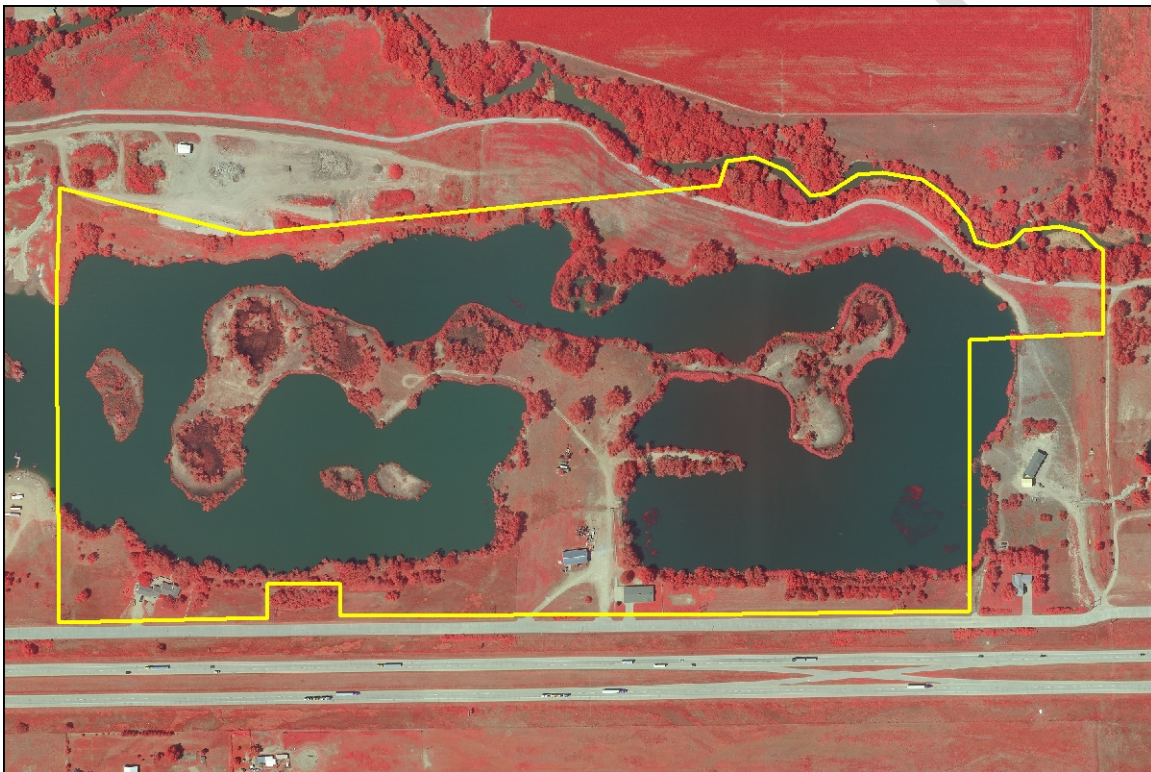




## LAND EVALUATION REPORT

For

### TRACT 1905



Prepared for:  
**Platte River Recovery Implementation Program  
Land Advisory Committee**

Evaluation Team:  
**Bruce Sackett, Andrew Pierson, Dave Zorn,  
Mark Czaplewski, Matt Rabbe, Brock Merrill**

Site Visit Date:  
**9/5/2019**

Evaluation Report Completion Date:  
**10/21/2019**



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## **I. EVALUATION TEAM AND SCHEDULE**

### **A. Evaluation Team Members**

The Tract 1905 Evaluation Team members are:

- Bruce Sackett – Platte River Recovery Implementation Program
- Matt Rabbe – US Fish & Wildlife Service
- Andrew Pierson – Audubon Rowe Sanctuary
- Mark Czaplewski – Central Platte Natural Resources District
- Dave Zorn – Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District
- Brock Merrill – US Bureau of Reclamation

### **B. Date of Evaluation**

The Evaluation Team performed a review of this property on September 5, 2019. A summary of this Evaluation Report was presented to the Land Advisory Committee (LAC) and discussed at the October 29, 2019 LAC meeting in Kearney, Nebraska. The Report was finalized following that meeting.

