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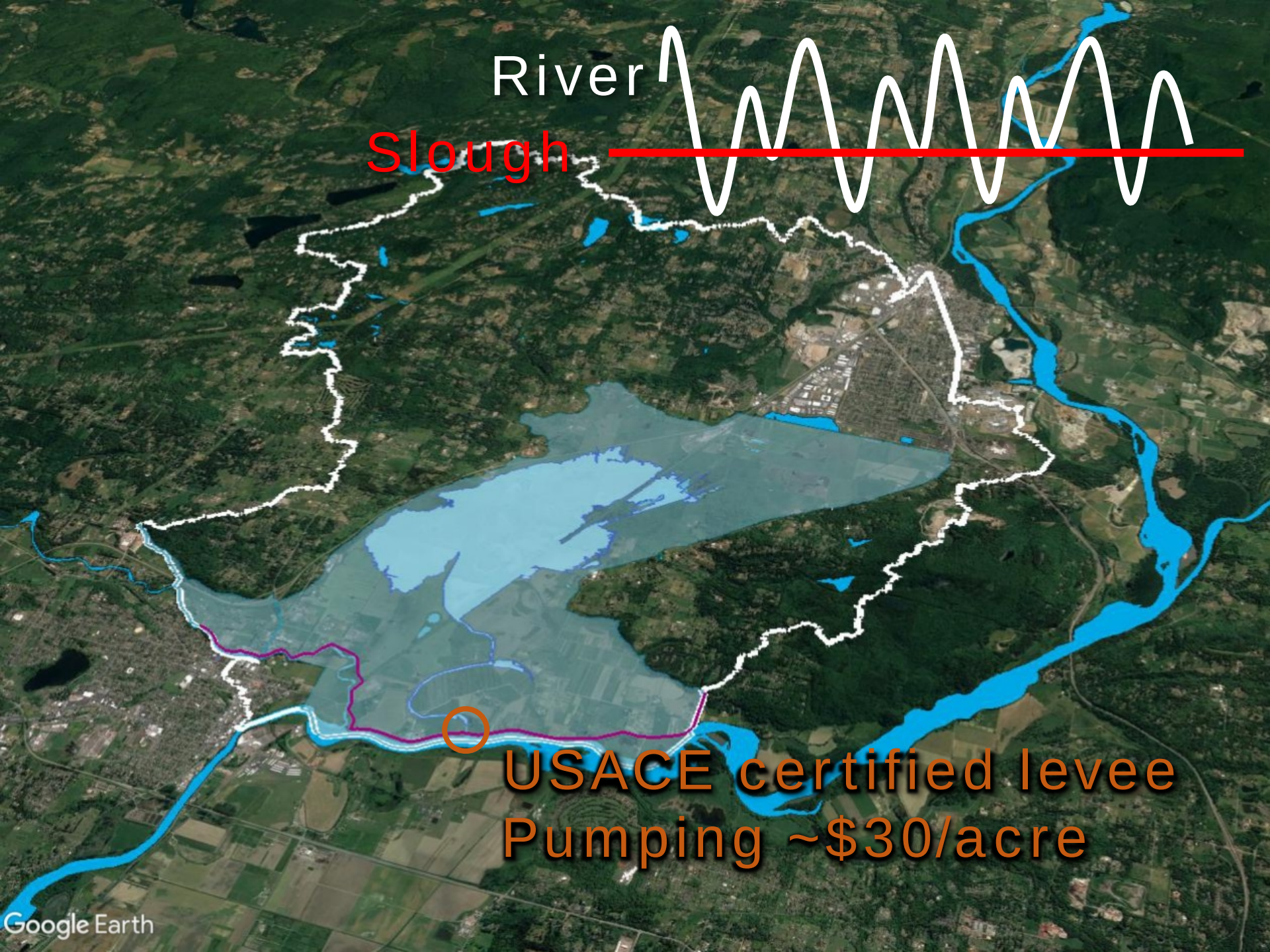
Agency silos, cultural isolation, and integrated floodplain design: the French Slough case study

