

# NISQUALLY STATE PARK

## INTERPRETIVE PLAN



Prepared for the Nisqually Indian Tribe by  
Historical Research Associates, Inc.



HISTORICAL  
RESEARCH  
ASSOCIATES, INC.



NISQUALLY INDIAN TRIBE

*We acknowledge that Nisqually State Park is part of the homelands of the Squalli-absch (sq<sup>w</sup>aliʔabš) people. We offer respect for their history and culture, and for the path they show in caring for this place.*



*“All natural things are our brothers and sisters, they have things to teach us, if we are aware and listen.” —Willie Frank, Sr.  
Nisqually State Park forest. Credit: HRA*

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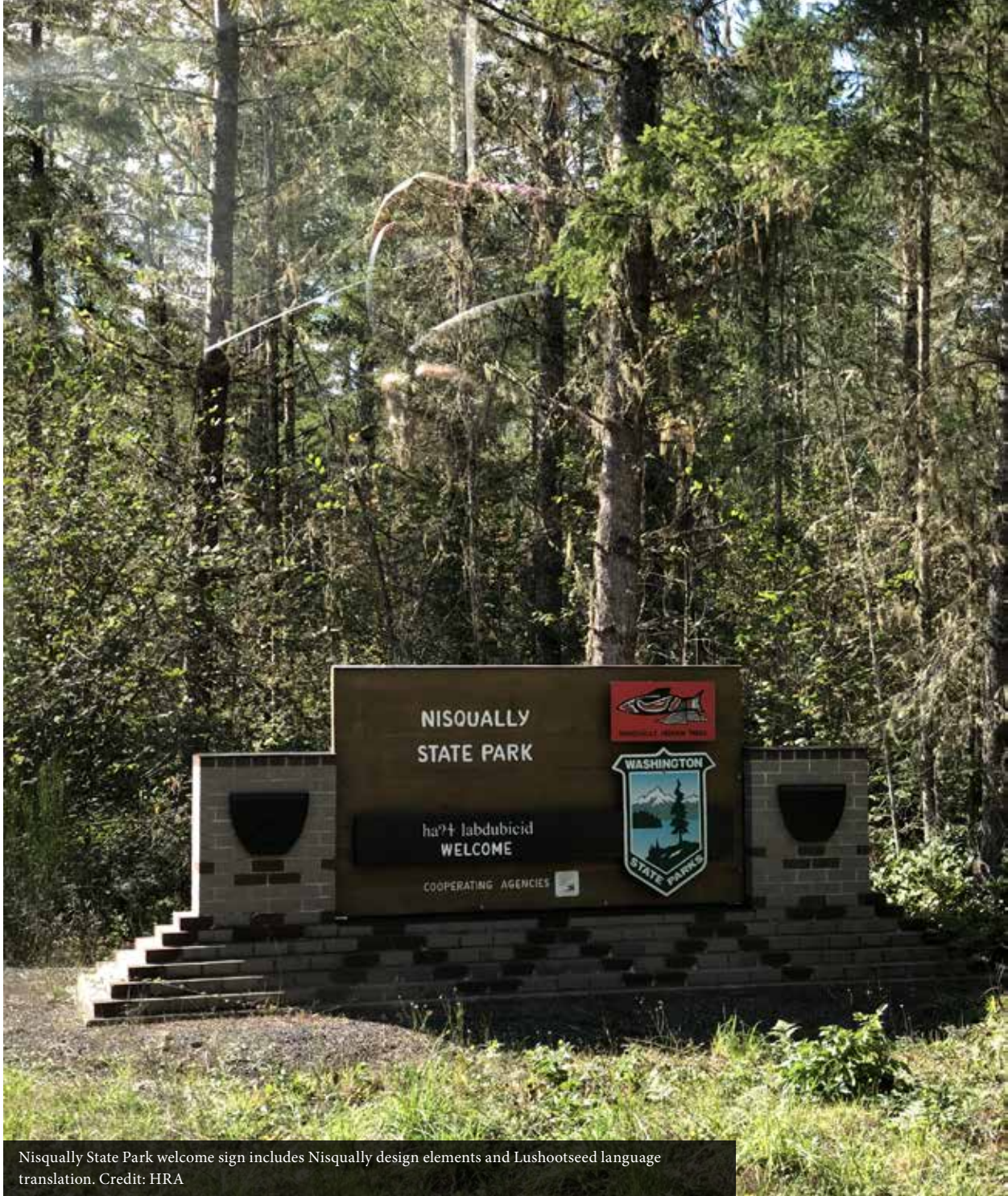
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# INTRODUCTION



Nisqually State Park welcome sign includes Nisqually design elements and Lushootseed language translation. Credit: HRA



The Nisqually River is a defining feature of Nisqually State Park. According to the late Nisqually historian Cecelia Svinth Carpenter, “The Nisqually River became the thread woven through the heart and fabric of the Nisqually Indian people.” —Carpenter, *The Nisqually People, My People*.  
Credit: HRA

## This landscape, the traditional land of the Nisqually people, is considered today's Nisqually State Park.

The Nisqually Indian Tribe presents this 2020 Nisqually State Park Interpretive Plan to guide interpretation at Nisqually State Park, with a focus on telling Nisqually State Park stories from the Tribe's point of view. Nisqually State Park is located approximately 25 miles from the Nisqually Indian Reservation and this ancestral village site was, and remains, an important historic and cultural location within the Nisqually homelands.

Prepared in advance of any major infrastructural improvements within the park, it sets forth a vision for communicating the meanings found there. It identifies aspects of Nisqually history and culture to be shared and the appropriate places within the park that provide opportunities to share them. It also identifies interpretive goals and issues, establishes a thematic framework, and provides recommendations for directing a meaningful and respectful visitor experience at Nisqually State Park.

Over the next 2-5 years, Washington State Parks will be constructing the first phase of a master planned campground, day use area, and trail network. The opportunities for interpretation in this phase include design elements and interpretive media. A visitor circulation/trail plan will present opportunities for the Nisqually Indian Tribe to develop interpretation along the trail network. Developing a full interpretive facility is a longer-term project. While this plan identifies that as a goal and identifies the desired location within the park, the interpretive direction for the facility itself will require focused planning. As the foundational document for interpretation at Nisqually State Park, this interpretive plan seeks to articulate the community vision for a comprehensive interpretive program there.

This interpretive plan is presented in two parts, the interpretive foundation and recommendations for future interpretation. The foundation is intended

to guide all subsequent interpretive design and media, and serve as a resource for anyone developing exhibitions, tours, outdoor elements, digital content, and more. It describes Nisqually State Park’s setting and interpretive facilities under development. The recommendations include short-, mid-, and long-term interpretive action items, based on current plans surrounding the design of Nisqually State Park.

The interpretive plan aims to identify a thematic framework upon which to develop interpretation and shape the visitor experience. These recommendations will give future interpretive practitioners and content developers the tools they need to develop interpretation. As a high-level planning document, this plan is somewhat general in its recommendations, presenting concepts and ideas more than directives. It is meant to complement other management documents produced for the park, including the park’s master plan, design guidelines, and trails plan.

## Overview

Nisqually means “People of the river, people of the grass,” and Nisqually (Squalli-absch) people have lived on the prairies along the Nisqually river since time immemorial. Their life is, and always has been, sustained by the seasonal return of the salmon from the sea. Certain places along the river have always been especially good for fishing, and in these places Squalli-absch people have made villages and seasonal camps for untold thousands of years. One such place is where the Nisqually, Ohop, and Mashel rivers all meet, not far from an upland prairie. This landscape, the traditional land of the Nisqually people, is considered today’s Nisqually State Park. This place is Chief Leschi’s home village

“This is the history of the Squalliabsch, the Indian people who, thousands of years ago journeyed across the Cascade Mountains to inhabit the vast watershed of the Nisqually River. They followed the river from the foothills downstream to where it emptied into South Puget Sound. When they first viewed the prairie grasses that covered the huge expanse of prairie lands that bordered on both sides of the river, they called the prairie lands by the name ‘Squalli.’ As time passed the river took its name from the flowering grasses and became known as the Squalli River.’ The people then called themselves ‘the Squalliabsch,’ meaning The People of the Grass Country, the People of the River. The people, the land, and the river became one.”

—Cecelia Svinth Carpenter, *The Nisqually, My People*

area and provided a refuge for the Squalli-absch during the Puget Sound Indian War of 1855–56.

