



AUTO TOUR

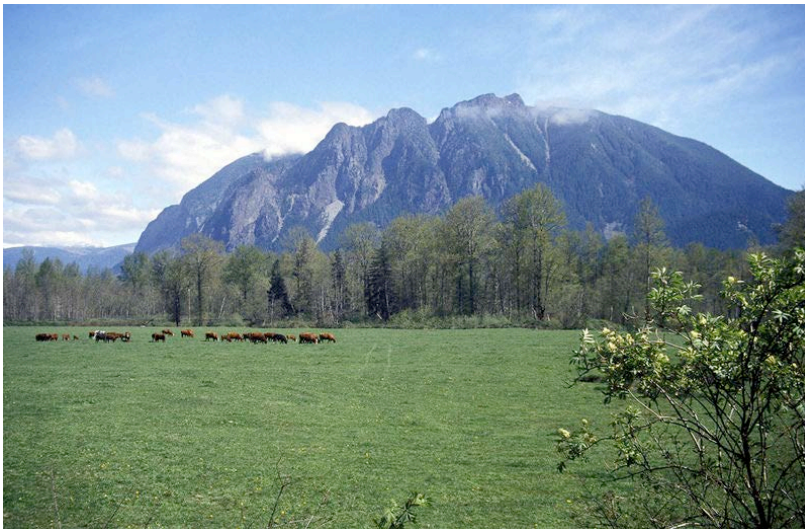
AAA Washington Travel Services

Central Cascades Loop

Our loop through Washington's Central Cascades traverses three distinct regions. The western side of the route visits the busy cities near the saltwater shores of Puget Sound. We follow deep valleys extending into the thickly forested Cascade Range, backbone of the Evergreen State. As we gain elevation the forest takes on more alpine characteristics. At these higher altitudes, snow lies on the ground for over six months.

Beyond the crest of the mountains the climate changes. Annual precipitation decreases dramatically as we continue eastward and the natural vegetation reflects the increasing aridity. The lower elevation valleys on the east side of the Cascades enjoy a dry, sunny climate. Here agriculture specializes in fruit growing, while tourist-oriented Leavenworth and bustling Wenatchee welcome visitors.

The westbound itinerary runs through scenic forests of pine, skirts the historic coal mining towns of Cle Elum and Roslyn, and easily climbs up to the crest at Snoqualmie Pass. West of the summit we return to the humid climate of western Washington with its lush forests and spreading urbanization.



The Central Cascades Loop is an all-season route. During winter months mountain snows can be heavy, and although roads are well maintained, motorists should have approved traction tires or carry tire chains.

← *Mount Si looms above lush meadows in the Upper Snoqualmie Valley near North Bend.*
[Photo: Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust]

The 310-mile itinerary can be driven in six hours, but given the numerous attractions en route, a trip of two or even three days permits a more relaxing pace. The AAA *Oregon-Washington TourBook* guide and AAA *Northwestern CampBook*, available at your local AAA Washington service center, lists lodging, dining and camping facilities, as well as points of interest. This information is also available online with AAA's TripTik Travel Planner at AAA.com.

1. Stevens Pass Highway

Eastbound: Seattle to Leavenworth (140 miles)

SEATTLE (pop. 616,500, alt. sea level to 520 ft.) is the largest city in the Northwest commanding an urban region encompassing over three million people. Seattle is an important port, and a manufacturing, trade and research center. A spectacular setting on Puget Sound with a backdrop of snowcapped peaks makes it a major tourist destination. From central Seattle proceed north on Interstate 5 to Exit 175. At the foot of the off-ramp, turn right on SR-523 (NE 145th Street). This highway forms the northern boundary of Seattle.

The separate municipality of **SHORELINE** (pop. 53,270, alt. 475 ft.), largest of the city's northern suburbs, lies north of 145th. After two miles, turn left on SR-522 (Bothell Way), which continues through a suburban landscape, descending to **LAKE FOREST PARK** (pop. 12,640, alt. 80 ft.), near the north end of Lake Washington. The lake is visible occasionally off to the right. The town was founded in 1912 as a planned community for professionals who could travel to Seattle by train.

A mile beyond is **KENMORE** (pop. 21,020, alt. 31 ft.), located at the point where the Sammamish River empties into Lake Washington (view of lake to right). You may see seaplanes landing and taking off – **Kenmore Air Harbor** is one of the country's largest commercial seaplane airports. The railroad, lake and river attracted industry to the area and Canadian immigrant John McMaster established a shingle mill here in 1901, naming the nascent community for his hometown in Ontario. During Prohibition, Kenmore's easy access and proximity to Seattle, fueled the popularity of a number of speakeasies. **Bastyr University**, located 1½ miles south on Juanita Drive, is one of the world's pre-eminent institutions of naturopathic medicine.

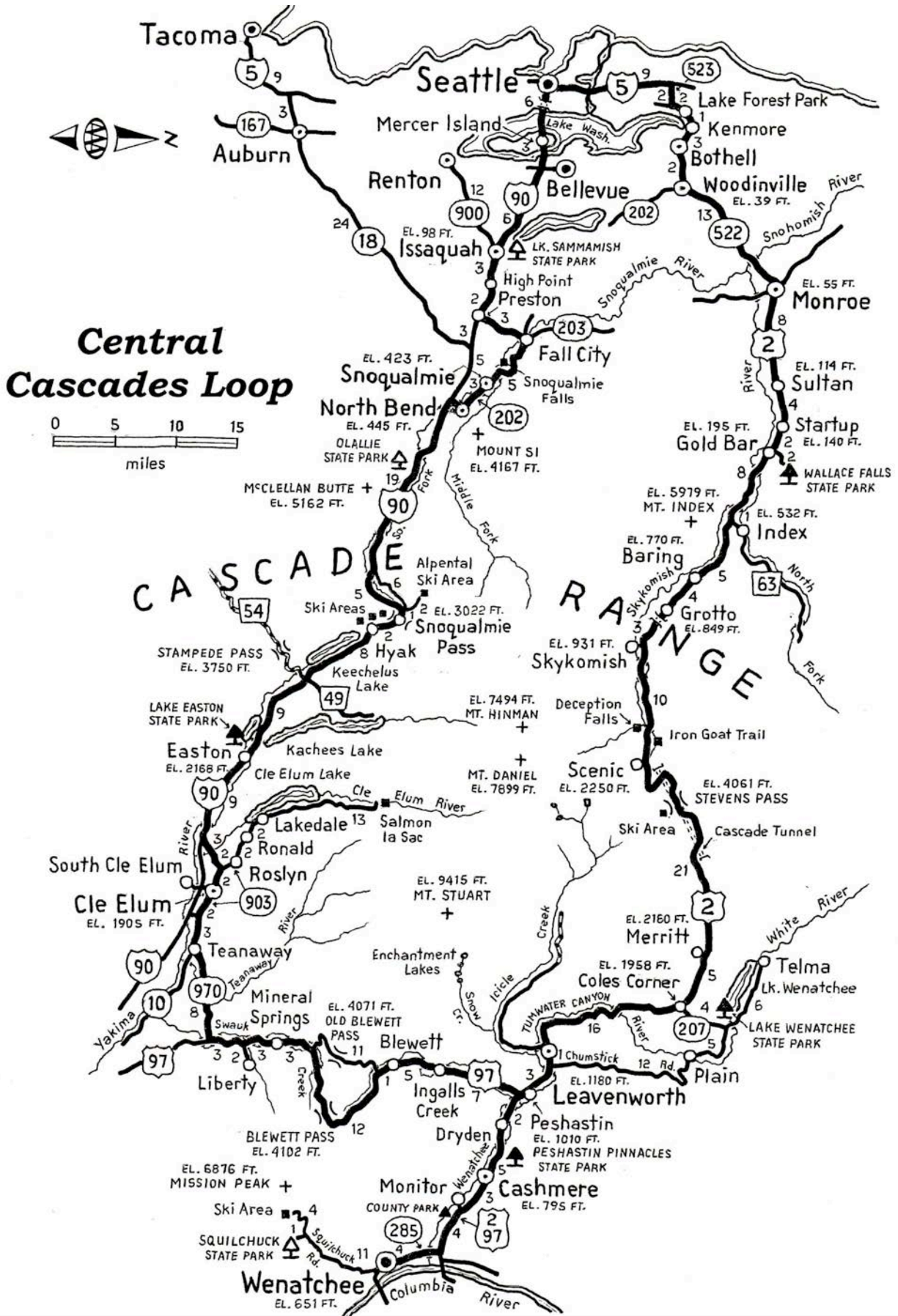
Highway 522 closely follows the former Seattle, Lake Shore & Eastern Railroad for several miles. Built in the late 1880s, it became part of the Northern Pacific system in the early 1890s. The line from Kenmore to Seattle was abandoned in 1970 and reopened to recreationists as the **Burke-Gilman Trail** in 1978. The line east of Kenmore continued to serve industrial customers for a number of years, finally closing in the 1980s. It was subsequently converted to a paved, recreational trail.

