



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St Paul District

SPONSOR: City of Le Sueur

Public Notice

ISSUED: November 13, 2020

EXPIRES: December 13, 2020

REFER TO: MVP-2018-02368-SRK

SECTION: 404 - Clean Water Act

1. WETLAND COMPENSATORY MITIGATION BANK PROPOSAL
2. SPECIFIC INFORMATION

SPONSOR'S ADDRESS: City of Le Sueur
c/o Mr. Jasper Kruggel
203 South 2nd Street
Le Sueur, Minnesota 56058

SPONSOR'S AGENT Shawn Williams
WSB and Associates, Inc.
701 Xenia Avenue South, Suite 300
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55416

PROJECT LOCATION: The project site is located in Sections 23, 24, 25 and 26, Township 112 North, Range 26 West, Sibley County, Minnesota. Latitude 44.483278, Longitude -93.911154.

BANK SERVICE AREA: The proposed bank service area is in Minnesota banks service area 9.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT: The sponsor is proposing to develop the Le Sueur Floodplain Wetland Bank. The proposed bank site is approximately 240 acres in size, including upland buffer areas.

NEED AND OBJECTIVE OF PROJECT: Wetland Bank Credits within Bank Service Area 9, especially for floodplain forest wetland community type, are in demand. There are currently 10 active wetland banks within BSA 9 – Major Watershed 33. Only one wetland bank is located within Sibley County. This wetland bank would provide floodplain forest wetland credit types to the market to meet the need of project types that impact floodplain type wetlands, among others. This wetland bank would allow project proponents to obtain compensatory mitigation for projects that have floodplain forest type impacts throughout the Minnesota River Valley, and beyond. This wetland bank will include USACE – approved credits for use in the market.

ESTABLISHMENT, OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT: The concept plan for the mitigation bank proposes to use effective techniques for restoration hydrology to the site and will incorporate means and methods as applicable from the *MN Wetland Restoration Guide*. The following key features are main points of the design, construction, and operation:

1. Remove most of the existing berm soil and grade it/smooth it throughout the rest of the 3 former treatment basins to meet the desired topographic elevations.
2. Construct shallow marsh pools and flowage connections.
3. Remove berm at two segments to allow for water flow.
4. Establish wet/mesic prairie at Credit Area 1 (farmed wetland).

5. Improve vegetation composition at Credit Area 2 through removal of invasive species.
6. Establish upland native buffer along the southern perimeter.

OWNERSHIP AND LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT: The City of Le Sueur (City) is the project sponsor and land fee title owner for all but two parcels. The City has ongoing discussion with an adjacent landowner, the owner of two Sibley County parcels that are proposed to be incorporated as part of the wetland bank easement, if acquired by the City. The City will implement the project and will be responsible for the long-term management of the wetland bank. The City will own the wetland credits generated by the project until sold.

TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY AND QUALIFICATIONS: Founded in 1995, WSB has grown into a full-service firm specializing in planning, design and construction services for government, commercial, and private clients. With a diverse staff of engineers, planners, scientists, and construction specialists, WSB has the technical resources available to complete the necessary survey and engineering services. In addition, WSB provides Wetland Conservation Act local government unit (LGU) services to various municipal Clients throughout Minnesota. Specifically, Shawn Williams has reviewed and facilitated the establishment of the Mader wetland bank (#1649) in the City of Minnetrista via WCA LGU responsibilities from 2015 to date. We are committed to an effective partnership with the Sponsor, TEP, and IRT towards design and creation of a sustainable wetland bank in Sibley County, Minnesota.

ECOLOGICAL SUITABILITY: Site investigations conducted show the site will be very suitable for restoration due to moderately to poorly drained soils, and natural floodplain hydrology that will occur at most areas of the site. It is expected restored wetlands will provide long-term sustainable conditions with continued maintenance. Restoration of the site will also remove a portion of land from agricultural use and provide a significant buffer area and provide a critical floodplain connection with the Minnesota River.

HYDROLOGY: As the site was a former wastewater treatment facility, with existing berms affecting hydrology movement throughout the site, it was pertinent to study the hydrology of the existing conditions. As part of the WWTP closure, a portion of the WWTP berm was removed to accommodate flow and hydrologic interaction with the Minnesota River. Within hydrologic concept design document, WSB evaluated three options (concepts) for the site, and included evaluation of onsite existing topographic survey elevations, river flow/elevation data, and HEC-RAS hydrologic modeling data, as described in detail in the report. The City is not aware of any existing drain tile or ditching within or near the farmed wetland area.

CURRENT LAND USES: Around 2005, the WWTP was closed by the City when a new WWTP opened elsewhere. During the closure process, breaks were created in the berms. The breaks connected the ponds to the Minnesota River and to each other, making the ponds now all hydraulically connected. The existing hydrology of the site describes these breaks and the flow of water in the former pond area. The gravel road remains but is now vegetated, primarily with grasses. Electrical lines that powered the plant remain along the south end of the site. The utility building at the south end of the site was removed but the concrete pad and rubble pile remain. The force main across the Minnesota River was removed. The southwestern portion of the site continues to be farmed. US 169 and the associated right of way remains and MnDOT also has an easement over a gravel access road in the southeast corner of the project area. MnDOT uses the easement road to access the US 169 bridge over the Minnesota River.

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 and Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources.

3. 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, Sibley 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.
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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.

4. JURISDICTION

This proposal 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.

5. 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 of the work in connection with this project.

6. 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.

