



# North Shore Lacamas Lake

**DRAFT**  
July 11, 2016

**A Vision for Conservation and Recreation**



# North Shore Lacamas Lake Vision Narrative and Background

DRAFT: July 11, 2016

## ***Background and Purpose***

The natural and recreational features within the Lacamas Lake corridor have long shaped the history, growth, and character of the City of Camas (City). Over the past several decades, the City, Clark County, the State of Washington, and the Columbia Land Trust have collaborated to preserve hundreds of acres of critical land within the corridor. These conservation efforts have resulted in the permanent protection of sensitive natural areas such as riparian zones, wetlands, and forested hillslopes; provided opportunities for recreational trails such as the popular Heritage Trail and the Lacamas Regional Park trail network; preserved the visual quality that gives Camas its unique sense of place; and provided direct public access to the lake for boating, fishing, and swimming. As the City continues to grow and prosper in the coming years, future urban development is likely to be concentrated within the designated urban growth area to the north of Lacamas Lake, providing both challenges and opportunities.

The guiding principles and vision map presented in this report highlight opportunities for land conservation and recreational trails on and around the north shore of Lacamas Lake. The vision was developed based on the direction contained within a variety of City, County, and regional plans (summarized on the next pages) along with input from City staff and key conservation partners. The vision is intended to paint a picture of what is possible. Implementation will ultimately rely on efforts by a variety of conservation partners, support of the citizens of Camas, available funding, and voluntary participation of key landowners. This narrative and vision map was produced by *Jeff Krueger Environments*, with input and assistance from the City of Camas and Columbia Land Trust.



*The Heritage Trail along the south shore of Lacamas Lake is heavily used by residents and visitors.*



## Regional Context

The Lacamas Lake corridor lies within the Urban Growth Area (UGA) of the City of Camas and is just over a mile north of the Columbia River and is a hub for recreational activities. The corridor includes Lacamas Lake (250 acres), Round Lake (21 acres), Fallen Leaf Lake (14 acres), Lacamas Creek, and the surrounding developed and undeveloped lands. Significant park land is located on the upper and lower end of the lake corridor including Lacamas Regional Park and Camp Currie. The popular Heritage Trail runs along the entire south shore of the lake. The north shore of the lake is largely undeveloped, but substantial future development is projected for that area, with much of the land zoned for residential and business park uses.



*Children enjoy Lacamas Lake on a hot day near the Lacamas Lake Lodge.*

## Lacamas Lake Context Perspective



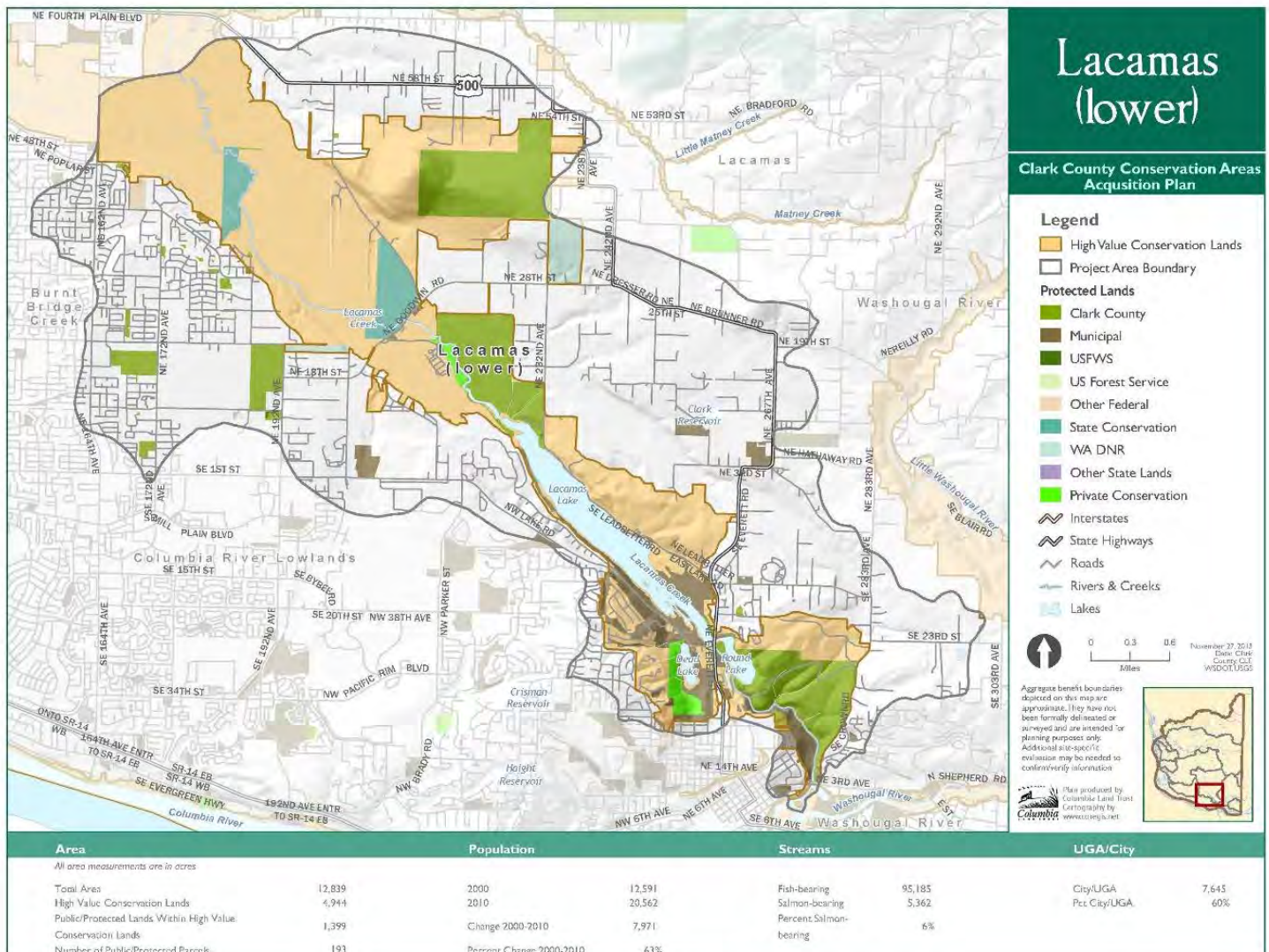


## Key Plans and Studies

The following key plans and studies were used to provide context and direction for the development of the North Shore Lacamas Lake Conservation and Recreation Vision Map (last page of report) and the associated guiding principles (starting on page 9).

### Clark County Conservation Areas Acquisition Plan (Clark County, 2014)

The *Conservation Areas Acquisition Plan* provides a vision for preserving and enhancing a countywide-system of conservation lands, including greenways, habitat, farm, and forest resource lands. The Plan contains a series of subarea maps including one for Lacamas (Lower) that highlights “high value conservation lands” in the area. This area represents future opportunities for habitat conservation, park development, trail creation, and restoration opportunities. The plan prioritizes projects that meet multiple benefits, expand on the existing system, and are aligned with other county plans (i.e. trails plans) and priorities. The plan also encourages the development of partnerships between public and private agencies.



**City of Camas Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan Update (City of Camas, 2015)**

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive (PROS) Plan provides an update to the City's 2007 PROS Plan and continues the City's long history of planning and providing a high quality park and recreation system. The *Trail System Concept Map* (right) from the PROS Plan shows proposed trail connections and trailheads along the north shore of the lake. The *Open Space Concept Map* on the next page identifies key future park and open space opportunity areas.








  
**City of Camas**  
 WASHINGTON  
 Parks, Recreation and Open Space  
 Comprehensive Plan Update

## Open Space Concept

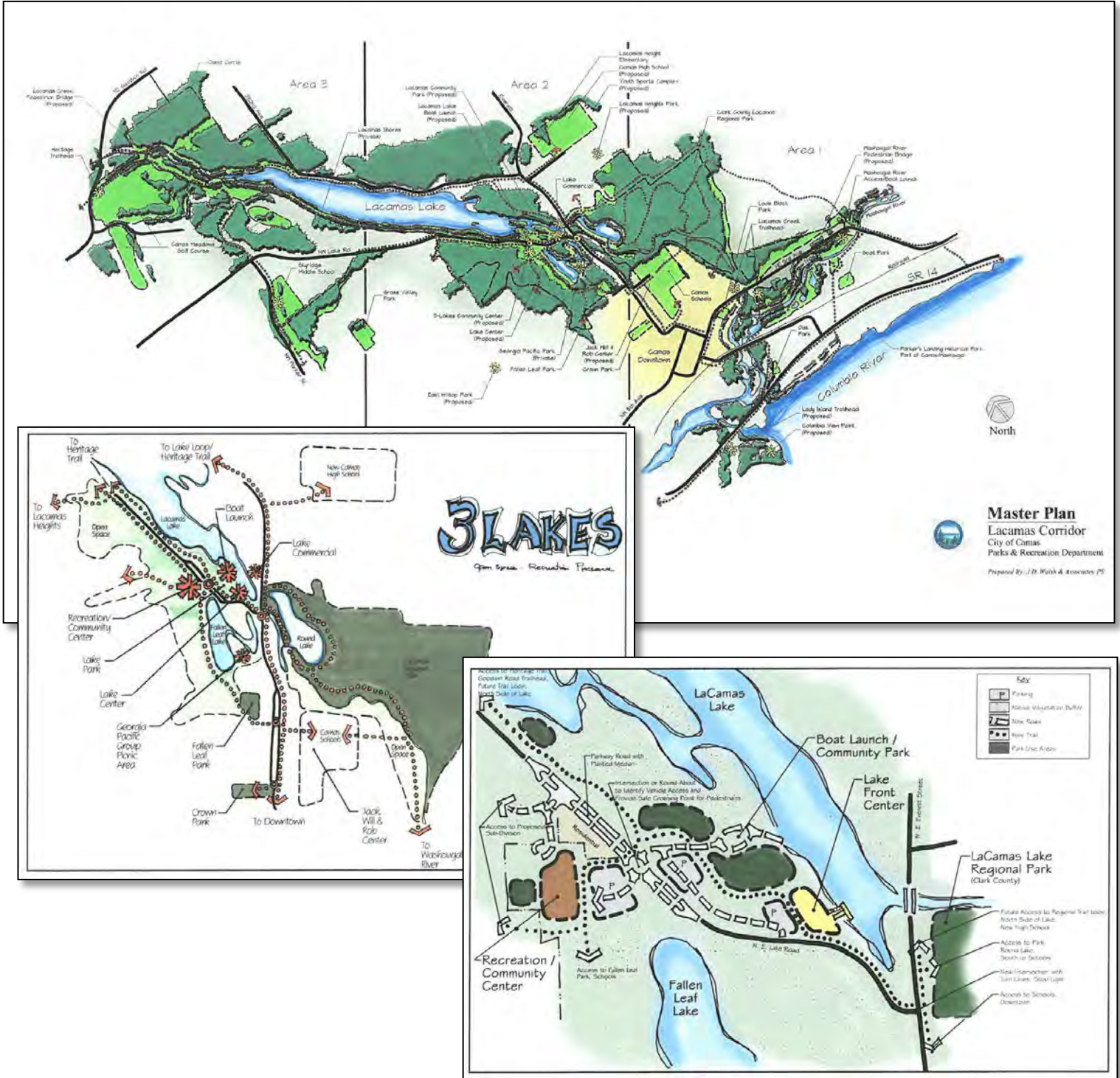
 9.9.2014 | Data sources:  
 Clark County GIS, USGS, ESRI, NOAA





## Lacamas Corridor Master Plan (Clark County, 2001)

The purpose of the 2001 Master Plan document was to develop a framework which will guide the enhancement and improvements of the Lacamas Lake Corridor for the greater benefit of the citizens of Camas. Many of the concepts in this Plan, which focused primarily on the south and east sides of the lake, have already been implemented.



## Portland-Vancouver Bi-State Regional Trail System Plan (Intertwine, 2010)



This Trail System Plan was developed by the *Intertwine Alliance* for the Portland-Vancouver Metropolitan Region. The plan proposes a network of trails and greenways connecting cities and suburbs to other communities and to nature. The planned network includes 37 regional trails: 20 in the Portland metropolitan area and 17 in Clark County. Several of these proposed regional trail corridors tie into the Lacamas Lake area.

## Lake to Lake Trail



**LAKE TO LAKE TRAIL - 22.3 MILES**  
Develop a continuous east-west trail connection along the Burnt Bridge Creek and Lacamas Creek Greenways to provide access for people to travel from Vancouver Lake to Lacamas Lake.

**TRAIL FACTS:**

- Connects neighborhoods with employment centers and schools in Vancouver and Camas.
- Joins two premier trails in Clark County for pedestrians and bicycle using 11.5 miles of existing trails.
- Provides people with the opportunity to learn about two significant greenway ecosystems in Clark County.
- Connects with the Camp Bonneville, Battle Ground-Fisher's Landing Trail, I-205, and I-5 Regional Trails.

**PARTNERS:**

City of Camas, City of Vancouver, Clark County, Vancouver Watersheds Council, Bonneville Power Administration

## Battle Ground-Fishers Landing Trail



**BATTLE GROUND-FISHERS LANDING TRAIL - 16.1 MILES**  
Provide a north-south trail that connects the Columbia River in Fisher's Landing to Battle Ground Lake State Park, by following portions of Lacamas and Lower Fifth Plain Creeks, China Ditch, and the Chelatchie Rail with Trail.

**TRAIL FACTS:**

- Provides the community access to experience several significant waterway ecosystems.
- Connects the schools and Hockinson High, Hockinson Meadows Community Park, and Harmony Sports Complex.
- Creates connections between employment areas in Battle Ground and east Vancouver.
- Connects the Lewis and Clark Columbia River Discovery Trail with the Chelatchie Prairie Rail with Trail.
- Provides equestrian access as the trail travels outside of City of Vancouver limits.

**PARTNERS:**

Battle Ground School District, City of Battle Ground, City of Vancouver, Clark County, Community of Hockinson





# Camp Bonneville Trail

# Livingston Mountain Dole Valley Trail



## CAMP BONNEVILLE TRAIL - 12.1 MILES

Provide an east-west trail that connects the City of Camas and Department of Natural Resources land to the future Camp Bonneville Regional Park in eastern Clark County by connecting the north end of Lacamas Lake Trail to the east end of the Salmon Creek Trail located at the headwaters of Salmon Creek.

### TRAIL FACTS:

- Connects eastern Clark County with State Natural Resource lands and trails.
- Provides access to the Lacamas Creek watershed ecosystem.
- Creates many loop opportunities with Lacamas Lake Trails, and the future Green Mountain, Camp Currie and Camp Bonneville Regional Parks.
- Provides equestrian access as the trail travels outside of City of Vancouver limits.

### PARTNERS:

City of Camas, City of Vancouver, Clark County, Department of Natural Resources, Green Mountain Golf Course



## LIVINGSTON MOUNTAIN DOLE VALLEY TRAIL - 21 MILES

Develop a north-south trail connection from Lacamas Lake Park in Camas to the Yacolt Burn State Forest to provide a multi-modal connection into the State Forest lands.

### TRAIL FACTS:

- Offers people the opportunity to access the Yacolt Burn State Forest from Camas by trail.
- Provides connections to the Camp Bonneville, Lake to Lake and East Power-line Trails.
- Accommodates pedestrians, bicycles, and equestrians.

### PARTNERS:

City of Camas, Clark County, Washington State Forest



## ***Guiding Principles for North Shore Conservation and Recreation***

The following six guiding principles and associated recommended actions are intended to guide future conservation and recreational actions on and around the north shore of Lacamas Lake. These recommended actions would be implemented over time through the combined efforts of regional conservation partners, private land owners, and the citizens of Camas.

### **I. Accommodate Recreational Trails and Promote Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity**

Complete the seven-mile loop trail around Lacamas Lake and provide connections to existing trail networks, nearby schools, neighborhoods, and places of employment.

#### Recommended Actions:

- Convert Leadbetter Road to a lakeshore bicycle and pedestrian corridor once an alternative road network is constructed to the north.
- Complete a trail and boardwalk across City owned conservation land at the foot of Lacamas Lake to make the connection between Leadbetter Road and the existing Heritage Trail and the trail network in Lacamas Regional Park.
- Create a safe pedestrian and bicycle crossing of NE Everett Street (Route 500) at the south end of Lacamas Lake to provide connectivity between the Heritage Trail and the trail network in Lacamas Regional Park. This could be achieved through the installation of a safe pedestrian crossing on Everett Street (signalized crossing or a roundabout with a rapid flashing beacon) or could potentially pass under Everett Street if the highway bridge crossing Lacamas Creek is reconstructed in the future at a higher level.
- Develop a primary trail parallel to the future realignment of Leadbetter Road that will connect future uses along the north shore of the lake and create a bicycle and pedestrian connection between Camas High School and the future school site adjacent to Camp Currie.
- Create safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to and from Lacamas Lake through a network of connector paths and trails running from future neighborhoods, schools, and places of employment.
- Create a trail connection between the west end of Leadbetter Road (future bicycle and pedestrian path) to the Heritage Trail through Camp Currie and across a new pedestrian-bicycle bridge over Lacamas Creek.
- Improve public access to the trail network and the lakeshore by providing additional trailheads and parking areas in key locations in the Lacamas Lake corridor.
- Install directional signage, maps, and mile markers along the lakeside trail system.



*Bicyclist on the west end of the Heritage Trail*



## II. Connect to the Planned Regional Trail Network

Provide connectivity between Lacamas Lake trails and the broader regional trail network.

### Recommended Actions:

- Connect the west end of the existing Heritage Trail to the proposed “Lake to Lake Trail” which will extend westward to Vancouver Lake.
- Connect the west end of the existing Heritage Trail to the proposed “Camp Bonneville Trail” which will extent northward to Camp Bonneville Regional Park.
- Connect the west end of the existing Heritage Trail to the proposed regional trail running southward to Fisher’s Landing on the Columbia River.
- Connect the east end of the Heritage Trail and the existing trail network in Lacamas Regional Park to the proposed regional trail corridor extending northward to Livingston Mountain.

## III. Provide Access and Facilities for Active Recreational Uses

Provide safe and convenient public access to Lacamas Lake for lake-oriented recreational uses such as fishing, boating, water play, and swimming and integrate recreational facilities such as ball fields, picnic areas, and play equipment into the future development pattern in the north shore area.

### Recommended Actions:

- Renovate the existing Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife boat launch on the north side of the lake and expand and improve or install related facilities such as parking, rest rooms, docks, and signage.
- Develop a new non-motorized boat launch and related facilities on the north shore near the upper end of the lake. This additional launch will help reduce crowding at other existing boat launches, better disperse boat use across the lake, provide direct lake access for north shore residents, and provide improved recreational access to the head the lake and Lacamas Creek.
- Promote development of a public or commercially run concession that would provide recreational rentals such as canoes, kayaks, standup paddle boards, paddle boats, bicycle, etc.
- Integrate a major sports field complex into the future development planned for the area to the north of Lacamas Lake.
- Install an accessible fishing dock or docks along the north shore of the lake to provide fishing access for those without a boat.



*Existing boat launch area in Heritage Park on a warm summer evening*



#### IV. Preserve and Restore High Quality Native Habitats

Lacamas Lake and the surrounding watershed provides outstanding habitat for native plant communities and wildlife. Key nature features such as riparian zones, mature conifer forest, wetlands, and prairies should be preserved and restored where possible, focusing on those areas closest to the lakeshore and areas the provide wildlife corridors.

##### Recommended Actions:

- Work to preserve and restore a substantial vegetated riparian zone and key wetland areas located along the north shore of the Lacamas Lake.
- Work to preserve mature conifer forest areas on the hillslopes to the north of the lake.
- Work with regional partners and landowners to preserve and restore high value prairie habitat in proximity to the existing Lacamas Prairie Natural Area.
- Provide vegetated corridors between conserved lands to allow movement of native wildlife.



*Lacamas Creek just above the lake*



*Paddlers enjoy water lilies and the preserved lakeside vegetation near the east end of Lacamas Lake.*



## **V. Improve the Water Quality of Lacamas Lake**

Lacamas Lake is a popular destination for boating, fishing, and swimming and the water quality of the lake should be improved to make these activities more enjoyable.

### Recommended Actions:

- Work with land owners and agricultural interests in the upper Lacamas Creek watershed to improve the quality of agricultural runoff flowing toward the lake.
- Preserve wetlands and key tributary streams as the area to the north of Lacamas Lake is developed and work with developers to implement low impact development practices.
- Preserve and enhance lakeshore vegetation to provide filtration and shade.

## **VI. Preserve the Visual Quality and Key Landmarks along the North Shore of Lacamas Lake**

The forested hillslopes of the north shore of Lacamas Lake provide a scenic backdrop to the community. Future conservation and urban development activities should carefully planned to maximize protection of the visual resources of the area. Preservation of historic structures and installation of heritage markers or interpretive signs will help residents understand and appreciate the human and natural history of the lake.

### Recommended Actions:

- Identify highly visible areas along the north shore of the lake and pursue possible acquisition or purchase of conservation easements on key parcels.
- Work with land owners and developers to conserve natural vegetation and tree cover as the area is developed in the future.
- Provide public access to a viewpoint atop Green Mountain which affords outstanding views of the surrounding landscape including a vista to Mount Hood.
- Orient public roads and site future parks to preserve vistas to the lake and natural features such as Mount Hood.
- Preserve the iconic Leadbetter House along the north shore of Lacamas Lake as a monument to the area's history and consider utilizing the house as a public facility in the future.
- Install heritage markers and interpretive signage at key locations along north shore of the lake.



*The historic Leadbetter House viewed from the Heritage Trail*



# North Shore Lacamas Lake

## Conservation and Recreation Vision Map

### Legend

- Lakes
- Major Rivers and Streams
- City of Camas Urban Growth Area (UGA)
- Major Roads
- City Ownership (Camas and Vancouver)
- Clark County (Parks or Environmental Services)
- School District Ownership (Camas and Vancouver)
- State Ownership
- Columbia Land Trust Ownership
- Existing Soft-Surface Recreational Trails
- Existing Trailhead with Parking
- Existing Boat Launch Area

### Potential Future Trails, Conservation Opportunities, and Planned Facilities

- Proposed Bicycle/Pedestrian Path (road conversion)
- Proposed Soft-Surface Trail
- Proposed Regional Trail Corridors (Intertwine)
- Proposed New Bridge or Boardwalk
- Potential Future Public Facility
- Proposed Trailhead with Parking
- Conservation Opportunity (habitat and viewshed)
- Proposed Sports Field Complex
- Potential New Boat Launch Area

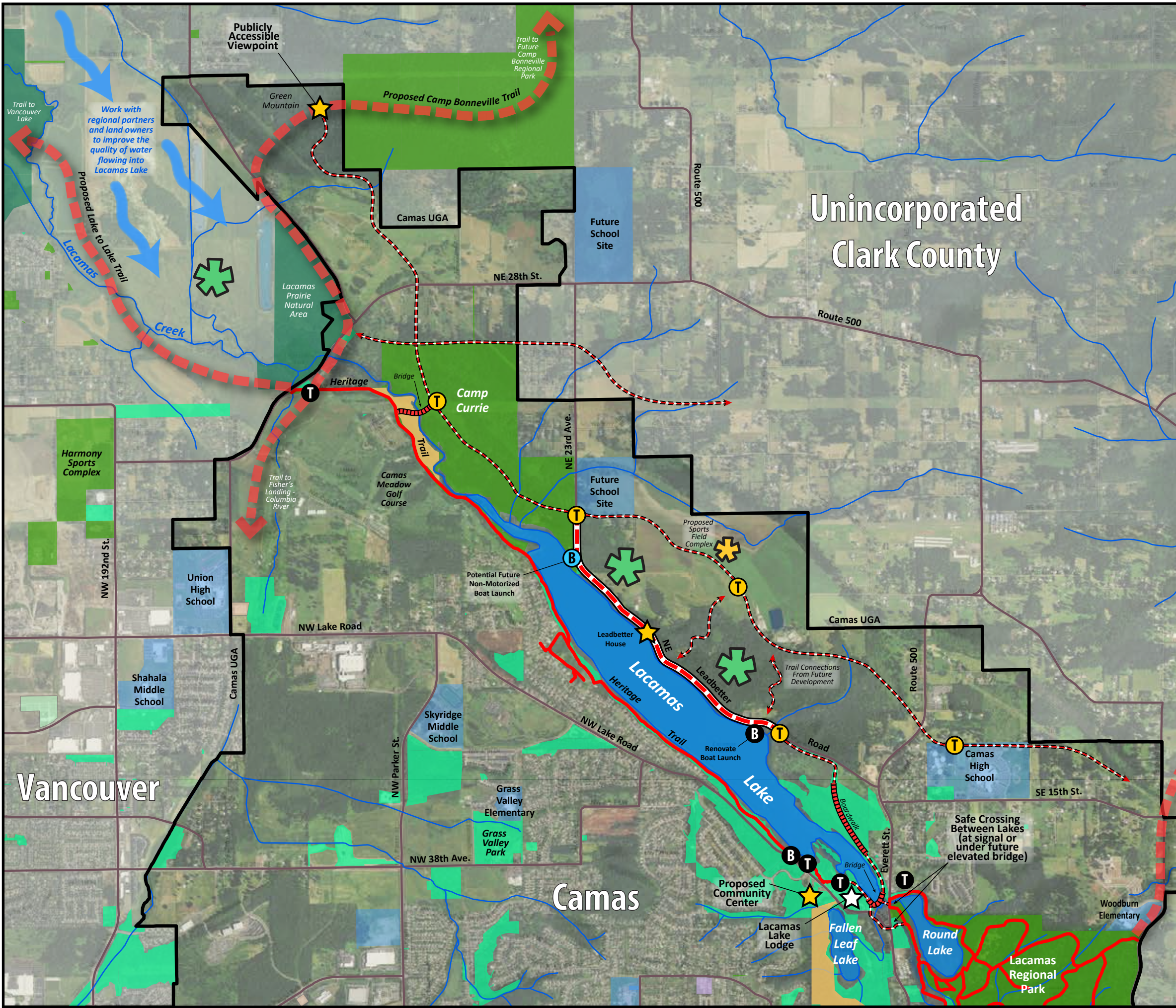
*This vision map reflects concepts and facilities proposed by various conservation and recreation organizations and is intended to serve as a conceptual framework to guide future recreational trail and conservation planning efforts on and around the north shore of Lacamas Lake. The locations of proposed trail corridors and facilities are conceptual. The vision is non-regulatory and subject to voluntary land owner participation.*

**DRAFT**  
July 11, 2016

Map Prepared Jeff Krueger in conjunction with the City of Camas and the Columbia Land Trust

Scale: 0, 1,000, 2,000 Feet

Scale: = 5 Acres



Vancouver

Camas

Washougal

Unincorporated  
Clark County