

# Lake City Floodplain Park

Update and Discussion

Thornton Creek Alliance 10/17/19

# Agenda

- Background:
  - Site context
  - Partners and priorities
- Initial project scope, schedule, and roles
- Opportunities for community partnerships (discussion)





# Fall 2018: Floodplain for sale!

(Thornton North Branch)



39,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of floodplain + 200 ft of channel + two buildings



# Kicking off the project...

## Community initiated...

- Thornton Creek Alliance
- Lake City Neighborhood Alliance
- Lake City Future First
- King County (CM Dembowski)
- Forterra
- DIRT Corps
- Plant Amnesty
- Home Realty/Jim Cole
- Seattle Parks Foundation



## ...City engaged

- Seattle Parks & Recreation
- Seattle Public Utilities
- Seattle City Council (CM Juarez)



# Partnership Drivers: Seattle Parks

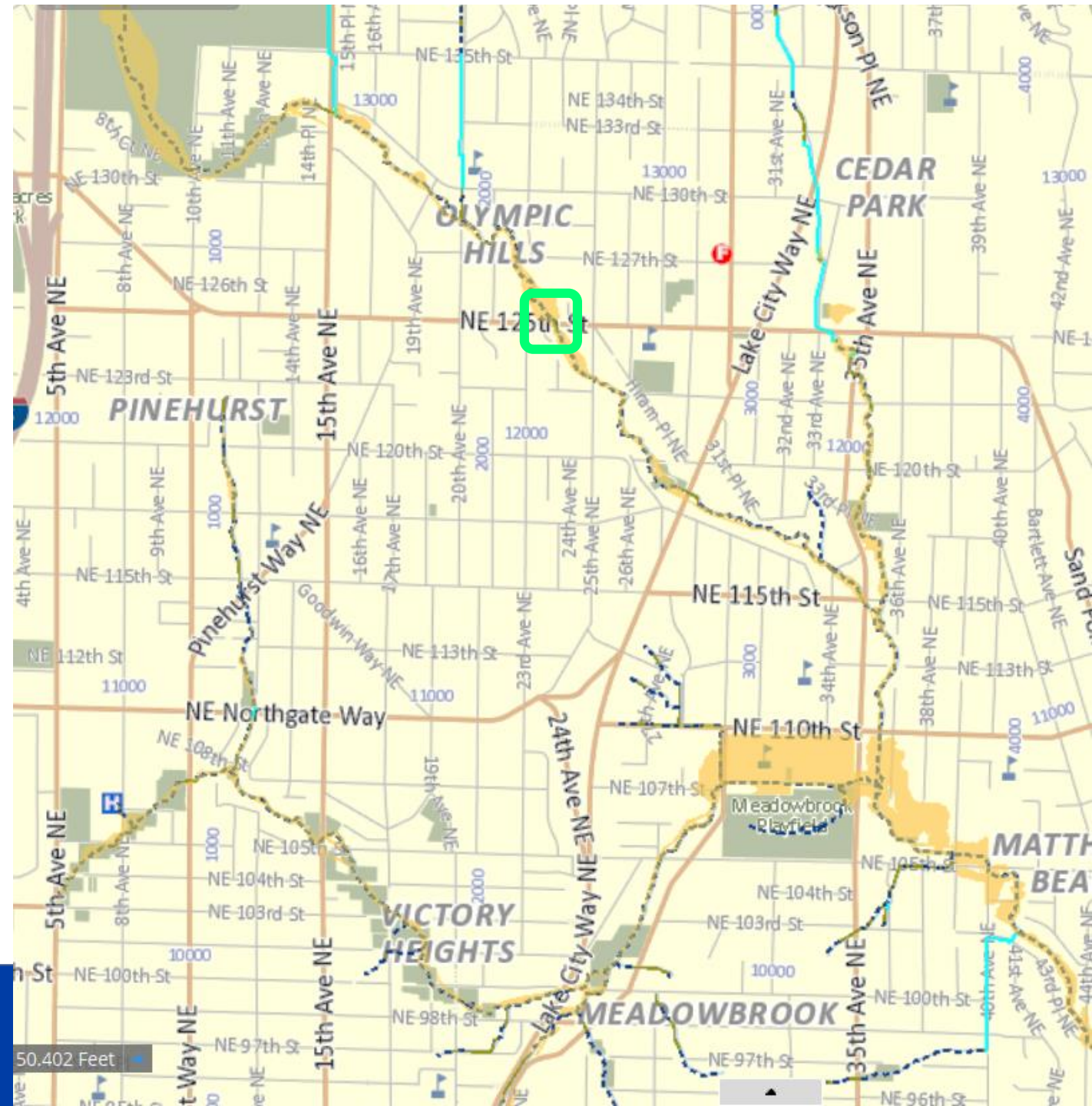
- Provide natural area access to Lake City
- Foothold for public protection of Thornton's north branch
- Partnership opportunity with SPU
- Leverage King County funding





# Foothold for public protection

- Unlike the South Branch, Thornton's North Branch is almost all privately owned from the Confluence to Jackson Park
- This restoration site is in an ideal location for public management of the creek over time.



