

SKYKOMISH & SNOHOMISH RIVERS

Interpretive Signage Themes/Content

Prepared for Snohomish County Parks, Recreation and Tourism

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Overview

Background

The Skykomish-Snohomish Rivers system is at the heart of the history, culture, and natural lifeways of Snohomish County. In 2015, the Skykomish-Snohomish Rivers Coalition (the Coalition) formed to address the growing recreational pressure on these rivers. A working group composed of “over 25 entities representing federal, tribal, state, and local governments and agencies, businesses, civic groups, non-profit organizations and residents” met regularly to develop a “shared vision and plan for coordinated, well-managed, sustainable recreation on the river system.”

One result of the discussions that have been ongoing since 2015 is the Skykomish-Snohomish Rivers Recreation Concept Plan, with a working draft released in August of 2018. The concept plan included a series of visions and goals as well as key considerations for coordinated recreation management. The plan also provided general recommendations and proposed public river access sites accompanied by a detailed inventory of current landowner management.

Among the major concerns expressed in the plan were safety on the rivers and protection of fish and habitat as recreational use increased. As part of ongoing efforts to address these issues, Snohomish County Parks, Recreation, and Tourism funded a project in 2018-2019 to develop and recommend a Wayfinding and Interpretive Signage Program for up to 11 access sites designated along the Skykomish-Snohomish River system. In addition to suggestions for various types of signs that will provide directional and safety guidance for visitors, the project includes this interpretive component, which has gathered ideas for the content of panels, signs, art, and other types of on-site installations that will instill a healthy respect for river resources by relating them to important natural, cultural, and historical values. In particular, the interpretive portion of the project will also ensure appropriate recognition for the cultural heritage and treaty rights of the Tulalip Tribes in relation to the rivers and their ecosystem.

Goals

The goal of this first phase of the interpretive process was to seek ideas from representatives of the Tulalip Tribes as well as members of the Coalition and other interested parties with a particular focus on cultural components. This report introduces a wide range of ideas related to cultural heritage that were presented during meetings and field visits and discusses some broad overarching themes and interpretive concepts as well as specific suggestions for potential content that can be addressed in a more detailed interpretive plan for the river system. It also includes a brief overview of other potential ways to engage the public through joint efforts with local historical societies, cultural centers, municipalities, agencies, and community groups.

Process

The kickoff for the Wayfinding and Interpretive Signage Program was held during a meeting of the Coalition at the Snohomish County Parks Administration offices in June 2018. Several additional meetings and field trips were then organized to orient project staff to the river access points under review and provide the opportunity for site managers, tribal representatives as well as interested community members to discuss site usage as well as potential signage needs. In addition to a multi-day field trip to visit designated access points along the river with Coalition members and agency representatives, an additional day-long trip was organized for the Environmental and Treaty Rights programs of the Tulalip Natural Resources Department as well as various Snohomish County staff and agency heads. Mayors and city council members, representatives of managing public agencies, and historical societies and museums met the group at the final 11 access locations chosen for the project. During these visits they discussed safety and fishery concerns as well as potential interpretive topics and goals.

Individual meetings were also held with representatives of the Hibulb Cultural Center, the Lushootseed Language program as well as the Treaty Rights office. Patti Gobin, special projects manager for the Tulalip Natural Resources department, served as an important liaison and guide during the process and also led a tour of the reservation and the Hibulb Cultural Center to provide additional perspectives on the foundations of tribal cultural values and ties to the environment.