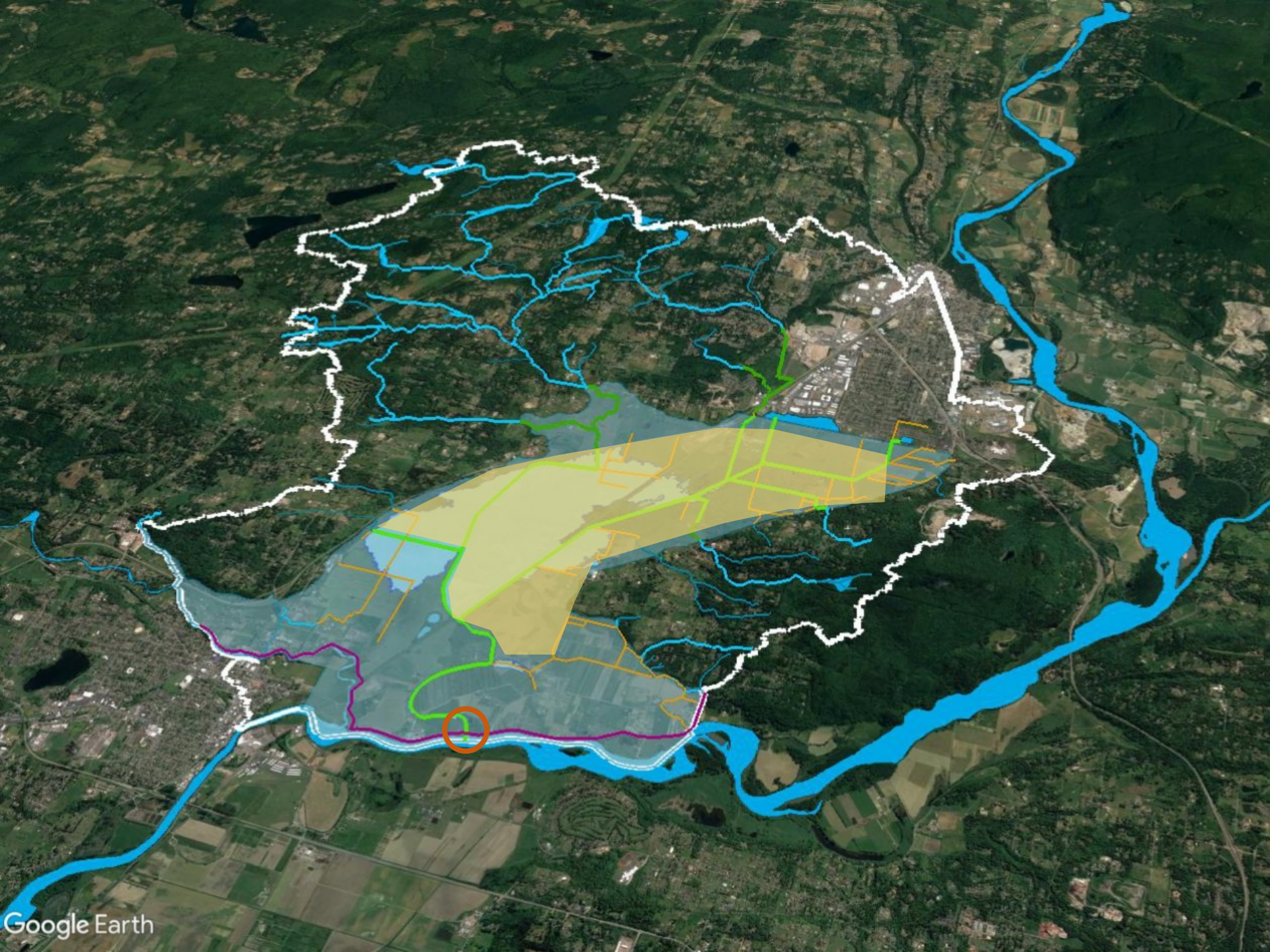
Paul Cereghino
NOAA Restoration Ctr., United States, paul.r.cereghino@noaa.gov

Agency Silos, Cultural Isolation, and Integrated Floodplain Design:

French Slough

Paul Cereghino
NOAA Restoration Center
5 April 2018


River
Slough
USACE certified levee
Pumping ~$30/acre
Google Earth


Google Earth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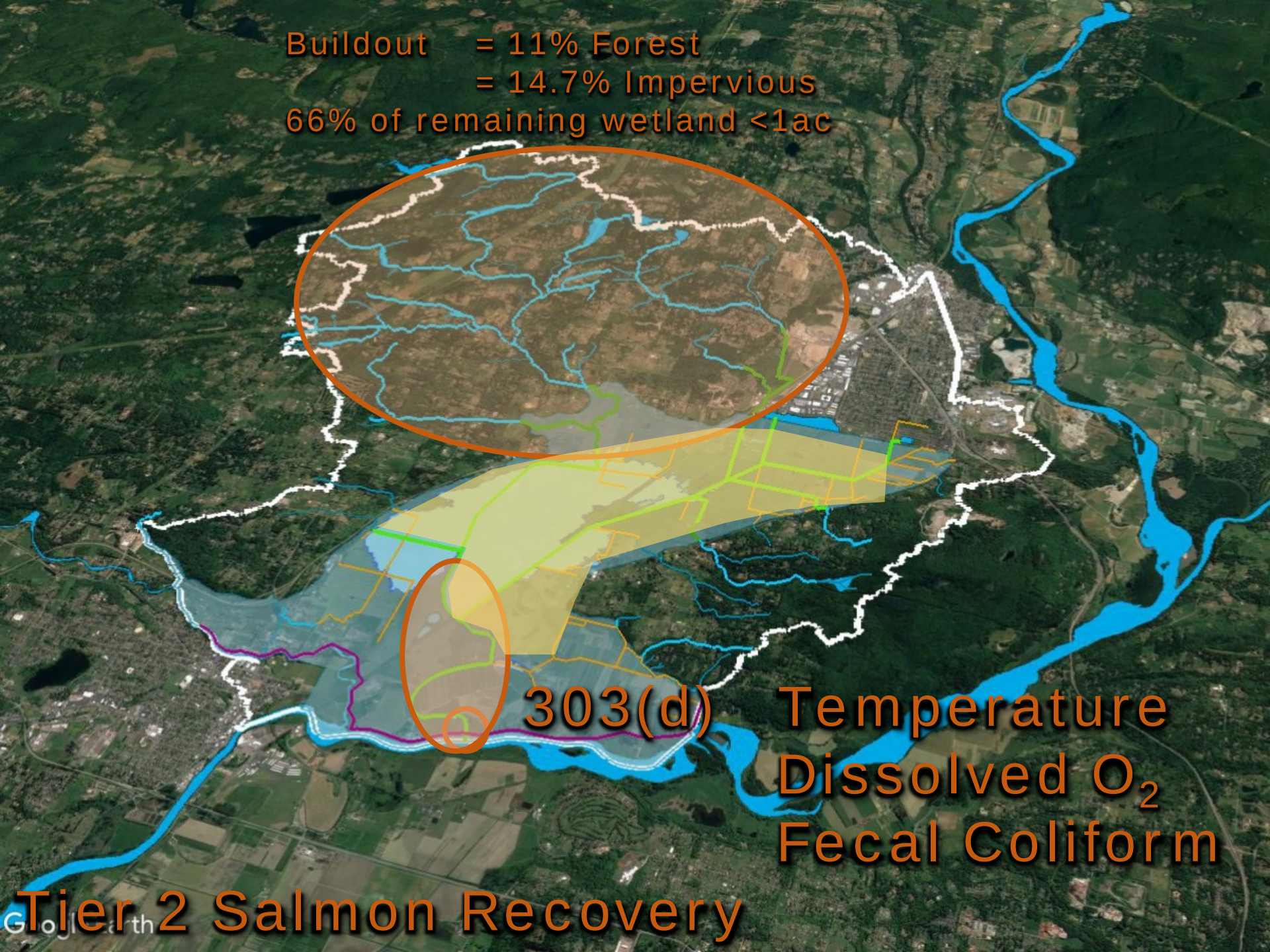

Buildout = 11% Forest
= 14.7% Impervious
66% of remaining wetland <1ac
303(d) Temperature
Dissolved O_2
Fecal Coliform
Tier 2 Salmon Recovery

The Status Quo?

2004 French Creek Watershed Management Committee

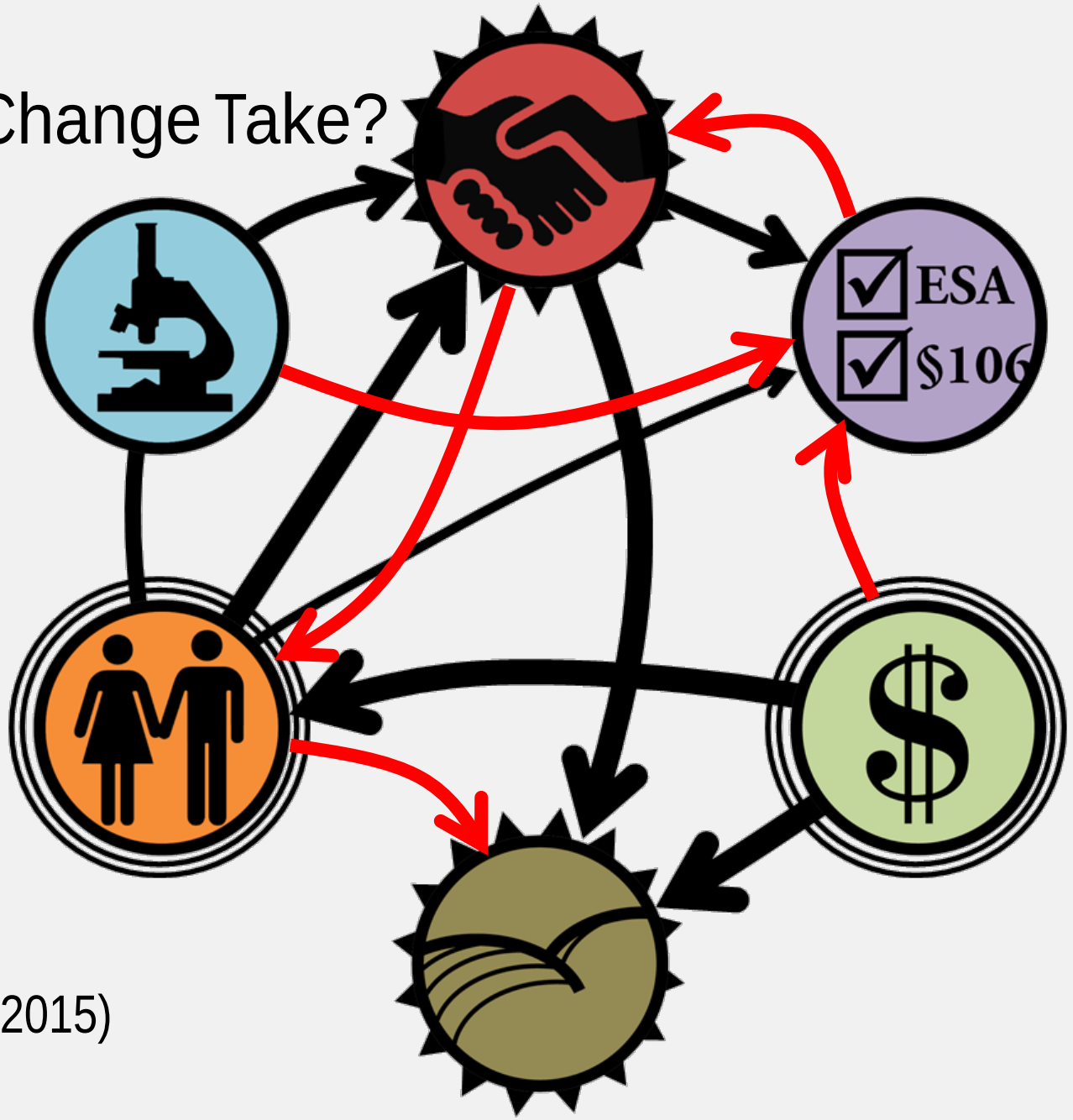
"… full buildout in and of itself will result in streams that are unlikely to support salmon recovery."

