

# Outdoor Access and Responsible Recreation (OARR) Plan

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*Summer 2023*

# Today's Presentation

Recreation on DNR-managed lands

Factors influencing DNR's need for a statewide plan:

- Impacts of increased recreation
- Challenges and opportunities
- Regulatory framework govern including tribal access, multiple use act and environmental laws
- Funding for DNR's recreation program

Outdoor Access and Responsible Recreation (OARR) Planning Process and Feedback

# Recreation on Lands Managed by DNR

DNR manages

**5.6 million acres**

of state-owned upland and aquatic lands to sustainably achieve multiple values.

**3 million** acres of uplands (including forest, agriculture, grazing, and urban lands).

More than **2.6 million** acres of state-owned aquatic lands (SOAL).

The Natural Area Preserve (NAP) system includes more than **41,000 acres in 58 sites.**

The Natural Resource Conservation Areas (NRCAs) protect native ecosystems, habitat, and scenic landscapes. Nearly **126,000 acres are conserved in 39 sites.**

# DNR Recreation Opportunities

Camping

Geocaching

Rock climbing

Backpacking

Kayaking

Foraging

Boating

Rockhounding

Nature viewing

Target shooting

Horseback riding

Motorized vehicle riding

Snowshoeing

Hunting

Hang gliding

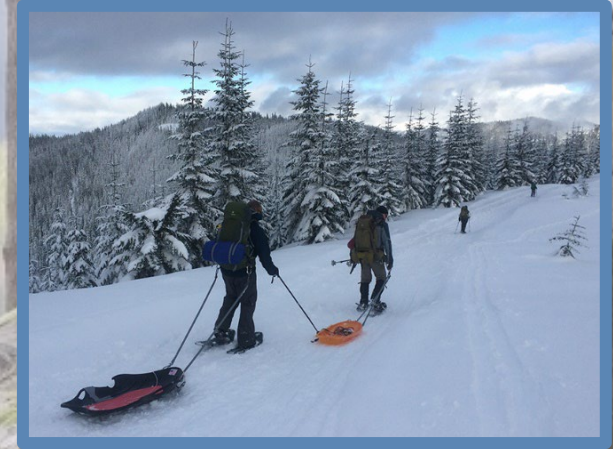
Paddleboarding

Hiking

Fishing

Paragliding

Mountain biking



# Nationwide Trends in Recreation

**53%**

of Americans participated in outdoor recreation at least once in 2020.

An additional **7.1 million people** in 2020 versus 2019.

**1/4**

of new recreationists said they did not want to continue their new activities.



Nearly

**3/4**

of recreation participants were white.

Over the last 3 years, participation rates have **declined 7%** among Asian Americans

and **remained stagnant** for Black participants.

Source: [2021 Outdoor Participation Trends Report by the Outdoor Industry Alliance.](#)

# Visitor Days to State Rec Lands, 2019-2020

Agency	Visitor Days 2019	Visitor Days 2020	Change
Department of Fish and Wildlife	27,230,000	29,069,000	7%
Department of Natural Resources	16,572,000	20,080,000	21%
State Parks	34,239,000	37,991,000	11%
All State-Managed Lands	78,041,000	87,139,000	12%

# Tribal Rights and Interests

- The US Federal and Washington State Governments recognize tribes as sovereign nations, having specific rights.
- Outdoor recreation impacts on ecosystems in areas covered by historic treaties can limit tribes' ability to exercise their sovereign and inherent rights through the harming or destruction of natural and cultural resources<sup>1</sup>.
- As outdoor recreation participation increases, so can the potential to further impact Tribal rights<sup>2</sup>

