



Country/City

University / School

Academic year

Title of the project

Authors

Switzerland / Zurich

ETH Zurich

2023 - 2024

Between Shores

Aamirah Nakhuda, Ni-Chin Tsai



Please provide a 250-word text explaining the selection criteria used to choose the five projects representing the school in the Ribas Piera Prize. Detail the aspects evaluated, such as conceptual quality, innovation, thematic relevance, technical resolution, or any other criteria considered in the selection process with a single image, characteristic of the academic process, to accompany the text.

Teaching landscape architecture means fostering a way of working that is grounded in process, encourages thinking across scales, and embraces a constant oscillation - between precision and ambiguity, between the large and the small, guided by overarching principles while remaining responsive to specific contexts. The selected projects reflect a shared sensitivity to the dynamics of time and temporality, engaging with sedimentation as a formative force in the Swiss landscape, revealing how landscape can emerge by staging and guiding those processes. Operating across scales and degrees of resolution, they unfold the complex interplay of layers that define landscape: water, topography, vegetation, and cultural meaning. The project sites - each shaped by historical river correction in Switzerland - bear traces of large-scale transformation, where dynamic fluvial systems were replaced by infrastructures of control. The projects critically reflect on this legacy and explore ways of re-engaging with these altered landscapes - searching for new relations with the littoral. The design emerges through an iterative interplay of digital methods and manual techniques, each offering distinct readings of space. These readings generate knowledge that is interpreted and translated into spatial expressions that aim to reveal often intangible atmospheric qualities. In dialogue with the Biennial's theme "Natural Intelligence?!", these works position landscape architecture as a practice that harnesses the power of natural processes and understands design as a means of controlling them - form and impact. The aim of any intervention is to install new processes so that multi-layered habitats for flora, fauna and humans can establish themselves.

Title of the project	Between Shores
Authors	Aamirah Nakhuda, Ni-Chin Tsai
Title of the course	traces, projecting new thresholds and shorelines for biel/bienne
Academic year	2023-2024
Teaching Staff	Martina Voser, Coralie Berchtold, Yann Junod, Sofia Prifti, Martin Zwahlen
Department / Section / Program of belonging	D-ARCH Department of Architecture / Landscape Architecture / Professur Voser
University / School	ETH Zurich



Written statement, short description of the project in English, no more than 250 words

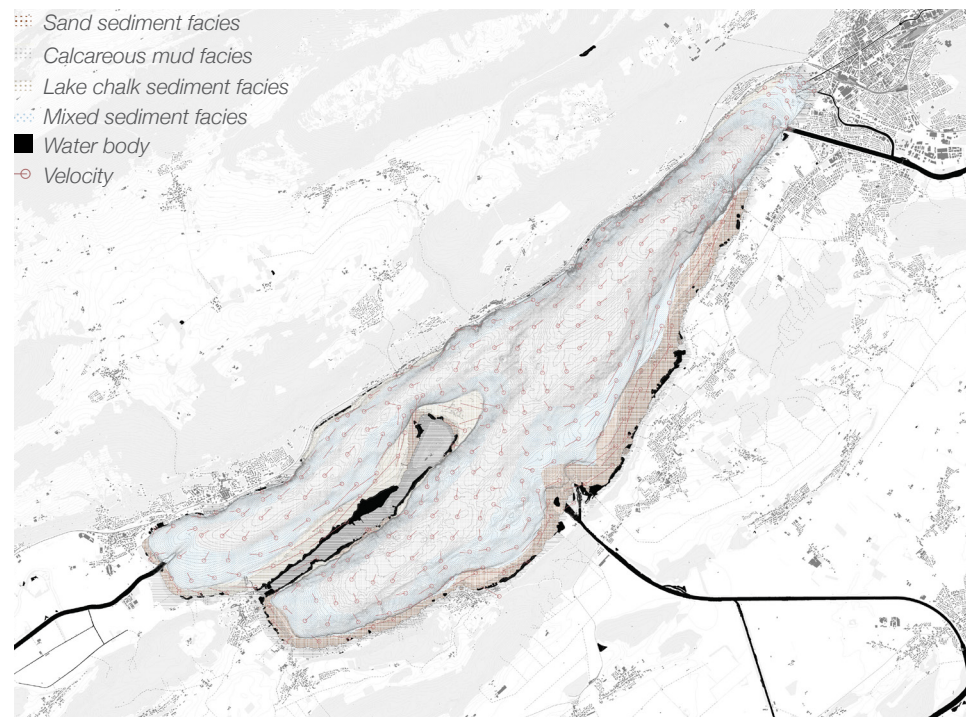
Biel has a history of changing water levels. Following the Jura water corrections, the straightening and addition of canals enlarged the water catchment area of the Aare river, resulting in increased sediment flow into Lake Biel. Wind and water currents also dramatically shape the bathymetry of Lake Biel, influencing activity underwater that is often invisible above the surface. These dynamics of the water system and the traces they leave in the shore area of Biel demonstrate that the shore is not a line.

Instead of the current division between city and lake through a hardened shoreline, how can a connection to the water be maintained as water levels constantly fluctuate? The allées are a structuring element of the city of Biel. They influence the organization of the city fabric, orient views, and direct movement from the city to the lake. Aspired from this key feature of Biel, our proposal uses the allée to break the existing shoreline of the city, extend into the lake, create several shorelines and respond to multiple timescales of water change. Working between different shorelines or shores is a method of addressing the changing water levels of the lake and the likelihood of more extreme fluctuations, such as drought and flooding, due to changing climate.

