The Willamette Chronicle

April 2001 — *Paid Supplement Sponsored by the Willamette Valley Livability Forum*

The future is in our hands

Population explosion endangers quality of life across Willamette Valley

A challenge to Willamette Valley residents: find spots, between now and 2050, to put the equivalent of three more Portlands or 13 Eugenes or 95 Woodburns.

Over the next half-century, demographic experts expect the Willamette Valley's population to balloon from its current 2.3 million to nearly 4 million, fattened with a combination of newcomers and Oregonians' children.

How do we deal with the coming crowd? Use a combination of common sense, computer technology, and public values. Computer-generated glimpses of the future and assessments by experts will offer guideposts as residents wade into the value judgments and practical trade-offs that growth presents.

To kick off the public's role in the effort, the Willamette Valley Livability Forum and others are hosting a conference on April 26 at Oregon State University. (See box below for details.)

What: Conference *Willamette Valley: Choices for the Future*
When: April 26, 2001 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Where: Oregon State University, CH2M-Hill Alumni Center
Who: Sponsored by the Willamette Valley Livability Forum

For more information: Contact (541)682-6559 or http://www.wvlf.org

Source: Susan Detroy

How will the Willamette Valley look in 2050?

When the population hits four million, according to new research, the Valley will feel very different if recent historical development patterns continue. For example:

- By 2050, urban growth boundaries in the Willamette Valley will grow by 106,000 acres—an area equivalent to about 160 downtown Portlands.
- Travel time from Salem to Portland during congested conditions could more than double by 2050.
- Streams will run dry in August and September, particularly in the north Willamette Basin, in years with lower-than-average rain and snow.
- Willamette Valley residents will dig in their pockets for more than $27 billion for new roads, storm and sanitary sewers, and septic well systems.

The burgeoning population projected for the 21st century is in keeping with the Valley's history of gaining population, with increasing swiftness in each passing decade—by 300,000 in the 1990s alone.

"It's not ho-hum growth," says Peter Watt, Manager of the Willamette Valley Livability Forum. "We're all concerned about the impact of that growth on our quality of life and the future livability of the Valley."

Matt Farmer, a junior at Sprague High School in south Salem, looks ahead and sees red flags. He's concerned about the trash he passes while kayaking the Willamette, the thickening traffic in Salem, the prospect of smog spoiling the clean air, and news reports of fish mutated by chemicals.

"It's a wonderful place to live," says 17-year-old Farmer, who moved to the Valley at age 2. "But if you didn't have trees everywhere, and the parks and open spaces, it wouldn't be the same Willamette Valley."

Source: Lane Council of Governments

Their future is in our hands.

Indeed, the Valley of 2050 will not be the same one that Farmer's generation has enjoyed. Until now, the Valley has done a fairly good job of gracefully handling the extra people and employers. But because of sheer numbers and dwindling elbowroom, the coming growth spurt will hit in ways far more dramatic and difficult than before.

An Interconnected Valley

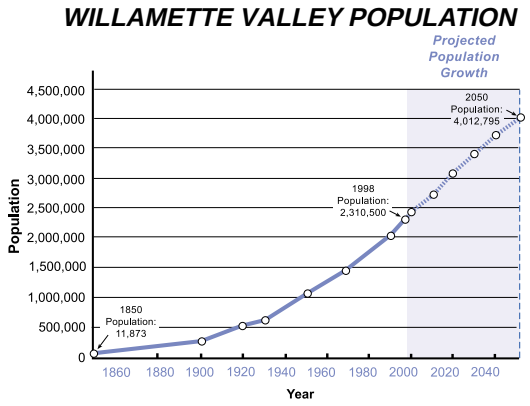
Governor Kitzhaber created the Willamette Valley Livability Forum in 1996. He asked its 88 varied members to find common threads related to growth issues in the Valley's ten counties.

Now the Forum is prodding communities along the 180-mile-long Willamette Valley—including Portland—to look at themselves with new eyes: a regional community sharing air, water, and an economy and threaded together by rivers, railroads, and highways.

The broader perspective requires a big psychological jump for many.

Turn to CHOICES, page 3

WILLAMETTE VALLEY POPULATION



The Willamette Valley's population is expected to balloon from its current 2.3 million to 4 million by 2050.

Source: Portland State University Center for Population Research and Census, and State of Oregon Department of Administrative Services

Our choices make a difference

Oregon does look different, as the 1990s state tourism campaign put it. Anyone who's visited Houston, a city without zoning, can see that the contrast goes beyond the geography of the coast and Cascades.

The Oregon difference is no accident. As population, pollution, and sprawl began to squeeze the state in the 1900s, citizens and politicians of various stripes came together to shape Oregon's course:

- In 1939, Valley residents passed a citizens' initiative, the Water Purification and Prevention of Pollution Bill, to clean a sewage-filled Willamette River.
- In 1966, Oregonians elected Governor Tom McCall who worked passionately to strengthen environmental protection and clean up the Willamette River.
- McCall initiated Project Foresight to encourage Oregonians to think about a desired future for the Willamette Valley. The project report, published in October 1972, set the stage for important decisions.
- The following year, a collaborative urban-rural Legislature enacted a revolutionary land-use planning bill, the Land Use Act of 1973 (SB 100). The act led to adoption of 19 state goals, including preserving agricultural

Turn to FUTURE, page 6

Using space wisely gives Valley chance to put brakes on sprawl

In 1806, Captain William Clark gathered information from the Willamette Valley's original inhabitants. He reported in his diary that: "this valley would be competent to the maintenance of 40 or 50 thousand souls if properly cultivated and is indeed the only desirable situation for a settlement which I have seen on the West side of the Rocky mountains."

Source: Independence National Historical Park

Now, 200 years after Clark's visit and 30 years after the passage of Oregon's landmark land-use planning laws, some Valley residents wonder whether those laws will be enough to ensure that the Willamette Valley is "competent to the maintenance" of the 1.7 million additional residents expected to live here in 2050.

Option for slowing Valley's urban sprawl: A little higher density and a little lower taxes.

If growth is to occur without too great a loss of the farm and forest lands that define the Willamette Valley for its current residents, newcomers must locate primarily in urban areas. Urban growth boundaries in Willamette Valley cities will need to push out by around 100,000 acres—if current land use policies and trends continue.

"...this valley would be competent to the maintenance of 40 or 50 thousands souls if properly cultivated..."
Captain William Clark, Saturday, March 29, 1806

Is there another choice? Yes, according to the $350,000 Willamette Valley Alternative Futures Project,

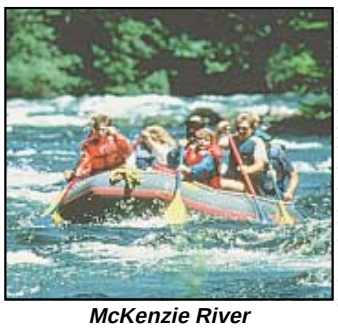
Turn to USING SPACE, page 2

Restoring river basin ecology

Oregonians—if they choose to—can restore the Willamette River basin's fish and wildlife ecology to much of the robustness of the mid-19th century—even as the Valley's 1990 population doubles over the next 50 years.

That's one of a continuing stream of conclusions arising from a massive undertaking led by the Pacific Northwest Ecosystem Research Consortium (PNW-ERC). The group is in the final stages of a project

Turn to RESTORING, page 4



Source: Lane Council of Governments

McKenzie River

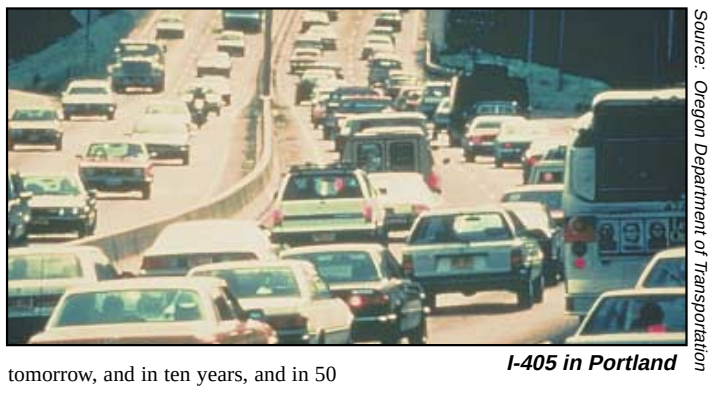
More people, more traffic will clog Valley roads, highways

How's the traffic out there? A nightmare—or not too bad?

Whatever the traffic is like today in your neck of the Willamette Valley, planners say it's likely to be worse tomorrow, and in ten years, and in 50 years.

But we'll have something to say about how *much* worse the coming congestion will be. Traffic could increase modestly, horrifically, or somewhere in between—depending on the choices we make today in public policy. Sophisticated research conducted in the past year clearly points to a most-winning path for dealing with the problem.

Turn to MORE TRAFFIC, page 6



Source: Oregon Department of Transportation

I-405 in Portland

Inside

Lot Size of 7,500 Square Feet

Lot Size of 5,000 Square Feet

24 Units per Net Acre: Townhouses with Accessory Apartments

24 Units per Net Acre: Modern Townhouses

Source: Fregonese and Calthorpe and Associates

USING SPACE *from page 1*

organized by 1000 Friends of Oregon and overseen by representatives of diverse groups, including farmers, builders, timber companies, local governments, and environmentalists.

> ***"Demographic changes are already making people more interested in higher density living,"***
> *Dr. Ethan Seltzer, Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies*

The project evaluated two possible futures: a continuation of recent trends under current policies (called the Historical Trend Alternative) and an alternative that focuses on saving land—and money. That second future (the Land-Conserving Alternative) emphasizes shifting new urban development to slightly higher densities by reducing average lot size. It reduces the need for expansion of urban growth boundaries in the Valley by about 40 percent and cuts back on the amount of farm and forest land used for developing new rural residences.

The project also considered what the Valley's future development pattern might look like if there were no state land use program (for example, no urban growth boundaries or farm land protection policies). It found that both the size of urban areas and the amount of development outside urban areas increased substantially.

Saving land means saving money

The land savings come from two changes. First, slightly more new housing is in multi-family designs (such as townhouses, duplexes, and apartments) than it was in the 1970s and 1980s. Second, the average lot size for single houses is trimmed slightly.

"Demographic changes are already making people more interested in higher density living," Dr. Ethan Seltzer, Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies.

"Family sizes are shrinking, Oregonians are getting older, and lifestyles are changing," says Ethan Seltzer, Director of the Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies and a member of the technical advisory committee for the project. In many Oregon cities, Seltzer says, one-person households account for one-quarter to one-third of all households.

The project researchers found frugal use of land carries a bonus that will benefit everyone, no matter his or her stance on density: lower development costs. "We found slightly denser development patterns could save about $30 million a year in the Valley," says Terry Moore of ECONorthwest, who managed the research.

Putting homes, jobs, and shops closer together can save on the cost of the improvements needed for that new development: If a mile of road or sewer lines or water lines can serve 25 percent more houses, then the cost for each taxpayer, or developer, is less.

Over a 60-year period (1990-2050), the Land-Conserving Alternative saves more than $1.5 billion that taxpayers and developers would otherwise pay for new infrastructure and maintenance to accommodate the same population growth under the Historical Trend Alternative.

A trim here, a trim there

Some ways the Land-Conserving Alternative would control urban and rural sprawl:

- Slight decreases in the share of new housing built on lots one-quarter to one-half acre in large urban areas
- Increases in the share of new housing that is multi-family: the share shifts 10 percent in larger urban areas and 5 percent in smaller cities
- More new development on urban land that is either not used or only lightly used
- Sharply reduced number of new houses built in the countryside on farm land and in forests

New buildings would go up on parking lots, for instance, with parking provided inside. Over time, old buildings would be replaced with new buildings that reflect land-conserving principles. A half-vacant strip mall, for example, might be reborn as street-level shops topped by second-floor apartments.

An advisory committee made up of developers, architects, local officials, and representatives of citizen groups reviewed both the accuracy of current development patterns and the plausibility of the Land-Conserving Alternative. Members generally agreed that, although challenging, the Land-Conserving Alternative was feasible.

"I think their assumptions and analyses were thoughtful and credible," says Glen Rea, an Albany-area developer who participated in the discussion of the alternatives.

Homebuyers today have already grown more interested in these types of housing, even in smaller urban areas such as Salem and Albany, according to developers who sat on the advisory committee.

Urban green spaces will help it fly

The Land-Conserving Alternative factored in the increased importance of green spaces as development shares closer quarters. The amount of land reserved for urban natural areas would increase; the ratio of parkland to new urban development would remain the same as today's proportion.

In a unanimous vote, the advisory committee agreed that land within 200 feet of a stream should be protected from development.

Mike Houck, Urban Naturalist with the Audubon Society of Portland and an advisory committee member sees advantages on several levels. "Protecting and restoring urban green spaces is crucial to helping the recovery of endangered species, to avoiding future listings of endangered species, and to maintaining livability as life inside urban growth boundaries grows more dense."

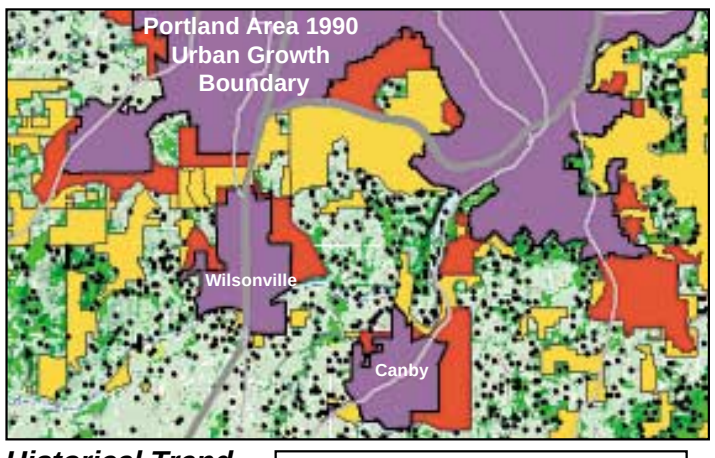
Research only a glimpse of the choices ahead

"Oregonians hate two things: sprawl and density," says Clackamas County Commissioner Mike Jordan and a member of the project's technical advisory committee.

"But they hate taxes, too," Jordan continues. "This study shows that limiting sprawl is a more financially efficient way for communities to grow."

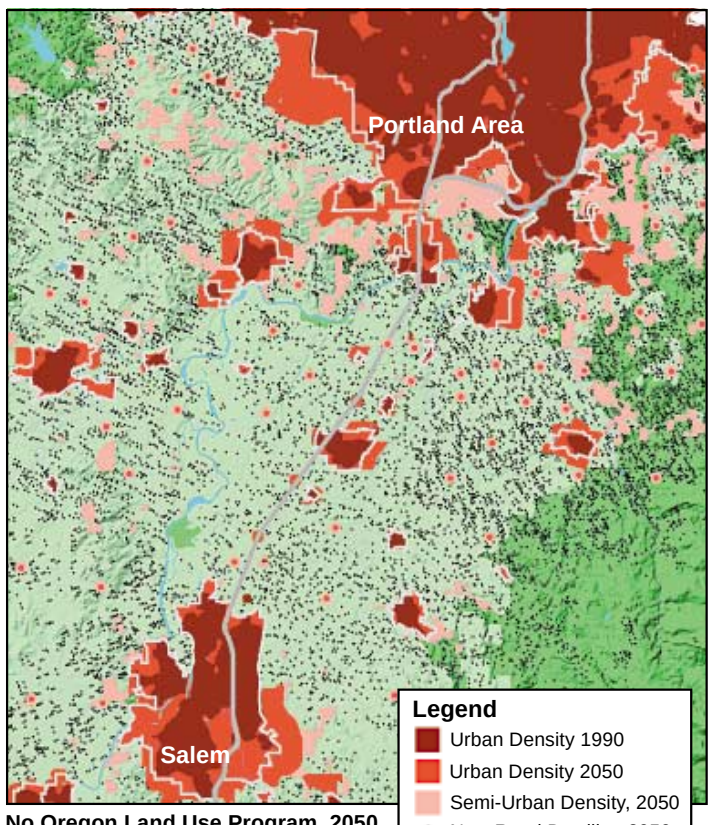
> ***"Oregonians hate two things: sprawl and density. But they hate taxes, too."***
> *Mike Jordan, Clackamas County Commissioner*

The research results are valuable, but they are not enough, says Robert Liberty, Executive Director of 1000 Friends of Oregon. "The research makes choices clearer, but it doesn't make the choices."



Historical Trend Alternative, 2050
Southern Portion of Portland Urban Growth Boundary

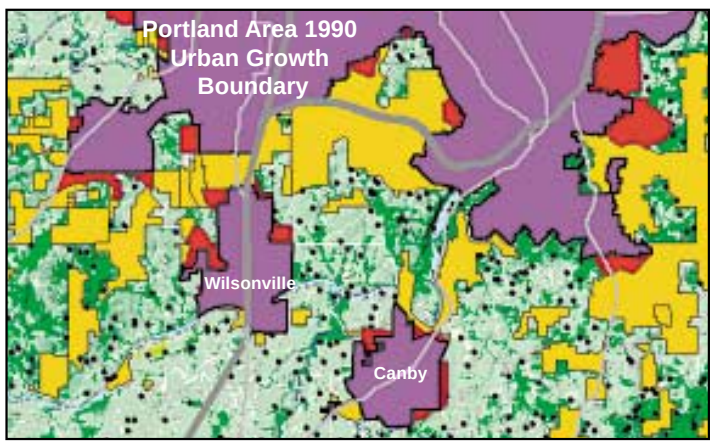
Legend
- 1990 Urban Growth Boundary
- 1990 Exception Areas
- 2050 Urban Growth Boundary Expansion
- New Houses in Rural Areas, 1990-2050



No Oregon Land Use Program, 2050
Northern Willamette Valley

Rural, urban sprawl pose twin threats to Valley farm land

Large losses of commercial farm land, production, and sales expected by 2050 if current trends continue



Land-Conserving Alternative, 2050
Southern Portion of Portland Urban Growth Boundary

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"Farming in the Willamette Valley offers its challenges," says Marion County farmer Tom Brawley. "Each new home site in farming areas brings with it a new set of problems: loss of land for farming, increased nonfarm traffic, increased use of limited ground water, and complaints about accepted farming practices."

Barb Iverson is a Clackamas County farmer who produces nursery stock and corn, beans, grass seed, cabbage seed, cut flowers, and other products. In her part of the Valley there is one house for every ten acres of land, even though the area lies outside metropolitan Portland's urban growth boundary.

"We've just got to stop treating our Willamette Valley farm land like surplus land," Iverson says, "waiting for low-density development."

Brawley and Iverson's personal experiences are supported by research by Dr. Jim Cornelius, Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at Oregon State University.

"The threat posed by population growth is not just the development or 'paving over' of existing farm land," Cornelius says. The growth affects the economic viability of remaining farms as well, he says. Patterns of development and land ownership directly affect the crops that farmers choose and the productivity of land.

If current land-use policies and trends in the Willamette Valley continue between now and 2050, the Valley could see almost 300,000 acres of farm land move out of commercial production as its population grows from 2.3 million to 4 million. That estimate includes land that, while not built on directly, is no longer being used as commercial farm land because new owners do not want to farm, or because they cannot because of conflicts with surrounding development. The 300,000 acres includes farm land lying within urban growth boundaries and rural residential zones.

Barb Iverson, Clackamas County farmer

Source: 1000 Friends of Oregon

> ***"We've just got to stop treating our Willamette Valley farm land like surplus land, waiting for low-density development."***
> *Barb Iverson, Clackamas County farmer*

The research considered many possible futures: estimates of acreage moved out of commercial production by 2050 varied from 200,000 to 500,000, but the consensus of technical advisors and farmers was that 300,000 acres was where current trends could lead. The acreage is an area a bit bigger than Multnomah County and is nearly as much as the 322,000 acres now protected by Exclusive Farm Use zoning in Marion County.

Farmers the original crusaders against sprawl

The annual loss in farm revenue that results from changes in the amount of land being farmed commercially could be about $350 million per year by 2050—almost one quarter of the $1.6 billion in annual sales of farm products from the Willamette Valley today.

The work of Cornelius, which benefited from a committee of technical experts and the expert opinions of farmers from around the Valley, was sponsored by the

Turn to SPRAWL, page 3

Fast Facts

Population and Land Use

- The Willamette Valley is home to 70 percent of the state's population and 75 percent of the state's jobs.
- 70 percent of new Valley residents move here from out-of-state and one Valley resident in seven has moved here since 1995.
- By 2050, about 1.7 million additional people — both born here and transplanted— are expected to swell the Willamette Valley's population to nearly 4 million.
- The Valley accounts for 50 percent of Oregon's agricultural sales.
- The Willamette Valley covers about 12 percent of the state. It includes the Willamette River, its 13 major tributaries and the land that drains to them. About 20 percent of the Valley's nearly 12,000 square miles are agricultural.
- The number of hobby farms is growing: Less than 10 percent of Valley farms generate three-fourths of the agricultural sales.
- The Willamette Valley is home to 69 urban growth boundaries, collectively containing about 450,000 acres. In 1990, the urban growth boundary sizes ranged from 56 acres in Barlow to more than 229,000 in metro Portland.

Good news on forests outweighs bad

Development will gobble up acres, but barely dent long-term timber production

Dr. Jeffrey Kline, Research Forester with the USDA Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Research Station at Oregon State University, has some bad news and good news for the Willamette Valley forests of tomorrow.

The bad news: Tens of thousands of acres of Willamette Valley forest land could be lost to development of 10,000 houses in the next 50 years if trends continue.

The good news: While the increase in rural homes carries a variety of consequences, the level of timber production will not change much.

"If current trends continue, 43,000 to 68,000 acres of the Valley's 2.1 million acres of privately owned forest land could be lost to rural and urban development by 2050," says Kline.

But most of the new houses, Kline says, would be built in parts of the forest that generally are not being managed intensively for growing commercial wood anyway, such as mixed hardwood stands and small private tracts.

"If current trends continue, 43,000 to 68,000 acres of private timber lands will be lost to urban or rural development by 2050."
Dr. Jeffrey Kline, Research Forester

The results of Kline's modeling and analysis correspond with the land development strategy that the timber industry and the Oregon Legislature sought in statutory changes hammered out in the 1993 session, says Dr. Doug Brodie, Forest Economist with OSU's College of Forestry and a technical advisor to the alternative futures project.

"The pressure at the time was to vastly loosen up potential for development of these so-called secondary lands," says Brodie. "And it was managed to a reasonable standoff between no-development and limited-development interests."

But, Brodie notes, "Poor forest land in Oregon still grows wood fiber faster than the national average."

Dan Green, a steering committee member and member of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association, is encouraged that forest productivity remains in good shape under both the historical trend and land-conserving alternatives.

The Valley's coming growth will be felt in many places, he notes. But the forests will not bear the brunt.

Groups agree on likely forest future

"Growth always causes changes we must adjust to, often grudgingly," says Green, Consulting Forester with Woodland Management, Inc. of Lake Oswego. "The good news of this study is that the productivity of the forests will hardly be affected by either growth scenario. It is much more likely that our forest economy will be negatively impacted by the political consequences of growth than by the physical ones."

Green says the process that produced the two alternative futures is one that the land use arena has needed for years; he commends 1000 Friends for steering a process he calls "open and inclusive." "When the research was done, we all analyzed the results and worked together to make appropriate conclusions."

Source: Starker Forests

Sixty-four percent of the Valley is forest land.

"It is much more likely that our forest economy will be negatively impacted by the political consequences of growth than by the physical ones."
Dan Green, Consulting Forester

Yet, even with the limited impact on timber production, the prospect of 10,000 new houses in the woods leaves some unhappy.

"In Columbia County where I live, the forests are being cut up into large-lot residential developments," says Pat Zimmerman, a retired high-tech engineer who's lived outside Scappoose for 22 years. "Those new homes are going to cause problems," she predicts, "be they homeowners objecting to adjacent clear cuts, or increased risk of forest fire or demands for new services."

Zimmerman prefers the Land-Conserving Alternative, which would trim the number of new forest homes from 10,000 to 3,400. The approach would save 17,000 to 34,000 acres of forest land from low-density development over the next 50 years.

"I believe our land-use laws have saved a lot of good forest land in the Willamette Valley from development."
Ward Armstrong, former president Oregon Forest Industry Council

The Willamette Valley Alternative Futures Project Funders

William and Flora Hewlett Foundation • Spirit Mountain Community Fund • Oregon Community Foundation • Compton Foundation • Lamb Foundation • Jackson Foundation • Bullitt Foundation • Rose E. Tucker Charitable Trust • 1000 Friends of Oregon

Steering Committee

Andy Anderson, Oregon Farm Bureau Federation • Ward Armstrong, Oregon Forest Industries Council (retired) • Helen Berg, Mayor, City of Corvallis • Jon Chandler, Oregon Building Industry Association • Randy Franke, Marion County Commissioner • Dan Green, Oregon Small Woodland Owners Association • Mike Houck, Audubon Society of Portland • Robert Liberty, 1000 Friends of Oregon • Brian Scott, Livable Oregon • Peter Watt, Willamette Valley Livability Forum

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"I believe our land-use laws have saved a lot of good forest land in the Willamette Valley from development—land that helps support the rural economy," says Ward Armstrong, former president of the Oregon Forest Industry Council and a member of the steering committee. "I hope this project helps our elected officials consider the advantages of doing an even better job of protecting forest land."

SPRAWL *from page 2*

Willamette Valley Alternative Futures Project. The project was organized by 1000 Friends of Oregon and overseen by a steering committee of representatives from a wide range of groups, including the Oregon Building Industry, the Oregon Farm Bureau Federation, local governments, and environmentalists.

The project looked at two approaches for shaping the valley's growth in the next 50 years: a continuation of current trends under current policies (the Historical Trend Alternative) and an alternative that focused on saving forests, farm land, and money (the Land-Conserving Alternative).

"The methodology for estimating farm land losses under either growth alternative is complicated by the diversity in crop type and parcel size here in the Willamette Valley," Cornelius says. "Land-*extensive* enterprises such as grass seed, grains, and field crops are more sensitive to urban development than land-*intensive* uses such as nursery crops, Christmas trees, and small fruits."

To estimate the agricultural landscape of 2050, researchers looked at existing patterns of farm land use and the likelihood of various crops surviving on the parcel sizes projected under the two growth scenarios.

But the Willamette Valley would have already lost far more land if trends that pre-date Oregon's land use planning laws had continued. In the 25 years before Oregon passed its comprehensive land use laws in 1974, the Willamette Valley lost one-third of its farm land as population in the Valley's counties grew by 570,000.

If that trend had continued, the last farm land in the Valley would have disappeared by 2050 or earlier.

"You realize Oregon owes its land-use planning to farmers and the farm movement," says Hector Macpherson Jr., a Linn County farmer who authored SB 100 and is considered the father of land-use planning in the state. "The preservation of farm land was uppermost in my mind when I got into this."

The alternative: Valley population grows by 90%; farmland decreases by just 10%

Researchers found that projected losses of farm land from commercial production over the next half century can be cut from 300,000 acres to 150,000 acres under the Land-Conserving Alternative. That alternative presumes policies can cause two changes in development over the next 50 years: increase compact urban growth and reduce the number of residences creeping into rural lands.

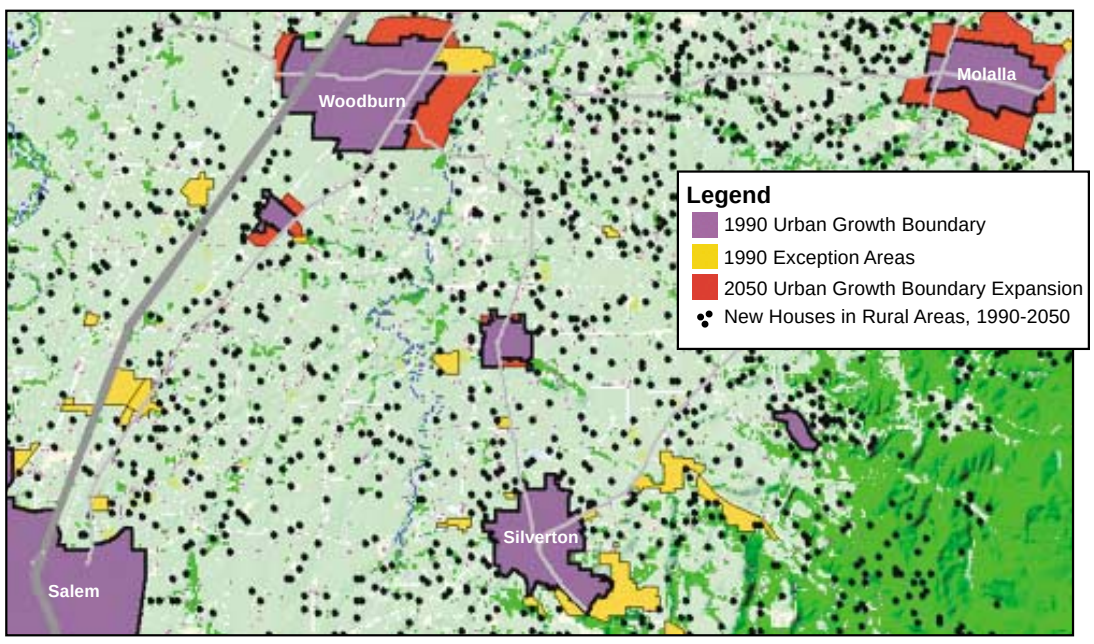
As the Valley's population nearly doubles between 1990 and 2050, just 10 percent of the Valley's remaining farm land would be developed—half the amount that would be developed under a status quo approach.

Saving those 150,000 acres would also save farm income: a savings of about $165 million per year.

"We need to be more efficient in how we build our cities and sharply cut back on the amount of precious farm land we use up for new rural home sites, new golf courses, new gravel pits," says Andy Anderson, executive vice president of the Farm Bureau Federation.

"We need to be more efficient in how we build our cities and sharply cut back on the amount of precious farm land we use up for new rural home sites, new golf courses, new gravel pits."
Andy Anderson, Executive Vice President of the Farm Bureau Federation

"Hector Macpherson and other leaders in the farm community and elected office made tough choices in the 1970s," Anderson says. "We should do the same for the next generation of farmers."



Historical Trend Alternative, 2050
New rural housing in Salem-Molalla area

Fast Facts

Ecosystem

- At least 1,400 miles of streams in the Willamette Basin violated one or more state or federal water quality standards in 1998, according to data from selected stream samplings. More than 13,000 miles of stream run through the basin and many have not been tested, so the number of actual violations is likely higher.
- Native habitat in the Willamette Basin has suffered great hits: More than 99 percent of original bottomland prairie, 72 percent of bottomland forest and 88 percent of upland prairie have been lost, according to the Pacific Northwest Ecosystem Research Consortium's 1998 report.
- In the past 150 years, 80 percent of streamside (riparian) forests along the upper and lower Willamette River has been sacrificed to industrial and urban development, farming, and channel straightening. Riparian forests are multipurpose good guys: They shade streams and rivers, filter polluted water from the surrounding land, provide wildlife habitat, and stabilize stream banks and floodplain soils.

CHOICES *from page 1*

lands, conserving forest lands, conserving open space, providing affordable housing, and providing for an orderly, efficient transition of rural land to urban—the birth of urban growth boundaries.

Maintaining the Willamette Valley's quality of life will become more complex and expensive as an expected 1.7 million more people roll in. The various scenarios of 2050 described in this tabloid are not crystal balls. But they make it clear that different policy choices create different realities over time.

"Each small choice we make on a daily basis adds up to the place we'll be in the future," says Duncan Wyse, President of Oregon Business Council, an independent group that advocates for policies that improve Oregon's quality of life and economy. "It's hard to remember, for example, that the Number 1 agricultural county in America 60 years ago was Los Angeles County. They obviously made some choices."

"Each small choice we make on a daily basis adds up to the place we'll be in the future."
Duncan Wyse, President of Oregon Business Council

Twentieth-century Oregonians made choices, too. The upshot: travelers in the Willamette Valley see sharp distinctions between farmland and suburbia or towns, a goal many growth-stressed states are just now scrambling to achieve.

Growth is complicated. Increased population, whether in cities or former mill towns, doesn't necessarily translate into well-paying jobs. And as the vibrant Portland metro area struggles with snarled highways, overcrowded schools and high-cost housing, other communities in the valley can see the expensive baggage that population growth packs.

"Surveys of Willamette Valley residents show they care about quality education, low crime rates, free-flowing traffic, open spaces, and healthy fish and wildlife," says Mayor Helen Berg of Corvallis. "Now is the time to think about the actions, policies, and standards we need to uphold those values." "But how do we know what we should be doing now," Berg points out, "if we don't have a vision?"

That's why Berg and other leaders throughout the Valley are asking residents to think about the type of future they want—to ask themselves what makes for a high quality of life and enhanced livability for future generations.

RESTORING from page 1

unprecedented in Oregon, which combines intensive scientific research with the voices of real people from the Willamette Valley.

The consortium's findings offer the public eye-opening sneak previews of the environmental effects of three possible approaches to handling the Willamette River basin's coming population boom. The balance between short-term private gain and long-term public good is at the center of the differences among the three scenarios.

"The value we have in Oregon is we still have the option to make choices and in order to make choices, and do that in a thoughtful manner, we need the basis for comparison."
Paul Risser, Ph.D., President of Oregon State University

Restoring lost ecosystems

The scenarios cast a beam into the future, pointing out trouble spots needing extra thought and attention. They are designed to help Oregonians see how today's decisions will impact land, water, and native species. And they can serve as a compass for voters, pointing them toward the policies and politicians that will lead to the future they want for the valley.

Rejuvenating the basin's ecology to 30 to 60 percent of its former self is possible, but it would require a series of specific steps, says David Hulse, a Professor in Landscape Architecture at the University of Oregon and principal investigator of the UO's portion of the consortium.

The steps include restoring streamside vegetation, changing the management of dams and other flood control measures, restoring the balance brought by natural fire, allowing native plants to flourish, and letting fallen trees remain at rest in streams. The prescription ranges from the "relatively easy and painless," Hulse says, to more challenging—such as finding innovative ways to compensate landowners in order to regain property currently used for short-term economic gain.

What advantages would a partially restored Willamette basin offer? "We'll reduce the likelihood of having to go through the wrenching socioeconomic changes that future endangered species listings would create," says Hulse. "Others also see ethical and moral dimensions to restoration."

Research plus reality check

The Pacific Northwest Ecosystem Research Consortium is a group of scientists from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Oregon State University, University of Oregon, University of Washington, and the U.S. Forest Service.

The EPA funded the group as part of its follow-up to President Clinton's Northwest Forest Plan. The consortium began its work by gathering an immense amount of data.

Then, more than three years ago, these university and government researchers pulled together 20 people, designated them the Possible Futures Working Group, and asked them to serve as a reality check. Their backgrounds cut across the spectrum of Oregon viewpoints: a real estate developer, a farmer, urban planners, state transportation experts, city managers, representatives of industry and environmental groups, and more.

The researchers asked the working group—with its many hats and biases—to come up with three plausible and distinct ways for Oregon to treat the Willamette watershed over the next 50 years.

Then, in consultation with the 20 citizens, the researchers fiddled with the knobs and dials representing changeable elements of each scenario: the spacing of homes within cities, for instance, the percentage of the population living in rural areas, and the age of a tree before it's harvested.

Making thoughtful choices

The researchers did not pick favorites. Their goal was to numerically illustrate distinct differences between scenarios, such as changes in stream conditions and acres of farm and forest lands converted to development.

Based on their numbers and the working group's assumptions, the Conservation Scenario is the only scenario in which ecological health is regained, and not eroded.

The project offers the public and policy gurus the gift of time and space: If people like—or don't like—what the scenarios project, they can adjust the Valley's course *before* the changes have rolled out on the ground.

Oregon is different from many places he has traveled and lived, says Paul Risser, Ph.D., President of Oregon State University, an internationally recognized biologist, and chair of the Willamette Restoration Initiative Board. In those states, land is not dedicated to different urban and rural uses, and sprawl reigns.

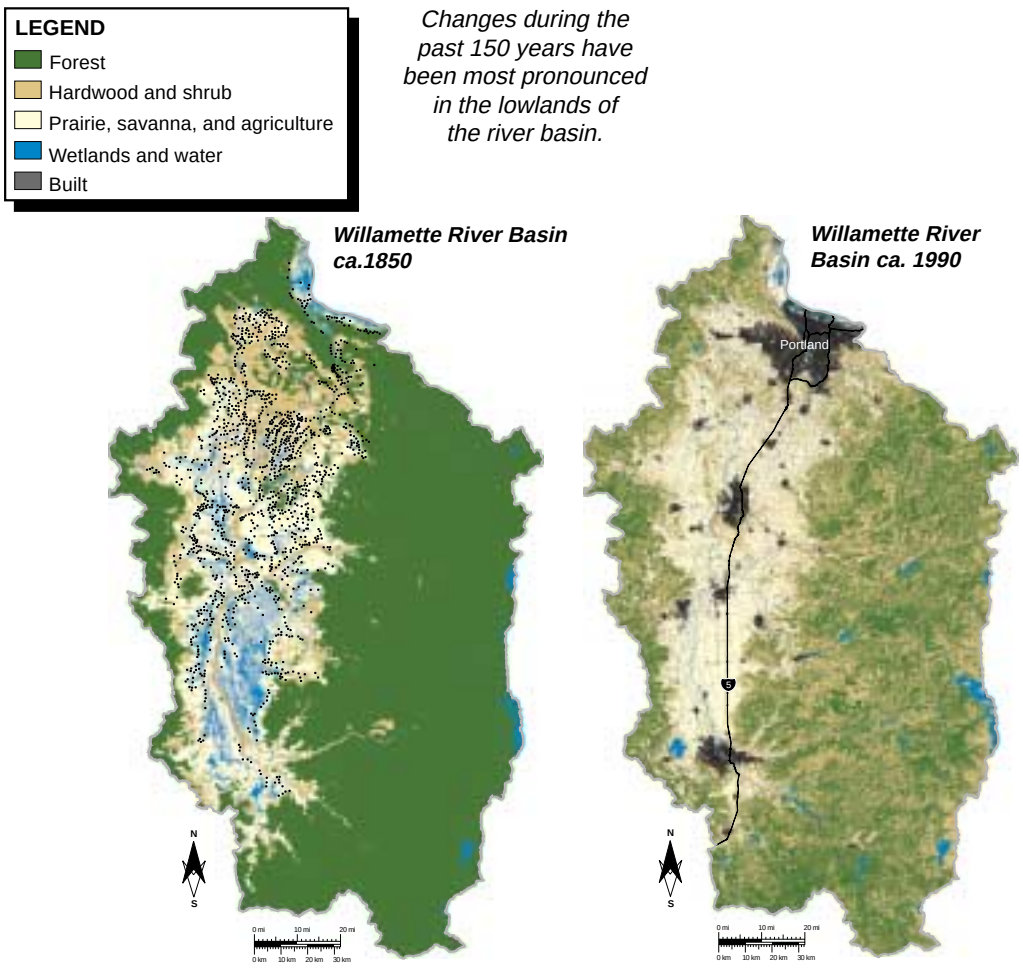
"The value we have in Oregon is we still have the option to make choices," Risser says. "And in order to make choices, and do that in a thoughtful manner, we need the basis for comparison."

How to compare? The chart on page 5 offers a 50-year snapshot of the three It-Could-Happen scenarios devised by the working group. Analyses are ongoing.

More-detailed effects of the scenarios will follow later this year and will be posted on the consortium web site at http://www.orst.edu/dept/pnw-erc/.

1850 VS. 1990 LAND USE/LAND COVER

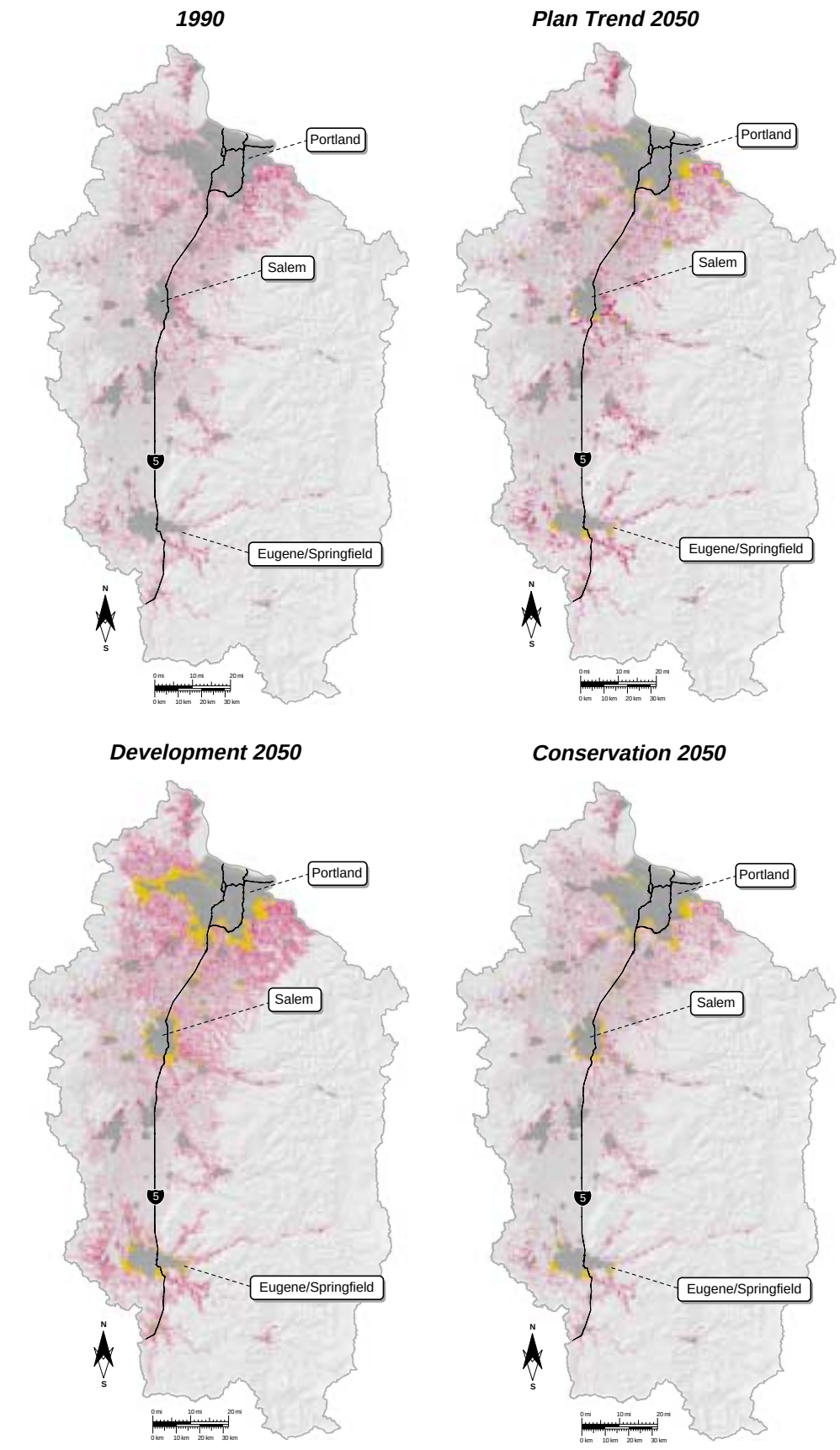
Changes during the past 150 years have been most pronounced in the lowlands of the river basin.



Source: 1850 vegetation from the General Land Office Survey notes transcribed and mapped by Oregon Natural Heritage Program, 1850 dwellings and 1990 map from PNW-ERC

URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY AND RURAL RESIDENTIAL EXPANSION

Varying assumptions about how the future will unfold (see chart on facing page) lead to significant differences in the future urban and rural areas of the basin.



Source: Pacific Northwest Ecosystem Research Consortium

The Pacific Northwest Ecosystem Research Consortium
Willamette Basin Alternative Futures Analysis

Funders
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Oregon State University
University of Oregon

Possible Futures Working Group
Rick Bastasch
Willamette Restoration Initiative
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Terry Moore
ECONorthwest
Dave Nelson
Oregon Seed Council
Mitch Rohse
Oregon Dept. of Land Conservation & Development
John Sessions
Oregon State University

Research Team
Over 30 research scientists at EPA, OSU, UO, USFS, and ECONorthwest.
See PNW-ERC website for complete listing.

Short-term gain vs. long-term good

Development, conservation must be weighed when planning restoration strategy

The ever-flowing Willamette carries with it our mistreatments from Cottage Grove—and all points in between—to Portland Harbor. Erosion from land that lacks soil-gripping ground cover. Sun that beats down, warming the water where no trees offer shade. Rainwater that washes over roofs, pavement, lawns, and fields coated with contaminants such as oil and pesticides. Suds from washed cars that sweep into city storm sewers and empty into streams that flow into the Willamette.

Because the river is subject to so many influences, Willamette Valley residents have the chance to make their mark, one way or another, over the next 50 years. The Pacific Northwest Ecosystem Research Consortium asked a committee of 20 citizens from a variety of backgrounds to create varying realistic scenarios for the river basin. This Possible Futures Working Group offered the following:

a. Continue with Oregon's current laws and implement current plans called *Plan Trend 2050.*

b. Let private property rights and short-term market forces call the shots, called *Development 2050.*

c. Spend the next half-century placing a highest premium on saving the habitat of native fish and animals, even if it means some economic losses, called *Conservation 2050.*

Willamette Valley residents looking at these three possible paths might make a quick pick based on their politics, their age, children in their lives, their line of work, or property they own. Portions of each are shown on the accompanying pages, with an eye to their effects on urban expansion, agriculture, and native habitats.

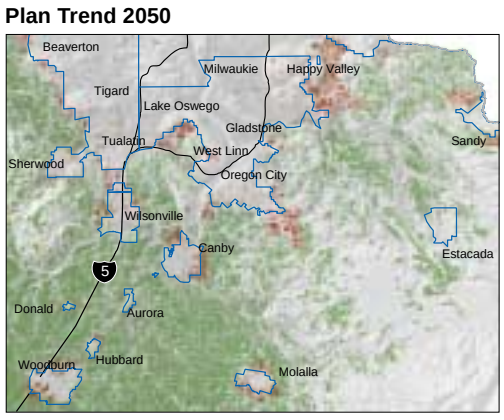
The point of the Pacific Northwest Ecosystem Research Consortium is to add forward-looking science—screened for common sense — to this mix of personal experience and bias.

As a result, the consortium project offers Oregonians a valuable opportunity to look across the whole region and develop a strategy, says Paul Risser, Ph.D., President of Oregon State University and chair of the Willamette Restoration Initiative Board. "And though decisions can be made locally," Risser says, "with this study, they can be made within the context of a regional analysis."

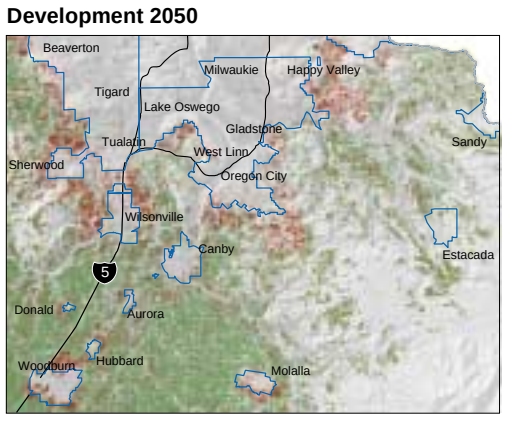
LOSS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

Legend
- Highways
- 1995 Urban Growth Boundaries
- Converted 1990 Agricultural Land
- 2050 Agricultural Land

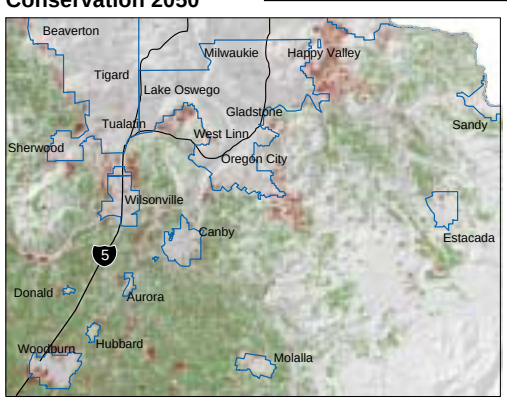
Plan Trend 2050



Development 2050



Conservation 2050



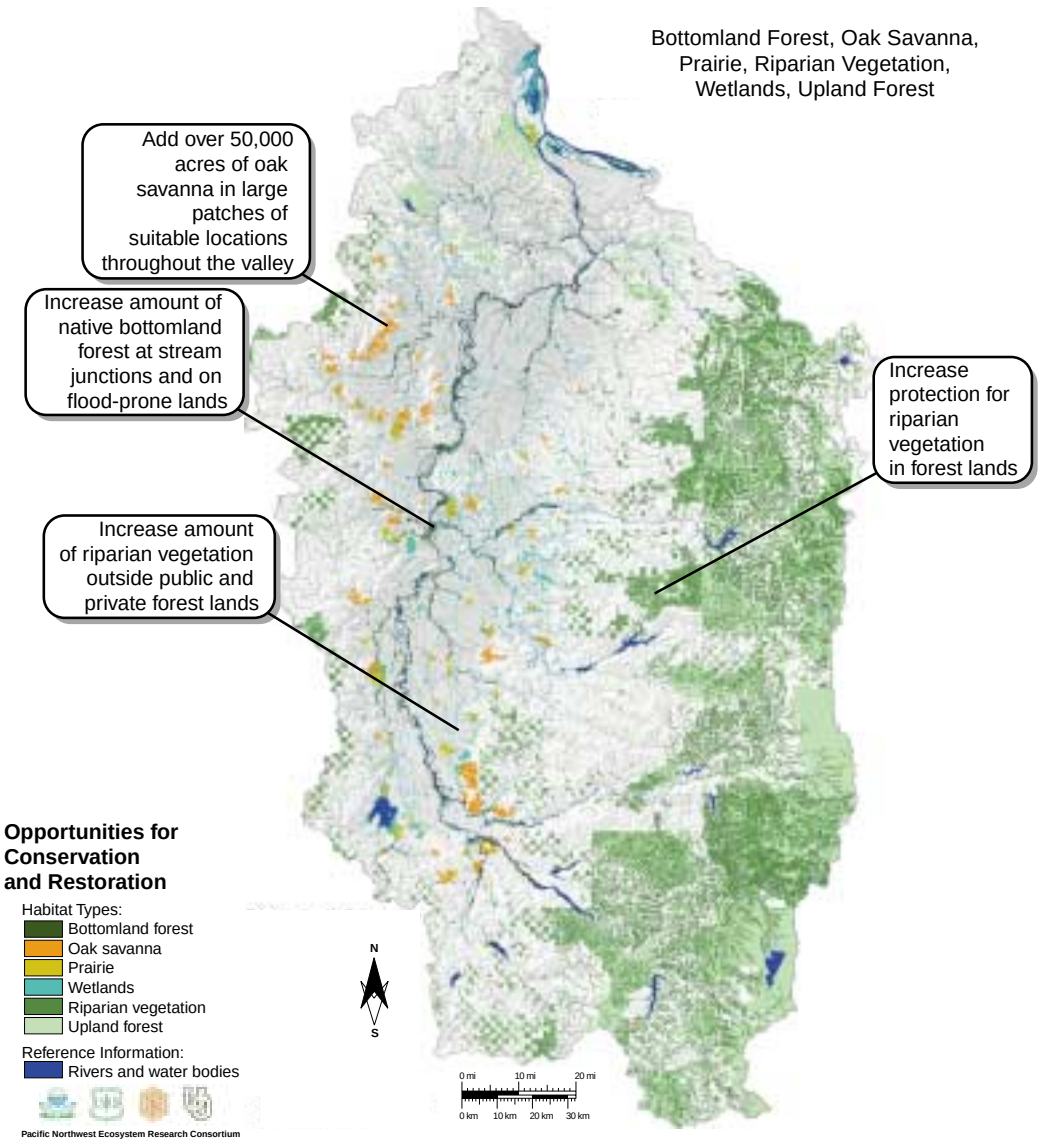
As urban and rural residential uses of land expand at different rates, the locations and amounts of converted agricultural land vary in the future alternatives.

Source: Pacific Northwest Ecosystem Research Consortium

Comparing Three Future Scenarios to 1990 Baseline Scenario

	Guiding Value	Key Assumptions	Valley Population	Urban/Rural Split	Acres within UGBs	Increase in UGB	Agricultural acres (defined by land cover)	Farm/Forest acreage Converted To:	Of Note
1990 Reality	*Protect prime agricultural and forest lands from residential and commercial development. Preserve farming and forestry as ways of life. Provide for rational expansion of urban growth boundaries.*	Past choices created the present landscapes of the Willamette River basin. Present choices will influence the future. The basin is increasingly comprised of human-dominated landscapes.	*2 million*	85% urban; 15% rural	*444,000*	N.A.	*1.4 million*	N.A.	*In the 1990s, 74 percent of Oregon newcomers settled in the valley.*
2050 Plan Trend Future	*Retain the status quo in Oregon's Land Use Planning System while accomodating an approximate doubling of the 1990 population.*	Current policies for water, land management and zoning continue through 2050. Existing long-range plans are followed, such as the 1993 federal Northwest Forest Plan, Oregon urban growth boundaries, and local comprehensive plans.	*3.9 million*	93 percent inside urban growth boundaries (UGBs); 7 percent outside	*495,000*	51,000 acres, equivalent to more than 49,000 football fields	*1.367 million*	Small amount lost is used to expand space for dense development in cities.	*Oregon's land use laws, passed in 1972, have been hailed nationally as an effective method for balancing conservation and development. But a 1990s population boom sparked debate over the laws' ability to handle future pressures.*
2050 Development Scenario	*Emphasis on short-term economic gain. Influence of the free market increases as a device for managing land and water resources.*	A relaxation of current state-sanctioned devices—regulations, incentives—for influencing the use of land and water. People, given the choice, will prefer to live no more densely within cities than they did in 1990 and will build a larger proportion of homes in rural areas.	*3.9 million*	87 percent inside urban growth boundaries (UBGs); 13 percent outside.	*573,000*	129,000 acres or more than 124,000 football fields	*1.219 million*	Largely to rural homes. Some urban residences, commerce and industry.	*An increase of rural residences also carries costs related to providing public services such as roads, fire protection, schools.*
2050 Conservation	*Emphasize long-term ecological health, sometimes at the expense of short-term economic gain. Numerous small decisionsaccumulate to protect native habitat: oak savanna, floodplain forests, prairie, wetlands, and riparian areas.*	By conserving and restoring native vegetation (riparian areas, old growth conifers, and oak savanna), we reduce future threats to at-risk species such as the salmon and the Acorn Woodpecker, improve water quality, and decrease chances that the federal government will need to list other species as threatened or endangered. Regulations and incentives will offer compelling reasons for compact urban and rural development.	*3.9 million*	94 percent urban; 6 percent rural.	*498,000*	54,000 acres, or about 52,000 football fields	*1.158 million*	Predominantly to native fish and wildlife habitat. Some to urban and residential use.	*The number of acres inside the urban growth boundaries is higher in the Conservation Scenario than in Plan Trend because urban land is set aside for natural areas inside future UGBs. Boundary is bumped out to accommodate the required 20-year housing supply.*

CONSERVATION 2050 SCENARIO'S CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OPPORTUNITIES



Source: Pacific Northwest Ecosystem Research Consortium

Can the Willamette River basin be home to more people, more salmon, and more native wildlife?

The Willamette Restoration Initiative (WRI) believes the answer is a resounding yes—if we choose to make it so.

In 1998, the Governor charged WRI with creating a new, integrated strategy to restore the Willamette's watershed health. Until then, no one had the job of promoting actions across the landscape to help the Willamette basin. Through its 26-member citizen board, WRI has worked with agencies, local governments, farmers, foresters, businesses, watershed groups, non-profit organizations, and citizens to draw up a comprehensive, 27-point restoration strategy.

WRI is recommending an approach that first recognizes the critical work already underway: watershed groups and local committees working on farm water quality plans, property owners continuing their land and water stewardship, local governments stepping up to the challenges of the Endangered Species Act, and government agencies implementing pollution control programs and bringing new incentives to landowners. The board sees a pressing need, however, to strengthen these efforts.

But at least five of WRI's 27 recommendations deal with activities that suffer a critical lack of attention and which must be immediately addressed—especially if basin communities are to locally manage implementation of the federal Endangered Species Act:

- Establish and apply clear riparian protection guidelines for this diverse landscape;
- Assure a coordinated, cross-jurisdictional effort to inventory and protect priority habitats throughout the watershed;
- Cut the paperwork and improve the flexibility and delivery of conservation incentives for landowners;
- Form a community council to sort through the extremely complicated and far-reaching requirements of the Endangered Species Act relating to salmon recovery; and
- Work with local communities to figure out the complexities, uncertainties, and costs of complying with both the Endangered Species and Clean Water Acts.

These activities involve a new vision for the basin—and hard work to bring the vision to life. Using scientific tools, the Pacific Northwest Ecosystem Research Consortium has developed the Conservation and Restoration Opportunities map at left. It represents a great leap in understanding what the Willamette basin could be in 50 years—*if* we deliberately choose new ways to share our lands and water with each other and with the plants and animals that preceded us.

The Consortium's work shows there is room for natural habitat as well as for working farms, productive forests, and growing towns. WRI's *Willamette Restoration Strategy* includes the map to guide a community conversation about how to create such a future.

For more information, go to www.oregonwri.org or call 1-888-854-8377.

FUTURE *from page 1*

"Getting people to think as a united Valley is going to be tough," says Randall Franke, a Marion County Commissioner for 22 years. "They're focused on their local community, their local economy, their local elected officials. And that's understandable."

But without question, Franke says, "the future quality of life in the Valley depends on our ability to start thinking more regionally about growth issues than we traditionally have. And the sooner we start the process, the better."

"...the future quality of life in the Valley depends on our ability to start thinking more regionally about growth issues than we traditionally have. And the sooner we start the process, the better."
Randall Franke, Marion County Commissioner

The Willamette Valley Livability Forum agrees, promoting regional strategies for dealing with growth rather than just piecemeal attempts by each jurisdiction to rev its slow economy, calm its breakneck growth, or preserve habitat for wildlife.

"We have to look at the economy as a whole," says Mayor Helen Berg of Corvallis, "not just the urban economy or the rural economy. We're very interdependent."

This newspaper supplement is part of the effort to unite the Valley's vast neighborhood in thinking about its future. It is being distributed this week to 459,000 households throughout the Valley.

Groundbreaking research into future

The articles and graphics summarize work by researchers at the University of Oregon, Oregon State University, the Oregon Department of Transportation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Forest Service, and private firms.

The forecasts present a menu of choices related to land use, land management and transportation—and their effects on traffic, employment, water supply, infrastructure costs, wildlife protection, the economy, and the amount of farm and forestland destined for development.

Over the past three years, the researchers used computer-assisted analysis to evaluate scenarios looking ahead to 2050. Each project then ran its analyses past a diverse citizens' group, advisory board, or other thoughtfully chosen panel of individuals familiar with growth, development and land management.

The groundbreaking research projects give Oregonians a first-ever opportunity to *try out* their possible futures instead of simply stumbling into tomorrow's uncharted territory.

"The only way we're ever going to hold our society together and keep the livability near the condition we have now is with united action."
Hector Macpherson Jr., former State Senator

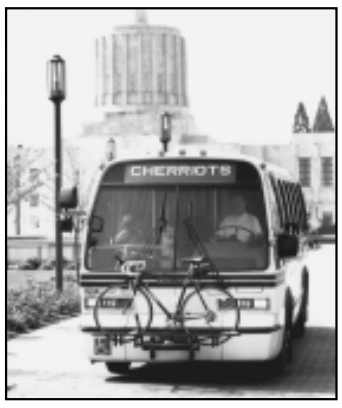
The project sponsors hope the resulting information will prompt Valley residents to think about the kind of Willamette Valley they inherited—and the kind they wish to leave for coming generations.

"The only way we're ever going to hold our society together and keep the livability near the condition we have now is with united action," says 82-year-old Hector Macpherson Jr., a Linn County farmer, lifelong Republican and former State Senator who co-sponsored SB 100, passed by the Legislature in 1973 to establish Oregon's landmark land-use laws. "And that's government action; and that's land use planning."

MORE TRAFFIC *from page 1*

The Valley's population is expected to hit 4 million in 2050. Along with those people come their vehicles. "The congestion will affect much of everyday life: commuting, businesses receiving deliveries on time, parents picking up their kids, anyone running errands, or heading out of town," says Marcia Kelley, member of Salem Area Transit Board.

The study shows Oregon cannot build enough roads to vanquish the coming congestion," says Chris Hagerbaumer of Oregon Transportation Reform Advocate Network. Yet our prosperity and quality of life—and, perhaps, our civic sanity—are tied to our ability to smoothly get where we want or need to go.



Source: Salem Area Transit

Salem area transit

Picking a route

Enter the Alternative Transportation Futures Project, with a truckload of information.

The project, an effort by the Willamette Valley Livability Forum, is the first of its kind in North America. Funded by the Federal Highway Administration and launched in July 1999, the project looks at traffic as a piece of a bigger puzzle of ever-changing mutual influences: land use, the economy, and transportation.

It is no surprise that each affects the other. But until this project, no one in the nation had meticulously connected the dots to illustrate the complexity of the web at such a large regional scale.

The study shows Oregon cannot build enough roads to vanquish the coming congestion."
Chris Hagerbaumer, Oregon Transportation Reform Advocates Network

Armed with mathematics, computers, and newly collected information, project leaders painted seven scenarios of the future. Then, with the help of a computerized model, planners crunched the data to see how various land use and transportation policies might set dominos tumbling over the next 50 years.

The dominoes included congestion on highways and major streets, people's inclination to hop into their own vehicles or board a bus or train, and even where people opt to live and businesses decide to locate.

Looking Down the Road

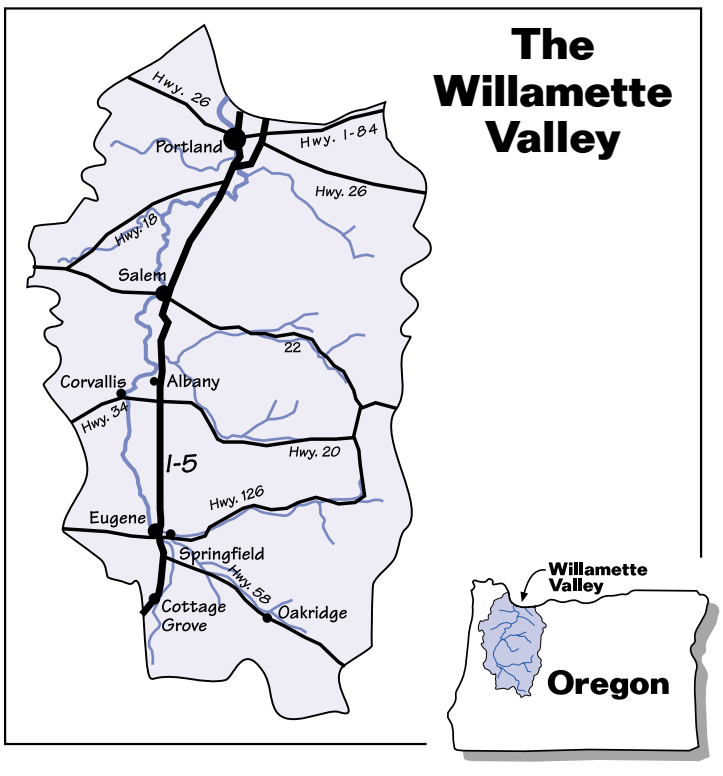
Driver beware: The computer model is not high-definition or a crystal ball. It doesn't paint infallible pictures of the future. But it is great at enabling planners to play a high-tech game of *what if*, a use endorsed by international experts who reviewed the model.

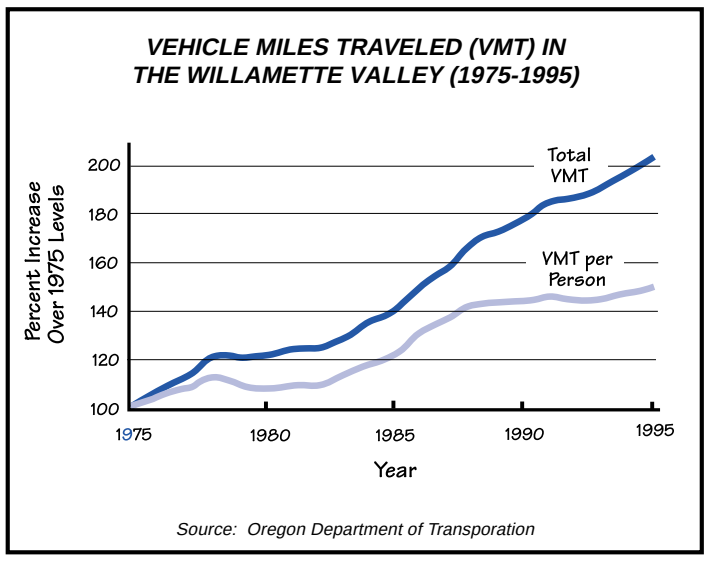
The planners' idea was to push the boundaries of transportation and land use policy in different directions to gain a sense of where those policies might take us. "It gives us food for thought as we deal with these questions," says Larry Schaffner, Planner with the Willamette Valley Livability Forum, "It's a start."

Some of the planners' *what ifs:* What if we invested a bunch of money into public transportation? Poured money into highways? Charged tolls? Developed land more efficiently than we have for the past 20 years? What if we did all four?

Source: Lane Council of Governments

It will take major shifts in policy over a long period of time to cause significant change.





Source: Oregon Department of Transporation

Total vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the Willamette Valley more than doubled from 1975 to 1995.

Then what would happen to traffic? To transit ridership? To trucked-in freight? To businesses' decisions about where to locate, and people's decisions about where to live?

The elaborate exercise produced loads of information, which experts then reviewed. They reached several clear conclusions.

- Baby and temporary steps will not cut it. To make a difference in traffic, we'll need big shifts in policy over many years.
- While the two other Valley futures studies found that increasing the density of development will help preserve farms, forests, and open spaces to ease traffic snarls on major highways between cities, we will also need to invest in our transportation system and curb our addiction to the automobile.
- Even if we go full-tilt into building roads, expanding public transit, and imposing transportation taxes, traffic congestion will still increase.

But there is good news, too. The research showed that choices we make about transportation policies will make a big difference in just how crowded highways become in the years ahead. For example:

- Increasing the frequency of public transit service will increase ridership and cut delays on Valley highways and major thoroughfares.
- Boosting the cost of driving—*a la* a mileage tax—will accomplish a few things: slice the amount of auto travel and time-chewing traffic jams, increase transit ridership, and bring in money to help finance transportation system improvements.

And most significantly, combining approaches will pack more punch than

Turn to MORE TRAFFIC, Page 7

Source: Oregon Department of Transportation

Today, more cars and trucks live in Oregon than people.

Livability Hopes and Worries

What's on Willamette Valley residents' minds?

A lot.

Worries about overpopulation, loss of open space and natural areas, traffic, and the quality of public education.

Values of clean air and water, preservation of open spaces and natural resources, and retaining livable communities.

Those dominating concerns came through loud and clear in a series of phone surveys that looked at valley residents' feelings about growth, their current worries, and their expectations for the Valley. Some highlights:

A bit of braking, please: From Portland to Cottage Grove, Valley residents are generally tilted slightly towards slower growth. Interviewers asked people to rate, on a scale of 0 to 10, how much more growth they wanted. Zero meant no growth in their county whatsoever; 10 meant as much growth as possible.

Average score? 4.4—both for down-Valley residents and those in the Portland area. In each survey, a strong *no growth* wing outweighed a strong *pro growth* sentiment, with the middle ground (scores of 4 to 6) capturing the most votes.

Growth worries: What are people fretting about? From a list of 16 issues, survey respondents identified these top five concerns:

1. Quality of public education,
2. Crime,
3. Traffic congestion,
4. Preservation of open spaces and natural areas, and
5. Protection of fish and wildlife.

Hopes for the future: When interviewers asked Valley residents to rank the desirability of a list of 13 future outcomes, they chose the following as most desirable:

1. Good air and water quality;
2. Sufficient supplies of water to support communities' industry, fish, and wildlife; and
3. Maintaining the unique character and livability of communities.

Source: Davis & Hibbits, Inc. 1998

8,000 BC: Humans arrive – and cluster near Willamette.

1840-1860: Migration of European-Americans peaks as 53,000 travel Oregon Trail, mostly bound for Willamette Valley.

1859: Oregon statehood.

1850s to early 1900s: Transportation defines valley population, town locations, and economies.

1887: Trains link Portland and Eugene.

1923: Highway 99, running length of Valley, is complete.

1930s: Population tilts to cities. Paper pulp industry joins logging and agriculture as major business. Portland Board of Health bans swimming in Willamette. Worst polluters: pulp plants and municipal sewer systems.

1939: Valley residents pass voter-sponsored initiative, Water Purification and Prevention of Pollution Bill. Further laws ban dumping raw sewage and require treatment plants.

1961: I-5 links Portland and Salem. Urban centers lose dwellers, suburbs grow, many rail-linked small towns shrink.

1962: Willamette River among dirtiest in nation. Portland TV newsman Tom McCall produces *Pollution in Paradise,* documentary about industrial waste and raw sewage.

MORE TRAFFIC *from page 6*

any single approach to keep traffic moving on the Valley's highways and major thoroughfares.

Researchers also looked at spin-off effects of transportation and land-use policies. They found that keeping a lid on urban growth boundaries will push some population and employment growth away from major urban centers to smaller cities and out of the Willamette Valley. An expansion of public transit will concentrate jobs in major urban centers (Portland, Salem-Keizer, Corvallis-Albany, Eugene-Springfield) while pulling population to smaller, outlying cities. Highway expansion will tend to draw both people and employers to outlying cities.

A Scrawled-Upon Slate

Whatever we choose, we won't be starting from scratch. "Addressing the Willamette Valley's transportation challenge will require tough choices, patience, coordination among numerous groups—and working within today's constraints," says Bob Russell of the Oregon Highway Users Alliance. The Valley's predominant land use and development patterns shape how we travel today. People jump into cars because convenient public transit is not an option for most Valley residents. At the same time, Oregon's roads and bridges are deteriorating, and money is short for repairing and maintaining them.

"Addressing the Willamette Valley's transportation challenge will require tough choices, patience, coordination among numerous groups—and working within today's constraints."
Bob Russell, Oregon Highway Users Alliance

So Oregonians must face other important questions: How will we pay for improving, caring for, and operating a transportation system? Will we unite behind a long-range vision for a transportation plan? How do we balance the practical need for mobility—and its costs—with other elements of livability? Meanwhile, we need patience because the rewards of good planning, public policy, and transportation investment often take a generation to unfold.

We are interested in hearing your reactions and comments. For more information and to respond to an online project questionnaire, visit www.wvlf.org.

Fast Facts

Transportation

- Valley residents drove twice as many miles in 1995 as they did in 1975, according to an Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) report conducted in May 1998 about commuting in the Willamette Valley.
- More cars and trucks *live* in Oregon than people.
- If no major transporation improvements occur in the Valley, and current development trends continue, traffic congestion on highways and major thoroughfares will increase by 81 percent by 2050.
- How big of a problem do people think traffic congestion is? According to the May 1998 ODOT report, 7 percent of Willamette Valley residents see congestion as a critical problem; 21 percent as very serious; 40 percent as moderate; 13 percent as a small problem; and 18 percent as not a problem.
- Eugene-to-Portland truck tonnage ranks second highest among major metropolitan origin-destination pairs in 17 western states, according to a recently completed Western Transportation Trade Network study.

Illustration by Ward Byrkit

Continued prosperity and quality of life depend on our ability to get around safely and efficiently.

The Alternative Transportation Futures Project

Funders
Federal Highway Administration
Oregon Department of Transportation

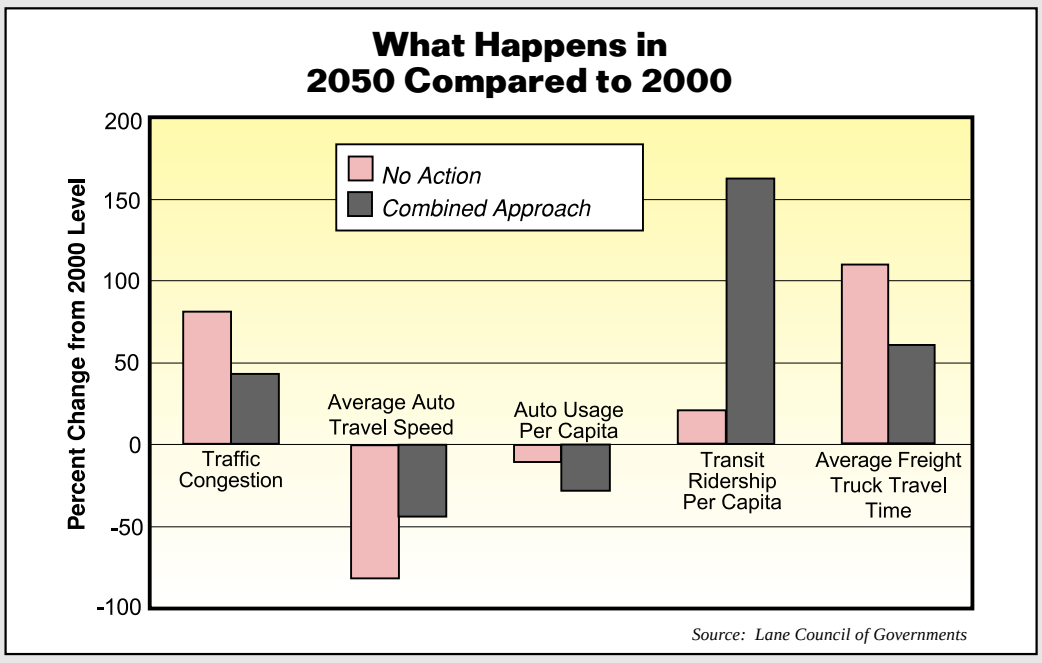
Steering Committee
Joan Baker
Environmental Protection Agency
Richard Brandman
Metro
Susan Brody
Willamette Valley Livability Forum
Jon Chandler
Oregon Building Industries Association
Bob Cortright
Department of Land Conservation and Development
Ed Gallagher
Governor's Office
Craig Greenleaf
Oregon Department of Transportation, Development Division
Chris Hagerbaumer
Oregon Transportation Reform Advocates Network
Gary Johnson
Oregon Department of Transportation – Region 2
Marcia Kelley
Mid-Willamette Area Commission on Transportation
Robert Liberty
1000 Friends of Oregon
Mike Propes
Polk County Board of Commissioners
Bob Russell
Oregon Highway Users Alliance
Tom Schwetz
Lane Council of Governments

Researchers
Parsons Brinckerhoff, Oregon Department of Transportation, Lane Council of Governments

Tale of Two Travel Scenarios

The Transportation Futures Project examined seven *scenarios* for handling private and public travel in the Willamette Valley. Their impact on factors such as traffic congestion and use of public transit varies greatly.

Here is a summary of two of the seven scenarios with extremely different tacks—and vastly different effects.



No Action Scenario

What it presumes: Urban expansion at historical rates. No major highway or transit expansion.

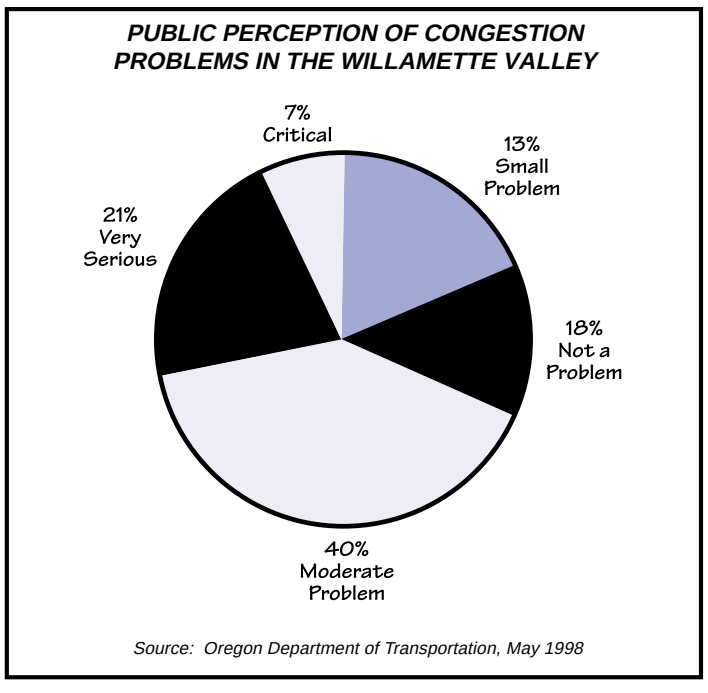
Combined Approach Scenario

What it presumes: Compact urban development that achieves density targets in comprehensive plans. Adding lanes to major rural state highways. Imposing a 10-cents-per-mile tax on autos and trucks, beginning in 2005, for travel anywhere within the Willamette Valley; increasing the tax to 20 cents per mile in 2025. Making major improvements to transit service, including frequent city-to-city rail and bus service; expansion of Portland's light-rail system, including an addition to Clark County; bus rapid transit in Eugene-Springfield; and commuter rail between selected cities.

Upshot

There is no silver bullet. Whatever we do, an additional 1.7 million Valley residents will raise traffic congestion and lower travel speeds.

However, as these two scenarios illustrate, the choices we make can measurably effect how crowded the Valley's highways and major thoroughfares will become in the years ahead.



Willamette Valley residents are worried about traffic congestion.

Source: Oregon Department of Transportation

The research showed that the choices we make can have a big effect on just how crowded highways will become in years ahead.

Late 1960s: Army Corps of Engineers completes 13th reservoir in Willamette Basin. Effects: Less flooding, inexpensive electricity, water for irrigation, decline of native migratory fish.

1966: Voters elect McCall as governor on platform of, "Thou shalt not pollute." Key target: Willamette River.

1970: Valley doubles its 1940 population.

1972: Willamette graces June cover of *National Geographic* as "a river restored." Surge of newcomers prompts McCall to say, "I welcome visitors. I urge them to come, and come many times to enjoy the beauties of Oregon. But I also urge them: for heaven's sake, don't move here to live."

1973: Legislature passes SB 100. Land-use planning program mandates each city establish urban growth boundaries to preserve working farms and forests and rein in sprawl.

1980s: Tough economic times put skids on Valley growth.

