



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**®
Rock Island District

PUBLIC NOTICE

Sponsor: Steve Salevsky
Ajinomoto Health & Nutrition
North America, Inc.
1 Ajinomoto Drive, Eddyville, IA 52553

Issued: June 21, 2022
Expires: July 20, 2022

Corps Project Number: CEMVR-RD-2022-0456
Proposed Project: County Line Mitigation Bank

WETLAND AND STEAM COMPENSATORY MITIGATION BANK PROPOSAL

This notice is issued in accordance with the Compensatory Mitigation for Losses of Aquatic Resources; Final Rule (the Mitigation Rule) described in the Federal Register dated April 10, 2008 (33 CFR Parts 325 and 332).

- 1. Project Location:** The proposed site is located within Sections 1 & 12, Township 73 North, Range 16 West, Monroe County and Section 6, Township 73 North, Range 15 West, Wapello County, Iowa. See attached location map. Latitude: 41.153248 Longitude: -92.641229.
- 2. Bank Objectives:** The fundamental objective of compensatory mitigation is to offset environmental losses resulting from unavoidable impacts to waters of the United States authorized by Department of Army Permits. Other Objectives include: Support the national goal of no net-loss of wetlands, enhance existing forested and emergent wetlands onsite, provide additional flood storage in the Des Moines River Watershed, create a compensation resource to allow an efficient method of mitigation to take place within designated service areas, compensate for wetland and stream loss in a manner which contributes to the long-term ecological function of the Des Moines River ecosystem.
- 3. Project Description/Bank Establishment:** The bank sponsor proposes to complete activities on 133.7 acres of privately owned property that would result in the establishment of stream, forested wetland, and emergent wetland mitigation credits. Establishment of the Bank will occur in two phases. Phase 1 will involve restoring floodplain wetland function through levee removal and improvement of associated wetlands and buffers in the east portion of the Bank. Phase 2 includes restoring the sediment filled floodplain wetlands and channels in the west portion of the Bank by grading low-lying areas and generating stream credits through the construction of bank protection and buffer establishment along the right descending bank of the Des Moines River. An off-site wetland delineation was completed in January 2021, in accordance with the 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual and 2010 Midwest Regional Supplement. The off-site delineation found four potential agricultural wetlands currently used in commodity-crop production and a fifth potential

wetland that includes a mix of agricultural and palustrine forested and possibly emergent wetlands. Of the 133.7 acres (52.4 acres west of the BSNF Railroad and 81.3 acres east of the BSNF Railroad) of the Bank, 32.6 acres were preliminarily assessed as either potentially jurisdictional palustrine forested wetland (7.9 acres) and/or agricultural wetland (24.7 acres). An on-site wetland delineation will be completed to help determine current conditions and the determination of credits prior to the submission of the draft mitigation banking instrument. Please see the detailed project description and drawings located within the bank Prospectus on RIBITS (link in #14, below).

4. Service Area: The proposed primary bank service area will be the Lower Des Moines Service Area.

5. Bank Need/Technical Feasibility/Ecological Suitability: While there is currently one established wetland mitigation bank serving the Lower Des Moines River Service Area, no existing banks currently provide stream mitigation credits. The proposed service area is largely agricultural and has experienced widely documented loss of floodplain wetlands and stream function. Review of permitting history and anticipated planning through Iowa Department of Transportation's five-year plan indicates an on-going need for both stream and wetland credits. The project area is dominated by hydric soils; a high-water table; and nearly level to undulating topography. Wetlands in the project area will be brought to a higher level of function and ecological quality through revegetation and improved/restored hydrology. Existing forested wetlands in the Bank will receive timber stand improvement actions. Sediment management will be a primary concern for the project and addressed during the design phase. The proposed actions are attainable and technically feasible. Due to the active, dynamic fluvial setting of the Bank, historic, remnant floodplain wetlands and other sediment-filled depressions are present throughout the property. The Bank's proximity to the Des Moines River typically floods several times per year, and the anticipated high-water table would provide an additional hydrological source. The construction and restoration of the Bank will create additional wetland habitat for fish, plants, and wildlife. The project vicinity is dominated by hydric soils; a high-water table; and level to nearly level (slightly undulating) topography. The construction and restoration proposed for the Bank will improve the function of existing wetland and enhance the surrounding upland areas providing increased habitat for native plants and animals. The Bank is connected to a large riparian habitat corridor which provides habitat for several endangered species. Restoring these areas to mimic historic conditions is likely to improve habitat for these species.

