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.

PROONENT INFORMATION

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<tr>
<th>NAME OF INDIVIDUAL, ORGANIZATION OR AGENCY</th>
<th>NAME OF REPRESENTATIVE</th>
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<tr>
<td>WA Department of Natural Resources - SPS Region</td>
<td>Scott Sargent</td>
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<tr>
<th>MAILING ADDRESS</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>950 Farman Avenue North</td>
<td>Region Manager</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITY, STATE, ZIP</th>
<th>E-MAIL ADDRESS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enumclaw, WA, 98022</td>
<td><a href="mailto:scott.sargent@dnr.wa.gov">scott.sargent@dnr.wa.gov</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>TELEPHONE NUMBER &amp; EXTENSION</th>
<th>FAX NUMBER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>360-825-1631</td>
<td>360-825-1672</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 purpose of this proposed project is to re-establish Sno-Park parking above the current 92 Road Sno-Park in the Elbe Hills State Forest. The location of this project is the original Upper 92 Road Sno-Park, Elbe Hills State Forest, Pierce County, Greenwater/Yakima Sno-Park Region, 46.782817, -122.049987.

The original Upper 92 Road Sno-Park was historically used for decades prior to the recession of 2009. Around that time, the Elbe Hills State Forest received a decline in road plowing funding. This reduction in funding contributed to the closure of the original Upper 92 Road Sno-Park and 1 mile of access road to it, to reduce the amount of road needing to be plowed. During the closure, signage has fallen into disrepair, the gate at the top of the original Upper 92 Road Sno-Park broke and was removed, and vegetation overtook the parking area. In the 12 years since the closure, funding for road plowing has returned and been consistent, the non-profit organization Mount Tahoma Trails Association (MTTA) has taken over road plowing responsibilities, and DNR has experienced land management changes for the landscape the Sno-Park resides in. The culmination of these factors, combined with future landscape planning in the Elbe Hills State Forest has resulted in this project proposal. The project has the potential to beneficially impact the 92 Road-Sno Park, Mount Tahoma Trails System, and the Copper Creek Hut by expanding existing parking.

If this project is funded, DNR will accomplish the following at the original Upper 92 Road Sno-Park:
- Re-install existing signage at the Sno-Park on new posts (old posts bent and broken).
- Install a new gate (old gate broke and has been removed from road). Gated access would allow for a snow groomer to unlock and pass through, while keeping motorized vehicles from traveling beyond that point.
- Install eco blocks across the orphaned, logging spur road at the Northwest end of the Sno-Park. This would improve the vehicle barrier to better block access to the logging spur road.
- Lay new gravel at parking area to improve the parking surface.
The reestablished parking area would only be used during the winter season (December-March). The current uppermost gate #510 (at the current 92 Road Sno-Park) would be closed anytime outside of that winter season. Sno-Park parking locations (Upper, Middle, Lower) during winter would be managed by MTTA in regards to snow depth, plowability and applicability of gate closures. This modular parking layout allows DNR and MTTA to manage flexibly for snow conditions and allows efficient use of resources to conduct snow removal as funding and conditions allow. DNR has no formal non-winter recreation in the 92 Road Sno-Park area, so this reestablished parking area would be strictly for Sno-Park users. The reestablished parking area would result in adding back 20 parking spaces to the 92 Road Sno-Park access system.

a. Does your total request factor in the potential need for Snow Removal, Grooming, Sanitation, Education, Enforcement and possible need for dirt/land work? Yes. MTTA, who is responsible for snow removal in the Elbe Hills State Forest, will address the need to add 1 mile of snow removal on the access road to the project site, and the associated additional funding needed through their supplemental operating funds. This project will not increase the amount of snow grooming required. There will be 1 less mile of snow grooming required when this road section gets plowed. This project will not create the need for additional sanitation facilities, as there is a sanitation facility at the current 92 Road Sno-Park. Reestablishing the original upper parking area will result in the existing sanitation facility being located in the middle of the 92 Road Sno-Park access road. DNR will cover the expense of paying DNR employees to conduct the extra education and enforcement resulting from having 20 extra parking spaces on the 92 Road Sno-Park access system. DNR will also cover the expense of paying DNR employees’ labor costs to manage and execute this project. This project will not require ground disturbing work that would require permits, as the footprint of the upper parking area already exists. This project would simply add rock to the existing rocked surface. The gate installation would not require any DNR permitting.

