

## **APPENDIX D: CULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES WORKSHOP SUMMARY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This discussion paper provides a summary of the Cultural and Natural Resources Workshop and background information that is critical to understanding these two essential components of Dorris Ranch. This is a starting point for the development of the final plan document. Given the complexity of Dorris Ranch, a number of additional considerations, such as recreational opportunities and programming requirements, will be discussed later in the planning process and will be considered when developing the final plan.

This discussion is separated into three parts. The first part of the discussion is a holistic look at key findings stemming from a discussion focused on both cultural and natural resources. This summary is followed by two sections, one focused on issues inherent to cultural resources followed by one focusing on natural resources. This discussion paper provides the necessary context for understanding existing conditions and current opportunities.

### **DORRIS RANCH**

The 258-acre Dorris Ranch Living History Farm is Willamalane's largest open space. With its breathtaking rural character, recreational activities, cultural resource centerpieces, and native oak and riparian communities, Dorris Ranch is a highlight of the region's parks and open spaces. Currently the park is divided between approximately ten acres used for community functions; approximately 170 acres of prairie, oak woodland, forested and riparian natural areas; more than two miles of trails; and approximately 80 acres of active historic commercial filbert orchards. The park's immensely rich diversity adds to its distinct character.

Management of full-scale commercial orchards within a public park presents challenges, especially during spraying, harvesting and pruning. However, it is this active management that maintains and emphasizes its authenticity as a working farm. As the first commercial filbert orchard in Oregon, Dorris Ranch unites past and present with historic orchards in active production, and a collection of historic buildings related to the property's farm history and regional history. Complementing the agricultural landscape is a diverse collection of forest and meadow landscapes, including an incense cedar grove which is experiencing challenges to its vitality; locally rare ponderosa pines nestled in a mixed Douglas fir and maple gallery forest; a classic Willamette Valley mixed flood-plain forest with remnant old growth Douglas fir; and native oak stands intermixed with Willamette Valley prairies and wetlands.

## **THE WORKSHOP AND THE PLANNING PROCESS**

In order to understand the intricate relationships between existing resources at Dorris Ranch, it is important to examine these resources as they exist today with an understanding of how they have been formed and managed. Due to the complexity of these dynamic elements it was important to host a workshop where a free flow of ideas and discussions between resource specialists and park planners would generate an active discussion and provide a foundation for moving forward.

The MIG Team was joined by invited area natural and cultural resource specialists and members of the Willamalane Project Steering Committee on Monday, February 25, 2008 to exchange ideas and develop preliminary solutions for the stewardship of the cultural and natural resources. (see appendix for list of participants) Goals for the workshop were outlined before cultural and natural resource specialists each met in separate small group sessions to discuss areas of high value, opportunities, and constraints. Salient points of each small-group discussion were brought back to the larger group for learning and discussion. The small-group and

all-group discussions were graphically recorded by the MIG Team facilitation staff. (see appendix for wallgraphic images)

## KEY WORKSHOP FINDINGS

- **Dorris Ranch possesses some of the region's most unique resources.** More well-known are the ranch's cultural resources including the filbert orchards and agricultural buildings and structures. Less well-known but just as unique are the site's natural resources, most notably the oak | prairie | savanna and the old-growth floodplain forest. These traditionally recognized natural resources possess cultural significance, notably to the Native American settlement era.
- While often perceived as conflicting, Dorris Ranch's **cultural and natural resources are balanced on site.** They fit together in the landscape like the Chinese philosophical symbol of yin and yang.
- Reviewing work on the ground through the planning process will allow the planning team to **identify training and coordination opportunities.** It's critical that staff that will be instrumental in implementing and managing the recommendations of the master plan are included in the discussion at critical junctures and supported with training and equipment needs based on potential management technique changes.
- **Management is more important than restoration.** Adjusting how resources are managed will gradually improve the ecosystem or add vitality to the cultural resources. Active management of these resources is critical to increase their value and function.

