

MOUNTAINS TO SOUND GREENWAY

SPRING 2014

CONNECTIONS

Linking People to the Forests, Trails, Wildlife, History and Communities from Seattle to Central Washington



Recent Conservation Successes
Middle Fork Recreation
National Heritage Area Moves Forward



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear friends,

This year marks the tenth year I have been honored to serve as the Board President of the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust. In this time, I have witnessed dramatic changes to the Greenway landscape, wonderful demonstrations of collaboration and cooperation, and huge growth in the public's recognition and support of the Greenway.

Looking back over the years, there have been countless successes that have made the Greenway what it is today: a connected landscape of scenic farms and forests, clean rivers, and regional trails on the doorstep of our thriving cities and towns. Together we conserved Rattlesnake Mountain, created a new city park for Snoqualmie, and built a trail up the scenic ledges and through its cooling forests. We worked with our partners to clean up the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River Valley, transforming it from a lawless valley into a wilderness reclaimed. These successes were made possible because of the hard work and dedication of hundreds of individuals who are members of the Greenway coalition. Each coalition member signed on to a vision; we signed on to a concept of the Greenway, an idea that began with our founder Jim Ellis, who had the foresight to know what this region could hold, if we each were willing to step forward and make it a reality.

Some of my proudest accomplishments have been sharing the Greenway with my friends and family. When my daughter Ellie volunteered for the Greenway in 2011, she wrote an article for the newsletter about learning to love hiking, and I knew that in some small meaningful way I had accomplished exactly what I set out to do – to help the next generation in my family and other families find their passion for the outdoors and inspire them to protect it. We each have stories like this, which collectively add up to a movement of people in this region who hold an ethic of conservation and recreation and are moved to inspire others.

“Some of my proudest accomplishments have been sharing the Greenway with my friends and family”

It was this movement, this force of nature that helped secure one of the biggest successes I have seen in my time with the Greenway: the acquisition of the Teanaway Community Forest in 2013. Over 50,000 acres near Cle Elum came into public ownership and marked the biggest land transaction in the Greenway, and the biggest land transaction in

Washington State in over 40 years! You all helped make this possible, and I am so proud the Greenway played a part in it.

When I am asked, what is one thing you will leave to this special place over the next 20 years? I respond: It starts with a small step – preferably outside. Get out in the Greenway.

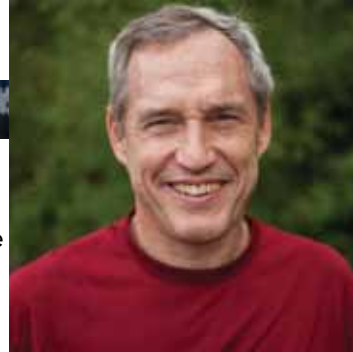
“It starts with a small step – preferably outside. Get out in the Greenway”

Get outside, and bring a friend! It really is that simple. This is how we are going to conserve the Greenway over the next 20 years. We have so many special places in the Greenway for people to enjoy, and now we need to recruit people to get out into the woods and mountains to use all of the lands the public now owns. This will require another movement, and greater recognition of the Greenway as a special place in our state and in our nation.

This is why we are seeking National Heritage Area status for the Greenway. This designation will bring greater visibility to the Greenway and will help cities and counties, agencies and organizations, and citizens work together more efficiently to keep this a special place.

“The Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area will be a source of very real pride for the people of this region”

In 2020, the population of Puget Sound will be double what it was when the concept of a Greenway was conceived. And this green corridor of forests, and the city parks and trails linking people to the mountains will still be a marvel. The Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area will be a source of very real pride for the people of this region, a magnet for high-tech recruiters and a tourism economy, and a refuge from the clamor of the cities. I have yet to meet someone walking a forest trail or cycling a new trail who regrets the conservation work that made it possible.



Bill Chapman
Bill Chapman, Greenway Trust Board President

Changes to the Middle Fork Are Coming

By Amy Brockhaus, Greenway Coalition Director

Middle Fork Road to be closed summers 2014, 2015, 2016

Major improvements to 10 miles of the Middle Fork Road will take place over the next three summers. This \$20 million upgrade will be managed by the Federal Highway Administration, a project that is nearly two decades in the making. The construction contract was recently awarded to Active Construction of Tacoma.

Surprising to some, a paved surface will greatly enhance water quality in the valley. Rain storms will no longer flush gravel and sediment from the road into wetlands and creeks. Summer dust clouds will no longer coat vegetation and campers. New drainage structures will open cutthroat trout migration routes that have been blocked for decades. And the notorious Middle Fork Road potholes will no longer deter visitors.

