



The Unzoo Sanctuary

**Giving Control & Competence Back to
Animals while Enriching Visitors**

**2023 Taipei Master Planning
and Zoo Design Conference
Jon Coe**

Zoo =
coerced animals, cages

Evolving to...

Unzoo =
Attracted Animals, Choice,
Control, Competence
No Cages!

Think Differently!

Zoo:

With “cages”
Physical barriers for animals

Display based upon coercion
or limitation

Managed captive animals

Animals forced to human
schedule

..

Large animal shows

Capital intensive

Unzoo:

Without “cages”
Physical barriers for people

Display based upon attraction,
motivation, choice & control

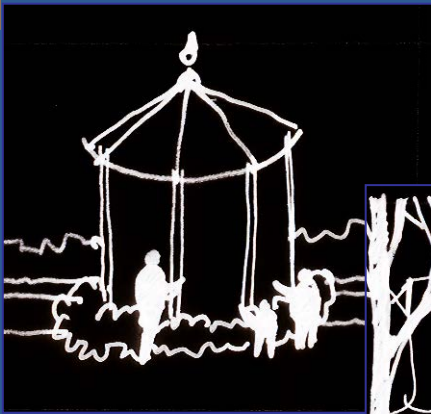
Managed free-ranging rehabilitated
and wild animals

People adapt to animal’s schedule
with animals trained to broaden
schedule

Small naturalistic Habitat Theatre.

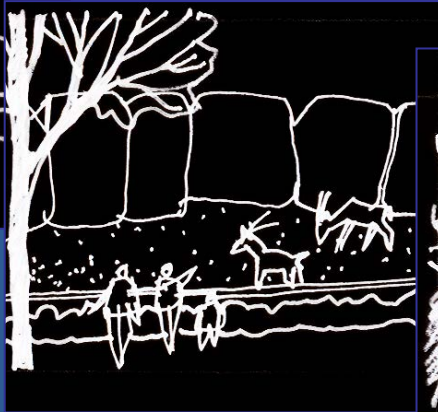
Staff intensive

Zoos Evolving:



VICTORIAN EXHIBIT

- Humans dominate
- Cages
- Animals as objects



HAGENBECK EXHIBIT 1907

- Humans dominate
- Barriers “naturalistic”
- Zoo as model



IMMERSION EXHIBIT 1976

- Animals dominate
- Hidden barriers
- Nature as model



UNZOO 2004

- Animals & Nature Dominate
- Animals attracted rather than confined

Existing Unzoo Examples



People and birds exploit each other, creating vital and lasting bonds with 'nature'

These birds trained me to feed them



Existing Unzoo Examples



Dolphin swimming with people. Dolphin Controls the encounter.



Sea lions took over San Francisco's Pier 39, creating a tourist attraction.

