



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St Paul District

SPONSOR: City of Blaine

Public Notice

ISSUED: July 6, 2015

EXPIRES: August 6, 2015

REFER TO: 2014-01829-ADB

SECTION: 404 - Clean Water Act

1. WETLAND COMPENSATORY MITIGATION BANK PROPOSAL

2. SPECIFIC INFORMATION.

SPONSOR'S ADDRESS: City of Blaine
Contact: Jim Hafner
10801 Town Square Drive NE
Blaine Minnesota 55449-8101

SPONSOR'S AGENT Critical Connections Ecological Services, Inc.
Contact: Jason Husveth
21150 Ozark Avenue North
P.O. Box 184
Scandia, Minnesota 55073

PROJECT LOCATION: The project site, referred to as Site 7, is located in Section 11, Township 31N., Range 23W., Anoka County, Minnesota, Latitude 45.18527, Longitude -93.17452.

BANK SERVICE AREA: The proposed bank service area is the Upper Mississippi River Basin in Minnesota (Bank Service Area 7) as shown on the drawing labeled MVP-2014-01829-ADB Page 1 of 9.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT: The sponsor is proposing to develop the Site 7 Wetland Bank. The proposed bank site is approximately 192.5 acres in size, including upland buffer areas, with an easement consisting of 180.96 acres, as shown on the drawing labeled MVP-2014-01829-ADB Page 9 of 9.

Current land use, including adjacent properties: The proposed 192.5 acre Site 7 Wetland Bank is currently undeveloped open space containing approximately 172.5 acres of wetland and approximately 20 acres of upland, as shown on the drawing labeled MVP-2014-01829-ADB Page 5 of 9. Much of the upland areas exist as upland islands within the larger wetland complex. Recent vegetation evaluations as well as past land cover classification efforts have mapped the area as a Type 2 wet meadow vegetation dominated by reed canary grass with woody vegetation and dense colonies of phragmites with inclusions of rich and poor fen. Upland areas which are mainly islands contain oak forest as well as basswood, aspen, box elder, green ash and elm moist woodlands.

The proposed wetland banking area also includes an actively managed public drainage system. Anoka County Ditch (ACD) 53-62, Branch 2 is located on the northern boundary of the site as well as along the eastern boundary of the site. There is an inferred public ditch maintenance easement and/or setback

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related to maintenance access associated with Anoka County Ditch 53-62. The maintenance easement associated with the ditch section running west to east on the north side of the property is approximately 37.0 feet on either side of the centerline of the ditch. The maintenance easement associated with the ditch section running north to south on the east side of the project boundary is approximately 35.0 feet on either side of the centerline of the ditch. The Rice Creek Watershed District is both the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act LGU and the Public Drainage Authority in the area.

Rice Creek Watershed District (RCWD) has been involved with the conceptual development of this project and concurs with the activities that have been proposed. No potential conflicts between the proposed Project and continued operation and maintenance of the existing drainage ditch by the Public Drainage Authority (RCWD) have been identified by the project sponsor or the RCWD at this point in the process. The City of Blaine does plan to exclude the public ditch and its maintenance easements from the proposed banking project area and conservation easement boundary as shown on the drawing labeled MVP-2014-01829-ADB Page 9 of 9. This would ensure no future conflict between the proposed project and future ditch maintenance and operation

Modifications proposed to restore, establish, enhance and/or preserve wetlands on the bank site: The Project would enhance or restore a total of 188.52 acres of wetland and upland natural communities including 58.54 acres of Rich Fen, 29.70 acres of Poor Fen, 83.36 acres of Anoka Sand Plain Wet Meadow, and 14.77 acres of upland oak forest and 2.15 acres of upland Aspen-Birch Forest. Enhancement and restoration efforts would result in up to 174.24 acres eligible for credit (excludes drainage features and associated easements, proposed trails and trail buffers, as well as a future nature center building site) as shown on the drawing labeled MVP-2014-01829-ADB Page 7 of 9 and 8 of 9. Ratios for credit allocation are proposed at 2:1 for wetland vegetation enhancement permanent protection, and 4:1 for upland buffer vegetation enhancement and permanent protection.

Hydrologic restoration of the major ditch and laterals to the east and north of the proposed wetland mitigation banking site is not feasible. Therefore, no hydrologic modifications would be included in the creation of the proposed Bank. Restoration methods proposed for the site are vegetative only. No excavation or soil modifications are proposed. Winter raking of the surface of the soil would likely occur in portions of the site, but this activity is completed during the winter months when soils are protected by frost and would not be disturbed. Winter raking removes built-up vegetative thatch exposing native soils, but does not excavate below existing soil surface elevations and grades.

Vegetation maintenance is anticipated to consist of annual mowing and spot spraying. Maintenance activities would target agricultural weeds and invasive species throughout the site. Rodeo or other MN DNR herbicides approved for near/in water bodies would be applied near ditch areas. All unplanned woody plants greater than ¼ of an inch in diameter that cannot be hand pulled would be cut down and herbicide applied. A schedule of maintenance activities would be prepared for the first three years following vegetation establishment.

The proposed credit generation schedule is shown below and is based on of the drawing labeled MVP-2014-01829-ADB Page 7 of 9.

Activity/Performance Standard	Percent Credit Release Schedule
Construction Certification & Easement Recording	15% of Total Potential Credits
Adjusted FQI* of at least 18 for 2 consecutive growing seasons for wet meadow and rich fen plant communities	50% credit for the area** (2:1)
Adjusted FQI* of at least 16 for 2 consecutive growing seasons for poor fen plant communities	50% credit for the area** (2:1)
Adjusted FQI* of at least 18 for 2 consecutive growing seasons for upland buffer areas	25% credit for the area** (4:1)

*Adjusted Floristic Quality Index (FQI) - metric that includes native species and non-native/invasive species when calculating FQI as opposed to native FQI which only includes native species when calculating FQI. Including non-native species in FQI calculations is a true representation of ecological integrity, as the presence of non-native species would lower the calculated FQI score and mean *coefficient of conservatism* value.

**Proposed credit areas are divided by major plant community type, therefore there are four main areas - Rich Fen, Poor Fen, Wet Meadow, and Upland Buffer.

