

An aerial photograph of a wide river, likely the Mississippi River, flowing through a landscape. On the left bank, there are industrial buildings and a parking lot. On the right bank, there are residential houses with red roofs and a parking lot. A road runs along the right bank of the river. In the background, there are hills and a bridge. A large, semi-transparent white circle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text.

# **A New Special District**

## **Flood Safety + Environment**





# Objectives & Agenda

- Who is MCDD and why a new district?
- Past outreach efforts
- Proposed strategies
- Questions and discussion





## Discussion Questions

What resonates?

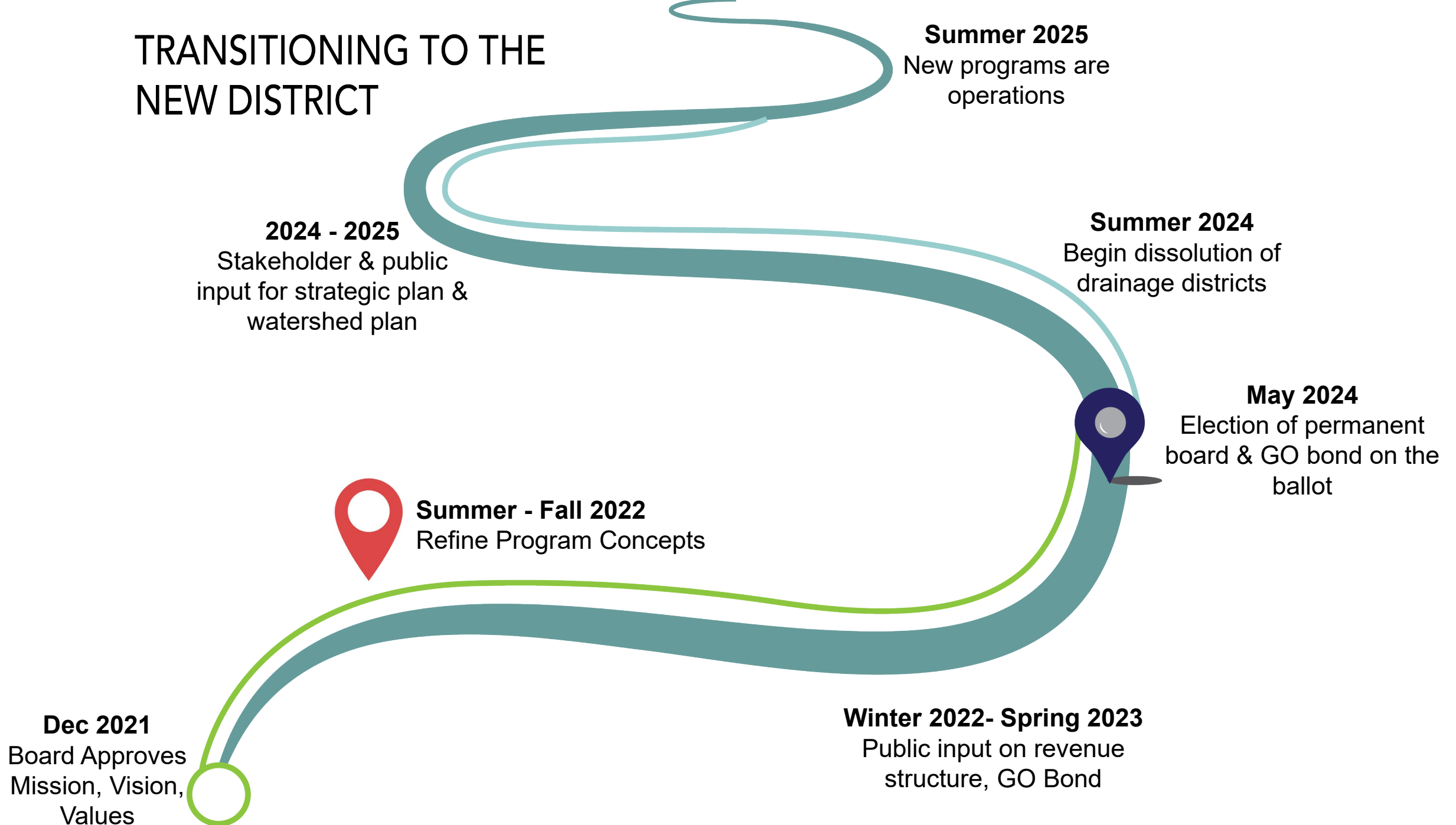
Are there additional strategies we should consider?

