



November 2, 2020

Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office
P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

RE: Support for RCO grant applications: 20-2234 Skykomish Ranger District Trail Maintenance 2021 and 20-2206 Skykomish Ranger District Education and Enforcement

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of The Mountaineers, I write to support the Skykomish Ranger District's Wilderness Rangers and Wilderness Program that support sustainable recreation opportunities.

The Mountaineers, based in Seattle, Washington and founded in 1906, is a nonprofit outdoor education, conservation, and recreation organization whose mission is "to enrich the community by helping people explore, conserve, learn about and enjoy the lands and waters of the Pacific Northwest and beyond." 1,600 skilled volunteers lead 3,200 outdoor education trips and courses annually for 14,000 members. Our youth programs provide over 10,000 opportunities each year for children to get outside. We are a passionate, engaged, and knowledgeable community that cares about the outdoors, and protects the outdoor experience for current and future generations.

The Skykomish Ranger District's Wilderness rangers have a presence in the field, and focus on education and enforcement in an effort to improve the experience and safety of Wilderness users. They patrol within the Alpine Lakes, Wild Sky, and Henry M. Jackson Wilderness areas. The Mountaineers support this program because of their hard work to keep our trails and Wilderness destinations healthy and beautiful for others to enjoy, and to educate our visitors on the importance of doing the same.

The Skykomish Ranger District encompasses many hiking, mountaineering and backcountry snow sports (skiing, snowshoeing and split boarding) destinations, and our members visit the District every season of the year. These proposals will help protect public lands that are very valuable to our membership.

The human-powered recreation community as a group is conscientious of access and environmental issues in the areas that they recreate. When resources are available to educate them, they can be one of the most thoughtful and proactive user groups in terms of preservation and impact minimization. We are excited about the potential of these programs to preserve the quality of outdoor experiences for all future users of the Skykomish Ranger District. The Mountaineers believe that the money granted for these programs would be very well spent preserving and improving our public lands and the experiences they provide.

Sincerely,

Betsy Robblee
Conservation & Advocacy Director
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