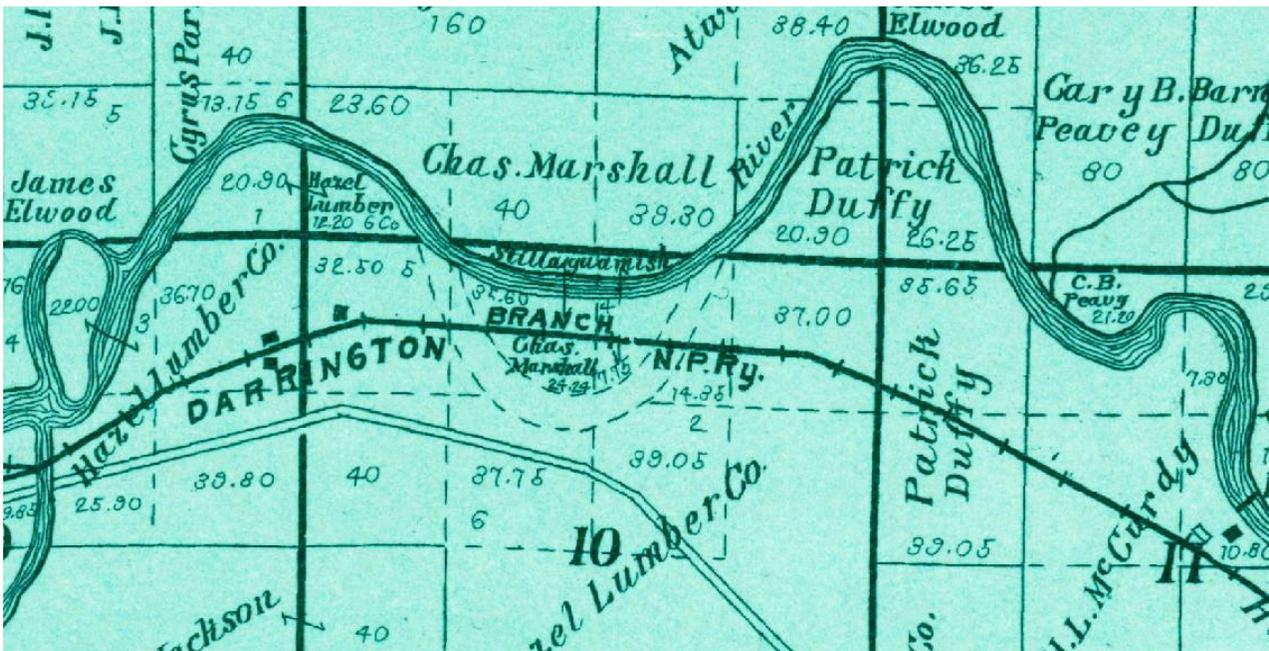


Never Heard of it!

A couple months ago, a lady from the Arlington/Oso area called, looking for some information on an early logging operation that was located on the North Fork Stillaguamish River. She knew our museum often used old maps to locate such installations, and asked us to take a look. During the conversation, she mentioned she lived right next to “Blue Pool” (thinking that would help our search). “Blue Pool? Never heard of it,” I said. “Roughly where is that located?”

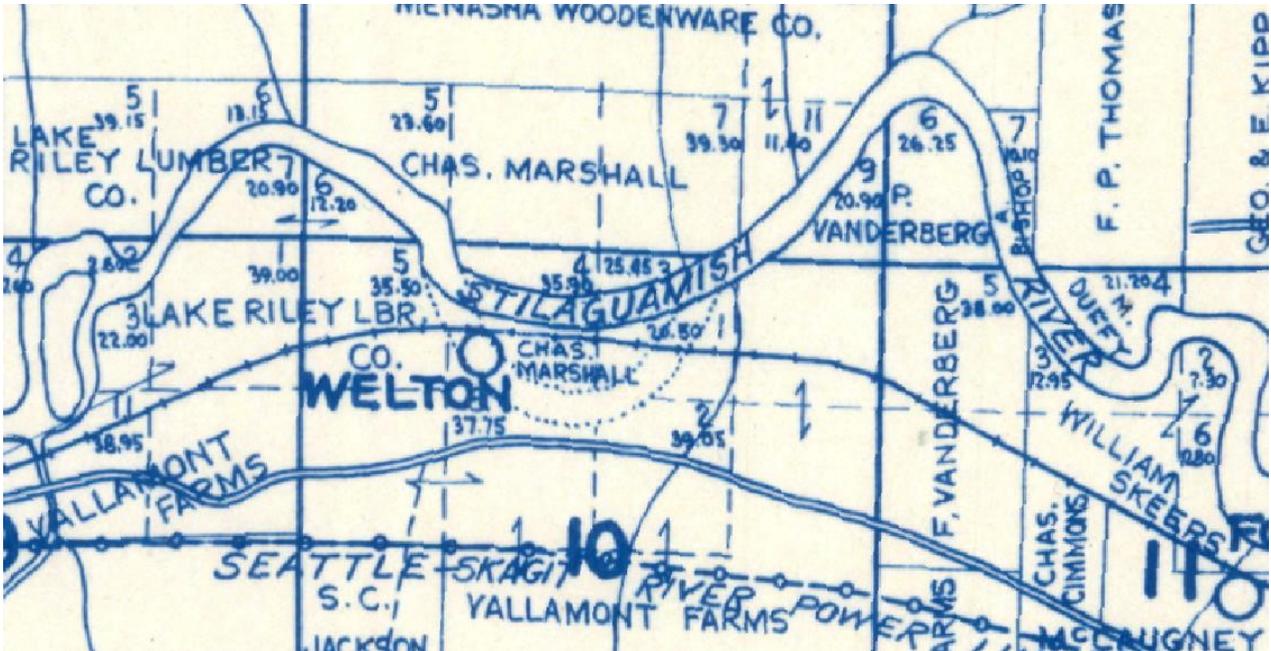
She provided an excellent description, and sure enough, the old maps revealed a little piece of history in our area that hadn’t come to light before in our research. “Blue Pool”, also called “Blue Pond”, is a real tribute to the conservationist spirit embodied in folks in the Pacific Northwest, and shows how some great things get done with very little publicity, but with great results. I’m sure the folks in the immediate area of the project were aware and justifiably proud of their accomplishment, but I have to admit complete ignorance prior to that short conversation about an old mill.