The Squalli-absch practice oral history, and the story of the massacre at the Mashel River in 1856 has been passed down through the generations. Nisqually people continued to visit the area after it was taken by the settlers, after the big trees were cut, and while the logging companies used it for plantation forestry. Nisqually people have never forgotten their long ties to this area and continue to practice treaty rights to hunt and gather. Nisqually people continue to honor the memory of those killed there by the settler militia.





Canoe Family members at the 2018 Protect Mother Earth Conference.  
Credit: Nisqually Indian Tribe

The once-plentiful salmon runs up the Nisqually, Ohop, and Mashel Rivers declined throughout the twentieth century as a result of commercial overfishing, dams, habitat loss, and pollution. By 1999, the situation became so dire that the federal government listed Nisqually Chinook as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The Nisqually Tribe partnered with the State of Washington and area nonprofit organizations to re-engineer the Ohop and Mashel Rivers and restore salmon habitat lost to farming and logging. The Tribe continues to lead an effort to restore additional habitat in both river systems. The Ohop-Nisqually confluence and the Mashel-Nisqually confluence areas are critical to the passage and survival of salmon traveling to upstream spawning grounds.

When Washington State Parks began to buy up parcels of land from the timber companies to establish the new park, the Tribe was just beginning to rebuild its economy. By the time State Parks assembled about 1200 acres, it had begun to develop a master plan for the future park. The Nisqually Tribe wrote directly to State Parks to inform them that it wanted to be a full partner in the planning process. The Tribe formed a Parks Commission in 2007 to represent tribal interests in the park.

And by 2012, the tribal economy had grown to the point that the Tribe could begin to purchase land that had once been theirs outright. In 2014, the Tribe and State entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to guide the formation of a partnership to collaboratively develop and manage the park.

In 2019, Washington State determined that Nisqually State Park would be the first new state park created in decades. The State and Tribe agreed that this park is and will always be different from other parks in the state. It will be an interpretive park, designed from the beginning to highlight the story of the Squalli-absch through time and into the present. This plan is the first step in making that vision real.

“The river was the lifeblood of the people. Not only did it connect all of the many villages into one tribe, but it was the home of the salmon, the Nisquallies’ main source of food.”

— Cecelia Svinth Carpenter, *Where the Waters Begin*

PART 1  
FOUNDATION



The Nisqually River. Credit: HRA

## Purpose and Guiding Principles

The purpose of the interpretive plan is:

- To use interpretation to communicate the tangible and intangible values associated with Nisqually State Park.
- To share the history of the Nisqually Indian Tribe and Nisqually State Park through the Tribe's perspective.
- To identify opportunities to use interpretation as a tool to safeguard Nisqually State Park's natural and cultural resources.
- To encourage stewardship and respectful behavior among Nisqually State Park visitors.
- To provide a resource for interpretive practitioners at Nisqually State Park.

The following are guiding principles for interpretation at Nisqually State Park:

- Tell Nisqually State Park's stories as accurately and honestly as possible.
- Base interpretation on solid research and knowledge.
- Present interpretation from Nisqually perspectives, while exploring multiple viewpoints.
- Provide space and opportunity for reflection.
- Respect culturally sensitive sites and issues.
- Produce a lasting impact by using the past to inform the future.
- Develop interpretation of both historical and contemporary Nisqually life.

The State and Tribe agreed that this park is and will always be different from other parks in the state. It will be an interpretive park, designed from the beginning to highlight the story of the Squalli-absh through time and into the present.

- Emphasize natural resource protection in interpretive messages.

## Interpretive Goals

Interpretive goals are the primary things to accomplish through the interpretive program. These are long-range, general descriptions of what the interpretive program should strive to achieve.

- Promote respectful visitor interaction with, and protection of, park resources.
- Increase awareness and understanding of Nisqually history and culture.
- Show that the Nisqually Indian Tribe continues to care for its homelands through such efforts as stream rehabilitation and fisheries restoration.
- Support protection, conservation, and restoration of natural and cultural resources within the park.
- Instill a sense of ownership in Nisqually State Park and the interpretation presented there among the Nisqually tribal community, including tribal elders and youth.
- Build partnerships among tribal, state, and local governmental entities; educational



Interpretive planning along the Nisqually River. Credit: HRA

institutions, and non-profit organizations to provide for a sustainable interpretive program.

- Enhance the Nisqually State Park experience for visitors of all ages and abilities.
- Provide audiences with clear links between Nisqually State Park and other natural, historical, and cultural sites within the Nisqually homelands.

## Desired Outcomes

The desired outcomes are measurable things that should be accomplished through the interpretive program. They are short-range objectives that visitors will know, feel, and do after experiencing interpretation.

- Know that the Nisqually River and surrounding watershed—from Mount Rainier to Puget Sound—are the homelands of the Nisqually Indian Tribe and have been since time immemorial.
- Recognize connections between the natural and cultural resources within the park, as well as at other sites within the Nisqually homelands.
- Follow interpretive and recreational trails that provide opportunities to learn about the park's resources and values while also avoiding sensitive areas.
- Engage in hands-on experiences.
- Relate to Nisqually community life and the personal experience of individual Nisqually people in both the past and the present.
- Find interpretation that connects audiences to their own interests to help them better understand why Nisqually State Park and its resources matter.
- Experience Nisqually history and culture firsthand from Nisqually tribal members who share their culture and experiences.
- Know that the Nisqually Indian Tribe and the State of Washington work in collaboration at Nisqually State Park.
- Know that the Nisqually people continue to maintain a vibrant community and culture.
- Feel personally connected to the experiences of the Nisqually people and to the history found within Nisqually State Park.



“All natural things are our brothers and sisters, they have things to teach us, if we are aware and listen.” —Willie Frank, Sr.  
Ohop Creek. Credit: HRA

## Themes

Themes are the heart of this interpretive plan and provide a framework for interpretive programming. Themes connect park resources to relevant concepts, ideas, meanings, beliefs, and values in a way that leads to greater understanding and appreciation of the park’s resources. They are the take home messages for audiences and should guide all interpretive media, including interpretive kiosks, landscape architecture, and personal interpretation such as interpretive walks and amphitheater presentations.

When developing interpretation, practitioners should identify the themes that best relate to the subject resources. From there, they can identify sub-themes, interpretive topics, and specific stories that communicate the thematic values to the public. The connectivity of these themes provides the thread that links the many facets of Nisqually history and culture to the resources within the park. An interpretive theme matrix is located in Appendix A.

### OVERARCHING THEME:

#### Homelands

Nisqually State Park is in the heart of the Nisqually homelands, where the Squalli-absch have lived since time immemorial and have resiliently sustained their community, culture, traditions, and language.

### THEME 1:

#### Land and Rivers

Salmon and the other sacred natural resources found at Nisqually State Park have provided for the Squalli-absch since time immemorial and remain essential to their culture.

Topics within this theme include:

- Salmon subsistence, cultural connections, and restoration
- Nisqually River, Mashel River, Ohop Creek—then and now
- Seasons in the park and connections to culture
- Nisqually homelands
- Nisqually River watershed

- Plants that sustained the people
- Cedar
- Animals
- Prairie
- Lushootseed names and meanings



Harvesting camas. Credit: Nisqually Indian Tribe

“This is our homeland. This is where we live. We aren’t going anywhere. We have to take care of our country, and we have to work with local, state and federal governments to sustain it.”

—Billy Frank, Jr.

## THEME 2:

### Nisqually History and Culture

Nisqually State Park offers a window into Nisqually history and culture where visitors can experience the sights, sounds, and smells of a homeland that has sustained the Squalli-absch from time immemorial.

Topics within this theme include:

- Chief Leschi’s home village
- Mashel Massacre
- Origin stories
- Nisqually life since time immemorial
- Nisqually territory and inter-tribal connections
- Horse culture
- Hudson’s Bay Company and trade
- Treaty of Medicine Creek
- Colonialism and tribal resistance
- Puget Sound War
- Reservation history, including allotment and dispossession
- Twentieth century life
- Fort Lewis/Joint Base Lewis-McChord
- Boarding schools
- Treaty rights and Fish Wars
- Self-determination



Nisqually canoe. Credit: Nisqually Indian Tribe

“Although time has tossed us about, the grinding and crushing has not pulverized us but has polished us, and through the years, we have become stronger. Despite the battles, we are still here .”

—Cecelia Svinth Carpenter

### THEME 3:

## Resiliency and Restoration

The Nisqually people have persevered through drastic changes to their lifeways and homelands to maintain a vibrant culture and do their part to restore natural processes after decades of resource exploitation.

