READING THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

EBEY’S LANDING
NATIONAL HISTORICAL RESERVE
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This report represents the fourth major opportunity for the Cultural Resources Division to engage and explore the significant resources and complex values of Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve.

The involvement of this division began in the summer of 1983, with a team of five individuals living on the reserve and conducting an inventory of every pre-1940 building, as well as the entire 17,400 acres of landscape that make up the reserve. The inventory as a whole sought to explore and record, not only individual landscape features and isolated structures, but the relationship between the built and natural environments, which forms the underlying fabric in a cultural landscape.

The product from that summer was more than a three-volume set of inventory cards. Over the course of fourteen weeks, there was a growing awareness among those directly involved, that there existed a significant and historic relationship between the resources of the reserve and the evolving community values that had shaped this place over time. It was an awareness that came slowly... that the landscape we were walking over and cataloguing that summer was more than a pleasant rural scene with some old buildings. Indeed, we began to see the landscape as a reflection of cultural trends and historic events, that had made a physical impression like a giant footprint on the land itself. Many of the structures, fence lines, roads, and land uses had not only remained the same for over a hundred years, but were commonly used in the everyday workings of the community.

In an effort to explore the value and significance of these resources a second report was underway by the fall of that year. In The Land, The People, The Place, an attempt was made to describe and bring together the facts, feelings and values of Ebey's Landing. It was written for the residents of the reserve but it served a much greater audience. Over the next few months we heard from other parts of the country, how other rural based communities were asking similar questions about the relative meanings and directions for protection of such resources.

Ultimately, it is the human caring about a place that determines its vitality. There was no shortage of caring on the reserve. In response to community interest and in order to assist in providing tools for preservation of the resources a third report, Design Considerations for Historic Properties, was completed during the summer of 1984. A sensitive text and highly illustrated format helped enforce the idea that it is not only the more elaborate homes and commercial buildings that are important to the reserve, but also the simpler homes, farms and complexes, public buildings and less elaborate commercial structures. Understanding the whole place and providing guidelines for protecting buildings in a landscape context through reasonable preservation measures was a valuable step, that in a sense, led to this final report.

This report, Reading the Cultural Landscape, seeks to identify, more specifically, the landscape resources on the reserve. It is written primarily for the trust board of Ebey's Landing and suggests guidelines and principles for conservation of significant historic and cultural landscape elements.

Altogether these four projects are tools that help to identify, evaluate and guide preservation efforts for the combined resources of Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve. Because of the complex nature of the reserve, management of these resources must be a cooperative effort of the community and local, state and federal groups, seeking preservation of a quality and sense of place, as well as a physical landscape and related structures.
Development of reports done by this division over the last two years has been the product of many people. A great deal of credit goes to Reed Jarvis, Project Manager of Ebey's Landing, who not only provided the opportunities, but had the foresight to understand the work that needed to be done, and had the patience to see it through. An appreciation also to Dr. T. Allan Comp, Chief of the division of Cultural Resources, who has guided this work over two years and encouraged an intellectual rigor and professional enthusiasm in every aspect of these projects.

Professor Robert Melnick from the University of Oregon generously shared his ideas and knowledge on the subject, as well as expertise on this report and other projects over the last two years. Dr. Jennifer L. Specker from the University of Rhode Island gave an enormous amount of time reviewing material and editing various texts.

In addition, over the last three years Kent Bush, Laurin Huffman, Jim Thomson, Stephanie Toothman, Jane Evans and Hank Florence all contributed generously to the material content and form of these reports. Their support, criticisms and suggestions made the work both useful and creative.

Finally a special appreciation to Gretchen Luxenberg, architectural historian, who managed to teach this author something about the individual character and magical personality of structures in the landscape. Her sensitivity, perception and technical skill has made looking at landscapes an environmental education and an enriching experience.

It is hoped these four documents collectively, can contribute to an understanding of the resources and can assist those responsible in making appropriate management decisions regarding the future of Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve.
"Each living pattern resolves some system of forces, or allows them to resolve themselves. Each pattern creates an organization which maintains that portion of the world in balance."

Christopher Alexander
Pattern Language
Introduction

The landscapes we see are the result of a long interaction between man and nature, a mixture of both natural systems and human features. Because both human values and nature change, landscapes also, by their nature, change over time. Some changes, such as the evolution of land forms, occur very slowly over many, many years. Other elements, such as the type of land use or the kind of crop grown may change seasonally within a single year.

When looking at landscapes we do not always see change as it happens, but over time, the impacts of change can imprint the land and in a sense, inscribe a human history in the physical landscape. Early patterns of settlement, types of land use, the development of roads and pathways, various kinds of structures and even front-lot gardens, are all pieces of a whole landscape and community history. If we can learn to see these individual pieces, and to understand them in relationship to each other over time, the landscape becomes a living history.

This report focuses on the visible resources of that living history as read in the landscape of Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve. Although this study borrows from various other reports describing specific resources on the reserve, it emphasizes the total cultural landscape; how to read it, understand it, and protect its significant elements.

This report is divided into four parts. Part one discusses the primary settlement patterns and land uses on the reserve as they evolved over time. Part two reviews a few of the natural and cultural resources of the area that influenced and were impacted by these patterns. It is a guide to looking at both natural and human-built landscapes. Part three is an orientation and workbook section that illustrates techniques for reading the relationships among individual features, patterns or qualities that comprise the whole landscape. It brings the reader from individual feature to the total cultural landscape. Part four suggests preservation principles for protection of the reserve's historically significant landscape elements, both built and natural.

Within the landscape pictured above are both natural areas like wetlands, and cultural elements, including houses and roads.
LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT
AND SETTLEMENT PATTERNS
Introduction to Settlement Patterns

As a way of understanding historic trends and significant landscape elements on the reserve, it is valuable to trace the patterns of settlement, types of land use, and the structures that reflect human use and adaption to the natural environment over time.

Previous studies (see bibliography) have identified five general historic periods and themes on the reserve including: The Salish Occupation, 1300-1850; White Settlement, 1850-1870; Community Development, 1870-1910; Community Stabilization, 1910-1940; Tourism and Recreation, 1940-present.

While these "eras" are general and the historic themes frequently overlap from one period to another, such an organization provides a framework for understanding the human impacts, artifacts and historic remnants on the landscape we see today. The following is not, therefore, a chronology of events so much as a history of land patterns and significant pieces of the past that still remain in the landscape of the reserve.
The Salish 1300-1850

More than 500 years before white settlement, the Skagit, Snohomish, Kikalos, and Clallam tribes occupied the land and shared the resources of central Whidbey Island. Attracted to the inland waters and low sandy beaches that made canoe landing safe, the Skagit established three permanent settlements along the shores of Penn Cove. Although different in size, these villages were sited on extended points of land with the largest at Snakelum Point, one on Long Point, and one across the cove at Monroes Landing.

