

# HOWE FARM MANAGEMENT PLAN



Artwork by Peter Juvonen

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# **Howe Farm Management Plan**

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# Howe Farm Management Plan



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# Howe Farm Management Plan



## Introduction

From the beginning of the Howe Farm planning process it was perceived that this would be an atypical park. A working farm or demonstration farm was envisioned by some. Some were interested in the history of the property and how it reflected changes over time in the region. Others were concerned with stream restoration and habitat improvement, while still others simply wanted to preserve the site as is. The development of alternative concepts involved extensive study of farm parks, stream restoration and wetland enhancement projects.

A concept plan for the property was developed over a series of four public meetings. The preferred plan continues traditional farming practices and proposes test plots, it includes stream and wetland enhancement, and provides a place for events and festivals. The Concept Plan was adopted by resolution by the Kitsap Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) in October, 2000 (Howe Farm Technical Appendices).

The Concept Plan envisioned further planning and study would be necessary to determine precise programming and management issues, appropriate stream and wetland buffer widths and best agricultural practices. In December 2000, the BOCC established a Stewardship Committee to continue the work began with the Concept Plan and create a more detailed management plan for the site. This document is the result of the Stewardship Committee's efforts.

### 1.1. Background

Kitsap County purchased the Howe Farm from Judy Howe in 1996. This 83 acre pastoral property sits at the intersection of Mile Hill Drive and Long Lake Road. It has a long history of active farming with hay as its main crop.

Howe Farm is located within a wide, gently sloping valley. Its east facing slope lies predominantly in pasture and its west facing slope in woodland. Traversing through the center of the property is Salmonberry Creek. The property is significant for its role in the county's agricultural history and for its value to the county's natural systems.

Though valued by many people for its farmland, this site is equally valuable for the quality of its natural systems. 49 acres or 59% of the property is wooded, while the remaining 34 acres or 41% of the property is in pasture. The majority of the woodland covers the eastern half of the site and is a mix of mature second growth mixed coniferous and deciduous woodland with a varied understory. The remaining woodland lies along the northwest corner of the property and is typified by second growth fir woodland with a thinned understory. Salmonberry Creek flows to the south towards its outlet into Long Lake and is classified as a type 3 stream by the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Currently the stream corridor is overgrown with

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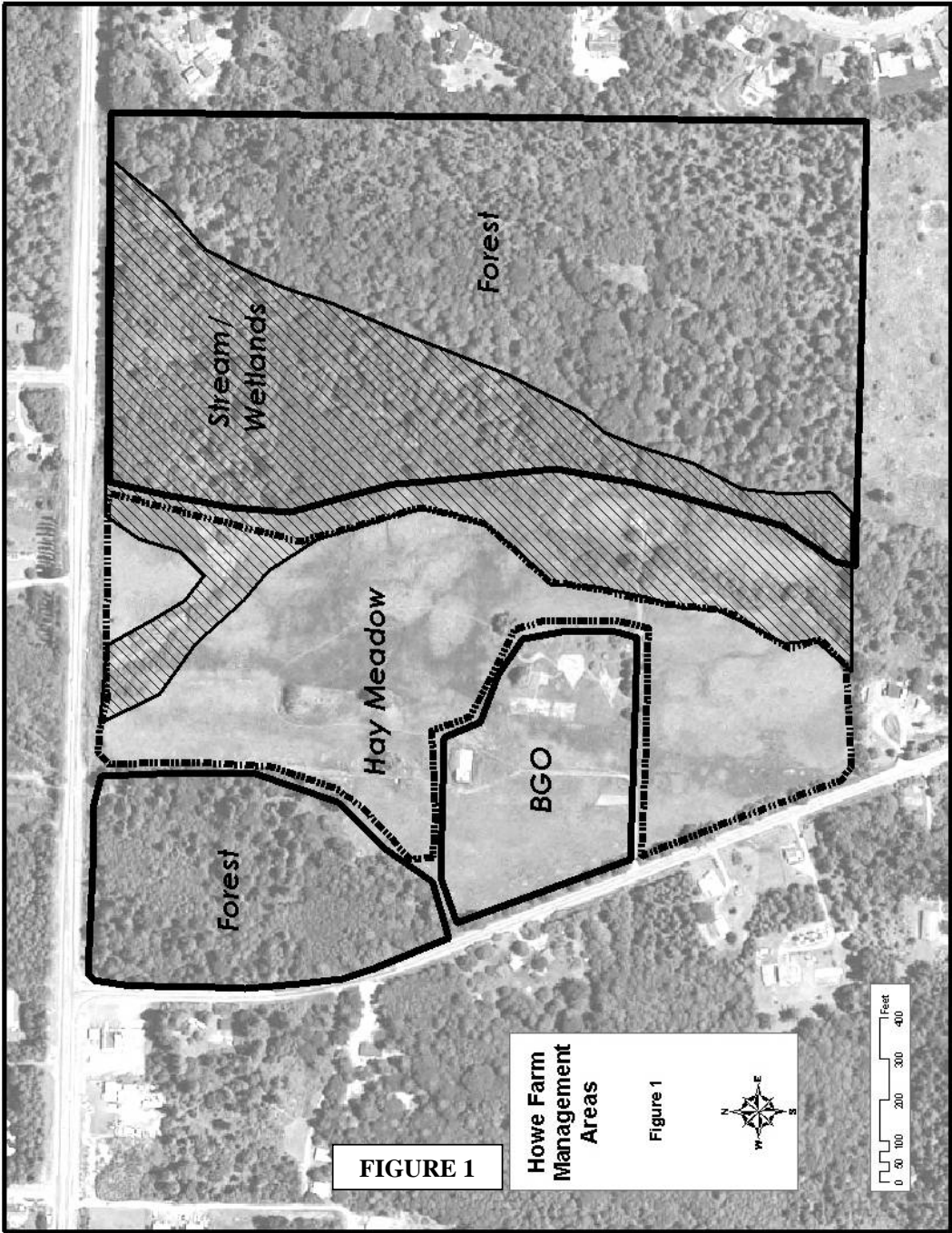
invasive species and the existing culvert and bridge at the old farm road crossings are in deteriorated condition. In both the forest and pasture areas there are a number of wetlands associated with the stream and with seeps. The combination of wetlands and stream areas and their associated buffers results in approximately 63% of the property subject to development restrictions.

