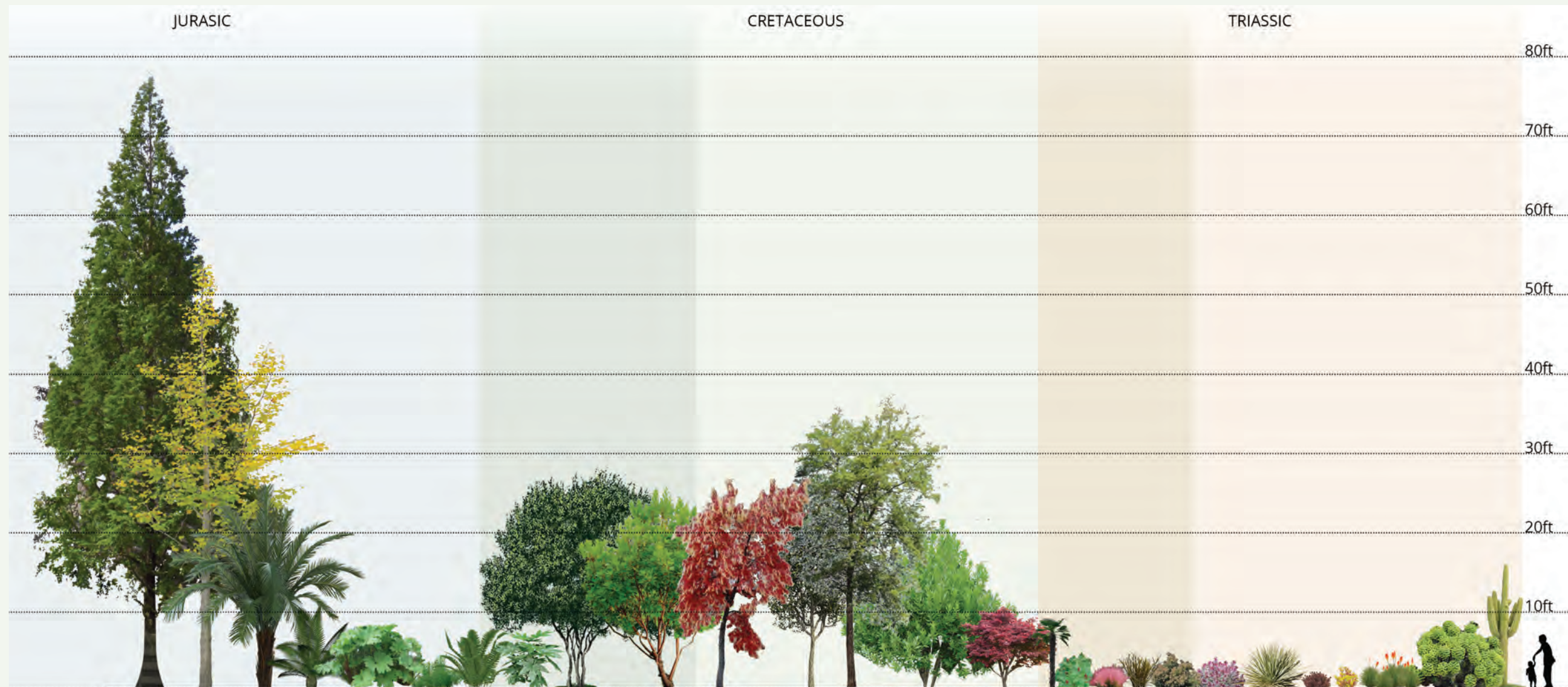




THE FUTURE OF WETLAND DESIGN AT THE BELLEVUE BOTANICAL GARDEN

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LARCH 424, Advanced Planting Design Seminar



From the LCY proposal Bellevue Mesozoic Garden LCY STUDENT TEAM



From the LCY proposal Time to Face the Change LCY STUDENT TEAM

THE CHALLENGE

The Bellevue Botanical Garden (BBG) is a valuable community asset, one that offers year-round recreational and educational opportunities to Bellevue residents and visitors. Plant species are well curated and maintained by the horticulturists who care for them. One area of the property, however, remains undeveloped. The northwest corner of the BBG, once occupied by volunteer Pacific Northwest native species, currently displays a messy mix of native conifers, invasive Himalayan blackberries, and myriad other wild species. Hidden beneath the thicket lies promising topography: classic Pacific Northwest soils, a delineated wetland, and seasonal wetlands.

The City of Bellevue asked us to create a variety of site-specific design recommendations that may inform how to develop and care for this portion of the garden. We spent fall quarter analyzing the site and designing recommendations through an iterative process. The site proved to be both complex and inspiring.

OUR METHODS

The design process consisted of the following phases: field and case studies, site analysis, iterative designing, and the production of final products. A carefully curated literature review guided our thinking over the course of the quarter. The themes of climate change and invasive species management continually underscored our efforts as a team.

After establishing a framework for determining the success of a planting design, we visited the Bellevue Botanical Garden and began an exhaustive analysis of our site. We applied five different analytical lenses in our approach: the 2007 Wetland Report, aspect and light, soil and hydrology, circulation and surroundings, and wind and current. We then split into seven groups and began the design process. Professionals joined us in the classroom, challenged our ideas, and provided perspective. Further feedback at our midterm review, both critical and encouraging, sent us back to the drawing board.

OUR DESIGNS

The following themes emerged from our work:

- Education
- Climate change
- Biodiversity
- Habitat
- Nature play

Groups tended to agree that planting for climate change is necessary. Some groups decided to work under the constraint that species should be native to the Pacific Northwest. Various other interventions were proposed, including boardwalks to protect plants and wetlands, and other interactive structures.

Restoration of the complex and relatively large northwest corner of BBG will complement the rest of the garden, and can provide unique opportunities for climate change adaptation and nature play. Open-minded consideration of the designs we have proposed as well as the maintenance required to manage an additional garden at the BBG will inform movement forward for the site.



From the LCY proposal Discovering Diversity of Native Plants LCY STUDENT TEAM

