WE’LL GO FAR outside
What if someone told you there was one area we could invest in that would:

- create jobs and build businesses
- bring families closer together
- cut health care costs
- help our kids learn more in school
- improve our quality of life
- protect our environment

OUTDOOR RECREATION

Invest now for Washington’s future
INVESTMENT in plain sight

Our state’s natural beauty is diverse, invigorating, inspiring, and a powerful economic driver. Time spent outside clears the mind and exercises the heart. Outdoor adventures build friendships and families. Communities prosper with businesses that supply gear and guides, motel rooms, restaurants, rental cars, and other travel services.

Washington has built an infrastructure of parks, trails, playgrounds, boat launches, and roads to support outdoor recreation. As budgets get tighter, this investment looks even smarter—for all the benefits it brings us.

Everything we stand to gain from outdoor recreation is also everything we stand to lose if we do not demonstrate leadership and a commitment to healthier people, stronger communities, and a thriving economy.
CREATING JOBS & BUILDING BUSINESSES across the state

“Our quality of life and our economy are both tightly linked to having healthy recreational opportunities. Growing businesses locate where they can attract and retain the most talented and capable employees.”

— MARK ELIASSEN, TREASURER, ALASKA AIRLINES
Washington businesses are designing and developing cutting edge and high performance gear for serious athletes, vacationers, and day trippers.

Washington’s outdoors also draws wholly unrelated businesses and industries—because their employees want to live here. That brings new tax dollars and a growing constituency for conservation of our natural heritage.

$21.6 billion
IN CONSUMER SPENDING

$2 billion
IN STATE AND LOCAL TAX REVENUE

EXPOSURE TO NATURE CAN REDUCE STRESS IN CHILDREN BY AS MUCH AS 28%  

Source: The National Environmental Health Foundation, 2012
We connect with nature every time we walk a beach, ride a bike, or bait a hook. We want to make it easier for families to enjoy the outdoors by unlocking recreation potential and removing barriers to access in our public lands.

Outdoor play raises exposure to Vitamin D and helps combat obesity. Doctors are prescribing outdoor activity for children suffering from attention deficit disorder and adults fighting dementia.

“The mountains saved my life. After three tours in Iraq, I was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). When my buddies and I first saw Mount Rainier, our immediate impulse was to go climb it. What began as a test of our own strength soon served as a transformative event, better than any pill or therapy I had received.”

— JOSHUA BRANDON, LEAD ORGANIZER, SIERRA CLUB MILITARY OUTDOORS, TACOMA
EDUCATING TOMORROW'S leaders today
The natural world is a natural teacher. A great outdoor experience requires planning, teamwork, and a respect for natural processes older and more complex than many of us can fully comprehend.

Kids exposed to the challenge and wonder of the natural world, as well as the joy of playing in it, grow up more likely to value it and want to protect it—for everyone’s benefit. We want our kids to be knowledgeable about how the world works and why that matters.
Urban trails provide healthy, active transportation and serve Millennials, seniors, and everyone in between who want to reach work, shopping, and services without worrying about traffic or contributing to pollution.

Walkable, bikeable options increase retail sales and real estate values. With one set of investments we can enhance today’s recreation and tomorrow’s transportation.

City, county, and state parks offer a pick-up game of basketball at lunch or a swim before work. A walk to the end of a city block can open up to a vista. An office window can frame a mountain view.

65% OF PEOPLE SHOPPING FOR A HOUSE FELT PARKS WOULD SERIOUSLY INFLUENCE THEM TO MOVE TO A COMMUNITY.

Source: National Association of Home Builders, 2002
Governor Jay Inslee called together leaders in outdoor recreation to develop an action plan and recommendations to manage, transform, and leverage Washington’s outdoor recreation assets and state programs.

For more information on the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation, go to www.rco.wa.gov.