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Cultural Resources Short Report

Title:	Lowman Beach Park Shoreline Restoration Project, Cultural Resources Assessment, Seattle, King County, WA		
Author(s):	Katie Wilson, M.A., Alicia Valentino, Ph.D., Chris Lockwood, Ph.D., and Joel Darnell, M.S.		
Date:	February 27, 2019	**DAHP Project No.**	2019-01-00564
Acreage:	1.5 Acres	**ESA Project No.**	D160292.02
Agency:	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	**Project Proponent:**	City of Seattle, Parks and Recreation Department
Regulatory:	Section 106 NHPA		
USGS Quad:	Seattle South, WA (7.5')	**Township /Range/Section:**	T24N, R03E, Sec 26
Address:	7005 Beach Drive SW, Seattle, WA, 98136	**County:**	King, WA
Parcel(s):	4315701200		
Study Area:	1.00 mile radius of the Area of Potential Effects (APE)		

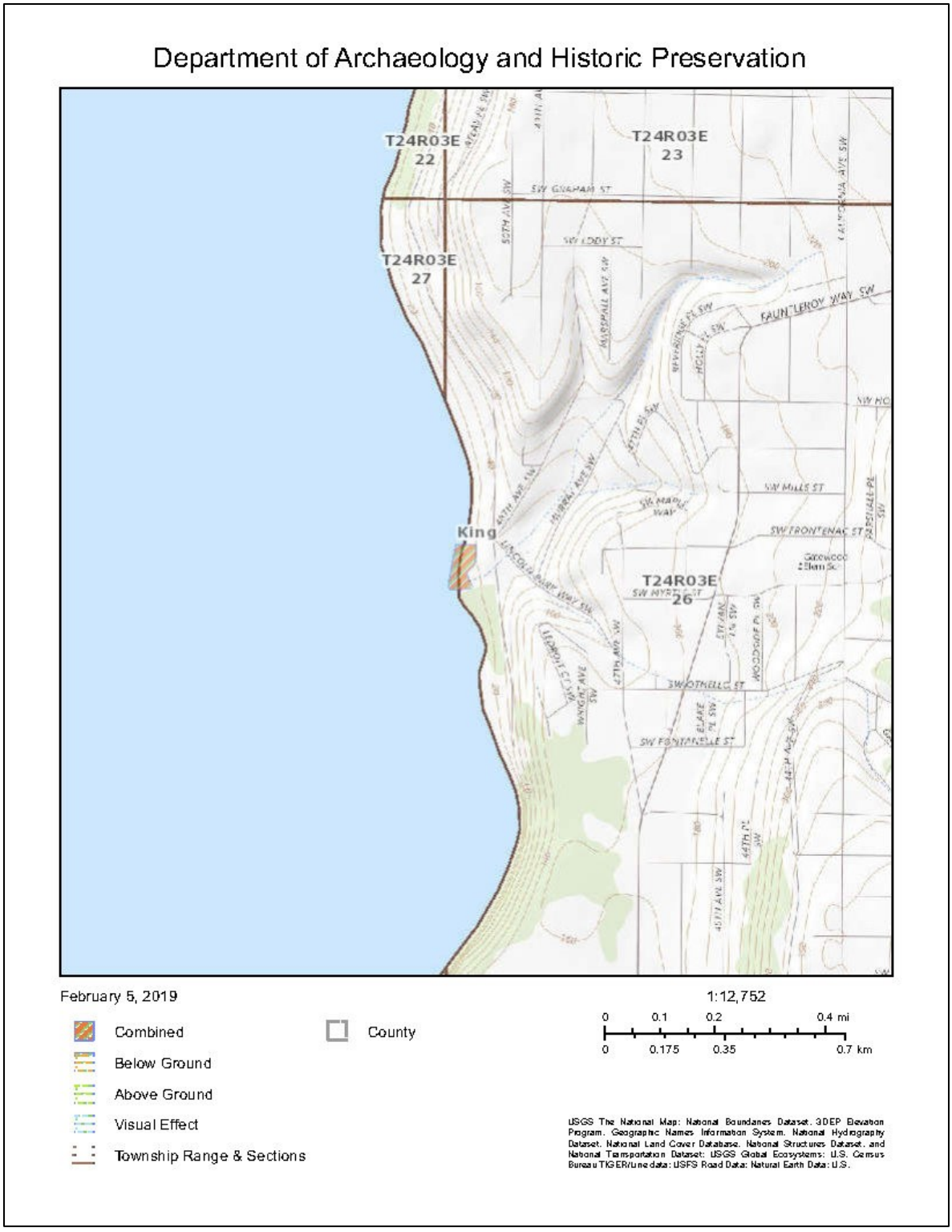
Field Methods Used:

☐No fieldwork was conducted.

☐Shovel Probes ☒Mechanical Trenches ☒Pedestrian Survey ☒Historic Property Survey

Project Understanding:

The City of Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation is proposing to the remove a failing seawall at Lowman Beach Park (Figure 1); construct a new seawall and retaining wall; remove an existing tennis court and establish a backshore beach, lawn and riparian plantings; daylight Pelly Creek within the park; construct a pedestrian bridge crossing the daylighted section of Pelly Creek; and construct ADA-accessible paths and landscaping in the upland portion of the park. The Project will require a permit from the US Army Corps of Engineer and, therefore, must comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.