## **CULTURAL & NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **OVERALL OPPORTUNITIES|CHALLENGES**

Several opportunities and challenges have been identified including:

- Opportunities exist to enhance the relationship between natural and cultural resource areas. It is possible to enhance these relationships at edges, within corridors and through education. For example, native Savanna plants can thrive within the orchard, especially in canopy openings.
- The orchards are an important cultural landscape that provides significant habitat for native species.
- Balancing historic and contemporary management practices is critical to maintaining the cultural and natural character. For example, reintroducing controlled burns would use a Native American management practice to maintain the oak prairie | savanna. Planting disease-resistant filbert trees could eliminate the need for spraying for Eastern Filbert Blight which was not an issue during the historic period.
- A greater focus should be placed on identifying and implementing cyclical (i.e. regularly scheduled) techniques to manage cultural and natural character.
- Connections and influences in the greater cultural and natural landscape beyond the Ranch's borders should be considered. Identify influences both up and downstream.
- Dorris Ranch's proximity to the confluence of the Willamette River's Coast and Middle Forks places it within one of the region's most diverse ecosystems.
- The scope of the historic eras being revealed and interpreted should be expanded.
- The oak | prairie | savanna habitat is a unique resource that requires new management techniques that can be financially supported through available funding, or supplemented with outside grants and partnerships.

- The floodplain forest is a unique resource due to its highly valued diversity, which needs to be maintained by periodic selective tree removal. Public education could be required prior to tree removal.
- The Western Gray Squirrel is identified as pest to the filbert harvest, and a sensitive species due to its population decline and loss of habitat.
- Implementation costs can provide challenges to completion.

## **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

### **VISION**

- Make site history primary
- Maintain operating filbert orchard
- Preserve key architecture and landscape architecture features
- Support a multiplicity of activities on site
- Maintain form, function and vitality of infrastructure
- Tell the story

### **HIGH VALUE|POTENTIAL**

#### **Filbert Orchards**

The filbert orchards are highly valued based on their documented significance to the region's agricultural history and their connection to and demonstration of the innovations of George Dorris. They are listed in the National Register of Historic Places as contributing resources.

Continuing active production is important as well as managing the orchards for longevity. Unique and rare elements of the orchards that should be considered in the planning process include their varying planting grids, which personify Dorris' experimentations, and their Barcelona tree stock. Half of the Barcelona trees in the United States can be traced to Dorris' trees.

### **History of Innovation**

Dorris Ranch's tie to agricultural innovations is less tangible, but just as highly valued. The farm is significant due to its connection with orchard industry innovations. Interpretive materials should highlight the site's link to these agricultural innovations, and consideration should be given to programs and techniques that continue innovative practices.

### **Domestic Buildings**

The Dorris House complex is highly valued for its integrity and direct relationship to the Dorris family. Various features are in need of preservation intervention, including the swimming pool that has been covered by invasive vegetation. The Briggs House is significant for being the oldest building on site, but has likely lost integrity. Its prominent location gives it high potential, and it has not undergone investigative research. The Tomseth House is not tied directly to the site, but is valued for its relationship to the valley's lumber industry history, and high utility.

### **Infrastructure**

Connections made possible by the site's infrastructure are highly valued and have high potential. In particular, restoring the waterways could restore water to the pool. The farm roads and bridges are critical historic elements that perpetuate the site's historic character.

### **Agricultural Buildings**

Agricultural buildings, namely the barn, pump house and packing shed, are critical elements that foster Dorris Ranch's historic character.

### **Historic property use**

It's valuable to keep the original use of property active, namely the filbert orchards, to retain its authenticity and provide a revenue stream.

## OPPORTUNITIES|CHALLENGES

Lists of opportunities and challenges for each element were listed and discussed during the workshop.

