create pure air
create pure water
store rainwater
produce its own food
create rich soil
use solar energy
store solar energy
create silence
consume its own wastes
maintain itself
match nature’s pace
provide wildlife habitat
provide human habitat
moderate climate
be beautiful

Citing 20th century building practices as wasteful and violent, an American architect once wrote: “The act of building, whether it involves giant hydroelectric dams or a single small home, is an act of land-destruction. Buildings destroy land for as long as they stand.” His name was Malcolm Wells (1926-2009).

Moving into the 21st century, Wells argued that we can no longer build the way we did during the previous century, and that we must find a new architecture - an architecture that not only heals the scars of its own construction, but also reclaims and repairs what he referred to as “marginal” land.

Learn from wild land, he preached. Let buildings emulate the many properties of wild land, he insisted.

In this vertical studio, we will study a set of properties of wild land, adopting them as core strategies for both building and site design, all towards reclaiming and repairing a chosen parcel of “marginal” land in or around Downtown Eugene.

In giving this land a new purpose - and a new life, we will imagine a new urban scenario that unapologetically defies those destructive norms and standards associated with professional architectural practice and professional architectural education.