

# Seahurst Park Master Plan

## APPENDIX E INTEGRATED ARTWORK AND INTERPRETATION FOR SEAHURST PARK



**Prepared for**  
City of Burien

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# ***Concepts for Master Plan:*** **Integrated artwork and interpretation for Seahurst Park**

**Elizabeth Conner, project artist  
July 2002**



*“(It is) a little piece of heaven and tranquility. All kinds of people., painters, authors, athletes, have taken in the mysterious gift that this small piece of land has to give. You never walk out of Seahurst Park feeling empty.” GiaMari Fish (Czebotar)*

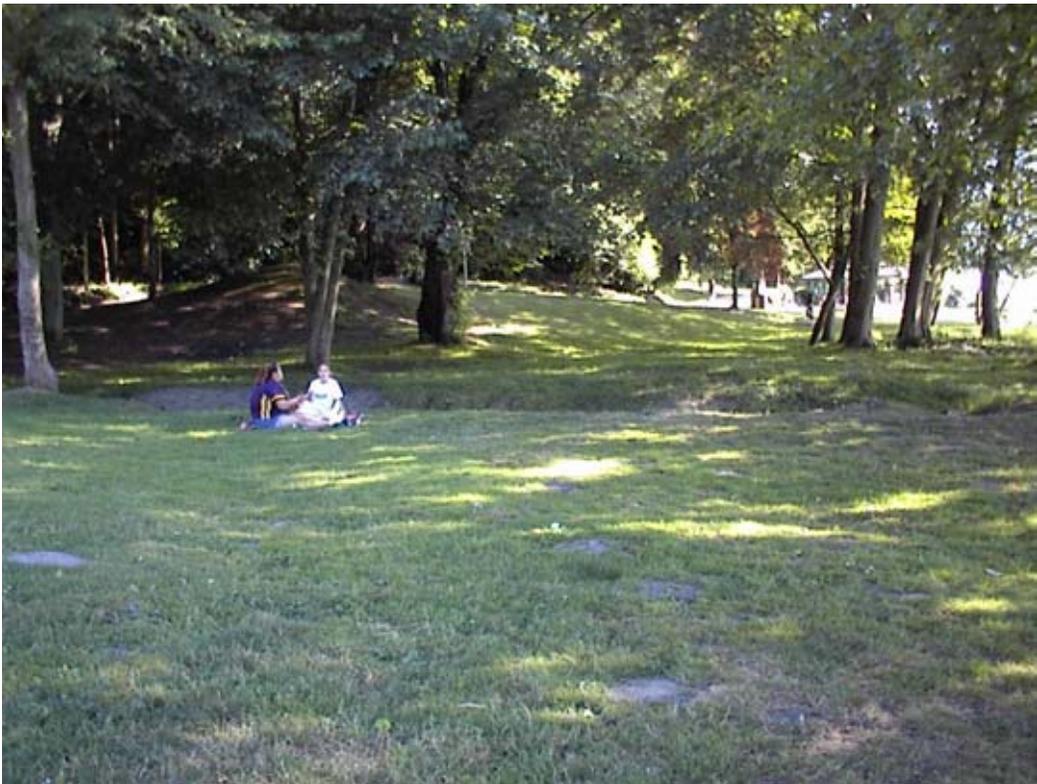
# Overall concept

*Nourishment, both physical and spiritual*

Of the **natural environment**

Of **humans** who visit Seahurst, through aesthetics and education

**“Preserve, protect, restore”** as organizing categories, versus “remove/replace”



# Contributing ideas

**Boundaries**, perimeters and connections

Delta as “**heart of the park**” (Wolf Bauer), from which emanate:

- *Entries*
- *Trails*
- *Uplands versus shoreline*
- *Activity zones*
- *“Micro-environments”*
- *Change, process, movement, instability versus stability*
  - *Transitions*
  - *Intersections*
  - *Junctions*
  - *Collisions*
  - *Delicate balance*
  - *Outdoor classroom*