6. Long Term Management: Post bank closure management would include ongoing plant management which may require herbicide and fire treatment additional seeding, as well as general site maintenance. The responsibility for long term management is held by the bank sponsor/landowner. A conservation easement will be required in perpetuity and will be held by a third-party grantee to ensure the conservation value of the property is protected. A long-term management fund will be established, and available to the grantee, to ensure funds are available should the sponsor fail to properly maintain the site.

7. Sponsor Qualifications: The Sponsor has a proven history of land management, stewardship, and conservation ethic. The Sponsor has selected a consulting firm, Emmons and Olivier Resources, Inc., with demonstrated experience in developing, designing, constructing, managing, maintaining, and monitoring components of two existing Section 404 wetland mitigation banks in Iowa and eight agriculture-only mitigation banks serving Swampbuster customers – the first successful program of its kind in the Nation.

8. **Water Rights:** Ajinomoto Health & Nutrition North America, Inc. currently owns the property associated with the bank proposal. The sponsor would not have complete control of upstream practices that may alter flows to the project area.

9. **Agency Review:** Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers. The Corps of Engineer is participating in this matter as the chair of an Interagency Review Team. The Interagency Review Team consists of the Corps of Engineers, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. The project would require Section 404, Clean Water Act authorization prior to the proposed construction. If approved, the proposed bank could provide stream and wetland credit for future, Section 404, authorized projects that require compensatory mitigation. Formal authorization of the bank proposal occurs through Corps approval of a Mitigation Banking Instrument.

10. **Historical/Archaeological:** A Phase IA archaeological and cultural resources assessment was conducted on the site in March of 2021. The study showed the following: no property currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places is within the study area; portions of the study area have been previously inventoried by a professional historian or archaeologist for archaeological and other cultural resources on several different occasions for differing project scopes, resulting in the recordation of two archaeological sites within the study area; mapped soils within the study area are alluvial soils formed in active, dynamic alluvial settings that holds low to moderate potential for significant, intact, subsurface archaeological deposits, signatures, or layers; no standing buildings or structures occur within the proposed bank; and no cemeteries or burials are reported within the proposed study area. The District will require the applicant to submit two (2) copies of a Phase I archaeological survey and geomorphological evaluation report covering the permit area. Geomorphological investigation must extend at least 50 centimeters below the proposed depths of soil disturbance or to a depth below which no possibility of historic properties exists. The applicant, in addition to this Phase I report, may be required to conduct additional Phase II test excavations to evaluate sites for eligibility for inclusion in the NRHP as well as other studies, site avoidance, or data recovery as may be the case.

11. **Endangered Species:** The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to approve the proposed bank. It is the Corps opinion that the proposed actions may affect, but not likely adversely affect the northern long-eared bat and the Indiana bat. The recommendation is that removal of any potential roost trees identified during the habitat study outside of the maternity season, which occurs annually from June 1 through July 31. The project site does not contain dry to mesic prairies with gravelly soils; therefore, the Corps has determined there be no effect on the Prairie Bush-clover. The project site does not contain mesic to wet unplowed tallgrass prairies and meadows; therefore, the Corps has determined there will be no effect to the Western Prairie Fringed Orchid. Accordingly, our preliminary determination is subject to change should further information become available. Our determination will be coordinated with USFWS separately.

12. **Who Should Reply:** The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by

the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to approve the proposed bank. Any comments received will be distributed to the members of the Interagency Review Team. Comments should be submitted on or before the expiration date specified at the top of page 1. Comments should bear upon the adequacy of plans and suitability of locations and should, if appropriate, suggest any changes considered desirable. Any person may also request a public hearing. The request must be submitted in writing to the District Engineer within the designated comment period of the notice and must state the specific reasons for requesting the public hearing.