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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$11,000: TOTAL PROJECT COST</th>
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<tr>
<td>-$4000: 1 Gate - Materials and Installation</td>
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<tr>
<td>-$5000: 10 (15 Ton) Loads of Gravel – Materials and Delivery</td>
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<tr>
<td>-$2000: Machine Rental for Gravel Handling – Grading Scrapper and Vibratory Roller</td>
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MATCHING DONATIONS:

- New Sign Posts - DNR
- 4 Concrete Eco Blocks – DNR
- DNR Labor (80 Hours)
- WCC Labor (40 Hours)
- DNR Equipment (40 Hours) - Kubota U70 Mini Excavator

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

Our target audience are snowshoers (60%), cross country skiers (35%), and general snow play recreationists (5%).

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

This project is essential because the 92 Road Sno-Park area of the Elbe Hills State Forest currently has limited parking available. The current 92 Road Sno-Park has 30 parking spaces. These parking spaces fill up quickly during the weekends, with overnight hut reservation guests competing for space with day users. Adding back the 20 additional parking spaces at the upper parking area would help reduce the impact of the limited parking. This project is essential to help DNR land managers to react to the
increased public use in the North District. This project is also essential to help balance the use of the South District and North District, Mount Tahoma Trail System Sno-Parks by allowing more users to come to use the North District, which historically has seen less use than the South District, in part due to limited parking.

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?
This project will benefit winter recreation by:
- Reducing the amount of bare road hiking that skiers and snowshoers currently must do during the shoulders of the winter season. The distance of road reopened would be one mile, and consequently reduce bare road hiking by a mile, putting people a mile closer to the Copper Creek hut. This will improve the recreation experience for cross country skiers and snowshoers who currently have to pack their equipment in when there is not snow on that one mile of road.
- It would provide an elevation gain of 300 feet from the existing sno-park, which could help compensate for the predicted rise in snow levels in the short-term future due to climate change. Elevation would go from 3180 feet to 3480 feet. This added elevation should help keep cross country skiers and snowshoers from hiking bare roads for longer periods during potentially warm winters.
- It would provide more parking for the Mount Tahoma Trails System - North District. The current 92 Road Sno-Park has 30 parking spaces. Reestablishing the upper parking area will reestablish an additional 20 parking spaces, increasing capacity for parking in the North District to 50 spaces. This will allow more winter recreationists to use the Sno-Park system while reducing potential conflicts with limited parking spaces.
- MTTA continues to work with the neighboring Nisqually Community Forest to explore building a new ski hut on their property in the future. This would increase the amount of winter recreationists using the 92 Road Sno-park and Mount Tahoma System North District. Having the additional 20 parking spaces at the reestablished upper parking area would help DNR and MTTA get ahead of potential future rise in overnight hut users.
- It will also benefit winter recreation by reclaiming old infrastructure. This is more cost effective than building a new Sno-Park area and allows that saved money to go towards other needed projects in the non-motorized winter recreation program.

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)
YES

7) If adjacent homeowners/housing developments/land owners will be impacted by the proposed action, do they support the proposal?
YES

8) Describe what communications were conducted to obtain homeowners/housing developments/land owners support.
The DNR project manager reached out the neighboring Nisqually Community Forest board and gave them a detailed project proposal. The board reviewed the project proposal at their February board
meeting and had no concerns about the project. They were supportive of the project's intention of installing a new gate at the end of the 92 Road, at the DNR/Nisqually Community Forest property line, which would help reduce trespass of motorized vehicles on their property. They were also supportive of the project's end result of giving more members of the public opportunity to recreate on the Mount Tahoma Trail System by expanding parking.