Low Return on Investment?
No "Bang for Your Buck"?

What does this say about Puget Sound "Recovery"?

What Does Change Take?

Social Vision
Legal Permission
Cash Flow
Land Access
Human Capacity
Predictive Ability



(From Cereghino 2015)

Who is Responsible for French Slough?

French Slough District Commissioners & Staff
French Slough District Members
Watershed Residents
County Council & Executive
County Surface Water Management
County Planning and Development Services
Development-Project Regulators
Water Quality Regulators
Ecosystem Project Funding System
Ecosystem Management Shops
- Conservation District
- Tulalip Tribes
- County SWM
- Ducks Unlimited
- Sound Salmon Solutions
- Adopt-a-stream Foundation

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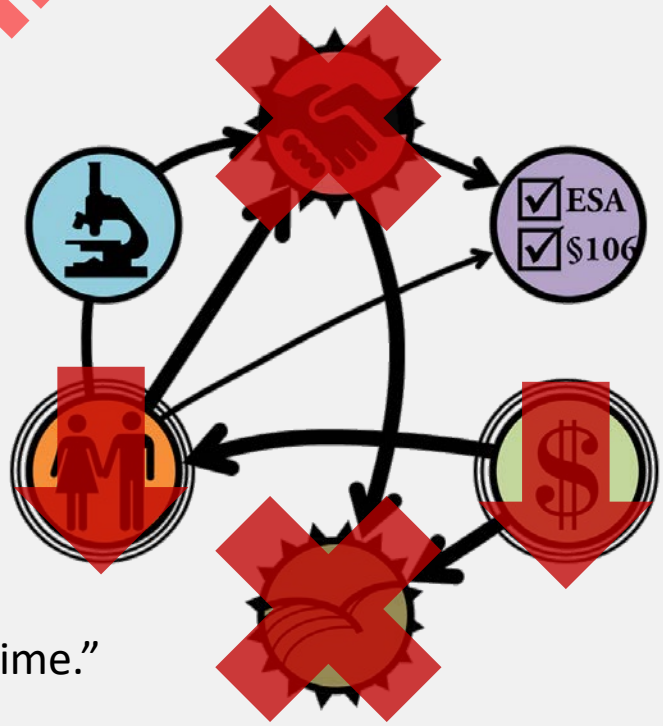
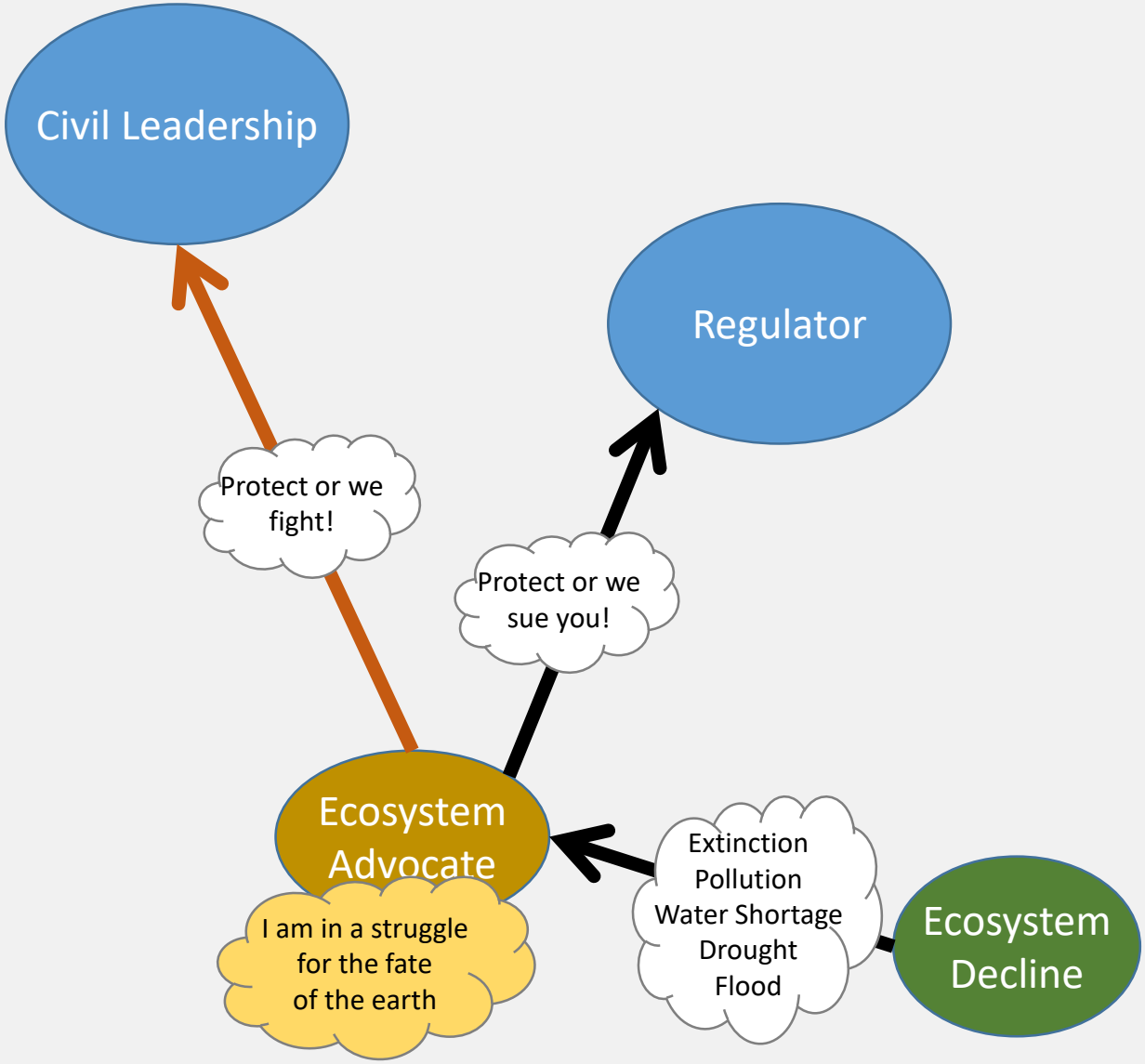
System of Irresponsibility