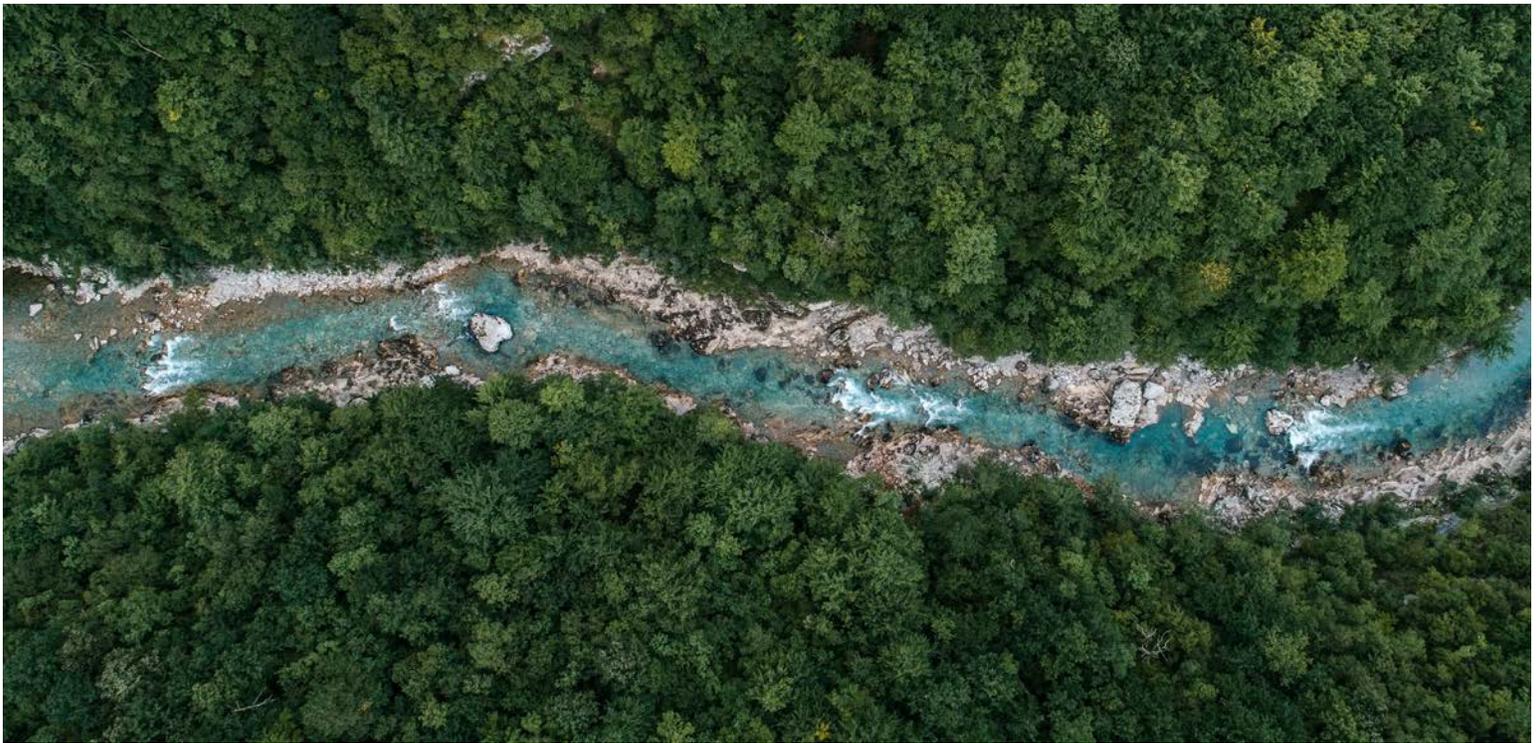
Key Concepts and Ideas

While the initial aim of the project was to gather ideas for cultural interpretation, it became apparent that the story of the natural history of the rivers as well as additional historical themes also had an important impact on cultural uses over time. These three major interpretive categories—cultural, natural, and historical—are interwoven and thus should all be part of the interpretation to give river users a more complete understanding of the importance of the rivers in every aspect of life and the necessity of protecting and preserving these vital resources. While cultural interpretation remains a major focus, this report also supplies an overview of some of the ideas related to historical or natural history themes that were suggested during the process.

From the perspective of representatives of the Tulalip Tribes, a key cultural message that the Tribe would like to convey in interpretation along the river is “These are our ancestral lands.” “We were here; we are here.” Throughout time, the ancestors of local tribal members relied on the rivers to support traditional lifeways. The waters of the Skykomish and Snohomish Rivers provided vital means of subsistence and fulfilled other important spiritual, medicinal, ceremonial and travel needs. Those connections remain today. Through their treaties with the federal government, the tribes have continued to retain hunting and fishing rights and the courts have affirmed their co-management responsibilities with the State of Washington for fish and wildlife resources. The rivers continue to be a centerpiece of tribal culture and an ongoing focus of tribal concern that it is important for residents and visitors to understand.

Finally, while it remains tempting to use the access points to tell multiple stories and interpret a range of themes, one message that was emphasized throughout the process was “Keep it simple.” A primary goal should be to educate visitors with interpretive panels or other that types of signage that are pictorial, evocative, informative and yet also succinct and focused. Users of each of the sites should come away with key interpretive messages that convey the significance of the river system and the need to protect its resources.





Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes serve as a framework to understand the significance of a particular place or resource. When effective, they elicit evocative ideas or offer opportunities to explore meanings that may not be obvious or clearly understood by the casual visitor. A primary theme represents a broad and overarching interpretation, while sub-themes are usually narrower in scope.

Primary Theme: Rivers as Lifeways

As a result of input from the Tulalip Tribes and other Coalition partners, one of Snohomish County's original concepts for the Wayfinding and Interpretive Signage Project was the significance of the Skykomish-Snohomish Rivers system as a "lifeway." While alternative themes and sub-themes have been suggested and discussed throughout this project, the central role of the river in all aspects of life within its waters and along its shores remains a concept that brings together all of the various interpretive goals.

The Skykomish-Snohomish Rivers system was a source of life for Native peoples, many of whose descendants are now part of the Tulalip Tribes. The characterization of the Skykomish-Snohomish Rivers system as a "lifeway" also embodies the idea of the rivers as the center of an ecosystem. An understanding of the origins of the river system and changes through time form the basis for an appreciation of the life cycle of the fish as well as other plants, animals, birds and insects that are dependent on its waters. Through time, Native peoples have also been dependent on the river system for their subsistence as well as transportation, spiritual, and medicinal needs. As newcomers came to the area, the rivers also provided them with access to food, water, trade, and travel and to foster community development and industry.

While the rivers remain essential lifeways for fish and other plant and animal life, many past and present human uses as well as changing environmental conditions have compromised the health of the system and its continued ability to fulfill this essential role. Today, while the rivers deliver recreational opportunities that foster an important connection with the natural environment, their users must also understand and take precautions to ensure that the life of the river system is protected and preserved. Interpretive materials that promote an understanding of the cultural heritage, natural history, and historical uses of the river are one potential means to instill both pride in and respect for the essential lifefunction of the river system through all time.

