

William Cannon Footpath Outdoor Activity of the Month

Have you noticed the brown sign on the 101 freeway near the Mud Bay Exit, "William Cannon Trail"? Here is more information about that trail.

What: William Cannon Footpath is a gravel trail approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ mile long that skirts Mud Bay. There are places to stop & stand to observe wildlife at the bay's edge. Great for **birdwatching**. Off to the right of the trail is the back of buildings in the industrial park. A great respite from a busy day.

How to Get there:

Take HWY 101 South toward Olympia.

Exit at "Mud Bay Road/Evergreen State College".

Turn LEFT off the ramp onto 2nd Avenue.

Turn LEFT just past the overpass onto Madrona Beach Road.

Take Madrona Beach Road for .4 miles (past Snell Crane & Bay Storage) and turn RIGHT into the WSDOT Park & Ride on the right. The trailhead is at the back left corner of the park & ride.

Facilities: Signage about the Squaxin Island Tribe, Logging, Shellfish, & William Cannon. No restrooms, no benches.

Activities: Viewing wildlife, meditating, listening to nature.

History: Dedicated in April 2002, The 4,000-foot-long trail is named after the only American in a 41-member Hudson's Bay Co. expedition that stopped at Mud Bay on its way north from Oregon to the Fraser River Valley. The date was Dec. 6, 1824. Cannon was the first American pioneer to set eyes on Eld Inlet.

From the trail, visitors can peer across the mudflats to an ancient American Indian fishing village site on property now owned by former Secretary of State Ralph Munro.

Munro was the master of ceremonies at the trail dedication and a driving force behind a project that is an extension of trail-building, tree-planting and flower-planting involving the McLane School Forest and Trails Committee. Jim Peters was also present at the dedication & was quoted in the Olympian.

The trail is sandwiched between the shoreline and the Bayside Business Park, a complex of offices, warehouses and light industrial businesses between U.S. Highway 101 and the inlet. The public access corridor was a county requirement for obtaining building permits for the project.

"This project shows that industry and the public can coincide and work together," said Ron Thompson of Bayside Investments, developers of the business park.

Duke Energy, which is building a gas-fired power plant at Satsop in Grays Harbor County, donated \$30,000 and 1,000 trees to the project.

The trail offers several vantage points for viewing wildlife, including shorebirds, great blue herons, river otters and salmon.