FUNDING PROPOSAL – NEW OR EXPANDED for 2022-2023

NON-MOTORIZED PROGRAM

The Winter Recreation Program may consider proposals for funding for new or expanded, Priority 5 and 6, budget commitments for the 2022-2023 winter season in the non-motorized program. To apply for funding, please complete the following form. Please Note: All Proposals must be postmarked by June 1, 2021 to be considered. No late applications will be accepted. Examples of new or expanded funding requests could include: requests for grooming frequency increases, expanded or new trail systems, new Sno-Parks, trail improvements, increased enforcement, etc.

PROPOLENT INFORMATION

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<tr>
<th>NAME OF INDIVIDUAL, ORGANIZATION OR AGENCY</th>
<th>NAME OF REPRESENTATIVE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Forest Service, Snoqualmie Ranger District I-90 Corridor</td>
<td>Brian McNeil</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAILING ADDRESS</td>
<td>TITLE</td>
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<tr>
<td>902 SE North Bend Way</td>
<td>Snoqualmie Ranger District Recreation Program Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>CITY, STATE, ZIP</td>
<td>E-MAIL ADDRESS</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Bend, WA. 98045</td>
<td><a href="mailto:brian.mcneil@usda.gov">brian.mcneil@usda.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TELEPHONE NUMBER &amp; EXTENSION</td>
<td>FAX NUMBER</td>
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<tr>
<td>425-365-6067</td>
<td>360-825-0660</td>
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1) Please give a thorough description of the intended purpose of the proposed funding, including location, and affected Sno-Parks and trail systems.

   The intended purpose of this proposal is to develop a new, non-motorized Sno Park opportunity along the I-90 Corridor within the Snoqualmie Ranger District and Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. Location for this new Sno Park would be at the Asehal Curtis and Annette Lake Trailheads. Access to this trailhead is approximately one mile off of I-90 at the Denny Creek Exit 47. This trailhead will accomodate aproximately 100 vehicles in a designated parking lot and help reduce off-highway shoulder parking.

   These areas are close to Seattle and already enthusiastically utilized by the public. During the 2020 summer the Snoqualmie Ranger District I-90 Corridor experienced 283,119 hiking visitors between June 6th - Oct 20th due to the pandemic as the public's desire for outdoor recreation peaked. Use decreased during the 2021 summer season at 190,593 hiking visitors and returned to a more "standard" summer.

2020-2021 Winter numbers: Took "average" number of car counts on random days throughout the winter. A daily average was estimated at 44 cars/day. Spread that over a time frame of four months, it's estimated that approx 5,000 cars visited the area over the winter. We feel these numbers are low, but represent a good estimate from the number of visits made to these areas by Forest Service staff.

During the 2021-2022 winter season, using Trafx vehicle counters Snoqualmie Ranger District's Winter Snow Rangers counted an average of 72 vehicles per day with peak usage on Saturdays and Sundays. On Saturdays we averaged in excess of 175 vehicles per day and 125 vehicles on Sundays. We began collecting this data in mid-December when the snow first began to accumulate. In December our Winter Snow Rangers counted 286 vehicles and checked 174, observing a 62% compliance rate. 136 public contacts were provided and 76 warnings were issued. 374 vehicles were counted in January and 236 were checked. 424 contacts were made, 61 warnings issued and 27 citations were issued. In February 474 vehicles were counted, 207 vehicles were checked for a 65.3% compliance rate. 191 public contacts were made as five warnings were issued and 83 citations were written. 160 vehicles were
counted in March with 116 being checked for a 73% compliance rate. Three warnings and 22 citations were issued. In total this program generated an approximate $1,300 of additional revenues in day-passes sold in February and March for Washington State Park's Sno-Parks program.

This area offers future Nordic Track and grooming opportunities along Forest Service Road 58 between the Franklin Falls and Denny Creek trailhead and Alpental/Summit Ski area access road. Snowshoeing opportunities exist along this road corridor as well, plus a one-mile summer ADA trail that accesses Franklin Falls. There is also the approximate one-mile Wagon Wheel Road ADA Trail, access to the Denny Creek Trail and trailhead (No vehicle parking allowed at this TRHD), and access to the Denny Creek Campground. This Denny Creek Campground area could also be used as a potential Snow Play and Snowshoe area. This new Sno Park addition could provide a much needed and safer parking access to Snow Play on a heavily used corridor with minimal cost to establish.