7. REPLIES/COMMENTS

Interested parties are invited to submit to this office written facts, arguments, or objections by the expiration date above. 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
180 Fifth Street East, Suite 700
St. Paul, MN 55101-1678

Regulatory Branch (File No. MVP-2018-02368-SRK)

Or, IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT, call Sean Kelly at the Brainerd office of the Corps, telephone number 651-290-5769 or email sean.r.kelly@usace.army.mil

Enclosure(s)

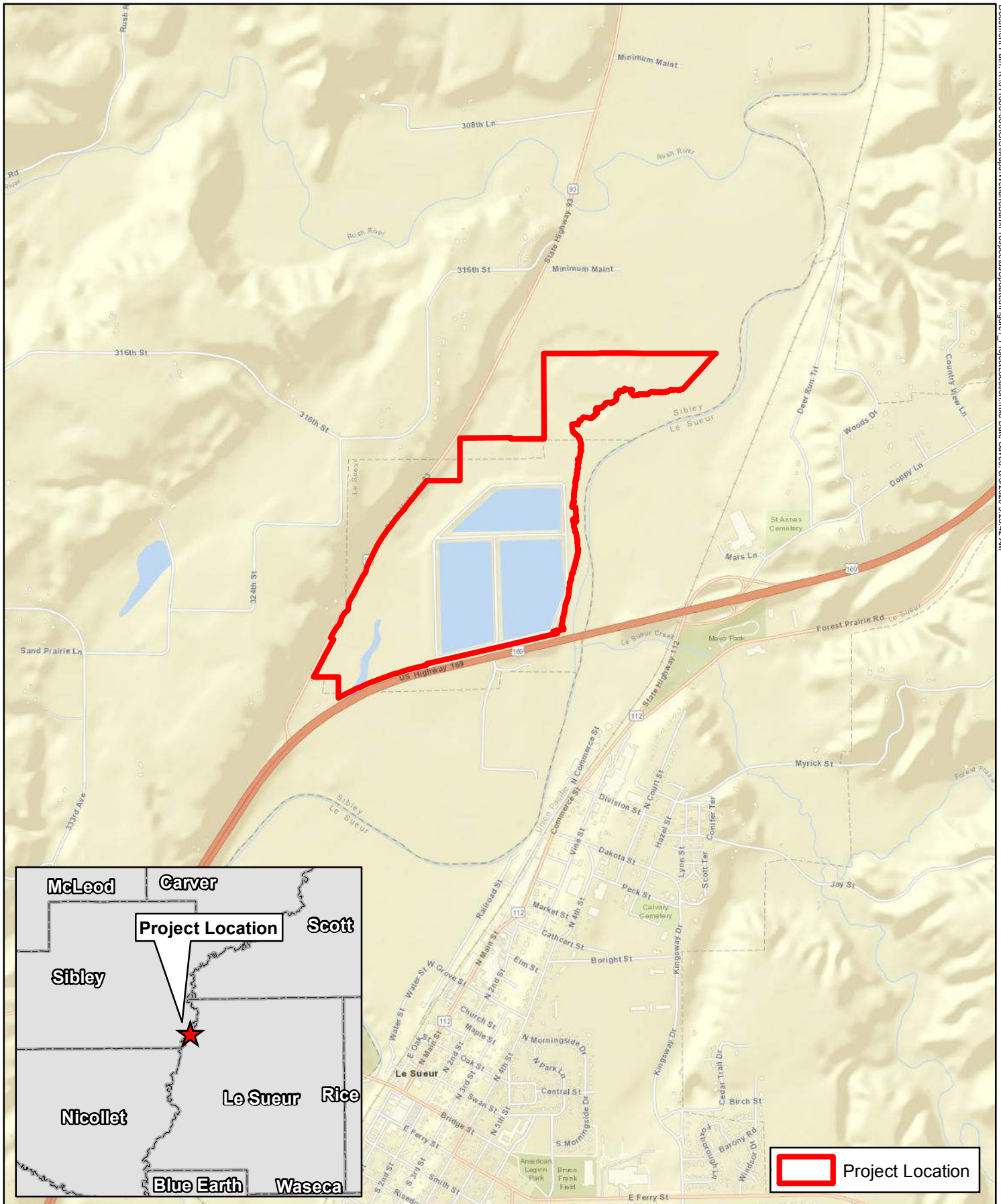


Figure 1: Project Location

Le Sueur Floodplain Wetland Bank
Le Sueur, MN



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1 inch = 2,000 feet