The Skagit were not a nomadic tribe, but populations in the villages could fluctuate dramatically according to seasonal supplies of fish and game and the harvest of camus and fern which provided their primary diet. In gathering their food crops the Skagit generally lived within the natural balance of the island's food resources. They did, however, practice field burning to enhance the production of camus, bracken fern and nettles which were not naturally abundant in the prairies. Their agricultural practices also included transplanting plant materials to increase production, mulching their crops with organic matter to increase fertility, and cultivating crops like wild carrot and lily by dividing the roots and bulbs.
These land practices, though rather contained, altered the native plant communities of central Whidbey over time. When the Hudson's Bay Company introduced the potato for cultivation in the early 1800s, several tribes tested the agricultural potential of the prairies around Penn Cove. Their great success signaled what was to become a significant and permanent change, the transformation of the prairies into permanent crop-producing lands.

Low sandy beaches, like this one on Penn Cove, made canoe landings relatively safe for the Indians of Central Whidbey.

Only a few markers remain in the landscape of the reserve to remind us of the Indian culture and presence on Central Whidbey.
Early Settlement 1850–1870

The white settlers who came to central Whidbey in the mid-1800s were primarily farmers and merchants. Taking advantage of the Donation Land Claim law, many claimed the rich prairies and shore areas of Penn Cove. Because the claims were made before land surveyors reached the territory, property boundaries often followed natural land forms or a neighbor's claim. The Ebeys, Engles, Crocketts, Kineths, Smiths, Terrys, and Hills settled next to one another on claims that varied in size and shape, each extending to a ridge or woodlot. Virtually all the prairie lands of central Whidbey were claimed by 1853. These claims meshed together to form major clusters of settlement and it is within these collective boundaries that the structure of white settlement occurred.

Primary access to central Whidbey occurred along the west shore of the island near Ebey's Landing. Travelers and settlers landed there and moved overland, often stopping at the Ferry house which served over the years as an inn, tavern, mail station and freight depot. Those not staying traveled on to Coveland, where a trading post provided supplies to those individuals leaving for other island communities via Penn Cove. Early roads developed along property lines and followed natural boundaries. By 1855 four roads connected Coveland, Ebey's Prairie, Snakelum Point and other points north.

Most farmers who settled on the prairies of central Whidbey considered native plants (bracken fern, camus, nettle) weeds that impaired the growth of "valuable" market crops such as wheat, oats, barley, corn, peas and cabbage. Almost immediately they set about improving the prairie fields. They laboriously dug through the root masses of bracken fern using oxen, simple plows and hand tools. They built worm fences to enclose domestic livestock and separate cultivated lands from "wilderness". Although the work was difficult and slow, an 1860 census reported 74 established farms clustered in the prairies of central Whidbey and nearly 1500 acres of
improved farm land in Ebey's Prairie and the San de Fuca area.

Slowly over the years the population increased and early scattered settlement began to take the shape of a community. As farms began to produce crops for market, the development of ports and service-oriented facilities like blacksmiths and trading posts remained concentrated around Penn Cove, especially at Coveland and Coupeville. The primary economic activity remained agriculture into the 1870s. Even twenty years after claims were made in the prairies, eight of nine original families were still living on Ebey's Prairie and six of nine original families still farmed the lands around San de Fuca.

The Jacob Ebey house (1855) and blockhouse (1856) on the ridge overlooking the prairie that bears his name.
Community Development 1870–1910

Some early farms on central Whidbey prospered over the next few years due primarily to productive agricultural soils, improving farm technologies and the skill of the farmer. Several others were not as fortunate and some original donation land claims were broken into smaller properties. Settlers arriving after 1860 claimed upland areas and tried farming in newly-cleared forest lands. Not many of these efforts were profitable and most turned to tenant and subsistence farming.

While land use patterns in the prairies continued to follow the early settlement patterns, farmers also were experimenting in search of a stable market crop. Their success brought more activity and, in response, the town of Coupeville grew into the dominant port and commercial center for the region. By 1881 Coupeville had hardware stores, drug stores, hotels, saloons, a blacksmith shop, courthouse, school, post office and church. Coupeville's growth was based on providing services to the farming community and exporting local goods. In contrast, during the 1880s three other towns were planned, based largely on speculation. Chicago and Brooklyn along Keystone Spit and San de Fuca along Penn Cove all developed as "boom towns" in a flurry of highly-speculative growth. While all three were platted and some developed hotels, saloons and residential areas, none survived as a viable town into the twentieth century.

Another major impact on settlement patterns on central Whidbey near the turn of the century occurred as the military began construction of Fort Casey on Admiralty Head. Requiring large amounts of materials and resources,
the Fort included wharfs and docks, roads, a variety of buildings and several gun emplacements. This significant effort had both immediate and long-range impacts on the physical landscape and social fabric of central Whidbey. Many acres of forest lands were cut and large volumes of earth moved in the construction of the facility. Keystone became a major wharf drawing traffic to it and affecting transportation networks over the entire island.

By the early twentieth century the landscape of Central Whidbey—the buildings, fields, towns and military structures—reflected a complex of interrelated events, trends and physical change that in a very real sense, carried human history into the fabric of the land itself.

Officer's Row (ca.1905) looking north from the barracks at Fort Casey on Admiralty Head. Many of these structures remain as do the parade grounds in the foreground.

Front Street today appearing much as it did eighty years ago.

The Liberal League Hall (1906) remains one of the few commercial buildings in San de Fuca.
Tourism and Recreation 1910–Present

The community of central Whidbey Island remained relatively stable over the next several years. Coupeville's growth was gradual, with new residential neighborhoods and Prairie Center spreading the city south and east.

Agriculture continued to dominate land use in the prairies. In San de Fuca however, soils could not withstand intensive crop production and many farmers switched to less intensive feed crops and pasture lands.

Two new trends, tourism and recreation, brought new changes to the landscape, just as they continue to influence the economy and physical development of the reserve today.

The Captain Whidbey Inn, formerly the Whid-Isle Inn on Penn Cove, continues as a popular resort today.

Construction of the Whid-Isle Inn (1901) on Penn Cove and boathouses at Good Beach signaled an early interest in recreation, focusing around Penn Cove. The increasing number of second or vacation homes around Penn Cove today reflects the continued impact of that trend today.

Additional housing needs created by numbers of military personnel stationed to the north in Oak Harbor, brought subdivision of lands in Coupeville, San de Fuca and on the ridge east of Crockett Prairie beginning in the 1950s. Also by 1950 the military complex at Fort Casey, which never saw action, was placed on caretaker status. Several military buildings were sold and moved from the complex to properties outside the reservation and used for other purposes. Their presence marks yet another era in the development of the landscape of the reserve.
In addition to the buildings brought by both tourism and the military, new transportation networks developed and old ones strengthened. Regular ferry service connecting south Whidbey Island to the mainland began in the 1920s. The island's major overland route along Highway 20 took travelers north, and in 1935, the opening of the Deception Pass Bridge assured easy access to the north end of the island. These improved circulation networks, coupled with the establishment of the Naval Air Station, boosted the local economy and after forty years of relatively little growth, the permanent population of Coupeville doubled in the ten years between 1950 and 1960.

Pictured above, Kennedy's Lagoon was once a popular swimming area for tourists.

Ferry landing at Keystone, linking the island with the Olympic Peninsula.
LOOKING AT LANDSCAPES
Introduction to Natural Features

Looking at landscapes involves identifying the individual elements and resources that taken together, create the whole landscape. Natural features such as landforms, soil types and vegetation form the physical parameters within which the built landscape develops.

