

= Washington State Route 18 =

State Route 18 ( SR 18 ) is a 28 @. @ 41 @-@ mile @-@ long ( 45 @. @ 72 km ) state highway in the U.S. state of Washington , serving southeastern King County . The highway travels northeast , primarily as a controlled @-@ access freeway , from an intersection with SR 99 and an interchange with Interstate 5 ( I @-@ 5 ) in Federal Way through the cities of Auburn , Kent , Covington , and Maple Valley . SR 18 becomes a two @-@ lane rural highway near Tiger Mountain as it approaches its eastern terminus , an interchange with I @-@ 90 near the cities of Snoqualmie and North Bend .

SR 18 was established during the 1964 state highway renumbering as the successor to the Auburn ? Federal Way branch of Primary State Highway 5 ( PSH 5 ) and the Auburn ? North Bend branch of PSH 2 , which were created in 1931 and 1949 , respectively . The initial two @-@ lane highway , named the Echo Lake Cutoff , was completed in December 1964 after the opening of a section around Tiger Mountain , which would later be the site of over 170 accidents in the 1980s . SR 18 was gradually widened into a four @-@ lane freeway beginning in Auburn in 1992 and most recently finishing in Federal Way in 2007 . The highway around Tiger Mountain and near the I @-@ 90 interchange remains a two @-@ lane road , with a funded project planned to re @-@ build the existing interchange with I @-@ 90 .

= = Route description = =

SR 18 begins as South 348th Street at a signalized intersection with SR 99 , named the Pacific Highway , in the city of Federal Way . The highway travels due east through an intersection with the Enchanted Parkway , which carries SR 161 southwards towards Wild Waves Theme Park and the city of Puyallup , to a hybrid cloverleaf @-@ stack interchange with I @-@ 5 , providing access to Seattle and Vancouver , British Columbia to the north , and Tacoma and Portland , Oregon to the south . SR 18 becomes a full four @-@ lane freeway as it descends into Peasley Canyon east of a diamond interchange with Weyerhaeuser Way , located south of the Weyerhaeuser headquarters .

After exiting the canyon , the freeway enters the city of Auburn and intersects West Valley Highway , signed as SR 181 until 1991 , and SR 167 , named the Valley Freeway , in a complex hybrid partial cloverleaf and diamond interchange . SR 18 continues east past The Outlet Collection Seattle and over the mixed @-@ use Interurban Trail as it approaches a folded cloverleaf interchange with C Street Southwest and a partial cloverleaf interchange with SR 164 at Auburn Way . The freeway passes an exit serving Green River Community College via Southeast Auburn @-@ Black Diamond Road before crossing over the Green River into unincorporated King County .

SR 18 continues northeast along the southeastern city limits of Kent , through an interchange with Southeast 304th Street , towards Covington . The freeway intersects SR 516 in a diamond interchange and 256th Street Southeast in a partial cloverleaf interchange before leaving Covington . SR 18 intersects Southeast 231st Street in a diamond interchange located north of Maple Valley , providing a connection to SR 169 , while the freeway travels on an overpass over SR 169 towards a partial cloverleaf interchange with 244th Avenue . The SR 18 freeway ends northeast of a partial cloverleaf interchange with Issaquah @-@ Hobart Road at the base of Tiger Mountain , becoming a two @-@ lane highway with at @-@ grade intersections for the remainder of its route . The highway travels on the east side of Tiger Mountain in the Issaquah Alps and provides access to a trailhead in Tiger Mountain State Forest before it reaches its eastern terminus , a diamond interchange with I @-@ 90 located west of North Bend . I @-@ 90 provides access to the cities of Issaquah and Seattle to the west and North Bend and Spokane to the east , traveling over the Cascade Mountains through Snoqualmie Pass . The roadway continues past the interchange as Snoqualmie Parkway into the city of Snoqualmie , intersecting SR 202 .

Every year , the Washington State Department of Transportation ( WSDOT ) conducts a series of surveys on its highways in the state to measure traffic volume . This is expressed in terms of average annual daily traffic ( AADT ) , which is a measure of traffic volume for any average day of the year . In 2012 , WSDOT calculated that the busiest section of SR 18 was its interchange with SR 167 in Auburn , serving 97 @, @ 000 vehicles , while the least busiest section of the highway was its

eastern terminus at I @-@ 90 , serving 19 @,@ 000 vehicles . SR 18 is designated as part of the National Highway System for its whole length , classifying it as important to the national economy , defense , and mobility . WSDOT designates the entire route of SR 18 as a Highway of Statewide Significance , which includes highways that connect major communities in the state of Washington .

= = History = =

The modern corridor that SR 18 follows was added to the state highway system in 1931 as a branch of State Road 5 that ran from the main highway in Auburn to State Road 1 and U.S. Route 99 ( US 99 ) in Federal Way via Peasley Canyon . The branch was retained by State Road 5 when it was re @-@ designated as PSH 5 as a new highway code was established in 1937 . A branch of PSH 2 was designated in 1949 , traveling southwest from North Bend , around Tiger Mountain and through Auburn before ending at a junction with PSH 1 and US 99 in Milton .

Construction on the Echo Lake Cutoff Road , along the route of the North Bend ? Auburn branch of PSH 2 and the Auburn ? Federal Way branch PSH 5 , began in 1955 . The two @-@ lane highway would cost \$ 9 million ( equivalent to \$ 80 million in 2016 ) and the 32 @-@ mile @-@ long ( 51 km ) route was chosen to avoid Tiger Mountain and connect the city of Tacoma to Snoqualmie Pass . SR 18 was designated on the corridor during the 1964 state highway renumbering and codified into state law in 1970 , replacing the branches of PSH 2 and PSH 5 . The final 7 miles ( 11 @.@ 27 km ) of the Echo Lake Cutoff , from an entrance to Tiger Mountain State Forest to I @-@ 90 , was officially opened on December 1 , 1964 . A new interchange with I @-@ 5 in Federal Way was opened to traffic on January 31 , 1967 , officially completing SR 18 .

Expansion of SR 18 from a two @-@ lane rural road to a four @-@ lane controlled @-@ access freeway began in 1992 response to six fatalities in over 170 accidents in a ten @-@ year period , giving the highway a reputation of being a " dangerous roadway " . WSDOT widened SR 18 to four lanes and added new interchanges between SR 167 and the Green River within Auburn . The Washington State Legislature briefly planned to toll the new SR 18 freeway in January 1995 to pay off loans for re @-@ construction , but the plan was protested by local residents and rejected months later , in May 1995 . Additional work was completed in 1997 from the Green River to Southeast 304th Street in Covington , and in 2007 from Covington through Maple Valley and to Issaquah @-@ Hobart Road . The western end of the freeway was extended in Federal Way through Peasley Canyon to I @-@ 5 in Federal Way , which was further improved in 2011 with the completion of interchange improvements to the " Federal Way Triangle " .

WSDOT is planning to widen the remaining section of SR 18 , between Issaquah @-@ Hobart Road south of Tiger Mountain to I @-@ 90 near Snoqualmie to serve capacity to at least 2035 , but funding has not been approved for the project . The project will widen the highway to four general purpose lanes with a truck lane on lanes traveling uphill towards the summit of Tiger Mountain and using concrete median barriers to separate traffic to prevent head @-@ on collisions . A compact diamond interchange is planned for the entrance of Tiger Mountain State Forest and the I @-@ 90 interchange will include flyover ramps from SR 18 to I @-@ 90 and a double roundabout interchange to provide access to Snoqualmie Parkway .

= = Major intersections = =

The entire highway is in King County .