### **Orchard**

- Understand the importance of the orchard's geometry to its character and viability. From the perspective of an orchardist an orchard's geometry is primarily important in the early stages of growth, before the canopy is filled in. Light balance is key.
- Complete replanting of the orchards in stages, considering their historic grids and original date of planting. It's possible to replace about 100 trees per year while maintaining production. Consider keeping smaller areas of heirloom trees with historic root stock, perhaps in interior locations in the orchards.
- Protect orchards from disease. Spraying for Eastern Filbert Blight has slowed the spread of the disease, but has not eliminated it. Over time, this is a high-effort way to treat the disease. Though less intense initially, over time tree replacement is a more sustainable way to manage this disease. Consider transitioning to blight resistant, higher productivity filberts at outer edges and along trails to reduce pesticide conflicts, hereby increasing nut production and improving economic viability. Most disease-resistant filberts can be related to Barcelona root stock that is currently planted at Dorris Ranch.
- Return the orchard to single-stem trees, which will result in higher production. The Briggs orchards produce fewer nuts than other orchards.
- Consider organic management, including safety and the economic benefits of selling organic hazelnuts.
- Investigate effects of herbicide drift.
- Investigate economic changes such as how to market Dorris Ranch filberts and the cost/benefit of having an orchard manager on staff.

### **National Register Update**

- Updating the master plan provides an opportunity to update the National Register documentation. In particular; three orchards - the Cannery Orchard, the Clump Orchard, and Mann Orchard - are now 50 years old and should be added to the documentation.
- Updating the National Register documentation could also provide clarity regarding the Briggs House and Tomseth House.

### **Dorris House**

- Recognize challenges to adaptive reuse of the Dorris House including cost of improvements and building code issues.

### **History**

- Consider what Dorris Ranch was, is and can be. Determine how to bring the history to life.

### **Educational Programs**

- Explore opportunities that exist for involving people in the growth and vitality of Dorris Ranch.
- Site high-impact uses and activities on less sensitive portions of the site.
- Explore ideas such as geocaching, cell phone tours, and the modern interface between agriculture and the way we live.

### **Infrastructure**

- Recognize that challenges may exist with utility/sewer capacity. Some have been identified in terms of parking, access and safety. Look at adaptive reuse of the roads/trails.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **VISION**

- Manage natural landscape types and transitions
- Foster regional connections for management, education and understanding.

- Strive for a park that is free of non-native invasive species with an active EDRR (Early Detection Rapid Response) program.
- Prioritize management that will perpetuate oak woodlands, prairies, savanna and riparian forests.

## HIGH VALUE|POTENTIAL

### **Oak Woodland|Prairie|Savanna Habitat**

The Oak Woodland/Prairie/Savanna habitat at Dorris Ranch is one of the most intact in the region. Some fir trees that tower over oaks will need to be removed to maintain this rare habitat type. There is high potential to add a demonstration area with interpretive elements to enhance the public education program. Brush removal and prescribed fire are important tools for prairie conservation. Well timed mowing is a good interim strategy until a prescribed fire strategy is developed.

### **Riparian Forest**

Dorris Ranch has one of the best examples of bottomland mixed conifer deciduous forest anywhere in the Willamette Valley. It is located in a rich ecosystem near the confluence of the Middle and Coast forks of the Willamette River, and includes relatively rare elements like Valley Ponderosa pine.

## OPPORTUNITIES|CHALLENGES

### **Regional Partnerships and Planning**

- Connect to regional and statewide management programs. Dorris Ranch, for example, is part of a larger conservation opportunity area along with the Friends of Buford Park who have scheduled a fir removal to enhance oak their woodlands. (see Appendix B)

- Connect with local and regional education programs to enhance learning opportunities and partnerships for coordinated public outreach/education efforts.
- Include public understanding of regional resources network of open spaces.
- Reference larger scale planning projects and initiatives.

#### **Event Programming**

- Integrate cultural/natural resources into activities and events, especially the Native American perspective. Connections are possible with the University of Oregon to explore ideas and partnerships.

#### **Invasive Species Management**

- Focus on eliminating invasive exotics in forest (false brome and shining geranium).
- Implement management techniques to prevent invasive species from entering habitat located along trails, roads and near parking.
- Consider implementing an active EDRR program, which could eliminate non-native invasive species.

#### **Oak Woodland|Savanna|Prairie**

- Determine acreage currently in oak habitat, and how much is needed for quality habitat.
- Think of area as a gradation of habitats from oak woodland to savanna to prairie rather than as distinct habitats.
- Think of “restoration” as going forward to a Desired Future Condition (DFC), not backward to previous system.
- Recognize that regular management and engagement is needed to conserve these ecosystems. Neglect leads to deterioration.
- Remove the trees that are overtopping mature oaks first.
- Consider adding pines to diversify since pines were observed just north of ranch.
- Explore and seek out possible participation with local programs and experts for advice, management techniques, and partnerships

(i.e. Alice Smith, Santiam Prairie restoration from a native American perspective).