The built landscape, based on human adaption to the natural environment and use of available resources, is reflected in the types of land use, style and function of structures, and systems of transportation.

When we look at our surroundings, we do not always see these elements so singularly. Often however, identifying each as a specific resource in the context of the whole landscape enhances our understanding of the relationships among these elements, and enriches our understanding of a place and its history.

Evolution of Landforms

Major landforms of the reserve, including the ridges, uplands, prairies and shorelines, formed as the Vashon Glacier began receding 13,000 years ago. The glacier scraped, carved and deposited the islands of Puget Sound as it retreated northward over Washington State.

On Whidbey, the largest island, huge slabs of ice broke away from the main lobes of the glacier and formed giant lake beds. Slowly, as the climate warmed, the water receded and glacial deposits mixed with organic matter to form rich loamy soils in these former lake beds. Today the former lake beds are the prairies of central Whidbey Island.

In other places, deposits and glacial till collected and formed upland areas and ridges, rarely exceeding 300 feet above sea level. Vegetation on the island established quickly around low-lying marshes and bogs. Highly adaptive and prolific pine tree communities were the first to establish. Slowly, over thousands of years, changing climate and ecological succession replaced pine with fir, spruce, alder, ash and maple. This forest cover remained the primary plant community on central Whidbey until human occupation, some 10,000 years ago, began the equally-slow alteration of the natural environment.
Soils

Soil is a living and constantly changing material formed over many years and influenced by such things as topography, parent material and climate. Each individual soil has distinctive inherent properties that define its potential hazards, its limitations for development, and its qualities as a useful resource. The focus here is on soil as a natural resource specifically related to agricultural land use on the reserve.

On the reserve there is a strong correlation between historic land use and current agricultural capability of soils located on the reserve. Two large areas of extremely fertile soils are located in Ebey's and Crockett prairies, which are the most productive agricultural lands on the entire island. It is important to note that in all of Island County, only a small portion of the total land mass is comprised of such rich soil and in the entire county, nearly half of that soil is found on the reserve. In addition to this prime resource, the majority of remaining area on the reserve is dominated by a variety of soils which, as a group, are suitable for agriculture with proper management.
Vegetation

As a resource, vegetation on the reserve can best be understood by identifying primary communities as they influenced land use over time. The location and composition of these plant communities can also reflect various impacts and influences as a result of human settlement. Four primary plant communities on the reserve include: beach vegetation, salt marsh vegetation, forest vegetation, and cultural vegetation.

Forest Vegetation

There are no old-growth or original forests on the reserve but there are areas where no cutting or burning has occurred since 1900 and where mature Douglas fir, grand fir and western hemlock can be found. The primary forest cover naturally occurs along the ridges and upland areas of the reserve. Forest cover ranges from very dense

Common understory vegetation includes salal and rhododendron.

Looking east over the dense forest which covers the narrow neck of Whidbey Island. The forest extends from the west shore to Penn Cove, pictured here.

and inaccessible to relatively small woodlots interspersed with pasture areas or croplands. The original dense forests on the reserve forced early settlers into naturally open areas, primarily because clearing such large trees involved not only great physical effort, but required valuable time away from crop production in already cleared lands, an activity essential to survival.

Dominant forest vegetation includes Douglas fir, western red cedar, red alder, western hemlock, and occasional madrona and bigleaf maple. Primary understory, or smaller plants, includes elderberry, rhododendron, snowberry, willow, oceanspray, Oregon grape, salal and fern.
Salt Marsh and Beach Vegetation

Significant salt marsh areas are located at Crockett Lake, Peregos Lake and Grassers Lagoon. These natural lowland areas provide food and habitat for a variety of bird species and small mammals. Salt marsh plant communities also create seams or ecotones between different habitats which enhance the diversity of both plants and animals.

Historically, all three marsh areas restricted development. They were, nevertheless, subject to a variety of cultural impacts including grazing, cultivation, and recreation activities, which partially altered the native plant communities.

Primary plant species associated with salt marshes on the reserve include pickleweed, saltgrass and saltbrush.

Beach and associated bluff vegetation occurs primarily along the eight-mile western shore of the reserve and along Penn Cove. In addition to routine disturbance by winds and tides, human use over many years has impacted native plant areas, leaving a variety of non-native species. This is especially evident in the public access areas around Penn Cove, and along the west shore of the reserve at Ebey's Landing. Some native plants have survived in less accessible areas, such as in areas around Perego's Lake and protected bluff areas. Historically, the unstable nature of the bluffs along the west coast restricted development and left the area covered primarily by native vegetation.

Primary plants in beach communities include: orchard grass, creeping bentgrass, dune wildrye, velvet grass, yarrow and sand verbena. Primary bluff species include: wild rose, snowberry, bracken fern, orchard grass, blue grass, pea vine, yarrow and seaside plantain.
Cultural Vegetation

Cultural vegetation (or plant communities introduced by humans) occurs in areas where human impact is most evident, primarily in the prairies and upland pastures. Cultural practices, including the introduction of non-native crops, field burning, plowing, grazing domestic livestock, and logging, inevitably and permanently altered original vegetative communities. The current plant cover reflects these practices and disturbances not only in the prairies, but in adjacent lands where the spread of weeds and pasture grasses impacted areas of native vegetation.

Another product of cultural practices over time resulted in a large number of hedgerows on the reserve. Developing along former fence lines, hedgerows are valuable ecological resources in the rural landscape. Although they take many years to develop naturally, once established they can favorably influence micro-climate, minimize soil erosion, conserve soil moisture and provide wildlife habitat, which in turn can increase soil fertility and restrict the growth of undesirable weeds. Most of the hedgerows on the reserve are the result of birds perching on fences and either dropping berries or scratching in the nearby soil accidently planting seeds. With care, hedges can be encouraged to grow to usefulness "in the time it takes for a fence to fall in disrepair" (del Moral, 1980).

Primary vegetation in open areas includes various commercial crops in cultivated fields, as well as Canadian thistle, pickly lettuce, goldenrod, nettle, quackgrass, yarrow, brome, bluegrass and perennial ryegrass.

Primary vegetation along hedgerows includes nootka rose, snowberry, bracken fern and Himalayan blackberry.
Introduction to the Built Landscape

The built landscape is represented by those features and patterns reflecting human occupation and use of natural resources. Virtually every landscape we see is, to some degree, impacted this way. Clearing or planting vegetation, building homes, fencing crop lands or pastures, establishing political boundaries and transportation networks and other activities, all reflect human manipulation of the natural landscape. Over time, community values, social tastes, or basic needs may change, but frequently, as on the reserve, built elements in the landscape survive as characteristics or reminders of a particular historic era or cultural trend.

Land Use

In response to natural resources, economic conditions and community development, land use on the reserve today reflects the evolution of activities and land use patterns from early settlement. These primary and consistent patterns include: agricultural use of the prairies, concentration of service and commercial development around Coupeville and the maintenance of natural areas (woodlands and forests) on the ridges and upland areas. While new development is occurring and land uses are changing in specific areas, these broad land use systems represent historic patterns and reflect continuity of use based on the inherent qualities of the natural landscape. This is particularly evident in the consistent agricultural use of the prairies and the stability of Coupeville.
Coupeville

Coupeville includes 740 acres of land, and remains, as it has since established in 1881, the governmental and commercial center of the reserve.