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.)
   NONE

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). Explain how:
   One aspect of the Winter Recreation Strategic Plan this project directly addresses is: “Climate Change, Adapting to Future Challenges: Winter Recreation staff noted that adapting program operations to decreasing snowpack may require moving Sno-Parks access points (e.g., parking lots) to higher elevations.” This project would directly address this concern by raising the uppermost parking area 300 feet in elevation from 3180 feet to 3480 feet. In addition, this would create 3 elevations of parking (upper, middle, lower), which would allow for high flexibility in adjusting snow removal and parking strategies to the conditions.

   Another aspect of the plan this project directly addresses is: “Upper Level Objective 1, Goal 1, Strategy A: Plan for or relocate more Sno-Parks, if trail system has the capacity to handle increased usage...”. This project would reestablish 20 additional parking spaces which will be used as popularity in winter recreation continues to grow in Pierce County and in the future if an additional future hut is built in the North District.

   “Upper Level Objective 1, Goal 2, Strategy A: Plan and develop future facilities and services will be responsive to user needs and concerns, will assess and address environmental impacts, safety concerns, overcrowding and user conflicts; and will involve stakeholders and the Advisory Committees.” This project was prepared in collaboration with DNR, MTTA, and the neighboring land owner (Nisqually Community Forest). This project will help address future needs of winter recreationists using the North District by increasing parking spaces and reducing overcrowding at parking spots.

   “Upper Level Objective 5, Goal 1, Strategy D: Applications for funding will give preference to applications that show local volunteer and stakeholder support, and/or that involve multiple funding partners, and how projects link to local and regional systems and local economic interests.” This project was drafted with collaboration from DNR, MTTA, and Nisqually Community Forest. DNR will contribute labor and materials to this project, as well additional Education and Enforcement time required. This project helps to increase parking capacity for anticipated future growth of winter recreation opportunities in the North District on DNR/Nisqually Community Forest land, as part of a future Winter Recreation Plan.

11) Has the Area Winter Recreation Program Advisory Committee member been advised of this request?
   YES

12) Who will be presenting this proposal at the funding meeting?
   Mike Fowler, Elbe Unit Forester - SPS Region - WA DNR
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.

<table>
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<tr>
<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>
<th>Trips Per Season</th>
<th>Total Miles</th>
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<td>TOTAL GROOMING MILES FOR TRAIL SYSTEMS LISTED ABOVE:</td>
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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.

DocuSign Envelope ID: 520E6FEB-8176-40A5-9793-07F389C16217
WINTER RECREATION USE PERMIT

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission is required by statute to have landowner permission for winter recreation activities funded by the Commission on public and private lands.

RCW 79A.05.225(1) Plan, construct, and maintain suitable facilities for winter recreational activities on lands administered or acquired by the commission or as authorized on lands administered by other public agencies or private landowners by agreement.


RCW 4.24.200: The purpose of RCW 4.24.200 and 4.24.210 is to encourage owners or others in lawful possession and control of land and water areas or channels to make them available to the public for recreational purposes by limiting their liability toward persons entering thereon and toward persons who may be injured or otherwise damaged by the acts or omissions of persons entering thereon.

Please sign and date below.

By my signature, I do hereby grant permission for winter recreational activities to occur on my land, that are funded by the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, from date signed below to terminate on the 30th day of April of 2023.

DNR/ Scott Sargent
Agency/Landowner 4/18/2022

Date
RCW 4.24.210

Liability of owners or others in possession of land and water areas for injuries to recreation users—Known dangerous artificial latent conditions—Other limitations

(1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (3) or (4) of this section, any public or private landowners, hydroelectric project owners, or others in lawful possession and control of any lands whether designated resource, rural, or urban, or water areas or channels and lands adjacent to such areas or channels, who allow members of the public to use them for the purposes of outdoor recreation, which term includes, but is not limited to, the cutting, gathering, and removing of firewood by private persons for their personal use without purchasing the firewood from the landowner, hunting, fishing, camping, picnicking, swimming, hiking, bicycling, skateboarding or other non-motorized wheel-based activities, aviation activities including, but not limited to, the operation of airplanes, ultra-light airplanes, hang gliders, parachutes, and paragliders, rock climbing, the riding of horses or other animals, clam digging, pleasure driving of off-road vehicles, snowmobiles, and other vehicles, boating, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, nature study, winter or water sports, viewing or enjoying historical, archaeological, scenic, or scientific sites, without charging a fee of any kind therefor, shall not be liable for unintentional injuries to such users.

