

ADVENTURE WITH PURPOSE

The Mountaineers Strategic Plan 2023-2028





Deception Pass. Photo by Will Wade.

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The Mountaineers adventure with purpose, aspiring to experience the natural world with respect and awe. We believe the outdoors are meant to be experienced mindfully and respectfully, not conquered, and that people and nature are inextricably connected. In pursuing these goals and beliefs, we acknowledge that The Mountaineers exists on the lands of the Pacific Northwest Indian tribes, who live here and steward these lands and waters as they have since time immemorial. As we pursue our mission and implement our strategic plan, we strive to listen to and amplify Native traditions and values through respectful engagement.



Photo by Eddie Kruger.

MISSION

The Mountaineers enriches the community by helping people explore, conserve, learn about, and enjoy the lands and waters of the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

VISION

Adventure with Purpose

We envision a world where our adventures extend beyond the reach of our own personal enjoyment and where all people can confidently enjoy and are inspired to protect the natural world.

CORE VALUES

ADVENTURE | We are **bold explorers** - driven by imagination, outdoor challenge, and the spirit of discovery.

EDUCATION | We **share knowledge** - empowering others to safely and responsibly pursue outdoor activities.

VOLUNTEERISM | We **foster connections** - developing leaders who continue our legacy of outdoor education, integrity, and action.

ADVOCACY | We **protect the outdoor experience** - the natural world depends on our powerful voice for conservation and responsible access.

COMMUNITY | We **provide opportunities for all** - a diverse and inclusive outdoors inspires unity, respect, and passion for the places we love.



Photo by Tiara Vincent



Basalt Columns at the Seattle Program Center. Photo by McKenzie Campbell Davies.

Introduction

The Mountaineers adventure with purpose. For more than 100 years, the core of our mission has been to connect people to the natural world and to each other. We envision a world where our adventures extend beyond the reach of our own personal enjoyment. Where all people can confidently enjoy and are inspired to protect the natural world.

We believe in the unwavering value of outdoor spaces, and its power to change minds and inspire action. Knowledge creates thriving communities, and experience outdoors creates a love for place, inspiring generations of outdoor advocates. That's why we teach responsible recreation for all people to find belonging in the outdoors.

The Mountaineers flourish thanks to a culture of giving. Our volunteers and donors give back and pay it forward, empowering others to confidently explore in their own backyards and beyond. Each act of giving strengthens our bonds and deepens our roots. We believe we are all connected, to this earth and to each other, through the magic of outdoor play.

Developed with input from our community, board, and staff, this strategic plan will be our guiding light in the years ahead. Our strategic priorities are built upon the foundation of our previous five-year plan, Vision 2022: Lead Innovation in Outdoor Education, Engage a Vibrant Community of Outdoor Enthusiasts, and Advocate on Behalf of the Natural World. These priorities will inspire a trail map of actions and investments intended to best serve The Mountaineers community and protect the places we love. We are excited to bring this vision to life with your support.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

VISION:

ADVENTURE WITH PURPOSE

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

LEAD

Innovation in
Outdoor Education

VISION OUTCOME:

Anyone inspired to learn outdoor skills has that opportunity with The Mountaineers.

ENGAGE

a Vibrant Community of
Outdoor Enthusiasts

VISION OUTCOME:

Every individual can find inspiration and belonging in the outdoors through Mountaineers community, programs, and books.

ADVOCATE

on Behalf of the
Natural World

VISION OUTCOME:

Our community makes a meaningful, enduring impact in protecting our planet and the outdoor experience.

Planning Context

Our last Strategic Plan, Vision 2022, provided an important foundation for The Mountaineers. Two factors caused us to slow implementation and narrow the scope of Vision 2022: (1) a decision to not embark on a dedicated funding campaign, and (2) significant operational impacts of the global pandemic that began in early 2020 and continued for nearly three years.

Even in the face of these headwinds, we made tremendous progress since Vision 2022 was finalized in 2017. We invested in nearly 3,000 volunteers, grew membership by nearly 23%, and expanded youth experiences by 85%. Our investment in equity and inclusion is creating opportunities for all people to feel belonging in The Mountaineers. And we're growing both the reach and impact of our conservation and advocacy efforts. These accomplishments were made possible by our volunteers as well as the financial support of our community, which doubled from 2017-2022.

Through conversations with our Board of Directors, Advisory Council, Strategy Steering Committee, other volunteer-led committees, and a series of nine focus sessions, we heard from our community that the strategic priorities outlined in Vision 2022 were the right ones. Our community indicated that we should continue to focus on those priorities, now and into the future.

The foundations of our new strategic plan remain tied to our mission, vision, and values—this is why its name is simply, Adventure with Purpose. The power of our strategic priorities (Lead, Engage, and Advocate), combined with the community support via a flexible implementation plan, will give Adventure with Purpose strength, resilience, and the ability to connect our nearly 120-year legacy with our future, where all people feel belonging in the outdoors.



Little Giant Pass. Photo by Cheryl Talbert.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

LEAD Innovation in Outdoor Education



Del Campo Peak. Photo by Luke Helgeson.

VISION OUTCOME | Anyone inspired to learn outdoor skills has that opportunity with The Mountaineers.

In response to unprecedented interest to learn outdoor skills, we will invest in the three most critical resources required to meet this need: volunteers, space, and expert resources.

GOALS

L1 Foster a vibrant community of skilled volunteer educators to meet the needs of a growing number of outdoor enthusiasts.

