

The Bou-hiro News

bouken-asobiba-net.com



The record of a year after
the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred

The Seaside Park Adventure Field Special Open !

The Seaside Park Adventure Field at Sendai (Bou-hiro) had been closed due to the damage caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11 2011. However, thanks to the support and encouragement of many people, it was temporarily opened three times in 2011. We wanted everyone to see the broken places caused by the disaster and know about the situation. That was the initial motivation, however, it was a significant progress for Bou-hiro to success in safely opening the park on a temporary basis. This Bou-hiro News is the record of a year of struggle since the disaster occurred.

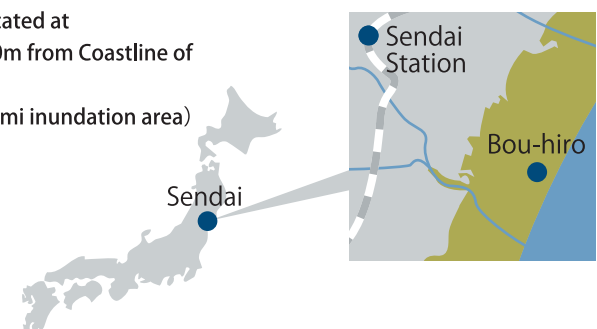
March 18th, 2011 Photo by City of Sendai



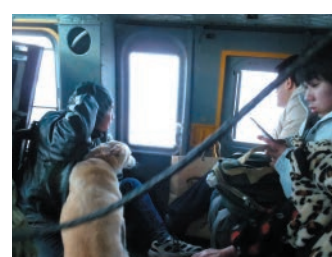
The Day of March 11th, The Seaside Park Adventure Field

The Seaside Park Adventure Field at Sendai has been damaged significantly due to the Great East Japan Earthquake. The adventure playground and large play equipments on the hilltop remained miraculously, however, the other parts could not be repaired easily, and we could not believe that it would be opened again at that time.

Bou-hiro is located at a distance 300m from Coastline of Pacific Ocean (Yellow:Tsunami inundation area)



Upper left: Before the Disaster
Upper right: Office Damaged
Bottom: Saved by The Self Defense Forces helicopter



Situation of March 11 2011

- 14:46 The earthquake occurred
- 14:49 A major tsunami warning was issued
- 14:53 Tsunami warning system was announced and started evacuation
- 15:10 After completing visitors evacuation, 3 residents from a nearby village evacuated
- Around 15:55 the great tsunami hit
- 17:10 The Self Defense Forces helicopter landed and rescued 3 residents, a dog, a cat, and 2 people

Damage situation

Tsunami's height was around 7-8m, and it reached around 15m along the coastline. The tsunami submerged the playground with children's play equipments, a day camp park, and a car park. A large part of the hill for the adventure playground and a large park with playground equipment were the only area that was not submerged.

A clock that was stopped at exactly the same time the tsunami hit at the hall of the administrative office



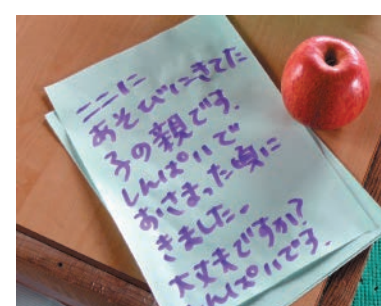
A step towards the reopening of Bou-hiro !

After the disaster, through several checking of the park's situation and encouragement from many people made us believe we needed to take responsibility as survivors. We discussed what we can do again and again with professionals. We started removing dirty mud and rubbles, collecting personal properties, recording and keeping a vestige of tsunami, and researching the post-disaster environment.

The administrative office damaged by the tsunami

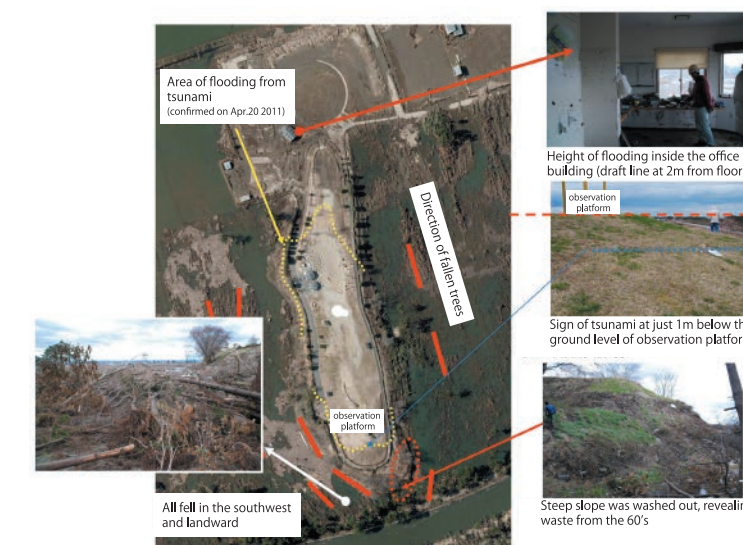


A letter found in the playleader house



I'm a parent of the child who was playing here. I came here after the tremors and waves stopped. Is this place all right? I'm worried.

