



King County

Road Services Division

Department of Local Services

Evaluation Summary

SE Middle Fork Road

At the request of area residents, a study was conducted to evaluate the appropriateness of the existing 35 mph speed limit on SE Middle Fork Rd from the North Bend City Limits east to the east end of the “lower couplet” of SE Lake Dorothy Road, about 1.9 miles long

SE Middle Fork Rd is a residential street (non-arterial) with 6 intersecting streets, 18 residential driveways and a group camp, Valley Camp, within the study site. The road also provides access to multiple trails system within the Middle Fork Snoqualmie Natural Area which is east of the study site. Lanes are not delineated throughout much of the roadway, except where raised pavement markers were installed along the centerline in 2017 to delineate curves. Pavement width varies from 19 to 28 feet. The roadway follows the terrain resulting in a rolling, winding alignment throughout the “lower couplet”, several crest vertical curves and limited sight distance at three intersecting roadways and the majority of the 18 driveways.

The 85th percentile speed for both directions within the “lower couplet” is 33.6 mph, indicating that motorists tend to drive slower than the posted 35 mph speed limit. Only 1 collision was reported to have occurred on SE Middle Fork Rd between 2013 and 2017, a property-damage-only collision where a motorist swerved to avoid an elk and left the roadway.

Based on the engineering data and the speed limit evaluation, the existing posted speed limit of 35 mph is appropriate west of the “lower couplet” given the linear alignment and wider paved width; however, a reduction from 35 to 30 mph is appropriate for the 1.2 miles on SE Middle Fork Rd within the “lower couplet”. This conclusion is in keeping with the posted speed limit east of the couplet, the grade and topography of the roadway, collision history, prevailing speeds and the narrow roadway width.