

TIMPANOGOS CAVE NATIONAL MONUMENT CANYON VIEW PICNIC AREA

CONCEPT PLAN

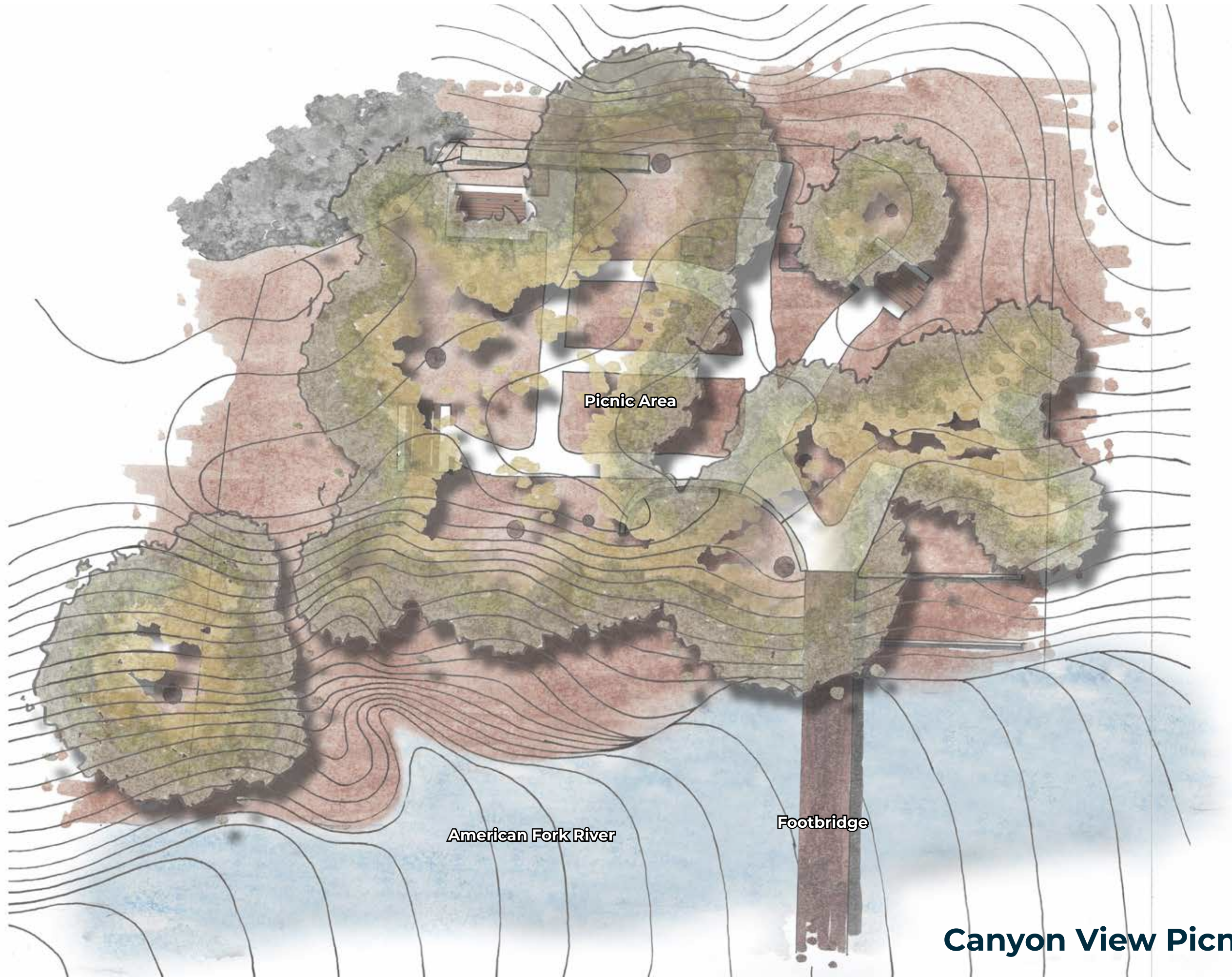


Canyon View Picnic Area Context

Timpanogos Cave National Monument (TICA) is home to a limestone cave system located on the slopes of Mount Timpanogos in the Wasatch Mountains. Approximately 50,000 visitors tour the caves annually, with another 100,000 stopping at the visitor center or hiking the trail to the cave. Looking beyond the Monument's borders, 1.6 million people visit American Fork Canyon and pass through the park to recreate in the