

# Rotary Park Fish and Wildlife Viewing Area Project

We are enhancing the Rotary Park Pavilion as an environmentally themed fish and wildlife viewing area for residents and visitors. We wish to make Rotary Park a recreational destination that attracts and inspires residents and visitors to learn more about Rotary, and Rotary's new focus area, protecting the environment, as well as our local history. We are doing this with interpretive signs, interactive metal art (the whale), maintenance and cleaning, new picnic tables, a loop trail, a peace pole, and memorial bench. We have twenty-six community partners providing kind support.



Rotary Park Pavilion

## Project History

- **In 2022 we received a \$5000 Rotary district grant that we added to \$14, 035 in club funds** to start maintenance and graffiti removal, and design two interpretive signs, a thank you sign and a new gazebo sign, two new picnic tables made from recycled plastic lumber. We also installed a floating bird roost.
- **In 2023 we received another Rotary district grant of \$5000.** We also received \$20,000 in additional grant money from Rasmuson Foundation (\$18,000) and the Seward Community Foundation (\$2000) which we used to fund interactive whale art. We also received additional donations of gravel to refresh the loop trail and create a pad for a newly donated memorial bench, a land survey, a memorial bench and The Kino Rotary club is creating and donating a peace pole.
- **In 2024 we have applied for another matching Rotary district grant of \$2500 and committed another \$2500 in club funds for a total of \$5000** to create 2 more interpretive signs to direct people on Third Ave to the Pavilion, and describe how to operate the whale and put up some wildlife boxes such as an owl box, bat box and bee hotel..
- **In the future**, we may investigate developing a trail from Third Ave around the lagoon to the Pavilion, but private land boundaries may make this unfeasible.

## New Signs

The following interpretive signs are in production and will be installed at the park soon.



# Protect Our Environment

Rotary is a global organization that brings together professional leaders and business to benefit their communities and the world. Rotary has been active in Seward since 1986.

Rotarians are volunteers in your community that believe in "service above self" and work to address a range of social and humanitarian issues in seven focus areas, including the environment. Please join us in making our world a better place to live with these simple tips.

- R** **Reduce, reuse, and recycle.** The easiest way to protect the environment is to reduce the amount of energy you use and the waste you produce. Reduce the amount you consume, reuse items whenever possible, and recycle whenever you can.
- O** **Order** environmentally friendly products and find **opportunities** to support renewable power sources. **Observe** and reduce your impacts on the environment. **Open** your mind to new ideas and approaches to protect the environment.
- T** **Take** shorter showers. **Turn off** lights and electronics when not in use. **Travel** sustainably. **Tell** friends and family what you are doing to help protect the environment. **Trees** are a great thing to plant to combat climate change.
- A** **Advocate** for environmental protection by supporting organizations and initiatives that protect natural habitats, reduce pollution, promote sustainable practices, and support sustainable agriculture.
- R** **Reduce** your water usage by turning off the tap while brushing your teeth. **Rethink** whether you need something that you could do without. **Repair** rather than replace items when possible. Before you throw something away, **reimagine** a new use for it.
- Y** **You** can make a difference by implementing these simple tips. Together, we can change the world.

SCAN ME

*to learn about how you can help protect the environment*



SCAN ME

*to donate to Rotary for funding local community projects*



ENVIRONMENT

## ROTARY'S AREAS OF FOCUS



PEACEBUILDING & CONFLICT PREVENTION



COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



DISEASE PREVENTION & TREATMENT



WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE



MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH



BASIC EDUCATION & LITERACY

Protect the environment messages.



# It Takes Community

The success of Rotary is a reflection of how much the people of Seward and Alaska support our community. We'd like to thank the following people and entities who support Rotary for our efforts within this park and for environmental action within our community.

## In-Kind Partners

Doug Capra • Buck Crouch and Family • John Lang • Lee Poleske  
John Lang and Associates • Seward Senior Center



**GATEWAY HOTEL**



Tucson Kino  
**Rotary**



**SustainableSeward**  
reduce | recycle | renew

## Funding Partners

**Rotary**  
Club of Seward



**Rotary**  
District 5010



**Seward Community Foundation**  
*An Affiliate of The Alaska Community Foundation*

## Art

Paintings: Kwangsook Schaefermeyer - KPS Gallery.  
Metal Art: Ryan Guale (from recycled materials as possible).



# IMAGINE ROTARY

In memory of Lee Poleske and his contributions



**ENVIRONMENT**

# Thank You!

**Rotary**  
Club of Seward



Thanks to our partners.

