
K. EXHIBIT DESCRIPTIONS DESIGN NARRATIVE

Introduction

The gallery is approximately 1600 square feet, fifteen feet tall, and circular. People who come into the gallery may proceed in any direction, but it is human nature in Western cultures to turn right upon entering. The Storyline therefore begins to the right of the entry and continues counter clockwise around the gallery, beginning in the past and continuing to the present. For those who elect a different route, the story is divided into discernable segments whether ‘backwards’ or ‘forwards.’

Storyline

The Story begins with the geologic processes that formed the region and the resulting glaciers, watersheds, forests and wildlife that evolved; proceeds through the arrival of early people and later Europeans, and the resources such as fur and mining that attracted them; and culminates with current stewardship practices and the presence of the agencies who now manage our public lands and resources.

The Story focuses on the natural resources and how people came to utilize them. The underlying message is about Change – the slow or sometimes rapid and catastrophic rate of change and its impact; our initial perception of a ‘limitless’ resource that has changed over time and now recognizes the vulnerability of our natural world; and lately a fundamental change in how we manage our land and care for its resources.

Appearance (organizing design systems)

The gallery is rich with visual and physical complexity, yet an underlying organization is perceived by the visitor – an organization that keeps rein on the complexity and helps people navigate.

Two juxtaposed systems are at work in the room and form the basis of the exhibit design and layout:

1. An *environment of natural landscape segments* includes scenic diorama pieces of a glacier, nunatak, spruce forest, Lowell cabin, railroad trestle, archeological dig and fishing scene; and
2. An *environment made or marked by human hand* includes the encircling architectural wall and its graphic surface treatment, several freestanding graphic ‘kiosks,’ and cutaway graphic surfaces that expose the sides of diorama pieces as ‘story surfaces’ with text, imbedments, images and discovery elements.

The two exhibitry systems are carefully balanced to convey beauty, richness, and information, and to facilitate circulation. They are obviously all manmade elements, but the visitor will accept and understand the ways in which they play off each other. Less

obviously, the two methods combine to elegantly deliver complex messages within a relatively small space, while leaving 8' – 10' wide 'museum standard' circulation paths.

People

Because visitors relate most easily to stories about people, several figures appear within the exhibits: an NPS researcher at a nunatak; USFS fire fighters in the forest; May Lowell outside her cabin; a railroad construction worker; a desolate miner in the gold field; an Alutiiq archeologist; and a fisherman.

Wildlife

Because much of the resource is based in wildlife, animals such as fish, mammals, and birds appear as models within the settings. Additional animals appear in photo panels.

Animation

Additionally, the gallery is animated by changing images in four locations:

1. Overhead video projections fit within an encircling band of photomurals;*
2. Slow, magical 'reveal' scenes appear on scrims at the Successional Forest;
3. Rearscreen projection displays multiple historic images across a window in the Lowell cabin; and
4. Video 'Disaster' excerpts from NPS loop on a monitor at Yesterday and Today.

These kinetic elements impart a sense of activity to the space when few visitors are present.

* Projections may be excerpted from the Show – see accompanying Show Narrative.

Humor

An opportunity exists to convey some Alaskan humor and quirkiness within this exhibit. For example, Alaska Nellie and her bear could be shown making roof repairs in the Yesterday and Today setting – an unexpected surprise that visitors will never forget.

Audio

And finally, 5 audio segments will help visitors believe in the realism of these settings by adding a touch of magic – a feeling of mystery connecting the past with the present, and taking them momentarily out of the gallery and out of themselves.

For example, standing under a train trestle with a dejected gold miner in view, visitors might hear the whistle and rumble of the train on the Alaska Railroad tracks accompanied by a narrator saying: "*The ghost of gold still travels the Kenai ...*"

Or approaching a calving glacier, visitors might hear a cacophony of kittiwakes accompanied by a line from the show film: * "*... glaciers heave downward and crack into the sea ... the earth shifts and waters rise ...*"

* See accompanying Show Narrative

APPROACHING THE EXHIBIT GALLERY

Optional Sculpture: Freestanding within entry plaza.

Subject TBD.

Timeline Wall Graphic: Wall-mounted within building entryway.

