayaking information) and programs (such as trail maintenance and youth engagement in the outdoors) that get people and kids outside. The section on "Government Planning" (pg 13) should also include nonprofit organizations as a critical partner for state planning efforts. Collectively, our organizations bring significant outreach support to Washington's growing human-powered recreational base. Partnering with nonprofit organizations can leverage limited resources and minimize duplicative efforts statewide.</p>
	Outdoor Alliance Washington (via Katherine Hollis)	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) Land Closures (pg 13): While this section acknowledges closures on some public lands, the recommendations only address private lands. Incentives, such as public-private partnerships on state lands to support stewardship and access, can be a viable solution on public lands as well. This topic is addressed in part on federal lands regarding road closures, but similar road closures that hinder recreational access also exist on state lands. Regarding incentives for private landowners, while some nominal fees for allowing access on private lands may be appropriate, the state's recreational use statute is designed to encourage free public access on private land. Providing the same level of liability protection for landowners that charge fees may undermine this purpose and we suggest that the state exercise caution before considering any changes to the recreational use statute.</p> <p>Forest Road Closures: Our organizations have been key partners with the US Forest Service to maintain road access to critical recreational resources and trailheads through the Sustainable Roads Analysis and various road projects. We agree with the point expressed in the draft report, however, we recognize that some roads that are not critical for recreational access may have a greater community benefit if closed or converted in a roads-to-trails conversion. We recommend that the Task Force acknowledge these alternatives while still expressing significant support to keep important recreational access roads on federal land open.</p> <p>Thank you for considering our second round of input and we sincerely appreciate your leadership in transforming Washington's outdoor recreational assets and state programs.</p>

4-Sep-14	Rodger Schmitt - Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 1)	<p>I am writing in my capacity as the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission representative to the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Task Force. This letter is to provide comments on the draft Task Force Report issued on August 26. Since our Commission meets every two months, it is not possible in this short review period to develop an official position of the Commission. However, I have consulted with our Director and communicated earlier drafts of this letter to fellow commissioners. I am confident that my thoughts are reflective of many of the Commissioner's perspectives and those of agency staff. Please consider this letter to be the comments of the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission as an agency.</p> <p>First, we appreciate the time and energy spent by Task Force members engaged in this important initiative. Valuable information and public input have been shared, and we believe that the Task Force has what it needs to deliver a meaningful report to the Governor.</p> <p>It is also Parks opinion that the draft report significantly misses the mark as charged by the Governor in his executive order. Because of this, State Parks has prepared a proposed report rewrite which we feel meets the Governor's intent. The rewrite accompanies this letter and is principally focused on those aspects which directly affect State Parks. We ask that the Task Force and RCO staff carefully consider Parks' approach to the report and factor it in with any decision about the Public Draft Report and the need for modification before it is sent in final form to the Governor on September 19.</p> <p>In Governor Inslee's "Welcome Letter to the Task Force," the very first thing he asked the Task Force to focus on was funding for State Parks:</p> <p>Help us come up with stable funding ideas for our beloved state parks. They've had a rocky few years, and none of us want to see parks close. We need to figure out how to provide a stable funding base so they can stay open and host the very families we want to get outside.</p> <p>While there are worthwhile proposals in the draft report, one of the core purposes of the Task Force remains unfulfilled – recommending healthy, dedicated and sustainable funding for State Parks.</p> <p>In the hopes of strengthening the report prior to its finalization, Parks will be submitting changes for your consideration in a separate document. The new language recommendations address the following concerns and preferences:</p>
	Rodger Schmitt - Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) 1. Near-Term Action #1 Establish an office to serve as the state's cross-agency leader on outdoor recreation. (p. 5). Parks recommends that the Governor work closely with the two existing state agencies (State Parks and Recreation Commission and the Recreation and Conservation Office) that have outdoor recreation as a core purpose, rather than create a third outdoor recreation office. Most functions of the new office proposed in the Task Force draft report can be distributed to existing agencies. Coordination functions are central to RCO, as it is responsible for preparing the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and assigned to State Parks by statute, which has responsibility to "coordinate the parks and recreation functions of the various state departments, and cooperate with state and federal agencies in the promotion of parks and recreation opportunities (79a.05.055(3) RCW). Integrating tourism, economic development and outdoor recreation can better be served by re-invigorating a state tourism function within the State Department of Commerce and tasking it with integrating outdoor recreation into the core economic development strategy of the state.</p> <p>2. Near-Term Action #2 Provide funding for the No Child Left Inside (NCLI) grant program. (p. 6). Parks is supportive of funding for the NCLI program, which under statute is the responsibility of State Parks to administer. The document should make clear that this funding is in addition to the agency's first priority - its core budget providing a healthy and sustainable level of parks operations.</p> <p>3. Near-Term Action #5 Designate "outdoor recreation" as a specific industry cluster within Washington's economic development strategy. (p. 8). Parks is supportive of this objective. State Parks earlier recommended re-invigorating a state tourism function within the Department of Commerce and directing it by statute to promote outdoor recreation as a core part of its mission. We believe this is an effective strategy for achieving the objective stated in this action item.</p> <p>4. Near-Term Action #6 Conduct an assessment of the current operations of Washington State Parks, and the Departments of Natural Resources and Fish and Wildlife to determine what parts are essential, important or value added so that a re-balancing of the public investment can be addressed. (p. 10). Parks recommends deleting this action item and replacing it with clear actions on funding for State Parks and other state recreation providers and also adding solid information about the most controversial funding source – the Discover Pass. There are four issues which repeatedly came up during the Task Force process:</p> <p>a) What is a healthy and sustainable level of support for State Parks and how far off is existing funding from that level?</p> <p>b) What has been the effect of the Discover Pass in limiting public access?</p> <p>c) What has been the effectiveness of the Discover Pass in raising adequate funds for state recreation providers?</p> <p>d) What are options for generating sufficient revenues to support state agency programs?</p>

	Rodger Schmitt - Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 3)	<p>(Cont'd from Parts 1 & 2 above) The Task Force has received testimony on all those items and has sufficient information to make declarative determinations. Parks is strongly concerned that if the Task Force calls for such a "re-balancing" study, it may be used as a justification for not acting immediately to shore up State Parks funding. State Parks has been through numerous assessments already over the past several years, and this work already has been submitted to the Task Force. Specifically, the agency's 2012 State of State Parks report and the Commission-adopted Transformation Strategy identify key elements and dynamics of providing recreation. The agency's new Commission-approved "Strategic Plan" addresses agency future direction. The Governor realizes that there is a crisis in funding for State Parks. He has called for bold action and created the Task Force to show the way. Parks urges the Task Force to do just that.</p> <p>There was one fundamental choice/issue that came up during many Task Force deliberations – whether to continue with the Discover Pass. This does not need a study, for the basic facts are clear and knowable now. We propose language to deal with that question head-on in the accompanying document. The report also has an opportunity – even a responsibility – to correct many of the public's misperceptions of how the Discover Pass Program operates among the three natural resources agencies. Parks proposes clarifying language in the report to do that as well.</p> <p>5. Fees, passes, and tax policy (page 12). Parks recommends specific changes to the Discover Pass program. These recommendations address concerns expressed in public testimony and bolster initiatives currently under way by the three Discover Pass agencies, including production of a new, sturdier product, enhanced marketing and ongoing customer service improvements.</p> <p>6. Need for more public recreation land (page 13). The history of the State Parks system is not solely acquisition from a "need" basis; rather it has also been a series of actions based on "opportunities" realized by far-sighted people. Local governments also operate from a need basis - in order to meet demands from increased population - and an opportunity basis in ensuring future resources for the public. We suggest language that emphasizes the thoughtful assessment of needs and the importance of taking advantage of those special opportunities when they arise.</p> <p>7. Sustain Our Outdoor Recreation Assets (page 14). Parks recommends a significant re-write:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A descriptive statement about the history of State Parks funding and its precipitous drop in public tax support. • A determined call for healthy and sustainable funding for State Parks and other state recreation lands. • A description and discussion of the "gap" between existing funding and healthy and sustainable funding. • A discussion/section about the Discover Pass. In addition to the existing statements in the report about negative public perception of the pass – there should be factual descriptions of the value of the pass in terms of revenues generated and services provided and its relative standing compared to other states. • A set of revenue options – much like the current draft, but structured in a way that provides clearer policy choices along with key recommended approaches by the Task Force.
	Rodger Schmitt - Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 4)	<p>(Cont'd from above) 8. Recommendations for Federal Lands. The report correctly points out that the State has little authority to direct changes in federal land management. There are several items in the recommendations which may not be accurate. Further, because federal land management is outside the State's sphere of control, emphasizing this issue by giving it its own section in the report undermines the Governor's stated focus for the Task Force. We recommend deleting the section entirely.</p> <p>Parks again thanks all the Task Force members for their civic contribution and effort to shine a light on this important public issue. Parks further asks that Task Force staff distribute our comments and language proposals to all Task Force members so that they can evaluate them as they consider their own comments on the public draft report. Finally, Parks asks that Task Force members have an opportunity to vote on incorporation of our suggestions into the final report.</p>
4-Sep-14	Jim King - Citizens for Parks and Recreation	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations	<p>We would endorse wholeheartedly the comments and suggested edits by State Parks. In addition, we strongly urge that front and center in the report be a strong and specific recommendation for sufficient and stable operating budget funding for state outdoor recreation programs- a need that has remained unmet for over a quarter century of talk about doing something about it.</p> <p>We would caution against reliance on a fictional method of analyzing who should pay, as is included in the draft. The Fort Worden methodology has never actually been implemented, and Fort Worden is and remains heavily subsidized- even its food services do not pay their way. The only practical way to evaluate revenue needs is to maximize revenues from non-recreational uses, to achieve reasonable return from recreational uses, and receive the remaining need from general tax revenues (including funds dedicated to outdoor recreation programs). The task force should respect the extensive work already done by the agencies on operating needs and funding gaps. Further analysis will just lead to further delay in needed action, while gaining little.</p> <p>In reviewing the revenue options listed in the draft report, we would strongly caution against any consideration of theft from dedicated funds. Outdoor recreation user groups have consistently and strongly opposed such thefts, and listing them as options could discredit the report in the eyes of many. Most deserving of consideration would be a combination of the watercraft excise tax, RV excise tax, and sales tax on bottled water. Whatever funding sources are recommended, they should be sufficient to fund all of the task force's proposals, which should be more fully evaluated as to cost and recommended spending levels.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the time constraints of a single week to comment, wrapped around the Labor Day weekend, has precluded more in-depth comment.</p>

4-Sep-14	Glenn Glover - Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 1)	<p>Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance is Washington State's largest mountain bike organization with over 10,000 followers dedicated to trail maintenance, advocacy, education, and recreation. We are also an important partner with public land managers across the state, contributing over 10,000 hours of volunteer labor in the past year. On behalf of Evergreen I would like to thank the Task Force members for their hard work in generating this draft report under significant time pressure. Our organization agrees with many of the findings and recommendations, however we would like to offer the recommendations listed below.</p> <p>SETTING THE CONTEXT</p> <p>The importance of acting now identifies three qualities of Washington at risk if action is not taken: Healthier People, Strong Communities, Thriving Economy.</p> <p>Recommendation: Consider explicitly identifying a fourth critical quality at risk which is Stewardship and Conservation. Many studies have shown, including recently by the The Nature Conservancy, that the value that citizens hold for their natural public lands is directly related to their ability to experience these lands. Outdoor recreation creates that connection with nature and is the path to support for state and federal efforts to protect and conserve our environment for the future of all residents. If outdoor recreation isn't sustained then every indication is that the natural environment will not survive in any way we will recognize.</p> <p>LEAD THE WAY TO OUTDOOR RECREATION</p> <p>Other Western States are aggressively pursuing the crown of "recreation" state with all the benefits that generates. Through funding, developing world-class recreation assets, tourism, and marketing these states are attempting to maximize the economic and quality of life benefits that recreation provides. If the results are not matched in Washington the impact will be to reduce the attractiveness of our state to out-of-state tourism, new businesses, and relocating employees.</p> <p>Recommendation: The recommended action item to create an integrated, cross agency, recreation office with a mandate to support and grow recreation is an important step. It must be formed in a way that facilitates stakeholder work with agencies rather than created an additional layer of bureaucracy which could act as a barrier to actual results.</p> <p>INSPIRE AN OUTDOOR RECREATION CULTURE</p> <p>As is clear from our initial statement, we believe that a recreation culture underpins all other elements of recreation and conservation. Without the support of the citizens there is no hope for recreation or conservation.</p>
	Glenn Glover - Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) Recommendation: While both good, the action items don't go far enough. While the focus on youth is understandable, there are tremendous opportunities to nurture a recreation and stewardship culture at all ages. We recommend assessing grant and other funding opportunities that will support getting more people, regardless of age, in active outdoor recreation. Additionally, look at the changing demographics of recreation and ensure that funding aligns with the ways that people are willing to recreate now - shorter periods of time in locations closer to home than ever before. We must lower the barriers that have been reducing participation in outdoor recreation for decades. Simply providing children with short exposures to nature doesn't improve the accessibility of recreation for their families.</p> <p>OPEN MORE OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p>We believe this is the foundation upon which all other aspects of outdoor recreation are built. Without the necessary number, quality, diversity, and accessibility of recreation opportunities all other efforts and recommendations are destined to fall short in the long run.</p> <p>It is disappointing that the only short-term objective coming from this is support for legislation to revamp the taxation of charter or out of state business owned boats, so called "super yachts". While this may well be an appropriate change it is certainly not "recreation" that is relevant to most Washingtonians and is not the most pressing issue limiting recreation opportunities.</p> <p>One long term recommendation in the draft includes working with private land owners to create incentives for allowing public use "including modifying the state recreation immunity statute". We are strongly opposed to continual efforts to adjust the recreation immunity statute for the interests of specific industries or small groups of landowners. The statute was envisioned and created to encourage landowners, public and private, to allow recreational access at no fee and the incentive was that those landowners would benefit from a restricted application of liability. Allowing immunity while charging a fee will encourage landowners to create access permits even while they aren't actually creating the recreational amenity (such as trails) but simply providing access for public use. Significant case law shows that the recreational immunity statute is working as intended and should be left unchanged.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As identified in the WA State Parks Transformation Strategy, leverage the private arena through forming "strategic partnerships with other agencies, tribes, and non-profits" and promoting "meaningful opportunities for volunteers". Numerous organizations like ours are capable and ready to partner with state agencies to support them in creating recreation opportunities. • Prioritize for funding recreation facilities that provide access which is close to population centers and meets the growing demand for more diverse types of recreation including mountain biking. • Form a statewide advisory committee of stakeholders representing primary agency and outdoor recreation groups to advise and support on policy issues.

Glenn Glover - Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 3)	<p>(OPEN MORE OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES Recommendations cont'd from above) • Pursue methods of streamlining the purchase and display of Discover Pass and investigate the possibility of creating a pass which integrates the Discover and the Federal NW Forest Pass.</p> <p>• Landowners know from experience that allowing appropriate public recreation actually reduces undesirable activities such as dumping, unregulated motorized use, human started fires, and drug use. Focus on these know benefits and the strength of the existing recreational immunity statute when discussing access issues with private land owners.</p> <p>GROW THE OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY</p> <p>Growth in the economic benefit of recreation to Washington can come from providing information, education, and marketing of recreation opportunities to residents of our state as well as residents of other states and countries. This, however, is significantly dependent on having the appropriate recreation opportunities to market and much less on the quality of marketing service.</p> <p>Recommendation: Rather than focusing on just promoting "what we have" a conscious process should be undertaken to assess what the state wants the recreation economy to become. Designating outdoor recreation as a distinct industry is a necessary first step for tracking economic impact. Additional steps should include: how to support rural, extraction-based, towns in developing new recreation opportunities aimed at becoming recreation destinations, creating recreation assets specifically aimed to encourage industry businesses to locate in Washington, nurturing outdoor recreation adventure tourism in the state, and others.</p> <p>SUSTAIN OUR OUTDOOR RECREATION ASSETS</p> <p>We strongly support the Task Force position that providing outdoor recreation is an essential government service. The many financial and social benefits that recreation creates far outweigh the small costs involved. While we also support the concept being tested of "pay for benefit" it must be done carefully. Taken too far it can become strictly a "pay to play" system which results in tremendous waste through administrative costs, a loss of recreation access for all but the wealthiest, and reduced public support for public land agencies. Limited funding enhancement methods such as the Discover Pass may not be popular, and they have administrative overhead which is fairly expensive as a percentage of dollars raised, but they have been critical in at least reducing the negative effects of draconian cuts to agencies for recreation.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>• The state agencies should reassess what have become accepted costs of creating and maintaining recreation assets, including trails. There is a need to push for cost reductions in the methods for designing, constructing, and maintaining these facilities - ensuring that the limited funds are used as cost effectively as possible to create/maintain assets while ensuring environmental regulations are satisfied. The enacted Trails Policy Act, ESHB 2151, is an example of efforts taken by organizations like ours to push for greater support of recreation and more cost effective use of available funding.</p>
Glenn Glover - Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 4)	<p>(Cont'd from above) • Funding other than grants must be identified for facilities maintenance. While originally grants such as NOVA and RTP were envisioned as supplements to development and maintenance, they have become primary and necessary funding sources. The result is that state and federal agencies must compete for limited dollars and have no certainty from year to year that there will be sufficient funds to support basic operations for recreation.</p> <p>• We support Action Item #9 calling for continued funding and protection of recreation grant programs and dedicated accounts. However the draft report also suggest the continued diversion of other dedicated accounts to benefit recreation - for example continued sweep of the litter tax. We strongly oppose diversion of any dedicated accounts. Not only does it make it harder to argue against diversion of recreation accounts but the unintended consequences can be far reaching. For example, in this case not funding litter programs will result in a more polluted natural environment for all of us.</p>

4-Sep-14	John Floberg - Washington State Parks Foundation	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 1)	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to review your draft report on Parks and Outdoor Recreation. We really appreciate all the time and energy you've put in to this effort. We appreciate that the Task Force, in having received over 3,000 comments from the public, has an enormous challenge in accurately representing all interests and weighing various options to satisfy the most pressing needs.</p> <p>However, even with the great number and breadth of public comments, we also recognize that you have been given clear direction by the Governor in specific areas that are important to him. For example, he has asked this Task Force to establish a stable and healthy funding level for state parks for the long term. In fact, this has been one of Jay Inslee's three central themes for the Task Force and a clear charge to you from the Governor since the Task Force's inception, both in writing and when he has spoken before you at your first meeting. Unfortunately, this central goal for state parks appears to be unmet in the present version of the report.</p> <p>We encourage the Task Force in the final version of the report to bring the state parks funding issue front and center – just as Jay Inslee has done – and to recommend not just sustaining state parks at their present level, but recognizing and recommending a boost in funding to a healthy level after years of inadequate support. The Governor has called this no less than a crisis and that he is prepared to back the Task Force in its proposed solution – but there needs to be a proposed solution.</p> <p>Table 2 on page 15 lists a variety of potential revenue sources. While some of these may yet have promise, the funds resulting from their implementation are not related to anything more specific than serving "state recreational lands." A reader might ask why should we care and (even if we do) how much is enough? Where's the exposition of the problem and a discussion of the gap between where we are and where we need to be in order to realize a stable, healthy state parks system? In relation to the Governor's priorities, why are these funding ideas on the second-to-last page and why didn't the Task Force recommend even one of these actions? Our fear is that without the Task Force laying out the need for state parks funding, without describing the gap and then recommending how to fund the gap, the Governor will lack the tools he needs to solve the state parks funding problem.</p> <p>Finally, we are concerned about the call for further study related to funding issues, as described in action 6 on page 10:</p>
	John Floberg - Washington State Parks Foundation	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 2)	<p>"Conduct an assessment of the current operations of Washington State Parks, and the Departments of Natural Resources and Fish and Wildlife to determine what parts are essential, important or value added so that a re-balancing of the public investment can be addressed." The Task Force should be aware that many exhaustive assessments have been completed for state parks over the past several years related to their efficiency and delivery of services in response to their precipitous decline in general funding. They have already been analyzed and cut to the bone. In our view, and in the words of our Governor, what's needed is for the public to understand the crisis and for the Task Force to come forward with a funding plan. We feel that "re-balancing" through further study is the kind of noncommittal language that risks prolonging an already protracted crisis. We respect the good work of the Blue Ribbon Task Force and recognize the significant challenge to raise the necessary support not just for state parks but for other recreation lands as well. We also understand that Washington's public funding environment is extremely competitive. However, the Task Force's recommendations are also our best hope for renewing public support for state parks, and we hope you will seize this opportunity to build the base of state outdoor recreation by funding state parks – Washington's premier recreational lands.</p>
4-Sep-14	Vic Colman - Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations	<p>I am writing this letter to provide a few comments to the recommendations outlined in the draft report dated August 2014. The Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition, a coalition of 52 organizations (see list below), is a statewide alliance working to improve the opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity, with an overriding interest in closing the health disparities now persistent in many sectors of our society.</p> <p>We took particular interest in your funding recommendations, especially the one idea to reimpose a sales tax on bottled water. Broadly speaking, we would like this report to ensure, whatever new revenue source is in play, that any new revenues be explicitly programmed to help the communities who are most at need. We see that you noted this concept on p.5 and would want to reinforce the notion that this concept be the critical guiding principle for the important work ahead to "inspire an outdoor recreation culture."</p> <p>While improving access to regulated (and free) tap water in schools and other public settings is one of our current policy initiatives, we wanted to point out a few considerations. Our state would be missing an opportunity to improve the health of our citizens by only proposing a tax on bottled water. This approach could drive consumers to purchase more sugary drinks; not a welcome unintended consequence. Instead, we would suggest adding a recommendation of new sales tax on sugary drinks, which would have multiple positive health and revenue benefits.</p> <p>Thank you for your hard work in developing this report. We stand ready to support any relevant policy and budget recommendations that can improve access to physical activity that could surface as a result of this work.</p>

4-Sep-14	Arvilla Ohlde - citizen	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 1)	<p>Thank: you for the opportunity to respond to the Task Force Draft Report concerning Outdoor Recreation. I have been observing and reading minutes, notes and updates as the Task Force worked on the strategy for outdoor recreation in our State. I want to express my sincere appreciation to Governor Inslee for his emphasis and directive to understand the value and needs of outdoor recreation for the citizens of Washington.</p> <p>From my perspective, a state that places "value" on outdoor recreation is light years ahead of others as it recognizes the substantial benefits to its citizenry. Unfortunately, Washington State agencies and their leadership do not place an emphasis on the "value" of outdoor recreation. The positive outpouring of input from the citizens with regard to the "value" of outdoor recreation is a glaring statement of need reflected in the community and that need is evident from the input to the task force. The following elements are included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access! Citizens describe and emphasize the level of need for public access for outdoor recreation. They correctly expressed frustration about public lands that are closed or have limited use. State agencies, (Department of Fish and Wildlife in particular) professes to provide public access but in reality they continue to limit or eliminate traditional access. Their access theme is---"you can WALK in when and where we say-YOU CAN". The Task Force and ultimately the Governor needs to express to the agencies that manage "our" public lands that they must emphasize the value of full access for outdoor recreation. • Funding: Recommendation for Action must include the need for outdoor facilities and grant funding. Historically, funding has emphasized outdoor recreation and the facilities and sites were appropriated for public outdoor recreational use. Most recently, the perspective of the RCO Funding Board and some legislators have gravitated towards categories of funding that DO NOT provide (or even require) public access. This shift of value based policy decisions must change in order to provide funding for projects that make public access available. If the RCFB desires to have projects that are privatized from public use, then funding of these projects needs to go to another Department (i.e. public use is not allowed in the category of Farmland Preservation). Therefore, in these instances, public tax funds have been used to acquire a "recreation" site without providing public recreational use. If the need to preserve farmland is important then the funding needs to be directed to the Department of Agriculture not the outdoor recreation funding account. • Lead Agency for Outdoor Recreation: It was very disconcerting for me to read that there is a proposal for the RCO, or the projects funding for outdoor recreation, to be transferred to the Department of Commerce. First of all, this is a waste of resources and it creates another "mega" Department that duplicates what already exists within the intent • ofRW 79A.25 RCFB & RCO.
	Arvilla Ohlde - citizen	Aug 26 Draft Report recommendations (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) The former title for the RCO (IAC), reflected the legislation that created the "Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation". It was clear in the title (which is clear in RCW 79A.25) that the Funding Board, the Director and the staff CLEARLY were to be the agency responsible for "outdoor recreation" for the State of Washington. This agency has effectively done their job for most of the past 50 years. It is only recently that they have gravitated away from an emphasis on "outdoor recreation". The RCO has been allowed to lose its focus and identity by promoting the impression of a mega funding agency for green open space without access, facilities or infrastructure. This loss of focus can be easily rectified by simply requiring the Funding Board and the Director to serve the citizens of Washington as mandated in RCW 79A.25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the mission in section 005 "implement statewide strategy for meeting the recreation needs of Washington's citizens" • 020 Director's duties: updated strategic plan. The Plan shall include (b) a forecast of recreational resource demand; .020(4) present and represent the state on recreation issues and further the mission; and create a guide to public parks and recreation sites, data collection and complete the SCaRP planning. • The Board .120: Recommend funding for outdoor recreation facilities • The RCO Agency: Prepares trails plans, strategic plans for outdoor athletic field, youth facilities. In summary, the RCO was created to manage outdoor recreation for the citizens of Washington State. The agency has skilled and talented staff. Keep the agency as the lead on outdoor recreation. If additional emphasis needs to be "value" based for tourism and economics then add this criteria for funding grant proposals for all programs rather than create a new agency. <p>Finally, I was surprised that the counties across the State were not asked to provide their input and perspective regarding the value of tourism and economics of outdoor recreation. For now, I will site just one example of a county commissioner with insight and passion for his citizens and visitors regarding outdoor recreation and the economic benefit for his county. Kittitas Commissioner Gary Berndt has formed a citizen based group to study the value and need of public land access and related uses in Kittitas County. He has a saying that is perfect from my perspective. He states "Kittitas County is just one latte away from Seattle"! He clearly understands what the Governor's Blue Ribbon Parks and Outdoor Recreation Task Force heard from the citizens of Washington.</p>
4-Sep-14	Bill Essman - Kittitas County Public Lands Advisory Committee	Access	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this document. I am a life long Washington State resident and avid outdoorsman. I have lived in Kittitas County for the past 35 years. I volunteered for and was appointed to the Kittitas County Public Lands Advisory Committee. I have become very concerned in the last 10 years about the loss of vehicle access to public lands, since over 70% of the land in Kittitas County is public. I am very pleased to see that access to public land is so important in this draft.</p>

4-Sep-14	Deborah Essman - Access Kittitas County Field and Stream Club	I am the President of the Kittitas County Field and Stream Club. Our club is the oldest sportsmen's organization in Washington State, founded in 1919. Our membership has been extremely concerned about loss of public access on state lands in our county. We applaud the Governor's Parks and Outdoor Recreation Task Force for emphasizing the importance of access for outdoor recreation, and hope that further steps will be taken to ensure that public lands remain open to the public. Thank you for the opportunity to comment of the draft report.
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Date	Name	Topic / Theme	Comments Submitted to RCO via Email
1-May-14	Lonnie Crumley	Access	<p>In Western Washington, most of the lands are owned by large timber companies. At this point they all are cutting off their lands from public access and will be charging people to access. The numbers they will be allowing is a fraction of who currently use it. For the most part the majority of the population of Western Washington will not be able to access the forest lands for hunting, hiking, or fishing. Some of the passes will cost in the thousands of dollars. Others are just a few hundred dollars but only a few passes will be allowed. The timber companies are Weyerhaeuser, Rayonier, Green Diamond, Hancock is thinking about doing it and am not sure about Campbell Group. It has already started for most of the timber companies and Weyerhaeuser is going totally into it this year. The only lands that will be available will be state lands, if you can get at them. If state lands are surrounded or blocked by the private timber companies, then that land will no longer be accessible. Please check with WDFW, Joe Stohr for further details. Would appreciate you looking into this.</p>
12-May-14	James Horan	Access	<p>1. Establish a permanent Outdoor Commission with a charter to include: identify what's working/what's not; encourage innovation and investment in outdoor recreation so that it is more accessible and desirable to include representatives from local, state, and federal agencies with outdoor recreation programs, services, and/or facilities (this is similar to recommendations made by the 1986 Presidents Commission on Americans Outdoors). Also include representation from educators, outdoor recreation industry and corporations like Microsoft, Amazon, Weyerhaeuser, etc. with either an interest in outdoor recreation, that have employees that enjoy outdoor recreation, or have lands suitable to outdoor recreation, non-profit user groups, volunteer user groups, and the medical community.</p> <p>2. Remove financial barriers to access to outdoor recreation by defining outdoor recreation's basic core elements and fund them through taxes because if all Washington citizens are encouraged for health and other reasons to recreate outdoors than all should pay for the basic core elements through taxes and access should be free of charges, fees, permits etc. Programs serving special user groups can be paid for by special charges, fees, etc. (off road vehicle registration, refund of off road vehicle fuel taxes, winter parking permits, etc.).</p> <p>3. Streamline ease of access to outdoor recreation information and funding by consolidating and centralizing the management and coordination of state agencies programs that provide access to outdoor recreation through vehicle licensing/registration, grant funding for operating and capital projects, and public information through various media, etc.</p>
6-Jun-14	Steve Belknap	Access	<p>ACCESS: We are most concerned. Every year we see more gates and closed roads and areas. Most of our areas concern hunting so are more related to state and county policies.</p> <p>IMPACT: How can we be denied access to public lands. The term public lands appears to have little if any meaning to our state and local officials. If people can't access the lands why be there. If they are not there they are sure not spending money in the local community. The impact is on present and future.</p>
10-Jun-14	Jim Goldsmith	Access	<p>ACCESS: Yes, our user group is concerned about lack of limited, or inconsistent access to public lands to enjoy outdoor recreation activities. WWC represents thousands of hunters within almost 50 organizations throughout Washington State.</p> <p>Road closures and decommissioning have become significant issues for many outdoor enthusiasts including hunters.</p> <p>If roads must be closed for valid reasons, then pursue non-destructive alternative actions like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road maintenance rotation. • "Forest roads to trails" and related forest access efforts similar to what is promoted by Congresswoman Jamie Herrera Beutler and others to keep our forests healthy, safe, and accessible. o Avoid road decommissioning and protect road beds for future use by converting roads slated for closure into trails. o Close, stabilize and seed road beds; avoid decommissioning o Ensure public safety by stabilizing and maintaining road beds that can be re-opened for rescues, firefighting, and emergency evacuation routes when necessary. <p>Focus on creating and maintaining road loops to ensure ingress and egress for public safety.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce cost by enhancing partnerships with [Stewardship] groups that can assist with road and trail maintenance. • Consider converting high maintenance level roads that are not major thoroughfares to lower maintenance levels. • Ensure access under the Americans with Disabilities Act by designating roads and trails for off-road vehicle access. • Pursue/explore possible funding opportunities for road maintenance: • Timber sales, Stewardship dollars, Federal road tax. • Lack of access also forces people to find access points in concentrated areas where they can park their vehicles; typically this is where roads once existed. This is particularly troublesome for hunters as it forces too many hunters into smaller areas. <p>IMPACT: The obvious impact is that outdoor enthusiast will likely be discouraged and disappointed when they come across multiple road closures and can't easily access areas they may have been able to access for decade or generations. Many of the road closures are so destructive that traversing the original road path is extremely difficult and hazardous, or nearly impossible. These conditions to not encourage taking part in outdoor recreation. If outdoor enthusiasts cannot access our public lands then they will cease to come to those areas and the communities that are nearby. The economic impact is obvious; if people don't come to enjoy our great outdoors; then all businesses, large and small, will suffer a loss of customers in the affected areas.</p>

10-Jun-14	Dave Duncan	Access	<p>ACCESS: I have concerns about any future regulation of public road access on WDFW and USFS lands Statewide and the effect that it will have on outdoor recreation as a whole. At present DNR understands the importance of road access.</p> <p>IMPACT: Living in a County with over 70% of its lands owned by Agency's and given the demise of the logging industry, outdoor recreation has become our number two industry and a large economic driver in Kittitas County. Limiting road access on public lands will have an economic effect on Kittitas County. It will also have an effect on the quality of life of its residents.</p>
10-Jun-14	Mark Pidgeon	Access	<p>ACCESS to public lands is the single most important issue to the hunting community. The hunter that can afford to pay an outfitter isn't concerned about access issues. The outfitter usually has lease concessions where that hunter can hunt private land. If things get to bad, that hunter can go to another state. That is a tiny percentage of our community. Most of our members are depended upon public land to hunt upon. Access is getting worse as private timber companies are charging higher and higher fees to access their lands. Any issue of access concerns our user group, whether it is lack of, limited, or inconsistent access. Our concerns are on mostly at the state level, although county access does impact our user group, so it is of concern to us. The perception of many in our community is that Washington is not a hunter friendly state. The bottom line is that for most of our members if there is no access they can't hunt.</p> <p>IMPACT: The impact is huge. The number of people buying hunting licenses has been dropping for years. I sit on the Game management Advisory Council and this trend is a major concern for the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Dropping licenses means dropping revenue for them and their ability to manage wildlife. Lack of access = hunters dropping out. The impact on rural communities is huge. According to the US Fish and Wildlife survey for Washington, hunters spend an average of \$86 per day in the field, more than fisherman or wildlife watchers. When hunters drop out these dollars disappear from hard-pressed rural economies. This also means that hunters stop buying items necessary to go hunting, so the impact affects retailers everywhere.</p>
5-Jul-14	Glen Strachan	Access: ADA	<p>On July 2, I received a group email from the Mountaineers asking for comments to submit to your Task Force on Parks and Recreation. I have a physical disability stemming from contraction of polio as a young child. Prior to retiring in 2004, my business was certified by the State of Washington and U.S. Department of Transportation as a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) on the basis of disability.</p> <p>I have been a member of the Mountaineers for 30 years and have led and participated in various hiking trips. My concern is the access to these trips is being denied for persons with disabilities. Unlike the Sierra Club and some other out-of-state outdoor recreation organizations, the Mountaineers do not have a policy regarding utilization of persons with disabilities for any of their trips. I have met with the Board President and discussed this issue with him and have been told that the ADA only applies to their building-related activities, not trips. In other words, the Mountaineers have no guidelines for persons with disabilities that go on their trips and this situation makes it difficult for the disabled and leaders of those trips to plan for and carry out trips. In fact, I personally have been retaliated by one Committee after I raised this issue with them. I know there are many negative impacts, including cultural discrimination, for persons with disabilities because of the lack of a policy in the Mountaineers, as well as other non-profit and for profit outdoor recreational organizations.</p> <p>What I would like to see is the State of Washington requiring that private outdoor recreational organizations adopt written policies regarding access for persons with disabilities in their activities in order to help them participate more fully and effectively. If you have any further questions, please contact me.</p>
23-Jun-14	Jeff Harris	Access: Road closure 1207 at Clear Lake / White Pass	<p>For the past 4 years, Road 1207 has been closed due to flood damage to the bridge going into the Scatter Creek Trailhead. This was a popular campsite/trailhead for the horse people and is still used commonly by the hikers. The road closure means 3.8 miles of walking before even getting to the trailhead. I have visited with the people at the Naches Ranger station and they say the engineer will not approve the bridge for unsafe reasons. I'm not an engineer, but I sure can't see why it's not approved for vehicle use? I've attached several photos of the bridge for your review and maybe it will get someone's attention to relook at what is needed to get this road open. There is a real shortage of horse campgrounds on the White Pass corridor, especially with the closure of the Indian Creek Horse Camp last year due to flood damage. All this is doing, is moving too many people onto the Conrad Meadows and White Pass Horse Campgrounds.</p>
3-May-14	Shari Brewer	ATV / ORV	<p>I am from Darrington, have lived here for 35 yrs. 90% of our land base is DNR or USFS lands. The biggest thing that is hampering recreation in our area is lack of motorized access especially on DNR lands. We need to make the Darrington area a Recreation Destination such as what Walker Valley is in Skagit county. It is a complex issue, but the best ones to ask are those that live, work and recreate in the local watershed. Meetings need to be in the rural communities where the trails and roads begin. You will get the best input and the best folks for stewardship as they love the land and the mtns.</p>