# Partnership drivers (from SPU perspective)

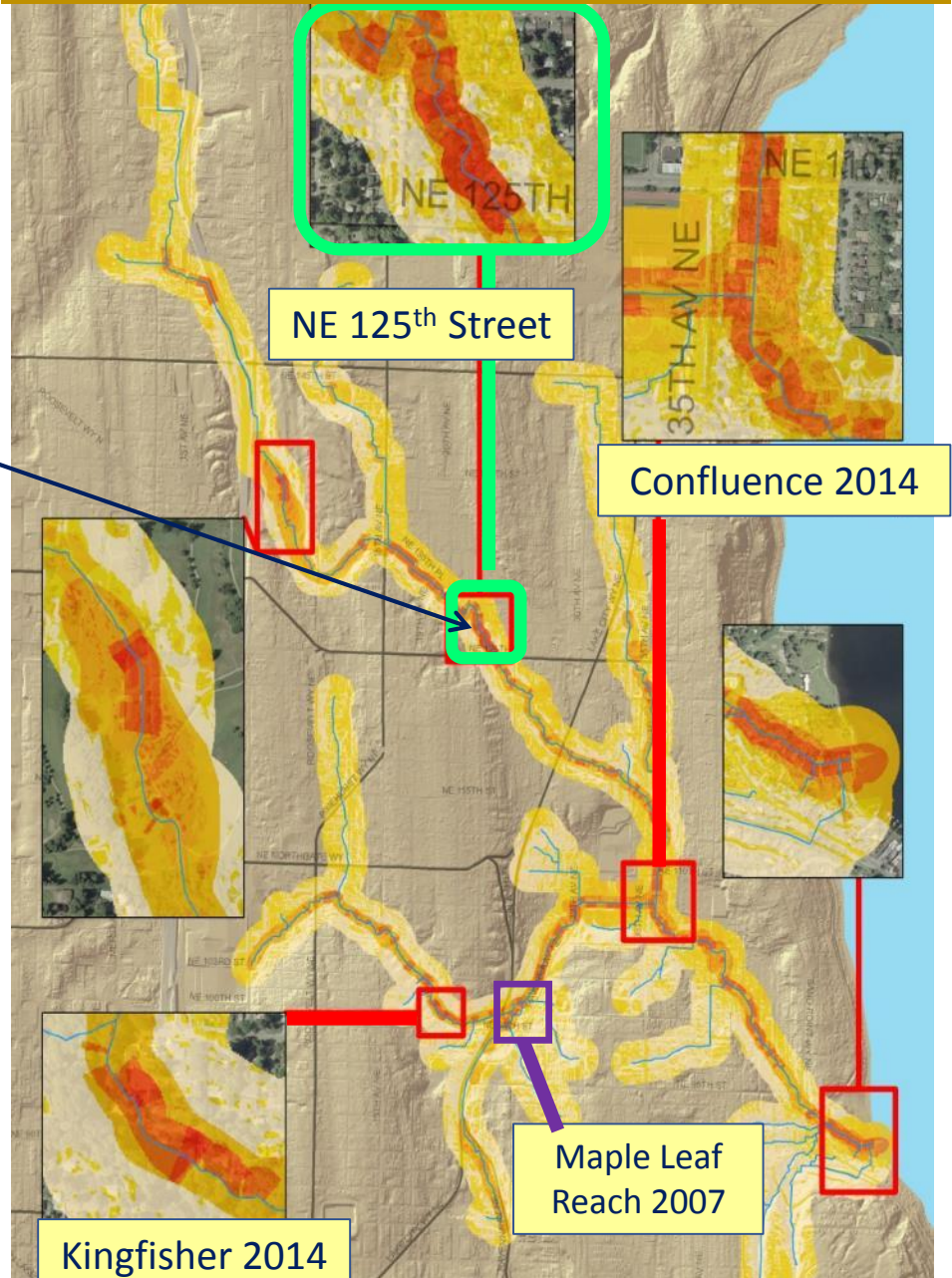
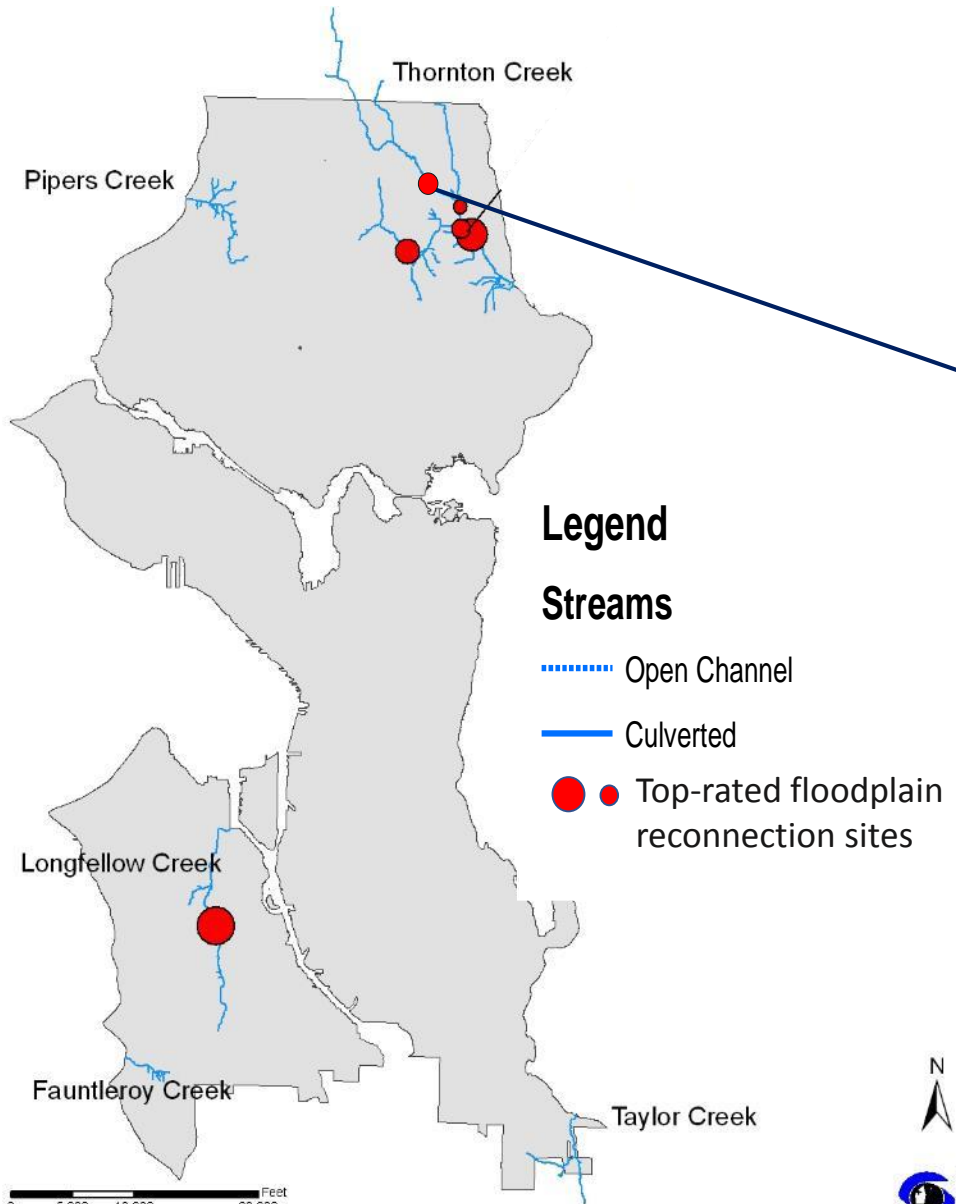
- Storage for floodwater, sediment and wood
- Slower peak flows to reduce channel erosion & property damage
- Culvert & other future infrastructure investments
- Water quality and aquatic habitat improvements
- Green Infrastructure in Urban Villages Program
- Environmental Justice and Service Equity
- Opportunity to pilot new community partnerships





