



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St Paul District

SPONSOR: Northern Family Farms

Public Notice

ISSUED: March 30, 2015

EXPIRES: April 30, 2015

REFER TO: MVP-2014-03612-SJW

SECTION: 404 - Clean Water Act

1. WETLAND COMPENSATORY MITIGATION BANK PROPOSAL

2. SPECIFIC INFORMATION.

SPONSOR'S ADDRESS: John and Ashley Ahl
Northern Family Farms
W10757 Jeffrey Road
Merrillan, Wisconsin 54757

SPONSOR'S AGENT: Jon Gumtow
Stantec
1165 Schuering Road
De Pere, Wisconsin 54115-1001

PROJECT LOCATION: The project site is located in Sections 4, 5, 8, and 9, Township 23 North, Range 4 East, Jackson County, Wisconsin. The approximate UTM coordinates are N 4928993.068, E 668367.183. Latitude 44.494622989363, Longitude -90.8823177207118.

BANK SERVICE AREA: The proposed bank service area is the Upper Mississippi Black-Root Bank Service Area, which is part of the Mississippi River Basin and the Black Buffalo Trempealeau GMU. This bank service area includes all of Trempealeau County and a portion of Buffalo, Jackson, Clark, La Crosse, Monroe, Wood, Pepin, Eau Claire, and Taylor Counties. Currently there are no wetland mitigation banks located in this bank service area. Completion of this mitigation bank site would allow projects that impact wetlands to be able to purchase credit within the same bank service area.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT: The sponsor is proposing to develop the Matalas Wetland Mitigation Bank. The bank site is approximately 221.8 acres in size, including upland buffer area. Specifically, the sponsor proposes to restore and enhance an area consisting of 221.8 acres of row crop, wet meadow (marsh hay and fallow fields), ditch agricultural channels, and shrub-carr to native wetland plant communities. Site objectives will also include the protection of 22.8 acres of existing forested wetland along the eastern and northern boundaries of the site, and approximately 8.5 acres of mesic prairie will be restored as upland buffer.

Including the adjacent properties, current land use consists of: approximately 26% wet meadow (91.5 acres), 5.5% wetland agricultural ditches (19.22 acres), 32% row crop (111.04 acres), and 0.5% farmed wetland (1.65 acres), 2% shrub-carr (6.97 acres), 6.6% forested wetland (22.82 acres), and 0.6% upland forest (1.99 acres). A network of drainage ditches can be found mostly on the southern half of the site. These drainage ditches were installed throughout various time periods beginning prior to the 1950's

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which allowed for the establishment of farmable acreage. The lands surrounding the project site consist of a mix of agricultural operations and wooded areas with homesteads scattered throughout the landscape. Existing wetlands were identified in various locations through out the site and consist of the aforementioned wetland types.

Modifications proposed to restore, establish, enhance and/or preserve wetlands on the bank site: restore/enhance diverse wetland community types such as wet/sedgme meadow, shrub-carr and forested wetland; existing forested wetland will be preserved along the eastern and norther site boundaries; restoration and enhancement activities will include drain tile abandonment, site grading to fill the network of existing agricultural ditches as needed, treatment of reed canary grass and other non-native plant species, and the establishment and management of native vegetation.

Reed Canary grass will be treated throughout the site by using a grass specific herbicide in conjunction with mowing, or a non-selective herbicide as deemed appropriate. An approved aquatic herbicide will be used to treat reed canary grass and other non-native plants within the agricultural ditches prior to site grading. A planting plan will be developed following approval of the bank prospectus.

Buffer zones consisting of both upland and wetland communities will be created between proposed wetland and existing agricultural fields or adjoining forest habitats. The plants used in the buffer zones will be native species that are tolerant of agricultural run-off. Specific plants will be detailed in a planting plan during the site design. Buffer zones will be sufficient width to provide the wetland protection from negative effects of agricultural practices from the surrounding fields. The width of the buffer will be approximately 100 feet, and may vary depending on slope, vegetation within and outside of the project boundary, and agricultural practices of adjacent fields.