28-Mar-14	Grant Nelson & James Boltz, Washington State Motorsports Dealers Association	ATV / ORV	<p>When you were my congressional representative I found it refreshing that you were approachable and fair regarding matters that I brought to your attention. I am a small business owner in Snohomish County for the past 42years. Most importantly, I am the longtime president of the Washington State Motorsports Dealers Association proudly representing the hundreds of dealers, related business and 10's of 1,000's of employees and motorsports enthusiasts in our state.</p> <p>I've just received the membership list of your 16-member "Governor's Parks and Outdoor Recreation Taskforce". I find it troubling that there is not a single member on this Taskforce representing the interests of one of the oldest recreational user groups in our state – the off-road motorsports enthusiasts (ORV).</p> <p>Washington State has a long and proud history serving the off-road motorsports community with its ORV Trails program - that officially began in 1971-72. Our association was initially formed for this specific legislation. Over the years many states have copied Washington's ORV program - considered one of the best in America. To leave the ORV community out of this taskforce is unfortunate.</p> <p>ORV'rs have long promoted "fair access for everyone" – and to be closed out of future decisions fly in the face as being unfair and must be corrected. We have several informed and intelligent members willing to capably participate in your Taskforce. Governor, thank you for your understanding and consideration of my request – it is vitally important that the ORV community have a place at your table.</p>
2-May-14	Lynn Brown	Bicycles	<p>Multi-use trails is a lie fostered by bike advocates. In fact, as soon as bikes are added to a trail, other users disappear due to quality of life and safety issues. What peaceful hiker wants to go into nature, while being on alert lest they be run over or forced off the trail by speeding vehicles/bikes. Bikes should be limited to their own area, and it should be enforced. Not only do bikes disenfranchise traditional trail users, but the environmental destruction they do is huge. No wonder that the bikers are always bragging about their trail work. They have to as they do almost all of the damage. Fast moving vehicles should be relegated to fire roads, and paved trails.</p>
7-Jul-14	Virginia Sullivan - Adventure Cycling Association	Bicycles	<p>I am writing on behalf of Adventure Cycling Association, based in Missoula, Montana. Adventure Cycling is a non-profit organization inspiring and empowering people to travel by bicycle. We are the largest cycling membership organization in North America, with over 47,000 members. The Adventure Cycling Route Network has 42,180 mapped miles of bicycle routes across North America. We create bicycle touring maps, produce an award-winning magazine, provide bicycle tours across North America, sell bike travel gear and provide on-line resources to make bike travel more accessible. We also provide technical assistance to states working on designating interstate bicycle routes, called the U.S. Bicycle Route System.</p> <p>Bicycle tourism and travel have grown increasingly popular over the last decade. Bicycle travel attracts a wide variety of people – young and old, working and retired, budget travelers and big spenders. Based on our membership surveys and other studies, however, the majority of bicycle travelers are usually early retirees who have higher discretionary income and tend to spend more than the average tourist. Bicycle travelers travel more slowly and require more frequent services (food, hydration, accommodations, etc.) than motorized travelers, resulting in increased spending in local communities. Bicycle travelers have a particularly significant economic impact in small rural communities, since they seek out low-traffic, rural back roads and tend to stop in small towns that don't usually see tourism or its economic benefits. Numerous studies show that bicycle tourism can help boost economies, both statewide and in small communities. These economic benefits are a significant reason why states across the country are taking initiatives to promote bicycle tourism.</p> <p>Oregon for example, has made bicycle travel very easy for cyclists, and as a result the state is known for going above and beyond for bicycle tourism. The state has designated numerous scenic bikeway routes for cyclists, provides a bicycle tourism website, and has recently implemented a Bicycle Friendly Business Program. The Oregon Parks & Recreation Department provides hiker/biker campsites at state parks with bicycle-specific amenities, such as fix-it stations with bicycle tools, covered group shelters, and food storage lockers. It is because of efforts like this that, according to a 2012 study, bicycle tourism contributes more than \$400 million annually to the state economy, and multi-day bicycle travelers stay about 5 days on average in the state and spend more than \$144 per day.</p> <p>The University of Montana's Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research (ITRR) also recently conducted a study that showed multi-day bicycle travelers visiting Montana spend more per day than motorized travelers (\$75.75 compared to \$64) and stay in the state longer (eight days vs. three). The study also found that bicycle travelers do not necessarily stick to developed bicycle routes, and communities throughout the state benefit from touring cyclists (p 21). Communities that have realized this, such as Twin Bridges, Montana have seen continuing economic returns from developing bicycle tourism services, amenities, and infrastructure. Residents of Twin Bridges (population 382) invested \$9,000 into building a bicycle camp with a group shelter, and in the first season of operation they saw a full return of investment through cyclist donations and spending in local businesses. The ITRR study has also caught the attention of state agencies such as Travel Montana and Montana State Parks, who are now interested in improving their bicycle tourism services and information.</p>

9-Jul-14	Kristy Kibler, PeopleForBikes	Bicycles	<p>Policy Recommendations and Rationales</p> <p>Encourage and support the development of low stress bicycling networks, with a focus on protected bike lanes, to make riding safe and attractive for all ages and abilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great bike networks, including protected bike lanes boost economic growth by fueling redevelopment to boost real estate values, helping companies attract talented workers, making the work force healthier and more productive, and increasing retail visibility and sales volume. For more information see "Protected Bike Lanes Mean Business", a report by PeopleForBikes and the Alliance for Biking and Walking. • Protected bike lanes encourage people to ride. When protected bike lanes are added to a street, bike traffic rises — by an average of 75 percent in the first year alone. National Institute for Transportation and Communities, June 2014. • Protected bike lanes are already on the ground in Washington, with more on the way. Seattle announced that a pilot protected lane will be installed this fall on Second Avenue, parallel to its highly anticipated new waterfront. <p>Continue to support public bike share.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cities across the nation are embracing bike sharing systems as part of their efforts to develop vibrant downtowns. Just five years ago only one bike sharing system existed in the U.S. now 42 cities have bike sharing systems and many more cities have plans in the pipeline. • Bike share is coming to Washington. In September 2014, the city of Seattle will launch the state's first bike sharing system. • Bike sharing drives retail sales. In the District of Columbia and Arlington County, research on Capital Bikeshare members shows their purchasing trends lead to big economic gains for local bicycle retailers. (Di Caro, M. 2012 - "From A To B: Bike Shop Owners See Big Returns from Capital Bikeshare," wamu.org, 29 June 2012)
22-Aug-14	Blaine Snow	Bicycles	<p>I applaud the efforts of Governor Inslee to improve the outdoor recreation and conservation in our state through the Task Force. I would like to urge the Task Force to do what they can to support bicycle tourism in our state through the establishment of bike touring routes on existing roads, bicycle lanes, biking trails, and other supports for individuals using bicycle transportation in and between our cities and towns. Cycling is good for our health and good for our economy.</p>
21-Aug-14		Big Tent Coalition (Part 1)	<p>The Big Tent Coalition includes about 50 Washington businesses, non-profit groups, and public agencies that have come together to promote the economic, social, health, and environmental benefits of outdoor recreation. These organizations – and their hundreds of thousands of members and employees – enhance the quality of life of all Washingtonians.</p> <p>The Coalition had a direct role in encouraging Governor Inslee to establish the Task Force, and we deeply appreciate the time and effort you have invested. We believe we all share the desire for a stronger recreation economy, reliable funding for State Parks and other recreation lands and facilities, and more access to outdoor opportunities for all state residents and visitors.</p> <p>Outdoor recreation is a pillar of Washington's economy, and it should be a pillar of the state's economic development strategy. In 2012, the national Outdoor Industry Association reported that outdoor recreation in Washington generates 227,600 jobs, \$22.5 billion in economic activity, and \$1.6 billion in state and local tax revenue each year. This overall economic impact is even more significant with the inclusion of additional sectors of the outdoor recreation economy that were not included in this report.</p> <p>Recreation is a hallmark of Northwest living, and year-round access to the outdoors – and the quality of life that comes with it – helps universities to draw top students and employers to attract talented workers.</p> <p>Recreation provides broad benefits to the state as a whole, and focused benefits to individuals, business sectors, state agencies and local communities. For that reason, we believe state support should include both general and dedicated funding that reflects these values. Additionally, the state benefits from several highly successful outdoor recreation grant programs. The state also derives significant revenue from a variety of user fees such as those paid through the sale of fishing and hunting licenses. Ensuring these dedicated accounts are used for their intended purposes and that they keep pace with growing populations and inflation will continue to yield benefits for our state.</p> <p>We strongly support the call for visionary leadership to ensure a lasting legacy of outdoor experiences for future generations. Additional state funding is vital, but transformational change should also focus on conservation, public access, and recognizing the economic value of recreation. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state's current economic development priorities do not identify outdoor recreation as a key sector, even though it is a primary engine of economic activity. We recommend the Task Force address this oversight. • Funding for many recreation programs depends on annual review and action by the State Legislature. We recommend the Task Force identify strategies to ensure predictable funding for the ongoing operation and maintenance of recreation programs and facilities.

		Big Tent Coalition (Part 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We strongly encourage the Task Force to articulate the importance of state government's role in addressing barriers that restrict access to outdoor opportunities. Washingtonians and visitors to our state enjoy a myriad of recreational activities that include bicycling, camping, water sports, snow sports, trail-based, motorcycles, off-road vehicles, boating, snowmobiling, RVing, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing. These and other opportunities should be available for one and all, and should be protected and enhanced. • We encourage the Task Force to recognize the contribution made by private landowners whose conservation and stewardship efforts open more recreational resources to the public. <p>The benefits of outdoor recreation have long been appreciated across Washington's political spectrum, so we encourage the Task Force to formulate recommendations that will take advantage of this bi-partisan tradition. With your initiative and Governor Inslee's commitment, we believe government, business, and outdoor recreation leaders can think on a grand scale about our place in nature. We are stewards of the great Northwest. It is time for bold action, and we look forward to working with you.</p>
17-Jun-14	41 emails with same comment	Boating (Part 1)	<p>Protect what you have: I recommend the Legislature NOT raid or divert from accounts like the Boating Facilities Program which provide grant funding for, and leverage money for, boating infrastructure that supports a \$4 billion a year recreational boating industry. I am supportive of other recreational funding as well that's managed through existing accounts, such as the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program. A "recognize, appreciate, and protect what you have" message is vital. Further, consider user fees based on equitable distribution of funds received/generated to support infrastructure and related maintenance of the facilities used by the contributors of such fees.</p> <p>Step up state efforts to promote outdoor recreation as a part of the state's tourism and marketing efforts: I support a state role in promoting and marketing outdoor recreation and tourism - perhaps by establishing an "Office of Outdoor Recreation in the RCO" that focuses 24/7 on the promotion and tourism of the outdoor recreation sector.</p> <p>Equalize the playing field for visiting boaters - between British Columbia and Washington State: For large, LLC-designated vessels that like to visit and stay in out-of-state waters for months at a time, the tax policy and tax climate in BC is much more welcoming than that of Washington, which places a use tax on these boats after just 60 days of visiting stays. Leveling the playing field for what some people refer to as "Floating Money Machines" is good business and ADDITIONAL revenue for the State of Washington. A vessel called the "Serene" visited Seattle last summer and put some \$10,000 a day into the local economy, but it left after 60 days due to our laws. Boaters have proposed a "marine tourism bill" to fix this problem.</p> <p>Increase events that get people - especially young people - out on the water and experiencing the outdoors: If the state were actively participating in and sponsoring more events to get people out on the water, we'd be able to create more "boaters for life" enthusiasts. Further, provide for preservation of existing access to the waters of the state by limiting commercial and residential development of public shore lands for purposes other than water related uses. Consider, also, the acquisition of existing commercial shore side properties when such are abandoned or no longer serve the purpose for which they were created initially in order to increase private commercial (e.g. leased marinas, fishing piers, water accessible restaurants, etc.) as well as public access to the water for recreational purposes.</p> <p>Create a more predictable fishing season for fishing boats/fishermen: I support the recommendations of NMTA, that a more predictable, well-advertised, and consistent fishing season would lead to more fishing boats on our waters, spending more money for our state economy.</p>
	41 emails with same comment	Boating (Part 2)	<p>(Cont'd from Part 1 above) Remove the 'lid' on dedicated non-highway-purpose recreation accounts that results in diversions of some of this funding into the Motor Vehicle Fund (transportation budget): Fix morally and legally inappropriate diversion when it comes to the distribution of funding from dedicated non-highway-purpose recreation accounts. Under state law, fuel purchased at the pump by boaters, ORV riders and snowmobilers is supposed to go into dedicated infrastructure accounts that support those activities. And, 23 cents of the 37.5 cents of gas tax paid by those users does. However, the other 14.5 cents is diverted to the Transportation Budget's Motor Vehicle fund as a result of 2003 and 2005 legislative actions. So, there's a "lid" on those accounts - 23 cents is going where it's supposed to, and 14.5 cents is not. This needs to be fixed.</p> <p>Thoughts on Sustainable funding: Boaters already pay for invasive species and derelict vessel programs through our annual registration fees, and we pay a percentage-based "watercraft excise tax" into the state general fund that NO OTHERS (owners of cars, planes, RVs, campers) have to pay - it was repealed for all others. Think not just about taxes and fees but about policy changes that will grow the revenue base - such as "Marine Tourism Bill". Make strong effort to protect dedicated accounts we already have, and correct injustices that divert money away from non-highway-purpose accounts.</p>

3-Aug-14	Paul Douglas Vazquez	Boating	<p>Please support recreational boating opportunities for citizens with trailer boats. The South Puget Sound area, though large in area, has limited access for trailerable boats in the middle to larger sizes (20' - 26'). This size boat requires a floating dock for loading and unloading of the boat and its passengers.</p> <p>Recreational boating generates business activity within the state. It makes good financial sense to provide more access for the trailer boating segment of the population of this state. Please support the expansion of recreational boating access points in the state.</p> <p>It has been noted that money generated by fuel sales in the state has not been fully allocated to its proper account- 14.5 cents is inappropriately diverted to other accounts not related to the boating, snowmobiling or off road vehicles. Please correct this as soon as possible.</p> <p>I support the efforts of the Recreational Boating Association of Washington to maintain and enhance recreational boating activity in this state. I would appreciate the support of the governor's Outdoor Recreation Task Force in this regard as well.</p>
4-Aug-14	Rick Rysemus	Boating	<p>I'd like to take moment to give my input on Governor Inslee's request to expand outdoor recreation. My wishes are on the boating and fishing side of things. Here are a few things I would like improved:</p> <p>Expand Puget Sound recreational shrimping by moving all commercial shrimping to the ocean. They have the boats and abilities to do that most recreational boaters do not.</p> <p>Expand summer fishing opportunities in Area 9. This year Chinook fishing in Area 9 was cut in half because of going over the quota last year. It's time to re-draw the marine area boundaries. Admiralty Inlet is in Area 9 but receives a larger amount of boaters from Port Townsend / Sequim so add Port Ludlow-Mutiny Bay to Area 6. I believe this would move the quota to the central Puget Sound area to extend the season for more families to enjoy. I have to means to fishing locally but not to trailer me boat all across the state to fish the hot bite.</p> <p>Improvement to most, if not all, boat launches is a must. There needs to be more locations to launch or larger launches. i.e. parking.</p> <p>In closing my daughter is 2 1/2, our hope is that she will have a chance to enjoy fishing as we have without derby style (so short that you might only get one day to fish) seasons and boating in the future. If opportunities continue to decline I'll end up selling my boat and look for other recreational things to do. Most likely out of the state.</p>
6-Aug-14	Robert Philpott	Boating	<p>We need to do what is right with money from boat tabs.</p>
6-Aug-14	Darrel Bowman	Boating	<p>Please take the time to carefully consider and promote these specific actions sponsored and endorsed by the RBAW to enhance recreational boating in Washington by promoting the "marine tourism bill" to get large boats to stay in our waters for extended periods; to protect the "Recreation Resource Account" for boating facilities; to lift a 'lid' which currently results in diversions of funding for non-highway-purpose accounts; and to ensure better predictability and better information regarding fishing seasons.</p>
7-Aug-14	Dave Willis	Boating	<p>I believe it is important to make sure Washington State keeps funding a full budget on recreational boating for the state. With just our boat here is what we spend at a minimum to own it. This is all spent on local marine companies around the state. Some financial facts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) For our 1987 42' power boat we incur the following cost that play a large part in the Washington State economy. (2) Monthly Moorage: \$550. (3) Annual registration fee: \$1,300. (4) Insurance: \$1,300. (5) Repairs and updates: \$12,000 It is averaging about \$1,000 per month for many repairs and upgrades for a boat this old. (6) Fuel: \$2,000. (7) Total annually: \$17,150 This is just one boat. <p>This is a huge part of the marine economy that drives an industry in the state. Making sure we all have public places as destinations with easy access is what drives our boating economy in the state. Our other boat last year got a new outboard motor that was \$14,000. This week we tied up in Seattle that has port facilities and spent \$300 while we were there for one night. That goes directly to the Seattle economy. That is because they provide the proper facilities for boaters to use. In Canada last week we see so many public facilities that are well maintained and because of that they are very busy. We need to have the same sort of budget to keep pace with demand. It is important to make sure the state provides funds for the boating citizens of the state as this drives a very large part of the economy. One thing takes care of the other.</p>

15-Aug-14	Steve Walker, Community Boating Center	Boating	<p>I write today to encourage the Task Force to acknowledge and advance the work that community-based recreation organizations do in contributing to the economy, creating jobs, improving public health, and elevating quality of life. Certain current state practices undermine this effort and warrant action.</p> <p>I am the director of the Community Boating Center, a nonprofit organization in Bellingham dedicated to fostering maritime recreation. The Center operates on state-owned aquatic land and provides educational programs, youth camps, and access to the saltwater environment via a fleet of human-powered and sail-driven watercraft available to the public. The facility has become a nexus in establishing community cohesion by engaging children, adults and families in healthy, active use of natural resources for fitness, environmental appreciation and leisure. I encourage Task Force members to visit the Boating Center's website, www.boatingcenter.org, to view images of young people enjoying the outdoors, exploring nature, cooperating with peers and learning skills that will last a lifetime.</p> <p>The Boating Center's location in the urban core enables citizens and visitors to reach the waterfront site via public transportation, bicycles and local pedestrian trails. The organization has garnered broad-based support for its focus on pollution-free non-motorized recreation, its preservation of water quality through environmentally sensitive dry moorage, and its shared-economy model for providing boating experiences to residents and tourists.</p> <p>Yet the Center suffers from having its boating services and programs regarded by the Department of Natural Resources as non water-dependent uses. The result is stifling rent one thousand percent (1000%) higher than neighboring state-owned aquatic lands with offices, parking and manufacturing, leased as water-dependent uses. While leadership at the Port of Bellingham, who manages of the land on behalf of the DNR, has expressed the desire to lease to the Boating Center at water-dependent rates, influence from the DNR has prevented that actuality. I am aware of other recreation organizations in Port Angeles and Seattle whose efforts are also burdened by similar circumstances.</p> <p>If the Task Force can facilitate state agencies in supporting rather than weakening community-based programs that engage citizens in outdoor recreation, that would be one very positive outcome of your work.</p>
22-Aug-14	Chris Warner	Boating	<p>The members of Seattle Yacht Club enthusiastically support the good work of the Blue Ribbon Task Force to expand the value of and promote outdoor recreation in general and recreational boating in particular in our state. Not only does outdoor recreation and recreational boating contribute enormously to the quality of life in Washington, but also adds significant value to the state's economy.</p> <p>We urge the Task Force to support and promote several important actions near and dear to recreational boaters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the unclaimed, non-highway gas tax refunds that flow to the Recreation Resource Account and provides capital funding of boating infrastructure programs. Prohibit raids on these funds for non-recreational uses, restore previous fund diversions, and remove the lid which precludes full refund of gas taxes paid by boaters to recreational boating support. • Urge the State Legislature to pass the Marine Tourism Bill to encourage and enable boaters visiting from outside the state to stay longer in Washington waters and contribute more through their spending to support of our marine industries and tourism opportunities. • Improve access to our waters for recreational use and promote events and activities that get people, especially young people, out on the waters to safely enjoy recreational boating. • Focus natural resource management efforts on promoting recreational activities such as fishing and boating by not only increasing predictability of seasonal regulation but also by focusing law enforcement on high priority/high risk illegal activity. Minimize routine non-essential law enforcement which are activities used to justify increased funding of law enforcement personnel and equipment. Increase reliance on volunteer organizations to promote boating safety and thus make expenditures on professional law enforcement more focused and effective. • Provide for reliable and sustainable funding for recreational facilities, access and enjoyment. Consider who is currently paying for recreational programs and what benefits are received in return. Equalize the financial contributions for support of recreational facilities and activities through the employment of user fees for specific uses, participation by all recreation users in general specific recreation activity based taxes and reasonable contributions from the state general funds for basic broad use based expenses such as state parks. • Allow vessels that are out of state to remain in Washington state waters free of the current sales tax levy on the value of the vessel as long as the vessel is under repair or refurbishment. Washington currently loses major refit and repair jobs and revenue to British Columbia and other states due to this arcane regulation.

9-Jul-14	Cascade Designs	Cascade Designs	<p>Recreation Environment: Address the Gate problem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open the gates; let users adopt and help maintain access roads • Teach "leave no trace" outdoor behavior so the gates are not needed • Measure and monitor Washington State's recreational land access, specifically the miles of approach roads necessary to access hiking and biking trails. These roads are critical and have been diminishing. How many miles were open and available in 1970, 1990, 2010, 2014? An inventory (facts) would show the trend. • Provide online map showing where the gates are located and their status (open or closed). Organizations like The Evergreen Mountain Biking Alliance and Washington Trails Association do a great job helping outdoor users plan their trips by providing online maps showing hiking and bike trails. <p>Business Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A uniform state (or national) minimum wage is more fair and workable for manufacturers. Such an approach at least puts domestic manufacturers on a more level playing field with one another. Of course this doesn't address U.S. trade policy which often pits U.S. manufacturing workers against workers in other countries who are not subject to similar minimum wage laws.
8-Aug-14	Kimberly Brown	Colorado Outdoor Recreation	<p>I ran across a Colorado project - a state collaboration with federal partners to host and maintain an information center and website for state-wide recreation-related opportunities and classes. One great source, all types of recreation. Outdoor Recreation and Information Center: www.oriconline.org</p>
17-Jun-14	Jamey Layman, Inland Northwest Nature Connection	Education	<p>On behalf of Inland Northwest Nature Connection (INN Connection) I want to thank you for creating the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation. INN Connection was founded in 1999 to assist and support the West Valley School District in Spokane, to create and sustain an outdoor learning center. Today, the West Valley Outdoor Learning Center serves over 15,000 community members and students annually.</p> <p>A part of our mission at INN Connection is to engage the public of all ages in a science - and fact-based exploration and understanding of the natural world. We routinely utilize the Washington State Park system, particularly Riverside State Park, as a basis for our programming. This spring we have signed a memorandum of understanding (attached) with Riverside State Park to increase our in-park programming and also formally begin planning for what we hope is a cooperative effort to construct an expanded Nature and Learning Center on the grounds of what is known as Clark Barns.</p> <p>Your efforts to promote private and public sector use and cooperation in regards to our treasured state park system are worthwhile. We intend to participate to the extent possible with this effort. Please let us know if INN Connection can be of service to your office in this or similar efforts. It would also be our honor to give you a tour sometime of the West Valley Outdoor Learning Center and the Clark Barns location at Riverside State Park. Thank you again Governor Inslee, for your efforts to build a cooperative and sustainable Washington State Parks system.</p>
24-Jul-14	Bill Taylor, Pacific Education Institute	Education	<p>As President of the Pacific Education Institute (PEI) and on behalf of PEI's Board of Directors, I am writing to submit testimony to the Governor's Blue Ribbon Parks and Recreation Task Force. This testimony highlights highly effective PEI resources, a replicable outdoor academy program, and new standards and policies that support outdoor learning and recreation.</p> <p>Our PEI board is dedicated to ensuring that every K-12 student experiences field science in community settings outside the classroom. This approach becomes a pipeline for fostering outdoor recreation interest. To this end PEI has developed Field Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) guidelines for outdoor learning as part of the North American Conservation Education Strategy, endorsed by all 50 state fish and wildlife agencies. PEI's Field STEM Guides, (no cost downloadable from our website) are highlighted in the 2012 Report to the Western Governors' Association, entitled "Connecting Kids and Families to the West's Great Outdoors". As stated in the Western Governor's Executive Order, these PEI tools, aligned with national and state standards, "shape students' environmental literacy, stewardship and outdoor skills".</p> <p>The Pacific Education Institute has experience integrating recreation (physical education) with science and language arts to strengthen student learning using an outdoor academy model. PEI has conducted research to show that outdoor recreation combined with science and language learning significantly improves student performance on state tests. In addition, the research determined that 10th grade outdoor academy students were increasingly interested in school and began to explore outdoor recreation opportunities. Several students started fishing for the first time. The PEI sponsored research published in peer reviewed journals describes the success of this outdoor academy approach at Tahoma High School.</p> <p>The time is right for schools to integrate outdoor learning with outdoor recreation.</p> <p>The State Board of Education just approved a graduation requirement rule (July 2014) where one of the three required science labs allow for "outdoor space" labs, where students may interact directly with the natural world. This policy change as well as the Next Generation Science Standards, which expect students to conduct real world science, together reduce barriers for schools to implement outdoor learning that nurtures student interest in outdoor recreation.</p> <p>PEI is led by a board of directors from leaders in education and environment, agriculture and natural resource sectors, and they are ready to submit testimony and attend hearings. Please contact Dr. Margaret Tudor, Executive Director of the Pacific Education Institute (360-705-9291) if you wish to have members of the Pacific Education Institute Board attend and testify at your meetings.</p>

2-May-14	Jeff Chapman	Equestrians	I'll be honest that BCHW is pretty put off that we (equestrians) weren't represented in the Blue Ribbon Task Force. We have been a primary force for funding for outdoor recreation for many years including annual trips to Washington DC. We were on Governor Gregoire's Western Governors committee for Outdoors Recreation. Governor Gregoire recognized the importance of the 8 billion dollar equestrian industry in Washington both with the Horse Park Authority and the Washington State Horse Park. For this, we have no even remote association representation on Governor Inslee's committee whereas most every other group does. We have been talking to others about this and figure this is just one effort we will sit out since we have been shunned. However, some committee members would like us to participate somehow so I am discussing this with others in the equestrian industry.
24-Jun-14	Shari Brewer	Equestrians	Two recreation groups that should be participating in the question of Outdoor Rec. is the WA Backcountry Horseman and the Blue Ribbon Coalition which the home office is in Idaho but have many members in WA state. Also there should be folks from the WA State Snowmobile Assoc., and it would not hurt to have folks from motorized recreation businesses such as ones that sell snowmobiles, atv's, rv's, etc. Seems your Recreation group is weighted from non motorized only walk there folks.
1-May-14	Doc Thoke	Fishing	If you have a meeting on salmon sport charters Asking why is there no salmon charters in the south sound to take my family salmon fishing? All gone I know why because I am one of them old school salmon charter owners. That fished out their. 32 years and counting. PS Filmed the narrows looking for ling or rock fish. What I am seeing ...You should close all waters of south sound to ling and all rock cod fishing. Thank you hope to talk one day. My web site tmkeyfilm.com info to reach me.
12-May-14	Doc Thoke	Fishing	Washington State Saltwater sport salmon fishing business is almost dead. Now you might not feel that way. But try and make a living chartering south sound. It seems someone dose not understand how to make money for the programs run at the Washington state level.
4-Aug-14	Charles Gauthier	Fishing: Access	Please try to make access to the water a little easier for all, especially for people like me at age 75 and all other semi or fully handicapped boaters that still have the urge to go boating and fishing. Here in Kitsap County some of the ramps I would like to use have no docks or breakwaters so are almost unusable to me, Misery Point boat ramp on the Hood Canal comes to mind. Point No Point boat ramp construction has come to a HALT, due to letters of opposition written to Corps of Engineers by our Co-Managers. Uplands work has been done so we now have a very expensive Kayak Launch, this after tons of money spent on studies, meetings of all concerned and actual funding obtained, which will now soon be lost. Cut the costs of boating and make it more convenient to all and you will make more money in the end for the business community and the state of Washington via B & O taxes. While you are at that, reopen the upper hood canal to salmon fishing, that alone would increase the state coffers by tons. Thank you for the opportunity to speak out and hopefully be heard.
10-Jun-14	72 emails with same comment	Fishing: Improve and enhance hatchery and fishing access infrastructure	Recreational anglers directly pay for steelhead hatchery production and a large portion of WDFW's budget through fishing license fee revenue. In recent years, anglers have also helped secure tens of millions of dollars in additional funding to construct new hatcheries, upgrade existing hatcheries, and build new boat launches. We need to do more to support the enhancement of our state's hatchery programs now and into the future through continued responsible, science-driven management that recognizes the importance of wild salmon and steelhead recovery and the value of recreational fisheries to our state's economy and way of life. In order to find balance, WDFW must continue implementing key hatchery reforms and seek to enhance hatchery production in certain watersheds through science-based tools like wild broodstock programs and improved smolt release strategies, rather than reducing hatcheries and recreational fishing opportunities.
10-Jun-2014 through 14-Aug-2014	83 emails with same comment	Fishing: Prioritize the Economic and Revenue Benefits of Recreational Fishing	Recreational fishing is more than just a hobby, it is a billion dollar industry in Washington and responsible for nearly 13,000 jobs. By way of comparison, WDFW-managed in-state commercial fisheries were responsible for only 3,524 jobs. Recreational fishing remains an important economic driver in both rural and urban communities, but it could be even bigger. Meanwhile, license fee and excise tax revenue derived from recreational anglers is now WDFW's single largest source of funding. Unfortunately, our fisheries management has simply not caught up to these economic and agency revenue realities and they continue to be stuck in the past. In order to better capitalize on this green economic powerhouse, we need WDFW to place a priority on recreational fisheries. The Governor should work with WDFW to develop a strategic plan for prioritizing recreational fisheries in light of their economic, social, and conservation benefits. The state should examine potential buyouts of non-selective, non-tribal commercial gillnet and troll fisheries that negatively impact ESA listed wild salmon & steelhead stocks and unnecessarily constrain recreational fisheries and local economies.
13-Jun-14	75 emails with same comment	Fishing: Promote Conservation through Harvest Management	Sportfishing license fee and excise tax revenue represents the largest source of revenue for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, allowing it to fulfill its conservation and management mission. Recreational anglers have been key supporters of selective fishing and upgrading our hatchery system to ensure that we can maintain fisheries while also recovering wild salmon populations. The ability of catch-and-release sport fisheries to harvest hatchery-reared salmon while releasing wild and endangered salmon unharmed is a critical tool in hatchery reform and wild salmon recovery efforts. Recreational anglers are also strong conservationists, often leading restoration and enhancement efforts. Anglers also continue to be the first to step up to fund conservation projects and programs. WDFW needs to focus their efforts on increasing environmentally-friendly, selective sportfishing activities and take action to reduce the impact that harmful non-selective commercial gillnet and troll fisheries have on ESA-listed salmon, steelhead, and valuable recreational fisheries.
5-Jun-14	Tim Gavin	Fishing: Promote Economy and Expand Fishing Opportunity	Access to many lakes in Central Washington close to fishing on September 30th. October can be one of the best months of the year for camping and fishing. I would like to see the season extended to October 31st. This would expand fishing opportunities and provide an economic boost to those who depend on sportsmen spending.

