



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

April 29, 2014

Motion 14118

Proposed No. 2014-0102.1

Sponsors Lambert, Dembowski and Phillips

1 A MOTION affirming King County's support for the
2 Skykomish Valley Economic Development, Recreation,
3 and Natural Resource Conservation Initiative and
4 recognizing the shared vision of the town of Skykomish
5 and the Stevens Pass Greenway to enhance economic
6 development, increase recreation opportunities and
7 conserve the natural resources in the Skykomish valley.

8 WHEREAS, the Skykomish valley is an important part of King County and
9 includes numerous natural features and human-made facilities of great value to the
10 county and the region, including: the South Fork Skykomish, Foss, Miller, Beckler and
11 Tye rivers and their fisheries; the Skykomish river watershed; the valley's wildlife
12 habitat; the scenic, rural communities of Skykomish, Baring, Grotto and Scenic; the
13 valley's numerous trails, campgrounds, ski areas, hot springs, mountain lakes, waterfalls,
14 alpine meadows and forests that provide opportunities for recreational activities; the
15 gateway to the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail; the Highway 2 National Scenic
16 Byway; the Alpine Lakes, Henry M. Jackson and Wild Sky Wilderness areas; the Stevens
17 Pass National Historic District; the critical transportation and utility infrastructure,
18 including U.S. Highway 2, the historic Great Northern railroad corridor and cross-

19 Cascades power lines; and the interpretive facilities at Wellington, Deception Creek, and
20 Skykomish, and

21 WHEREAS, King County shares the vision of the town of Skykomish as a vibrant
22 historic town on the railroad, surrounded by the Cascade mountains, that provides access
23 to numerous outdoor recreation opportunities and that achieves economic vitality
24 through: a balance between tourism-related industries and those that serve local and area
25 residents; appropriate infrastructure and services to sustain the community and support
26 future opportunities for growth; enhanced livability of the town through the maintenance
27 of a high quality of life for younger and older generations of Skykomish residents alike;
28 references to the unique history of the town and its character that are maintained in new
29 development; clear, consistent connections and access to the town from surrounding
30 areas, as well as to cultural and natural amenities within the town; and promotion of the
31 town's strong relationship to the environment, and

32 WHEREAS, King County continues to collaborate with the town of Skykomish,
33 the U.S. Forest Service and user and community groups such as the Washington Trails
34 Association, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, Forterra and the Skykomish
35 Environmental Institute, in revitalizing the economy of the Skykomish valley by:
36 supporting the protection of the magnificent natural setting; supporting the maintenance
37 and enhancement of the valley's recreational resources, including trail development,
38 outdoor recreation, land conservation and natural resources management; and supporting
39 protection of and reinvestment in historic structures in the town of Skykomish, and

40 WHEREAS, the objectives of the Skykomish Valley Economic Development,
41 Recreation, and Natural Resource Conservation Initiative are to enhance conservation

42 and recreation-based economic development in the town of Skykomish, and conserve the
43 natural resources in the Skykomish valley. The initiative will seek to identify potential
44 actions that would:

45 1. Protect key lands in the Skykomish valley, including public acquisition and
46 protection of old-growth forest and river frontage; fish and wildlife habitat, especially for
47 endangered species; scenic vistas; and outdoor recreation opportunities;

48 2. Maintain working forests to retain timber related jobs and avoid conversion of
49 forest lands to nonforest uses;

50 3. Enhance the recreation-based economy with a focus on hiking, mountain
51 climbing, bicycling, fishing, hunting, river rafting, skiing, environmental and historic
52 education and similar activities related to the natural and historic resources of the valley;

53 4. Revitalize the town center of Skykomish by capitalizing on its historic
54 character and connection to the Great Northern Railroad and proximity to U.S. Highway
55 2; and

56 5. Enhance safety by ensuring adequate emergency response systems and
57 continuing to provide flood hazard reduction services;

58 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

59 A. King County will support for Skykomish Valley Economic Development,
60 Recreation, and Natural Resource Conservation Initiative by continuing to collaborate
61 with the town of Skykomish, the U.S. Forest Service, the Washington state Department
62 of Fish and Wildlife, the Washington state Department of Transportation, recreational
63 groups such as the Washington Trail Association, American Whitewater and the
64 Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, nonprofit conservation organizations, such as

65 Forterra, the Stevens Pass Greenway and Skykomish Environmental Institute and
66 Snohomish and Chelan counties, as part of the Skykomish Valley Economic
67 Development, Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Initiative.