Topics within this theme include:

- Stories and words of individual Nisqually people
- Contemporary Nisqually life
- Environmental history and watershed restoration
- Cultural traditions
- Government-to-government relations
- Canoe Family/Canoe Journey

- Requiring homelands
- Landscape restoration and renewal
- Stewardship

## Setting and Connections to Regional Interpretive Sites

Nisqually State Park spans more than 1,200 acres of forested lands at the mouths of Ohop Creek and the Mashel River. With access along Washington State Route 7, it is approximately halfway between Olympia and Mount Rainier National Park. It provides an ideal stopover place for visitors traveling to and from these locations. The park’s proximity to the major metropolitan areas of Olympia, Tacoma, and Seattle; smaller municipalities such as Eatonville and Yelm; and Joint Base Lewis-McChord ensure regular day-use visitation.

The following parks, museums, and heritage areas offer varying degrees of interpretation connected by subject matter to Nisqually State Park:

- Billy Frank Jr. National Wildlife Refuge
- Fort Nisqually Living History Museum



- Mount Rainier National Park
- Pioneer Farm Museum and Ohop Indian Village
- Pack Forest
- Port of Olympia Billy Frank Jr. Trail and Park
- Washington State Historical Society

- General public
- Nisqually tribal community
- Tourists from outside the region
- Recreationalists, including hikers, runners, equestrians, mountain bikers, fishers, dog walkers, and campers
- Families
- Senior citizens
- Tour bus groups
- School groups, including elementary, middle, high school, and college students
- Mount Rainier National Park visitors



Nisqually Indian Tribe designated use camping area at Mount Rainier National Park. Credit: Nisqually Indian Tribe

## Audiences

To design the most effective interpretive programming and employ the most impactful interpretive techniques, it is necessary to identify audiences who are likely to visit the park and experience site interpretation. Consideration should be given on ways to most effectively reach these anticipated audiences and what special accommodations should be made to add value to their experiences in the park. Likely audiences include:

## Desired Audience Experiences

While themes explain what audiences will learn, experiences describe what audiences will do.

### Experiential

- Find Nisqually State Park interpretation integrated into the landscape, through landscape architecture, art, and culturally significant design elements
- Easily become aware of interpretive program offerings and resources
- Follow trails that are identifiable with clear wayfinding and are appealing to a variety of users
- Attend informative and entertaining ranger programs and cultural demonstrations
- Spend time at an interpretive facility
- Participate in heritage events that are engaging and entertaining
- Find a variety of opportunities for education

- Envision what life looked like at various points in history
- Find places for reflection
- Travel to other sites with historical and cultural connections to the Nisqually Indian Tribe

### Cognitive

- Know that Nisqually people traveled along these rivers and waterways, fished their shores, and continue to recognize them as part of their homelands
- Understand the uniqueness and complexity of contemporary Indigenous cultures and communities
- Realize the many values and meanings that Nisqually State Park holds for the Nisqually people
- Understand the hardship, isolation, and oppression Nisqually people have experienced
- Recognize the continuity of the Nisqually community through stories of the Shaker Church, hop farming, exercising treaty rights, Fish Wars, and salmon restoration
- Understand the impacts of environmental degradation of the forests and waterways and recognize the work associated with restoration efforts
- Learn about the lives of individual Nisqually people and how they are a reflection of the resilience of the community-at-large
- Recognize that the park provides a window into environmental and ecological processes, both natural and caused by humans,

including environmental degradation and restoration

- Understand the need to safeguard park resources, especially the rivers and waterways
- Desire to become ambassadors of the park and support its continued restoration and protection

### Reflective

- Contemplate the changing landscape and how this place influenced individuals and community
- Make connections between Nisqually State Park and other regional locations and landscapes
- Recognize the stewardship values revealed at the park
- Relate to the experiences of the Nisqually people

## Issues and Influences Affecting Interpretation

The following are internal and external issues and influences that may affect interpretation. By identifying these, strategies can be developed to overcome them.

### Changing Landscape

Nisqually State Park's landscape has changed dramatically over the past 200 years. Much of the old growth forest was harvested, wetlands filled for dairies, and invasive species introduced that crowded out native vegetation. Despite all of this, the lack of visible outside development is an asset to the park. Interpretation should

present opportunities for visitors to visualize the different landscapes that existed within the park. Care should be taken to preserve landscape features that remain largely intact throughout the park’s history, such as old growth cedar lining the canyon walls and the natural features at the confluence areas.

### Varied Uses

Nisqually State Park development may negatively impact sensitive natural and cultural resources. Care should be taken to produce interpretive infrastructure to reach recreational user groups in ways that promotes respectful behavior and stewardship in the park.



Boardwalks and well-placed interpretive panels, such as those shown here in Mount Rainier National Park, can reduce impacts on sensitive resources while enhancing the overall visitor experience. Credit: National Park Service, Digital Assets Management System

“Culture is a set of traditions, a way of knowing that is transferred through activities, ceremonies, and formal and informal teachings. Returning to our cultural traditions strengthens our capacity to fight for treaty rights and self-govern.”

—2013 Nisqually Indian Tribe Community Vision Plan

### Sensitive Areas

The sensitive and fragile nature of certain natural and cultural resources in Nisqually State Park means that there are places that visitors should avoid. In nearly all such instances, it is best to leave the areas undisturbed. A lack of development and access should discourage visitation and safeguard the resources present there. In instances when sensitive areas cannot be avoided, interpretation should be developed to inform visitors of the fragile landscape and discourage resource damage.

# PART 2 RECOMMENDATIONS



Nisqually State Park day use area kiosk. Credit: HRA

## Introduction

The following section includes recommendations for developing interpretation at Nisqually State Park and specific action items related to integrating interpretation, interpreting Nisqually culture, developing relevant interpretation, youth and age-specific programming, special events, scholarship, wellness, and partnerships. Each recommended action is included in an implementation plan, which provides a road map for the next ten years (Appendix B). This section of the interpretive plan should be revisited regularly by partners and interpretive practitioners as conditions change and infrastructure is developed. Staff should adjust the implementation plan by removing accomplished tasks and adding new actions when necessary. Recommended interpretive media includes both personal and non-personal services and is meant to provide a mix of applications to reach the various park audiences.

## Recommended Approach

As presented in the interpretive themes, Nisqually State Park is defined by both its tangible features and intangible values. Nisqually history and culture, as well as the environment and resources protected within the park, shape the overall spirit of place found there. Each of these elements should be interwoven throughout the park's interpretive content. With varied recreational uses and diverse audiences visiting the park, this plan identifies levels of visitor engagement that should direct the visitor experience journey and create a network of interpretive opportunities.

The interpretive network provides opportunities

to present interpretation in different ways based on anticipated uses and visitor expectations. Universal threads in each level guide the visitor experience throughout the park. Central to this approach is continuity in design and messaging and the development of an area of the park as a conceptual respect threshold—a distinct location within the park where interpretation is presented in a way for visitors to realize that they are experiencing a place of historical and cultural significance, as well as a place of commemoration. Leading visitors through this respect threshold is meant to be especially impactful and is intended to promote respectful behavior and experiences elsewhere in the park.

### THE SIX INTERPRETIVE EXPERIENCE LEVELS ARE:

- Level 1: Distance Interpretation and Park Arrival/Departure
- Level 2: Orientation and Pathways
- Level 3: Welcome Center and Exterior Exhibitions
- Level 4: Respect Threshold and Gathering Space (People's Center)
- Level 5: Trail System and Story Points
- Level 6: Nisqually Tribal Exclusive Area

### Level 1: Distance Interpretation and Park Arrival/Departure

Interpretation begins when visitors first take interest in Nisqually State Park. This occurs through websites, social media, mobile apps, and other digital content. These platforms should adhere to

the interpretive themes and design represented in the park. Level 1 interpretation should introduce the park and attract potential visitors. It should provide visitor orientation and provide information on what visitors can expect to experience. Visitors engaging with park websites, social media, and other digital content should be able to recognize the park's purpose and overarching theme.

Interpretation should also appear in design elements developed on the highway approach to the park. Plans for park infrastructure, such as traffic roundabouts, provide opportunities to introduce Nisqually cultural imagery through design features and commissioned public art. Nisqually-carved welcome figures or house posts are an ideal way to greet visitors upon arrival. Figures or posts should express the meaning corresponding with the park's interpretive themes, such as gathering baskets to represent park resources; a likeness of Chief Leschi to represent Nisqually history; or a likeness of a figure in contemporary Nisqually regalia to represent culture. Parking lots, although utilitarian by design, can support interpretive values when features like public art, native vegetation, and landscape design are considered.