## **1.2. Site Boundaries, Management Areas and Maps**

The 83 acre site is bounded by Mile Hill Drive to the north and Long Lake Road to the West. **Figure 1** shows an aerial photograph of the site with the park boundaries delineated. The Concept Plan identified several unique areas of the site based on terrain, vegetation cover, and historic use. These management areas will be used as the basis for more detailed sub-area planning and are shown on **Figure 1**, Barn/Garden/Orchard area, Hay Meadow area, Stream/wetlands area, and Forest areas.

## **1.3. History/Cultural Resources**

Howe Farm is a valuable legacy of Kitsap County's rich agricultural heritage. The existing park was once part of a much larger property owned by Joe Wymer. In 1903, he sold part of his land to the McPherson family, who worked and lived on the property. They raised chickens, cows and sheep, and planted an orchard and vegetable gardens. The old farmhouse built was in 1920. In the early 1940's, the McPherson family sold the farm to Ed Howe. They retained the existing circa 1930 barn and added on to it a lower section in 1946. The Howes referred to the farm as the "ranch", having primarily used it to raise horses and cattle. In 1967, the farmhouse was torn down. In later years, the family continued to maintain the barn and pasture areas. In recent years, the farm was used more for Howe family events, including cider presses, barn dances and a wedding.







## 2. Park Goals and Objectives

The general consensus from those who have participated in public meetings to develop a concept plan for the Howe Farm are utilize areas of the Farm for what they are best suited for – farming in appropriate areas; recreation in areas not suitable for farming or wildlife; and preservation of the main view of the lands as a rural farming area.

The Stewardship committee has taken the community’s ideas and crafted them into an overarching vision of the Howe Farm, which can be summed up in three statements:

- Honor the county’s agricultural history by retaining the agricultural character and function of the site.
- Protect and enhance the stream corridor and biological diversity of the site.
- Provide for recreational opportunities that build community and respect the unique mission of the county park.

### 2.1. Recreation

#### Goal #1

Provide opportunities for passive recreation and community events that will not impact or conflict with other farm related activities.

#### Objectives

##### 1. Determine Event Type

- a. Site specific relating to farming, history or education
- b. Seasonally appropriate
- c. Passive recreation
- d. Maintain local community access

##### 2. Determine Event Users

- a. Sponsored by Kitsap County
- b. Cities, school districts, non-profits
- c. Commercial or private parties

#### Goal #2

Trails – develop a system of walking trails to view the farming, wildlife, creek, and forested areas of the property.

#### Goal #3

Educational Program – Provide a variety of farming, historical, and environmental educational programs in partnership with the local school district, FFA, and 4H.

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## 2.2. Farming

### Goal #1

Continue agriculture in those areas historically used for agriculture to the extent practical and consistent with other site uses.

#### Objective

Seek agricultural “reserve” designation

### Goal #2

Ongoing public education of sustainable agriculture.

#### Objective

Promote sustainable and Best Management Practice (BMP) agricultural practices

### Goal #3

Provide educational, cultural and economic benefits to local growers and the citizens of Kitsap County.

#### Objective

Invite participation from non-profit organizations, schools, agencies, public etc.

### Goal #4

Encourage voluntary participation to achieve projects on site.

#### Objective

Make on-site volunteer work easy to accomplish by clearly identifying types of projects and scope of work appropriate for volunteer workers.

#### Objective

Advertise projects and activities in need of volunteer support.

## 2.3. Habitat

### Goal # 1

To restore, enhance and preserve the site with consideration of regulations and best use of the property.

#### Objectives

1. Restore stream habitat
  - a. Culvert replacement
  - b. Manage vegetation for streams and wetland enhancement
2. Restore native plants
3. Initiate partnerships to aid with restoration projects

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4. Monitor environmental conditions
5. Develop an ecosystem inventory database

## **Goal # 2**

To educate the public on the natural and managed ecosystems of Howe Farm.

### Objectives

1. Create educational signage which includes plants with names and medicinal uses
2. Signage about ecosystem and ecotones (transition zones between ecosystems)
3. Establish trails to appropriate areas with consideration to habitat impact

## **2.4. History**

### **Goal #1**

Identify and preserve historical uses of the site.

### Objective

Research and document specific uses:

- |                                     |           |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| a. Native American (coastal Salish) | pre-1860s |
| b. Logging activity                 | 1860-1900 |
| c. McPherson Farm                   | 1901-1945 |
| d. Howe Ranch                       | 1945-1995 |

### **Goal #2**

Educate public about historical uses of site within context of local, regional, and world events.

### Objectives

1. Develop signage showing different uses of site
2. Create timeline showing historical context of region and world
3. Provide educational center with museum and displays
4. Restore and preserve barn, farmhouse and other appropriate outbuildings
5. Demonstrate historic uses of site including:
  - a. Local Salish encampment
  - b. Logging camp
  - c. Farming practices

## **3. Resource Inventory**

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## 3.1. Soils

An abbreviated soil analysis of the Howe Farm is included in Appendix B of the Wetlands Analysis Report conducted by Wiltermood Associates. The complete wetlands report is included in (Howe Farm Technical Appendices). A more complete description of the soils can be found in the Soil Conservation Service, Soil Survey of Kitsap County Area, Washington, September, 1980.

The soil analysis shows soils types (moving west to east on the site) McKenna gravelly loam, Alderwood very sandy loam, Harstine gravelly loam (in an island between two other forks of McKenna soils). McKenna soils are classified as hydric soils. Harstine and Alderwood soils are characterized by perched water tables in the rainy seasons.

## 3.2. Water (Wetlands/Stream)

Wiltermood Associates produced a Wetlands Analysis Report on the Howe Farm in August of 2001. A total of six individual wetlands were delineated and were classified as C2category II and III wetland according to the Washington State Wetlands Rating System. **Figure 2** shows the wetlands delineation for Howe Farm. The complete wetlands report is included in (Howe Farm Technical Appendices).

