



DRAFT

Ted Olson Nature Preserve Concept Plan

5 March 2010

SUMMARY

Ted Olson Nature Preserve was donated by Theodore Olson in 1973 with the intention that 'the land be preserved for public park use' and the park be developed with 'nature trails, picnic area, and parking'.

In 1981 Charles Maher and Scout Troop 565 developed the trails that remain today.

The Preserve is beautiful - its rolling terrain is covered with maturing second growth Douglas fir and vigorous huckleberry, its lower areas are covered with expansive thickets of salmonberry and alder.

BIMPRD initiated a process in October 2009 to evaluate the existing 10.41 acre Preserve, the recently acquired 4.89 acre Kallgren property east of the Preserve, and solicit public input on improvements.

Considerations for the development of a concept plan for the property included Board direction to construct a trail linking Kallgren Road NE to the existing Preserve trails and the opportunity to discuss with the community including residents and Wilkes Elementary School and other stakeholders on use and needs at the Preserve.

The Kallgren property was acquired through significant community involvement and with the Bainbridge Island Land Trust. The property was transferred with deed restrictions outlining a variety of allowed and prohibited uses. A wetland delineation and summary environmental evaluation on the property were submitted by the Land Trust with the transfer.

A wetland delineation was made on the Preserve in November 2009 which identified limited wetlands on the east border.

A consultant was also hired in November 2009 to assess flora and fauna at the park and to make recommendations about management of natural systems and to guide potential improvements. The flora and fauna report noted that off leash dogs and cats are a significant detriment to the Preserve's nature, non native plant species should be removed, trails should optimally create a 200' buffer for woodland species and avoid nesting sites – salmonberry and snags, and finally that the optimal time to build trails is 1 April through 30 May to minimize impact on nesting species.

Wilkes Elementary does use the Preserve for art and science – though less now with the existing condition of the amphitheater. Wilkes asked for benches along the trail and would use benches in the amphitheater. BPA once staged A Midsummer Night's Dream in the

amphitheater. Parks uses the amphitheater for programs and has a need for benches. And a resident was married in the amphitheater.

Two public meetings were held 12 November and 10 December 2009 with notices mailed to the surrounding community and posted at the Preserve and on the Parks' website.

The goals for the public process –

- To have an open, transparent, and accountable process
- To listen to and understand community values and vision for the Preserve
- To be respectful of all users, property owners, and residents
- Optimize the community use and natural systems of the Preserve
- Share opportunities and limitations of the Preserve properties including deed restrictions, Comp Plan findings and CIP meeting outcomes
- Develop a plan for physical improvements for the Preserve

Outcomes of the public process –

- Community participation and acknowledgment of the process and outcomes
- An implementable and phased plan that guides physical development of the Preserve
- A master plan that enhances community use and natural systems of the Preserve
- Stronger community stewardship of the Preserve

The first public meeting solicited views on the 'most important assets and qualities' of the Preserve, 'opportunities and concerns for potential improvements', and what 'change you would like to see at the Preserve.

The second public meeting reviewed the summary of earlier meeting, reviewed analysis drawings, and discussed potential improvements.

Subsequently staff reviewed the public comment and considered available resources, maintenance, and standards.

Summary of Public Comments

Assets and Qualities –

- The quiet and passive experience that allows a connection to the earth
- The trail – its intimacy and twisty alignment
- The strength of neighborhood ownership and stewardship
- Diversity of (native) plants
- It is a place for nature and acknowledgement that the Preserve is a 'wildlife corridor'

Opportunities and concerns –

- Connection to Kallgren – Opportunity
- Control of non natives - Concern
- Increasing and lengthening trails – Opportunity
- Restoring amphitheater – Opportunity

Opportunities for change –

- Connection to Kallgren



- Restoration of amphitheater
- Interpretation of natural systems
- Expanded trails – should match character of existing trail
- Site furnishings – dog station and garbage can

Proposed improvements (from site plan date December 2009) –

- North trail alignment from Kallgren to Preserve is preferred – less impact on wetlands and adjacent properties
- Amphitheater benches should be restored and trail alignment modified to not go through amphitheater
- Eliminate social trail to NW property and realign to NW corner of preserve
- Add trail from SW corner to existing loop trail
- Replant SE alder thicket with cedar
- Existing loop trail should be expanded with careful consideration for adjacent properties and acceptance to retain existing loop trail but removal of E/W cross trail
- Site furnishings – park entry signs on Madison, Winthers, and Kallgren, small kiosk and dog station at parking, and interpretive signs (similar to 1981 Eagle Scout project).

Staff Recommendations

- North trail alignment from Kallgren to Preserve
- No revision to trail at amphitheater
- Eliminate trail to NW property and realign to NW corner of preserve
- Add trail from SW corner to existing loop trail
- Replant SE alder thicket with cedar
- Existing loop trail should be expanded with careful consideration for adjacent properties and acceptance to retain existing loop trail but removal of E/W cross trail
- Site furnishings – park entry signs on Madison, Winthers, and Kallgren, and small kiosk and dog station at parking
- Phase 1 – Kallgren trail, kiosk, trail removal
- Phase 2 – SE cedar planting, entry signs, trail additions at NW and SW corners
- Phase 3 – extended loop trail
- Ongoing – weed removal and restoration

Public Comment with No Action

- Amphitheater restoration, realignment of trail through amphitheater, benches, interpretation, multiple dog stations

Concept Plan Summary

The Preserve is a well used neighborhood destination with a healthy ecosystem.

While beyond the scope of this concept plan there are adjacent natural areas and potential trails that if acquired or secured with easements would enhance the Preserve.

The Kallgren connection, expanded loop trail, and other improvements are in keeping with Mr. Olson's as well as the community's vision for the Preserve.