# Strategic location for floodplain reconnection

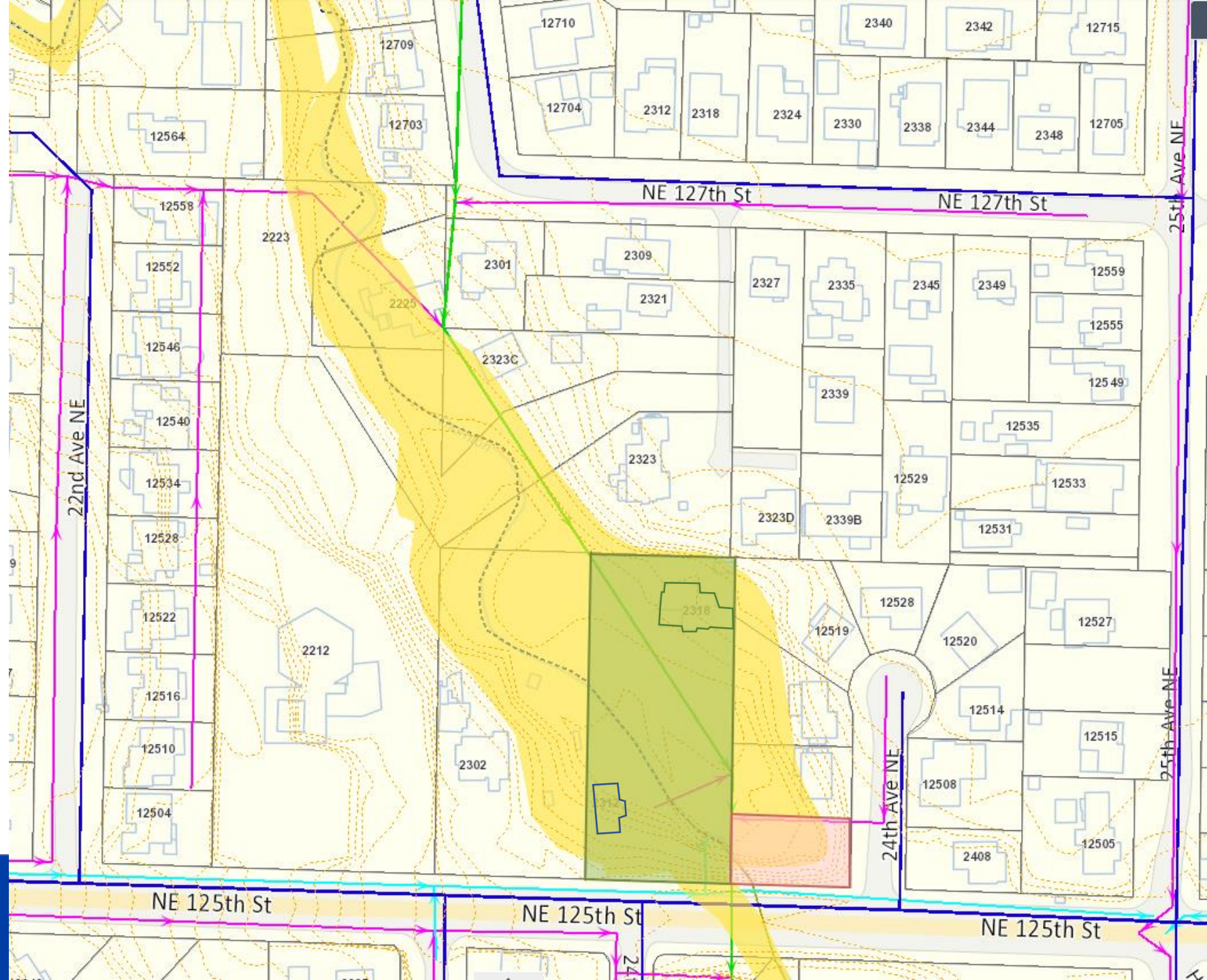
## Floodplain reconnection opportunities Site suitability





