

Monitoring WRP Easements 2013



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and Carol Strojny

WRP Monitoring 2013

2013 MINNESOTA ANNUAL MONITORING WORKSHEET

Select the Appropriate Program: County:

Landowner(s): Phone:

NEST Agreement & Parcel Number:

Other identifying name or number (Legacy #):

Monitoring Date:

Monitor(s): Affiliation if other than NRCS:

The purpose of monitoring is to ensure compliance with program policy, the terms of easement deeds, evaluate restoration progress, determine restoration repairs or enhancements needed to ensure maximum environmental benefits, and to maintain contact with landowners or partners. Staff with applicable expertise should collect the monitoring information. Partners with the appropriate technical expertise may be authorized to conduct monitoring reviews. The landowner or decision maker should be offered the opportunity to participate in monitoring reviews.

Photographs from designated points are required when conducting onsite monitoring.

METHODS OF MONITORING

<input type="checkbox"/> Ownership Review	Landowner contact and answer question 1 of this worksheet. Only applicable in the year immediately following onsite monitoring that did not require corrective actions or had no violations.
<input type="checkbox"/> Offsite	A review of the most recent aerial photography and answer questions 1, 3 and 4 of this worksheet.
<input type="checkbox"/> Summary Review	At a minimum; a cursory onsite visit, a landowner contact and answer questions 1, 2, 3 and 4 of this worksheet. Only applicable during the pre-restoration phase.
<input type="checkbox"/> Onsite	At a minimum; landowner contact, a review of available aerial photography and answer all questions on this worksheet.

LANDOWNER INFORMATION

1. A) Landowner Contact (attempted) – Date: Contact Method:
- B) Was current land ownership verified? Yes No
If Yes, Date of verification Verified by:
- C) If there is a new landowner, were they notified of the easement and have records been updated?
 Yes No N/A (If yes, onsite monitoring is required for the next 2 years)
- New landowner name(s) (if applicable):
- D) Follow up requested by landowner: Yes No
- Comments:
2. Was the landowner or decision maker present during the review? Yes No

2013 Minnesota NRCS Easement Monitoring Worksheet Guidance

Introduction

This document provides guidance and instructions for completing the Annual Monitoring Worksheet. The Easement Common Provisions Manual (440-CPM-Part 527) is the source for overarching monitoring policy that applies to all easement programs. See the individual easement deeds for specific deed restrictions; this is particularly important for pre-1997 WRP or EWRP easements.

The specific worksheet questions to be completed in a given year will vary based on the monitoring method: on-site or summary review.



Review of an upland prairie planting.

Preparation

For any onsite visit, preparation is important to ensure that the monitoring review can be accomplished as efficiently as possible. Pre-visit preparation includes:

- notification of the visit to the landowner;
- reviewing the most recent aerial photography;
- reviewing any useful plat maps, topographic maps, site maps;
- reviewing a copy of the restoration plan, field boundaries, and easement boundary;
- reviewing a copy of the management plan;
- reviewing a copy of any compatible use authorizations;
- reviewing a copy of the most recent monitoring report;
- a camera and a listing of any predetermined photo points if available;
- a GPS unit to record field data and verify locations or markers.

Completing the Annual Monitoring Worksheet

General Site Information

Select the Appropriate Program: drop down list of WRP, EWRP, HFRP, GRP, FRPP, EWRP-FPE

Enter County Name

Prior to Site Visit

- ✓ Review site background information
- ✓ Review air photo and previous monitoring reports
- ✓ Prepare equipment
- ✓ Notify Landowner of site visit
- ✓ Complete General Site information and Landowner verification sections on worksheet

Prior to Site Visit

Review Conservation Plan

WRP Attachment # 1

WRP Conservation Plan Attachment				Page	of
Easement Number	Acres	22.1	Date	10/5/2012	Conservationist
County	Modification Number		Legal Description		