Features highlights from region's natural and cultural history, Seward, and the formation and legacies of the participating agencies.

Trip Planning Map: Wall-mounted across exterior side of Gallery.

Establishes location of gallery Storyline while providing reference information for the Trip Planning area.

Gallery Intro and Title: Wall-mounted next to and above the Gallery doorway.

Introduces Main Message of Exhibit.

Issues invitation to visit the Theater/Auditorium.

Issues invitation to 'Get out there!'

Theater Title: Wall-mounted outside of Multi-Purpose Room, above its doorway.

Ties Show and Gallery experiences together.



WITHIN THE EXHIBIT GALLERY

Main Message: This dramatic region is characterized by a changing landscape and dynamic underlying geology which affects plants, animals and people; in turn, people's changing attitudes have effected this environment over time.

Subthemes:

- Habitats are dynamic – this area is continually changing through plant and animal succession.
- Agencies use a variety of strategies to manage habitats based on their different mandates.
- Habitats are complex and interrelated and can be disrupted by human activity.
- The factors that limit species diversity are not always what one might expect.

PLEASE NOTE: The subject of Geology is interspersed throughout the exhibits, and appears on the kiosks. The term 'kiosk' is a placeholder used to describe stacked dimensional interactive units that contain graphics, images, artifacts, and discovery items. The 'kiosks' come in three heights – short, medium and tall – in order to fit easily into their surroundings. The graphic grid wall around the room's perimeter employs full-color, screened-back, and/or duotone photos, line art and quotations. Names and titles will be revised as the project proceeds – words shown here are placeholders.

Exhibit 1: GEOLOGY, CLIMATE AND GLACIERS

Content Description:

Forces Shape the Region.

Geology.

- Plate tectonics and geology are foundation of ecosystem.
- Ring of Fire and park/forest within it.
- Slow steady changes contrast with abrupt ones (slow steady crustal movements vs. earthquakes / avalanches that create dramatic changes in an instant).

Climate and Glaciers.*

- Glaciation / Ice Age.
- Climate and glaciers define and restrict what can grow or live here.
- Glaciers still here due to ocean circulation and storm patterns which cause icefield formation that feeds glaciers.
- Vivid examples of attempted ice field crossings and snow storms.

*(Change/retreat /recognizing glacial landforms are covered at Exit Glacier).

Media Description:

Towering rock spire with mountain goat and portion of a glacier.

Tall kiosk with focus on What's here and Why is it here?

3D regional topo model.

Cutaway glacier with relationship between geology, climate, glaciers, plants and animals.

Cutaway rock with exposed geologic strata, imbedded rock samples, and diagrams of region's basic geology.

Wall mural(s), scenic and detail photographs and quotations range along the back wall.

Video projection alternates with photomurals overhead.

Cutaway sections may incorporate pull-out discovery drawers or panels, inset objects, images and text.

Exhibit 2: FJORDS AND TIDEWATER GLACIERS

Content Description:

Habitat interconnections.

Habitat Formation and Range.

- A continuum of interconnected habitats range from nearly barren icefields through temperate rainforest, to rich marine waters.

Fjords/Tidewater Glaciers.

- Glaciers carve deep fjords of cold, oxygen rich water.
- Glacial movements transport nutrients within their sediments.
- Calving or melting glaciers mix fresh water with salt water.
- Focus story – Harbor seals use icebergs for pupping – what will be effect of climate change? OASLC (Ocean Alaska Science and Learning Center) programs provide research and education to support Kenai Fjords National Park and Alaska Sea Life Center.
- Focus story – Upwelling of nutrients from calving ice creates rich environment for fish and the sea birds that eat them – an example is Kittlitz's Murrelet, a recently listed threatened species.

Media Description:

Nunatak and surrounding ice flow / glacier.

Figure of NPS field researcher monitoring the nunatak.

Glacial calving at leading edge of ice.

Cutaway glacier with graphic surfaces showing relationship between tidewater glaciers, nutrients and sealife.

An audio program with directional speakers conveys cracks, groans, snaps and splashes of calving glaciers, along with sounds of seabirds and one line of narration.

Wall mural(s), scenic and detail photographs and quotations range along the back wall.

Video projection excerpts from the Show alternate with photomurals in overhead band.