Long-term management of the site: Following the successful implementation of the restoration and enhancement activities as well as monitoring strategies outlined in the final approved wetland banking plan, the City would be responsible for long-term management and stewardship of the proposed Project site. A recommended adaptive long-term monitoring and management strategy would be developed by CCES. The written stewardship document would include likely tasks as well as annual cost estimates per acre to assist the City in planning for continued monitoring and corrective maintenance of the mitigation banking site. The City of Blaine and its residents are highly committed to the long term success of this site. With 80% of Blaine residents (result of a community survey) placing high value on open space areas, the city sees great importance and value in restoring and preserving the natural areas of the city. Through implementation of the proposed project the city would create and bank credits, the sale of which would generate a revenue stream to support the long term maintenance of the open space areas while providing the quality natural areas the residents have requested. In the short term, the City's Open Space Fund has adequate dollars to fund the improvements and monitoring necessary to ensure the success of the proposed project. By Motion 14-048, the City has already authorized an expenditure greater than \$650,000 to fund the proposed restoration and enhancement activities needed to adequately complete the first five years of management.

To further describe the City's commitment to the long term success of this site it should be noted that the City is in the process of planning for the implementation of the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Project which would encompass the proposed Project site as well as adjacent areas to create a more than 500-acre City owned nature center, the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary. Via Motion 14-160, the council unanimously agreed to fund the final design work associated with the planned Blaine Wetland Sanctuary (which would encompass the Site 7 Wetland Mitigation Banking Site) in an amount just greater than \$400,000.

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With the City of Blaine having already committed more than one-million dollars (adopted via unanimous votes and supported by its residents) within the past year to the development of the proposed project site and surrounding area, it is evident that the City is highly invested in this area and long-term maintenance and stewardship are expected to be done effectively and in a timely manner. In the long term, the City plans to utilize funds generated through the sale of credits to fund stewardship activities; however maintenance activities would be funded through the City's general fund in the short-term.

SURROUNDING LAND USE: ACD 53-62, Branch 2 is located on the northern boundary of the site as well as along the site's eastern boundary. On the northern side of the ditch there is a large lot single-family residential development. East of the ditch is a large lot single-family residential development along with Lexington Avenue. An existing wetland bank (Branch 3 Bank) is located to the south. To the west is a medium density single-family residential development, as shown on the drawing labeled MVP-2014-01829-ADB Page 2 of 9.

COORDINATION WITH RESOURCE AGENCIES: This project has been coordinated with the following members of the Interagency Review Team (IRT) and other resource agencies: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, Rice Creek Watershed District and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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. A copy of the full prospectus submitted by the Sponsor is available to the public for review upon request.

Replies may be addressed to Regulatory Branch, ATTN: Andy Beaudet, St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers, 180 Fifth Street East, Suite 700, Saint Paul, MN 55101-1678.

Or, IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT, call Andy Beaudet at the St. Paul office of the Corps, telephone number (651) 290-5642.

To receive Public Notices by e-mail, go to: http://mvp-extstpl/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 bank sponsor or are known to exist in the action area. However, Anoka County is within the known historic range for the following Federally-listed species:

Northern Long-Eared Bat

Hibernates in caves and mines – swarming in surrounding wooded areas in autumn. Roosts and forages in upland forests during spring and summer.

This notice 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 would be considered in our final assessment of the described work.

5. JURISDICTION.

This proposal is being reviewed in accordance with the practices for documenting Corps jurisdiction under Sections 9 & 10 of the Rivers and Harbor Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act identified in Regulatory Guidance Letter 07-01. We have made a ***preliminary determination*** that any 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. Our jurisdictional review and final jurisdictional determination could result in modifications to the scope of the project's regulated waterbody/wetland impacts. Because this project is a mitigation bank, any required compensatory mitigation would be accounted for in the credit yield calculations. Any regulated discharges associated with implementation of a final approved bank plan could likely be authorized by regional general permits if the bank plan is approved before any regulated discharge occurs. Any ***approved jurisdictional determination*** needed would be made prior to reaching a decision, and would be posted on the St. Paul District web page at <http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx>.

6. HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES.

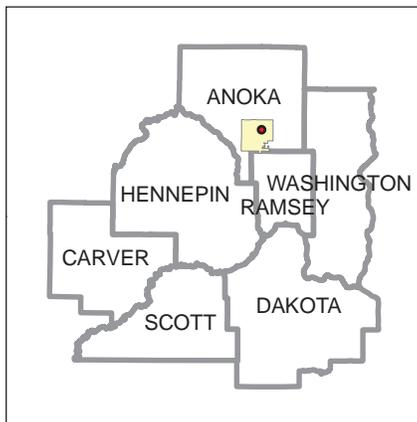
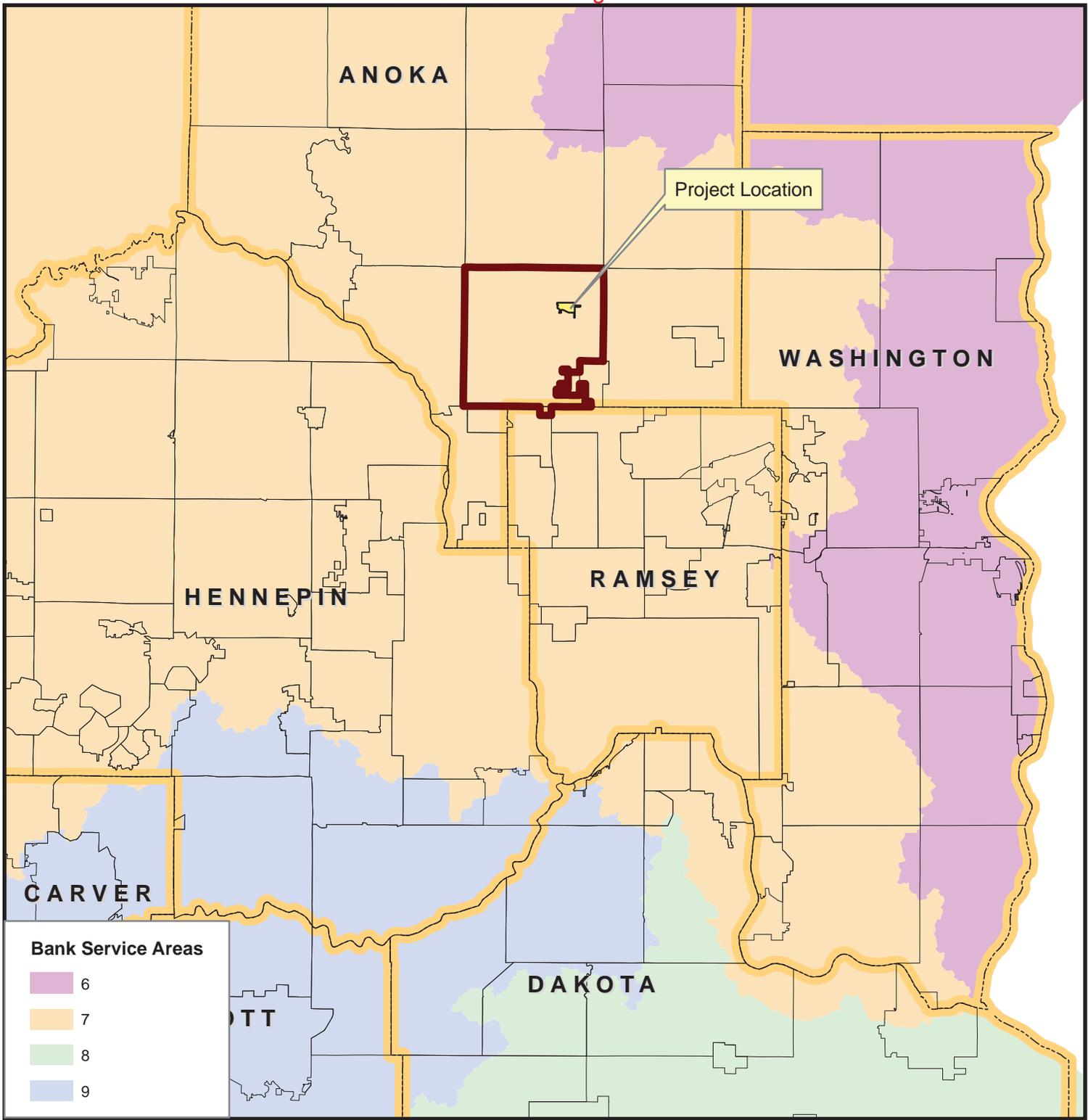
The Corps will review information on known cultural resources and/or historic properties within and adjacent to the project area. The Corps will also consider the potential effects of the project on any properties that have yet to be identified. The results of this review and the Corps' determination 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.

7. 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.

Tamara E. Cameron,
Chief, Regulatory Branch

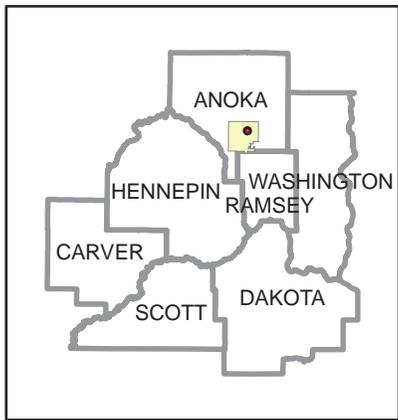
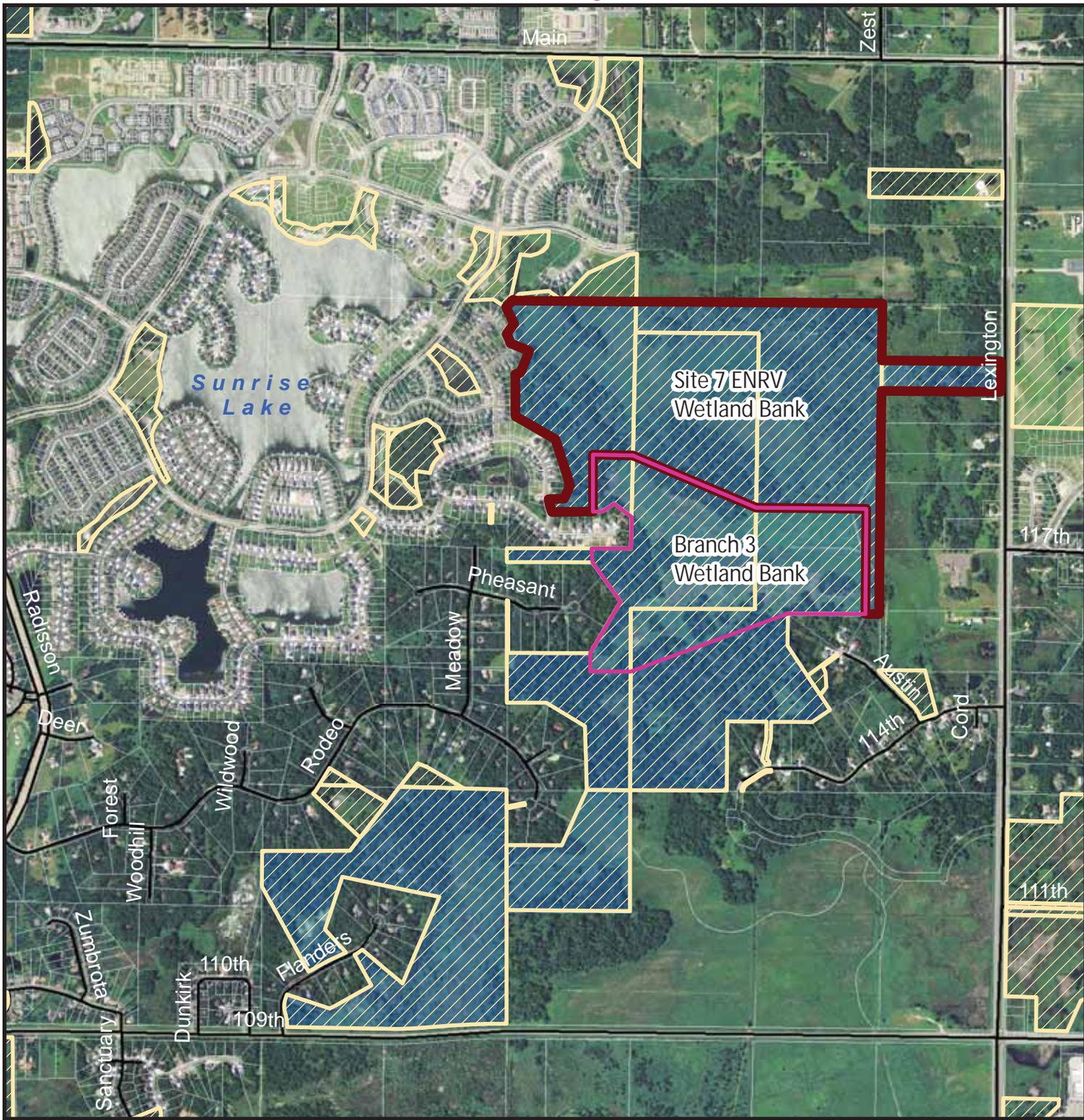
Enclosures