Damaged situation around Bou-hiro Made by Syuichi Hashimoto in Japan Society of Engineering Geology



Messages

Thank you very much for a lot of cheering messages. Followings are comments extracted from the Bou-hiro blog (<http://bouhiro.bouken-asobiba-net.com>).

(Omitting the beginning) I'm a clinical therapist at a school but have realized that the most important is not caring by counselors but by playing outside freely with parents and friends. Please let me know if there is anything I can do for rebuilding. (From Aoi papa in Watari)

I live in Taihaku ward and used to come here many many times ever since my oldest son learned playing in parks. (An omission of the middle part) It was also here that my oldest son got a facial blemish because he fell on the ground and my second oldest son scribbled on the ground with pieces of chalk for the first time... I wish someday we can play with our favorite slides and Fufufuwa Dome (fluffy eggs type trampoline) again. (From Ri)

My daughter was very sensitive, coward, and shy. (An omission of the middle part) This place is precious not only as a place for children to play freely and cheerfully, but it is also an important place for me as a mother to feel happiness and feel touched. Please, please, bring back the children's smile to this place again. (From Maika mama)

(Omitting the beginning) I believe that the memories of playing here all day covered with mud will be a basis for the children, and it will live in their hearts even after they are grown up. We were able to learn a lot from Bou-hiro which we could not have done from other parks full of restrictions. I have learned a lot too as a mother. (From yu)

The project for supporting children's playing

"Adventure Playground Sendai - Miyagi Network" is a NPO creating places for children to play lively and fully through the revival from the Great East Japan Earthquake in Sendai city and other peripheral damaged areas. In 2011, we promoted visiting playground activities in Wakabayashi ward of Sendai city and supported activities both in Miyagi and other prefectures.

Playground connecting with Bou-hiro

While we could not predict Bou-hiro's reopening, we started our playground project from sending playleaders to other organizations' playground projects. By making use of existing connections, we began visiting playground activities in 5 new places at Rokugou and Shichigou in Wakabayashi ward. We aim to play the role of what Bou-hiro had for children's healthy growing up and of "emotional care" which has become more necessary since the disaster occurred. Places for our activities have been starting to get established at "an area of playground in primary schools", "a park in between a civic and children center and a primary school", "a park with a part of the temporary houses built", "an area of temporary houses", "a public hall in the neighborhood association" by the activities held once a week. We have started an inside playground project at the meeting-house in neighborhood associations. We will continue these activities.

1. Shichigo Playground : Sponsored by Satellite Project of Sendai Seaside Park Adventure Field
2. Rokugo Playground : Sponsored by Disaster Relief for the East Japan Earthquake at Central Community of Japan
3. Niperia Playground : Sponsored by Model Project of New Public Commons at Miyagi Prefecture
4. Arai 2nd Playground : Sponsored by Model Project of New Public Commons at Miyagi Prefecture
5. Kami-Arai Community Hall : Sendai City Subsidy of Supporting Activities for Children and Family suffering from Great East Japan Earthquake

- 1: Lively with many children
- 2: With supporters from Hawaii
- 3: A playground in the area of temporary houses



- 4: A playground in a corner of park
- 5: For parents with infants



Supporting activities for children

Working with other NPOs and NGOs, we perform supporting activities for nursery schools, kindergartens, and primary schools in damaged areas in Miyagi prefecture. Supporting activity organizations outside of the prefecture also keep supporting for camping and creating playgrounds for victim children.