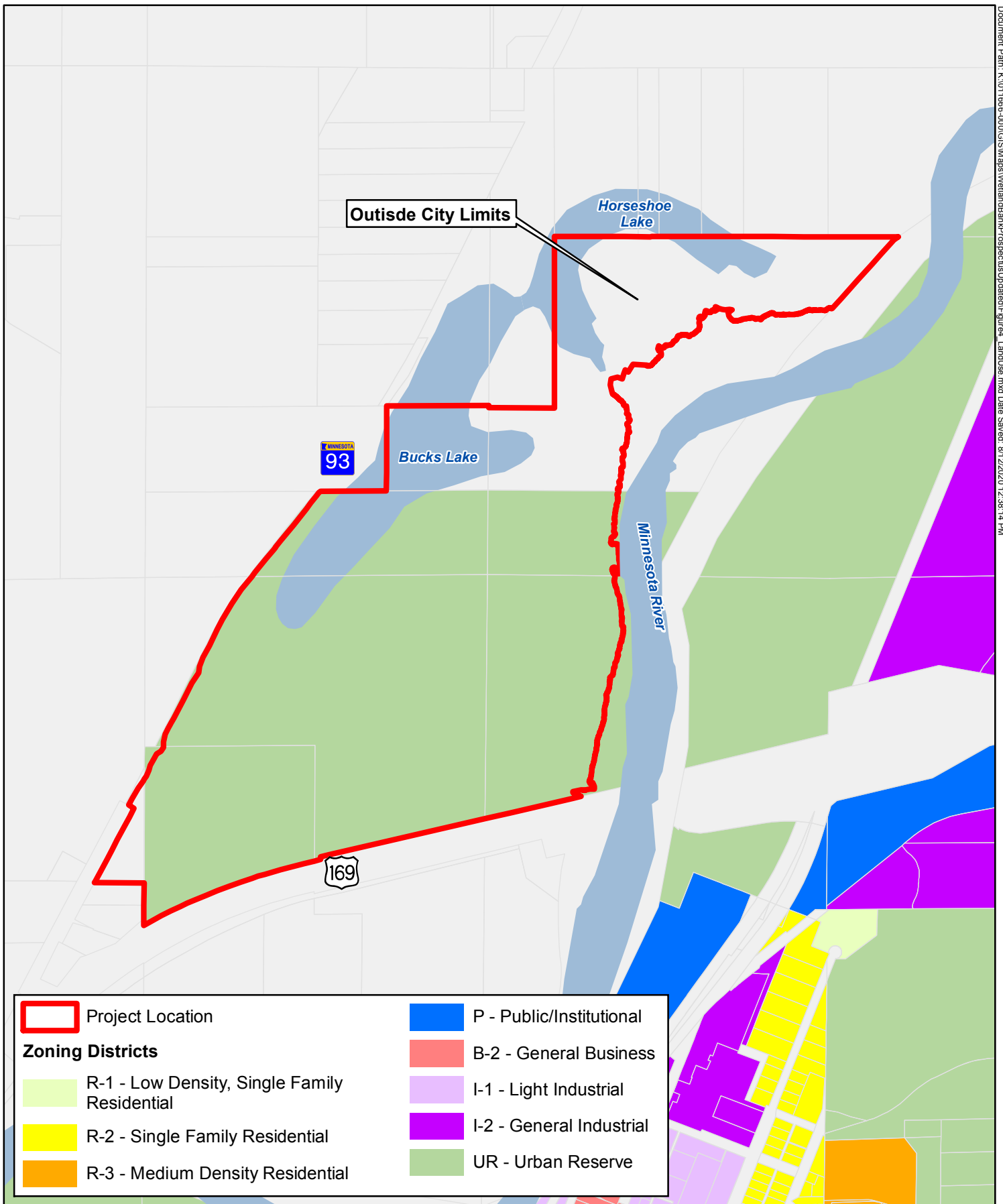


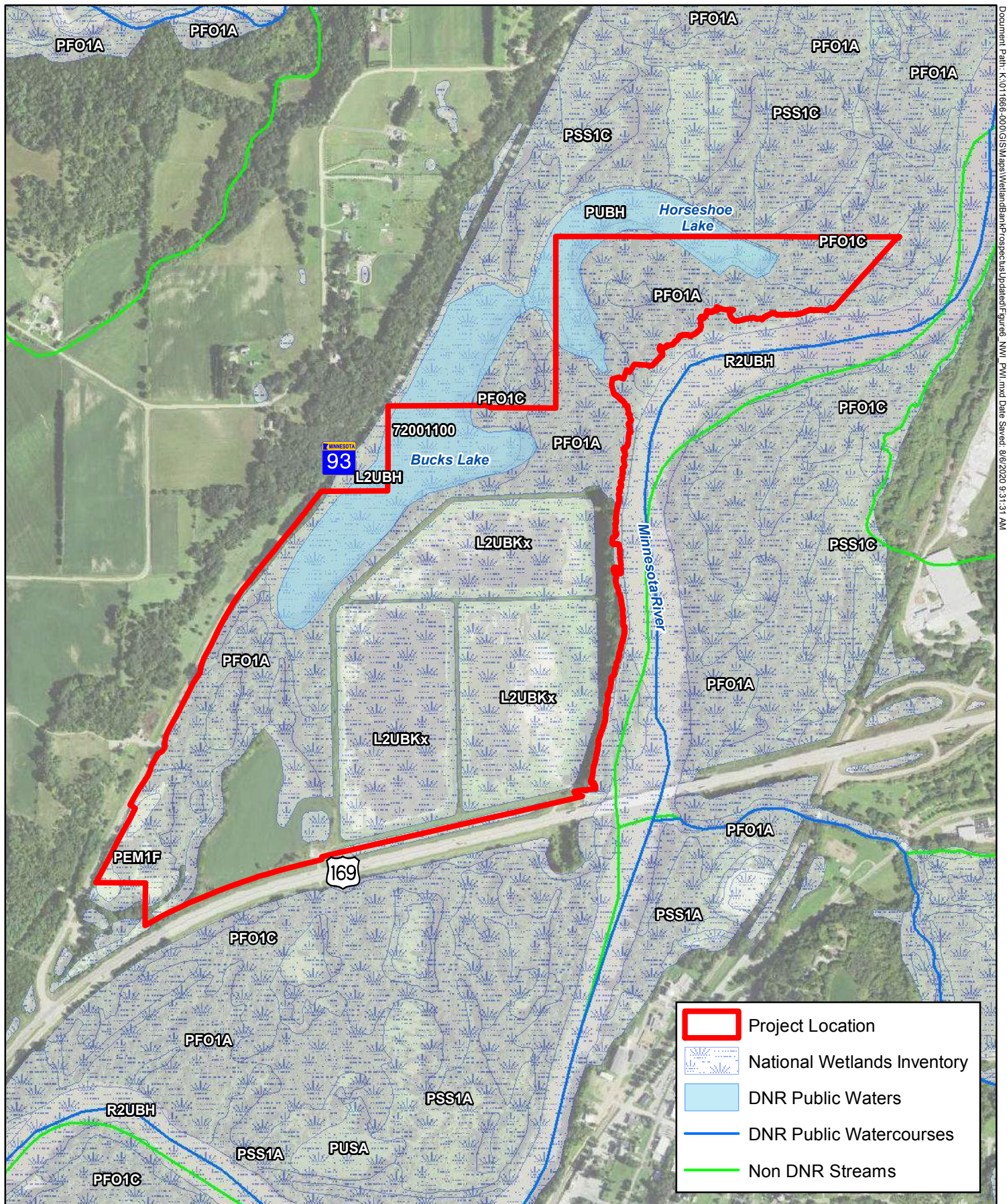
Figure 4: Land Use

Le Sueur Floodplain Wetland Bank
Le Sueur, MN



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1 inch = 1,000 feet





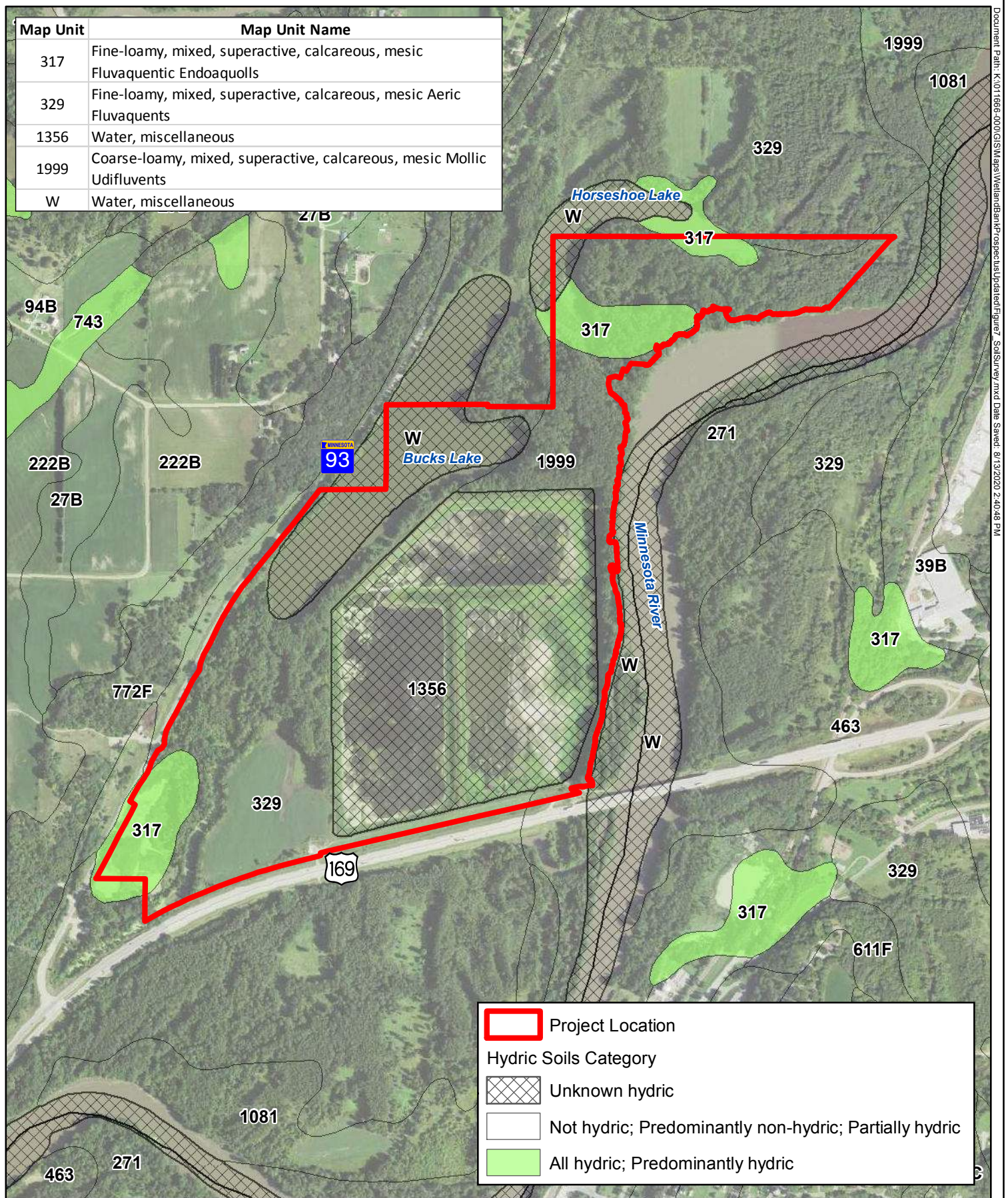


Figure 7: Soil Survey