**Respect**, co-existence of humans and nature

*“You can turn rocks over, but you have to put them back.”*



## Goals (from community and team)

- Nature is the “subject”
- Community needs to be respected
- Keep it simple  
 (“this place was nicer before it became known as a park”)
- Design the site to interpret the following:

*This place is subject to important living processes that act on water and land*

*Long-term, the beach is supplied by bluffs*

*Eventually, all things move to the north*

*Human impact on site is significant and changes over time*

*This site illustrates how the environmental movement has evolved over time (control of nature, restoration, etc.)*

# Approach

***Build on existing park character,*** features, and materials

***Utilize the “stuff” of the site*** to create integrated artwork

***Engage visitors in active interpretation*** of site through amenities and artwork

***Document site history,*** retaining vestiges of gabion wall and seawall. in addition to other human interventions (e.g. daylight previously hidden portions of hatchery, etc.)

***Interpret and honor process,*** utilizing temporary artwork to interpret process of restoration, pique public interest over a long time frame

***Use amenities to highlight unique features,*** how visitors sit, walk, gaze (seating, trails, viewpoints – how these are directed to take advantage of previously unnoticed features of the park

## **Notes on concepts for Master Plan: integrated artwork and interpretation**

This report was prepared by the design team artist as part of the overall Master Planning process for Seahurst Park. It is a conceptual document which addresses opportunities for integrated artwork and interpretation. During future phases, this outline of opportunities will be refined to include specific projects, participants, and scopes of work.

***Integration with Master Plan:*** wherever possible, artwork will be integrated into project construction documents, supporting the overall concept of restoration, as well as integrating closely with functional and interpretive elements of the park.

***A guide for future work:*** this outline of opportunities is intended to guide future work by:

- Project artist, in conjunction with design team
- Other artists, craftspeople, and fabricators

***Ongoing collaboration*** will continue with the Burien Arts Commission, to identify future opportunities associated with Seahurst Park and to assist in implementation of projects.



**Goal:** Add intrigue and an educational element to the pedestrian wander from parking to beach

**Existing element:** Paving, with interesting 50/50 division of pavement treatment along roadway

**Opportunity:** Sandblast images/shadows into existing pavement; alter images as they cross center divider

***Build on existing park character***

*Create sculptural elements and amenities from materials significant to Seahurst*

- *Logs*
- *Stones*
- *Concrete*
- *Gravel*
- *Water*



Potential use for recycled materials



“Gravel” is significant to site ecology; objects could be cast/cored using this material

***Utilize the “stuff” of the site***

*“awkward”*



*“intriguing”*

*“intriguing”*



*“intriguing”*

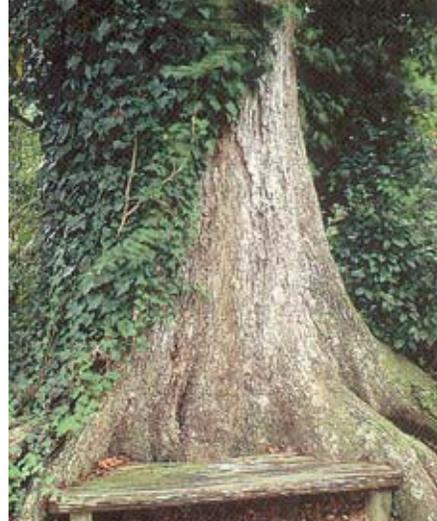
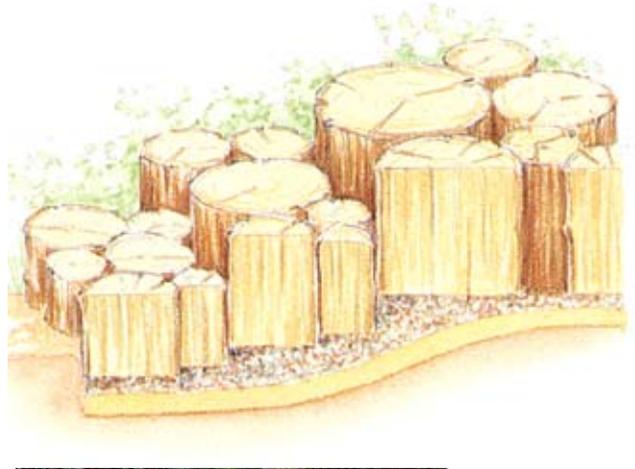
**Goal:** Build upon the “log” aesthetic

