

**DRAFT**

# ALDER CREEK FARM

## MASTER PLAN



Lower Nehalem Community Trust Mission: "To preserve land and nurture conservation values in partnership with an engaged community in the Nehalem region of the Oregon Coast"

# Alder Creek Farm Master Plan

Prepared for:



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## MASTER PLAN PURPOSE

The purpose of the master plan is to guide the future development of Alder Creek Farm.

## MISSION

To preserve and restore Alder Creek Farm with maximum benefits for wildlife and the community.

## GOALS

- Restore and preserve native habitat on the land designated for conservation.
- Utilize Alder Creek Farm to engage and educate visitors and the community.
- Create a self-guided information system throughout the property that encourages visitors to adopt and export practices for using earth friendly vegetation;
  - *use of native plants for landscaping*
  - *teach and demonstrate organic gardening techniques*
  - *enhance pollinators*
  - *provide wildlife habitat*
- Continue the community garden tradition of growing healthy foods for members and local food banks
- Maintain and expand display gardens for pollinators, medicinal herbs and native plants.
- Complete the self-guided teaching trail featuring the region's plants and their practical uses through the traditional knowledge of a local culture and people.
- Demonstrate best practices for sustainability and energy independence through the use of alternative energy sources.
- Pursue flexible land use and zoning designations to enable a range of events

## VICINITY

Alder Creek Farm is located within Tillamook County just west of the City of Nehalem, Oregon. Access is from Highway 101 via Underhill Lane, which lies north of the property. Residential development and assisted living center border the property on the west. To the east are forested hillsides and to the south is Nehalem Bay.



Figure 1 - Vicinity Map

### Existing Conditions

Alder Creek Farm is composed of three parcels with a total of approximately 62 acres. Figure 2 shows that to the south of the farm buildings is a 50 acre natural preserve. This area is managed under conservation easements with the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Wetland Reserve Program and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board. The management plan focus is preservation and enhancement. This area is restricted from other uses.

The approximately seven acres to the north encompasses the actual farm structures and the former Anderson residence. This portion of the property is within the Nehalem UGB and is under the City of Nehalem's Zoning Ordinances. The zoning allows farm and associated uses.

A five acre portion of the forested hillside east of Alder Creek was donated to LNCT. The intention is that the forest would remain with only use for trails and conservation measures.