Departure and post-visit interpretation should extend the visitor experience at Nisqually State Park, while enticing visitors to engage in other opportunities to connect with the park's stories through supplemental resources and related interpretive sites. Departure features should point visitors to related interpretive opportunities within the Nisqually homelands, particularly the the Nisqually Indian Reservation and regional interpretive sites such as Mount Rainier National Park or Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. Books, memorabilia, and educational

resources sold at Nisqually State Park can reinforce park messages and carry them beyond the physical site visit.



"Coyote" by Grande Ronde artist Travis Stewart is located on a roundabout in McMinnville, Oregon, and is one of many examples where public art creates cultural expression on these traffic control features. Credit: Visit McMinnville



An interpretive landscape feature providing a respect threshold is shown here at the Bainbridge Island Exclusion Memorial.  
Credit: Paul Dunn/National Park Service

## Level 2: Orientation and Wayfinding

Interpretive media should provide clear orientation and wayfinding to facilitate connectivity throughout the interpretive network. Orientation and wayfinding features include directional signs and informational mapping. Primary pathways developed within Nisqually State Park should include interpretive elements introducing the park's themes to visitors. Orientation and wayfinding should be simple and intuitive, while featuring uniform design elements and Lushootseed language translation whenever possible. Primary pathways should serve all visitors, especially to ensure access for all abilities, including small children and elders. They should respect landscape contours and feature regular places for reflection that reveal otherwise overlooked landscape features.

## Level 3: Interior and Exterior Exhibitions

A park welcome center and exterior interpretation are essential opportunities to deliver key messages to visitors, while offering expanded content to audiences seeking a more in-depth interpretive experience. Such features should be easily accessible and intentionally located in high traffic areas to reach the greatest audience. It is essential to make themes easily accessible so that audiences can identify the

park's resources and connect with their values throughout their visit.

Interpretive nodes should act as hubs to direct the visitor experience throughout the park (See Visitor Experience Mapping in Appendix C). Recommended interpretive media in this level includes narrative text panels, listening stations, orientation videos, architectural features, and integrated landscape design.

Nisqually State Park should also be a hands-on experience with interactive learning and opportunities for immersion in the park's natural surroundings. Such programming will enable audiences to make both emotional and intellectual connections to the park and its resources, especially through culturally focused activities. Exhibitions and interpretive activities should be designed for visitor engagement and to show what Nisqually life was like in the past and what it is like today. Special focus and care should be placed on telling Chief Leschi's story, interpreting salmon, and memorializing those who perished in the Mashel Massacre.

## Level 4: Respect Threshold and Gathering Space (People's Center)

The Gathering Space, or People's Center, is an interpretive focal point and should be a place that

attracts all park visitors. Located near the day-use area and welcome center, the Gathering Space should include a distinct, open air setting to present interpretive media alongside space for a future four-season interpretive facility, such as a reconstructed plank house or an interpretive center. The Gathering Space should be accessible to all visitors, with special care taken to accommodate visitors with mobility limitations.

Audiences visiting the Gathering Space should be drawn through a through a conceptual respect threshold. This should be a signature experience of Nisqually State Park where visitors emotionally connect with the park. The Respect Threshold should feature a mix of interpretive media, design elements, and impactful art installations that elevate the park experience ensuring that visitors recognize it as a special place where they should practice respectful behavior.

The **respect threshold** is a distinct location within the park where interpretation is presented in a way for visitors to realize that they are experiencing a place of historical and cultural significance, as well as a place of commemoration.

The Nisqually people are the focus of this level and it should be a place to celebrate Nisqually history, culture, and contemporary life. Contemporary tribal art and stories featured on rotating exhibit panels and landscape art installations will connect the park to the contemporary Nisqually community. It is also a place of commemoration with a signature installation—whether landscape design or public art—to memorialize and honor those who perished

in the Mashel Massacre.

Additional features in this level should include seating areas built into the landscape for both reflection and interpretive programming. Quotes and messages should be integrated into the built environment to further personalize the subject matter.

### Level 5: Trail System and Story Points

Interpretation should be incorporated into the future trail network in both obvious and subtle ways and should seek to influence audience behavior to discourage resource damage and promote visitor stewardship. Well-planned interpretive media should provide story points for visitors to interact with park resources, while serving as an important tool in safeguarding the irreplaceable natural and cultural resources that exist there.

Thoughtfully placed benches can direct audiences to otherwise overlooked landscape features. Special attention should to be paid to avoid sensitive areas altogether and interpretation in other locations should reinforce messages of respect, stewardship, and restoration. The Nisqually Indian Tribe should be given the opportunity to name park features and recreational trails.

### Level 6: Nisqually Tribal Exclusive Area

Nisqually Tribal Exclusive Area is a portion of the park set aside for the Nisqually people. Such a location, whether a designated area within a developed campground, or another area within the tribally owned park lands, will to serve as a place to gather, camp, and practice cultural traditions.



Consideration should be given to providing space for group gatherings, storytelling, and built-in landscape features, such as a community campfire, an arbor, and seating.

## Recommended Actions and Benchmarks

### Actions Related to Interpreting Nisqually Culture

Nisqually history and culture distinguishes Nisqually State Park from all other parks within the Washington State Parks system. In presenting elements of Nisqually culture in park interpretation, it is essential to present the history from Nisqually sources and from Nisqually perspectives, whenever possible, which allows longstanding narratives to be reconsidered and for the stories there to be more personalized. Text should identify the Nisqually people through the present tense wherever possible to reinforce understanding of the Nisqually as a living and thriving community. Interpretation should also emphasize that the Nisqually Indian Tribe is a sovereign, self-sufficient, and growing nation.

#### BENCHMARK:

Execute a memorandum of agreement (MOA) between Washington State Parks and the Nisqually Indian Tribe based on the following concepts:

- All interpretive media should be produced in collaboration among Washington State Parks and the Nisqually Indian Tribe.
- When interpreting any past events, it is important to consult historical records, published histories, and anthropological

resources. Especially important for interpreting tribal history are sources of community memory and oral history.

- Public programs should begin with a land acknowledgement as an act of respect for the Nisqually homelands, with such acknowledgement marking the beginning of respectful and meaningful collaboration. For an example of land acknowledgement see page 2 of this interpretive plan.

According to “Honor Native Land: A Guide and Call to Acknowledgement,” prepared by the U.S. Department of Arts and Culture, “Acknowledgement is a simple, powerful way of showing respect and a step toward correcting the stories and practices that erase Indigenous people’s history and culture and toward inviting and honoring the truth.”

—U.S. Department of Commerce, “Honor Native Land: A Guide and Call to Acknowledgement”

- Draw from the work of Nisqually scholars and knowledge-keepers, such as the late tribal historian Cecilia Svinth Carpenter, (see Bibliography) for essential resources on Nisqually history. Carpenter based her work on both historical records and oral history to create a balanced narrative in the many books she published on the Nisqually people.
- Present interpretation from Nisqually points-of-view. The use of oral history is essential in presenting Nisqually history and culture from Nisqually perspectives. Embedding individual



Landscape restoration in and around Nisqually State Park provides opportunity for relevant interpretation.  
Ohop Valley. Credit: HRA

quotes can deliver messages in a powerful way, as would broadcasting recordings of Nisqually people addressing topics over various points in time.

### Actions Related to Developing Relevant Interpretation

With the varied recreational uses that will occur within the park, interpretation should be intentional in achieving relevancy for target audiences. Such instructive interpretation at Nisqually State Park should connect Nisqually history and culture, such as horse culture, with current park uses, such as equestrian paths, and encourage visitors to respectfully experience this hallowed ground.

#### BENCHMARK:

Incorporate interpretation relevant to contemporary park user groups in first phase interpretive nodes. Specific recommendations include:

- Identify opportunities to interpret Nisqually horse culture near equestrian facilities and trails.
- Present interpretation about all trails being first and foremost Indian trails.

- Identify opportunities to interpret Nisqually trails, trade networks, and runners along forest recreation trails.
- Develop interpretation at the park boat launch about Nisqually canoes.
- Provide interpretation about Nisqually fishing and fisheries restoration in designated fishing access locations.
- Identify locations in, and overlooking, the Ohop Valley to interpret the changing landscape and restoration work there.

### Actions Related to Integrating Interpretation

Interpretation throughout Nisqually State Park should appear in both obvious and subtle ways. Nisqually State Park is a site of conservation, education, recreation, and reflection. Interpretation should be as varied as park uses and appear along trails, at overlooks, and within landscape architecture. Consistent messaging and design throughout the park centered on Nisqually history and culture will distinguish the visitor experience from experiences elsewhere.

- Develop culturally relevant design standards to apply throughout the park.