First developing along Front Street on the waterfront of Penn Cove, the town has a strong cohesive structure. This is due, in part, to the number of false front commercial structures along Front Street and the close proximity of residential neighborhoods (relative to the town).

The dominance of false front buildings along Front Street contribute to the visual and structural unity of the town.

Prairie Center developed at the turn of the century and, although never competing with Front Street in terms of services, it did develop services that helped pull development in the town toward the south. In more recent years, the linear area along Main Street, linking Prairie Center, with Front Street, developed an importance of its own. Main Street became the primary entry to the historic waterfront when Highway 20 replaced the old entry along Penn Cove. Several government buildings, small shops, and stores located along Main Street, and the area became a district of its own. In the areas around these primary service districts, residential neighborhoods filled-in close to this commercial development and in some ways helped contain the spread of new commercial structures. These neighborhoods retain a cohesive character with a number of pre-1900 residential structures remaining on their original city lots. Newer residential development is primarily occurring in clustered developments around Penn Cove and the upland areas surrounding Coupeville, reflecting an influx of permanent and seasonal populations.
Agriculture

Cultivated fields, pastures, woodlands and open space comprise the majority of lands on the reserve (nearly 90 percent). Agriculture remains viable largely because of the rich soils (see previous section), low rainfall and relatively warm annual temperatures. A survey (see Comprehensive Plan, 1980) indicated the reserve has 48 working farms ranging in size from five to seven hundred acres. Altogether these farms cover approximately 6,000 acres of agricultural land and of that 6,000 acres, 3,500 acres is in cropland.

Land leasing, a practice similar to historic farming practices where farm land is worked by non-owners, is still practiced on the reserve. In some cases, several generations of a single family continue in the farming community and, despite the relative difficulty of small scale farming and competitive markets, the current farm community appears committed to maintaining productive prairie lands in agricultural use.

Along with Ebey's Prairie pictured below, Crockett Prairie contains some of the richest agricultural soils in the entire county.
Structures

Like land use, structures are a response to both individual needs and the inherent qualities and specific resources of the landscape. Building type, location, materials, details, location, function, and siting reflect cultural customs, economic conditions, technology, and a basic relationship between human need and the natural environment. Whether on a south-facing ridge or along the road into Coupeville, many structures on the reserve reflect these adaptations and a number of them survive as significant historic and cultural resources.

In 1983, all structures on the reserve built before 1940 were surveyed and the historic significance of each evaluated according to National Register criteria (see bibliography). Based on that work and additional field work, structures on the reserve can be defined as below-ground, which primarily includes archeological sites, and above-ground structures which can be broken into three categories: historic buildings, including barns and residences, transportation-related structures such as roads and docks, and remnant and small-scale structures like fences, walls, or road markers.
Historic Buildings

Altogether the 1983 Building and Landscape Inventory identified 338 historically significant structures on the reserve. The structural and cultural significance of these buildings was evaluated not only in terms of architectural style, but also with reference to their relationship to surrounding elements, including other structures, roads, vegetation, water, and topography. Primary building styles range from the simple saltbox to the more ornate Victorian residence and the twentieth-century bungalow. Although no single style dominates the building character of the reserve, there is a cohesiveness among the various structures. Many buildings throughout the reserve are constructed of wood with clapboard or shiplap siding, and the colors, lines, materials, details, and construction techniques create a sense of locale and visual continuity.

One hundred and seventy-seven historically significant buildings are located in Coupeville alone, including most of the false front commercial buildings and a variety of significant residential structures. Many of these older homes are located on early platted city lots with original walks, gates, orchards, or gardens still intact. The proximity of historic buildings to newer residences and structures adds a dimension of time and richness to the community landscape.

In the outlying areas, several historic buildings, primarily residences and farm buildings, are located along the earliest roads and sited in response to the natural contour of the land. Many farm complexes with a main residence, a barn and several outbuildings, remain as examples of farm building practices over several generations. The viability of these buildings throughout the reserve and their continued function as useful structures adds a valuable dimension to the landscape we see.
Transportation-Related Structures

A number of significant roadways, wharfs and docks, bridges, paths and foot trails still remain as remnants or working structures within the reserve.

Primary vehicular access to the reserve is along Highway 20 and Highway 525. These relatively recent roadways connect to a compact system of secondary roads, many of which are based on the earliest roads established on the reserve. Roads from Ebey’s Landing into the Prairie Center area (1865), Coupeville to Coveland (1853), Ebey’s Prairie to Smith Prairie (1854) and Keystone to the Prairie Center area (1874) are examples of this network.

The early dominance of water transportation is evidenced in the remains of several wharfs and docks on the waters of the reserve. Two docks at San de Fuca and the large wharf and dock at Coupeville (1905) reflect the significance of areas around Penn Cove as ports for market goods and travelers. The oldest extant wharf and dock (1898) is located near Keystone and was used by the military during construction of Fort Casey.

Other Structures and Small-Scale Elements

Other significant above-ground structures include military emplacements, blockhouses, the cemetery, and smaller elements such as walls, fences, wells, and irrigation structures.

Abandoned gun emplacements are located along the west shoreline of the reserve. Collectively, they represent the military presence on the reserve and have interpretive value as well as sculptural quality.
Above: In many places old and abandoned farm machinery, tools and various kinds of equipment like this scale remain on the landscape of the reserve.

Right: The markers in a cemetery and fence details can help define a unique sense of place.

Four blockhouses built by early settlers to protect them from the Indians are located on the reserve. Although never used for defense, the physical presence, similar materials and construction techniques and, in some cases, original location of these structures are significant.

The pioneer cemetery, located on a ridge overlooking Ebey's Prairie, was officially deeded in 1869, and named Sunnyside after Jacob Ebey's farm. The oldest sections of the cemetery contain Ebey, Crockett, and Kellogg graves, as well as several other pioneers of central Whidbey. Generally, monuments and markers face east and, while some fragile wooden markers remain, most of the monuments are stone.

Fences, walls and other small structures built on the landscape can express technical capability, as well as conventions or styles of a period. Equally significant, these small aspects of the landscape may also express the personality and spirit of a place, showing individual innovations and even whimsy. When they reflect historic systems and patterns, or express its spirit they are significant resources for understanding cultural history in the landscape.
Below-Ground Structures

Below-ground structures are primarily represented by archeological sites. Archeological sites can provide information ranging from the identification of a resource found in a specific place to the physical activities of a culture interacting with these resources. The development of technologies, land uses, and even the relationship to larger cultural trends and behavior patterns can often be understood by studying archeological sites. Thirty-five known archeological sites are located on the reserve. Archeological work on the reserve was conducted in the 1950s and reviewed again in 1983 (see bibliography).

Indian longboat in Coupeville.

Findings from the initial work indicate that with the exception of one site on Ebey's Prairie and four sites on the upland ridges around Penn Cove, all remaining (known) sites are located in the littoral environment of Penn Cove. Most of these sites are high density artifact clusters. Since little information exists on the distribution of other sites, it is not possible to evaluate the relationship among sites or ascertain details of prehistoric settlement patterns or land uses (Harris, 1983). Lack of information does not pre-empt the significance of known or potential archeological sites on the reserve.

