

Developing a Vision for Outdoor Access and Responsible Recreation on DNR-Managed Lands

Presentation to Board of Natural Resources

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June 6, 2023



Agenda Overview

 **Recreation Program Goal**

 **Why does DNR have a recreation program?**

 **Trust Lands**

 **Aquatics**

 **NAP/NRCA**

 **Tribal Access**

 **How does it work?**

 **What are the benefits?**

 **Next Steps**



DNR's Goal for Recreation and Outdoor Access

To implement a recreation and outdoor access program on DNR-managed lands that provides diverse and high-quality recreational opportunities on DNR landscapes that foster community engagement, promote a strong sense of environmental stewardship, and enrich the quality of life in Washington.

Map of DNR-Managed Lands



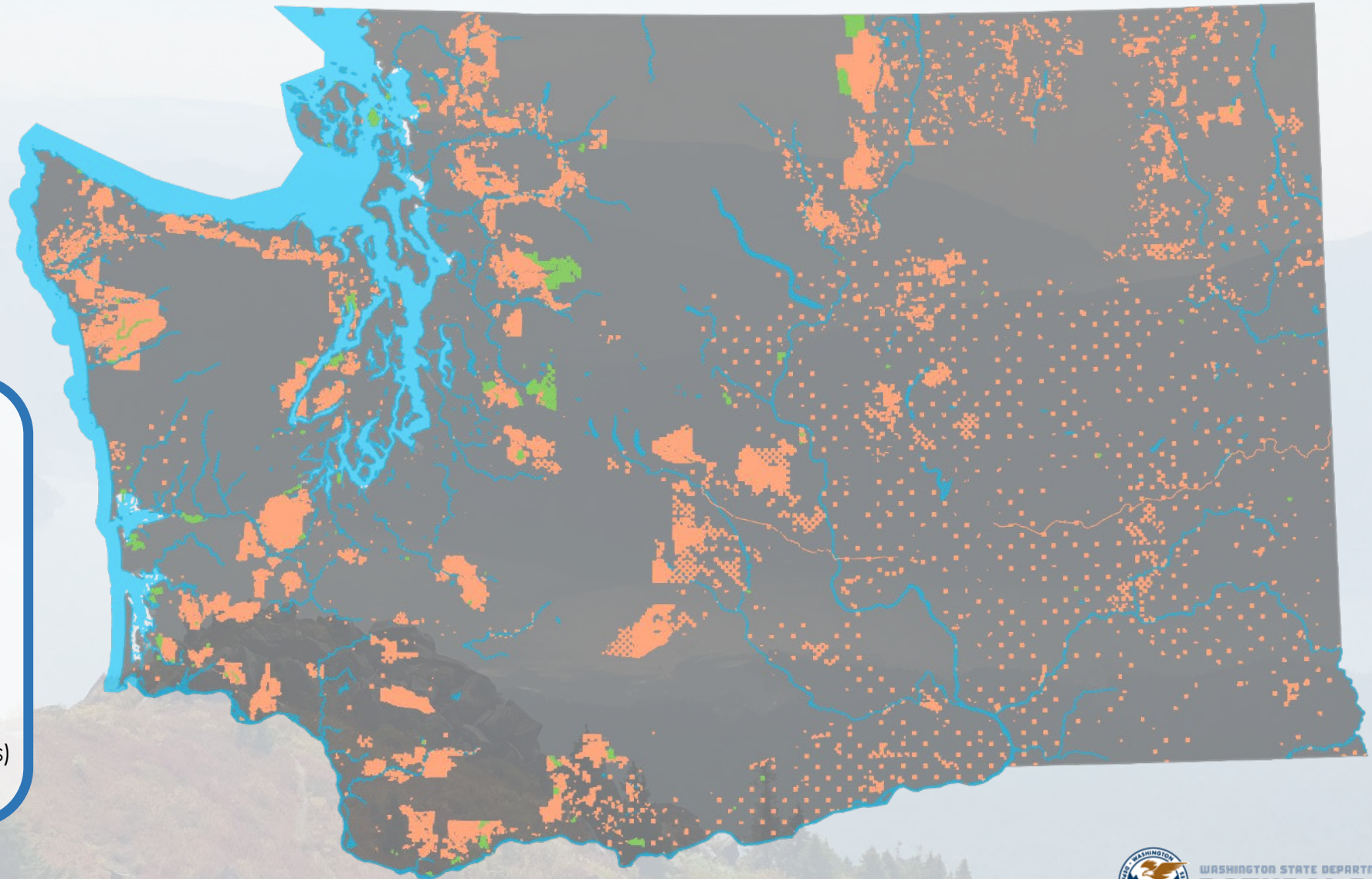
Assumed
State-Owned
Aquatic Lands



Trusts



Natural Areas
(NAPs & NRCAs)





Why does DNR have a recreation program?





