



Slow Food® Portland

June 8th, 200

Reserves Steering Committee
Metro, 600 NE Grand
Portland, OR 97323

Dear Commissioners & Reserve Steering Committee Members:

Slow Food Portland is a non-profit organization with over 500 members in the Portland metro area. Slow Food Portland is part of the global and national Slow Food movement that works toward a food system that is based on the principles of high quality and taste, environmental sustainability, and social justice – in essence, a food system that is good, clean and fair. Such a food system depends first and foremost on the availability of local farmland.

Slow Food Portland was the first chapter of its kind in the United States, founded in 1991 by local small business owners. Slow Food Portland, like its umbrella organization Slow Food USA, is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to supporting and celebrating our regional food traditions through programs and activities dedicated to defending biodiversity and building food communities. From the salmon in our local rivers to the produce at our farmers' markets and restaurants; from animal breeds and heirloom varieties of fruits and vegetables to handcrafted wine and beer, and farmhouse cheeses; these foods are a part of our cultural and geographical identity. They reflect generations of commitment to the land and devotion to the processes that yield the greatest achievements in taste.

These foods, and the communities that produce and depend on them, are constantly at risk from competing interests in and degradation of our farmland. Slow Food Portland therefore advocates for the central role and importance of agriculture in future land use decisions involving urban growth in the metro region. It is for this reason that we have been following the Urban & Rural Reserves Process closely.

Several of our members participated in the recent Reserves Open Houses or completed the online survey. We were pleased to see that the results of this public outreach broadly supported protecting working farms.¹ With this in mind, we

would strongly encourage you to reduce the number of acres being considered for urban reserves in your meetings over the next few months. We are especially concerned about the large tracts of “Foundation”² farmland that are still being considered for urban reserve in Washington County. This concern was also clearly raised on page 5 of the Open House summary.

In response to these concerns, we’d like to draw your attention to the Washington County Farm Bureau Foundation Lands Base Protection Map. This map was submitted to the Washington County Reserves Coordinating Committee on May 11th, 2009. We would encourage the Core 4 and Reserves Steering Committee to seriously consider this proposal.

The Urban & Rural Reserves process is our generations chance to leave the kind of legacy for the region that Senate Bill 100 was for the previous generation! We encourage you to support an end product that creates vibrant urban centers and preserves the working farms that we as Oregonians cherish.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Katherine Deumling
Slow Food Regional Governor, Oregon
Slow Food USA, Board of Directors
Katherine@slowfoodportland.com; 503.239.1664

¹ Urban & Rural Reserves, Phase 3 Public Involvement Summary, pg 2

² as defined in the Oregon Dept. of Agriculture Report to Metro, Jan ‘07

**Washington County
Farm Bureau
Foundation Lands
Base Protection**

