



State Revolving Fund Loan Programs

Drinking Water, Clean Water, Nonpoint Source

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

CITY OF ROCHESTER WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS – PHASE 1 SRF PROJECT DW 24 30 25 00

DATE: May 23, 2025

PUBLIC COMMENTS DUE BY: June 22, 2025

I. INTRODUCTION

The above entity has applied to the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loan Program for a loan to finance all or part of the Drinking Water project described in the accompanying Environmental Assessment (EA). As part of facilities planning requirements, an environmental review has been completed which addresses the project's impacts on the natural and human environment. This review is summarized in the attached EA, which can also be viewed in color at <http://www.in.gov/ifa/srf/>.

II. PRELIMINARY FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

The SRF Drinking Water Program has evaluated all pertinent environmental information regarding the proposed project and determined that an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary. Subject to responses received during the 30-day public comment period, and pursuant to Indiana Code 5-1.2-3, it is our preliminary finding that the construction and operation of the proposed facilities will result in no significant adverse environmental impact. In the absence of significant comments, the attached EA shall serve as the final environmental document.

III. COMMENTS

All interested parties may comment upon the EA/FONSI. Comments must be received at the address below by the target approval date above. Significant comments may prompt a reevaluation of the preliminary FONSI; if appropriate, a new FONSI will be issued for another 30-day public comment period. A final decision to proceed, or not to proceed, with the proposed project shall be effected by finalizing, or not finalizing, the FONSI as appropriate. Comments regarding this document should be sent within 30 days to:

**Jenni Curry
Environmental Section Manager
State Revolving Fund
100 N. Senate Ave. IGCN 1275
Indianapolis, IN 46204
463-261-6943
jecurry@ifa.in.gov**

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

I. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Project Name and Address: Water System Improvements – Phase 1
City of Rochester
320 Main Street
Rochester, IN 46975

SRF Project Number: **DW 24 30 25 00**

Authorized Representative: Trent Odell, Mayor

II. PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed project is located in Fulton County, Rochester Township, Rochester 24k USGS Quadrangle, Township 30N, Range 3E, and Sections 2-4, 6, 7, 9-11, 14, 22, Michigan Road Lands 31-34. See **Figure 1**.

III. PROJECT NEED AND PURPOSE

During water utility master planning efforts, several high priorities needs were identified, including inadequate water storage, inadequate looping in the distribution system, and water infrastructure in the Manitou Heights neighborhood that has exceeded its useful life.

IV. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed Phase 1 project will provide additional finished water storage necessary to support near-term community growth, improve water quality, flow, and pressure in the distribution system, and replace aged water infrastructure.

The Water System Improvements – Phase 1 project includes:

- Construction of a 750,000-gallon elevated storage tank southwest of the intersection of US 31 and S CR 50 E.
- Construction of water main looping projects, including valves, hydrants, and appurtenances, at the following locations:
 - East SR 14, approximately 1,800 linear feet of 8-inch water main;
 - Apache Drive, approximately 800 linear feet of 8-inch water main;
 - S CR 50 E (Industrial Park), approximately 3,900 linear feet of 12-inch water main;
 - S CR 50 E (Country Meadows), approximately 700 linear feet of 12-inch water main, including new bulk meter and metering vault;
 - Redundant US 31 crossing at SR 25, approximately 6,200 linear feet of 12-inch water main.
- Hydrant and valve replacement in Manitou Heights.

V. ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS, AFFORDABILITY, AND FUNDING

The total cost of this project is estimated to be approximately \$12,913,000. The City intends to finance the project with a loan from the Drinking Water SRF Loan Program for a term and annual

fixed interest rate to be determined at loan closing. Monthly user rates and charges may need to be analyzed to determine if adjustments are required for loan repayment.

VI. DESCRIPTION OF EVALUATED ALTERNATIVES

Distribution System Upsizing, Valves, and Hydrants: Five alternatives were considered for the Distribution System Upsizing, Valves, and Hydrants project. These consisted of a no action alternative, which is not practical, environmentally sound or economical. The four other alternatives considered replacing aging hydrants, valves, and select two and four inch mains. Ultimately, the chosen alternative is to replace hydrants and add valves in the Manitou Heights subdivision as this was the least costly alternative that met the need.

Distribution System - Looping: Fourteen alternatives were considered for the Distribution System – Looping project. These consisted of a no action alternative, which is not practical, environmentally sound or economical. The thirteen other alternatives considered different alignments to loop the distribution system to eliminate dead ends to the extent possible. These alternatives, with exception of the no action alternative, were evaluated to work in tandem with each other. The chosen looping alignment consists of East SR 14, Apache Drive, Industrial Park, Country Meadows, and a redundant US 31 main.

New Storage Tanks: Four alternatives were considered for the New Storage Tanks project. These consisted of a no action alternative, which is not practical, environmentally sound or economical. The three other alternatives included a new elevated storage tank, two new elevated storage tanks, and a new storage tank while decommissioning a current 100,000 gallon tank. The chosen alternative is to construct a new 750,000 gallon storage tank that would meet the City’s storage needs.