## **II. GEOGRAPHIC CONSIDERATIONS**

This tract lies within the Kearney to Highway 10 reach of the Platte River and within 3.5 miles of the main channel or 2 miles of a side channel. As such, it is eligible for inclusion in the Program. Tract 1905 is being considered as non-complex off-channel sand and water (OCSW) habitat.

### **A. Tract Location and Size**

Tract 1905 is approximately 84 acres in size and is located in section 7, T-8N, R-15W. Figure A-1 (located in Appendix A) delineates the property boundary. The tract is located in the Kearney to Highway 10 bridge segment. Figure A-2 shows the parcel location within the Program land acquisition area, bridge segment and its proximity to existing leased and owned conservation lands and other tracts being evaluated by the Program.

## **III. LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS**

Land cover/use information for this phase of the land evaluation process is compiled by Program Staff utilizing best available Geographic Information System (GIS) datasets developed by the Program and its partners. A more detailed field analysis of target species habitat considerations is conducted during the next phase of the tract evaluation process and is discussed further in the next section of this report.

### **A. Land Cover/Use**

Existing land cover/use on and adjacent to this tract was evaluated utilizing the 2005 land cover overlay developed in cooperation with the Whooping Crane Maintenance Trust Inc. (Crane Trust) and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFW). The land cover classifications from the overlay were compared to the most recent United States Department of Agriculture



(USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Program aerial photography in order to identify any land use changes that have occurred since the development of that dataset. The 2005 land cover/use for this tract is summarized in Table 1. Several additional land cover/use related maps are located in Appendix A including:

- Figure A-3 – 2005 Land Cover/Use
- Figure A-4 – National Wetland Inventory
- Figure A-5 – 1938 Aerial Photography
- Figure A-6 – 1998 CIR Aerial Photography
- Figure A-7 – 2019 CIR Aerial Photography

**Table 1 – Tract 1905 2005 Land Cover/Use Summary**

Land Cover Classification	Acres	Percent of Total
Bareground/Sparse Veg	0.8	0.9%
Phragmites	0.3	0.4%
Riparian Shrubland	1.5	1.8%
Roads	1.6	1.9%
Rural Developed	43.0	51.2%
Sand Pit	36.8	43.8%
	<b>84.0</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

#### **B. Incompatible Uses and Environmental Concerns**

Tract 1905 is a residential lake property, formerly a sand and gravel mine many years ago. The sand pit portions of the tract appeared to be strictly recreational. No environmental concerns were identified during the field visit. The current owner stated that no adjacent landowner has permission or rights to be on the lake itself but may be recreating on the outer banks on adjacent property.

#### **C. Restoration and Maintenance Impacts on Neighboring Properties**

Restoration and maintenance on this tract is not expected to have negative impacts on neighboring properties. Program Staff would coordinate with neighboring landowners to inform them about restoration and maintenance activities and use this contact as a tool to develop positive relationships.

#### **D. Target Species Use**

There is no documented target species use of this tract.

#### **E. Certified Irrigated Acres**

Tract 1905 includes no NRD certified irrigated acres.



## IV. TARGET SPECIES HABITAT CONSIDERATIONS

### A. Existing Species Habitat

On September 5, 2019 the Evaluation Team visited tract 1905. The information in this section of the report has been compiled from that review.

#### 1. *Non-Riverine Surface Water*

Tract 1905 contains a sandpit lake covering approximately 42 acres.

#### 2. *River Frontage and Active Channel Widths*

Tract 1905 is being evaluated as non-complex least tern and piping plover nesting habitat. The tract contains minimal river frontage adjacent to the highway 283 bridge.

#### 3. *Contiguous Sand Substrates*

This tract contains approximately 15 acres of potential contiguous sand substrate, though it is all vegetated and would require some restoration. The field visit revealed that approximately 2 acres of this land interior to the peninsula would be considered wetlands, and are likely not suitable for least tern and piping plover nesting.

#### 4. *Island and Channel Bank Height*

Not applicable.

#### 5. *Groundwater*

Observations of the lake level on site indicate groundwater approximately 1-4 feet below most of the sand area.

#### 6. *Flooding in Non-Wetland Areas*

There was no evidence of temporary inundation of non-wetland areas at the time of the site.

#### 7. *Power/Transmission Lines*

A power transmission line runs along the southern boundary of tract 1905. It is not expected to be an issue for tern and plover habitat on this site.