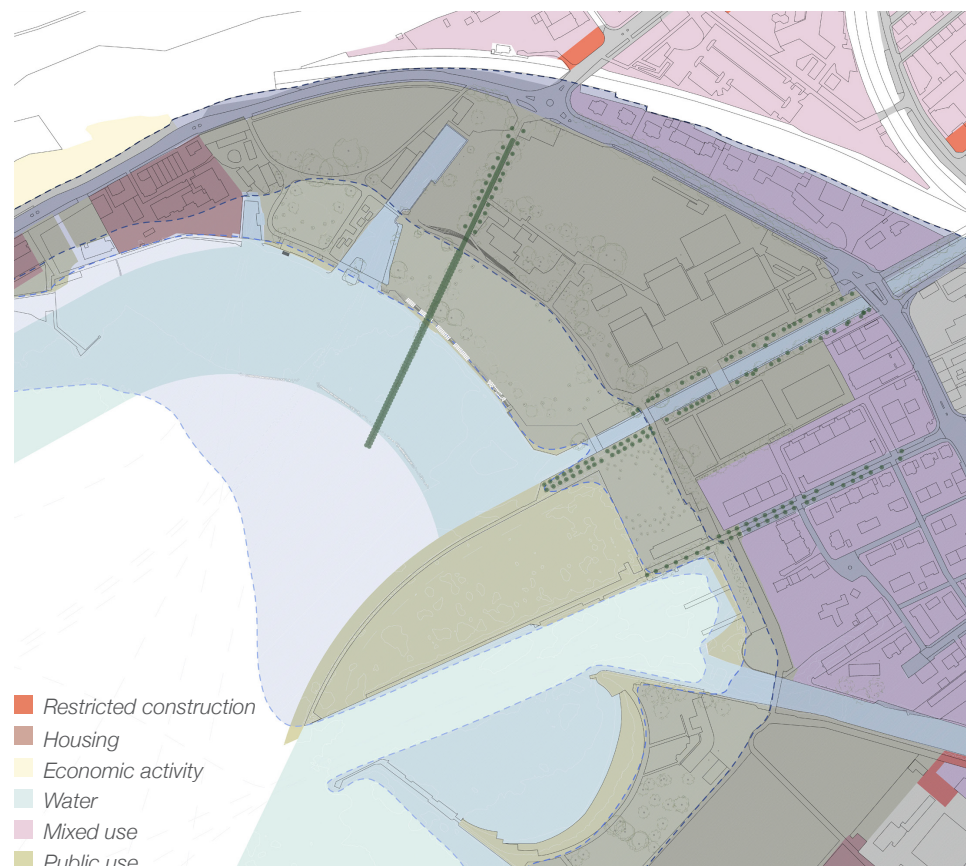
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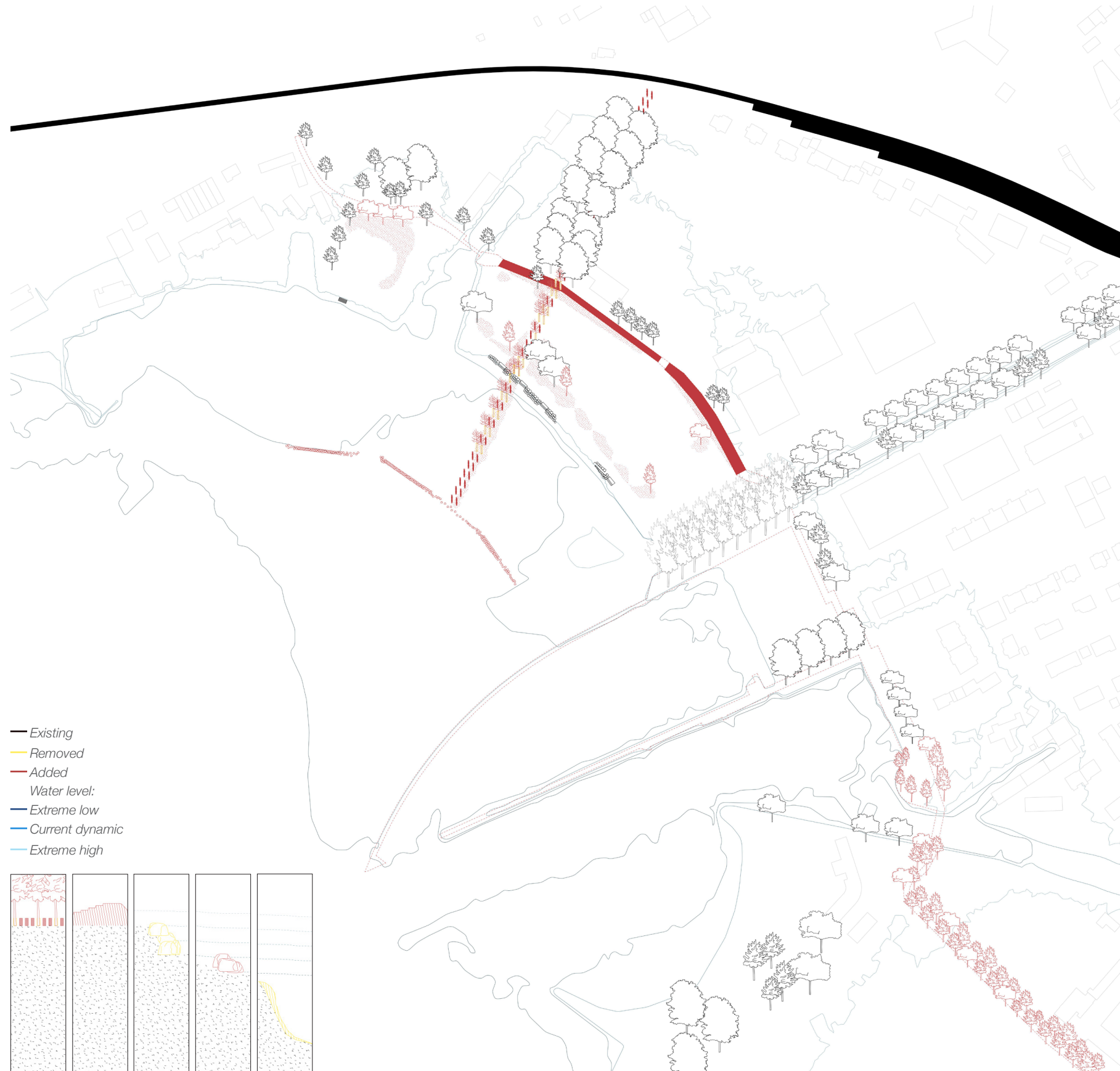
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Layers beneath the Surface Currents shift with wind, depth, and inflow. The map reveals how Lake Biel responds to different local conditions, shaped by the ground below and the orography above.



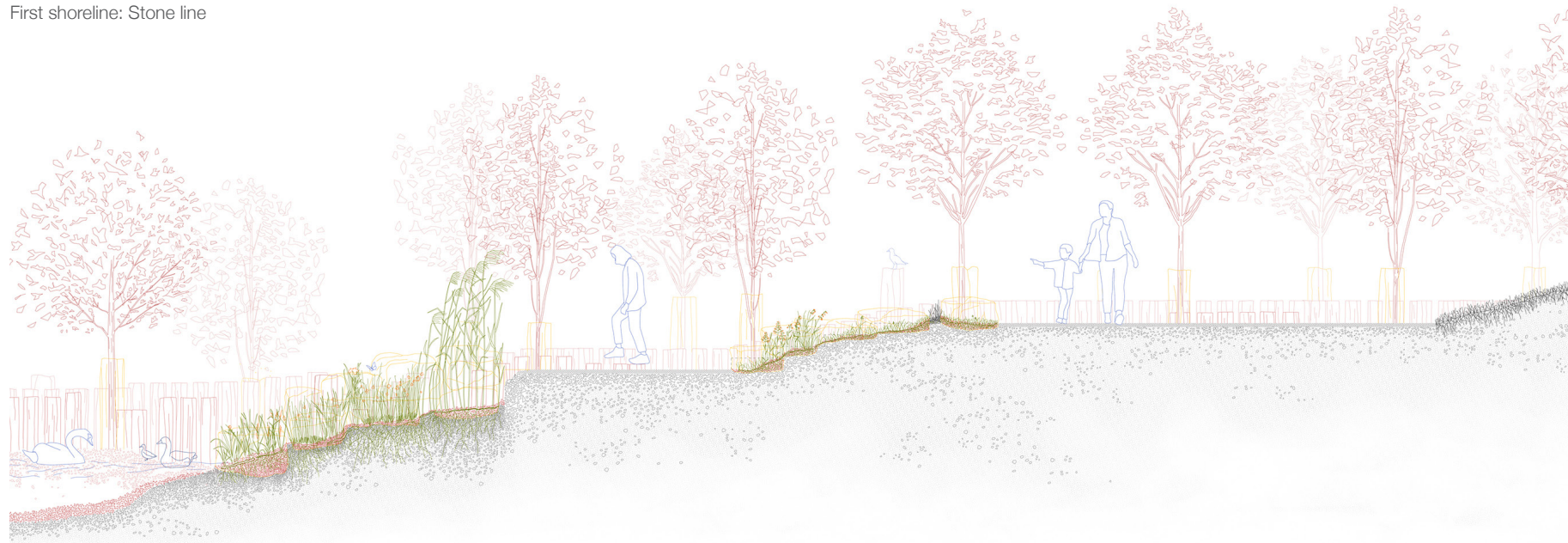
A new Zoning Plan Understanding the seasonal changes in water levels within the lake led to a striking conclusion: The zoning plan along the shores had to respond to these conditions, changing the perception of the shore as a line, to the shore as a space, defined by the highest and the lowest lake water levels.