- Develop a carving teaching program to produce welcome figures or house posts to introduce park themes through imagery, including resources, history, and culture.
- Incorporate Lushootseed place names throughout the park as an interpretive layer. Interpretation providing definitions allows visitors to better connect to their meanings and the lessons they reveal. Such language features take a positive step in support of tribal language revitalization efforts and deliver subtle messages about Nisqually culture.

“Our youth are our most precious resource for in their being holds the hope and future of the Nisqually Tribe. Their health and wellbeing is a reflection and leading indicator of the health and wellbeing of all Nisqually people, families, and community.”

—2013 Nisqually Indian Tribe Community

## Actions Related to Youth and Age-Specific Programming

Nisqually State Park should be a place where youth and young adults have opportunities to both recreate outdoors and experience park stories. A concerted effort by park and tribal staff can ensure that youth become involved in the park and become personally invested in it. Partners and interpretive practitioners should build relationships with educators and youth program facilitators to promote youth engagement with the park.

- Provide opportunities for tribal youth to tell their stories, through both interpretive media and art.
- Identify youth programs in local communities and collaborate to find opportunities for such organizations to become involved in the park.
- Develop interpretation using digital interpretive technologies, such as Pocket Ranger, to appeal to young people.
- Collaborate with the Nisqually Youth Council to identify stewardship projects that it might want to lead in the park.
- Collaborate with the staff at the Nisqually Youth and Community Center to provide opportunity for field trips.
- Work with the Nisqually Youth Council to involve young tribal members in an oral history program with tribal elders.
- Provide space to feature Nisqually youth art.
- Offer special tours and activities for summer camps.
- Develop a Junior Ranger activity book specific to Nisqually State Park and offer Junior Ranger programs for groups.
- Create geocaching collections in accordance with Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission Directive 06-01 featuring a variety of interpretive sites throughout the park.

## Actions Related to Special Events

Special events should be an integral part of the Nisqually State Park interpretive program. By offering regular special events, audiences will feel a greater personal ownership of the park, and it

will take on a greater role in community life for both the Nisqually people and the visiting public.

- Host walk-in-the-park events with both park staff and subject matter experts. This could include talks or walks led by tribal elders and educators, scholars, and staff from the various departments of the Nisqually Indian Tribe, such as the Tribal Historic Preservation Office and Department of Natural Resources.



Leschi Honor Walk is an example of a successful Nisqually community event hosted in partnership with Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

Credit: Nisqually Indian Tribe

- Host events exclusively for the Nisqually tribal community.
- Host Nisqually cultural events for the public during the various seasons.
- Host storytelling events with educators and authors.
- Establish a carving and artisan program for Nisqually community members in collaboration with the Nisqually Cultural Center.
- Host oral history collection events.
- Develop a citizen science program featuring special events.
- Host special youth events and workshops.

- Offer cultural float trips and guided horseback rides.
- Hold special events on important dates, such as Chief Leschi's birthday (January 29), Billy Frank Jr. Day (March 8), National Indian Day (May 10), Nisqually Day (September 29), and Indigenous Peoples' Day.

## Actions Related to Scholarship

By supporting scholarship, heritage areas like Nisqually State Park can reinvigorate contemporary understanding of historical events. It allows the heritage area to benefit from student/scholar/artist/researcher projects, and these individuals, in turn, benefit from the experience gained working there.

- Expand internship opportunities at the park for young adults, especially members of the tribal community, through AmeriCorps VISTA or other programs. Collaborate with Northwest Indian College's Nisqually Campus to provide college credit for such service.
- Provide opportunities for local high school and college classes to complete projects in the park, including history, science, and the arts.
- Develop curriculum-based programming that meets State of Washington curriculum standards tied to "Since Time Immemorial," including treaty making, the Mashel Massacre, and "Leschi: Justice in Our Time."
- Collaborate with Northwest Indian College or other higher education institutions to provide opportunity for student-led heritage projects. This could involve public history,

public art, filmmaking, drama, and many other areas of study.

- Provide links to online research resources on park websites.
- Facilitate the collection of oral histories as part of heritage events.

“Our Nisqually history has always been an oral history . . .”

—Cecelia Svinth Carpenter

### Actions Related to Wellness

Nisqually State Park should be a place of physical, emotional, and spiritual renewal for all visitors. Washington State Parks is part of the Park Rx America network and actively promotes the benefits of the outdoors on health and wellness. Interpretive programming should be offered to promote these values. It should also include places of solitude and offer quiet moments for reflection.

- Set aside places for quiet reflection.
- Offer guided activities focused on wellness.
- Identify areas exclusively for passive recreation.

### Actions Related to Partnerships

Partnerships and community collaboration are critical to the successful implementation of the interpretive program at Nisqually State Park. The ongoing collaboration between the Nisqually Indian Tribe and Washington State Parks is the core partnership of the park, but there are many



The Nisqually River in Mount Rainier National Park. Numerous opportunities exist to expand collaboration and partners with the National Park Service. Credit: NPS, Digital Assets Management System

partner institutions that can contribute to a robust interpretive program.

- Establish educational partnerships with regional schools, especially schools where Nisqually tribal members attend and where there are active Native American student groups.
- Expand the working relationship with the National Park Service interpretive program at Mount Rainier. The National Park Service consults with the Nisqually Indian Tribe on interpretation at the National Park. Identifying opportunities to link Nisqually State Park interpretation to Mount Rainier National Park is an effective way to expand this relationship and tell the Nisqually story throughout the Nisqually homelands.
- Collaboration with Northwest Indian College’s Nisqually Campus and other higher education institutions can lead to

class activities, internships, stewardship projects, and provide an avenue for Nisqually community members to pursue future educational and career opportunities.

- Establish partnerships with other historical and cultural sites in the area, including, but not limited to: Billy Frank Jr. National Wildlife Refuge, Fort Nisqually Living History Museum, Pack Forest, Pioneer Farm Museum and Ohop Indian Village, and Washington State Historical Society.

## Interpretive Media Recommendations

Interpretive media provides the means to communicate messages and ideas to audiences throughout an interpretive site. It should be developed with interpretive goals in mind to deliver desired messages and used to facilitate understanding throughout the visitor experience. Many types of media should be used throughout Nisqually State Park to reach audiences in many different ways.

### Fixed Media Interpretation

Fixed media includes art, interpretive landscape design, wayfinding, interpretive signs, digital applications, videos, and other non-personal mechanisms used to deliver park messages.

- Follow established resources and guidelines for interpretive media development produced by Washington State Parks and the National Park Service to produce high-quality media design, content, and construction.
- Use consistent design elements in all

interpretive signs and wayfinding.

- Incorporate aerial and historic imagery to provide scale and perspective.
- Refer to visitor experience mapping in Appendix C of this plan for recommended interpretive nodes.

### Digital Interpretation

Digital interpretation should be developed as part of the park interpretive program and held to the same content and design standards as fixed media interpretation. This includes interactive kiosks at the interpretive center and mobile applications that allow for the development of interpretation that does not interfere with cultural landscapes. This could be especially important as a means to develop interpretation in areas of environmental or culture sensitivity. Digital technology allows for language translation to accommodate foreign visitors, audio narration to provide accessibility for visually impaired visitors, and Lushootseed language programming. Tribal youth have expressed interest in augmented reality features that provide for an interactive audience experience.

Digital interpretation allows for the delivery of richer and more extensive content than fixed interpretation alone. It also brings added appeal to a variety of age demographics and audiences who are unable to physically visit the site. As the COVID-19 global pandemic revealed, digital interpretation, especially a robust and engaging website, is essential for audiences who are unable to physically visit the site. Similarly, mobile technologies enable park managers to deliver interpretation in absence of staff.

- Develop Pocket Ranger® Content for Nisqually State Park.
- Include park trails on the Washington Trails Association Trailblazer Mobile App.
- Consider other digital platforms, including augmented reality.

## Personal Services

Personal services interpretation focuses on programming and roving interpretation. This includes activities and events such as talks, guided walks, living history exhibitions, cultural demonstrations, and community gatherings. Personal services provide direct interaction among park staff and the visiting public, which can lead to some of the most impactful and memorable experiences parks can offer.

- Develop daily program offerings to correspond with park visitation.
- Offer staff-led educational programs to area schools that meet Washington educational curriculum standards.
- Collaborate with the Nisqually Indian Tribe Cultural Program to offer occasional cultural events.
- Provide roving interpretation in areas of high visitor use.
- Provide interpretive training through Washington State Parks, the National Park Service, or the National Association for Interpretation.
- Provide cultural training in collaboration among Washington State Parks and the Nisqually Indian Tribe, which should include standards for park staff and volunteers.