### B. Complex and Non-Complex Habitat

Tract 1905 is being considered as non-complex habitat in accordance with section II.B.2 and Table 2. *Non-Complex Habitat Guidelines* of the Program Land Plan.

#### 1. *Habitat Complex Acres*

No portion of this tract is being considered as complex habitat.

#### 2. *Non-Complex Habitat Acres*

The entirety of tract 1905 would be considered non-complex (approx. 84 acres).



### **3. *Excess Acres***

This land offering includes two residences and a large outbuilding. While the outbuilding may be useful for storage of Program equipment and property, these residential parcels should likely be sold or the structures removed.

### **4. *Habitat Restoration and Maintenance Needs and Conceptual Costs***

Tract 1905 is being pursued as potential off-channel sand and water habitat. The peninsula on this tract is well configured for least tern and piping plover habitat. The height above water level is quite low on much of the peninsula, and several wetland pockets exist within, so times of extremely high water could be a concern. Restoration activities would include tree clearing of the large woody vegetation, other sparse vegetation removal – likely using dozers or paddle scrapers, and herbicide treatment. **In total, approximately 13 acres of nesting area could be created for a total cost on the order of \$15,000.**

After construction, other typical activities may include installation of a woven wire predator fence, including permanent electric fencing across the peninsula entrances. These activities will cost on the order of \$10,000.

### **5. *Buffer***

This tract is bounded on the south by Interstate 80 frontage, on the east and west by residential and recreational land, and on the north by City of Kearney hike/bike trail and material storage. Trespass on this property was not mentioned as a concern by the seller, but may be a higher risk here vs. other more remote tracts, given proximity to public access areas and the City of Kearney.

## **V. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

### **A. Encumbrances**

#### **1. *Legal Encumbrances***

At the time of review there were no known legal restrictions. The owner did not detail any information about any restrictive easements; public records have not yet been reviewed. This evaluation is subject to a complete title search. Upon initial approval by the LAC a review of title will be ordered, and will be attached when completed.

#### **2. *Management Encumbrances***

No management encumbrances have been identified.

### **B. Environmental Audit**

An environmental audit has not been completed for Tract 1905.

### **C. Property Interest Acquisition Options and Costs**

The property owner prefers the sale of a fee simple absolute title to the Program. Table 2 identifies costs expected during the acquisition process.



**Table 2 – Tract 1905 Land Interest Acquisition Cost Estimate**

<b>Acquisition Item/Activity</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Title Review</b>	\$125
<b>Appraisal</b>	\$5,000
<b>Appraisal Review</b>	\$500
<b>Surveying</b>	\$3,000
<b>Total Estimated Cost</b>	<b>\$8,625</b>

#### **D. Extraneous Costs**

Extraneous costs include current land use modification or cessation, third party impacts, and adjacent incompatible use mitigation costs. No extraneous costs have been identified at this time.

#### **E. Operations and Maintenance**

If the entire site is developed into least tern and piping plover nesting habitat, operations and maintenance will include primarily treatment of vegetation through preemergent herbicide application and predator fence maintenance. These items are expected to cost approximately \$3,000 annually.

#### **F. Other Considerations**

No other considerations were identified that are not discussed in this report.

### **VI. EVALUATION TEAM RECOMMENDATION**

The Evaluation Team felt that tract 1905 has some potential for suitable OCSW habitat, but given its relatively small size, on-site residences, and potential interior wetland issues, it should be considered a low priority for acquisition.