# Seward Over Time



## The Shores of Resurrection Bay

You are standing on what was once the shore of Resurrection Bay. From here, at a short distance, you may have once seen whales, sea lions, or seals following fish for a tasty meal. What you see now is the product of over 100 years of development to build Seward as it exists today.



1936 map showing Resurrection Bay, site of what is now Seward. The 2.5 x 1.8 km, Seward Peninsula, Alaska, is part of the Seward Peninsula Borough. (Source: Alaska Department of Natural Resources, 1936)

**EXCELLENT IDEA IS PROPOSED TO STRAIGHTEN ROAD**

The proposed road will straighten the road at Resurrection Bay, Alaska. The road will be 100 feet wide and will be paved. The road will be 100 feet wide and will be paved. The road will be 100 feet wide and will be paved.

**SCAN ME**



to learn more about the history and ecology of Rotary Park



The Lagoon area prior to the 1964 earthquake, circa 1920-1963, as it was.

## A Changing Landscape

After the founding of Seward in 1903, the Alaska Central Railway put a railroad trestle across this tidal flat, providing train access out of Seward while still allowing water and fish to pass. The slopes on the road behind you, once the only road out of town, were treacherous in the winter, and in 1931 the Chamber of Commerce proposed to make travel easier (and avoid the hill) by extending Third Avenue. Completed on September 10, 1931, the road extension created the "lagoon." This coastal lagoon is still connected to the sea by a culvert under Third Avenue. This culvert allows salmon and other fish to come into the lagoon, providing habitat for pink, red, and silver salmon from mid-summer to late fall on their way to Scheffler Creek. The lagoon is also actively stocked with king salmon. This created lagoon is now a vital part of our landscape, providing habitat and enjoyment to residents and visitors.



Sockeye salmon and boats. (Salmon, a 2018 lagoon sculpture)

## A Community's Vision

Over these years, the view hasn't always been pretty. A garbage dump was visible on the other side of Third Avenue until 1956 when the Seward Women's Club proposed moving the dump and filling in that area to create a city park. They won a national community achievement award from the Sears Roebuck Foundation for their idea.

"The project started when Seward's front door became our back door," said Mrs. Walter Blue, president of the club at the time. "With the cessation of boat service on one side of town and the completion of the [Seward] highway [to Anchorage] on the other, the city dump and its rat population were right in the front yard."

Despite resistance from the city council due to budget concerns, the women worked tirelessly to get their idea approved. Rotarian Margaret Anderson, the city clerk at the time, remembers, "Mrs. Blue was constantly in the city offices pushing the city council to get rid of that dump." The city finally voted (May 26, 1956) to purchase land for a new dump. Although the dump area never became a park, the women's efforts led to the site's cleanup.

The tsunamis from the 1964 earthquake filled the lagoon with railroad cars and houses, and the citizens of Seward pulled together to clean it up. After the earthquake, the view changed again as dredge material from creating the new Seward Small Boat Harbor filled the area across the road. This area became the Harbor Commercial District.

## A Community's Park

Rotary Park was named in 1991 when then Rotary President Skip Reiersen proposed the idea to the City Council. Rotary sponsored the construction of the Pavilion in 1995 and later a boardwalk. The remains of the boardwalk are still visible and now support the whale art.

Rotary Park is a beautiful location for bird watching, wildlife viewing, and youth-only salmon fishing. Over 134 bird species have been sighted here, including ducks, trumpeter swans, bald eagles, owls, and songbirds.

In 1956, a Women's Club Program contained this ever-true sentiment, "To make a city beautiful, there must be vision to see, willingness to do, and cooperation to achieve."

Thanks to our community and many partners for your support in achieving this vision of Rotary Park today.



ENVIRONMENT

## Rotary Park: Valuable For People, Fish, and Wildlife



Rotary Club of Seward

Learn more detail about the history of Rotary Park and the project in our blog article, "[The History and Ecology of Rotary Park](#)".

