APPENDIX A
COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Dawn Scott, Director SHPO MDNR/DSP
P. O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102

October 10, 2024

RE: Whitewater Watersheds Project, Stoddard County, Missouri – Section 106 Consultation

Dear Ms. Scott,

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Missouri received a request for federal assistance from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program for the Whitewater River watershed. Pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.4(b)(1) of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (as amended), as a part of the "reasonable and good faith effort" to identify historic properties in each project's area of potential effect (APE), NRCS informed the Missouri SHPO regarding this project in a letter dated July 15th, 2022. We are writing to continue Section 106 consultation (36 CFR § 800.4(d)(2)) on the Whitewater River Watershed project.

The Whitewater River watershed is in the southeastern lowlands in Scott County, Missouri. The goal of the Little River Drainage District is to make enhancements to the aging drainage infrastructure to reduce the risk of flooding in the area. Project actions may include sediment basin clearance and repair, reshaping and reinforcement of drainage canal banks, establishment of native grasses on drainage canals, or installation of drop pipe structures to control gully erosion in drainage ditches. Ditch repairs and streambank stabilization will occur within the drainage ditch rights-of-way. Ground disturbance actions may include dredging, spreading soils along the ditch banks, and seeding these soils with native vegetation.

A cultural resources reconnaissance survey was conducted for this undertaking. Archaeological field work was conducted by WSP USA Environment & Infrastructure, Inc., Jefferson City office on 14 December 2023. Prefield investigation revealed that there had been no previous cultural resource survey or known archaeological or historical sites located within the APE and only one cultural resource site located within one mile. No cultural materials were identified during the archaeological field survey; however, the architectural-historic resource evaluation of the Little River Drainage Ditch - Ditch No. 1 identified the ditch as an archaeological site Eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, B, & C.

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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Based on these findings, NRCS has determined that the enhancements to the aging drainage infrastructure to reduce the risk of flooding in the area of the Whitewater River Watershed Project will have no adverse effect to historic properties. Included for this consultation are the cultural resource survey-historic survey report, and architectural/historic inventory record for your review and records.

If any changes are made to the described planned project, NRCS will provide revised information and update this consultation pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA. In the event of any potential Cultural Resources being discovered during any phase of work, implementation will be immediately stopped, NRCS will be notified, and NRCS will conduct the required Section 106 coordination with the Missouri SHPO.

We are seeking your concurrence regarding this No Adverse Effects determination. Please review the information provided and advise NRCS if you have any questions or concerns, and we will address your input prior to proceeding. Please respond electronically to our Cultural Resources Specialist Russell Snyder (russell.snyder@usda.gov, 573-876-9342) within 30 days.

Russell Snyder
NRCS CRS-State Archaeologist

Enclosed:

1. Whitewater Review Compliance Information Form
2. Whitewater Cultural Resource Investigation Report
3. WSP Whitewater Cultural Resource-Historic Resource Report
4. WSP Whitewater AR-1 Historic Resource Site Form

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Michael L. Parson
Governor

Dru Buntin
Director

October 21, 2024

Russell Snyder
USDA-NRCS
601 W. Business Loop 70, Suite 250
Columbia, MO 65203

Re: **SHPO Project Number: 001-ST-25** — Phase I Cultural Resource Survey, Whitewater River Watershed, Chaffee, Scott County, Missouri (NRCS)

Dear Russell Snyder:

Thank you for submitting information to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding the above-referenced project for review pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, P.L. 89-665, as amended (NHPA), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's regulation 36 CFR Part 800, which require identification and evaluation of historic properties.

We have reviewed the information regarding the above-referenced project and have included our comments on the following page(s). Please retain this documentation as evidence of consultation with the Missouri SHPO under Section 106 of the NHPA. SHPO concurrence does not complete the Section 106 process as federal agencies will need to conduct consultation with all interested parties. **Please be advised that, if the current project area or scope of work changes, such as a borrow area being added, or cultural materials are encountered during construction, appropriate information must be provided to this office for further review and comment.**

If you have questions, please contact the SHPO at (573) 751-7858 or call/email Jeremy Morin, (573) 526-3761, jeremy.morin@dnr.mo.gov. If additional information is required, please submit the information via email to MOSection106@dnr.mo.gov.

Sincerely,

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

Dawn Scott, Director
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

C Steven Hefner, USDA-NRCS
Michelle Jesse, USDA-NRCS

PO Box 176, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176 • dnr.mo.gov

October 21, 2024
Russell Snyder
Page **2** of **2**

SHPO Project Number: 001-ST-25 — Phase I Cultural Resource Survey, Whitewater River Watershed, Chaffee, Scott County, Missouri (NRCS)

COMMENTS:

We have reviewed the cultural resources survey report entitled *Phase I Cultural Resource Survey, Whitewater River Watershed, Scott County, Missouri,* by Clay Cantrell of WSP. SHPO concurs that the project as described will have **no adverse effect** on the historic constructed watershed and has no objection to the initiation of project activities.

SHPO Reviewer: Jeremy Morin, (573) 526-3761, jeremy.morin@dnr.mo.gov

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West, Suite 250
Columbia, MO 65203

September 19, 2025

DAWN SCOTT
Director SHPO
MDNR/DSP
Post Office Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

Dear Ms. Scott:

Per 36 CFR 800.3, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Missouri is continuing consultation on SHPO Project Nr. 001-ST-25 Phase 1 Cultural Resource Survey, Whitewater River Watershed, Chaffee, Scott County, Missouri (NRCS).

Please find attached a resubmittal of the Phase 1 Cultural Resources Survey, Whitewater River Watershed, Scott County, Missouri and the AR-1 Architectural/Historic Inventory Form for the Whitewater River segment of the Little River Drainage Ditch No. 1 (AR-1). This segment of the Little River Drainage Ditch No. 1 was recorded in December 2023 by WSP USA, Inc. for NRCS Missouri. This record was submitted as part of the Phase 1 Cultural Resource Survey report but did not receive comment on its eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places. The Whitewater River segment of the Little River Drainage Ditch No. 1 (AR-1) was recommended eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, B & C. SHPO Project Nr. 001-ST-25 was determined 'no adverse effect' on the historic constructed watershed.

NRCS Missouri has determined that the Whitewater River segment of the Little River Drainage Ditch No. 1 (AR-1) is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. NRCS Missouri concurs with the findings presented by WSP USA, Inc., and has determined that the site is eligible under Criterion A, Criterion B, and Criterion C.

We are seeking your concurrence regarding this eligibility determination. Please review the information provided and advise NRCS if you have any questions or concerns. Please respond electronically to our Cultural Resources Specialist Russell Snyder at russell.snyder@usda.gov or 573-876-9342 within 30 days.

Sincerely,

NATE GOODRICH
Missouri NRCS Acting State Conservationist

Enclosure
1. Architectural Survey Results segment of the Phase 1 Cultural Resource Survey, Whitewater River Watershed, Scott County, Missouri
2. WSP Whitewater AR-1 Site Form

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MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Mike Kehoe
Governor

Kurt U. Schaefer
Director

October 23, 2025

Russell Snyder
USDA-NRCS
601 W. Business Loop 70, Suite 250
Columbia, MO 65203

Re: **SHPO Project Number: 001-ST-25** — Phase I Cultural Resource Survey, Whitewater River Watershed, Chaffee, Scott County, Missouri (NRCS)

Dear Russell Snyder:

Thank you for submitting information to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding the above-referenced project for review pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, P.L. 89-665, as amended (NHPA), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's regulation 36 CFR Part 800, which require identification and evaluation of historic properties.

We have reviewed the information regarding the above-referenced project and have included our comments on the following page(s). Please retain this documentation as evidence of consultation with the Missouri SHPO under Section 106 of the NHPA. SHPO concurrence does not complete the Section 106 process as federal agencies will need to conduct consultation with all interested parties. **Please be advised that, if the current project area or scope of work changes, such as a borrow area being added, or cultural materials are encountered during construction, appropriate information must be provided to this office for further review and comment.**

If you have questions, please contact the SHPO at (573)751-7858 or call/email Aaron Schmidt, (573) 522-4641, aaron.schmidt2@dnr.mo.gov. If additional information is required, please submit the information via email to MOSection106@dnr.mo.gov.

Sincerely,

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

Dawn Scott, Director
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

c: Rex McAliley, USDA
Michelle Jesse, USDA

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October 23, 2025
Russell Snyder
Page **2** of **2**

SHPO Project Number: 001-ST-25 — Phase I Cultural Resource Survey, Whitewater River Watershed, Chaffee, Scott County, Missouri (NRCS)

COMMENTS:

We have reviewed the cultural resources survey report entitled *Phase I Cultural Resource Survey, Whitewater River Watershed, Scott County, Missouri* by Clay Cantrell of WSP. SHPO concurs that Architectural Resource (AR) 1, the Whitewater River Segment of the Little River Drainage District No. 1, is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). However, the scope of work, as described in the previous submission, will not affect the ditch's integrity or the character-defining features that would make this system eligible for listing on the NRHP. Therefore, SHPO concurs that this undertaking will have **no adverse effect**.

SHPO Reviewer: Aaron Schmidt, (573) 522-4641, aaron.schmidt2@dnr.mo.gov

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Missouri E-START Site/Facility Summary

This is an advisory about environmental conditions that could affect use of the property identified on the map below. Any property use limitations are intended to ensure safe use of the property after the cleanup of contamination in the soil and/or groundwater. This advisory identifies the governmental agencies that oversaw the sites cleanup, and provides contacts for further information.

Although this map and its underlying data sets have been compiled by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (Department), no warranty, expressed or implied, is made by the Department as to the accuracy of the data and related materials. The act of distribution shall not constitute any such warranty, and no responsibility is assumed by the Department in the use of these data or related materials.

SITE MAP

ACTIVE

Site/Facility Name Hubble Creek Arsenic Well

Address 5566 Nash Road

City Scott City

Zip 63701

County Scott

Site Status Active

Site Background/History The Missouri Department of Natural Resources' (Department) Public Drinking Water Branch (PDWB) referred the site to the Superfund Section on February 17, 2022, for increased arsenic levels in groundwater. The site center is located within the QC LLC facility, a subsidiary of Verdesian Life Sciences Company, located in Cape Girardeau County, Missouri. The public water system at this site includes two public wells serving Verdesian's manufacturing process and restrooms and showers; however, bottled water is provided for consumption. In December 2021, PDWB detected concentrations of arsenic above the MCL and found that concentrations remained elevated after sampling the PWS again in January 2022.

The Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) also identified arsenic contamination in four private drinking water wells within four miles of the site. The Department is currently investigating the Hubble Creek Arsenic Well site under the authority of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) to determine if there is a release, or threat of a release, of a hazardous substance that warrants entry into the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Superfund Enterprise Management System (SEMS).

Lead Regulatory Agency DNR/Hazardous Waste Program/Superfund Section

Contact Information Long-Term Stewardship Unit

To report a problem with information about a site location, please contact us at LTS@dnr.mo.gov, (573) 526-8913, or (800) 361-4827.

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
3410 P St. NW, Miami, OK 74354 • P.O. Box 1326, Miami, OK 74355
Ph: (918) 541-1300 • Fax: (918) 542-7260
www.miamination.com

Via email: chris.hamilton@usda.gov

August 1, 2022

Chris Hamilton, Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources & Easements
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
601 Business Loop 70 West
Parkade Center, Suite 250
Columbia, MO 65203

Re: Whitewater River Watershed Project Upgrade Water Management Infrastructure., Cape Girardeau & Scott Counties, Missouri – Comments of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

Dear Mr. Hamilton:

Aya, kikwehsitoole – I show you respect. The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, a federally recognized Indian tribe with a Constitution ratified in 1939 under the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act of 1936, respectfully submits the following comments regarding Whitewater River Watershed Project Upgrade Water Management Infrastructure in Cape Girardeau & Scott Counties, Missouri.

The Miami Tribe offers no objection to the above-referenced project at this time, as we are not currently aware of existing documentation directly linking a specific Miami cultural or historic site to the project site. However, given the Miami Tribe's deep and enduring relationship to its historic lands and cultural property within present-day Missouri, if any human remains or Native American cultural items falling under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) or archaeological evidence is discovered during any phase of this project, the Miami Tribe requests immediate consultation with the entity of jurisdiction for the location of discovery. In such a case, please contact me at 918-541-8966 or by email at THPO@miamination.com to initiate consultation.

The Miami Tribe accepts the invitation to serve as a consulting party to the proposed project. In my capacity as Tribal Historic Preservation Officer I am the point of contact for consultation.

Respectfully,

Diane Hunter

Diane Hunter
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

STATE CAPITOL
201 W. CAPITOL AVENUE, ROOM 216
JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI 65101

(573) 751-3222
WWW.GOVERNOR.MO.GOV

Michael L. Parson
GOVERNOR
STATE OF MISSOURI

August 1, 2022

Scott Edwards
Natural Resources Conservation Service
601 West Business Loop 70
Parkade Center Suite 250
Columbia, MO 65203-2585

Dear Scott:

This letter is to acknowledge the receipt of your correspondence to Governor Michael L. Parson. Governor Parson is committed to moving Missouri forward by bringing transparency and a listening ear to all Missourians' needs.

Thank you for taking the time to contact our office. Each email, letter and fax is read by a member of the Governor's constituent services team, before being shared with appropriate staff and any applicable state agency.

Again, thank you for your correspondence. Please do not hesitate to contact our office if we may be of assistance in the future.

Sincerely,

Sheila Luebbert

Sheila Luebbert
Constituent Services

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Michael L. Parson
Governor

Dru Buntin
Director

October 10, 2024

Steven Hefner
U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resource Conservation Service
4327 Highway 67 North
Poplar Bluff, MO 63901

Dear Steven Hefner;

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources appreciates the opportunity to review the materials for the Whitewater River Watershed project.

The department offers the following comments related to environmental considerations for use in evaluating your project's environmental impacts pursuant to National Environmental Policy Act as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 4321, et seq.).

Project Location
The project location is within the northwestern corner of Scott County spread across a large area directly south west of Chaffee, MO and northwest of Oran, MO along the southwestern portion of the Whitewater River HUC 10. The following geographic descriptions apply to the approximate location of the study area.

Geographic Coordinates:
792257E, 4117224N
790842E, 4115202N
791044E, 4113017N

Public Land Survey System:
T29NR12ES27
T29NR12ES27
T29NR12ES27

8-Digit Hydrologic Unit Code:
Little River Ditches (08020204)

Ecological Drainage Unit:
MS Alluvial Basin/St. Francis/Little

Geology and Geospatial Data
The project area covers approximately 85 square miles and is situated in the Southeastern Lowlands Groundwater Province of Missouri. The primary aquifer within this area are the

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alluvial deposits of the Quaternary System, which are typically over 100 feet thick, and composed of silts, sands and gravels. These deposits can yield up to 3,000 gallons of water per minute, dependent on permeability. In addition, within the counties of Scott and Cape Girardeau parts of the project area are mapped as Cretaceous and Ordovician-age bedrock. These formations are mostly made up of sandstones with the exception of the Dutchtown, Joachim, Cotter and Jefferson City formations, which consist of dolomites.

Due to the proximity of the project area to the New Madrid seismic zone (NMSZ), there is potential for impact to the area in the event of a significant earthquake (https://dnr.mo.gov/land-geology/hazards/earthquakes/science/facts-new-madrid-seismic-zone). Areas of the project that contain sands, such as but not limited to the Quaternary System alluvium setting, may be impacted by liquefaction during a seismic event.

If a full Geologic Assessment is required for a project, the Missouri Geological Survey can be contacted directly at 800-361-4827. Other maps showing natural and cultural resources can be found at https://dnr.mo.gov/land-geology/maps-data-research.

Karst Topography
There are 12 historical surface mines identified within the study area which produced limestone or clay, sand, and gravel; it is unclear their potential impact will have on the future project.

There are no springs or sinkholes near the project area. The project area is in the Chaffee and Oran quadrangles which have a cave density of 0. Springs, sinkholes, and caves are features on the landscape associated with karst topography that can act as direct conduits of surface water and pollutants to groundwater. As such, extra precaution should be taken to minimize disturbance of land in or around these features, and to avoid the introduction of pollutants to sensitive groundwater resources. Karst areas may also present the possibility of potential collapse.

Wells
There is domestic and public water well data and we have identified over 407 domestic and nine public wells within the project area. The majority of these wells are high yield and completed within the first 200 feet of the alluvium deposits. This aquifer is unconfined and likely highly susceptibility to surface contaminants due to its moderate permeability. Current and future wells could potentially become impacted if any hazardous materials from the project migrate into the subsurface.

There are 41 abandoned, soil, and other public wells near the project area. Wells can act as conduits of pollutants to groundwater resources. Abandoned wells should be plugged prior to any land disturbance, and care should be taken to utilize appropriate best management practices to protect any currently operating wells. For more information on locating and plugging wells, or on private domestic wells, please visit the link below for the department's Wellhead Protection Section webpage or contact the department's Geological Survey Program directly. https://dnr.mo.gov/water/business-industry-other-entities/permits-certification-engineering-fees/wells-drilling.

Public Land
There are no public lands near the project area. Care should be taken to avoid impact to these public lands.

Conservation Opportunity Areas
There are no Conservation Opportunity Areas (COA's) near the project area. Both terrestrial and aquatic COAs are identified by the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and its conservation partners as priority areas that support and conserve viable populations of wildlife and the ecological systems on which they depend. Designated COAs are located statewide and may consist of a combination of public and private resources. Please contact the MDC at 573-751-4115 for more information.

Water Protection
Best Management Practices
Best management practices should be utilized during project activities to limit the amount of sediment and other pollutants entering waters of the state, and to protect the water's chemical, physical, and biological characteristics. These practices include, but are not limited to, conducting work during low flow conditions whenever possible, keeping heavy equipment out of the water, and taking all necessary precautions to avoid the release of fuel or other waste products to streams and other waters. In addition, the department encourages the preservation of existing riparian or buffer areas around each water resource to limit the amount of sediments or other pollutants entering the water. Any stream banks, riparian corridors, lake shores, or wetlands denuded of vegetation should be stabilized and re-vegetated as soon as is practicable.

Watershed Conditions
Public Drinking Water
The project area is in or around the Scott County PDSD #4. There are no intakes, drinking water wells, or tanks near the project area. Proposed project personnel should be aware of nearby Public Drinking Water systems. Work associated with any project should take into consideration the protection of surface and groundwater public drinking water supplies, implementing appropriate best management practices as necessary. For additional information regarding source water protection, please contact Ken Tomlin of the department's Public Drinking Water Branch at 573-526-0269.

Designated Uses
Water Bodies with Specific Designated Uses
The proposed project area is in the watershed of Ditch #1. Water bodies are assigned specific designated uses according to State of Missouri Water Quality regulations at 10 CSR 20-7.031(2). These waters are protected by numeric water quality criteria outlined in 10 CSR 20-7.031(5) and Table A, as well as general water quality criteria outlined at 10 CSR 20-7.031(4). Designated uses of Whitewater Headwater Diversion Channel and Little River Ditches include the following:

- Protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife – warm water habitat (WWH)
- Human health protection (HHP)

- Irrigation (IRR)
- Livestock and wildlife protection (LWP)
- Secondary contact recreation (SCR)
- Whole body contact recreation – Category B (WBC-B)
- Drinking water supply (DWS)

Water Bodies without Specific Designated Uses
Water bodies that are not assigned specific designated uses are still protected by general water quality criteria outlined at 10 CSR 20-7.031(4) and are subject to the acute toxicity criteria of Tables A and B, as well as whole effluent toxicity conditions.

According to the National Wetlands Inventory https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/, there is the likelihood of freshwater wetlands and ponds within the riparian corridors of the Little River Ditches. This project has the potential to impact wetlands, ponds, and the aforementioned tributaries and headwater streams to be impacted, depending on their proximity to land disturbance activities. Project sponsors should avoid such impacts through alternatives analysis before compensatory mitigation is considered. If wetlands, ponds, headwaters, or tributaries are not directly impacted but are near any land disturbance, project sponsors should take care to protect water quality. While these water bodies are not assigned specific designated uses, they are protected by Missouri's general water quality criteria.

Sensitive Waters
There are no known sensitive waters in the project area for the following categories: Cold Water Habitat, Outstanding National Resource Waters, Outstanding State Resource Waters, Metropolitan No-Discharge streams, biocriteria reference locations, losing streams, and 303(d) Impaired and 305(b) Threatened Waters.

Waters with Approved Total Maximum Daily Loads
The area near the site includes the Old Channel Little River TMDL for sediment.

Impairments should not be made worse by this project's activities. The department staff may require extra protections when developing permits or certifications to comply with total maximum daily load and wasteload allocations. Additional information can be found by contacting the department's Water Protection Program at 573-526-1446 or by visiting the link below.
https://dnr.mo.gov/water/what-were-doing/water-planning/quality-standards-impaired-waters-total-maximum-daily-loads/tmdls

Permitting Obligations
Clean Water Act Sections 401 and 404
Projects that have the potential to discharge fill or dredged material into a jurisdictional water of the United States must receive a Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit Authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the department. Some examples of activities that typically require a 404 permit and a 401 certification include stream bank stabilization, installation or replacement of culverts and low water crossings, fill impacts related to residential and commercial developments, and

infrastructure maintenance. To learn more about the 404 permits visit the USACE's website: https://rrs.usace.army.mil/rrs/home/permitting. For more information about 401 water certification from the department, go to https://dnr.mo.gov/water/business-industry-other-entities/permits-certification-engineering-fees/section-401-water-quality

If discharge into water has occurred, or will occur, project personnel should immediately contact the appropriate USACE District (link below) and the department's Operating Permits Section at 573-522-4502 for more information.
http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Portals/48/docs/regulatory/MORegBound.pdf

Land Disturbance
The project must apply for a land disturbance permit from the department if it involves construction disturbance activities of one or more acres, or construction activities that disturb less than one acre when part of a larger common plan of development or sale that will disturb a cumulative total of one or more acres over the life of the project. Land disturbance activities include clearing, grubbing, excavating, grading, filling, and other activities that result in the destruction of the root zone. Disturbance to valuable resource waters, including springs, sinkholes and losing streams, could require additional conditions or permits.

Information and application for online land disturbance permits are located at https://dnr.mo.gov/water/business-industry-other-entities/permits-certification-engineering-fees/stormwater/construction-land-disturbance.

Questions regarding permit requirements may be directed to the appropriate Regional Office.
https://dnr.mo.gov/about-us/division-environmental-quality/regional-office

Demolition and Construction Waste Management
Information on managing construction and demolition waste can be found at https://dnr.mo.gov/print/document-search/pub2045.

Hazardous Waste
The department's interactive map allows users to access information about hazardous substance and petroleum storage tank site investigations and cleanups. Please review site investigations and cleanups in the project area by accessing the interactive map at the following link: https://dnr.mo.gov/waste-recycling/long-term-stewardship-lts/environmental-site-tracking-research-tool-e-start. Should the project area intersect with one or more hazardous substance or petroleum storage tank sites, please contact erp@dnr.mo.gov for additional guidance prior to initiating excavation.

During the project, if any underground tanks or contaminated soil is discovered, workers should withdraw to a safe distance and notify the department's spill line at 573-634-2436.

It is the generator's responsibility to determine if materials generated during construction and demolition, are hazardous wastes. Demolition-related waste categories typically include paint residue (paint chips, paint scrapings, etc.), demolition debris (metal and boards that have been

painted with lead-based or other heavy metal-based paint), and scrap metal (metal objects that contain lead or other heavy metals). A hazardous waste determination is not required for materials that will be reused or recycled without additional processing.

Asbestos
Prior to demolition activities, regulated structures must be thoroughly inspected by a Missouri-certified asbestos inspector to determine if any Asbestos Containing Materials are present, and a notification made to the department at least ten working days prior to demolition. Regulated structures include any building which has been used as a commercial, institutional, or industrial building (even if it was historic use), and projects involving two or more residential structures. In addition, this includes but is not limited to the following "non-building" structures: bridges, pipelines, cooling towers, chimneys, dams, and tunnels. Any asbestos found must be properly managed to prevent release of asbestos fibers.

Solid Waste
Information about solid waste uncovered during construction activities can be found at https://dnr.mo.gov/document-search/managing-solid-waste-encountered-during-excavation-activities-pub2192/pub2192.

No waste may be buried on-site or at an alternate site, except for clean fill. Clean fill is defined by the Revised Statutes of Missouri as "uncontaminated soil, rock, sand, gravel, concrete, asphaltic concrete, cinderblocks, brick, minimal amounts of wood and metal, and inert solids as approved by rule or policy of the department for fill, reclamation or other beneficial use." Clean fill must not contain protruding metals or demolition debris. Although not regulated as waste, placement of clean fill materials may be subject to requirements of the department's Water Protection Program if it is placed in contact with surface or subsurface waters of the state or would otherwise violate water quality standards.

Air Pollution
Dust
Ensure fugitive particulate matter emissions, such as dust, resulting from the project do not remain on surfaces or in the air beyond the property line of origin. 10 CSR 10-6.170 restricts the emission of particulate matter to the ambient air beyond the premises of origin. Additional information on general dust emissions may be found at https://dnr.mo.gov/print/document-search/pub2200.

Open Burning
The open burning of refuse and trade waste is restricted according to 10 CSR 10-6.045. Construction, demolition, and trade waste cannot be open burned, except for untreated wood. Brush from land clearing activities may be burned if the burning is conducted outside the city limits and greater than 200 yards from the nearest occupied structure. Additional information on open burning can be found at https://dnr.mo.gov/print/document-search/pub2047.

The above comments concern potential environmental impacts related to air, land, and water. Feedback on this project related to the other topics should be directed as described below:

Steven Hefner
Page 7

- Historic Preservation: Project personnel should check with the department's State Historic Preservation Office to determine if a Section 106 Review is needed. Information on the Section 106 Review can be found on the department's web site at https://www.mostateparks.com/page/84261/section-106-review or by contacting the State Historic Preservation Office at 573-751-7858.
- Floodplain: For information concerning flood plains impacts, contact the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency, Floodplain Management and Mitigation Branch, at 573-526-9100 or 2302 Militia Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65101.
- Endangered Species: The MDC is responsible for collecting and managing information on the location and status of endangered species in the state. Contact MDC's Endangered Species Coordinator at 573-751-4115 or P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102 for information about endangered species impacts.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments for the proposed project. If you have any questions or need clarification, please contact me at 573-522-6221.

Sincerely,

Hannah Humphrey
Deputy Director

HH/rab

Attachment

Osage Nation Historic Preservation Office

Date: **August 31, 2022**

RE: **USDA, MO NRCS, Little River Watershed PIFR, Multiple Counties, Missouri**

Natural Resources Conservation Service
Chris Hamilton
601 Business Loop 70 West, Parkade Center Suite 250
Columbia, MO 65203

Dear Mr. Hamilton,

The Osage Nation Historic Preservation Office has evaluated your submission regarding the proposed **USDA, MO NRCS, Little River Watershed PIFR, Multiple Counties, Missouri** and determined that additional information needs to be submitted to respond to the proposal sufficiently. We would request that once the dates, location, and construction needed are known, that the Osage Nation be informed in writing. Also, if a cultural resource survey is conducted within the Area of Potential Effect for this project, that report be submitted to our office.

The Osage Nation Historic Preservation Office looks forward to consulting with your agency on this project once details are finalized. Should you have any questions or need any additional information please feel free to contact me at the number listed below. Thank you for consulting with the Osage Nation on this matter.

Andrea A. Hunter, Ph.D.
Director, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

Robbie Murie, MA, RPA
Archaeologist

1

627 Grandview Ave. * Pawhuska, OK 74056 Telephone 918-287-5328 * Fax 918-287-5376
www.osagenation-nsn.gov/who-we-are/historic-preservation * HistoricPreservation@osagenation-nsn.gov

Osage Nation Historic Preservation Office

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Date: September 15, 2022

Natural Resources Conservation Service
Chris Hamilton
601 Business Loop 70 West, Parkade Center Suite 250
Columbia, MO 65203

RE: USDA, NRCS, Whitewater River Watershed Project PIFR, Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

SENT VIA EMAIL

Dear Mr. Hamilton,

The Osage Nation Historic Preservation Office has received notification and accompanying information for the proposed project listed as USDA, NRCS, Whitewater River Watershed Project PIFR, Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri. **The Osage Nation requests that a cultural resources survey be conducted for this project.**

In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, (NHPA) [54 U.S.C. § 300101 et seq.] 1966, undertakings subject to the review process are referred to in 54 U.S.C. § 302706 (a), which clarifies that historic properties may have religious and cultural significance to Indian tribes. Additionally, Section 106 of NHPA requires Federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on historic properties (36 CFR Part 800) as does the National Environmental Policy Act (43 U.S.C. 4321 and 4331-35 and 40 CFR 1501.7(a) of 1969).

The Osage Nation has a vital interest in protecting its historic and ancestral cultural resources. **The Osage Nation anticipates reviewing and commenting on the planned Phase I cultural resources survey report for the proposed USDA, NRCS, Whitewater River Watershed Project PIFR, Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri.**

Should you have any questions or need any additional information, please feel free to contact me at the number listed below. Thank you for consulting with the Osage Nation on this matter.

Andrea A. Hunter, Ph.D.
Director, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

Robbie Murie, MA, RPA
Archaeologist

627 Grandview Ave. * Pawhuska, OK 74056 Telephone 918-287-5328 * Fax 918-287-5376
www.osagenation-nsn.gov/who-we-are/historic-preservation * HistoricPreservation@osagenation-nsn.gov

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

May 22, 2023

Mr. Everett Bandy
Preservation Officer/QNHPP Director
Quapaw Nation
Post Office Box 765
Quapaw, Oklahoma 74363

Dear Mr. Bandy:

The following reports are being re-sent as a follow-up action item from our latest phone call with your staff. The initial reports were sent certified to The Honorable Joseph Byrd. We will begin to copy you on all correspondence regarding Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL-566) Watershed Projects. We will send additional information for your Nation to review as projects move from a feasibility study to a planning phase.

We look forward to partnering.

Sincerely,

(Acting)

Scott Edwards
State Conservationist

Enclosure:
Delaware and Lick Creek Watershed Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report
Brewer Lake Watershed Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report
Lick Creek and Dudley Main Ditch Watershed Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report
Whitewater River Watershed Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report
Little River Watershed Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report

cc:
Chris Hamilton, Assistant State Conservationist-Water Resources & Easements, NRCS, Columbia, Missouri
Steven Hefner, Natural Resources Specialist, NRCS, Columbia, Missouri
Lydia VerBrugge, Cultural Resources Coordinator, NRCS, Columbia, Missouri
Russell Snyder, NRCS State Archaeologist Cultural Resources Specialist

Natural Resources Conservation Service
601 Business Loop 70 West, Parkade Center Suite 250, Columbia, Missouri 65203
Telephone: (573) 876-0909 Fax: (855) 830-0683
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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

May 15, 2023

Mr. Everett Bandy
Preservation Officer/ QNHPP Director
Quapaw Nation
Post Office Box 765
Quapaw, Oklahoma 74363

Dear Mr. Bandy:

Thank you for reaching out to our office. It is our desire to work cooperatively with your Nation to solicit input and achieve responsible conservation planning on our federal projects. I appreciate the map of Missouri that details counties with Quapaw interest. In regard to your request, I directed my staff to query the Missouri Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) correspondence with the Quapaw Nation during Fiscal Year 2022 and 2023. Our written correspondence during this timeframe is listed in the table below.

Date	Mailing Address	Project	Topic
07-22-22	The Honorable Joseph Byrd Post Office Box 765 Quapaw, Oklahoma (certified)	Whitewater River	PIFR
07-29-22	The Honorable Joseph Byrd Post Office Box 765 Quapaw, Oklahoma (certified)	Main Ditch - Little River	PIFR
09-12-22	The Honorable Joseph Byrd Post Office Box 765 Quapaw, Oklahoma (certified)	Lick Creek and Dudley Main Ditch	PIFR
12-12-22	The Honorable Joseph Byrd Post Office Box 765 Quapaw, Oklahoma (certified)	Brewer Lake	PIFR
02-10-23	The Honorable Joseph Byrd Post Office Box 765 Quapaw, Oklahoma (certified)	West Ditch-Main Ditch	PIFR
02-14-23	The Honorable Joseph Byrd Post Office Box 765 Quapaw, Oklahoma (certified)	Main Ditch	PIFR
02-24-23	The Honorable Joseph Byrd Post Office Box 765 Quapaw, Oklahoma (certified)	Delaware Creek	PIFR

To date the correspondence has centered on Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Reports (PIFR) for Public Law 83-566 projects. A PIFR is a pre-planning exercise to briefly summarize findings of existing data and field information to provide reasonable assurance to United States Department of Agriculture that a feasible watershed project plan can be developed. We send PIFRs to our conservation partners

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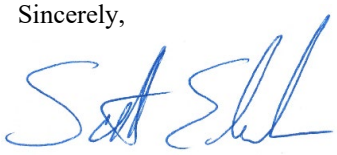
Mr. Everett Bandy
Page 2

in case they wish to comment, especially if they are initially aware of any insurmountable obstacles. It is not only our duty, but our wish to inform you of possible projects from the inception.

At this point, we have received approval to begin formal planning efforts for Whitewater River, Main Ditch – Little River, Lick Creek and Dudley Main, and Brewer Lake. We will hire an Indefinite Delivery – Indefinite Quantity contractor to prepare an Environmental Document for each of these projects. This contractor will be contacting you in the future to solicit planning consultation.

Out of respect for your Nation, I have addressed PIFR correspondence to The Honorable Joseph Byrd, Chairman of Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma. If you prefer to have correspondence directed elsewhere, please notify us. At this point, none of these projects have been planned, designed, or constructed. Missouri NRCS has yet to request an official Section 106 request for any of the projects listed.

Sincerely,



Scott Edwards
State Conservationist

cc:
Chris Hamilton, Assistant State Conservationist-Water Resources & Easements, NRCS, Columbia, MO
Steve Hefner, Natural Resources Specialist, NRCS, Columbia, MO

Natural Resources Conservation Service
601 Business Loop 70 West, Parkade Center Suite 250, Columbia, Missouri 65203
Telephone: (573) 876-0909 Fax: (855) 830-0683
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QUAPAW NATION

P.O. Box 765
Quapaw, OK 74363-0765

(918) 542-1853
FAX (918) 542-4694

Thursday, September 21, 2023

Attn: Chris Hamilton, Assistant State Conservationist
Water Resources and Easements
NCRS
601 Business Loop 70 West, Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203

Re: Whitewater River Watershed Project New Madrid, Pemiscot, and Stoddard counties Missouri

Dear Mr. Chris Hamilton,

The Quapaw Nation Historic Preservation Program (QNHPP) has received and reviewed the information you have provided. Based upon the information you provided we believe that the proposed Whitewater River Watershed Project New Madrid, Pemiscot, and Stoddard counties Missouri will have no effect on known properties of cultural or sacred significance to the Quapaw Nation.

In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, (NHPA) [16 U.S C. 470 §§ 470-470w-6] 1966, undertakings subject to the review process are referred to in S101 (d) (6) (A), which clarifies that historic properties may have religious and cultural significance to Indian tribes. Additionally, Section 106 of NHPA requires Federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on historic properties (36 CFR Part 800) as does the National Environmental Policy Act (43 U.S.C. 4321 and 4331-35 and 40 CFR 1501.7(a) of 1969).

The Quapaw Nation has vital interests in protecting its historic and ancestral cultural resources. We do not anticipate that this project will adversely impact any cultural resources or human remains protected under the NHPA, NEPA, or the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. If, however, artifacts or human remains are discovered during project construction, we ask that work cease immediately and that you contact the Quapaw Nation Historic Preservation Office.

Should you have any questions or need any additional information, please feel free to contact Julia Pebeahsy at Julia.pebeahsy@quapawnation.com, please copy section106@quapawnation.com to ensure additional information requests are reviewed in a timely manner. Thank you for consulting with the Quapaw Nation on this matter.

Sincerely,

Julia Pebeahsy

On behalf of
-Everett Bandy
Preservation Officer/ QNHPP Director
Quapaw Nation
P.O. Box 765
Quapaw, OK 74363
(w) 918-238-3100
(f) 918-674-2456

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Michael L. Parson
Governor

Dru Buntin
Director

October 10, 2024

Steven Hefner
U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resource Conservation Service
4327 Highway 67 North
Poplar Bluff, MO 63901

Dear Steven Hefner;

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources appreciates the opportunity to review the materials for the Whitewater River Watershed project.

The department offers the following comments related to environmental considerations for use in evaluating your project's environmental impacts pursuant to National Environmental Policy Act as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 4321, et seq.).

Project Location
The project location is within the northwestern corner of Scott County spread across a large area directly south west of Chaffee, MO and northwest of Oran, MO along the southwestern portion of the Whitewater River HUC 10. The following geographic descriptions apply to the approximate location of the study area.

Geographic Coordinates:
792257E, 4117224N
790842E, 4115202N
791044E, 4113017N

Public Land Survey System:
T29NR12ES27
T29NR12ES27
T29NR12ES27

8-Digit Hydrologic Unit Code:
Little River Ditches (08020204)

Ecological Drainage Unit:
MS Alluvial Basin/St. Francis/Little

Geology and Geospatial Data
The project area covers approximately 85 square miles and is situated in the Southeastern Lowlands Groundwater Province of Missouri. The primary aquifer within this area are the

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alluvial deposits of the Quaternary System, which are typically over 100 feet thick, and composed of silts, sands and gravels. These deposits can yield up to 3,000 gallons of water per minute, dependent on permeability. In addition, within the counties of Scott and Cape Girardeau parts of the project area are mapped as Cretaceous and Ordovician-age bedrock. These formations are mostly made up of sandstones with the exception of the Dutchtown, Joachim, Cotter and Jefferson City formations, which consist of dolomites.

Due to the proximity of the project area to the New Madrid seismic zone (NMSZ), there is potential for impact to the area in the event of a significant earthquake (https://dnr.mo.gov/land-geology/hazards/earthquakes/science/facts-new-madrid-seismic-zone). Areas of the project that contain sands, such as but not limited to the Quaternary System alluvium setting, may be impacted by liquefaction during a seismic event.

If a full Geologic Assessment is required for a project, the Missouri Geological Survey can be contacted directly at 800-361-4827. Other maps showing natural and cultural resources can be found at https://dnr.mo.gov/land-geology/maps-data-research.

Karst Topography
There are 12 historical surface mines identified within the study area which produced limestone or clay, sand, and gravel; it is unclear their potential impact will have on the future project.

There are no springs or sinkholes near the project area. The project area is in the Chaffee and Oran quadrangles which have a cave density of 0. Springs, sinkholes, and caves are features on the landscape associated with karst topography that can act as direct conduits of surface water and pollutants to groundwater. As such, extra precaution should be taken to minimize disturbance of land in or around these features, and to avoid the introduction of pollutants to sensitive groundwater resources. Karst areas may also present the possibility of potential collapse.

Wells
There is domestic and public water well data and we have identified over 407 domestic and nine public wells within the project area. The majority of these wells are high yield and completed within the first 200 feet of the alluvium deposits. This aquifer is unconfined and likely highly susceptibility to surface contaminants due to its moderate permeability. Current and future wells could potentially become impacted if any hazardous materials from the project migrate into the subsurface.

There are 41 abandoned, soil, and other public wells near the project area. Wells can act as conduits of pollutants to groundwater resources. Abandoned wells should be plugged prior to any land disturbance, and care should be taken to utilize appropriate best management practices to protect any currently operating wells. For more information on locating and plugging wells, or on private domestic wells, please visit the link below for the department's Wellhead Protection Section webpage or contact the department's Geological Survey Program directly.
https://dnr.mo.gov/water/business-industry-other-entities/permits-certification-engineering-fees/wells-drilling.

Steven Hefner
Page 3

Public Land
There are no public lands near the project area. Care should be taken to avoid impact to these public lands.

Conservation Opportunity Areas
There are no Conservation Opportunity Areas (COA's) near the project area. Both terrestrial and aquatic COAs are identified by the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and its conservation partners as priority areas that support and conserve viable populations of wildlife and the ecological systems on which they depend. Designated COAs are located statewide and may consist of a combination of public and private resources. Please contact the MDC at 573-751-4115 for more information.

Water Protection

Best Management Practices

Best management practices should be utilized during project activities to limit the amount of sediment and other pollutants entering waters of the state, and to protect the water's chemical, physical, and biological characteristics. These practices include, but are not limited to, conducting work during low flow conditions whenever possible, keeping heavy equipment out of the water, and taking all necessary precautions to avoid the release of fuel or other waste products to streams and other waters. In addition, the department encourages the preservation of existing riparian or buffer areas around each water resource to limit the amount of sediments or other pollutants entering the water. Any stream banks, riparian corridors, lake shores, or wetlands denuded of vegetation should be stabilized and re-vegetated as soon as is practicable.

Watershed Conditions

Public Drinking Water
The project area is in or around the Scott County PDSD #4. There are no intakes, drinking water wells, or tanks near the project area. Proposed project personnel should be aware of nearby Public Drinking Water systems. Work associated with any project should take into consideration the protection of surface and groundwater public drinking water supplies, implementing appropriate best management practices as necessary. For additional information regarding source water protection, please contact Ken Tomlin of the department's Public Drinking Water Branch at 573-526-0269.

Designated Uses

Water Bodies with Specific Designated Uses
The proposed project area is in the watershed of Ditch #1. Water bodies are assigned specific designated uses according to State of Missouri Water Quality regulations at 10 CSR 20-7.031(2). These waters are protected by numeric water quality criteria outlined in 10 CSR 20-7.031(5) and Table A, as well as general water quality criteria outlined at 10 CSR 20-7.031(4). Designated uses of Whitewater Headwater Diversion Channel and Little River Ditches include the following:

- Protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife – warm water habitat (WWH)
- Human health protection (HHP)

- Irrigation (IRR)
- Livestock and wildlife protection (LWP)
- Secondary contact recreation (SCR)
- Whole body contact recreation – Category B (WBC-B)
- Drinking water supply (DWS)

Water Bodies without Specific Designated Uses
Water bodies that are not assigned specific designated uses are still protected by general water quality criteria outlined at 10 CSR 20-7.031(4) and are subject to the acute toxicity criteria of Tables A and B, as well as whole effluent toxicity conditions.

According to the National Wetlands Inventory https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/, there is the likelihood of freshwater wetlands and ponds within the riparian corridors of the Little River Ditches. This project has the potential to impact wetlands, ponds, and the aforementioned tributaries and headwater streams to be impacted, depending on their proximity to land disturbance activities. Project sponsors should avoid such impacts through alternatives analysis before compensatory mitigation is considered. If wetlands, ponds, headwaters, or tributaries are not directly impacted but are near any land disturbance, project sponsors should take care to protect water quality. While these water bodies are not assigned specific designated uses, they are protected by Missouri's general water quality criteria.

Sensitive Waters
There are no known sensitive waters in the project area for the following categories: Cold Water Habitat, Outstanding National Resource Waters, Outstanding State Resource Waters, Metropolitan No-Discharge streams, biocriteria reference locations, losing streams, and 303(d) Impaired and 305(b) Threatened Waters.

Waters with Approved Total Maximum Daily Loads
The area near the site includes the Old Channel Little River TMDL for sediment.

Impairments should not be made worse by this project's activities. The department staff may require extra protections when developing permits or certifications to comply with total maximum daily load and wasteload allocations. Additional information can be found by contacting the department's Water Protection Program at 573-526-1446 or by visiting the link below.
https://dnr.mo.gov/water/what-were-doing/water-planning/quality-standards-impaired-waters-total-maximum-daily-loads/tmdls

Permitting Obligations
Clean Water Act Sections 401 and 404
Projects that have the potential to discharge fill or dredged material into a jurisdictional water of the United States must receive a Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit Authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the department. Some examples of activities that typically require a 404 permit and a 401 certification include stream bank stabilization, installation or replacement of culverts and low water crossings, fill impacts related to residential and commercial developments, and

infrastructure maintenance. To learn more about the 404 permits visit the USACE's website: https://rrs.usace.army.mil/rrs/home/permitting. For more information about 401 water certification from the department, go to https://dnr.mo.gov/water/business-industry-other-entities/permits-certification-engineering-fees/section-401-water-quality

If discharge into water has occurred, or will occur, project personnel should immediately contact the appropriate USACE District (link below) and the department's Operating Permits Section at 573-522-4502 for more information.
http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Portals/48/docs/regulatory/MORegBound.pdf

Land Disturbance
The project must apply for a land disturbance permit from the department if it involves construction disturbance activities of one or more acres, or construction activities that disturb less than one acre when part of a larger common plan of development or sale that will disturb a cumulative total of one or more acres over the life of the project. Land disturbance activities include clearing, grubbing, excavating, grading, filling, and other activities that result in the destruction of the root zone. Disturbance to valuable resource waters, including springs, sinkholes and losing streams, could require additional conditions or permits.

Information and application for online land disturbance permits are located at https://dnr.mo.gov/water/business-industry-other-entities/permits-certification-engineering-fees/stormwater/construction-land-disturbance.

Questions regarding permit requirements may be directed to the appropriate Regional Office.
https://dnr.mo.gov/about-us/division-environmental-quality/regional-office

Demolition and Construction Waste Management
Information on managing construction and demolition waste can be found at https://dnr.mo.gov/print/document-search/pub2045.

Hazardous Waste
The department's interactive map allows users to access information about hazardous substance and petroleum storage tank site investigations and cleanups. Please review site investigations and cleanups in the project area by accessing the interactive map at the following link: https://dnr.mo.gov/waste-recycling/long-term-stewardship-lts/environmental-site-tracking-research-tool-e-start. Should the project area intersect with one or more hazardous substance or petroleum storage tank sites, please contact erp@dnr.mo.gov for additional guidance prior to initiating excavation.

During the project, if any underground tanks or contaminated soil is discovered, workers should withdraw to a safe distance and notify the department's spill line at 573-634-2436.

It is the generator's responsibility to determine if materials generated during construction and demolition, are hazardous wastes. Demolition-related waste categories typically include paint residue (paint chips, paint scrapings, etc.), demolition debris (metal and boards that have been

painted with lead-based or other heavy metal-based paint), and scrap metal (metal objects that contain lead or other heavy metals). A hazardous waste determination is not required for materials that will be reused or recycled without additional processing.

Asbestos
Prior to demolition activities, regulated structures must be thoroughly inspected by a Missouri-certified asbestos inspector to determine if any Asbestos Containing Materials are present, and a notification made to the department at least ten working days prior to demolition. Regulated structures include any building which has been used as a commercial, institutional, or industrial building (even if it was historic use), and projects involving two or more residential structures. In addition, this includes but is not limited to the following "non-building" structures: bridges, pipelines, cooling towers, chimneys, dams, and tunnels. Any asbestos found must be properly managed to prevent release of asbestos fibers.

Solid Waste
Information about solid waste uncovered during construction activities can be found at https://dnr.mo.gov/document-search/managing-solid-waste-encountered-during-excavation-activities-pub2192/pub2192.

No waste may be buried on-site or at an alternate site, except for clean fill. Clean fill is defined by the Revised Statutes of Missouri as "uncontaminated soil, rock, sand, gravel, concrete, asphaltic concrete, cinderblocks, brick, minimal amounts of wood and metal, and inert solids as approved by rule or policy of the department for fill, reclamation or other beneficial use." Clean fill must not contain protruding metals or demolition debris. Although not regulated as waste, placement of clean fill materials may be subject to requirements of the department's Water Protection Program if it is placed in contact with surface or subsurface waters of the state or would otherwise violate water quality standards.

Air Pollution
Dust
Ensure fugitive particulate matter emissions, such as dust, resulting from the project do not remain on surfaces or in the air beyond the property line of origin. 10 CSR 10-6.170 restricts the emission of particulate matter to the ambient air beyond the premises of origin. Additional information on general dust emissions may be found at https://dnr.mo.gov/print/document-search/pub2200.

Open Burning
The open burning of refuse and trade waste is restricted according to 10 CSR 10-6.045. Construction, demolition, and trade waste cannot be open burned, except for untreated wood. Brush from land clearing activities may be burned if the burning is conducted outside the city limits and greater than 200 yards from the nearest occupied structure. Additional information on open burning can be found at https://dnr.mo.gov/print/document-search/pub2047.

The above comments concern potential environmental impacts related to air, land, and water. Feedback on this project related to the other topics should be directed as described below:

- Historic Preservation: Project personnel should check with the department's State Historic Preservation Office to determine if a Section 106 Review is needed. Information on the Section 106 Review can be found on the department's web site at https://www.mostateparks.com/page/84261/section-106-review or by contacting the State Historic Preservation Office at 573-751-7858.
- Floodplain: For information concerning flood plains impacts, contact the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency, Floodplain Management and Mitigation Branch, at 573-526-9100 or 2302 Militia Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65101.
- Endangered Species: The MDC is responsible for collecting and managing information on the location and status of endangered species in the state. Contact MDC's Endangered Species Coordinator at 573-751-4115 or P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102 for information about endangered species impacts.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments for the proposed project. If you have any questions or need clarification, please contact me at 573-522-6221.

Sincerely,

Hannah Humphrey

Hannah Humphrey
Deputy Director

HH/rab

Attachment

Missouri Department of Conservation

Natural Heritage Review Report

October 2, 2023

Science Branch
P. O. Box 180
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Prepared by: Shelly Colatskie
NaturalHeritageReview@mdc.mo.gov
(573) 522 - 4115 ext. 3182

Matt Vitello
MDC
Matt.Vitello@mdc.mo.gov

NHR ERT ID:		NHR ERT Level:	
Project type:	Water Use		
Location/Scope:	T29NR12ES33. T29NR12ES34. T28NR12ES04, T28NR12ES03		
County:	Scott		
Project Title:	Whitewater River Watershed Project		
Query received:	9/13/2023		

This NATURAL HERITAGE REVIEW is not a site clearance letter. Rather, it identifies public lands and records of sensitive resources located close to and/or potentially affected by the proposed project. If project plans or location change, this report may no longer be valid. Because land use conditions change and animals move, the existence of an occurrence record does not mean the species/habitat is still present. Therefore, reports include information about records near but not necessarily on the project site. Lack of an occurrence record does not mean that a sensitive species or natural community is not present on or near the project area. On-site verification is the responsibility of the project. These records serve as one reference and additional information (e.g. wetland or soils maps, on-site inspections or surveys) should be considered. Look for additional information about the biological and habitat needs of records listed to avoid or minimize impacts. More information is at Natural Areas | Missouri Department of Conservation (mo.gov) and Missouri Fish and Wildlife Information System (MOFWIS).

Level 3: Records of federal-listed (also state-listed) species or critical habitats near the project site:

Natural Heritage records identify no wildlife preserves, no designated wilderness areas or critical habitats, and no federal-listed species records within the project area, or in the public land survey section or sections adjacent.

FEDERAL LIST species/habitats are protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act. **Contact U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service** (101 Park Deville Drive Suite A, Columbia, Missouri 65203-0007; 573-234-2132) for Endangered Species Act coordination and concurrence information).

Level 2: Records of state-listed (not federal-listed) endangered species AND / OR state-ranked (not state-listed endangered) species and natural communities of conservation concern. The Department tracks these species and natural communities due to population declines and/or apparent vulnerability.

Natural Heritage records identify no state-listed endangered species within the project area.

Natural Heritage records indicate the following state-ranked species near the project area:

Scientific Name	Common Name	State Rank	Proximity (miles)	Primary Habitat
Carex oxylepis	Sharp-scale Sedge	S2	<6	Forest Matrix
Taxidea taxus	American Badger	S3	<3	Grassland matrix, Savanna pasture/orchard, Row/close grown crops
Pseudacris illinoensis	Illinois Chorus Frog	S2	<6	Grassland matrix, Ephemeral pools, Wet ditches
Notropis texanus	Weed Shiner	S3	<6	Rivers/Streams
Opsopoeodus emiliae	Pugnose Minnow	S4	<4	Rivers/Streams

Erimyzon sucetta	Lake Chubsucker	S2	<6	Rivers/Streams

State Rank Definitions:

- S1: Critically imperiled in the state because of extreme rarity of or because of some factor(s) making it especially vulnerable to extirpation from the state. Typically, 5 or fewer occurrences or very few remaining individuals (<1,000).
- S2: Imperiled in the state because of rarity or because of some factor(s) making it very vulnerable to extirpation from the state (6 to 20 occurrences or few remaining individuals).
- S3: Vulnerable in the state either because rare and uncommon, or found only in a restricted range (even if abundant at some locations), or because of other factors making it vulnerable to extirpation. Typically 21 to 100 occurrences or between 3,000 and 10,000 individuals.
- S4: Uncommon but not rare, and usually widespread in the nation or state. Possible cause of long-term concern. Usually more than 100 occurrences and more than 10,000 individuals.
- S#S#: Range Rank: A numeric range rank (e.g., S2S3) is used to indicate the range of uncertainty about the exact status.
- ?: Denotes inexact or uncertain numeric rank.
- SU: Currently unrankable due to lack of information or due to substantially conflicting information about status or trends.

There are no regulatory requirements associated with this status, however we encourage voluntary stewardship to minimize the risk of further decline that could lead to listing.

STATE ENDANGERED species are protected under the Wildlife Code of Missouri (3CSR10-4.111).
See the Missouri Species And Communities Of Conservation Concern Checklist (mo.gov) for a complete list.

General recommendations related to this project or site, or based on information about the historic range of species (unrelated to any specific Natural Heritage records):

- **Water Use, Transfer and Channel Activities:** Potential impacts to fish, forest and wildlife resources can be minimized or avoided by placing new lines in areas that have already been developed or disturbed, using existing utility line easements, or placing lines along existing roads. Maintenance activities that occur within the existing footprint of the water line are less likely to affect fish, forest, and wildlife resources. Following best management practices and Clean Water Act Permit conditions, if required, also help minimize potential for significant habitat effects. Stream and drainage crossings are concerns, and every effort should be made to avoid erosion, silt introduction, petroleum or chemical pollution, and disruption or realignment of stream banks and beds during maintenance activities. Please see Best Management Practices for Construction and Development Projects Affecting Missouri Rivers and Streams (mo.gov).
  - Revegetation is an important part of managing utility corridors and can have significant resource impacts depending on the techniques used. Revegetation of disturbed areas is recommended to minimize erosion; use native plant species compatible with the local landscape and wildlife needs. Annuals like ryegrass may be combined with native perennials for quicker green-up. Avoid aggressive, exotic perennials such as crown vetch and *sericea lespedeza*. Maintenance of ground cover in utility corridors can have significant implications for sensitive resources. Native plant species typically require low maintenance over the long term, and provide more benefits to native wildlife. Utility corridors can provide wildlife travel corridors, food sources, and types of low-growing plant diversity sometimes rare in adjoining land. Mowing and maintenance schedules should consider nesting seasons, and diversity in plant composition.

- **<u>Indiana Bats and Northern Long-eared Bats:</u> If this project has the potential to alter habitat (e.g. tree removal, projects in karst habitat) or cause direct mortality of bats, please coordinate directly with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Ecological Services, 101 Park Deville Drive, Suite A, Columbia, Missouri 65203-0007; Phone 573-234-2132 Ext. 100 for Ecological Services) for further coordination under the Endangered Species Act.**

  Though Indiana and Northern Long-eared bats are not known to occur in the project area, these species should be assumed present wherever habitat exists.

  Though Indiana and Northern Long-eared bats are not known to occur in the project area, these species should be assumed present because they occur in adjacent Cape Girardeau County and could occur in the project area. Indiana Bats *(Myotis sodalis*, federal and state-listed endangered) and Northern Long-eared Bats (*Myotis septentrionalis,* federal-listed endangered) hibernate during winter months in caves and mines. During the summer months, they roost and raise young under the bark of trees in riparian forests and upland forests near perennial streams. During project activities, avoid degrading stream quality and where possible leave snags standing and preserve mature forest canopy. Do not enter caves known to harbor Indiana Bats and/or Northern Long-eared Bats, especially from September to April.

- **<u>Bald Eagles:</u>** Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) nest near streams or water bodies in the project area. Nests are large and fairly easy to identify. While no longer listed as endangered, eagles continue to be protected by the federal government under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Work managers should be alert for nesting areas within 1500 meters of project activities, and follow federal guidelines at: Do I need an eagle take permit? | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (fws.gov) if eagle nests are seen.

- Invasive exotic species are a significant issue for fish, wildlife and agriculture in Missouri. Seeds, eggs, larvae, and aquatic plant material may be moved to new sites on boats or construction equipment, so inspect and clean equipment thoroughly before moving between project sites.
  - Remove any mud, soil, trash, plants (or plant material) or animals from equipment before leaving any water body or work area.
  - Drain water from boats and machinery that has operated in water, checking motor cavities, live-well, bilge and transom wells, tracks, buckets, and any other water reservoirs.
  - When possible, wash and rinse equipment thoroughly with hard spray or HOT water (≥140° F, typically available at do-it-yourself carwash sites), and dry in the hot sun before using again.

These recommendations are ones project managers might prudently consider based on a general understanding of species needs and landscape conditions. Natural Heritage records largely reflect sites visited by specialists in the last 30 years. Many privately owned tracts have not been surveyed and could host remnants of species once but no longer common.

Robin Ledford

From: Scott R. Hobart <srhobart@mstutz.com>
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2023 8:58 AM
To: Robin Ledford
Cc: Warner, Kathy; Sample, Larry
Subject: FW: USFWS Response to stakeholder Participation Whitewater River Watershed Project

FYI

Thank you,

Scott R. Hobart, P.E. *
CONSERVATIONWORKS JOINT VENTURE **| Project Manager**
3116 N. Dries Lane Suite 100 **|** Peoria, IL 61604
Ph: (309) 693-7615 **|** Fax: (309) 693-7616
Email: srhobart@mstutz.com **|** Website: www.mstutz.com
*Licensed in IL, IN, NE, OK, WY
Please consider the environment before printing this email.

From: Hefner, Steven - FPAC-NRCS, MO <steven.hefner@usda.gov>
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2023 8:10 AM
To: Scott R. Hobart <srhobart@mstutz.com>
Subject: FW: USFWS Response to stakeholder Participation Whitewater River Watershed Project

FYI. For your files.

Steve Hefner
Natural Resources Specialist
Water Resources & Easements Staff
Natural Resources Conservation Service
United States Department of Agriculture
Parkade Center, Suite 250
601 Business Loop 70 West
Columbia, MO 65203-2546

From: Bulliner, Kathryn M <kathryn_bulliner@fws.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2023 4:41 PM
To: Hefner, Steven - FPAC-NRCS, MO <steven.hefner@usda.gov>
Subject: USFWS Response to stakeholder Participation Whitewater River Watershed Project

Dear Mr. Hefner,

Thank you for sending the request for stakeholder participation as it relates to the proposed Whitewater River Watershed Project in Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Missouri Ecological Services Field Office received the letter and appreciates NRCS reaching out to our office. We have no comments at this time; however, we anticipate future coordination through Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act

(ESA) and dialogue on the project. For any future ESA consultation or general questions please reach out to me as the NRCS lead for the Missouri Office.

Thank you and I look forward to coordinating with you,

Kathryn
Kathryn Bulliner, PhD
Fish and Wildlife Biologist
Missouri Field Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Cell: 573-476-9136
Pronouns: she/her/hers

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Robin Ledford

From: Scott R. Hobart <srhobart@mstutz.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 18, 2023 3:10 PM
To: Robin Ledford; Hertfelder, Cori
Cc: Sample, Larry
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FW: [External Email]EPA Scoping Comments - Whitewater River Watershed Project

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FYI, all standard response, didn't see any specifics for this particular project.

Thank you,

Scott R. Hobart, P.E. *
MAURER-STUTZ| **Project Manager**
3116 N. Dries Lane Suite 100 | Peoria, IL 61604
Ph: (309) 693-7615 | Fax: (309) 693-7616
Email: srhobart@mstutz.com | Website: www.mstutz.com
*Licensed in IL, IN, NE, OK, WY

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From: Hefner, Steven - FPAC-NRCS, MO <steven.hefner@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, October 18, 2023 2:36 PM
To: Scott R. Hobart <srhobart@mstutz.com>
Cc: Hamilton, Chris - FPAC-NRCS, MO <chris.hamilton@usda.gov>
Subject: FW: [External Email]EPA Scoping Comments - Whitewater River Watershed Project

FYI.....

Steve Hefner
Natural Resources Specialist
Water Resources & Easements Staff
Natural Resources Conservation Service
United States Department of Agriculture
Parkade Center, Suite 250
601 Business Loop 70 West
Columbia, MO 65203-2546

From: Sedlacek, Michael <Sedlacek.Michael@epa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, October 18, 2023 1:46 PM
To: Hefner, Steven - FPAC-NRCS, MO <steven.hefner@usda.gov>
Subject: [External Email]EPA Scoping Comments - Whitewater River Watershed Project

You don't often get email from sedlacek.michael@epa.gov. Learn why this is important

[External Email]
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Please send any concerns or suspicious messages to: Spam.Abuse@usda.gov

Mr. Hefner:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 7 has reviewed the project scoping document for the Whitewater River Watershed Project, Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, and Stoddard Counties, Missouri. The following comments were prepared in accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

NEPAssist
EPA recommends using NEPAssist as the first step to identify any potential environmental and/or human health concerns. NEPAssist may be accessed at: https://www.epa.gov/nepa/nepassist.

Water Quality
EPA recommends the forthcoming NEPA document describe how the proposed actions may affect water bodies listed as impaired under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and their listing status as impaired. A list of impaired waterbodies is found at: https://www.epa.gov/tmdl/impaired-waters-and-tmdls-region-7.

Wetlands and Aquatic Resources
EPA recommends the forthcoming NEPA document explain how the Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1) guidelines have been applied to both stream and wetland impacts. The Section 404 (b)(1) guidelines call for the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative to be selected to address impacts to wetlands, streams, and other waters of the United States. The guidelines also require the sequence of first avoiding, then minimizing, and finally mitigating for any impacts to aquatic resources. EPA recommends the forthcoming NEPA document discuss proposed mitigation for unavoidable, minimized stream and wetland impacts (if applicable).

Air Quality Strategies
Temporary fugitive dust and diesel exhaust emissions from construction activities, such as use of heavy machinery and material hauling, would occur. In 2002, EPA classified diesel emissions as a likely human carcinogen, and in 2012 the International Agency for Research on Cancer concluded that diesel exhaust is carcinogenic to humans. Diesel exhaust can also lead to other serious health conditions and can worsen heart and lung disease. EPA recommends implementing air quality best management practices and mitigation measures for this project. Examples include:

- Use vehicles that are equipped with zero-emission technologies or the most advanced emission control systems available.
- Establish an anti-idling policy for internal combustion vehicle.
- Use onsite renewable electricity generation and/or grid-based electricity rather than diesel-powered generators or other equipment.
- Where appropriate, retrofit older-tier or Tier 0 nonroad engines with an exhaust filtration device before it enters the construction site to capture diesel particulate matter.
- Stabilize open storage piles and disturbed areas by covering and/or applying water or chemical/organic dust palliative, where appropriate.
- Where appropriate, install wind fencing.
- Use enclosed, climate-controlled cabs pressurized and equipped with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters to reduce operator exposure to diesel exhaust.

Climate Change Resiliency

The Fourth National Climate Assessment (https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/chapter/21/) finds that in the Midwest, extreme heat, heavy downpours, and flooding will affect infrastructure, health, air, and water quality. Acute storm events are occurring with increasing frequency and intensity. EPA recommends that the forthcoming NEPA document account for increased storm frequency and intensity in the design of any proposed mitigation to help ensure the health and safety of the public by installing "green" stormwater management features, such as stormwater retention/detention basins, permeable pavement, rain gardens, rainwater cisterns, and/or over-sized culverts and bridges (see: https://www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure.) Information on adapting to the effects of climate change is available at EPA's Climate Change Resiliency and Adaptation Resource Center: https://www.epa.gov/arc-x/planning-climate-change-adaptation.

Environmental Justice and Children's Health
EPA recommends using EJScreen (https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen) as the first step to identify communities living with Environmental Justice (EJ) concerns near the project area. EPA recommends that any affected communities living with EJ concerns be identified and given an opportunity to provide input into the remainder of the NEPA process, including proposed mitigation, if applicable. EPA recommends the forthcoming NEPA document include information describing what was or will be done to inform these communities about the project and the potential impacts it may have on their communities, what input has been received to date from the communities, and how that input was or will be used in decision-making. If you have any questions about EJ or would like EPA's help reaching out to the communities that may be affected by this project, please contact LaTonya Sanders at (913) 551-7555 or via email at sanders.latonya@epa.gov.

Demolition Debris and Contamination
EPA recommends testing structures to be demolished for lead paint, asbestos, polychlorinated biphenyl compounds (PCB), Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), and organic petroleum compounds. We also recommend testing the soil beneath those structures, and remediate, if necessary. EPA recommends any contaminated material that cannot be remediated be disposed of in accordance with federal and state regulations before planting vegetation in the affected area. EPA also recommend reuse and/or recycling of demolition debris to the maximum extent possible. For more information, see: https://www.epa.gov/smm/sustainable-management-construction-and-demolition-materials.

Energy Efficiency
For new structures associated with the proposed project, EPA recommends the use of energy-efficient and/or sustainable building materials, where appropriate. We also recommend installation of renewable energy sources, such as solar panels. See https://www.epa.gov/energy/reduce-environmental-impact-your-energy-use and Section 438 of the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) for examples of how to integrate energy efficiency into Federal projects.

Pollinators and Native Plant Species
Pollinators are critical contributors to our nation's economy, food system, and environmental health. Vegetation within the project area can provide vital habitat for pollinators, providing food, shelter, and connections to other patches of habitat. Where feasible, EPA recommends planting native species and pollinator-friendly plants within the project footprint. For more information, see: https://www.epa.gov/pollinator-protection/find-best-management-practices-protect-pollinators and https://extension.missouri.edu/publications/m405

Consultation Records
EPA recommends attaching to the forthcoming NEPA document inter-agency consultation documents regarding historic and cultural resources (Missouri State Historic Preservation Office), wetlands and streams (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), and Federal and state threatened and endangered species (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Missouri Department of Natural Resources), and any affected Tribes.

Electronic Recordkeeping
In order to comply with the National Archives' electronic records regulations, the EPA Region 7 NEPA Program has set up an inbox to receive future projects. Our email address is: R7_NEPA@epa.gov. In the future, you may submit all projects for NEPA review to this email box.

We appreciate your consideration of our recommendations. These comments are intended to help ensure a thorough assessment of the project's environmental impacts, adequate public disclosure, and an informed decision-making process. If you have any questions concerning our review, please contact Mike Sedlacek at (913) 551-7208 or sedlacek.michael@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Mike Sedlacek
Environmental Scientist
Office of Intergovernmental Affairs
US Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
11201 Renner Boulevard
Lenexa, Kansas 66219
(913) 551-7208
Sedlacek.michael@epa.gov

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Sylvia Harris

From: Scott R. Hobart <srhobart@mstutz.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 2:59 PM
To: Sarah Stai; Sylvia Harris; Terry L. Feldmann; Jason Sweet
Cc: Marina Osier
Subject: RE: NRCS/USFWS coordination - revised overview graphic

Sarah,

One other thing I remembered from our Whitewater comment review in regards to USFWS that Rex mentioned at our last comment review meeting:

Rex followed up with USFWS. Vona Kuczynska, the USFWS NRCS contact, who stated verbally on 9/22/25 that because MO NRCS determined no anticipated effects (on Whitewater & Lick-Dudley), USFWS won't do any formal response of concurrence to any submittal on them.

So, if no anticipated effect determined on T&E, then no point in submitting to USFWS because they won't formally respond to confirm no effect.

Thank you,

Scott R. Hobart, P.E. *
MAURER-STUTZ| **Project Manager**
3116 N. Dries Lane Suite 100 | Peoria, IL 61604
Ph: (309) 693-7615 Ext 1101 | Fax: (309) 693-7616
Email: srhobart@mstutz.com | Website: www.mstutz.com
*Licensed in IL, IN, MO, NE, OK, WY
NOTE NEW EXTENSION NUMBER 9/24/25
Please consider the environment before printing this email.

From: Sarah Stai <sstai@prairieengineers.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 8:02 AM
To: Scott R. Hobart <srhobart@mstutz.com>; Sylvia Harris <sharris@prairieengineers.com>; Terry L. Feldmann <tlfeldmann@mstutz.com>; Jason Sweet <jsweet@prairieengineers.com>
Cc: Marina Osier <mosier@prairieengineers.com>
Subject: NRCS/USFWS coordination - revised overview graphic

Hi all – I updated the flow chart based on our conversation yesterday. Let me know if you'd like any changes at this point.

Sarah M. Stai, PhD, CSE
Prairie Engineers
ENGINEERS · SURVEYORS · SCIENTISTS
404 N Main Street | Columbia, IL 62236

1

217-217-2018 | www.PrairieEngineers.com

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Whitewater River Initial Public Meeting October 24, 2023

6:30pm – 7:21pm at Little River Drainage District Office, 1432 Kurre Lane, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

In-person sign-in attached. Online attendees – Teams attendance report attached.

Meeting Minutes

1. Introduction of Project – Dustin Boatright – LRDD.
2. Presentation by Steve Hefner – MO NRCS (~33min), see attached Power Point slides.
3. Attendees Questions
    a. Q: Ken Moore: Had questions on the Diversion Channel and levee system outside the watershed within the Little River Drainage Disrict. A: Dustin Boatright answered the questions (no detail in minutes, outside scope of this Watershed Plan).
    b. Q: Ken Moore: Had questions on Birchville Quarry and Capital Sand Company location on Cape La Croix Creek above Mississippi River south side of Cape Girardeau, outside watershed. A: Dustin Boatright and Steve Hefner answered the questions (no detail in minutes, outside the scope of this Watershed Plan).
    c. No questions were asked related to this Whitewater River Watershed project.

1. Summary

Meeting title	Whitewater Initial Public Participation Meeting
Attended participants	3
Start time	10/24/23, 6:15:06 PM
End time	10/24/23, 7:27:50 PM
Meeting duration	1h 12m 44s
Average attendance time	1h 1m 4s

2. Participants

Name	First Join	Last Leave	In-Meeting Durati	Email	Participant ID (UPN)	Role
Scott R. Hobart	10/24/23, 6:16:08 PM	10/24/23, 7:27:5	1h 11m 42s	srhobart@mstutz.com	srhobart@mstutz.com	Organizer
Robin Ledford	10/24/23, 6:16:20 PM	10/24/23, 7:27:5	1h 11m 30s	rledford@prairieengineers.com	rledford@prairieengineers.com	Presenter
Bethany A. Bertsch	10/24/23, 6:43:15 PM	10/24/23, 7:23:1	40m	babertsch@mstutz.com	babertsch@mstutz.com	Presenter

3. In-Meeting Activities

Name	Join Time	Leave Time	Duration	Email	Role
Scott R. Hobart	10/24/23, 6:16:08 PM	10/24/23, 7:27:5	1h 11m 42s	srhobart@mstutz.com	Organizer
Robin Ledford	10/24/23, 6:16:20 PM	10/24/23, 7:27:5	1h 11m 30s	rledford@prairieengineers.com	Presenter
Bethany A. Bertsch	10/24/23, 6:43:15 PM	10/24/23, 7:23:1	40m	babertsch@mstutz.com	Presenter

USDA

United States Department of Agriculture

The NRCS Watershed Program

A Commitment to Assisting Local Communities with Watershed Protection

Steve Hefner
Natural Resources Specialist
Natural Resource Conservation Service, Columbia, MO

Natural Resources Conservation Service

nrcs.usda.gov/

Overview of Presentation Topics

1. Basic information about the NRCS and the Watershed Program
2. An explanation of the Watershed and Flood Prevention Program (WFPO)
3. The purpose and requirements of WFPO.
4. The NRCS goals and objectives for the Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environmental Assessment (Plan-EA).

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The NRCS Agency Mission

NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to address natural resource and watershed concerns.

NRCS also helps to plan, build, and/or improve infrastructure that prevents flooding, saves lives, and protects property.

NRCS offers programs that focus on the conservation of soil and water resources throughout the project watershed.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

nrcs.usda.gov/

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

The NRCS Watershed Program

NRCS Watershed planning is:

a. Science-based

b. Identifies 1 or more resource concerns

c. Evaluates feasible options

d. Emphasizes a desired outcome (such as reduced flooding)

2. Integrates social, economic, and natural resource concerns

3. Ensures conservation of resources and wise stewardship decisions

4. Protects both natural and cultural resources

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WFPO Authorized Purposes

1. Flood prevention (Flood damage reduction)
2. Watershed Protection (sediment reduction)
3. Public Recreation/ Public Fish and Wildlife
4. Agricultural Water Management
5. Municipal Water / Water Quality Protection
6. Watershed Structure Rehabilitation (aging dams)

Natural Resources Conservation Service

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United States Department of Agriculture

A Partnership Effort for a Community Goal

The NRCS Watershed and Flood Prevention Program (WFPO) is dependent upon local sponsor involvement.

A project cannot be planned or installed without having a local entity (City, Township, County, Conservation District, Drainage District, etc.) serve as the project sponsor.

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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Responsibilities of the Sponsor

The Sponsor must agree to:

1. Provide local leadership
2. Acquire necessary permits and licenses
3. Have the authority to levy taxes (if needed)

Taxing authority provides assurance that the federal investment of building a structure will be maintained for the life of the project.

Natural Resources Conservation Service
nrcs.usda.gov/

Responsibilities of the Sponsor

1. Implement zoning and acquire land if needed
2. Commit financially to cost-share amounts (if required)
3. Support the project planning public participation (meetings, outreach documents, website, etc.)
4. Support NRCS conservation practice implementation within the project watershed

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

WFPO Project Benefits and Limitations

WFPO planning projects are limited to watersheds of 250,000 acres or less.

Projects over $25 million require the development of an Environmental Impact Statement and Congressional approval.

WFPO pays for 100% of the Engineering and Planning Technical Assistance for flood prevention.

WFPO pays for 100% of installation and construction of flood prevention works of improvement.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

WFPO Project Benefits and Limitations

WFPO pays for 100% of the planning and technical assistance for related public recreation works of improvement.

WFPO pays for up to 50% of the installation and construction of related public recreation works of improvement.

WFPO can not pay for real property rights.

WFPO pays a percentage (not to exceed 50%) for conservation easements or floodplain easements.

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Watershed Operations Program Cost Share

Federal Cost Share	Planning/ Engineering/ TA	Installation/ construction	Real Property Rights
Flood Prevention	100%	100%	0%
Watershed protection - Flood control, sedimentation, water quality, water conservation, wildlife, etc.	100%	variable	0%
Public Recreation	100%	Not to exceed 50%	Not to exceed 50%
Public Fish and Wildlife	100%	Not to exceed 50%	No to exceed 50%
Agricultural Water Management - Drainage, Irrigation, Ground water discharge, etc.	Up to 100%	Up to 75%	0%
Municipal and Industrial Water Supply - Reservoir Structure	0%	Not to exceed 50%	0%
Water Quality Management - Reservoir Structure	Up to 100%	TBD	0%

Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Works of Improvement -Structural

WFPO planning projects may include structural components such as construction of a new watershed structure and/or substantial upgrades in stormwater management infrastructure.

Conservation Service

nrcs.usda.gov/

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Works of Improvement – Nonstructural

WFPO projects may include nonstructural components:

1. Wetland restoration
2. Wetland creation
3. Conservation easements

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

NRCS Watershed Program Timelines

1. Investigation Phase:
   Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Study or PIFR
   (completed in 2022)

2. Planning Phase:
   Watershed Plan/Environmental Document (initiated in 2023)
   Estimated timeframe: 18 months

3. Design Phase, Estimated Timeframe: 1-1.5 years

4. Construction Phase, Estimated Timeframe: 1-2 years

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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Design Limitations

A watershed structure is considered only if:

1. Engineering analyses determine that construction of a watershed structure is feasible for the site (soils, geology, topography, etc.)

2. The structure will protect public safety.

3. The structure is the most effective flood control alternative with a positive benefit:cost ratio.

4. Projects usually have design limitations due to adjacent structures and roads.

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Project Purpose and Need

The **purpose** of the proposed project is to prevent damage from erosion, floodwater, and excessive sediment deposition in and adjacent to drainage canals within the LRDD that support agricultural cropland. This is a multi-purpose project with flood control and agricultural water management improvements which would benefit local landowners, farmers, and communities as well as fulfill the general purposes of PL 83-566.

The **need** of the project is to address flood damages and aged infrastructure:

• **Flood damages.** In this region, the economy is dependent upon agricultural crop production, which in turn is dependent upon adequate drainage. Without flood protection and drainage water management, the area remains vulnerable to higher intensity storms caused by climate change, excessive floodwater, prevented planted acres, harvest interruptions, and loss of farm income.

• **Aged infrastructure**. More than 100 years ago, the LRDD began constructing a system of drainage ditches southeast Missouri to create vital farmland that accounts for one third of the State of Missouri's agricultural income. Over the last century, the system's 1,000 miles of ditches have become laden with sediment and its banks have suffered excessive erosion, further de-stabilizing normal flow and drainage capacity, and causing flooding. During flooding events, the drainage canals overflow and flood adjacent cropland, hindering farming practices. Further, groundwater in the area is high, reducing infiltration potential and prolonging the length of time cropland is flooded and unfarmable. Bank stabilization and sediment extraction, is needed to ensure proper water conveyance. Specifically, Ditch #1 at the southwest portion of the watershed is steeper and experiencing erosion from high velocities. Higher sediment delivery rates are present and this area needs to be armored to protect both farming operations and existing canal infrastructure.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

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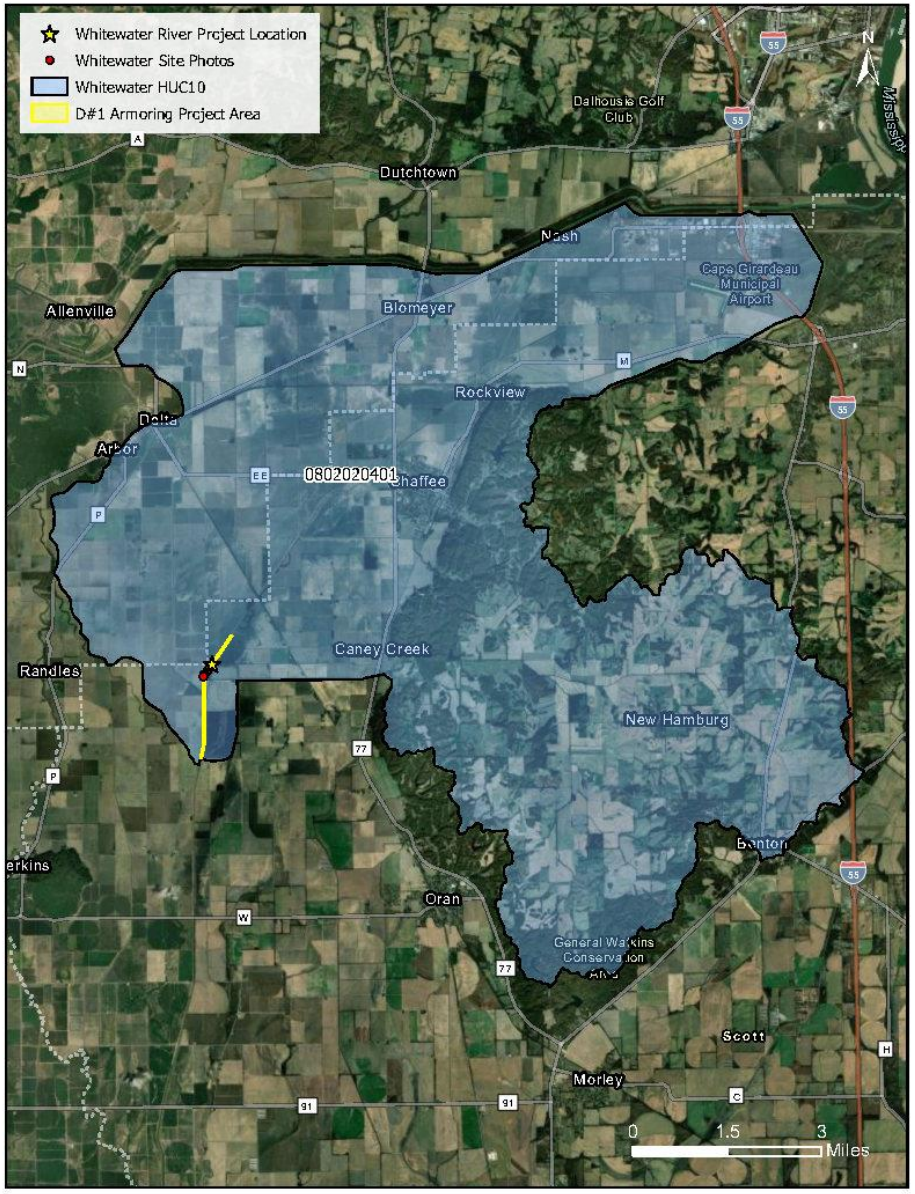
Project Map

Proposed improvements being reviewed includes armoring both banks of Ditch #1 at the location shown in yellow.



Natural Resources Conservation Service

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NRCS Project and Local Contacts

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist
Water Resources and Easements
USDA-NRCS, Parkade Center, Suite 250
601 Business Loop 70 West, Columbia, MO 65203-2546
Email: chris.hamilton@mo.usda.gov

Steve Hefner
USDA-NRCS Natural Resources Specialist
Water Resources & Easements Staff
Butler County USDA Service Center
4327 Highway 67 North, Poplar Bluff, MO 63901
Email: steven.hefner@usda.gov

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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Conservation Works Joint Venture (CWJV)

NRCS has engaged the services of CWJV for planning and engineering support.

CWJV is a multi-disciplinary team of professionals experienced in watershed planning, environmental compliance, and engineering.

NRCS welcomes and appreciates their expertise and assistance in developing the Whitewater River Watershed Plan and Environmental Assessment.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Find your local USDA-NRCS Service Center at:
www.nrcs.usda.gov

Helping People Help the Land

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Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

Or call toll free at (866) 632-9992 (voice) to obtain additional information, the appropriate office or to request documents. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

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Questions, Comments, Concerns?

Iowa

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Natural Resources Conservation Service

nrcs.usda.gov/

Whitewater River Watershed Project, HUC 10: 0802020401
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri
Initial Public Participation Scoping Meeting, October 24, 2023
Attendance

Name	Landowner/Affiliation	Email/Contact Information
Scott Hobart	CWJV	srhobart@mstutz.com
Steve Hefner	NRCS	steven.hefner@usda.gov
Charles Loughman	CWJV	Charles.Loughman@wilsonco.com
Robin Ledford	CWJV	rledford@prairieengineers.com
EDWARD DEMENT	LRDD BOARD	edward.dement@gmail.com
Ken Moore	Cape County landowner	home phone 573-243-5001
Joyce Moore	wife	
W. Dustin Boatwright	LRDD	DBOATWRIGHT@THELRDD.ORG

Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

Roger S. Allan, Deputy Chief
Regulatory Division
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District
167 North Main Street, Room B202
Memphis, Tennessee 38103-1894

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Allan,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 *et seq*.); the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the NRCS is preparing a Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with a proposed action(s).

As project sponsor, the Little River Drainage District proposes a Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (PL 83-566) project to address agricultural water management in southeast Missouri. This watershed resides in Cape Girardeau and Scott County, Missouri and will also address downstream flood control concerns in Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, and Stoddard counties.

The Little River Drainage District is the largest drainage project in the United States. The drainage district is approximately 90 miles (north to south) by 10 to 20 miles wide (east to west). Located in several counties in southeast Missouri, a series of constructed ditches (~1000 miles) and levees (~ 300 miles) built from 1914 to 1928 have transformed nearly inhabitable land into a productive region. The watershed infrastructure in this region is approximately 100 years old.

The sponsor proposes to take measures to ensure the vitality of aging infrastructure, thus providing benefits to downstream watersheds and ensuring landscape scale resilience. The proposed project is a sub-unit of the entire drainage district and is in the northern section of the drainage district. The locally preferred alternative is to place rock along eroding portions of the drainage canals and to plant native warm season grasses to help stabilize canal banks while providing wildlife habitat. All work will remain within the original canal designs and will not expand the footprint of existing infrastructure.

As part of the NEPA process, the NRCS invites you to participate as a stakeholder in this process. We request your participation, opinion, and/or suggestions early in the process, and ask that your response is received within a 30-day period after receipt of this letter. To facilitate cumulative impact analysis, we

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would also appreciate identification of major projects in the vicinity that may contribute to cumulative effects.

If you have an interest in the project, please submit a response in writing to Mr. Steven Hefner at Butler USDA Service Center, 4327 Highway 67 North, Poplar Bluff, MO 63901 or by email at steven.hefner@usda.gov . In your communication, please make reference to "Whitewater River". If you have initial concerns with impacts of the project, please note them in your response.

If you are interested in attending, we are having an interagency stakeholder meeting on October 24th from 2:30-4:30 pm virtually and in person at the Little River Drainage District Office, 1432 Kurre Lane, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701. Please contact Mr. Hefner to obtain meeting invite access.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Site Location Map

cc: file

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Columbia, Missouri 65203
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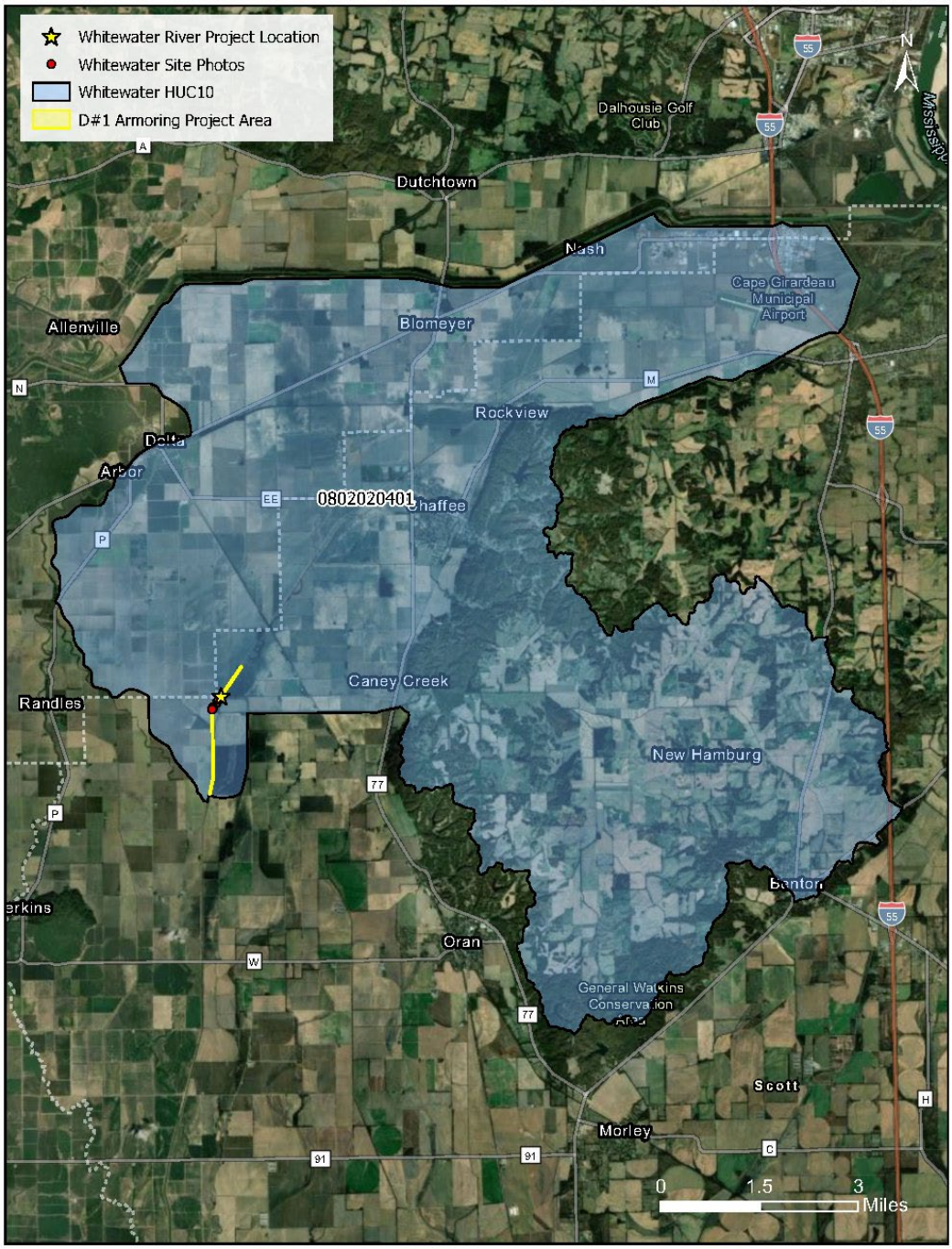
Site Location Map
Note: Proposed watershed improvements only within "D#1 Armoring Project Area"



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September 7, 2023

Missouri State Representative
House District 148
The Honorable Jamie Burger
201 W. Capitol Avenue, Room 302-B
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Burger,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 *et seq*.); the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the NRCS is preparing a Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with a proposed action(s).

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The sponsor proposes to take measures to ensure the vitality of aging infrastructure, thus providing benefits to downstream watersheds and ensuring landscape scale resilience. The proposed project is a sub-unit of the entire drainage district and is in the northern section of the drainage district. The locally preferred alternative is to place rock along eroding portions of the drainage canals and to plant native warm season grasses to help stabilize canal banks while providing wildlife habitat. All work will remain within the original canal designs and will not expand the footprint of existing infrastructure.

As part of the NEPA process, the NRCS invites you to participate as a stakeholder in this process. We request your participation, opinion, and/or suggestions early in the process, and ask that your response is received within a 30-day period after receipt of this letter. To facilitate cumulative impact analysis, we

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If you are interested in attending, we are having an interagency stakeholder meeting on October 24th from 2:30-4:30 pm virtually and in person at the Little River Drainage District Office, 1432 Kurre Lane, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701. Please contact Mr. Hefner to obtain meeting invite access.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Site Location Map

cc: file

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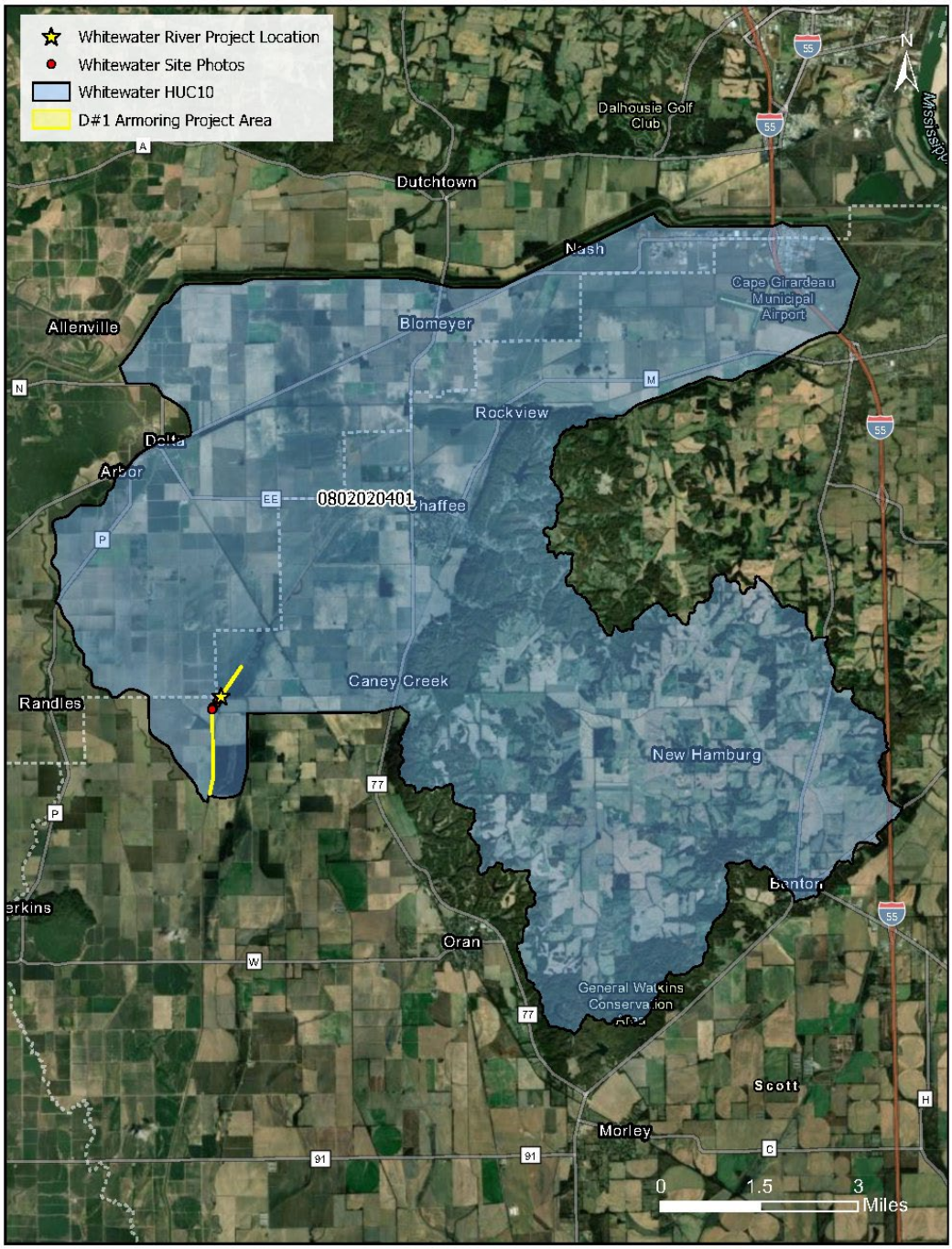
Site Location Map
Note: Proposed watershed improvements only within "D#1 Armoring Project Area"



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September 7, 2023

Cape Girardeau County
Floodplain Manager
1 Barton Square, Suite 202
Jackson, Missouri 63755

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

To Whom It May Concern,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

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As project sponsor, the Little River Drainage District proposes a Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (PL 83-566) project to address agricultural water management in southeast Missouri. This watershed resides in Cape Girardeau and Scott County, Missouri and will also address downstream flood control concerns in Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, and Stoddard counties.

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The sponsor proposes to take measures to ensure the vitality of aging infrastructure, thus providing benefits to downstream watersheds and ensuring landscape scale resilience. The proposed project is a sub-unit of the entire drainage district and is in the northern section of the drainage district. The locally preferred alternative is to place rock along eroding portions of the drainage canals and to plant native warm season grasses to help stabilize canal banks while providing wildlife habitat. All work will remain within the original canal designs and will not expand the footprint of existing infrastructure.

As part of the NEPA process, the NRCS invites you to participate as a stakeholder in this process. We request your participation, opinion, and/or suggestions early in the process, and ask that your response is received within a 30-day period after receipt of this letter. To facilitate cumulative impact analysis, we

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would also appreciate identification of major projects in the vicinity that may contribute to cumulative effects.

