

***WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK***

***Development Concept Plan***

***February 2013***



# Wilkeson Coke Oven Park

## Development Concept Plan

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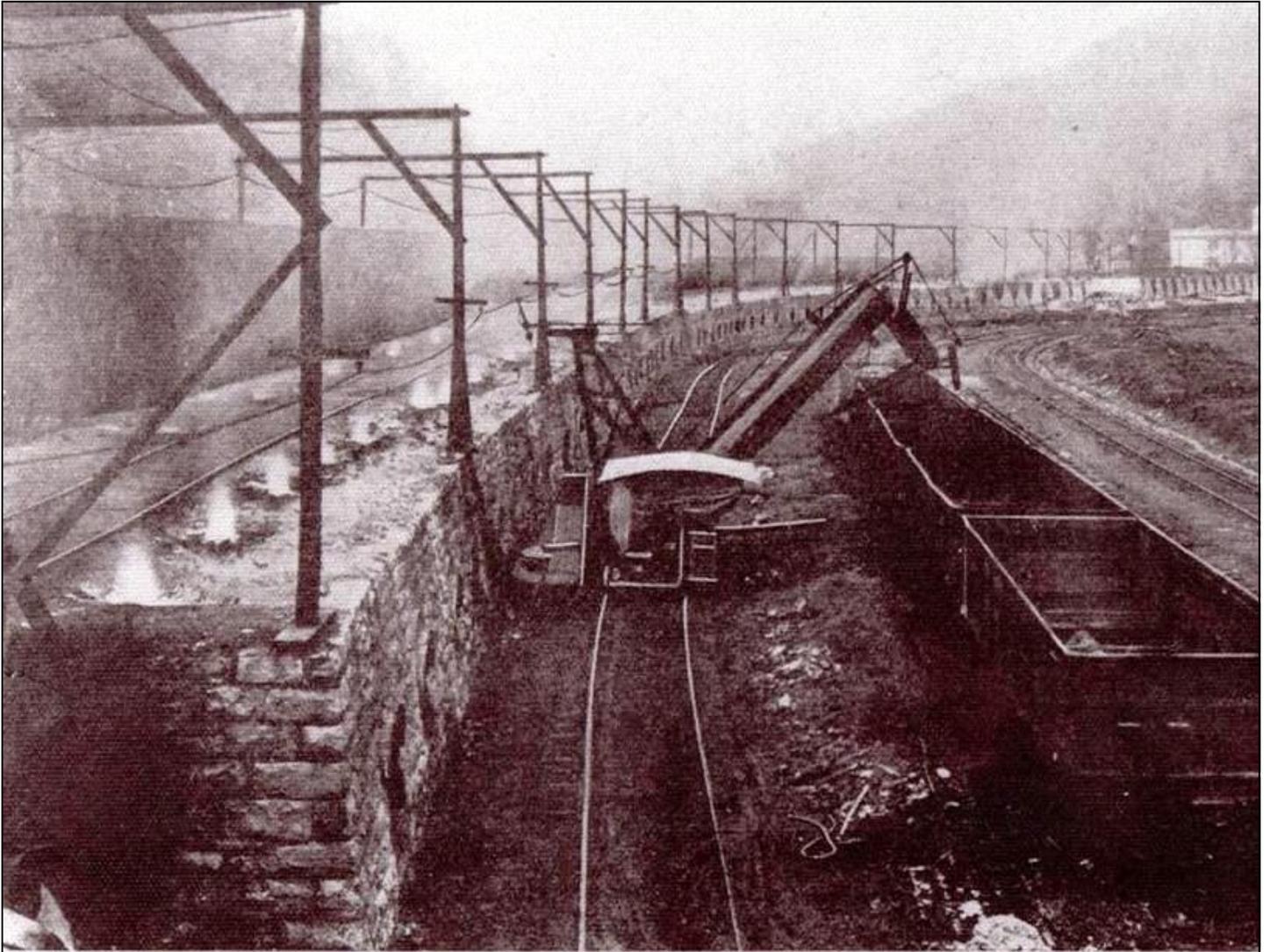


The Town of Wilkeson



Planning support and production of this document was provided by a grant of technical assistance from the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program of the National Park Service. RTCA provides non financial grants of planning assistance to communities working on local conservation and recreation projects. Assisting communities achieve their conservation and recreation goals is one way the National Park Service achieves its mission of extending the benefits of conservation and recreation to the nation and world.

**WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK**



BATTERY OF 160 COKE OVENS OF WILKESON COAL & COKE CO.

## A Word about ‘Development Concept Plans’

This document presents the community vision for the development of Wilkeson’s Coke Oven Park at a conceptual level. Development concept plans (DCP’s) are preliminary documents used to describe how an area can potentially be developed and utilized. DCP’s typically are written utilizing the best information available at the time, but readers should understand that many of the concepts presented could get modified and adjusted as more detailed design and engineering occurs to produce construction documents, and as those construction documents move through the permitting process. Future design and engineering will involve detailed analysis of factors such as soil structure, wetland delineation, hydrology, and sensitive natural or cultural resources, any of which could cause refinements to the concepts presented in this document. Further refinements could occur during the permitting process in order to receive the necessary building and construction permits before work can actually begin.

Development Concept Plans are useful documents as a starting point in project development. They help to promote consensus among community leaders and stakeholder groups by articulating goals for development and use of the property. They are also useful documents for securing grants, appropriations, and assisting in other fundraising efforts.

## **Acknowledgments**

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## WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

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The Charrette Team

## Table of Contents

**Introduction.....11**

- Project Background and History
- Request for National Park Service Assistance
- The Planning Process
- Public Outreach and Participation

**Vision, Goals and Objectives.....15**

**Natural and Cultural Resources .....17**

*Natural Resources:*

- Geographic Setting
- Climate
- Geology
- Vegetation
- Hydrology
- Habitat
- Wildlife
- Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species
- Scenery

*Cultural Resources:*

- Native Americans
- Immigration and European Settlement

**Design Charrette.....24**

- Charrette Schedule/Agenda
- Coke Oven Park Development Concepts:
  - Interpretation, Education, and Coke Oven Preservation
  - Community Events
  - Trails and Connectivity
  - Master Plan

**Next Steps and Implementation.....49**

**Funding Opportunities.....51**

- Federal Programs
- State Programs

# WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

Private Businesses and Foundations  
Information Sources

**Appendices.....56**

Appendix 1 – Resident Survey

Appendix 2 – Visitor Survey

Appendix 3 – Resident Survey Summary

Appendix 4 – Visitor Survey Summary

Appendix 5 – Coke Ovens National Register Nomination Form

## INTRODUCTION

### Project Background and History

The Town of Wilkeson intends to develop Coke Oven Park on approximately 11+ acres of land southeast of town. The property is adjacent to town limits but located in unincorporated Pierce County. Wilkeson currently owns 9.42 acres of the area and is in negotiation with Pierce County to transfer an additional 1.84 acres of land for the park. A portion of Coke Oven Park is a registered site on the National Historic Register called the ‘Wilkeson Coke Ovens and Coal Mining Area’. The Coke Ovens (30 total) are deteriorating and require extensive rehabilitation to preserve their historic character.

Coke Oven Park is currently in park use but it has never been master planned and is significantly underdeveloped. The Wilkeson Booster Club uses Coke Oven Park historic railroad tracks for handcar races during the annual Wilkeson Days celebration, an event that currently draws about 2,000 people. The Booster Club would like to develop better outdoor seating, picnic facilities, and parking to accommodate more capacity during Wilkeson Days as well as to support other community events. The pictorial Gale Creek borders the full length of the park but it’s hidden behind vegetative overgrowth and is not accessible. There are wetland areas that could be better enhanced for wildlife habitat. Other opportunities exist for the development of a trail network in the park and to partner with the nearby Wilkeson Elementary School to develop outdoor classroom opportunities to enhance education curriculum.

In 2010 Wilkeson completed a comprehensive park master plan that provides an overview of the entire Towns’ needs for parks and recreation. That plan includes a goal to develop Coke Oven Park to its full potential as a regional park and historic site. There is strong community support for developing Coke Oven Park as a regional recreation destination and for the protection, restoration, and interpretation of the Coke Ovens and Wilkeson’s coal mining history. Unfortunately, the Town has limited resources and cannot afford the professional assistance required to prepare a master plan for the development of the park.

### Request for National Park Service Planning Assistance

To address the master planning need for Coke Oven Park, the Town of Wilkeson applied for a grant of planning assistance from the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program of the National Park Service in the summer of 2011. RTCA provides non-financial grants of technical planning assistance to communities working on local conservation and recreation projects. The grant request was approved in late October, 2011, and the project got underway in January, 2012.

### The Planning Process

Working together, the National Park Service and the Mayor of Wilkeson first established a timeline for implementation of the project. During the timeline discussions it was determined the end product for this project was preparation of a Development Concept Plan (DCP). A 'Planning Team' and an 'Advisory Committee' were then formed to manage and guide the process. The Planning Team consisted of the Mayor and a Town Council representative working with the National Park Service to guide and manage the process and oversee preparation of the DCP. The Advisory Committee consisted of representatives from key stakeholder groups, organizations and individuals with specialized subject matter expertise who were asked to provide input and advice to the Planning Team during the planning process. The first meeting with the advisory committee occurred in March, 2012.

The time line organized the project into the following four stages:

1. Information Gathering
2. Charrette Planning
3. Design Charrette
4. Writing and Plan Production

***Information Gathering***

The first stage was to acquire, develop, and organize background information relative to the project. This included researching natural and cultural resource information, development of a draft vision and goals statement, creation of base maps for the area, and conducting surveys of residents and visitors. A *resident* survey was included in the June, 2012, utility bill statements that were mailed to every household in the Town of Wilkeson. A *non-resident* survey was administered at a booth display about the Coke Oven Park planning project during the annual ‘Wilkeson Days’ celebration on July 21, 2012. Copies of both surveys and results summaries are provided in the Appendices at the end of this report. (Please see Appendices 1 - 4 for copies of the survey instruments and survey result summary information).

***Charrette Planning***

In this phase, the planning team and advisory committee coordinated all of the planning and logistics required to convene and facilitate a ‘Design Charrette’. A charrette is an intense, focused, illustrated brainstorming session that involves community members, stakeholders, and design professionals working together to produce graphic conceptual sketches and/or design ideas for a specific task or assignment. The National Park Service has a formal agreement with the Washington Chapter, American Society of Landscape Architects (WASLA) by which WASLA provides pro bono assistance to RTCA projects to fulfill the community service goal of their organization and to promote the profession of Landscape Architecture.

***Design Charrette***

The cornerstone event in the process occurred over a two-day weekend in October, 2012, when a design charrette was conducted. Nineteen community members and stakeholders were teamed with 10 volunteer WASLA Landscape Architects to develop graphic design ideas for achieving the vision and goals of the project. Additional design support was provided from ten students studying landscape architecture (three from the University of Washington and seven from Washington State University).

***Writing and Plan Production***

Armed with all the work to date, the planning team moved into the last stage of the project to write the draft and final plan.

### Public Outreach and Participation

A public involvement component was included in the project to complement and parallel the planning process. This component was designed to accomplish two goals:

1. Inform people about the project at key stages
2. Provide opportunities for public comment in the process

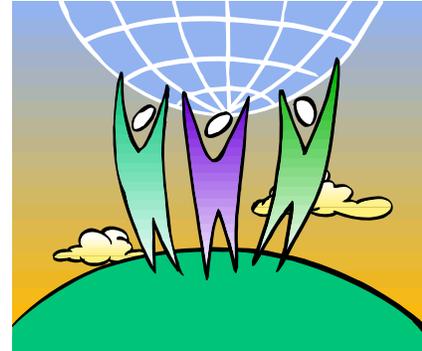
Public participation for this project was accomplished in the following ways:

- An ‘Advisory Committee’ consisting of representatives from key stakeholder groups, organizations and individuals with specialized subject matter expertise was formed at the beginning of the planning process to guide and advise the planning team in the development of this plan.
- Newsletters were developed and distributed at key points in the planning process. These were distributed by email to stakeholder groups and news outlets. In addition a printed copy of each newsletter was included in the corresponding monthly utility bill statements mailed to every household in Wilkeson.
- A public meeting was held at the conclusion of the design charrette to present and discuss the results.
- Public comments were requested by the Town Council as part of the formal process for adopting this plan.

## VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### Vision

Wilkeson's Coke Oven Park is a premiere regional destination that provides safe and healthy family oriented recreation opportunities for residents and visitors within the context of the regions natural and cultural heritage. The park is designed to:



- Restore, preserve and protect the historic coke ovens
- Provide educational and interpretive programs and activities
- Support a variety of community events
- Meet basic park user needs for safety, accessibility, and enjoyment

### Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Restore, preserve and protect the historic coke ovens.

#### ***Objectives:***

- Restore and stabilize the coke ovens in collaboration with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).
- Secure and protect the restored coke ovens from future deterioration

Goal 2: Build and manage a safe, accessible park designed to meet basic user needs.

#### ***Objectives:***

- Provide a variety of settings and facilities that support the recreation, education, and health interests of individuals, groups and families.
- Assure that park facilities and development are designed to support/encourage activities appropriate to the park in terms of size, location, noise, etc.

## WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

- Connect activity areas with an integrated trail system. Include footpaths and nature trails as part of the larger trail system.
- Incorporate safety features that protect park users, adjacent properties and the environment.
- Establish a volunteer program for management, maintenance and education to increase community ownership and stewardship of the park.
- Maintain a clear and visible management presence that demonstrates the park is clean, well maintained, and regularly patrolled.

Goal 3: Provide Educational and Interpretive Opportunities.

### ***Objectives:***

- Plan and develop interpretive opportunities to educate park users on the natural and cultural history of the area.
- Develop partnerships with schools and youth groups in the community for cooperative use of the park for educational purposes.
- Provide a wide variety of interpretive *facilities* (e.g., signs, self-guiding brochures, replica of a coke oven, cell phone tours, recorded messages, etc.)
- Provide a wide variety of interpretive *programs* (e.g., guided walks, speakers, youth programs, etc.)

Goal 4: Design and build the park to accommodate family-friendly community events

### ***Objectives:***

- Provide a premier facility for hosting the annual Wilkeson Hand Car races
- Include a large grassy open space area capable of supporting large public and/or private community events such as concerts, weddings, art shows, etc.

## **NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

### ***Geographic Setting***

The Town of Wilkeson is located on State Route 165 in northeastern Pierce County along the shores of Gale Creek. SR 165 leads to and from the Carbon River and Mowich Lake areas of Mount Rainier National Park which are popular tourist recreational areas, particularly in the summer months. Situated along the western foothills of the Cascade Range, the area is characterized by rolling Cascade foothills, heavily forested areas, pastoral settings, and small, rural towns. The current population of Wilkeson is approximately 477 people.

### ***Climate***

The climate of the area can be characterized as a marine climate dominated by cool, moist winds coming off the Pacific Ocean. Winters are wet and relatively mild and summers are dry and warm. Rain usually begins in earnest in mid-October and continues with few interruptions through the spring months. This pattern is caused by maritime low pressure disturbances originating in the Pacific Ocean and carried inland on 'jetstream' winds ranging from the southeast to the southwest. Warmer and drier weather, associated with gradually lengthening high pressure systems, begins in June and continues through September. Winter temperatures are typically 40-50° in the day and 30-40° at night. Summer temperatures average 70-80° with nighttime lows of 50-65°.

