

Section 2: Site & Interpretive Programming



In an effort to create an effective site design and interpretive experience for visitors, the Stakeholder Advisory Committee assisted the consultant team with answering the following questions:

What desired outcomes need to be achieved?

Whom do we need to serve in order to achieve those desired outcomes?

What circumstances and opportunities do we have to take into consideration when developing a plan for serving those audiences at this site?

What themes (messages) need to be communicated in order to achieve the desired outcomes?

To answer these questions, goals and desired outcomes were derived for the Dry Falls experience from the visioning workshop results and from the 2006 IMPIAF. Information about audiences, site-specific parameters, site-specific opportunities, constraints, and themes were identified. This information became the basis for the Ice Age Floods interpretive network and the starting point for developing additional detail specific to Dry Falls.



Interpretive Goals and Desired Outcomes

Through interpretive planning, Washington State Parks has identified Dry Falls as a major center for the Ice Age Floods (IAF) interpretive network in Washington State. The key IAF features at the site – Dry Falls and Grand Coulee – are two of the most iconic and significant features sculpted by the floods. Given the array of IAF-related features occurring on or near the site, Dry Falls is positioned to become the most central location for the Ice Age Floods story in the flood region.

The next step was to determine attributes of the visitor experience that supported this goal. The task was to derive key characteristics of a visitor experience that would achieve the general objectives identified in the 2006 IMPIAF.

The central question in defining the visitor experience was:

What needs to be offered on the site for it to function effectively as a hub of the IAF interpretive network?

The answer was that the site must attract a significant number of visitors who are coming specifically to learn about and experience the IAF story. To have that attraction power, the site must offer a “world class” experience. Although this is a desired goal of most interpretive efforts of any significance, it is particularly important for the Dry Falls site, due to the fact that it is so far removed from major interstate travel corridors.

Visitor Experience Program Goals: The “World Class Experience”

For this site to function as a hub for the IAF story, which encompasses it being a world class experience, the following must occur:

- The Ice Age Floods features are highlighted.
- All resources – scenic, historic and natural – are conserved.
- The IAF story is the focus of the experience.
- Visitors have the opportunity to immerse themselves physically, intellectually and emotionally in the story.
- The experience is welcoming and user-friendly.
- Decompression (separation in time and space) and/or transition (sequences of different environments such as highway to parking to building to overlook) are used to move people emotionally from the rapid pace of a vehicle on a highway to the state of mind required for emotional connection to and immersion in the story.
- Learning and exploration about the IAF continues after a visitor leaves the site.
- All types of visitors have a high quality experience.
- The site, along with Sun Lakes-Dry Falls State Park, offer at least a 1/2-day experience that target audiences consider to be worth the time and effort to drive to the area.

Target Audiences

Regardless of their motivations for visiting or their physical capabilities to access the site and visitor center, visitors must have the opportunity to fully enjoy their visit. With that in mind, the following categories were used as starting points for profiling visitors, to determine what types of experiences would be so appealing that visitors would make their way to visit the remote site; so powerful as to hold them long enough to communicate the key themes; and so compelling as to motivate them to continue their Ice Age Floods experience after they leave Dry Falls. Those categories are:

1. Spiritual Pilgrim/Rechargers – want to immerse themselves in

the setting in a variety of ways, and don't necessarily need interpretation to have a great experience. These people will want to contemplate the landscape features. They may also want to get down to the base of the falls. To serve this audience, the site should offer opportunities for solitude and contemplation, such as benches at the end of a trail, trails away from the crowd, and quiet places where these visitors can ponder the story stretching out in front of them.