**Existing elements:** Signage, picnic tables, benches, shelters and other amenities

**Opportunity:** Combine more “naturalistic” log/tree shapes with current peeled log/post aesthetic;

“push” the combination of plumbing, seating, signage, and logs through multiplication of elements, use of “tree canopy” combined with exposed structural elements in shelter structure, etc.

***Utilize the “stuff” of the site***



**Goal:** Build upon the “log” aesthetic

**Future elements:** Shelters, seating, play area, other amenities

**Opportunity:** Design shelters in form of tree canopy, incorporate built elements with living trees, give play area a “slope” that recalls geologic processes, through collection of logs

***Utilize the “stuff” of the site***



**Potential thematic/interpretive zones for specific areas and trails**

- Hydrology
- Geology
- Water-related zones: stream, shoreline, wetland
- Plant communities



*Cast concrete objects, placed individually, or piled to form “cairns” at entries and along trails.*

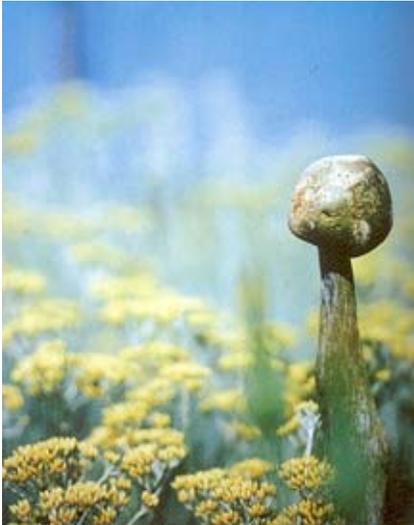
*Relate objects to thematic subject matter of each trail, using amenities and art*

