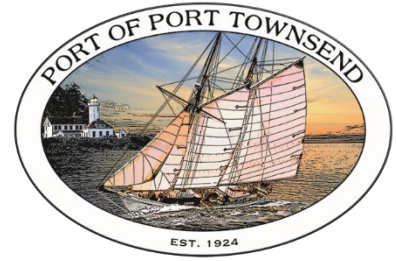


Port of Port Townsend – Short’s Farm Steering Committee



Date: June 5, 2024

Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Location: In-Person – WSU Extension (Kivley Center, 97 Oak Bay Road, Port Hadlock)

Time	Item	Leader
5:30 – 5:40	Introduction/Review of Draft Plan, Implementation Matrix	Eric Toews/Katie Cody
5:40 – 7:20	Discussion and Deliberations	FSC/Facilitator
7:20 – 7:30	Questions, Next Steps, Next Meeting: Tentative date Tuesday, June 18 (5:30 p.m.) and Scheduled Meeting Wednesday, July 10, 2024 (9:30 a.m.)	FSC/Facilitator
7:30	Adjourn	

This meeting is open to the public. However, it is not a venue for providing public testimony. Written comments may be submitted and entered into the record. The principal purpose of the meeting is to allow the Farm Steering Committee and Port staff to communicate with each other, ask and answer Committee member’s questions, and obtain Committee member input regarding the subject topic(s).

The Mission of the Port of Port Townsend is to serve the citizens of Jefferson County by responsibly maintaining and developing property and facilities to promote sustainable economic growth, to provide community access to Port facilities and services, and to protect and maintain our environment, community resources, and maritime heritage.

Farm Steering Committee May 29, 2024 Minutes

The Farm Steering Committee met at the WSU Extension Office Kivley Center, 97 Oak Bay Road, Port Hadlock. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Members present: Janet Aubin, Martin Frederickson, Keith Kisler, Laura Llewellyn, David Seabrook, Kellie Henwood, Al Latham, and Martin Mills **Absent:** Rebecca Benjamin

Other Attendees: Heidi Eisenhour, Jefferson County Drainage District and Erik Kingfisher of the Jefferson Land Trust

Staff: Deputy Director Eric Toews, Administrative Assistant Joanna Sanders, and University of Washington Katie Cotie.

UW Students: Will McPherson, Abby Newbold, Tony Charvoz, Ben Hagen, and Greg Suskin

Port Commissioners: Petranek and Hasse

Introduction by Eric Toews on the purpose of the meeting for Committee discussion on farm goals, activities, and to formulate recommendations. Provided were a list of consolidated goals and activities, an implementation matrix of priorities to date, including timeline, cost, and partners as well as a farm plan template. Comments from Al Latham and David Seabrook were provided.

Discussion and Deliberations: The Committee discussed and worked through revisions to the plan's purpose, key challenges, and opportunities in the plan template. Katie Cotie and Eric Toews recorded changes. Initial comments were that the challenges are well stated. Alternative language to "hub" was recommended. There was consideration for ongoing management and maintenance responsibilities (managing canary grass especially in the creek channel, mowing and/or grazing as the map reflects a lot of area to be grazed, and maintenance of infrastructure such as roads, buildings). Toward the goal of improving riparian habitat, the topography of the farm remains a challenge with water quality and dissolved oxygen issues in areas that are not draining. A long-term desire or opportunity is adding cold storage. Tenant/lessees might not maintain leased space like a property owner so staffing or dedicated farm staff oversight is imperative. If habitat goals are a factor, then not all the acreage would be farmable. Leasing land (with water) is an opportunity as is maintaining the water right. "Incubating" needs partner business for providing access to farmland and agriculture. Add information on the Port's purpose, so that it is clear that this is for long-term economic development.

To be added under Goal 1 Support, Sustain and Expand Local Ag, was food system resiliency. In particular, processing that does not require a commercial kitchen. A question that arose was whether the residential water right and well could be reclassified under a different use.

There was considerable discussion and ideas for a better location for seasonal hunting, public access, and birding rather than under Goal of Support, Sustain and Expand Local Ag. Ideas were to put under Goal 2 Restore Habitat (as a new strategy 2.3), to move it instead to Opportunities, or move Hunting to Goal 3 and add strategy 3.4 support license and use agreements to provide a return on investment and provide examples on what those would include. Another option

considered was to add a strategy under each goal related to hunting, birding and public access. Alternatively, if we are going to talk about a land access strategy, then put these in Goal 4. Erik Kingfisher spoke about creating best management practices with assistance by NRCS and Conservation District.