Why does DNR have a recreation program on trust lands?

As manager of state trust lands, DNR has legal fiduciary responsibilities to:

- Generate revenue and other benefits for each trust, in perpetuity
- Preserve the corpus of the trust
- Exercise reasonable care and skill
- Act prudently to reduce the risk of loss for the trusts
- Maintain undivided loyalty to beneficiaries
- Act impartially with respect to current and future beneficiaries



Multiple Use Concept

RCW 79.10.100-120

Recreation areas

Vehicular trails

Fishing

Sports

Trails
development

Trails
maintenance

Pollinator habitat

Non-consumptive
wildlife activities

Non-vehicular
trails

Educational
studies

Scenic areas

Historical sites

Scientific studies

Experimental
programs

Public watersheds

Greenbelts

Special events

Hunting

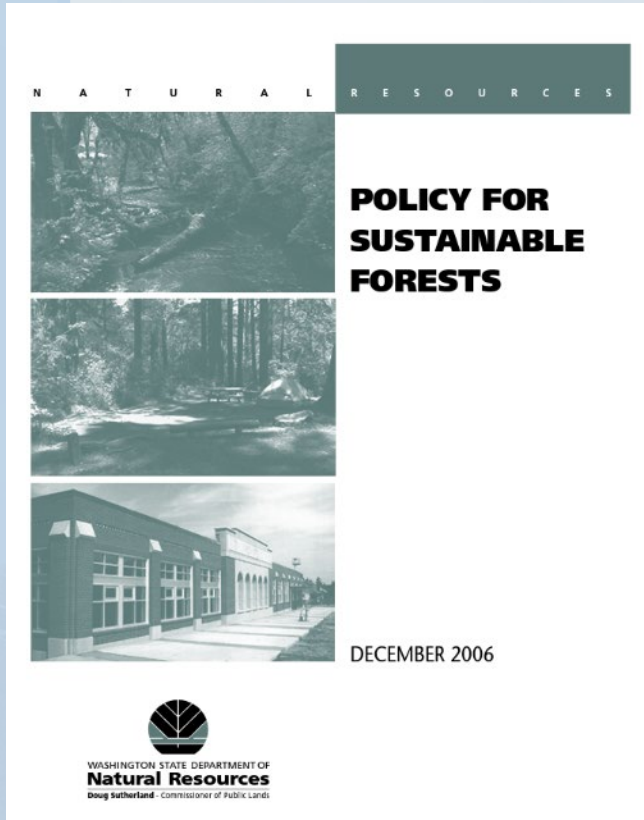
Public rights-of-
way

Other uses by
public agencies

“Multiple uses compatible with financial obligations of trust management”