Sub-Theme: Rivers and Treaty Rights

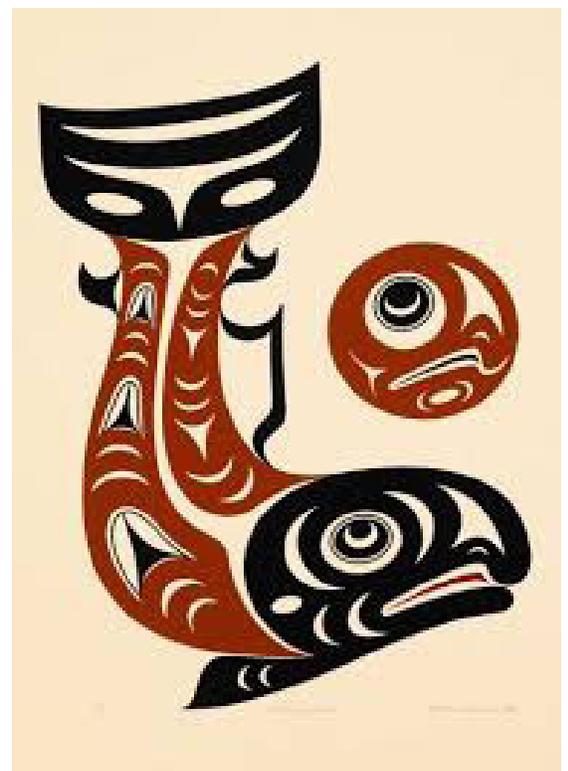
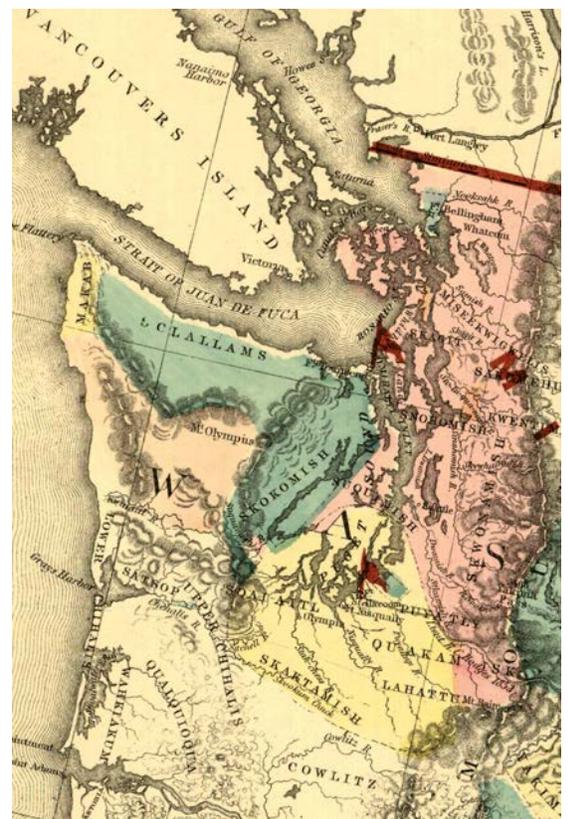
The Tulalip Tribes today represent a number of tribes and bands, including the Snohomish, Snoqualmie, and Skykomish, who were signers of the 1855 Treaty of Point Elliott. One of a series of treaties negotiated by the federal government with Puget Sound area tribes, the Point Elliott document offered a small monetary payment, promises of schools, hospitals, food, and household goods as well as protection by the government in return for the cession of millions of acres of land from the tribes. The use of the treaty process affirmed tribal sovereignty over the lands, waters, and resources that they retained, known as “reserved rights,” and also guaranteed the right to fish, hunt, and gather at all “usual and accustomed places.”

While the treaty process guaranteed these rights, the Tribes historically faced opposition to the exercise of those rights from Washington State and other landowners and non-Native fishermen, and, at times, were prevented from fishing in the Skykomish-Snohomish Rivers as well as other state waterways. Through the courts and public protests, the Tribes fought for their rights. Finally with the 1974 federal case, *United States v. Washington*, more familiarly known as the Boldt decision, the court reaffirmed the reserved rights of tribes in Washington, and, in particular, the right to continue fishing, hunting, and gathering in accordance with the terms of the treaties that the United States had signed with the tribes. In this and subsequent rulings, the courts also reaffirmed the role of the signatory tribes to act as co-managers with the State of fish and wildlife resources.

Tribal fishing rights and the concept of co-management of these resources is not well understood by the public. A series of interpretive panels about treaty rights could provide needed insights on the important role that the tribes play along with the State in protecting fish runs and habitat.

Interpretive Symbol

In meetings about interpretive signage, the most frequent suggestion was to develop a symbol that would serve as a pictorial representation of the Skykomish-Snohomish Rivers system and could be used as a visual link for all of the access areas. Whether it was a simple graphic of the river waters and its fish, for example, or more complex artistic rendering that exemplified some aspect of the rivers’ life-giving forces, the symbol would produce continuity as well as easy identification of the river access sites in the system. In particular, the proposal was made to commission a Native artist to develop the symbol or graphic so that it would represent not only the river system as a lifeway, but also the continuing presence of tribal people and their cultural connection to the rivers. The Tulalip Tribes have several carvers and other artists who could produce such a work. The symbol could also be used in any accompanying maps or other materials associated with the Wayfinding Program or the work of the Coalition.





Cultural Heritage Interpretive Concepts

One important goal of interpretation at the access sites is to establish reminders of the long cultural heritage tied to the river system. Several interpretive concepts were suggested that provide consistent and repeated reminders of the role that the rivers have played in the cultural values and traditions practiced by Native people of the region. These concepts can be incorporated at any or all of the sites and offer a simple, yet effective, means to reinforce the idea of the cultural significance of these rivers.

Use of Lushootseed Names

Lushootseed is one of approximately twenty surviving languages that are part of the broader Salish language family. The Tulalip Tribes take pride in expanding knowledge of Lushootseed by providing language training to tribal members and encouraging its use in everyday life. The incorporation of the Lushootseed language in interpretive signage can exemplify the integral connection between tribal cultural heritage and the Skykomish-Snohomish Rivers system.

Teachers in the Lushootseed Language program recommended the use small signs at various access points to identify the Lushootseed names for plants and animals that were traditionally found at these sites. Also, the types of fish that lived in nearby waters could be identified by both Lushootseed and English names.

The use of Lushootseed place names was also discussed. Where appropriate, the traditional names of particular locations along the river or notable natural features could be paired with current place names. The Tulalip Tribes should be involved in any decisions about the selection of named places, since in some cases they have a desire to protect knowledge of village locations or other important spiritual, ceremonial, or culturally significant sites and they may not wish to have Lushootseed names used.

