

# Mountains to Sound Greenway - I-90

Drive east from Seattle on I-90 through pastoral valleys, lush forests and a dramatic mountain landscape. Visit historic towns and scenic spots for forest walks or challenging hikes. Cross the Cascades into a drier climate where coal mining built pioneer towns on the way to the Columbia River.



Length: 100 miles / 160.0 km  
 Time to Allow: 1.5 to 2 hours to drive the byway.

## Local Information

**Washington State Tourism Div.**  
 800-544-1800  
 360-725-4181

## Visitor Services

### Fees



There are no fees along the byway proper.

### Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities



A connected network of trails for walkers, hikers, bicyclists, equestrians, and handicapped visitors is a fundamental part of the Greenway concept. Towns, counties, and agencies in the I-90 corridor have adopted plans to complete links for a trail system that will lead from Seattle through rural areas to the mountains and a connection with the cross-state John Wayne Trail. This system will be managed by the State Parks.

Existing trails are paved or gravel, and they are designed to meet state safety requirements. The I-90 right-of-way can be traveled by bicycle for the entire length of the Greenway, including separated and landscaped trails along urban portions of the highway. Many recreational trails exist along the corridor in lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service, the State Department of Natural Resources, State Parks, and private lands. Existing trails and missing links are all documented in the Washington Department of Transportation's *Mountains to Sound Greenway Implementation Plan, Vol. 4*.

There are many significant trails found near the I-90 corridor. When linked, they will provide a continuous Mountains to Sound Greenway trail system in the I-90 Greenway corridor. Existing trails include:

- Seattle I-90 corridor trail: 13.5 miles to Bellevue
- Eastgate I-90 trail: 1 mile

- Issaquah/High Point Trail: 1 mile
- High Point/Preston link: 3 miles
- Preston/Snoqualmie Trail: 6 miles
- Snoqualmie Centennial Trail: 2 miles, paved
- Snoqualmie/North Bend/Cedar Falls Trail: 6 miles, gravel
- Cross-state John Wayne Trail: 60 miles east from the Cedar Falls trails and accessible at seven points along I-90. This trail is handicap accessible at one point. With repairs now underway, this trail will provide a continuous, easy grade, handicap accessible, unpaved trail to the Greenway terminus at Thorp.

### **Camping**



There are places to camp along this byway.

### **Food**



There are places to buy food along this byway.

### **Gasoline**



Gasoline is available.

### **Information**



There is an authoritative information center along this byway.

### **Lodging**



There is overnight lodging along this byway.

### **Phone**



Public phones are available along this byway.

### **Restrooms**



There are toilet facilities along this byway.

### **Retail**



In Seattle, there are several chances to shop and pick up souvenirs for your trip along the byway.

## **Special Considerations**

Interstate 90 provides a minimum of four lanes of high-speed, limited-access highway for the entire length of the Greenway corridor. All significant tourist stopping points can accommodate tour buses.

## Mountains to Sound Greenway - I-90

During the winter, the Department of Transportation is fully equipped for snow removal. The DOT has also designed I-90 to accommodate the need for vehicles to pull off the road and place chains on their tires. In 1997, the WSDOT installed a Vehicle Information System (VIS) that will monitor road conditions during winter months and transmit information to electronic signs at every highway interchange in order to provide travelers with up-to-the-minute road safety information.

Road conditions vary during the winter season, affecting travel time by lengthening the trip from a maximum of two hours to as many as four hours for the entire route.

### Restrictions

Winter snow conditions on the I-90 Snoqualmie Pass regularly require the use of chains or other traction devices. However, the pass is rarely closed, and DOT winter crews are prepared for this contingency.

### Seasons

Best Time to Drive

Summer and Fall

High Season

Summer and Winter (for sports)

## Map and Directions



**Legend:**

 Point of Interest	 Campground	 Featured Byway	 Water	 State Border
 Park	 Picnic/Rest Area	 America's Byways	 Wildlife Refuge	 Urban Area
 Mountain	 Interstate	 Other Byway	 Wilderness Area	 Tribal Nation
 City	 U.S. Highway	 Other Road	 Other Federal Lands	 Military Base
 Capital	 State Highway	 Trail	 Other State Lands	

**Driving Directions**


- Starting from Thorp, travel on I-90 West to Seattle. The byway travels through towns of Cle Elum and Easton. Continue over Snoqualmie Pass into North Bend and through Snoqualmie and Issaquah. The byway also goes through Bellevue and Mercer Island before its final destination in Seattle.

