



A FOCUSED LOOK at Fish and Wildlife Habitat

SPRING COMMUNITY FORUM

March 21, 2024

Land Use & Transportation

www.washingtoncountyor.gov



Presentation overview

Welcome!

- Project overview
- Inventory update
- Draft Code Concepts
- Discussion and questions

→ Polling Question 1

How are you feeling about this topic?





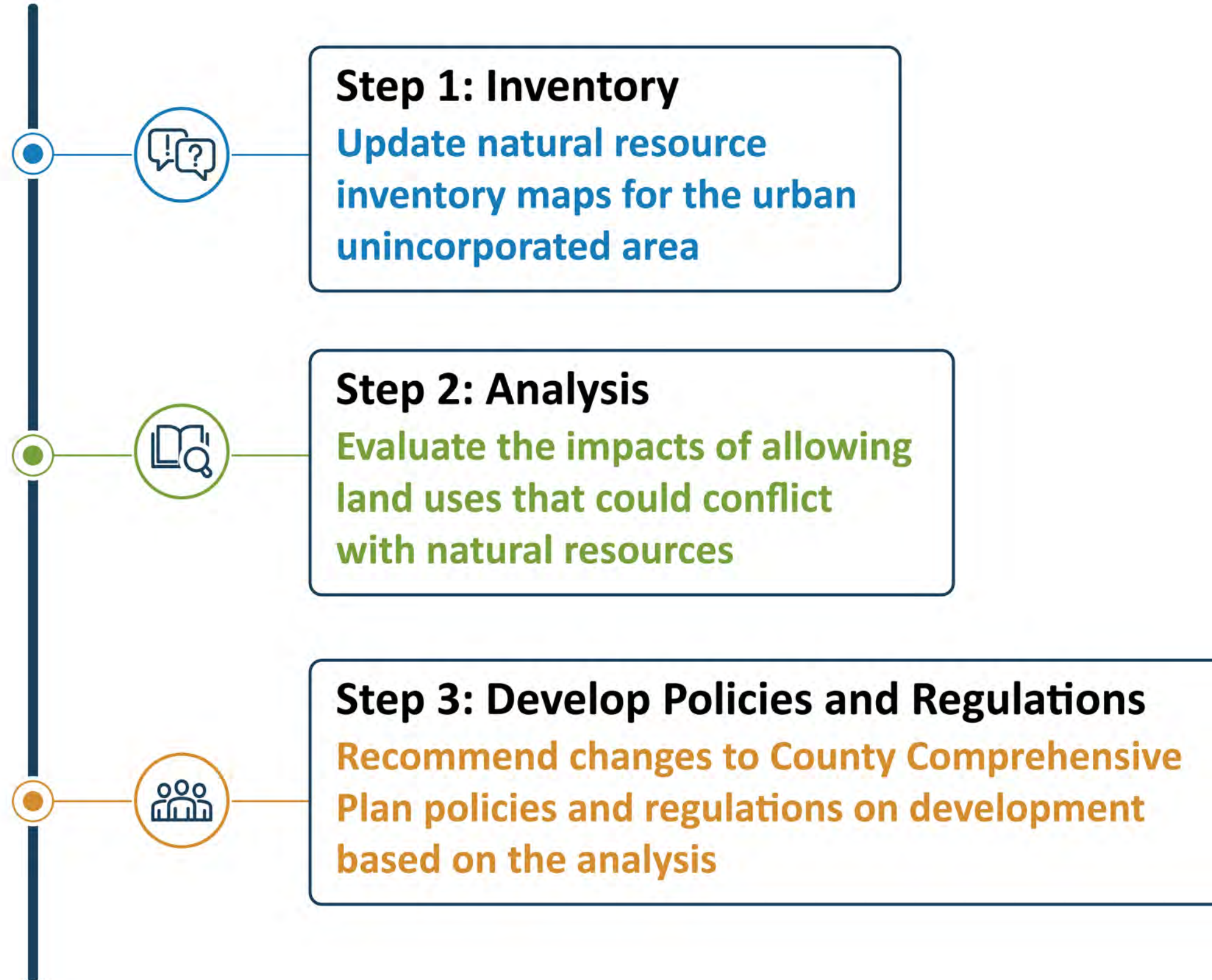
1. Project Overview

→ Project context

- Natural resources (wetlands, streams and forests) that provide fish and wildlife habitat are included in our planning process
- State law and land use planning Goal 5 require that we balance protection with other important land uses like housing
- We are updating our SNR regulations due to legal challenges
- The Board of Commissioners asked us to update our natural resources inventory map as part of this project, since it was quite dated
- We are sharing our work to date and hope to hear your thoughts on possible changes to our draft regulations