VII. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVES

A. Direct Impacts of Construction and Operation

Disturbed/Undisturbed Land: Construction of the project will occur on property which is developed land and is owned by the City of Rochester, in disturbed rights-of-way, or in existing easements.

Structural Resources: Construction and operation of the project will not alter, demolish or remove historic properties. If any visual or audible impacts to historic properties occur, they will be temporary and will not alter the characteristics that qualify such properties for inclusion in or eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. The SRF’s finding pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act is: “*no historic properties affected.*”

Surface Waters (Figure 3): The project will not adversely affect outstanding state resource waters listed in 327 IAC 2-1.3-3(d), exceptional use streams listed in 327 IAC 2-1-11(b), Natural, Scenic and Recreational Rivers and Streams listed in 312 IAC 7-(2), or Salmonid Streams listed in (327 IAC 2-1.5-5(a)(3) or streams on the Outstanding River List for Indiana. The project is near Lake Manitou, Mill Creek, Graham Ditch, Walters Ditch, and Minnow Ditch. The project will cross Minnow Creek and an unnamed tributary to Lake Manitou. Stream crossings will be installed using a trenchless method and will not impact streams.

Wetlands (Figure 2): Mitigation measures to lessen and compensate for wetland impacts cited in comment letters about the project from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be implemented. There are no anticipated wetland impacts as a result of this project.

Floodplain (Figures 4 and 5): The project will not include dredge or fill in the floodway without a permit from IDNR Division of Water. No change in grade will occur within the floodplain.

Groundwater: The project will not impact a drinking water supply or sole source aquifer.

Plants and Animals: The proposed project items will be implemented to minimize impact to non-endangered species and their habitat. Mitigation measures cited in comment letters from the Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be implemented.

Prime Farmland: The project will convert prime farmland.

Air Quality: Construction activities may generate some noise, fumes and dust, but should not significantly affect air quality.

Open Space and Recreational Opportunities: The project will neither create nor destroy open space or recreational opportunities.

Lake Michigan Coastal Program: The project will not affect the Lake Michigan Coastal Zone.

National Natural Landmarks: Construction and operation of the proposed project will not affect National Natural Landmarks.

B. Indirect Impacts

The City's Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) states: *The City of Rochester, through the authority of its council or planning commission, or other means, will ensure that future development and utility projects connecting to SRF-funded facilities will not adversely affect wetlands, wooded areas, steep slopes, archaeological/historical/structural resources, or other sensitive environmental resources. The City of Rochester will require new development and utility projects to be constructed within the guidelines of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, and other environmental review authorities.*

C. Comments from Environmental Review Authorities

In correspondence dated April 24, 2025, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology stated:

Pursuant to Indiana Code 5-1.2-10, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. § 306108), and 36 C.F.R. Part 800, the Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer ("Indiana SHPO") is conducting an analysis of the materials dated and received by the Indiana SHPO on April 2, 2025, for the above indicated project in Rochester Township, Fulton County, Indiana.

Thank you for providing the archaeological survey report (Stillwell, 4/4/2025; AR-25-00123). Based on our analysis, it has been determined that no historic properties will be altered, demolished, or removed by the proposed project.

If any prehistoric or historic archaeological artifacts or human remains are uncovered during construction, demolition, or earthmoving activities, state law (Indiana Code 14-21-1-27 and 29) requires that the discovery must be reported to the Department of Natural Resources within two (2) business days. In that event, please call (317) 232-1646. Be advised

that adherence to Indiana Code 14-21-1-27 and 29 does not obviate the need to adhere to applicable federal statutes and regulations, including but not limited to 36 C.F.R. 800.

In correspondence dated February 20, 2025, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service responded with:

The USFWS concluded that the proposed project impact, Project Code 2024-0052061, would have a “No effect” for the Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) and proposed endangered Tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*). As such, there is a “No effect” for the Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) as well. Trees suitable for Indiana bat or Northern Long-eared bat roosting should not be cut from April 1 through September 30.

In correspondence dated April 4, 2025, the Department of Natural Resources Environmental Unit stated:

Natural Heritage Database:

The Natural Heritage Program's data have been checked. Care should be taken to note and avoid the boundary of the below-listed nature preserves located south of Lake Manitou. The following have been documented within .5 mile of the project area:

Properties

Bob Kern Wetlands Nature Preserve

Judy Burton Nature Preserve

Manitou Islands Nature Preserve

Communities

Dry-mesic Sand Savanna

Dry Sand Savanna

Marsh

Flora

Bicknell's Northern Cranesbill (Geranium bicknellii), State endangered

Hill's Thistle (Cirsium hillii), State endangered

Howe's Sedge (Carex atlantica ssp. capillacea), State endangered

Smooth Veiny Pea (Lathyrus venosus), State endangered

Eastern Featherbells (Stenanthium gramineum), State threatened

Fauna

Cisco (Coregonus artedii), State endangered

Blanding's Turtle (Emydoidea blandingii), State endangered

Spotted Turtle (Clemmys guttata), State endangered

American Bittern (Botaurus lentiginosus), State endangered

Barn Owl (Tyto alba), State endangered

Common Gallinule (Gallinula galeata), State endangered

Least Bittern (Ixobrychus exilis), State endangered

Marsh Wren (Cistothorus palustris), State endangered

Sedge Wren (Cistothorus platensis), State endangered

Virginia Rail (Rallus limicola), State endangered

Broad-winged Hawk (Buteo platypterus), State special concern

Badger (Taxidea taxus), State special concern

Red Bat (Lasiurus borealis), State special concern

Migratory Bird Concentration Area

Fish and Wildlife Comments:

Avoid and minimize impacts to fish, wildlife, and botanical resources to the greatest extent possible, and compensate for impacts. The following are recommendations that address potential impacts identified in the proposed project area:

A) Heritage Species

The Division of Fish and Wildlife does not anticipate any significant impacts to the above-listed Migratory Bird Concentration Area or fish, reptile, or bird species due to this project. Badgers are a wide-ranging species that prefer an open, prairie-type habitat, with Indiana being at the eastern edge of their natural range. The range of the Badger continues to expand as a result of land-use changes from forest to farmland and open pastureland. Impacts to the Badger or its preferred habitat are unlikely as a result of this project.

Do not cut any trees within the project area from April 1 through September 30 to avoid impacts to the Red Bat. The Red Bat is a foliage roosting species and shows no strong preference for tree size or species.

B) Tree Removal

The Division of Fish and Wildlife recommends avoiding tree removal along roadways to the greatest extent possible and replacing trees that must be removed to maintain the economic, aesthetic, and ecological benefits provided by trees. The following links give a good overview of the benefits of a street tree program and how to select the right species to avoid the negative impacts of non-native invasive species such as the common and popular Bradford pear:

<https://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/forestry-publications-and-presentations/> (scroll down to the Community & Urban Forestry section).

Additionally, we recommend a mitigation plan be developed (and submitted with the permit application, if required) for any unavoidable habitat impacts that will occur. The DNR's Habitat Mitigation Guidelines (and plant lists) can be found online at: <https://www.in.gov/nrc/files/IB-17.pdf>.

Impacts to non-wetland forest of one (1) acre or more in a rural or urban area should be mitigated at a minimum 2:1 ratio based on area of impact. Impacts to non-wetland forest under one (1) acre but at least 0.10 acre in a rural or urban area should be mitigated at a minimum 1:1 ratio based on area of impact. Impacts under 0.10 acre in a rural area typically do not require mitigation or additional plantings beyond seeding and stabilizing disturbed areas, though there are exceptions for high quality habitat sites. Impacts under 0.10 acre in an urban area should be mitigated by replacing each mature tree removed (trees that are 10" diameter-at-breast height (dbh)) with two trees of 3-gallon stock or larger. Seeding and stabilizing disturbed areas is required regardless of the impact amount and location.

The mitigation site should be located in the floodway, downstream of the one (1) square mile drainage area of that stream (or another stream within the 8-digit HUC, preferably as close to the impact site as possible) and adjacent to existing forested riparian habitat.

The additional measures listed below should be implemented to avoid, minimize, or compensate for impacts to fish, wildlife, and botanical resources:

- 1. Revegetate all bare and disturbed areas that are not currently mowed and maintained with a mixture of grasses, sedges, and wildflowers native to Northern Indiana and specifically for stream bank/floodway stabilization purposes as soon as possible upon completion; turf-type grasses (including low-endophyte, friendly endophyte, and endophyte free tall fescue but excluding all other varieties of tall fescue) may be used in currently mowed areas only. A native herbaceous seed mixture must include at least 5 species of grasses and sedges and 5 species of wildflowers.*
- 2. Minimize and contain within the project limits inchannel disturbance and the clearing of trees and brush.*
- 3. Do not work in the waterway from April 1 through June 30 without the prior written approval of the Division of Fish and Wildlife.*

4. Do not cut any trees suitable for Indiana Bat or Northern Long-eared Bat roosting (3 inches or greater diameter-at-breast height, living or dead, with loose hanging bark, or with cracks, crevices, or cavities) from April 1 through September 30.
5. Do not construct any temporary runarounds, access bridges, causeways, cofferdams, diversions, or pumparounds.
6. Minimize the movement of resuspended bottom sediment from the immediate project area.
7. Do not deposit or allow construction/demolition materials or debris to fall or otherwise enter the waterway. Any incidental fallen material or debris in the waterway must be removed within 24 hours using best management practices, particularly lifting material out of the waterway and not dragging it across the streambed whenever possible.
8. Appropriately designed measures for controlling erosion and sediment must be implemented to prevent sediment from entering the waterbody or leaving the construction site; maintain these measures until construction is complete and all disturbed areas are stabilized.
9. Seed and protect all disturbed streambanks and slopes not protected by other methods that are 3:1 or steeper with erosion control blankets that are heavy-duty, biodegradable, and net free or that use loose-woven / Leno-woven netting to minimize the entrapment and snaring of small-bodied wildlife such as snakes and turtles (follow manufacturer's recommendations for selection and installation); seed and apply mulch on all other disturbed areas.