Le Sueur Floodplain Wetland Bank
Le Sueur, MN



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1 inch = 1,000 feet

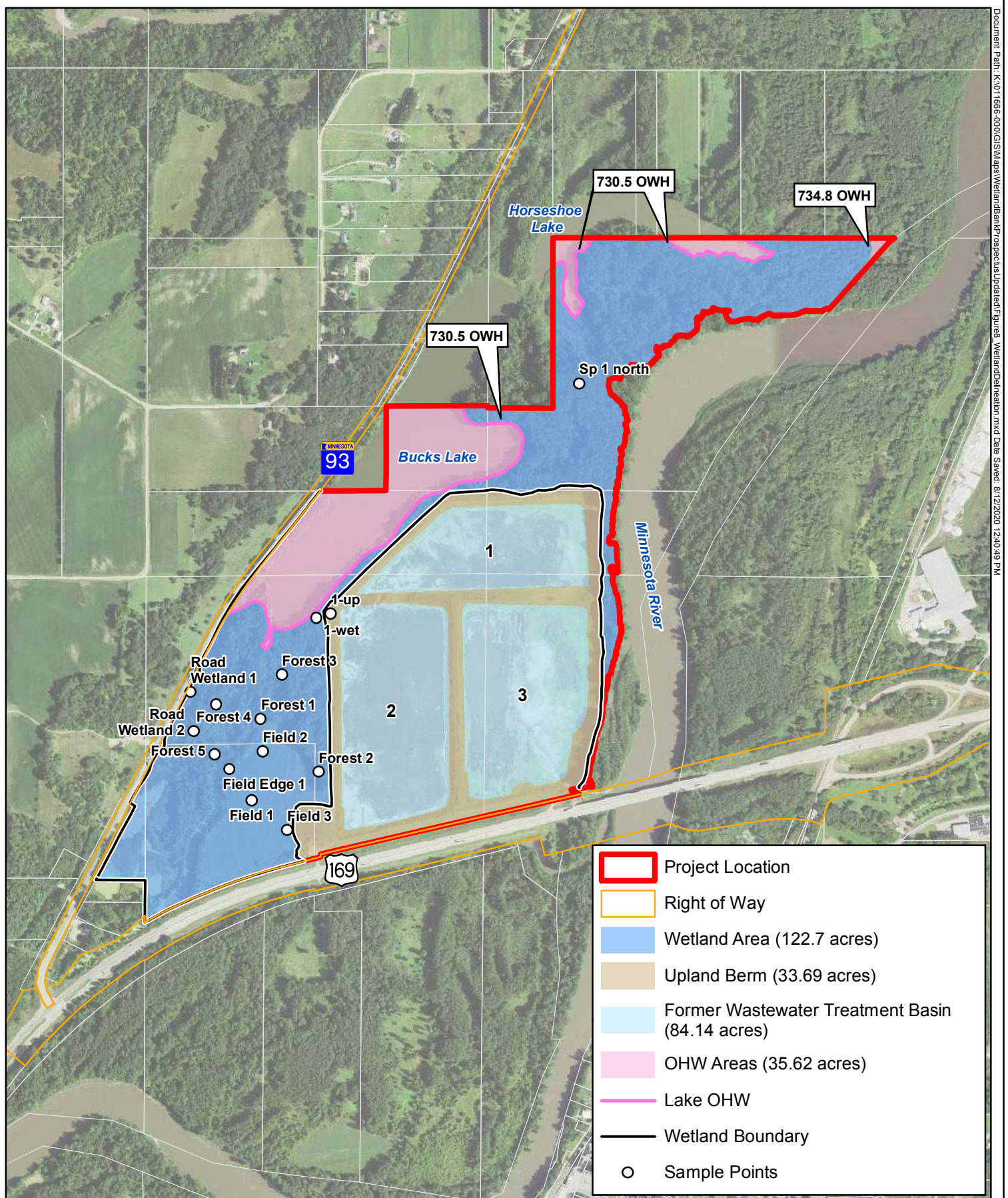


Figure 8: Wetland Delineation

Le Sueur Floodplain Wetland Bank
Le Sueur, MN



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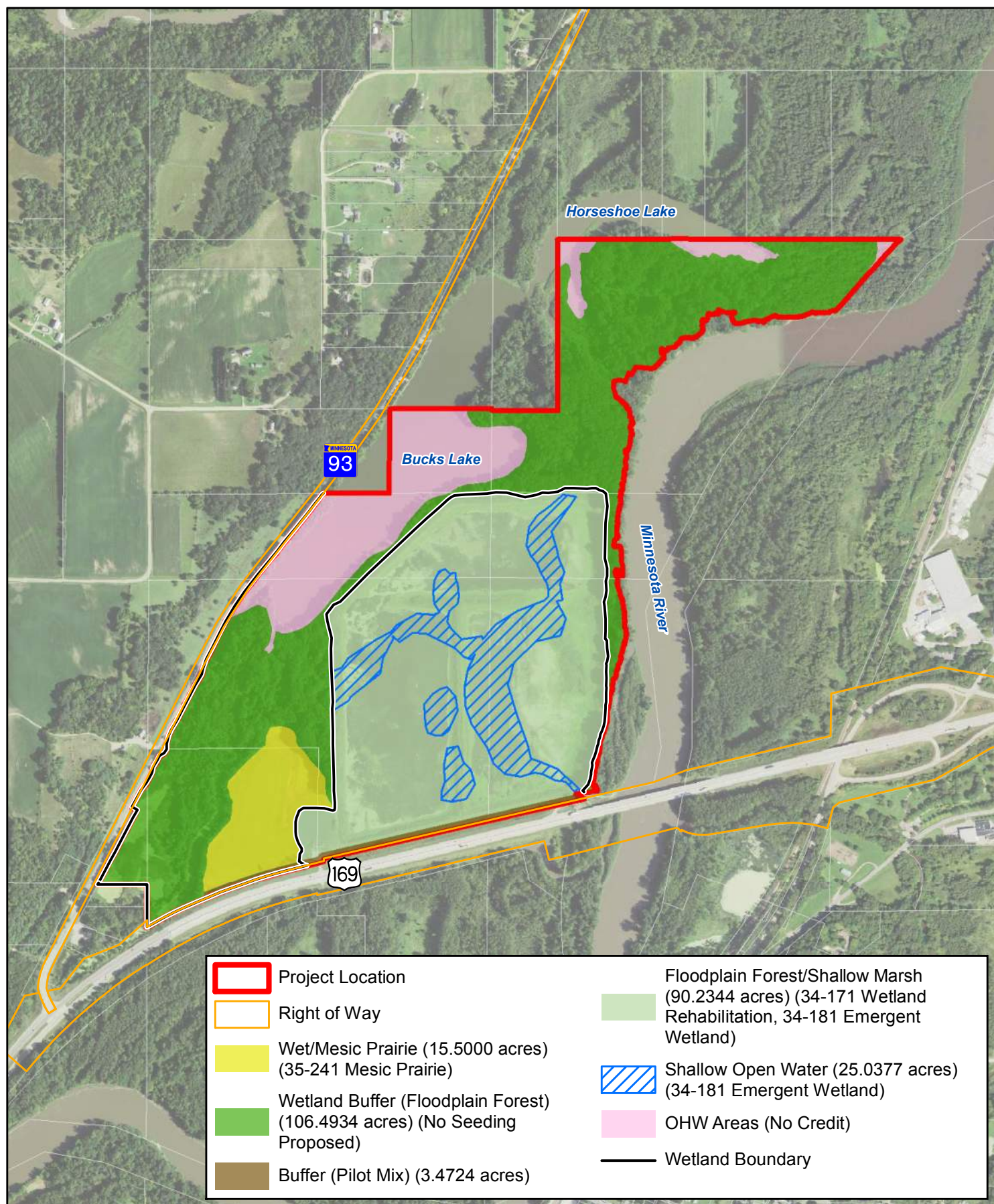