A Vision for the Middle Fork

The Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River Basin is located just 45 minutes from downtown Seattle and holds huge potential as a major recreation destination with its rugged mountain peaks, expansive forests, a wild river, and prime wildlife habitat.

“Now is the time to invest in the valley so we can all enjoy the natural wonders of the Middle Fork”

Once plagued by illegal dumping, target shooting, and drug use, the Middle Fork Valley has been transformed over the past 20 years through public land acquisitions, cleanup, and recreation planning. The Greenway Trust, State Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Forest Service and other partners have been working together to plan ahead for increased recreation while protecting the spectacular natural areas the Middle Fork has to offer.



“A paved Middle Fork Road will attract many more people to the valley,” says Mark Boyar, President of the Middle Fork Outdoor Recreation Coalition and Greenway board member. “To prepare, we need to invest in trails, trailheads and river access sites – some new, some improving what’s already there. Popular trails need major repairs, Middle Fork parking areas are already overflowing, and there are far too few bathrooms! So we are raising money to get the work done.”

To build new recreation facilities and make improvements to handle the increased use, agencies and nonprofit groups are teaming up to raise funds for the Middle Fork. We need your help! Your donation will help two recreation projects move forward this year, and allow work to continue on recreation planning for the future of the Middle Fork.

To make your gift to the Middle Fork, visit mtsgreenway.org/bettermiddlefork

Ways to EXPLORE the GREENWAY

As Bill recommends, the first step to conserving this place is getting to know it — Get outside in the Greenway!

Check out our events calendar, recommended hikes, trip planning resources, and more at greenway365.org

OUR POPULAR SUMMER TRIPS ARE BACK

June 28 - Snoqualmie Tunnel Bike Ride

July 19 - Hidden Trails of Tiger Mountain Hike

Online registration opens in early May.



Your resource for exploring the Greenway, 365 days a year greenway365.org

Events Calendar | Top Recommendations | Trip Planning | & more!

NEW LANDS CONSERVED ACROSS THE GREENWAY

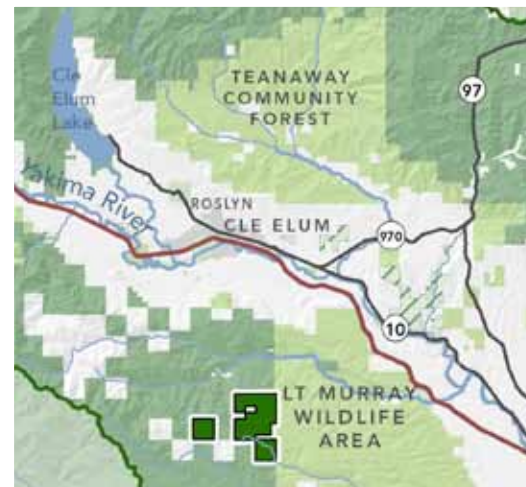
These lands provide recreation opportunities, improve wildlife habitat, and allow public agencies to more effectively manage their lands.

Each year, many Mountains to Sound Greenway partner organizations and local, state, and federal agencies work to bring new lands into public ownership. These lands provide more recreation opportunities, improve habitat for fish and wildlife, and allow public agencies to more effectively manage their lands. Over the past six months, the following acquisitions have brought more than 4,400 acres of land into public ownership in the Greenway. We invite you to learn about these new public lands and celebrate their contribution to the Greenway landscape.

Manastash Block

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, with help from the Nature Conservancy, recently completed the first phase of the Manastash Block property acquisition by purchasing 3,512 acres, six more sections of the checkerboard south of Cle Elum. This property was acquired from Plum Creek Timber Company and helps connect U.S. Forest Service lands in the L.T. Murray Wildlife Area. Funding for purchase came from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Heart of the Cascades project.

"The Manastash Block property is important for wildlife migration and is vital to the Yakima elk populations," said James Schroeder with the Nature Conservancy. The consolidation of public lands by the U.S. Forest Service in this area will allow the agency to better manage the lands for people and wildlife. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife expects to purchase the remaining acreage of the total 5,497-acre Manastash Block in late 2014.