Do you have concerns?

Who else should we be talking to?

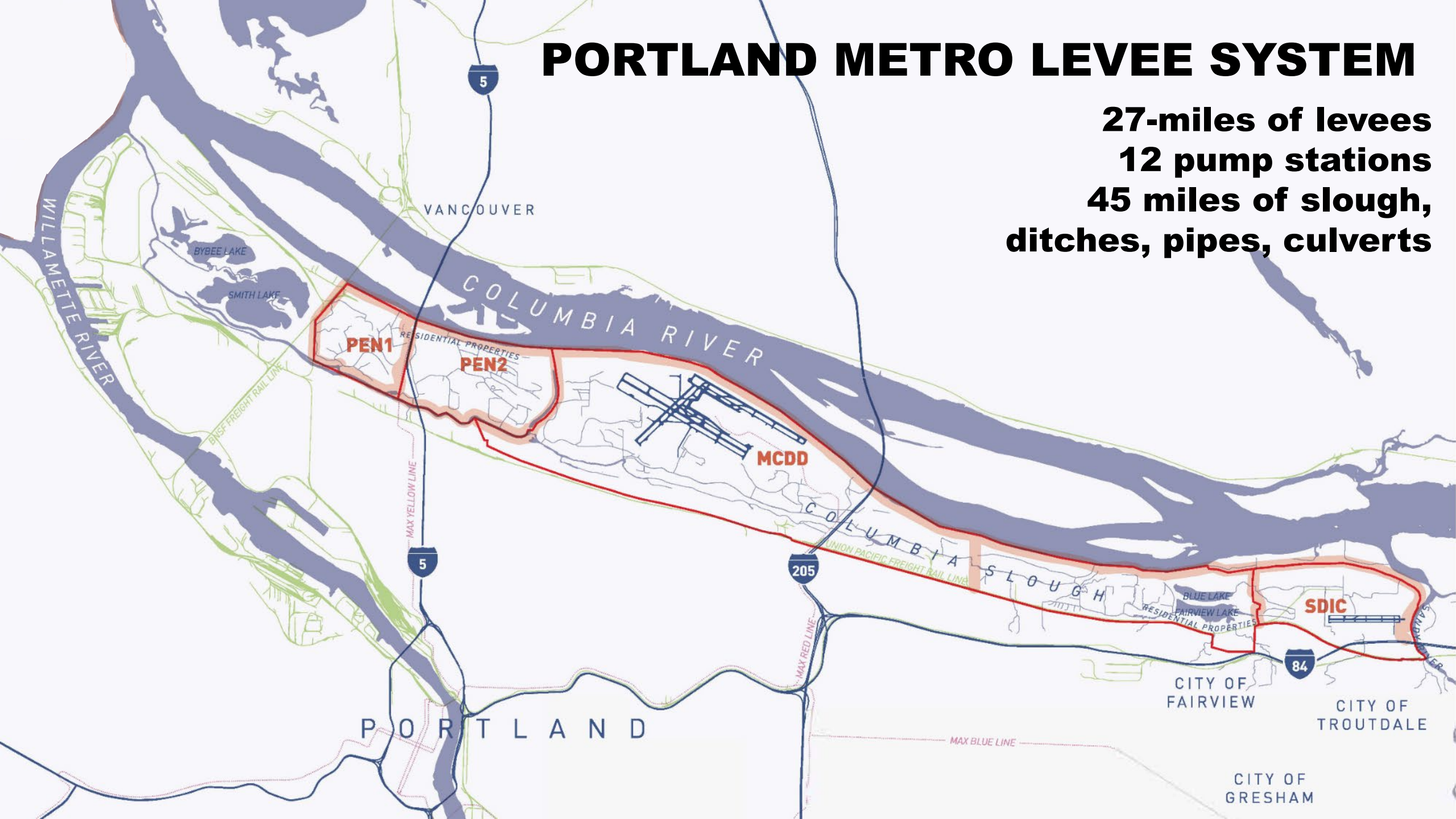


# TRANSITIONING TO THE NEW DISTRICT



# PORTLAND METRO LEVEE SYSTEM

**27-miles of levees**  
**12 pump stations**  
**45 miles of slough, ditches, pipes, culverts**





Then



The Columbia Slough was a **richly braided network of wetland channels and ponds** that was regularly flooded by the Columbia River.