Cutaway sections may incorporate pull-out discovery drawers or panels, inset objects, images and text.

Exhibit 3: NUNATAKS

Content Description:

Icefields and Nunataks

- Nunataks are small islands of life amidst a sea of ice.
- Wildlife is hidden within the nunatak.
- Focus story – NPS inventories and monitors the surprising array of life making use of the icefields.
- Sidebar: Scientists and their fieldwork.

Media Description:

Wildlife models within the scene.

Cutaway of ice field / glacier and nunatak.

Medium kiosk with nunatak model on top and graphics about refugia.

Wall mural(s), scenic and detail photographs and quotations range along the back wall.

Video projection excerpts from the Show alternate with photomurals in overhead band.

Cutaway sections may incorporate pull-out discovery drawers or panels, inset objects, images and text.

Exhibit 4: SPRUCE FOREST

Content Description:

Spruce Forest.

- Extent of boreal spruce forest and threats to it.
- What lives here.
- Focus story – Spruce bark beetle effects on forest habitat and wildlife.
- Climate change effects on forest habitat and wildlife.
- Focus story – USFS management of forest.

Media Description:

Wall-mounted graphics about animals and forestry management.

Forest setting with spruce tree and nurse stump.

Animal model in den beneath the stump.

Crawl through tunnel for kids.

USFS fire crew figures doing fire suppression.

Short kiosk with giant spruce bark beetle and pull-out discovery shelves about infestation.

Wall mural(s), scenic and detail photographs and quotations range along the back wall.

Video projection excerpts from the Show alternate with photomurals in overhead band.

Cutaway sections may incorporate pull-out discovery drawers or panels, inset objects, images and text.

Exhibit 5: FOREST SUCCESSION

Content Description:

Glaciers move and shape the forests.

Glacial retreat.

Emergent forests.

Forest succession.

Climax forest.

Alutiiq village.

Media Description:

Evocative and ‘magical’ scenes morph into one another and show succession over time, concluding with the village(s) that preceded the Lowell’s arrival. (Uses theatrical scrims and programmed lighting changes.)

Bas relief models of animals and people set between the theatrical scrims.

A railing panel details the processes.

An audio program with directional speakers adds to the sense of ‘magic’ by conveying sounds of insects, birds, scuffling mammals, wind and rain and native voice.

Wall mural(s), scenic and detail photographs and quotations range along the back wall.

Video projection excerpts from the Show alternate with photomurals in overhead band.

Exhibit 6: YESTERDAY AND TODAY

Content Description:

History of Seward: Human Use of Resources.

Early People.

- Focus story – The people who were here first.

Lowell Cabin.

- Focus story – Frank Lowell was a fur trader personifying the attitude toward wildlife as subsistence and economic resource; Mary Lowell was an Alaskan native and skilled at frontier survival and subsistence.
- Rate of change accelerated due to technology and population, accompanied by slower rate of change in attitude toward resources.
- Examples of focus stories: Herring Pete at Nuka Island in the Park, and a fox farm at Lower Russian River (?) in the Forest (and/or Alaska Nellie and her bear).
- Examples of changing dichotomy: Then – exotic species valued and introduced, but bounty placed on native bald eagles. Now – exotics removed as an issue in Park and Forest, while bald eagles are protected.



Media Description:

Figure of Mary Lowell stands near her porch, shading her eyes from the sun and looking out across the water, as if waiting.

Alutiiq baskets holding forest products sit on Mary's porch.

The smell of wood smoke is in the air.

A 'construction armature' employs timber from Old Solly's to provide a framework for artifacts, historic photographs and scale models.

A featured photo of tree stumps recalls the earlier forest that was removed.

Rearscreen projection on the cabin's window expands the number of images visitors see.

A video monitor shows clips from NPS archival 'disaster' footage about quake & Valdez.

An audio program with directional speakers conveys the sounds of construction, voices debating where and how to build, the clang of fire bells, the sounds of chickens, dogs and mules, and/or oral histories.

Optional figures of Alaska Nellie and her bear peer from a rooftop.

Video projection excerpts from the Show alternate with photomurals in overhead band.

Exhibit 7: MINING AND TRANSPORT

Content Description:

The need for transportation grew from economics and greed for gold.