Quiet inland waters of Penn Cove used by the Indians of central Whidbey.
READING
THE LANDSCAPE
Introduction

Historic settlement patterns, natural features and cultural elements are all important pieces in the landscape we see. Identifying these resources is the first step in learning to look at and "read" the whole landscape. One may consider them individually in order to see them clearly, but it is the relationship among these resources that most often describes the "character" of a landscape. It is these landscape patterns and relationships over time that imprint and reflect human history in the fabric of the land itself. The significance, meaning or value in the landscape depends on our ability to read and understand these patterns over time.

Identifying landscape relationships and components is discussed in the document Cultural Landscapes: Rural Historic Districts in the National Park System (see bibliography). The following section selects a few of those components and reviews portions of that discussion as it helps us "read" the landscape of the reserve.
Overall Landscape Patterns

The first level of identification describes the patterns and relationships among several large landscape systems including major landforms, primary circulation networks and broad land use patterns. Identification of these general patterns sets the context and landscape character for other elements, and can be accomplished using aerial photographs, topographic maps or direct observation.

Identification of large settlement patterns is valuable because, while smaller elements such as houses, crops, building materials, fence lines and property boundaries may change frequently, these broad patterns of settlement often remain for generations.
Land Use Patterns

The next level of identification describes the ways in which individual units of land are used. Common kinds of land use designations include agriculture and open space, woodlands, residential, commercial, park and natural areas. These general designations are often called land use categories.

More specific uses within these categories include a number of related activities that can also be identified. For example, within the land use category of "agriculture and open space," the more specific activities of crop production, dairy farm, pasture land or grazing may occur, impacting the land in different ways.

General land use categories can be identified from aerial photographs and direct field observation. Although the same is true for specific land use activities, these uses are better identified by direct field observation.

Identifying land use patterns contributes to understanding the ways cultural practices, technologies, economic conditions and available natural resources such as soils, topography and water, influence the development of a community.
Land Use Categories

Within the general land use category, urban, pictured at the top, are the more specific land use activities: commercial and residential.

Land Use Activities

Within the general land use category, agriculture, pictured at the top, are the more specific land use activities: pasture land and crop land.
Circulation Patterns

The systems of movement through a landscape, from foot trails to major highways, are described as circulation networks.

Larger networks that link entire regions can be identified by aerial photographs or topographic maps. Smaller systems such as secondary roads, access roads, or paths within complexes, may best be identified by direct field observation.

Circulation networks are often the first patterns established in a cultural landscape. Identifying the kind of road or system, its location and purpose, can help establish the relationship among key locations and significant access points.

Above left: Patmore road is an example of a secondary road on the reserve.

Above Right: This road does not receive much public use and is considered a local road.

Right: Foot path from a road to the main residence on a farm complex is an example of an early pattern that is no longer used because the road has changed from a local road to a major highway with no pedestrian access.

Hierarchy of roads shown on a topographic map.
Boundaries

Boundaries in a landscape are those features that create edges or demarcations between individual land units. Boundary elements include natural features like ridges and shorelines; cultural elements like roads, fences, or property lines; and visual edges, as in cases where visual access to a scene is restricted by vegetation or other structures.

Boundaries may be identified by aerial photographs and maps but are best understood by direct observation. The identification of boundaries helps organize the landscape into discrete units within which smaller or more detailed relationships occur.

Political jurisdictions, like city limits, are also considered boundaries.

The shoreline creates both a natural boundary and visual edge.
Cluster Arrangement

The arrangement of individual buildings, driveways, paths, gardens, fences, work areas and open spaces within discrete land units is called cluster arrangement. Typical cluster organizations include various farm complexes, ranches, and residences with outbuildings. Identification of cluster arrangement can be done with aerial photographs and topographic maps but is most accurate when done by direct observation.

Description of function, use and activities associated with the spatial organization of any cluster can often reveal cultural practices within a community.

This simple sketch of the Kinneth complex in Smith Prairie shows primary vegetation, buildings, and their functional relationship to each other.
Introduction

The total cultural landscape of the reserve has been growing and changing as community needs and values shift over generations. Preservation principles are not intended to inhibit or stop growth, but serve as guides for understanding how much change and what kinds of change can occur before the cultural context and historic integrity of the landscape is lost.

This report has outlined historic settlement patterns, land uses, and resulting structures. It has identified natural and cultural resources in the landscape today and illustrated ways to describe critical landscape relationships among these individual resources. The preservation principles that follow are based on that information and patterned in the following manner.

First, while the reserve as a whole is considered a single landscape, within it are ten distinct land units or character areas that can be used as a framework for evaluation and development of preservation principles. These ten areas are identified in the 1983 Building and Landscape Inventory and include all eighteen sites listed in the Comprehensive Plan (1980). The ten areas include: the San de Fuca Uplands, West Woodlands, Coupeville, East Woodlands, Smith Prairie, Penn Cove, Ebeys Prairie, Fort Casey Uplands, Crockett Prairie, and the Coastal Strip.

For each of the ten land areas an evaluation of landscape resources includes:
1) a description, including location and boundaries, general character and primary access;
2) a statement summarizing the historic patterns and significant elements that remain and contribute to an overall landscape integrity;
3) a set of principles to guide preservation of significant historic landscape patterns, features and structures as identified in this report and the 1983 Building and Landscape Inventory.

It is important to note that the landscape evaluation and the principles outlined in this report address preservation of the general landscape patterns that are historically significant. Guidelines for preservation of more discrete or site specific land units would require a more detailed evaluation.

Finally, in several of the preservation principles, reference is made to the visual quality or visual resource of a character area. A short discussion of these resources is included in the appendix and techniques for visual assessment can be found in the bibliography.
San de Fuca Uplands

Location and Access

Located along the northernmost portion of the reserve, the San de Fuca Uplands are bounded by Penn Cove to the south and east, the Coastal Strip along the west and the reserve boundary on the north.

San de Fuca is characterized by the sweep of land up from Penn Cove which levels out to agricultural land broken by woodlots and residential subdivisions. Primary access is along Highway 20, which slices through from north to south, and Scenic Heights Road which follows Penn Cove around the edge of the uplands.

Significance and Integrity

Archeological evidence suggests the Skagit Indians used portions of the upland areas bordering Penn Cove for cultivating and harvesting camas, fern and nettle.

White settlement began in 1850 when ten donation land claims were made in the uplands. Early land use patterns focused around the natural harbor of Penn Cove, and development of agriculture on the uplands. Although good soils existed in the uplands, large portions of the area were densely wooded and many settlers turned their lands into less intensive agricultural crops and pasture areas. These patterns remain in several areas and are evidenced in a number of small cultivated lots and pasture lands between woodland stands.

Associated with the period of community development on the reserve, the town of San de Fuca was platted in the 1880s. Although the town did not survive into the twentieth century, the name did, and several of the seventeen historically significant buildings in the uplands are located in and around the town site.
Although several areas of the San de Fuca Uplands are still in agriculture, three newer residential subdivisions have significantly altered historic land use patterns and limited overall historic landscape integrity.

Preservation Principles

Preservation principles for the San de Fuca Uplands encourage protection and maintenance of remaining significant and historic landscape patterns and features.

