**Why?**

I’m making this expansion to Pebbles primarily for the purpose of exploring the interaction between water movement and anti-grav movement.

The appeal of platformers comes from gravity dragging everything down, creating some dynamism in the gameplay, and directional bias. Water gameplay removes this, by making every direction function equally, and complete movement control brings an un-fun freedom - the boring lack of limitation. That’s not to say that water gameplay can’t be fun, but the fun never comes from the movement itself. Additionally, water time is limited, due to breathing mechanics, which makes prolonged periods in the water impossible, and players will never *want* to be in the water for fear of drowning, which is one of the least ‘fun’ ways to die.

Anti-grav has the same un-biased directional movement as swimming does, but it has the massive limitation of not being able to change direction when not holding anything. This limitation makes for *very* interesting and unique gameplay. However, the lack of control is so severe that it becomes unnecessarily annoying to control. You can’t change directions unless you’re against a wall or a pole, but choosing a precise angle when coming off of these is very difficult, and it’s very common to bump off a wall, and then float just too far away to grab onto it.

The combination of the completely free water movement and the extremely limiting anti-grav movement brings out the best of both gameplay modes. The water movement allows for precisely setting an angle, and then anti-grav is a commitment to that movement. Drowning actually becomes an interesting mechanic, as it encourages the player to generally choose the more restrictive anti-grav movement more often than water. The interaction between the two movements is also a very interesting dynamic, and I’ve had so much fun messing around with the few rooms I’ve created. It’s too much fun to not turn it into a Pebbles subregion.

**Additional considerations, design goals, philosophy**

**Gameplay Challenge**

My goal is not to create a tough challenge with hard failstates, but rather to make some fun movement interactions, perhaps some light movement puzzles, and to create a playground for a player to safely explore the interesting dynamic that is created.

I feel these goals are in line with the majority of SS, as there are very few places where death is actually a concern. Even in Transform Arrays, the threat of being zapped is rarely presented as a tough obstacle, but moreso as a strong incentive to not get too careless with movement. Unfortunate Development is probably the only truly challenging area in Pebbles.

**Structure**

I don’t want to get in the way of the structure of SS as a region (primarily in terms of how it functions for a traditional playthrough of Rain World,) but, if possible, I’d like to enhance it, and contribute to the structural goals of the region, as well as possibly recontextualizing them, if that would result in a ‘better’ structure.

I also want this expansion to feel as though it could’ve always been a part of the region. Connecting the entire new area through a single obscure entrance feels weird to me, it’s annoying to find, and it doesn’t add anything meaningful to the rest of the region. For this reason, I’ve tried my best to make the new areas as interwoven into the already existing region in as little of a destructive way as possible.

I want this expansion to stay as an expansion of the SS region, and to not turn into an entire region by itself. The current plan adds more screens than some vanilla regions have, but since it’s Pebbles, the rooms need to be broader to feel the same size. So I’d like to keep this expansion as small as possible while still exploring the themes as much as possible.

**Other Things**

I spent so long writing this that I forgot everything else I was gonna write about, lol. Probably for the better, cause this is too long already.