Highway 522 follows the Sammamish River to **BOTHELL** (pop. 34,000, alt. 90 ft.). This is the oldest of the string of suburbs along our route, dating back to the 1870s. The town, named for pioneer David Bothell, prospered as an early lumbering and agricultural center. It incorporated in 1909. The **Park at Bothell Landing**, off SR-522 at 9919 NE 180th Street, fronts the Sammamish River where the town was founded. Its historic attractions include a log cabin and school (both built in 1885) and an 1893 house containing the **Bothell Historical Museum**. The city's pleasant downtown area lies just east of the junction of Highway 522 and SR-529. Highway 522 continues east, passing beneath Interstate 405. The Canyon Park district, along I-405 north of the city, is a center of high tech businesses and hosts a branch campus of the **University of Washington**.

At the I-405 interchange, SR-522 becomes a freeway. A mile east is **WOODINVILLE** (pop. 10,960, alt. 39 ft.); its center lies just south of the freeway. Named for pioneer Ira Woodin, settlement started in the early 1870s. It was first a logging town, but has grown into a bedroom community with a diversified economic base of light industry, retail and tourism. There are 80+ wineries in the area and their tasting rooms draw throngs of visitors. **Molbak's**, at 13625 NE 175th Street, is one of the Northwest's largest retail nurseries.

Beyond Woodinville, SR-522 heads northeastward through rolling, wooded countryside. This area is growing rapidly and the highway is gradually being widened to accommodate the increasingly heavy traffic. After crossing the Snohomish River, the forest gives way to farmland and from a ridge crest we enjoy a fine panorama of the Skykomish Valley with the rugged peaks of the Cascades marking the eastern horizon. The large complex on a hillside to the right is a state correctional facility.

Take the Main Street exit and follow Main into **MONROE** (pop. 17,390, alt. 55 ft.). This old town traces its beginnings to the late 1850s. The rich alluvial soils of the district attracted homesteaders and a settlement sprang up. First called Park Place, it was renamed for President James Monroe in 1889. It prospered first off logging, later as a farm trading center. Today it's a fast-growing bedroom community at the eastern edge of the Puget Sound urban area. Main Street leads into the city's pleasant, well maintained central business district. The **Monroe Historical Museum**, in the former city hall at 207 E. Main Street, has displays on the area's history (open Monday, Wednesday and Saturday afternoons).



West of Monroe the **Evergreen State Fairgrounds** hosts auto racing and a calendar of special events culminating with the *Evergreen State Fair*, a ten-day extravaganza ending on Labor Day. The Western Heritage Museum, on the east side of the fairgrounds, has interactive exhibits documenting agriculture, logging, mining and transportation in the region (open Weds.-Sunday).

At the north end of downtown, we cross the busy mainline of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and join the Stevens Pass Highway (US-2). Turn right (east) on US-2. A mile east of Monroe, the **Washington Serpentarium** exhibits more than 50 snakes, including some of the world's deadliest.

SULTAN (pop. 4,660, alt. 114 ft.) extends along the highway beside the railroad tracks and back into foothills to the north. Prospectors scoured the district in the last decades of the 19th century. The advent of the Great Northern in the early 1890s attracted permanent settlement. Shingle mills and logging camps dotted the surroundings. The town, and in turn the nearby river, were named for a local Native American chief, Tsul-tad (or Tseul-tud). Sultan's main street, a block off US-2, has a collection of late 19th-century buildings from the town's early years.

Highway 2 continues east. The valley narrows and scattered farms give way to a mixed woodland of maple, alder, cottonwood and second-growth red cedar and Douglas-fir. **STARTUP** (pop. 675, alt. 140 ft.) was first called Wallace, for a local lumber company. Repeated confusion with Wallace, Idaho prompted a name change in 1901 to honor George Startup owner of the town's sawmill.

Two miles east is **GOLD BAR** (pop. 2,060, alt. 195 ft.), founded as a rowdy mining camp in the last years of the 19th century. It prospered as a logging and railroad town. A side road leads 2 miles north to **Wallace Falls State Park**, where a 2½-mile trail climbs to the brink of its 265-foot namesake waterfall.

Highway 2 parallels the railroad tracks, occasionally offering glimpses of the Skykomish River foaming in its narrow, rocky gorge. Directly ahead looms the dramatic rock-girt tower of **Mount Index** (elev. 5,979 ft.). Bridal Veil and Sunset Falls spill off its lower slopes.



Mount Index dominates the Skykomish Valley

INDEX (pop. 180, alt. 532 ft.), a mile north of the highway, is a quiet town on the North Fork Skykomish River. Settled in 1890 and incorporated in 1907, it's named for the lofty finger of rock dominating the southern horizon.

Several frame buildings date from the town's early years as a railroad and miner's supply center, including the Bush House (1898) and the Red Men's Wigwam (1903). The **Pickett Historical Museum** has exhibits on the area. A giant saw, on display in the town park, was used to quarry granite from Index for the steps of the State Capitol in Olympia. The sheer cliffs north of Index known as the **Town Walls** are popular with rock climbers and whitewater rafting is practiced on the Skykomish

Continuing east, US-2 follows the rushing Skykomish River through a lush forest of western hemlock, red cedar and Douglas-fir. The settlements along this stretch began as mining and timber camps in the last quarter of the 19th century. **BARING** (pop. 220, alt. 770 ft.) straddles a long stretch of straight highway. Prospectors and miners scoured the district in the late 19th century. First called Big Index, then East Index, it was renamed for nearby Mount Baring, a 6,235-foot peak towering two miles east. The scattered community of **GROTTO** (pop. 50, alt. 849 ft.) is named for a nearby mountain whose slopes contain cave-like ravines.