21-Apr-14	Nello Picinich, Coastal Conservatin Association	Fishing: Recreational Fishing	<p>There is an untold, but powerful economic story behind outdoor recreation in our state. Outdoor recreation provides tremendous benefits to our state, including license fee and tax revenues for state government that historically has been ignored by budget writers and is often times not given the consideration it is due.</p> <p>We believe that one key consideration of the Task Force should be to bring a greater awareness of the economic engine we call recreational fishing and potential opportunities for growth. There is an incredible opportunity here with your leadership for the Task Force to establish recreational fishing as an economic priority for our state.</p> <p>Unfortunately, in recent decades the policies and priorities of our state Department of Fish and Wildlife have contributed to the reductions we have seen in fishing opportunities for salmon and steelhead, particularly in the Puget Sound area. At one time, Washington was known as the Salmon Fishing Capitol of the World. Now anglers often travel to Oregon, British Columbia, and Alaska for their salmon and steelhead fishing experiences.</p> <p>Despite this, recreational fishing remains a billion dollar industry in Washington state that is directly responsible for over 16,000 jobs. The economic benefits are felt in urban and rural communities alike with boat sales, lodging, food, gas, and fishing equipment sales that support local economies. With over 1 million recreational fishing licenses sold annually and over 13 million angler days spent fishing in Washington, recreational fishing is incredibly important to many of your constituents. The revenue generated from recreational fishing license sales and federal excise taxes on sportfishing equipment now represents WDFW's largest single source of revenue. This source of revenue has grown significantly in recent years as the recreational fishing community has agreed to license fee increases and new endorsement fees. At the same time, state general fund support for WDFW has been slashed by nearly half.</p> <p>The Task Force has a unique opportunity to explore how we can maximize the economics of recreational fishing by providing more fishing opportunity. It is the opportunity to catch fish that brings the revenue to the State of Washington, and it is the public's perception of opportunity that drives sales of licenses and all of the goods and services that are associated with a recreational fishing trip.</p> <p>In light of the unprecedented fiscal challenge facing state government and the McCleary decision, the Task Force should also explore the implications of WDFW's growing reliance on license fee revenue. We believe there needs to be a concerted effort to grow the economic benefits of sportfishing and the total number of fishing licenses sold rather than proposals to increase license and endorsement fees. That will require more fisheries and increased fishing opportunity and we don't see that happening without a long-term strategic plan. Our four organizations would be pleased to offer recommendations within the Task Force process or any other venues appropriate for enhancing the economic, cultural, and economic benefits of healthy sport fisheries in Washington state. Let us know how we can best assist your efforts to promote policies that better recognize the economic benefits of sport fisheries and help create more recreational fishing opportunity.</p>
5-Jun-14	Richard Albrecht	Fishing: Strategic Plan for Recreational Fishing Needed	<p>Recreational Angling is a billion dollar business in Washington. I urge the Task force to take a fact-based view of the issues to promote increased angling opportunity in the long term. At the core of increased opportunity is conservation - both of fishery resources and of WDFW funds. License revenue should directly support recreational fisheries, which it does not now. Funds generated by fishing should support fishing, period. License fees should be higher, with graduated costs for youth anglers. I strongly support a river classification system and other important conservation regulations that have been so successful in British Columbia. Preserving and protecting our wild fish through decreased harvest, using the best available science, will increase the right kind of long term sustainable opportunity for all. A focus on short term opportunity gains from hatcheries and harvest has its place, but only in areas where wild stocks have been depleted and hatchery fish are predominant. Protect what is wild and good first through catch and release and other restrictive regulations - then create "hatchery zones" for harvest opportunity in areas where ecosystems are already compromised. Fund enforcement in "wild zones" and support harvest in "kill zones" through graduated license fees across river/lake/ocean classification systems. People will pay more for the experience they want to have.</p>
29-May-14	Margaret Fleek	Funding	<p>The state has an important role to play. RCO grants appear to be strongly biased to large jurisdictions, yet small areas like Skagit County have amazing affordable access to outdoor recreation.</p>
7-Jun-14	Theresa Julius	Funding	<p>I signed up today and found the site very disjointed and confusing. Even read the about MindMixer- didn't help - maybe this project is for the Facebook generation. I love our state parks and the state (legislature) needs to recognize that parks are important and put state parks back into the general fund.</p>

5-Jul-14	Jeff Lambert	Funding (Part 1)	<p>Sustainable Funding: My concern is a sustainable funding method for State Parks. It is vitally important to the State but particularly in Spokane with Mt Spokane, Riverside State Park, and the Centennial Trail providing the outdoor recreation opportunities. Other parts of the state have nearby US Forests or National Parks. As you know, Parks recreation includes not just picnics, hiking, mountain biking, equestrian users and nature viewers but also motorized recreation such as at the Seven Mile ORV park managed by Riverside State Park and funded through the NOVA program. The uncertain State Parks funding (at the whim of each legislative session) plays havoc on operations and maintenance of State Parks. The concept of self-funding State Parks is not possible without significant closures and service reductions. I am confident Washingtonians are willing to pay for State Parks through a dedicated tax or fee if given a chance to express that desire.</p> <p>Muddled Options: The funding options presented by the Task Force are quite muddled. The Task Force will get better responses if a range of options are described and presented. Those who favor self-funding parks have a clear message - oppose any tax or General Fund contributions to State Parks.</p> <p>\$10 Tab Fee: The Engage Washington question about \$10 tab fee versus the \$30 Discover Pass is confusing. Is the tab fee on top of the Discover Pass? Is the tab fee is voluntary - as the license option to donate to State Parks in the past. What is the revenue generated and is it adequate? Which agency gets the tab fee revenues - does DNR and Fish & Wildlife get a share? I support the \$10 Tab Fee dedicated to State Parks and Outdoor Recreation but the details are lacking. Having a clear statement about funding options is necessary. Even my organization members (Spokane Mountaineers, Inland Northwest Trails Coalition and the Lands Council) are uncertain about the options. It is hard to advocate for a particular option without a better description of the range of options. The option descriptions should include Revenue Raised and Consequences as well as comparison to historic funding levels that affects the Willingness to Pay More.</p> <p>Revenue Raised: The revenue raised is also in question - so if there are about 5.8 million autos, trucks and motorcycles registered in Washington State, my simple math shows \$58 million per year would be raised and \$116 million per biennium. The Discover Pass raises about \$32 Million per biennium or so. The projections of \$70 million per biennium were obviously too optimism to the detriment of the park system. Being able to tell the revenue raised is important.</p> <p>Willing to Pay More: The question about willing to pay more is also confusing. Looks like about half were willing to pay more and half were happy with the current cost. The problem is the baseline is unknown. Some pass \$30 for a Discover Pass and some pay nothing. My interpretation is most would be willing to have Parks well-funded - the method could cost a little more than \$30 per year and be acceptable.</p>
	Jeff Lambert	Funding (Part 2)	<p>Consequences: The consequences are always important. What are the consequences of the current funding levels for State Parks. If parks will be closed or reduced security, operations and maintenance - the answers about acceptable revenue enhancers might be different. Reduced security with limited rangers is a real problem. There are entire days without a ranger at Mt Spokane State Park - the largest State Park. I assume there is a very low Ranger presence at many of the State Parks. Right now Parks has established lower service levels and is using reserves. The reality is parks should be closed with the self-funding model. A possible consequence from "enterprise in Parks" is damage to or loss of many historic, educational, recreational, and ecological assets and values that are part of the State Parks mission.</p>
5-Aug-14	Paul Earsley	Funding	<p>Once again the tax payers are being asked for more money. Yet, personal incomes for average folks throughout the state/nation are in decline. Government at all levels need to spend tax money currently generated for which a given tax was levied, as opposed to spending the monies on those items that enhance ones political career. In our personal lives we all have limited resources for which we must make the hard choices as to how our limited income must be spent. It is past the time the various levels of government from local to state, to make the hard choices for what is best for their constituents and the state of Washington. In closing, I will state that in my view, the state of Washington currently generates a more than adequate level of income to fund the NECESSARY state funded operations. Therefore, I am strongly opposed to increasing or creating new sources of income.</p>

7-May-14	Anna Bukowski, Governor's Office Facebook Governor's Office (Part 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Increase minimum wage to \$15 statewide so people will have the time and money to enjoy recreational opportunities. <input type="checkbox"/> A week of out-door ed every school year - at least! You can lengthen the school year that way as well, while decreasing the burden of parents to find care for their children during the way too long summer break. Include community service for older kids and water safety for younger grades. <input type="checkbox"/> Create a Youth Corps or something similar where kids could get jobs working on trail crews or similar jobs. That money could be monetary or in the form of tuition credit or something. Not only have they earned something but they have a sense of pride and accomplishment in something that hopefully they will want to use and encourage others to use. <input type="checkbox"/> Greenways.. Off road paths that are safe for all users away from cars, that you can commute or recreate on. <input type="checkbox"/> Trails for older people -- easy to traverse and well-maintained. Walking as well as biking. <input type="checkbox"/> More state parks need to be made accessible to people with disabilities. <input type="checkbox"/> Drop the State Park access fee to \$2 a day and \$20 per year. <input type="checkbox"/> Engage with groups like Earthcorps to revitalize our state parks. So many of the roads and buildings are over 30 years old, and some of them date back to the WPA. There's plenty of opportunity to rebuild and improve. <input type="checkbox"/> Develop winter sports that use existing outdoor space: bubbles over outdoor tennis courts, platform tennis, outdoor covered ice rinks with skate rentals (Tacoma Polar Plaza), put hockey and skating within reach of all kids, develop local learn to si, board and X - country without 9 plus mile drives for beginners, more trails for biking and strollers from city to country, community events with scales for weight and pedometers in a year round Walk Washington event for health and fitness (how many walked the Narrows just for fun?) - all require employees to plan, market, supervise and teach but partner with RE I and health care et. And make moving Washingtonian move the economy and spirit of the state forward. <input type="checkbox"/> I love birding, so preserving more bird habitat would be awesome. <input type="checkbox"/> If the Discovery Pass is still needed then make it more accessible to the masses. Promote sites that showcase the region's beauty and easy access. Make sure trailheads are easy to find on Google/Bing and so well marked you can't miss them. Cater to new visitors. Veteran visitors won't care. Just a few ideas from the Cubmaster of Pack 59 in Lynnwood, your old district. Plenty more ideas if I put my mind to it Governor. Thanks for asking. <input type="checkbox"/> Its no secret what would lead to more opportunities. A law limiting liability for landowners so that more properties could made open for public use. Redeveloping the states hot spring and other water locations from a strictly wilderness use to permit the building of structures and roads for public use. You have an outdoors recreation policy the restricts recreation to a small portion of the population: hyper-healthy people with lots of free time, and the ability to spend money for extreme outdoor gear. Your recreation policy development does not make state, local or private lands available to the average user, families, people without great wealth (in money or time), the disabled, or anyone but a small group. Recreation is not viewed as a valuable use, and you don't have accompanying policies so that people will get time off to visit in the state. Recreational properties are locked up by laws and mis-intended policies for an exclusive use, and those very vocal groups want to keep it that way.
	Anna Bukowski, Governor's Office Facebook Governor's Office (Part 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Put in swings that hold wheel chairs. They have them, and children who are in wheel chairs can swing like other kids!! <input type="checkbox"/> military rates on passes/licenses for all veterans not just active duty. <input type="checkbox"/> One universal pass that replaces all of the permits needed to park and hike! <input type="checkbox"/> Bike trails. The users are way-motivated toward keeping things maintained. The paved trails are even wheelchair accessible. + mountain bike & cyclocross trails -- they'll help with forest preservation. Unfortunately the off road motorcycle folks that got going in the 1970s turned destructive <input type="checkbox"/> 1 weekend a month where people can pay a flat rate fare for the ferries-so those who normally cannot afford to go can have a chance to go somewhere. Sell tickets for it and when sold out for that sailing, they are sold out. 1st come first serve and should not impact lines anymore than usual. <input type="checkbox"/> How about take away the Discovery Pass, so that there no longer is an economic disincentive to seeing our beautiful regions. When you tax something, you get less of it. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, more greenways for bikers and walkers! Also, better online resources to help people find and use trails, that's pretty much where everyone's trip starts at this point and it can still be confusing to find consistent maps and information about what's out there. I should be able to type in seven mile trail outside of Seattle and get results. Not be confused. <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking trails, natural beauty, Japanese Gardens <input type="checkbox"/> Mountain Biking Trails <input type="checkbox"/> More money for parks! How about not making us pay to visit state parks. It's like paying to visit something you already own and for people without discovery passes paying is a big turn off for them to visit a state park. <input type="checkbox"/> Well-maintained marine buoys in sufficient numbers at public parks: safe places to spend the night for boaters, protection of bottomland from anchors, jobs for those installing and maintaining them. <input type="checkbox"/> Free access to state parks <input type="checkbox"/> Take back our state land from the federal government <input type="checkbox"/> While Wolves have perhaps brought tourism, also realize that they are hurting our ranchers, as a kid who has grown up on a farm in Eastern WA, I see how they are hurting our cattle, while I know that you probably could care less about ag/ranching, just realize Washington's cattle is very important to our local economies. <input type="checkbox"/> No hidden fees to enjoy Nature. <input type="checkbox"/> Let's just be careful where we allow development and save some lands for recreation/ nature <input type="checkbox"/> More hunting areas. <input type="checkbox"/> Include community swimming pools in funding for outdoor spaces. Unless our children learn to swim they cannot take full advantage of our abundant water resources. Please make funding available for improvements to existing pools and provide funding for more. Pools have closed during the downturn. The Evergreen pool in White Center Heights is barely hanging on. They need a grant for a new roof. <input type="checkbox"/> adequate public transportation to outdoor opportunities would really help. <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging those with few means by giving out an allotted amount of free passes to families with children to go to State & Federal parks. <input type="checkbox"/> I like it best when some of the places are dog or animal free. Tired of seeing all the poop left behind.

	Anna Bukowski, Governor's Office Governor's Office (Part 3)	Governor's Office Facebook	<input type="checkbox"/> bike lanes, and safe/wider shoulders for cycling in non-urban areas <input type="checkbox"/> more bike trails like the one down in orting! <input type="checkbox"/> The Burien Bird Festival was a delight! More opportunities to learn about habitats, native plants and animals, and stewardship of nature's gifts <input type="checkbox"/> now that Idaho has decided to sterilize its wilderness of wolves>> that wolf loving tourist money shouldn't be overlooked.. Yellowstone has estimated its wolves netted some \$15M in revenue from wolf watchers.
7-May-14	Anna Bukowski, Governor's Office	Governor's Office Twitter	<input type="checkbox"/> Drop the parking fees. <input type="checkbox"/> how about motorized access to gov owned land for starters. The state buys land "for the people" but 99.9% can't hike 10 miles. <input type="checkbox"/> Hire more park rangers. There's been a shortage and there's openings but the state budget hasn't allowed it for years now. <input type="checkbox"/> @americorps projects focusing on outdoor health! <input type="checkbox"/> open more fishing #SkagitKings. Legalize all UTV's on county roads under 35 mph in every county. <input type="checkbox"/> Allow hound hunting for cougars/bears and baiting for bears. Hunting can be a job creator if we're smart.
15-May-14	Anna Bukowski, Governor's Office	Governor's Office Twitter (Part 1)	<input type="checkbox"/> scrap the discovery pass <input type="checkbox"/> I support the discover pass and sno-park passes but we need payment meters at trailheads. Many ranger stations are closed on the weekends and it's hard to find places to purchase, especially early in the morning when most people head out for hiking or snowshoeing. <input type="checkbox"/> also, a good percentage of our citizens dont have transportation to these areas. Mostly low income families have 0 access. <input type="checkbox"/> I understand the reasoning behind the discovery pass, but I think parks should be open to everyone. Why can't Washington State parks be funded through state sales taxes? The state sales tax could be raised by 0.1% and that would likely be enough to cover the upkeep and services of the parks. Charging a \$30 fee creates a barrier that some people just cannot overcome. <input type="checkbox"/> Please, please eliminate the Discovery Pass. It is the only reason I don't go to state parks anymore. <input type="checkbox"/> Why charge the users fees...when nature and her beauty is for all of us to enjoy...local and state governments should have it in their budgets to maintain our parks and waterways! <input type="checkbox"/> Places where people can rent traditional wood rowboats (not canoes) and take them out on the lake. Places where people can rent bicycles to take on the trails. People can't afford their own boats or bikes or the places to store them. <input type="checkbox"/> There is too much private property on the shores of the lakes, such as Lake Sammamish. The shore lines and coast lines should be public. <input type="checkbox"/> I was just at the Nourishing Networks meeting and someone from one of the churches described an interesting program. They took the children from the shelter apartments on a bus tour to play in the snow during the winter. I assume they also supplied the winter clothing. <input type="checkbox"/> FREE Saturdays. <input type="checkbox"/> What I want is for everyone to be able to enjoy the great outdoors that they already pay for, not having to pay extra, like our diamond lanes. We already have paid for these roads many times over with our taxes and not being able to use the entire system is not right. (did I mention how stupid and useless the controlled on-ramp stop and go lights are?) <input type="checkbox"/> Nicer, cleaner bathrooms at trail heads. I take high schoolers on day hikes and we don't usually do a trip unless there are bathrooms available. Privacy is a concern for many youngsters especially on mixed gender trips. I would even support pay-per-use (like \$1-2) like they do in some European countries. <input type="checkbox"/> The rural areas need more walking/bike trails. <input type="checkbox"/> Keeping public areas open and at least minimally maintained, with organized volunteer teams if that's what it takes. <input type="checkbox"/> Do away with the Discover Pass. Access to public recreational land shouldn't be based on ability to pay. It's sad to see how empty some parks are now, while in the past they were full of families. <input type="checkbox"/> Repeal discover pass so that everyone can afford to use state parks <input type="checkbox"/> Scrap the passes too much money for them! <input type="checkbox"/> more trails in the central and eastern parts of the state...the Yakima valley is gorgeous, but limited.
	Anna Bukowski, Governor's Office Governor's Office (Part 2)	Governor's Office Twitter	<input type="checkbox"/> it is confusing. what pass is needed. i used to go to parks all the time but never do now. i do not want a ticket/fine/towed and do not have time to research and get whatever pass is needed. and i recall parking areas were not safe to leave vehicles.. public lands became non public. really short term thinking to do that. thanks for asking. <input type="checkbox"/> Parks...lots of parks...everywhere. <input type="checkbox"/> Stop the violent crime and make your parks and walking trails safe <input type="checkbox"/> Stop the destruction of our planet and state from the burning of fossil fuels! <input type="checkbox"/> One other comment - I think that those who embark on potentially dangerous activities, such as mountain climbing on certain peaks, should have to pay a high usage fee to do such an activity. If something happens the government has to spend money on helicopters and searches. Of course the searches are needed, but people undertaking potentially dangerous activities should pay for more of the cost of the government having special search and rescue operations. People who can't afford to drive a car or get to a state park are paying the taxes that pay for the rescue operations for highly technical athletic undertakings. <input type="checkbox"/> Bus tours and cruises for senior citizens, starting later in the morning or at noon. <input type="checkbox"/> Family friendly access to more snow activities including warming huts at snow parks; family guided hiking meetups on child/stroller friendly trails <input type="checkbox"/> Have park rangers give tours highlighting certain trails, plant species, wildlife, ect. <input type="checkbox"/> We could use some soccer fields in Tenino for kids to use. All local rec teams hold home games in tumwater, Lacey and Oly. <input type="checkbox"/> I support the Discover Pass and am happy to contribute to keep our parks funded and maintained. Please put recycling facilities in all parks. Thank you. <input type="checkbox"/> Less Government fees and regulations. The fewer the better.

6-Jun-14	Tim Hollingsworth, Lake Chelan Recreation Development Foundation	Lake Chelan Recreation Development Foundation	<p>Ideas for State Level Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To the extent feasible, consolidation of jurisdiction in these areas, preferably into the agencies more focused on recreational purposes. • Legislation and administrative action that emphasizes the importance of recreational development in these urban/wild interface areas across jurisdictional boundaries. • Legislation and administrative policies that improve meaningful incentives and protection for private landowners and developers to contribute to the regional recreational infrastructure. • Legislation that improves the tools for counties and cities to adopt development and planning policies and regulations that similarly encourage private landowner and developer participation. • Development of and funding for Recreation Planning Areas that bring together Federal, State and Local managers with local users and stakeholders into formal planning groups. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o These groups would develop effective recreation plans that take advantage of the public lands; o Investigate common interests with adjacent private landowners and where possible incorporate these lands into the plan; o Provide strategies for implanting the plan by suggesting funding sources; o Streamline the permitting procedures and encouraging volunteer participation.
1-Jul-14	Stephanie Hamilton	Marine tourism	<p>I am writing on behalf of the board of directors of the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce in support of your efforts on the Blue Ribbon Task Force for Outdoor Recreation, specifically in support of the Marine Tourism Bill. So you know, there are 38 marine businesses within Anacortes. This number grows when you think about all the fun tourist activities in our downtown core. Boating is the centerpiece of the Anacortes economy. Unfortunately, our neighbors in Sidney B.C. have full marinas while many of my members are struggling to hold on. Our competitors in Canada allow U.S. boats to stay there 363 days a year without owing any tax. Boat owners move their boats (legally) for 48 hours to Port Angeles and then return to Sidney, year after year. We are losing out. This bill would allow us to level the playing field a bit. The Marine Tourism Bill will keep boats in our marinas longer, meaning more customers for our local economy. The economic impact would be gigantic for our community. It will stabilize our waterfront and help our local marinas, boatyards, electricians, welders, painters, carpenters benefit when this boat is kept in our state's waters. Additionally, retailers, restaurants and hotels would see a spike. Thank you for your consideration as you put together your recommendations for critical priorities and let's finally level the playing field here in Washington State.</p>
14-Jul-14	David King, Mayor Port Townsend	Marine tourism	<p>As Mayor of the City of Port Townsend I am sending this letter to you in support of your efforts on the Blue Ribbon Task Force for Outdoor Recreation and specifically to re-state our support of the Marine Tourism Bill. As we wean ourselves from dependence on the extraction industries of timber and fishing and pursue a sustainable future, thriving marine trades are critical to the economies of the waterfront communities in Northwest Washington. By expanding cruising permits to six months for entity-owned boats (such as owned by a limited liability company), the bill allows this class of out-of-state boats a longer stay in Washington without having to pay a 10% use tax. As such:</p> <p>The bill puts entity-owned boat on the same footing as individually-owned boats. There is no basis for the current difference in treatment. As we understand it, when the bill was originally passed in 2007, the difference in treatment resulted simply from legislative oversight and the failure to understand the impacts of not allowing both individually-owned and entity-owned boats the same cruising permit treatment.</p> <p>The bill would greatly help our local marinas, boatyards, and skilled marine workers, and our local economy in general. Port Townsend as you know has a strong marine trades economy. Making it easier for boats to stay longer here in Port Townsend and other locations in Washington State waters simply makes good economic sense.</p> <p>The recent Hebert Study shows that if the bill is passed the state receives a stunning \$17M in new revenue from the additional work that will be done in Washington. The state Department of Revenue estimate of tax losses of \$5. 5M is based on an assumption that the state will collect taxes after the current 60 day allowance expires. But this overlooks that many out of state boaters may not visit the state in the first place, or move before 60 days to avoid the use tax.</p> <p>The bill greatly levels the playing field with our competitors in British Columbia - where a boater can stay for up to a year without paying any tax. Boat owners move their boats (legally) for 48 hours to Port Angeles and then return to Sidney, year after year. We are losing out if all boaters, not just individually-owned boats, are not allowed extended cruising permits of up to six months (or more).</p>
14-Jul-14	Tom Norwalk, Visit Seattle	Marine tourism	<p>This is to support your efforts on the Blue Ribbon Task Force for Outdoor Recreation, specifically in support of the Marine Tourism Bill. It's said that one in four Seattleites own some kind of boat. Boating is major feature of our lifestyle, and our tourism economy in Seattle and King County includes many marine businesses.</p> <p>However, we're missing an opportunity to maximize the positive economic impact of such tourism because current state law limits the length of stay of visiting boaters by imposing restrictive taxes. Our tourism competitors in Canada allow U.S. boats to stay there 363 days a year without owing any tax.</p> <p>The Marine Tourism Bill will keep boats in our marinas longer and expand the economic benefit across our economy. In addition to helping local marinas, boatyards, electricians, welders, painters, carpenters and other marine trades, we expect that shore side tourism businesses will greatly benefit, including retail shops, restaurants, cultural attractions and many other businesses.</p>

15-Jul-14	Joe McWilliams, Port of Seattle	Marine tourism	<p>As the owner and operator of multiple facilities in King County, including Sea-Tac Airport, marine cargo-handling facilities, cruise terminals, marinas, maritime industrial centers and public open space, the Port of Seattle facilities provide an essential link to opportunities for business and recreation, both for residents and visitors to our state. //The Port is a strong supporter of tourism and marketing efforts in this state, and is a founding member of the Washington Tourism Alliance, which stepped up to continue marketing efforts for the state after state budget support was eliminated. We know first-hand the tremendous draw Washington state has for visitors, across all types of recreation, and know that we must compete to keep that business. //In Seattle, I oversee operations at Fishermen's Terminal, which is celebrating its centennial this year, Shilshole Bay Marina, Bell Harbor Marina and Pier, Harbor Island Marina, Pier 90/91 and the Maritime Industrial Center, which is home to dozens of maritime and marine-related businesses supporting commercial and recreational boating in the state. I would ask your support for two of our priorities for residents and visitors:</p> <p>We encourage the state to maintain grant programs such as the Boating Facilities Program, the Boating Infrastructure Grant program and the State Park Pump-Out Grant Program, to assist facility operators with investments to keep and maintain visitors and tenants to boating facilities.</p> <p>We also support efforts to pass a Marine Tourism bill, to allow boating visitors to stay longer in state waters, and to keep that recreational boat traffic in Washington state. We have many businesses who provision, repair and enhance all sizes of recreational vessels. Under current law, we have had boats leave our marinas and travel out of state before the 60-day tax deadline arrives. Businesses are able to bill thousands of dollars of work for these boats while they are here and we support efforts to keep them here and generate jobs and revenue in the state. These are important tools for our state to build on our natural advantages in recreation, and the tremendous investment many communities have made in this part of our state's economy. I ask for your support for a marine tourism bill, and to support and maintain important grant programs to benefit our state.</p>
17-Jul-14	Teresa Verraes, ED, Jefferson County Chamber	Marine tourism	<p>I am writing on behalf of the board of directors of the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce in support of your efforts on the Blue Ribbon Task Force for Outdoor Recreation, specifically in support of the Marine Tourism Bill.</p> <p>Port Townsend's economy relies heavily on our marine trades businesses. Unfortunately, our neighbors in Sidney B.C. have full marinas while many of our member businesses are struggling to hold on. Our competitors in Canada allow U.S. boats to stay there 363 days a year without owing any tax. Boat owners move their boats (legally) for 48 hours to Port Angeles and then return to Sidney, year after year. We are losing out.</p> <p>This bill would allow us to level the playing field a bit. The Marine Tourism Bill will keep boats in our marinas longer, meaning more customers for our local economy.</p> <p>The economic impact would be incredible for our community. It would help our local marinas, boatyards, electricians, welders, painters and carpenters for these vessels to remain in our waters. Additionally, retailers, restaurants and hotels would see increases in revenue.</p>
17-Jul-14	Mayor Kelli Linville, City of Bellingham	Marine tourism	<p>I am writing in support of the Blue Ribbon Task Force's efforts to promote Washington's outdoor recreation economy. As the Task Force develops strategies, actions, and recommendations to manage, transform, and leverage Washington's outdoor recreation assets and state programs, I urge you to recommend the passage of a Marine Tourism Bill which will remove disincentives for out-of-state boaters to visit and stay in Washington harbors. Out-of-state boaters are an important part of the outdoor recreation economy contributing millions of dollars to community tourism and businesses and generating tax revenue which supports state and local services.</p> <p>Washington levies a substantial and disproportionate tax on some out-of-state recreational vessels which serves as a disincentive for these boaters to visit and stay in Washington harbors. Out-of-state boats owned in partnership must pay a use tax of about 1- percent of the boat's value if they remain in Washington for more than 60 days. Rather than staying at local ports, servicing their boats in local shops, and spending money at local businesses; out-of-state boaters have a significant financial incentive to take a short cruise to British Columbia where they can avoid paying Washington's punitive use tax and stay for up to a year without being taxed.</p> <p>The marine trades cluster is a critical part of Bellingham's regional economy and culture. Whatcom County's working waterfront and other water based recreation provides a supply of year-round, family-wage jobs which has a ripple effect throughout the local and regional economy and contribute directly to the economy of Bellingham. Despite the tremendous economic importance of the marine trades sector, business development and job creation continue to be limited by the tax levied on out-of-state recreational vessels remaining in Washington for more than 60 days.</p> <p>The passage of a Marine Tourism Bill will greatly benefit the local and regional economy including outdoor recreational businesses. Outdoor recreation plays an important role in the economy and quality of life in Bellingham and is essential for the area's tourism and businesses. The breadth of outdoor recreation opportunities found in Whatcom County is often used as an employment recruitment tool by businesses and industry. Thank you for considering adding the support of the Blue Ribbon Task Force to this important legislation which will grow Washington's outdoor recreation economy and stimulate its marine trades cluster.</p>

4-Aug-14	Joe Leitzinger	Marine tourism	<p>It is my understanding the state of WA has a outdoor recreation Task Force assigned to access and make recommendations on our marine resource. I am a family of three, 58 years old, an avid boating family. I was born and raised in Tacoma. My father also an avid boater took my family including three brothers and my mom on many boating trips through south Puget Sound and the San Juan/Gulf Islands. We have become a family of boaters including six yearly registered boats and trailers. We buy 4 - 5 complete salt water and fresh water and shell fish licenses every year. We all love the Puget Sound and take full advantage of the marine state parks.</p> <p>I support funding WA State Marine Parks, the marine tourism bill, and would like protect the Recreation resource account and would like to stop diversion from this account to non related recreational use. I feel we need to do a better job of controlling Native American fishing on the Puget Sound & Straights and coastal waters and rivers. I have watched for years now the tribal harvesting of Dungeness crab, and Goeduck, they blow the bottom with hydraulic pumps to expose the Goeduck and kill the surrounding eco system in the process. The recent return of Dungeness Crab to South Sound is being decimated by non regulated fisheries by tribal interest. The Salmon fisheries is also being affected by river netting and fishing in non designated areas. When we witness these offenses and report to Department Fish and Game we are told there is nothing they can do, and are asked to report these offenses to the local Tribes.</p> <p>This is met by un-returned phone calls and or once we have reported to the Tribal Leaders with video and pictures as evidence, we get know response. The Salmon sport fishing counts continue to decline on our inland waters because of Tribal and commercial over fishing. The license fee are almost \$100 for sport fishing and the sport fishing is catch ratio to days on the water is depressing. Yesterday I spent \$500 on sport fishing gear at Sportco and if the fishing does not improve our boat sales, tackle and bait and general marine industry will be at stake.</p>
4-Aug-14	Mark Flaten	Marine tourism	<p>You have a unique body of water here in Washington State. The Puget Sound is not found anywhere else in the WORLD. //If you are a boater, then you know exactly what I am talking about... If you are not then either "get out there" or resign your appointment, because you have no clue what "it is about". As a born and raised Washingtonian, I grow weary of seeing our tax dollars squandered, our natural resources exploited, our government officials thinking they know more then the populace that put them there. //I grew up near the shores of Three Tree Point in Burien. My fondest memories are being a teenager on the Puget Sound in a friends boat. I have owned a boat for all of my adult life and today continue to do so...</p> <p>DOING THE RIGHT THING IS ALWAYS THE RIGHT THING TO DO !!!!</p> <p>PS: Sorry, here is the right thing to do >>>RBAW-NMTA letter that urges the Task Force to promote the "marine tourism bill" to get large boats to stay in our waters for extended periods; to protect the "Recreation Resource Account" for boating facilities; to lift a 'lid' that currently results in some diversions of funding for non-highway-purpose accounts; and to ensure better predictability and information regarding fishing seasons.</p>
8-Aug-14	Glenn Carlson, Port of Grapeview	Marine tourism	<p>The Port of Grapeview is responsible for a boat launch and recreational area in North Case Inlet. In the summer, our population grows from 60,000 to 100,000. On the weekend of July 30th of this year we experienced over 1200 movements at our boat ramp as empirically gathered by our camera.</p> <p>In recent years activity has exploded at our launch ramp. Most especially in kayak activity because of the vast areas of smooth water and sights to see on Case Inlet. The tourists make heavy use of the adjacent Fair Harbor Marina where marine fuel (non-ethanol) is available along with restrooms and a store to purchase sundry items. The Marine Tourism Bill is important to us.</p> <p>A major priority for us is restoring the funding to the Recreational Conservation Office's Boating Facilities Fund. The Port of Grapeview is currently requesting funding to restore our launch ramp. Our ramp is over 50 years old and literally crumbling.</p> <p>We are the only low tide launch on Case Inlet. Without this funding we may be forced to condemn the ramp. The RCO conducted a survey of Washington's boaters several years ago which identified the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the question as to what facilities need to be improved, 45% stated maintenance of our present boat ramps. • On the question from 1-10 as to what are the motor-boating priorities – 8.3 said they wanted functional boat launches. • We also support the other issues raised by the Recreational Boating Association of Washington as they fully understand the economic impact of boating in Washington State and most especially Puget Sound. Then there's the human side, the age old need to relax and enjoy one's self after financially supporting the infrastructure of both Washingtons.
11-Aug-14	Stephen Hulsizer	Marine tourism	<p>I do not support any sales tax exemption at any level for recreational boats. Any exemption creates an appearance that we boaters are "holier than thou".</p>

6-Jun-14	James DeSalvo, Methow Valley Sport Trails Association	Methow Valley Sport Trails Association	<p>Policy Recommendations & Rationales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washington state should develop a unified strategy to “import” recreationalist and establish our state as the recreation leader. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Secure recreational access with limited barriers to entry, especially for kids. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Free access for kids in all recreational ventures. The economics actually work here for most rec operations. If we educate an entire generation on the health and economic benefits of recreation we are building an army of recreation advocates for the future. □ Limit parking pass requirements that create barriers to recreational access and often don't even fund the enforcement/payment programs. o Create a Landowner culture that embraces recreation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Limited liability for rec operations on all lands □ Advertise the benefits to land value (in the Methow your land valley increases 14% if you have a trail running through or near your property. □ Get major land agencies, like the F.S., to recognize the economic driver that recreation is to the communities they operate in and around. It may not make them money directly but it does support the economic vitality of the communities they operate in. • Create a state wide resource to more effectively pursue funding. This could be local and state dollars explained but most importantly this would be a resource for state organizations to secure federal funding for state recreation.
31-Jul-14	Outdoor Alliance Washington - The Access Fund, American Alpine Club, American Whitewater, El Sendero Backcountry Ski Club, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, The Mountaineers, Washington Climbers Coalition and Washington Trails Association	Outdoor Alliance Washington (Part 1)	<p>1) Seek greater opportunities for public-private partnerships on state lands</p> <p>Issue</p> <p>For some areas and trails, Washington's outdoor recreation and state land agencies could benefit from a greater willingness to partner together on the part of local land managers. At Washington State Parks, the 2014 task force is a perfect follow-up to the Transformation Strategy of 2013 to "promote meaningful opportunities for volunteers, friends and donors" and "form strategic partnerships with other agencies, tribes and nonprofits."</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>Further direction from the task force, Governor, and state agency directors would encourage greater partnerships at the local level. Residents and visitors of Washington are fortunate to experience the benefits of many positive public-private partnerships where non-profit organizations can help coordinate, fundraise, install improvements, provide volunteer support, help manage recreational resources, educate its user group and aid in protecting these areas' natural resources. While Outdoor Alliance Washington's organizations already provide substantial support to state land agencies that manage important recreational opportunities, the potential exists to greatly increase partnerships and, in turn, public benefits. For example, these partnerships can be expanded in many areas, including state trust lands and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife lands (WDFW). We recognize that the primary purpose of state trust lands is often timber sales, grazing leases, and other revenue-generating uses to fund public schools and other critical public services. As such, outdoor recreation opportunities are not always an appropriate fit depending on the area, nature of the activity and scope of use. However, extensive opportunities exist to explore and consider recreation as a secondary use. Timber activities and human-powered recreation are not mutually exclusive when managed in partnership with nonprofit support and resources.</p> <p>Examples of a successful partnerships that should be expanded and replicated include the ski hut system maintained by Mount Tahoma Trails Association; building and maintaining multi-use trails by Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance on the Washington Department of Natural Resource's Tiger Mountain State Forest; the partnership between Washington Climbers Coalition and Forks of the Sky State Park at the Index Town Walls; and the efforts of Mountains to Sound Greenway to facilitate an integrated system of trails among different land managers and user groups. On WDFW lands where wildlife protection and traditional wildlife-dependent activities such as fishing and hunting are prioritized, there is a growing recognition that other human-powered recreation uses can also be compatible on these lands and land managers should openly explore partnerships with nonprofits to help manage these low-impact uses. When successfully carried out, land managers can find their efforts and tax dollars matched by nonprofit partners and volunteers. For example, Washington Trails Association partnered with 26 land managers to improve 190 trails with more than 1,100 days of trail work in 2013 for a value of \$1.5 million. In a time of diminishing appreciation of nature and reduced visitation of Washington's amazing state resources, land managers should employ a public process and adaptive management practices that encourage more citizens to visit and serve as stewards of our state lands.</p>