BNR Policy on Public Access and Recreation

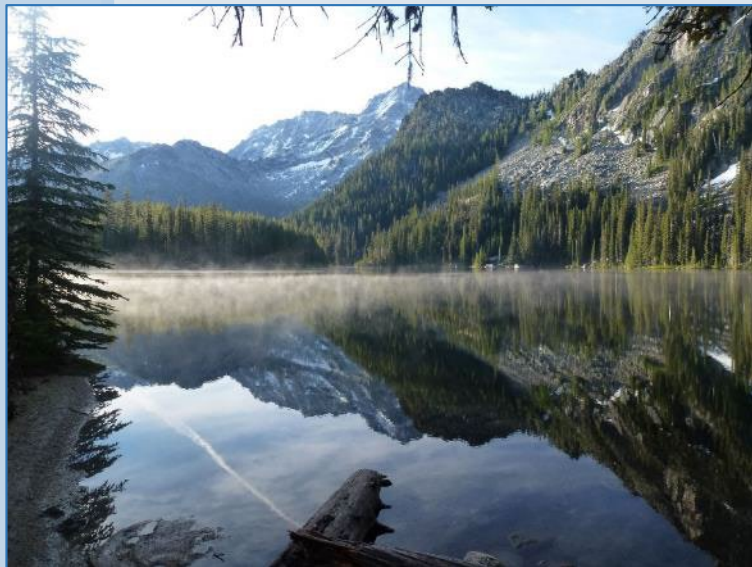


“...the department will protect trust interests and seek to balance economic, ecological, and social concerns by evaluating....cost and benefit to the trusts.”

“...the department will only expend management funds for closing, limiting or redirecting public access in order to meet trust objectives or protect trust assets by controlling the impacts of incompatible dispersed public access and illegal activities.”



Why does DNR have recreation on aquatic lands?





Aquatic Lands – Management Guidelines

RCW 79.105.030

- State-owned aquatic lands include: tidelands, shorelands, harbor areas, and the beds of navigable waters (e.g., rivers, lakes, and streams)
- DNR shall “Strive to provide a balance of *public benefits* for all citizens of the state.”
- Public benefits include “encouraging direct public use and access....”



Natural Areas Preserve Act RCW 79.70



“The department is authorized to.... [limit] public access to natural area preserves....where appropriate, and on a case-by-case basis, a buffer zone with an increased low-level of public access may be created around the environmentally sensitive areas.” (RCW 79.70.030)



Natural Resource Conservation Areas Act RCW 79.71

Lands identified as having high priority for conservation, natural systems, wildlife, and low-impact public use value” (RCW 79.71.020)



Howell's Daisy



Public Access and Recreation WACs

Chapter 332-52 WAC

Last Update: 2/11/09

PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION

WAC Sections |

332-52-001	Introduction.	332-52-200	Reservations.
332-52-002	Purpose.	332-52-205	Recreation permits.
332-52-010	Definitions.	332-52-300	Campground and campsite use and occupancy.
332-52-100	Managing recreation and public use.	332-52-305	Water recreation facilities.
332-52-105	Capacity.	332-52-310	Day-use areas and facilities.
332-52-110	Destruction of property.	332-52-400	Managing road and trail use.
332-52-115	Removal of plants, soils, rocks, and other valuable materials.	332-52-405	Construction and maintenance of trails and structures.
332-52-120	Sanitation.	332-52-410	Traffic rules.
332-52-125	Posting.	332-52-415	Parking.
332-52-130	Peace and quiet.	332-52-420	Snowmobiles.
332-52-135	Campfires.	332-52-500	Specific rules for Milwaukee Road Corridor only.
332-52-140	Pets, service animals, and livestock.	332-52-600	Notice of rules.
332-52-145	Firearms and target shooting.	332-52-605	Compliance with signs.
332-52-150	Fireworks.		
332-52-155	Anchorage.		





Tribal Rights and Interests

- Tribes are sovereign nations, having specific rights.
- Tribal leaders have expressed concerns* over:
 - The impact of outdoor recreation on the condition of state-managed land, specifically how it may be undermining the integrity of ecosystems that are important to tribal communities.
 - Projected increases in outdoor recreation participation
 - The importance of continued collaboration



Why does DNR have a Recreation Program? Enthusiastic public

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%



How does DNR's Recreation Program work?





Diverse uses: what does it look like?



DNR Offers over 200
Recreation Facilities:

- 80 campgrounds
- > 1,300 miles of multi-use trails
 - > 500 miles for motorized use

www.dnr.wa.gov/go



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES



Specialized Programs: how do they work?