SKYKOMISH (pop. 200, alt. 931 ft.), just south of US-2, lies on the south bank of its namesake river. Founded in 1899, this was an important division point on the Great Northern, with railroad shops and a station to supply power to electric locomotives. Here trains switched motive power from steam to electricity for the run through the Cascade Tunnel. Aside from the railroad, Skykomish also boasted a sawmill and two shingle mills. During the 1920s the population swelled to 8,000 during construction of the new Cascade Tunnel. Despite the relatively low elevation, tin roofs on most of the town's buildings mark this as a snowy area. The railroad still dominates Skykomish and long freights rumble down the tracks, which parallels the old main street. The four-story **Cascadia Inn**, facing the tracks in the middle of town, opened its doors in 1904.

Deception Falls thunders through a narrow gorge just south of the road (parking and restrooms north of highway). A trail leads beneath the road to the falls.

Several miles east the **Iron Goat Trail Interpretive Center** is housed in a restored Great Northern caboose. The trail follows 9 miles of the old railroad right of way. **SCENIC** (pop. negligible, alt. 2,250 ft.), just off the left side of the highway,

was formerly a railroad siding town. Scenic bustled during the construction of the new Cascade Tunnel. All that remains today are railroad sidings. In the mountains to the south is primitive **Scenic Hot Springs**.

Several miles east, US-2 begins a long, gradual climb up to the crest of the Cascade Range at Stevens Pass. Over a 4-mile distance the road ascends more than 2,400 feet. Sweeping views extend across the alpine valley. The forest thins to meadows on the heights. In fall the slopes blaze with color. The avalanche chutes that scar the opposite slopes mask a chilling history. Early in the morning of 22 February, 1910, a massive snow slide obliterated the hamlet of **Wellington**, located at the west portal of the original Cascade Tunnel. The avalanche swept two standing passenger trains to the bottom of the canyon, killing 118 people. Eager to avoid the obvious hazards of winter travel through the high mountains, the Great Northern shortly started work on the new Cascade Tunnel. After the Wellington disaster, the GN changed the name of the town to Tye and it was abandoned when the new tunnel opened in 1929. You can see some of the original alignment, including snowsheds, along the mountainside across the canyon west of the pass.

STEVENS PASS (alt. 4,061 ft.) marks the summit of the Cascade Range. Streams to the east drain into the Columbia basin; to the west streams feed the Snohomish basin, tributary to Puget Sound. The pass is named for John G. Stevens, a surveyor for the Great Northern Railroad. The first rail line opened in 1892, using switchbacks to get over the pass. Switchbacks avoided prohibitively steep grades, but their use was very time consuming. It required 13 miles of track, including switchbacks, to connect spots a mere three miles distant. In 1897 GN started construction of the first Cascade Tunnel, 1,000 feet below the pass. The 2.5 mile tunnel opened in 1900, eliminating the switchbacks. Now abandoned, it was replaced by today's 7.8-mile tunnel, a further 900 feet below the original bore.

Cascade Tunnel, opened in 1929, runs 7.8 miles beneath the crest of the Cascades. Until the advent of diesel in the mid-1950s, GN used electric engines to haul trains through the tunnel between Wenatchee and Skykomish. Trains can only pass through the tunnel every 30 minutes, as the ventilation system, takes that long to clear the fumes. This was the longest railroad tunnel in the western hemisphere until the 8.1-mi. Mount Macdonald Tunnel opened on the Canadian Pacific line in eastern British Columbia in the late 1980s.

Stevens Pass Ski Area opened at the crest of the Cascades in 1937. The ski season extends from Thanksgiving into early April. In summer you can take a sightseeing ride on the Hogsback Chairlift or test your mettle on the trails at **Stevens Pass Bike Park**, state's first lift-accessed bike park.

Near the base of the long downgrade, we pass the **Berne Maintenance Facility**, where Washington Department of Transportation stores sand and gravel for winter road maintenance. Berne started as a construction camp during the building of the Cascade Tunnel. Highway 2 continues eastward, losing altitude more slowly. Ponderosa pine gradually replaces Douglas-fir, reflecting the increasingly drier climate.

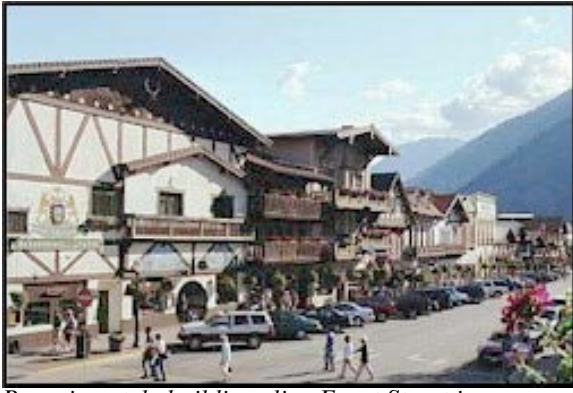
At **COLES CORNER** (pop. 40, alt. 1,958 ft.), 20 miles beyond Stevens Pass, SR-207 branches 4 miles north to **Lake Wenatchee State Park**. The park has over two miles of shoreline and offers camping, picnicking, swimming, boating, fishing, water skiing and kayaking. Boat rentals and horseback riding are available. Twenty miles of trails are designated for hiking, biking and equestrian uses. In winter, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing are popular. Lake Wenatchee, the source of its namesake river, is set amid towering, forested peaks. The paved road continues beyond the park, following its north shore, lined with vacation homes and cottages.

South of Coles Corner, US-2 enters the narrow gorge of **Tumwater Canyon**, one of the Evergreen State's scenic delights. Through this gorge the Wenatchee River tumbles in a series of rapids and cataracts. Snow fed waterfalls grace the canyon walls and spill from high peaks. Fires in the mid-1990s scorched the forest on the opposite bank. The canyon sports spectacular displays of spring wildflowers and in fall brilliant flashes of autumnal foliage. Leaving the canyon, US-2 enters the Wenatchee Valley at Leavenworth.

2. Leavenworth and the Wenatchee Valley

Eastbound: Leavenworth to Wenatchee (20 miles)

Washington's Bavarian Village, **LEAVENWORTH** (pop. 2,225, alt. 1,180 ft.) nestles at the base of the Cascade Mountains near the western end of the Wenatchee Valley. Established in 1890, it prospered first as a railroad division point, then as a logging and fruit packing center. The Great Northern mainline formerly passed through Leavenworth and the railroad established a roundhouse and machine shops here. In the 1920s GN rerouted its tracks through Chumstick, in effect relegating Leavenworth to branch line status. By the early 1960s community leaders decided to convert Leavenworth into a tourist destination by capitalizing on its scenic setting. Gradually the town's appearance was transformed into a Bavarian village, complete with alpine architecture bedecked with flower-filled window boxes and hanging flower baskets. Leavenworth is now one of the Northwest's most popular getaway destinations.



Bavarian-style buildings line Front Street in Leavenworth [Photo: Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce]

City Park, downtown between Highway 2 and Front Street, is the heart of all the action. Bavarian-style buildings flank Front and its side streets. Dozens of shops, galleries, boutiques and restaurants cater to visitors. Art displays are set up in the park on summer weekends. The **Upper Wenatchee Valley Museum**, 347 Division Street, has displays about the area's history. The unique **Nutcracker Museum** (735 Front Street, second floor) displays more than 5,000 nutcrackers.

