



Anderson Island Park & Recreation District
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2021

DRAFT

ADOPTED

_____, 2021

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Anderson Island Park & Recreation District is to preserve open space, wildlife habitat and natural greenbelt, to provide recreational opportunities for island residents and visitors, and to build and maintain facilities for the benefit of the public.

INTRODUCTION

The Anderson Island Park & Recreation District was established by the voters of Anderson Island in May, 1968. Having recognized the need to act so that future generations could continue to enjoy the natural flora and fauna, scenic vistas, solitude and opportunities for outdoor recreation valued by island residents and property owners, and faced with the challenge to preserve the island's iconic one-room schoolhouse, a committee of islanders petitioned Pierce County for the right to form a Park and Recreation District.

The Anderson Island Vision Statement, adopted as part of the Anderson and Ketron Islands Community Plan (2009), states in part: ***“The island contains well planned public infrastructure and services to support a diversity of residents’ needs including safe walking areas, recreational opportunities, parks and open space.”*** The Anderson Island Park & Recreation District was conceived and created by the citizens of the island in anticipation of fulfilling this vision.

Surveys of Anderson Island residents, as well as public input at planning workshops hosted by the District and by Pierce County Planning and Land Services, have consistently verified the desire of the community to preserve its rural character. This is most clearly expressed in Objective 28 of the Community Plan, namely ***“encourage acquisition and retention of open space through the use of a variety of strategies.”*** This is supported by Principle 28.1, ***“Coordinate with local land trusts and public agencies to promote acquisition of high priority parcels on Anderson Island.”*** Again, the District is the public agency best positioned to implement this policy.

This Comprehensive Plan, adopted by Resolution 2021-X of the District's Board of Commissioners, is intended for use as a guide and tool for planning and directing the activities of the District so that it will achieve optimal success in accomplishing the missions enumerated above.

GOALS

1. Conservation and Open Space

- The District should persevere in its efforts to preserve as much habitat, open space and greenbelt as possible, so that islanders may continue to enjoy the benefits of natural scenery and wildlife.
- Walking, hiking and nature-viewing should be supported by developing a network of walking trails within all parks and between parks.
- The District is committed to public education in the area of flora and fauna through workshops, summer youth camps and the placement of interpretive signs.
- The District will cooperate with other organizations and agencies, as well as private property owners to promote conservation and protection of major scenic and environmental assets such as the lakes, shorelines and creeks.

2. Athletics and Recreation

- The District should encourage athletics, especially for young people, and provide both financial and administrative support for community efforts to promote sports. The District should provide scholarships to assist young people to participate in sports and sponsor athletic clinics whenever feasible.
- Athletic facilities should be maintained and upgraded as needed.
- Facilities for off-leash dog exercising, bicycling, orienteering and similar low- impact recreational activities should be developed and maintained.
- The District should, independently or with the participation and cooperation of other agencies, construct, facilitate, or enhance increased public salt water access including parking for activities such as picnicking, launching of human powered water craft and boat launching.

3. Historic Preservation

- The District will continue to assign a high priority to documenting and maintaining historic structures within its jurisdiction. Major cultural assets currently owned by the District include the Old Schoolhouse and the Jacobs Homestead Site. The District will cooperate with the Anderson Island Historical Society and other agencies as appropriate to promote public awareness and appreciation of such assets.

4. Community Activities, Communications and Volunteer Support

- The District’s commissioners will cooperate with individuals and organizations to support worthwhile community activities and facilities.
 - The District should maintain a policy of regular reports to the community, as well as maintain a website and a presence in other online media.
 - The District should encourage the creation of a 501C(3) organization devoted to coordinating volunteer participation, fundraising, and soliciting public input for park planning.
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INVENTORY

At the time of adoption of this plan (2021), the Anderson Island Park & Recreation District includes the properties listed below:

1. Andy's Park

Originally a 120-acre bequest of Andrew Anderson (1895-1975), this park was expanded with the 50-acre addition of Windy Pete's farm, purchased with the support of Pierce County Conservation Futures funding in 1994. It is located in the geographical center of the island, at the intersection of Eckenstam-Johnson Road and Sandberg Road. It features approximately two miles of walking trails, including three footbridges over creeks, as well as Freddy's Off-Leash Dog Park, with over an acre of mowed and fenced exercise space for pets and their owners, picnic tables and a covered shelter.