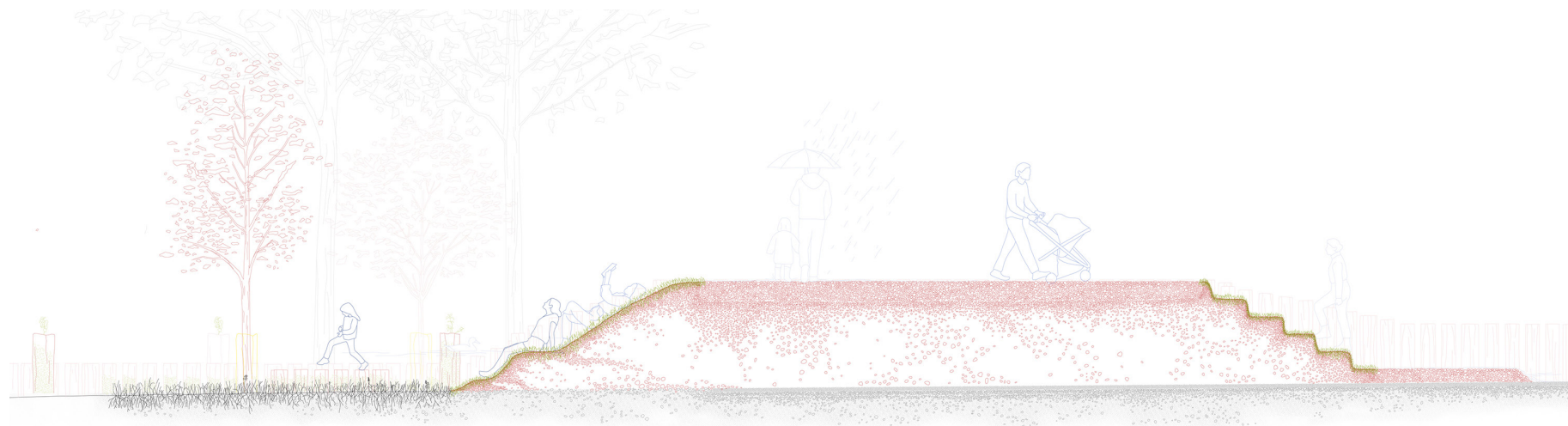
Shore Transformation Strategies The historical shoreline of Biel/Bienne is transformed into zones defined by the observed lake water extreme levels as a response to the changing water levels. The strategic steps on deconstructing, transforming and reconstructing are achieved by a long term material exchange from land and water - quite simply by building on the existing, moving and relocating materials and elements found on site. Finally, the continuation of the existing allées from the city into the lake act as a bridge, that links the lakeshores to the settlement, the old city center to the new spaces between shores.



First shoreline: Stone line



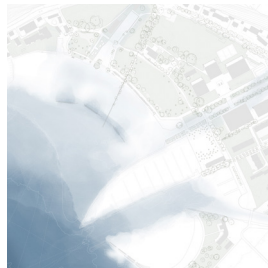
Second shoreline: Dip line



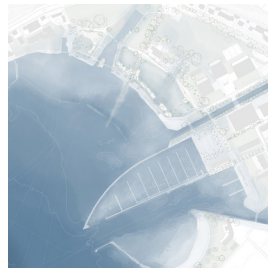
Third shoreline: Sediment line

— Existing — Removed — Added — Water level low — Current dynamic — Water level extreme high

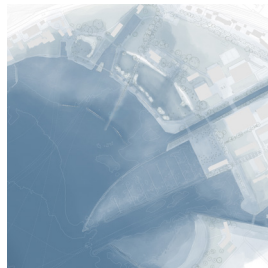
From Line to Space *Dip Line & Stone line-* Shifting the stones from the existing edge (second shoreline) into the lake creates the first shoreline that responds to drought conditions. When water recedes, the stones retain water for fish habitat and spawning. *Sediment line-* Sediment is transported from the underwater landslide areas to raise the pathway of the second shoreline. During a flooding event, the pathway is still accessible for public use.



427- 428.5m a.s.l.429.2-



429.7m a.s.l.

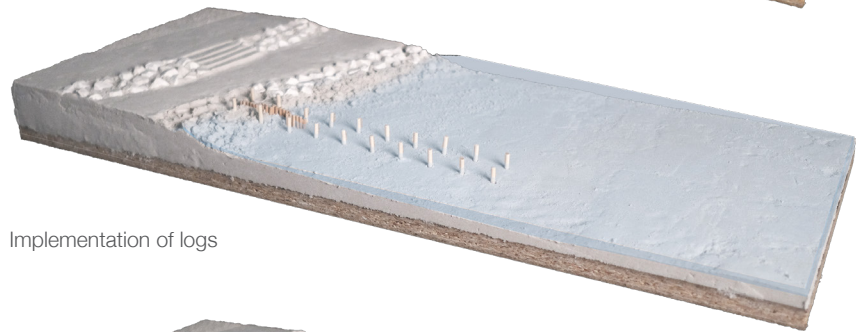


428.5- 430.3m a.s.l.

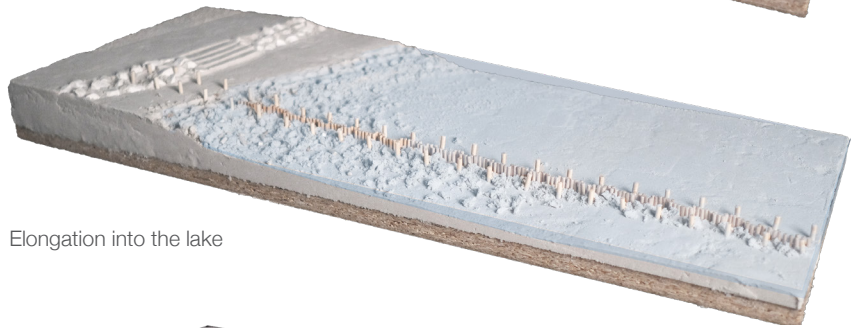
Layers beneath the Surface *Currents shift with wind, depth, and inflow. The map reveals how Bielersee responds to different local conditions, shaped by the ground below and the orography above.*