# FEMA floodway

- Parcel for sale
- FEMA floodway
- City FAS parcel
- County sanitary main
- SPU drainage main
- SPU sanitary main
- SPU water main





# 125<sup>th</sup> St NE culvert



SPU Culvert

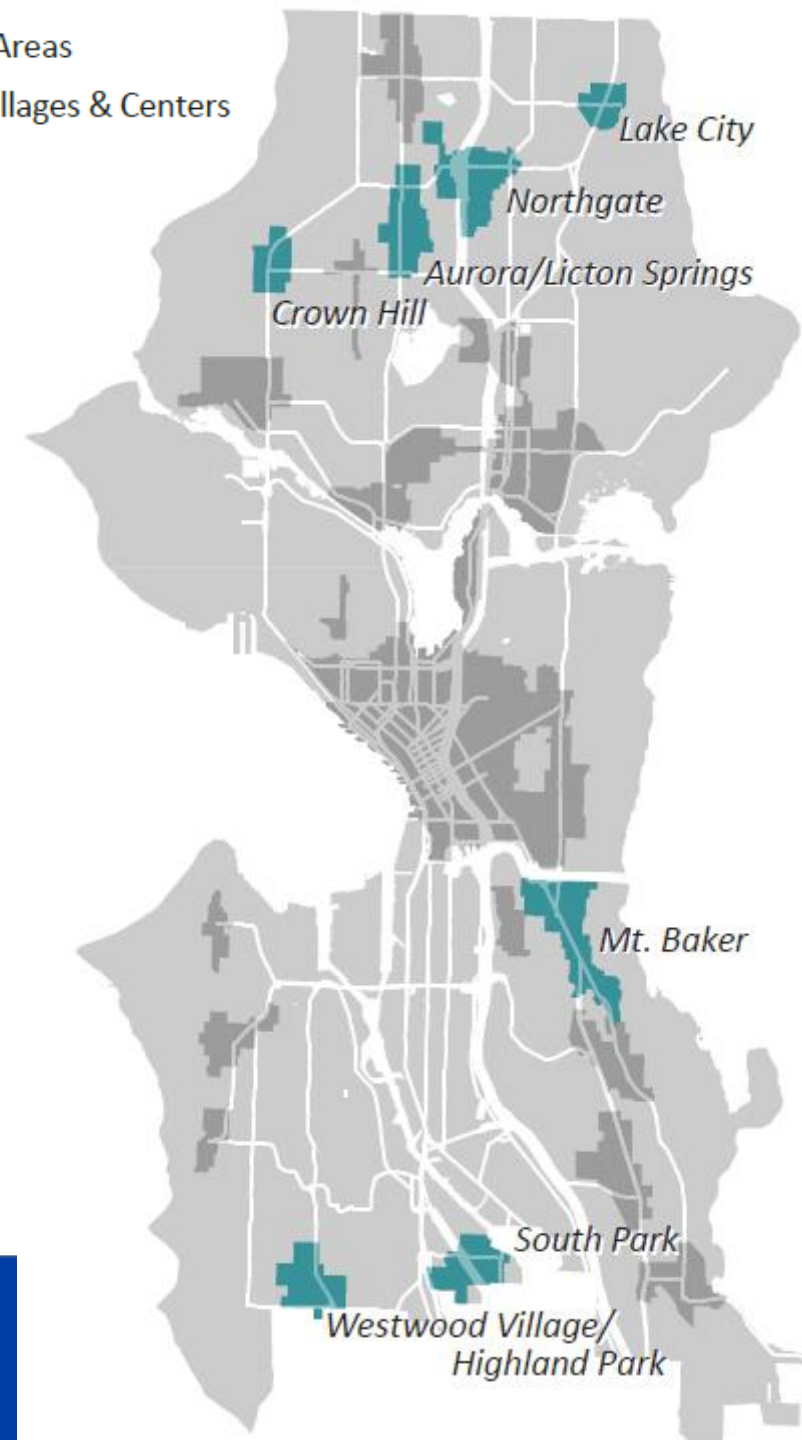




# Green Infrastructure in Urban Villages Program

- Part of SPU's 2018-2023 Strategic Business Plan
- Lake City is a Phase 1 focus area, floodplain park project is a good fit for program objectives:
  - Build projects with multiple system benefits in high growth neighborhoods
  - Expand the GSI toolbox
  - Align projects with community goals
  - Environmental Justice and Service Equity
  - Grow partnerships: private development, public agencies, community, NGOs...

Phase 1 Focus Areas  
Other Urban Villages & Centers



# Partnership Drivers: Seattle and KC Councilmembers

- (Comments from CM representatives)





# Mid Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group

We're a local nonprofit that works with communities to restore local stream and nearshore habitat so salmon can thrive.

We can serve as a design/construction project manager for communities that need help on large and small public works projects.

We're excited to take part:

- Help improve habitat and water quality on Thornton Creek.
- Secure funding
- Engage the community and lead the design process