At the west end of the park is a two-acre, 1320-foot-long corridor donated by Delbert and Jan Deweyert in 2009 to provide a trail link to the Marine Park.

Also included in this park are approximately 2000 feet of frontage on Schoolhouse Creek, presently being restored by volunteers and funds from South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Fund grants. Situated in a lovely grove along the creek is Charlie's Creekside Park, a spot where visitors can sit and enjoy the music of the babbling brook and, hopefully, watch returning salmon on their way up the creek to spawn.



2. Andrew Anderson Marine Park

The original 37 acres of this park were also donated by Andrew Anderson, one of the founding members of the District, in 1975. It includes a spectacular sheltered cove of approximately four acres at high tide, protected by a natural spit some 800 feet in length. Pedestrian access to the park was provided through 20 acres acquired through donation and a 1987 ALEA grant, and close to one mile of trails have been developed from the parking lot located on Clausen Road. The 12 acres immediately to the south of the park, including a substantial portion of the cove and 550 feet of beach, were acquired through a Conservation Futures Grant in 1997; an additional 21 acres to the north were added in 2007, also with Conservation Futures funding.



3. Cammon Field and Trail

This Park comprises 40 acres fronting on Camus Road and is the site of Anderson Island Elementary School and the Multipurpose Room, plus Cammon Athletic Field, a walking/running track, and a covered play area with a basketball court.

The north 20 acres of the park contain the Jane Cammon Trail, nearly two miles of walking and bicycling trails. The property was donated by Pierce County in 1968. An additional 36 acres bordering on the west has been leased from Pierce County to expand the Jane Cammon Trail and provide a link to Montalvo Park.



4. Lowell Johnson Park

Five acres on Lake Florence were purchased by the District in 1970 for a swimming hole. An additional 60 ft. wide strip, 1.2 acres, was acquired from Pierce County in recent years. The park has 335 feet of shoreline, with two swimming beaches, swim floats, picnic areas and a volleyball court. Restroom facilities were completed in 2009.



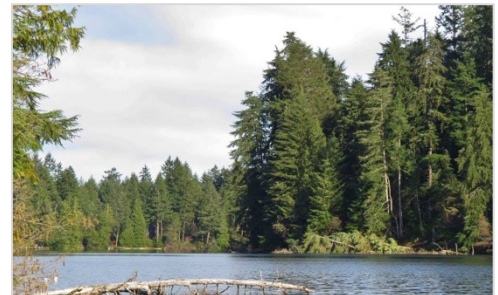
5. Montalvo Park

In 2008, Steve Montalvo donated five acres on 94th Street for a park honoring his parents, Rudy and Agnes Montalvo. Parking and a picnic area have been developed, along with a horseshoe pit for recreation. A trail developed on land leased from Pierce County connects it with the Jane Cammon Trail.



6. Tom's Park

Tom's Park, nearly 11 acres with 520 feet of waterfront located on a peninsula on Lake Florence, was the gift of the Seto family in 2009. Restrictions designed to protect a now long-vanished eagles' nest limited development for a decade until 2019, when the District received permission to develop rough trails on the property. Development is still underway, but the park currently has two trails that lead to waterfront viewing spots. Future development on one of the trails will allow lake access for off-leash dogs.



7. Wide Awake Hollow

When the Anderson Island School District was closed in 1968, the 7½ acres on which the Old Schoolhouse was located were donated to the newly formed Park & Recreation District. Included in this park are the historic one-room schoolhouse, Wide Awake Hollow, several out-buildings, a playground and picnic area, a tennis and pickleball court, and Tom White Park. The Old Schoolhouse is currently leased to a non-profit organization which maintains an active exercise facility there. Across the road, Tom White Park has several hundred feet of walking trails as well as 500 feet of creek frontage on Schoolhouse Creek, where incubators for Chum Salmon have been established and maintained by the District. A one-acre parcel adjacent to the west border of the park was acquired via donation in 2020.