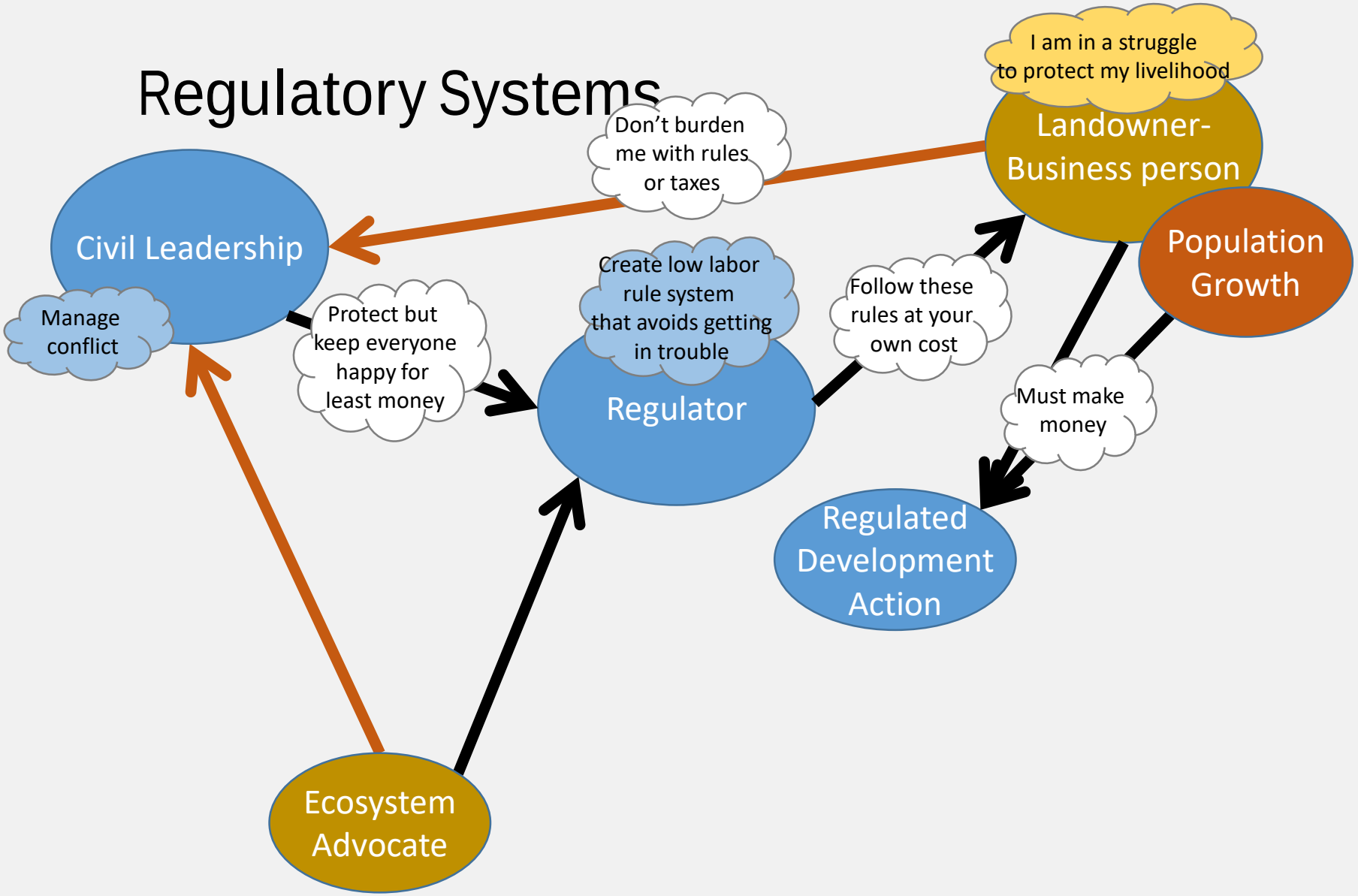
"… each and every watershed resident contributes to these problems. **It is up to them** to see that individual problems they cause are addressed…"



