

PEAR Team Meeting 25 – Meeting Notes – August 13, 2025, 12-2 pm

Facilitators Present:

Janette Chien, she/her, Parks DEI Director
Chris Gourley, Environmental Program Manager
Hannah Ross, Headquarters Environmental Planner
Kira Swanson, Headquarters Environmental Planner 4

PEAR Team Present:

Reco Bembry, he/him, President Big Tent Coalition
Suzanne Kagen, she/her, Program Specialist 2
Jeff Vassallo, he/him, Tahoma Gateway Area Manager, NW Region
Clare Delong Tuminez, she/her, Parks Communications Director
Natasha James, she/her, Business Support Services Deputy Director
Angela Smith, she/her, Recreation Professional and Community Builder
Denice Rochelle, she/her, The Bronze Chapter
Cha Cha Sawyer, she/her, Community Member
Stacey Coltrain, Ranger 1 Sequim Bay
Michael Mataya, he/him, Administrative Assistant

Observers Present

Phillip Nontell, IT Business Analyst
Heather Carington, she/her, Central Lakes Area Administrative Assistant

Agenda

Janette welcomed the team at 12:09, and she reviewed our community norms and the agenda.

Agenda:

- Check in
- EIR Topic: What is SEPA? Informing the public and collecting input about SEPA determinations.
 - Presentation from Chris and Hannah
 - Breakout rooms
 - Regroup and recap
- General Updates
- Closing

Check Ins until 12:25

Michael is going to record the presentation portion and stop the recording for the discussion.

Janette introducing our presenters from the Environmental Program

Let's meet Chris Gourley and Hannah Ross

(Introduction– reference PowerPoint)

EIR Topic

What is SEPA? Informing the public and collecting input about SEPA determinations.

- The Environmental program and planners
 - This program is small and relatively new in its current form.
 - 9 planners altogether, staff are divided by regions and between our Operations & Capital teams.
 - Team is responsible for regulatory compliance within the vast state, local, and federal laws for environmental protection
- Evolution of the program
 - This year the program moved from Parks Development division to our Stewardship division.
 - Part of the reorganization was to help streamline internal policies & procedures. Since this is a recent change, the team is open to ideas and suggestions for engagement.
- What do we do?
 - The program interacts with: Capital projects, FEMA projects, special activity permits, deferred maintenance, and many others.
 - Review agency projects, plans, proposals for regulatory compliance as well as suggesting design alternatives and mitigation strategies to lessen environmental impacts.
 - Some exempt project assessments are brief & some of these reviews can go on for years.
 - 1000+ reviews each year
- Parks 'Notice' example – Determination of Non-significance
 - What stand out to you?
 - There is legal verbiage and can be worrying or confusing to users/visitors
 - Has anyone seen one of these at state parks? Do you understand what's being asked?
 - Has anyone seen one of these at state parks?
 - Yes and as a parks staff, one concern was that the terminology could be misinterpreted as the area/project being labeled as 'not significant'.
 - Would you understand how to reach out with questions/concerns based on this example?

- There is a URL link at the bottom, but in poster form that wouldn't be very helpful at the Park. (Possibly a QR code instead?)
 - The contact info is for the planner at HQ, but visitors will almost always contact parks staff or the ranger station directly
 - There isn't anything to suggest comments or feedback can have an effect other than a stated deadline for comments. The impression is that the decision has already been made.
- What is SEPA?
 - Washington State Environmental Policy Act and is a codified legal process for reviewing the environmental aspect of a proposal.
 - The term 'environmental' is very broad in this context, it's not just water/land/air but also includes housing, utilities, recreation, and existing materials.
 - Agency "Responsible Official" go through a long checklist to assess what the potential impact
 - "Responsible Official" is a title given to someone once they reach certain criteria set forth by our agency. It means we can speak on behalf of the agency on the determination of a project through SEPA reviews.
 - All SEPA reviews must issue a 'determination', which simply indicates whether something has an adverse impact on the environment. These are:
 - Categorically exempt
 - Determination of non-significance
 - Determination of mitigated non-significance
 - Determination of significance
 - This means that there is an adverse impact on the environment that cannot be mitigated, and is when an EIS (environmental impact statement) is triggered
 - Chris likes to think of an analogy of a cylinder around every project, from deep below ground up into the atmosphere, to encompass all the ecological systems being affected.
 - There are non-project SEPA, such as agenda items for commission meetings and CAMP - Classification and Management Plan
 - CAMP is how we develop "master plans" for classifying lands for certain use and a plan for how the park will develop.
 - This process can be complicated, their team are often consulting with ecology staff, trying to figure out how best to interpret the law.
- Parks and SEPA
 - An important part of this process is that it's often the only chance that the public has to weigh in with concerns or feedback on Parks projects.

