



Visioning the Future: Mapping Workshops

Mapping Workshops Summary

Following research, interviews, a Visioning Open House, and small-group listening sessions, McKenzie River Trust held mapping workshops with key organizations and individuals from May 11th to 14th, 2026, at their Eugene office. The workshops sought to:

- **Identify geographic locations** for regional activities and projects related to the core planning topic areas.
- **Brainstorm potential criteria** for priority actions.
- **Share the revised** draft vision, values, strategies, and actions, and request feedback in the next three months.
- **Help build community networks** and increase partnership between McKenzie River Trust and project collaborators.

Participants

Invitations were sent via email to 50 individuals, and 35 people participated. **The following organizations and groups were represented at the meetings:**

City of Eugene
 City of Springfield
 Coast Fork Watershed Council
 Eugene Water and Electric Board
 Lane County Parks
 Long Tom Watershed Council
 McKenzie River Trust
 Metropolitan Wastewater Commission
 Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council

Mount Pisgah Arboretum
 Oregon Parks and Recreation District
 Springfield School District WELL Program
 Springfield Utility Board
 Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District
 University of Oregon
 Willamalane Parks & Recreation

Topics and Agendas

The five sessions were conducted in two hours blocks with 8-15 participants per session. See below for a snapshot of the webpage invitation:



Land Stewardship and Restoration: Floodplains

05/11/2026, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

This session will focus on opportunities for land stewardship and floodplain and riparian restoration within the project area. Staff and community members with unique expertise and insight into floodplain restoration, hydrology, riparian habitats, and water resource management are encouraged to attend.



Community Connections & Environmental Education

05/11/2026, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

This session will focus on opportunities to leverage outdoor spaces in the project area to promote environmental education, community volunteering, and interpretive programming. Staff, educators, and community members with unique expertise and insight into education and community engagement are encouraged to attend. *Space is limited, and we ask that organizations limit participation to two staff members.*



Water Quality: Drinking Water Protection, Stormwater Management, and Water Filtration

05/13/2026, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

This session will focus on water quality and long-term natural resource planning. Conversations will include sourcewater protection projects and how natural lands and resources can benefit our community for generations to come. Staff and community members with unique expertise or insight into water quality, hydrology, water infrastructure, and water resource planning are encouraged to attend.



Trails and Transportation

05/14/2026, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

This session will focus on existing and desired future trails and transportation investments within the project area. Staff and community members with unique expertise and insight into trail design and development, transportation planning and infrastructure, and accessibility are encouraged to attend.



Land Stewardship and Restoration: Oak and Prairie

05/14/2026, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

This session will focus on opportunities for land stewardship and restoration in upland oak and prairie habitats within the project area. Staff and community members with unique expertise and insight into upland habitat restoration and/or prescribed fire are encouraged to attend. *Space is limited, and we ask that organizations limit participation to two staff members.*

Workshop agendas included a brief welcome and introduction, an orientation to the maps, and a group discussion. Example from the Education session:

Envisioning a Future for the Willamette Confluence

Community Connections & Environmental Education

Monday, May 11th, from 1- 3 PM
McKenzie River Trust Offices at 725 W 1st Ave in Eugene

- 1:00 Welcome and Introductions
- 1:10 Revised Vision, Goals, and Strategies
- 1:20 Collaborative Mapping

Key questions:

- *Where are the priority areas for education and community connections, and why?*
- *What programs do you envision, and what infrastructure and facilities are needed to support them? (both current and future)*