### ***Geology***

Mount Rainier is a volcano built up above the surrounding Cascade mountain range by repeated eruptions and successive flows of lava. In geologic terms it is a relatively young volcano, only about one million years old. By contrast the mountains of the Cascade Range are at least 12 million years old and were created by the folding, buckling, and uplifting of the Earth's surface.

The natural landscape of the upper Carbon River area began to form at the end of the last ice age approximately 13,000 years ago. During this ice age a lobe called the

## WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

Vashon ice sheet spread south from Canada covering the Puget Sound region with an ice sheet about 3,000 feet thick near present day Seattle and nearly 6,000 feet at the present Canada-U.S. border. At its maximum extent the Vashon ice sheet extended south of Olympia near the Town of Tenino and covered the lowlands between the Olympic and Cascade Mountains. As the Vashon ice sheet retreated it left deep stream channels and glacial outwash plains behind. Erosive forces of the Carbon River and its tributaries, rushing down the steep slopes of Mount Rainier and the Cascade mountains, cut and shaped the hills and valleys of the upper Carbon River area where Wilkeson is situated today.

The underlying geology of this area is made up of 25-40 million year old layers, including thick layers of lake deposits. The bedrock consists of sedimentary sandstone, mudstone, shale, and coal. The underlying coal is a high quality, low sulfur coal, and there are rich and plentiful seams in the area. The veins, however, are deep-pitched and broken by faults which makes mining difficult and expensive – especially when compared to the relatively ‘flat’ seams of high quality coal in areas such as Wyoming. The Town of Wilkeson was created from its coal mining origins, but the underground mines all closed as oil replaced coal as a primary fuel source.

### *Vegetation*

The Wilkeson area is abundant with a variety of vegetation. Forested hillsides in the area are a mix of deciduous and coniferous trees such as cedar, fir, hemlock, alder, maple and poplar. Open pastures and farmlands contain grasses, small shrubs and a mix of native and planted deciduous and coniferous trees. Meadows and wetland areas contain wildflowers, willows, reeds, hay and other grasses. Riparian corridors contain uniquely adapted vegetation typically found alongside stream and river corridors such as cottonwoods, alders, bushes, shrubs, moss, lichens, etc.

### *Hydrology*

The rivers and streams flowing off Mount Rainier are a significant feature linking Mount Rainer glaciers with the Puget Sound region. Three of these river drainages – the Puyallup, White, and Carbon – make up the Puyallup watershed. The Carbon and White

rivers empty into the Puyallup River which continues on to Commencement Bay in Tacoma. The Town of Wilkeson is located in the Carbon River-Upper Puyallup sub-basin. Smaller streams in the upper watershed are typical mountain streams producing falls, cascades, and rapids with large rock or boulder stream bottoms. In the lower watershed the land flattens out, water velocity slows, and the streams tend to meander on the final journey to the sound.

### ***Habitat***

A rich diversity and abundance of wildlife is present throughout the Carbon River-Upper Puyallup sub-basin. This is attributable to a healthy surrounding of public and private forests and the availability of multiple and diverse types of habitat capable of supporting a variety of wildlife including large and small mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates. Wildlife use different habitats for different activities related to nesting, feeding, foraging, migrating, and cover. Numerous habitat types are found in the sub-basin such as old-growth and mature forests, wetlands and seeps, snags, rocky slopes, open meadows and clear-cuts, cedar groves, caves, cliffs, and riparian areas.

### ***Wildlife***

Elk, black bear, bobcat, mountain lion, red fox, and coyote are common mammals that live in the watershed. Beavers, otters, and muskrats make their homes along streams and rivers. Many other animals such as frogs, snakes, rabbits, black tail deer, shrews, voles, and ground squirrels live in and around wooded areas, meadows, pastures, wetlands, and riparian areas.

Large numbers of resident and migrating birds can also be found at various times of the year throughout the watershed. These include raptors such as eagles, hawks, owls, osprey and falcons; waterfowl such as geese, ducks, and herons; songbirds such as warblers, finches, bluebirds, blackbirds, robins, thrushes, wrens, nuthatches and chickadees; and others such as jays, flickers, hummingbirds, ruffed grouse, swallows, and woodpeckers.

### ***Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Wildlife***

Some species are declining in numbers across the Pacific Northwest and receive special protection through Federal or State laws. Federally listed ‘Threatened and Endangered’ species that range within areas of the Puyallup Watershed include the marbled murrelet, peregrine falcon, and spotted owl. At the state level, the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) manages a ‘Priority Habitats and Species’ (PHS) program that lists: 1) *priority species* that require protective measures for their survival due to their population status, sensitivity to habitat alteration, and/or recreational, commercial, or tribal importance; and 2) *priority habitats* that are habitat types or elements with unique or significant value to a diverse assemblage of species. The WDFW also designates threatened and endangered species in Washington State pursuant to state law. Examples of state listed species found in the watershed include bald eagle, fisher, cascade fox, western gray squirrel, golden eagle, northern goshawk, pileated woodpecker, and bull trout.

### ***Scenery***

The Carbon River-Upper Puyallup sub-basin is a place of grandeur and majesty. Some areas are tightly contained within dense forest and views are restricted; other areas open up to beautiful pastoral views of open meadows, agricultural operations, forested mountainsides, and magnificent views of Mount Rainier. Wildlife is abundant and climate conditions keep vegetation green all year long.

## **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

### ***Native Americans***

A variety of Native American groups inhabited and utilized regional areas around Mount Rainier for thousands of years. Within the Puget Sound region, their territories were often associated with river drainages and watersheds, some of which originated on the flanks of Mount Rainier which was and continues to be the spiritual center for many of these tribes. These groups were part of the Salish speaking people of the Pacific Northwest. They all spoke the same stock language, but there were many different dialects among individual groups. Many people from different groups were related by marriage and all were connected by common religious observations, myths and traditions. In the Puget Sound region they lived in villages ranging from the Cascade foothills, along the rivers and creeks, and down to the shores of Puget Sound. Salmon

and elk were primary sources of food. Other tribes, from both the east and west sides of the Cascades, also used the region for hunting and trading.

Early immigrant settlers began arriving in the Puget Sound region in the mid-1800's and were generally welcomed into Indian communities. These early settlers were dependent on Indians for food, transportation, and labor, which contributed to cross-cultural cooperation and integration. A significant feature of this 'bridge' culture was the emergence of the Chinook Jargon, a limited trade language that facilitated expanded communication between Indians, settlers, and among Indians of different groups.

Immigration permanently and significantly changed the lives of Pacific Northwest Native American Indians. By 1855 three treaties had been negotiated covering lands surrounding Puget Sound guaranteeing the tribes reservation lands and assurance they could hunt and fish in their usual and accustomed places. Most Indians, however, did not move to reservations until the later 1800's when immigration increased exponentially. Until then settlers were few, government was weak, reservations held few attractions, and settlers needed Indian skills and friendship.

### ***Immigration and European Settlement***

The Town of Wilkeson was named after Samuel Wilkeson, Northern Pacific Railroad Secretary, who, in 1869, noted rich coal deposits in the Carbon River area while conducting a geological survey for the railroad. In 1874, two brothers (William and David Flett) along with their brother-in-law (John Gale) staked a coal claim on a creek in the area. They named the creek 'Flett Creek' but it was later re-named 'Gale Creek'. William and David Flett grew up in the nearby town of South Prairie and were the sons of John Flett who started the Flett Dairy that was originally located in Sumner and later moved to the Lakewood/Steilacoom area.

The Puyallup Valley Coal Company staked a second claim across the creek from the Fletts in the same year (1874). This company was connected with the Northern Pacific Railroad and had the financial backing of the railroad. Officials at the Northern Pacific Railroad understood the significance of the potential coal mines as a financial

## WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

opportunity that would help them fund continued construction of the transcontinental line from the East Coast to the Washington Territory.

The Northern Pacific Railroad constructed a line from Tacoma to the coal fields in 1877 and opened the first major coal mine two years later. Initially nearly all of the coal mined in Wilkeson was used to power locomotives and ocean going steam ships. Then, in the 1880's, the suitability of Wilkeson coal for coke production was determined. Coke is a solid, grey and porous material derived from charring low-ash, low-sulfur bituminous coal. It was prized by steel mills for use in the smelting process that extracted metal from iron ore. Smelting uses heat and a chemical reducing agent to decompose the ore, separating off other elements such as gasses or slag and leaving just the metal behind. The reducing agent is commonly a source of carbon such as coke. The Tacoma Coal and Coke Company built the first coke ovens in Wilkeson in 1885 and, by the 1890's, operated 160 beehive shaped ovens in Wilkeson.

On March 29, 1889, the Town of Wilkeson was platted by Joseph and Lydia Johns. North of the railroad tracks (where the mines were located) was known as 'Uptown' and was all owned by the Northern Pacific Railroad. This was a company town and the Northern Pacific owned the hotel, a store, mine buildings, the train depot, post office, school, and rows of miners' cottages. South of the tracks was privately owned and known as 'Downtown'. Downtown housed numerous businesses, fraternal organizations, and other community and social groups.

Wilkeson boomed from the late 1800's through World War I. Hundreds of immigrants were recruited to work the mines and ovens, including many from Southern and Eastern Europe. The sandstone quarry officially opened in 1886 and logging and milling soon became as important to the regional economy as mining. Tourism to Mount Rainier was another aspect of Wilkeson's economy once the railroad arrived. Outfitters met tourists arriving by train in Wilkeson and then guided them by pack horse to the park.

The Wilkeson area remained an important center of coal and coke production through World War I, at which time it had the only coke ovens in the United States west of Utah. By 1918 Wilkeson had two freight trains daily pulling 80 to 100 cars each. The

Wilkeson Coal and Coke Company employed 200 men; the Gale Creek Coal Mine employed 75 men; and the population of Wilkeson was about 3,000 people.

Mining, logging, and coke production gradually declined from the 1920's to the 1970's and the population declined as well. The Wilkeson Coal and Coke Company quit mining in 1936 and the last year of mining in Wilkeson ended in 1974. Uptown Wilkeson's abandoned mining offices and buildings were dismantled and the mines were sealed. The railroad tracks were removed in both uptown and downtown. Of the 160 coke ovens, 30 were saved from demolition (without their outer walls which were constructed of sandstone). In 100 years of coal mining, 21 million tons of coal was produced from the Wilkeson area mines. The estimated amount of coal still in the Wilkeson area is 222,000,000 tons.



## **DESIGN CHARRETTE**

The cornerstone event in the planning process occurred over a two-day weekend in October, 2012, when a design charrette was conducted. A charrette is an intense, focused, illustrated brainstorming session that involves any number of people and lasts from a few hours to a few days.

Charrette planning began in earnest in June, 2012, and lasted four months until the charrette convened on October 19-20, 2012. For this project, it was decided to organize four teams of community members and stakeholders with volunteer landscape architects and students to develop conceptual graphic design ideas for the park master plan. Following is a list of each team and their specific assignment:

***Team One: Interpretation, Education, and Coke Oven Preservation***

Assignment: develop recommendations for restoration and protection of coke ovens and for interpreting the natural and cultural resources throughout the park.

***Team Two: Community Events***

Assignment: develop site recommendations for accommodating various community events to include a multi-purpose amphitheater and re-configured facilities for handcar races. This may include a concession building including public rest-rooms.

***Team Three: Trails and Connectivity***

Assignment: develop recommendations for a sidewalk and trail system throughout the park to include bicycle and pedestrian connectivity through town to the Foothills Trail.

***Team Four: Master Plan***

Assignment: develop the overall master plan incorporating the design recommendations from teams one, two and three and including other needed park infrastructure such as parking, restrooms, picnicking and playground areas.

Charrette Schedule/Agenda

The charrette began Friday afternoon and finished Saturday evening with a public meeting to present and discuss the results. Following is a brief outline of the charrette agenda:

Friday, October 19

- 4:00 – 4:30 p.m. Welcome and Introductions
- 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. Guided Field Trip to Coke Ovens and Park Property
- 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Dinner (provided by the Wilkeson Eagles Aerie 1409)
- 7:00 – 8:15 p.m. Evening Program:
  - Welcome - Mayor of Wilkeson
  - History of Wilkeson and Coke Ovens
  - National Park Service Planning Assistance
  - WASLA Assistance
  - Wilkeson Rural Town Centers Planning Grant Results

Saturday, October 20

- 7:00 – 8:00 a.m. Breakfast (provided by Wilkeson Booster Club)
- 8:00 – Noon Individual teams at work developing concepts and design ideas
- Noon – 12:30 p.m. Lunch (provided by Wilkeson Historical Society)
- 12:30 – 4:30 p.m. Individual teams at work developing concepts and design ideas
- 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. Plan and setup for public meeting
- 5:30 – 6:15 p.m. Dinner (provided by Town of Wilkeson)
- 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. Public meeting – present results, discussion, and comments



Guided field trip to coke ovens and park property



Charrette team at work on master plan graphic

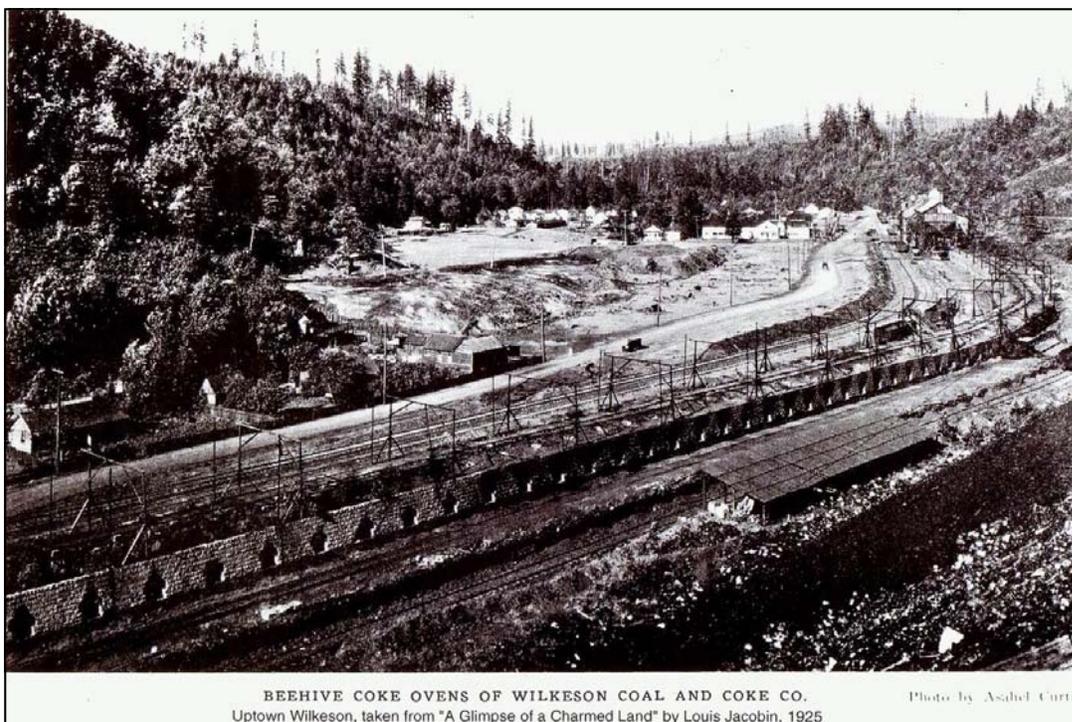
## **COKE OVEN PARK DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS**

### **Interpretation, Education, and Coke Oven Preservation**

The Interpretation, Education and Coke Oven Preservation team was charged with responsibility to develop recommendations for restoration and protection of the coke ovens and for interpreting the natural and cultural resources throughout the park.

