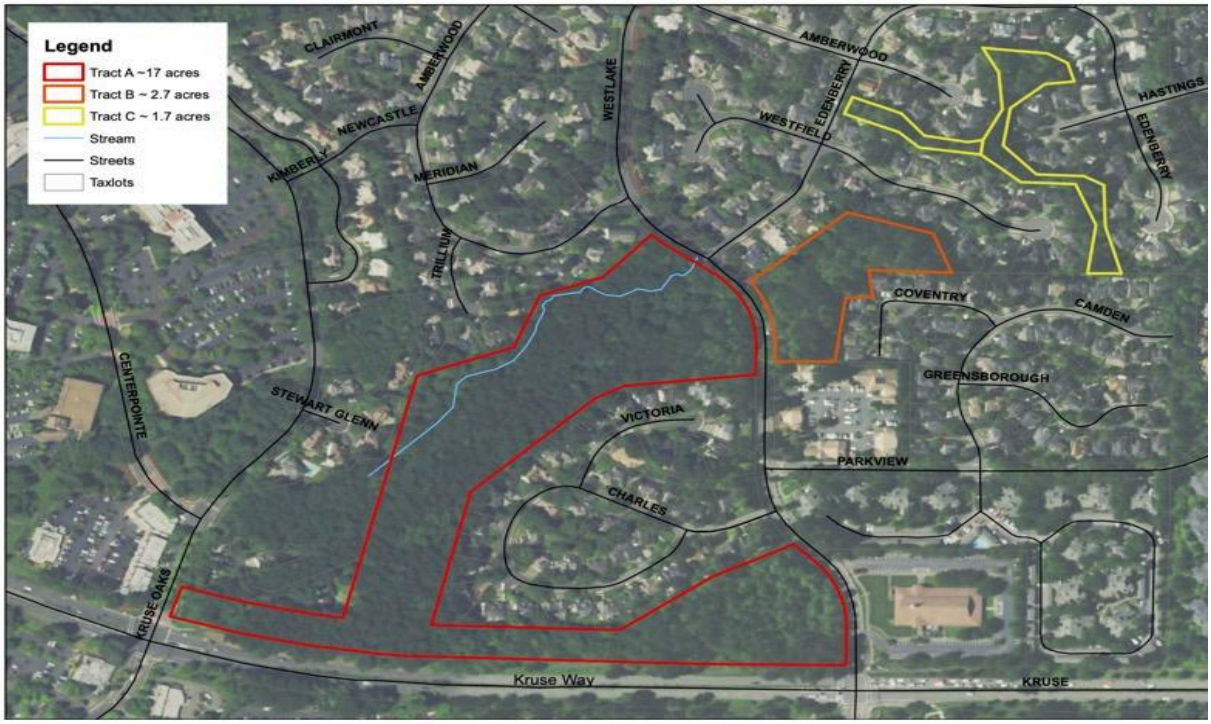
OLWC/WHOA RESTORATION SITE MANAGEMENT PLAN
and PHYSICAL SITE DESCRIPTION
2025 UPDATE

Date: 11/15/2025

Project Name	**Westlake Oak Woodland**
Site Location	**Kruse Way & Westlake Drive**
Stewardship Coordinator Contact information	**Tom Berridge** **503-421-5825**
Property Owner(s) Contact information	**Westlake Homeowners Association** **PO Box 2255, Lake Oswego, OR 97035** **Board President Christopher Heuer**

SUMMARY OF CURRENT ISSUES IN THE WOODLAND

This update of the 2024 management plan is necessitated by a historic winter storm that occurred in January 2024. The storm brought unprecedented winds that toppled many trees in the Westlake neighborhood, crushing several homes and killing one resident. (The victim was not in the Westlake HOA but in a contiguous HOA.) The storm alerted residents to the danger inherent in living near a forest, and it also served as a stress test of the HOA management of the Common Space woodland. That management proved to be effective, as the impact of falling trees from the HOA property was limited to minor damage to one house and damage to yard improvements and fences, which the hazard tree survey does not take into account because it would require extensive cutting of trees around the perimeter of the woodland. Prior management had included hazardous tree surveys in 2009, 2015 and 2021, followed by removal of trees that were found to be unhealthy or overly leaning toward dwellings. After the 2024 storm, the trees were surveyed again to assess storm damage and to take into account the potential for more severe weather than previous surveys had anticipated. A few healthy trees that were not on the perimeter were uprooted by the storm, which indicated that work is needed to reduce the hazard of perimeter trees that are healthy, as opposed to only removing unhealthy trees. That can be done with pruning to reduce the weight and improve the balance of trees.
In the wake of the storm, many residents, especially those whose property bordered on the woodland, expressed a desire for the HOA to increase dues to do more to safeguard the neighborhood from extreme weather events. The board responded with a proposal to raise HOA dues by $150 a year to fund work to make the woodland more resilient. It was approved by over the required XX% of HOA members.



MANAGEMENT GOALS

- Prune to improve the balance of healthy trees on the perimeter so they are less likely to fall and less likely to hit a structure if they do fall.
- Survey trees on the perimeter of the woodland more frequently.
- Remove invasive species to improve the health of the oak trees and thereby make them less susceptible to pests such as the Mediterranean Oak Borer, which recently arrived in Oregon.
- Clear flammable debris on HOA property from within 10 feet from property lines as recommended by the Lake Oswego fire marshal.
- Ensure sensitive lands regulations (retention of native plants, soil, and dead wood) are followed
- Educate homeowners, especially those who have oak trees on their properties, about proper care of their trees, with a focus on the problem of summer irrigation near oak trees. Education may consist of information sessions, information in HOA communications, and personal contact with homeowners.
- Prevent encroachment on HOA property by neighboring landowners including dumping of leaves, landscape clippings, firewood, debris piles, and trash

TIMING OF WORK

2025

- Prune trees in Tract C to improve structure
- Remove invasive species from Tract C
- Monitor for presence of ash and oak borers

2026

- Prune trees in Tracts B and A to improve structure
- Complete removal of invasive vegetation in Tract C and plant native species
- Remove invasive species in Tract B and plant native species
- Establish fire breaks on the perimeters of Tracts B and C
- Educate homeowners about care of oak trees on their property
- Educate homeowners about sourcing firewood that will not bring in the Emerald Ash Borer and begin working on a plan to help the woodland adapt to the likely loss of that species of tree.
- Ongoing priority invasive removal in Tract A

2027

- Establish fire breaks on the perimeter of Tract A
- Revisit extensive invasive species removal in Tract A
- Maintain Tracts B and C by continuing to control invasive species
- Conduct perimeter survey (on 3-year rotation instead of previous 6-year rotation)
- Begin implementing Emerald Ash Borer plan, which may involve proactively replacing ash trees with other species.

VISION FOR DESIRED FUTURE CONDITION

Because oak habitats have declined and are continuing to decline in Oregon due to development, agriculture and fire suppression, the goal is to maintain that habitat here. Although dominance of oaks is sought, other tree species also will occur in this naturally mixed habitat. The acorns and nesting opportunities that the oak trees provide, as well as fruit and seeds from other native plants, will support birds and the insects they depend on, and the woodland will continue to provide habitat for native mammals and amphibians.

A healthy woodland means healthy trees, which translates to trees that are less likely to fail in a strong wind. The understory plants that are native to an oak woodland are resilient so they can survive the dry summers, and their root systems are better at absorbing water so the soil becomes less saturated and trees are less likely to uproot in a strong wind.

Unfortunately, the arrival of the Emerald Ash Borer in Oregon means that it is likely that most ash trees will die. Replacing the ashes with other species can mitigate that loss.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS AND SITE HISTORY

Acreage: 17 acres-plus

Habitat(s) and Water Features:

The principal woodland trees are Oregon oak, Oregon ash, and big-leaf maple with a few Douglas fir trees. It also contains understory trees such as Western hazelnut and Cascara. The woodland contains many shrubs typical of an oak woodland including Oregon grape, western serviceberry, oceanspray, snowberry, Pacific nine-bark, and thimbleberry.

The area was set aside as open space when the residential area was created but no management plan was established for it. In 2016 the Homeowners association board designated that in addition to providing buffer zones between houses and streets the woodland would be managed as wildlife habitat and to preserve the remnant of a native ecosystem and native plants. At that time the woodland had become severely degraded by invasive species, principally English ivy, Himalayan blackberry, English hawthorn, and English holly. It was estimated that 75 percent of the ground was covered by the ivy and blackberry. In 2018 The HOA began working with the Oswego Lake Watershed Council with funding from the city of Lake Oswego, the Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District, the Westlake HOA, and other sources to remove the invasive species. Those species have been mostly eradicated from Tract A with spot treatments ongoing. Many native species spontaneously returned and the OLWC planted others to bolster their presence. Shiny geranium continues to be a problem in one area of the tract.

The habitat is predominantly oak woodland with Oregon ash woodland in one marshy area. An intermittent stream crosses the northern part of Tract A. It has become incised and likely was relocated at the time of development. The southwest corner has a wetland. The woodland provides habitat for numerous species of birds including red-tailed hawks, barred owls, spotted towhee, and slender-billed nuthatch, among other birds. It also is home to, or used as a corridor for, deer and coyotes. Squirrels feast on acorns in the fall.

Native Tree Species

The principal woodland trees are Oregon oak (D), Oregon ash (C), and big-leaf maple (A) with a few Douglas fir trees (A). It also contains understory trees such as Western hazelnut (B) and Cascara (A).

Coverage Code: A=0-24% B=25-49% C=50-74% D=75-100%

Native Understory:

Oregon grape, western serviceberry, oceanspray, snowberry, Pacific nine-bark, and thimbleberry.

Native Groundcover:

Camas, Pacific Waterleaf, Fringecups, Spreading Rush, Slough Sedge,

Invasive Plant Species (IPS)

Ivy, Blackberry, Hawthorne, Holly, Laurel, Cherry, Clematis, Shiny Geranium, Herb Robert, Lesser Celandine

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES INCLUDING INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

The primary concern is preventing the invasive species from becoming re-established. One strategy is removal of sprouting or encroaching plants by volunteers and when needed by contract crews, which currently is the strategy in Tracts B and C. Where that is not feasible or effective, such as in large areas of Tract A, spot spraying with herbicide is carried out.
Native species are being planted to preserve the ecology of the tract as a native oak woodland, so species associated with oak trees are the focus. Planting also prevents or slows growth of invasive plants.
In some instances, native trees may be pruned or cut down when they negatively impact specific oak trees. This can mean blocking sunshine or crowding out oak seedlings. Promoting regeneration of oaks is important for the long-term preservation of the habitat.

Herbicide will be used in Tract A, consisting of spot application of herbicide to invasive plants. It will be done at times when it is dry enough and warm enough for the herbicide to be effective and at the time in the reproduction cycle of the targeted species when spraying will be most effective. Herbicide will not be applied during the bird nesting season and it will not be applied inside a buffer zone along the stream or bordering the wetland. Its effect will be monitored by visits to the sprayed areas after a sufficient time for the effect to be discernible and at least once a year thereafter. The type of herbicide that will be used is Glyphosate, Triclopyr, and grass-selective herbicides. For reed canary grass, Poast active is sethoxydim.
In Tracts B and C, which are much smaller, mechanical means of invasive plant control will be used.

MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

Ownership: Private ownership by the HOA is secure and the current board supports maintenance of the ecosystem. Recent increase in HOA dues to fund improvements in the Common Space indicates a commitment to continuing maintenance.

Adjacent Lands, Including Potential Expansion/Connectivity Risks: Expansion is not anticipated because the tract is surrounded by a settled neighborhood.

Access, Parking, Trails: Access is limited but is adequate because the area is not managed for public use. No developed trails exist and the trail for management access is little more than a deer trail. Parking for volunteers is available by permission, except on Sundays, at the LDS Church across the street from the principal entrance to Tract A

Potential Restoration Partners: City of Lake Oswego, Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District, Oswego Lake Watershed Council, and Westlake HOA.

Development Status & Structures Present: No structures are present in the tract but it is surrounded by single-family residences. It is very unlikely that development will occurt.

Hazards & Safety Concerns: Falling branches and trees, especially during storms, are a hazard. The HOA periodically hires an arborist to evaluate trees along the perimeter and remove or prune trees that are diseased or severely imbalanced to reduce threats to houses in the neighborhood. Fire is a potential threat so crews that cut hazard trees on the perimeter or invasive trees cut up the debris so it has ground contact and will break down relatively quickly. Abundant Poison Oak and Occasional Bee nesting can be a threat to volunteers.

Other Concerns & Comments: Encroachment by adjoining homeowners has been a persistent problem but is being addressed on a case-by-case basis by the HOA.

LONG TERM MAINTENANCE

Long-term maintenance is being funded by the HOA and overseen by the OLWC. The OLWC organizes volunteer efforts and obtained a state grant to partner with the city in a citywide campaign of mapping oak trees and educating the public about their value and proper care.