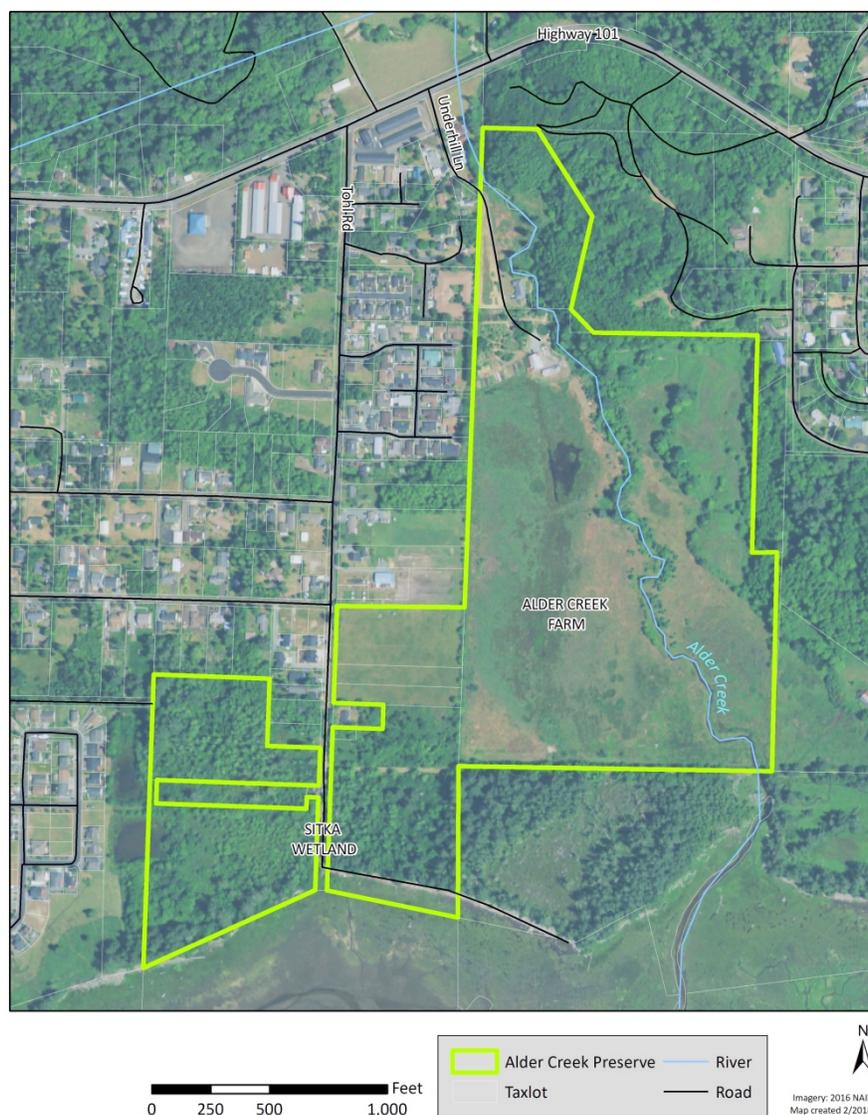
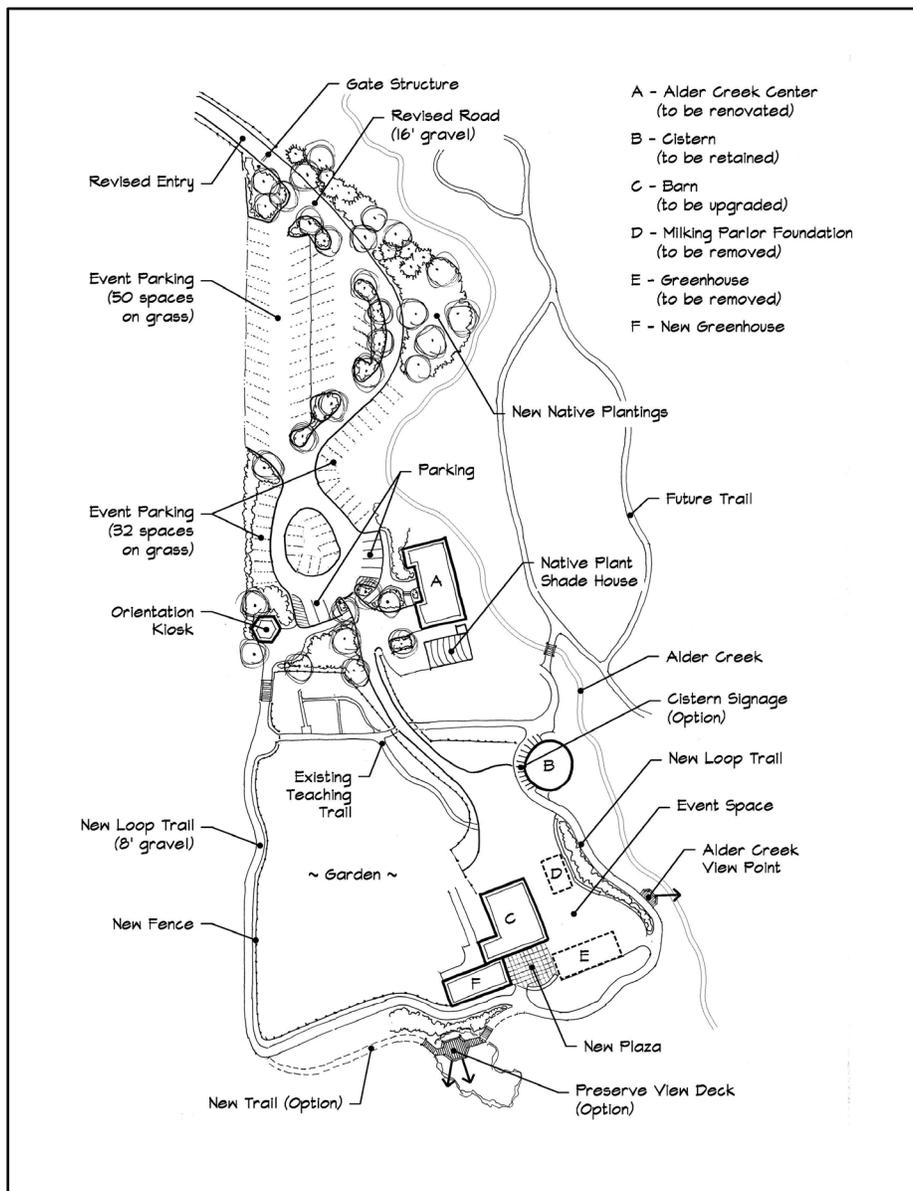