Existing Unzoo Examples



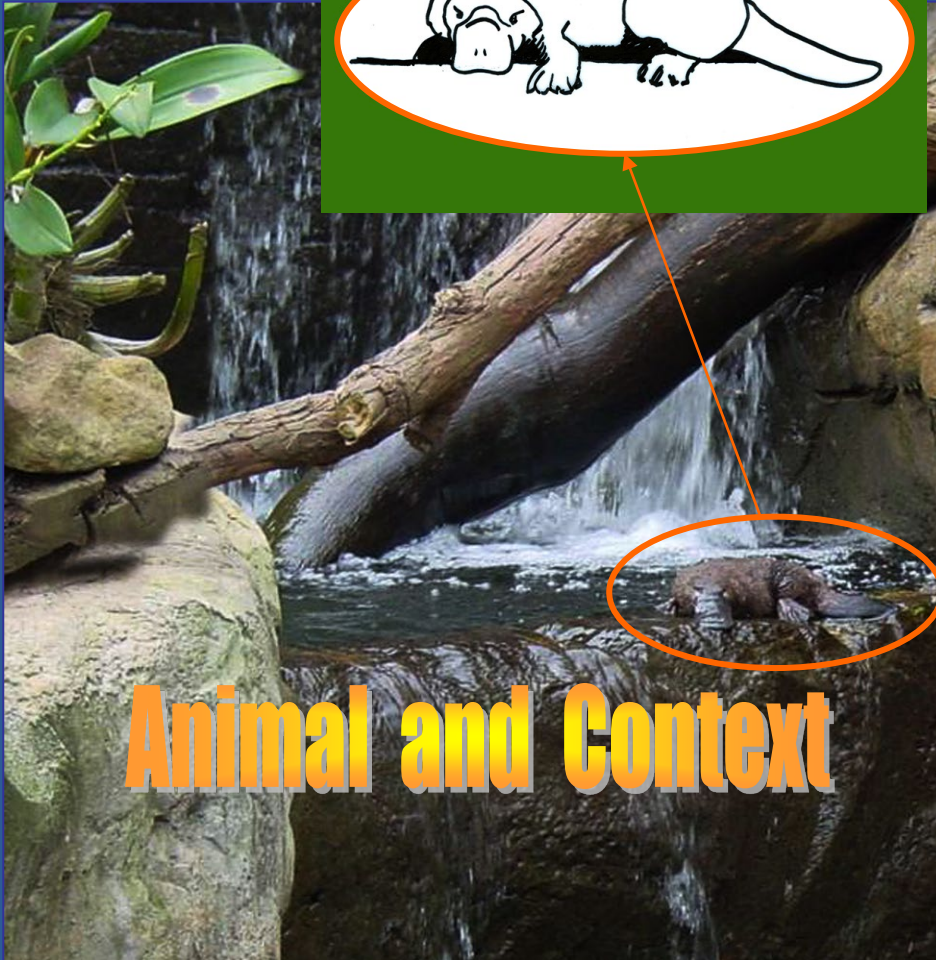
Trainer Joshua Bassett

Conditioning Free-Ranging Water Dragon at Currumbin Sanctuary

Tools of Change: Immersion

Immersed in

- Sights,
 - Sounds,
 - Smells,
 - Nature's Landscape
- ... The complete ecological picture.