Cole Creek Section and Martin Parcel

In late 2013, Forterra transferred a full section of land (640 acres, one square mile) near Easton to the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife. The land, known as the Cole Creek Section, was purchased from Plum Creek Timber Company using a federal endangered species grant. In a similar transaction, Forterra also acquired a 57-acre parcel along the John Wayne Pioneer Trail, called the Martin Parcel, and transferred it to Washington State Parks. Both of these properties help fill in gaps in a checkerboard pattern of land ownership, the result of federal land grants to the Northern Pacific Railroad during westward expansion in the 19th Century (see page 6).

"The checkerboard land ownership pattern across the Cascades makes it challenging for public and private land managers to efficiently manage forests for timber, wildlife or recreation. These transactions conserve these lands for both wildlife habitat and public access," said Charlie Raines, Forterra's Director of Forest Conservation and Greenway board member. The location of these parcels directly benefits the State Department of Transportation's work to create safe wildlife crossings over and under Interstate 90 in the Central Cascades.



Tall Chief

King County recently acquired 191 acres near Carnation in the Snoqualmie Valley. The property is located along the Snoqualmie River, near the Snoqualmie Agricultural Production District and was a dairy farm before it became the Tall Chief Golf Course. When the golf course closed in 2009, a developer bought the land and proposed to build 18 high-end homes. The farming community in the Snoqualmie Valley came together around this property to see this rich land brought back into agricultural production.

"Saving this fertile land for farming will create more jobs for rural residents, support a more robust local food supply, and ensure an even stronger wall against sprawl," said King County Executive Dow Constantine. The County worked hard for many months to find funding and was able to acquire the property at the end of December 2013. King County has not yet determined who will farm the former Tall Chief land, and intends to issue a request for proposals from groups or farmers interested in leasing or purchasing the land.



Legend: Federal (dark green), State (medium green), County (light green), Other Public (white with green border), Conserved Private (white with green border), Private (white), New (dark green square)

Key Agricultural Lands Conserved

For farmers in the Snoqualmie Valley, the acquisition of the Tall Chief property marks a big win for this farming community. The Snoqualmie Valley is located just minutes from the greater Seattle area and has some of the most fertile agricultural soil in the nation. The valley's farms are a vital source of local food and supply many of the region's farmers markets and restaurants.

The valley is prone to regular flooding which can damage crops, strand livestock, and destroy expensive equipment. Increased development pressures, like housing that was proposed at the Tall Chief golf course, concerns neighboring farmers who want to see rural lands in the valley stay rural.

"The outcome of the Tall Chief purchase is an amazing demonstration of a collaborative achievement between local farmers and King County," said Erick Haakenson, owner of Jubilee Biodynamic Farm.

There are very few places left in King County like the Snoqualmie Valley, and farmers like Haakenson are willing to fight to protect the remaining open spaces. Haakenson adds that thanks should go out to King County Councilmember Kathy Lambert and King County Executive Dow Constantine for their efforts to help secure this property. "This is an enormous victory for this valley, for agriculture, and for the citizens of the County!" said Haakenson.



RAILWAY HERITAGE SHAPED OUR REGION



By Elizabeth Lunney

A quick glance at a map of the Mountains to Sound Greenway will highlight Interstate 90 as the region's backbone, carrying people and goods through bustling towns and verdant farms and forests. But looking back in time, it was the transcontinental railroads and the massive land grant of the Northern Pacific that shaped the 20th century landscape of the Greenway.

Two transcontinental railroads crossed the Cascades in the Mountains to Sound Greenway: the Northern Pacific (in 1887) and the Milwaukee Road (in 1909). The transcontinental railroads connected the tiny, frontier outposts of Puget Sound to the rest of the nation, bringing immigrants, establishing mail and telegraph connections, and moving freight. The railroads provided the shortest connection between the commerce of the Great Lakes and Puget Sound, and the country's best shipping access to Asia. The railroads were quick to whip up steady business.

“It was the transcontinental railroads and the massive land grant of the Northern Pacific that shaped the twentieth-century landscape of the Greenway”

The Northern Pacific runs through the eastern half of the Greenway, climbing up to the Cascade crest before crossing at the Stampede Pass tunnel. This railroad, still in operation today, has had an impact on the entire Greenway far beyond the immediate rail corridor. When Congress authorized the northern transcontinental railroad, it agreed to finance the Northern Pacific with federal land. Checkerboard sections of land were given to the railroad, making up the largest land grant in American history: forty million acres were set aside for the Northern Pacific in the 1870s and 1880s. This land could then be sold to underwrite the cost of construction.