### **Riparian Habitat**

- Manage the floodplain area as part of the larger river confluence and coordinate management with other area partners and agencies.
- Maintain the area as more natural, with fewer trails to conserve and enhance the floodplain habitat.
- Build predictive flood frequency zone map, based on new contour information. Flooding is probably rare within conifers (100 years), more frequent in hardwoods.
- Keep hard infrastructure out of frequently flooded areas and remove existing flood obstructions (i.e. blocked channels) where possible.
- Consider enhancing habitat with minor excavations near the river's edge, opening and increasing the backwater habitat that is now cut off.
- Suggest girdling fir trees that are crowding pines within riparian forest to prolong the life of the more rare pine.

### **Incense Cedar**

- Recognize that the incense cedar may be affected by root rot, perhaps one of two types (*Armillaria* or *Phellinus*), but further investigation needed since incense cedar is typically very resistant to these root rot types. Samples can be sent to Oregon State University for analysis.
- Consider the approach to plant oak and pine (depending on the root rot type) within the cedar grove to help isolate the fungus and enhance the habitat since the fungus travels through connected roots. This could prolong the life of the cedar and sustain the grove over time.

## **CULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS**

### **Invited Guests**

Ed Alverson, The Nature Conservancy  
Matt Blakely-Smith, Institute for Applied Ecology  
Bruce Newhouse, Salix Associates  
Jeff Olsen, Oregon State University Extension Service  
Chris Orsinger, Friends of Buford Park and Mt. Pisgah  
Ross Penhallegon, Oregon State University Extension Service  
Barry Sims, Trout Mountain Forestry

### **MIG Team**

Dean Apostol  
Steve Farneth, Architectural Resources Group  
Christina Frank, Moore Iacofano Goltsman  
Arnie Hollander, Architectural Resources Group  
Rene Kane, Moore Iacofano Goltsman  
Laurie Matthews, Moore Iacofano Goltsman  
Robert Z. Melnick

### **Willamalane Staff**

Pat French  
Rebecca Gershow  
Greg Hyde  
Bob Keefer  
Lori Quick-Mejia  
Jake Risley

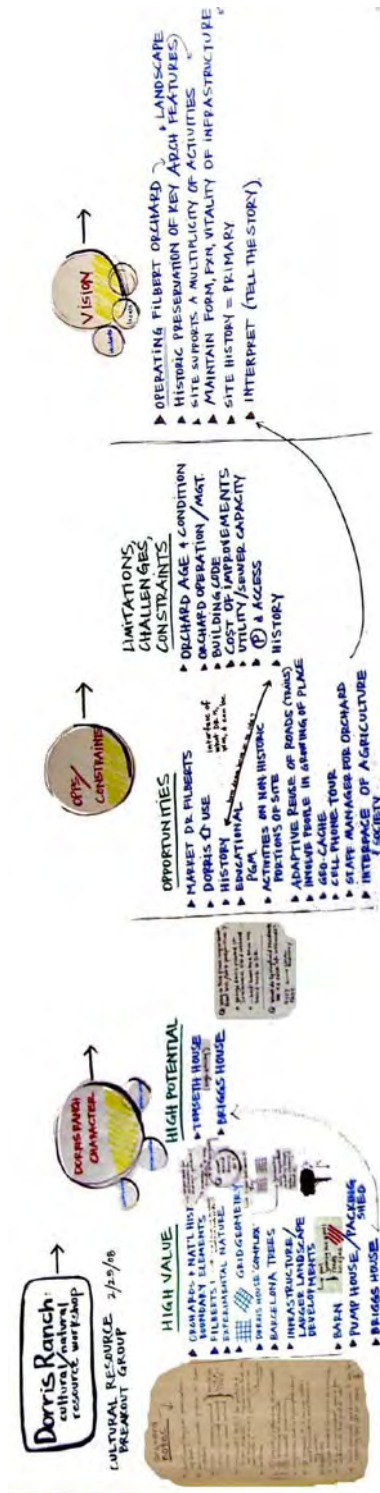
**IDENTIFIED POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIPS AND EXTERNAL RESOURCES**

