



Environmental Review Report

Project Information

Report Generation Date:	12/11/2024 03:37:47 PM
Project Title:	Benjamin Villas
User Project Number(s):	
System Project ID:	NE-CERT-013702
Project Type:	Development (ex: construction, housing, land development, CSW/ISW Permits, etc.; Does NOT include Mining), New construction within existing municipality - previously disturbed habitat
Project Activities:	None Selected
Project Size:	27.91 acres
County(s):	Madison
Watershed(s):	Elkhorn
Watershed(s) HUC 8:	North Fork Elkhorn
Watershed(s) HUC 12:	Hadar Creek-North Fork Elkhorn River
Biologically Unique Landscape(s):	Elkhorn Confluence
Township/Range and/or Section(s):	T24R01WS24
Latitude/Longitude:	42.045829 / -97.375839

Contact Information

Organization:	Mesner Development Co.
Contact Name:	Christopher Lenz
Contact Phone:	308-940-0493
Contact Email:	lenz@mesnerlaw.com
Contact Address:	PO Box 335 1415 16th Street Central City NE 68826
Prepared By:	
Submitted On Behalf Of:	

Project Description

Benjamin Villas is a 28 unit new construction rental housing project in Norfolk Nebraska.

The Nebraska Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act (NESCA)

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (Commission or NGPC) has responsibility for protecting state-listed endangered and threatened species under authority of the Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act (NESCA) (Neb. Rev. Stat. § 37-801 to 37-814). Pursuant to §37-807 (3)(c) of NESCA, **all state agencies shall, in consultation with the Commission, ensure projects they authorize (i.e., issue a permit for), fund or carry out do not jeopardize the continued existence of state-listed endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or modification of habitat of such species which is determined by the Commission to be critical. If a proposed project may affect state-listed species or designated critical habitat, further consultation with the Commission is required.**

Informal consultation pursuant to NESCA can be completed by using the Conservation and Environmental Review Tool (CERT). The CERT analyzes the project type and location, and based on the analysis, provides information about potential impacts to listed species, habitat questions and/or conservation conditions.

- If project proponent agrees to implement conservation conditions, as outlined in the report and applicable to the project type, then this document serves as documentation of consultation with the Commission and the following actions can be taken to move forward with the project:
 - Sign the report in the designated areas, and
 - Upload the signed and dated report into the project within CERT, and
 - Change the edit status to Final from Draft status.
- When these actions are completed, no additional coordination (i.e., contacting the Commission) is required.
- If the report indicates further consultation is required in the Overall Results section on the following page and/or conservation conditions cannot be met, then the following actions must be taken:
 - Project proponent is required to contact and consult with the Commission. Contact information can be found under the Additional Considerations section.

Review the Overall Results section on the following page for further instructions.

Disclaimer

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has responsibility for conservation and management of fish and wildlife resources for the benefit of the American public under the following authorities: 1) Endangered Species Act; 2) Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act; 3) Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act; and 4) Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

It is recommended that a project start with requesting an Official Species List via the Information for Planning and Consultation ([IPaC Tool](#)), to begin informal consultation with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

The information generated in a CERT Environmental Review Report DOES NOT satisfy consultation obligations between the lead federal agency and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pursuant to the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

For the purposes of ESA, the information in this report should be considered as technical assistance, and does not serve as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's concurrence letter, even if the user signs and agrees to implement conservation conditions in order to satisfy consultation requirements of NESCA.

Review the Additional Considerations section for further information.

Overall Results

The following result is based on a detailed analysis of your project.

- The project may have potential impacts on state-listed species. More information is needed, please answer the questions under the Question and Conservation Conditions section. If conservation conditions are required, review the Conservation Conditions Agreement section. Additional consultation with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission may or may not be required; please review all the information provided in this document.

Questions and Conservation Conditions

Northern Long-eared Bat

This project is within the range of the state and federally listed endangered Northern long-eared bat (NLEB) (*Myotis septentrionalis*).

Suitable summer roosting habitat for NLEB consist of forests or woodlots which contain suitable roost trees. In Nebraska, suitable roost trees consist of deciduous and/or pine live or dead trees or snags that are greater than or equal to 3 dbh (diameter at breast height) that exhibit peeling bark or have cracks, crevices or cavities. Linear features such as fencerows, riparian forests, and other wooded corridors are suitable for NLEB if they contain potential roost trees. 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.

