
SAYLORVILLE LAKE MASTER PLAN

**DES MOINES RIVER WATERSHED
JOHNSTON, IOWA**

APPENDIX H

MAPS

POLK, DALLAS, BOONE COUNTIES, IOWA

JANUARY 2015

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DES MOINES RIVER WATERSHED JOHNSTON, IOWA

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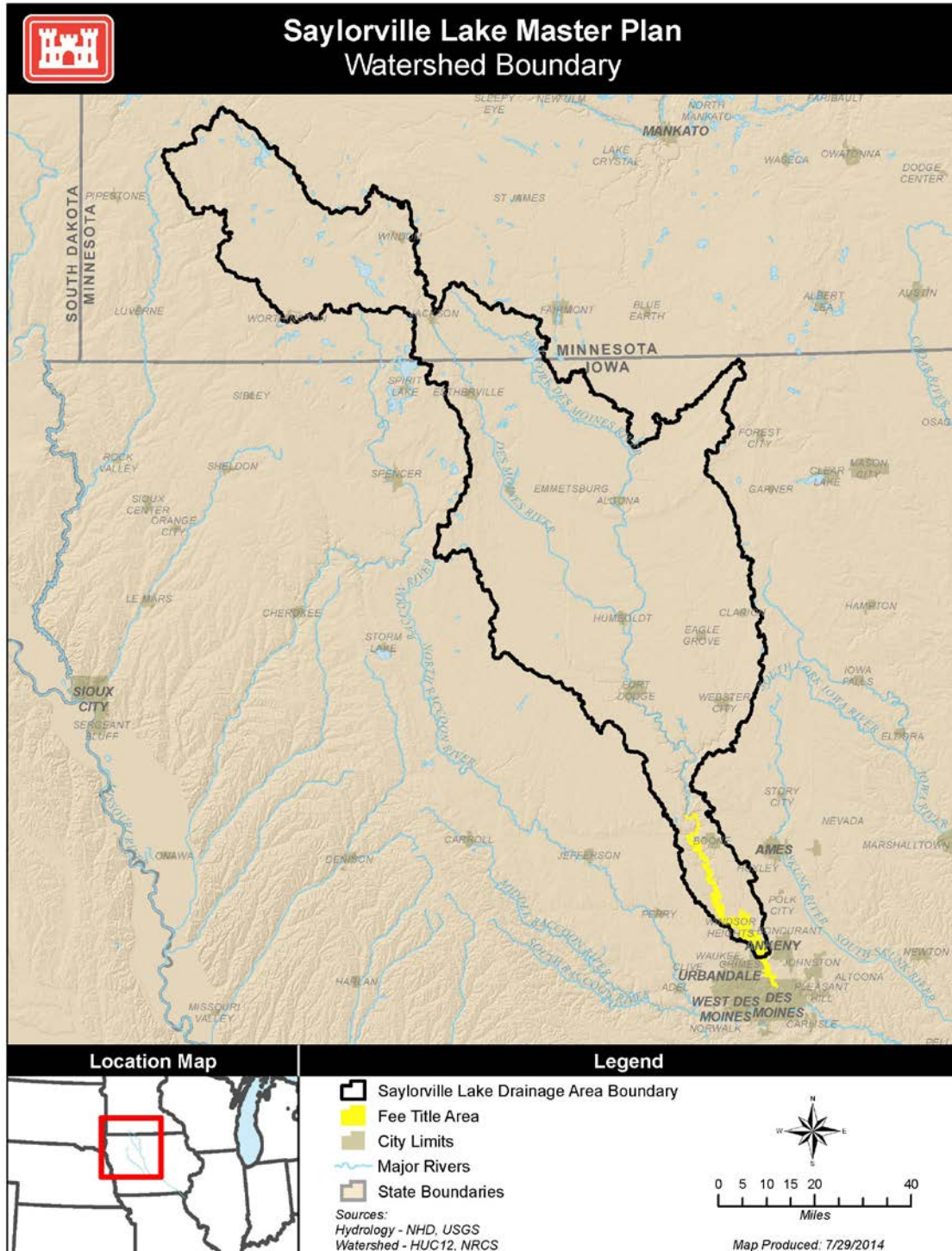
H.1. Saylorville Lake Project Area



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H.2 Saylorville Lake Watershed



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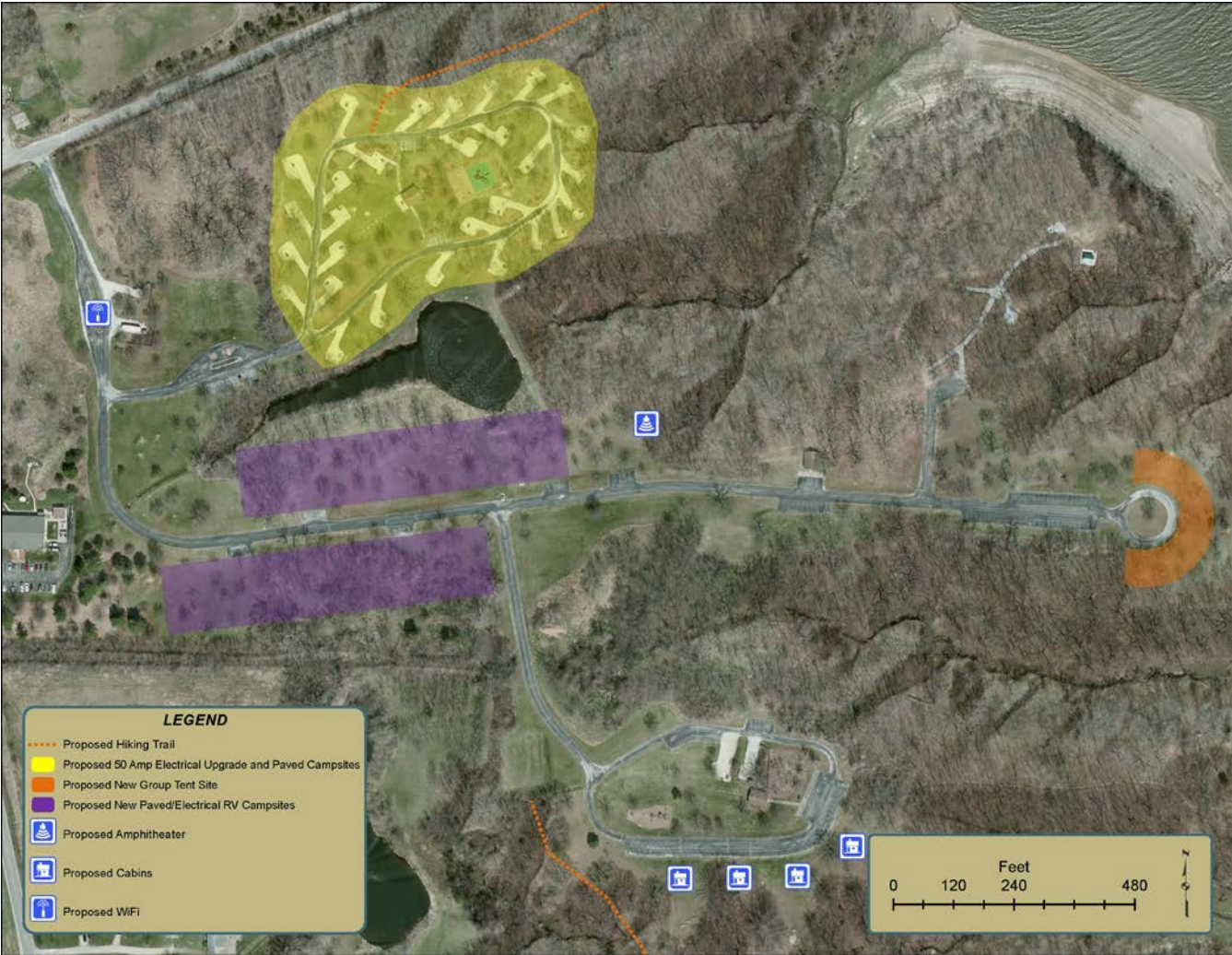
H.3 Saylorville Lake Mudflats



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H.4 Acorn Valley Campground



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H.5 Walnut Ridge Recreation Area



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H.6 Lakeview Recreation Area



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H.7 Bob Shetler Recreation Area – Main Campground



