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WSDOT kicks off construction of the I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East Project to improve safety and reliability of vital cross-state route

The Washington State Department of Transportation began [construction](#) on the [I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East Project](#) (I-90 Project) today. The project will build five miles of wider, safer and more reliable highway for [east-west travelers](#).

The \$595 million, 2005 Transportation Partnership Account-funded project was scheduled to begin in 2010. But a portion of the project was moved ahead a year after engineers developed a plan to build a detour bridge near the Gold Creek area at the Keechelus Lake reservoir to limit construction impacts on the movement of freight and people across Snoqualmie Pass.

Two down, three to go; An update on highway construction from Snoqualmie Summit to Ellensburg

Since the start of the 2009 construction season, WSDOT and construction crews have been repairing and upgrading five areas along I-90 from Snoqualmie Summit to Ellensburg. So far, the I-90 [Yakima River to West Ellensburg Paving project](#) and the [I-90 Slide Curve to Cabin Creek eastbound paving project](#) are complete.

The [I-90 Snoqualmie Summit to Hyak](#) dowel bar retrofit project and the [I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East Project](#) have both started, and we expect minimal impacts to traffic. The Snoqualmie Summit to Hyak project will be completed in September, while the I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East Project is scheduled for completion in 2015.

After Labor Day, WSDOT will restrict I-90 to one lane in each direction 24 hours a day from [Lake Easton to Bullfrog Road on I-90](#). Crews will open two lanes in the eastbound direction on Fridays and Saturdays to allow for heavy traffic volumes. To provide for heavy westbound traffic late in the weekend, crews will open two lanes in the westbound direction Saturday nights through Sunday evenings. Drivers should plan ahead, pack their patience, and expect lengthy delays during peak travel times.

WSDOT partners with Cascade Land Conservancy to conserve land

WSDOT, the [Cascade Land Conservancy](#), the Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service successfully acquired 546 acres of critical mature forest, wetlands, and fish and [wildlife habitat](#) in the Central Cascades near Gold Creek last month.

Conservation of this property will preserve important fish and wildlife habitat, including the only area of designated critical habitat for the endangered bull trout in Gold Creek. Preservation efforts

will also prevent degradation of water quality in downstream wetlands and the Yakima River, and enhance the effectiveness of new fish and wildlife crossing structures that are part of the I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East project. WSDOT helped purchase this property as part of a watershed-based mitigation approach to offset impacts to wetland from the construction of the I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East project.

The acquisition will allow lands that were previously slated for development to be conserved as natural areas.

Help WSDOT signal crews get bicycles and motorcycles moving

Are those two wheels just not enough to turn the light green? Let us know.

We are looking for comments from bicyclists and motorcycle drivers who notice when traffic detection systems at state-operated traffic signals do not detect them.

Traffic signals keep traffic moving with various vehicle detection systems that work in conjunction with programmed timing intervals. This provides more green time to travelers in the high-volume direction during morning, midday, and evening peak traffic. The detection systems make sure travelers in the opposite direction also get through.

Bicyclists or motorcyclists can contact us regarding vehicle-activated traffic signals on the state highway system [on the Web](#) or by writing to WSDOT Ombudsman at P.O. Box 47327 Olympia, WA 98504-7327. Be sure to note your specific location.

We only maintain signals located on the state highway system. If you have questions about traffic signals on city streets, or county roads, contact the local municipality.

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