When considering what types of farming to include, suggestions were greenhouse or nursery production, forestry activity including, but not limited to “agroforestry, orchard, or paludiculture, and secondary forest products.”

Additional changes included the following: Under Strategy 2.1 remove “regulators” in that section, research the potential to remove re-meander to improve Chimacum Creek Habitat and Switch 2.2 and 2.3 to be first on list before 2.1.

Goal 4 might include a provision for Port staff to consider short-term leases. Add a strategy pertaining to short-term leases to ensure the farm is actively worked. Regarding Strategy 4.2, consider retaining a farm caretaker or farm manager. Address in the matrix existing housing and the unused or unrealized development right.

Eric Toews summarized the next step would be to prepare a tracked changes version for next week.

Next public meeting: June 5, 2024. The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.



PORT OF PORT TOWNSEND SHORT'S FAMILY FARM PLAN

Working Together to Support Community Resilience and Prosperity



Port Commission

Peter W. Hanke, President (District 3)
Carol L. Hasse, Vice President (District 2)
Pamela A. Petranek, Secretary (District 1)

Farm Steering Committee (FSC)

Janet Aubin, Stellar J. Farm
Rebecca Benjamin, North Olympic Salmon Coalition
Martin Fredrickson, One Straw Ranch
Kellie Henwood, Jefferson Landworks Collaborative
Keith Kisler, Finn River & Center Valley Orchards
Al Latham, Jefferson County Conservation District
Laura Llewellyn, Chimalow Produce
Martin Mills, The Flying Knucklehead Ranch
David Seabrook, Chimaicum Workhorse Project

Planning Team

Master's Students from the University of Washington, CBE - Department of Urban Design & Planning
Heidi Eisenhour, Jefferson County Drainage District
Erik Kingfisher, Jefferson County Land Trust
Eron Berg, Port of Port Townsend Executive Director
Joanna Sanders, Administrative Assistant/Public Records Officer
Eric Toews, Port of Port Townsend Deputy Director

DRAFT – MAY 30, 2024

I: Introduction & Background

~~[Note: Provided as a Placeholder Only]~~

In the summer of 2023, the Port acquired the 253-acre Short's Family Farm in Chimacum, one of the largest contiguous agricultural land holdings in Jefferson County. The Commission authorized the purchase of the farm with the objective of developing and maintaining infrastructure and establishing uses of the property that will help sustain and expand agriculture in Jefferson County. Acquisition, re-development, and active use of the Short's Family Farm represents a rare opportunity for the Port to help to strengthen the agricultural sector of our economy and support the health of our local food system.

On September 27, 2023, the Commission adopted Resolution No. 797-24 to guide the development of a plan for the farm. The resolution outlined four planning objectives, a schedule for plan development, and established a committee of local experts (the Farm Steering Committee (FSC)) to help prepare a Farm Plan to guide future use and development of the property.

In late 2023, the Port contracted with the University of Washington's Department of Urban Design (UW) to employ master's degree students and faculty to assist the FSC and Port staff with the visioning process, community engagement, meeting facilitation, and to assist the FSC in preparing its recommendations for Commission consideration.

FSC meetings were held regularly between January and June of 2024. Between January and March of 2024, the FSC's work focused on developing a common understanding of existing site conditions and identifying issues requiring additional information and research. In April and May, community and FSC meetings concentrated on developing a vision for future use and development of the property. All FSC meetings were conducted at the WSU Extension Offices in Hadlock, or on-site at the Short's Family Farm. The FSC's recommendations were presented to the Port Commission at a Public Workshop Meeting on July 10, 2024.



II: Plan Purpose & Vision for the Future

PLAN PURPOSE

To help promote a thriving agricultural sector in Jefferson County.

A VISION FOR THE FARM'S FUTURE

The Port's ownership and management of the Short's Family Farm has expanded agricultural opportunities for the farmers of Jefferson County, enhanced the resilience of the local food system, and improved fish and wildlife habitat along Chimacum and Naylor's Creeks. The ag-supporting infrastructure developed and maintained by the Port includes a multi-functional hub for processing, storing and distributing local ag products, and the property has been wisely stewarded to help nurture a new generation of farmers in our community.