Figure 2

**Master Plan**

Through an interactive process with the Lower Nehalem Community Trust Board a preliminary master plan has been prepared. In support of the goals the emphasis of the master plan is to welcome visitors and provide better opportunities to explore and enjoy Alder Creek Farm. Visiting the farm is intended to be an educational experience acquainting the community with the mission of Lower Nehalem Community Trust (LNCT) and offering opportunities to be involved and provide support.

Figure 3 illustrates the major features of the plan. Figure 4 illustrates these features in the context of an aerial photo of the property. A more detailed discussion of the proposed improvements is included on the following pages.



**Figure 3**

# Alder Creek Farm Master Plan

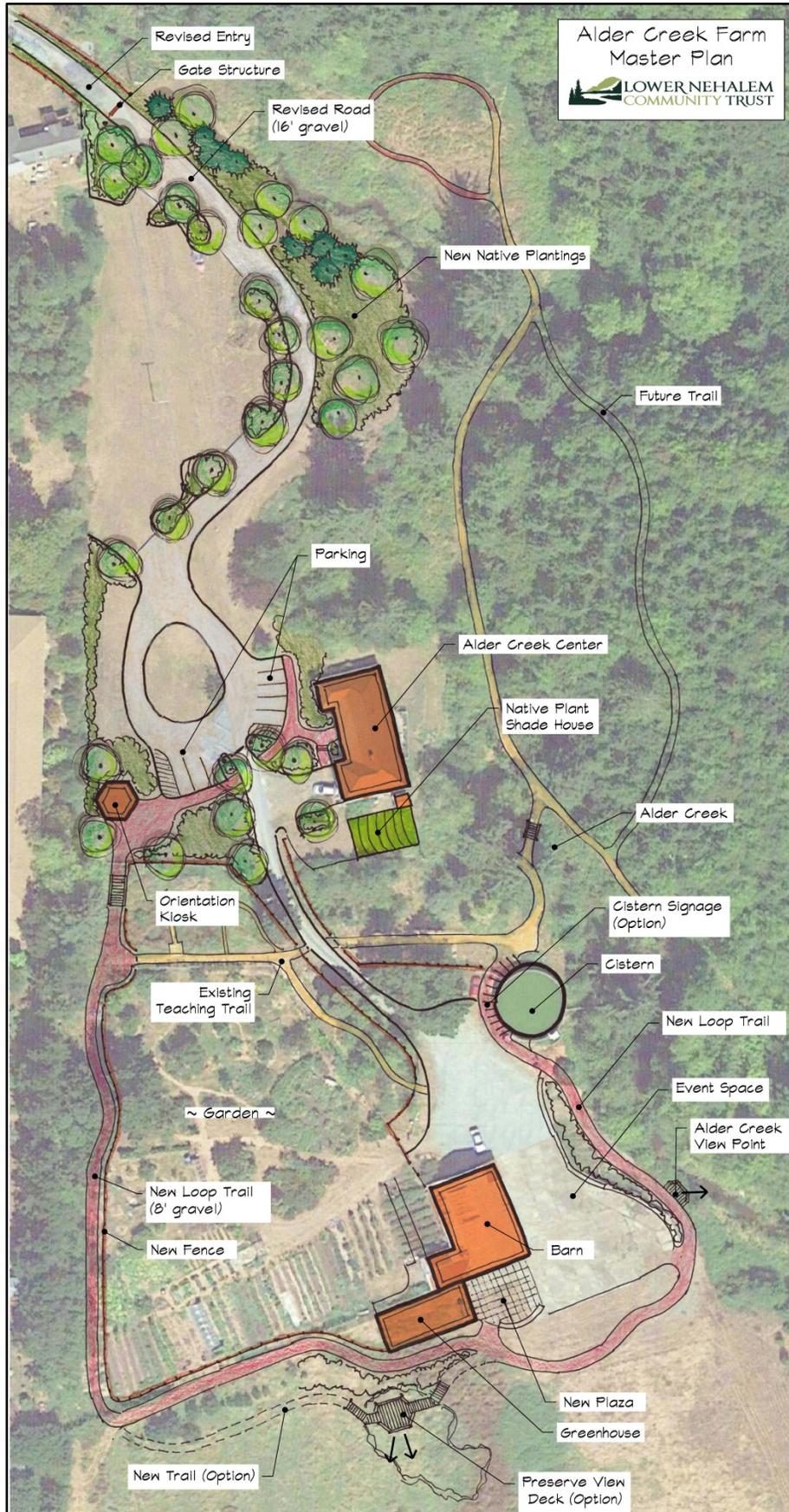


Figure 4

### Vehicle Access

The current access to Alder Creek Farm from Underhill Lane is narrow and difficult for visitors to identify. In addition the actual gravel drive encroaches on the neighboring property to the North. The proposed improvements include shifting the access road to the Southwest and widening the road to 15 feet. This will require negotiations with the adjacent neighbors. Signage, landscape plantings and fencing would be additional improvements. An enlarged plan is shown on Figure 5.

