



Park bowl and pond

DESTINATION POINT DEFIANCE

This rare 760 acre park is a popular destination for over 3.1 million visitors each year who are drawn by the appeal of its unique natural, recreational and educational opportunities.

The picturesque park boasts 20 miles of trails through old growth forest and along the scenic waterfront, a living history museum, sandy shoreline at Owen Beach, and unique vistas for picnics and family play. Guests enjoy the unique experience of Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium's (PDZA) high caliber exhibits and shows. The Wild Wonders Outdoor Theater, Animal Avenue, new ZOOM zip line, sting ray touch tank and annual animal births all make PDZA one of the State's greatest attractions.

The Pagoda, originally a streetcar station, the Lodge and gardens are iconic places within the Park. Many weddings, anniversaries, corporate events and reunions have been celebrated in the Park over the years. The varied gardens – Northwest Native Plant Garden, Rose Garden, Japanese Garden, Rhododendron Garden, Iris Garden, Fuchsia Garden and Dahlia Garden – are maintained by clubs who host public plant sales and horticulture workshops each year.

Planning for Point Defiance is a multi-year initiative to steward and enhance the Park. The initiative includes park-wide activities and capital projects pulled together into one comprehensive plan that supports three philosophical components, or guiding principles:

1. *Preserve the character of Point Defiance Park;*
2. *Provide unified access to and throughout the Park and to the waterfront; and*
3. *Create year-round activities that encourage visitors to utilize the Park in all seasons.*

The park is divided into three key zones divided by land use intensities:

- **Forest Area.** The forested area in the northernmost part of the Park contains the underdeveloped area, 5 Mile Drive, native forests, overlook viewing areas and low-impact pedestrian trails.
- **Central.** The central area of the Park includes the secondary entrance to the Park, the Baker Tract and former Camp 6 area, Owen Beach and Fort Nisqually. It also includes the intervening forested area.
- **Park Entryway & Waterfront.** This most active and intensely developed area is centered around the main entrance located in the southeast part of the Park and stretches from the peninsula at the very eastern edge through to and including the Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium.

Destination Point Defiance promises to bring an additional influx of visitors to the Park thanks to increased access, stimulated in part by the connecting trail from Point Ruston and added amenities, such as the relocation of the Tacoma Public School District's Science and Math Institute (SAMI) and facilities. This plan will help park staff be in a better position to assist the current visitor, as well as to better understand and accommodate future needs of the Park.