canyon, making the small Canyon View Picnic Area a central stopping place for not only the tens of thousands of TICA visitors, but the millions of recreationalists using the confined American Fork Canyon.

Visitors waiting for their cave tour, visitors unable to hike or unable to obtain frequently sold out cave tour tickets, and also general canyon users looking for a day use area often use the Canyon View Picnic Area. The Canyon View Picnic Area is easily accessible by crossing SR-92 via a crosswalk and the American Fork River via a footbridge. Although the picnic area is only approximately 200 feet from the visitors center it remains a world apart from the rest of the monument. The picnic area covers less than .15 acres but is almost completely shaded by large conifer and deciduous trees. The shade provided by the overstory of trees provides a much needed secluded, natural experience to monument and canyon visitors.





Canyon View Picnic Area

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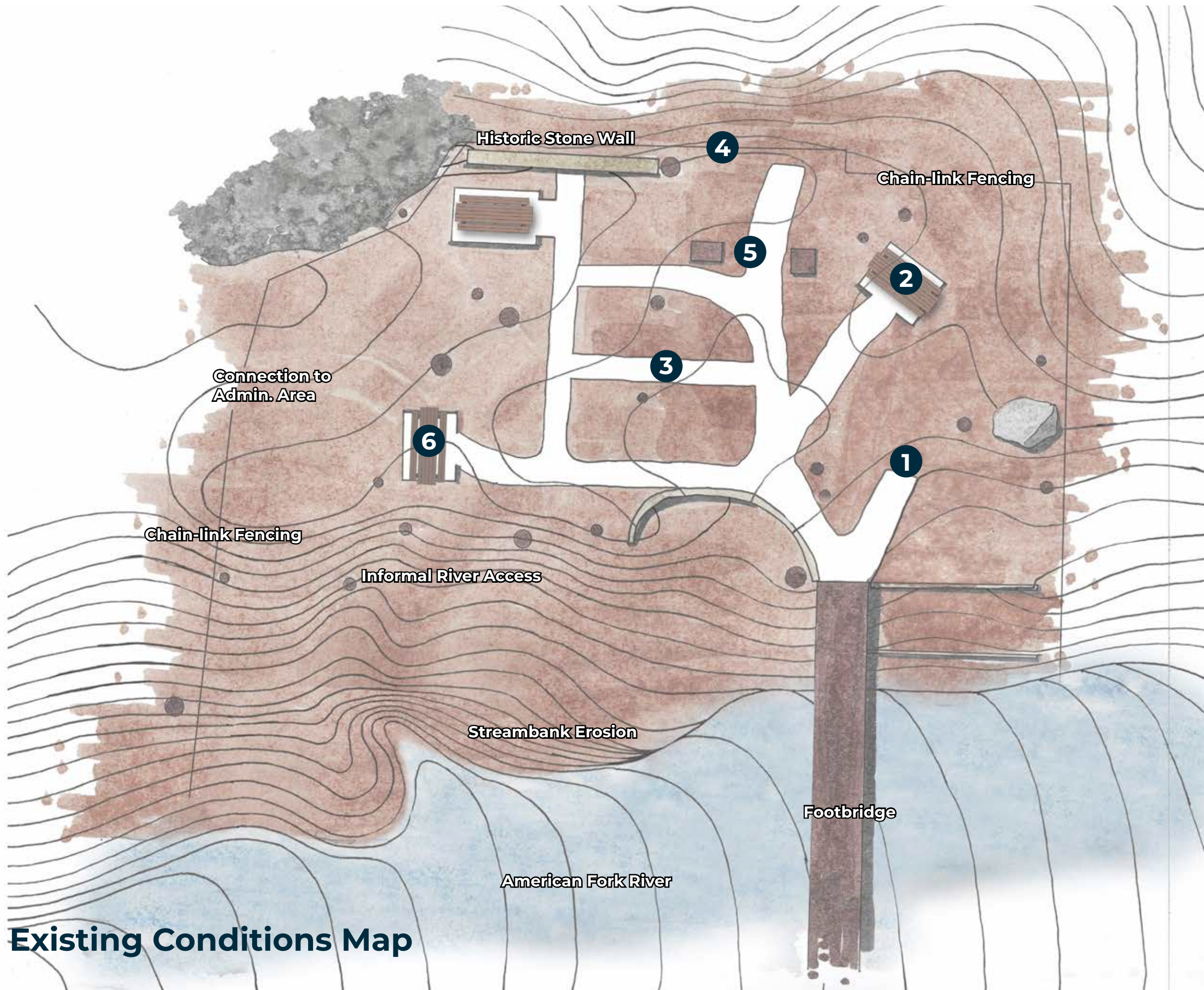
EXTENSION
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Existing Conditions