Field	Acres	Practice Code	Prior Wetland Class (Use FSA Designation)	Restored Wetland Class (Use Cowardin Labels)	Restoration Description (Optional) Modification Basis (for non-Toolkit generated Modifications)
1	10.4	657	NI	PEMC	Restore wetland by installing a structure with natural regeneration of vegetation
2	8.4	643	NI	U	Restore Tallgrass Prairie by doing a permanent grass seeding
3	0.3	657	NI	PEMC	Existing wetland
4	0.2	657	NI	PEMC	Existing wetland
5	2.5	657	NI	PEMC	Restore wetland by installing a structure with natural regeneration of vegetation
6	0.3	657	NI	PEMC	Restore wetland by installing a structure with natural regeneration of vegetation

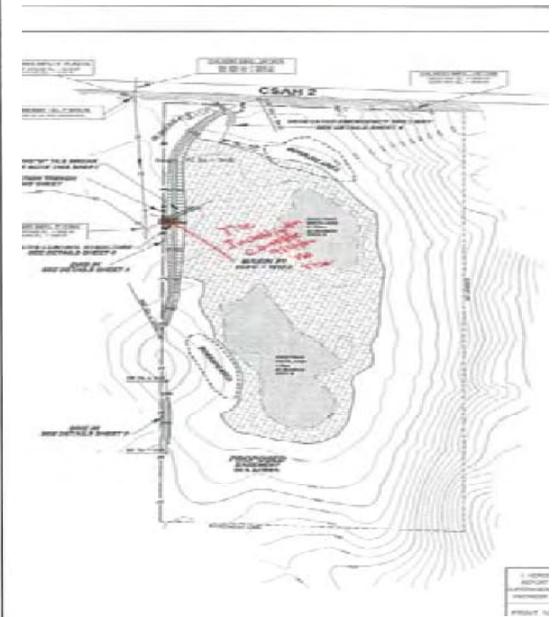
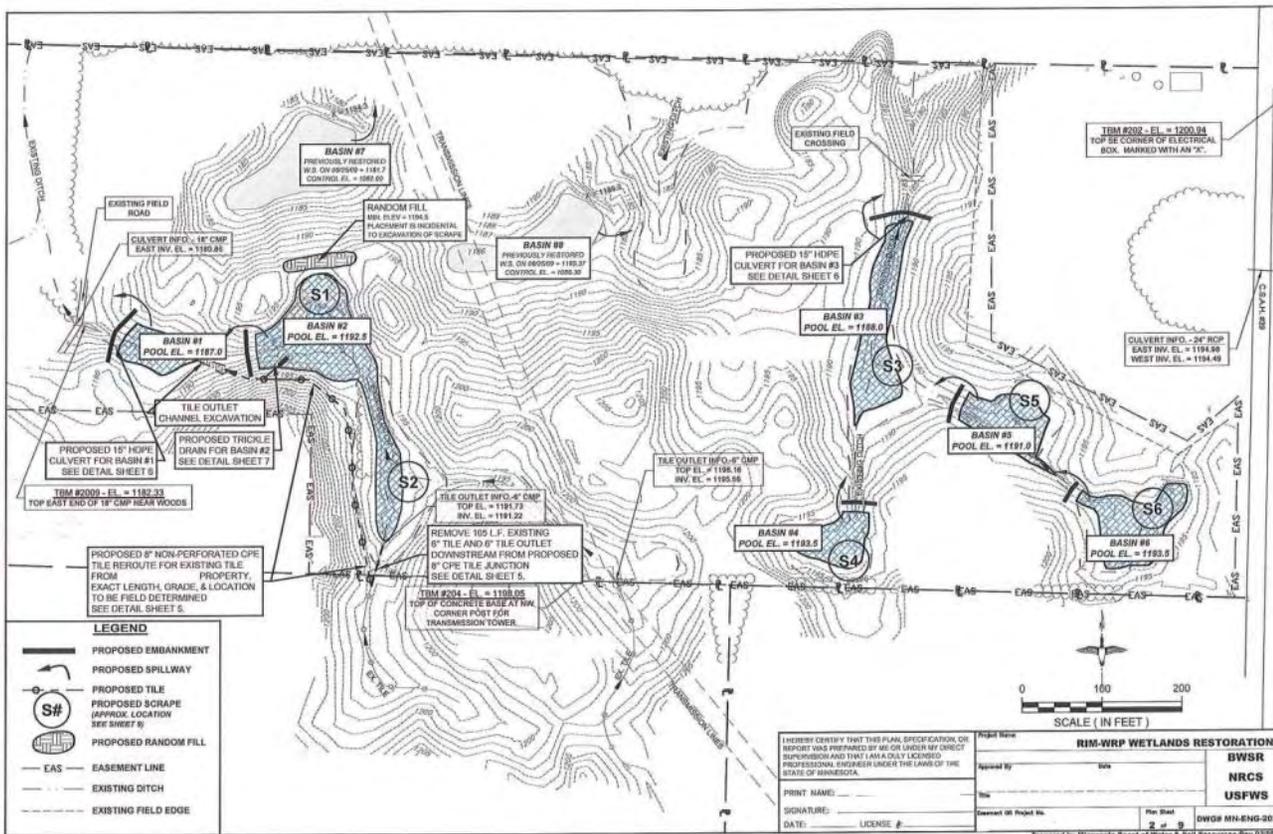
Prior to Site Visit