8. Jacobs Point

Jacobs Point Park & Wildlife Refuge is located on approximately 100 upland and tideland acres projecting into Oro Bay. The acquisition was accomplished in 2012 and 2016 through grants from the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, Pierce County Conservation Futures, the Nisqually Land Trust and a gift from Young Life. A trail system of about 4 miles has been developed, including an elevated walkway which crosses a wetland, interpretive signs, six scenic viewing areas with picnic tables, and stairs to access the nearly 1 mile of unspoiled beach. A solar-powered composting toilet was installed in 2014 to complete the initial development of the park. With assistance from soldiers from Joint Base Lewis McChord and island volunteers, additional trails have been added to include the site of the Historic Anderson Island Brickyard and complete a loop back to the trail head.



9. Idie Ulsh Park

Idie Ulsh Park, located across Eckenstam-Johnson Road to the north of The Old Schoolhouse, was acquired in 2017 through grants from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and Ducks Unlimited. The Park honors Idie Ulsh, a prominent conservationist and lepidopterist, to whose family the property had belonged for over 100 years. The Park includes 16 forested acres and 660 feet of frontage on Schoolhouse Creek. A trail system with a raised walkway crossing wetlands has been developed.



10. St. Anne's Park

A gift from the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia in 1998, St. Anne's Park comprises 24 acres and 1200 high-bank front feet on Nisqually Reach, on the southwest side of the island. There is currently no access to this property other than from the water. In the future, the District plans to explore the feasibility of obtaining access from Eckenstam-Johnson Road and developing walking trails.

11. Walking Trails at NLT Property

The District is partnering with the Nisqually Land Trust to develop parking and low-impact walking trails on property the Trust has acquired near St. Anne's Park at the south end of the island. There is currently no established completion date for that project.