Disabled Hunters Program

Policy for Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices

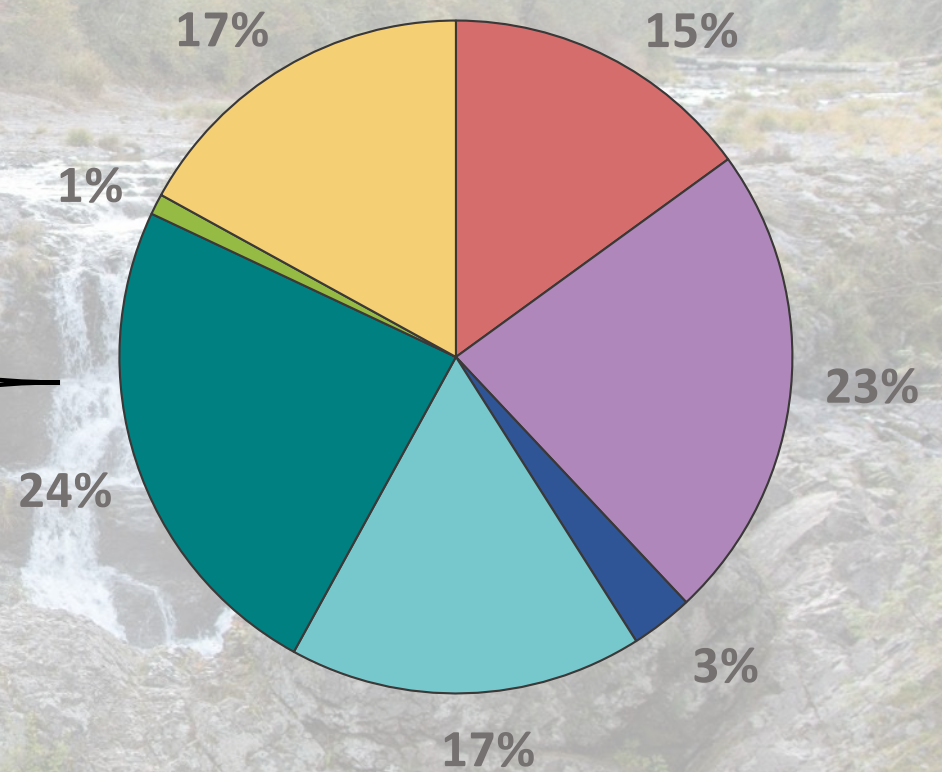




DNR Recreation Funding: how does it work?

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



*After agency indirect charges, as applicable

**Will not continue past 21-23 biennium





Work Force: how does it work?