NLEB 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 when they are within 1000 feet of suitable forested habitat (see above).

Examples of **UN-SUITABLE** habitat for the NLEB include:

- 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) – but note that NLEBs sometimes use relatively extensive forested natural areas within urban areas for summer roosting habitat;
- A pure stand of less than 3-inch dbh trees that are not mixed with larger trees.

Habitat Questions for Northern Long-eared Bat:

Is suitable summer habitat, as defined above, located within 1000 feet of the project activities?

☐ Unknown.

☒ No. Conservation measures are not needed for this species unless otherwise indicated. **Additional habitat questions for this species are not applicable if suitable habitat is not present.**

☐ Yes. The following conservation measures must be implemented in order to avoid adverse impacts on Northern long-eared bat.

NLEB CM-2: No removal of suitable trees or roosting structures between May 15 and July 31 (maternity roosting season).

Does the action include temporary or permanent lighting of roadways, facilities, and/or parking lots?

☐ No. Lighting conservation measures are NOT APPLICABLE.

☐ Yes. The following lighting conservation measure must be implemented:

NLEB CM-7 Use downward-facing, full cut-off lens lights* (with same intensity or less for replacement lighting) when installing new or replacing existing permanent lights.

**Full cut-off lens lights are fixtures or luminaires constructed and installed in such a manner that all light emitted from the luminaire, either directly from the lamp or a diffusing element, or indirectly by reflection or refraction from any part of the fixture, is protected below the horizontal plane through the fixture's lowest light-emitting part.*


Conservation Measures Agreement

Based on the information contained in the report, follow the instructions for A, B or C below.

A) If one or more of the habitat questions were answered with "Yes", insert an "X" for one of the two Options below:

☒ **Option 1.** For all species for which there is habitat present (as indicated by checking "Yes" to a habitat question) I understand and agree to implement and/or incorporate the conservation measures for those species as indicated. By agreeing to implement and/or incorporate the conservation measures for those species as indicated, no further consultation with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is required.

Sign and date on the line below, and also sign and date the Certification section. Submit a copy of the signed and dated (i.e. certified) report with any type of permit/application required for the project.



Applicant/project proponent signature

December 11, 2024

Date

☐ **Option 2.** I have concerns regarding one or more of the conservation measures. Sign the Certification section below. When submitting the project as "Final" in CERT, please attach a separate document explaining your concerns with the conservation measures and why they cannot be implemented. Then, contact the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for further information.

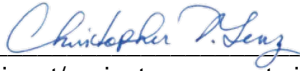
B) If one or more habitat questions were answered with "Unknown" then leave your project as "Draft" and contact the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for more information. Once your concerns are addressed with the Commission, adjust your answer to "Yes" or "No", sign and date under the Certification section, upload the report using the File Attachments feature and change the Edit Status to "Final".

C) If ALL the habitat questions were answered "No" then sign the Certification section below and submit the project as "Final" in CERT. Once these steps are completed, no additional correspondence with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is required. Submit a copy of the signed report with any type of permit/application needed for the project.

Additional coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may be necessary depending on the determination made by the lead federal agency pursuant to their obligations under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Certification

I certify that ALL the project information in this report (including project location, project size/configuration, project type, project activities, answers to questions) is true, accurate and complete. If the project type, activities, location, size, or configuration of the project change; if a species listing status is reclassified; if a new species is listed; or if any of the answers to any questions asked in this report change, then this document is no longer valid, and re-consultation with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is required.



Applicant/project proponent signature

December 11, 2024

Date

Additional Considerations

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

Environmental Review Team
2200 North 33 Street
Lincoln, NE 68503
Phone: (402) 471-5423
Email: ngpc.envreview@nebraska.gov

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Nebraska Ecological Services
9325 South Alda Road
Wood River, NE 68883
Phone: (308) 382-6468
Email: nebraskaes@fws.gov

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Omaha Regulatory Office
8901 South 154 Street
Omaha, NE 68138
Phone: (402) 896-0896
Email: NE404Reg@usace.army.mil

The following federal laws contribute to the conservation and management of fish and wildlife resources in the United States: Endangered Species Act, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Clean Water Act, and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.

Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act

The federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (Eagle Act) (16 U.S.C. 668-668c) provides for the protection of the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*). Under the Eagle Act, "take" of eagles, their parts, nests or eggs is prohibited. Disturbance resulting in injury to an eagle or a decrease in productivity or nest abandonment by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior is a form of "take."

Nebraska Specific Information

Bald eagles use mature, forested riparian areas near rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands and occur along all the major river systems in Nebraska. The bald eagle southward migration begins as early as October and the wintering period extends from December-March. The golden eagle is found in arid open country with grassland for foraging in western Nebraska and usually near buttes or canyons which serve as nesting sites. Golden eagles are often a permanent resident in the Pine Ridge area of Nebraska. Additionally, many bald and golden eagles nest in Nebraska from mid-February through mid-July. Disturbances within 0.5-miles of an active nest or within line-of-sight of the nest could cause adult eagles to discontinue nest building or to abandon eggs. Both bald and golden eagles frequent river systems in Nebraska during the winter where open water and forested corridors provide feeding, perching, and roosting habitats, respectively. The frequency and duration of eagle use of these habitats in the winter depends upon ice and weather conditions. Human disturbances and loss of wintering habitat can cause undue stress leading to cessation of feeding and failure to meet winter thermoregulatory requirements. These affects can reduce the carrying capacity of preferred wintering habitat and reproductive success for the species.

To comply with the Eagle Act, it is recommended that the project proponent determine if the proposed project would impact bald or golden eagles or their habitats. This can be done by conducting a habitat assessment, surveying nesting habitat for active and inactive nests, and surveying potential winter roosting habitat to determine if it is being used by eagles. The area to be surveyed is dependent on the type of project; however for most projects we recommend surveying the project area and a ½ mile buffer around the project area. If it is determined that either species could be affected by the proposed project, the Commission recommends that the project proponent notify the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission as well as the Nebraska Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for recommendations to avoid "take" of bald and golden eagles.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Nebraska Revised Statute §37-540

We recommend the project proponent comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703-712: Ch. 128 as *amended*) (MBTA). The project proponent should also comply with Nebraska Revised Statute §37-540, which prohibits take and destruction of nests or eggs of protected birds (as defined in Nebraska Revised Statute §37-237.01). Construction activities in grassland, wetland, stream, woodland, and river bank habitats that would result in impacts on birds, their nests or eggs protected under these laws should be avoided. Although the provisions of these laws are applicable year-round, most migratory bird nesting activity in Nebraska occurs during the period of April 1 to July 15. However, some migratory birds are known to nest outside of the aforementioned primary nesting season period. For example, raptors can be expected to nest in woodland habitats during February 1 through July 15, whereas sedge wrens, which occur in some wetland habitats, normally nest from July 15 to September 10. If development in this area is planned to occur during the primary nesting season or at any other time which may result in impacts to birds, their nests or eggs protected under these laws, we request that the project proponent arrange to have a qualified biologist conduct a field survey of the affected habitats to determine the absence or presence of nesting migratory birds. If a field survey identifies the existence of one or more active bird nests that cannot be avoided by the planned construction activities, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the Nebraska Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should be contacted immediately. For more information on avoiding impacts to migratory birds, their nests and eggs, or to report active bird nests that cannot be avoided by planned construction activities, please contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (contact information within report). Adherence to these guidelines will help avoid unnecessary impacts on migratory birds.

Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act

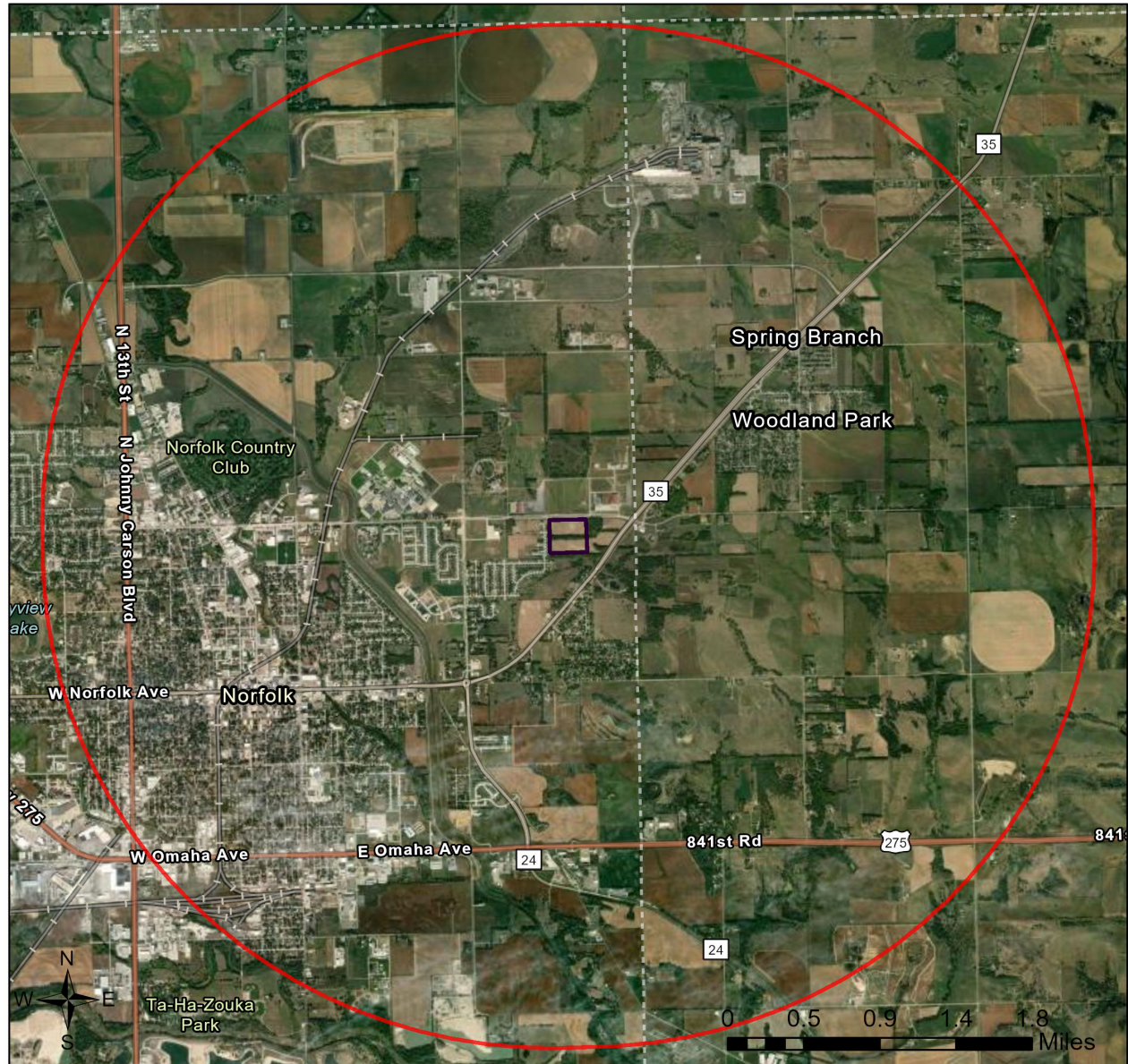
The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) requires consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and the State fish and wildlife agency (i.e., Nebraska Game and Parks Commission) for the purpose of preventing loss of and damage to fish and wildlife resources in the planning, implementation, and operation of federal and federally funded, permitted, or licensed water resource development projects. This statute requires that federal agencies take into consideration the effect that the water related project would have on fish and wildlife resources, to take action to prevent loss or damage to these resources, and to provide for the development and improvement of these resources. The comments in this letter are provided as technical assistance only and are not the document required of the Secretary of the Interior pursuant to Section 2(b) of FWCA on any required federal environmental review or permit. This technical assistance is valid only for the described conditions and will have to be revised if significant environmental changes or changes in the proposed project take place. In order to determine whether the effects to fish and wildlife resources from the proposed project are being considered under FWCA, the lead federal agency must notify the Service in writing of how the comments and recommendations in this technical assistance letter are being considered into the proposed project.

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act

In general, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have concerns for impacts to wetlands, streams and riparian habitats. We recommend that impacts to wetlands, streams, and associated riparian corridors be avoided and minimized, and that any unavoidable impacts to these habitats be mitigated. If any fill materials will be placed into waterways or wetlands, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory Office in Omaha should be contacted to determine if a 404 permit is needed.