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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573-876-0901

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Site Location Map
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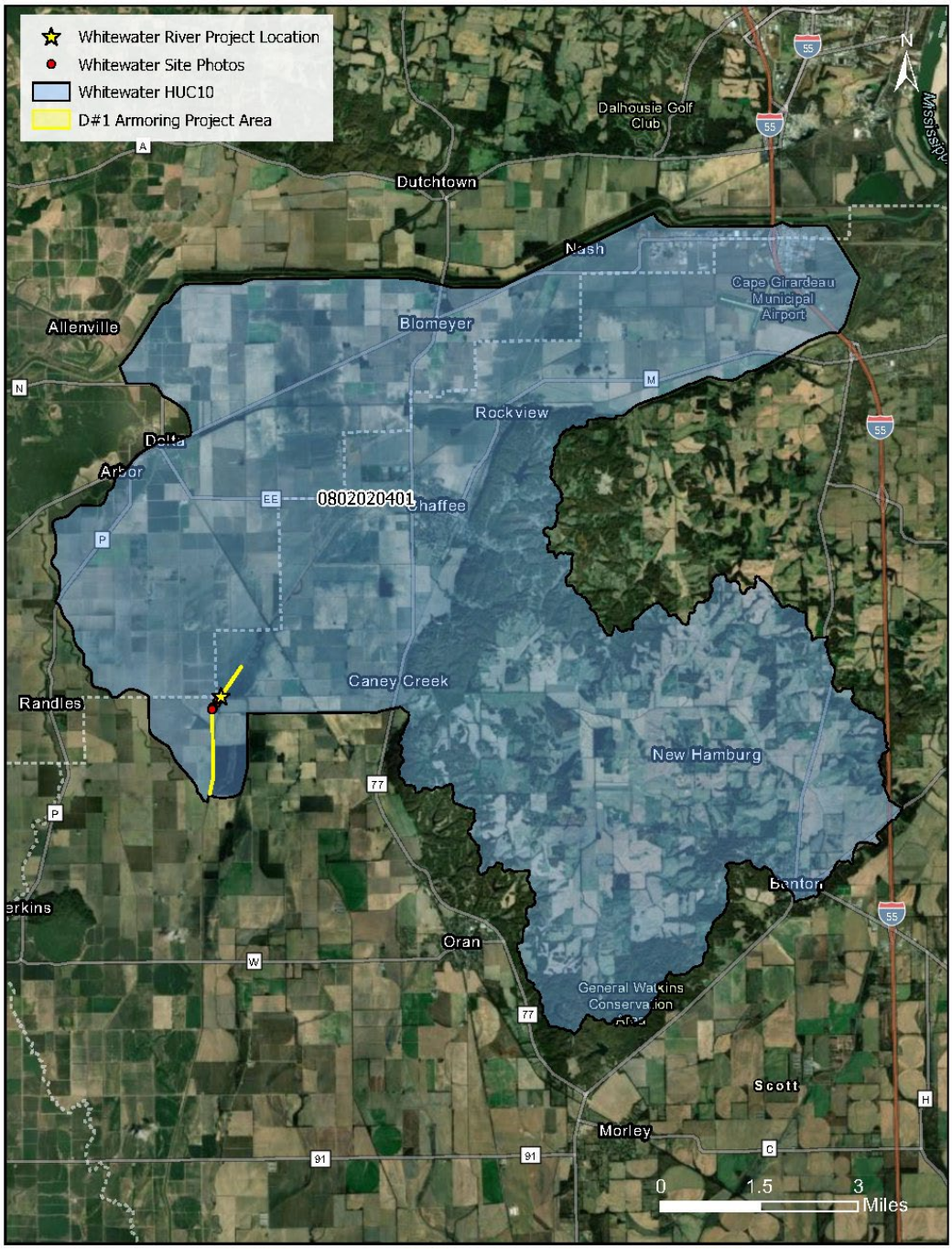

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September 7, 2023

The Honorable Chuck Hoskin
Principal Chief of Cherokee Nation
Post Office Box 948
Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74465

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Principal Chief Hoskin,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Site Location Map

cc: file

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573-876-0901

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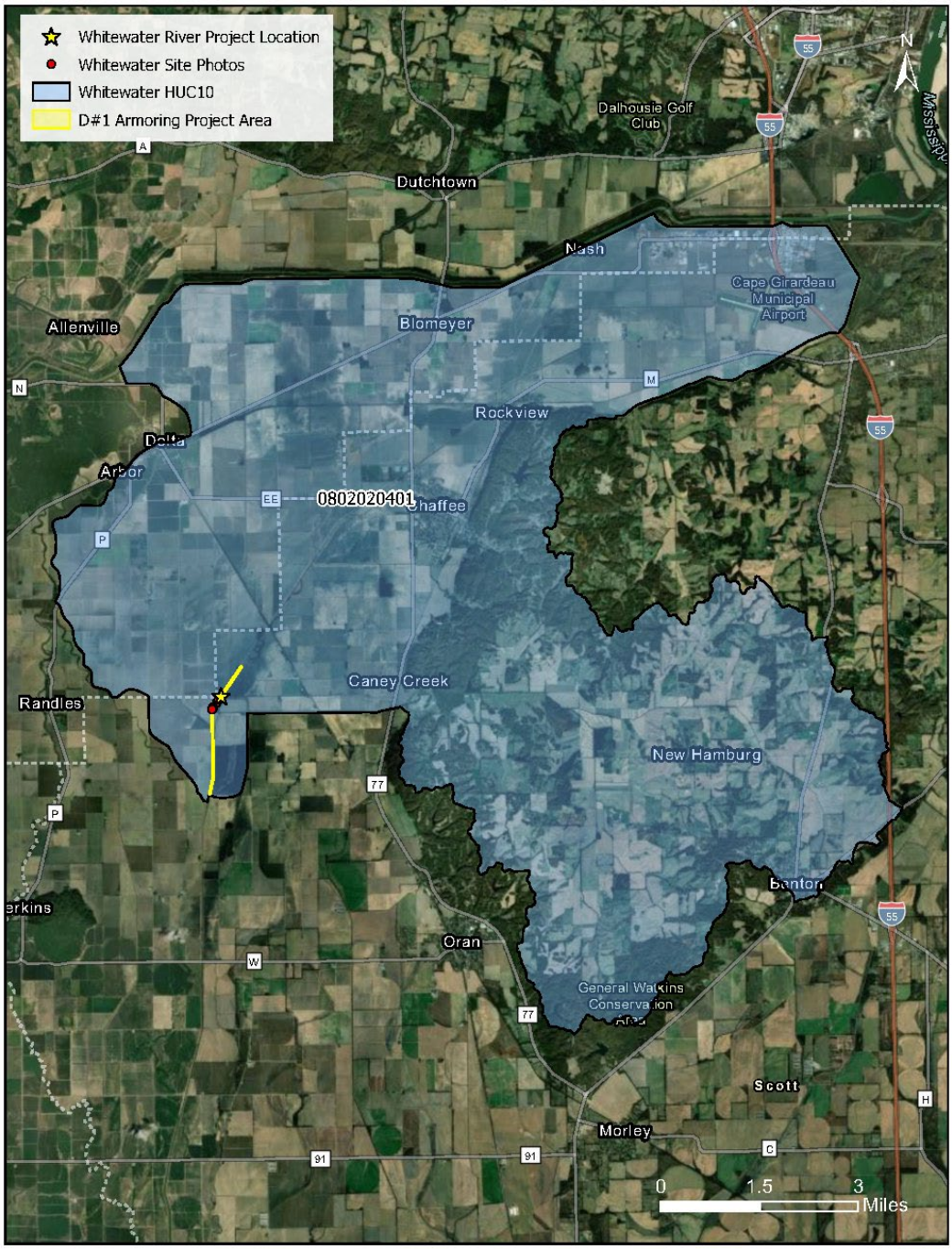
Site Location Map
Note: Proposed watershed improvements only within "D#1 Armoring Project Area"



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Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Deborah Dotson
President of Delaware Nation
Post Office Box 825
Anadarko, Oklahoma 73005

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear President Dotson ,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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Columbia, Missouri 65203
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Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Site Location Map
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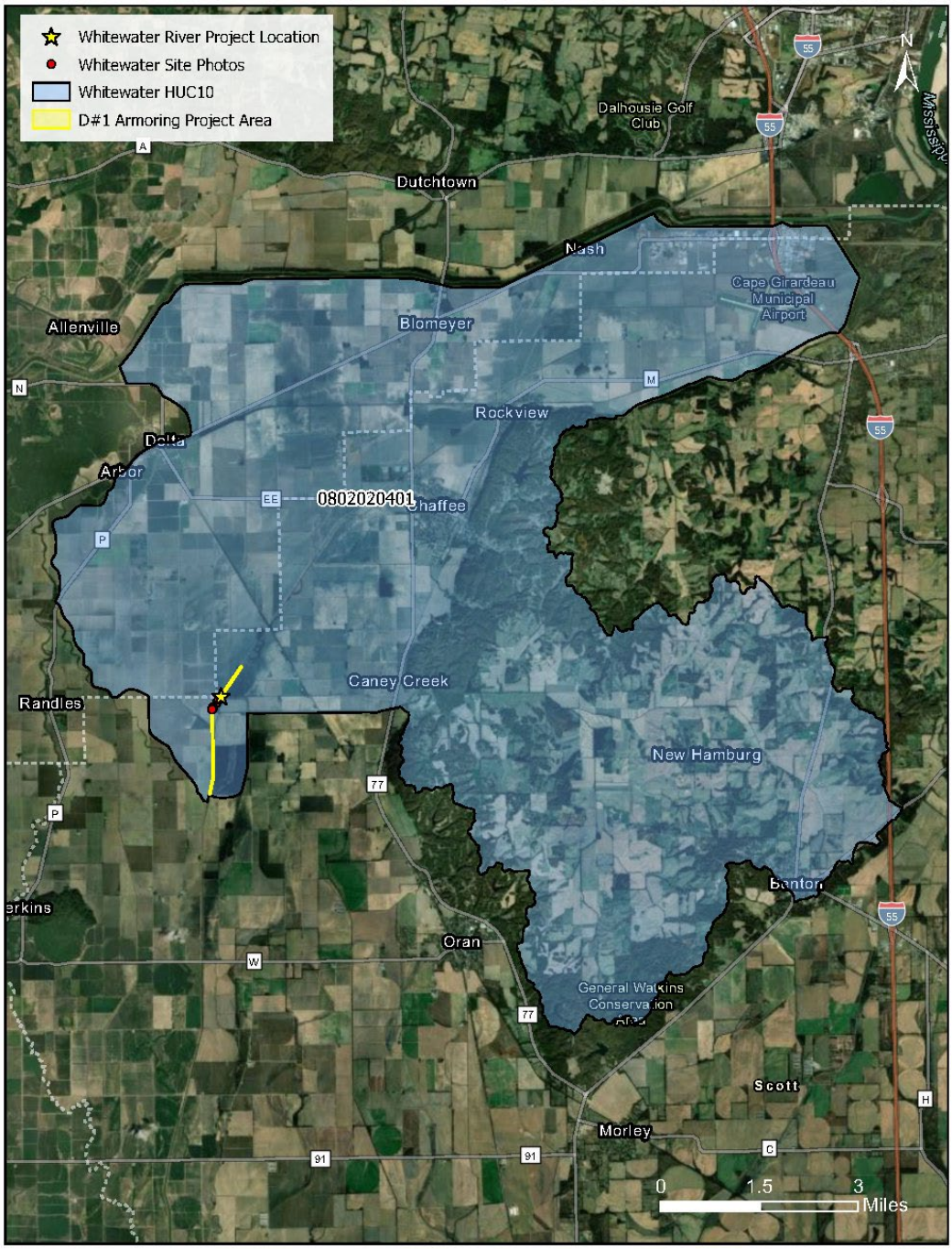

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Brad Killscrow
Chief of Delaware Tribe of Indians
5100 Tuxedo Boulevard
Bartlesville, Oklahoma 74006

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Chief Killscrow,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

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Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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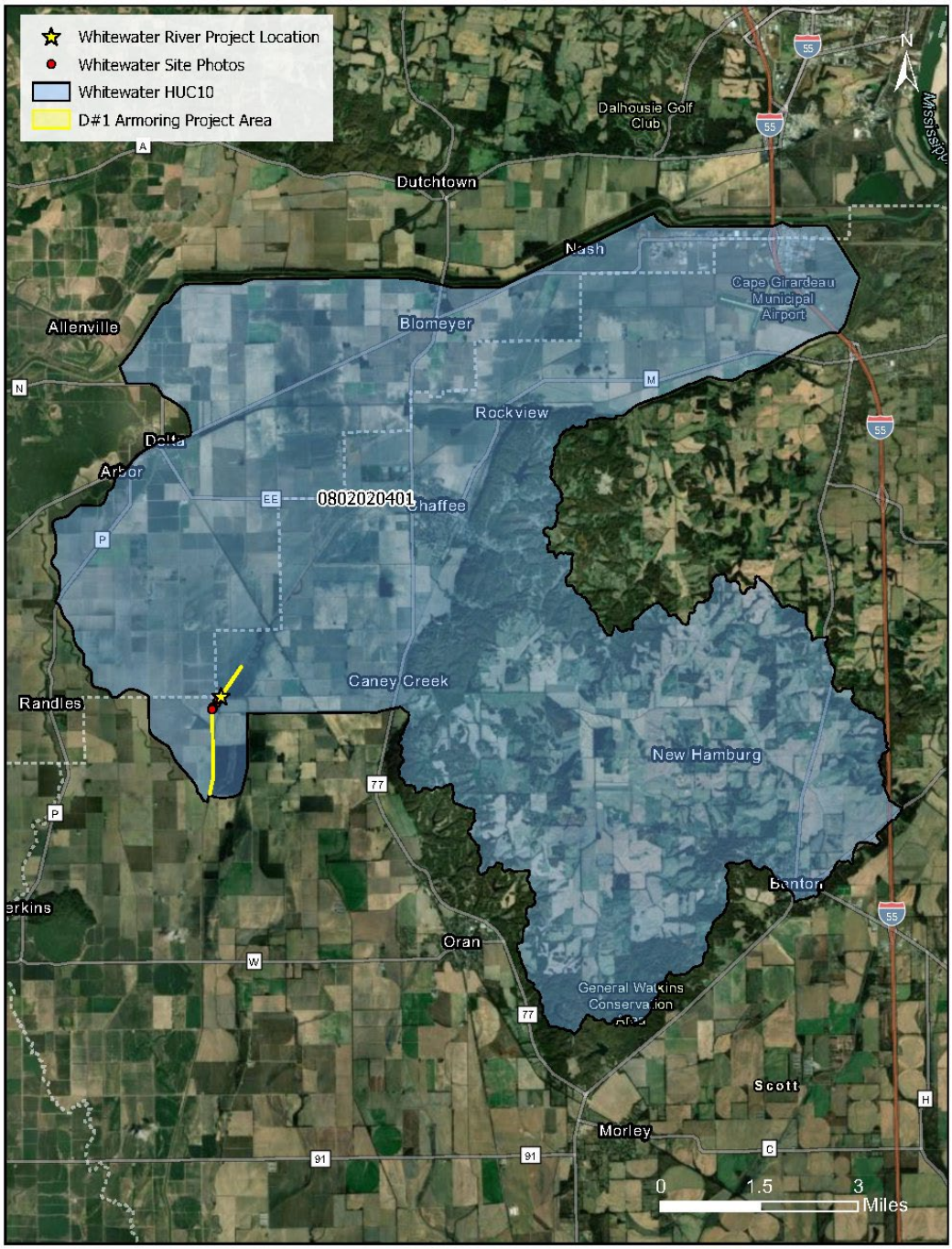

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573-876-0901

Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Glenna Wallace
Chief of Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
Post Office Box 350
Seneca, Missouri 64865

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Chief Wallace:

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 *et seq*.); the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the NRCS is preparing a Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with a proposed action(s).

As project sponsor, the Little River Drainage District proposes a Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (PL 83-566) project to address agricultural water management in southeast Missouri. This watershed resides in Cape Girardeau and Scott County, Missouri and will also address downstream flood control concerns in Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, and Stoddard counties.

The Little River Drainage District is the largest drainage project in the United States. The drainage district is approximately 90 miles (north to south) by 10 to 20 miles wide (east to west). Located in several counties in southeast Missouri, a series of constructed ditches (~1000 miles) and levees (~ 300 miles) built from 1914 to 1928 have transformed nearly inhabitable land into a productive region. The watershed infrastructure in this region is approximately 100 years old.

The sponsor proposes to take measures to ensure the vitality of aging infrastructure, thus providing benefits to downstream watersheds and ensuring landscape scale resilience. The proposed project is a sub-unit of the entire drainage district and is in the northern section of the drainage district. The locally preferred alternative is to place rock along eroding portions of the drainage canals and to plant native warm season grasses to help stabilize canal banks while providing wildlife habitat. All work will remain within the original canal designs and will not expand the footprint of existing infrastructure.

As part of the NEPA process, the NRCS invites you to participate as a stakeholder in this process. We request your participation, opinion, and/or suggestions early in the process, and ask that your response is received within a 30-day period after receipt of this letter. To facilitate cumulative impact analysis, we

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Columbia, Missouri 65203
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would also appreciate identification of major projects in the vicinity that may contribute to cumulative effects.

If you have an interest in the project, please submit a response in writing to Mr. Steven Hefner at Butler USDA Service Center, 4327 Highway 67 North, Poplar Bluff, MO 63901 or by email at steven.hefner@usda.gov . In your communication, please make reference to "Whitewater River". If you have initial concerns with impacts of the project, please note them in your response.

If you are interested in attending, we are having an interagency stakeholder meeting on October 24th from 2:30-4:30 pm virtually and in person at the Little River Drainage District Office, 1432 Kurre Lane, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701. Please contact Mr. Hefner to obtain meeting invite access.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Site Location Map

cc: file

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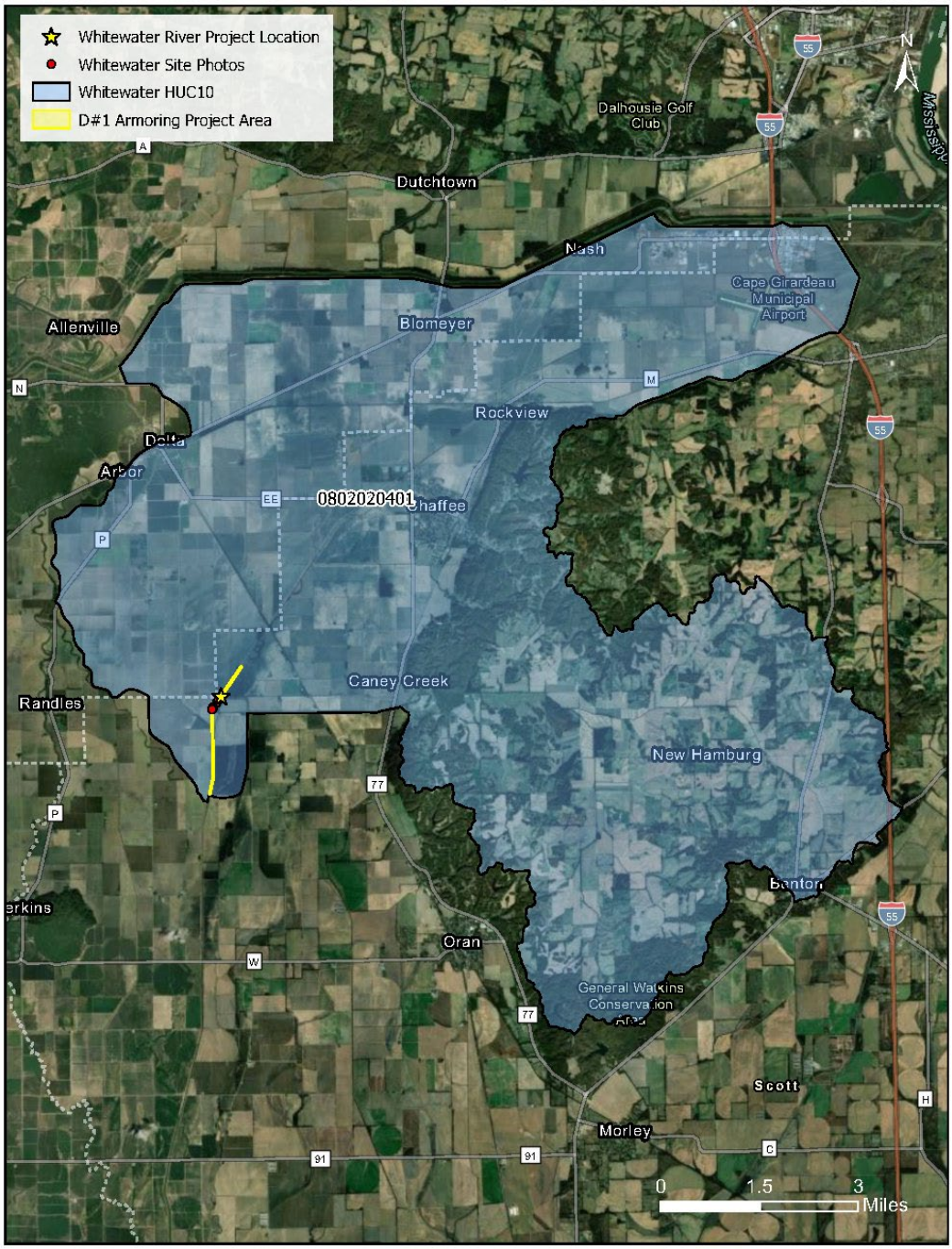
USDA NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Site Location Map
Note: Proposed watershed improvements only within "D#1 Armoring Project Area"



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U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

Missouri State Floodplain Administrators
Floodplain Administrator
Mr. David Gore
215 Chester Avenue
Scott City, Missouri 63841

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Gore,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

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The sponsor proposes to take measures to ensure the vitality of aging infrastructure, thus providing benefits to downstream watersheds and ensuring landscape scale resilience. The proposed project is a sub-unit of the entire drainage district and is in the northern section of the drainage district. The locally preferred alternative is to place rock along eroding portions of the drainage canals and to plant native warm season grasses to help stabilize canal banks while providing wildlife habitat. All work will remain within the original canal designs and will not expand the footprint of existing infrastructure.

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Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
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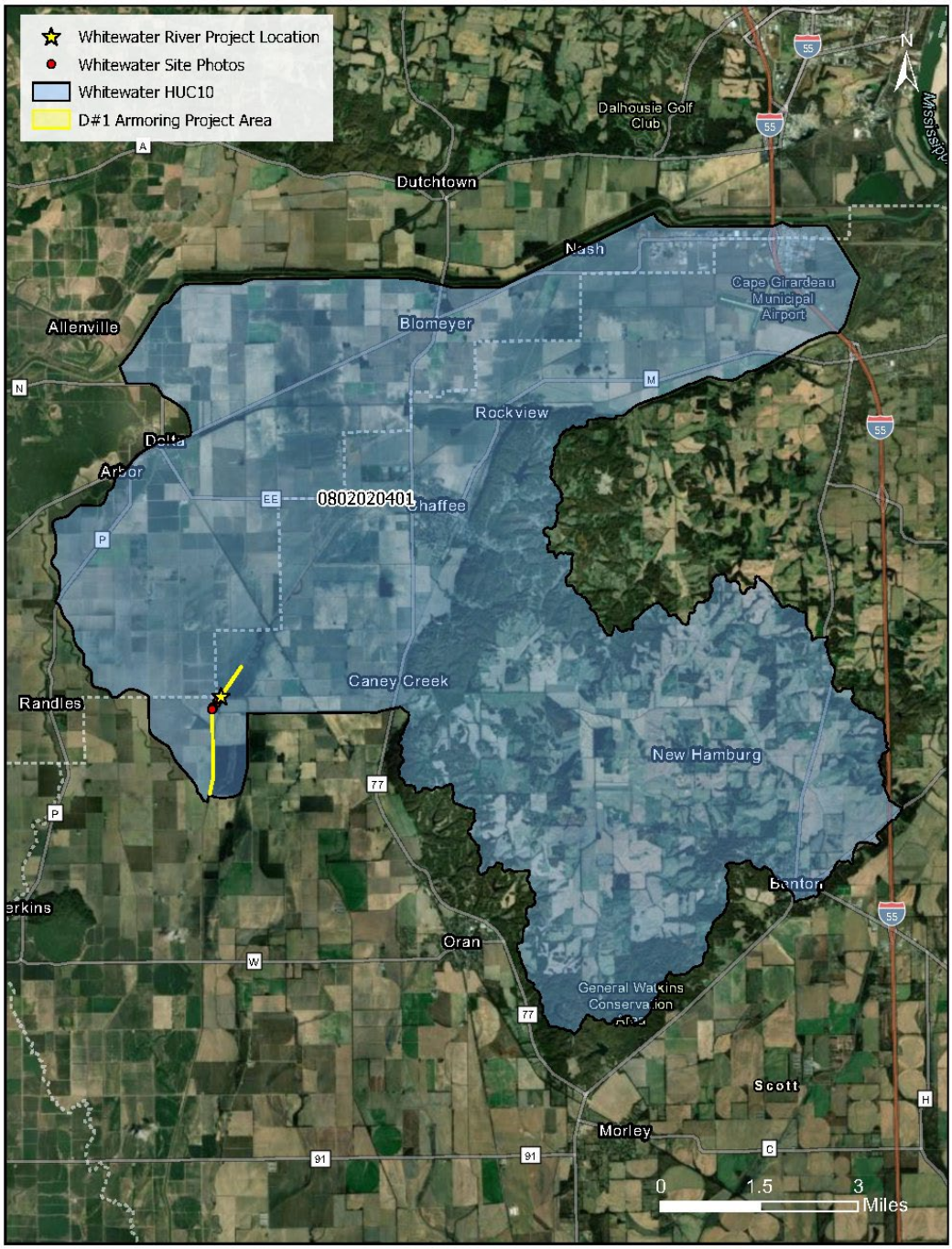

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U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

Scott County USDA Farm Service Agency
County Executive Director
Chris Grojean
6458 State Highway 77
Benton, Missouri 63736-8237

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Grojean,

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Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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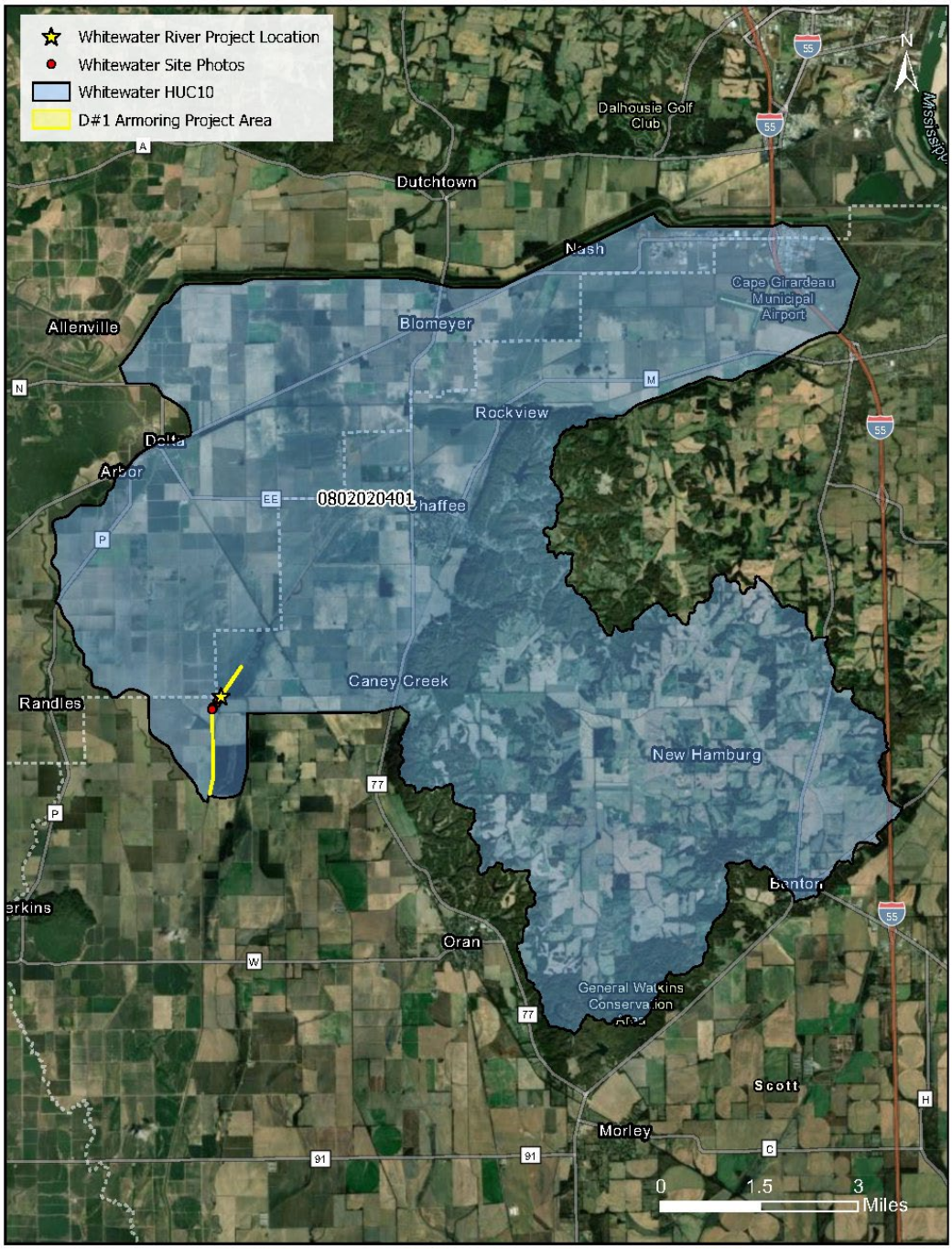

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Josh Hawley
U.S. Congress
United States Senator for Missouri
555 Independence Street, #1600
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63703

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Senator Hawley,

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Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
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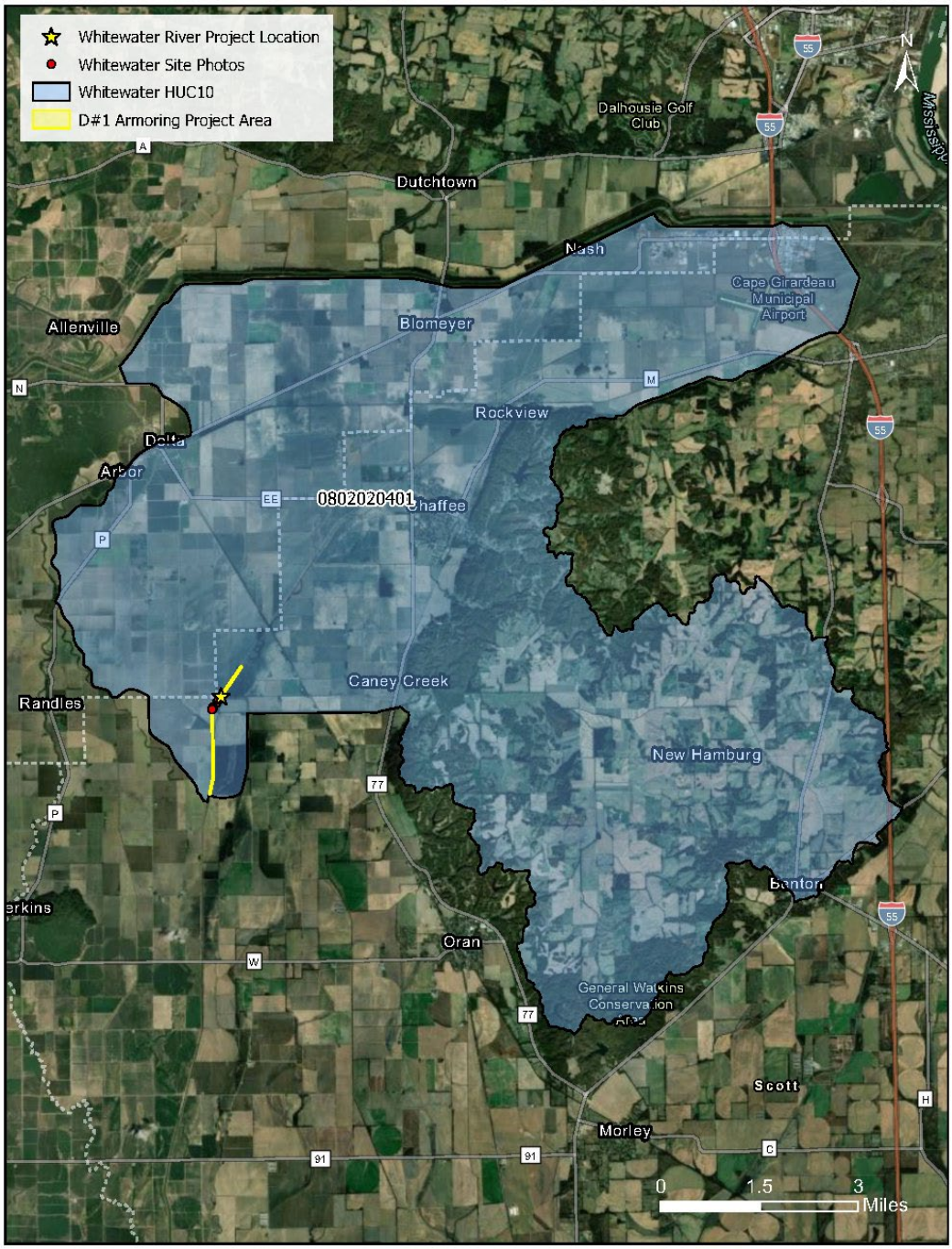

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September 7, 2023

Missouri State Emergency Management Agency
Emergency Coordinator (Cape Girardeau County)
Mr. Travis Hollis
1 S. Sprigg Street
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63703

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Hollis,

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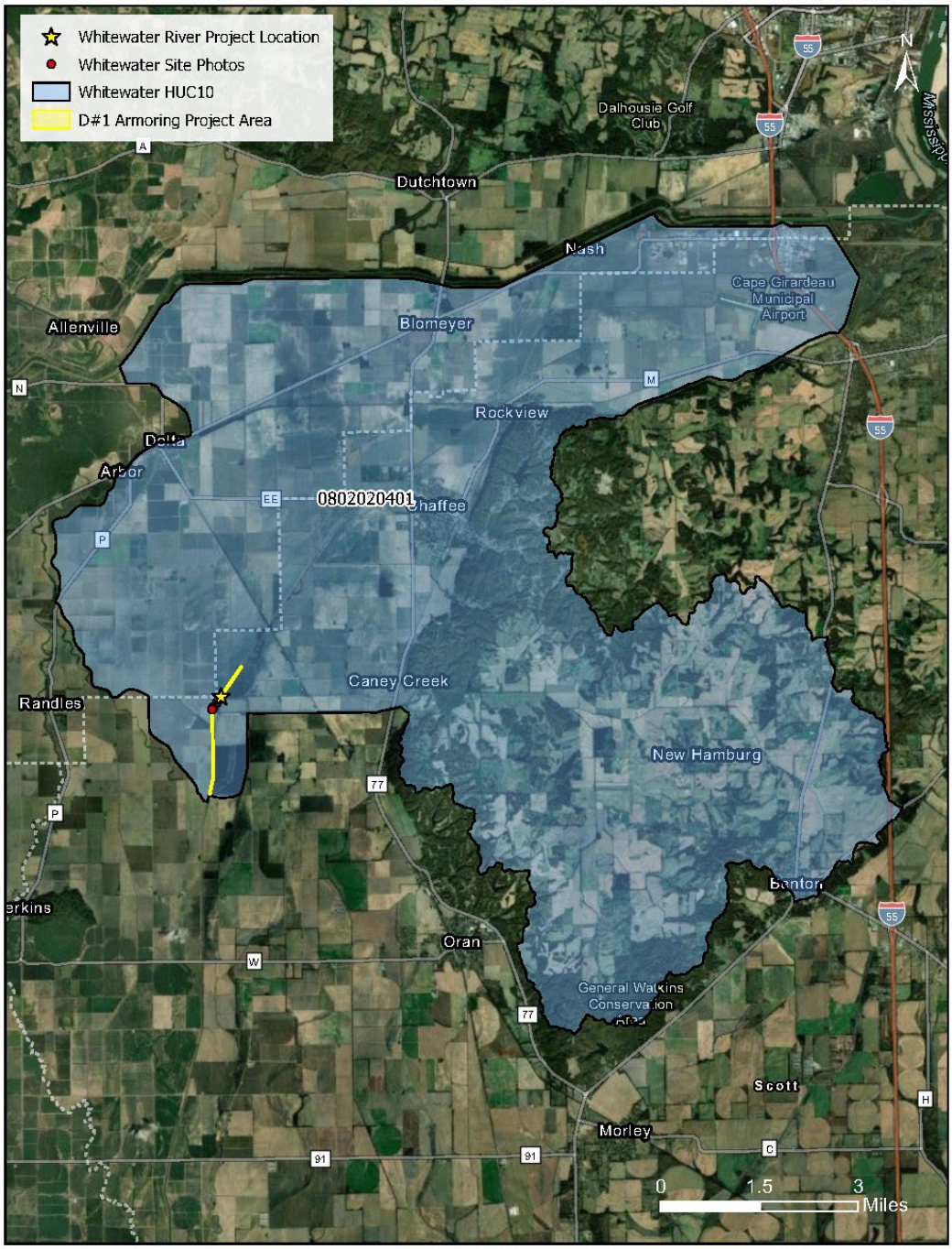

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September 7, 2023

The Honorable Jacob Keyes
Chairman of Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma
335588 East 750 Road
Perkins, Oklahoma 74059

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Chairman Keyes,

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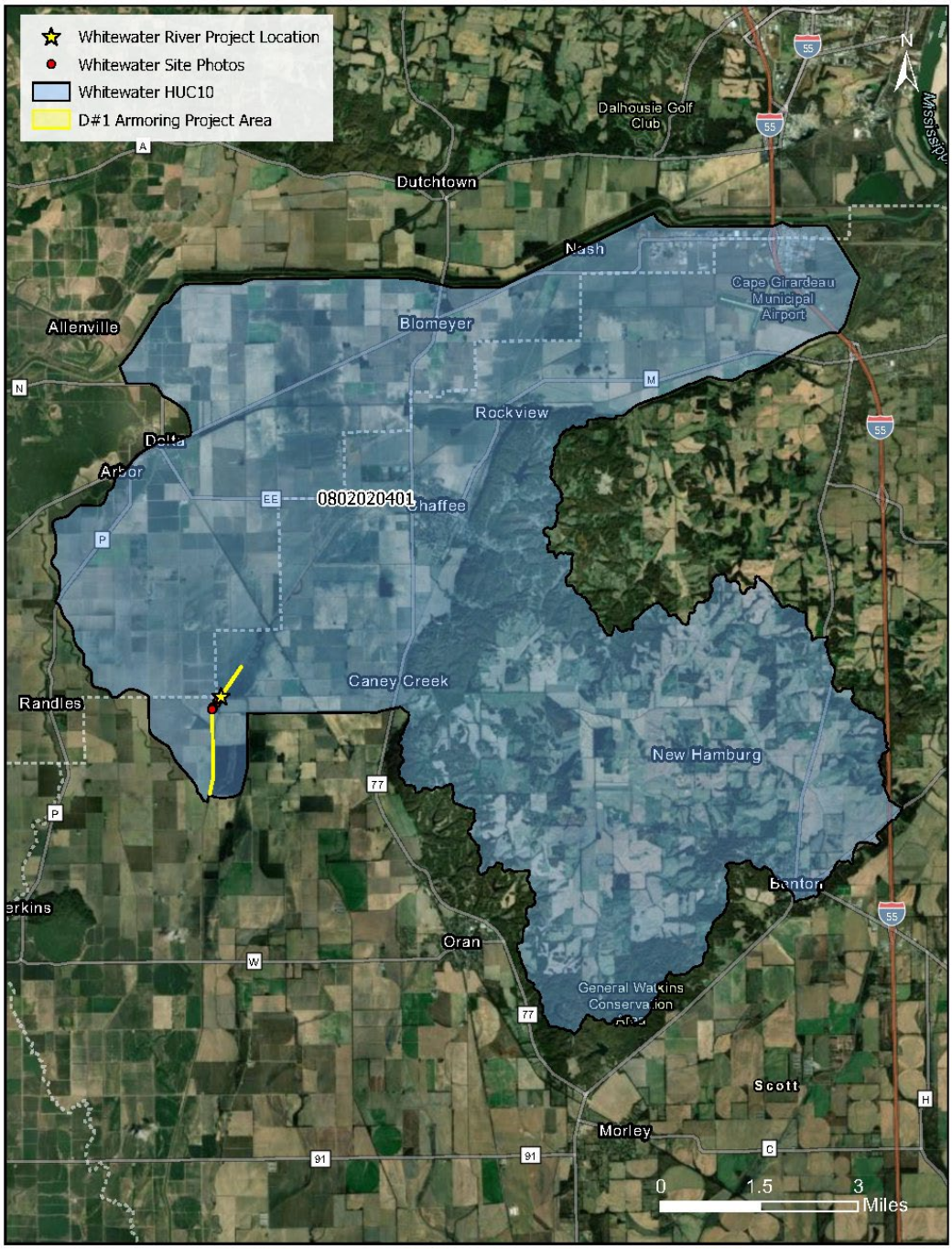

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Stacy Kinder
Mayor City of Cape Girardeau
44 N. Lorimier
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701-7314

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mayor Kinder,

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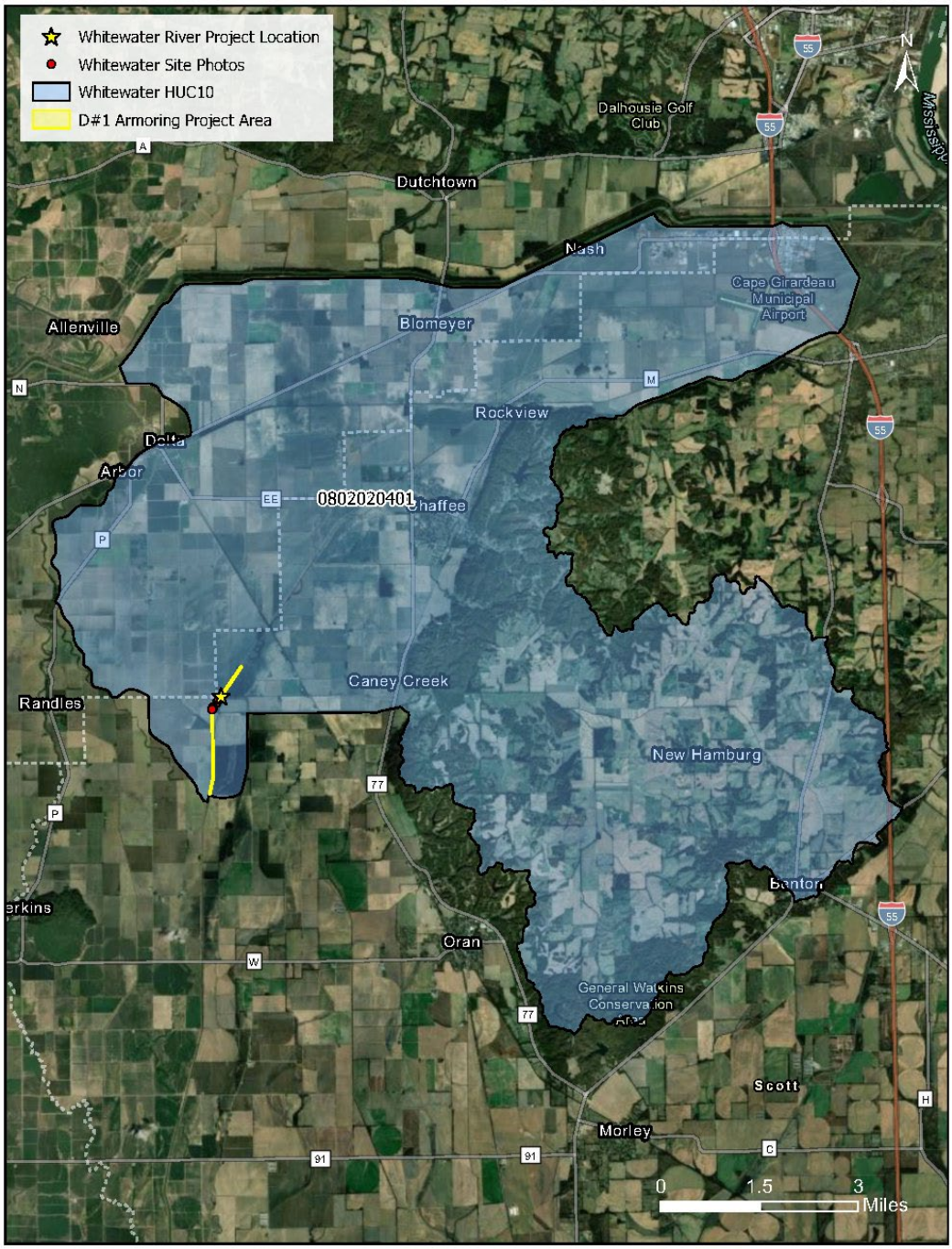

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September 7, 2023

Mr. Dan King
Emergency Coordinator (Scott City)
Missouri State Emergency Management Agency
618 Main Street
Scott City, Missouri 63780

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. King,

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
601 Business Loop 70 West, Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
573-876-0901

Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Site Location Map

cc: file

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601 Business Loop 70 West, Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
573-876-0901

USDA NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Site Location Map
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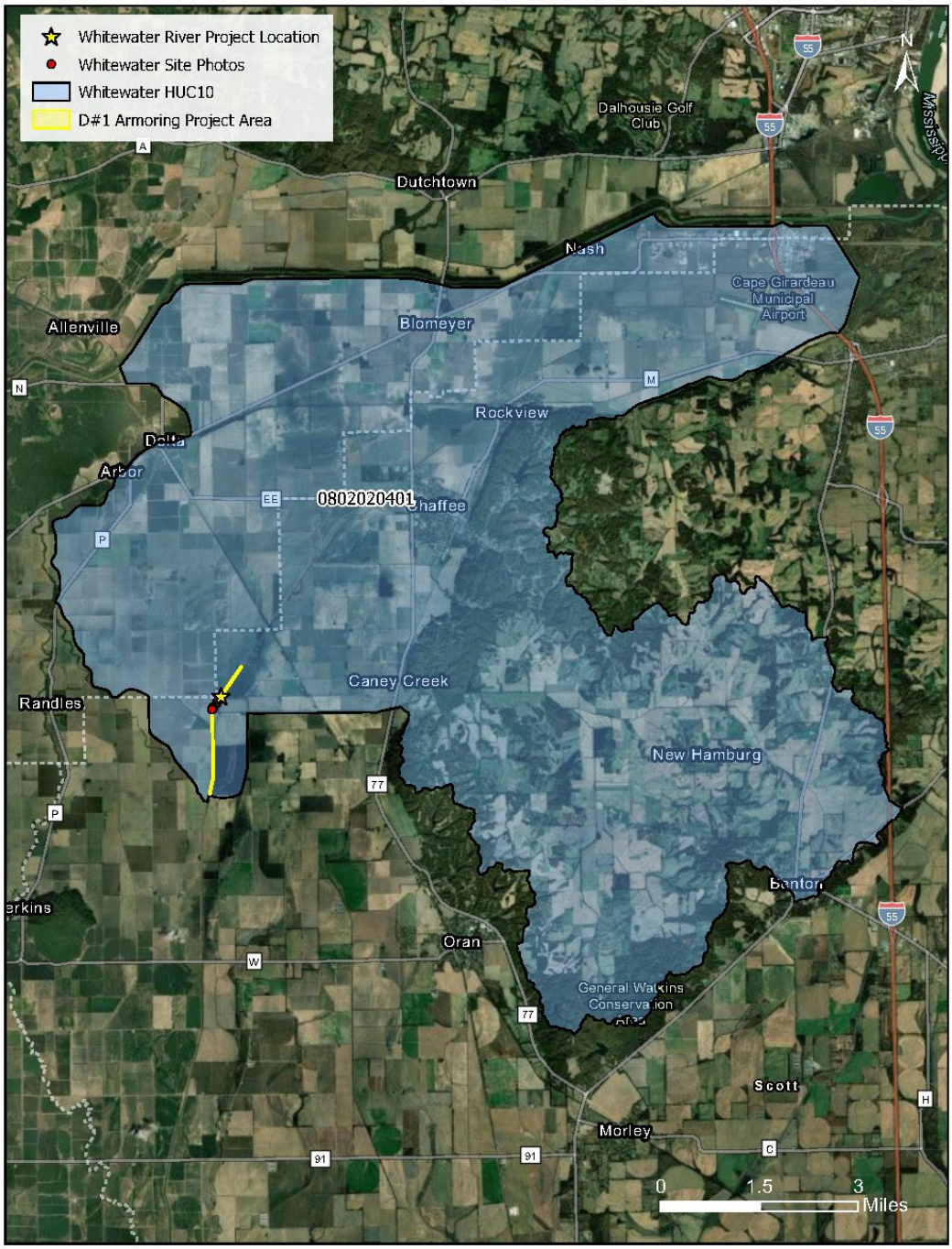

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U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

Mr. Randy Koenig
County Executive Director
Cape Girardeau County USDA Farm Service Agency
480 W. Jackson Trail
Jackson, Missouri 63755-2655

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Koenig,

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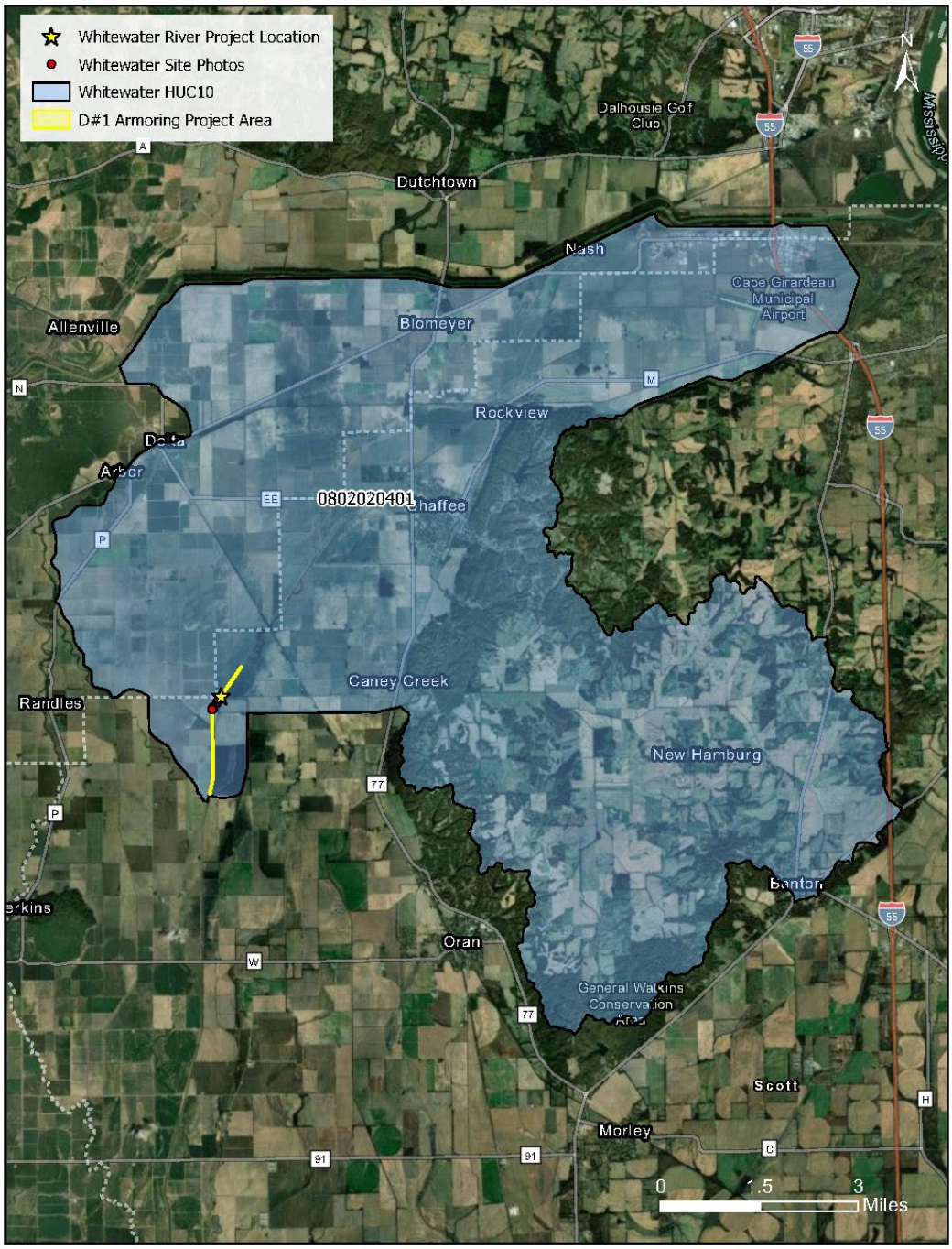

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Steve Loucks
Mayor of the City of Chaffee
222 W. Yoakum Avenue, #C
Chaffee, Missouri 63740

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mayor Loucks,

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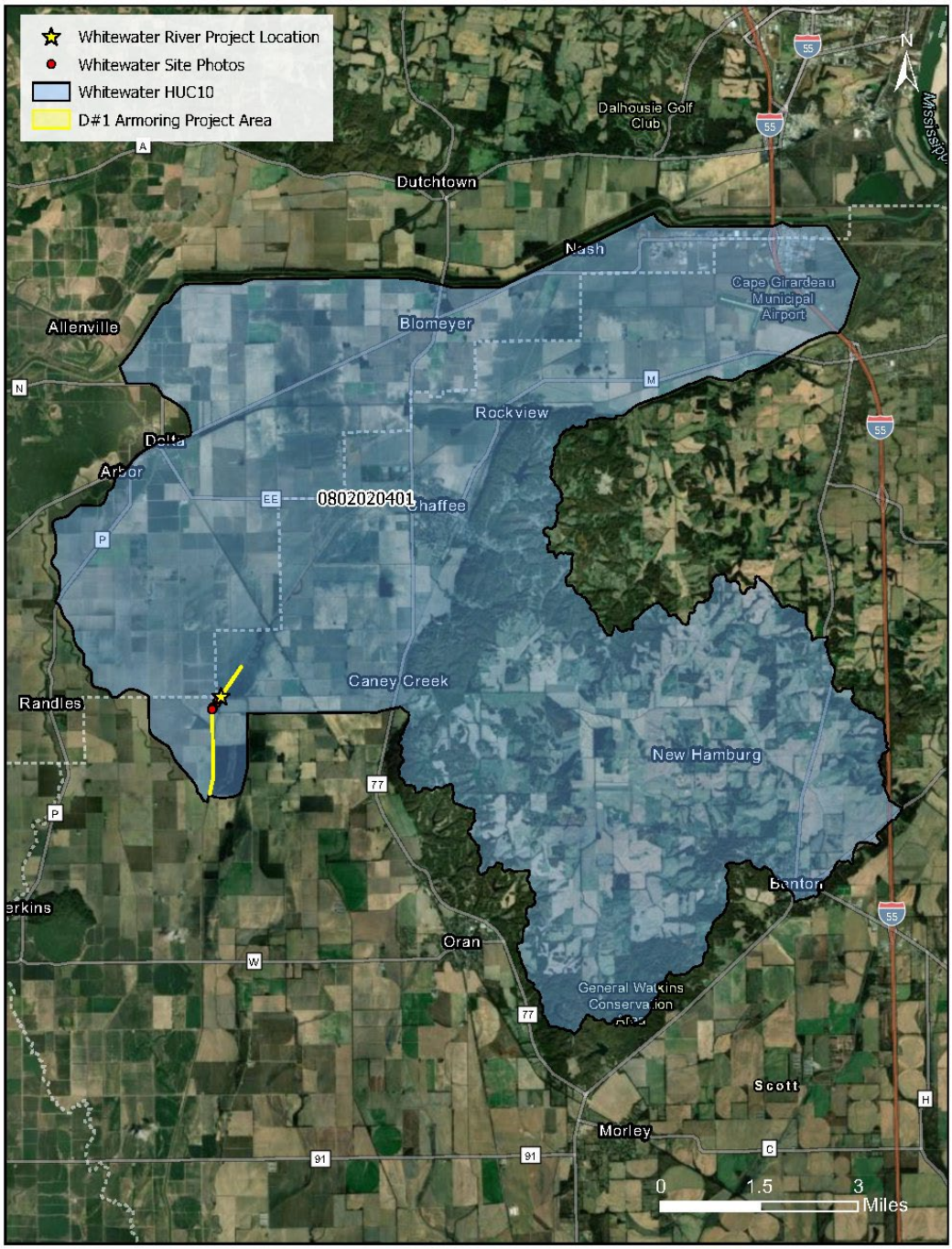

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U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

Mr. Andrew Maurer
Floodplain Administrator (Cape Girardeau County)
Missouri State Floodplain Administrators
44 N. Lorimier
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63703

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Maurer,

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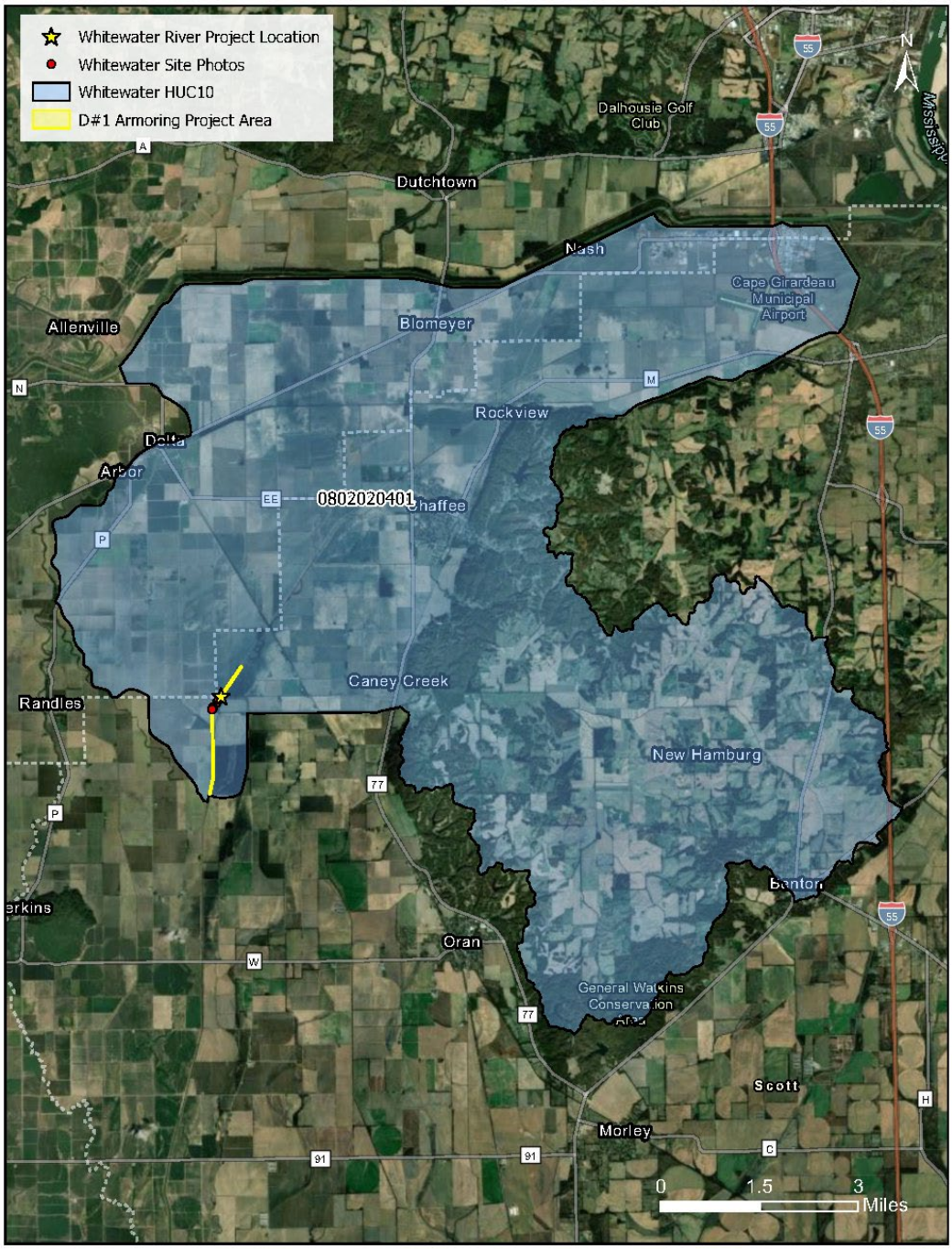

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September 7, 2023

Ms. Meg McCollister
Region 7 Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
11201 Renner Boulevard
Lenexa, Kansas 66219

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Ms. McCollister,

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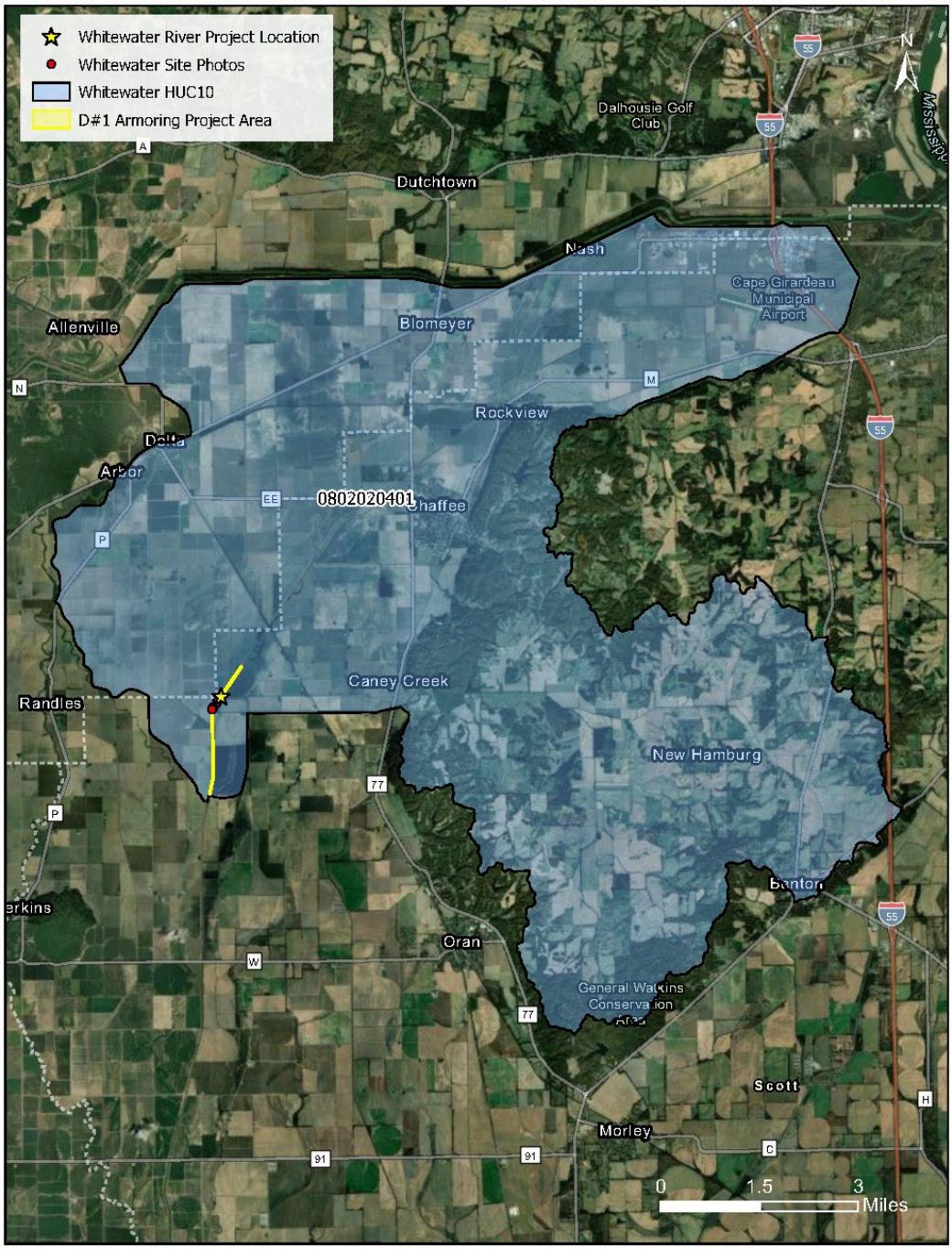

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
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September 7, 2023

The Honorable Douglas Lankford
Chief of Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
Post Office Box 1326
Miami, Oklahoma 74355

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Chief Lankford,

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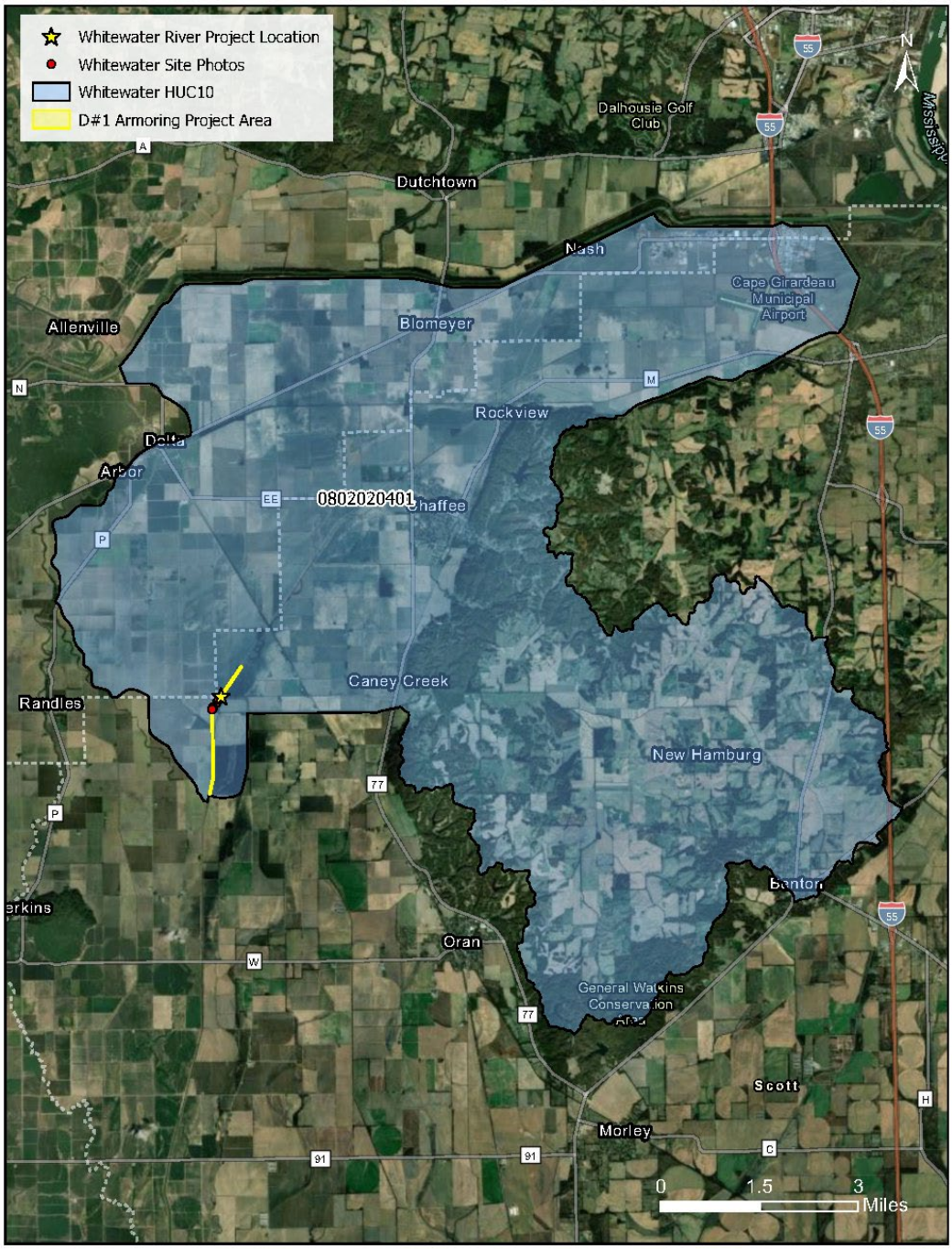

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September 7, 2023

Missouri Department of Agriculture
1616 Missouri Boulevard
Post Office Box 630
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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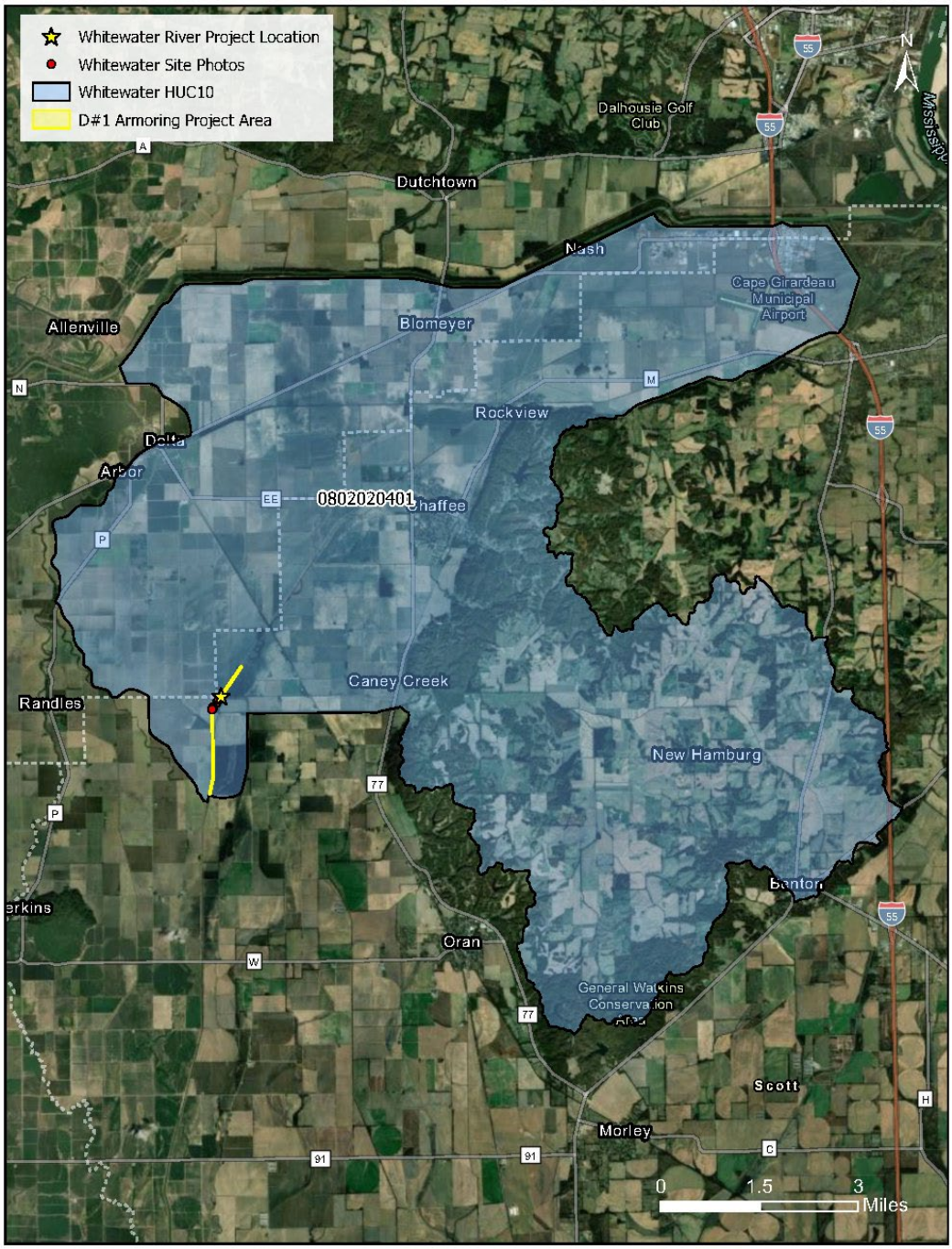

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Missouri Department of Conservation
Southeast Regional Office
2302 County Park Drive
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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As part of the NEPA process, the NRCS invites you to participate as a stakeholder in this process. We request your participation, opinion, and/or suggestions early in the process, and ask that your response is received within a 30-day period after receipt of this letter. To facilitate cumulative impact analysis, we

Natural Resources Conservation Service
601 Business Loop 70 West, Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
573-876-0901

Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Site Location Map

cc: file

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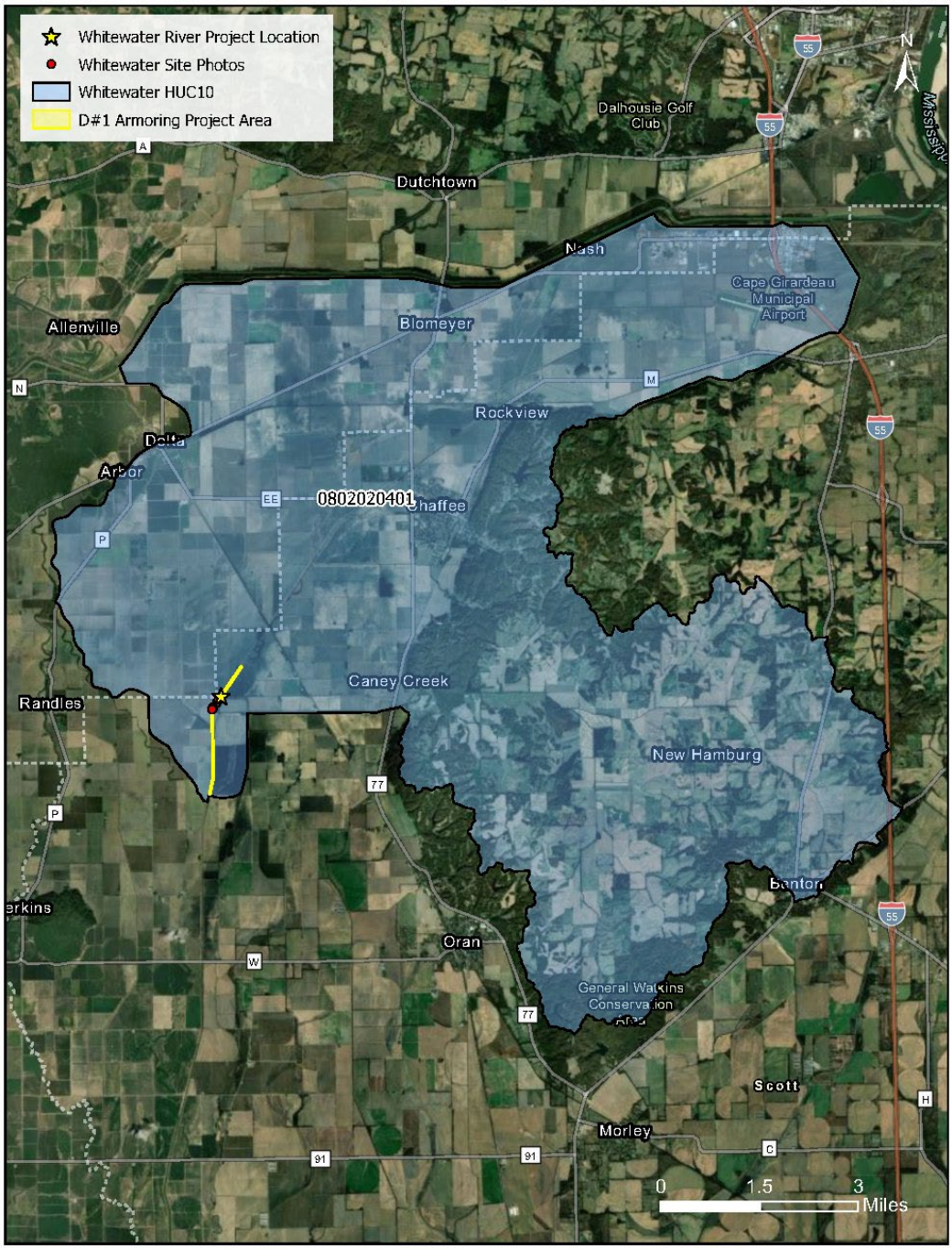
601 Business Loop 70 West, Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
573-876-0901

USDA NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Site Location Map
Note: Proposed watershed improvements only within "D#1 Armoring Project Area"



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573-876-0901

USDA NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

Missouri Department of Transportation
Southeast District
2676 N. Main Street
Sikeston, Missouri 63801

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

To Whom It May Concern,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

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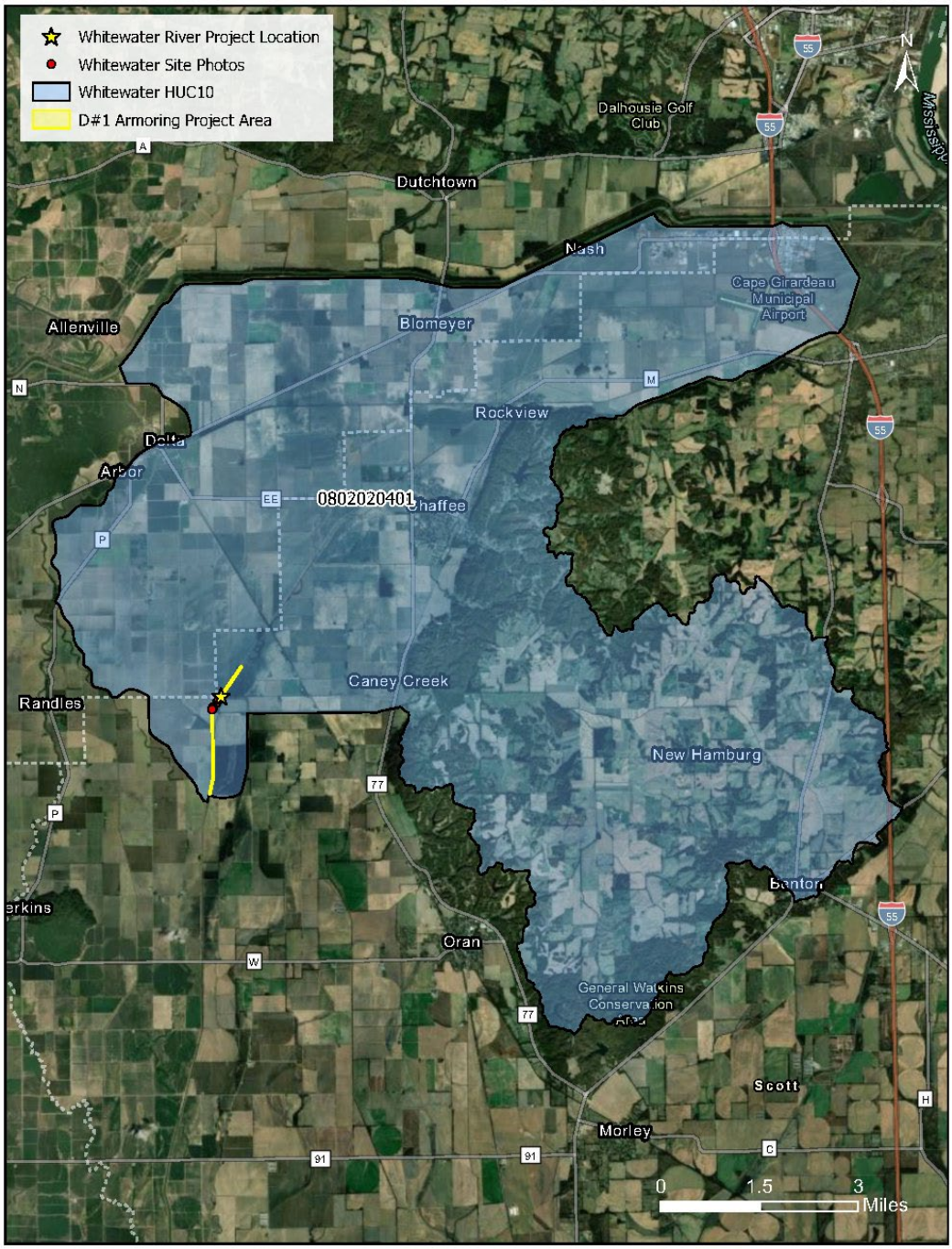

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office
Missouri State Parks
Post Office Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0176

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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U.S. Department of Agriculture

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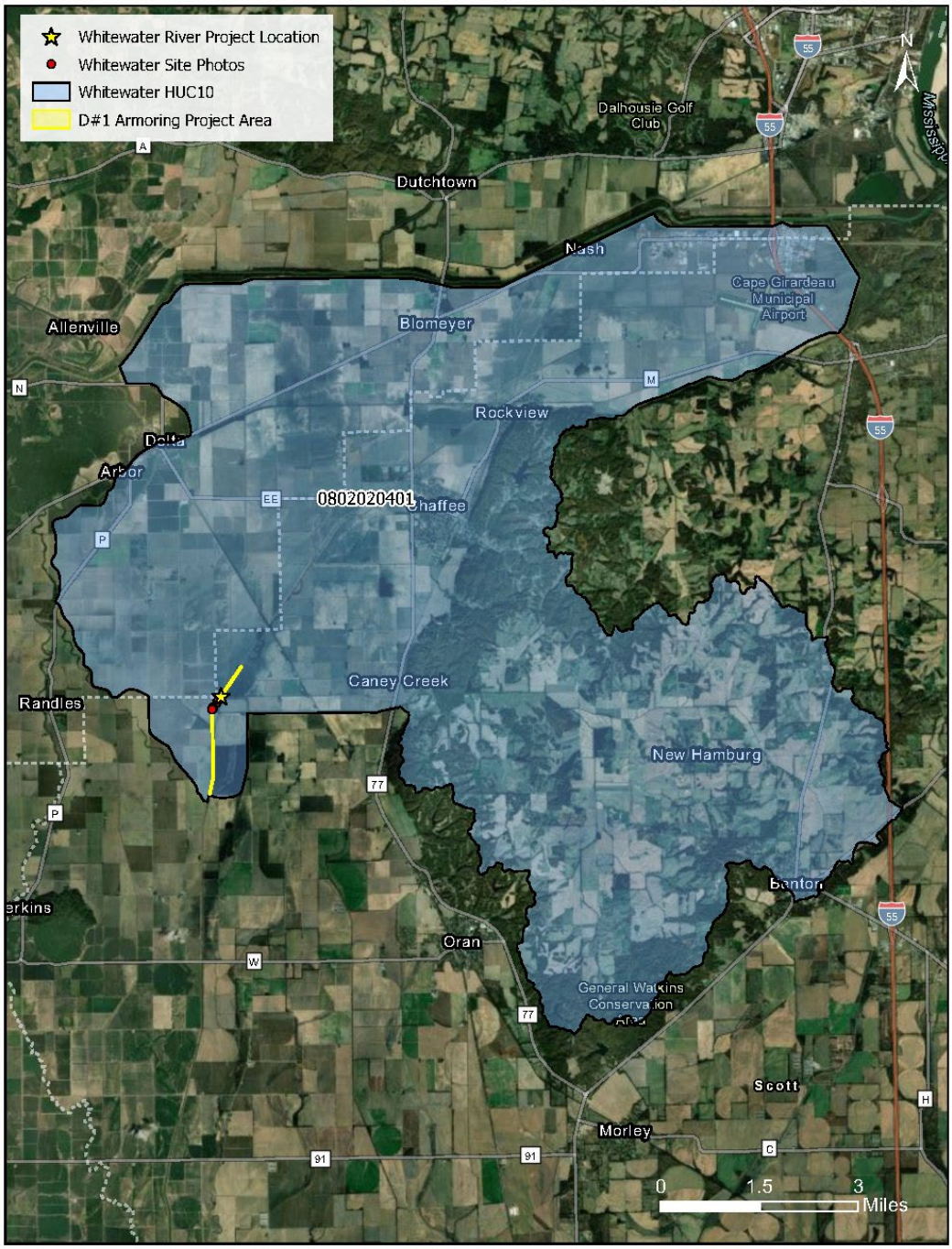

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Water Protection Program
Division of Environmental Quality
Post Office Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0176

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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USDA NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
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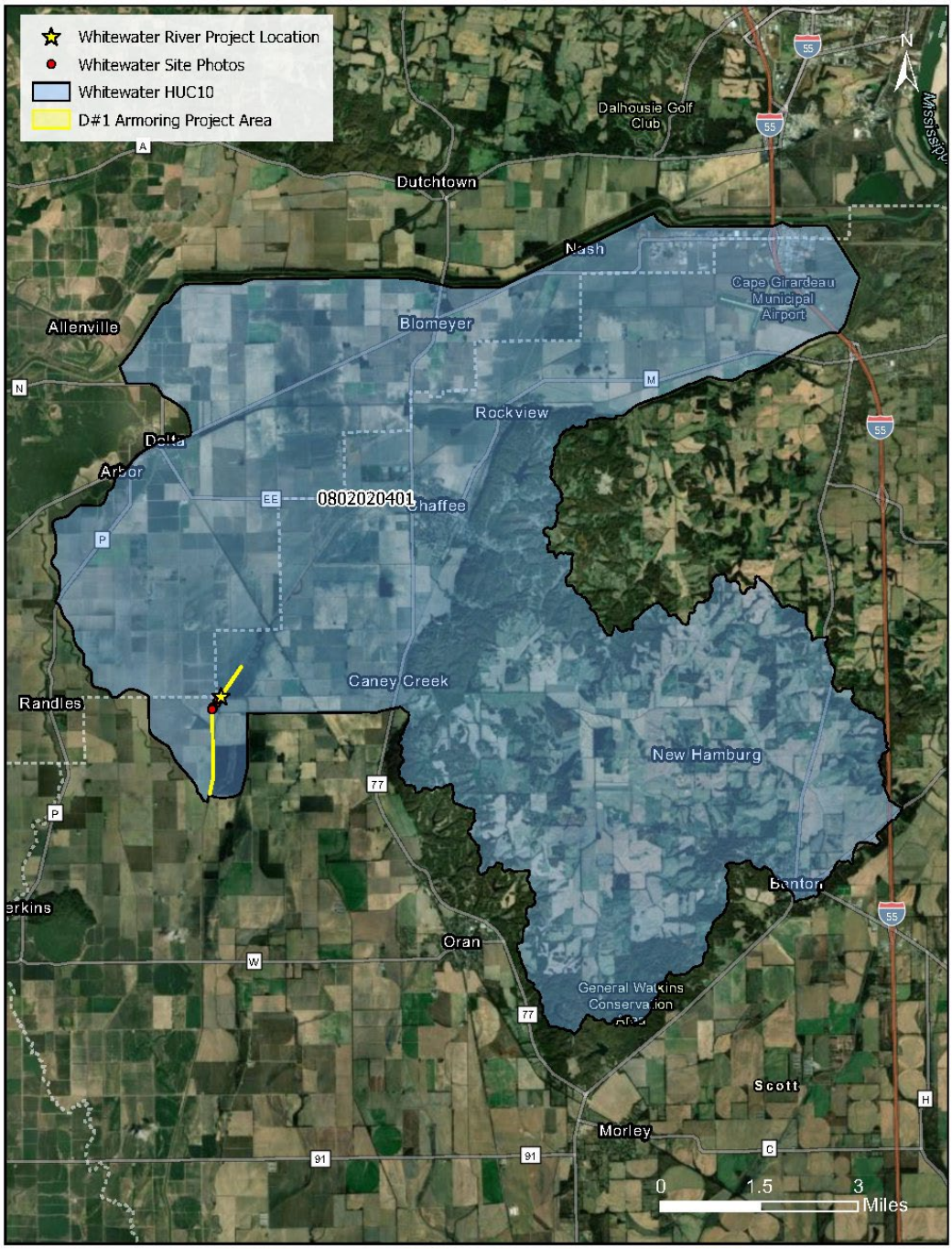

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573-876-0901

Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Herman Morse
Missouri State Representative
House District 151
201 W. Capitol Avenue, Room 135
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Morse,

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
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Natural Resources Conservation Service

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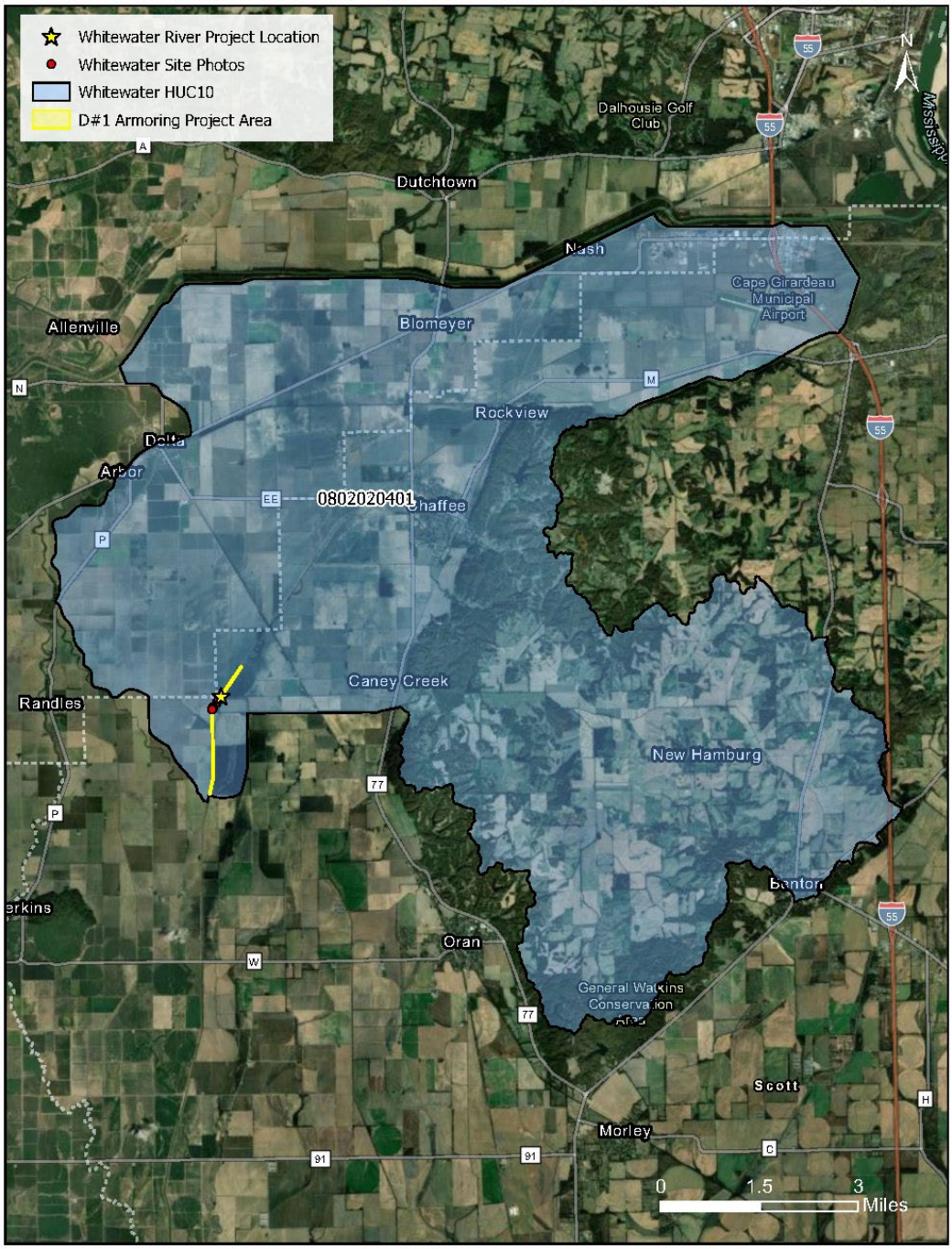

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USDA NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Geoffrey Standing Bear
Principal Chief of Osage Nation
Post Office Box 779
Pawhuska, Oklahoma 74056

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Principal Chief Standing Bear,

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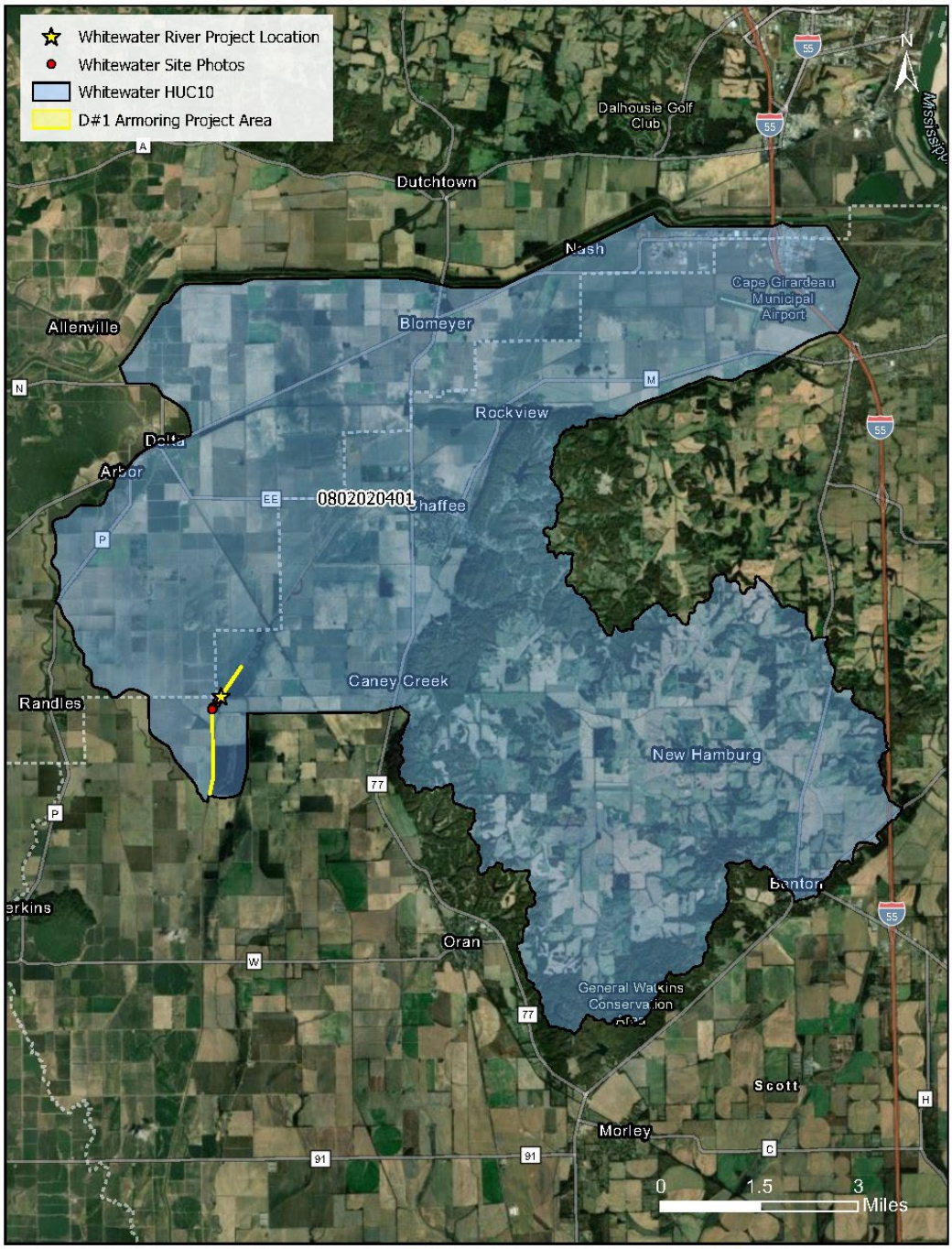

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573-876-0901

Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Michael L. Parson
Governor of Missouri
Post Office Box 720
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Governor Parson,

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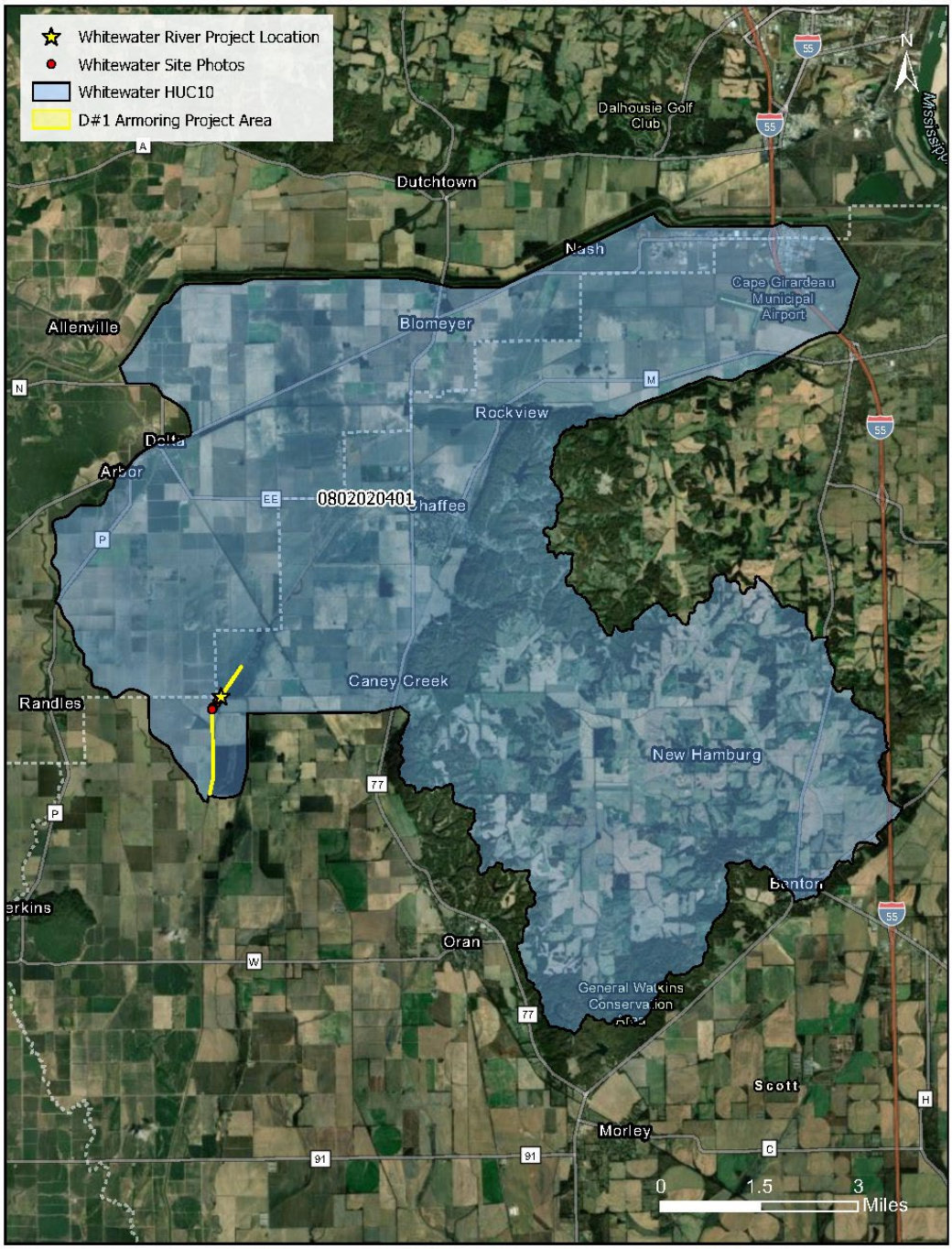

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
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September 7, 2023

The Honorable Craig Harper
Chief of Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
Post Office Box 1527
Miami, Oklahoma 74355

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Chief Harper,

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The sponsor proposes to take measures to ensure the vitality of aging infrastructure, thus providing benefits to downstream watersheds and ensuring landscape scale resilience. The proposed project is a sub-unit of the entire drainage district and is in the northern section of the drainage district. The locally preferred alternative is to place rock along eroding portions of the drainage canals and to plant native warm season grasses to help stabilize canal banks while providing wildlife habitat. All work will remain within the original canal designs and will not expand the footprint of existing infrastructure.

As part of the NEPA process, the NRCS invites you to participate as a stakeholder in this process. We request your participation, opinion, and/or suggestions early in the process, and ask that your response is received within a 30-day period after receipt of this letter. To facilitate cumulative impact analysis, we

Natural Resources Conservation Service
601 Business Loop 70 West, Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
573-876-0901

Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

would also appreciate identification of major projects in the vicinity that may contribute to cumulative effects.

If you have an interest in the project, please submit a response in writing to Mr. Steven Hefner at Butler USDA Service Center, 4327 Highway 67 North, Poplar Bluff, MO 63901 or by email at steven.hefner@usda.gov . In your communication, please make reference to "Whitewater River". If you have initial concerns with impacts of the project, please note them in your response.

If you are interested in attending, we are having an interagency stakeholder meeting on October 24th from 2:30-4:30 pm virtually and in person at the Little River Drainage District Office, 1432 Kurre Lane, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701. Please contact Mr. Hefner to obtain meeting invite access.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Site Location Map

cc: file

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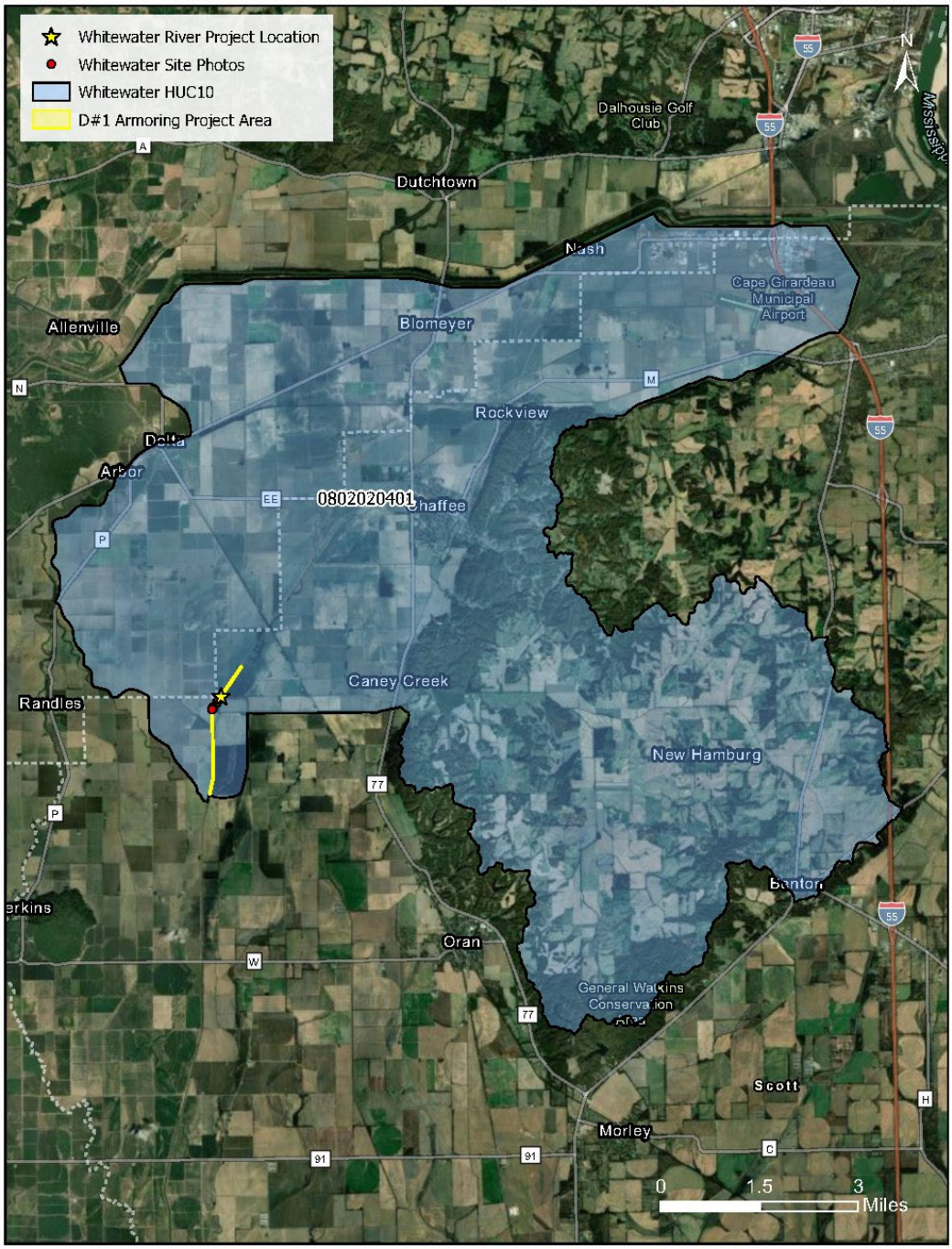

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Candace Schmidt
Chairwoman of Ponca Tribe of Nebraska
Post Office Box 288
Niobrara, Nebraska 68760

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Chairwoman Schmidt:

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 *et seq*.); the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the NRCS is preparing a Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with a proposed action(s).

