



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
St Paul District

**SPONSOR:** Meadowbrook Dairy, Inc.

# Public Notice

**ISSUED:** February 19, 2021

**EXPIRES:** March 22, 2021

**REFER TO:** 2020-01164-EJI

**SECTION:** 404 - Clean Water Act

## 1. WETLAND COMPENSATORY MITIGATION BANK PROPOSAL

## 2. SPECIFIC INFORMATION

**SPONSOR'S ADDRESS:** Meadowbrook Dairy, Inc  
John Udermann  
2611 17<sup>th</sup> St N  
Sartell, MN 56377

**SPONSOR'S AGENT:** Westwood Professional Services  
Matthew Vollbrecht  
3701 12<sup>th</sup> Street N, Suite 206  
St. Cloud, MN 56301

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The project site is located in Section 7, Township 129 North, Range 28 West, Stearns County, Minnesota. The approximate UTM coordinates are N 402254.570099, E 5056050.648825. Latitude 45.651117, Longitude -94.254475.

**BANK SERVICE AREA:** The proposed bank service area is the Upper Mississippi River Basin in Minnesota (Bank Service Area 7).

**DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:** The sponsor is proposing to develop The Meadowbrook Wetland Bank. The proposed bank site is approximately 298.6 acres in size, including upland buffer areas.

**NEED AND OBJECTIVE OF PROJECT:** As stated by the sponsor, the proposed project is in Minor Watershed 15013, within the Mississippi River-Sartell Major Watershed (Exhibit 5a) and in Bank Service Area 7 (Exhibit 5b). As of January 26, 2021, there were no wetland bank credits in this Minor watershed. There were only 4 wetland banks with available credit listed for sale as of the same date in Stearns County. These banks have a total of approximately 14 acres of credit listed, however, based on conversations with these bank owners, the majority of these credits are not currently for sale. They are either tied up in pending sales or are being held and not currently for sale. Based on this data, the demand for wetland credit in Stearns County and BSA 7 is expected to increase.

The overall project goal is to create 232.60 acres of new Type 2 (Sedge Meadow) wetland credit on 294.54 acres through the conversion of 5.51 acres of upland to wetland, the restoration of 170.57 acres of partially drained cropland, the restoration of 48.63 acres of partially drained and vegetatively degraded wetland and the preservation/restoration of 69.82 acres of upland buffer.

**ESTABLISHMENT, OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT:** The bank would be established in 3 phases. According to the prospectus, the actions to restore hydrology include installing engineered ditch plugs in the planned locations shown in Exhibit 9 and Exhibit 9b and backfilling the remaining portions of the ditches. The engineered plugs will have created overflow swales to prevent water from backing up off

the site. The elevations of these overflows are set by the hydrology study that was completed and will be of the approximate elevation to prevent any hydrological impacts on the neighboring landowners.

Material for the engineered ditch plugs and the ditch fill will come from three planned barrow areas, one in each Phase. Preliminary grading plans are being completed and will be designed so no material needs to be imported from off-site. Topsoil will be stripped and re-applied after the material is removed from these areas. Slopes in the borrow areas will be flattened and these areas are expected to develop into wetlands. In addition to the ditch plugs, a broad shallow swale will be excavated in Phase I from where the onsite ditch along the northern portion of the western property line turns east. This swale is designed to convey the water from the neighboring property to the east that currently flows through that ditch into the PWI watercourse that bisects the property. This swale's elevation will allow the water to provide hydrology to the southern portions of Phase I while continuing the ditches effect on the neighboring property. The swale will be constructed by shallow scraping the ground surface and the removed material will be used as top-dressing in the nearby ditch proposed to be filled. A low broad embankment is also proposed to allow the ditch along the property in Phase I to stay in place to allow drainage from the neighboring property to continue and to hold hydrology on the site. This embankment will be approximately 10 feet wide with a top 1 foot above the Emergency Overflow Elevation determined in the Hydrology study. Five other similar low broad embankments are proposed in Phase II to prevent hydrology onsite from impacting neighboring landowners and provide additional hydrology onsite. All the embankments will be low with shallow slopes to prevent damage by rodents. The embankment locations are shown on Exhibit 9a and 9b.

The sponsor stated that site preparation, seeding and long term invasive species control will all be completed by a Native Plant and Landscape firm with experienced staff to ensure vegetation restoration is a success and that invasive species are controlled in the short term. By using an experienced contractor and being proactive with an adaptive management plan the planned native vegetation will be allowed to become well established onsite. This will allow the plant communities onsite to become well established and be resistant to invasive species in the long term.

**OWNERSHIP AND LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT:** The project sponsor is Meadowbrook Dairy Inc. They are also the owner of the property. The primary contact for Meadowbrook Dairy Inc. is John Udermann. Long term management and ownership of the land will remain with Meadowbrook Dairy Inc.

**TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY AND QUALIFICATIONS:** According to the sponsor's consultant, the project is technically feasible due to the nature of the site and the simplicity of the planned restoration actions. The presence of the internal ditches, the large areas of hydric soils and the aerial photography review indicate that the areas onsite that are proposed for wetland restoration are mostly partially drained, cropped agricultural fields. As stated in the prospectus, Westwood has completed wetland banking plans for multiple projects in Aitkin, Clay and Stearns Counties in Minnesota. In addition, Westwood has completed large numbers of Project Specific Mitigation plans for residential and commercial developments all across Minnesota. Westwood is a full service Engineering, Surveying and Environmental firm that has been in operation in Minnesota since 1972. Westwood has Professional Engineers (including engineers that specialize in hydrology studies and modeling), Professional Surveyors and Professional Wetland Scientists and Minnesota Certified Wetland Delineators on staff with the technical expertise to plan, design and implement this project.

**ECOLOGICAL SUITABILITY:** As stated in the prospectus, the project will fit well into the surrounding landscape. Large wetland complexes located to the northwest and southeast of the proposed bank would be connected and provide a large habitat corridor. The western and southern property boundaries are bounded by roads with wetlands and rural homesteads beyond. No impacts to the land use of these properties are expected by the project.

**HYDROLOGY:** The prospectus states that hydrology within the easement area flows from the west to the east. Historically the water movement was underground, but agricultural operations have created ditches that drain into the large public ditch in the center of the site (Existing Conditions Mapping, Exhibit 3). The majority of ditches flow north to south. No drain tile is present on the site. Many of the wetlands on site are inadequately drained in most normal years and still support wetland conditions. No known drainage agreements are in place. The watercourse identified as County Ditch 13 that flows through the center of the site is a MNDNR public watercourse. Stearns County is the County Ditch authority for the project area. Westwood contacted Stearns County and verified that the watercourse is not a county ditch and no maintenance easement exists over the ditch or the surrounding lands. Therefore, the proposed easement to the Top of Bank of the watercourse is appropriate for the project. Due to the potential for off-site hydrology impacts to neighboring landowners. Westwood completed a Preliminary Hydrology Report to model the effects of the proposed actions on the property. This report is included in the prospectus in Appendix G and an exhibit of the storm event ponding is included as Exhibit 13. The results for this study indicate that there will be no ponding of water on neighboring properties, and the project will not have any adverse effects on neighboring properties. Even though the Hydrology Study has indicated that the design will contain all the water on the site, six embankments are proposed as an extra measure to prevent effects on the neighboring properties.

**CURRENT LAND USES:** Exhibit 2 shows the current land use on the site. The current conditions on the site consist of mostly cultivated fields with a ditch system used to drain the site. A farmstead is present in the southern portion of the site. A large wetland complex used for hay production is located in the southwestern portion of the Site and other scattered wetlands are located in the north, west, and eastern portions of the site. Public roads border to the site to the west and south. A farm road extends from the southern boundary of the site to the north central portion.