1. In order to preserve historic landscape patterns and visual quality in the uplands, maintain existing rural residential-agriculture land use designations and all significant historic structures.

2. Limit further intrusions on agricultural land by encouraging new residential development to occur within existing subdivisions.

3. In order to support visual quality in the area, any new structures should be carefully sited along the edges of open areas and sensitive in design, scale, mass, color and material to surrounding areas (see Design Considerations for Historic Properties, 1984).

4. Maintain existing hedgerows throughout the area as natural and cultural resources.

This barn (1918) is part of the Arnold farm complex overlooking Penn Cove in San de Fuca.
West Woodlands

Location and Access

The West Woodlands are located in the narrow neck of Whidbey Island, with the Coastal Strip forming the west boundary, Penn Cove on the east, San de Fuca Uplands on the north and Ebey's Prairie along the south.

The area is topographically diverse with the highest ridges on the reserve and the largest depressions, called kettles, in excess of 200 feet. The forest cover is primarily second and third-growth Douglas Fir, western red cedar with alder, salal and rhododendron understory.

Primary access is limited to Highway 20 and a foot trail along the bluff.

Significance and Integrity

Densely-woooded and remote, this area remains a significant natural resource, reflecting the geological history of the reserve. The kettles, formed as huge chunks of ice melted, are unique on the island. Lake Pondilla in Fort Ebey State Park fills such a kettle hole.

From earliest human occupation, the inaccessible nature of the forest forced major settlement around the ridge or along its edges. Land speculators and logging interests eventually capitalized on the resource and by 1900 the forest had been cut at least once. However the forest has grown back and although some development is occurring in the interior portions, including residential development and gravel extraction, the area as a whole remains a significant natural resource area.
Preservation Principles

Preservation principles for the West Woodlands focus on maintaining the natural resources of the area.

1. In order to protect the existing natural quality of the area, maintain forest-park land use designation for entire area.

2. Large residential developments within the woodlands are discouraged. However, where new development occurs, appropriate vegetative screening and the clustering of structures is strongly encouraged in order to minimize potential impacts on natural resources.

3. To maintain the visual quality of the woodlands, the wooded edges of the ridge must be maintained as visual buffers to the interior, especially along Ebey's Prairie, Highway 20, and the Coastal Strip.

Remains of gun emplacements located on the west shoreline in Fort Ebey State Park.
Coupeville
Location and Access

The town of Coupeville is the commercial center of the reserve, occupying 740 acres of land stretching across Highway 20 to Prairie Center in Ebey's Prairie. Coupeville is bounded by Penn Cove on the north, Woodlands to the east and west, and Ebey's Prairie on the south.

Primary access into the town is along Main Street off of Highway 20, along Parker Road from the east, and Madrona Way from the west.

Significance and Integrity

Platted in 1881, the town of Coupeville grew quickly into the market and service center of the island. Front Street, along the waterfront, was the original center of town and still contains the oldest commercial buildings in Coupeville, including a number of false-front structures from the nineteenth century.

Neighborhoods surrounding the old commercial core also contain several older residences, many of which retain qualities from their original site designs. These designs include large, undivided lots, remnant orchards, gates, walls, walks and grounds that denote early patterns and development trends, as well as social values.

Prairie Center, in the southernmost portion of the city (south of Highway 20), developed as the military base at Fort Casey grew and centered around Pat's Place (now the Tyee Motel and Cafe) built in 1910.

Contemporary activities associated with tourism and recreation, including boating on Penn Cove and the dock at Coupeville's wharf, echo historic trends that lend regional importance to the town.
Preservation Principles

Preservation principles for Coupeville encourage the continued maintenance of all historic structures and significant landscape patterns and features.

1. In order to preserve historic landscape patterns, maintain distinct and separate commercial districts and residential neighborhoods.

2. In order to maintain visual continuity and quality any new buildings in the area should be sympathetic in design, scale and material to surrounding structures, land forms, and views especially to the water (see Design Considerations for Historic Properties, 1984).

3. Maintain the cohesive visual and material quality of the town by encouraging attention to entry experiences, signage, building setback and scale, orientation of structures to each other and surroundings, and a general regard for the townscape as a whole.

The Wharf in Coupeville, historically a major access point for the movement of goods, now provides moorage for small boats.

The Olympic building and the Tyee Motel and Cafe in Prairie Center.
**East Woodlands**

**Location and Access**

The East Woodlands are located along a ridge line on the eastern portion of the reserve. Smith Prairie and Keystone Road form the eastern boundary, Crockett Prairie, the southern edge; Eddy's Prairie and Coupeville, the western edge; and Penn Cove, the northern boundary.

This area, like the West Woodlands, is largely remote and undeveloped with some residential development and Rhododendron Park located within.

Primary access is along Highway 20, which slices through the center of the woodlands, and Parker Road which follows the northern edge.

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**Significance and Integrity**

Densely-wooded, this area remains a natural resource area. The inaccessible nature of the forest channeled early settlement around the large ridge into the prairies and along its edges.

More recent development, including scattered residential structures and recreational activities associated with park areas, have maintained the forest edge as a visual screen, and, as a whole, the area maintains its natural resources.
Preservation Principles

Preservation principles for the East Woodlands focus on maintaining the natural resources of the area.

1. In order to protect the remaining natural quality of the area, maintain forest land use designation for entire area.

2. Large residential developments within the woodlands are discouraged. However, where new development occurs, appropriate vegetative screening and the clustering of structures is strongly encouraged in order to minimize potential impacts on natural resources.

3. To maintain the visual quality of the woodlands, preserve wooded edges of the area as a visual buffer, especially as viewed from Highway 20 and Parker Road.

A complex in the interior portion of the woodlands.

Right: View of Patmore Road as it cuts through the woodlands.

Left: Cleared area within woodlands is not visible from the road because of vegetation left along edges as physical screen.
Smith Prairie
Location and Access

Divided by the reserve boundary, most of Smith Prairie is located outside the reserve. The small portion that is within the reserve is bounded on the west by the forest of the East Woodlands.

A 600-acre open area enclosed by forest, Smith Prairie is the primary south entry to the reserve. Access is along Highway 20, which cuts across the prairie.

Significance and Integrity

The early donation claims of Joseph Smith and John Kineth filled the small portion of the prairie land inside the reserve. One of the first roads on the reserve (1854) linked Ebey's claim and Smith's claim. The Kineth farm complex, located along the old wagon road from Coupeville to Langley, is in its original location with a number of original outbuildings remaining on the complex. The land itself, while used for agriculture, was never as productive as the other prairies, and as a result, less intensive pasture and grazing replaced market crop production. That pattern continues today and a variety of agricultural land uses remain, including a tree farm, state game farm, feed crops, some pasture and natural open areas.

The presence of these land uses and the remaining farm complex reflects a continuity of land use that contributes to the historic integrity of the landscape.
Preservation Principles

Preservation principles for Smith Prairie focus on maintaining its naturally open and historically rural character.

1. In order to maintain the open nature and overall visual qualities of the prairie, maintain existing agricultural land use designation and existing historic structures.

2. In order to minimize other potential visual impacts on the prairie, any new structures not associated with existing complexes should be located along the edges of the prairie.