# Rotary Park Gazebo

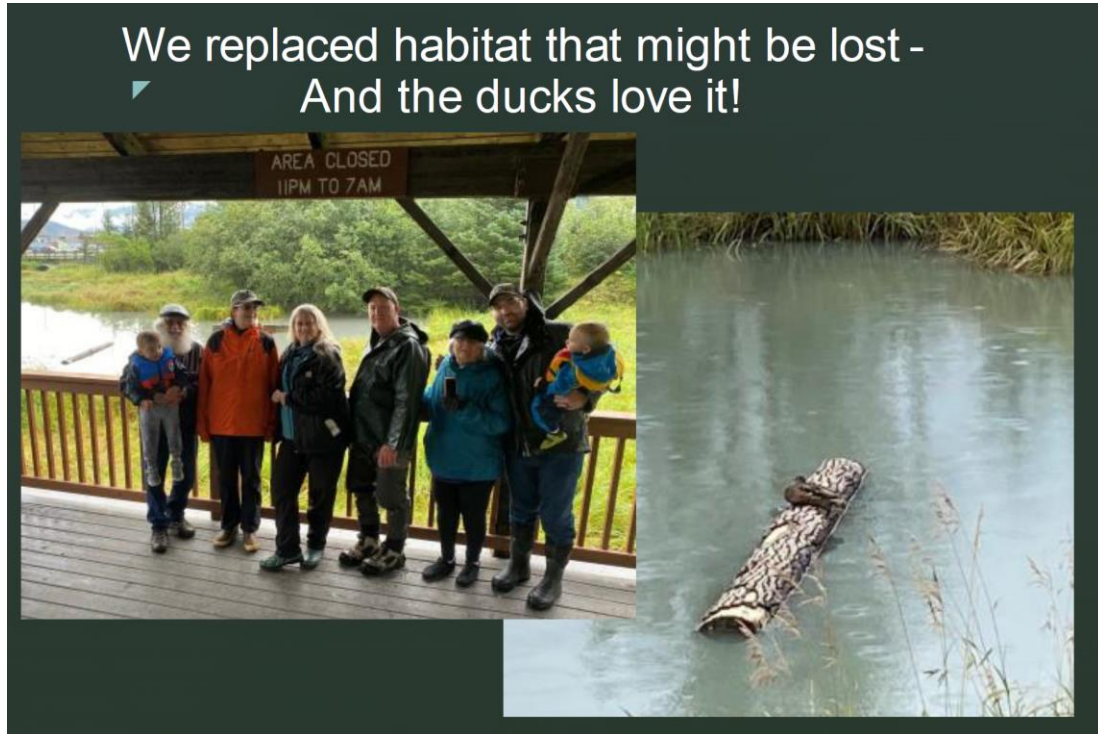
Park closes at 10pm or dusk, whichever comes first.





New Gazebo sign.

## Habitat Improvement



A floating roost habitat log was created to replace the area where birds sometimes roost on the old pier, which will be unavailable when the whale is installed. As you can see, ducks are already using it.

## Pavilion Maintenance

Before, the walkway to the Pavilion had rotting boards which were unsightly and becoming unsafe. Inside the Pavilion there was graffiti and burn marks from where a burn barrel had been used. The picnic table was small and damaged. The wood throughout was darkened from smoke from a previous fire.



Removing graffiti and replacing the old beat-up picnic table with two larger ones made from recycled lumber.

Now, many of the walkway boards have been replaced, making it safer and more beautiful by our partner, the city. The Pavilion was power-washed, and graffiti removed by the maintenance folks from the Gateway hotel as a donation.



Power washing and replacing rotting boards.



Jim Tomeo

The old picnic table was removed, and two new ones were created from lumber made of recycled plastic, helping to promote our environment message. This was completed with grant funds and in partnership with Sustainable Seward and Alaska Plastics Recovery.



Seward Rotary and Rotarians purchased a recycling can take care of the recycling.



## The Whale

The fifteen' moveable metal whale will be the main attraction drawing locals and visitors to the park, so they will see the environmental messages. The initial concept went through several prototype designs until a final design was complete and presented to the Seward Rotary Club. The whale is being built now with primarily recycled materials and will be installed in September 2024. Visitors will be able to move the whale via a ship's captain's steering wheel mounted on the Pavilion and connected to the whale with a drive shaft.