Existing shore



Implementation of logs

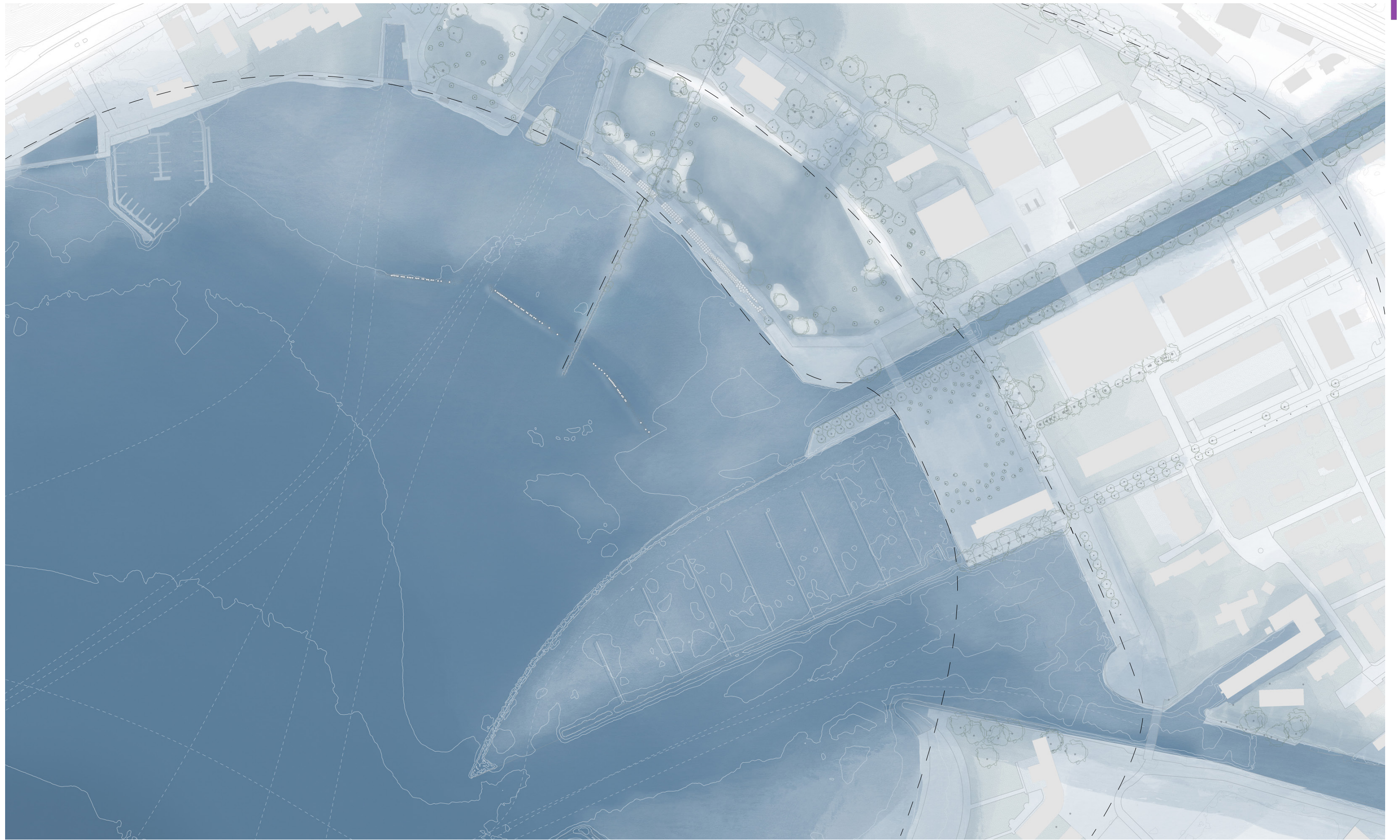


Elongation into the lake

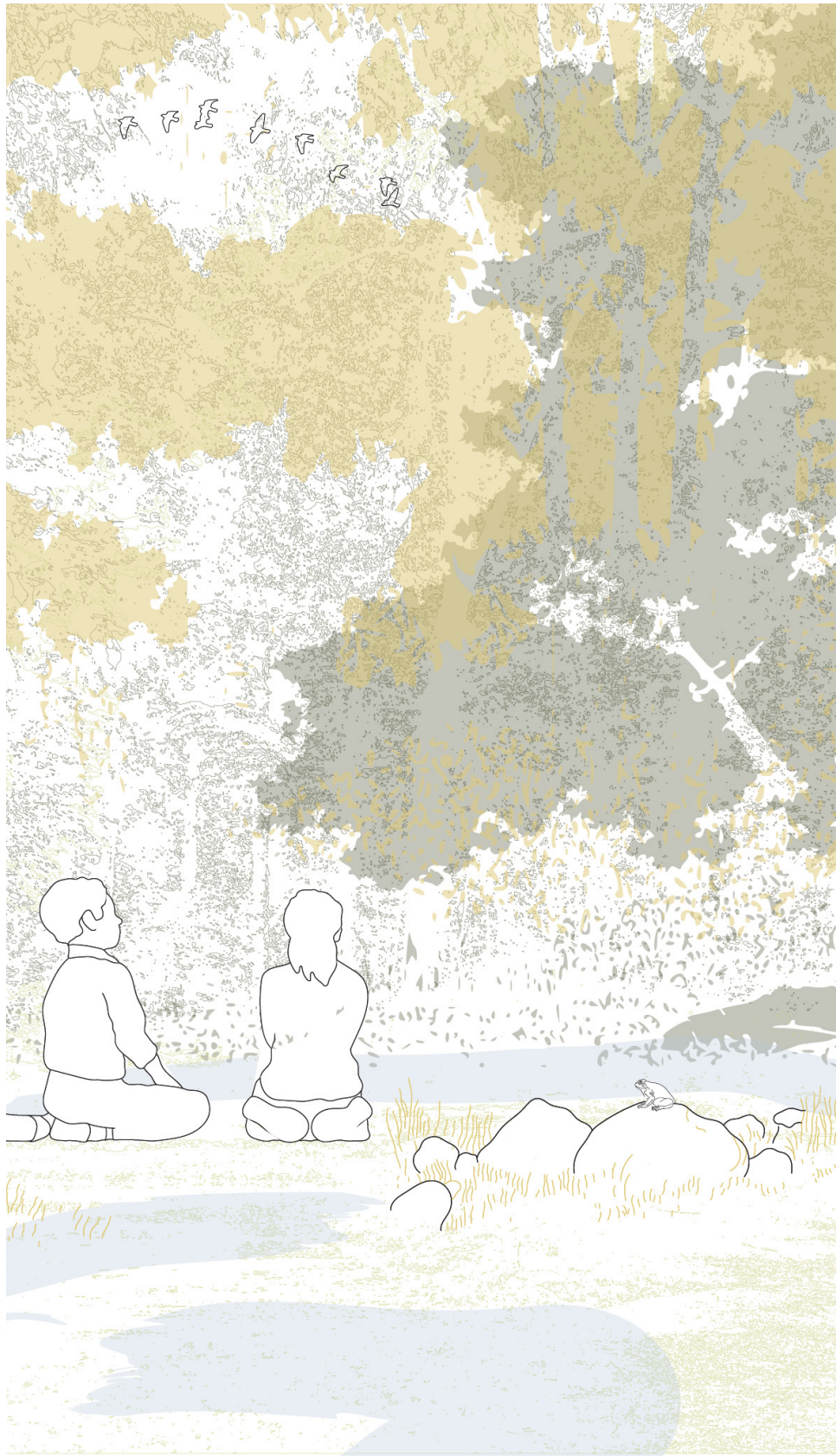


Substitution of logs with trees

Allée into the Lake *Drawing from the local history of pile dwellings, logs extend an existing allée from the city into the lake. Over time, as sediment is trapped by the logs, the logs are replaced by trees from nurseries.*



Between Shores *The shoreline is no longer a line. It is a space, stretched between extremes, shaped by rising amplitudes and uncertain rhythms. Where once a fixed edge promised safety and control, fluctuating zones now open up: neither land nor lake, but both. This in-between becomes habitat. In spring, it draws fish to spawn. In summer, it invites people to linger on exposed sand. At times, it vanishes into depth. The project suggests a different relationship between humans and the lake, one that responds to fluctuating water levels, seasonal rhythms, and the shifting outline of the shore. Whenever we visit the lake we never encounter the same shore, but a different variation of itself.*



Country/City

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Title of the project

Authors

Switzerland / Zurich

ETH Zurich

2024 - 2025

Hydrophilic Earthworks

Valentina Maldonado Zuniga, Inés Plasencia Gonzalez Rubio, Young-Jae Shin

Title of the project	Hydrophilic Earthworks
Authors	Valentina Maldonado Zuniga, Inés Plasencia Gonzalez Rubio, Young-Jae Shin
Title of the course	Liminal, orchestrating landscape dynamics in the Linthebene
Academic year	2024-2025
Teaching Staff	Martina Voser, Beatrice Kiser, Dennis Häusler, Dylan Torri, Martin Zwahlen
Department / Section / Program of belonging	D-ARCH Department of Architecture / Landscape Architecture / Professur Voser
University / School	ETH Zurich



Written statement, short description of the project in English, no more than 250 words