Appedix A, Figure 1
 Site Locator Map
 City of Blaine Site 7 ENRV Wetland Banking Site
 2015 Mitigation Bank Prospectus

-  Site 7 ENRV Boundary
-  Blaine City Boundary
-  City Boundaries
-  County Boundaries





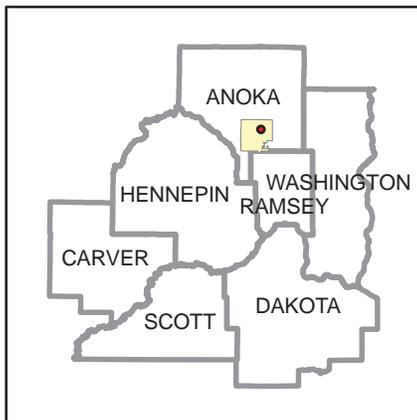
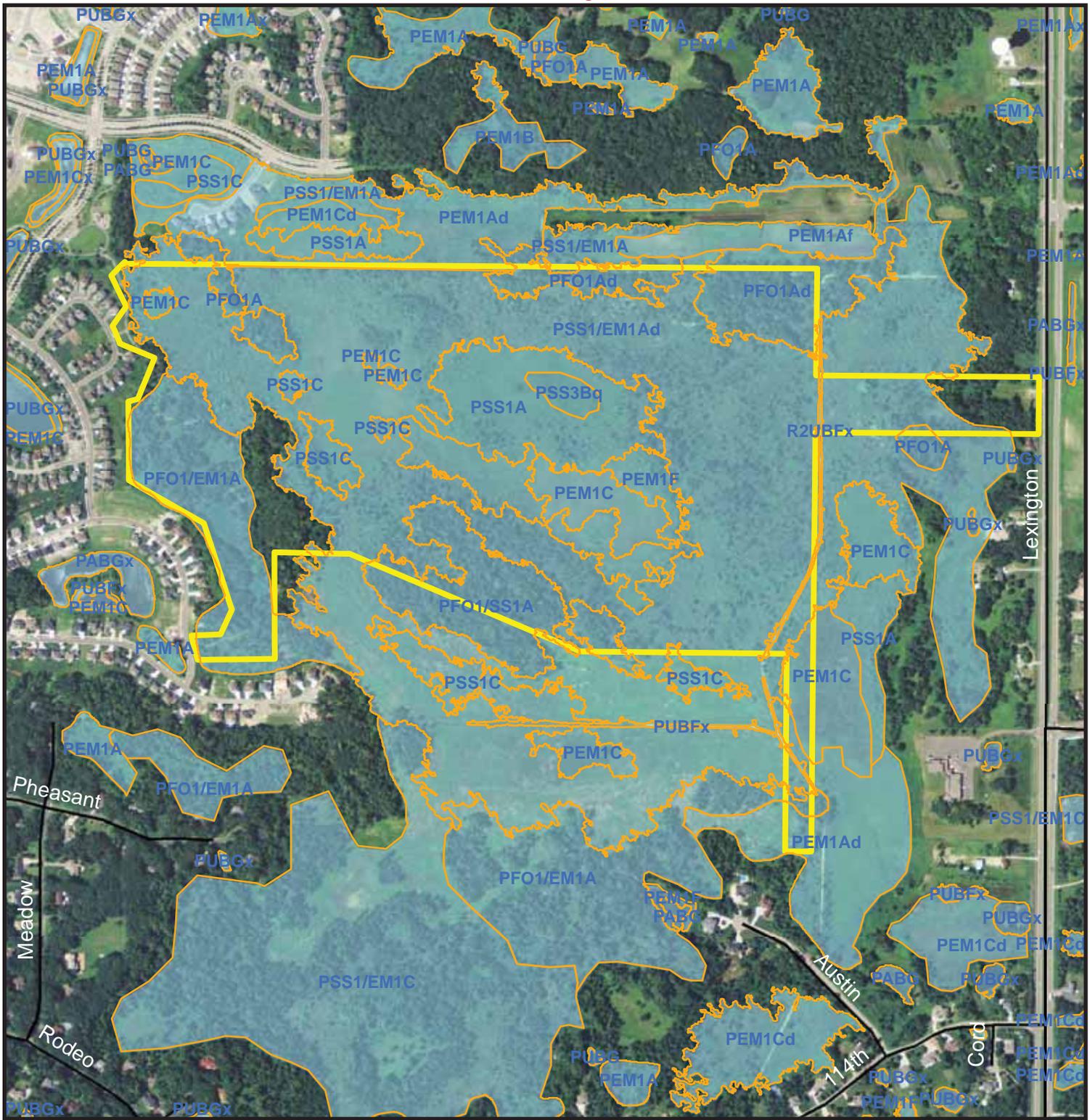
Appendix A, Figure 3
Plat and Landownership Map
City of Blaine Site 7 ENRV Wetland Banking Site
2015 Mitigation Bank Prospectus