Review
Conservation
Plan MAP



Prior to Site Visit

Review engineering plans or “as-built” drawings



Prior to Site Visit

Determine if any current Compatible Use Authorizations (CUA's)



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Natural Resources Conservation Service
GRAZING
COMPATIBLE USE PERMIT FOR WRP EASEMENTS
(This permit is assignable to subsequent landowners)

Prior to Site Visit



General Site Information

2013 MINNESOTA ANNUAL MONITORING WORKSHEET

Select the Appropriate Program: County:

Landowner(s): Phone:

NEST Agreement & Parcel Number:

Other identifying name or number:

Monitoring Date:

Monitor(s): Affiliation if other than NRCS:

- Choose an item.
- WRP
- EWRP
- HFRP
- GRP
- FRPP
- EWPP-FPE

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1. Landowner Verification



LANDOWNER INFORMATION

1. A.) Landowner Contact (attempted) – Date: 7/1/2013 Contact Method: Phone

B.) Was current land ownership verified? Yes No

If Yes, Date of verification 7/1/2013 Verified by:

C.) If there is a new landowner, were they notified of the easement and have records been updated?
 Yes No N/A (If yes, onsite monitoring is required for the next 2 years)

New landowner name(s) (if applicable):

D.) Follow up requested by landowner: Yes No

Comments:

- Choose an item.
- Phone
 - Letter
 - Other
 - Deed
 - Remote (APH/tax layer)
 - Title Company Review

2. Was the landowner or decision maker present during the review? Yes No

Action Items

Action Items

This is a list of possible action items that can be taken to address concerns or violations discovered during the monitoring event. Use this list as a reference when answering the monitoring questions that ask for action items to be listed. Some of the action items listed are not applicable to all programs or all questions.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1- NRCS action needed (FA contract) | 6- Plan needs to be developed/updated |
| 2- NRCS Action needed (3 rd party contract) | 7- O&M plan needs to be developed/updated |
| 3- Entity action needed | 8- NRCS Enforcement action needed |
| 4- Landowner action needed | 9- Other |
| 5- CUA needed | |



3. Unauthorized Uses (UUs)

MONITORING QUESTIONS

3. A.) Are the terms and conditions of the easement deed being met? (e.g. no encroachment, dumping, unauthorized uses, etc.) See question # 14 for noxious weed issues.

Yes No

If No, select observed unauthorized uses or potential violations:

* Indicates condition may be resolved with a compatible use permit

- Encroachment
- Cropping*
- Food Plots*
- Haying/Mowing*
- Tree/Shrub*
- Timber Harvest/Cutting*
- Burning*
- Trails*
- Road
- Dumping
- Parked Equipment

- Structures
- Grazing*
- Livestock*
- Aquaculture*
- Commercial Seed Production
- Energy Production
- Pest Management*
- Installation/Maintenance of Acceptable Structures*
- Maintenance of Private Drainage*

- Infrastructure Projects (phone gas etc.)*
- Mining (includes peat/gravel)
- Impervious Surfaces
- Illegal Activities
- Carbon Sequestration Activities
- Hydrology alteration
- Unauthorized Easement Subdivision
- Other:

Description and field areas:

Unauthorized Uses



Which unauthorized use would you check on your worksheet for this scenario?

- a. Encroachment
- b. Cropping
- c. Both Encroachment and Cropping

ANSWER:



Which unauthorized use would you check on your worksheet for this scenario?

- a. Encroachment
- b. Cropping

c. Both Encroachment and Cropping

Unauthorized Uses



True or False?

Dumping of trash in the easement is ok as long as the landowner plans to burn it.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER



Dumping of trash in the easement is ok as long as the landowner plans to burn it.

a. True

b. False

Unauthorized Uses



Mowing

Unauthorized Uses



Haying

Unauthorized Uses



Unauthorized tree/shrub planting

Unauthorized Uses



Roads or Trails

Unauthorized Uses



Parked vehicles or equipment

Structures



Rustic, customary, and elevated

**Document all UUs with
photo and GPS location!**



True or False?

All unauthorized uses can be resolved with an approved compatible use authorization?



- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER

All unauthorized uses can be resolved with an approved compatible use authorization?



