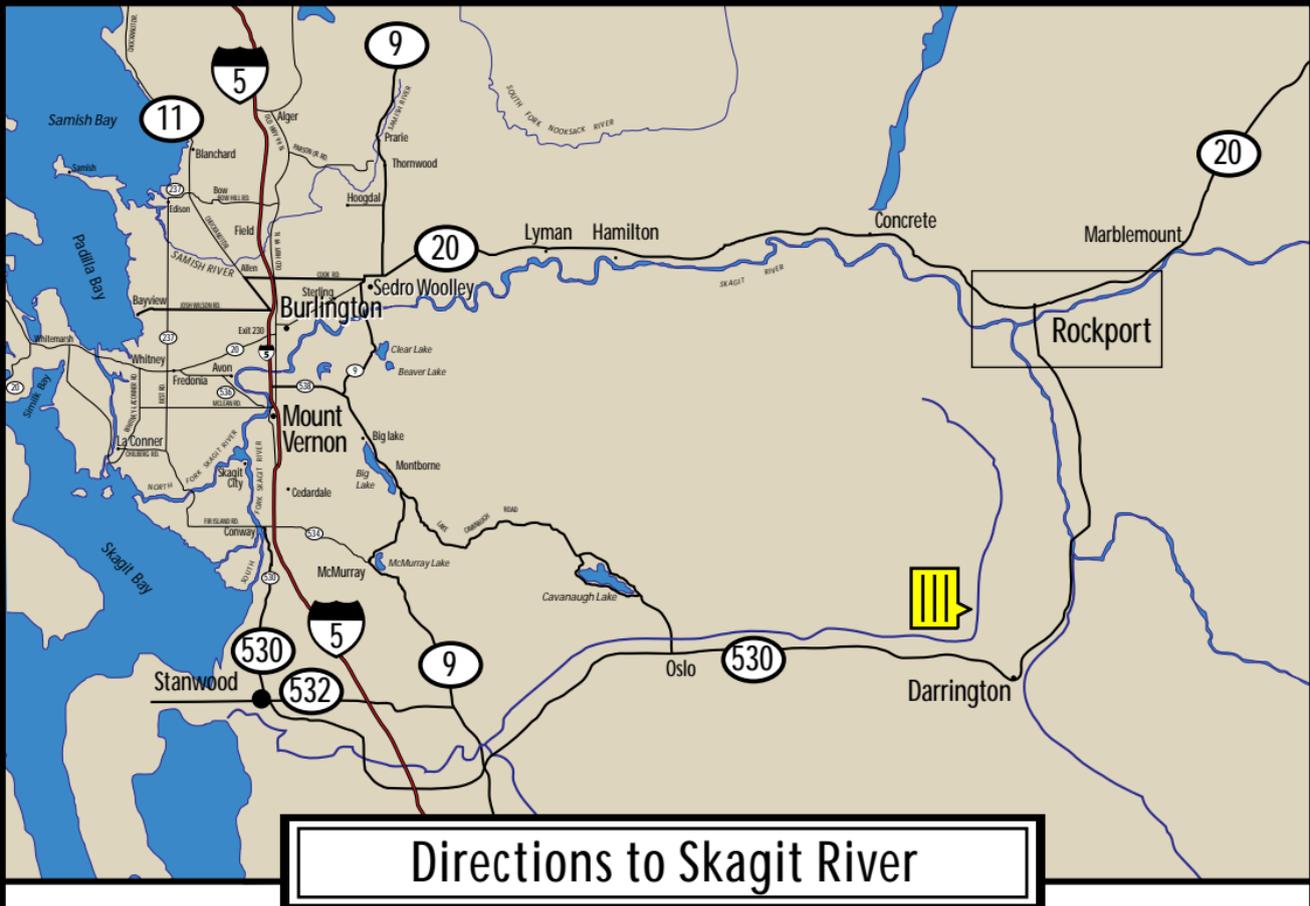




PRESERVING
WASHINGTON
WILDLANDS

Skagit River Bald Eagle Natural Area

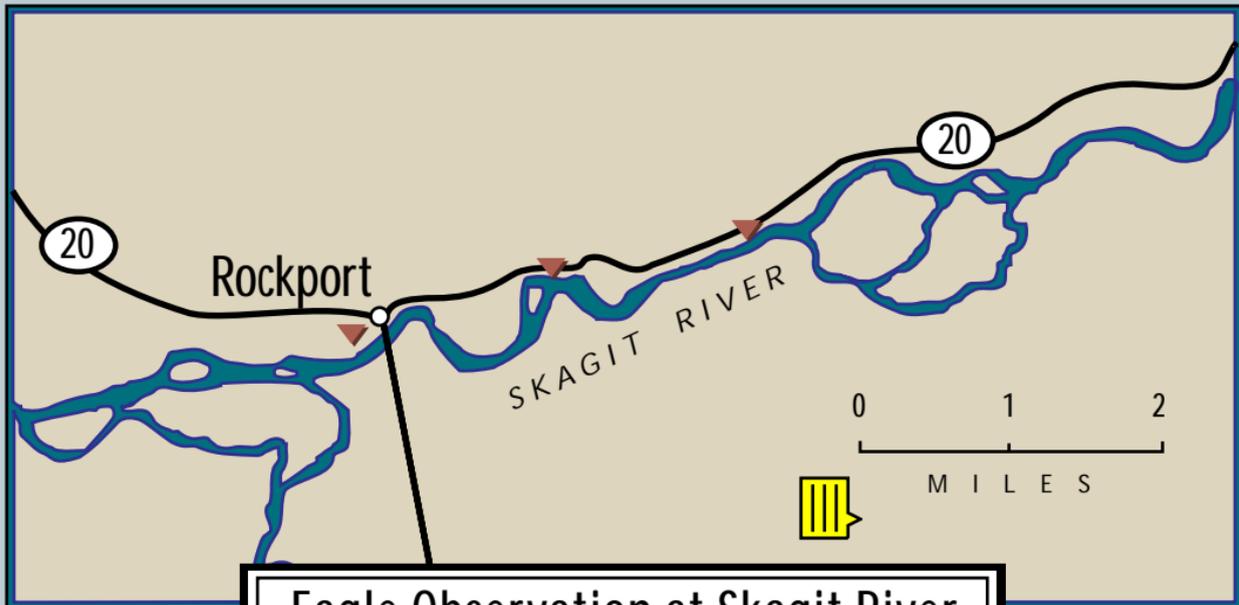
The image features a stylized map of Washington state. The state's outline is drawn in a dark blue line. The interior of the state is a light tan color, while the surrounding area is a solid green. In the center of the state, the words "PRESERVING WASHINGTON WILDLANDS" are written in a large, green, outlined, serif font. In the lower-left portion of the state, a yellow speech bubble icon with three horizontal lines inside points to a specific area. A white rectangular box with a black border is positioned below this icon, containing the text "Skagit River Bald Eagle Natural Area".