Although the picnic area is only approximately 200 feet from the visitors center it remains a world apart from the rest of the monument. The picnic area covers less than .15 acres but is almost completely shaded by large conifer and deciduous trees. The shade provided by the over story of trees provides a much needed secluded, natural experience to monument and canyon visitors.

Picnic facilities are scattered throughout the area and a series of redundant asphalt paths create confusing circulation routes. The area is surrounded by a chain-link fence that contradicts the natural feel of the area and creates an undesirable visual barrier to the surrounding landscape.

The American Fork River runs to the south of the site and visitors access the river via an informal path down a steep and often dangerous slope. Other visitors access the river by walking through native riparian vegetation, creating social trails and further damaging this sensitive ecosystem. At the base of the slope the river is causing erosion of the streambank.



Existing Conditions Map



Existing drinking fountain to be removed.



Existing fence to be removed.



Existing picnic table to be moved. Concrete pad to remain.



Existing trash and recycling cans to be moved.



Existing non-essential asphalt paths to be broken up and removed.



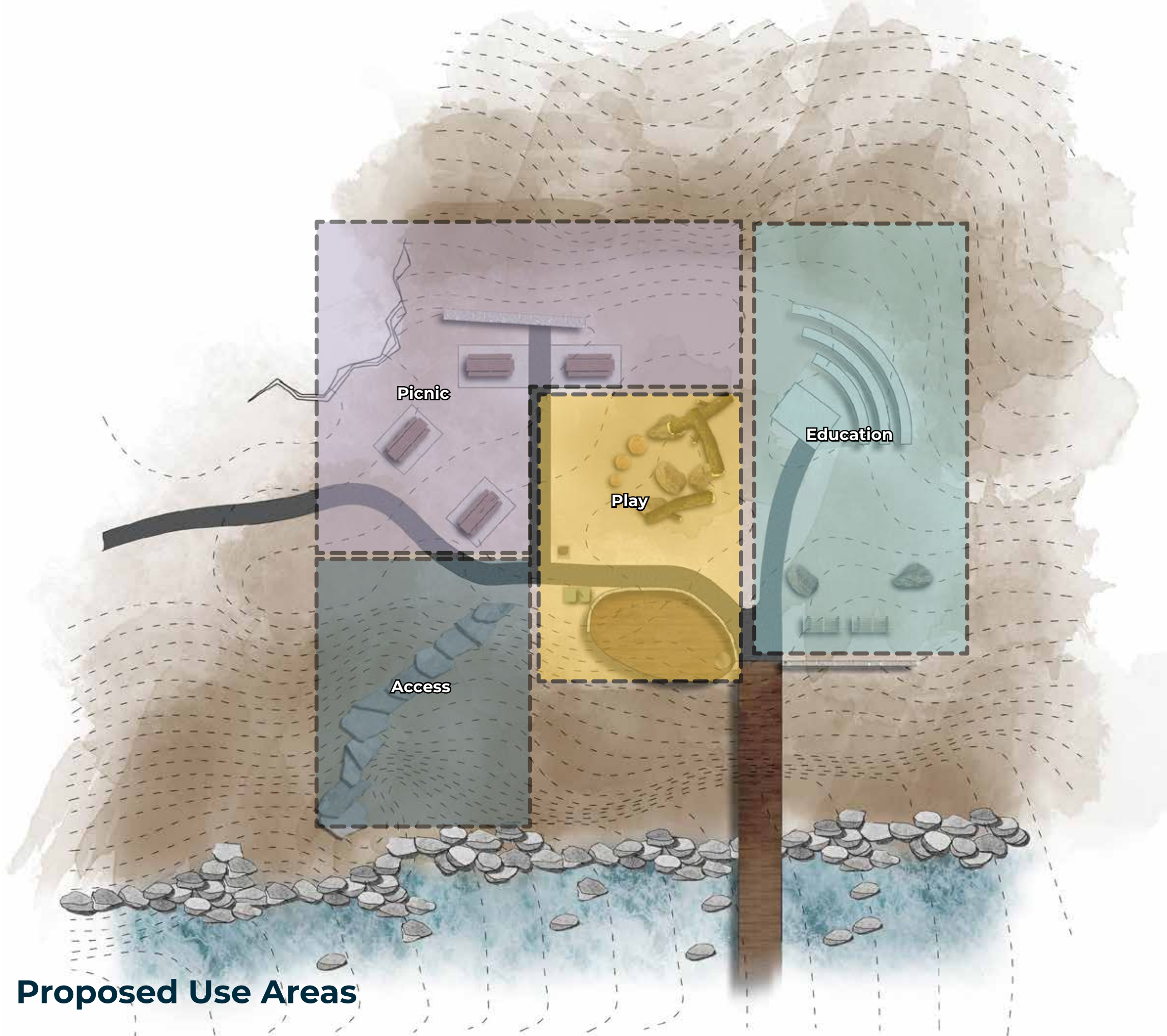
Existing picnic table to be moved and concrete pad removed.

