CONFLUENCE PROJECT

LANDBRIDGE CONCEPT PLAN
RECONNECTING THE CONFLUENCE OF CULTURES & ECOSYSTEMS

SEPTEMBER 2003
INTRODUCTION

The Confluence Project's Land Bridge Concept Plan is the culmination of several years of work and community vision. For nearly 20 years, the city of Vancouver, Washington and the National Park Service have discussed the importance of and need for a Land Bridge to reconnect the Columbia River Waterfront with the National Park.

Once completed, the Land Bridge will become the vital reconnection of the Columbia River Waterfront and Old Apple Tree Park with Fort Vancouver National Historic Site and the Fort Vancouver Village, the Pacific North West's first multi-cultural community.

At this site the Confluence Project Foundation, the National Park Service and the City of Vancouver, Washington have joined efforts to bring this vision to fruition.

Jones & Jones Architects and Landscape Architects working as lead designers for the project have developed this concept plan as a foundation for a major artwork by artist Maya Lin.

In addition to the Land Bridge design effort, Jones & Jones has been instrumental in providing technical assistance and planning services for the National Park Service's Fort Vancouver National Historic Site General Management Plan.

The proposed Land Bridge concept is recognized within the General Management Plan and the draft Vancouver National Historic Reserve Cultural Landscape Report as a core component that serves to connect and unify the Fort Vancouver Site.
SITE ANALYSIS

The Confluence Project involves the creation of public artworks at key points along the Columbia River Basin marking important confluences of rivers, ecosystems and cultures. The sites will be separate yet connected. Art, architecture and landscape design will combine with environmental features to create a dialogue about the history, culture and ecology of the place. The goal of the confluence project is to integrate environmental concerns with an awareness and sensitivity to the tremendous changes the journey of Lewis and Clark effected on the Native People and their homelands.

Fort Vancouver was selected as a site for the Confluence project due to its importance as the confluence of the Mighty Columbia and the historical Klickitat Trail. Fort Vancouver is also arguably the most historically significant area in the Northwest.

The Klickitat trail threaded through a series of prairies and terminated at the alae’k-ae “turtle place” prairie and wetlands, which now constitutes The Vancouver National historic Reserve. The trail linked the Klickitat and Taidnapam people with the River-centric Chinook people and the resources of the river to that of the prairies and mountains. The Prairie and wetlands of the Reserve was a stopping place on Lewis and Clarks journey down the river in 1805 and their return trip back in 1806. As the explorers traveled along the north bank of the Columbia, they met Indians from the Chinook, Cowitz and other nations. Some introduced them to “wap pa too” or “whapto” roots, an edible tuber. Some paddled oarly carved canoes. Some dressed in sailor jackets, carried muskets and spoke a few words of English—evidence that trading was already common.

20 years later Fort Vancouver was established as a fur trading post led by the Hudson’s Bay Company and the adjoining “Kanaka Village” became the first large scale multicultural community in the Pacific Northwest. During peak times it had a population of over 800 people, which represented more than 30 distinct Native American tribes, Hawaiians, French-Canadians, Scots, Irish and Americans. The Village was soon followed by the cities of Vancouver, Washington and Portland, Oregon.

Today, Fort Vancouver National Historic Site is part of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve. The concept of a pedestrian overpass first emerged during the General Management planning process for Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, and was validated by the findings of the draft Vancouver National Reserve Cultural Landscape Report.

01 pre-1824 site conditions
02 hudson's bay company site conditions 1824-1846
03 existing site conditions 2002
04 site images 2003
05 site images 2003
Much like the Chinook tribes, the Klickitat Indians accessed the Columbia River. However, in contrast to the lower Columbia River tribes' shoreline orientation, the Klickitat traveled north and south along the tributaries between the south-central Cascades and the Columbia River. The Klickitat's subsistence strategy was "prairie-oriented," moving with the seasons to take advantage of plant resources ripening at different elevations. The Klickitat Trail, an overland route from Fort Vancouver to The Dalles and Yakima, was a network of trails and passes that connected the Klickitat's subsistence areas, and enabled the tribes to take advantage of trans-Cascade trade. Klickitat traded staves, deer meat and skins, hazelnuts, buckthornberries, camas, and cedar root baskets with the Chinook Indians.