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Natural Resources Conservation Service

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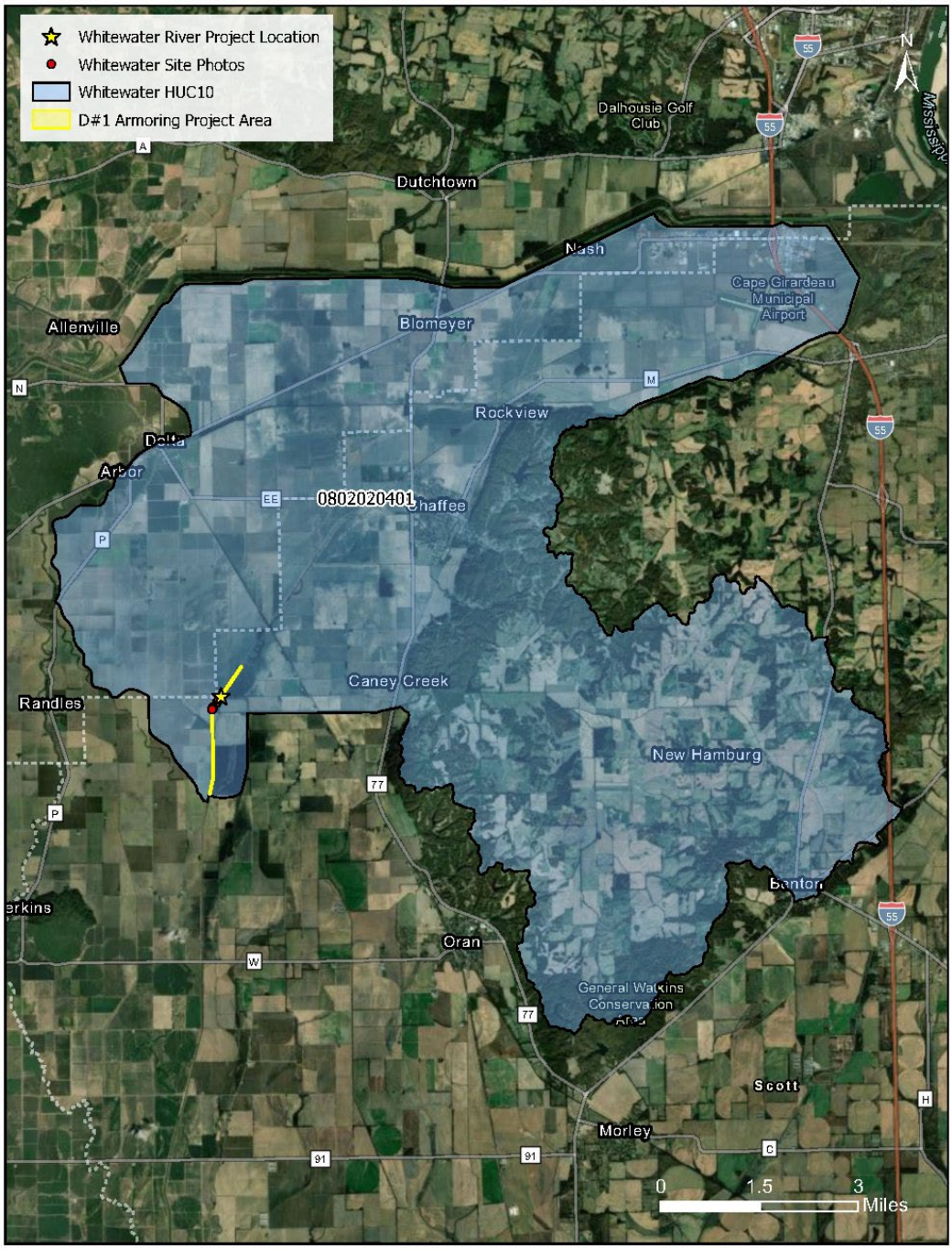

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September 7, 2023

The Honorable Oliver Little Cook
Chairman of the Ponca Tribe of Oklahoma
101 White Eagle Drive
Ponca City, Oklahoma 74601

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Chairman Little Cook:

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Chris Hamilton

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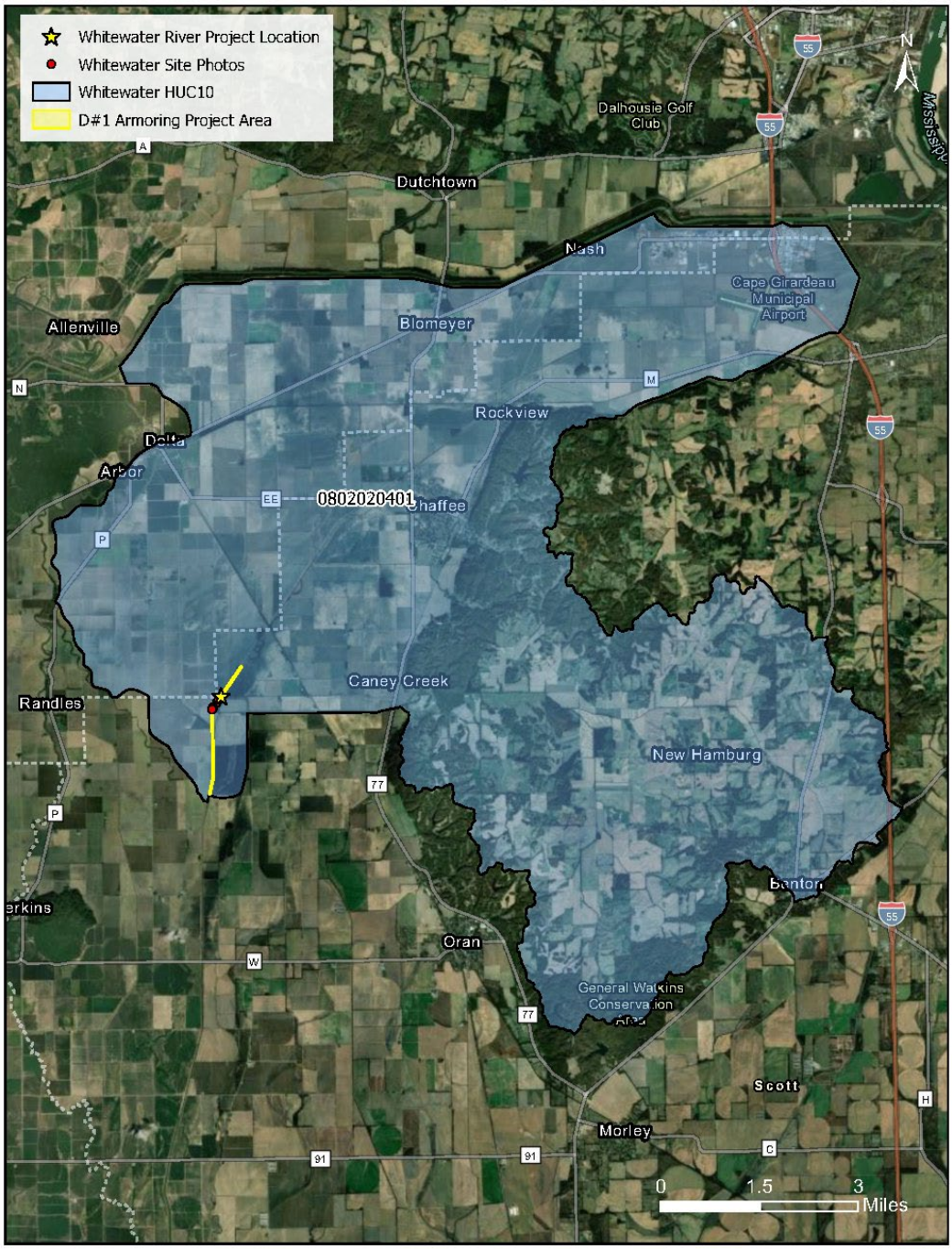

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USDA NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Wena Supernaw
Chairperson of Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma
Post Office Box 765
Quapaw, Oklahoma 74363

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Chairperson Supernaw,

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Chris Hamilton
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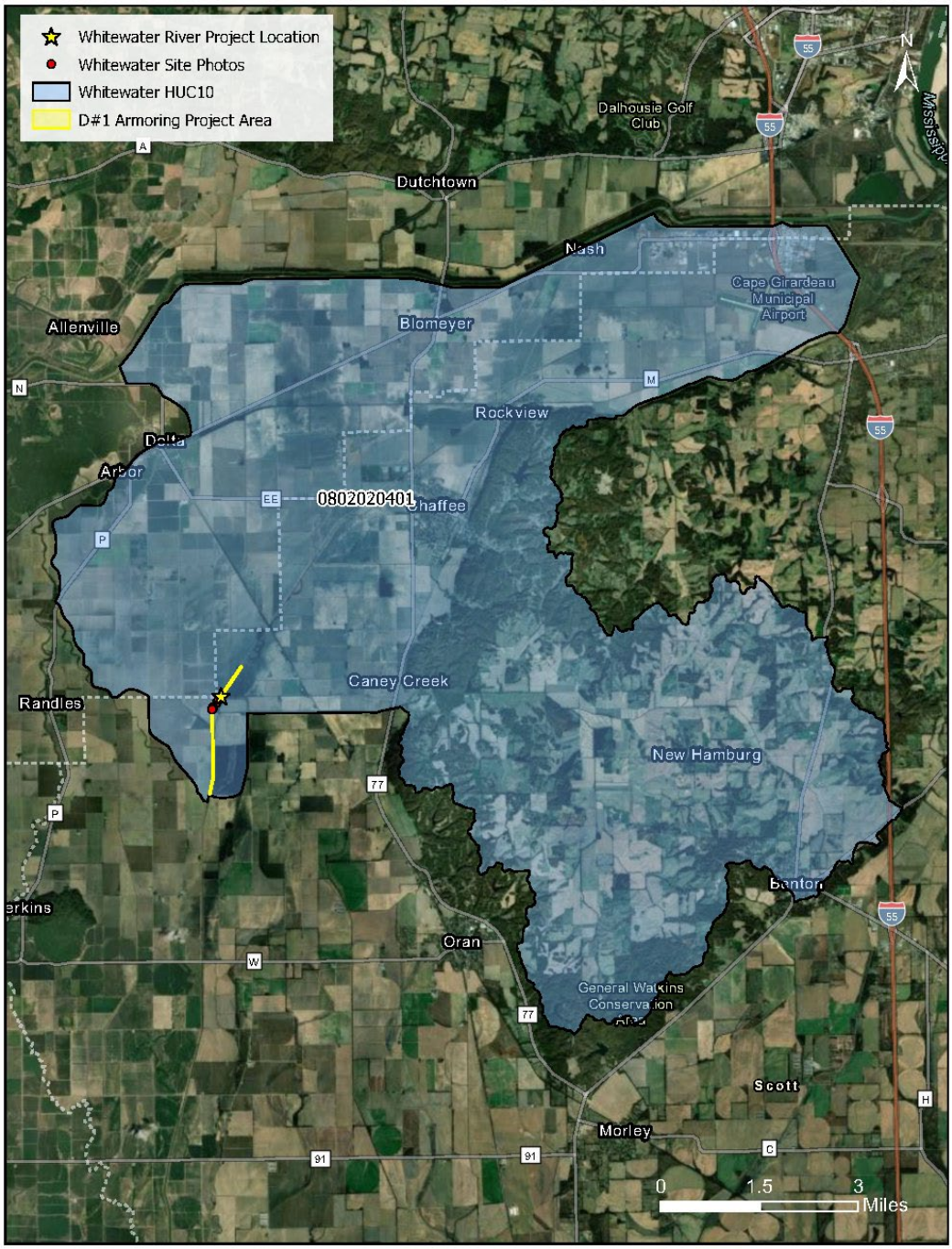

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Holly Thompson Rehder
Missouri State Senate
Senate District 27
201 W. Capitol Avenue, Room 433
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Ms. Rehder,

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Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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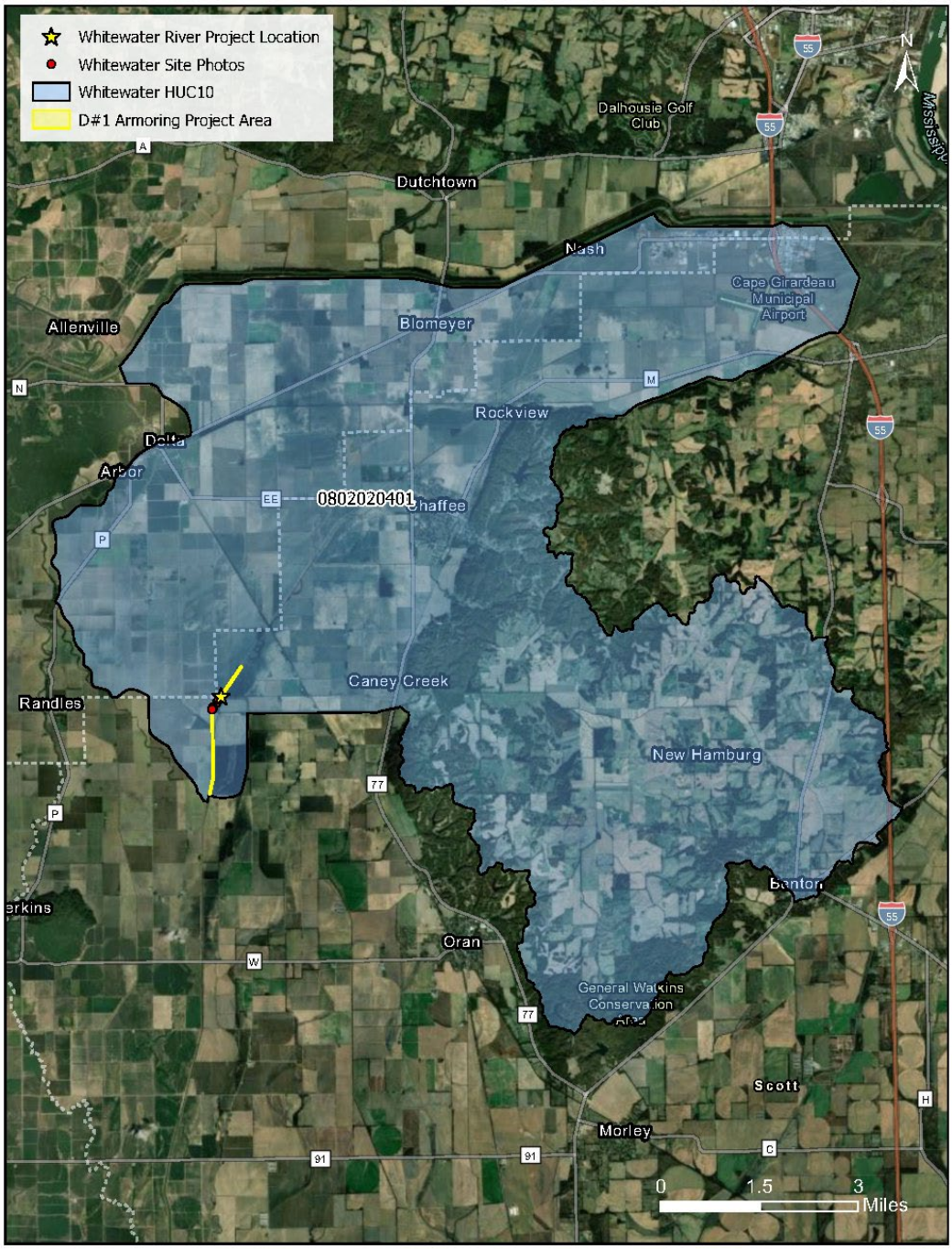

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September 7, 2023

Ms. Michaela Roth
District Specialist III
Cape Girardeau County Soil and Water Conservation
480 W. Jackson Trail
Jackson, Missouri 63755

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Ms. Roth,

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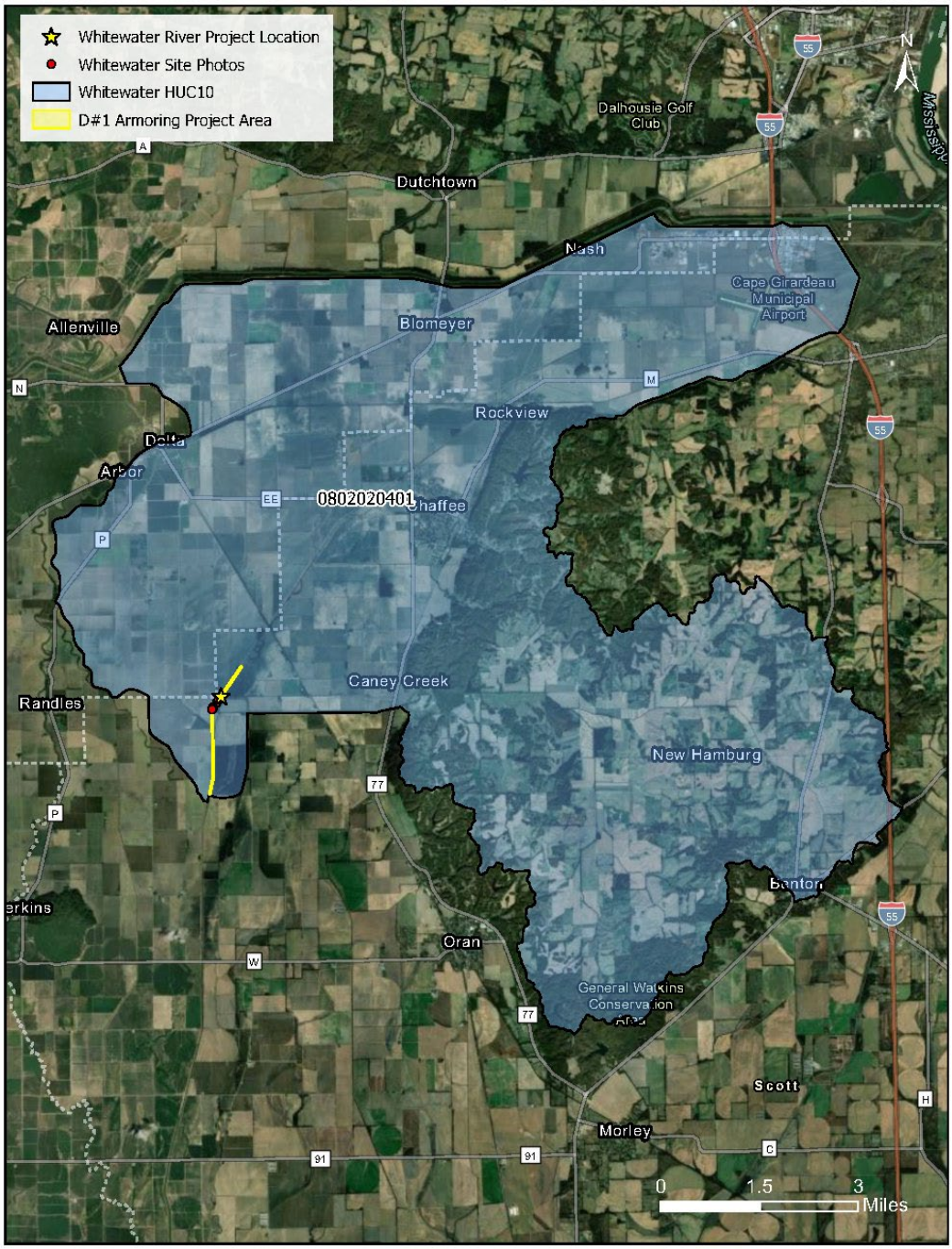

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U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Eric Schmitt
U.S. Congress
United States Senator for Missouri
111. S. 10TH Street, Suite 23.305
St. Louis, Missouri 63102

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Senator Schmitt,

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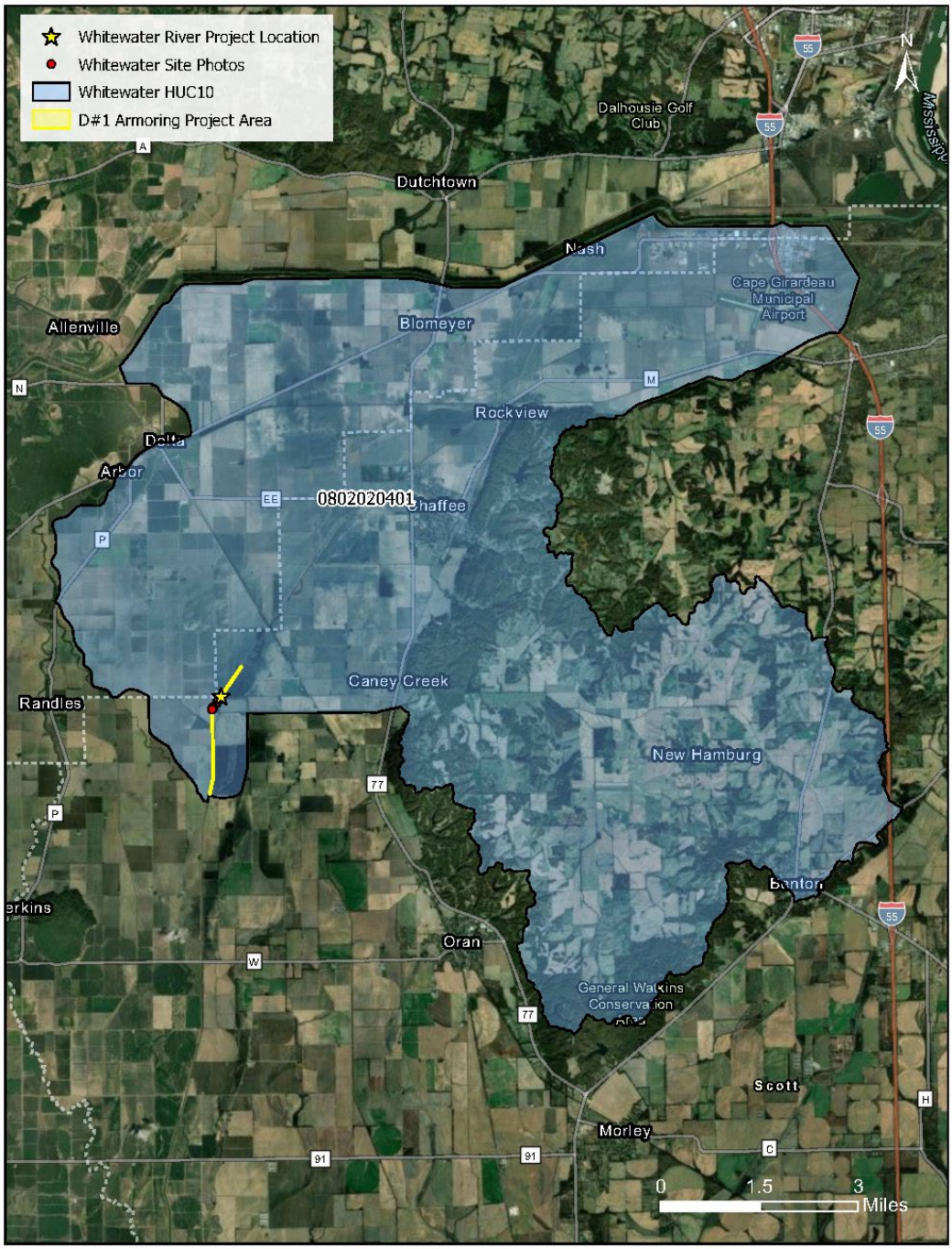

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September 7, 2023

Mr. John R. Scott
Emergency Coordinator (Scott County)
Missouri State Emergency Management Agency
131 S. Winchester Street Room 13
Benton, Missouri 63736

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Scott,

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As part of the NEPA process, the NRCS invites you to participate as a stakeholder in this process. We request your participation, opinion, and/or suggestions early in the process, and ask that your response is received within a 30-day period after receipt of this letter. To facilitate cumulative impact analysis, we

Natural Resources Conservation Service
601 Business Loop 70 West, Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
573-876-0901

Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

would also appreciate identification of major projects in the vicinity that may contribute to cumulative effects.

If you have an interest in the project, please submit a response in writing to Mr. Steven Hefner at Butler USDA Service Center, 4327 Highway 67 North, Poplar Bluff, MO 63901 or by email at steven.hefner@usda.gov . In your communication, please make reference to "Whitewater River". If you have initial concerns with impacts of the project, please note them in your response.

If you are interested in attending, we are having an interagency stakeholder meeting on October 24th from 2:30-4:30 pm virtually and in person at the Little River Drainage District Office, 1432 Kurre Lane, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701. Please contact Mr. Hefner to obtain meeting invite access.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Site Location Map

cc: file

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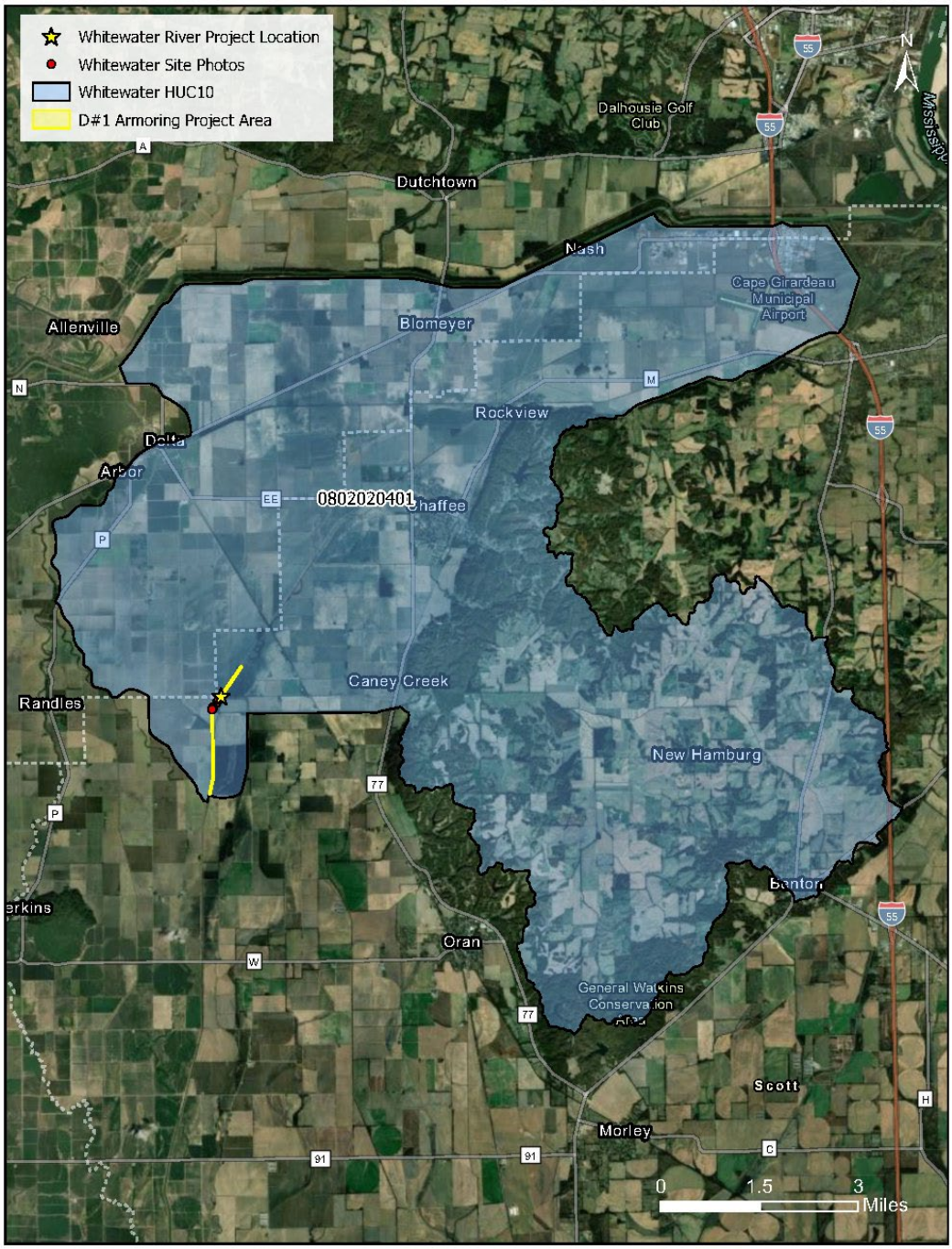
Columbia, Missouri 65203
573-876-0901

USDA NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Site Location Map
Note: Proposed watershed improvements only within "D#1 Armoring Project Area"



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September 7, 2023

The Honorable John Johnson
Governor of Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
2025 South Gordon Cooper Drive
Shawnee, Oklahoma 74801

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Governor Johnson,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 *et seq*.); the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the NRCS is preparing a Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with a proposed action(s).

As project sponsor, the Little River Drainage District proposes a Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (PL 83-566) project to address agricultural water management in southeast Missouri. This watershed resides in Cape Girardeau and Scott County, Missouri and will also address downstream flood control concerns in Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, and Stoddard counties.

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The sponsor proposes to take measures to ensure the vitality of aging infrastructure, thus providing benefits to downstream watersheds and ensuring landscape scale resilience. The proposed project is a sub-unit of the entire drainage district and is in the northern section of the drainage district. The locally preferred alternative is to place rock along eroding portions of the drainage canals and to plant native warm season grasses to help stabilize canal banks while providing wildlife habitat. All work will remain within the original canal designs and will not expand the footprint of existing infrastructure.

As part of the NEPA process, the NRCS invites you to participate as a stakeholder in this process. We request your participation, opinion, and/or suggestions early in the process, and ask that your response is received within a 30-day period after receipt of this letter. To facilitate cumulative impact analysis, we

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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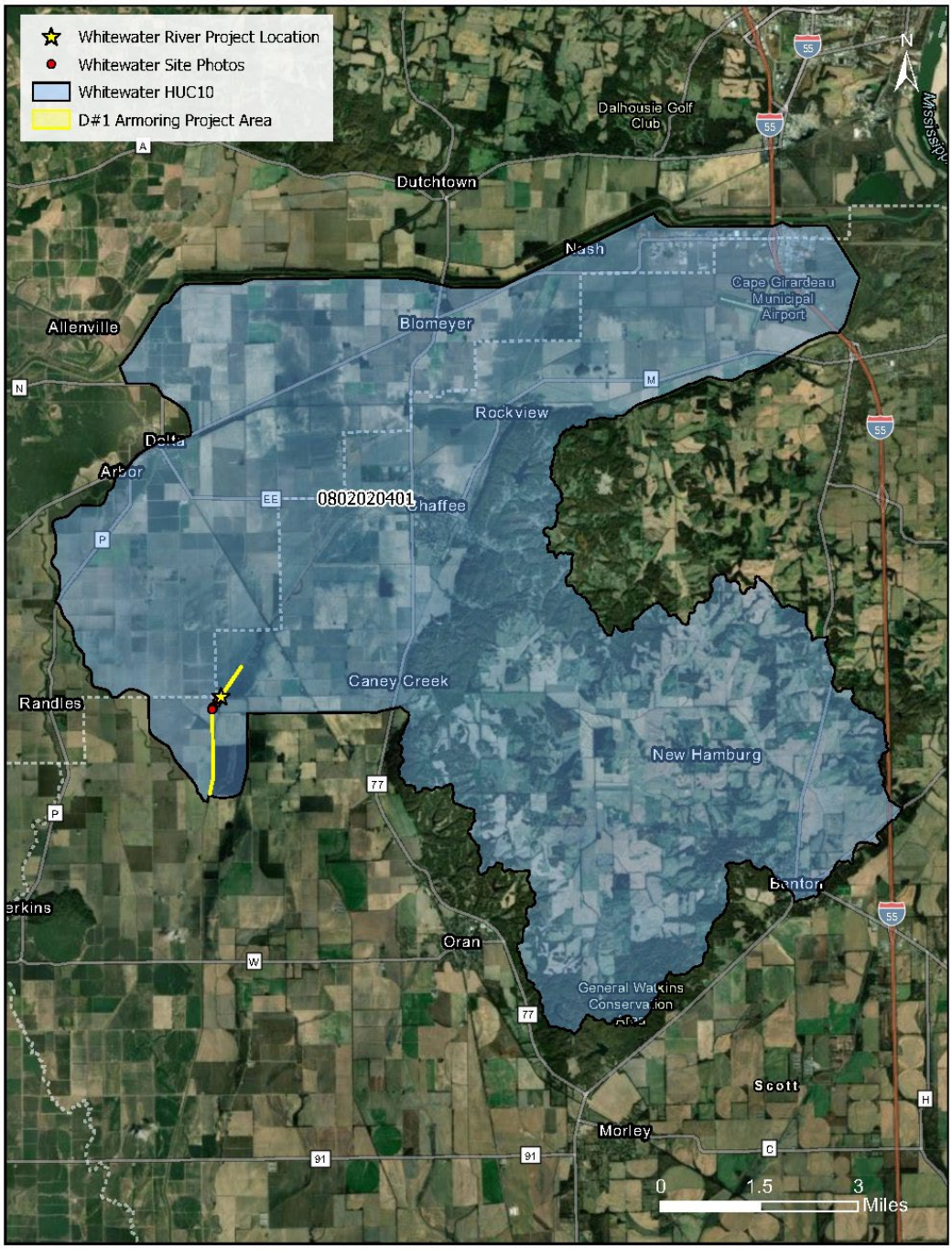

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U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Benjamin Barnes
Chief of Shawnee Tribe
Post Office Box 189
Miami, Oklahoma 74354

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Chief Barnes,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 *et seq*.); the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the NRCS is preparing a Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with a proposed action(s).

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The sponsor proposes to take measures to ensure the vitality of aging infrastructure, thus providing benefits to downstream watersheds and ensuring landscape scale resilience. The proposed project is a sub-unit of the entire drainage district and is in the northern section of the drainage district. The locally preferred alternative is to place rock along eroding portions of the drainage canals and to plant native warm season grasses to help stabilize canal banks while providing wildlife habitat. All work will remain within the original canal designs and will not expand the footprint of existing infrastructure.

As part of the NEPA process, the NRCS invites you to participate as a stakeholder in this process. We request your participation, opinion, and/or suggestions early in the process, and ask that your response is received within a 30-day period after receipt of this letter. To facilitate cumulative impact analysis, we

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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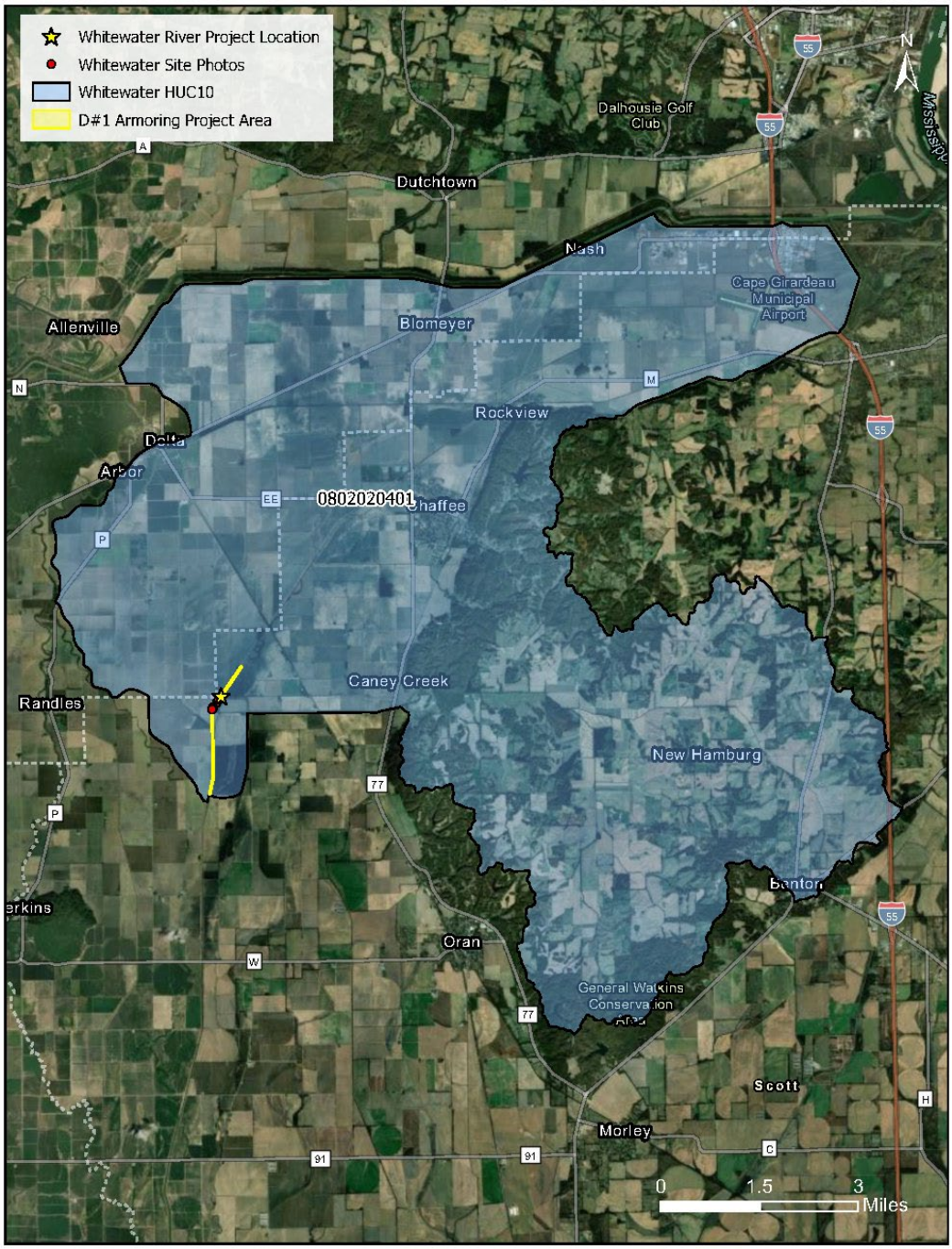

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U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Jim Simmons
Mayor of Benton City
City of Benton
21 W. North Street
Post Office Box 185
Benton, Missouri 63736

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mayor Simmons,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 *et seq*.); the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the NRCS is preparing a Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with a proposed action(s).

As project sponsor, the Little River Drainage District proposes a Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (PL 83-566) project to address agricultural water management in southeast Missouri. This watershed resides in Cape Girardeau and Scott County, Missouri and will also address downstream flood control concerns in Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, and Stoddard counties.

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The sponsor proposes to take measures to ensure the vitality of aging infrastructure, thus providing benefits to downstream watersheds and ensuring landscape scale resilience. The proposed project is a sub-unit of the entire drainage district and is in the northern section of the drainage district. The locally preferred alternative is to place rock along eroding portions of the drainage canals and to plant native warm season grasses to help stabilize canal banks while providing wildlife habitat. All work will remain within the original canal designs and will not expand the footprint of existing infrastructure.

As part of the NEPA process, the NRCS invites you to participate as a stakeholder in this process. We request your participation, opinion, and/or suggestions early in the process, and ask that your response

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If you have an interest in the project, please submit a response in writing to Mr. Steven Hefner at Butler USDA Service Center, 4327 Highway 67 North, Poplar Bluff, MO 63901 or by email at steven.hefner@usda.gov . In your communication, please make reference to "Whitewater River". If you have initial concerns with impacts of the project, please note them in your response.

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Site Location Map
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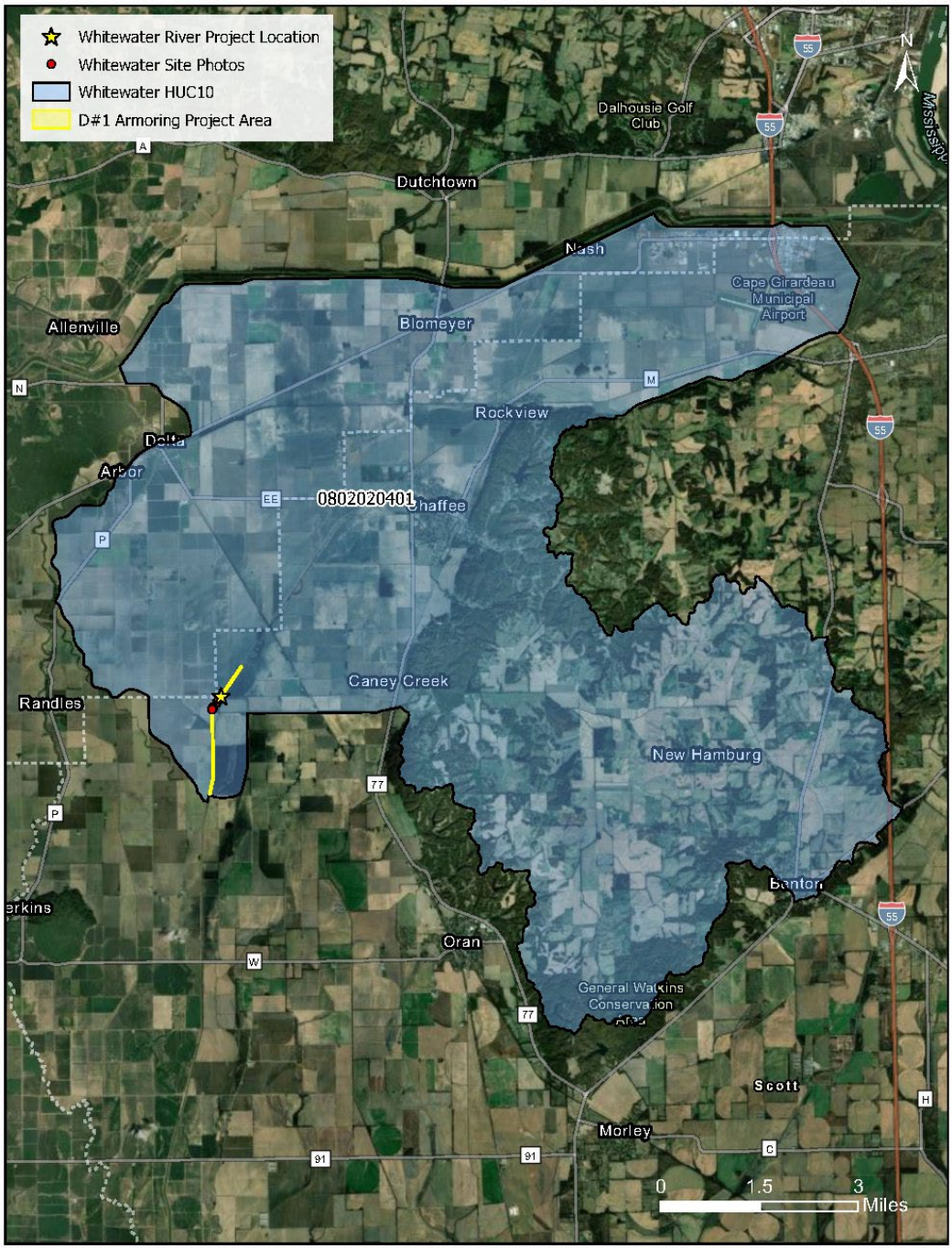

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U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Jason Smith
U.S. Congress
United States House of Representatives
2502 Tanner Drive, Suite 205
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63703

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Smith,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
601 Business Loop 70 West, Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
573-876-0901

USDA NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Site Location Map
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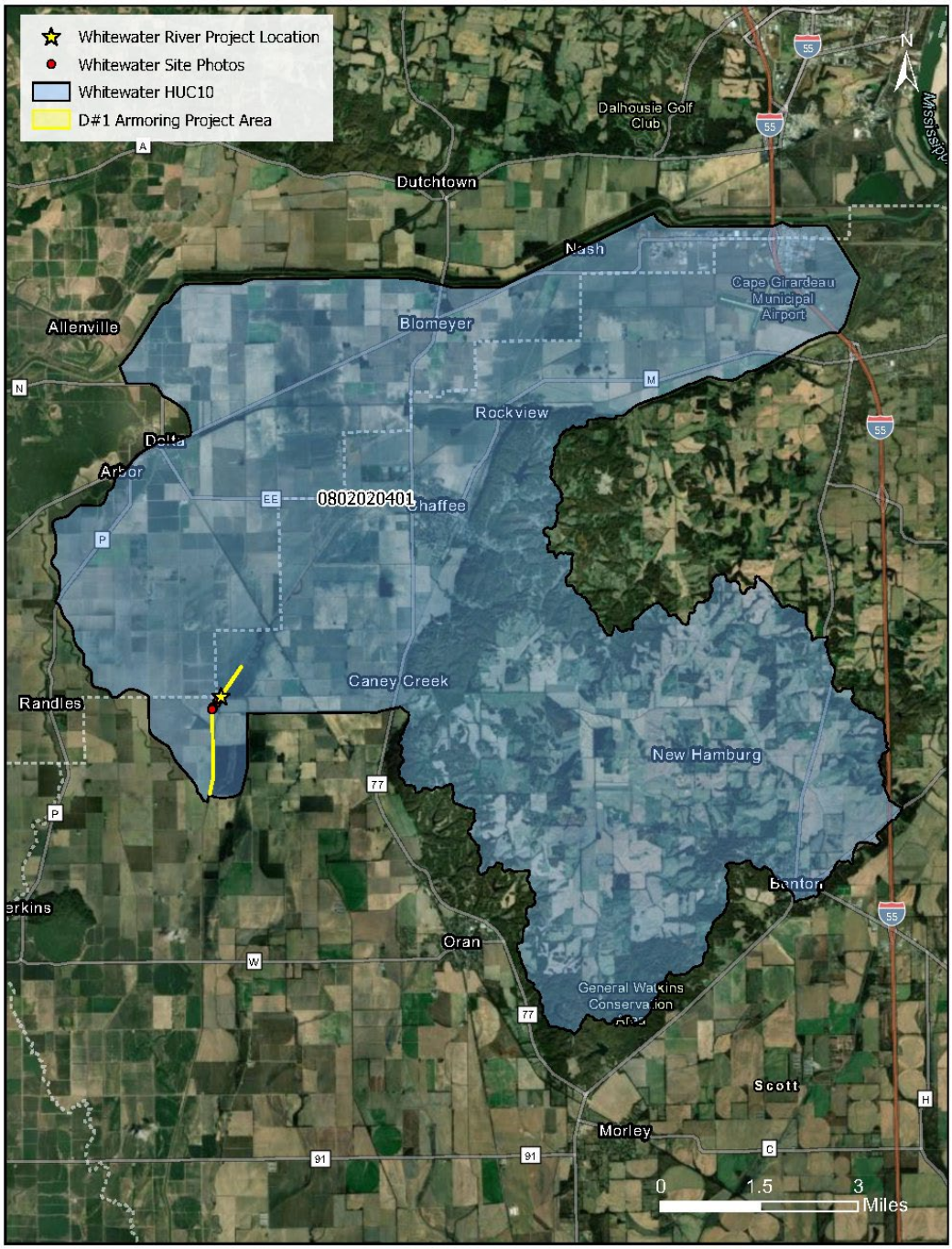

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September 7, 2023

Ms. Andrea Spillars
Region 7 Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
11224 Holmes Rd.
Kansas City, Missouri 64131

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Ms. Spillars,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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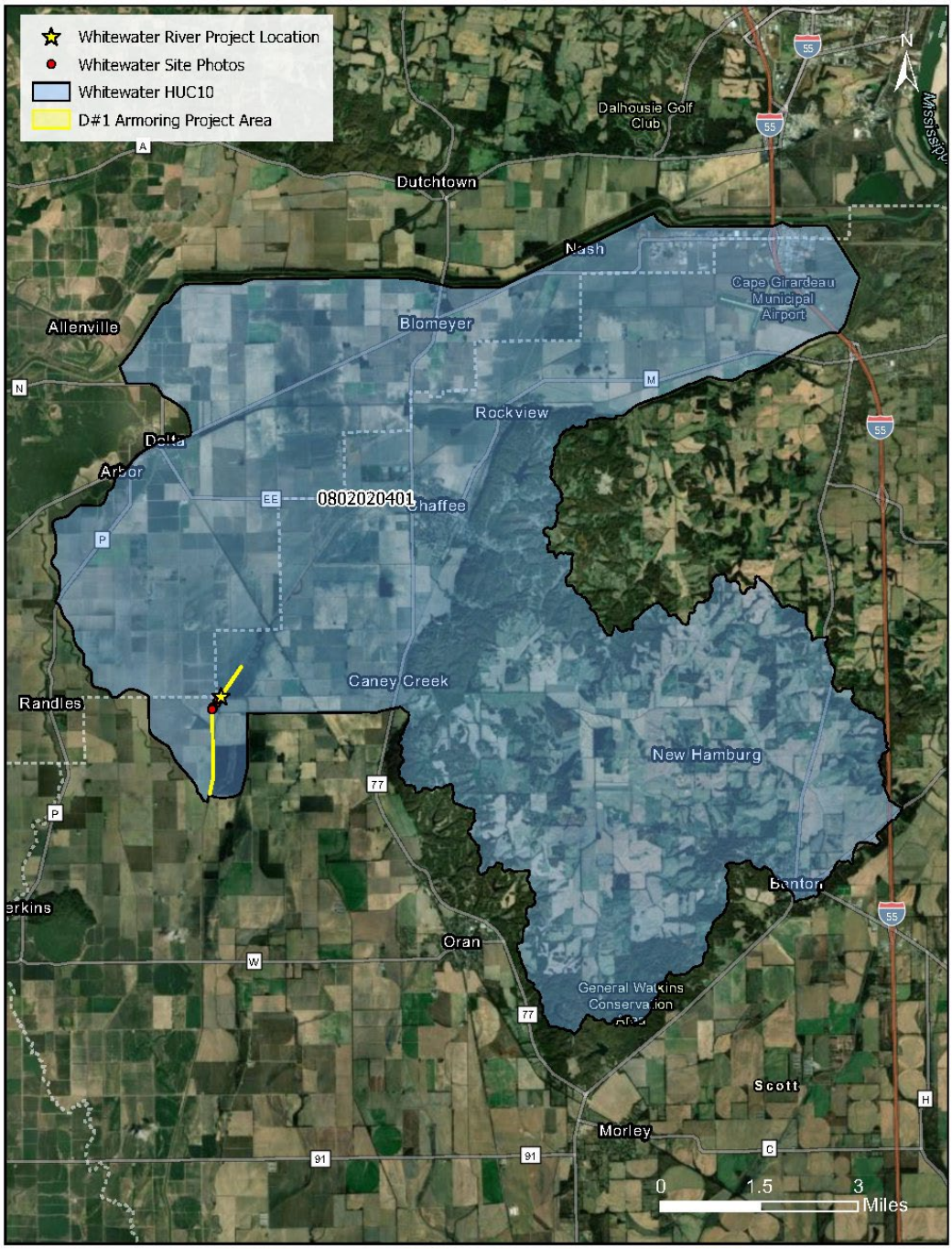

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September 7, 2023

Mr. Brent Summers
Area 4 Director
USDA Rural Development
4327 Highway 67 N.
Poplar Bluff Missouri 63901

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Summers,

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Chris Hamilton
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Natural Resources Conservation Service

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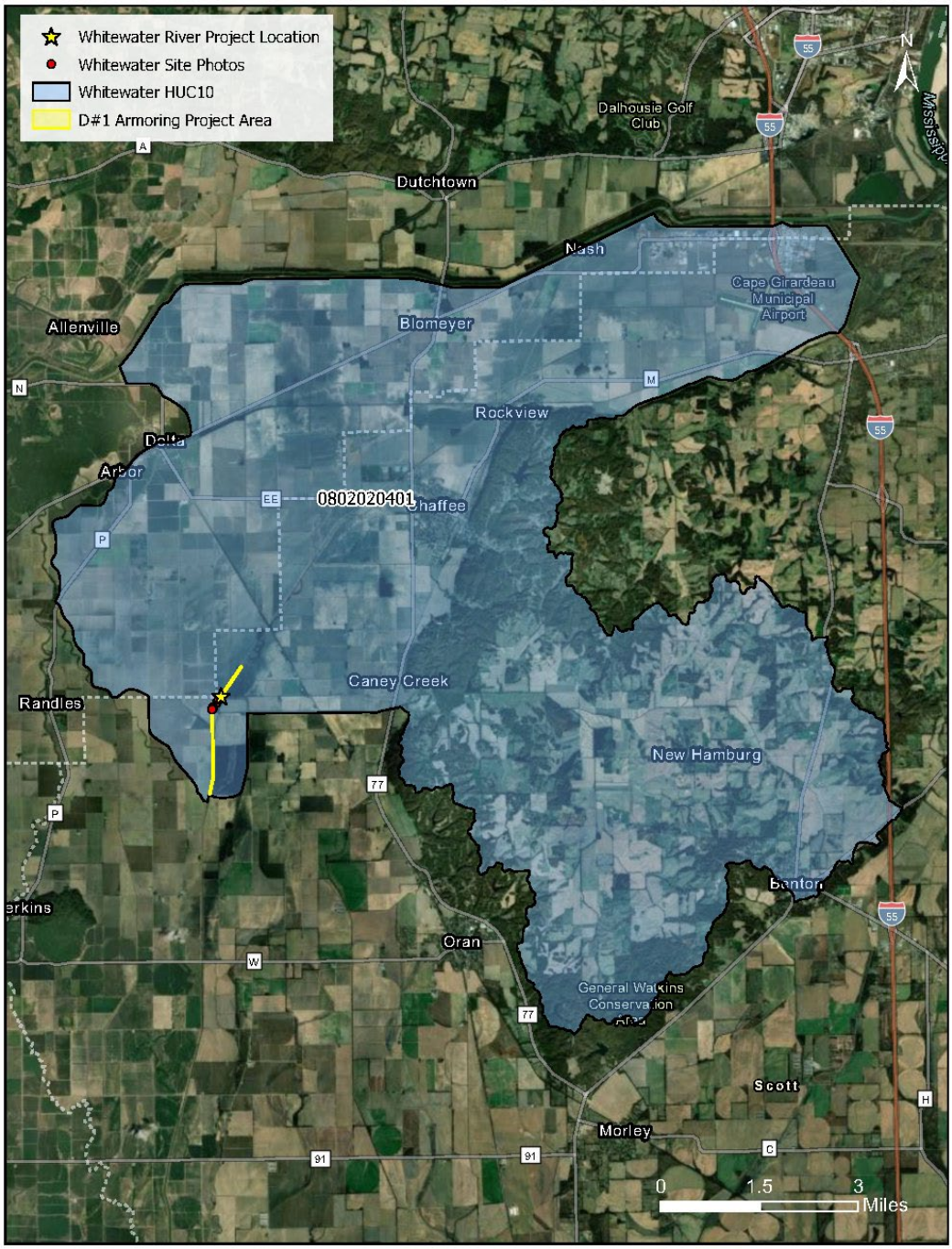

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U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

Mr. Danny Tetley
Presiding Commissioner
Scott County Commission
Post Office Box 188
Benton, Missouri 63736

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Tetley,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

would also appreciate identification of major projects in the vicinity that may contribute to cumulative effects.

If you have an interest in the project, please submit a response in writing to Mr. Steven Hefner at Butler USDA Service Center, 4327 Highway 67 North, Poplar Bluff, MO 63901 or by email at steven.hefner@usda.gov . In your communication, please make reference to "Whitewater River". If you have initial concerns with impacts of the project, please note them in your response.

If you are interested in attending, we are having an interagency stakeholder meeting on October 24th from 2:30-4:30 pm virtually and in person at the Little River Drainage District Office, 1432 Kurre Lane, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701. Please contact Mr. Hefner to obtain meeting invite access.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

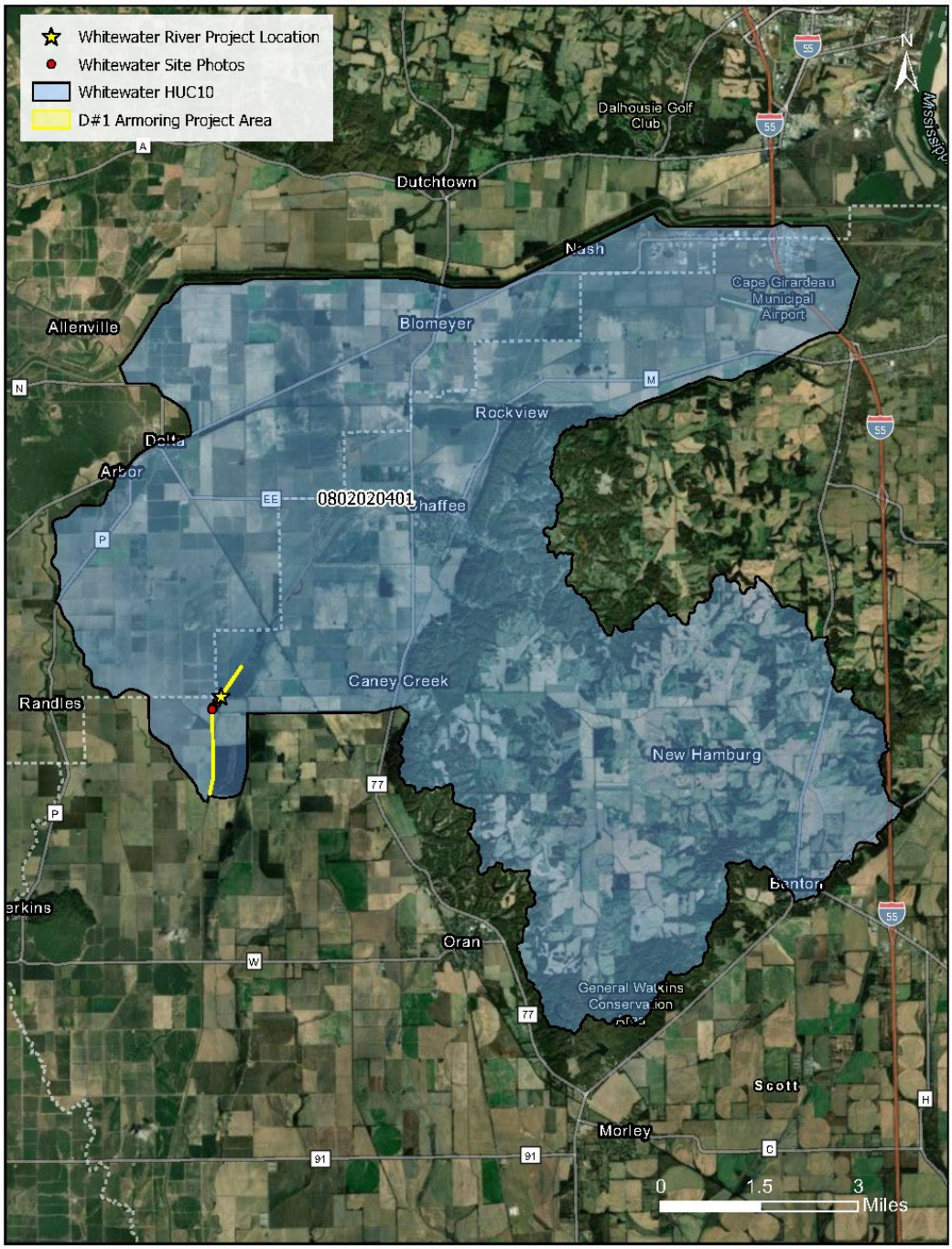
Attachment
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
601 Business Loop 70 West, Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
573-876-0901

USDA NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Site Location Map
Note: Proposed watershed improvements only within "D#1 Armoring Project Area"



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Columbia, Missouri 65203
573-876-0901

Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

Mr. Clint Tracy
Presiding Commissioner
Cape Girardeau County Commission
1 Barton Square
Jackson, Missouri 63755

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Tracy,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 *et seq*.); the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the NRCS is preparing a Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with a proposed action(s).

As project sponsor, the Little River Drainage District proposes a Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (PL 83-566) project to address agricultural water management in southeast Missouri. This watershed resides in Cape Girardeau and Scott County, Missouri and will also address downstream flood control concerns in Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, and Stoddard counties.

The Little River Drainage District is the largest drainage project in the United States. The drainage district is approximately 90 miles (north to south) by 10 to 20 miles wide (east to west). Located in several counties in southeast Missouri, a series of constructed ditches (~1000 miles) and levees (~ 300 miles) built from 1914 to 1928 have transformed nearly inhabitable land into a productive region. The watershed infrastructure in this region is approximately 100 years old.

The sponsor proposes to take measures to ensure the vitality of aging infrastructure, thus providing benefits to downstream watersheds and ensuring landscape scale resilience. The proposed project is a sub-unit of the entire drainage district and is in the northern section of the drainage district. The locally preferred alternative is to place rock along eroding portions of the drainage canals and to plant native warm season grasses to help stabilize canal banks while providing wildlife habitat. All work will remain within the original canal designs and will not expand the footprint of existing infrastructure.

As part of the NEPA process, the NRCS invites you to participate as a stakeholder in this process. We request your participation, opinion, and/or suggestions early in the process, and ask that your response is received within a 30-day period after receipt of this letter. To facilitate cumulative impact analysis, we

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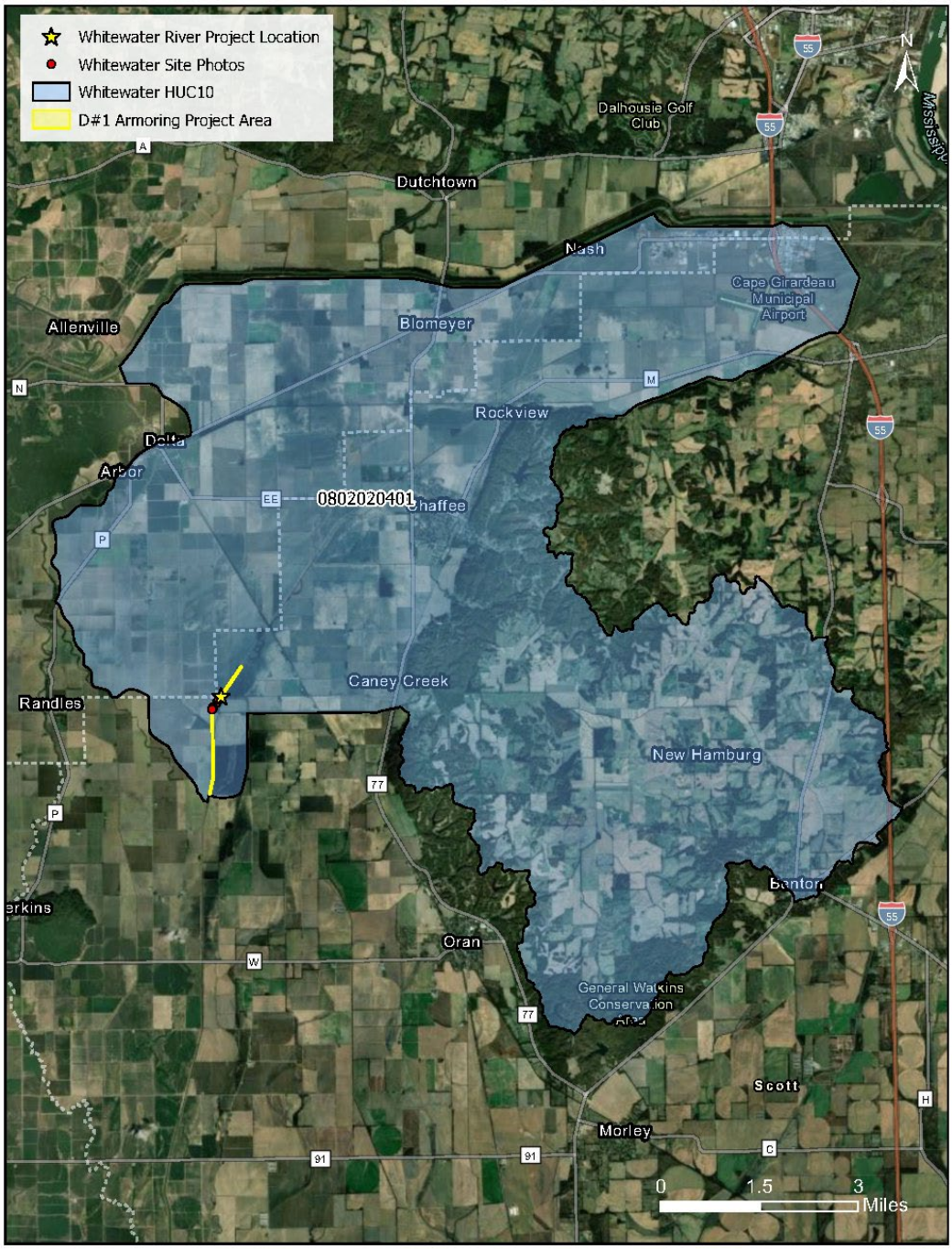

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573-876-0901

Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Joe Bunch
Chief of United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma
Post Office Box 746
Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74465

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Chief Bunch,

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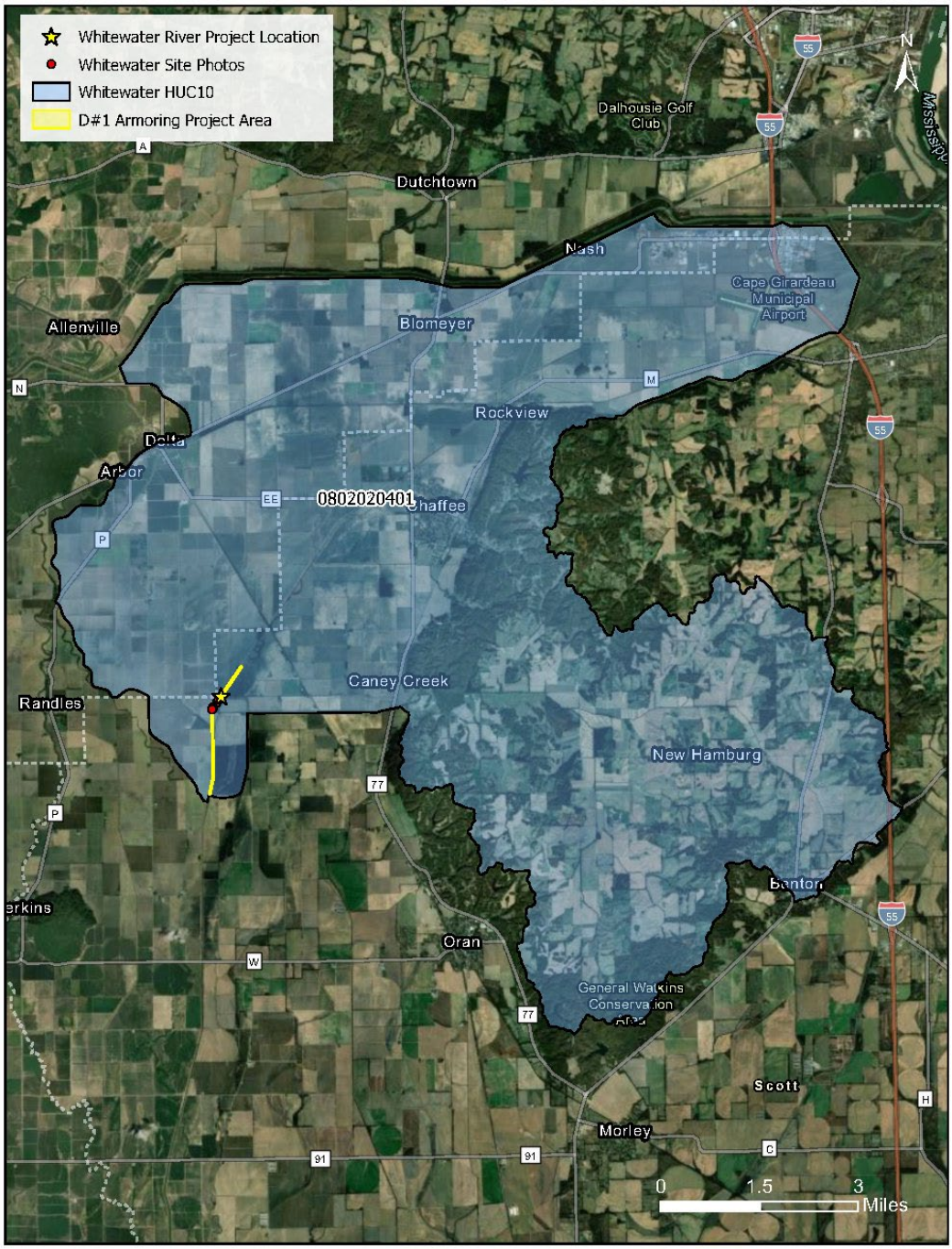

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Missouri Ecological Services Field Office
101 Park Deville Drive, Suite A
Columbia, Missouri 65203

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

To Whom It May Concern,

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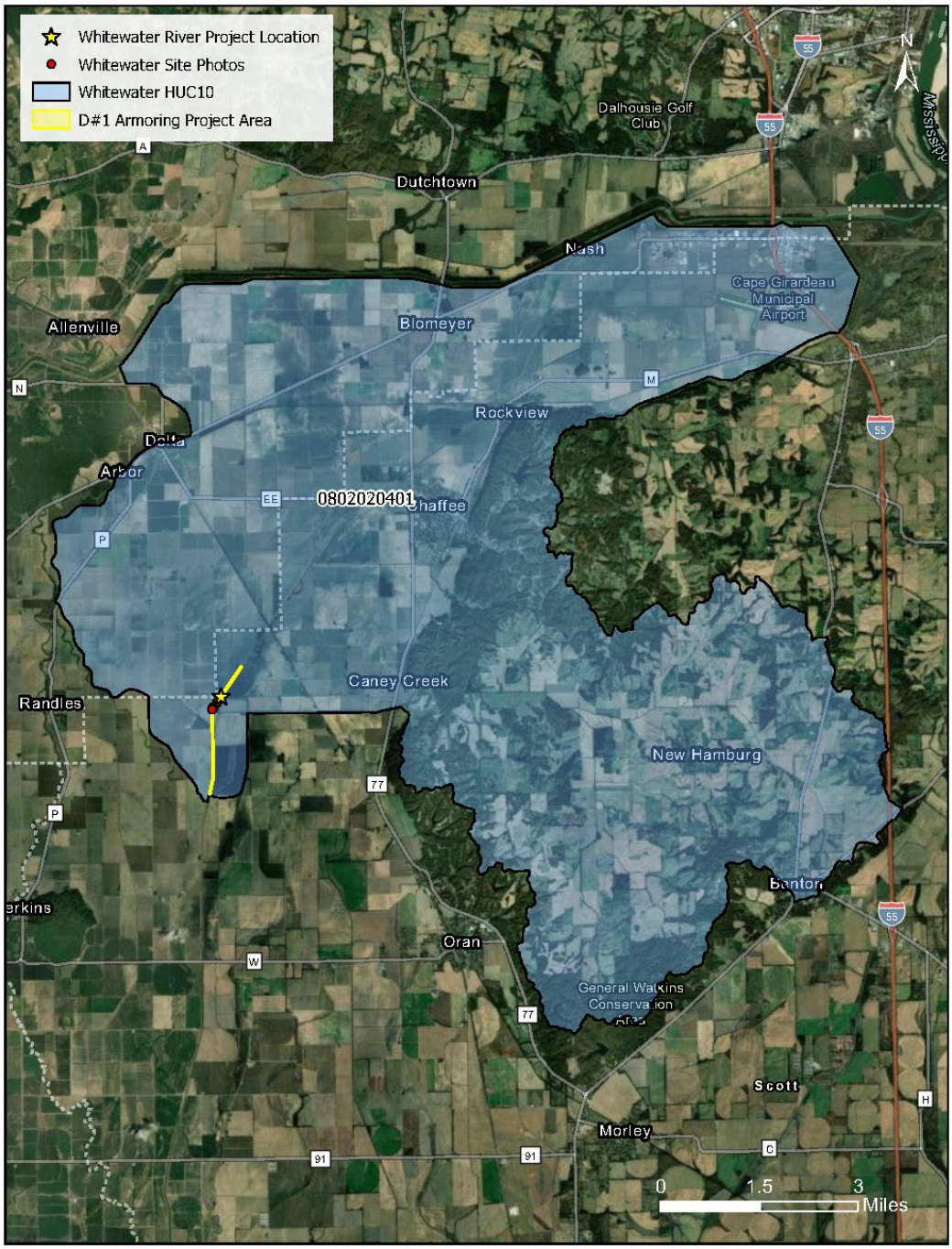

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September 7, 2023

U.S. Geological Survey
Central Midwest Water Science Center Director
1400 Independence Road
Rolla, Missouri 65401

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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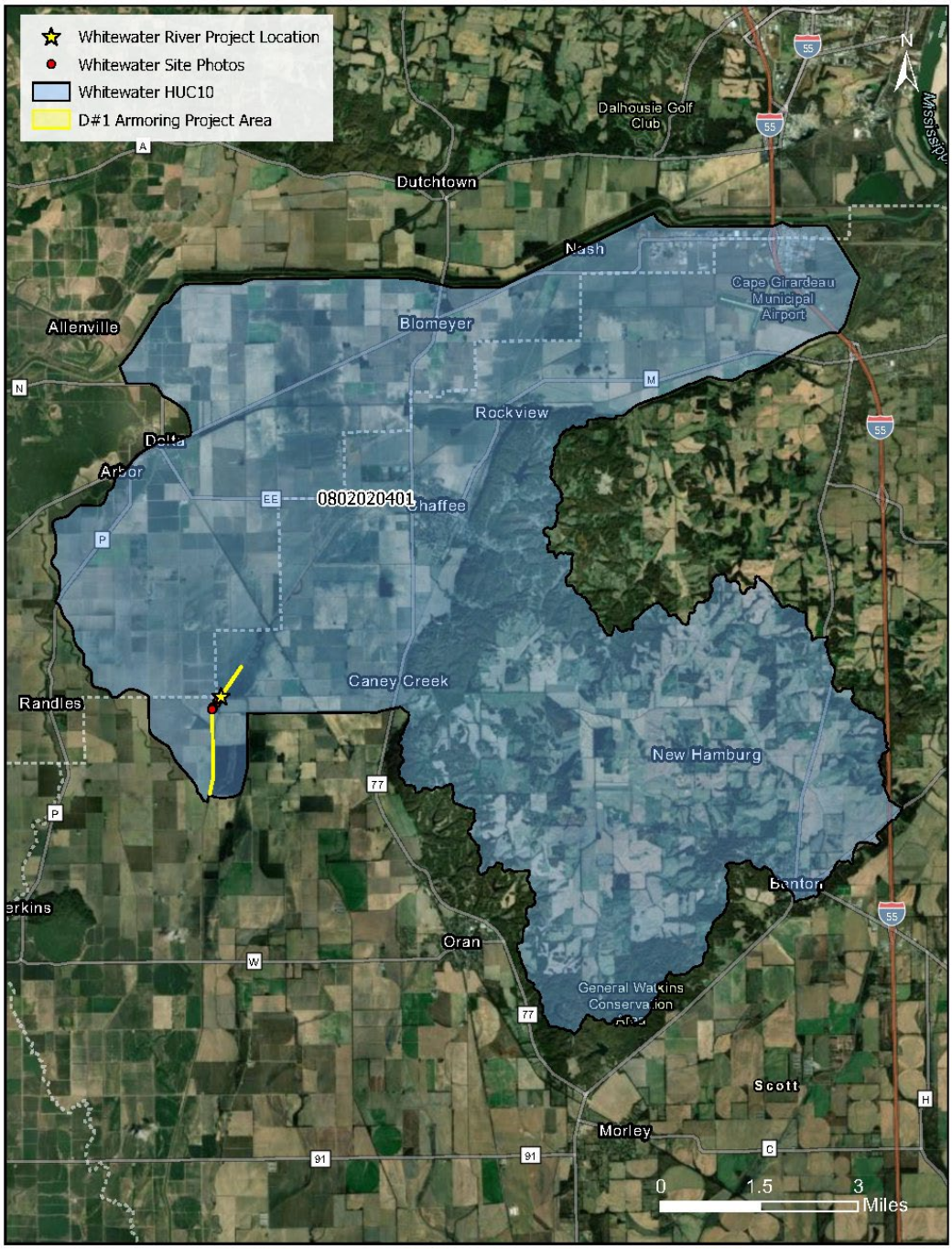

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

The Honorable John Voss
Missouri State Representative
House District 147
201 W. Capitol Avenue, Room 110-A
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Voss,

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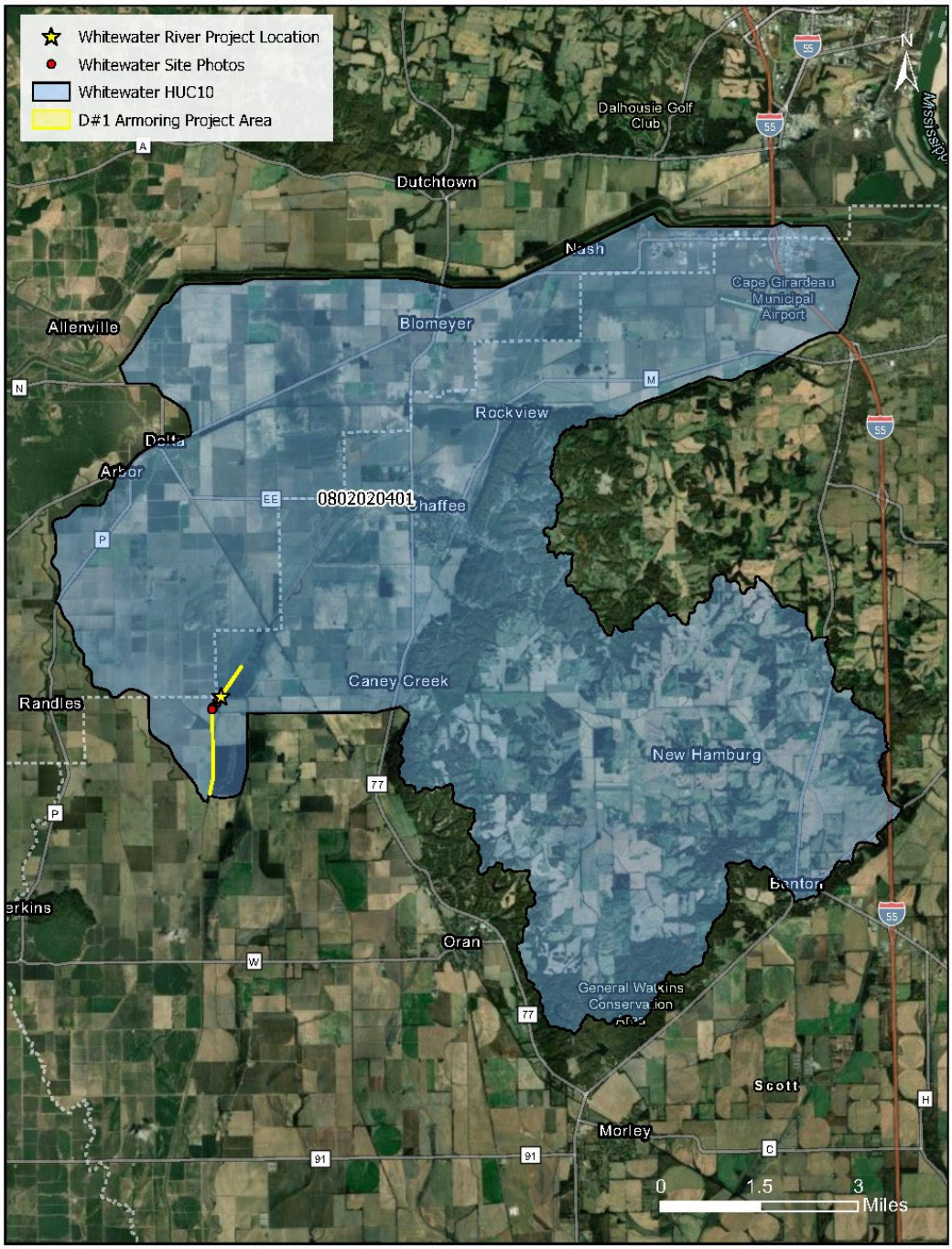

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September 7, 2023

Mr. Michael Thomas Waters
Chairman
Missouri Levee and Drainage District Assoc.
108 N. Jefferson St.
Mexico, Missouri 65265

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Waters,

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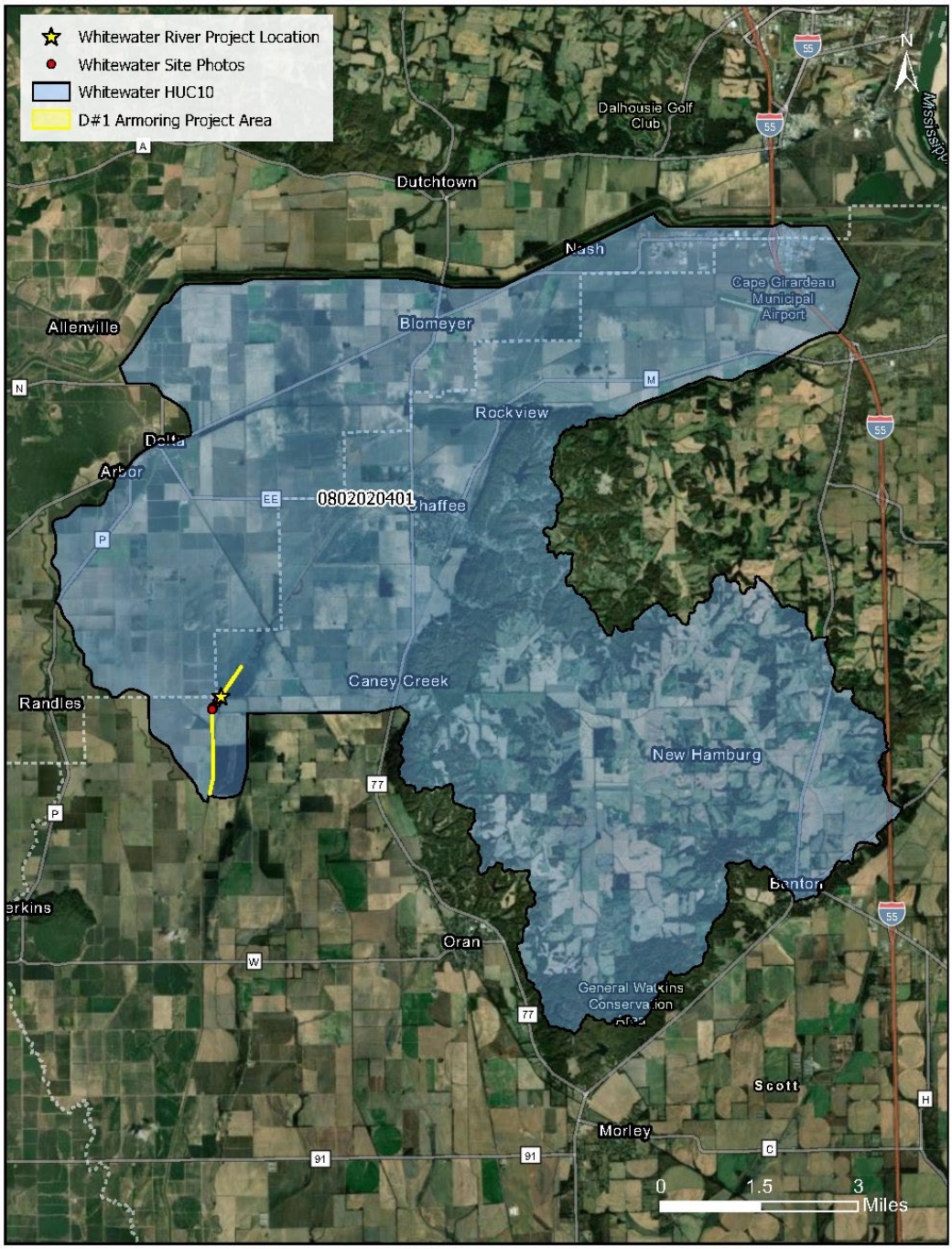

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September 7, 2023

Ms. Kay Wilson
District Specialist II
Scott County Soil and Water Conservation District
6458 State Highway 77
Benton, Missouri 63736

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Ms. Wilson,

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573-876-0901

USDA NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
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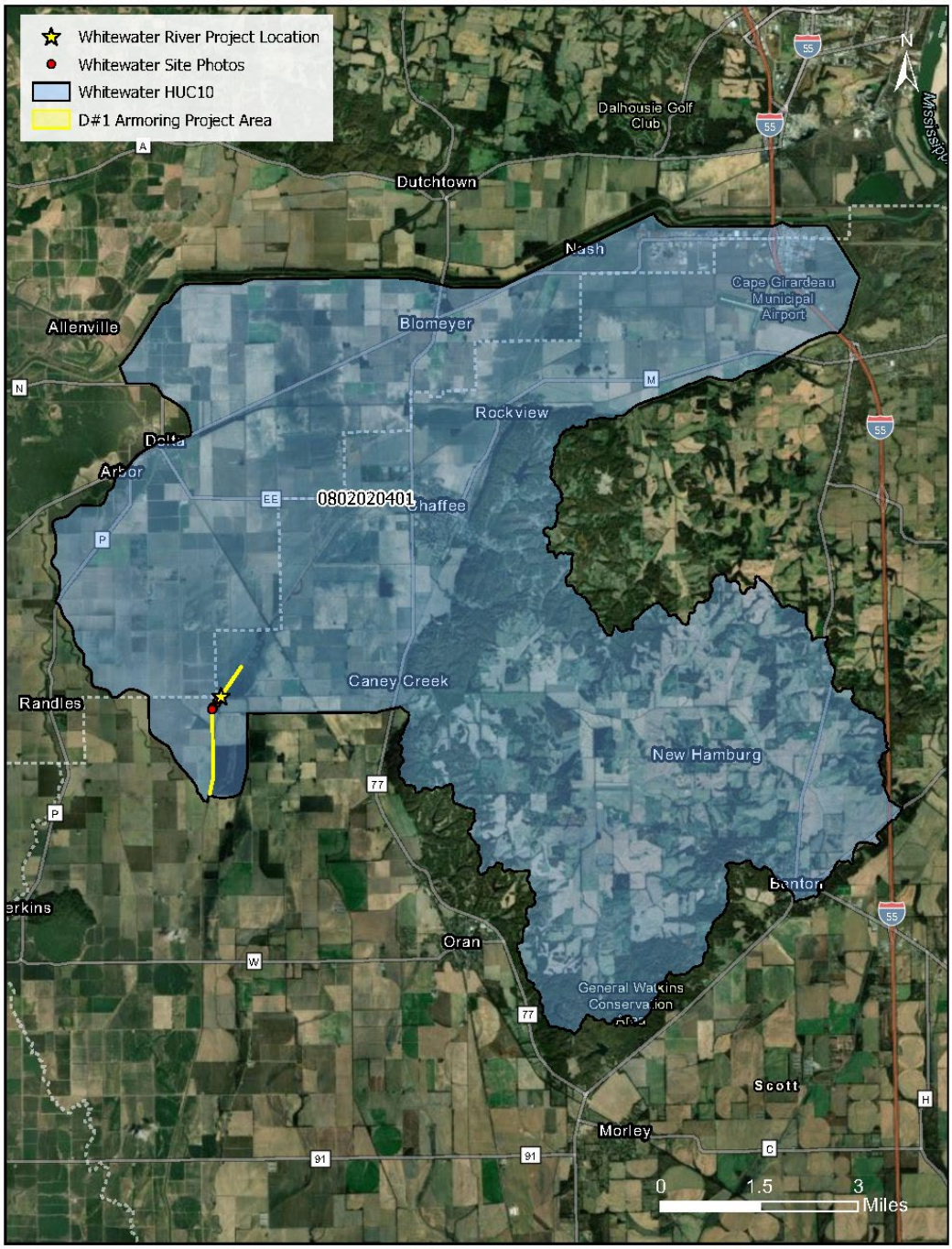
Site Location Map
Note: Proposed watershed improvements only within "D#1 Armoring Project Area"



Natural Resources Conservation Service
601 Business Loop 70 West, Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
573-876-0901

Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

September 7, 2023

Mr. Mark Winkler
Emergency Coordinator (Cape Girardeau County)
Missouri State Emergency Management Agency
1 Barton Square, Suite 102
Jackson, Missouri 63755

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Dear Mr. Winkler,

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing an Environmental Document to assist in the Federal decision-making process concerning the Whitewater River Watershed (please see **Attachment 1** including potential areas where work will be conducted).

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 *et seq*.); the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the NRCS is preparing a Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with a proposed action(s).

As project sponsor, the Little River Drainage District proposes a Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (PL 83-566) project to address agricultural water management in southeast Missouri. This watershed resides in Cape Girardeau and Scott County, Missouri and will also address downstream flood control concerns in Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, and Stoddard counties.

The Little River Drainage District is the largest drainage project in the United States. The drainage district is approximately 90 miles (north to south) by 10 to 20 miles wide (east to west). Located in several counties in southeast Missouri, a series of constructed ditches (~1000 miles) and levees (~ 300 miles) built from 1914 to 1928 have transformed nearly inhabitable land into a productive region. The watershed infrastructure in this region is approximately 100 years old.

The sponsor proposes to take measures to ensure the vitality of aging infrastructure, thus providing benefits to downstream watersheds and ensuring landscape scale resilience. The proposed project is a sub-unit of the entire drainage district and is in the northern section of the drainage district. The locally preferred alternative is to place rock along eroding portions of the drainage canals and to plant native warm season grasses to help stabilize canal banks while providing wildlife habitat. All work will remain within the original canal designs and will not expand the footprint of existing infrastructure.

As part of the NEPA process, the NRCS invites you to participate as a stakeholder in this process. We request your participation, opinion, and/or suggestions early in the process, and ask that your response is received within a 30-day period after receipt of this letter. To facilitate cumulative impact analysis, we

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would also appreciate identification of major projects in the vicinity that may contribute to cumulative effects.

If you have an interest in the project, please submit a response in writing to Mr. Steven Hefner at Butler USDA Service Center, 4327 Highway 67 North, Poplar Bluff, MO 63901 or by email at steven.hefner@usda.gov . In your communication, please make reference to "Whitewater River". If you have initial concerns with impacts of the project, please note them in your response.

If you are interested in attending, we are having an interagency stakeholder meeting on October 24th from 2:30-4:30 pm virtually and in person at the Little River Drainage District Office, 1432 Kurre Lane, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701. Please contact Mr. Hefner to obtain meeting invite access.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Site Location Map

cc: file

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Site Location Map
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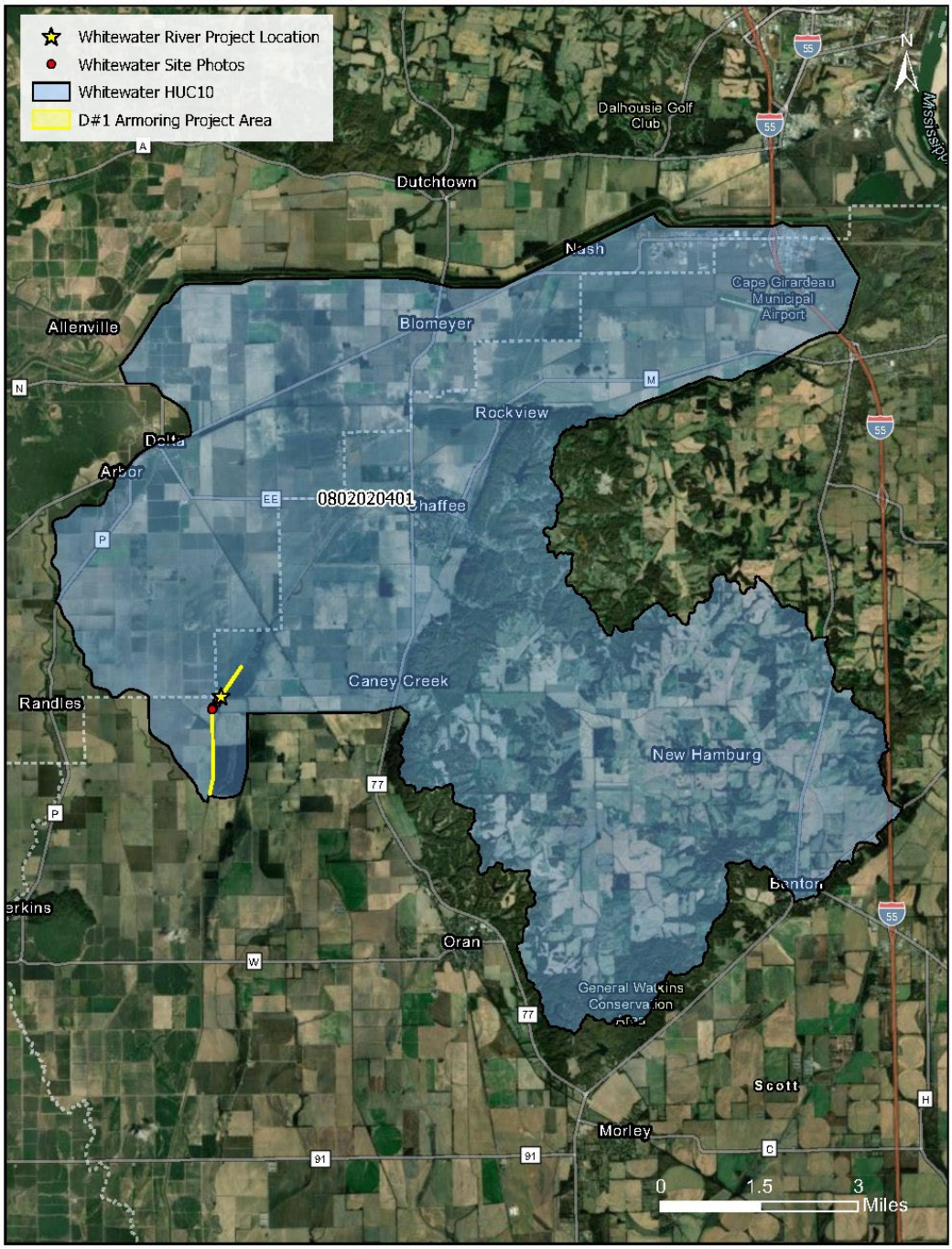

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WHITEWATER RIVER WATERSHED PROJECT AREA

BIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Prepared using IPaC

Generated by Sylvia Harris (sharris@prairieengineers.com)

November 19, 2025

The purpose of this document is to assess the effects of the proposed project and determine whether the project may affect any federally threatened, endangered, proposed, or candidate species. If appropriate for the project, this document may be used as a biological assessment (BA), as it is prepared in accordance with legal requirements set forth under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1536 (c)).

In this document, any data provided by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is based on data as of November 19, 2025.

Prepared using IPaC version 6.128.17-rc2

WHITEWATER RIVER WATERSHED PROJECT AREA BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

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1 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

1.1 PROJECT NAME

Whitewater River Watershed Project Area

1.2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NRCS is proposing to implement measures along the drainage ditches in the Whitewater River Watershed to provide watershed protection for agricultural lands and infrastructure in the watershed and areas downstream of the watershed. The measures will address sediment that was previously removed from the drainage ditches and placed on the ditch banks as well as stabilize eroding banks. This removed sediment has been eroding back into the ditches, worsening flooding of the ditch system and impacting the surrounding agricultural lands. The sediment has been accumulating in the ditches for around a century and has reduced the drainage system's capacity, diminishing its ability to reduce flooding.

The action area includes drainage ditches constructed for agriculture in the early 1900s. The area surrounding the ditches is in cropland. In a few areas along the ditches, there are scattered trees. Ditch buffers are minimal and typically planted to non-native grasses.

The preferred project alternative is to spread the removed sediment and seed it to native plants as well as stabilize eroding banks with riprap.

No direct impacts on Indiana bats, northern long-eared bats, tricolored bats, or monarchs are anticipated, because any necessary tree removal or herbaceous vegetation removal would occur during winter when bats are hibernating and monarchs have migrated. While the few existing trees do have characteristics that make them potentially suitable habitat for bats, and there are scattered nectar plants and several stands of milkweed for monarchs along the existing ditch banks, the drainage ditch setting is likely not currently providing high quality habitat for any of the three species.

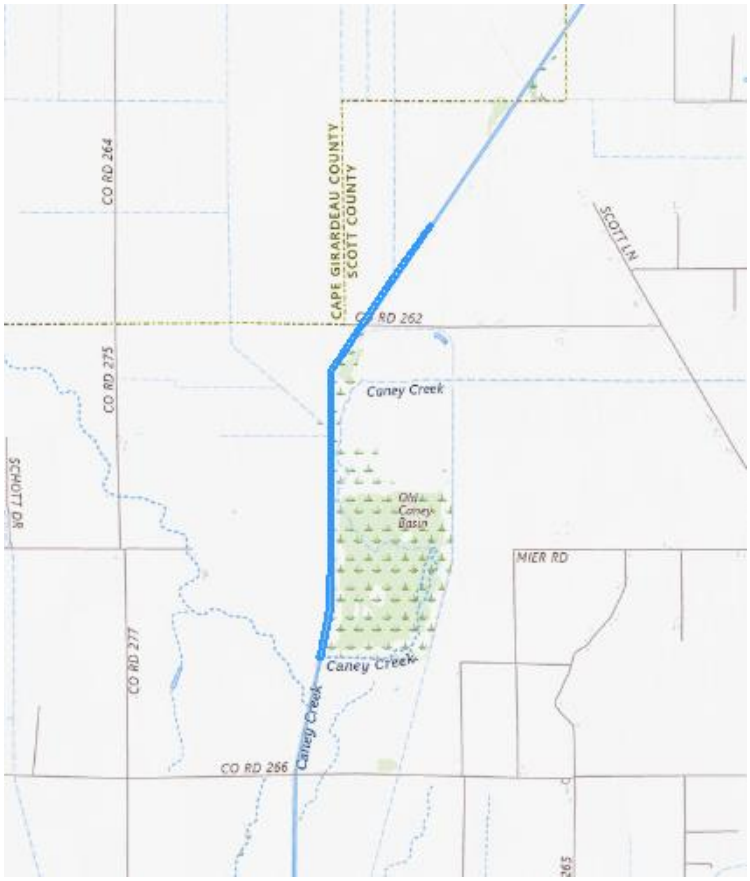
Any unexpected indirect impacts that could occur due to tree or herbaceous vegetation removal would not be expected to have a meaningful adverse effect on species conservation efforts. The action area has minimal, if any, role in meeting conservation needs for any of the four species given the highly agricultural landscape, the low numbers of trees, and the predominance of non-native vegetation. One potential benefit of the proposed action would be an increase in nectar plants and milkweed by incorporating seeds of those plants into seeding mixes when seeding the ditch banks after spreading the previously removed sediment as well as grading and seeding the banks that will be riprapped

1.3 EFFECT DETERMINATION SUMMARY

SPECIES (COMMON NAME)	SCIENTIFIC NAME	LISTING STATUS	PRESENT IN ACTION AREA	EFFECT DETERMINATION
Alligator Snapping Turtle	Macrochelys temminckii	Proposed Threatened	Excluded from analysis	Excluded from analysis
Gray Bat	Myotis grisescens	Endangered	No	NE
Indiana Bat	Myotis sodalis	Endangered	Yes	NLAA
Monarch Butterfly	Danaus plexippus	Proposed Threatened	Yes	NLAA
Tricolored Bat	Perimyotis subflavus	Proposed Endangered	Yes	NLAA

1.4 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.4.1 LOCATION



LOCATION
Scott County, Missouri

1.4.2 DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT HABITAT

The action area includes drainage ditches constructed for agriculture in the early 1900's. The area surrounding the ditches is in cropland. Ditch buffers are minimal and typically planted to non-native grasses. In a few areas along the ditches, there are scattered trees.