The timber industry in Washington State is a product of the Northern Pacific land grant. Prior to the railroads, most federal land grants were no larger than 160 acres—an area too small

to sustain timber operations. After Frederick Weyerhaeuser bought 900,000 acres of land from Northern Pacific in 1905, he immediately set his sights on consolidating land in the land grant checkerboard. Large-scale harvesting quickly transformed the timber industry in Washington.

The railroad land grants also left a legacy of intermingled land ownership, with the federal government, the state, and private landowners trying to manage square-mile sections of land with little connectivity or cohesion. Parts of this checkerboard still remain around Snoqualmie Pass, and efforts are ongoing to consolidate these remaining blocks. The Cedar River Watershed, once part of the Northern Pacific, is now owned and protected by the City of Seattle. Weyerhaeuser consolidated the checkerboard of the 90,000-acre Snoqualmie Forest, and today it is a private, working forest now harvesting its third generation of trees. And while Tiger Mountain may look like a solid swath of green on most maps, it too, was once a checkerboarded mix of state and private interests.

The Mountains to Sound Greenway today is a tapestry of old railroad lines, public parks, and working forests. Freight still rattles along the rails of the Northern Pacific, and families and history buffs can now explore the depots, substations, and tunnels of the Milwaukee Road. The forests of the Greenway are still deep and green, thanks to the preservation efforts of those who value the Greenway's natural wealth.



Squak Mountain – Then, Now, and into the Future

By Erin Derrington, Greenway Trail Event Lead

It is hard to imagine the Issaquah Alps as anything other than the green, serene foothills of the Cascades that they are today. However, in the mid-1800s, these hills bustled with coal mining and logging exploits of early settlers in the Pacific Northwest.

“Squak is a testament to the challenges of balancing growing urban populations with natural resource management”

Nestled between Cougar Mountain to the west and Tiger Mountain to the east, Squak Mountain is a testament to the challenges of balancing growing urban populations with natural resource management.

The Squak Mountain State Park was formed in 1972 by a land grant of 590 acres from the Bullitt family. Despite growing development pressures in the region, Washington State, King County, and City of Issaquah have worked to acquire additional parcels on and around Squak. Today, the park boasts about 1,545 acres, including substantial natural areas as well as several multi-use trails of various difficulty.

The Greenway Trust actively works to maintain and improve the trails on Squak, which are part of the 1,600-mile trail network in the Greenway landscape. A Squak trailhead was

recently reopened after being closed due to dangers posed by an outbreak of laminated root rot, a fungal disease that eventually kills infected trees. Much of the twelve acres near the south Squak trailhead were affected, and numerous trees were removed, creating a need for restoration at the trailhead.

Greenway crews have worked to clear downed trees, reroute water from the trails, and improve the tread (the actual walking surface of the trail), but much work remains to be done. Trail maintenance events this spring will focus on reconstructing the trail at the park's south entrance as well as restoring many well-used trails. Happy trails!



Learn more or sign up to volunteer at mtsgreenway.org/volunteer

Riverview students help restore Tolt-MacDonald



In the fall, Susie Marshall's class at Riverview Learning Center in Carnation participated in the Greenway education program and spent a day helping plant native trees to restore the river bank at Tolt-MacDonald Park. Tolt-MacDonald Park is located at the confluence of the Tolt and Snoqualmie Rivers and is an important wetland habitat for birds, animals, and salmon. Riverview students learned about the importance of native plants and trees, the threat of invasive species, and participated in a day of caring for the land.

Sign up for an education event at mtsgreenway.org/education

YOU CAN HELP SECURE A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR THE GREENWAY

Our region's future rests in all of our hands, and you can play a strong role in shaping it.

- ✓ Become a Greenway Member
- ✓ Volunteer
- ✓ Become a Corporate Sponsor

Visit mtsgreenway.org or contact us to learn more about how you can help leave a legacy.





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SEEKING NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA STATUS FOR THE GREENWAY IN 2014

After 20 years of hard work creating the Greenway, now it is time to conserve the Greenway for future generations by giving it official status. A National Heritage Area designation will recognize the Greenway as a special place in our state and in the country, and will preserve our legacy of nature on the doorstep of our cities and towns.

Now is the time. Your support is essential to get legislation passed in the U.S. Congress this year. Help us demonstrate overwhelming public support for making the Mountains to Sound Greenway a National Heritage Area.

Join the campaign today, for the future of the Greenway!

greenwayheritage.org

Sign a Petition | Submit a Letter | Contact Congress

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