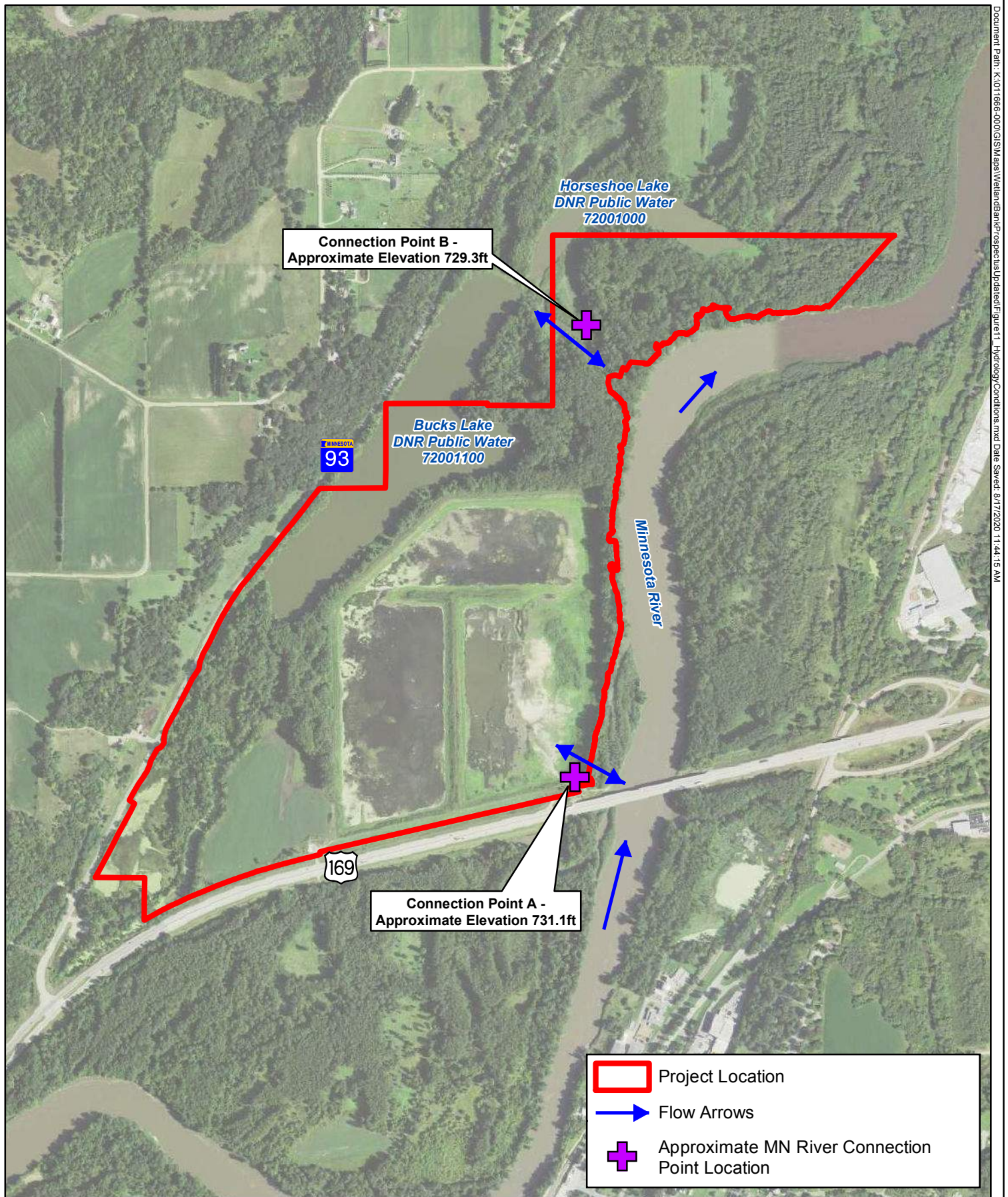
Figure 14: Proposed Vegetation Conditions Map

Le Sueur Floodplain Wetland Bank
Le Sueur, MN



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1 inch = 1,000 feet





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Figure 11: Existing Conditions Hydrology