**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, Stearns 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:

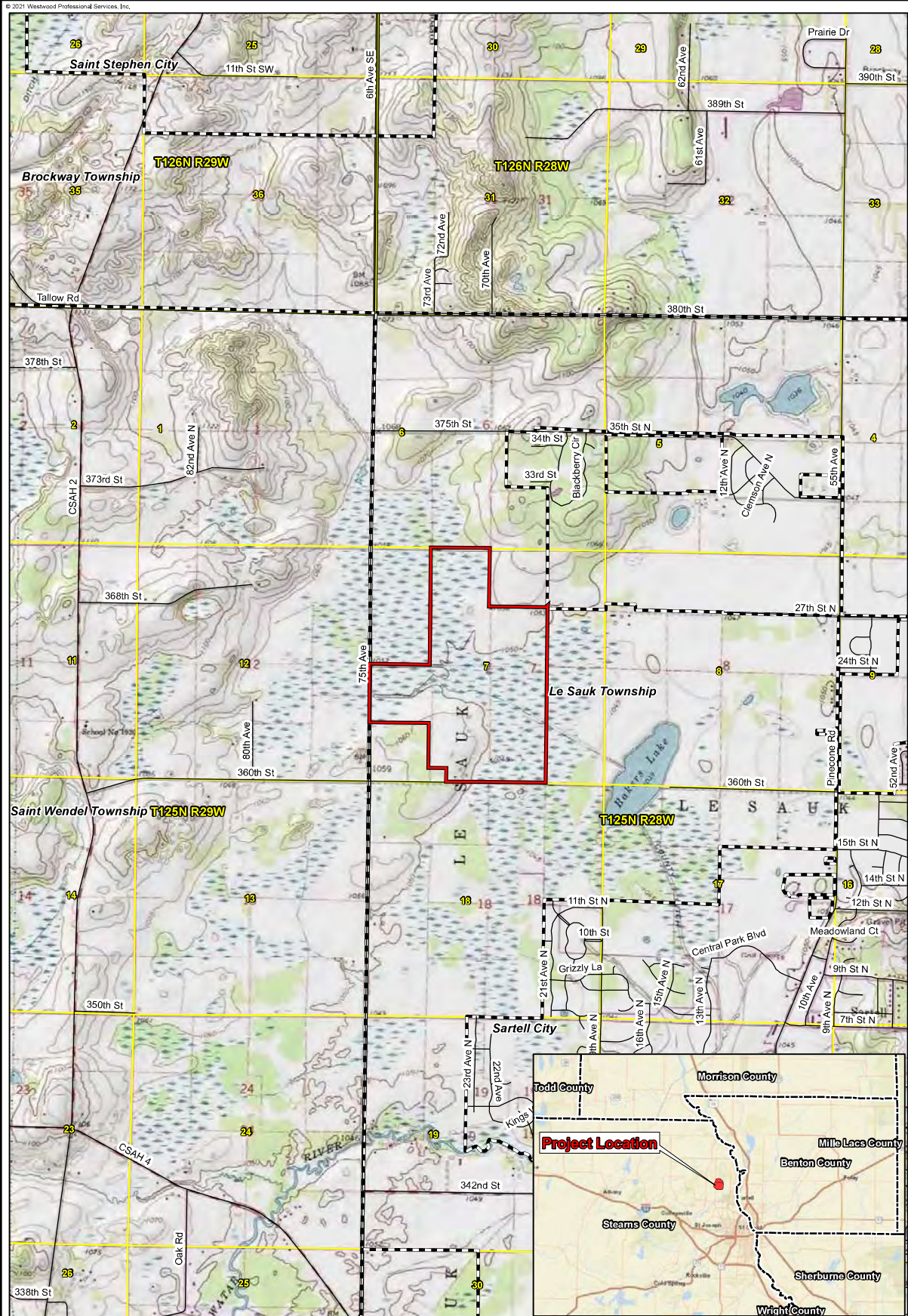
Regulatory Division  
St. Paul District Corps of Engineers  
180 Fifth Street East, Suite 700  
St. Paul, MN 55101-1678

Or, IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT, call Evan Ingebrigtsen at the Brainerd field office of the Corps, telephone number 651-290-5765 or email [evan.j.ingebriktson@usace.army.mil](mailto:evan.j.ingebriktson@usace.army.mil).

If you wish to receive St. Paul District public notice notifications, please visit our website at <https://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/Public-Notices/> for instructions on how to subscribe to individual RSS Feed categories. Click "See Information On RSS Notifications for Public Notices" towards the top of the page.

Enclosures

Map Document N:\0026003\00GEBanking\Exhibits\MDL\_Ext1\_SiteLocation.mxd 1/13/2021 1:14:33 PM RJ/Cress  
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Data Source(s): Westwood (2021).

**Legend**

- Project Boundary
- County Boundary
- Road
- PLS Township Boundary
- City/Civil Township Boundary
- PLS Section Boundary

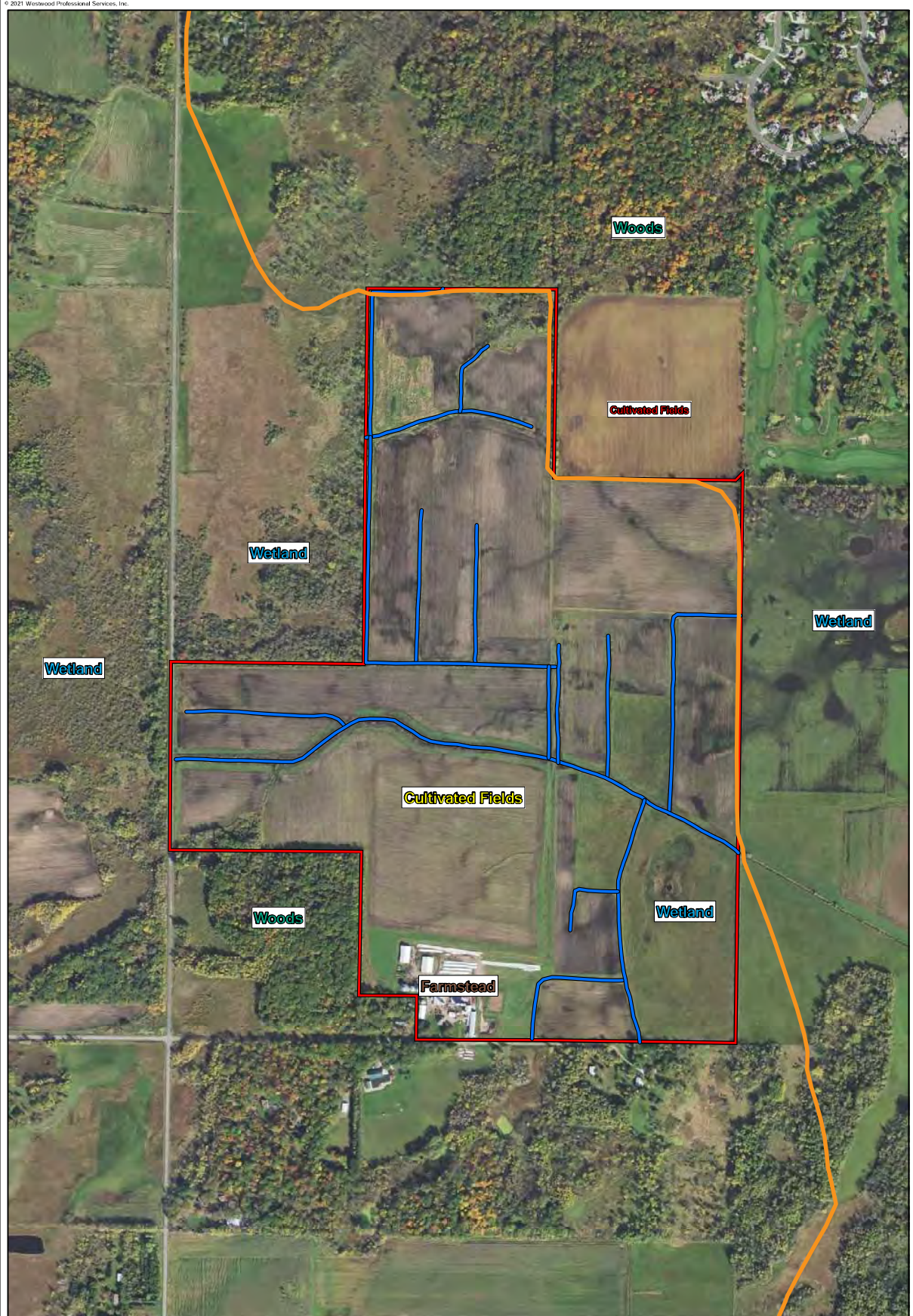


**Meadowbrook Wetland Bank**

Stearns County, MN

Site Location

EXHIBIT 1



Data Source(s): Westwood (2021):