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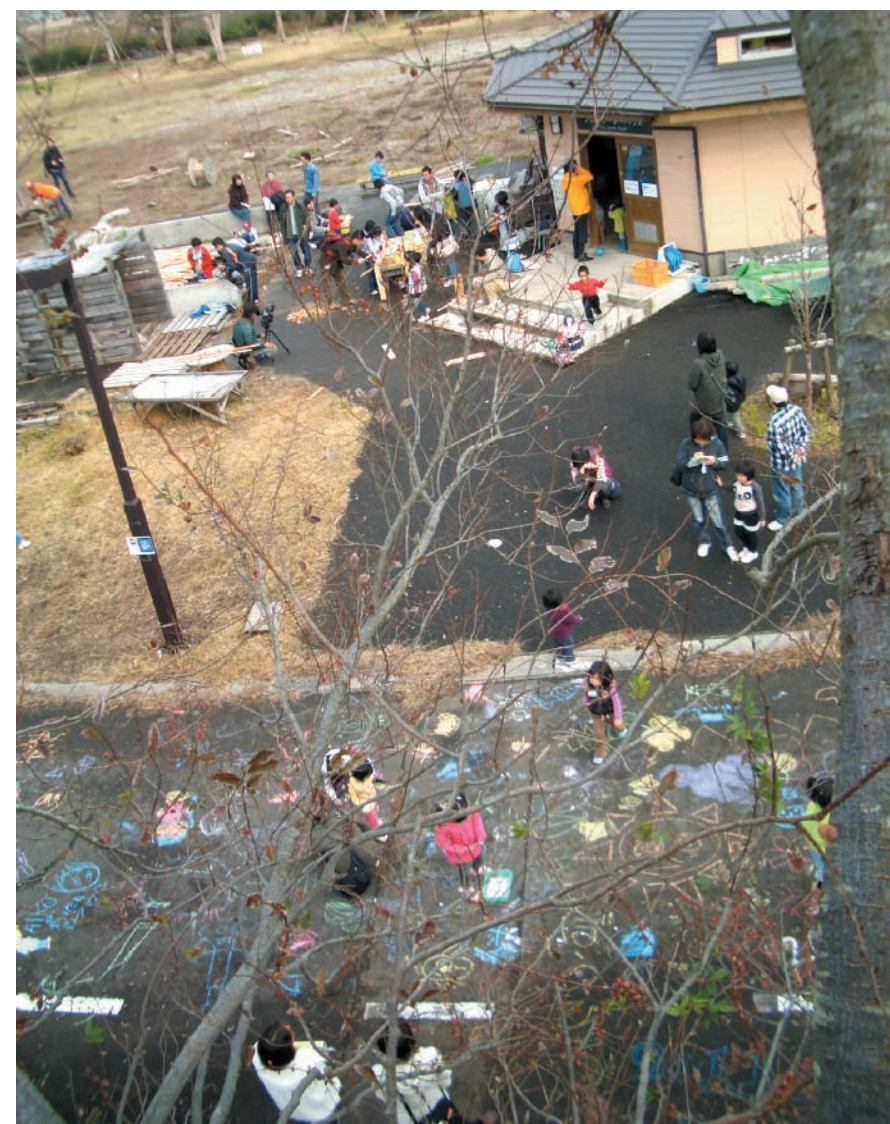
Designed by Naoko Ishiyama, Editing supported by Soichi Takahashi, Translated by Sachi Aratani and Rina Sasaki

Upper left: Viewing Sendai city from Bou-hiro observation platform
 Upper right: Children and adults getting absorbed in craft-work
 Lower left: The dyed carp streamers
 Lower right: Enjoying reed pipe and bamboo-work



Special Open Days of Bouhiro in three times

We welcomed about 850 visitors through the three special opens in November 2011 and March 2012. Here we introduce the contents and situations of that day in each reopen.



For better special park opening

Bou-hiro has changed a lot due to the disaster. Maritime forest around the damaged area was used for a temporary debris stockyard to rebuild Sendai city.

In order to show people how extensive the damages were, we set guide boards at several places in the park to show the previous park and we left grass growing in places where tsunami evidence were seen uncut. We also used guide ropes to guide visitors smoothly. As well as that, in order to lessen inconveniences, we also set temporary toilets since water and electricity services had been suspended. What is more, we discussed evacuation plan in case the disaster occurred again, and we collected and shared information all the time on the special open day.

We were helped with a variety of things such as making "clay seed balls" by many volunteers from all over Japan. "Clay seed balls" is a one rolled clayey soil mixed with vegetable seeds made into a ball. When it is put on the ground outside, it collects water by itself and sprouts. It is a modest shoot, but we made it with hope for Bou-hiro's recovery.

Left: Set a new guide board
 Right: Powdered clayey soil and made "clay seed balls"



Left: Relaxed around a fire place
 Right: Drive a dolly in the park



Damaged playground equipment and children



Wishes for Bou-hiro

We got many wishes for Bou-hiro's early reopen and the next special open from visitors. Also, we are asked to preserve and exhibit the disaster situations to tell the threat of the earthquake.

Cheering for Bou-hiro

Bou-hiro is now supported by the encouragements from the people wishing its reopen.