Le Sueur Floodplain Wetland Bank
Le Sueur, MN



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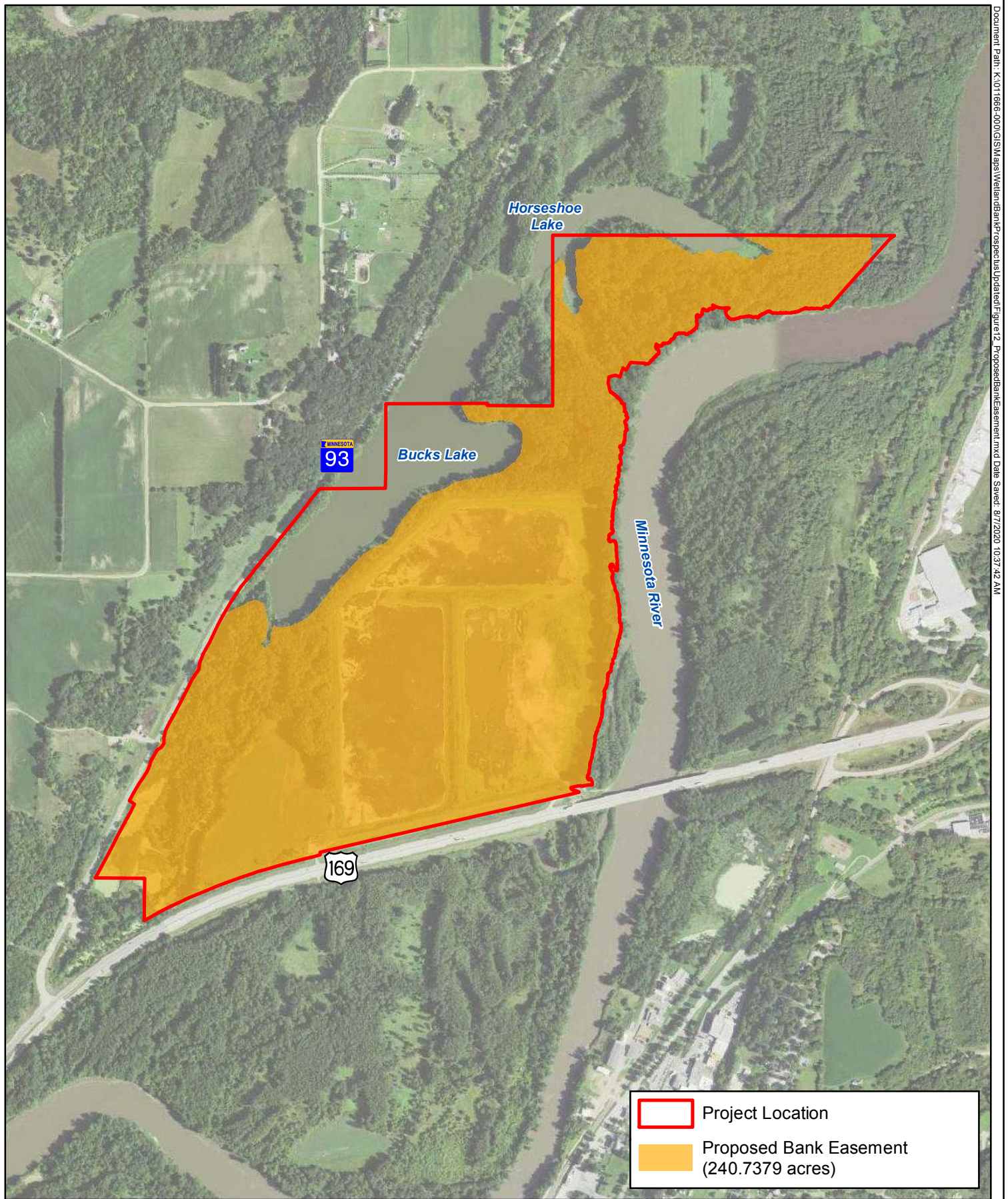