Directions to Skagit River

From Seattle, take Interstate 5 North to Exit 230. Follow Highway 20 through Burlington and continue 36 miles to Rockport





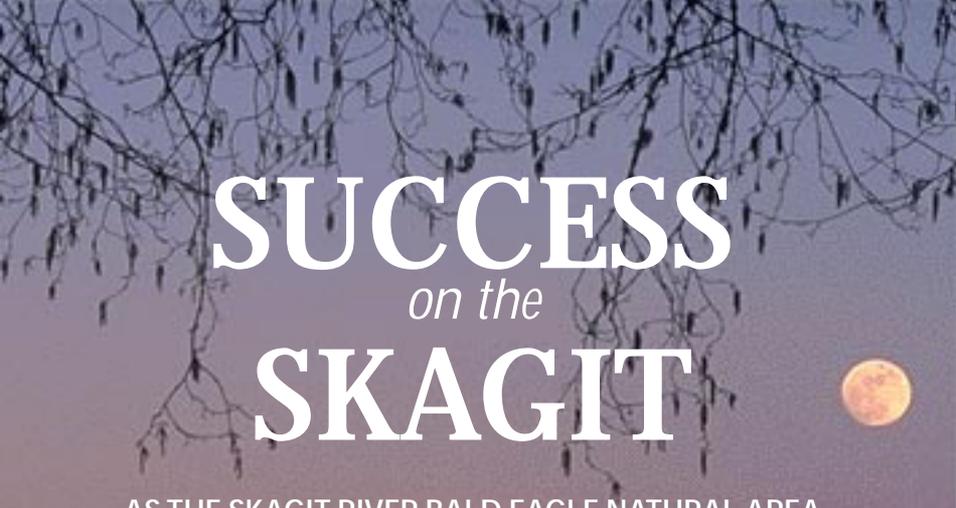
Eagle Observation at Skagit River



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- ▲ Howard Miller Steelhead Park
- ▲ The Washington Eddy Lookout
- ▲ Milepost 100





SUCCESS *on the* SKAGIT

AS THE SKAGIT RIVER BALD EAGLE NATURAL AREA
BEGINS ITS 20TH YEAR, THE CONSERVANCY CELEBRATES
ITS UNIQUE SUCCESS WITH NEW ADDITIONS

A juvenile bald eagle—mottled brown feathers covering his head and tail where someday regal white plumage will shine—plunges from the sky toward a gravel bar on the Skagit River.