2. Facilitators – want to facilitate a positive experience for others. Parents and teachers are the typical facilitators, but groups often have one or two people who like to facilitate the experience for others in the group. These people can use some of the same interpretive strategies as the “discoverer,” but also want information that can accommodate a group leader. A self-guided interpretive trail using a brochure is an example of the type of opportunity that appeals to facilitators.
3. Curriculum-Based Learners – educators want a place to facilitate field trips and desire agency staff time and resources to facilitate educational groups. This audience is distinguished by their captivity - they typically have an assignment or activity that drives their purpose for visiting. The message development approach for exhibits should enable staff to provide some basic levels of service for this audience. The exhibits should accommodate a range of learning styles (observer, hands-on, social) and be accessible to persons with disabilities of all types. Organized groups should be able to efficiently move through the site with their basic needs being met.
4. Discoverers – want to learn the story; absolutely need interpretation. They want some of the opportunities to be self-guided. To serve this audience, the site must offer the opportunity to learn about the story in a variety of different ways (accommodate different learning styles), and have the opportunity to continue discovering the story after leaving the site.
5. Professional/hobbyists – already know a lot about the subject. Interpretive opportunities typically need more detail and depth than most other visitors are looking for. These visitors

seek sources of information to further their research.

6. Experience seekers – the “been there, done that” crowd. They will have a good experience just by walking to the rim because the breathtaking view is a signature experience that makes the trip worthwhile. If the site can offer other signature experiences, the attraction power increases significantly for all groups, but especially this group.

The task of the planning and design project was to ensure that every one of these groups would be served by the experiences offered at the site, no matter the preferred learning style, the degree of physical ability/disability, or the size of the group. The limitations of the site dictated a need to move organized groups through the site, which had significant impact on the design concepts for the site and buildings.

Themes, Sub-Themes and Stories

In order for Dry Falls to be a hub of the entire network of interpretive opportunities focused on the IAF, it must communicate all of the major themes and sub-themes identified in the 2006 IMPIAF.

The following is the theme hierarchy that was developed and approved in the plan. All supporting stories are included because they are applicable to interpretive strategies designed to motivate visitors to explore more areas after they leave, and are also possible ways to make connections with visitors. The over-arching themes and related sub-themes are those concepts that park visitors should understand about the IAF. Many of these themes are directly applicable to the site-specific interpretive efforts at Dry Falls.

Theme 1

The landscape you see today is the product of many forces working over millions of years. The Ice Age Floods were the

most recent major agents of change, sculpting the landscape on a massive scale over a rapid period in geologic time.

Sub-Theme:

A variety of forces combined over time to set the stage for and influence the Ice Age Floods.

Supporting Stories:

The stories that support this sub-theme focus on geomorphologic forces and their impact.

- Plate tectonics caused land masses to shift, and helped shape these land masses through differential pressure that caused uplift, tilting, warping, cracks and other characteristics of the landscape that affected the course and flow of the flood waters. (This is clearly evident in the tilted rocks in the Park Lake further down the coulee).
- Cascade volcanoes built the mountain chain.
- Columbia basalt flows helped to form the vast Columbia River Plateau, including the Waterville Plateau through which the Grand Coulee runs.
- The continental ice sheet supplied water for the floods as well as influenced the pathway of the floods. Specifically, a lobe of the ice sheet prevented flood waters from following the path of the Columbia River and forced them across the Waterville plateau, where they cut both Moses Coulee and Grand Coulee.
- The windblown Palouse loess covers much of the channeled scabland and is linked with the floods in that winds blew some of the flood sediment back to the northeast where the floods would scour and erode again and again. The Palouse loess are recycled flood deposits that go back 2 million years, about the age of the first floods.
- Defining geologic time to a range of audiences and explaining how this relates to the events that occur over these dy-

namic ranges of time.

Sub-Theme:

The extent and type of impact of the Ice Age Floods was determined by past events.

Supporting Stories:

The stories to support this sub-theme focus on other geomorphologic forces and their impact on the floods.

- The tilt of the Columbia basalt near Spokane and across much of the Columbia Plateau caused the water to pick up velocity, contributing to the erosive force and subsequent formation of scablands.
- The columnar basalt or colonnade portion of the Columbia River basalt flows was easily eroded by flood waters, which contributed to the formation of iconic features of the floods, such as Grand Coulee and Dry Falls.
- The Cascades Mountains, formed by plate tectonics and volcanic activity, formed a barrier that helped determine the course of the flood waters.
- The ice sheet, specifically the Okanagan Lobe, created barriers to the flood waters, causing the formation of Grand Coulee and Moses Coulee.
- Natural constrictions (such as Wallula and Sentinel Gaps) formed by past geomorphologic events caused impounding and led to depositional features.