The restoration will be completed by filling the agricultural ditch network and removing drain tiles, and shallow excavations will be constructed as needed. Topsoil will be salvaged and used to topdress disturbed areas following construction. The ditch network will be filled with available wetland soil from the site and nearby sources of native, organic soil will be used as fill if needed to supplement on-site sources. Drain tile will be located prior to construction and removed, and shallow excavations may be conducted to lower the soil surface to intersect the ground water table. Additional shallow excavations of a few inches in small scattered pockets of less than a quarter acre in size may be used to create micro habitats and increase habitat diversity.

Long-term management of the site: The ownership arrangement and long-term management strategy will be controlled by the current property owner-Northern Family Farms. The current plan is that Northern Family Farms will own and operate the mitigation site and serve as the land steward. The site would be adaptively managed for development of herbaceous communities dominated by native species common to the bank area. Credit sales would be tracked by the bank sponsor and reported to the state as required by state law. The reported credit releases and sales would be tracked on both Corps and state databases using ledger data supplied by the state. By state law, long-term management of the property would be the responsibility of the landowner and the sponsor until all released credits have been debited. After all credits are debited, long-term management obligations would fall to the landowner under state law. Additional protections and management limitations would be spelled out in both a conservation easement and in an approved bank plan.

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SURROUNDING LAND USE: Surrounding land use is comprised of a mix of open agricultural lands and forest lands with single family homes and farming facilities scattered throughout the landscape.

COORDINATION WITH RESOURCE AGENCIES: This project has been coordinated with the following members of the Interagency Review Team (IRT) and other resource agencies: The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

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, St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers, Attention Sam Woboril, 1314 Contractors Boulevard, Plover, Wisconsin 54467.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT, call Sam Woboril at the Stevens Point (Plover) 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 bank sponsor or are known to existing in the action area. However, Jackson County is within the known historic range for the following Federally-listed species:

Gray Wolf: Northern Forested Areas

Northern Long-Eared Bat: Hibernates in caves and mines-swarming in surrounding wooded areas in autumn. During summer, roosts and forages in upland forests.

Kirtlands Warbler: Potential breeding in young jack pine stands (5 to 25 years old).

Eastern Massasauga: Open to forested wetland and adjacent uplands.

Karner Blue Butterfly: Praire, oak savanna, and jack pine areas with wild lupine.

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 will be considered in our final assessment of the described work. .

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5. JURISDICTION.

This application 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 permit if the bank plan is approved before any regulated discharge occurs. Any *approved jurisdictional determination* needed will be made prior to reaching a decision, and will be posted on the St. Paul District web page at <http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx>.

6. HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL.

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.

