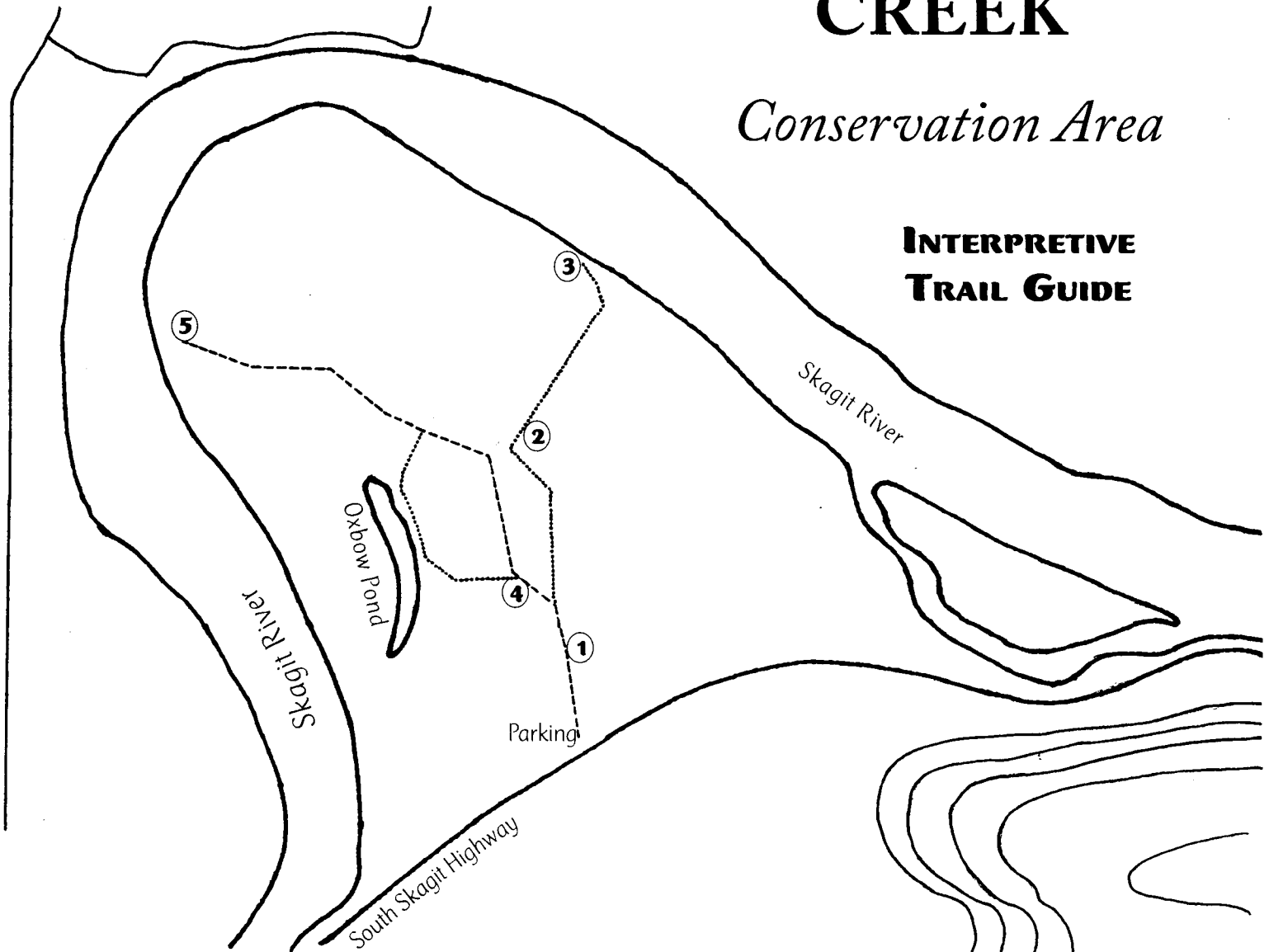


We hope you enjoy your time at
Cumberland Creek. Happy trails!