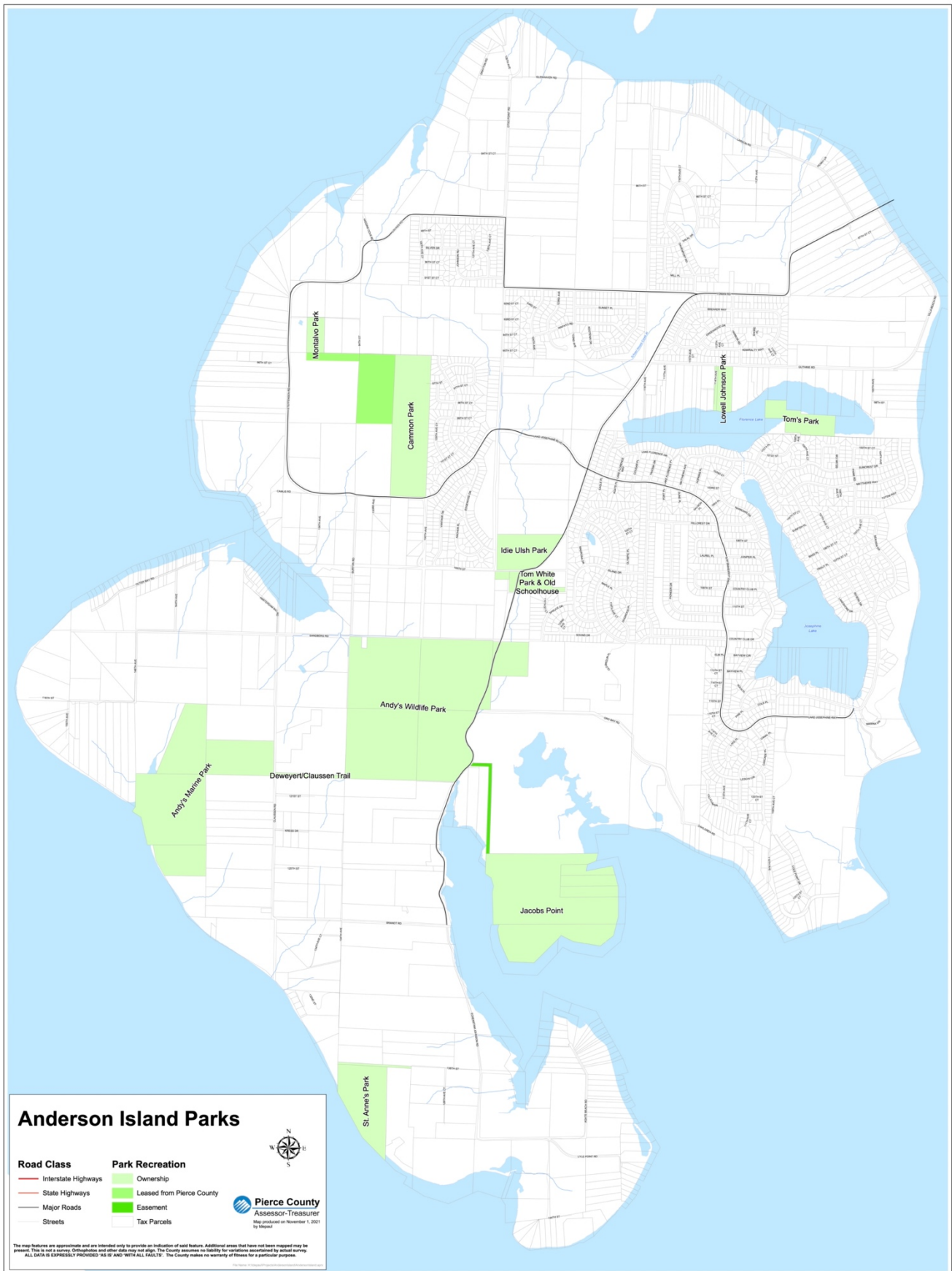
12. County Easements

The District has acquired a license from the Pierce County Planning & Public Works for the use of County Right-of-way at three locations on Anderson Island for the construction, installation, operation, and maintenance of Park and Recreation Facilities. The main objective is to provide residents of Anderson Island access to the Puget Sound.

The first of these is located at the end of Otso Point Road where plans are being developed to construct a set of stairs to the beach for the launching of small watercraft such as canoes and kayaks.

The second location is at the junction of Larson Road and Eckenstam-Johnson Road, referred to as Johnsons Landing. This spot is for viewing of Eagle Island, walking the beach, accessing the Sound for island dogs and their owners and possible launching small craft by way of steep steps. We have upgraded the existing steps, installed a small parking area, constructed new fencing, replaced existing stairs and added two picnic tables. Due to the location and size of this area we are limiting the amount of time to 3 hours per visit.

The third easement at Brant and Claussen, due to wetland issues, we have not made any plans to develop this area.



SHORT TERM AND ONGOING OBJECTIVES

Preservation and Open Space

1. Continue to restore native vegetation and improve salmon habitat along Schoolhouse Creek in Andy's Wildlife Park.
2. Assess flora for native plant ID opportunities and create interpretive signs for Idie Ulsh Park.

Athletics and Recreation

1. Develop recreational opportunities at Montalvo Park.
2. Sponsor and support youth athletics through athletic program partnerships and potential revival of the Anderson Island Athletic Association.
3. Create and manage a Youth Activities Scholarship Program to connect island youth to recreation opportunities, awarding scholarships that cover registration and travel fees to attend programs on and off the island. (2022, and beyond if possible)
4. Develop saltwater access and parking at Otso Point and Johnsons Landing.
5. Continue to sponsor a summer nature camp for children.
6. Continue to make the Old Schoolhouse available as a site for an exercise facility.

Historic Preservation

1. Maintain the Old School House and grounds to the greatest extent feasible.
2. Restore and maintain the chimney at the Jacobs Homestead Site.

Community Activities, Communications and Volunteer Support

1. Continue to maintain and develop the District's website.
 2. Continue to maintain an online / social media presence.
 3. Support the Community Club and the Historical Society in efforts to maintain their historic buildings.
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LONG RANGE OBJECTIVES

Preservation and Open Space

1. Acquire the remaining Ulsh family property north of Idie Ulsh Park to form a Central Park and preserve the headwaters of Schoolhouse Creek.
2. Assess feasibility, solicit community feedback, and acquire easements to enable public access to St. Anne's Park.
3. Promote native flora education through projects like:
 - a. Seasonal surveys of parks for specimen ID
 - b. Install of interpretive signs
 - c. Create programs in partnership with other organizations about native plant conservation.
4. Promote wildlife watching, conservation, and education opportunities through projects such as:
 - d. Designate or install bird nesting habitats and platforms in appropriate locations
 - e. Install bird blinds for observation (Andy's Wildlife and Andy's Marine Parks)
 - f. Pursue conservation programs in partnership with organizations like Tahoma Audubon and the Nisqually Land Trust.
 - g. Install wildlife behavior interpretive signs
 - h. Promote educational programs that connect the community to local wildlife
5. Construct raised trails for wet areas at the Marine Park and Andy's Park
6. Construct a viewing platform overlooking the estuary at Andy's Wildlife Park
7. Develop additional trails as needed in various Parks.
8. Accept donations of both tidelands and upland property as they become available.