When the Northern Pacific Railway opened the Darrington branch, the rails completely cut off a small loop in the river. Later maps actually showed in dotted lines where the river originally flowed. As you might imagine, the old riverbed wasn’t filled in, and collected water as a natural side-effect. The map from 1910 shows detail, with the loop in dotted lines just beneath the word “branch” on the rail line:

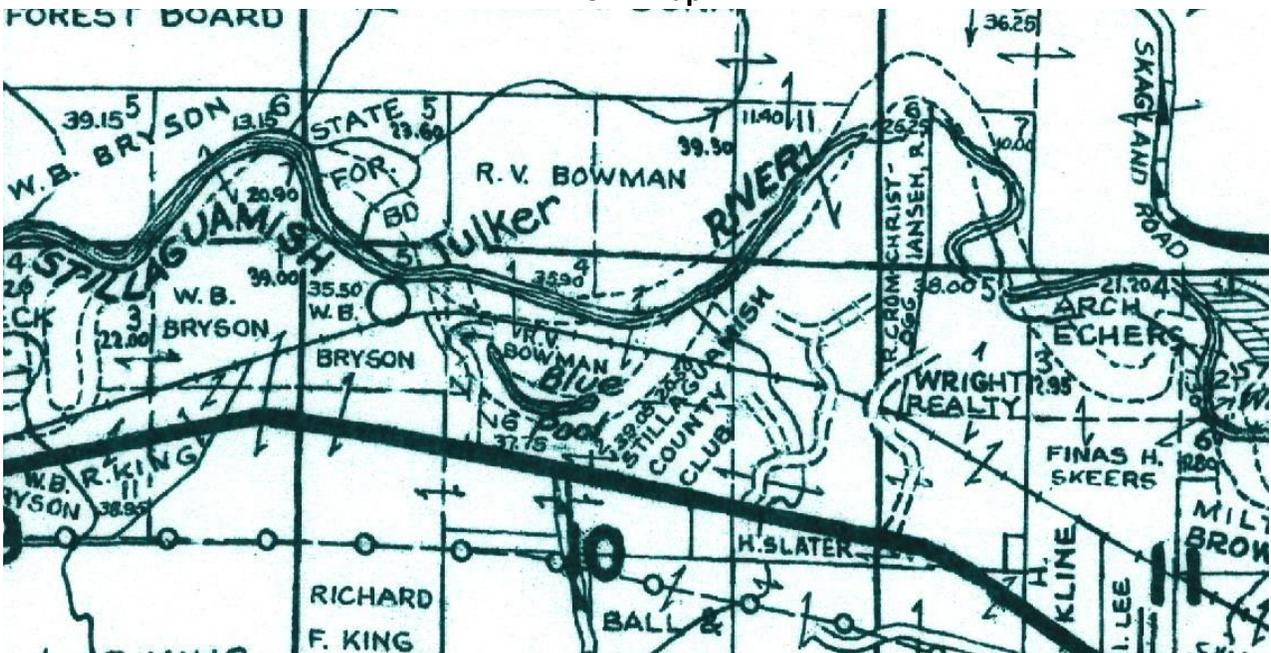


1910 Map

Later maps show the same effect, but also indicate that an actual rail stop was established at the west end of the loop. Originally designated as “Welton” on the 1917 map, it appeared as “Tulker” on later maps (the origin of those names remains to be researched, any information would be much appreciated).



1927 Map



1975 Map

The 1975 map indicates the “Blue Pool”. Area property owners were interested in enhancing the small pond, and efforts were made to raise the money required to circulate water from the Stillaguamish into the pond. In the early 21st century, it became a salmon restoration project, and with new inflow and outflow pipes funded by a number of sources, spawning salmon were seen in the pond in Nov 2010!

I’d never heard of “Blue Pool”, but this simple story of habitat restoration is a very satisfying one. We never did find the exact location of the old mill that originally started the conversation, but we did find a local “treasure” that deserves to be recognized.



2012 Aerial photo

The 2012 aerial photo is enhanced with blue designation of “water”, but the isolated Blue Pool is clearly visible . . . and it all started when the railroad cut off part of the river.