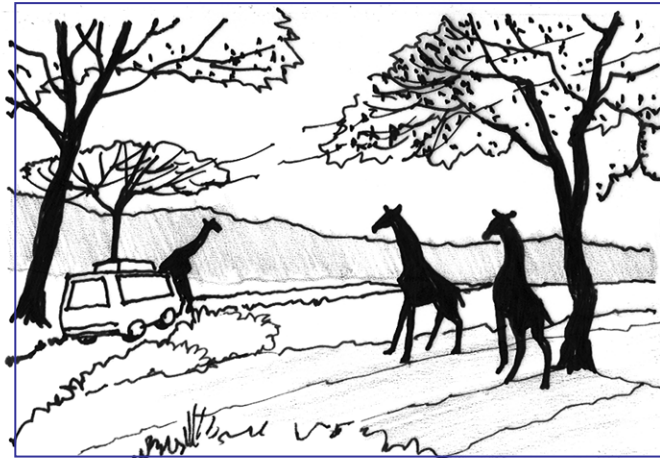
Tools of Change: **Controlling People**



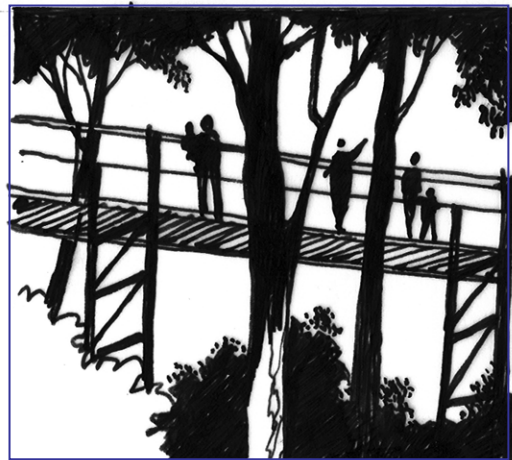
Walk Through



Boardwalk



Drive Through



Sky Walk

Tools of Change: **Animal Training**



© Louisville Zoo

Tools of Change: **Habitat Theatre**



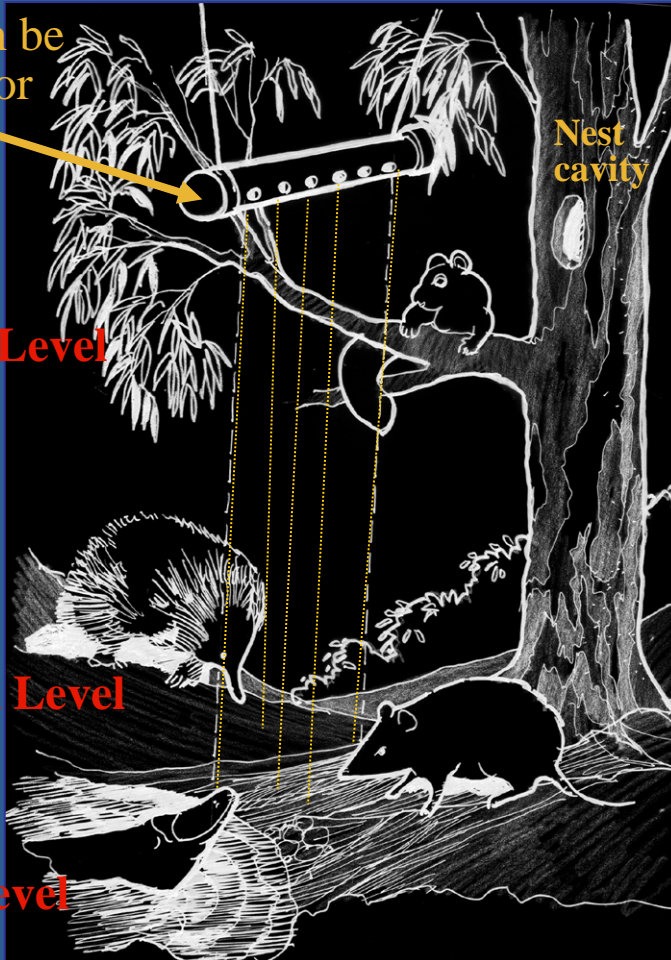
Tools of Change: Attracting Animals

Feeder can be lowered for service

Arboreal Level

Terrestrial Level

Aquatic Level



PVC Pipe Feeder

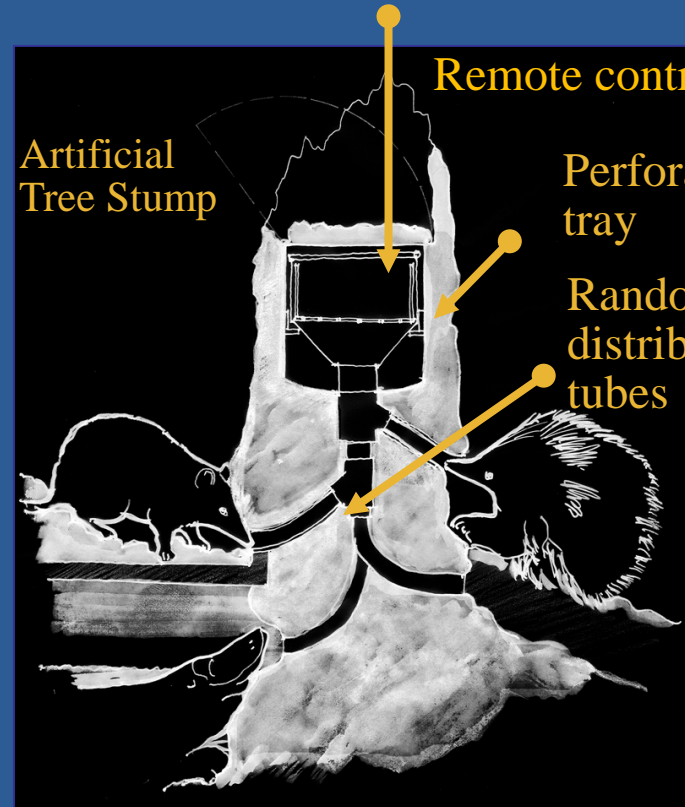
Place refrigerated meal worms, crickets etc. in removable food hopper

