

MOUNTAINS TO SOUND GREENWAY

FALL 2015

CONNECTIONS

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



25th Anniversary Greenway Trek

Connecting Local Economies

Middle Fork Snoqualmie Conservation



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear friends,

It has been a great summer in the Mountains to Sound Greenway. We celebrated 25 years of work in the best way we could imagine – hiking and biking the length of the Greenway as an homage to the original Greenway March that started it all back in 1990. As the hundreds of participants on the 25th Anniversary Trek built relationships and memories that will last a lifetime, it was a perfect time to look back on all we've accomplished in the Greenway spirit of collaboration and taking care of this beautiful place together.

The Trek also was a great reminder that the work of the Greenway has only just begun, and that the next 25 years may be even more challenging than the last. More and more people flock to this region, drawn by its natural bounty and thriving economy. More people discover the wonders of its trails, parks, and waterways. Meanwhile, public funding allocations continue to be cut as usage rises, creating a growing need for creative solutions that ensure our unparalleled access to wild places is accompanied by wise and sustainable stewardship of those places.

“ The work of the Greenway has only just begun, and the next 25 years may be even more challenging than the last. ”

We can accomplish the ambitious goals of the Greenway. What it comes down to is leadership, and I am encouraged by what I see. I saw incredible, selfless leadership by the volunteers who led 275 people across the Greenway last month on the Trek. I see blossoming leadership in the children who ask good, hard questions about how to keep our forests and rivers healthy when they participate in the Greenway Education program. I see leadership from our corporate community, with great partners like REI,

Carter Subaru, and Boeing marshaling volunteers, raising public awareness, and donating tens of thousands of dollars to care for local lands. I see wonderful leadership from our public representatives – our congressional delegation sustaining a bipartisan effort for National Heritage Area recognition and our state officials fighting for key conservation and recreation projects. Finally, in our own “house,” I am thrilled to carry forward the leadership of the Greenway Trust alongside our new Executive Director, Jon Hoekstra.



“ At the Greenway Trust, our leadership role is to connect stakeholders together in partnership. ”

At the Greenway Trust, our leadership role is to connect stakeholders together in partnership – to keep such diverse parties informed of opportunities and ensure that every possible synergy of effort is found. That is our responsibility and our joy. Everywhere we turn, we find new inspiration and energy in these partnerships, and we are reminded that here, in this place, we can have it all.

Please join me in finding new ways this year to volunteer, donate, and take action to help assure a bright future for the Mountains to Sound Greenway. I hope to see you on the trail. Here's to the next 25 years.

See you on the trail,

Kurt Fraese, Greenway Trust Board President

WELCOME, JON!

In June, we welcomed our new executive director, Jon Hoekstra. Previously having served as Chief Scientist and Vice President for Science at the World Wildlife Fund, Jon also spent nearly a decade working on strategy and conservation for the Nature Conservancy. He brings to the Greenway Trust a unique blend of scientific understanding, strategic problem solving, and communication skills, as well as a commitment to the Greenway landscape that he loves to call home.



Support Grows for National Heritage Area

Strong, bipartisan support moves legislation forward

Bipartisan legislation was re-introduced in June to designate the Mountains to Sound Greenway as a National Heritage Area. We greatly appreciate the efforts of Senators Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray and Congressmen Dave Reichert and Adam Smith, who are strong champions in caring for the Greenway.

Our region is unique in the nation, with our spectacular outdoors, world-class recreation, and thriving economy. We have a deep heritage of placing great value on a healthy relationship with the vast natural landscapes on the doorsteps of our cities.

Official recognition as a National Heritage Area will help tell the story of our region's commitment to conserving the natural world in balance with the people who live here, and serve as a model of collaborative conservation for the nation.

Greenway designation has strong, bipartisan support in Congress and has been endorsed by more than 6,000 businesses, governments, nonprofits, and individuals.