Traditional Stories

Within Native culture, traditional stories and songs were an important means of sharing knowledge and values. The Tulalip Tribes today recognize the essential role that stories have played in transmitting the teaching of elders to succeeding generations. With their many levels of meaning, these stories provide a way to understand the skills and lifeways that have connected Native peoples to land and water resources that have served as a foundation for cultural practices.

Traditional stories, and particularly those that related to identifiable places or practices along the rivers, could also be part of the interpretation at specific sites. These stories could help visitors make connections that might enhance their appreciation of and care for the rivers. Some tribal members, however, felt very strongly that many of these stories have very special meanings to the Tulalip Tribes, and like the location of spiritual and ceremonial sites, should not be publicly shared.

The Hibulb Cultural Center and the Lushootseed Language Program have published some traditional stories online, illustrating the seven teachings that represent the core values of the Tulalip Tribes. One of these teachings, The Story of the Salmon Ceremony, as told by Bernie Gobin Kia-Kia, has particular resonance for the critical importance of caring for the rivers and the salmon. A brief synopsis of the story follows:

The story tells of how the salmon offered themselves as food for the people of the village, but over time, the people had become careless and had not kept the river clean or followed the ceremonial rituals that were required for the return of the salmon. As a result, fewer and fewer salmon returned. One day as a young man of the village was walking by the river, the waters parted and he was taken to where the salmon people lived. There he learned of the hardships the salmon faced in returning to feed the people and the duties of the people to make sure the habitat of the rivers was appropriately maintained. The young man returned to his village and shared the wisdom that he had learned from the salmon people, who each year thereafter sent a scout to make sure that the villagers kept their promise to properly clean and care for the river and follow the traditional ceremonies to welcome the salmon back.

Since this story has already been shared publicly, the use of an adapted version could be an acceptable addition to the overall interpretation of river access sites. The Tulalip Tribes should be consulted prior to the use of this or any other traditional stories.

Personal Views of the Rivers

The Skykomish-Snohomish Rivers system has multiple layers of cultural meaning for tribal members as well as other local residents and even visitors. An identified interpretive element could be used at every access site and would link people today and in the past through their perspectives on the meaning of the rivers in their lives. Historic quotations from elders in both the tribal and non-tribal community could be compared or contrasted with the views of modern-day people of all ages who have personal experiences connecting them to the river system.

Tribal archives as well local historical societies and museums have oral history collections that provide ample historic views. A public-outreach project, short surveys, or a river-related oral history program could be used to gather modern-day perspectives on the rivers. These types of projects could be undertaken by public schools, historical societies, municipalities, managing agencies, Chambers of Commerce, or even the Snohomish County Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. Selected quotations could be accompanied by a photograph or drawing of the individuals.

Public River Access Sites: Interpretive Ideas

A total of 11 access sites on the Skykomish-Snohomish Rivers system were selected for initial inclusion in the Wayfinding and Interpretive Signage Program. These sites were chosen as a result of comments from Coalition members and an assessment of frequency of use as well as potential safety and habitat protection issues. While interpretation was not a focus of this selection process, suggestions for potential interpretive content pertinent to each access were solicited during site visits and meetings and are discussed below.

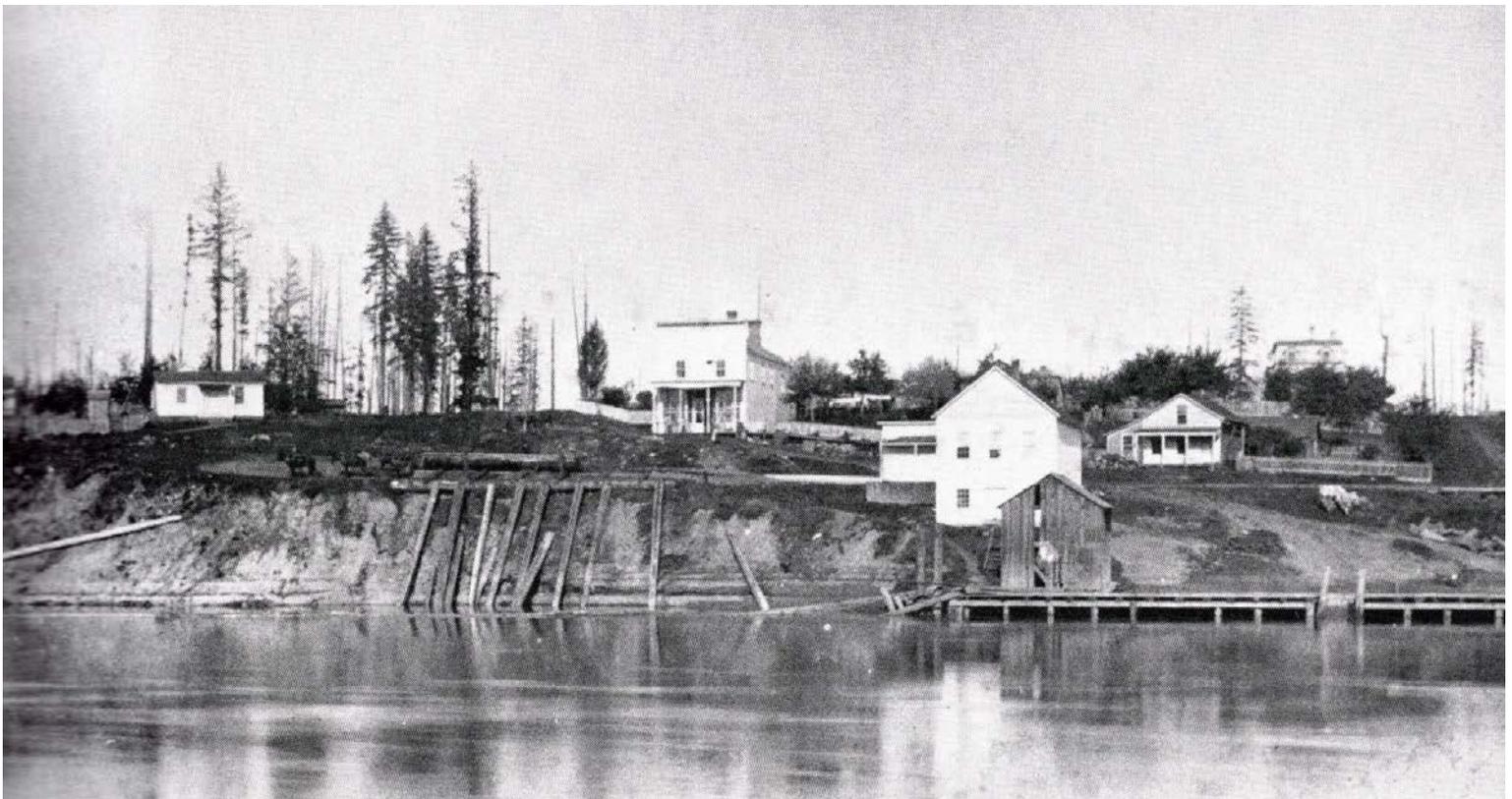
In addition to the cultural concepts previously mentioned, interpretive suggestions were made that focused not only on cultural heritage, but also historical and natural history themes. Generally, historical themes were associated with the role of the rivers in transportation, industrial development, and settlement. Natural history themes included the evolution of the rivers through time, shaped by natural forces as well as human impacts. Interpretive emphasis was also placed on the ecosystem supported by the rivers, and, in particular, the life cycle, identification and habitat of salmonids and other fish in the Snohomish-Skykomish Rivers system. The effects of human behavior on habitat and the nature and goals of fisheries management were other suggested themes.