# A LOT AT RISK



almost

**8,000**  
residents



Drinking water for  
**1 million**



**20 million**  
passengers annually at PDX



Hundreds of  
**Hazardous Materials**  
are kept out of the river



nearly  
**60,000**  
jobs



**3** Major highways  
(I-5, 1-205, I-84)



about

**2,000 acres**  
of parks & natural spaces



approximately

**7.4 billion**  
in assessed property value



# What We Do Today



**Levee Maintenance & Repair**



**Keep Water Moving**



**Respond to Emergencies**





# Why the “New District”?

- Managing four separate agencies for one system is inefficient
- More modern & sustainable approach to managing the flood safety system
- Mandated by legislature to integrate equity, environmental practices, and cultural history into flood management



# Stakeholder Mandates

## How Mandates QRS 550

### Drainage Districts Current Mission



Levee  
Maintenance



Keep Water  
Moving



Emergency Response  
and Preparedness



Support Regional  
Partnerships



Contribute to  
improved water  
quality, fish and  
wildlife habitat,  
floodplain  
restoration and  
landscape  
resilience



Prepare for and  
adapt to the impact  
of **climate change**  
in relation to the  
managed  
floodplain

### UFSWQD

#### Expanded Mission



Promote **equity**  
and **social**  
**justice** in all  
aspects of the  
district's  
operations



Provide the public  
with information  
regarding the  
**cultural history**  
of the territory in  
the managed  
floodplain



# Stakeholder Input

## Columbia Slough Goals & Opportunities Report

### *Goals*

- Restore water quality to levels healthy for humans and wildlife.
- Create a thriving, inviting environment for people that actively promotes equitable, just, and resilient communities.
- Restore critical habitat to create a protective and thriving habitat for non-human species.



Credit: Columbia Slough Watershed Council 2019



# Stakeholder Input

## Columbia Slough Goals & Opportunities Report

### *Opportunities*

*Projects that can balance multiple objectives across flood safety, economic development, species protection, and other priorities.*

*Connections across boundaries through planning, funding, and partnerships*

*Work with the community, promote an equitable future*



Credit: Columbia Slough Watershed Council 2019



# Stakeholder Input

## Multi-Benefit Charette

*Add refugia habitat for salmon, alcoves, improved habitat along the levees*

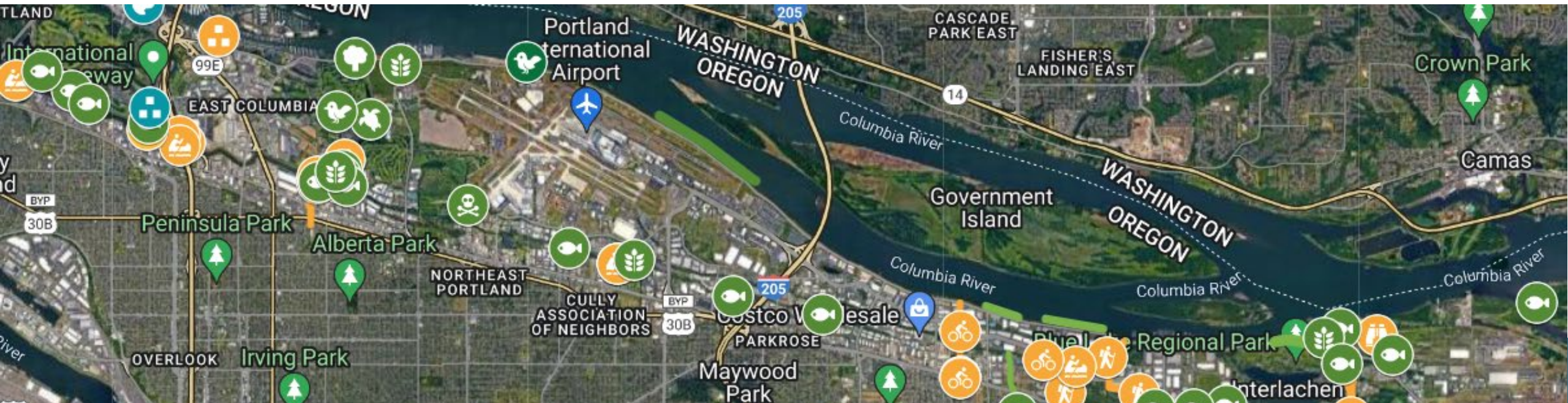
*Land acquisition, wetland restoration. Opportunities for Wapato.*

