

Letitia Carson Legacy Project

Design Phase Report | January 2022



NAACP
Linn Benton Branch



Oregon State
University

SUMMARY

Oregon State University's Soap Creek beef ranch, north of Corvallis, in Benton County, Oregon, includes a site significant to the history of Oregon's early Black residents.

Letitia Carson, a formerly enslaved woman, came to Oregon in 1845 and was one of the first Black woman settlers in Oregon. She and her husband, David Carson, settled on land that is now part of the Soap Creek beef ranch. Because of Oregon's exclusion laws and the whites only provision of the 1850 Oregon Donation Land Claim Act, Letitia Carson was forced off her land. She filed two lawsuits in the mid-1850s against the administrator of her late partner's estate. Despite the Oregon Territory's exclusionary laws, Letitia Carson won both suits.

Although there are no visible remnants of the Carson homestead, the open prairie land and tree lined Soap Creek are a powerful reminder of the hard work and success achieved by many of Oregon's early Black residents, despite the many obstacles that they had to endure.

The Letitia Carson Legacy Project a partnership of four organizations – Black Oregon Land Trust, Oregon Black Pioneers, the Linn-Benton Counties NAACP Branch, and Oregon State University – committed to honoring Letitia Carson's legacy. The Project focuses on the Black experience in Oregon while connecting these women and communities to the Indigenous people of this region.

We envision creating, on Letitia Carson's land, a 21st century version of her Soap Creek homestead to inspire, educate, and nurture Oregon's future generations of Black and Indigenous growers, gatherers, foragers, entrepreneurs, and leaders. We imagine experiential learning and applied research opportunities for OSU students and faculty. We imagine welcoming kids, families, and community members to the land to learn and share Letitia's inspiring story.

This site is unique: nowhere else in the country can the public visit and participate in programs on land once owned by a Black pioneer.

Based on a design phase in 2021, the LCLP has planned the following for the next two years:

- ▶ Creation of a digital history exhibit and traveling "pop up" exhibit;
- ▶ Archaeological exploration at the homestead site;
- ▶ Small-scale on-site programming that is compatible with current management;
- ▶ Outreach to engage and activate the OSU community and external partners.

The Letitia Carson Legacy Project is part of a restorative justice movement, in Oregon and across the U.S. We will focus on our part, in this place. In the next two years we will build public support, secure funding, and make specific, tangible progress.

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WHO WAS LETITIA CARSON?

Oregon State University's Soap Creek beef ranch, in Benton County, north of the City of Corvallis, includes a site that is significant to the history of Oregon's early Black residents.

Letitia Carson, a formerly enslaved woman, came to Oregon in 1845 and was one of the first Black women settlers in Oregon. Because of Oregon's exclusion laws and the whites-only provision of the 1850 Oregon Donation Land Claim Act, she was forced off the land she had settled and worked on but then filed two lawsuits in the mid-1850s against the administrator of her late partner's estate. Despite the Oregon Territory's exclusionary laws, Letitia Carson won both suits.

Although there are no visible remnants of the Carson homestead, the open prairie land and tree lined Soap Creek, which flows through the DLC, are similar to the landscape that Letitia Carson and her family would have known. This site is a reminder and recognition of the hard work, resilience, and success achieved by many of Oregon's early Black residents, despite the trauma and many obstacles that they had to endure.

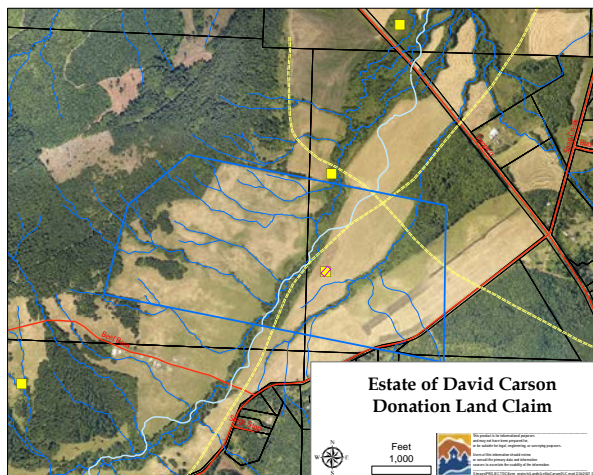
Letitia Carson was born into slavery in Kentucky between 1814 and 1818. David Carson was born in Ireland in 1800 and likely came to the United States in the 1810s or early 1820s. It is not known when or how David and Letitia came together or when Letitia was granted her freedom, so the nature of their relationship is unclear. However, the two raised a family in Oregon, and details suggest they lived together consensually.