DNR Recreation
Staff

Volunteers

Contractors

Conservation/
Youth Corps

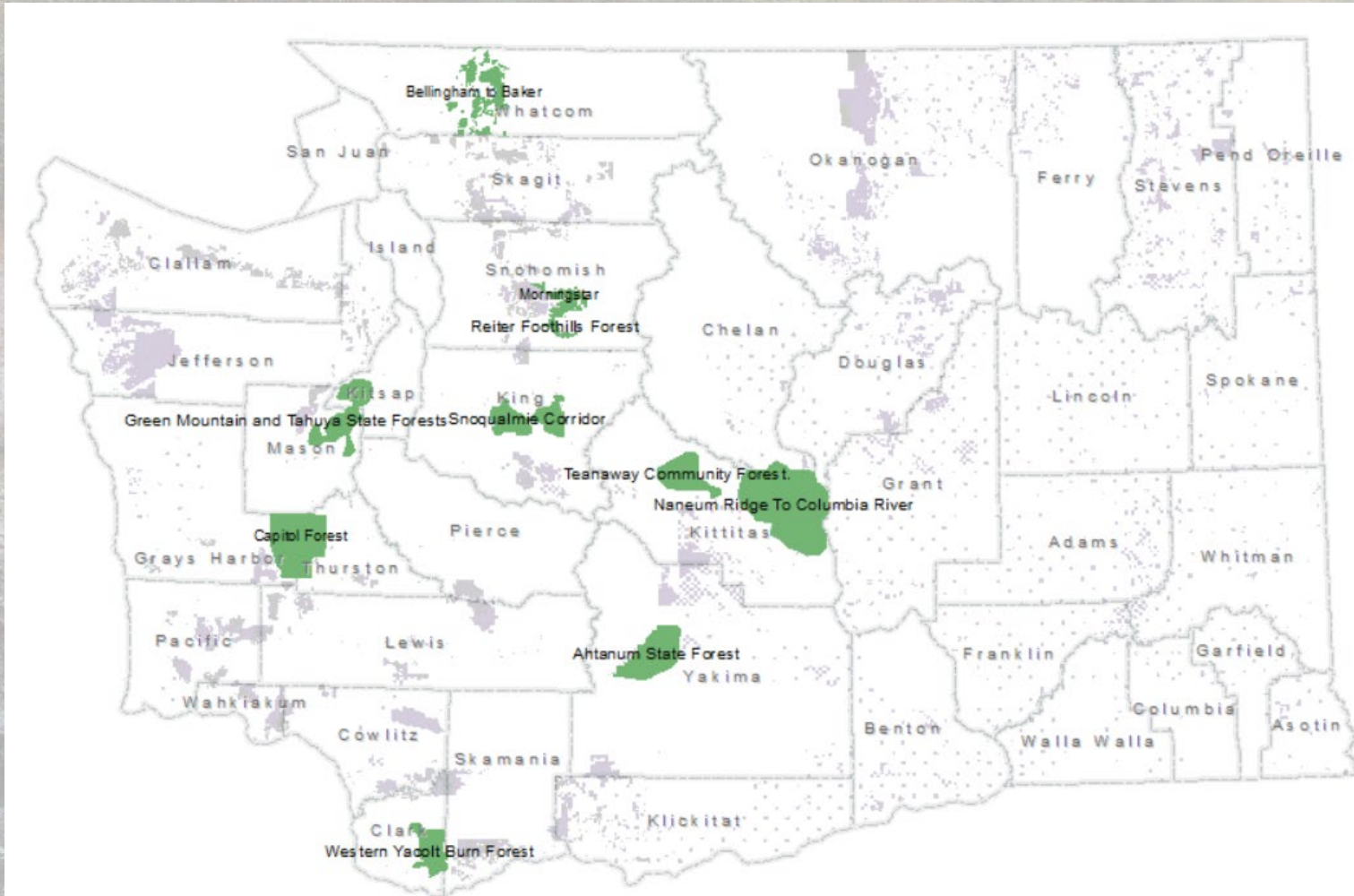
Extensive
network of
partners





Planning: how does it work?