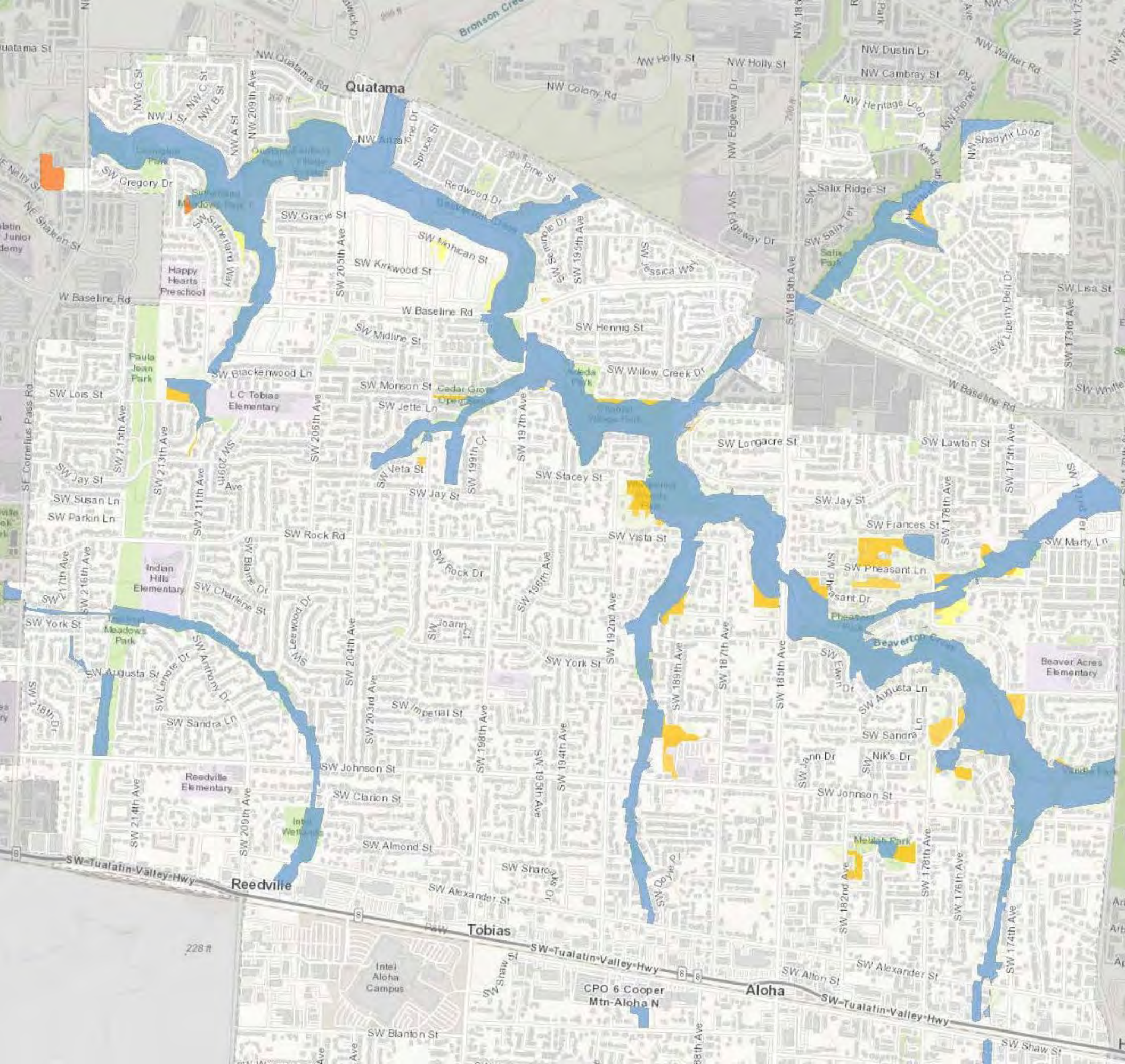


→ Goal 5 process

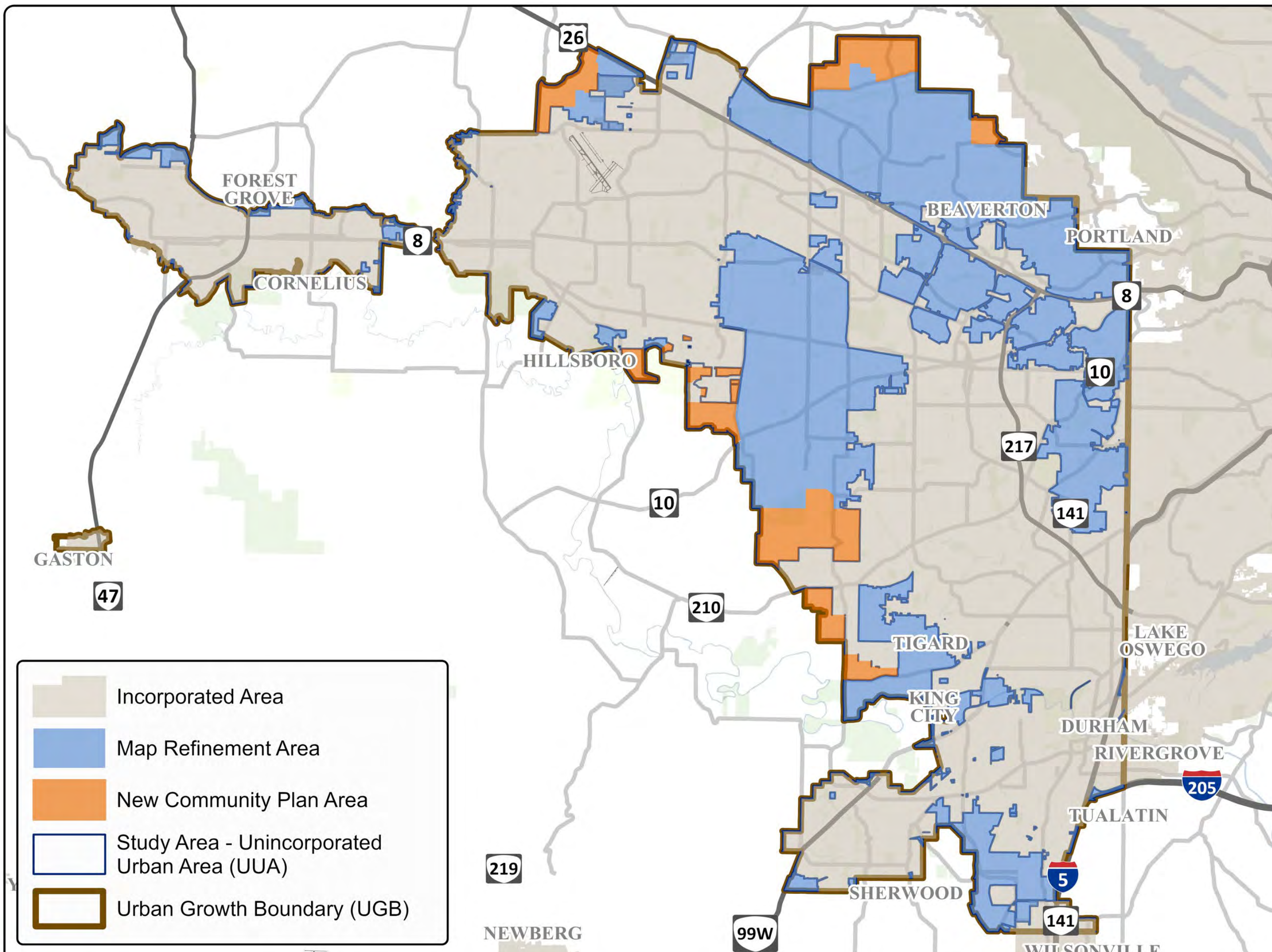


→ Schedule





2. Inventory Update

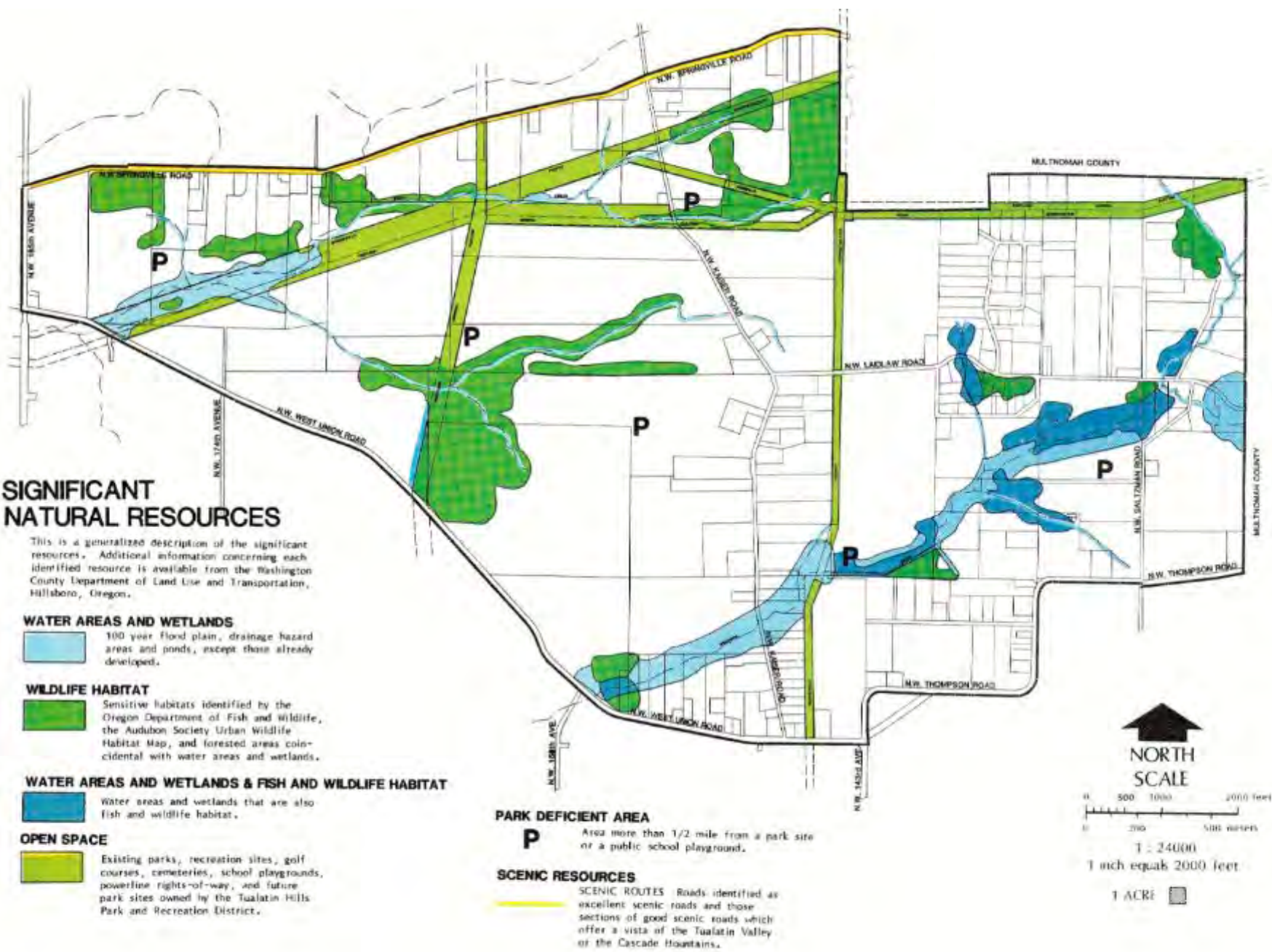


Study Area
for updated
inventory



Starting point

County SNR map

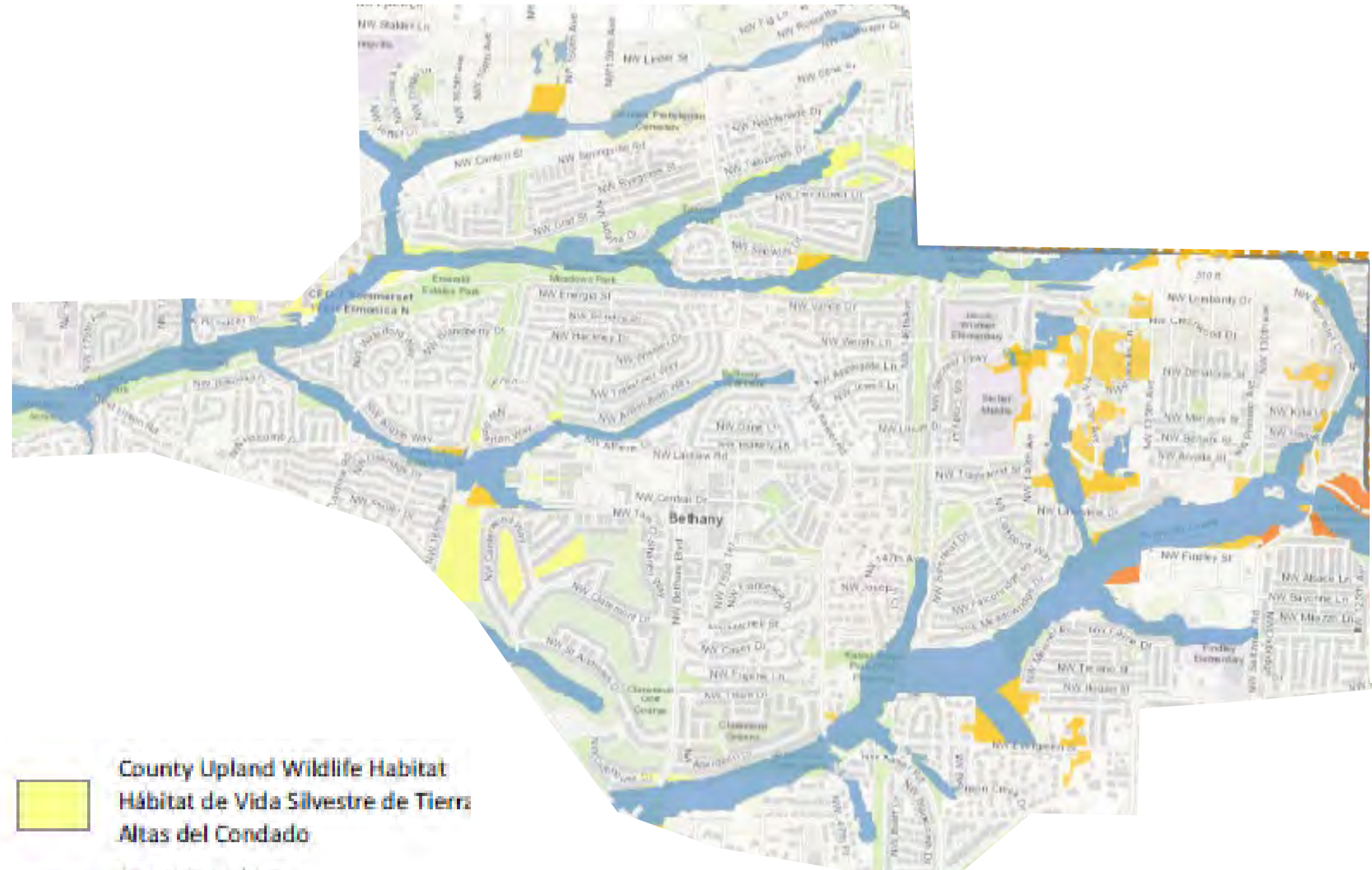






Metro SNR map





Updated consolidated map



- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
|  | Upland Wildlife Habitat Class A
Hábitat Silvestre en Tierras Altas A |  | County Upland Wildlife Habitat
Hábitat de Vida Silvestre de Tierras Altas del Condado |
|  | Upland Wildlife Habitat Class B
Hábitat Silvestre en Tierras Altas B |  | Riparian Habitat
Hábitat Ribereños |



→ Inventory refinement steps

Remove areas that are no longer significant

- Developed areas
- Fragmented areas
- Small habitat patches
- Sites already reviewed under County regulations and Clean Water Services (CWS) requirements