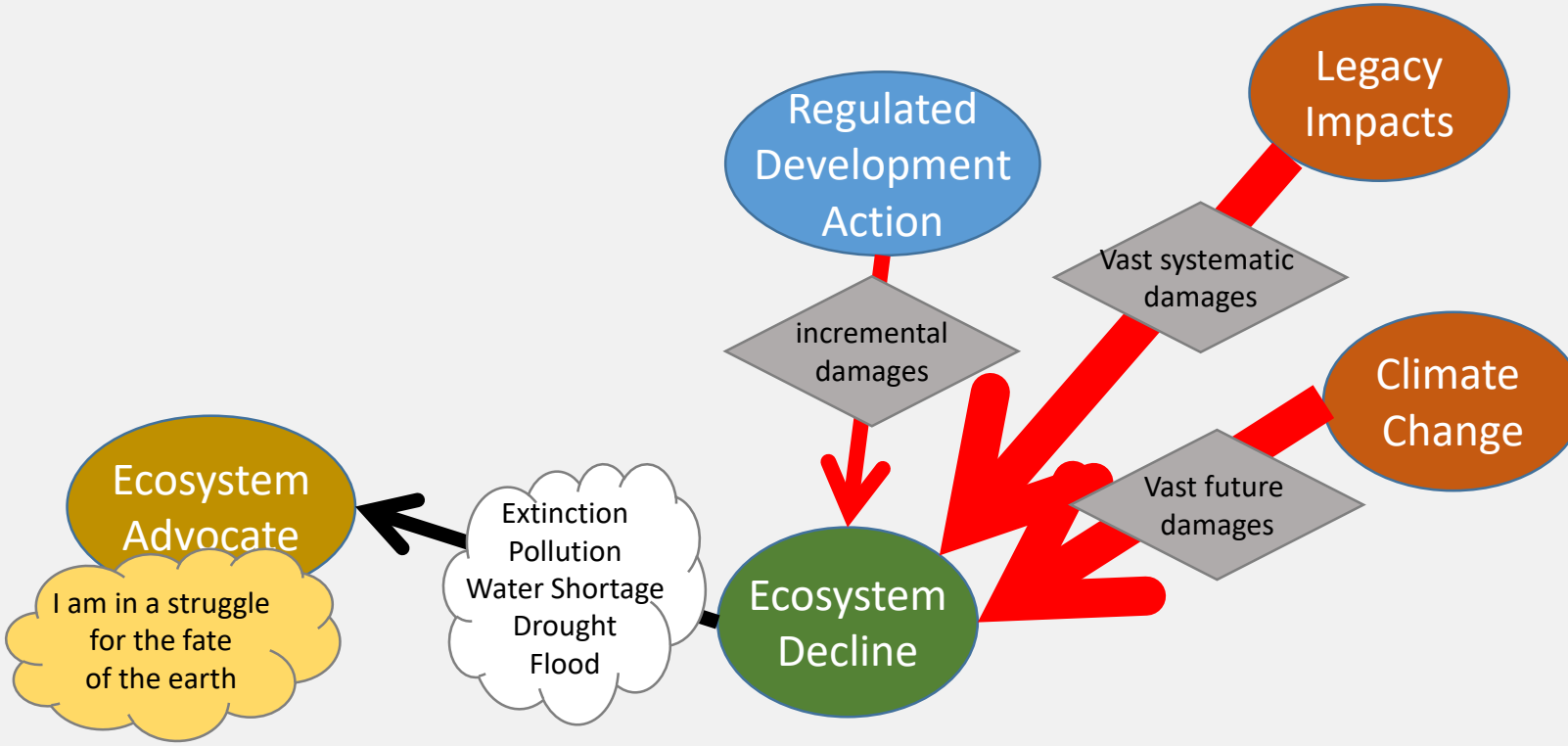
"A bad system will beat a good person every time."