Sub-Theme:

The Ice Age Floods had large-scale impact over a large area.

Supporting stories:

The stories to support this sub-theme focus on the impacts of the floods.

- The floods carved new landforms, such as the Grand Coulee

and Palouse Falls and Canyon.

- The floods created landforms through deposition, such as gravel bars and bergmounds.
- The floods significantly altered existing landforms, turning parts of eastern Washington into scablands, dumping huge amounts of material in the Quincy Basin and carving away rock to form the basalt cliffs along the Columbia River channel.
- The floods affected the physical landscape in four states, from Montana to the Pacific Ocean.
- The length of the undersea area affected by deposits from flood waters is longer than the overall reach of the waters on the land.

Theme 2

The Ice Age Floods had a significant impact on cultural use of the Pacific Northwest and on your life today.

This theme is focused on the linkage between humans and the physical environment. The environment shapes human lifestyles by influencing how they use the land (a concept known as geodeterminism). In turn, humans shape the environment. Possible sub-themes and supporting stories include the following:

Sub-Theme:

The Ice Age Floods significantly influenced travel and trade routes. Since transportation routes are a key to cultural development in and use of an area, the floods had impacts still felt today.

Supporting stories:

The stories supporting this sub-theme focus on how the floods affected the distribution of human activity – including Native American Tribal and Euro-American settlement patterns and transportation – on the landscape.

- The distribution of key resources, including water, vegetation and topsoil, determined hunting and gathering and agricultural potential. These resources determined travel and settlement patterns, and established common travel routes.
- The impacts of Ice Age Floods created new travel and trade routes, such as the Grand Coulee, and shaped other routes to facilitate their use. (Travel routes influenced how Tribal cultures interacted with each other through contact, trading, languages, and intermarriage).
- Transportation routes at the time of Euro-American settlement were determined in part by landforms sculpted by the Ice Age Floods.

Sub-Theme:

The Ice Age Floods significantly affected the economies of the Pacific Northwest - past, present and future.

Supporting Stories:

The stories supporting this sub-theme focus on the impact on agriculture.

- The re-distribution of soil determined what crops could be grown where, and whether agriculture was even a possibility. (This relates specifically to the productivity of the Quincy Basin, which most visitors pass through on their way out of Grand Coulee, and the lack of productivity of the scablands to the southeast).
- The wine growing industry in parts of Oregon's Willamette Valley and Washington's Yakima Valley depend on soils deposited by the Ice Age Floods.
- The story could also include impact on tourism.

Theme 3

The composition and distribution of flora and fauna in the Pacific Northwest were affected significantly by the Ice Age Floods.

The story's focus is on the linkages between the biotic and physical environments, and between different biotic components, such as wildlife and habitat. Possible sub-themes and supporting stories include the following:

Sub-Theme:

The redistribution of soil had significant impact where certain types of plants could grow, which in turn had a significant impact on the presence and distribution of wildlife that depend on those plants.

Supporting Stories:

The stories supporting this sub-theme focus first on species of plants that are growing or not growing in an area due to impact by the floods, and the consequent presence or absence of fauna that are tied to those species. This could perhaps be best illustrated by comparing the flora and fauna of a particular area from before the floods to after the floods.

- The Dry Falls site was scoured of topsoil by the flood waters, thus determining what flora could survive there and in turn, what associated fauna could survive. The lakes at the bottom of the Coulee created a whole new environment, supporting a new ecology.

Sub-Theme:

The floods played a significant role in determining habitat for fish and wildlife.

Supporting Stories:

The stories supporting this sub-theme focus on habitat formed mainly due to the floods.

- Basalt cliffs eroded and shaped by flood waters are used by raptors. (This includes the cliffs visible from Dry Falls).
- Wetland and riparian areas growing in areas carved by floodwaters are used by a variety of birds. (This includes the bottom of the Grand Coulee visible from Dry Falls).
- Scablands support different vegetation and cover, and consequently different species of wildlife.
- Much of the remaining shrub-steppe habitat in eastern Washington is in channeled scablands.
- Lakes in the Grand Coulee are used by fish and waterfowl.