CUMBERLAND CREEK

Conservation Area

INTERPRETIVE TRAIL GUIDE



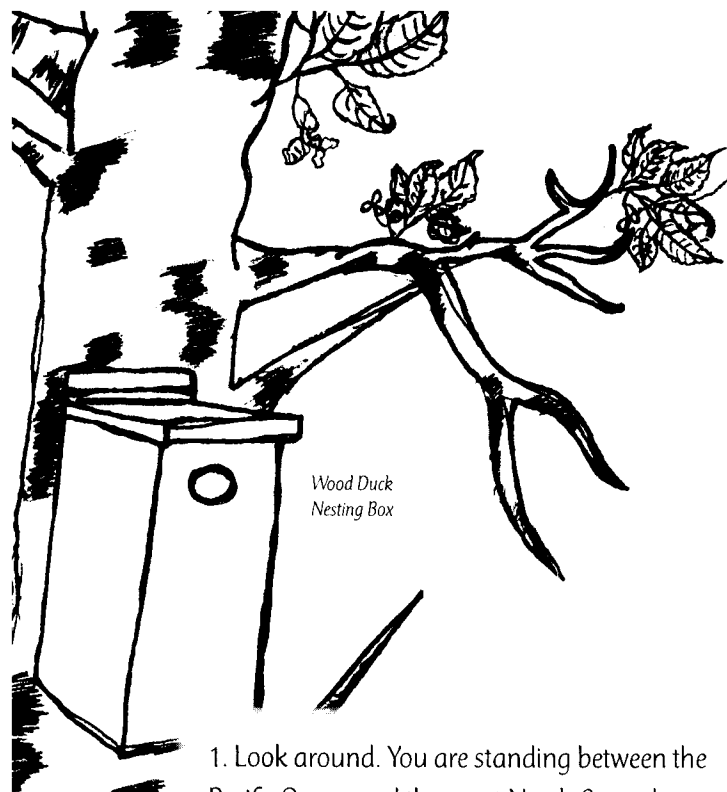
This trail guide is the result of a collaborative project between Skagit Land Trust and Emerson High School. Emerson students were immersed in the local heritage and landscape as they utilized this land parcel as the foundation for study in environmental issues and sustainability. This trail guide is the story of their learning. A special thanks to Sara Holden and Shae Quigley for their hard work and dedication.



SKAGIT LAND TRUST

Saving Land for Tomorrow

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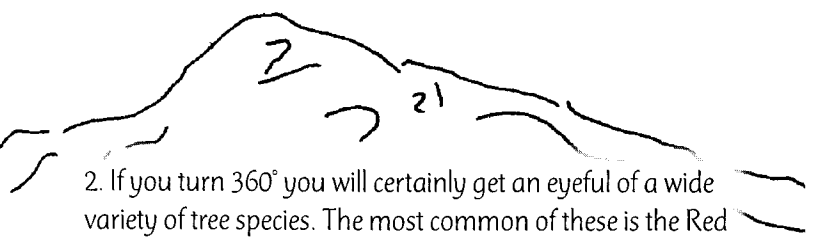


Wood Duck Nesting Box

1. Look around. You are standing between the Pacific Ocean and the great North Cascades mountain range. Our rainy climate is caused by storm systems created off the Pacific Coast that drift over the Cascades. As the elevation increases, clouds are forced to increase altitude as well, becoming cooler and less able to hold onto that warm, moist ocean air, causing the release of rain. Over thousands of years this has made Skagit Valley into a thriving utopia for wildlife and plant species alike.



Sword Fern



2. If you turn 360° you will certainly get an eyeful of a wide variety of tree species. The most common of these is the Red Alder. Tall and straight, its white and grey splotchy bark conceals its naturally red wood. The valley Native Americans would boil the wood for dyes to stain clothing, and the same elixir was given to those unfortunate enough to be afflicted with tuberculosis. Try to spot the gangly moss covered branches of the Big Leaf Maple or smell the thick, sappy aroma of the Black Cottonwood's buds, which were used at the turn of the century to combat baldness. Another important tree native to the Pacific Northwest is the Western Red Cedar; it is recognized in this region as the tree of life. From its bark, clothes and baskets were woven, and, from the heartwood, canoes and dwellings were made. Without these crucial elements, human life here simply wouldn't have been.

