

Bird's Eye View

Conservation. Education.
Community.



Inside:
Nature Center
Expansion Underway

Jordan River Nature
Center Map Detail

Message from the Nest

Aldo Leopold's "Thinking Like A Mountain" essay in *A Sand County Almanac* helped many of us understand that relationships exist in nature among different parts of the ecosystem. Robin Wall Kimmerer's

Braiding Sweetgrass drove home the realization that humans have always played an active role in shaping ecosystems through agriculture, fire management, and selective harvesting. Suzanne Simard's *Finding the Mother Tree* describes how trees rely on an underground network to support their direct tree relatives as well as other species of trees.

These wonderful stories emphasize that relationships matter, and that systems can be complex, multi-faceted, and hard to fully understand. As Tracy Aviary launches into Phase II of the Jordan River Nature Center, these are lessons that will serve us well as we face the challenges ahead.

In the face of a historic drought, our first challenge is to transform approximately 12 acres of parched landscape, that has been mostly ignored for decades and is filled with invasive plants, into beautiful gardens that provide habitat for birds and insects, and will inspire curiosity and caring among our guests, volunteers, and staff.

Our second challenge is to create a nature-based community center in South Salt Lake that is welcoming to all, especially those who live close by because this community simply has less access to cultural assets than others in our

valley. To do this we need to build relationships and create programs that are responsive to the needs and wants of the community, and that it will take time and learning to do this well.

The final challenge is building this multi-million-dollar Jordan River Nature Center during tough times with supply chain issues, rising inflation, labor shortages, and a construction boom with COVID barely in our rear-view mirrors. We appreciate that to be successful we will need the support of the public and private sector, in big ways and in small ways, and that success might be hard to detect at first but will become apparent in time. 🌱

Cover: Wilson's warblers can be seen along the Jordan River during spring and fall migrations.

Above: Orb Weaver



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President/CEO, Tracy Aviary

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Jordan River Nature Center Update


Phase II Expansion

After several months of working through necessary processes and permits, Phase II of the Jordan River Nature Center (JRNC) is poised to start construction to expand its footprint by several acres. The entire property will be secured with an 8' fence similar to our Liberty Park campus. Infrastructure (irrigation and electricity) will be placed and main paths will thread through Phase II connecting a new 1000 West parking lot with our current campus.

Land sculpting will remove the existing weed saturated topsoil and replace it with berms topped with better soil ready for thousands of plants and trees that will create more beauty for guests. Our first significant garden area, the Utah Conservation Loop, was designed with the help of community members from Great Salt Lake Audubon, Salt Lake Air Protectors and Tracy Aviary's Volunteer Corps who developed initial conceptual designs. Located in the southern portion of the campus, this garden will feature native and drought tolerant plants that provide habitat for birds and insects.

Just north of the Utah Conservation Loop will be The ALSAM Foundation Observation Tower and a Wildlife Viewing Blind to be used as a classroom to teach about birds, and much more. To the east will be an Outdoor Amphitheater intended as a performance space for theater, music, and spoken word. The Emma Eccles Jones Pavilion, to the northeast, will provide a shaded space for school field trips, classes or family reunions.

Once construction is completed, our Jordan River Nature Center will be ready for all sorts of activities including educational programs, private events, school field trips, family reunions, Birding 101 class, and outdoor performances. Nature play spaces for the young and walking paths and areas for the older incorporated into the design will provide a much needed respite from the surrounding hustle of the city.

We are eager for construction to begin, and excited for what the future will bring. If you'd like more information about naming opportunities, please contact development@tracyaviary.org. 



Above: The Outdoor Amphitheater is intended as a performance space for theater, music, and spoken word.

Below: Tracy Aviary volunteers weed a native plant garden along the Jordan River Parkway Trail. In addition to creating habitat for birds and insects, these gardens allowed staff to test which native and drought tolerant plants would thrive in future gardens at the Jordan River Nature Center.





Jordan River Nature Center

Phase I (Existing) Phase II Phase III Phase IV

Proposed Buildings

A West Classroom (Existing)
B Bike Storage (Existing)
C West Restroom (Existing)
D Security Gatehouse
E PV Covered Parking Pavilion & EV Charging
F Outdoor Amphitheater
G The Emma Eccles Jones Pavilion