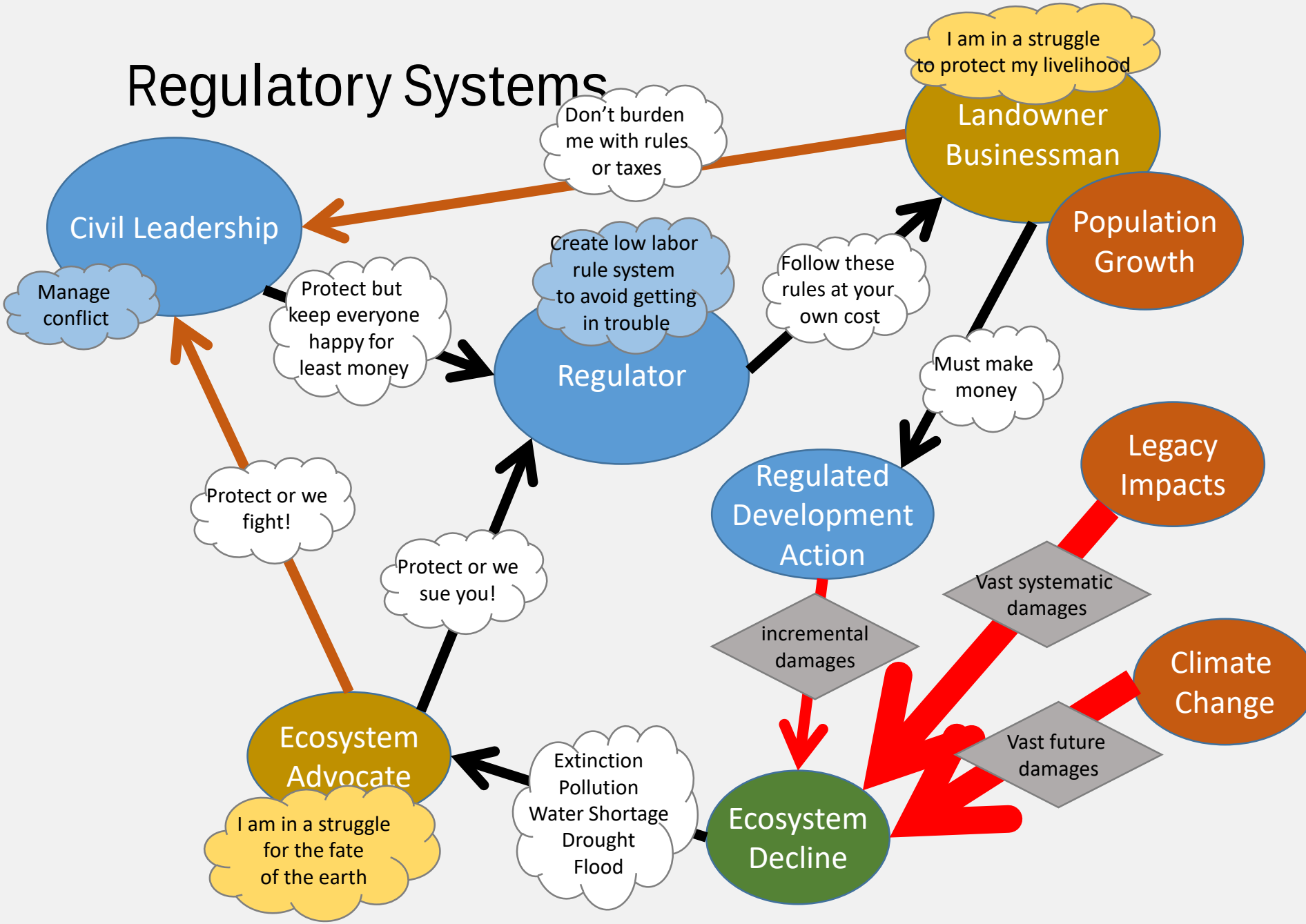
Regulatory Systems




Regulatory Systems
I am in a struggle to protect my livelihood
Landowner-Business person
Don't burden me with rules or taxes
Civil Leadership
Manage conflict
Protect but keep everyone happy for least money
Create low labor rule system that avoids getting in trouble
Regulator
Follow these rules at your own cost
Population Growth
Must make money
Regulated Development Action
Ecosystem Advocate

Regulatory Systems

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Regulator
Follow these rules at your own cost
Population Growth
Must make money
Regulated Development Action
Legacy Impacts
Protect or we fight!
Protect or we sue you!
Vast systematic damages
incremental damages
Climate Change
Vast future damages
Ecosystem Advocate
I am in a struggle for the fate of the earth
Extinction
Pollution
Water Shortage
Drought
Flood
Ecosystem Decline

