

WSDOT's Corridor Sketch Initiative is a collaborative planning process with agency partners to identify performance gaps and select high-level strategies to address them on the 304 corridors statewide. This Corridor Sketch Summary acts as an executive summary for one corridor. Please review the User Guide for Corridor Sketch Summaries prior to using information on this corridor:

SR 542: SR 9 Jct (Deming) to Artist Point

This 43-mile long east-west corridor is located in the northwestern corner of Washington, near the U.S.-Canada border. The corridor travels between the census designated place of Deming and the crest of Mount Baker at Artist Point. The corridor includes a short couplet located just north of Artist Point. In addition to Deming, the corridor passes through the communities of Kendall, Maple Falls, and Glacier. Between the communities the corridor passes through, the character is rural with forestland on the eastern half and some farmland on the western half of the corridor. On the eastern half of the corridor is the Mt Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. Within the communities the corridor passes through, land use is rural residential. The route carves its way through the rugged terrain of the foothills of Mt Baker as it parallels the North Fork of the Nooksack River. Other notable landmarks near the corridor include Mt Shuksan and the North Cascades National Park.



Current Function

State Route 542 serves as the main highway to Mt Baker and communities of Deming, Kendall, and Maple Falls. The primary role of this corridor is to support the movement of people and goods through rural Whatcom County and the United States Forest Service lands. Many people make their way to the forest lands of Mt Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest on summer weekends, and to access peak winter skiing. Other trip attractors are the multiple trailheads along the route within the forest. This section of SR 542 is a Highway of Regional Significance. This corridor is a moderately used freight corridor. The corridor intersects SR 9 in Deming and 547 in Kendall. Whatcom Transportation Authority provides some service as far east as the community of Maple Falls. There are no park and rides along this segment of the corridor. Bicyclists use this route, however they must share the road on the narrow and steep sections of the highway.

Future Function

Based on the projected population, land use, and economic trends, the future function of this corridor is expected to remain the same.

Highlights and Performance

This section of SR 542 is a two-lane, undivided highway with narrow shoulders as it winds up Mt Baker. The annual average daily traffic on this corridor is highest at the junction with SR 9 and lowest at the junction with the couplet.

What's working well?

- The entire corridor performs above WSDOT's congestion threshold.
- Roughly 92% of surveyed pavement on the corridor is in fair or better condition.
- There are wildlife connectivity features in place on the corridor.

What needs to change?

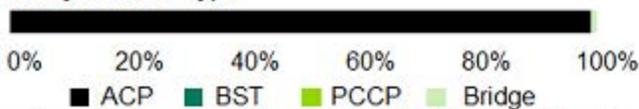
- Six bridge preservation needs have been identified on the corridor, two of which are for seismic retrofits.
- There are 34 fish passage barriers present along the corridor.
- The corridor has a high rating for climate vulnerability impacts .
- There are many challenges where left turn acceleration and right lane turn deceleration exist.

WSDOT monitors the state system in ongoing efforts to track asset performance. For this corridor, WSDOT finds:

High	Low	
5,698	421	Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)
8.2%	3.5%	Bus/Truck Percent
85.98		Number of Lane Miles
2		# of Signalized/Stop Controlled Intersections
\$48,581,000		Corridor Investments (2005-2016)

Preservation

Roadway Surface Type



Roadway Surface Condition (Percent of Surveyed Area)

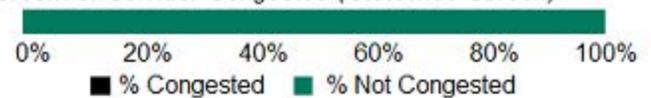


Corridor Bridge Preservation Needs



Mobility

Percent of Corridor Congested (Statewide Screen)



Environment

	Protect	Restore/ Enhance/ Assess
Fish Barriers	43.3% Passable	56.7% to Do
Noise Walls	0% Built	0% Proposed
Chronic Environmental Deficiencies	47.4% Resolved	52.6% Unresolved
Wildlife Connectivity	0 Structures in Place	25 High Priority Miles
Stormwater Treatment	9 BMPs	Retrofit Prioritization in progress
	98.5	% of Corridor with high potential for increased Climate Impacts
	None	Wetland Mitigation Locations
	1	Historical Bridges

1) 2015 data unless otherwise noted. 2) For more information see the User Guide for Corridor Sketch Summaries at <http://bit.ly/WSDOTcorridorsketch>

What we heard from our partners

WSDOT collected feedback from agency partners. Key themes included:

- USFS would like to promote access to the forestlands and develop pedestrian crossings that facilitate safe access.
- There is an opportunity for a park and ride at the visitor information center in Kendall.

Strategies

WSDOT identified the following strategies and associated actions to keep the corridor working well and address performance gaps. Regional partners collaborated on high-level mobility strategies. The identified strategies are not meant to be all-inclusive, nor an established list of priorities. Further evaluation is needed before any strategy can be recommended as a solution to address performance. Project funding decisions will take place at the programming phase, and are subject to statewide prioritization. For more strategy information, visit the Corridor Sketch Summary User Guide.

Policy Goals / Strategies Description and Near-Term Actions

Economic Vitality

Under Development	<i>WSDOT will continue to work with partners in developing strategies to address economic vitality.</i>
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Environment

Protect and Maintain	<i>Protect and maintain existing assets that provide environmental function (these include WSDOT's mitigation sites, storm water systems, fish passable culverts).</i>
Enhance or Restore	<i>Enhance or restore natural areas and environmental functions associated with the multimodal transportation system. WSDOT has a planned Chronic Environmental Deficiency action on this corridor.</i>
Fish Barrier Retrofit	<i>WSDOT has prioritized the removal of state-owned culverts that block habitat for salmon and steelhead. See interactive map of uncorrected fish barriers at http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/FishPassage/default.htm.</i>

Mobility

Assessment	<i>A mobility performance strategy has not been identified by WSDOT.</i>
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Preservation

Maintenance	<i>Based on expenditure history, it is expected that the top three activities will continue to be maintenance on snow and ice control, rest areas, and pavement repair.</i>
Pavement	<i>WSDOT has identified two Pavement actions in the next six years encompassing 57% of the corridor.</i>
Structures	<i>WSDOT has identified two Structures actions in the next six years at specific locations within this corridor.</i>

Safety

Investment	<i>WSDOT has identified one Safety Investment action in the next six years at a single location on this corridor.</i>
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Stewardship

Planning	<i>Under Practical Solutions, the Corridor Sketch Initiative identifies corridor performance, and assesses alternative strategies to improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system.</i>
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For more information

To find out more information about this corridor or how to get involved, please contact:

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Washington State Department of Transportation's Corridor Sketch Initiative is a set of planning activities that engage our partners to define the context and performance information for all of the state's 304 highway corridors. The Corridor Sketch complements and supports regional planning processes in Washington. It is not intended to duplicate, substitute or compete with other planning efforts; nor is it intended to generate lists of projects.

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