Legend

- Project Boundary
- Ditch
- DNR Snowmobile Trail



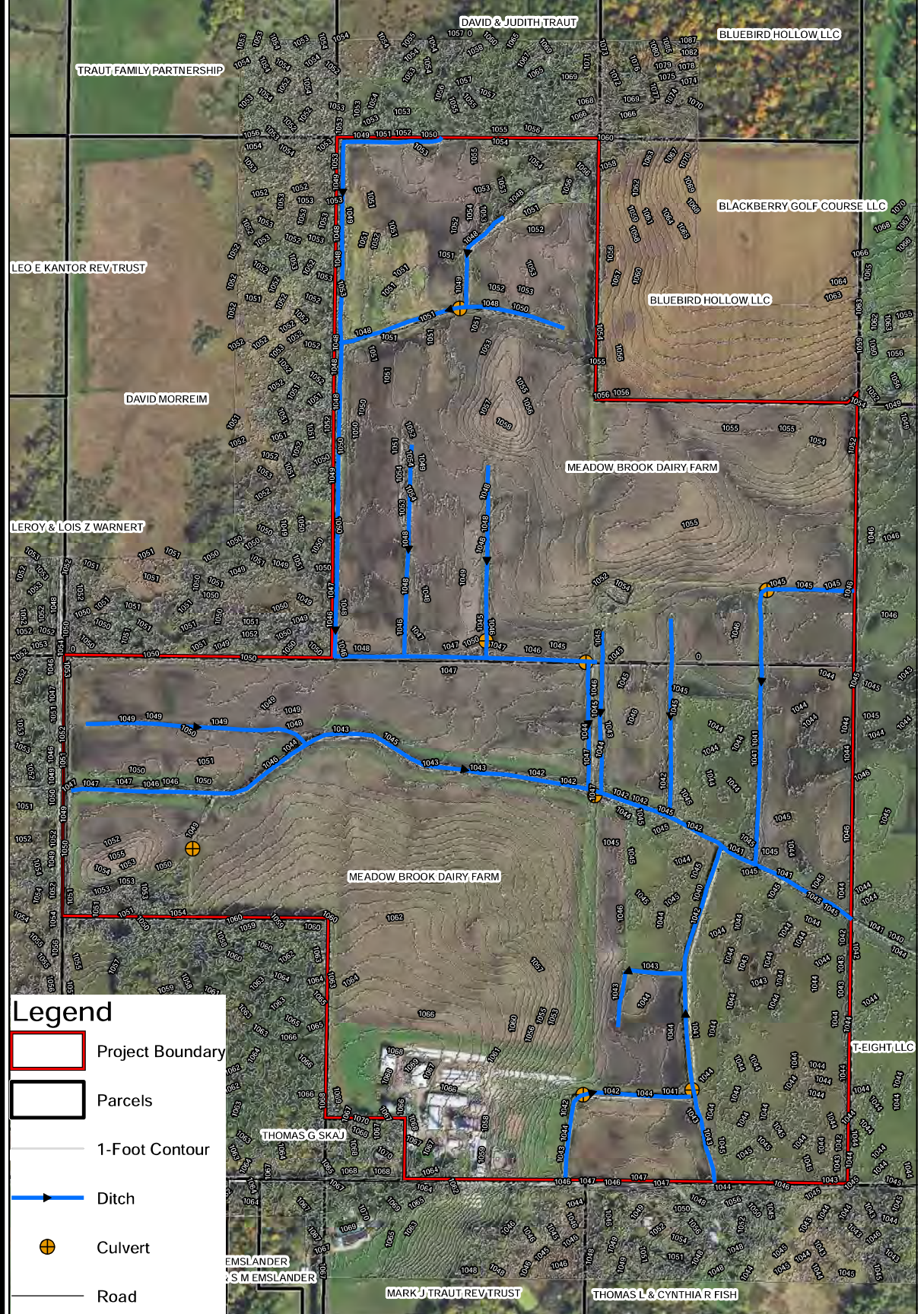
Meadowbrook Wetland Bank  
Stearns County, MN

Land Use

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 Westwood Professional Services, Inc.

EXHIBIT 2

Map Document: N:\0029003.09\GIS\Banking Exhibits\MDL\_Ext\_ExistingConditionsTopographic.mxd 1/15/2021 2:02:30 PM RJ/Cres



**Legend**

- Project Boundary
- Parcels
- 1-Foot Contour
- Ditch
- ⊕ Culvert
- Road

Data Sources: Westwood (2021).

**Meadowbrook Wetland Bank**  
 Stearns County, MN  
 Existing Conditions  
 Topographic



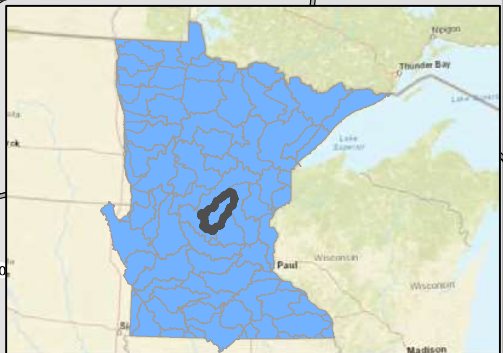
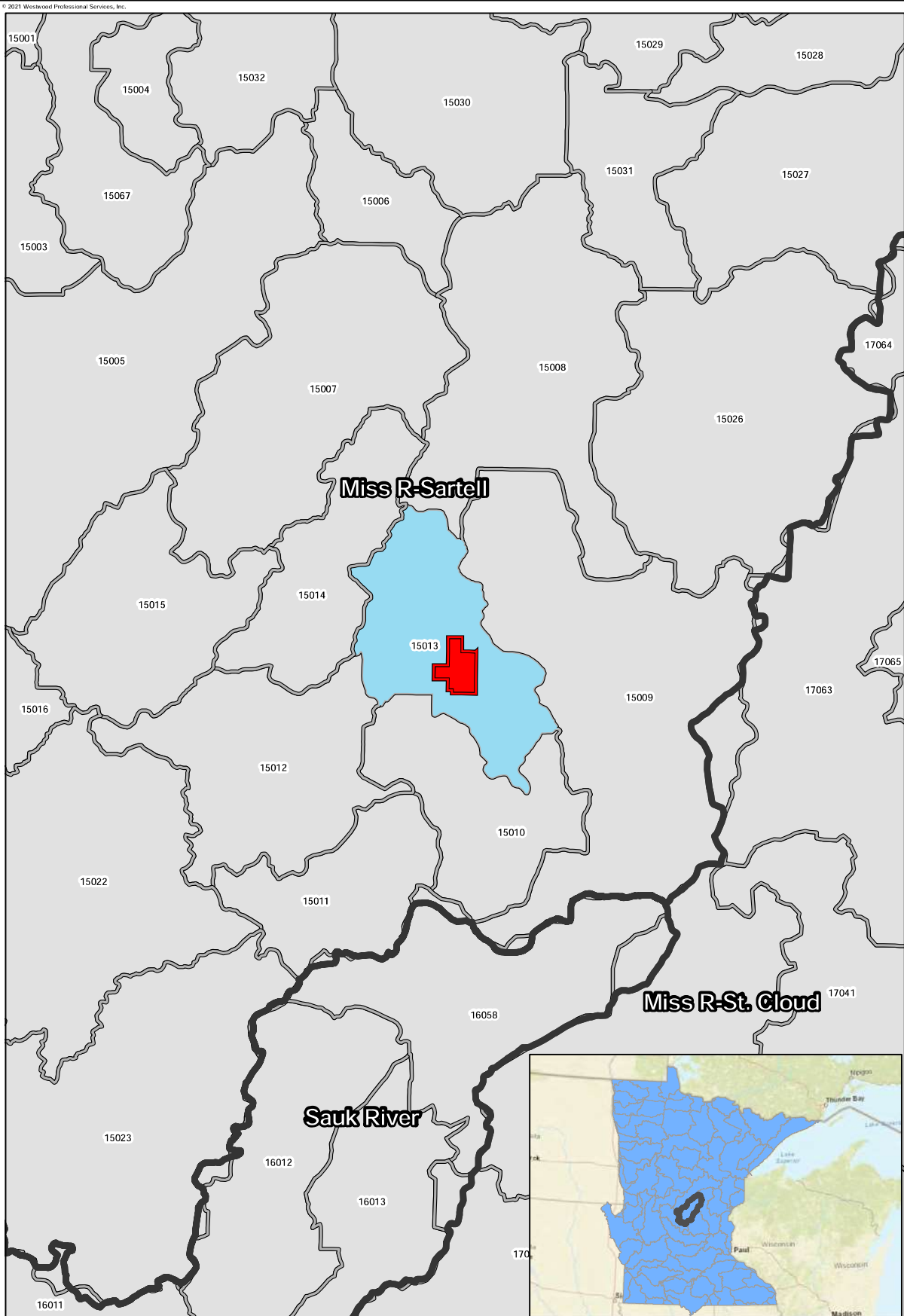
**Westwood**  
 (888) 937-5150 westwood.com  
 Westwood Professional Services, Inc.





