

Clear Creek Trail System Map and Points of Interest

The following points of interest are identified along the Clear Creek Trail by a green marker with their corresponding number.

1 In 1841, Captain Wilkes of the U.S. Navy sailed through a narrow channel from Puget Sound into a large bay as part of his exploration. He named the bay Dyes Inlet after the expedition's assistant taxidermist, W.W. Dyes.

2 The "mosquito fleet" began ferrying passengers and goods from points on Puget Sound in 1853. In the mid-1880s, steamer boats began making trips to Seattle from the Kitsap area. By 1900, the sloop "Telka" left Silverdale once a week for Seattle.

3 Watch for belted kingfishers, great blue herons, bald eagles and osprey fishing in the rich, shallow water near the estuary. You may see an osprey hovering 40-60' up before diving feet first to capture its prey or the tall, wading great blue heron take off in flight with slow, powerful wingspan of up to 6'.

4 Old Mill Park. In the late 1800s, valley settlers beached and stored their dingsies along this area. In 1909, Anders Nilson may have used this site as a dog-fish oil-processing site. Around 1955, the property owners, the Westfall-Schneebekk Lumber Company, installed a German-made mill which can be seen today.

5 At the SE end of the estuary, look for the culvert installed decades ago to allow the creek to drain and the tide to flow into the estuary. In the future, the narrow, insufficient culvert is expected to be replaced with a larger one. The original Bucklin Hill Road bridge was probably built in 1907 by C. H. Brandlein, who grazed cattle on his 40-acre site NE of Bucklin Hill.

6 Sources provide two names used by the Suquamish to refer to Clear Creek: Duwe'iq, meaning "mouth of a creek way back in a pocket" (roughly where the creek empties into the estuary), and Sa'qad, meaning "spear it;" which refers to the camping ground at the mouth of the creek, the creek itself and all of Dyes Inlet. The area was good habitat for silver salmon, oysters, clams, huckleberries and deer.

7 Levin Road was part of a much longer north-south territorial road reaching to north Kitsap County. Portions still exist, including a section of Schold Road. The name "Levin" comes from early Clear Creek valley settler John Levine. The road ran through his homestead in the valley.

8 It was necessary for this foot bridge to be 120' long to accommodate the "100-year flood plain." Clear Creek is known to flood its banks frequently. Its location in the Puget Lowlands, as well as present day development, contribute to this trend. In 1858, the General Land Office survey map shows the area as a floodplain or "wet bottom land."

9 The Clear Creek Ponds. This is a "working" part of the creek watershed, where the wetland community occasionally receives floodwaters and sediments when the creek overflows. As the water gradually returns within the stream banks, the sediments stay trapped behind and leave our creek once again clear.



10 This forested wetland rising east up to Ridgetop acts like a giant garden soaker hose slowly releasing last season's rainwater into Clear Creek. Common in a forested wetland are rhododendron, skunk cabbage, salmonberry, red osier dogwood, western cedar, false lily of the valley and salix willow.

11 Looking west, north and south, you can see the valley, its surrounding watershed, Dyes Inlet, the Olympic Mountains and often a fine sunset. The north-south orientation of the valley, most of Kitsap and the Puget Sound Basin is evidence of the last glacial advance some 12,000-14,000 years ago.

12 This property, owned by Harrison Hospital, is a good example of a managed forest, where selective tree thinning has promoted a healthier stand of trees. Competing understory is usually cleared out. Kitsap has many managed forests owned by businesses, school districts and government.

13 Cattails are a familiar wetland plant, but their ecological and wildlife value often not appreciated. Native tribes ate them, favored them for weaving and used their soft down to cushion diapers and line cradles. Second to the cedar tree in importance to early Suquamish, the tall plant is also a useful species for wetlands mitigation, restoration and pollution control.

14 In the 1850s, William Littlewood held a government contract to keep a trail open from Manette Point to Seabeck. Logging began around Dyes Inlet and progressed along other routes eventually deforesting the valley. Logging was the major industry in the area until the 1880s.

15 In 1880, A.J. Schold arrived and built his homestead in the Clear Creek Valley. Later, his wife, Hannah and their children arrived. The first night in their new home included a howling storm. The next day surprised at the clarity of the water after the storm, Hannah named it Clear Creek.

16 Many farmers in the valley raised chickens because they did not need to remove tree stumps left behind from decades of logging. Others established dairy farms. By the early 1900s, milk, chicken and egg production were major industries. By the 1930s, Silverdale was shipping 50,000 cases of eggs and 62,000 chickens a year.