68 B. Specific actions King County will pursue in collaboration with the town of
69 Skykomish and other partners to achieve the objectives of the initiative include:

70 1. The King County department of natural resources and parks will continue to
71 collaborate with the U.S. Forest Service, the town of Skykomish, Forterra and others to
72 assess potential land conservation and recreation projects, including identifying potential
73 partners, priority funding needed and potential funding sources;

74 2. The department of natural resources and parks, water and land resources
75 division, will continue to: protect and restore rivers and streams; support preservation of
76 floodplain lands; reduce flood hazards and support retention of productive private
77 working forest lands;

78 3. The department of natural resources and parks historic preservation program

79 will continue to support protection, restoration and reuse of historic structures in
80 Skykomish and the surrounding valley.
81

Motion 14118 was introduced on 3/10/2014 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 4/28/2014, by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Mr. Phillips, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Hague, Ms. Lambert, Mr. McDermott, Mr. Dembowski and Mr. Upthegrove
No: 0
Excused: 2 - Mr. von Reichbauer and Mr. Dunn

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Larry Phillips, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: A. Skykomish Valley Economic Development , Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Initiative

**Skykomish Valley Economic Development,
Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Initiative
King County, Washington 2014**

Objective: *To revitalize the local community economy, increase recreation opportunities, and conserve the natural resources in the Skykomish Valley.*

Geography: The Skykomish Valley is a key part of the Highway 2 Corridor which connects the urban areas of Everett on Puget Sound to the agriculture center of Wenatchee on the Columbia River. Its scenic and recreational values have been recognized and enhanced by the designation of the Stevens Pass National Scenic Byway. A large portion of the valley is part of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. The King County portion of the valley includes Stevens Pass and the communities of Skykomish, Baring, Grotto and Scenic, which lie along this historic travel corridor.

King County Council Motion

King County Council Members Kathy Lambert and Rod Dembowski have introduced a motion to highlight the vision for the valley and the town of Skykomish, reaffirm the County's commitment to the vitality of the valley, its residents and natural resources, and collaborate with numerous partners who share that vision. The motion focuses on three interconnected activities.

1. Economic Development

Re-energize the valley's economy by capitalizing on its historic character and connection to the Great Northern Railroad, proximity to U.S. Highway 2, and as a gateway to wild and spectacular recreational lands. Maintain working forests to retain timber related jobs and avoid conversion of forest lands to non-forest uses.

- **Historic Preservation & Community Revitalization**

The town of Skykomish has served as a hub of railroad activity for over 120 years. The community is working to revitalize the town center, solidify its historic character as the Great Northern Town, and encourage new business growth. The motion incorporates the town's vision. An example of this work is the restoration of the historic Skykomish Hotel. This could include relocating some Forest Service public contact functions to this historic location.

2. Recreation

Enhance the recreation-based economy with a focus on hiking, mountain climbing, bicycling, fishing, hunting, river rafting, skiing, environmental and historic education, and similar activities related to the natural and historic resources of the valley.

- **New Recreation Development**

We can increase outdoor recreation opportunities for hiking, bicycle and cross-country ski trails, boating access and other activities, and to provide interpretive sites on suitable national

forest lands. We are working with our partners to develop and implement a King County-Forest Service Cooperative Agreement to enable improved collaboration. Examples of potential projects include developing an interpretive overlook on Maloney Rock, building trails from the town center to Maloney Rock and Sobieski Mountain for mountain bikers and hikers. Other projects could include reopening the Deception Falls picnic area and developing river access points such as at Foss River and at the town center.

3. Natural Resource Conservation

Through partnership, protect key lands in the Skykomish valley, including public acquisition and protection of old-growth forest and river frontage; fish and wildlife habitat, especially for endangered species; existing roadless areas; scenic vistas; and outdoor recreation opportunities.

- **Land Conservation**

King County focus would be on conserving selected parcels on key reaches of the rivers near the town of Skykomish to protect water quality, salmon spawning habitat and riparian zone vegetation, while providing public access to rivers for high quality recreation activities. This could include acquisitions on the Foss, South Fork Skykomish, Beckler, and Miller Rivers. King County will support preservation of the remaining old growth forest in the Skykomish Valley.

The Forest Service focus would be on acquiring selected inholdings in the valley to conserve important scenic views, watersheds, wildlife habitat, existing roadless areas, and rivers. Key pieces of threatened mature and old growth forest include Maloney Creek which overlooks the town of Skykomish, Windy Ridge, a pristine section of land adjacent to the H.M. Jackson Wilderness near Stevens Pass, and rugged Grotto Mountain.

Opportunities for Collaboration

Forterra and King County have fostered collaboration to achieve the objectives of the Skykomish Valley Initiative. In addition to the Town of Skykomish, partners include the Stevens Pass Greenway, Washington Trails Association, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, Skykomish Environmental Institute, and Alpine Lakes Protection Society.

