



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St Paul District

APPLICANT: U.S. Silica Company

Public Notice

ISSUED: 26 June 2015

EXPIRES: 27 July 2015

REFER TO: MVP-2015-00953-SJW

SECTION: 404 - Clean Water Act

1. APPLICATION FOR PERMIT TO discharge fill material into approximately 7.87 acres of wetlands adjacent to Bridge Creek for the construction of rail facilities associated with the newly proposed U.S. Silica Fairchild mine.

2. SPECIFIC INFORMATION.

APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:

U.S. Silica Company
200 N. LaSalle, Suite 2100
Chicago, Illinois 60601

AGENT:

Mandy Bohnenblust-BARR
Engineering

AGENT'S ADDRESS:

4700 W. 77th Street #200
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55435

PROJECT LOCATION: The project site is located in Sections 19, 20, 27, 28, 29, 33, and 34, Township 25 North, Range 5 West, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin. The approximate UTM coordinates are Lat: 44.72687 Lon: -91.28604. (See attached figure labeled MVP-2015-00953-SJW-U.S. Silica-Fairchild Page 1 of 9).

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT: U.S. Silica has submitted a request for authorization under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) for unavoidable wetland impacts associated with the establishment of a non-metallic sand mining operation. The proposed activity would include the development of a 677 acre non metallic sand mining and processing operation capable of producing three million tons of sand per year. The project would include the construction of a sand processing facility and associated rail facilities to allow for high volume shipments of sand which are expected to be produced at this site. The construction of new rail lines would include three separate segments of track; a unit train, a manifest track, and a loadout spur. In addition, improvements would be made to the existing main line tracks to meet the requirements of Union Pacific, the owner of the existing tracks.

QUANTITY, TYPE, AND AREA OF FILL: The proposed project would result in the discharge of fill material into 7.87 acres of wetlands from the construction of new rail line facilities. The wetlands found within the 677 acre review area fall within the Eau Claire Watershed (07050006). In addition, approximately 3,462 linear feet (0.65 miles) of unnamed streams would be realigned to allow for modifications to the existing rail facilities. (See attached figures labeled MVP-2015-00953-SJW-U.S. Silica Fairchild Page 5 of 9 through 9 of 9).

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VEGETATION IN THE AFFECTED AREA: The U.S. Silica Fairchild Mine project area consists of 17 identified wetlands. The wetlands on site were accounted for in two separate delineation reports and a supplemental delineation report completed by SEH and Barr Engineering. The locations of the wetlands listed below can be seen on the attached figure labeled MVP-2015-00953-SJW-US Silica Fairchild Page 2 of 9.

SEH Delineated Wetlands

- Wetland 1 (14.71 acres)-dominant vegetation includes reed canary grass, common red raspberry, and allegheny blackberry.
- Wetland 2 (0.20 acres)-dominant vegetation includes quaking aspen, red maple, black elder, and spotted touch-me-not.
- Wetland 3 (27.49 acres)- dominant vegetation includes red maple, quaking aspen, black ender, lake sedge, and reed canary grass.
- Wetland 4 (12.90 acres)-dominant vegetation includes red maple, common hackberry, European buckthorn, spotted touch-me-not, reed canary grass, cottongrass bulrush, and softstem clubrush.
- Wetland 5 (0.70 acres)-dominant wetland vegetation includes reed canary grass.

Barr Delineated Wetlands

- Wetland 1 (0.45 acres)-dominant vegetation includes red maple, tag alder, bottlebrush sedge, and interrupted fern.
- Wetland 2 (0.78 acres)-dominant vegetation includes woolgrass, dwarf red blackberry, steplebush, and alder.
- Wetland 3 (2.83 acres)-dominant vegetation includes hairy sedge, and broadleaf cattail.
- Wetland 4 (0.62 acres)-dominant vegetation includes bladder sedge, fringed sedge, and alder.
- Wetland 5 (1.01 acres)-dominant vegetation includes upright sedge and Canada bluejoint.
- Wetland 6 (4.14 acres)-dominant vegetation includes broadleaved cattail, woolgrass, Canada bluejoint, and meadow willow.
- Wetland 1sa (0.13 acres)-dominant vegetation includes corn, fall panicum, and barnyard grass. This wetland area is currently planted in row crops.