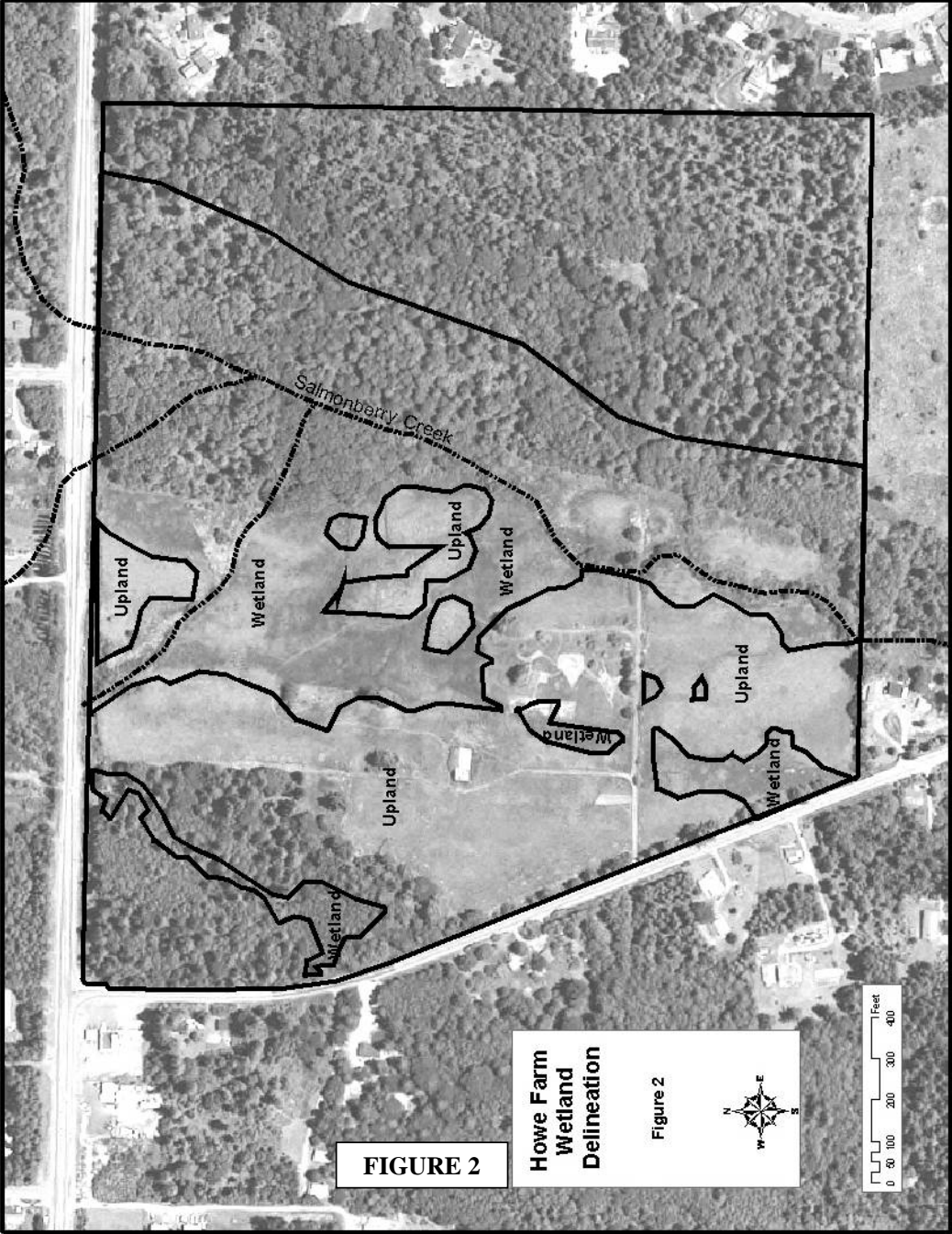
Most of the east half of the pasture north of the farm road is composed of wetlands associated with Salmonberry Creek. The eastern most half of the woodlands is composed of forested uplands. The low portions of the hayed pasture are composed of wetlands and are associated with the stream. A second forested wetland was identified in the northwest corner of the site.

## 3.3. Flora and Fauna

49 acres or 59% of the property is wooded, while the remaining 34 acres or 41% of the property is in pasture. Salmonberry Creek flows from north to south on the property towards its outlet into Long Lake.

A detailed inventory is needed of the plant and animal life of the site. An inventory program should be developed to ensure that information collected about the site can be added to a site inventory and utilized in for ongoing educational programs and site management. Recommendations for plant inventory program:

- Create database design/protocols to insure that information collected by different groups or at different times can be combined into a site inventory database.
- Map and name eco-tones (sub-areas) of the site.



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- Work with local partners (SK School District, Vocation Skills Center, Audubon Society, Master Gardeners, Kitsap Historical Society, Scouts, WSU Cooperative Extension, Grange, outdoor groups, DNR, photographers, artists) to participate in data collection

## 3.4. Forest

The majority of the woodland covers the eastern half of the site and is a mix of mature second growth mixed coniferous and deciduous woodland with a varied understory. The remaining wood-land lies along the northwest corner of the property and is typified by second growth fir woodland with a thinned understory.

An inventory of the forested area of the site is needed and can be combined with the inventory of the site flora and fauna described above in 3.3. Forestry management issues should be addressed in a forest management plan. Although forest management issues are not as pressing as other management issues on the farm, they will need to be addressed in the next 3-5 years. Several members of the stewardship committee could develop the expertise needed to address forestry issues by attending a forestry management program for small land owners offered by the WSU Cooperative Extension.

## 3.5. Visual Quality

Maintaining views of the farm from both Mile Hill Road and Long Lake Road is an important factor in making decisions about site planning and vegetation management on the site. Preserving the agricultural character of the site is a primary objective of this management plan and protecting view corridors is a necessary means to this end.

In general, all future development and use of the Howe Farm should adhere to the following guidelines:

- The dominant characteristic of the site should be a vegetative landscape, either agricultural fields or native vegetation.
- Any structures or physical improvements should maintain an historic farm characteristic.
- Any new structures or physical improvement should be sited outside of the most visually sensitive areas of the site. (see Figure 3)

### *Views from off site onto property*

Views from Mile Hill Road look south onto the property and have a relatively unobstructed view across the pasture to the barn. Due to the volume of traffic on Mile Hill Road and its connection between Port Orchard and the Southworth ferry dock, this view corridor is the most important off-site view access on the property.

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Views from Long Lake Road look north/east across the pastured hillside to the barn and the old orchard area. This view corridor is secondary in nature to the views from Mile Hill Road. The topography from Long Lake to the barn is less complex than from Mile Hill Road and is smaller in its reach. Traffic volumes are also smaller than on Mile Hill Road.

### *Views from within the site*

The forested areas on the east and northwest of the site serve as background for the views of the pasture area and also provide a visual buffer from the surrounding development. Although not visually significant on their own, the forested areas are important in maintaining the overall scenic quality of the site.