#### ***Coke Oven Preservation***

The central feature of Coke Oven Park will be the remaining historic coke ovens and the associated coal mining history of the region. The area originally included 160 beehive shaped coke ovens that were built in pairs (side-by-side) and arranged in a long row covering a distance of about three tenths of a mile. The domes are inherently strong structures, dependent on support from each other to maintain strength and integrity. They were constructed of brick, marked “Heathfield” that was imported from Scotland. The brick was used for ballast on ships sailing from Scotland to America.



BEEHIVE COKE OVENS OF WILKESON COAL AND COKE CO.  
Uptown Wilkeson, taken from "A Glimpse of a Charmed Land" by Louis Jacobin, 1925

Photo by Asahel Curtis

Historic photograph of Wilkeson coke ovens taken by Ashael Curtis. Original negative from the collection of the Washington State Historical Museum.

The Wilkeson Coke Ovens were apparently constructed without mortar but a six-inch layer of cement covered the exterior of each oven. Originally a sandstone wall about ten feet high faced the entire line of ovens and a small arched opening allowed access into each oven. These openings were repeatedly sealed by brick and mortar at each firing and then re-opened to collect the end product (called coke) when the firing was completed. Coal was loaded into the ovens from the top via a charging/chimney hole and the holes were capped with a metal lid during the firing (i.e., coking) process. Burning coal was smelted for about 48 to 72 hours depending on the amount of impurities needed to be removed. Coke was a highly prized fuel that burned hot, clean and was long-lasting. It was used for purposes such as heating homes, producing steel and powering steam engines on trains and ships.

In the late 1940's most of the outer sandstone wall was removed and used for wall construction in the nearby Town of Orting. Only the lowest two or three courses of sandstone remain today. As a result the earth covering the top of the ovens has eroded away partially and the sides of the ovens have fallen in somewhat.



## WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

A meeting to address issues and questions surrounding preservation of the historic Wilkeson Coke Ovens was convened in Wilkeson on October 5, 2000, by the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP). Technical preservation experts from both the National Park Service and OAHP participated in the meeting along with others interested in the preservation of the coke ovens (e.g., Wilkeson Mayor and Town Council representatives, Wilkeson Historical Society, Pierce County Planning, etc.). The charrette team reviewed meeting notes and recommendations from that meeting and affirmed they are still valid today. Following is a summary of the recommendations from that meeting:

*The Wilkeson Coke Ovens site was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 (see Appendix 5). The nomination document that resulted in the listing met the needs for designation at that time, but it did not specify any resource boundaries, thereby making it difficult to achieve any meaningful long range planning and management. Therefore, there is an overarching need to clearly define a comprehensive boundary of the resource and amend the National Register listing accordingly.*

*Definition of the historic boundary needs to acknowledge and be informed by associated historic properties such as other coke ovens, the coal washing station, nearby coal mines, archaeological resources, and railroad beds. When completed, the map and resulting documentation should be used to revise the National Register listing to be more inclusive. The need to complete a comprehensive nomination is the highest priority and needs to be in place as soon as possible to guide the future management of the site.*

*The thirty remaining coke ovens are deteriorating and require extensive rehabilitation to preserve their historic character. However, physical impacts to these ovens should be avoided until the revised nomination is completed and all remaining resources are fully understood. The biggest threat to these ovens is the invasive roots from the trees and shrubs*

*growing in the soil on top of them. The roots are undermining the structural integrity of their construction. Light-handed vegetative management to arrest further damage to the ovens is recommended. Large trees and shrubs could be cut back to reduce their canopy volume and then sprayed with Round-Up when in leaf and left to die off for one to two weeks. The dead aerial parts of the trees could then be removed but no attempt should be made to extricate the dead roots of the sprayed trees from the ovens' masonry, as this could lead to further masonry disruption.*

*Seeding the ovens with a grass cover for stabilization is not recommended until the site mapping is complete and the revised nomination has been accepted by the Keeper of the National Register. Establishment of a manageable grass cover will require greater intervention and some modification of the outer surface of the ovens. This will mean complete removal of the aerial parts of all vegetation now covering the ovens (after spraying) and the application of a layer of topsoil over the ovens, before grass seed is broadcast.*



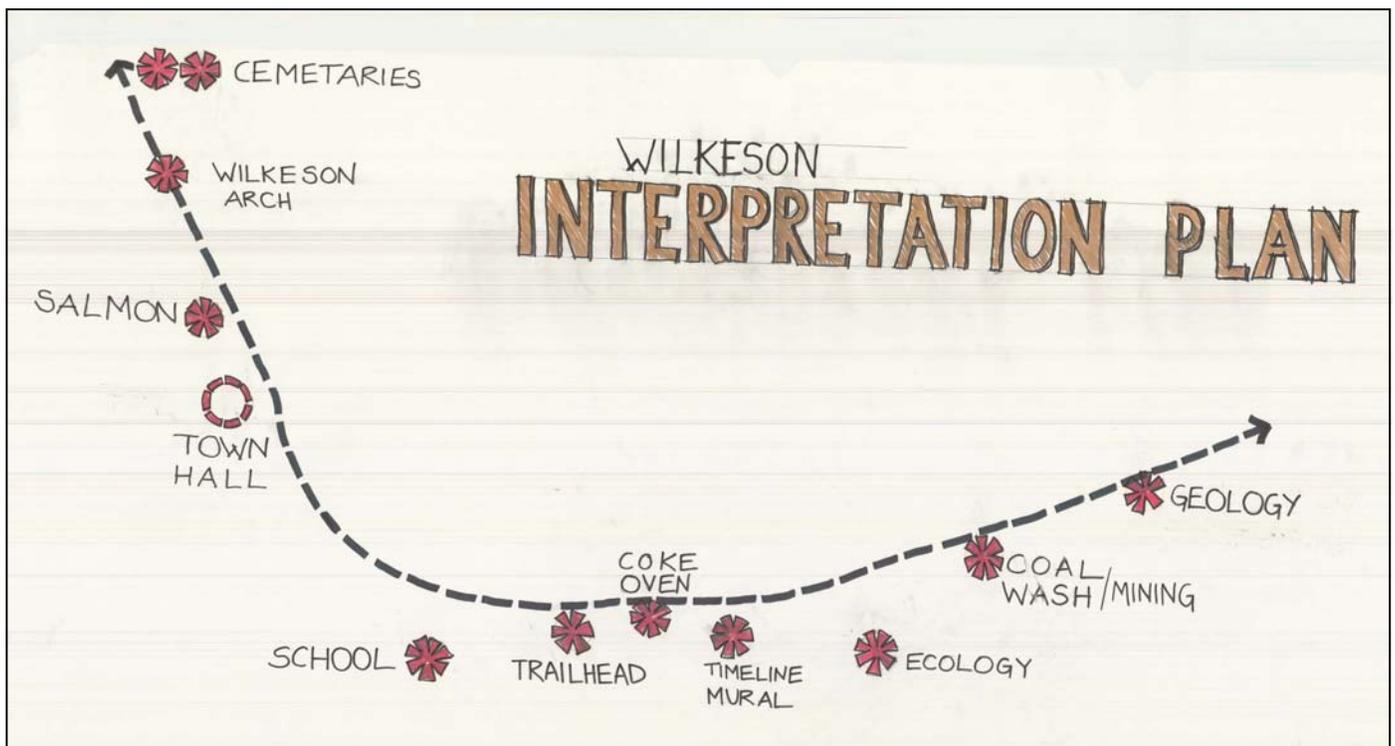
WSU student drawing showing restored coke ovens with sandstone barrier and interpretive panels

## WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

### *Interpretation and Education*

The team developed ideas for implementing an environmental education and interpretation program extending throughout the Town of Wilkeson from the two cemeteries on the west end of town to Coke Oven Park and the sandstone quarry on the east end of town. The program would be developed via a series of 'Interpretive Nodes' (informational kiosks) that would be developed at key locations throughout town. Each node would have a unique topic but they would all be developed with a consistent look and feel so that each one would be easily recognizable as part of a greater 'family' of interpretive displays pertaining to the natural and cultural heritage of Wilkeson.

In addition, the team recommended development of a 'passport' guiding users to each interpretive node. The passport would include a handout for the user to obtain a rubbing at each node thereby demonstrating they had visited each one. The rubbing would be a symbolic icon representing the subject matter presented at each node.



Following is a brief description of the interpretive nodes envisioned by the team:

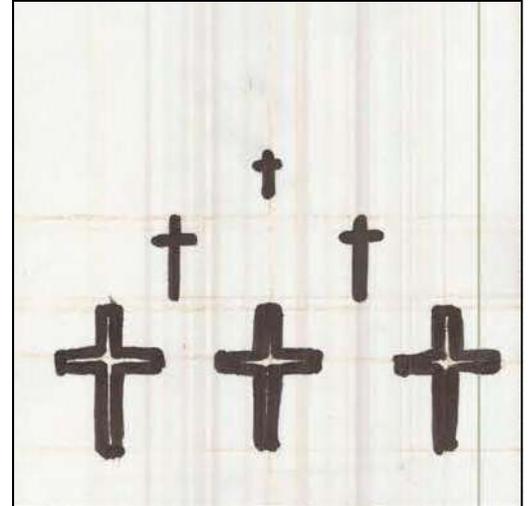
**Node One**

**Theme:** Wilkeson’s Two Cemeteries

**Location:** One kiosk at each cemetery (two kiosks) or one kiosk between the cemeteries

**Information Presented:**

- Information on important people in Wilkeson’s history
- Historic photographs of people and events
- Timeline of Town history



Sample cemetery node rubbing

**Node Two**

**Theme:** Wilkeson Arch

**Location:** Nelson Park near the arch

**Information Presented:**

- History of Arch

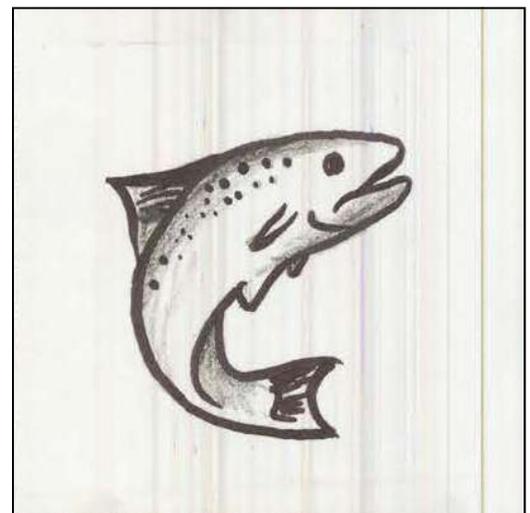
**Node Three**

**Theme:** Salmon

**Location:** By the bridge over Gale Creek (near the Eagles Hall)

**Information Presented:**

- Information about salmon runs
- Native fishing and hunting
- Map of salmon migration
- Information on regional conservation efforts
- Pictures – contemporary and historic



Sample salmon node rubbing

## WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

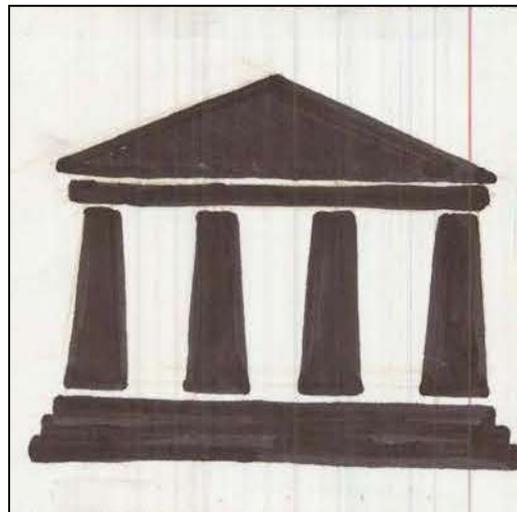
### Node Four

**Theme:** Regional Visitor Information/Orientation

**Location:** Outside Wilkeson Town Hall

**Information Presented:**

- Large map of the region with points of interest
- Historic map of the region in early 1900's
- Information on local services (food, gas, lodging, etc.)
- Wilkeson history
- Historic photos



Sample Town Hall node rubbing

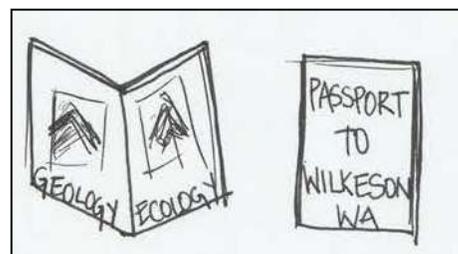
### Node Five

**Theme:** Local Visitor Information

**Location:** Inside Wilkeson Town Hall

**Information Presented:**

- Wilkeson history
- Overview of interpretation nodes and passport system
- Map and passport handout for rubbings
- Coke ovens video



Sample passport available inside Town Hall

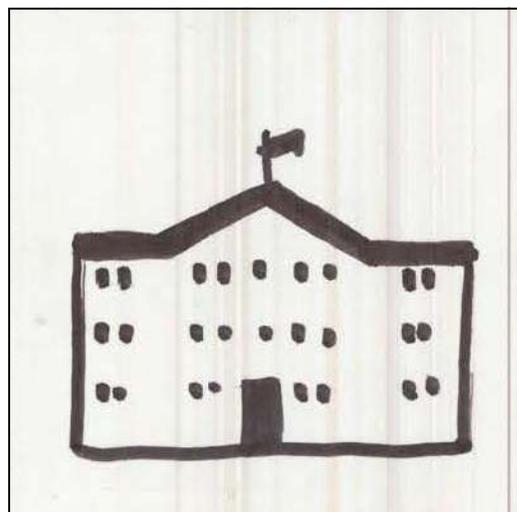
### Node Six

**Theme:** Wilkeson Elementary School

**Location:** In front of school

**Information Presented:**

- School/building history
- National Historic Register listing information



Sample school node rubbing

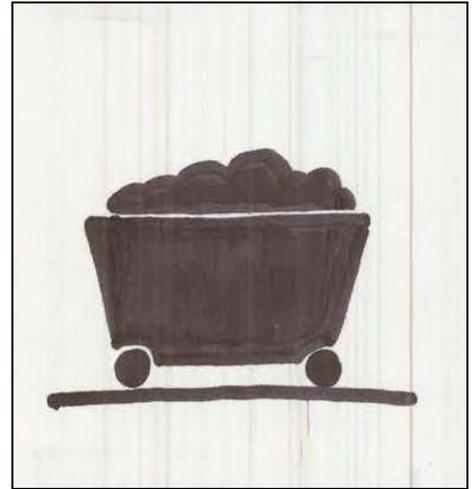
**Node Seven**

**Theme:** Coke Ovens Park/National Historic Register District

**Location:** Parking lot by coke ovens

**Information Presented:**

- Map of park/trail system
- Overview of historic register district
- Historic photos