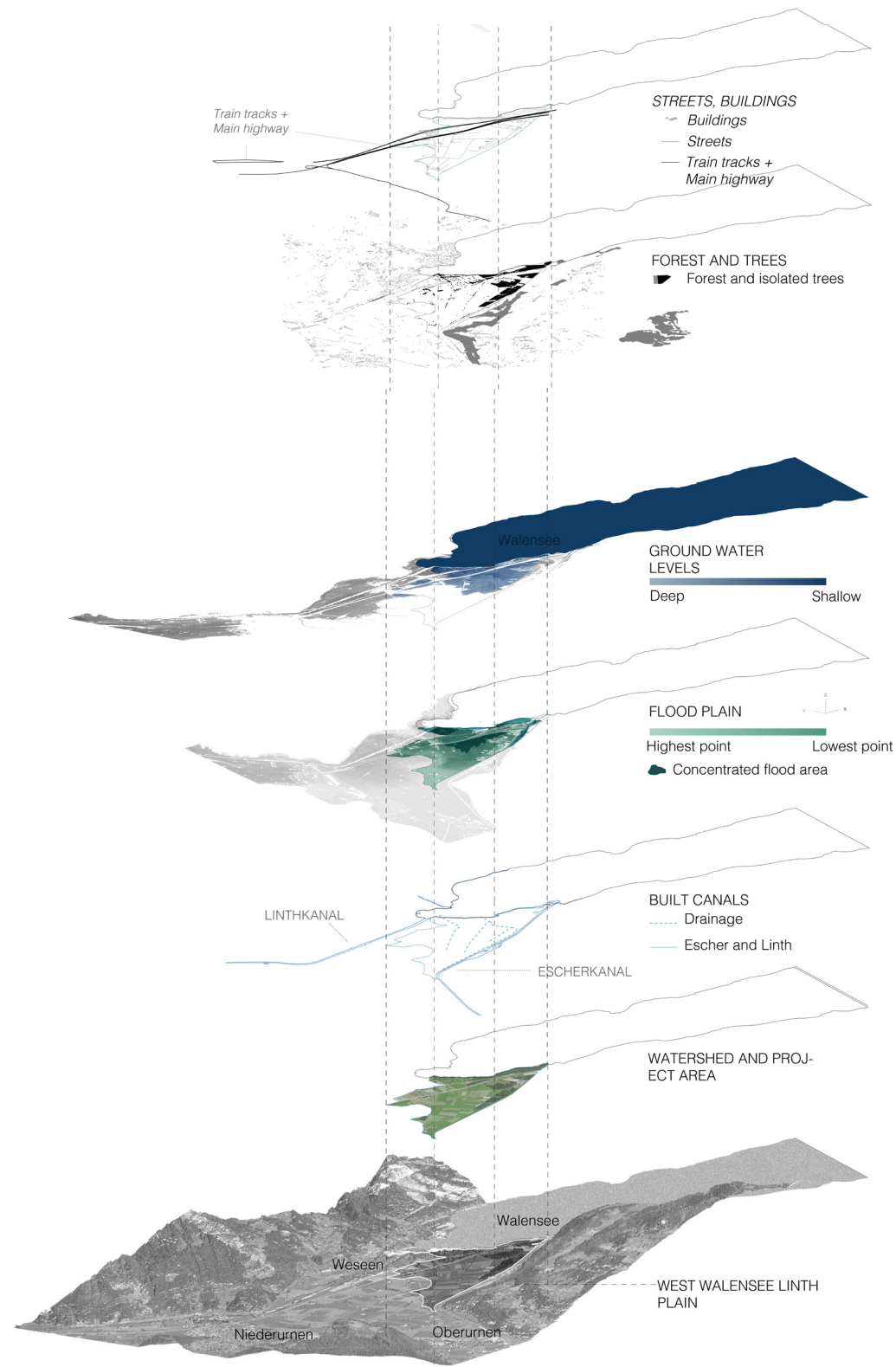
We imagine the Linthebene as a wet landscape. We try to imagine what that would mean, how it would look like and how it could function. Landscape is not a static structure—it evolves and its attentive reading allows us to re-imagine it, to re- shape its new systems and futures. We imagine a landscape where water is treated differently. Today, rainfall is often abundant—but water vanishes quickly into the ground or drained through rigid infrastruc-tures. What if it was slowed down, retained, guided, used purposefully and given space and presence?

We see a landscape where wetness is visible and celebrated. Where wetlands support amphibians, odonates, ripa-rian forests, and wet meadows. A sponge-like terrain that cools, replenishes, and restores ecological functions. We propose diverse wet habitats, shaped through cut-and-fill earthworks. A raised promenade, built from debris, which connects them—inviting visitors to walk through and feel the presence of water again. A tailored mainten-ance along with the design that creates a dynamic and transformative wetscape, altering with the passage of time. We echo Dieter Kienast: “Only when ecological function and aesthetic form merge, does landscape architecture reach its full potential.”

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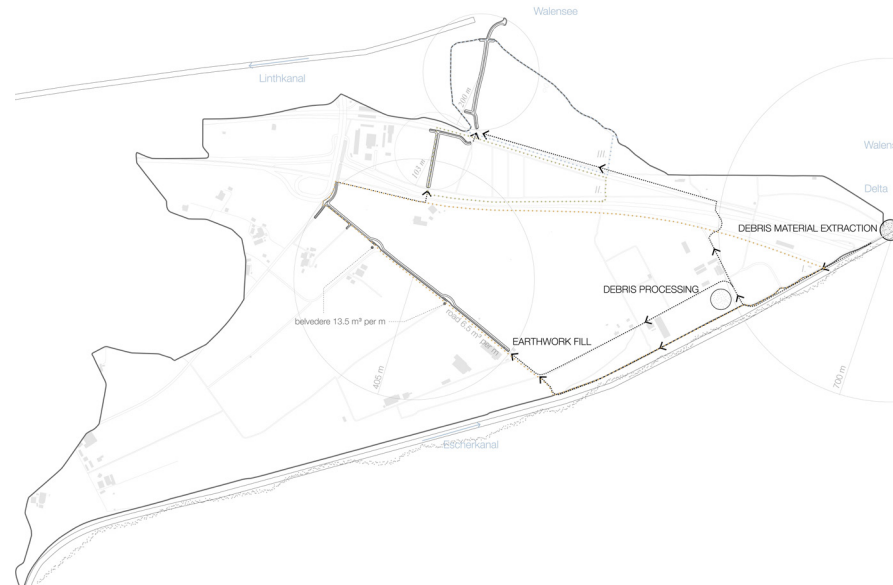
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Decompositional site analysis: reading the site through the lense of water

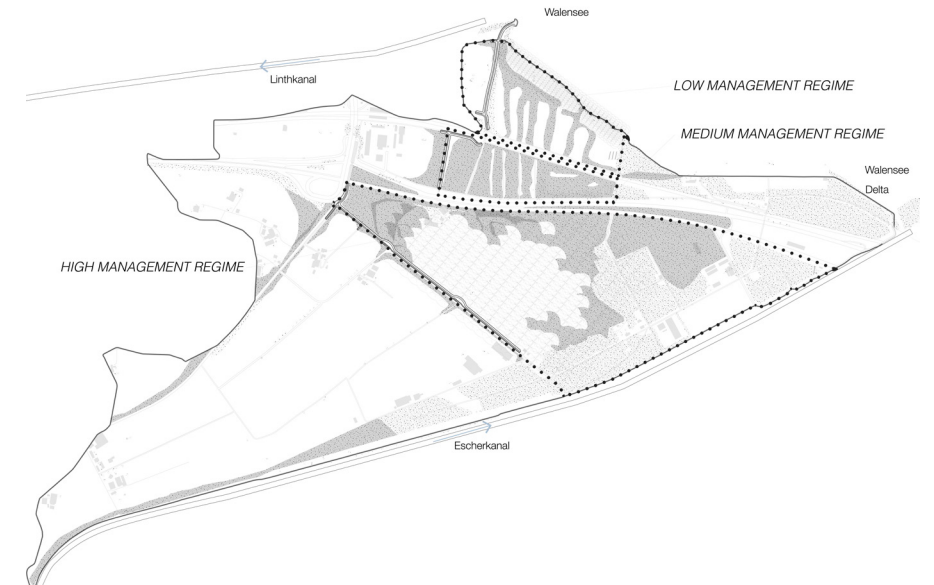
Memory of a Wetland The Linthplain we encounter today is the result of centuries of engineering to make the land arable. Once a vast wetland, this landscape now hides its watery past - despite abundant rainfall, water vanishes into the ground or flows in controlled channels, barely hinting at the swamp it once was.



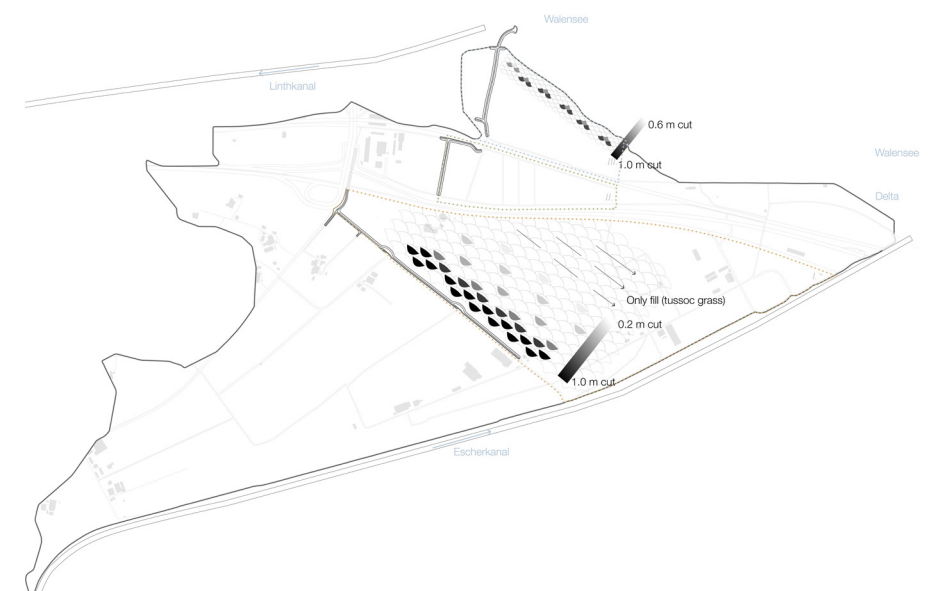
Topographical strategy: re-allocation of debris