- The planning team fills out a form (checklist) with numerous and specific questions about the project in question.
- Trail project example: as project plans are developed the team gets designs at certain phases (often 30%, 60%, and 90% completed). SEPA is always evaluated at 60% completion of the project, where there won't be many changes to the project after that point.
- Once a determination is given, it is distributed to various stakeholders. But Parks also has a public facing SEPA site that lists all the determinations on Parks projects.
- Vision and Goals
 - For the agency to meet its mission of serving all Washingtonians, the environmental team will keep working on what their SEPA distributions look like & who they are reaching.
 - The other crucial aspect is gauging if/how these are being understood and the ability for all to submit feedback to reviewers.
- Challenges
 - Often the people who are reached are those who already have the time, resources, and knowledge to research these projects and weigh in for their interests.
 - The loudest people in the room are not always the most impacted by these decisions. It's often 'friends' groups or other coordinated interests.
 - The planning team doesn't often hear from marginalized communities and people who aren't already a part of the decision making process.
- Opportunities for PEAR team
 - How do we create a more diverse and equitable comment period? What other feedback strategies would allow for this?
 - Idea of adding SEPA language to individual parks pages to highlight what projects are occurring there and if they would like to comment.
 - Idea of adding SEPA projects to newsletters and other external communications from the agency.
 - The Environmental team isn't tied to any current strategy and is very open to new approaches; with being a newer program this is a good time to adjust procedures like this.
- Questions / Contacting the Environmental Team
 - Regarding these specific topics or questions moving forward, feel free to reach out to staff:
 - Headquarters EPs
 - Chris.Gourley@parks.wa.gov – Program Manager
 - Kira.swanson@parks.wa.gov
 - Hannah.ross@parks.wa.gov

- Region based EPs
 - Devin.sola@parks.wa.gov – NW Ops
 - John.clark@parks.wa.gov – NW Capital
 - Clare.Wirzbicki@parks.wa.gov – SW Capital
 - Chelsea.hamer@parks.wa.gov – SW Ops
 - Maryellen.haggard@parks.wa.gov – EA Ops
 - Chelsea.harris@parks.wa.gov – EA Capital
- Takeaways
 - Chris - There are existing practices that are worth examining. For example, we've questioned whether our distribution lists are reaching the right people, do we need postcards/mailers or can we put those resources elsewhere? On notices, would a QR code be more effective than just stating URLs?
 - Janete - On the legal notices, is it possible to change the layout & types of information displayed? Is there an ability to add photos, maps, project drawings?
 - Chris: There are some legal restrictions on what can be included in the notices, but also we need to be strategic about the amount of content/info listed. This part also happens before the project begins, so there are certain limitations there for what information is useful.
 - Angela - do you track the kinds of people who are weighing in or reaching out regarding a certain project? Also does the SEPA team have relationships with tribes or other indigenous communities?
 - Chris: All the comments are posted with the SEPA project site in a batch, but the exact groups or people are not tracked beyond that.
 - Hannah: for the times available where community members can discuss these determinations, the kinds of people who reach out are overwhelmingly older or retired people who have the time to do so. The SEPA team does have direct relationships with Tribal representatives, external natural resources staff, and other parks staff who help coordinate with tribal communities involved in these projects.
- Questions for Environmental Team
 - Janette – I like the idea that 'environmental' also encompasses the human infrastructure (onsite Parks staff housing/transportation), how does that play into review?
 - If a private developer is building condos, their input and questions will vary greatly from public input and that context is an important part of the assessment.