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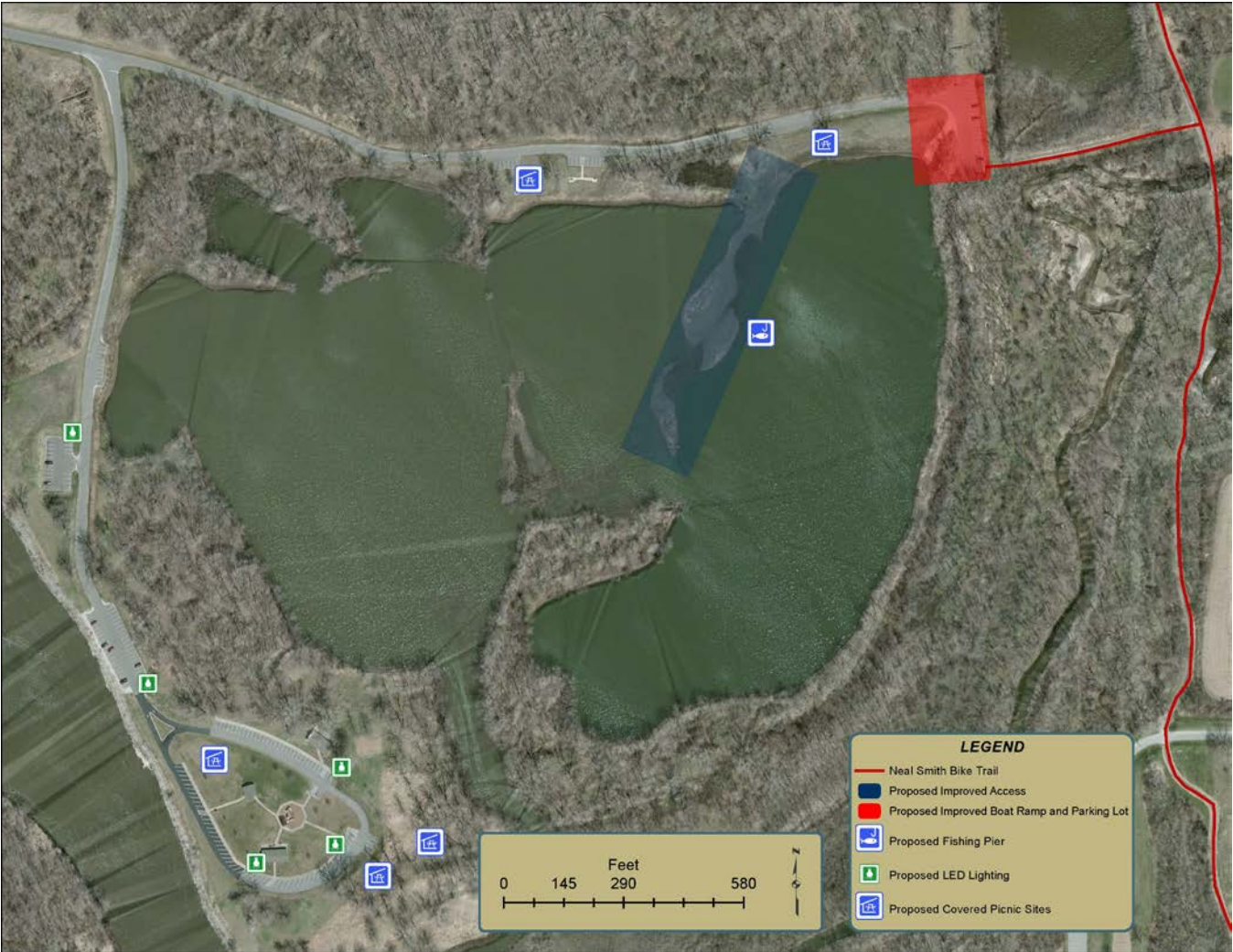
H.8 Bob Shetler Recreation Area – West Campground and Day Use



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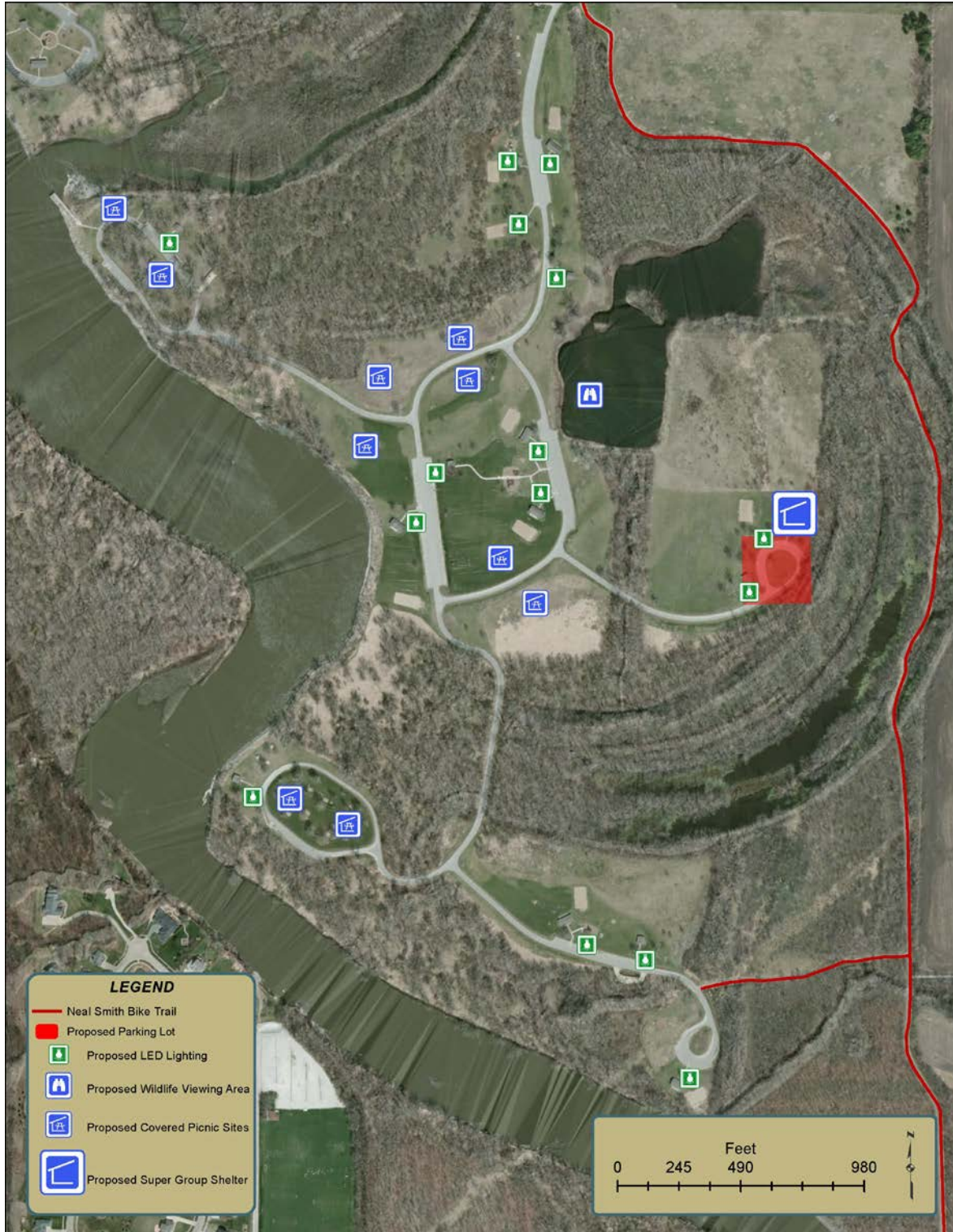
H.9 Bob Shetler Recreation Area – Picnic



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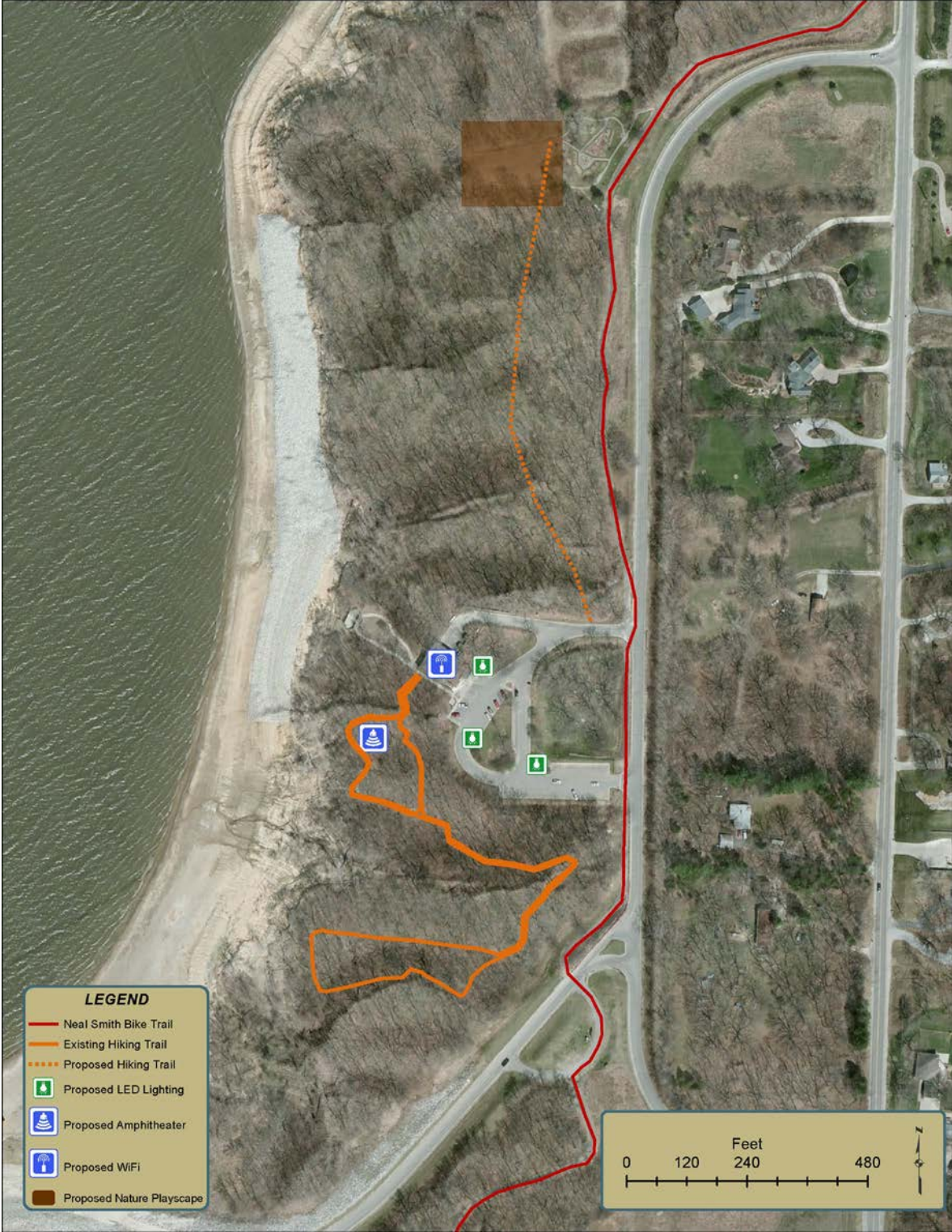
H.10 Cottonwood Recreation Area