# Roles and responsibilities

| Party                                 | Role  |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Seattle Parks & Rec                   | Land acquisition, upland restoration and management               |
| Seattle Public Utilities              | Creek and floodplain restoration and management                   |
| Mid-Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group | Lead conceptual site design & community engagement, grant funding |
| Community partners TBD???             | Support and participate in design, implementation, management...  |

- Outside funding: King Conservation Futures, KC Flood Control District, Waterworks, ...



# Proposed approach and timing



## Partnership Expectations

Site acquisition -2019  
Building Removal - 2020  
SPU commitment to future restoration  
Joint property management and stewardship

## Flexible Timing for Restoration

Yr. 1 - Options analysis  
Yr. 2-3- Design  
> Yr. 3 - Construction

# Progress to date

## July 2019

- Seattle City Council approved purchasing the site

## Sept 2019

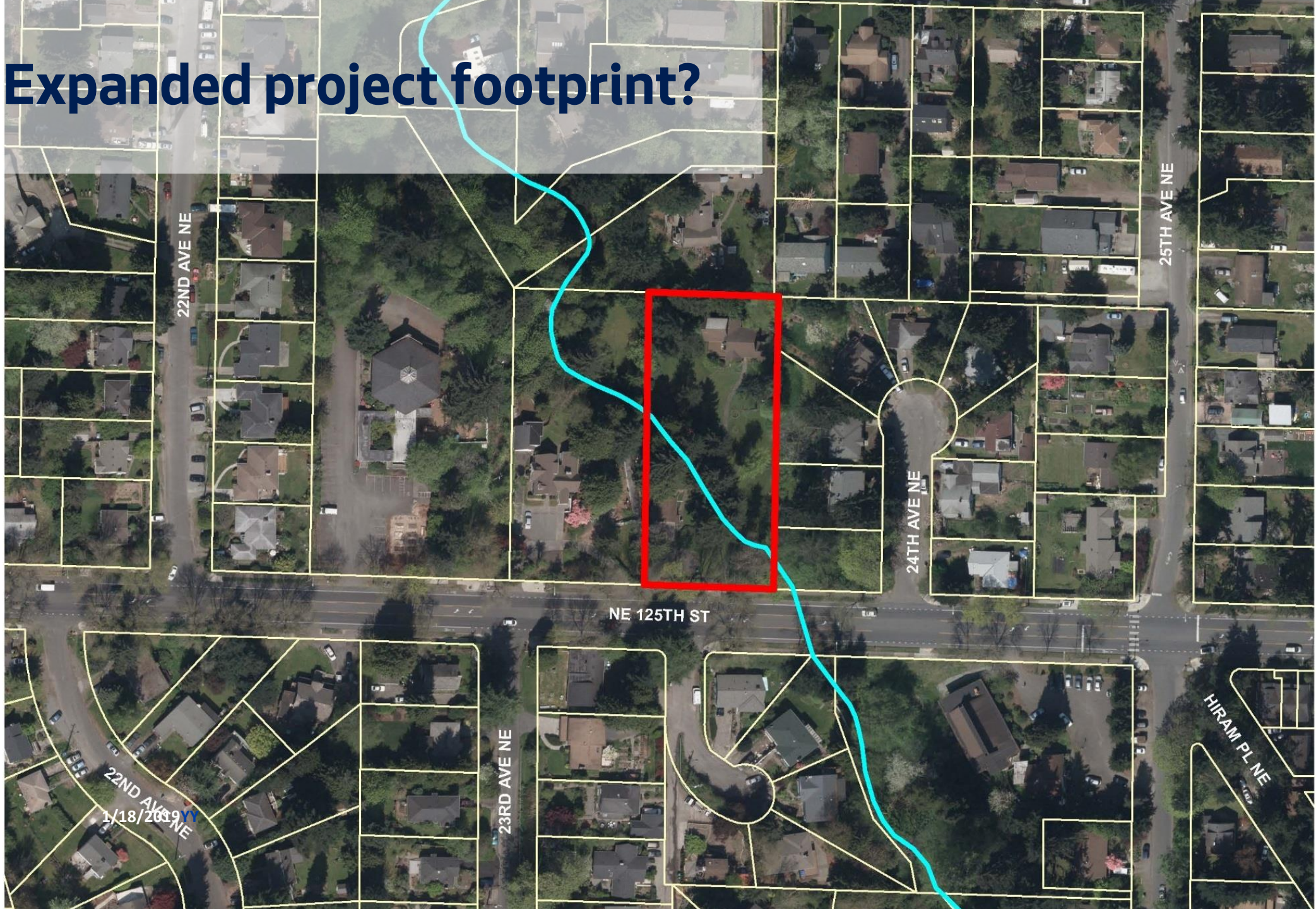
- SPR closed the purchase of the site
- Mid-Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group secured funding for concept design and community engagement

## Oct 2019

- Finished the agreement between SPR and SPU
- Began drafting scope to evaluate options and develop concept designs



# Expanded project footprint?





# Community partners

- Design, implementation, ongoing management
- Discussion: groups and roles to consider as we scope the process?
- How best to use this opportunity to engage a broad cross-section of Lake City communities?





# Thank you!



**Contacts:**

SPU: [chapin.pier@seattle.gov](mailto:chapin.pier@seattle.gov) [dave.laclergue@seattle.gov](mailto:dave.laclergue@seattle.gov)

SPR: [lisa.ciecko@seattle.gov](mailto:lisa.ciecko@seattle.gov)

Mid-Sound: [ben@midsoundfisheries.org](mailto:ben@midsoundfisheries.org)

*Photo credit: Chapin Pier*

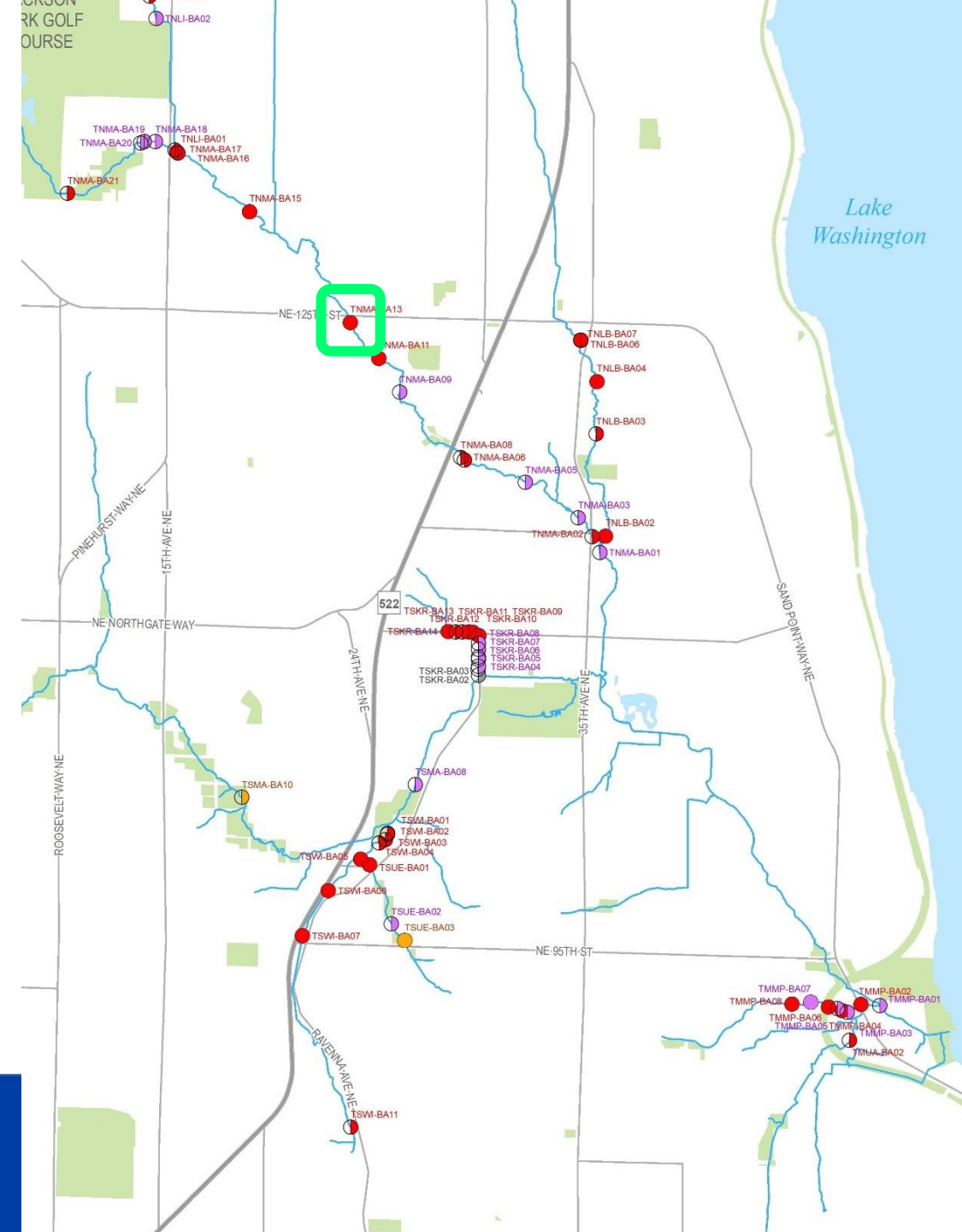
**(Reference slides)**





# Culverts and Fish Passage

- Fish passage barrier (ranked 12 city-wide; 6 SPU)
- 6+ barriers downstream
- Culvert moderate condition (ranked 22 of 54)