Letitia and David migrated to Oregon from Missouri in May 1845 with nearly 1,000 other emigrants. During the trip, along the North Fork of the Platte River in what would become Nebraska, Letitia gave birth to their first child, Martha Jane. The family arrived in Oregon in the fall of 1845. In December, David trekked south into the mid-Willamette Valley, and under the Oregon provisional government's land laws, made a claim for 640 acres -- the amount entitled to married couples -- of mostly native prairie in the Soap Creek Valley.

They likely built their homestead, close to Soap Creek, in the spring of 1846. They began raising cattle (Letitia was the primary cattle-raiser) and hogs; they planted crops including potatoes and likely established an orchard. The Applegate Trail ran close to their homestead, and it is probable that the Carsons sold produce, dairy products and meat to travelers on the road.

In September 1852, David Carson passed away. Because he had not made a will, a nearby Soap Creek resident, Greenberry Smith, was named administrator of David's estate. Smith and his family had also migrated to Oregon in 1845, so it is possible that the Smiths and Carsons knew each other while on the trail to Oregon. Smith did not recognize Letitia or her children as David's rightful heirs, either because she was Black or because he considered her still enslaved. In early January 1853, Smith held an auction of David's possessions. Letitia had to spend \$104.87 to buy back some of her family's basic possessions, including bedding, cookware, and a few head of cattle, in order to survive.

Soon after that, Letitia and her two children relocated to Douglas County. But Letitia Carson was not through with Greenberry Smith. In February 1854 Letitia filed suit against Smith as the administrator of David Carson's estate. She was represented by Corvallis attorney Andrew Thayer. The gist of her complaint was that if Smith did not recognize her as David Carson's legal heir, then she was due back wages -- in the amount of \$3,750 for the seven years she had been with David -- and damages of \$5,000. She also made a claim of nearly \$2,500 for the unlawful sale of her cattle. She later reduced the labor claim to \$1,000. Both nephew Andrew J. Carson and David Carson (Jr.) were subpoenaed to testify, as were several neighbors. In May 1855, the jury found in her favor on the labor issue, but she only was awarded \$300 plus \$222.20 in court costs.



Attorney Thayer filed a second suit in August 1855 pertaining to Letitia's cattle. One witness, a neighbor, confirmed that Letitia had owned and raised most of the cattle. In October 1856 the judge in the case issued a judgment in Letitia's favor, awarding her \$1,200 plus nearly \$200 in costs.

Letitia Carson's noteworthiness did not end with her successful lawsuits. On June 17, 1863, she filed a claim for 154 acres in Douglas County under the federal 1862 Homestead Act. Five years later her claim was one of the first seventy-one claims certified in the U.S., and most likely the first claim by a Black woman in Oregon.

The Carson lands were sold in 1857, and from that time until the federal government purchased the lands in 1941 for the Camp Adair cantonment, they mostly were used for cattle grazing and haying. The use of the land for military training during WWII seems to have had minimal impact on the landscape. In 1948 Oregon State University acquired 6,200 acres of the former Camp Adair lands from the federal government, including most of the Carson lands and what became the Dunn Forest. Today much of the Carson land is open prairie, used for beef cattle grazing by Oregon State University's beef ranch. There are no visible remnants of the Carson homestead or farm outbuildings; they were demolished, moved off site, or allowed to deteriorate after Letitia Carson was forced to leave her homestead and the Carson Estate DLC was sold in 1857.

WHAT IS THE LETITIA CARSON LEGACY PROJECT?

Partners, vision, values, structure, and governance

The Letitia Carson Legacy Project is a partnership of four organizations coming together to honor Letitia Carson's legacy in many ways, with a focus on the very land she first homesteaded in the Oregon Territory.

The Letitia Carson Legacy Project connects powerful Black women and their communities across 177 years of Oregon history. The Project focuses on the Black experience in Oregon while connecting these women and communities to the Indigenous people of this region.