Hydrological strategy: retaining and guiding water

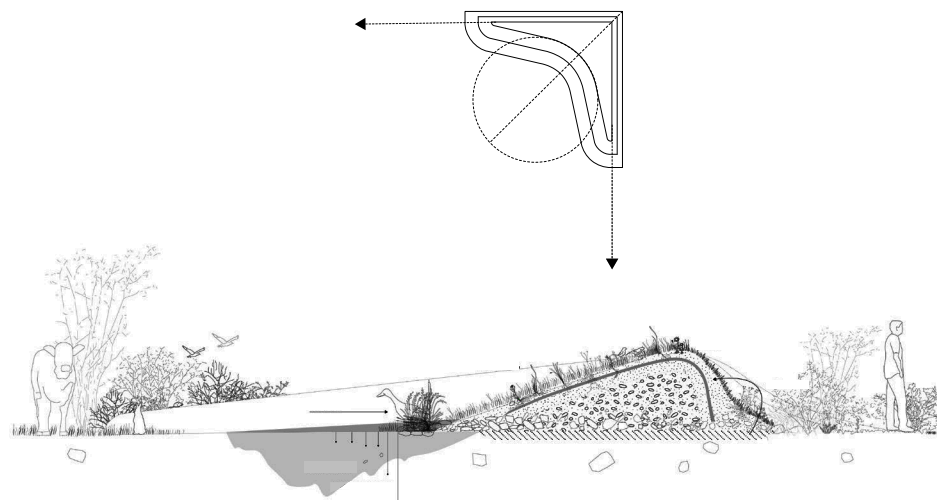


Vegetation strategy: habitat creation through maintenance



Soil strategy: formation of wet soils

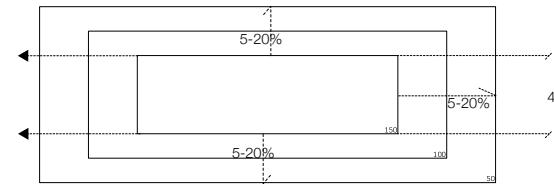
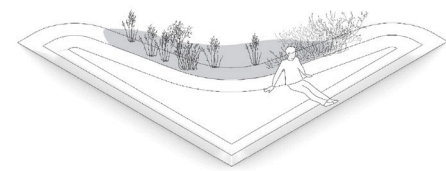
Visibility and Deceleration of Water By opening three of the existing drainage canals in the meadows, water is redirected and utilized before it reaches the lowest point - the Walensee. Each cut-and-fill structure is designed in a fan shape to efficiently collect and distribute this water across the terrain. These fans span approximately 140m², an area manageable by one person in a single day, without the need for heavy machinery. This gesture of making space for water transforms the habitat into a wetlandscape.



BERM

4.6m³ (per 1m)

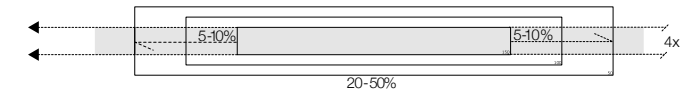
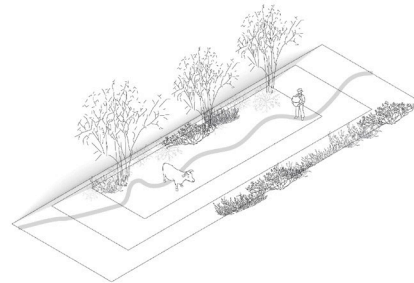
- Base soil from calcareous origin at the edge of permeable soils
1. Exterior layer: Top soil with grasses on top
 2. Clay layer: Soil mixture with clay at least 20%
 3. Debris core: Local debris from fine (outside) to rough sizes (interior) with soil and 20% clay added to mixture
 4. Rocky debris: Local rocks at the end of the berm to avoid water erosion



BELVEDERE

10.5m³ (per 1m)

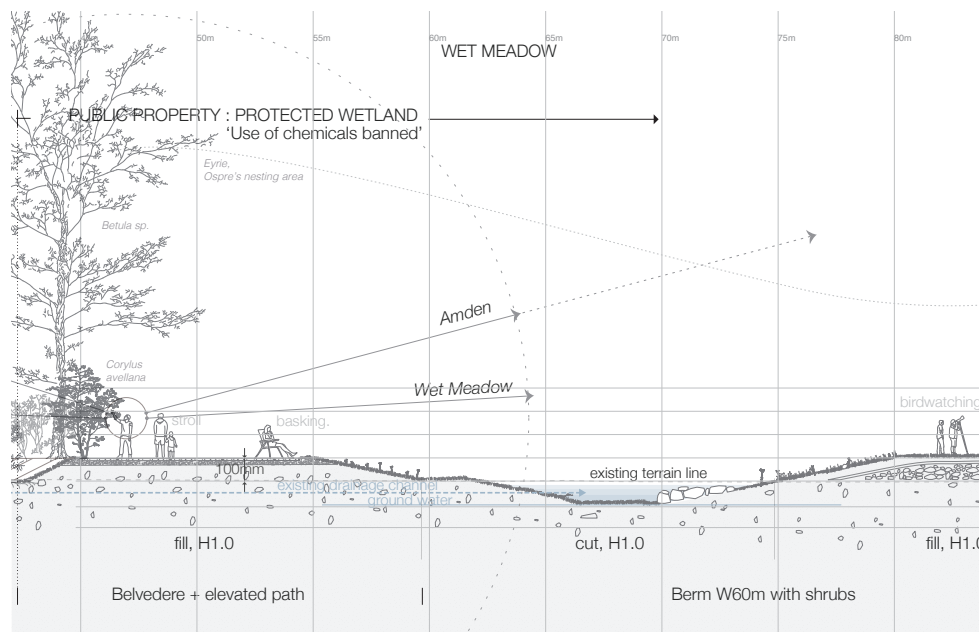
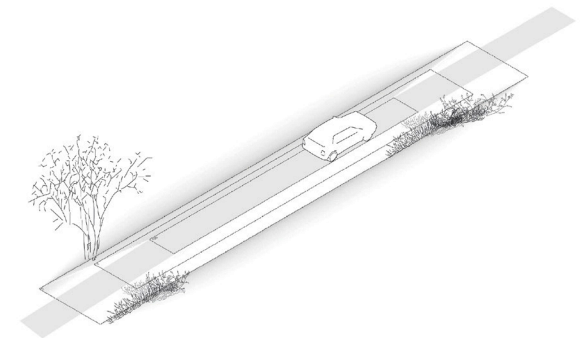
- Base soil from calcareous origin at the edge of permeable soils
1. Exterior layer: Top soil with grasses on top
 2. Toe drain made of rocks and scree
 3. Debris core: Local debris from fine (outside) to rough sizes (interior) with soil and 20% clay added to mixture
 4. Rocky debris: Local rocks at the end of the berm
 5. Cut and fill of top soil in area where the platform is built



PATH

10.5m³ (per 1m)

1. Exterior layer: Top soil with grasses on top
2. Edge of road made with local stone or concrete
3. Top surface: Porous pavement or compacted sandy soil
4. Subbase: Compacted sand
6. Compacted debris from fine to coarse (bottom)



Meadows in the Linthplain The vast grasslands in the Linthebene lay on a thin soil, barely above the mean ground water level. By digging small openings, the normally invisible drainage water is given space and presence. Over years of maintaining the land, new topographies and wet habitats slowly transform the appearance of the plain.

Riparian Forests along the Infrastructure Lines Sylvicultural strategies are implemented along the existing infrastructures, most notably the highway cutting off the plain from the shore. Here, the existing tree lines and forests are taken as a starting point, from which an afforestation is slowly altering the plain into a riparian forest.

Shores of the Walensee Clusters of small-scale cut-and-fill structures support wetland species in need of interconnected microhabitat spaces. Odonata and Anura species move freely through these small littoral areas.