1.4.3 PROJECT PROPONENT INFORMATION

Provide information regarding who is proposing to conduct the project, and their contact information. Please provide details on whether there is a Federal nexus.

REQUESTING AGENCY
Prairie Engineering

FULL NAME
Sylvia Harris

STREET ADDRESS
404 North Main Street

CITY	STATE	ZIP
Columbia	IL	62236

PHONE NUMBER	E-MAIL ADDRESS
8037414193	sharris@prairieengineers.com

LEAD AGENCY
Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service

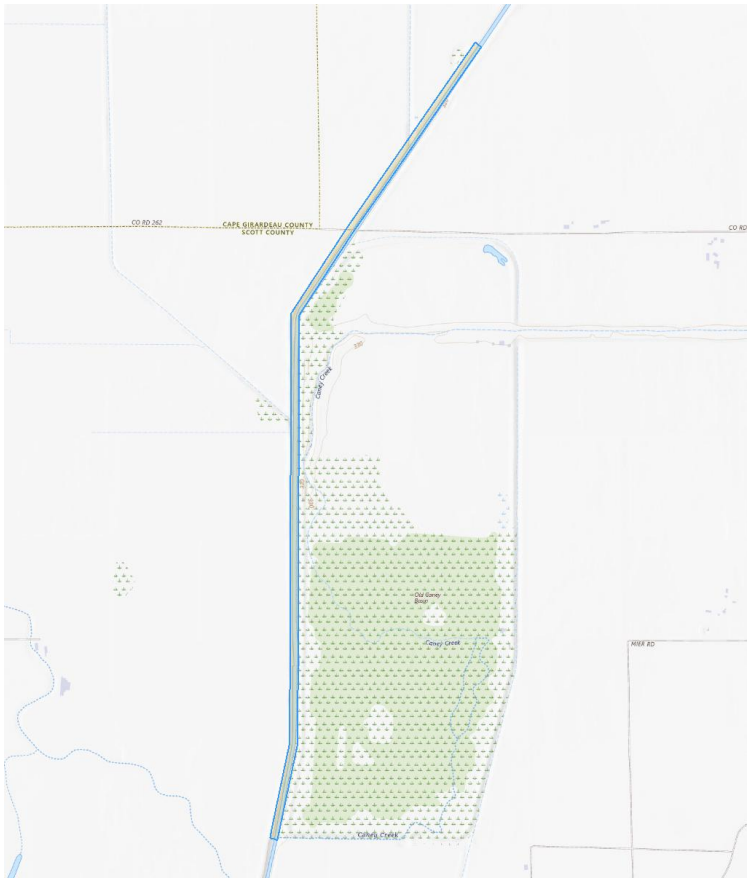
1.4.4 PROJECT PURPOSE

Drainage ditches constructed for agriculture have silted in and banks are failing, causing flooding of surrounding land and transportation routes during rain events.

1.4.5 PROJECT TYPE AND DECONSTRUCTION

This project is a drainage structure maintenance project.

1.4.5.1 PROJECT MAP



LEGEND

Project footprint

Ditch Cleanout: Drainage structure maintenance: Drainage structure maintenance: Drainage structure maintenance

1.4.5.2 DRAINAGE STRUCTURE MAINTENANCE

ACTIVITY START DATE
November 16, 2028

ACTIVITY END DATE
January 16, 2029

STRESSORS
- Change in decrease in bats

DESCRIPTION
Maintenance will be limited in duration.

1.4.6 ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL STRESSORS

Describe the anticipated effects of your proposed project on the aspects of the land, air and water that will occur due to the activities above. These should be based on the activity deconstructions done in the previous section and will be used to inform the action area.

1.4.6.1 ANIMAL FEATURES

Individuals from the Animalia kingdom, such as raptors, mollusks, and fish. This feature also includes byproducts and remains of animals (e.g., carrion, feathers, scat, etc.), and animal-related structures (e.g., dens, nests, hibernacula, etc.).

1.4.6.2 PLANT FEATURES

Individuals from the Plantae kingdom, such as trees, shrubs, herbs, grasses, ferns, and mosses. This feature also includes products of plants (e.g., nectar, flowers, seeds, etc.).

1.4.6.3 AQUATIC FEATURES

Bodies of water on the landscape, such as streams, rivers, ponds, wetlands, etc., and their physical characteristics (e.g., depth, current, etc.). This feature includes the groundwater and its characteristics. Water quality attributes (e.g., turbidity, pH, temperature, DO, nutrients, etc.) should be placed in the Environmental Quality Features.

1.4.6.4 ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY FEATURES

Abiotic attributes of the landscape (e.g., temperature, moisture, slope, aspect, etc.).

1.4.6.5 ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESSES

Abiotic processes that occur in the natural environment (e.g., erosion, precipitation, flood frequency, photoperiod, etc.).

1.4.6.6 MISCELLANEOUS

Miscellaneous should only be used if the created feature does not fit into one of the other categories or if the creator is not sure in which category it should be placed.

1.4.6.6.1 CHANGE IN DECREASE IN BATS

ANTICIPATED MAGNITUDE

This stressor is not expected to occur; the following explanation has been provided:

This stressor was completely avoided by implementing a conservation measure.

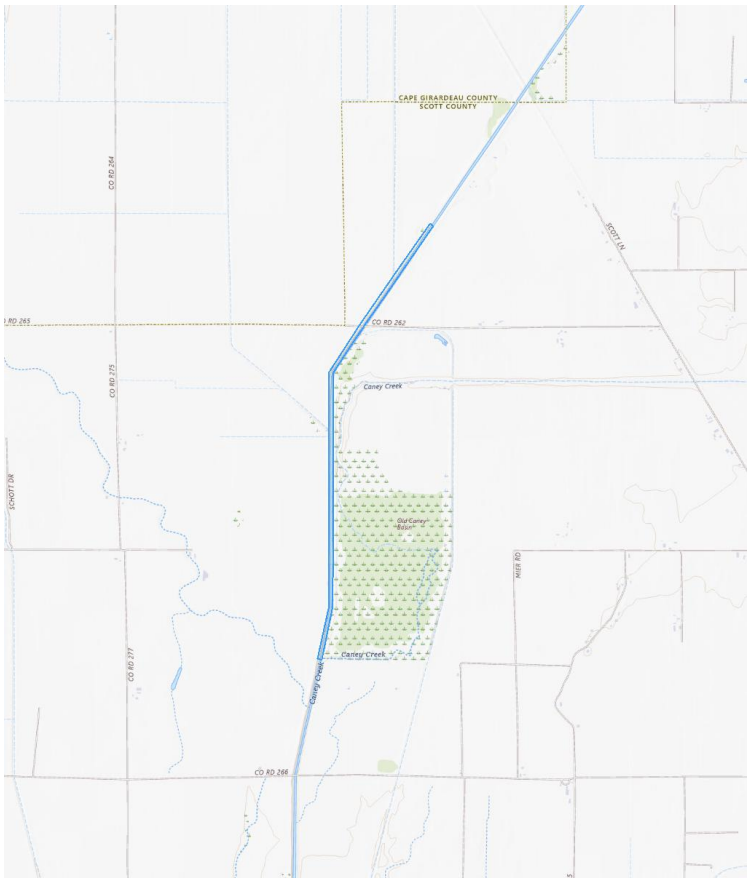
CONSERVATION MEASURES

- Limit time of year of action

STRUCTURES AND ACTIVITIES

- Drainage structure maintenance

1.5 ACTION AREA



LEGEND

Project footprint

Stressor location

1.6 CONSERVATION MEASURES

1.6.1 LIMIT TIME OF YEAR OF ACTION

DESCRIPTION

Any necessary tree removal (for bats) or herbaceous vegetation removal (for monarchs) will be limited to the winter months.

STRESSORS

- Change in decrease in bats

DIRECT INTERACTIONS

- removal

1.7 PRIOR CONSULTATION HISTORY

N/A

1.8 OTHER AGENCY PARTNERS AND INTERESTED PARTIES

The local project sponsor is the Little River Drainage District.

1.9 OTHER REPORTS AND HELPFUL INFORMATION

N/A

2 SPECIES EFFECTS ANALYSIS

This section describes, species by species, the effects of the proposed action on listed, proposed, and candidate species, and the habitat on which they depend. In this document, effects are broken down as direct interactions (something happening directly to the species) or indirect interactions (something happening to the environment on which a species depends that could then result in effects to the species).

These interactions encompass effects that occur both during project construction and those which could be ongoing after the project is finished. All effects, however, should be considered, including effects from direct and indirect interactions and cumulative effects.

2.1 ALLIGATOR SNAPPING TURTLE

This species has been excluded from analysis in this environmental review document.

JUSTIFICATION FOR EXCLUSION

Habitat is minimal in the Project Area as the drainage ditches are silted in and shallow much of the year.

2.2 GRAY BAT

This species has been excluded from analysis in this environmental review document.

JUSTIFICATION FOR EXCLUSION

The Project Area does not contain caves.

2.3 INDIANA BAT

2.3.1 STATUS OF THE SPECIES

This section should provide information on the species' background, its biology and life history that is relevant to the proposed project within the action area that will inform the effects analysis.

2.3.1.1 LEGAL STATUS

The Indiana Bat is federally listed as 'Endangered' and additional information regarding its legal status can be found on the ECOS species profile.

2.3.1.2 RECOVERY PLANS

Available recovery plans for the Indiana Bat can be found on the ECOS species profile.

2.3.1.3 LIFE HISTORY INFORMATION

The Indiana bat is a medium-sized Myotis, closely resembling the little brown bat (Myotis lucifugus) but differing in coloration. Its fur is a dull grayish chestnut rather than bronze, with the basal portion of the hairs on the back a dull-lead color. This bat's underparts are pinkish to cinnamon, and its hind feet are smaller and more delicate than in M. lucifugus. The calcar (heel of the foot) is strongly keeled.

IDENTIFIED RESOURCE NEEDS

Hibernacula

Humidity: high and temperature: <10°c (50.0°f) but infrequently drops below freezing, and the temperature is relatively stable.

Insects

Type: flying

Open water

Type: streams, rivers, ponds, wetlands, lakes, road ruts

Travel corridors

Location: between two whole patches of forests. and type: hedgerow, riparian corridor, forest edge

Trees

Size: > or = 5 inches dbh, spatial arrangement: within 1000 feet of forest, structure: cracks, crevices, loose bark, type: dead, nearly dead, and living with dead parts

2.3.1.4 CONSERVATION NEEDS

From the 2007 Recovery Plan:

Actions Needed: 1. Conserve and manage hibernacula and their winter populations. 2. Conserve and manage summer habitat to maximize survival and fecundity. 3. Plan and conduct research essential for recovery. 4. Develop and implement public information and outreach program.

2.3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE

*The environmental baseline describes the species' health **within the action area only** at the time of the consultation, and does not include the effects of the action under review. Unlike the species information provided above, the environmental baseline is at the scale of the Action area.*

2.3.2.1 SPECIES PRESENCE AND USE

There are very few trees in the Project Area, but use by these bats cannot be ruled out.

2.3.2.2 SPECIES CONSERVATION NEEDS WITHIN THE ACTION AREA

The action area has minimal, if any, role in meeting conservation needs given the highly agricultural landscape and the low numbers of trees.

2.3.2.3 HABITAT CONDITION (GENERAL)

Scattered trees exhibiting characteristics of potentially suitable habitat for the Indiana bat were observed in and adjacent to the project area during a field assessment in September 2023.

2.3.2.4 INFLUENCES

Habitat loss and degradation, disturbance, disease, environmental contaminants (from 2007 Recovery Plan)

2.3.2.5 ADDITIONAL BASELINE INFORMATION

N/A

2.3.3 EFFECTS OF THE ACTION

This section considers and discusses all effects on the listed species that are caused by the proposed action and are reasonably certain to occur, including the effects of other activities that would not occur but for the proposed action.

2.3.3.1 INDIRECT INTERACTIONS

Provide a brief overview of what the applicable science has discovered regarding the species and its response to the stressors that each project activity may cause. This should include an explanation of the pathways and mechanisms that have potential to translate environmental change (impact) into response and effects to individuals.

2.3.3.2 DIRECT INTERACTIONS

No direct interactions leading to effects on species are expected to occur from the proposed project.

Justification:

Any necessary tree removal will be limited to the winter months.

2.3.4 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

There are no reasonably foreseeable activities that would affect the site after the Proposed Action is implemented.

2.3.5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

DETERMINATION: NLAA

COMPENSATION MEASURES
No direct impacts on Indiana bats are anticipated, because tree removal would occur outside of summer. While the few existing trees do have characteristics that make them potentially suitable habitat, the drainage ditch setting is likely not currently providing high quality habitat. Thus, any indirect impacts that may occur due to tree removal would not be expected to have a meaningful adverse effect on species conservation efforts.

2.4 MONARCH BUTTERFLY

2.4.1 STATUS OF THE SPECIES
This section should provide information on the species' background, its biology and life history that is relevant to the proposed project within the action area that will inform the effects analysis.

2.4.1.1 LEGAL STATUS
The Monarch Butterfly is federally listed as 'Proposed Threatened' and additional information regarding its legal status can be found on the ECOS species profile.

2.4.1.2 RECOVERY PLANS
Available recovery plans for the Monarch Butterfly can be found on the ECOS species profile.

2.4.1.3 LIFE HISTORY INFORMATION

For information on monarch conservation, visit https://www.fws.gov/initiative/pollinators/monarchs, http://www.mafwa.org/?page_id=2347, and, for the West, https://wafwa.org/committees-working-groups/monarch-working-group/.

Adult monarch butterflies are large and conspicuous, with bright orange wings surrounded by a black border and covered with black veins. The black border has a double row of white spots, present on the upper side of the wings. Adult monarchs are sexually dimorphic, with males having narrower wing venation and scent patches. The bright coloring of a monarch serves as a warning to predators that eating them can be toxic.

During the breeding season, monarchs lay their eggs on their obligate milkweed host plant (primarily Asclepias spp.), and larvae emerge after two to five days. Larvae develop through five larval instars (intervals between molts) over a period of 9 to 18 days, feeding on milkweed and sequestering toxic chemicals (cardenolides) as a defense against predators. The larva then pupates into a chrysalis before emerging 6 to 14 days later as an adult butterfly. There are multiple generations of monarchs produced during the breeding season, with most adult butterflies living approximately two to five weeks; overwintering adults enter into reproductive diapause (suspended reproduction) and live six to nine months.

In many regions where monarchs are present, monarchs breed year-round. Individual monarchs in temperate climates, such as eastern and western North America, undergo long-distance migration, and live for an extended period of time. In the fall, in both eastern and western North America, monarchs begin migrating to their respective overwintering sites. This migration can take monarchs distances of over 3,000 km and last for over two months. In early spring (February-March), surviving monarchs break diapause and mate at the overwintering sites before dispersing. The same individuals that undertook the initial southward migration begin flying back through the breeding grounds and their offspring start the cycle of generational migration over again.

IDENTIFIED RESOURCE NEEDS

Habitat connectivity

The size and spatial arrangement of habitat patches for nectar and milkweed resources is important during the breeding season and along the migration route.

Larval host plant

Healthy and abundant milkweed needed for oviposition and larval consumption.

Microclimate

Monarchs at all life stages need specific temperature ranges, precipitation levels, and other climatic conditions that are supportive of life processes (breeding, migrating and overwintering).

Nectar

Sufficient quality and quantity of nectar from flowers is needed for adult feeding throughout the breeding and migration seasons.

2.4.1.4 CONSERVATION NEEDS

The loss of milkweed and nectar resources (i.e., breeding and migratory habitat) has been targeted as the threat that can be most easily addressed through conservation efforts. Protection, restoration, enhancement and creation of habitat is a central aspect of recent monarch conservation strategies. The 2023 Mid-America Monarch Conservation Strategy, developed by the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, established a goal of adding 1.3 billion stems of milkweed on the landscape by 2038. Missouri is among the states that have agreed to participate in the effort to reach the 1.3 billion stem goal, which will require contributions from multiple sectors of society, including private landowners, agricultural producers, non-governmental organizations, rights-of-way organizations, and federal, state and local governments. (Monarch Butterfly Species Status Assessment Report, version 2.3, December 2024)

2.4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE

*The environmental baseline describes the species' health **within the action area only** at the time of the consultation, and does not include the effects of the action under review. Unlike the species information provided above, the environmental baseline is at the scale of the Action area.*

2.4.2.1 SPECIES PRESENCE AND USE

Along a few of the ditches in the Project Area, there are scattered milkweed plants. Other than that, most ditch buffers are planted to non-native grasses.

2.4.2.2 SPECIES CONSERVATION NEEDS WITHIN THE ACTION AREA

Nectar plant and milkweed seeds will be incorporated into native species seeding plans for the ditch buffers.

2.4.2.3 HABITAT CONDITION (GENERAL)

Very few nectar or larval plant sources are in the Project Area; most ditch buffers are planted to non-native grasses.

2.4.2.4 INFLUENCES

Besides loss of milkweed and nectar resources during breeding and migration, influences on monarchs include availability and quality of overwintering habitat; climate (storms, drought, temperatures); disease and natural enemies; insecticides; and road mortality and pollutants. (Monarch Butterfly Species Status Assessment Report, version 2.3, December 2024)

2.4.2.5 ADDITIONAL BASELINE INFORMATION

N/A

2.4.3 EFFECTS OF THE ACTION

This section considers and discusses all effects on the listed species that are caused by the proposed action and are reasonably certain to occur, including the effects of other activities that would not occur but for the proposed action.

2.4.3.1 INDIRECT INTERACTIONS

Provide a brief overview of what the applicable science has discovered regarding the species and its response to the stressors that each project activity may cause. This should include an explanation of the pathways and mechanisms that have potential to translate environmental change (impact) into response and effects to individuals.

2.4.3.2 DIRECT INTERACTIONS

DIRECT INTERACTION	CONSERVATION MEASURES	INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED	IMPACT EXPLANATION
Removal	Limit time of year of action	No	Any milkweed plants that may be present during spring, summer, and fall could be host to monarch eggs, larvae, and/or pupae. If such milkweed plants were destroyed by maintenance equipment, monarchs in those life stages would be destroyed. To avoid this possibility, herbaceous vegetation will be cleared in the winter when there would not be eggs, larvae, or pupae on the milkweed plants.

2.4.4 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

There are no reasonably foreseeable activities that would affect the site after the Proposed Action is implemented.

2.4.5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

DETERMINATION: NLAA

COMPENSATION MEASURES
Because milkweed plants could be destroyed by maintenance equipment, herbaceous vegetation will be cleared in the winter when there would not be eggs, larvae, or pupae on the milkweed plants.

2.5 TRICOLORED BAT

2.5.1 STATUS OF THE SPECIES
This section should provide information on the species' background, its biology and life history that is relevant to the proposed project within the action area that will inform the effects analysis.

2.5.1.1 LEGAL STATUS
The Tricolored Bat is federally listed as 'Proposed Endangered' and additional information regarding its legal status can be found on the ECOS species profile.

2.5.1.2 RECOVERY PLANS
Available recovery plans for the Tricolored Bat can be found on the ECOS species profile.

2.5.1.3 LIFE HISTORY INFORMATION

The tricolored bat is a small insectivorous bat that is distinguished by its unique tricolored fur and often appears yellowish to nearly orange. The once common species is wide ranging across the eastern and central United States and portions of southern Canada, Mexico and Central America. During the winter, tricolored bats are often found in caves and abandoned mines, although in the southern United States, where caves are sparse, tricolored bats are often found roosting in road-associated culverts where they exhibit shorter torpor bouts and forage during warm nights. During the spring, summer, and fall, tricolored bats are found in forested habitats where they roost in trees, primarily among leaves of live or recently dead deciduous hardwood trees, but may also be found in Spanish moss, pine trees, and occasionally human structures. Tricolored bats face extinction due primarily to the rangewide impacts of white-nose syndrome, a deadly disease affecting cave-dwelling bats across the continent. White-nose syndrome has caused estimated declines of more than 90 percent in affected tricolored bat colonies across the majority of the species range. To address the growing threat of white-nose syndrome to the tricolored bat and other bats across North America, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is leading the White-nose Syndrome National Response Team, a coordinated effort of more than 150 non-governmental organizations, institutions, Tribes, and state and federal agencies. Together we are conducting critical white-nose syndrome research and developing management strategies to minimize impacts of the disease and recover affected bat populations. For more information on white-nose syndrome, please see: https://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/ For more information on tricolored bats, please see: https://www.fws.gov/species/tricolored-bat-perimyotis-subflavus

IDENTIFIED RESOURCE NEEDS

Hibernacula

Tricolored bats hibernate in caves, mines, road-associated culverts, tree cavities, and abandoned water wells (2021 species status assessment report for the tricolored bat, version 1.1).

Insects

Tricolored bats are opportunistic feeders and consume small insects including caddisflies, (trichoptera), flying moths (lepidoptera), small beetles (coloptera), small wasps and flying ants (hymenoptera), true bugs (homoptera) and flies (diptera) (2021 species status assessment report for the tricolored bat, version 1.1).

Open water

Wetlands and waterways (2021 species status assessment report for the tricolored bat, version 1.1).

Travel corridors

TCB prefer landscapes with greater forest area, forest aggregation, and tree corridors and are less abundant in urban areas (2021 species status assessment report for the tricolored bat, version 1.1).

Trees

TCB primarily roost among live and dead leaf clusters of live or recently dead deciduous hardwood trees. in the southern and northern portions of their range, they will also roost in spanish moss and lichen, respectively. they have also been observed roosting during summer among pine needles, eastern red cedar, and within artificial roosts (e.g., barns beneath porch roofs, bridges, concrete bunkers). trees need to be near suitable food and water resources (2021 species status assessment report for the tricolored bat, version 1.1).

2.5.1.4 CONSERVATION NEEDS

Reducing the effects of white-nose syndrome, mortality related to wind energy generation, and habitat loss. (2021 Species Status Assessment Report for the tricolored bat, Version 1.1)

2.5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE

*The environmental baseline describes the species' health **within the action area only** at the time of the consultation, and does not include the effects of the action under review. Unlike the species information provided above, the environmental baseline is at the scale of the Action area.*

2.5.2.1 SPECIES PRESENCE AND USE

There are very few trees in the Project Area, but use by these bats cannot be ruled out.

2.5.2.2 SPECIES CONSERVATION NEEDS WITHIN THE ACTION AREA

The action area has minimal, if any, role in meeting conservation needs given the highly agricultural landscape, the low numbers of trees, the absence of hibernacula where white-nose syndrome spreads, and the absence of wind energy generation facilities.

2.5.2.3 HABITAT CONDITION (GENERAL)

Scattered trees exhibiting characteristics of potentially suitable habitat for the tricolored bat were observed in and adjacent to the project area during a field assessment in September 2023.

2.5.2.4 INFLUENCES

White-nose syndrome, mortality related to wind energy generation, habitat loss (2021 Species Status Assessment Report for the tricolored bat, Version 1.1)

2.5.2.5 ADDITIONAL BASELINE INFORMATION

N/A

2.5.3 EFFECTS OF THE ACTION

This section considers and discusses all effects on the listed species that are caused by the proposed action and are reasonably certain to occur, including the effects of other activities that would not occur but for the proposed action.

2.5.3.1 INDIRECT INTERACTIONS

Provide a brief overview of what the applicable science has discovered regarding the species and its response to the stressors that each project activity may cause. This should include an explanation of the pathways and mechanisms that have potential to translate environmental change (impact) into response and effects to individuals.

2.5.3.2 DIRECT INTERACTIONS

No direct interactions leading to effects on species are expected to occur from the proposed project.

Justification:

Any necessary tree removal will be limited to the winter months.

2.5.4 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

There are no reasonably foreseeable activities that would affect the site after the Proposed Action is implemented.

2.5.5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

DETERMINATION: NLAA

COMPENSATION MEASURES

Any necessary tree removal will be limited to the winter months.

3 CRITICAL HABITAT EFFECTS ANALYSIS

No critical habitats intersect with the project action area.

4 SUMMARY DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

4.1 SUMMARY DISCUSSION

No direct impacts on bats or monarchs are anticipated, because tree removal or herbaceous vegetation removal would occur during winter when bats are hibernating and monarchs have migrated. While the few existing trees do have characteristics that make them potentially suitable habitat for bats, and there may be scattered nectar plants and milkweed for monarchs, the drainage ditch setting is likely not currently providing high quality habitat for any of the four species. Any unexpected indirect impacts that could occur due to tree or herbaceous vegetation removal would not be expected to have a meaningful adverse effect on species conservation efforts. The action area has minimal, if any, role in meeting conservation needs for any of the three species given the highly agricultural landscape, the low numbers of trees, and the predominance of non-native vegetation. One potential benefit of the proposed action would be an increase in nectar plants and milkweed by incorporating seeds of those plants into seeding mixes when seeding the ditch banks after spreading the previously removed sediment.

4.2 CONCLUSION

The proposed action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the Indiana bat, monarch butterfly, and tricolored bat. Any effects on the three species would be insignificant (because the potential for direct effects should be avoided by doing any necessary tree or herbaceous vegetation removal in winter) or discountable (because the potential for indirect effects, given the paucity of suitable habitat that exists to begin with, is minimal if not absent). There may be beneficial effects for monarchs by increasing availability of nectar plants and milkweed.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

General Project Design Guidelines (4 Species)

Generated November 19, 2025 05:58 PM UTC, IPaC v6.128.17-rc2

IPaC - Information for Planning and Consultation (https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/): A project planning tool to help streamline the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service environmental review process.

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Species Document Availability

Species with general design guidelines

Alligator Snapping Turtle Macrochelys temminckii

Gray Bat Myotis grisescens

Indiana Bat Myotis sodalis

Tricolored Bat Perimyotis subflavus

Species without general design guidelines available

Monarch Butterfly Danaus plexippus

General Project Design Guidelines - Indiana Bat and 4 more species

Published by Missouri Ecological Services Field Office - Publication Date: July 9, 2025 for the following species included in your project

- Indiana Bat *Myotis sodalis*
- Tricolored Bat *Perimyotis subflavus*
- Alligator Snapping Turtle *Macrochelys temminckii*
- Gray Bat *Myotis grisescens*
- Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus*

Missouri Ecological Services Field Office - Publication Date: July 9, 2025
General Project Design Guidelines - Indiana Bat and 4 more species

Avoidance and Minimization Measures for Listed Species in Missouri

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Missouri Ecological Services Field Office is currently developing recommendations to help avoid or minimize adverse effects to listed species and designated critical habitat. Until measures are developed, we recommend coordinating directly with our office to discuss ways to avoid or minimize adverse effects. Federal Agencies may find their contact at the Missouri Ecological Services Field Office at https://www.fws.gov/service/missouri-esa-consultation-and-technical-assistance.

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Missouri Ecological Services Field Office
101 Park Deville Drive
Suite A
Columbia, MO 65203-0057
Phone: (573) 234-2132 Fax: (573) 234-2181

In Reply Refer To: 11/19/2025 17:56:31 UTC
Project Code: 2025-0149882
Project Name: Whitewater River Watershed Project Area

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Threatened and Endangered Species

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirement for obtaining a Technical Assistance Letter from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).
New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. **Note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days.** The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

Consultation Technical Assistance

Refer to the Midwest Region S7 Technical Assistance website for step-by-step instructions for making species determinations and for specific guidance on the following types of projects: projects in developed areas, HUD, pipelines, buried utilities, telecommunications, and requests

for a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) from FEMA. Please contact the appropriate POC at Missouri Ecological Services for any additional consultation needs.

Federally Listed Bat Species

Indiana bats, gray bats, and northern long-eared bats occur throughout Missouri and the information below may help in determining if your project may affect these species.

Gray bats - Gray bats roost in caves or mines year-round and use water features and forested riparian corridors for foraging and travel. If your project will impact caves, mines, associated riparian areas, or will involve tree removal around these features – particularly within stream corridors, riparian areas, or associated upland woodlots –gray bats could be affected.
Indiana and northern long-eared bats - These species hibernate in caves or mines only during the winter. In Missouri the inactive season is considered to be October 15 to March 31 unless the project is located within a 1/2 mile of a hibernacula. During the active season in Missouri they roost in forest and woodland habitats. Suitable summer habitat for Indiana bats and northern long-eared bats consists of a wide variety of forested/wooded habitats where they roost, forage, and travel and may also include some adjacent and interspersed non-forested habitats such as emergent wetlands and adjacent edges of agricultural fields, old fields and pastures. This includes forests and woodlots containing potential roosts (i.e., live trees and/or snags ≥5 inches diameter at breast height (dbh) for Indiana bat, and ≥3 inches dbh for northern long-eared bat, that have exfoliating bark, cracks, crevices, and/or hollows), as well as linear features such as fencerows, riparian forests, and other wooded corridors. These wooded areas may be dense or loose aggregates of trees with variable amounts of canopy closure. Tree species often include, but are not limited to, shellbark or shagbark hickory, white oak, cottonwood, and maple. Individual trees may be considered suitable habitat when they exhibit the characteristics of a potential roost tree and are located within 1,000 feet (305 meters) of other forested/wooded habitat. Northern long-eared bats have also been observed roosting in human-made structures, such as buildings, barns, bridges, and bat houses; therefore, these structures should also be considered potential summer habitat and evaluated for use by bats. If your project will impact caves or mines or will involve clearing forest or woodland habitat containing suitable roosting habitat, Indiana bats or northern long-eared bats could be affected.
Examples of unsuitable habitat include:

- Individual trees that are greater than 1,000 feet from forested or wooded areas;
- Trees found in highly-developed urban areas (e.g., street trees, downtown areas);
- A pure stand of less than 3-inch dbh trees that are not mixed with larger trees; and
- A stand of eastern red cedar shrubby vegetation with no potential roost trees.

Using the IPaC Official Species List to Make No Effect and May Affect Determinations for Listed Species

1. If IPaC returns a result of “There are no listed species found within the vicinity of the project,” then project proponents can conclude the proposed activities will have **no effect** on any federally listed species under Service jurisdiction. Concurrence from the Service is not required for **No Effect** determinations. No further consultation or coordination is required. Attach this letter to the dated IPaC species list report for your records. An example "No Effect" document also can be found on the S7 Technical Assistance website.

2. If IPaC returns one or more federally listed, proposed, or candidate species as potentially present in the action area of the proposed project – other than bats (see #3 below) – then project proponents can conclude the proposed activities **may affect** those species. For assistance in determining if suitable habitat for listed, candidate, or proposed species occurs within your project area or if species may be affected by project activities, you can obtain Life History Information for Listed and Candidate Species through the Species website.
3. If IPac returns a result that one or more federally listed bat species (Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, or gray bat) are potentially present in the action area of the proposed project, project proponents can conclude the proposed activities **may affect** these bat species **IF** one or more of the following activities are proposed:
    a. Clearing or disturbing suitable roosting habitat, as defined above, at any time of year;
    b. Any activity in or near the entrance to a cave or mine;
    c. Mining, deep excavation, or underground work within 0.5 miles of a cave or mine;
    d. Construction of one or more wind turbines; or
    e. Demolition or reconstruction of human-made structures that are known to be used by bats based on observations of roosting bats, bats emerging at dusk, or guano deposits or stains.

If none of the above activities are proposed, project proponents can conclude the proposed activities will have **no effect** on listed bat species. Concurrence from the Service is not required for **No Effect** determinations. No further consultation or coordination is required. Attach this letter to the dated IPaC species list report for your records. An example "No Effect" document also can be found on the S7 Technical Assistance website.
If any of the above activities are proposed in areas where one or more bat species may be present, project proponents can conclude the proposed activities **may affect** one or more bat species. We recommend coordinating with the Service as early as possible during project planning. If your project will involve removal of over 5 acres of suitable forest or woodland habitat, we recommend you complete a Summer Habitat Assessment prior to contacting our office to expedite the consultation process. The Summer Habitat Assessment Form is available in Appendix A of the most recent version of the Range-wide Indiana Bat Summer Survey Guidelines.

Other Trust Resources and Activities

Bald and Golden Eagles - Although the bald eagle has been removed from the endangered species list, this species and the golden eagle are protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Should bald or golden eagles occur within or near the project area please contact our office for further coordination. For communication and wind energy projects, please refer to additional guidelines below.

Migratory Birds - The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) prohibits the taking, killing, possession, transportation, and importation of migratory birds, their eggs, parts, and nests, except when specifically authorized by the Service. The Service has the responsibility under the MBTA

to proactively prevent the mortality of migratory birds whenever possible and we encourage implementation of recommendations that minimize potential impacts to migratory birds. Such measures include clearing forested habitat outside the nesting season (generally March 1 to August 31) or conducting nest surveys prior to clearing to avoid injury to eggs or nestlings.

Communication Towers - Construction of new communications towers (including radio, television, cellular, and microwave) creates a potentially significant impact on migratory birds, especially some 350 species of night-migrating birds. However, the Service has developed voluntary guidelines for minimizing impacts.

Transmission Lines - Migratory birds, especially large species with long wingspans, heavy bodies, and poor maneuverability can also collide with power lines. In addition, mortality can occur when birds, particularly hawks, eagles, kites, falcons, and owls, attempt to perch on uninsulated or unguarded power poles. To minimize these risks, please refer to guidelines developed by the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee and the Service. Implementation of these measures is especially important along sections of lines adjacent to wetlands or other areas that support large numbers of raptors and migratory birds.

Wind Energy - To minimize impacts to migratory birds and bats, wind energy projects should follow the Service's Wind Energy Guidelines. In addition, please refer to the Service's Eagle Conservation Plan Guidance, which provides guidance for conserving bald and golden eagles in the course of siting, constructing, and operating wind energy facilities.

Next Steps

Should you determine that project activities **may affect** any federally listed species or trust resources described herein, please contact our office for further coordination. Letters with requests for consultation or correspondence about your project should include the Consultation Tracking Number in the header. Electronic submission is preferred.

If you have not already done so, please contact the Missouri Department of Conservation (Policy Coordination, P. O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102) for information concerning Missouri Natural Communities and Species of Conservation Concern.
We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. Please feel free to contact our office with questions or for additional information.

John Weber

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List

Project code: 2025-0149882 11/19/2025 17:56:31 UTC

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Missouri Ecological Services Field Office
101 Park Deville Drive
Suite A
Columbia, MO 65203-0057
(573) 234-2132

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2025-0149882
Project Name: Whitewater River Watershed Project Area
Project Type: Drainage Project
Project Description: Potential project to clean out sediment from drainage ditches that were originally created in the early 1900s.
Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: https://www.google.com/maps/@37.13303755,-89.72288468813875,14z

Counties: Scott County, Missouri

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 5 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries[1], as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

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1. NOAA Fisheries, also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

Project code: 2025-0149882 11/19/2025 17:56:31 UTC

MAMMALS

NAME	STATUS
Gray Bat *Myotis grisescens* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6329 General project design guidelines: https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/project/RFDI7GI43BE2JLXGGQ522Y32FE/documents/generated/9456.pdf	Endangered
Indiana Bat *Myotis sodalis* There is **final** critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5949 General project design guidelines: https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/project/RFDI7GI43BE2JLXGGQ522Y32FE/documents/generated/9456.pdf	Endangered
Tricolored Bat *Perimyotis subflavus* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515 General project design guidelines: https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/project/RFDI7GI43BE2JLXGGQ522Y32FE/documents/generated/9456.pdf	Proposed Endangered

REPTILES

NAME	STATUS
Alligator Snapping Turtle *Macrochelys temminckii* No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4658 General project design guidelines: https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/project/RFDI7GI43BE2JLXGGQ522Y32FE/documents/generated/9456.pdf	Proposed Threatened

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus* There is **proposed** critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Proposed Threatened

CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Prairie Engineering
Name: Sylvia Harris
Address: 404 North Main Street
City: Columbia
State: IL
Zip: 62236
Email sharris@prairieengineers.com
Phone: 8037414193

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Agency: Natural Resources Conservation Service
Name: Rex McAliley
Email: rex.mcaliley@usda.gov
Phone: 5738769425

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Whitewater River Watershed Project Area

Species Survey Guidelines (1 Species)

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IPaC - Information for Planning and Consultation (https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/): A project planning tool to help streamline the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service environmental review process.

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Species Survey Guidelines (1 Species)
Species Document Availability

Species Document Availability

Species with survey guidelines

Indiana Bat Myotis sodalis

Species without survey guidelines available

Alligator Snapping Turtle Macrochelys temminckii

Gray Bat Myotis grisescens

Monarch Butterfly Danaus plexippus

Tricolored Bat Perimyotis subflavus

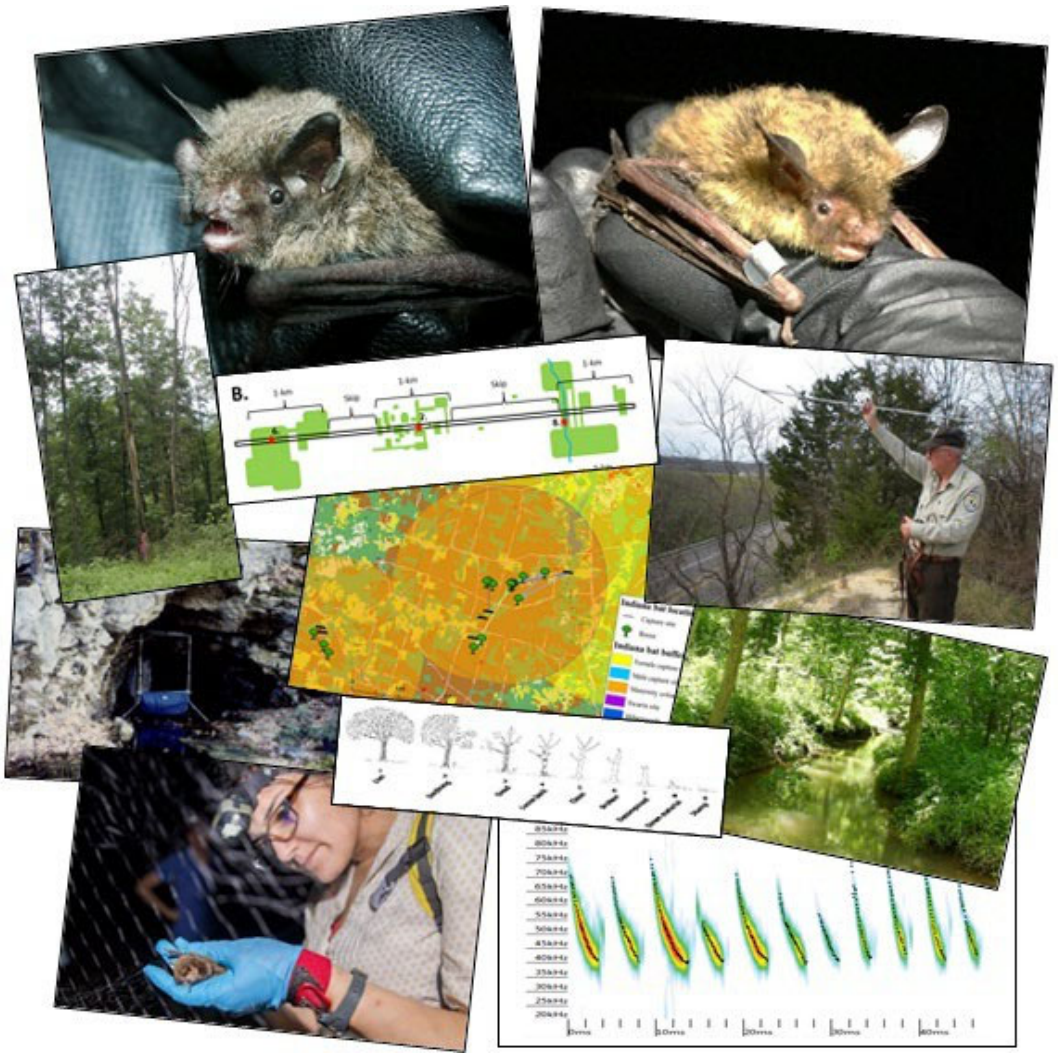
Species Survey Guidelines - Indiana Bat and 4 more species

Published by Missouri Ecological Services Field Office - Publication Date: March 1, 2024 for the following species included in your project

- Indiana Bat *Myotis sodalis*
- Tricolored Bat *Perimyotis subflavus*
- Alligator Snapping Turtle *Macrochelys temminckii*
- Gray Bat *Myotis grisescens*
- Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus*

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

RANGE-WIDE INDIANA BAT & NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT SURVEY GUIDELINES



March 2024

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RANGE-WIDE INDIANA BAT & NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT SURVEY GUIDELINES

(modifications from the previous guidelines are in **blue**)

INTRODUCTION

The Indiana bat (IBAT) (*Myotis sodalis*) was originally listed as being in danger of extinction under the Endangered Species Preservation Act of 1966 (32 FR 4001, March 11, 1967), and is currently listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended. The northern long-eared bat (NLEB) (*Myotis septentrionalis*) was listed as threatened under the ESA on April 2, 2015, and reclassified to endangered on March 31, 2023. This survey protocol provides the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) recommended guidance on survey methods and outlines additional reporting requirements for surveyors. These guidelines provide recommendations to project proponents completing habitat assessments and presence/probable absence surveys for IBAT and NLEB. Following these recommendations streamlines project coordination with USFWS[1]. The USFWS does not require surveys for federally listed species to meet ESA compliance within Section 7 or 10 contexts. Therefore, use of these guidelines remains optional, and project proponents may discuss other options with the local USFWS Field Office (FO).

The following guidance is designed to determine whether IBAT or NLEB are present[2] or probably absent (P/A)[3] at a given site during the summer/active season (see Appendices B, C, I, or J), within bridges and culverts (see Appendix K), or during the winter (see Appendix H) (also refer to Table 1). The phased-approach includes coordination with the USFWS, habitat assessments, acoustic, mist-net, and an assortment of survey guidance appendices, and supersedes all prior survey guidance for these two species. Future changes to this document may occur and will be posted on the USFWS IBAT and NLEB survey guidance website by March 31st of each year. Before conducting surveys, please check this website to ensure use of the most current version of this document. All USFWS survey guidance documents can be found at https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long- eared-bat-survey-guidelines.

These protocols may be different from those designed for general bat monitoring as part of the North American Bat Monitoring Program (NABat)[4]. NABat surveys may be thought of as similar to breeding bird surveys and are not project-specific surveys in most cases. Information from NABat surveys can be considered as part of "best available" information when assessing whether there is already some existing information on presence of IBAT or NLEB in the vicinity of a given project.

NOTE: These protocols may also be used for tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*; TCB) presence/probable absence surveys using the NLEB level of effort (LOE) for the 2024 field season. We collected preliminary data from these datasets to complete an initial evaluation of LOE for TCB to ensure that deferring to the NLEB LOE for 2024 was acceptable. The unique factors and differences from NLEB protocols include:

- The definition of suitable summer habitat for tricolored bats (Appendix A);

[1] Coordinate with the appropriate state natural resource agencies and any involved federal agency(ies) whenever "USFWS" coordination is listed. USFWS FO(s) may direct project sponsors to state agencies for existing occurrence information. Coordinate with your local USFWS FO(s) to understand the process for their area of jurisdiction.
[2] The guidance is not intended to be rigorous enough to provide sufficient data to fully determine population size or structure.
[3] Recognizing protocols are not 100% likely to detect IBAT and NLEB when present and identification errors may occur.
[4] Loeb et al. 2015 available at https://www.nabatmonitoring.org

- Acoustic or combination acoustic and mist-netting surveys are required for TCB when it is the only species (IPaC species list includes TCB but not IBAT or NLEB) being surveyed for P/A (Appendix C or I);

- Manual vetting is necessary for linear projects when using an approved version of Kaleidoscope Pro if the MLE is > 0.05 for all site-nights and 10 or more passes are auto-classified as potentially belonging to TCB at any site-night. If you choose not to manually vet calls meeting these criteria, then you should assume presence of TCB for the project (Appendix C or I);

- Radio-tracking of TCB should prioritize identification of the immediate roosting area (if the exact roosting locations cannot be determined) of the transmittered bat given the frequent difficulty in locating the bats' exact roosting location (Appendix D);

- Emergence surveys of potentially suitable (versus known) roost trees for TCB is not always a viable option given the variability in roosting locations (Appendix E); and

- Internal surveys of potentially suitable hibernacula may be completed for TCB (Appendix H).

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of IBAT and NLEB survey guidelines are to: (1) standardize range-wide survey procedures; (2) maximize the potential for detection/capture of IBAT and NLEB at a minimum acceptable level of effort (LOE); (3) make accurate presence/probable absence determinations; and (4) aid in conservation efforts for the species' by identifying areas where they are present.

BACKGROUND

In 2011, the USFWS developed a multi-agency team to determine whether improvements could be made to the 2007 IBAT Mist-Net Protocols (USFWS 2007). The USFWS implemented the revised guidance in 2014. Since then, a USFWS team with support from USGS has made any necessary revisions to the guidelines each year (e.g., formally incorporated NLEB in 2022). The USGS conducted initial independent testing of automated acoustic software programs during the winter of 2014-15 and continues to provide support to USFWS testing new versions of available software using software- testing procedures updated in January 2019[5].

We considered the best available information for all aspects of the guidance. For example, see our white paper[6] and 2018 addendum outlining the methods used to determine the minimum IBAT LOE. Our 2022 addendum provided the rationale for the NLEB minimum LOE for acoustic and mist-net surveys (previously we deferred to LOE used for IBAT) as well as updating the IBAT acoustic LOE. The 2023 addendum utilized new data to provide updated mist-netting LOE recommendations for IBAT and NLEB and year-round active LOE recommendations for NLEB. As we receive additional information, we may incorporate additional survey recommendations for the IBAT, NLEB, and/or other bat species. The USFWS continues to partner with local, State, and Federal biologists; scientific and academic institutions; commercial organizations; and other interested parties to collect additional data on the distribution, ecology, and biology of the IBAT and NLEB, as well as other at- risk bat species, and looks forward to receiving any additional pertinent information from partners.

[5] Revised USFWS Software Testing Procedures are available on the USFWS website provided in the intro.
[6] The white paper, 2018, 2022 and 2023 addenda are available on the USFWS website provided in the intro.

GENERAL PROCESS

IBAT and NLEB surveys for some proposed projects will require modification (or clarification) of this guidance through coordination with the USFWS Ecological Services Field Office(s) (FOs) responsible for the state(s) in which the project occurs[7]. Before coordinating with the USFWS FO(s) on survey plan development, project proponents should submit their project through the Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) website (https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/). If not already required by federal permit, federal action agencies and surveyors should develop a proposed survey study plan in coordination with the USFWS FO(s) so that all parties fully understand which methods will be deployed, what assumptions will be made, and what the various outcomes would be based on the results of each step. Although optional, we encourage the use of the fillable USFWS Study Plan Form for Bat Surveys and Monitoring as it will ensure all the information necessary is provided to the USFWS FO and expedite review and approval. Project proponents are encouraged to coordinate with the USFWS FO(s) regarding when they may cease survey work once an assumption or documentation of their targeted species presence occurs. Pre-survey coordination typically will preclude the need for subsequent reviews of intermediate steps by USFWS FO(s) during the busy field season. An online directory of USFWS FO(s) is available on the USFWS website (https://www.fws.gov/our-facilities). Unless otherwise agreed to by the USFWS, negative P/A survey results obtained using this guidance are valid for a minimum of five years[8] from their completion unless new information (e.g., other nearby surveys) suggest otherwise. If negative survey results are older than 5 years, coordinate with the USFWS FO(s) to discuss if additional surveys are needed. If not already required by federal permit, submit all results (negative or positive) from any phase to the USFWS FO(s) you have been in coordination with. We strongly encourage this coordination as it improves the USFWS' understanding of (1) the level of survey effort underway and (2) the distribution of the species. A single report can be submitted at the end of all phases conducted for a given project. Results of acoustic survey data collected as part of P/A surveys must also be submitted annually in Section 10 reporting spreadsheets to the USFWS.

USFWS FO-level coordination is also important during the survey planning process. USFWS Section 10 permits require FO approval for each individual survey study plan in order to be in compliance. Field Offices have the authority to deny a proposed survey if it is determined that the study plan is insufficient for Section 7 consultation requirements of the ESA. For example, radio-tracking of captured IBAT and/or NLEB may be required by individual FOs and should be discussed as part of the study plan and pre-survey coordination. The guidelines that are described in this document are designed to be implemented during acceptable survey windows (see Table 1) and in typical habitats that are conducive to the standard survey techniques described herein. However, the USFWS recognizes that occasionally there may be some site-specific conditions in summer habitats or at potential hibernacula sites that do not lend themselves to being surveyed using the standard survey options (e.g., mist nets, acoustic detectors, or harp traps) even though a site may otherwise meet the definition of suitable IBAT and/or NLEB habitat. Therefore, we strongly encourage coordination with the FO(s) prior to using methods that may not be appropriate for site-specific habitat conditions. The bat activity timeframes (see Appendix L) are intended to provide consistency across the species' ranges and aid conversations between project proponents and USFWS FOs regarding Section 7 consultations (e.g., avoidance and minimization). Similarly to other components of the guidelines, these timeframes are subject to change based on use of the best science available.

[7] For example, project sponsors for large acreage and/or landscape-scale projects that do not result in permanent habitat loss and would not pose an ongoing threat of lethal take, especially those proposed by land management agencies, may work with local USFWS FOs to apply different scales of surveys (broad vs. project-level) or different types of surveys, such as long-term monitoring results (e.g., forest-wide acoustic data) and/or targeted survey efforts (e.g., sub- sampling of large project areas), to address P/A concerns.

[8] The timeframe may be reduced if significant habitat changes have occurred in the area or increased based on local information.

Because surveys that result in the capture of IBAT and/or NLEB result in take, such surveys should only be conducted by a qualified biologist[9]. Generally, a recovery permit for the IBAT and NLEB authorizes the capture of bats for identification, and handling of bats for measurements, photography, banding, and radio transmitter attachment; some (but not all) may also authorize entry into potential hibernacula to conduct internal surveys and other study-specific collection. Following this survey guidance will meet standard USFWS Section 10 recovery permit requirements; however, surveyors also need to ensure they meet all applicable state permitting and reporting requirements. Failure to follow the survey guidance, as written, and/or failure to follow a study plan which has received concurrence from the local USFWS FO(s), may result in a USFWS FO requesting additional survey effort.

The following provides a step-by-step outline of how IBAT and/or NLEB summer surveys and/or potential hibernacula surveys should be conducted. Some of these steps can occur concurrently.

NOTE: If surveys are specifically targeting both the IBAT and NLEB, **make sure to use the higher minimum LOE for chosen survey methods (e.g., NLEB range-wide acoustic or mist-netting LOE, also see 2022 and 2023 Addendum)** to ensure it meets the needs for both species.

PHASE 1 – INITIAL PROJECT SCREENING

Step 1. Determine if your project is within the range of IBAT and/or NLEB through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Information for Planning and Consultation website (https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/). Once completed, coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Field Office(s)[10] regarding existing IBAT and/or NLEB summer and/or winter occurrence information. [*Projects located within known IBAT and/or NLEB summer habitat and/or known hibernacula/spring-staging/fall swarming zones will not proceed to Phase 2 of this process unless the project meets the definition of an "outer-tier project" outlined in Appendix G. "Outer-tier" guidance only applies to summer captures/detections (not hibernacula)*].

a) If a project (located within or outside of a known maternity colony home range or spring-staging/fall-swarming zone of a known hibernaculum) is already covered under an existing Endangered Species Act (ESA) incidental take authorization (e.g., HCP, BO), then no further summer and/or potential hibernacula surveys are needed, follow the procedures previously authorized by the USFWS FO(s).

b) If there are known IBAT or NLEB occurrences (e.g., known roost trees, capture locations, foraging locations or hibernacula) within the project action area[11];

OR

if there are no known IBAT or NLEB summer or spring/fall/winter occurrences within the proposed project area itself, but the project area is located within a known maternity colony

[9] A qualified biologist is an individual who holds a USFWS Recovery Permit (Federal Fish and Wildlife Permit) for IBAT and/or NLEB in the state/region in which they are surveying and/or has been authorized by the appropriate state agency to net and handle IBAT and/or NLEB. Several USFWS offices maintain lists of qualified bat surveyors, and if working in one of those states with authorizations in lieu of a Recovery Permits, the individual will either need to be on that list or submit qualifications to receive USFWS approval prior to conducting any field work.
[10] Coordinate with the appropriate state natural resource agencies and any involved Federal Action agencies whenever "USFWS" coordination is listed. USFWS FO(s) may direct project sponsors to state agencies for existing occurrence information. Coordinate with your local USFWS FO(s) to understand the process for their area of jurisdiction.
[11] The "action area" is defined as all areas to be affected directly or indirectly by the Federal action and not merely the immediate area involved in the action. [50 CFR Section 402.02]

home range and/or the spring-staging and fall-swarming zone of a known hibernaculum[12];

OR

if the project is located outside a known maternity colony home range and/or spring- staging and fall-swarming zone of a hibernaculum but is within the range of the IBAT and/or NLEB (note this can change over time), then proceed to Step 2.

Step 2. Conduct Habitat Assessment (Desktop or Field-based; see Appendix A, H, and K).

a) If suitable summer habitat, a potential hibernaculum(a), and/or a potential bridge/culvert roost is present within the action area, then proceed to Step 3.

b) If suitable summer and winter habitat (i.e., potential hibernaculum) and potential bridge/culvert roosts are absent within the action area, then no further P/A surveys are recommended; however, additional coordination with the USFWS FO(s) may be recommended if IBAT and/or NLEB may be present in an action area during other seasons (e.g., spring and fall migration) and may be affected by the proposed project.

Step 3. Assess potential for adverse effects to IBAT and/or NLEBs

a) If the project is not anticipated to result in adverse effects to IBAT and/or NLEB (as proposed), then no further summer, bridge/culvert roost, and/or potential hibernacula surveys are recommended, coordinate with the USFWS FO(s).

b) If the project may result in adverse effects to IBAT and/or NLEB, but impacts can be adequately assessed and conservation measures can be designed to minimize those effects without additional P/A information (this includes **all** proposed projects within known summer maternity colony home ranges and /or at known hibernacula and their surrounding spring-staging and fall-swarming zones, but may include other areas as well), then no further surveys are recommended. Coordinate with the USFWS FO(s) regarding an assessment of the project's potential effects, development of conservation measures, determination of the need for any ESA incidental take authorization, and discussion of value of additional surveys.

c) If the project does not meet the conditions of 3a or 3b, then proceed to **Phase 2, 5, and/or 6**.

PHASE 2 – SUMMER/ACTIVE SEASON P/A SURVEYS (NETTING AND/OR ACOUSTIC)[13]

Presence/probable absence (P/A) of IBAT and/or NLEB may be determined by conducting either Step 4 (mist-netting; see Appendix B or Appendix J) or Step 5 (acoustics; see Appendix C or Appendix J) as outlined below. If the project area contains habitat that is appropriate to conduct either survey method, it is the project proponent's choice as to which option to use, for each survey area unit (i.e., ≤123-acre area or 1-km section of linear project). A combined mist-netting and acoustic approach is also acceptable (see "pilot" Appendix I). Under no scenario can a project proponent use either mist-netting or acoustic Phase 2 surveys to challenge the other methods results. The USFWS accepts the results of either option and has no preference for methods. The USFWS FO(s) can discuss pros and cons of different approaches depending on project sponsor needs and project- specific habitat conditions. For example, a project area may not have suitable conditions for a mist- net survey and an acoustic survey may be the only

[12] See USFWS IBAT Section 7 and Section 10 Guidance for Wind Energy Projects (Questions 4 & 5) on the USFWS website provided in the introduction.
[13] NOTE: acoustic and/or mist-net surveys should be conducted in the best suitable habitat possible for each survey type to increase the likelihood of detecting/capturing IBAT and/or NLEB. In some cases, the most suitable habitat for effectively conducting surveys may occur outside a project site boundary and may be sampled if landowner permission is granted.

appropriate method for establishing P/A. It is up to the surveyor's professional judgment to determine whether the habitat on-site has the appropriate structure for the survey method chosen prior to the survey and to coordinate with the FO(s) if issues arise with the method chosen and need to be reconsidered.

Acoustics at the Phase 2 level of effort (LOE) (or otherwise agreed to with the USFWS FO) may be used as a coarse screening tool for conducting subsequent mist-netting at the Phase 2 LOE. For example, if NO high frequency (HF) calls (≥35 kHz) are detected, then no netting is required within that 123-acre (non-linear) or 1-km (linear) survey area due to IBAT and/or NLEB probable absence. If ANY HF calls are detected, then mist-net at the Phase 2 LOE. Any project study plan that includes use of both acoustics and netting needs to be written clearly to avoid potential misunderstandings between the project proponent and the USFWS FO.

Also, Phase 2 acoustic results should be used to inform whether, when, and where to conduct any optional Phase 3 mist-netting. In this case, acoustics is the P/A method and if presence is detected (HF screen, automated/MLE and/or manual vetting), then IBAT and/or NLEB presence is established. Negative results from follow-up mist-netting (at any LOE) does not refute a previously established positive acoustic result. The goal of Phase 3 netting is simply to verify where IBAT and/or NLEB(s) are active and to capture and track individuals to document roost trees and population size to further inform consultation or coordination under the ESA.

The summer survey season for IBAT and the hibernating[14] NLEB range is from 15 May through 15 August, unless the survey is being conducted within the year-round active portion of the NLEB range where the survey season is from 1 March through 15 October (see Appendix J). All P/A surveys should be completed by the end of the designated survey season unless otherwise indicated by USFWS FO[15]. The minimum prescribed survey level of effort for any given survey area unit (i.e., ≤123-acre area or 1-km section of linear project) **cannot** be completed in a single calendar night regardless of which survey method (netting or acoustic) is used (i.e., minimum survey effort must be spread over at least 2 calendar nights with suitable weather conditions). If netting is chosen as the preferred P/A method and an IBAT and/or NLEB is captured, then surveyors may immediately begin Phase 4/radio- tracking. Project proponents must decide whether they will proceed to Phase 4 in coordination with the USFWS FO before any mist-netting occurs. Submit Phase 2 study plans to USFWS FO prior to conducting surveys for their review and site-specific authorization.

Step 4. Conduct Mist-Netting Surveys following IBAT and/or NLEB Protocols[16] (See Figure 1, Table 2, and Appendix B, I, or J)

OR

Step 5. Conduct Acoustic Surveys[17] (see Figure 1, Table 2, and Appendix C, I, or J)

[14] The hibernating NLEB range includes the portion of the range where the species hibernates in the winter, stages and swarms outside of hibernacula in the spring and fall, and migrates to summer home ranges.
[15] With prior USFWS FO approval, a survey may be completed after the end of the designated survey season if it was initiated in time to be completed by August 15 or October 15 (year-round active portion of the NLEB range) and extenuating weather circumstances resulted in delaying completion. Delays as a result of not meeting the acceptable weather requirements are the ONLY valid justification for surveying after August 15. If tracking is proposed, surveys should be scheduled so that tracking is concluded prior to August 15 or October 15.
[16] We have no recommendations for reducing the mist-netting minimum level of effort to demonstrate probable absence for projects <123 acres in size. Level of effort is based on detection probabilities and occupancy estimates that were derived from past survey efforts that used the same acreage threshold. Level of effort for mist-netting is designed to reach 90% confidence in negative survey results (see Niver et al. 2014; Armstrong et al. 2023).
[17] Acoustic surveys are available as a P/A option throughout the ranges of both species. We have no recommendations for reducing the minimum level of effort required to demonstrate probable absence for projects <123 acres in size. Level

PHASE 3. CONDUCT MIST-NETTING SURVEYS TO CAPTURE INDIANA and/or NORTHERN LONG-EARED BATS.

If mist-netting was not conducted as the P/A method, then mist-netting may be conducted in Phase 3 to capture and characterize (e.g., sex, age, reproductive condition) the IBAT and/or NLEB that are present in an area and to facilitate Phase 4 efforts. We encourage working with the FOs to develop Phase 3 netting plans based on best available information (e.g., positive acoustic locations). There are no minimum requirements for this phase as this is not a P/A phase.

a) If no IBAT and/or NLEB are captured, then coordinate with the USFWS FO.

b) If IBAT and/or NLEB are captured, then proceed to **Phase 4**.

PHASE 4. CONDUCT RADIO-TRACKING AND EMERGENCE SURVEYS (See Appendices D and E)

PHASE 5. CONDUCT POTENTIAL HIBERNACULA SURVEYS (See Appendix H)

PHASE 6. CONDUCT BRIDGE AND CULVERT ROOST SURVEYS (See Appendix K)

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TABLE 1. Standard survey seasons for conducting P/A surveys for IBAT and/or NLEB.

IBAT & NLEB SURVEY SEASONS	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
IBat Internal Winter Hibernacula Surveys[1,2]												
Acceptable survey window (1 Jan. - 28 Feb.)												
Traditional survey window of known sites (15 Jan. - 15 Feb.)												
IBat & NLEB Spring & Fall Surveys at Entrances of Potential Hibernacula [3,4]												
Acceptable survey window (1 - 21 Apr. & 15 Sep. - 31 Oct.)												
IBat & NLEB Summer Surveys of Suitable Summer Habitat [5]												
Acceptable survey window (15 May - 15 Aug.)												
Optimal survey window (1 Jun. - 31 Jul.) [6]												
NLEB Surveys of Suitable Habitat in Year-round Active Range												
Acceptable survey window - (1 Mar. - 15 Oct.)												
Optimal survey window (1 May - 30 Sep.) [6]												
IBat & NLEB Bridge and Culvert Surveys [7]												
Acceptable survey window (Year-round)												

[1] visual and photographic surveys conducted within known and/or potential hibernacula (if deemed safe to enter).

[2] internal winter hibernacula surveys are seldom appropriate for NLEB as they typically fail to reliably detect and accurately enumerate the species when present.

[3] conducted using harp traps or mist nets at cave/mine entrances.

[4] if State/USFWS FO approve, spring and fall survey windows can "drift" a bit earliler or later to better accommodate prevailing weather patterns and/or climate conditions in the location of the proposed survey. For example, the fall survey window in nothern portions of the IBAT or NLEB range may begin on or after 1 Sep. and end prior to 31 Oct. pending local State and FO approval. Likewise, if agencies approve, spring surveys of potential hibernacula may be pushed back/extended a few days or longer due to an extended period of unseasonably cold spring weather.

[5] conducted using mist nets or acoustic detectors deployed within suitable flight corridors and foraging areas.

[6] the middle of the maternity season is considered by many to the best or "optimal" time to capture resident bats.

[7] coordinate with your local USFWS FO to determine best time to conduct bridge or culvert surveys for your project.

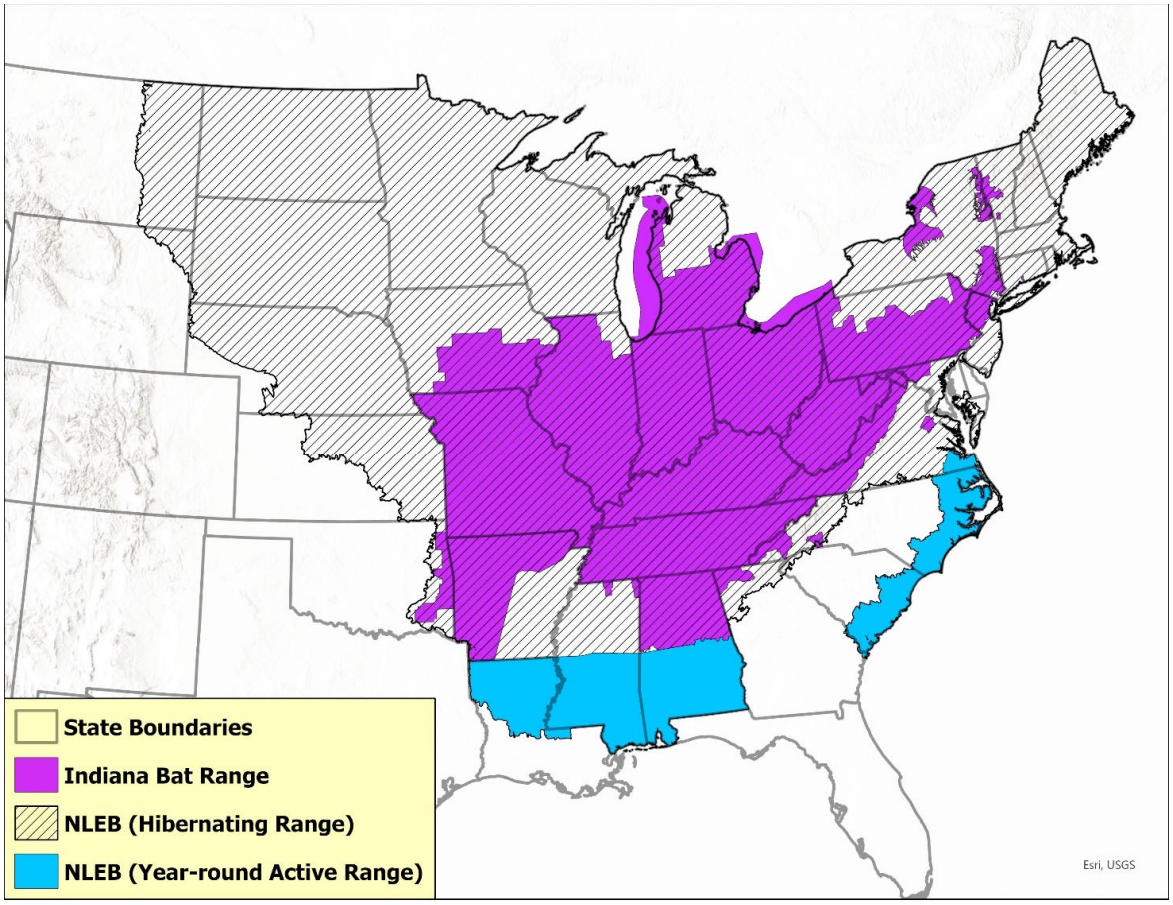

FIGURE 1. IBAT and NLEB ranges as defined for use in presence/ probable absence surveys (also see Table 2).

TABLE 2. Summary of current survey LOEs for IBAT and NLEB.

		MIST-NETTING (net nights)		ACOUSTICS (detector nights)	
Species	Region	Linear (per km)	Non-Linear (per 123 ac.)	Linear (per km)	Non-Linear (per 123 ac.)
IBAT	Range-wide	2	6	4	10
NLEB	Hibernating Range (non-coastal areas)	4	10	4	14
	Year-round Active Range (coastal areas)	2	6		

APPENDIX A: PHASE 1 HABITAT ASSESSMENTS

Summer habitat and potential hibernacula assessments are Step 2 of Phase 1- Initial Project Screening. The information below is provided to assist applicants, consultants, and/or project proponents (hereinafter termed the "applicant") in establishing whether surveys for IBAT and/or NLEB should be conducted. As a reminder, the first steps for determining presence of IBAT and/or NLEB at a given site is to 1) use the USFWS's Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) website (https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/), and 2) determine whether there is any existing occurrence data available for the vicinity of the project from the local USFWS FO. This step can be conducted remotely via a desktop analysis (e.g., use of aerial photography to assess the potential presence of suitable summer habitat); however, on-site field assessment is always preferred. The applicant is responsible for developing and providing sufficient information as to whether suitable summer habitat and/or potential hibernacula exist within a proposed project area. If suitable habitat is present, the applicant should calculate the amount and submit this to the USFWS FO(s) and determine the need for any P/A surveys (Phase 2).

NOTE: If IBAT and/or NLEB are present or assumed to be present during any phase, more detailed habitat information may be necessary to adequately assess the potential for impacts (see attached example Bat Habitat Assessment Datasheet). If no suitable habitat is present or it is determined through discussions with USFWS FO(s) that no adverse effects are anticipated from the proposed project, no surveys are recommended to assess risk. Habitat assessments for IBAT and/or NLEB can be completed any time of year and applicants are encouraged to submit results and proposed Phase 2 study plans well in advance of survey seasons.

PERSONNEL

Habitat assessments should be completed by individuals with a natural resource degree or equivalent work experience demonstrating skills and knowledge in area-specific ecoregions, landscapes, habitats, and ecosystems.

DEFINITION FOR SUITABLE INDIANA BAT SUMMER HABITAT

Suitable summer habitat for IBAT consists of a wide variety of forested/wooded habitats where they roost, forage, and travel and may also include some adjacent and interspersed non-forested habitats[18] such as emergent wetlands and adjacent edges of agricultural fields, old fields and pastures. This includes forests and woodlots containing potential roosts (i.e., live trees and/or snags ≥5 inches dbh[19] (12.7 centimeter) that have exfoliating bark, cracks, crevices, and/or hollows), as well as linear features such as fencerows, riparian forests, and other wooded corridors. These wooded areas may be dense or loose aggregates of trees with variable amounts of canopy closure. Individual trees may be considered suitable

[18] Non-forested habitats typically should be excluded from acreages used to establish a minimum level of survey effort for Phase 2 surveys.

[19] While trees <5 inches (<12.7 cm) dbh that have exfoliating bark, cracks, crevices, and/or hollows may have some potential to be male IBAT summer roosting habitat, the USFWS does not consider early successional, even-aged stands of trees <5 inches dbh to be suitable roosting habitat for the purposes of this guidance. Suitable roosting habitat is defined as forest patches with trees of 5-inch (12.7 cm) dbh or larger. However, early successional habitat with small diameter trees may be used as foraging habitat by IBATs. Therefore, a project that would remove or otherwise adversely affect ≥20 acres of early successional habitat containing trees between 3 and 5 inches (7.6-12.7 cm) dbh would require coordination/consultation with the USFWS FO to ensure that associated impacts would not rise to the level of take. The USFWS may request P/A surveys if >20 acres of early successional habitat were proposed for removal.

habitat when they exhibit the characteristics of a potential roost tree and are located within 1,000 feet (305 meters) of other forested/wooded habitat.

Indiana bats have also been observed roosting in human-made structures, such as bridges and bat houses (artificial roost structures); therefore, these structures should also be considered potential summer habitat[20]. We recommend that project proponents or their representatives coordinate with the appropriate USFWS Field Office (FO) to define suitable habitat more clearly for their region as some differences in state/regional suitability criteria may be warranted (e.g., high-elevation areas may be excluded as suitable habitat in some states).

Examples of unsuitable habitat:

- Individual trees that are greater than 1,000 feet from forested/wooded areas;
- Trees found in highly developed urban areas (e.g., street trees, downtown areas); and
- A pure stand of less than 3-inch dbh[21] trees that are not mixed with larger trees.

DEFINITION FOR SUITABLE NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT SUMMER HABITAT

Suitable summer habitat for the NLEB consists of a wide variety of forested/wooded habitats where they roost, forage, and travel. Although they may also traverse habitat adjacent and interspersed with forest habitat, such as emergent wetlands and field edges, they are predominately found in forest/wooded habitat. This includes forests and woodlots containing potential roosts (i.e., live trees and/or snags ≥3 inches dbh that have exfoliating bark, cracks, crevices, and/or cavities), as well as linear features such as fencerows, riparian forests, and other wooded corridors. These wooded areas may be dense or loose aggregates of trees with variable amounts of canopy closure. NLEBs are nocturnal foragers and use hawking (catching insects in flight) and gleaning (picking insects from surfaces) behaviors in conjunction with passive acoustic cues (Nagorsen and Brigham 1993, p. 88; Ratcliffe and Dawson 2003, p. 851). NLEB often prefer intact mixed-type forests with small gaps (i.e., forest trails, small roads, or forest-covered creeks) in forest with sparse or medium vegetation for foraging and commuting rather than fragmented habitat or areas that have been clear cut (USFWS 2015, p.17992). Individual trees may be considered suitable habitat when they exhibit characteristics of suitable roost trees and are within 1,000 feet of other forested/wooded habitat[22]. The NLEB has also been observed roosting (although to a lesser degree than forested habitat) in human-made structures, such as buildings, barns, bridges, and bat houses; therefore, these structures should also be considered potential summer habitat[23].

NLEBs typically occupy their summer habitat from mid-May through mid-August each year[24] and the

[20] If human-made structures are present within your project area and are proposed to be removed or modified, see Appendix E (Emergence Surveys) and then coordinate with the local USFWS FO(s) regarding how to determine P/A.
[21] Suitable roosting habitat is defined as forest patches with trees of 5-inch (12.7 cm) dbh or larger. However, early successional habitat with small diameter trees may be used as foraging habitat by IBAT. Therefore, a project that would remove or otherwise adversely affect ≥20 acres of early successional habitat containing trees between 3 and 5 inches (7.6- 12.7 cm) dbh would require coordination/consultation with the USFWS FO to ensure that associated impacts would not rise to the level of take. The USFWS may request P/A surveys if >20 acres of early successional habitat were proposed for removal.
[22] This number is based on observations of bat behavior indicating that such an isolated tree (i.e., ≥1000 feet) would be extremely unlikely to be used as a roost. This distance has also been evaluated and vetted for use for the NLEB. See the "Indiana bat Section 7 and Section 10 Guidance for wind Energy Projects," question 33, found on the USFWS website provided in the intro.
[23] Trees found in highly-developed urban areas (e.g., street trees, downtown areas) are extremely unlikely to be suitable habitat.
[24] Exact dates vary by location., with NLEBs typically being found earlier in spring at lower latitudes. Also, NLEBs in

species may arrive or leave some time before or after this period. In most areas, roosting habitat is considered suitable summer habitat because NLEBs are only present in forested habitat during the summer active months. In some areas of the southern U.S., NLEBs are present in potential roosting habitat year-round. In these areas (see Figure 1 and Figure 3 in Appendix J), habits and habitat use differ significantly from the rest of the species' range.

Examples of unsuitable habitat:

- Individual trees that are greater than 1,000 feet from forested/wooded areas;
- Trees found in highly developed urban areas (e.g., street trees, downtown areas); and
- A pure stand of less than 3-inch dbh trees that are not mixed with larger trees.

DEFINITION FOR SUITABLE TRICOLORED BAT SUMMER HABITAT

Suitable TCB summer habitat consists of a wide variety of forested/wooded habitats where they roost, forage, and travel and include some adjacent and interspersed non-forested habitats such as emergent wetlands, shrublands, grasslands, and forested edges of agricultural fields, old fields, and pastures. Roosting habitat includes forests, woodlots, and linear features (e.g., fencerows and riparian corridors) containing trees with potential roost substrate (e.g., live and dead leaf clusters of live and recently dead deciduous trees, Spanish moss [*Tillandsia usneoides*], and beard lichen [*Usnea trichodea*]).[25] TCBs will roost in a variety of tree species, especially oaks (*Quercus spp.*), and often select roosts in tall, large-diameter trees, but will roost in smaller diameter trees when potential roost substrate is present (e.g., 4-inch [10-centimeter]; Leput 2004). TCBs commonly roost in the mid to upper canopy of trees although males will occasionally roost in dead leaves at lower heights (e.g., < 16 feet [5 meters] from the ground; Perry and Thill 2007) and females will occasionally roost in Spanish moss of understory trees (Menzel et al. 1999). TCBs seem to prefer foraging along forested edges of larger forest openings, along edges of riparian areas, and over water and avoid foraging in dense, unbroken forests, and narrow road cuts through forests (Davis and Mumford 1962; Kurta 1995; Lacki and Hutchinson 1999; Ford et al. 2005; Menzel et al. 2005; White et al. 2006; Thames 2020; Hantulla and Valdez 2021).

TCBs also roost in human-made structures, such as bridges and culverts, and occasionally in barns or the underside of open-sided shelters (e.g., porches, pavilions); therefore, these structures should also be considered potential summer habitat. TCBs occupy similar forest habitats in the spring, summer, and fall (i.e., non-hibernating seasons) but in the southern portion of the range, where TCBs exhibit shorter torpor bouts and remain active and feed year-round, they may roost in culverts, bridges, cavities in live trees, live and dead leaf clusters, and/or Spanish moss during the winter (Sandel et al. 2001; Newman et al. 2021). TCBs may roost and forage in forested areas near anthropogenic structures and buildings (e.g., suburban neighborhoods, parks, etc.) (Helms 2010; Shute et al. 2021). However, highly developed urbanized areas generally devoid of native vegetation (including isolated trees surrounded by expansive anthropogenic development) are considered unsuitable habitat (e.g., parking lots, industrial buildings, shopping centers).

SUBMISSION OF PHASE 1 HABITAT ASSESSMENT & PHASE 2, PHASE 5, AND/OR PHASE 6 STUDY PLAN (IF NEEDED)

the year-round active portion of the range are an exception as they utilize the same habitat in summer as they do in winter.

[25] Occasional summer roosts also include clusters of dead pine needles of large live pines (Pinus echinata), live branches of Norway spruce (Picea abies), eastern red cedar (Juniperus virginiana), abandoned gray squirrel (Sciurus carolinensis) nests, and under exfoliating birch (Betula spp.) bark (Veilleux et al. 2003; Perry and Thill 2007; WDNR 2016; WDNR 2017a; WDNR 2017b; WDNR 2018; Thames 2020; Hammesfahr et al. 2022).

If a proposed project may affect (positively or negatively) IBAT and/or NLEB and the conditions outlined in Step 3 a or b are not met, a habitat assessment report should be submitted to the appropriate USFWS FO(s) (and/or to the lead Federal Action Agency as appropriate) along with a draft study plan for the Phase 2 (acoustic or netting), Phase 5 (potential hibernaculum), and/or Phase 6 (bridge/culvert potential roost) survey(s) (if suitable habitat(s) is present). Although optional, we encourage the use of the new fillable USFWS Study Plan Form for Bat Surveys and Monitoring as it will ensure all the information necessary is provided to the USFWS FO and expedite review and approval of your study plan. If you choose not to submit the study plan form, ensure all information requested on the form applicable to your survey are included with your study plan request submittal to your local USFWS FO(s). Complete Phase 1 reports will include the following:

1. Full names and relevant titles/qualifications of individuals (e.g., John E. Smith, Biologist II, State University, B.S. Wildlife Science 2007) completing the habitat assessment and when the assessment was conducted
2. A map and latitude/longitude or UTM clearly identifying the project location (or approximate center point) and boundaries
3. A detailed project description (if available)
4. Documentation of any known/occupied spring staging, summer, fall swarming, winter habitat, and/or bridge/culvert roosts for IBAT and/or NLEB within or near the project area
5. A description of methods used during the habitat assessment
6. A summary of the assessment findings and a completed Bat Summer Habitat Assessment Datasheet (see example below; use of this datasheet is optional)
7. Other information that may have a bearing on use of the project area (e.g., presence of fall or winter habitat [caves, crevices, fissures, or sinkholes, or abandoned mines of any kind], bridges/culverts and other non-tree potential summer roosts.)
8. A Phase 1 Habitat Assessment on all potential hibernacula that could be affected by the proposed project (see Appendix H for additional instructions for completing this assessment and sample datasheet), if necessary
9. A Step 1 Initial Assessment of Suitability and Safety on all bridges and culverts that could be affected by the proposed project (see Appendix K for additional instructions for completing this assessment and sample datasheet), if necessary
10. Any other information requested by the local USFWS FO(s) related to the project

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APPENDIX A: PHASE 1 HABITAT ASSESSMENTS

BAT HABITAT ASSESSMENT DATASHEET

Project Name:_____ Date:_____

Township/Range/Section:_____

Lat Long/UTM/ Zone:_____ Surveyor:_____

Brief Project Description

Project Area				
	Total Acres	Forest Acres		Open Acres
Project				
	Completely cleared	Partially cleared (will leave trees)	Preserve acres- no clearing	
Proposed Tree Removal (ac)				

Vegetation Cover Types	
Pre-Project	**Post-Project**

Landscape within 5 mile radius
Flight corridors to other forested areas?
Describe Adjacent Properties (e.g. forested, grassland, commercial or residencial development, water sources)

Proximity to Public Land
What is the distance (mi.) from the project area to forested public lands (e.g., national or state forests, national or state parks, conservation areas, wildlife management areas)?

APPENDIX A: PHASE 1 HABITAT ASSESSMENTS

Use additional sheets to assess discrete habitat types at multiple sites in a project area
Include a map depicting locations of sample sites if assessing discrete habitats at multiple sites in a project area
A single sheet can be used for multiple sample sites if habitat is the same

Sample Site Description
Sample Site No.(s): _____

Water Resources at Sample Site				
Stream Type (# and length)	Ephemeral	Intermittent	Perennial	Describe existing condition of water sources:
Pools/Ponds (# and size)		Open and accessible to bats?		
Wetlands (approx. ac.)	Permanent	Seasonal		

Forest Resources at Sample Site				
Closure/Density	Canopy (> 50')	Midstory (20-50')	Understory (<20')	1=1-10%, 2=11-20%, 3=21-40%, 4=41-60%, 5=61-80%, 6=81-100%
Dominant Species of Mature Trees				
% Trees w/ Exfoliating Bark				
Size Composition of Live Trees (%)	Small (3-8 in)	Med (9-15 in)	Large (>15 in)	
No. of Suitable Snags				

Standing dead trees with exfoliating bark, cracks, crevices, or hollows. Snags without these characteristics are not considered suitable.

IS THE HABITAT SUITABLE FOR INDIANA BATS? _____

IS THE HABITAT SUITABLE FOR NORTHERN LONG-EARED BATS? _____

Additional Comments:

Attach aerial photo of project site with all forested areas labeled and a general description of the habitat

Photographic Documentation: habitat shots at edge and interior from multiple locations; understory/midstory/canopy; examples of potential suitable snags and live trees; water sources

APPENDIX B: PHASE 2 OR PHASE 3 MIST–NETTING

Mist-netting can be used as a P/A method (Phase 2 surveys) or it can be conducted for the purpose of attempting to capture IBAT and/or NLEB after detection during acoustic P/A surveys (Phase 3 surveys). The same recommendations (e.g., season, personnel, equipment, net placement, checking nets) apply for either use of mist-netting surveys. NOTE: Appendix B is intended for use within the IBAT range and/or NLEB hibernating range (see Figure 1); also refer to Appendix J for additional guidance on conducting mist-netting in the year-round active range of the NLEB.

SUMMER MIST-NETTING SEASON: May 15 – August 15[26]

Capture of reproductive adult females (i.e., pregnant, lactating, or post-lactating) and/or young of the year during May 15 – August 15 confirms the presence of a maternity colony in the area. Since adult males and non-reproductive females have commonly been found summering with maternity colonies, radio-tracking results will be relied upon to help determine the presence or probable absence of a maternity colony or large concentrations of bats in the area when only males and/or non-reproductive females are captured.

PERSONNEL

A qualified biologist(s)[27] must (1) select/approve mist-net sets in areas that are most suitable for capturing IBAT and/or NLEB, (2) be physically present at each mist-net site[28] throughout the survey period, and (3) confirm all bat species identifications. This biologist may oversee other biological technicians and manage mist-net sets in close proximity to one another if the net-check timing (i.e., every 10 minutes) can be maintained while **walking** between net-sets[29]. A minimum of two (2) biologists (e.g., one qualified and one technician) must be on-site for every four (4) net-sets being operated. Exceptions to on-site minimum staffing levels may be allowed under extenuating circumstances, provided written justification is included in the proposed survey study plan and subsequently approved by the local USFWS FO(s).

NOTE: The mist-netting survey protocol may also be used for determining P/A of TCBs using the NLEB LOE for the 2024 field season when the survey is also being conducted for IBAT and/or NLEB; however, an acoustic or combined acoustic/mist-net survey must be completed in portions of the range where TCBs are the only species identified by IPaC and the project proponent chooses to conduct a P/A survey.

[26] With prior USFWS FO approval, a survey may be completed after August 15 if it was initiated in time to be completed by August 15 and extenuating weather circumstances resulted in delaying completion. Delays as a result of not meeting the acceptable weather requirements are the ONLY valid justification for surveying after August 15. If tracking is proposed, surveys should be scheduled so that tracking is concluded prior to August 15.
[27] A qualified biologist is an individual who holds a USFWS Recovery Permit (Federal Fish and Wildlife Permit) for IBAT and NLEB in the state/region in which they are surveying and/or has been authorized by the appropriate state agency to net and handle IBAT and/or NLEB. Several USFWS offices maintain lists of qualified bat surveyors, and if working in one of those states with authorizations in lieu of a Recovery Permits, the individual will either need to be on that list or submit qualifications to receive USFWS approval prior to conducting any field work.
[28] A Net Site is defined as one or more net sets that can be efficiently walked to and checked by a survey team (typically 2 people) within a 10-minute window from a central bat-processing location. For example, a single net "site" is often composed of 4 individual net sets (separated by at least 30 m apart) that are checked every 10 minutes by a 2-person team (each person checks 2 nets for each net check).
[29] A Net-Set is defined as one mist-net deployment consisting of two poles and typically from 1-3 affixed mist-nets stacked onto one another. A typical net set is at least 5 m to 9 m high consisting of two or more nets stacked on top of one another (without gaps) and from 6 m to 18 m wide.

COORDINATION WITH USFWS FIELD OFFICES (FOs)

If not already required by federal permit, we recommend that applicants submit a draft study plan for all survey phases to the USFWS FO(s) for review and approval (See Appendix A for guidance on submitting a draft study plan).

EQUIPMENT

Use the finest, lowest visibility mesh mist-nets commercially available, as practicable. Currently, the finest net on the market is 75 denier, 2 ply, denoted 75/2 (Arndt and Schaetz 2009); however, the 50 denier nets are still acceptable for use currently. The finest mesh size available is approximately 1½ inches (38 millimeters). No specific hardware is required. There are many suitable systems of ropes and/or poles to hold nets. The systems of Gardner et al. (1989) and Chenger's BCM triple high has been widely used. See NET PLACEMENT discussion below for minimum net heights, habitats, and other netting requirements that affect the choice of hardware.

To minimize potential for disease transmission, any equipment that comes in contact with bats should be kept clean and disinfected, following approved protocols; this is particularly a concern relative to white-nose syndrome (WNS). Disinfection of equipment to avoid disease transmission (e.g., WNS) is required; protocols are posted at http://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/. Federal and state permits may also have specific equipment restrictions and disinfection requirements.

MINIMUM P/A MIST-NETTING LEVEL OF EFFORT (PHASE 2)

The level of netting survey effort required for a non-linear project will be dependent upon the overall acreage of suitable habitat that may be impacted by the action (directly or indirectly). To determine the survey effort, quantify the amount of suitable summer habitat within the project area.

NOTE: for projects where other impacts than tree removal are likely (e.g., collision), ensure that P/A surveys are designed to cover all suitable habitat within the entire project area (where exposure to any kind of impacts may be anticipated) and NOT just the locations where tree removal is planned. Additional guidance for linear projects is in Appendix F.

Conduct Mist-Netting Surveys following IBAT and/or Hibernating NLEB Range Level-of-Effort Recommendations (See Figure 1 and Table 2)

Range-wide IBAT Mist-netting LOE:

Linear projects: a minimum of 2 net nights per km (0.6 miles) of suitable summer habitat (see Appendix F).

Non-linear projects: a minimum of 6 net nights per 123 acres[30] (0.5 km^2) of suitable summer habitat.

After 2 consecutive nights of netting at the same location without capturing target species, you must change net locations or wait at least 2 calendar nights before resuming netting at the same location.

[30] We have no recommendations for reducing the minimum level of effort required to demonstrate probable absence for projects <123 acres in size. Detection probabilities and occupancy estimates were derived from past survey efforts that used the same acreage threshold (see Niver et al. 2014).

a) If no capture of IBAT(s), then no further summer surveys are recommended[31].

b) If capture of IBAT(s), then stop or proceed to **Phase 4** as previously decided in coordination with the FO(s).

Hibernating NLEB Range Mist-netting LOE:

Linear projects: a minimum of 4 net nights per km (0.6 miles) of suitable summer habitat (see Appendix F).

Non-linear projects: a minimum of 10 net nights per 123 acres (0.5 km^2) of suitable summer habitat.

After 2 consecutive nights of netting at the same location without capturing target species, you must change net locations or wait at least 2 calendar nights before resuming netting at the same location.

a) If no capture of NLEB(s), then no further summer surveys are recommended.

b) If capture of NLEB(s), then stop or proceed to **Phase 4** as previously decided in coordination with the FO.

MIST-NETTING SURVEYS TO CAPTURE INDIANA AND/OR NORTHERN LONG- EARED BATS AFTER ACOUSTICS WERE USED AS P/A METHOD (PHASE 3)

If netting was not conducted as the P/A method, then netting may be conducted to capture and characterize (e.g., sex, age, reproductive condition) the IBAT and/or NLEB (documented through the Phase 2 acoustic P/A survey) present in an area and to facilitate radio-tracking (Phase 4) efforts. We encourage working with the FO(s) to develop Phase 3 netting plans based on best available information (e.g., positive acoustic locations). There are no minimum requirements for this phase as this is not a P/A phase.

a) If no IBAT and/or NLEB are captured, then coordinate with the USFWS FO.
b) If IBAT or NLEB are captured, then proceed to **Phase 4** as previously decided in coordination with the FO(s).

NET PLACEMENT

Indiana and Northern long-eared bats typically forage in habitats that do not completely overlap (see species-specific habitat definitions in Appendix A) therefore, net placement should reflect these differences when targeting both species. Net placement along potential travel corridors (e.g., streams, logging trails, roads) as well as other edge habitats (e.g., other water sources, field edges) have traditionally been the most common habitats sampled due to their ease of access. However, non-traditional net placement in interior forest habitats may also be productive, especially for NLEB and IBAT (Carroll et al. 2002). Because the best survey sites for capturing bats may fall outside of a project footprint, the surveyor and project proponent should coordinate with the appropriate USFWS FO(s) to establish a project-specific maximum net placement distance from the centerline or project boundary

[31] NOTE: For Phase 2 P/A Surveys, wherever the phrase "no further summer surveys are recommended" occurs within this document, the USFWS FO(s) is in affect assuming probable absence of IBAT and/or NLEB during the summer.

prior to initiating surveys.

When sampling traditional travel corridors with defined edges, place net-sets approximately perpendicular to the edge and, ideally within bends or curves in the corridor that reduces bat reaction time to avoid capture. Net-sets should fill the corridor from side to side, extending beyond the corridor boundaries and into the interior forest to prevent bats from flying along the edges of the corridor and avoiding the nets, and from water (or ground) level up to the overhanging canopy. Surveyed corridors must have overhanging branches, most often within 9 m of the ground, that force bats to fly downward and into the nets. Net-sets of varying widths and heights may be used as the situation dictates. A typical net-set is at least 5 m to 9 m high consisting of two or more nets stacked on top one another (without gaps) and from 6 m to 18 m wide. If netting over water, ensure there is enough space between the net and the water so that captured bats will not get wet. Justification for placing net-sets perpendicular to a forest edge, or any net-set, without overhanging vegetation (i.e., no funneling effect) should be specifically provided in the survey report or ideally discussed with the FO(s) prior to sampling.

Because a) NLEB is a clutter-adapted gleaning species (see definition of suitable summer habitat in Appendix A) or b) a project area may not have well-defined travel corridors, surveyors may sample more non-traditional habitat types (e.g., small forest openings, ponds, interior forest). The typical equipment and placement described in the section above may be inadequate when netting for IBAT and NLEB in these non-traditional locations, where a travel corridor is less obvious. This would require innovation on the part of the surveyor (see Humphrey et al. 1968). For example, net placement in interior forests should be a minimum of 50 m from edge habitats and should represent a variety of understory cover and canopy closure (Carroll et al. 2002). Ponds and large water-filled road ruts can be productive places to net when other water sources are limited. See Kiser and MacGregor (2005) for additional discussion about net placement.

Mist-net sets should be spaced a minimum of 30 m apart, surveyors should attempt to evenly distribute net-sets throughout suitable habitat and not over-sample individual habitat features (e.g., three or more mist-net sets on a single travel corridor or stream). Surveyors must provide written justification in their report if net-sets were not distributed throughout suitable habitat (i.e., why were they clumped?). Surveys conducted for northern long-eared bat should include both traditional and non-traditional (as described above) net placements within suitable habitat when present. Net-sets can be repeatedly sampled throughout the project, but no more than 2 nights at a single location is recommended. In addition, changing locations within a project area may improve capture success (see Robbins et al. 2008; Winhold and Kurta 2008). Photo-document placement of net-sets.

SURVEY PERIOD

The survey period for each net shall begin at sunset[32] and continue for at least 5 hours (longer survey periods may also improve success).

CHECKING NETS

Each net-set should be checked every 10 minutes (Gannon et al. 2007). If surveyors monitor nets continuously, take care to minimize noise, lights, and movement near the nets. Monitoring the net-sets continuously with a bat detector (ideally using earphones to avoid alerting bats) can be beneficial: (a) bats can be detected immediately when they are captured, (b) prompt removal from the net decreases stress on the bat and potential for the bat to escape (MacCarthy et al. 2006), and (c) monitoring with a bat detector also allows the biologist to assess the effectiveness of each net placement (i.e., if bats are active near the

[32] Surveys may need to start a little earlier or later than official sunset times (i.e., at “dusk”) in some settings such as a deep/dark forested valleys or ridge tops to avoid missing early flying bats or capturing late-flying birds, respectively. Sunset tables for the location of survey can be found at: https://sunrise-sunset.org.

net set but avoiding capture), which may allow for adjustments that will increase netting success on subsequent nights. There should be no other disturbance near the nets, other than to check nets and remove bats. Biologists should be prepared to cut the net if a bat is severely entangled and cannot be safely extracted within 3 or 4 minutes (CCAC 2003; Kunz et al. 2009). Capture and handling are stressful for bats. Emphasis should be on minimizing handling and holding bats to as short a time as possible to achieve field study objectives. Indiana and/or northern long-eared bats should not be held for more than 30 minutes after capture, unless the individual is targeted for radio-tracking. Bats targeted for radio-tracking should be released as quickly as possible, but no longer than 30 minutes[33] after capture, or as allowed in federal and state permits. See Kunz and Kurta (1988) for general recommendations for holding bats.

WEATHER, LIGHTING, AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Severe weather adversely affects capture of bats. Some IBAT and NLEBs may remain active despite inclement weather and may still be captured while others in the same area become inactive. Therefore, negative surveys combined with any of the following weather conditions throughout all or most of a sampling period are likely to require an additional night of mist-netting[34]: (a) temperatures that fall below 50°F (10°C)[35]; (b) precipitation, including rain and/or heavy fog, that exceeds 30 minutes or continues intermittently during the survey period; and (c) sustained wind speeds greater than 9 miles/hour (4 meters/seconds; 3 on Beaufort scale) for 30 or more minutes.

NOTE: Provided that nets are not dripping wet, surveyors can resume netting to meet the minimum 5-hour requirement after short periods of adverse weather. If nets are under good cover, light rain may not alter bat behavior. However, if no bats are being captured during marginal weather, coordinate with the USFWS FO(s).

It is typically best to place net sets under the canopy where they are out of moonlight, particularly when the moon is half-full or greater. Net sets illuminated by artificial light sources should also be avoided. The shining of lights, and noise should be kept to a minimum with no smoking around the survey sites. In addition, the use of radios, campfires, running vehicles, punk sticks, citronella candles and other disturbances will not be permitted within 300 feet of mist nets (or acoustic detectors) during surveys.

DOCUMENTATION OF INDIANA AND/OR NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT CAPTURES

If an IBAT and/or NLEB is captured during mist-netting, protocols for radio-tracking and emergence survey requirements, as provided in Appendix D and E, respectively, should be followed. In addition, the appropriate USFWS FO(s) must be notified of the capture within 48 hours (or in accordance with permit conditions), and the sex and reproductive condition of the bat and GPS coordinates of the capture site should be provided. Ensure GPS coordinates are recorded for each individual net set on datasheets.

Several species of bats from the genus *Myotis* share common features which can make identification difficult; IBATs and little brown bats (*Myotis lucifugus)* can be particularly difficult to distinguish. Photo documentation of all bats captured and identified as IBAT and/or NLEB and the first 10 little brown bats

[33] Current standard federal Section 10 bat permit conditions require prior written approval from the Field Supervisor in the USFWS FO(s) if capture times may exceed 30 minutes.
[34] With prior USFWS FO approval, a survey may be completed after August 15 if it was initiated in time to be completed by August 15 and extenuating weather circumstances resulted in delaying completion. Delays because of not meeting the acceptable weather requirements are the ONLY valid justification for surveying after August 15. If tracking is proposed, surveys should be scheduled so that tracking is concluded prior to August 15.
[35] Overnight survey temperatures may be lower in northern portions of the NLEB range, coordinate with the local USFWS FO in the northern portions of the range for any variation in temperature requirements.

per project are requested to verify the identifications made in the field.

Photo documentation should include diagnostic characteristics:

- a ¾-view of face showing ear, tragus, and muzzle
- view of calcar showing presence/absence of keel
- a transverse view of toes showing extent of toe hairs

Consider taking short video clips of the bat and its diagnostic features, as videos may also be helpful to later confirm bat identification. If a bat from the genus *Myotis* is captured during mist-netting that cannot be readily identified to the species level, then species verification may be attempted through fecal DNA analysis. Collect one or more fecal pellets (i.e., guano) from the bat in question by placing it temporarily in a holding bag (15 minutes is usually sufficient, no more than 30 minutes is recommended). The pellet (or pellets) collected should be placed in a small vial (e.g., 1.5 ml) with silica gel desiccant; pellets from each individual bat should be stored in separate vials and out of direct light. Fees charged by independent laboratories for sequencing fecal DNA samples is generally inexpensive (approx. $50 per guano sample).

BAT BANDING

Bat banding (i.e. application of any type of band to the forearm of a bat) should be limited to well-designed projects with clear objectives addressing a research question of significant importance to the species' conservation and coordinated with the appropriate USFWS FO and state agency. Bat banding should be limited to efforts that are committed to returning to the capture site or a location where marked bats have a high likelihood of being recovered (e.g., hibernacula), thus enabling meaningful data collection from marked individuals. If approved to band bats, surveyors are required to demonstrate that banding is approved on their USFWS 10(a)1(A) Recovery Permit and adhere to any State permit conditions.

Banding pliers are required for applying bands to bat forearms; securing bands by pinching a band down with fingertips is not permitted. Banding pliers should be maintained at the correct calibration to ensure proper function. Surveyors must carry needle nose pliers that can be used to safely remove a band that was either improperly placed or is causing distress to a bat.

Bats must be banded with bands that are appropriate in size for the species. TCB should receive 2.4 mm aluminum metal-lipped bands and IBAT and NLEB should receive 2.9 mm bands. Males should be banded on the right forearm and females on their left. Proposals that deviate from these standards must include written justification in the site-specific Study Plan submitted to the USFWS FO for approval. All band information needs to be included in the mist net survey report and as part of the annual Section 10 reporting spreadsheet.