Major annual events include the Washington State Autumn Leaf Festival (late September), Oktoberfest (early October) and the Christmas Lighting Festival (first three weekends in December). Area recreation includes hiking, fishing, camping, swimming, horseback riding, pack trips, white water rafting, snowmobiling and skiing.

The Wenatchee River downstream from Leavenworth is one of Washington's most popular rafting streams. Relatively calm stretches alternate with class III and IV rapids. There are a dozen or so outfitters offering guided whitewater trips during the spring and summer.

The **Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery**, 2 miles southwest of town on Icicle Road, raises more than 1.7 million chinook annually. Established in the early 1930s to maintain fish stocks, its visitor center has displays on the life of the salmon (open daily 8am-4pm). The hatchery hosts a Salmon Festival in mid-September.

The **Wenatchee Valley** extends southeastward from Leavenworth 20 miles to Wenatchee and the Columbia River. Pine woods cloak the hillsides that closely flank the valley. In the lower valley south-facing slopes support grasses and scrub. Snowcapped heights crown the far western horizon. This is one of the nation's prime fruit growing districts, and orchards fill the valley and extend fingerlike into its peripheral canyons. During the spring blossom period – late April into mid-May – the district is a sea of blooms.

The climate is particularly suited to apple growing, although cherries, pears, peaches and apricots are also raised. Apple varieties include Red and Golden Delicious, Granny Smith, Braeburn, Jonagold, Fuji, Gala and many others. Growers now use dwarf trees in high-density plantings to bring new orchards into production faster. This enables orchardists to get faster return on their investment and to respond more quickly to consumer demand for popular new varieties. The smaller trees also improve harvest efficiency because the apples are easier to reach as the crop is entirely handpicked. The harvest begins in mid-August and generally ends by early November. Washington apples are shipped throughout the U.S. and to more than 40 countries.



Orchards in bloom near Peshastin

PESHASTIN (pop. 900, alt. 1,010 ft.) is another valley town on the banks of the Wenatchee River, three miles beyond Leavenworth. Homesteading started in the upper Wenatchee valley in the late 1880s. The town was established when the Great Northern arrived in 1892. Its name derives from an Indian term 'Pish-pish-astin,' meaning broad-bottom canyon. Lumbering and fruit packing are the economic mainstays. There are also several wineries in the area.

Two miles east of the junction with US-97, the town of **DRYDEN** (pop. 500, alt. 977 ft.), nestles amid a sea of orchards. Great Northern Railway officials named the site in 1907 for a noted horticulturalist who speculated the area would be good for orchard crops. After a canal started providing irrigation water in 1912, fruit trees were planted on every available acre.

Several miles east of Dryden the sandstone spires of **Peshastin Pinnacles** stand just north of the highway. The state park is a popular rock climbing area.

Five miles east of Dryden, **CASHMERE** (pop. 3,075, alt. 795 ft.) stands in the heart of the Wenatchee Valley. Its name honors South Asia's fabled Vale of Kashmir. The orchard-filled valley, flanked by forested mountains with a backdrop of the snowcapped high Cascades provides a gorgeous setting. Cashmere's first name – Old Mission – recalls the early Roman Catholic mission established in 1863 (nothing remains save the 1870s cemetery). Highway 2/97 Business Route crosses the

river and leads into central Cashmere. Its downtown has a western look with lampposts and covered sidewalks. A pleasant residential district with tree-shaded streets and well-tended yards abounding in flowers lies just east of downtown. At the east end of town the **Cashmere Museum Pioneer and Village** features 20 authentic early structures, a working water wheel and one of the Northwest's most extensive collections of American Indian artifacts.

Cashmere is renowned for *applets and cotlets*, a fruit and nut confection coated with powdered sugar. A pair of Armenian refugees settled here in the early 20th century. What started out as a roadside stand evolved into a large commercial enterprise. The plant, known as **Liberty Orchards** (tours offered), is on Mission Avenue, a block south of Cottage.

The Cashmere area is renowned for its pear crops. The prime varieties are Bartlett and D'Anjou. On a trivia note, the geographic center of Washington is located 9 miles south of Cashmere at Red Hill.

MONITOR (pop. 120, alt. 710 ft.) lies just south of the highway beside the Wenatchee River. The main industry here is obvious – stacks of apple boxes stand outside the packing sheds and storage warehouses that line the railroad tracks. The community was first called Browns Flats. The Wenatchee River above Monitor is one of Washington's most popular whitewater rafting streams. Most outfitters start near Leavenworth and stop at **Wenatchee River County Park**, just downstream from Monitor. The rafting season extends from May into September, although the river is at its highest and most exciting in late spring.



[Photo: Wenatchee Convention & Visitors Bureau]

East of Monitor, traffic increases as we enter the northern part of the Wenatchee urban area. Highway 285 branches south, crosses the Wenatchee River and enters **WENATCHEE** (pop. 32,400, alt. 651 ft.). This becomes Wenatchee Avenue, which leads into the downtown area.

The city extends for over four miles along the west bank of the Columbia and spreads into the canyons and foothills of the mountains at its western edge. Together with East Wenatchee and other suburban communities, the district has nearly 60,000 people, making it the largest urban area in North Central Washington.

The surroundings are attractive. Orchards frame the suburbs and grasslands – golden brown in summer and lush green in spring – blend into pine woods that crown the heights. In winter, snow caps the mountains. The first settlers arrived in 1871, setting up a trading post on the banks of the Columbia River. In those years the only traffic was the occasional pack train headed for the mines in the distant interior Northwest.

A town was platted in 1888 along Miller Avenue (between Fifth and Springwater), well above the river. It relocated closer to the Columbia when the Great Northern opened a station (at First and Columbia) on its new mainline in 1892. The community prospered as a supply and transportation point for the surrounding region.

For a decade settlers tried various small-scale schemes to bring water to the parched but fertile earth. Finally, the Highline Canal was built in 1903, and by 1908 was transporting precious water to the East Wenatchee Bench by bridge. The span, at the foot of Bridge Street, is now open to bicycles and pedestrians. The orchard boom began. In the decade from 1900 to 1910, Wenatchee's population increased nearly ten-fold to 4,050.

Wenatchee's soil and climate are ideal for apple growing. Indeed, although the industry has suffered in recent years from over production and low market prices, the city still bills itself as "Apple Capital of the World." The area's major annual event – the *Apple Blossom Festival* – occurs in early May.

There are many attractions in Wenatchee, making a visit well worthwhile. Downtown Wenatchee has a collection of interesting buildings and shops. **Art on the Avenues** is an outdoor gallery featuring works on granite pedestals scattered throughout the downtown area. **Waterfront Park**, at the foot of Orondo Avenue, provides river access. The 11-mile **Apple Capital Trail** loops along both banks of the Columbia, crossing the river by two bridges. **Wenatchee Valley Farmers Market** takes place Wednesday and Saturday mornings on Columbia near Palouse from mid-May into October.

The **Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center**, downtown at 127 S. Mission Street, documents the history of the region from Native American times to the present. Among its highlights are a model of the Great Northern line through the Cascades and exhibits about the apple industry and the Pangborn-Herndon trans-Pacific flight.

Ohme Gardens, a mile north of the junction of US-2 and US-97, perches atop a rocky bluff overlooking the city and valley. Paths loop through carefully tended plantings recreating alpine and forest habitats, all the more striking given the garden's location in a desert climate. It's open daily from mid-April into mid-October.

