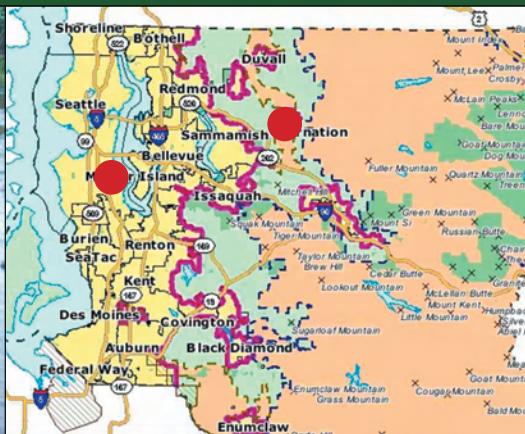


URBAN RURAL CONNECTIONS – A WHOLE KING COUNTY



Recreation at Tolt MacDonald

Mark Pawlosky, Mercer Island

The secret to being an avid fly fisherman isn't about how skilled or proficient you are with the rod. Far from it. Instead it is this: Trout and salmon inhabit wild, beautiful and, for the most part, uncrowded places. It's a gift to be a guest in their home. Those of us who reside in urban King County are so lucky in that, while we live in the shadows of urban skyscrapers, in a mere matter of minutes we can find ourselves knee-deep in the snow-fed waters of the Snoqualmie, Tolt and other rivers. Think about that. What a unique and special place we live in. How many other people in the Continental U.S. can make a similar claim? A very slim few.

Driving east on Interstate-90, it's nearly impossible to imagine how anything could degrade these powerful rivers or mar the mountainous landscape. But nature is extremely fragile, and once lost, nearly impossible to recover. The mere fact we have such great rivers to fish so close to an urban area tells me that we have the balance just about right. Let's keep it that way.

Mark Pawlosky is a journalist, conservationist and an avid outdoorsman. He resides on Mercer Island with his family.

Tolt MacDonald Park, Carnation

Looking for a place to camp along a river and create great memories that's close to home? How about some of the best fly fishing in the state or shredding some great single track? Or maybe just get away from city life? Tolt MacDonald Park in Carnation is a true recreation destination within an hour of Seattle. The 574 acre park sits at the confluence of the Snoqualmie and Tolt Rivers in the beautiful Snoqualmie Valley.

A 500-foot suspension foot bridge constructed by boy scouts across the Snoqualmie River connects the east and west sides of the park and offers terrific views of the Snoqualmie River and Cascade foothills. You can observe spawning salmon in the river below and eagles and osprey soaring above.

The park features 6 brand new yurts overlooking the river and year-round camping for RV's and tents, and two group camp sites, all with fire pits. There are also 2 large picnic shelters for large reunions and a beautifully restored barn for company picnics, weddings, and other special events.

Tolt MacDonald has 3 baseball fields and a soccer field that serve local Snoqualmie Valley youth leagues. Open meadows and picnic areas are perfect for family gatherings and a long time local tradition is floating the river on a hot summer day. And of course the treasured chance to watch the annual 4th of July fireworks from the grass meadows in the park.

Tolt MacDonald Park is also a favorite bicycle destination. From the west side of the suspension bridge a mountain biker has access to miles of single track trail on the Ames Lake Plateau. And if you want a bicycle tour of local farms and forests, head east from the park along the Tolt River to access the 27-mile Snoqualmie Valley Regional Trail.

Tolt MacDonald Park is an outdoor recreation treasure for Carnation and King County residents alike!