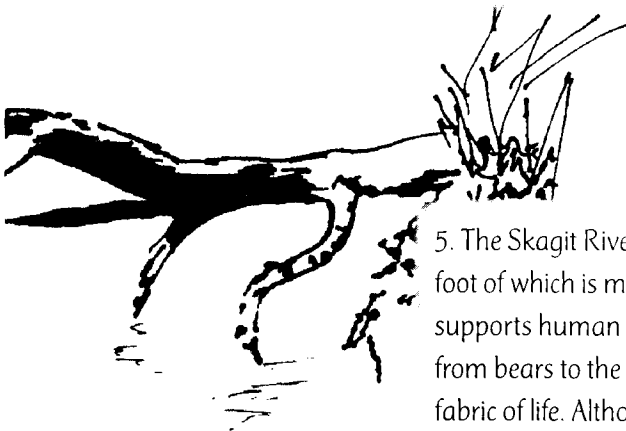
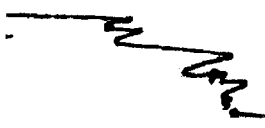
3. During the settlement period of the valley, logging was the backbone of the economy. The need for lumber was so great that tens of thousands of people migrated to the Pacific Northwest seeking riches in the form of lumber. One of the early logging families in the region was the Janickis. Mike Janicki, co-owner of Janicki Logging, and a local conservationist, says in his perfect world, "Nobody gets to waste wood. We need to worry about what energy we are taking away from our grandchildren." This particular parcel of land was purchased from the Janicki family in 2006 by Skagit Land Trust and remains in the Trust's care to this day as a conservation area.



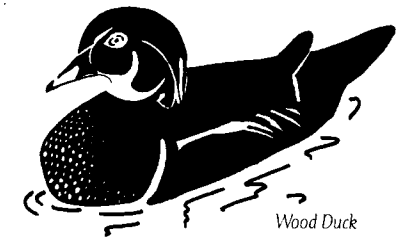
Red-tailed Hawk

4. As you follow this trail to the Oxbow Pond, listen to the various bird calls as they welcome you to their wetland home.