-  Site 7 ENRV Boundary
-  Existing Conservation Easement - Branch 3 Wetland Bank
-  Proposed Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Boundary
-  Parcels Owned By City of Blaine
-  Parcel Boundaries



2013 USDA NAIP Imagery



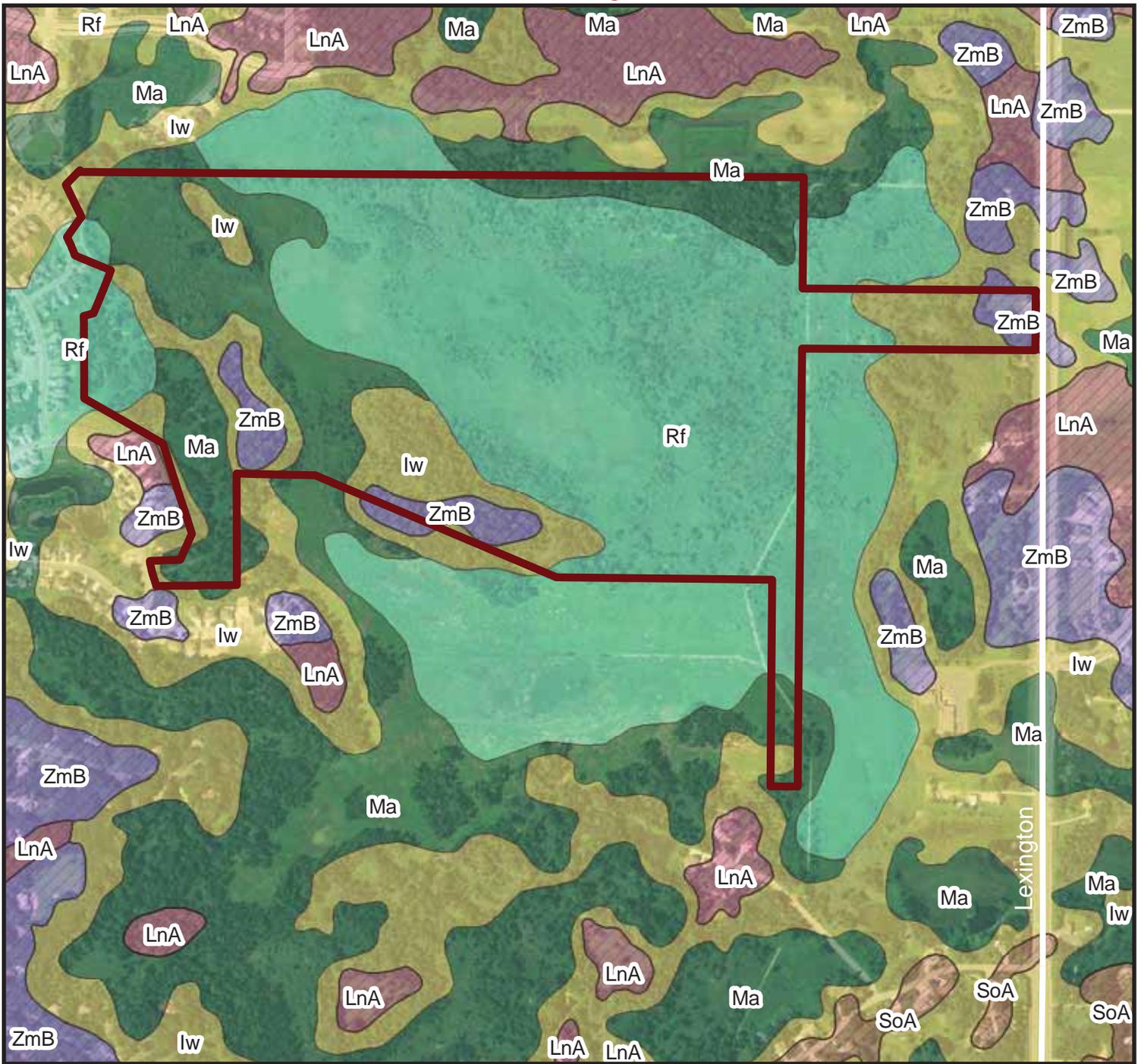


Appendix A, Figure 5
 National Wetlands Inventory
 City of Blaine Site 7 ENRV Wetland Banking Site
 2015 Mitigation Bank Prospectus

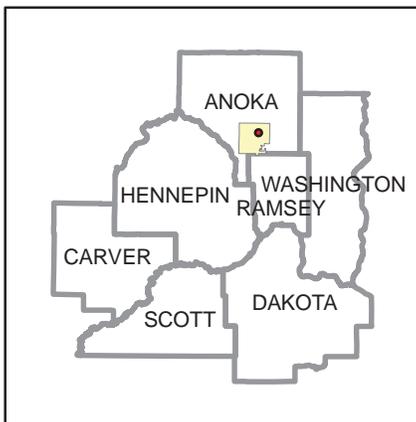
-  National Wetlands Inventory
-  Site 7 ENRV Boundary
-  National Wetlands Inventory