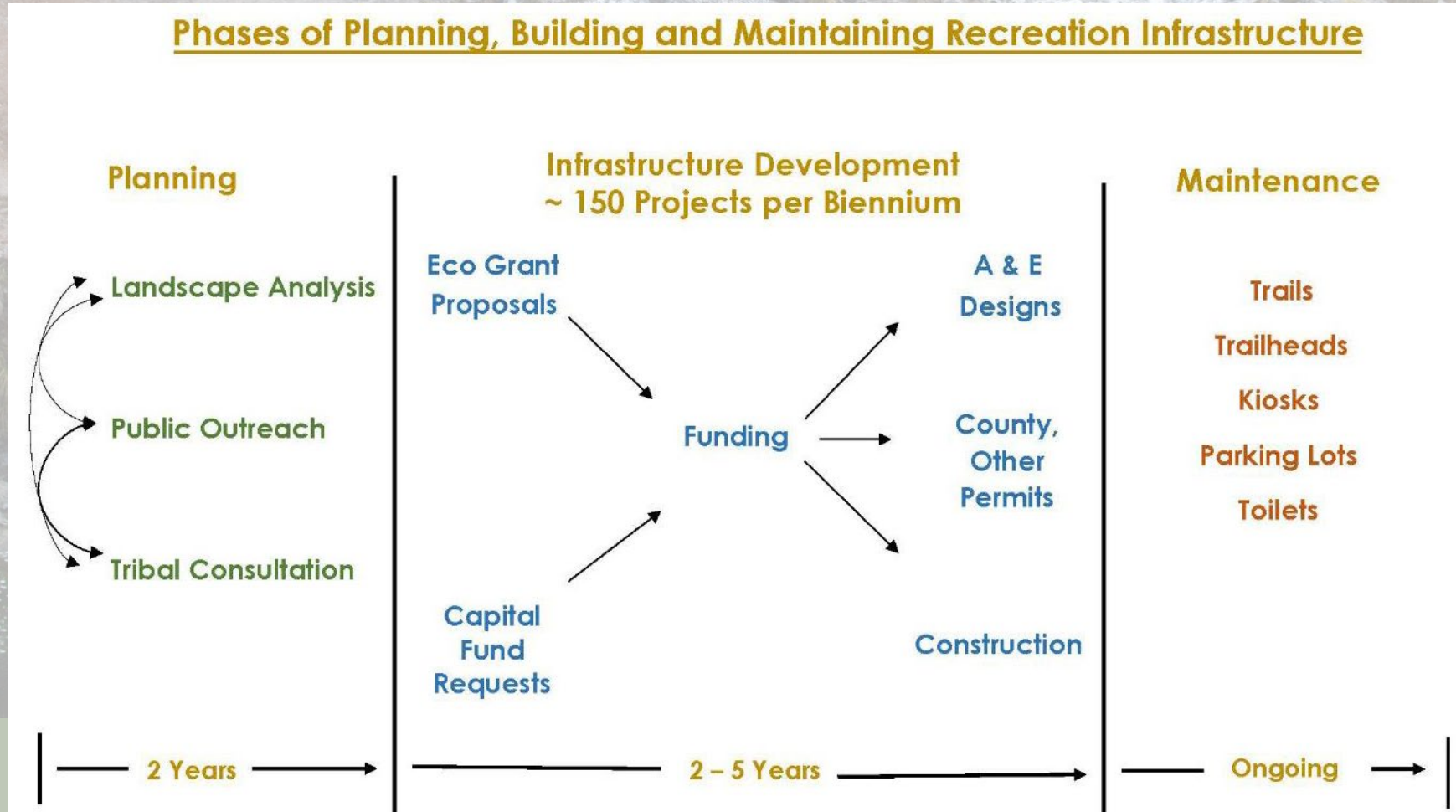
DNR Recreation Landscape Plans





Funding and Implementation: how does it work?

Phases of Planning, Building and Maintaining Recreation Infrastructure





Olsen Creek Bridge





Trust compensation for Rec Sites: how does it work?

When recreation sites are built on trust land, the department uses leases or restrictive covenants to ensure the trust is compensated for the land.



Delineate recreation site
State Land Survey Office



Site preparation
Direct timber sale



Recreation program lease
Bare land value



What are the benefits?



Manages Recreation Impacts



Unmanaged



Managed

vs.



Economic Contribution of Outdoor Recreation

Washington State:

- Exceeded ~\$26.5 billion in direct spending
- Supported 264,000 jobs.

DNR-Managed Lands:

- ?

Mojica, J., Fletcher, A. *Economic Analysis of Outdoor Recreation in Washington State, 2020 Update*. Earth Economics. Tacoma, WA, 2020.



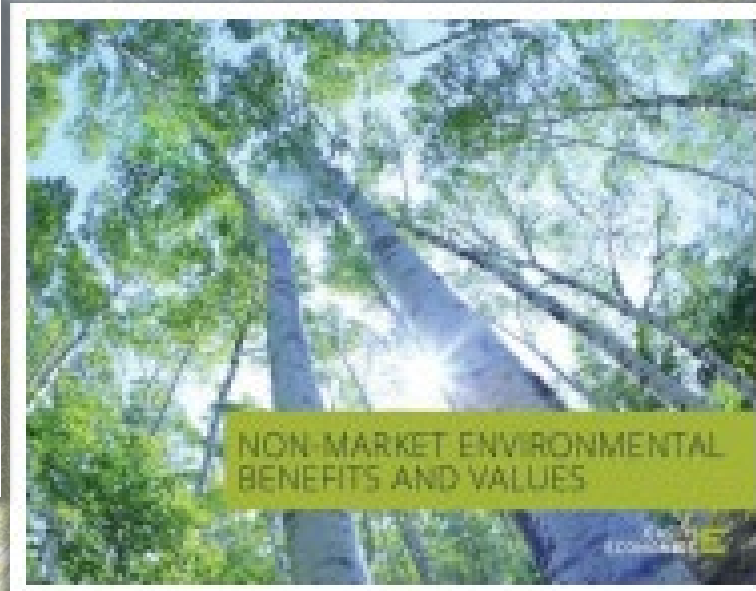
Non-Market Benefits of State Lands in Providing Outdoor Recreation