SOURCE: DAHP 2019

Figure 1
Location of the Lowman Beach Park Shoreline Restoration Project

Project Area:

The Project Area consists of the 1.5-acre Lowman Beach Park at 7005 Beach Drive SW, located between Beach Drive SW and the Puget Sound shoreline, in Seattle, WA.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL SETTING

Environment:

Review of topographic maps (T-Sheets) from 1877 indicate that project site historically formed the mouth of Pelly Creek and its associated deltaic shoal, beaches, and vegetation along the shoreline. Historical photographs and maps from the 1920's imply a relatively low bank shoreline to either side of the creek mouth, but no detailed data were discovered that depict the pre-development condition of the shoreline and tidelands in great detail. Typical for beach processes in Puget Sound, sand and small gravel is transported primarily by waves and wave-driven currents (Finlayson 2006), and less so by other factors. Historically, the Pelly Creek delta would have composed an accretion shoreform, evidence of which remains today in the shallow deltaic shoreform offshore of the park. Low lying feeder bluffs would have fed the beaches to the north of the site, historically. Beaches fronting the Lowman Beach Park are composed primarily of gravel and pebbles at the surface. Some minor surface sand lenses are present here and there on the beach face but appear to be transient features.

Cultural:

Today's Lowman Beach Park is located within the ceded lands of the *Dkhw'Duw'Absh* (Duwamish) people. The Duwamish were signatories of the 1855 Point Elliott Treaty with the United States. Today's Duwamish people are enrolled in the Duwamish, Suquamish and Muckleshoot Tribes. Oral history and archaeological evidence demonstrates Native American people have lived in this region of the Puget Sound for thousands of years.

In 1851, non-Native settlement of Puget Sound began with the arrival of the Denny Party at Alki Point. At this time numerous Duwamish villages were located on the shores of Puget Sound and the riverbanks of the Duwamish. Duwamish people and non-Native settlers lived in close proximity during this time. Following the Treaty Wars of the mid-1850s, Native people were forcibly removed from their traditional lands to reservations established by the United States government. Some Duwamish people stayed in West Seattle but their homes were subject to arson as development by non-Native people increased (Thrush 2007:84-85).

During the 1920s ethnographer T.T. Waterman interviewed Native people to record place names within the Puget Sound region. This work identified eight locations along the shoreline between Duwamish Head and Brace Point alone (Hilbert et al. 2001; Thrush 2007; Waterman 1922). These include places with religious associations, outlets of streams, a prairie, an inundated area where cranberries and cattails were gathered, and a fishing location. In addition, several places within 0.25 mile are associated with oral tradition myths.

Among these locations is Lowman Beach Park, where Pelly Creek formerly joined the Puget Sound. This outlet is known in Lushootseed as *g^{w}al* or "capsized/to capsize", which is thought to be related to the conditions off shore and potential for canoes overturning (Hilbert et al. 2001:68; Thrush 2007:232; Waterman 1922:189). Having a name associated to this location suggests Lowman Beach Park is an area that has significance to the Duwamish people.

Only four cultural resources studies have been conducted within one mile of the Project Area (Dellert 2014; Kiers 2006; Nelson et al. 2011; Schultz et al. 2013). Three (Dellert 2014; Nelson et al. 2011; Schultz et al. 2013) were conducted adjacent to or within Lowman Beach Park; however, the fieldwork areas excluded the tennis courts and seawall. There are two known archaeological sites within one mile of Lowman Beach Park. The first is archaeological site 45-KI-1190, which is 140 feet east of the park. This site was dated to circa 1900-1920s and contained charcoal, square nails, ceramic tile, and glass bottles (Dellert 2014; Raff-Tierney 2014). The second is a burial site approximately one mile south and in the vicinity of the Fauntleroy Ferry Dock (45-KI-1028). Although the Project Area does not contain any recorded archaeological sites, it is classified as Very High Risk for containing intact archaeological resources, according to the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation's Statewide Predictive Model (DAHP 2010). Further, it is located within the ceded lands of the Duwamish people and at the outlet of a small freshwater stream with associated Lushootseed name. Archaeological sites are commonly found along the beaches of Puget Sound and, in particular, at the outlets of streams (DAHP 2017).

Today's Lowman Beach Park was originally established as Lincoln Beach Park. Located within the 1904 Lincoln Beach plat, it is sited on lands reserved for a park (Figure 2). The Lincoln Beach subdivision was platted by the Yesler Logging Company, who logged the area prior to platting (USGS 1897). The park was established in December of 1909. The area was remote during the first decade of the 20th century, but by 1912 a modest number of beachside single-family residences had been built to the north of the park and on the hill to the southeast. In April of 1925, the name was changed from Lincoln Beach Park to Lowman Beach Park to avoid confusion with the newly developed Lincoln Park, located just south at Point Williams. The park's new namesake was J.D. Lowman, who was an employee the Yesler Logging Company.