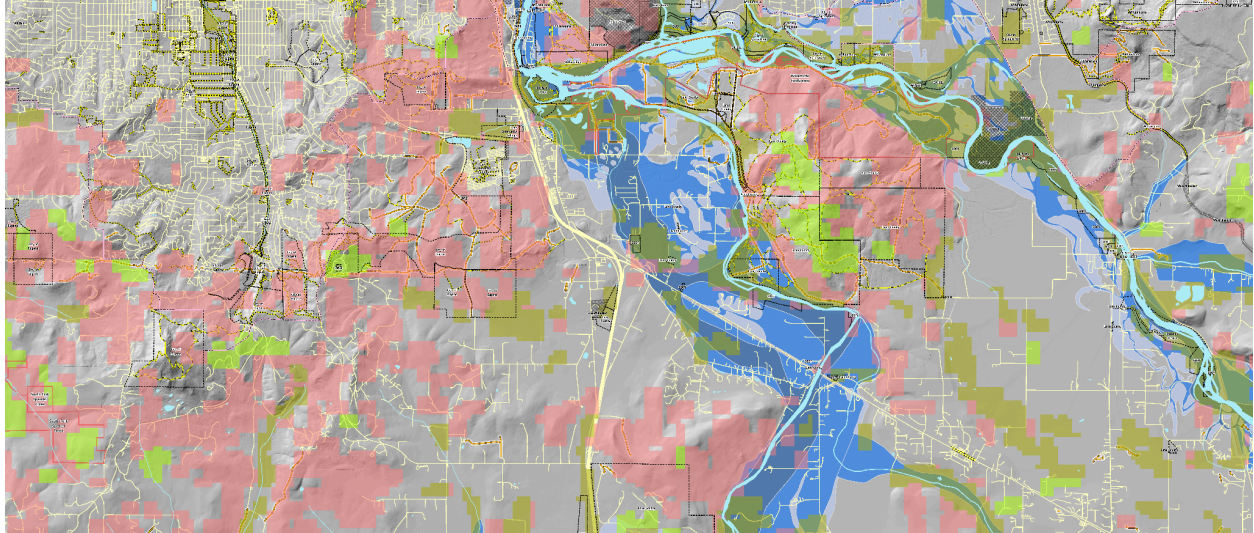
2:20 Break

2:30 Brainstorm criteria for education and community connections
Based on the priority areas, what criteria should be used for future decisions, and how would you rank them?

2:55 Next steps

Collaborative Mapping Outcomes

Land Stewardship and Restoration: Floodplains



Brainstormed criteria for future projects

- Flood management
- Water quality
- Ecological value (confluences, width/flood capacity, connections to uplands)
- Impacts to vulnerable communities (such as low-income) - community impacts, disaster response, zones of vulnerability
- Cost & implementation

Key Questions

- Where are the best locations for storing the floodwater?
 - Key factors include land ownership, community impacts, and potential for river dynamism
 - What's the cost of not providing more flood storage? Flood impacts, rain events & snow pack
- How can we work with farmers? How can agriculture live, and potentially thrive, with managed field flooding?

Ideas and information

- Delta change in flood: allowing movement
- Channel mitigation easement programs

- “Pearls on a necklace” - connecting restoration/flood storage areas
- Amount of wood and potential impacts of woody debris on downstream areas

Coast Fork of the Willamette

- Experiences more variation in flow, more movement of woody debris, and more flood risk
- More private land than the Middle Fork
- Less recreation due to fewer areas to access the river and more low flows in summer
- Greater water quality issues