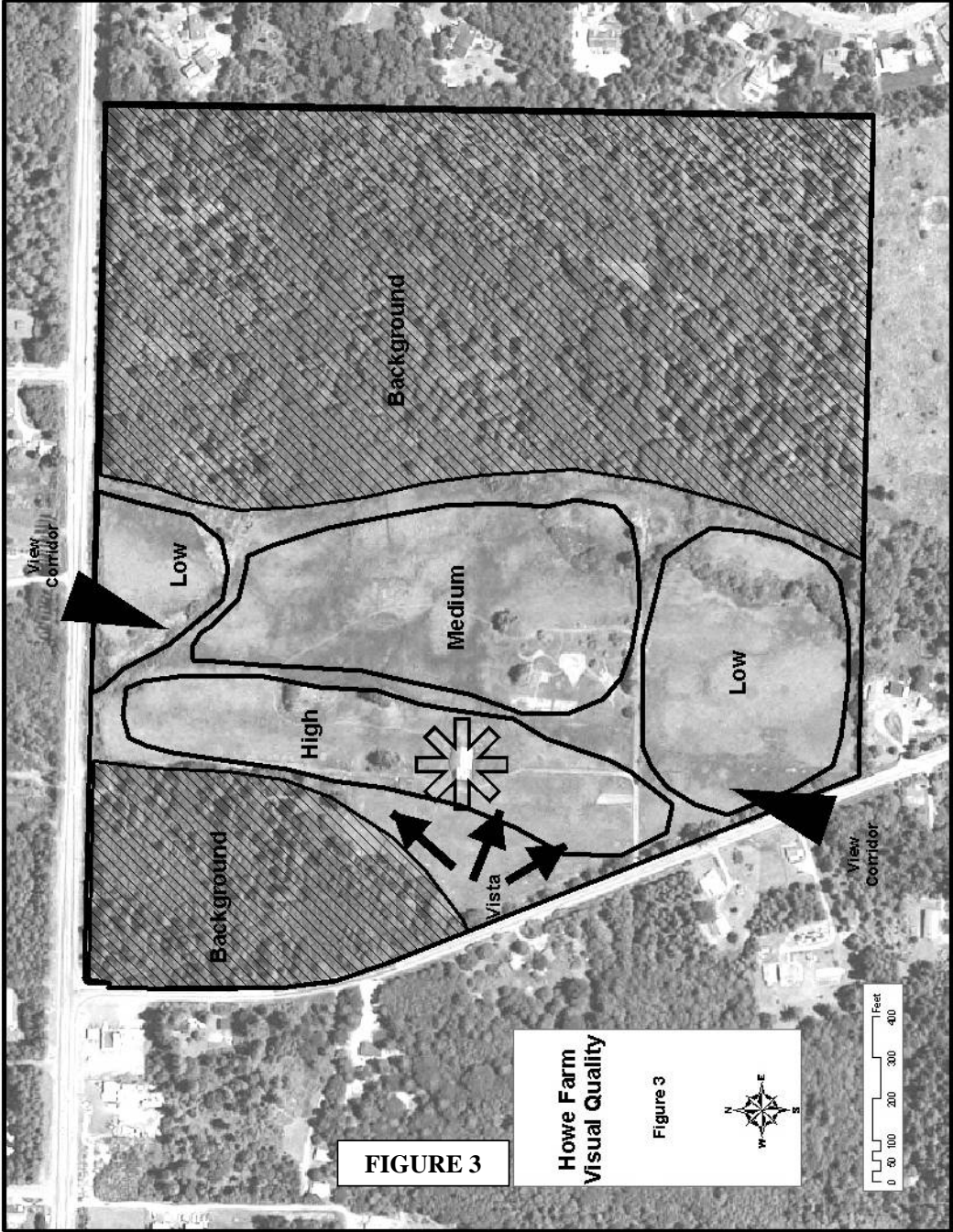
*The high quality visual area* identified on **Figure 3** runs north to south and encompasses the pastured hillside to the west of the property. This area includes the barn and is the dominant viewscape on the property being visible from both off-site and on-site viewpoints.

*The medium quality visual area* identified on **Figure 3** encompasses the lower pasture area from the western tributary to Salmonberry Creek south to the farm road. This open rolling pasture area provides much of the character that defines the Howe Farm property.

*The low quality visual areas* identified on **Figure 3** are the pasture area south of the farm road and the area between Mile Hill Road and the western tributary of Salmonberry Creek. These pastured areas are the backdrop to other view areas but are not visually significant on their own.

### *Scenic Vista.*

The bench at the far western edge of the property, south of the forested area, provides the most commanding views on the site. Due to the topography and adjacent forest area, this area is somewhat hidden from the rest of the property and off-site view corridors.







## 4. Hay Meadow Management Area

### 4.1. Inventory Summary

The “hayfields” discussed in this section encompass all the open field areas and include those hayfields that have not been in recent hay production due to inaccessibility for machinery.

The fields have not been maintained in a manner to create a quality hay yield. Additionally, poor access to some field areas has resulted in those areas not being maintained or processed for hay. Invasive species, especially Scotch Broom, have encroached on the margins of the fields. Although some effort has been put into control of the invasive species in certain areas, these efforts have not been consistent, and disposal of the removed vegetation has been a chronic problem.

Some of the field areas are not drained well enough to allow harvest when hay quality is at its peak. These same areas contain rushes which significantly reduce the feed value of the hay. Through 2002 the accessible fields have been harvested under a contract which yielded minimal income for the county. There was no effort under the contract to improve or maintain the fields in any fashion that would result in an increase in the quality or quantity of hay produced.

### 4.2. Resource Concerns

As a public property, it is important to identify the best course of action in the use and management of the fields. At present, the highest priority is not to maximize agricultural production from the hayfields. For the immediate future the focus should be on working the fields for a well-kept appearance and providing open field environments for various passive recreation activities, and less on overall quality and quantity of hay production. It is extremely important to recognize the agricultural potential of these fields, should a need arise for additional agricultural production to meet local food production requirements. If agricultural production is set postponed in any of the hayfield areas to focus on other uses, it should be made clear that it is intended these areas be available for future agricultural production, and any intervening use will have to give way at the time agricultural use becomes desirable.

### 4.3. Management Objectives

Improvements to the fields should focus on several factors:

- *Control or elimination of invasive species.* These efforts would demonstrate opportunities and requirements with respect to compliance with weed laws, improved hay quality, access, and general aesthetics on the property.

