



Prince William Sound Science Center (PWSSC)
Cordova, Alaska
Request for Proposals

The Prince William Sound Science Center seeks proposals for an Exhibit
Design, Fabrication, and Installation Project

RFP Issue Date: October 18, 2024

Deadline for responses: Friday, December 13, 2024, 5 pm AKST

Contact: Lauren Bien, Education Director

Email: lbien@pwssc.org

Phone: 907-424-4259



INTRODUCTION

The Prince William Sound Science Center (PWSSC) seeks professional exhibit design, fabrication, and installation services for a 1,380-square-foot atrium. The exhibit will focus on our work, our community, the ecosystems surrounding us, and the interconnectivity of it all. A total of \$375,000 has been budgeted for the design, fabrication, printing, furnishings, and installation of the exhibit.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Prince William Sound Science Center. PWSSC is an independent, non-profit community benefit organization committed to scientific research and science education. We work to improve the understanding of the ecosystems of Prince William Sound, the Copper River watershed, and the northern Gulf of Alaska.

Since our inception in 1989, we have applied an innovative combination of formal and informal education programs to inspire a lifelong understanding of and interest in evidence-based decision-making. We hope to inspire the next generation of scientifically literate ecosystem stewards and to encourage continual curiosity about the world around us. In the Science Center's vision, our region maintains resilience by fostering strong connections between self, surroundings, science, and society for all community members; education is a cornerstone of this vision.

In 2022, PWSSC moved from our original location, a harborside icehouse, to a new campus better suited to our organization's growing needs. We envision our campus as a destination for researchers, students, tourists, and community members.

Organizational Background. In 1986, a group of Cordova fishermen, scientists, and resource managers began sharing bad coffee over informal lunches to explore a question: what can we do to understand this globally relevant region better and share what we learn for the benefit of local people and the world?

Two years later, the discussion with the semi-regulars resulted in a commitment to develop a community-based organization to serve as a repository for the knowledge gained from nearly 30 million acres of coastline, wetlands, estuaries, mountains, rivers, and streams – all while engaging residents with education and entrepreneurial endeavors. The dream was ambitious. Then, as the Prince William Sound Science Center's nonprofit papers were being developed in March 1989, the Exxon Valdez ran aground on Bligh Reef, spilling more than 11 million gallons of crude into our backyard

of Prince William Sound –forever altering the environment and the commercial fishery upon which our town relied. Shortly after, on Earth Day – April 22, 1989 – our legal papers were filed, and the real work began. Over the years, we’ve become well-known for our leading research in hatchery-wild salmon interactions, herring, glaciers, climate change, land-and-sea relationships, seabird/shorebird health, and much more. Studies conducted by our researchers provide answers to many challenges, including resource use and sustainability, food webs that support coastal and inland economies, and the management, harvest, and processing of fish and shellfish. Ultimately, all our work seeks one outcome: to understand how a place can maintain its environment and economy for future generations.

Our education programs have been the bridge from researchers to community members, engaging learners of all ages in immersive, hands-on science lessons and exploratory programs. Oil spill curriculum, marine robotics, “Field Notes” radio programs, Tuesday night lecture series, *Discovery Room* classes for the local elementary school, science summer camps, and outdoor nature groups for toddlers are just a few of our efforts. At the endpoint of a 1,000-year conveyor belt of water, our location gives us a unique vantage point to understand the globe’s changing climate. Our region is one of the world’s most remote and greatest living laboratories and classrooms, and in these last-best places, there’s a responsibility to research, discover, and share what we learn. Ours is one of the world’s environmental strongholds, a place that is critical to a thriving planet.

Interpretive Scope of the Exhibit. PWSSC intends to create an exhibit space that welcomes new PWSSC visitors and reaches long-standing supporters in a new way.

Cordova is situated in the World’s Richest Classroom. We are surrounded by Prince William Sound, dynamic glaciers, the wetlands of the Copper River Delta, and the temperate rainforest of the Chugach National Forest. Our researchers strive to understand these ecosystems and our educators immerse learners in these environments to increase their sense of place. The interconnectedness of these ecosystems and the people of Cordova are what drives PWSSC’s work.

