

## West Snoqualmie River Road Heritage Corridor

**Location:** Snoqualmie Valley  
**Length:** 5.8 miles  
**Begins:** Tolt Hill Road  
**Ends:** SR 202

Corridor consists of the West Snoqualmie River Road NE/SE, running south from Tolt Hill Road to a series of eight connecting streets all angling east and south to SR 202. These include: E Main St, W Snoqualmie River Road SE, SE 24th St, 316th Ave SE, SE 28th St, 321st Ave SE, SE 31st St, and 324th Ave SE.

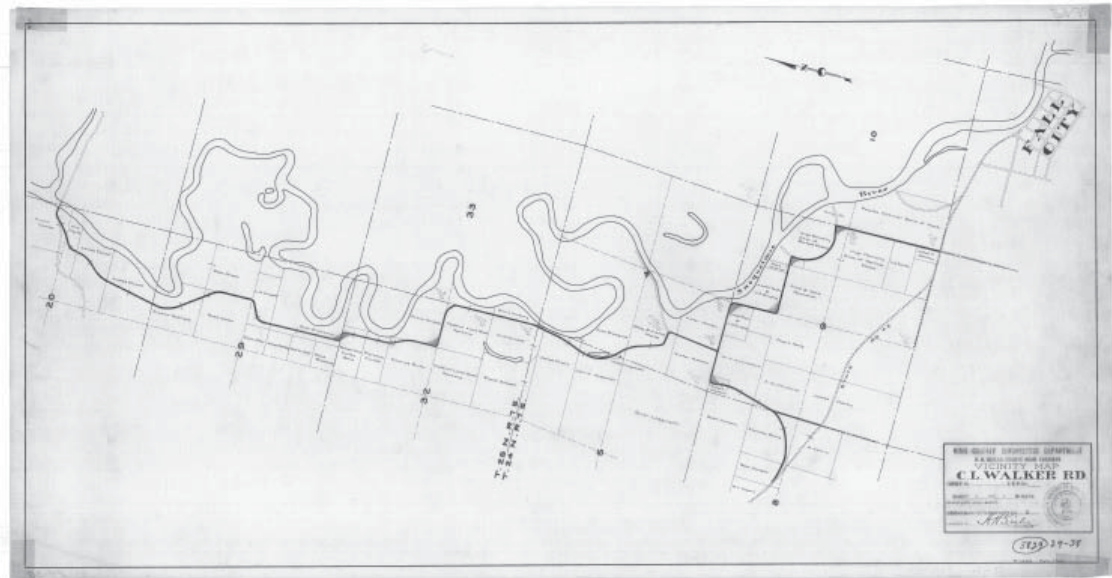
### Road history in local context

Road building in the lower Snoqualmie River Valley below Snoqualmie Falls was slow to start. As the lower valley floor was cleared of forest, subsistence farms developed through the 1860s-80s, providing a variety of cash crops to local markets. But for several decades these products were transported to market via flat-bottomed river steamboats. Farmsteads were actually oriented toward the river, not toward roads, and built on the high ground that flanked the channel.

Into the early 20th century, area residents crossed the river in personal small craft, or at strategic ferry landings. At the village of Tolt, this ferry was at Ames Landing at today's Tolt-MacDonald Park. In Fall City, Charles Bonnell built what was very likely the valley's first swing bridge across the river in 1889.

That bridge, and the coming of the Seattle Lake Shore and Eastern Railroad through Fall City that same year, first inspired construction of a north-south valley wagon road east of the river, connecting the villages of Fall City and Tolt. A 1907 Anderson atlas of King County shows that road (now SR 203) completed all the way to Cherry Valley, or Duvall.

The first petitioner for a road on the west bank of the river, for what is now the West Snoqualmie River Road, was Charles L. Walker in 1888. Walker hoped to connect Fall City, (from today's 324th Avenue and SR 202) to Tolt, but the surveyors found that the swampland at what is now called Carnation Marsh Natural Area made the pro-



*C.L. Walker Rd, 1940, From King County Road Services Map Vault Database; Road History Packet, Road No. 228*



West Snoqualmie Road near Pleasant Hill, c. 1911. Courtesy of King County Archives



Tolt Bridge over Snoqualmie River, c. 1911. Courtesy of King County Archives

posed route not practical at the north end. The surveyors also noted in the Viewers' Report (dated March, 1889), "There are no settlers below this point who would or does [sic] need such a road." Thus, the Charles Walker Road No. 228 was built all of a piece, but only as far north as the marsh. It is shown as such on the 1907 Anderson map.

In 1910, Charles Davies petitioned for completion of the road at its north end, from the marsh to a newly built bridge across the Snoqualmie, just south of the Tolt River. This strategic bridge was later replaced in 1922, and again most recently in 2008. The official survey map for the Davies Road, dated November 1910, shows the bridge under construction. By 1912, the bridge was in place, and connected to the new Tolt Hill Road over the ridge. The Davies Road extension was completed shortly thereafter.

The West Snoqualmie River Road, complete by 1913, remained a quiet rural corridor in the decades that followed. Dairy farming came to the fore in the first half of the 20th century. Historic farmsteads, whose barns illustrated a progression of types and styles, were built along its length. This road also includes one location of special note. The site of old Fort Patterson, a small fortification built during the Indian Wars of 1855-56 under Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens, is located at an unmarked spot midway along the road on the Fred Keller Farm (HRI #738).

Sources: King County records: Assessor's Property Record Cards, Land Use and Aerial Survey - 1936-1941, Historic Preservation Program HR database, *Index to Roads Records*, *Engineer's Road Establishment Atlas - 1913*, Roads' Map Vault database. Maps: AAA - 1917-1929; Anderson - 1888, 1907; Kroll - 1912, 1913, 1926, 1930, 1936, 1938; Metsker - 1926, 1936; Washington Map & Blueprint Co. - 1900, 1905, 1908.

## Corridor signature

- Evocative rural ambiance
- Authentic “back road” experience
- Inviting agri-tourism stops

The Snoqualmie River Road Heritage Corridor steps back to the early 20th century when farming was a way of life and the valley seemed miles from the city. Located in a secluded pocket of the valley with proximity to the meandering river, this corridor offers peaceful ambiance, low traffic levels, and bucolic views. Several working specialty farms on old dairy acreage provide seasonal interest.

## Contributing features

The following **roadway features** contribute positively to overall corridor character:

- Historic alignment - curvilinear in north half, right angle in south half
- No roadway striping
- Minimal shoulders; ground vegetation to edge of roadway
- Flat roadway crown
- Minimal signage

The following **contextual features** contribute positively to overall corridor character:

- Views across open agricultural lands toward forested foothills
- Cut flower fields, row crops, and pastures
- Historic dairy farmsteads, barns, and milk houses
- Grazing livestock
- Natural features and recreational attractions

## Non-contributing features

The following elements visually detract from overall corridor character:

- Suburban-style landscaping and monument signs at entrance to Carnation and Tall Chief golf courses
- Several newer, non-farm residences