Learn more and voice your support at GreenwayHeritage.org

“ In my terms in Congress, I saw the Greenway model of synergy and consensus bring government agencies, nonprofits and private organizations together to realize remarkable achievements. National Heritage Area designation will build on existing partnerships and forge new ones by providing a forum for addressing the shared challenges of maintaining the Greenway legacy. ”

– Governor Jay Inslee, State of Washington

“ By recognizing the value of this landscape in an official manner, we can raise awareness that these corridors are a key element of our national infrastructure, capable of inspiring active living and enabling equitable access. ”

– Peg Staeheli, Founding Principal, SvR Design Company

“ Our region has a unique history that tells an important part of America's story. The route through the Cascade Mountains, in the Mountains to Sound Greenway, completed the nation's final transcontinental railroad, which played a dramatic role in the development of this region and the country. ”

– Bonnie Hawk, Northern Kittitas County Historical Society

WILDLIFE BRIDGES

By Amy Brockhaus, Coalition Director

Construction workers at Snoqualmie Pass broke ground this summer on a new kind of highway - this time for animals.

The Washington State Department of Transportation's Interstate 90 Snoqualmie Pass East Project is reconstructing 15 miles of the state's busiest east-west transportation corridor. Between Hyak at Snoqualmie Pass and the community of Easton, the interstate freeway is being expanded to six lanes with stabilized hillsides and improved bridges and culverts, as well as 20 major underpasses and overpasses for wildlife.

“The forested slopes of Snoqualmie Pass are rich habitat for iconic Pacific Northwest wildlife, including elk, cougars, black bears, coyotes, and even lizards,” says Jen Watkins of Conservation Northwest. “Many species cross I-90 to new feeding and breeding grounds. Until now, their only option was to dodge fast-moving interstate traffic – a safety issue for both wildlife and motorists. The I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East project is an innovative way to tackle this challenge.”

A ground-breaking ceremony in June kicked off construction of a 150-foot overpass at Price Creek, just east of Lake Keechelus, which will connect publicly-owned forest lands on both sides of the highway. This new bridge will be covered with native vegetation to provide forest cover and safe passage for wildlife.



“Interstate highways aren't normally known for being ‘pretty,’” said Greenway Trust President Kurt Fraese at this summer's groundbreaking ceremony. “But this section of I-90—now running through a proposed National Heritage Area—was the first interstate in the nation to be designated a National Scenic Byway, a designation usually reserved for smaller, rural roads.

“Today, I-90 through the Greenway serves as a model for the nation in how to connect public lands and improve mobility, while enhancing wildlife habitat and the ecological health of this part of the Central Cascades.”

Cameras placed at wildlife under-crossings completed during an earlier phase of this project are already capturing images of deer, pikas, coyotes and river otters using these new passages.

Funding for the remaining eight miles of I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East and wildlife bridges was recently allocated as part of the transportation revenue package by the Washington State Legislature, led by transportation committee chairs Rep. Judy Clibborn (D-Mercer Island) and Sen. Curtis King (R-Yakima.)

EVERY TRAIL CONNECTS



REI donates nearly \$69,000 to repair iconic trail in Greenway

In August, REI asked outdoor enthusiasts to vote for how the co-op should allocate half a million dollars to repair ten trails across the country as part of their 'Every Trail Connects' campaign. Thousands of voters weighed in, earning a donation of \$68,790 from REI to repair the prized Middle Fork Snoqualmie River Trail, right in the heart of the Mountains to Sound Greenway.

The Middle Fork Snoqualmie Valley is a treasure. A person seeking a day of adventure can leave downtown Seattle and, in less than an hour's time, reach the gateway to pristine Cascades wilderness in the Middle Fork Valley, from there to set out on any one of dozens of trails leading to mountain peaks, hidden lakes, old growth forests, and majestic river views.

Through two decades of relentless effort and dedication by a few local people who simply refused to quit, and by the work of government agencies and nonprofit organizations like the Greenway Trust, the Middle Fork Valley is undergoing a transformation into a recreational paradise. Once home to those who wished to conduct criminal activity out of sight, the Middle Fork has been reclaimed for all of us.