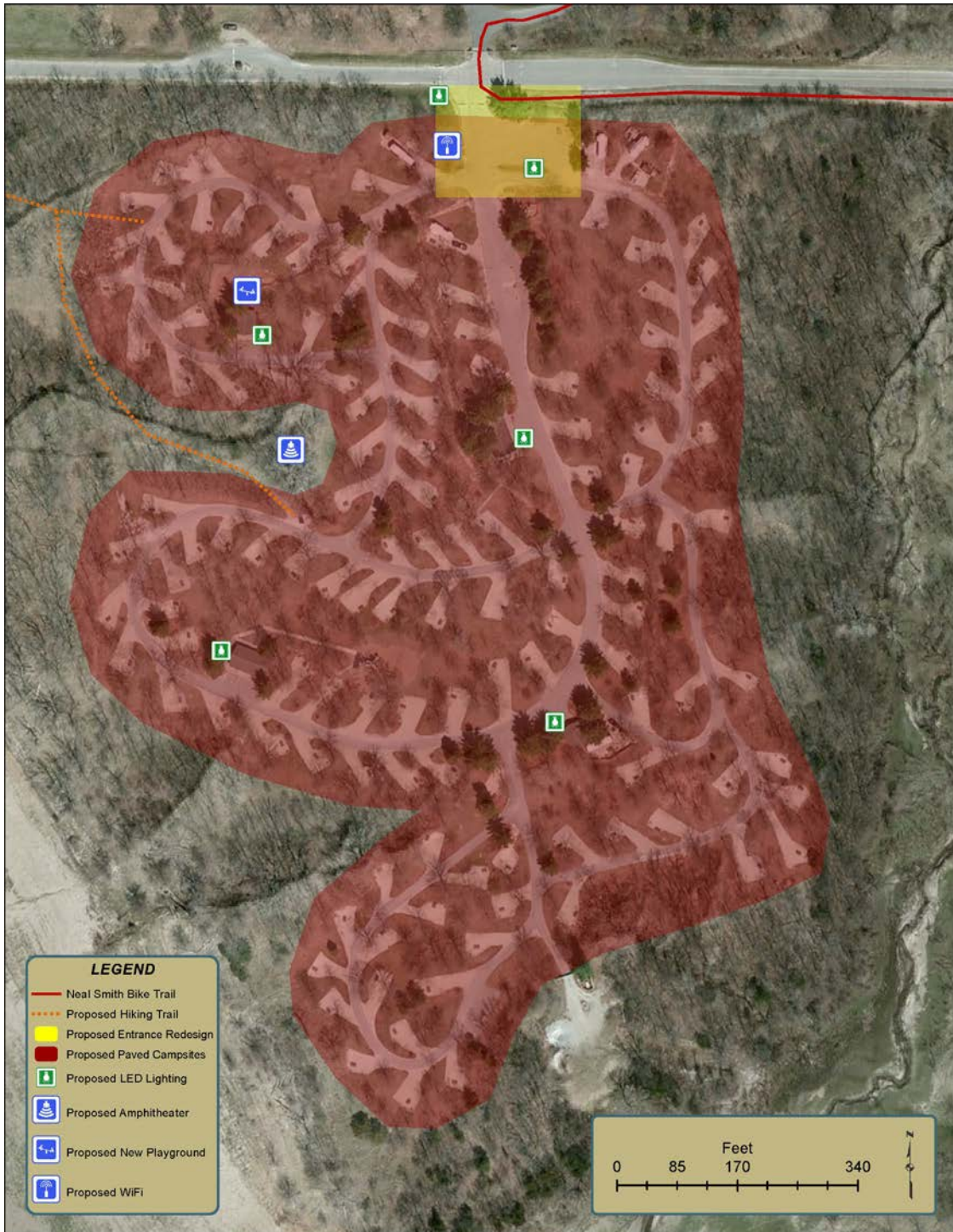
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H.11 Visitor Center



H.12 Cherry Glen Campground



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H.13 Cherry Glen Recreation Area – Picnic



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H.14 Cherry Glen Recreation Area – Boat Ramp



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H.15 Oak Grove Recreation Area – Beach



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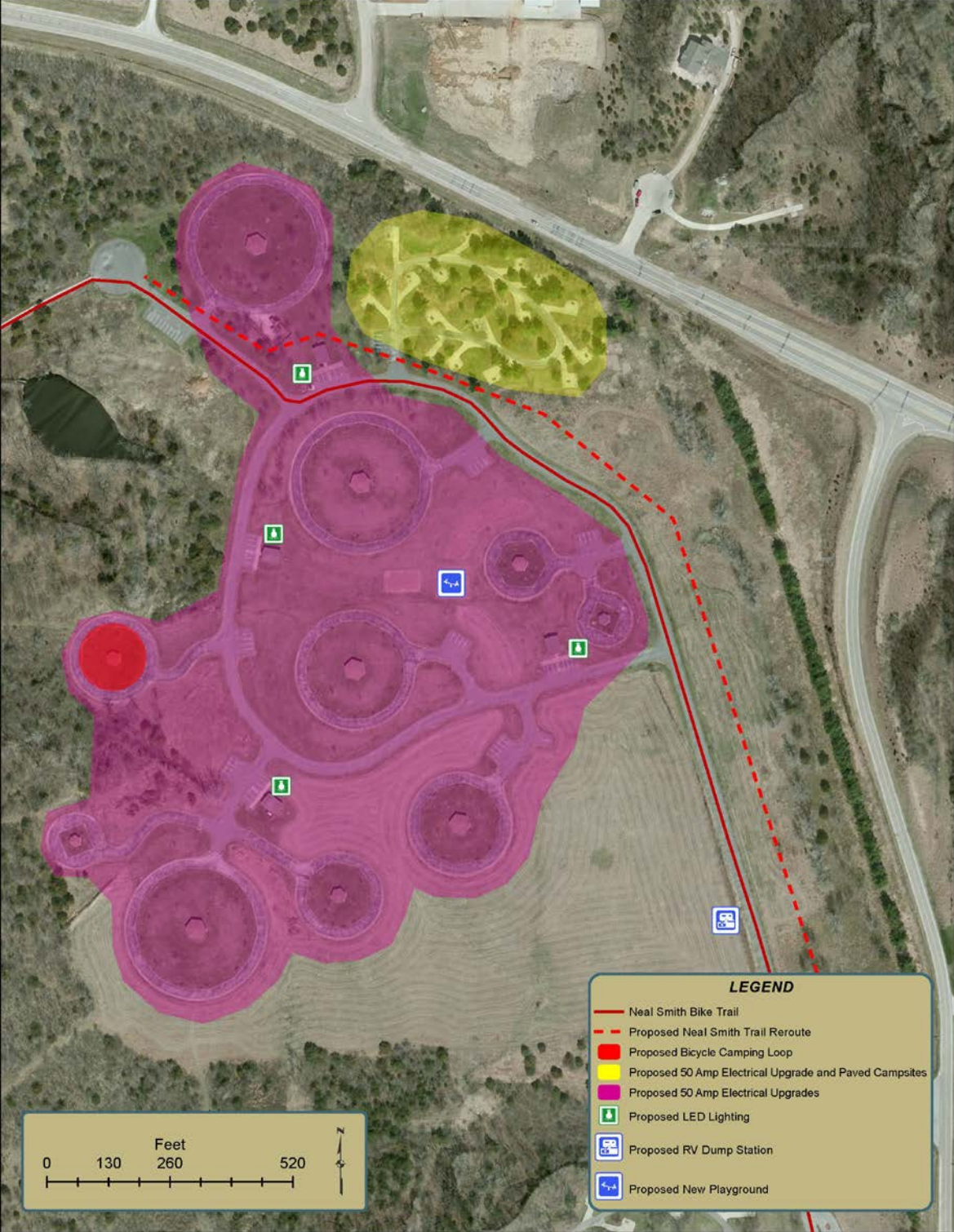
H.16 Oak Grove Recreation Area – Picnic