3. To support the historic and natural "low profile" of the prairie landscape, development of hedgerows along existing fence lines or in lieu of new fence materials is encouraged.

View of Smith Prairie looking northwest from Highway 20. Tree farm is in the foreground.
Penn Cove
Location and Access

The Penn Cove area includes the 4,000 acres of water that constitute the cove itself and the ten miles of shoreline along its edge.

Exhibiting a distinct beach character the shoreline varies from high sandy cliffs to muddy tidelands, with points of land extending into the cove.

Primary access is along a series of shoreline roads which circle the cove including Parker Road, Front Street in Coupeville, Madrona Way and Scenic Heights Road.

Significance and Integrity

Occupied and used by Indians and white settlers for nearly 600 years, the lands surrounding Penn Cove are richly layered with cultural history.

The oldest known significant resources are the 34 archeological sites, including three permanent Salish villages.

White settlers also realized the value of the water resource and eleven original donation land claims were taken up along the shores of the cove.

The first trading post on the entire island located along the shores of Penn Cove on Captain Barstow's claim. An overland road, developed in 1854, linked the cove and Ebey's Prairie following portions of what is now Madrona Way.

Nearby, and associated with the period of early settlement, the county seat was established at Coveland where it remained until 1881 when Coupeville became the primary service area for the region. Also in the vicinity
of Coveland, a small resort area grew around the cove at the turn of the century. The Captain Whidbey Inn (1901) was built during this time, and it, along with several small cabins, echo the subsequent historic trends in recreation and tourism around the cove.

Today, similar recreation-related activities including the development of seasonal homes, boat launches, and beach areas, reflect the use of Penn Cove as a significant natural resource and recreational area on the reserve.

Seventeen contributing and historically significant structures remain on the shores of Penn Cove. Because of these structures, the thirty-four known archeological sites, and the cove itself, Penn Cove remains a valuable cultural and natural landscape area.

Preservation Principles

Preservation principles for Penn Cove focus on the protection of significant cultural and natural resources.

1. In order to protect known archeological sites around Penn Cove, archeological clearance from the state should be obtained before any new construction occurs along the cove.

2. Maintain all significant historic structures as well as natural areas reflecting historic settlement patterns including Monroe's Landing, San de Fuca, Captain Whidbey Inn, Good Beach, Kennedy's Lagoon, the Coupeville waterfront, Long Point and Snakelum Point.

3. Maintain the visual quality of the cove by encouraging appropriate design and thoughtful and sensitive siting of new structures.

4. Maintain Penn Cove as a recreational resource by providing clear public access to the water.
Ebey's Prairie
Location and Access

Ebey's Prairie is located in the central portion of the reserve, surrounded by the Coastal Strip on the southwest, the West Woodlands, Coupeville and Highway 20 along the north, and the East Woodlands.

The large natural prairie is characterized by a gentle sweep of agricultural land and a patchwork of farms, fields, fences and hedgerows.

Primary access is along Highway 20, Ebey's Landing Road, Engle Road, and Hill Road.

Significance and Integrity

From the very earliest use by the Skagit Indians and subsequent settlement by white pioneers, the prairie land has been used for agriculture. Taking advantage of the open fields and fertile soils, early donation land claims by the Ebeys, Erigles, Hills and others solidified settlement patterns on the prairie. Many of these claims remain remarkably intact today.

Early homes from this initial period of settlement are still standing in their original location (including the Jacob Ebey Saltbox, 1855), and are historically significant structures on the reserve. Other structures, including the cemetery, several barns and outbuildings, roads, and fencelines have remained the same for over a hundred years and reflect this same period of early settlement. Taken altogether, the stability and continuity of these broad patterns of settlement and land use, circulation, and structures, reflect a high degree of both natural landscape integrity and the history of a still-vital community.
Preservation Principles

Preservation principles for Ebey's Prairie focus on protection of significant historic landscape patterns and features.

1. Protect both natural soils, historic landscape patterns and structures by maintaining an exclusive agricultural land use designation for the entire prairie.

2. New development or structures not associated with existing complexes should be carefully sited along the edges of the prairie (see #3 below).

3. In order to preserve the high degree of visual quality on the prairie, no structures, other than interpretive devices of small-scale, should be allowed on the bottom lands. Structures on the slopes should not intrude into the prairie or into the skyline when seen from local roads or viewpoints.

4. Maintenance and incorporation of existing fence lines and hedgerows into current land practices is strongly encouraged.

Above: The sheep barn on the bluff overlooking the prairie was probably part of Jacob Ebey's homestead.
Crockett Prairie
Location and Access

A sloping triangle of land, Crockett Prairie funnels between the Fort Casey Uplands to the west, Admiral Bay along the south, and the East Woodlands.

The prairie is a mix of both natural and cultural resources. It contains a significant natural marsh, Crockett Lake, Keystone Spit, the ferry landing, and the rich, fertile soils which cover much of the prairie.

Primary access is along Highway 20 on Keystone Spit, Wanamaker Road and Fort Casey Road.

Significance and Integrity

As one of three natural prairies on the reserve, several original donation land claims occurred here during the period of early white settlement, including five by the Crockett family alone. As was the case in other areas of the reserve, these initial claims structured historic settlement patterns and land use.

Agriculture, the dominant land use since 1850, remains viable today, due in large part to those early patterns and the excellent agricultural soils found on the prairie.

The area also retains a number of significant historic structures, including several historic buildings, barns and outbuildings, road locations, and the remains of a bridge over Crockett Lake which connected Keystone and Prairie Center in 1874.

Development of plats for the towns of Chicago and Brooklyn in the late nineteenth century coincided with the period of community growth on the reserve. Although no
structures from those developments remain (reportedly only one hotel ever existed), several features and buildings from the military era remain in the landscape around the Keystone area, including the wharf and dock remnants.

Crockett Prairie is significant also for the natural resources of Crockett Lake, including the marsh vegetation, wildlife habitat, and the recreational use of the beach and waterfront along the spit.

Although newer residential development on the ridge east of the prairie and along its base has had a visual impact on the natural setting, the historic settlement patterns, historic and current land uses and significant structures still remain and contribute to an overall landscape integrity.

**Preservation Principles**

Preservation principles for Crockett Prairie focus on protection of both natural and cultural resources and significant historic landscape patterns.

1. Protect both natural resources of soil and historic landscape patterns by maintaining agricultural land use designation.
2. New development or structures not associated with existing complexes should be carefully sited along edges of the prairie or within existing subdivisions.
3. In order to protect the visual quality and historic patterns in the prairie, small scale elements such as fence lines, hedgerows, and the bridge remains over Crocket Lake should be retained.
Fort Casey Uplands
Location and Access

The Fort Casey Uplands extend north from Admiralty Head between Ebey's and Crockett prairies. The Coastal Strip forms the southwest boundary.

The uplands are a mix of second-growth forests and scattered clearings of pasture or croplands.

Primary access is along Engle Road which cuts through the center of the area, Fort Casey Road along the east edge and Hill Road along the north.