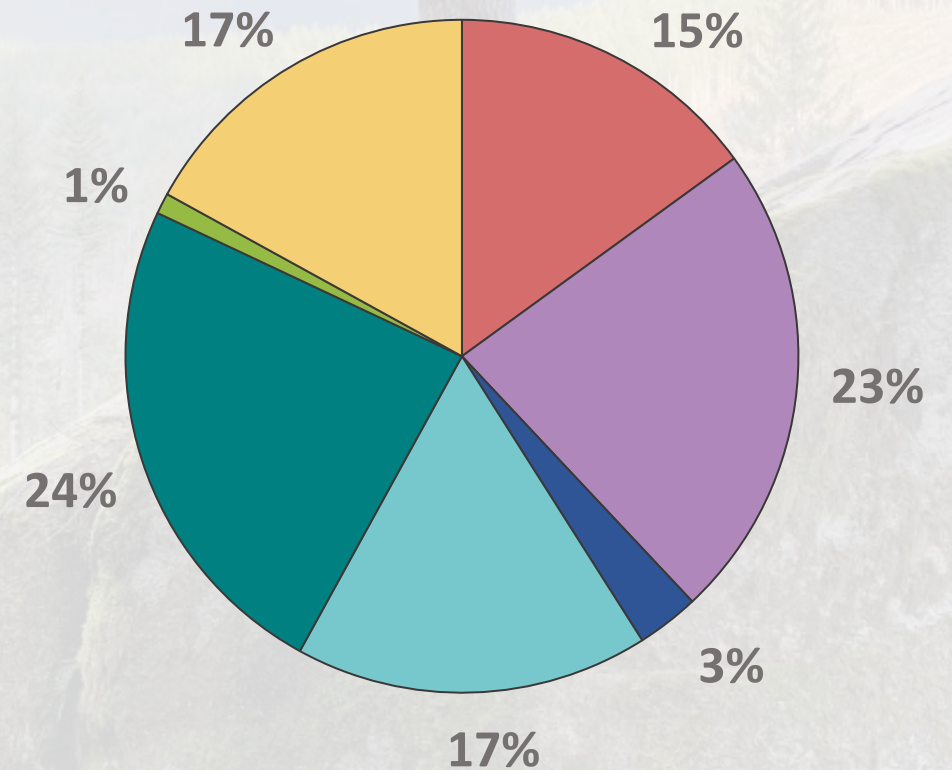
<sup>1</sup> The “Recreation Boom” on Public Lands in Western Washington: Impacts to Wildlife and Implications for Treaty Tribes: A Summary of Current Literature (2021).

# DNR Recreation Funding by Source and Amount

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES	21-23 Biennium*
ORV and Non-Highway Vehicle (Gas tax refund)	\$ 4,884,000
Grants (All Recreation and Conservation Office Programs)	\$ 4,800,000
Discover Pass (PLTRA)	\$ 3,542,000
General Fund-State Maintenance	\$ 3,500,000
State Capital Appropriation	\$ 3,100,000
NOVA (Direct DNR Appropriation)**	\$ 629,000
RMCA, FDA, and Ag-Trust (Trust Lands Management Accounts combined)	\$ 253,000

**TOTAL ALLOCATION: \$20,708,000**  
**TOTAL ESTIMATED NEED: \$32,000,000**

Source: 2021-2023 Step Table, Initial Allotment. One-time money not included (i.e. e-bike proviso)



\*After agency indirect charges, as applicable

\*\*Not anticipated to continue past FY 2022



# DNR Recreation Planning Hierarchy

## Strategic

### Statewide Outdoor Access and Recreation Plan

*DNR has no strategic plan for recreation*

## Landscape

### Landscape Recreation Plans

Outline recreation needs for a landscape with strategies of how to achieve its vision.  
*Ex. Baker to Bellingham Recreation Plan*

*DNR has 10 landscape plans*

## Operational

### Facility and Infrastructure Planning

Planning for, designing, and implementing recreation opportunities to meet specific needs of users in a given area within the context of the Regional Recreation Plan.  
*Ex. Olsen Creek Trail System*

*~100 projects per biennium*

# OARR Draft Goals

To develop a shared vision for recreation and public access on DNR-managed lands, that provides diverse and high quality recreational opportunities that foster engagement from all communities, promote a strong sense of environmental stewardship and enriches the quality of life in Washington.

A key part of this work will be to articulate what responsible and sustainable use of DNR-managed lands for generations looks like, in order to ensure that all outdoor users are taught and practice preservation and responsible use.

# Phase 1: DNR Small Group

## (Completed)

In 2021, DNR convened a small group with membership drawn from users representing different types of WA outdoor recreation, land owners, and the recreation industry.

They developed five key topics areas for the plan to focus on:

- Preserve and Protect Natural and Cultural Resources
- Increase Equitable Outdoor Access and Recreation, Education and Engagement
- Manage Effectively and Fund Sustainably
- Mitigate Climate Impacts and Build Resilience
- Experience the Joy of the Outdoors

This work provided a critical foundation on which to begin Phase 2.

Assemble Team  
Draft OARR Materials  
Draft Scope of Work

Obtain Tribal Input  
GOIA Tribal Training  
for DNR Staff  
Hire Consultant  
Update Small Group

