Design Methodology

Washington State Parks began the design process of re-envisioning Schafer State Park in 2010 with the development of a Classification and Management Plan (CAMP) for the park that 1) documents preliminary community input and site assessment, 2) creates zones or land classifications within the park that determine what recreational uses and types of development are appropriate in different areas, and 3) identifies management issues and recommendations. The design team then worked with Washington State Parks and the Recreation Commission, along with the community, to develop a vision for renewal of Schafer State Park to better serve the public and meet the CAMP management objectives.

Management Objectives (from CAMP)

Recreational Resources
- Provide and develop an array of compatible and quality overnight, day-use facilities and recreational opportunities that are inspired by and in harmony with the parks’ natural and cultural resources
- Improve trails within the park and make connections to the larger trail system on lands surrounding the park

Natural Resources
- Maintain and enhance habitat for plants and animals in cooperation with other government organizations and groups
- Interpret natural resources to the public to create and reinforce stewardship of those resources
- Restore natural processes of the Satsop River in the park where feasible

Partnership
- Enhance partnerships to provide programs and facilities that lead to increased public service and economically sustainable parks

Cultural Resources
- Preserve historical and archeological resources when performing maintenance and development projects
- Provide interpretation of historical and cultural resources when appropriate
Park Enterprise

- Explore alternatives to increase overnight occupancy during non-peak use periods
- Coordinate with local businesses to provide information to park visitors about services and programs available nearby
- Continue excellent customer service and programs or events that encourage a longer length of stay and repeat visits
- Encourage donations to Washington State Parks to maintain and improve the park system

Washington State Park Land Classifications (from CAMP)

- Resource Recreation Area (blue) - low and medium intensity recreation including picnicking, primitive camping, trail experiences, floating fishing, etc. Intense recreational uses are not permitted
- Recreation Area (magenta) - high intensity recreation including camping, water sports, and group field games. Activities with high levels of social interaction are encouraged. This designation is on both riverbanks, designated by the dark magenta color in the map below.
- The CAMP served as a basis for the Concept Plan, guiding where higher-intensity and lower intensity uses would occur
Concept Design Process

Armed with the CAMP, Washington State Parks engaged a design team of landscape architects, engineers, architects and scientists to investigate the site and river morphology, natural ecology, built infrastructure, and recreational uses of the site and lead a public and stakeholder visioning process to assess current and future uses, needs and desires. Key to this process was input from Schafer Neighborhood Adopt-A-Park (SNAP) and Friends of Schafer and Lake Sylvia (FOSLS) two community organizations dedicated to preserving and enhancing its namesake parks. The project investigation and engagement informed several alternative concepts exploring options for the park. Through a process of reviewing and testing the alternatives, a final concept plan was developed and an implementation strategy was formed.

Concept Design Process Steps

1. Site investigation
2. Community outreach in the form of an online survey, stakeholder meetings and public meetings
3. Program development defining the issues to be addressed and amenities to be developed
4. Alternative concept exploration to examine various design possibilities
5. Evaluation of the alternative concepts by the public and Washington State Parks’ operations and development staff
6. Draft Concept Plan creation
7. Cost estimation and implementation phasing development
8. Final Concept Plan development and approval
Context

Schafer State Park is located at 1365 W. Schafer Park Rd. Elma, WA 98541 in Mason County, Washington State. The park is surrounded primarily by Rural Residential 10 zoning, with adjacent properties housing residences, agriculture, undeveloped land and forest. Park access is via E. Satsop Road W. which connects to Highway 12 in the town of Satsop, south of the park between the cities of Olympia to the east and Aberdeen to the west. There are no bus stops near the site. The site is a short drive from the Towns of Montesano, Matlock, Elma, Brady and Satsop, and approximately one-half hour from Aberdeen and Shelton and one-hour drive from Olympia.
Existing Park Amenities

Schafer State Park is open for day use activities year-round and for camping from May 1 to October 1. The park offers camping, community and family events, fishing, hiking, wildlife viewing, and floating/inner tubing.

The existing parks office building is used for registration, interpretation and as a small store. Its location on the west side of the park, distant from the park entry, makes it less visible to visitors and unable to provide orientation as people arrive at the park. Historically the structure was a picnic shelter and it would serve the park well if restored to its original function. With restoration of the office as a picnic shelter, the office, registration, interpretation and store functions will require development of a new facility/welcome center.

Schafer State Park existing facilities include:

- 41 campsites (32 standard, nine utility)
- Two walk-in primitive campsites
- One group camp with capacity for 100
- Two comfort station buildings, only one has shower
- One vault toilet in small group camp
- One vault toilet in large group camp
- Approximately 42 extra vehicle/day use parking spaces
- Approximately 25 picnic sites
- Two kitchen shelters
- Building used for registration, interpretation, and store
- Ranger residence
- Shop building
- Three miles of trail
- A historical marker
- Volleyball field
- Horseshoe pits
- Amphitheater
Park Organization

For ease of communication, this plan divides Schafer State Park into three main areas:

- The **East Area** is the portion of the site bounded by the East Fork Satsop River to the north, Satsop-Cloquallum Road to the south, and West Schafer Park Road to the west. It currently includes the day use area, two river beaches, the two historic kitchen/picnic shelters, the maintenance area (ranger residence, garage, shop, and well), an existing group camp, historic comfort station, CXT vault toilet at the group camp and trails.

- The **West Area** is the portion of the site bounded by the East Fork Satsop River to the north and west and West Schafer Park Road to the east. It also includes the portions of the site along the western edge separated from the main parcel by the East Fork Satsop River. It currently includes 41 campsites, a group camp with a picnic shelter, a day use area with a beach, the ranger office, historic comfort station, a CXT vault toilet at the group camp, the dump station, the burn pile and trails.

- The **North Area** is the portion of the site bounded by the East Fork Satsop River to the south and includes the parcels on both sides of West Schafer Park Road. It currently includes trails in the eastern part of the area.