The 15-mile Middle Fork Trail is the "backbone" of the trail network in the Valley. Hikers, backpackers, trail runners, mountain bikers, and equestrians utilize this scenic and tranquil trail, which provides access from the low-elevation reaches of the Middle Fork Valley all the way into the Alpine Lakes Wilderness Area. The trail weaves through a temperate rainforest, past pockets of old-growth and historic relics from the Valley's timber and mining eras, including a stretch of trail that follows the former railroad line built to haul timber.

Unfortunately, this popular trail is in danger. Repeated flooding during the past several years has eroded the banks of the river, causing severe trail washouts, closing and blocking access to mountain bikers and equestrians, and endangering other users.

The Greenway Trust is teaming up with the US Forest Service, Washington Trails Association, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, Backcountry Horsemen of Washington, and many other partners to re-route a section of trail that has washed away, protecting and restoring recreational access to the upper reaches of the Middle Fork Valley and the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. REI's funding will play a crucial role in ensuring this trail is restored.

Discover the Middle Fork Valley at mtsgreenway.org/bettermiddlefork

Earth Underfoot

By Patrick Mulligan, Education Program Manager

This fall, the Greenway Education Program is launching "Earth Underfoot", a new curriculum designed to teach students about Earth's various ecological, hydrological, and geological systems and how they interact to create the Greenway landscape we know and love.

The BIG QUESTION: "How do we build a hiking trail for long-lasting recreational enjoyment while minimizing negative environmental impacts?" To answer, students will take part in an educational journey touching on everything from plate tectonics to climate change. Part presentation, part field investigation, part service learning, "Earth Underfoot" aims to develop the next generation of environmental stewards.

Learn more and sign your class up at mtsgreenway.org/education



Gateway to the Middle Fork Conserved

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) just conserved a key piece of land at the entrance to the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River Valley, next to the Mailbox Peak Trailhead. This 80-acre forested parcel surrounds the Middle Fork Road as it enters the Valley, serving as the new gateway to this spectacular destination just 45 minutes from Seattle.

As the first step of a two-step process, TPL assumed ownership of the property formerly owned by Buse Timber Company. The next step will occur near the end of the year when the property is conveyed to the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and King County for inclusion into the Middle Fork Snoqualmie Natural Resources Conservation Area.

"This is a gateway to dozens of trails, picnic sites, and river access points, and an important piece of a connected corridor of wildlife habitat."

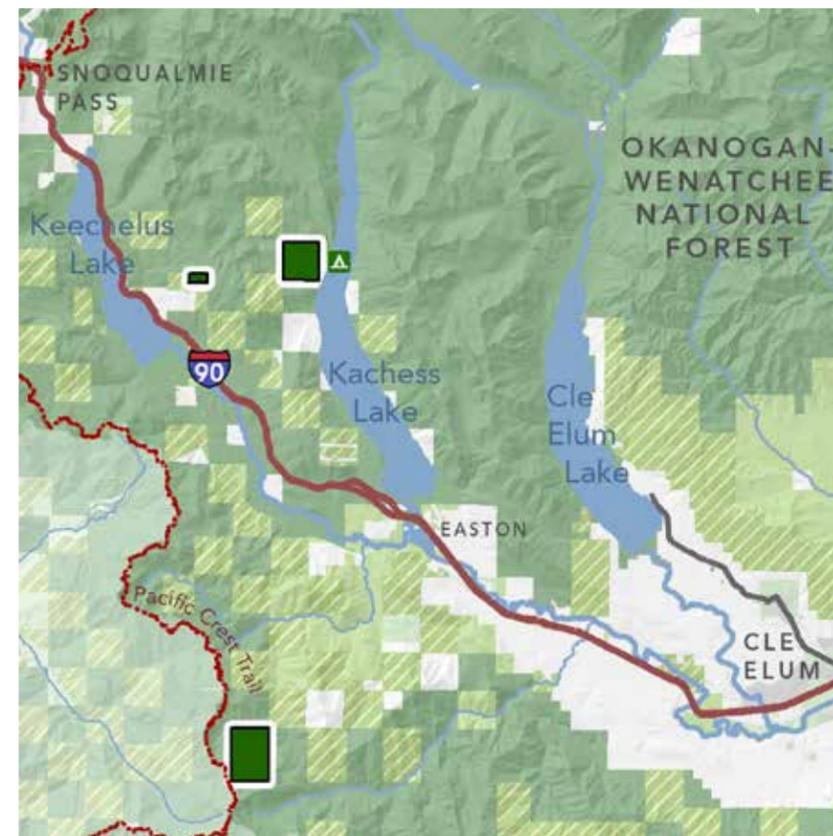
"King County and the Trust for Public Land deserve a huge thanks for their valuable work on this crucial property. Along with the continuing efforts of Forterra and the Greenway Trust, we are all working together to ensure we fully conserve this river valley for future generations," said Doug McClelland, Assistant Region Manager at DNR.