In the previous winter of 2020-2021 the Snoqualmie Ranger District was able to fund 2 full-time employees using C.A.R.E.S Act Funding (COVID related) and Forest Service appropriated funding. This funding opportunity expired and was no longer available during the 2021-2022 winter season, this proposal seeks to ask for continued funding in year 2 for two Winter Snow Rangers and Forest Protection Officers to administer this Sno Park at Asehal Curtis and Annette Lake Trailheads. Duties that this funding would support, but are not limited too, would be for these two individuals to clean and stock an existing CXT, two-seat vault toilet, monitor, patrol, inform, and enforce Sno-Park passes at the Asehal Curtis and Annette Lake Trailheads and Sno Park area Fridays through Sundays. Supplemental funding would come from Forest Service Force Account dollars to support the additional two days for a full 40-hour per week schedule. This is approximately a 40% funding match to this request and will cover payroll while providing the Snoqualmie Ranger District Recreation program the opportunity to offer a competitive and appealing professional position. With these additional two days, these Winter Snow Rangers will monitor, patrol and educate winter forest visitors in other Snow Play areas along the I-90 corridor and will assist The Summit at Snoqualmie Ski Resort with their traffic and parking enforcement efforts. These Forest Service Winter Snow Rangers will visit these Sno Park areas for routine visits, but the area would not be a focal point over these additional two days. The District would look to train the two winter employees to be Collection Officers so as to have the ability to offer Sno Park passes to those who may show up without knowing the requirements, but Washington State Parks and the Forest Service have already partnered to install a new automated fee machine at the Snoqualmie Pass Visitor center that currently sells Sno Park passes. Winter Snow Rangers will be able to direct the public to this site for purchasing these Sno Park passes.

a. Does your total request factor in the potential need for Snow Removal, Grooming, Sanitation, Education, Enforcement and possible need for dirt/land work?
   An estimated $5,000 dollars would be needed to plow the Denny Creek Road for the winter. Jason Goldstein will work up an agreement

Grooming is not factored in this proposal, but future opportunities for grooming exists and could be an option for future years.

Sanitation: An existing CXT, two seat vault toilet is currently in operations at this trailhead location. The Forest Service would pay for pumping of the toilet in the Fall, and is asking for funding through this proposal to pump the toilet at the end of the winter season. This cost would be $500. The Forest Service will provide toilet paper and cleaning supplies to keep the vault toilet sanitary. No need for dirt/land work.

1) Amount of funding requested. Please give as much detail as possible and the dollar amount required for each element of the proposal. For new trail grooming requests fill out the Table A. NEW TRAIL GROOMING MILES REQUESTED FOR 2022-2023 (on the last page of this application)

| $ Total amount of funding requested = $24,229.44 |
| Two GS- 5 Sno-Park Rangers/Forest Protection Officers at 3 days/week = $18,949.44 |

2022-2023 Funding Proposal.doc
2) What is the estimated target audience (snowmobilers, dog mushers, cross country skiers, snowshoers, others) and what percentage do you anticipate each use at?

The immediate target audience would be Snowshoers, non-motorized Winter Snow Play, hikers, backcountry skiers, cross country skiers on the ungroomed routes. Future target audiences would include nordic skiers for groomed/tracked route along FSR 58 (Forest Service Road). Based on current use, we anticipate approximately 50% Snow Play/hikers to Franklin Falls, 40% Snowshoers, 10% other (nordic, backcountry skiers). As the public's awareness of this winter recreational opportunity has emerged, we anticipate snowshoeing and nordic skiing to become more popular as conditions allow. Future Sno Park development should be looked at somewhere in the proximity of the Pacific Crest Trail North trailhead. If Forest Service Road 58 is ever groomed for nordic skiing and snowshoeing, there is potential for possible shuttle opportunity to park a car at the top of FSR 58 and one at Franklin Falls trailhead to provide a gradual downhill ski and snowshoe opportunity within the Franklin Falls/Denny Creek valley/switchback road system.

3) Why is this project essential? (New or expanded area, local economic impacts, recreational demands)

Sno Park parking, Snow Play, and general winter recreational opportunities are in high demand along the I-90 corridor. But as we have experienced over the last several years; demand is high, but opportunity for appropriate, quality snow play is extremely limited. By continuing to fund this new Sno Park in year two of this proposal, this area will continue to provide a much needed winter recreational opportunity for the citizens of Washington, as well as a safer means to park and recreate with reduced conflict. With its proximity to Seattle and presence as a known commodity, this new Sno Park on the I-90 Corridor and Snoqualmie Ranger District has proven to be financially beneficial for Washington State's Winter Recreation Sno Park program. As the public has become aware of this winter recreational opportunity featuring new and improved access to Asehal Curtis, Annette Lake, Denny Creek and Franklin Falls throughout the winter months for snow play and winter recreational opportunities, this Sno Park has operated at full capacity on weekends and approximately 80%-90% capacity on weekdays. With this high demand, having Winter Snow Rangers is essential to monitor this program and provide Education and Enforcement in support of this project, as well as acting as general ambassadors for the U.S. Forest Service and Washington State Parks to the area. These individuals provide knowledge of Franklin Falls, winter snow play and recreational opportunities at the Sno Park and other areas along the I-90 corridor, while also servicing the toilet and patrolling the area for trash and general cleanliness.