Sample historic district node rubbing

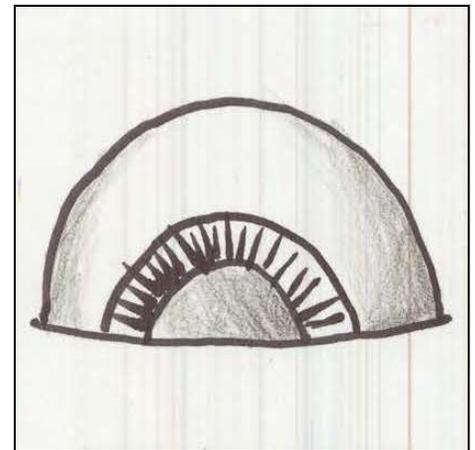
**Node Eight**

**Theme:** Coke Ovens

**Location:** In front of historic coke ovens

**Information Presented:**

- Information on coke production process
- Historic photos of coke ovens
- Information on what happened to the coke ovens after production stopped



Sample coke ovens node rubbing

**Node Nine**

**Theme:** Timeline Mural

**Location:** In amphitheater area

**Information Presented:**

- Graphic linear timeline depicting the history of the region

## WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

### Node Ten

**Theme:** Ecology

**Location:** Viewing deck/platform overlooking Gale Creek and Skookum Mine opening

**Information Presented:**

- Forest ecology
- Stream and wetland hydrology
- Native plants, animals, birds, fish, amphibians and invertebrates
- Impact of mining and recovery



Sample ecology node rubbing

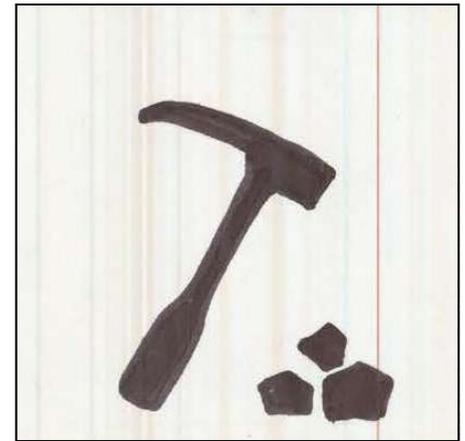
### Node Eleven

**Theme:** Coal Washing and Mining

**Location:** At coal washing site

**Information Presented:**

- Information on coal mines
- Information on coal washing
- Coal miner stories from local mines
- Diagram(s) of mining operations
- Historic photos



Sample coal washing & mining node rubbing

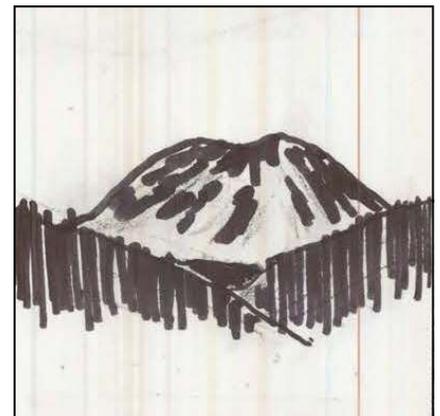
### Node Twelve

**Theme:** Geology

**Location:** At sandstone quarry end of park

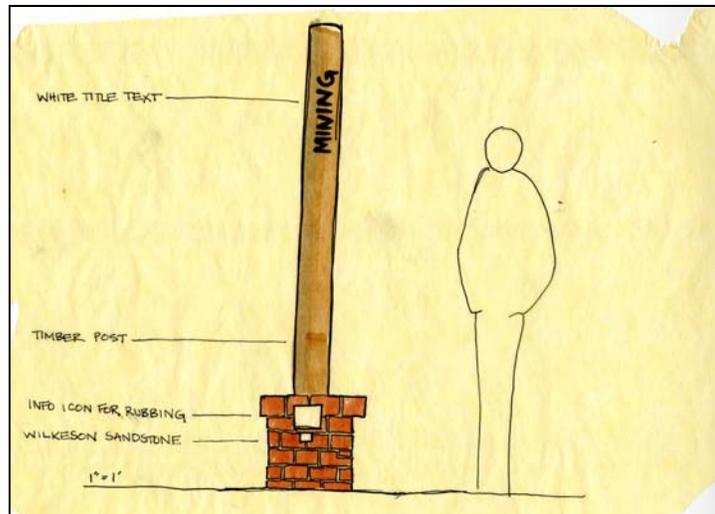
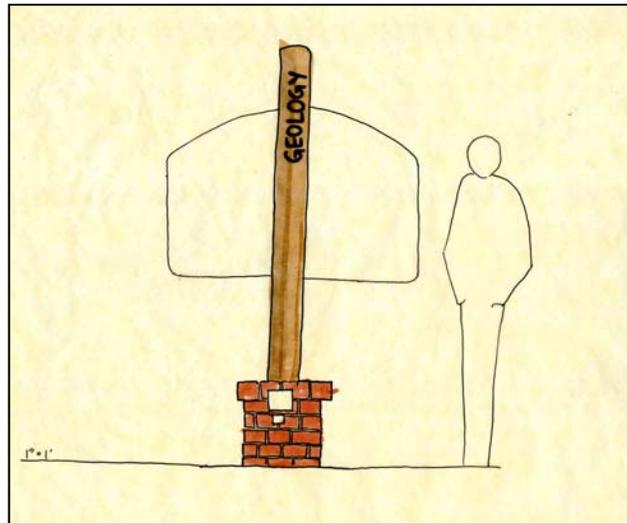
**Information Presented:**

- Formation of Cascade Range
- Volcanic activity – Mount Rainier
- Coal and sandstone formation
- History of Wilkeson Sandstone Quarry



Sample geology node rubbing

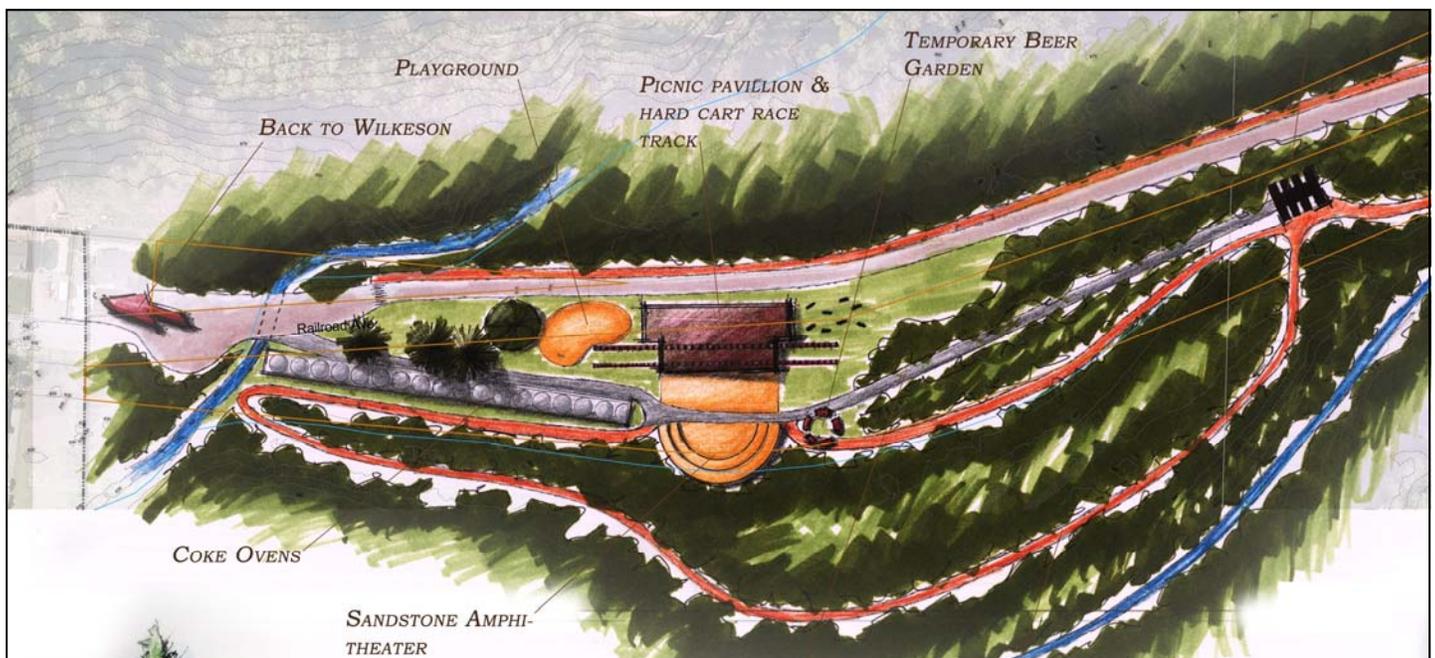
The final recommendation from the Interpretation, Education and Coke Oven Preservation team is to identify trees, shrubs and plants throughout Coke Oven Park with small, inconspicuous signs or labels. A significant percentage of park users appreciate the opportunity to learn the names of various trees and shrubs while they are otherwise enjoying the park. School groups are also likely to utilize plant identification labels as part of their field trip experience.



Front and side views of recommended interpretive kiosks

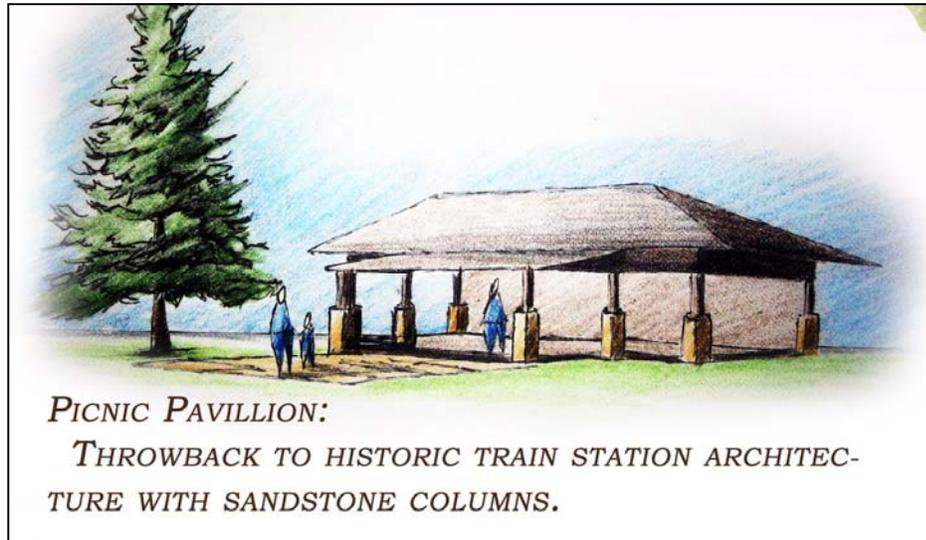
## Community Events

The Community Events team was charged with responsibility to develop site recommendations for accommodating various community events to include a multi-purpose amphitheater and re-configured facilities for handcar races. The team developed a concept for development of the multi-purpose amphitheater to be located east of the coke ovens near the south property line. A large, covered group picnic shelter would be developed opposite the amphitheater near the north property line and a hardened pedestrian plaza area would be developed in the area between the amphitheater and picnic shelter. Two parallel railroad tracks (running east to west for approximately 100 yards) will be constructed to provide a venue for side-by-side handcar race events. These tracks will be embedded in the plaza area where they overlay the plaza, but the plaza will not be 100 yards wide.

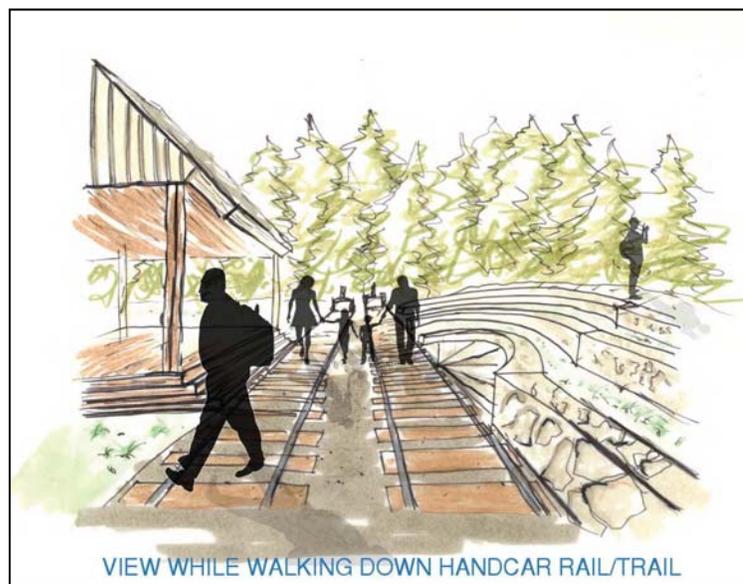


WSU Student Drawing - Post Charrette  
Illustrates potential for amphitheater, hardened pedestrian plaza area, large group covered picnic pavilion and two parallel railroad tracks embedded in the plaza area.

The group picnic shelter would be designed in an architectural style resembling the old Wilkeson Train Depot. It would be used for traditional group picnicking most of the year. During community events it would function as a covered stage for performers or as the announcing booth during handcar races. The covered picnic shelter would also serve as a gathering space for school groups on field trips, especially when it is raining.



WSU Student Drawing - Post Charrette  
Illustrates recommendation to design a group picnic pavilion in an architectural style resembling the historic Wilkeson Train Depot.



WSU Student Drawing - Post Charrette  
Illustrates recommendation to embed two parallel sets of railroad tracks into hardened plaza surface area.

# WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK



WSU Student Drawing - Post Charrette

Illustrates alternative idea for location of picnic pavilion. The north and south walls of the pavilion can be removed and used to build a temporary stage at the amphitheater during larger performances.

The amphitheater would be shaped in a semi-circular pattern and may incorporate sandstone seating. It would be designed to accommodate small crowds of about 200 to 250 people.

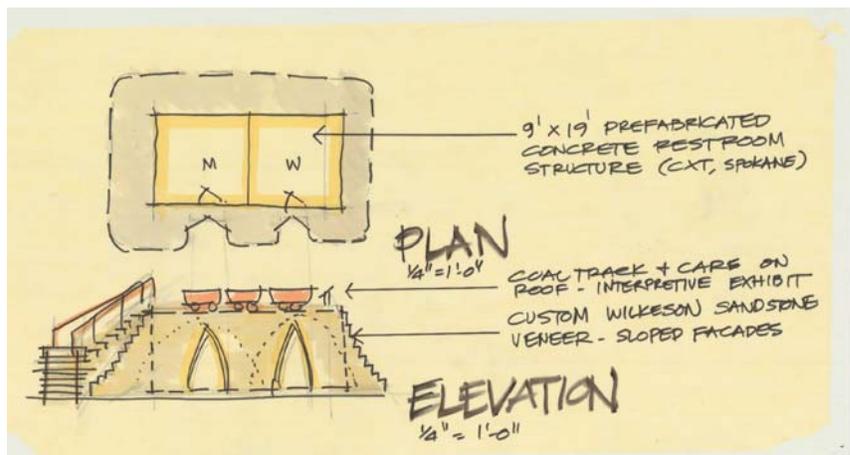


WSU Student Drawing - Post Charrette  
Illustrates amphitheater

A public ADA accessible vault toilet would be located near the amphitheater. It would be a standard vault toilet with an exterior veneer designed to make it look like two sets of coke ovens. An interpretive exhibit would be located on top of the restrooms accessible via a stairway. The exhibit would replicate a coal car and tracks similar to what would have been on top of coke ovens when they were in use.



