

## 12. La Conner Chamber of Commerce

Over the river and through the flats to La Conner Washington we go.

The Best Roads lead you to Pleasant Ridge, Valentine Road and Cal whom is heading west.

Round and round and round we go along to the boardwalk where we shall see Otters, Seals, crabs, Eagles, Seagulls, Mussels and That's Knot All Co-Operative is a great place to be.

Burgers in the brig or cod homemade in the café', Bench on the dock and take a relaxing break.

Facing West hidden behind the nightstand your treasure at rest awaits! Somewhere under the Rainbow Bridge a Channel once known as Swinomish Slough slowly ripples by.

## 13. & 14. Skagit County Historical Museum, La Conner

### Pioneer Park

*Follow 1st St as it winds passed Maple Hall to 3rd St. When you hit the T at Pioneer Park, park and wander toward the amphitheater*

There's a red picnic table with a bench nearby...

The bench bears the name of the Family Stephens.

Behind this bench lies a rough, little trail,

Running over the hill, a little uneven...

Walk 14 paces and look to your left,

Behind a big rock, tucked back in the sticks...

The treasure is wrapped in a black plastic bag.

I tell you the truth ... I offer no tricks.

### Hole in the Wall

*From Pioneer Park, follow the road underneath the Rainbow Bridge. Stay on that road, which turns into a dirt road. Drive to the end and park at the chain.*

*Follow the path through the woods and then down a steep grade to the little beach. Then...*

With your back to the water, and facing the land,

On your far left-hand side, the tall grasses stand.

Grey, weathered drift logs lay buried in sand.

And close to the rock wall, log roots do arise,

There buried beneath, you'll discover your prize.

## 15. Skagit Beachwatchers, Washington Park

"Surrounded by water with views that abound, this place on an island is what must be found. Round and round the park you may go, where the box is-you don't yet know. Follow the trail to a place where you'll find...bright purple stars, seaweed, and brine. Explore near the water, but please do be kind to the many small critters you're likely to find."

## 16. Anacortes Farmers Market

Each Saturday from 9 - 2 and each Wednesday from 4 - 7 You can join in the fun and shop for foods from heaven! You follow the sunshine in the sky over in Anacortes ...and make your way to the Old Town Depot plaza where the **Anacortes Farmers Market** is held. In the plaza there are booths selling wonderful things, some are veggies, some are treats, and also some are blings. The Market Manager's booth is where you will find what you seek. Just ask the smiling folks there to let you take a peek. We hope you enjoy the letterbox but that you also stay to play. You'll hear live music & likely find this visit the highlight of your day.

[www.anacortesfarmersmarket.org](http://www.anacortesfarmersmarket.org)

## 17. Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

Padilla Bay is an estuary.

To find the beach, just follow me!

But how do we get there?

Oh where? Oh where?

From the front door the path will go,

Down, down, the path we go,

First there is grass, then the shrub bushes grow

On the right you must stop when the shrub bushes end,

Then follow the path on the grass that bends,

down to the pine trees standing together in a bunch,

could something be in there or is that just a hunch?

Down to the pine tree closest to the main road,

Around the bottom on the ground might be a box with a load.

You might want to check;

we are Letterbox adventurers after all, we have to inspect!

*Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, 10441 Bayview-Edison Road, Mt. Vernon (just north of the Bayview State Park!)*

## 18. Taylor Shellfish Farm

Over a river or two and through the woods and by the cliffs you go. Find **Taylor Shellfish Farm** on scenic Chuckanut Dr. Don't miss the lighthouse and the store or you have not completed your trip to Bow. The letterbox is neither here nor there. So take a stroll and enjoy the view: the ocean, the islands, the eagles, and maybe sailors in the sea and in the skies. **And make sure you end where you properly put dog doo.**

**Check out our Facebook page (Skagit Watershed Letterbox) and website (SkagitCleanWater.org) throughout the summer!**

**To report a missing box email [info@skagitcleanwater.org](mailto:info@skagitcleanwater.org)**

**Trail ends October 5, 2014**

**Come to the End of Trail Celebration Monday, October 20, 2014**

**4:00 pm - 6:00 pm**

# 2014 Skagit Watershed Letterbox Trail

A Letterbox is a hidden box filled with fun facts, stickers, stamps and secret words that will lead you on a hunt where you will discover the treasures of Skagit Watersheds. Follow the clues below to find the boxes our conservation partners have hidden throughout Skagit County.

Letterboxing is a fun, exciting way for kids of all ages to explore the natural world and to learn about our beautiful community (great family activity). Participants seek out hidden letterboxes by cracking codes and following clues. The prize: an image from a miniature piece of art known as a rubber stamp—usually a unique, hand-carved creation. Letterboxers stamp their discoveries in a personal journal, then use their own rubber stamp to stamp into the letterbox's log-book. All you need to get started is a journal (or small tablet), an inkpad and ink stamp, and a sense of adventure. Pick up your trail clues at a local library, at the Skagit Conservation District office, the Skagit PUD office, or on line at [Atlasquest.com](http://Atlasquest.com), [www.skagitcleanwater.org](http://www.skagitcleanwater.org).