The parcel is a gateway to dozens of trails, picnic sites, and river access points, and an important piece of a connected corridor of wildlife habitat. TPL is working with the Greenway Trust, DNR, and King County to determine its ecological and recreational opportunities. Old roads through the mature rainforest on the property could provide opportunities for accessible trails and state ownership of this property will allow for expanded parking at the extremely popular new Mailbox Peak Trailhead.

Learn more about the Valley at mtsgreenway.org/bettermiddlefork

Filling in the GAPS



Several parcels were recently conserved on the forested eastern slopes of the Cascade Mountains.

Forterra acquired 80 acres of habitat near Price Creek. This newly conserved land, adjacent to the future Snoqualmie Pass wildlife bridge, will allow large mammals and other wildlife to move across I-90 and safeguard long-term species viability by facilitating seasonal movement and genetic exchange between wildlife populations.

The Trust for Public Land purchased two parcels, one near the Kachess Lake Campground and the other to the south near the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) and Stampede Pass, which helps preserve a segment of the PCT corridor in public ownership. Grants from the Land and Water Conservation Fund assisted in both acquisitions.

Over the years, Forterra and TPL have conserved thousands of acres in the Mountains to Sound Greenway. In concert with the work of the Nature Conservancy in Kittitas County last year and building on the storied accomplishments of the Cascades Conservation Partnership, these acquisitions consolidate public ownership, ensure recreational access in perpetuity, and ease management challenges.

ISSAQUAH BRINGS NATURE INTO HEART OF DOWNTOWN

New Confluence Park transforms downtown Issaquah, and is the site of our Annual Tree Planting Celebration.

Tucked next to the heart of downtown Issaquah is the new crown jewel of its park system: Confluence Park. Located where Issaquah Creek and its East Fork meet, this scenic park was started more than 20 years ago when the City began acquiring land along the confluence, combining Margaret's Meadow and Cybil-Madeline Park with the Tollé Anderson Homestead to create the now 15.5-acre Confluence Park.

The park includes a picnic shelter, play area, community garden, restrooms, and various trails. Future development will add a bridge, creek view trails, playground, and parking area.

This summer, the City of Issaquah broke ground on a massive ecological restoration project at Confluence Park. The project will restore aquatic and riparian wildlife habitat, including naturally meandering curves, install large woody debris, and replace invasive weeds with native plants.

The Greenway Trust is teaming up with the City this fall to help plant more than 6,000 native trees and shrubs at Confluence Park, in a long-term effort supported by the citizens of Issaquah, King Conservation District, Washington State legislature, Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (through the Salmon Recovery Funding Board), and Carter Subaru. Plantings will help increase native plant diversity, canopy cover, and tree regeneration, all of which will benefit native salmon populations. Join us on October 24th for our Tree Planting Celebration at Confluence Park—it is great for all ages!