Conduct manual review and data cleanup based on community input

Use Metro or city mapping for areas added to the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) since the original County inventory

→ Inventory refinement process

Next steps:

- We are still taking comments on the inventory map. Our consultant will review comments and recommend potential changes
- Once complete, the map will be included for action by the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners
- We understand the map may not be perfect. Regulations will include a process to address map errors



3. Draft Code Concepts

→ Draft Code Concepts

- Regulations will apply to areas identified on County maps
- County maps will identify Significant Habitat, which includes Riparian Habitat and Upland Wildlife Habitat





Draft Code Concepts overview

County regulations will apply to these areas:

Riparian Habitat - draft regulations are similar to current requirements:

- Development is strictly limited
- Some activities allowed (roads, trails, other infrastructure)
- If development impacts Riparian Habitat, Clean Water Services (CWS) requirements apply

Upland Wildlife Habitat - draft regulations will:

- Not change allowed uses
- Focus on tree retention and replacement, providing different ways to meet requirements



→ Why protect trees in habitat areas?

Trees provide important habitat for wildlife and other benefits:

- Trees clean our air and water, connect communities and support our health and well-being
- Whenever trees are planted, wildlife and other plants are sure to follow
- Flowers, fruits, leaves, buds and woody parts of trees are used by many different species



→ When will regulations apply?

Regulations will apply to your property when:

- The map shows Significant Habitat on your property

AND

- You propose an action that impacts the Habitat area such as removing trees, building a new structure (depending on size), grading or land division



→ What is considered “development?”

Development includes:

- Changing land or its use intentionally
- Constructing or adding building(s)
- Dividing the land into smaller parcels
- Removing trees in Significant Habitat areas
- Changing the ground, such as grading, paving or excavating



Riparian Habitat regulations



Overview of Riparian Habitat regulations

Draft regulations are similar to current requirements:

- Development will be strictly limited, but some development activities are allowed
- If your development impacts Riparian Habitat, Clean Water Services (CWS) requirements will likely apply
- If impacting Riparian Habitat vegetation, you will need to replant native vegetation along the water area and remove invasive plants



→ Allowed activities

Activities allowed in Riparian Habitat:

- Transportation facilities
- Public utilities
- Public wildlife viewing areas, recreation or nature trails
- Stream or creek bank restoration work
- One single dwelling unit/middle housing duplex
- Restoration or mitigation required by other agencies



Upland Wildlife Habitat regulations



Upland Wildlife Habitat regulations

Draft regulations:

- Will not change your allowed land uses. You can still develop your property.
- Include standards for tree retention and replacement that apply when trees within the Upland Wildlife Habitat area are impacted by development
- Require preservation or replacement of a certain percentage of trees
- Include a simpler process for smaller projects on individual properties

Alternative discretionary approaches to tree standards are being considered



→ Potential tree exceptions

Potential exceptions to the tree requirements include:

- Hazardous, diseased or dying trees
- Invasive tree species
- Trees in tree farms and nurseries
- Trees under 6 inches in diameter
- Trees located within 10 feet of an existing house
- Trees on developed sites with only very small amounts of Significant Habitat Area
- Trees near underground utilities, like water or sewer lines



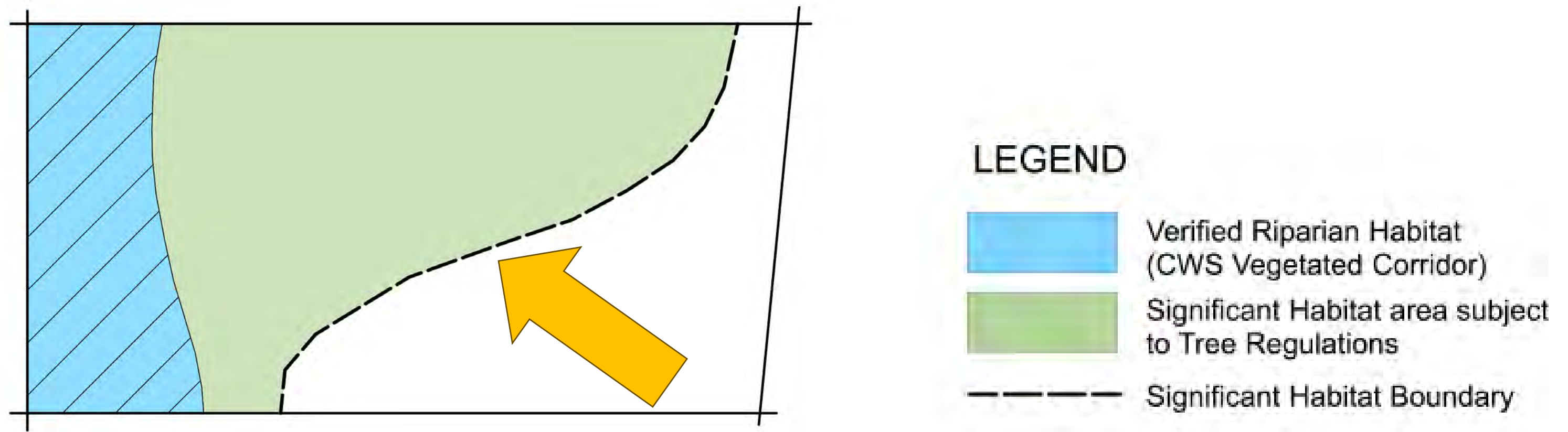
Polling Question #2

Which of these potential exceptions to the tree requirements would you support?