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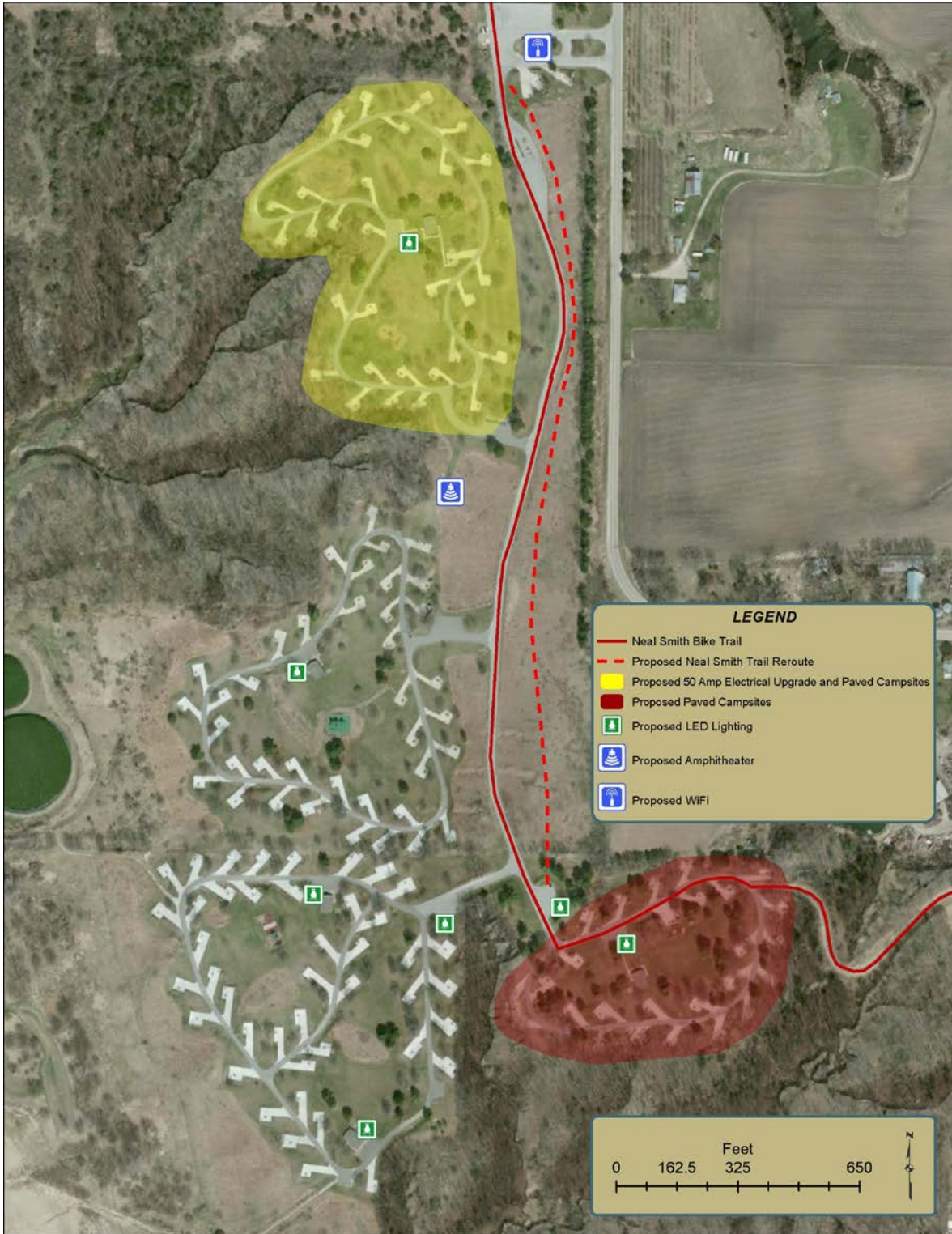
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H.17 Prairie Flower Campground – North



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H.18 Prairie Flower Campground – South



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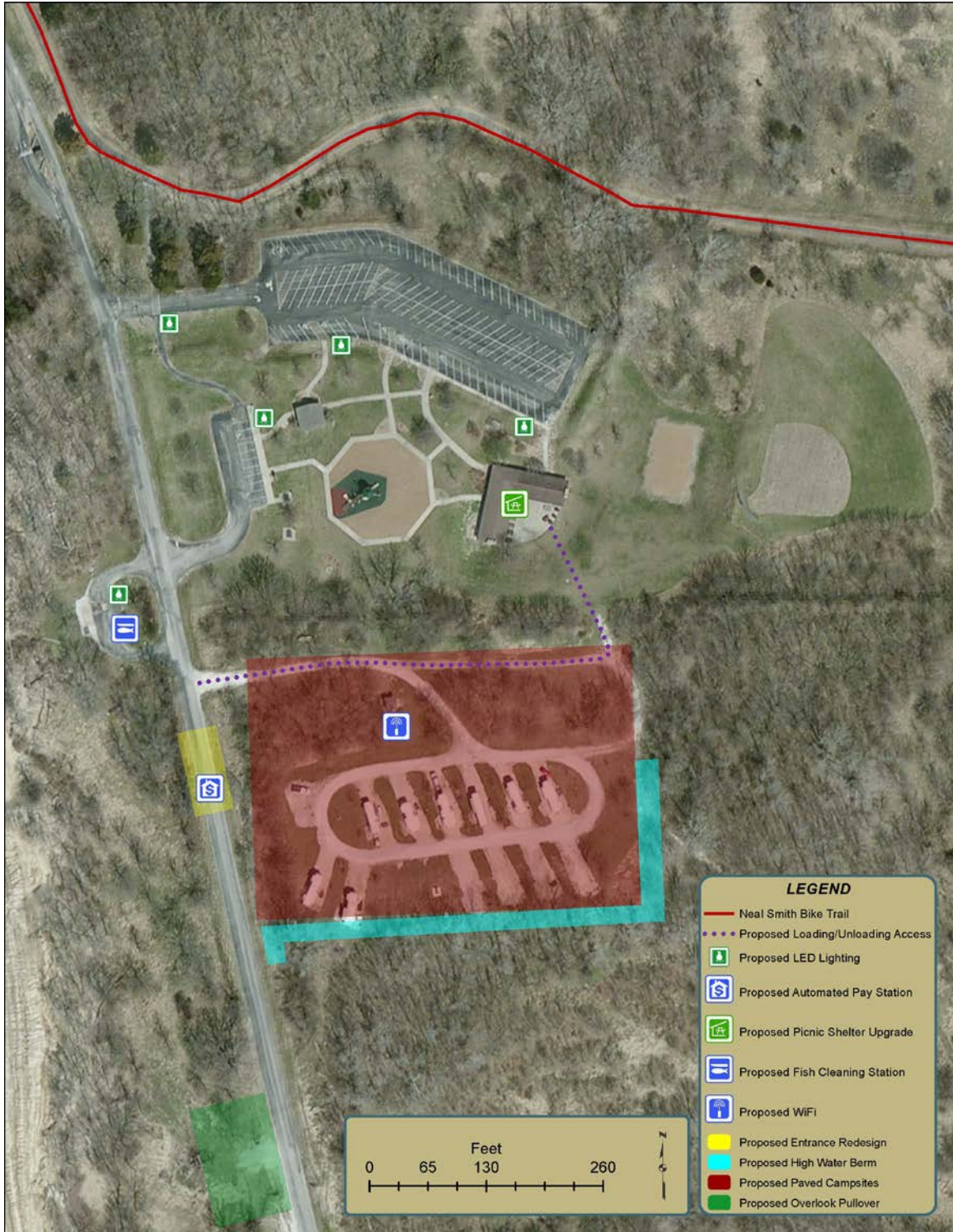
H.19 Sandpiper Recreation Area – Beach and Boat Ramp



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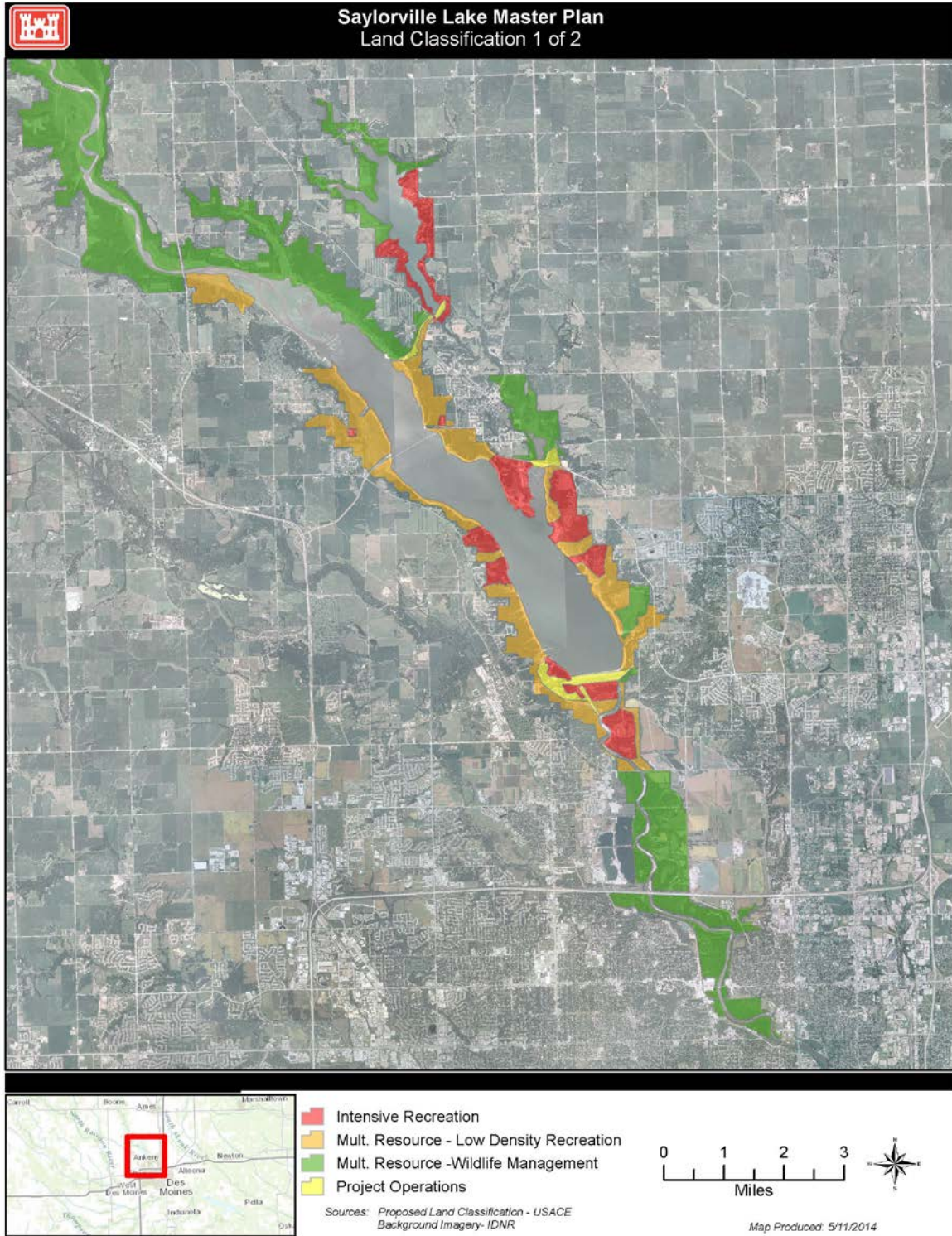
H.20 Sandpiper Recreation Area – Picnic