Theme 4

The history of field research on the Ice Age Floods demonstrates how knowledge evolves over time, often through a combination of ideas and other advances in science, the importance of open-mindedness and perseverance. The controversy and personal dynamics of the Ice Age Floods story is a testament to the scientific method, which ultimately leads to the best solution.

The human story of J Harlen Bretz's struggle to have his theory of the Ice Age Floods accepted by the scientific community is both fascinating and instructive. First, it can communicate the importance of perseverance, especially in the field of scientific endeavor. Second, it can be used to communicate a classic process in the ongoing evolution of scientific knowledge. Although the story of Bretz and his battle with the scientific world appears brutal, it is not atypical. It is an example of the classic struggle between competing scientific theories, ultimately resolved when the views are synthesized to reach new conclusions. This process has repeated itself throughout human history and continues today. In communicating that story, it sends the message that there are things left to discover, including new ways to look at old stories. This is a good message for children – our potential scientists of the future. Possible sub-themes and supporting stories include the following:

Sub-Theme:

The story of the Ice Age Floods evolved with input from a variety of sources.

Supporting stories:

The stories supporting this sub-theme include the work of others who were looking at additional aspects of the story, such as Pardee and Chamberlain and more recently Waitt, Baker and others.

Sub-Theme:

Other advances in knowledge were a key to the scientific community accepting this theory.

Supporting stories:

The stories supporting this sub-theme focus on the impact technology has made, especially aerial and satellite photography, and the evolving understanding of this event. Early geologists did not have the tools available today, and were entrenched in Uniformitarianism (i.e., present is the key to the past). Therefore they were not prepared to accept Bretz's catastrophic flood theory.

Sub-Theme:

Although other factors played a role in the eventual acceptance of the Ice Age Floods story, the perseverance and continuing exploration and study by Bretz was key to the process.

Supporting stories:

The story supporting this sub-theme is the story of Bretz's struggles, with emphasis on the length of time it took for the theory to be accepted, the difficulties he faced, and the fact that he continued to study and refine his theory in spite of the difficulties.

Theme 5

The landscape contains many stories about cultural and natural history that can be “read”.

We want people, especially children, to become “detectives of the landscape”, always looking for what is there and what it might mean. Such seeds could lead to the sprouting of a passing interest or a life career in science and other related fields. This experience should foster a stronger connection to the land, natural resources and a stronger respect for nature. Possible supporting stories include the following:

Supporting stories:

The stories supporting this theme are numerous. All of the interpretive opportunities, whether about cultural or natural history, focus on reading the landscape. The story of Bretz is also about him reading a story in the landscape.

Theme 6

The Ice Age Floods are part of the dynamic water cycle of the Columbia Watershed.

Sub-Theme:

Ice Age Flood events are directly linked to cyclic changes in global climate. Dry Falls is merely a dormant waterfall waiting for the next Ice Age cycle to occur.

Sub-Theme:

Precipitation patterns common to the Columbia watershed influenced the advance of the Cordilleran Ice sheet into low elevation valleys.

Sub-Theme:

Specific geographic conditions within the watershed, including the lack of low-elevation divides within the Clark Fork drainage, the choke point in the Columbia River Valley at Grand Coulee,

and the narrow constriction at Wallula Gap, directly impacted the magnitude and area inundated by the return of this water to the ocean.

Theme 7

Washington State Parks and the surrounding landscapes are fascinating places to visit and worth protecting as part of the state’s heritage.

This is a marketing and support theme. We want people to support Washington State Parks and the best way to do that is to provide visitors with something they value. The more sites they visit and the more they enjoy experiences facilitated by the WSP, the more likely they are to support the agency. Possible sub-themes include the following:

Sub-Theme:

Natural and cultural resources are an important to my quality of life.