→ Applying the tree regulations

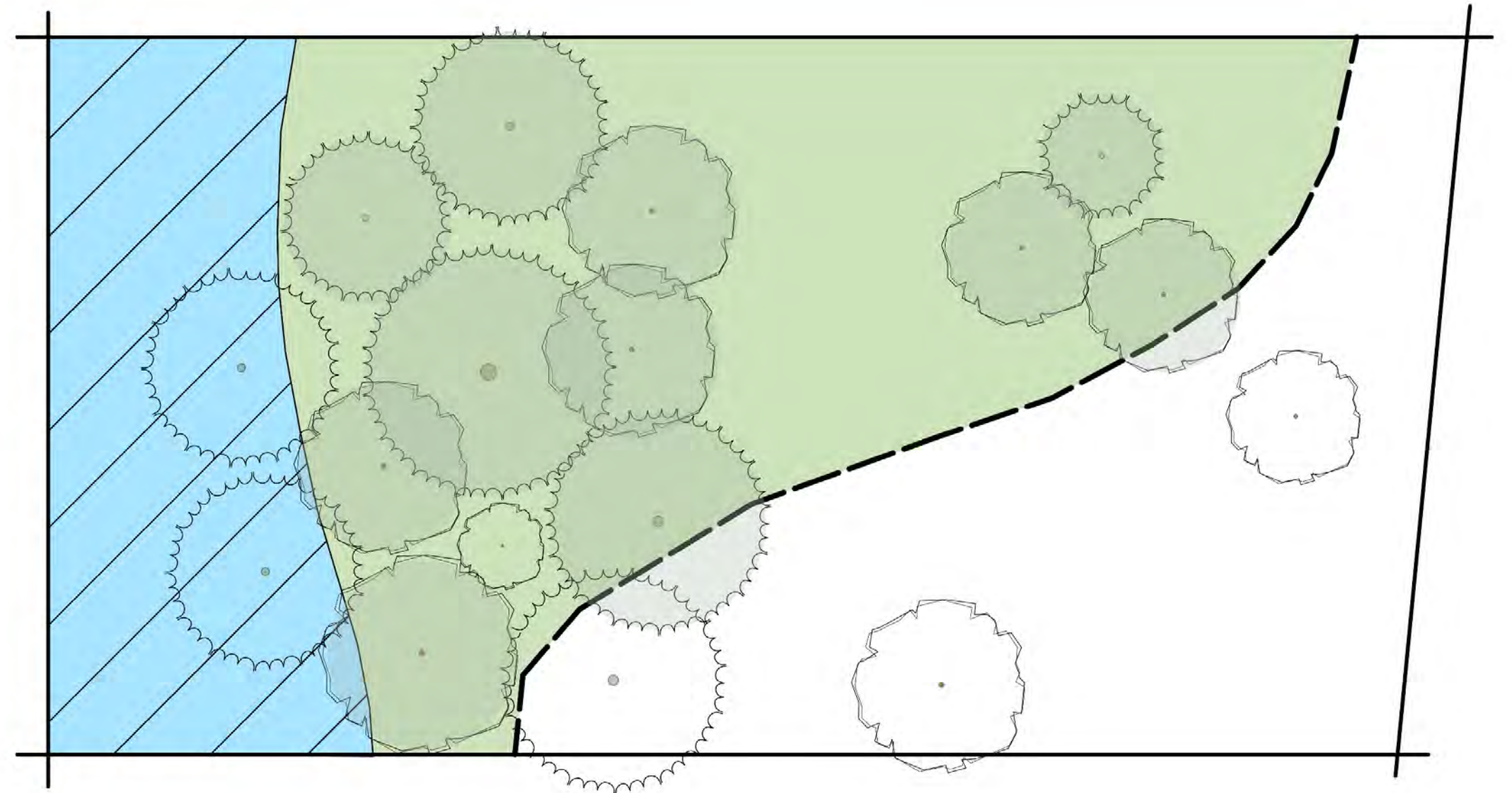
Tree retention and replacement regulations apply to all areas within the Significant Habitat boundary but outside the verified Riparian Habitat





Tree Inventory approach steps

All trees on site



LEGEND



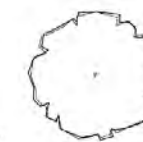
Verified Riparian Habitat
(CWS Vegetated Corridor)