Coast Fork potential future priorities

- Work with private landowners
- Improve water quality
- Reduce flood risk

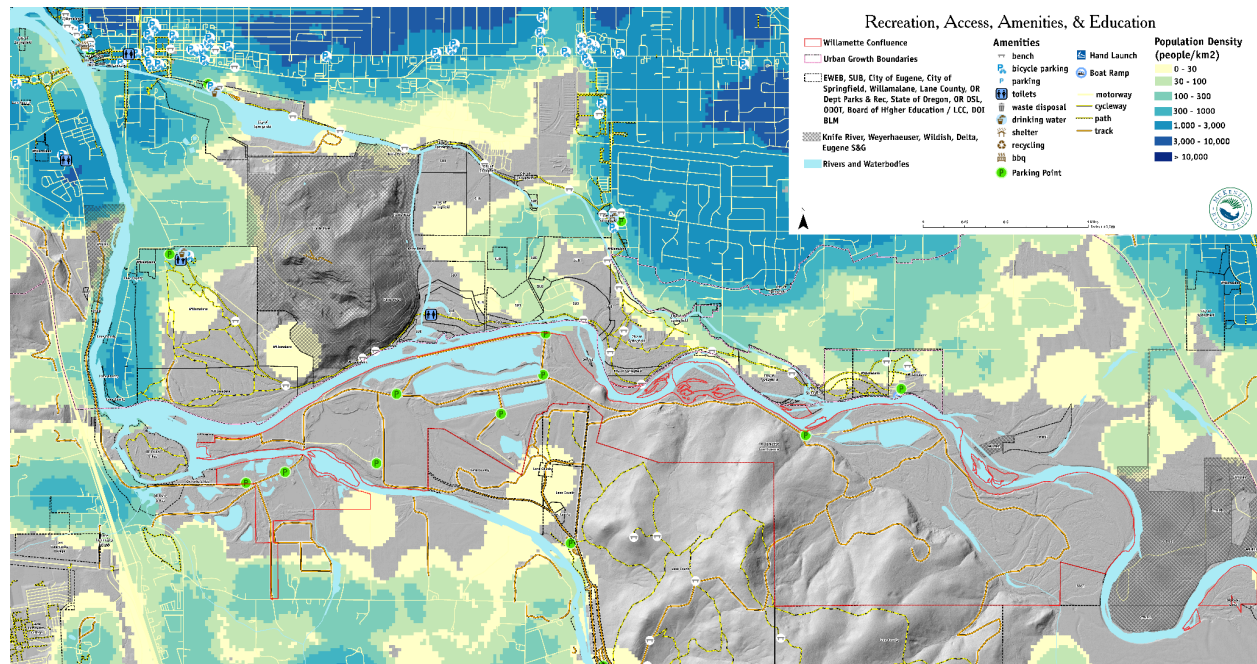
Middle Fork of the Willamette

- Less variation in flow, more flood management via dams (Dorena, Look Out Point, and Fall Creek)
- Significant areas of publicly owned land
- Pengra property: Army Corps of Engineers feasibility study

Middle Fork potential future priorities

- Link public lands from Confluence to Dexter Dam
- Increase flood water storage, flood dynamics

Community Connections & Environmental Education



Brainstormed criteria for future projects

- Evaluate and work to fill gaps in existing environmental education offerings regarding:
 - Grade level/age
 - Content
- Build in multiple touch points for students moving through the grades
- Create online curricula that can be useful to a variety of organizations
- Identify and leverage locations that can withstand human activity
- Envision facilities that could benefit a wide variety of ages and activities

Guiding questions

- Who do you teach?
- Where are you taking people? Where do you gather from? Walk to?
- What do you teach?
- How do you reinforce learning over time?

Big Picture Ideas

- Field Trips: evaluate “touch points” in all grades across each school district, identify gaps. Funders are looking for multiple touch points for each student.
- Develop a Springfield nature-based school, like Rachel Carson
- Build a facility for teaching and research at the Arboretum

- Shared online curricula/toolkits
- Integrate Youth Farm into other programs, add an agriculture component
- Develop Glassbar Island as an educational destination
- At the Willamette Confluence property, consider designing an outdoor “classroom” with two shipping containers, a covered area between, white boards, and a mini-bus to get folks from LCC to the property, and then around the property.