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- *Improving the surface level.* These efforts would focus on grading in certain areas to establish garden areas, improve drainage, and create a more “foot friendly” walking environment throughout the open field areas. In some cases tillage, cover, amendments and seeding would occur simultaneously with the efforts to make the fields more “foot-friendly” - creating a dual benefit. In effect, each outcome - flatter walking surfaces and better forage quality - are a byproduct of each other.
- *Demonstration of pasture/forage improvement.* Initially these efforts would be limited to the large field lying to the south of the main farm road. This field is not used heavily by the public, as most of the farm’s features lie north of this field. The field has a natural barrier (ditch and vegetation) which tend to limit access along most of its’ north margin. This will help keep people out of portions of the field undergoing improvement until those areas can bear traffic. The field can be readily divided into several plots to show the various stages of the improvement process, and to proceed on a smaller scale as funds become available.

Agricultural uses other than forage production:

Throughout the open fields are a variety of *micro-environments*. Some of these environments are desirable and suitable (with the necessary preparation) for non-forage agriculture. Examples include:

- Areas suitable for orchards and tree fruits.
- Sloping areas with good drainage and sun exposure for terraced gardens.
- Dry (in context with this property) knolls for plant species which require excellent drainage, or for demonstrating desirable plants with low water requirements or drought tolerance.
- Shaded areas for demonstrating desirable plants requiring shade or limited sun to thrive.
- Wet/soggy acidic soils to demonstrate either beneficial wetland plants or crop species that do well in these conditions (mint family, some other herbs).

In addition to the micro-environments, there are some portions of the open fields which are good candidates for non-forage agriculture due to their physical location. These may include areas near infrastructure or utilities for maintenance intensive agriculture, or natural hills, swales, hollows, or ridges favored by certain plant species.

Use of the micro-environments to increase agricultural diversity on the property should be encouraged where feasible. This would lead to more educational/demonstration opportunities and add to the aesthetics of the property. These could serve as low-cost/high-impact features that draw attention to the property as a destination with much more than just open fields and woods.

Suggestions for specific locations/fields:

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- *“Intensive use” area*- This area would be taken out of current forage production. Those areas not used as gardens, orchards or other uses, and that maintain a grass cover should be kept mowed. This will afford easy year-round pedestrian access and delineate where people may go without disturbing production areas.
- *South of main farm road, large field* - This area will be for a combination of forage production and demonstration of phased pasture management/improvement. Those areas not undergoing tillage, fallow, or cover may be harvested. An unused headland strip adjacent to the ditch will be used to provide access for machinery and for viewing by the public.
- *South of the main farm road, small abandoned field east of Salmonberry Creek* - This area could serve as a model of best management practices for abandoned agricultural land adjacent to a stream. This field is essentially abandoned for lack of access, but with good agricultural background and potential. This area could be used for an in-depth analysis of the conditions (good open ground, abandoned, near stream) and decision making process of how to revitalize and use it within the environmental constraints that private land owners would have to follow.
- *Northeast field, near stream corridor* - Take wettest portions (a strip, width to be determined) out of forage production and replace with marketable wetland species. The area could be planted with native species found in wetland environments that tend to reproduce rapidly, and fill in if space becomes available by the “harvest” of some. The harvested plants could be made available for sale, or donation to projects requiring new plants. The result would be to maintain agriculture production in these areas, but specializing in wetland beneficial crops.

*NOTE: the term “forage” used throughout this section is intended to apply to any grass-based crop to be harvested for animal feed. The crop could be dried hay finished as bales, or “green chop” destined for preservation/use as ensilage.*

## 5. Barn/Garden/Orchard Management Area

### 5.1 Inventory Summary

The boundaries of the Barn/Garden/Orchard (BGO) management area are shown on **Figure 1** and include the barn, orchard, and site of original farmhouse. The BGO area is bounded on the south by the main east-west farm road to the south, the Northwest Forested area to the north, Long Lake Road to the west and the orchard area to the east.

The BGO area possesses conditions that are suitable for working or demonstration gardens with good sun exposure, prime soils, varying slopes and proximity to planned infrastructure. The BGO will likely become the most intensively used area of the Howe Farm with the combination of the barn, orchards, gardens, and park entrance and parking area.



## 5.2 Resource Concerns

### The Orchard

Educational programming and community involvement opportunities have the potential to grow within the orchard. The orchard could also potentially provide a financial resource for the farm and/or clubs through graft and fruit sales. Enhancing the orchard mason bee habitat (the friendly pollinator), yearly maintenance of the trees and the harvesting of fruits will be key to the preservation and restoration of the orchard.

These activities will be limited by the expertise that is available to the site. Time as well as knowledgeable care will be needed for the restoration of older trees. Pruning and the enhancement of the orchard mason bee habitat can potentially increase productivity of the trees. However, protection of fruits and security for native bee blocks could potentially be of concern.

The concrete pad near the orchard area should be removed to provide more space for the garden area.

### Garden/ Open Field

The National Soil Conservation Resource Service has compiled a comprehensive report on soils for the farm. Soil fertility and composition within the BGO location have been determined to be prime soils needed to cultivate a garden site. A predominant amount of the site is in areas with excellent sun exposure and a gradual slope which will assist in proper drainage of the area. The only constraint will be in areas with moderate to severe sloping. Terracing, cover crop and proper plant selection and rotation will minimize erosion in these areas and maintain optimum fertility of the soil.

Two distinctive types of gardens may be plotted: demonstration and/or working plots. Both hold potential benefits for income and community education. Demonstration gardens may include but not be limited to: the waterwise garden, heirloom garden, children's garden, pollinator garden and plots for master gardeners and school projects. Working gardens may be in the form of leased plots to individual growers or cooperatively working farmers, pea patches for neighboring citizens, at risk youth project plots and farm trial plots managed by researchers with farmers.

Activities on the space could potentially provide economic benefits and educational opportunities to local growers and community groups through crop cultivation, marketing and sales. The leasing of space and a percentage charged from seasonal yields could also provide income to the general maintenance of the farm.

Opportunities for agricultural research projects can potentially provide grant resources to the site as well as educational opportunities to growers. The gardens will

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also provide aesthetic interest and beauty throughout the year and could potentially become a destination place for nursing home tours, school field trips and tourists.