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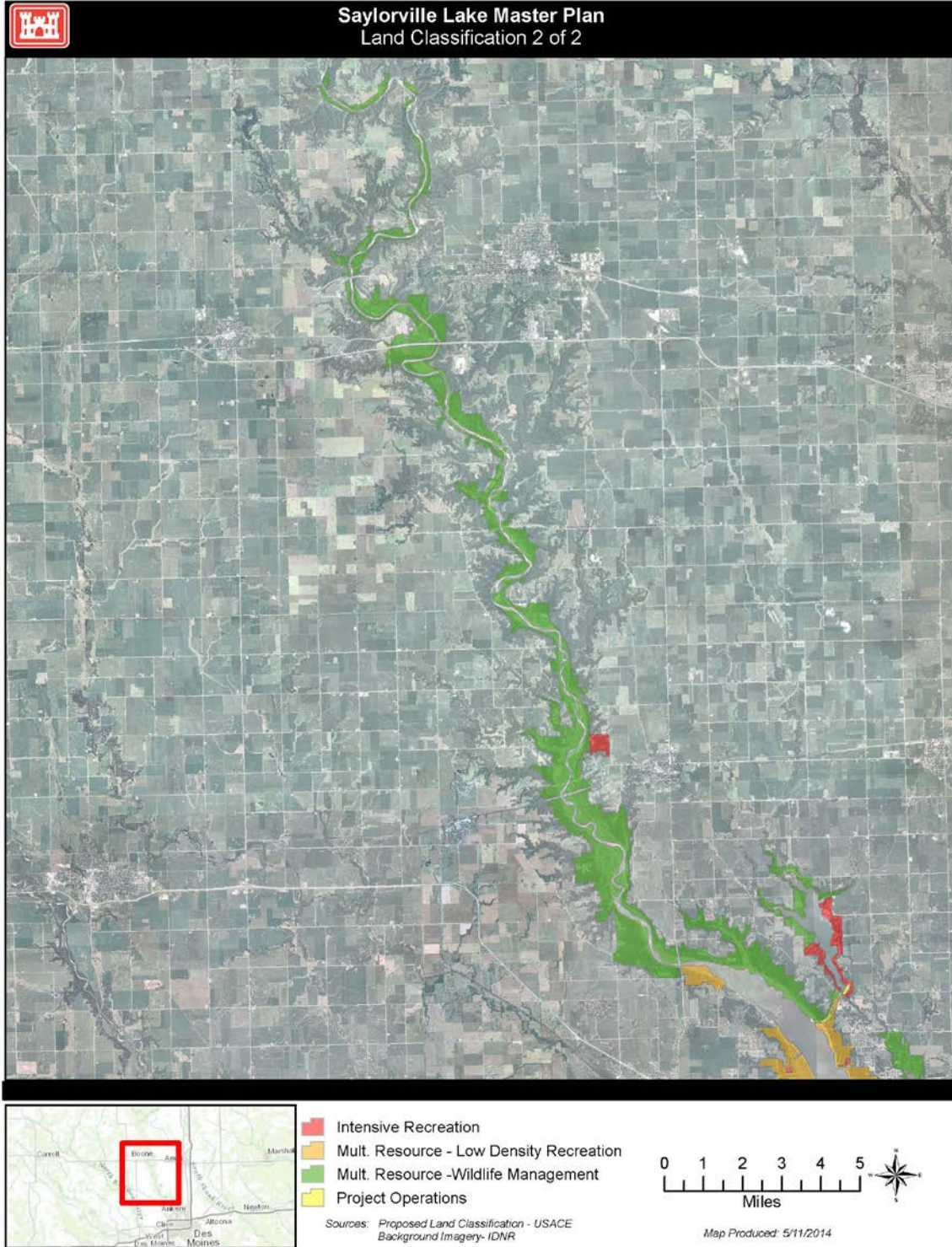
H.21 Saylorville Lake Land Classification



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H.22 Saylorville Lake Land Classification



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H.23 Saylorville Lake Sensitive Lands Poster

SAYLORVILLE LAKE
MASTER PLAN


SENSITIVE AREAS

Environmentally Sensitive Areas are identified in our master plan as resources that could be permanently altered or destroyed if human disturbance activities occurred on these lands. The degree of sensitivity in response to type and intensity of disturbance varies across the continuum. Protection of diversity, whether plants or animals, is the foundation of the public land ethic.

Human activity represents the greatest threat to maintaining this diversity. Many factors contribute to areas within the Saylorville Lake project being identified as sensitive. Examples of sensitivity are best demonstrated by sample descriptions. This poster shows just some of the examples of sensitive areas worthy of protection at Saylorville Lake.


ECOSYSTEMS DESERVE PROTECTION




Great Blue Herons are colonial tree nesters attracted to the Saylorville Lake environment. They often nest in large groups high in the crowns of Cottonwood and Silver Maple forests. These birds are very sensitive to disturbance while nesting. The colony and surrounding lands should be free from human disturbance throughout the nesting season. Excessive disturbance to Great Blue Heron rookeries can cause the birds to abandon the colony site.



Tall grass prairie is essentially gone from Iowa but once covered two-thirds of the state. The plants and animals that occupied this once magnificent ecosystem have declined dramatically. The few remnant prairies found at the lake and the larger prairie restorations contain plant and animal species deserving protection. Prairies from small to large are considered environmentally sensitive.




Saylorville Lake Master Plan Sensitive Areas



Saylorville Lake Master Plan Sensitive Areas

HELP PRESERVE OUR CULTURAL RESOURCES & LARGE BLOCK HABITAT



Cultural resources are abundant in the Des Moines River valley and protection of these resources is mandated by law and regulation. One hundred fifty eight of the discovered sites at the Saylorville Lake Project are eligible for the National Historic Register. Exploration of cultural resources was extensive prior to construction of the reservoir and new discoveries continue as more is learned about the resource. Protecting the location of these cultural resource sites is paramount. Adequate buffering is required for these sites. Similar to federally endangered plant and animal locations, obligatory protection of the location of these sites is imperative.



Large block habitat refers to larger unbroken tracts of land that could be covered by forests, grasslands or wetlands. Many of Iowa's threatened, endangered or declining species are dependent on large tracts of continuous habitat. Red Shouldered Hawk, Henslow's Sparrow and the Bobcat are examples of animals dependent on large tracts of habitat. Fragmentation of these tracts pose a significant threat. When roads, utility lines and other human disturbance activity disrupt or fracture these large blocks of habitat, negative impacts occur. Large blocks of forest or prairie are particularly rare in Iowa and when they occur on public lands, their protection is vital to maintaining diversity and managing this public resource.


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H.24 Multiple Species Inventory and Monitoring Poster


SAYLORVILLE LAKE

MASTER PLAN



MULTIPLE SPECIES INVENTORY & MONITORING (MSIM) PROGRAM

In support of the Iowa Wildlife Action Plan and to learn more about diversity of animals that call Saylorville Lake their home, an ambitious survey was undertaken last year on federal lands. Conducted by Iowa State University, this extensive survey was applied to 18 different habitat associations scattered along the river corridor. By learning what species are found here, we can better manage the resource to provide for wildlife. 296 species have been identified species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) in Iowa. These animals have shown trending decline, most often the result of habitat change or loss. The MSIM survey helps us identify where important habitat exists and plan for the protection and management of those habitats.



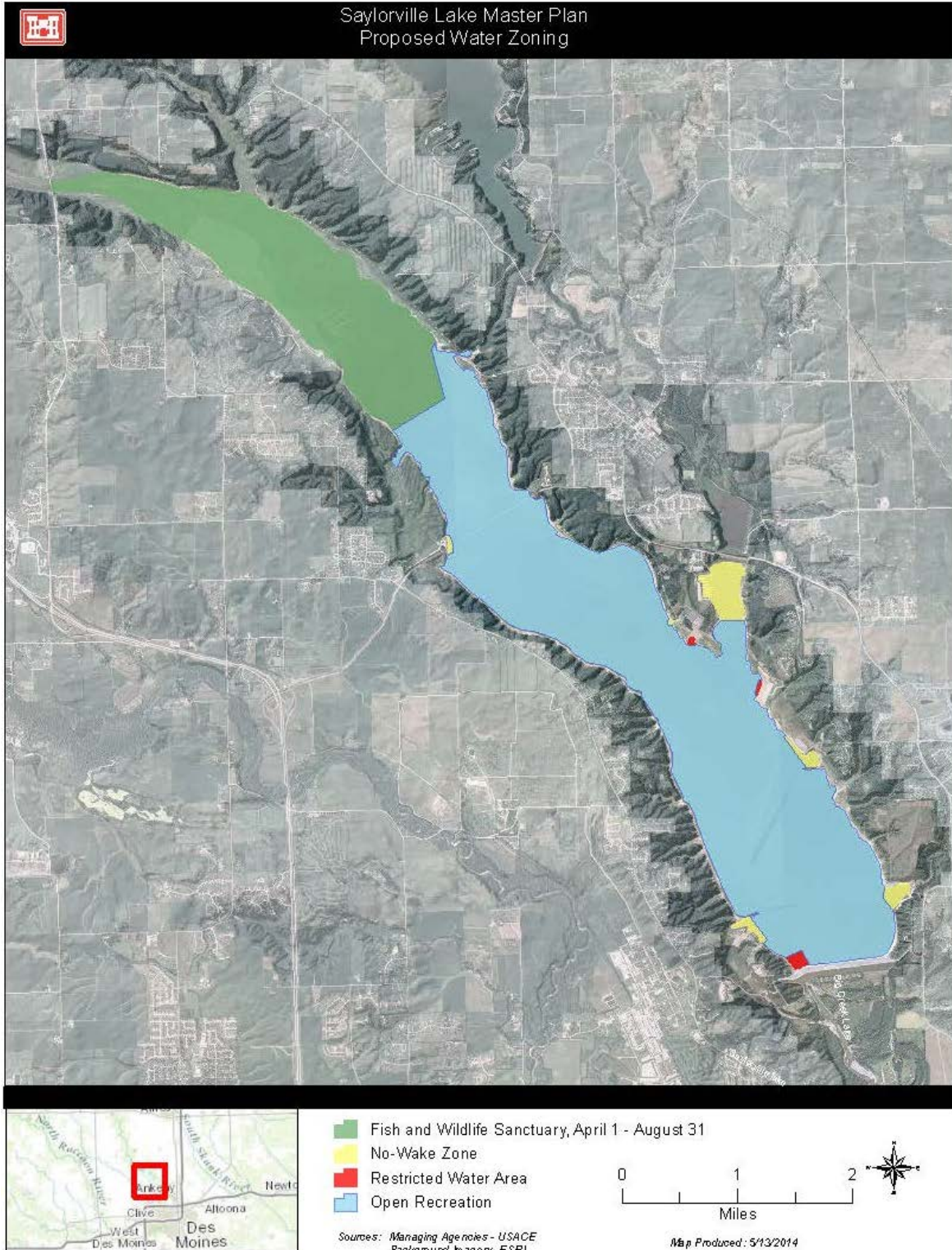
Almost 50 species of animals were found that are state identified species of greatest conservation need. This survey identified mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles, butterflies, damselfly and dragonflies, fish, mussels, bats and amphibians and macroinvertebrates throughout the project lands.