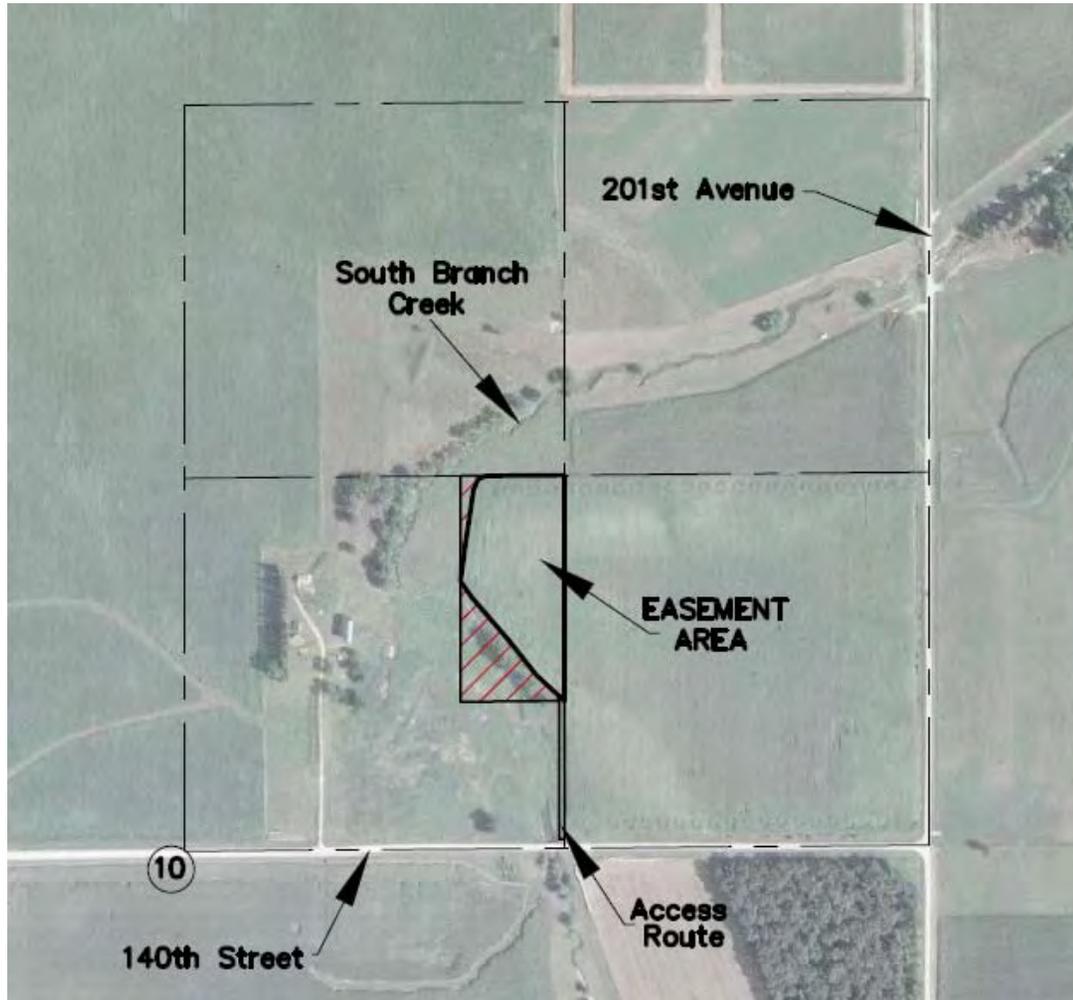
a. True

b. False

Compatible Use Authorizations (#5)



Access Routes (#6)



Boundary Posts (#7)



Boundary Posts

7. A.) Is the boundary clearly marked and identifiable? Yes No

If No, choose at least one item below:

Boundary not marked

Corner/high risk posts missing

One to several low risk posts missing

Other:

Posts present but knocked over - eastern boundary line adjacent to cropland.

B.) Are actions needed? Yes No

List action items and/or suggest corrective action needed:

--

Management Plan (#8)



Infrastructure Practices (#9)



Restoration Objectives (#10)



Poor establishment



Progressing as planned

Endangered Species (#11)



Acceptable Hydrology (#12)



Acceptable Vegetation (#13)





13. Is acceptable vegetation present? (Not applicable)

Yes No N/A

If No, select conditions observed:

- Annual or perennial weed cover is dominant
- Bare or sparsely vegetated areas
- Woody establishment in grasslands or prairie
- Invasive species management is needed & feasible
- Other:

Describe (list species, extent, location), list action items and/or suggest corrective action needed:

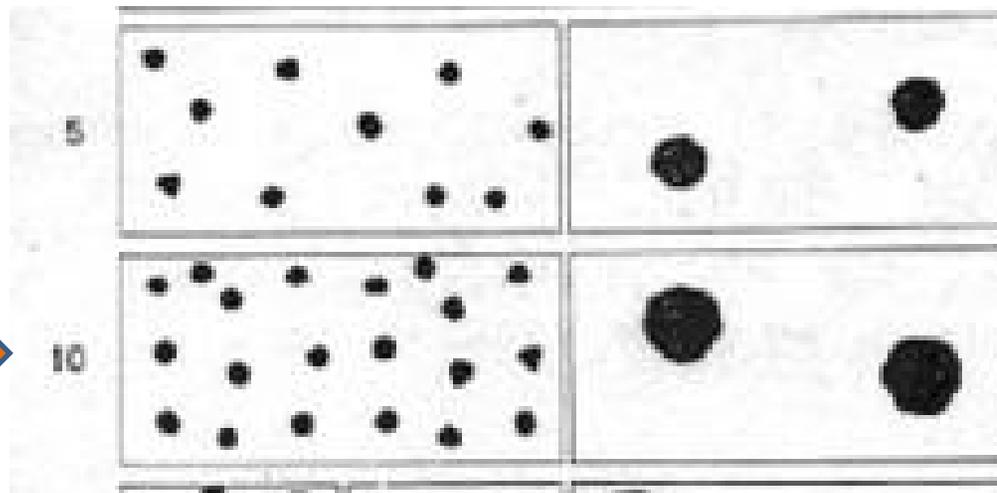
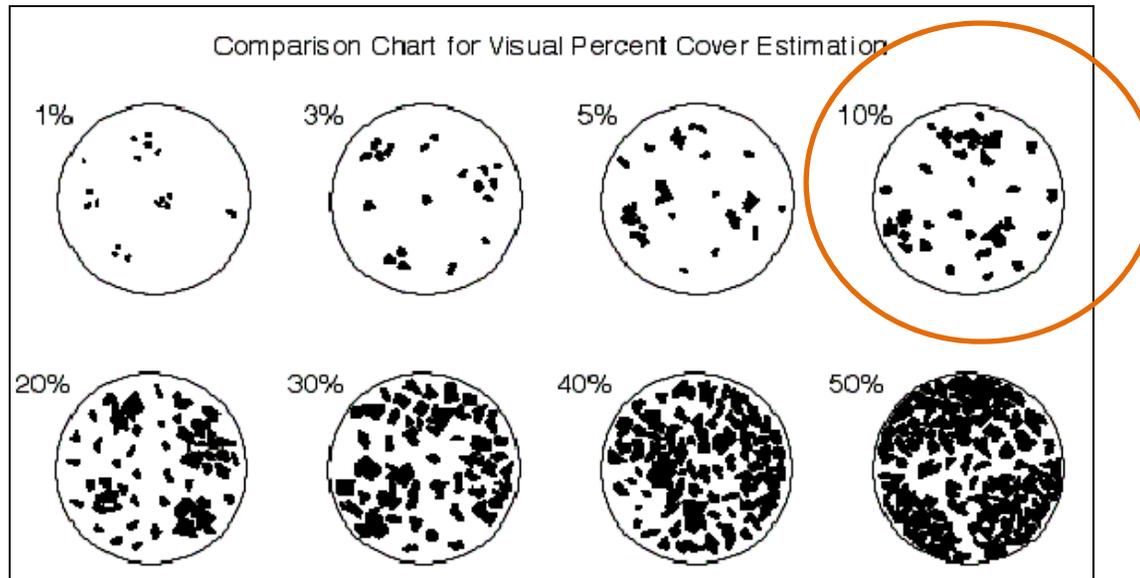
3 acre portion field 1. Mapped. Bare ground 30-40%; Weed cover 40-60% (lambquarters, clovers, mustards, witchgrass); <5% native cover. Recommend mowing and interseeding with native grasses and forbs. Photo ID: AOC sparse vegetation F1