Letitia Carson's strength, determination, and resilience are deeply inspiring, and her story must be more widely known and celebrated. Through her, we can learn more about the history and resilience of Black folk, especially Black women, in the Willamette Valley, Oregon, and the West.

LCLP Partners

- ▶ Black Oregon Land Trust
- ▶ Oregon Black Pioneers
- ▶ Linn-Benton Counties NAACP Branch
- ▶ Oregon State University

Black Oregon Land Trust (BOLT) was created and is led by powerful Black women. BOLT's vision is that Black farmers in Oregon own their own land. Permanently, securely, forever. With the land assured, they build their soil, their health, their wealth, and their communities for generations to come. BOLT will do this by acquiring land for Black farmers to steward in perpetuity, and connecting those farmers with training, technical assistance, equipment and infrastructure, and operating capital.

Oregon Black Pioneers (OBP) is Oregon's only historical society dedicated to preserving and presenting the experiences of African Americans statewide. Since 1993, OBP has illuminated the seldom-told history of people of African descent in Oregon. They are inspired by the tenacity of Black Oregonians who have faced discrimination and hardship to make a life for themselves here over the past 400 years. OBP honors their sacrifices by remembering their stories and by sharing them with the public.



Linn-Benton Counties NAACP Branch: since its founding in 1909, the NAACP has worked to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination. Since the local branch's founding in 1971, they have strived for justice and inclusive excellence by providing opportunities for members to get involved in one of many standing committees and initiatives that directly combat all forms of racial injustices and white supremacist ideologies.



Oregon State University (OSU): OSU leadership has acknowledged deep racial inequities and systemic racism in our nation, our state, and at our university. OSU has committed to becoming an anti-racist institution, recognizing that “We have work to do” across all three land grant missions. In addition, as an 1862 land grant university, OSU shares the national responsibility of the land grant university system to acknowledge and address Indigenous history.



The Letitia Carson Legacy Project aligns with OSU's Strategic Plan 4.0, particularly goal 4: “A Culture of Belonging, Collaboration, and Innovation.” The LCLP has the potential to touch OSU's full land grant mission of research, teaching, and extension. Current OSU involvement and support are as follows:

- ▶ The Center for Small Farms & Community Food Systems, an Extension-based Center in the College of Agricultural Sciences, co-founded the LCLP and is OSU's lead;
- ▶ The College of Agricultural Sciences, which currently manages the land that was once the Carson homestead, provided financial support for the design phase;
- ▶ The Division of Extension and Engagement also provided financial support for the design phase.
- ▶ The College of Liberal Arts has expressed strong support, and faculty in three CLA Schools are already involved with LCLP activities.
- ▶ The College of Forestry, which manages forest land adjacent to the Carson homestead, will provide guidance on public use of actively managed land and is also exploring a “sister” project.
- ▶ The Office of Institutional Diversity has also expressed strong support for the project.

Our Vision

We envision creating, on Letitia Carson's land, a 21st century version of her Soap Creek homestead to inspire, educate, and nurture Oregon's future generations of Black and Indigenous growers, gatherers, foragers, entrepreneurs, and leaders. On this land, we can learn and practice restorative, regenerative agriculture and land stewardship necessary for resilience in a rapidly changing environment.

We imagine experiential learning and applied research opportunities for OSU students and faculty. We imagine welcoming kids, families, and community members to the land to learn and share Letitia's inspiring story. This site is unique: nowhere else in the country can the public visit and participate in programs on land once owned by a Black pioneer.

More broadly, Letitia Carson's story is an opportunity to retell the history of this place - Corvallis, the Willamette Valley, Oregon, the U.S. West, and the U.S. as a whole -- from a more complex and multilayered perspective than is typically told. This includes acknowledging the genocide of Indigenous people – specifically, the Kalapuya – and theft of their land by the U.S. government that cleared the way for Letitia Carson, a strong and determined Black woman, to overcome the deep, anti-Black racism of her time.

Our Values

- ▶ The Letitia Carson Legacy Project will be led by and center the experiences of the Black community in Oregon;
- ▶ Black Oregon Land Trust, Oregon Black Pioneers, and the Linn-Benton Counties NAACP Branch will lead or advise on Project direction, strategy, and resource allocation.