Upon entering the farm property the intent is to straighten the road to eliminate the existing blind curve. In addition a gate structure is proposed to further identify and welcome visitors (see Figure 6 ). In the future the gate would also provide added security to prevent after hour vehicle access.

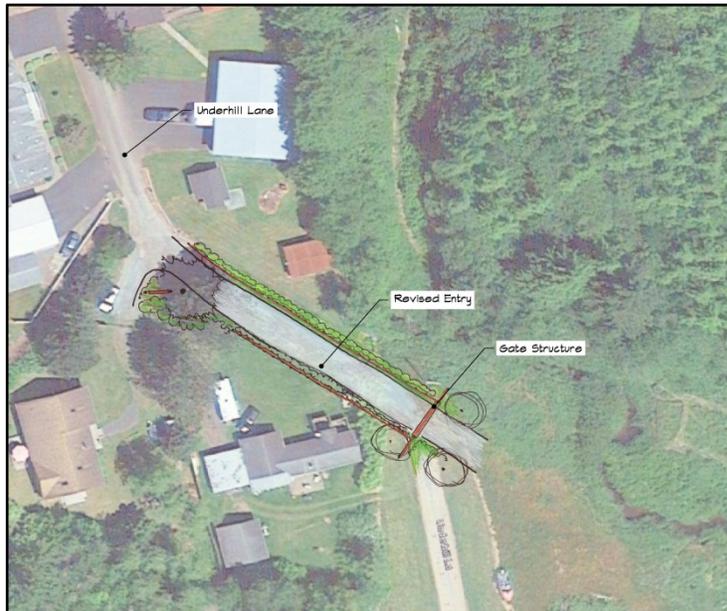


Figure 5



Figure 6

Entry View Looking South East

### *Entry Road / Turnaround*

The entry road is to be realigned terminating in a circular turnaround see Figure 7. Entering the farm through the gate native plantings surrounding the road will immediately immerse visitors into the natural preserve setting. The new alignment will allow for a large event parking space (50 cars). The circular turnaround with signage will offer visitors convenient access to the orientation space as well as Alder Creek Center. This will also allow buses and emergency vehicles to safely turnaround without backing or maneuvering. Convenient parking would be provided for the orientation space and Alder Creek Center. During events an additional 30 cars can be parked along the entry road and turnaround.