Oregon Conservation Strategy - A Place for People and Wildlife: Conservation in Urban Areas

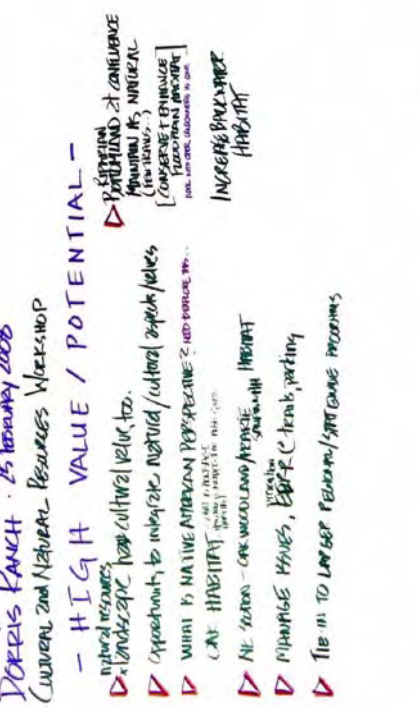
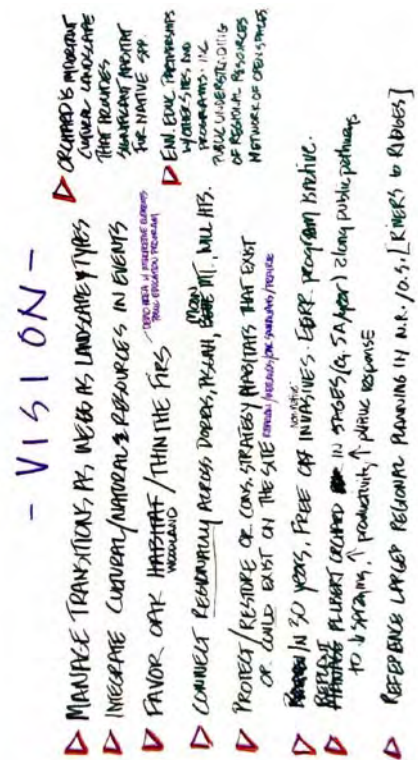
Rivers to Ridges, Metropolitan Regional Parks and Open Space Study, Vision and Strategies

# ORIGINAL WALL GRAPHICS

## Cultural Resources Group



## Natural Resources Group



Overall Group Discussion

- ### VISION
- EDUCATIONAL
  - FINANCIALLY PROFITABLE
  - MORE INTEGRATED HABITAT
  - ONE, INTEGRATED WHOLE
  - CONNECT RIVER WITH OLD CHANNELS
  - 50-year vision to maintain result operational character of orchard
  - PRESERVE HISTORY / CHARACTER OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE SITE
  - MAINTAIN AS A WORKING ORCHARD
  - BROADEN THE IDEA OF HISTORY: INTEREST BEFORE SETTLEMENT
  - INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO Mgt, education, interpretation (e.g. docents, etc.)

- ### OPPORTUNITIES / CONSTRAINTS
- GO BEYOND THE "FAUXLINE" TO LOOK AT A BROADER CONTEXT / LANDSCAPE
  - UPSTREAM / DOWNSTREAM INFLUENCES
  - LOOK AT SITE AS A WHOLE w/ DIVERSE TIME / FOR INFLUENCES
  - DIVERSITY OF FLOODPLAIN FOREST / HIGH FREQUENCY HABITATS
  - WPCO / PRORIE / SAUNDERS HILLBIE IS FUNDING ARIAL FOR PRESERVATION (restoration)
  - CONJUGENCE LOCATION
  - MENDING HISTORICAL / CONTEMPORARY PRACTICES
  - BALANCING
  - COST OF IMPLEMENTATION / IMPLEMENTATION
  - RESTORATION / MAINTAINING WILL REQUIRE TRAINING - MAINT. REFLECTION ISSUE