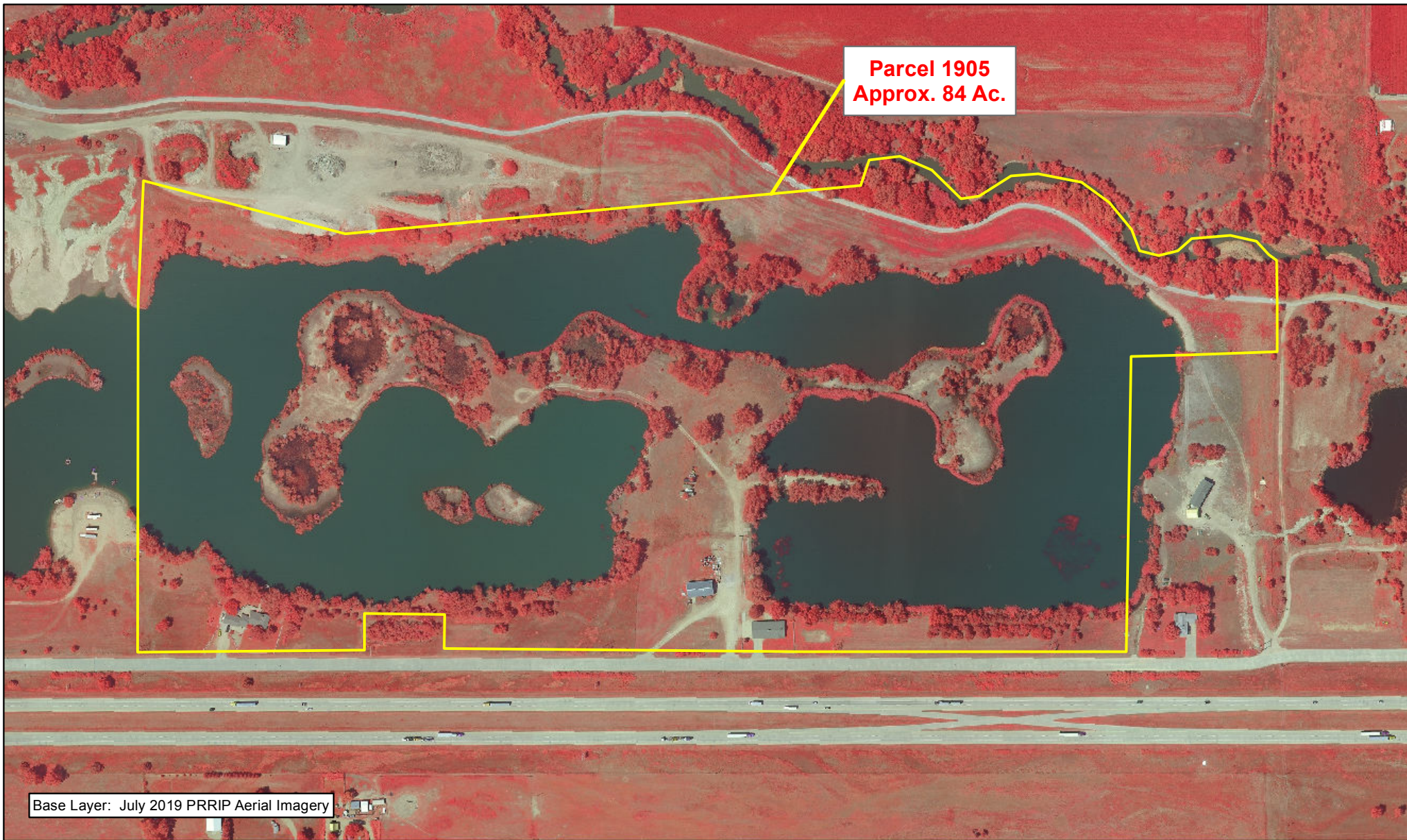
### **VII. LAC RECOMMENDATION**



## APPENDIX A – MAPS

CONFIDENTIAL





**Legend**



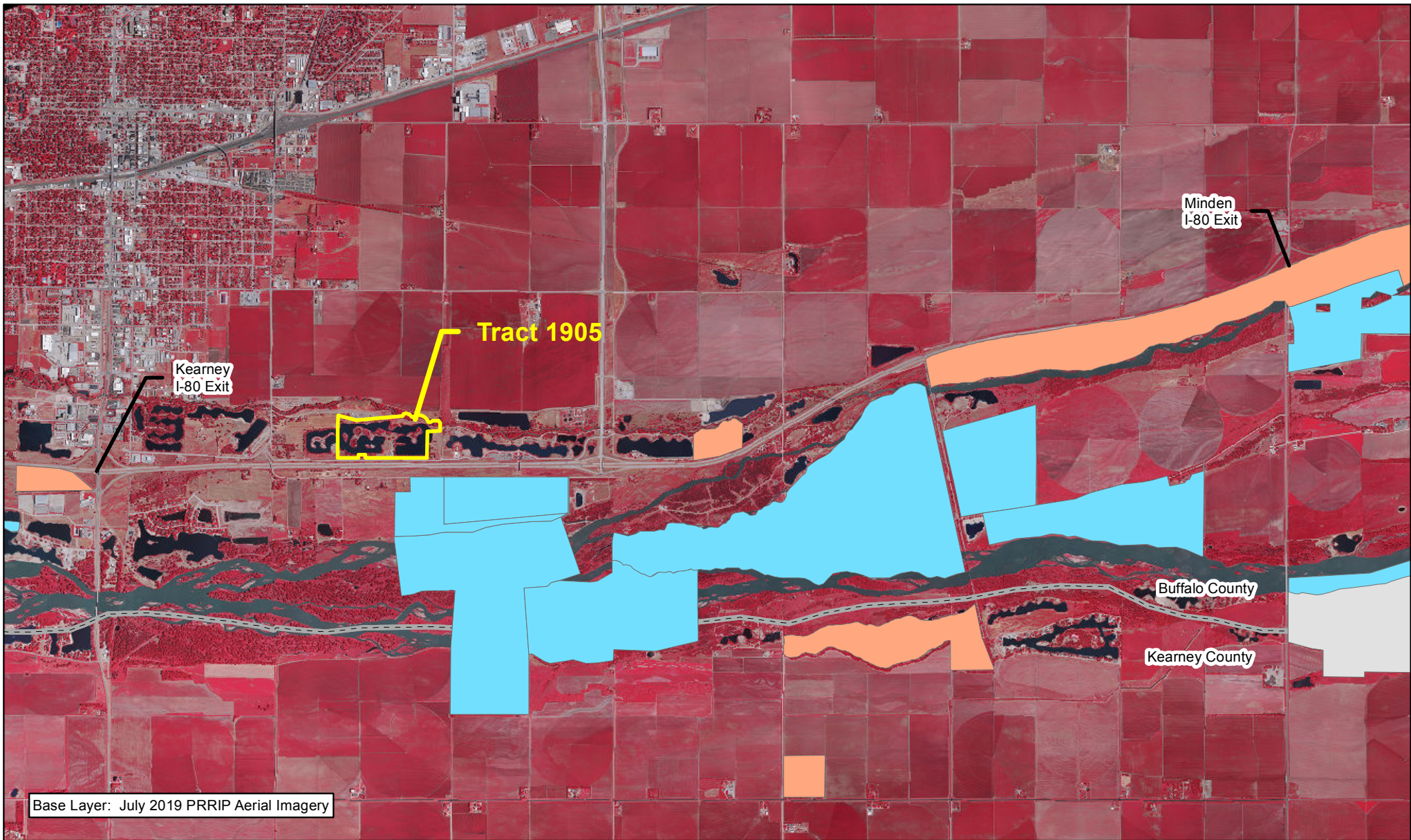
0.1 Miles

**TRACT 1905  
BOUNDARY MAP**

Parcel Evaluation  
Date: 10/18/19  
By: JDB

Figure A-1





### Legend

	1905		Audubon		PRRIP
	County		CNPPID		PRWCT
			Ducks Unlimited		TNC
			NGPC		USFWS
			NPPD		



Miles  
1

### TRACT 1905 LOCATION MAP

Parcel Evaluation  
Date: 10/18/19  
By: JDB

Figure A-2





**Legend**

- |                       |                          |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Tract 1905            | River Early Successional |
| Ag                    | River Shrubland          |
| Bareground/Sparse Veg | Roads                    |
| Canal/Drainage        | Rural Developed          |
| Meadow Sand Ridge     | Sand Pit                 |
| Mesic Wet Meadow      | Unvegetated Sandbar      |
| Phragmites            | Upland Woodland          |
| Riparian Shrubland    | Warmwater Slough         |
| Riparian Woodland     | Xeric Wet Meadow         |
| River Channel         |                          |



0.1 Miles

**TRACT 1905  
2005 LAND COVER/USE**

Parcel Evaluation  
Date: 10/18/19  
By: JDB

**Figure A-3**





#### Legend

- Tract 1905
- Lacustrine Unconsolidated Bottom (LUB)
- Palustrine Aquatic Bed (PAB)
- Palustrine Emergent (PE)
- Palustrine Forested (PF)
- Palustrine Scrub-Shrub (PSS)
- Palustrine Unconsolidated Bottom Excavated (PUBx)
- Palustrine Unconsolidated Shore
- Riverine Unconsolidated Bottom (RUB)
- Riverine Unconsolidated Shore (RUS)
- Riverine Streambed (RS)