*Improve hydrologic function*

*Riparian restoration and tree planting along the banks*

*Create benches for habitat across the lower slough & upper slough*

*Salmon habitat along the Columbia River/creating more shallow water habitat*



# Partner & Stakeholder Resources

- CRITFIC 2016 Future Of Our Salmon
- City of Portland Watershed Framework
- Levee Ready Columbia Levee Environmental Condition Assessment
- County & Portland Climate Action Plan
- Oregon Water Futures Report
- Local programs: Oregon Metro Bond Priorities, City of Portland Sediment, DEQ Clean-up
- Other regional and national leaders: Floodplains by Design, Mile High Flood District, Clean Water Services, Valley Water, King County



Credit: Columbia Slough Watershed Council 2019



# An Integrated Approach

- Legislation has multiple objectives
- Efficient use of public resources
- Public supports environment-centered approach
- Natural intersections
- Consistent with best practices

80th OREGON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY--2019 Regular Session

## Enrolled Senate Bill 431

Sponsored by Senator FREDERICK, Representative GORSEK; Senator MONNES ANDERSON (Pre-session filed.)

CHAPTER .....

AN ACT

Relating to urban flood safety and water quality districts; creating new provisions; amending ORS 174.116, 198.010, 198.310, 198.510 and 255.012; and prescribing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

### PURPOSE AND CREATION OF URBAN FLOOD SAFETY AND WATER QUALITY DISTRICT

**SECTION 1. Purpose.** The Legislative Assembly declares the lands protected by the Columbia River levee system in northern Multnomah County to be of statewide and regional significance because they contain significant industrial and economic lands, one of the state's most important transportation hubs, the Portland International Airport, the second largest source of drinking water in Oregon and a number of important natural assets. This area also represents a significant cultural and community history of flooding, displacement and loss, a history that should be remembered so that it is not repeated. The purpose of sections 1 to 26 of this 2019 Act is to create a new special district that has the legislative authority and financial capability to carry out the purposes set forth in section 3 (1) of this 2019 Act.

**SECTION 2. Definitions.** As used in sections 1 to 26 of this 2019 Act, unless the context requires otherwise:

(1) "District" means the urban flood safety and water quality district created under section 3 of this 2019 Act.

(2) "District board" means the board of directors of the district.

(3) "Elector" means an individual qualified to vote under Article II, section 2, of the Oregon Constitution, who resides in the district.

(4) "File for record" means to file a document for recording with the county clerk.

(5) "Green infrastructure" means infrastructure adapted to wet weather management that:

(a) Infiltrates, evapotranspires, captures and reuses storm water to maintain or restore natural hydrology;

(b) Protects or restores natural landscapes;

(c) Uses rain gardens, porous pavements, green roofs, infiltration planters, trees, tree boxes, bioswales or other green infrastructure strategies; or

(d) Harvests rain water from an artificial impervious surface for nonpotable uses, including landscape irrigation and toilet flushing.

Enrolled Senate Bill 431 (SB 431-B)

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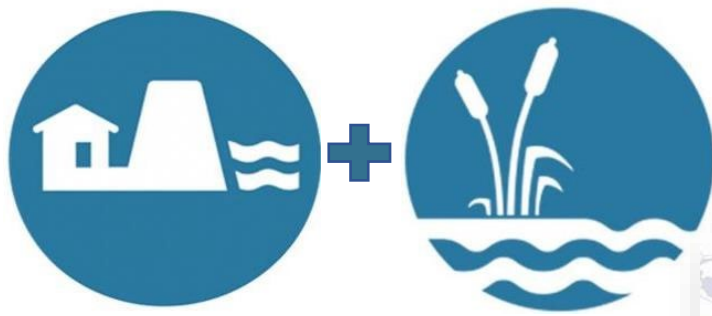
# Award winning Urban Restoration – with multi-habitats and water quality functions



