

## Public Access to Public lands

**WHEREAS** the commons in the United States have shrunk considerably; much like the commons in England as a result of the Enclosure Acts;

**WHEREAS** many people cannot afford the fees for access to public land they already own;

**WHEREAS** Washington residents are the “owners” of the wildlife and water that DNR and the National Forests deny access;

**WHEREAS** the Declaration of Independence, US Constitution and Washington State Constitution proclaim that “all men are created equal” and that the purpose of the government is, among other things established to promote the general welfare;

**WHEREAS** Article I Section I of the Washington State Constitution proclaims the powers of the state are derived from the consent of the governed and established to protect individual rights;

**WHEREAS** public access to public lands is a right to promote physical and mental health and welfare;

**WHEREAS** it is the duty of the state to raise revenue to support its obligations and it is incumbent upon the state to seek support from all the various peoples, groups, agents and corporate entities; and

**WHEREAS** the fees imposed upon the public to access the lands they already own deny equal access to all;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats call for government agencies such as the DNR, National and State forests, and other public lands eliminate fees for public access to lands already owned by the people, and that funds for upkeep, repair and so forth be provided from the State General Fund.

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Submitted by the Cowlitz County Democrats.

The Platform Committee recommended that this resolution be passed at their June 15, 2018 meeting.

The 2018 Washington State Democratic Convention passed this resolution on June 16, 2018.