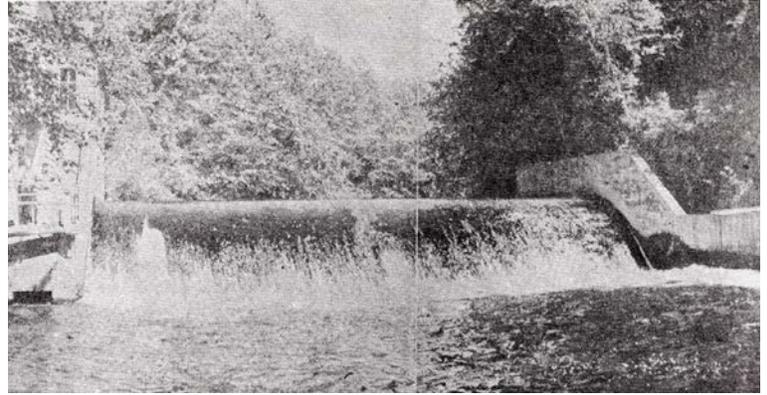
Each river access site is discussed below with a description of some of the interpretive content identified. The numbers associated with the sites are keyed to their locations on the accompanying map.

Cady Landing - Manged by City of Snohomish

Cultural/Historical Interpretation 1

The park is near the former site of one the largest Native villages on the Snohomish River, but also represents one of the first non-Native settlements in the area. Proposed construction of a military road led a small group of investors to send Edson Cady, Heil Barnes, and Egbert Tucker to file squatters' claims along both sides of the Snohomish River at the potential location of a ferry crossing for the route. The road project lost its funding, and while none of these original claimants, including Cady, remained at the site, they each sold or transferred their claims to settlers who formed the nucleus of what eventually became the town of Snohomish. The site offers the interpretive opportunity to compare and contrast the Native and non-Native settlements and to discuss the cultural impacts that affected both the newcomers and the Native community.





Cultural/Historical Interpretation 2

Transportation and the Snohomish River. In addition to its role as a ferry landing, interpretation at the Cady Landing site on the Snohomish River creates an opportunity to look at other forms of transportation and their relationship to the river and the development of the town of Snohomish. Interpretation could include a discussion of various types of watercraft used on this portion of the river, from Native canoes to the rowboats and later steamers that carried passengers and goods once settlement began to grow. The proximity of the National Register-eligible Northern Pacific (originally Seattle, Lakeshore, and Eastern) railroad bridge that crosses the Snohomish next to the park, offers the opportunity to explore the role that rail service played in the further development of the region.

Edson Cady is also an interesting figure connected to these various forms of transportation. After filing for a post office under the name of Cadyville and then selling his claim, he pioneered a trail up the north fork of the Skykomish River to look for potential mining claims and located a route through the mountains that became known as Cady Pass and was later used by the Great Northern Railroad as their access through the mountains. Failing to make his fortune in mining, Cady also ran a steamboat service on the river.

Pilchuck Julia Landing - Manged by City of Snohomish

Cultural/Historical Interpretation

The Pilchuck Julia Landing is within view of the confluence of the Pilchuck and Snohomish Rivers and offers an opportunity to interpret the dynamics created by two river systems coming together. The pending removal of the Pilchuck Dam will also have an impact on those dynamics and particularly on fish passage. The original wooden dam structure was built by the City of Snohomish on the Pilchuck River a few miles from Granite Falls in 1912, and then replaced by a new concrete dam in 1932. The 60-foot-wide dam provided water for the City, but despite the use of fish ladders, severely impeded fish runs. The dam removal is a joint project of the Tulalip Tribes and the City of Snohomish and should particularly benefit the steelhead runs as well as the passage of Chinook and Coho salmon.