- Example: DFW is demolishing existing/older housing as part of a larger project, this happens when land is being acquired by a public agency.
- This leads into short term vs long term impacts, there can often be short term negative impacts but will lead to long term positive impacts on those lands/environments.
- Angela - when the public reaches out to the Environmental Planning team, is it always email or what are the other avenues?
 - Chris: email is by far the most common form but written and others are acceptable. We often extend comment periods if people reach out to say they won't make the deadline period, that's used to help with equity
- Angela - does the review checklist / questionnaire get periodic changes or is updated to reflect equity considerations?
 - Since SEPA checklist requirements/instructions are set by legal language (RCW & WAC), amending legislation would be needed to change the wording or types of information requested as part of the review.
- Janette - when it comes to commenting, I have difficulty with an open ended 'comment' vs asking more specific questions for 'how would building this affect your environment?' something along those lines.
 - Chris: SEPA laws only require agencies take comments into consideration with their evaluation, but they aren't required to. Most of the time these projects are meant for public access, so we want to be careful not to ask leading questions. That might be better for open forum community discussion, but not always the best approach during the SEPA stages

Questions/posts in the Chat:

- Reco - For improving the EP's distribution lists: Advance Notification System adding BIPOC leaders and organizational groups, create information sessions online like this, to be replayed for community or affinity groups
 - thebronzechapter.org/
 - [Outdoor Equity Coalition > Home](#)
 - [King County Play Equity Coalition](#)
 - [NAARVA, Inc.](#)
 - [Outdoor Asian | Home | API Community: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion](#)
- Kira - This information is so helpful Reco! I feel like it would be very helpful to get your thoughts on how this information can be incorporated into the SEPA

process. For example, at Saltwater State Park (Des Moines) does sending postcards make sense when most folks live in apartments or are there better ways to reach the communities there?

- Reco - info that could be helpful for determining SEPA distributions
 - [Racial Demographics - RSJI | seattle.gov](#)
 - [Census Tracts WA 1980-2020 - Civil Rights & Labor History Consortium](#)
 - DEI Analyzer Tool: [DEI Analyzer – Bembry Consulting](#)
 - [HomeSnacks - Presenting Presentable Data About Where You Live](#)
- Angela - [racialequitytoolkit_final_august2012.pdf](#)
- Reco - Great place to do tabling about SEPA: [Refuge Outdoor Festival returns to King County](#)
- Janette - I was thinking of posters at nearby bus stops - and a way where local public transit authorities can help
- What would you think of allowing Special Activity Permit approval at the local level for the company picnics that happen day in and out at a park so that you don't have to review things over and over...? I'm sure you've seen the same "Company Picnic with amplified music and inflatable bouncy house at "X" shelter" multiple times!!!
 - Hannah: We have standard language and conditions that we apply to lots of these kinds of SAPs that occur all the time. We do need to keep these as they often need the lens of a subject matter expert, and the Environmental Program are not the only folks reviewing these.

Stopped slideshow presentation & recording at 1:02 pm

Group Break at 1:21 and

Returned at 1:30

Questions to review as a group:

- **How do we reach all of Washington in our SEPA public comment process?**
- **What are some creative ways we could engage the public?**

Breakout Rooms

Group 1

Group 1
Names: Cha Cha, Jeff, Reco Bembry, Kira Swanson
<p>How do we reach all of Washington in our SEPA public comment process?</p> <p>What are some creative ways we could engage the public?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Groups, Social Media - Instagram, Facebook, X, Tic Tok - attach legal notice • Why was the decision made to not utilize social media? • “This is the best mode of communication to use new user groups for sure! • Engage Broader BIPOC populations and First Nations • Sent to Representatives and Senators Aides to distribute State Wide! • Make signage reader friendly (Bilingual) multiple languages for posters • Less is best • Inserting an announcement in an organization's newsletter, a org that has an affiliation/activities with parks and outdoors. This message can get to their participants • Update BIPOC listing with accurate emails and contact information i.e. CHA CHA, King County Play Equity Coalition, Outdoor Equity Coalition <p>Other thoughts? Ideas? Reflections?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media • State Representatives – asking them for email lists for certain topics/areas/stakeholder

Group 2

Group 2
Names: Phil Nontell, Stacey Coltrain, Chris Gourley, Heather Carrington
<p>How do we reach all of Washington in our SEPA public comment process?</p> <p>What are some creative ways we could engage the public?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we identify what we don't know?