With talons extended, he dives at an adult eagle standing guard over his morning meal, a chum salmon carcass. They flutter and jump, whistle and squeal. But in a few moments the defeated, upstart juvenile must take his place with his peers several yards away, waiting his turn at the rotting fish when his elders are finished.

Events like this happen every winter day on the banks and gravel bars of the upper Skagit. They are part of the rhythms of life that have kept time here for countless generations.

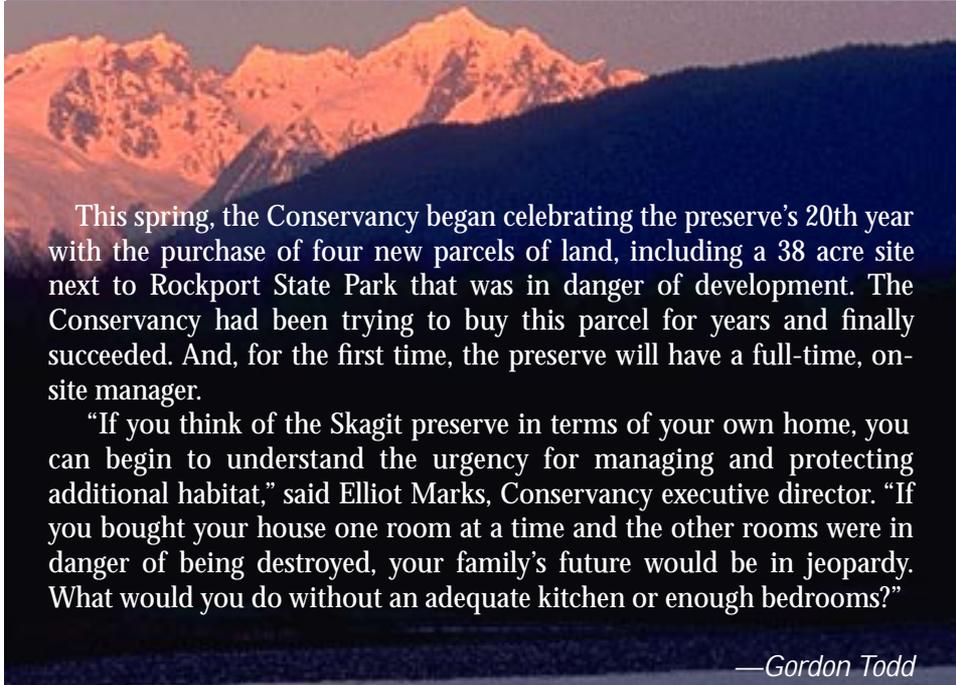
Chum Salmon return to the place of their birth to spawn and die.

Bald Eagles congregate to feast on the spawned-out fish. At night, they fly to protected forests to roost together until dawn.

It is a cycle that has remained undisturbed for millennia.

As it begins its 20th year, The Nature Conservancy of Washington's Skagit River Bald Eagle Natural Area is seen as a unique success in the quest to help nature survive alongside the modern world. Established in the bicentennial year of 1976 by the Conservancy and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Skagit preserve area now has several local, state and federal agencies working with the Conservancy to protect more than 6,000 acres of habitat for our national symbol.

While it has been an unparalleled success, this home for eagles and many other native species is still under ongoing renovations for improvements. Parts of the eagles' "kitchen" (areas on the river where eagles eat) and "bedroom" (communal night roosts in nearby forests) have been protected, but not the whole "house." Since starting the preserve 20 years ago, the Conservancy has worked to bring additional partners on board, study the eagle's survival needs and purchase key additions.



This spring, the Conservancy began celebrating the preserve's 20th year with the purchase of four new parcels of land, including a 38 acre site next to Rockport State Park that was in danger of development. The Conservancy had been trying to buy this parcel for years and finally succeeded. And, for the first time, the preserve will have a full-time, on-site manager.

"If you think of the Skagit preserve in terms of your own home, you can begin to understand the urgency for managing and protecting additional habitat," said Elliot Marks, Conservancy executive director. "If you bought your house one room at a time and the other rooms were in danger of being destroyed, your family's future would be in jeopardy. What would you do without an adequate kitchen or enough bedrooms?"

—Gordon Todd