Benjamin Villas

Aerial Image Basemap With Locator Map



- 3-mile Information Buffer Boundary
- Project Review Boundary
- Project Boundary

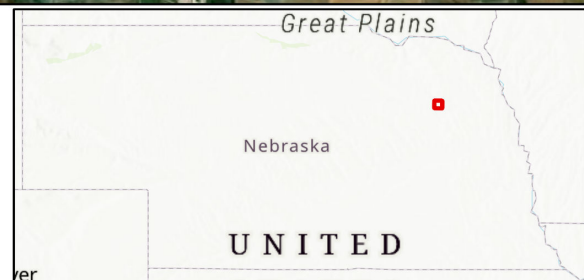
Project Size (acres): 27.91

Lat/Long (DD): 42.0458 / -97.3758

County(s): Madison

BUL(s): Elkhorn Confluence

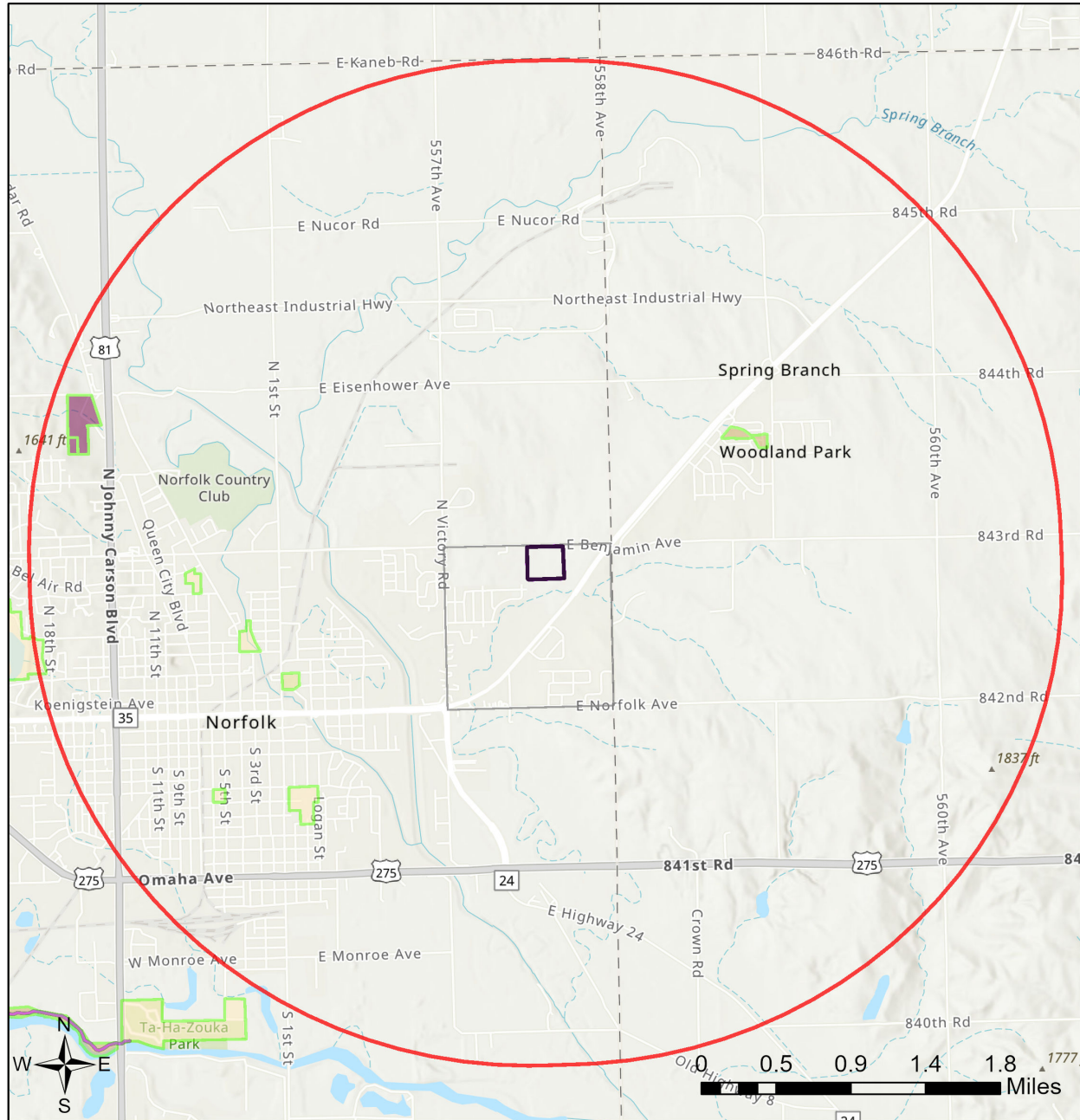
Township/Range/Section(s): T24R01WS24



Nebraska Game & Parks Commission, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA, USFWS
 Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, USFWS
 Earthstar Geographics

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Topographic Basemap With Sections and Protected Areas





- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| PAD (USGS) - boundaries | Designation | NGPC Properties |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Regional Agency | Sections |
| U.S. Forest Service | State (NGPC) | 3-mile Information Buffer Boundary |
| National Park Service | Other State | Project Review Boundary |
| Bureau of Reclamation | NGO or Private | Project Boundary |
| | Other (City, Unknown) | |

Nebraska Game & Parks Commission, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA, USFWS
Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS

Benjamin Villas

Web Map As Submitted By User



-  Project Review Boundary
-  Project Boundary

Maxar

Table 1
Protected Areas in Immediate Vicinity of Project (project review area)

This table has no results.

Table 2
Documented Occurrences in Immediate Vicinity of Project (project review area):
Natural communities and selected special areas

Name	Other Information	SRank	GRank
Elkhorn Confluence Biologically Unique Landscape	Link to BUL document		