In correspondence dated February 28, 2025, the Natural Resources Conservation Service stated:

The proposed water system improvements project in the City of Rochester, Fulton County, Indiana as referred to in your letter received February 21, 2025, will cause a conversion of prime farmland.

VIII. MITIGATION MEASURES

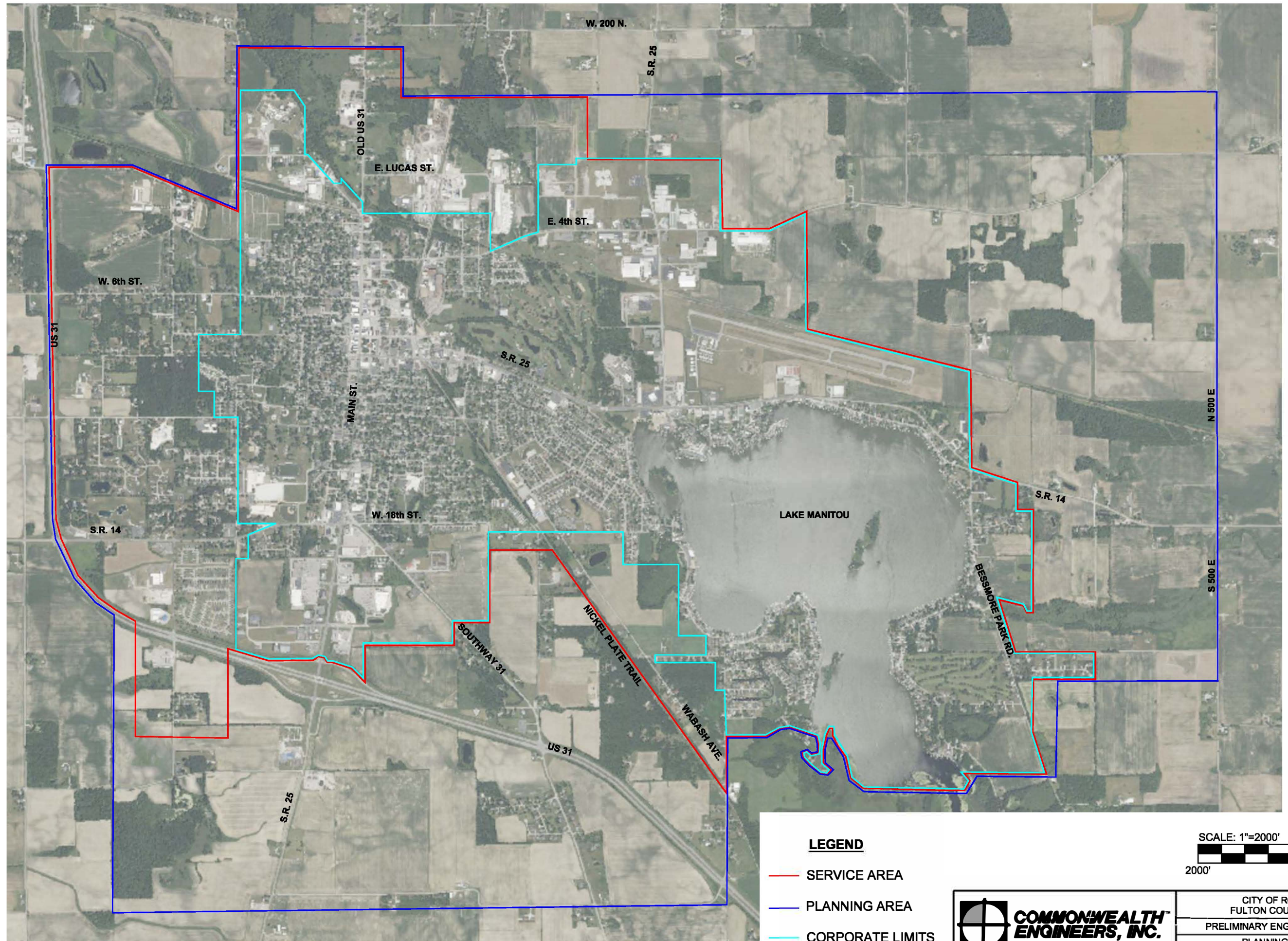
City of Rochester's PER states:

The majority of the environmental impacts will occur during construction of the proposed improvements. These issues will be temporary in nature, since no significant impacts to environmental, historical, or other regulated resources are involved. These temporary construction impacts include the potential for noise, dust, and construction site erosion. Provisions will be included in the construction specifications to limit such problems and to provide erosion control in accordance with current state standards. The work is expected to be completed during normal working hours, restricting any work-related nuisances to those hours. All construction equipment will be required to have mufflers to reduce noise pollution. Additionally, reasonable and proper construction techniques and clean up practices will be required by the contractor to reduce dust emissions. Proper surface wetting practices will be required.

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A properly noticed public hearing was held on April 16, 2024, at 5:00 pm at the Rochester City Hall, 320 Main St, Rochester, IN 46975 to discuss the PER. No written comments were received during the 5-day comment period following the hearing.

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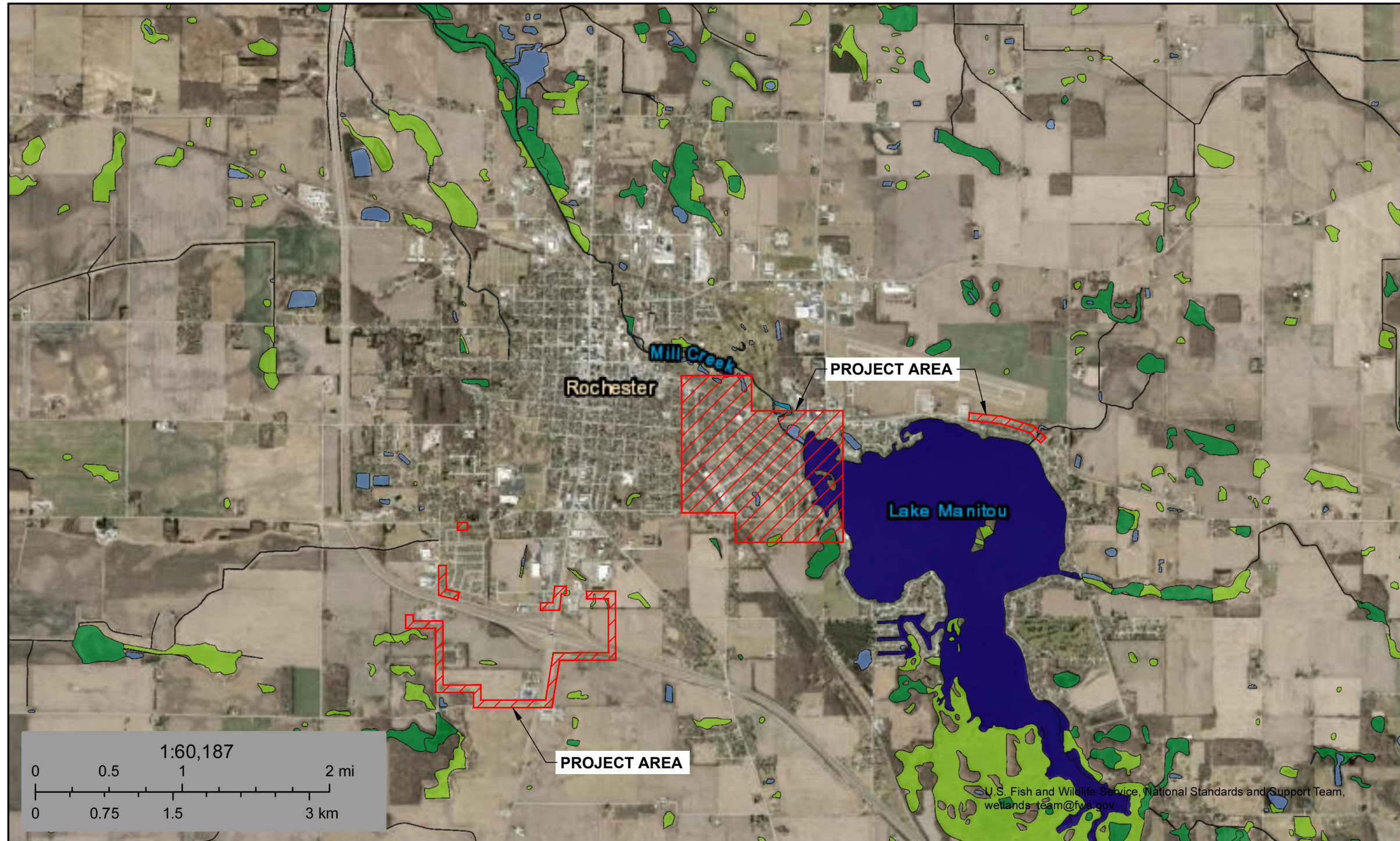


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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory

Wetlands



February 18, 2025

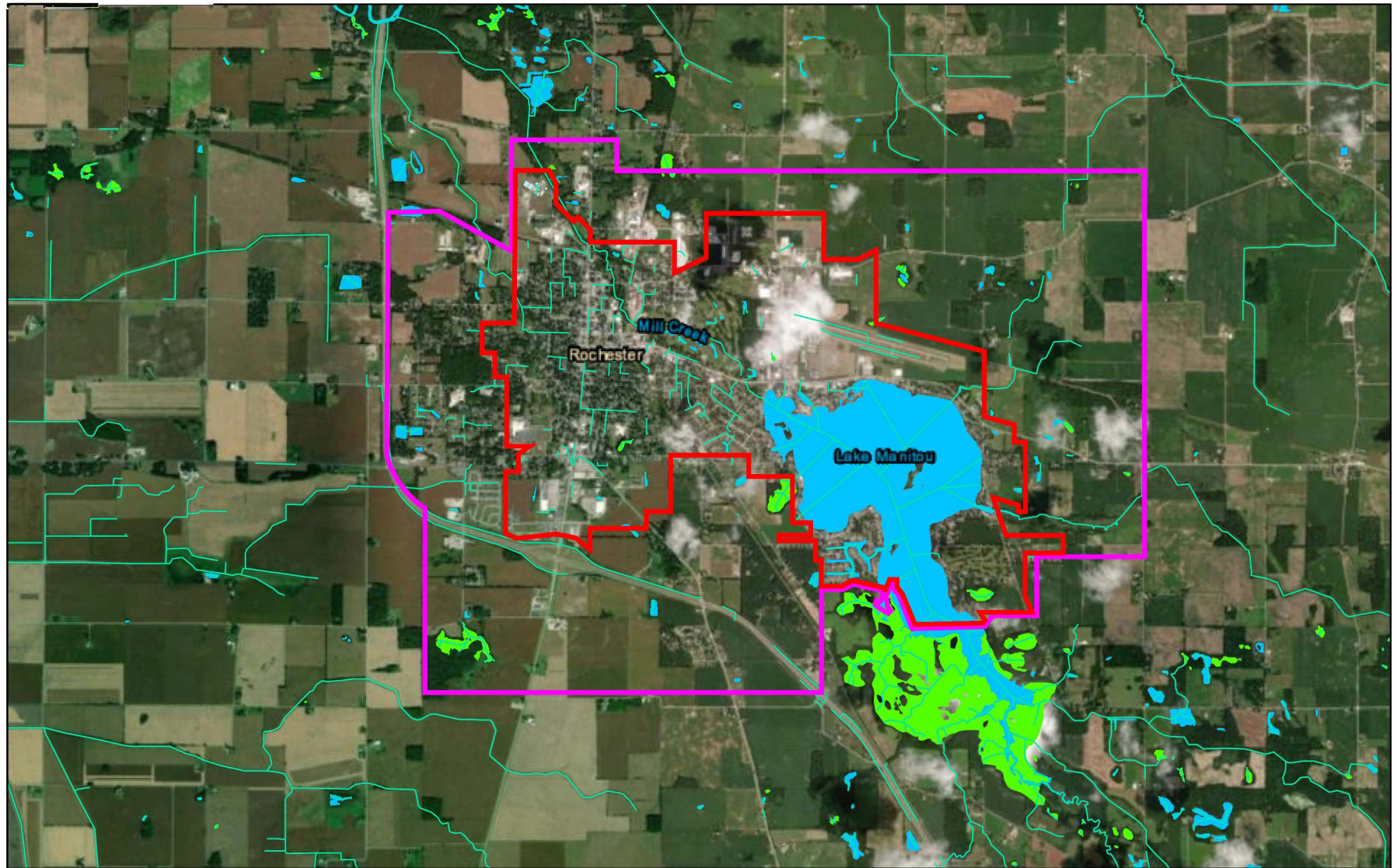
Wetlands

- Estuarine and Marine Deepwater
- Estuarine and Marine Wetland

- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Freshwater Pond

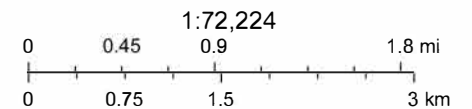
- Lake
- Other
- Riverine

This map is for general reference only. The US Fish and Wildlife Service is not responsible for the accuracy or currentness of the base data shown on this map. All wetlands related data should be used in accordance with the layer metadata found on the Wetlands Mapper web site.



January 18, 2024

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| NHD Classified Flowlines | NHD Discrete Waterbodies |
| NHD Linear Waterbodies - Linear Water Bodies | LakePond |
| StreamRiver | Reservoir |
| CORPORATE LIMITS | SwampMarsh |
| PLANNING AREA | |