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- ▶ The Project will align with and support the values, mission, and activities of the OSU President's Commission on the Status of Black Faculty and Staff.
 - ▶ The Project will respect and honor Indigenous experiences by collaborating with and learning from the original peoples of these lands.
 - ▶ Black and Indigenous faculty, students, and staff will be prioritized for teaching, learning, research, professional development, funding, and career advancement opportunities.
 - ▶ The Project will have strong faculty and student engagement and extensive external partnerships.
 - ▶ The Project's advisory and governance structures will reflect our commitment to anti-racism, justice, and inclusivity.

We believe that the Letitia Carson Legacy Project is an opportunity for reparations – reparations that are specific to this project, these partners, this land, and Oregon's history. The term "reparations" often means financial compensation, but that is not our approach. In the design phase, we envisioned the following ways to repair harm to communities.

- ▶ Hiring of tenure-track OSU faculty in public history, agroecology, education, or other connected field who can speak directly to the experience of Black communities;
- ▶ Creation of an endowment to fund scholarships for Black undergrad and grad students, paired with mentorship, so they leave OSU debt-free and with excellent jobs;
- ▶ Creation of an endowment to fund student internships for Black students to work with Black Oregon Land Trust, Oregon Black Pioneers, Linn-Benton Counties NAACP Branch, and the OSU Center for Small Farms & Community Food Systems.

Letitia was forced, against her will, to leave her land. She did find a new home and community in Douglas County. We want Black students who graduate from OSU to leave feeling they were part of a kind and caring community that actively supports them and cares about their success.

A second significant reparations opportunity is to work with Black Oregon Land Trust to make Letitia Carson's land available for Black farmers, as well as an important gathering place for Black food justice leaders, and their allies, in Oregon.

A third significant reparations opportunity is to make Letitia Carson's land a satellite location for Oregon Black Pioneers. As a Black-led organization dedicated to preserving and presenting the experiences of African Americans in Oregon, OBP should lead the interpretive direction of the Letitia Carson homestead and long-term management of on-site programming. Letitia's story is a crucial part of Black history in our state: a Black-led organization should be holding and telling that story on a site that they manage.

Structure and Governance

- ▶ OSU will provide project management support, create/host the LCLP website and related social media, and manage grants and gifts as appropriate/agreed on by partners.
- ▶ OSU, OBP, and BOLT will actively collaborate on outreach, advocacy, and fundraising for the project. This includes developing a long-term funding strategy.
- ▶ The Linn-Benton Counties NAACP Branch, one of the founding partners, will serve in an advisory role and may be more involved in the future as their capacity allows.
- ▶ Advisory groups of OSU faculty, staff, students, and alumni will share ideas and provide feedback on the project.
- ▶ We will provide regular updates to community partners and "sister" projects and host annual "open house" convenings to share progress and invite feedback.

PRESERVE, INTERPRET, ACTIVATE

The Letitia Carson Legacy Project (LCLP) is a collaborative effort to preserve, interpret, and activate the 19th century homestead of Letitia Carson and her family in Benton County, Oregon. During our design phase in April-November of 2021, project partners developed the following plan for interpreting the story of Letitia Carson for the public using the unique resource of the Carson homestead and the combined expertise of LCLP partners.

Mission:

Through the experiences of Benton County pioneer Letitia Carson, the LCLP presents the labors and sociopolitical position of Black women of the Willamette Valley in the 19th century.

Themes:

- ▶ Slavery and Freedom
- ▶ Where is Home?
- ▶ Lessons on the Land
- ▶ The Pursuit of Justice

Objectives:

- ▶ Reparations and Restorative Justice
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Skill Building
- ▶ Self Determination
- ▶ Environmental Stewardship

Goals:

- ▶ The public will become familiar with Letitia Carson, her time in Benton County's Soap Creek Valley, and her unprecedented legal battle against Greenberry Smith.
- ▶ The public will be better able to critically examine Oregon's contemporary racial demographics and racial inequalities.
- ▶ Letitia Carson's story will inspire contemporary Black Oregonians to connect with the land as a source of healing, entrepreneurship, and economic justice.

Proposed Activities

In the first two years, we will focus on digital history, archaeological exploration, a traveling "pop up" exhibit, and initial on-site programs. Here is a summary of plans for each.