Figure 12: Proposed Bank Easement

Le Sueur Floodplain Wetland Bank
Le Sueur, MN



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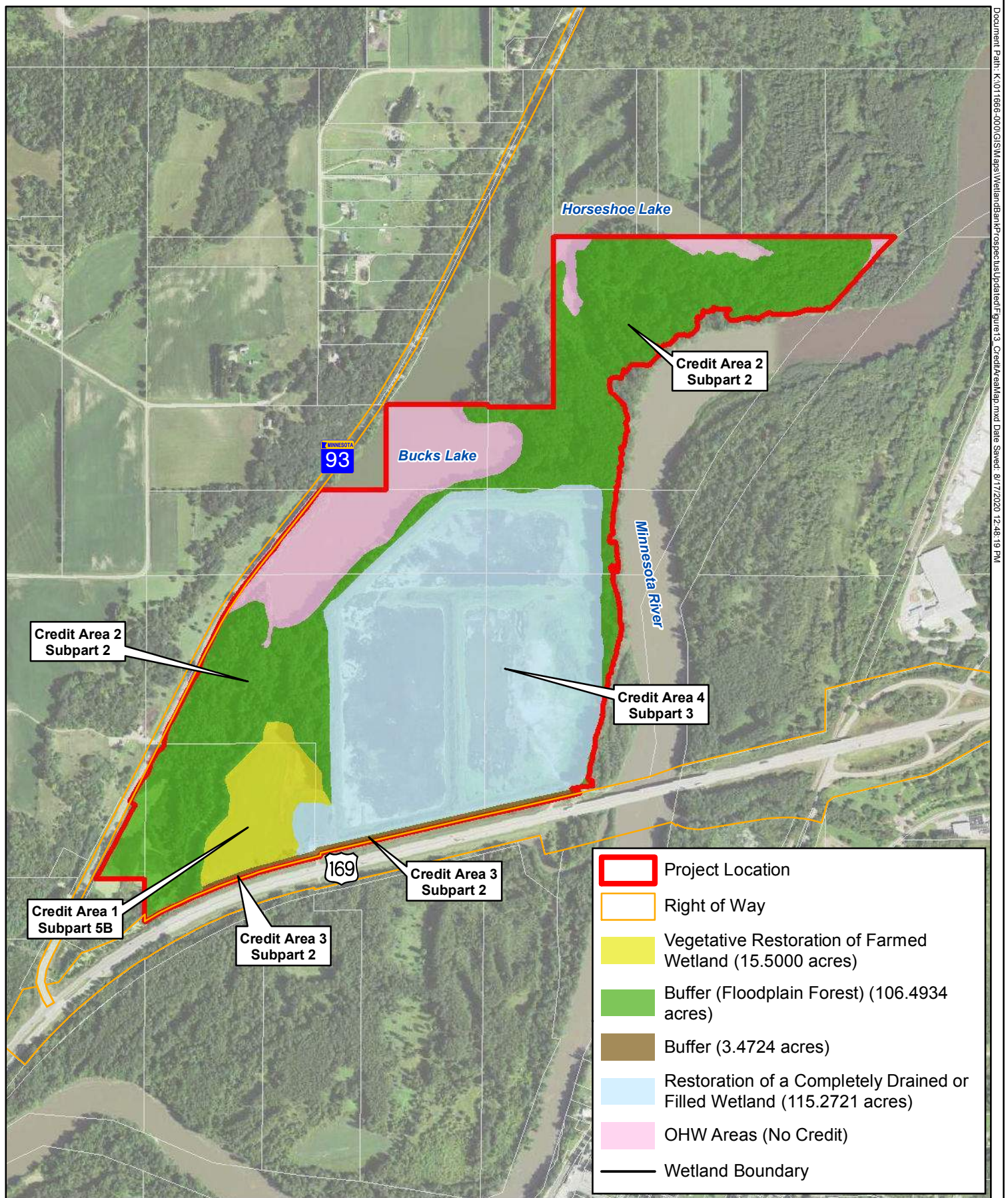
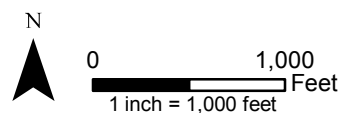
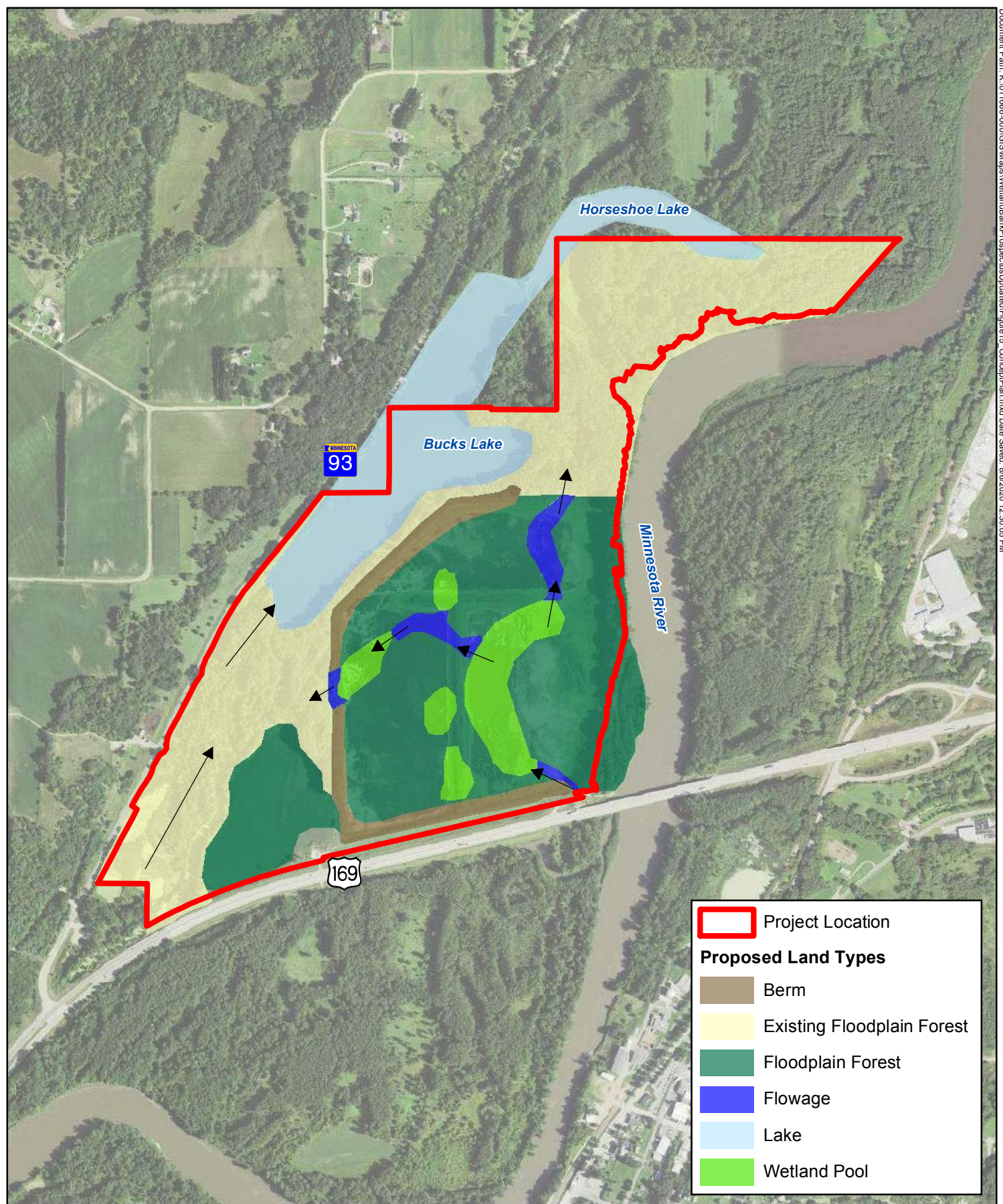


Figure 13: Credit Area Map
 Le Sueur Floodplain Wetland Bank
 Le Sueur, MN





**Figure 15: Concept Plan
Hydrology Restoration and Features**

Le Sueur Floodplain Wetland Bank
Le Sueur, MN



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