

(Submitted online to Senate Ways & Means Committee)

Chair Robinson and members of the Committee, my name is Conor Marshall and I am submitting written testimony on PSSB 5195 on behalf of The Mountaineers, signed in as “pro.” We appreciate your dedication to the challenging work of balancing so many important capital budget priorities amidst a constrained financial outlook for our state.

The Mountaineers is a non-profit outdoor education and recreation organization that connects youth and adults to the outdoors through human-powered recreational activities, including on Washington’s state-managed public lands.

These state parks, recreation, and wildlife areas provide both residents and visitors transformational outdoor experiences, positive health and wellness benefits, and connection to the natural world that fosters a stewardship ethic for our shared lands and waters.

Thank you for prioritizing important conservation and recreation priorities in your proposed 2025-2027 capital budget, including:

- \$120 million for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program
- \$12.65 million for DNR’s Trust Land Transfer Program
- \$2.6 million to support safe and sustainable recreation on DNR lands
- \$1.48 million for DNR’s Natural Areas Program

These investments will help restore public lands, manage sustainable recreation, and connect our communities to the outdoors at a time when federal public lands are under threat and under-resourced. We ask that you retain this critical funding in the final 2025-2027 state capital budget.

We also ask that you strive to meet the proposed House funding levels for the three Department of Natural Resources requests referenced above. As DNR’s maintenance backlog continues to grow and visitation continues to rise, additional funding is needed to support conservation and recreation on DNR-managed lands and protect our forests.

Thank you for considering our support and this request.