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# 3.0 Programmatic Uses

## 3.1 CURRENT USES AND EVENTS

### 3.1.1 Gardens

General admission to Winterthur includes access to the “Garden Area Proper” which is open from 9:00 A.M. to dusk year round except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day. Maps are available for self-guided walking tours. Also included with the general admission is a 30–45 minute narrated tram ride through the garden and outlying areas of Winterthur. Topics covered include the history of the property and the story of Henry Francis du Pont, as well as aspects of nature, color, and seasonal interests. Guided garden walks, available for an additional \$5.00, are offered on Saturdays and Sundays from late March through mid-June (except Easter and the first Sunday in May) and mid-September through late October.

### 3.1.2 Programs

Programs offered by the Garden Department have included garden lectures, horticultural and design symposiums featuring national and international experts and speakers, and the “Successful Gardener Series,” a series of hands-on workshops for the home gardener.

### 3.1.3 Special Events

Special events have included “Picnicking Under the Cherry Blossoms,” “Easter in the Garden,” a family event, a “Plant Extravaganza” with experts available to answer questions, talks, guided garden walks, and plants and books available for purchase, and the annual Point-to-Point Races and Craft Festival. The Point-to-Point Races are held on the first Sunday in May each year with 20,000 to 24,000 people attending typically. The Craft Festival, which will have its fourth year in 1999, is a 2-day event over the Labor Day weekend with 180 juried craftsmen that attracts over 20,000 people.

## 3.2 FUTURE USES AND EVENTS

The following recommendations for additional or expanded programmatic uses related to environmental issues and concerns have been generated as a result of this study and from internal work sessions of the Winterthur staff.

### 3.2.1 Gardens

~ **Highlighting native plants** throughout the garden. A pamphlet or brochure could be developed that points out native plants throughout the garden and explains how they can be used in the residential landscape and the various benefits to wildlife and the environment.

~ **Special subject tours**, guided and/or self-guided, could include:

“*Birds in the Garden*,” including ideas on how to attract them (in partnership with Delaware Audubon Society)

“*Native Plants in the Garden*” could complement and expand on the brochure mentioned above.

“*The Winterthur Estate/Farm*” could expand (both in content and route) on the current tour, but would probably require some road improvements

“*Winterthur’s Natural Areas*” could highlight the woodlands, meadows, and wetlands and explain management and restoration techniques

### 3.2.2 Programs

~ **Lectures and/or walks:**

Birdwatching or nature walks combined with a breakfast (in partnership with Delaware Audubon Society)

Fungi identification combined with a dinner

~ **Workshops:**

Natural areas management and restoration techniques (in partnership with Delaware Nature Society, Mt. Cuba Center for the Study of Piedmont Flora)

### 3.2.3 Special Events

~ **Arbor Day** events could highlight native species as well as offer native trees for sale

~ **Azalea Festival** events could highlight native species as well as offer them for sale

### 3.2.4 Trails

The opportunity exists to utilize the natural areas to greatly enhance the recreational and educational experience of Winterthur visitors. A well defined trail system with interpretive materials (brochures, signage) could be used to tell a more complete story of the property, inform visitors of proper management techniques, and provide inspirational views of meadow vistas and the large trees of the woodlands. Figure 6 and the Management Recommendations plan show a potential trail system for the Winterthur property.

Figure 6 shows the proposed trail system in three phases. This is to allow Winterthur to experiment with increased public use of the natural areas and to evaluate the program throughout its implementation. Phase 1 uses the existing road network in Chandler Woods, which was previously an interpretive trail, and

then creates new trails to incorporate Upper Armour Farm Meadow, Armour Farm Woods, and Negandank Meadow South 1. This network would highlight the healthiest woodlands on the property and introduce users to the meadow habitats as well as restoration measures such as afforestation, wetlands enhancement, and riparian buffers.

Phase 2, which includes the existing trails along Clenny/Wilson Run between East Barn Road and the railroad, adds a new trail along the north side of East Barn Pond, as well as a new trail through Browns Woods Meadow and Browns Woods, accessed from the Garden Lane. These trails would highlight aquatic habitat and riparian buffers and woodlands restoration.