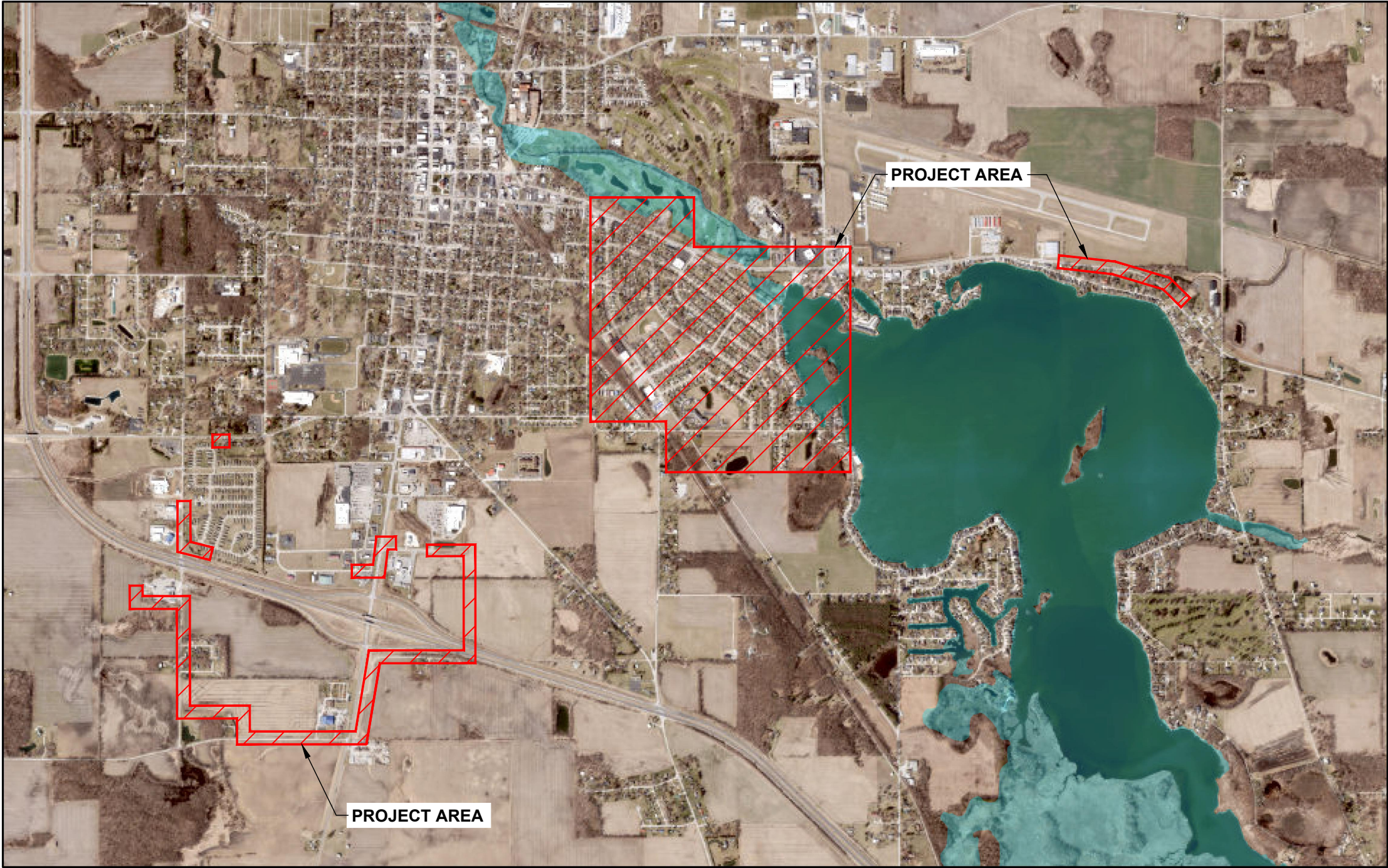
Esri, HERE, Garmin, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community, Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User



CITY OF ROCHESTER
FULTON COUNTY, INDIANA
PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING REPORT
PLANNING AREA SURFACE WATERS MAP
FIGURE 3

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FEMA Flood Hazard Zones 2023



February 18, 2025

FIRM Flood Hazard Zones 2023

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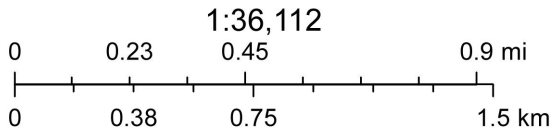
County Boundaries of Indiana Current

Indiana Current Imagery

Red: Band_1

Green: Band_2

Blue: Band_3



Access to Indiana Geographic Information Office Orthoimagery is governed by Creative Commons 0 (CC0)