Outdoor Alliance Washington	Outdoor Alliance Washington (Part 2)	<p>2) Create a simpler, more stream-lined pass for land access</p> <p>Issue</p> <p>Many citizens, and many of our members, continually express frustration about the confusion caused by multiple passes for land access. While the Discover Pass can be used in many areas of Washington, the state's Sno-Park permits are needed to access many areas in winter, fish and wildlife areas have a different access plan and county roads often transect other lands. Meanwhile, the U.S. Forest Service's Northwest Forest Pass is used for many federal recreation sites, adding confusion for recreationists who are uncertain about which pass is needed for their intended outing. For example, a Nordic skier headed to Snoqualmie Pass needs a different set of passes depending on which trailhead they use, a situation that is not obvious to someone seeking winter recreation opportunities for the first time.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>We recommend a plan to simplify access to the many types of public lands be created and implemented to further encourage people to get outside in Washington state while lowering costs by eliminating redundant administration expenses. Pass fees could be adjusted to cover the greater combined costs of multiple agencies and funds could be distributed to the respective agencies according to visitor and sales data. The authority for multi-entity pass agreements between federal and state agencies currently exists with the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act.³ At a minimum, trailhead signage can be significantly improved to clearly inform users about the correct pass to display and agencies should provide more readily available and user-friendly methods of payment.</p> <p>3) Develop a State of Washington Office of Outdoor Recreation.</p> <p>Issue</p> <p>With no long-term state focus on outdoor recreation, we are concerned that Washington is missing many opportunities to grow and benefit from our recreation economy.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Office of Outdoor Recreation would be directed to develop and implement a vision and strategic plan to enhance Washington State's outdoor recreation. The State of Utah's new Office of Outdoor Recreation is an example of a state making outdoor recreation an integral part of its identity, tourism and economic driver. The Washington state office could provide continuous support, resources and active encouragement to state agencies as well as federal, county and local partners that own and manage important state outdoor resources. Washington state currently has a Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), but the mission, values, and goals of this agency are primarily focused on distribution and management of grants. As an alternative to establishing a new department, it may be possible to broaden the scope of RCO to actively promote our state's natural assets and their ability to sustain economic growth and quality-of-life dividends for years to come.</p>
Outdoor Alliance Washington	Outdoor Alliance Washington (Part 3)	<p>4) Develop a Task Force to research new mechanisms for funding Washington State's parks and other state lands.</p> <p>Issue</p> <p>Funding for our state public lands is chronically a problem.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>We would like to see the task force research innovative funding models from around the United States and other countries to increase funding to state parks and other state lands, and outdoor recreation infrastructure, education and maintenance for facilities and trails. As one example, Great Outdoors Colorado invests a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds to help preserve and enhance the state's parks, trails, wildlife, rivers and open spaces.</p> <p>5) Increase support between federal and state agencies and programs and look for new partnerships.</p> <p>Issue</p> <p>Public lands comprise a total of 17.5 million acres in Washington State. Of that, 13.0 million acres are federal (74% of all public land in Washington), 3.8 million are state (22%) and 659,000 acres are locally owned or managed (4%).⁴ Maintenance backlogs for recreational trails and access roads have increased significantly in the past few decades and the backlogs now total an estimated figure of well over \$100 million.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>State interest and support of federal recreation lands should be increased and new partnerships should be identified to help bolster recreation and access on federal lands. Adequate funding and resources could be provided, in part, through unique state-federal partnerships that enhance improvements and maintenance on federal lands. In addition, active state support of federal funding programs such as Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Recreational Trails Program (through TAP), Land and Water Conservation Fund and other funding initiatives should continue. Given the importance of these federal funding sources for recreation in our state, the Governor's office needs to continually highlight the importance of these programs with the state legislature, Congressional delegation and colleagues at the Western Governor's Association.</p>

Outdoor Alliance Washington	Outdoor Alliance Washington (Part 4)	<p>6) Form a long-term advisory committee on outdoor recreation in Washington State</p> <p>Issue</p> <p>We are concerned that this focus on outdoor recreation will end when the Task Force is dissolved in September.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>We recommend that a long-term advisory committee on outdoor recreation be created so that this effort doesn't end with the conclusion of the task force. This group should be made up of volunteer members to ensure fiscal longevity and sustainability.</p> <p>7) Provide and protect recreational opportunities and access close to population centers</p> <p>Issue</p> <p>Suburban sprawl and development in some formerly undeveloped areas even in the city take areas close-in out of recreational usage, requiring people to go further from where they live in order to find open space or making it effectively impossible for large numbers of citizens. A combination of factors including law enforcement problems, trash dumping, and misuse or overuse issues tend to drive road closures and even trail closures in areas that are easy to reach.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>Recreational opportunities like hiking and cycling trails, swimming holes, or climbing areas closer to population centers would be easier to reach for many different populations, encouraging more Washingtonians to get outside. Outdoor recreation facilities closer to urban centers would serve more people and be more environmentally responsible for them to use. Outdoor Alliance Washington partners find that regular use by human-powered recreationists often reduces inappropriate activities common at urban or suburban recreational areas such as vandalism and dumping. Community planning efforts and master development plans should be required to include a recreation plan for trails for walking and biking that create linkages with regional trail networks. Reconstruction of bridges should include a formal evaluation of opportunities for water access within the public right-of-way as required in other states.</p>
31-Jul-14	Outdoor Industry Association	Outdoor Industry Association <p>We strongly urge Governor Inslee to formally recognize outdoor recreation as an economic driver in Washington and create an office of the Outdoor Recreation "ombudsman" to develop and coordinate the state's economic investment in, and benefits from, outdoor recreation as well as manage the state's outdoor recreation vision. One possibility would be to elevate the role of the RCO into this position.</p> <p>We envision this office would foster long-term, cross-agency coordination in growing the outdoor recreation sector and in cultivating its many direct and indirect economic benefits. Direct benefits include the development and sale of outdoor goods and apparel, as well as extensive travel and tourism across the state. Indirect benefits of outdoor recreation include public health, deeper environmental awareness, more cohesive communities and an overall higher quality of life across Washington – with quality of life serving as a draw for new companies and workers.</p> <p>We envision this office would serve as a convener for the multiple stakeholders in recreation by developing an Outdoor Recreation Advisory Group and hosting an annual Outdoor Recreation Summit.</p> <p>OIA can support this initiative by providing further recommendations and support on how to grow the outdoor industry through an office of outdoor recreation based on Utah's model and efforts in other states to organize around the outdoor recreation economy. OIA can connect this office with the industry in Washington State and solicit involvement and input from its 95 member companies. OIA can assist with capacity in writing the Outdoor Recreation Vision report to serve as the directive for the office as we have considerable staff expertise and assisted Utah in the drafting of their plan. Washington is a step ahead in writing this directive as the recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Task Force may very well spell out the basis for the state's recreation vision.</p>
12-May-14	Patti Miller-Crowley	Passes, Permits & Fees <p>1. If you want to turn off a lot of people from participating in this process, make them open an account with yet another login and password to remember!</p> <p>2. Oregon has a day pass costs of \$5 for their state parks—which is half of what a day pass costs in Washington. I don't know if they set it so high thinking that if people have to pay that much for a single day they will go ahead and invest \$30 to get an annual pass. However, for low income, having a day pass fee of \$10 is more likely to discourage them from going to a state park at all rather than having them try to come up with \$30 for something they may or may not be able to use.</p> <p>3. Speaking of low income and state parks, they should coordinate with transit agencies to try to provide weekend service (even if only once going mid-morning and one returning late afternoon) to parks and /or public shuttle locations and then advertise the heck out of the service with public service announcements.</p> <p>4. Provide information on where people can rent or borrow outdoor gear.</p>

18-Jun-14	Lunell Haught	Passes, Permits & Fees	<p>There is nothing more distressing to mothers/fathers than children begging to 'buy' something, which is why I made Sekani Adventure Day's commercial free. It isn't all about getting people to spend money at the park. I have tabled too many events in riverfront park where I see the constant 'wheeling' of children and it just looks miserable. Don't put the temptation there - if they can barely afford a discovery pass, they don't need \$5.00 water! (I know, I'm on a rant here, but really, does it all have to be the market? can't we be more imaginative?) Going there should be engaging (what to see/do - interpretive stuff - is cool ... like why we don't 'bog' etc - I really don't think people know they are destroying stuff.) help people not feel uncomfortable, let them know how to own a piece of it - know how to walk through it with the ease they would walk through a mall.</p>
9-Jul-14	Dick Hall	Passes, Permits & Fees	<p>My wife and I are retired and have traveled all 48 states over the last 26 years. We live in Grapeview and have raised our 4 children here...and they have provided us with 9 beautiful grand children. The reason for the email is to beg the commission to find a way of reducing the cost of our State Parks. We have enjoyed staying at many many state parks during our travels across this beautiful nation. We DO NOT stay at Washington State Parks except as a last result. The reason is the cost. Only one state we have traveled in has prices as high as this state. That state is California. A week or so ago we called to make a reservation at Pacific Beach State Park for a Sunday and Monday night. We figured the park would have openings as the weekend was pretty much over. We have a camper. The sites only have electric. Not water or sewer. We were told it would cost \$86. Wow...\$43/night. Instead went to a private RV Park and paid \$30/night with full hook ups. When we came by the park Tuesday morning on way home the park was about 1/3 full. This situation is not uncommon. Other than weekends we see many unoccupied spots. Our children don't have much money and can't camp in our parks very often due to the cost. My contention is that if the prices were lower they spots would have more campers. The parks would make the same money due to volume. We talked to several park hosts who work in the parks and they say the biggest complaint of folks staying there is the cost. My recommendations is for the Commission to take any and/or all of the following actions to reduce cost at the parks. These actions could be part of a two year trial period to see if necessary revenue can be maintained with lower prices and increased volume.</p> <p>Reduce staff by 10%</p> <p>Advertise the new low prices</p> <p>Provide for an additional camp host to maintain the parks *If possible contract to the private sector for any repairs/work that the state may be doing. Have a much more reduced price of seniors during the work week. Work hard with the legislators to ensure some revenue is available if necessary*. Allow the local community near a park to help maintain the park as volunteers (I would be glad to help at my local parks) Thank you for your time. I would sure like to hear from the commission that some actions are in the works to bring the parks costs in line with the other states.</p>
21-Jul-14	Neil Morgan	Public process (Part 1)	<p>I want to express my total dissatisfaction with the time frame given to the task force report process being prepared for our Governor. Action like this has strengthened my perception that comments from the public are not read nor are they considered. The task force via your office has indicated "developing recommendations due to the governor by September 1". Is this "recommendations" the draft report that will be made available in late August for comments? You give an unspecified period of time for comment but I suspect it will be less than four days. It is not difficult for me to view your process as a total waste of time and effort. I will however, go over it with a fine tooth comb, submit my comments, consequences of action and my recommendations. There won't even be sufficient time to read the draft, submit comments and for the task force to read those comments let alone incorporate them in the document being delivered to the Governor. Is the final report indicated as being posted before September 15th one signed and enacted?</p> <p>Question asked from the public are in essence, answers to a survey the task force has apparently put together and used as a basis for justification. Often, a comment or answer could not be given as insufficient information was not provided. The majority of the question wanted a "Yes"/" No" answer yet the answer was dependent on this insufficient information, therefore I for one did not answer the question. It is obvious that asking this type of question is a means satisfying a survey developed by the task force and used to justify specific position taken on recreation matters. To put it bluntly, this Governor wants the creation of or continuation of specific programs and a means for funding these programs. Surveys are often used to justify these wants although one must insure the outcome of the survey doers in fact support their position.</p> <p>I for one believe the intent of this report is finding a means to fund recreation, specifically our state parks. As I understand it, a few years ago the decision was made to eliminate or greatly reduce the funds available to state parks from the General Fund. This decision justified the creation of the "Access Pass" required only by vehicles considered street legal. Hikers, bicycle riders and horse riders among others are users of recreation facilities including those within the state parks and considered exempt from this requirement.</p> <p>I now understand the issue of insufficient funding remains and all attempts are being made to justify additional funding sources. I recognize the need but feel all users should step up to the plate and become a team player not a selected few. Apparently the state doesn't approve of this and continues to subject specific users to "increased cost or no access" while allowing others free access. It is difficult for me to comprehend the effectiveness of this state's policy of discrimination based on individual choice of recreational types.</p> <p>Presently I understand there is an attempt to subject cars, trucks, motorcycles and recreational vehicles to a \$10.00 license surcharge for a Discover Pass. Again, this reflects the attitude of the task force in their belief of others should be responsible to support Washington State Dept of Natural Resources, Washington State Dept of Wildlife and Washington State Parks. I furthermore ask the reasoning for the disproportional percentage of every dollar collected to be divided to each of these departments.</p>

19-Aug-14	Jan North	Passes, Permits & Fees	<p>I express these comments as an individual with many years of experience working with the Fort Worden Advisory Committee, The Port Townsend Marine Science Center, and a previous board member of the Peninsula Trails Association.</p> <p>I believe it is imperative to create a long-term sustainable source of funding for Washington State Parks. If one believes -- as I do -- that opportunities for recreation are as valid a state function as governance, schools, courts, and roads, then citizens must support Washington State Parks as they do these other functions.</p> <p>The Discover Pass has had a negative and limiting effect on encouraging family outdoor activities at Fort Worden. I won't cite specific numbers here, but from my years of personal experience as a docent at the Marine Science Center and as a Trail Team member, family access to these activities is discouraged by the need for a Discover Pass. By discontinuing the Discover Pass and implementing a mandatory fee of \$10 for car, truck, and RV license registration would more than cover an adequate budget for our State Parks. Out-of-State licenses would be required to pay the Discover Pass fee.</p> <p>At the very least, an OPT OUT amount of \$10 on license registration would help supplement the revenue from the Discover Pass, which has not brought in the revenue projected when it was implemented. Another idea would be to add a \$2/night fee to RV and campsites, or offer the \$30 year Discover Pass.</p>
	Neil Morgan	Public process (Part 2)	<p>This attitude from the state has dramatically damaged the attitudes of users the state has decided should be solely responsible. The volunteered hours by many users has decreased, the feeling of being "part of the solution" is now gone, the perception our agencies abilities is close to hitting the bottom of the bucket. The state considers individual users as "part of the problem" rather than "part of the solution " thus destroying many valuable opportunities individuals can contribute.</p> <p>It is high time the state addressed the issue of including individual users and not depending on organized groups in their management programs. The technique of forming recreational management teams made up of individual users, recreational groups, owners and managers has been proven throughout this county as a valuable tool to effectively manage different forms of recreation but this state has completely closed their eyes to this concept.</p> <p>Recapping the Access Pass, I ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Why aren't all users required to pay for the pass? <input type="checkbox"/> What happened to the General Fund funding the state parks once received? <input type="checkbox"/> Are those funds being redirected to programs which, based on their individual scope/merits are difficult to fund? <input type="checkbox"/> Why do funds seem to be available to purchase lands for state parks while no funds are available to maintain what we presently have?
21-Aug-14	Dan Fallstrom, Washington State Snowmobile Association	Snowmobiles	<p>The Washington State Snowmobile Association (WSSA) represents snowmobilers in WA State with membership of over 2,200 families and nearly 100 snowmobile related businesses. Snowmobiles are very popular in WA State with 36,000 registered snowmobiles. The economic impact of snowmobiling is conservatively estimated to be \$70 to \$90 million per year.</p> <p>WSSA also puts together their WSSA Snowmobile Expo and Swap Meet each year; the largest of its kind west of Minneapolis! Attendance at Expo averages over 8,000 visitors and has peaked at more than 10,000 people during its two days at the Western Washington Fairgrounds in Puyallup. And WA State snowmobilers generously volunteer thousands of hours a year to help keep up the Sno-Park trails..</p> <p>The WSSA supports Recommendation 2 of the Outdoor Recreation Task Force Subcommittee Recommendations on How to Finance Outdoor Recreation by lifting the lid on non-highway gas tax accounts. Such legislation would remove the cap on the fuel tax refund for recreational accounts (Marine/NOVA/Snowmobile) that is presently limited to 23 cents/gallon of the state fuel tax rate currently at 37.5 cents/gallon.</p> <p>The attached Joint Transportation Committee January 12, 2011, Final Report on the "Review of Fuel Tax Refunds for Nonhighway or Off-Road Use of Gasoline" reports the fuel tax refunds for nonhighway or off-road use of gasoline has additional future needs of at least \$313.9 million over 10 years that could be funded if additional resources were made available for off-road, marine, and snowmobile funding needs. This future need is conservative, as it included only two cities and no information was provided from the counties.</p> <p>The removal of the lid would raise funding for the Marine, NOVA, and Snowmobile accounts by \$62.4 million over 8 years (see attached fiscal note to HB 2001 Lias and SB 5888 Litzow in 2013-14). The only funds available for administering the Snowmobile Program (through Washington State Parks and Recreation) come from a portion of the state fuel tax, based on the amount of fuel used in snowmobiles, and snowmobile registration fees. These funds go to the Snowmobile dedicated account in the State budget that was exclusively for building and maintaining a trail grooming program throughout the entire state.</p> <p>The attached Joint Legislative and Audit Review Committee tax preference study recommends as a matter of equity in the treatment of fuel taxes, the current practice of capping the fuel tax collections be modified to conform to the 18th Amendment to the State's Constitution, that only fuel taxes collected for highway use be used for highways and those based on non-highway use be refunded to recreational accounts. Thank you for considering our request for support of Recommendation 2 of the Outdoor Recreation Task Force Subcommittee Recommendations on How to Finance Outdoor Recreation by lifting the lid on non-highway gas tax accounts.</p>

29-May-14	Ron Figlar Barnes	Tourism Marketing & Promotion	The state has the opportunity to promote. Coming to Washington? Here is what you can see! Mt Rainier (Picture), Columbia River Gorge (Picture), Columbia Basin "Channel Scablands" (Picture--Potholes Coulee), The Olympics (Picture-Ruby Beach), Eastern Washington is Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park—(history Pictures), Seattle, Vancouver, Spokane. I could go on and on—but the bottom line tourism makes money for everyone—help support the development of a national campaign to introduce the county and the World to Washington. Help with places to stay—help support community tourism with funding –match private donations. Help the small communities like Aberdeen on the doorstep the Pacific and the Olympic National Park. Get it together-- and go for it!
30-Jun-14	Mayor Sooling- Moody, Town of Twisp	Town of Twisp	<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The social health and wellbeing of rural communities can depend on the availability of outdoor recreational parks and trails. Access to the outdoors and greater mobility are critical, especially where health resources are limited. Mental, physical, and social health can be impacted in areas where there is infrastructure lacking. It would be recommended to initiate a program in local jurisdictions can better serve the youth and senior populations toward a healthier lifestyle by providing fair access to funding and assistance for the development of lacking municipal infrastructure to support outdoor parks and recreation. • The establishment of local recreational facilities in rural areas would greatly enhance the economic wellbeing of the community as sporting events and other recreational meets inevitably bring more people into the area, acting as an attractant to new business development as well as support of existing businesses. • Need to create policy for grant funding to be accessible for smaller communities with limited financial resources. Like larger communities, small communities have a limited debt capacity, but unlike urban areas, rural areas simply lack a significant enough tax base to support some of the larger projects such as sports field development that larger areas can afford. The lack of fields in rural areas is not a result of the lack of need, but the lack of means to meet that need. Additionally, one could argue that the need is even greater in rural areas, as there is often also a lack of other recreational opportunities or entertainment in existence to offset that need. • Criteria for funding should not be based on the numbers of people served (population size) but rather on the measure or percentage of the population impacted. Considering this change in rating a project, would eliminate the unfair disadvantage of rural areas when competing against urban areas. In so doing, a project can be more fairly scored on the viability and impact of that project - resulting in those reviewing the application to better understand the actual significance of a proposed project for the overall community (large or small). Projects would be scored based on impact and significance as opposed to population.
17-Jul-14	Carin Smith	Walking with a Dog	Please put a plug in for including "walking with a dog" as one of the items along with the usual bicycle, etc – this is a super important stat. We have one source that says that walking with a dog was the number one outdoor activity in terms of frequency, so it is definitely worthwhile including that as a specific choice in a multiple choice list (and not thinking folks will fill it in under 'other').
15-Aug-14	Mark Scantlebury	Weyerhaeuser Plan for Kalama River	<p>I'm president of the Lower Columbia Canoe Club and represent about 200 households in SW Washington and Oregon. We're concerned about a recent change in policy by Weyerhaeuser on access to the upper reaches of the Kalama River (Wolf Creek to Jack's Creek--map sectors 7N2E and 7N3E). For years our club has paddled the Kalama during hunting season (Oct - Dec) when Weyerhaeuser has opened the gates. We realize that this is private land and that we were "guests" permitted on it on a seasonal basis. That was fine by us.</p> <p>Weyerhaeuser is now changing their policy regarding access to this area "above the gate." They have instituted at \$150 fee per family to use this area. We have written to them and explained our situation. We told them we are a club and we paddle these waters one to three times a year. We asked if they could make an exception or perhaps allow the club to pay the "family" rate. //We got two responses from them:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I was not aware of your past boating trips down the Kalama, but others may have been. We are not offering any special rates or passes for groups such as yours. I am glad you have been able to enjoy it in the past." Recreation Program, Weyerhaeuser - Longview Timberlands 2. "Had another thought. You could instead boat down the South Toutle. Weyerhaeuser maintains our 4100 road as a public access corridor up to our 4950 road bridge. So if you put in there, you would have about 15 miles to paddle to its confluence with the North Toutle. Don't ask for the 6000 to become an access corridor. That won't happen." <p>The first response is interesting because it shows what good stewards we have been in using their land--we left no trace. Unlike hunters, fishermen, and campers, this is very typical of our group. We go directly to a put-in, paddle down the river, take out, and drive home, leaving nothing behind. We also prohibit any use of alcohol on our trips. One time, notably, we even helped a very drunk hunter who had shot an elk that had then died in the middle of the river. We paddled to it, tied rope around the horns, and dragged it to shore for him and helped him load it into his pickup.</p> <p>Obviously, Weyerhaeuser has the right to allow and prohibit access to this land at their discretion. Nonetheless, I would hope you could persuade them to allow seasonal paddler access. This is an extraordinary stretch of river that deserves to be appreciated up close and personally by a club like ours. I personally look forward to it every year. This video that I produced shows why: http://youtu.be/R3lwalZlIws.</p> <p>The loss of public access to rivers because of private timberlands is a serious recreation problem. While I completely agree that land can be owned, navigable rivers should be open to the public and private landowners with rivers on their property should allow access to these rivers. Perhaps there are some incentives a state could provide these landowners to encourage them to provide this access. Anyway, I ask that you consider this issue. For paddlers and for anglers. I have complete respect for Weyerhaeuser and its need to protect its lands in order to harvest the timber. But at the same time, no one should own a river.</p>

5-Jun-14	Nathan Pate	Youth	<p>I have observed and understand children are the individuals that are the rising group who do not participate in outdoor recreation (compared to historic trends). This may be two fold:</p> <p>1) if they desire to go to a park or recreation site (walking, biking), the route is unsafe</p> <p>2) they must be accompanied by others to stop crimes against children. With such, "getting to" and "being at" a recreational opportunity is reduced or limited. Annual payment for recreation is a bit tricky. Everyone agrees that recreation is needed and great for the community's well being, but payment is not necessarily welcome unless there is visible services (for example: a pool has active staff, clean water, heated water... etc). Parks and outdoor recreation do not have the same benefit of observable services (maintenance of trails, parking lots, garbage service, restrooms... etc are not "seen" as active service, the work is done behind the scenes, and at long intervals). I do not have a budget for such, and could not answer.</p>
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Date	Name	Topic / Theme	Comments Submitted to RCO via Email (in response to questions posted to www.engageoutdoorwashington.com)
5-May-14	Toni Reading	Engage Web Q: <i>What are the three most important things we can do to make outdoor recreation more desirable and more accessible?</i>	<p>1. Return to the simple, straightforward & FAIREST for all pay scales, taxation directly through our state taxes system! It is beyond frustrating and onerous (especially for those economically challenged) to have to deal with both the NW Forest Pass/Discover Pass. The Discover Pass which I finally "shared" with a co-hiker to easily trade carpooling duties with did not work out as was later informed we would have to always be switching it out (a copy with verifiable payment details etc. would not suffice for 2nd vehicle) & now I no longer hike with that individual at all, so that purchase was a financial waste for me (& I also attempted the volunteer format to earn one & am infuriated by the slave wage of less than \$2.00 for the effort and more than one day's labor needed-just the transportation costs make this option onerous for individuals of lesser means/time challenges). I get that the way it has now been set up to sell the pass that businesses will now protest a change back as they are making profit now, too-ingenious backdoor plan to keep it! There should be a cost analysis done because I'm sure the "old tax all a little" (& we all benefit from these lands whether we walk in them or not!) & user fee systems.</p> <p>2. Traffic-Hwy 2 for instance is a parking lot on many days and it will do no good to encourage additional road use if they end up just sitting on the highway going nowhere, (or worse injured on this "still death" highway) so there needs to be bus/ride share/carpooling options that will have the necessary support systems in place to make them not only viable but desirable.</p> <p>3. Protect the resources we want to promote-for example it is counterproductive to promote the "Stevens Pass Greenway" and then log adjacent to Wallace Falls State Park for example and other scenic spots along the way or put the Skykomish River system at risk with the Sunset Falls/PUD proposal, (which will also add risk to the highway system during build process!). It should be an option to look at the trains that run through the US 2 corridor, perhaps a special run i.e. Amtrak type or at least a "drop off/pick up" in a key wilderness location for hiking access could be established? Better than the oil cars now impacting our communities!</p>
7-May-14	Mark Levensky	Engage Web Q: <i>What are the three most important things we can do to make outdoor recreation more desirable and more accessible?</i>	<p>There aren't just three important things that Washington could do to encourage people to enjoy outdoor recreation here, but here are dozens of things, and all or most of them are obvious. But you asked for three, so here are three:</p> <p>1) Support Outdoor-Recreation-in-Washington TV shows.</p> <p>2) Improve campgrounds, campsites, trails, routes, boat ramps, etc. and the roads to them.</p> <p>3) Encourage people to borrow or buy Delorme's Atlas & Gazetteer for Washington and other standard maps and guide books as well as checking out the many Internet descriptions of Outdoor-Recreation-in-Washington-Possibilities offered by DNR, USFS, National Parks, WTA, WWTA, County Parks, clubs, and unattached enthusiasts. We just returned from a weekend camping in the Teanaway. We had a fine campsite above the North Fork of the Teanaway River, and good quiet walks down to the banks of the high, fast river and up through some pretty woods to snow and ice. Not the Grand Canyon, and rain at night and on Sunday, but perfect in its easy, simple way all the same.</p>
30-May-14	Mike Nordin	Engage Web Q: <i>Should the state leave outdoor recreation marketing and tourism to the private sector, or play a specific role?</i>	<p>The state should leave it to private entities. Salmon dollars should not compete against recreation.</p>

Date	Name	Topic / Theme	Comments Submitted to RCO via Email (in response to questions posted to www.engageoutdoorwashington.com)
17-Jun-14	Linda Beam	Engage Web site (Part 1)	<p>I want to thank you for the work you and other Task Force members are doing to expand on the important role outdoor recreation already plays in our state's economy and with our state's quality of life. As the Task Force starts receiving draft recommendations from its subcommittees, we would like to emphasize a number of key recommendations on behalf of recreational boaters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect what you have: As you think about how to add sustainable funding for outdoor recreation, please take an initial step to aggressively protect what you already have! We think it's critical to recommend that the Legislature NOT raid or divert from accounts like the Boating Facilities Program which provide grant funding for, and leverage money for, boating infrastructure that supports a \$4 billion a year recreational boating industry. We're extremely supportive of other recreational funding as well that's managed through existing accounts, such as the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program. A "recognize, appreciate, and protect what you have" message is vital. • Step up state efforts to promote outdoor recreation as a part of the state's tourism and marketing efforts: We suggest there be a significantly enhanced state role in promoting and marketing outdoor recreation - perhaps by establishing an "Office of Outdoor Recreation" that focuses 24/7 on the promotion and tourism of the outdoor recreation sector. • Equalize the playing field for visiting boaters - between British Columbia and Washington State: For large, LLC-designated vessels that like to visit and stay in out-of-state waters for months at a time, the tax policy and tax climate in BC is much more welcoming than that of Washington, which places a use tax on these boats after just 60 days of visiting stays. Leveling the playing field for what some people refer to as "Floating Money Machines" is good business and ADDITIONAL revenue for the State of Washington. To name just one example, a vessel called the "Serene" visited Seattle last summer and put some \$10,000 a day into the local economy, but it left after 60 days due to our laws. Boaters have proposed a "marine tourism bill" to fix this problem. • Increase events that get people - especially young people - out on the water and experiencing the outdoors: We believe if the state were actively participating in and sponsoring more events to get people out on the water, we'd be able to create more "boaters for life" enthusiasts. • Create a more predictable fishing season for fishing boats/fishermen: We support the recommendations of our colleagues at NMTA, that a more predictable, well-advertised, and consistent fishing season would lead to more fishing boats on our waters, spending more money for our state economy.
	Linda Beam	Engage Web site (Part 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the 'lid' on dedicated non-highway-purpose recreation accounts that results in diversions of some of this funding into the Motor Vehicle Fund (transportation budget): We would like to see the Task Force fix what we see as a morally and legally inappropriate diversion when it comes to the distribution of funding from dedicated non-highway-purpose recreation accounts. Under state law, fuel purchased at the pump by boaters, ORV riders and snowmobilers is supposed to go into dedicated infrastructure accounts that support those activities. And, 23 cents of the 37.5 cents of gas tax paid by those users does. However, the other 14.5 cents is diverted to the Transportation Budget's Motor Vehicle fund as a result of 2003 and 2005 legislative actions. So, there's a "lid" on those accounts - 23 cents is going where it's supposed to, and 14.5 cents is not. This needs to be fixed. • Thoughts on Sustainable funding: Finally, as the Task Force considers sustainable funding options for outdoor recreation, we ask that you remember a few key principles. First, bear in mind who is paying now for recreation - boaters already pay for invasive species and derelict vessel programs through our annual registration fees, and we pay a percentage-based "watercraft excise tax" into the state general fund that NO OTHER VESSELS (cars, planes, RVs, campers) has to pay - it was repealed for all others. We also urge the Task Force to think not just about new taxes and fees but also about policy changes that will grow the revenue base - such as the "Marine Tourism Bill" described above. And, as we noted, we hope there will be a strong effort to protect dedicated accounts we already have, and correct the injustices that divert money away from non-highway-purpose accounts.
24-Jun-14	harrishse@comcast.net	Engage Web Q: <i>(1) What steps can we take to ensure parks and public lands remain readily available despite tight budgets? (2) How do we ensure that a broader and more diverse group of Washington residents become active in the outdoors? (3) Should Washington establish an office focused specifically on marketing and promoting outdoor recreation?</i>	<p>(1) Ensure the Parks etc. remain available. State Management, our elected Reps, needs to provide true and realistic budgets. Parks etc. should be financed by all state residents because they all benefit from the sales tax etc. gained from what the users pay as they recreate. Not increasing budgets etc. is a political game, and leads to such foolish and disruptive things like the Discover pass. This year, Nevada is running a new program where seniors pay a \$30 annual fee for unlimited access to their State Parks - without paying any additional fees for overnight or any other service. Part of the concept is they have already paid into the state park funds via other taxes in the State.</p> <p>(2) Ensure broader use of the outdoors. Drop the fees. Also, use is fighting a Nation Wide problem - the middle and lower income groups have even less money than earlier for these activities. They just can't afford it. Look at what ACA alone is doing to their budgets, and their job opportunities are continuing to become more limited for lack of a match between what is needed and what they can provide. Those with the funds to participate spend it elsewhere.</p> <p>(3) Office promoting outdoor recreation. A good idea, but again those it reaches don't have the finances to participate. Need that solved first.</p>

Date	Name	Topic / Theme	Comments Submitted to RCO via Email (in response to questions posted to www.engageoutdoorwashington.com)
3-Jul-14	Jerry Eckenrode	Engage Web Q: <i>(1) How can we promote Washington as an outdoor recreation destination for U.S. and overseas travelers? (2) What barriers reduce Washington's youth and millennials engagement in the outdoors?</i>	<p>Times are changing, just as the phone booths have disappeared due to the use of cell phones, the expanded use of hand held electronic devices is fast eliminating the need for Visitor information centers. Visitors are utilizing electronic data and information due to the speed and ease in which to obtain news and information. The need for bricks and mortar is no longer a necessity when notifying (providing the many "reasons to visit"), inviting (timely notification of events) and welcoming visitors to Mason County.</p> <p>While researching my recent bid to manage and improve the tourism industry in Mason County. There are several web sites paid for by the State that are supposed to help the traveler (new to the area, within the state, within the USA and foreign visitors) the web sites are expensive and offer old, inaccurate and are not user friendly. The sites I visited had maps of the Olympic Peninsula that actually routed people around Mason County. And there was not an easy way to see what kind of activities and things to see in Mason County, which I feel is the best kept secret in the state, and provides the best opportunity for an affordable family vacation (camping, fishing, hiking, bird watching....and much more). Stop and think about how much information the average person (check the cell phone stats how many people have them verses do not) gets off their phone today, and what about the future? The current web sites (experience wa.com) could go a long way to promote the areas of the state through a joint effort by working with the communities identifying and promoting the area's festivals, events, seasonal activities and seasonal beauty.</p> <p>I am proposing the Washington State funded web site host and web masters be directed to work with local and regional web sites/web masters to offer an interactive map and web site to allow for a point and click ease in obtaining information specific to their area. I.E. what to do (hiking, fishing, bird watching etc.) in a particular location. Or be able to search the web site for what to do by regional area i.e. county or peninsula, cascades, south west Washington, zip code/ area code). Making local tourism officials responsible for the information and result for their county. Giving each area trying to promote their county's activities the ability to provide and update their information through links to their web site would keep the web site maintained. This would provide incentive for the Citys/Counties or regional web sites, to keep current, and continually add information to the potential visitor/tourist. The idea here is to make the ability to connect information to the traveler "sesame street simple" and NOT hard to find. As you soon realize this does engage the younger population and the progressive older population though the hand held devices they currently use. As a backup, until the printed materials fall to the wayside as the phone booth has, you would still strategically locate and inform the visitor/tourist as to where and how to find it, more than on the ferries and in hotels, how about by request though the mail?</p>
7-Jul-14	Fred Marshall	Engage Web Q: <i>Would you prefer a \$10 annual fee on car, truck, motorcycle and RV license tab renewals or the annual \$30 Discover Pass?</i>	<p>On the face of it, anyone would prefer \$10 / year / vehicle in place of \$30 / year for two vehicles!!! But that's not the whole story is it? The \$30 / year is OPTIONAL. I take it that the \$10 fee would not be? But you didn't say that! This is what makes skeptics. It very much looks like a biased survey. You are hoping for the \$10 answer, eh?</p>
8-Jul-14	Martin Volken	Engage Web Questions (Part 1)	<p>What strategies can towns in forested and rural areas use to attract outdoor adventurers and travelers? I believe that the towns have to willing and most of all be able to partner with Land management agencies. The agencies have to be willing to work with communities that abut the public land. This is not what I have experienced as a 20 year resident of North Bend. Our town could be taken as a perfect example of what the current opportunities, pressures and threats for both "parties" are (the towns and the public lands). Just like in many of those rural towns, North Bend considers the neighboring public lands as a major asset to the quality of life. The problem is that we do not have any jurisdiction of these so-called assets which in turns does not make them our asset. So with this as a basic situation, it is very hard to truly tie these outdoor recreation opportunities to the brand of any given town. You are not in charge of events, when or when not to hold them, how to use the public lands in the marketing materials etc. The lands are after all public lands, so they will never be owned by the towns, but they truly depend on the cooperation of the land management agencies. Here are a few examples of how it is not supposed to work: I am the owner of a mountain guiding office and specialty retail store in North Bend. I have been asking the responsible land manager repeatedly to let me put up a little sign in the various parking lots, so that people know that I am there. This would potentially bring me some business and the town some foot traffic. It was denied with the reasoning that this would stand in conflict with their "no commerce policy" and that it would set a bad precedent. Solution: Have to courage to make a change in the management policy to publicly support businesses of neighboring communities. This would mean for example that only North Bend businesses from North Bend would be able to advertise on their trail heads, Leavenworth businesses on theirs etc.</p> <p>There is a large sport climbing area around North Bend. Many of the bolts need to be replaces and I wanted to put up a sign to let the climbing community know that they can contact the store if they see bolts that need replacing. Again, I was denied. This time for fear of liability. Apparently, if the DNR acknowledges the fact that there is climbing going on, they might be liable. Solution: Have the courage to admit that there are over 500 bolted routes in North Bend climbing area. Work with local climbing communities and guiding offices to insure support in the upkeep and have clear signage in the parking areas that DNR will not assume any liability for climbing accidents of any sort.</p> <p>I wanted to put up a climbing route on the north side of Mount Si. This would have been a major attraction for the town and its branding, since it would have the closest multi pitch route to Seattle. Again I was denied. This time it was a supposed Falcon nest. Solution: Let this happen instead of simply saying no. There is a critical nesting period when the route could be off limits. This can be clearly posted at the parking area and online. Climbers would respect that.</p>

Last year, I ended up putting on a running race up Mount Si. It took two trips to Olympia to meet with the commissioner of the DNR. The reason the race was ultimately approved (in midweek only) was most likely because Mr. Goldmark had just asked one of my friends and supporters for a campaign finance contribution. Because of this my friend joined me in the initial meeting. Solution: How can you designate a hiking trail that gets between 60000 and 80000 visitors per year and conservation area? Maybe the management policy is out of sync with the reality? How can you limit a race that would bring so much to a town and causes no environmental impact be limited to 100 racers? The major concern was that other people are asking for events as well. Have the courage to say no if it does not benefit the neighboring community. Use that as a criteria.