- Have we explored the idea of piggybacking off other data like surveys?
- Is there a recurring open forum by region or geographic area that could house the public comments?
- Unless they are personally affected, you aren't going to get potentially useful feedback.

Other thoughts? Ideas? Reflections?

- How to ID what you don't know
- Piggybacking off surveys or
- Unless people aren't directly affected a person

Group 3

Group 3

Names: Janette, Clare, Angela, Hannah, Michael, Denice, Suzanne

How do we reach all of Washington in our SEPA public comment process?

What are some creative ways we could engage the public?

- Social media posts.
- QR code on the SEPA posters that are posted in parks.
- Update language regarding projects etc. to make it more plain talked and understandable.
- Consider placement of signs - is near the project better, or place people are more likely to gather, e.g. near the restrooms or kiosk.
- Plain talk first - then translated to different languages (QR code could go to sites with translated content)
- Connect with diverse groups connected to parks - starting a listserv to add them to the list when public input is needed. Ensure better representation from across communities. If they have newsletters, partner with them to provide content to reach their constituents. (Can be hard to find the specific person to send them to - need to build relationships within the organizations.)

Other thoughts? Ideas? Reflections?

- Angela – civic engagement training for environmental planners
- There is room for changing how notices are translated into plain talk
- Is there room for changing language “non-significance” etc.? (Not on that, but yes on other language)

- How do we evaluate when to act on comments or not? Challenging for staff taking these comments but feeling like nothing is done with the comments.
- How often do we (Parks staff) go through training, or review policies, regarding civic engagement? (Now this is a consolidated team, we hope it can be more of a unified approach and make changes in procedures and policies)
- SEPA processes vary between the land management agencies - even within organizations it can differ. We're working to change that within Parks and through better coordination with DNR/DFW.

General Updates

- Everyone Outdoors application close
 - Impact report has been compiled between Parks, DNR, and WDFW
- Burn ban posters translated into top 6 languages spoken in WA
- Youth leadership Program wrapped up
 - Youth participants had some extremely creative proposals

Closing

- Closed out at 2:03



PEAR Team Meeting 24

August 13, 2025

What is SEPA? Public input
& SEPA Determinations



Community Norms	Practices
GOAL ORIENTED & STRUCTURED MEETINGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitators provide agenda, meeting notes, and organization • Time checks – limit tangents to keep us on track • PEAR Team meetings recorded during presentation portions
THOUGHTFUL PARTICIPATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center PEAR goals to empower discussions • Raise your virtual hand • Balance speaking and active listening • Open-minded observations and feedback, lean into curiosity, ask questions before assuming, seek to understand • Use accessible language (explain acronyms, terms, etc.) • Practice compassion, patience, and understanding • Trust the process; be open to feedback • Trust that we are stronger together than alone
RECOGNIZE EACH PERSON HAS UNIQUE EXPERIENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak your truth • Appreciate everyone’s differences and commonalities • Awareness of diversity within BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) community • Awareness of privilege (white, able-bodied, education, etc.) • Notice and re-consider blanket statements
SUPPORT PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judgment-free zone • Recognize this is an intergenerational space • Consider the role(s) of silence and its impact in our space • Take care of yourself • Acknowledge intent, assess impact • Honor confidentiality for the group’s contributions



Why PEAR Team & Equity Impact Review (EIR) is essential:

- PEAR team supports our agency to make more equitable decisions
- Public serving agency: Collaboration between community and staff is vital to achieve our equity goals
- Elevates community voice in our processes to build equity into our systems and the way we do business



Agenda

- Check in
- **EIR Topic:** What is SEPA? Informing the public and collecting input about SEPA determinations
- General updates
- Closing



Let's check in!