The atrium is 1,380 sf, with 930 sf of usable exhibit space.

- **Target Audience:** The exhibit should appeal to a general audience and engage informal learners of various ages. We envision a space that is equally informative and engaging for people who may visit once to families that may return several times a year. Exhibits should cater to multiple learning types, be impactful, interactive, engaging, and not overly text-heavy.
- **Exhibition Goals:** The space footprint is small, 930 square feet. We envision modular and mobile exhibits that use vertical space and allow the space to be easily rearranged and transformed by PWSSC staff. While aspects of the installation may remain relatively static, there should be a way to incorporate dynamic research updates/new data visualizations/etc.
- The exhibits must touch on or include the history of the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill and the impact the spill had on our community and the ecosystem.

We want our exhibit space to:

- Through an immersive experience, demonstrate the unique ecosystems that surround us (rainforest, ocean, glaciers, wetland) and use the lens of connection to frame the scientific work we do throughout the region.
- Tell the story of the interconnected ecosystems that exist, support, and sustain our economy and way of life.
- Orient visitors geographically, biologically, and culturally.
- Welcome guests to explore the space independently.
- Feature a small, simple Touch Tank holding local marine invertebrate species. This should be the only fixed exhibit in the space.
- Feature interactive exhibits and hands-on activities that deepen visitors' experience.
- Feature flexible, modular, and mobile exhibits that can be moved, changed, or updated regularly to reflect current research.
- Take advantage of the vertical, double-height space with 2-dimensional, stowable visualizations.
- Accommodate the display of a few physical objects (e.g., scientific equipment, monitors to display dynamic graphics) or artifacts from the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill.
- Give visitors knowledge and data to empower them to become better, scientifically literate citizens.
- Leave visitors with a feeling of connection to place and an understanding of the importance and depth of scientific work we do.

Above all else, the visitor experience should be engaging. There needs to be an “aha!” moment throughout the visitor experience that connects the unique place where we live and the importance of the work we do. PWSSC is especially interested in ensuring the space appeals to and is as accessible as possible both physically and intellectually to visitors of all ages and audiences.

DESCRIPTION OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

Scope of Work. All respondents must be able to provide professional exhibit fabrication and other specialty services to design, build, and install the exhibits and components and produce graphics as required by PWSSC. All design, fabrication, and installations must be finalized and approved by PWSSC. All proposals must be made on the basis of and either meet or exceed the requirements contained in the RFP.

Specific Tasks

1. The vendor shall furnish all labor, materials, and equipment required to perform the work indicated and specified by the documents, technical specifications, and drawings. Work includes design, fabrication, and installation of exhibit components, custom furniture, and graphic production. Exhibit components include but are not limited to:
 - a. Seawater touch tank
 - b. Graphics
 - c. Exhibit lighting