Design Intent

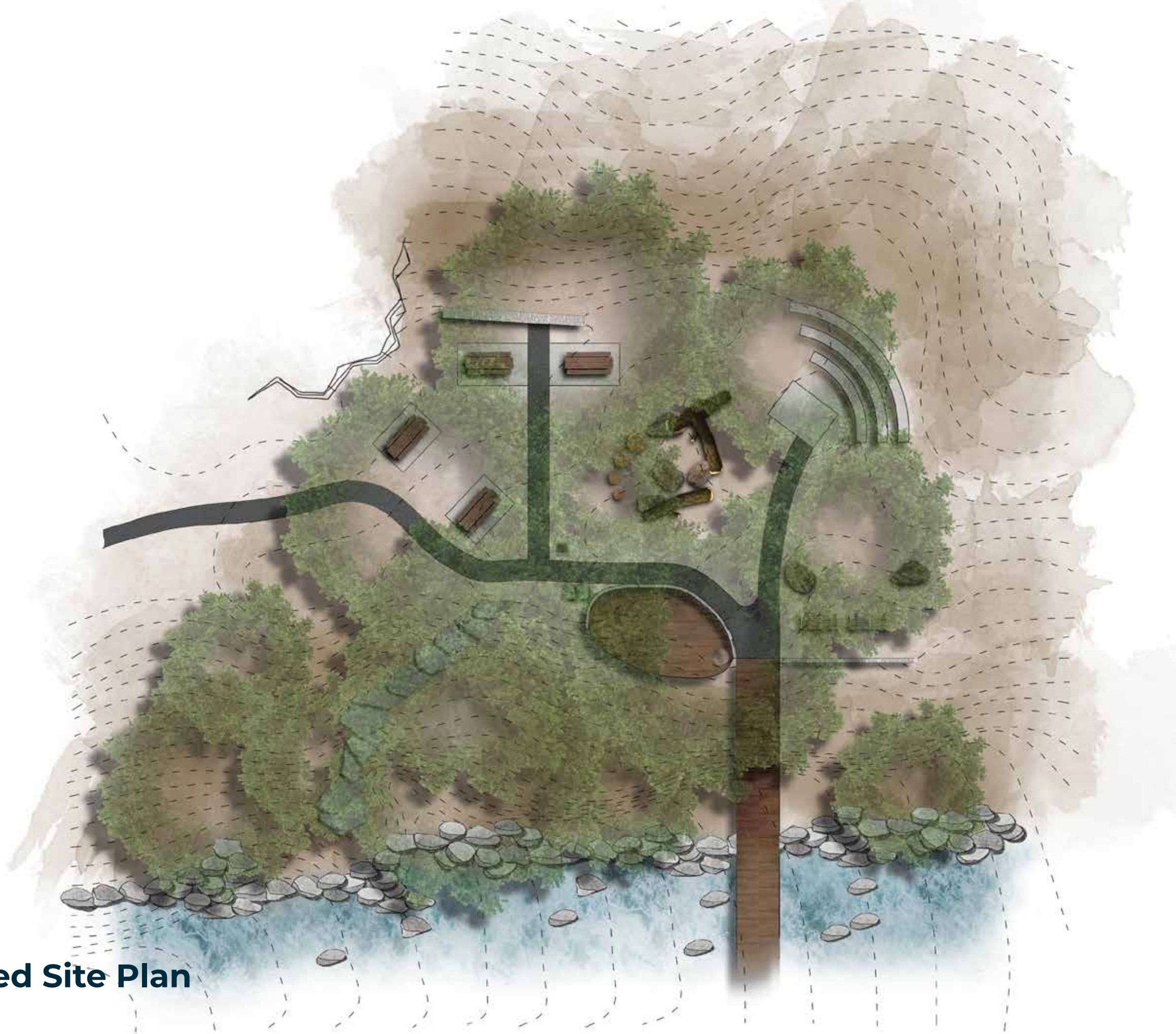
The proposed site plan seeks to simplify the existing design by removing redundant paths and uniting similar uses into specific areas. This effort will provide discreet areas for different activities and uses. The site is separated into four uses: Education, Play, Picnic, and Access.