1990s: Valley's population returns to rapid growth with addition of 300,000 people. Valley is home to 70 percent of Oregonians.

1998: Governor John Kitzhaber spotlights growth as state's most pressing environmental problem, calls for channeling it so Oregon's defining quality of life is maintained.

2001: Willamette Valley Livability Forum urges residents to see Valley as an interconnected unit and prepare thoughtfully for expected population boom.

The Willamette Chronicle
Willamette Valley Livability Forum, Publisher

Peter Watt, Forum Manager
Janet Filips, Editor/Writer

Layout, design, and editing by
Lane Council of Governments' Production Team.
www.lcog.org/design

A Newspaper Supplement

The Willamette Valley Livability Forum, with assistance from Lane Council of Governments, Federal Highway Administration, 1000 Friends of Oregon, Pacific Northwest Ecosystem Research Consortium, Defenders of Wildlife, and Surdna Foundation produced this newspaper supplement concerning the Valley's future to provide information to Oregonians living in the Willamette Valley.

Sustaining our quality of life while Oregon grows

On April 26, several hundred Willamette Valley residents will come together to contemplate a shared vision for the Valley. They will address how we sustain Oregon's exceptional quality of life in the face of unprecedented growth. The course we set for ourselves in the Willamette Valley will affect the entire state in terms of economic prosperity, environmental health and livability.

These Oregonians will examine scenarios that identify the possible consequences of doubling the Valley's population in the next 50 years. This information will help identify decisions we need to make to sustain our quality of life. I encourage you to spend time reviewing the information and sharing your ideas about a sustainable future.

I define sustainability as managing the use of our natural, social, and environmental resources in a way that enables people to meet their current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Part of Oregon's greatness is our land use planning program and our protected farm and forest lands and open spaces. Land use planning has given this state more choices in how we grow and develop than probably any other state in America. These things are part of the Oregon ethic.

This Oregon ethic, this heritage that we point to so proudly, this quality of life that we enjoy in this state and valley – didn't just happen. The fact is, these things that we cherish about Oregon have to be constantly renewed in ourselves and in our community.

Quite simply, the future is ours to make. I urge the residents of the Willamette Valley to work to make the future of the Valley one that has room for both prosperity and environmental quality.

Governor John Kitzhaber

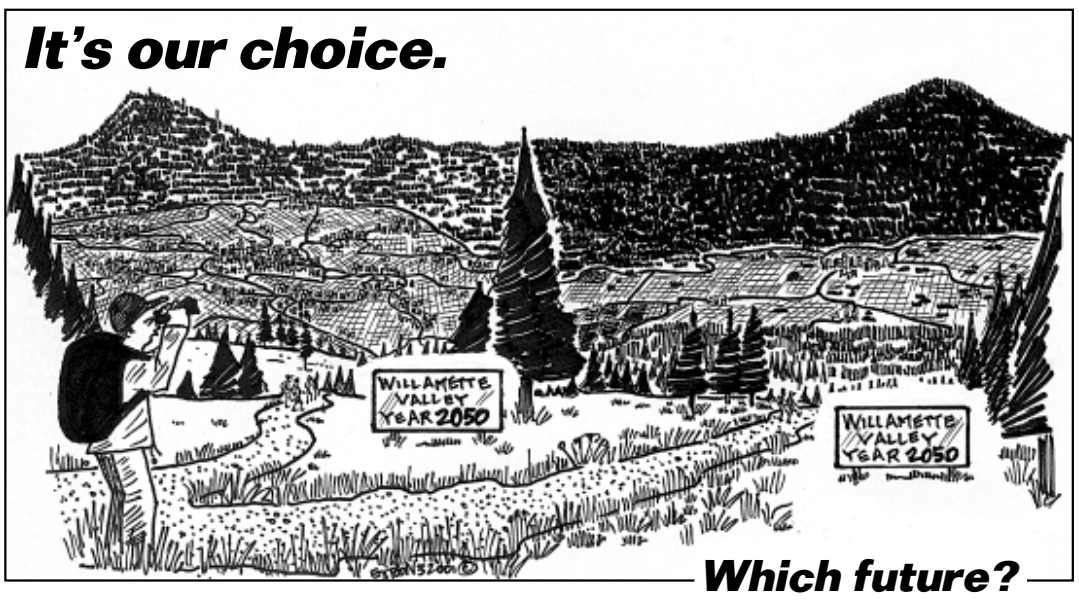
Preserving the Valley's future

Today's choices can ensure a healthy tomorrow

The studies described on the previous pages remind us of the importance of today's choices. These studies indicate that, in the next half century, our cities will grow between 50,000 and 130,000 acres. Farms, forests, rivers, and streams will all change. We will choose individually and as a society whether the changes are for better or worse. The studies also indicate that, with careful and deliberate efforts, we can accommodate growth while also recapturing 20-65 percent of the natural ecological function we have lost during the past 150 years of intensive use of the Willamette River basin's natural resources.

Another recent document, *The Oregon State of the Environment Report 2000,* makes it clear that the Willamette Basin will be one of Oregon's major environmental challenges in coming years. The tools and approaches described in the previous pages allow us, if we choose, to envision the environments we want our children and grandchildren to have in 50 years, and then set about achieving them. Oregonians have done it before. It is time to do it again.

Dr. Paul G. Risser
President, Oregon State University



LETTERS to the Forum

Larger can still be livable

On a clear day, Mary's Peak—the highest spot in the Coast Range—affords a beautiful view of the Willamette Valley—a view that our children and grandchildren deserve the chance to enjoy.

They can, if we follow the wise policy choices the Alternative Transportation Futures study points out: transit access, restraints on sprawl, and changes to misguided policies that subsidize sprawl and ever-increasing reliance on driving.

The path to enjoyable communities, transportation choices and a healthy environment is clear. But if we don't plan wisely, development will gobble up Willamette Valley forests and farms, traffic will choke our roads, and inspiring vistas will be history.

If we plan wisely, our children and grandchildren will enjoy green expanses, dotted by larger — but highly livable — communities.

Oregon Transportation Reform Advocates Network is a coalition of organizations across the state promoting community-friendly transportation. To connect to a group near you, visit www.cfst.org/otran or call (503) 222-1963 ext. 102.

CHRIS HAGERBAUMER
Oregon Transportation Reform Advocates Network

Creative ways needed to link land use planning and conservation

Some dramatic changes in the Willamette Valley seem to happen overnight—office parks that sprout out of farm land, traffic jams clogging what were once rural roads. Others, like the slow silencing of the Valley's meadowlarks and the decline of salmon runs, occur so gradually that most of us never notice.

Oregon's much-lauded land use planning laws won't halt the steady decline of the Willamette Valley's native fish and wildlife. They were never intended to, because habitat loss wasn't viewed as a pressing issue when our land use planning system was put together in the 1970s. The primary motivation was to keep urban growth from spreading unchecked into the state's farm and forest lands.

Land use planning has done little to stem the loss of remaining native habitats or address newly emerging water quality issues. Natural areas fall victim to intensified forestry and farming practices far more often than they succumb to urban sprawl. These habitat losses have also contributed to the Valley's water quality and flooding problems.

Zoning alone won't protect important habitats. We also need to look for creative ways to link land use planning decisions to conservation funding and implementation strategies, as the City of Eugene and its many partners have done with the innovative West Eugene Wetlands Program.

It's time for a thoughtful discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of our land use planning system—including concerns about private property rights and the need for better alignment between Oregon's planning and habitat conservation goals. If you value clean rivers, open spaces, and wildlife, you need to say so. Please contact your local planning officials and community leaders to find out what actions are being done in your area to protect wildlife habitat.

JENNE BRUBAKER
Defenders of Wildlife

Expand urban-style housing options

As a Salem architect, I have found that many people prefer higher density, more-urban types of housing. But urban housing choices have been quite limited in communities such as Salem. As more demand is being generated by many factors, our market has little or no supply of this kind of housing.

Our land-use plans and regulations must be adjusted to allow more urban housing choices all across the valley, not just in Portland.

ALAN COSTIC
Architect

Traffic requires swift, integrated action

If we do nothing to address the Willamette Valley's transportation needs, we invite gridlock and a dramatic deterioration of our cherished quality of life. We are already experiencing significant congestion on our streets, roads, and highways.

So, what do we do?

The Alternative Transportation Futures project indicates that no single cure-all solution exists. To succeed, we must balance highway, transit, land-use, and funding solutions. We must take an integrated approach to meeting today's challenges—and tomorrow's as well.

The real challenge is to understand that, unless we begin today, it may be too late for tomorrow.

BOB RUSSELL
Oregon Highway Users Association

Protect wondrous Willamette

This is decision time for us in the Willamette Valley. And what we decide is not just for ourselves, but for those yet to come.

The Ecosystem Research Consortium's work provides a sound scientific basis for believing that people—even a lot more people—can live in harmony with nature. The strategy identifies how to protect riparian areas and key habitats, assure flexible landowner incentives, establish a community salmon forum and increase public involvement in basin issues.

We at the Willamette Restoration Initiative invite you to tell us what you think. You're the difference between what can be and what should be. You can start futuring today. Sign up for a salmon license plate or environmentally friendly power; attend soil and water conservation district meetings; ask candidates their priorities for the Willamette basin; and most of all, discover the wondrous beauty of the Willamette.

For information on how to help the health of the Willamette basin, phone us at 1-888-854-8377 or visit www.oregonwri.org. We'd love to hear from you. So would the Valley.

RICK BASTASCH
Willamette Restoration Initiative

Developers need to be more like farmers

Like most farmers in Washington County, I have increased my productivity by growing higher value crops on the same supply of land. Urban developers need to do the same, to create more value per acre on the current supply of urban land rather than spreading out into the farm land. If we can both become more productive, there will be room for both cities and farms in the Valley's future.

DAVE VANASCHE
Washington County Farmer

RESPONSE FORM

Please return this form to WVLF, 99 East Broadway, Suite 400, Eugene, OR 97401-3111.
You can also respond by accessing this form at www.wvlf.org.

1. My biggest concern about the future of the Valley is: (check one)
   _ Population growth
   _ Traffic congestion
   _ Other (please specify)
   _ Sprawl
   _ Loss of species and habitat

2. I think the most important step for decision makers in the Valley to take to ensure a better future is:

3. I need to know more about: (check all that interest you; based on your response, we will connect you with more resources)
   _ Land Use Issues
   _ Environmental Issues
   _ Transportation Issues
   _ *Willamette Restoration Strategy*
   _ Willamette Valley Livability Forum
   _ Other (please specify)

Name: _____ E-mail: _____
First Last

Mailing Address: _____
Street/P.O. Box City State Zip

Phone Number: (____) _____
Area Code

If you are interested in attending the April 26th Conference
Choices for the Future,
please call (541) 682-6559 or visit *http://www.wvlf.org.*

What is the Willamette Valley Livability Forum?

The Forum is a gathering of people seeking to clarify choices about the future of the Willamette Valley. Created by Governor John Kitzhaber in December 1996, the Forum's charge is to:

- Help residents understand the development of the valley;
- Create and promote a 50-year vision for enhancing the livability of the valley;
- Advise local and state officials on issues relating to the economic development and physical environment of the Valley; and
- Build partnerships to maintain and improve livability.

The Forum has approximately 90 members representing the business community; private citizens; educational institutions; non-profit organizations; and local, state, and federal government. For more information about the Forum, please visit the web site at www.wvlf.org, call (541) 682-4429, or write to 99 East Broadway, Suite 400, Eugene, OR 97401-3111.