The challenges facing this portion of the site are:

- the availability of irrigation, limited growing space
- staff for coordination of volunteers and security of the site
- storage space for tools
- space for a potting shed
- lack of fencing that would help keep domestic animals from food crop/garden areas and steeper slopes in some garden areas.

Plot sizes and best crops for each space will be dependent upon the availability of water to the site and space availability. Fees and damage controls from domestic pets will also need to be determined. A policy for domestic pets on the site will need to address concerns related to the garden area.

## **Road/Trails**

Current roads/trails through this area will provide an opportunity for visitors to view many aspects of the garden and orchard area and access other areas of the farm. Constraints for the road/trail running through this location should be left to maintenance vehicles and operations, such as draft horses utilized for tilling and farm machinery. Safety issues for pedestrians will need to be addressed through signage and scheduling policies for vehicles, large animals and machinery. Clean up policies will also need to be set for walking paths through the garden areas. Smaller walking paths will also need to be developed throughout the garden sites.

## **Native Trees**

Trees surrounding this area will provide shade for visitors and could be a good area to locate picnic tables. They will also provide a windbreak for crops in this location and a safe place for mason bee blocks. Care will need to be taken so that they remain standing in good health.

## **5.3 Management Objectives**

It has been concluded that the barn be placed as a priority project within the space until the structural integrity of the building is preserved. Management of the area shall focus on establishing activities in keeping with the farming goals of the site i.e.; agricultural reserve designation, ongoing public education of sustainable agriculture, benefits to local growers and citizens and allowing for maximum voluntary participation.

## **6. Stream/Wetland Management Area**



## 6.1. Inventory Summary

As discussed in the Resource Inventory section, Salmonberry Creek runs through the middle of Howe Farm. A Stream Assessment was conducted by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in June 2001.

The stream and its associated wetlands affect a significant portion of the property. The wetland areas are described in the Wetland Analysis Report prepared by Wiltermood Associates (August 31, 2001).

During 2002, monthly water quality monitoring of Salmonberry Creek was conducted by the Kitsap County Health District Water Quality Program. The results indicate that the temperature and dissolved oxygen levels in this portion of the creek are well within the range needed to support normal physiological functions of salmon.

## 6.2. Resource Concerns

- Work within existing regulatory constraints for management of stream corridor and wetland areas.
- Demonstrate current agricultural best management practices adjacent to streams and wetland areas, wetland management options and restoration techniques.
- Preserve and enhance, where applicable, water quality and wetland habitats on Howe Farm.
- Incorporate educational elements explaining benefits of healthy streams and wetlands.

## 6.3. Management Objectives

1. Work within existing regulatory constraints for management of stream corridor and wetland areas.

The Kitsap County Critical Areas Ordinance provides an exemption for “pre-existing and ongoing agricultural activities on lands containing critical areas”. However, it is the intent of this plan to balance recreational and agricultural practices with the preservation of wetland functions and habitat. Howe Farm provides an opportunity to demonstrate to private land owners how these uses can coexist in adjacent areas.

2. Demonstrate current agricultural best management practices adjacent to streams and wetland areas, wetland restoration techniques and management options.
  - a. Agricultural Best Management practices

# Howe Farm Management Plan



In cooperation with the Kitsap Conservation District, develop and implement a farm plan for Howe farm to manage the pasture, forest and wetlands in a comprehensive and responsible manner.

## b. Alternative Agricultural Practices

Alternative agricultural practices (other than hay production) that limit wetland soils may be demonstrated in the isolated wetland area in the southwest corner of the property. Any demonstration projects should use appropriate plant species, and avoid introducing any potentially invasive species.

## 3. Preserve and enhance, where applicable, water quality and wetland habitats on Howe Farm.

### a. Culvert Replacement

The old culvert under the road crossing at Salmonberry Creek is failing and should be replaced with a bridge or larger culvert. Any other potential barriers to fish passage should be evaluated and removed as necessary.

### b. Stream and Wetland Vegetation Buffers

Enhance and protect vegetation buffers along the stream channel and wetlands to preserve existing water quality and "high quality rearing habitat for juvenile Coho salmon", as described in the USDA Stream Assessment.

1. Establish a 40 foot wide vegetation buffer (zone 1), measured from the top of the bank, along the stream corridor of Salmonberry Creek and its tributaries. This buffer should consist of native shrubs and trees that provide year-round shade for the stream. The stream buffers should be managed so that they do not interfere with view corridors from Mile Hill Drive or Long Lake Road.
2. Construct a fence along the 40 foot buffer to delineate the limit of zone 1, prevent accidental encroachment by haying activities and discourage dogs from entering Salmonberry Creek.
3. An additional strip of land (zone 2) will begin at the upgradient edge of zone I and extend out a distance of 100 feet. Within zone 2, the grass may be cut but the turf must be maintained to prevent erosion and filter potential sediment if the adjacent uplands are plowed. These areas are shown in **Figure 4**, and noted as "no plow" zones. The 100 foot No Plow zone may be modified with a more site



specific recommendation as part of a farm management plan if it can be demonstrated through a monitoring program that there is no increase in sediment reaching the stream from upland plowing.

4. Protect the existing forest buffers along Salmonberry Creek and the wetland area in the northwest corner of the property. The forested buffer should be maintained at a minimum of 100 feet from the wetland area.

c. Wetland Restoration Techniques

Areas proposed for wetland restoration are shown in **Figure 4**. The specific boundaries of these restoration areas will be determined in cooperation with the staff Wetlands Biologist within the Department of Community Development. Any restoration projects should use appropriate plant species, and avoid introducing any potentially invasive species.

d. Improve Salmon Habitat

Place pieces of large woody debris into stream channel in lower reach of Salmonberry Creek to encourage the formation of spawning habitat for Coho salmon, as recommended in the NRCS Stream Assessment.

e. Environmental Monitoring

Ongoing monitoring will be required to determine the success of restoration efforts. It is recommended that the Kitsap County Health District continue to monitor Salmonberry Creek for temperature, dissolved oxygen and turbidity. Any further monitoring should be developed in consultation with the staff Wetlands Biologist within the Department of Community Development, and possibly the Stream Team. Any monitoring results indicating deteriorating water quality should be reported to Kitsap County Parks and Recreation, so that corrective action can be taken as soon as possible.

4. Incorporate educational elements explaining benefits of healthy streams and wetlands. Teach all the people that visit Howe Farm to be responsible stewards of their environment.