- d. Decorative work
 - e. Exhibit furniture, artifact cases, and other structures
2. Fabrication shall be of museum quality, with particular attention paid to high quality, fit and finish, colorfastness, durability, and ease of maintenance. For the purpose of this RFP, “museum quality” shall be defined by the Alliance of American Museum certification requirements and with defects not discernible to the human eye.
 3. Prepare and submit final shop drawings detailing design, fabrication, and installation. Shop drawings are required for each typical component type and include specially prepared technical data for this project, drawings, diagrams, schedules, templates, patterns, instructions, measurements, and similar information not in standard print form.
 4. Exhibit structures: fabricate all exhibit elements, including but not limited to: cabinetry, panels, platforms, vitrines, or other elements which constitute the basic structural elements of the space. All components must be easily mobile (except the touch tank) and easily serviced and repaired (particularly access to lighting and audio/video equipment) by established contractors. Component construction shall allow PWSSC staff to make repairs when possible. Component parts of each element shall be easily replaceable rather than replacing the entire component.
 5. Electrical and mechanical: purchase (except where noted by PWSSC), fabricate, assemble, and install into exhibit structures, and thoroughly test all electrical and mechanical devices.
 6. Graphics: review and prepare all relevant material; final placement of text and graphics, adjustments to graphic layouts, and conversion of digital files for specified imaging system output.
 7. Graphic production: includes but is not limited to digital images, screen printing, label copy plaques, spray-painted shapes, vinyl graphics, photo-etched or sandblasted images, porcelain enamel panels, fiberglass-embedded panels, and cut-out graphic images of letters or images. If PWSSC provides the required images, they shall be returned unaltered and undamaged. Protection from loss and physical damage shall be the responsibility of the vendor at all times during construction and installation until acceptance of the project by PWSSC.
 8. Mockups or prototypes are required for interactives with moving parts. Each interactive shall be tested thoroughly before installation. Work cannot proceed without acceptance by PWSSC.
 9. Set up and installation: set up and install on-site elements and materials unless agreed upon in writing by PWSSC.
 10. Training on operations, maintenance, and upkeep of the installed components shall be included in the project scope. Training shall be provided to designated PWSSC staff.
 11. Project closeout: preparation of all closeout components includes but are not limited to maintenance manual and closeout package (including all electronics and hard copies of all drawings). Product data are to be provided to PWSSC in the form of an Operations and Maintenance manual at the completion of the project. Project data includes standard printed information on materials, products, and systems, not specially prepared for the project. Product data may include

information indicating the range of standard products for selection to be used in the finished work.

12. Warranties for installed components shall be provided as follows: exhibit components shall be warranted for two years.

Project Management. The vendor must establish one person to serve as the project manager and liaison to the PWSSC project manager.

PWSSC looks to the vendor to inform the needs of the project, maintain a cohesive schedule and coordinate, oversee, and manage the work produced. Therefore, the vendor must establish a work plan (work breakdown structure) and schedule for all parties to ensure timely completion of the project. A critical path schedule shall be prepared by the vendor and submitted in reproducible form. In addition to the start and completion of various construction stages, the schedule shall also show percentages of work to be completed at any given time, as well as significant dates that will serve as checkpoints to determine compliance with the approved schedule. Each respondent should indicate critical anticipated dates for work by others which impacts exhibit fabrication.

Regular meetings with the PWSSC team are an integral part of the overall process and must be indicated in the project schedule. These meetings will report on and track the fabrication process and establish and implement mechanisms for ongoing communication.

The PWSSC team will be intimately involved in the process from contract signing through opening. The core team for the exhibit space will include the Education Director, President and CEO, Facilities Manager, and Development and Communications Manager.

SELECTION PROCESS

Schedule. The anticipated Selection Process schedule:

- Request for Proposals Issued October 18, 2024
- Questions/queries to PWSSC November 15, 2024
- Answers provided to potential proposers December 2, 2024
- Proposals Due December 13, 2024
- Contract Negotiations January 27, 2025
- Design, Fabricate, Install contract award February 10, 2025

Response Requirement. Please number your responses exactly as the questions are presented below and limit to ten (10) one-sided pages, including work samples and fee proposals. The response must include the following:

1. Letter of Interest/Cover Letter
2. Vendor shall provide an executive summary that contains, at a minimum, a brief description of the major contents of the proposal including DEI and

- sustainability policies and statement of DBE if applicable. The executive summary should communicate the proposed services' primary benefits to PWSSC in non-technical terms.
3. References to verify capabilities, experience, and work history. A minimum of three (3) references are required. References should consist of projects of a similar scope and complexity to the project addressed by this RFP. Each reference shall include the client's name or institution, start and end dates of the engagement, primary contact person, email address, telephone number, a description of the services provided, timeframe of project, and selected photos.
 4. Identification and bios of personnel to be directly involved in this project: principals, project manager, and professional staff and others to be expected to perform work.
 5. Identify the current workload of the firm/team and personnel to be assigned the project.
 6. Experience in fabricating exhibits that meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
 7. Identify your in-house fabrication capabilities and those services that you would outsource. Include a list of subcontractors and a statement of the subcontractor's qualifications.
 8. Detailed proposed scope of work describing individual tasks to be performed and the relative scheduling of those tasks. All deliverable items should be identified and described.
 9. Detailed description of any requirement that PWSSC must fulfill prior to, during, or at the end of the project for the respondent to be successful.
 10. Cost proposal. The proposed not-to-exceed fee shall include all costs and expenses for providing the services as described in this RFP to PWSSC.
 11. Training Requirements. A detailed description of training the respondent will supply to PWSSC staff including but not limited to maintenance, operations, and/or training manuals.
 12. Legal Issues/Conflicts of Interest. Proposals must include your firm's background information on the following: Violations of federal, state, or local regulations and laws within the past three (3) years; pending or current litigation; arrangements with other firms that could pose a conflict of interest. If none of the above applies, a statement to that affect.