Boundary sign. Credit: HRA

## Summary

Nisqually State Park is in the heart of the Nisqually homelands, where the Squalli-absch have lived since time immemorial and have resiliently sustained their community, culture, traditions, and language. It is the intention of this interpretive plan to identify opportunities to communicate Nisqually history and culture in a way to encourage audiences to make personal and emotional connections with Nisqually State Park. Well-planned interpretation can guide visitors to experience the park in a meaningful way and provide them with a deeper level of understanding and respect for the resources and values found there.



Nisqually State Park trail. Credit: HRA

“Whatever the future holds, do not forget who you are. Teach your children, teach your children’s children, and then teach their children also. Teach them the pride of a great people. . . A time will come again when they will celebrate together with joy. When that time comes, my spirit will be there with you..”

— Chief Leschi



# PLANNING RESOURCES



A cedar grove in Nisqually State Park. Credit: HRA

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## Definitions

**Implementation Plan:** Divides the recommended actions in the interpretive plan into achievable short-, mid-, and long-term steps.

**Interpretation:** Defined by the National

Association for Interpretation as “a mission-based communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource.”

**Interpretive Plan:** A document that defines the overall vision and long-term interpretive goals of a site.

**Interpretive Planning Process:** According to the National Park Service, the process helps historic sites “consider ideas, makes choices, and set priorities about interpretation and education programming; it provides guidance to staff by clarifying objectives, identifying audiences, and recommending the best mix of media and personal services to use to convey themes.”

**Respect Threshold:** a distinct location within the park where interpretation is presented in a way for visitors to realize that they are experiencing a place of historical and cultural significance and encourages respectful visitation.

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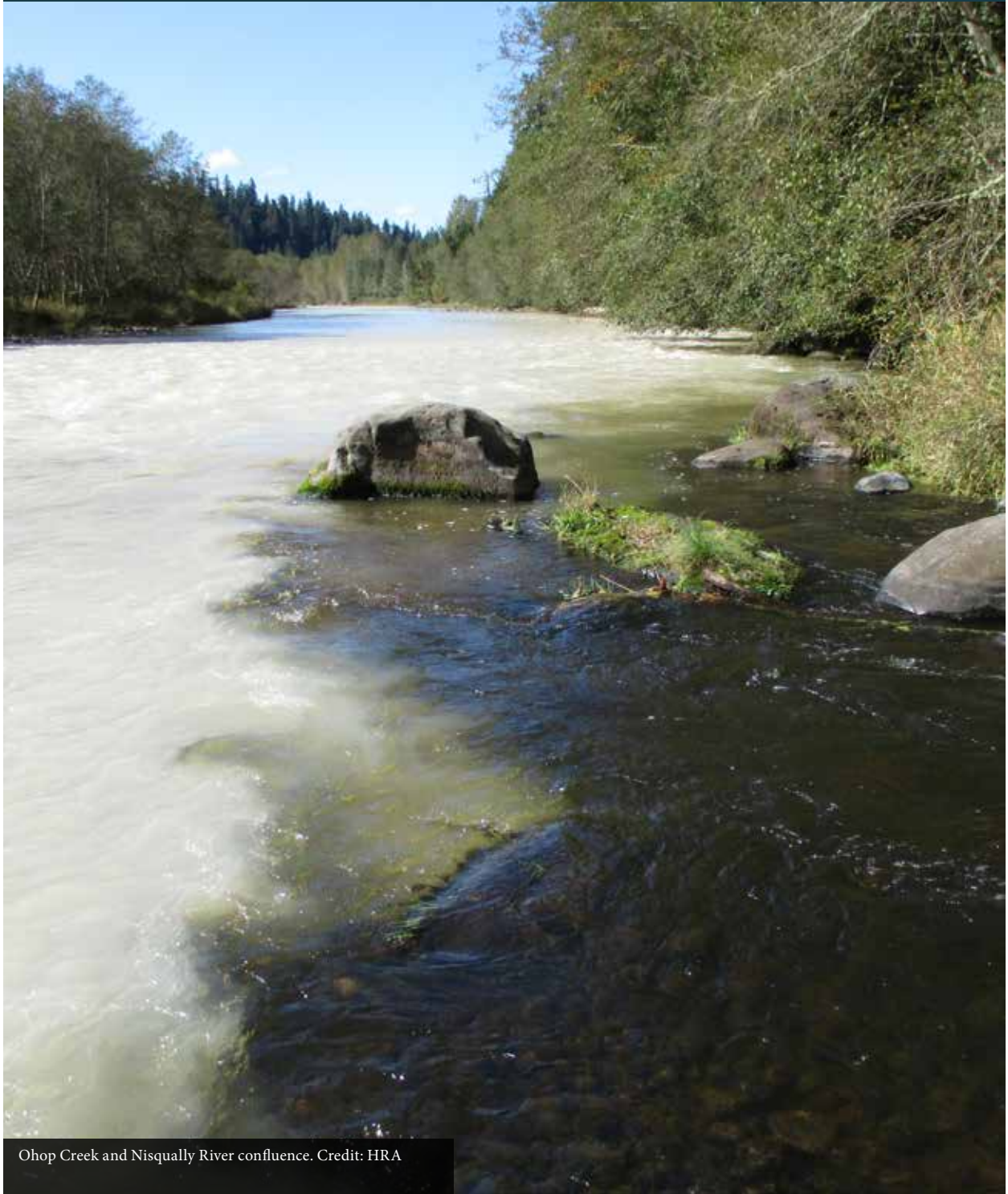
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# APPENDICES



Ohop Creek and Nisqually River confluence. Credit: HRA

## Appendix A

### Interpretive Theme Matrix

# Interpretive Theme Matrix

The Interpretive Theme Matrix provides a guide for tying together the site’s interpretive themes to concepts and ideas, as well as topics and stories.

## THEME 1: The Land and Rivers

| THEME   | CONCEPTS + IDEAS  | TOPICS + STORIES   |
|---|---|--|
| <p>1. The Land and Rivers</p> <p>Salmon and other sacred natural resources found at Nisqually State Park have provided for the Squali-abs people since time immemorial and remain essential to their culture.</p> | <p>Investigate the geologic events that shaped the Missoula landscape</p> <p>How the Squalli-absch have interacted with these lands</p> <p>Nisqually homelands from Ta-co-bet (Mount Rainier) to Puget Sound</p> <p>The natural resources of Nisqually State Park</p> <p>Scientific research and restoration activity happening in the park</p> <p>Natural history of plants and animals</p> <p>Traditional ecological knowledge</p> <p>Connection to contemporary life</p> | <p>Seasons in the park and connections to culture: frogs, plants, animals, moons</p> <p>Seasonal rounds</p> <p>Salmon subsistence, cultural connections, and restoration</p> <p>Nisqually watershed and restoration</p> <p>Plants that sustained the people—including yarrow, camas, cedar, red huckleberry, salmonberry</p> <p>Cedar—including stories, baskets, canoes, housing, clothing</p> <p>Animals—ecosystem, food web, stories</p> <p>Prairie—burning and stewardship</p> <p>Lushootseed plant names and meanings</p> <p>Stories about Ta-co-bet (Mount Rainier)</p> <p>Nisqually River, Mashel River, Ohop Creek—then and now</p> <p>Then and now, including restoration work by the tribe</p> <p>Nisqually homelands from Ta-co-bet (Mount Rainier) to Whulge (Puget Sound)</p> |



## THEME 2: Nisqually History and Culture

| THEME  | CONCEPTS + IDEAS  | TOPICS + STORIES  |
|--|---|---|
| <p>2. Nisqually History and Culture</p> <p>Nisqually State Park offers a window into Nisqually history and culture where visitors can experience the sights, sounds, and smells of a homeland that has sustained the Squalli-absch from time immemorial.</p> | <p>Including, but not limited to:</p> <p>Nisqually life since time immemorial</p> <p>Squalli-absch ethnohistory</p> <p>Traditional stories</p> <p>The role of stories</p> <p>Oral tradition and histories</p> <p>Personal experiences</p> <p>Inter-tribal relations</p> <p>Connections to place</p> <p>Continuity, adaptation, and change</p> <p>Survival</p> <p>Oppression, hardship, and resilience</p> <p>Memorializing those lost</p> | <p>Origin stories, including creation and migration</p> <p>First village at Skate Creek</p> <p>Nisqually timeline</p> <p>Village life</p> <p>Technologies, such as tools, projectiles, etc.</p> <p>Subsistence activities such as fish weirs and camas digging</p> <p>Use of plants and animals</p> <p>Nisqually territory</p> <p>Seasonal cycles</p> <p>All trails are Indian trails</p> <p>Prairies and resources such as camas throughout the Nisqually traditional homelands</p> <p>Connections with Chehalis, Yakama, and other tribes and bands for trading, socializing, gathering, and dancing</p> <p>Horse culture</p> <p>Bilingual community</p> <p>The story of Chief Leschi, including his birthplace; life experiences; connections to horse culture; leadership, colonialism, and resistance; conviction, execution, and exoneration; and community memory</p> <p>Hudson’s Bay Company and trade</p> <p>Treaty of Medicine Creek</p> <p>Colonialism and tribal resistance through the Puget Sound War</p> <p>Twentieth century history and community life</p> |