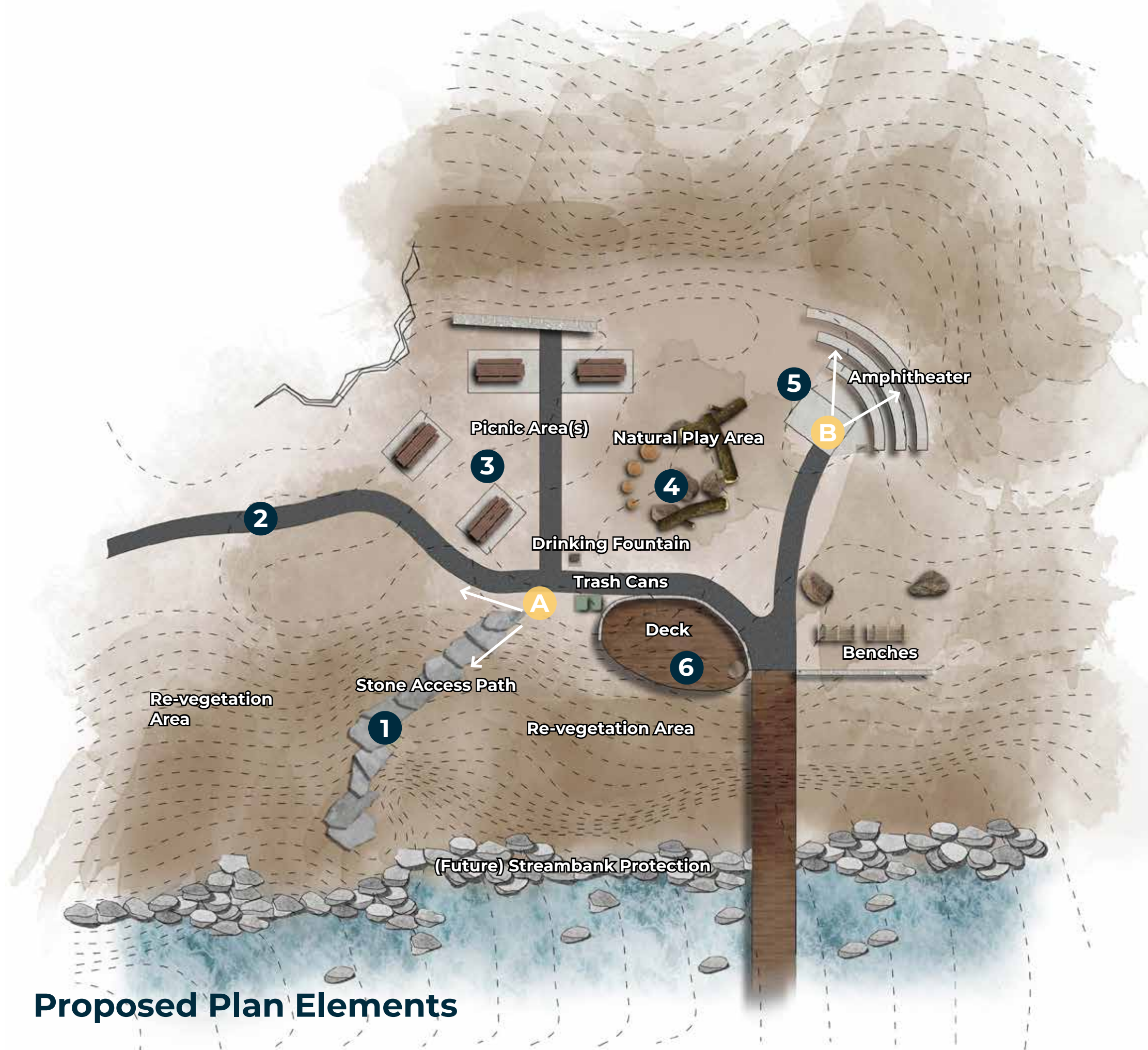
-  Education: This area utilizes the natural topography of the site to incorporate a small amphitheater to host educational events.
-  Play: This area will host a natural play area. This flat, sunny section of the site will allow children an area to climb and play so as to deter them from playing near the stream or on the hillside. This area will be considered for construction at a later date.
-  Picnic: This area utilizes the most secluded and shady area of the site for groups to gather to enjoy a picnic. A single path provides access to the picnic tables and trash and the drinking fountain are located near this area.
-  Access: The development of a defined pathway to the edge of the river concentrates foot traffic in order to minimize disturbance along the riverbank. It also provides a safer route to the river bank.