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- Wetland 1sb (0.79 acres)-dominant vegetation includes barnyard grass, reed canary grass, blunt spikerush, smartweed, and common witchgrass. This wetland is currently planted in forage crops.
- Wetland 3s (0.76 acres)-dominant vegetation includes fall panicum, barnyard grass, yellow foxtail, common ragweed, and white clover.
- Wetland 6s (0.02 acres)-dominant vegetation includes various sedge species and reed canary grass.
- Wetland 7s (0.03 acres)-dominant vegetation includes fall panicum, yellow nutsedge, white clover, dandelion, and tumble grass. This wetland is currently planted with row crops.
- Wetland 8s (0.09 acres)-dominant vegetation includes fall panicum, barnyard grass, blunt spikerush, and hybrid clover. This area is located in a forage field and was mowed prior to the delineation.

SOURCE OF FILL MATERIAL: Clean granular fill material would be excavated from an on-site upland borrow pit. Pre application exploratory borings have confirmed the suitability of the granular on-site materials for use on the embankments.

SURROUNDING LAND USE: The lands surrounding the project site predominantly consist of agricultural land and forested areas with homes scattered randomly throughout the landscape.

THE FOLLOWING POTENTIALLY TOXIC MATERIALS COULD BE USED AT THE PROJECT SITE: Use of heavy mining equipment could result in minor spills of gas, oil, fuel oil, or other petroleum products.

THE FOLLOWING PRECAUTIONS TO PROTECT WATER QUALITY HAVE BEEN DESCRIBED BY THE APPLICANT: Wetlands not impacted by the proposed project will remain intact and erosion control devices will be installed in accordance with the WDNR's applicable requirements to minimize the potential for additional impacts to wetlands and water quality.

MITIGATION: At this time, U.S. Silica has yet to finalize a mitigation plan to compensate for the unavoidable loss of 7.87 acres of wetlands, however, U.S. Silica has stated that they plan to purchase credits from an approved wetland mitigation bank or through the Wisconsin Wetland Conservation Trust (WWCT) in-lieu fee program.

3. REPLIES/COMMENTS.

Interested parties are invited to submit to this office written facts, arguments, or objections within 30 days of the date of this notice. These statements should bear upon the suitability of the location and the adequacy of the project and should, if appropriate, suggest any changes believed to be desirable. Comments received may be forwarded to the applicant.

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Replies may be addressed to Regulatory Branch, St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers, 1314 Contractors Boulevard Plover, Wisconsin 54467.

Or, IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT, call Sam Woboril at the Stevens Point field office of the Corps, telephone number (651) 290 - 5878.

To receive Public Notices by e-mail, go to: http://mvp-extstp/list_server/ and add your information in the New Registration Box.

4. FEDERALLY-LISTED THREATENED OR ENDANGERED WILDLIFE OR PLANTS OR THEIR CRITICAL HABITAT.

None were identified by the applicant or are known to exist in the permit area. However, Eau Claire County is within the known or historic range of the following Federally-listed threatened (T) and endangered (E) species:

Species

Gray wolf (E) – Northern forested areas.

Northern long-eared bat (T) – Caves, mines, and surrounding upland forests/wooded areas.

Sheepnose (E) – Chippewa River

Karner blue butterfly (E) – Prairie, oak savanna, and jack pine areas with wild lupine.

Barr Engineering Company conducted a level 1 Karner Blue Butterfly (KBB) survey on July 23, 2014 and determined that a substantial amount of lupine was present which had the potential to support a viable population of KBB. Based on the findings of the level 1 KBB survey, a level 2 survey was conducted on July 23, 2014, and no KBB were observed. Two additional level 2 surveys were conducted during the second flight of the KBB and once again no KBB were observed. Although this site does contain the preferred habitat type for the KBB, based on these surveys the KBB does not reside within the project area. The proposed site does not contain critical habitat for the additional species listed above and therefore the proposed work would not result in an impact to these species or their preferred habitats.

This application is being coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Any comments it may have concerning Federally-listed threatened or endangered wildlife or plants or their critical habitat will be considered in our final assessment of the described work.

5. JURISDICTION.

This application is being reviewed in accordance with the practices for documenting Corps jurisdiction under Sections 9 & 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act identified in Regulatory Guidance Letter 08-02. We have made an initial determination that the aquatic resources that would be impacted by the proposed project are regulated by the Corps of Engineers under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and/or Section(s) 9 & 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. The Corps will prepare an approved or preliminary jurisdictional determination prior to making a permit decision. Approved jurisdictional determinations are posted on the St. Paul District web page at <http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx>.

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THE APPLICANT HAS STATED THAT THE FOLLOWING STATE, COUNTY, AND/OR LOCAL PERMITS HAVE BEEN APPLIED FOR/ISSUED:

6. STATE SECTION 401 WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION.

This Public Notice has been sent to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and is considered by the District Engineer to constitute valid notification to that agency for Section 401 water quality certification. A permit will not be granted until the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has issued or waived Section 401 certification.

7. HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL.

This public notice is being sent to the National Park Service and the State Archaeologist for their comments. The Corps will review information on known cultural resources and/or historic properties within and adjacent to the project area. The Corps will also consider the potential effects of the project on any properties that have yet to be identified. The results of this review and the Corps' determination of effect will be coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Officer independent of this public notice. Any adverse effects on historic properties will be resolved prior to the Corps authorization, or approval, of the work in connection with this project.

On behalf of U.S. Silica, Orbis Environmental Consulting conducted a Phase I Archaeological Records Review and Reconnaissance of the site, in accordance with a September 8, 2014, letter from the USACE. On January 5, 2015, the State Historic Preservation Office concurred with the findings of the report that no historic properties will be affected by the proposed project.

8. PUBLIC HEARING REQUESTS.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, in detail, the reasons for holding a public hearing. A request may be denied if substantive reasons for holding a hearing are not provided or if there is otherwise no valid interest to be served.

9. PUBLIC INTEREST REVIEW.

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact, including cumulative impacts, of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered, including the cumulative effects. Among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. Environmental and other documents will be available for review in the St. Paul District Office.

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The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Jeffrey M. Olson
Northeast Section Chief

Attachments:

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NOTICE TO EDITORS: This public notice is provided as background information and is not a request or contract for publication.