4) Briefly describe the recreational benefits of the proposal. How will this funding improve the recreational experience of visitors? What types of recreational uses will be enhanced?

Additional funding will allow increased presence and additional Education and Enforcement efforts by Forest Service Winter Snow Rangers during the 2022-2023 winter season. This continued presence will ensure added security for forest visitors and has enhanced our ability to promote Washington State Parks' Winter Sno Parks program. This Forest Service presence is greatly valued by forest visitors from a security and general presence standpoint as well as an enhanced and more readily available informational capacity. Informing individuals of snow levels and winter conditions, and directing visitors to more suitable sledding areas are examples of questions and concerns our Forest Service staff regularly address.
5) Is the requested funding one-time only, or on-going?
   One Time ☐
   On-going ☒

6) Has Landowner Permission been obtained?  *(Funding agreements may be approved on condition that Landowner Permission will be obtained prior to the beginning of the project)*
   Landowner Permission is granted through the District Ranger Line officer of the Snoqualmie Ranger District/Mt Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest where all winter recreation Sno Park operation occur, except for the one mile of County Rd that will need to be plowed from time to time to provide access to Forest Service lands. Landowner permissions will be forthcoming.

7) If adjacent homeowners/housing developments/land owners will be impacted by the proposed action, do they support the proposal?
   This is Federal Land. There are a handful of Recreational Residence in the Denny Creek area that are under Forest Service Permits, but owners of these cabins understand that their cabins sit on public land and that access to these lands to the public will not be denied. King County approval is needed to plow portions of Forest and County Road 58. King County has concerns on roadside parking on their land that have caused search and rescue issues in the past. If these concerns can be remedied, I believe King County will agree to this proposal.

8) Describe what communications were conducted to obtain homeowners/housing developments/land owners support.
   Recreation residents are under Forest Service Special Use permits. Communicated with by phone with King County Sheriff/Search and Rescue Coordinator, King County Roads Supervisor II, left messages with King County Road Engineer. Plowing of King County road (1 mile) to access Franklin Falls area.

9) Are there any permitting or environmental review requirements associated with implementation of the proposal?  *(i.e. NEPA, SEPA, Environmental Assessment, Hydraulics Permit, Building Permit, etc.)*
   On Forest Service lands, NO -- All environmental analysis has been performed by the agency specialists and approved by the District Ranger Line officer. County approval is needed to plow the 1 mile of County road to access the Sno Park area.

10) Is the funding proposal consistent with the elements of the Winter Recreation Strategic Plan (to be found at [http://parks.state.wa.us/149/Strategic-Plan](http://parks.state.wa.us/149/Strategic-Plan)) Explain how:
   Yes. This proposal is consistent with the elements of the Winter Recreation Strategic Plan overall, but also improves upon your # 4 bullet point under "What the Plan seeks to Accomplish" --- 'Provide guidance to the program in meeting increasing recreational demands, especially along the I-90 Corridor, and other areas exhibiting high demand.'
   This proposal for the new Sno Park at the Franklin Falls trailhead sits right in the heart of the I-90 corridor and will provide a much needed improved opportunity for better Snow Play.

11) Has the Area Winter Recreation Program Advisory Committee member been advised of this request?
Yes, this proposal was discussed in person and on-site with Jason Goldstein.

12) Who will be presenting this proposal at the funding meeting?
   Brian McNeil, Snoqualmie Ranger District Recreation Program Manager.

See Question 2.

A. NEW TRAIL GROOMING MILES REQUESTED FOR 2022-2023 (16 week season)
   - List the trail grooming miles planned for next season for each groomed trail system.
   - Grooming schedules will be required by October 16, 2022.

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<th>Trail Name or Road Number</th>
<th>From which Sno-Park</th>
<th>Map Miles</th>
<th>Trip Miles</th>
<th>Trips per Week</th>
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TOTAL GROOMING MILES FOR TRAIL SYSTEMS LISTED ABOVE:

Total funds requested for new grooming miles. $

Agreement

In the event funding is recommended by the Snowmobile Advisory Committee or by the Winter Recreation Advisory Committee for this project and approved by State Parks, either an existing Purchased Services Contract will be modified to reflect the approved budget, or a new Purchased Services Contract will be awarded through a public bidding process.

The applicant certifies that, to the best of his/her knowledge, the information in this application is true and correct.

Todd Schmutz
Signature of Applicant

Todd C. Schmutz – Snoqualmie RD 410 Corridor Manager
Printed Name and Title of Applicant

05/26/2022
Date

Signature of Grooming Council Representative

Printed Name and Title of Grooming Council Rep.

Date