KEY CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES PRESENTED BY THE FARM

Challenges:

- Ongoing need to manage reed canary grass, especially in the creek channel
- Site topography and channelized creek that contribute to flooding and poor salmon habitat
- Shortage of arable land – better suited to grazing/pasture than crops/perennials

- Aging farm buildings and infrastructure in need of replacement, or rehabilitation, and ongoing maintenance
- Maintenance of the unfarmed areas of the property (i.e., unleased common areas)

Opportunities:

- Advancing the Port’s mission to support the community’s economic health and vitality
- Collaborating to build community consensus for future use
- Leveraging Port capabilities to ~~fund and construct~~ develop infrastructure that widely benefits farmers in the community and grows Jefferson County’s economy
- Forging partnerships with agencies, non-profits and producers to address complex habitat restoration, and management land stewardship, and food system resilience challenges
- ~~Incubating new farmers that lack access to land and capital~~
- Providing farmers access to land for lease



Figure 1 - Short's Family Farm & Chimacum Valley – View Looking North/Northwest, June 2023

FOUR KEY PLAN GOALS

Consistent with the guidance provided by the Port Commission in Resolution No. 797-23, the Farm Steering Committee has recommended adoption of four key goals to guide the Port's future decision-making concerning the Short's Family Farm, as follows:

1. **Support, Sustain & Expand Local Ag:** Develop and manage the farm to tangibly benefit area farmers and support, sustain, and expand agricultural production, processing, and food system resilience in Jefferson County.
2. **Restore Habitat:** Undertake restoration efforts to improve habitat functions and values on site, especially for migratory fish.
3. **Seek a Return on Port Investments:** Whenever possible, advance uses and activities that achieve the Port's standard rate of a return on its directly invested dollars.
4. **Buy Time for Further Research & Investigation:** Establish a standing committee or specific ad hoc committees to assess the feasibility of the ideas and concepts outlined in this plan.



III: Goals, Strategies & Actions

Goal #1 - Support, Sustain & Expand Local Ag: *Develop and manage the farm to tangibly benefit area farmers and support, sustain, and expand agricultural production, processing, and food system resilience in Jefferson County.*

Strategy 1.1: Seek funding to design, build and permit on-site infrastructure that provides wide benefits to Jefferson County farmers.

- Investigate, and if feasible, fund and construct the infrastructure needed to periodically host a mobile slaughter unit (MSU) at the Short’s Family Farm.
- Research the potential to construct and license use of infrastructure that supports a Food Hub, supporting multiple users, for the processing, cold storage, and distribution of locally grown produced ag products goods.
- ~~Explore the viability of either hosting under a lease agreement, or directly owning and managing, a farm equipment rental center.~~ Support equipment sharing and rental arrangements that increase farmers’ access to the tools of the trade.

Strategy 1.2: Encourage continued active agricultural use of the farm for both grazing and growing arable crops.

- Identify and delineate¹ areas of the farm for specific uses, including:
 - Year-round pasture
 - Hay production/year-round pasture
 - Summer-only pasture
 - Arable crops and perennials
 - ~~A farm “incubator”~~ An area that could provide smaller parcels for new growers that lack land and capital to get started (managed by a non-profit)
 - Seasonal Hunting
 - Public access for birding, walking and wildlife viewing
- ~~Support and encourage a range of activities and uses, including:~~
 - ~~Livestock grazing~~
 - ~~Seasonal waterfowl hunting~~
 - ~~Bird watching~~
 - ~~Growing arable crops and perennials (e.g. barley, blueberries, etc.)~~

[NOTE: revised and moved to 2.4, below]

- In collaboration with agencies and community groups ~~the USFWS, NOAA/NMFS and NRCS,~~ continually apply adaptive management principles at the farm to attain the Port’s goals of benefitting both agriculture and habitat, while achieving the Port’s adopted rate of return.
- Investigate, and if feasible construct, vehicular farm access from West Valley Road.

¹ See Figure #2 on the following page depicting potential production areas.