Mission Street leads south to Squilchuck Road, which climbs into the mountains. Eight miles up, **Squilchuck State Park** (alt. 4,000 ft.) offers picnic tables and 10 miles of trails for hiking and mountain biking. In winter the park has a snow play area (sledding and tubing) and cross-country skiing. Four miles beyond the park is **Mission Ridge Ski Area** (alt. 4,600 ft.), beckoning downhill skiers and snowboarders with four chairlifts. The season extends from late November into early April.

Wenatchee has a nice selection of lodgings and eateries. Conventions are popular and tend to fill hotel rooms, so advance reservations are recommended (contact your nearest AAA office to book a room).

3. Over Blewett Pass

Southbound: Wenatchee to Cle Elum (67 miles)

Retrace our route west from Wenatchee, following US-2/97. A couple miles beyond Dryden, turn left on US-97. The highway follows Peshastin Creek, which forms one of the Wenatchee Valley's major peripheral canyons. Orchards fill its lower reaches. The scorched landscape on the ridges west of the highway wears the scars of horrific wildfires in the mid-1990s. Continuing south, the canyon narrows. At Mill Creek we leave orchards behind and enter the forest.

The last signs of civilization are at the small community of **INGALLS CREEK** (alt. 1,819 ft.), at the point where its namesake stream joins Peshastin Creek. Ingalls Creek drains the north face of the scenic Stuart Range. The trailhead for a hiking route following the valley into the Alpine Lake Wilderness, and eventually to Icicle Creek west of Leavenworth, is less than a mile west of here. A dozen miles south of the junction, we pass the site of **BLEWETT** (alt. 2,325 ft.), where a roadside marker indicates the location of a mining town established here in 1860 by prospectors returning from British Columbia. The ruin of a long abandoned ore-grinding machine known as an arrastra is in the area.

Highway 97 follows Tromsen Creek in a series of long, easy grades up to the summit of **Blewett Pass** (alt. 4,102 ft.). The Swauk Pass section is slightly longer than the old road [*See Below*], but is a much easier drive, featuring long, gradual grades, as opposed to the switchbacks, hairpin curves and twisting alignment of the original route. Local people continued to call this Blewett Pass, despite its correct geographic name of Swauk Pass. Recognizing this common usage, the Washington Board on Geographic Names officially changed Swauk to 'Blewett Pass,' and renamed the original Blewett 'Old Blewett Pass' in the mid-1990s.

South of the pass, the highway follows Swauk Creek, gradually losing elevation.

3a. Alternate route: *Old Blewett Pass Road*

Thirteen miles south of the US-2/97 junction, approximately ½-mile south of milepost 173, watch for a side road (right) – the junction is unmarked. This is the **Old Blewett Pass Road**, the original route of US-97 until the Swauk Pass alignment opened in 1957. Until the 1940s this was also the route of the Sunset Highway (US-10), which linked Spokane and the Inland Empire with the Puget Sound region.

The Old Blewett Pass Road lacks mile markers, directional and warning signs, and there are no guardrails. There is also no winter maintenance, so attempt this route only after snows have melted – generally June into October. It's paved, but watch for potholes. The road has a faded centerline, which has been worn off in many areas and is hard to see. The roadway is quite narrow and should be driven as if it were single-lane, especially on approaches to the numerous curves, many of which are "blind." Allow 25 to 30 minutes to drive the 11-mile route.

The road follows the upper reaches of Peshastin Creek. The first mile is relatively flat, passing a few impromptu campsites in the woods beside the creek. Motorists need to carefully navigate three one-lane bridges on this section. At several points erosion has eaten into the edge of the roadway. Five miles below the summit there is a junction with an unpaved Forest Road that branches off to the right along Scotty Creek – this is the only signed junction along the route. Lacking ongoing maintenance, vegetation is encroaching on the right of way and rocks, falling from the numerous cuts, litter the roadway.

A small sign announces the 4,071-foot summit of **Old Blewett Pass**. The pass also marks the Kittitas-Chelan county boundary, beyond which we begin to lose elevation. Sweeping views open up to the south, over valleys and ridgelines to the western end of the Kittitas Valley. A mile before the junction with US-97, it switchbacks down the side of a steep grade. There are several hairpin curves. At the bottom of the grade we return to US-97.

Three miles south of the Old Blewett Pass junction, Highway 97 passes **MINERAL SPRINGS** (alt. 2,720 ft.), little more than a roadside inn. Its name recalls a way stop developed here beside a sulfur spring.

SIDE TRIP TO LIBERTY

Another three miles south of Mineral Springs, a paved side road leads two miles east to **LIBERTY** (pop. 100, alt. 2,680 ft.), a living ghost town, located on Williams Creek in the Wenatchee National Forest. Prospectors struck gold along Swauk and Williams creeks in the late 1860s. Make-shift towns appeared and vanished, until Williams Creek was established on the site of present-day Liberty in 1880. In 1897 it was renamed Meaghersville, and when a post office relocated here in 1912, it was given its present name by postal authorities.

At its peak Liberty boasted a railroad, school, general store, meat market, saloons, a dance hall, an assay office, barber shop, taxidermy, gasoline station, a sawmill and offices of logging and mining companies. Today, false-front buildings and cabins line its single main street and the town has been declared a **National Historic District** for its representation of an early 20th-century mining settlement. These structures are private property and there are no visitor services here. Active private mine claims are scattered throughout the area – please respect private property advisories. The district is also noted for its gem-quality wire gold. The surrounding mountains and canyons are popular with rockhounds. Agate beds can be found on Red Top Mountain, on Teanaway Ridge, west of US-97.

Return to US-97.

Three miles south of the Liberty junction, follow SR-970 west. Reaching the crest of a grassy ridge, a beautiful view extends westward across the tidy fields and farms of the Teanaway Valley. Forested foothills rise up to the 9,000-foot snowcapped crags of the Stuart Range, which form a stunning backdrop, off to the north. **Hidden Valley Guest Ranch** has an enviable site amongst all this grandeur, just off the highway. The road drops down to the Teanaway River, lined with towering black cottonwoods.

The village of **TEANAWAY** once stood near the junction of SR-970 and SR-10. During a gold rush to the Blewett Pass area in the late 19th century, this was an important outfitting point, as it was located on a railroad. Today one is hard pressed to call this a “town.” The settlement was named for a local Indian chief, called *Ten-a-weisn*. The local rail agency found it too difficult to transcribe, so it was changed to the present form. The name is also applied to the river, which empties into the Yakima just downstream from here.

Highway 970 runs arrow-straight to a junction with I-90. Follow signs for Cle Elum (SR-903).

4. Mountains to Sound Greenway

Westbound: Cle Elum to Seattle (84 miles)

CLE ELUM (pop. 1,865, alt. 1,905 ft.) is located on the banks of the upper Yakima River amid stands of pine, aspen and cottonwood. Its name comes from an Indian word meaning ‘swift water.’ Black gold from the Cle Elum District, the Northwest’s largest coalfield, fueled Northern Pacific’s steam locomotives from the late 1880s until the switch to diesel traction after World War II. Our route follows First Street, flanked by nicely maintained one- and two-story brick buildings, many from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The original mainline of the Northern Pacific parallels First Street, a block to the south. This is now a branch line of the Burlington Northern & Santa Fe.