Any recovered bats with bands on their forearms should be assessed for injury and their condition noted on the mist net data form, and as part of the USFWS 10(a)1(A) Permit reporting spreadsheet in the comment section of the Capture Data Worksheet. Surveyor should note (1) type of injury and (2) whether band was left on or removed. Photos and/or videos of the site of injury should be included with the report. If known, duration from time the band was applied should also be noted. Bands should be cautiously removed when bats show signs of injury, except in situations where band removal may result in additional trauma or fatality.

SUBMISSION OF MIST-NETTING RESULTS

Provide results of netting surveys to the appropriate USFWS FO(s) in accordance with previously agreed

upon[36] timeframes and formats[37]. If IBAT and/or NLEB are captured, this report should also include the results of subsequent radio-tracking and emergence counts. Reports should include the following:

1. Copy of prior phase reports (if not previously provided).
2. Explanation of any modifications from original survey plan (e.g., altered net locations)[38]
3. Description of net locations (including site diagrams), net sets (include net heights), survey dates, duration of surveys, weather conditions, and a summary of findings.
4. Map identifying netting site locations and information regarding net sets, including lat/long or UTM, individual net placement, net spacing (i.e., include mist-netting equipment in photographs of net locations), and adequate justification if net sets are not evenly distributed across suitable habitat within the project area.
5. Full names of mist-netting personnel attending each mist-net site during an operation, including the federally permitted/qualified biologist present at each mist-net site. Indicate on the field data sheet the full name of person who identified bats each night at each site.
6. Legible copies of all original mist-netting datasheets (see example datasheet below) and a summary table with information on all bats captured during the survey including, but not limited to: capture site, date of capture, time of capture, sex, reproductive condition, age, weight, right forearm measurement, band number and type (if applicable), and Reichard's wing damage index score (Reichard and Kunz. 2009).
7. Photographs of all net sets, as well as **all** IBAT and NLEB and the first 10 little brown bats captured from each project, so that the placement of netting equipment and identification of species can be verified. Photographs of bats should include all diagnostic characteristics that resulted in the identification of the bat to the species level.
8. Any other information requested by the local USFWS FO(s) related to the project.

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[36] As discussed in the Introduction, we encourage coordination with USFWS FO(s) prior to implementation of any surveys to ensure that all parties agree upon the need for surveys, the methods proposed, and the decisions from various survey results.
[37] In 2016, the USFWS implemented a new standardized approach for reporting of bat survey data. In addition to a traditional written report, federal permit holders are now required to submit their survey data using the standardized permit reporting spreadsheets available on the USFWS website provided in the intro.
[38] If the USFWS previously agreed upon the study plan, we need to understand whether the revised work still accomplished the agreed upon methods.

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APPENDIX B: PHASE 2 OR 3 MIST-NETTING

Sample Data Sheets for Bat Surveys

Site No.	Project/Firm:	Date:
Location:		
County:	State: Quad:	Quadrant:
Lat/Long (DMS): N	W Zone:	Surveyors:

#	Time	Species	Age	Sex	Repro. Cond.*	RFA (mm)	Mass (g)	Net/ Ht	Guano/ Hair	Wing Score	Band # Type
1											
2											
3											
4											
5											
6											
7											
8											
9											
10											
11											
12											
13											
14											
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21											
22											
23											
24											
25											
26											
27											
28											
29											
30											

Moon Phase:			%
	Rise	Set	
Moon:			
Sun:			

Time	Temp	Sky	Wind	# Bats
Avg				

Sky Code	
0	Clear
1	Few Clouds
2	Partly Cloudy
3	Cloudy or overcast
4	Smoke or fog
5	Drizzle or light rain
6	Thunderstorm

Beauford Wind Code	
0	Calm (0 mph)
1	Light wind (1-3 mph)
2	Light breeze (4-7 mph)
3	Gentle breeze (8-12 mph)
4	Moderate breeze (13-18 mph)

*Repro. Cond (Reproductive Condition): (P) pregnant; (L) lactating; (PL) post-lactating; (NR) non-reproductive, (TD) testes descended

APPENDIX B: PHASE 2 OR 3 MIST-NETTING

Sample Data Sheets for Bat Surveys

Net Site Diagram	Dominant Vegetation
	1
	2
	3
	4
	5

Net Site(s) by Habitat				
Habitat	A	B	C	
River				
Stream				
Pond				
Road Rut				
Corridor				
Cave/mine				
Total				

No. of Poles X Net length				
A	=		X	
B	=		X	
C	=		X	
D	=		X	

Other Species:

Comments:

APPENDIX C: PHASE 2 ACOUSTIC SURVEYS

SUMMER ACOUSTIC SURVEY SEASON: May 15 – August 15[39]

PERSONNEL[40]

Overall: Acoustic surveyors should have either completed one or more of the available bat acoustic courses/workshops put forth by various entities (e.g., Bat Conservation & Management, Bat Survey Solutions, Titley/AnaBat, Wildlife Acoustics, USFWS, Vesper Bat Detection Services) or be able to show similar on-the-job or academic experience. NOTE: Appendix C is intended for use within the IBAT range and/or NLEB hibernating range (see Figure 1); also refer to Appendix J for additional guidance on conducting acoustic surveys in the year-round active range of the NLEB.

Detector Deployment: Acoustic surveyors should have a working knowledge of the acoustic equipment and IBAT and/or NLEB ecology. Surveyors should be able to identify appropriate detector placement sites and establish those sites in the areas that are most suitable for recording high-quality IBAT and/or NLEB calls. Thus, it is highly recommended that all potential acoustic surveyors attend appropriate training and have experience in the proper placement of their field equipment.

Acoustic Analysis: Acoustic surveyors should have a working knowledge of the approved acoustic analysis programs, and any candidate acoustic analysis programs used for surveys. Thus, it is highly recommended that all potential acoustic surveyors attend appropriate training and have experience in the analysis of acoustic recordings.

Qualitative Analysis: Individuals qualified to conduct qualitative analysis of acoustic bat calls typically have experience: (1) gathering known calls as this provides a valuable resource in understanding how bat calls change and the variation present in them; (2) identifying bat calls recorded in numerous habitat types; (3) familiarity with the species likely to be encountered within the project area; and (4) individuals must have multiple years of experience and must have stayed current with qualitative ID skills. A resume (or similar documentation) must be submitted along with final acoustic survey reports for anyone making final qualitative identifications.

NOTE: The acoustic survey protocol may also be used for determining P/A of TCBs using the NLEB LOE for the 2024 field season; however, at this time, qualitative analysis is necessary for linear projects when using an approved version of Kaleidoscope Pro if the MLE is > 0.05 for all site-nights and 10 or more passes are auto-classified as potentially belonging to TCB at any site-night to reduce risk of false negatives. If you choose not to manually vet calls meeting these criteria, then you should assume presence of TCB for the project.

COORDINATION WITH USFWS FIELD OFFICES (FOs)

If not already required by federal permit, we recommend that applicants submit a draft study plan for all survey phases to the USFWS FO(s) for review and approval. Study plans should include a map/aerial photo identifying the proposed project area boundaries, suitable bat habitats and acreages within the project area, the proposed number and tentative locations of acoustic monitoring sites, and the identification of the approved (or candidate[41]) acoustic software program(s) (and version #) used for

[39] With prior USFWS FO approval, a survey may be completed after August 15 if it was initiated in time to be completed by August 15 and extenuating weather circumstances resulted in delaying completion. Delays as a result of not meeting the acceptable weather requirements are the ONLY valid justification for surveying after August 15.
[40] Coordinate with your local FO regarding any state-specific requirements.
[41] At this time, all acoustic software programs are considered 'candidate' for locations identified in Figure 2.

analysis of calls for the specific project. If a single software program is used for analysis, surveyors will not be allowed to switch programs from what was originally identified in their final study plan.

DETECTOR AND MICROPHONE REQUIRED CHARACTERISTICS

Full-spectrum (FS) and/or zero-crossing (ZC) detectors are suitable for use in this survey protocol, however, FS is preferred given that FS call files capture more detail and can be converted to ZC for analysis if desired. Detectors used during surveys must be able to retain detailed information that is important for distinguishing between bat species with overlapping echolocation characteristics (e.g. high frequency component of the call). Multiple detectors capable of recording high-quality data are available for commercial use (e.g. Anabat Swift, Wildlife Acoustics SM4BatFS, Pettersson D500×). Until further refinements and testing of the AudioMoth detector (Open Acoustic Devices) take place, use of this detector for P/A surveys is not acceptable (Starbuck et al. 2022; Kunberger and Long 2023).

Directional, hemispherical, and omnidirectional microphones are acceptable for acoustic surveys. The use of external microphones on an extension cable is the preferred deployment as it further limits degradation of call quality. Recording without directional horns on hemispherical and omnidirectional microphones is preferred as the addition of these systems may result in some signal degradation and directional microphones are commercially available.

Use recommended manufacturer detector settings for conducting IBAT and/or NLEB P/A surveys unless otherwise noted on the Service's IBAT Summer Survey Guidance webpage. For ZC detectors (as well as when converting WAV files to ZC files), the data-division ratio must be set to 8.

ACOUSTIC SAMPLING PROTOCOL

Detector/Microphone Placement

IBAT and NLEB typically forage in habitats that do not completely overlap (see species-specific habitat definitions in Appendix A); therefore, acoustic sites should reflect these differences when targeting both species. When sampling for multiple species, surveyors are expected to understand which sites are more likely to detect each species of interest and avoid oversampling habitat that only one species is likely to use. Early coordination with the FOs is highly encouraged to ensure the sampling methods are suitable. For instance, NLEB is a clutter-adapted gleaning species (see definition of suitable summer habitat in Appendix A), and therefore acoustic sites should target interior forests and forested riparian streams representing a variety of understory cover and canopy closure (Carroll et al. 2002). Ponds and large water-filled road ruts can be productive places to deploy detectors when other water sources are limited. Detectors placed on forest edges are less likely to detect NLEB.

Detector/Microphone placement is critical to the successful isolation of high-quality bat call sequences for later analysis. The following locations are likely to be suitable sites for detectors/microphones to sample for IBAT and/or NLEB, including, but not limited to: (a) forest-canopy openings; (b) near water sources; (c) wooded fence lines that are adjacent to large openings or connect two larger blocks of suitable habitat; (d) blocks of recently logged forest where some potential roost trees remain; (e) road and/or stream corridors with open tree canopies or canopy height of more than 33 feet (10 meters); and (f) woodland edges (Britzke et al. 2010). Of equal importance to acoustic site selection is the surveyor's working knowledge of the sampling volume and area of highest sensitivity within the zone of detection around a given microphone, which helps to ensure that detector placement as well as microphone selection and orientation are best suited for a particular site to ensure the detection zone is free of clutter. Detection distance, placement (e.g., location, orientation, height of microphone), and specific features (e.g., vegetation, water, and other obstructions) at the sample site should dictate whether a directional,

hemispherical, or omnidirectional microphone is used. If detectors/microphones are placed in unsuitable locations, effective data analysis may be impossible, and the results of the sampling effort will likely be invalid.

Many features (e.g., vegetation, water, wind turbines, high-tensile powerlines, micro-wave towers) can obstruct and reflect call sequences recorded in the field and thereby reduce the surveyor's ability to record high-quality bat call sequences. The following recommendations are provided to aid surveyors in their selection of acoustic sites (also see Chenger and Tyburec 2014). If surveyors choose acoustic sites outside of these recommendations, then adequate justification for doing so should be provided with the acoustic survey report provided to the USFWS FO(s); otherwise, results from these sites will not be accepted. Surveyors should deploy microphones: (a) at least 10 feet (3 meters) in any direction from vegetation or other obstructions (Hayes 2000; Weller and Zabel 2002; Chenger and Tyburec 2014, Fraser et al. 2020); (b) in areas without, or with minimal[42], vegetation within 100 feet (30 meters) of highly directional microphones or 33 feet (10 meters) from other microphones; (c) parallel to woodland edges; and (d) at least 49 feet (15 meters) from known or suitable roosts[43] (e.g., trees/snags, buildings, bridges, bat houses, cave or mine portal entrances).

Elevating a detector greater than 3 meters above ground level (AGL) vegetation may dramatically improve recording quality. Microphones can be attached horizontally to a pole to listen out into flight space, rather than just listening up from the ground. This will serve to increase the volume of airspace sampled and avoid the distortion effect of recording near the ground. However, the relationship between the zone of detection and the vegetation/clutter, not the placement of the detector is the most important consideration during site selection. Because NLEBs are a clutter- adapted gleaning species (see definition of suitable summer habitat in Appendix A), placement of detectors should be as close to clutter as possible but not in clutter.

Surveyors should distribute acoustic sites throughout the project area or adjacent habitats. In most cases, acoustic sites should be at least 656 feet (200 meters) apart. If closer spacing is determined to be necessary or beneficial (e.g., multiple suitable habitats and acoustic sites immediately adjacent to each other), sufficient justification must be provided in the acoustic study plan and survey report submitted to USFWS FO(s).

Verification of Deployment Location

It is recommended to temporarily attach GPS units to each detector (according to manufacturer's instructions) to directly record accurate location coordinates for each acoustic site that is paired with the acoustic data files. Regardless of technique used, accurate GPS coordinates must be generated and reported for each acoustic detector location.

Verification of Proper Functioning

It is highly recommended that surveyors ensure acoustic detectors are functioning properly through a periodic verification of performance to factory specifications (a service currently offered or in development by several manufacturers). It may be possible that independent service bureaus would be willing to perform this service, providing that a standard test/adjustment procedure can be developed.

[42] If necessary, surveyors can remove small amounts of vegetation (e.g., small limbs, saplings) from the estimated detection zone at a site, much like what is done while setting up mist-nets. Deployment of detectors/microphones in closed-canopy locations that typically are good for mist-netting are acceptable as long as the area sampled below the canopy does not restrict the ability of the equipment's detection zone to record high-quality calls (i.e., vegetation is outside of the detection zone).

[43] If the surveyor discovers a potential roost and wishes to document bat use, refer to Appendix E for guidance on conducting emergence surveys and contact the USFWS FO(s).

It is also recommended to ensure equipment is working during set-up in the field. This can be done simply by producing ultrasound (e.g., finger rubs, calibrator, or follow the equipment manufacturer's testing recommendations) in front of the microphone at survey start and survey finish. These tests document that the equipment was working when deployed and when picked up (and by assumption throughout the entire period). Detector field settings (e.g., sensitivity, frequency, etc.) should follow the recommendations provided by the manufacturer. Surveyors should also save files produced by detectors (e.g., log files, status files, sensor files) as an excellent way to provide documentation when equipment was functioning within the survey period. Many types of detectors allow for setting timers that initiate and end recording sessions. This saves battery life as well as reducing the number of extraneous noise files recorded. However, if the units are visited when the timer is on (i.e., unit is in standby mode), the surveyor cannot verify that the unit is functioning properly. This is particularly important in areas where no bat activity is recorded for the entire night or during the last portion of the night. In these cases, if the surveyor cannot demonstrate that the detector was indeed functioning properly throughout the survey period, then the site will need to be re-sampled, unless adequate justification can be provided to the USFWS FO(s).

Selection of acoustic sites is similarly important. Suitable set-up of the equipment should result in high-quality call sequences that are adequate for species identification. Nights of sampling at individual sites that produce no bat calls may need to be re-sampled unless adequate justification (e.g., areas with significant bat population declines due to WNS) can be provided to the USFWS FO(s). Modifications of the equipment (e.g., changing the orientation and/or microphone type) at the same location on subsequent nights may improve quantity and quality of call sequences recorded, which can be determined through daily data downloads. If modifications of the equipment do not improve call identification, then the detectors will need to be moved to a new location.

Orientation

Detectors deployed with directional microphones should be aimed to sample the majority of the identified flight path/zone to maximize the number of call pulses recorded from individual bats. Omnidirectional microphones deployed on a pole in the center of the flight path/zone should be oriented horizontally. In some circumstances, it might be desirable to aim a directional microphone straight up in smaller forest openings. As always, the goal is to sample as large a volume of likely bat flight space as possible while minimizing clutter. Hemispherical microphones should be aimed vertically, creating a dome-like detection field. Hemispherical microphones are best suited for open areas where deploying at heights greater than 3 meters AGL is problematic because of the lack of structure to hide the microphone and prevent it from becoming a novel item of interest to bats. Vertical orientation, however, precludes the use of weatherproofing for protection of the microphone. Once acoustic sites are identified, photographs documenting the orientation, detection zone (i.e., "what the detector is sampling"), and relative position of the microphone should be taken for later submittal to the USFWS FO(s) as part of the acoustic survey report (See Submission of Acoustic Survey Results for additional description).

Weather Conditions

If any of the following weather conditions exist at a survey site during acoustic sampling, note the time and duration of such conditions, and repeat the acoustic sampling effort for that night[44]: (a) temperatures fall below 50°F (10°C)[45] during the first 5 hours of survey period; (b) precipitation, including rain and/or fog, that exceeds 30 minutes or continues intermittently during the first 5 hours of the survey period; and (c) sustained wind speeds greater than 9 miles/hour (4 meters/second; 3 on Beaufort scale) for 30 minutes or more during the first 5 hours of the survey period. At a minimum, nightly weather conditions for survey sites should be checked using the nearest NOAA National Weather Service station and

[44] With prior USFWS FO approval, a survey may be completed after August 15 if it was initiated in time to be completed by August 15 and extenuating weather circumstances resulted in delaying completion. Delays as a result of not meeting the acceptable weather requirements are the ONLY valid justification for surveying after August 15.
[45] Overnight survey temperatures may be lower in northern portion of the NLEB range, coordinate with the local USFWS FO in the northern portion of the range for any variation in temperature requirements.

summarized in the survey reports.

Weatherproofing

Depending on the brand and model, bat detectors may or may not be weatherproof when delivered from the factory or supplier. Recording without after-market weatherproofing is preferred as the addition of these systems may result in some signal degradation. The decision to weatherproof detectors or not should be determined nightly based on the likelihood of precipitation in the survey area. If necessary, detectors should be placed in after-market weatherproof containers and an external microphone, attached by an extension cable should be deployed greater than 3 meters AGL.

For directional microphones, the use of a polyvinyl chloride (PVC) tube[46], generally, in the form of a 45-degree elbow the same diameter as the microphone (Britzke et al. 2010) is acceptable, if the situation requires the use of after-market weatherproofing. The microphone should be placed facing the open end of the elbow and as close to the opening as is consistent with the aim of weatherproofing. The microphone should be pointing at an angle below horizontal so water will not collect in it. Corben & Livengood (2014) showed that the direction of greatest sensitivity of tubes like this varies greatly depending on details of the specific tube shape and the exact position of the microphone. Often the greatest sensitivity will be pointed up at a substantial angle (up to 45 degrees) above horizontal when the microphone itself is pointing 45 degrees below horizontal. Users should be aware of the characteristics of the setup they use so they can know what region is being sampled. Again, the preferred option for weatherproofing detectors is to detach the microphone from the detector so that the detector can be placed in a weatherproof container, but the microphone (tethered by a cable) remains unobstructed.

Other after-market weatherproofing systems may become available and approved by the USFWS provided they show that call quality and the number of calls recorded are comparable to those without weatherproofing.

MINIMUM LEVEL OF EFFORT

The level of acoustic survey effort required for a project will be dependent upon the overall acreage of suitable habitat that may be impacted by the action (directly or indirectly). To determine the acoustic survey effort, quantify the amount of suitable summer habitat within the project area.

NOTE: for projects where impacts other than tree removal are likely (e.g., collision), ensure that P/A surveys are designed to cover all suitable habitat within the entire project area and NOT just the locations where tree removal is planned.

IBAT Range-wide Acoustic LOE (See Figure 1 and Table 2)

Linear projects: a minimum of 4 detector nights per km (0.6 miles) of suitable summer habitat (See Appendix F).

At least 1 detector location for at least 2 calendar nights (can sample the same location or move within the km site).

Non-linear projects: a minimum of 10 detector nights per 123 acres (0.5 km^2) of suitable summer habitat.

At least 2 detector locations per 123-acre "site" shall be sampled over the course of at least 2 calendar nights (may be consecutive) until at least 10 detector nights has been completed.

[46] The PVC option has only been tested with AnaBat SD1/SD2 detectors and directional microphones. It may not perform as well with other detector microphone combinations.

NLEB Range-wide Acoustic LOE (See Figure 1 and Table 2)

Linear projects: a minimum of 4 detector nights per km (0.6 miles) of suitable summer habitat (see Appendix F).

At least 1 detector location for at least 2 calendar nights (can sample the same location or move within the km site).

Non-linear projects: a minimum of 14 detector nights per 123 acres (0.5 km^2) of suitable summer habitat.

At least 2 detector locations per 123-acre "site" shall be sampled over the course of at least 2 calendar nights (may be consecutive) until at least 14 detector nights has been completed.

The acoustic sampling period for each site must begin at sunset[47] and ends at sunrise each night of sampling.

ANALYSIS OF RECORDED ECHOLOCATION CALLS

Step 5. Optional coarse screening - for high frequency (HF) or myotid calls (depending on available H/L frequency filters) or Proceed to Step 6.

a) If no positive detection of HF calls[48] (≥35 kHz) or myotid calls, no further summer/active season surveys recommended.

b) If positive detection of HF or myotid calls, then
   i) proceed to Step 6 for further acoustic analysis; **OR**
   ii) assume presence of IBAT and/or NLEB and coordinate with the USFWS FO(s); **OR**
   iii) assume presence and proceed to **Phase 3**.

Step 6. Conduct Automated Acoustic Analyses for each site that had HF or Myotid calls from Step 5 or ALL sites and ALL calls if Step 5 was not conducted.

Use **one or more** of the currently available 'approved' acoustic bat ID programs[49] (use most current approved software versions available and manufacturer's recommended settings for IBAT and/or NLEB P/A surveys) as previously identified in your Phase 2 study plan.

'Candidate' programs are not yet approved by USFWS for stand-alone use for P/A surveys but may be used in conjunction with one or more of the approved programs. At this time, no acoustic bat ID programs are 'approved' for many western states (Figure 2). Two or more of the currently available 'candidate' programs must be used for surveys conducted in these locations (always use most recent versions of software programs).

Include your plans for which specific software program(s) you will use in your survey study plan and submit for USFWS FO(s) review prior to conducting surveys. Beginning with acoustic data

[47] Surveys may need to start a little earlier or later than official sunset times (i.e., at "dusk") in some settings such as a deep/dark forested valleys or ridge tops to avoid missing early flying bats or capturing late-flying birds, respectively. Sunset tables for the location of survey can be found at: https://sunrise-sunset.org
[48] HF calls are defined as individual call pulses whose minimum frequency is ≥35 kHz.
[49] Approved and candidate programs are listed on the USFWS website provided in the intro; note all programs are considered 'candidate' for areas identified in Figure 2.

from night one at each acoustic site, run each night's data for each site through your chosen ID program(s). Review results by site by night from each acoustic ID program used[50].

a) If IBAT and NLEB presence is considered unlikely by the approved and candidate program(s) used in analysis, then no further summer surveys recommended.

b) If IBAT and/or NLEB presence is considered likely at one or more sites on one or more nights by any approved or candidate program(s) used in analysis, then

i) proceed to Step 7 for qualitative ID; **OR**
ii) assume presence of IBAT and/or NLEB and coordinate with the USFWS FO(s); **OR**
iii) assume presence and proceed to **Phase 3**.

Step 7. Conduct Qualitative Analysis of Calls.

At a minimum, for each detector site-night a program identified IBAT and/or NLEB presence likely (i.e., P<0.05), review all HF (i.e., ≥35 kHz) call files (regardless of MLE value and including no ID files) from that site-night. Qualitative analysis (i.e., manual vetting) must also include and present within a written report a comparison of the results of each acoustic ID program by site and night (see Reporting Requirements below).

a) If no visual confirmation of IBAT and NLEB, then no further summer/active season surveys recommended[51].

b) If visual confirmation of IBAT and/or NLEB, then

i) assume presence of IBAT and/or NLEB and coordinate with the USFWS FO(s); **OR**
ii) assume presence and proceed to **Phase 3**.

SUBMISSION OF ACOUSTIC SURVEY RESULTS

NOTE: All originally recorded (ZC or FS) data MUST be maintained for a period of 7 years and be made available to the USFWS FO(s), if requested. Failure to do so may result in invalidation of survey results. Results of acoustic survey data collected as part of P/A surveys must also be submitted annually in Section 10 reporting spreadsheets to the USFWS.

Provide results of acoustic surveys to the appropriate USFWS FO(s) within 30 days of completing the survey unless otherwise agreed upon with the local USFWS FO(s)[52]. Each acoustic survey report should include the following[53] (also, see checklist at end of this appendix):

[50] The approved acoustic identification programs all have implemented a maximum likelihood estimator (MLE) at this time. If the analysis of collected calls at a given site on a given night results in the presence of IBAT and/or NLEB with high levels of certainty (P<0.05), then select one of the options available in Step 6b.
[51] If you identify any suspected mis-identifications from programs, the Service will share those results with the software manufacturer(s) and the USGS to assist with future improvements and testing of software.
[52] As discussed in the Introduction, we encourage coordination with USFWS FO(s) prior to implementation of any surveys to ensure that all parties agree upon the need for surveys, the methods proposed, and the decisions from various survey results.
[53] In 2016, the USFWS implemented a new standardized approach for reporting of bat survey data. In addition to a traditional written report, federal permit holders are now required to submit their survey data using the standardized permit reporting spreadsheets available on the IBAT Summer Survey Guidance webpage (http://www.fws.gov/midwest/Endangered/mammals/inba/inbasummersurveyguidance.html).

APPENDIX C. PHASE 2 ACOUSTIC SURVEYS

1. Copy of habitat assessment (if not previously provided)
2. Explanation of any modifications from original survey plan (e.g., altered site locations)[54]
3. Full names of all personnel conducting acoustic surveys, including those that selected acoustic sites and deployed detectors
4. Full name and resume of individual(s) conducting qualitative acoustic analyses (if applicable)
5. Description of acoustic monitoring sites, survey dates, duration of survey, weather conditions, and a summary of findings
6. Table with information on acoustic monitoring and resulting data, including but not limited to: detector GPS coordinates for each detector, survey dates, survey hours
7. Map identifying acoustic detector locations and a corresponding table including the GPS coordinates. Include arrow(s) showing direction(s) of microphone(s)
8. Photographs documenting the location of each detector, the orientation of the detector, and the intended sampling area. Include detector and something for scale (e.g., vehicle, person) in photographs of acoustic sites
9. Description of acoustic detector and microphone brand(s) and model(s) used, microphone type, use of weatherproofing, acoustic monitoring equipment settings (e.g., sensitivity, audio division ratios), deployment data (i.e., deployment site, habitat, date, time started, time stopped, orientation), and call analysis methods used
10. A description of how proper functioning of bat detectors was verified
11. Discussion of what software program(s) was/were used (including settings)
12. Acoustic detector log files renamed by site identifier
13. Acoustic analysis software program output/summary results by site by night (i.e., number of calls detected, species composition, MLE results, settings files)
14. Discussion for any site-nights with zero bat calls (were additional nights added? was detector functioning? was placement appropriate?)
15. If manual vetting was used, discussion of how this was done (e.g., what keys were used?)
16. If manual vetting was used, detailed analysis and results of any qualitative acoustic analysis conducted on those projects where a program(s) considered IBAT and/or NLEB presence likely, including justification for rejecting any program MLE results (if applicable). We recommend providing a table with each species ID from the program(s), suggested species ID from manual vetting, and rationale for any changes.
17. Any other information requested by the local USFWS FO(s) related to the project

[54] If the USFWS previously agreed upon the study plan, we need to understand whether the revised work still accomplished the agreed upon methods.

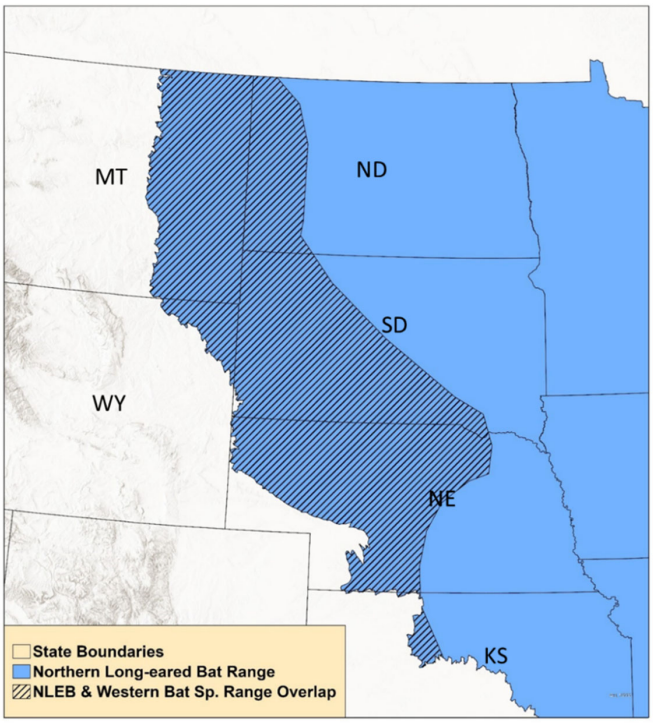

FIGURE 2. Portion of NLEB range overlapping with western bat species.

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Kunberger, J.M. and A.M. Long. 2023. A comparison of bat calls recorded by two acoustic monitors. Journal of Fish and Wildlife Management 14(1):171-178.

MacKenzie, D.I., and J.A. Royle. 2005. Designing occupancy studies: general advice and allocating survey effort. Journal of Applied Ecology 42:1105-1114.

APPENDIX C. PHASE 2 ACOUSTIC SURVEYS

Starbuck, C.A., L.M. SeSchepper, M.L. Hoggatt, and J.M. O'Keefe. 2023. Bioacoustics, DOI: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09524622.2023.2290715

Weller, T.J., and C.J. Zabel. 2002. Variation in bat detections due to detector orientation in a forest. Wildlife Society Bulletin 30:922-930

General Checklist for Acoustic Surveys of Indiana and/or Northern Long-eared Bats

The following items should be documented and clearly presented within acoustic bat survey reports submitted to the Service

ACOUSTIC SURVEY INFO

- ☐ Project Name
- ☐ Site ID No./Name
- ☐ State and County
- ☐ Site Lat./Long. Coordinates (e.g., decimal degrees, NAD83)
- ☐ Approx. accuracy of Lat./Long. Coordinates
- ☐ Survey Date(s)
- ☐ Person who Selected Acoustic Site(s)
- ☐ Person who Deployed Detector(s)
- ☐ Detector Brand & Model
- ☐ Microphone Brand & Model
- ☐ Microphone Type: Directional/Hemispherical/Omnidirectional
- ☐ Type of Weatherproofing (if any)
- ☐ Microphone Height above Ground-level Vegetation(m)
- ☐ Distance from Nearest Vegetation or other Obstruction (m)(apart from veg. on ground)
- ☐ Horizontal Orientation of Microphone (1-360°)
- ☐ Vertical Orientation of Microphone (assuming 0° is parallel with horizon)
- ☐ Photographs of Detector Set-up at each Site
- ☐ Detector Settings and/or Log Files (all settings used for each brand/model of detector. For example, sensitivity, gain, data division, 16k high filter, sample rate, min/max duration, min trigger freq., trigger level, etc.)
- ☐ Survey Start Time (military)
- ☐ Survey End Time (military)
- ☐ Methods used to Field-test proper Functioning of Detector
- ☐ Were calls collected in Full Spectrum or Zero Crossing?
- ☐ Habitat Type and/or Feature Surveyed
- ☐ Weather Conditions during Survey Period

ACOUSTIC ANALYSIS INFO

- ☐ Program used to convert Full Spectrum to Zero Cross (if applicable)?
- ☐ Filter(s) used (if any) and parameters used (e.g., CFRead, noise, bug, etc.)
- ☐ Name of Service-approved Bat ID Software Program(s) and Version(s) used and Candidate program(s)(if used)
- ☐ Program Settings (if applicable):
  - Min. # of pulses for species ID
  - Min. # of pulses per group ID
  - Min. discrim. prob. for species ID
  - Other relevant settings affecting ID
  - Suite of species/groups included in program analysis
- ☐ Table summarizing Number of Calls ID'd for each Species/Site/Night/Program (including MLE p-values)
- ☐ If Qualitative Analysis was conducted, include Number of Calls Confirmed through Qualitative ID for each Species/Site/Night
- ☐ Full Name of Person(s) who conducted Qualitative Analysis
- ☐ Additional Survey Reporting Requirements
- ☐ Acoustic Report Appendices:
  - data sheets and maps,
  - photographs of detector set-ups,
  - computer screen captures of representative bat species identified during acoustic analyses, and
  - resume(s) highlighting relevant qualifications of person(s) who conducted qualitative analysis (e.g., experience visually identifying *Myotis*, certificates of training, publications etc.)

APPENDIX D: PHASE 4 RADIO-TRACKING

PERSONNEL

Transmitter Attachment: A qualified biologist[55] who is experienced in handling IBAT and/or NLEB and attaching radio transmitters must perform transmitter attachments, as further explained in the protocol below.

Tracking: Biological technicians and/or a qualified biologist who is experienced in tracking transmittered bats must be present and actively involved in all tracking activities for IBAT and/or NLEB as further explained in the protocol below.

NOTE: The radio-tracking protocol may also be used for captured TCBs; however, radio-tracking of TCB should prioritize identification of the immediate roosting area of the transmittered bat given the difficulty in locating the bats exact roosting location.

METHODS

If one or more IBAT and/or NLEB are captured, the following radio-tracking protocols will be applicable:

1. Biologists should coordinate in advance with USFWS FO(s) regarding radio-tracking recommendations (e.g., number and distribution of transmitters, including prioritization of sex/age and maximum number per site) and whether foraging data would be beneficial to collect. Also, professional judgment should be used to determine whether attachment of transmitters could compromise the health of a bat. Since the maximum holding times for IBAT and/or NLEB targeted for radio-tracking is 30 minutes[56], or as allowed in federal and state permits, surveyors should be prepared to place transmitters on bats immediately following their capture to minimize holding times.

2. The radio transmitter, adhesive, and any other markings (e.g., wing bands) should weigh less than 5% of pre-attachment body weight (Aldridge and Brigham 1988, American Society of Mammalogists 1998) and must comply with any USFWS and state permits. In all cases, the lightest transmitters capable of the required task should be used, particularly with pregnant females and volant juveniles. With pregnant bats, biologists should always use the lightest transmitter possible but no more than 5% of their expected non-pregnant weight.

3. Proper application methods are paramount to the successful retention of an applied transmitter. Qualified biologists should apply commonly accepted methods. Examples of available resources include:

    - https://tccarterlab.files.wordpress.com/2017/10/application-of-transmitters-in-small-insectivorous-bats1.pdf

[55] A qualified biologist is an individual who holds a USFWS Recovery Permit (Federal Fish and Wildlife Permit) for federally-listed bats in the state/region in which they are surveying and/or has been authorized by the appropriate state agency to mist-net for IBAT and/or NLEB. Several USFWS offices maintain lists of qualified bat surveyors, and if working in one of those states with authorizations in lieu of a Recovery Permits, the individual will either need to be on that list or submit qualifications to receive USFWS approval prior to conducting any field work.
[56] Current standard federal Section 10 bat permit conditions require prior written approval from the Field Supervisor in the USFWS FO(s) if capture times may exceed 30 minutes

- https://www.holohil.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/carter2009.pdf
- https://www.holohil.com/links/bat-attachment/#:~:text=Transmitters%20should%20be%20attached%20to,the%20fur%20is%20not%20clipped.

4. Adhesives (or "glues") used during radio-tracking and telemetry studies[57] to attach transmitters to bats must be included in the "Approved Adhesives for P/A Telemetry Studies" list (Table 3)[58]. The list includes commercially available latex and silicone-based cements that are known to adhere transmitters to bats for approximately 1 to 30 days. Latex-based rubber cements have a long history of use by researchers and to our knowledge have no adverse health effects to bats. Products that are likely to adhere transmitters to bats for more than 4 weeks or have been reported to have adverse reactions are not permitted (see Figure 3). For a list of examples of products that are currently not permitted, see Table 4.

TABLE 3. Approved Adhesives

Type	Active ingredients	Name	Manufacturer
Latex-based Surgical Cement[1]	Liquid latex, N-hexane, zinc oxide	Torbot	Torbot Group, Inc.
	Liquid latex, N-hexane, zinc oxide	Ostobond	Montreal Ostomy Products.
	Liquid latex, N-hexane, zinc oxide	Permatype	Perma-Type Company, Inc.
Silicone-based Surgical Adhesive[2]	Silicone solids, ethyl acetate	Uro-Bond III 5000	Urocare Products, Inc.
Butyl-cyanoacrylate Surgical Adhesives[3]	100% n-butyl cyanoacrylate	Vetbond	3M

[1] Liquid, malleable bonding cements that contain latex and take several minutes to cure. Bonds skin to skin.
[2] Liquid, malleable surgical adhesives that contain silicone and takes several minutes to cure. Bonds appliances to skin.
[3]Stiff, cyanoacrylate-based products react quickly with water to form a durable, waterproof bond.

TABLE 4. Examples of Prohibited Adhesives. (This list is not exhaustive)

Type	Active ingredients	Name	Manufacturer
Octyl-cyanoacrylate Surgical Adhesives[1]	100% 2-octyl cyanoacrylate	Dermabond	Zoetis Canada Inc
	100% 2-octyl cyanoacrylate	Surgi-Lock 2oc	Meridian Animal Health
	60% 2-octyl cyanoacrylate, 40% n-butyl cyanoacrylate	GluTure	Ethicon, Inc
	60% cyanoacrylate	Locktite 422	Henkel Adhesives

[1] Stiff, cyanoacrylate-based products react quickly with water to form a durable, waterproof bond.

[57] The Guidelines do not address recommendations for MOTUS based transmitter applications, wound closure for pit-tag studies, or other applications of adhesives. However, we strongly recommend researchers review SDS information for products prior to use to determine their safety for use on bats. Adhesives that are not recommended for use on human or animal skin should never be used to attach transmitters to bats or to close up pit tag wounds. Therefore, products such as (but not limited to) F2 Adhesive, Lash Grip, Shut Eye, and Locktite Superglues, whose Safety Data Sheets specifically state that the product is not intended for application to skin and may cause skin irritation, should be avoided.
[58] To request a specific product addition to the list of adhesives in Table 3, submit a request to FW4_Bat_Survey_Guidance@fws.gov. In the email, provide the product name, product Safety Data Sheet, manufacturer recommendations for product use, active ingredient list, whether the product was developed for human or veterinary purposes, if the product is designed for bonding appliances to skin (preferred) or for closing wounds and any other relevant information.

NOTE: Surveyors who recapture a bat after using any adhesive should observe the bat's skin for signs of irritation, infection, excessive fur loss, and take photos or a video of the area where transmitter was applied (for example, see Figure 3). Report information to the Guidelines Team (FW4_Bat_Survey_Guidance@fws.gov).

FIGURE 3. A photo of a back of an Indiana bat with significant fur loss three weeks after transmitter was attached using GluTure. In this example, the transmitter was applied using a small dab of GluTure between the scapulae.

5. Proposed radio telemetry equipment (e.g., receivers, antennas, and transmitters) and frequencies should be coordinated with the appropriate state natural resource agency and USFWS FO(s). Prior to purchasing transmitters, biologists should inquire with transmitter manufacturers about signal boosting to determine if this option would improve bat detectability in their planned work areas. Transmitters with modified signals must be built to last the duration of the telemetry study approved in the Site Study Plan (e.g., > 7 days).

   Surveyors should thoroughly test transmitter function prior to the Study. Transmitters should be new or no more than one year old at the time they are applied to a bat and should be stored as recommended by manufacturer prior to use. Transmitters more than 1 year old must be tested prior to the study to ensure function and no degradation in anticipated signal strength. To establish function, all transmitters should be temporarily activated for at least 24 hours. To determine signal strength, surveyors should temporarily activate transmitter and test receiver signal strength. Topography, ambient weather conditions, and location of the bat and direction of antenna are all examples of variables that will dictate the distance at which a signal is detectable, but in general, the signal should be consistently detectable from at least one mile away. Transmitters more than 2 years old should be refurbished before using for P/A surveys.

6. The qualified biologist or biological technician(s) should track all radio-tagged bats captured to diurnal roosts in accordance with permit requirements. We generally recommend tracking until the transmitter fails, fall off, or cannot be located for at least 7 days and should conduct a minimum of 2 evening emergence counts at each identified roost (See Appendix E for Emergence Survey Protocols). However, biologists are encouraged to continue radio-tracking efforts for the life of the transmitter. Biologists should contact the USFWS FO(s) immediately if they plan to cease tracking efforts before the 7-day tracking period ends. If landowner access is denied, approximate roost locations (i.e., coordinates) should be determined using triangulation.

7. Daily radio telemetry searches for roosts must be conducted during daylight hours and should be conducted until the bat(s) is located or for a minimum of 4 hours of ground or 1 hour of aerial-searching effort per tagged bat per day for 7 days. However, multiple bats captured at the same net location or nearby may be tracked simultaneously. Once a signal is detected, tracking should continue until the roost is located. At a minimum, biologists should document all ground and aerial-searching effort for all bats not recovered during radio- tracking for submittal with the survey report. For each roost identified during tracking, the biologist should complete a "USFWS

IBAT and/or NLEB Roost Datasheet".

8. To minimize potential for disease transmission, any equipment that comes in contact with bats should be kept clean and disinfected, following approved protocols; this is particularly a concern relative to WNS. Protocols are posted at http://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/. Federal and state permits may also have specific equipment restrictions and disinfection requirements.

SUBMISSION OF RADIO-TRACKING RESULTS

Phase 4 radio-tracking results should be included with the Phase 2 or 3 mist-netting report and submitted to the appropriate USFWS FO(s). Each report should include the following information related to radio-tracking efforts[59]:

1. Copy of prior phase reports (if not previously provided)
2. Explanation of any modifications from original survey plan (e.g., number of transmitters used, frequency of transmitters changed)[60]
3. Map and narrative detailing all ground and aerial search effort for all bats not recovered during radio-tracking and relative to the negotiated or agreed effort as determined by the appropriate USFWS FO(s)
4. Map summarizing IBAT and/or NLEB data collected from summer surveys for the proposed project (e.g., project area boundary and results from the site habitat assessment, acoustic survey, mist-net survey, radio-tracking, and emergence surveys)
5. Full names and permit numbers of personnel who attached transmitters to IBAT and/or NLEB and full names of all personnel conducting radio-tracking efforts
6. Photographs of all roosts identified during radio-tracking
7. Legible copies of all original USFWS IBAT and/or NLEB Roost Datasheets
8. Any other information requested by the local USFWS FO(s) where work was conducted

REFERENCES

Aldridge, H., and R.M. Brigham. 1988. Load carrying and maneuverability in an insectivorous bat: a test of the 5% "rule." Journal of Mammalogy 69:379-382.

American Society of Mammalogists. 1998. Guidelines for the capture, handling and care of mammals. Journal of Mammalogy 79:1416-1431.

[59] In 2016, the USFWS implemented a new standardized approach for reporting of bat survey data. In addition to a traditional written report, federal permit holders are now required to submit their survey data using standardized permit reporting spreadsheets available on the USFWS website provided in the intro.
[60] If the USFWS previously agreed upon the study plan, we need to understand whether the revised work still accomplished the agreed upon methods.

USFWS INDIANA AND/OR NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT ROOST DATASHEET

Biologists (Full Name):_____ Date: _____

UTM: Zone_____ Easting _____ Northing_____ *OR*

LAT_____ LONG_____

Property Owner: _____ Phone#_____

State_____ County_____ Site #_____

Roost #_____ Roost Name: _____

Roost Tree Data

Species: _____ Live __ Snag __ Other _

(if other, explain) _____

DBH (in or cm) _____ Total Height (ft or m) _____

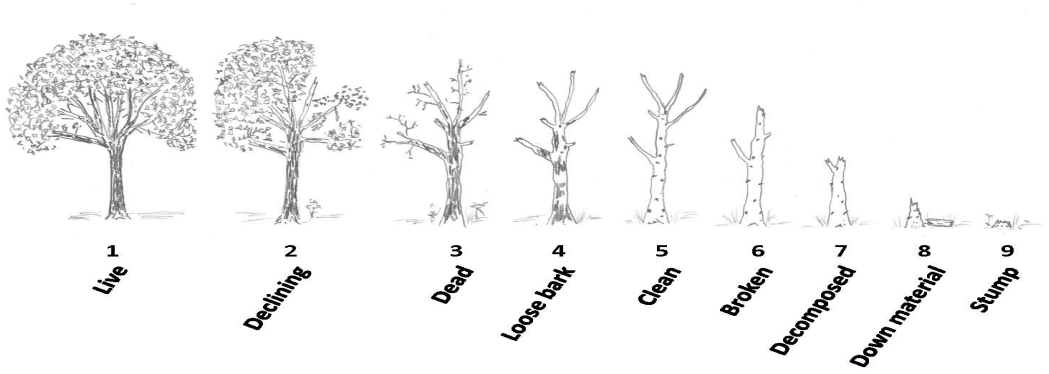
Height of roost area (if known) _____Dist. from capture site_____

Roost position aspect (deg) _____

Exfoliating bark on bole (%) _____ Describe: sloughing _ platy_ tight_

Cavities present? ____ If so, describe: _____

Roost Decay State: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Other



APPENDIX D: PHASE 4 RADIO- TRACKING

Roost tree or snag canopy position: Dominant __ Co-Dominant __ Suppressed _

Surrounding Habitat Condition

Canopy closure at roost (%) _____

Approximate woodlot size (ac or ha) _____ Distance to non-forest (ft or m) _____

Describe forest/woodlot current condition (mature, partially cut-over, burned, insect damage, etc.)

_____

_____

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_____

Additional Comments_____

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APPENDIX E: PHASE 4 EMERGENCE SURVEYS

PERSONNEL

Qualified biologists[61], biological technicians, and any other individuals deemed qualified by a local USFWS FO may conduct emergence surveys for IBAT and/or NLEB by following the protocols below.

EMERGENCE SURVEYS FOR KNOWN IBAT AND/OR NLEB ROOSTS

The following protocols should begin as soon as feasible after identification of a diurnal roost (ideally that night):

NOTE: The emergence survey protocol should not be used for radio-tracked TCBs or emergence surveys of identified potential roosts given the variability in roosting locations typically used by the species (e.g., roosting in dead leaf clusters in the canopy of live trees) and difficulty observing bats emerging. An emergence count may be attempted on the rare occasion that the surveyor is able to discover the exact roosting location of a transmittered TCB and believes he/she can observe the bat(s) emerging.

1. Bat emergence surveys should begin one half hour before sunset[62] and continue until at least one hour after sunset or until it is otherwise too dark to see emerging bats. The surveyor(s) should be positioned so that emerging bats will be silhouetted against the sky as they exit the roost. Tallies of emerging bats should be recorded every few minutes or as natural breaks in bat activity allow. There should be at least one surveyor per roost. Surveyors must be close enough to the roost to observe all exiting bats but not close enough to influence emergence. That is, do not stand directly beneath the roost, do not make noise or carry on a conversation, and minimize use of lights (use a small flashlight to record data, if necessary). Do not shine a light on the roost as this may prevent or delay bats from emerging. Use of an infra-red, night vision, or thermal-imaging video camera or spotting scope is encouraged but not required. Likewise, use of an ultrasonic bat detector may aid in identifying the exact timing of bats emerging and may be used to help differentiate between low- and high-frequency bats species, and therefore, is strongly recommended. If multiple roosts are known within a colony, then simultaneous emergence surveys are encouraged to estimate population size. [NOTE: If a roost cannot be adequately silhouetted, then the local USFWS FO(s) should be contacted to discuss alternative survey methods].

2. Bat activity is affected by weather; therefore, emergence surveys should not be conducted when the following conditions exist: (a) temperatures that fall below 50□F (10□C); (b) precipitation, including rain and/or fog, that exceeds 30 minutes or continues intermittently during the survey period; and (c) sustained wind speeds greater than 9 miles/hour (4 meters/second; 3 on Beaufort scale).

3. Surveyors should use the attached (or similar) “Bat Emergence Survey Datasheet”.

[61] A qualified biologist is an individual who holds a USFWS Recovery Permit (Federal Fish and Wildlife Permit) for federally listed bats in the state/region in which they are surveying and/or has been authorized by the appropriate state agency to mist-net for IBAT and/or NLEB. Several USFWS offices maintain lists of qualified bat surveyors, and if working in one of those states with authorizations in lieu of a Recovery Permits, the individual will either need to be on that list or submit qualifications to receive USFWS approval prior to conducting any field work.

[62] Surveys may need to start a little earlier or later than one half hour before official sunset times (i.e., before “dusk”) in some settings such as deep/dark forested valleys or ridge tops, respectively. Sunset tables for the location of survey can be found at: https://sunrise-sunset.org

4. Surveyors should also complete an "IBAT and/or NLEB Roost Datasheet" for each roost known to be used by one or more IBAT and/or NLEB (see Appendix D for an example).

5. Completed datasheets should be included in reports prepared for the USFWS.

EMERGENCE SURVEYS FOR POTENTIAL IBAT AND/OR NLEB ROOSTS

In some limited cases (e.g., individual hazard tree removal during the active season[63]), surveyors may have the option of conducting emergence surveys for individual potential IBAT and/or NLEB roosts to determine use prior to removal. Evaluations whether potential roosts meet the criteria to conduct emergence surveys should be for each individual tree rather than groups of trees. The following protocol applies to these surveys:

1. Consult with the local USFWS FO(s) to determine whether a tree(s) that needs to be felled/ cleared may be potential roosting habitat for IBAT and/or NLEB and whether conducting an emergence survey is an appropriate means of avoiding take of IBAT and/or NLEB[64]. In general, the USFWS only approves of conducting emergence surveys as a means of avoiding direct take of bats for projects that only affect a very small number of potential roosts (e.g., less than or equal to 10)[65] in relatively small project areas. In addition, emergence surveys are only valid if all parts of the tree (limbs and trunk) can be observed by the surveyor. Therefore, trees within woodlands that are directly adjacent to other trees and whose canopy is blocked are not suitable for emergence surveys. An online directory of USFWS offices is available at: http://www.fws.gov/offices/.

2. If the USFWS FO(s) approves/concurs with Step 1, then follow the emergence guidelines for Emergence Surveys for Known IBAT and/or NLEB Roosts (above) to determine if any bats are roosting in the tree(s).

3. At the conclusion of the emergence survey:

    a. If **no** bats were observed emerging from the potential roost(s), then it maybe felled immediately. If safety concerns dictate that a tree cannot be felled immediately (i.e., in the dark), then the tree(s) should be felled as soon as possible after sunrise on the following day. If a tree is not felled during the daytime immediately following an emergence survey, then the survey must be repeated, because bats may switch roosts on a nightly basis. Immediately after the tree is felled, a visual inspection of the downed tree must be completed to ensure that no bats were present, injured, or killed. The USFWS FO should be contacted immediately if bats are discovered during this inspection.

    b. If **1 or more** bats (regardless of species, because species identification cannot reliably be made during visual emergence counts alone) are observed emerging from the roost, then it should **not** be felled, and the USFWS FO(s) should be contacted the next working day for further guidance.

[63] The active season periods for IBat and NLEBs are available in Appendix L.
[64] If a potential bat roost tree poses an imminent threat to human safety or property, then emergency consultation procedures should be followed as appropriate. (50 CFR §402.05). If a hazard tree does not pose an imminent threat, then the USFWS requests that it be felled during the bat's inactive season. When possible, felling of potential roost/hazard trees should be avoided during the primary maternity period to avoid potential adverse effects to non-volant pups (see Appendix L for specific inactive and pup season dates for your area).
[65] Areas containing >10 hazard trees will be assessed by the USFWS on a case-by-case basis with the project proponent.

APPENDIX E: PHASE 4 EMERGENCE SURVEYS

SUBMISSION OF EMERGENCE SURVEY RESULTS

Emergence survey results should be included with the mist-netting survey report, unless the survey was completed as an evaluation of potential roosts and should be submitted to the appropriate USFWS FO(s) for review. Each survey report should include the following information related to emergence survey efforts[66]:

1. Copy of prior phase reports (if not previously provided)
2. Explanation of any modifications from the Phase 4 emergence count study plan (e.g., number of potential roosts surveyed), if applicable
3. Summary of roost emergence data
4. Map identifying location of roost(s) identified during radio-tracking and/or emergence surveys for IBAT and/or NLEB(s) including GPS coordinates
5. Full names of personnel present during emergence survey efforts and who conducted emergence surveys of roosts
6. Photographs of each identified roost
7. Copies of all “Emergence Survey” and “IBAT and/or NLEB Roost” datasheets
8. Any other information requested by the local USFWS FO(s) where work was conducted
9. Copy of the pre-approved site-specific written authorization from USFWS and/or state natural resource agency (if required)

[66] In 2016, the USFWS implemented a new standardized approach for reporting of bat survey data. In addition to a traditional written report, federal permit holders are now required to submit their survey data using standardized permit reporting spreadsheets available on the USFWS website provided in the intro.

APPENDIX E: PHASE 4 EMERGENCE SURVEYS

USFWS BAT EMERGENCE SURVEY DATASHEET

Date: _____ Surveyor(s) Full Name: _____

State: _____ County: _____ Project Name: _____
Site Name/#: _____ Roost Name/# _____ Bat #:_____

Lat/Long or UTM of Roost: _____
Description of Roost/Habitat Feature Surveyed: _____

_____

Bat Species Known to be using this Roost/Feature (if not known, leave blank):

_____

Other Suspected Bat Species (explain): _____
Weather Conditions during Survey (temperature, precipitation, wind speed):

_____

Survey Start Time: _____ Time of Sunset: _____ Survey End Time: _____

NOTE: Emergence surveys should begin ½ hour before sunset and continue until at least one hour after sunset or until it is otherwise too dark to see emerging bats. The surveyor(s) should position him or herself so that emerging bats will be silhouetted against the sky as they exit the roost. Tallies of emerging bats should be recorded every few minutes or as natural breaks in bat activity allow. Ensure that surveyor(s) are close enough to the roost to observe all exiting/returning bats, but not close enough to influence emergence (i.e., do not stand directly beneath the roost and do not make unnecessary noise and/or conversation, and minimize use of lights other than a small flashlight to record data, if necessary). Do not shine a light on the roost tree crevice/cave/mine entrance itself as this may prevent or delay bats from emerging. If available, use of an infra-red, night vision, or thermal-imaging video camera or spotting scope and an ultrasonic bat detector are strongly recommended but not required.

Time	Number of Bats Leaving Roost*	Comments / Notes

APPENDIX E: PHASE 4 EMERGENCE SURVEYS

Site Name/#: _____ Roost Name/#: _____

Time	Number of Bats Leaving Roost*	Comments / Notes
Total Number of Bats Observed Emerging from the Roost/Feature During the Survey:		

* If any bats return to the roost during the survey, then they should be subtracted from the tally.

Describe Emergence: Did bats emerge simultaneously, fly off in the same direction, loiter, circle, disperse, etc. If a radio-tagged bat was roosting in the tree, at what time did it emerge?

APPENDIX F: LINEAR PROJECT GUIDANCE

For linear projects (e.g., pipelines and roadways) >1 km in length (shorter lengths should be considered as a non-linear project), surveyors have the option to use either mist nets or acoustic detectors in any given 1-km segment of suitable habitat. A survey site may also cover other associated linear project facilities (e.g., access roads) that are located within a pre-determined distance of each segment. When possible, surveyors should seek out the best available survey sites located within the footprint of the project alignment, and directly adjacent to, or near, the alignment if no suitable sites are available within the footprint. Because the best survey sites for capturing/detecting bats may fall outside of a project footprint, the surveyor and project proponent should coordinate with the appropriate USFWS FO(s) to establish a project-specific maximum distance from the centerline or project boundary prior to initiating surveys.

Tentative survey site locations along linear projects should be included in a proposed study plan to be reviewed and approved by the USFWS FO(s). Adequate survey effort should be conducted within each approximate 1-km segment that contains suitable forested habitat along the proposed workspace. It is not appropriate to cumulatively add up each habitat block crossed until 1km of habitat has been traversed. Segments along a linear project that do not contain suitable habitat should be skipped until the next patch of suitable habitat is encountered (Figure 4). Establishing exactly how many survey sites are needed for P/A surveys along a linear project often involves some give and take particularly in fragmented habitat areas (Figure 4, rows B and C). The final number of survey sites could be greater than the minimum number of sites prescribed in the protocol to adequately cover the areas of suitable habitat to be impacted. When available, habitat quality and quantity (e.g., size and location of suitable maternity roost trees) from on-the-ground habitat assessments can be used to fine tune and guide the placement of survey sites. In some marginal habitat areas, the quality and quantity of the existing habitat may be low enough to justify skipping some survey segments (e.g., Figure 4, Site 11). Likewise, some isolated woodlots, fence lines or individual trees may be considered too isolated and/or small to independently support bats and may be skipped if the USFWS FO(s) concurs. Habitat suitability in fragmented areas should be assessed on a site-specific basis and consider habitat configuration and connectivity to other suitable habitat patches. In general, we recommend surveying a few more sites for a project than the absolute minimum required.

In instances where a mist netting survey has been proposed, but no suitable mist net sites can be found or accessed within a particular segment, biologists should contact the USFWS FO(s) for further guidance or ideally agree in advance as to how such situations will be handled when encountered in the field (e.g., an acoustic survey may be substituted). Similarly, if an area of forest habitat that seemed suitable from aerial photography appears to be unsuitable or of particularly low quality upon field inspection, then you should coordinate with the USFWS FO(s) to determine if an area may be exempted from surveys. To avoid problems, any significant departures from previously agreed to survey plans should be justified and coordinated with the USFWS FO(s) prior to leaving the field.

APPENDIX F: LINEAR PROJECT GUIDANCE

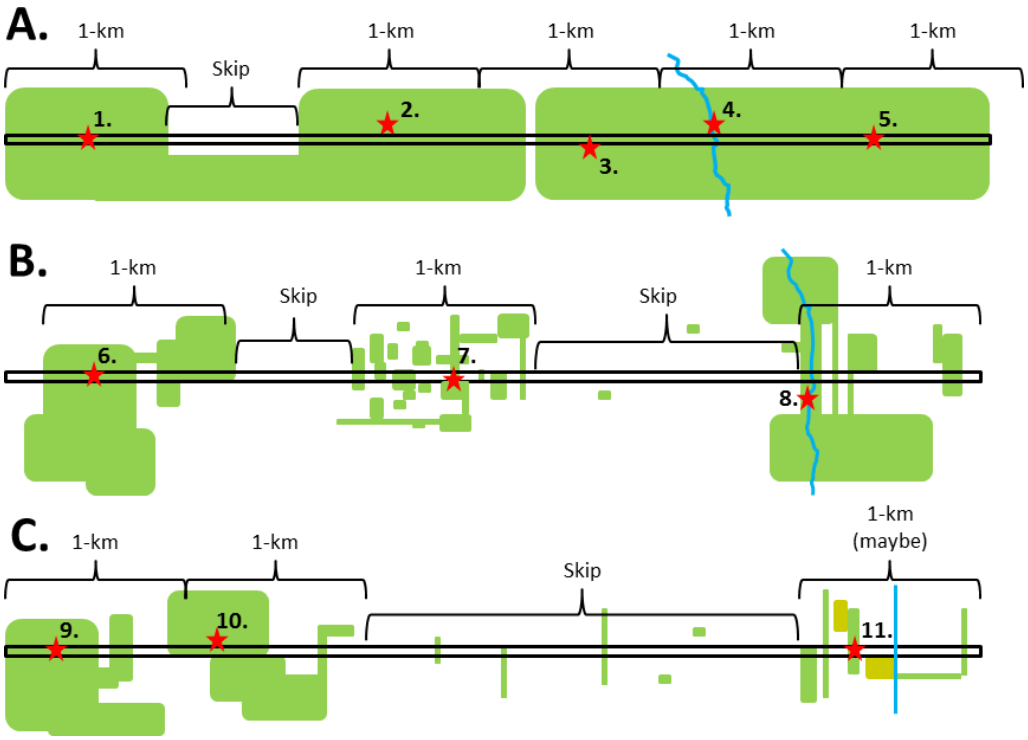

FIGURE 4. Conceptual linear project (black double lines) through relatively contiguous (A.) and fragmented (B. and C.) forested habitats (green patches) delineated into approximate 1-km survey sections. Numbered red stars represent suitable survey sites (1-11) on or near the project boundaries. Blue lines represent natural streams (A. and B.) and a ditch (C.). Yellow-green patches near Site 11 represent low-quality habitat.

APPENDIX G: THE OUTER–TIER GUIDANCE

Since early radio-tracking studies in Illinois, it has become standard practice for USFWS FOs to assume that an IBAT summer maternity colony will utilize suitable habitat within approximately 2.5 miles of its primary roost tree(s)/focal roosting area. However, if a reproductive adult female or juvenile IBAT is captured (or acoustically detected), but not radio-tracked to a roost site, then FOs typically assign its capture site a 5-mile conservation buffer and assume that its roost tree is located somewhere within 2.5 miles of the capture site. This approach is further detailed in the Service's IBAT Section 7 and Section 10 Guidance for Wind Energy Projects[67].

NOTE: The same principles used for the IBAT can be used for the NLEB using a 3-mile conservation buffer around capture/detections. Additionally, the outer-tier guidance may also be used for TCB presence/probable absence surveys using a 3-mile conservation buffer around capture/detections. "Outer-tier" guidance only applies to summer captures/detections (not hibernacula).

Because a 5-mile buffer encompasses four times more area than a 2.5-mile buffer (50,265 acres vs. 12,566 acres), it is reasonable to assume that only approximately 25% of a 5-mile buffered area is actually occupied by the documented IBAT summer maternity colony at any given time and that approximately 75% remains unoccupied or could be used by members of another yet undocumented colony(s). Therefore, if a subsequently proposed project is either ≤123 acres in size or affects ≤1% of existing suitable summer habitat within a 5-mile buffer (whichever is greater) but is situated ≥2.5 miles from the original capture/detection site, then it will have a relatively low probability of being within the true maternity colony home range (assuming suitable habitat is more or less evenly distributed in all directions from the capture site) (See Figures 5 & 6). Allowing project proponents of such "outer tier" projects to conduct a summer P/A survey for IBAT and/or NLEB using the standard survey level of effort (LOE) (as outlined in Appendix B and C) in such cases is reasonable and the additional survey data would 1) help refine the home range boundaries of the original colony, 2) confirm presence of additional colonies if present, 3) provide additional radio-tracking opportunities /roost tree locations, and 4) provide an option for project proponents to survey instead of always assuming presence.

Prior to emergence of WNS, NLEBs were widely distributed throughout much of the eastern U.S. and Canada. Although not nearly as common today, surveys show that the species continues to occur in pockets distributed throughout the WNS-impacted portion of its range. NLEB populations continue to remain stable in portions of the Southeast Coastal Plain (Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina) as well as in Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana where they are active year-round in forested or wooded habitats due to mild winter temperatures, and these populations, which are not dependent upon caves or mines for hibernation, may not be susceptible to WNS. Similarly, IBATs within the Northeast and Appalachian Recovery Units (RUs) have seen significant declines due to WNS; however, populations remain stable to increasing within the Midwest and Ozark-Central RUs (USFWS unpublished data 2023).

Due to the severity of the impact of WNS on populations across much of the hibernating NLEB and eastern IBAT RUs (i.e., Northeast and Appalachian) ranges, there is uncertainty where surviving NLEBs and IBATs are located in these portions of their ranges. To address this uncertainty, we recommend allowing project proponents whose project is either ≤123 acres in size or affects ≤1% of existing suitable summer habitat within a 5-mile (IBAT) or 3-mile (NLEB) buffer (whichever is greater) the opportunity to survey in both the inner-tier and outer-tier of known Hibernating Range NLEB buffers and IBAT buffers within the Northeast and Appalachian RUs when the buffered occurrence was prior to 2 years[68] after WNS was first confirmed in the state. We recommend coordinating with the local USFWS FO in the state where the proposed project survey is planned to determine whether inner-tier NLEB and/or IBAT

[67] Document is available on the USFWS website provided in the introduction.
[68] An alternative year may be used if the USFWS FO(s) has data to more precisely support when WNS affected abundance and distribution in their state.

buffers can be surveyed or not. Provided proponents use at least the prescribed minimum LOE for NLEBs and/or IBAT in these locations and the survey is approved by the Field Office, the USFWS would accept the results as evidence of presence/probable absence. For example, if WNS was confirmed in 2011, project proponents can survey both inner and outer tiers of a known buffer for presence/probable absence if the occurrence was in 2012 or earlier. For this example, presence/probable absence surveys could not be conducted in the inner tiers of occurrence buffers documented in 2013 and later.

NOTE: USFWS FO(s) may decide not to approve an outer-tier survey under the following circumstances: (1) If available forest habitat with a 5-mile (or 3-mile for NLEB) buffer is not more- or-less evenly distributed, but rather is highly clumped or restricted to a relatively narrow strip(s) (e.g., a riparian corridor); (2) <10% of a 5-mile (or 3-mile for NLEB) buffer contains suitable summer habitat; or (3) other site-specific reasons.

If a project proponent of an "outer-tier" project coordinates with the USFWS FO(s) upfront and conducts a valid summer mist-netting (Appendix B) or acoustic (Appendix C) survey using the appropriate LOE and does not capture/detect an IBAT and/or NLEB(s), then no IBAT or NLEB related restrictions will be required for that specific project area. However, all restrictions/ assumptions of IBAT and/or NLEB presence outside of a completed outer-tier project survey area shall remain intact indefinitely within the 5-mile (or 3-mile for NLEB) buffer zone or until additional negative survey data or discovery of roost trees indicate adjustments to a buffer are warranted by USFWS. Negative survey results from "outer-tier" projects are valid for 5 years for that project area. If an IBAT and/or NLEB(s) is captured/detected/radio-tracked during the survey, then the project area will be presumed to be occupied, restrictions will remain in place, and the USFWS FO(s) will reassess/adjust the original buffer(s) if warranted using the newly acquired bat location data.

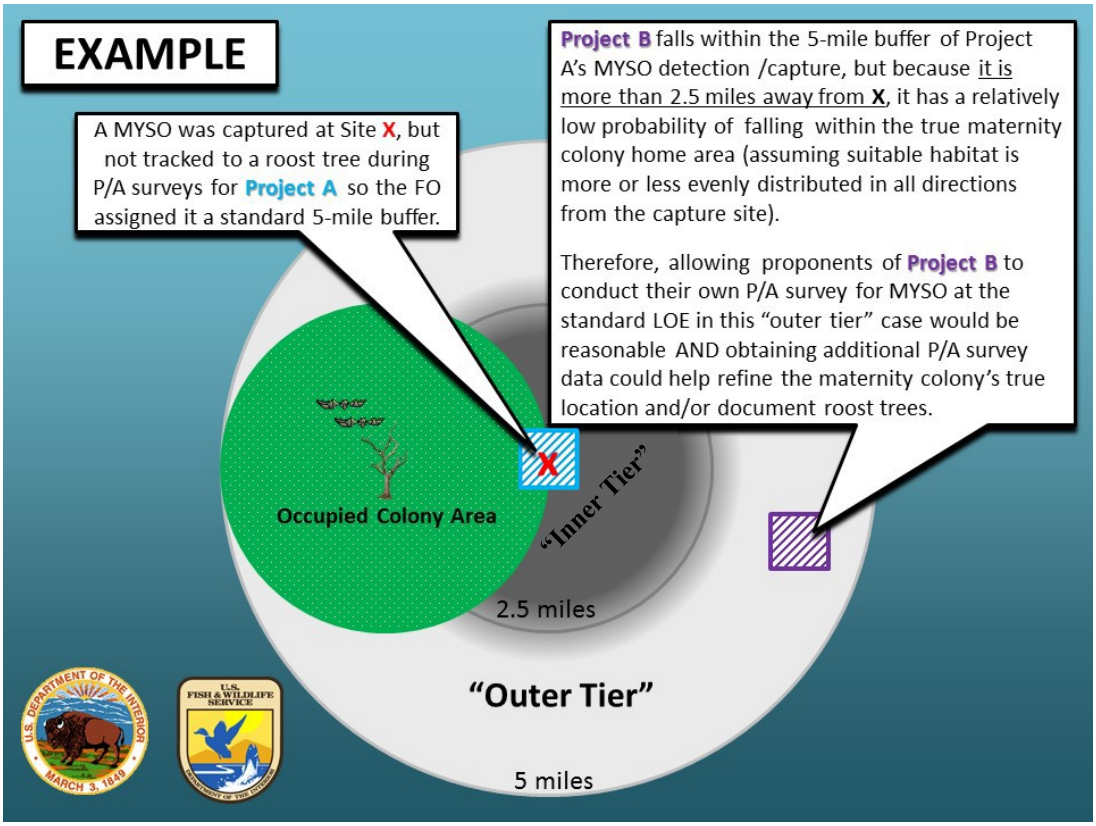

FIGURE 5. Graphical example depicting the proper application of the outer-tier guidance.

APPENDIX G: THE OUTER–TIER GUIDANCE

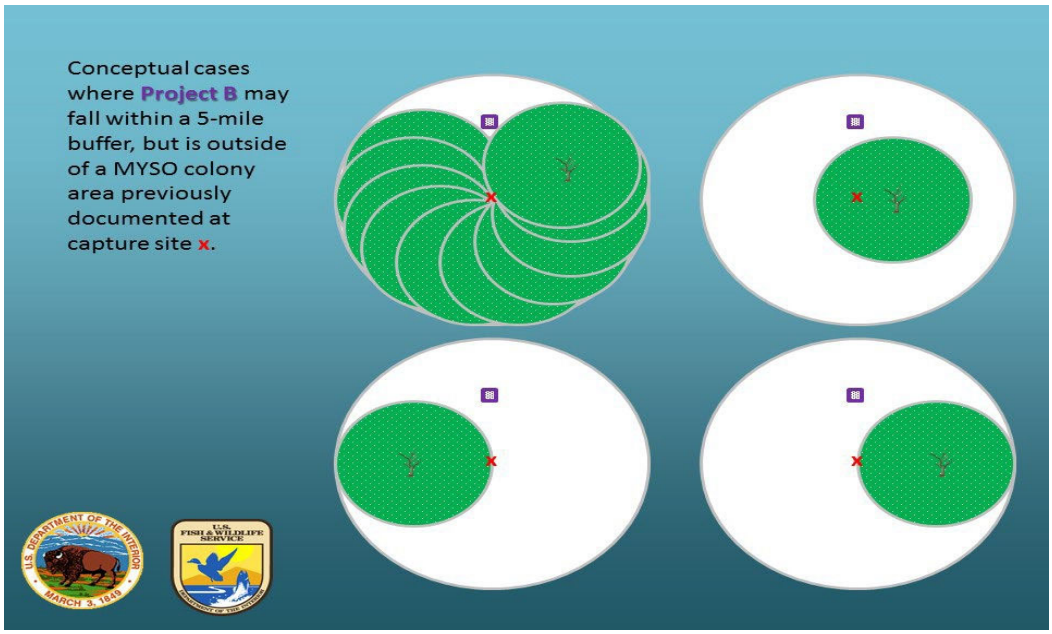

FIGURE 6. Hypothetical outer-tier scenarios where a proposed project area (depicted by a purple square) falls outside of the "true" IBAT maternity colony area(s) (depicted in green).

APPENDIX H: POTENTIAL HIBERNACULUM SURVEY GUIDANCE

Indiana and NLEBs have been documented using caves (and their associated sinkholes, fissures, and other karst features), as well as anthropogenic features such as mines and tunnels as winter hibernation habitat (i.e., hibernacula). Project proponents need to evaluate whether any potentially suitable IBAT and/or NLEB hibernacula exist within a proposed project area. This knowledge will be derived from a variety of sources. The following phased process should be followed to determine presence or probable absence of IBAT and/or NLEB in potential hibernacula:

NOTE: The potential hibernaculum survey guidance may also be used for TCB presence/probable absence surveys, including winter (internal) surveys, in portions of the TCB range that the species hibernates. TCBs use a wider variety and warmer hibernacula than what would often be considered as suitable for IBATs and NLEBs. Coordinate with the local USFWS FO(s) if you are proposing to use this guidance to survey for TCB.

PHASE 1 – INITIAL PROJECT SCREENING

Step 1. Coordinate with the USFWS FO(s) and appropriate state natural resource agencies regarding existing federally listed bat hibernaculum or other occurrence information.

Prior to initiating P/A surveys (Phase 2) of potential IBAT and/or NLEB hibernacula (as determined by the Phase 1 Habitat Assessment), the USFWS FO(s) and appropriate state natural resource agencies must be contacted to determine if any caves or other underground features have been previously documented as hibernacula or other habitat for federally listed bat species. Any proposed surveys of previously documented hibernacula must be coordinated directly with these agencies to ensure that adverse effects to listed species do not occur because of the survey.

Step 2. Desktop Analysis and Initial Field Reconnaissance.

After coordinating with the FO and appropriate state natural resource agency (when applicable), a desktop analysis and initial field reconnaissance should be completed by individuals with a natural resource degree or equivalent work experience and a solid understanding of karst topography and/or surface features associated with underground mines. These initial assessments can be completed at any time of year.

For all projects, a FO-approved field survey of all land within 0.5 miles of the edge of the project footprint (where access can be obtained) and documentation (e.g., a literature search, maps and information provided by local cave survey groups or grottos, review of aerial photography and topographical maps, previous mining records (if applicable), forest inventories, previous species survey reports, and the work of consultants or other designees) of all known caves and abandoned mines within 3 miles of the outside edge of the project footprint should be conducted. If caves or abandoned mines are found, further detail about the known or estimated underground extent of the cave/mine should be provided to the USFWS FO(s), including minimum and maximum depth of features and where those features are located on a map(s).

In general, underground openings can be deemed unsuitable as a hibernaculum and dismissed from further assessment and surveys if:

a) There is only one horizontal opening, and it is less than 6 inches (15.2 cm) in diameter;

b) Vertical shafts are < 1 foot (0.3 m) in diameter;

c) Passage continues < 50 feet (15.2 m) and terminates with no visible fissures that bats can access;

d) Openings are prone to flooding, collapsed shut and completely sealed, or otherwise are inaccessible to bats; and

e) Openings that have occurred recently (i.e., within the past 12 months) due to human activity or subsidence. (Include written documentation verifying this determination).

The results of initial field assessments should be submitted to the USFWS FO(s) and State regulatory partners (when applicable) for review and approval prior to proceeding to Step 3. FO- approved results from Step 2 will remain valid for a minimum of five years. **NOTE**: longer time frames may not be appropriate due to cave/mine dynamics.

Step 3. Conduct a Phase 1 Habitat Assessment of Potentially Suitable Hibernacula.

If underground openings are documented during field surveys in Step 2 and cannot be dismissed during initial project screening above, then a qualified biologist[69] will need to conduct a Phase 1 Habitat Assessment to determine whether bats using a potentially suitable hibernaculum within a project area could be adversely affected by the proposed project as described below (see Phase 1 Habitat Assessment Sample Data Sheet).

Habitat assessments should include all entrances or openings that will be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed project. This would include those caves (and their associated sinkholes, fissures, and other karst features), as well as anthropogenic features such as mines and tunnels that are within the project site or that are otherwise connected (i.e., by physical passageway, airflow or hydrologically) to any underground feature that will be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed project.

The results of a Phase 1 Habitat Assessment should be submitted to the USFWS FO(s) and State regulatory partners (when applicable) for review and approval prior to proceeding to Phase 2. FO-approved results from Step 3 will remain valid for a minimum of five years. **NOTE**: longer time frames may not be appropriate due to cave/mine dynamics.

PHASE 2 – PRESENCE/PROBABLE ABSENCE SURVEYS

Surveys to Confirm Use of Suitable Winter Habitat

If suitable winter habitat is discovered as a result of the Phase 1 Habitat Assessment above, do not alter, modify, or otherwise disturb entrances or internal passages of caves, mines, or other entrances to underground voids (potential hibernacula) within the action area before completing a Phase 2 survey. The survey protocols for determining occupancy are detailed below. Some surveys may require modification (or clarification) of these guidelines; therefore, submittal of a study plan and coordination with the USFWS FO(s) and state natural resource agency is necessary prior to initiating suitable winter habitat/hibernacula surveys. Submit results of completed summer and/or winter surveys to the appropriate FO(s) prior to clearing or altering of identified bat habitat. The USFWS FO(s) will review the results of P/A surveys conducted according to these guidelines for the purposes of determining whether IBAT and/or NLEB are occupying hibernacula in the project area and whether they may be adversely affected by any proposed actions.

[69] A qualified biologist is an individual who holds a USFWS Recovery Permit (Federal Fish and Wildlife Permit) for IBAT and/or NLEB in the state/region in which they are surveying. Alternatively, in States within Region 5 of the USFWS, state agencies assess qualifications and provide authorization to net, handle, and conduct hibernaculum surveys of/for IBAT and/or NLEB in that State (authorization is only valid in the State that provides the authorization). Several USFWS offices maintain lists of qualified bat surveyors, and if working in one of those states with authorizations in lieu of a Recovery Permits, the individual will either need to be on that list or submit qualifications to receive USFWS approval prior to conducting any field work.

APPENDIX H: POTENTIAL HIBERNACULUM SURVEY GUIDANCE

WINTER (INTERNAL), FALL, AND SPRING SURVEY PROTOCOLS FOR IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL BAT HIBERNACULA

White-nose syndrome (WNS) is a devastating fungal disease that has killed unprecedented numbers of hibernating bats in eastern North America. WNS and/or *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (Pd), the fungus causing the disease has been detected throughout the range of the IBAT, as well as most of the range of the NLEB. Users of this guidance must follow the recommendations provided in the most recent USFWS Cave Advisory[70] as they relate to reducing the potential for humans to disturb hibernating bats or inadvertently transporting Pd to uncontaminated bat habitats. All surveys conducted at caves/mines should be coordinated with the USFWS FO(s) and appropriate state natural resources agencies prior to initiation (see example USFWS Project Proposal Form).

Winter (Internal) Survey

Working near and within abandoned mines and caves can be inherently dangerous due to a variety of potential hazards (e.g., ceiling collapse and presence of toxic gases)[71]. Therefore, surveyors must thoroughly assess their work sites for any known and potential health and safety hazards and must use appropriate personal protective equipment and take proper precautions to avoid and minimize identified risks. Only sites that are deemed safe should be entered at the surveyor's discretion.

Potential hibernacula that are deemed safe to enter should be entered and all its accessible passages visually surveyed for the presence of IBAT during mid-winter (i.e., beginning January 1st and ending prior to March 1st of the same calendar year (also see Appendix 4 of the USFWS 2007 Indiana Bat Draft Recovery Plan: first revision). **NOTE:** The use of direct internal surveys is not adequate for NLEB due to the difficulty in visually detecting the species inside hibernacula (i.e., it typically roosts in deep cracks and crevices). Only properly trained and qualified individuals with the appropriate federal and/or state permits and equipment should attempt internal P/A surveys for the IBAT. If the qualified biologist, who completed the Phase 1 Habitat Assessment, does not have the necessary experience/permits to complete internal survey work, then this portion of the project should be subcontracted to another individual or group that does. If a site is unsafe or too difficult to enter or it is believed that significant portions of the underground system are inaccessible, it should be surveyed using the Fall or Spring emergence survey guidance to determine presence or probable absence of federally listed bat species, including the IBAT and/or NLEB (also see Sample Data Sheet for Fall or Spring Surveys of Potential Hibernacula).

Fall or Spring Emergence Survey

1A. Fall surveys of mine/cave entrances must be conducted between September 15 and October 31[72] and prior to any tree clearing by the project applicant. A minimum of one night of harp trap sampling per week for 6 weeks (i.e., 6 nights of sampling) is required at each suitable entrance as determined by the Phase 1 Habitat Assessment. Each night of sampling should be separated by at least one week of the survey window if weather conditions allow it. However, multiple nights of sampling per week can be accepted in the last two weeks of October if forecasted weather conditions

[70] https://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/press-release/updated-cave-advisory-recommendations-for-managing-access-to-subterranean-bat-roosts-to-reduce-the-impacts-of-white-nose-syndrome-in-bats

[71] The Service highly recommends that surveyors seek counsel from an occupational health and safety professional(s) prior to working underground or under other potentially hazardous field conditions.

[72] Timing of fall surveys may need adjustment based on location and weather conditions leading up to the survey. Coordination with local USFWS FO(s) and State regulatory partners (when applicable) during development of the study plan/project proposal form is required.

require it, at least 3 nights of sampling were completed during the first 3 weeks of the survey period, and the modification is approved by the appropriate USFWS FO(s). Survey effort may be suspended if no bats (of any species) are captured after the first 2 nights of acceptable survey effort in the fall. Surveys of a potential hibernaculum are in addition to any summer P/A surveys that may be required for a proposed project.

OR

1B. Spring surveys of mine/cave entrances must be conducted between April 1 and April 21[73] and prior to any tree clearing by the project applicant. Conducting surveys during the spring emergence is typically more complex than conducting fall surveys due to a greater number of uncontrollable factors (e.g., weather related factors). Thus, a minimum of three nights of harp trap sampling per week for three weeks (i.e., 9 nights of sampling) is required at each suitable entrance as determined by the Phase 1 Habitat Assessment. Due to the need to monitor weather conditions closely, each proposed spring mine/cave survey must be coordinated with the USFWS FO(s) and appropriate state natural resource agencies prior to surveying to ensure that adequate survey results are achieved. Surveys of a potential hibernaculum are in addition to any summer P/A surveys that may be required for a proposed project.

2. Unless otherwise approved by the USFWS FO[74], the capture of an IBAT and/or NLEB during a fall or spring mine/cave survey requires that the applicant complete three additional nights of sampling per week for three consecutive weeks (9 additional nights LOE) to determine the relative significance of the mine(s) and/or cave(s) and their associated underground workings to the IBAT and/or NLEB. If the mine/cave survey season (i.e., September 15 to October 31 for fall sampling and April 1 to April 21 for spring sampling) ends prior to the completion of the required additional sampling, then sampling must be completed the following fall or spring.

3. Harp traps are the preferred method for sampling entrances as they are less stressful on captured bats. Mist nets can also be deployed along corridors immediately adjacent to the entrance to increase survey effectiveness. Mist nets may also be used at the entrance but only when the mine or cave configurations are not suitable to harp trapping. The use of mist nets must be approved by the USFWS FO(s) and appropriate state natural resource agency prior to initiation of survey. Mist nets should be made of the finest, lowest visibility mesh commercially available. Currently, this is 2-ply, 50-denier nylon (denoted 50/2). The mesh should be approximately 1.5-inch in size. No other specific mist netting hardware is required.

4. Entrances must be entirely enclosed by the survey gear when harp trapping. If mist nets are used, entrances should not be entirely enclosed by the survey gear.

5. All entrances that are potentially inter-connected should be surveyed on the same night. In cases where one team of surveyors cannot feasibly sample all entrances in one night, a modified method could also be used; however, a minimum of 100 feet should separate surveyed vs un-surveyed entrances in cases where numerous entrances to a potential hibernaculum exist. This method should only be used in situations where the entrances are known to be interconnected. In this modified method, half of the interconnected entrances are surveyed on the first night, and the other half of the entrances are completely blocked using bird- exclusion netting, plastic sheets, or other impervious material. On the second night, survey efforts are reversed. Any materials used to block the entrances must be removed each night immediately after conducting the survey. No entrances should be left blocked over-night.

[73] Timing of spring surveys may need adjustment based on location and weather conditions leading up to the survey. Coordination with local USFWS FO(s) and State regulatory partners (when applicable) during development of the study plan/project proposal form is required.
[74] Additional survey effort may not be recommended in cases where a project proponent agrees to modify their project to completely avoid adverse impacts to newly documented hibernacula and if abandoned mine openings can be closed with a USFWS FO approved bat friendly gate design.

APPENDIX H: POTENTIAL HIBERNACULUM SURVEY GUIDANCE

Plastics or other materials used to block the entrances should be removed each night immediately after conducting the survey. Entrances that are not connected (e.g., as determined by existing mine maps) do not have to be surveyed simultaneously.

6. The sampling period should begin at sunset and continue for at least 5 hours each night. During this time, harp traps (most preferable method) and/ or mist nets (acceptable method, but less preferable from a bat-handling perspective) should be monitored for captured bats on 30- and 10-minute intervals, respectively, to minimize the number of bats that escape while limiting disruption of the swarm in the fall or emergence in the spring. Surveyors monitoring set-ups must minimize noise, lights and movement near the traps or nets. Monitoring with night vision or thermal cameras can be beneficial: (a) bats can be detected when they are captured, (b) any evidence of bats escaping the trap or net can be documented, and (c) monitoring with night vision or thermal camera also allows the biologist to assess the effectiveness of each trap/net placement (i.e., if bats are active near the set-up but avoiding capture), which may allow for adjustments that will increase capture success on subsequent nights. There should be no other disturbance near the set-up, other than to check traps/nets and remove bats. Biologists should be prepared to cut the net if a bat is severely entangled and cannot be safely extracted within 3 or 4 minutes or reduce harp trap check intervals to less than 30 minutes when capture rates are high. Capture and handling are stressful for bats. Emphasis should be on minimizing handling and holding bats to as short a time as possible to achieve field study objectives. Bats should not be held for more than 30 minutes after capture or as allowed in federal and state permits.

7. If captures increase during the survey or if 6 or more bats of any species were captured during the last hour of monitoring, the survey effort must continue until activity declines or fewer than 6 bats are captured per hour. A total of 30 (fall) or 45 (spring) hours of sampling should take place for a mine/cave survey to be approved.

8. Severe weather adversely affects the activity levels of bats. If any of the following weather conditions exist during the fall or spring mine/cave survey, the time and duration of such conditions must be noted on the data sheets and in the survey report, and the survey effort for that night must be repeated: (a) winds sufficiently strong and variable enough to move equipment (i.e., traps or nets) more than 50 percent of the time; and (b) precipitation, including rain and/or fog, that does not stop within 30 minutes or continues intermittently during the survey period; and (c) temperatures that are less than 50° F (10° C) for the first 2 hours, and that drop below 40° F (4.4° C) at any point during the survey.

9. All bats captured during fall or spring surveys must be temporarily marked with a USFWS FO-approved non-toxic material that will last for the remainder of the survey period to identify any recaptures during subsequent survey nights.

10. If IBAT and/or NLEB (or other federally listed species) are captured during fall or spring mine/cave surveys, notification to the local USFWS FO(s) is required within 48 hours (or in accordance with permit conditions), and the sex and reproductive condition of the bat and GPS coordinates of the capture site should be provided.

11. A bat detector/roost logger should be deployed at each entrance during sampling to monitor bat activity when trapping or netting. Bat passes should be monitored and tallied hourly. Bat tallies should be reported along with the time sampled. Report the beginning time and number of bat passes in hour blocks. Analysis of recorded bat calls to attempt species identification should not be completed as these calls are not expected to be foraging calls.

12. Noise, the use of lights, or other potential disturbances should be kept to, at a minimum, no closer than 300 feet (91.4 m) of the sampling site.

APPENDIX H: POTENTIAL HIBERNACULUM SURVEY GUIDANCE

13. At least one member of each survey crew must hold, and have in his or her possession, a valid endangered species collection permit issued by USFWS[7581] and/or the appropriate state natural resource agency that allows the qualified biologist to collect bats, including federally listed species. All activities must be carried out with strict adherence to permit conditions and authorizations specified in your federal permit, as well as any State authorizations. A qualified biologist(s) must (1) select/approve harp trap/mist-net sets, (2) be physically present at each site throughout the survey period, and (3) confirm all bat species identifications. This biologist may oversee other biological technicians and manage set-ups near one another as long as the traps/nets are being monitored as defined in bullet 6 above.

14. All survey efforts must follow the most recent USFWS decontamination protocols regarding WNS.

[75] Surveyors working in States within Region 5 of the USFWS only require a permit from the State where the survey is taking place.

APPENDIX H: POTENTIAL HIBERNACULUM SURVEY GUIDANCE

Phase I Habitat Assessment Sample Data Sheet

Location _____

Observers (include permit numbers) _____

Latitude _____ **Longitude**[76] _____

Date ___ **Time** _____ **Temp (outside)** _____

	Opening #1	Opening #2	Opening #3	Opening #4
Opening Type (e.g., cave, portal, shaft)				
Opening vertical or horizontal				
Opening Size: Height x Width (or Diameter)				
Internal Dimensions: Height x Width				
Slope (up or down from entrance)				
Entrance Stable?				
Direction of Airflow (In or out?)				
Amount of Airflow (e.g., none, slight, heavy)				
Internal air warmer or cooler than outside temp.?				
Evidence of collapse?				
Ceiling Condition				
Amount of water in opening				
Evidence of past flooding?				
Observed length of internal passage				
Distance to nearest water source				
% Canopy Cover at entrance				
Foraging Signs? (e.g., moth wings)				

Are any portals suspected or known to be connected? Which ones?

Any observable side passages?

Additional comments:

Entry of abandoned mine portals, quarries, or caves can be extremely dangerous because of the potential for ceiling collapse and presence of toxic gases. Safety or health problems may occur as a result of entering abandoned mines. The FWS does not authorize or require anyone to enter any potential hibernaculum that is or could be unsafe while implementing surveys. These guidelines do not require any applicant or applicant employee, consultant, lessee, or other such designee to enter any cave, quarry, or mine portal.

[76] Provide coordinates for each opening.

APPENDIX H: POTENTIAL HIBERNACULUM SURVEY GUIDANCE

Sample Data Sheet for Fall or Spring Surveys of a Potential Hibernaculum

DATE:				TEMPERATURE		Start:		End:
PRECIPITATION*:						WIND*:		
MOONLIGHT:				TIME		Start:		End:
PERSONNEL (include permit numbers):							LOCATION (lat/long):	
Time	Species	Age	Sex	Repro Cond.	RFA (mm)	Mass (g)	Flight Direction (in or out)	Notes and General Comments

***Precipitation and Wind should be measured hourly**
****Repro. Cond (Reproductive Condition): (P) pregnant; (L) lactating; (PL) post-lactating; (NR) non-reproductive, (TD) testes descended**

APPENDIX I: CALCULATING LOE FOR A COMBINED ACOUSTIC AND MIST-NETTING SURVEY

Numerous publications discuss the general advantages of using acoustics and mist-netting in tandem for inventorying bat communities (Kunz and Brock 1975, Kuenzi and Morrison 1998, Murray et al. 1999, O'Farrell and Gannon 1999, Flaquer et al. 2007). One of the stated objectives of the IBAT and NLEB survey guidelines is to maximize the potential for detection/capture of these species at a minimum acceptable LOE. The USFWS has long recognized that offering a combination acoustic and mist-netting option has advantages over the current single technique options presented in Appendices B and C; however, developing the methodology to calculate an acceptable LOE for a combined approach is challenging because our recommended LOE approaches were calculated based exclusively on either mist-netting or acoustic datasets.

Some advantages of a combined approach are that it provides flexibility to address challenging survey conditions (e.g., situations where mist-net set-ups are limited or the reverse). These situations are not uncommon, especially for linear projects which can pass through highly variable habitats. A combined approach provides project proponents with the ability to reduce overall survey time and cost while still providing for a suitable LOE. Finally, a combined approach alleviates challenges associated with number of sites/acoustic locations and limits on number of survey nights per net-site for projects impacting smaller acreages of suitable habitat.

To calculate the mist-netting and acoustic LOE using the combined approach the surveyor must consider survey LOE as a percent, and then balance the netting percent against the acoustic percent, which is what the guidance inherently does in setting the existing sole mist-netting and acoustic LOE standards.

- X mist-net nights of effort/123 acres = Y acoustic nights of effort/123 acres

First, determine the proportion of effort that will be applied using either the mist-netting or acoustic method. The decision to use mist-netting or acoustic should be made with consideration to the project area and the total number of high-quality survey sites of each survey method available for the species (i.e., IBAT and/or NLEB) the survey is being conducted for. Next, refer to Table 2 of the guidance and identify the highest LOE for the selected method and species' being surveyed. Finally, use the information above to calculate the total survey LOE that would be accomplished by the previously selected method at high-quality mist-net sets or acoustic locations for the proposed P/A survey.

Proportion of Effort (PoE) for combined LOE should be calculated as follows:

A. PoE using mist-netting x highest mist-netting LOE for surveyed species' = Total survey LOE in nights accomplished by mist-netting

   – or –

   PoE using acoustics x highest acoustic LOE for surveyed species' = Total survey LOE in nights accomplished by acoustics

Once the number of nights of the total survey LOE to be conducted by either method is known, then it can be used to determine the minimum required LOE for the other survey method. To calculate the necessary LOE for the second survey method, simply subtract the calculated PoE (see A, above) from 1 and multiply that proportion by the highest overall LOE for the second method for the species' being surveyed from Table 2.

B. (1 - PoE used in A, above) x highest overall species LOE prescribed for the method not used in

APPENDIX I. CALCULATING LOE FOR A COMBINED ACOUSTIC AND MIST-NETTING SURVEY

A = Total number of survey nights necessary to meet the recommended LOE using the second method.

C. Round nights calculated in A and B up to nearest whole number.

EXAMPLE: The construction of a new bourbon distribution center (non-linear project) in KY falls within the range of IBAT and NLEB according to IPaC. A Phase 1 Habitat Assessment (see Appendix A) determined that 95 acres of suitable habitat for both species would be permanently removed to construct the project. The permitted bat biologist contracted to complete the P/A survey calculated that 35% of the project area could be surveyed with high-quality mist-netting set-ups.
Using the simple equation in A above, a total of 3 nights of mist-netting effort (0.35 x 6 = 2.1; rounded up) are recommended for this project impacting under 123 acres of suitable habitat. Using equation B above, the proposed project would need a total of 10 nights of acoustic effort ([1 – 0.35] x 14 = 9.10; rounded up) for the proposed project.

For the USFWS to approve a combined mist-netting and acoustic survey, the survey must be completed as described below:

1) There must be a minimum of two mist-net sets and two acoustic locations proposed in the study plan and surveyed to be accepted by the USFWS FO(s).
2) Each mist-netting set may only be surveyed two nights (either consecutive or otherwise) if a combined mist-netting/acoustic survey is proposed.
3) Surveyors should distribute mist-netting sets and acoustic locations throughout the project area or adjacent habitats. In most cases, net sets and acoustic locations should be at least 656 feet (200 meters) apart. If closer spacing is determined to be necessary or beneficial (e.g., multiple suitable habitats and acoustic sites immediately adjacent to each other), sufficient justification must be provided in the study plan, approved by the USFWS FO(s), and submitted as part of the survey report to the USFWS FO(s).
4) The combined mist-netting and acoustic survey, including the calculation of LOEs for each method, must be proposed and submitted for approval to the USFWS FO(s) with the study plan. The study plan must also include written justification for the use of the mixed effort including how the proposal will lead to improved survey quality. The mixed LOE may be adjusted before the beginning of the survey with written approval from the USFWS FO(s); however, no modifications are allowed once the survey has started.
5) Because the combined approach represents a single LOE for individual project areas, under no scenario can a surveyor use either mist-netting or acoustic Phase 2 surveys to challenge the other methods results. If a species is documented to be present with one method but not the other, then the USFWS FO(s) will still consider it present in the context of a subsequent consultation or other decision-making process.
6) Except for 1-5 above, all other guidance provided in Appendices B and C apply to individual mist-netting sets and acoustic locations under this combined survey approach.

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APPENDIX J: GUIDANCE FOR SURVEYING YEAR-ROUND ACTIVE NLEBs

A portion of the NLEB's range overlaps with coastal areas of the eastern and southern U.S. where NLEB behavior, habits and habitat use differ significantly from the rest of the species' range. Bats may be active in these areas (see Figure 7) at any time of year and have not been documented utilizing traditional hibernation strategies found in the rest of the species range. Because of this, the USFWS collated and analyzed mist-netting data from local partners and worked with USGS and Virginia Tech to calculate year-round active NLEB minimum recommended LOE for mist-net surveys to provide expanded survey opportunities where allowed (also see Armstrong et al. 2023). Both acoustic and mist-netting techniques may be used in this region as a presence/probable absence method (Phase 2 surveys). Alternatively, mist-netting can be conducted for the purpose of attempting to capture NLEBs after detection during acoustic presence/probable absence surveys (Phase 3 surveys). The same recommendations (e.g., habitat assessments, personnel, coordination with USFWS FOs, nightly survey period, equipment, net/detector placement, checking nets, weather and other environmental conditions (temperature and precipitation), analysis of recorded echolocation calls, radio-tracking, emergence surveys, linear project guidance, outer-tier guidance, etc.) provided in other guidance appendices apply for either use of mist-netting or acoustics in the year-round active portion of the NLEB's range unless specifically addressed below.

NOTE: Where we consider the TCB active year-round (see Appendix L, Figure 9), surveyors can use these survey protocols applying the year-round active NLEB level of effort (LOE) with the following limitations: (1) an acoustic or combined acoustic/mist-net survey must be completed in portions of the range where IPaC identifies TCB as the only species; and (2) qualitative analysis is necessary for linear projects when Kaleidoscope Pro software produces an MLE > 0.05 for all site-nights and 10 or more passes are auto-classified as potentially belonging to TCB at any site-night. If you choose not to manually vet calls meeting these criteria, then you should assume presence of TCB for the project. Coordinate with the local USFWS FO(s) if you are proposing to use this guidance to survey for TCB to determine which LOE is appropriate for the specific project area.

SURVEY SEASON FOR YEAR-ROUND ACTIVE NLEBs: March 1 – October 15

While NLEBs may be captured in every month of the year in occupied coastal plain regions, the late fall/early winter is not an optimal time to conduct surveys because of lower and inconsistent temperatures as well as reduced availability of insect prey. Capture of reproductive adult females[77] (i.e., pregnant, lactating, or post-lactating) and/or young of the year between March 1 – October 15 confirms year-round presence of NLEB and the presence of a maternity colony in the area. Since adult males and non-reproductive females have commonly been found summering with maternity colonies, radio-tracking results will be relied upon to help determine the presence or absence of a maternity colony or large concentrations of bats in the area when only males and/or non-reproductive females are captured.

[77] We recognize that the reproductive condition of captured female NLEBs in early spring may not be possible; however, available data indicates NLEBs are not migrating to different areas from summer to winter so it is likely many of those adult females are indicative of the presence of maternity colonies.

Likewise, detection of NLEBs using acoustic equipment and approved[78] software program(s) confirms year-round presence in the project area.

MINIMUM PRESENCE/ABSENCE LEVEL OF EFFORT

The level of mist-netting or acoustic survey effort required for a project in the year-round active portion of the NLEB range will be dependent upon the overall acreage of suitable habitat that may be impacted by the action (directly or indirectly). To determine the survey effort, quantify the amount of suitable habitat within the project area. For projects where impacts other than tree removal are likely (e.g., collisions with infrastructure), ensure that presence/probable absence surveys are designed to cover all suitable habitat within the entire project area (where exposure to any kind of impacts may be anticipated) and NOT just the locations where tree removal is planned. Additional guidance for linear projects is available in Appendix F.

Year-Round Active NLEB Mist-netting LOE: (also see Figure 1 and Table 2)

Linear projects: a minimum of 2 net nights per km (0.6 miles) of suitable habitat (see Appendix F).

Non-linear projects: a minimum of 6 net nights per 123 acres (0.5 km2) of suitable habitat.