Proposed Use Areas



Proposed Site Plan







Existing Connection to Swinging Bridge Trail



Proposed Connection to Swinging Bridge Trail



Picnic Area



Nature Play Area Example

Notes:

- 1 River access would be provided through a stone staircase that will allow people a safer way to get near the river. Areas around the river will be protected to encourage natural growth and re-vegetation efforts. Boulders and/or hydrologic structures can aid in erosion control in a future phase.
- 2 The important connection to the swinging bridge parking should be enhanced by simplifying the path where it curves around the house to provide a direct visual connection between the path and the picnic area.
- 3 The picnic area is located in a quiet corner of the site.
- 4 A natural play area is proposed for a later phase. This area facilitates children's desire to climb and explore in an environment other than the streambank or hillside.
- 5 The amphitheater should provide flexible seating for those visiting the site and provide space for ranger talks and other group gatherings. Materials that match the local environment such as stone should be used to give the appearance that the seating is coming out of the existing stone or rigid concrete similar in theme to the visitor center should be used.
- 6 A deck area provides additional seating and views toward the Visitor Center. This area also provides a visual connection with the American Fork River without damaging the riparian vegetation or streambanks. The deck should incorporate the existing low stone wall. Salvaged Trex decking can be used to minimize costs.



Amphitheater Area Current Condition

B



Proposed Amphitheater Area Visualization

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1



Current Condition

Proposed Trail Connections

- 1 The first challenge to diverting pedestrians from crossing the highway is enticing them over the bridge and into the administration area and onto a trail. Showing pedestrians a pathway in a creative way can assist in delineating a path different from the direct visual connection to the visitor's center.
- 2 In lieu of an entirely new trail a simple re-route to enhance the direct visual connection between the picnic area and the trail is recommended. This short re-route will eliminate the blind corner that can confuse users and indicate the trail going further into an administrative area. This re-route will also create a visual connection for trail users moving from the picnic area back to the parking lot.

2



Current Condition



Proposed Treatment



Proposed Trail Connection



Trail Alignment Visualization



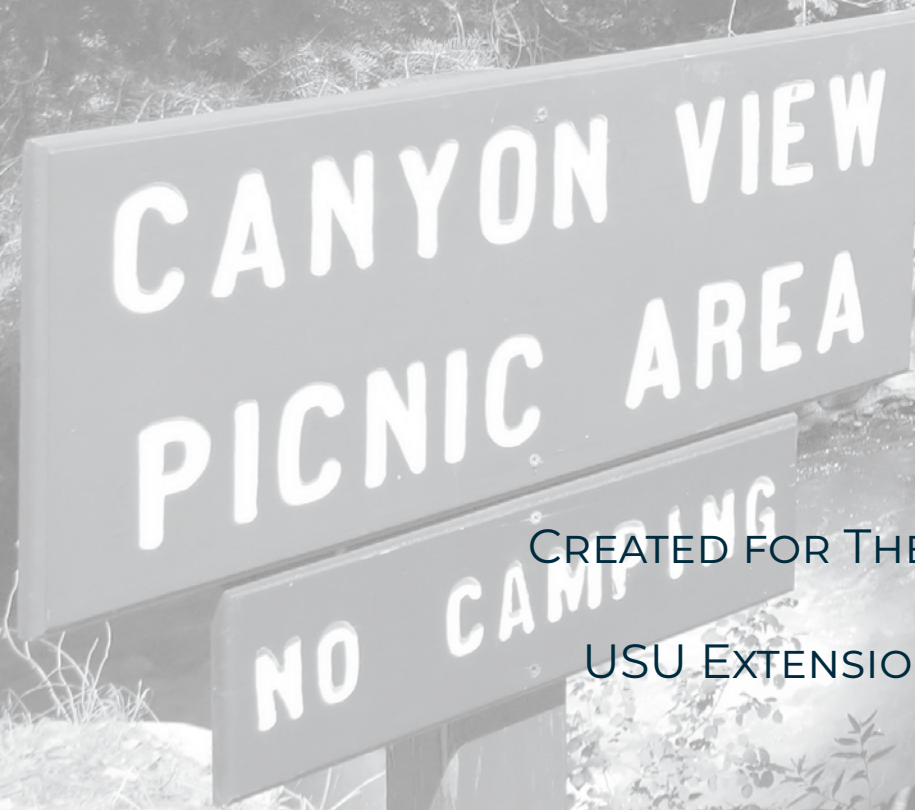
Proposed Trail Connections



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CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM