



Champoeeg and French Prairie

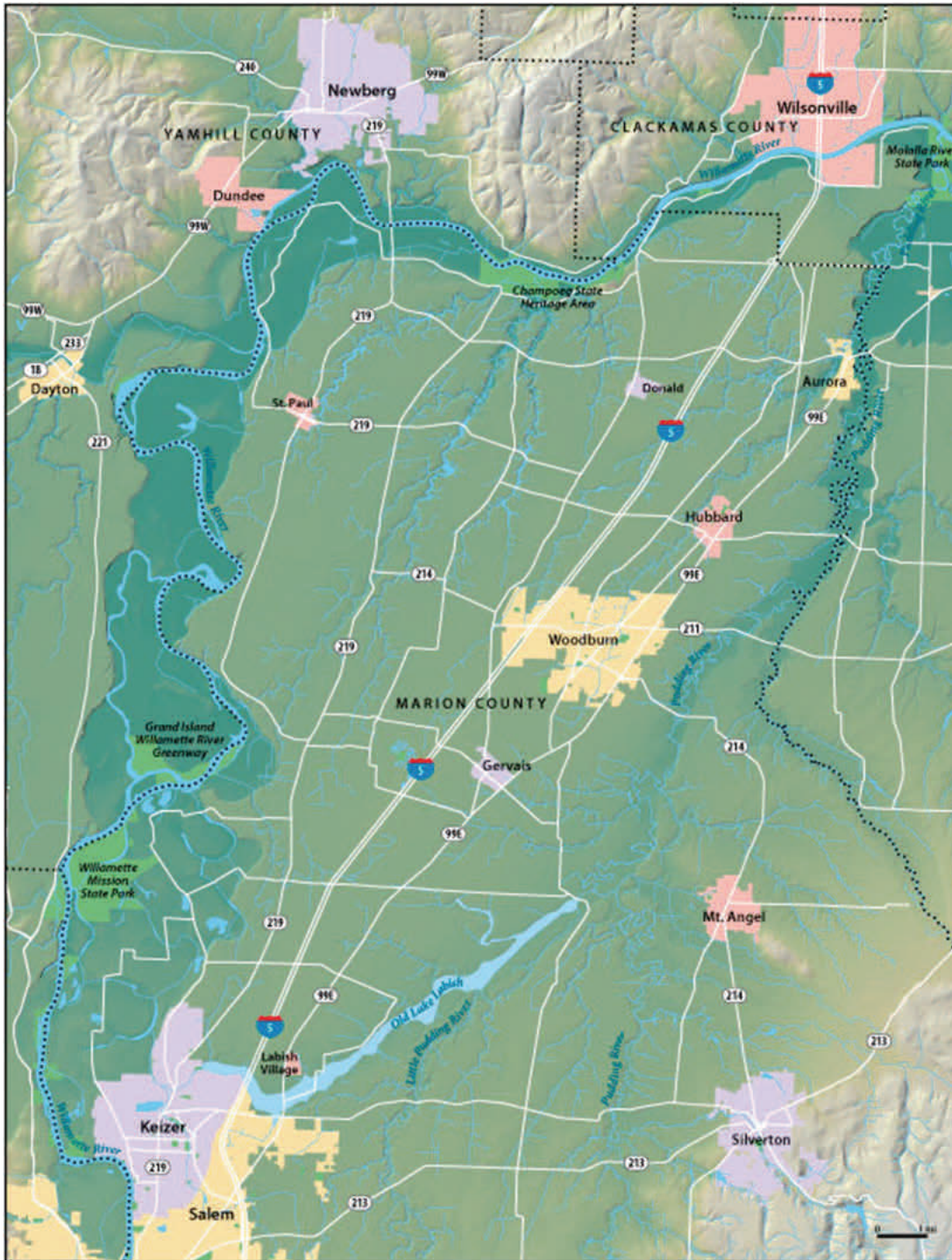


A historical and cultural survey

Prepared by Friends of French Prairie

Section 1

Champoeg & French Prairie: Oregon's Historical Heartland



French Prairie as historically understood

*[Bounded on the north
and west by the
Willamette River, on the
east by the Pudding
River, and running south
to Lake Labish]*

CHAMPOEG Timeline

The First People

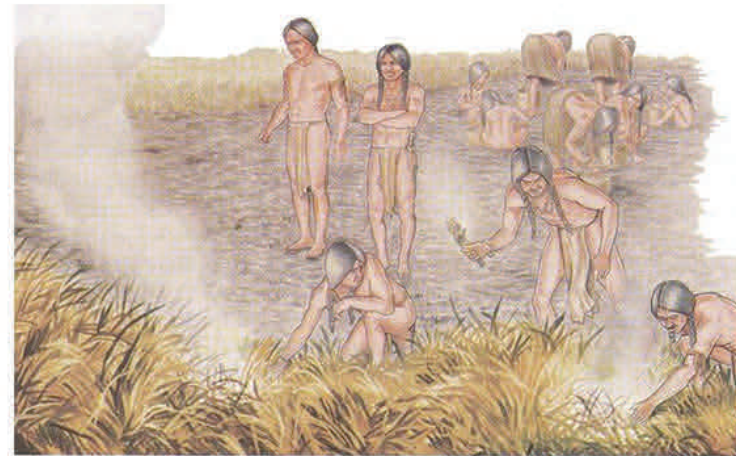
Pre-contact through the early 1700s

The human history of Champoeg spans over 7,000 years. Discover some of the key elements of Champoeg's story, outlined over the following six pages.

Kalapuya Indians live in the interior valleys between the Cascade Mountains and the Coast Range. They seasonally set fires in the Willamette Valley to create prairies and manage food supplies. Champoeg provides access between river and prairie, and is an important meeting place. Today, scholars believe the name "Champoeg" comes from the Kalapuya word for yampah, an edible root.



Source: *Atlas of Oregon*, University of Oregon Press, 2001

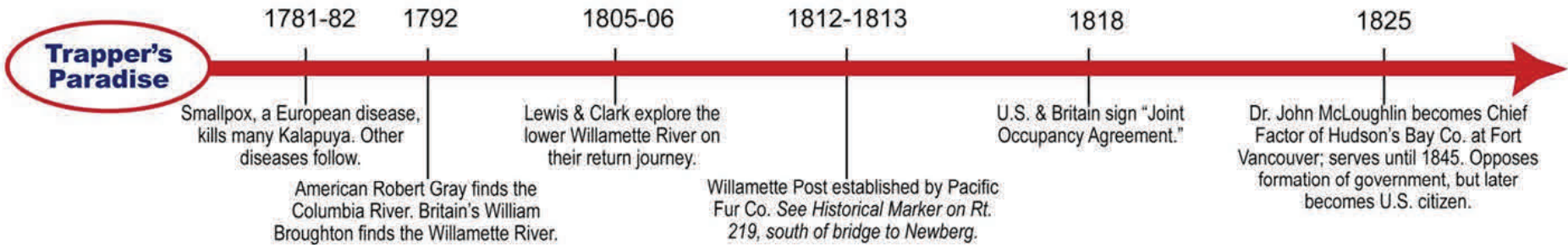


Source: *Champoeg Heritage Park Guide*



Time Line illustration courtesy of *Champoeg Heritage Park Guide*

Champoeg → French Prairie



Lewis and Clark at Three Forks (Montana Historical Society)



Time Line illustration courtesy of Champoeg Heritage Park guide



Hudson's Bay Co. coat of arms and motto, "A Skin for a Skin"



JASON LEE'S MISSION—1834



Commercial & Political Center



Seal of the Provisional Government 1843-1849

1827-31 1830-31 1833 1834 1835 1837 1839 1841 1841-43

French Canadians begin the first farms in the Northwest near Champoeg. Local area known as "French Prairie."

Malaria appears, reducing Kalapuya numbers to a few hundred by the 1840s.

John Ball establishes the first American farm in the Northwest within today's park boundary.

Willamette Mission established by Methodist missionary Jason Lee. Visit Willamette Mission State Park to see the ghost structure.

Webley Hauxhurst builds first grist mill in Willamette Valley at Champoeg.

Ewing Young leads first cattle drive from California to Willamette Valley.

Father Blanchet establishes first Catholic mission in St. Paul. See the 1846 church on the self-guided French Prairie Tour.

Ewing Young's death causes settlers to meet and discuss probate matters; Hudson's Bay Co. warehouse built at Champoeg.

Settlers—mostly retired American and French-Canadian trappers and mountain men—meet at various places to discuss organizing an Oregon government: the "Wolf Meetings" of 1843.



Lower Willamette Valley: from *Champoeg: Place of Transition* by J A Hussey



Champoeg Cemetery



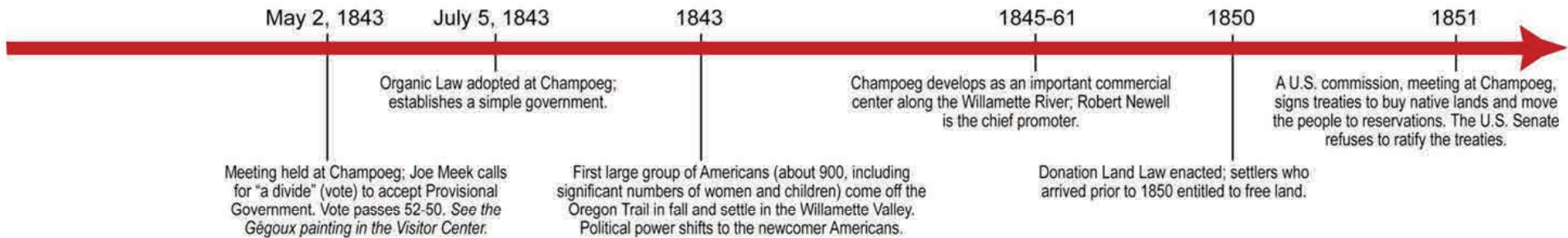
Wolf meeting—French Prairie 1843



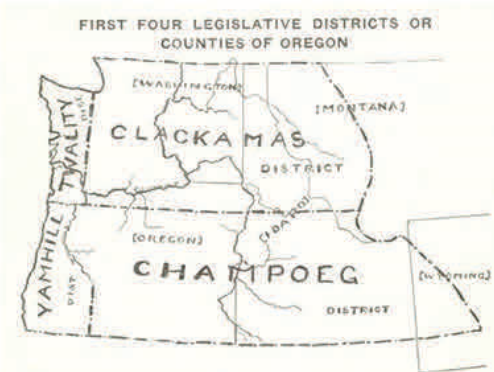
Time Line illustration courtesy of *Champoeg Heritage Park Guide*



Champog and the Prairies Beyond



The Beginning of Oregon; courtesy Champog State Park



Home in Butteville, 1852



Champog and the Prairies Beyond and First Four Legislative Districts: from *Champog: Place of Transition* by J A Hussey

Time Line illustration courtesy of *Champog Heritage Park Guide*



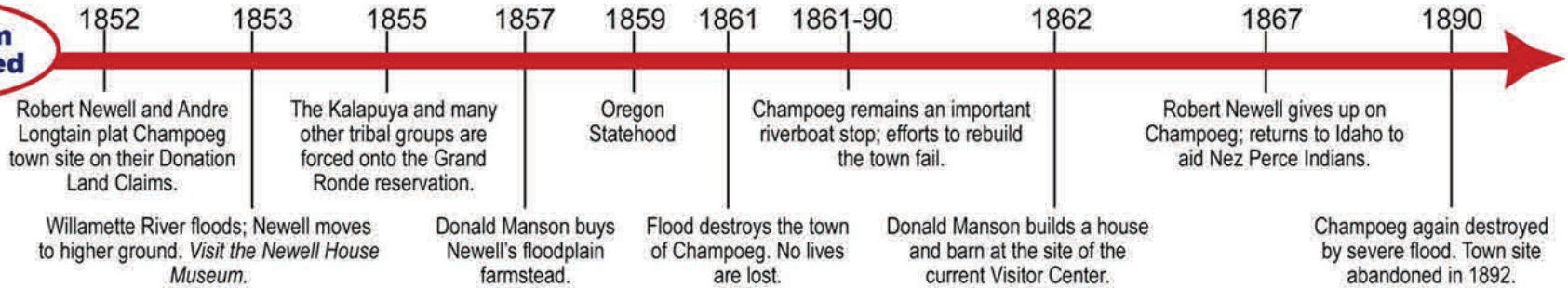
Paddlewheeler at Champoeg, 1907



Zorn House and water tower



A Dream Unfulfilled



Champoeg Town plat map



Manson House and Barn at Champoeg



Downtown Butteville, early 1900's



Time Line illustration courtesy of Champoeg Heritage Park guide

Dedication of Champoeg memorial, 1901



Fargo Station, French Prairie



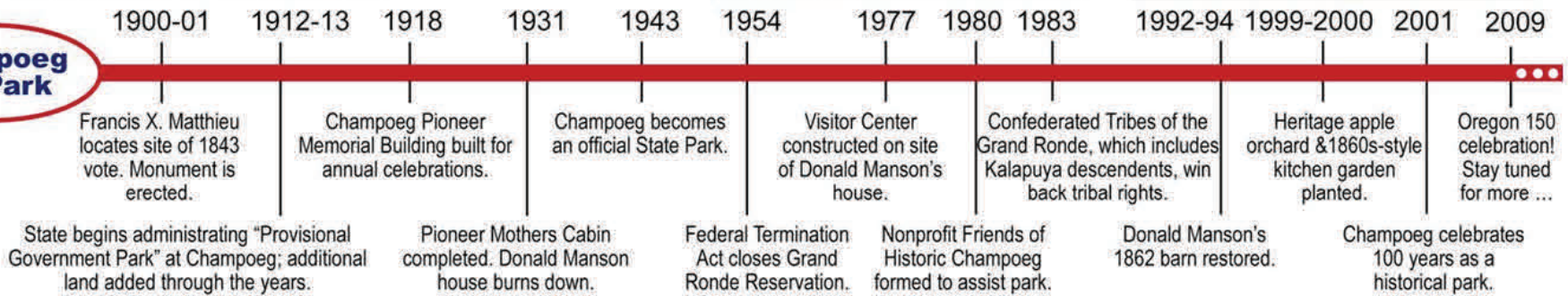
Champoeg State Heritage Area



Newell House Museum



Champoeg the Park



Matthieu house, Butteville, 1901



Champoeg Pioneer Memorial Building



Butteville Store today



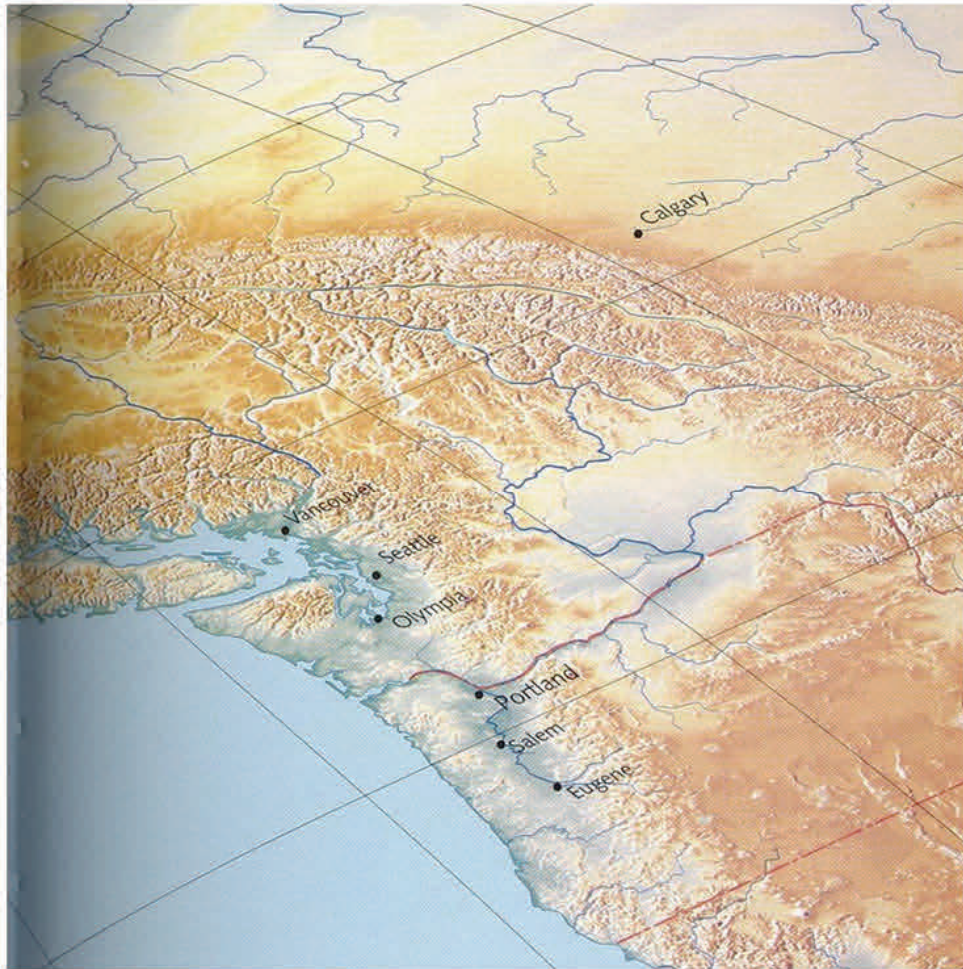
Time Line illustration courtesy of *Champoeg Heritage Park Guide*

Section 2

The Willamette Valley & French Prairie

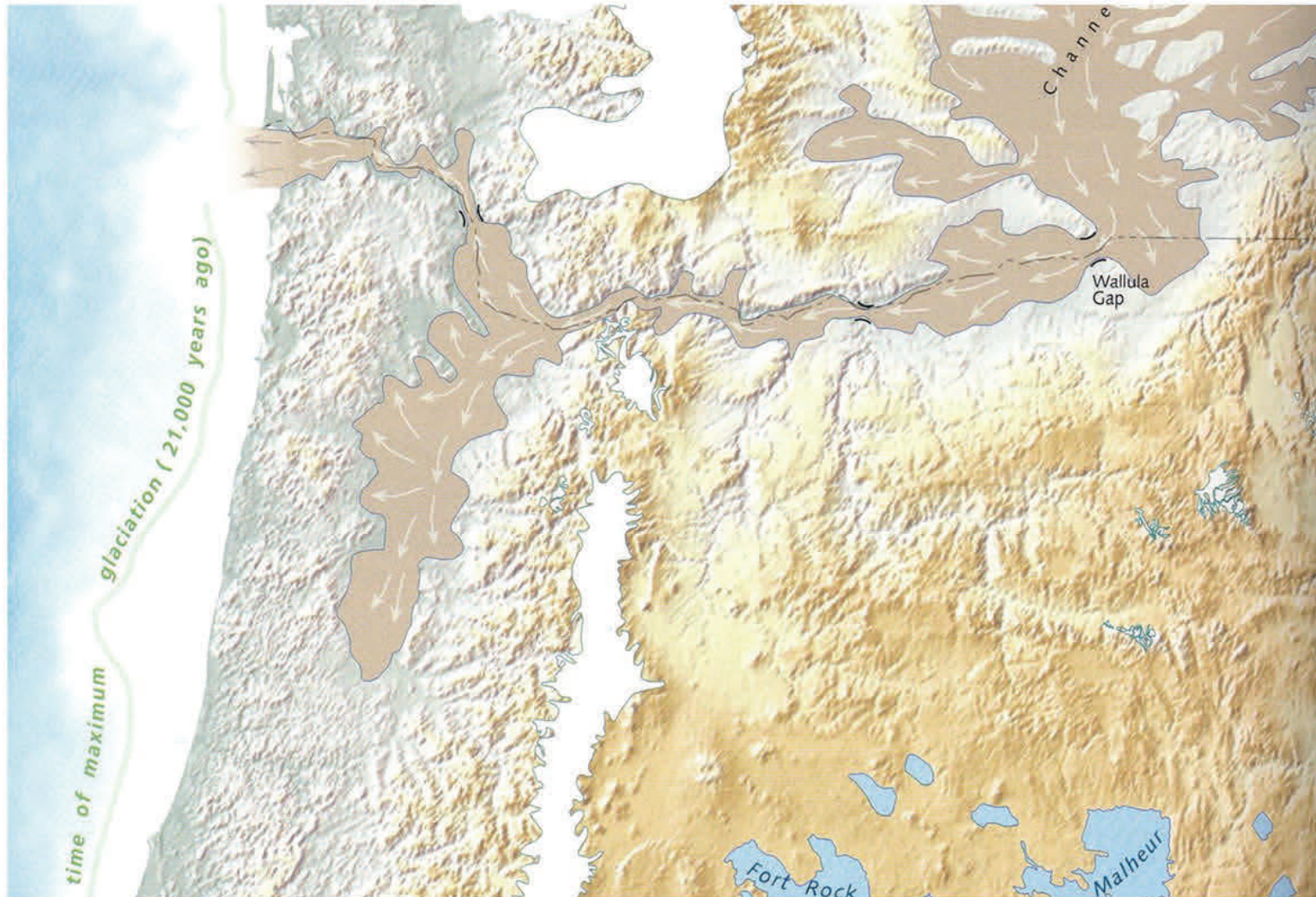


A historic assessment of a special agricultural resource



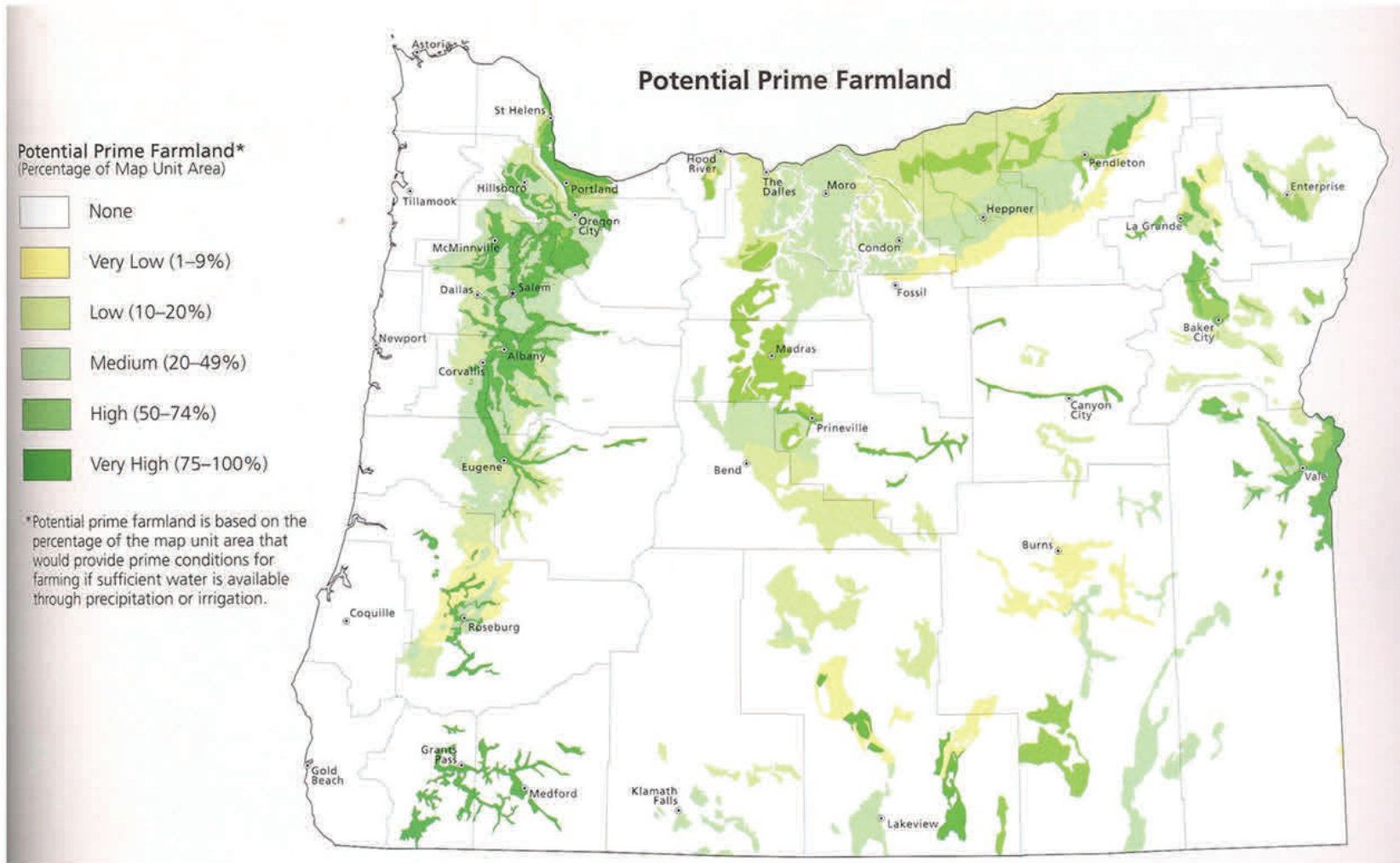
In spite of the perceptions of the Pacific Northwest as a verdant paradise, there is precious little arable land for farming.

Source: *Atlas of Oregon*, University of Oregon Press, 2001



Source: *Atlas of Oregon*, University of Oregon Press, 2001

The source of the high quality soils in the Willamette Valley is the deposits from the Missoula Floods (12-18,000 years ago)



Source: *Atlas of Oregon*, University of Oregon Press, 2001

Concentration of Prime Farmland in the Willamette Valley

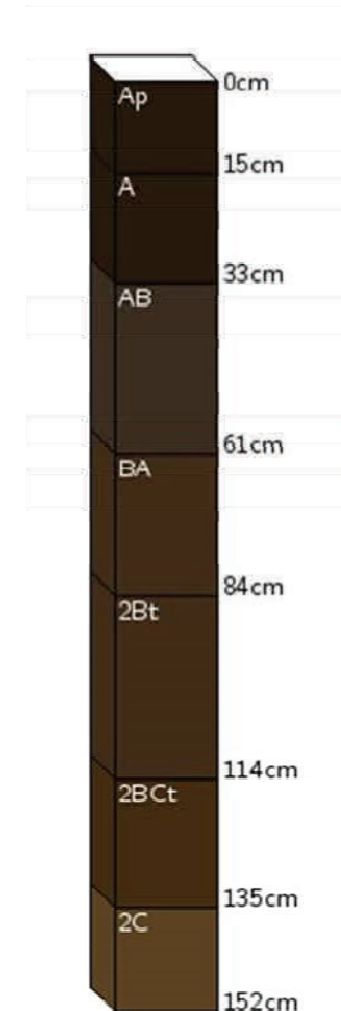
What makes French Prairie a truly unique agricultural resource?

- Outstanding **soils**—some of best in country
- Mild **climate**—long growing season, limited severe weather
- Mostly adequate **water** for irrigated crops
- Excellent **transportation** corridor and **markets**
- **History** and **culture** of farming for past 150 years
 - Experience
 - Creativity, ingenuity
 - Infrastructure
 - Agriculture resources for educational, technical, financial support—a network to support success

Slide courtesy Mike Bondi, NWREC

Willamette Valley Soils

- Willamette Silt Loam—our most common valley soil
 - About one-half of the soils in FP are Willamette silt loams
 - Deep, well-drained, highly productive, dark with lots of organic matter
 - Formed when Missoula Floods occurred 10,000 years ago and deposited sediments



Slide courtesy Mike Bondi, NWREC

Willamette Valley Climate

- Average about 165 frost free days per year
- Adequate moisture with ~ 40" of rain per year
- Mild temperatures—no great extremes; about a dozen days over 90 degrees annually



Slide courtesy Mike Bondi, NWREC

Willamette Valley Water



- Over 650MM gallons of water needed daily for crops in irrigation season—nearly 80% of all water used in state goes to agriculture
- Water availability becoming more limited—no new permits
- Higher efficiency systems becoming more popular

Slide courtesy Mike Bondi, NWREC

Willamette Valley Transportation/Markets

- Location, location, location
- I-5 transportation corridor
- Port of Portland
- Linking people and products



Slide courtesy Mike Bondi, NWREC

Willamette Valley History and Culture of Agriculture

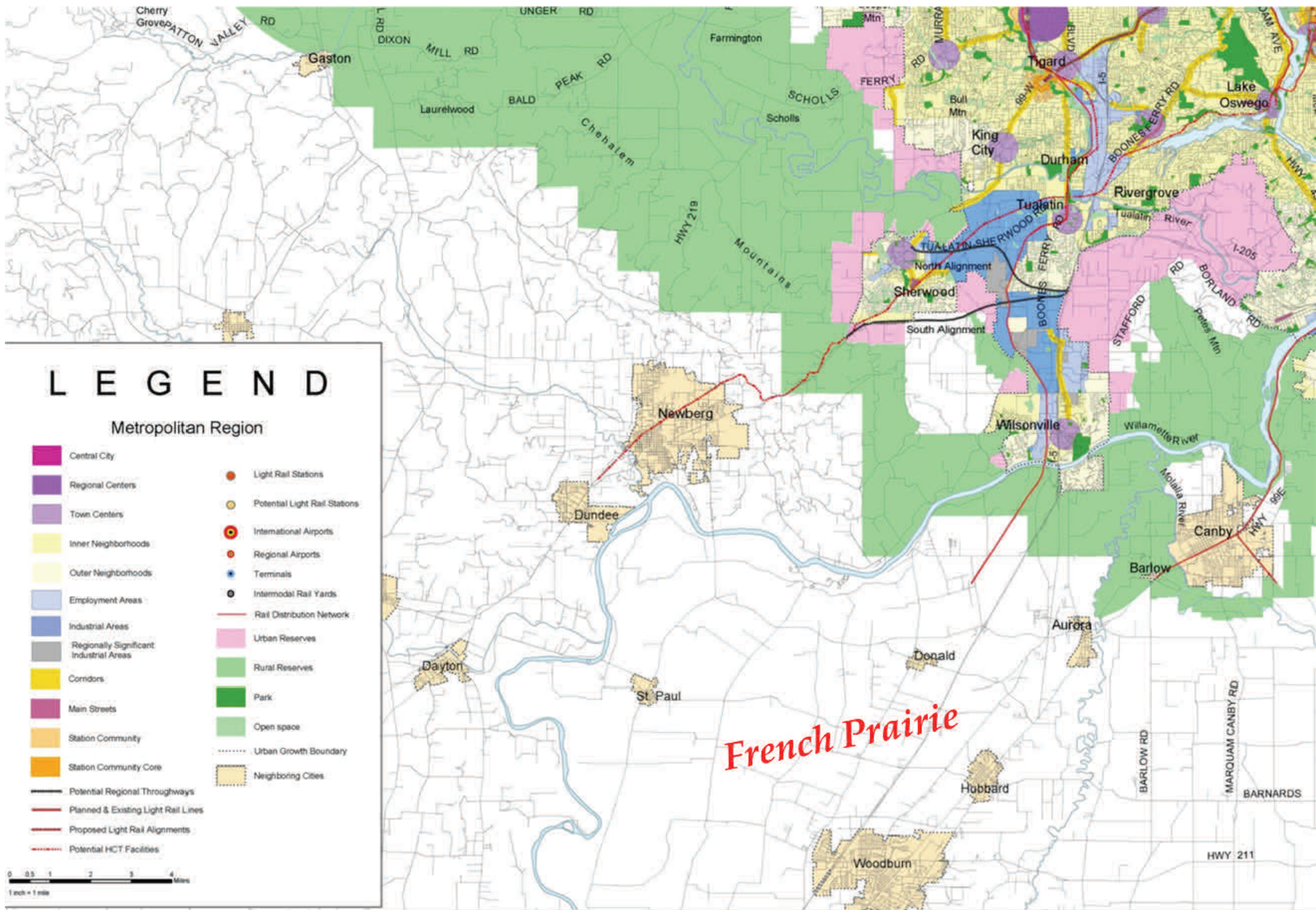


Slide courtesy Mike Bondi, NWREC

French Prairie's Important Crops

- Nursery (field and greenhouse)
- Fresh and Processed Vegetables
- Vegetable and Flower Seed
- Berries (strawberries, caneberries and blueberries)
- Christmas Trees
- Hazelnuts
- Livestock (cattle, dairy, poultry)
- Hops
- Grapes
- Grasses and Legumes
- Grains and Hay
- Pasture

Slide courtesy Mike Bondi, NWREC

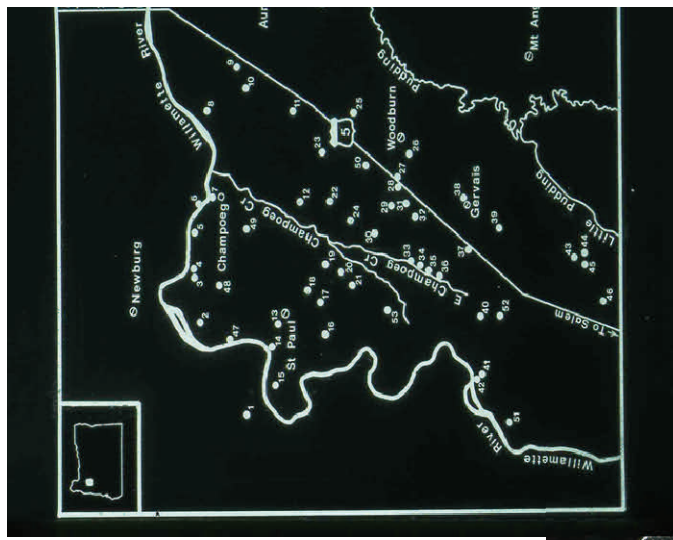


Urban-Rural Reserves in south Clackamas County & French Prairie

NOTES

French Prairie is possibly the most historic piece of real estate in the entire West, certainly in the Pacific Northwest, and it must be protected

David Baranew, Ph.D. Professor of Archaeology
Oregon State University



Platted farms in French Prairie—1843