In 1927, a 30-foot by 14-foot comfort station (restroom building) was designed by L. Glenn Hall, landscape architect (Seattle Department of Parks 1927a). It was located above the beach at the park's center point and has since been removed.

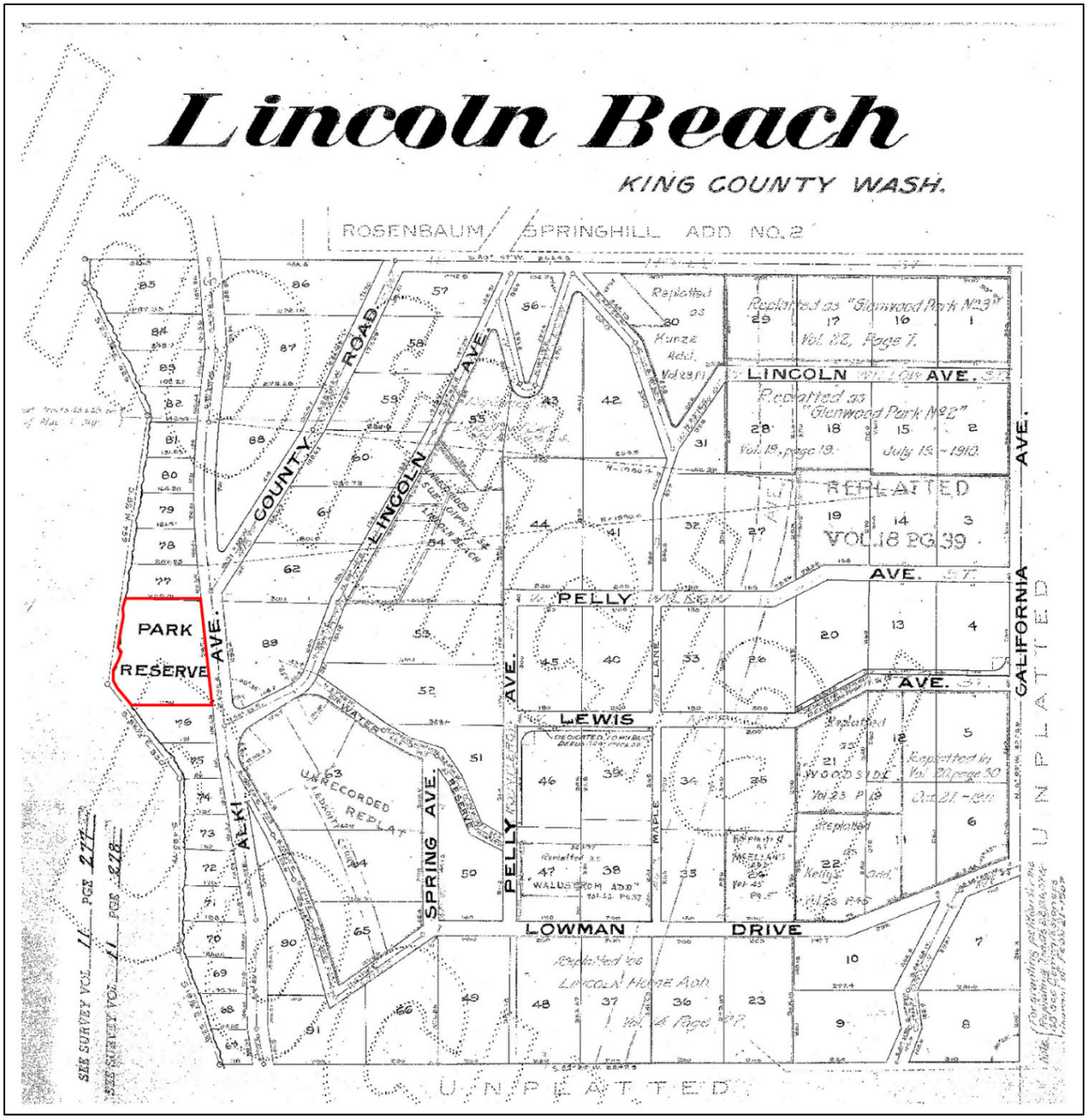
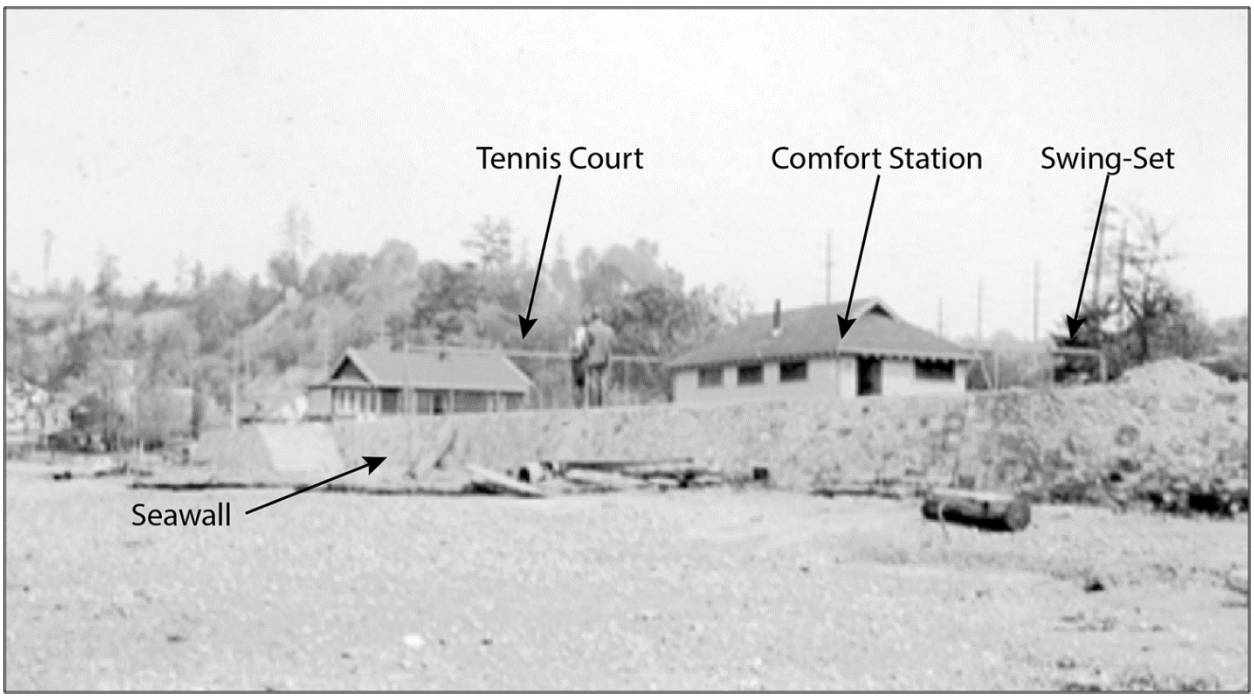