- **Name**
- **Pronouns**
 - (she/ her, they/them, he/him, etc.)
- **Visual Description** (highlights)
 - Race and/ or skin color
 - Hair (cut or style)
 - What you are wearing (glasses, jewelry, color of your shirt)
- **Role(s)** if you like
- **Check in question**



"Remember to imagine
and craft the worlds you
cannot live without, just as
you dismantle the ones
you cannot live within."



Name, pronouns
Role (if you like)
Visual Description

Name one thing you imagine
for the future.



Welcome Hannah and Chris!



Chris Gourley, Environmental Program Manager



Hannah Ross, Headquarters Environmental Planner





The Environmental Program

Who is the Environmental Program?



Meet the Environmental Planners



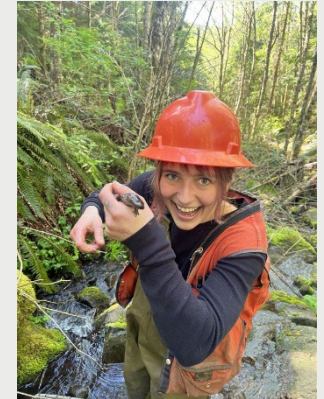
John Clark, NW Capital



Devin Sola, NW Ops



Chelsea Hamer, SW Ops



Clare Wirzbicki, SW Capital



Maryellen Haggard, EA Ops



Chelsea Harris, EA Capital



Kira Swanson, HQ



Evolution of the Program

Stewardship supports the agency's mission of caring "for Washington's most treasured lands, waters, and historic places." Stewardship staff provides technical support for managing natural and cultural resources, addressing climate change, complying with environmental regulations, and managing agency mapping data.

- The Environmental Program supports State Parks in ensuring compliance with internal policies as well as local, state, and federal regulations.



What Do We Do?

1000+ Reviews





NOTICE

Determination of Nonsignificance

PARK NAME: Pleasant Harbor State Park

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION:

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission (Parks) proposes to repair and maintain the marine access structure at Pleasant Harbor State Park. The repairs and maintenance consist of two components. The first being replacement of eight existing creosote-treated cross braces (four sets) with galvanized steel cross-braces and installation of three epoxy grout-filled fiberglass pile jackets. The second being the repair and replacement of the existing failing pier abutment. This includes installation of a new abutment shoreward of the existing abutment and above high tide line (HTL) using a drilled concrete shafts and cast-in-place concrete abutment approach.

More information is available on State Parks website at:
www.parks.wa.gov/SEPA

Determination Date: 07-16-25 **Comment Deadline:** 07-30-25

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission Staff has determined that the above proposal does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment or has been mitigated to eliminate such impact. An environmental impact statement is not required. Any person wishing to comment on this determination of nonsignificance (DNS) should submit written comments to:

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
P.O. Box 42650
Olympia, WA, 98504
ATTENTION: Chelsea Hamer
Phone: 360-790-8512 / Email: sepa@parks.wa.gov



What is SEPA?

- State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) provides a mechanism for reviewing the environmental aspects of proposals.
 - Provides a mechanism for public input
 - SEPA was modeled after National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and first adopted in 1971
 - The State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21C) is implemented through the Department of Ecology Rules (WAC 197-11)



Parks and SEPA

- Why do we do SEPA
 - Often, it's the only chance for the public and agencies to look at our projects and provide feedback
- How does Parks do SEPA
 - A determination can be given once a full picture of the project is understood
 - Emails and postcards are sent to anywhere from 50-500 people for notifications
- SEPA Website: www.parks.wa.gov/SEPA



Vision and Goals

- Ensuring a range of people are receiving notifications
 - We want to ensure that all Washingtonians, if interested, can provide feedback.
 - We want the information to be succinct and digestible.
 - We want the information to be available and easily found.
- Transparency as an agency
 - Our projects are for all Washingtonians, so we need to be transparent about what the projects are and how they may affect the environment.



Challenges

- Who are we reaching
 - People who have the resources and already know where to look
- How we reach people
 - Emails
 - Postcards
 - Posters
 - SEPA website
 - SEPA Register (Department of Ecology's Website)



Opportunities for PEAR team

- How do we reach all of Washington?
- Creative ways to engage the public?
 - We have some legal requirements



Questions and Comments?



Twanoh State Park



Contacting Us

Headquarters EPs

- Chris.Gourley@parks.wa.gov – Program Manager
- Kira.swanson@parks.wa.gov
- Hannah.ross@parks.wa.gov

Region based EPs

- Devin.sola@parks.wa.gov – NW Ops
- John.clark@parks.wa.gov – NW Capital
- Clare.Wirzbicki@parks.wa.gov – SW Capital
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- Maryellen.haggard@parks.wa.gov – EA Ops
- Chelsea.harris@parks.wa.gov – EA Capital



Prompts for Discussion

- How do we reach all of Washington in our SEPA public comment process?
- What are some creative ways we could engage the public?



Discuss in Breakout Rooms!



Updates – Everyone Outdoors

- Everyone Outdoors applications closed
 - 10,189 passes requested from 278 organizations
 - **1,250 passes awarded to 104 organizations**
- Of the 104 organizations awarded passes:
 - *95% served BIPOC communities*
 - *77% served individuals with disabilities*
 - *73% served youth under 18*
 - *33% served LGBTQ+ communities*
- 3 agencies creating an Impact Report to advocate for continuing pilot + funding



Updates – Highlights

- Burn ban posters translated to top 6 languages spoken in WA
- Youth Leadership Program presented independent projects (see following slides)

Peligro de incendio:
EXTREMO



No se permiten llamas abiertas de ningún tipo.
No fumar.
Se permiten estufas internas para vehículos recreativos.
Consulte los cierres de senderos/áreas.
Call (360) 902-8844 for more information.

P&R 45-30101-07 (8/5/25) Fire Danger: Extreme (Spanish Translation)



How Could this be a Reality in State Parks?



Justin Fisher

WASHINGTON STATE PARKS
YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM



Collaboration
Meet monthly with other high schoolers virtually and discuss state park functions, positions, and other areas of interest. Work together to share feedback and ideas on how to attract more teens to state parks.



Equity and Inclusion
The Youth Leadership Program works to promote equity and inclusion in all ideas and programs. Consider whether working to make state parks more accessible and inclusive is an interest for you.




Connection
Get connected with state park workers who can provide you with insight into your future career choice. State park positions expand far outside of just park rangers so all career interests are welcome.



Turn Ideas Into Action
At the end of the year, use all you have learned to create a project that showcases your understanding or vision for the future of state parks.



CREATED BY
LEILA DE FOLO



GRADE: 12
HIGH SCHOOL: HENRY M. JACKSON
CAREER GOAL: ATTORNEY
YEARS ON YLP: 2


HOW I HEARD ABOUT YLP
My High School sent out a newsletter about community volunteer opportunities and the Youth Leadership Program was among the groups listed.

SKILLS I GAINED AND HOW THEY HAVE HELPED ME
In my first year of YLP, I worked with a team on creating new recreation ideas to attract more teens to state parks. This experience has been something I point back to in job interviews as it deepened my teamwork and research skills. This experience has helped me receive jobs such as being a leader in my college's student government.

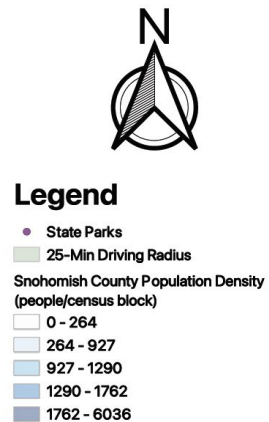
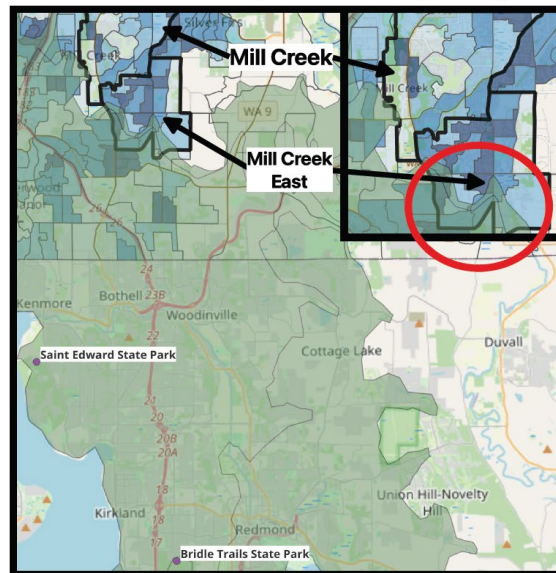
FAVORITE YLP EXPERIENCE THIS YEAR
I really enjoyed the opportunity to meet the State Park's Communications Manager, Sarah Fronk. Learning about her marketing strategies and social media work stood out to me because those are skills that I find valuable to develop in our current world.

