



Spada Lake Reservoir Recreational Area Interpretive Trail Guide

Spada Lake Reservoir is the principal source of drinking water for 75 percent of Snohomish County's population. As a result, maintenance of high water quality is of primary importance. Water quality depends upon responsible public observation of the following:

WATER QUALITY REGULATIONS

1. Boat launching only at designated locations.
2. No combustion engines allowed on Spada Lake Reservoir.
3. Licensed motorized vehicle operation on improved roads only.
4. Picnicking only at approved sites.
5. Pets must remain in vehicles or be leashed at all times.
6. No overnight camping.
7. No swimming, wading and/or water-contact activities in creeks or Spada Lake Reservoir.
8. No inflatable devices on Spada Lake Reservoir.

IMPORTANT

All sources of water within the basin are untreated, and consumption is not recommended.

FISHING REGULATIONS

For the most current fishing regulations, contact the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife at 360-902-2700 or check its website at www.wdfw.wa.gov. **Note: all tributaries to the lake are closed to fishing.**



CONTACT

For more information about the recreation sites, please visit our website at snopud.com/spada



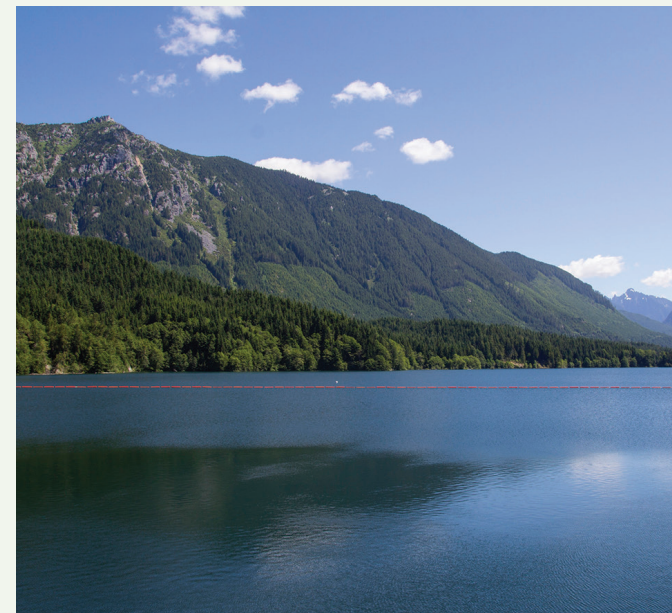
PO Box 1107 • Everett, WA 98206-1107



1 Welcome to **Olney Pass**, the gateway to Spada Lake Reservoir: the majority source of Snohomish County's drinking water supply and the PUD's power generation from the Henry M. Jackson Hydroelectric Project. You are about to start your journey on our self-guided interpretive trail. Look for numbered posts that correspond with the listed numbers in this brochure. Feel free to explore the designated sites in any order you choose.

Please remember that we are all stewards of this natural environment.

2 **Culmback Dam:** While overlooking the reservoir, take in the quiet beauty of the scenery and appreciate the abundant fresh water of the Pacific Northwest. The reservoir collects surface water runoff from snow melt and rain; its water level can fluctuate up to 30-40 feet seasonally. To the east you can see Vesper Peak and the Cascade mountain range. To the west, you can see the Sultan River, which runs through a steep canyon for approximately 5 miles. It then shifts into a high terraced valley for 8 miles and transitions to a low valley for the final 3 miles before joining the Skykomish River.



3 **Sultan River Canyon Trail:** This quiet path leads away from the reservoir and down toward the Sultan River, an elevation change of roughly 900 feet. A round trip offers a 4-mile jaunt through towering trees. The tree canopy keeps the air cool as do several small drainage streams. This area, known as Blue Mountain, is prone to small rock slides, which causes sediment and woody debris to reach the upper Sultan River. This material distributes itself downstream, helping provide additional fish habitat.

4 **South Fork Sultan River bridge crossing:** Observe the resident fish of the Sultan River, which may be present seasonally at this crossing. You may find Rainbow Trout, Cutthroat Trout, Bullhead or Large-Scale Suckers in the river or present in the reservoir. Fishing with a license is allowed in Spada Lake Reservoir, but its tributaries are closed to fishing.



