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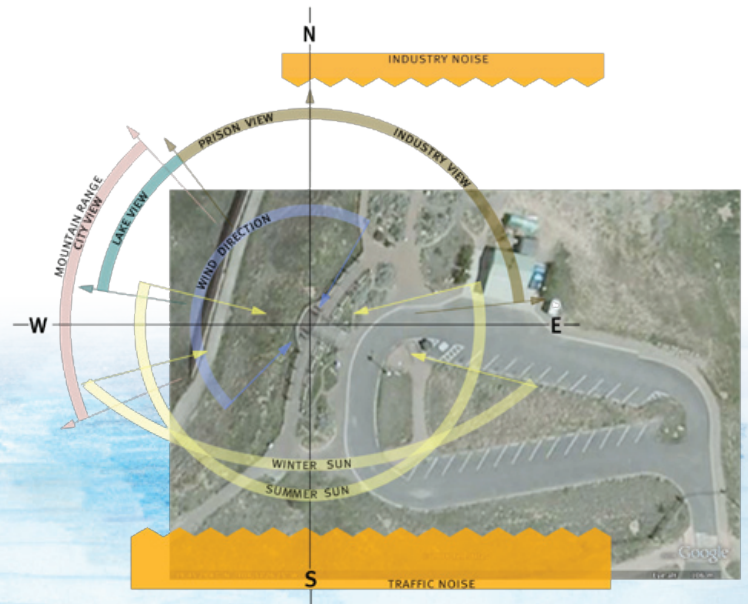
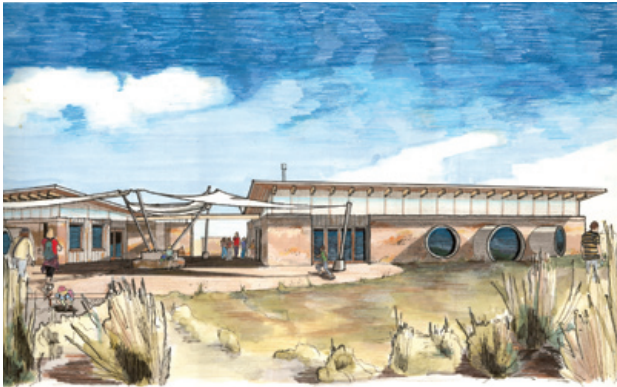
BLUFF LAKE NATURE CENTER

Stapleton, CO

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The Bluff Lake Nature Center endeavors to bring interaction with the natural environment to a decidedly urban setting - the former Stapleton Airport site in Denver, Colorado.

Initial site analyses revealed several distinct view opportunities, focusing on different views of nature and incursions upon nature. As a response, circular viewports constructed of recycled concrete culvert are deliberately inserted in a sheltering cast earth wall to guide views of the city, the watershed, and the mountains. This orchestrated experience underscores the vitality and diversity of this unique site.



A simple butterfly roof articulated with recycled glulam beams opens to the sky, flooding the interiors with diffuse natural light through Polygal translucent panels. The plan view reveals the same butterfly structure: an orthogonal building plan becomes more dynamic when split and hinged. The hinge point creates a landscaped entry pavilion with fire pit & fabric shade structure, connecting to an existing multi-modal path. Inside, the west wing contains a flexible exhibit & interpretive space that transforms into more defined classrooms via folding walls. To the east, conference and administrative functions find their home.

An Integrated Design process involved all consultants, engineers, and builder from early stages of design, resulting in a holistic building both clear and effective in form and purpose.