After 2 consecutive nights of netting at the same location without capturing target species, you must change net locations or wait at least 2 calendar nights before resuming netting at the same location.

a) If no capture of NLEB(s), then no further surveys are recommended.

b) If capture of NLEB(s), then stop or proceed to Phase 4 as previously decided in coordination with the FO.

Range-wide NLEB Acoustic LOE: (also see Figure 1 and Table 2)

Linear projects: a minimum of 4 detector nights per km (0.6 miles) of suitable habitat (see Appendix F).

Non-linear projects: a minimum of 14 detector nights per 123 acres (0.5 km2) of suitable habitat.

A minimum of 2 detector locations per 123 acre "site" shall be sampled until at least 14 detector nights has been completed over the course of at least 2 calendar nights (may be consecutive).

[78]For surveyors planning optional TCB P/A acoustic surveys in western states where the TCB range overlaps with western bat species and TCBs are year-round active for 2024, note that no acoustic ID software programs are approved for this portion of the TCB range. Refer to optional TCB survey guidance (see FAQ) and use of candidate software programs for 2024.

APPENDIX J. GUIDANCE FOR SURVEYING YEAR-ROUND ACTIVE NLEBs

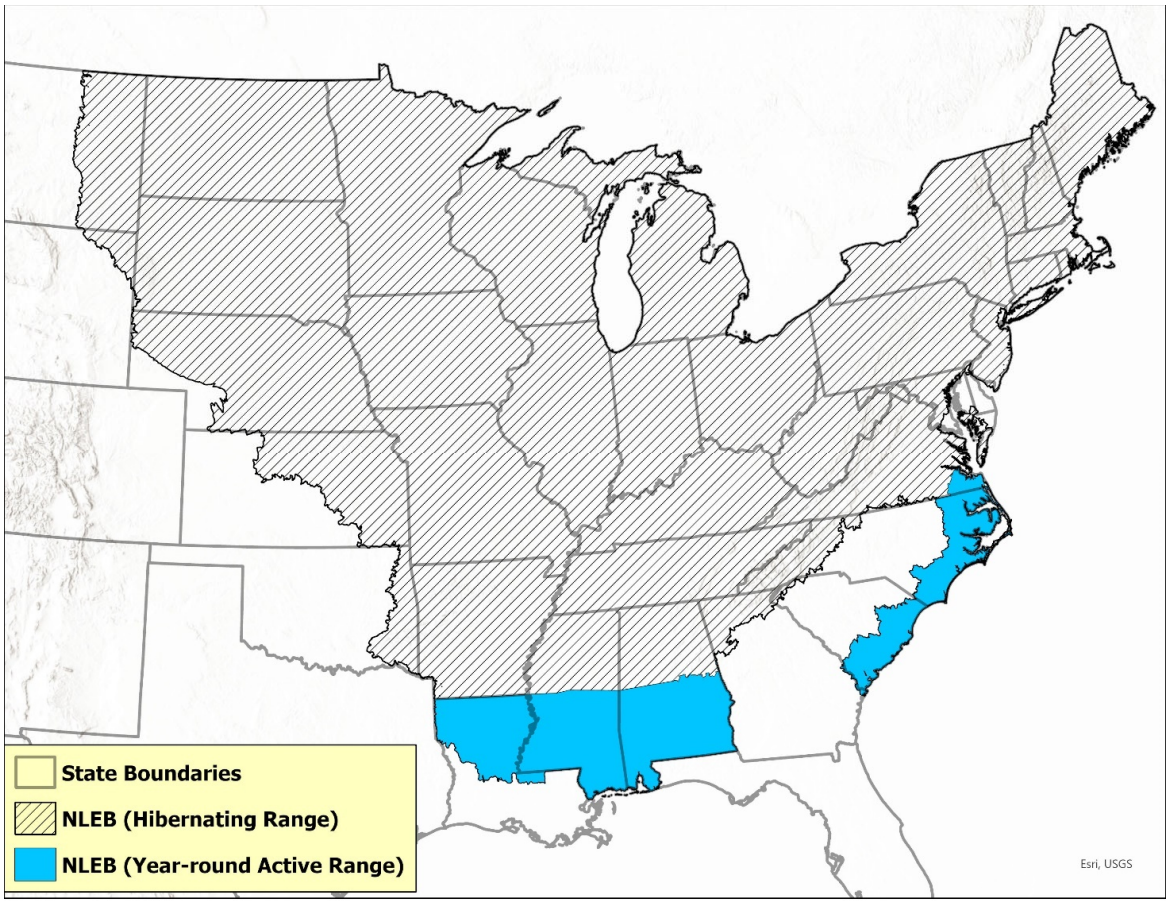

FIGURE 7. Areas delineated for use of year-round active NLEB survey guidance.

APPENDIX K: ASSESSING AND SURVEYING BRIDGES AND CULVERTS FOR BAT USE

Roadway transportation structures, specifically bridges and culverts, can provide suitable roosting habitat for bats. At least 24 North American bat species have been documented using bridges and culverts as roosting sites (Keeley and Tuttle 1999) and our understanding of the frequency of use improves as efforts increase to consider transportation structures as potential bat habitat. Georgia Department of Natural Resources reports presence of bats or guano at 20% of surveyed bridges and > 30% of surveyed culverts (GADNR, unpublished data 2023). Detweiler and Bernard (2023). conducted a literature review of 75 published studies finding that the use of bridges varies greatly across the landscape due to climatic factors, availability of natural roosts, and structural design. NLEBs and IBATs have been found using bridges and/or culverts throughout their ranges, as well as other species of conservation concern, such as the proposed endangered TCB. Use of this protocol is acceptable for TCB in 2024. Bats have been documented throughout the United States using bridges and culverts as maternity sites, hibernation sites, temporary resting sites during foraging, and during periods of staging and swarming. Often bridges are documented as important roosting locations during the active seasons (staging, maternity, and swarming; Detweiler and Bernard 2023, Keeley and Tuttle 1999) whereas culverts are often recorded as winter roost sites in areas where suitable cave habitat may be lacking, especially in the southern United States (USFWS 2022). However, there are exceptions to these generalizations and bats may use bridges or culverts at various times throughout their life histories.

A culvert[79] is a round or rectangular-shaped structure hydraulically and structurally designed to convey water, sediment, debris, and, in many cases, aquatic and terrestrial organisms through roadway embankments (Figure 8). Roadway culverts are usually composed of concrete or corrugated metal but can also be constructed of timber or PVC piping. Bridges[80] are vehicular or pedestrian structures that are larger and more structurally open than culverts and may span over waterways, various uplands, or urban areas. Bridges are constructed in numerous designs and are often composed of concrete, metal, wood, or a combination of these materials (Figure 9).

These guidelines describe who and what is needed to conduct surveys, and when and how to determine if bats, including IBAT, NLEB, and/or TCB, are using bridges and/or culverts as habitat. Bats' use of bridges and culverts as roosts varies considerably and depends on numerous factors such as structure type (including design and structural condition), area geography, surrounding habitat, availability of natural bat roosts in the

[79] The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) defines a culvert as a structure comprised of one or more barrels or cells, beneath an embankment and designed structurally to account for soil-structure interaction. These structures are hydraulically and structurally designed to convey water, sediment, debris, and, in many cases, aquatic and terrestrial organisms through roadway embankments. Culvert barrels have many sizes and shapes and have inverts that are either integral or open, i.e., supported by spread or pile-supported footings. A culvert typically has soil materials (i.e., backfill) between the travel way (e.g., road or rail or trail) and actual culvert structure (i.e., barrels, cells). To support dead loads and live loads (e.g., cars, trucks, trains, pedestrians, etc.), the culvert consists of those barrels or cells (typically concrete, metal, or plastic material), backfill, and soil bedding underneath the culvert. In comparison, a bridge typically uses structural components and elements in the deck, superstructure and substructure (abutments and piers) to support those dead and live loads.

[80] FHWA defines a bridge as a structure including supports erected over a depression or an obstruction, such as water, highway, or railway, and having a track or passageway for carrying traffic or other moving loads. A bridge typically uses structural components and elements in the deck, superstructure and substructure (abutments and piers) to support dead and live loads. Bridges typically have an opening of more than 20 feet (measured along the centerline of the roadway) between under copings of abutments, spring lines of arches, or extreme ends of openings for multiple boxes.

vicinity, and seasonality of activity (e.g., year-round active range vs. hibernating range).Due to the numerous factors influencing bat use of bridges and culverts, both seasonally and geographically, the appropriate time of year for assessments should be coordinated with your local USFWS FO(s) and respective state wildlife agency(ies). Surveys resulting in probable absence for IBAT and NLEB are valid for two years[81] if this guidance is followed and the survey report is approved by the local USFWS FO(s). Validity timeframes for other bat species should be coordinated with your local USFWS FO(s) and respective state wildlife agency(ies). Those practitioners utilizing the Programmatic Biological Opinion in conjunction with Federal Highway Administration, Federal Railroad Administration, and Federal Transit Administration for Transportation Projects in the Range of the IBAT and NLEB, should follow these guidelines for completing assessments of bridges or culverts.

PERSONNEL

Before performing assessments for bats on bridges or culverts, surveyors should coordinate with their local USFWS FO(s) and respective state wildlife agency(ies) regarding potential field training opportunities that may be required. At a minimum, surveyors should view the USFWS's virtual bat and transportation structures training[82] before conducting field assessments. Additional trainings may be available in specific states.[83] We recommend individuals conducting reviews for bats use the included sample data form at the end of this Appendix to submit with your survey report as it will ensure all the necessary information is provided to the USFWS FO(s) and expedite review of your study plan and survey report. If you choose to submit a different data form with your survey report, please ensure, at a minimum, it includes all information requested in the sample data form. We also encourage the incorporation of the minimum data field requirements for contributing bridge and culvert assessment data into the North American Bat Monitoring (NABat) database; however, it is not required. Individuals assessing bridges and culverts should employ appropriate safety measures in conducting these reviews and avoid touching any bats.

EQUIPMENT

The following equipment is highly recommended at a minimum to complete bridge or culvert assessments for bats.

- A high-powered flashlight, headlamp, or spotlight (> 600 lumens)
- Binoculars and/or spotting scope
- Digital camera with video recording capability
- Data forms and writing utensil
- Sturdy footwear. Depending on conditions, waders or muck boots may be preferred
- Decontamination[84] equipment if within white-nose syndrome positive area
- Personal protective equipment, according to organizational or agency requirements

[81] The timeframe of two years is to remain consistent with the Programmatic Biological Opinion for Transportation Projects in the Range of the IBAT and NLEB

[82] Virtual Training available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w3g9HDQFi3A

[83] In Georgia: To express interest in annual field training or additional online materials, please contact the USFWS Georgia Field Office or the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Nongame Conservation Section
In New Jersey: To express interest in field training, please contact the USFWS New Jersey Field Office or the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Endangered and Nongame Species Program
In Indiana: Online training required by Indiana Department of Transportation is available here.

[84] Please refer to the White-nose Syndrome Decontamination Protocol available here.

APPENDIX K: ASSESSING & SURVEYING BRIDGES & CULVERTS FOR BAT USE

The following equipment may be beneficial or advisable depending on conditions at the site, level of difficulty in completing a thorough assessment, safety requirements of your institution, or other site-specific factors.

- Mirror with telescoping handle for viewing tight spaces
- Acoustic bat detectors
- Dust mask or KN95/N95 mask
- Cellular phone
- Handheld GPS
- Easily removed, protective coveralls and change of clothes if access requires crawling
- Guano sample collection materials
- Endoscope, borescope, or similar camera and light, perhaps attached to a telescoping pole. It is recommended to choose a camera with the option to view live footage in real time
- Specialized equipment such as ladders, kayaks or other floating equipment, or under bridge inspection vehicles, etc. may be useful in some circumstances

APPENDIX K: ASSESSING & SURVEYING BRIDGES & CULVERTS FOR BAT USE

FIGURE 8. Representative culvert structures of various types, including a box culvert in Indiana (top; photo by USFWS); a round, concrete pipe culvert design in Georgia (bottom left; photo provided by Georgia Department of Natural Resources); and a corrugated metal pipe culvert design in Missouri (bottom right; photo provided by L. Droppelman).

APPENDIX K: ASSESSING & SURVEYING BRIDGES & CULVERTS FOR BAT USE

FIGURE 9. Representative bridges with documented bat use, including a bridge with metal struts in Indiana (top; photo provided by Indiana Department of Transportation) and a concrete bridge in North Carolina (bottom; photo provided by North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission).

ASSESSING BRIDGES/CULVERTS FOR BATS

Bridges and culverts can have many characteristics suitable for bat occupation. Many bat species will take advantage of cracks, crevices, voids, and other openings within structures. These can include cracks and openings caused by structural deterioration (e.g., cracking in concrete, rusted metal, etc.) and typical spaces existing via structural design (e.g., expansion joints). Bats may also roost in the open on rough surfaces or within drain or weep holes, along guardrails, and within jersey barriers or other voids. Additionally, many bridges and culvert designs create artificial “cave-like” environments where conditions are generally stable, thus allowing bats to use for extended periods of torpor, particularly in areas where natural cave-like habitats may be limited.

APPENDIX K: ASSESSING & SURVEYING BRIDGES & CULVERTS FOR BAT USE

Step 1. Initial Assessment of Suitability and Safety

Prior to conducting any bridge or culvert assessment, a thorough safety assessment of each structure should be conducted to identify any potential health or safety hazards to surveyors and bystanders. Road traffic, unstable surfaces (e.g., riprap, deep sediment, ice, and swift moving water), or enclosed spaces are examples of some potential safety concerns. Surveyors should use appropriate personal protective equipment and take proper precautions to avoid and minimize identified risks according to their own comfort level and following the safety recommendations and guidelines required by their organization and local authorities. Only structures that are deemed safe should be entered at the surveyor's discretion.

Upon determining that a site is safe to enter, the bridge or culvert should be evaluated to determine whether it is generally suitable for bat roosting. Because most bridges will contain cracks and crevices that are of suitable size for bat roosting, any bridge that is safe to assess should be considered potential habitat for IBAT and NLEB, as well as TCB. Culvert suitability may vary by species. Table 5 includes the minimum diameter measurements for each species for consideration (adapted from USFWS 2022). The minimum length culvert that any of the species of interest has been documented is 23 feet (N. Anderson, personal communication), and should generally be considered the minimum suitable length for all three species. However, for safety reasons we do not recommend entry of any site less than 3 feet in diameter at the entrance, regardless of whether the site is greater than 23 feet in length. Practitioners should coordinate with local USFWS FO(s) and respective state wildlife agency(ies) to determine if local guidance deviates from these minimums when additional species may need to be considered. Additionally, culverts that are fully enclosed or blocked (e.g., under roadway or soil), enclosed with grills or grates, or fully obstructed in any other manner should not require an assessment. Partially enclosed or obstructed structures may be suitable and should be inspected if of the appropriate size. Uncertainties in suitability should be coordinated with the local USFWS FO(s) and respective state wildlife agency(ies).

TABLE 5. Suggested minimum culvert dimensions for determining IBAT, NLEB, and TCB suitability. If a site meets 1) the minimum entrance height/diameter for a particular species and 2) is 23 feet or greater in length*, it may be considered suitable to survey.

Species	Minimum Culvert Entrance Height/Diameter (feet)	Source
IBAT	4	L. Pattavina & E. Ferrall, personal communication, Georgia 2022
NLEB	4.5	N. Anderson, personal communication, Louisiana 2014
TCB	3*	USFWS 2022

* TCBs have been documented in culverts as small as 2 feet in diameter as reported in USFWS 2022; however, instances of TCB in culverts this small are expected to be rare. We do not recommend entry of sites less than 3 feet in height/diameter, regardless of length.

Step 2. Inspections of Bridges/Culverts and Indicators of Bat Presence

After an initial assessment if the bridge/culvert would be suitable for bats, surveyors should submit a completed USFWS Project Proposal Form or Study Plan to the local USFWS FO(s) for approval before they begin inspecting it for evidence of bat occupancy. The most ideal vertical crevices for bats are those that are 0.5 – 1.25 inches wide and > 4 inches deep (if sealed at the top) or >12 inches deep if not sealed. Although these characteristics represent the most ideal size of cracks and crevices for bat roosting, bats may be found in spaces that are larger and smaller than this range. Assessments should identify and inspect all cracking, crevices, spaces, and voids along the under deck of the bridge and support beams and inner walls, such as

below a fillet (a concrete filling between ceiling and vertical beam). Additionally, expansion joints that are unobstructed by debris or other blockages should be identified and inspected. Additional features to inspect include vertical spaces between end walls and bridge deck, areas of spall repair, guardrails and gaps in concrete parapet, plugged drainpipes, and weepholes. During the assessment, individuals should use high-powered flashlights, headlamps, or spotlights to examine all accessible parts of the bridge or culvert. Cave-like areas, recesses, and other similar features inside bridges or culverts (e.g., deck in the case of a bridge; see photos) should be searched in a similar fashion, although these areas may require the use of specialized equipment such as endoscopes. There are numerous indicators that can be used to determine bat use and presence within a bridge/culvert.

Visual

- ***Roosting Bats:*** Upon entry of the bridge/culvert, check for bats roosting out in the open. Open-roosting bats will typically be near the ceiling or on the ceiling itself of a culvert or similarly along the underdeck of a bridge. Bats will occasionally roost on or within bird nests, such as those composed of dried mud and created by various species of swallow (CBWG 2022). Bats may also take flight when disturbed and can be quickly accounted for during the assessment. Use binoculars/spotting scopes when attempting to locate bats roosting in higher areas of the bridge/culvert. If bats are present, record species (if determinable), total number, a description of the respective roosting locations, and representative photographs of the individuals (see Figure 10). Additionally, provide a sketch map, if possible, showing the locations of where the bat roosts exist on the bridge/culvert (use the bridge/culvert plan sheet as base for sketch). If any dead or injured bats are observed, take photographs and promptly notify the local USFWS FO(s) and respective State Agency(ies).

Figure 10 A TCB roosting on the ceiling of a culvert in Georgia (left; photo provided by Georgia Department of Natural Resources) and IBATS roosting in an expansion joint in Indiana (right; photo provided by USFWS).

- ***Urine and/or Body Staining:*** Urine or body oil stains may appear wet when bats have recently used the structure as a roost and are usually found in dark places. When dry, urine staining may have light-colored mineral deposits, but it can be difficult to differentiate from water staining (the latter often has presence of green algae). Dry urine staining can also be difficult to differentiate from concrete efflorescence (a deposit of soluble salts and bases, usually white in color, that sometimes

appears along cracks in concrete or masonry). For body oil staining, look for 4-6 inches-wide dark stains located on concrete support beams and walls immediately below the underdeck of the bridge, and beneath joints (Figure 11). It's important to note that staining on bridges and culverts can be caused by a wide variety of things other than bat presence. Guano deposits almost always accompany bat urine or body staining at structures, so "suspect" staining alone may not be sufficient evidence of bat presence (with the notable exception of structures with roost locations situated over waterways, where guano deposits would be washed away).

Figure 11. Open-roosting Indiana bats (*Myotis sodalis*) and associated urine staining on the underside of a bridge in Indiana (photo provided by R. Yaeger).

- ***Presence of Guano (bat droppings):*** Guano deposition is a relatively quick visual indicator of recent bat use of a structure. Individual bat guano pellets are small, brown/black in color, and unlike fibrous rodent droppings are more easily crushed and contain notable insect parts[85](Figure 12). Older droppings may be gray in color. These droppings will accumulate on the ground, floor of a covered bridge, pier caps, or on other horizontal structural components below where bats roost (Figure 13). Droppings may also adhere to vertical surfaces (e.g., support beams and walls) below roosts. Searches for bat droppings should be performed via the use of a high-powered flashlight. Surveyors should wear a dust mask (e.g., N95), and rubber boots are recommended for traversing

[85] Insect parts may be difficult to see without magnification. Low magnification handheld field microscopes or hand lenses are recommended for those practitioners regularly conducting guano sampling as part of bridge and culvert assessments.

through large guano deposits. All accessible cracks, cave-like areas, and expansion joints should be checked for the presence of guano. Confirmed and suspected bat droppings should be noted and their location within the bridge/culvert should be documented. Additionally, representative photographs should be taken of guano deposits in-situ, with a ruler or other object for scale, prior to crush-testing or collecting any guano samples (note: if guano samples are intended to be collected, refer to the guano sampling section of this Appendix). It is notable that in many cases, guano accumulation in culverts or at bridges over water will be minimal due to the regular inflow and outflow of water. In these situations, urine and body staining may be a more important indicator of bat use than guano accumulation.

Figure 12. Examples of guano accumulations on bridges. (photos provided by Georgia Department of Natural Resources (top) and Indiana Department of Transportation (bottom)).

Figure 13. Examples and comparative sizes and characteristics of bat guano from little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*) and big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus)* (left; photo provided by Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department)*;* Guano deposit from colony of Yuma bats (*M. yumanensis*) on horizontal bridge structure (right; photo provided by P. Crawford/ Oklahoma Department of Transportation).

Sound and Smell

Bats occupying bridges/culverts may audibly vocalize when approached, thus high-pitched squeaking or chirping can be a quick indicator of current use. Surveyors that have difficulty hearing high pitch noises may find an acoustic detector with an external speaker or headphone jack helpful for detecting bat chatter, but use of this equipment during visual inspections is not required. Guano deposits, especially large amounts, also have an ammonia odor that can be apparent in some situations.

Step 3. Inaccessible Areas and Additional Assessment Options

In some situations, there will be portions of a bridge/culvert that may be inaccessible or unsafe for thorough inspections. In these instances, we recommend coordinating with the USFWS FO, State Agency(ies), and/or local Department of Transportation to determine if any of the following inspection methods or alternate assessment methods included here are recommended.

- **Acoustic Surveys**

  Note: In some circumstances, acoustic surveys can be used to assist in assessing and characterizing bat colony use of a bridge or culvert. However, acoustic surveys should be conducted with caution and only by experienced practitioners. Detectors may also need to be placed further back from the structure to avoid ultrasonic noise associated with vehicle traffic, powerlines, and other nearby infrastructure. Acoustic collections should only be used as a supplement to a larger suite of structural survey/assessment approaches and cannot be used to determine species identification as a

stand-alone method (refer to Appendix C for performing acoustic surveys to determine P/A of IBAT and NLEB). An example scenario where an acoustic survey at a bridge or culvert may be appropriate includes the use of acoustic equipment to assist in an emergence survey for a structure that has been determined to be unsafe to enter or inspect using traditional methods.

- **Emergence Surveys**

  Emergence surveys may be used as a supplementary tool to determine use of a structure and can only be used once IBAT and/or NLEB colony presence has been confirmed. If emergence surveys are planned for the structure for TCB, contact the local USFWS FO(s) and respective State Agency(ies) to determine if Appendix E of the Survey Guidelines is applicable, or if a modified approach is appropriate for the situation.

- **Alternative Techniques**

  Assessments from kayak/boat with binoculars to inspect areas over deep water, as well as ladders or construction equipment (cherry pickers, snooper truck, etc.; Figure 14) to access high areas of structures or areas over deep water may be necessary in certain situations.

Figure 14. Biologists use a snooper truck to assess expansion joints and concrete caps over deep water (photo provided by Georgia Department of Transportation).

SPECIES IDENTIFICATION

Visual Identification

Visual identification of species may be possible by experienced practitioners, such as those individuals that have Section 10(a)(1)(A) permits to conduct bat surveys. However, voucher photos should be taken with high-quality cameras for inclusion in survey reports regardless of the experience of the surveyor. If species identification cannot be verified visually, in photographs, or by other methods when bats are known to use a structure, it may be appropriate to assume presence of IBATs or NLEBs. Please coordinate with the local USFWS FO for guidance about assuming presence.

Acoustic Identification

Species identification may not be reliable using acoustic detectors to confirm occupancy at a bridge. Bats just emerging from roosts are often making social calls, which cannot always be reliably identified to species. Detectors may need to be set further back from suspected roost locations to record "search phase" calls that bats make while navigating/foraging. Automatic or qualitative acoustic identifications from bridges or culverts should only be performed following coordination with and approval from the local USFWS FO. Surveyors can use timestamps of acoustic recordings to glean insight into whether the recorded bats may have been made by bats emerging from the roost, but caution should be used in interpreting acoustic data as the detector may have also recorded bats not using the structure.

Guano Collection & Analysis

Genetic material in bat guano can be analyzed to determine which species deposited the pellet(s). However, samples must be collected in a manner that minimizes contamination and maintains their integrity for lab analysis. If possible, guano should be collected in sufficient amounts to maximize the ability for species to be properly identified.

Recommended standard equipment for performing guano sampling includes a high-powered flashlight (> 600 lumens, preferably a headlamp), hard hat, dust mask, digital camera, writing utensil(s) (e.g., fine- to medium-point permanent marker or pen; pencil for sketches), disposable latex gloves, collection vials (*e.g.*, 1.5 or 15 ml in size), and a collection utensil (e.g., plastic spoon).

Guano collections should only be performed after coordinating with the local USFWS FO(s) and respective State Agency(ies) to develop a collection plan, which may be included in the overall survey Study Plan. The primary goal of a guano collection plan is to obtain samples that provide a full representation of bat use of the structure. Additionally, it should include the following elements: 1) number of distinct areas of guano present in the structure; 2) guano condition (e.g., old vs. fresh), 3) map of guano locations within structure and collection sample points (see Figure 15); 4) photographs of structure, guano deposits, on the ground at the time of sample collection; 5) time of year[86] that samples will be obtained; 6) equipment that will be used to safely collect and curate guano (*e.g.*, sample collection vials, gloves, collection utensils, writing utensils, camera, etc.).

The following protocols* should be followed when collecting guano samples (**check with the institution, lab, or entity you are using to perform guano analysis for any additional protocols, if needed*). Collect the freshest guano possible (freshest guano is likely on walls/sides of the structure, as well as piers vs. the ground). Old guano deposits may be too degraded to be identifiable.

1) Obtain a minimum sample size of 6 pooled samples or 10 individual samples. However, additional pellets and/or more samples covering each location is ideal (for smaller sample sizes, coordinate with local USFWS FO(s) and respective State Agency(ies)). Each sample must be labeled with a unique identifier to link it to the specific location where it was collected.
2) Number of vials collected should be proportional to the surface area of guano under a bridge; 10-20 pellets per ft² is ideal. For a linear line of guano, collect 10 pellets per 15feet or collect a few pellets every 5 feet, depending on the length of the guano deposit. For individual guano piles, collect pellets off the top and around the entire surface of the pile (NOTE: If possible, fill an entire sample

[86] It is recommended to obtain guano samples during bridge and structure use or as close to movement to hibernacula (if applicable) as possible to avoid sample degradation.

vial per single guano pile; do not combine multiple, separate guano pile samples into one vial so that specific roost sites of federally listed bats can be identified.)

3) Per the guano collection plan, work with your local USFWS FO(s) and respective State Agency(ies) to determine which institution or entity will analyze the guano results for species identification.

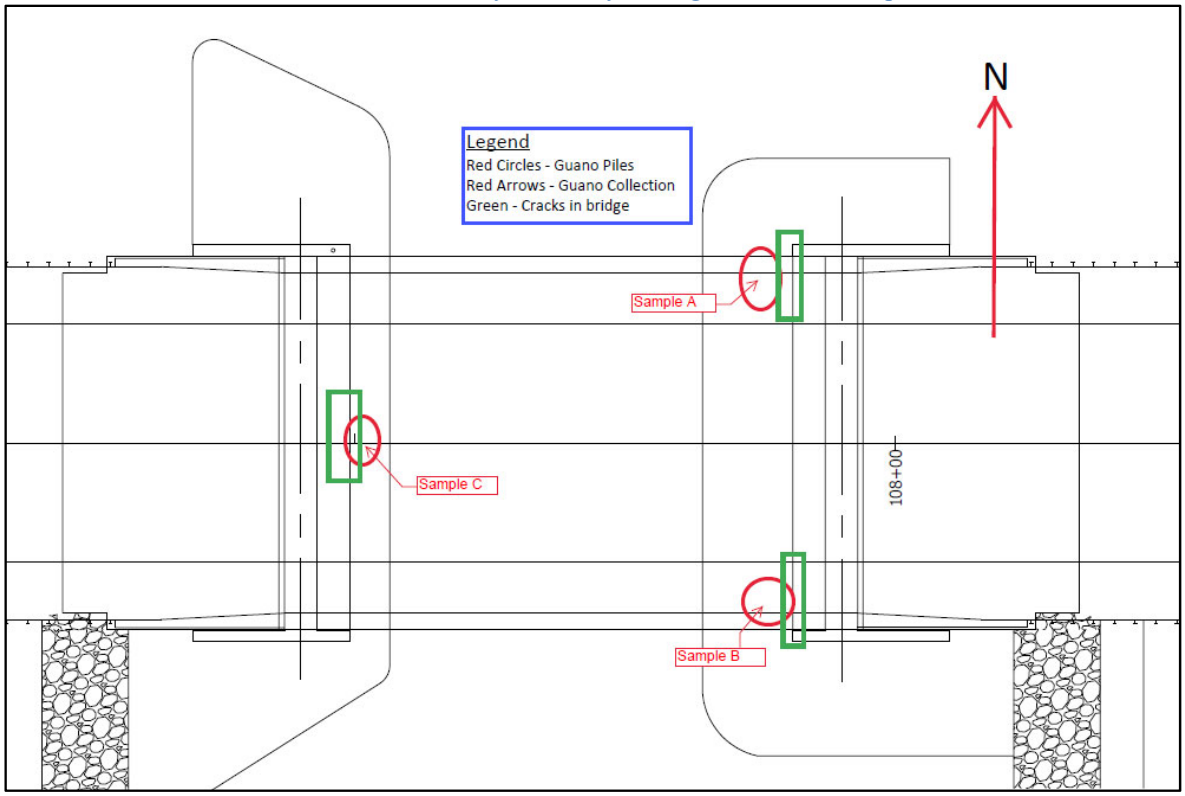

Figure 15. Example map for a guano collection plan, showing top-down view of a bridge, showing linear guano piles located along the abutment walls (underneath the structure's expansion joins). Arrows indicate proposed sample collection locations (Photo provided by Indiana Department. of Transportation).

NEXT STEPS—WHAT TO DO IF BATS ARE FOUND

Findings of bridge or culvert assessments should be submitted to the local USFWS FO(s) and respective State Agency(ies) in a survey report. If IBAT, NLEB, or TCB are positively identified during a bridge or culvert assessment or if species identification cannot be verified at a bridge or culvert with evidence of use, coordinate with your local USFWS FO within 24 hours to determine next steps. For other species, coordinate with your appropriate state agency(ies) (e.g., state wildlife and transportation agencies).

SURVEY REPORTING CHECKLIST

- Completed survey data form
- Annotated photo log w/representative images of surveyed structure (including areas with no indication of bat presence)
- Detailed information on location(s) where roosting bats and/or signs of bat use (e.g., staining, guano, etc.) was documented
- Information pertaining to any guano samples collected and locations within the structure where samples were obtained.

APPENDIX K: ASSESSING & SURVEYING BRIDGES & CULVERTS FOR BAT USE

Additional information, photos, results, etc. relevant to any other previously agreed upon survey methods for the structure (e.g., emergence surveys, mist-netting, harp-trapping, acoustics).

DATA MANAGEMENT[87]

USFWS FOs and respective state wildlife agency(ies) may prefer that bridge and culvert assessment data be submitted electronically, in hard copy survey reports, or both. An example data form that can be printed is available on the next page [88][89].

REFERENCES

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2022. WHITE PAPER: Recommended Minimum Culvert Dimensions for Bat Roost Surveys in Western North Carolina. USFWS, Asheville Field Office, Asheville, NC. 11 pp.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2019. New Jersey Guidance on Surveying Transportation Structures for Bat Occupancy. September 2019. 3 pp.

[87] The submission procedures are not required to be used under the Guidance but are highly recommended. Use of these forms will ensure all the necessary information is provided to the USFWS FO and expedite review of your study plan and survey report. Regardless of the form that is used, please ensure that the necessary data is submitted to the local USFWS FO and appropriate state wildlife agency(ies).

[88] Data submission from bridge and culvert assessments to the North American Bat Monitoring Program (NABat) database is encouraged but not required. The minimum required fields for submission to NABat are highlighted on the sample form.

[89] A template electronic data form that incorporates the minimum fields required for submission to NABat is found at: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1U3wCk6EIb8ZtWXSXUlBhkfANOHMJytW4?usp=sharing

APPENDIX K: ASSESSING & SURVEYING BRIDGES & CULVERTS FOR BAT USE

Walker, F. and D. Sanchez. 2021. Standard Operating Procedure – Fecal Collection for Genetics. Northern Arizona University, College of Engineering, Forestry, and Natural Resources. Available at: https://in.nau.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/51/2021/02/Fecal-Collection-SOP_NAU-Bat-Team_January-2021.pdf

Bridge/Culvert Bat Assessment Form

Date & Time of Assessment	DOT Project Number or IPaC Code	Route/Facility Carried	County
Federal Structure ID	Structure Coordinates (latitude and longitude)	Structure Height (approximate)	Structure Length

Structure Type (check one)

Bridge Construction Style

☐ Cast-in-place		☐ Pre-stressed Girder	
☐ Flat Slab/Box		☐ Steel I-beam	
☐ Truss	Side View	☐ Covered	
☐ Parallel Box Beam		☐ Other:	

Culvert Type

☐ box	
☐ pipe/round	
☐ Other:	

Other Structure

Structure Material (check all that apply)

Deck Material	*Beam Material*	*End/Back Wall Material*
☐ Metal	☐ None	☐ Concrete
☐ Concrete	☐ Concrete	☐ Timber
☐ Timber	☐ Steel	☐ Stone/Masonry
☐ Open grid	☐ Timber	☐ Other:
☐ Other:	☐ Other:	

Creosote Evidence

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown

Culvert Material

☐ Metal ☐ Concrete ☐ Plastic ☐ Stone/Masonry ☐ Other:

Notes:

Crossings Traversed (check all that apply)

☐ Bare ground	☐ Open vegetation
☐ Rip-rap	☐ Closed vegetation
☐ Flowing water	☐ Railroad
☐ Standing water	☐ Road/trail - Type:
☐ Seasonal water	☐ Other:

Surrounding Habitat (check all that apply)

☐ Agricultural	☐ Grassland
☐ Commercial	☐ Ranching
☐ Residential-urban	☐ Riparian/wetland
☐ Residential-rural	☐ Mixed use
☐ Woodland/forested	☐ Other:

Areas Assessed (check all that apply)

Check all areas that apply. If an area is not present in the structure, check the "not present" box.
Document all bat indicators observed during the assessment. Include the species present, if known, and provide photo documentation as indicated.

Area (check if assessed)	**Assessment Notes**	**Evidence of Bats** (include photos if present)
☐ All crevices and cracks: **Bridges/culverts:** rough surfaces or imperfections in concrete **Other structures:** soffits, rafters, attic areas	☐ Not present	☐ Visual - live # dead # ☐ Guano ☐ Staining ☐ Audible ☐ Odor ☐ Photos ☐ Species
☐ Concrete surfaces (open roosting on concrete)	☐ Not present	☐ Visual - live # dead # ☐ Guano ☐ Staining ☐ Audible ☐ Odor ☐ Photos ☐ Species
☐ Spaces between concrete end walls and the bridge deck	☐ Not present	☐ Visual - live # dead # ☐ Guano ☐ Staining ☐ Audible ☐ Odor ☐ Photos ☐ Species
☐ Crack between concrete railings on top of the bridge deck	☐ Not present	☐ Visual - live # dead # ☐ Guano ☐ Staining ☐ Audible ☐ Odor ☐ Photos ☐ Species
☐ Vertical surfaces on concrete I-beams	☐ Not present	☐ Visual - live # dead # ☐ Guano ☐ Staining ☐ Audible ☐ Odor ☐ Photos ☐ Species
☐ Spaces between walls, ceiling joists	☐ Not present	☐ Visual - live # dead # ☐ Guano ☐ Staining ☐ Audible ☐ Odor ☐ Photos ☐ Species
☐ Weep holes, scupper drains, and inlets/pipes	☐ Not present	☐ Visual - live # dead # ☐ Guano ☐ Staining ☐ Audible ☐ Odor ☐ Photos ☐ Species
☐ All guiderails	☐ Not present	☐ Visual - live # dead # ☐ Guano ☐ Staining ☐ Audible ☐ Odor ☐ Photos ☐ Species
☐ All expansion joints	☐ Not present	☐ Visual - live # dead # ☐ Guano ☐ Staining ☐ Audible ☐ Odor ☐ Photos ☐ Species

Name: Signature:

APPENDIX L: BAT ACTIVITY TABLE

APPENDIX L. BAT ACTIVITY PERIODS TABLE FOR IBAT, NLEB, AND TCB

State	Hibernation	Winter Torpor[90]	Spring Staging[91]	Summer Occupancy	Pup Season	Fall Swarming[92]
	Timeframe when most bats are hibernating (i.e., inactive[93] season)	Timeframe when mean winter temperatures fall below 40° F and bats roosting in trees are in torpor[94]	Timeframe when most bats are emerging from hibernation, roosting near hibernacula, and preparing for migration to summer home range	Timeframe when bats are present on their summer home range and/or roosting in colonies[95]	Timeframe during late pregnancy and when most young are born until they can fly and forage independently	Period of increased activity near hibernacula (including foraging, roosting in trees, and mating) prior to hibernation
Alabama: Hibernating Range	Nov 16 – Mar 14	N/A	Mar 15 – Apr 30	Mar 15 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Sept 1 – Nov 15
Alabama: Year-round Active Range (Zone 1)[96]	N/A	Dec 15 – Feb 15	N/A	Mar 15 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A
Alabama: Year-round Active Range (Zone 2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	Mar 15 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A
Arkansas	Nov 16 – Mar 14	N/A	Mar 15 – Apr 30	Mar 15 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
Colorado	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
Connecticut	Nov 1 – Apr 14	N/A	Apr 15 – May 14	Apr 15 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Oct 31

[90] Only applies in Zone 1 of the year-round active range (see Figure 16).
[91] We currently have no information to inform spring staging timeframe near winter roosts within the year-round active portion of the NLEB or TCB range; consequently, the Service will consider new information in the future that may inform spring staging timeframe.
[92] We currently have no information to inform fall swarming timeframe near winter roosts within the year-round active portion of the NLEB or TCB range; consequently, the Service will consider new information in the future that may inform fall swarming timeframe.
[93] The "active season" is the inverse of the hibernation period. If no hibernation period is listed, bats in this area are active year-round.
[94] State of lowered body temperature and metabolic activity.
[95] IBAT (rangewide) and NLEB (hibernating range) often remain in colonies until the end of Summer Occupancy. TCB (rangewide) and NLEB (year-round active range) roost singly once young can fly and forage independently (i.e., the end of the pup season).
[96] If your project falls within suitable summer IBAT habitat and IBATs are assumed or confirmed present, then default to using the more protective activity periods (AL: hibernating range).

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	Timeframe when most bats are hibernating (i.e., inactive[93] season)	Timeframe when mean winter temperatures fall below 40° F and bats roosting in trees are in torpor[94]	Timeframe when most bats are emerging from hibernation, roosting near hibernacula, and preparing for migration to summer home range	Timeframe when bats are present on their summer home range and/or roosting in colonies[95]	Timeframe during late pregnancy and when most young are born until they can fly and forage independently	Period of increased activity near hibernacula (including foraging, roosting in trees, and mating) prior to hibernation
Delaware	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
District of Columbia	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
Florida	N/A	N/A	N/A	Mar 15 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A
Georgia: Hibernating Range	Nov 16 – Mar 14	N/A	Mar 15 – Apr 30	Mar 15 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Sept 1 – Nov 15
Georgia: Year-round Active Range (Zone 1)	N/A	Dec 15 – Feb 15	N/A	Mar 15 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A
Georgia: Year-round Active Range (Zone 2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	Mar 15 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A
Illinois	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
Indiana	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
Iowa	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
Kansas	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
Kentucky	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Oct 15	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
Louisiana: Year-round Active Range (Zone 1)	N/A	Dec 15 – Feb 15	N/A	Mar 15 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A
Louisiana: Year-round Active Range (Zone 2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	Mar 15 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A

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Maine	Nov 1 – Apr 14	N/A	Apr 15 – May 14	Apr 15 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Oct 31
Maryland	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
Massachusetts (Inland)	Nov 1 – Apr 14	N/A	Apr 15 – May 14	Apr 15 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Oct 31
Massachusetts (Coastal)[97]	Dec 1 – Mar 14		Mar 15 – May 14	Mar 15 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Nov 30
Michigan (Outside Indiana Bat Range)	Nov 1 – Apr 14	N/A	Apr 15 – May 14	Apr 15 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Oct 31
Michigan (Within Indiana Bat Range)	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
Minnesota	Nov 1 – Apr 14	N/A	Apr 15 – May 14	Apr 15 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Oct 31
Mississippi: Hibernating Range	Nov 16 – Mar 14	N/A	Mar 15 – Apr 30	Mar 15 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Sept 1 – Nov 15
Mississippi: Year-round Active Range (Zone 1)	N/A	Dec 15 – Feb 15	N/A	Mar 15 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A
Mississippi: Year-round Active Range (Zone 2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	Mar 15 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A
Missouri	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Oct 15	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
Montana	Nov 1 – Apr 14	N/A	Apr 15 – May 14	Apr 15 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Oct 31
Nebraska	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15

[97] Coastal Massachusetts includes Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, and Cape Cod.

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New Hampshire	Nov 1 – Apr 14	N/A	Apr 15 – May 14	Apr 15 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Oct 31
New Jersey	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
New Mexico: Hibernating Range	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Sept 1 – Nov 15
New Mexico: Year-round Active Range (Zone 1)	N/A	Dec 15 – Feb 15	N/A	Apr 1 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A
New Mexico: Year-round Active Range (Zone 2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	Apr 1 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A
New York (Inland)	Nov 1 – Apr 14	N/A	Apr 15 – May 14	Apr 15 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Oct 31
New York (Long Island)	Dec 1 – Feb 28		Mar 1 – May 14	Mar 1 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Nov 30
North Carolina: Hibernating Range	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
North Carolina: Year-round Active Range (Zone 1)	N/A	Dec 15 – Feb 15	N/A	Apr 1 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A
North Dakota	Nov 1 – Apr 14	N/A	Apr 15 – May 14	Apr 15 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Oct 31
Ohio	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
Oklahoma	Nov 16 – Mar 14	N/A	Mar 15 – Apr 30	Mar 15 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
Pennsylvania	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15

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Rhode Island	Nov 1 – Apr 14	N/A	Apr 15 – May 14	Apr 15 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Oct 31
South Carolina: Hibernating Range	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Sept 1 – Nov 15
South Carolina: Year-round Active Range (Zone 1)	N/A	Dec 15 – Feb 15	N/A	Apr 1 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A
South Dakota (Plains)	Nov 1 – Apr 14	N/A	Apr 15 – May 14	Apr 15 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Oct 31
South Dakota (Black Hills)	Oct 1 – April 30	N/A	May 1 – June 1	May 1 – Aug 31	June 15 – Aug 31	Aug 16 – Sept 30
Tennessee	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
Texas: Hibernating Range	Nov 16 – Mar 14	N/A	Mar 15 – Apr 30	Mar 15 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Sept 1 – Nov 15
Texas: Year-round Active Range (Zone 1)	N/A	Dec 15 – Feb 15	N/A	Mar 15 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A
Texas: Year-round Active Range (Zone 2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	Mar 15 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A
Vermont	Nov 1 – Apr 14	N/A	Apr 15 – May 14	Apr 15 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Oct 31
Virginia: Hibernating Range	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15
Virginia: Year-round Active Range (Zone 1)	N/A	Dec 15 – Feb 15	N/A	Apr 1 – July 15	May 1 – July 15	N/A
West Virginia	Nov 16 – Mar 31	N/A	Apr 1 – May 14	Apr 1 – Sept 30	May 15 – July 31	Aug 16 – Nov 15

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Wisconsin	Nov 1 – Apr 14	N/A	Apr 15 – May 14	Apr 15 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Oct 31
Wyoming (Plains)	Nov 1 – Apr 14	N/A	Apr 15 – May 14	Apr 15 – Sept 30	June 1 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Oct 31
Wyoming (Black Hills)	Oct 1 – April 30	N/A	May 1 – June 1	May 1 – Aug 31	June 15 – Aug 31	Aug 16 – Sept 30

90

APPENDIX L: BAT ACTIVITY TABLE

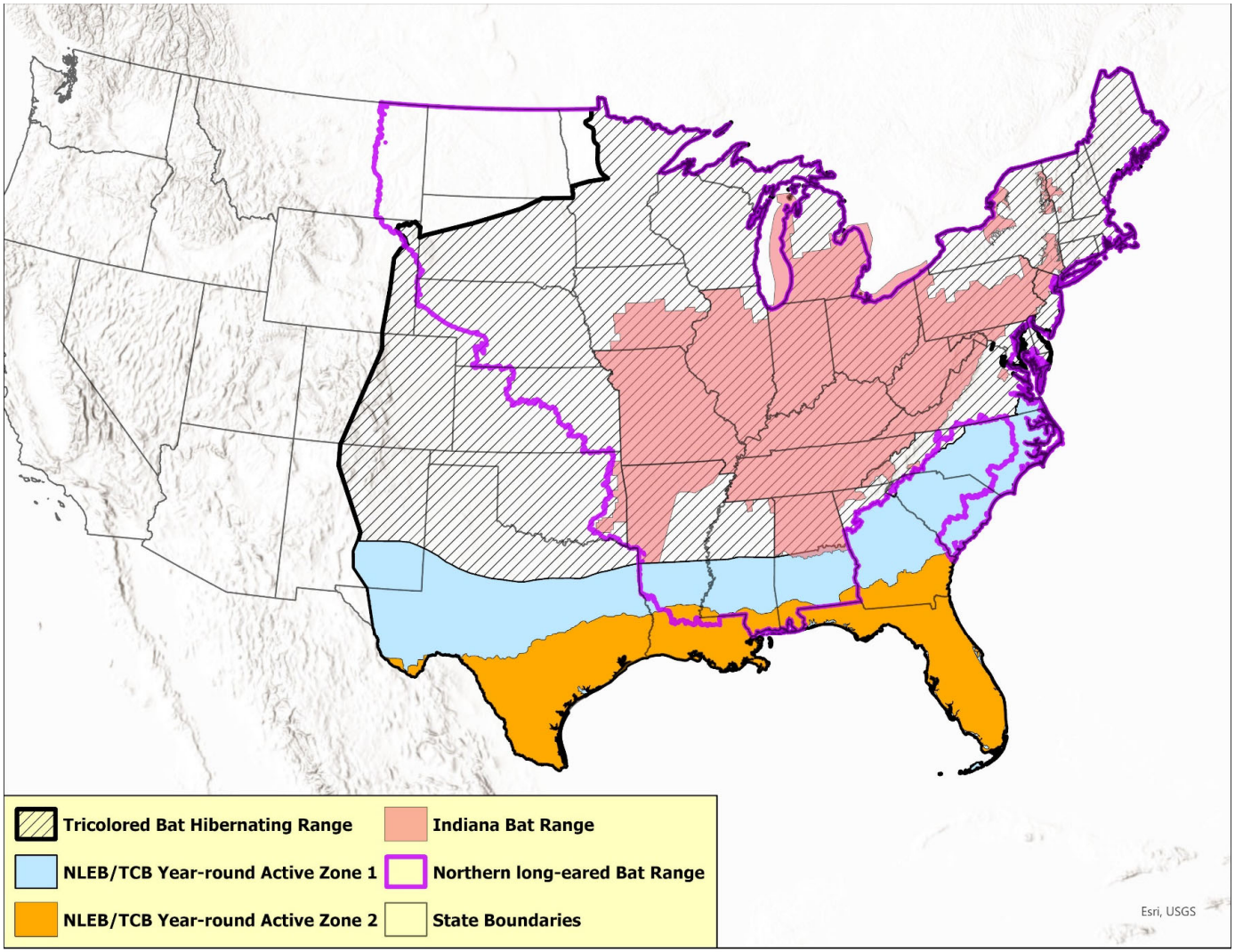

FIGURE 16. Hibernating and/or year-round active ranges of IBAT, NLEB, and TCB.

APPENDIX M: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Above ground level (AGL) – height at which an acoustic detector microphone is elevated above the top of ground-level vegetation present at the detector deployment location.

Acoustic bat survey – bat sampling conducted through recording and analyzing echolocation calls.

Acoustic location – actual site where an acoustic detector and microphone is deployed; multiple acoustic locations may be used for a full acoustic bat survey.

Approved software program - bat acoustic program (see also *automated bat call ID software*) approved through the USFWS software testing procedures for stand-alone use in presence/probable absence surveys for Indiana bat and/or northern long-eared bat.

Automated bat call ID software – a form of echolocation identification in which recorded files are filtered and identified within a software program; the program compares the statistical properties of a recorded call to a library of known calls to classify to species.

Bat detector – equipment capable of detecting ultrasonic echolocation calls of bats that are above the range of human hearing.

Call quality – how closely the sequence matches typical search-phase behavior for the species.

Call sequence – a series of bat echolocation call pulses.

Candidate software program – bat acoustic program (see also *automated bat call ID software*) submitted to USFWS for software testing, but not yet approved for stand-alone use in presence/probable absence surveys for Indiana bat and/or northern long-eared bat.

Clutter –obstacles present in an area that can affect recording of bat echolocation calls; may be caused by either scattering echolocation calls from sound bouncing off obstacles (thereby reducing call quality) or by bats adjusting their normal search phase calls in response to additional obstacles resulting in changed bat echolocation call parameters.

Detection probability – the likelihood of detecting the presence of a species when that species is present.

Detector sensitivity – measures the ability of a bat detector to detect an echolocation call.

Detector - see *bat detector*.

Directional microphone – a microphone that is more sensitive to sound arriving from certain directions; compared to omni-directional, may detect sounds from a further distance away, but within a narrower cone of detection.

Echolocation – use of ultrasound and the returning echoes to orient and navigate in the environment.

Emergence survey – a survey method that involves visually counting bats that emerge from a known or suspected roost; usually conducted in early evening (e.g., 30 minutes before sunset) when bats exit to forage.

False negative – the failure to detect a bat species when it is present in the area; statistically a type II error in hypothesis testing.

Forest canopy openings – gaps in the continuous forest cover formed by tree crowns, where sunlight

APPENDIX M: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

reaches the forest floor.

Forest corridor – Three-dimensional corridors that bats use to travel within forests (also known as flyways).

Forest interior – forest areas surrounded by forest edge, typically 50-300 feet inside from an outer edge.

Forest strip – narrow area with trees. Examples include visual buffers or forest fragments dominated by edge effects.

Forest/woodland edge – transition area between forest and open spaces. Edges create edge effects impacting the species communities and growth of vegetation extending into the forest from the edge. Edge can occur whenever there is a 30-foot break in canopy cover.

Forest/woodland gap – area between intact forest areas that form small open areas. These areas are partially shaded by forest areas and natural regeneration will likely fill the gap.

Frequency filter – pre-programmed range of sound frequencies (in kHz) set for acoustic bat detectors to record.

Full-spectrum detector – bat detectors in which all desirable information about the recorded sound is preserved, including time, frequency, and amplitude.

Harp-trapping – capture method by which a device (harp-trap) composed of a metal frame, multiple strands of equally-spaced nylon strings, and a catch bag at the bottom, is deployed near the entrances of caves, cave-like openings, and mines. Bats are captured as they exit a restricted opening to forage.

Hemispherical microphone – see *omni-directional microphone*.

Hibernaculum (*pl.* "hibernacula") – a thermally-stable roost used by bats for extended periods of torpor during winter. Typically, a cave, natural cave-like feature (e.g., sinkhole, fissure, talus opening, etc.), or anthropogenic structure (e.g., mine, tunnel, bridge, etc.).

High-frequency calls – a general classification of calls that refers to those with minimum frequencies >35 - 40 kilohertz.

Kilohertz (kHz) – a unit of measure of the frequency of sound; one thousand hertz.

Level-of-effort (LOE) – Minimum number of survey nights required (using a particular survey methodology) to determine probable absence of a target bat species; statistically set at a particular confidence level (e.g., 90%, 95%, etc. – depending upon species and region) by USFWS.

Linear project – a project with a footprint greater in length than width (e.g., pipeline, roadway, or right-of-way) with ≥ 1 km (0.6 mi) of suitable habitat; may contain contiguous and fragmented patches of suitable habitat, but only segments at least ≥ 1 km in length can be considered for presence/probable absence survey sites.

Manual-vetting – see *qualitative call identification*.

Maximum-Likelihood Estimate (MLE) – a statistical method of estimating the parameters of a statistical model. For our purposes, the MLE is a statistical method that can be used to determine species presence or probable absence at a particular site on a particular night by means of a classification matrix.

Microphone sensitivity – the minimal amplitude required at a given frequency for a microphone to

APPENDIX M. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

detect a sound.

Microphone orientation – the direction in which the microphone is pointing' thereby affecting the cone of detection.

Mist-netting – survey technique that uses low-visibility, mesh nets affixed between two poles to capture foraging bats in areas of increased activity (e.g., travel corridors, ponds, etc.)

Net set – one mist-net deployment consisting of two poles and typically from 1-3 affixed mist-nets stacked onto one another. A typical net set is at least 5 m to 9 m high consisting of two or more nets stacked on top of one another (without gaps) and from 6 m to 18 m wide.

Net site – see *site*.

Noise – unwanted or extraneous environmental sound or electronic interference detected by a bat detector.

Non-linear project – any project generally not linear in nature or linear and < 1 km in length; may contain contiguous and fragmented patches of suitable habitat, but only blocks ≤ 123 acres can be considered for presence/probable absence survey sites.

North American Bat Monitoring Program (NABat) – A multi-national, multi-agency coordinated bat monitoring program across North America that was created to monitor bats at local to rangewide scales. It incorporates winter hibernaculum counts, maternity colony counts, mobile acoustic surveys, and stationary acoustic surveys (https://www.nabatmonitoring.org).

Omni-directional microphone – a microphone that can detect equally in all directions (e.g., has a spherical cone of detection). Hemispherical microphones are a type of omni-directional microphone.

Out-tier project guidance – a USFWS discretionary survey guidance scenario that can be applied when an Indiana and/or northern long-eared bat has been captured or acoustically-detected, but no known roosting areas have been identified. Under "out-tier" guidance, 2.5 and 5-mile or 1.5 and 3.0- mile buffers are placed around the Indiana bat or northern long-eared bat capture or detection location. Surveyors are allowed to perform a standard P/A survey to help refine a maternity colony's true location and/or document roost trees if the project area is more than 2.5 or 1.5 (for NLEB) miles away from the Indiana bat capture/detection site, but within the 5- or 3-mile (for NLEB) buffer.

Pass – a single crossing of a bat through a bat detector's cone of detection; see *call sequence*.

Probable absence – using the appropriate Level of Effort (LOE), a determination that survey protocols are not 100% likely to detect IBAT or NLEB when present and that identification errors may occur.

Pulse – a brief, continuous emission of sound; see *call sequence*.

Qualified biologist – For activities involving the handling of bats, an individual who holds a USFWS Section 10(a)(1)(A) Recovery Permit (Federal Fish and Wildlife Permit) for federally-listed bats in the state/region in which they are surveying. For qualitative analysis of acoustics, an individual that has completed one or more of available bat acoustics trainings/workshops and/or able to show similar on-the-job or academic experience; furthermore, have demonstrated multiple years of experience in 1) gathering known calls of the target species, 2) have identified bat calls recorded in numerous habitat types, 3) are familiar with species likely to be encountered within the project area, and 4) must have stayed current with qualitative identification of bat calls.

Qualitative call identification (manual vetting) – identification of call sequences through visual comparison with a known call library. Qualitative analysis must also include and present within a written

report a comparison of the results of each acoustic ID program by site and night. Qualitative analysis of each acoustic site and night with probable detections of IBAT and/or NLEB should include the entire night's high frequency call data, including "no ID" files, and not just those files making it through the acoustic analysis tools as probable IBAT and/or NLEB; accuracy can be highly variable based on researcher experience; also referred to by some as manual vetting (see *qualified biologist*).

Roost tree – A live or dead standing tree (snag) occupied by one or more bats. Throughout most of the IBAT and NLEB range, trees are typically occupied by bats outside of the hibernation period (spring, summer, fall), although see Appendix J regarding year-round active populations.

Roost – see *roost tree*.

Site – an area containing one or more individual net sets or harp traps in relatively close proximity that can be efficiently walked to and checked by a survey team (typically two people) within a 10- minute window from a central bat-processing location.

Site-night – The standard unit of time for operating an acoustic detector at one site for one calendar night during an acoustic P/A survey. The MLE should be assessed for a target species on a site-night basis.

Ultrasonic/ultrasound – sounds made of frequencies that are beyond the range of human hearing (often arbitrarily set at 20 kilohertz, although most adults have trouble hearing sounds above 15 kHz.)

Weather proofing – various methods/materials used to protect a bat detector/microphone from the elements (primarily rain).

Winter habitat – see *hibernaculum*.

Zero-crossing detector – a detector type that calculates frequencies by measuring the time between moments of zero sound pressure, which corresponds to the period of the wave.

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Missouri Ecological Services Field Office
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Columbia, MO 65203-0057
Phone: (573) 234-2132 Fax: (573) 234-2181

In Reply Refer To: 11/19/2025 16:30:27 UTC
Project code: 2025-0149882
Project Name: Whitewater River Watershed Project Area

Federal Nexus: yes
Federal Action Agency (if applicable): Natural Resources Conservation Service

Subject: Technical assistance for 'Whitewater River Watershed Project Area'

Dear Sylvia Harris:

This letter records your determination using the Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system provided to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) on November 19, 2025, for 'Whitewater River Watershed Project Area' (here forward, Project). This project has been assigned Project Code 2025-0149882 and all future correspondence should clearly reference this number. **Please carefully review this letter. Your Endangered Species Act (Act) requirements are not complete.**

Ensuring Accurate Determinations When Using IPaC

The Service developed the IPaC system and associated species' determination keys in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA; 87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) and based on a standing analysis. All information submitted by the Project proponent into IPaC must accurately represent the full scope and details of the Project. **Failure to accurately represent or implement the Project as detailed in IPaC or the Northern Long-eared Bat and Tricolored Bat Range-wide Determination Key (Dkey), invalidates this letter.**

Determination for the Northern Long-Eared Bat and Tricolored Bat

Based on your IPaC submission and a standing analysis completed by the Service, you determined the proposed Project will have the following effect determinations:

Species	Listing Status	Determination
Tricolored Bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*)	Proposed Endangered	May affect

Federal agencies must consult with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) when an action *may affect* a listed species. Tricolored bat is proposed for listing as endangered under the ESA, but not yet listed. For actions that may affect a proposed species, agencies cannot consult, but they can *confer* under the authority of section 7(a)(4) of the ESA. Such conferences can follow the procedures for a consultation and be adopted as such if and when the proposed species is listed. Should the tricolored bat be listed, agencies must review projects that are not yet complete, or projects with ongoing effects within the tricolored bat range that previously received a NE or NLAA determination from the key to confirm that the determination is still accurate. Projects that receive a may affect determination for tricolored bat through the key, should contact the appropriate Ecological Services Field Office if they want to conference on this species.

Other Species and Critical Habitat that May be Present in the Action Area

The IPaC-assisted determination key for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat does not apply to the following ESA-protected species and/or critical habitat that also may occur in your Action area:

- Alligator Snapping Turtle *Macrochelys temminckii* Proposed Threatened
- Gray Bat *Myotis grisescens* Endangered
- Indiana Bat *Myotis sodalis* Endangered
- Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus* Proposed Threatened

You may coordinate with our Office to determine whether the Action may cause prohibited take of the species listed above.

Conclusion

Consultation with the Service is not complete. Further consultation or coordination with the Service is necessary for those species or designated critical habitats with a determination of “May Affect.” A “May Affect” determination in this key indicates that the project, as entered, is not consistent with the questions in the key. Not all projects that reach a “May Affect” determination are anticipated to result in adverse impacts to listed species. These projects may result in a “No Effect”, “May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect”, or “May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect” determination depending on the details of the project. Please contact our Missouri Ecological Services Field Office to discuss methods to avoid or minimize potential adverse effects to those species or designated critical habitats.

Action Description
You provided to IPaC the following name and description for the subject Action.

1. Name

Whitewater River Watershed Project Area

2. Description

The following description was provided for the project 'Whitewater River Watershed Project Area':

> Potential project to clean out sediment from drainage ditches that were originally created in the early 1900s.

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: https://www.google.com/maps/@37.13303755,-89.72288468813875,14z

DETERMINATION KEY RESULT

Based on the answers provided, the proposed Action is consistent with a determination of "may affect" for a least one species covered by this determination key.

QUALIFICATION INTERVIEW

1. Does the proposed project include, or is it reasonably certain to cause, intentional take of listed bats or any other listed species?

   Note: Intentional take is defined as take that is the intended result of a project. Intentional take could refer to research, direct species management, surveys, and/or studies that include intentional handling/encountering, harassment, collection, or capturing of any individual of a federally listed threatened, endangered or proposed species?

   No

2. Is the action area wholly within Zone 2 of the year-round active area for northern long-eared bat and/or tricolored bat?

   Automatically answered
   No

3. Does the action area intersect Zone 1 of the year-round active area for northern long-eared bat and/or tricolored bat?

   Automatically answered
   No

4. Does any component of the action involve leasing, construction or operation of wind turbines? Answer 'yes' if the activities considered are conducted with the intention of gathering survey information to inform the leasing, construction, or operation of wind turbines.

   No

5. Is the proposed action authorized, permitted, licensed, funded, or being carried out by a Federal agency in whole or in part?

   Note for projects in Pennsylvania: Projects requiring authorization under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and/or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act would be considered as having a federal nexus. Since the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has issued the Pennsylvania State Programmatic General Permit (PASPGP), which may be verified by the PA Department of Environmental Protection or certain Conservation Districts, the need to receive a Corps authorization to perform the work under the PASPGP serves as a federal nexus. As such, if proposing to use the PASPGP, you would answer 'yes' to this question.

   Yes

6. Is the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), or Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding or authorizing the proposed action, in whole or in part?

   No

7. Are you an employee of the federal action agency or have you been officially designated in writing by the agency as its designated non-federal representative for the purposes of Endangered Species Act Section 7 informal consultation per 50 CFR § 402.08?

   Note: This key may be used for federal actions and for non-federal actions to facilitate section 7 consultation and to help determine whether an incidental take permit may be needed, respectively. This question is for information purposes only.

   No

8. Is the lead federal action agency the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or Federal Communications Commission (FCC)? Is the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or Federal Communications Commission (FCC) funding or authorizing the proposed action, in whole or in part?

   No

9. Is the lead federal action agency the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)?

   No

10. [Semantic] Is the action area located within 0.5 miles of a known bat hibernaculum or winter roost? Note: The map queried for this question contains proprietary information and cannot be displayed. If you need additional information, please contact your state wildlife agency.

    Automatically answered

    No

11. Does the action area contain any winter roosts or caves (or associated sinkholes, fissures, or other karst features), mines, rocky outcroppings, or tunnels that could provide habitat for hibernating bats?

    No

12. Will the action cause effects to a bridge?

    Note: Covered bridges should be considered as bridges in this question.

    No

13. Will the action result in effects to a culvert or tunnel at any time of year?

    No

14. Are trees present within 1000 feet of the action area?

    Note: If there are trees within the action area that are of a sufficient size to be potential roosts for bats answer "Yes". If unsure, additional information defining suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat can be found in Appendix A of the USFWS' Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared bat Survey Guidelines at: https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines.

    Yes

15. Does the action include the intentional exclusion of bats from a building or building-like structure? **Note:** Exclusion is conducted to deny bats' entry or reentry into a building. To be effective and to avoid harming bats, it should be done according to established standards. If your action includes bat exclusion and you are unsure whether northern long-eared bats or tricolored bats are present, answer "Yes." Answer "No" if there are no signs of bat use in the building/structure. If unsure, contact your local Ecological Services Field Office to help assess whether northern long-eared bats or tricolored bats may be present. Contact a Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator (NWCO) for help in how to exclude bats from a structure safely without causing harm to the bats (to find a NWCO certified in bat standards, search the Internet using the search term "National Wildlife Control Operators Association bats"). Also see the White-Nose Syndrome Response Team's guide for bat control in structures.

    No

16. Does the action involve removal, modification, or maintenance of a human-made building-like structure (barn, house, or other building) **known or suspected to contain roosting bats?**

    No

17. Will the action cause construction of one or more new roads open to the public?

    For federal actions, answer 'yes' when the construction or operation of these facilities is either (1) part of the federal action or (2) would not occur but for an action taken by a federal agency (federal permit, funding, etc.).

    No

18. Will the action include or cause any construction or other activity that is reasonably certain to increase average night-time traffic permanently or temporarily on one or more existing roads? **Note:** For federal actions, answer 'yes' when the construction or operation of these facilities is either (1) part of the federal action or (2) would not occur but for an action taken by a federal agency (federal permit, funding, etc.). .

    No

19. Will the action include or cause any construction or other activity that is reasonably certain to increase the number of travel lanes on an existing thoroughfare?

    For federal actions, answer 'yes' when the construction or operation of these facilities is either (1) part of the federal action or (2) would not occur but for an action taken by a federal agency (federal permit, funding, etc.).

    No

20. Will the proposed Action involve the creation of a new water-borne contaminant source (e.g., leachate pond, pits containing chemicals that are not NSF/ANSI 60 compliant)?

    Note: For information regarding NSF/ANSI 60 please visit https://www.nsf.org/knowledge-library/nsf-ansi-standard-60-drinking-water-treatment-chemicals-health-effects

    No

21. Will the proposed action involve the creation of a new point source discharge from a facility other than a water treatment plant or storm water system?

    No

22. Will the action include drilling or blasting?

    No

23. Will the action involve military training (e.g., smoke operations, obscurant operations, exploding munitions, artillery fire, range use, helicopter or fixed wing aircraft use at night)?

    No

24. Will the proposed action involve the use of herbicides or pesticides (e.g., fungicides, insecticides, or rodenticides)?

    No

25. Will the action include or cause activities that are reasonably certain to cause chronic or intense nighttime noise (above current levels of ambient noise in the area) in suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat or tricolored bat during the active season?

    Chronic noise is noise that is continuous or occurs repeatedly again and again for a long time. Sources of chronic or intense noise that could cause adverse effects to bats may include, but are not limited to: road traffic; trains; aircraft; industrial activities; gas compressor stations; loud music; crowds; oil and gas extraction; construction; and mining.

    Note: Additional information defining suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat can be found in Appendix A of the USFWS' Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared bat Survey Guidelines at: https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines.

    No

26. Does the action include, or is it reasonably certain to cause, the use of permanent or temporary artificial lighting within 1000 feet of suitable northern long-eared bat or tricolored bat roosting habitat?

    Note: Additional information defining suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat can be found in Appendix A of the USFWS' Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared bat Survey Guidelines at: https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines.

    No

27. Will the action include tree cutting or other means of knocking down or bringing down trees, tree topping, or tree trimming?

    Yes

28. Is the project related to the production of coal, including projects that support the mining of coal, as well as the production and/or distribution of energy produced from coal?

    No

29. Will the proposed action occur exclusively in an already established and currently maintained utility right-of-way?

    No

30. Does the action include emergency cutting or trimming of hazard trees in order to remove an imminent threat to human safety or property? See hazard tree note at the bottom of the key for text that will be added to response letters

    Note: A "hazard tree" is a tree that is an immediate threat to lives, public health and safety, or improved property.

    No

31. Does the project intersect with the 0- 9.9% forest density category?

    Automatically answered
    Yes

32. Does the project intersect with the 10.0- 19.9% forest density category map?

    Automatically answered
    No

33. Does the project intersect with the 20.0- 29.9% forest density category map?

    Automatically answered
    No

34. Does the project intersect with the 30.0- 100% forest density category map?

    Automatically answered
    No

35. Will the action cause trees to be cut, knocked down, or otherwise brought down across an area greater than 0.5 acre in total extent?

    Yes

36. Does the action area intersect the tricolored bat species list area?

    Automatically answered
    Yes

37. Is the action area located within 0.5-mile of radius of an entrance/opening to any known tricolored bat hibernacula or winter roost?

    Note: The map queried for this question contains proprietary information and cannot be displayed. If you need additional information, please contact your state wildlife agency.

    Automatically answered
    No

38. [Semantic] Is the action area located within 0.25 miles of a culvert that is known to be occupied by northern long-eared or tricolored bats? **Note:** The map queried for this question contains proprietary information and cannot be displayed. If you need additional information, please contact your State wildlife agency.

    Automatically answered
    No

39. Has a presence/probable absence bat survey targeting the tricolored bat and following the Service's Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern Long-Eared Bat Survey Guidelines been conducted within the project area?

    No

40. Is suitable summer habitat for the tricolored bat present within 1000 feet of project activities?
    (If unsure, answer ""Yes."")

    Note: If there are trees within the action area that may provide potential roosts for tricolored bats (e.g., clusters of leaves in live and dead deciduous trees, Spanish moss (Tillandsia usneoides), clusters of dead pine needles of large live pines) answer ""Yes."" For a complete definition of suitable summer habitat for the tricolored bat, please see Appendix A in the Service's Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared Bat Survey Guidelines.

    Yes

41. Do you have any documents that you want to include with this submission?

    No

PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE

Enter the extent of the action area (in acres) from which trees will be removed - round up to the nearest tenth of an acre. For this question, include the entire area where tree removal will take place, even if some live or dead trees will be left standing.

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IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Prairie Engineering
Name: Sylvia Harris
Address: 404 North Main Street
City: Columbia
State: IL
Zip: 62236
Email sharris@prairieengineers.com
Phone: 8037414193

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Agency: Natural Resources Conservation Service
Name: Rex McAliley
Email: rex.mcaliley@usda.gov
Phone: 5738769425

THE
LITTLE RIVER
DRAINAGE DISTRICT

FLOOD CONTROL & DRAINAGE
SINCE 1907

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Paul T. Combs, President
A.C. Riley James, Vice President
Gaylon M. Lawrence Jr.
Tim W. Martin
Edward E. Dement

STAFF
W. Dustin Boatwright, PE
Executive Vice President
Chief Engineer
Belinda G. Welker
Treasurer
Stephanie L. Hosey
Secretary
Tom K. O'Loughlin, II
Erica D. Koetting
Attorneys

CERTIFICATION OF REAL PROPERTY INTERESTS

I, W. Dustin Boatwright, Chief Engineer of The Little River Drainage District, do hereby certify that the said District has acquired the real property interests required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and otherwise is vested with sufficient title and interest in lands, for design and implementation of Main Ditch - Little River Watershed Project.

WITNESS my signature as Chief Engineer of The Little River Drainage District this 27th day of September, 2024.

W. Dustin Boatwright

W. Dustin Boatwright, PE
Chief Engineer

Attest:

Erica D. Koetting
Attorney for The Little River Drainage District

Sam M. Hunter, DVM
Honorary Supervisor

E.B. Gee Jr.
Honorary Supervisor

Glenn O. Petersen
Honorary Supervisor

Larry D. Dowdy
Chief Engineer Emeritus

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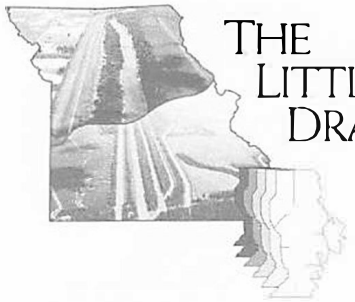

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Tom K. O'Loughlin, II
Erica D. Koetting
Attorneys

CERTIFICATION OF REAL PROPERTY INTERESTS

I, W. Dustin Boatwright, Chief Engineer of The Little River Drainage District, do hereby certify that the said District has acquired the real property interests required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and otherwise is vested with sufficient title and interest in lands, for design and implementation of Whitewater River Watershed Project.

WITNESS my signature as Chief Engineer of The Little River Drainage District this 27th day of September, 2024.

W. Dustin Boatwright

W. Dustin Boatwright, PE
Chief Engineer

Attest:

Erica D. Koetting
Attorney for The Little River Drainage District

Sam M. Hunter, DVM
Honorary Supervisor

E. B. Gee Jr.
Honorary Supervisor

Glenn O. Petersen
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Chief Engineer Emeritus

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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

July 29, 2022

The Honorable Oliver Littlecook
Chairman of the Ponca Tribe of Oklahoma
20 White Eagle Drive
Ponca City, Oklahoma 74601

Dear Chairman Littlecook:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584, Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

The Little River Watershed is in the Southeastern Lowlands of Missouri in Cape Girardeau, Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Scott and Stoddard Counties, Missouri. The goal of Little River Drainage District is to make enhancements to aging drainage infrastructure thereby reducing the risk of flooding in the area.

Please find enclosed the Little River Watershed PIFR. The PIFR is a brief study, using existing data and field information. The purpose of the PIFR is to provide reasonable assurance that a feasible watershed plan can be developed that addresses one or more Public Law 83-566 purposes and that there are no apparent insurmountable obstacles.

If you have any questions, concerns, or relevant information, please contact Chris Hamilton, Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements at (573) 876-0901 or chris.hamilton@usda.gov. If authorized, we look forward to working with you during the planning phase of the project.

Sincerely,

Scott Edwards
State Conservationist

Enclosure: Whitewater River Watershed Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report

cc:
Chris Hamilton, Assistant State Conservationist-Water Resources & Easements, NRCS, Columbia, MO
Andrew Rackers, State Conservation Engineer, NRCS, Columbia, MO
Nate Goodrich, State Resource Conservationist, NRCS, Columbia, MO
Nancy Walker, Area Conservationist, NRCS, Jackson, MO
Steve Hefner, Natural Resources Specialist, NRCS, Columbia, MO
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Michelle Gross, District Conservationist, NRCS, Dexter, MO
W. Dustin Boatwright, Executive Vice President, Chief Engineer, Little River Drainage District

Natural Resources Conservation Service
601 Business Loop 70 West, Parkade Center Suite 250, Columbia, Missouri 65203
Telephone: (573) 876-0909 Fax: (855) 830-0683
An Equal Opportunity Provider, Employer, and Lender

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

July 29, 2022

The Honorable Joseph Byrd
Chairman of Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma
Post Office Box 765
Quapaw, Oklahoma 74364

Dear Chairman Byrd:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584, Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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July 29, 2022

The Honorable Glenna Wallace
Chief of Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
Post Office Box 765
Seneca, Missouri 64865

Dear Chief Wallace:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584, Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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July 29, 2022

The Honorable Benjamin Barnes
Chief of Shawnee Tribe
Post Office Box 189
Miami, Oklahoma 74354

Dear Chief Barnes:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584, Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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July 29, 2022

The Honorable Joe Bunch
Chief of United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma
Post Office Box 746
Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74465

Dear Chief Bunch:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584, Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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United States Department of Agriculture

July 29, 2022

Roger S. Allan, Deputy Chief
Regulatory Division
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District
167 North Main Street, Room B202
Memphis, Tennessee 38103-1894

Dear Mr. Allan:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584, Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

July 29, 2022

Karren Herrington, Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Missouri Ecological Services Field Office
101 Park Deville Drive, Suite A
Columbia, Missouri 65203

Dear Ms. Herrington:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584, Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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July 29, 2022

The Honorable Brad Killscrow
Chief of Delaware Tribe of Indians
5100 Tuxedo Boulevard
Bartlesville, Oklahoma 74006

Dear Chief Killscrow:

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USDA
United States Department of Agriculture

July 29, 2022

The Honorable Edgar Kent
Chairman of Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma
335588 East 750 Road
Perkins, Oklahoma 74059

Dear Chairman Kent:

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July 29, 2022

The Honorable Douglas Lankford
Chief of Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
Post Office Box 1326
Miami, Oklahoma 74355

Dear Chief Lankford:

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July 29, 2022

National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

To Whom It May Concern:

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July 29, 2022

The Honorable Geoffrey Standing Bear
Principle Chief of Osage Nation
627 Grandview Avenue
Pawhuska, Oklahoma 74056

Dear Principal Chief Standing Bear:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584, Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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July 29, 2022

The Honorable Craig Harper
Chief of Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
Post Office Box 1527
Miami, Oklahoma 74355

Dear Chief Harper:

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Steve Hefner, Natural Resources Specialist, NRCS, Columbia, MO
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Michelle Gross, District Conservationist, NRCS, Dexter, MO
W. Dustin Boatwright, Executive Vice President, Chief Engineer, Little River Drainage District

Natural Resources Conservation Service
601 Business Loop 70 West, Parkade Center Suite 250, Columbia, Missouri 65203
Telephone: (573) 876-0909 Fax: (855) 830-0683
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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

July 29, 2022

The Honorable Rebecca Sullivan
Interim Chairwoman of Ponca Tribe of Nebraska
Post Office Box 288
Niobrara, Nebraska 68760

Dear Interim Chairwoman Sullivan:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584, Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

The Little River Watershed is in the Southeastern Lowlands of Missouri in Cape Girardeau, Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Scott and Stoddard Counties, Missouri. The goal of Little River Drainage District is to make enhancements to aging drainage infrastructure thereby reducing the risk of flooding in the area.

Please find enclosed the Little River Watershed PIFR. The PIFR is a brief study, using existing data and field information. The purpose of the PIFR is to provide reasonable assurance that a feasible watershed plan can be developed that addresses one or more Public Law 83-566 purposes and that there are no apparent insurmountable obstacles.

If you have any questions, concerns, or relevant information, please contact Chris Hamilton, Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements at (573) 876-0901 or chris.hamilton@usda.gov. If authorized, we look forward to working with you during the planning phase of the project.

Sincerely,

Scott Edwards
State Conservationist

Enclosure: Whitewater River Watershed Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report

cc:
Chris Hamilton, Assistant State Conservationist-Water Resources & Easements, NRCS, Columbia, MO
Andrew Rackers, State Conservation Engineer, NRCS, Columbia, MO
Nate Goodrich, State Resource Conservationist, NRCS, Columbia, MO
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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

July 29, 2022

The Honorable Deborah Dotson
President of Delaware Nation
Post Office Box 825
Anadarko, Oklahoma 73005

Dear President Dotson:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584, Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

July 29, 2022

The Honorable Michael L. Parson
Governor of Missouri
Post Office Box 720
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

Dear Governor Parson:

Please find enclosed the Preliminary Investigation Findings Report (PIFR) for the Little River Watershed in Cape Girardeau, Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Scott and Stoddard Counties, Missouri. The PIFR was prepared in coordination with the Little River Drainage District and the United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The intent of the PIFR is to document if a feasible watershed project plan can be developed in accordance with Public Law 83-566, Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566).

Based on the findings of the PIFR, the NRCS intends to request planning funds to prepare a Little River Watershed Plan for the proposed project no later than August 1, 2022.

If you have any questions, concerns, or relevant information, please contact Chris Hamilton, NRCS Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements at (573)876-0901 or chris.hamilton@usda.gov.

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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

July 29, 2022

The Honorable John Johnson
Governor of Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
2025 South Gordon Cooper Drive
Shawnee, Oklahoma 74801

Dear Governor Johnson:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584, Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

July 29, 2022

The Honorable Chuck Hoskin
Principal Chief of Cherokee Nation
Post Office Box 948
Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74465

Dear Principal Chief Hoskin:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584, Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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Post Office Box 948
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July 15, 2022

The Honorable Deborah Dotson
President of Delaware Nation
Post Office Box 825
Anadarko, Oklahoma 73005

Dear President Dotson:

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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

July 15, 2022

The Honorable Brad Killscrow
Chief of Delaware Tribe of Indians
1 Kellog Drive, Roosevelt Hall, Room 212
Emporia, Kansas 66801

Dear Chief Killscrow:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584 Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

July 15, 2022

The Honorable Glenna Wallace
Chief of Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
70500 East 128 Road
Wyandotte, Oklahoma 74370

Dear Chief Wallace:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584 Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

July 15, 2022

The Honorable Edgar Kent
Chairman of Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma
335588 East 750 Road
Perkins, Oklahoma 74059

Dear Chairman Kent:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584 Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

July 15, 2022

The Honorable Joe Bunch
Chief of United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma
18263 Keetoowah Circle
Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74464

Dear Chief Bunch:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584 Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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July 15, 2022

The Honorable Douglas Lankford
Chief of Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
Post Office Box 1326
Miami, Oklahoma 74355

Dear Chief Lankford:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584 Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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July 15, 2022

The Honorable Michael L. Parson
Governor of Missouri
Post Office Box 720
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

Dear Governor Parson:

Please find enclosed the Preliminary Investigation Findings Report (PIFR) for the Whitewater River Watershed in Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri. The PIFR was prepared in coordination with the Little River Drainage District and the United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The intent of the PIFR is to document if a feasible watershed project plan can be developed in accordance with Public Law 83-566, Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566).

Based on the findings of the PIFR, the NRCS intends to request planning funds to prepare a Whitewater River Watershed Plan for the proposed project no later than August 1, 2022.

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July 15, 2022

National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

To Whom It May Concern:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584 Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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If you have any questions, concerns, or relevant information, please contact Chris Hamilton, Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements at (573)876-0901 or chris.hamilton@usda.gov. If authorized, we look forward to working with you during the planning phase of the project.

Sincerely,

Scott Edwards
State Conservationist

Enclosure: Whitewater River Watershed Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report

cc:
Chris Hamilton, Assistant State Conservationist-Water Resources & Easements, NRCS, Columbia, MO
Andrew Rackers, State Conservation Engineer, NRCS, Columbia, MO
Nate Goodrich, State Resource Conservationist, NRCS, Columbia, MO
Nancy Walker, Area Conservationist, NRCS, Jackson, MO
Steve Hefner, Natural Resources Specialist, NRCS, Columbia, MO
Brian Kirn, District Conservationist, NRCS, Benton, MO
Dana Seibel, District Conservationist, NRCS, Jackson, MO
W. Dustin Boatwright, Executive Vice President, Chief Engineer, Little River Drainage District

Natural Resources Conservation Service
601 Business Loop 70 West, Parkade Center Suite 250, Columbia, Missouri 65203
Telephone: (573) 876-0909 Fax: (855) 830-0683
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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

July 15, 2022

The Honorable Geoffrey Standing Bear
Principle Chief of Osage Nation
627 Grandview Avenue
Pawhuska, Oklahoma 74056

Dear Principal Chief Standing Bear:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584 Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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July 15, 2022

The Honorable Craig Harper
Chief of Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
118 South Eight Tribes Trail
Miami, Oklahoma 74354

Dear Chief Harper:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584 Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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July 15, 2022

The Honorable Oliver Littlecook
Chairman of Ponca Tribe of Oklahoma
121 White Eagle Drive
Ponca City, Oklahoma 74601

Dear Chairman Littlecook:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584 Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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July 15, 2022

The Honorable Rebecca Sullivan
Interim Chairwoman of Ponca Tribe of Nebraska
Post Office Box 288
Niobrara, Nebraska 68760

Dear Interim Chairwoman Sullivan:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584 Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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USDA United States Department of Agriculture

July 15, 2022

The Honorable Joseph Byrd
Chairman of Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma
Post Office Box 765
Quapaw, Oklahoma 74364

Dear Chairman Byrd:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584 Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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July 15, 2022

The Honorable John Johnson
Governor of Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
2025 South Gordon Cooper Drive
Shawnee, Oklahoma 74801

Dear Governor Johnson:

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July 15, 2022

The Honorable Benjamin Barnes
Chief of Shawnee Tribe
29 South Highway 69A
Miami, Oklahoma 74354

Dear Chief Barnes:

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July 15, 2022

Roger S. Allan, Deputy Chief
Regulatory Division
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District
167 North Main Street, Room B202
Memphis, Tennessee 38103-1894

Dear Mr. Allan:

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July 15, 2022

Karren Herrington, Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Missouri Ecological Services Field Office
101 Park Deville Drive, Suite A
Columbia, Missouri 65203

Dear Ms. Herrington:

The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a preapplication requirement under Executive Order 10584 Section 3 that requires notification to your organization concerning a Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR) for Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566) projects. A request for Federal Assistance was received from the Little River Drainage District for watershed planning and project funding through the PL-566 Small Watershed Program.

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RFP #2023-18
NRCS Missouri – Watershed Plan and Environmental Document
for Whitewater River Watershed, Various Counties, Missouri

Whitewater River Plan-EA - 2nd Public Meeting – October 1, 2024

4:00pm – 4:55pm at Little River Drainage District Office, 1432 Kurre Lane, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

In-person sign-in attached. Online attendees – Teams attendance report attached.

Meeting Minutes

1. Presentation by NRCS (~36min), see attached Power Point slides.
2. Questions
    a. Q. MDC Attendee: Is there other cost share programs in the uplands to help prevent sediment in the ditch? A. Steve Hefner: There's a big push by conservation agencies to push cover crops through the USDA working lands programs like EQIP and CSP. State local water conservation district programs cannot well address what we are doing here.
    b. Q. MDC Attendee: How long has it been since the sideslopes in the ditches have been shaped and sediment removal because the cross-sections show pretty good sloughing off? A. Blake Hagedorn: 5 years ago.
    c. Q. MDC Attendee: What kind of background information do you do with your study? A. Trevor Cunningham: As much as we can from desktop. We looked at Web Soil Survey, the National Wetlands Inventory, Fish and Wildlife. We submitted a request for the MO National Heritage Review, MDC provided list of known populations of threatened and endangered species and how far they are from the project. We did a cultural resources survey. An architectural history report and a lot of social justice and minority population affects from public data online.
    d. Q. MDC Attendee: Did you do any aquatic sampling? A. Trevor: I don't believe any was involved. We were looking for habitat specifically and didn't find the mussel habitat to indicate sampling needed. Did find one bald eagle nest, which would affect construction timing.
    e. Q. Steve Hefner: Do you have information on cost of grass seeding so we can get improved costs on those? A. MDC Attendee: I noticed you had different acreages for the different alternatives. Trevor: It depends on full bank armoring or not, but the values are shown in the presentation. Half bank has more acreage of seeding needed. MDC Attendee: Cost would vary between seed banks and mixes. Probably need full season mixes on ditch banks. Maybe do hydroseeding or drone seeding. $100 is very conservative for just buying the seed. Would expect about $1000/AC for installed seeding.
    f. Q. MDC Attendee: How many drop pipes feed into this section of the ditch? Where does Little River scope of work extend beyond the outside slopes of ditch? Is there a way to filter sediment prior to the drop pipes? A. Blake: Not sure on number of drop pipes. Majority of connections do have drop pipes. Trying to plant a 10' buffer from new native grasses to keep crop production away from it.

g. Q. MDC Attendee: Can you give me more information on the other two projects, you referenced Cypress Ditch? (Lick Creek and Main Ditch-Little River) A. Steve: They are about the same, but erosion is threatening a county road and additional head-cut to deal with in Lick Creek. Also, Lick Creek has an additional alternative for developing wetlands that may or may not be promoted further. Main Ditch – Little River is much more similar and is also much bigger.

1. Summary		
Meeting title	Whitewater Final Public Participation Mtg	
Attended participants		1
Start time	10/01/24, 3:31:56 PM	
End time	10/01/24, 9:59:17 PM	
Meeting duration	6h 27m 21s	
Average attendance time	6h 27m 19s	

2. Participants					
Name	First Join	Last Leave	In-Meeting Duration	Email	Participant Role
Scott R. Hobart	10/01/24, 3:31:58 PM	10/01/24, 9:59:17 PM	6h 27m 19s	srhobart@mstutz.com	srhobart@r Organizer

3. In-Meeting Activities					
Name	Join Time	Leave Time	Duration	Email	Role
Scott R. Hobart	10/01/24, 3:31:58 PM	10/01/24, 9:59:17 PM	6h 27m 19s	srhobart@mstutz.com	Organizer

Whitewater River Watershed Project, HUC 10: 0802020401
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri
Second Public Participation Meeting, October 1, 2024
Attendance

Name	Landowner/Affiliation	Email/Contact Information
Scott Hobart	CWJV - MSI	srhobart@mstutz.com
Charles Loughman	CWJV - Wilson & Company	Charles.Loughman@wilsonco.com
Tim Kavan	Missouri Dept of Conservation	Tim.Kavan@mdc.mo.gov
Kevin Brunke	Missouri Dept. of Conservation	kevin.brunke@mdc.mo.gov
Steve Hefner	steven.hefner@usda.gov	USDA
Blake Hagedorn	LRDD	bhagedorn@thelrdd.org.
Trevor Cunningham	CWJV - Prairie Engineers	TCunningham@PrairieEngineers.com

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Mr. Mark Winkler
Emergency Coordinator (Cape Girardeau County)
Missouri State Emergency Management Agency
1 Barton Square, Suite 102
Jackson, Missouri 63755

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

To Whom It May Concern,

The Missouri Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is developing a draft watershed plan/ environmental document for the Whitewater River Watershed in Cape Girardeau and Scott counties, Missouri. The local sponsor is the Little River Drainage District. Through the NRCS Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations Program (WFPO), NRCS is authorized to assist local municipalities with complex watershed planning projects. The Whitewater River Watershed Project purpose is to provide feasible flood control alternatives within the watershed. Please see the attached map including potential areas where the work will be conducted.

As part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, the NRCS invites you to comment and/or participate in the next public meeting. A stakeholder/public meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 1st starting at 4:00 p.m. (CST). Interested stakeholders can attend in person at the Little River Drainage District Office, 1432 Kurre Lane, Cape Girardeau, MO. Stakeholders wishing to attend virtually, can obtain access by contacting Steven Hefner at steven.hefner@usda.gov.

Below is a brief overview of this project including draft alternatives. Supportive of this watershed planning effort, there are reports available for review. Please contact Mr. Hefner for electronic or print copies.

1. Phase I Cultural Resource Survey
2. Draft -Limited Waters of the U.S. Delineation and Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment

2 - Missouri State Emergency Management Agency

I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

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3 - Missouri State Emergency Management Agency

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Project Overview: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.): the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing a Whitewater River Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed project.

Project Sponsor: As project sponsor, the Little River Drainage District (LRDD) of Cape Girardeau, MO requested NRCS assistance to identify and analyze feasible alternatives for flood control within the watershed. The project watershed boundary is the HUC10 0802020401 boundary.

Project Need: The Proposed Action is needed to address aging infrastructure to aid in flood control. For around a century, water from adjacent farmland has been transporting silts, loams, and sands to the LRDD drainage canals. The sediments accumulate over time, reducing the drainage system's capacity and thereby diminishing its ability to prevent flooding. In addition to sheet, rill, and gully erosion, the canal banks have been eroding into themselves. Improvements to the aging infrastructure will provide benefits to downstream watersheds and ensuring landscape scale resilience. The proposed project is a sub-unit of the entire drainage district. The system of drainage ditches serves to manage runoff received from higher ground and several neighboring drainage districts. Drainage water is collected and transferred by drainage canals to Arkansas and ultimately the Mississippi River. This system of drainage canals is the life blood of the region, permitting the production of commodities.

Proposed Alternatives: Alternatives under evaluation:

1. No Action
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Whitewater River Watershed Proposed Project, Site Location Map

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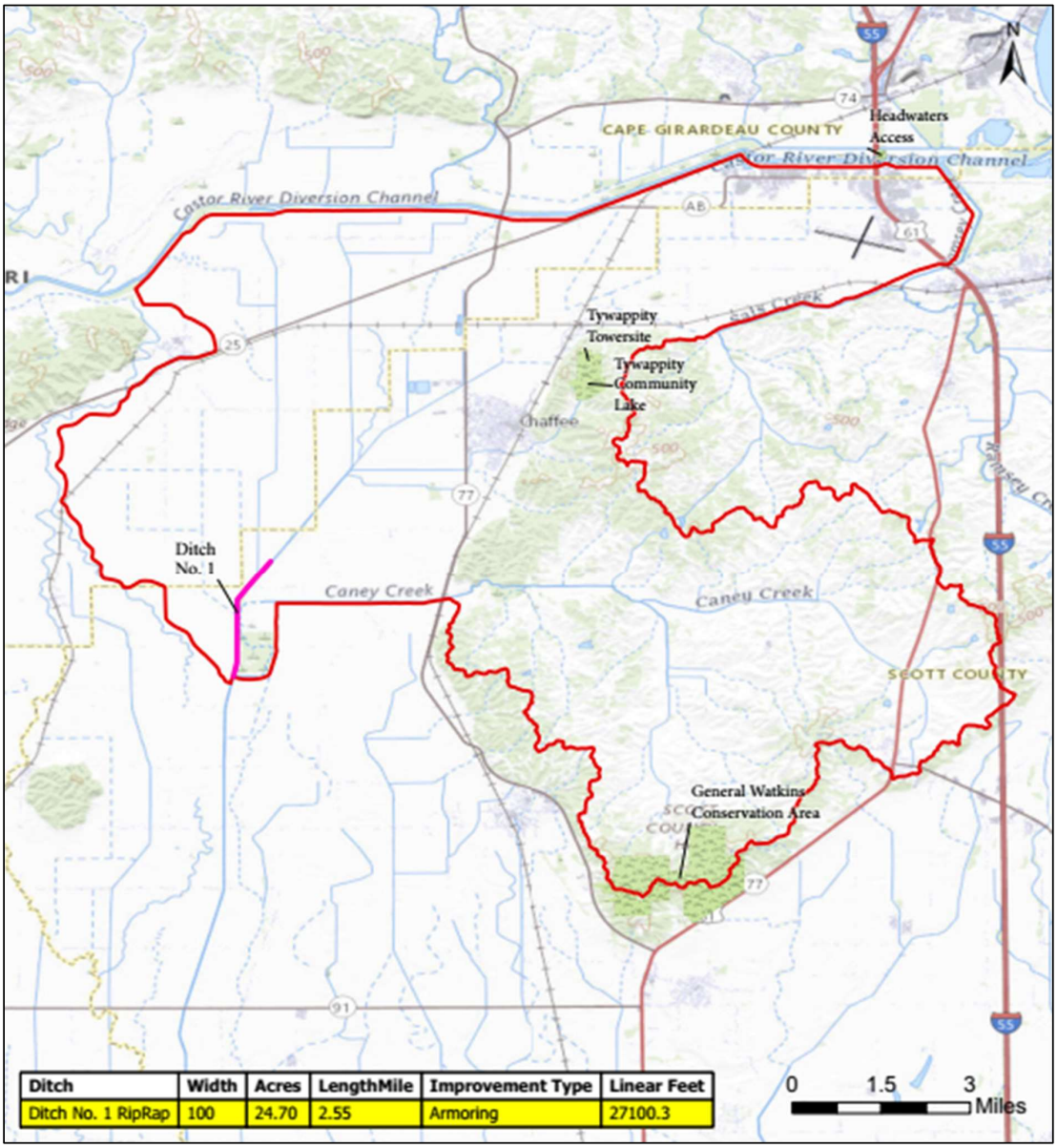

Ditch	Width	Acres	LengthMile	Improvement Type	Linear Feet
Ditch No. 1 RipRap	100	24.70	2.55	Armoring	27100.3

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Floodplain Manager, Cape Girardeau County
1 Barton Square, Suite 202
Jackson, Missouri 63755

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

To Whom It May Concern,

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2. Draft -Limited Waters of the U.S. Delineation and Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment

2 - Cape Girardeau County

I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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3 - Cape Girardeau County

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Project Overview: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.): the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing a Whitewater River Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed project.

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
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4 - Cape Girardeau County

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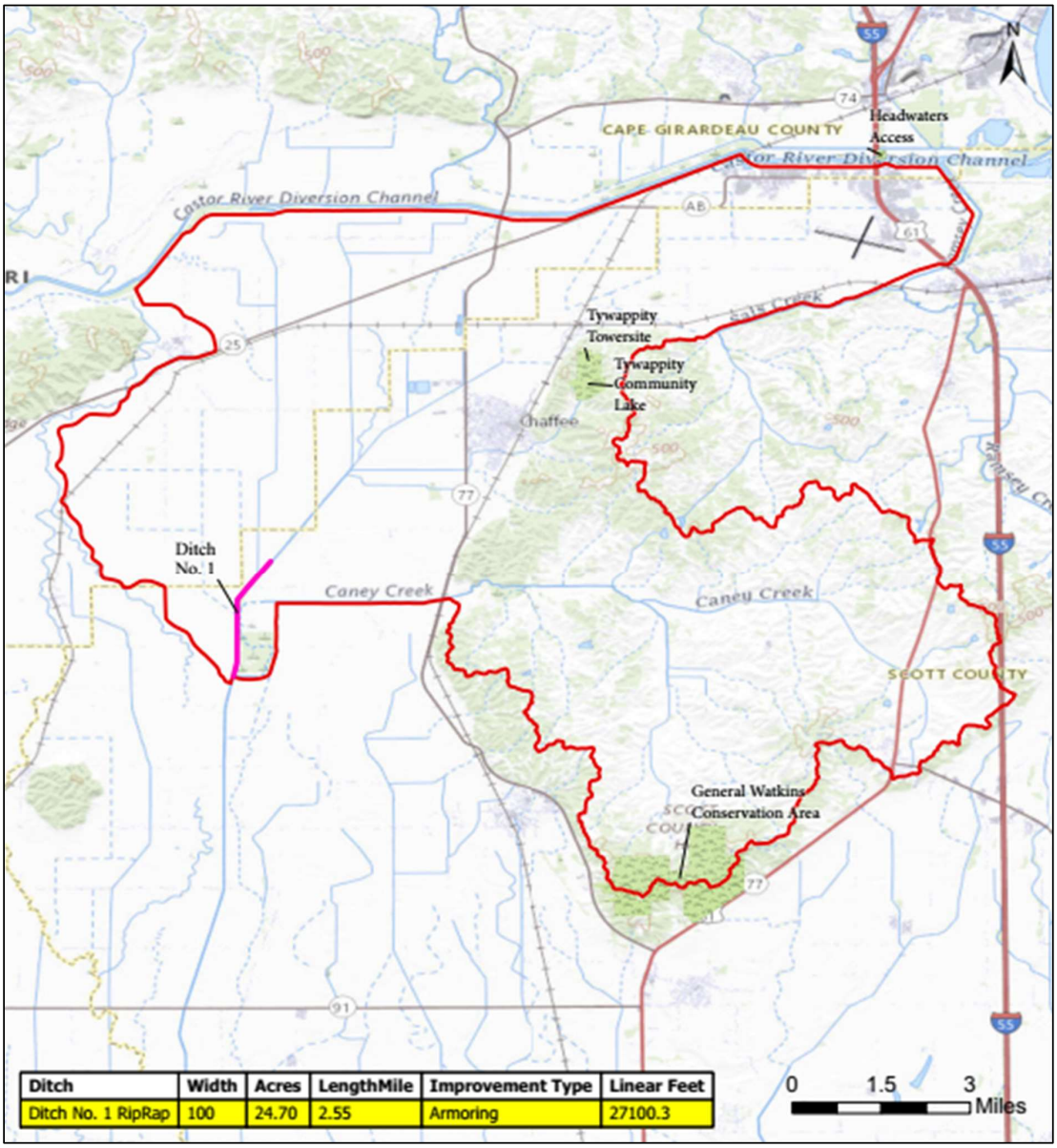

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Mr. Clint Tracy
Presiding Commissioner, Cape Girardeau County Commission
1 Barton Square
Jackson, Missouri 63755

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
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3 - Cape Girardeau County Commission

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Project Overview: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.): the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing a Whitewater River Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed project.