Lewis Street River Access - Managed by City of Monroe

Identified Cultural Interpretation

The Lewis Street location on the Skykomish River offered easy access to the river as well as fairly level, open terrain that was well-suited to summer fishing camps. Locations like these up and down the river also frequently supported villages and in the more recent past served as stopover points for tribal families crossing the mountains to visit relatives in Yakima and points beyond. Local lore suggests that the Lewis Street site was also occupied at one time by a gypsy camp.

Historical Interpretation 1

The coming of the railroad and the ability to ship perishable fruits and vegetables to new markets enhanced the agricultural potential of the area. The farming land adjacent to the Lewis Street site was formerly part of the Great Northern Fruit Farm, operated by Charles Stewart but bankrolled by the Great Northern Railroad. Once one of the largest employers in the area, the fruit farm later became the site of a large dairy cattle operation.

Historical Interpretation 2

Spanning the Skykomish River. The history and difficulties of constructing bridges over the Skykomish River is a potential interpretive theme. The bridge visible from the Lewis Street Access is the fourth to have spanned the Skykomish River at this location. A wooden wagon bridge built in 1894 was the first to cross the river, but the power of the river's waters and the toll of flooding led to rebuilding in 1905 and then replacement by a new steel girder bridge in 1915. The current thru truss bridge was erected in 1957 and is considered a scenic attraction in the area.

Al Borlin Park - Managed by City of Monroe

Natural History Interpretation 1

This part of the Skykomish River is considered a prime spawning area for Chinook salmon. The site provides plenty of room for interpretive panels that discuss the life cycle of salmon and potentially the journey of the Chinook back to this place. The site currently includes large roots, snags, and in-water brush and thus offers the opportunity to present information on the importance of retaining this type of woody debris for fish habitat.

Natural History Interpretation 2

The Skykomish River has changed course at this site and a discussion of the impact of floods and other natural forces that have shaped and reshaped the landscape is a potential interpretive theme at this site (as well as others along the river). Old maps can help to show the changes to Woods Creek and the river in this area through time.

Historical Interpretation

The upland areas of the park were once part of an extensive old-growth forest along Woods Creek and became contested ground for competing logging interests and shingle bolt cutters. The Buck Shingle Mill operated nearby on Woods Creek until 1916, and loggers also used oxen to skid their logs to the creek, and at high water, move them into the Skykomish River and then on down to mills in Everett. First-person accounts of the shingle bolt "wars" in this area and historic photographs provide interpretive opportunities at the site.



Ben Howard Boat Launch - Managed by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Cultural and Natural History Interpretation

When crowded, parked cars obscure most of the areas where interpretive signage could be used. This part of the river is noted as a fishing spot for pinks, Coho, and steelhead, and interpretive materials that illustrate identification and habitat information for these species could encourage more respectful use of the site. Both Lushootseed and more common names for these fish could be included here, with reference to the numerous fishing camps and village sites that once existed along the river.

Sportsman's Park - Managed by City of Sultan

Cultural and Natural History Interpretation

The confluence of the Sultan and Skykomish Rivers is a rich cultural area that includes a former village site and long-term use by the Skykomish people. The site has room for an interpretive focus on the lifeways of Native peoples, including plank houses, seasonal fishing and hunting camps, and the rich resources in both fish and also elk and other game available in the Sultan basin.

Cultural and Historical Interpretation

A folk art statue depicts the Skykomish leader Tsul-tad or Tseul-tud, whose anglicized name was Sultan John. The reminiscences of elder like Ed Davis as well as local stories about the naming of the town and the role of Sultan John might offer an opportunity to explore cultural expropriations and the complex interactions and adaptations between cultures that evolved historically. The community's continuing celebration of the return of the salmon might also figure into the interpretation and could be an opportunity for joint interpretive efforts by the Tulalip Tribes and the City of Sultan.

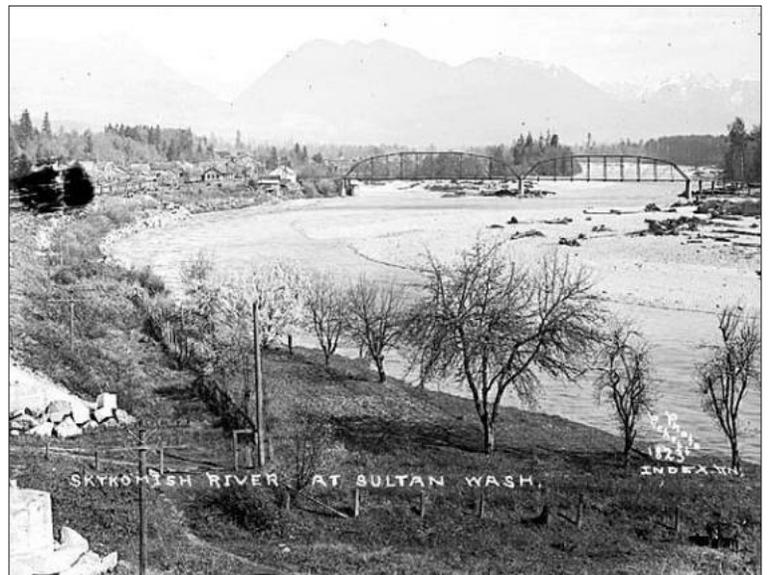
Steelhead County Park - Managed by Snohomish County Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism

Natural History Interpretation

The land is part of a floodplain, and the site offers the opportunity to discuss historic flooding on the Skykomish-Snohomish Rivers and the various efforts to deal with the changing river by the Army Corps of Engineers and other agencies. From a fisheries perspective the interpretation should also include the discussion of how functional floodplains are critical for fish and other species.

Cultural and Historical Interpretation

The park offers a vantage point from the south side of the Skykomish River to view its confluence with the Sultan River and to discuss the natural features and access to fish and game that this important area provided. Artwork and landscaping along the river could elicit other visual reminders of the past cultural activities that may have occurred in this area.