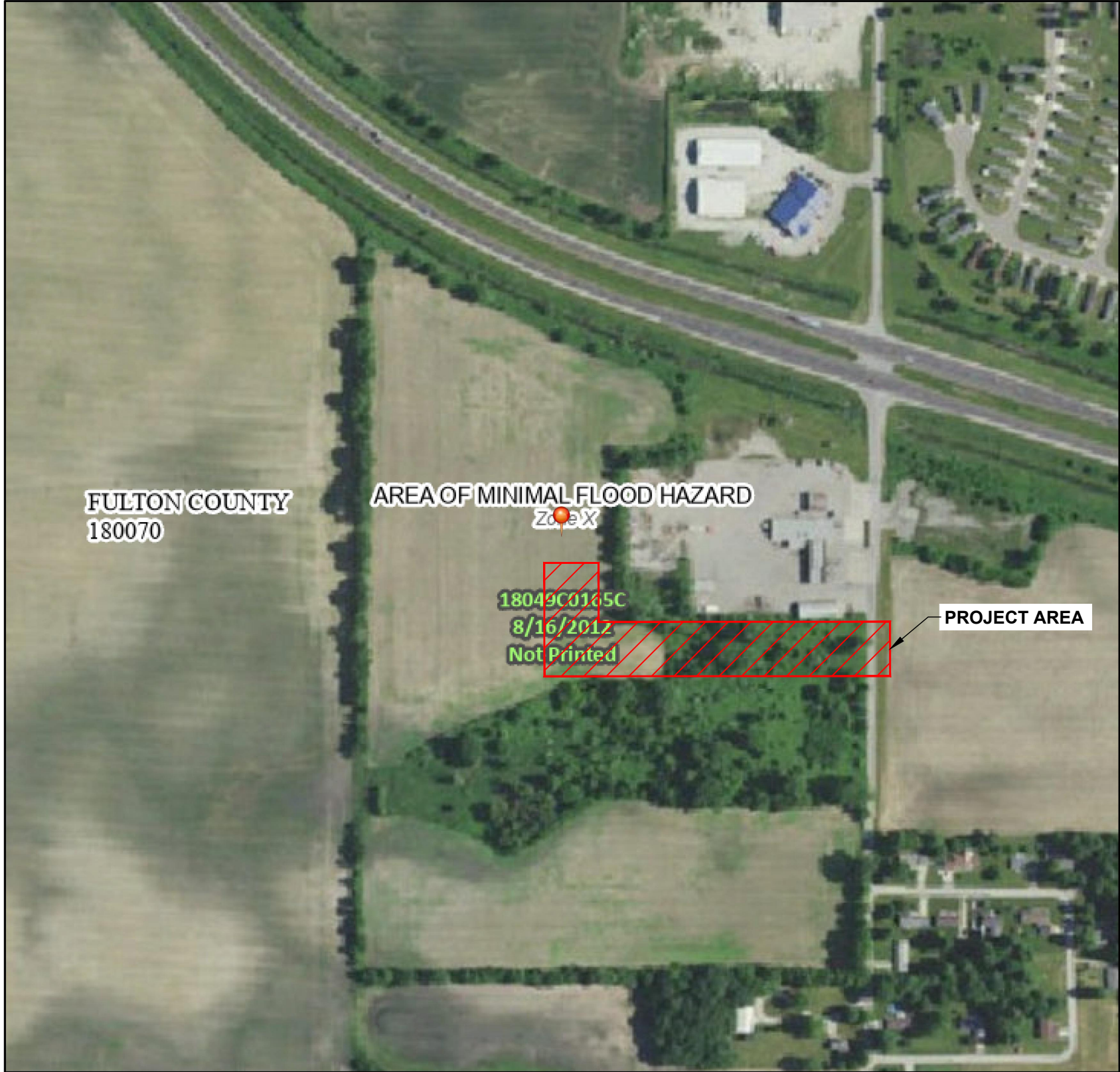
Indiana Viewer

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National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette



86°14'20"W 41°3'4"N



Basemap Imagery Source: USGS National Map 2023

Legend

SEE FIS REPORT FOR DETAILED LEGEND AND INDEX MAP FOR FIRM PANEL LAYOUT

SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS		Without Base Flood Elevation (BFE) Zone A, V, A99
		With BFE or Depth Zone AE, AO, AH, VE, AR
		Regulatory Floodway
OTHER AREAS OF FLOOD HAZARD		0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard, Areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile Zone X
		Future Conditions 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard Zone X
		Area with Reduced Flood Risk due to Levee. See Notes. Zone X
		Area with Flood Risk due to Levee Zone D
OTHER AREAS		NO SCREEN Area of Minimal Flood Hazard Zone X
		Effective LOMRs
		Area of Undetermined Flood Hazard Zone D
GENERAL STRUCTURES		Channel, Culvert, or Storm Sewer
		Levee, Dike, or Floodwall
OTHER FEATURES		20.2 Cross Sections with 1% Annual Chance Water Surface Elevation
		17.5 Coastal Transect
		Base Flood Elevation Line (BFE)
		Limit of Study
		Jurisdiction Boundary
		Coastal Transect Baseline
		Profile Baseline
		Hydrographic Feature
		Digital Data Available
		No Digital Data Available
MAP PANELS		Unmapped
		The pin displayed on the map is an approximate point selected by the user and does not represent an authoritative property location.



This map complies with FEMA's standards for the use of digital flood maps if it is not void as described below. The basemap shown complies with FEMA's basemap accuracy standards

The flood hazard information is derived directly from the authoritative NFHL web services provided by FEMA. This map was exported on **2/18/2025 at 10:15 PM** and does not reflect changes or amendments subsequent to this date and time. The NFHL and effective information may change or become superseded by new data over time.

This map image is void if the one or more of the following map elements do not appear: basemap imagery, flood zone labels, legend, scale bar, map creation date, community identifiers, FIRM panel number, and FIRM effective date. Map images for unmapped and unmodernized areas cannot be used for regulatory purposes.