Figure 2
1904 Lincoln Park Plat. Today's Lowman Beach Park in red.

In 1936 the SPR built a stone and mortar seawall using federal grant funds from the Works Progress Administration (WPA) (Figure 3). That same year the tennis courts were also constructed as a WPA-funded project. Between 1935 and 1939, Seattle undertook many infrastructure improvement projects using funding made available by the WPA. Projects were carried out across the SPR and local laborers were hired whenever possible (Phelps 1976:182-185). Other WPA projects in West Seattle were seeding the Highland Park playground, earthwork at the Duwamish Head Park (now Hamilton Viewpoint Park), and constructing the West Seattle Golf Course (Eals 1987:200). The WPA was a national program created

during the Great Depression to provide employment opportunities across the nation. Many of the projects completed by the WPA have been recognized as historically significant due to their association with this national program and its role in addressing the unemployment crisis of the 1930s. The tennis court has not previously been evaluated regarding eligibility for listing on national, state, or local historic registers.

The 1936 seawall originally extended across the entire shoreline of the park and featured a pair of steps connected to a platform at the seawall's center point (Seattle Department of Parks 1936). In 1950 the north portion of the original seawall began to fail, and in 1951 the portion of the seawall north of the steps was replaced and the portion to the south of the steps was reinforced with a concrete support along its base (Seattle Department of Parks 1951). In 1973, a combined sewer overflow outfall was constructed in the Park, necessitating closure of the tennis courts for several months (Seattle Times 1973). In 1994, the south portion of the 1936 seawall failed, and in 1995 a portion of the remaining seawall was replaced with a new concrete return wall and gravel beach restoration (Pascoe & Talley, Inc. 1995). It appears that the original seawall steps were also removed at this time.



