

Hon. Board of County Commissioners of King County, Washington of the route  
necessary. Gentlemen: I have much needed change and am quite confident that one  
mile and a quarter of new I herewith hand you my statement of labor per-  
formed, and money, provisions and tools received in the improvement of  
the Snoqualmie Pass road. As each winter

I began work on the third day of June, 1899, and closed on the 23rd  
day of September. I made 412 feet of bridges and put down over 1200 feet  
of corduroy, made 3040 feet of new road and removed a large amount of  
rock from the road, nearly 200 blasts.

I commenced work on the left side or rather bank of the Yakima River,  
or outlet of Lake Kitchelos, in Kittitas County. Around the shore of the  
lake I had a great amount of rock work to do, there being many dangerous  
places in the road. In fact, it took just a month to complete the work  
around the lake. Then a half mile west of the lake the old road crossed  
Rocky Run and was exceedingly bad, to avoid which I made a cut off of  
1650 feet, made a 75 foot bridge and a good ford over the east branch of  
the creek. Just west of the 4 mile tree, I made two bridges and put down  
a quantity of corduroy, then a 40 foot bridge, all in the valley of Gold  
Creek. The crossing of Gold Creek in high water is dangerous and in fact  
impossible in extreme high water. I did all I could to improve the ford  
by shooting two logs which were in the water near the west bank. Just  
west of the crossing I made more corduroy and improved the crossing of an  
old channel of Gold Creek, then  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west made another bridge, then  
rock work to the summit, the dividing line between the two counties, and  
down the west side to the first crossing of the South Fork of the Sno-  
qualmie River. There I found the river was cutting the road away, and  
from every appearance one more winter and the road would be destroyed.  
So I thought best to cut a jaw which was the cause of the injury to the  
road. I put the men at work and accomplished the work at a cost of about  
fifteen dollars, which outlay will save two or three hundred dollars.

I also wish to call your attention to the fact that there is a good  
practicable way to avoid the two upper crossings of the river and by so  
about one and one half miles of new road and saving as much as \$15,000

doing will also avoid two bad hills. I made an examination of the route necessary to make this much needed change and am quite confident that one mile and a quarter of new road will be all that ~~is~~ is needed to make this improvement. Both of these crossings are bad by reason of many boulders and in fact are impassable at high water, ~~one for a choice, and~~

Then proceeding along west from the middle crossing the work was ~~as~~ mainly removing rock until I reached what is known as the "Hump-backed Bridge," which I repaired and made a new bridge 75 feet long across the west branch of the same creek; then more rock work and corduroy until I reached the small creek just east of the 15 mile bridge. I made a 55 foot bridge over this creek and replaced the corduroy between the two bridges; repaired the 15 mile bridge, made new crib, one 44 foot stringer, three new 24 foot stringers, new mud sills and shear boom to protect the cribs. In short, the bridge is now in as good or better condition than ever before. I found a good ford a short distance above the bridge which can be used any time when it is possible to use the road, and would recommend that it be put in shape to be used in case of any accident to the bridge. ~~Miles~~ Coming west one mile, I found a long piece of road where the mud was very deep and getting deeper by the constant travel. So I made camp and put down nearly 1,000 feet of corduroy. Then moved camp to the Baxter cabin just west of the 26 mile tree. Then I finished up by taking the stones out of the two long hills west of the cabin and some of the largest ~~And worst of the~~ boulders at the top of Grouse Ridge, and would have taken more out but that the constant rains had made it impossible to keep the powder dry, and consequently it would not work well. Speaking of the rain, I would say that it was a great hindrance to the work, causing the loss of several ~~days, a safe condition. Furthermore I was laboring under the belief that~~

In conclusion, I would most earnestly recommend the change of the road so as to avoid the two upper crossings of the river and a change of the road on Salale prairie so as to avoid Grouse Ridge. The proper route would be to follow the middle fork road for a distance and then make side hill grade and strike the road near Grindstone creek, making about one and one half miles of new road and saving as much in distance

and avoiding the long pull up Perkins Back Bone or Grouse Ridge, as now called.

I find the topography of the country on the east side is such that in locating the road there was not much choice; it had to be put where it now is. But on the west side there is chance for a choice, and unfortunately in some places a bad choice has been made, notably the two places mentioned above.

As to travel, I kept tally while on the road and found that from the time travel commenced until I closed work 94 wagons and carriages had passed over the road, 1148 horses had crossed the mountains, and the travel has continued unabated up to the present time, so that nearly two hundred wagons have crossed. People came in their covered wagons from Michigan and many points east. I estimate fully 19/20 of those crossing come to make homes in the Puget Sound valley, and that of itself is sufficient incentive to people on the west side to make a united effort to put the road in first class shape. Of course you understand that with \$2000. less tools and provisions, I could only strike the worst places in 27 miles of mountain road! The sum should be ten times as much and then we could have a road in fair condition.

I find that the labor in Kittitas County amounted to about seven hundred and fifty nine dollars and that performed in King County to six hundred and forty five dollars. Not but what the road in King County needed more work to put it in a passable condition, but there were more dangerous places on the road in Kittitas County than there were in King County, and I felt it my first duty to make the road safe to life and limb, regardless of which county the work might have to be done in to put it in a safe condition. Furthermore I was laboring under the belief that the State appropriation was for the Snoqualmie Pass Road and not for any particular county.

Respectfully submitted.

W. T. Bennett