The proposal may not exceed ten 8.5" by 11" single-spaced, one-sided pages. All proposals shall provide a straightforward, concise delineation of the firm/team's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of this request. Proposals must give the full name and address of the firm/team, and the person signing the proposal should show their title or authority to bind the firm to a contract. By submitting a proposal, the respondent's firm/team authorizes PWSSC to contact any or all the individuals listed as references or contacts of the information provided.

CRITERIA SELECTION

The following criteria will be used for screening and selection of the vendor.

1. Cost proposal.
2. Established record of design, fabrication, and installation excellence for museum facilities. Quality of work product as demonstrated through submitted work samples. The number, complexity, and nature of the exhibition are handled by the team/firm.
3. Experience in design, fabrication, and installation of projects of a similar scale and complexity.
4. Experience working in a collaborative environment.
5. Experience in designing and fabricating highly interactive exhibits.
6. Experience and availability of key individuals proposed for the project.
7. Experience and qualifications in curatorial work, particularly in the field of science communication.
8. Reputation and thoroughness, credibility, and client responsiveness are demonstrated through references.
9. Creativity and innovation in exhibition design and storytelling work by the team/firm that demonstrates the team/firm's unique qualification to provide exhibition design, fabrication, and installation services.

Additional Questions, Notifications, and Information

1. By submitting a response, respondents represent and warrant to PWSSC that all information provided in the response submitted is true, correct, and complete.
2. Respondents who provide false, misleading, or incomplete information, whether intentional or not, in any of the documents presented to PWSSC for consideration in the selection process shall be excluded.
3. Questions and all inquiries in written form via email will be accepted from all vendors before November 15, 2024, at 5 PM AKST. Questions will be answered in writing via email and will be distributed to all vendors who have indicated interest in the RFP by December 2, 2024. Send project-related questions to Lauren Bien; lbien@pwssc.org
4. PWSSC is not responsible for the cost incurred by anyone in the development of the submission of the RFP responses to the solicitation or responses to the RFP. No submittal documents will be returned.
5. This RFP is not to be construed as a contract or commitment of any kind. If this RFP results in a contract offered by PWSSC, the specific scope of work, associated fees, and other contractual matters will be confirmed during contract negotiations.
6. PWSSC reserves the right to evaluate the responses submitted, waive any irregularities therein, select candidates for the submittal of more detailed or alternate proposals, accept and submittal or portion of submittal, and reject any or all respondents submitting responses should it be deemed in PWSSC's best interest or cancel the entire process.
7. The respondent shall have in effect, for any duration of the contract period, the appropriate liability insurance written by an insurer authorized to transact insurance in the State of Alaska.

8. All parties in a response shall, if applicable, be duly licensed to offer said services in the state of Alaska or capable of obtaining such license before entering into the contract.

Addendum and Supplement to RFP

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP or if additional data are necessary to enable an exact interpretation of provision of this request, an addendum will be issued. It is the responsibility of the vendor to ensure that it has received all addendums prior to submitting a proposal.

CONTRACTUAL STATUS OF PROPOSALS

This RFP has been prepared solely to solicit proposals, and is not a contract offer. This RFP is not binding to PWSSC. The only document that will be binding to PWSSC is the contract duly executed by PWSSC and the successful respondent after the completion of the selection process and the award and negotiation of the contract.