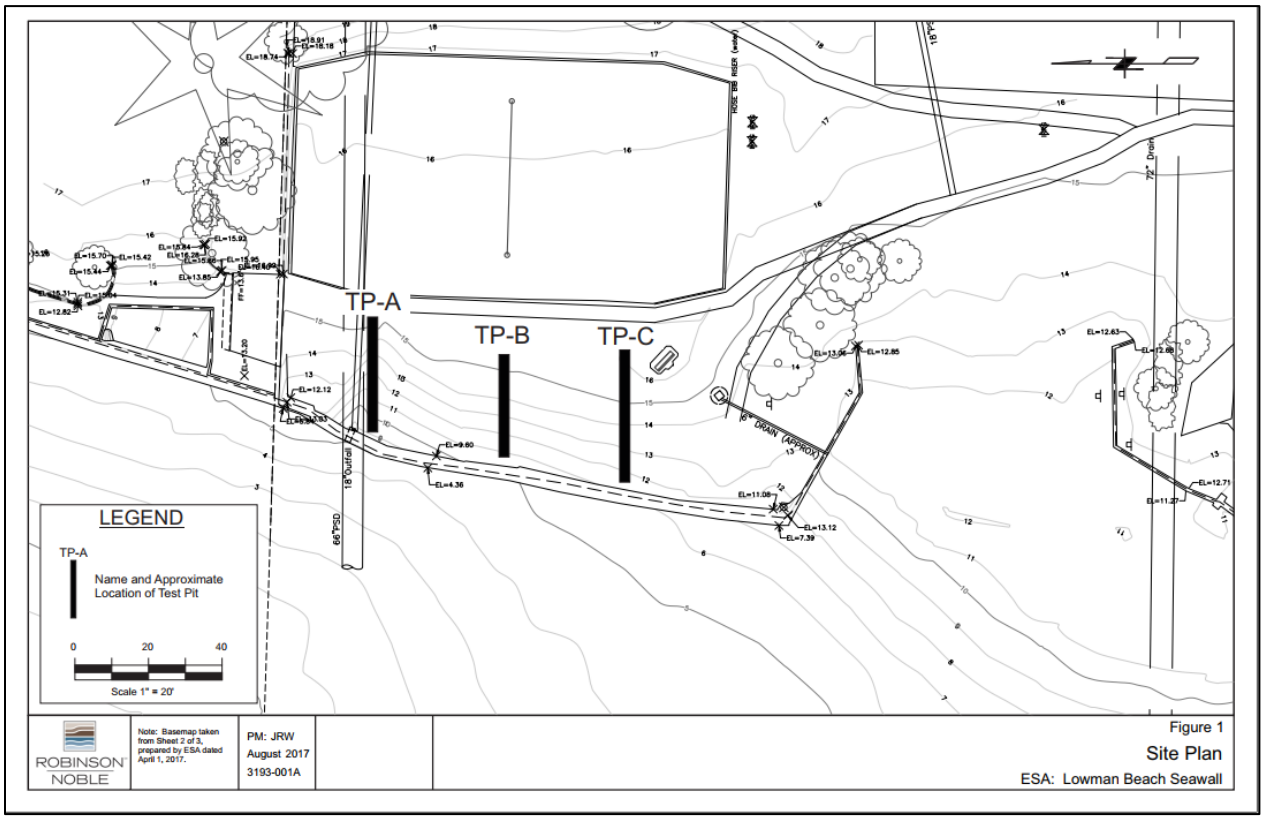
SOURCE: Seattle Municipal Archives, Don Sherwood Parks History Collection, Item Number 29784

Figure 3
Lowman Beach Par, circa 1936

FIELD INVESTIGATIONS

Archaeological:

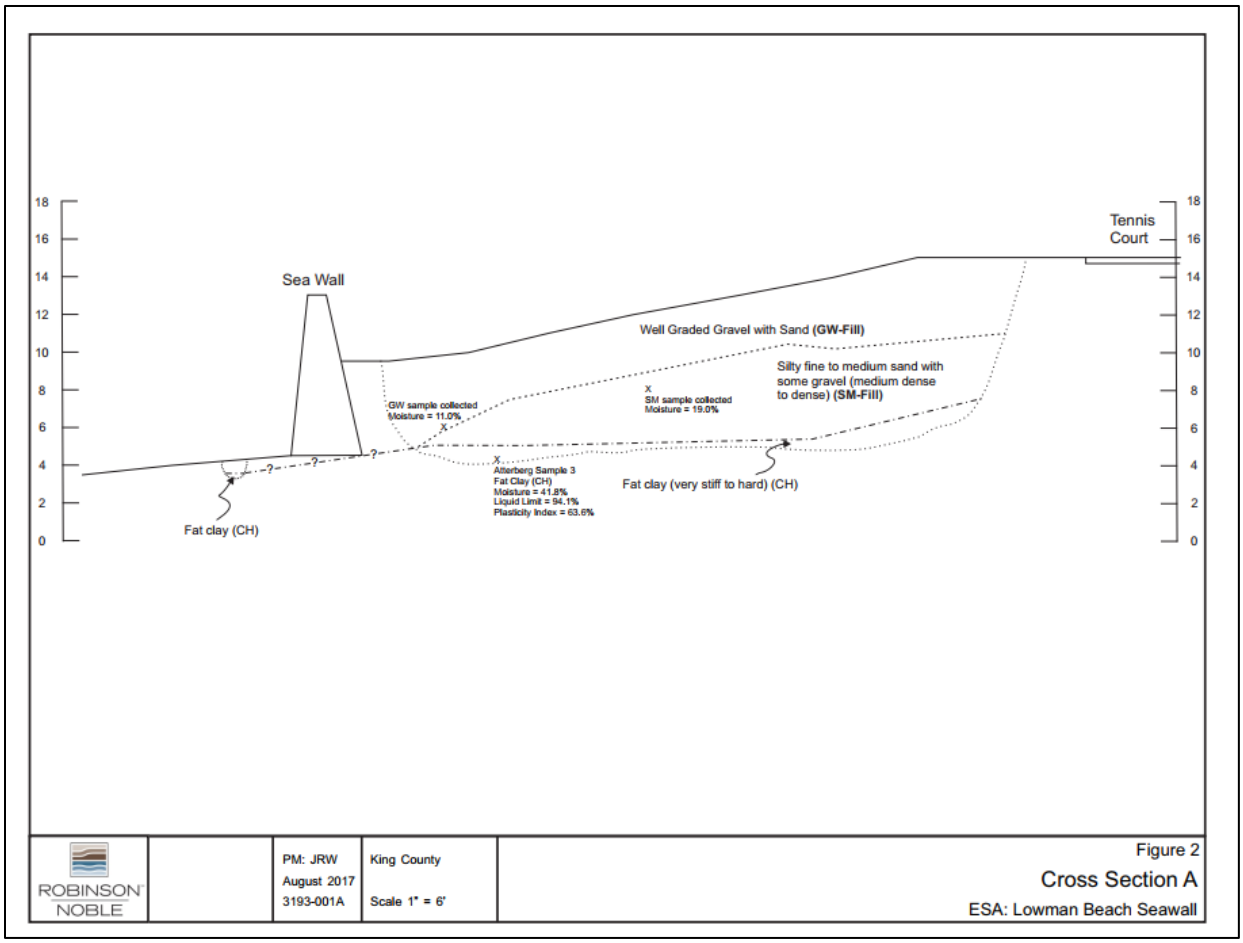
On May 3, 2017, ESA and Robinson Noble conducted archaeological and geotechnical and field investigations consisting of three mechanical test pits between the seawall and the tennis court (Figure 4). Dr. Chris Lockwood, ESA Senior Archaeologist and Geoarchaeologist, observed the test pits and stratigraphy, examined spoils piles, and recorded historic and recent debris. No precontact artifacts or features were encountered.