 Planned Project Boundary

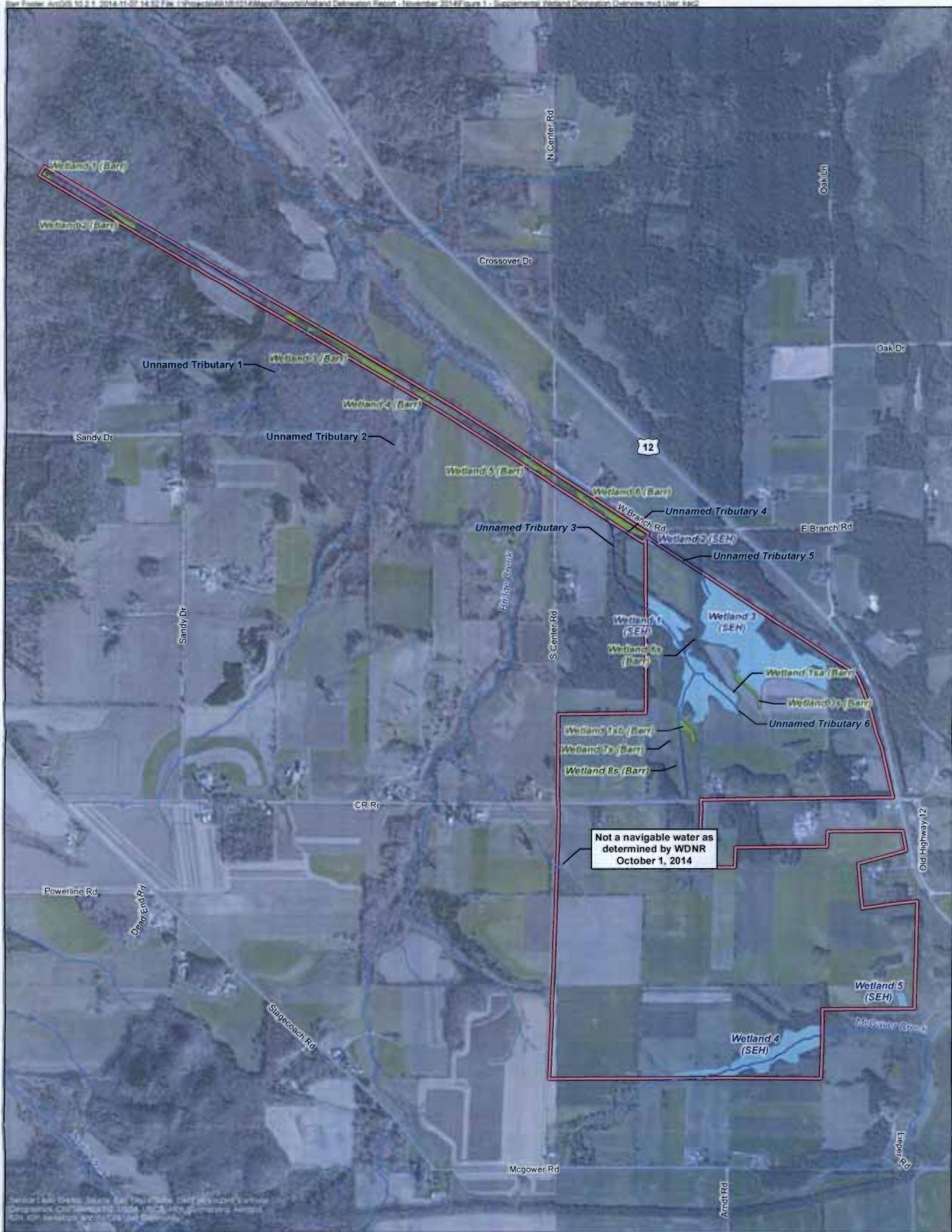


0 Feet 1,500 3,000




Figure 2

EXISTING CONDITIONS
 US Silica – Fairchild
 Eau Claire County, WI



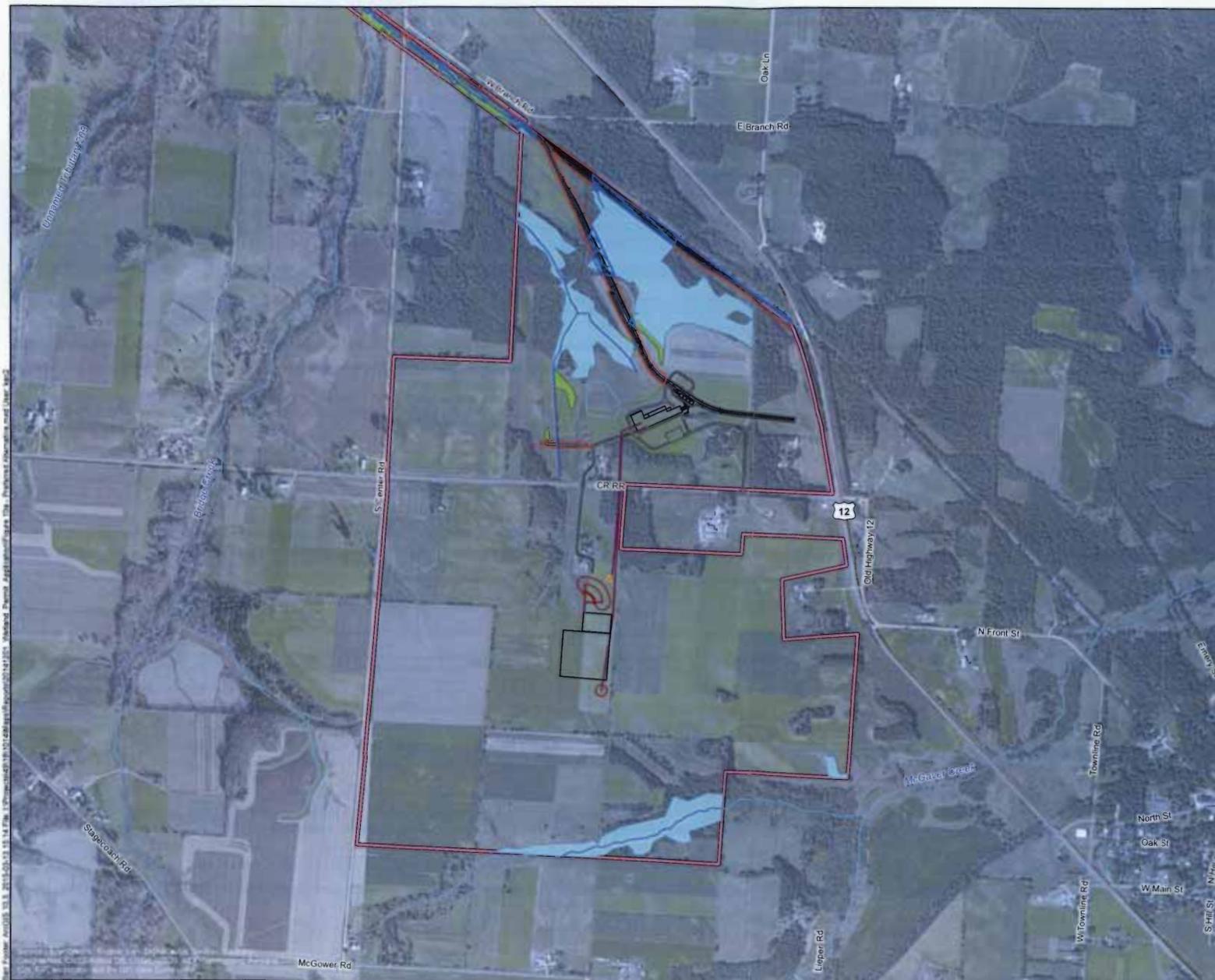
- Planned Property Boundary
- Wetlands (Barr - August/October 2014)
- Wetlands (SEH - December 2013)
- Waterbodies (Barr, October 2014)*
- Stream Centerline (WI DNR 24K Hydro Dataset)