Existing programs and information

Metropolitan Wastewater Commission

- CleanWater University (lots of community partnership and support including EWEB + SUB)
 - Eugene, Bethel + Springfield Schools, 4 + 5th Grades (NGSS curriculum alignment at these grade levels)
 - Annual event at the regional treatment plant plus a virtual classroom
 - Teachers have access to 10 modules, plus they can lottery for in-person event (primarily 5th graders)
 - BIG GOAL: Expand to all 4th and 5th-grade classes
- One Water Education - general population
 - Guided group river trips, focused on safety and river ecology
- H2O Academy - adults
- Future mentorship with older students teaching younger students, developing “teaching skills”
- Online curriculum for teachers to use in classrooms (Education Toolkit)

Mount Pisgah Arboretum

- Field trips are the bulk of programming (2-hour walk)
- Curricula for K-5 have been developed, but are adhered to loosely as programs encourage and follow student-led inquiry during trips (programs run by volunteers)
- Different themes, depending on the grade
- Others include LCC projects, interpretive exhibits, and professional interpreter development training
- Migrant Education Led programming (mentor style)
- 60-75% of programs serve are K- 5th grade
- Festivals - for adults
- Volunteer pool - site stewardship

- Other partners use the site including Whole Earth Nature School and Nearby Nature, which run programs on site in the summer.

Springfield School District: Water & Energy Learning Lab (WELL)

- Supported by SUB, Springfield School District, and the Middle Fork Watershed Council
- High School students apply - trained to conduct research (on the watershed level)
- Based on research protocols from ODF

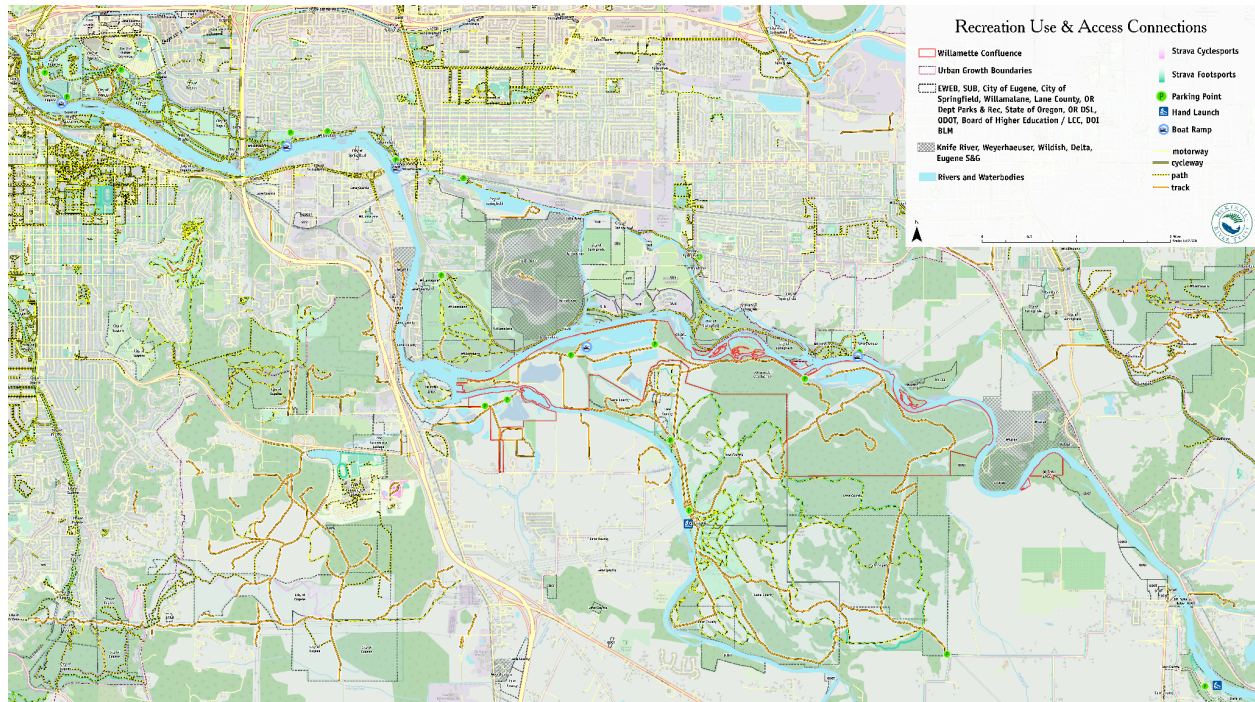
FUTURE GOAL:

- District wide education (already doing 10 -11 field trips a month)
- Develop a natural resources education center (like Rachel Carson Center) to fill in gaps with science education
- Retain/return students from Springfield schools to the area (to apply skills here)

McKenzie River Trust

- 90%+ of participants are adults
- The Trust also provides access to the Willamette Confluence (and other properties outside of the project planning area) for K-12 programming
- Partners with City of Eugene, Willamalane (limited mobility tour)
 - Adaptive recreation (Wednesday Wheelers)
 - Closed gates support privacy
- Large educational component
- 2,000+ visits to the Willamette Confluence per year (mostly on the west side)
- Some formalized programs with teachers, some teachers reach out, coordinate with partners
- Additional restoration work could change the areas that are accessed for tours
- Consider advocating for Glassbar access
- Future potential programs and outreach: painters and photographers
- Similar to Green Island, make sure to include education in the land management plan
- Partner organizations provide support and advocacy for future Willamette Confluence activities

Trails and Transportation



Brainstormed criteria for future projects

- Bicycle access
- Pedestrian access
- EMS access
- Impacts on water quality
- Value for educational programs and tours
- Recreational value

Key Questions

- How do we get bicycles and pedestrians from West Lane County to East Lane County? From Eugene to the Pacific Crest Trail? From Springfield to the Howard Buford Recreation Area/Mount Pisgah (HBRA)?
- What are the best opportunities for connecting people and connecting wildlife between Eugene and the Greater Mt. Pisgah area?
- What are the disaster response routes and second access routes to and from HBRA?
- Where do boaters recreate and camp along the Middle Fork and Coast Fork?