Trust Lands Performance Assessment Project
Charting a Course for the Future

Legislative Report | January, 2021



Office of the Commissioner of Public Lands, Hilary Franz
Deputy Supervisor for State Uplands, Angus Brodie



State trust lands provide ~\$990 million annually in non-market outdoor recreation benefits.

Cousins, K., Mojica, J., Madsen, T., Armistead, C., Fletcher, A. Trust Land Performance Assessment: Non-Market Environmental Benefits and Values Earth Economics. Tacoma, WA, 2020.





Other Benefits:

1. Presence on landscape
2. Tax dollars spent educating users on working forests
3. Law enforcement

MANAGING WORKING FORESTS FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

MIDGE TIMBER SALE | ACTIVE SUMMER/FALL 2022



Funds support Skagit County, the Burlington-Edison School District and statewide public services.



This timber sale helped facilitate a new access road to the Overlook that is safer and more sustainable.



Produces locally-sourced wood products and helps support nearly 2,000 living wage jobs in Whatcom and Skagit counties.*



Keeps forests development free.



Pioneered some of the nation's highest environmental standards for sustainable forestry.



Planting and forest stewardship ensure ecologically sound and economically productive forests for future generations.



NATURAL RESOURCES


DNR manages this working forest in partnership with the Blandford Forest Advisory Committee, which approved this timber sale. This committee is made up of a diverse group of stakeholders from the recreational and environmental communities and the local timber industry working collaboratively to provide input to the agency on the best practices for managing Blandford State Forest as a working forest.



DID YOU KNOW? Led by the Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz, DNR manages the state's working forests to not only provide access for recreation, but also require statewide public services, protect against development, support clean air and water and provide habitat for plants and wildlife.

Your Trust Lands at Work


THIS TIMBER HARVEST SALE PROVIDES ONGOING SUPPORT TO YOUR COMMUNITY




Funds county services.



Replants forestland with a mix of an average of 400 native trees per acre.



Retains some mature trees within the harvested area and along the trail corridor.

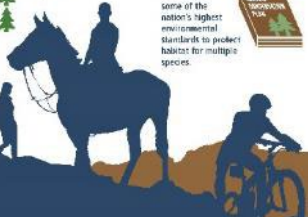


Adheres to some of the nation's highest environmental standards to protect habitats for multiple species.



JANEWAY TIMBER SALE HARVEST AREAS

Map showing harvest areas, stake land, and trails. Includes a legend and scale.



Provides funds for road maintenance, supporting outdoor recreation access.

Compromised, triangle pit, trailheads, and trails may close for safety reasons from 10/01/20 until 5/01/21.





Next Steps: Legislative

Additional law enforcement officers and sergeant
(\$2.8 Million – GFS)

DNR's new Outdoor Access and Responsible Recreation
(OARR) Plan (\$200K)

Interagency – Tribal coordination (\$687K)

Safe and Sustainable Recreation (\$2.9 Million)

Conservation Corps (\$3.0 Million)



Next Steps: Grant Funding 23-25

Grant Type and Amount*				
Grant Program		Development	Maintenance	Education and Enforcement
	Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities (NOVA)	\$485,000	\$2,040,000	\$703,000
	Recreational Trails Program (RTP)		\$41,000	
	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) State Lands Development	\$1,267,000	N/A	N/A

* These amounts are estimates and will be decided by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board at their June 2023 meeting.





Next Steps: Calendar for Upcoming Meetings

June 6 BNR Meeting – Recreation Program Overview



June 12, 13 Tribal Summit



July 5, BNR Meeting – Challenges in Recreation
and OARR Kickoff



August 22, 23 BNR Retreat – NW Region