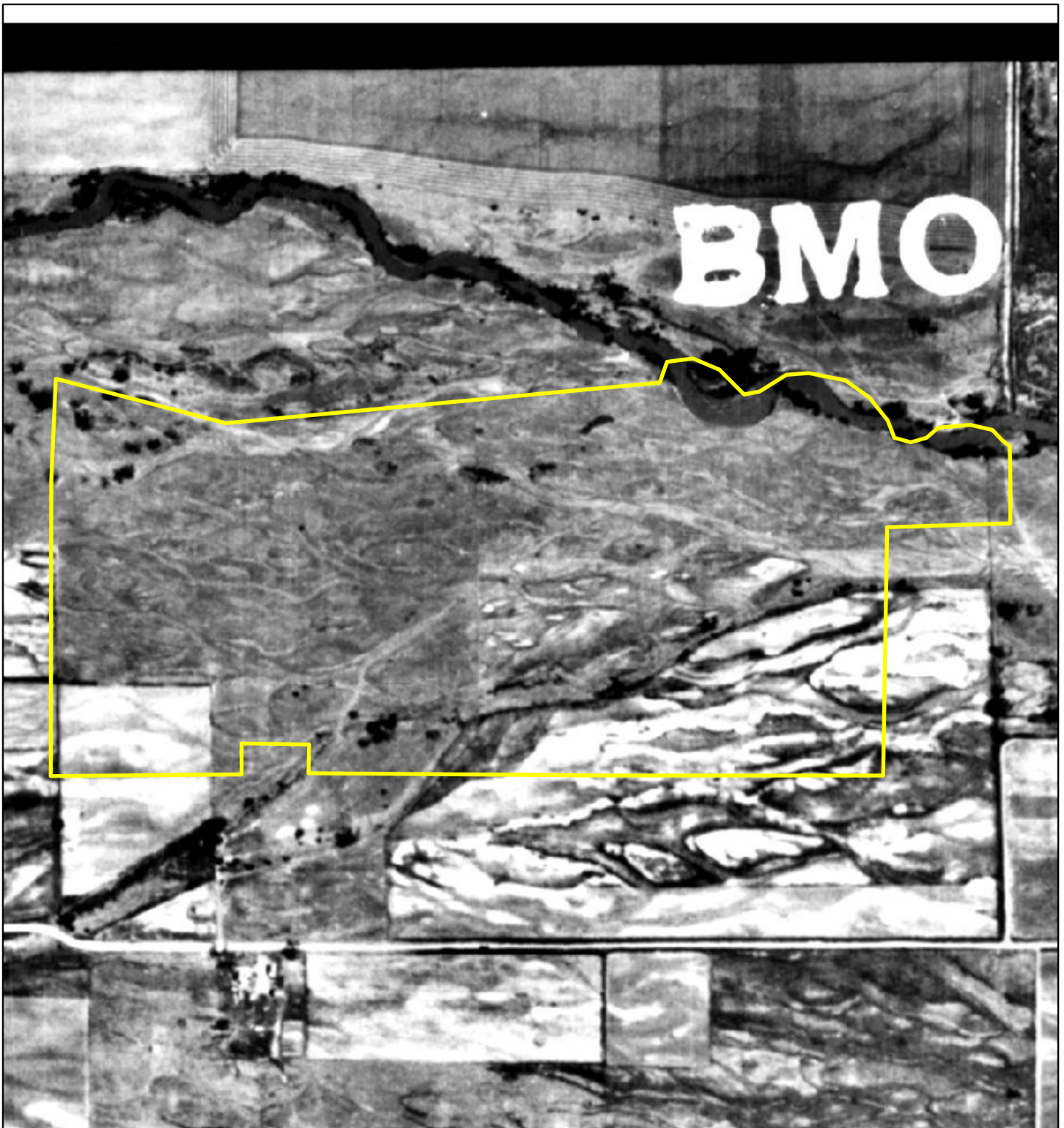
0.1 Miles

#### TRACT 1905 NWI MAP

Parcel Evaluation  
Date: 10/18/19  
By: JDB

Figure A-4






PLATTE RIVER  
RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

**Legend**

 Tract 1905



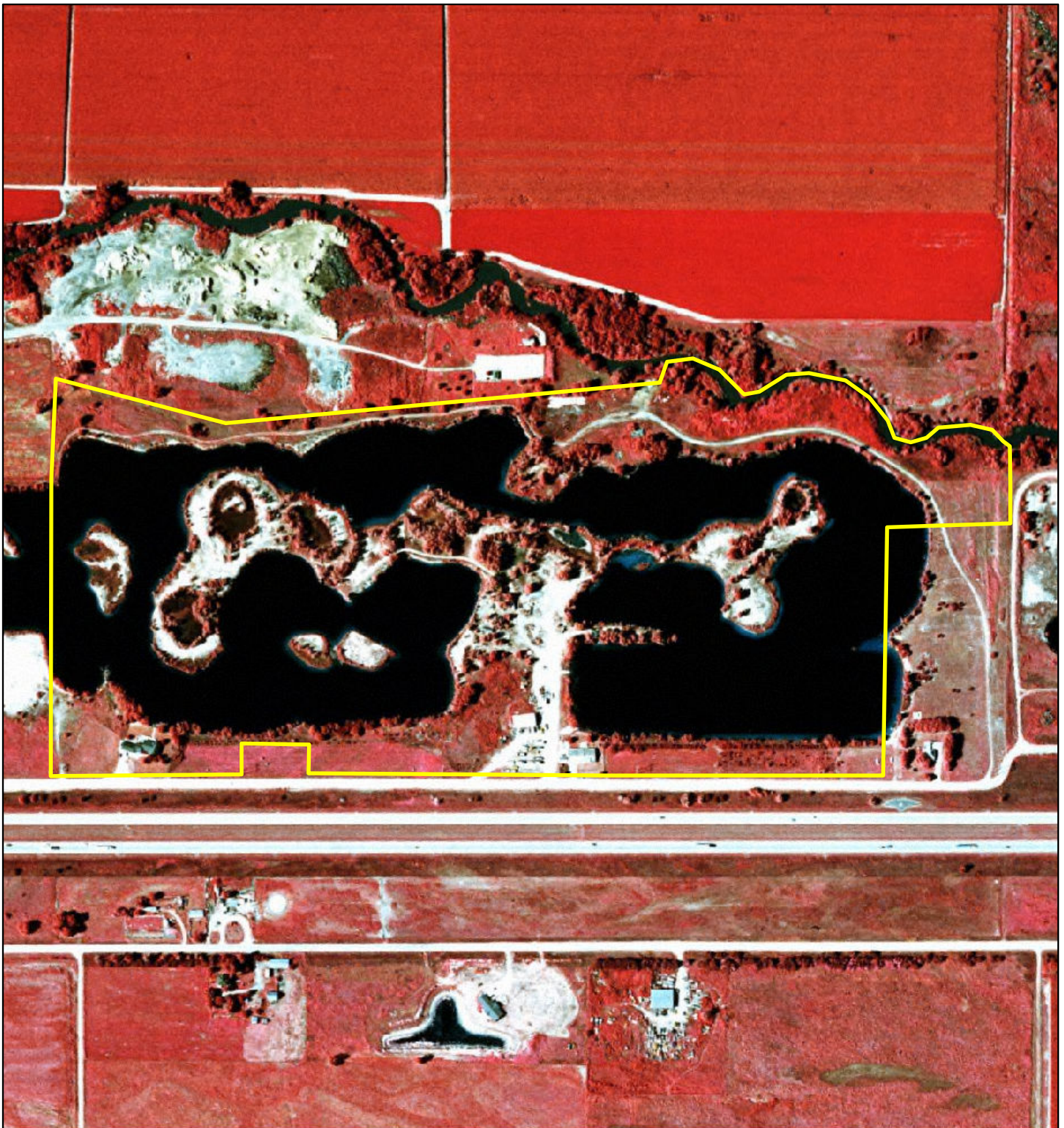
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TRACT 1905  
1938 IMAGERY