Significant Habitat area subject
to Tree Regulations



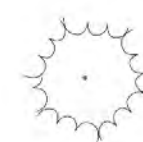
Significant Habitat Boundary



Existing Deciduous Tree



Regulated Trees



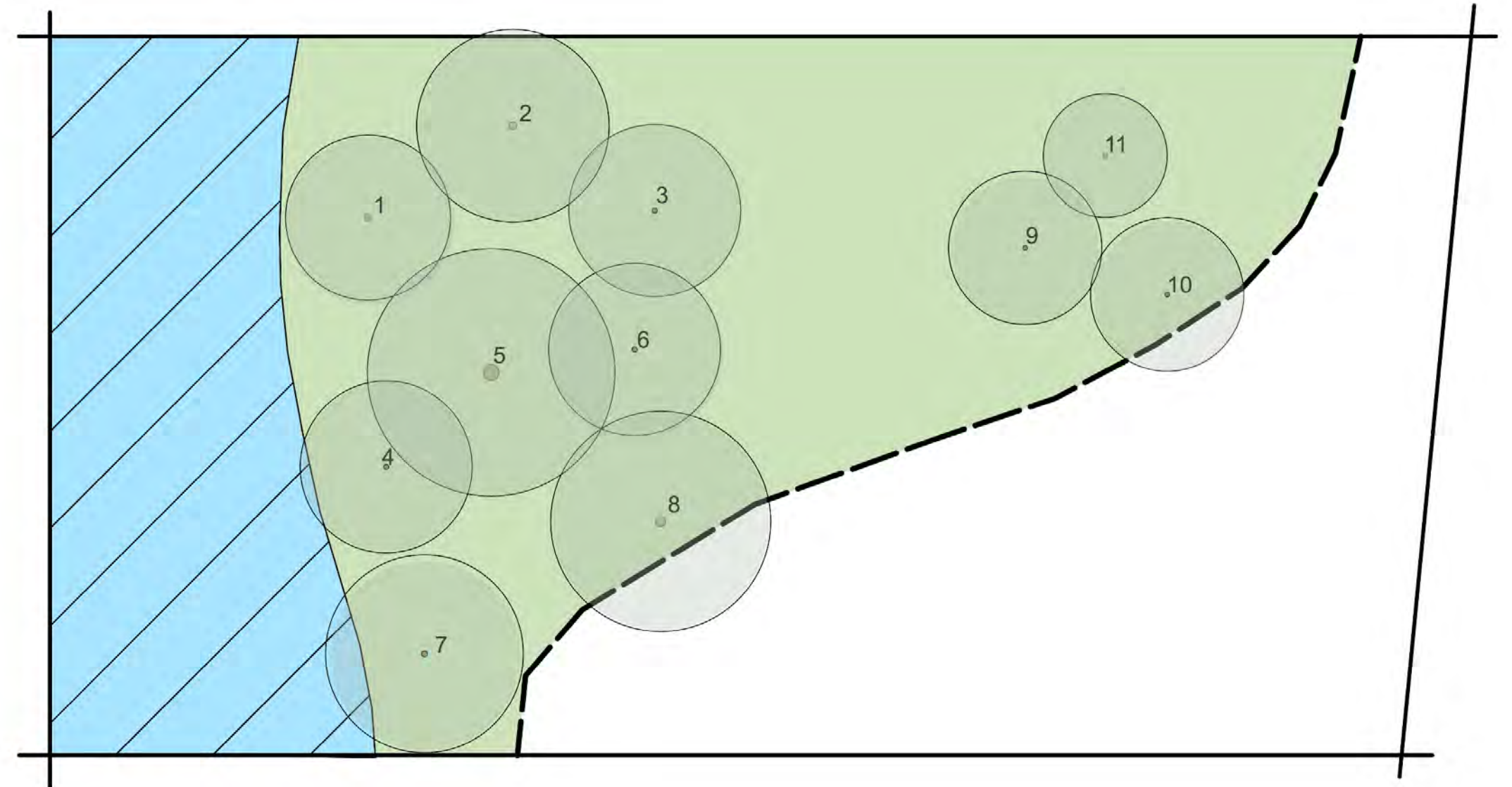
Existing Coniferous Tree



Tree Inventory approach steps

1. Prepare Tree Inventory and identify Regulated Trees

Regulated Trees are over 6 inches in diameter at breast height (DBH) within the Significant Habitat Boundary, but outside the verified Riparian Habitat

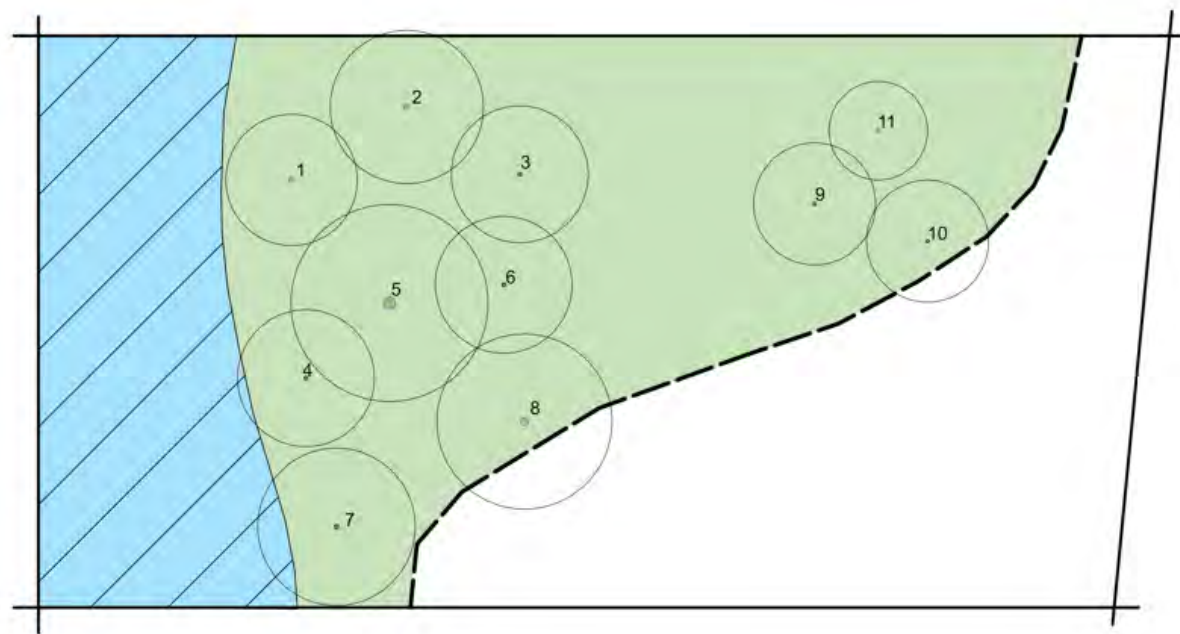




Tree Inventory approach steps

2. Prepare a Tree Inventory table

Table will describe tree characteristics, including type of tree, size and location (proximity to the Riparian Habitat), health and whether it will be removed



No.	Common Name	Diameter (DBH)	Native to Pacific NW	Proximate to Riparian Habitat
1	Douglas Fir	12"	yes	yes
2	Western Red Cedar	28"	yes	yes
3	Pacific Dogwood	9"	yes	yes
4	Japanese Maple	8"	no	no



Tree inventory approach steps

3. Calculate tree value points

Each Regulated Tree gets points based on:

- Tree size (Diameter of the trunk at breast height (DBH))
- Species
- Proximity to Riparian Habitat

Certain trees are more important than others and are given more points to encourage retention. These include trees that are:

- Large (over 30 inches DBH)
- Special native trees (e.g., Garry or White Oak)
- Closer to the Riparian Habitat



Tree Inventory approach steps

4. Calculate tree value points and determine whether mitigation is needed

Do the math:

- Add up the total points
- Subtract the points for the trees being removed
- Calculate the percentage of tree value points that will remain on site

If this percentage is less than regulation requirements, the developer can plant or preserve smaller existing trees to make up the difference



Tree Inventory approach

The Tree Inventory approach:

- Provides a clear and objective path for limiting impacts to Upland Wildlife Habitat
- Ensures a certain percentage of the total Tree Value points is maintained on the site