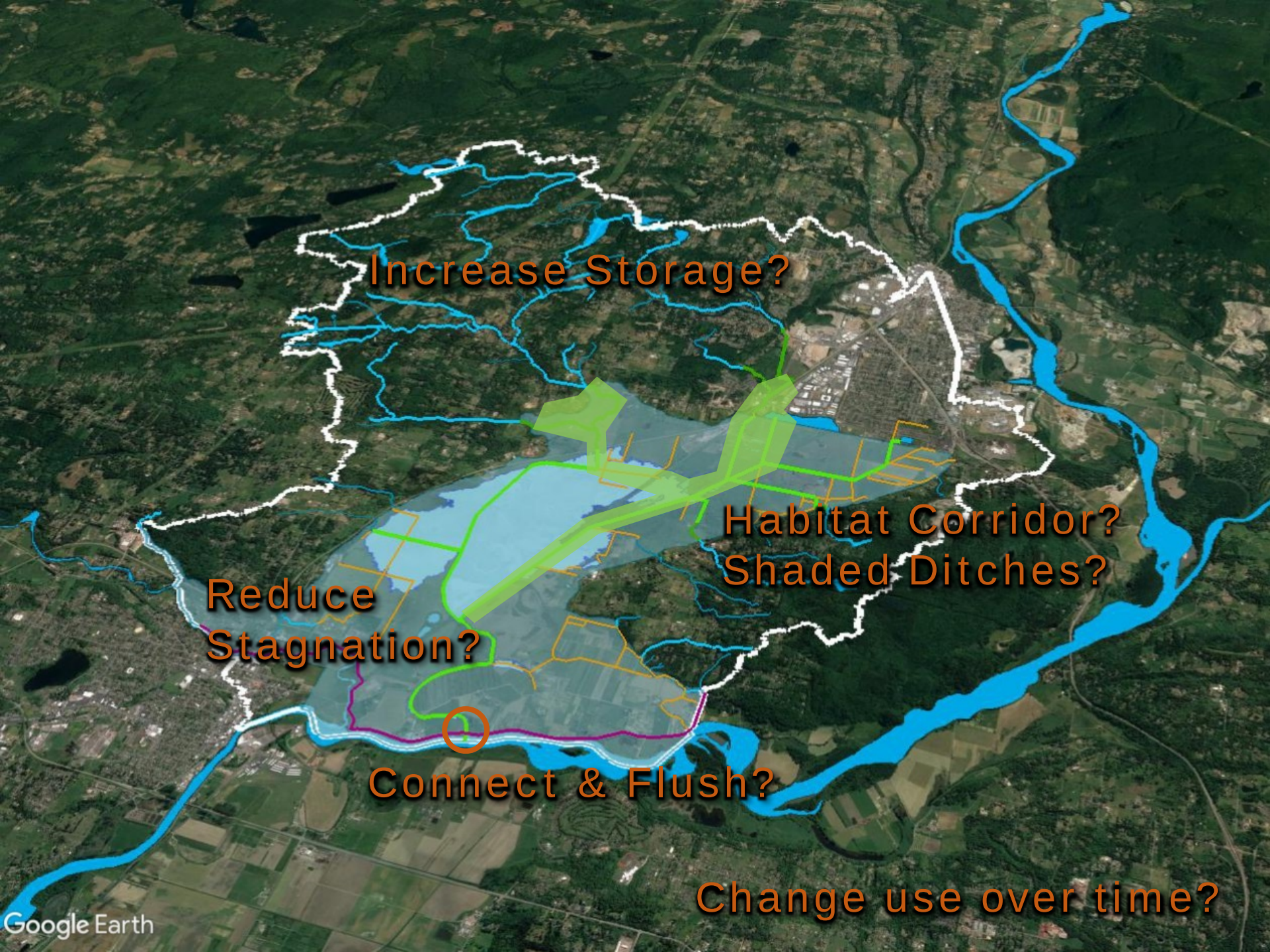
Regulatory Systems

“Unintended Adversaries”

Each individual trying to solve their own problem creates a problem for the other, resulting in increasingly adversarial behavior.

“Quick Fix Addiction”

Small regulatory gains undermine the collaboration needed to solve the bigger water quality problem. Unable to solve the big problem, we come to depend on the quick fix.


Increase Storage?
Habitat Corridor?
Shaded Ditches?
Reduce
Stagnation?
Connect & Flush?
Change use over time?
Google Earth

What is Next in French Slough?

- Get permission to maintain ditches.
- "100 foot Rule" – Reinterpretation of the 2003 Federal Ag Fish and Wildlife debate.
- Mitigation – do we want to force costs of transitioning the system on the landowners or share the cost?
- Farm Bill Programs – How to apply at scale? Individual landowner contracts, or lease habitat elements to a single operator?
- Beaver Management Strategy? – Can we allow beaver activity within managed corridor? Who has skill? Who carries risk?
- TMDL – Gather data outside formal process to support design to allow greater flexibility? What is the risk to the district?
- Surface Water Management Fees – how responsible is the watershed community for water storage? What percentage of SWM effort is focused on drainage?