State tax support for State Parks was reduced by \$37 million annually since 2008. What are your ideas to provide greater support for State Parks? Start blending in soft commerce in the parking area. Use this as an opportunity to create outdoor recreation culture. Give people an opportunity to spend some money. Don't just create more fees. Create an extension of the experience they just had. It is like having desert. It enriches the experience and people are happy to part with the money. You could do this by building a restaurant at the base of some of these major destinations such as Mount Si, Rattle Snake Lake etc. I could be simple and people would be happy to pay. Actively encourage people to go visit the town. Some towns might be able to levy a small public lands tax on certain businesses such as hotels, coffee shops etc. if they feel the support from the land management agencies. It has to be a mutually supportive atmosphere. That is the bottom line.

How can information about outdoor recreational opportunities be better disseminated throughout Washington? I think this starts all the way on a State Congress Level. I believe that the State has not yet officially declared that Outdoor Recreation is the most logical renewable resource on public lands. Resource extraction certainly is not it. Once this happens and they give guidance to the land management agencies to take a more vital interest in the economic health of the rural communities, strategic marketing plans can be built – on a state wide, regional and municipality level. Once the true economic quality of life importance has been recognized, funding might increase again.

How can Washington's outdoor recreation programs better meet the needs of Latinos, African Americans, seniors and other diverse communities? Maybe they can be exempt from or receive a substantial discount on the hefty parking pass fee. This model already exists for senior citizens on the National Park level. Should landowners be given immunity from liability when they open their land for recreation? Absolutely! Signs should be clearly posted and then the landowners should be given immunity from liability.



ANACORTES EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

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LAURIE GERE, MAYOR

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June 23, 2014

Blue Ribbon Task Force on Outdoor Recreation
Co-Chair Barb Chamberlain, Barb@wabikes.org
Co-Chair Doug Walker, doug@dwwalker.biz
RCO staff Jim Fox, jim.fox@rco.wa.gov
RCO staff Meg O'Leary, meg.oleary@rco.wa.gov

Dear Task Force:

We are writing today in support of your efforts on the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Outdoor Recreation. Outdoor Recreation is an integral part of the Anacortes culture and economy. We have 2800 acres of forestlands that have hiking, biking, climbing, and boating opportunities. We also are located on Fidalgo Island and have a robust marine environment that supports recreational boating, fishing, kayaking, sailing, and tourism pleasure boats with Cap Santé Marina (the 2nd most used marina in the state).

We endorse your recommendations as outlined below.

- Protect what we have: The boater's facility program, money paid by boaters and through the grant back to the State to improve boating infrastructure. For example, boat launch ramps, which is integral in the 4 billion recreational boating industry.
- Prioritize the State's Tourism and Marketing: To promote our national treasure of outdoor recreational opportunities.
- We need the Marine Tourism Bill: This will equalize the playing field for visiting boaters between British Columbia and Washington State. After 60 days, visiting boats leave our marinas and go to Canada to avoid the 10% use tax. Our visiting boaters put thousands of dollars a day into our local economy. This bill is very short sighted and a classic case of "penny-wise, pound short".
- Increase events to get young people on the water: Anacortes believes this makes "Boaters for Life". People on the water are good for the economy. They eat in our restaurants, shop in our retail shops, food stores, and marine supply stores. It makes for healthy community. It keeps people active and provides a solid family activity. We have our annual Waterfront Festival to promote waterfront activities for all ages and our youth sailing program sponsored by the

Anacortes Yacht Club and the City of Anacortes Parks and Recreation Department.

- Create a more predicable fishing season: This will lead to a more predictable fishing season and lead to more fishing boats on our water. Anacortes has both salt water and fresh water lakes, we need anglers to visit our community and add to the economy. We also hold an annual Salmon Derby, which bring thousands of dollars to our local merchants and excitement about fishing and boating in the San Juan Islands.
- Please remove the LID on Non-highway Purpose Recreation account and allow the full 37.5-cent gas tax to be calculated into the Non-highway Purpose Recreation account. These monies is an example of self-paying at the users of this recreational area, and support of the recreation infrastructure.

We believe outdoor recreation is a major drive in our state economy and a natural core resource and we must protect and support it.

Sincerely yours,

CITY OF ANACORTES

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Laurie Gere', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Laurie Gere, Mayor

cc: Peter Schrapen, peter@nmta.net



August 29, 2014

Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation
c/o Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office
Olympia, WA 98504

RE: Community Boating Center Letter dated August 15, 2014

Dear Blue Ribbon Task Force Members:

In a recent letter to the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Mr. Steve Walker, Executive Director of the Bellingham Bay Community Boating Center (CBC), states that CBC "suffers from having its boating services and programs regarded by the Department of Natural Resources as nonwater-dependent uses", resulting in "stifling rent one thousand percent (1000%) higher than neighboring ... uses."

While CBC's lease is located on state-owned aquatic lands, it and many others along the Bellingham Bay waterfront are managed by the Port of Bellingham (POB) through a Port Management Agreement (PMA). A PMA gives a port authority over the management of state-owned aquatic lands in defined areas adjacent to port-owned property. The port is required to manage all state-owned aquatic lands included within the PMA according to the same aquatic laws and rules as DNR. Within this framework, the port has autonomy in making leasing decisions and performing other management responsibilities. The establishment of rental rates is among the authorities that POB has under its PMA.

CBC expresses concern regarding POB's determination that the portion of CBC's operation dedicated to dry boat storage is considered a nonwater-dependent use. Nonwater-dependent uses are defined by statute as uses that can operate in a location other than on the waterfront (see RCW 79.105.060(11)), and are directed to be charged full fair market rental rates whether leased directly from DNR or from a port, through a PMA. Although CBC is a boating organization, with an obvious relationship to the water, the location of its facilities is not water dependent. In other words, CBC can operate in a location other than on the waterfront.

There are several approaches to determining fair market value for nonwater-dependent rents under WAC 332-30-125. Each of these alternatives is available to POB in determining CBC's rent.

DNR supports CBC's mission and works with numerous similar entities across the state. However, the distinction between water-dependent and nonwater-dependent uses is important to the public interest. CBC's facilities are not water-dependent and thus do not warrant the



Blue Ribbon Task Force Members

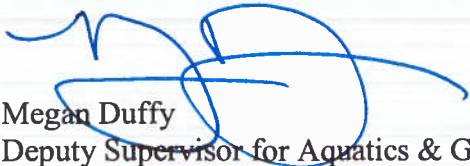
August 29, 2014

Page 2 of 2

discounted rent that is available to water-dependent uses (uses that can only be situated on the waterfront).

Should you have any questions about DNR's role in the management of state-owned aquatic lands, please do not hesitate to contact me at 360-902-1034 or megan.duffy@dnr.wa.gov.

Sincerely,



Megan Duffy
Deputy Supervisor for Aquatics & Geology

c: Kaleen Cottingham, Director of Recreation and Conservation Office
Kristin Swenddal, DNR Aquatic Resources Division Manager
Cyrilla Cook, DNR Aquatics Policy Unit Supervisor



6021-136th Ave NE
Kirkland, WA 98033

Response to the GOVERNOR'S PARKS & OUTDOOR RECREATION TASK FORCE DRAFT REPORT

As stated in the Blue Ribbon Task Force report, their mandate was "to develop a transformation strategy for outdoor recreation in Washington State, and issue recommendations to transform Washington's outdoor recreation assets and state programs."

Given the broad nature and short timeframe to develop their report, the Task Force has done a good job of framing many of the issues and challenges facing the State of Washington's outdoor recreation assets and industry. However, the primary issue threatening the health, maintenance, and access to our state's outdoor resources is FUNDING! In particular, our Washington State Parks.

For nearly 20 years, the Friends of Washington State Parks group has been an advocate for our Washington State Parks – lobbying the Legislature to fully fund our State Parks system; attending and testifying at dozens of Park Commission meetings and workshops; pushing for the development of Friends groups; and even building and leading a very successful nonprofit organization to raise funds to pay 50% of the annual net operating costs in order to preserve and maintain Bridle Trails State Park. Based on these years of working with our Washington State Parks organization, we are in a good position to offer the following response to the Task Force draft report.

Funds required for Washington State Parks operations are less than .005 percent of the total State Budget!!
Funding for our Washington State Parks is beyond the critical point – we are now on life support systems!

Adequate funding for our State Parks and other recreational programs has been steadily eroding over the past 20 years to where we have stripped away many of the essential resources needed to preserve and protect many of our state's outdoor assets – especially our state parks. The state legislature has kicked the funding issues back to the general public – first with a fee for parking and more recently with a fee for access – the Discover Pass. In each case the general public has responded with a dislike and rejection of these methods of funding. Now the Task Force is recommending another "study":

Action #6:

"Conduct an assessment of the current operations of Washington State Parks, and the Departments of Natural Resources and Fish and Wildlife to determine what parts are essential, important or value added so that a re-balancing of the public investment can be addressed."

The Task Force sites the model negotiated with the Fort Warden Development Authority as an outline to use for evaluating all state parks in order to "re-balance the public share of investment". This approach amounts to "kicking the can down the road" – and would simply suspend any funding solution into the future. Consider the following:

- "Funding Models" - the Fort Warden Development Authority agreement, like other "funding agreements", require both parties have a strong interest in finding a solution that works for the specific case they are trying to preserve. Most of the 120+ State Parks do not have a public partner willing to step forward and take on the ongoing fund raising needed to preserve and maintain a specific outdoor recreational asset.
- Developing Funding "Partnerships" has historically emerged when State Parks have had to make the difficult decision to close a park or substantially reduce services to a park. This was behind the case with Fort Warden and led to the agreement with the Fort Warden Development Authority. This was also the case with Bridle Trails State Park which led to the agreement with the Bridle Trails Park Foundation in 2002 which pays 50% of the annual net operating costs to keep this park open.

Note: Making the decision to close a park is the sort of alternative neither the State Parks administration nor the State Parks Commission has been willing to consider as such a decision is fraught with political issues and the challenge of developing a criteria to support such a decision. So faced with an unwillingness to close a park, and the lack of developing funding partnerships, the alternative has been to reduce operating costs – and this has led to the deterioration of all our State Park assets.

The model the Task Force suggests under *Action #6* is that funding for “Important” and “Value Added” programs be paid partially or fully by the user. Applying the Task Force recommendation to use the “Fort Warden” model for re-balancing State Parks funding would result in something like the following examples:

Assumes State Parks Annual Operating Budget = \$75,000,000

Example 1: (State Parks and “Partner” share “Important” 70/30 and “Value Added” 30/70)

Type of Program	Percent of Total Parks OP Budget	Percent Funding by State	Dollar Funding by State	Percent Funding by “Partner”	Dollar Funding by “Partner”	Total – All Funding Sources
Essential	85%	100%	\$63,750,000	0%	\$0	\$63,750,000
Important*	10%	70%	\$5,250,000	30%	\$2,250,000	\$7,500,000
Value Added**	5%	30%	\$1,125,000	70%	\$2,625,000	\$3,750,000
Totals:			\$70,125,000		\$4,875,000	\$75,000,000
% of Total			93.5%		6.5%	

Example 2: (State Parks and “Partner” share “Important” 50/50 and “Value Added” 10/90)

Type of Program	Percent of Total Parks OP Budget	Percent Funding by State	Dollar Funding by State	Percent Funding by “Partner”	Dollar Funding by “Partner”	Total – All Funding Sources
Essential	85%	100%	\$63,750,000	0%	\$0	\$63,750,000
Important*	10%	50%	\$3,750,000	50%	\$3,750,000	\$7,500,000
Value Added**	5%	10%	\$375,000	90%	\$3,375,000	\$3,750,000
Totals:			\$67,875,000		\$7,125,000	\$75,000,000
% of Total			90.5%		9.5%	

The reader can manipulate the percentages used above, but the outcome will still lead to the following conclusion - the Washington State Legislature needs to provide >90 % of the State Parks operating funds

Additional Notes under “Type of Program” – (see the Task Force report for examples of these services)

Important* - Friends groups and volunteers already contribute thousands of hours every year maintaining and restoring trails, removing noxious plants, restoring historical buildings, etc – a cost that does not even appear in the State Parks operating budget.

Value Added** - Friends groups and volunteers already host and pay for special events held in our parks as well as providing many other “value added” services; a cost that does not even appear in State Parks operating budget.

- This model, proposed by the Task Force, suggests Parks operational costs will be reduced, whereas the value of thousands of volunteer hours, currently providing these services, are not even in the Parks budget!
- Therefore just how much operational expense can be offset under the proposed “Type of Program” approach is problematic.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

1. There is no need or value for another "study" on State Parks funding – other than for political purposes. State Parks has the data and experience to support any requests for what it costs to preserve, maintain, and enhance our state park assets.
2. The State Parks Commission should develop criteria that would be used to identify any park that might require further reduced services or potential closure in the event park operating funds drop below a given threshold. This information would be useful in recruiting "Partners" for funding threatened parks / assets.
3. State Parks "Friends Groups" are well suited to fill the need for "Important" and "Value Added" programs
4. State Parks should aggressively identify "Partners" who are willing to provide ongoing operational funding for our State Parks organization and/or specific parks facing reduced services and possible closure.

The devil is in the details but any further delay in funding our Washington State Parks will simply lead to the loss of more experienced park personnel and the further deterioration of our park lands and buildings.

We urge the Task Force and Governor Inslee to find a solution to the operational and capital funding requirements of our Washington State Parks organization.

Respectfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Don & Alice Prince". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid.

Donald and Alice Prince

Friends of Washington State Parks



**1820 Jefferson Street
PO Box 1220
Port Townsend, WA 98368**

Phil Johnson, District 1 David W. Sullivan, District 2 John Austin, District 3

July 14, 2014

Barb Chamberlain, Co-chair
Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force
on Parks and Outdoor Recreation
c/o Washington Bikes
314 First Ave South
Seattle, WA 98104-2620

Meg O'Leary, Policy Administrator
Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force
on Parks and Outdoor Recreation
c/o Recreation and Conservation Office
P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, Washington 98504-0917

Jim Fox, Project Lead
Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force
on Parks and Outdoor Recreation
c/o Recreation and Conservation Office
P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, Washington 98504-0917

Doug Walker, Co-chair
Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force
on Parks and Outdoor Recreation
c/o The Wilderness Society
North Cascades Washington
720 3rd Ave, Suite 1410
Seattle, WA 98104

JT Austin, Policy Advisor to the Governor
Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks
and Outdoor Recreation
c/o Recreation and Conservation Office
P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, Washington 98504-0917

Dear Ms. Chamberlain, Mr. Walker, Mr. Fox, Ms. O'Leary and Ms. Austin,

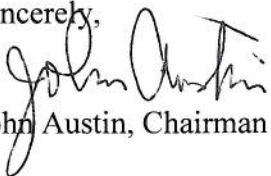
As the Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation formulates its recommendations for its draft plan to manage, transform, and leverage Washington's outdoor recreation assets and state programs, the Jefferson County Commissioners unanimously support including adoption of a Marine Tourism Bill in its recommendations. In doing so, we join the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce, the Port Townsend City Council, the Port Townsend Marine Trades Association and the Port Townsend Port District in supporting a Marine Tourism Bill similar to Senate Bill 5241 and House Bill 1366 from this past Legislative Session.

We believe this change in the law will encourage more yacht owners to stay in Washington waters longer, visit and financially support our recreation assets along Washington's shorelines, and also choose to service their vessels in Washington boat yards. Current law requires entity-owned (LLC), out-of-state registered vessels to leave the state after 60 days or pay a fine of ten percent of the boat's value. Boats not owned by an LLC may obtain two 60 day cruising permit

extensions and are able to stay in Washington waters for as long as 180 days without the 10 percent fee. The Marine Tourism Bill treats both kinds of vessels in the same manner.

Passing a Marine Tourism Bill will be an immediate benefit to the economies of Jefferson County and the many other counties visited by out-of-state vessels, it will increase usage and fees for coastal parks and recreation facilities, and generate additional revenue to the state through increased sales taxes and other revenues from increased economic activity through tourism and business in our ports. Please include a recommendation to adopt a Marine Tourism Bill in the Task Force's draft plan.

Sincerely,


John Austin, Chairman


Phil Johnson, Member


David Sullivan, Member



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Crow's Nest Yachts

*Promoting the
Recreational Boating
Industry in the
Pacific Northwest*



RECREATIONAL BOATING ASSOCIATION
of WASHINGTON
Voice of Northwest Boating
PO Box 17063, Seattle, Washington 98127

July 18, 2014

Dear Co-Chairs:

We have been closely following the work of the Task Force, and very much appreciate the time and attention you are taking to shine a spotlight on outdoor recreation in the State of Washington. While NMTA's President George Harris serves on this Task Force, we also wanted to submit formal written comments to this important group.

As you may know, boating means business for Washington State. Routinely, boats spend about 10 percent of their boat's value each year in operations and maintenance. It makes good financial sense for the state to take pro-active steps to ensure a pro-boating climate for the 238,000 registered vessels – the state receives an economic shot in the arm as well as sales tax, B&O tax, excise tax, and payroll tax revenues. We commissioned a 2012 economic impact study that shows the recreational boating industry is a \$4 billion per year economic boost to the state. And, a 2010 analysis of recreational boating showed that boaters pay \$70 million in taxes each year and receive \$54 million in services. We pay our fair share and then some.

NMTA (the "chamber of commerce" for recreational boating businesses) and the boaters who use our state's waters (represented by the Recreational Boating Association of Washington, or RBAW) speak with one voice when it comes to our recommendations. We'd like to outline four key priorities that we would ask you to include in your final recommendations:

The first one, on which NMTA has taken the lead, is getting the Marine Tourism Bill enacted. Expanding the cruising season for marine tourists from out-of-state would mean \$30 million of new revenue to the state, according to the economic impact study commissioned by NMTA (www.nmta.net/impact). Please add our support to

July 18, 2014

[BLUE RIBBON LETTER FROM RBAW - NMTA]

the growing number of chambers, ports, mayors, conventions and visitors bureaus, and county commissioners that have told you this change would transform their local communities. A full list of endorsers and for more information is here: <http://www.nmta.net/legislative-advocacy/tourism-bill.asp>

The second shared priority is the need to protect the unclaimed, non-highway gas tax refunds that feed the Recreation Resource Account. These dollars provide funding for the Capital Budget's "Boating Facilities Program," administered by RCO. Half of these grant funds go back to local (oft-times rural) communities for improved launch ramps, docks and piers – and half go to state agencies that operate boating facilities. Since 92 percent of Washington State's boats are on trailers, the overwhelming number of these vessels in our state depend on these launch ramps and points to access our state's waters. This infrastructure is the real lynchpin of the industry. The fund was set up by voters, paid into by users and then granted back to improve what users need. Please protect this account.

The third priority is to ensure more predictable recreational fishing seasons. These well-advertised and consistent fishing seasons would lead to more fishing on our waters, more young people participating in these recreational activities, and more spending more money for our state economy. Predictable fishing seasons would bolster the Legislature's investments in hatcheries in the past several years, too.

Our fourth priority has to do with the Transportation Budget. Please remove the 'lid' on dedicated non-highway-purpose recreation accounts that results in diversions of some of this funding into the Motor Vehicle Fund (transportation budget). At the current time, 23 cents of the gas tax from non-highway purchases goes into the dedicated accounts it is supposed to serve – boating, off-road vehicles ("NOVA") and snowmobiling. But 14.5 cents is being inappropriately diverted.

We would like to see the Task Force fix what we see as a morally and legally questionable diversion of funding from these dedicated non-highway-purpose recreation accounts. Under state law, fuel purchased at the pump by boaters, ORV riders and snowmobilers are supposed to go into dedicated infrastructure accounts that support those activities. Unfortunately, the non-highway portions of the 14.5 cents raised from 2003 and 2005 gas tax packages was instead diverted. As a result, there is a "lid" on those accounts -- 23 cents is going where it's supposed to, and 14.5 cents is not. Please fix this.

Thank you for considering these items. Please connect with George Harris or either of us for more info.

Sincerely,



Steve Greaves
President, RBAW



Peter Schrappe
Vice President & Director of Government Affairs, NMTA



July 9, 2014

Blue Ribbon Task Force on Outdoor Recreation
Co-Chair Barb Chamberlain, Barb@wabikes.org
Co-Chair Doug Walker, doug@dwwalker.biz
RCO staff Jim Fox, jim.fox@rco.wa.gov
RCO staff Meg O'Leary, meg.oleary@rco.wa.gov

Dear Task Force:

I am writing in support of the Blue Ribbon Task Force's efforts to promote Washington's outdoor recreation economy and grow jobs in the sector. As the Task Force develops strategies, actions, and recommendations to manage, transform, and leverage Washington's outdoor recreation assets and state programs; I urge you to recommend the passage of a Marine Tourism Bill which will remove disincentives for out-of-state boaters to visit and stay in Washington harbors. Out-of-state boaters are an important part of the outdoor recreation economy contributing millions of dollars to community tourism and service businesses and generating tax revenue which supports state and local services.

Washington levies a substantial and disproportionate tax on some out-of-state recreational vessels which serves as a disincentive for these boaters to visit and stay in Washington harbors. Out-of-state boats owned in partnership must pay a use tax of about 10 percent of the boat's value if they remain in Washington for more than 60 days. Rather than staying at local ports, servicing their boats in local shops, and spending money at local businesses; out-of-state boaters have a significant financial incentive to take a short cruise to British Columbia where they can avoid paying Washington's punitive use tax and stay for up to a year without being taxed.

The marine trades cluster is a critical part of Whatcom County's regional economy and culture. Its firms include over 100 businesses which employ more than 2,300 people and generate a combined annual revenue of more than \$550 million. Whatcom County's working waterfront provides a supply of year-round, family-wage jobs which has a ripple effect throughout the local and regional economy. Despite the tremendous economic importance of the marine trades sector, business development and job creation continue to be limited by the tax levied on out-of-state recreational vessels remaining in Washington for more than 60 days.

The passage of a Marine Tourism Bill will greatly benefit the local and regional economy including outdoor recreational businesses. The Port of Bellingham has the waterfront infrastructure necessary to service the additional demand this legislation will generate and Whatcom County's highly trained marine trades workforce stands ready. Thank you for considering adding the support of the Blue Ribbon Task Force to this important legislation which will grow Washington's outdoor recreation economy and stimulate its marine trades cluster.

Sincerely,

Rob Fix
Executive Director

July 8, 2014

Co-Chair Barb Chamberlain
Co-Chair Doug Walker
Jim Fox
Meg O'Leary

RE: Blue Ribbon Task Force on Outdoor Recreation and Marine Tourism Bill

Dear Task Force Members:

We are writing in support of your efforts on the Blue Ribbon Task Force for Outdoor Recreation, specifically in support of the Marine Tourism Bill.

Current Washington State law requires entity-owned (LLC), out-of-state registered vessels to leave the state after sixty days or pay ten percent of the vessel's value. Our neighbors in British Columbia allow U.S. vessels to stay in its waters for six months before being required to leave the country for a day and then they can return and resume their transient stay.

Ports and our marine industry represent one of the primary centerpieces of the local economy but have been negatively impacted due to restrictive regulations. Our neighbors in British Columbia continue to derive substantial benefit of full marinas while many Washington State marine trade members struggle to stay ahead of the economic challenges set before them.

The yacht industry and the services they require represent many kinds of businesses including boat repair, chandlery, air transport, supplies, restaurants, fuel services and accommodations. Unfortunately, by not being able to fully respond to those needs, the Port of Port Angeles and other Port authorities in Puget Sound have been missing out on a unique and substantial economic opportunity.

Yachters spend money where their vessels are moored, but currently none of these classes of vessels spend more than sixty days in Washington State. A recent study by the Northwest Marine Trade Association predicts that about \$29 million in new spending and 1,295 new marine-trade jobs statewide could be generated if a Marine Tourism Bill were to pass (NMTA.net/Impact).

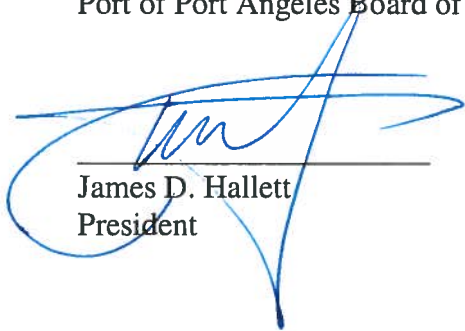
The State Legislature should review this issue and the current tax revenues to examine what the future might look like with relaxed rules on the length out-of-state, entity-owned boats can remain in our waters. What we gain in new jobs, sales taxes and tourism would mean millions of dollars more than we are currently collecting in penalties.

Task Force Members
July 8, 2014
Page 2

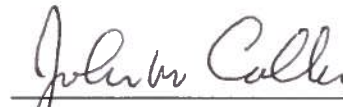
The Port of Port Angeles Commissioners support the Marine Tourism Bill and encourage you to support legislation to insure Washington State remains competitive and on an equal basis with British Columbia.

Sincerely,


Port of Port Angeles Board of Commissioners



James D. Hallett
President



John M. Calhoun
Vice President



Colleen M. McAleer
Secretary



P.O. Box 1180 • Port Townsend, Washington 98368-4624

Administration: (360) 385-0656

Operations: (360) 385-2355

Fax: (360) 385-3988

July 11, 2014

Subject: Marine Tourism

Blue Ribbon Task Force on Outdoor Recreation
Co-Chair Barb Chamberlain, barb@wabikes.org
Co-Chair Doug Walker, doug@dwwalker.biz
RCO staff, Jim Fox, jim.fox@rco.wa.gov
RCO staff, Meg O'Leary, meg.oleary@rco.wa.gov

Dear Task Force,

I am writing on behalf of the Port of Port Townsend Commission in support of the Marine Tourism bill. We have supported this legislation from day one.

As you know, the current Washington State law requires vessels which are entity-owned (LLC) and registered out of state, to leave our waters after 60 days or pay a fine. This simply does not make sense. The Port of Port Townsend, with the help of Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) funds built the largest public boatyard in the State, with the capacity to haul up to 330 tons; the exact vessels which our laws drive away from our state and our community. We have over 400 marine trade jobs which depend on a vibrant boating culture in Puget Sound. Our current laws do not support such a culture.

The positive economic impact in sales tax, lease hold tax (which goes to the State), and the financial well-being of our marine trades is at stake. Not only will local economies benefit, but the State would also benefit. Presently, the State gets nothing from these vessels as they do not stay in our waters. Please consider this as you make your recommendations.

If I can be of assistance, please feel free to contact me at (360) 385-0656.

Respectfully,

Larry Crockett
Executive Director



Semiahmoo Marina Condominium Association

July 30, 2014

Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Re: Vessel Port of Entry Status

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Doug Romano, and I am the harbormaster at Semiahmoo Marina, located on Drayton Harbor in Blaine, Washington.

Thank you for serving on the Blue Ribbon Task Force and for soliciting input from the community. The purpose of this letter is to request your help in regaining Blaine's status as a Vessel Port of Entry.

In 2008, Blaine Marina, operated by the Port of Bellingham, was, and had been for many years prior, an official Vessel Port of Entry for those visiting the United States from Canada. This brought many boaters to our area, both of Canadian and US registry. They shopped in our stores, ate in our restaurants and spent many dollars in our economy.

Unfortunately, sometime in 2008, the Vessel Port of Entry status was taken away from this harbor. No one we have spoken to has been able to give an explanation as to why we lost this very vital designation.

Being recognized matters for our rural economy. Vessel Port of Entry brings with it many travelers interested in all the recreational opportunities Blaine Harbor and Semiahmoo Marina have to offer. We have County and State Parks in our area, with Marine Parks located just to the south of us.



Semiahmoo Marina Condominium Association

The area is rich with many diverse activities, from hiking and biking trails to art and music festivals, to a very fine and newly renovated Semiahmoo Resort and Spa. The resort also has two championship golf courses.

The Peace Arch Border Crossing in Blaine is literally steps from the Blaine Marina. This border crossing is one of the busiest, well staffed crossings in the USA. It seems only logical to us, we should have the ability to clear vessels in and out of the USA at this location. Certainly, there are other locations in our area, which make far less sense as a Vessel Port of Entry. San Juan Island has two such Ports, Friday Harbor and Roche Harbor.

The Blaine harbormaster has indicated they would be more than happy to re-dedicate dock space to serve as a landing area for vessels. Semiahmoo Marina would be willing to offer the same.

Any help this committee can offer in helping Blaine regain its' status as a Vessel Port of Entry, would be greatly appreciated. Should any of you find yourself in my area, I'd be delighted to show you around.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me for more information. Like wise, we are members of the Northwest Marine Trade Association. Their government affairs director, Peter Schrapen, can help you understand this issue better, too.

Respectfully,

Doug Romano



Harbormaster

Semiahmoo Marina

www.semiahmoomarina.com



July 11, 2014

Barb Chamberlain and Doug Walker, Co-Chairs
Members of the Blue Ribbon Task Force for Outdoor Recreation

Via email: bard@wabikes.org, doug@wwalker.biz

Dear Co-Chairs and Members,

The Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber supports your efforts on the Blue Ribbon Task Force for Outdoor Recreation. Specifically, we would ask that the Task Force examine and give its support to the Marine Tourism Bill, which was introduced in the legislature this past session – HB 1366 and SB 5241 (Maritime Tourism Bills).

What these bills did was to better the availability of use permits for purposes of vessel sales and use taxation and extended to nonresident business entities. A nonresident business entity owning a vessel may obtain a vessel permit allowing the vessel to remain in Washington for up to six months rather than the current 60 days.

There are a multitude of marine businesses within the Tacoma and Pierce County communities that would benefit from such an approach, as well as the ancillary positive impacts on the economy.

Boating and the maritime industry are a big component of the economy here in Pierce County. Unfortunately, while many marinas in Washington struggle to hold on, our neighbors in Sidney, B.C. have full marinas. Our competitors in Canada allow U.S. boats to stay there 363 days a year without owing any tax. Boat owners move their boats (legally) for 48 hours to Port Angeles and then return to Sidney, year after year. We in the Washington maritime industry are losing out.

The bills noted above would provide marinas a more level playing field. The Marine Tourism Bill will keep boats in our marinas longer, meaning more customers for our local economy.

The economic impact would be enormous for our community. It will stabilize our waterfront and more importantly help our local marinas, boatyards, electricians, welders, painters, carpenters and boat supply businesses (e.g., furniture suppliers) benefit when an out-of-state boat is kept in our state's waters for a longer period of time. Additionally, retailers, restaurants and hotels should also see a spike in business.

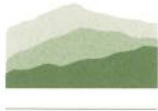
Thank you for your consideration of this information as you put together your action plan and recommendations.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Pierson'.

Tom Pierson
President and CEO

cc: Jim Fox jim.fox@rco.wa.gov
Meg O'Leary meg.oleary@rco.wa.gov



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September 4, 2014

Barb Chamberlain, Co-Chair
Doug Walker, Co-Chair
Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation
Recreation and Conservation Office
1111 Washington Street SE
Olympia, WA 98501
[Sent also via email to policychanges@rco.wa.gov]

RE: Comments on Draft Task Force Report

Dear Barb and Doug:

The Trust for Public Land ("TPL") partners with landowners, communities, local governments, and state agencies on programs and projects that create parks, trails, and other outdoor recreation lands. We also conserve working forest, farm and ranch lands, and preserve historical and cultural sites. To achieve these goals, we provide conservation finance services to analyze and implement local and state funding strategies, geographic information systems (GIS) and maps to guide our work with our partners, and provide economic research on outdoor recreation and parks issues. The Trust for Public Land worked in support of the creation of Governor Inslee's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation ("Task Force"), which includes Tom Reeve, Chair of TPL's National Leadership Council.

We greatly appreciate your service as Co-Chairs of Governor Inslee's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation. Along with other Task Force members, staff, and consultants, you have taken on a review of issues that are central to The Trust for Public Land's mission to ensure that all Americans – urban and rural - have access to recreational opportunities. The draft Task Force Report includes a number of important recommendations and we strongly support the overall direction of the Draft Report and the Task Force's work to date. Our comments focus on a few key issues based on our work in Washington State and perspective from working on similar issues around country.





1. Washington State Lags Behind Other States in Promoting Outdoor Recreation for Its Economy and Quality of Life.

Based on our work throughout the United States on outdoor recreation funding and related economic issues, we are familiar with how other states promote outdoor recreation, both for tourism and economic development, and provide outdoor opportunities for their own citizens. Compared to other states, including our Pacific Northwest neighbors, Washington State lacks a concerted focus in promoting our outdoor recreational opportunities and the outdoor recreation business sector. This results in lost economic opportunities, especially in rural parts of Washington State where local economies and residents can benefit greatly from tourism and outdoor recreation-related spending.

Washington's own citizens need not leave our state to experience recreational opportunities that are both family-friendly and world-class. For this reason, we are pleased to see the recommendation to create a designated office to develop a focused strategy to promote both the economic and quality of life aspects of outdoor recreation in Washington State. We appreciate the recognition that a centralized focus within a state office must include participation from the private and non-profit sectors.

2. Role of Discover Pass Must Continue to be Refined to Balance Revenue Needs with the State's Role in Enabling Recreational Access.

In a fairly short period of time, the Discover Pass has become one of the more successful revenue-producing recreational pass programs in the country. However, success in raising revenue should not be the only metric in assessing the merits of the Discover Pass program. The Discover Pass program must continue to be refined to eliminate some of the cumbersome attributes of the system that discourage use of our State Parks and encourage noncompliance. For this reason, we support the recommendations in the draft Task Force Report to obtain a review of the Discover Pass program to make it more user-friendly and to eliminate the negative impacts on access, especially for moderate income residents.

3. Task Force Report Should Include Consideration of Washington's Future Population Growth – Both How Much and Where it Will Occur.

The Task Force process included significant public comment opportunities for outdoor recreation and other interests. One element not yet included is consideration of Washington State's population growth projections and how continued population growth will drive increased demand for outdoor recreation opportunities. Data from the Office of Financial Management (OFM)





shows that Washington's population is expected to grow from 6.7 million in 2010 to approximately 8.8 million by 2040, with a majority of that occurring in Central Puget Sound. Recent OFM information shows that the state's population gain between 2013 and 2014 was the largest one-year increase since 2008, driven largely by people moving into Washington State. Central Puget Sound already suffers from an imbalance between the demand for recreational facilities and the supply available, and continued population growth will continue this trend.

