

Skagit Trail Builders

May 9, 2026 Work Party Work Party Plan

Norlum Trail, Port of Skagit SWIFT Center

Edited May 8, 2026 - Jenny



Background

In early April, Skagit Trail Builders and the Port of Skagit team walked the roughed-in route of Norlum Trail Loop. This is our second phase in expanding the Northern State Trail

System at SWIFT Center. Norlum Trail will eventually connect to Goat Hill and a future bridge near the Powerhouse Building.

“Norlum,” short for “Northern Asylum,” was the name of the railroad spur connecting Sedro-Woolley to Northern State Hospital in the early 1900’s. (It was also the name of the baseball team.)

The trail begins at the Fire Access Road across from Quarry Trail and heads north, following the elevated, well-drained bed of the historic rail line while offering glimpses of Brickyard Creek. As the route continues, it thoughtfully navigates natural springs and areas of seasonal water flow.

The corridor is rich with native plants like Oso Berry, Salmonberry, Cedar, Big Leaf Maple, Ferns, and Bleeding Heart, creating a lush, distinctly Northwest experience. Near a private access road, the trail turns east, looping back to reconnect with the SWIFT Campus behind Trevennen Hall.

This final stretch passes through a former sheep pasture from the hospital’s farming days, now overgrown with invasive blackberries. The Port crew has cleared a path, however this section will remain temporary and more rustic due to its designation as a development site.

Our goals for the work party included:

1. Manage native plants encroaching on the trail corridor, including trimming and transplanting where needed.
2. Grade, outslope and level soils. Shape notch drains.
3. Spot treat low areas with ballast.
4. Stockpile native rock (exposed during rough-in).
5. “Beautify” drains.

Schedule

Guest Groups include SWHS Earth Club and the Skagit Alpine Club.

8:45 am Volunteers Sign-in at the trail head on the Fire Access Rd.

9:00 am:

Introductions, explain today’s work, team assignments, and safety talk.
New volunteers receive their free T-shirt!

Group Photo

930-noon: trail work

12-12:45 pm: lunch

1-3 pm: trail work

3 pm: clean up and organize tools

4:00 pm: Work Party Planning Meeting (by invitation for volunteers who work a full day 9am-3pm)

Teams

Roving Crew Leader: Paul

Native Plant Management: Lynn

Grade, Outslope, Level: Jerry

Ballast: Chloe & Amelia

Stockpile Native Rock + Beautify Drains: Jenny

Power Carrier Drivers: Kip, Michael and Craig

Material staging and loading: JT

**Additional teams may be determined on Friday afternoon after the conditions and materials are evaluated.

Key Dates

- May 9: STB First work party on Norlum Trail. Guest Groups Skagit Alpine Club and SW Earth Club.
- May 16: Leadership team work party at Thompson Pond
- May 23: Norlum Trail. Guest Group Mountaineers GoHike.
- June 13: Norlum Trail. Guest Group Mountaineers GoHike.
- June 27: Norlum Trail. Final work party before summer break.
- July 25: Public History Day at SWIFT

- Aug 22: Music in the Park SWIFT (tentative)
- Sept 12: Music in the Park SWIFT (tentative)