Jeffrey M. Olson
Northeast Section

Enclosure(s): Project maps and drawings

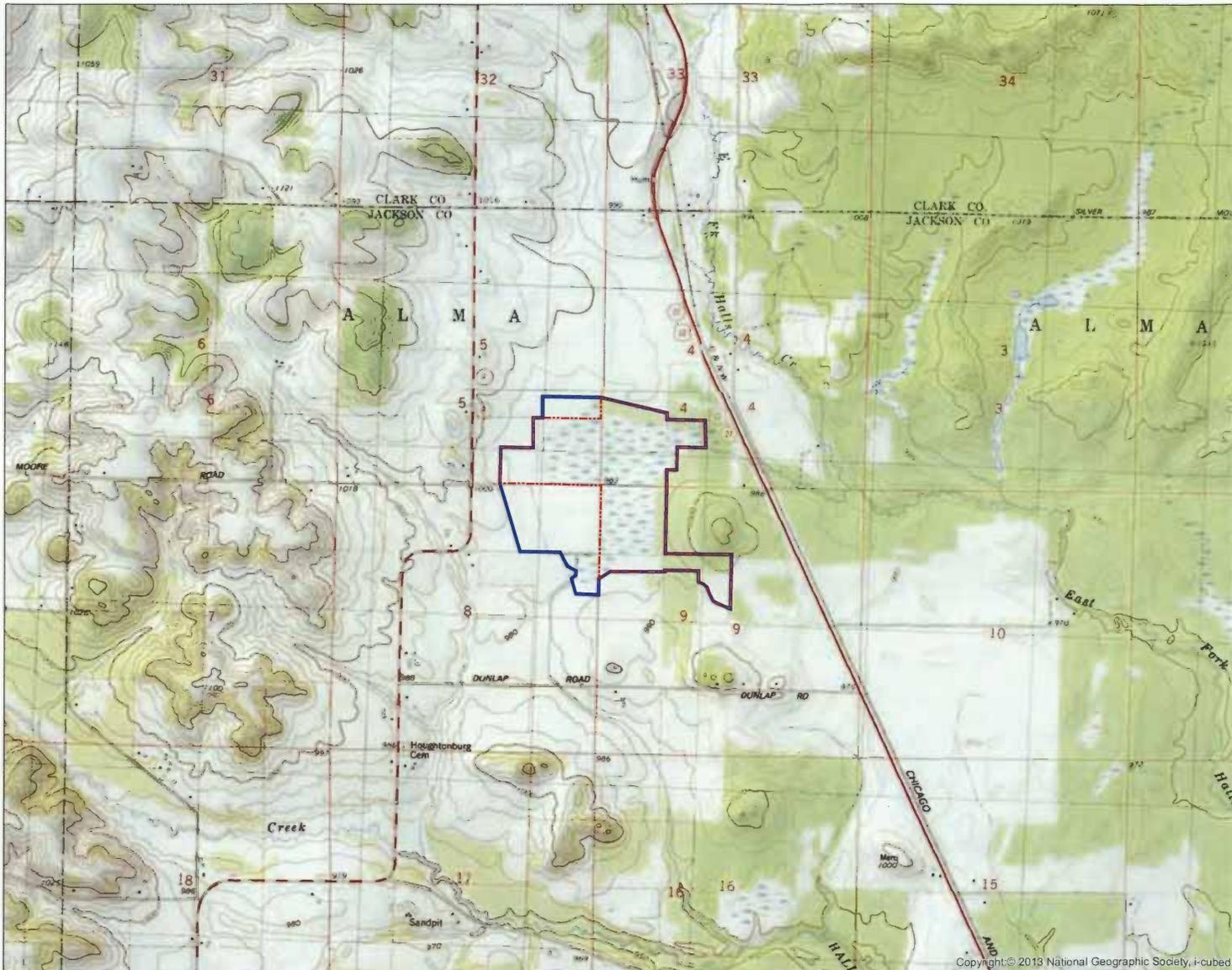


Figure No. **1**
Title
Project Location and Topography

Client/Project
 Northern Family Farms
 Wetland Mitigation

Project Location
 T. of Alma, Jackson Co., WI
 Prepared by MCP on 2014-09-26
 Technical Review by XXX on 2014-XX-XX
 Independent Review by XXX on 2014-XX-XX



Legend
 Existing Project Boundary (179 acres)
 Anticipated Project Boundary (256 acres)



Notes
 1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane Wisconsin Central FIPS 4802 Feet
 2. Data Sources include: Stantec
 3. Background: USGS 7.5' Topographic Quadrangles



Figure No.
2

Title
2013 Orthophotography Map

Client/Project
 Northern Family Farms
 Wetland Mitigation

Project Location
 T. of Alma, Jackson Co., WI

193702920
 Prepared by MCP on 2014-10-09
 Technical Review by XXX on 2014-XX-XX
 Independent Review by XXX on 2014-XX-XX



Legend

Existing Project Boundary (179 acres)

Anticipated Project Boundary (256 acres)



Notes

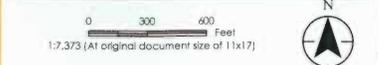
1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane Wisconsin Central FIPS 4802 Feet
2. Data Sources include: Stantec, WDOT
3. Orthophotography: Esri



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, IGN, USDA, USDA, AeroGRID, IGN, Esri, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



Figure No. **3**
NRCS Soil Survey Data
 Client/Project
 Northern Family Farms
 Wetland Mitigation
 Project Location
 T. of Alma, Jackson Co., WI
 Prepared by MCP on 2014-09-26
 Technical Review by XXX on 2014-XX-XX
 Independent Review by XXX on 2014-XX-XX



- Legend**
- Existing Project Boundary (179 acres)
 - Anticipated Project Boundary (256 acres)
 - NRCS Soil Survey Data
 - Predominantly Hydric Soils
 - Partially Hydric Soils
 - Non-Hydric Soils
 - DNR 24k Hydrography
 - Perennial Stream
 - Intermittent Stream
 - Waterbody



- Notes**
1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane Wisconsin Central FIPS 4802 Feet
 2. Data Sources include: Stantec, NRCS, WDOT
 3. Orthophotography: Esri