The undersupply of outdoor recreational access in some parts of the state is also caused not simply by the numbers of new residents, but by the types of people who choose to live in Washington State. In recent years, surveys of business leaders have shown that Washington State is a prime destination for new businesses that include business owners and employees who rank outdoor recreation as a critical component of quality of life. Much of our economic growth is driven by people who come to Washington State because of our outdoor recreation opportunities, who expect these opportunities, and most important – will support creation of more opportunities with their wallets and their votes.

The Trust for Public Land appreciates the recognition in the draft Task Force Report that continued capital investment in outdoor recreation will be needed. However, our view is that additional investment is needed simply to meet current demand, let alone meet the new demands for outdoor recreational opportunities driven by new population growth.

One of The Trust for Public Land's core national program areas is our Parks for People program. This program recognizes that our country's recreational resources, whether they are urban parks or large rural landscapes, should be preserved for use by people. Like the rest of the country, Washington State is urbanizing, with an increased percent of new growth occurring in cities and suburban areas. 80% of Americans now live in or near cities. While these new land use patterns have significant benefits, the built environment can disconnect people from nature and the outdoors, and the fun, fitness, and relaxation that parks, trails, and other outdoor recreational amenities provide. Our Parks for People program has a simple objective: to ensure that all Americans who live in or near cities are within a 10 minute walk of a park, trail, garden, or natural area. We ask that the Task Force consider using this metric as one method of analyzing whether Washington State is making progress toward the goals expressed in Governor Inslee's Executive Order. In addition, we urge the Task Force to recommend increased funding for the creation and improvement of urban parks so that all citizens of the state have access to nature and the outdoors.



THE
TRUST
for
PUBLIC
LAND



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We thank you, other Task Force members, agency staff, and others involved in the process for developing tangible recommendations that we believe will support TPL's work in Washington State and meet the needs of our citizens. We look forward to the Task Force's final report and in working to implement the recommendations in future years.

Sincerely,

Paul Kundtz, State Director



July 1, 2014

Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation
Recreation and Conservation Office
1111 Washington Street S.E.
Olympia, Washington 98501

RE: Stakeholder Comments to the Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Thank you for the opportunity to provide stakeholder comments to the Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

Founded in 1987, Washington Bikes is Washington's statewide bicycle advocacy organization and has led efforts for passage of the majority of bike legislation adopted in the past 27 years. Washington Bikes works to grow bicycling statewide and to create complete, safe and healthy streets by working for investment in a balanced transportation system, providing education, developing more inclusive communities for cycling, building a coalition of organizations, promoting bike tourism and travel, and seeking to make bicycling accessible to everyone.

Growing outdoor recreation opportunities has always served as a critical goal for Washington Bikes to work and advocate for better and safer connections; easier non-motorized access to parks, trails, and camping; and as an unparalleled way to see Washington state. Increasingly, Washington Bikes is working with local governments, chambers, and tourism bureaus to highlight the amazing destinations and corridors that Washington state has to offer for bicyclists.

Washington Bikes is currently pursuing two major initiatives to promote bicycle travel and tourism as a form of outdoor recreation:

1. **Establishing the US Bicycle Route System in Washington state.** In May Washington Bikes and WSDOT received notice from the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) that US Bicycle Route 10 was approved. The route follows the SR 20 corridor from Anacortes to Newport. It represents the first of six corridors traversing the state that will provide new opportunities and awareness for bicycling statewide.
2. **Bike Travel and Tourism Marketing/Promotion Statewide.** Washington Bikes, in conjunction with a Northwest travel author, recently published the first book in over a decade on multi-day bicycle tours in Washington state. In addition, Washington Bikes is working statewide to coordinate new awareness of routes and destinations for travellers and tourists to tap into a market that in Oregon contributes \$400 million in direct annual economic impact to the state economy.

Washington state has incredible strengths and opportunities to highlight the state as a supremely attractive destination for a multitude of activities. Its physical attributes – both natural and human-built – make it a great place to enjoy outdoor activities.

Still, the state's outdoor recreation sector faces several challenges and threats:

- **Poor definition of outdoor recreation as a sector.** Several divisions appear to exist as to what outdoor recreation constitutes. Washington Bikes supports the notion that road biking, biking to school, and bike travel and tourism are all forms of outdoor recreation (especially the latter). Going to a city park and engaging in outdoor recreation is a critical "gateway" activity that needs encouragement and fostering
- **A need for an interdisciplinary lens to highlight the value of outdoor recreation to Washingtonians – particularly around health.** Many of us value outdoor recreation for its positive mental and physical benefits that help individuals but are critical for public health, too. By saying "outdoor rec" we don't just mean driving to a faraway state park or doing something that involves spending money. We include opportunities close to home to walk or bike in the neighborhood or use a local park.
- **Lack of investments for state agencies, or other entities to support this emerging outdoor recreation sector.** Since the disbandment of the state tourism office, we are concerned that the state lacks the institutional support of many its neighboring and peer states to effectively market and highlight outdoor recreation opportunities, which ultimately cost visitors and the revenues for state agencies and local economies. Additionally, state agencies (e.g., State Parks) need additional investments to support outdoor recreation, and the expansion of trail investments (e.g., Washington Wildlife Recreation Program).

Washington Bikes would like to submit several recommendations that could enhance outdoor recreation in Washington state:

- **Encouraging the creation of an office/position/interdepartmental coordination to raise awareness and coordination in Washington state government.** Cross-departmental coordination is necessary for this wide-ranging topic.
- **As outdoor recreation is further defined and policy recommendations are made, the state needs to remember that "close to home" access is particularly important for public health.** We face an aging population, people with disabilities who can't drive, and young people who aren't driving in the numbers they once were. All of these are people whose primary recreational activities will be in their own neighborhoods and communities. Designing for health and for active transportation access will be critical. Including the Department of Health in outdoor recreation and promotion should be explored.
- **Developing policy proposals that underscore the importance of outdoor recreation and its benefits the attraction of businesses and workforce talent to local economies.** More often, employers and employees are looking for quality of life attributes in where they choose to locate. Washington state has a fantastic opportunity enhance outdoor recreation to increase its competitiveness. Policy goals developed by this task force need to focus on the benefits of outdoor recreation to making Washington state more competitive economically.

Additionally, Washington Bikes believes that transportation needs to play a larger role in outdoor recreation. Transportation corridors play a huge role in certain types of outdoor recreation activities, in urban areas transportation can either promote or inhibit physical activity (particularly important for children), and transportation is critical for access to

outdoor recreation amenities –whether urban or rural. We wish to submit the following recommendations:

- **Roads are an underutilized recreational asset.** Invest in design, construction and maintenance of roads that create a network of more comfortable bike connections provides return on investment through recreational use and bike travel. This includes wider highway shoulders and careful attention to how highways connect with and affect local streets.
- **Take a multimodal approach to transportation design to enhance outdoor recreation on our roads.** For the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and transportation departments statewide, not enough to mitigate the effects of a given corridor; the transportation goal should be to create the same kind of seamless experience for people on bikes that is routinely available to motor vehicle drivers by incorporating design that improves safety for people on bikes as well as drivers.
- **Investing in signage/wayfinding for bikes would significantly enhance awareness for drivers that they should expect bikes on the road; for people who bike it will provide important guidance.** Providing bike-specific signage through small towns and scenic areas can help prospective bike travellers and tourists envision making the trip by bike. Additionally, Washington state has recently had its first US Bicycle Route approved. The state needs a signage plan for this and future US Bicycle Routes in the state (routes being coordinated by Washington Bikes).
- **Challenge Washington to catch up to other states that are making significant investments in bicycle and walking infrastructure of all types.** Massachusetts just passed a 5-year \$12 billion transportation investment package that includes \$377 million for walking and bike trails that will connect the state – far exceeding any current or planned Washington state investments in paths and trails. A similar Washington state investment in key missing links of local trail projects to create regional attractions will provide significant return. This benefits outdoor recreation tourism along with the health of local residents and the value of nearby real estate.
- **WSDOT should develop a Scenic Bikeways program with signage to highlight great bicycling loops similar to Scenic Byways.** Washington Bikes has taken steps toward this by bringing out a book of multi-day bike tours this spring. Many of the routes in the book could be designated as Scenic Bikeways and could enhance the state's outdoor recreation potential for residents and visitors alike.

Already we believe WSDOT is to be commended on beginning to take a multimodal corridor approach to their planning; recreational use provides additional economic incentive to accelerate this thinking. The Task Force recommendations can help grow this momentum at WSDOT.

On behalf of Washington Bikes, I sincerely appreciate the time to provide stakeholder comments to this important Task Force.

Sincerely,



Blake Trask
Statewide policy director

**WHATCOM COUNTY
EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE**

County Courthouse
311 Grand Avenue, Suite #108
Bellingham, WA 98225-4082



Jack Louws
County Executive

July 11, 2014

Blue Ribbon Task Force on Outdoor Recreation
Co-Chair Barb Chamberlain, Barb@wabikes.org
Co-Chair Doug Walker, doug@dwwalker.biz
RCO staff Jim Fox, jim.fox@rco.wa.gov
RCO staff Meg O'Leary, meg.oleary@rco.wa.gov

Dear Task Force:

I am writing in support of the Blue Ribbon Task Force's efforts to promote Washington's outdoor recreation economy. As the Task Force develops strategies, actions, and recommendations to manage, transform, and leverage Washington's outdoor recreation assets and state programs; I urge you to recommend the passage of a Marine Tourism Bill which will remove disincentives for out-of-state boaters to visit and stay in Washington harbors. Out-of-state boaters are an important part of the outdoor recreation economy contributing millions of dollars to community tourism and service businesses and generating tax revenue which supports state and local services.

Washington levies a substantial and disproportionate tax on some out-of-state recreational vessels which serves as a disincentive for these boaters to visit and stay in Washington harbors. Out-of-state boats owned in partnership must pay a use tax of about 10 percent of the boat's value if they remain in Washington for more than 60 days. Rather than staying at local ports, servicing their boats in local shops, and spending money at local businesses; out-of-state boaters have a significant financial incentive to take a short cruise to British Columbia where they can avoid paying Washington's punitive use tax and stay for up to a year without being taxed.

The marine trades cluster is a critical part of Whatcom County's regional economy and culture. Its firms include over 100 businesses which employ more than 2,300 people and generate a combined annual revenue of more than \$550 million. Whatcom County's working waterfront and other water based recreation provides a supply of year-round, family-wage jobs which has a ripple effect throughout the local and regional economy and contribute directly to the economies of our shoreline communities in Bellingham, Birch Bay, Blaine and Point Roberts.

The passage of a Marine Tourism Bill will greatly benefit the local and regional economy including outdoor recreational businesses. Outdoor recreation plays an important role in the economy and quality of life in Whatcom County and is essential for the area's tourism and supporting businesses. The breadth of outdoor recreation opportunities found in Whatcom County is often used as an employment recruitment tool by businesses and industry. Thank your for considering adding the support of the Blue Ribbon Task Force to this important legislation which will grow Washington's outdoor recreation economy and stimulate its marine trades cluster.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Jack Louws", is written over a blue star-shaped graphic. Below the signature, the name "Jack Louws" and title "County Executive" are printed.

Jack Louws
County Executive

Appendix VII | Task Force Subcommittee Recommendations and Resources

Appendix VII a | **Economic Development Subcommittee Recommendations**

Subcommittee lead

Marc Berejka

The subcommittee recommendations below remain strategic and directional, and are supplemented by a few more tactical ideas on how to bring the strategies to life. After Jim and the drafting team have had a chance to digest these and see how they might meld with other recommendations, I'm happy to chat about what more detail my Subcommittee should provide. The template asked for a lot of detail, some of which would be really hard to develop for high-level recommendations like these. I want to get the drafters the information they need, but not over-invest in developing content that might end up on the cutting room floor.

Short title for your recommendation

Economic Development

- Reduce barriers to accessing the outdoors through ongoing regulatory reform. For instance, by simplifying pass systems to make it easier for the general public to access federal/state lands/parks; by having a state liaison work with federal land managers and outdoor recreation guides/outfitters to streamline the commercial permitting process; and by making it easier for people to hunt, fish, boat, horseback ride and use OHVs.
- Unlock economic potential through targeted investments and policy changes. For example, by assuring that targeted investments in recreation infrastructure can, indeed, be treated by state agencies as "economic development" projects and by allowing some portion of existing public lands to be used for revenue-generating activities (e.g., modest sponsorships, concessions, modest conversions).
- Increase and better coordinate the promotion of Washington's many, diverse recreation opportunities. In order to attract more travelers from overseas, across the nation and within Washington, and to show that our amazing quality-of-life is a great reason to build businesses and families here.
- Continue to educate public officials that recreation can be a key contributor to the economic well-being of Washington. In particular, make an extra effort to assist smaller towns in filling gaps in their recreation

infrastructure and marketing; also, recognize that many recreation businesses are small and entrepreneurial, and are affected by the business climate government creates.

- Designate a cross-agency leader or leadership group whose principal task is to maximize the many indirect economic benefits of recreation. Such as collaborating with healthcare providers to reduce healthcare costs via recreation; working with transportation and urban planners to create healthier, greener, bikable/walkable communities; and guiding environmental/conservation/habitat investments in ways that also support recreation.

Problem statement TBD
(What issue does the recommendation address?)

Recommendation TBD
(Briefly describe the proposed solution.)

What does success look like? TBD

Context TBD
(Key background, facts and figures)

Alternatives considered, if any TBD
(How did you land on this solution?)

Who will implement this recommendation? TBD

Who needs to be involved? TBD

What, if any, legislation is required for implementation? TBD

How much will it cost? TBD
(Include potential funding sources.)

What's the anticipated timeline? TBD

Barriers to implementation TBD

How will you measure success? TBD
(Consider key metrics and outcomes.)

Governor's Parks and Outdoor Recreation Task Force
Economic Development Subcommittee
 DRAFT – August 19, 2014

Recap of Policy Recommendations from Commenters

On six successive Fridays between May 23 and June 27, 2014, the Economic Development Subcommittee of the Governor's Parks and Outdoor Recreation Task Force hosted teleconferences to take stakeholder input. We also accepted written policy recommendations. Many recommendations may be more narrowly focused than can be accommodated in the main body of the Final Report, so for completeness, they are summarized here.

Lead the Way to Outdoor Recreation

- Washington should create an office of the Outdoor Recreation “ombudsman” to develop and coordinate the state’s economic investment in, and benefits from, outdoor recreation as well as manage the state’s outdoor recreation vision. One possibility would be to elevate the role of the RCO into this position.
- This office would foster long-term, cross-agency coordination in growing the outdoor recreation sector and in cultivating its many direct and indirect economic benefits. Direct benefits include the development and sale of outdoor goods and apparel, as well as extensive travel and tourism across the state. Indirect benefits of outdoor recreation include public health, deeper environmental awareness, more cohesive communities and an overall higher quality of life across Washington – with quality of life serving as a draw for new companies and workers. In addition to implementing and coordinating the state’s outdoor recreation vision, this office can be responsible for:
 - Building and providing state support for outdoor recreation through evaluating and restoring funding mechanisms, promoting public/private partnerships, and harnessing the power of collaboration. Examples include assuring:
 - Transportation funding adequately supports recreation infrastructure;
 - Public health centers see outdoor recreation as a “prescription” for combating obesity and other ailments;
 - Economic development officers recognize outdoor recreation infrastructure as essential to growth, especially in rural communities, and
 - Education officials sufficiently integrate outdoor exposure into their environmental instruction.
 - Supporting national and regional initiatives that positively impact recreation assets by advocating for well-funded and proper management of federal land and facilities, and the support of federal initiatives such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Recreational Trails Program.
 - Ensuring the balanced and responsible use of public lands by evaluating all needs including resource development, recreation, wildlife habitat, environmental services, etc.
 - Promoting outdoor recreation while recognizing coming challenges including changes in demographics and demand.
 - Grow the outdoor products industry by promoting the state’s favorable business climate and range of recreation amenities.

- Preserve the natural assets, which support outdoor recreation, by ensuring that the state's great outdoor places remain healthy and beautiful.

This office would serve as a convener for the multiple stakeholders in recreation by developing an Outdoor Recreation Advisory Group and hosting an annual Outdoor Recreation Summit. In addition, the office would provide resources to these stakeholders such as:

- Educational opportunities for county and municipal government to transform their communities into recreation destinations
- Business counseling for the outdoor industry to learn about incentive programs regarding economic development, trade and diplomacy, and workforce development
- Marketing and promotion support for the state's recreation opportunities

Inspire an Outdoor Recreation Culture

- Increasing amount of research shows that time spent outdoors improves physical and mental health, community cohesion and feeds into a healthier environment. Most of an individual's health profile can be connected to one's access to nature. It has been a challenge to get the healthcare industry to "invest" in the outdoors, but there are changes afoot. Increasingly, public health experts recognize that access to safe, clean and well-maintained parks and outdoor spaces is good for your health. Howard Frumkin, Dean of UW's School of Public Health, has said, "In public health, it's axiomatic that everybody should have access to vaccinations, preventive screening, health care when sick, wholesome food and clean air and water. In just the same way, everybody should have access parks and green space." At the same time, as the Willamette Partnership commented, "Outdoor recreation organizations should take advantage of the current interest by health organizations in undertaking initiatives that lower health care costs by demonstrating the benefits of physical activity, clean air and water and access to nature for both physical and mental health."
- Kids who spend time outdoors are better learners. Test better. Kids' environmental efforts, e.g., recycling help schools save money. "Outdoor labs" can now be part of science curriculum – easier to meet requirements for lab facilities and lab time. Kids who spend time outdoors become environmental leaders. WA has learning standards for environment and sustainability, but programs are unfunded. Apparently, there was funding in 2007. Should kids have free access for kids in all recreational ventures?
- Urban areas with access to recreation have significant economic benefits. More specifically, there are many social, economic, and fiscal benefits to creating dense, walkable urban communities with easy access to transit. But these communities need recreation opportunities within walking distance. The ability to engage in outdoor recreation is critical to every part of our population, but the availability of recreation spaces is even more important as we create denser, walkable communities in our urban areas. For example, Seattle's South Lake Union neighborhood has been transformed from a low density warehouse/commercial district to a medium and high density community with a mix of uses and a booming population of workers and residents. The synergy of uses (restaurants, offices, service providers, apartments) and people (residents, creative workers, and professionals) have resulted in a major economic benefit to the region. The City of Seattle has made major investments in infrastructure to support the transformation of SLU, and those initial investments have paid dividends and the City's return on its investment has been substantial. The proximity of all the mix of uses in SLU to park and recreation facilities, public spaces, bike routes, and lake activities supports those

economic benefits and makes the neighborhood a vibrant and livable urban experience. Community planning efforts and master development plans should be required to include a recreation plan – e.g., for trails for walking and biking that create linkages with regional trail networks.

Open More Recreation Opportunities

- For hiking and camping, user concern is apparent decline in access to federal lands. Seem to be more need for permits, more closed gates. Harder for people/families to take spontaneous hike/trip when permit process is confusing/complicated. Need to make it easier – especially since WA weather is variable and need to be ready to be spontaneous when weather is inviting.
- To build trails or even use them for events, dealing with patchwork jurisdictions (federal, state, county, quasi-public entities like PUDs and reclamation districts) is a huge obstacle. Competing mandates between the jurisdictions makes reasonable use difficult. With cooperation of all levels of government in fostering outdoor recreation we can have a more diversified economy and move towards a four season regime.
- Need more off-road/ATV opportunities. A primary issue is access to paved roads at 35mph or less. Access to paved roads can create connections between off-road trail heads. Off-road visitors are good customers for local towns. Also need to look at liability protections for private land-owners. Off-road vehicles can be basic transportation (instead of cars) in small communities.
- Mountain bikers need better trails and better access, especially to DNR lands. Need to get past unauthorized trail problem by better funding planning process. Discover Pass proceeds not providing enough. Forest Service also hard to navigate/work with. Some trails closing. Government agencies need \$\$ to implement plans. NGOs are already offsetting costs by doing trail construction. Much more cost-effective than government construction.
- For hunting and sport fishing, lack of access for commercial guides at the federal, state, and county level inhibits their ability to serve customers. Commercial use of public lands should be encouraged because it results in more money being spent in Washington. Lack of access to public lands means the open areas become more congested. Hunters are depressed by this lack of access and are choosing to go out of state. The loss of participants directly hits businesses in our rural towns. In contrast, Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board meets with the US Forest Service and establishes a Memorandum of Understanding “MOU” regarding commercial permitting of businesses which results in greater commercial opportunity in the National Forests for recreational businesses. Fishing also depends on clean water, conservation, healthy fisheries in this state and beyond.
- Guides who provide transportation face a confusing permitting system. There is a split between the UTC for vehicles with capacity of 8 and up, and the Department of Licensing for vehicles smaller than 8 (jeeps and minivans). Neither regulation is specific to vehicles involved in outdoor recreation and having two different departments regulating makes for confusion.
- For recreational boating, biggest hurdle right now is marine tourism due to the 60 day limit/tax. Will be running a bill next year to expand the time period from 60 days to 180 days. That change would create \$30 million in new revenue.

- For developed areas, complete streets are an economic competitive advantage (accommodate cars, transit, bike and pedestrian). Need to expand funding for all users. Walking/biking access helps attract talent. Cities (SF, NYC, Chicago) competing now to attract talent, and green lanes/protected bike lanes can help. Designing for transportation alternatives can pull from different funding mechanisms – e.g., federal funding for pollution/congestion reduction, direct funding.
- Also for cycling, biking is often completely left out of promotional materials in areas of the state where it is very popular. Yet, bikes are an “attraction.” In most communities, transportation infrastructure and planning does bike related projects and the chamber/DMO do hotels and restaurants – need more coordination. Tremendous potential – bikers don’t just ride bikes they do other outdoor recreation activities. Issues are access and funding. For instance, lack of connectivity and linkage of bicycle systems is another significant challenge. A state investment in key missing links of local trail projects to create regional attractions will provide significant return on investment. An effort to create smart connections will bolster recreation tourism along with the health of local residents and the value of nearby real estate. Also, if we encourage and support the development of low stress bicycling networks, with a focus on protected bike lanes, we will help make riding safe and attractive for all ages and abilities.

Grow the Outdoor Recreation Economy

- Need to be mindful of recreation access issues, yes, but also aware that recreation businesses have “standard” business issues, too; e.g., wage/hour/disability/workers comp, tax, healthcare/ACA. Some (many?) recreation businesses can’t relocate because their essence is tied to the place they’re located. Others, like manufacturers, could relocate if cost of doing business is too high.
- Apparel and gear companies worry about high import tariffs, Internet tax fairness – seeking balanced trade and level competitive playing field for online versus bricks and mortar. But care should be taken not to undercut domestic manufacturing.
- Need to continue to draw people to the region. Support gateway communities. Example is current work to promote recreation in Darrington (east of Oso, WA). Spurt of promotion has created an uptick. Longer term Qs include: How to make mountain biking access easier? How to fund other gaps in rec infrastructure? Support federal bill making it easier for NGOs to help with trails? How to polish business attractions? Can Darrington example be cited in TF’s final report?
- Competition for recreational users is strong from our neighboring states and Canada. Washington needs to strengthen and prioritize outdoor recreation across all agencies. Additionally, Washington state needs to determine a solid mechanism to compete with other states and regions on destination/tourism marketing in regards to outdoor recreation specifically. Can take advantage of strong correlation between agro-tourism and eco-tourism. State also needs to do more international marketing and awareness of outdoor recreation as tourism asset. International visitors are looking for a destination like we have in Washington. We should be building a brand around outdoor recreation. State hasn’t embraced tourism as economic development like other states have. Also note: lodging tax money goes to projects that are not necessarily for bringing tourists to community – can State stiffen up requirements for lodging tax usage?
- Tourism showcases quality of life in communities and helps in investment in communities, but many CEOs state that they locate their business because of the quality of life.

- For tribes, even though casinos do economic development, cultural tourism is important segment. Need partnerships with communities that tribal lands are in. Get rid of boundaries and look at partnering with neighboring areas. Environment is important. Tribes are the original “eco tourist” – hunting, fishing, etc.
- Municipal and local parks are the gateway to the outdoors for many residents who may not have access to vehicle. Sports fields have become an extension of our front yards. The days of kids playing with neighborhood children are gone, organized play has taken over and the families and kids you meet at the park has become more of our social network. Realtors highlight proximity to local parks as a selling point. New businesses that come to the area focus on the schools and parks systems. Youth athletic fields are a major economic development driver (hosting tournaments, etc.). The local hotels and campgrounds get booked and those visitors will eat at our local restaurants and shop at our local stores. Parks in the suburban community are a driver for the local economy and add value to real properties in their vicinity and the overall community. That said, there often is difficulty in passing levies in rural counties and the subsequent closing of parks.
- This is a vital issue to small cities where outdoor recreation is the lifeblood of the economy – they may have interest in outdoor recreation as an industry but may lack assets. In some small rural communities, access isn't the problem as much as finding funding to expand access and park (sport) facilities. For example, in Ritzville a wheat farmer donated 17 acres of land for a quad baseball/softball complex but there are no funds to build it. Streamlining access to funding is important for small communities. Similarly, some small communities cannot provide the matching funds necessary to take advantage of RCO grants. The match can be an insurmountable barrier that ultimately makes those funds unavailable to small communities that need the help the most. It can be hard in small rural communities especially if they aren't adequately staffed to know where the funding sources even are. The value of a statewide directory would be immense.
- It would be great to have a state level unified approach where they advocate for recreational access/permits/approval as long as there is a good return on investment and liability is limited. It would definitely help the economy.

Sustain Our Outdoor Recreation Assets

- All of the different user fees and passes are having a negative impact on recreational opportunities. User passes are a barrier to access. At Experience WA call center, 70 to 80% of callers ask about state's natural beauty and outdoor recreation, but 40 to 50 % of calls are about camping and passes – citing confusion about passes. Separate fees make it confusing to the general public. Just a short time ago there were no fees for boat launches, snow passes or a Discover Pass, the parks were full. The investment in our parks and their recreational opportunities should come from the general fund. At a minimum, trailhead signage can be significantly improved to clearly inform users about the correct pass to display and agencies should provide more readily available and user-friendly methods of payment.
- For cycling, fully fund, staff, and implement the Transportation Alternatives program and take advantage of other federal funding programs. Fully spend funds from the Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School, and Recreational Trails programs

- The state has a great untapped resource in their volunteer base, the state needs to use them better. Volunteers can get things done at a low expense. They just need an informed priority from our officials. The state can encourage greater partnerships at the local level. Residents and visitors of Washington are fortunate to experience the benefits of many positive public-private partnerships where non-profit organizations can help coordinate, fundraise, install improvements, provide volunteer support, help manage recreational resources, educate its user group and aid in protecting these areas' natural resources. In a time of diminishing appreciation of nature and reduced visitation of Washington's amazing state resources, land managers should employ a public process and adaptive management practices that encourage more citizens to visit and serve as stewards of our state lands.
- State interest and support of federal recreation lands should be increased and new partnerships should be identified to help bolster recreation and access on federal lands. Adequate funding and resources could be provided, in part, through unique state-federal partnerships that enhance improvements and maintenance on federal lands. In addition, active state support of federal funding programs such as Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Recreational Trails Program (through TAP), Land and Water Conservation Fund and other funding initiatives should continue.
- Climate change could prove costly to the recreation economy, especially snow sports. Lower snowfall years have cost Washington ski resorts over \$79M. In the last decade, the resorts have seen 1.6M fewer skier visitors – a 28% decrease – compared to higher snowfall years.

Appendix VII a | **Get More People Outdoors** **Subcommittee Recommendations**

Subcommittee lead

Ben Klasky

Short title for your recommendation

Access

Problem statement

(What issue does the recommendation address?)

One Pass

The current parking pass regime is broadly cited as a barrier to participation as well falling short of anticipated revenue generation goals.

Recreational use liability statutory reform

Access to vast areas considered prime recreational assets in the state is becoming substantially restricted due to road closures by state and federal land managers. In addition large portions of WA recreational assets are privately owned, particularly by timber companies. A primary driver of these closures is liability exposure.

Establish Outdoor Recreation Office

Current RCO lacks power and capability to fully engage all necessary government stakeholders and drive change. In particular a vast portion of WA state's most valuable recreation assets fall under federal control. Those land managers update their various management plans based on processes that include input from a range of private interest groups. Often those inputs have narrow perspectives and don't reflect broad based considerations for maximizing access for all possible users. WA state needs a voice in these dialogues

Non-Profit Group Permit Reform

501c3 groups are increasingly being treated by land managers as 'Commercial Services' and subject to those permit requirements. By doing so without increasing the overall number of permits an effective reduction in non-profit group permit allowance has occurred. This dynamic falls disproportionately on low-income, minority, and disadvantaged youth populations as they are most inclined to access outdoor recreation via non-profit programs.

Close Park Funding Gap

Budget cuts have severely compromised the quality of our parks and it's getting worse fast. If it has truly become economically impossible for the traditional funding sources to do the job then

we'll need to consider non-traditional sources. At first blush many of these suggestions will be shocking to some and considered heresy based on our traditional approach of limiting commercialism within our park and other public land settings. Unfortunately desperate times call for desperate measures and while some ideas may seem initially unpalatable at best the alternative of a collapsing physical infrastructure is certainly worse.

Positive Reinforcement for State and Federal land managers who exhibit strong leadership in enabling increased participation as well as high quality land stewardship

Many land managers believe they are fighting a zero sum game where based on budget cuts they have no choice but to limit access to the areas they manage. This has led to an overall reduction in access to state and federal lands over the past two decades.

Streamline event permitting

A key aspect of raising the awareness for outdoor activities is providing opportunities to participate in mass events. This is quite often a gateway opportunity for new participants who encouraged to join in by friends already engaged with the activity. For event organizers the logistical overhead of getting all necessary permits is overwhelming.

Drive Awareness

With the Outdoor Recreation Commission establish a service that offers a streamlined permitting service. This would give event organizers one stop shopping to understand what permits are necessary and then offer expedited processing of the permits themselves.

Recommendation

(Briefly describe the proposed solution.)

One Pass

Offer a single pass good for all state recreation parking areas. The pass would be a windshield sticker that could alternatively be placed on a substrate to lay on the dash for transferability. Offer the pass as part of tab renewal for increased distribution in addition to existing points of sale. Passes would be transferable, this is a fundamental expectation of recreationalists.

Recreational use liability statutory reform

Colorado has enacted a package of statutory reforms, notably the Recreational Use Act and the Colorado Premises Liability Act. These serve to limit land managers and owners from claims by recreational users. Washington should implement a similar set of statutes which would reduce the perceived liability exposure burden which so often leads managers and owners to restrict or eliminate recreational use.

Establish Outdoor Recreation Office

Establish Governor office level Outdoor Recreation Commission. This could be an enhancement to current RCO establishment. This would mirror what Utah has done but also suggest including an ongoing private sector advisory board as part of ORC leadership.

Non-Profit Group Permit Reform

Reform the permit rules to exempt 501c3 groups from Commercial Use permit requirements. This would align with legislation being introduced at the federal level in the coming months. Non-profit groups would still be subject to local group size limits where applicable.

Close Park Funding Gap

Open up certain commercial opportunities within very limited guidelines in order to generate revenue to fund park maintenance. A simple version of this would be 'park sponsorship'. A sign near the park entrance would offer private entities the opportunity to sponsor that park in exchange for simple logo exposure to its users. This just a half step further than the highway signs that allow companies exposure to commuters as being responsible for removing litter from those roads.

Positive Reinforcement for State and Federal land managers who exhibit strong leadership in enabling increased participation as well as high quality land stewardship

From the Outdoor Recreation Commission the Governor would host an annual conference where land managers would convene to share best practices. As a part of this event awards would be given to land managers who demonstrated exceptional leadership in expanding access while also sustaining the highest levels of stewardship. This would orient creative land managers to continue to find new solutions to help WA state drive its recreation economy.

Streamline event permitting

With the Outdoor Recreation Commission establish a service that offers a streamlined permitting service. This would give event organizers one stop shopping to understand what permits are necessary and then offer expedited processing of the permits themselves.

Drive Awareness

Empower the Outdoor Recreation Commission to work closely with the WA Office of Tourism to upgrade its marketing to more

explicitly feature outdoor recreation opportunities as part of its campaigns. This how it works in Utah and they kick our ass in this area.

What does success look like? TBD

Context TBD
(Key background, facts and figures)

Alternatives considered, if any TBD
(How did you land on this solution?)

Who will implement this recommendation? TBD

Who needs to be involved? TBD

What, if any, legislation is required for implementation? TBD

How much will it cost? TBD
(Include potential funding sources.)

What's the anticipated timeline? TBD

Barriers to implementation TBD

How will you measure success? TBD
(Consider key metrics and outcomes.)

Appendix / Original Notes:**1) Title: One Pass****Problem statement:**

The current parking pass regime is broadly cited as a barrier to participation as well falling short of anticipated revenue generation goals.

Recommendation:

Offer a single pass good for all state recreation parking areas. The pass would be a windshield sticker that could alternatively be placed on a substrate to lay on the dash for transferability. Offer the pass as part of tab renewal for increased distribution in addition to existing points of sale. Passes would be transferable, this is a fundamental expectation of recreationalists.

2) Recreational use liability statutory reform

Problem Statement: Access to vast areas considered prime recreational assets in the state is becoming substantially restricted due to road closures by state and federal land managers. In addition large portions of WA recreational assets are privately owned, particularly by timber companies. A primary driver of these closures is liability exposure.

Recommendation:

Colorado has enacted a package of statutory reforms, notably the Recreational Use Act and the Colorado Premises Liability Act. These serve to limit land managers and owners from claims by recreational users. Washington should implement a similar set of statutes which would reduce the perceived liability exposure burden which so often leads managers and owners to restrict or eliminate recreational use.

3) Title: Establish Outdoor Recreation Office

Problem Statement: Current RCO lacks power and capability to fully engage all necessary government stakeholders and drive change. In particular a vast portion of WA State's most valuable recreation assets fall under federal control. Those land managers update their various management plans based on processes that include input from a range of private interest groups. Often those inputs have narrow perspectives and don't reflect broad based considerations for maximizing access for all possible users. WA State needs a voice in these dialogues.

Recommendation:

Establish Governor office level Outdoor Recreation Commission. This could be an enhancement to current RCO establishment. This would mirror what Utah has done but also suggest including an ongoing private sector advisory board as part of ORC leadership.

In particular the ORC would be charged with engaging with federal land managers from the Forest Service and National Parks to expand participation opportunities on non-state lands.

4) Title: Non-Profit Group Permit Reform

Problem Statement: 501c3 groups are increasingly being treated by land managers as 'Commercial Services' and subject to those permit requirements. By doing so without increasing the overall number of permits an effective reduction in non-profit group permit allowance has occurred. This dynamic falls disproportionately on low-income, minority, and disadvantaged youth populations as they are most inclined to access outdoor recreation via non-profit programs.

Recommendation: Reform the permit rules to exempt 501c3 groups from Commercial Use permit requirements. This would align with legislation being introduced at the federal level in the coming months. Non-profit groups would still be subject to local group size limits where applicable.

5) Title: Close Park Funding Gap

Problem Statement: Budget cuts have severely compromised the quality of our parks and it's getting worse fast. If it has truly become economically impossible for the traditional funding sources to do the job then we'll need to consider non-traditional sources. At first blush many of these suggestions will be shocking to some and considered heresy based on our traditional approach of limiting commercialism within our park and other public land settings. Unfortunately desperate times call for desperate measures and while some ideas may seem initially unpalatable at best the alternative of a collapsing physical infrastructure is certainly worse.