MY ADVICE FOR FUTURE YLP MEMBERS
Get involved in conversations and put your best effort into all your projects, as you do not always know who is going to see them. Don't use this program as just another activity for college applications but try to use what you learn to better yourself as a leader.

FUTURE PLANS AS A YLP ALUM
This Fall I will be entering the University of Washington - Seattle as a Junior to pursue a Bachelor's Degree in Law, Societies, and Justice.



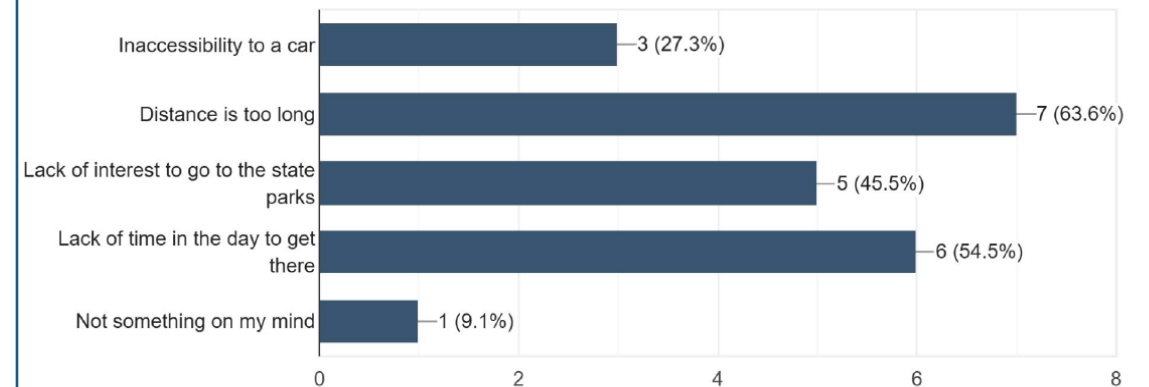
25-Minute Driving Access from State Parks (Mill Creek, WA)



Sources:
 - Washington State Parks GIS Data, 2025.
 - U.S. Census Bureau, TIGER/Line Shapefiles (2020).
 - U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Block Data.
 - OpenStreetMap contributors (© OpenStreetMap, ODbL).
 Map created with QGIS (Version 3.x), 2025.
 Prepared by Chaiten Parikh.

What prevents you from going more often?

11 responses



Chaiten Parikh

Empowering Youth Stewards – Miles Remmel

This program has provided an outlet for me to speak my mind to an agency doing real work that impacts my community. Being able to provide my own input—and knowing my voice will be heard—is a powerful experience, and one that I am deeply grateful to have been afforded. Giving youth agency over the changes happening in their communities is important because today's younger generations will be the ones living with and maintaining the state parks for years to come. Such is the beauty of the Youth Leadership Program; it empowers today's youth to take a part in building the future.

(Continued on next slide)



Empowering Youth Stewards – Miles Remmel

Today's youth are tomorrow's voters, educators, and world leaders, and the Youth Leadership Program builds confidence, opens connections to careers in government and conservation, and nurtures a passion for stewardship in today's youth. To me, being taught how to make a difference by using my voice has been truly transformative. A citizenry that has the opportunity to engage with the agency behind much of their public lands is a citizenry that will provide opportunities for Washington's state parks to flourish. Because youth are the future, including us in the conversations about parks management is important. Empowering those who will one day make the decisions about public lands management by letting them develop their voice now through direct conversations and action.



Closing