There are several historic attractions in town. The **Cle Elum Historical Telephone Museum**, 221 E. First Street, preserves telephone equipment dating back to the early 1900s. Cle Elum was the last district in the Northwest to get automatic dialing and this served as the central switchboard until 1966. The museum is open daily afternoons Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day. **Carpenter Museum**, W. Third Street and Billings Avenue, occupies the 1914 Frank Carpenter House. Its original furnishings depict the comfortable lifestyle of an early 20th-century banker. The museum and art gallery are open Friday through Sunday afternoons.

At the west end of Cle Elum, a paved road leads a mile south, crossing the Yakima River, to **SOUTH CLE ELUM** (pop. 530, alt. 1,922 ft.). The town grew up as a separate municipality around the station for the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad, popularly called the Milwaukee Road. Opened in 1909, this was the last of the transcontinental lines. The tracks were pulled up in the 1980s and the right-of-way now forms **Iron Horse State Park**, an easy gravel route (also known as the John Wayne Pioneer Trail) open to hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riding. Cross-country skiers use the trail in winter.

The old railway yard on the west side of town constitutes the **South Cle Elum Rail Yard National Historic District**. Interpretive panels describe the history of the area along The Rail Yard Trail, which loops through the site. The former Milwaukee Road Depot now functions as a restaurant and interpretive center. The former crew bunkhouse is a bed and breakfast inn.

SIDE TRIP TO ROSLYN AND SALMON LA SAC

From the west side of Cle Elum, Highway 903 leads four miles north to **ROSLYN** (pop. 895, alt. 2,266 ft.). This picturesque former coal mining town dates back to 1886 and has been declared a **National Historic District**. Its frame and brick structures are scattered among relics of its mining past. Roslyn's population peaked at 4,000 in the 1920s and mining ended in 1963. If time permits, check out the **Roslyn Museum** and the **Roslyn Cemeteries** – the latter cradles the remains of yesterday's citizens in 25 ethnic sections, an unusual and interesting sight.

Highway 903 continues two miles north to the village of **RONALD** (pop. 310, alt. 2,300 ft.), another former coal mining town (a small-scale Roslyn). Large piles of mine tailings can be seen on the east and north side of town. Another couple miles up the road we enter **LAKEDALE** (pop. 500, alt. 2,240 ft.), a district of cabins and summer homes, and catch our first glimpse of **Cle Elum Lake**. The 8-mile long lake occupies a trough scoured out by ancient glaciers – today a dam controls the water level. Entering the **Wenatchee National Forest** the state highway ends, but continues as an excellent county road (speed limit signs are posted for snowmobiles). The paved road follows the lake's east shore, although trees block our view of the lake. Private lanes branch down to cabins and summer homes close to the shore. One leads to **Wish-Poosh**, a Forest Service campground. Near the northern half of the lake the highway approaches the shore, offering sweeping views across the white-capped expanse of water with its backdrop of a forested ridgeline. At the lake's northern extremity there are several boat launches.

The road follows the Cle Elum River north another six miles, passing several campgrounds (Cle Elum River and Red Mountain). Pavement ends 17 miles north of Roslyn at **Salmon la Sac**. The disused two-story log building here was a former Forest Service ranger station. It was built in 1911 by a French mining company and was intended to be a railroad station. The Forest Service obtained the building in a lawsuit against the company for cutting trees without a permit. It housed the ranger district headquarters from 1915 into the 1980s. A narrow lane spans the river to the popular **Salmon la Sac Campground** on the opposite shore. North of here, a narrow gravel road leads another dozen miles and more deep into the heart of the eastern Cascades. Snowcapped peaks in the Alpine Wilderness off to the north beckon backcountry recreationists.

Return to Roslyn.

Two miles south of Roslyn on SR-903, follow signs west to I-90. This road runs through pine woods and the **Suncadia** residential resort, reaching the interstate in three miles. The freeway follows the old route of the Sunset Highway, blazed through the Cascades in 1915.



*Lake Easton State Park is a year-round camping park with nearly five miles of shoreline on its namesake lake.
[Photo: Washington State Parks]*

The former railroad community of **EASTON** (pop. 480, alt. 2,160 ft.) lines the tracks south of I-90 Exit 71. The town grew up after the Northern Pacific opened its line in 1888. Its name derives from its location, near the east portal of the Stampede Pass railroad tunnel. Rebuilt after a fire in 1934, Easton today caters to year-round outdoor recreationists and is a major access point to **Iron Horse State Park** and the John Wayne recreational trail.

West of town I-90 skirts **Lake Easton**, a reservoir on the Yakima River. **Lake Easton State Park** offers fishing, boating, camping and winter recreation.

Continuing west, the forest changes -- fir and cedar replace pines, reflecting the higher annual precipitation prevalent near the Cascade crest.

At I-90 exit 62, Forest Road 49 branches north to **Kachees Lake** (Indian meaning 'many fish'). Although a natural lake, its level is controlled by a dam, built in 1912 as part of the Bureau of Reclamation's Yakima Project. Recreation includes boating, fishing, swimming and camping.



Looking east toward Snoqualmie Pass. Eastbound I-90 is at right, the westbound lanes at left.
[Photo: Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust]

West of exit 62, Interstate 90 hugs the shore of **Keechelus Lake** (its name means ‘few fish’). This is the source of the Yakima River, which flows over 200 miles to the Columbia at Richland. A dam regulates its level and in late summer and early fall its surface falls, exposing stumps of the old forest that grew here before the lake level was raised.

From the lake’s western end, I-90 easily climbs up to Snoqualmie Pass. **HYAK** (pop. 50, alt. 2,565 ft.), is a recreational community just before the summit off exit 54. The town grew up around a railroad station established in 1915. The ski area here is the state’s oldest, built by the Milwaukee Road railway in 1934. During the 1940s it featured a major ski jump and hosted national competitions. The railroad’s 2.3-mile **Snoqualmie Pass Tunnel**, now part of the John Wayne Trail, is open to hikers from late spring to early fall.

Between exit 54 and 52, you can follow SR-906, which links a trio of ski areas south of the freeway, passing through the resort community of **SNOQUALMIE PASS** (pop. 310, alt. 3,022 ft.). This is the lowest pass through the mountains and has been an important transportation route since Native American times. Pioneers blazed a wagon road through the pass in 1868. The first automobiles navigated the rough dirt track in 1915. This was gradually upgraded as the Sunset Highway, the major auto road connecting eastern and western Washington. In 1926, it was designated US-10 and was kept open during the winter for the first time in 1932-33. The highway was paved in 1934.

On Highway 906, off Exit 53, is a Forest Service information center, a motel (AAA approved), restaurant, gas station and the wood and stone structure known as **Travelers Rest**, which has the only public restrooms for miles around. The community’s prevailing architecture is chalet-style, with steeply pitched roofs to deflect the heavy snowfall. Although Snoqualmie Pass bustles with activity during the ski season, it’s fairly tranquil the rest of the year. In summer the area offers mountain biking and hiking. The **Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail**, which follows the Cascade-Sierra crest from the Canadian border south to Mexico, crosses the freeway at exit 52. **The Summit at Snoqualmie**, with 20 lifts in four separate areas is Washington’s largest ski complex. Ski season extends from Thanksgiving (snow conditions permitting) into early April.

At the saddle of the summit, a side road branches north to **ALPENTAL** (pop. 50, alt. 3000 ft.), a resort community in a pretty valley flanked by 5000-6000 foot peaks. Vacation homes nestle among the trees and ski runs cling to the slopes.