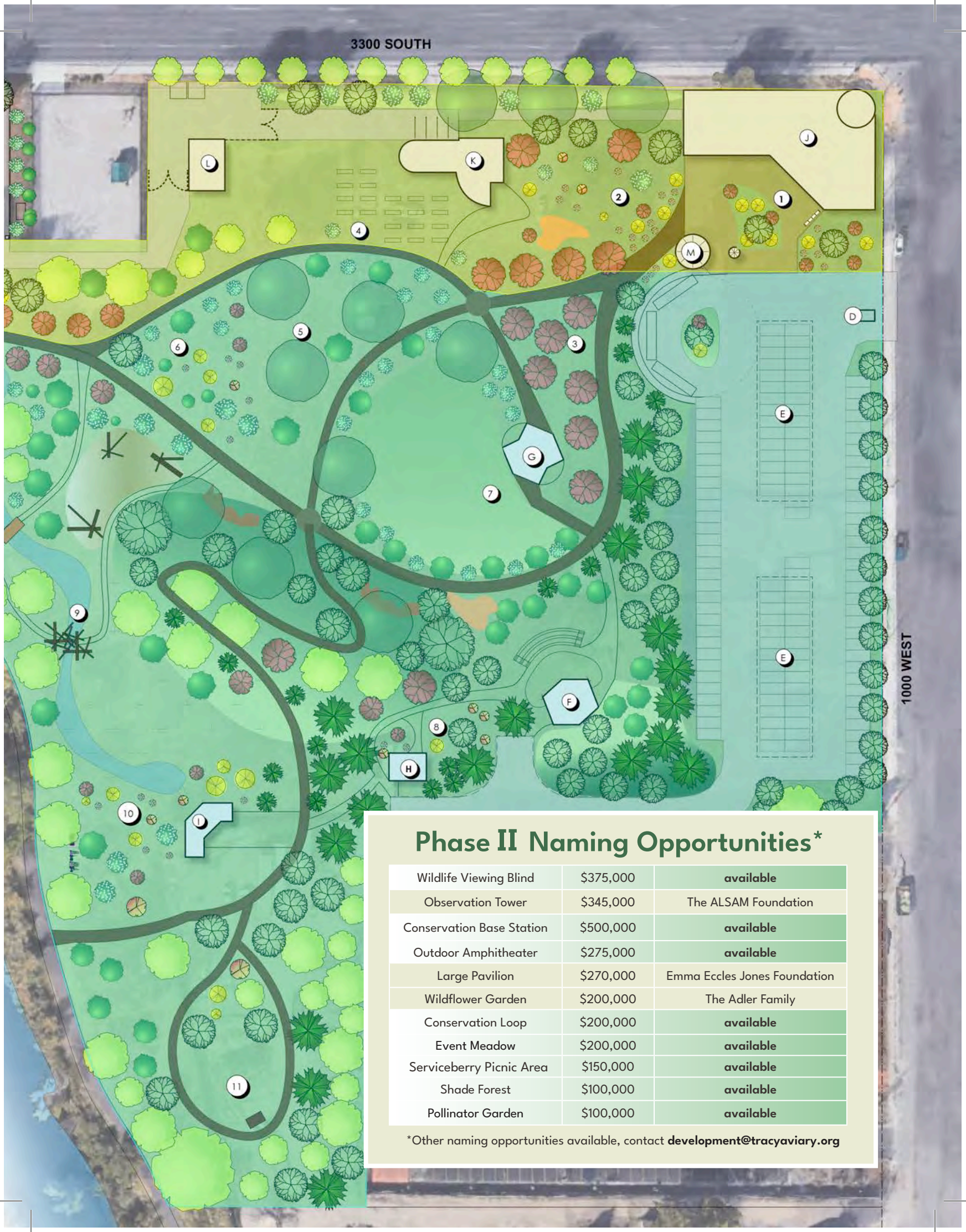
H Conservation Base Station & Restrooms
I The ALSAM Foundation Observation Tower / Wildlife Viewing Blind
J Visitors Center
K The Bobo Eco Learning Lab
L Service Building
M Small Pavilion
N Concessions / West Entry Kiosk
O Observation Tower

Proposed Site Features

1 Entry Plaza
2 Habitat Demonstration Garden
3 Serviceberry Picnic Area
4 Edible Gardens
5 Shade Forest
6 Pollinator Garden
7 Event Meadow
8 Waterwise Demonstration Garden
9 Beaver Lodge

10 Adler Wildflower Garden
11 Conservation Loop Natural Area
12 Culinary Foodscape Garden
13 Mudplay Area
14 Climbing Wall
15 Adventure Course
16 Eagle Perch
17 Boat / Bike Storage - Bike Repair

JORDAN RIVER



Phase II Naming Opportunities*

Wildlife Viewing Blind	\$375,000	available
Observation Tower	\$345,000	The ALSAM Foundation
Conservation Base Station	\$500,000	available
Outdoor Amphitheater	\$275,000	available
Large Pavilion	\$270,000	Emma Eccles Jones Foundation
Wildflower Garden	\$200,000	The Adler Family
Conservation Loop	\$200,000	available
Event Meadow	\$200,000	available
Serviceberry Picnic Area	\$150,000	available
Shade Forest	\$100,000	available
Pollinator Garden	\$100,000	available

*Other naming opportunities available, contact development@tracyaviary.org

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Questions: development@tracyaviary.org, 801-596-8500 x112.

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Birds & Spiders

A web of connections

- Of the more than 620 spider species that live in Utah, only seven have bites that are harmful to humans.

- Spiders are beneficial predators that eat mosquitoes that may carry the West Nile virus, which can be lethal for birds.

- Omnivorous birds like sparrows and crows eat spiders as an energy-rich snack.

- Several species of hummingbirds use spider webs as nesting material - the elasticity of the webs allow their nest to grow with their chicks!

- Spiderwebs have inspired the design elements found in bird-friendly glass. See this in action on two exterior windows at our Visitors Center in Liberty Park!

- At Antelope Island State Park, spiders are so important to the health of the park's habitat that they are celebrated annually during Spider Fest.

The presence of spiders is an indicator of the overall ecological health of an area. Jumping spiders are harmless to humans and are common in Utah.

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