Artificial Tree Stump

Remote control

Perforated tray

Random distribution tubes



Low Provisioning Station

Tools of Change: **Close Encounters**



© Philadelphia Academy of Science



Tools of Change: Expand the Senses



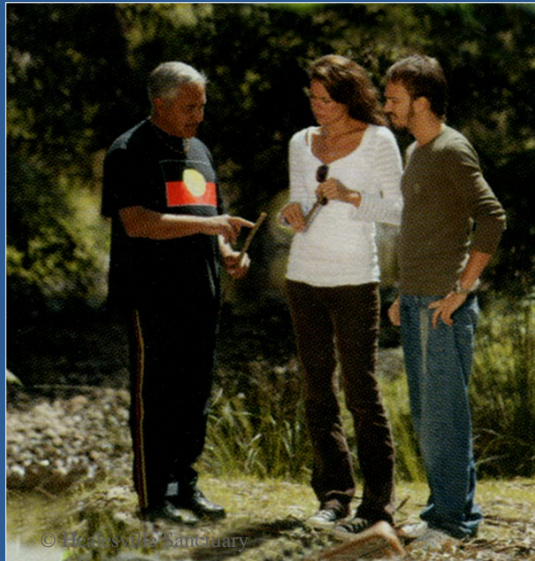
← **Microchip**

Telemetry



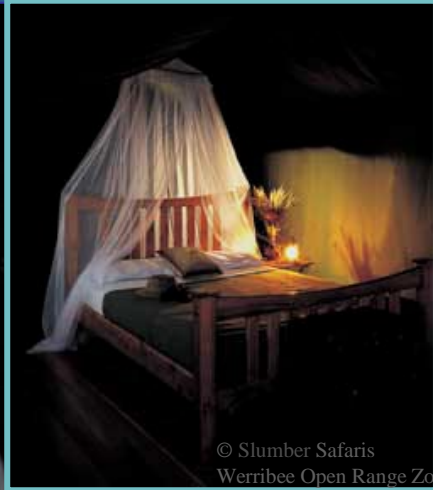
Werribee Open Range Zoo

Tools of Change: Ethnic Connections



Tools of Change: **Night Events & Encounters**