13. Reply to the Corps of Engineers: Comments or questions concerning this notice may be directed to Abby Steele (309/794-5377) (Abigail.a.steele@usace.army.mil), US Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, ATTN: OD-P, Clock Tower Building - Post Office Box 2004, Rock Island, Illinois 61204-2004.

14. Complete Prospectus: The complete prospectus can be found on our public website at: https://ribits.ops.usace.army.mil/ords/f?p=107:278:7010300821234:::RP,278:P278_BANK_ID:6322# Hard copies are also available by request.

Abigail A. Steele

Attach
Plan

Ms. Abigail A. Steele
Iowa Mitigation Bank Manager
Western Branch
Regulatory Division

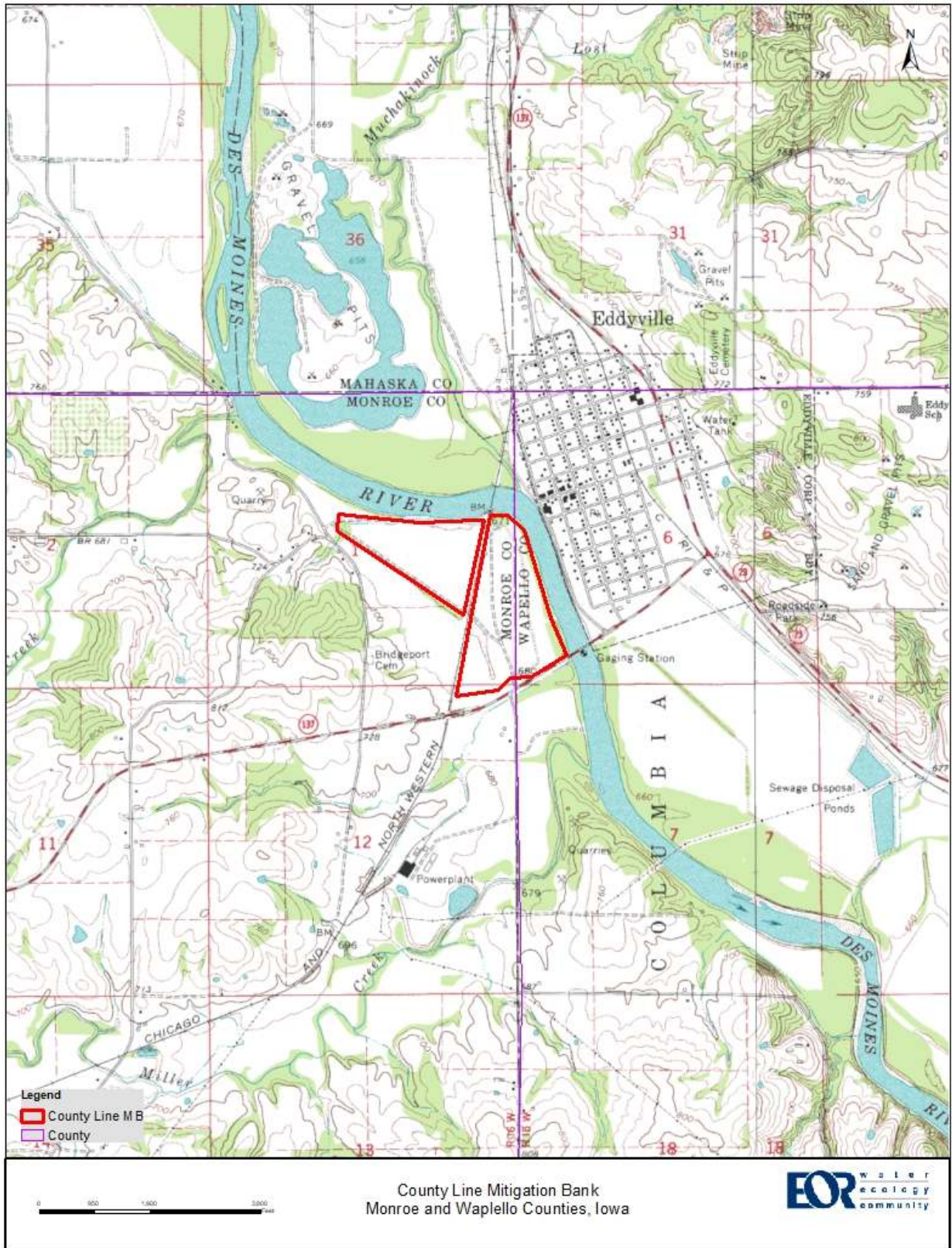


Figure 2. Project Overview.