Map Document: N:\0029003.00\GIS\Banking Exhibits\WDI\_Ex5a\_WatershedMap.mxd 1/12/2021 1:22:06 PM RJ/Cress

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Data Source(s): Westwood (2021).

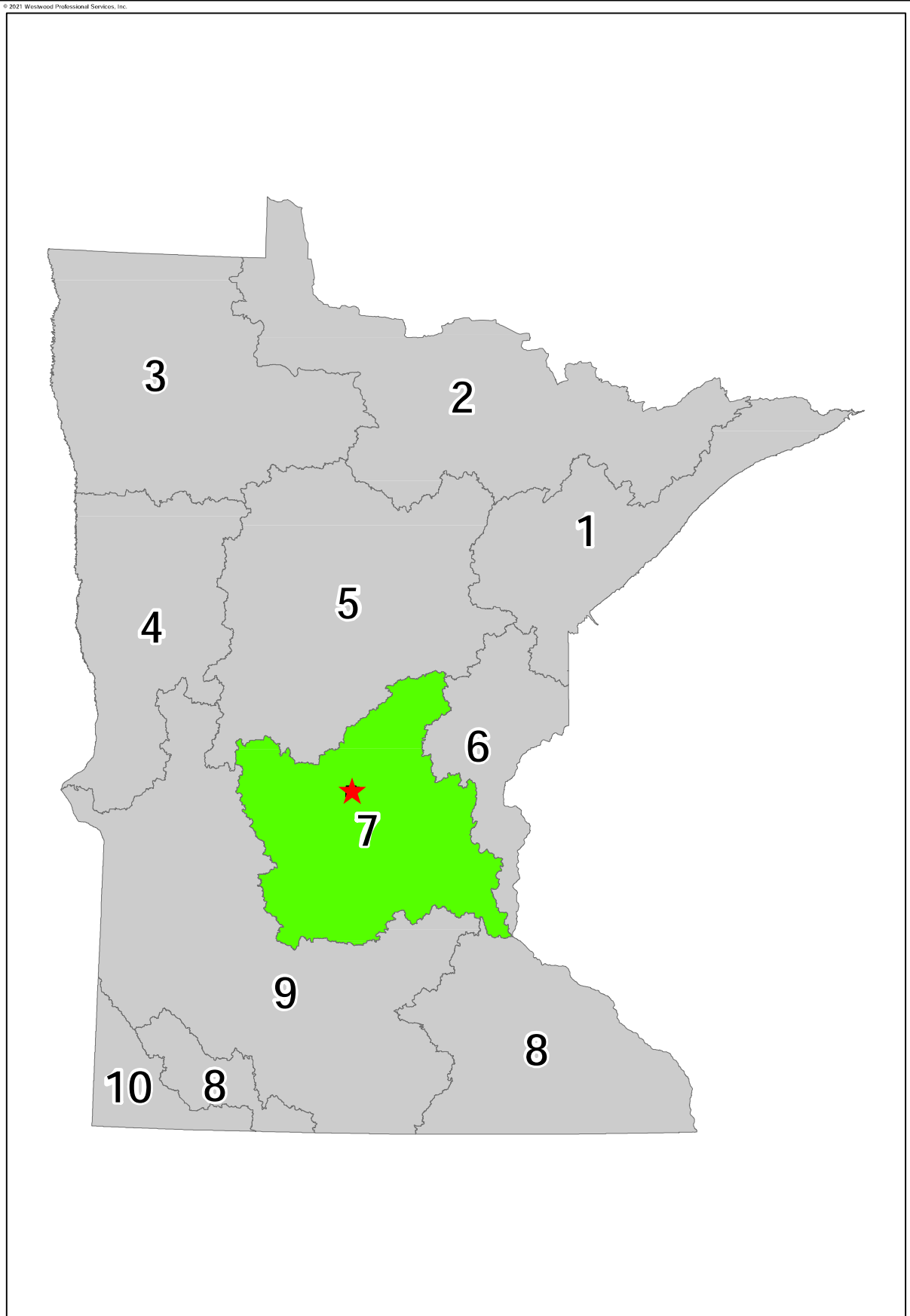
- Legend**
- Project Boundary
  - Major Watershed #15
  - Surrounding Minor Watersheds
  - Minor Watershed #15013



**Meadowbrook Wetland Bank**  
Stearns County, MN




**Watershed Location**

Map Document: N:\0029003.00\CAD\Banking Exhibit\MDI\_ Ex5b\_BankServiceArea.mxd 1/8/2021 8:41:57 AM RJCress  
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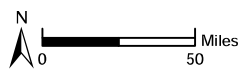


Data Source(s): Westwood (2021):

Legend

-  Project Location
-  Other Bank Service Areas
-  Bank Service Area 7

Meadowbrook Wetland Bank  
Stearns County, MN

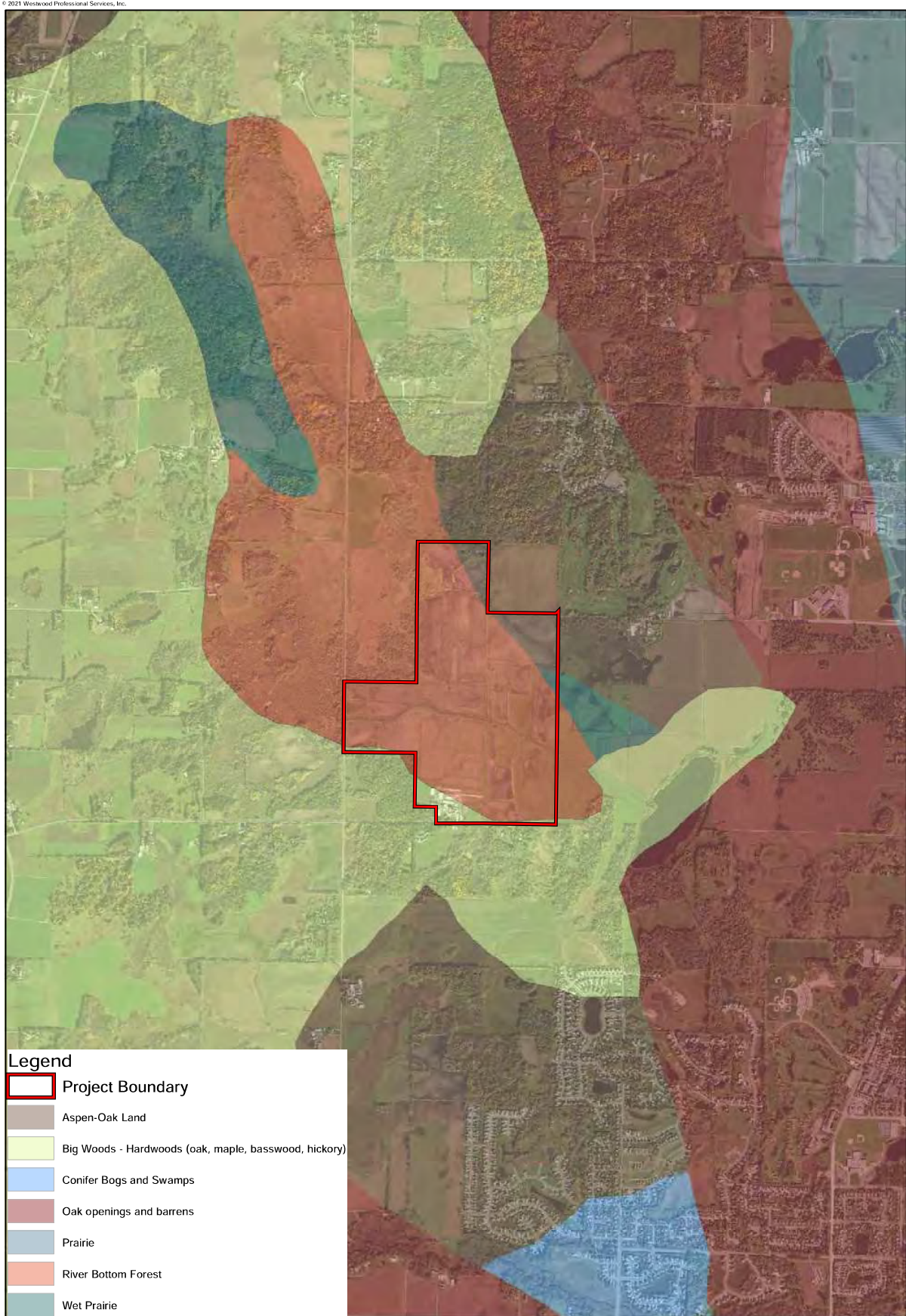


Bank Service Area Location









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EXHIBIT 5b





**Legend**

-  Project Boundary
-  Aspen-Oak Land
-  Big Woods - Hardwoods (oak, maple, basswood, hickory)
-  Conifer Bogs and Swamps
-  Oak openings and barrens
-  Prairie
-  River Bottom Forest
-  Wet Prairie