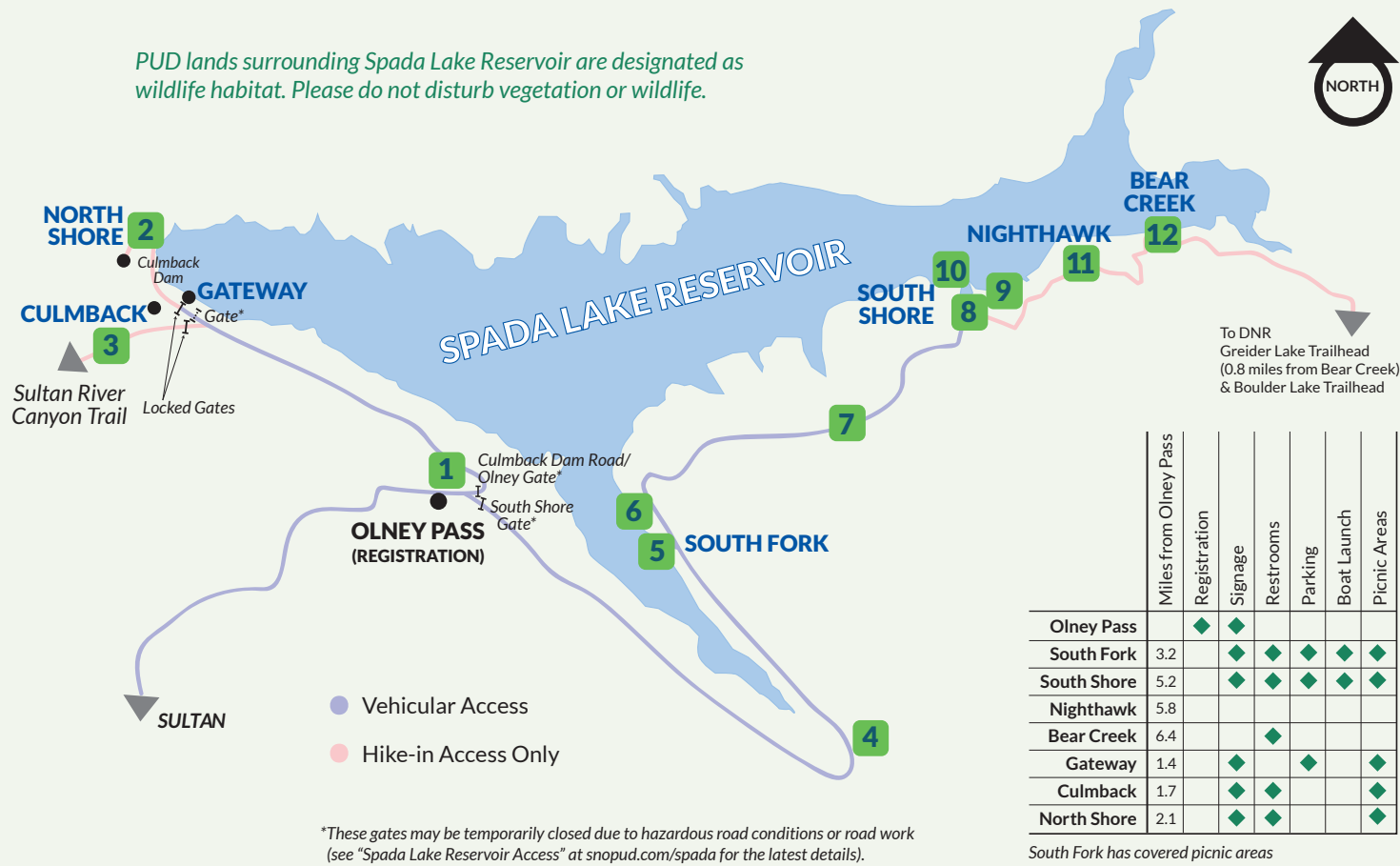
5 **South Fork Recreation Site:** a peaceful place to relax, launch your kayak and have a picnic! View different stages of foliage each season and see a peekaboo view of the reservoir through the trees. Watch for eagles circling in the breeze or perched on the highest trees above you on the ridge.





6 South Fork Boat Launch: When launching your non-gas-powered watercraft from this boat launch, make sure you are not transporting aquatic invasive species from other waterways. Invasive species could cause serious damage to the water quality of the reservoir, decrease habitat for native species, and clog infrastructure needed for supplying water and power generation. Every time you remove your boat, remove all plants and mud, thoroughly clean (using environmentally approved products), drain, and dry it before launching again to make sure you aren't bringing unwanted microscopic visitors with you!

7 South Shore Road: Earth's natural water cycle provides us with year-round clean water in the reservoir. The mountains above the reservoir typically receive abundant snow during winter, and the Spada Basin receives an average of 163 inches of rain annually. The abundance of rainfall makes this a great location for water supply. You'll see waterfalls along this road in the fall during the heavy rains and in the spring as the snow melts, making its journey to the reservoir where it may continue to your home as drinking water! How many waterfalls do you count along this road?



8 South Shore Recreation Site: Beavers are prevalent here; observe their dams constructed near the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) trailhead. Beavers are large swimming rodents. They create ponds for protection from predators, to store their food, and increase vegetation growth by building dams across flowing water. These pools of fresh water often attract other species and contribute to the important biodiversity of the area.

9 South Shore Site/trailhead: Look above you at the "snags" – dead trees left standing among live ones. Snags contribute to the natural environment and provide valuable habitat, resting spots, and food storage areas for a variety of birds such as swallows, osprey, and bald eagles, and other terrestrial species such as squir-

rels and raccoons, so we leave them in place when possible. Listen for a variety of bird calls or woodpeckers tapping their homes into the trees. How many different birds can you identify from sight and sound?

10 South Shore boat launch: Observe large pieces of fallen trees and branches known as "large woody debris" that may be present around the shore or in the reservoir. Woody debris provides important refuge and rearing habitat for fish and other aquatic organisms. It also performs other ecosystem functions, such as trapping sediment and organic debris that contribute to biodiversity of the shoreline. Woody debris cannot naturally transport itself downstream due to the presence of Culmback Dam. When too much wood accumulates, some is removed and placed in

the Sultan River to provide similar ecosystem functions downstream.

11 Nighthawk Recreation Site/hiking trail: As you walk the path, observe how the vegetation changes from what you saw closer to the reservoir. The understory vegetation includes alder, western redcedar, black cottonwood, vine maple, bigleaf maple, huckleberry, snowberry, and salal. The PUD helps create and preserve habitat by responsible tree thinning in this area. Creating gaps in the trees reduces overcrowding and allows sunlight to reach the forest floor, strengthening native vegetation.

12 Bear Creek Recreation Site: Look northward toward Williamson Creek. This area is home to over 150 acres of old-growth forest habitat. Preservation of this 200-year-old forest environment is critical to endangered species such as the marbled murrelet and spotted owl. Murrelets are sea birds that only nest in old growth forests. They may travel over 80 miles and back to feed on ocean species. Think about other important functions old-growth habitats provide and why they should be preserved.



Save natural resources and consider not printing this brochure. Instead, download it to your phone from snopud.com/jhp prior to adventuring out as cell coverage is limited in the Spada River Basin Area. We hope you enjoy your visit!