Our volunteer instructors and mentors create a rich, multigenerational community of outdoor enthusiasts. Without volunteers trained and motivated to teach and lead trips, we cannot expand our capacity to meet growing demand, resulting in lengthy waitlists and restricted access to mentorship. By supporting our volunteers with resources, training, and growth opportunities, we will empower new volunteers and inspire growth.

L2 Invest in new and existing spaces to offer expanded educational opportunities and community connections.

Mountaineers courses are mission critical for teaching the skills individuals need to recreate safely and responsibly. Each year, demand for outdoor training grows, yet space constraints are reducing our capacity instead of growing to meet demand. We need more access to relevant terrain, artificial teaching spaces, gathering places, and virtual teaching spaces, and we will invest staff resources in working closely with land managers, in growing new, existing, and shared urban- and mountain-based facilities, and in technology to improve virtual training spaces.

L3 Publish and curate category-leading titles and content in outdoor education.

Mountaineers Books draws from a wide range of experts to publish award-winning books from across the outdoor-recreation spectrum and that reflect homegrown expertise as well as international athletes and outdoor professionals. We will invest in these core educational publications to ensure that we continue to provide high-quality resources that feature diverse voices, address all skill levels, and share best practices alongside leading-edge techniques.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

ENGAGE a Vibrant Community of Outdoor Enthusiasts



Table Mountain. Photo by Brian Degenhardt.

VISION OUTCOME | Every individual can find inspiration and belonging in the outdoors through Mountaineers community, programs, and books.

As an organization reliant on a community of outdoor enthusiasts and philanthropists, we must grow connections through our classes, programs, books, and other resources. By investing in opportunities that help everyone feel belonging, we will ensure the future of our organization and our planet.

GOALS

E1 Cultivate an organizational culture of outdoor equity and belonging.

We seek to foster a culture of equity and belonging by reducing barriers and creating welcoming spaces. Our community will live our values through changes to policy, programs, and education, and we will amplify the importance of belonging through the stories we tell, the diverse authors we publish, and the guides that help all readers enjoy the outdoors.

E2 Expand our youth programs to foster lifelong connections with the outdoors.

Building a multigenerational community starts with ensuring youth are introduced to the outdoors at a young age and have opportunities for a progression of outdoor experiences. We will engage more youth by partnering with community-based organizations to understand the best way to provide joyful outdoor experiences, particularly for youth from historically excluded communities.

E3 Deepen our culture of giving back by providing new opportunities to contribute.

The spirit of generosity cultivated by our volunteer community empowers us to achieve our most ambitious objectives. Our ability to advance our strategic plan will rely on an engaged membership, celebration of volunteerism, and philanthropic investment from those inspired to do so. To respond to our members' desire to facilitate unique projects and protect the future of outdoor education, we will create specific opportunities for donors to make transformational contributions that support our ability lead, engage, and advocate.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

ADVOCATE on Behalf of the Natural World



Hoh Rain Forest. Photo by Brendan Moore-Penaskovic.

VISION OUTCOME | Our community makes a meaningful, enduring impact in protecting our planet and the outdoor experience.

The Mountaineers has always been a fierce defender of the natural world. In response to increasing recreational use of public lands and intensifying climate change, we must strengthen our capacity to protect the outdoors for future generations.

GOALS

A1 Achieve high-impact outcomes for conservation and sustainable recreation access through new and deepened partnerships and policy expertise.

The Mountaineers plays a unique role in the conservation community, convening outdoor partners, land managers, legislators, and tribes to advance innovative and collaborative solutions. With a critical need to better engage with tribes, the increasing impacts of climate change, and complex land management challenges, we must advocate for funding, management tools, and protections for our public lands. Through initiatives like Outdoor Alliance Washington, we will continue to forge strong relationships, lead diverse coalitions, and capitalize on our deep policy expertise to protect the outdoor experience and the public lands and waters we love.

A2 Inspire and equip our community to be highly-effective advocates for climate and the natural world.

Our books and programs spark a lifelong passion for the outdoors, and our conservation work translates this passion into tangible policy outcomes for conservation and climate. With the evolving political environment, we need deeper engagement with lawmakers and more innovative methods of advocacy to remain effective. We will create tools like advocacy training and mentorship programs, bolster impact campaigns, publish more books in support of threatened North American landscapes and biodiversity, and further elevate the voices of outdoor enthusiasts directly to lawmakers.

A3 Act urgently to minimize our organization's impact on the environment.

The climate crisis is an urgent threat to the future of The Mountaineers and our community, and we are committed to doing our part to lower our carbon footprint. We will aggressively reduce carbon emissions from direct organizational impacts, striving to become a net zero organization. To further reduce our carbon footprint, we will educate our community on additional ways to minimize environmental impact through sustainability, responsible recreation, and stewardship.

SUPPORT THE MOUNTAINEERS

The Mountaineers®, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, relies on book sales, dues, donations, and volunteerism to sustain our mission and deepen our impact. Your support, at any level, will amplify our efforts to connect more people to the natural world and protect the outdoor experience.

Our staff located in Seattle work to support our seven branches (Bellingham, Everett, Foothills, Kitsap, Olympia, Seattle, and Tacoma), three lodges (Baker, Meany, and Stevens), Kitsap Forest Theater, and the international reach of our publications through Mountaineers Books.

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Tax ID: 27-3009280.

GET INVOLVED

Join or renew as a member | mountaineers.org/join

Donate time and talent as a volunteer | mountaineers.org/volunteer

Enroll in the Public Lands 101 Conservation course | mountaineers.org/publiclands101

Visit a new place with Mountaineers Books | mountaineers.org/books

Consider a charitable contribution | mountaineers.org/donate