Ray Mendez



Inspiring Images

Healesville Sanctuary

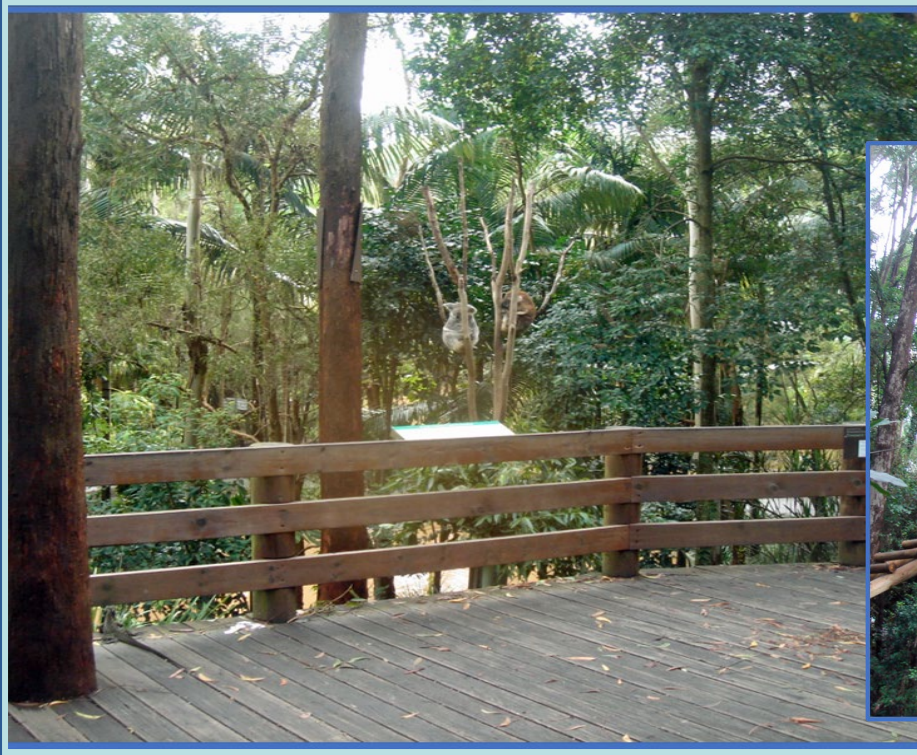


Wade with
Platypus

Animal rescue & treatment focus

Inspiring Images

Currumbin Sanctuary



Canopy trails for animals & visitors

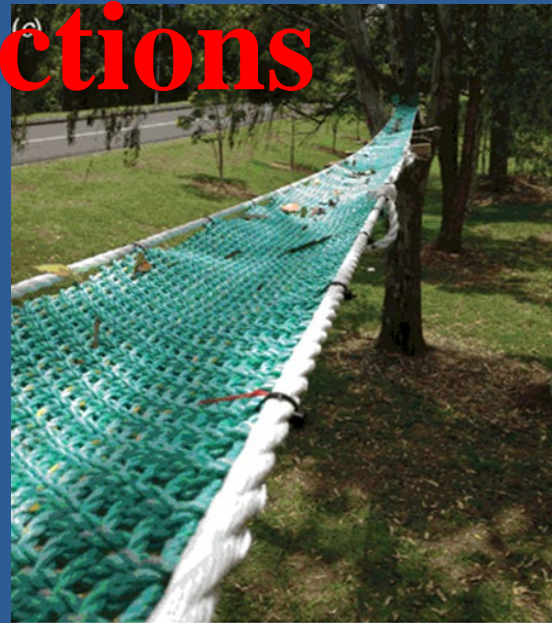
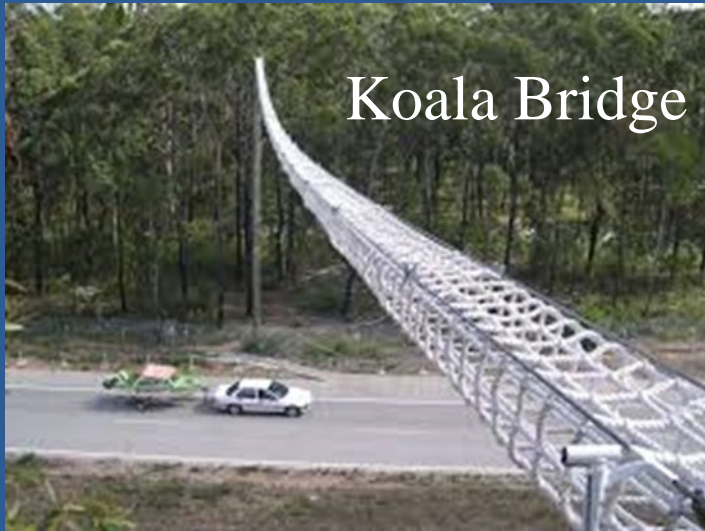
Morris Arboretum Tree House



Canopy trails for animals & visitors

Wildlife Connections

Over and Under



Tools of Change:

Exotic to Native Animals

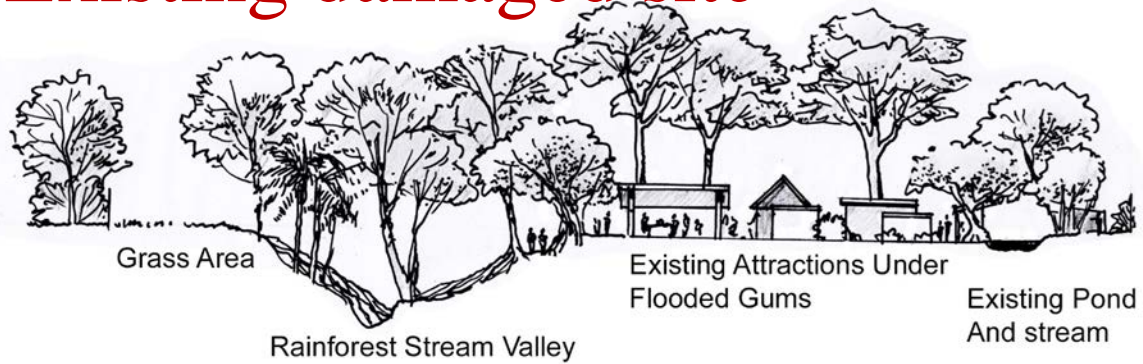
- From exotic to native animals & habitats.
- From breed & release to heal & release.
- From many small expensive exhibits to fewer, larger mixed-species natural areas.
- From bring outside looking in: to walk-through experiences.
- From passive to guided experiences.
- From emphasis on built facilities to focus on staff & animal training and abilities.