Ideas and information

- **Transit: future options**

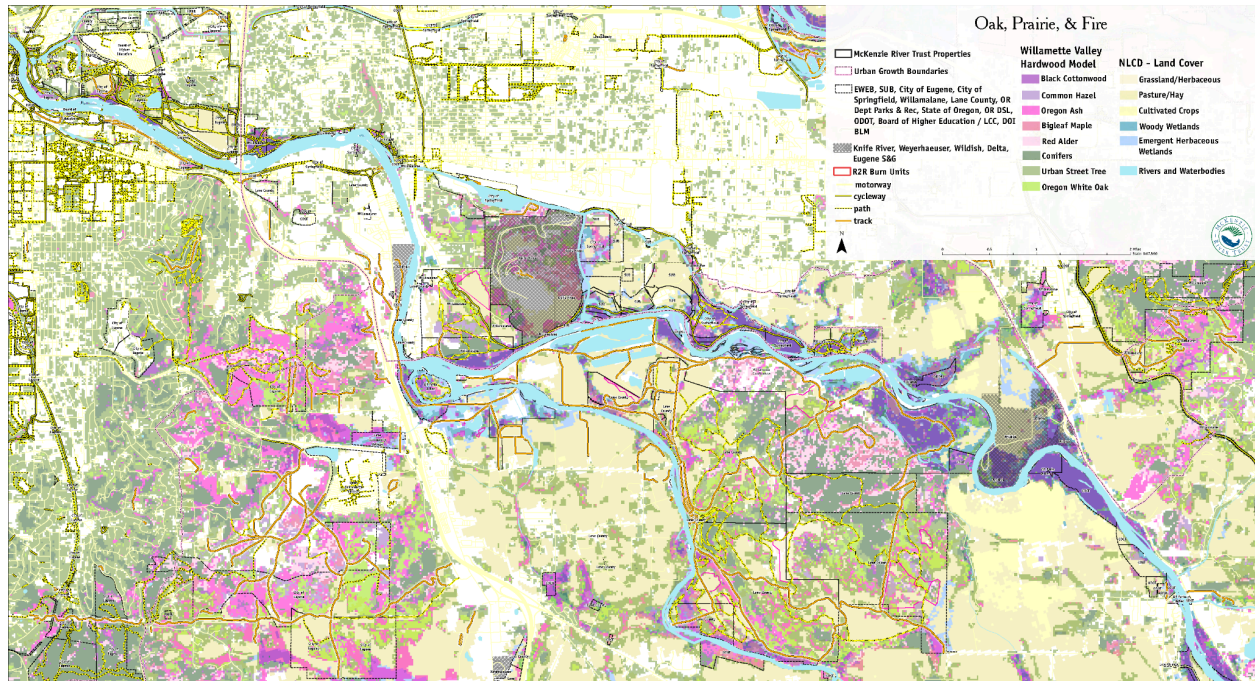
- LTD “test bus” to HBRA is on hold because the parking turn-around does not accommodate articulated buses.
- There are currently no buses serving areas South of Main Street in Springfield, including the Clearwater boat ramp.
- **I-5 bike and pedestrian crossings: future options**
 - Several locations were discussed and mapped in relation to improving bicycle and pedestrian connections from Eugene to the Greater Mount Pisgah areas and the Pacific Crest Trail:
 - Springfield Main Street/S. A Street bridges: future improvements could include a pedestrian bridge, which would be very valuable to connect the urban areas.
 - Coryell Underpass, just South of the Main Street bridge, could be improved to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians crossing I-5.
 - The new EWEB intake on the Willamette is in this area, and infrastructure improvements could present water quality concerns.
 - A new bridge on the Willamette Confluence property that connects the Springfield Clearwater bike path to the Pisgah area.
 - Participants discussed the feasibility of constructing the bridge outside of the floodplain and connecting it directly to Lane County parkland.
 - A bridge could provide a secondary EMS access to the Pisgah area from Springfield, if a portion of the Middle Fork path were improved to accommodate EMS vehicles in an emergency.
 - A bridge could also incorporate the existing Northwest Natural gas line that currently runs across the river (submerged line) in this location. A daylighted gas line would also reduce the likelihood of gas line leakage into the river near the SUB (and future EWEB) intake.
 - The future City of Springfield South Bank path will connect the Eugene bike path to Springfield, through Glenwood.
 - Funding options for bridge improvements include tapping into funds dedicated to wildlife crossings, bicycle/pedestrian improvements, and EMS response/disaster preparedness.
 - Note: If you are cycling from Springfield to the Pacific Crest Trail, the Hall Road route is blocked, so the Middle Fork Path to Pisgah is now the main route.

- What are the **wildlife connection opportunities** between Arlie/South Hills and the Greater Mount Pisgah area?
 - 30th St overpass?
 - Coryell underpass?
 - Follow up with LCC student work
- **On-river transportation/boat ramps:** these are generally adequate, and there are enough of them, but there needs to be better public messaging around safety, and perhaps designate a specific area for floating and maintain that section of river for floating (i.e. wood removal projects and clearing of obstructions).
- **EMS response:**
 - The Main Street bridge is designated for upgrades to accommodate heavy vehicles over time.
 - The Willamette Confluence property includes a bridge over the Coast Fork, which needs evaluation and assessment of EMS capacity and upgrades. (Lane County offered to help with this).
- **On river transportation:** floating recreation opportunities
 - Opportunity to create a recreation plan for the river: where people access the river from roads, and where boaters stop to rest. (Reach out to the boating community for this information.
 - Evaluate the costs and benefits of increasing recreation on both the Coast Fork and the Middle Fork. Some participants recommended: Recreate on the Middle Fork, Restore the Coast Fork.