## THEME 2: Nisqually History and Culture

| THEME | CONCEPTS + IDEAS | TOPICS + STORIES   |
|-------|------------------|--|
|       |                  | <p>Mashel Prairie as a stronghold for Nisqually and other Native people</p> <p>Shaker Church and cemetery</p> <p>Native people as farmers, lumberjacks, and guides</p> <p>Reservation history—allotment and dispossession</p> <p>JBLM: dispossession and artillery sounds</p> <p>Boarding schools</p> <p>Treaty Rights and Fish Wars</p> <p>Self-determination</p> |

## THEME 3: Resiliency and Restoration

| THEME   | CONCEPTS + IDEAS  | TOPICS + STORIES   |
|---|---|--|
| <p>3. Resiliency and Restoration</p> <p>The Nisqually people have persevered through drastic changes to their lifeways and homelands to maintain a vibrant culture and do their part to restore natural processes after decades of resource exploitation.</p> | <p>Nisqually River, Mashel River, Ohop Creek—then and now</p> <p>Stories and words of individual Nisqually people</p> <p>Environmental history and watershed restoration</p> <p>Sovereignty and government-to-government relations</p> <p>A tradition of activism and stewardship</p> <p>Community life now</p> <p>Food sovereignty</p> <p>Stewardship</p> <p>Cooperation and collaboration</p> <p>Restoring homelands</p> <p>Revitalizing language</p> <p>Park as a symbol of reclaiming homelands</p> | <p>Contemporary Nisqually life</p> <p>Cultural traditions, including Canoe Family/Canoe Journey, regalia, drum and song, carving, community garden, cultural preservation, language preservation</p> <p>Environmental history and watershed restoration, including Mashel log jams, Ohop Creek Project, salmon restoration</p> <p>Links to forest management history at Pack Forest</p> <p>Activism and defending treaty rights from fish wars to Water is Life</p> <p>Treaty as a living document</p> <p>Government-to-government relationships, including the park’s establishment story</p> <p>Reacquiring homelands through land acquisition and greater presence</p> <p>Where Nisqually people live today</p> |

## Appendix B

### Recommended Implementation Plan

## RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

| ACTION | Short-Term<br>2021–2023 | Mid-Term<br>2023–2026 | Long-Term<br>2026–2030 |
|--------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
|--------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|

### Actions Related to Integrating Interpretation

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Use culturally relevant design elements throughout the park                        | X |   |   |
| Produce thematically relevant welcome figures or house posts                       |   | X |   |
| Consider designing an interpretive facility inspired by a plank house              |   |   | X |
| Incorporate Lushootseed language into the park through place names and wayfinding. |   | X |   |

### Actions Related to Interpreting Nisqually Culture

|  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| Complete a MOA between the Tribe and State that identifies collaborative processes to produce interpretive materials | X |  |  |
| Begin programs with land acknowledgement   | X |  |  |
| Use a variety of sources, especially community memory and oral history when interpreting past events                 | X |  |  |
| Present interpretation from Nisqually points-of-view   | X |  |  |

### Actions Related to Developing Relevant Interpretation

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| Interpret Nisqually horse culture near equestrian facilities                           | X |   |  |
| Interpret Nisqually trails for trade and relations                                     | X |   |  |
| Interpret Nisqually canoes and fishing and the boat launch and controlled river access |   | X |  |
| Interpret the changing landscape of the Ohop Valley                                    | X |   |  |

## RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

| ACTION | Short-Term<br>2021–2023 | Mid-Term<br>2023–2026 | Long-Term<br>2026–2030 |
|--------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
|--------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|

### Actions Related to Youth and Age-Specific Programming

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Involve youth programs from local communities in the park  | X |   |   |
| Provide opportunities for tribal youth to tell their stories   | X |   |   |
| Develop digital interpretive media   |   | X |   |
| Collaborate with the Nisqually Youth Council to identify stewardship projects that it might want to lead in the park |   | X |   |
| Collaborate with the staff at the Nisqually Youth and Community Center to provide opportunity for field trips        |   | X |   |
| Provide space to feature art from Nisqually youth  |   |   | X |
| Offer special tours and activities for summer camps.   |   | X |   |
| Create geocaching sites throughout the park  | X |   |   |

### Actions Related to Special Events

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| Host walk-in-the-park events with both park staff and subject matter experts |   | X |  |
| Host events exclusively for the Nisqually tribal community                   | X |   |  |
| Host Nisqually culture events for the public during the various seasons      | X |   |  |
| Host storytelling with educators and authors                                 |   | X |  |

## RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

| ACTION | Short-Term<br>2021–2023 | Mid-Term<br>2023–2026 | Long-Term<br>2026–2030 |
|--------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
|--------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|

## Actions Related to Special Events (cont.)

|   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| Establish a carving and artisan program for Nisqually community members in collaboration with the Nisqually Cultural Center   |   | X |  |
| Host oral history collection events   | X |   |  |
| Develop a citizen science program featuring special events  |   | X |  |
| Host special youth events and workshops   |   | X |  |
| Offer cultural float trips and guided horseback rides   |   | X |  |
| Hold special events for important dates, such as Chief Leschi's birthday (January 29), Billy Frank, Jr., Day (March 8), National Indian Day (May 10), Nisqually Day (September 27), and Indigenous Peoples' Day | X |   |  |

## Actions Related to Scholarship

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Expand internship opportunities at the park for young adults                                     | X |   |   |
| Provide opportunities for local high school and college classes to complete projects in the park |   | X |   |
| Develop curriculum-based programming that meets State of Washington curriculum standards         |   |   | X |
| Collaborate with area college faculty to provide opportunity for student-led heritage projects   |   | X |   |
| Provide links to online research resources on park websites                                      | X |   |   |

## RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

| ACTION | Short-Term<br>2021–2023 | Mid-Term<br>2023–2026 | Long-Term<br>2026–2030 |
|--------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
|--------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|

### Actions Related to Scholarship (cont.)

|   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| Encourage the collection of oral histories as part of heritage events |  | X |  |
|---|--|---|--|

### Actions Related to Wellness

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| Set aside places for quiet reflection            | X |   |  |
| Offer guided activities focused on wellness      |   | X |  |
| Identify area exclusively for passive recreation | X |   |  |

### Actions Related to Partnerships

|   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| Build educational partnerships with regional schools  |  | X |   |
| Partner with the National Park Service interpretive program at Mount Rainier to tell the Nisqually story throughout the Nisqually homelands   |  | X |   |
| Collaborate with regional higher education institutions to promote class activities, internships, stewardship projects, and to provide an avenue for Nisqually community members to get the training necessary to pursue careers in the parks |  |   | X |
| Collaborate with other historic and cultural sites to provide related interpretive experiences  |  | X |   |



## Appendix C

### Visitor Experience Mapping

# VISITOR EXPERIENCE MAPPING



## Overview

Visitor experience mapping, or story mapping, presents the conceptual messaging prioritized in the Nisqually State Park Interpretive Plan for specific locations within the park. Each location identified is meant to serve as an interpretive hub. More than just stories, the interpretation there is intended to promote desired visitor experiences within the park.