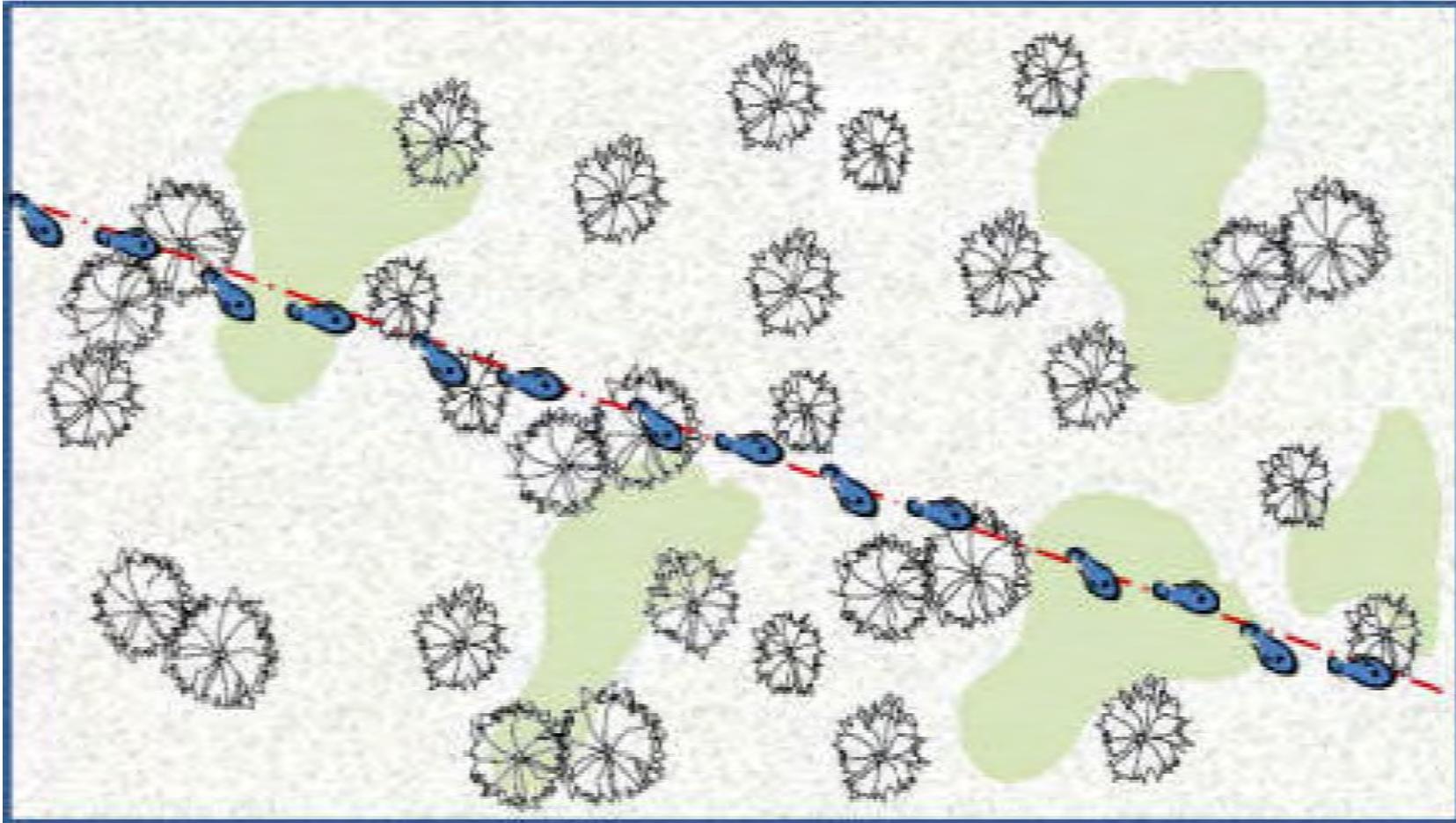
Noxious Weeds (#14)



Noxious Weeds (#14)



Noxious Weeds (#14)



Cultural Resources & Water Rights (#15 & 16)



Additional Areas of Concern (#17)



Enhancements (#18) or Landowner Comments (#19)



Additional Notes and Observations (#20)





Photo Documentation

Required Photo Types

- Landscape Photos (LS)
- Unauthorized Uses (UU)
- Area of Concern (AOC)



Landscape Photos (LS)

At least one representative photo per wetland/community type



LS Deep Marsh



LS Wet Meadow



LS Upland

UU Photo



UU Cropping

AOC Photo



AOC Woody Establishment

Photo Documentation Table

Record the following information for each photo taken:

Photo Type	Subject	Field	Azimuth	UTMx	UTMy	Comments
LS	Shallow Marsh	2	47	5062084	265428	
AOC	Erosion	5	n/a	5062061	265445	gullies
UU	Crop encroachment	6	n/a	5061828	265169	1.2 acres of corn
UU	Resolved	6	n/a	5061928	265182	equipment removed
AOC	Woody establishment	1	n/a	5062888	264321	on embankment

*When naming/labeling photos: Use first 3 columns of table.