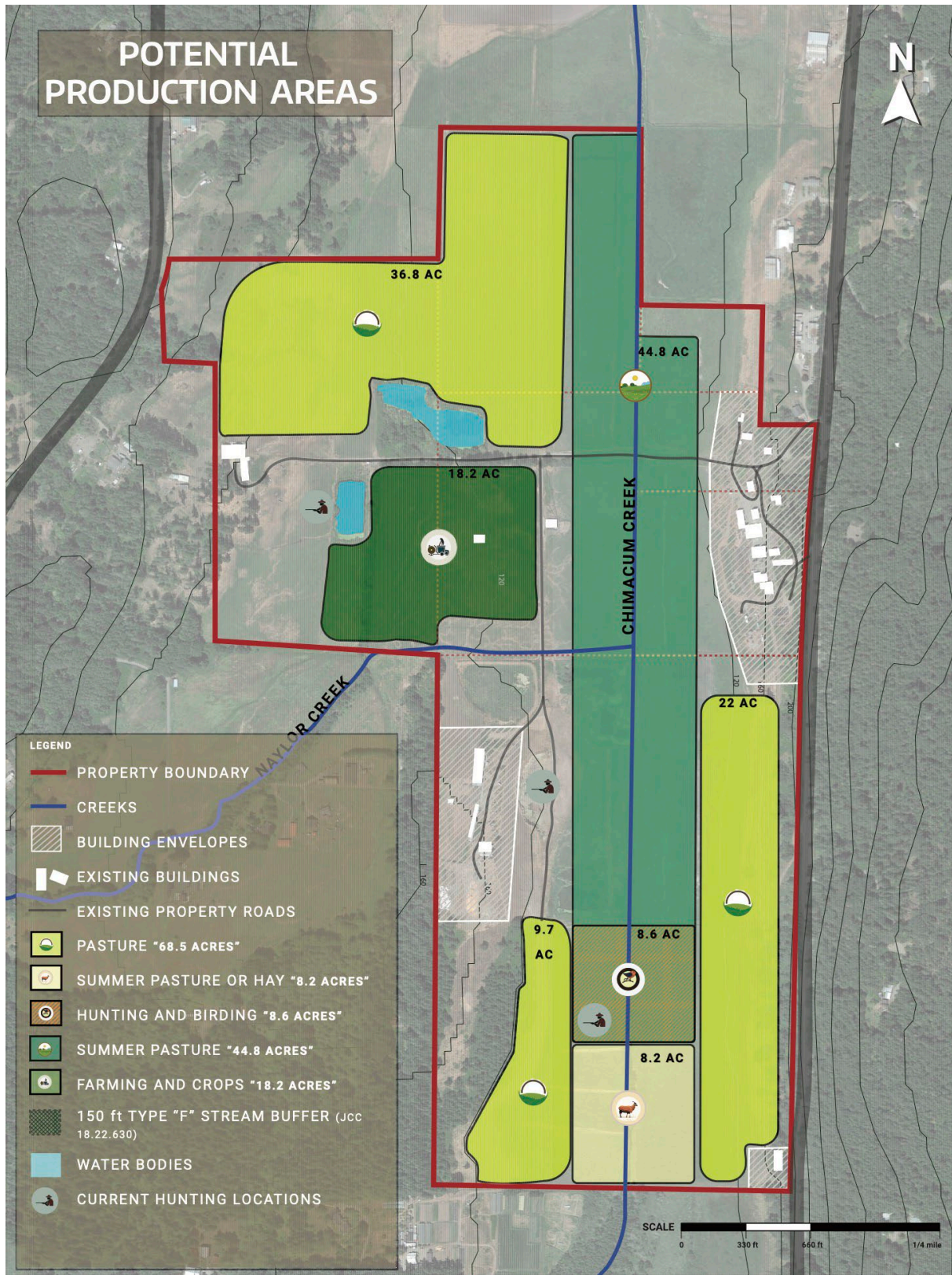


Figure 2 – Potential Production Areas

(Note: the Port is coordinating with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Department of Agriculture, to determine whether the potential use areas identified are viable from a regulatory standpoint).

- ~~Explore the potential to, and if feasible irrigate areas on the west side of If feasible, extend irrigation to portions of the farm not supplied with water for arable crops and perennials.~~
- ~~Research the potential for persistently wet soils on-site to be used for paludiculture crops (e.g., cranberries, watercress, etc.).~~

Strategy 1.3: Ensure public access is sensitive to, and compatible with, agricultural activity.