Legend:
- VNBR Boundary
- Camps & Villages
- Burned Prairie
- Dense Coniferous Forest

Pre-1824
Indian Country
SITE DESIGN

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, part of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve (the Reserve), is bisected by State Route 14 and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad. Both of these corridors create physical and visual barriers between the Village and Fort areas and the Columbia River waterfront. The Land bridge reinstates the vital, historic connection between the Reserve and the river edge and establishes a gateway to the city of Vancouver, Washington. The land bridge will serve as a connector and unifier bringing visitors from one part of the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site to the other. Recreational opportunities will be enhanced by connecting trails and recreational facilities, e.g. connecting the Discovery Trail with the Lower Columbia River Water Trail and the Caneo Landing Beach. The bridge will also interpretively reconnect the confluence of the historical Klickitat Trail to the Columbia River.

In addition to various design and conceptual ideas the current bridge design was sited and conceived in accordance with the following constraints and challenges:
- Meet the required clearances of S.R. 14.
- Meet vertical and horizontal clearance requirements of neighboring Pearson Airfield and associated FAA requirements.
- Sensitivity to the archeological constraints of Kanaka Village and Old Apple Tree Park.
- Meet the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act.
- Conform to the Washington State Shoreline Management Act.

06 aerial
07 context plan
08 site plan
09 plan oblique
10 bridge plan
The Village

Lewis and Clark Highway

Interpretive Center

Columbia River

Alaéí' Kaa'e Turtle Place
LANDSCAPE EXPERIENCES

The land bridge will help reinstate the natural landscape continuum from upland prairie to river edge through an interpretive landscape of native species that were important to the Native Peoples and documented during Lewis and Clark’s journey. Approaching the bridge from the north, visitors travel along historical pathways emanating from the fort site to a berm which is planted with camas and prairie grasses that blend into the surrounding landscape. The trail gradually spirals up the berm as the "vista trail". Views along the trail open outwards to the Fort and Village while dense shrubs block the views of the highway. At the top of the berm the trail gently meanders into the "bridge trail" at which point the vegetation becomes a dense combination of prairie shrubs and grasses. The plants create a visual and acoustical barrier and the earth begins to mound up and away from the trail and the structure spans across S.R. 14. The trail is punctuated by interpretive pause spaces at either side of the highway opening up views and creating areas of rest and introspection. After crossing the highway the "riverine trail" begins to descend between the railroad berm and the I-5 off ramp. At this point the trail is accented by meandering site walls and a blend of river edge shrubs which slowly turn into a grove of cottonwoods along the "ravine trail". The cottonwoods terminate at a canoe gate that opens up into Old Apple Tree Park. Visitors can continue to the waterfront by following the path under the railroad berm and along the waterfront trail towards the proposed salmon store and the existing beach/canoe landing.

11 elevation
12 vista trail
13 bridge trail
14 riverine trail
15 ravine trail
SECTION A - VISTA TRAIL
path thru prairie grasslands

prairie grasses  vista trail  grasses and shrubs  lewis and clark highway s.r. 14
SECTION B - BRIDGE TRAIL
massing of native shrubs
SECTION C - RIVERINE TRAIL
meandering transition to prairie edge vegetation

I-5 off ramp  riverine trail  dense river edge shrubs  b.n.a.f. rail road
GREAT CIRCLE LANDBRIDGE

The Great Circle Landbridge draws upon the organic forms of nature and the cultural significance of the circle. The circle is a pervasive form in Native American Art and it symbolizes the continuity of life and the cycles of nature. The circle is inward looking and becomes a marker and unifier. As it sweeps across the highway in a simple but elegant arch form, the bridge will immerse pedestrians in an interpretive landscape as it simultaneously signifying the entrance to the city of Vancouver for 58,000 vehicles passing beneath it daily. The bridge marks the emergence of the historical Klickitat trail and the Columbia River while acknowledging the traces on the landscape from our present and those that have yet to emerge.
The beauty of the trees,
the softness of the air,
the fragrance of the grass,
speaks to me.

The summit of the mountain,
the thunder of the sky,
the rhythm of the sea,
speaks to me.

The faintness of the stars,
the freshness of the morning,
the dew drop on the flower,
speaks to me.

The strength of fire,
the taste of salmon,
the trail of the sun,
And the life that never goes away.
They speak to me.

And my heart soars.

Chief Dan George
Tel-Lai-Wah
Coast Salish