Some successes associated with wildlife include now reproducing viable populations of river otter, bald eagles, bobcat and osprey at Saylorville. All reintroduced species to central Iowa that flourish because of significant available habitat. Saylorville is globally significant for birds especially for water birds and neo-tropic migrants. Maintaining and protecting this diversity over time is an important goal supported by the master plan.

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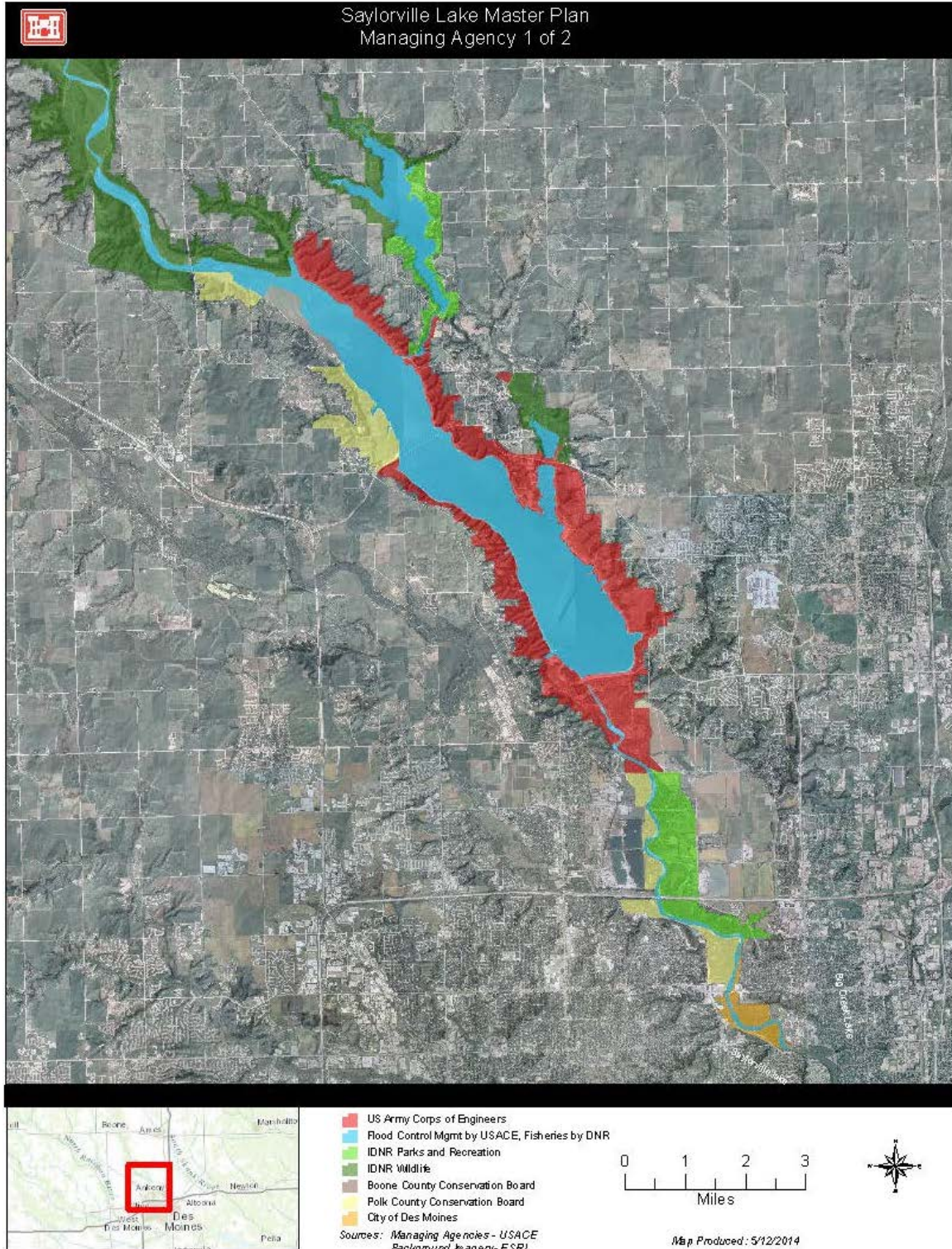
H.25 Saylorville Lake Water Zoning



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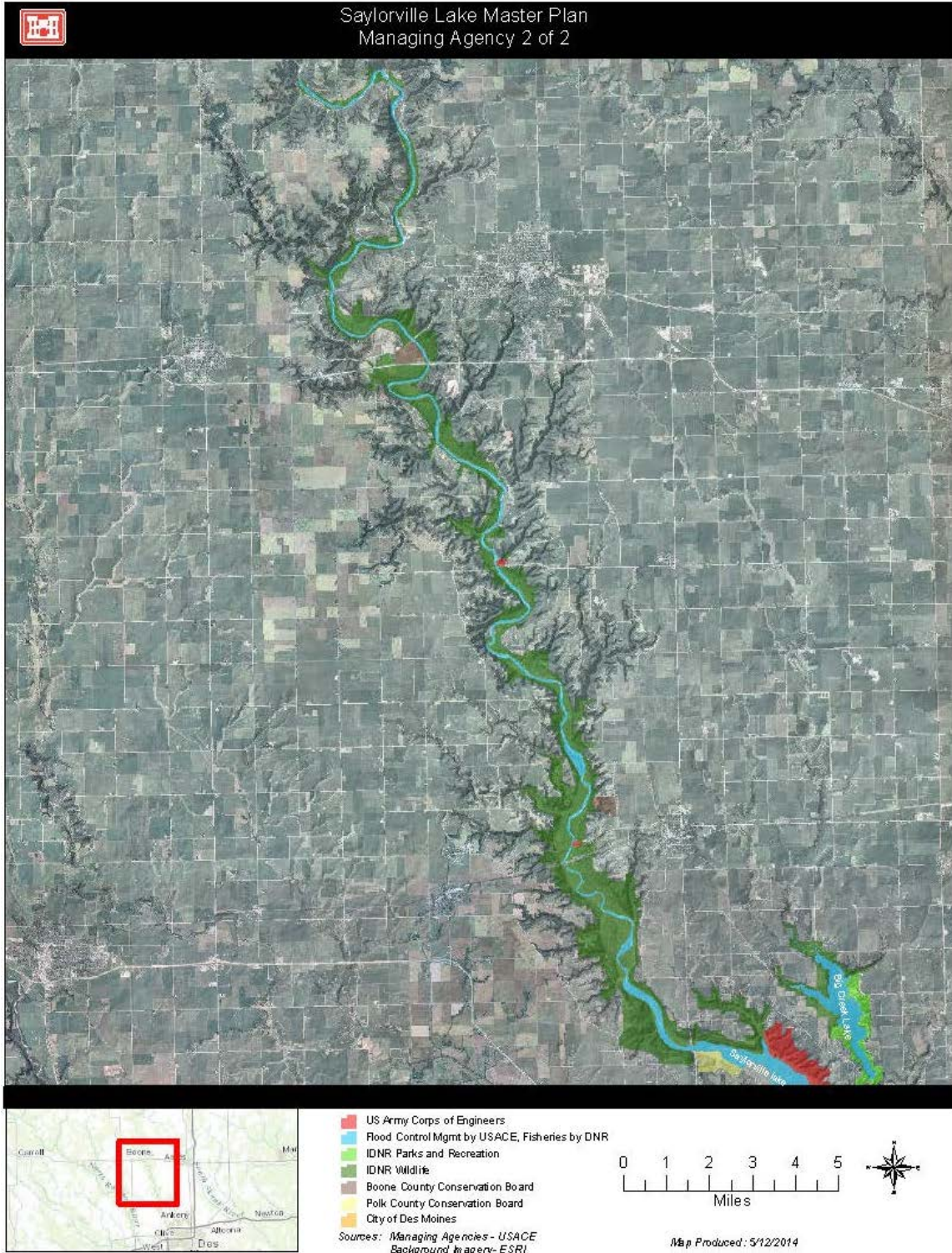
H.26 Saylorville Lake Managing Agencies