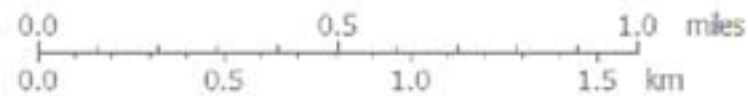
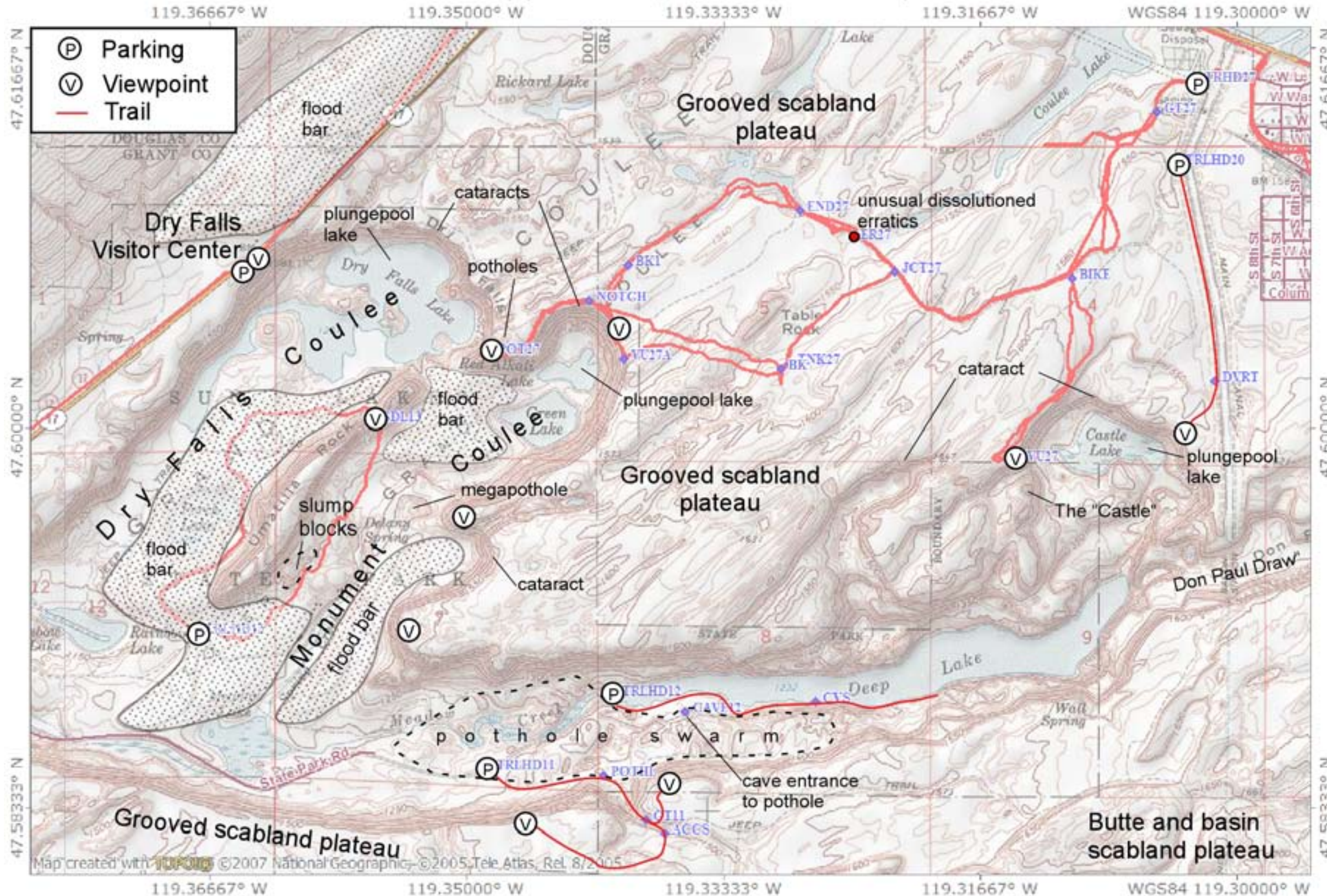
Sub-Theme:

Washington State Parks protects natural and cultural resources important to my quality of life.

Sub-Theme:

I can help protect these resources in part by becoming a steward of the resource and by supporting Washington State Parks’ mission to create opportunities “for future generations to enjoy.”