Recommendation: Open up certain commercial opportunities within very limited guidelines in order to generate revenue to fund park maintenance. A simple version of this would be 'park sponsorship'. A sign near the park entrance would offer private entities the opportunity to sponsor that park in exchange for simple logo exposure to its users. This just a half step further than the highway signs that allow companies exposure to commuters as being responsible for removing litter from those roads.

6) Title: Positive Reinforcement for State and Federal land managers who exhibit strong leadership in enabling increased participation as well as high quality land stewardship.

Problem Statement: Many land managers believe they are fighting a zero sum game where based on budget cuts they have no choice but to limit access to the areas they manage. This has led to an overall reduction in access to state and federal lands over the past two decades.

Recommendation: From the Outdoor Recreation Commission the Governor would host an annual conference where land managers would convene to share best practices. As a part of this event awards would be given to land managers who demonstrated exceptional leadership in expanding access while also sustaining the highest levels of stewardship. This would orient creative land managers to continue to find new solutions to help WA state drive its recreation economy.

7) Title: Streamline event permitting

Problem Statement: A key aspect of raising the awareness for outdoor activities is providing opportunities to participate in mass events. This is quite often a gateway opportunity for new participants who encouraged to join in by friends already engaged with the activity. For event organizers the logistical overhead of getting all necessary permits is overwhelming.

Recommendation: With the Outdoor Recreation Commission establish a service that offers a streamlined permitting service. This would give event organizers one stop shopping to understand what permits are necessary and then offer expedited processing of the permits themselves.

8) Title: Drive Awareness:

Problem Statement: Among states with substantial outdoor recreation opportunities Washington has arguably the highest quality opportunities in the country but ranks low in terms of awareness.

Recommendation: Empower the Outdoor Recreation Commission to work closely with the WA Office of Tourism to upgrade its marketing to more explicitly feature outdoor recreation opportunities as part of its campaigns. This how it works in Utah and they kick our ass in this area.

Appendix VII a | **Get More People Outdoors** **Subcommittee Recommendations**

Subcommittee lead

Ben Klasky

Short title for your recommendation

Military Community Access to the Public Lands, Outdoor Recreation, Outdoor Therapeutic Recreation

Problem statement

(What issue does the recommendation address?)

Discover Pass and Public Lands Campaign:

The military community in Washington State is an underserved population in regards to outdoor access, outdoor recreation, and outdoor based therapeutic programs.

WDVA Outdoor Website:

Washington veterans and their families as well as veteran service organizations currently lack a single online resource that consolidates veteran related opportunities for outdoor therapy and recreation in the state.

Outdoor Therapeutic Initiative:

Currently in Washington State, outdoor therapeutic treatment through the WDVA and the federal DVA hospitals is fragmented, and lacks a systematic approach or source of funding

Recommendation

(Briefly describe the proposed solution.)

Discover Pass and Public Lands Campaign:

Washington State changes its free Discover Pass policy to include all active service members and veterans.

Additionally, the free Discover Pass rollout will be complimented by an outreach campaign by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wild Life, and the Parks and Recreation Commission to the active duty and military community with a goal of

WDVA Outdoor Website:

While the WDVA website is a comprehensive resource for education, employment, medical, and other services available to Washington veterans, it can be improved to become the single point of reference detailing the numerous outdoor opportunities offered my nonprofit, commercial, and government based organizations offering opportunities for veterans in the outdoors.

Outdoor Therapeutic Initiative:

An outdoor therapeutic task force, led by WDVA, and consisting of members from Washington VA hospitals, representatives of

outdoor therapeutic and outdoor recreation organizations, and independent mental health professionals will be formed with the specific mission of designing and implementing a unified and systematic approach to outdoor therapy in the treatment of mental health issues in the military community.

What does success look like?

Discover Pass and Public Lands Campaign:

Providing a complimentary Discover Pass will significantly critical issues for the military community in Washington, ultimately resulting in increased access opportunities and physical and mental health benefits for veterans, active duty service members, and their families.

Increased use of the outdoors by the military community will result in direct economic benefits to the state due to additional spending on outdoor recreation and supporting commercial and service industries.

WDVA Outdoor Website:

This veteran resource will serve as a single source for information connecting the military community to reputable outdoor organizations and services within the state.

Outdoor Therapeutic Initiative:

In addition to long term benefits to the military community, success in treating mental health issues through the military community can serve as a testing ground to expand outdoor therapy to additional populations such as at risk children, first responders, refugees, and crime victims suffering from similar forms of trauma. A proven link between public health to public lands and recreation will ultimately raise their economic and social importance.

Context

(Key background, facts and figures)

Discover Pass and Public Lands Campaign:

The Discover Pass is currently free for veterans with a 30% disability rating or higher in Washington. At the federal level, active duty military (military pass) and disabled veterans (access pass) get free access to all National Parks and Forrester Service lands.

Washington is 6th in the nation in the number of active duty military (13th in overall population nationally), with 69,125 military personnel and another 90,246 dependents and 19,474 reservists.

The military and defense sector employs another 39,000 civilians, mostly at Joint Base Lewis McChord (JBLM) and Puget Sound Naval Shipyard (PSNS).

Washington State is home to 6 major military installations and an additional 19 minor installations, with an economic impact of over \$28.5 billion.

WDVA Outdoor Website:

In 2014, The WDVA oversees the creation of a committee consisting of representatives from the WDVA recreation and medical departments, outdoor recreation, outdoor therapeutic organizations, and veterans to establish a vetted list of reputable organizations to be featured on a one source veteran recreation website hosted by the WDVA, launched in 2015.

Outdoor Therapeutic Initiative:

Outdoor recreation and outdoor therapeutic programs are enjoying increasing success as complimentary treatments to existing care for combat related injuries such as Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).

Traditionally, only anecdotal evidence existed linking the use of the outdoors to mental health benefits. An increasing body of scientific study demonstrates direct psychological and physiological benefits in terms of both general health and mental health treatment through outdoor recreation and outdoor therapy.

Alternatives considered, if any
(How did you land on this solution?)

TBD

Who will implement this recommendation?

TBD

Who needs to be involved?

Discover Pass and Public Lands Campaign:
WDNR, WDFW, and the WPRC

WDVA Outdoor Website:
WDVA

Outdoor Therapeutic Initiative:
Local, state, and federal veteran medical and outdoor therapeutic organizations, state and federal VA mental health entities

What, if any, legislation is required for implementation?

TBD

How much will it cost?
(Include potential funding sources.)

TBD

What's the anticipated timeline? TBD

Barriers to implementation TBD

How will you measure success? TBD
(Consider key metrics and outcomes.)

Appendix / Original Notes

Draft Subcommittee Recommendations for the Military Community Outdoors

Date: 30 June, 2014

POC: Joshua Brandon

Contact: joshua.brandon@sierraclub.org 931-206-1595

*The military community is defined as veterans, active duty service members, and their families.

Facts: Washington is 6th in the nation in the number of active duty military (13th in overall population nationally), with 69,125 military personnel and another 90,246 dependents and 19,474 reservists. The military and defense sector employs another 39,000 civilians, mostly at Joint Base Lewis McChord (JBLM) and Puget Sound Naval Shipyard (PSNS).

Washington State is home to 6 major military installations and an additional 19 minor installations, with an economic impact of over \$28.5 billion.

Military Community Access to the Public Lands, Outdoor Recreation, Outdoor Therapeutic Recreation

Problem Statement: The military community in Washington State is an underserved population in regards to outdoor access, outdoor recreation, and outdoor based therapeutic programs.

Recommendation: Public lands are a quintessential expression of our nation's democracy. Providing increased access to Americans who defended those lands not only honors the sacrifice of the military community, it provides a means to improve psychological and physiological health benefits to our state's active duty service members, veterans, and their families. Furthermore, increased use of the outdoors by the military community will result in direct economic benefits to the state due to additional spending on outdoor recreation and supporting commercial and service industries.

Discover Pass and Public Lands Campaign: Washington State changes its free Discover Pass policy to include all active service members and veterans. The Discover Pass is currently free for veterans with a 30% disability rating or higher in Washington. At the federal level, active duty military (military pass) and disabled veterans (access pass) get free access to all National Parks and Forrest Service lands. Additionally, the free Discover Pass rollout will be complimented by an outreach campaign by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wild Life, and the Parks and Recreation Commission to the active duty and military community with a goal of educating the benefits of and promoting the increased use of Washington State public lands. Providing a complimentary Discover Pass will significantly critical issues for the military community in Washington, ultimately resulting in increased access opportunities and physical and mental health benefits for veterans, active duty service members, and their families.

Outcome: Members of the Washington military community can obtain a free Discover Pass through the existing administrative system by providing documentation of the current or past military service. Through a deliberate outreach campaign by the WDNR, WDFW, and the WPRC, an increased numbers of the military community are using Washington State public lands.

WDVA Outdoor Website: Washington veterans and their families as well as veteran service organizations currently lack a single online resource that consolidates veteran related opportunities for outdoor therapy and recreation in the state. While the WDVA website is a comprehensive resource for

education, employment, medical, and other services available to Washington veterans, it can be improved to become the single point of reference detailing the numerous outdoor opportunities offered by nonprofit, commercial, and government based organizations offering opportunities for veterans in the outdoors. This veteran resource will serve as a single source for information connecting the military community to reputable outdoor organizations and services within the state.

Outcome: In 2014, The WDVA oversees the creation of a committee consisting of representatives from the WDVA recreation and medical departments, outdoor recreation, outdoor therapeutic organizations, and veterans to establish a vetted list of reputable organizations to be featured on a one source veteran recreation website hosted by the WDVA, launched in 2015.

Outdoor Therapeutic Initiative: Outdoor recreation and outdoor therapeutic programs are enjoying increasing success as complimentary treatments to existing care for combat related injuries such as Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). Traditionally, only anecdotal evidence existed linking the use of the outdoors to mental health benefits. An increasing body of scientific study demonstrates direct psychological and physiological benefits in terms of both general health and mental health treatment through outdoor recreation and outdoor therapy. Currently in Washington State, outdoor therapeutic treatment through the WDVA and the federal DVA hospitals is fragmented, and lacks a systematic approach or source of funding. An outdoor therapeutic task force, led by the WDVA, and consisting of members from Washington VA hospitals, representatives of outdoor therapeutic and outdoor recreation organizations, and independent mental health professionals will be formed with the specific mission of designing and implementing a unified and systematic approach to outdoor therapy in the treatment of mental health issues in the military community. While increasing access to the outdoors and outdoor recreation of the military community is of primary concern to the task force, Washington State stands in a position to lead the nation in using its natural treasures, its public lands, to assist in the medical recovery and reintegration of one of its greatest human treasures, the military community. In addition to long term benefits to the military community, success in treating mental health issues through the military community can serve as a testing ground to expand outdoor therapy to additional populations such as at risk children, first responders, refugees, and crime victims suffering from similar forms of trauma. A proven link between public health to public lands and recreation will ultimately raise their economic and social importance.

Outcome: Local, state, and federal veteran medical and outdoor therapeutic organizations partner in a coalition that is deliberately implementing a unified approach to outdoor therapy for wounded veterans and active duty service members. State and federal VA mental health entities partner with outdoor therapeutic providers and academic institutions to augment existing mental health care treatment (PTS and TBI) with outdoor therapeutic practices.

Sources:

1. State of Washington Department of Commerce Statistics on Military and Defense [Link](#)
2. Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs Benefits and Services [Link](#)
3. Exploring the Benefits of Outdoor Experiences on Veterans: Report prepared for the Sierra Club Military Families and Veterans Initiative by Jason Duvall, Ph.D., University of Michigan and Rachel Kaplan, Ph.D., University of Michigan [Link](#)
4. The Therapeutic Impact of Outward Bound for Veterans David Scheinfeld- University of Texas/ Chad Spangler OutwardBound Veterans [Link](#)
5. Open Sky Wilderness Therapy [Link](#)

Appendix VII a | Get More People Outdoors Subcommittee Recommendations

Subcommittee lead

Ben Klasky

Short title for your recommendation

Reenact the No Child Left Inside

Problem statement

(What issue does the recommendation address?)

Washington state youth are not getting outdoors. Youth spend over 50 hours a week on electronic media according to a Kaiser Family Foundation Study. State park attendance is down and the average age of a conservation.

Recommendation

(Briefly describe the proposed solution.)

- Re-establish and enhance the No Child Left Inside (NCLI) grant program
- This program should once again be funded, with a focus on encouraging grantees to seek 1:1 matching donations from other organizations for the granted money they receive. This program should be seen as both an investment in the both public health and education of Washington's youth.
- The No Child Left Inside Project passed in 2008 helped 180,000 diverse youth experience the outdoors in Washington. It gave \$1.8 million in funds to connect diverse youth to the outdoors, and helped leverage over a million in matching private funds and connecting children and families to over 90% of the Washington State park network.
- Ensure integration of outdoor recreation into physical education programs in Washington schools, providing teachers with resources to connect healthy outdoor curriculum to the state-mandated Common Core learning standards.

What does success look like?

Success is connecting a new diverse generation to Washington's public lands. But from a metric standpoint we can measure the following as the original No Child Left Inside program did:

- # of youth engaged in the outdoors
- Private matching funds raised
- State Parks visited
- Legislative counties served

Context (Key background, facts and figures)	<p>No Child Left Inside Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1.5 million to get children outdoors • 150,000 diverse children outdoors • \$1 million raised in private funds to match public
Alternatives considered, if any (How did you land on this solution?)	<p>This solution was landed in by a diverse and disparate coalition of stakeholders including representatives of the outdoor recreation, education and conservation community as a strategic way to empower a new generation to get outdoors and experience Washington's Natural Wonders.</p>
Who will implement this recommendation?	<p>No Child Left Inside Coalition</p>
Who needs to be involved?	<p>No Child Left Inside Coalition Strategic Partners State Legislature Governor State Agencies</p>
What, if any, legislation is required for implementation?	<p>Reenactment of No Child Left Inside 352-80 WAC</p>
How much will it cost? (Include potential funding sources.)	<p>Range depends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • License Plate Fees • Discover Pass Revenue • General Funds
What's the anticipated timeline?	<p>Reintroduce Legislation January 1st 2015 Legislation Passed-April May 2015 Signed into Law-June 2015</p>
Barriers to implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget constraints • Legislative barriers

Appendix / Original Notes:

Re-establish and enhance the No Child Left Inside (NCLI) grant program

NCLI, administered by the State Parks and Recreation Commission, provided significant enhancements to outdoor recreation opportunities for the youth of our state with a relatively small initial investment, garnering significant interest from matching donors and taking advantage of existing resources inside grantees' organizations to allow students to experience the natural aspects of Washington State. This program should once again be funded, with a focus on encouraging grantees to seek 1:1 matching donations from other organizations for the granted money they receive. This program should be seen as both an investment in the both public health and education of Washington's youth.

Fund programming implemented by staff, separate from NCLI programs, in Washington State Parks, WDFW, and DNR administered areas. Successful interpretive and classroom programs have been cut due to budgeting restrictions, and these cuts have been noticed by Washington youth and educators alike. It is essential that staff time is available to liaise with both local K-12 educators (general and physical educators) and specialized environmental education programs.

Ensure integration of outdoor recreation into physical education programs in Washington schools, providing teachers with resources to connect healthy outdoor curriculum to the state-mandated Common Core learning standards.

Appendix VII a | Meet Future Recreation Needs Subcommittee Recommendations

Subcommittee lead

Jim Cahill

Short title for your recommendation

Increase Earned Revenue at State Parks, and WDFW and DNR Recreation sites.

Problem statement

(What issue does the recommendation address?)

There is an estimated gap of \$82 million a biennium between current resources and what is needed to operate and maintain State Park, wildlife areas, water access sites and campgrounds.

Recommendation

(Briefly describe the proposed solution.)

Increase revenues earned by State Parks, WDFW and DNR.

This includes:

1. Improve Discover Pass sales
 - a. Improve experience of purchasing the pass by making it more simple, quick and convenient
 - b. Redesign the pass to improve durability, legibility, and resistance to forgery
 - c. Maximize sales through a mix of sale channels before arrival at recreation sites.
 - d. Expand bulk sales of Discover Passes to shift the burden of sales to retailers and other partners
 - e. Convert one-day pass buyers to annual pass customers
2. Optimize fee revenue
 - a. Boat moorage and dock services
 - b. Variable pricing for camping
3. Enhance Concession and Lease revenues (\$300,000 to \$400,000 annually by 2020.
4. Improve marketing of Discover Pass, camping and recreating at State Parks.
5. Expand recognition of donor and sponsorship programs for operation and maintenance at State Parks to other state lands consistent with ESB 6034 (Chapter 86, Laws 2014).

What does success look like?

Additional revenue to state agencies. Improved customer experience.

Context

(Key background, facts and figures)

State Parks has preliminarily estimated a gap of \$64 million a biennium between available funding and what is needed to properly operate and maintain the State Park system. WDFW has identified gaps of \$12.4 million for its wildlife areas and water access sites and \$6.1 million respectively for DNR recreation sites.

In the 2007-09 Biennium, the State Parks budget included \$94.5 million in General Fund support. In the 2013-15 Biennium, General Fund support for general operations was reduced to \$8.7 million representing a 90.8 percent reduction in tax support for operations. In the same timeframe, earned revenues increased from \$39.9 million to \$86.6 million – a 117 percent increase. This, Overall resources to support Park operations declined by 20.4 percent. A total of \$1.2 million in general fund support for DNR's recreation programs was replaced by Discover Pass revenues beginning in the 2011-13 biennium. WDFW saw a \$600,000 GF-S reduction and a replacement with Discover pass revenues.

Annual Discover Pass revenues from State Parks, WDFW and DNR has increased from the first year of implementation increasing from \$15.7 million in FY 12 to a projected \$17.0 million in FY 2015.

Alternatives considered, if any
(How did you land on this solution?)

State Parks has existing authority to increase revenues from camping and other sources. While the sales of Discover Pass has increased year over year, more can be done. The three agencies are looking at a variety of options under their existing authority.

Who will implement this recommendation?

State Parks, DNR, WDFW

Who needs to be involved?

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, DNR
WDFW

What, if any, legislation is required for implementation?

Legislation is likely required to clarify DNR and WDFW authorities related to sponsorship at state recreation sites, wildlife areas and water access sites. Legislation would be required to change the Discover Pass fee rates and/or products.

How much will it cost?
(Include potential funding sources.)

\$500,000 a biennium (Discover Pass revenues) for increased marketing, and work with potential sponsors.

What's the anticipated timeline?

Work has begun in the current biennium and will be ongoing.

Barriers to implementation

Legislative concerns over corporate sponsorship
Citizen concerns over increased cost of camping and recreation
Price resistance to increased fees.

How will you measure success?
(Consider key metrics and outcomes.)

Increase sales of Discover Passes
Decrease percentage of day Discover Passes sold
Increase in camping and earned revenue per campsite
Increase Concession revenues

Blue Ribbon Parks and Outdoor Recreation Task Force
www.engageoutdoorwashington.com | www.rco.wa.gov

Task Force Meet Future Recreation Needs Subcommittee Recommendations – New Revenue

Subcommittee leads: We offer this template to facilitate development of your recommendations; help the RCO team identify overlapping themes; and to create a clear foundation for the final report. Work with your group to generate a list of priority recommendations (no more than 10). You are welcome to develop more if it helps your dialogue, though keep in mind the need to prioritize.

Due dates: **July 15** – Draft recommendations (no more than 10) to RCO
August 15 – Final recommendations (no more than 5) to RCO

Subcommittee title and lead	Meet Future Recreation Needs – Jim Cahill
Short title for your recommendation	Increase taxpayer or user support for State Parks, and WDFW and DNR Recreation sites.
Problem statement (What issue does the recommendation address?)	There is an estimated gap of \$82 million a biennium between current resources and what is needed to operate and maintain State Park, wildlife areas, water access sites and campgrounds.
Recommendation (Briefly describe the proposed solution.)	<p>Several options are under consideration to increase state support.</p> <p>Option A</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add a \$5 fee on annual vehicle registration 2. Change vehicle license donation from “opt-out” to “opt in” 3. Adjust Discover Pass to include transaction fees 4. Adjust Discover Pass to reflect inflation 5. Apply vehicle registration fee and Discover Pass purchase option to new vehicle purchases <p>Estimated revenue: \$55M to \$68 Million a biennium</p> <p>Option B</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Extend current diversion from the Waste Reduction, Recycling and Litter Control established in Chapter 15, Laws of 2013, 2nd sp.s. (ESSB 5897), and/or increase current litter tax. Expand litter tax to include spirits. 2. Reimpose sales tax on bottled water repealed in Initiative 1107 (2010). (Sales tax was imposed on bottled water

until 2004. Legislature reimposed July 1, 2010 and subsequently repealed by I-1107) (\$45 million a biennium)

3. Reimpose the excise tax on motor homes and travel trailers (\$16 M a biennium). Provide camping discount for instate trailers and motor homes.
4. Retain any new gas tax increases attributable to non-highway gas sales attributable to ORVs, snowmobiles and boats.

Estimated revenue: \$56 Million to \$100 Million a biennium

What does success look like?

Additional revenue to state agencies adequate for healthy and sustainable operating funding.

Context

(Key background, facts and figures)

State Parks has preliminarily estimated a gap of \$64 million a biennium between available funding and what is needed to properly operate and maintain the State Park system. WDFW has identified gaps of \$12.4 million for its wildlife areas and water access sites and \$6.1 million respectively for DNR recreation sites.

In the 2007-09 Biennium, the State Parks budget included \$94.5 million in General Fund support. In the 2013-15 Biennium, General Fund support for general operations was reduced to \$8.7 million representing a 90.8 percent reduction in tax support for operations. In the same timeframe, earned revenues increased from \$39.9 million to \$86.6 million – a 117 percent increase. This, Overall resources to support Park operations declined by 20.4 percent. A total of \$1.2 million in general fund support for DNR's recreation programs was replaced by Discover Pass revenues beginning in the 2011-13 biennium. WDFW saw a \$600,000 GF-S reduction and a replacement with Discover pass revenues.

Annual Discover Pass revenues from State Parks, WDFW and DNR has increased from the first year of implementation increasing from \$15.7 million in FY 12 to a projected \$17.0 million in FY 2015.

Alternatives considered, if any

(How did you land on this solution?)

Option C

1. Add a \$10 fee on annual vehicle registration
2. Eliminate Discover Pass for in-state vehicles.

Estimated revenue: \$70 Million to \$120 Million a biennium

Other

1. Increase or dedicate a portion of the Watercraft Excise Tax

2. Establish B&O surcharge on Outdoor Recreation related businesses or dedicate a percentage of existing B&O tax.
3. Remove cap on gas tax revenue for recreation purposes from non-highway gas sales attributable to ORVs, snowmobiles and boats currently provided for highway purposes. (\$16.5 million a biennium)
4. Establish a 1 cent tax per oz of bottled water (\$90 million annually)

Who will implement this recommendation?

State Parks, DNR, WDFW Department of Licensing, Department of Revenue.

Who needs to be involved?

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Department of Licensing, Department of Revenue, Department of Ecology, local government solid waste managers.

What, if any, legislation is required for implementation?

Legislation would be required to implement any of these options.

How much will it cost?
(Include potential funding sources.)

Unknown. Need to estimate implementation costs

What's the anticipated timeline?

Legislation proposed for enactment in the 2015 legislative session.

Barriers to implementation

- Legislative concerns with increasing taxes or fees
- Soft Drink industry opposition to reimposing the sales tax on bottled water
- Motor Home and Recreational Vehicle dealers are likely to have concerns.
- Local government solid waste managers

How will you measure success?
(Consider key metrics and outcomes.)

Increased dedicated revenues for State Parks and recreation programs adequate for health and sustainability.

Appendix VII a | Meet Future Recreation Needs Subcommittee Recommendations

Subcommittee lead	Jim Cahill
Short title for your recommendation	Enhance support for local park operations and capital development
Problem statement (What issue does the recommendation address?)	Spending by local governments varies widely. The Great Recession has reduced local funding available for operating current parks, as well as any potential expansions. Lack of funding for parks and outdoor recreation continues to be a concern for local government
Recommendation (Briefly describe the proposed solution.)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote expanded use of Metropolitan Parks Districts (RCW Chapter 35.61) 2. Prevent sunset of current law allowing REET to be used for local parks maintenance. (RCW 82.46). This ability is scheduled to sunset on December 31, 2016. 3. Provide consistent funding for the Youth Athletic Field (YAF) grant program.
What does success look like?	<p>Additional revenue to local governments for park purposes.</p> <p>Additional capital projects funded through the YAF program</p>
Context (Key background, facts and figures)	<p>The 2013 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan survey of local recreation providers identified funding and or costs, and maintenance of existing facilities as the greatest issue of concern for both the short and long term. (pg 81)</p> <p>Funding for operation and maintenance of parks was an issue brought forward in public testimony before the taskforce.</p> <p>We are trying to document the need for additional operation and maintenance.</p> <p>According to the Municipal Research and Service Center, Metropolitan Parks Districts offer more fiscal capacity and flexibility in terms of property tax levy and debt limit than parks and recreation districts (RCW 36.69) or Park and Recreation Service Areas (RCW 36.68.400) www.mrsc.org/subjects/parks/spd-mpdfin.aspx. There are currently 16 Metro Park Districts in the State. Most recent Park Districts created was the Chuckanut Community Forest and Recreation District (2013), Tukwila Pool Metro Park District (2011) and Shelton Metro Park District, William</p>

Shore Memorial Pool Park District – Clallum Co, and Village Green Metro Park District – Kitsap County in 2010)
www.mrsc.org/subjects/parks/spd-mpdlist.aspx.

The Youth Athletic Field Program was originally established in 1997 as part of The grant program was approved by Washington voters as part of Referendum 48, which helped fund the Seattle Seahawks stadium. This program provides specific grants for youth athletic fields. A total of \$21 million has been provided through RCO since the program was created. This has been matched over 2 to 1 by project sponsors amounting to almost \$50 million. (PRISM database). Although there was an initial infusion of funding at the creation of the program state funding has been sporadic.

Alternatives considered, if any
 (How did you land on this solution?)

Providing state funding for park operations was considered but not adopted due to the state budget situation.

Increasing funding through the WWRP program which includes local parks is another option. However, it is less targeted at meeting the demand for youth athletic fields.

Who will implement this recommendation?

The legislature would need to pass legislation to remove or extend the sunset date on the REET. RCO, WSAC and AWC would need to support this legislation in the legislative process.

Local governments and citizens would need to approve creation of metro park districts.

RCO would need to submit a capital budget request to the Governor. The Governor and legislature would need to provide additional capital funding for the YAF grant program.

Who needs to be involved?

WSAC, and AWC, Washington Recreation and Parks Association

What, if any, legislation is required for implementation?

Legislation would be required to implement the sunset repeal or extension of the REET.

How much will it cost?
 (Include potential funding sources.)

Extension of the REET and creation of additional metro park districts would have zero fiscal impact on state government.

\$1 million to \$3 million would be a good amount to invest as a starting point in the YAF program.

What's the anticipated timeline?

REET Legislation proposed for enactment in the 2015 or 2016 legislative session.

Promotion of MPD could begin within the next six months.

YAF funding would be considered in the 2015 legislative session.

Barriers to implementation

Local government concerns with creating additional taxing districts.

How will you measure success?

(Consider key metrics and outcomes.)

Increased and maintained revenues to maintain local parks

Additiiona Metro Park Districts in the state.

Creation of additonal youth athletic fields.

Appendix VII a | State Role in Providing Outdoor Recreation Subcommittee Recommendations

Subcommittee title and lead

Doug Levy

Short title for your recommendation

ACCESS – Reduce/Remove barriers to accessing recreation lands & enhance the predictability and ease of access to these lands

Findings

(What issue does the recommendation address?)

Barriers to access are restricting the ability of Washington State residents and visitors to fully utilize our private and public recreational lands. Specific issues cited for closing private lands and some public lands to public use have included liability concerns, dumping of trash, road maintenance, fires, and property destruction. On public lands, there is also a need to upgrade open spaces, make strategic acquisitions of available lands, and provide all-weather playing capability on athletic fields. And the subcommittee finds there needs to be simpler and easier to understand regulations and information to help fishing, boating, and hunting enthusiasts know when seasons are and are not occurring.

Recommendation

(Briefly describe the proposed solution.)

- Improvements and/or statutory fixes to liability immunity statutes that limit the ability of landowners to offer access;
- Acquiring lands in cases where it is needed to facilitate access – though the subcommittee cautions this should be done judiciously and on a needs basis;
- Capital funding for the Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF) program, which can result in improvements to athletic fields (such as all-weather fields) and enable year-round access;
- Making recreational site and lands information more predictable – communication and information on fishing and hunting seasons that is more predictable, and easier to understand; having gates open for the public that visits state parks and state lands
- Request information from large private landowners and public land managers identifying problems involving road maintenance, fires, and property destruction caused by public access and request a list of suggested solutions.
- Reduce the exposure of lands to garbage dumping by allowing counties to collect for garbage pickup and landfills with property taxes and by increasing litter and dumping penalties/taxes to fund cleanup efforts.

What does success look like?

- 1) Liability immunity legislation that opens up more access opportunities to recreational lands;
- 2) Capital funds for acquisition – only in those cases where it needed to facilitate or ensure access to recreational lands
- 3) Capital funding for YAF to re-establish a competitive grant program for fields upgrades, improvements, and replacements.
- 4) Information pamphlets and online websites in which the regulations are more predictable from year to year, easier to read, and easier to understand.
- 5) An existing agency responsible to address concerns of large landowners and public land managers involving road maintenance, fires, and property destruction caused by public access. Rules and/or legislation to address identified concerns and a follow up surveys of large private landowners and public land managers to determine effectiveness of measures to solve issues.
- 6) Revenue created through property tax/increased penalties/litter taxes funding garbage collection and open landfills for dumping. Cleanup of identified dump sites on accessible lands and fewer lands closed due to garbage dumping.

Context

(Key background, facts and figures)

- Liability immunity issue – the Legislature has considered statutory fixes as recently as 2014 – SHB 2150;
- Strategic acquisitions of lands – The Legislature considers this through the Capital Budget and has directed a study of these issues which is ongoing;
- YAF – The Legislature took steps to re-establish this program in the 2013 capital budget with an allocation of \$3.63 million – however, this was for four earmarked projects; RCO may be recommending a competitive program;
- Increased predictability through better communication and information that is simpler to understand, easily located, and easily retrievable can be done administratively;
- Issues cited for closing private lands and some public lands to public use include liability concerns, dumping of trash, road maintenance, fires, and property destruction.
- Accessible lands close to population centers experience the worst impact. Many landowners cite dumping as a key reason for closing lands. Idaho allows counties to include garbage pickup and landfills in property taxes, as a result there is very little dumping on open lands in Idaho.

Alternatives considered, if any (How did you land on this solution?)	ACCESS has been a major issue identified by the Subcommittee, although some access-related issues have been narrowed and consolidated in the development of recommendations.
Who will implement this recommendation?	State Legislature; state agencies such as RCO and other natural resource agencies.
Who needs to be involved?	Task Force; state agencies; stakeholder groups, counties.
What, if any, legislation is required for implementation?	1) Immunity legislation; 2) Capital Budget; 3) Clean Lands Legislation to include garbage and landfills in property taxes/litter tax/increased litter and dumping penalties. Additional legislation regarding land impacts may be needed in the future depending on input from affected landowners and agencies.
How much will it cost? (Include potential funding sources.)	Of the access recommendations, the strategic acquisition of lands to ensure access has a Capital Budget cost – TBD depending upon legislative action; the YAF has a Capital Budget cost – TBD depending upon RCO, Governor's Office recommendations and legislative action. The communication and information efforts to give users more predictability about seasons, a better understanding of park hours and gate closures, etc., should have a minimal cost.
What's the anticipated timeline?	2015 Session if possible for most items; within the next several months to a year for the communication and information tools that provide more predictable and easily locatable information for recreational lands, recreational sites users, and land impacts.
Barriers to implementation	There are stakeholder groups that are wary of granting recreational immunity, tax changes, or increased penalties. In terms of recommendations requiring capital budget allocations, there are the competitive demands within the Capital Budget.
How will you measure success? (Consider key metrics and outcomes.)	Forward progress on recreational immunity legislation and capital allocations for strategic lands needs and YAF. Online, easily understandable, predictable information on accessing recreational lands and sites. By documenting: the number of dump sites cleaned up, the number of new dump sites reported, lands that are opened again, and landowner/public support of the program. Surveys/feedback from timber land owners and public land managers indicating actions to address identified concerns have been successful and land use problems are declining.

Appendix VII a | State Role in Providing Outdoor Recreation Subcommittee Recommendations

Subcommittee lead	Doug Levy
Short title for your recommendation	New or improved programs to get more people outdoors – especially kids
Findings (What issue does the recommendation address?)	<p>We find that the state lacks a coherent strategy and active efforts to provide opportunities or events for youth, to give kids incentives to experience the outdoors, and to educate children about the value of the great outdoors and their environment.</p>
Recommendation (Briefly describe the proposed solution.)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Restart funding for the “No Child Left Inside” program that already exists in statute (at State Parks); 2) Establish, market, and promote events for youth – with a particular focus on reaching out to diverse audiences, minority populations, and ethnic groups in enhancing access; with more kid-focused events at State Parks (especially in partnership with schools). Start-up matching grants might prove useful to getting these programs in all corners of the state; 3) More promotion of programs such as “Fish Washington” and others that help both retain and enhance fishing and hunting opportunities; 4) Make environmental and outdoor education a part of the K-12 “STEM” (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) curriculum.
What does success look like?	<p>Additional opportunities and events – especially for kids – to boat, sail, fish, hunt, use state parks and state lands, etc. An end result that shows more kids are spending time outdoors. An outdoor and environmental education ethic that is integrated into STEM.</p>
Context (Key background, facts and figures)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The No Child Left Inside program is already in state law, but lacks any funding; • The state has fallen behind – partly due to budget and staff cuts – in promoting and marketing events that get people (especially kids) outdoors; • Outdoor and environmental education is seen as a ‘nice to have’ rather than integrated into our STEM efforts and teaching of science.
Alternatives considered, if any (How did you land on this solution?)	<p>The Subcommittee didn’t necessarily see any alternatives – but rather a void in this area.</p>

Who will implement this recommendation?

State agencies can provide grants for events/programs and can lead event marketing and promotion efforts – perhaps in concert with schools, the private sector, and non-profits; Funding is required on No Child Left Inside and a more formal integration of environmental/outdoor education into STEM and science programs. Funding is also required for any new grant programs to support the start-up of any outdoor programs.

Who needs to be involved?

Legislature, state agencies, stakeholder groups, service providers, schools, non-profits

What, if any, legislation is required for implementation?

- 1) Funding would have to be budgeted for No Child Left Inside and/or any other matching grant programs;
- 2) Statutes relating to STEM and science education may need to be amended to better integrate environmental and outdoor education programs – the Subcommittee needs details/guidance on this one.

How much will it cost?
(Include potential funding sources.)

Operating budgets are potential sources for No Child Left Inside, other grant programs and marketing/promotional/events efforts.

What's the anticipated timeline?

Ideally, re-established funding for No Child Left Inside could occur in 2015; for bringing more outdoor recreation events to youth – a ramp-up would be expected over the course of several years.

Barriers to implementation

- 1) Funding;
- 2) Educational community may have resistance to environmental/outdoor education brought into STEM?

How will you measure success?
(Consider key metrics and outcomes.)

The state could set up a before-and-after survey to understand and collect data on how many youth are participating in outdoor activities such as parks, boating, sailing, hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, mountain climbing, scuba diving, kayaking and paddling.