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar USA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



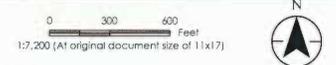
Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar (USA), USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

Figure No. **4**

National Wetland Inventory

Client/Project
Northern Family Farms
Wetland Mitigation

Project Location
T. of Alma, Jackson Co., WI
Prepared by MCP on 2014-09-26
Technical Review by XXX on 2014-XX-XX
Independent Review by XXX on 2014-XX-XX



- Legend**
- Existing Project Boundary (179 acres)
 - Anticipated Project Boundary (256 acres)
 - National Wetlands Inventory
 - DNR 24k Hydrography
 - Perennial Stream
 - Intermittent Stream
 - Waterbody



- Notes**
1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane Wisconsin Central FIPS 4802 Feet
 2. Data Sources Include: Stantec, WDNR, FWS
 3. Orthophotography: Esri





Figure No.
5

Title
Site Hydrology

Client/Project
Northern Family Farms
Wetland Mitigation

Project Location
T. of Alma, Jackson Co., WI

193702920
Prepared by MCP on 2014.09.25
Technical Review by XXX on 2014.XX.XX
Independent Review by XXX on 2014.XX.XX



- Legend**
- Existing Project Boundary (179 acres)
 - Anticipated Project Boundary (256 acres)
 - Restorable Wetlands (204 acres)
 - Drainage Ditch
 - Drain Tile (approx.)
 - DNR 24k Hydrography
 - Perennial Stream
 - Intermittent Stream
 - Waterbody



- Notes**
1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane Wisconsin Central FIPS 4802 Feet
 2. Data Sources Include: Stantec, WDOT, WDNR
 3. Orthophotography: Esri



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aergrid, swisstopo, and the User Community.