These messages are not communicated by telling specific stories, but by providing a quality experience with gentle reminders and making sure the participant knows who was responsible for that experience.



Flood Features in Sun Lakes-Dry Falls State Park

Section 3: Site & Architectural Programming



Sun Lakes-Dry Falls State Park is perhaps the best site in the region for understanding the impact of the Ice Age Floods because of its dramatic display of flood features. The part of the falls visible from the existing Visitor Center is only about 25% of the total width. The falls continue eastward for several more miles. After viewing the falls from the inside - the current Visitor Center's vantage point - visitors may have the impression that they've seen the entire falls, when in reality they've only seen a small portion of its four-mile span. The site's features create good opportunities to tell a wide variety of stories associated with the floods. For example, the Dry Falls site creates the opportunity for interpreting a receding waterfall, and to interpret the volume of water involved, since the cataract would have been ten times the size of Niagara Falls. The basalt cliffs create the opportunity to tell the story of basalt in forming the features associated with the IAF. The breadth and depth of the coulee also create a good opportunity to focus on the amount of material removed by the floods, and the presence of the Grand Coulee, a topographic feature created by the IAF. The site also creates the opportunity to focus on the impact of the floods on the landscape and their influence on how people use the land. The lower Sun Lakes Park area allows for another perspective of the size of the coulee, and the extent of the basalt flows that set the stage for the carving of the coulee. Large chunks of basalt that have fallen into the coulee provide the opportunity to explain how the waters carved the landscape. The features also create opportunities to tell the story of the impact on the area's ecology.



Project Site

The existing Dry Falls Visitor Center and natural area became part of the Washington State Parks system in 1933. While the State Park land area ownership at the Sun Lakes-Dry Falls State Park is extensive, the established study area for this project encompasses only about seven acres located adjacent to Highway 17 on a wide, flat area part way up the coulee. Of this study area, approximately five acres is natural area comprised of cobbly soils, mounded or depressed areas amidst basalt outcroppings and natural vegetation characteristic of the shrub-steppe plant community, including sagebrush, grasses and greasewood. Approximately two acres of the study area consists of a maintained cultural landscape, including introduced plant species used in park landscaping: lawn, deciduous trees, conifers and evergreen shrubs, including juniper.





Within the maintained landscape, there are several structures. During the 1930's, projects at the site were undertaken by either the Works Progress Administration or the Civilian Conservation Corps. The remnants of these projects include stone and chain guardrails, a stone and wood frame gazebo, and a platform overlook which projects beyond the rim. The guardrails consist of mortared stone piers joined by low stone walls and iron chains with large links. A hexagonal gazebo constructed of mortared basalt and granite stone with wood framing remains on the north end of the site. Inside this structure, a brass plaque commemorates the designation of the Grand Coulee as a Registered National Natural Landmark in 1965. The projecting overlook is a narrow concrete ramp anchored at its outward edge by a natural basalt spire. The overlook projects about 18 feet beyond the rim and is bordered by pipe railing that in recent years, was wrapped in chain link fencing. This overlook is extremely popular with visitors.



In addition to the Depression-era structures, a 3,400 square foot Visitor Center exists. An example of mid-century modernist architecture, the building was designed by Spokane-based architect Kenneth Brooks and constructed in 1965. This white stucco structure consists of two modular units; a smaller, 30-foot square lower unit, serves as a pedestal for a larger, 50-foot square upper unit. The ground floor of the Visitor Center provides restrooms and houses the mechanical room. The upper floor provides an information desk attended by WSPRC staff, a gift shop and bookstore, panorama-style interpretive exhibits, and a large viewing window that overlooks Dry Falls and the lower Grand Coulee.

Other structures in proximity to the existing Visitor Center include a flag pole, a drinking fountain, a large wood and concrete park



entry sign with interpretive information, and a plaque commemorating geologist J Harlen Bretz.

The east side of the Dry Falls site is bounded by Washington State Highway 17. Part of the 100-mile Coulee Corridor National Scenic Byway, it was designated as a scenic byway by the Federal Highway Administration in 2005.