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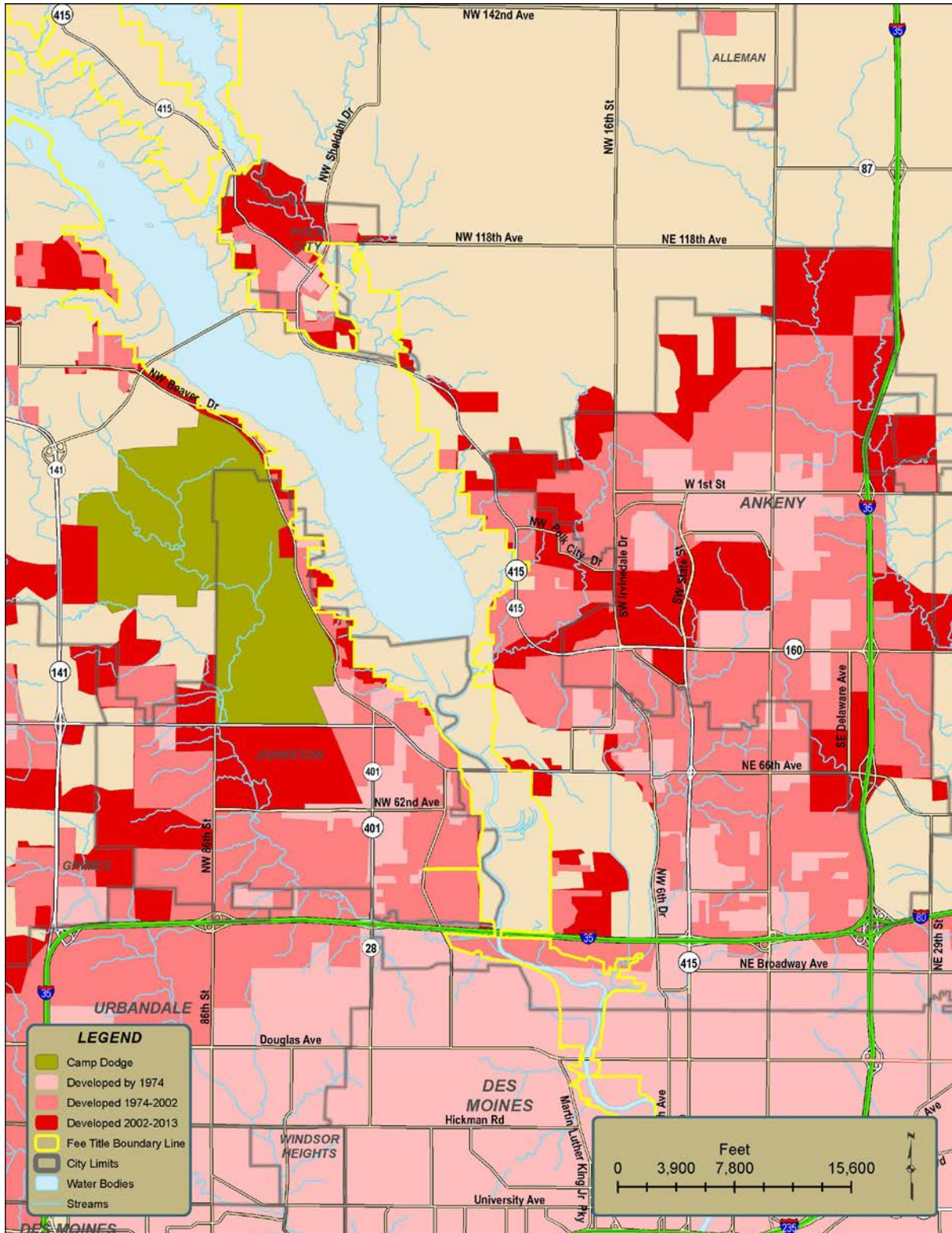
H.27 Saylorville Lake Managing Agencies



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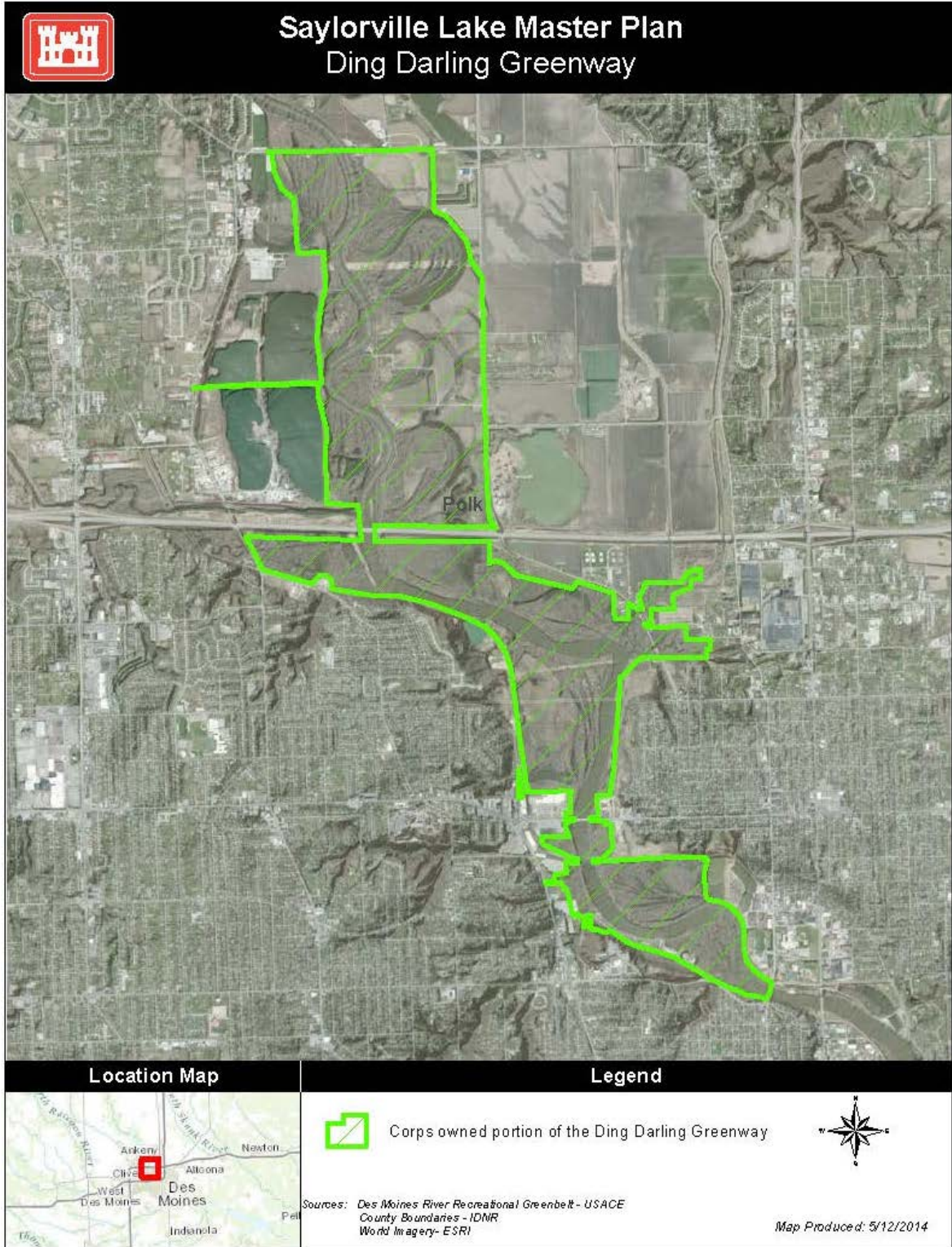
H.28 Saylorville Lake Urban Sprawl