**Getting to the Byway**



**Nearby cities**

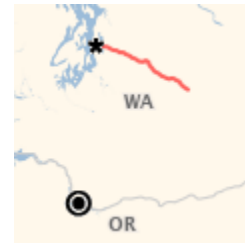
**Vancouver, WA** (163 miles / 262.32 km, 2 hours 40 minutes)

**Start:**  East Fourth Plain Blvd entrance to I-5 N  
 N 45.639° W 122.661° [?]

**Directions:**

- Take I-5 north to Seattle.
- Merge onto I-90 east where the byway begins.

**Junction with byway:** \* I-5/90 Interchange, Seattle, WA  
 N 47.594° W 122.318° [?]



## Road Trip: Along the Greenway

**Departure:** Alki Point, Washington

**Destination:** Thorp, Washington

**Time to allow:** 1 day

Travel from Seattle to Thorp and experience everything the Mountains to Sound Greenway has to offer.

### Day 1

- **Start: Alki Point**

**Suggested time at this stop:** 45 minutes

Alki Point, at the beaches of West Seattle in Puget Sound, is a favorite recreation spot for travelers and locals. Have fun scuba diving under the water.

- **Stop 2: Hiram M. Chittenden Locks**

**From previous stop:** 31 minutes / 13.27 mi (21.2 km)

**Directions:** Total Est. Time: 31 minutes Total Est. Distance: 13.27 miles

Drive northeast on Alki Ave SW toward Point Pl. SW, turn right onto 63rd Ave SW, then left onto SW Admiral Way. After 2.5 miles, SW Admiral Way becomes SW Spokane St. Take the ramp toward I-5, merge onto the West Seattle Bridge, then merge onto WA-99/ After 3.4 miles, take the Western Ave exit. Continue straight along West Ave W., road turns into Elliott Ave and after 1.1 miles, Elliott Ave turns into 15th Ave W. Turn left to stay on the road; after 1.5 miles, turn left onto NW Market St. After 1 mile, end at the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 30 minutes

Walk the botanical gardens, watch the boats, and keep your eyes open for rare fish in the Locks.

- **Stop 3: Pike Place Fish Market**



**From previous stop:** 16 minutes / 5.79 mi (9.3 km)

**Directions:** Drive northeast on NW 54th ST toward 30th Ave, NW 54th St. becomes NW Market St. Turn right on Leary Ave NW, road turns into NW Leary Way. Turn right onto 15th Ave NW and after 2.1 miles, 15th Ave NW turns into Elliott Ave. Drive for 2.0 miles, turn left onto Blanchard St., then right onto 1st Ave. Turn right onto Pike St. to end at the Pike Place Fish Market.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 30 minutes

Referred to as "the Soul of Seattle," the Pike Place Market really includes you in the action, where when you order a fish, it picks up some air miles before arriving in your hands.

- **Stop 4: Seattle Aquarium**

**From previous stop:** 3 minutes / 0.77 mi (1.2 km)

**Directions:** Drive west on Pike St., turn right onto Pike Pl., then left onto Virginia St. Turn left onto Western Ave, turn right onto University St, then right onto Alaskan Way to end at the Seattle Aquarium.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 1 hour

When you are here, find the fascinating educational wonders that are featured here. You can see and even touch some of the unique sea life in the Pacific. Families won't want to miss this!

- **Stop 5: Mercer Island**



**From previous stop:** 14 minutes / 8.15 mi (13.0 km)

**Directions:** Drive southeast on Alaskan Way toward Union St, turn left onto Spring St, then take the I-5 ramp toward Portland. Merge onto I-90 via the exit on the left toward Bellevue/Spokane and drive for 4.5 miles. Merge onto Island Crest Way via exit 7B. After 1.9 miles, turn left onto SE 47th St. to end at Mercer Island.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 45 minutes

Travel over the water to visit this slice of Washington's history with its historic buildings.

- **Stop 6: Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park**

**From previous stop:** 23 minutes / 12.93 mi (20.7 km)

**Directions:** Drive west on SE 47th St toward 88th Ave SE, turn right onto Island Crest Way and continue for 1.7 miles before merging onto I-90 E. Drive for 6.1 miles then take the Lakemont Blvd S.E. exit, toward S.E. Newport Way. Turn right onto W. Lake Sammamish Pkwy SE, turn left onto SE Newport Way and drive for 1.2 miles before turning right onto SE 54th St. After .8 miles, turn left onto SE Cougar Mountain Dr. to end at Cougar Mountain Park.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 1 hour 15 minutes

If you like to hike or horseback ride, this park is known as the largest wild park in urban America, with its excellent network of trails which go through wetland and forest terrain.