- PWSSC reserves the right to withdraw the RFP at any time at its sole discretion before the execution of a contract.
- PWSSC reserves the right not to proceed with any of the respondents to the RFP. In such an event, PWSSC shall not be liable to any respondent for additional costs incurred by it, as a result of the withdrawal of the RFP or by the failure to proceed with any respondent.
- PWSSC will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by a team/firm in preparing and submitting a proposal.

Proprietary Information and Confidentiality. All responses will be treated as proprietary information and will be used solely for the purposes herein. Should a respondent require its response to be returned, PWSSC will do so at the respondent's request and expense.

Copyright Ownership of Vendor's Work Product. The selected vendor's services will be engaged and shall be rendered on a "work-for-hire" basis in favor of PWSSC for copyright purposes. In the event such services are not deemed to be on a "work made for hire" basis, then the vendor shall assign to PWSSC the vendor's entire rights, title, and interest, including copyright, in and to anything created or developed by the vendor and PWSSC, including (by way of example and not of limitation) all original files or work files created by or in the possession or control of the selected vendor, and all patents, copyrights, trade secrets and other proprietary rights in the work performed by the vendor for PWSSC. The vendor shall cause any subcontractor or partner to do the same.

We sincerely appreciate your interest and look forward to receiving your proposal.

Appendices







Prince William Sound SCIENCE CENTER

EXHIBITION CONCEPTUAL DESIGN



523 4th Street, Juneau, AK 99801

907.209.5970 | www.exhibitak.com | info@exhibitak.com

MISSION & BIG IDEA

BIG IDEA

**It's all
connected.**

AUDIENCE

Many families and school groups come to the science center and use the interactives, but the exhibits are designed for all ages to enjoy.

MISSION

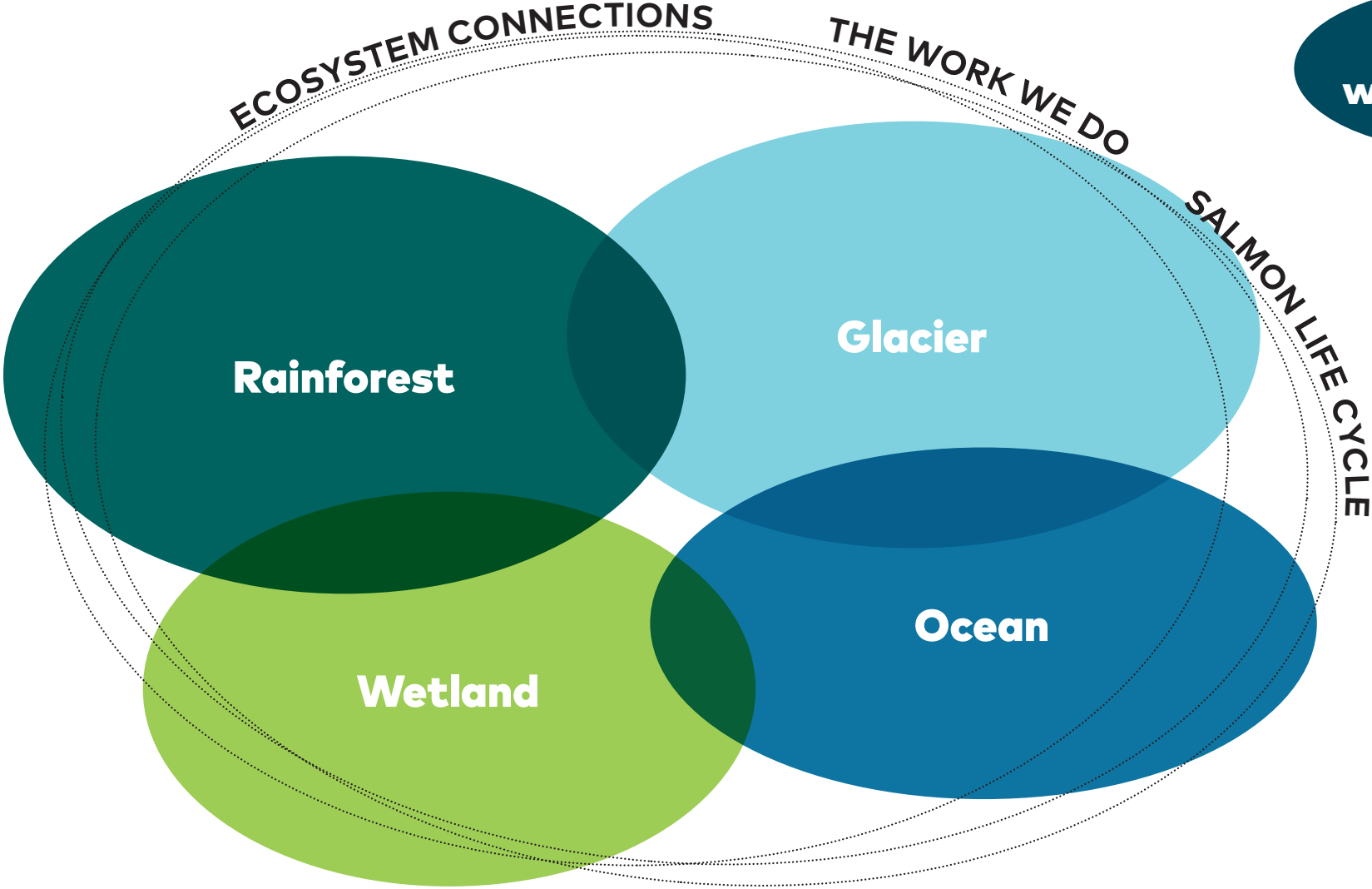
The mission of the PWSSC is to advance community resilience and the understanding and sustainable use of ecosystems.

GOALS

- Guests will leave with the understanding that Cordova is a special place of interconnected ecosystems.
- Guests will understand the importance and depth of the research and education that PWSSC does in Cordova.
- Guests will come away with a better understanding of the science of ecosystems, with knowledge and data to empower them to become better citizens.

CONCEPT MAP

LOBBY EXHIBITS:



EXTERIOR SIGNAGE:



Cordova is a unique and special place, and the Prince William Sound Science Center (PWSSC) tells the story of the interconnected ecosystems that exist here and in no other place in the world.

In the exterior signage, visitors will be welcomed to Cordova and the work of PWSSC. They will see the trails and forest that are available to explore, and an overarching understanding of Cordova: the place where we live. Outside of the building, houseposts and the cannery feel will orient visitors geographically, culturally, and biologically.

This theme will be expanded upon in the lobby exhibits, using the lenses of connections and research to understand the four major ecosystems of the area: rainforest, glacier, wetland, ocean.

EXHIBIT NARRATIVE

In the lobby area, a double-height space and large windows welcome guests to explore on their own. PWSSC envisions a self-directed tour, with an employee nearby for assistance.

The touch tank is the only fixed exhibit, needing plumbing, and a highlight of the room. Other potential interactives include a puffin camera in a constructed burrow, frequently updated exhibits about the research that PWSSC is involved in, and a 3-d visualization of plankton research. Exhibits will change regularly with different research projects, and the exhibit will be flexible enough to accommodate.

Several 2-dimensional exhibits will explore the ecosystems, but will be built to fold and stow, potentially on casters to allow for easy removal. Monitors will provide

access to real-time research, and will be routinely updated.

The exhibits are not object-heavy, but there will be some physical objects that will need mounts or cases: a halibut hook can be used to discuss indigenous science, and samples from the Exxon Valdez will let us touch on the oil spill and response.

Connections and research are themes that run through the exhibits. In addition, the life cycle of a salmon might guide us through the exhibit, and how a salmon interacts with the 4 different ecosystems.

Leaving the exhibit, we will ask for guest reflection, *How are you connected to this place?* The questions will change from time to time, asking repeat visitors to examine something new each time they visit.

VISITOR TAKEAWAYS

These are the ideas visitors will leave with after visiting the PWSSC exhibits.

I want to come back with sister and show her the touch tank.

*A barnacle is an animal?
I've never seen it eat like that before!*

The diversity of habitat types in this area is astounding.

That grinding glacier created the delta for the fish and the birds.

Gee whiz, that was so cool!

LOOK & FEEL

These words describe how the exhibit will feel.

comfortable.

neat but not gaudy.

welcoming.

sophisticated but unpretentious.

not austere and cold feeling.

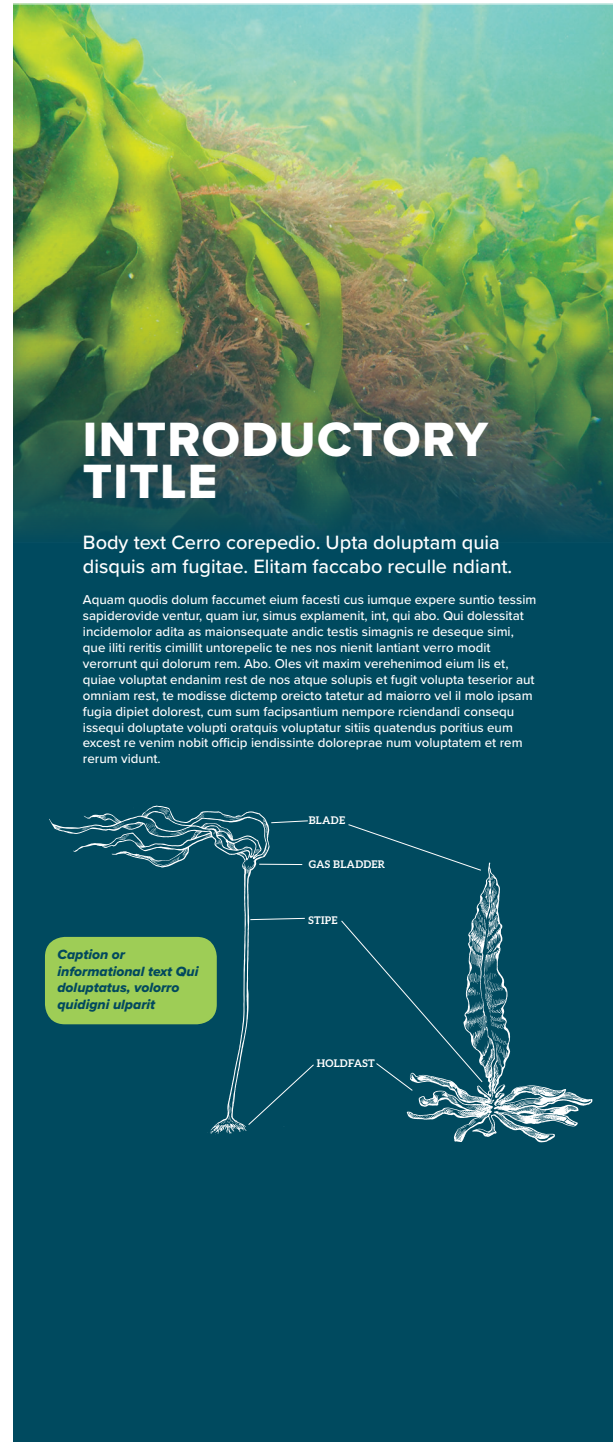
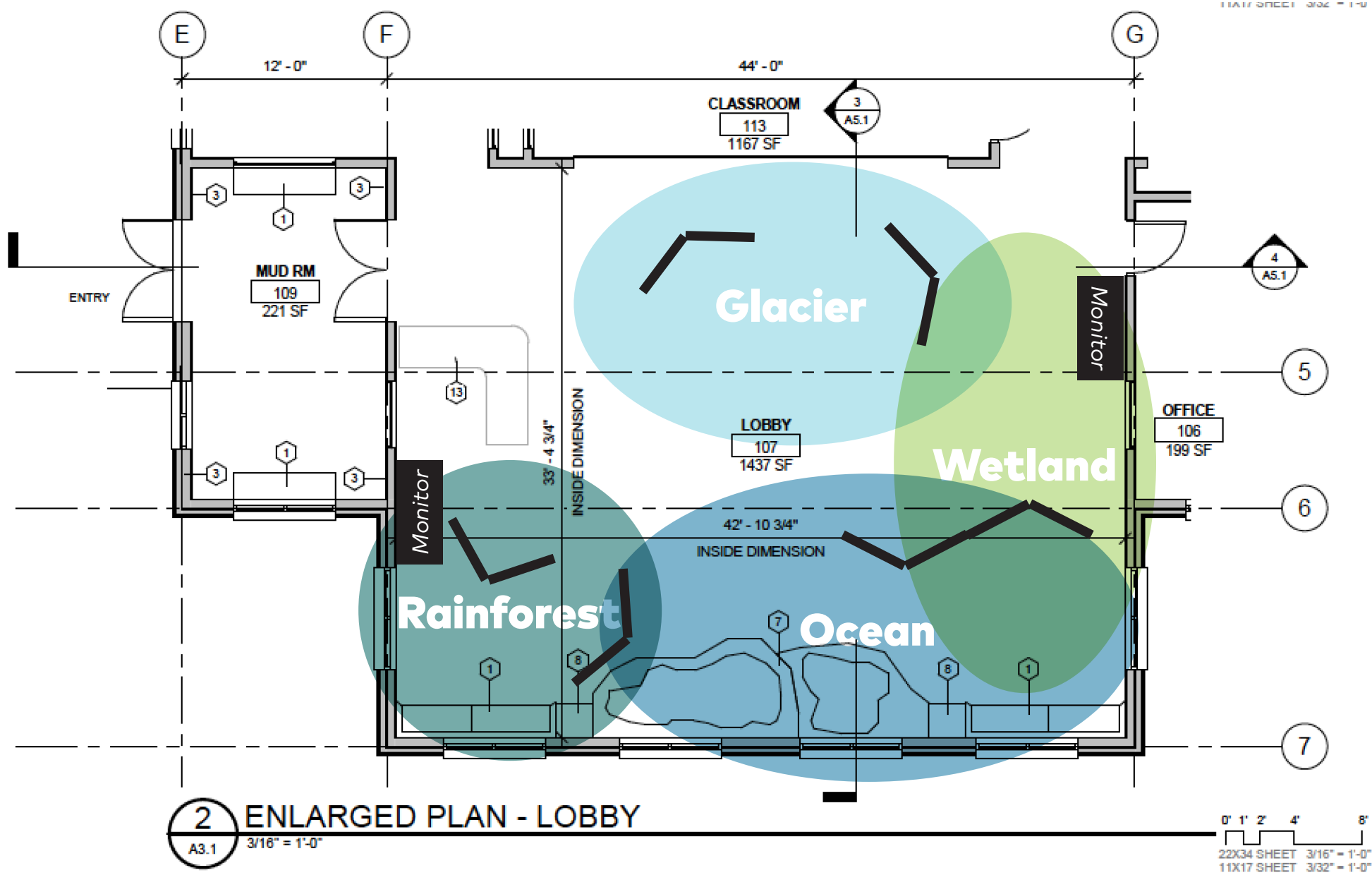
casual and competent.

bold and amusing.

beautiful.

POTENTIAL EXHIBIT LAYOUT *

*not current floorplan, see page 10



GRAPHIC IDENTITY

TYPOGRAPHY TREATMENT

TITLE

[all caps, Proxima Nova Extrabold, 180pt]

Body text

[Proxima Nova Medium, 72 intro, 48 body]

informational text Qui

[Proxima Nova Bold Italic, 50pt]

SAMPLE GRAPHIC

Six foot tall panels

Clean, bold introductory title. Intro paragraph is slightly larger than body copy.

Illustrations to represent concepts, sketches, data.

Large photographs from PWSSC archive.

Captions or callouts in alternative color.

Panels framed with local wood, hinged together to create different arrangements.

COLOR PALLETTE



Shades of blue with green and orange accents

POSSIBLE EXHIBIT HIGHLIGHTS