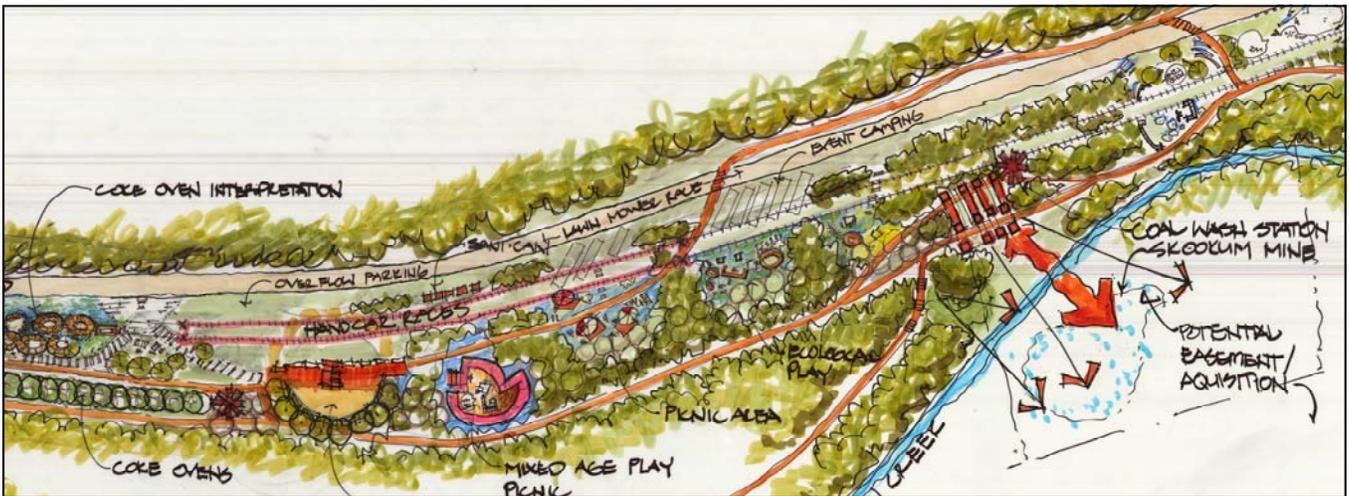
Concept drawing of vault toilets



Conceptual Plan and Elevation sketch for vault toilets

## WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

Last, the team developed a concept for a small camping area that would be used to support community events. This would not be a public campground; rather, it is a place where vendors, contractors, etc. can set up camp during multi-day events. It would include trailer pad space for approximately five self-contained trailers. The campground would not include hook-ups for electric, water and sewer for several reasons: 1) they would be seldom used; 2) the cost is not warranted; and 3) they could be subject to vandalism.



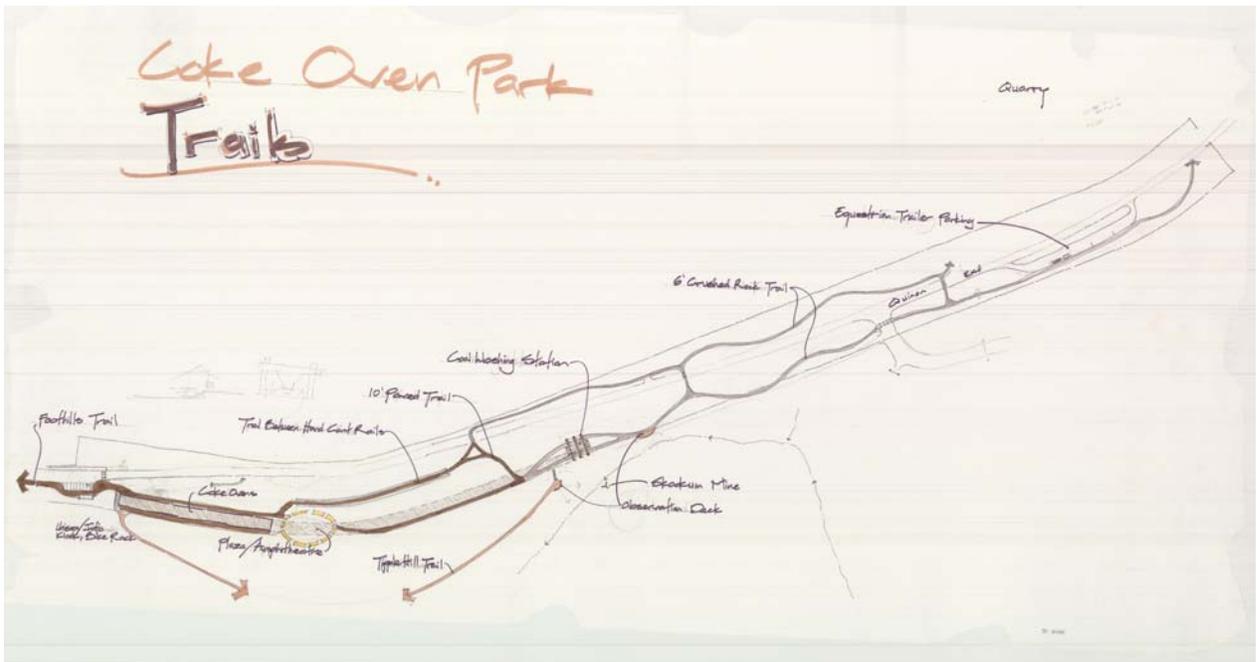
Event camping trailer pad space located along Railroad Avenue

## Trails and Connectivity

The Trails and Connectivity Team was assigned responsibility to develop recommendations for a sidewalk and trail system throughout the park and to include recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian connectivity from the park through town to the Foothills Trail.

### *Park Trail System*

The team designed an integrated trail system throughout the park. The trail system would consist of a variety of trail widths and surfaces including paved asphalt, crushed rock, and a nature trail with a natural surface. Following are descriptions of various segments of the in-park trail system:

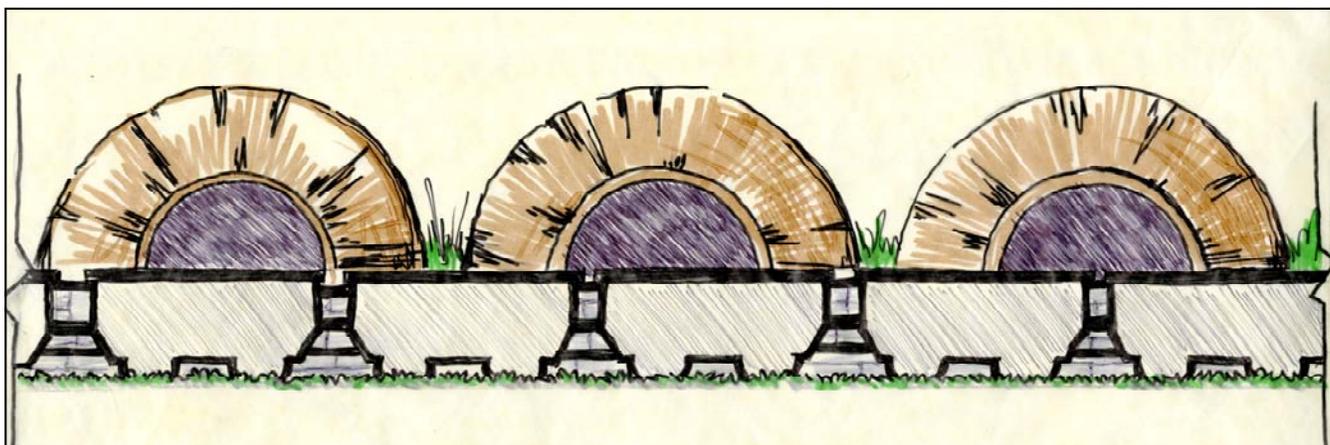


Trail team concept sketch for an integrated trail system throughout the park

## WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

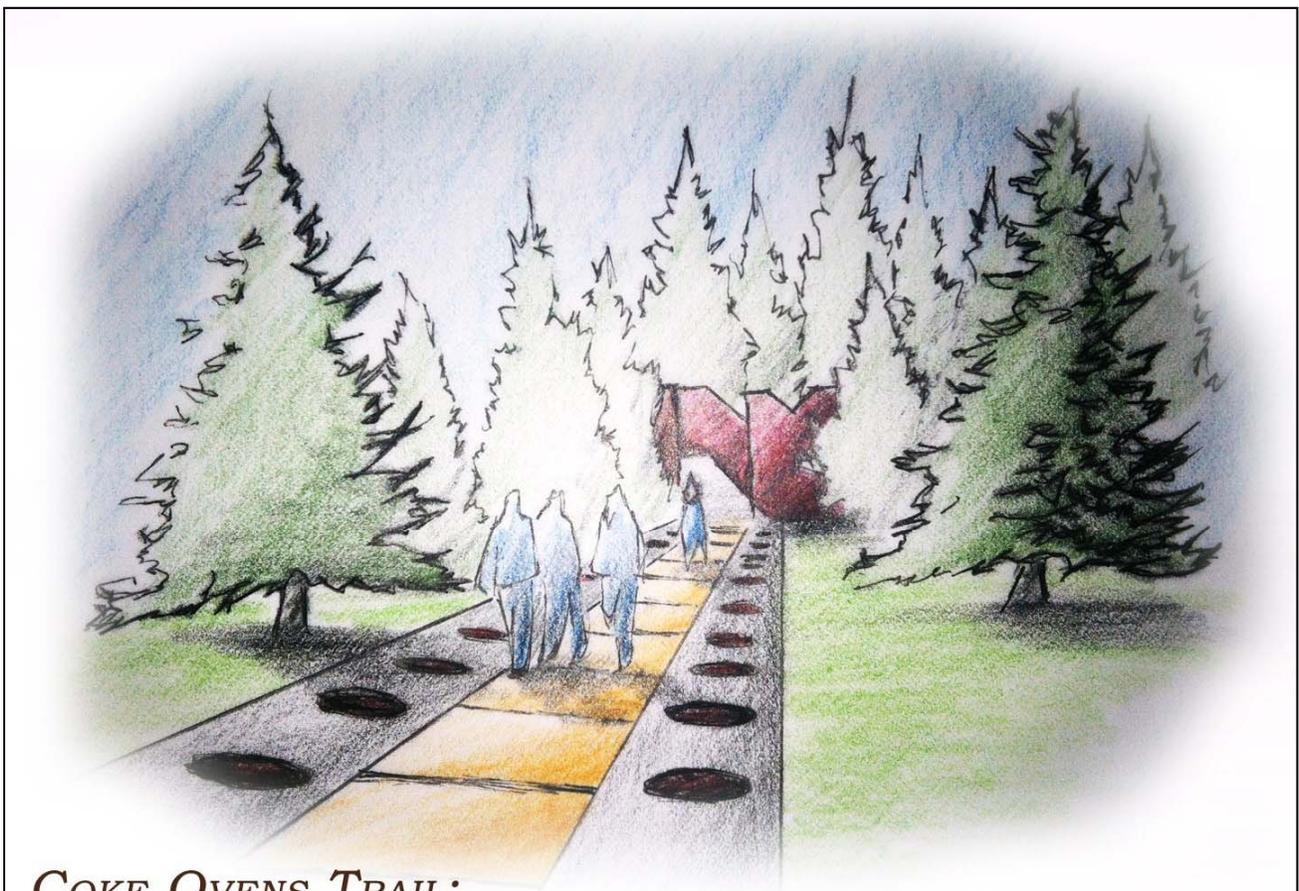
### Coke Ovens Trail

The Coke Ovens Trail is a paved asphalt trail that circumnavigates around both sides of the existing coke ovens and then extends from the west end of the coke ovens all the way to the coal washing station. The trail would be ten to twelve feet wide around the coke ovens and would include fencing (to keep people out of the coke ovens) and interpretive signs. The fence would be designed to be both functional and aesthetically pleasing. The team came up with a suggested fence design utilizing a silhouette of a coal car.



Concept drawing depicting decorative fencing utilizing silhouette of a coal car

The trail from the west end of the coke ovens to the coal washing station would replicate the historic location of the coke ovens that were demolished and removed. The trail surface would be designed to look as though the trail user were walking on the top surface of active coke ovens with charging/chimney holes on the sides and the trail/track line running down the middle. Interpretive signs would be included to help trail users realize they are walking where a line of coke ovens once stood.



***COKE OVENS TRAIL:***

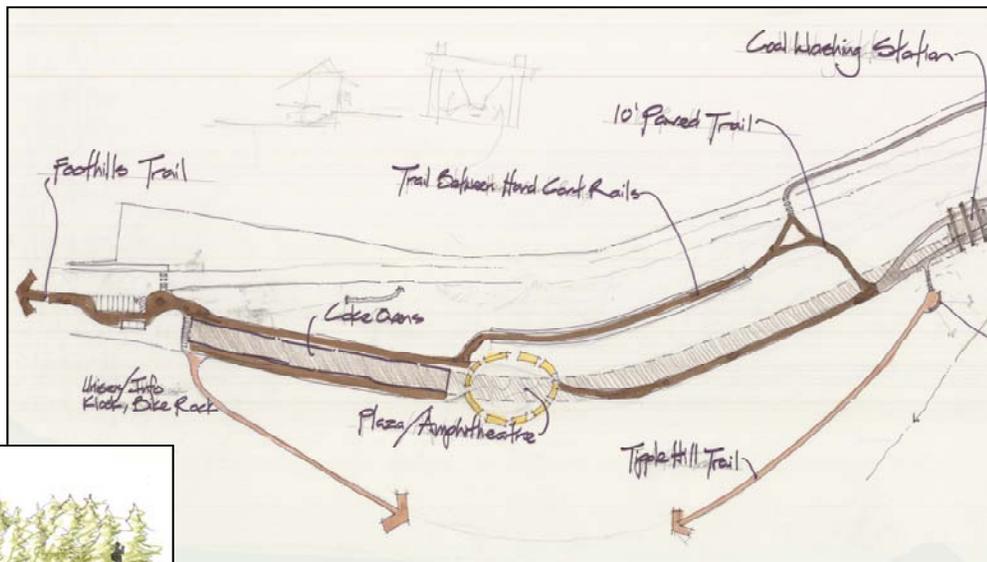
***RESEMBLES THE APPEARANCE OF THE TOP OF THE COKE OVENS BACK DURING THE DAYS OF THE MINE.***

WSU student drawing showing the Coke Ovens Trail from the end of the coke ovens to the coal washing station

# WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

## Handcar Races Trail

Per the Community Events team, two parallel railroad tracks (running east to west for approximately 100 yards) will be constructed to provide a venue for side-by-side handcar race events. These tracks will be embedded in the plaza area, but the plaza will not be 100 yards wide. Therefore the trail team developed an idea to include a paved asphalt trail between the hand car rails extending from the edges of the plaza area to both endpoints of the tracks (called the 'Handcar Races Trail'). Paved asphalt connecting trails would link both endpoints of the handcar tracks back to the Coke Ovens Trail, thereby creating a continuous paved asphalt loop trail between the amphitheater/plaza area and the coal washing station.