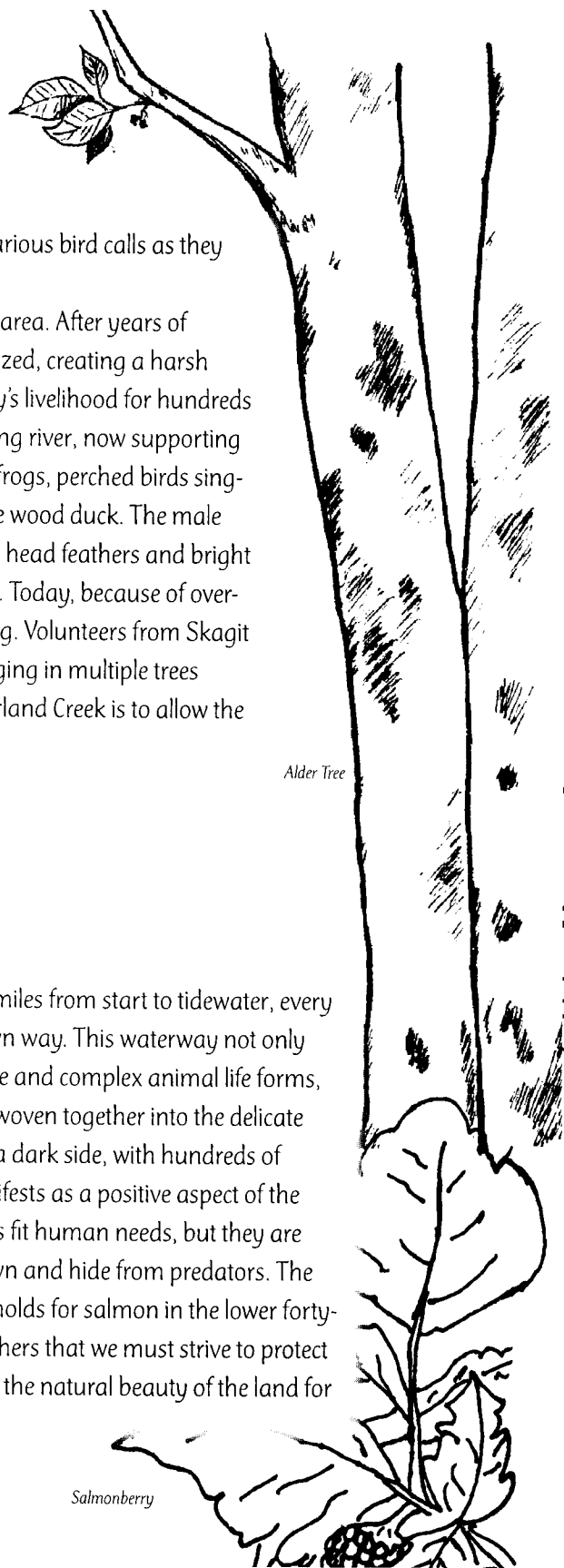
Years ago, the mighty Skagit wandered freely through this area. After years of logging and diking, much of the river has become channelized, creating a harsh environment for the salmon that have supported humanity's livelihood for hundreds of years. The oxbow pond was left behind by the meandering river, now supporting many life-forms including hiding and hopping red-legged frogs, perched birds singing in chorus, and an uncommon species of duck called the wood duck. The male wood duck is eye-catching with green and purple iridescent head feathers and bright red eyes. They are shy but beautiful in their natural habitat. Today, because of over-logging, wood ducks have limited places to raise their young. Volunteers from Skagit Land Trust have fabricated homes for them which are hanging in multiple trees along the oxbow. Part of the management goal for Cumberland Creek is to allow the river to again braid through this property freely.



5. The Skagit River spans an incredible 160 miles from start to tidewater, every foot of which is majestic and unique in its own way. This waterway not only supports human life but also the most simple and complex animal life forms, from bears to the short-lived mayfly. All are woven together into the delicate fabric of life. Although the Skagit does have a dark side, with hundreds of sunken logs and deadly undertow, this manifests as a positive aspect of the ecosystem. These conditions may not always fit human needs, but they are perfect for salmon, providing a place to spawn and hide from predators. The Skagit river network is one of the last strongholds for salmon in the lower forty-eight states. It is for this reason and many others that we must strive to protect it. Skagit Land Trust will continue to preserve the natural beauty of the land for future generations.



Wood Duck



Alder Tree

Salmonberry

Welcome to Skagit Land Trust's Cumberland Creek Conservation Area! We hope that along this interpretive trail you will begin to see the intimate relationship between this land and human-kind. The provided map will guide you to numbered posts that correspond with the text included inside this brochure. Take your time. Enjoy yourself and all of the beauty that comes with this walk in the woods.

A Brief History of Cumberland Creek

1700s – Pre-settlement, local Native American Tribes use Western Red Cedar, the tree of life, for canoes, cradles, totem poles, tools, whistles, paddles and more.

1775 – The first known Europeans set foot in Washington.

1871 – Construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad begins.

1890s – Logging advances up the Skagit River. Trains allow the industry to continue into the 20th century as a crucial part of the Skagit economy.