Big Eddy - Managed by Washington State Park, Wallace Falls

Identified Natural History Interpretation

Considered an important spawning site, this access is potentially a good place to interpret the life cycle of salmon. The content of messaging at the site could include an explanation and illustrations of salmon redds as well as cautions to avoid them. It is also a possible location to interpret the importance of retaining woody debris for salmon, while at the same time communicating that may hold dangers for humans using the river.

Identified Historical Interpretation

Two bridges crossing the Skykomish River are visible from Big Eddy, including a Burlington Northern (originally Great Northern) Railroad bridge. The railroad construction process brought thousands of men into the region, with tote roads forged along the rivers to get building supplies and goods up to the construction sites. Once in place, the railroads also increased interest in mining, with nearby Gold Bar and the Wallace River being sites of prospecting activity.

Cable Drop - Managed by US Forest Service, Mt Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

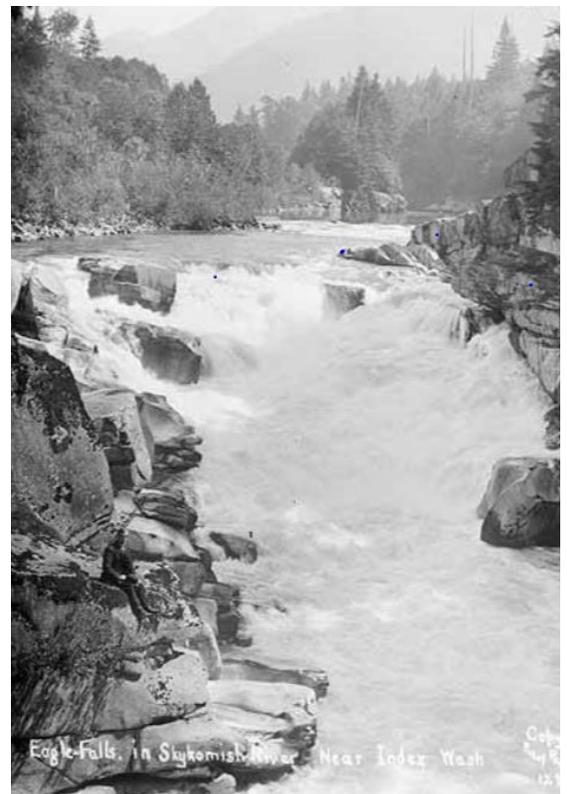
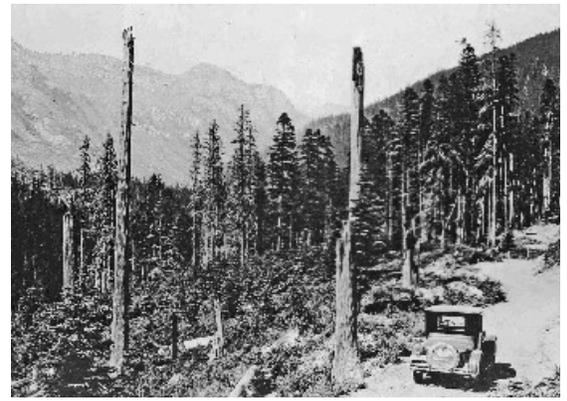
Identified Cultural and Natural History Interpretation

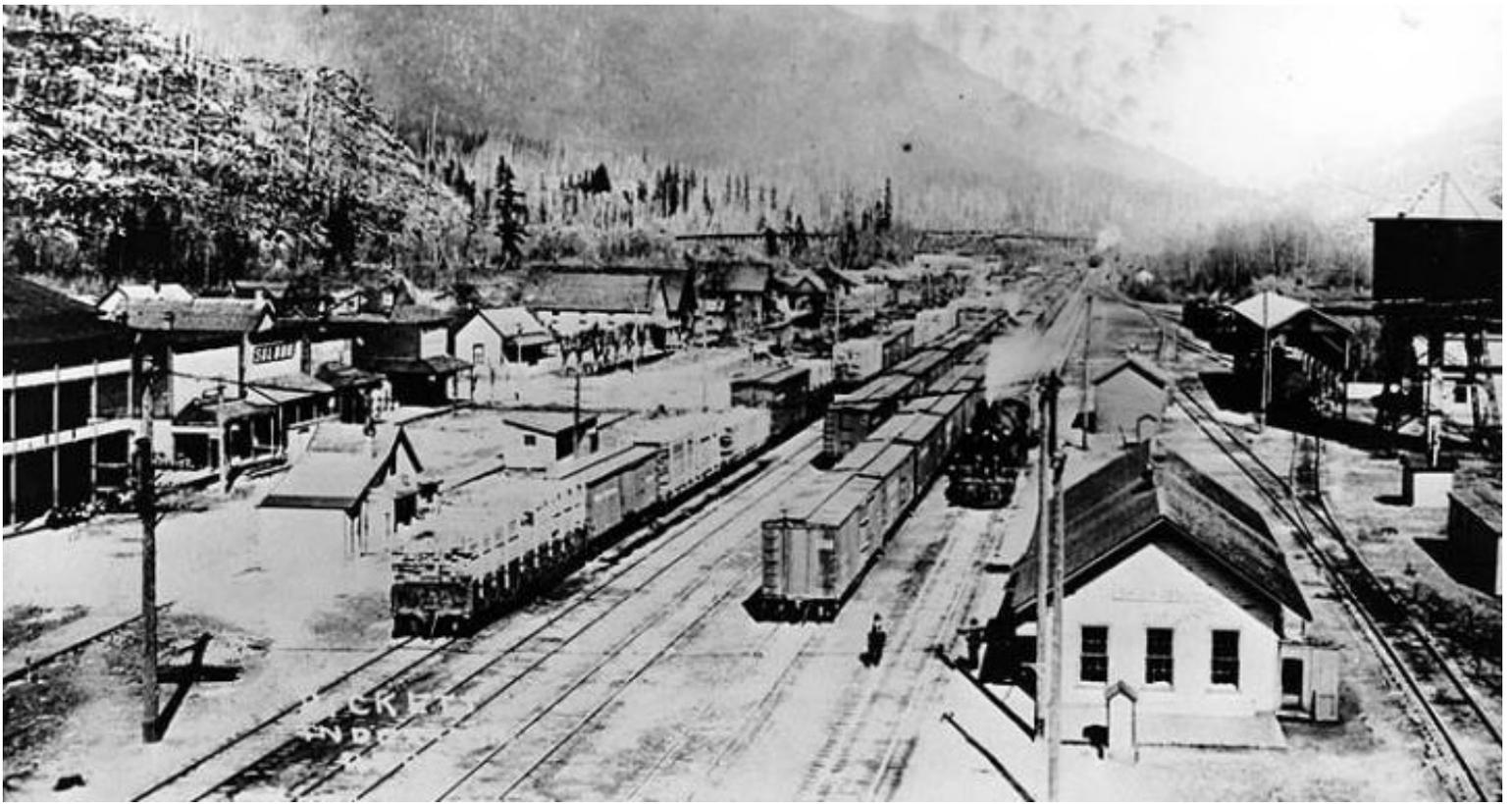
The site is near a series of whitewater rapids and may be a good spot to discuss the changing nature of the river as it descends from the mountains and the habitat that is created in various parts of the river. This changing river can also be related to the nature of the plant and animal life along its banks and is a potential spot to identify Lushootseed names for some common species that are found along this section of the river.