# Racial & Social Equity priority area

- City depts actively pursuing investments to undo effects of systemic racism
- Lake City ranks highly for equity prioritization, based on:
  - Race, English language learners, national origins
  - Socioeconomic disadvantages
  - Health disadvantages

## Racial and Social Equity Index

The Racial and Social Equity Index, produced by the Office of Planning & Community Development, is a tool to aid in the identification of City planning, program, and investment priorities.

The index includes:

- **Race, ELL, and Origins** (shares of population who are)
  - Persons of color
  - English language learners
  - Foreign born
- **Socioeconomic Disadvantage** (shares of population with)
  - Income below 200 percent of poverty level
  - Educational attainment less than a bachelor's degree
- **Health Disadvantage**
  - No leisure-time physical activity
  - Diagnosed diabetes
  - Obesity
  - Mental health not good
  - Asthma
  - Low life expectancy at birth
  - Disability

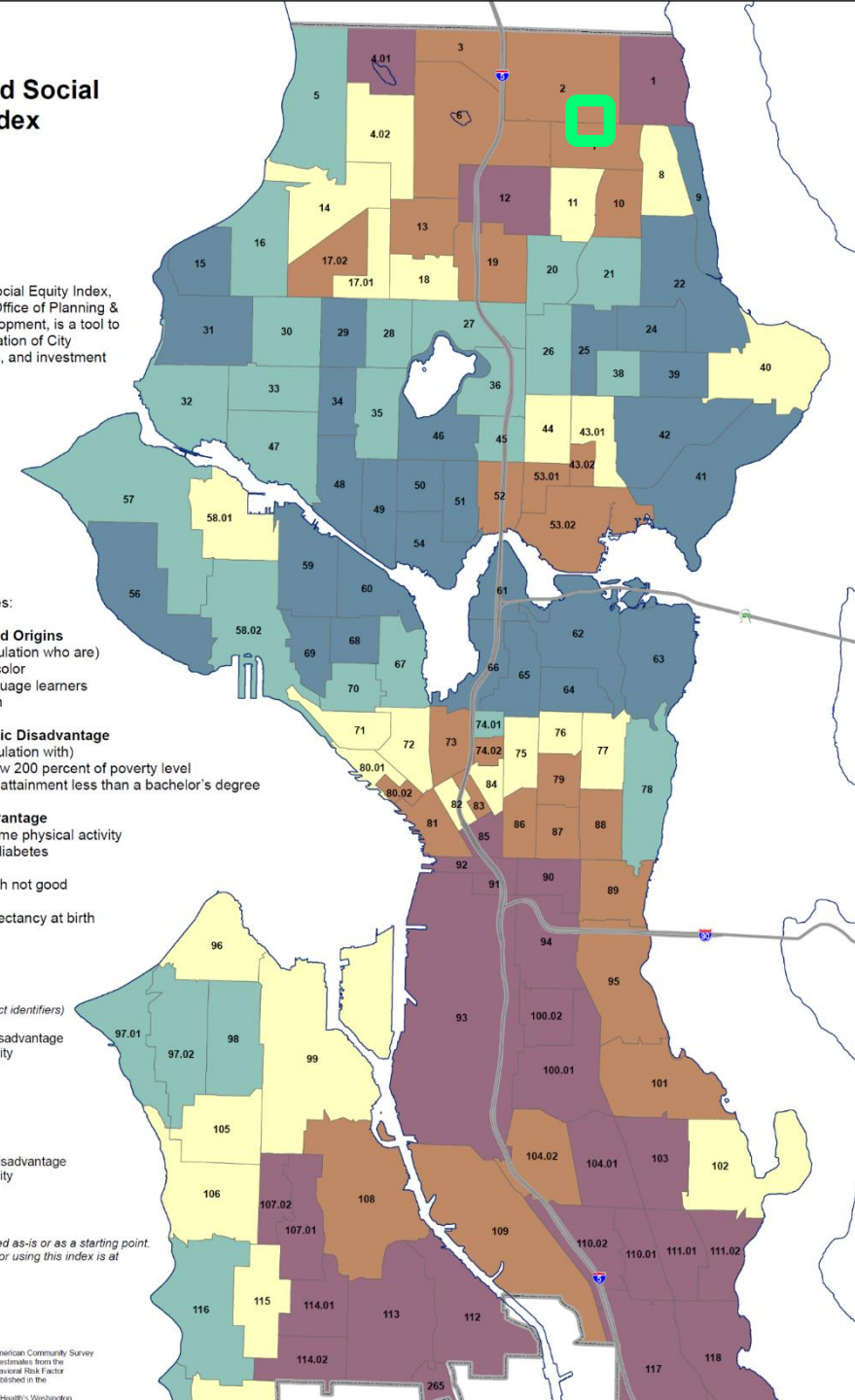
### Legend

(map numbers are tract identifiers)