2013 USDA NAIP Imagery

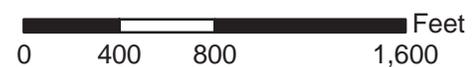


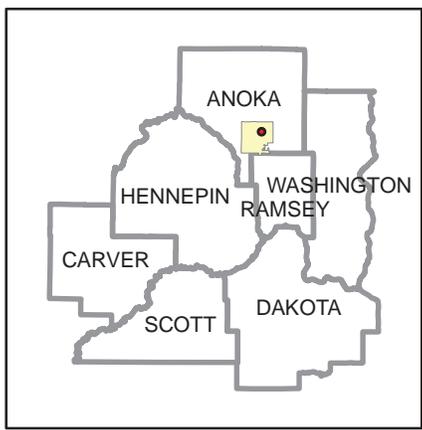
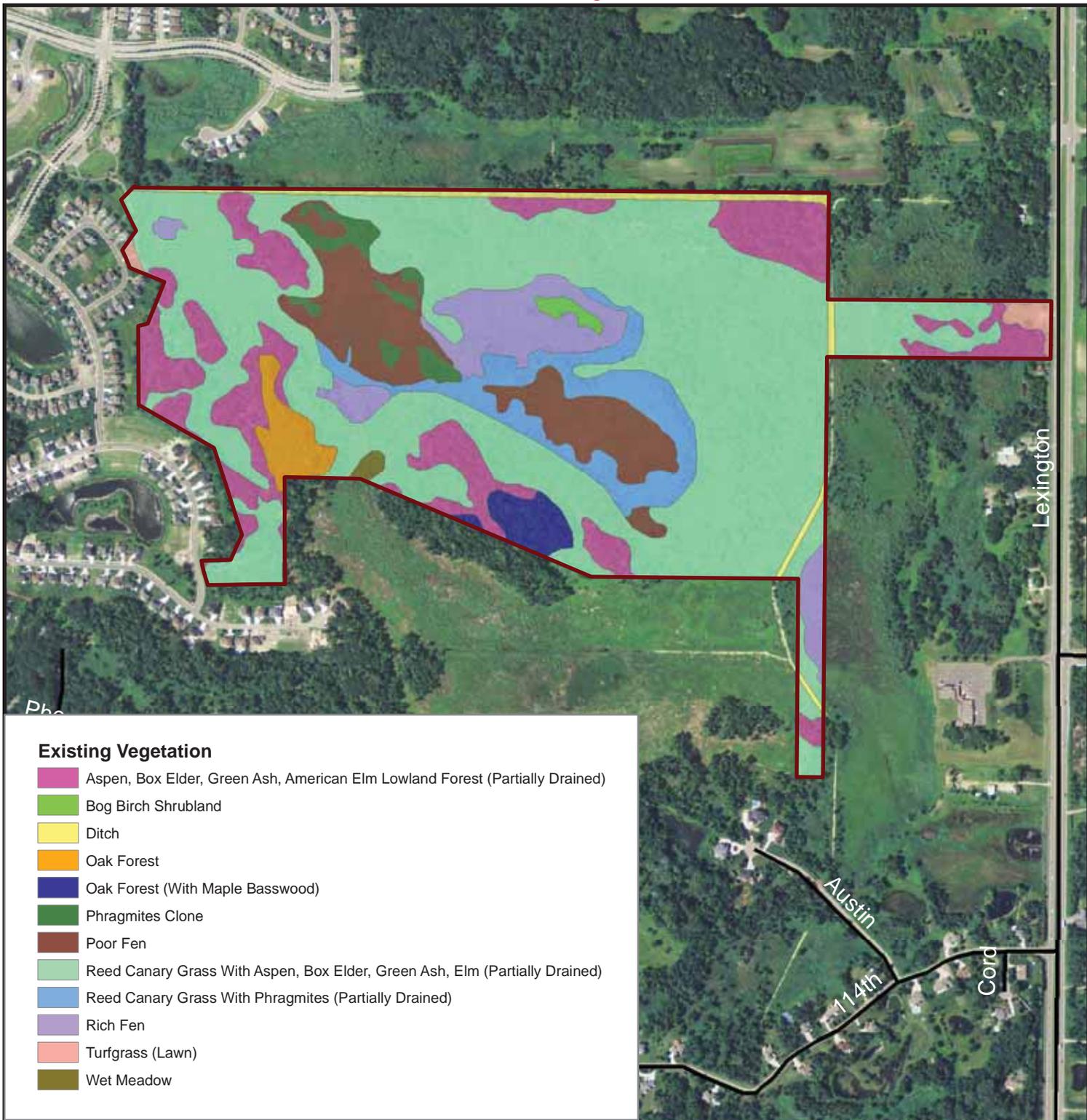


Appedix A, Figure 6
 USDA Soil Survey
 City of Blaine Site 7 ENRV Wetland Banking Site
 2015 Mitigation Bank Prospectus



- Lino Loamy Fine Sand, 0 to 4 Percent Slopes (LnA)
- Soderville Fine Sand, 0 to 3 Percent Slopes (SoA)
- Isanti Fine Sandy Loam (Iw)
- Rifle Mucky Peat (Rf)
- Markey Muck (Ma)
- Zimmerman fine sand, 2 to 6 percent slopes (ZmB)
- Hydic Soils (96% of Site)
- Non Hydic Soils (4% of Site)





Appendix A, Figure 10
 Existing Vegetation Conditions Map
 City of Blaine Site 7 ENRV Wetland Banking Site
 2015 Mitigation Bank Prospectus

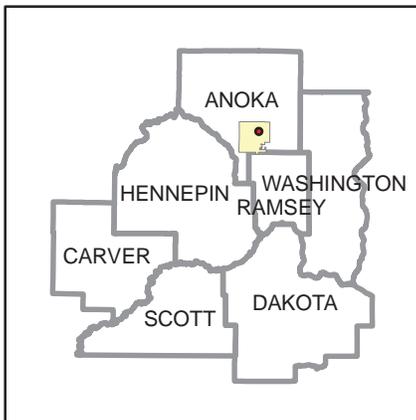
Site 7 ENRV Boundary
 Anoka County Roads

2013 USDA NAIP Imagery





Drainage system data obtained from Rice Creek Watershed District



Appendix A, Figure 11
 Existing Drainage Features
 City of Blaine Site 7 ENRV Wetland Banking Site
 2015 Mitigation Bank Prospectus