Confluence Park is the crown jewel, not only of Issaquah's park system, but of the green necklace encircling the city. That network of parks, open space, and trails is part of what defines the excellent quality of life in Issaquah.

In the decades ahead, this open space will only grow in importance as Issaquah's business district transforms into a vibrant urban center. As the business district evolves into a dense neighborhood, more local residents will be able to connect with their natural environment at Confluence Park.



Tree Planting Celebration

Join us! Plant a tree, leave a legacy.

Saturday, October 24
Confluence Park | Issaquah

Sign Up at
mtsgreenway.org

Welcome New Board Members

The Mountains to Sound Greenway Board of Directors took on five new Directors for three-year terms:



Will Castillo
Principal, GGLO



Kari Glover
Global Integration Partner, Retired, K&L Gates



Janet Knox
Principal Environmental Geochemist, Pacific Groundwater Group



Arlene Levy
Social Venture Partners



Marie Quasius
Associate Partner, K&L Gates

CREATING A CONNECTED LOCAL ECONOMY

By Jennifer McKeown, Snoqualmie Program Manager

With help from the Greenway Trust, Snoqualmie Valley residents, businesses, cities, and community organizations are joining forces to create a more economically vibrant region. The Snoqualmie Valley is a spectacular place with both vast natural beauty and thriving communities. Each year, millions of people come to the region visiting popular destinations such as Snoqualmie Falls, Rattlesnake Lake, Mt. Si, and Tolt-MacDonald Park.

Although millions visit the Snoqualmie Valley, the majority do not stop to shop at a local business. Very few are even aware that there are unique downtown districts or working farms nearby. An enormous opportunity exists to connect these visitors to the Valley's businesses, farms, and heritage sites.

“Imagine 20 years from now, the Snoqualmie River Valley is a renowned destination for its economically thriving rural cities, local food production, agritourism, ecotourism and outdoor recreation.”

Last March, dozens of local citizens, businesses, and public officials came together to launch a grassroots, non-partisan campaign called SnoValleyUnited, which aims to develop a regional economic strategy for the Valley.

The strategy includes building a branding and marketing plan, as well as a workshop series, called *A River Runs Through It*, to be held in February and March 2016. This regional workshop series



modeled after Travel Oregon's successful Rural Tourism Studio.

“Uniting together and highlighting the Valley will enhance its economic viability, encourage more visitors and residents to support local businesses and farms, and ultimately strengthen our economy,” remarked King County Councilwoman Kathy Lambert.

A regional brand for the Snoqualmie River Valley can raise the profile of the region and increase the visibility of its local businesses. “Imagine 20 years from now,” Duvall City Councilman Jason Walker exclaims, “the Snoqualmie River Valley is a renowned destination for its economically thriving rural cities, local food production, agritourism, ecotourism, and outdoor recreation.”

Learn more at
mtsgreenway.org/snoqualmievalley

Future of Land & Water Conservation Fund

One of America's more impactful conservation tools is dangerously close to expiring. The Greenway Trust is joining forces with conservation groups across the country to urge Congress to save it.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has been working for 50 years, reinvesting over half a billion dollars in iconic outdoor destinations of Washington State, including Mount Si and Snoqualmie Point Park. Since 1990, LWCF has helped conserve more than 80,000 acres of public land in the Greenway.



The past successes of LWCF are monumental, and so are the future needs. At the time of this writing, LWCF was less than two weeks from expiration and Congress had yet to reauthorize the program. Stay tuned for more details and how you can help at mtsgreenway.org.

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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This summer, nearly 300 hikers and bikers joined the **Mountains to Sound Greenway Trek**, traveling across the Greenway from Ellensburg to Seattle to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the original Greenway March where the concept of a Greenway along Interstate 90 was born and citizens were inspired to thoughtfully shape our region's growth. More photos: mtsgreenway.org/trek

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