Mapping and follow-ups

- Get GIS layers for bike share parking areas when they are available
- Add the [LC Bicycle Masterplan](#) to the GIS layers: this will show Seavey Loop and 30th Street improvements.
- Review bike and pedestrian improvements listed in the [Willamalane Comprehensive Plan](#)
- Ask boaters to map summer camping/resting locations along the Middle Fork from the dams down to Green Island.
- Consider different colors for gated vs non-gated roads, especially in the Willamette Confluence and HBRA areas.

Land Stewardship and Restoration: Oak and Prairie



Brainstormed criteria for future projects

- Access to a fire district/authority
- Proximity to urban and major roads
- Connectivity (ability of species to move between habitat areas)
- Burn history
- Level of preparation needed to burn (landscape treatments)
- Habitat diversity
- Cultural history
- Listed species
- Capacity to do the work: collaboration, staffing, resources
- Views of residents in the area (level of support for burning)

Ideas and information

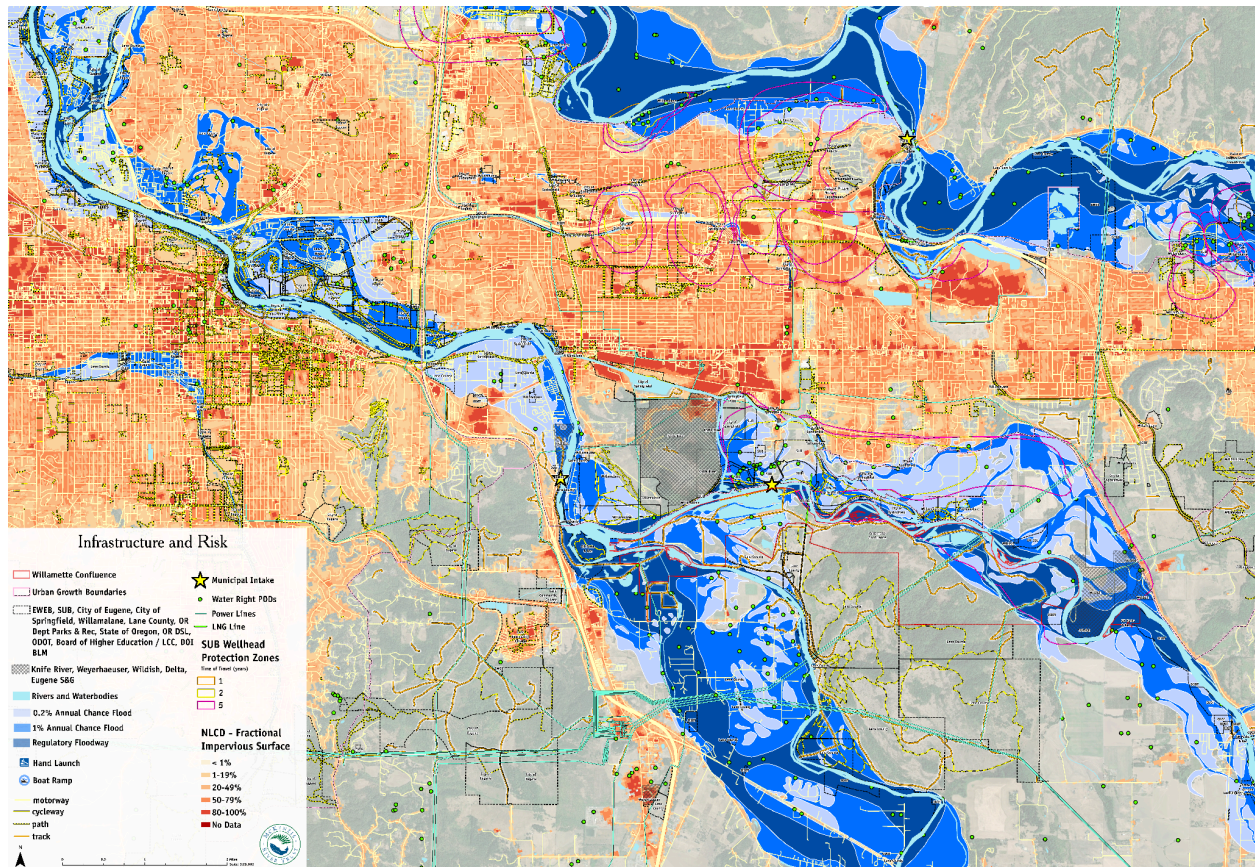
- Map key species such as the Vesper Sparrow, and identify how to increase their ability to move between Creswell Oaks and other areas, such as Pisgah
- Re. public education: identify methods to change the way people think and feel about burning. The City of Eugene has made progress on this, and they now have resident support and trust.
 - Incorporate into existing K-12 curricula
 - Add to the Middle Fork online curricula
 - General public education: example - City of Ashland success