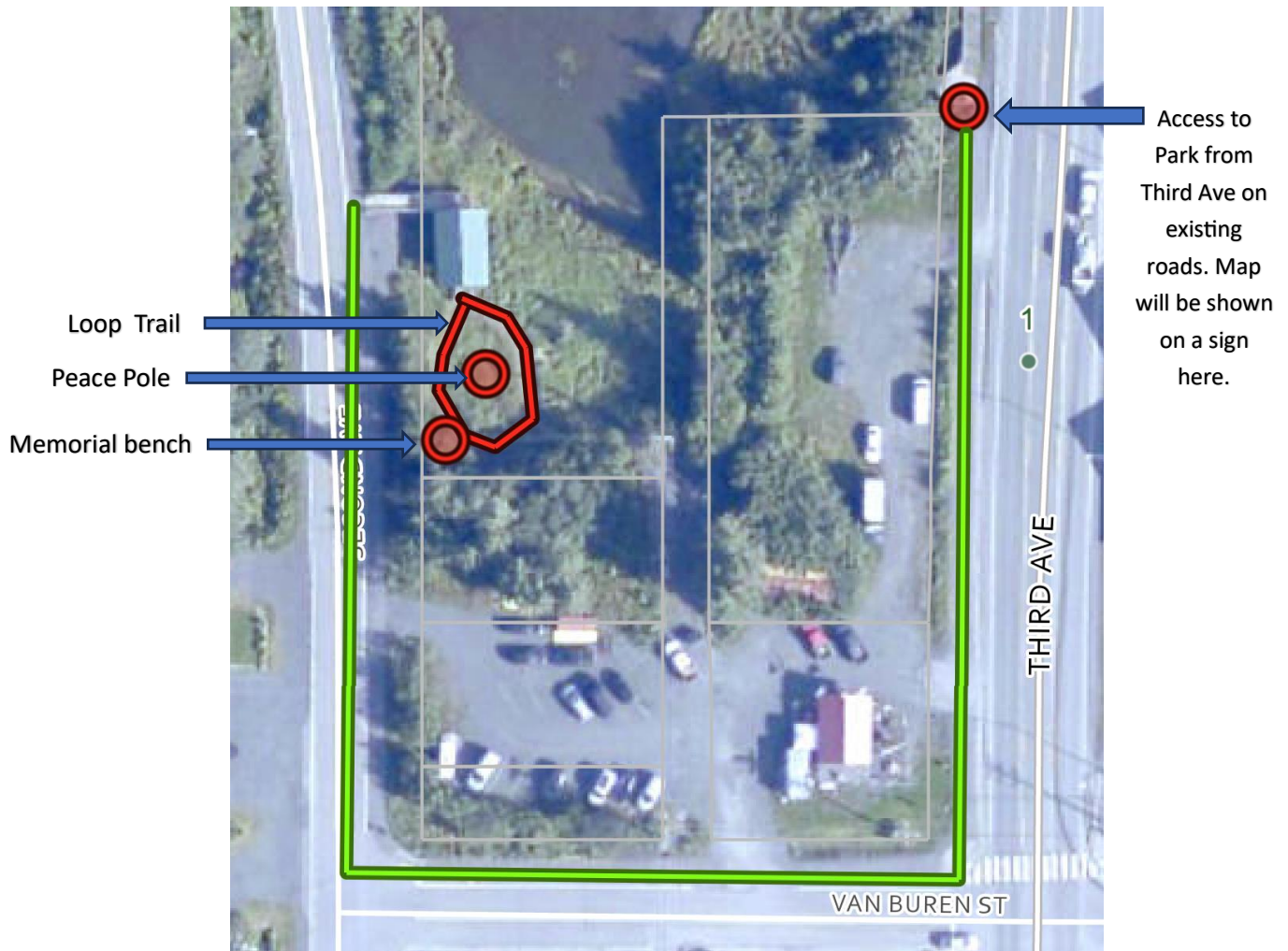


Early model of the moveable whale by Ryan Guale. [Demonstration of final model](#). It will be made from copper tubing.

## New Donations

As word spread of the project, more people wanted to get involved and donate in some way. The Kino Rotary club from Arizona is building a peace pole that will stand in the center of the loop trail, and honor

early settlers and native inhabitants with the word peace spelled out in their languages. A land survey was donated by John Lang and associates, freeing up some funds to pay a contractor to refresh a previous loop trail with new gravel, which was also donated by Metco. The contractor will also create a gravel pad to install a new memorial bench, donated by the Seward Senior Center.



The Loop trail which went out of use when the wood creosote board walkway was removed for environmental reasons, will be reinstated by adding fresh gravel, donated by Metco. A gravel bench pad will be installed on the SW corner to provide a site for the newly donated Rotarian memorial bench, donated by the Seward Senior Center. People will access Rotary Park from Third Ave on existing roads (green line), and a sign will be installed on Third Ave directing people with a grant in 2024. People can also drive and park on Second Ave.



Peace Pole will be created for us by Buck and Ada Crouch of the Kino Rotary and installed in the center of the loop trail