The 'Handcar Races Trail' will include a paved asphalt trail between the hand car rails extending through the plaza area to the endpoints of the handcar tracks thereby creating a continuous paved asphalt loop trail between the amphitheater/plaza area and the coal washing station.

Crushed Rock Trail

The west half of the park will be less developed and will include a network of looped crushed rock trails to provide a more ‘natural’ feel. These trails will be six feet wide to accommodate two people walking side by side. Legs of the loops will be located on both sides of Railroad Avenue. Striped pedestrian crosswalks will be developed on Railroad Avenue where these trails cross the road. An observation deck will be constructed adjacent to the crushed rock trail west of the coal washing station at a strategic point overlooking Gale Creek and the Skookum Mine opening. This observation deck is the location the Interpretation and Education Team envisioned for an interpretive kiosk on the subject of ‘Ecology’.



Concept drawing for an observation deck from another WASLA supported design charrette

Tipple Hill Trail

Tipple Hill is the hillside located south of the Coke Ovens. It is a man-made hill created from the disposal of coal mine tailings and it extends from near the coal washing station all the way to the west end of the coke ovens. The term ‘tipple’ was a reference to the place where the mine cars were tipped and emptied of their coal. Tipple Hill is probably located outside the property owned by the Town of Wilkeson so additional land acquisition may be needed before this trail could be developed.

The Tipple Trail would be a natural surfaced hiking trail approximately three to four feet wide. It would begin at the west end of the Coke Ovens and extend southeast up the hill, roughly following the ridgeline with nice views looking down onto Coke Oven Park. At the top it would gently curve back to the northeast and connect back to the Coke Ovens Trail at a point near the Coal Washing Station. Interpretive signs would be included to inform trail users about the history of the hill on which they are walking.

## WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

### Trail Connectivity to the Foothills Trail

For bicycle and pedestrian connectivity between Coke Oven Park and the Foothills Trail the team developed a simple diagram showing how this could easily be developed. A complete sidewalk would be developed from SR 165 along Railroad Avenue all the way to Coke Oven Park. Bicycle and pedestrian access will then be accommodated along both sides of SR 165 from Railroad Avenue through downtown all the way to the Foothills Trail. This will include safe crosswalks across SR 165 and traffic signs. Much of this system is already in place and the Town of Wilkeson has grant funding for downtown streetscape improvements that includes the extension of the Foothills Trail to downtown.

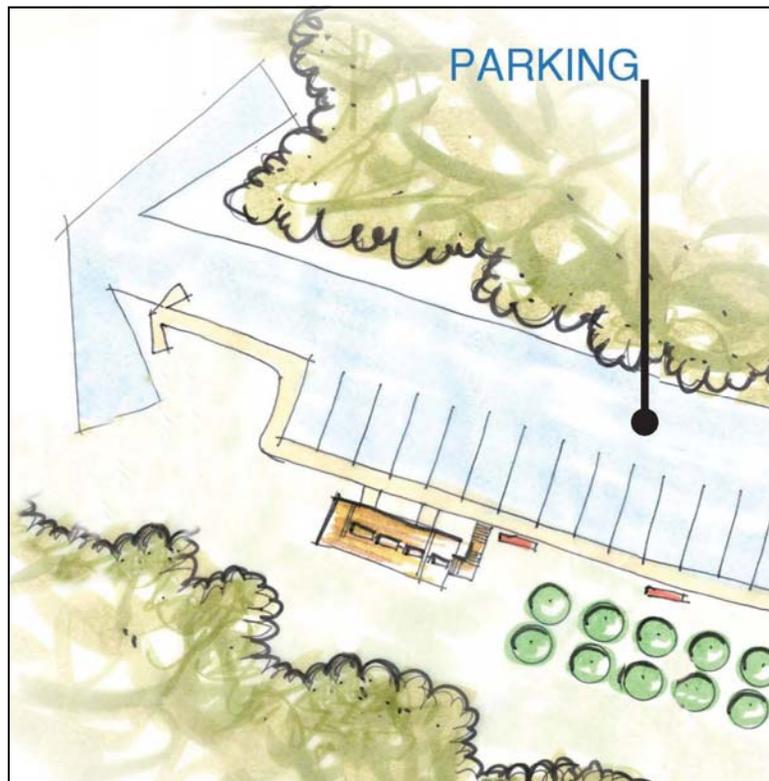


Bicycle and pedestrian connectivity will be provided between Coke Oven Park and the Foothills Trail through downtown Wilkeson

## Master Plan

The Master Plan Team was assigned responsibility to develop the overall master plan incorporating the design recommendations from the other three teams and including other needed park infrastructure such as parking, restrooms, picnicking and playground areas. Their work is included as the master plan drawing in this document.

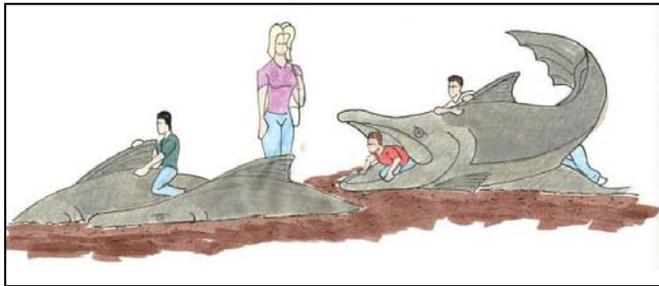
An additional benefit to this project came from the Washington State University (WSU) professor and students who participated in the charrette. After the charrette was over and the students were back in class, the Professor gave them an assignment to develop their own master plan drawings for Coke Oven Park. These drawings were provided to the planning team and were useful because they helped depict several key design ideas that weren't developed during the charrette. Many of the site plans and drawings in this document came from these WSU students.



WSU Student Drawing - Post Charrette

Illustrates potential for developing main parking entrance area with restroom by re-configuring current circular drive (not to scale)

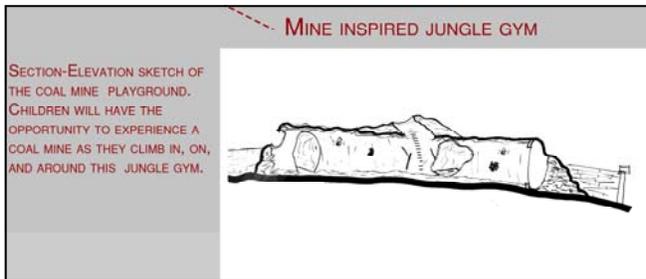
# WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK



Playground equipment - salmon



Playground equipment - salmon slide and eagle nest jungle gym



Playground equipment - mine inspired jungle gym



Playground equipment - steam train engine

## NEXT STEPS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Following is a description of the most likely steps and actions that have to occur to begin implementing the ideas envisioned in this document. Some ideas can be implemented relatively easy while others are more difficult and challenging. Many of the steps are interrelated and may occur simultaneously, or they may occur in a different order than presented depending on opportunities that arise, funding obtained, etc.

1. Amend the National Register listing for the Wilkeson Coke Ovens site.

A defined comprehensive boundary of the area's historic resources needs to be added to the National Register listing for the Wilkeson Coke Ovens site. Definition of the historic boundary needs to acknowledge and be informed by associated historic properties such as other coke ovens, the coal washing station, nearby coal mines, archaeological resources, and railroad beds. When completed, the map and resulting documentation should be used to revise the National Register listing to be more inclusive. The need to complete this amendment is the highest priority and needs to be in place as soon as possible to guide the future management of the site.

2. Develop and maintain a 'punch list' of work to be done.

The Town of Wilkeson should prepare a master list of the work that needs to be done in order to open the park to the public. Significant design, engineering, permitting, and construction needs to occur to build the park facilities and infrastructure. Maintenance of a master 'punch list' helps guide efforts related to writing grants, fundraising, and coordinating the work of volunteers.

3. Apply for grants.

It is anticipated that most of the money for design, engineering, permitting, and construction projects will come from one or more grant sources. Local community groups and individuals should support these grant requests by submitting letters of

## WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

support, fundraising for matching requirements, testifying at preliminary grant proposal hearings, etc. A list and description of potential grant programs that can assist in park development is contained in the ‘Funding Opportunities’ chapter of this document.

### 4. Design and Engineering

The Town of Wilkeson will most likely hire one or more consulting firms to do the design and engineering work for various components of the park. This will be the stage where some of the ‘concepts’ described in this plan will get modified, adjusted, and/or refined as more detailed information is obtained (e.g., soil structure, wetland delineation, hydrology, sensitive natural or cultural environments, etc.). Further refinements could occur during the permitting process in order to receive the necessary building and construction permits before work can actually begin.

### 5. Permitting

Permitting can be a very lengthy process that can take one or more years to complete. It is important for local citizens to stay informed and involved during the permitting process and to take actions such as attending and speaking at hearings, writing letters of support for the proposed action, etc. It is also important to remember that permitting processes are in place for good reasons to protect the public’s rights to clean air, water, a healthy environment, and protection of our historic/cultural heritage.

### 6. Construction

The last stage will be the actual construction of park facilities and infrastructure. The Town of Wilkeson will most likely contract major work with construction companies, but some lighter work may also be coordinated and completed by volunteer efforts or by existing Town crews and staff.

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### *Federal Programs*

#### **A. Federal Transportation Bill**

The most significant federal funding source for bicycle and pedestrian facilities the past twenty years has been included in the federal transportation legislation that provides federal funding to states for planning, design, construction and reconstruction of the nation's transportation facilities. Federal transportation legislation is typically updated and renewed by Congress every five years.

The most recent transportation bill is called 'MAP-21 – Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century'. MAP-21 was signed into law on July 6, 2012. It established a new program called 'Transportation Alternatives' (TA) to provide for a variety of alternative transportation projects that were previously eligible activities under separately funded programs. The TA program is funded at a level equal to two percent of the total of all MAP-21 authorized Federal-aid highway and highway research funds, with the amount for each State set aside from the State's formula apportionments. Unless a State opts out, it must use a specified portion of its TA funds for recreational trails projects.

Eligible activities include:

- Transportation alternatives (new definition that incorporates many activities previously called transportation 'enhancements' and adds several new activities)
- Recreational trails program
- Safe routes to schools program
- Planning, designing, or constructing roadways within the right-of way of former Interstate routes or other divided highways.

Fifty percent of TA funds are distributed to areas based on population. States and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) for urbanized areas with more than 200,000 people will conduct a competitive application process for these funds. Eligible applicants include tribal governments, local governments, transit agencies, and school districts.

Contact:

Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator  
Highways and Local Programs  
Washington State Department of Transportation  
310 Maple Park Ave SE  
PO Box 47390  
Olympia, WA 98504-7390  
(360) 705-7596

### **B. EPA Environmental Education Grants**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administers a grant program that supports environmental education projects that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and skills to help people make informed decisions that affect environmental quality. EPA awards grants each year based on funding appropriated by Congress. Annual funding for the program ranges between \$2 and \$3 million. More than 75 percent of the grants awarded by this program receive less than \$15,000.

Contact: EPA Region 10, (206) 553-1207

### **C. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**

The NRCS administers the 'Resource Conservation and Development' (RC&D) program. The purpose of the RC&D program is to accelerate the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, improve the general level of economic activity, and to enhance the environment and standard of living in designated RC&D areas. It improves the capability of State, tribal and local units of government and local nonprofit organizations in rural areas to plan develop and carry out programs for resource conservation and development.

Current program objectives focus on improvement of quality of life achieved through natural resources conservation and community development which leads to sustainable communities, prudent use (development), and the management and conservation of natural resources. RC&D areas are locally sponsored areas designated by the Secretary of Agriculture for RC&D technical and financial assistance program funds.

Contact:

National RC&D Program Manager

(202) 720-0557

For more information about this and other NCRS programs, see the Natural Resources Conservation Service's website at: [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov).

### ***State Programs***

#### **Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office**

The Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) administers grants that fund the development of parks and trails and is the primary agency the Town of Wilkeson should apply to for funding to develop Coke Oven Park. The RCO runs two boards to administer grants: The Recreation & Conservation Funding Board (RCFB) and the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB).

#### **A. Recreation & Conservation Funding Board:**

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB) administers several grant programs for recreation and habitat conservation purposes. Depending on the program, eligible project applicants can include municipal subdivisions of the state (cities, towns, and counties, or port, utility, park and recreation, and school districts), Native American tribes, state agencies, and in some cases, federal agencies and nonprofit organizations.

To be considered for funding assistance, most grant programs require that the proposed project will be operated and maintained in perpetuity for the purposes for which funding is sought. Most grant programs also require that sponsors complete a systematic planning process prior to seeking RCFB funding. Grants are awarded by the Board based on a public, competitive process which weighs the merits of proposed projects against established program criteria.

RCFB administers the following grant programs:

- Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account
- Boating Facilities Program

## WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

- Boating Infrastructure Program
- Farmland Preservation
- Firearms and Archery Range Recreation Program
- Land and Water Conservation Fund
- Non highway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program
- Recreational Trails Program
- Washington Wildlife Recreation Program
- Youth Athletic Facilities

### **B. Salmon Recovery Funding Board:**

The Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) administers three grant programs for protection and restoration of salmon habitat:

- Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program
- Family Forest Fish Passage Program
- Salmon Recovery Program

The board also supports feasibility assessments for future projects and other activities. Depending on the grant program, eligible applicants may include municipal subdivisions (cities, towns, counties, and special districts such as port, conservation, utility, park and recreation, and school), tribal governments, state agencies, nonprofit organizations, regional fisheries enhancement groups, and private landowners.

To be considered for funding, acquisition projects must be operated and maintained in perpetuity, and restoration projects must be operated and maintained for ten years after construction is completed. All projects must be a high priority in the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan. Grants are awarded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board based on a public, competitive process that weighs the merits of the proposed projects against established program criteria.

Contact:

The Recreation and Conservation Office

1111 Washington Street SE

Olympia, Washington 98501

(360) 902-3000

<http://www.rco.wa.gov>

***Private Businesses & Foundations***

There are a number of private businesses and foundations that provide grants for trails and environmental education projects. Grants given through these organizations are harder to track because in any given year some of the grant opportunities will have been discontinued and new opportunities from other organizations will have appeared. The best way to capitalize on these types of grants is to research grant opportunities close to the time of implementation through libraries and the internet.

***Information Source – Federal Grant Programs***

A valuable source of information for all federal grant programs is the “***Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Programs***”. The catalog is a compendium of federal programs, projects, services, and activities that provide assistance or benefits to the American public. It is organized by agency, function, subject, and applicant eligibility. The catalog is available at most libraries. Also, a website has been developed that describes Federal Assistance Grants (visit <http://www.grants.gov>). The “Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance” can be found there.

***APPENDICIES***

***Appendix One - Resident Survey***

***Appendix Two - Visitor Survey***

***Appendix Three - Resident Survey Results Summary***

***Appendix Four - Visitor Survey Results Summary***

***Appendix Five - Coke Ovens National Register Nomination Form***

## Appendix 1 - Resident Survey

### Town of Wilkeson Coke Oven Park Survey

Wilkeson, with planning assistance from the National Park Service, is preparing a conceptual plan for the future development of Coke Oven Park (approximately 11 acres) as a regional park. This goal was identified in the 2010 Wilkeson Master Park Plan. An advisory committee of interested citizens and stakeholders has formed to provide advice and to help with the project. Our draft vision is:

*Wilkeson's Coke Oven Park is a premiere regional destination that provides safe and healthy family oriented recreation opportunities for residents and visitors within the context of the regions natural and cultural heritage. The park is designed to:*

- Restore, preserve and protect the historic coke ovens
- Provide educational and interpretive programs and activities
- Support a variety of community events
- Meet basic park user needs for safety, accessibility, and enjoyment

We need your input on how to best develop Coke Oven Park. Specifically, we would like to ask one person in your household to fill out this questionnaire and return it to Wilkeson Town Hall by June 30, 2012. For questions, please call Mayor Donna Hogerhuis at (360) 829-0790.

