



Public Park

Seattle Gas Light Company

Seattle, Washington

Originally built:
1906

Type:
Coal gasification

Decommissioned:
1956

Acquired by City:
1962

Opened to Public:
1975

Site size:
20 acres

The former Seattle Gas Light Company site in Seattle, Washington was converted into a public park known as Gas Works Park – now one of the most popular in Seattle and a National Register Historic Place. Landscape architect Robert Haag used a bioremediation process to detoxify the soil on site. The most toxic materials were put in a large pile and capped with 18 inches of hard-packed clay – this spot is known as Kite Hill and is one of the park’s most popular features. No known surface soil contamination remains on site today. Several of the original structures from the plant stand as ruins in the park while others have been reconditioned and are now used as children’s play structures.



Key Findings

Reusing on-site structures

Retaining some of the gas works structures provided significant cost savings, as opposed to demolition.

Importance of engagement

Haag used an extensive community engagement process to build public support for the park and ensure users of its safety.

Bioremediation

The park was a pioneer in bioremediation methods, some 20 years before the EPA recommended them.

Need for continued monitoring

The park has had numerous environmental re-evaluations since its opening. Access to the water at the park is prohibited.