Goal #2 – Restore Habitat: Undertake restoration efforts to improve habitat functions and values on site, especially for migratory fish.

Strategy 2.1 2-2: Immediately (i.e., July-September 2024) implement measures to manage invasive Reed Canary Grass to improve stream flow and reduce the extent of fall and winter flooding.

- Work with the Jefferson County Conservation District and other partners to mechanically remove Reed Canary Grass and other invasive species via rake and flail mower attachments from the main stem of Chimacum Creek.
- Develop, fund and implement an annual plan to manage Reed Canary Grass and other invasives on-site.
- Collaborate and coordinate with other landowners on the main stem of Chimacum Creek and the JCCD to encourage system-wide Reed Canary Grass management efforts.

Strategy 2.2 2-3: Investigate the potential to access ~~2024 Emergency Drought~~ grant funding to replace the Naylor’s Creek culvert on-site to improve fish passage.

Strategy 2.3 2-1: In consultation with agencies ~~agency regulators~~, habitat and wetland specialists, and non-profits (e.g., NOSC and Jefferson Land Trust), develop a Habitat Restoration Plan.

- Investigate and confirm the extent of historic agricultural activities to inform decisions concerning the geographic scope of future habitat restoration efforts.
- Develop improved topographic survey data to inform habitat restoration design.
- ~~Research options to improve habitat the potential to re-meander Chimacum Creek and provide vegetative buffers to reduce summer water temperatures for migratory fish.~~
- Coordinate with agencies ~~agency regulators~~, wetland and habitat specialists, and non-profits to design a Habitat Restoration Plan capable of funding and implementation.
- Ensure that public access is sensitive to habitat functions.

Strategy 2.4: Support and encourage a range of compatible uses and activities, including, but not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Livestock grazing
- Growing arable crops and perennials (e.g. barley, blueberries, etc.)
- Orchards
- Agroforestry
- Paludiculture
- Seasonal waterfowl hunting
- Bird watching
- Pedestrian public footpaths

Goal #3 – Seek a Return on Port Investments: *Whenever possible, advance uses and activities that achieve the Port’s standard rate of a return on its directly invested dollars.*

Strategy 3.1: Ensure that licenses, leases, and capital investment decisions at the Short Farm employ a “triple bottom line” analysis to confirm that each is responsible economically, environmentally, and socially.

Strategy 3.2: Aggressively seek grant funding for capital infrastructure improvement and habitat restoration efforts to minimize directly invested Port dollars and maximize the potential to achieve the Port’s standard rate of return.

Strategy 3.3 3.1: Recognize that the Port’s standard rate of return of 9.5% for the Short’s Family Farm may not be achieved immediately but may require a period of years.

Strategy 3.4: Pursue short-term license and use agreements as a means to generate an immediate return on investment (e.g., hunting and birding access agreements with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)).

Goal #4 - Buy Time for Further Research & Investigation: *Establish a standing committee or specific ad hoc committees to assess the feasibility of the ideas and concepts outlined in this plan.*

Strategy 4.1: Immediately (i.e., before September 1, 2024) develop an “Operations Plan” that documents the locations of key utilities and improvements on the Farm, and that outlines the day-to-day, month-to-month, and year-to-year activities that must be undertaken to ensure that the farm remains viable.

Strategy 4.2: ~~Retain~~ Consider retaining a part-time/temporary farm caretaker to routinely inspect the property and oversee implementation of the Operations Plan.

Strategy 4.3: Create an Implementation Matrix outlining action items requiring further research and analysis to determine their feasibility (see Attachment “A”, Implementation

Actions). Ensure that the matrix identifies a timeline for completion of each item, its estimated rough order of magnitude cost, implementation leaders and partners, and measures of success. Priority implementation actions include, but are not limited to the following:

- Negotiating and approving short-term lease agreements (e.g., 12-24 months) to ensure that the farm remains in active use while the longer-term use and development plans outlined in this Plan are advanced.
- Adopting an Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP) Manual for farm tenants and licensees.
- Developing evaluation criteria to fairly select lessees (i.e., an equitable land access strategy).

Strategy 4.4: Consider establishing the Farm Steering Committee as a regular standing committee to advance the work outlined in this Plan between July 2024, and December 2026. Alternatively, consider convening an ad hoc committee or committees to assist the Port in implementing this plan as needed.