Proposed Byron Bay Australia Wildlife Hospital & Sanctuary Case Study



Existing
Renovated
Macadamia
Castle Attraction

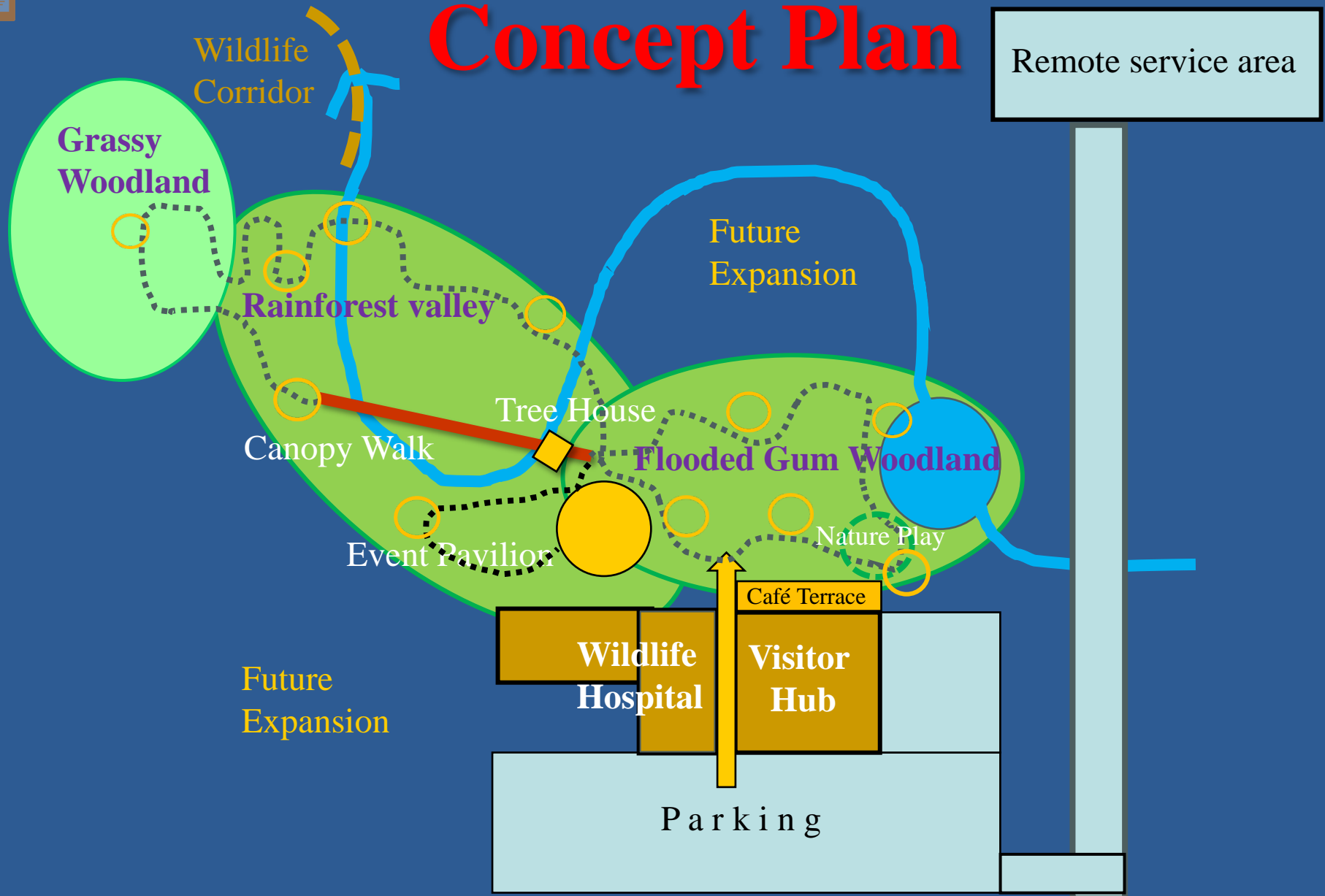
Existing damaged site



Proposed restored site

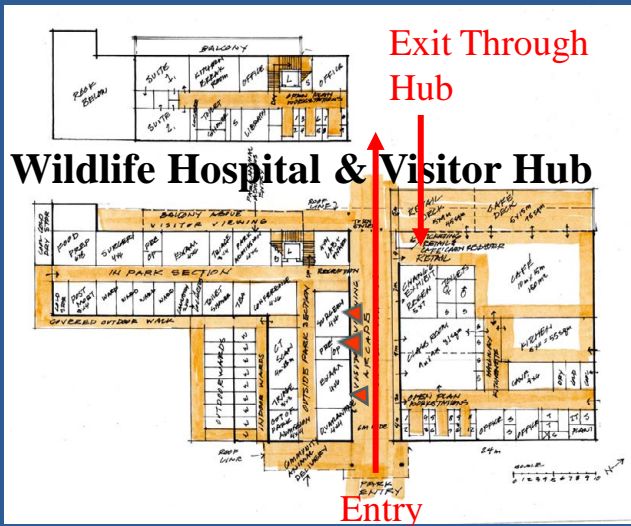


Concept Plan



Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital & Sanctuary

Wildlife Hospital Concept





The Unzoo Sanctuary Case Study

Proposed Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital & Sanctuary

- Ecological restoration of a disturbed site.
- Wildlife hospital for rescue, treatment & release.
- Support some non-releasable wildlife in sanctuary.
- Connect to wildlife corridors.
- Condition local wildlife to accommodate visitors.
- Night experiences when wild mammals are active.
- Fewer visitors, “elite” experiences.
- Fewer buildings, more staff.
- Supporting events, conferences, retreats.
- Earned revenue to support hospital.

Strategic Concept: Will it work?

Based upon the novel proposition that visitors will be more satisfied discovering fewer **free-ranging** birds, mammals & reptiles trained to do natural behaviours, including semi-scripted “surprise encounters,” throughout restored natural landscapes compared to seeing more contained animals in a traditional zoo.



Tools of Change Summary

- Immersion Design
- Positive Training
- Habitat Theatre
- Control People – Attract Animals
- Provide Close Encounters
- Expand the Senses
- Night Encounters
- Ethnic Connections
- Invest in People, Not Facilities
- Evolve!



The Unzoo Sanctuary

Jon Coe