Significance and Integrity

Five original donation land claims were taken in this upland area. Scattered throughout and tucked along edges of clearings are several historic buildings, barns, roads and other structures surviving from the period of early settlement. There are twelve contributing structures in the uplands including the complexes associated with Fort Casey and the military presence on the reserve over a fifty year period. Thirty buildings and structures from the military complex including gun emplacements, a lighthouse (1901), barracks, officers' quarters, storage buildings, roads, paths, and stairways into empty fields remain in the contemporary landscape. As a whole, the remains of the complex are relatively intact, with portions under the jurisdiction of the state (Fort Casey State Park) and Seattle Pacific University (Camp Casey).
Open areas throughout the uplands are maintained to a large degree in agricultural use as they have been for a hundred years. With soils not as profitable as other areas on the reserve, smaller pastures and cropland areas developed between woodland stands and this structure influenced land use patterns. Although some new residential development is occurring and some forest areas have been cut, these basic land patterns remain.

Portions of the Fort Casey Uplands reflect historic patterns of early settlement and community development with a number of significant and contributing structures remaining in the landscape. The area as a whole retains enough of these elements to have integrity.

Preservation Principles

Preservation principles for the Fort Casey Uplands encourage protection and maintenance of remaining significant and historic landscape patterns and features.

1. In order to preserve historic landscape patterns and visual quality in the uplands, maintain the existing agricultural land use designation and all significant historic structures.

2. In order to support visual quality in the area, any new structures should be carefully sited along the edges of open areas and sensitive in design, scale and material to surrounding areas (see Design Considerations for Historic Properties, 1984).

3. Preserve and, when appropriate, incorporate into new development or interpretive features, historic remnants including old military structures, abandoned roads, and other small scale elements such as footpaths, lighting fixtures and plantings.
Coastal Strip
Location and Access

The Coastal Strip includes the beach, Perego's Lake, the shoreline and bluffs found along the eight-mile western boundary of the reserve. Elevations range from sea level to just over 200 feet. The bluffs are sparsely vegetated, relatively unstable and in a constant state of erosion.

Access to the area is limited to a state park trail, and the beach itself.

Significance and Integrity

The fragile and unstable nature of the Coastal Strip has historically restricted human impacts with two significant exceptions; the landing area at Ebey's Prairie and the military emplacements associated with Fort Casey.

Used over many years by the Salish Indians and early settlers, the ravine between the beach and low point along the bluff/prairie provided a natural landing and access area along the coast. Constructed in 1860 near the ravine, the Ferry house served pioneers arriving at the landing and traveling overland to Penn Cove. By 1865, a county road from the landing (and bisecting Isaac Ebey's claim) connected the shore with points north.

As Penn Cove developed into a primary port area, and a ferry dock was built at Keystone, the use of Ebey's Landing area diminished. Today the Ferry house and road remain in their original locations and the landing area still serves as an access point for the state bluff trail and beach.
Military gun emplacements, including batteries, map rooms and bunkers, reflect the military presence on the reserve over a fifty-year period. Although never engaged in battle, these fortifications are significant examples of military installations during these years and remain intact. Finally, the variety of native plants and natural areas make the coastal strip a significant natural and recreational resource on the reserve.

Preservation Principles

Preservation principles for the coastal strip focus on maintaining the natural resource of the area as a context within which significant cultural elements exist.

1. The Shoreline Management Plan which exists for all of Island County and protects natural resources of shoreline areas, should be observed.
2. Any new structures, including residential development along bluffs and interpretive structures, should be carefully sited in the natural context with sensitive regard to visual impact, materials, scale and color.
3. In order to protect the landing area, any regrading for vehicular circulation or construction of new access from the beach to Ebey's Prairie should be avoided. Footpaths may be appropriate if the bluff top becomes public land.
A Note on Visual Quality and Visual Resources

There are several methods of identifying and assessing the visual qualities of a landscape. Techniques range from evaluation based on individual preferences and subjective tastes to more objective analysis using computers and statistical systems that rate the types and values of visual resources in a landscape.

In previous studies at Ebey's Landing two different methods have been used. One study (1976) focused on the public image of the reserve by conducting a citizen survey and combining that information with direct field observation. In the study, natural boundaries helped establish seven "visual districts". Within these larger areas, the study identified several landscape details and features such as gateways, landmarks, viewpoints and smaller boundary elements that influence perception and experience of the whole reserve. The information in the study was not evaluated or given a positive or negative value, but it did provide a preliminary visual inventory of the reserve.

In a later study (see Comprehensive Plan for Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve, 1980), visual resources were evaluated and assessed according to an area's vulnerability to development and potential impacts in the landscape because of change.

Both studies are valuable for enhancing our understanding of visual resources on the reserve. This report incorporates both studies and includes field information gathered during the building and landscape inventory (1983) to help identify distinct character areas and visual characteristics among landscape features. The observations in this report are not primarily evaluative but do suggest some perceptual tools for understanding the ways we look at landscapes. Briefly the techniques used in this report considered visual character of the reserve at three scales.

The largest scale is equivalent to the contextual setting of the reserve and overall landscape organization as discussed in part three of this report. In addition,
visual qualities at this level consider perceptions of entry and access and definition of primary districts within the entire reserve. For example a product from this scale of visual analysis was development of the ten character areas of the reserve.

The second scale of observation considered a variety of features from the built environment especially buildings and structures, but also hedgerows, tree groupings, shorelines and roadside elements. These observations were reflected in discussions of the "visual cohesiveness" of Front Street in Coupeville or the "visual quality" (based on historic patterns) of open prairies with hedgerows defining the patchwork of cultivated field and pasture.

The third scale considered the landscape in detail. Although this study primarily addressed broad historic landscape patterns several small scale elements were included, such as fence details, pathways, building materials, and a variety of remnant historic features that give depth and texture to any landscape. Images of gates, the headstones in the cemetery, old lamp posts and abandoned structures reflect this focus.

Altogether these different levels of looking at landscapes are methods of organizing our understanding of a complex and dynamic system of landscape components. As mentioned above, this report does not evaluate visual resources on the reserve. A more comprehensive study on this subject is planned this year.
Bibliography


A report on vegetation resources on the reserve related to historic events and potential impacts on existing patterns by new development.


A richly illustrated text of local history and the events and people of early central Whidbey.


A brief history and background to the reserve, its resources, meaning and value. Illustrated appendix includes archaeological overview, inventory methods and sample cards.


An inventory of wildlife resources on the reserve with text and tables.


Information on preservation and maintenance of historic buildings on the reserve, with several helpful illustrations.


Techniques for identifying, evaluating and managing rural and cultural landscapes.


Maps and data on individual soil types found on reserve.


A collection of reports, inventory and evaluation on soils (including descriptions, capability, classification, woodland suitabilities, and wildlife) on the reserve.

A collection of essays on the issues, techniques and tools for the preservation of rural resources.


Complete inventory of every pre-1940 building on the reserve and all 17,400 acres of land. Descriptions, illustrations, history, and photographs. Comprehensive data base of significant cultural resources.


Primary planning document for reserve assembled by local citizens, city and county planning departments, and National Park Service staff.


Current land protection policy for reserve.


An excellent environmental history of the reserve describing land use practices that shaped the present landscape.

OTHER REFERENCES

Maps and records on file, Island County Engineering Department, Coupeville, Washington.

Historic Photographs on file, Island County Historical Society, Coupeville, Washington.

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