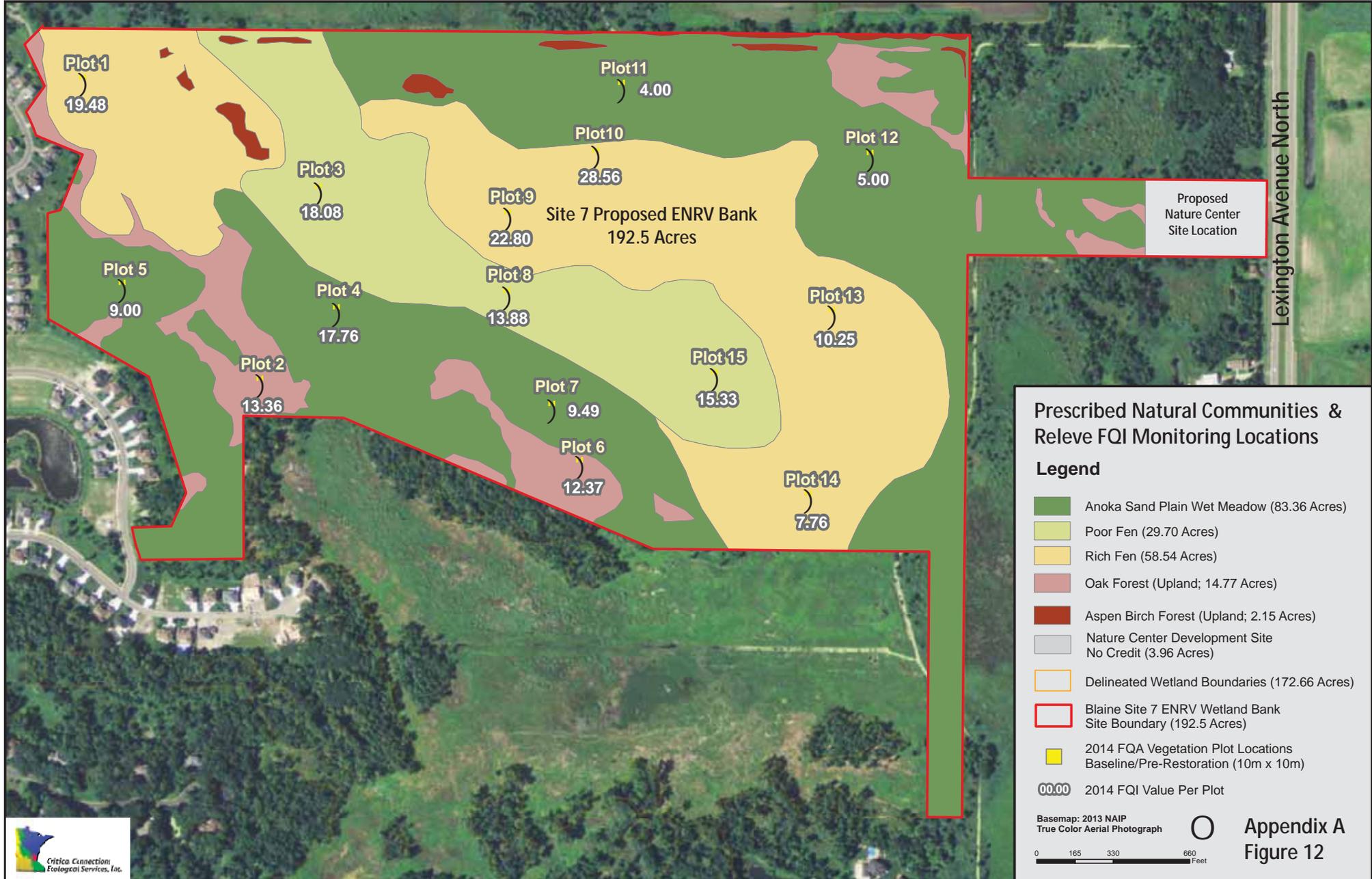
Existing Drainage Features (Ownership)