OARR Launch

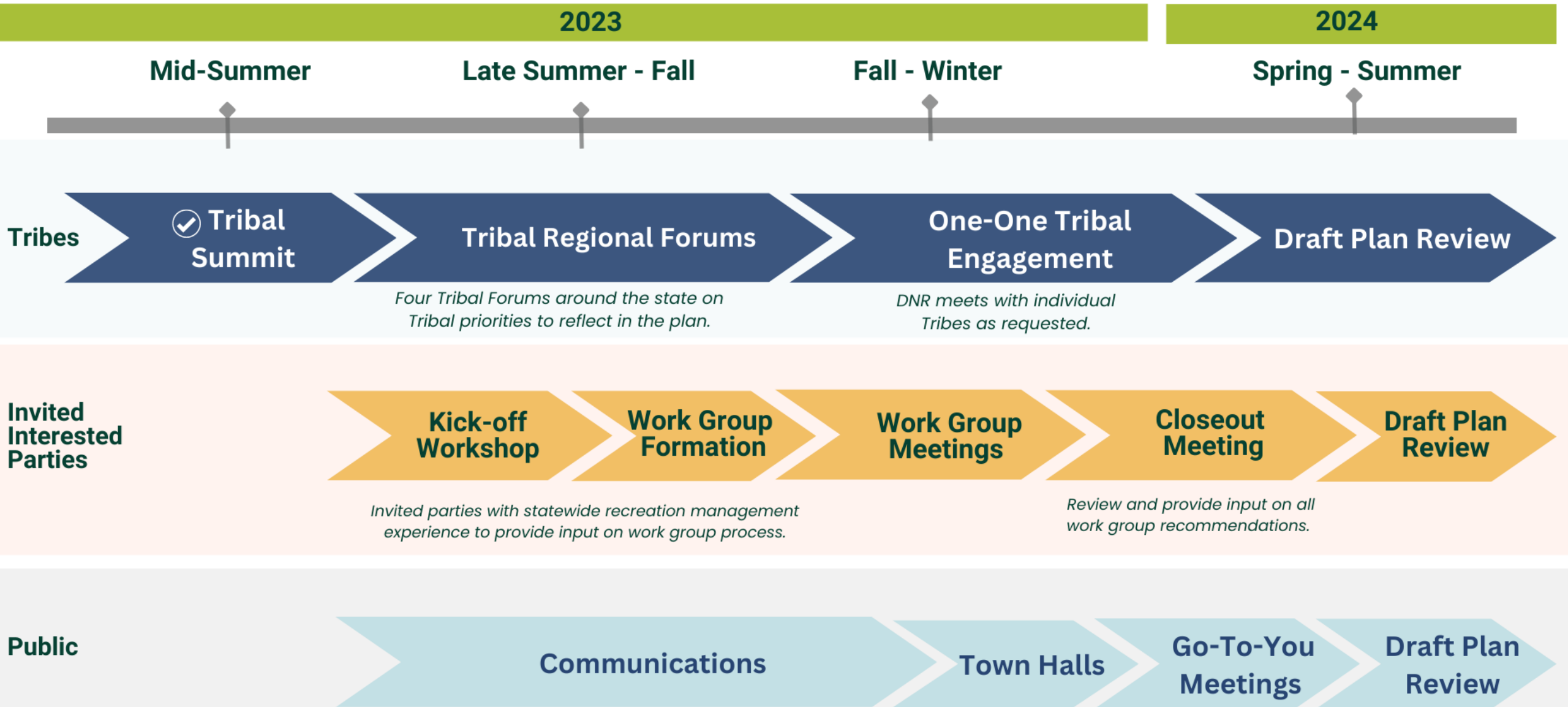
Tribal Training &  
Hire Consultant

Engagement



# DNR OARR Plan Engagement Timeline - DRAFT

Draft Document  
Subject to Change  
(v.7-12-23)



# Phase 3: OARR Plan Drafting and Public Review (Upcoming)

In Phase 3, DNR will write and publish the OARR Plan

This phase will consist of:

- Writing a Draft OARR Plan
- Sharing that Draft OARR Plan with the Tribes for review and approval
- Soliciting public feedback on the Draft OARR Plan
- Updating the plan to incorporate Tribal and public feedback

Publishing the Final OARR Plan

# Draft Goals of the Outdoor Access and Recreation Plan

- Preserve and Protect the Natural Environment and Cultural Resources
- Build an Outdoor Stewardship and Responsibility Ethic
- Increase Equitable Outdoor Access and Responsible Recreation Development, Stewardship, and Management
- Secure Financial Stability for Recreation Development, Stewardship, and Management
- Mitigate Climate Impacts and Build Resilience

*Draft - subject to change*



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
**NATURAL RESOURCES**

# Next Steps

Tribal regional  
forums



Workgroup  
formation



Public town  
halls



# Opportunities to Offer Input

- Check out our Website
  - Coming soon!
- Email Us
  - [OARRPlan@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:OARRPlan@dnr.wa.gov)
- Questions

The image is a composite. On the left, there is a vertical wooden plank with a natural wood grain. The rest of the image shows a forest landscape. In the foreground, a large, rounded rock is covered in vibrant green moss. Behind it, a dense forest of tall, thin evergreen trees stretches into the distance. The sky is overcast with grey clouds. The overall scene is a natural, somewhat somber forest environment.

**Questions?**