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?
TRANSMITTED TO THE
NEW DISTRICT

2024 - 2025
Stakeholder & public
input for strategic plan &
watershed plan

Summer - Fall 2022
Refine Program Concepts

Summer 2025
New programs are
operations

Summer 2024
Begin dissolution of
drainage districts

May 2024
Election of permanent
board & GO bond on the
ballot

Winter 2022- Spring 2023
Public input on revenue
structure, GO Bond

Dec 2021
Board Approves
Mission, Vision,
Values
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
New Mandates
ORS 550

**Drainage Districts Current Mission**

- Levee Maintenance
- Keep Water Moving
- Emergency Response and Preparedness
- Support Regional Partnerships

**UFSWQD Expanded Mission**

- Contribute to improved water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, floodplain restoration and landscape resilience
- Promote equity and social justice in all aspects of the district’s operations
- Prepare for and adapt to the impact of climate change in relation to the managed floodplain
- Provide the public with information regarding the cultural history of the territory in the managed floodplain
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.
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.
Stakeholder Input
Multi-Benefit Charette

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

Riparian restoration and tree planting along the banks

Create benches for habitat across the lower slough & upper slough

Land acquisition, wetland restoration. Opportunities for Wapato.

Improve hydrologic function

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
An Integrated Approach

• Legislation has multiple objectives
• Efficient use of public resources
• Public supports environment-centered approach
• Natural intersections
• Consistent with best practices
Award winning Urban Restoration – with multi-habitats and water quality functions
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
• Contact Carrie at csanneman@mcdd.org