



Save Helvetia  
13260 N.W. Bishop Road  
Hillsboro, Oregon 97124

[www.SaveHelvetia.org](http://www.SaveHelvetia.org)

March 14, 2023

RE: SB 4 - Industrial Site Selection - OPPOSED

Honorable Members of the Joint Semiconductor Task Force,

## **Let's be honest - The land is great but greed is greater**

Let's face the facts. Some landowners in the 1,760-acre NW Hillsboro RURAL RESERVES agricultural area don't want to farm anymore. They have testified over the years that they cannot farm because the land is not irrigated. In the past, they have testified that it would be better suited as a Town Center. Now they say it is better suited for semiconductor manufacturing. Isn't this just a reason to cash out and become multi-millionaires in the process? Who can blame them? After all, it's the American way. But don't blame the land - the land has been successfully farmed for generations. Be honest and admit the real reason for the sell-out of prime farmland with the best soils in the world: money.

### **Since the 1850's NW Hillsboro has been farmed successfully**

Using Rain Fed Agriculture practices, farmers in NW Hillsboro have practiced successful carbon sequestration and carbon dioxide reduction for over 160 years:

- Their extensive investment in an underground network of sub-surface irrigation channels rain efficiently
- Their contour farming: reduces soil erosion and increases crop yields
- Planting cover crops enhances moisture retention and productivity of the soils
- Doing all of these contribute to conserving soil nutrients and 160 years of improvement in productivity

## **Not all soils are the same**

The Missoula Floods carried away eastern Washington state's Class 1 and Class 2 soil, leaving eastern Washington with "scablands". The Willamette Valley was the beneficiary of this premier six-foot deep topsoil. NW Hillsboro's 1,760 acres of RURAL RESERVES is primarily Class 1 and 2. (See map titled "South of Highway 26"). The key shows the eight classes of soil based on its non-irrigated capability, with Class 1 having the best capability and Class 8 having the poorest. NW Hillsboro has the best soil in the world!

## **NW Hillsboro RURAL RESERVE farmland is very productive**

Because of the Class 1 and 2 soils and the practices mentioned above, landowners in this RURAL RESERVES area are able to grow a variety of cereal, grains and blueberries, contributing to Washington County's agricultural production of over \$300 million annually. Typically, landowners lease out their grain and grass seed fields to farmers who farm many parcels on the north side and south side of US-26, maximizing their investment in equipment, machinery, fuel and labor. Industrializing this block of 1,760 acres of prime agricultural land will remove the last block of farmland from McKay Creek east to Brookwood Parkway.

## **Multi-millions beckon**

Some residents do not want to farm anymore and the siren call of cashing out is alluring. Now, the semiconductor gold rush grab will cause agricultural land prices to skyrocket and people are being promised prices for industrialized land between \$500,000 and \$800,000 an acre. Who can resist that windfall? **Just don't blame the land - it has been great but greed is greater.**

**VOTE NO** to SB 4's super-siting on Rural Reserve land.

Respectfully submitted,

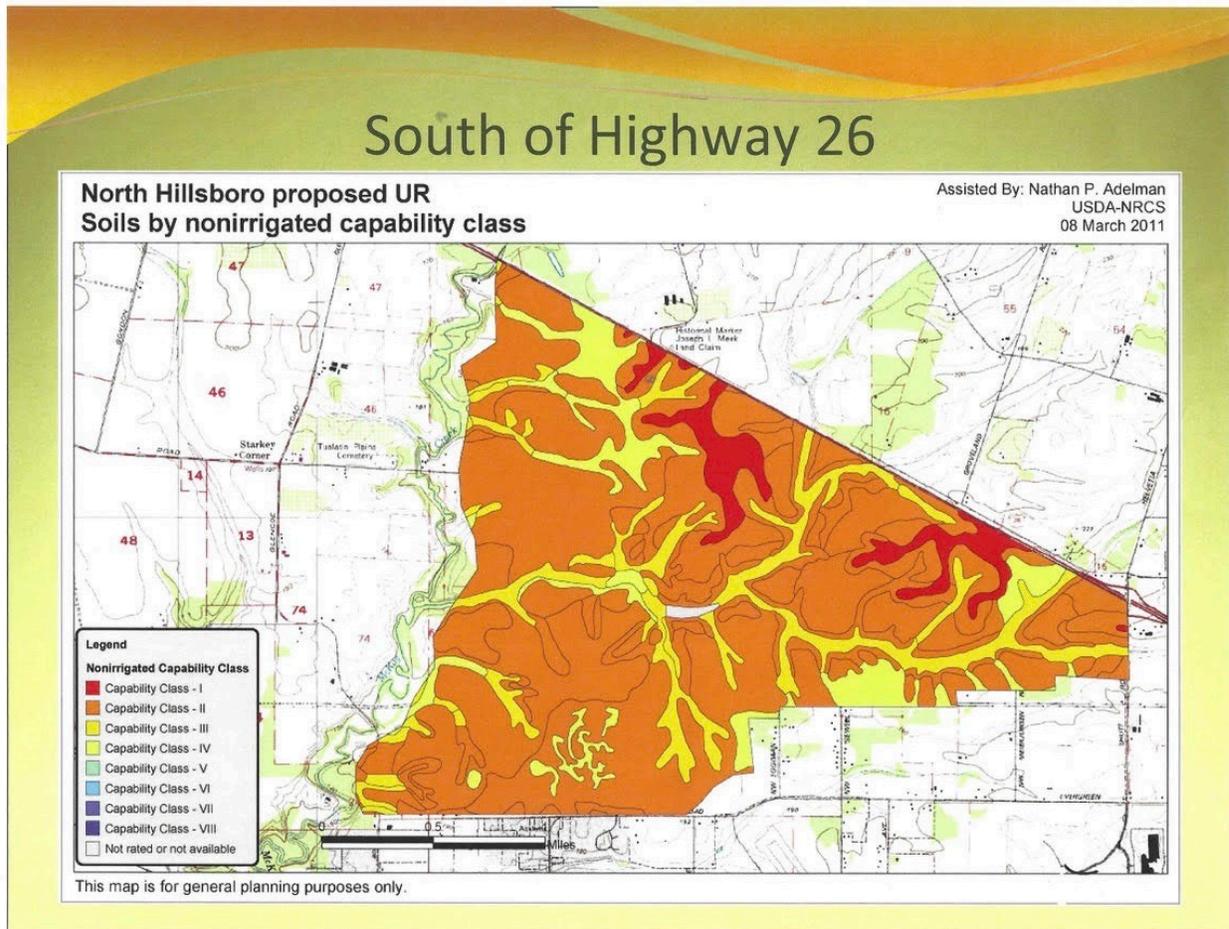
*Faun Hosey*

Vice-President, Save Helvetia

**SEE ATTACHED MAPS BELOW**

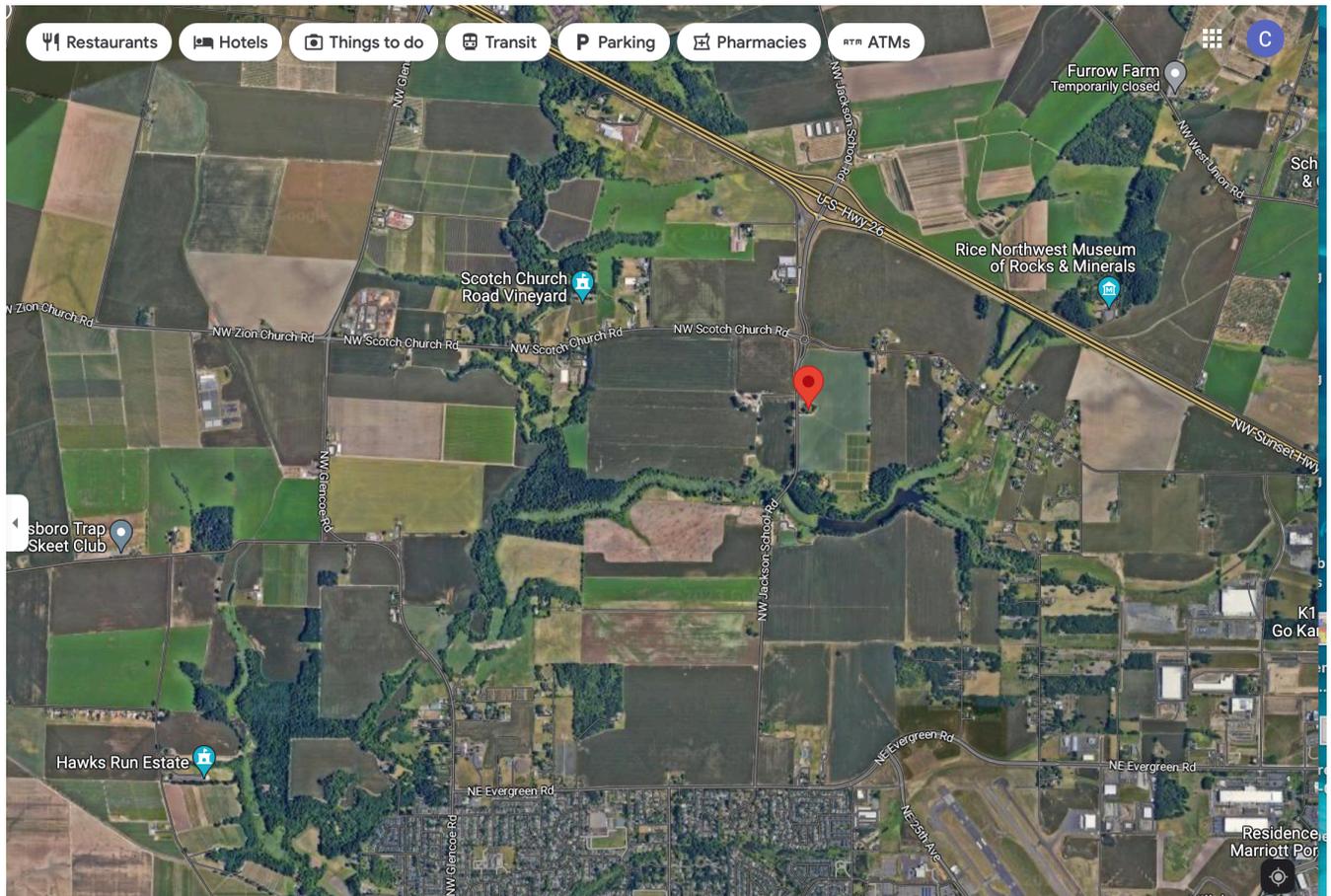
## NW Hillsboro RURAL RESERVES - Productively farmed since 1850's

- Soils are predominantly Class 2
- Classified by ODA as “excellent agricultural soils” and “prime farmland”
- Bounded on west by McKay Creek
- Includes Storey Creek and Waible Creek in watershed from north



## NW Hillsboro - Partial view of 1,760 acres of RURAL RESERVES

- Blueberries, cereals and grass seed crops contribute to Washington County's \$300 million annual agricultural production
- Extensive sub-surface irrigation system across all parcels
- Grain crop land leased out for efficiency
- Extensive riparian watershed: McKay Creek, Storey Creek, Waible Creek



## Partial View of NW Hillsboro RURAL RESERVES

Leaders in sustainable, carbon-sequestering, rain fed agriculture

- Productively farmed for 160 years
- Note pristine blocks of blueberries (blue arrow)
- Surrounded by hundreds of acres of neighboring farms growing grain crops
- Storey Creek and reservoir at bottom of photo
- Some farms have water rights from McKay Creek