* Some locations are approximate, based on field observations.



Figure 1

SUPPLEMENTAL WETLAND
DELINEATION OVERVIEW
U.S. Silica
Eau Claire County, WI



- Planned Project Boundary
- Preferred Alternative**
- Rail Grading Limits
- Roads
- Hopper
- Equipment
- Conveyor
- Ponds
- Ditch
- Buildings
- Railroad
- Wetland Impacts (7.87 acres)
- Wetlands (Barr - August/October 2014)
- Wetlands (SEH - December 2013)
- Waterbodies (Barr, October/December 2014)*
- Stream Centerline (WI DNR 24K Hydro Dataset)

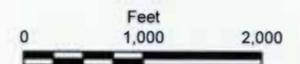


Figure 10a

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE
 US Silica - Fairchild
 Eau Claire County, WI



-  Planned Project Boundary
- Preferred Alternative
-  Rail Grading Limits
-  Roads
-  Railroad
-  Wetland Impacts (7.87 acres)
-  Wetlands (Barr - August/October 2014)
-  Wetlands (SEH - December 2013)
-  Waterbodies (Barr, October/December 2014)*
-  Stream Centerline (WI DNR 24K Hydro Dataset)

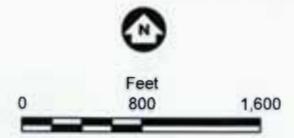


Figure 10b

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE
 US Silica – Fairchild
 Eau Claire County, WI
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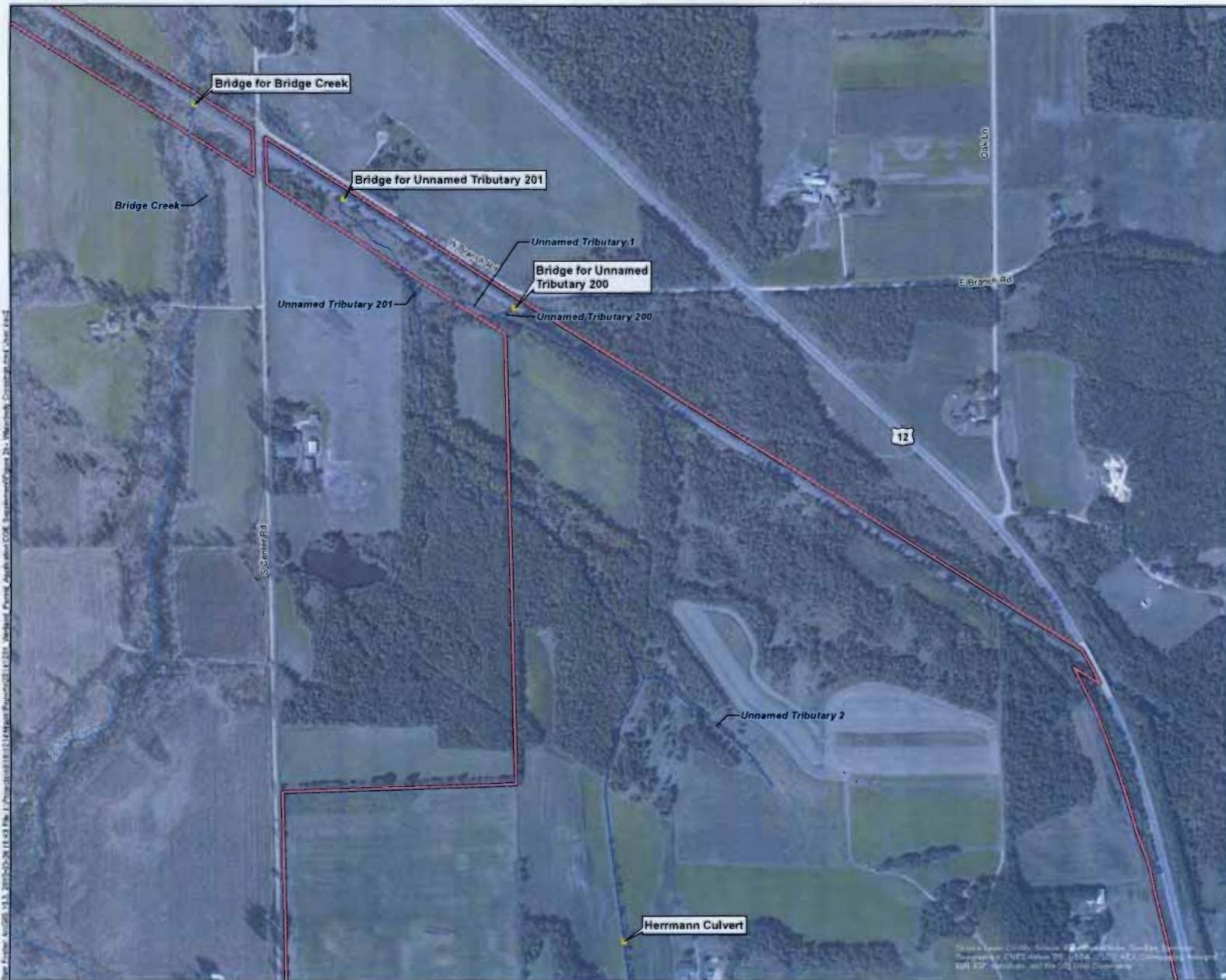
-  Planned Project Boundary
-  Bridge/Culvert Location
-  Stream Centerline (WI DNR 24K Hydro Dataset)
-  Waterbodies (Barr, October/December 2014)*

* Some locations are approximate, based on field observations.



Figure 2a

WATERBODY CROSSINGS
U.S. Silica - Fairchild
Eau Claire County, WI



-  Planned Project Boundary
-  Bridge/Culvert Location
-  Stream Centerline (WI DNR 24K Hydro Dataset)
-  Waterbodies (Barr, October/December 2014)*

* Some locations are approximate, based on field observations.



Figure 2b
 WATERBODY CROSSINGS
 U.S. Silica – Fairchild
 Eau Claire County, WI



-  Planned Project Boundary
-  Wetlands (Barr - August/October 2014)
-  Waterbodies (Barr, October/December 2014)*
-  Stream Centerline (WI DNR 24K Hydro Dataset)
-  Unnamed Tributary 201 Realignment
- Preferred Alternative
 -  Roads
 -  Railroad

* Some locations are approximate, based on field observations.

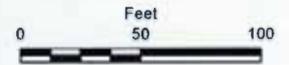


Figure 3

UNNAMED TRIBUTARY 201
REALIGNMENT
U.S. Silica – Fairchild
Eau Claire County, WI



- Planned Project Boundary
- Wetlands (Barr - August/October 2014)
- Wetlands (SEH - December 2013)
- Waterbodies (Barr, October/December 2014)*
- Unnamed Tributary 200 Realignment
- Unnamed Tributary 1 Realignment
- Culvert for Unnamed Tributary 1 Realignment
- Preferred Alternative**
- Roads
- Railroad

* Some locations are approximate, based on field observations.



Figure 4

UNNAMED TRIBUTARY 200
AND UNNAMED TRIBUTARY 1
REALIGNMENT AND CULVERT
U.S. Silica - Fairchild
Eau Claire County, WI



-  Planned Project Boundary
-  Wetlands (Barr - August/October 2014)
-  Waterbodies (Barr, October/December 2014)*
-  Stream Centerline (WI DNR 24K Hydro Dataset)
-  Unnamed Tributary 3 Realignment
-  Existing Portion of Unnamed Tributary 3 to be Deepened



Figure 5

UNNAMED TRIBUTARY 3
REALIGNMENT
U.S. Silica – Fairchild
Eau Claire County, WI