West of the pass, I-90 splits. Its westbound segment is built on an elevated structure clinging to the side of a steep rocky ridge. This structure keeps the roadway above the path of avalanches. The eastbound lanes follow a separate alignment on the south side of the canyon. Dozens of small waterfalls course the mountainside beside the freeway. Winter locks these streams in ice. As we lose elevation, the forest becomes increasingly lush.

There is an alternative to the freeway. At Exit 52, Forest Road 58 follows the old **Snoqualmie Pass Road**. In summer dappled light filters through a canopy of trees arching above the road. It passes some private homes nestled in the woods, views of the river, trailheads (leading to waterfalls up the mountainsides that flank the approach to the pass), and Forest Service campgrounds (**Denny Creek** and **Asahel Curtis**). The 1.3-mile **Asahel Curtis Nature Trail** loops through one of the last old growth forests in the Snoqualmie Valley. The giants include Douglas-fir, western red cedar, western hemlock and Pacific silver fir. A *Northwest Forest Pass* (the day pass costs \$5; the annual pass is \$30) is required to park at these public recreation areas.

The freeway follows the South Fork Snoqualmie River. West of Exit 45, you can see the former Milwaukee Road railway route along the hillside south of the freeway. Note the steel bridges spanning peripheral canyons. The last trains rumbled along this line in 1981. Today it’s part of the John Wayne recreation trail. At Exit 38 the old Snoqualmie Pass Road leads to **Olallie State Park**. The park spans a 3½-mile stretch of the South Fork Snoqualmie River and has traces of logs from the old corduroy road built in the late 1860s. The most spectacular sight in the park is **Twin Falls**, accessible by a 1.6-mile trail. A shorter trail (1.3 miles), leads to the falls from the west end of the park, south of I-90 Exit 34. The river plunges 300 feet over a series of drops.

West of Exit 38 the freeway makes a wide turn around a ridge, dropping down to the widening lowlands. The ridge on the right is a moraine deposited by an ancient glacier. The bulky mass of **Mount Si** (pronounced ‘sigh’) rises just north. From Exit 32 a road leads south to **Rattlesnake Lake**, where a trail winds up to sweeping views back across the valley to Mount Si. Despite the name, there are no rattlesnakes in this region. Near the lake, the **Cedar River Watershed Education Center** has displays about the valley which supplies water to nearly a million customers in the Seattle area. On summer weekends the center offers guided nature tours into the otherwise-restricted watershed.

At Exit 31, follow SR-202 into **NORTH BEND** (pop. 5,855, alt. 445 ft.). The town straddles the South Fork Snoqualmie River near the base of Mount Si. Logging and small-scale farming occupied early settlers, who arrived in the late 1850s. By the 1880s hop growing was the major cash crop. The railroad arrived in 1889, spurring the platting of a town. In the early 1890s an infestation of aphids brought an end to the hop industry throughout western Washington. First called Snoqualmie, then Mountain View, the town's name was changed to its present form, which describes a sharp bend in the river. For decades, the town was a quiet backwater, a farm trading center bypassed by the interstate. Today it marks the eastern edge of the Seattle urban region. Some of its buildings feature alpine architectural motifs.

North Bend gained wide notoriety as the setting for David Lynch's cult 1990-91 television series, *Twin Peaks*. For insights into area history, visit the **Snoqualmie Valley Historical Museum**, off Exit 31 on the road into town. The museum, featuring American Indian and pioneer displays, is open Thursday through Sunday afternoons from April through October. The **North Bend Depot**, on McClellan Street just south of E. North Bend Way, recalls the town's railroad past. Built near the site of the former Milwaukee Road Depot (1912-75), it serves as the North Bend terminus of the **Snoqualmie Valley Railroad**, which offers excursion trains service weekends from April through October.

The U.S. Forest Service's **North Bend Ranger Station**, on the east side of town at 42404 SE North Bend Way, has information on recreation in the nearby Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. Forest Road 56 follows the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River more than 20 miles east into the mountains, passing trailheads and campgrounds.

Mount Si (elev. 4,167 ft.) is a prominent rampart of the western Cascades. Seen from North Bend, it resembles a giant haystack. The steep western façade is an active, high-angle fault. Its name recalls pioneer settler Josiah 'Si' Merritt. A 4-mile trail twists up to the summit, where a panoramic view ranges from Mount Rainier on the south, across the Puget lowlands to the Olympic Mountains on the western horizon. It's a strenuous climb, gaining 3,100 feet. This is one of the state's most popular climbs and upwards of 10,000 people use the trail annually. Get an early start to get a jump on the crowds. The trail is usually snow free from April into early November. To reach the trailhead, take North Bend Way east from town; turn left on Mount Si Road and follow about 3 miles.



*Snoqualmie Falls is at its grandest after heavy winter and spring rains.
[Photo: City of Snoqualmie]*

overlooks the falls and a trail leads down to its boulder strewn base. In 1898 the world's first underground power plant opened in the rock behind the falls. Although it diverts some of the river's flow, Snoqualmie Falls remains an impressive site, especially during high runoff following heavy rains. Salish Lodge, an AAA Four Diamond rated lodging and restaurant, perches at the edge of the cliff just north of the falls.

Highway 202 continues three miles northwest to **SNOQUALMIE** (pop. 8,600, alt. 423 ft.). Like most of the towns in the region, Snoqualmie got its start as a lumbering center. The railroad arrived in 1889 and the town incorporated in 1903. The completion of I-90 in the 1970s improved access to the area and since 2000, Snoqualmie has been one of the state's fastest-growing cities. There are several historic buildings in the central business district along Railroad Avenue.

The **Northwest Railway Museum** occupies a restored 1890-era depot. **Snoqualmie Valley Railway** excursion trains depart from the depot weekends from April through October. Historic railway rolling stock, a treasure trove for rail fans, stands on the tracks west of the depot.

The biggest attraction of the region is **Snoqualmie Falls**, two miles northwest of town on SR-202. The 268-foot plunge is Washington's most popular waterfall, attracting 1.5 million visitors a year. A cliff-top viewpoint

West of Snoqualmie Falls, SR-202 winds down the escarpment marking the boundary between the upper and lower Snoqualmie Valley. **FALL CITY** (pop. 2,000, alt. 90 ft.) is a pleasant community beside the Snoqualmie River, three miles below the falls. The first settlers arrived in the late 1860s. A post office opened in 1872. The town prospered as a tourist gateway to Snoqualmie Falls, but languished after the main highway bypassed the area after World War II. **Riverfront Park** has a historic hop shed (1880), the last remaining structure of its kind in King County. Despite its long history and sense of community, Fall City has never incorporated.

Highway 202 crosses the Snoqualmie River; just south of the bridge take the Preston-Fall City Road. This follows the Raging River three miles south to **PRESTON** (pop. 500, alt. 508 ft.), where we return to Interstate 90. The town, named for the official of the Seattle, Lake Shore & Eastern Railroad, dates from the 1890s. A post office opened in 1893. Sawmilling was the main employer, until the mill closed in 1970. Many of the early settlers came from Sweden and their native language was commonly used into the 1940s. Today, Preston strives to maintain an identity as suburban sprawl spreads across the area. The former route of the railway is now a recreation trail. **Tiger Mountain** (elev. 3004 ft.) is the high, forested ridge south of the freeway. The area is a state forest reserve and is popular with hikers.