Parcel Evaluation  
Date: 10/18/19  
By: JDB


Figure A-5





**Legend**  
 Tract 1905



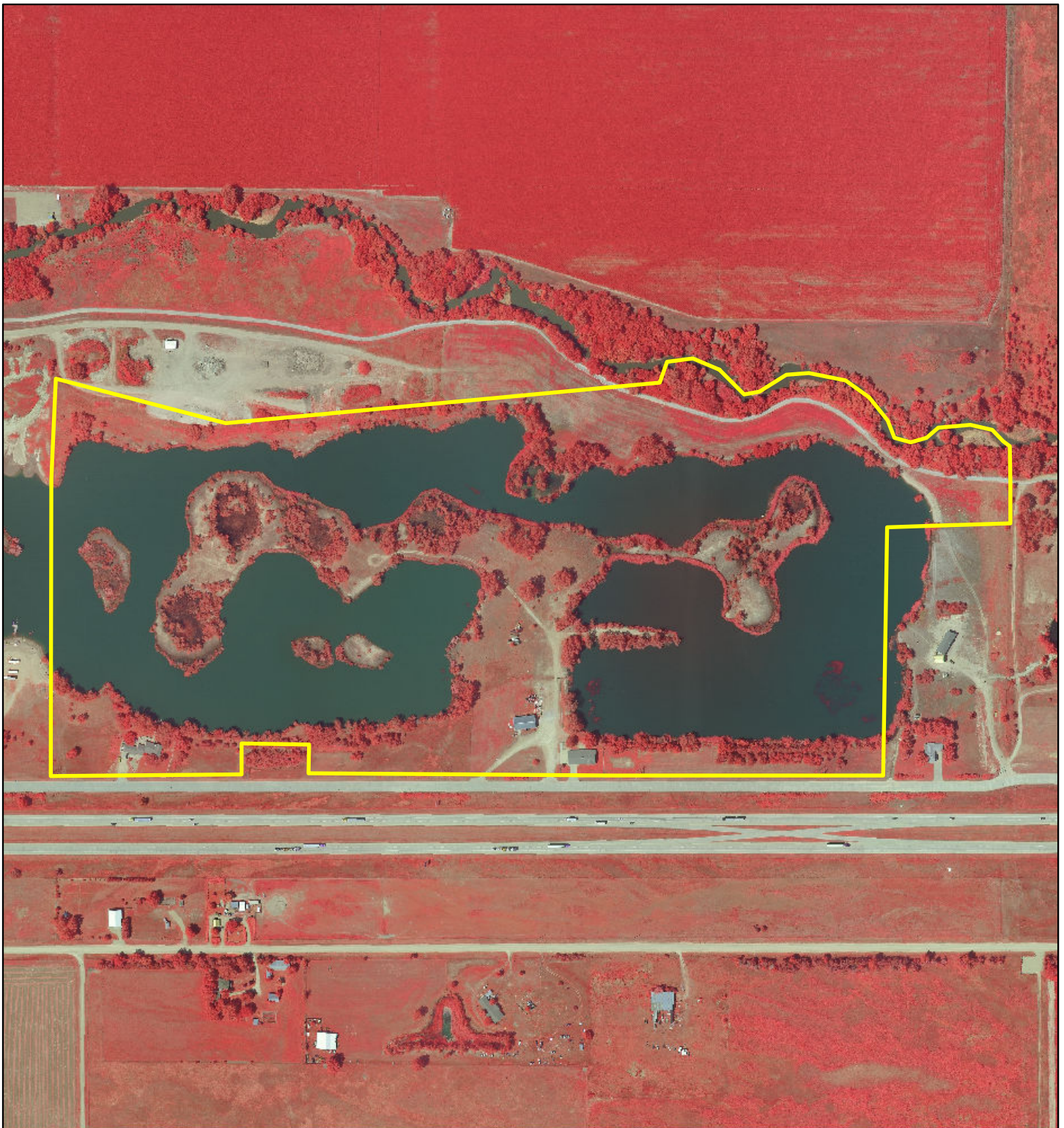
 Miles  
0.1


**TRACT 1905**  
**1998 CIR IMAGERY**

Parcel Evaluation  
Date: 10/18/19  
By: JDB


Figure A-6





**Legend**  
 Tract 1905



 Miles  
0.1

**TRACT 1905**  
**2019 CIR IMAGERY**

Parcel Evaluation  
Date: 10/18/19  
By: JDB

**Figure A-7**



## APPENDIX B – LEGAL REVIEW

CONFIDENTIAL