- **Stop 7: Lake Sammamish State Park**



**From previous stop:** 13 minutes / 5.39 mi (8.6 km)

**Directions:** Drive west on SE Cougar Mountain Dr. toward 173rd Ave SE, turn right onto SE 60th St and drive for 1.1 miles before turning left onto 189th Ave SE. After .8 miles, turn right onto Newport Way NW and drive for 1.1 miles. Turn left onto WA-900 and follow the road for .7 miles before turning left onto NW Sammamish Rd to end at Lake Sammamish State Park.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 1 hour

Take a breather from the dust of the road for a picnic lunch, and while there take to the water by swimming boating or water skiing.

- **Stop 8: Issaquah Salmon Hatchery**

**From previous stop:** 6 minutes / 2.82 mi (4.5 km)

**Directions:** Drive east on NW Sammamish Rd toward 15th Pl NW. Turn right onto 17th Ave NW, then merge onto I-90 E via the ramp on the left toward Spokane. After 1 mile, take the Front St exit toward E LK Sammamish Parkway SE, then the Front St. ramp toward City Center. Continue straight for half a mile, then turn right onto W. Sunset Way to end at the Issaquah State Salmon Hatchery.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 30 minutes

While at the hatchery, learn about the Issaquah Salmon and watch them fight the currents to lay their eggs. Tours are given daily for all ages to experience the wonder of the hatchery.

- **Stop 9: Lake Keechelus**

**From previous stop:** 57 minutes / 46.24 mi (74.0 km)

**Directions:** Drive east on W Sunset Way toward 1st Ave NW, merge onto I-90 E toward Spokane and drive for 36.7 miles before taking exit 54 toward Gold Circle. Turn right onto WA-906; after 1 mile, turn left onto NF-9070, then turn left again. After 1.3 miles, turn left onto NF-115, drive for 2.3 miles, then turn left onto NF-5480. Drive for 1.5 miles, turn left and then left again to end at Lake Keechelus.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 45 minutes

With trailheads for cross country skiing, snowmobiles, and hiking, the scenery is not the only thing available at Lake Keechelus.

- **Stop 10: Speelyi Beach**



**From previous stop:** 1 hour 3 minutes / 40.89 mi (65.4 km)

**Directions:** Drive southwest for .9 miles, turn right and then right again onto NF-5480. After 1.5 miles, turn right onto NF-115 and drive for 2.3 miles before NF-115 becomes unnamed road. Drive for 1.3 miles, turn right onto NF-9070, which then becomes unnamed road. After half a mile, turn right onto Hyak Dr. E, which then becomes WA-906. Merge onto I-90 and drive for 25.3 miles, take exit 80 toward Roslyn, then turn left onto Bullfrog Rd. Turn left, then right and right again. Drive for 1.2 miles before making a sharp left and then a right. After 1.1 miles, turn left and then right onto NF-4303. Turn left onto NF-201, drive for half a mile then turn right to end at Speelyi Beach.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 1 hour

Travel out to Speelyi Beach, where you can picnic, swim at the beach, and spend the day relaxing in the sun.

- **End: Thorp**



**From previous stop:** 38 minutes / 28.67 mi (45.9 km)

**Directions:** Drive west toward Lake Cle Elum Dam Rd, turn left and then left again onto NF-201. Turn right onto NF-4303, turn left and drive for 2 miles before making a right. After 1.1 miles, turn left, then make a sharp right and drive for 1.2 miles. Turn left, drive for half a mile then make another left before turning right onto Bullfrog Rd. Merge onto I-90 via the ramp on the left, drive for 20.5 miles, then take the Thorp Hwy ext toward Thorp. Turn left onto N. Thorp Hwy and drive for 1 mile to end at Thorp.

**Suggested time at this stop:** 35 minutes

End your trip in the town of Thorp, the home of the Historic Thorp Grist Mill. The mill is being preserved in its original form to maintain its sense of culture in the area.

### Totals for Day 1

**Total Distance Traveled:** 164.92 miles / 263.9 km

**Total Travel Time:** 4 hours 24 minutes

**Total Stopping Time:** 8 hours 35 minutes