Source:  
Wolf Water  
Resources



# Levees

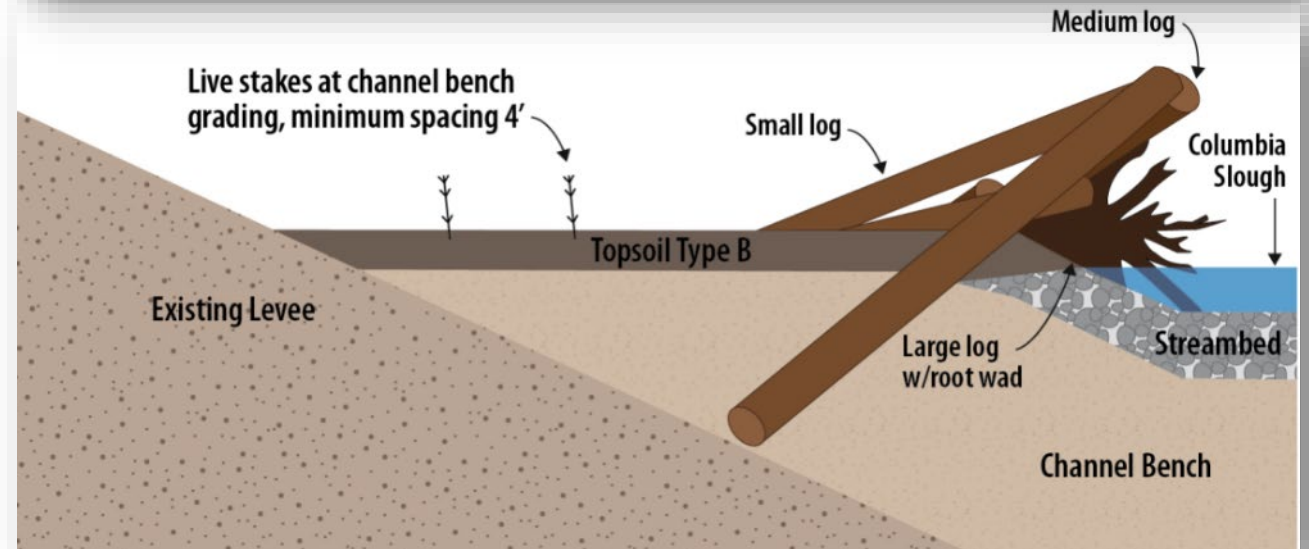


## Continue

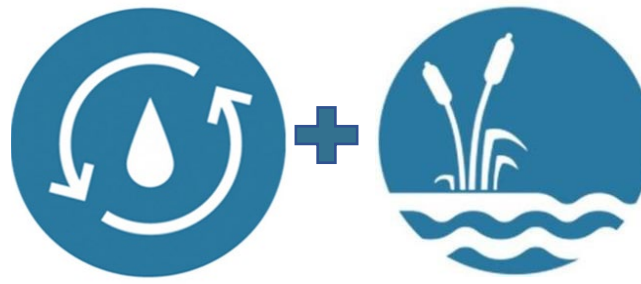
- Local sponsor of the federally-authorized levee system
- Strengthen, increase reliability of the levee and conveyance system to reduce flood risk

## Integrate

- Overbuild integrates vegetation and habitat (within USACE standards)
- Native plants and pollinator-friendly seeds



# Moving Water



## Continue:

- Maintenance, debris removal in slough, canals, ditches
- Pump stations – maintain, repair, replace
- Invasive species management

## Integrate:

- Work with natural hydrology
- Increase natural flood storage + habitat
- Streamside revegetation
- Upland tree planting





# Big Opportunity: The Watershed Improvement Plan

- Required 3 years from launch of elected board.
- Updated at least every 10 years
- Regional coordination
- Identify existing and encourage new partnerships



# Climate Adaptation

- Plan for larger, longer, and more intense events
- Emphasize redundancy and resilience
- Set goals to reduce District impact and vulnerability






# Integrating Equity through Partnerships

*This is one piece of a broader approach to equity and cultural history programming*

Partnerships support planning, priorities, design, outreach, and implementation







# QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

## Discussion Questions

- What resonates?
- Are there additional strategies we should consider?
- Do you have concerns?
- Who else should we be talking to?



# Next Steps

- Your input goes into how we estimate new district costs
- GO bond stakeholder information by end of year
- Sign up for our newsletter at [mcdd.org](http://mcdd.org)
- Contact Carrie at [csanneman@mcdd.org](mailto:csanneman@mcdd.org)

