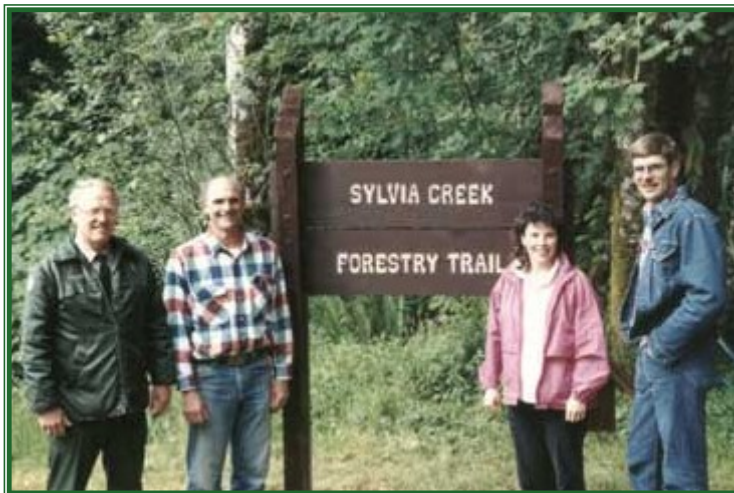


## City of Montesano City Forest Sylvia Creek Interpretive Forestry Trail The Renewable Forest Story

The Sylvia Creek Forestry Trailhead is located past the south end of the parking lot in [Lake Sylvia State Park](#), Montesano, Washington. The two-mile interpretive trail is a cooperative project of the City of Montesano, Grays Harbor County, WSU Extension, Weyerhaeuser, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Washington State Parks, Washington Department of Fisheries, Stouffer Lumber, Bonnell Logging, and the Army Reserve. It was built in 1991 by the DNR Cedar Creek trail crew and is maintained by the City of Montesano forestry and public works departments and volunteers.

At the trailhead, you may pick up a brochure trail guide, or print this document. Station numbers described on these pages correspond to numbered posts along the trail.



The trail committee poses at the completed trailhead in 1991: L-R: Don Hansen, at-the-time State Parks Ranger; Ron Schillinger, at-the-time City forester; Julie Truax, forester; Larry Smith, Grays Harbor County; and Dick Stone (not pictured), Washington State Fish and Wildlife and at-the-time City Council member.



## 1. Lake Sylvania History

In 1868, Michael F. Luark dammed Sylvania Creek and built a sawmill operated by water power. A larger dam was built in the 1920's to generate power for Montesano. In 1936, this area was transferred from the City Forest to become Lake Sylvania State Park.

## 2. Sylvania Creek

Water in the forest is like the blood that flows through our bodies. It gives life to plants, animals, birds, and fish.

## 3. Wetland Protection - RMZ

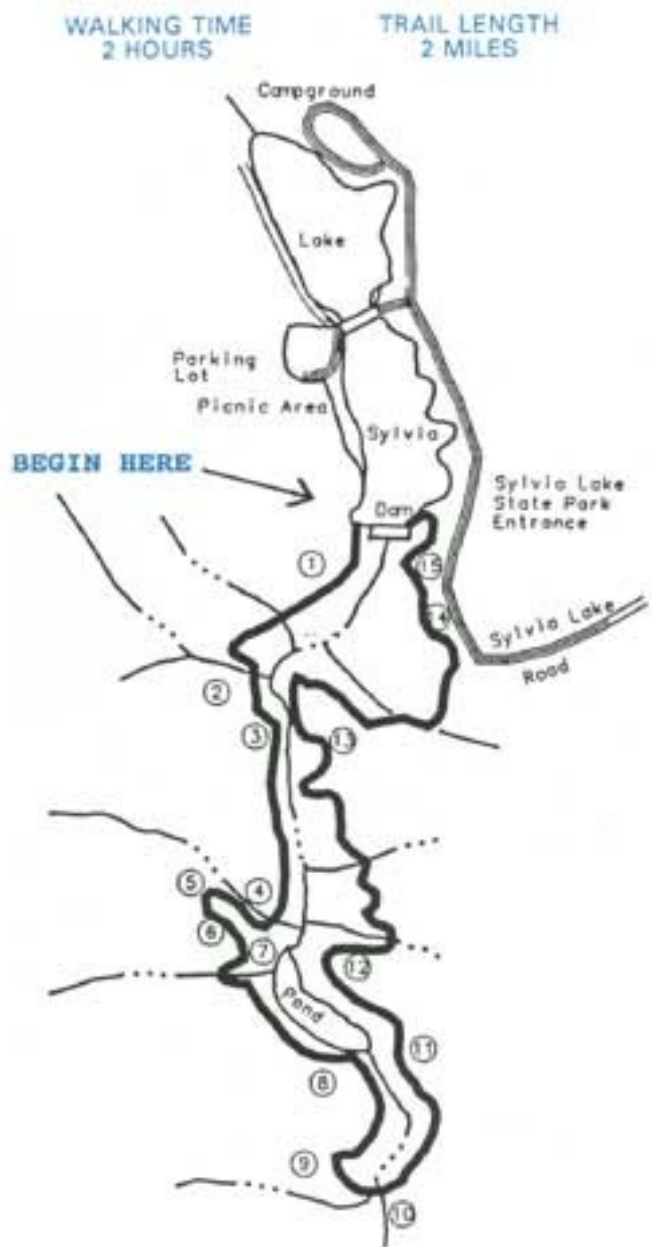
Trees and brush along the creek provide food, shade, cover, roosts, nest sites, soil nutrients, and bank stability. An area 75 feet wide on each side of the creek bank is maintained as a riparian management zone.

