

Whatcom Creek Salmon Art Trail

Every creek has its own story. Whatcom Creek's story is a story of life and death, of destruction and renewal, of a stream that flows through the heart of Bellingham.

Through art, we can begin to see and start to understand the environmental story of Whatcom Creek. Using salmon and salmon habitat as a window into this place, we can reclaim, transform and re-imagine our relationship with nature in the middle of our city.

For over 10,000 years, Whatcom Creek has tumbled four miles into its estuary at Bellingham Bay. As early as 8,000 years ago, Coast Salish peoples used the mouth of Whatcom Creek to land canoes, camp, fish and gather shellfish. The word "Whatcom" (What-coom or Xwtqwem) means *noisy or rumbling water* in the language of the Lummi Nation.

In 1852, Lummi people and Euro-American pioneers met at the waterfall at Whatcom Creek. A land claim followed, a sawmill was built, the forest logged, and houses, businesses and streets constructed by the white pioneers. Whatcom Creek estuary saw the town of Whatcom, and later the City of Bellingham, grow.

From 1900 to 1985, Whatcom Creek was channeled, dredged, ditched, bermed, moved, paved, polluted, and pushed into configurations that made it convenient for the growth of city neighborhoods. Sewage flowed into the stream and unwanted items were tossed down the creek banks. Garbage eventually covered 13 acres of the estuary.

During the 1970s, new visions for the lower creek surfaced. The sewage treatment plant along lower Whatcom Creek was recycled into a fish hatchery and became the cornerstone for **Maritime Heritage Park**. In 1979, the first salmon were released from the hatchery and volunteers began to restore the banks of lower Whatcom Creek. The City of Bellingham, Bellingham Technical College and Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA) have worked in partnership to restore the natural systems, enhance salmon populations and stream habitat, provide education for students in local schools, and revitalize this public park with art, trails and native plants along Whatcom Creek.

The art along the **Whatcom Creek Salmon Art Trail** connects us to nature and shares the community's environmental history. Artists and their artworks along the creek provide a gift to the community and to those who come after us, contributing to the richness of our city, our place on the earth, and our lives.

Vicinity Map



Access to the Salmon Art Trail

From I-5 north, take exit 253, Lakeway Drive. Merge onto King Street, turn right at Lakeway Drive. Continue on to E. Holly Street. Look for Maritime Heritage Park on the right, at 514 W. Holly Street. The trail starts on either side of the Whatcom Creek bridge.

From I-5 south, take exit 254. Merge onto Ohio Street and go west on State Street. Slight left at N. State Street. Turn right at Holly Street. Look for the Maritime Heritage Park on the right, at 514 W. Holly Street. The trail starts on either side of the Whatcom Creek bridge.

Bus stops on Holly Street:

- #3—Maplewood (going north)
- #4—Downtown (going south)
- #10—Birchwood/Downtown

Bus stops on Dupont Street and C Street:

- #50—Gooseberry/Downtown
- #232—Cordata/Downtown

Buses serving the Salmon Art Trail may change. Check www.ridewta.com or call 676-RIDE for more information.

Multiple Use Trail Information

The Salmon Art Trail includes many surfaces. Most of the trails along Whatcom Creek are compacted crushed rock, with a wheelchair accessible boardwalk from Holly Street to the hatchery and pavement around the salmon hatchery. The sections on Prospect Avenue and Grand Avenue at the Whatcom County Courthouse are paved. All users stay on designated trails, please. Bikers yield to pedestrians.

Whatcom Creek Salmon Art Trail

A self-guided tour of community artworks that connect us to the natural world along Lower Whatcom Creek



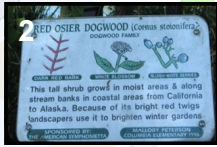
City of Bellingham

Parks and Recreation



Bellingham Parks and Recreation
210 Lottie Street, Bellingham, WA 98225
(360) 778-7000 ♦ parks@cob.org ♦ www.cob.org

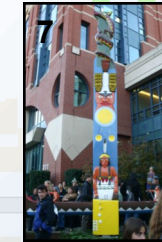
ART ALONG THE SALMON ART TRAIL



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- 1 Confluence**
Gerard Tsutakawa, 2001, bronze
- 2 Native Plant Signs**
Columbia Elementary School Children, 1995 & 1996, metal
- 3 Salmon Woman Totem**
Lummi House of Tears Carvers, 1997, cedar
- 4 Steel Salmon Going to Salmon Woman**
Steve Seymour, 1997, steel, in constructed stream bed
- 5 Returning Salmon**
Steve Seymour, 1997, steel
- 6 Eagle Memorial Totem**
Mike McRory, 2000, cedar
- 7 Centennial Story Pole**
Joseph Hillaire, 1953, cedar, restored 2007, Felix Solomon/Scott Jensen
- 8 Four Ages of the Seas**
Phillip Baldwin, 2000, aluminum
- 9 Centennial Mural**
East Los Streetscapers, 1990, paint on wall
- 10 Quiet Middens, Noisy Waters**
Elizabeth Conner, 2008, cast concrete