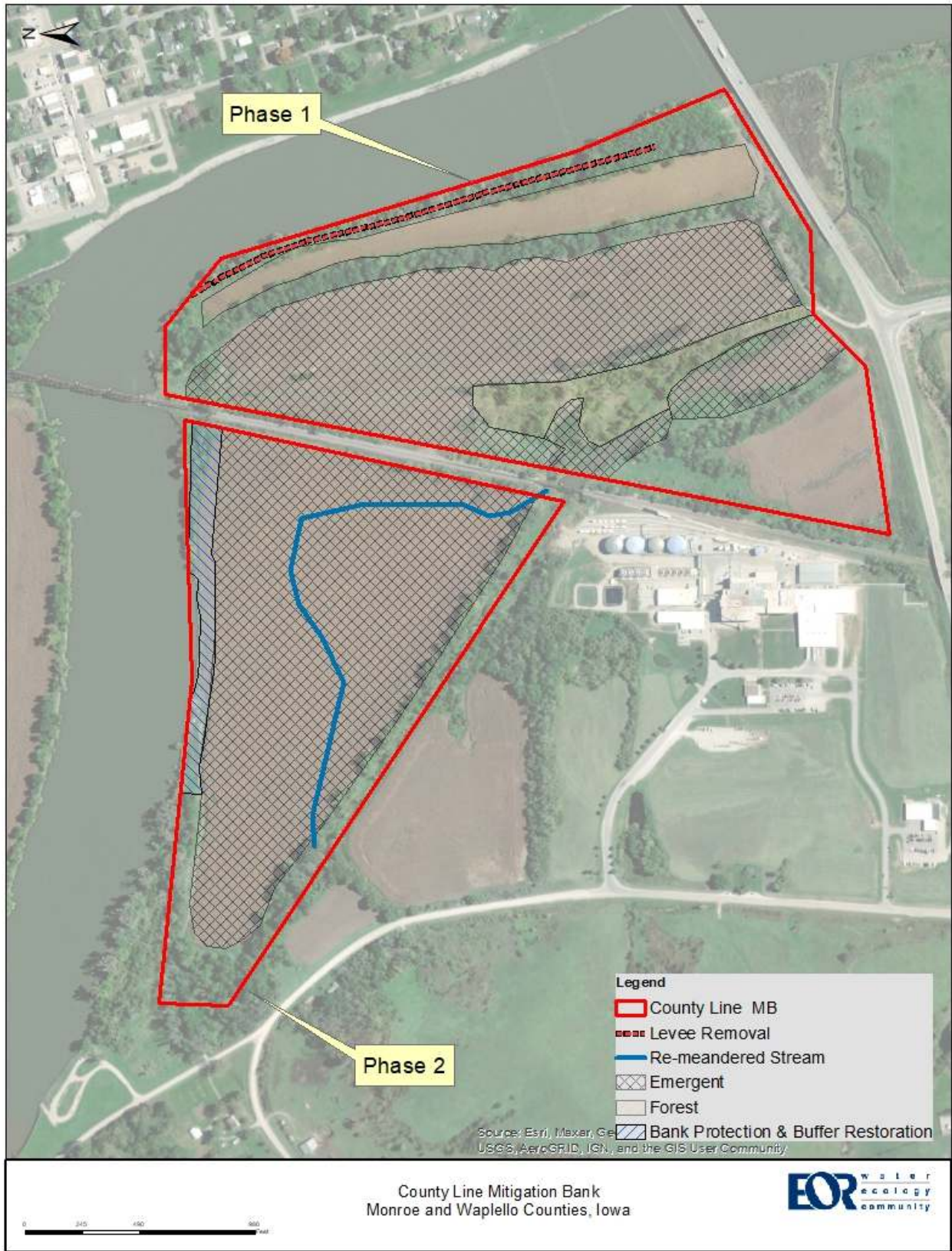


Figure 4. Proposed Mitigation Features.