(2) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (3) or (4) of this section, any public or private landowner or others in lawful possession and control of any lands whether rural or urban, or water areas or channels and lands adjacent to such areas or channels, who offer or allow such land to be used for purposes of a fish or wildlife cooperative project, or allow access to such land for cleanup of litter or other solid waste, shall not be liable for unintentional injuries to any volunteer group or to any other users.

(3) Any public or private landowner, or others in lawful possession and control of the land, may charge an administrative fee of up to twenty-five dollars for the cutting, gathering, and removing of firewood from the land.

(4)(a) Nothing in this section shall prevent the liability of a landowner or others in lawful possession and control for injuries sustained to users by reason of a known dangerous artificial latent condition for which warning signs have not been conspicuously posted.

(i) A fixed anchor used in rock climbing and put in place by someone other than a landowner is not a known dangerous artificial latent condition and a landowner under subsection (1) of this section shall not be liable for unintentional injuries resulting from the condition or use of such an anchor.

(ii) Releasing water or flows and making waterways or channels available for kayaking, canoeing, or rafting purposes pursuant to and in substantial compliance with a hydroelectric license issued by the federal energy regulatory commission, and making
adjacent lands available for purposes of allowing viewing of such activities, does not
create a known dangerous artificial latent condition and hydroelectric project owners
under subsection (1) of this section shall not be liable for unintentional injuries to the
recreational users and observers resulting from such releases and activities.
(b) Nothing in RCW 4.24.200 and this section limits or expands in any way the
doctrine of attractive nuisance.
(c) Usage by members of the public, volunteer groups, or other users is permissive
and does not support any claim of adverse possession.
(5) For purposes of this section, the following are not fees:
(a) A license or permit issued for statewide use under authority of chapter 79A.05
RCW or Title 77 RCW;
(b) A pass or permit issued under RCW 79A.80.020, 79A.80.030, or 79A.80.040;
(c) A daily charge not to exceed twenty dollars per person, per day, for access to a
publicly owned ORV sports park, as defined in RCW 46.09.310, or other public facility
accessed by a highway, street, or nonhighway road for the purposes of off-road vehicle
use; and
(d) Payments to landowners for public access from state, local, or nonprofit
organizations established under department of fish and wildlife cooperative public access
agreements if the landowner does not charge a fee to access the land subject to the
cooperative agreement.
Elbe Hills State Forest:
92 Road Sno-Park Project

DNR-Managed Lands

Project Location

Elbe Hills State Forest

Tahoma State Forest

5/3/2022
Elbe Hills State Forest: 92 Road Sno-Park Project

- **DNR-Managed Lands**
- **Access route to proposed project**
- **Non-motorized Trail**
- **Motorized Trail**

**Proposed Project Location:**
- Re-open Upper Parking Area

**Non-winter Season / Heavy Snowfall Lower Parking Area**

**Elbe Hills State Forest: 92 Road Sno-Park Project**

- **Sno-Park**
- **Ski Hut (not DNR)**
- **Camping Area**
- **Toilet**
- **Gate, closed**

Map legend includes:
- **DNR-Managed Lands**
- **Access route to proposed project**
- **Non-motorized Trail**
- **Motorized Trail**
- **Sno-Park**
- **Ski Hut (not DNR)**
- **Camping Area**
- **Toilet**
- **Gate, closed**

**Project Details:**
- **Location:** Elbe Hills ORV
- **Roads:** 92 Road, Sahara Creek Camp, 8 Road, 706
- **Access Route:**
  - **Non-motorized Trail**
  - **Motorized Trail**

