

## Utopia Conservation Area

Welcome to Utopia Conservation Area! This property is owned by the Skagit Land Trust and protects over 87 acres of creeks, wetlands, and forested habitat in the Skagit River floodplain. This property was acquired primarily to protect salmon habitat in the creeks and the Skagit River. Prior to the Land Trust purchase, the land had likely been used for grazing and hay production. Plans for the property include restoration of the lowland forest and understory as seen in the numerous tree plantings throughout the property. Bring your outdoor shoes/boots, this trail is muddy!

### 1. Side Channel

#### Habitat

Park on the side of the road or at the gate, here is where the trail awaits. The first station is next to a sign with rules to guide you, please follow them and the clue sheet too.

### 3. Bats

Head along the trail, here is where it starts to get muddy and fun. On the right you will find a station who's theme is no fan of the sun.

### 4. Native Plants

To the left the trail will veer, see the trees we plant with volunteers? This next station you will find on your right side, let the tall grass be your guide.

### 5. Wetlands

Keep going until you find a "y" in the path, go to the right. Come upon a muddy spot in the trail, with caution you will prevail. Don't let the mud make you wary, the next station is to your left among the blackberries.

### 7. Birds

Along the trail under the canopy of trees. Back out to the open field the foothills you will see. Along this grassy trail on the right you will find the next treasure, hope you have fun learning about this animal with feathers.

### 8. Skagit River

The last station you seek to bring this trail to an end, go until you see the River bend. Here you can reflect on your journey with this view, we were delighted to share this conservation area with you.

## This Clue Sheet Belongs To

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_



SCEA is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit, community based organization working for the benefit of the greater Skagit ecosystem to protect water quality and watershed functions. To learn more visit: [skagitcleanwater.org](http://skagitcleanwater.org). Join our Group at [Facebook.com/groups/Letterboxtrail](https://www.facebook.com/groups/Letterboxtrail). **To report a lost or damaged letterbox station please email: [cwaterskagit@gmail.com](mailto:cwaterskagit@gmail.com).**

2020 Skagit  
Watershed  
Letterbox Trail



## What is Letterboxing:

Letterboxing is an exciting opportunity for kids of all ages to explore our local watersheds and have fun while doing so! With this clue sheet you can explore our partner trails, discover the letterbox stations, and qualify for prizes! All you need is a clue sheet, pencil, outdoor attire, a smart phone (unless you want to unplug) and a sense of adventure!

## Letterboxing Steps:

**Step 1.** Pick your trail and navigate there:

- Padilla Bay Upland Trail: 10441 Bayview Edison Rd, Mt Vernon, WA 98273
- Pomona Grange Trail: 5550-5720 Old Hwy 99 North Rd, Burlington, WA 98233
- Utopia Conservation Area Trail: 28057-28193 Utopia Rd. Sedro Woolley WA, 98284 (Follow Hwy 20 east from Sedro-Woolley. Turn right onto Hoehn Road. Turn left onto Utopia Road and travel about 1/4 mile, the Utopia Conservation Area is on the right. Look for the Skagit Land Trust sign on a gate. Parking is available on the shoulder and in front of the gate.) Careful, this trail is muddy fun!

**Step 2.** Hit the trail! Follow the clues to find the Letterbox Stations along each trail. When you find a Letterbox Station, draw something you see around you next to that clue on the clue sheet. For extra fun, bring your smart phone to scan the QR codes.

**Step 3.** When you visit at least two trails, send or scan a photo of your clue sheet to be entered to win a prize! Email: [cwaterskagit@gmail.com](mailto:cwaterskagit@gmail.com) your clue sheet by October 4, 2020.

**Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve**  
The Padilla Bay Reserve is nestled just north of the quiet community of Bay View, WA. Here in the heart of the Salish Sea, they study and protect a massive eelgrass meadow. At more than 8,000 acres, it's the second largest on North America's Pacific Coast.  
Padilla Bay is one of 29 sites in the National Estuarine Research Reserve system established to protect coastal areas for long-term research, monitoring and education, and stewardship.



**1. Great Blue Herons**  
Walk through the parking lot away from the reserve, stop at the arch and begin to observe. Before the archway the first station you will see, now head on up the trail like a buzzy bee.

**2. Estuaries**  
Along the trail the path will curve then come to a "Y", find the bench and next to it the next station you will spy.



**3. Orcas**  
Go left of the bench where it turns to gravel, a ways up you will travel. At the top of the trail the trees will clear, near the smooth bench the next station will be near.

**4. Climate Change**  
Along the grassy trail head back to the reserve, finding the next station you surely deserve. Down the path you will find a bench with a view of the bay, the next station you seek is this way.



**5. Cedar and Coast Salish Traditional Territories**  
Go into the trees, careful there is uneven ground, don't leave the woods until the station is found. Find it next to the covered spot, we hope you are enjoying the trail a lot!

**6. Water Cycle**  
Go back to the reserve, and through the parking lot you will find, a path towards the water the trail will wind. To the left the next spot you will see, you have gone too far if you can see the sea.



**7. Eelgrass**  
When you see the tunnel and water gleam, to the right of the ramp you will find the last station theme. When found keep going to take in the view, it was our please to share this trail with you!

**Pomona Grange Park**  
Pomona Grange Park is one of many Skagit County Parks. Located 3.5 miles off Cook Road on Old HWY 99, this park has two trails. The first trail is approximately 1/4 mile and has 18 interpretative signs of local plants and trees. The second trail, 1/8 mile, is adjacent to Friday Creek and leads to the Washington State Fish Hatchery. One of the cedar nurse stumps has five species of trees growing from it! The trail also has a footbridge that gives one access to Friday Creek. In fall of the year, salmon can be seen spawning there.



**1. The Many Benefits of Trees**  
After you park read the welcome sign, to the right the "living roof" you will find. Follow the trail right until the maple tree w/ licorice fern, find the first station with so much to learn.

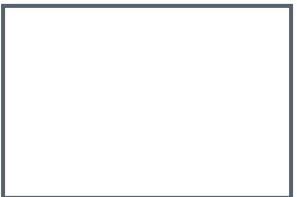
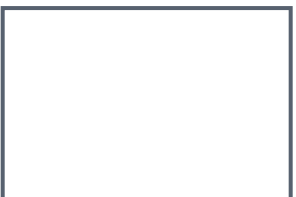
**2. Pollinators**  
Keep going and the trail will start to curve then straightens out, to the left the next station you will find no doubt.



**4. Spring Board Stumps**  
Along the trail hear water flowing free, see the "Y" in the path, find the friendliest tree. At these stumps the next station lies, here you will learn why the trees have eyes.



**6. Salmon**  
Now go ahead cross the bridge towards the creek, among the shore the next station you will seek.



**3. Food Chain**  
Make your way along the trail to find a clearing, the next letterbox station you should be nearing. If the trail bends left you have passed the sign, at this station food webs you will find.



**5. Macroinvertebrates**  
Spot the bridge and head that way, don't cross it just yet, to the right the next station is on display.



**7. Samish Hatchery**  
Back to the trail take the path right, to the hatchery you will head to take in all the sights. Come to a bench sit and rest for a bit, there you will find the last station hope this trail was a hit!