Digital History

We will create a comprehensive digital exhibit about Letitia Carson, her story, and the Letitia Carson Legacy Project, using the Omeka digital exhibit platform. This includes gathering relevant primary source documents and photographs, historic maps, newspaper articles, published works (in the public domain) and other documentary evidence pertaining to Letitia Carson and her family. The digital exhibit will provide enhanced public access to and interpretation of the primary source materials pertaining to Letitia Carson's story that are currently located in archives, libraries, and museums at the local, state, and federal level.

Oregon Black Pioneers will provide oversight for a master's student in OSU's Public History program to do this work; this internship will be funded by a grant we received from the Oregon Heritage Commission. Collaborators include Joel Zapata, Assistant Professor of History in CLA's School of History, Philosophy, and Religion; and Bob Zybach, a historian and OSU graduate who is a leading expert on Letitia Carson and originally uncovered her story and relationship to the Soap Creek Ranch.

We expect the digital exhibit to be complete and available by August 2022.



Letitia Carson's daughter,
Martha

Archaeological Exploration

During the design phase, the LCLP team was able to identify the location of the homestead and outbuildings, using a combination of survey maps, aerial photographs, site visits, and other documentation. In consultation with archaeology faculty in OSU's Anthropology Program, Loren Davis and Neal Endacott, we have a plan to explore the homestead site, first with ground penetrating radar (GPR), and then by digging eight to ten test pits. We will have a curation plan for any artifacts we may find.

We have identified a recent graduate of OSU's historic archaeology program, with extensive experience with sites from the same time period as the Carson site, to lead the test pits. We will also involve current OSU students, through field trips and observation on-site and by sharing results in their classes.

The GPR is planned for March, followed by the test pits from April – August 2022. The consulting archaeologist will provide a final report with findings and recommendations in the Fall. If test pit results are positive, this site should be considered for a future field school.

Traveling Exhibit

We will develop a small-scale, “pop-up” exhibit about Letitia Carson and her story, focusing on her experience in the Soap Creek Valley, and introducing the Letitia Carson Legacy Project to communities around Oregon. The exhibit will include a slideshow and potentially short videos.

Because of Letitia Carson's connection to Douglas County, The Ford Family Foundation has pledged to support and collaborate on content development for the exhibit; Black Oregon Land Trust has offered to be the first host, at their Black Community Food Center in Portland.

On-Site Programs

Imagine learning about a Black pioneer – about how she lived, how she farmed, how she raised children, and how she struggled against injustice – on the very place where she lived. We know of no other site in the U.S. where that is possible. While the land where Letitia and David Carson settled is now actively managed by the OSU Beef Ranch, we believe there are many opportunities for compatible programming on the site itself, to bring the public – and especially Black Oregonians – to connect with Letitia at her first home in Oregon.

During the design phase, we brought multiple small groups to the land, in different seasons, to learn more about it and envision possibilities. In 2022-2023, we plan to:

- ▶ Continue learning about the land, in partnership with the Beef Ranch manager;
- ▶ Collaborate with the Beef Ranch and CAS to develop general guidelines for on-site programming, including safety, accessibility, liability, driving and parking, restrooms, sun/wind/rain protection, and security for Beef Ranch property.
- ▶ With these guidelines in place, begin occasional small-scale interpretive programming which introduces more of the OSU community and the public to the Letitia Carson story and the Carson homestead. Programs could include:
 - Guided tours, including for school/youth groups
 - Work parties (brush clearing, invasive species remediation, etc.)
 - Picnics and campouts
 - Native plant surveys, with a focus on First Foods

Over this time and through these experiences, we will also further develop ideas we have for more extensive and durable on-site programming, for example:

- ▶ Sustainable, regenerative farming demonstrations, including integrated crop and livestock farming;
- ▶ Living history that allows visitors to experience aspects of life on a 19th century homestead, based on what we know about Letitia Carson's experience. In addition to farming animal husbandry, this could include craftsmanship, building shelters, food gathering, food preservation, outdoor survival skills, and more.

As noted, in the long run, this site could serve as a satellite location for Oregon Black Pioneers. OBP is the ideal partner to help shape the interpretive direction of the Letitia Carson homestead and then offer on-site programming for many years to come.