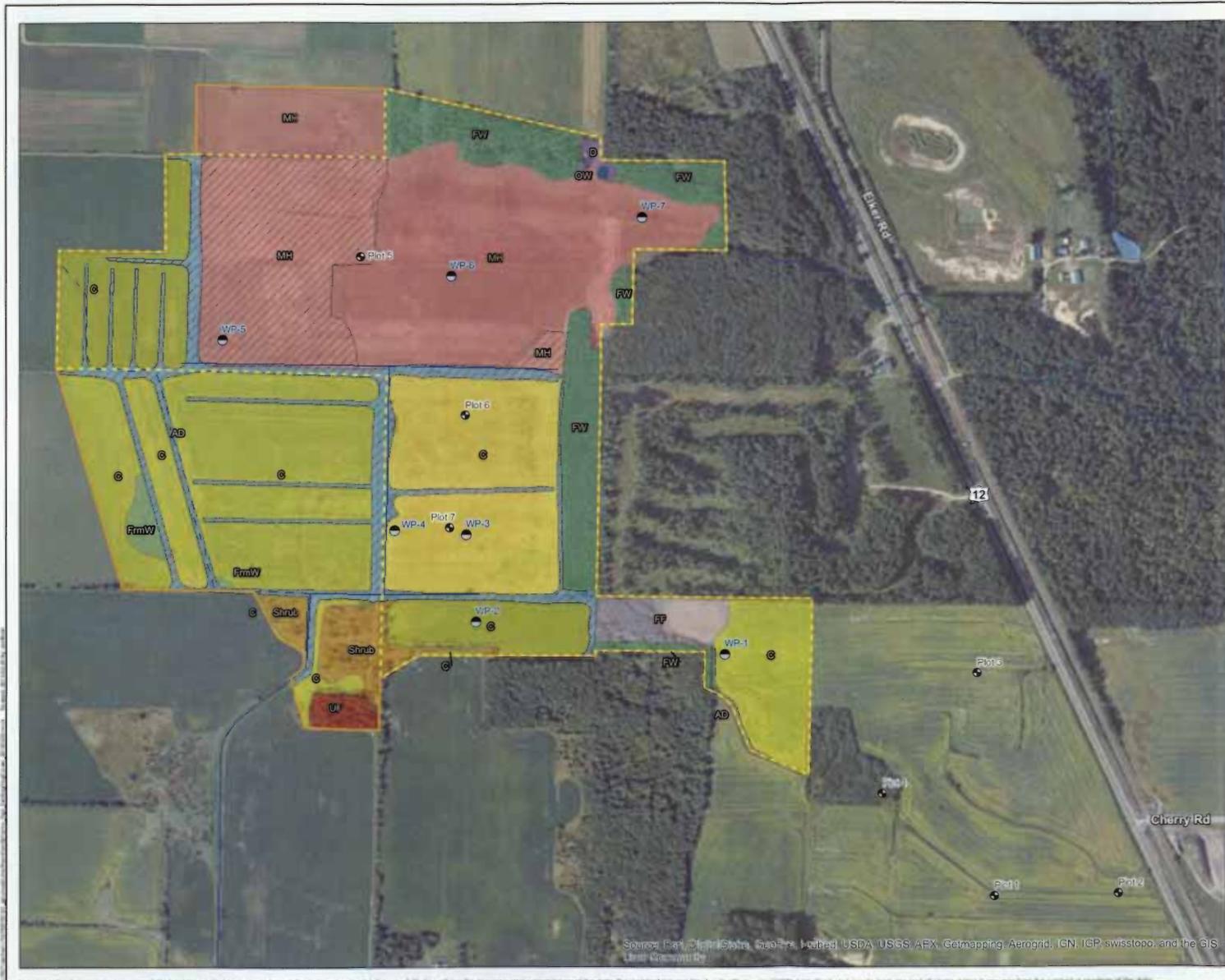


Figure No.
6
Existing Vegetation Cover

Client/Project
Northern Family Farms
Wetland Mitigation

Project Location: 193702920
1. of Alma, Jackson Co., WI
Prepared by MCP on 2014.12.05
Technical Review by XXX on 2014.03.11
Independent Review by XXX on 2014.03.11



- Legend**
- Existing Project Boundary (179 acres)
 - Anticipated Project Boundary (256 acres)
 - Soil Lag Location
 - Well Location
 - Current Land Cover**
 - AD - Agricultural Ditch (19.22ac)
 - C - Row Crop (111.04ac)
 - D - Developed (0.65ac)
 - FF - Wet Meadow/Fallow Field (4.89ac)
 - FmW - FSA Slide Review Farmed Wetland (1.65ac)
 - FW - Forested Wetland (22.82ac)
 - MH - Wet Meadow/Marsh Hay (86.61ac)
 - OW - Open Water (0.12ac)
 - Shrub (6.97ac)
 - UF - Upland Forest (1.99ac)
 - Greater than 60% Reed Canary Grass Cover
 - DNR 24k Hydrography
 - Perennial Stream
 - Intermittent Stream
 - Waterbody



- Notes**
1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane Wisconsin Central FIPS 4802 Feet
 2. Data Sources include: Stantec, WDOT, WDNR
 3. Orthophotography: Esri



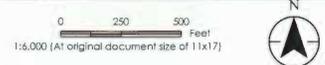
Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, IGN, GeoEye, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, IGN, USDA, USGS, AEX, GeoEye, AeroGRID, IGN, USGS, Airphoto, and the GIS User Community

Figure No.
7
Title
Conceptual Wetland Mitigation Plan
Client/Project
Northern Family Farms
Wetland Mitigation

Project Location
T. of Alena, Jackson Co., WI
Prepared by MCF on 2014-09-23
Technical Review by XXX on 2014-XX-XX
Independent Review by XXX on 2014-XX-XX



- Legend**
- Existing Project Boundary (179 acres)
 - Anticipated Project Boundary (256 acres)

Mitigation Type

 - Forested Wetland Enhancement (20.43ac)
 - Forested Wetland Preservation (22.82ac)
 - Mesic Prairie Buffer (8.53ac)
 - Shrub-Carr Enhancement (47.56ac)
 - Shrub-Carr Partial Restoration (6.97ac)
 - Upland Forest Buffer (1.99ac)
 - Wet Meadow Buffer (12.95ac)
 - Wet Meadow Restoration via Re-establishment (45.00ac)
 - Wet Meadow Restoration via Rehabilitation (18.90ac)

DNR 24k Hydrography

 - Perennial Stream
 - Intermittent Stream
 - Waterbody



- Notes**
1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane Wisconsin Central FIPS 4802 Feet
 2. Data Sources include: Stantec, WDOT, WDNR
 3. Orthophotography: Esri