The access road to the barn and community garden would be gated allowing car access to be restricted at night and off hours.



Figure 7

### *Orientation Space*

At the turnaround visitors would be direct to an orientation kiosk (see Figure 8). The small shelter structure would provide visitors with information regarding the Trust mission and accomplishments to date. Information would also be provided on how to explore and enjoy Alder Creek Farm. Visitors would be invited to become involved and support the LNCT



Figure 8

### ***Loop Trail / Conservation Area Viewing Deck***

To more easily allow visitors to view the conservation area a loop trail is proposed as shown on Figure 10. From the information kiosk at the visitors orientation space a trail would be developed along the west side of the garden. A fence would separate the trail from the garden. The teaching trail would be accessible through a gated entry off the loop trail.

Signage on this trail would describe the examples of our region's native plants and their practical uses by native people.

As the trail turns to follow the south side of the garden fence, a deck would afford viewing opportunities of the conservation land. (see Figure 9).

The area under and near the observation deck would be excavated to enhance (or create) a natural wetland environment. Native plantings would provide a close up view of the wetland habitat.

As the trail begins to loop back North it would provide access to the barn, garden, greenhouse and another deck providing a closer view of Alder Creek. It would continue guiding visitors back to the parking area. (see Figure 10)



**Figure 9**

Viewing Deck Looking West

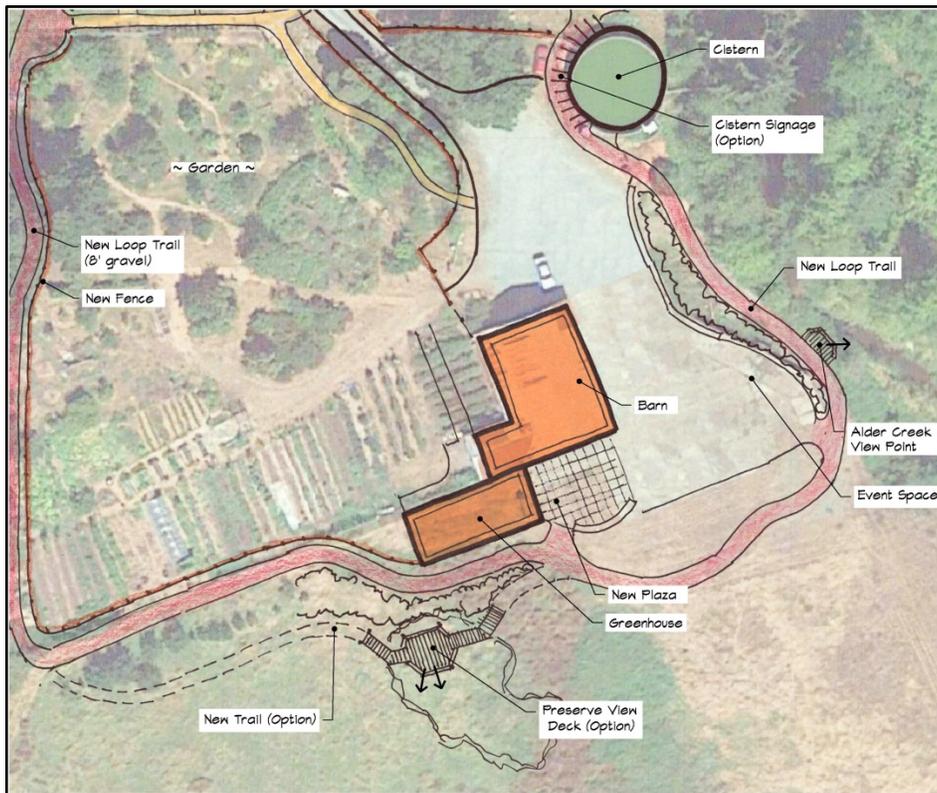


Figure 10

### *Barn / Garden Area*

The barn and garden area are intended to remain the operational area of the farm. (see Figure 3) The barn is to be upgraded to address bird intrusion and the openings in the building. Glass garage doors could be added to the south opening allowing light and a view of the preserve. Also the door could be rolled up allowing access to an adjacent patio overlooking the conservation area.

The garden area access will remain in its present location and the overall garden area will remain as currently developed. Alterations will be required to accommodate the trail along the west boundary.