Gradients of Wetness Three habitats are proposed, defined by the division of existing infrastructures or natural boundaries: the wet meadow, the riparian forest, and the lakeshore habitat. These three habitats follow different maintenance regimes, creating a dynamic and transformative wetscape. Over time, the landscape will re-embrace its former wetness, inviting both humans and non-humans to witness and actively inhabit it. Seasonal fluctuations in water levels will shape the habitats continuously, allowing spontaneous vegetation and wildlife patterns to emerge. Visitors may experience the shifting terrain through elevated paths and open clearings, where immersion and observation coexist. This evolving relationship between design and natural processes encourages a more reciprocal way of inhabiting the land.



Country/City	Switzerland / Zurich
University / School	ETH Zurich
Academic year	2024 - 2025
Title of the project	Keep the Dust in the Carpet
Authors	Nils Hayoz, Hoi Yan Young

TECHNICAL DOSSIER

Title of the project

Authors

Title of the course

Academic year

Teaching Staff

Department / Section / Program of belonging

University / School

Keep the Dust on the Carpet

Nils Hayoz, Hoi Yan Young

Liminal, orchestrating landscape dynamics in the Linthebene

2024-2025

Martina Voser, Beatrice Kiser, Dennis Häusler, Dylan Torri, Martin Zwahlen

D-ARCH Department of Architecture /
Landscape Architecture / Professur Voser

ETH Zurich



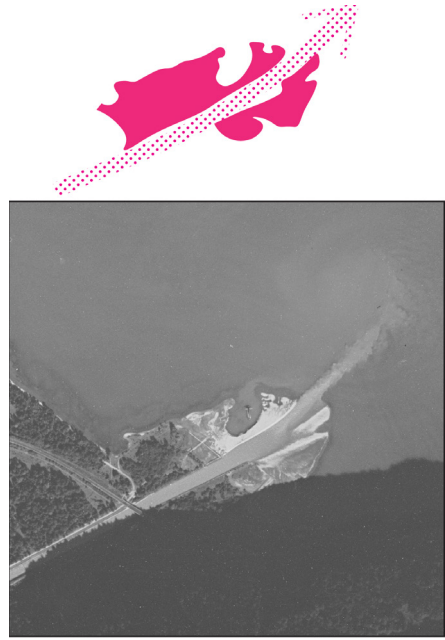
Written statement, short description of the project in English, no more than 250 words

Since the construction of the Escher canal in the 19th century, the physiology of Lake Walensee has undergone significant change: millions of tons of sediments have been redirected into the bottom of the lake, and unconsolidated sediments pile up as deep as 300 meters below the water surface. According to Escher's calculations, by the current speed the lake would be filled up with sediments in the next 400 years. To guarantee the lakes` good health, its deepness needs to be preserved in order to facilitate the seasonal mixing of water for oxygenation and nutrient cycles. Therefore, the sediment coming from the canal shouldn't be deposited into the lake in an uncontrolled way as of today. The project aims to transform this uncontrolled loss into intentional landscapes. To resurface the sediment brought via the Escher Canal from the Alps and create a new chain of islands on the lakeshore, above the water surface. New shallow lands will form along the western shore between the delta and the Linth canal outlet, serving future Walensee visitors, fauna and flora. The sunken sediment reappears on the surface of the lake, no longer invisible and under the carpet, fostering conditions for these new spaces of constant evolution.

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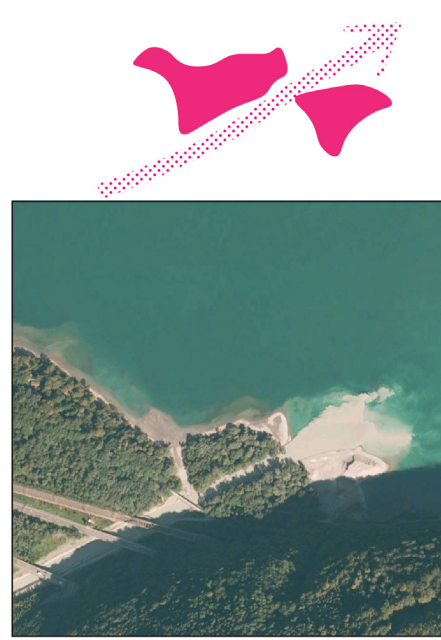
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Delta Escher Canal 1932



Delta Escher Canal 1953



Delta Escher Canal 2009



Delta Escher Canal 2012

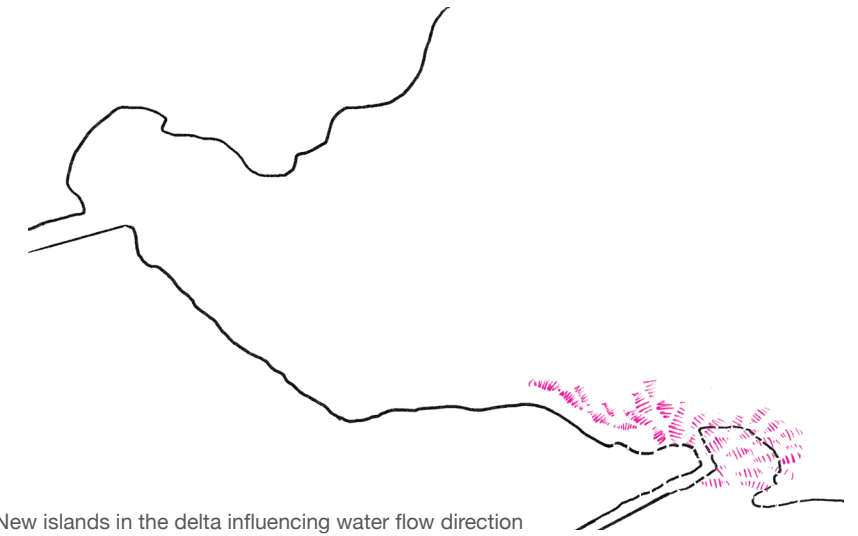


Delta Escher Canal 2019



Delta Escher Canal 2022

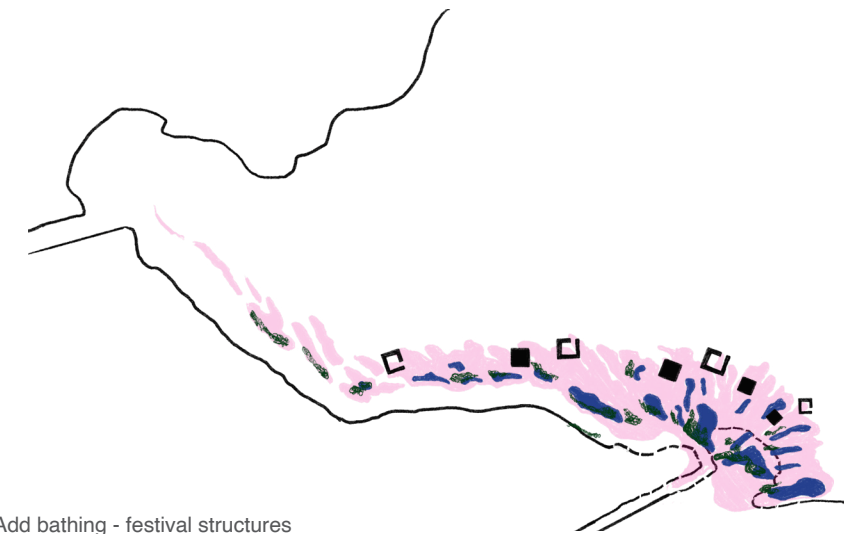
Shaping Depths Analyzing the changing bathymetry of the Walensee reveals how the Escher Canal redirected sediment and reshaped the delta over time. The study shows the latent potential of sedimentation as a formative force in landscape design and the environmental consequences when such dynamics are left unmanaged.