### The fun begins below:

### Boxes 1. & 2. Skagit Conservation Education Alliance and Friday Creek Habitat Stewards at Pomona Grange Park

*Pomona Grange Park, 5625 Old Highway 99 N., Burlington. Heading either north or south on I-5, take the Bow Hill Exit 236. Head east on Bow Hill Road and follow to stop sign. Turn left (north) onto Old Highway 99 N. Turn right into first parking lot.*

1. After parking find and face the kiosk with the "living roof." Turn to the right and take the trail to the left of the Doggie Pot sign. Continue on through the forest of ferns. Stop at the Nurse stumps and see if you can find all 5 trees. The trail veers to the right, then at the next fork, take the left hand path. The bridge to Friday Creek should be in view. Listen to the chattering sound of the creek and the sign to the right tells you its name. Pass between the sign and the cedar. Can you spy the box below the bridge? See if you can find little critters in the creek like the ones you found in Skagit Conservation Education Alliance Box.

2. From the Friday Creek Bridge, take the path to the right that parallels the creek. Walk passed the Red Alder and see the Hatchery Trail sign. As you stroll along the path, look around at the vine maples, sword ferns and salmonberry. Just as you pass the Big Leaf Maple dripping with ivy, you will see two leaning nurse stumps to your left. Walk carefully toward the stumps and see the mossy root. When you peer behind the root, you should find your quest. After your stamping, continue along the trail on the creek, the Samish River's largest tributary. Late in summer, you just might see a Chinook salmon making its way home. Be sure to pick up any litter you may find and always treat this habitat with care so you will display what the secret word is in the **Friday Creek Habitat Stewards' box.**

UPDATES at: Facebook: Skagit Watershed Letterbox  
**Trail ends October 5, 2014**

**End of the Trail Celebration**

**Padilla Bay Interpretive Center Monday, October 20**

**from 4:00 pm—6:00 pm**



### 3. US Forest Service/Mount Baker Ranger Station

1. Think of the largest river in Skagit County...
2. Follow the river east on Highway 20 to the town with two names...
3. Look for a shield and arrowhead embedded in stone on the Northern Side of the highway...
4. Do you need a map or hiking information????
5. Turn around, face north, take a couple steps into the covered area.
6. On the left, look under the lid and what you are looking for will be inside.

### 4. Skagit Land Trust

*Next stop, off Highway 20 keep an eye posted to your right for the Wildlife viewing pullout, three miles before the town of Concrete*

Where oftentimes elk will lay,  
Start at the interpretative signs,  
Then turn to the east and you'll be on your way.  
Follow the fence line around the corner and to the end,  
And look for an orange reflector.  
Near blackberry bushes the fence will break,  
this is where you should make your conjecture.  
Look for what is hidden,  
It won't be hard to find,  
The letterbox is waiting,  
For you to peak inside.

### 5. Skagit Conservation Education Alliance

**Walk on the Wild Side** Rockport is a little town 42 miles east of Mount Vernon, at the juncture of Hwy 20 and Hwy 530. It hosts a gem of a park –Howard Miller Steelhead Park. When you arrive, park in the day-use area. Travel back in time to the 1880's. Linger at the ferry, Tom Fowler's cabin and a shovel-nosed canoe. The Wild and Scenic Skagit River has many stories to tell! Try to visit them all. Now for the hunt – travel to the far end of the camping area, past the numbers 30 – 39 and the pit of shoes where you'll find the gateway you're looking for. Pause to learn stories about the local residents. Over the bridge and through the woods, you'll come upon a green grass road. Look for more stories and notice the change in the flora. Native plants and wildflowers are strewn along your path. How many can you identify? (maybe you can start a list to share at the End-of-the Trail Celebration). Look for the tri-trunked tree in your pathway, after which you will see a path to the right which leads to evidence of watershed stewards having been there. Your prize is not this way, though. Keep to your original heading to the lone tree in the middle of the green grass road. Keep following your path to the next story, after which you will pass a nowhere trail on the left. Stay true to the green grass road and you'll find yet another trail to the left. On your right is a tree that is out-standing in its field. Your prize is about 35 paces down the trail toward the river. It will seem that you are at a dead-end, but then gently make your way through the 'snow field' (snow berry bushes to be exact). You'll see a small tree that has fallen over another tree directly in front of you. Look to your right for a nurse log on the ground. Explore its hiding places to find your

### 5. Skagit Conservation Education Alliance...continued

prize. Keep going if you like, there are more stories along the trail (but not more SCEA letterboxes). Bring bug spray! It's about 1.5 miles round trip.