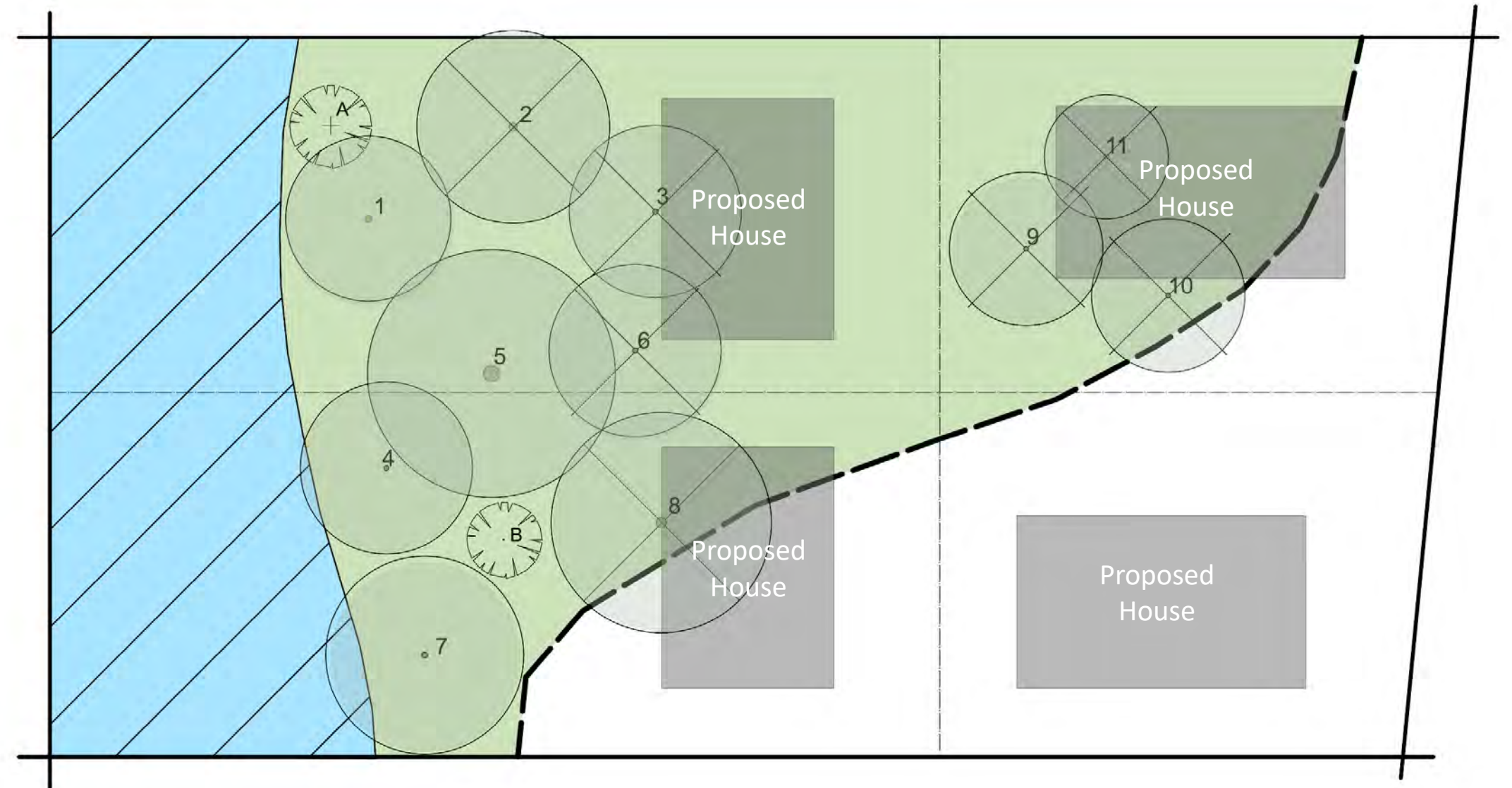
Targets could differ by location, for example:

- Areas inside the UGB before 2006: Require retention or replacement of 50% of the total Tree Value points
- Areas added to the UGB after 2006: Require retention or replacement of 80% of the total Tree Value points



Example: Proposed land division

In this example, replacement trees would need to be planted in the Significant Habitat area to meet the minimum-point target for tree preservation or replacement



LEGEND



Verified Riparian Habitat (CWS Vegetated Corridor)



Significant Habitat area subject to Tree Regulations



Significant Habitat Boundary



Regulated Tree to Be Removed



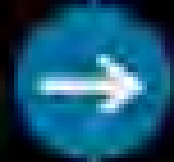
Non-Regulated Tree to Remain (small or outside habitat area)



New Tree



Regulated Tree to Remain



Polling Question #3

For most areas we are considering requiring 50% of the tree value points on a development site to be retained or replaced.

What do you think?





Polling Question #4

We are considering allowing off-site tree replacement or payment of a fee-in-lieu of tree replacement if a development cannot accommodate onsite replacement trees.

Which options would you support?





Tree Canopy approach: An option

As an alternative to the clear-and-objective Tree Inventory approach, we are considering an approach based on Tree Canopy that would require:

- A certain amount of the Significant Habitat to be placed in a Canopy Preservation Area
- A certain percentage of the tree canopy in that area must be maintained (based on existing or planted trees)
- Deed restrictions and maintenance for the Canopy Preservation Area



Next steps

- Community forums
 - 6 p.m. April 2: Virtual via Zoom
 - 1:30 p.m. April 6 at Cedar Hills Recreation Center
- Publication of proposed regulations and inventory map expected in late May
- Ordinance hearings expected to start late June
- Board action expected by Oct. 1



4. Discussion and Questions



Polling Question #5

Now that you have heard more about this project and the concepts for how our regulations will work, how are you feeling about this topic?



Thank you for being here!



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