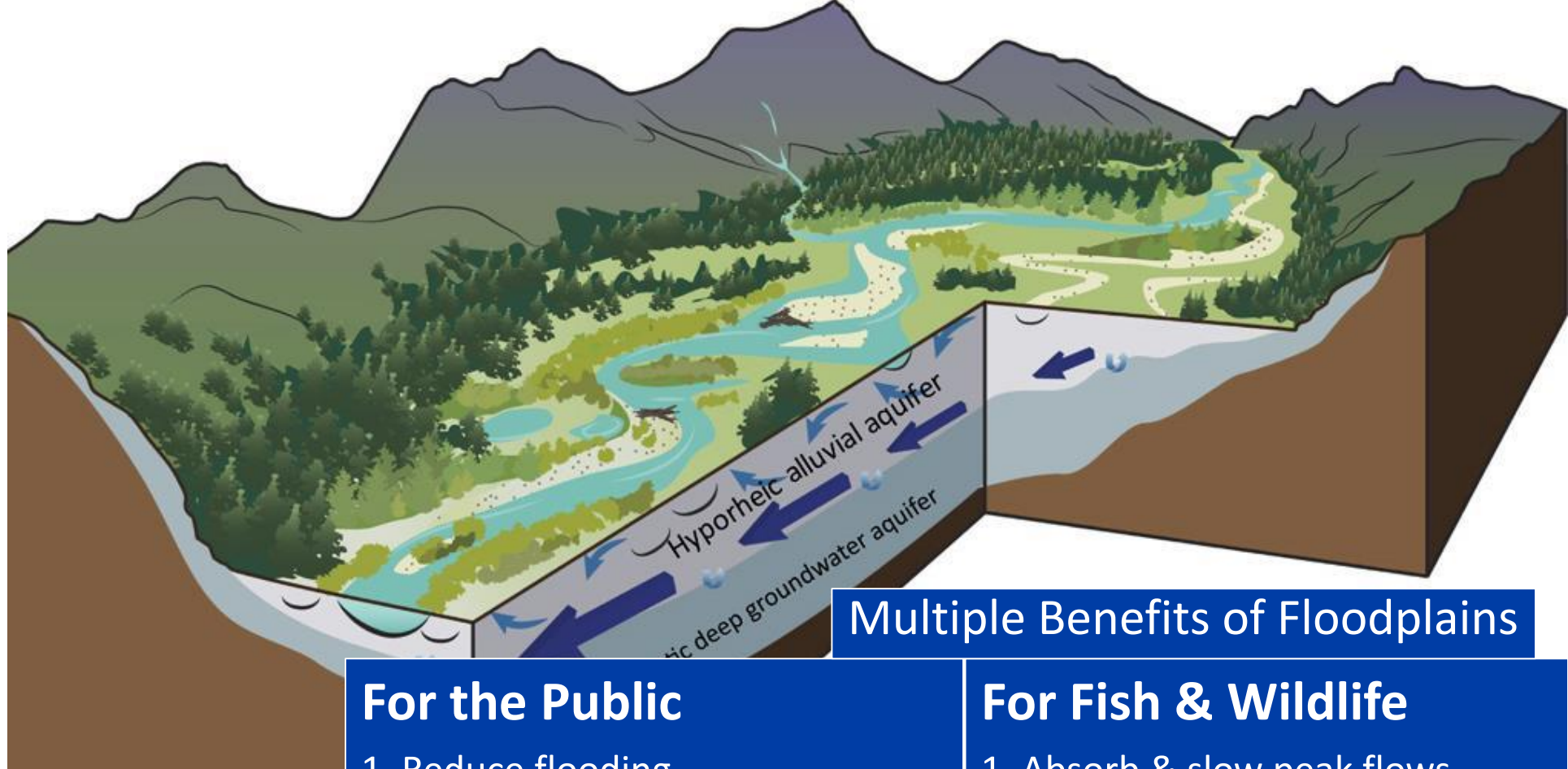
- Lower disadvantage and priority
- Higher disadvantage and priority

This index may be used as-is or as a starting point. Suggested guidance for using this index is at [\[link\]](#).

Sources: 2011-2015 Five-Year American Community Survey Estimates; U.S. Census Bureau; estimates from the Centers for Disease Control Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) published in the "The 500 Cities Project"; Washington State Department of Health.







## Multiple Benefits of Floodplains

### For the Public

1. Reduce flooding
2. Reduce erosion
3. Reduce property damage
4. Protect & improve water quality
5. Provide open green space
6. Can increase public safety
7. Increase climate resilience

### For Fish & Wildlife

1. Absorb & slow peak flows
2. Connect terrestrial & aquatic habitats (= ecological hot spot)
3. Cool, filter & clean water
4. Recruit, store, & transport sediment & wood to sustain habitat diversity

**Floodplains  
provide  
many benefits**