



## Legislation Text

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Clerk 03/06/2014

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

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

WHEREAS, King County shares the vision of the town of Skykomish as a vibrant historic town on the railroad, surrounded by the Cascade mountains, that provides access to numerous outdoor recreation opportunities and that achieves economic vitality through: a balance between tourism-related industries and those that serve local and area residents; appropriate infrastructure and services to sustain the community and

support future opportunities for growth; enhanced livability of the town through the maintenance of a high quality of life for younger and older generations of Skykomish residents alike; references to the unique history of the town and its character that are maintained in new development; clear, consistent connections and access to the town from surrounding areas, as well as to cultural and natural amenities within the town; and promotion of the town's strong relationship to the environment, and

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

WHEREAS, the objectives of the Skykomish Valley Economic Development, Recreation, and Natural Resource Conservation Initiative are to enhance conservation and recreation-based economic development in the town of Skykomish, and conserve the natural resources in the Skykomish valley. The initiative will seek to identify potential actions that would:

1. 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; scenic vistas; and outdoor recreation opportunities;
2. Maintain working forests to retain timber related jobs and avoid conversion of forest lands to nonforest uses;
3. 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;

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

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

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

A. King County will support for Skykomish Valley Economic Development, Recreation, and Natural Resource Conservation Initiative by continuing to collaborate with the town of Skykomish, the U.S. Forest Service, the Washington state Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Washington state Department of Transportation, recreational groups such as the Washington Trail Association, American Whitewater and the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, nonprofit conservation organizations, such as Forterra, the Stevens Pass Greenway and Skykomish Environmental Institute and Snohomish and Chelan counties, as part of the Skykomish Valley Economic Development, Recreation and Natural Resource Conservation Initiative.

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

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

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

3. The department of natural resources and parks historic preservation program will continue to support protection, restoration and reuse of historic structures in Skykomish and the surrounding valley.