SOURCE: Robinson Noble 2018

Figure 4
August 2017 Trenching Plan

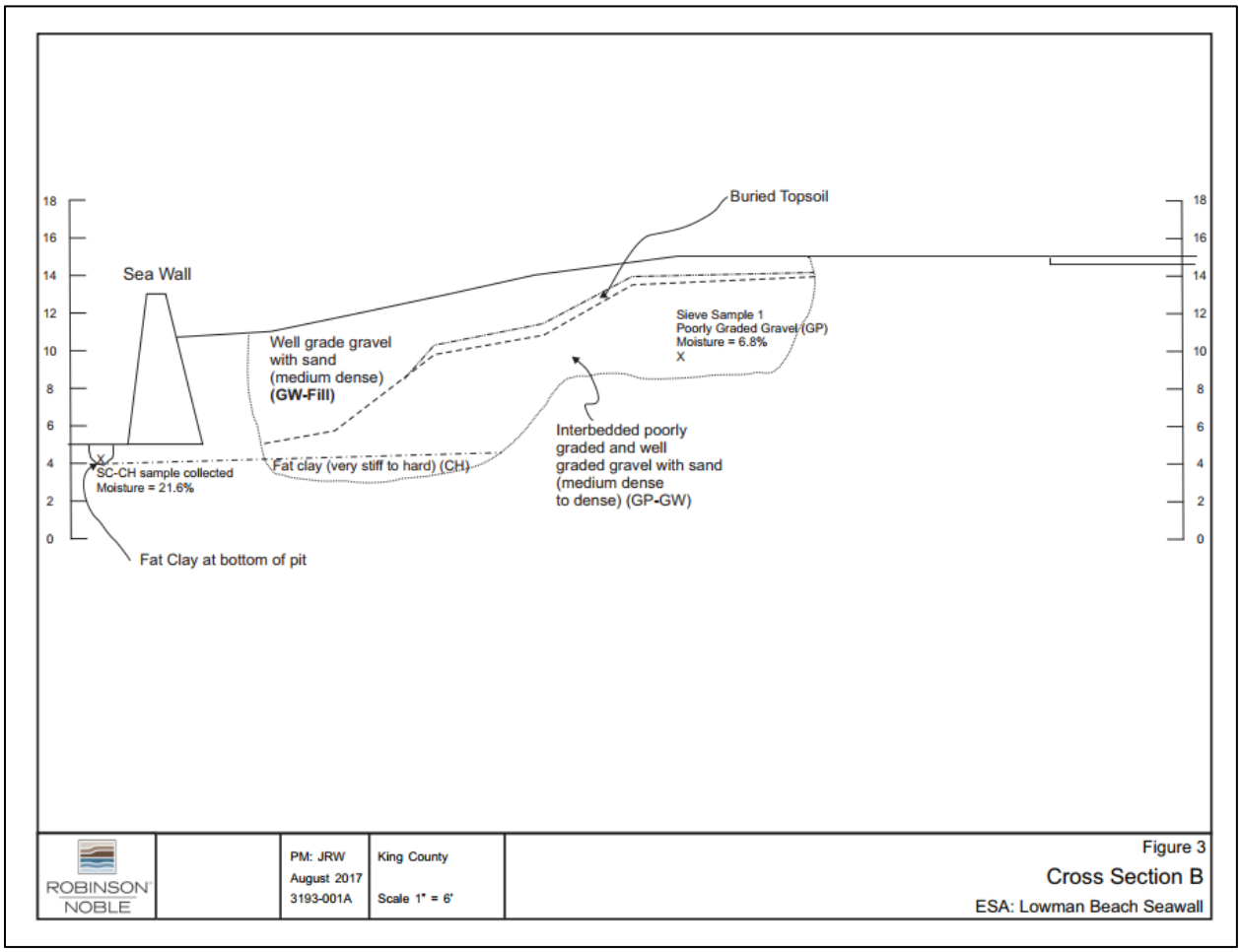
Test Pit A (Figure 5), the northernmost test pit, contained well graded gravel with sand (fill) overlying gravelly sand (fill) overlying very stiff clay (likely Pleistocene-aged Lawton clay). Given the proximity of the test pit to two existing storm pipes, the fill is interpreted to have been placed during pipe installation. The fill contained an approximately 6-foot long length of dock or anchor chain and several fragments of lumber.