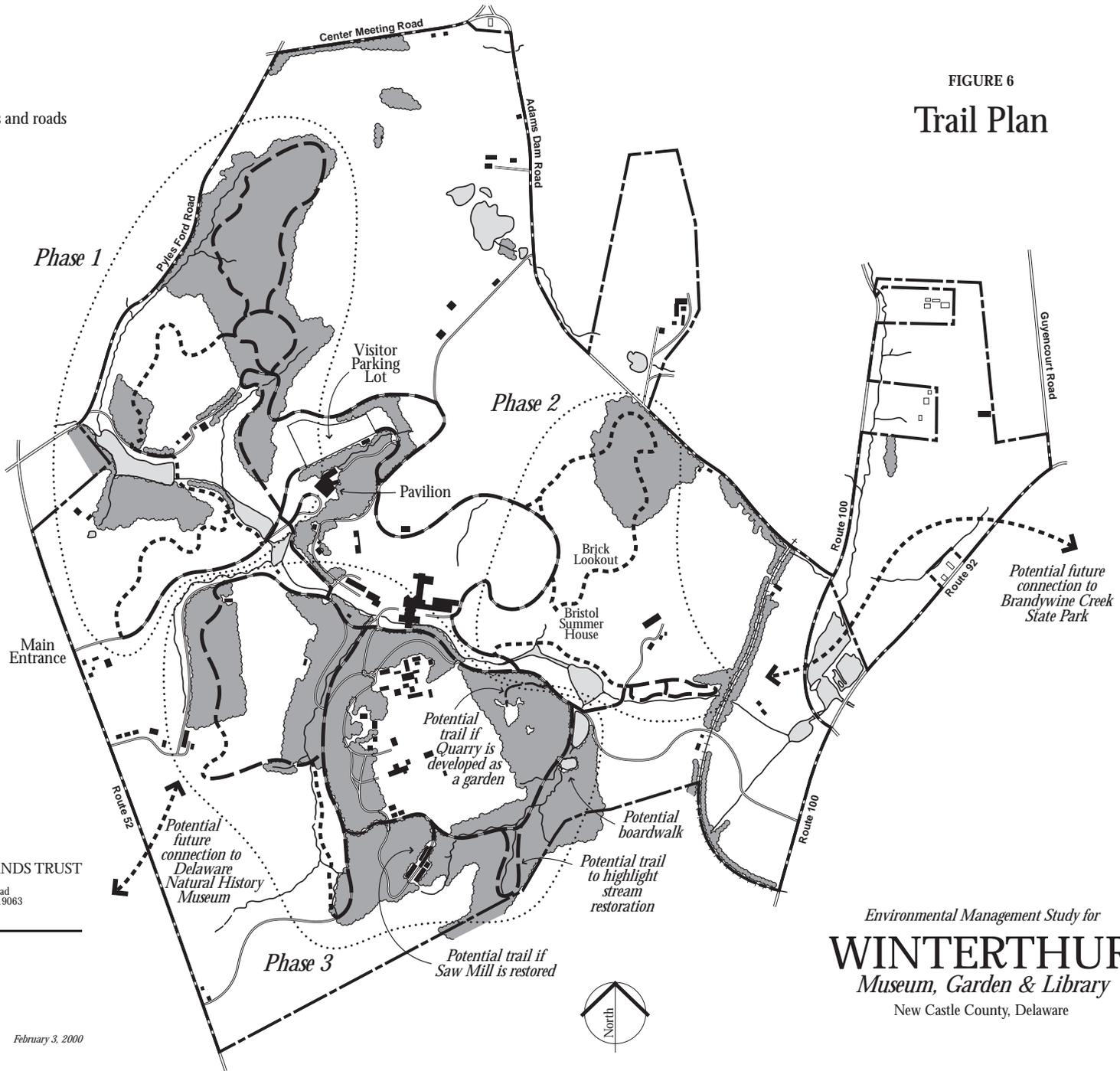
Phase 3 is indicated as the final phase because although its trails highlight interesting areas of Winterthur, they also take users through working areas of the property and more environmentally sensitive areas. A new trail is shown along the stream in the Event Field/Old Gatehouse Meadow that has been recommended as an afforestation and/or riparian buffer restoration area. Another trail, utilizing an old road, could highlight stream restoration measures. And there is a unique opportunity to construct a boardwalk through the exceptional wetlands associated with the Upper and Lower Duck Ponds.

### 3.2.5 Research and Education

The natural areas at Winterthur offer a wide range of research and educational opportunities through which Winterthur, local natural resource managers, and local schools and universities can benefit. Winterthur staff and other resource managers will benefit by receiving information that can assist them in better understanding and managing their natural areas. The academic world gains by

FIGURE 6  
Trail Plan

- Existing trails and roads
- - - New trails
- ..... Phases



 NATURAL LANDS TRUST  
Hildacy Farm  
1031 Palmers Mill Road  
Media, Pennsylvania 19063  
610-353-5587

with  
PATRICIA ANN QUIGLEY, INC.  
1080 Quarry Hall Road, R.D. #1  
Norristown, Pennsylvania 19403  
610-584-1829

HYLA ASSOCIATES  
1011 Center Mill Road  
Hockessin, Delaware 19707  
302-652-1952

February 3, 2000

Environmental Management Study for  
**WINTERTHUR**  
Museum, Garden & Library  
New Castle County, Delaware

## PROGRAMMATIC USES

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having access to relatively secure natural areas with diverse plant communities. In addition, supporting environmental education helps to educate the next generation to the importance of stewardship. Winterthur has already been approached by the Delaware Natural History Museum, the Delaware Audubon Society, and other organizations about use of the property. Other institutions that may be interested are the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, Widener University, and the University of Delaware.

