



## Legislation Text

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Clerk 03/01/2012

A MOTION supporting efforts of the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust to gain designation as a National Heritage Area and urging Congress to approve such designation.

WHEREAS, in 1990, the Issaquah Alps Trails Club led a citizens march from Snoqualmie Pass to the Seattle waterfront to dramatize the need for a greenway plan, and

WHEREAS, in 1991, the nonprofit Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust was formed, still governed to this day by a sixty-member board of directors representing a diversity of conservation, development, businesses and local, state and federal interests, with the goal of creating a one-hundred-mile-long Greenway along Interstate 90 from the Seattle waterfront and across the Cascades, and

WHEREAS, in 1998, Federal Highway Administration designated the Mountains to Sound Greenway as a National Scenic Byway, wherein certain roads receive recognition from the U.S. Department of Transportation based on archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic qualities, and

WHEREAS, today within its 1.5 million acres, more than nine hundred thousand acres of land are publicly owned, from city parks to expansive public forests, more than one hundred thousand acres are conserved as permanent forests and farms in private ownership, there are over one thousand six hundred miles of recreational trails, twenty-eight cities and 1.8 million people, and

WHEREAS, the greenway is often heralded as a national model for conservation and land use, showcasing successful efforts weaving together the urban and the wild landscapes of the 1.5 million acres surrounding Interstate 90, including the fifteenth-largest metropolis in the United States, and

WHEREAS, the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust has been uniquely successful in acting as a shepherd for the greenway and that it has the capacity and the support needed to be the local coordinating entity for the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area, and

WHEREAS, in 2009, the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust board announced a plan to gain National Heritage Area designation for the greenway - a federal designation meant to highlight a unique feature or local history, and

WHEREAS, while there are currently forty-nine National Heritage Areas, the designation of the greenway would be the first in Washington state, and

WHEREAS, the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust began the effort by first identifying and cataloging the stories that shape its heritage, and then hosting more than one hundred forty public meetings from which there emerged a clear consensus from over one thousand stakeholders that the greenway will benefit enormously from such a designation, and

WHEREAS, the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust released a draft feasibility study dated January 2012, and

WHEREAS, National Heritage Areas are designated by Congress as landscapes wherein historic preservation, natural resource conservation, recreation, heritage tourism and educational projects can be more easily supported through public-private partnerships, and

WHEREAS, a National Heritage Area is not a unit of the U.S. National Park Service, and no land is owned, managed or regulated by the U.S. National Park Service, which acts rather to provide advisory and technical assistance and distribute matching federal funds from Congress to National Heritage Area entities, and

WHEREAS, National Heritage Area designation of the greenway would provide increased access to private funds and federal matching funds and technical assistance from the U.S. National Park Service, and

WHEREAS, while National Heritage Area designation for the greenway could increase public

awareness of and strengthen conservation efforts within the greenway, the designation does not affect private property rights, legislate new public lands or add land-use regulations or more regulatory authority for lands within the greenway;

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

The council supports and endorses the efforts of the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust to gain official recognition for the greenway, and urges Congress to designate the Mountains to Sound Greenway as a National Heritage Area.