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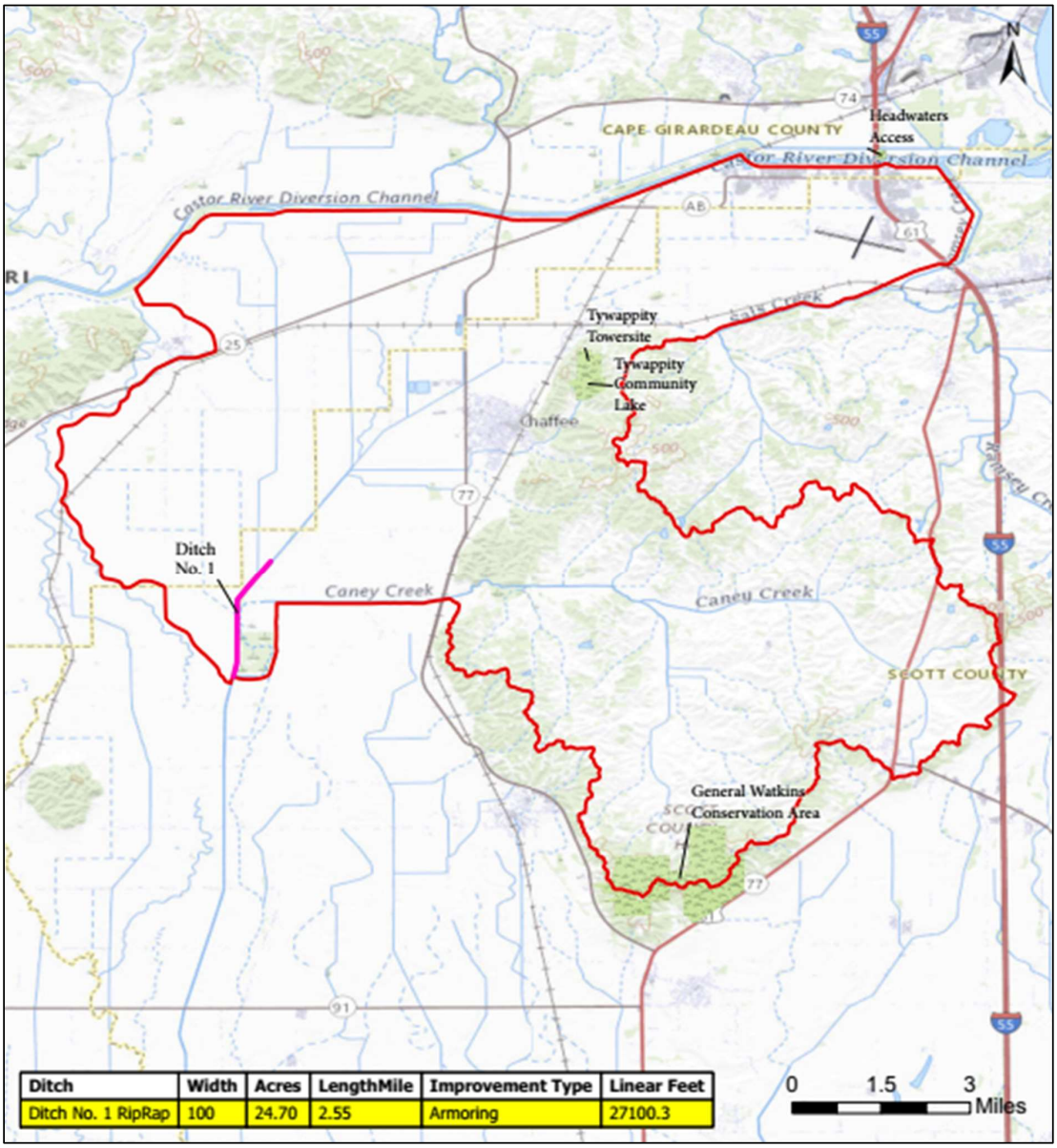

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Mr. Travis Hollis
Emergency Coordinator Cape Girardeau
Missouri State Emergency Management Agency
1 S. Sprigg
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63703

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

3 - Missouri State Emergency Management Agency

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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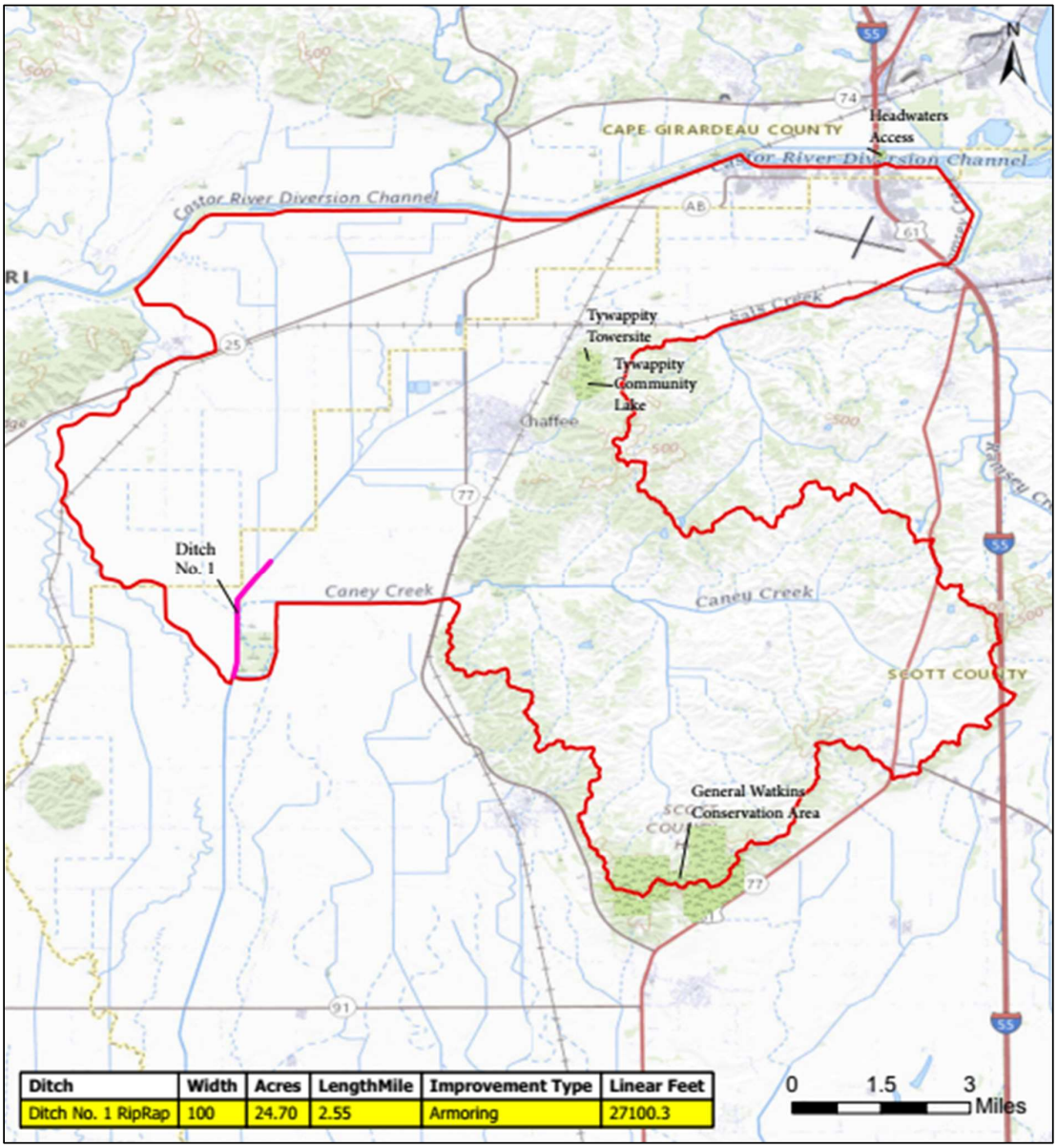

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Missouri Ecological Services Field Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
101 Park Deville Drive, Suite A
Columbia, Missouri 65203

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Chris Hamilton

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Project Summary
Site Location Map

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
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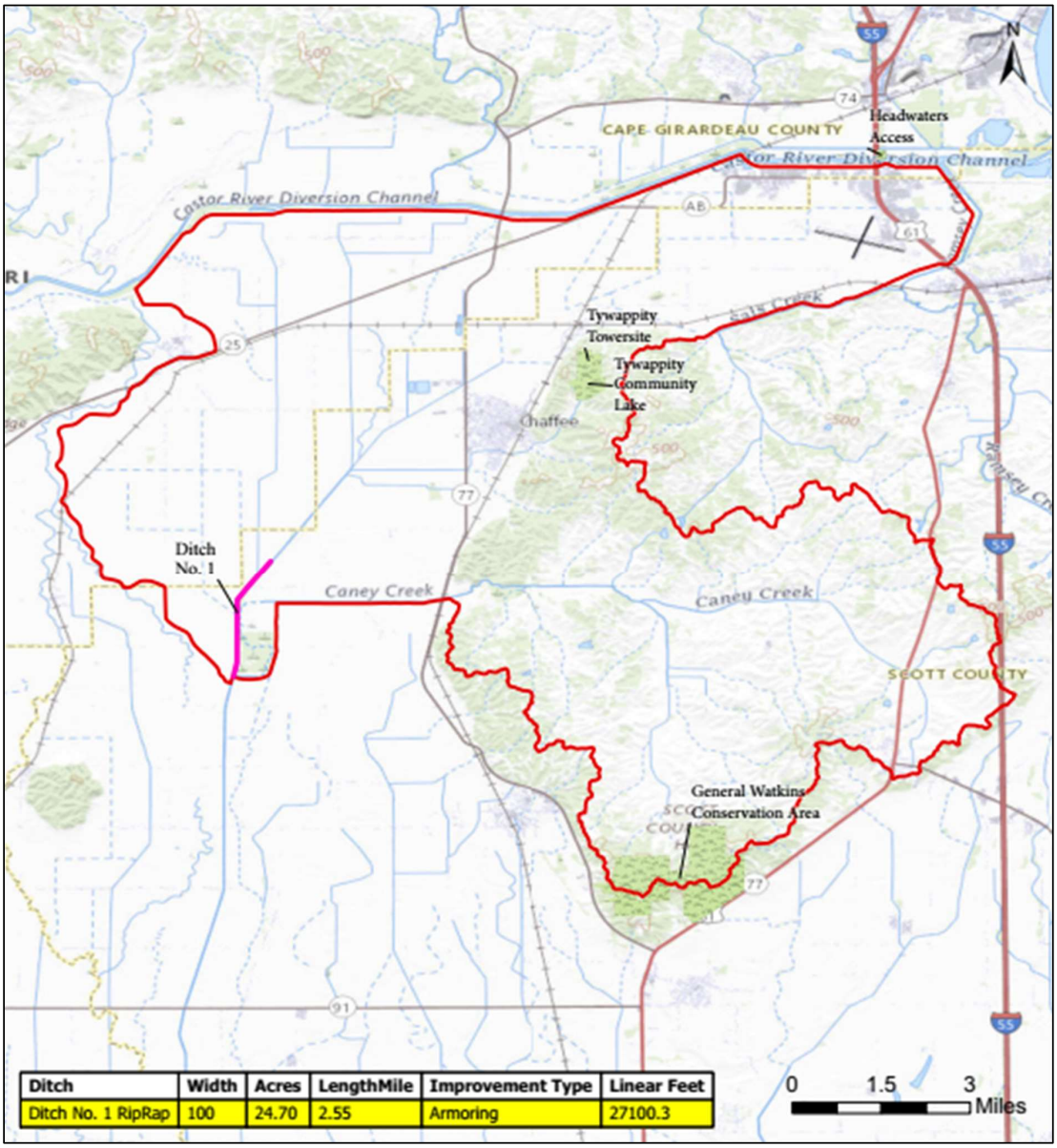

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

The Honorable Oliver Little Cook
Chairman, Ponca Tribe of Oklahoma
101 White Eagle Drive
Ponca City, Oklahoma 74601

September 12, 2024

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Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
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Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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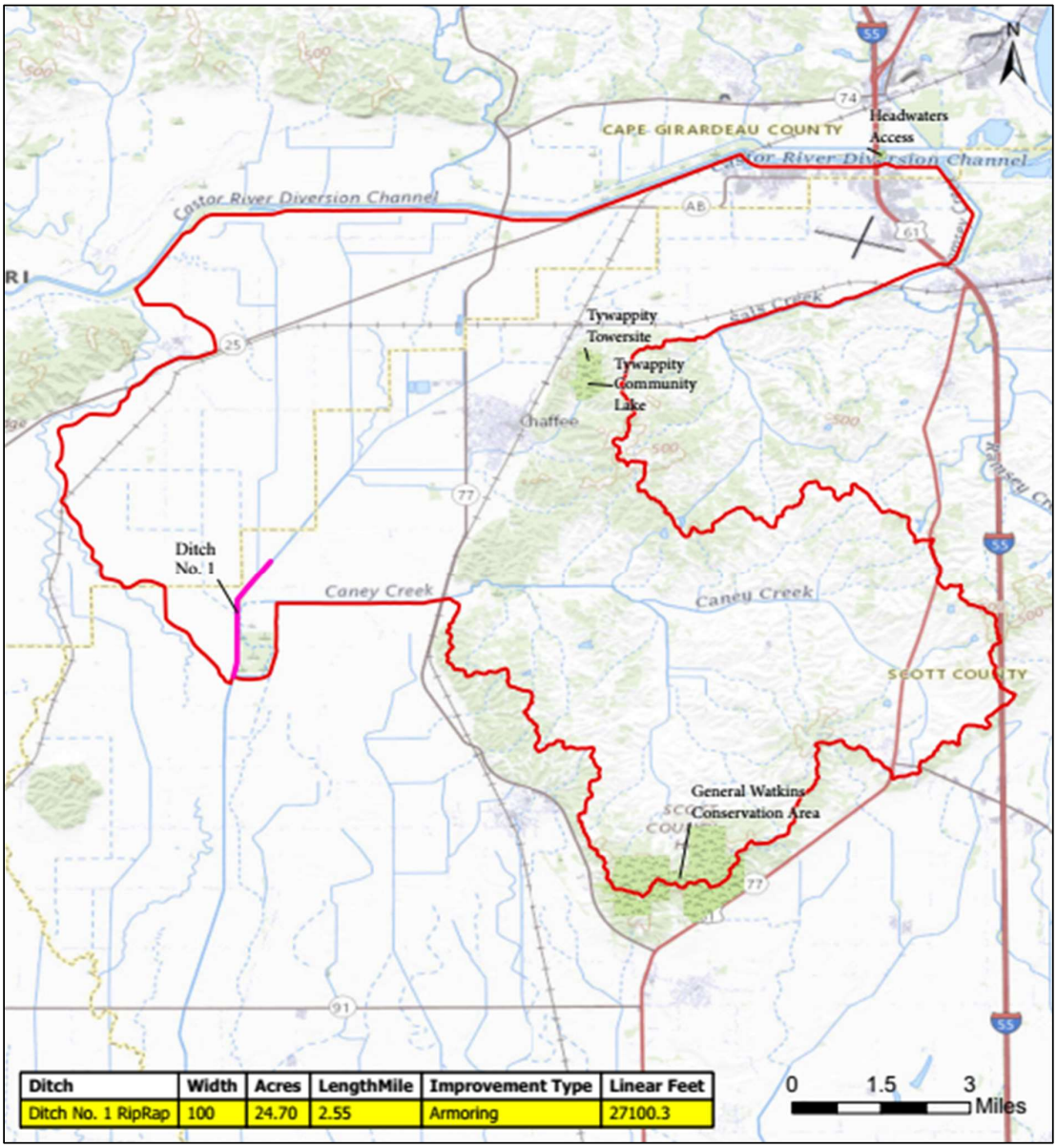

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Honorable Eric Schmitt
Senate, U.S. Congress
111 S. 10th Street, Suite 23.305
St. Louis, Missouri 63102

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Whitewater River Watershed Proposed Project, Site Location Map

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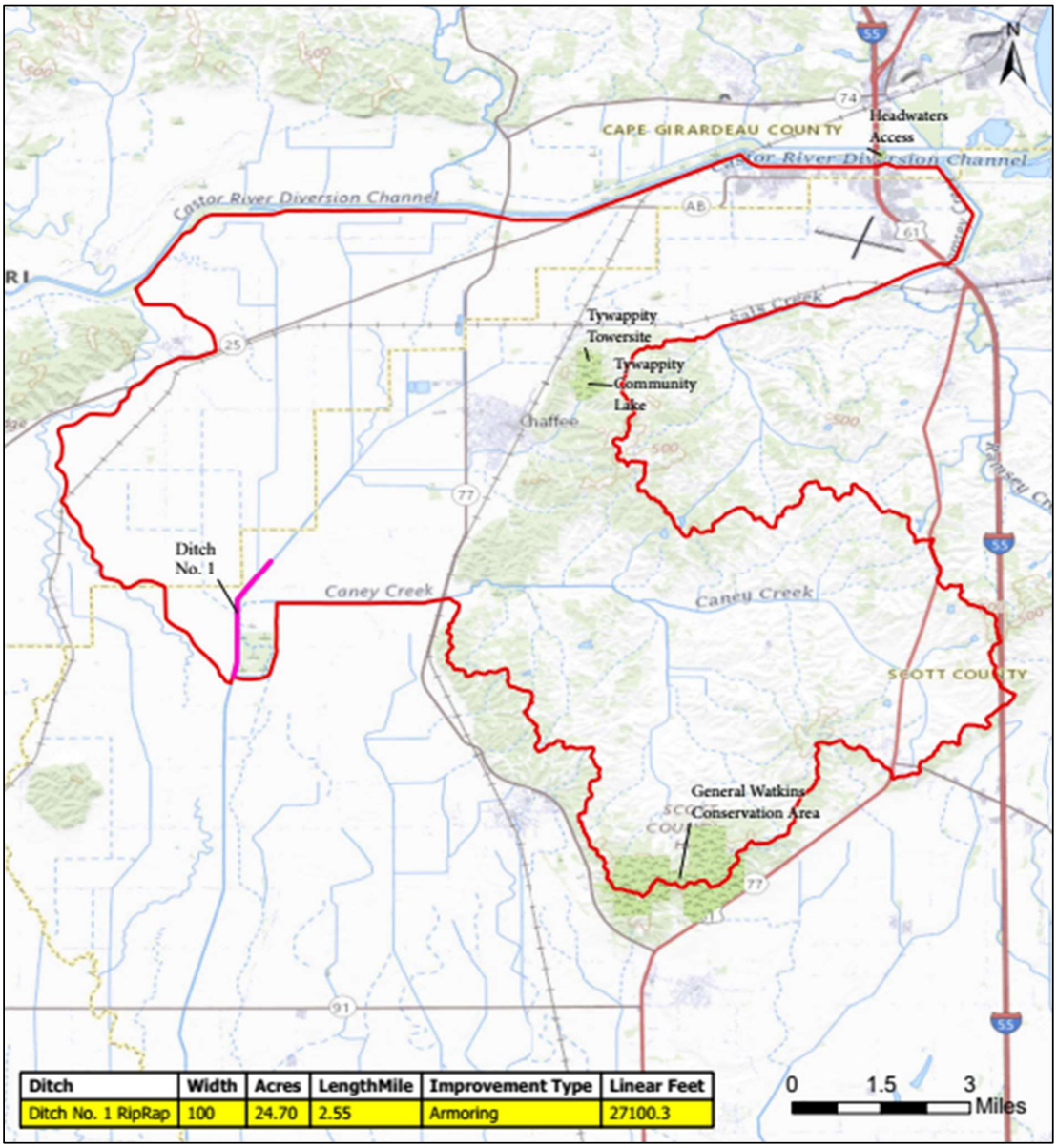

Ditch	Width	Acres	LengthMile	Improvement Type	Linear Feet
Ditch No. 1 RipRap	100	24.70	2.55	Armoring	27100.3

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Ms. Meg McCollister
Region 7 Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
11201 Renner Boulevard
Lenexa, Kansas 66219

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
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3 - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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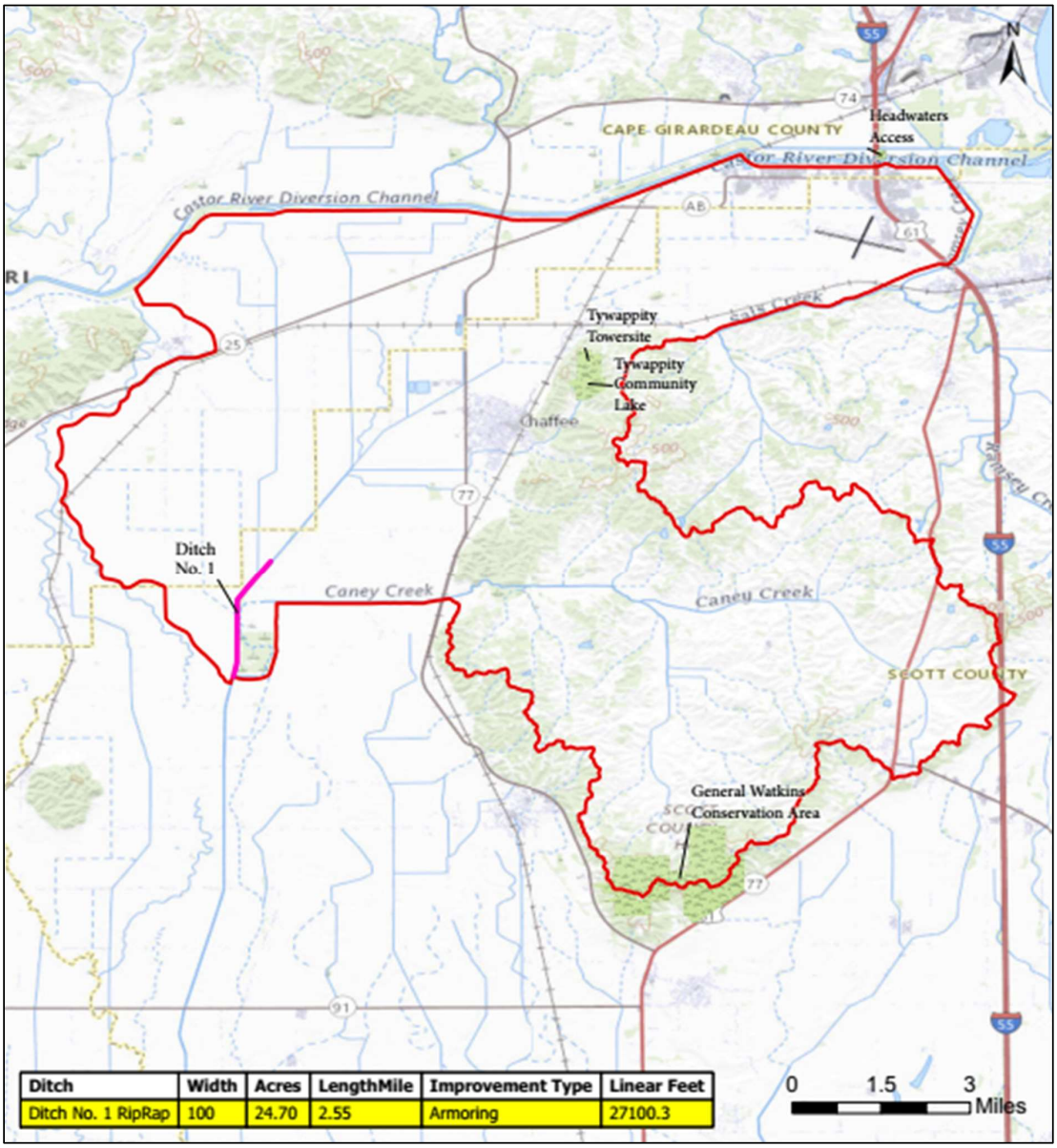

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Mr. John R. Scott
Emergency Coordinator Scott County
Missouri State Emergency Management Agency
131 S. Winchester Street,
Benton, Missouri 63736

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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3 - Missouri State Emergency Management Agency

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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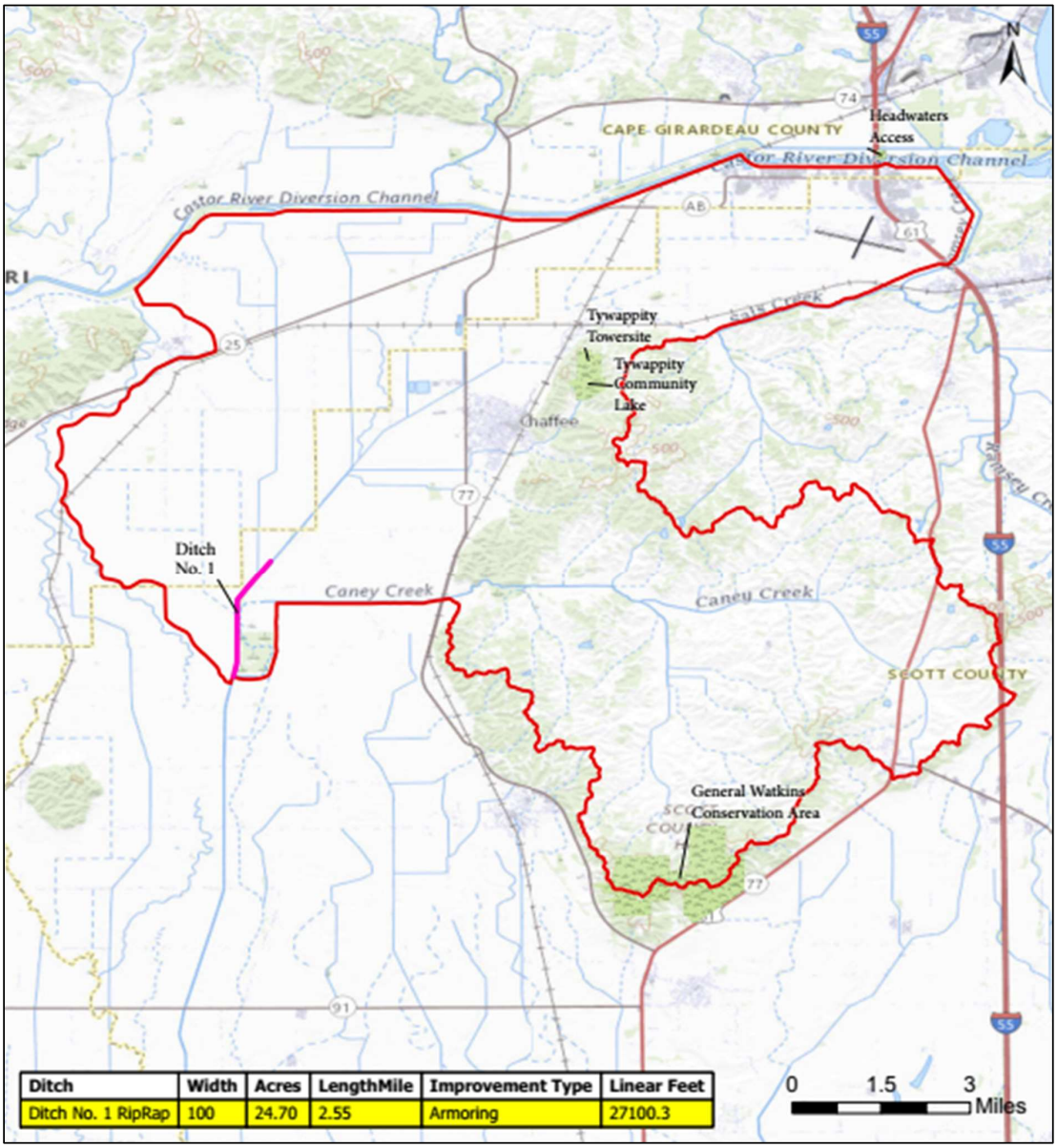

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Central Midwest Water Science Center Director
U.S. Geological Survey
1400 Independence Road
Rolla, Missouri 65401

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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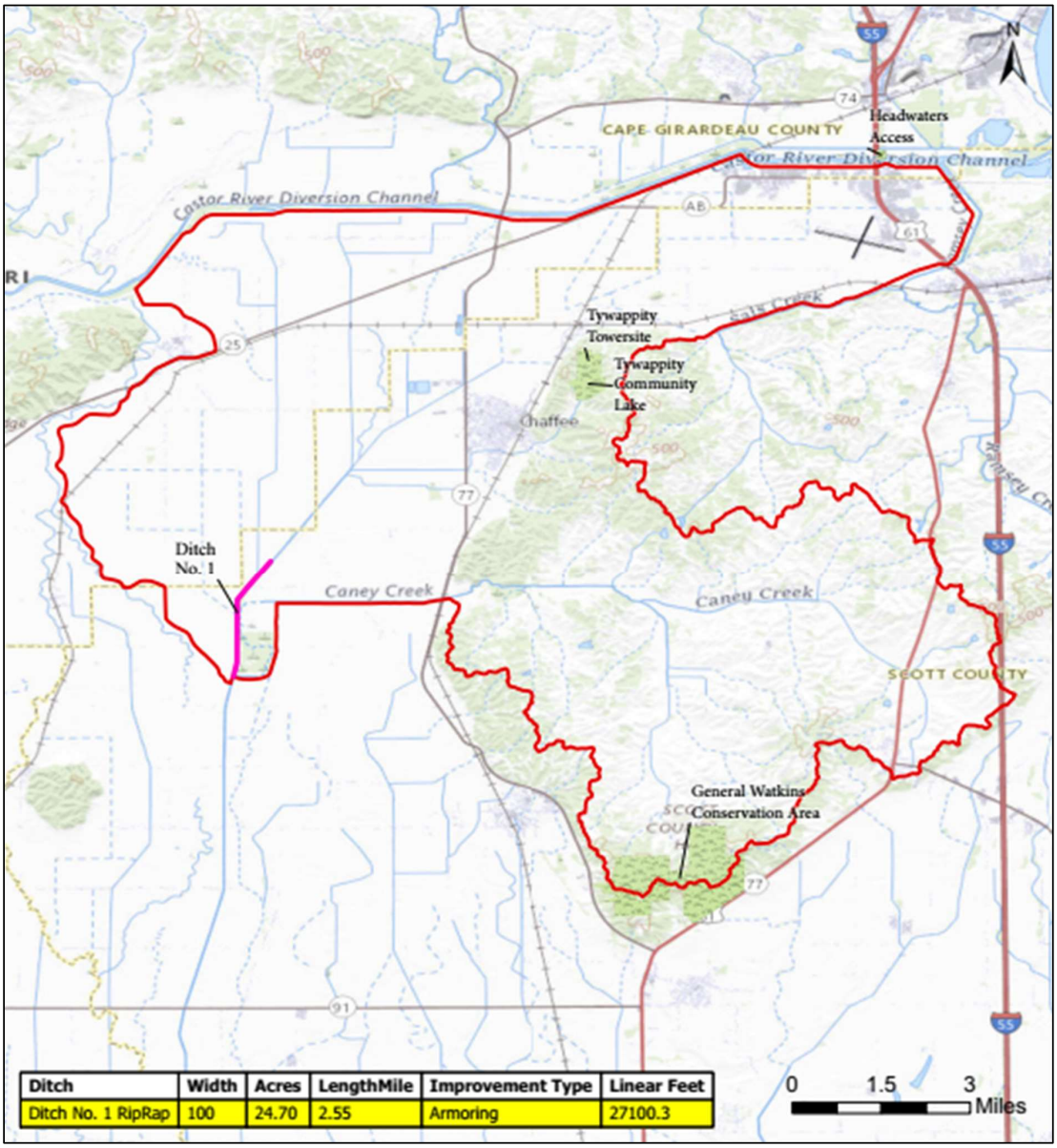

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Missouri Department of Agriculture
Post Office Box 630
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Site Location Map

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Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
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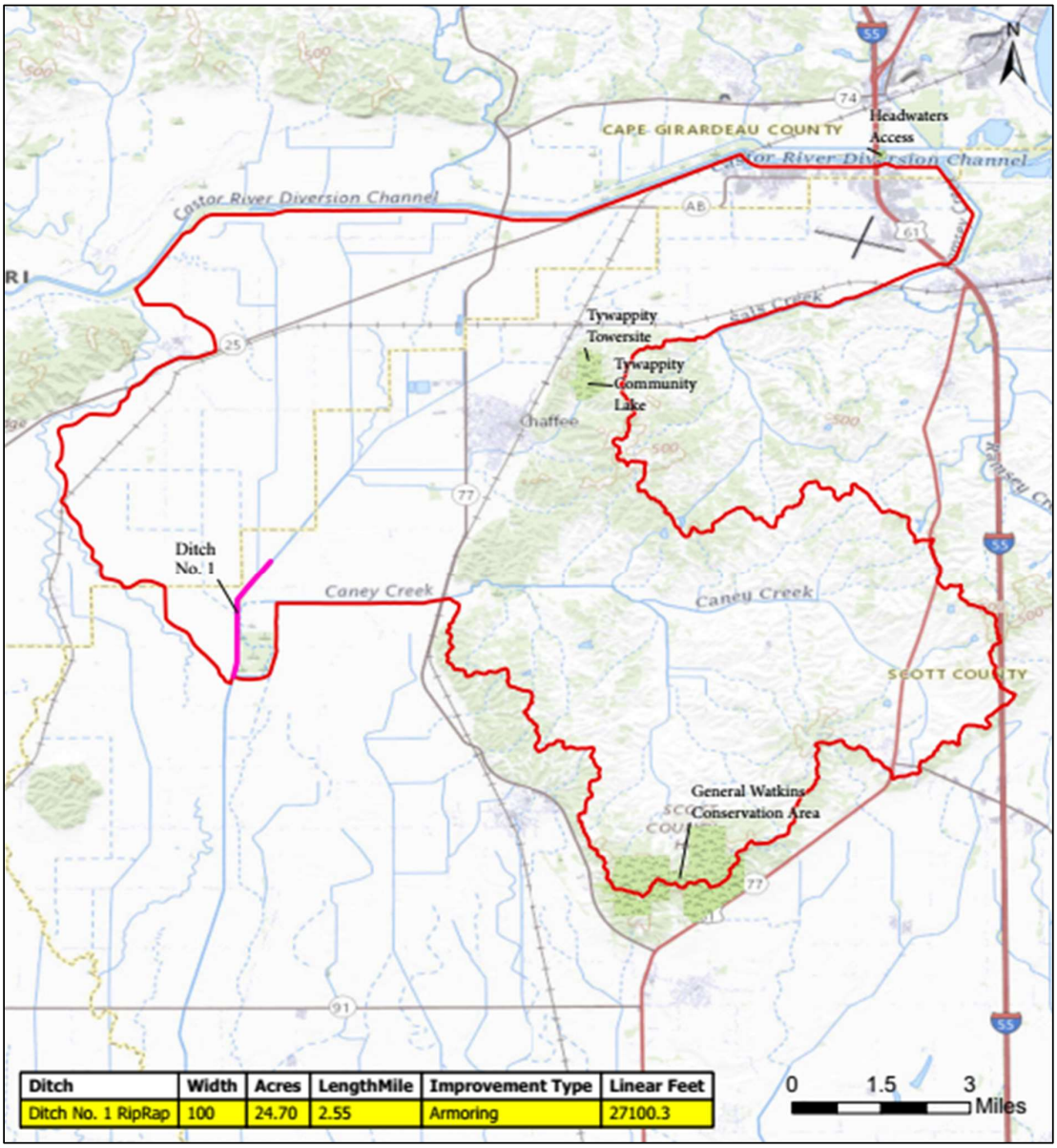

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Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Honorable Holly Thompson Rehder
Senate District 27, Missouri State Senate
201 W. Capitol Avenue, Room 433
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

September 12, 2024

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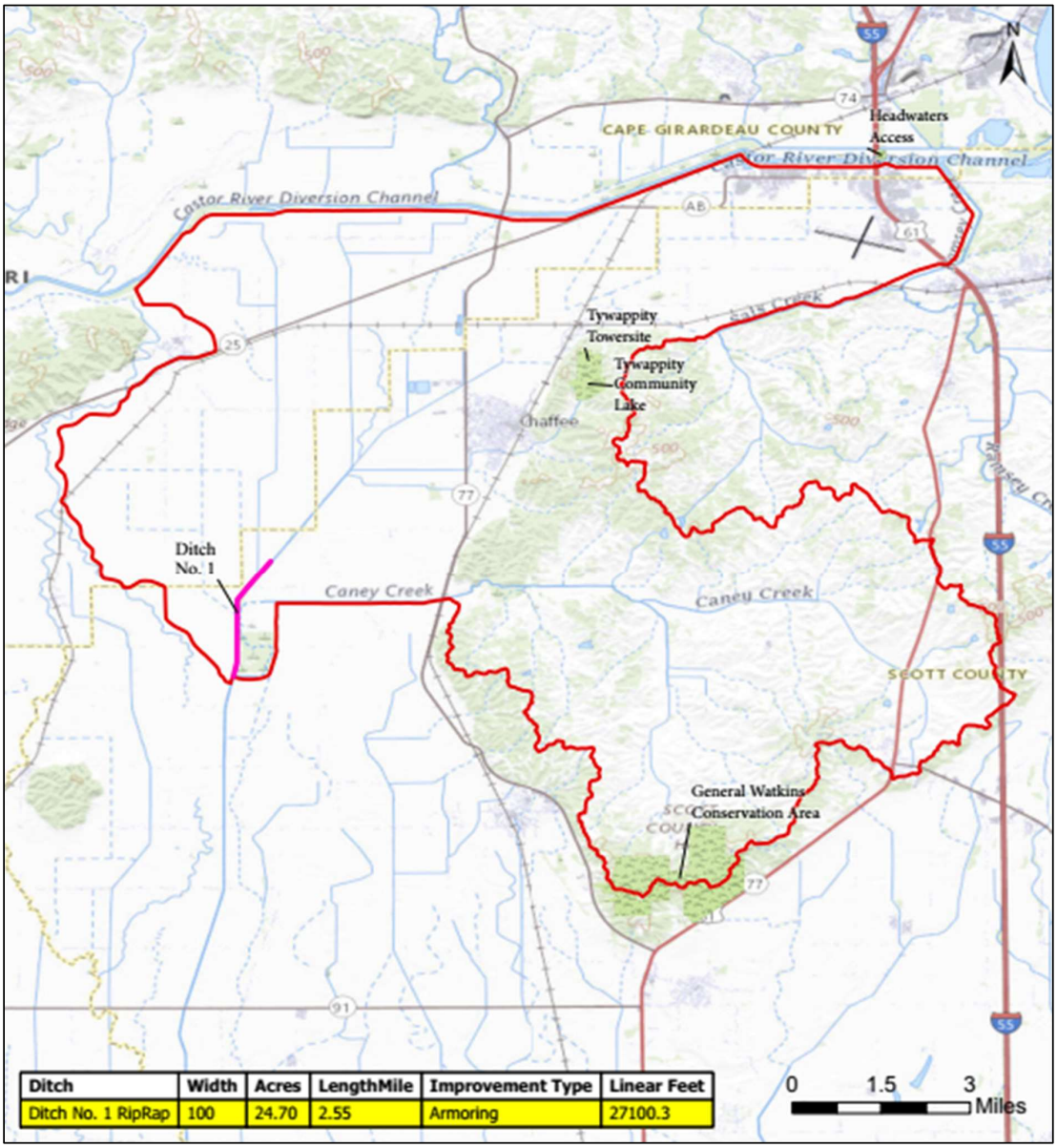

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Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Honorable John Voss
House District 147, Missouri State Representative
201 W. Capitol Avenue, Room 110-A
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

September 12, 2024

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Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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2. Draft -Limited Waters of the U.S. Delineation and Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment

2 - Missouri State Representative

I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

3 - Missouri State Representative

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Project Overview: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.): the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing a Whitewater River Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed project.

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4 - Missouri State Representative

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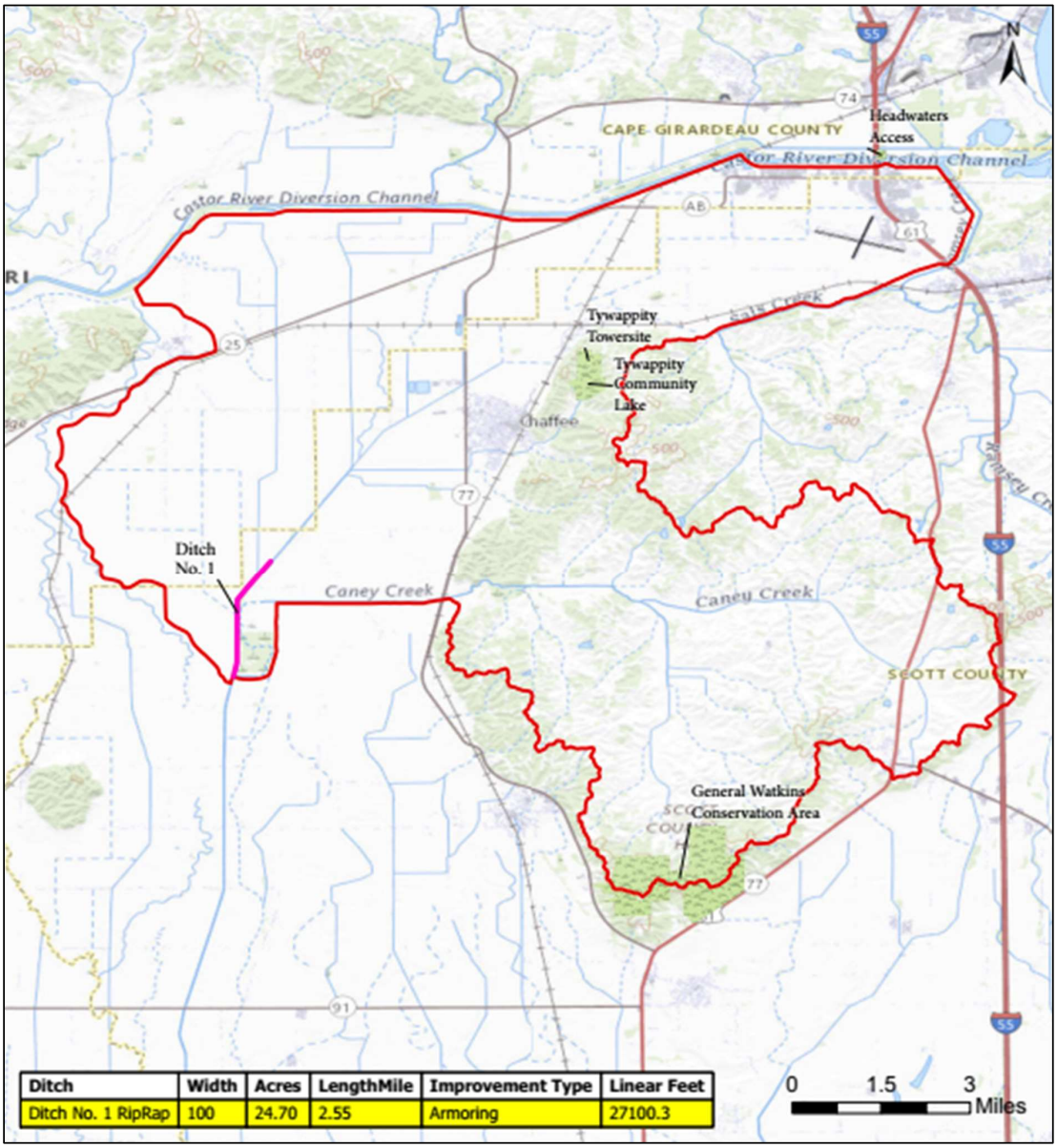

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Honorable Jamie Burger
House District 148, Missouri State Representative
201 W. Capitol Avenue, Room 302-B
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Chris Hamilton
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Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
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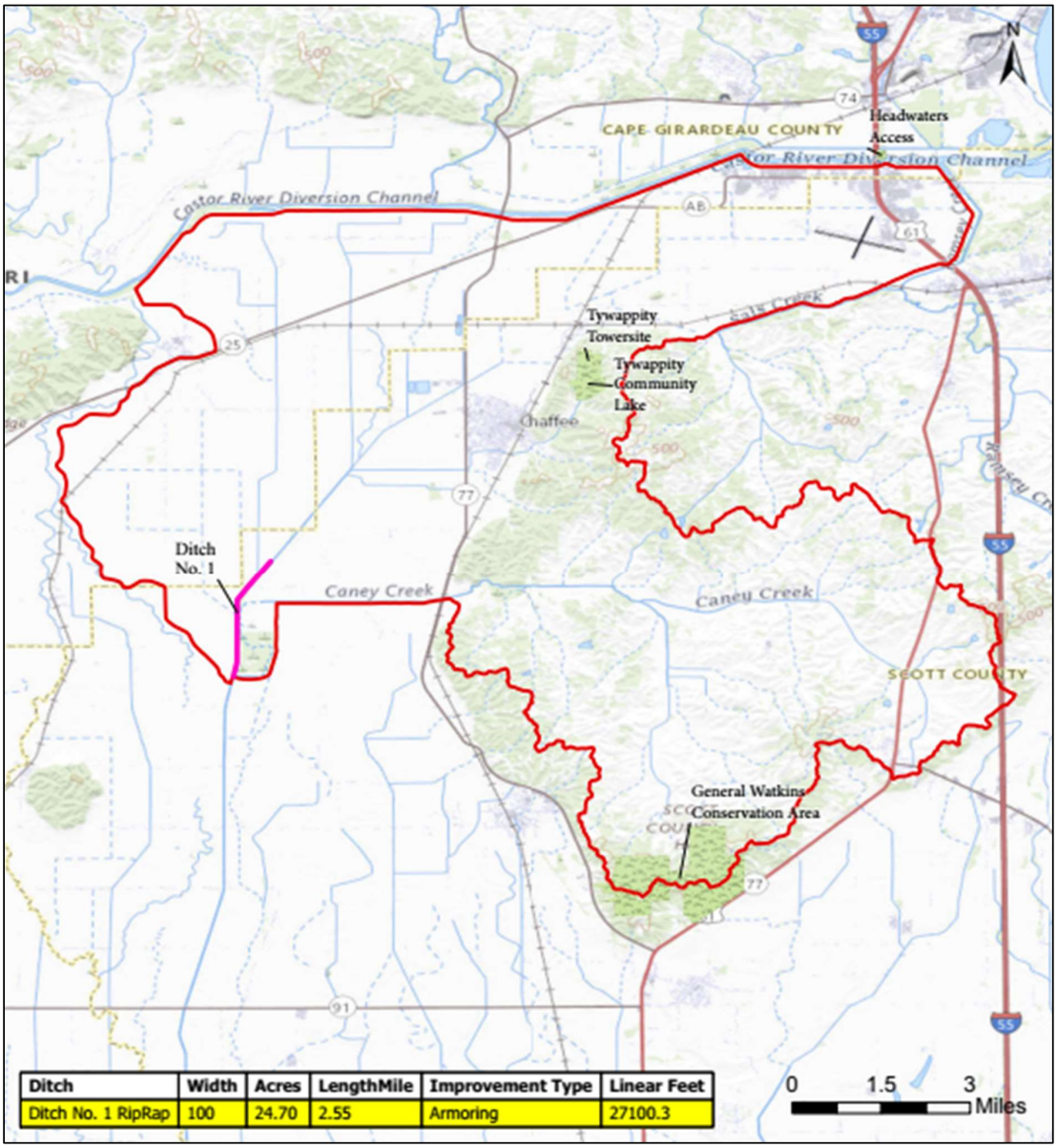

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Honorable Herman Morse
House District 151, Missouri State Representative
201 W. Capitol Avenue, Room 135
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

September 12, 2024

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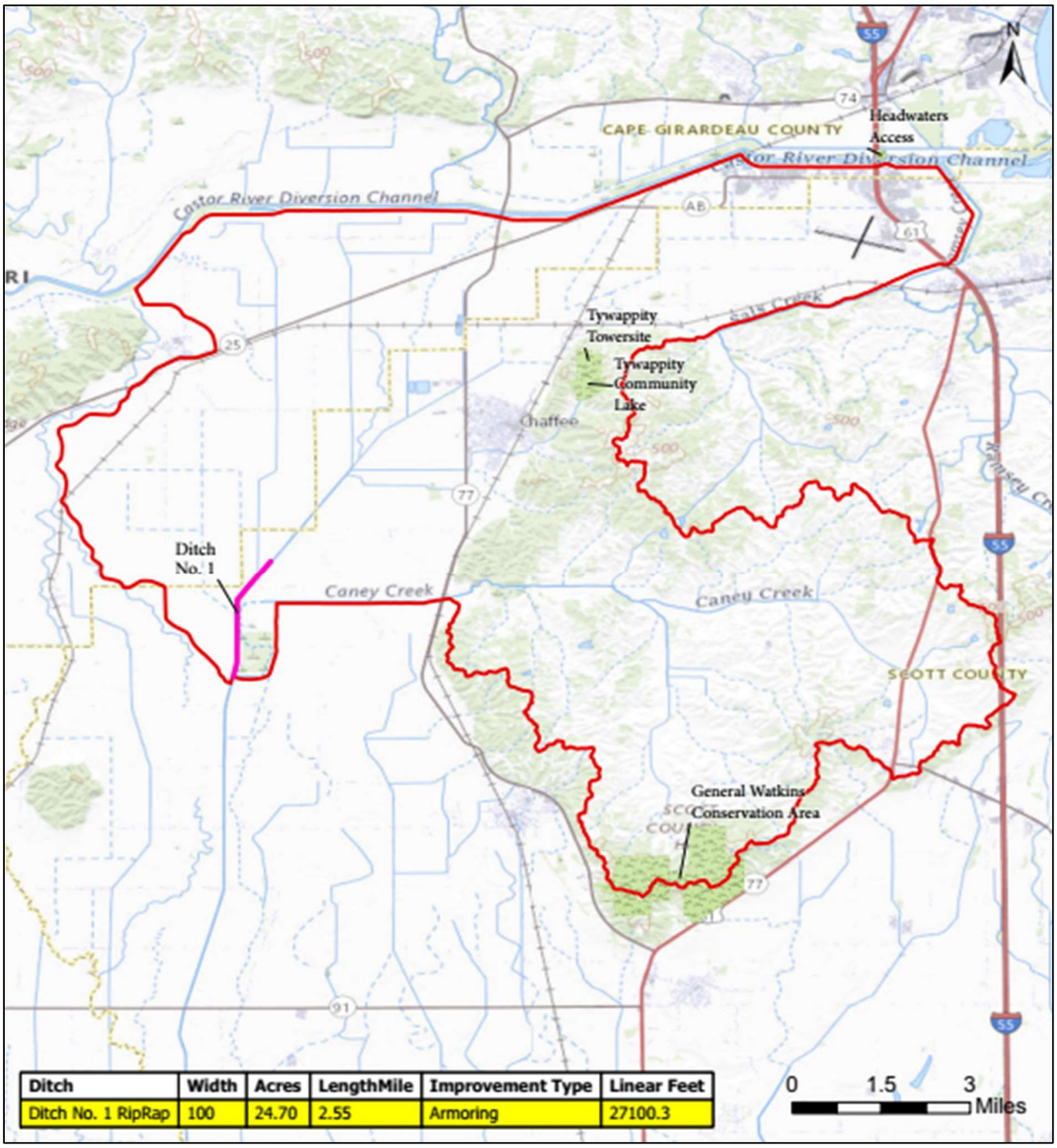

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

The Honorable John Johnson
Governor, Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
2025 S. Gordon Cooper Drive,
Shawnee, Oklahoma 74801

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

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3 - Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
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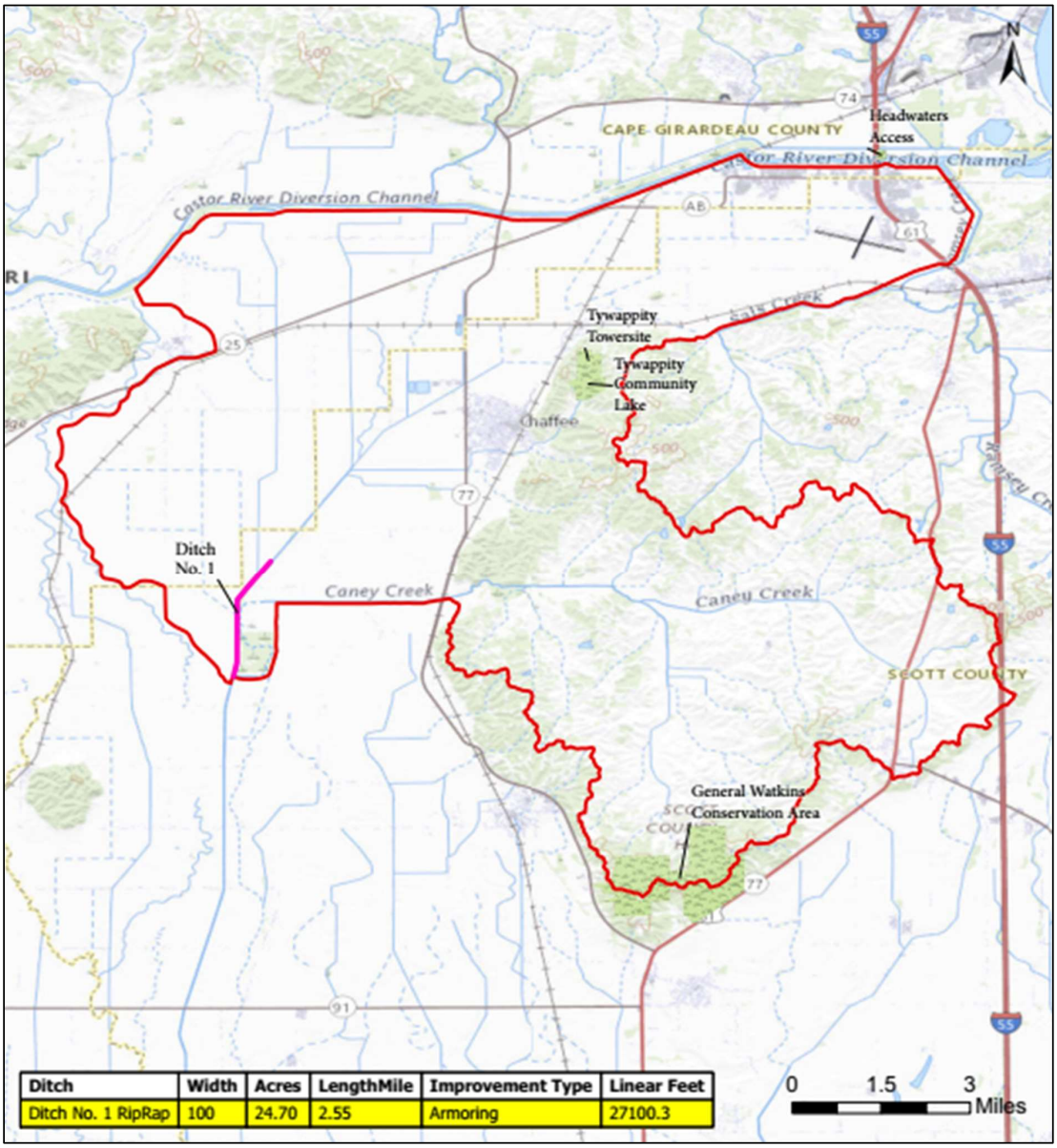

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Honorable Jim Simmons
Mayor, City of Benton
Post Office Box 185
Benton, Missouri 63736

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
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Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Site Location Map

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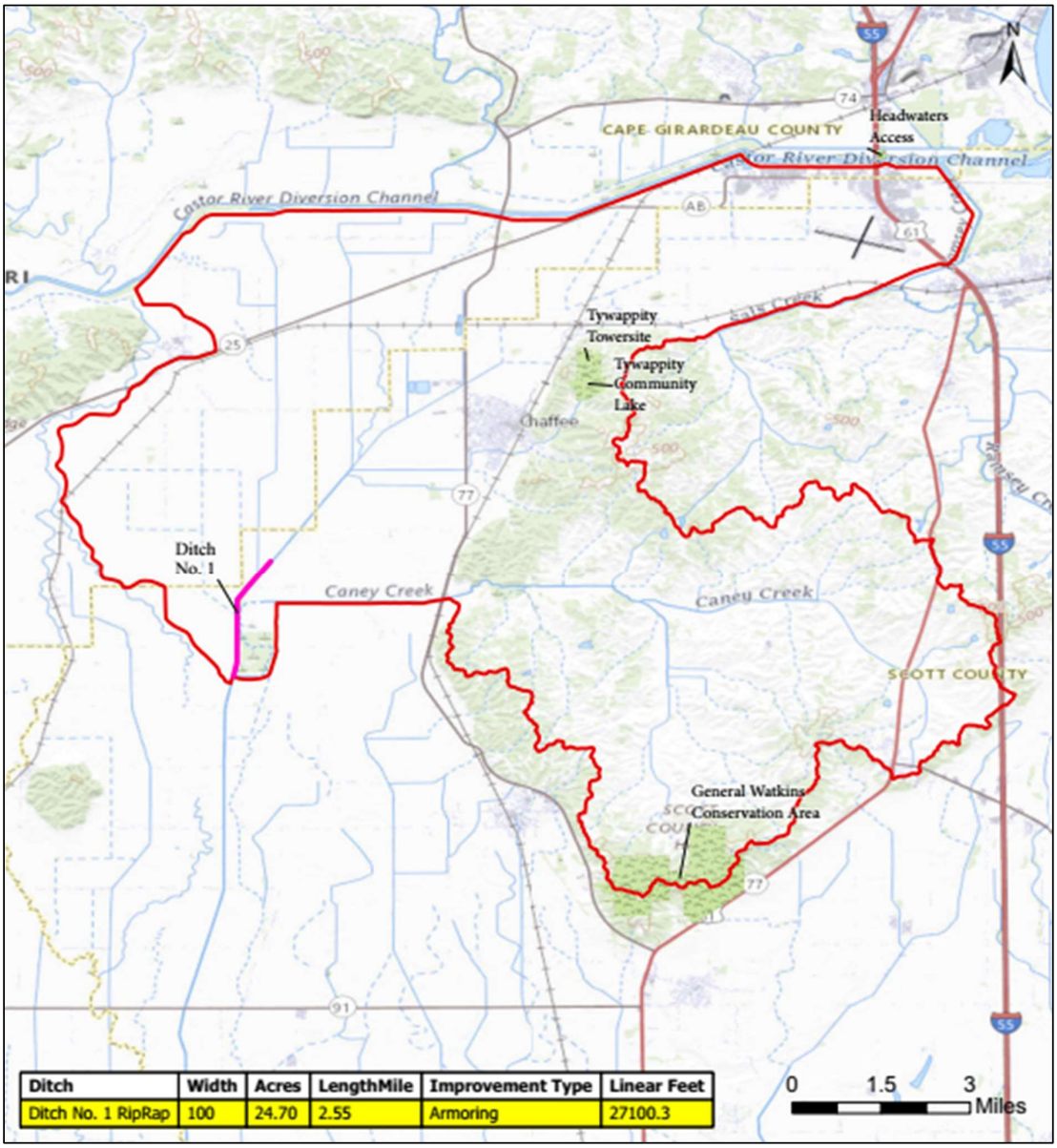

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Mr David Gore
Floodplain Administrator, Scott City
Missouri State Floodplain Administrators
215 Chester Avenue
Scott City, Missouri 63841

September 12, 2024

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Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Site Location Map

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Whitewater River Watershed Proposed Project, Site Location Map

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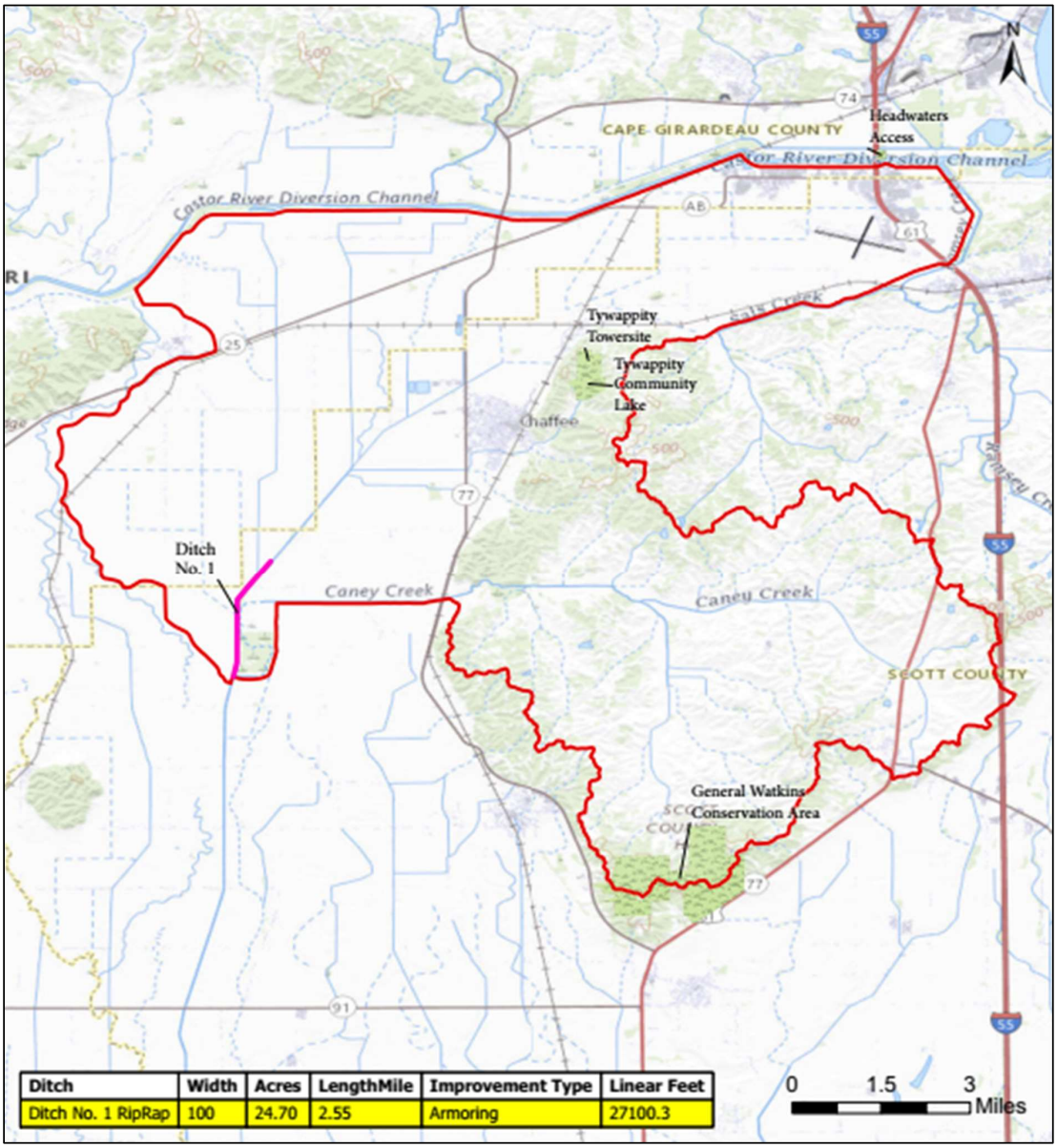

Ditch	Width	Acres	LengthMile	Improvement Type	Linear Feet
Ditch No. 1 RipRap	100	24.70	2.55	Armoring	27100.3

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Honorable Steve Loucks
Mayor, City of Chaffee
222 W. Yoakum Avenue, #C
Chaffee, Missouri 63740

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

To Whom It May Concern,

The Missouri Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is developing a draft watershed plan/ environmental document for the Whitewater River Watershed in Cape Girardeau and Scott counties, Missouri. The local sponsor is the Little River Drainage District. Through the NRCS Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations Program (WFPO), NRCS is authorized to assist local municipalities with complex watershed planning projects. The Whitewater River Watershed Project purpose is to provide feasible flood control alternatives within the watershed. Please see the attached map including potential areas where the work will be conducted.

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1. Phase I Cultural Resource Survey
2. Draft -Limited Waters of the U.S. Delineation and Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment

2 - City of Chaffee

I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

3 - City of Chaffee

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Project Overview: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.): the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing a Whitewater River Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed project.

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4 - City of Chaffee

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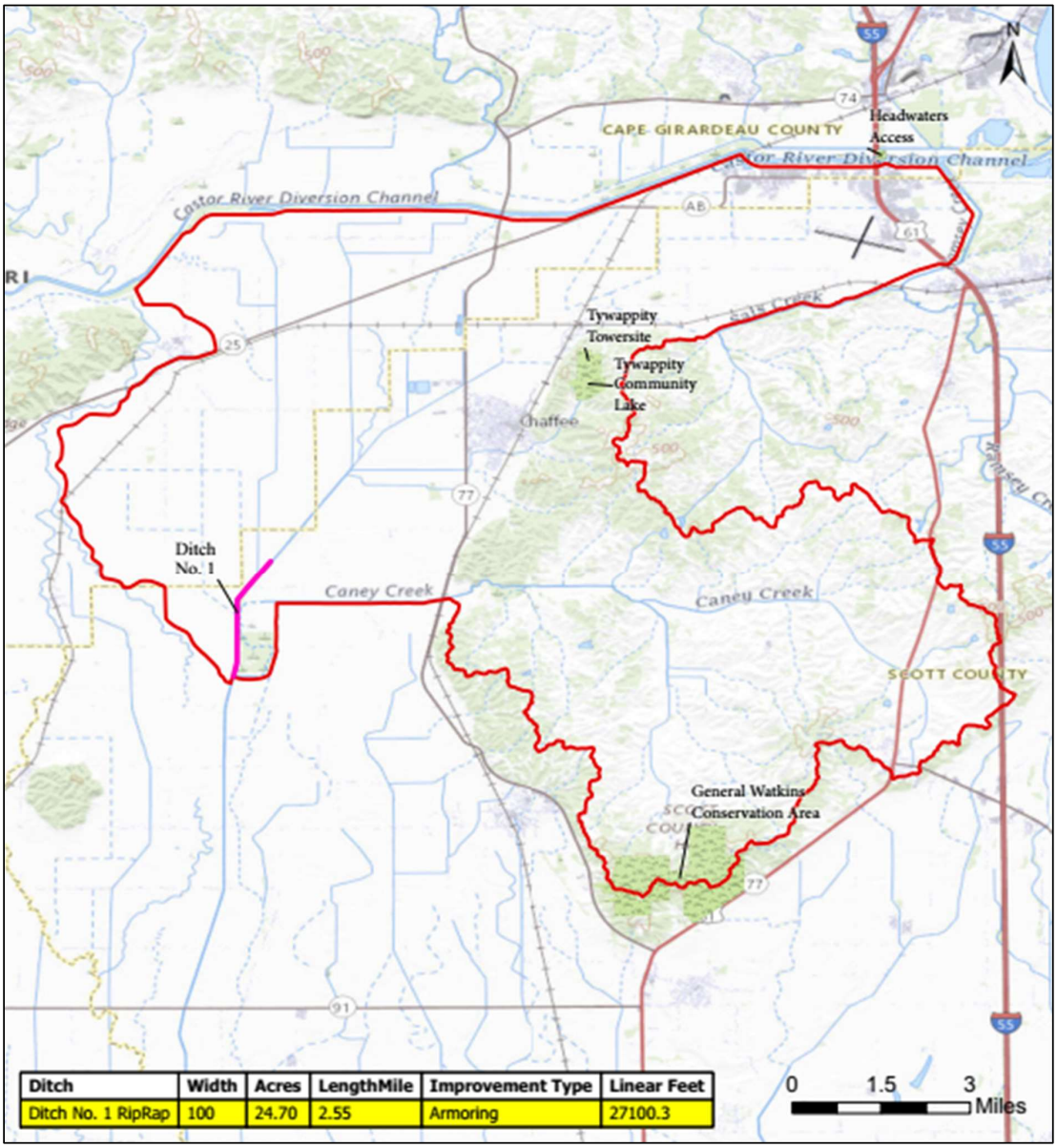

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Missouri Department of Conservation
Southeast Regional Office
2302 County Park Drive
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701

September 12, 2024

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Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

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3 - Missouri Department of Conservation - Southeast Regional Office

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
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Natural Resources Conservation Service
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4 - Missouri Department of Conservation - Southeast Regional Office

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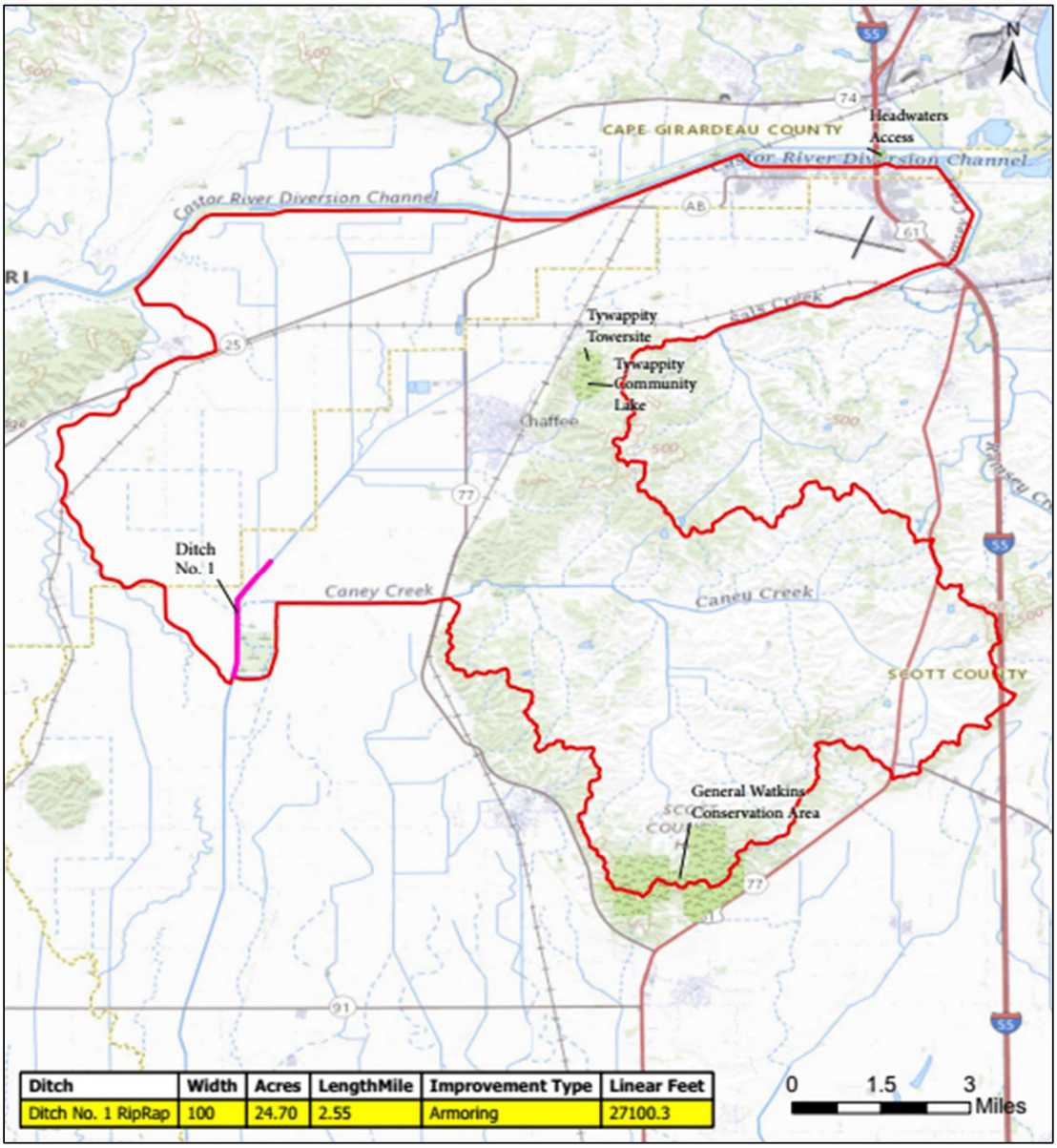

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Honorable Jason Smith
House - 8th Congressional District, U.S. Congress
2502 Tanner Drive, Suite 205
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63703

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
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Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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3 - U.S. Congress

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Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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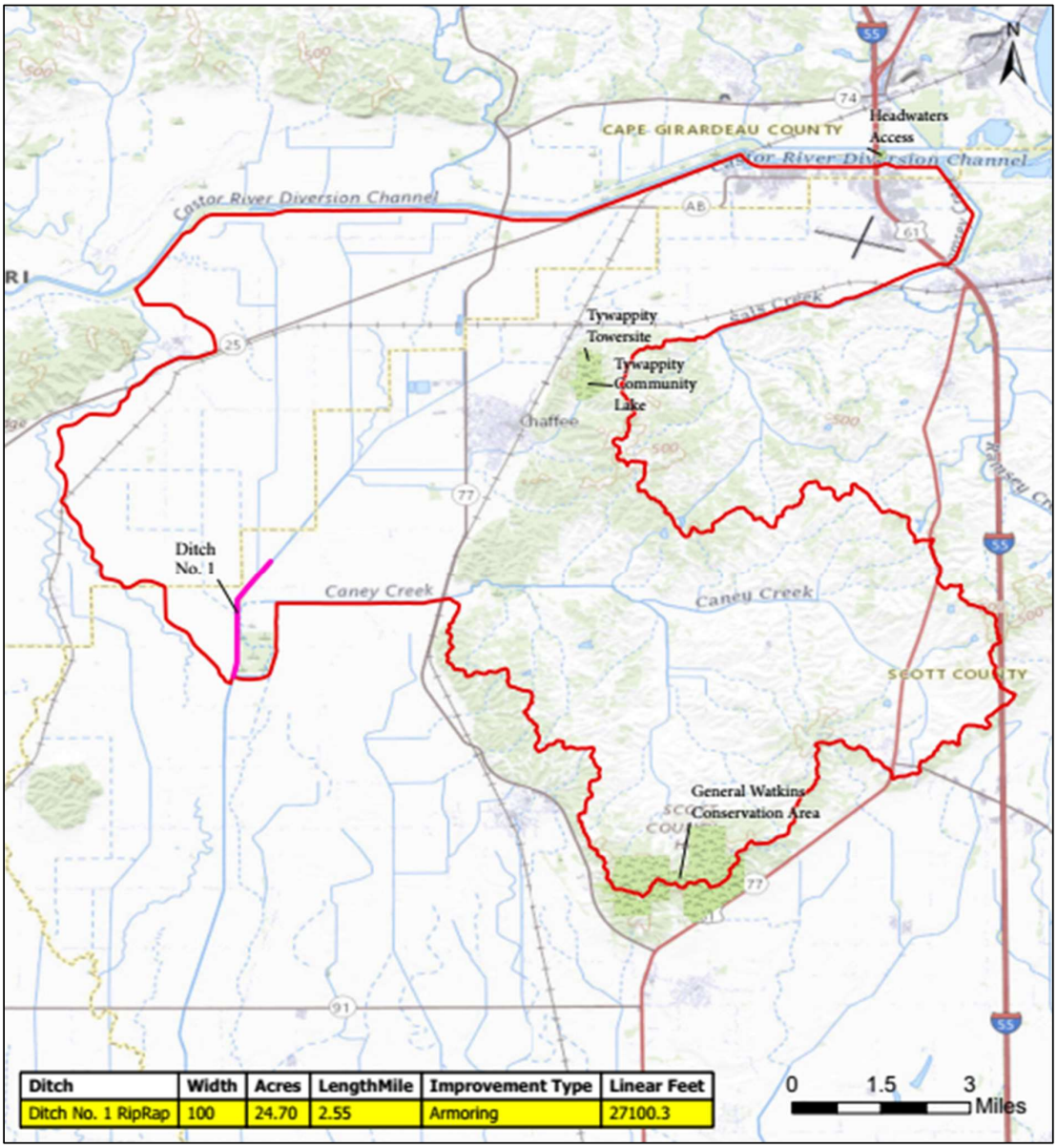

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Missouri Department of Transportation - Southeast District
2675 N. Main Street,
Sikeston, Missouri 63801

September 12, 2024

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Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

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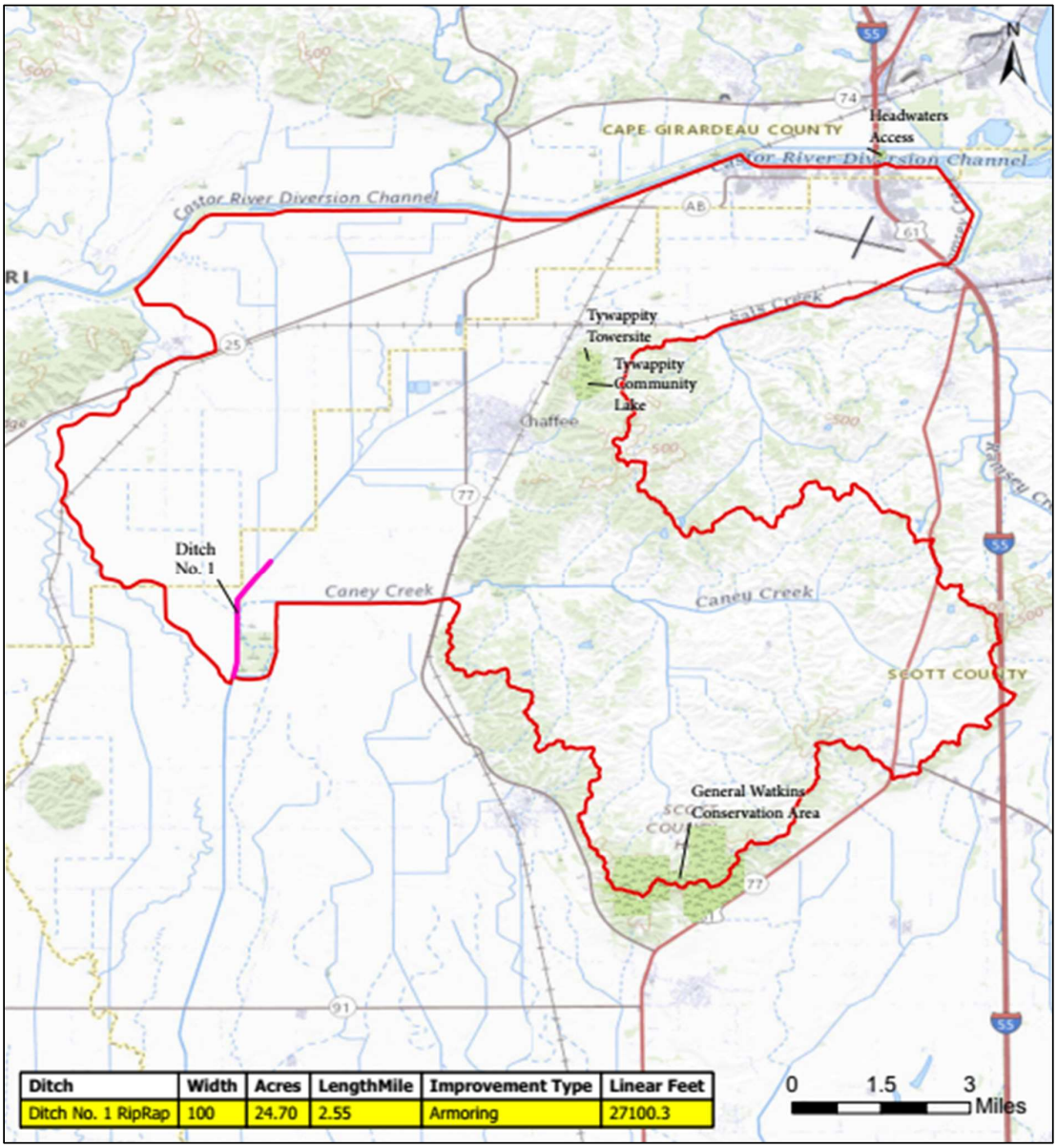

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

The Honorable Jacob Keys
Chairman, Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma
335588 East 750 Road
Perkins, Oklahoma 74059

September 12, 2024

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Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Project Summary
Site Location Map

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3 - Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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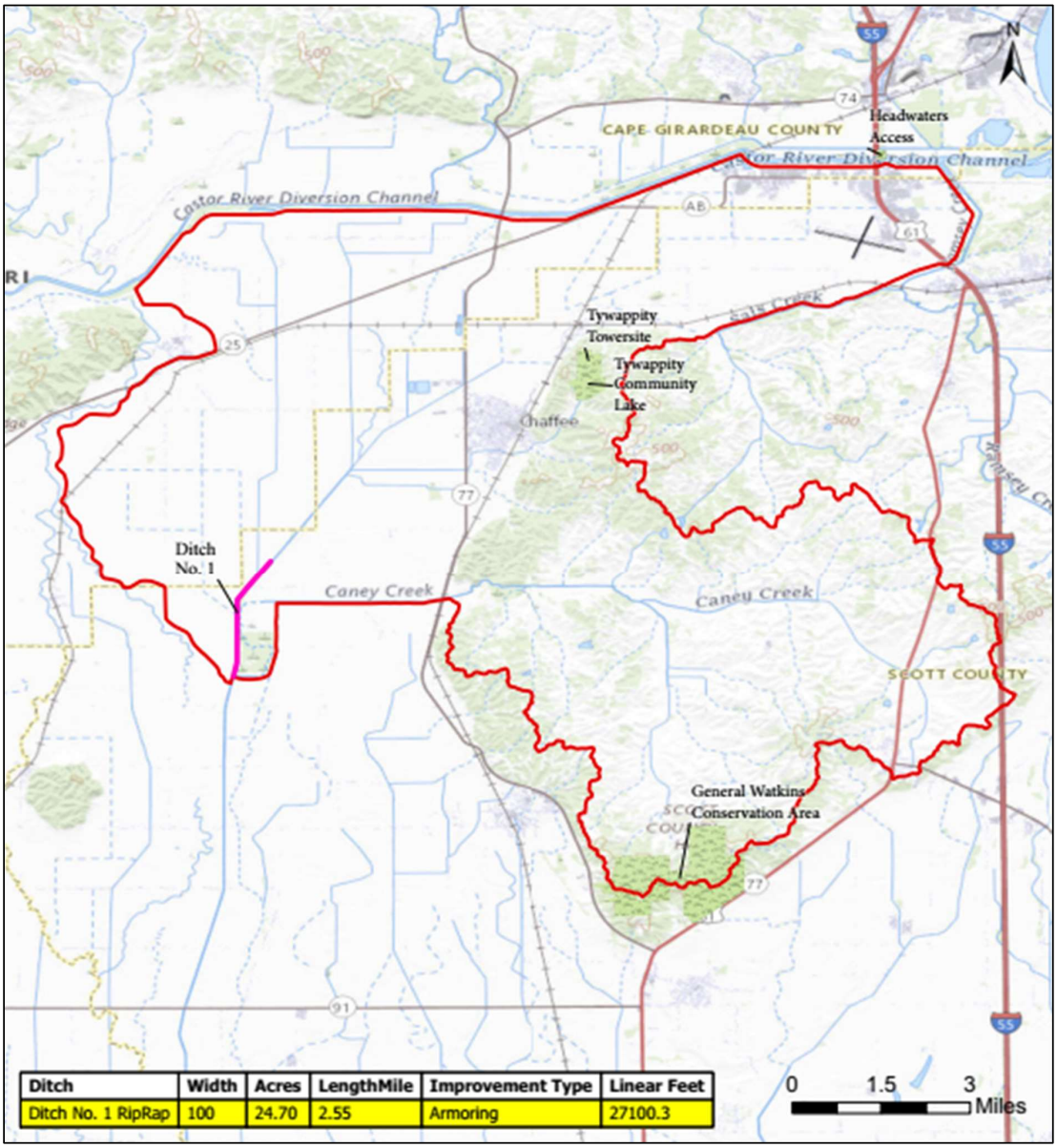

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Mr Andrew Maurer
Floodplain Administrator, Cape Girardeau
Missouri State Floodplain Administrators
44 N. Lorimier
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63703

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Chris Hamilton
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Attachment
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Natural Resources Conservation Service
USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Whitewater River Watershed Proposed Project, Site Location Map

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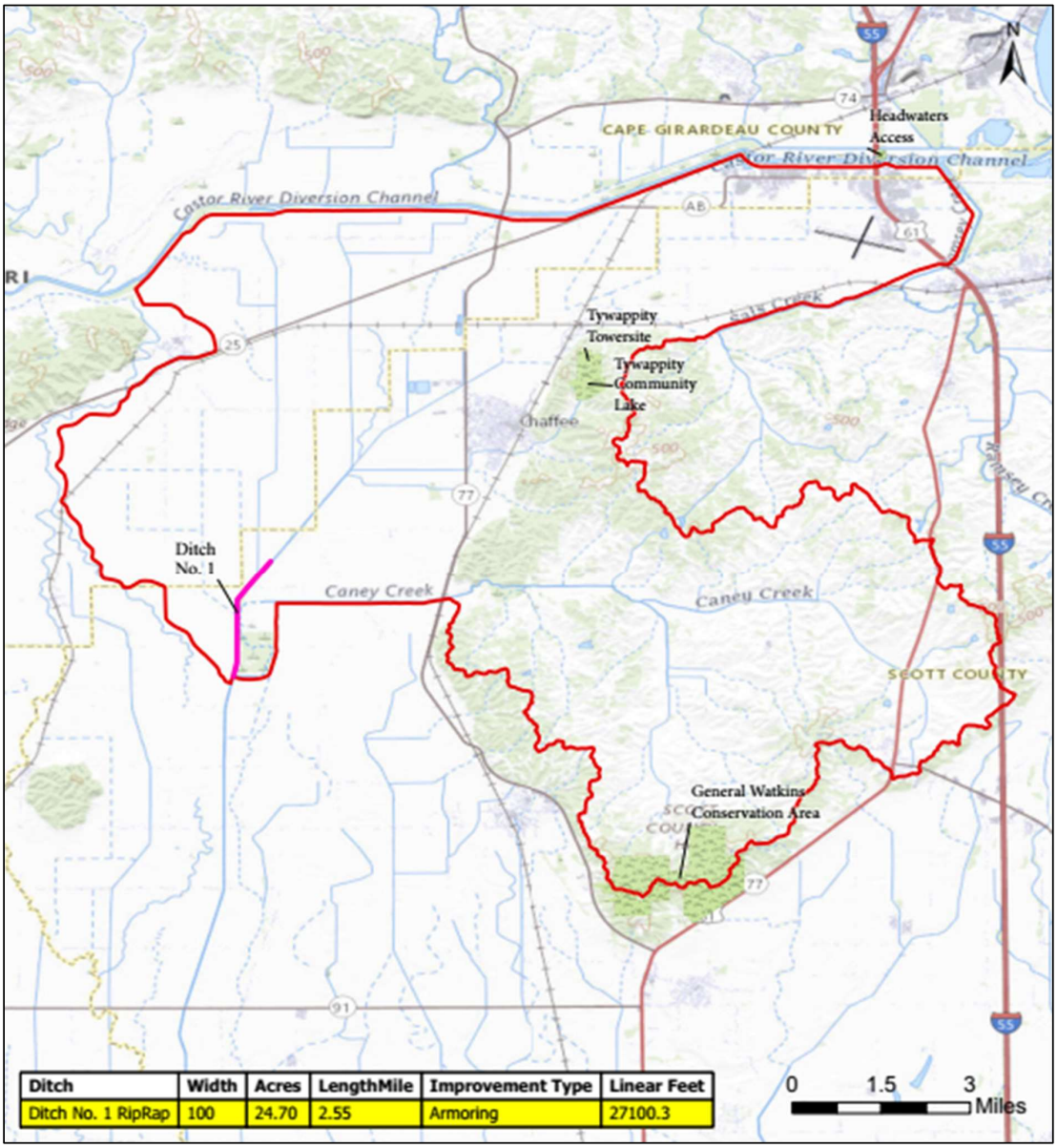

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Ditch No. 1 RipRap	100	24.70	2.55	Armoring	27100.3

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Honorable Stacy Kinder
Mayor, City of Cape Girardeau
44 N. Lorimier
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

To Whom It May Concern,

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2. Draft -Limited Waters of the U.S. Delineation and Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment

2 - City of Cape Girardeau

I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

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3 - City of Cape Girardeau

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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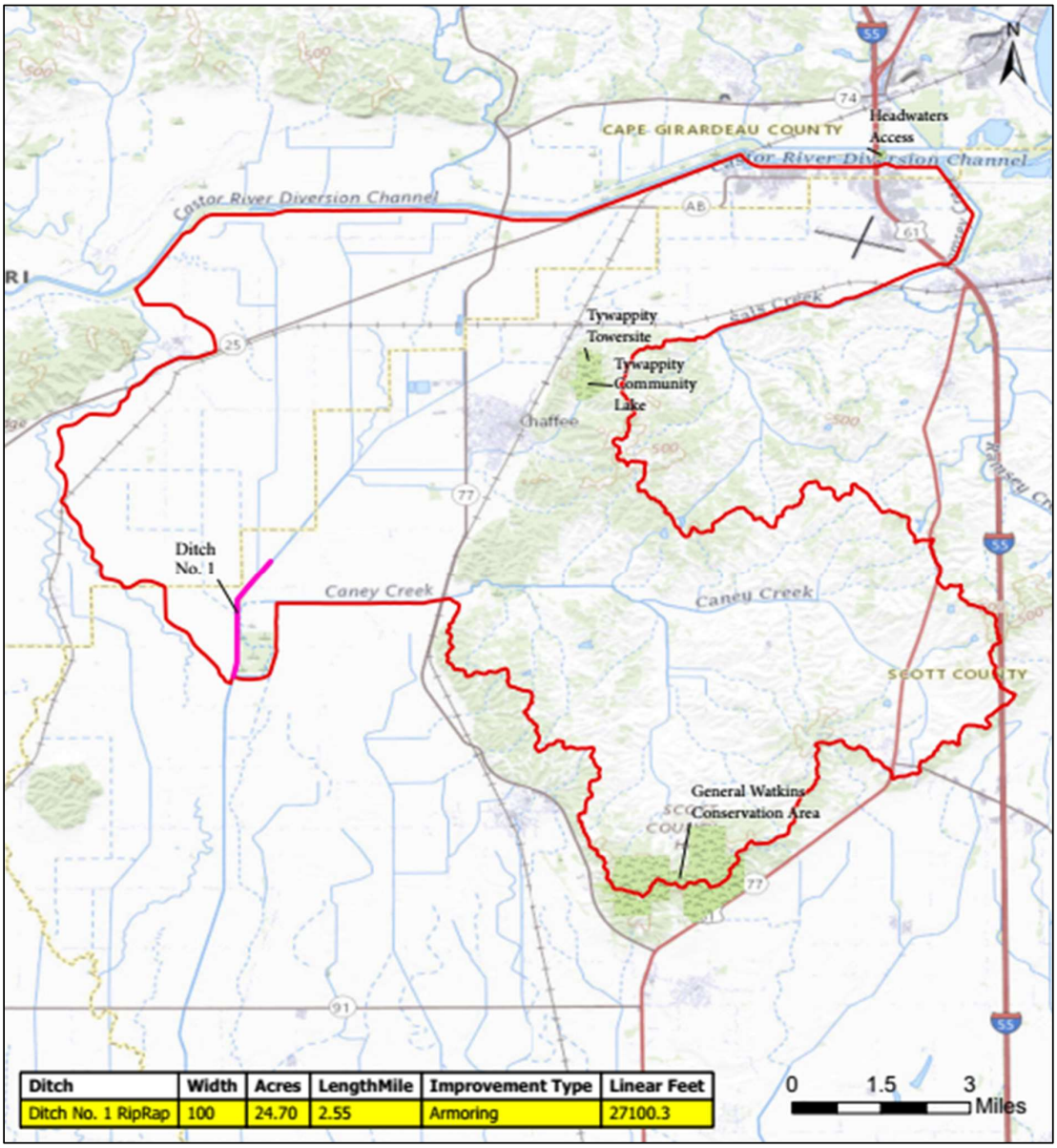

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Ms. Michaela Roth
District Specialist III
Cape Girardeau County Soil and Water Conservation District
480 W. Jackson Trail
Jackson, Missouri 63755

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Project Overview: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.): the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing a Whitewater River Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed project.