- Foster partnerships that bring support: (Long Tom examples)
 - ODF, in the past BLM
 - Wildland Fire Service (federal)
 - Plan and conduct burn/fire training together
- Expand the burn window: increase off-season burning, work with fire districts and partners.
- Continue collaborative oak and prairie work. Reasons why?
 - Long history of collaboration (West Eugene Wetlands in the 1990s)
 - Significant federal involvement and funding
 - Collective support needed to implement change (burns, cutting trees, etc.)
 - LRAPA burn permit mandates collaboration
 - Local leadership

Mapping and follow-ups

- Get info for past burns and add info to the map asset
- Map the [City of Eugene Urban Reserve areas](#). City of Eugene Urban Reserves are areas to be considered for future expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary in 2027. Advocate for the preservation of sensitive areas within the Reserves, either through public or private purchase.
- Consider reviewing  WV-Oak-and-Prairie-Cooperative-SAP-FINAL-3_2020-web-2.pdf
- If using the printed maps for other meetings, add layers to the oak map to improve the ability to wayfind
- In legend, note that savanna & street trees represented the same, red alder is over-represented

Water Quality: Drinking Water Protection, Stormwater Management, and Water Filtration



Brainstormed criteria for future projects

- Community safety & security
- Protect & improve water quality
- Identify out-of-compliance areas
- Leverage natural solutions
- Minimize risk to infrastructure

Key questions

- How does water quality and floodplain restoration intersect?
- How much risk to infrastructure do we accept in terms of floodplain improvements?
- Do we consider channel migration zone easements?
- What are the opportunities to prepare our communities for environmental disasters?
- Where are our zones of influence for groundwater protection?

Ideas and information

SUB

- All wells are influenced by both ground and surface water, some by the river directly
- Current use: SUB is certified for 20 cfs of surface water; they are currently using 10 cfs, with an additional 5 in the next few years. Total water rights are 40 cfs.
- Well capacity in relation to population growth and resiliency
 - Approx 40% of Springfield's use is coming from the Middle Fork intake
 - Depth to groundwater in the wellfield: 7-8 ft
- Future use (percentage from certain wells)
 - Reduce reliance on the Willamette Confluence intake system?
 - Actively planning for the future, thinking out 100 years
- The new (McKenzie River) treatment plant will help address concerns about capacity
- Moving the Middle Fork intake upstream is challenging and requires State approval/intervention. There may be a legislative opportunity to remove barriers to "point of diversion" regulations for municipalities.

EWEB

- Other critical infrastructure includes electrical lines
- Spill response team
 - GIS + on the ground
 - Calculated travel time to intake downstream

SUB + EWEB

- 4 existing interties (where water between Utility Boards can be diverted to one another in case of emergency)
- Limited due to different pressure systems

What are other big risks we're planning for?

- Wildfire
- Algal toxins
- Sediment
- Scour events
- Ice storms, wind storms, snow storms
- Multi-year drought
- Emerging contaminants (treatment plants not designed to treat)

- PFAs
 - Microplastics
 - Pharmaceuticals
- Flooding issues
- Septic contamination (ex. Seavy loop all on septic)