Table 3
Regional Documented Occurrences of Species within 1 Mile of Project Review Area:
Tier 1 and 2 at-risk species and additional S1-S3 plants

Scientific Name	Common Name	USFWS	State	SGCN	SRank	GRank	Taxonomic Group
Boloria selene nebraskensis	Nebraska Fritillary			Tier 1	SNR	G5T3T4	Invertebrate Animal - Butterflies and Skippers
Catocala nuptialis	Married Underwing			Tier 1	SNR	G3	Invertebrate Animal - Underwing Moths
Charadrius melodus	Piping Plover	T	T	Tier 1	S2	G3	Vertebrate Animal - Birds
Emydoidea blandingii	Blanding's Turtle		NC	Tier 1	S4	G4	Vertebrate Animal - Turtles
Euphyes bimacula illinois	Two-spotted Skipper			Tier 1	S3	G4T1T2	Invertebrate Animal - Butterflies and Skippers
Euphyes conspicua buchholzi	Bucholz Black Dash			Tier 1	S1	G4G5T1	Invertebrate Animal - Butterflies and Skippers
Euphyes dion	Dion Skipper			Tier 2	S2	G5	Invertebrate Animal - Butterflies and Skippers
Fundulus sciadicus	Plains Topminnow			Tier 1	S3	G4	Vertebrate Animal - Fishes
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Bald Eagle			Tier 2	S3	G5	Vertebrate Animal - Birds
Hybognathus argyritis	Western Silvery Minnow			Tier 1	S2	G4	Vertebrate Animal - Fishes
Hybognathus placitus	Plains Minnow			Tier 1	S2	G4	Vertebrate Animal - Fishes
Lampsilis cardium	Plain Pocketbook			Tier 1	S2	G5	Invertebrate Animal - Freshwater Mussels
Luxilus cornutus	Common Shiner			Tier 2	S2	G5	Vertebrate Animal - Fishes
Macrhybopsis hyostoma	Shoal Chub			Tier 2	S3	G5	Vertebrate Animal - Fishes
Macrhybopsis storeriana	Silver Chub			Tier 2	S2	G5	Vertebrate Animal - Fishes

Table 3
Regional Documented Occurrences of Species within 1 Mile of Project Review Area:
Tier 1 and 2 at-risk species and additional S1-S3 plants