FIGURE 4



## 7. Forest Management Area

### 7.1 Inventory Summary

A forest management plan was produced for the private land owner over 10 year ago prior to the County acquiring the Howe Farm. The forest management plan needs to be updated and modified to reflect the goals and objectives of this plan.

### 7.2 Resource concerns

1. Confer with the DNR and the Cooperative Extension to determine proper forest management practices.
2. Ensure that the trails are created where the public can learn about forest ecosystems.
3. Ensure that forest provides adequate cover so the salmon stream is healthy.

### 7.3. Management Objectives

1. Develop and preserve an old-growth ecosystem on the northwest corner of the property.
2. Selectively harvest trees on the eastern portion of the property in order to:
  - a. Demonstrate best logging practices
  - b. Provide money for other Howe Farm projects
  - c. Demonstrate best forestry practices
3. Maintain the health of the whole ecosystem.
  - a. Maintain a quality forest and manage the health of the understory
  - b. Enhance the habitat and wildlife on site
  - c. Conduct an inventory of the ecosystem
4. Provide opportunities for education on-site.
  - a. Ask high school students to participate in the inventory process
  - b. Ask Arnold Bergstrom (Cooperative Extension) to conduct a class on small wood lot management
  - c. Ask loggers who use horses to demonstrate selective tree felling

## 8. Facility Management

From the beginning, the Howe Farm has been envisioned as a community project with local residents and interest groups taking a leading role in the development of the facilities and programs at the park, and in the ongoing operation of the community asset.



## 8.1. Roles and Responsibilities

Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for ongoing maintenance and capital development are critical to ensure the successful implementation of the Howe Farm management plan. As defined in the County's Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (adopted June, 2000), the County's primary role is to develop and operate regional park and open space facilities throughout the County. In order to achieve this goal with limited resources, the County will need to develop partnerships with community groups and other agencies to help operate and maintain County facilities.

The goal for the Howe Farm is to have an active and involved Stewardship Committee that oversees activities on the Farm and manages the day to day operations. The primary responsibility for implementation of this management plan will fall on the Stewardship Committee. Modifications to this plan will need to be approved by the County.

Deleted:

a) Parks Department Responsibilities. Providing support for the Stewardship committee; entering into use agreements with other agencies and/or non-profit organizations to carry out portions of the management plan; development of site improvements (infrastructure, building, trails, etc.); and fund raising.

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b) Stewardship Committee Responsibilities. Mobilize community awareness and support of the project; organizing and directing volunteer programs and efforts on the site; monitor the property, conducting routine maintenance; develop educational programs; raise funds for capital development, programs, and ongoing operations and maintenance.

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## 8.2. Leases and Inter-local Agreements

Any leases, use agreements, and inter-local agreements will be negotiated and entered into by the County. The purpose of such agreements would be to further the goals of the management plan and to provide services and expertise not readily available within the County or Stewardship Committee. Any income derived from these agreements should be used to support the operations and programs at the Howe Farm.

## 8.3. Site Security

Vandalism of the barn has been an ongoing problem since the County acquired the Howe Farm. Most of the problems seem to occur during the night when the park is closed. As more facilities and programs are developed at the Farm, site security issues will become ever more important. Some undesirable activities tend to lessen as more appropriate uses are developed on the site. Having a full-time onsite presence at the Farm has been proposed as one possible solution to security issues.

# Howe Farm Management Plan



Site security issues need to be considered as part of the physical planning of the site. Many problems can be avoided through property design and placement of facilities and lighting.

## 8.4. Volunteers

Volunteers will be the heart and soul, the backbone, the eyes and ears, and the spleen of the Howe Farm. This project can only be successful through the efforts of volunteers and volunteer organizations. The first step in creating a successful program at the Howe Farm is to develop a well functioning, motivated Stewardship Committee with a clear vision of what they want to achieve and a plan on how to get there. A clear purpose and direction will enable the committee to recruit volunteers to help implement discrete parts of the plan.

County ultimately has the responsibility (and liability) for work preformed at the Howe Farm. In order to insure a safe work environment, all volunteers must follow established procedures spelled out in the County's Volunteer Project Handbook, developed by the County's Volunteer Coordinator and Risk Assessment office. The Volunteer Project Handbook may need to be expanded or tailored to fit the unique circumstances of the Howe Farm project.

## 9. Infrastructure/Structures

### 9.1. Barn

The barn should be retained and repaired but only to the extent necessary to make it safe and weather tight for seasonal public uses. This should include electrical upgrades, interior and exterior lighting, and window replacement. The barn is not envisioned to be used as a "community center" with year round activities. It should not be finished inside, insulated, or have central heating. This will concentrate the use of the barn during the spring and summer months.



Once structural repair necessary to comply with current safety codes is complete, the barn interior may be opened to the public. According to previous architectural opinions, it is possible that seismic and structural repair could be made with little, if any, change to the exterior appearance. Maintaining the barns historic exterior is critical to preserving its aesthetic character.

# Howe Farm Management Plan



The most immediate concern about the barn is the critical need for roof repair. Any structural repairs that are necessary prior to roof repair should be assessed and completed as soon as possible. Continuing deterioration could make it financially impractical to restore the barn. This would be a tremendous loss to the character of the property.

The barn holds a wide range of opportunities for the future. Historical preservation and restoration of the structure has been designated as the top priority. The building could potentially host special seasonal events, provide a gathering place for meetings, space for storage, and house museum or photographic displays constructed to withstand the seasons. The barn has the potential to inspire community involvement through restoration, fundraising for the structures on site, development of an identifiable symbol for the farm and various educational programs. Grants obtained for the barn may also be a springboard for other farm projects.

## 9.2. Outbuildings

Any outbuildings built to serve the current uses of the property should, to the extent possible, be replicas of structures that previously existed on the Howe Farm property. These included machine sheds, large chicken coops, and a milking shed. If these can not be replicated, then new structures should be built using a style similar to historic buildings.

## 9.3. Farmhouse

Several different ideas about a potential “farmhouse” building were discussed during the public meeting process. These options included reconstruction of the historic farmhouse, a building to be used as a caretakers residence, or a new building that functions primarily as an educational facility while using an architectural style that fits with the historic character of the property. The space could be used as an interpretive center i.e.; space for educational exhibits, living history activities, seminars, classes, film viewing and other education activities that relate to the farm’s past and present. A museum, certified kitchen area, potting shed, storage space and restrooms could also be located within this facility.

