

## **Le Front Périphérique,**

### **Nurseries in the forts around Paris.**

**The ring of forts around Paris is being transformed from a military defence systems into a nature protection system. The forts will become nurseries where regional endangered species can be bred.**

Le Front Périphérique is about the forts around Paris. A fascination for old maps and forts is the starting point of this plan. Old photos show beautiful, complex and mysterious spaces, looking at it, a fortress seems a building and a landscape simultaneously.

The forts do not bear the same activities anymore as shown on these old photos, today they are abandoned and overgrown by vegetation. Often it is even forbidden to enter the fort. In the course of the years, the forts have been neglected.

The ambition of this plan is to change these forbidden places into public spaces, by looking for a new valuable function for the forts. A new function could give the ring of forts a new meaning on the scale of the Parisian region.

The second ring of forts that surround the capital is part of the national defence system of Séré de Rivières, it contains 22 forts, positioned 30 km. outside of the city centre. The city has a long history with these forts, defence lines and city walls. During the first World War the forts were in use, but lost their function soon after. The forts have not only been used in battle, the topography of its construction covered in grass proved to be of excellent use during a pick-nick or a Sunday walk.

#### Strategy:

The strategy of Le Front Périphérique is to connect the historical ring of forts with the plans of Le Grand Paris.

Numerous urban expansion plans are collected under the name of Le Grand Paris, and takes place from 2013 to 2030. It consists of a new public transport ring, Le Grand Paris Express, and urban renewal, but it has few green projects or park development planned. The new public transport ring rubs against the historical ring of forts, which will make the forts attainable for all inhabitants of the Parisian conurbation.

In this plan the ring of forts are transformed from a defence system into a protection system.

It will be activated as an ecological ring that functions as a reinforcement between forest and urban park. The forts will be interconnected by a green lacework that again is connected to the new metro stations, to make the ring accessible as a recreational network in the region. This is how the ring of forts can be of significance for the city of Paris and its banlieue.

#### The Natura 2000:

The Natura 2000 policy has established important ecological connections in the Île-de-France region.

Connecting the ring of forts with routes to the city parks, forests and the Natura 2000 areas, will create a green 'infrastructure' of significance for animal and plant species in the region.

Ecological connections can be strengthened and reinforced through the forts. Since the forts have been

deserted for decades and overgrown by vegetation, their ecological value has expanded. Each fort was located in a different landscape, but today the forts are sandwiched between urbanised landscapes: infrastructure, residential areas or business parks. Every fort should be developed to preserve different plants and species, in relation to the specifics of the fort and its surrounding landscape.

The nursery:

The Front P  pini  re is being built up from areas where the use of pesticides is forbidden, to protect small animals. Tree nurseries and woodland with shrubs will be planted, to allow small animals to navigate through uninterrupted migration routes or to find shelter.

In dense urbanized areas, habitats of animals are becoming smaller and more fragmented. Numerous insects, bats, birds and amphibians are registered on the red list of endangered species.

The forts become nurseries where these endangered animals can be bred, so the Front P  pini  re is a network of breeding grounds. The various spaces in the forts are being converted into nesting and breeding places for specific species. The function of the nursery is tailored to the isolated location and the unique physical condition of the forts.

By planting specific vegetation on the forts, habitats can grow that will attract those specific species. By activating the strategic positioned forts, the biodiversity in the region can be strengthened.

Fields of fire:

At the same time, the fort is a peculiar park for the neighbourhood. The nurseries will be open to the Parisians, as a public park and will become a place for nature experience and education in the city. The forts will be within reach for every inhabitant of Paris, by the new metro ring Le Grand Paris Express.

The fort itself and the type of nursery, with its animal species in it, will influence the planting and vegetation in the neighbourhood around it. The planting in the neighbourhood is being set up to create an attractive habitat for animals and inhabitants, and to strengthen the over all local green structure in adjacent districts.

Each fort provides a specific product, within its 'field of fire', with which local residents can facilitate and distribute the animal species of the fort. The forts are not only a literal source of nature, but also a place for education and thus a source for culture and nature awareness for Parisians.

The plan actually starts a new 'nature movement' in the city of Paris. The forts and their 'fields of fire' will once again have significance as a defence line, this time for the city nature.