1. Indicate the number of people in your household:

Youth 0-5 _____	Youth 6-12 _____
Youth 13-18 _____	Adults 19-35 _____
Adults 36-55 _____	Adults 56+ _____

2. Please circle the activities you or members of your household would do at Coke Oven Park:

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| A. Exercise (walking/jogging)  | F. Picnicking (group)                       |
| B. Playground (small children) | G. Picnicking (individual/family)           |
| C. Playground (older children) | H. Community Events (festivals, fairs, etc) |
| D. Nature observation/birding  | I. Unstructured play (frisbee, catch, etc.) |
| E. Educational/Interpretive    | J. Other (specify) _____                    |

3. From the list above, please indicate the top three priorities for your household:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_



# WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

4. Please circle the landscape and design elements that would enhance the experience and use of Coke Oven Park for you and/or members of your household:

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| A. Paved trail surfaces          | N. Parking                             |
| B. Gravel trail surfaces         | O. Drinking fountains                  |
| C. Dirt trail surfaces           | P. Flush toilets                       |
| D. Exercise course w/stations    | Q. Vault toilets                       |
| E. Grassy open space             | R. Benches                             |
| F. Small amphitheater            | S. Bike racks                          |
| G. Playground equipment          | T. Decorative fencing                  |
| H. Picnic tables                 | U. Security fencing                    |
| I. Cooking/barbequing areas      | V. Lighting                            |
| J. Covered group picnic shelters | W. Posted regulations/guidelines       |
| K. Interpretive signage          | X. Improved handcar race tracks        |
| L. Coke oven replica/model       | Y. Handcar races seating/viewing area  |
| M. Artwork                       | Z. Concession stand/announcement booth |
|                                  | AA. Other (specify) _____              |

5. From the list above, please indicate the top seven priorities for your household:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_\_\_ 7. \_\_\_\_\_

6. For each of the following statements, please indicate your level of agreement based on the following scale:

1. Strongly Agree    2. Agree    3. Neutral    4. Disagree    5. Strongly Disagree

\_\_\_\_\_ Construction of facilities at Coke Oven Park should utilize native building materials as much as possible (such as logs, rock, sandstone, etc.).

\_\_\_\_\_ The design of facilities at Coke Oven Park should be reflective of the regions natural and cultural heritage.

7. The more space dedicated to parking equals less space for other park amenities. Please rank the following by indicating your preference (1 = highest preference; 2 = second preference; and 3 = lowest preference):

- \_\_\_\_\_ One small parking lot (about 10 to 15 parking spaces)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Multiple small parking lots in different locations  
\_\_\_\_\_ One large parking lot (about 30 to 50 parking spaces)

8. Besides Wilkeson's Annual Handcar Races, what type of community events would you like to see offered at Coke Oven Park?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Please provide any additional information and/or comments you would like us to consider.

\_\_\_\_\_

Please return by June 30, 2012, to:

Town of Wilkeson  
Coke Oven Park Survey  
540 Church Street, P.O. Box 89  
Wilkeson, WA 98396

Thank You!

Appendix 2 - Visitor Survey

Town of Wilkeson Coke Oven Park

I reside in (City & State): \_\_\_\_\_

1. Please place a check (✓) next to your age group:

- 12 or younger     19 to 35     56 or older
- 13 to 18         36 to 55

2. Please circle the activities you would do at Coke Oven Park:

- A. Exercise (walking/jogging)
- B. Playground (small children)
- C. Playground (older children)
- D. Nature observation/birding
- E. Educational/Interpretive
- F. Picnicking (group)
- G. Picnicking (individual/family)
- H. Community Events (festivals, fairs, etc)
- I. Unstructured play (frisbee, catch, etc.)
- J. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

3. From the list above, please indicate your top three priorities:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Please circle the landscape and design elements that you would like to have at Coke Oven Park:

- A. Paved trail surfaces
- B. Gravel trail surfaces
- C. Dirt trail surfaces
- D. Exercise course w/stations
- E. Grassy open space
- F. Small amphitheater
- G. Playground equipment
- H. Picnic tables
- I. Cooking/barbequing areas
- J. Covered group picnic shelters
- K. Interpretive signage
- L. Coke oven replica/model
- M. Artwork
- N. Parking
- O. Drinking fountains
- P. Flush toilets
- Q. Vault toilets
- R. Benches
- S. Bike racks
- T. Decorative fencing
- U. Security fencing
- V. Lighting
- W. Posted regulations/guidelines
- X. Improved handcar race tracks
- Y. Handcar races seating/viewing area
- Z. Concession stand/announcement booth
- AA. Dry Camping

5. From the list above, please indicate your top three priorities:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

6. Please rank the following from 1 highly preferred to 3 lowest preference:

- One small parking lot (about 10 to 15 parking spaces)
- Multiple small parking lots in different locations
- One large parking lot (about 30 to 50 parking spaces)

8. Besides Wilkeson's Annual Handcar Races, what type of community events would you like to see offered at Coke Oven Park?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Please provide any additional information and/or comments you would like us to consider:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thank You!

*Appendix 3 - Resident Survey Summary Results*

Town of Wilkeson  
Coke Oven Park Planning Project  
Survey Results – Community Residents

A community survey was included in the June, 2012, utility bill statements that were mailed to every household in the Town of Wilkeson. The survey instructions requested that one person from each household complete the survey and return it to Town Hall by June 30, 2012. A copy of the survey questionnaire is attached.

A total of 26 surveys were returned from this mailing. Some questions were not answered on every survey so the numbers are not always equal. Following is a summary of the results from this survey.

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Indicate the number of people in your household:

- Youth 0-5.....None
- Youth 6-12.....Seven
- Youth 13-18.....Ten
- Adults 19-35.....Nine
- Adults 36-55.....Thirteen
- Adults 56+.....Twenty Two

2. Activities people would do at Coke Oven Park (ranked from highest to lowest):

- 19 - Exercise (walking/jogging)
- 17 - Community events (festivals, fairs, etc.)
- 11 - Picnicking (individual/family)
- 10 - Picnicking (group)
- 9 - Playground (small Children)
- 9 - Nature observation/birding
- 8 - Unstructured play (Frisbee, catch, etc. )
- 8 - Educational/Interpretive
- 5 - Playground (older children)
- 1 - Other (heated pool)
- 1 - Other (dog park)
- 1 - Other (zip line)
- 1 - Other (re-living the old days)

3. From the activities listed please indicate your top three priorities:

<i>Activity</i>	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Priority</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Priority</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Priority</i>
Exercise (walking/jogging)	16	1	1
Playground (small children)	0	2	1
Playground (older children)	0	1	2
Nature observation and/or birding	0	3	4
Educational and/or interpretive	3	2	3
Picnicking (group)	0	0	2
Picnicking (individual and/or family)	1	5	4
Community Events (festivals, fairs, etc)	4	7	4
Unstructured play (Frisbee, catch, etc)	0	2	2
Other (heated pool)	0	0	0
Other (dog park)	0	0	0
Other (zip line)	0	0	0
Other (re-living the old days)	0	0	1

4. Design elements people would like to have at Coke Oven Park (ranked from highest to lowest):

- 17 - Picnic tables
- 14 - Benches
- 14 - Grassy open space
- 14 - Cooking/barbecuing areas
- 14 - Covered group picnic shelters
- 12 - Lighting
- 12 - Improved handcar race tracks
- 11 - Paved trail surfaces
- 10 - Small amphitheater
- 10 - Parking
- 10 - Handcar races seating/viewing area
- 10 - Coke oven replica/model
- 9 - Drinking fountains
- 9 - Flush toilets
- 9 - Vault toilets
- 9 - Bike racks
- 9 - Posted regulation's/guidelines
- 8 - Interpretive signage
- 8 - Exercise course w/stations
- 7 - Gravel trail surfaces
- 7 - Playground equipment
- 7 - Concession stand/announcement booth

# WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

- 6 - Decorative fencing
- 4 - Security fencing
- 3 - Dirt Trail surfaces
- 2 - Artwork
- 1 - Other (Pave bus turnaround)
- 1 - Other (Trail to river)

5. From the landscape and design elements listed please indicate your top seven priorities:

<i>Design Element</i>	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Choice</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Choice</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Choice</i>	<i>4<sup>th</sup> Choice</i>	<i>5<sup>th</sup> Choice</i>	<i>6<sup>th</sup> Choice</i>	<i>7<sup>th</sup> Choice</i>
Paved trail surfaces	4	4	2	0	0	0	0
Gravel trail surfaces	2	3	0	0	0	0	0
Dirt trail surfaces	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Exercise course with stations	1	1	2	0	1	1	0
Grassy open space	1	3	3	1	0	1	1
Small amphitheater	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
Playground equipment	1	1	1	0	1	1	0
Picnic tables	1	4	3	3	2	1	0
Cooking and/or barbecuing areas	0	0	2	3	1	2	1
Covered group picnic shelters	0	1	1	2	1	2	1
Interpretive signage	3	1	2	2	0	0	0
Coke oven replica or model	1	1	1	1	0	3	2
Artwork	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Parking	0	0	2	2	2	1	2
Drinking fountains	0	1	0	2	0	1	2
Flush toilets	2	0	1	2	3	0	1
Vault toilets	2	0	0	1	2	2	0
Benches	1	1	1	2	2	0	0
Bike racks	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Decorative fencing	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Security fencing	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Lighting	1	0	1	0	2	1	5
Posted regulations and guidelines	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Improved handcar race tracks	2	0	1	1	3	2	1
Handcar races seating/viewing area	1	1	0	2	0	3	1
Concession stand and/or announcement booth	0	0	0	0	3	0	1
Other (pave bus turnaround)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other (trail to river)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0

6. Building Materials and Design

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
<b>Building Materials:</b> Construction of facilities at Coke Oven Park should utilize native building materials as much as possible (such as logs, rock, sandstone, etc.).	17	9	0	0	0
<b>Design:</b> The design of facilities at Coke Oven Park should be reflective of the regions natural and cultural heritage.	15	7	3	0	0

7. Parking lot size and preference:

<i>Parking Lot Description</i>	<i>Highest Preference</i>	<i>Second Preference</i>	<i>Lowest Preference</i>
One small parking lot (about 10 to 15 parking spaces)	16	4	4
Multiple small parking lots in different locations	10	8	2
One large parking lot (about 30 to 50 parking spaces)	13	2	5

8. Besides Wilkeson's Annual Handcar Races, what type of community events would you like to see offered at Coke Oven Park?

- Re-enactment of a logging and mining camp
- Music
- Community BBQ, 4th of July events, Memorial Day and Christmas tree lighting
- Gift shop
- Town picnic
- Educational
- 4th of July celebration
- Concerts, art shows, dog and cat shows, small cultural events

## WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

- Farmers market, national night out, concerts
- Lawn mower races of course; Quad races
- Town BBQ, kids Halloween party
- Retire Jim Walker
- BMX track, a coke oven run
- Activities for kids
- Jazz festival, music, plays, history interpretive skits
- Events, concerts, town picnic

9. Please provide any additional information/or comments you would like us to consider:

- Playground equipment is provided at the school.
- We would like theme similar to Leavenworth, but appropriate to our past (when coal was king over oil and wood was king over bricks).
- PLEASE DO THIS.
- Pave the bus turn around.
- Making of this park would be wonderful BUT since we don't have a police presence in this town how are we going to ensure safety in this town, how are we going to ensure safety and prevent vandalism? Improper use of space. We can't even keep our children safe walking to and from school. Construct the park with focus of cultural and education. NOT COMMERCIALIZED ACTIVITY! Restore the coke ovens and fix existing seating; leave everything else as is.
- Keep it small and keep it historical.
- Keep the ovens would be good; to show history and a sign to show history info would be awesome.
- I don't think too much should be done to the park; the more you put up there the more to be vandalized. It is away from the town too much for watching out for vandalism. It is also away from town too much for there being a lot of use other than the handcar races. The more natural it is left the better.
- Some kind of supervision at the park for safety for all.
- Anything you build must be vandal proof, damage by errant teenagers is guaranteed.
- Group spaces for picnic, skate park, so others will provide constant use which diminishes vandalism. Thanks for asking.
- Baseball fields would be nice.

END

Appendix 4 - Visitor Survey Summary Results

Town of Wilkeson
Coke Oven Park Planning Project
Survey Results – Non-Resident Survey

A non-resident survey was conducted on Saturday, July 21, 2012, during the annual Wilkeson Hand Car Races community event. A copy of the survey questionnaire is attached. A total of 102 surveys were obtained during the event. Seventeen (17) of those were from people who indicated they are Wilkeson residents so those 17 responses are tabulated separately for comparison purposes between resident and non-resident responses.

The questions asked on the non-resident survey were nearly the same as the questions asked on the resident survey with the following exceptions:

- 1. Survey length – the questionnaire was shortened to one page to reduce the amount of time it would take to complete the survey. Question 6 from the resident survey was deleted and not included on the non-resident survey.
2. Question about age group – the category for 'Youth 0-5' was deleted and replaced with a choice indicating '12 or younger'.
3. Question about landscape and design element preferences – the choice for 'AA. Other (specify)' was deleted and replaced with a choice of 'AA. Dry Camping'.
4. Question about ranking landscape and design elements – The number of priority options was reduced from 7 to 3.

Some questions were not answered on every survey so the numbers are not always equal. Following is a summary of the results from this survey.