Interstate 90 glides westward through wooded hills. **HIGH POINT** (pop. 280, alt. 525 ft.), at Exit 20, was a station on the Seattle, Lake Shore & Eastern Railroad, who named it for being at the end of a long grade up from Issaquah. Logging was the mainstay and the area was nicknamed “Little Sweden” for the prevalence of Scandinavians in the local population. The modern highway has obliterated the old town site and its contemporary population is dispersed over a wide area, lacking any semblance of a town. The frontage road south of the exit leads to a major trailhead for a network of paths lacing the Tiger Mountain State Forest.

West of High Point the interstate curves around the lower slopes of Tiger Mountain. Emerging on a narrow valley, we enter **ISSAQUAH** (pop. 31,150, alt. 98 ft.), at the edge of the continuously built-up area of metropolitan Seattle. A vein of coal attracted miners in the early 1860s, and soon farmers and loggers had settled in. The hamlet was first called Gilman, in honor of Daniel Gilman, who persuaded the SLS&E Railroad to build its line through the community in 1889. When it incorporated in 1899, town leaders petitioned the Legislature to change it to an anglicized version of *Is-qu-ah*, which means ‘bird song.’ Growth has been rapid since 1990. Major employers in the area include Boeing, Microsoft and Siemens. Retail giant Costco has its corporate headquarters here.



*Preservation Park, downtown at Front and Rainier, has a logging history display.
[Photo: Issaquah History.org]*

From Exit 17, Front Street leads south into Issaquah’s historic center. The old part of the city nestles on the flats beside its namesake creek near the base of forested peaks – Tiger Mountain to the east and Squak Mountain to the south. A third peak, Cougar Mountain, lies to the west. Locals label these heights the Issaquah Alps and they are popular hiking areas.

Attractions in town include the **Issaquah Depot Museum** (a restored 1890 depot), the **Gilman Town Hall Museum** (dating from 1888) and the **Issaquah State Salmon Hatchery** (self-guided tours). Shoppers enjoy **Gilman Village** (off Exit 17 on NW Gilman Boulevard) a complex of shops and restaurants in restored period homes in a park like setting,. At **Boehm’s Candies**, 255 NE Gilman Blvd., you can see chocolates made with the traditional hand-dipped method.

North of the freeway, Issaquah Creek meanders toward **Lake Sammamish**. Retail, warehouse and corporate buildings cover the plain that was open space until the 1970s. **Lake Sammamish State Park**, north of Exit 15, is a 512-acre tract of woods and wetlands. Its 1.2 miles of lakefront feature a large freshwater beach. Activities include swimming, boating, waterskiing, fishing, birding and hiking. The lake, shaped like an elongated ‘S,’ is 8 miles long and up to 1½ miles wide.

Cougar Mountain Zoo is another Issaquah attraction. Among its exotic and endangered species are cougars, reindeer, cranes, antelopes, macaws, emus, lemurs and alpacas. The zoo is south of I-90 Exit 15, then west on Newport Way (follow signs). They’re open Wednesdays through Sundays (daily in December until the 23rd).

The interstate climbs a ridge with Lake Sammamish to the right and Cougar Mountain to the left. **BELLEVUE** (pop. 124,600, alt. 100 ft.), straddling the ridges between lakes Sammamish and Washington, is the state’s fifth largest city. Settlers started clearing the forest east of Lake Washington in the late 1800s, establishing small farms to supply produce to the urban market of Seattle. By 1900 an estimated 400 people were living in the area encompassed by today’s city. Berries were an early specialty crop. In the first decade of the 20th century the Northern Pacific Railroad opened its line along the east side of Lake Washington. By 1908 a road had been built to Kirkland, where a ferry service crossed the lake to Seattle. The Lake Washington Ship Canal was completed in 1917, opening the lake to seaborne commerce. The American Pacific Whaling Co. established its base on Meydenbauer Bay and from 1920 into the 1940s Bellevue was an important whaling port.

The opening of the Mercer Island Floating Bridge in 1940 sparked a boom on the east side of the lake. Bellevue incorporated in 1953, with a population of 5,940. Passing the interchange with I-405, the city’s impressive collection of highrises is on your right. To the west, the tops of downtown Seattle’s skyscrapers rise above an intervening ridge.

Interstate 90 bridges the narrow East Channel of Lake Washington to **MERCER ISLAND** (pop. 22,700, alt. 75 ft.), a residential community on its namesake island. First settled in the late 19th century, it languished until the first East Channel Bridge opened in 1923. A ferry linked the island with Seattle until the opening of the Mercer Island Floating Bridge in 1940. Improved access sparked a wave of suburban growth. The city’s business district lies south of I-90 Exit 7, invisible to us as the eight-lane freeway is recessed in a concrete lined right-of-way. West of here a 0.6-mi.-long landscaped lid covers the freeway.

West of the lid the **Mercer Island Floating Bridges** carry I-90 across the 1.5-mile wide main channel of Lake Washington. The first bridge (south span), considered a marvel of engineering, opened in 1940. Washington State Highway Department

Director Lacey V. Murrow, brother of broadcast journalist Edward R. Murrow, advocated the use of floating concrete pontoons because of the lake's 200-foot depth. As traffic increased, a second parallel span was built in 1989 (this structure carries westbound traffic). During a 1990 windstorm sections of the original bridge sank. It was rebuilt and now carries eastbound traffic.

Lake Washington, measuring 20 miles from north to south, is the second-largest natural lake in the state. Covering over 34 square miles, with 58 miles of shoreline, the lake forms a signature feature of the region's urban landscape. Native Americans referred to it with names roughly translated as 'large body of fresh water.' Isaac Ebey, one of Seattle's pioneer settlers called it Lake Geneva in 1851. Some also called it Lake Duwamish. It received its present name in 1856.

Midway across the lake, look to your far left; in clear weather there's a classic view of Mount Rainier. Its 14,411-foot summit is the tallest peak in the Pacific Northwest. To the right you might see the distant snowy dome of Mount Baker, another volcano in Washington's North Cascades.

Seattle covers the hills flanking the western shore of the lake. Downtown's lofty office towers cluster in the distance. At the west end of the bridge we enter **SEATTLE**. The bridge span rises up to enter the Mount Baker Tunnel. A concrete bas-relief above the tunnel's portal reads "Seattle, Portal to the Pacific."

**KEEPING
INFORMED ON
THE ROAD**

Here is a listing of area
radio stations . . .

BELLEVUE
KBCS-FM – 91.3FM

CASHMERE
KZPH-FM – 106.7FM

LEAVENWORTH
KOHO-FM – 101.1FM

SEATTLE
(selected)
KVI – 570AM
KIRO – 710AM
KJR – 950AM
KOMO – 1000AM
KKOL – 1300AM
KEXP-FM – 90.3FM
KUBE-FM – 93.3FM
KUOW – 94.9FM (NPR)
KIRO – 97.3FM
KING-FM – 98.1FM

WENATCHEE
KPQ – 560AM
KRKT – 900AM
KWWX – 1340AM
KWNC – 1370AM
KNWR – 90.7FM (NPR)
KYSN-FM – 97.7FM
KAPP-FM – 99.5FM
KPQ-FM – 102.1FM
KWWW – 103.9FM
KKRV-FM – 104.7FM

jpk – 17 July, 2012