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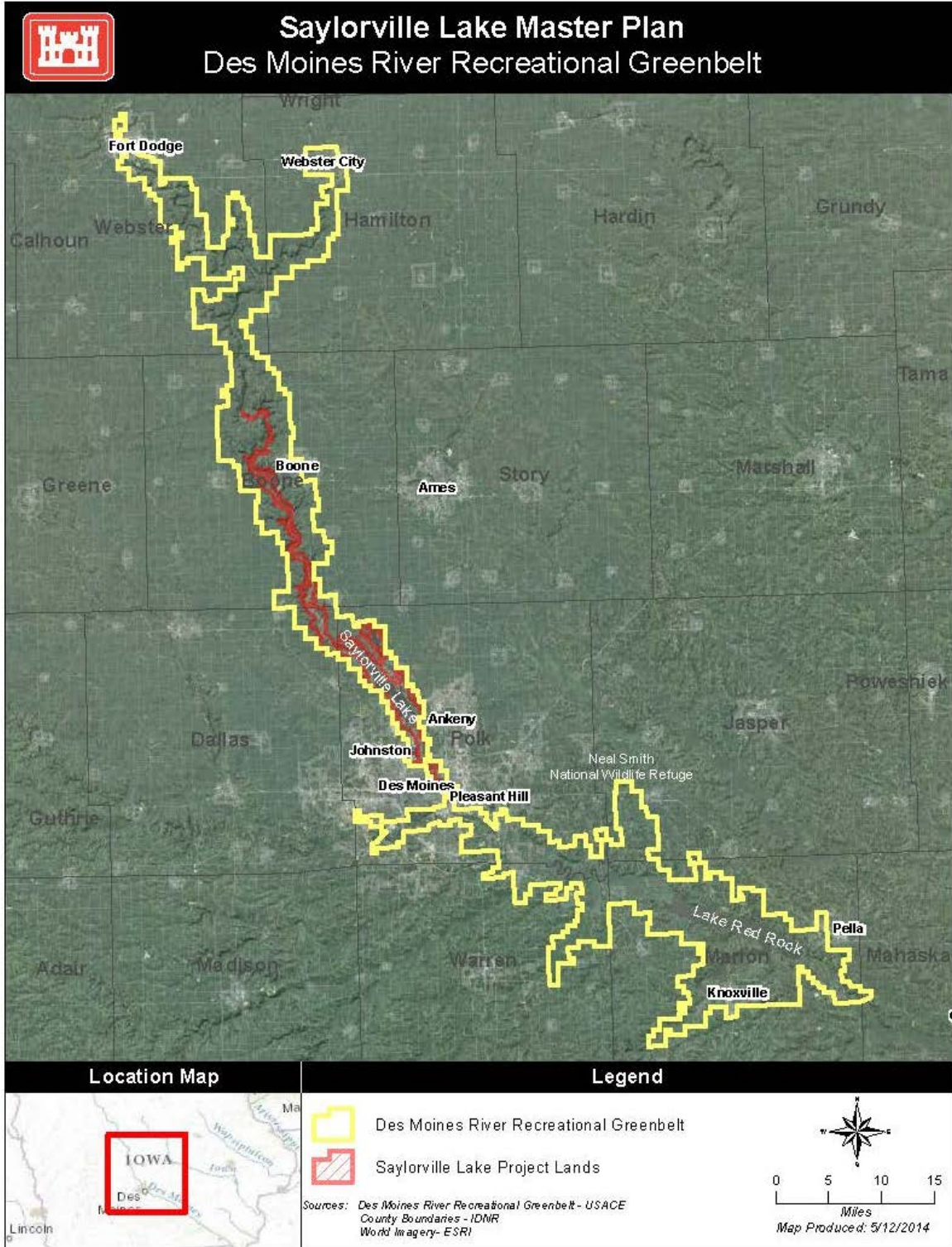
H.29 Ding Darling Greenway



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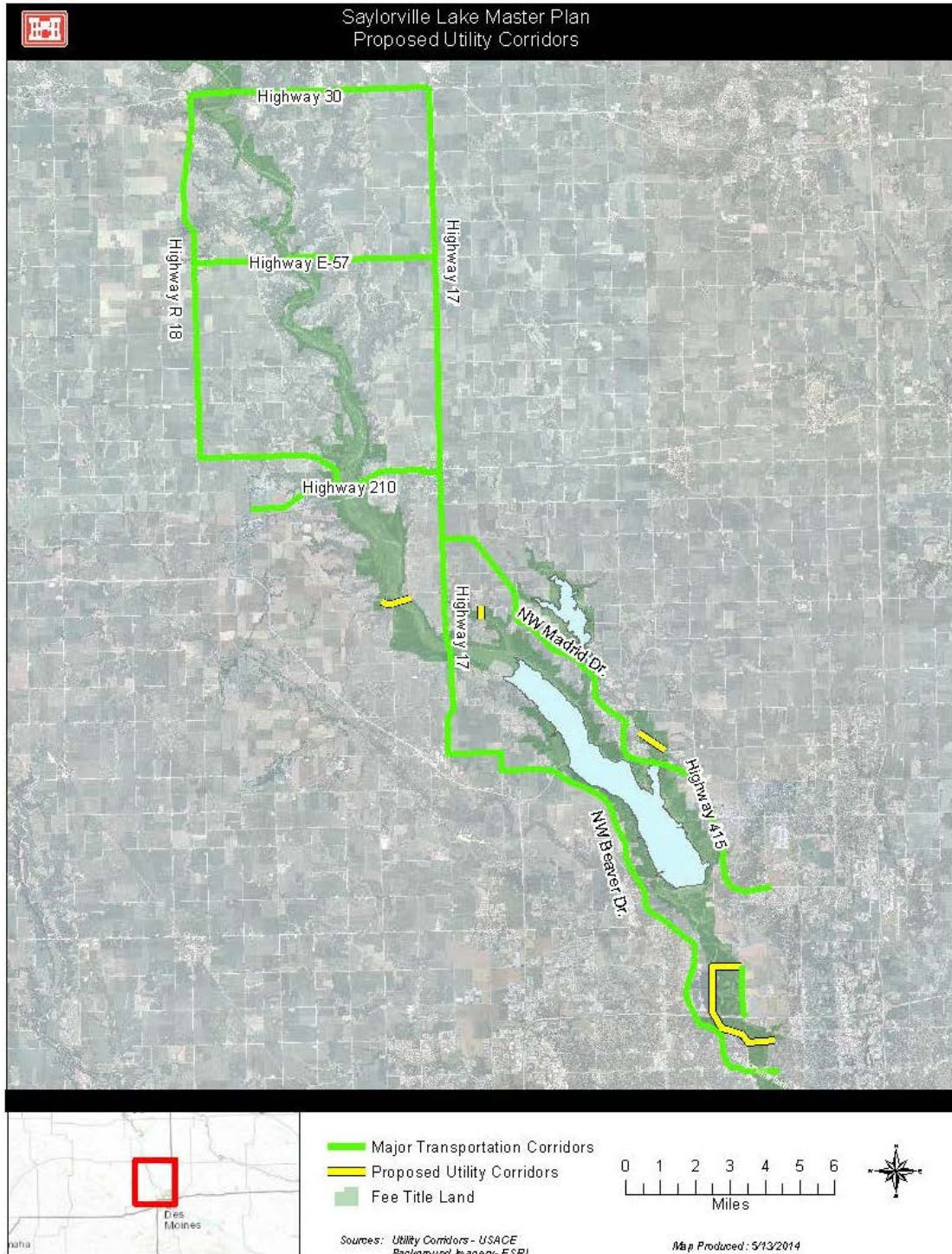
H.30 Des Moines River Greenbelt



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H.31 Saylorville Lake Utility Corridors



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H.32 Saylorville Lake Trails Poster

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WEST SIDE TRAIL

Saylorville Lake has recently seen an increase in trail advocates seeking natural surfaced multi-use trails that offer a sense of remote solitude. Due to the altered landscape in Iowa, limited public lands, natural area fragmentation, and urban growth, specifically in Central Iowa, there are limited opportunities to enjoy remote natural surfaced trails. This has spurred interest in the revitalization of a 3.5 mile abandoned hiking trail along the rugged west side of the Saylorville Lake project. This trail is historically known as the West Side Trail.



CHALLENGES

The Corps was presented with several challenges in maintaining the trail. The combination of several issues caused the closure of the trail and present day abandonment. The current conditions of the trail present several issues.

1. Very rugged terrain limits accessibility and safe, feasible trail routing.
2. Frequent fluctuation in the Saylorville Lake pool level has resulted in bank stability issues, severe erosion, and bridge damage.
3. Maintenance costs, manpower and budgets, limit the feasibility of keeping the trail open.
4. Increased urban development adjacent to the trail has changed the hydrology of the landscape and remote aspect of the trail.




FUTURE TRAIL PLANNING PROCESS

Due to the challenges presented with the trail, a planning process will have to be implemented to understand the feasibility of the trail.

- Review of existing trail – Prior to developing a trail reconstruction proposal an extensive current conditions assessment needs to take place.
- Develop a trail proposal – A trail proposal should be generated to understand the following:
 - Background and perceived need for the trail.
 - Overall trail purpose.
 - Intended users.
 - Scope of the reconstruction.
 - Timing of the development of the trail.
 - Any possible partnership support.
- Develop a concept design – Research of similar trails and discussions with trail groups will need to take place to develop a trail design.
- Develop a funding plan – Investigate the trail's economic viability.
- Develop a maintenance and management plan – A plan should outline the items that need to be maintained, by whom, how often, and any costs.





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H.33 Neal Smith Trail Poster

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NEAL SMITH TRAIL

The most popular trail at Saylorville Lake is the multi-use Neal Smith Trail. The Neal Smith Trail is a 26 mile paved National Recreation Trail that extends from Des Moines through Saylorville Lake to Big Creek State Park. The Neal Smith Trail allows for year round outdoor activities including hiking, biking, running, rollerblading, snow shoeing, and cross country skiing.

Thirteen miles of this trail are managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with the remaining miles managed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the City of Des Moines.



CONNECTIONS

The Neal Smith Trail has become a focal point for connectivity to adjacent trail systems. Many trail connections are in the planning or proposed stages.

- 1) The City of Johnston currently has plans to construct a trail along Beaver Drive on the west side of Saylorville Lake that would connect to the Neal Smith Trail at the Sycamore Access Area.
- 2) The Polk County Conservation Board has plans to connect the High Trestle Trail in northern Polk County to the northern reaches of the Neal Smith Trail in Big Creek State Park.
- 3) The Corps is considering creating a trail across the Saylorville Lake Dam that would connect the Neal Smith Trail and the Beaver Drive Trail.




IMPROVEMENTS

The Neal Smith Trail has been the backbone for the Central Iowa Trail System for years. Bicyclists, walkers, and joggers have taken to the trail in large numbers. But, as the years passed, the trail became increasingly deteriorated. In 2010 the trail was improved by widening, resurfacing, and realigning the Corps managed portion. Several other improvements are proposed for the future.

- Eliminate the shared roadway through Prairie Flower Campground by constructing a standalone trail for the Neal Smith Trail.
- Create a trail spur in Red Feather Prairie to connect to a proposed prairie educational kiosk.
- Develop a group campsite for bicyclists along the Neal Smith Trail in the Prairie Flower Campground.

NOTE: All improvement photos are for illustration and concept purposes only.

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H.35 2014 Report of Sedimentation Resurvey Map