At the site, the 55 mile-per-hour, 2-lane highway receives frequent semi-truck travel, local and regional use as well as tourist traffic, especially in the summer months. The highway right-of-way is 100 feet wide, extending 50 feet east and west from the highway center line. Part of the project study area - the asphalt parking lot, drive aisles and planting areas - is within the existing right-of-way. No right or left turn lanes exist from the highway.

The paved parking lot allows travelers to enter from Highway 17 on the northern end of the project site. The current parking configuration is a remnant of how the site was initially used when it was first developed. Visitors in vehicles were able to pull cars up to the rim where the chain guardrail defines the edge. In later years, wheel stops were added to keep parked vehicles at a safer distance from the rim. Currently, no safe established pedestrian routes exist for visitors desiring a closer view from the rim once they have left their parked vehicle.

Visitor Experience and Sense of Place

Over 75 percent of the visitors to the Sun Lakes-Dry Falls site are from west of the Cascades, another state, or from another country. These visitors are surrounded by a new landscape; an expansive living exhibit that offers opportunities to learn and understand the awesome geomorphologic events that shaped the area. The visitor experience is the key to creating effective and captivating interpretive opportunities. Interpretive opportunities that capture a visitor's attention are usually site based, meaning they are tied to the first hand experience available on-site. The surrounding landscape tells different stories. The role of the interpretation is to informally educate – or to “tell the story” that people can then “see” in their surroundings. By careful interpretation of the geologic, cultural and natural components of the region, that interpretation can be carried through the site to the building and indoor exhibits complementing the main visitor experience that occurred outside, and carried still further when visitors leave and travel through the Ice Age Floods region. While the site remains the focal point, the indoor exhibits can enhance the on-site experience and increase understanding of the landscape by taking the visitor back in time, offering compelling aerial views, simulating impacts of the Ice Age Floods and illustrating where the visitor is in relationship to the overall landscape.

The quality of experience will improve with redevelopment. Creating an effective wayfinding network and separated circulation systems, providing large vehicle access, integrating interpretive features, overlooks and picnicking areas, providing for universal accessibility, and creating a strong connection with the natural environment will contribute to a positive visitor experience. Site design options could potentially expand the site to the north, south and west. Through sensitive planning and design, the development can create a model for environmental stewardship and recreation.

Development principles for the Dry Falls Visitor Center Area Plan include:

- Balance recreational development with protection of ecological systems and visual corridors
- Develop a Visitor Experience and Interpretive Plan for the site
- Provide clear and safe access to parking, pedestrians and picnicking
- Provide adequately sized parking, turning radii and circulation routes to accommodate emergency vehicles, cars/trucks, vehicles with trailers, RV's, motor homes, and tour buses
- Accommodate site limitations and constraints in proposed site improvements
- Assess the existing Visitor Center and develop recommendations
- Develop concepts based on facilities that are vandal-resistant and simple to maintain

Site Considerations

As the site is today, visitors arrive by vehicle and suffer from a lack of clarity during the arrival sequence. Existing highway improvements are insufficient for today's vehicles; signage is lacking, and vehicular circulation is mixed with pedestrian traffic. The current parking situation puts drivers and pedestrians at risk. Developing site concepts that work with existing amenities will redefine the site arrival and orientation, pedestrian circulation, exterior interpretive opportunities, visitor use amenities and building entry to create a safe, user-friendly and captivating experience.

Architectural Considerations

Part of the effort of this project was to determine the value of preserving the existing Visitor Center for use in expanding interpretive facilities on the Dry Falls site. Throughout the evaluation of the

existing facility, stakeholders and WSPRC recognized the need for a larger facility within their territory to inform constituents about the Ice Age Floods story. Being one of the most iconic landscapes created by the floods, the WSPRC feels that the Dry Falls site is very significant. However, the Visitor Center as designed by Kenneth Brooks was also important in its own right. A considerable effort was made to determine if and how it could be used.