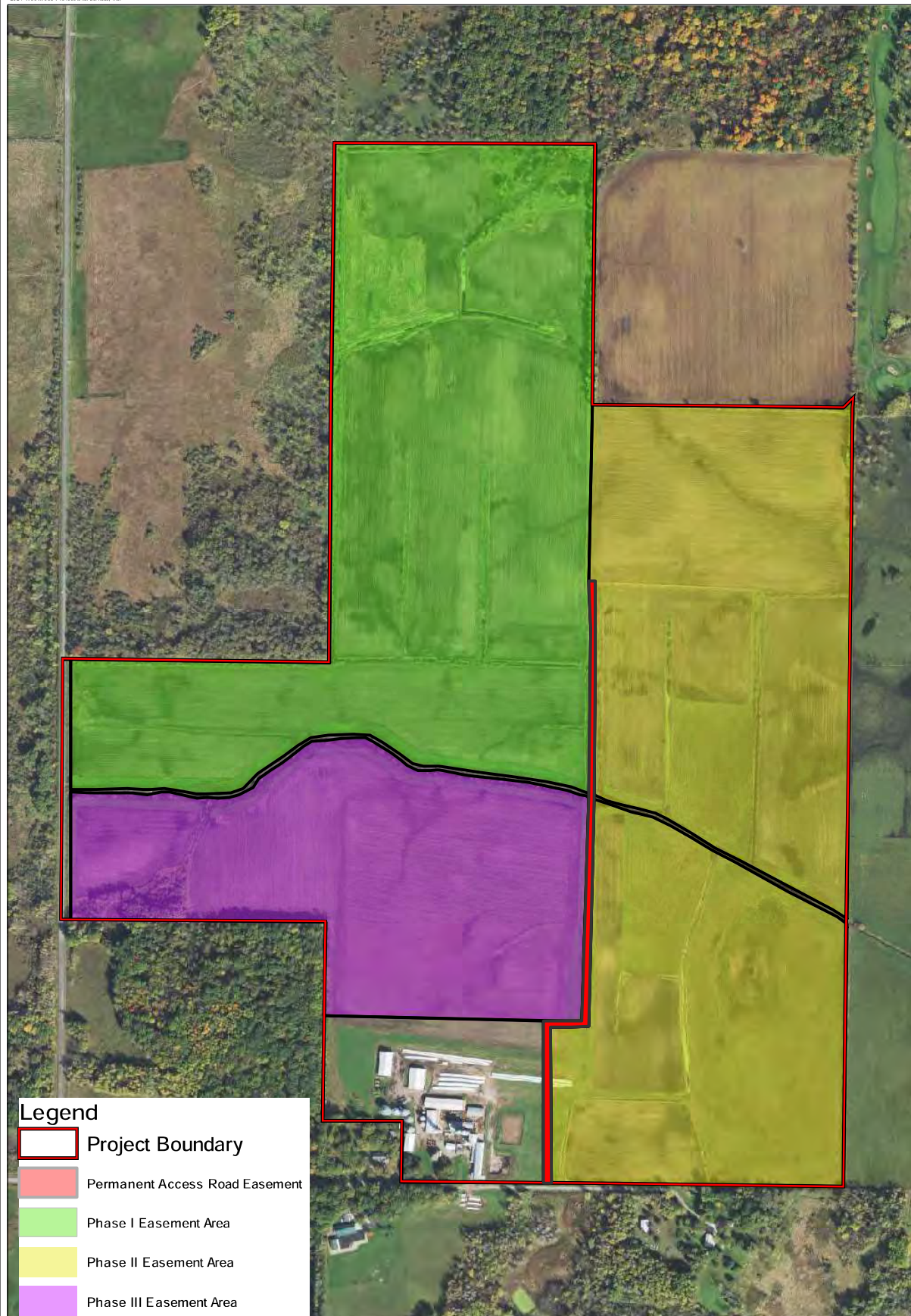
Data Source(s): Westwood (2021).

**Meadowbrook Wetland Bank**  
Stearns County, MN



**Early Settlement Vegetation**

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**Legend**

- Project Boundary
- Permanent Access Road Easement
- Phase I Easement Area
- Phase II Easement Area
- Phase III Easement Area

Data Source(s): Westwood (2021)

**Meadowbrook Wetland Bank**  
Stearns County, MN



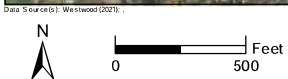
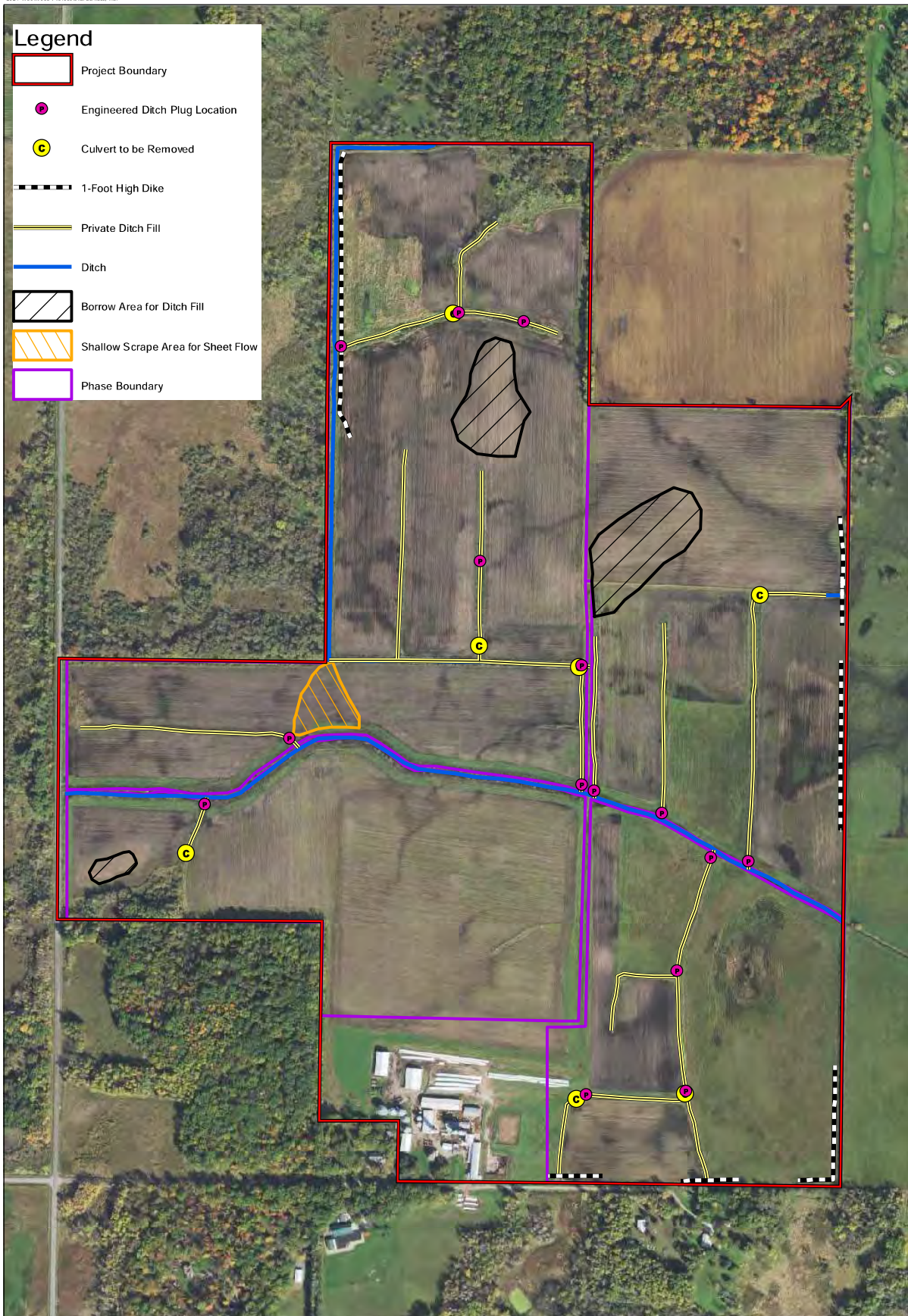
Proposed Phases

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Westwood Professional Services, Inc.