SOURCE: Robinson Noble 2018

Figure 5
Trench A Cross-section

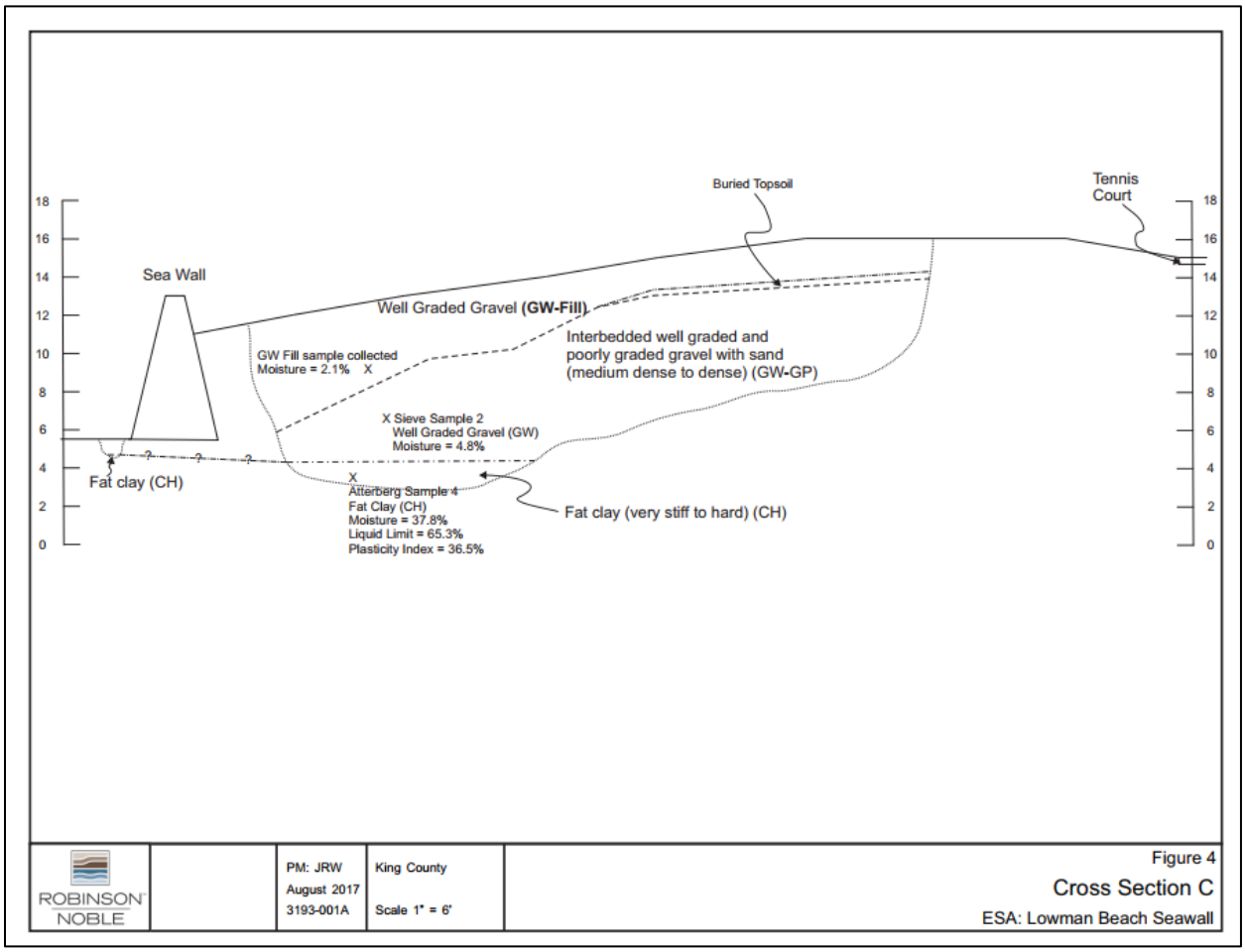
Test Pit B (Figure 6), the center pit, contained well graded gravel with sand (fill) overlying interbedded gravel with sand (uplifted beach) overlying very stiff clay (likely Pleistocene-aged Lawton clay). The top of the uplifted beach deposit contained a partially intact topsoil, marking the original "pre-fill" ground surface. The extreme west end of the test pit contained abundant, highly-corroded, ferrous cable, possibly the remains of kind of structural tieback, as well as concrete fragments. Test Pit B also contained trace amounts of highly-fragmented, clear, green, and brown bottle glass.