**Dates:**
- **4/27/2022**

**Coordinates:**
- **T15R06E**
- **T15R07E**
- **T14R06E**
- **T14R07E**
Directional Signs to Copper Creek Hut and Future Gate Location
Old Logging Spur Road Needing Blocked by Eco Blocks
Sir/Ma’am,

The MTTA is extremely excited for the potential DNR project to re-establish the Upper 92 Road Sno-Park. We have seen a considerable increase in trail users over the past two years and believe this project will help by creating more parking, improving signage, and reducing the risk of intrusion into the trail system by unauthorized vehicles. Every person I saw on the trail system this past winter had a smile on their face and truly enjoyed the opportunity to ski or snowshoe in a safe, low cost environment. Folks of all nationalities and ages use our trails to enjoy the beauty of our forests in the winter and this project will help continue this opportunity for future trail users.

We 100% support this project and appreciate the support of Washington State Parks to help us keep the public engaged in nature.

Thank you for your time, if you have any questions, feel free to call my cell (253) 330-3177.

Sincerely,

Patrick L. Lamie
President, Mount Tahoma Trails Association
May 5, 2022

Joe Chavez
Elbe Unit Recreation Manager
South Puget Sound Region
Washington State Department of Natural Resources

Dear Joe:

Nisqually Community Forest (NCF) owns the private property adjoining the Upper 92 Road Sno-Park proposed for improvement in the Washington Department of Natural Resources’ application to the Washington State Parks Winter Recreation Program. As president of the NCF Board of Directors, I would like to express our wholehearted support for the DNR application.

We appreciate and welcome the gate repair and eco-block installation this proposal would support. Currently, non-winter, unauthorized access to our property from Elbe Hills State Forest, in particular by off-road vehicles, at the point the gate and eco-blocks would be installed poses significant security problems for us and threatens the conservation values of our property, including habitat for four species listed under the Endangered Species Act. The work supported by this proposal would go a long way toward eliminating that threat.

Also, Nisqually Community Forest hosts most of the Mount Tahoma Trails Association (MTTA) ski trail from the Sno-Park to the Copper Creek Hut, which we lease to MTTA free of charge. As a community-based nonprofit organization, we encourage public use of the trail and welcome improvements, such as those in the DNR proposal, that promote that use.

Sincerely yours,

Byran Bowden
President

The Nisqually Community Forest acquires and manages working forests in the Nisqually Watershed to provide sustainable economic, environmental, and social benefits to local communities.
May 18, 2022

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission  
1111 Israel Road SW  
Tumwater, WA 98501-6512

Re: WA DNR Upper 92 Road Sno-Park Project Future Funding Proposal

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of The Mountaineers, I am writing to express our support for Washington Department of Natural Resources’ (DNR) funding proposal to re-establish parking at the Upper 92 Road Sno-Park in the Elbe Hills State Forest.

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.” The Mountaineers Books publishing division expands the mission internationally through award-winning publications including instructional guides, adventure narratives, and conservation photography.

More than 1,200 Mountaineers volunteers lead 3,200 outdoor education trips and courses annually for our more than 15,000 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.

Winter recreation has always been an important aspect of our programming, and the Mount Tahoma ski huts and trails located within Elbe State Forest provide important ski, snowshoe, and other winter recreation access for Mountaineers courses and activities. The area is used by four of our seven branches (Seattle, Tacoma, Olympia, and Foothills), and for both youth and adult programs. In the last three winter seasons alone, we’ve led 13 cross-country skiing and snowshoeing trips in the Mount Tahoma Trails Association area.

The success of our trips depends on reliable parking and access from 92 Road Sno-Park. The existing 30 parking spaces fill up quickly during weekends, as day-use visitors and overnight hut reservation guests compete for the limited number of spaces. The Mountaineers encourages Washington State Parks to fund this project to help meet the needs of current and future winter recreation enthusiasts by improving access to Elbe Hills State Forest.
Thank you for considering this important proposal.

Sincerely,

Betsy Robblee
Conservation & Advocacy Director

The Mountaineers
betsyr@mountaineers.org
(206) 521-6012