Eagle Falls - Managed by US Forest Service, Mt Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

Identified for Cultural Interpretation

Traditional stories about the falls may provide a means for visitors to connect with their cultural power and bring more respect to their treatment of this special part of the river. The Tulalip Tribes could make the determination if any of these stories would be appropriate to share with the public at this spot. A few small signs indicating the Lushootseed place names of identifying natural features, plants, or animals might also serve as a visual reminder.





Skykomish Bridge - Managed by Town of Skykomish

Natural History, Historical, and Cultural Interpretation

Skykomish was the location of a construction camp and later a depot and refueling station for the Great Northern Railroad. Over time, leakage from the storage tanks along the tracks caused oil and other toxic materials to seep below the Town of Skykomish and to move underground toward the river, threatening to pollute its waters. As part of a massive cleanup effort, a number of residential and commercial buildings were physically lifted and moved so that the contaminated soils could be extracted. During that process archaeological work took place to identify earlier uses of the site and to document the cultural and historical artifacts that were found there. Once this work was completed, new soils were brought in and the buildings were replaced in their original locations.

Interpretation of the consequences of industrial activities along the Skykomish and the massive cleanup efforts that were needed to protect the health of both residents and the river can provide some important insights on the impact of human activity throughout the river system. Photographs of the historic town juxtaposed with the others of moving the town's buildings provide compelling evidence of sometimes unintended consequences, and artifacts found at the site provide evidence of important linkages between past and present.

Growing Interpretive Support and Community Connections

Interpretive panels and other types of signage at the various river access points offer important on-site opportunities to highlight cultural, historical, and natural history themes for visitors. Necessarily, these interpretive elements can provide only a very limited representations or discussions of these themes, and it is important, when possible, to provide additional interpretive information to enhance or deepen visitor understanding and appreciation of the messages conveyed.

In terms of cultural heritage, the Hibulb Cultural Center, which includes a museum, research center, and natural history preserve, offers significant opportunities for additional interpretive support. Located on the Tulalip Reservation, Hibulb provides a rich visitor experience with immersive displays that address various themes in tribal history and culture. The importance of the river system is also highlighted in design elements of the building. To encourage linkages between the cultural interpretation at public river access sites and the cultural center, the web address, bar code links to the center's website, or mention of the center's location should be included on interpretive panels that address cultural heritage.

The same types of linkages should be made to the historical societies and museums that are located in towns along the Skykomish-Snohomish Rivers system and that collect, interpret, and preserve cultural and historical records, photographs, and artifacts. Partnerships and collaborations between these organizations could enhance the interpretation at individual sites, but also provide more in-depth treatments of important themes. Small traveling exhibits that highlight key interpretive elements of the Skykomish-Snohomish Rivers system project could be developed and circulate to these various museums and historical societies as well as libraries, schools or public buildings. Individual museums and historical societies could be encouraged to develop their own displays that focus on the importance of the rivers to their communities, and possibly grants could be made available to assist with these efforts. Oral history interview projects focusing on river-related topics could also contribute important interpretive perspectives and growing community connections.

Online exhibits could also include elements of the on-site interpretation as well as additional photographs and explanatory materials and could be added to other web-based information provided on the river accesses. A map that included access locations and some interpretive information could be available online to download, but a print version could also be handed out at visitor centers, local businesses, and other venues.

Interpretive Partnerships and Future Planning

This report serves as the initial information-gathering phase of a larger project to develop a comprehensive interpretive plan for the Skykomish-Snohomish river access system. Final identification and selection of themes and types of interpretive signage at the river access points should be made in partnership with the Tulalip Tribes and other local groups. Once sources of funding and support for interpretive panels and signage on the rivers are identified, more detailed planning can begin. An advisory board composed of representatives from the Tulalip Tribes, heritage organizations, agency and county personnel could be assembled to provide guidance and serve as an essential link to the broader community. It is important to have both tribal and community support for design and content and to provide opportunities for these partners to play a significant role in the development and review of proposed panels, artwork, or other interpretive signage and related materials.

Appendix

This report was authored by Sherry Boswell, in coordination with Tangram Design.