***Engage visitors in active interpretation***

**Goal:** Mark various trails thematically; add intrigue and an educational element to pedestrian experience

**Existing element:** Exposed tree roots

**Opportunity:** “Nestle” cast concrete objects, carefully attached, in spaces created by tree roots



***Engage visitors in active interpretation***

*Potential three-dimensional objects/images to enhance thematic trails*

**Native plants:**

- Dry: Alder
- Cedar
- Hemlock
- Wet: Douglas Fir
- Madrone
- Salal

**Geology:**

- Layers of material
- Elements of slides

**Streams and springs:**

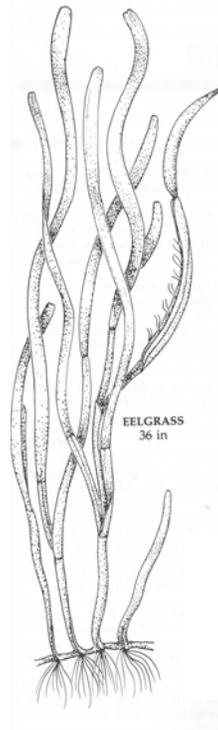
- Elements of riparian edge

**Wetland:**

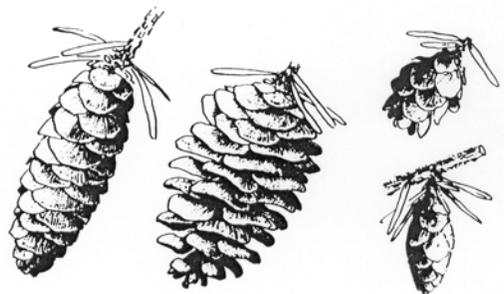
- Plants such as sedges

**Saltwater communities:**

- Herring
- Salmon
- Larvae
- Surf smelt
- Sand Lance
- Eelgrass

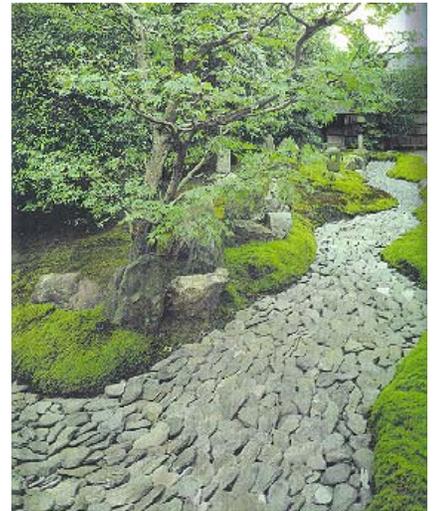


A variety of botanical and other illustrations could be transformed into three-dimensional objects



***Engage visitors in active interpretation***

*Create sculptural elements that respond to or mimic movement and change*



*Artist: Richard Long*

- Tides (vertical elements marked with MHHW, responsive elements, etc.)
- Drift (can sand/gravel be marked to track drift?)
- Stream (re-create shape, install temporary stakes to mark change in stream direction)
- Landslides (brightly-colored elements that stand/slide over time)

***Engage visitors in active interpretation***



**Goal:** Utilize former elements of previous “restorations”

**Existing elements:** Seawall fragments

**Opportunity:** Use color to clean up and enhance wall, interpret interaction between humans and nature

***Document site history***



**Goal:** Interpret various “restoration” techniques; re-use existing built elements where appropriate

**Existing element:** Vestiges of gabion walls, seawalls, etc.

**Opportunity:** Sandblast images/text into rocks/seawall; add color to gabion wall mesh and concrete seawall; combine built elements and plant materials in “layered” fashion

***Interpret and honor the process of restoration***

Incorporate technical information that is also visually compelling (like slope calculation sheets, which are beautiful)

Utilize “poetic and mysterious vocabulary”:

*Tree wedging*

*Feeder beach*

*Colluvium*

*Sand lenses*

*Seepage*

*Active sloughing*

*Creep*

*Backshore*

*Long-shore transport*

*Groin*

*Sediments*

*Drift sill*

*Erosion beach*

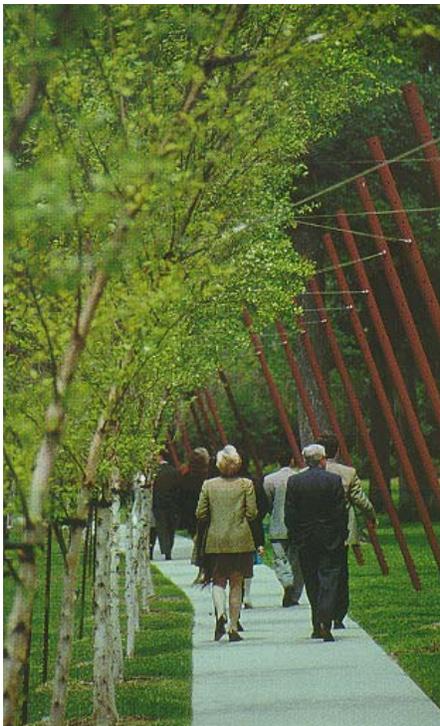
*Beach etiquette*



***Interpret and honor the process of restoration***



*Temporary interventions to mark space*



*Create temporary and permanent artwork to define trails and park edges*

*Vertical elements to mark entries*

***Use amenities to highlight unique features***



*Create artwork that embellishes functional elements*



**Goal:** Calm traffic, add intrigue and an educational element to the pedestrian experience

**Existing element:** speed bumps, currently painted yellow

**Opportunity:** Add images to painted yellow surface (leaves, branches, etc.)

***Use amenities to highlight unique features***

## **Photo Sources**

Beardsley, John, *Earthworks and Beyond*, Abbeville Press, New York, 1998.

Conran, Terence and Pearson, Dan, *The Essential Garden Book*, Three Rivers Press, New York, 1998.

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*Landscape Architecture Magazine*, (various volumes)

Conner, Elizabeth – site photos and original artwork