Athletics and Recreation

1. Develop salt water access for beach walks, picnicking and possible boat launching.
2. Pursue acquisition of a facility for multi-purpose use, including possibly an expanded exercise facility, public space to pursue arts & crafts, Park Board office & meeting space, and Park Board storage and supply.
3. Assess feasibility and pursue location /partnerships to construct a skate park for island youth.
4. Develop additional recreation activities for both adults and children.
5. Develop a covered shelter at Andrew Anderson Marine Park.
6. Develop improved restroom facilities at Wide Awake Hollow.
7. Develop self-sustaining composting toilet at Andrew Anderson Marine Park, near the newly constructed covered shelter.
8. Improve usability of covered play area at Cammon Field.
9. Resurface and upgrade the tennis court at the Old Schoolhouse.

Historic Preservation

1. Repaint and restore windows at the Old Schoolhouse.
2. Pursue a partnership with the Evergreen State College Department of Archaeology to conduct a survey of archaeological resources on Jacobs Point.

Community Activities, Communications and Volunteer Support

1. Form a Friends of the Parks organization to coordinate volunteer activities and fundraising.
 2. Engage the Riviera Community Club Board Members about island parks and potential areas of collaboration to support the community's needs.
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FUNDING SOURCES AND OTHER RESOURCES

Current State

The Park and Recreation District receives revenue from:

- **Property Taxes collected exclusively from Anderson Island properties.** The current operating levy is \$.50 per \$1,000 of property value, giving the District an operating revenue of between \$130,000-\$150,000 per year. These funds form the backbone of our annual budget, paying for park maintenance, general improvements, and our operations. This operating levy will come up for public vote again in 2023.
- **Donations for special projects.** Periodically, the District has conducted large fundraising campaigns to finance a special project, like the restrooms at the Swimming Hole which raised more than \$15,000 for construction, and Schoolhouse Creek Restoration which has raised over \$18,000 since 2007.
- **General Donations.** Donation income is limited, on average \$500 a year.
- **Grants.** Where possible, the District applies for grants to fund projects. Most grants range from \$1,000-\$6,000 for targeted use, though we have received larger grants over the years for youth programs (\$16,000 in 2021) and property acquisition.
- **Special levies or bonds presented to the voters for large capital projects.** We have never utilized this option, but should we need to build a large capital expense, this is an avenue for funding.

Maintenance of park facilities is mostly accomplished by a Park Maintenance Contractor, currently Goodin Homes Inc.

There are no paid staff, and the District relies heavily on volunteer work from the Commissioners and others to apply for grants and to get special projects done.

The District will continue to rely on volunteers to accomplish the specific projects outlined in this plan. The District will pursue grants and work with

non-profit conservation groups to acquire property identified as significant for conservation or public use. A special levy or bond issue will be presented to the voters for any large capital projects, for example if expanded community facilities are needed.

District Growth Opportunities

If the District wanted to expand services to be more in alignment with other park districts, it would require hiring employees, either part-time or full-time. This includes:

- Year-round or seasonal in-house recreational programs for youth, like extended day camps, athletics, or educational events
- Monthly and/or special educational events for the community at large
- Rangers to help enforce rules, monitor park access, or assist visitors
- Administrative staff to coordinate operations and programs

The current operating budget covers park maintenance but could not sustain the above items. The biggest hurdle for the District to expand services or increase the volume of projects executed will be reliable income expansion.

An increase in the operating budget may occur:

- As population – and therefore tax base – grows.
- If voters choose to increase the operations levy. Communities in our area pay between \$.45-\$.60/\$1000 for their park district levy, putting the District in the median of the range.
- If the programs created are self-funding through fees collected.

As the District considers long-term plans, the question of staffing will continue to be assessed.