- Mining and Transport (resource extraction).
- Focus stories – accelerated human use of resources, Harry Johnson & Alaska Nellie (also may be oral histories available from people involved).
- Ties into geology – gold mining, perils of travel, difficulties with railroad.
- Extraction and trade was motivation for traveling the interior, giving rise to Iditarod and construction of Alaska Railroad.

Media Description:

Railroad trestle with construction worker on cantilevered tracks extends overhead.

Fragment of hillside below the trestle, where a miner sits dejectedly among rocks and rubble, beside a flume and his mining gear.

A medium kiosk with gold ore and gold artifacts, samples of coal, photos of oil tankers, astounding facts, and other resource-related discovery items.

Audio track whistle and narrative.

Wall mural(s), scenic and detail photographs and quotations range along the back wall.

Video projection excerpts from the Show alternate with photomurals in overhead band.

Exhibit 8: AGENCIES AND STEWARDSHIP

Content Description:

Stewardship and Changing Attitudes.

Seeds of Change.

- Seward, Park and Forest as they are today – are still tied to natural processes and still using natural resources, but with more focus on recreation and stewardship.
- Examples of how these agencies and others accomplish this, including some of the specifics of current management issues, projects, research.

USFS: Outdoor Recreation Management and the Forest.

TBD.

NPS: Cultural Management and the Park.

- Focus story – Alutiiq use of natural resources and relationship to the land; maintaining their traditions; recovering their history.
- Hope, AK.
- Others (TBD).

Media Description:

A split foreground scene shows (NPS) archeological dig site with figure and artifacts, and (USFS) riverside scene with fisherman.

Archeological artifacts.

Background images from all agencies show various services and activities.

One large flipbook combining all agencies contains changeable information.

Large root wad on a fallen tree.

A medium kiosk examines the changes in attitudes, and shows a transition toward a tourism economy and stewardship attitude.

Wall mural(s), scenic and detail photographs and quotations range along the back wall.

Video projection excerpts from the Show alternate with photomurals in overhead band.

Cutaway sections may incorporate pull-out discovery drawers or panels, inset objects, images and text.

GRAPHIC SYSTEM AND TEXT DESCRIPTIONS

The following graphic panel types will communicate the main interpretive messages in the proposed exhibits.

1. Introduction

Function: Communicates the Main Message for the exhibits.

Description: Composed of 3-d heading, 'banners,' rotating cubes with interactive elements.

Size: TBD

Substrate: TBD

2. Kiosks

Function: Communicates in-depth information at individual exhibit areas.

Description: Vertical assemblage of cubes displays exhibit titles, text, rotating sidebars, geology models, discovery drawers and images.

Size: Height varies; individual "cubes" are 16" x 12."

Substrate: TBD

3. Detail Text

Function: Gives detailed information about a topic.

Description: Silkscreen and or vinyl letters are applied to cutaway graphic surfaces or set pieces within the exhibits.

Size: TBD

Substrate: Various

4. Railing Panels

Function: Provides context for and a description of selected exhibit scenes.

Description: Panels attach to railings with supplemental text and photographs. They are positioned to meet ADA requirements.

Size: TBD

Substrate: TBD

5. Flip Books

Function: Provide a range of breadth or depth information about a topic using text and images in an intimate setting.

Description: TBD

Size: Approximately 11x17.

Substrate: Laminated pages.

6. Photo Murals

Function: Extend the exhibit scenes and introduce additional layers of visual information.

Description: Murals fit into background wall grid within the gallery, and may be ranges of full color scenic photographs, duotone, photo-shopped images, and or screened-back patterns.

Size: Various.

Substrate: May have acoustic properties. TBD

7. Quotes

Function: Inspire and communicate in a personal way the history of people in this dynamic changing land.

Description: Interspersed among photomurals and images on the background wall grid.

Size: Varies.
Substrate: May have acoustic properties. TBD

8. Specimen/Artifact I.D.'s

Function: Identify and attribute artifacts and specimens.
Description: TBD
Size: TBD
Substrate: TBD

9. Timeline Panels

Function: To identify and highlight events in Seward, Alaska history, will contain images and text.
Description: TBD
Size: TBD
Substrate: TBD