Map Document N:\002908\00GIS\Banking Exhibits\MDI\_Exp\_Concept Plan.mxd 1/29/2021 10:07:06 AM ewestwood  
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**Legend**

- Project Boundary
- Engineered Ditch Plug Location
- Culvert to be Removed
- 1-Foot High Dike
- Private Ditch Fill
- Ditch
- Borrow Area for Ditch Fill
- Shallow Scrape Area for Sheet Flow
- Phase Boundary



Meadowbrook Wetland Bank  
Stearns County, MN

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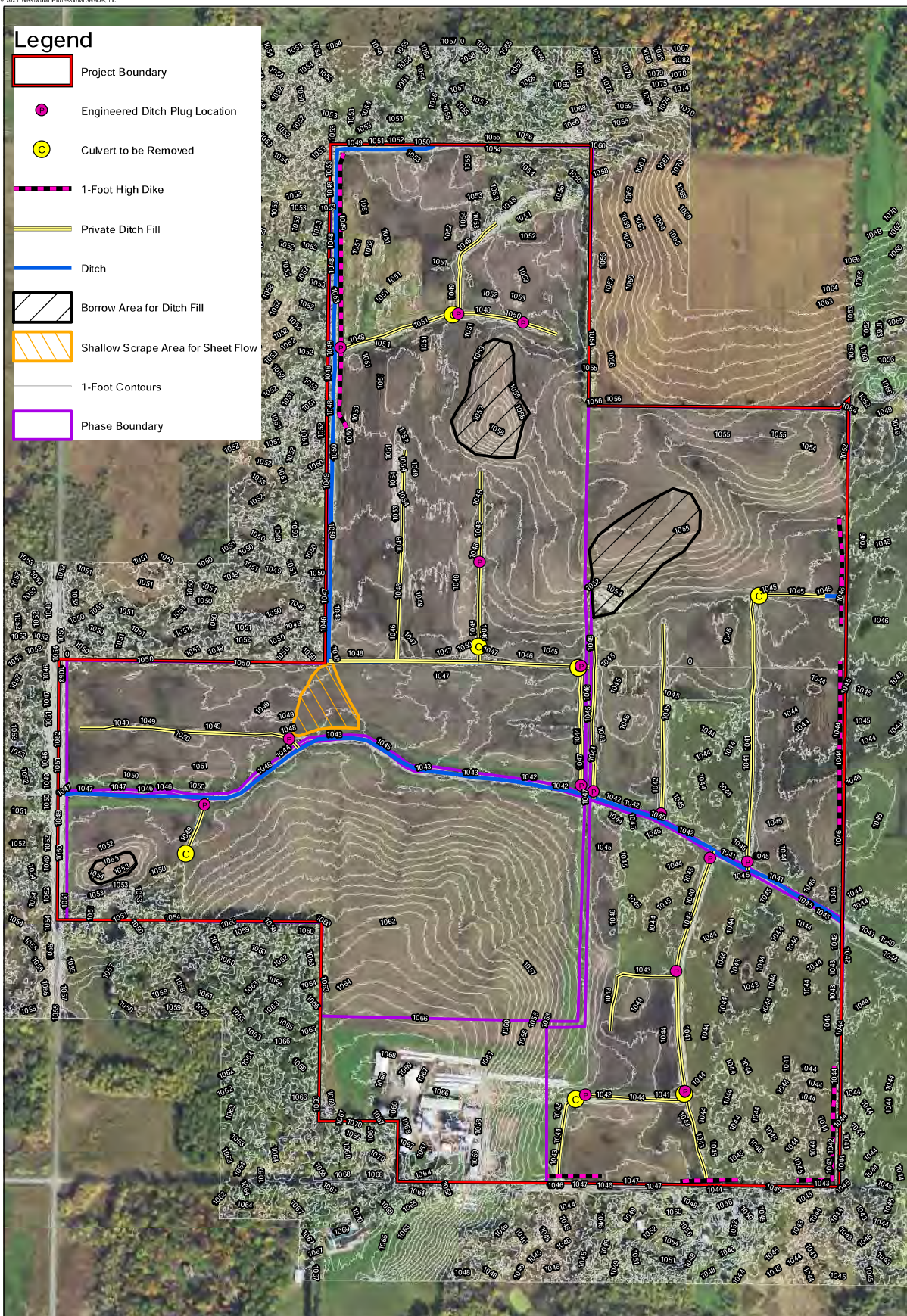
Proposed Concept Plan

EXHIBIT 9a

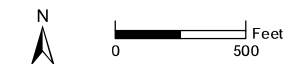
Map Document N:\0225008\_00\GIS\Banking\_Exchange\MDI\_Exchange\_Concept\_Plan\mxd 10/29/2021 10:06:55 AM mrc@westwood  
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**Legend**

- Project Boundary
- Engineered Ditch Plug Location
- Culvert to be Removed
- 1-Foot High Dike
- Private Ditch Fill
- Ditch
- Borrow Area for Ditch Fill
- Shallow Scrape Area for Sheet Flow
- 1-Foot Contours
- Phase Boundary



Data Source(s): Westwood (2021)





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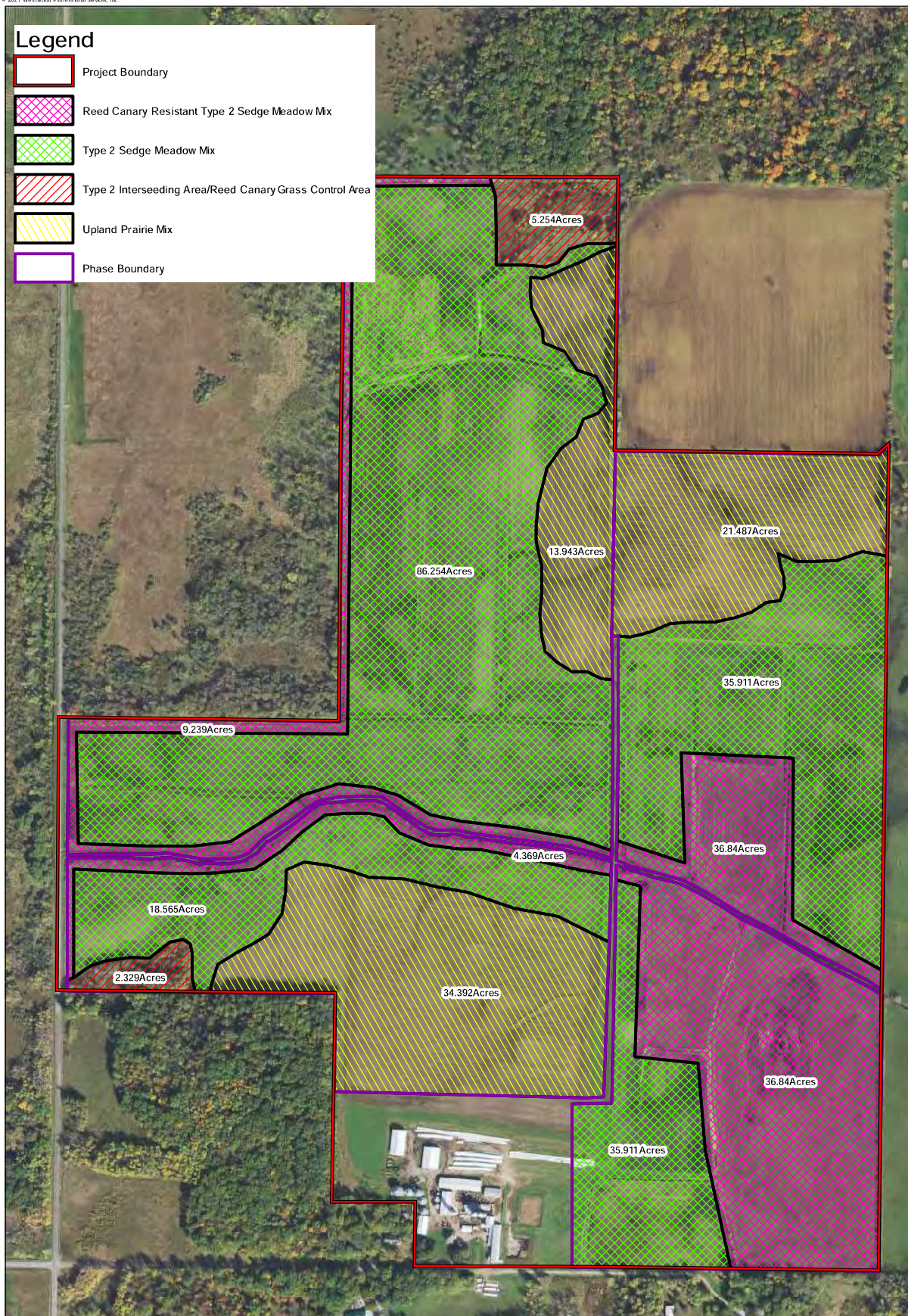
**Meadowbrook Wetland Bank**  
 Stearns County, MN

Proposed Concept Plan  
 with Contours  
 EXHIBIT 9b

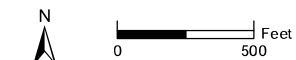
Map Document N:\022508-00\GIS\Banking Exhibits\MDL\_1x10C\DR\_SeedingPlan.mxd 1/29/2021 9:40:14 AM mrcvrbuck  
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**Legend**

-  Project Boundary
-  Reed Canary Resistant Type 2 Sedge Meadow Mix
-  Type 2 Sedge Meadow Mix
-  Type 2 Interseeding Area/Reed Canary Grass Control Area
-  Upland Prairie Mix
-  Phase Boundary



Data Source(s): Westwood (2021)



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




**Meadowbrook Wetland Bank**  
 Stearns County, MN

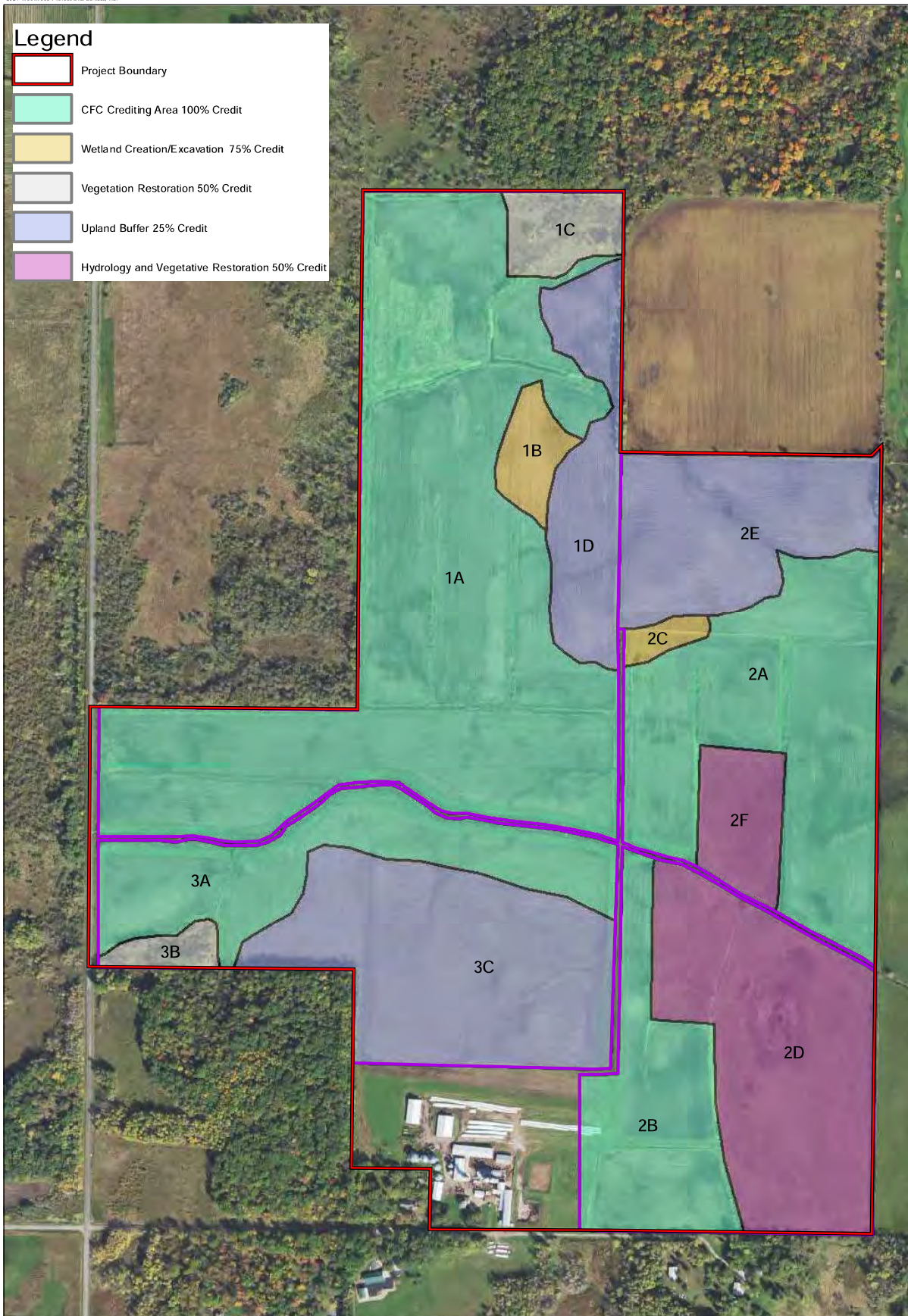
Proposed Seeding Area



Map Document N:\0025008-00\GIS\Banking Exhibits\MDO\_1x11\_CreditingPlan.mxd 1/25/2021 9:49:26 AM mcdobrach  
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### Legend

-  Project Boundary
-  CFC Crediting Area 100% Credit
-  Wetland Creation/Excavation 75% Credit
-  Vegetation Restoration 50% Credit
-  Upland Buffer 25% Credit
-  Hydrology and Vegetative Restoration 50% Credit



Data Source(s): Westwood (2021)



0 500 Feet

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**Meadowbrook Wetland Bank**