HONORING AND LEARNING FROM THE KALAPUYA

The Letitia Carson Legacy Project is centered on the story of an inspiring woman who came to Oregon in 1845 as one of Oregon's first Black pioneers. In addition to the remarkable experiences of Letitia Carson, the land that the Carson family initially settled also holds a powerful story. The land contains the complex and multilayered history of this place: Corvallis, Benton County, and the Willamette Valley in Oregon.

The Carson family homestead was in what we now call the Soap Creek valley, which is located within the traditional homelands of the Kalapuya, either the Ampinefu Band (also known as the Mary's River Band), or potentially the Luckiamute. From time immemorial, the Kalapuya lived on and cared for this land that the Carsons claimed. Much like the land was stolen from the Kalapuya, this land was later taken from Letitia and her children because of racism against Black people.

This land connects experiences of exclusion and displacement of both Black and Indigenous people throughout Oregon's entire history.

A core goal of the Letitia Carson Legacy Project is to retell and educate the community about this complex history in Oregon, but there is much to learn. For thousands of years, Indigenous communities lived in relationship with the land and waters, and have histories and experiences that are not broadly known. Without that knowledge, our project is not yet able to accurately interpret or honor the knowledge and authentic experiences of the Kalapuya and other Indigenous groups.

We do know that the U.S. government sponsored genocide of Indigenous people and theft of their land. Indigenous lands were forcibly taken from many tribal communities and settled by mostly white settlers. Following the Willamette Valley Treaty of 1855 (Kalapuya etc. Treaty), Kalapuya people were forcibly removed to reservations in Western Oregon. Today, their living descendants are a part of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.

These devastating experiences of Indigenous communities cleared the way for Letitia Carson, a strong and determined Black woman, to overcome the deep, anti-Black racism of her time. For the Carson family, this is not where Indigenous connection ends. After being denied a portion of the original homestead land due to her status as a Black woman, Letitia moved south. In Douglas County, Letitia became the first and only Black woman in Oregon to successfully secure a land claim under the 1862 federal Homestead Act. In 1868, Letitia's daughter Martha Jane Carson married Narcisse Lavadour, a member of the Walla Walla Tribe, who lived near the Carson homestead in Douglas County. In 1886, they moved to the Umatilla Indian Reservation where they would raise ten children. Many of Martha's descendants are currently enrolled members of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. A settlement-era family finding refuge and community within the tribes is another component of the complex history of the U.S.

Our project envisions transforming the land where Letitia Carson first lived in Oregon into a 21st century version of her Soap Creek homestead, to inspire, educate, and nurture Oregon's future generations of Black and Indigenous growers, gatherers, foragers, and leaders. This is an essential part of creating a more just, equitable, and sustainable food system.

Our project wishes to honor Indigenous experiences by collaborating with and learning from the original peoples of these lands. In 2021, we reached out to contacts at both the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz to request their feedback and potential collaboration. We understand they have many such requests and look forward to working with them when it is our turn for feedback. We also know they have been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic and understand where their current priorities need to be. We are committed to providing the Tribes with information and updates about the project as it progresses.

For now, we are consulting with Indigenous Studies faculty at OSU to develop ideas for the project. In addition to accurate and respectful land acknowledgment, initial ideas include interpretive historical opportunities, regenerative land stewardship practices, and exploration of First Foods. Recently, an informal assessment was done for native plant restoration opportunities such as (re) introduction of camas in conservation zones. Additionally, existing Indigenous food sources and medicinal plants have been located on the site.

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

In 2022 and 2023, our goals for outreach and engagement are as follows.

At OSU, we will:

- ▶ Solidify a core advisory group of OSU faculty, staff, and students.
- ▶ Partner with the Commission on the Status of Black Faculty and Staff to lay groundwork and begin fundraising for faculty support and hiring goals;
- ▶ Assess student interest, especially among Black students, in the LCLP and what Letitia Carson's story and the Project mean and could mean for them;
- ▶ Explore collaboration opportunities with MANRRS, the Lonnie B. Harris Black Cultural Center, Native American Longhouse Kaku-Ixt Mana Ina Haws, the Nia Black Scholar and munk-skukum Indigenous Living and Learning Communities, Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Student Participation, Black student associations, and others already doing crucial work to support Black students, Indigenous students, and other students of color at OSU;
- ▶ Strengthen ties to the land for faculty, staff, and students through field trips;
- ▶ Launch an annual Letitia Carson symposium for faculty and students to share their work related to her and her story;
- ▶ Partner with the Center for the Humanities to explore how to incorporate Letitia Carson's story in a multi-disciplinary way across the university.