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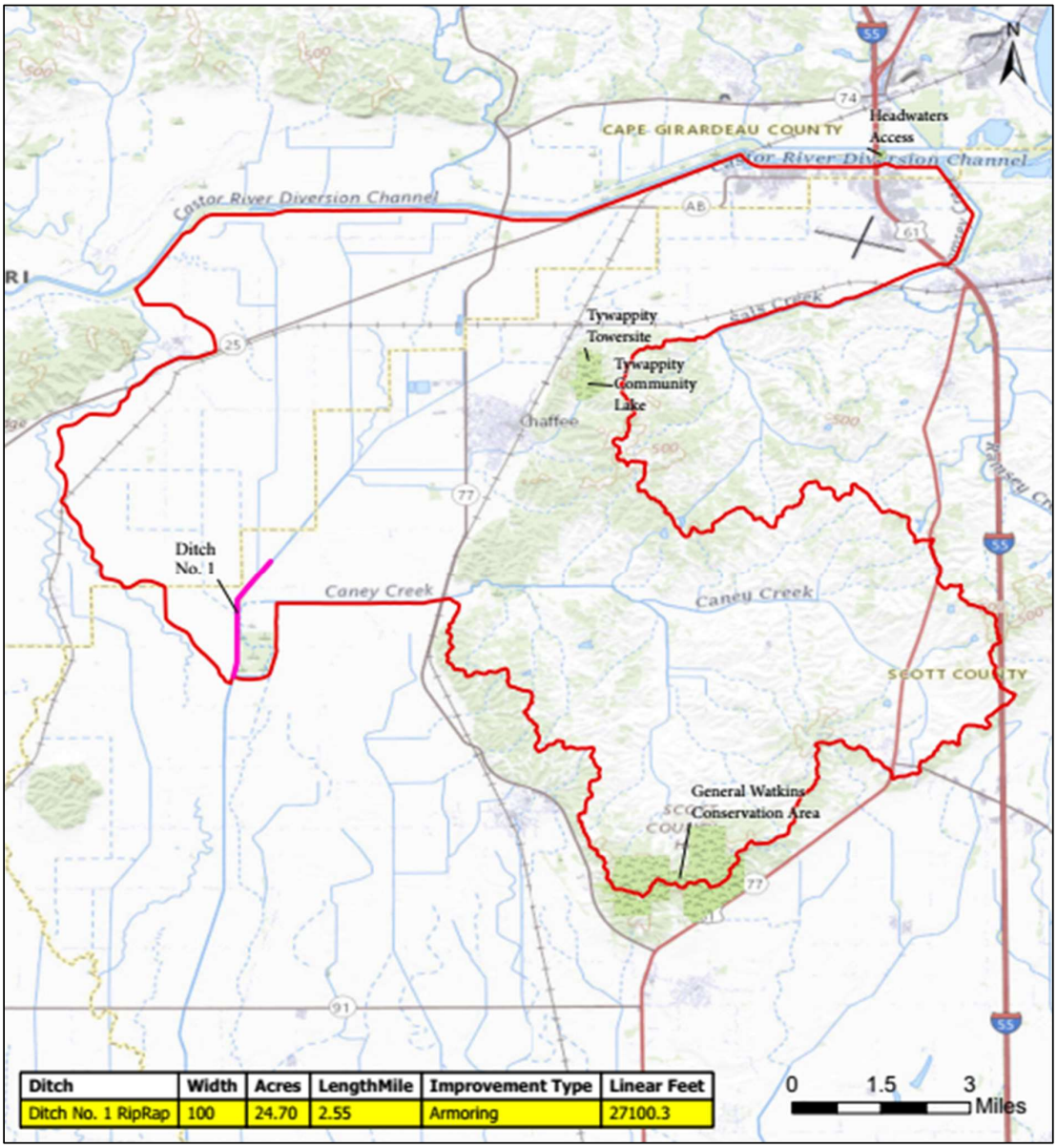

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Mr. Randy Koenig
County Executive Director
Cape Girardeau County USDA Farm Service Agency
480 W. Jackson Trail,
Jackson, Missouri 63755

September 12, 2024

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Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Project Summary
Site Location Map

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
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Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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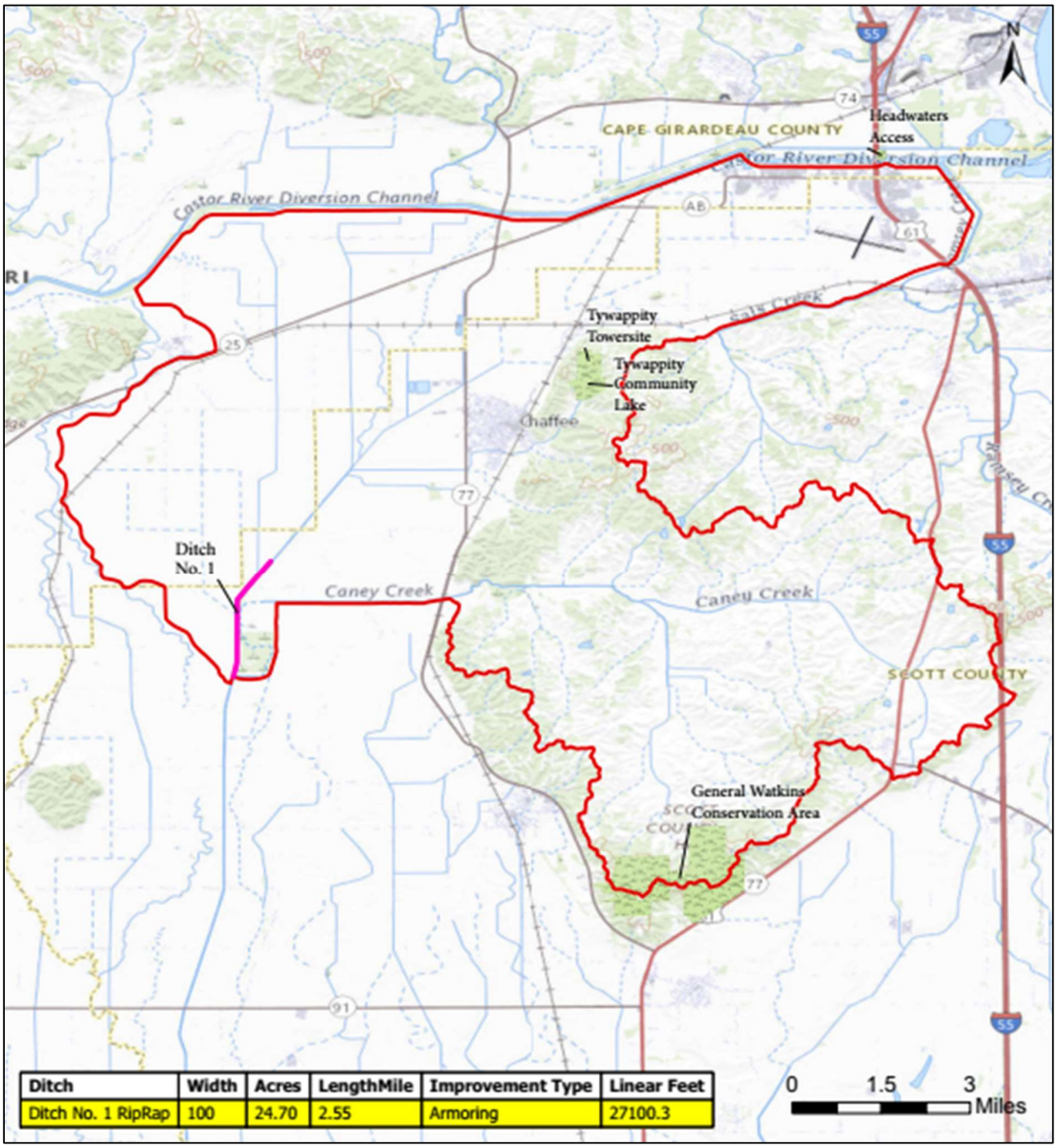

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

The Honorable Brad Killscrow
Chief, Delaware Tribe of Indians
5100 Tuxedo Boulevard
Bartlesville, Oklahoma 74006

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Project Summary
Site Location Map

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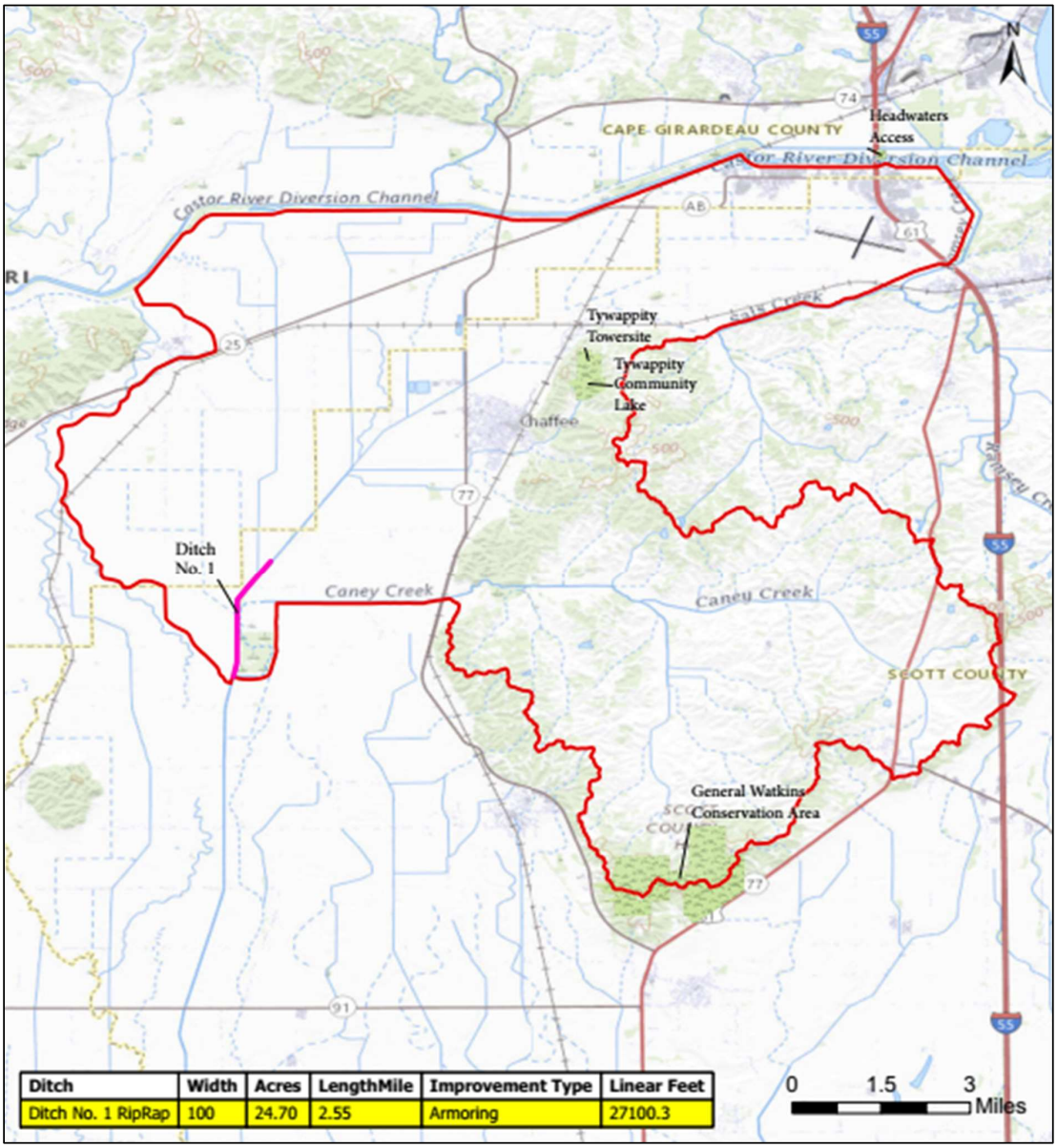

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Honorable Josh Hawley
Senate, U.S. Congress
555 Independence Street, #1600
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63703

September 12, 2024

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Whitewater River Watershed Project
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Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
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Site Location Map

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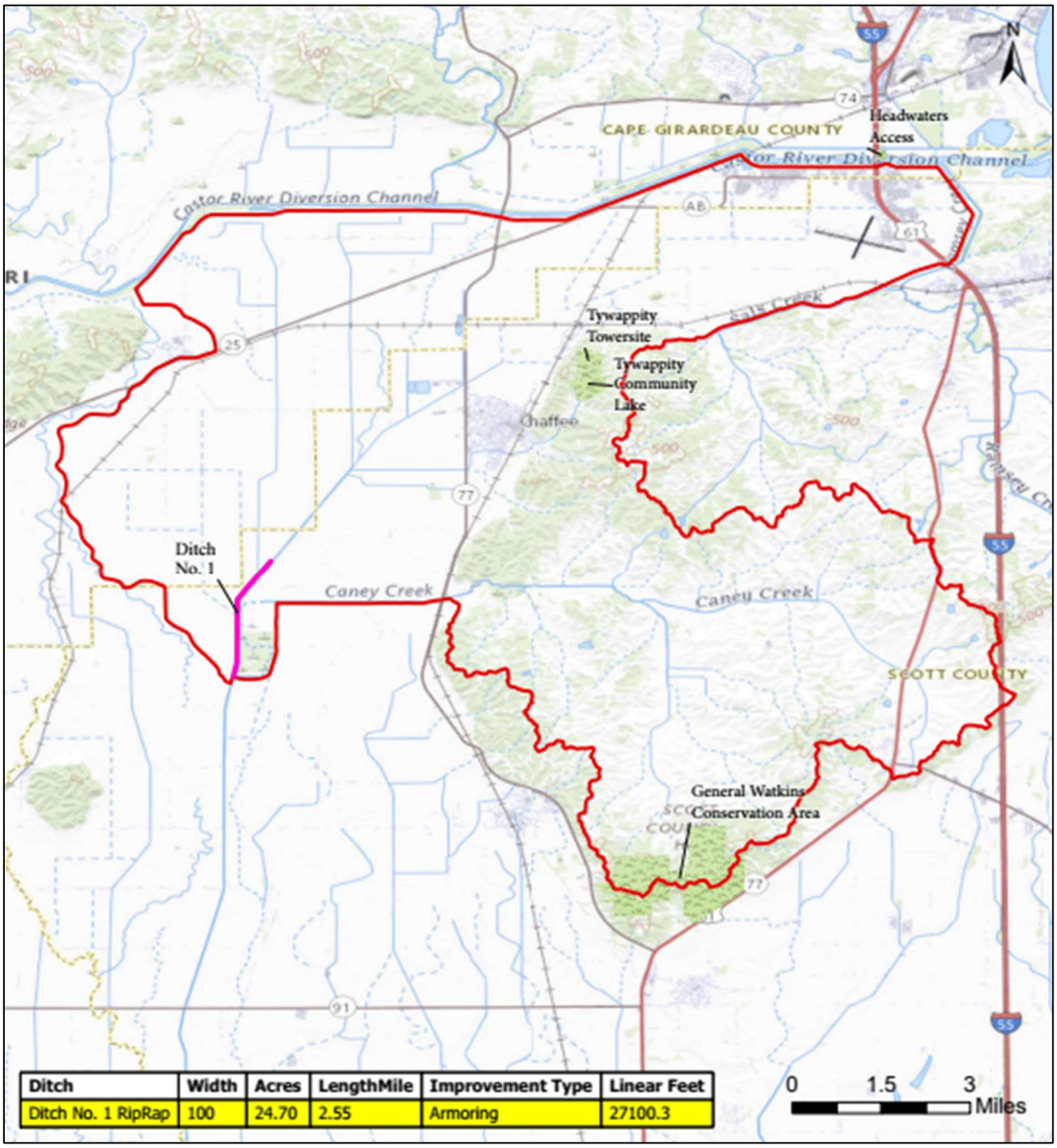

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Mr. Dan King
Emergency Coordinator, Scott City
Missouri State Emergency Management Agency
618 Main Street
Scott City, Missouri 63780

September 12, 2024

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Whitewater River Watershed Project
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Below is a brief overview of this project including draft alternatives. Supportive of this watershed planning effort, there are reports available for review. Please contact Mr. Hefner for electronic or print copies.

1. Phase I Cultural Resource Survey
2. Draft -Limited Waters of the U.S. Delineation and Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment

2 - Missouri State Emergency Management Agency

I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

3 - Missouri State Emergency Management Agency

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Project Overview: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.): the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing a Whitewater River Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed project.

Project Sponsor: As project sponsor, the Little River Drainage District (LRDD) of Cape Girardeau, MO requested NRCS assistance to identify and analyze feasible alternatives for flood control within the watershed. The project watershed boundary is the HUC10 0802020401 boundary.

Project Need: The Proposed Action is needed to address aging infrastructure to aid in flood control. For around a century, water from adjacent farmland has been transporting silts, loams, and sands to the LRDD drainage canals. The sediments accumulate over time, reducing the drainage system's capacity and thereby diminishing its ability to prevent flooding. In addition to sheet, rill, and gully erosion, the canal banks have been eroding into themselves. Improvements to the aging infrastructure will provide benefits to downstream watersheds and ensuring landscape scale resilience. The proposed project is a sub-unit of the entire drainage district. The system of drainage ditches serves to manage runoff received from higher ground and several neighboring drainage districts. Drainage water is collected and transferred by drainage canals to Arkansas and ultimately the Mississippi River. This system of drainage canals is the life blood of the region, permitting the production of commodities.

Proposed Alternatives: Alternatives under evaluation:

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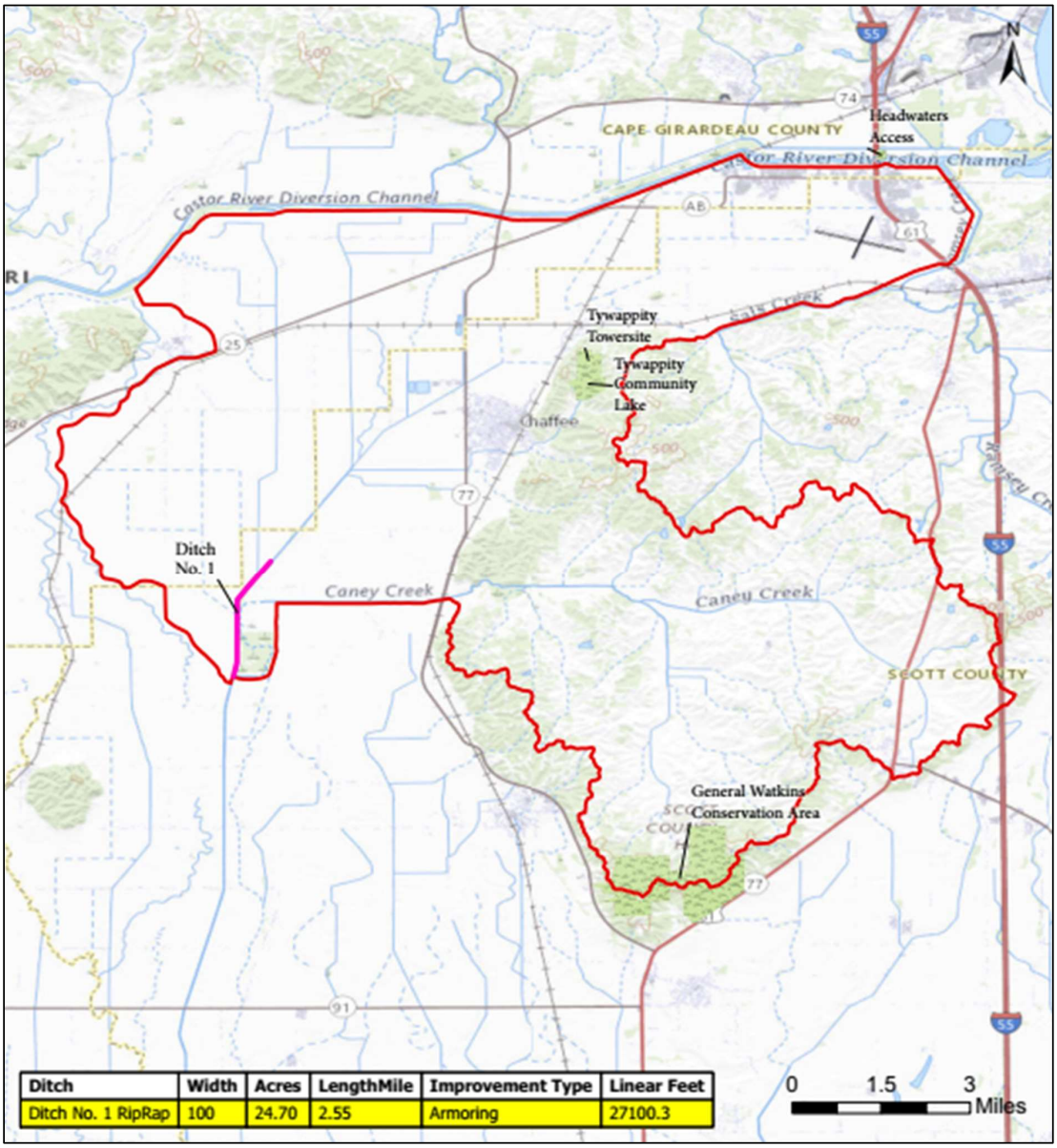
Whitewater River Watershed Proposed Project, Site Location Map

Note: Proposed improvements are limited to Ditch 1.



Ditch	Width	Acres	LengthMile	Improvement Type	Linear Feet
Ditch No. 1 RipRap	100	24.70	2.55	Armoring	27100.3

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Ms. Kay Wilson
District Specialist II, Scott County Soil and Water Conservation District
6458 State Highway 77
Benton, Missouri 63736

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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2 - Scott County Soil and Water Conservation District

I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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3 - Scott County Soil and Water Conservation District

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Project Overview: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.): the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing a Whitewater River Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed project.

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
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4 - Scott County Soil and Water Conservation District

Whitewater River Watershed Proposed Project, Site Location Map

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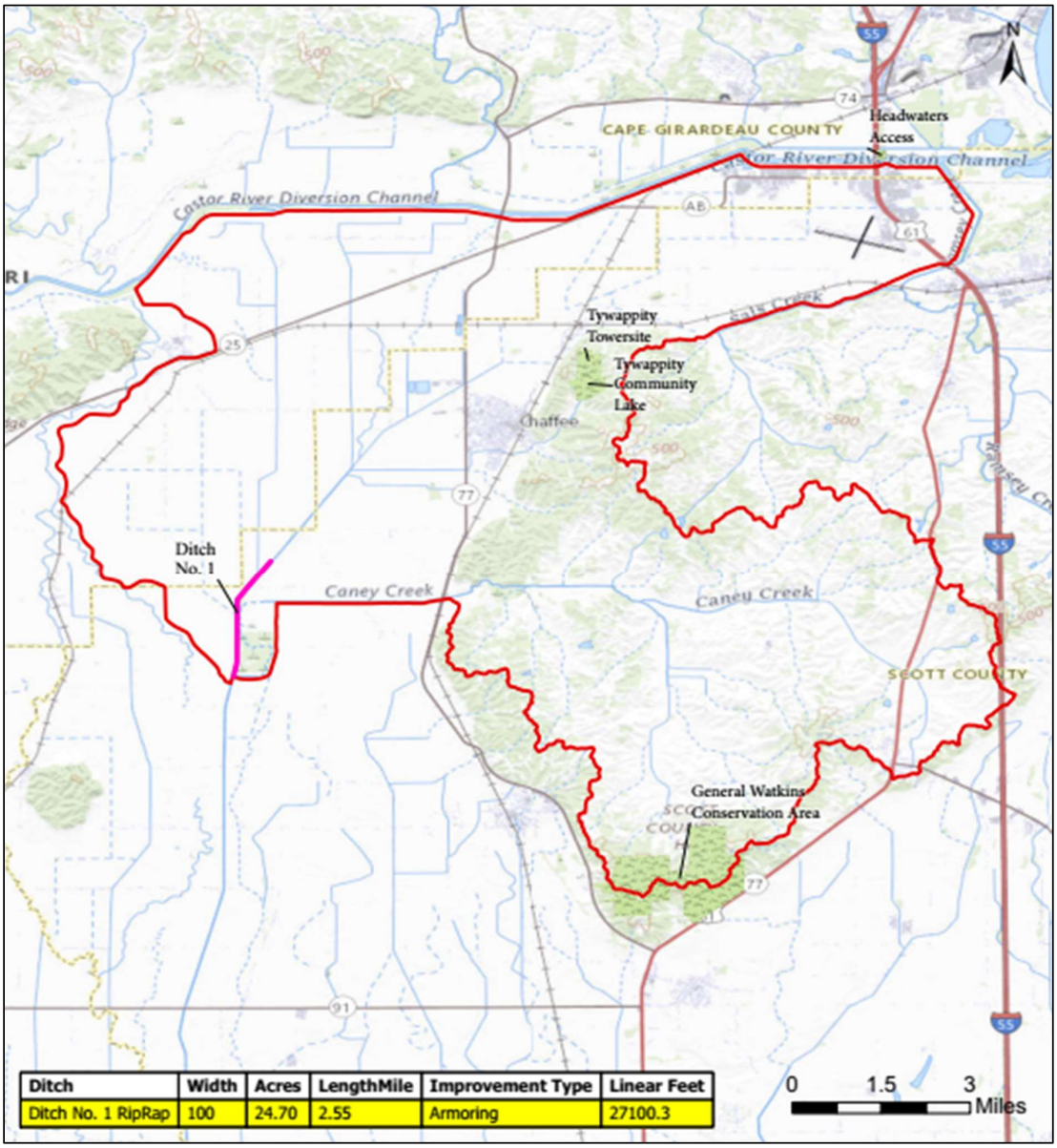

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Chris Grojean
County Executive Director
Scott County USDA Farm Service Agency
6458 State Highway 77
Benton, Missouri 63736

September 12, 2024

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Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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2 - Scott County USDA Farm Service Agency

I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

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3 - Scott County USDA Farm Service Agency

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Project Overview: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.): the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing a Whitewater River Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed project.

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4 - Scott County USDA Farm Service Agency

Whitewater River Watershed Proposed Project, Site Location Map

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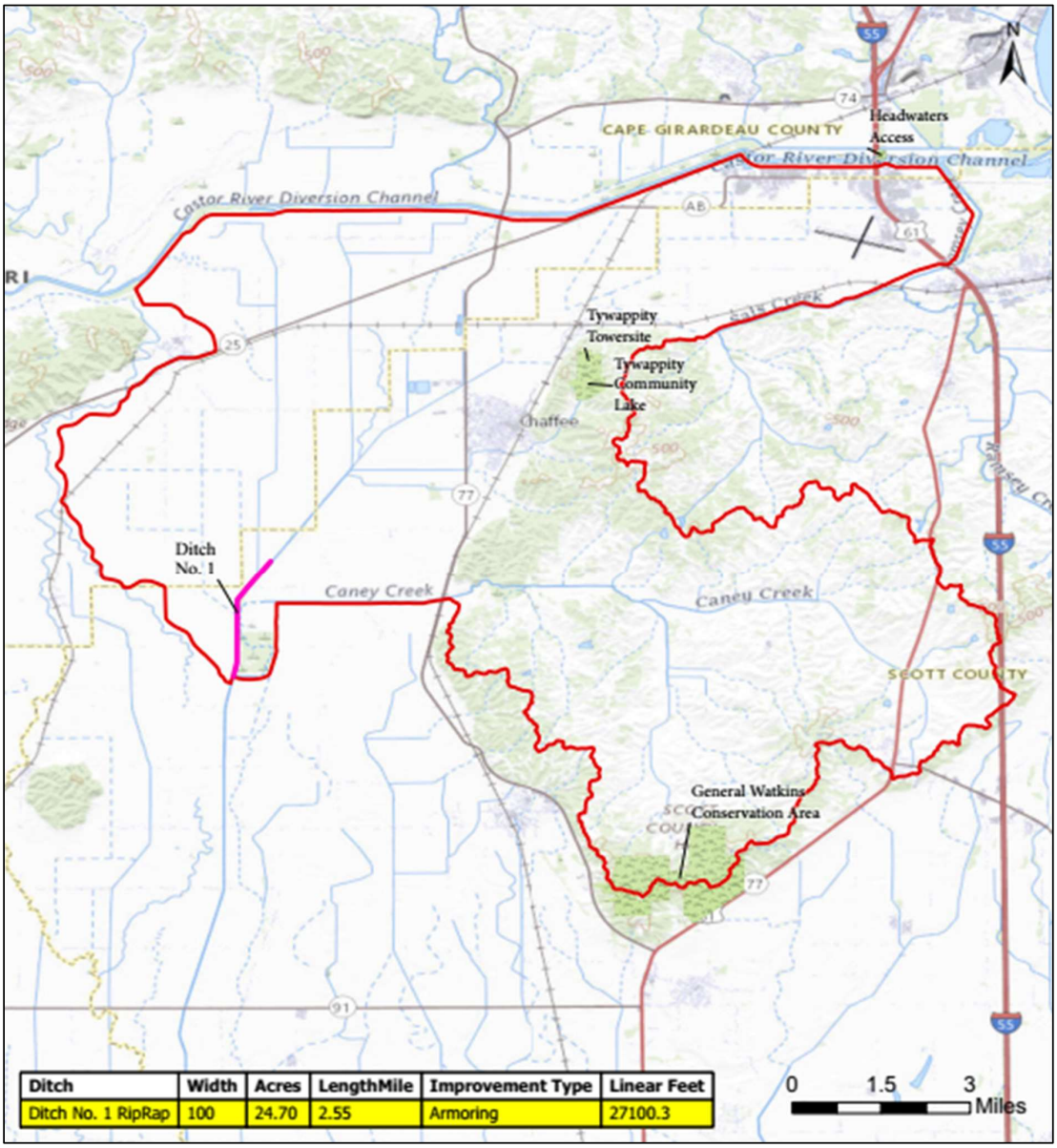

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

The Honorable Douglas Lankford
Chief, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
Post Office Box 1326
Miami, Oklahoma 74355

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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2. Draft -Limited Waters of the U.S. Delineation and Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment

2 - Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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3 - Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Project Overview: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.): the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing a Whitewater River Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed project.

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Whitewater River Watershed Proposed Project, Site Location Map

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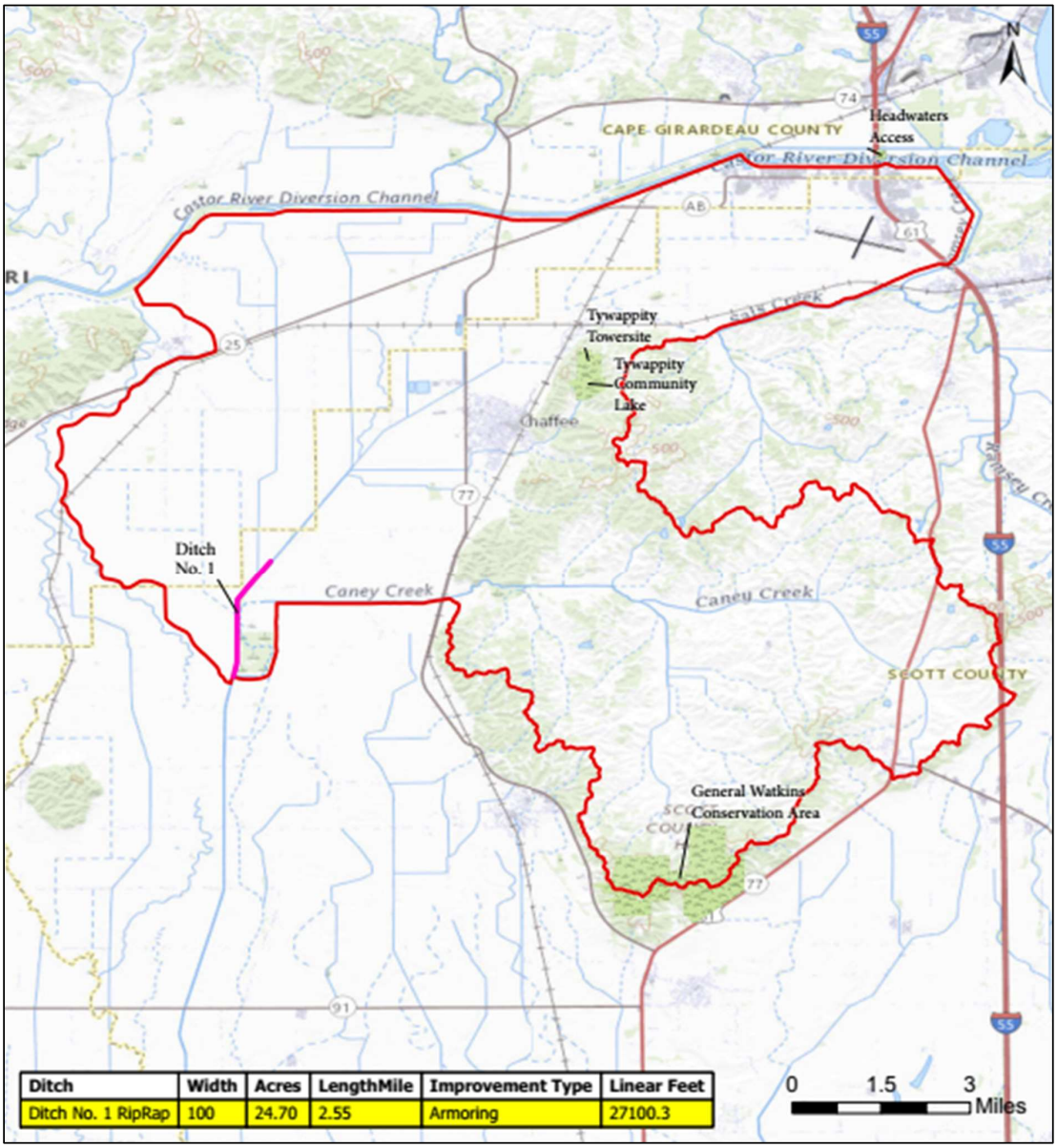

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

The Honorable Craig Harper
Chief, Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
Post Office Box 1527
Miami, Oklahoma 74355

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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2 - Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma

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Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

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3 - Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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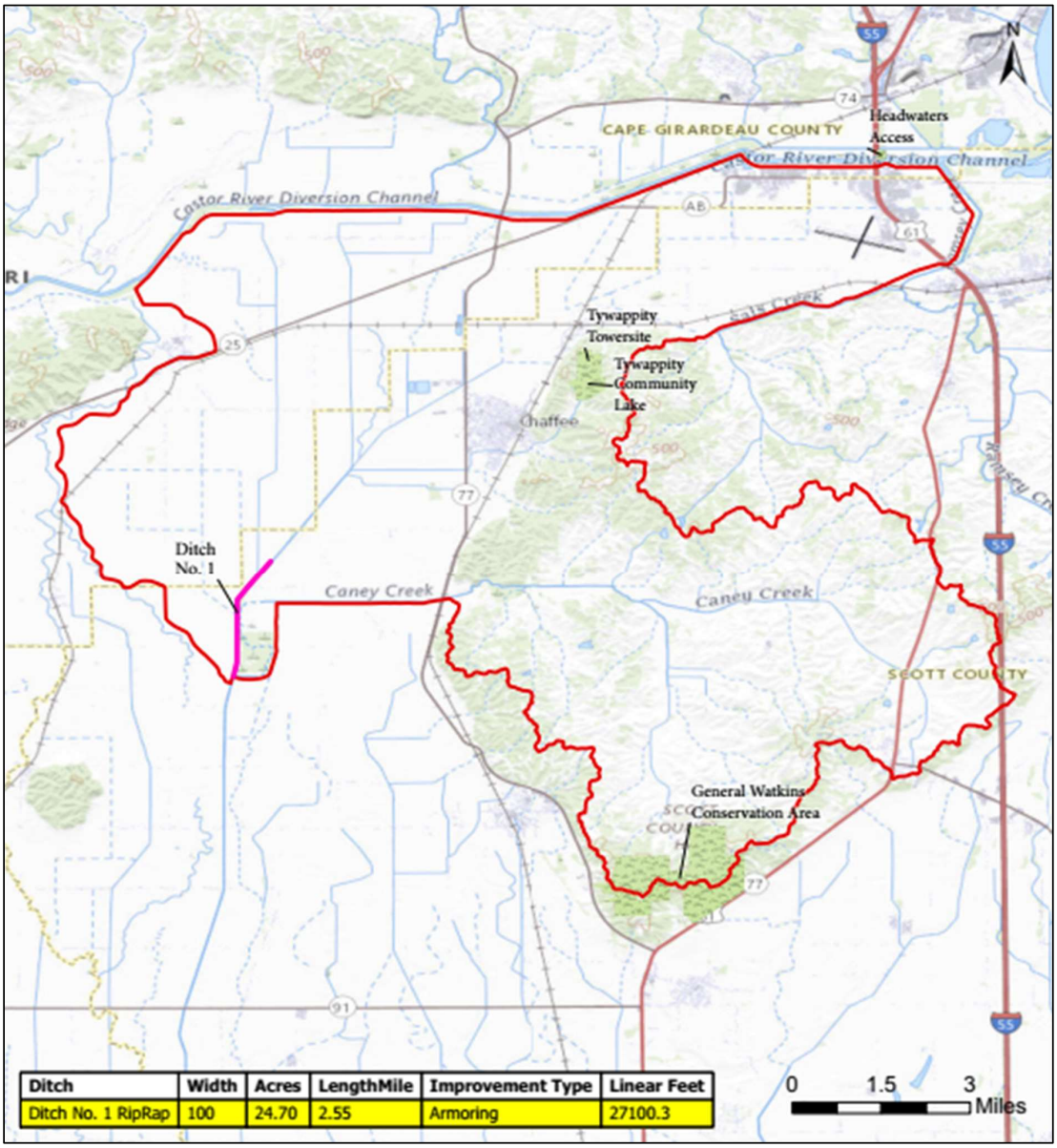

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Division of Environmental Quality
Missouri Department of Natural Resources- Water Protection Program
Post Office Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Project Summary
Site Location Map

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3 - Missouri Department of Natural Resources- Water Protection Program

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Whitewater River Watershed Proposed Project, Site Location Map

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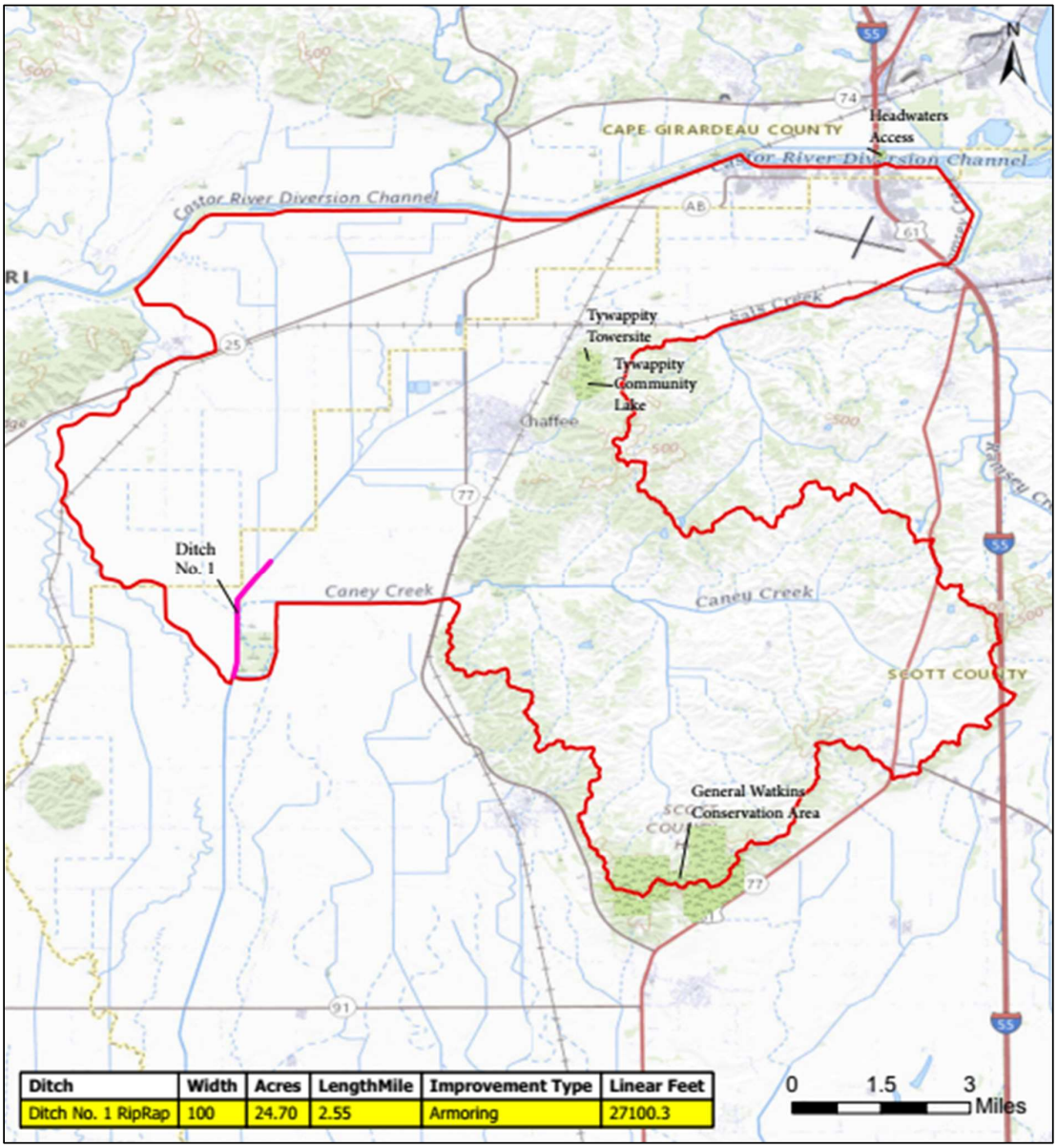

Ditch	Width	Acres	LengthMile	Improvement Type	Linear Feet
Ditch No. 1 RipRap	100	24.70	2.55	Armoring	27100.3

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Missouri State Parks
Missouri Department of Natural Resources- State Historic Preservation Office
Post Office Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

To Whom It May Concern,

The Missouri Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is developing a draft watershed plan/ environmental document for the Whitewater River Watershed in Cape Girardeau and Scott counties, Missouri. The local sponsor is the Little River Drainage District. Through the NRCS Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations Program (WFPO), NRCS is authorized to assist local municipalities with complex watershed planning projects. The Whitewater River Watershed Project purpose is to provide feasible flood control alternatives within the watershed. Please see the attached map including potential areas where the work will be conducted.

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Below is a brief overview of this project including draft alternatives. Supportive of this watershed planning effort, there are reports available for review. Please contact Mr. Hefner for electronic or print copies.

1. Phase I Cultural Resource Survey
2. Draft -Limited Waters of the U.S. Delineation and Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment

2 - Missouri Department of Natural Resources- State Historic Preservation Office

I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

3 - Missouri Department of Natural Resources- State Historic Preservation Office

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Project Overview: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.): the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing a Whitewater River Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed project.

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Project Need: The Proposed Action is needed to address aging infrastructure to aid in flood control. For around a century, water from adjacent farmland has been transporting silts, loams, and sands to the LRDD drainage canals. The sediments accumulate over time, reducing the drainage system's capacity and thereby diminishing its ability to prevent flooding. In addition to sheet, rill, and gully erosion, the canal banks have been eroding into themselves. Improvements to the aging infrastructure will provide benefits to downstream watersheds and ensuring landscape scale resilience. The proposed project is a sub-unit of the entire drainage district. The system of drainage ditches serves to manage runoff received from higher ground and several neighboring drainage districts. Drainage water is collected and transferred by drainage canals to Arkansas and ultimately the Mississippi River. This system of drainage canals is the life blood of the region, permitting the production of commodities.

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
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4 - Missouri Department of Natural Resources- State Historic Preservation Office

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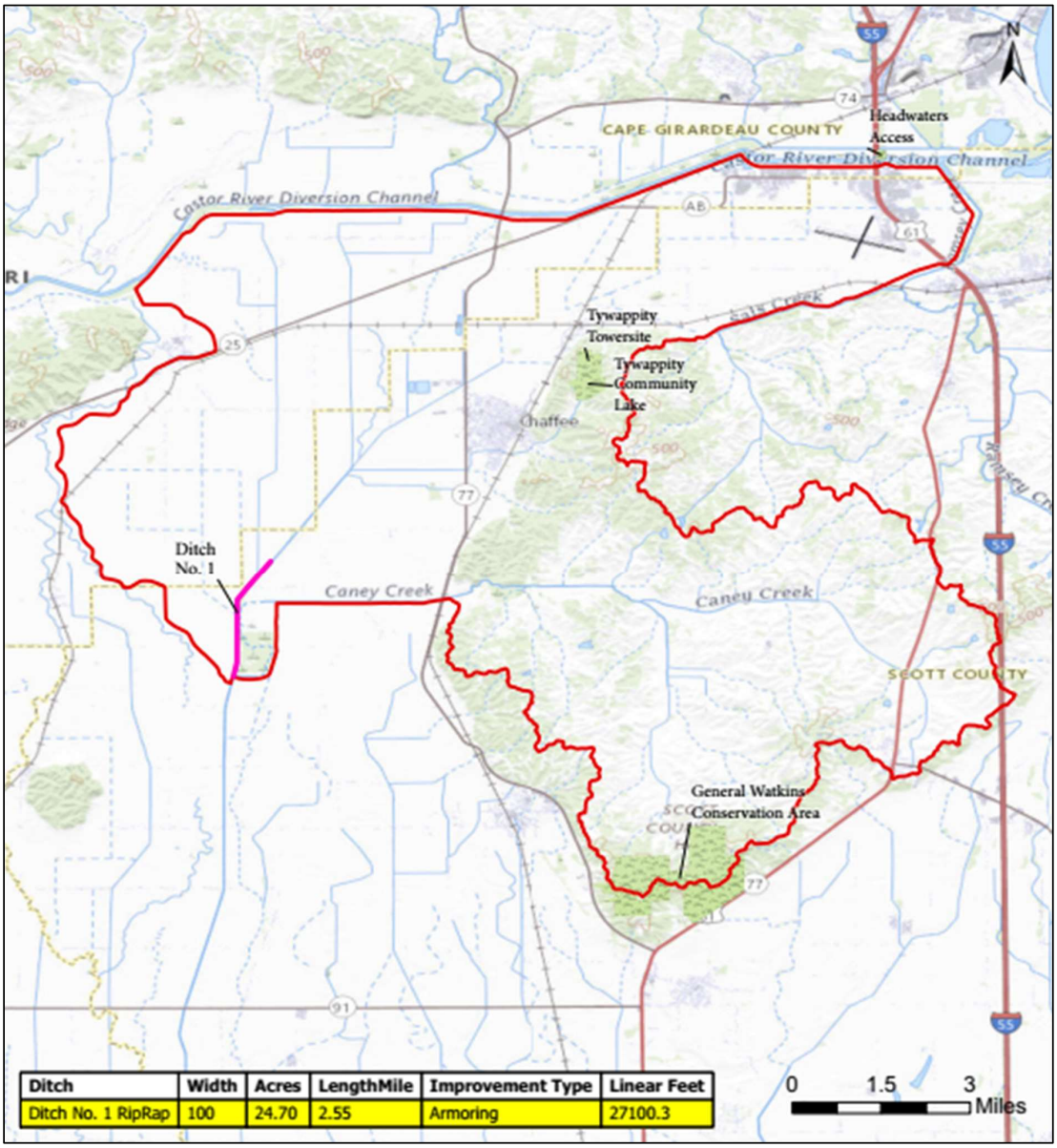

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Mr. Danny Tetley
Presiding Commissioner, Scott County Commission
Post Office Box 188
Benton, Missouri 63736

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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2. Draft -Limited Waters of the U.S. Delineation and Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment

2 - Scott County Commission

I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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3 - Scott County Commission

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Project Overview: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.): the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing a Whitewater River Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed project.

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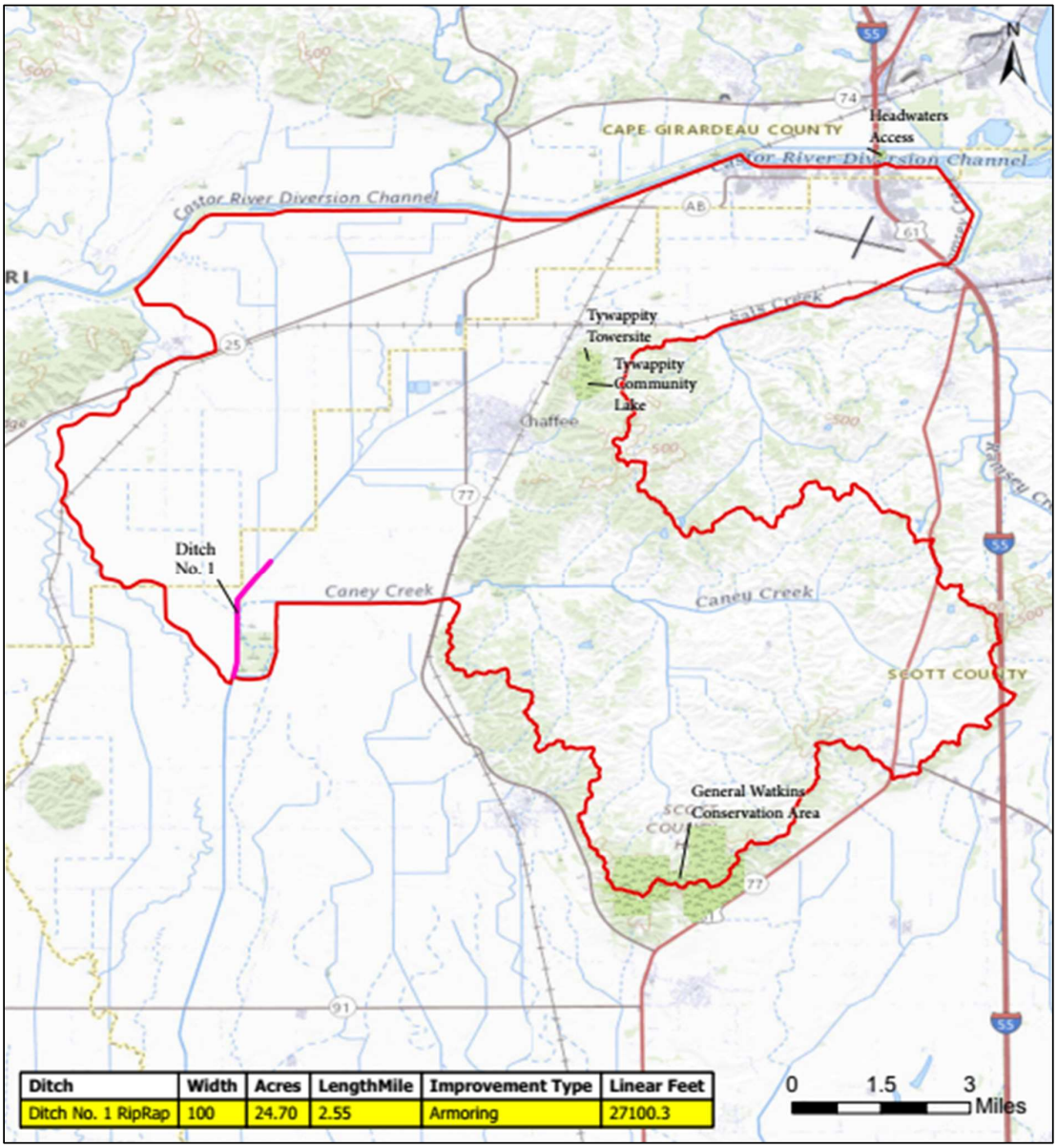

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

The Honorable Benjamin Barnes
Chief, Shawnee Tribe
Post Office Box 189
Miami, Oklahoma 74354

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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2 - Shawnee Tribe

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

3 - Shawnee Tribe

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
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Natural Resources Conservation Service
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4 - Shawnee Tribe

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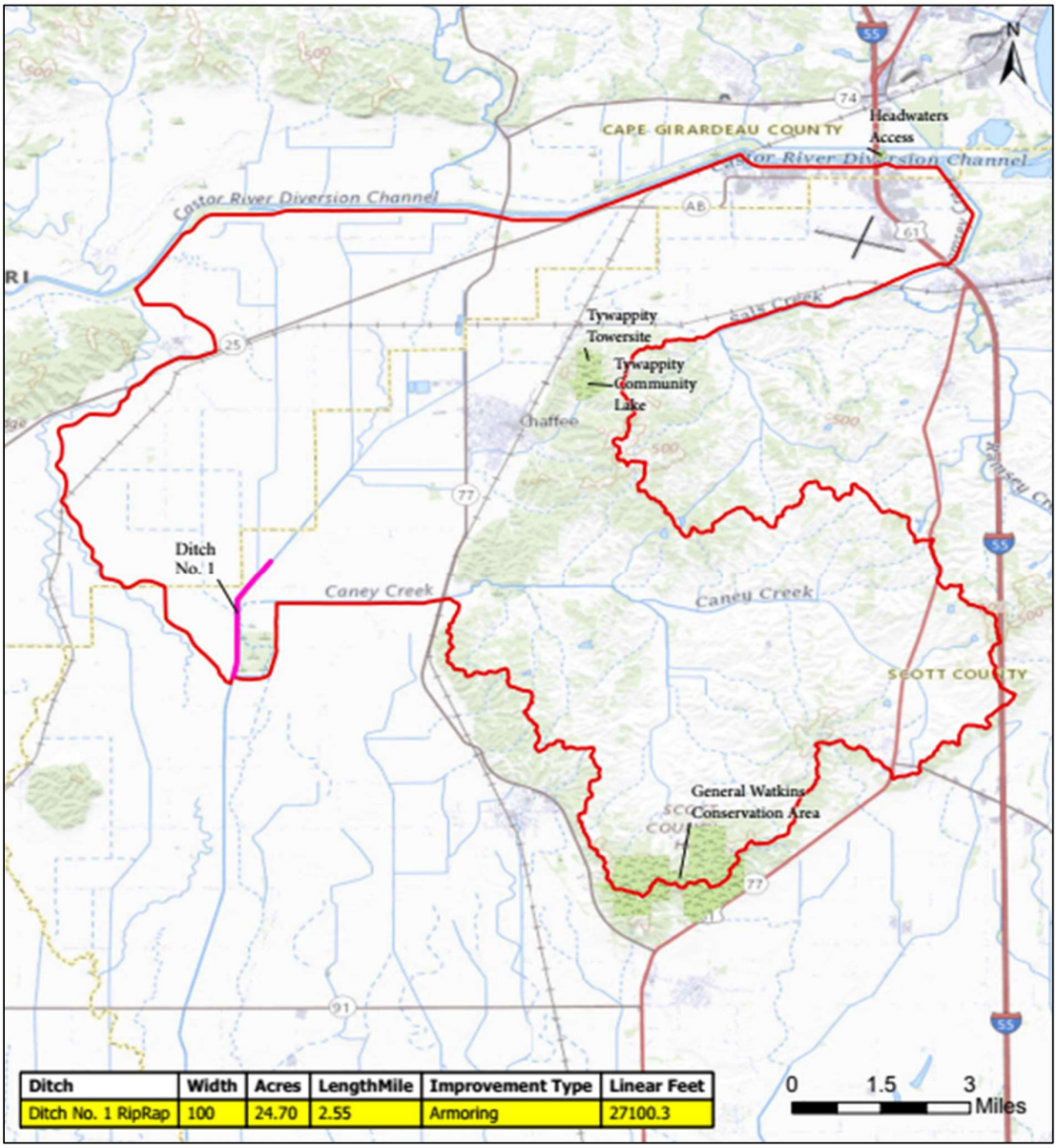

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

The Honorable Candace Schmidt
Chairwoman, Ponca Tribe of Nebraska
Post Office Box 288
Niobrara, Nebraska 68760

September 12, 2024

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Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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2 - Ponca Tribe of Nebraska

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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3 - Ponca Tribe of Nebraska

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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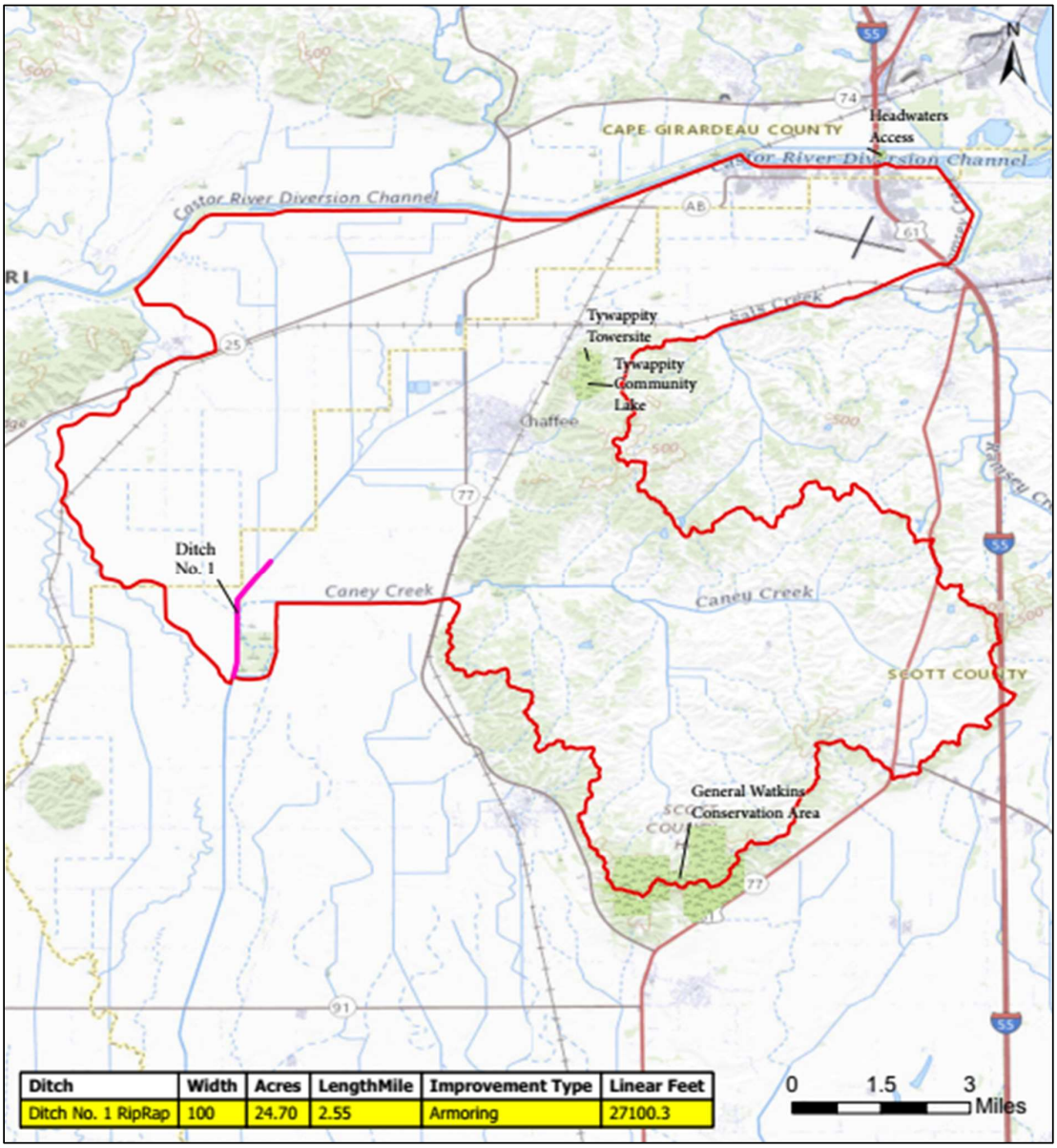

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

The Honorable Glenna Wallace
Chief, Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
Post Office Box 350
Seneca, Missouri 64865

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Project Summary
Site Location Map

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Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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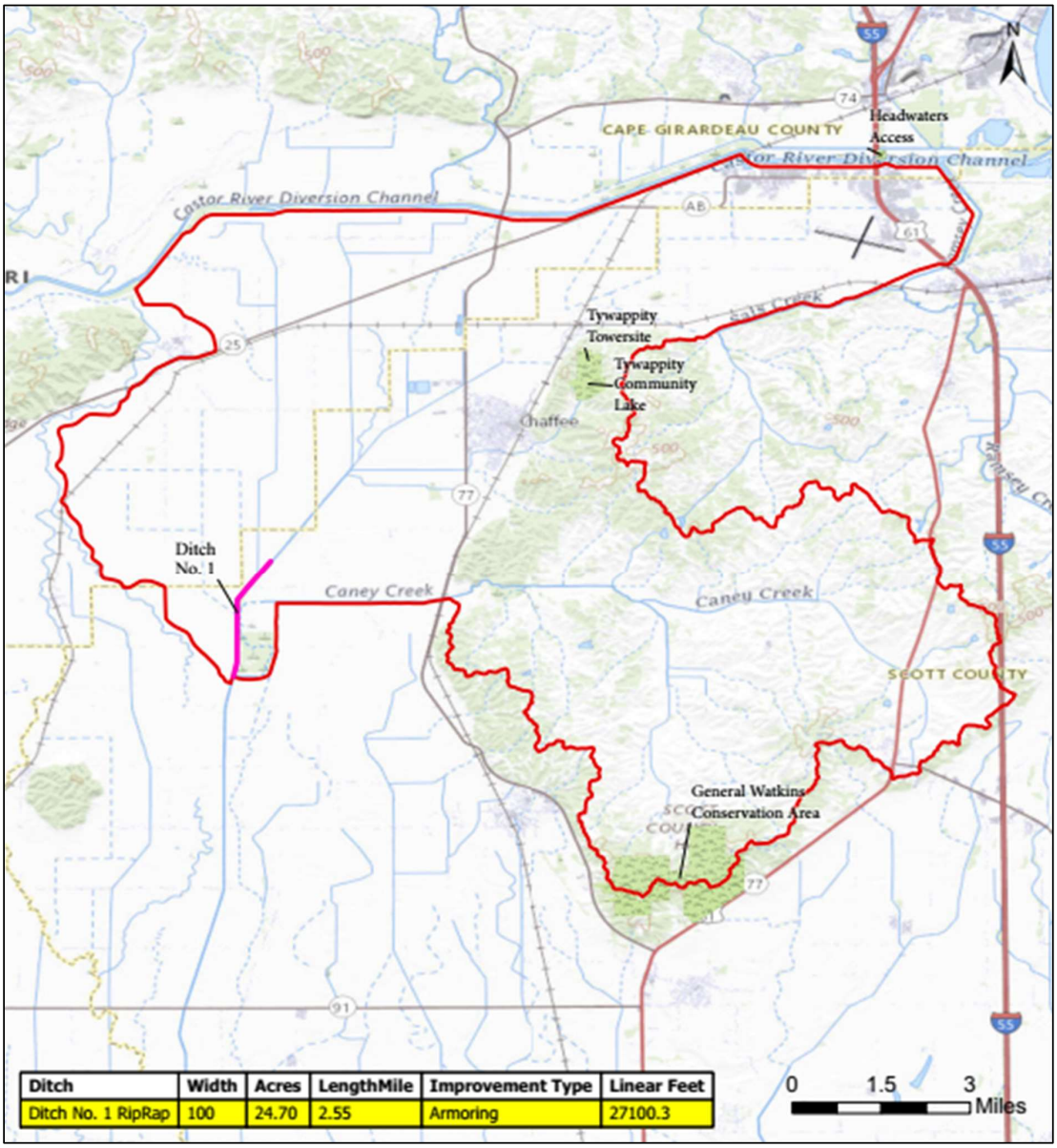

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Honorable Mike Parson
Governor, Governor of Missouri
Post Office Box 720
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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Whitewater River Watershed Proposed Project, Site Location Map

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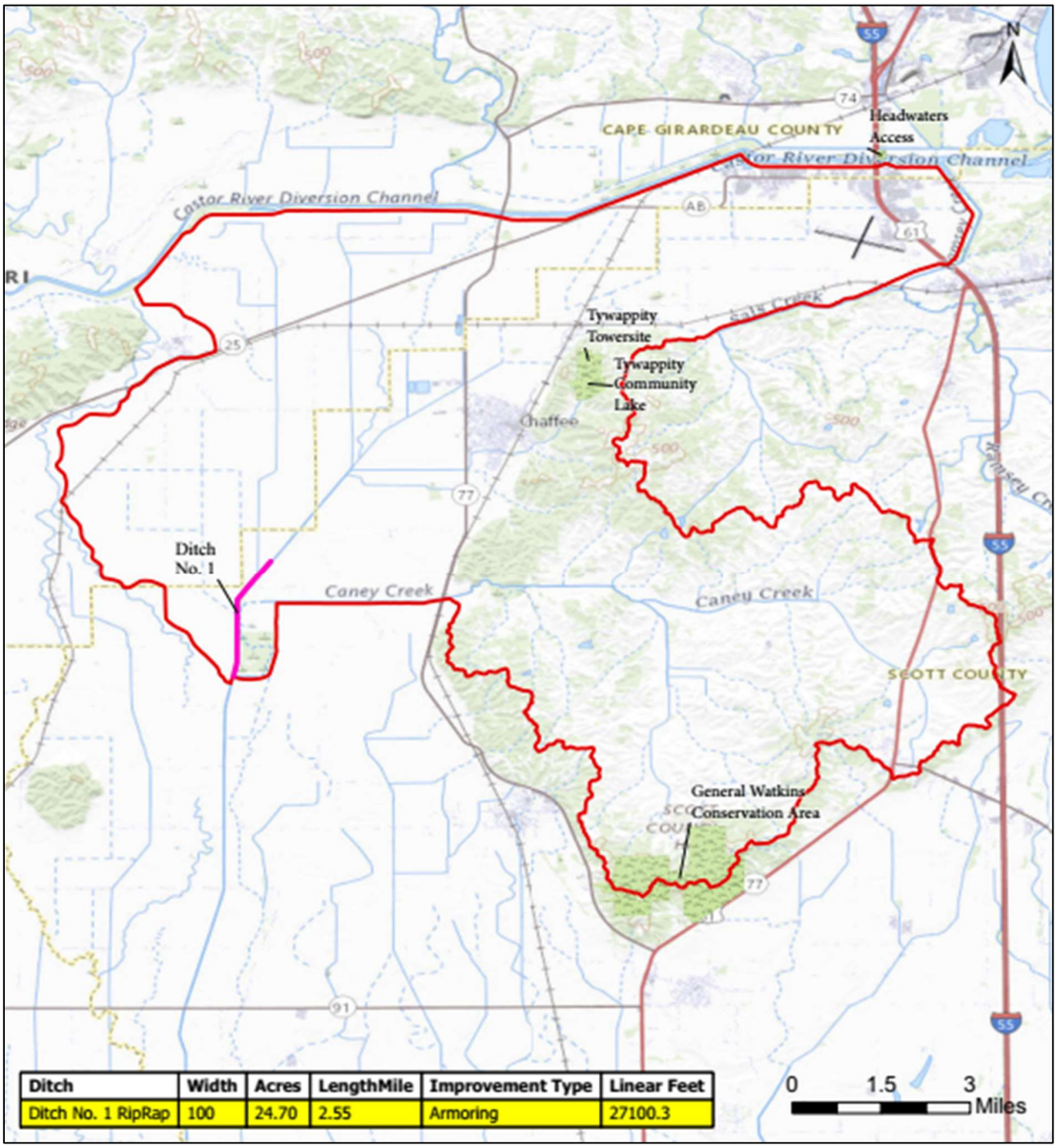

Ditch	Width	Acres	LengthMile	Improvement Type	Linear Feet
Ditch No. 1 RipRap	100	24.70	2.55	Armoring	27100.3

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

The Honorable Joe Bunch
Chief, United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma
Post Office Box 746
Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74465

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

To Whom It May Concern,

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1. Phase I Cultural Resource Survey
2. Draft -Limited Waters of the U.S. Delineation and Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment

2 - United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma

I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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3 - United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Project Overview: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.): the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing a Whitewater River Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed project.

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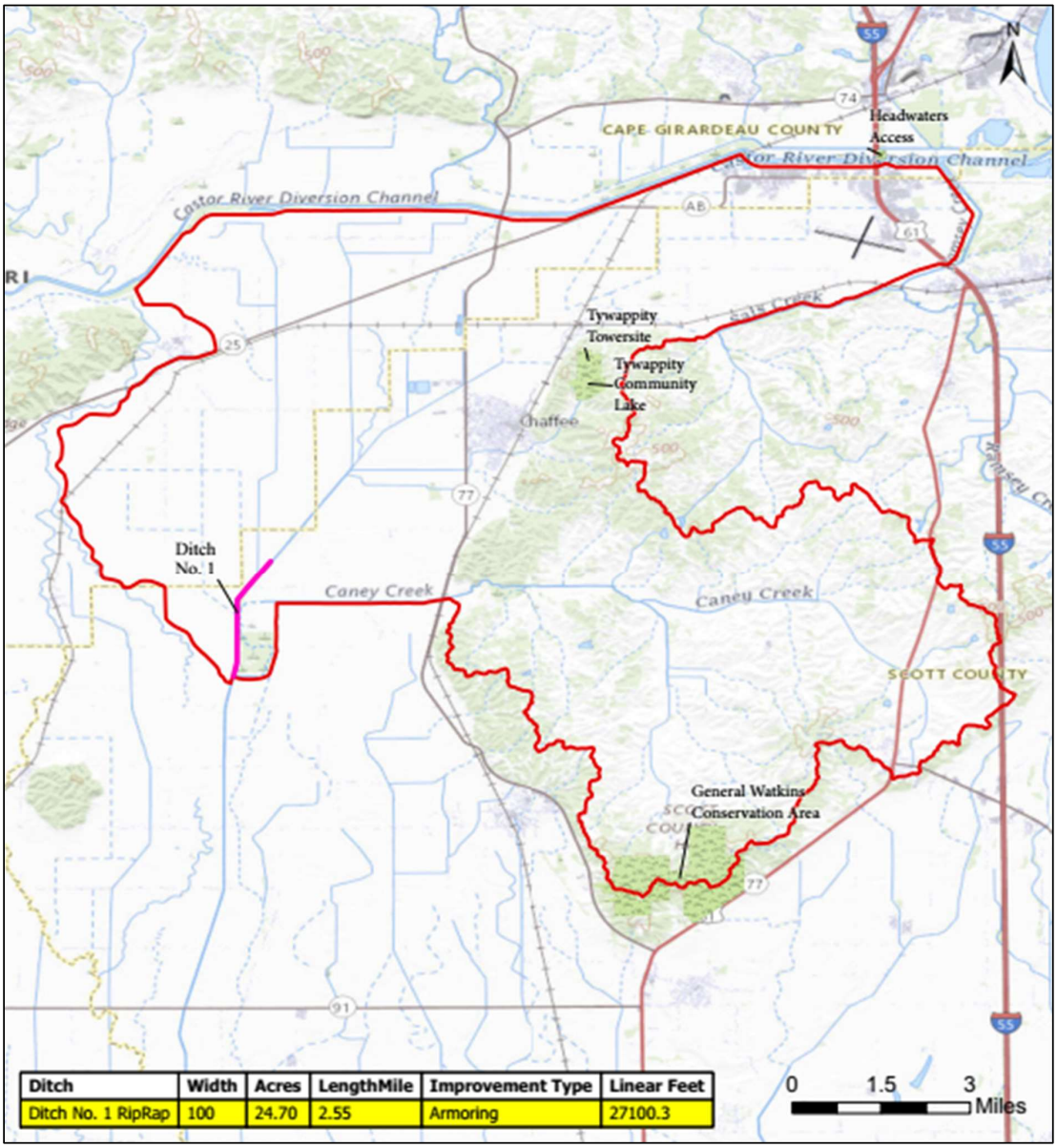

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

The Honorable Wena Supernaw
Chairperson, Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma
Post Office Box 765
Quapaw, Oklahoma 74363

September 12, 2024

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2 - Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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3 - Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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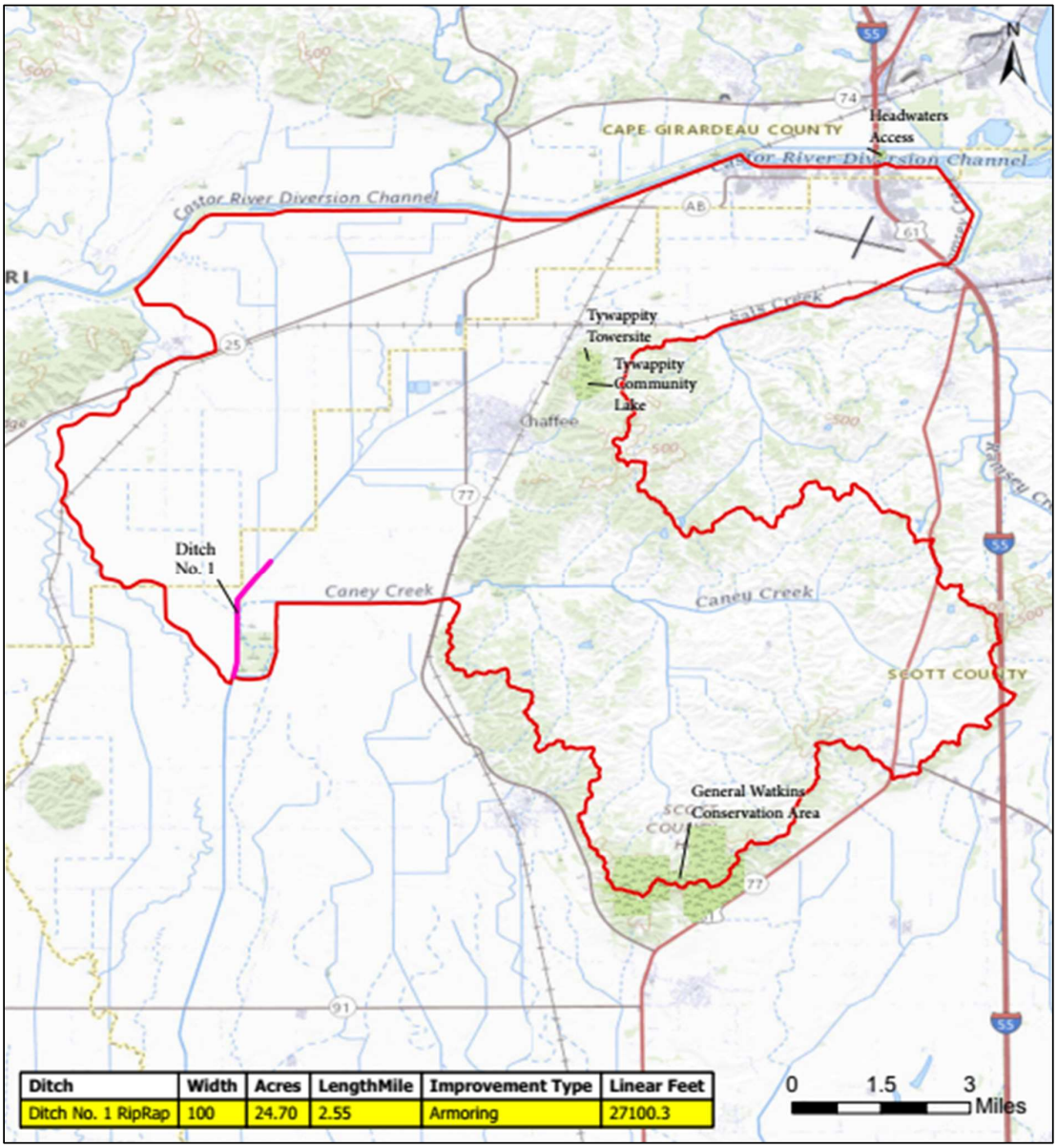

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

The Honorable Deborah Dotson
President, Delaware Nation
Post Office Box 825
Anadarko, Oklahoma 73005

September 12, 2024

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2 - Delaware Nation

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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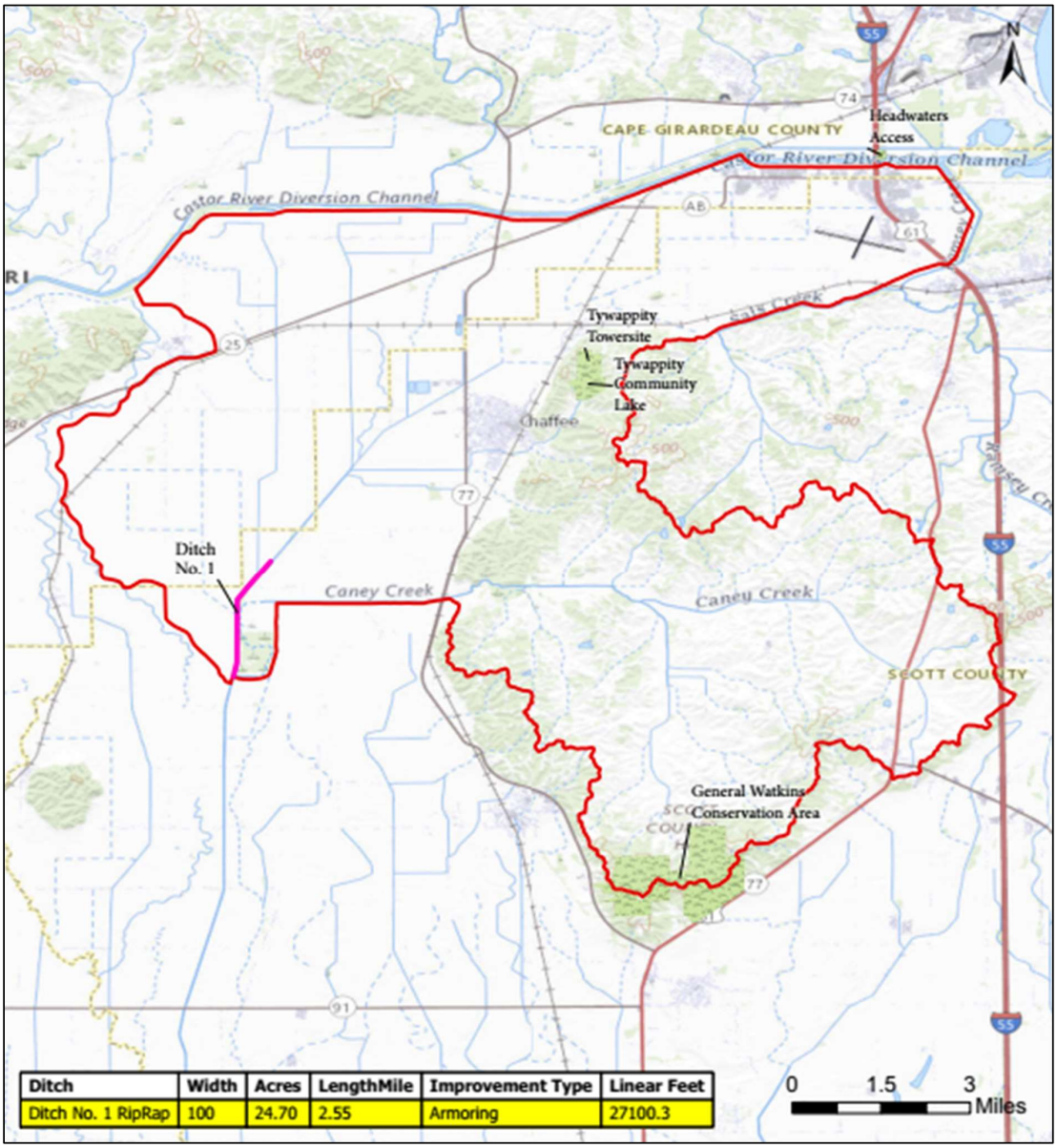

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

The Honorable Chuck Hoskins
Principal Chief, Cherokee Nation
Elizabeth-Toombs@cherokee.org

September 12, 2024

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Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
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Site Location Map

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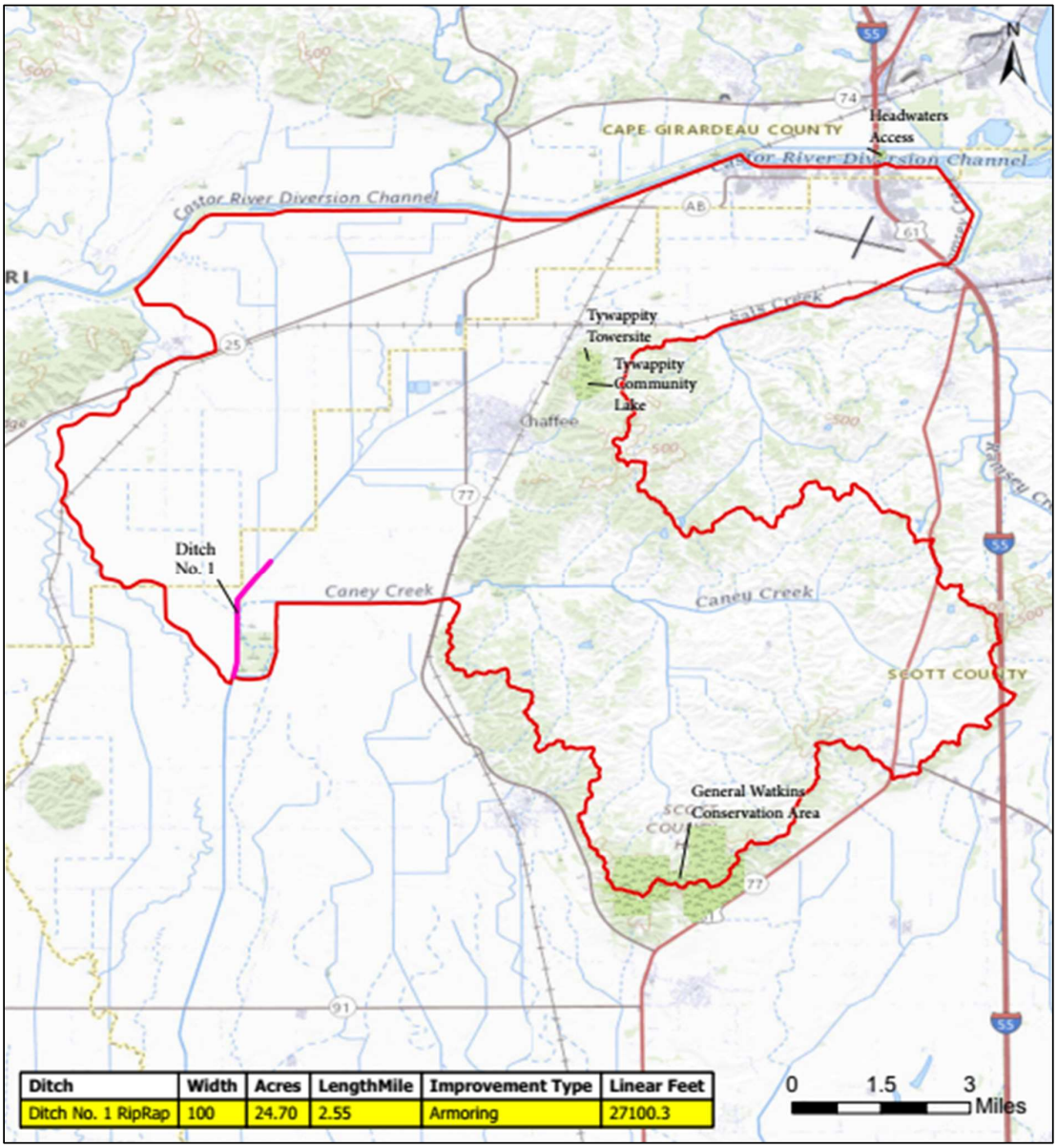

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Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
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PHONE: 573.876.0901

The Honorable Geoffrey Standing Bear
Principal Chief, Osage Nation
S106@osagenation-nsn.gov

September 12, 2024

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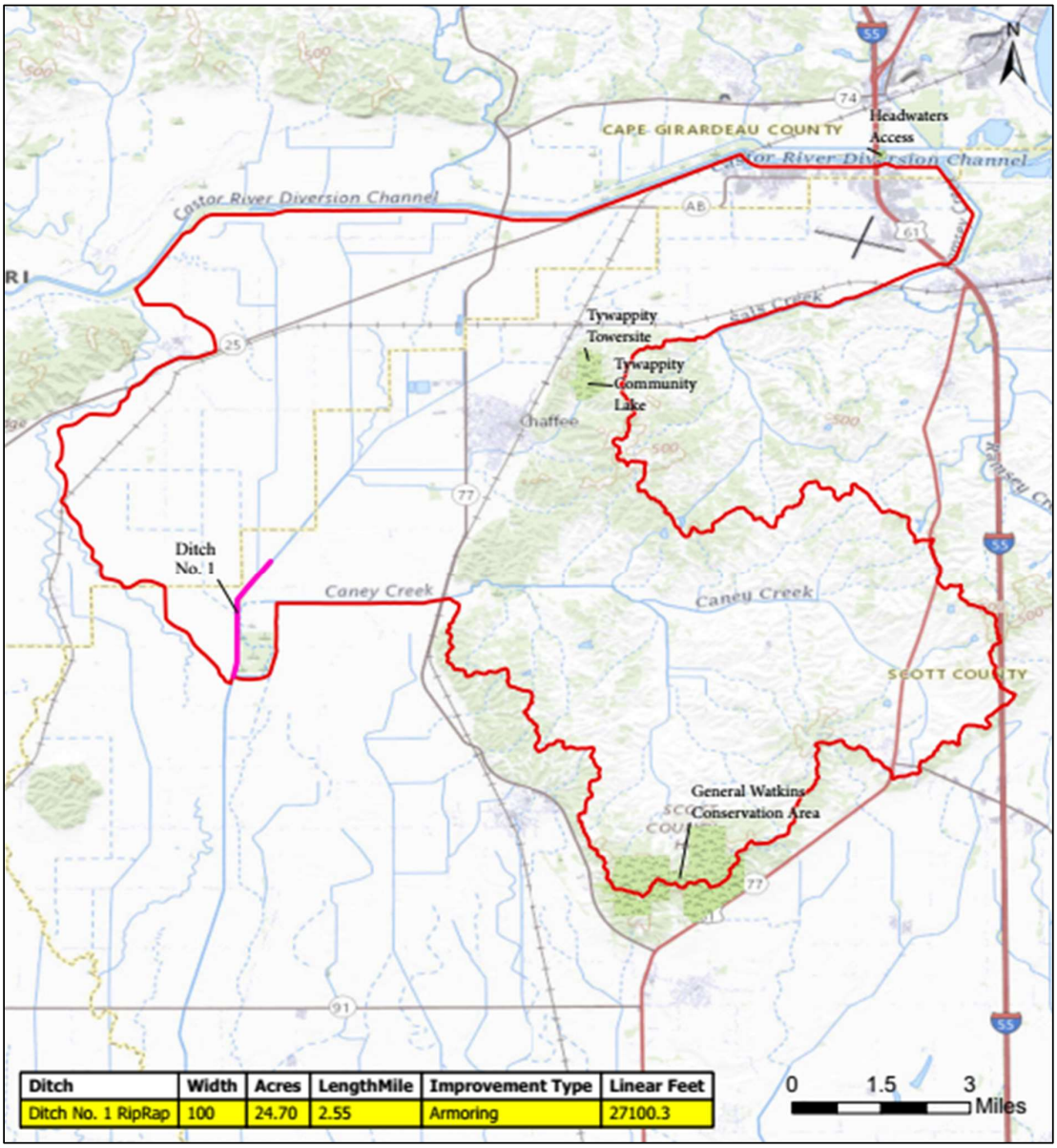

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Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
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PHONE: 573.876.0901

Brent Summers
Area 4 Director, USDA Rural Development
brent.summers@usda.gov

September 12, 2024

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Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Attachment
Project Summary
Site Location Map

cc: file

Natural Resources Conservation Service
USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

3 - USDA Rural Development

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Project Overview: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.): the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing a Whitewater River Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed project.

Project Sponsor: As project sponsor, the Little River Drainage District (LRDD) of Cape Girardeau, MO requested NRCS assistance to identify and analyze feasible alternatives for flood control within the watershed. The project watershed boundary is the HUC10 0802020401 boundary.

Project Need: The Proposed Action is needed to address aging infrastructure to aid in flood control. For around a century, water from adjacent farmland has been transporting silts, loams, and sands to the LRDD drainage canals. The sediments accumulate over time, reducing the drainage system's capacity and thereby diminishing its ability to prevent flooding. In addition to sheet, rill, and gully erosion, the canal banks have been eroding into themselves. Improvements to the aging infrastructure will provide benefits to downstream watersheds and ensuring landscape scale resilience. The proposed project is a sub-unit of the entire drainage district. The system of drainage ditches serves to manage runoff received from higher ground and several neighboring drainage districts. Drainage water is collected and transferred by drainage canals to Arkansas and ultimately the Mississippi River. This system of drainage canals is the life blood of the region, permitting the production of commodities.

Proposed Alternatives: Alternatives under evaluation:

1. No Action
2. Full Bank Armoring with Rock Bedding and Riprap of a section of Ditch 1.
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The locally preferred alternative is to place rock along eroding portions of the drainage canals and to plant native warm season grasses to help stabilize canal banks while providing wildlife habitat. All work will remain within the original canal designs and will not expand the footprint of existing infrastructure.

Stakeholders are invited to submit comments on the project. Please contact Steven Hefner, Natural Resources Specialist, at Butler USDA Service Center, 4327 Highway 67 North, Poplar Bluff, MO or by email at steven.hefner@usda.gov to submit comments and questions.

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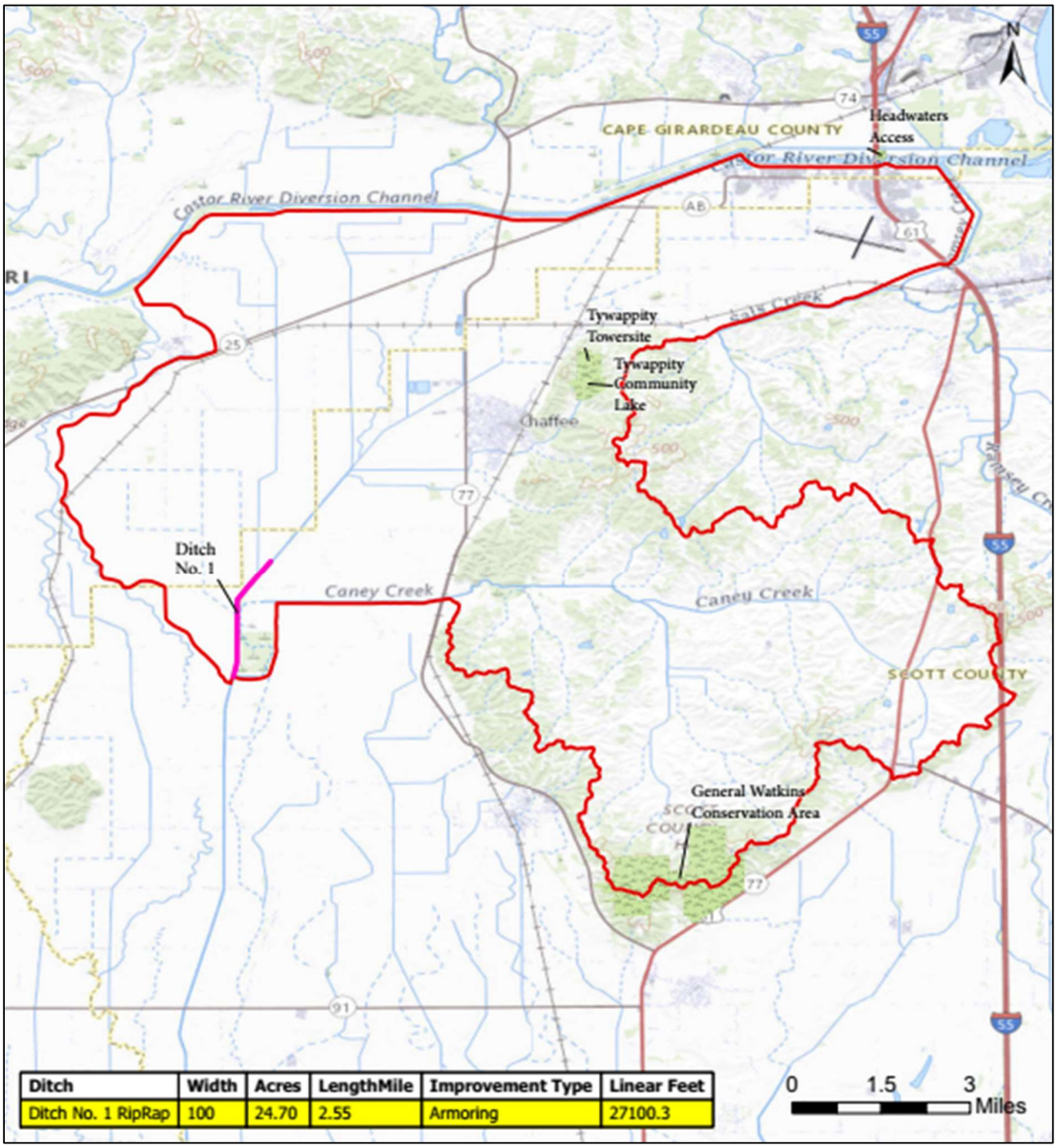
Whitewater River Watershed Proposed Project, Site Location Map

Note: Proposed improvements are limited to Ditch 1.



Ditch	Width	Acres	LengthMile	Improvement Type	Linear Feet
Ditch No. 1 RipRap	100	24.70	2.55	Armoring	27100.3

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
Suite 250
Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Mr. Tom Waters
Chairman, Missouri Levee and Drainage District Association
Orrick, Missouri
waters4@ix.netcom.com

September 12, 2024

RE: Request for Stakeholder Participation
Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

To Whom It May Concern,

The Missouri Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is developing a draft watershed plan/ environmental document for the Whitewater River Watershed in Cape Girardeau and Scott counties, Missouri. The local sponsor is the Little River Drainage District. Through the NRCS Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations Program (WFPO), NRCS is authorized to assist local municipalities with complex watershed planning projects. The Whitewater River Watershed Project purpose is to provide feasible flood control alternatives within the watershed. Please see the attached map including potential areas where the work will be conducted.

As part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, the NRCS invites you to comment and/or participate in the next public meeting. A stakeholder/public meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 1st starting at 4:00 p.m. (CST). Interested stakeholders can attend in person at the Little River Drainage District Office, 1432 Kurre Lane, Cape Girardeau, MO. Stakeholders wishing to attend virtually, can obtain access by contacting Steven Hefner at steven.hefner@usda.gov.

Below is a brief overview of this project including draft alternatives. Supportive of this watershed planning effort, there are reports available for review. Please contact Mr. Hefner for electronic or print copies.

1. Phase I Cultural Resource Survey
2. Draft -Limited Waters of the U.S. Delineation and Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment

2 - Missouri Levee and Drainage District Association

I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Project Summary
Site Location Map

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3 - Missouri Levee and Drainage District Association

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

Project Overview: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.): the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and Environmental Policy and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is preparing a Whitewater River Watershed Plan – Environmental Document (Plan-ED) to evaluate the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic effects associated with the proposed project.

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4 - Missouri Levee and Drainage District Association

Whitewater River Watershed Proposed Project, Site Location Map

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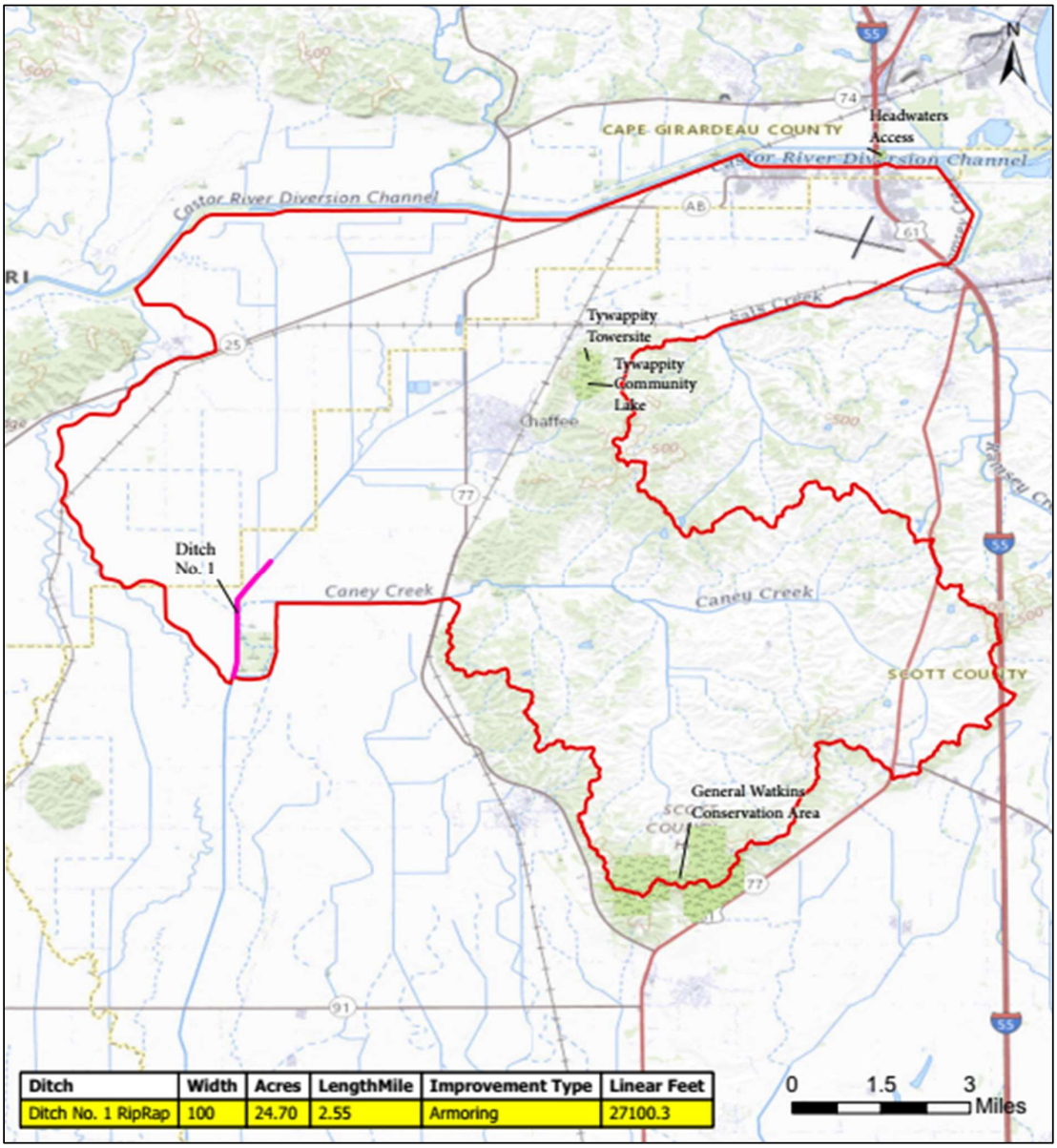

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Missouri State Office
601 Business Loop 70 West
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Columbia, Missouri 65203
PHONE: 573.876.0901

Roger S. Allan, Deputy Chief
Regulatory Division
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District
167 North Main Street, Room B202
Memphis, Tennessee 38103-1894

September 12, 2024

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Whitewater River Watershed Project
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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2. Draft -Limited Waters of the U.S. Delineation and Threatened and Endangered Species Assessment

2 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District

I appreciate your consideration of this NRCS watershed planning project.

Respectfully,

Chris Hamilton
Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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3 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District

Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties, Missouri

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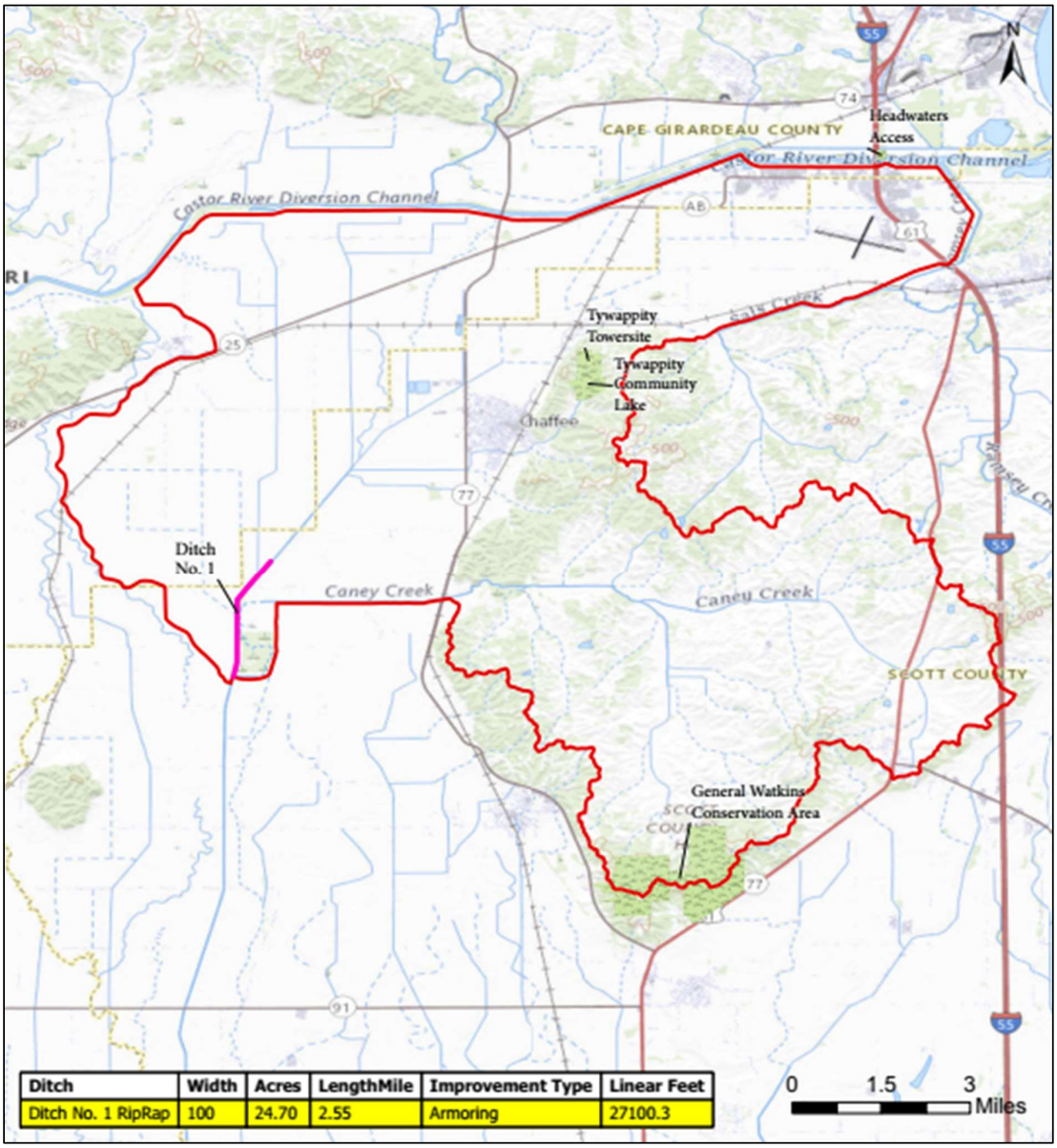

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PHONE: 573.876.0901

Ms. Andrea Spillars
Region 7 Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency
FEMARegion7info@fema.dhs.gov

September 12, 2024

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Whitewater River Watershed Plan/Environment Document
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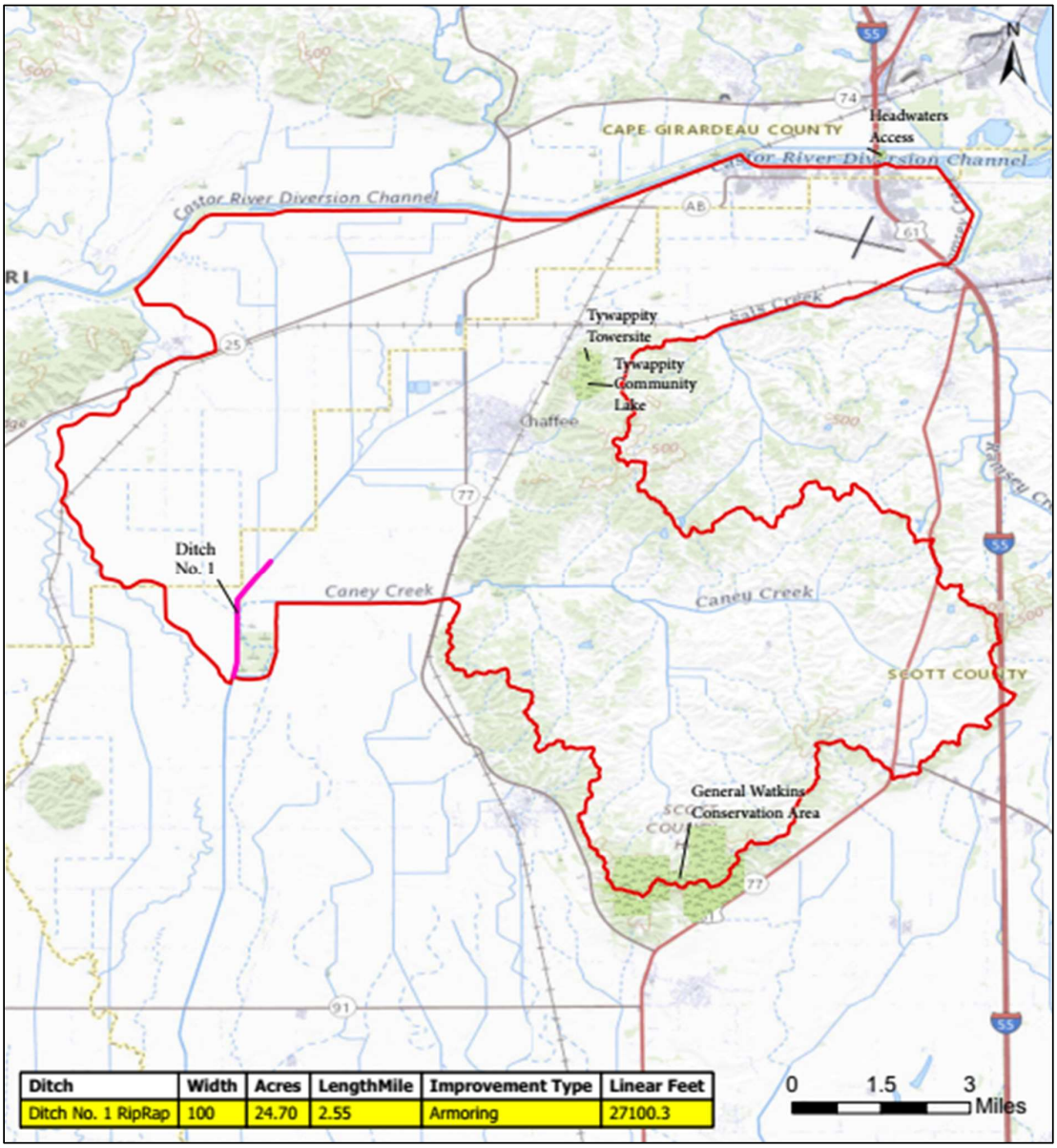

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