- Possible Public
- Private
- Public
- Public-Abandoned
- Site 7 ENRV Boundary

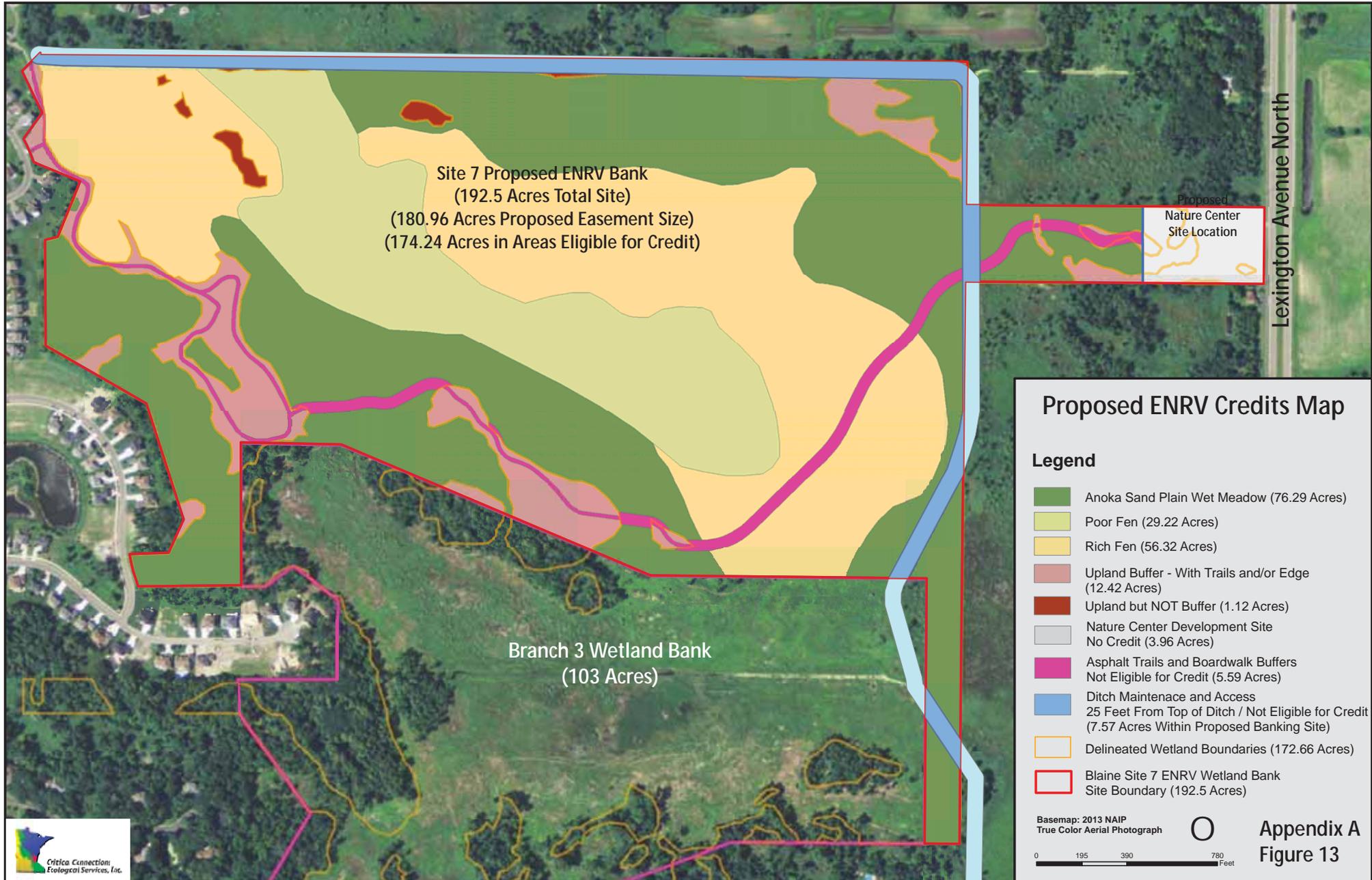


2013 USDA NAIP Imagery



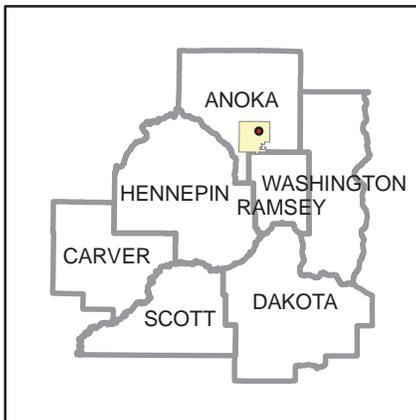
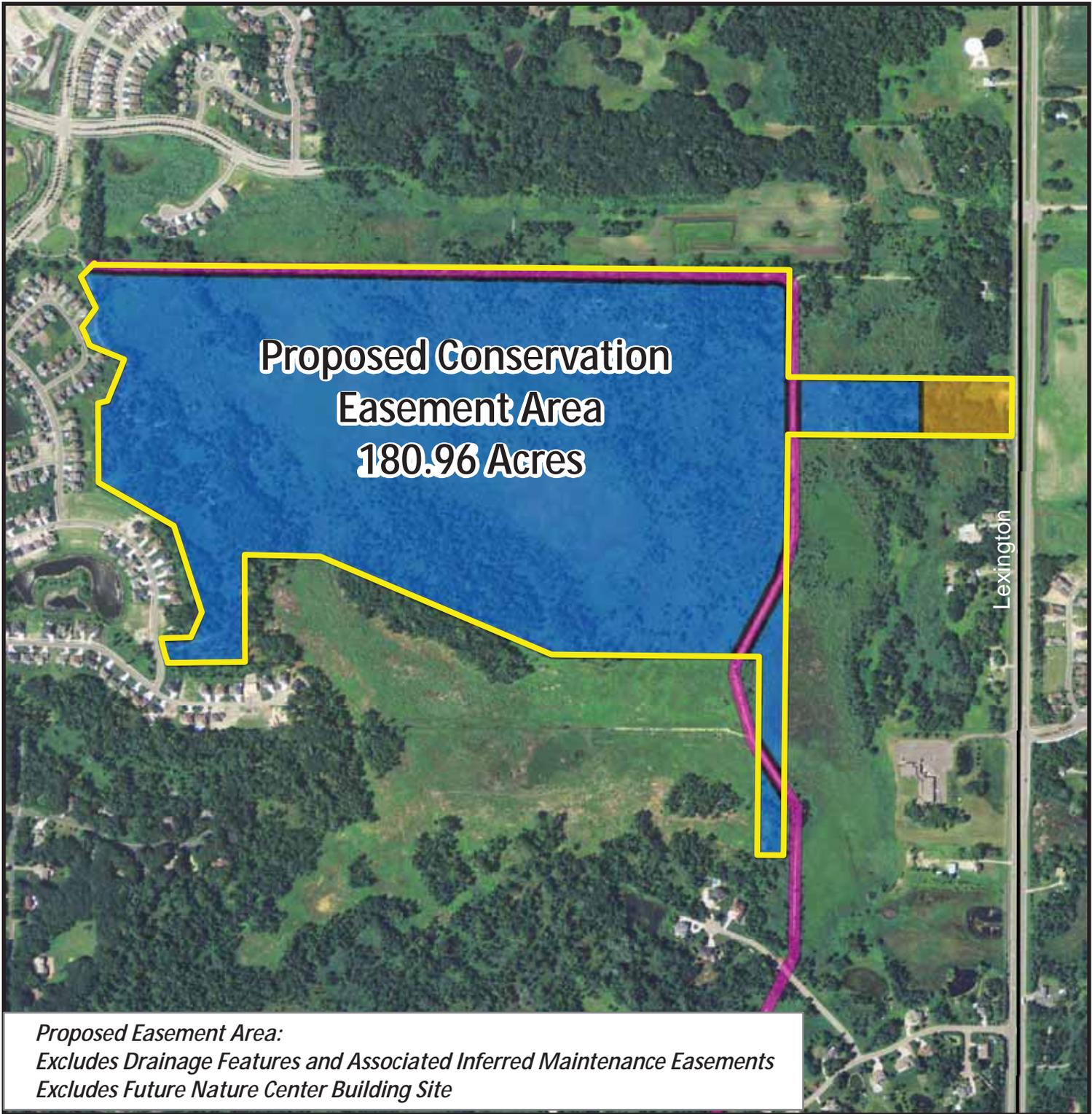


Appendix A
Figure 12



Lexington Avenue North

Proposed Nature Center Site Location



Appendix A, Figure 14
Proposed Conservation Easement
City of Blaine Site 7 ENRV Wetland Banking Site
2015 Mitigation Bank Prospectus

-  Site 7 ENRV Boundary
-  Proposed Conservation Easement Boundary
-  Proposed Nature Center Building Site
-  Drainage Features & Inferred Easements

2013 USDA NAIP Imagery



0 400 800 1,600 Feet