1. New islands in the delta influencing water flow direction

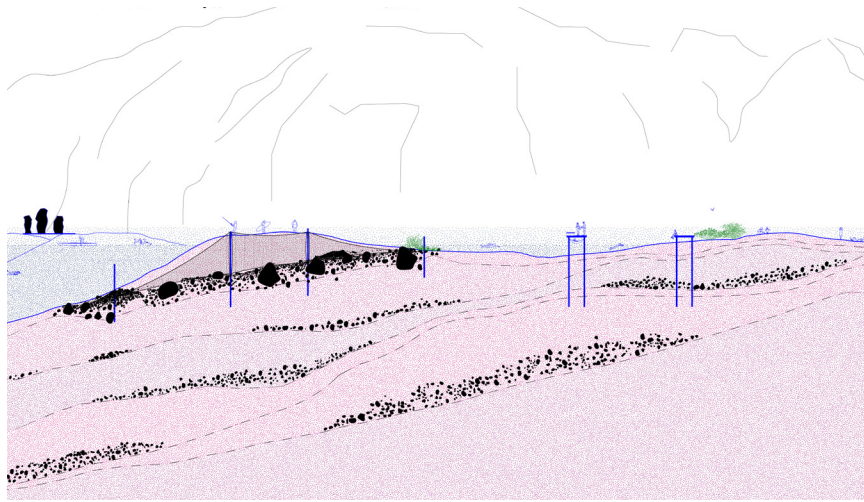


2. Sedimentation creates new islands

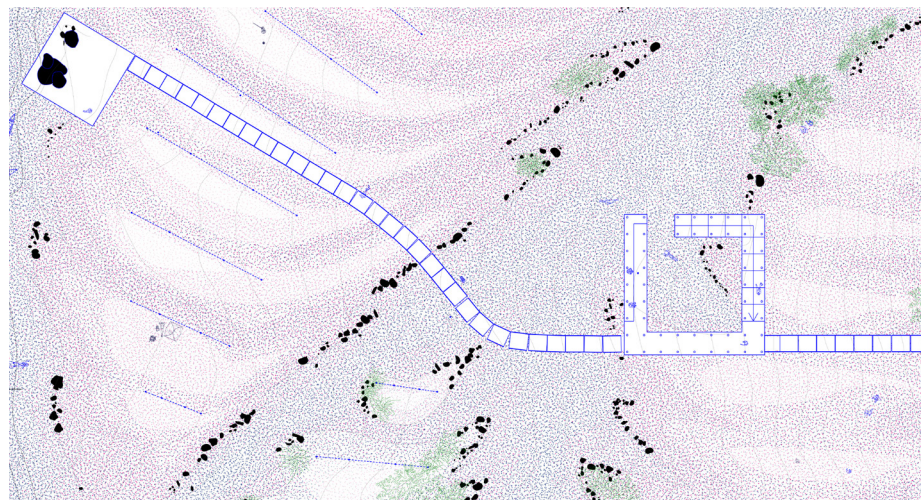


3. Add bathing - festival structures

Directed Accumulation Step-by-step strategies guide sediment to form new islands, transforming uncontrolled loss into intentional landscape.



Rethinking the use of sediment: new space is created in time by the arrival of sediments from Escher Canal to the built structures.



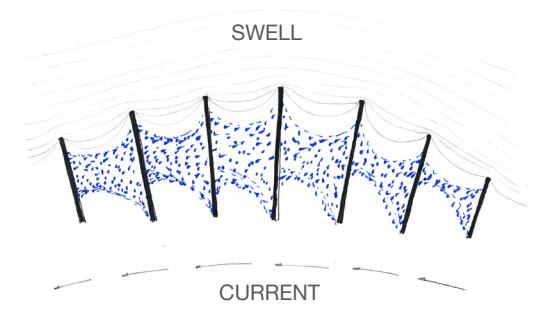
Accumulation along the structured lines form new islands through sedimentation.



Sedimentation simulated in physical models



Interplay of structure and space: over time, the structure is taken over by humans and non-humans alike



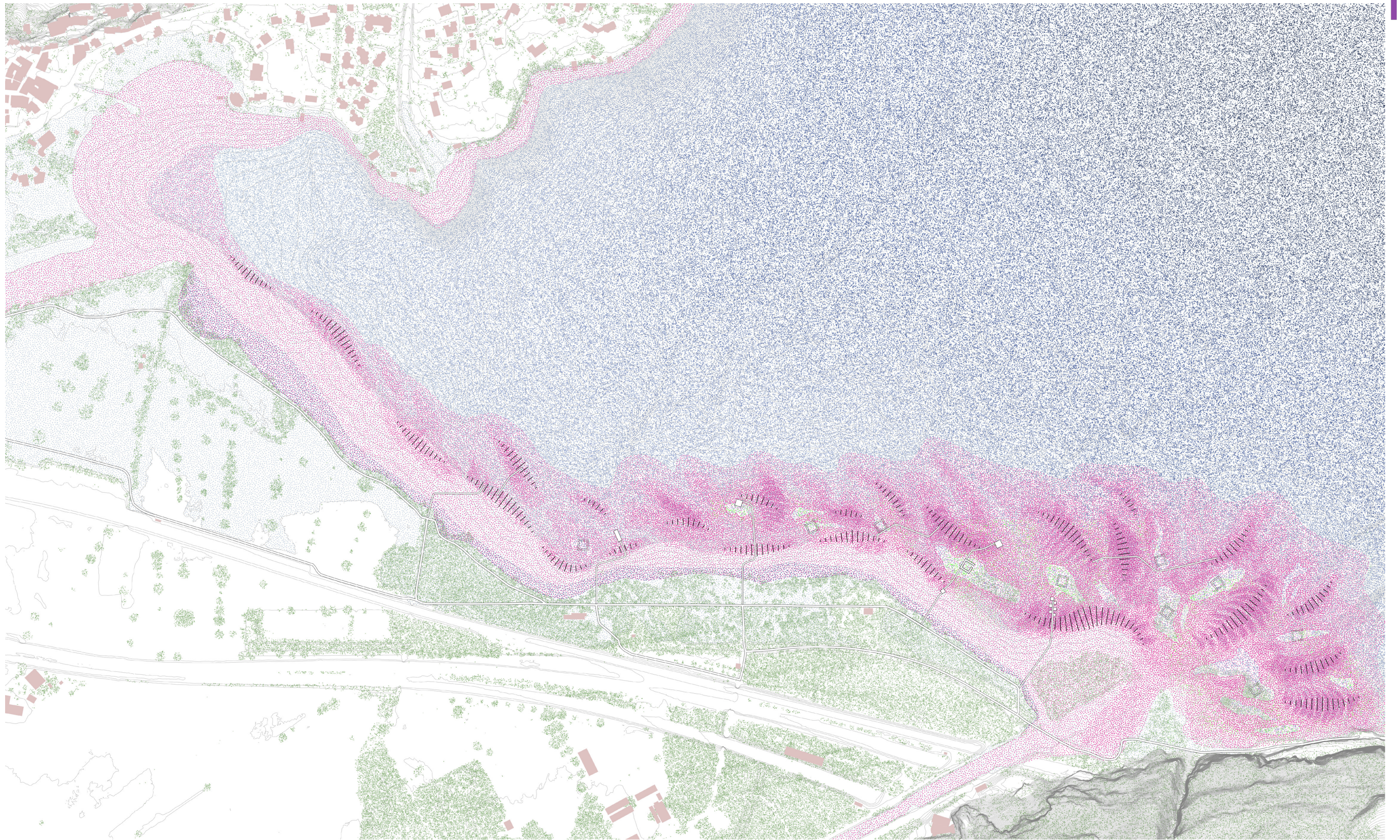
Design for a responsive structure between currents and sediment



Creation of a second shore inside the lake

Contrôle & Laisser-faire Parts of the structure remain exposed, but are increasingly shaped and softened by sedimentation. Gradually, it becomes embedded in a living system - colonized by vegetation, serving as nesting ground for birds, shelter for fish, and a place for people to swim, rest, and build. A technical intervention turns into a living landscape shaped by multiple forms of inhabitation.

From Structure to Landscape A series of models and sketches explore a wooden and hemp-fiber structure designed to guide sedimentation in the lake. Acting as both object and process, it organizes the delta, accumulates matter, and initiates the formation of new islands, shifting the human relationship to shoreline, sediment, and water.



Designed to Be Taken Over *The final project plan illustrates the emergence of sedimented islands within Lake Walensee - a space shaped by an intentionally soft design intervention. What began as a minimal gesture has been adopted by natural dynamics and (non-) human users alike, resulting in a rich and evolving waterscape. The design does not impose form, but fosters conditions for the constant evolution of a space, that would otherwise disappear at the bottom of Lake Walensee.*