Left: The relief supplies given to us
 Middle: Messages from Hawaiian children
 Right: Words of cheer on a road in the park from a child



Environment observation and record

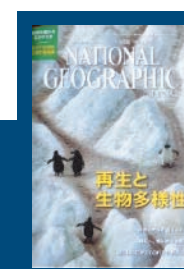
Bou-hiro previously held a program for children to observe creatures in and around the park. However, the ecosystem was destroyed due to the disaster, therefore, creatures children found could not be seen. We do research periodically with professors to analyze and record this changed ecosystem.



Bou-hiro Planting trees The project for supporting forest's life

On July 31 2011, we performed "the project for supporting forest's life". Although it was limited, we welcomed about 300 people including residents in the communities to Bou-hiro for the first time after the disaster.

The event was reported by Asahi Newspapers (on Aug.11 2011) and National Geographic Japan Special Edition "Regeneration and biodiversity" (issued in Oct.30 2011)



Introducing and informing on the media

Our activities after the disaster have got attention by news media such as newspapers and TV. We have also sent information through briefing sessions and conferences.

<Newspaper>

- Asahi Newspaper "Playground for Kids" (Mar. 24 2011)
- Kahoku Shimpo "Seaside Park plays a role to pass on the 'tsunami' experience to the next generation" (Apr. 15 2011 evening paper) *1
- Asahi Newspaper "Plant trees in hope for the coastal forest to return" (Aug. 1 2011)
- Asahi Newspaper "The expert on playground teaches how to get back the smiles" (Aug. 11 2011)
- Kahoku Shimpo "Playground equipment caravan gives kids time and place to play" (Sep. 14 2011 evening paper) *2
- Kahoku Shimpo "Understanding what happened on 3.11 through Bou-hiro" (Oct. 17 2011)*3

<Web>

- Kyodo News "Helping hands for the earthquake and tsunami relief" (Apr. 9 2011) <http://www.47news.jp/47topics/e/205260.php>
- Sendai Media Network, Sendai city Sapo-sen "Different ways of supporting- Sapo-sen Ustream #3" (Aug. 21 2011) <http://recorder311.smt.jp/movie/5003/>

<Other Publications>

- NPO Yururu Monthly paper, Jun. 2011 issue, "The road to recovery"
- Sendai city Sapo-sen newsletter "Palette" Aug. 2011 issue featuring the Great East Japan Earthquake
- Parks and Open Space Association of Japan Journal, Sep. 2011 issue
- Gakugei Publisher "Park Management" Sep. 2011 issue
- Soudo Bunka "The state of children 2011" Sep. 2011 issue
- Network for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Newsletter Sep. 15 2011 issue
- National Geographic Japan special edition "Regeneration and biodiversity" Oct. 30 2011 issue
- The National Network of Physical and Mental Health in Japanese Children "Annual Report of Physical and Mental Health among the Children in 2011"

<Sessions>

- Japanese Institute of Landscape Architecture "Reporting from the affected area: The Seaside Park Adventure Field" (May. 21 2011)
- Setagaya Play-Park "Report on play fields in the disaster areas and what should be done going forward" (Jun. 18 2011)
- Community Design Partners for Children's Safety "Communicating the experience of 3.11 and supporting children" (Jun. 19 2011)
- Junior leaders training "Report on what happened on 3.11 and the activities to support kids through playing" (Jul. 18 2011)
- TMU Urban Planning and Association, Tokyo Metropolitan University "What happened to the Adventure Field after 3.11 and how the Wakabayashi ward of Sendai is working to rebuild it" (Jul. 30 2011)
- IPA Japan, national convention "How to build playgrounds in the affected areas" (Oct. 15, Oct. 16, 2011)

<TV>

- Miyagi TV "Oh! Bandesu" (May. 11 2011) *4
- Shizuoka Asahi TV "Tobbikiri Shizuoka" in the local news section (Nov. 21 2011)

Media coverage of the Seaside Park Adventure Field Special Open

<Newspaper>

- Kahoku Shimpo "Shouts of joy heard once gain at Adventure Field" (11/21/2011) *5

<TV>

- Miyagi TV "NEWS 24" (Nov. 20 2011)
- Sendai Television "ANN Super J Channel" (Nov. 20 2011)
- NHK "Tele Masamune" (Nov. 22 2011) *6
- NHK "News Miyagi 845" (Nov. 22 2011)
- NHK "NHK News" *On-aired in the six Tohoku prefectures. (Nov. 23 2011)
- NHK "NHK News" (Mar. 18 2012)

<Radio>

- FM Sendai "Smile Miyagi" (Feb. 25 2012)



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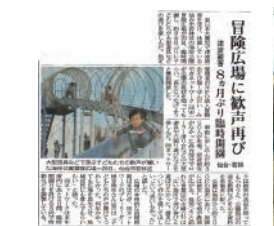
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