At a statewide level, we will:

- ▶ Establish the LCLP as an entity that has specific goals and a specific role in the Oregon-wide movement to celebrate, learn from, and be inspired by Letitia Carson towards restorative justice for Black Oregonians.
- ▶ In our outreach, highlight OSU's specific role/opportunity as (1) the current stewards of her land and (2) Oregon's 1862 land grant university.
- ▶ Present on the LCLP at relevant conferences and professional gatherings to update potential contributors, stakeholders, and funders about our work, beginning with a panel at the Oregon Heritage Conference in April 2022, in Corvallis: "The Letitia Carson Legacy Project: Celebrating the Black and Kalapuya Presence in Benton County's Soap Creek Valley."
- ▶ Explore opportunities for the LCLP to partner with other Letitia Carson-focused projects and groups in Corvallis/Benton County, with a focus on (1) Letitia Carson Elementary and the Corvallis Public School District, and (2) Friends of Carson Prairie and Soap Creek neighbors.

VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The Letitia Carson Legacy Project is part of a restorative justice movement – in Oregon and across the nation – that is much larger than us. We will focus on our part, in this place. The next two years are a critical time to build public support, secure funding, and make specific, tangible progress on the plans described in this report.

That said, we believe the Letitia Carson Legacy Project has truly transformative potential. Inspiring ideas for the future, envisioned during our design phase, include but are not limited to:

Black Farmers Return to the Land

To honor Letitia's legacy as a direct market farmer, Black farmers will once again farm on the land. This could be a commercial enterprise, an educational farm with OSU student and community participation, and potentially a combination. Direct market crops could be sold at a farm stand, at farmers markets, and through other local food outlets. This program will be guided by the Black Oregon Land Trust with an emphasis on involving Black students and Black community in agriculture. Training will also include entrepreneurship and farm business management.

Letitia Carson Educational Degree Track

An interdisciplinary undergraduate degree track will be established for students to learn skillsets needed for resilient communities: community development, climate smart agricultural production, entrepreneurship, public policy, and more.

Support for Single Black Mothers

Campus housing and daycare services will be created for single Black mothers. A fellowship program will fund their education in Letitia Carson's name.

Letitia Carson Living Learning Centers in Corvallis and Douglas County

A pair of student living and learning centers will be created, one on OSU's Corvallis campus and one in Douglas County where Letitia settled after being forced to leave Soap Creek.

FUNDRAISING GOAL

Our two-year fundraising goal, for Jan. 2022 – Dec. 2023, is as follows:

Personnel:

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| Project coordinator (0.5 FTE on base of \$55,000, ~55% fringe) | \$43,000 |
| Student interns (four interns, \$18-20/hour, 5% fringe, 20 hrs/wk, 11 wks) | \$18,000 |
| Stipends to support BOLT and OBP staff participation | \$15,000 |
| Honoraria for faculty advisors | \$5,000 |
| Outside consultants (B. Zybach, others tbd) | \$10,000 |

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| Subtotal: | \$91,000 |
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Planned activities in 2022

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| Digital history | \$15,000 |
| Archaeology (test digs) | \$7,000 |
| Traveling exhibit | \$8,000 |
| On-site programming (est.) | \$5,000 |
| Advisory and partner meetings (travel, venue, meals) | \$4,000 |

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|------------------|-----------------|
| Subtotal: | \$39,000 |
|------------------|-----------------|

Total budget for 2022 = \$130,000

Total budget for 2023 = \$91,000 plus additional funds for activities to be determined.

Current and planned funding sources include but are not limited to:

- ▶ Oregon Heritage Commission grant (awarded)
- ▶ The Ford Family Foundation contract (committed)
- ▶ OSU Center for Small Farms & Community Food Systems (internal funding)
- ▶ Oregon Cultural Trust (proposal due May 2022)
- ▶ Individual donor outreach

For more information, contact:

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