## 4. Birds in the Forest

The RMZ area is reserved for birds and wildlife in our managed forest. Stop and listen. You often hear birds at this stop because of the variety of food and over. Sylvania Creek on the left...a wide marshy area on the right...large dead snags for feeding, nesting, and perching...tall green trees of many species.

## 5. Clearcut

This open area is a clearcut. Trees were cut in 1988 and replanted in 1989 to provide jobs, lumber, and revenue. They were cut, yarded to the road at the top of the hill, and



## 6. Reforestation

This area was clearcut in 1923. A second forest was harvested in 1988. A third crop of trees planted in 1989 is scheduled for harvest in 2039. The City of Montesano uses this area to grow trees for revenue, jobs, and forest products on a sustained basis.



## 7. Wildlife

Wildlife in the area adapts to changes people have made in the forest, just as they would to natural changes. Deer, bear, elk, small animals and birds love the sweet grasses, berries, new trees and bushes that flourish in the bright, warm, open replanted areas.



## 8. Beaver Dam

Beavers are common along Sylvia Creek. Their activity creates swamp and pond areas. This habitat diversity helps fish, birds, and animals. Over time floods wash out the dams or beaver move on.



## 9. Timber Types/Tree Species

A forest has different trees that adapt to certain areas. Western hemlock grows fast in shady, cool areas.

## 10. Fish

Many type of fish live in streams in the forest. They are important food for birds, animals, and people. Coho salmon and trout live in Sylvia Creek. Our forest management plans include fish protection.



## 11. Old Mill Site

Even works of people fall to the passing of time. In the late 1800's this was the site of a working sawmill. Look for a saw blade stuck in an alder tree, bricks from the furnace, and old trestles in the mill pond.

## 12. Second Growth Forests

As you continue along the south side of Sylvia Creek, you are in a second growth forest.

## 13. Miscellaneous Forest Products

Many plants here are food for birds and animals. Cascara bark, blue and red huckleberries, mushrooms, salal, and ferns are useful as a source of income. As tall trees change and grow, short shrubs and brush also change; species die out and others move in. DO NOT EAT plants or berries unless you know what they are...some are poisonous!

## 14. Douglas Fir

Ninety years ago this area was clearcut. Today it is an area of large second growth trees that started out as small tree seedlings like you saw in the clearcut at Stop #5. Douglas fir is one of the biggest, tallest, and fastest-growing of trees. It produces high quality lumber. Rich, deep soils and moist climate in Grays Harbor County combine to make some of the world's best tree growing conditions. As you travel along roads and highways you will see many trees of different ages.

## 15. Coho Salmon

Adult coho salmon swim upstream to the pool below the rock wall each year from the ocean, via the Chehalis River. They arrive in winter and can often be seen jumping at the rocks. Once hatched, small coho fingerlings stay a year in Sylvia Creek before swimming out to the ocean. They return when they are three years old to lay their eggs and die. Just like the forests, the fish and wildlife have their life cycles, too. Whether by nature's processes or by human presence...life in the working forest is always changing. ◇