An assessment of the existing Visitor Center building was performed to determine its capacity to serve the uses as established by the Stakeholder Advisory Committee. As a part of the evaluation of how the building can be renovated to be both a modern interpretive tool and an architectural landmark, the following deficiencies were discovered. Primarily, the existing facility is too small to adequately serve an expanded visitor experience. Additionally, the current Visitor Center relies on dated exhibits to deliver its interpretive messages, which do not always reflect the theme hierarchy developed in the 2006 plan.

These deficiencies are exacerbated by:

- Upper level of the building does not meet American with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility code standards or fire egress code standards.
- To add the code-required second exit stair from the upper level would further reduce programmable area.



- A chair-lift to the second floor requires staff to operate, and thus does not meet universal accessibility standards. An elevator would need to be added, further diminishing program area.
- The restrooms do not comply with ADA requirements, and there are not enough fixtures to serve an expanded program.
- Mechanical equipment is inefficient and difficult to maintain.
- The exterior stucco finish requires repair and there are problems with water and insect intrusion.
- Upgrades to the structural system would be required to meet current seismic design codes. The extent of these upgrades is unknown.

After extensive evaluation of the existing floor plan with remodeling, building expansion or relocation strategies, it was determined that the existing Visitor Center is too small to serve for updated interpretive activities and still maintain a desirable visitor experi-



ence. The existing building requires substantial improvements to remedy deferred maintenance and seismic issues. Cost estimates determined that the existing Visitor Center would require over 1 million in renovation costs to bring the building to current ADA and building safety standards. Additionally, Parks determined that since the building by itself did not provide adequate space for a substantial Visitor Center, nor did it function well for any other needed operational use, Parks could not afford the costs for the building's ongoing maintenance, or staffing costs to keep the building operational. It was therefore determined by WSPRC that the existing building be removed.

Following the existing building assessment by the architectural consultant, WSPRC evaluated the structure's eligibility for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). As designee for the lead federal agency (Federal Highways Administration) for the evaluation, the Washington Department of Transportation reviewed the findings and determined the structure to be eligible for listing on the NRHP. The Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) concurred with this determination. Additionally, DAHP also made the recommendation that WSPRC retain and preserve the structure for the reasons that *"the building significantly represents the growth and development of state park systems in the Post World War II era. This era was a period of nationwide change in recreation trends that came to be reflected in the development, management, and use of parks. This change was also expressed through new ideas and concepts of park interpretation. Additionally, the building represents an intact example of the work of prominent Spokane architect Kenneth Brooks, whose design philosophy of utilizing and manipulating cubic spaces is well represented by this building. In summary, it is our opinion that the Dry Falls Interpretive Center is perhaps the best example of modern architecture within the Washington State Park system."*

Since demolition of a NRHP-eligible property constitutes an adverse effect, the proposed action was conditioned to include specific mitigation measures identified in the State Environmen-

tal Policy Act (SEPA) Mitigated Determination of Nonsignificance (MDNS), as noted below:

"Accordingly, and consistent with State Parks' Cultural Resources Management Policy (#12-98-1) and the SEPA rules (WAC 352-11-350 and WAC 352-11-665), this proposal has been conditioned to include reasonable and capable mitigation measures designed to reduce the likely significant adverse environmental impacts of the proposal. Mitigation measures include:

- *Documentation of the historic property (Brooks building) by preparing a Historic American Building Survey (HABS) report to the standards of U.S. Department of the Interior's National Park Service and the guidelines of the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). Documentation will include digital photography and text that describes the structure, puts it in a larger context, and states its relationship to Kenneth Brooks's larger body of work.*
- *Inclusion of interpretive materials and exhibits related to the Brooks building as component of the overall interpretive plan developed for the site.*

Separately, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) will complete consultation under Section 106 of the NHPA (36 CFR Part 800) and Section 4(f) of Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (now codified at 23 CFR 774) compliance for the proposed undertaking."

The complete report on SEPA's Mitigated Determination of Nonsignificance and SEPA documentation prepared for the proposal is available by accessing the following website:

<http://www.parks.wa.gov/plans/dryfalls/R-01-SEPA%20MDNS.pdf>

Ultimately, the consultant team's exploration of plans for a new Visitor Center building provided the opportunity to explore interpretive concepts while planning for a facility, and provided solutions to current site problems.