\* \* \* \* \*

NON-WILKESON RESIDENTS (85 Surveys)

1. Residence (City & State):

- 13 – Carbonado
13 – Buckley
11 – Enumclaw
8 – Bonney Lake
7 – Puyallup
5 – South Prairie
3 – No response
3 – Tacoma
2 – Eatonville
2 – Olympia
2 – Rainier Ranch Site
1 – Las Vegas, NV
1 – Graham
1 – Orting
1 – Browns Point
1 – Pittsburgh, CA
1 – Lake Tapps
1 – Auburn
1 – Federal Way
1 – Edgewood
1 – Sumner
1 – Redmond
1 – Duvall
1 – Oregon
1 – Seattle
1 – Fairfax
1 – Burnett

# WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

## 2. Age group:

- Youth 0 -12.....One
- Youth 13-18.....Four
- Adults 19-35.....Ten
- Adults 36-55.....Forty-five
- Adults 56+.....Twenty Three

## 3. Activities people would do at Coke Oven Park (ranked from highest to lowest):

- 53 - Community events (festivals, fairs, etc.)
- 50 - Exercise (walking/jogging)
- 49 - Picnicking (individual/family)
- 46 - Picnicking (group)
- 46 - Educational/Interpretive
- 39 - Nature observation/birding
- 26 - Playground (small Children)
- 26 - Unstructured play (Frisbee, catch, etc. )
- 20 - Playground (older children)
- 4 - Other (dog walk)
- 3 - Other (skate park)
- 1 - Other (concerts)
- 1 - Other (mudding)
- 1 - Other (wading pool)
- 1 - Other (zip line)
- 1 - Other (historic preservation)

## 4. From the activities listed please indicate your top three priorities:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Priority</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Priority</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Priority</b>
Exercise (walking/jogging)	17	5	8
Playground (small children)	12	8	4
Playground (older children)	10	3	5
Nature observation and/or birding	9	9	7
Educational and/or interpretive	12	2	7
Picnicking (group)	2	7	6
Picnicking (individual and/or family)	14	20	7
Community Events (festivals, fairs, etc)	11	12	13
Unstructured play (Frisbee, catch, etc)	3	1	5
Other (dog walk)	1	1	1
Other (skate park)	2	0	1
Other (concerts)	0	0	0
Other (mudding)	1	0	0
Other (wading pool)	1	0	0
Other (zip line)	1	0	0
Other (historic preservation)	1	0	0

## WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

5. Design elements people would like to have at Coke Oven Park (ranked from highest to lowest):

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>49 - Grassy open space</li> <li>48 - Picnic tables</li> <li>45 - Flush toilets</li> <li>38 - Drinking fountains</li> <li>33 - Paved trail surfaces</li> <li>32 - Benches</li> <li>31 - Parking</li> <li>30 - Cooking/barbecuing areas</li> <li>30 - Lighting</li> <li>28 - Coke oven replica/model</li> <li>27 - Handcar races seating/viewing area</li> <li>26 - Gravel trail surfaces</li> <li>24 - Small amphitheater</li> <li>22 - Playground equipment</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22 - Covered group picnic shelters</li> <li>20 - Posted regulation's/guidelines</li> <li>18 - Improved handcar race tracks</li> <li>16 - Bike racks</li> <li>15 - Dirt trail surfaces</li> <li>12 - Interpretive signage</li> <li>10 - Vault toilets</li> <li>10 - Exercise course w/stations</li> <li>9 - Concession stand/announcement booth</li> <li>8 - Dry camping</li> <li>7 - Decorative fencing</li> <li>7 - Security fencing</li> <li>5 - Artwork</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

6. From the landscape and design elements listed please indicate your top three priorities:

<i>Design Element</i>	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Choice</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Choice</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Choice</i>
Paved trail surfaces	13	2	3
Gravel trail surfaces	8	7	2
Dirt trail surfaces	5	3	1
Exercise course with stations	2	0	0
Grassy open space	10	4	8
Small amphitheater	5	3	2
Playground equipment	1	6	4
Picnic tables	3	14	5
Cooking and/or barbecuing areas	3	7	3
Covered group picnic shelters	1	2	2
Interpretive signage	5	5	2
Coke oven replica or model	8	1	3
Artwork	1	0	2
Parking	3	1	3
Drinking fountains	0	2	3
Flush toilets	3	8	5
Vault toilets	0	0	0
Benches	0	1	0
Bike racks	0	2	0
Decorative fencing	0	0	0
Security fencing	0	0	0
Lighting	1	0	5
Posted regulations and guidelines	0	0	2
Improved handcar race tracks	1	2	4
Handcar races seating/viewing area	5	3	0
Concession stand and/or announcement booth	1	1	0
Dry Camping	1	0	2

# WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

## 7. Parking lot size and preference:

<i>Parking Lot Description</i>	<i>Highest Preference</i>	<i>Second Preference</i>	<i>Lowest Preference</i>
One small parking lot (about 10 to 15 parking spaces)	17	17	19
Multiple small parking lots in different locations	33	12	9
One large parking lot (about 30 to 50 parking spaces)	23	12	18

## 8. Besides Wilkeson's Annual Handcar Races, what type of community events would you like to see offered at Coke Oven Park?

- Demonstration of period mining technology / model of mine
- Beer festival/tasting
- Picnics (2)
- Live music/ music festival (12 )
- Bluegrass festival (3)
- Street fairs
- Craft shows
- Animal shows
- Star gazing
- Farmers market (4)
- Movie nights
- Car shows
- History education (2 )
- Show of coke ovens are/were
- Street party/fairs
- Similar to Wilkeson Days ( 2)
- July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks event
- Art festivals
- Fairs
- Summer camp
- Keep as natural as possible
- Skate park (2)
- Like the old times, race side by side
- Wilkeson elementary school activities/education
- Family activities
- Dog park
- Kite fest
- Any community/educational event
- BBQ, benches and picnic tables
- Mud racing

## 9. Please provide any additional information/or comments you would like us to consider:

- Please stick to historic accuracy, do not re-write history
- Historical preservation

- Dog friendly
- Show off what the coke ovens are/were, educate people about our history
- Ice cream truck
- Let all residents know when events occur (all surrounding areas. Also do not charge so much for vendors).
- Love to see a display of the ovens with explanation of their history and how they worked
- Skate board park (2)
- Leave as is
- Possible horse area

**WILKESON RESIDENTS (17 Surveys)**

1. Age group:

Youth 0 -12.....None  
 Youth 13-18.....One  
 Adults 19-35.....Two  
 Adults 36-55.....Ten  
 Adults 56+.....Four

2. Activities people would do at Coke Oven Park (ranked from highest to lowest):

12 - Community events (festivals, fairs, etc.)  
 12 - Exercise (walking/jogging)  
 9 - Picnicking (individual/family)  
 9 - Playground (small Children)  
 8 - Picnicking (group)  
 7 - Unstructured play (Frisbee, catch, etc.)  
 7 - Playground (older children)  
 6 - Nature observation/birding  
 5 - Educational/Interpretive  
 1 - Other (bicycle shop)

3. From the activities listed please indicate your top three priorities:

<i>Activity</i>	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Priority</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Priority</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Priority</i>
Exercise (walking/jogging)	4	2	3
Playground (small children)	5	0	2
Playground (older children)	2	2	0
Nature observation and/or birding	2	2	0
Educational and/or interpretive	1	1	0
Picnicking (group)	1	1	2
Picnicking (individual and/or family)	0	3	1
Community Events (festivals, fairs, etc)	2	1	5
Unstructured play (Frisbee, catch, etc)	0	1	1
Other (bicycle shop)	0	0	0

# WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

4. Design elements people would like to have at Coke Oven Park (ranked from highest to lowest):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 11 - Benches                           | 5 - Small amphitheater                  |
| 10 - Grassy open space                 | 5 - Improved handcar race tracks        |
| 10 - Flush toilets                     | 5 - Vault toilets                       |
| 10 - Gravel trail surfaces             | 4 - Dirt trail surfaces                 |
| 9 - Paved trail surfaces               | 3 - Cooking/barbecuing areas            |
| 9 - Lighting                           | 3 - Artwork                             |
| 8 - Picnic tables                      | 2 - Posted regulation's/guidelines      |
| 7 - Parking                            | 2 - Interpretive signage                |
| 7 - Playground equipment               | 2 - Exercise course w/stations          |
| 7 - Covered group picnic shelters      | 2 - Concession stand/announcement booth |
| 6 - Drinking fountains                 | 2 - Dry camping                         |
| 6 - Coke oven replica/model            | 0 - Decorative fencing                  |
| 6 - Bike racks                         | 0 - Security fencing                    |
| 5 - Handcar races seating/viewing area |   |

5. From the landscape and design elements listed please indicate your top three priorities:

<i>Design Element</i>	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Choice</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Choice</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Choice</i>
Paved trail surfaces	3	2	0
Gravel trail surfaces	2	3	0
Dirt trail surfaces	0	0	1
Exercise course with stations	0	1	0
Grassy open space	0	0	0
Small amphitheater	1	1	1
Playground equipment	1	0	2
Picnic tables	1	0	0
Cooking and/or barbecuing areas	0	0	0
Covered group picnic shelters	0	1	0
Interpretive signage	0	0	0
Coke oven replica or model	2	1	0
Artwork	2	0	1
Parking	0	0	1
Drinking fountains	1	0	1
Flush toilets	1	3	2
Vault toilets	0	0	1
Benches	0	0	1
Bike racks	0	0	0
Decorative fencing	0	0	0
Security fencing	0	0	0
Lighting	0	2	2
Posted regulations and guidelines	0	1	1
Improved handcar race tracks	0	0	0
Handcar races seating/viewing area	0	0	0
Concession stand and/or announcement booth	0	0	0
Dry Camping	0	0	0

6. Parking lot size and preference:

<i>Parking Lot Description</i>	<i>Highest Preference</i>	<i>Second Preference</i>	<i>Lowest Preference</i>
One small parking lot (about 10 to 15 parking spaces)	8	2	3
Multiple small parking lots in different locations	5	5	1
One large parking lot (about 30 to 50 parking spaces)	4	3	6

7. Besides Wilkeson's Annual Handcar Races, what type of community events would you like to see offered at Coke Oven Park?

- BBQ
- Kids days, craft shows & music events (2)
- Historical restoration
- Arts festival & talent search
- Town picnics and holiday festivities
- Family events

8. Please provide any additional information/or comments you would like us to consider:

- Some place for kids to play
- Family events, arts, farmers markets and natural
- Keep the coke ovens there
- Skate park

END

Appendix 5 - Coke Ovens National Register Nomination Form

42 02 28

Form 10-800 (Rev. 6-72) UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Washington	COUNTY: Pierce
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	

**1. NAME**

COMMON: Coke Ovens PI 177

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Wilkeson CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: #3 - Honorable Julia B. Hansen

STATE: Washington COUNTY: Pierce CODE: 053

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted No: <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Governmental <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify): <u>abandoned</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: Burlington-Northern Inc.

STREET AND NUMBER: 176 E. 5th Street

CITY OR TOWN: St. Paul STATE: Minnesota CODE: 27

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Pierce County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER: 930 Tacoma Avenue South

CITY OR TOWN: Tacoma STATE: Washington CODE: 53

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: None

DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Washington  
COUNTY: Pierce  
FOR NPS USE ONLY  
ENTRY NUMBER:  
DATE:

WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

DESCRIPTION	
CONDITION	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Ruined <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed (Check One)
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered
	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site (Check One)
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	
<p>The bee hive shaped coke ovens are arranged in pairs for a distance of about three tenths of a mile parallel to a now abandoned rail line immediately adjacent to the town of Wilkeson. Although there were 160 ovens at this location at one time, all but about 30 have been recently destroyed.</p> <p>The remaining ovens are about eight feet high and twelve feet in diameter. They are constructed of brick, marked "Heathfield" and reputedly imported from Scotland, beveled to form the distinctive bee hive shape. The construction was accomplished apparently without mortar but a six-inch layer of cement covered the exterior of each oven. Originally, a sandstone wall about ten feet high faced the entire line of ovens and a small arched embrasure in the wall opened into each oven. In the late 1940's, the stone was removed and was used for wall construction in Ortting. Only the lowest two or three courses of stone remain. As a result, the earth covering the ovens has eroded away partially, although the major portion has been held intact by a dense growth of timber and brush. The side of each oven which was faced by the sandstone wall has fallen in somewhat, although the original configuration of the oven is clear.</p> <p>The interior of the ovens show signs of intense heat, the effects varying from a slight color change to the melting and fusing of the brick face. Ash lines the floors in some ovens, although the majority are filled with earth and rubble. A small hole about one foot in diameter is centered on the top of each structure.</p>	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

# WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE			
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	
SPECIFIC CRITERIA (If Applicable and Known)			
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Parliament	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE			
<p>The Wilkeson Coke Ovens represent an early industrial activity in Washington which had an effect throughout the Pacific Coast. They are an example of the influence of the railroad in the development of the area. They are also emblematic of the state's coal industry, an enterprise which has always held much promise but has never grown into full substance. It has remained even until now an interesting but subdued element in the economy and history of the Puget Sound Region.</p> <p>The Pierce County bee hive coke ovens, of which those at Wilkeson were the most numerous and active, were the sole supply of coke in the coastal area.</p> <p>Coal was first discovered in the canyon of the Carbon River in Pierce County in 1862, and mining for local consumption began in 1873. During that same year, the Northern Pacific Railway had reached its western terminus at Tacoma and realized the potential value of the Wilkeson coal deposits. A branch line was built to the area in 1876. Several organizations mined the coal, but the emphasis altered when it was discovered that the coal could make very satisfactory coke.</p> <p>The Tacoma Coal &amp; Coke Company built the first bee hive coke ovens on the Pacific Coast at Wilkeson in 1885. The first 25 ovens were built as an experiment and supplied coke to foundries in the Seattle and Portland areas. The Wilkeson Coal &amp; Coke Company added 50 more ovens in 1891, and by 1902, there were 100 ovens in constant use. In later years, a total of 160 ovens supplemented the original 25. Lead smelting added to the demand for coke after 1899, and demand increased sharply in 1902 with the advent of copper smelting.</p> <p>The ovens were the only coke producers from 1885 to 1914. Subsequent to that date, the bee hive coke was supplemented with by-product and bench gas coke. Coke production reached a maximum of 125,872 tons in 1916, after which it declined steadily until termination in 1937. With the loss of markets for coke, local coal mining operations shut down. The most significant factor in the reduction of coke production was the change in the copper smelting industry from the blast furnace to the reverberatory furnace which used pulverized coal, oil, or natural gas.</p>			

WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK

Form 10-200a  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Washington
COUNTY	Pierce
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

#8 - Significance  
Wilkeson Coke Ovens

The production of coke is essentially a baking process whereby impurities are driven out of coal, leaving a substance which burns with a more intense heat. At Wilkeson, the procedure began when rail cars loaded with washed, dry coal traveled down a track laid on top of the ovens. Coal was shoveled into the ovens through the opening at the top and the embrasure in the sandstone wall was sealed with clay. Depending on the quality desired, the material was baked for 48, 72, or 96 hours, the oven opened and the coke raked into rail cars waiting on the adjacent siding. Although the initial fire to prepare the coke had to be made with wood, the ovens retained sufficient heat to continue the process with each individual charging.

After the ovens were abandoned, they proved useful to at least one individual. A Wilkeson miner worked diligently and carefully saved his money. After spending his small fortune on his love, he was jilted. Disappointed and embittered, he moved into an oven and made it his home earning him the name of Coke Oven Dan and a reputation as the town character.

GPO 921-724

**WILKESON COKE OVEN PARK**

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Daniels, Joseph. Coal Fields of Pierce County. Division of Geology Bulletin #10, Olympia, 1914.

Washington Geological Survey. Annual Report 1902, Vol. 2.

Wilkeson Area Coal Study. U.S. Area Redevelopment Administration, 1963.

"Pierce County Town has Varied History", Tacoma News Tribune, August 2, 1964, Page 5.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	47° 6' 08"	122° 2' 21"			
NE					
SF					
SW					

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than one

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY:**

NAME AND TITLE: Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

ORGANIZATION: Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission DATE: 11/1/73

STREET AND NUMBER: P.O. Box 1128

CITY OR TOWN: Olympia STATE: Washington CODE: 53

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION	NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION
<p>As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-663), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name: <u>Charles H. Odgaard</u>  <u>Charles H. Odgaard</u></p> <p>TITLE: <u>Director - Washington State Parks &amp; Recreation Commission</u></p> <p>Date: <u>January 14, 1974</u></p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____            Director, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____            Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date: _____</p>

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1973-725-147/1487 3-4