Scientific Name	Common Name	USFWS	State	SGCN	SRank	GRank	Taxonomic Group
<i>Perognathus flavescens</i> <i>perniger</i>	Plains Pocket Mouse			Tier 1	SNR	G5TNR	Vertebrate Animal - Mammals
<i>Pimephales notatus</i>	Bluntnose Minnow			Tier 2	S3	G5	Vertebrate Animal - Fishes
<i>Platygobio gracilis</i>	Flathead Chub			Tier 1	S2	G5	Vertebrate Animal - Fishes
<i>Spinus pinus</i>	Pine Siskin			Tier 2	S3	G5	Vertebrate Animal - Birds
<i>Sternula antillarum</i> <i>athalassos</i>	Interior Least Tern		E	Tier 1	S2	G4T3Q	Vertebrate Animal - Birds

Table 4
Potential Occurrences in Immediate Vicinity of Project (project review area):
Special status species (Tier 1 at-risk species and Bald and Golden Eagle), based on models or range maps

Scientific Name	Common Name	Data Type	USFWS	State	SGCN	SRank	GRank	Taxonomic Group
<i>Argynnis idalia</i>	Regal Fritillary	Range			Tier 1	S3	G3?	
<i>Asio flammeus</i>	Short-eared Owl	Range			Tier 1	S2	G5	
<i>Atrytone arogos iowa</i>	Iowa Skipper	Range			Tier 1	S1	G2G3T2T3	
<i>Boloria myrina</i> <i>nebraskensis</i>	Nebraska Fritillary	Range			Tier 1	SNR	G5?T3T4	
<i>Calidris subruficollis</i>	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Range			Tier 1	S2N	G4	
<i>Catocala nuptialis</i>	Married Underwing	Range			Tier 1	SNR	G3	
<i>Catocala whitneyi</i>	Whitney Underwing	Range			Tier 1	S1	G2G3	
<i>Cicindela limbata limbata</i>	Sandy Tiger Beetle	Range			Tier 1	S4	G5T3T4	
<i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i>	Black-billed Cuckoo	Range			Tier 1	S3	G5	
<i>Cypridium candidum</i>	Small White Lady's Slipper	Range		T	Tier 1	S1	G4	
<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	Monarch	Range			Tier 1	S2	G4	
<i>Eleocharis wolfii</i>	Wolf's Spikerush	Range			Tier 1	S4	G3G5	
<i>Ellipsoptera lepida</i>	Ghost Tiger Beetle	Range			Tier 1	S2	G3	
<i>Emydoidea blandingii</i>	Blanding's Turtle	Range			Tier 1	S4	G4	
<i>Euphyes bimacula illinois</i>	Two-spotted Skipper	Range			Tier 1	S3	G4T1T2	

Table 4
Potential Occurrences in Immediate Vicinity of Project (project review area):
Special status species (Tier 1 at-risk species and Bald and Golden Eagle), based on models or range maps

Scientific Name	Common Name	Data Type	USFWS	State	SGCN	SRank	GRank	Taxonomic Group
Euphyes conspicua buchholzi	Bucholz Black Dash	Range			Tier 1	S1	G4G5T1	
Fundulus sciadicus	Plains Topminnow	Range			Tier 1	S3	G4	
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Bald Eagle	Range			Tier 2	S3	G5	
Hesperia ottoe	Ottoe Skipper	Range			Tier 1	S2	G3	
Hybognathus argyritis	Western Silvery Minnow	Range			Tier 1	S2	G4	
Hybognathus placitus	Plains Minnow	Range			Tier 1	S2	G4	
Lanius ludovicianus	Loggerhead Shrike	Range			Tier 1	S3	G4	
Lasiurus borealis	Eastern Red Bat	Range			Tier 1	S3	G3G4	
Lasiurus cinereus	Hoary Bat	Range			Tier 1	S3	G3G4	
Lethe eurydice fumosus	Smoky-eyed Brown	Range			Tier 1	S3	G5T3T4	
Myotis septentrionalis	Northern Long-eared Myotis	Range	E	E	Tier 1	S1S2	G2G3	
Perimyotis subflavus	Tricolored Bat	Range			Tier 1	S3	G3G4	
Perognathus flavescens perniger	Plains Pocket Mouse	Range			Tier 1	SNR	G5TNR	
Pica hudsonia	Black-billed Magpie	Range			Tier 1	S2	G5	
Platanthera praeclara	Western Prairie Fringed Orchid	Range	T	T	Tier 1	S2	G3	