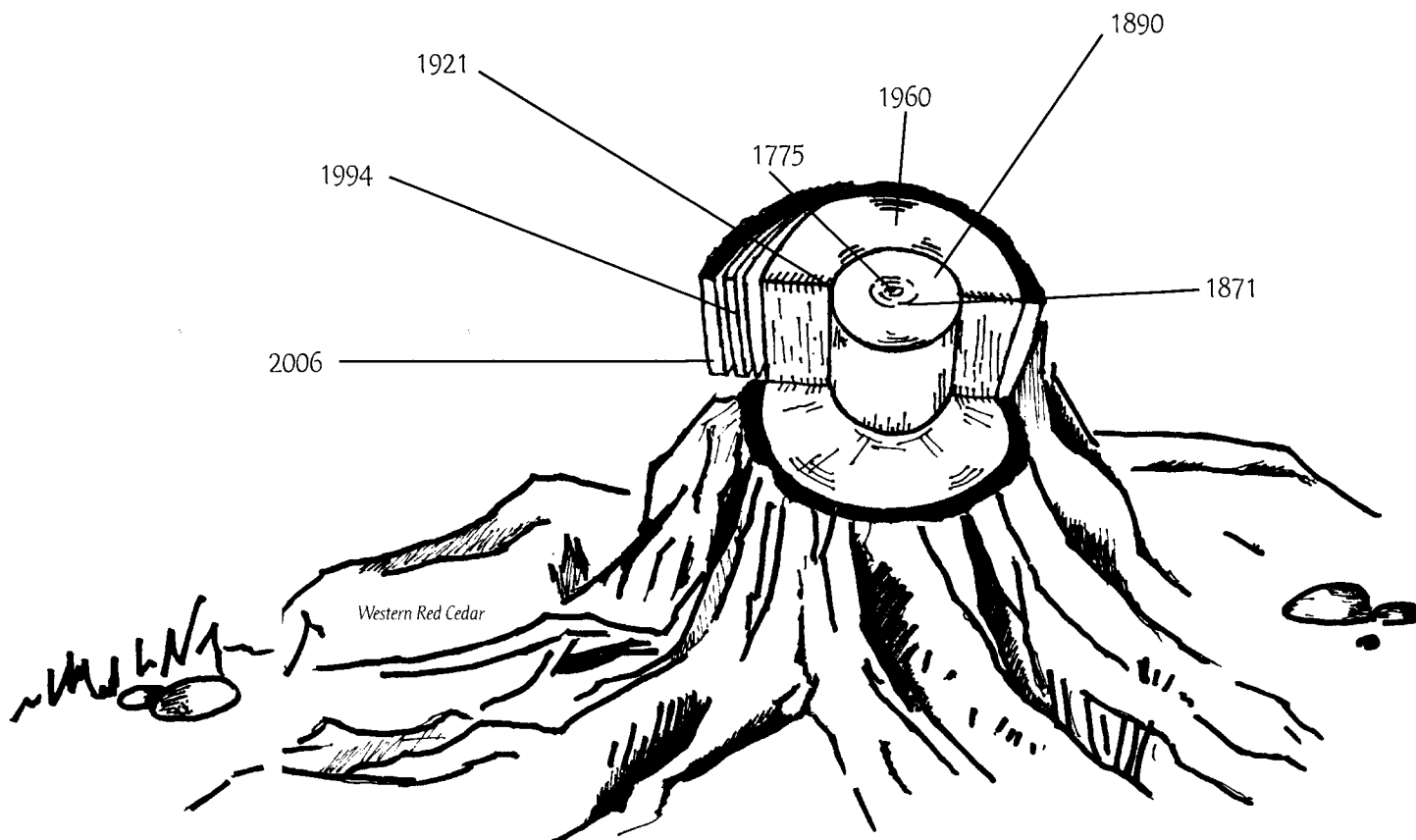
1921 – The first of three major dams goes in on the Skagit River, providing power to Seattle, but affecting flooding and sedimentation down river.

1960s – Cumberland Creek is logged and replanted.

1994 – Chinook salmon are first listed as an endangered species.

Late 1990s – The Janicki Family, owner of the property at the time, begins harvesting and replanting Cumberland Creek with Western Red Cedar, Douglas Fir and Alder Trees.

2006 – Skagit Land Trust buys the first portion of this land, declaring it a conservation area and intending to restore it as salmon and wildlife habitat.



“Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land....”
– Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac