

BACK TO THE LAND

BACK TO THE LAND is an effort to rejuvenate and revitalize a plot of old farmland on the northern edge of Killaloe, Ontario. The site contains an ecologically significant wetland, with a creek running through the middle of the site. The former owners, William and Amelia Hoch, used the site as a community garden, and held the Killaloe Farmer's market on the site. Killaloe was one of the main destinations during the 1980's Back to the Land movement. This movement saw people from all over flock to rural communities in search of a simpler life. This movement resulted in several artisan's, including globally acclaimed glassblowers, to set down their roots in Killaloe.

The Covid-19 pandemic has hit small communities harder than urban centers. Unemployment, food scarcity and decreased supply of household essentials are more prevalent. BACK TO THE LAND aims to combat these effects by providing opportunities for the community to generate revenue. A community vegetable garden, space for a farmer's market, as well as an outdoor classroom and studio space provide opportunities for the community to combat food scarcity and generate revenue by selling vegetables, and teaching classes. The space also caters to the nearby public school, by providing an exciting outdoor play area, where children can play outdoors, and learn about the natural world.

BACK TO THE LAND aims to capture the spirit of what makes Killaloe special, the people who live there, and the stories they have to tell.

HOCH ECO PARK - BACK TO THE LAND ANALYSIS

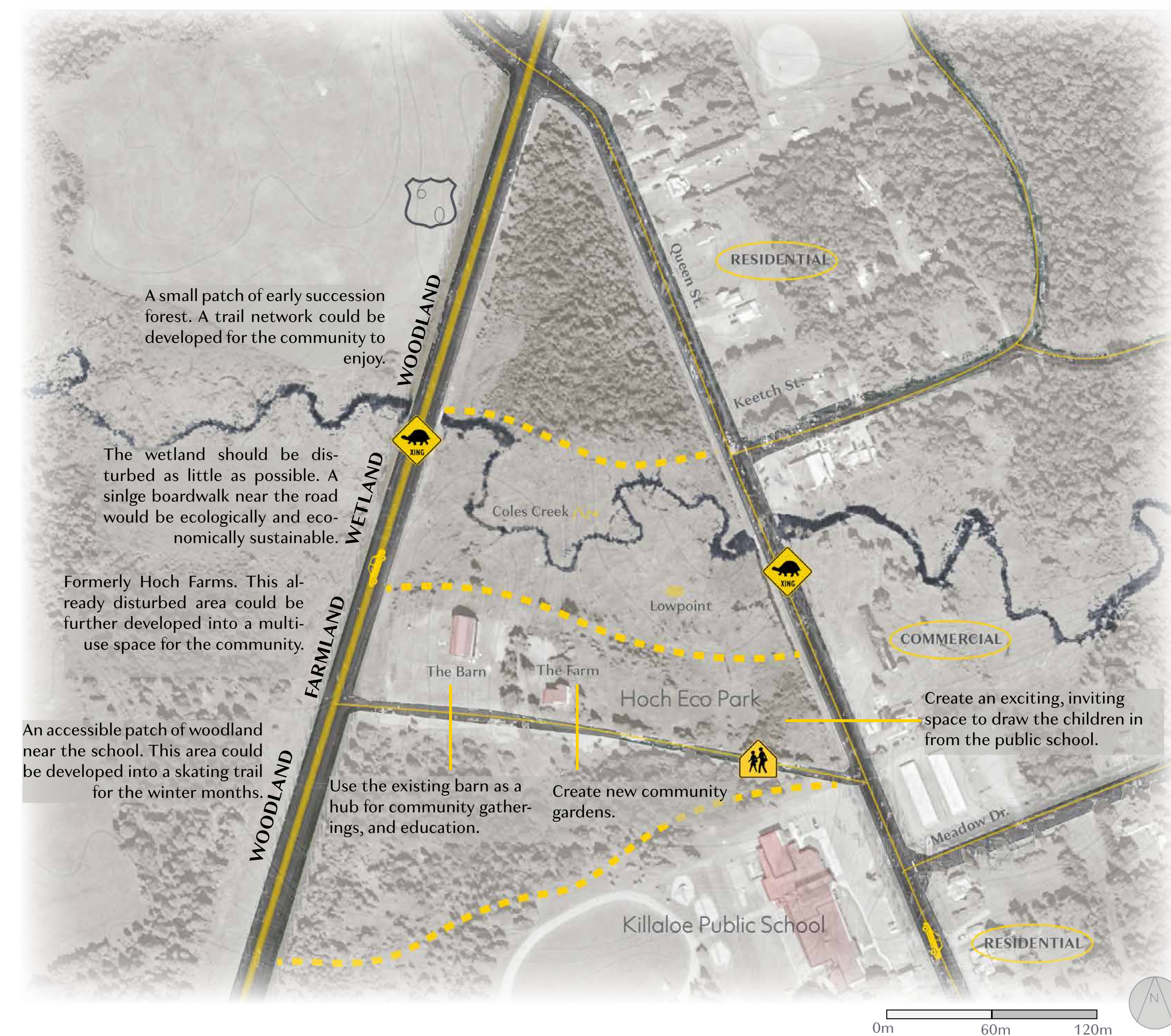


SITE CONTEXT

Killaloe is located in Renfrew County, Ontario, 2 hours northwest of Ottawa. The town is a gateway to Ontario's well-known Algonquin Park and has a long history of interaction with the surrounding natural environment. The area was formerly the site of the Hoch Farmhouse Museum, and Amelia Hoch Community Garden. The site has seen use as a marketplace; catering to local artisans, farmers, and families as a gathering point for local events. Killaloe was at the forefront of the "Back to the Land" movement in the 1980's. This movement saw artists and artisans flocking to Killaloe seeking a simpler life.

PROJECT GOALS

- DESIGN A COVID-SAFE SPACE WHERE THE COMMUNITY CAN SAFELY ENJOY THE OUTDOORS
- CREATE AN ECOLOGICALLY RESPONSIBLE SPACE FOR THE COMMUNITY TO LEARN, PLAY, AND GROW
- CREATE PROGRAMS THAT CAN HELP THE COMMUNITY GENERATE REVENUE
- CREATE A BOARDWALK AND TRAIL SYSTEM USING LOCALLY AVAILABLE MATERIALS
- CREATE A SPACE FOR KILLALOE'S ARTISTS AND ARTISANS TO SHOWCASE THEIR WORK AND PROCESS



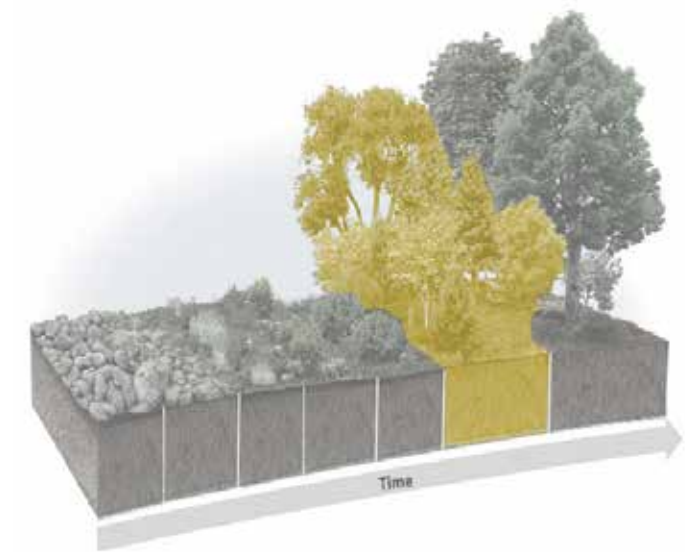
PROJECT THEMES

Education

Hoch Eco Park's proximity to Killaloe Public School makes it the perfect place to teach the children of Killaloe about the land around them. Getting children excited about the natural world will promote stewardship qualities that will make the world better for all.

Succession

Succession is the process of change in the dominant species of an ecosystem. Oaks replace Birches, much like our children replace us and take on the world.



Ecology

Cole's Creek runs through Hoch Eco Park as part of an ecologically significant wetland that spans the site. Limiting disturbances and educating the public about the importance of these fragile ecosystems will be one of the goals of Hoch Eco Park.

Barriers

Man-made structures act as barriers to ecological systems, effectively reducing habitat for native plants and animals. Covid-19 has acted as a barrier to normal life; a barrier which outdoor spaces can help overcome.



Artists Old and Young

Killaloe is home to a number of world class glass blowers, musicians, and knitters. Giving them a place to showcase their skills, to their community and to others, will help draw people to Hoch Eco Park. The space could be a source of income for the community, as well as a place to play and learn.

Back to the Land

The spirit of the Back to the Land movement is alive and well. Killaloe could attract visitors seeking a simpler life. Hoch Eco Park could showcase this lifestyle with markets and learning opportunities.



The Great Outdoors

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the outdoors has become a refuge for many. But it can be so much more. The outdoors can be a classroom, a place to work, a place to grow food and cultivate knowledge.

Community

Community is what makes Killaloe special. Hoch Eco Park could be a place where the community can come together safely to flourish.



21 ACRES

STEPS AWAY FROM KILLALOE PUBLIC SCHOOL

VISIBLE FROM HIGHWAY 60

WALKABLE FROM KILLALOE

WHO IS THE SPACE FOR?



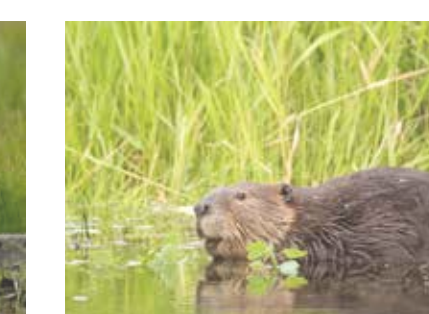
Children



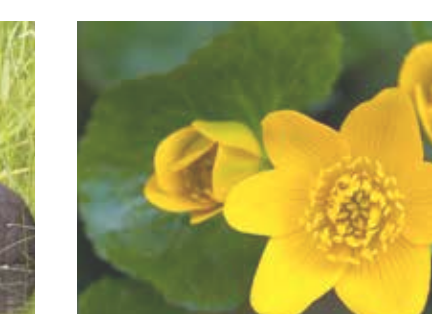
Creators



Great Blue Heron



Beaver



Marsh Marigold



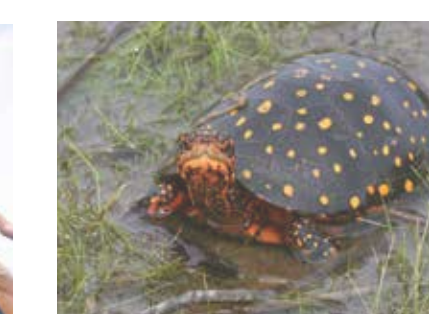
Green Ash



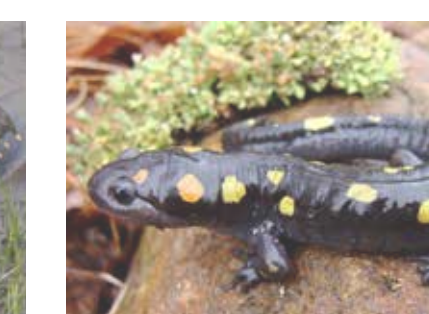
Locals



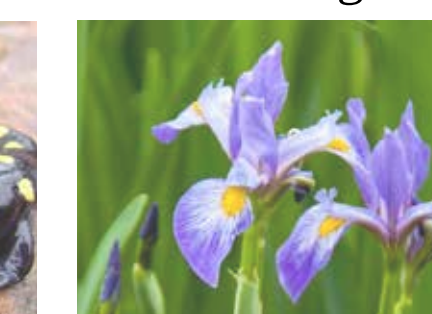
Tourists



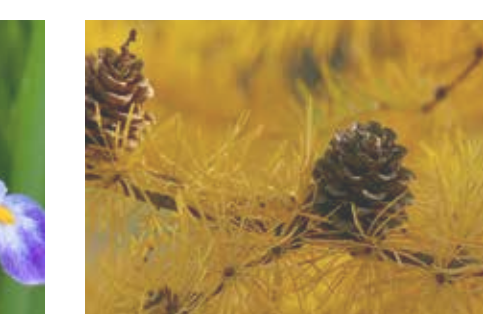
Spotted Turtle



Spotted Salamander



Blue Flag Iris



Tamarack

HOCH ECO PARK - BACK TO THE LAND

IDEATION

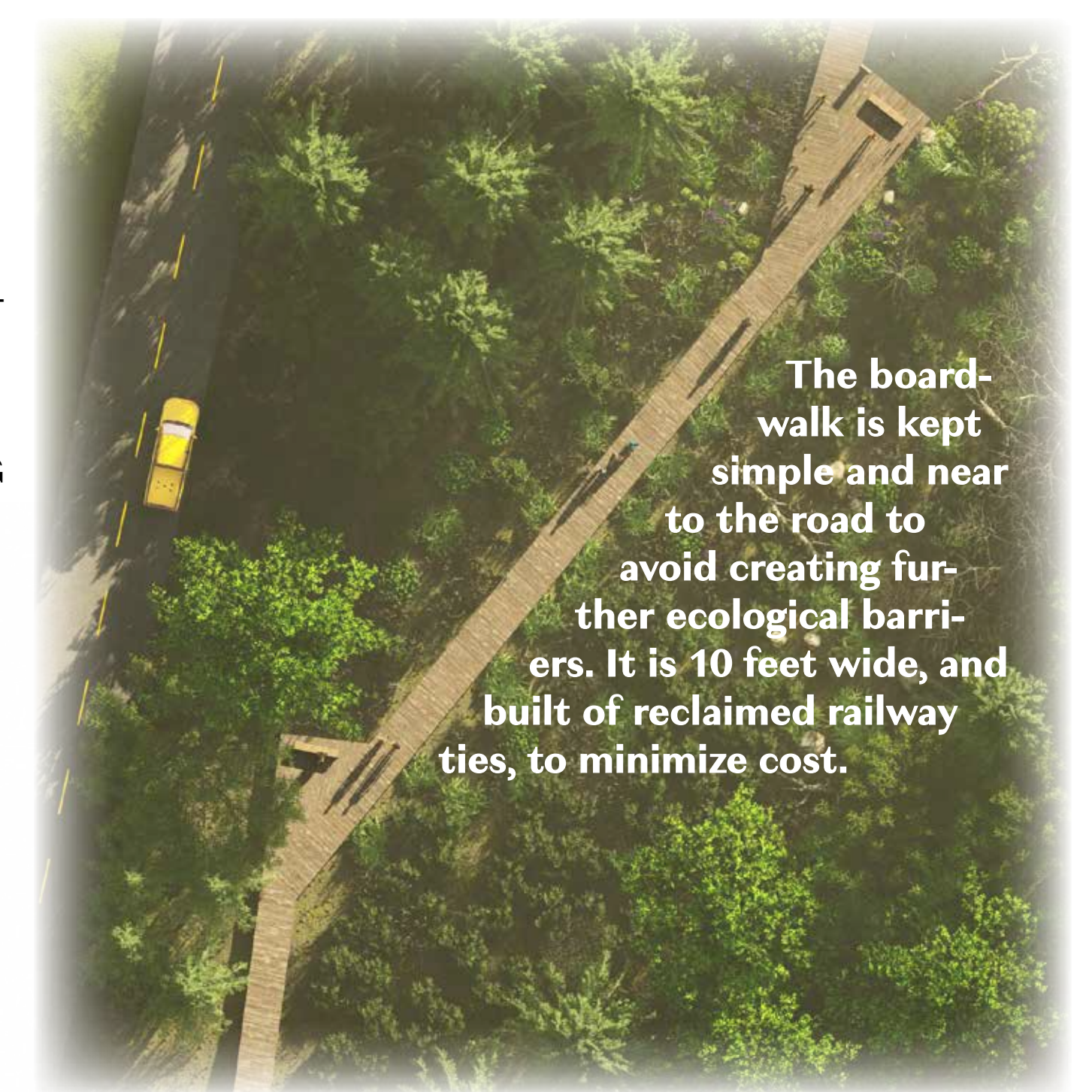


DESIGN OUTCOMES

- A MULTITUDE OF PATHS AND OPEN SPACES FOR PEOPLE TO SAFELY ENJOY WHILE SOCIAL DISTANCING
- EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS ALIKE WITH MINIMAL ECOLOGICAL IMPACT
- FARMER'S MARKET, COMMUNITY GARDEN, AND STUDIO CLASSES CAN GENERATE REVENUE
- LOCAL RECLAIMED RAILWAY TIES, LOGS, CEDAR POSTS, AND NATURAL STONE ARE USED THROUGHOUT THE SPACE
- STUDIO SPACE FOR ARTISTS AND ARTISANS IN THE BARN WITH OUTDOOR TEACHING SPACE FOR LOCALS AND TOURISTS TO LEARN

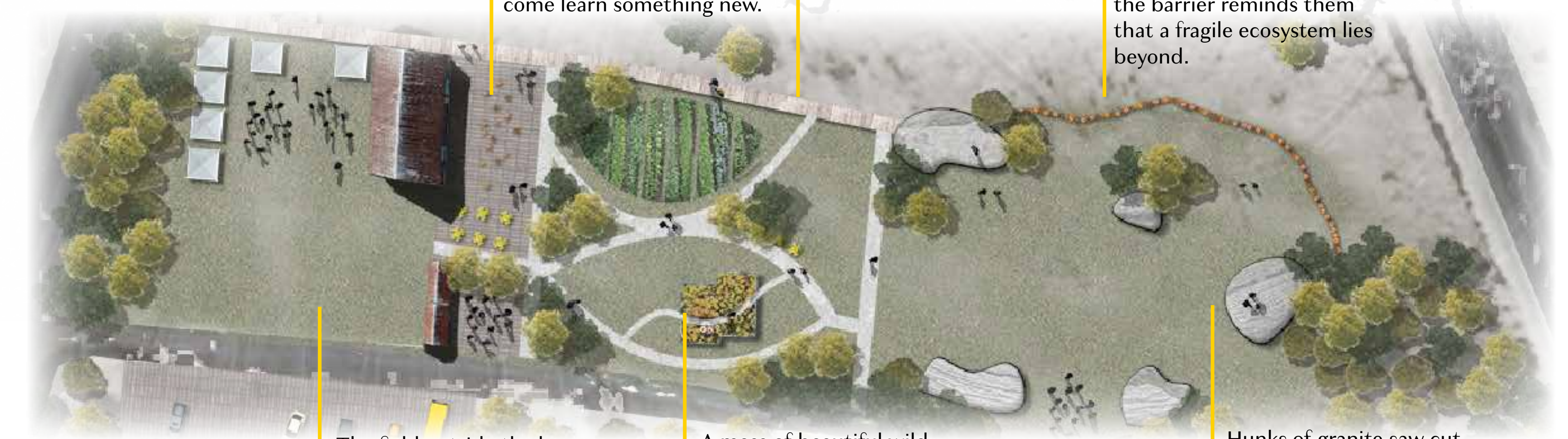
CONCEPTUALIZATION

- DRAW PEOPLE TO THE WETLAND
- DO NOT CREATE ADDITIONAL ECOLOGICAL BARRIERS
- KEEP COMMUNITY VEGETABLE GARDEN ACCESSIBLE
- PLACE OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND NEAR TO SCHOOL
- FARMER'S MARKET AND OUTDOOR CLASSROOM EACH USE THE BARN
- BOARDWALK VIEWING PLATFORMS OVERLOOK SITE AND CREEK



The boardwalk is kept simple and near to the road to avoid creating further ecological barriers. It is 10 feet wide, and built of reclaimed railway ties, to minimize cost.

A CLOSER LOOK



A cluster of stump stools facing the barn acts as an outdoor classroom or studio. Where people young and old from all over can come learn something new.

The Boardwalk spans part of the site. Benches provide opportunities to observe the natural beauty of the wetland.

A retaining wall of logs acts to frame the natural beauty of the wetland. Children are invited to jump along the undulating wall, while the barrier reminds them that a fragile ecosystem lies beyond.

The field outside the barn acts as the site of the new Killaloe Farmer's market. The hay loft doors act as an impromptu stage for local musicians to entertain the community.

A mass of beautiful wildflowers stands framed by a low stone wall in the footprint of the old farmhouse. A way to pay tribute to Amelia Hoch's famous community garden.

Hunks of granite saw cut and placed back together on site echo the Canadian Shield that peppers northern Ontario. These unique play structures invite children to clamber and experience nature.

Native pollinator host species and cut flowers.
Ex: Pale Purple Coneflower, Anise Hyssop.

Ornamental planting.
Ex: Serviceberries, Witchhazels.

Canadian Shield indicator species.
Ex: White Pine, Wild Columbine.



The field outside the barn can accommodate markets and other events.

Outdoor classroom, with a view into studio space inside the Barn.

Woodland planting to screen roadway. Tamaracks, Maples, Oaks, and Pines, underplanted with Sedges.



THE AMELIA HOCH
MEMORIAL GARDEN
IN THE FOOTPRINT
OF THE OLD FARM-
HOUSE.



THE SOUTH TRAIL
LOOP CAN BE CON-
VERTED TO A SKAT-
ING TRAIL FOR THE
WINTER MONTHS.



THE MOUNDS OF
GRANITE AND LOW
STUMPWALL
THAT FORM THE
ADVENTURE PLAY-
GROUND.



A VIEW DOWN THE BOARDWALK BOR-
DERING THE SITE, WITH THE COMMUNITY
FARM ON THE LEFT.