Nature is constantly changing over time, a continuum of cycles and succession. This design aims to make these processes visible and reconnect visitors to nature through the observation of these changes.

One loop meanders through the site while nodes along the way encourage people to explore, play, and rest in their own way. Each node envelops the visitor in a different ecological process while a consistent 'snag' typology creates cohesion across the site. This snag typology takes the form of bird snags, scattered logs, beaver dam analogs, and bird blinds. Each creates habitat while allowing visitors to use all of their senses to interact with nature. The plantings and restoration work on site support the flows of wildlife and manage water movement, presenting nature as living art.
Movement

People

Varied planting areas create a diverse set of experiences across the site, accommodating many activities and ways to interact with nature. The looped path leads visitors through the site and provides many opportunities for play. These areas support play for people of all ages, especially children, and facilitate learning about ecological processes on site.

Water

The flow of water on site is managed and enhanced through a restoration approach. Man-made beaver dam analogs are used to enhance the existing topography and allow water to move more freely and slowly. The beaver dam analogs also work to pool water in designated locations, ultimately relieving the site of the flooding patterns that currently exist. Different amounts of water exist on site at different times of the year, enhancing the seasonal experiences of the meadow.
The plantings are divided into three different areas: the second growth forest, the wetland, and the wildflower meadow. Each area features only native plants and draws from the existing plants on site. The aim is to create a colorful experience that changes throughout the year. Different species bloom at different times and in various colors so that visitors can tell time by what is in bloom. Each plant species has also been chosen for its ecological benefits. These plants support many pollinators and bird species, particularly those featured on the bird species mural, to encourage a robust ecosystem.
The Heron Meadow Educational Center serves as a place for community engagement, education, and research. Education and play are major themes in this project. Children will be able to explore the meadow, observe its current conditions, and design their own experiments to help inform the public about the habitat and water flow on Vashon.

Reutilizing the current Milk Barn as an onsite educational center: Our strategy is to peel off the skin of the barn’s southern side, transforming it into a community veranda to maximize engagement between the building and the meadow.

Bird Blinds
Wildlife is the ultimate client in this project as the majority of the site is designed to maximize rehabilitation of wildlife habitat. Bird blinds are installed at strategic places so that visitors can admire the birds without disrupting their natural cycles.

Nature Playground
Our design encourages children to interact with nature by placing natural elements such as beaver dam analogs, nurse logs, and rocks adjacent to the pedestrian path. These serve as playful, suggestive access points to nature.
**100 Year Vision**

**Process & Succession**

Within the second growth forest areas, this design aims to create new coniferous forests as originally existed on Vashon Island. A tree's story on this site does not end when it dies. Instead, the tree is reutilized in a new way. This timeline showcases these cycles while highlighting the diversity that will exist in the canopy height of the new growth forest areas. Alder trees will provide a mixed canopy while the evergreen trees grow to maturity and provide shade for western hemlock and Sitka spruce trees to thrive in. These variations in heights over time allow various bird species to come back to the Heron Meadow and create an evolving human experience.