Stearns County, MN

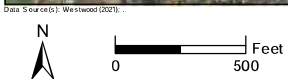
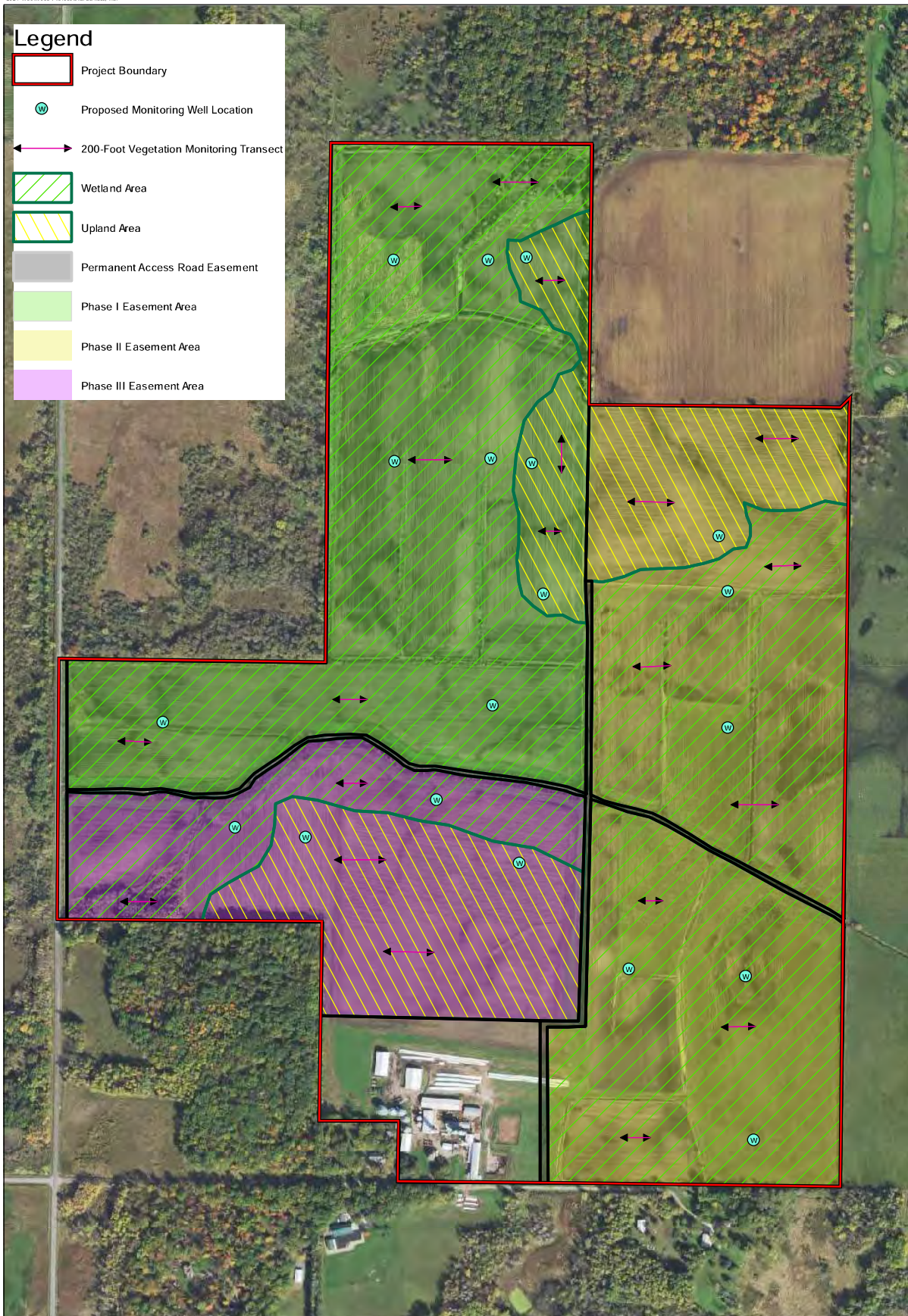
Proposed Crediting Plan

EXHIBIT 11

Map Document N:\002908\00GIS\Banking\_Exchange\MDI\_1x12\_MonitoringPlan.mxd 1/29/2021 9:51:37 AM mcochrane  
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**Legend**

- Project Boundary
- Proposed Monitoring Well Location
- 200-Foot Vegetation Monitoring Transect
- Wetland Area
- Upland Area
- Permanent Access Road Easement
- Phase I Easement Area
- Phase II Easement Area
- Phase III Easement Area

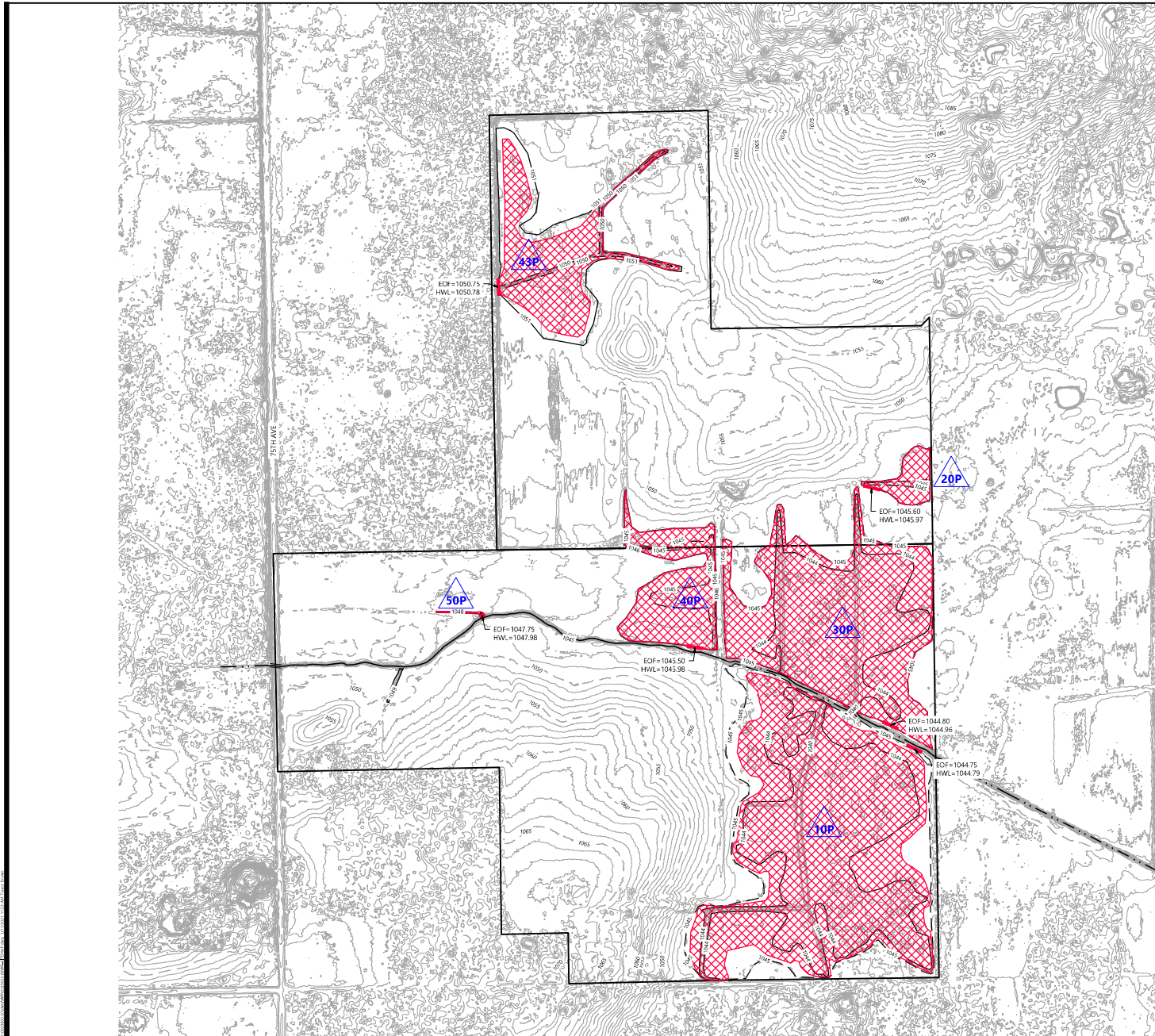


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Westwood Professional Services, Inc.

**Meadowbrook Wetland Bank**  
Stearns County, MN

Proposed Monitoring Plan

EXHIBIT 12



**LEGEND:**

- 900 — PROJECT BOUNDARY
- EX INDEX CONTOUR
- EX INTERVAL CONTOUR
- EX CULVERT
- EX STREAM CHANNEL
- 900 — PROPOSED INDEX CONTOUR
- 900 — PROPOSED INTERVAL CONTOUR
- PROPOSED HWL
- PROPOSED EMERGENCY OVERFLOW
- PROPOSED WETLAND BANK

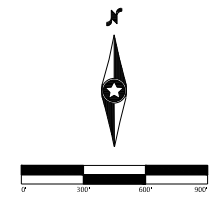
**Westwood**  
 Phone: (202) 254-895 3261 10th Street North, Suite 206  
 Fax: (202) 256-007 St. Cloud, MN 56205  
 Toll Free: (800) 216-895 westwood.com  
 Westwood Professional Services, Inc.

PREPARED FOR:

**Meadowbrook Dairy, Inc.**

2611 17th St N  
 Sartell, MN 56377

REVISION #	DATE	COMMENT



**Meadowbrook Dairy Wetland Bank**  
 LeSauk Township, Stearns County, Minnesota

Wetland Site Map  
 Preliminary Hydrology Map  
 Exhibit 13

**NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION**

DATE: 11/24/2020  
 SHEET: 7