As an example, research projects and educational activities that are currently being conducted at Natural Lands Trust preserves include:

- ~ The simplification of structure and composition in southeastern Pennsylvania woodlands as a result of a complex of forces of human origin with adverse consequences for wildlife and plant diversity.
- ~ Exclosures and the effects of heavy deer browse on plant communities.
- ~ Reestablishing the American chestnut to the Eastern forest by breeding hybrids resistant to the chestnut blight.
- ~ If and how different management practices affect breeding bird populations.
- ~ The effects of prescribed fire on meadow plant communities.
- ~ Informal research to determine the most practical way to convert open land to forest in light of invasive vegetation and high deer populations. Treatments include plantations protected by tree shelters, natural regeneration, and natural regeneration protected with tree shelters.

- ~ Over the past several years the Trust has hosted two week-long teacher workshops at our Stroud Preserve focused on current resource management issues. These workshops are funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and designed to disseminate knowledge of regional forest resources and what human activities are doing to these forests; the target audience was school teachers and their students in Chester County and nearby. The first program was entitled “People, Deer, and the Land” which ran from 1994-1995; the current program is called “Human Impact on Forests in Southeastern Pennsylvania.” One past participant in the program, an environmental science and ecology teacher, continues to bring a class to Stroud Preserve every fall and spring, to study the deer exclosure experiment set up there as a part of “People, Deer, and the Land.”

There are three resource management issues associated with research and education programs. The first is the concern for balancing public use policy with the need to protect research and interpretive sites from unintentional damage from property users (hikers) and vandals. Before promoting or increasing passive recreation, it must be ascertained how this will impact current or future research and education activities. The second concern is the potential impact on staff resources that would accompany these activities. While Winterthur has no plans to conduct research or educational projects itself at this point, there will be a need to coordinate and monitor the activities. Increases in staff demands could result in a reduced management level or lost research or educational opportunities. Finally, consideration should be given to possible conflicts with other existing programs such as agricultural leases and deer management.

## 3.2.6 Conservation Easements

A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and a conservation organization or government agency that protects land while leaving it in private ownership. The restrictions of the easement, tailored to suit the particular property and landowner's goals, permanently limit a property's uses in order to protect its conservation values. The easement binds all present and future owners of the eased land. A landowner generally donates the easement to a qualified conservation organization or government agency, which in turn ensures that the conditions of the easement are met over time.

Conveying a conservation easement is a way of making a tangible commitment to the preservation of the natural resources, cultural heritage, scenic beauty, and open spaces of a property, and the community in which it lies, for present and future generations. Winterthur is a significant property not only for its size, almost 1,000 acres of which 90% is open, but also for the diversity and health of the natural habitats that occur there. Over time, these lands will become more and more important as development pressures increase and open space and natural areas are lost. The property could also provide valuable information to local resource professionals trying to understand current ecological problems and to prepare for future ones.

Winterthur staff within the Garden Department have had discussions regarding whether to place a conservation easement on all or part of the property. Their recommended process for making a decision on the issue is to first have an understanding of what is to be accomplished and then making a commitment to proceed. This process would begin with the Garden Committee presenting a recommendation to the Executive Committee and then to the

Board of Trustees. Once a commitment by Winterthur has been made, a qualified conservation organization or government agency would be selected and the necessary documentation prepared. The results of this Study will provide most of the information needed for baseline documentation of existing conditions.

The Board of Trustees for Winterthur has already begun to address these issues. The *Policy and Guidelines for the Gardens and Grounds*, May 1987, states that "Winterthur is committed to conserving the former estate and residence of Henry Francis du Pont." The Board also authorized this Study, which has a goal of developing and implementing a stewardship plan to assure that future management, events, and site development will be conducted in an environmentally responsible manner. The logical next step in ensuring this commitment into the future would be for the Winterthur Board of Trustees to consider conveying a conservation easement.

## 3.2.7 Future Site Development

The first step in identifying suitable areas for future site development is to identify areas which should not be developed. These "preservation areas" contain critical constraining natural features such as wetlands, hydric soils, and steep slopes which make them unbuildable. The next step is to identify "conservation areas" where development could occur, but in a limited manner; areas with fewer development constraints but important natural features. These include features that are still environmentally sensitive, such as soils with a seasonally high water table, moderate slopes, woodlands, and scenic viewsheds, but vary in importance, vulnerability, or fragility. Within each type of resource there are examples of greater and lesser significance—large and/or mature

## PROGRAMMATIC USES

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stands of woodlands versus younger woodlands or those severely impacted by invasive vines. What remains are the areas most suited for development, the “potential development areas.”

The Future Site Development plan shows such an analysis of Winterthur. What this mapping does not include though, is scenic viewsheds. The determination of these are very site specific and involve many factors such as historical and cultural significance, botanical interest, and garden design which are outside the scope of this Study. Winterthur staff will need to overlay this information during the planning process for any future site development.

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