SOURCE: Robinson Noble 2018

Figure 6
Trench B Cross-section

Test Pit C (Figure 7), the southernmost pit, contained well graded gravel (fill) overlying interbedded gravel with sand (uplifted beach) overlying very stiff clay (likely Pleistocene-aged Lawton clay). Similar to Test Pit B, the top of the uplifted beach deposit in Test Pit C contained a partially intact topsoil. The extreme west end of Test Pit C contained a moderate amount of highly-corroded, ferrous cable, as well as concrete fragments. Test Pit C also contained trace amounts of highly-fragmented, clear, green, and brown bottle glass.



SOURCE: Robinson Noble 2018

Figure 7
Trench C Cross-section

Given the historic construction sequence near this portion of the seawall, with original construction in 1936, wall replacement in 1951, and placement and maintenance of storm pipes and other utilities, it is to be expected that some demolition debris remains on site within fill deposits. After more than a century of public recreational use, it is expected that additional fragments of beverage bottles, jars, cans, and other personal items have accumulated across the parcel through occasional, opportunistic disposal of these items. While such artifacts would reflect decades of public use of the park, it would be difficult if not impossible to establish a chronological date for many of the objects. Further, even if dates can be established, it is highly unlikely that specific items could be attributed to specific visitors or even to broad groups of visitors, and thus appear unlikely to contribute important historical information.

Historic Properties:

Works Progress Administration Tennis Court

Evaluation of the tennis court and completion of a Washington Historic Property Inventory was completed by Dr. Alicia Valentino, ESA Historical/Industrial Archaeologist, on January 27, 2019.

Physical Description

The tennis court (Figures 8 to 10) is a concrete slab (in six segments) measuring approximately 120 feet (north/south) by 66 feet (east/west). The court is partially enclosed by a chain-link fence, and the grass abutting the concrete pad is at a slight, west-facing slope down to the water. The landform appears to have been slightly graded when the court was built. No changes or improvements to the tennis court appear to have taken place since its construction in 1936. In 1973, a combined sewer overflow outfall was constructed in the Park, necessitating closure of the tennis courts for several months (Seattle Times 1973).

Figure 8
2019 Aerial Photo of Lowman Beach Park Tennis Court

SOURCE: ESA 2019

Figure 9
Lowman Beach Park Tennis Court. View to east.

SOURCE: ESA 2019

Figure 10
Lowman Beach Park Tennis Court. View to southwest.

Significance Statement

Land designated for a park is visible on a 1904 plat map of the Lincoln Beach neighborhood, but the first known amenities at the park were a comfort station and swing-set built in 1927. In 1936, the City built a seawall using federal grant funds from the Works Progress Administration (WPA). That same year, tennis courts were also constructed with WPA-funding. The seawall and tennis court were some of the many infrastructure improvement projects carried out in the Seattle area using WPA funding (Phelps 1976:182-185). Other examples include seeding the Highland Park playground in West Seattle, earthwork at the Duwamish Head Park (now Hamilton Viewpoint Park), and constructing the West Seattle Golf Course (Eals 1987:200).

National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Criteria for Evaluation

"The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

B. That are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past; or

C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

D. That have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory."

NRHP Eligibility Recommendation

Criterion A: The Lowman Beach Park Tennis Court may be Eligible for listing in the NRHP due to its construction as a product of the WPA. The WPA was a national program created during the Great Depression to provide employment opportunities across the nation. Many of the projects completed by the WPA have been recognized as historically significant due to their association with this national program and its role in addressing the unemployment crisis of the 1930s. Local laborers were hired whenever possible.

Criterion B: No known significant people are associated with the construction of the tennis courts; therefore, is it recommended Not Eligible under Criterion B.

Criterion C: There are no significant architectural or design-elements used in the design or construction of the tennis court; therefore, it is recommended Not Eligible under Criterion C.

Criterion D: There is no known significant data to be learned from the construction and design of the tennis court; therefore, it is recommended Not Eligible under Criterion D.

The tennis court is therefore recommended Eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the fact that the tennis court may be Eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and the proposed removal of the tennis court, ESA further notes that the Lowman Beach Seawall Project, as designed, may result in an ADVERSE EFFECT TO HISTORIC PROPERTIES; namely, removal of the tennis court. If the tennis court cannot be avoided, and USACE concurs with ESA's recommendation, the project will require a Memorandum of Agreement to resolve the adverse effects under Section 106.

Regarding below-ground resources, ESA's trenching program did not encounter precontact or significant historic archaeological resource, and, therefore, recommends no further cultural resources at this time. However, subsurface conditions beneath the tennis court are unknown. If the tennis court is removed during project construction, a professional archaeologist should conduct a brief inspection once the tennis court has been removed, but prior to removal of subgrade. The inspection should include subsurface probing, if needed in the opinion of the archaeologist. Depending on results of the inspection, earthwork within the footprint may or may not require archaeological monitoring

As a best management practice, construction should proceed only with an Archaeological Resources Inadvertent Discovery Plan (IDP) in place. The IDP will provide guidance and protocols to be followed in the event of an archaeological resources discovery during construction. The contractor and construction crews should receive a brief orientation to the requirements of the IDP prior to engaging in ground disturbing activities.

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