



THE Wilderness OF WOMEN

The creative spirit of women and environmental advocacy

purpose.

The purpose of this project was to create an exhibit for the Tacoma Historical Society that highlighted underrepresented female narratives in history and connected them to the present.

big idea.

Women of the last century have significantly shaped how we approach environmental advocacy today.

impact.

The impact of this exhibit aimed to educate audiences about the importance of women's history and representation, and inspire innovative approaches to make meaningful change.

We have often lamented...that the history of the accomplishments of women does not survive past the memories of those who lived them.

League of Women Voters

process.

Collaborated with Tacoma Historical Society to find an exhibit topic that would highlight women in their collection, their mission, and be relevant to a current issue.

Research involved working closely with the Tacoma Public Library Northwest Room Special Collections. Together we pulled newspaper articles, photography, books, and other resources, in search of women who were active in conservation and environmental issues.

Digitized The Tacoma Mountaineers scrapbooks, which included thoughtfully compiled material from female Mountaineers, for object/artifact list.

Compiled research into a cohesive narrative, focusing on women and issues specific to Tacoma whenever possible. This material can be seen in the final exhibit brief.

framing.

In Washington, over four million acres of wilderness, including lands that form Olympic, North Cascades and Rainier National Parks, have been preserved with the leadership and concerted efforts of women as well as men, often with women in the forefront and in the largest numbers.

Without equal rights, women have often had to get creative in order to get things done. Their approaches often involve community engagement, or working collaboratively with communities in order to make change, to find power in numbers.

Women give greater priority to protection of and improving the capacity of nature, maintaining farming lands, and caring for nature and the environment's future. Creating accessible resources about environmental health, and how it impacts future generations, has influenced entire generations and movements.

Climate change is a global phenomenon that impacts everyone, but disproportionately affects women. Because women are more likely to live in poverty and have less access to basic human rights, desecration of natural resources puts them in a more vulnerable state. Women in political leadership roles are more likely to center environmental justice, sustainability, and conservation issues.

Many of these approaches have influenced how we approach environmental advocacy today. So why do we think the outdoors is for boys? Let's take a closer look at how environmental issues began, how it impacts our communities, and learn about a few (of many) notable and inspiring women who have made a difference.



Helen Engle and Spotted Towhee, Courtesy of the Tacoma Audubon Society