Appendix VII a | State Role in Providing Outdoor Recreation Subcommittee Recommendations

Subcommittee title and lead	Doug Levy
Short title for your recommendation	Enhance the promotion, marketing, and advocacy of outdoor recreation
<i>Findings</i> (What issue does the recommendation address?)	<p>The state lacks an intensive and focused entity to market and promote outdoor recreation – to promote the opportunities, to promote the health and fitness benefits, to promote the economic benefits to our state and local communities. This is particularly troubling given the economic benefits generated by outdoor recreation and the outdoor recreation industry, and the fact that outdoor recreation contributes to more active and healthy communities and individuals.</p>
Recommendation (Briefly describe the proposed solution.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More intensive promotion of the benefits of outdoor recreation – the subcommittee has suggested either an expansion of RCO into a more far-reaching role to market “Outdoor Recreation” – or perhaps by using a non-profit approach or establishment of a Commission (akin to the Washington Wine Commission); • Stepped-up marketing of outdoor recreation activities, events, and opportunities; • Use of independent contractors and marketing of Discover Pass - make it easier to buy; • Additionally, there is one area where state tax policies are a barrier to bringing certain types of recreational boats into the State – the subcommittee supports a legislative fix to the problem. Address inequitable tax policies between B.C. and Washington for LLC-designated boaters by allowing these large LLD-designated boats to spend more time in Washington waters before being subject to use tax; • Designate “outdoor recreation/tourism” as a specific industry cluster within Washington’s economic development strategy.
What does success look like?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Establishing either a state office, non-profit, or Commission-based way to more actively and intensely promote outdoor recreation; 2) Increased Discover Pass sales; 3) Passage of the “Marine Tourism Bill” on the tax policy item referenced above; 4) Administrative Action to add outdoor rec/tourism as industry cluster in state’s ED strategy.

Context

(Key background, facts and figures)

- 1) Other states are utilizing a very specific attention to Outdoor Recreation – for example, the State of Utah established an Office of Outdoor Recreation in 2013. Additionally, there are examples of successful non-profit-based and Commission-based approaches;
- 2) The state passed legislation allowing State Parks to utilize bulk sales of Discover Passes – other resource agencies believe more could be done to expand that authority;
- 3) The “Marine Tourism Bill” (SB 5241) progressed to the Senate Ways & Means Committee in 2014. The NW Marine Trade Association has estimates showing it could generate \$29 million in new revenue for the state;
- 4) The Executive Branch and agencies have discretion on revising the Economic Development Strategy.

Alternatives considered, if any

(How did you land on this solution?)

The Subcommittee is looking at a few alternatives on the “Office of Outdoor Recreation” concept – another might be to fold a specific emphasis on Outdoor Recreation into the work of the Washington Tourism Alliance (WTA). Natural resource agency members of the Subcommittee note that on the Discover Pass item, increased marketing or independent contracting efforts may need to be preceded by inter-agency coordination work.

Who will implement this recommendation?

Legislation would be required on an “Office of Outdoor Recreation” established through the state or through a Commission approach. A non-profit would have to be formed independently, or the WTA could be involved in this effort.

The Legislature would need to enact the Marine Tourism Bill.

Adding outdoor recreation/tourism to the ED strategy is a “low-hanging fruit” item that can be achieved administratively.

Who needs to be involved?

Legislature, stakeholders, state agencies, perhaps non-profits and WTA

What, if any, legislation is required for implementation?

See above

How much will it cost?

(Include potential funding sources.)

Indeterminate

What's the anticipated timeline?

- Setting up an Office of Outdoor Recreation or equivalent non-profit or Commission might well take a few years.
- A more robust marketing and contracting effort with Discover Pass would appear to be a couple years away.
- Legislators could enact the Marine Tourism bill as soon as 2015.
- The addition of outdoor recreation/tourism to the ED strategy could be done, we would hope, in 2015 and carries no cost.

Barriers to implementation

Funding; lack of clarity about whether an Office or Outdoor Recreation is needed or who would do it or where it would fit.

How will you measure success?

(Consider key metrics and outcomes.)

- A more intensive and focused promotion of Outdoor Recreation – through one means or another;
- More robust marketing of the Discover Pass;
- Passage of the Marine Tourism Bill.

Appendix VII a | State Role in Providing Outdoor Recreation Subcommittee Recommendations

Subcommittee lead

Doug Levy

Short title for your recommendation

Formal study/evaluation of increased reliance on user fees – are they equitable or are certain groups paying disproportionately? Have they helped participation or hurt it?

Findings

(What issue does the recommendation address?)

The Subcommittee is concerned that the state's increased reliance on user fees such as the Discover Pass may be having a counter-productive effect on participation and usage of outdoor recreation lands. Additionally, subcommittee members have fielded numerous concerns about certain groups disproportionately paying into the user fee system (fishing, hunting, and boating groups, for example) while others are not paying an equitable or fair share.

Recommendation

(Briefly describe the proposed solution.)

The Subcommittee recommends that a formal study or analysis needs to take place to help guide future state policy decisions on the balance between user fees and general funds.

What does success look like?

Legislative direction (and funding) to perform a study.

Context

(Key background, facts and figures)

The state's recession-era budget pressures resulted in dramatic general fund cutbacks to natural resource agencies. Here's one vivid example: In an Oct. 28, 2013 legislatively-directed report to OFM, Washington State Parks ("Status Update of the Fiscal Health of the State Parks System") noted that general fund operational assistance had declined from \$94.5 million in 2007-09 to \$8.3 million in 2013-15. This has resulted in a significantly higher reliance on user fees – which the subcommittee is concerned could have some adverse effects, especially as to participation in outdoor recreation by those least able to afford it.

Alternatives considered, if any

(How did you land on this solution?)

The Subcommittee gave some consideration to dropping this issue, but views it as a state role to understand the impacts of dramatically increased reliance on user fees. Subcommittee Members were reluctant to drop this item, at least not without knowing whether a separate subcommittee would be willing to take it on.

Who will implement this recommendation?

Likely a state agency – perhaps OFM

Who needs to be involved?	State natural resource agencies would be heavily relied upon to provide background and data for such a study.
What, if any, legislation is required for implementation?	The State Legislature would have to authorize or direct such a study through either the Operating or Capital Budget.
How much will it cost? (Include potential funding sources.)	Several hundred thousand dollars would be needed to do a good, in-depth analysis.
What's the anticipated timeline?	2015-17 biennium
Barriers to implementation	Funding, and whether this stacks up as a high enough priority
How will you measure success? (Consider key metrics and outcomes.)	A study that yields beneficial data and information to help the state understand the impacts of increased reliance on user fees, and to design in policy the best mix of general funds and user fees – as well as a user fee system that is as equitable as possible.

Appendix VII b | **Boots in the Woods: Getting the Washington State Military Community into the Outdoors**

Washington State is in a position to lead the nation in using its natural treasures, its public lands, to assist in the medical recovery and reintegration of one of its greatest human treasures, the military community.¹ In addition to long term benefits to the military community, public health, outdoor economy, and conservation, success in treating mental health issues through the military community can serve as a testing ground to expand outdoor therapy to additional populations such as at risk children, first responders, refugees, and crime victims suffering from similar forms of trauma.

Outdoor recreation and outdoor therapeutic programs are enjoying increasing success as complementary treatments to existing care for combat related injuries such as post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injury. Traditionally, only anecdotal evidence existed linking the use of the outdoors to mental health benefits. An increasing body of scientific study demonstrates direct psychological and physiological benefits in terms of both general health and mental health treatment through outdoor recreation and outdoor therapy.^{2 3} However, in Washington State, outdoor therapeutic treatment through the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA), veterans' hospitals, and local, state, and federal non-governmental organizations are fragmented, and lack a systematic approach or source of funding.

At the second annual Military Families and Veterans Action Summit in 2014 at IslandWood, a nonprofit organization dedicated to outdoor education⁴, participants recognized that the military community⁵ is an underserved population in regards to outdoor access, outdoor recreation, and outdoor based therapeutic programs. Participants concluded that improved access to outdoor recreation and recreation programs will result in significant physical and mental health benefits for veterans, active duty service members, and their families and recommended enacting the Washington Military Community Outdoor Recreation and Therapeutic Initiative: Boots in the Woods.

Recommendations

The Boots in the Woods campaign consists of a partnership between local, state, and federal governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the military community to implement a comprehensive outdoor recreation and therapeutic program enhanced by a broad range of services, centralized

¹ The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs reports that Washington State has 69,125 active duty military personnel, the sixth highest in the nation, plus 19,474 reservists. In addition, there are 602,272 veterans living in Washington State, with 461,678 (77%) being wartime vets, about 5% dating back to World War II.

² Sheinfeld, D. and C. Spangler. *The Therapeutic Impact of Outward Bound Veterans*

³ Duvall, Jason and R. Kaplan, 2013. *Exploring the Benefits of Outdoor Experiences on Veterans*

⁴ <http://islandwood.org/military-families-and-veterans-action-summit>

⁵ Active duty service members, national guardsmen, reservists, veterans, and their families.

organization, research, and community involvement in support of Washington State veterans, active duty, National Guard, and Reserve service members, and their families.

Washington State will implement the following structural and operational goals in partnership with the WDVA and Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee (VACC).

Structure (WDVA and VAAC leadership, public and private partnerships)

- Designate a Washington State veterans committee to oversee outdoor recreation and outdoor therapeutic initiatives in direct partnership with the WDVA. Oversight will be conducted by three possible entities in partnership with the WDVA:
 - Current Washington State Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee augmented by members representing military outdoor recreation and therapy,
 - A newly established committee consisting of public and private members partnered with the VAAC and the WDVA, or
 - An independent committee consisting of veterans, active duty personnel, military and veteran service organizations, and outdoor recreation and therapeutic organization representatives.
- Design and implement an organizational structure and accompanying memorandums of understanding between community members, NGOs, Universities, and the WDVA to encourage partnerships and cooperation across the state.
- Create a WDVA website to provide outdoor resources for the active and veteran communities in order to consolidate reputable resources and to provide communication between organizations to better facilitate internal communication for individual service member needs.

Mental and Behavioral Health

- Partner with existing mental health and military community health care organizations for veteran and active duty outreach and to modify existing care (VA and Tri-Care) with privately funded initiatives that increase the scope and effectiveness of existing treatment.
- Encourage the use of alternative therapeutic practices such as outdoor, equine, art, and tribal ceremony as primary forms of treatment as opposed to limited augmentation of existing practices.
- Reach out to military community youth with outdoor programming in order to inculcate the outdoors into their life and culture. Additionally children can serve as a means to engage adults in healthier lives outdoors.

Research and Academic Partnerships

- Connect the Washington military community and state and NGOs to existing outdoor research initiatives around the country (U. Michigan, California Berkeley, Georgetown, and the VA Center of Excellence).
- Generate Washington-based research; connect WA universities, nonprofits, government agencies and members of the military community to partner in research that will lead the nation in a paradigm shift connecting outdoor therapy and recreation to public health and public lands.
- Expand research into the effectiveness of other alternative therapies such as art, equine, and tribal ceremony.

Outreach, Endowment and Recruitment

- Create a State or WDVA grant program in partnership with private foundations to empower grassroots organization to conduct effective care, research, and programming for the military community.
- Directly engage the state government, private foundations, NGOs, and the military community through an education campaign centered on the public health, environmental, and economic benefits of outdoor recreation and outdoor therapy.
- Change Washington's free Discover Pass policy to include all active service members and veterans. The Discover Pass is currently free for veterans with a 30% disability rating or higher in Washington. At the federal level, active duty military (military pass) and disabled veterans (access pass) get free access to all National Parks and Forrest Service lands. Providing a complimentary Discover Pass will significantly critical issues for the military community in Washington, ultimately resulting in increased access opportunities and physical and mental health benefits for veterans, active duty service members, and their families.

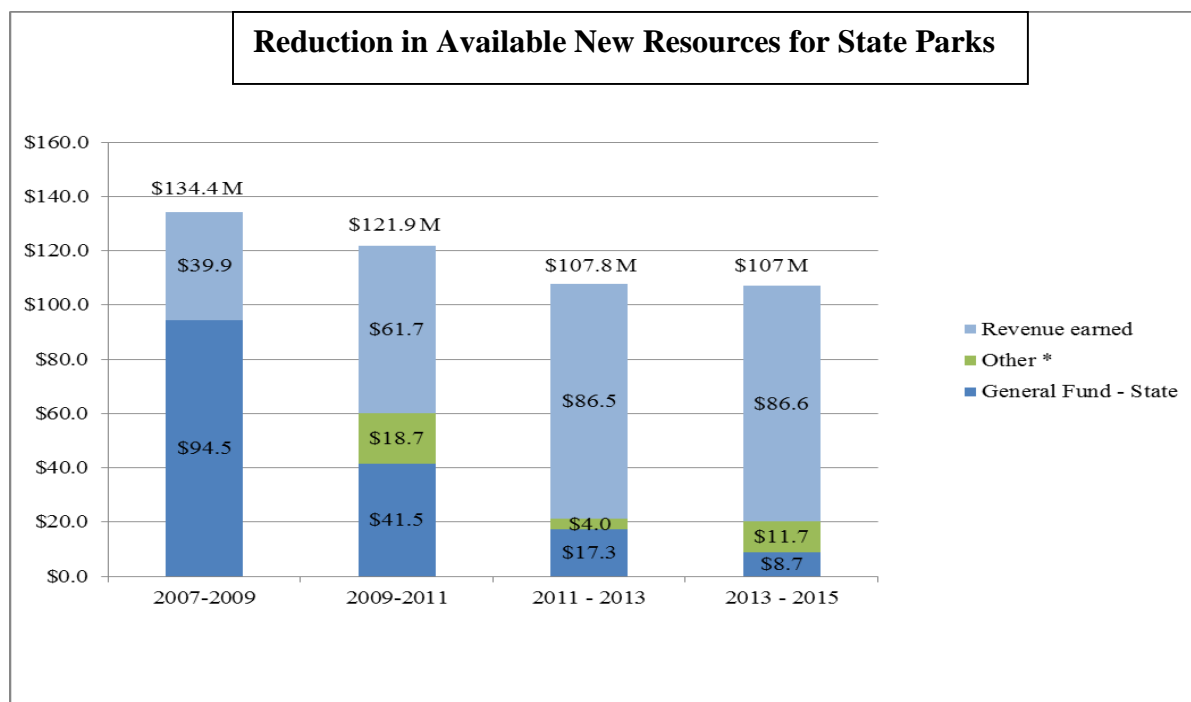
Appendix VII c | State Park Funding

Parks and Outdoor Recreation Task Force Questions Washington State Parks' Response June 27, 2014

The following information is provided to the “Meet Future Recreation Needs” subcommittee of the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Task Force, as the result of questions posed at the May 28th meeting.

1. Historically, what has Washington State Parks' budget situation looked like?

In the 2007-09 Biennium, the State Parks budget included \$94.5 million in General Fund support. In the 2013-15 Biennium, General Fund support for general operations is \$8.7 million. This represents a 90.8 percent reduction in tax support for operations. In the same timeframe, earned revenues increased from \$39.9 million to \$86.6 million – a 117 percent increase. This increase is due primarily to the introduction of the Discover Pass. To help Parks maintain minimal operations in the short-term, the legislature in 2013-15 diverted other revenue sources to offset the overall reduction in available resources. Even with this temporary support, overall resources to support operations declined by 20.4 percent.



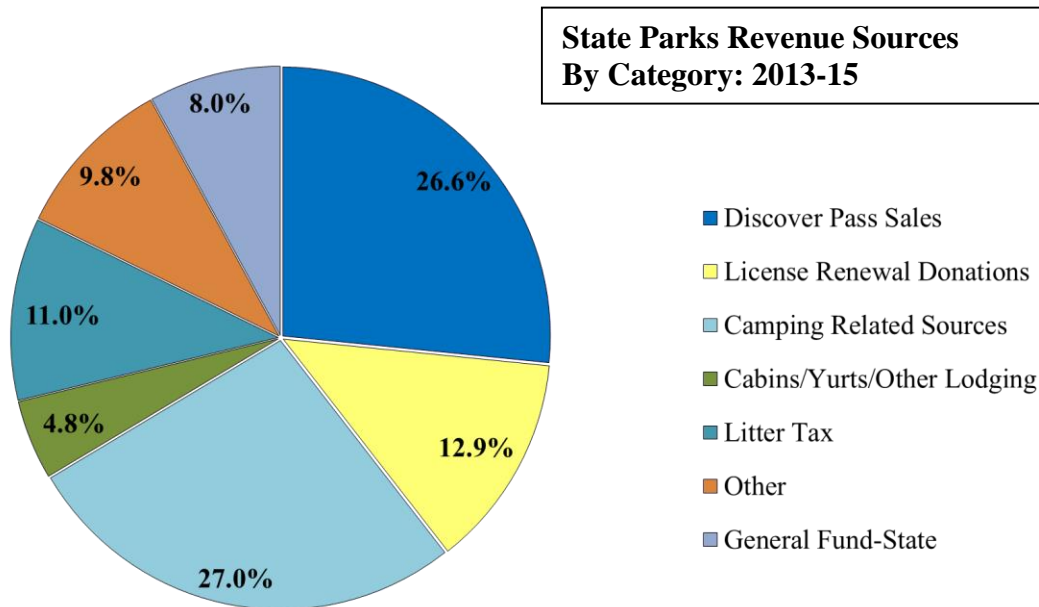
* Other does not include dedicated funds (Winter Recreation, Boating Safety, Roads, etc.).

Other does include:

- 2009-11 - Recreation Resource Account, Non-highway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program Account
- 2011-13 - Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account
- 2013-15 - Litter tax

2. What are the current revenue sources that support State Parks?

Earned revenue from the sale of Discover Pass, camping and other overnight lodging, and donations are the primary revenue sources that currently support State Parks. The relatively small portions of the budget funded from litter tax and State General Fund supplement the agency's earned revenues.



3. What are some options for Washington State Parks to raise additional earned revenues and how much would each source earn?

Information about revenues generated through Discover Pass, fees, recreational concession and leases, and donations is provided below:

Discover Pass

Background

Census data conducted by Washington State University (WSU) in March 2011 showed that there are 2.6 million households in Washington State. Survey respondents indicated at that time that 32% of households would purchase a Discover Pass if the pass was offered for \$30. However, legislation was not finalized at the time of the survey. When the program was finally passed, it contained the following elements, which very likely contributed to lower participation:

- Exemptions for campers, hunters, fishermen and ocean beachgoers
- 12 free days a year in state parks, as passed into law by the legislation
- One pass is valid for two cars (changed legislatively in 2012 to address user concerns)
- Exemptions on state parks lands for groups eligible for legislated State Parks passes, including limited income seniors, disabled persons, disabled veterans, and foster families

Prefacing the survey with those exemptions and changes probably would have reduced the number of respondents (32 percent) who said they would be likely to purchase. This would have resulted in a more accurate revenue projection at the beginning of the program. Total revenue generated from the sale of the

Discover Pass and daily permits generated \$15,716,263 in fiscal year 2012 – about half of the revenue projected by the survey. Program revenue is distributed 84% to State Parks and 8% each to the Departments of Fish and Wildlife and Natural Resources.

Price Points

The March 2011 WSU survey tested various price points for the Discover Pass - \$20 to \$50, in \$5 increments. The most popular choices were \$20 and \$25, but \$30 was selected as the price point that would be acceptable to the market; it was anticipated that this price point would raise a significant amount of money. The \$30 price also was comparable with the \$30 annual pass fee charged by Oregon State Parks, the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service. The current statute requires the Office of Financial Management (OFM) to recommend price modifications every four years to account for inflation.

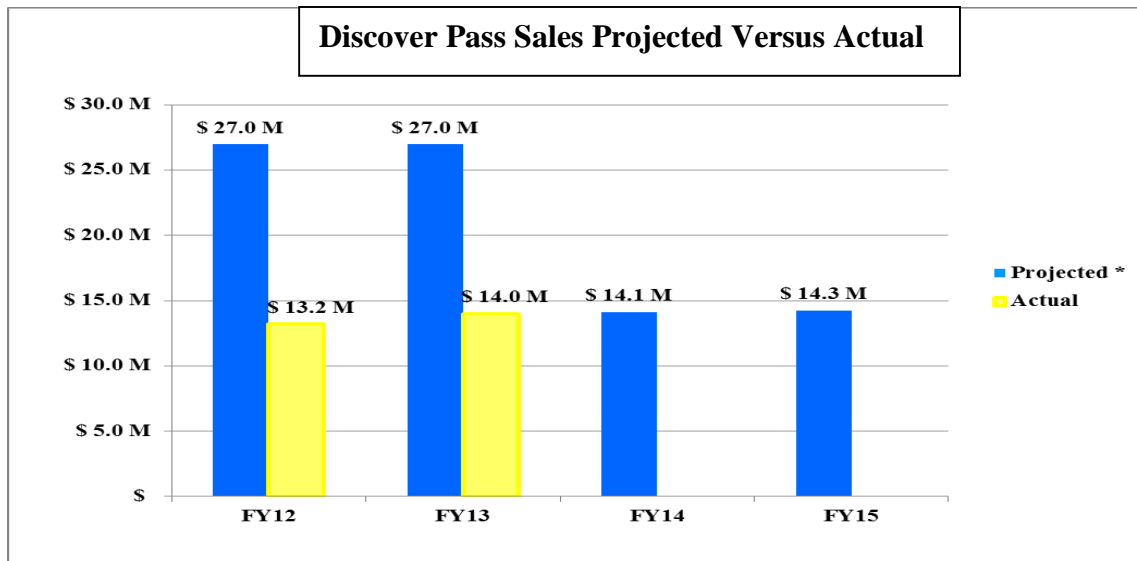
New Opportunities

The three agencies have just completed work on a Program Management Plan to guide and enhance project management of the program moving forward. As part of that process, the State Parks' Business Development Team also completed a work plan to focus efforts on completing projects with the most potential to positively affect the bottom line. The principles of this work plan are based on the BERK/PRR Business Plan that was commissioned by the three Discover Pass agencies to produce recommendations for increasing Discover Pass sales. The guiding principles include:

- Increase pass sales and revenue by focusing on the customer experience, making the purchasing process simple, quick and convenient.
- Redesign the pass products to improve durability, legibility, and resistance to forgery
- Maximize the opportunity to sell passes through a mix of sales channels before arrival at recreation areas
- Treat the pass as a retail product, and expand bulk sales to shift the burden of sales to retailers and other partners
- Position the annual pass as the main product, and convert one-day pass buyers to annual pass customers
- Set policy framework at the multi-agency Coordination Team level allowing for innovative business deals to be made in a timely manner

The team is using these guiding principles, first to finalize a redesigned Pass product and next to expand sales channels and explore the option of new Pass products. Revenue projections are in development, but they have not been finalized at this time. Concurrently, partners agree it could be fruitful to explore the basic tenets of the original Discover Pass

legislation to understand the effect of current exemptions and the viability of continuing them in today's marketplace. Discover Pass estimates and collections are shown in the graph below.



Fees

Washington State Parks' Business Development Program currently is taking a methodical approach in evaluating existing fee structures to determine where there is room to optimize fee revenues and identify opportunities to update fees to current market rates. The Program started with evaluating the agency's boating moorage and docks services. Research has been conducted, presentations have been made to the boating community, a survey with the public recently closed and formal recommendations will be presented to the State Parks' Commission for approval in September. (The potential increase in revenue for the boat moorage program could be approximately \$150,000, or 27% higher than current program revenues, depending on survey results and what is ultimately approved by the Commission.)

A variable pricing model for camping was launched this season to allow greater price flexibility based on demand and to match more closely the typical model used in today's hotel and the hospitality industry, as well as to ensure greater public use of all available campsites. As a result of this new approach, fees were increased on approximately 18 percent of sites, while fees were decreased for approximately 17 percent of total sites. Along with this, cancellation policies were changed to be stricter on customers who held campsites, did not show and as a result prevented State Parks from "renting" the site to another paying customer. Revenue estimates for this new program are expected to be higher than previous years.

The State Parks' team is currently putting together recommendations to improve the variable pricing model for camping. If implemented, revenue estimates will be adjusted higher again to reflect the new pricing schedule. Refinements and improvements are being developed to improve user experience and more effectively manage the program.

Recreational Concessions and Leases

Historically, concessions in parks have been managed by staff at Headquarters, with the objective of finding concessionaires that can provide a mission-related service to park visitors. The program is managed primarily by responding to inquiries and utilizing WEBS to offer request for proposals (RFPs) when a concession location has been vacated. Terms of the concession agreements are typically flat-rate paid, as opposed to a percent of revenue generated by the concessionaire.

The Business Development Program is currently evaluating and gathering a concise list of possible concessions and locations. With that data, the team will work to refine the strategy and process for

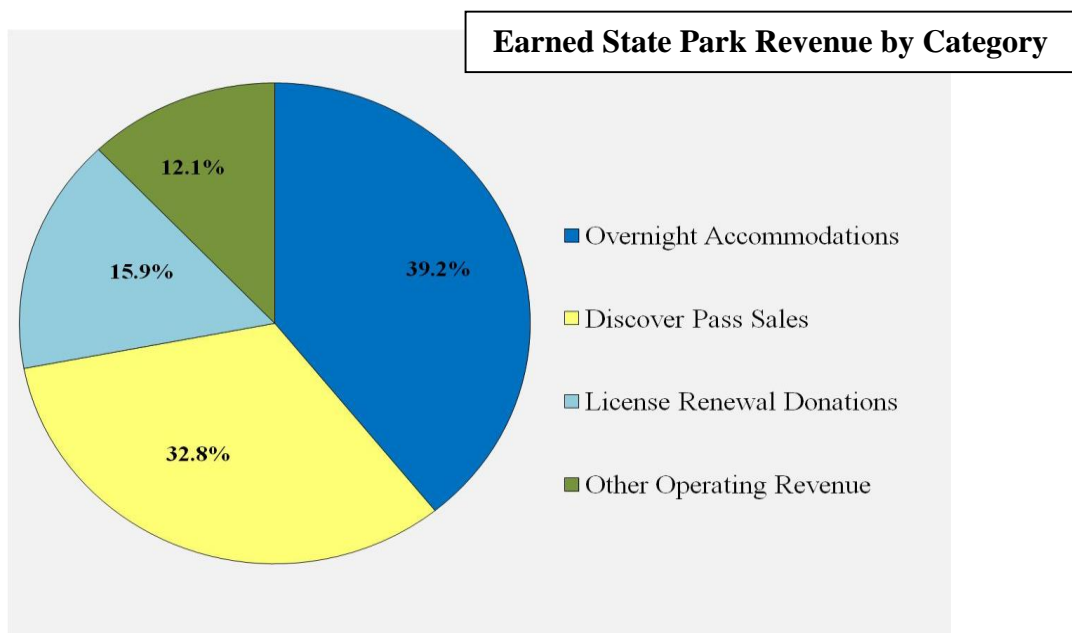
attracting new concessionaires, with a focus on ensuring a positive return on investment. Careful thought is being given to developing a new tracking system to more effectively manage these relationships and reduce labor costs associated with the program. Work is underway to determine how much additional revenue can be generated from recreational concessions and leases in parks.

In a best-case scenario, revenue from commercial use of select agency-owned properties could generate between \$300,000 and \$400,000 annually by 2020.

Donations

Donations are collected by the Department Licensing on behalf of State Parks through the \$5 donation program known as the “opt-out” program. Since the creation of the Discover Pass in FY12, these donations have declined. This decrease was expected, since both opportunities – to purchase a pass and to donate – are presented at the same time during the vehicle on-line license renewal process. From the 2011-13 Biennium to the 2013-15 Biennium a 12.9 percent decline in revenue was projected, however, the agency expects that revenues may flatten out in the 2015-17 Biennium.

The following chart shows earned revenue categories broken down by the percent of total projected earned revenue for the 2013-15 Biennium:



4. What is State Parks doing to increase marketing of parks and outdoor recreation?

Marketing of State Parks

Historically, marketing efforts for State Parks were focused primarily on advertising. For the 2013-15 Biennium, the agency developed a new marketing plan that includes a variety of campaigns to be carried out over different seasons and to be pitched toward different target markets. With this marketing strategy, the agency uses a newly created assessment form to evaluate opportunities prior to making marketing decisions; tracking codes are then used to allow the agency to evaluate its return on investment for these activities. This method allows the agency to try new channels/mechanisms to market state parks and make calculated future decisions that will more effectively spend the marketing budget and produce results.

The following are some of the marketing efforts State Parks has deployed so far this biennium:

- Television station finale sponsorship of KSTW/CW11. This was the first television commercial State Parks has produced and was measured using a unique texting contest. Evaluation of results is pending.
- Joint marketing campaign with SUBWAY restaurants (June 14-Sept. 30). This campaign also features a television commercial to begin airing in July 2014.
- Print and online advertising, including AAA Travel Magazine, Alaska Airline (new channel) magazine, multiple trade magazines, Washington Visitor's Guide, Scenic Washington map and travel guide, WRPA Guide, Department of Licensing tab renewal monthly insert and Astoria Wedding Guide.
- Cinema advertising for summer premieres (launched June 6, 2014)
- Email campaigns to existing State Parks customers
- Launch of a new website with a platform that allows for timely changes and promotion of State Parks events and programs

5. How does State Parks recruit new partnerships and volunteer efforts and how does this help to fill the funding gap?

Partnerships

State Parks has taken a broad view of partnerships, and our efforts fall into several categories:

- *Friends Groups:* State Parks has been formalizing our agreements with volunteer friends groups in parks throughout the state and recruiting for groups at parks that do not yet have such supporting organizations. These groups provide parks a variety of help, including fundraising for park projects, organizing special events, operating park stores, providing interpretation and assisting with park maintenance. There are currently 19 officially recognized friends groups, and several more in the early stages of formation.
- *Non-Profit Organizations:* State Parks has a number of partnerships with non-profits, and their purposes are quite varied. Some examples include partnering with the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust to provide restoration work at Lake Sammamish State Park, partnering with the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance to develop trails and a mountain bike skill park at Squilchuck State Park and partnering with Washington Trails Association to develop a boardwalk at Leadbetter Point State Park.
- *Federal, State, and Local Governments:* State Parks partners with other government agencies in a variety of ways. Some examples include partnering with the City of Spokane, Spokane County, and the City of Spokane Valley to provide operation, maintenance, and law enforcement for the Spokane River Centennial Trail; partnering with the US Forest Service to manage a portion of Klickitat Trail; and partnering with the City of Issaquah to work together to develop a long-term strategy for increased public use and stewardship of Lake Sammamish State Park.
- *Tribal Governments:* State Parks coordinates with Tribes on projects in many parks, but in some cases, the agency has developed more formal partnership agreements. Examples include a partnership with the Swinomish Tribe to jointly own, develop, and manage Kukutali Preserve; and an agreement with the Nisqually Tribe to coordinate work on Nisqually State Park.
- *Private Businesses:* State Parks has fewer partnerships with private businesses than with other groups, however notable examples of this type of cooperation include a donation from the BP Cherry Point Refinery to develop a center for environmental education at Birch Bay State Park, and land donations from Avista Utilities at Riverside State Park.
- *Grants:* State Parks seeks grant funding from a variety of sources for land acquisition, park development and maintenance projects, and grant agreements can be seen as partnerships to

accomplish a project. Most of the grants State Parks receives are administered through the State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), but the agency does receive some grant funding from other public and private sources.

Volunteers

In 2012, volunteers contributed approximately 234,800 hours to State Parks, valued at \$3,287,000, and in 2013, they contributed approximately 231,600 hours, valued at \$3,243,000. So far, the agency's recruitment efforts have not focused on particular demographics, such as senior citizens, but staff does plan to explore more targeted recruitment. Current recruitment methods include:

- RV shows
- Events, including ShellFest, Get Outdoors Day, and other community events
- School service fairs
- Use of social media channels such as Facebook
- The State Parks website

Volunteer hosts perform a variety of tasks for State Parks. Examples of the type of work they do include:

- Registering campers, and assisting staff with tracking reservations and campsite use
- Ensuring that campsites are available and clean for incoming campers
- Maintaining firewood supplies, and selling wood to park visitors
- Checking restrooms, and replenishing supplies
- Opening and closing park gates
- Raising and lowering flags
- Informing and educating park visitors about park rules and regulations
- Conducting routine and preventative park equipment maintenance
- Picking up litter
- Leading interpretive and Junior Ranger programs
- Cleaning park facilities
- Assisting with recycling programs
- Painting park structures
- Completing small carpentry projects
- Completing minor plumbing repairs
- Performing general landscape and trail maintenance
- Driving park shuttles

6. What are State Parks' capital facility (trails, roads, campgrounds, buildings, infrastructure and boating) needs to efficiently operate its recreational services?

Since 1913, Washington's state park system has grown from a single donated parcel of land in Whatcom County, to a system totaling approximately 121,000 leased and owned acres. (Approximately one-third of this land was donated to the system.) More than one in four (28 percent) State-owned buildings in Washington is in State Parks' ownership. Within these land holdings are:

- 195 miles of saltwater shorelines and 210 miles of fresh water shorelines
- More than 1,100 miles of trails and 894 miles of roads
- Campgrounds, day-use sites, environmental learning centers, interpretive facilities and conference centers
- Small municipal-type sewage systems, drinking water and irrigation systems totaling more than 40 miles of buried pipeline, hundreds of sewer and water pumps, 157 wells and 80 reservoirs.

- State Parks has more than 770 historic buildings with more than 54 percent of State Parks' maintenance backlog existing in six historic fortifications and the Saint Edward Seminary building.

Unmet boating facility needs

Washington State Parks manages 26,000 square feet of boat floats and piers, as well as 100 boat and water access ramps. Currently underway are 12 projects to repair and replace marine access facilities using deferred maintenance funds.

The current unmet boating facility needs totals approximately \$40,885,000. This facilities list includes such projects as marine and freshwater boat docks, boat launches, piers, pilings, breakwater and mooring buoy replacements.

An important service that State Parks provides is the installation and servicing of boat pump-out stations, barges and floating restrooms in areas where water quality is being negatively affected by boating pollutants. To ensure water quality and convenience to the boating public, State Parks owns and services boat pump-out stations and barges at seven of its saltwater moorage facilities. The annual operation and maintenance for servicing one pump-out station (pump-out barges and floating restrooms) is \$95,000, with 75 percent paid for through a federal grant and 25 percent from state funds. Once these facilities are constructed and operational, the annual service and staff costs for servicing all new facilities are estimated at \$1,050,000.

Inventory and assessment of facilities

In 2001, the agency completed an inventory and assessment of its facility assets and in 2012 a new inventory was completed for buildings only. The condition of roadways and utilities infrastructure has been recalculated based on data collected from the original 2001 assessment. Identified are about 400 capital projects totaling \$600 million in unfunded capital needs for State Parks (including the \$40.8 million in unmet boating facilities needs discussed above).

Preliminary results from the 2012 facilities inventory show an increased deferred maintenance backlog and declining facilities condition during the 12-year span. Deferred maintenance refers to major facilities maintenance activities with an expected life space of at least 13 years and otherwise meeting the OFM's definition of a capital project.

Comparison of 2001 and 2013 Facilities Inventory and Condition Assessments

2001	2013
Total Number of Buildings: 2679	Total Number of Buildings: 2742
Total Replacement Value: \$1,065,500,327*	Total Replacement Value: \$1,173,063,197
Deferred Maintenance Backlog: \$372,911,517*	Deferred Maintenance Backlog: \$463,056,332
Facility Condition Index: 65%**	Facility Condition Index: 61%**

*Adjusted for inflation ** Facility Condition Index (FCI) = Deferred Maintenance Backlog %