### 6. US National Park Service

Your journey begins in **North Cascades National Park**,

Near where you cross the river to **view rising peaks**.

The **Visitor Center** (MP 120) is the portal to all that you seek.

Beyond the doors, tread lightly to find a place of hiding.

Secrets of your place to **protect and enjoy** are held in the view beyond.

\*\* Talk with a ranger about activity booklets for all ages. Junior Ranger or Wilderness Ranger booklets are available with patches and badges for completing them.

### 7. Skagit PUD

From the Skagit PUD parking lot on Freeway Dr. in Mount Vernon, look for the blue rain barrel. Consider the water in-side the barrel; it could contain molecules that dinosaurs once drank. Head north and go around to the east side of the building to the front lawn. See the fountains? Follow them south-1,2,3. Once past the third, continue towards the trees. Search and you will find, something blue beneath the big pine. Now, head back to the fountains, take your shoes off and put your toes in the water! You deserve it. Look to the east for the Cultus Mountains, which is where this water comes from.

### 8. Skagit Conservation District & Salal Chapter of the Native Plant Society

#### 9. Master Composter

#### 10. Master Gardener

**Directions:** From downtown Mount Vernon, cross the Skagit River and head west on Memorial Hwy (State Route 536) for approximately 2.7 miles to the WSU Extension Research Center, 16650 Memorial Hwy, which will be on your left. Watch for the sign to the Discovery Garden, and turn left into parking lot. This garden is open to the public 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

8. To find the letterbox, walk through the entrance of the Discovery Garden and head towards the outdoor pavilion. Follow the signs and arrows leading to the Native Plant Garden. As you enter this beautiful garden, you will be greeted by the sounds of birds singing and a host of trees and shrubs, all native to our region. "Why garden with native plants," you ask? If you are interested in habitat gardening for birds, butterflies or other pollinators or creating a beautiful garden that uses less water and doesn't need pesticides and lots of fertilizer, gardening with native plants is the way to go. Continue straight ahead on the garden path- two signs and lots of plants to enjoy on the way. A perfect spot for sitting a spell and letterboxing (whether rain or shine) is just around the corner. Do you see a bench with a covered roof? Take a seat! Behind the sword fern in front of you and tucked in the branches of the Cascara tree, you will find what you are seeking. Remember to carefully re-hide the box once you have stamped in.

9. Take a garden path that leads you to the north

Go past raspberries and veggie beds that give summer dining worth  
At the back, near a shack, and lots of piles of soil  
You will find a row of cubic yards, filled with garden spoils  
Look around, up and down, notice little critters  
They have a secret much larger than the length of their small feelers

10. The Master Gardener Program, created by WSU in 1973, fosters the networking individuals who share an interest in promoting scientific-based, sound gardening practices. For more information, call the WSU Extension Office at (360) 428-4270 or [skagit.wsu.edu](http://skagit.wsu.edu). Now to the important stuff! You are looking for a treasure that resides here. Pick up a Discovery Garden brochure at the front entrance and enjoy a stroll through the 26 specialty gardens. When you come to the composting area (where we recycle organic plant material) in the northwest corner, take a break on the bench in the clematis-covered arbor on the north side. Watch your feet as you sit in the cool shade. You never know what might be lurking underneath.

### 11. Skagit Aududon Society

Take Interstate 5 to Exit 221, south of Mount Vernon. Go west from the around the traffic circle (under construction in summer 2014) onto Fir Island Road, following the sign for Conway/La Conner. Cross over the Skagit River Bridge and in 1.8 miles, turn left onto Wylie Road & continue for 1 mile to a T-intersection & a Washington Dpt. of Fish & Wildlife sign. Turn left onto the unpaved road. Drive a short distance & turn right. Just before the gate ahead, turn right to reach the parking lot.

Park & walk back to the gate at which you just turned. A sign indicating that this area is a stop on the Cascade Loop of the Great Washington Birding Trail and information about its importance to shorebirds. Turn right & pass around the gate, continuing down the road or the path which parallels it. Watch for ospreys, bald eagles, swallows, & other birds. There may be ducks and other species on or over the water. In a short distance, you will round the first curve in the road. At that point look ahead about 100 yards for a 40 or 50 foot tall conifer (a Sitka spruce) overhanging the road. Walk to this tree and turn to face it. A few feet to the right of the tree's trunk, you will see a path through the brush. Carefully avoiding any blackberry vines or stinging nettle, go down the path and look behind the tree trunk. Just to the left as you face the trunk is a thick pile of twigs with a space opening beneath. That's where you will find the letterbox! Please be sure to return it to the same spot.

Please note that you need to have & display a Discover Pass (\$10/day or \$30/year) or a Washington State fishing or hunting license to park at this area. The Discover Pass may be purchased on-line, over the phone, or at many stores. Go to [www.parks.wa.gov/discoverpass/](http://www.parks.wa.gov/discoverpass/). The fees collected help pay for the management of state lands.

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