Ex: AOC Erosion 5.jpg or LS Shallow Marsh 2.jpg

Mapping

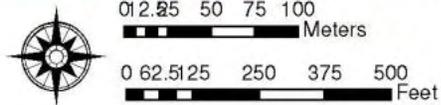
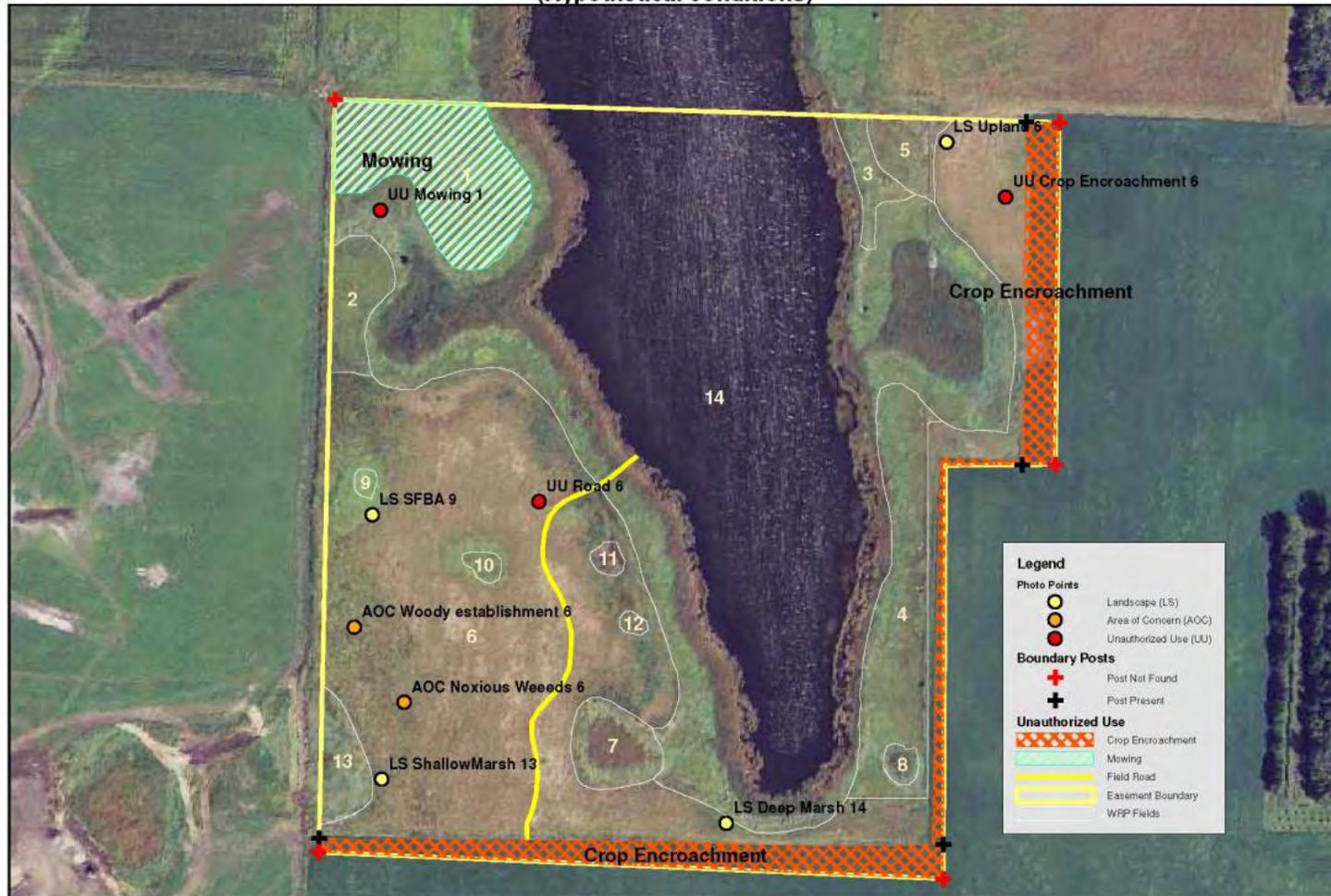
Required Monitoring Map Elements:

- Air photo with easement boundary
- NRCS field boundaries
- Photo point locations
- Unauthorized Uses (UUs)
- Areas of Concern (AOCs)
- Missing boundary posts
- Legend



Monitoring Map Example

WRP # 66-6322-#-####
 Some County, MN - 70.6 acres
 2013 Monitoring Map
 (Hypothetical conditions)



Field Checked By: Monitoring Specialist
 Date of Site Visit: July 4, 2013
 (Air Photo 2010)

QUESTIONS?

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