The intent is to replace the existing greenhouse in three to five years. The new location is illustrated on Figure 10. This new location attaches to the existing barn for energy efficiency and proximity to power and utilities. The location also offers excellent solar orientation and limits shading to the organic garden. The existing greenhouse will continue to function until a replacement greenhouse can be established. Minor improvements will be required to keep the older greenhouse functional. Also, locating a new greenhouse southwest of the barn will require changes to the garden area.

The existing milking parlor foundation is to be partially removed and the area filled to match the ground floor elevation of the adjacent barn.

With the removal of the greenhouse and the milking parlor foundation the gravel area to the east of the barn can be enlarged to afford more operational and event space. This will provide a vista view of the conservation land. This space will be used for LNCT events such as, the harvest festival, living locally dinner and annual plant sales.

The cistern is to remain (see Figure 12) providing a water source for irrigating the garden and fire protection. The piping needs to be completed to allow hookup for fire protection. The side of the cistern may be utilized for signage informing visitors about the garden, teaching trail, native species and the Trust's mission as shown on Figure 11.



Cistern Signage Option

Figure 11

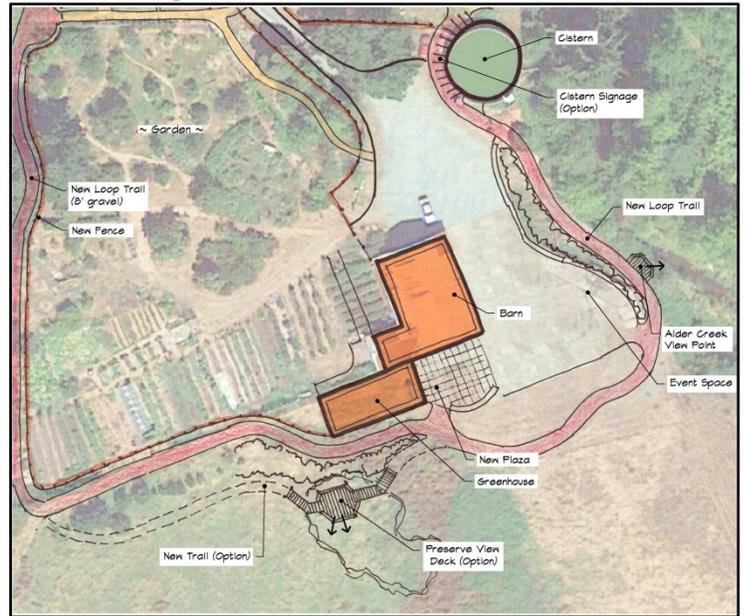


Figure 12

**Trails**

Alder Creek offers a number of trails for the public to access and enjoy on the farm. As shown on Figure 13 a teaching trail bisects the central portion of the farm. This is an educational trail that features a collection of native plants. Also an existing trail extends along the east side of Alder Creek through the forested hillside. An extension of this trail connects further east up the hillside to 13th Street.

The proposed trails will provide a loop access out the view the conservation area. Additional trails on the east portion of the property will provide a loop access through the forested hillside.

Also noted are trails out to the southern portions of the conservation area. During the dry summer months the grass is mowed providing informal access.



Figure 13