Structure	Purpose	Users	Improvements
Barn	Seasonal public use, informal farmer's market	Public and Staff	Repair roof, seismic and structural repair and upgrades.
Farmhouse	Restrooms, meeting rooms/classroom, interpretive display, storage.	Public and Staff	New construction
Outbuildings	Storage, garden sheds, support facilities.	Public and Staff	New construction
Meadow Gazebo	Picnic shelter or events	Public	New construction



## **9.4. Meadow Gazebo**

The small existing meadow in the forested uplands on the eastern side of the property should be expanded and maintained as an open area. The small alder trees should be removed and chipped for trail cover. Brush should be cleared and the meadow seeded with native field grasses.

The concept plan recommended a large gazebo be built in the meadow. However, any structures in this remote location will be very susceptible to vandalism.

## **9.5. Roads**

Most of the old roads on the property will either be maintained as trails, or allowed to return to natural vegetation. However, the main roads on the property must be kept open for traffic such as maintenance and emergency vehicles. These main roads include those going from the parking area to the barn, orchard, and forest meadow. Replacing the culvert over Salmonberry Creek will be necessary to access the eastern side of the property.

The old road grades used for loop trails through the eastern forest should also be kept open for emergency vehicles.

## **9.6. Trails**

As mentioned above, trails will primarily be developed on old road grades. However, trails should be relocated to provide year round use and avoid getting too close to neighboring properties. The trails may be covered with wood chips or other natural material to allow year round use, and help prevent erosion.

## **9.7. Dog Use Area**

Over the past few years, the Howe Farm has been discovered by local dog owners who are likely the largest user group of the Farm at this time. With little farming activity occurring to this date, the dogs and their people have had unrestricted access to the open fields and forested trails of the Farm. This type of unrestricted use is contrary to this management plan and allowing dogs to run at large is in violation of the County Code. As the Farm is developed, it will be important to work with the dog owners to establish appropriate use areas that allow for the safe enjoyment of the Farm by all user groups.

# **10. Utilities**

# Howe Farm Management Plan



## 10.1. Power

Electrical power will need to be re-established to the site to provide basic services for farming and other program activities.

All power lines should be installed underground to preserve the visual quality of the Farm. The underground lines should be deep enough in the ground so they will not interfere with plowing or other normal farm operations.

## 10.2. Water

Water is needed for both public consumption and farming activities, especially in the BGO area where most intense activities are planned. If the barn is restored to allow public access, water lines that can accommodate fire flow and fire hydrants will be required within 200 feet of the barn.

Short term potable water needs could be accommodated by the existing well on the Farm. The existing well will need to be inspected and upgraded to current health codes to guarantee a potable water source.

The long term water needs (especially fire flow) may best be met through connection to a municipal water provider. An alternative approach might be to construct a water tower on site that would meet the water capacity and flow rates required by the fire code. The water tower should replicate the style that would have been found on farms in the area in the early part of the century.

## 10.3. Septic

The Howe Farm is outside of the Port Orchard Urban Growth Area (UGA) and by law can not be connected to the public sewer system. An onsite septic system will be needed to provide public restroom facilities for the park. Other methods of waste treatment should be explored for installation at the park in keeping with the educational goals of the Howe Farm.

# 11. Implementation

Implementation of the Howe Farm Management Plan will require the dedication of many community organizations and volunteers. Keys to implementing this plan will be:

- Creating an effective organizational structure that rewards and encourages participation from a wide spectrum of the local community,
- Identifying achievable goals, and
- Finding adequate financial resources.

## 11.1. Stewardship Committee

# Howe Farm Management Plan



The Howe Farm Stewardship Committee was established in December, 2000 to develop a master plan for the property and to work on issues of phasing, funding, management, operations, and long-term stewardship. Upon adoption of this management plan, the stewardship committee should change from an appointed committee to a committee with membership open to anyone in the local community. The committee should organize subcommittees as needed to address both ongoing issues (e.g., farming, history) and special projects (e.g., barn restoration).

## 11.2. Phasing

The development of the Howe Farm will advance over a number of years and will depend largely on the availability of funding and volunteers. The stewardship committee should assess its one, three and fifteen year goals each year and develop a realistic work program based on available resources and volunteers.

MAJOR TOPICS TO BE ADDRESSED	ONE YEAR GOALS 2003-4	THREE YEAR GOALS 2006-7	FIFTEEN YEAR GOALS 2018
		▶▶ (= continuation of project)	
Develop physical infrastructure	Stabilize and weatherize barn	Complete restoration of barn for public use	
	Replace creek culvert with bottomless culvert or bridge		
		Mark Boundaries between some habitat areas (wetlands, stream)	Rebuild farmhouse for museum and educational uses
	Establish safe parking area	▶▶	▶▶
	Provide power and water to site	▶▶	▶▶
Develop adequate funding resources	Become connected with a 501(c)(3)		Be a self-sufficient operation
			Have full time staff on site
	Establish partnerships	▶▶	▶▶
Demonstrate historical agricultural practices	Keep grand-fathered uses in all areas allowed by law	Establish historic replication of farming practices	Fully Incorporate sustainable agricultural farming practices and "best" management



# Howe Farm Management Plan



			practices
	Continue haying	▶▶	▶▶
	Restore orchard	▶▶	▶▶
		Establish public pea patch gardens; heirloom gardens	
Establish interpretive trail system			Complete signs for plant identification and ecosystem information
			Create historical displays
			Create multi-use zones of interest
Establish community ownership and involvement	Use community volunteer groups	▶▶	▶▶
	Address security issues	▶▶	▶▶
Incorporate educational opportunities in all aspects of farm development	Work with Banner Forest educational committee		

### 11.3. Financing

The Howe Farm Management Plan, as envisioned, will need a significant investment of capital to reach full implementation. Potential funding sources may include County Park capital funds, grants, private donations, and revenue generated from farm programs. The long term goal of the stewardship committee is to become a self-sufficient operation. Therefore, any revenue generated from the Farm should be directed back into the Farm's capital projects, ongoing maintenance or program activities. A fundraising subcommittee should be created to help in securing grant and privation donations to further the goals of the management plan.



## Technical Appendices

**(Copies of the following reports will be provided upon request)**

- October 2000 Concept Plan
- August 2001 Wilermood Associates Wetlands Analysis Report
- 2002 National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Hayfield and Stream Report
- 1993 Forest management plan
- November, 2001 McMenamin Engineering assessment of Barn
- September 2003 Howe Barn improvements – schedule of proposed work