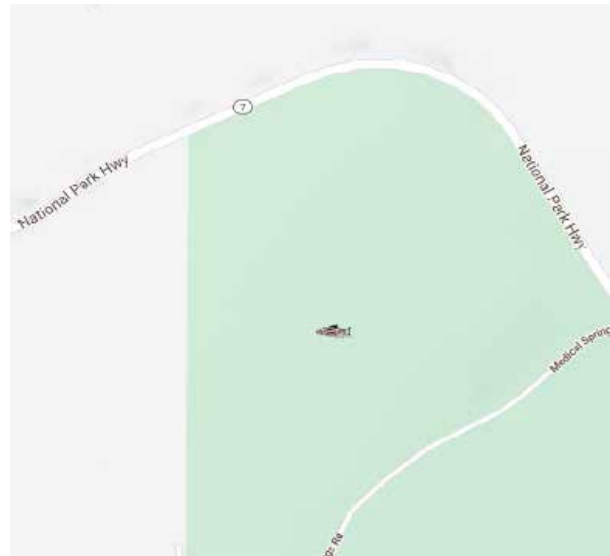
## Location 1: Welcome Center Area

### THEMES:

- Resiliency and Restoration
- Nisqually History and Culture

### TOPICS, STORIES, AND CONCEPTS:

- Visitor experience will include a Welcome Center, a place of orientation and introduction
- Within this area, visitors will be led through a conceptual respect threshold that will feature an installation to thoughtfully memorialize the Mashel Massacre; this area will lead to an Interpretive Center, which will include an exterior Gathering Space/People's Center and multi-media interpretation
- Instructive interpretation at Welcome Center – fishers, equestrians, runners, hikers –will provide instructions to various park users as well as connect these visitors to the history, culture, and present-day Nisqually people
- Interpretive themes presented here are meant to emphasize present day Nisqually life



- Include space to showcase contemporary tribal stories, poems, and art within the Gathering Space/People's Center
- Where Nisqually live today and community life now
- Cedar—including stories, baskets, canoes, housing, clothing, weaving
- Salmon subsistence, cultural connections, and restoration
- Sovereignty and government-to-government relations through park's establishment story and the park as a symbol of reclaiming homelands
- Leschi's village
- Lushootseed names and meanings



## Location 2: Mashel River/ Təqʷuʔmaʔ Overlook Platform

### THEMES:

- Land and River
- Nisqually History and Culture

### TOPICS, STORIES, AND CONCEPTS:

- Visitor experience will involve visiting a viewing platform
- Overview of the homelands and the extensive Nisqually watershed
- An opportunity to show geographic and cultural connections among tribes
- Nisqually homelands from Təqʷuʔmaʔ (Mount Rainier) to the sound – view of mountain (key tangible)
- Natural resources of Nisqually State Park
- How the Squalli-absch have interacted with these lands and traditional ecological knowledge (TEK)
- Subsistence activities and seasonal rounds
- Seasons in the park and connections to culture each season



- Nisqually territory and inter-tribal connections and trade with Chehalis, Yakama, and other tribes and bands for trading, socializing, gathering, and dancing
- Village life
- Lushootseed names and meanings



### Location 3: “Rock Pile/Lunch Spot” Mashel River Overlook

#### THEMES:

- Nisqually History and Culture
- Land and Rivers

#### TOPICS, STORIES, AND CONCEPTS:

- Visitor experience will include a scenic viewpoint
- Emphasize resources below your feet – broader view at the platform overlook leads to a narrower view at Location 3
- Place to immerse your senses: sounds, smells, and feeling of this place
- Cultural connections to natural resources
- Subsistence activities such as fish weirs and camas digging
- Seasonal cycles and use of plants and animals
- All trails are tribal trails
- The natural resources of Nisqually State Park
- Contemporary Nisqually life



- Village life
- Chief Leschi
- Lushootseed names and meanings



## Location 4: Nisqually River Managed Access Entrance Gate

### THEMES:

- Resiliency and Restoration
- Land and Rivers

### TOPICS, STORIES, AND CONCEPTS:

- Visitor experience involves a walk or bike ride through the forest
- Consider this location a trailhead and an opportunity to deliver resource messages promoting respectful visitation
- Discuss salmon subsistence, cultural connections, and restoration
- Nisqually River, Mashel River, Ohop Creek—then and now
- Figurative and literal gate to cross before entering this sacred place and instill a sense of respect among visitors
- Crossroads concept – introduce different ecosystems in the park, such as prairie, forest, and watershed

- Nisqually life since time immemorial
- Where Nisqually people live today and community life now, including stewardship
- Nisqually State Park as a symbol of reclaiming homelands
- Natural resources of Nisqually State Park
- Lushootseed names and meanings



## Location 5: Nisqually-Ohop Confluence

### THEMES:

- Land and Rivers
- Nisqually History and Culture
- Resiliency and Restoration

### TOPICS, STORIES, AND CONCEPTS:

- Visitor experience includes seeing Ohop Creek and the Nisqually River and may include viewing spawning salmon
- Most significant interpretive site aside from Location 1: Welcome Center and Interpretive Center
- Great location to develop two distinct visitor experiences – viewing platform/overlook and boat launch/parking area
- Nisqually River, Mashel River, Ohop Creek—then and now
- Consider using elevated roadbed for interpretive opportunities associated with salmon viewing. Create other destination locations here for interpretive experiences

- Emphasize water and how it relates to all three themes
- Nisqually watershed and restoration
- How the Nisqually people have interacted with the watershed
- Salmon subsistence, cultural connections, and restoration – include area to view salmon spawning
- Oral traditions related to salmon
- Subsistence activities such as fish weirs
- Seasonal cycles and use of plants and animals
- Scientific research and restoration activity happening in the park
- Stories, words, oral traditions, and personal experiences of individual Nisqually people
- Activism and stewardship, including defending treaty rights, Fish Wars, and Water is Life
- Women’s role in Fish Wars and broader activism
- Treaty as a living document
- Restoration and renewal of homelands and watersheds, including Mashel log jams, Ohop Creek Project, salmon restoration
- Lushootseed names and meanings



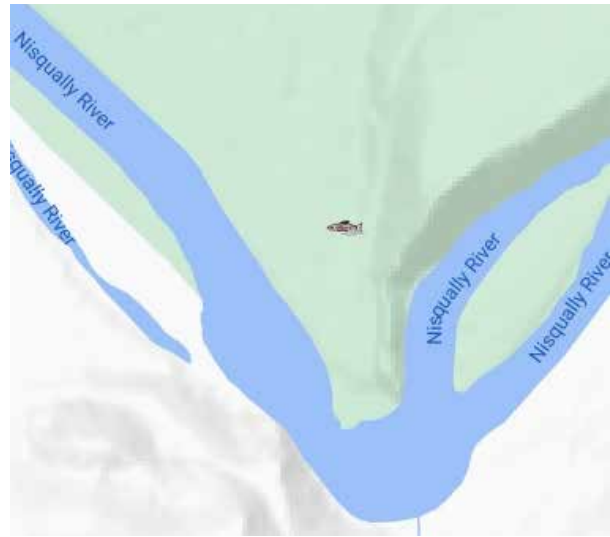
## Location 6: Controlled Nisqually River Access

### THEMES:

- Land and Rivers
- Nisqually History and Culture
- Resiliency and Restoration

### TOPICS, STORIES, AND CONCEPTS:

- Visitor experience involves accessing the Nisqually River for scenery and may include swimming, floating, or fishing
- Emphasize resource messages – instructive interpretation showing respect for the watershed and the Nisqually people
- Cultural traditions, including Canoe Family/Canoe Journey, regalia, drum and song, carving, community garden, cultural preservation, language preservation
- Cedar—including stories, baskets, canoes, housing, clothing, weaving
- Map of the watershed and Nisqually homelands



- Nisqually watershed and restoration
- How the Nisqually people have interacted with these lands and waters
- Salmon subsistence, cultural connections, and restoration
- Natural resources of Nisqually State Park
- Scientific research and restoration activity happening in the park
- Lushootseed names and meanings





## Location 7: Ohop Valley Overlook

### THEMES:

- Resiliency and Restoration
- Land and Rivers

### TOPICS, STORIES, AND CONCEPTS:

- Visitor experience involves a scenic viewpoint overlooking a restored landscape
- A place to view restoration and changes over time, located on the bluff or within the valley
- Nisqually life since time immemorial
- Contemporary Nisqually life
- Before and after images of the landscape
- Restoration and renewal of homelands and watersheds, including Mashel log jams, Ohop Creek Project, salmon restoration
- Stewardship
- Lushootseed names and meanings



## Location 8: *Future Mashel Prairie Site*

### THEMES:

- **Nisqually History and Culture**

### TOPICS, STORIES, AND CONCEPTS:

- Future visitor experiences may involve group gatherings, picnics, or passive recreation within this cultural landscape
- Not part of the park, but a visible natural and cultural feature of the area. Any interpretation would require additions to the park before it could be implemented
- Prairie—burning and stewardship
- Medicine springs
- Mashel Prairie Native Community
- Shaker Church
- Prairies and resources, such as camas, throughout the Nisqually homelands
- Connections to contemporary life
- Horse culture
- Inter-tribal connections



- Leschi's Village
- Village life
- Continuity and change
- Lushootseed names and meanings

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