



Natural and Cultural Resource Inventory

A Supplement to Beyond Coulee Vision 2040—the Metropolitan
Transportation Plan for the La Crosse and La Crescent Area

Natural and Cultural Resource Inventory

A Supplement to *Beyond Coulee Vision 2040*

May 14, 2020



La Crosse Area Planning Committee

Metropolitan Planning Organization for the La Crosse, WI-La Crescent, MN Urbanized Area

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www.lapc.org

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Introduction

This document provides inventories of agricultural, water, natural, recreational, and cultural resources within the planning area. The purpose of these inventories is to provide a baseline of existing conditions for use during project scoping and environmental assessment as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and its state equivalents.

The MTP planning process considers the protection of agricultural, water, natural, recreational, and cultural resources by:

- ⇒ Providing an inventory of the resources considered under the NEPA process for use during the environmental consultation process.
- ⇒ Considering local, State, and Federal plans in the development of future land use scenarios and projections.
- ⇒ Considering all options to avoid and minimize resource impacts in traffic/land use modeling scenarios.
- ⇒ Identifying mitigation measures for alternatives used in traffic/land use modeling scenarios that cannot reasonably avoid or minimize impacts.
- ⇒ Ensuring mitigation measures identified for alternatives are consistent with the preferred means of mitigation identified by resource agencies.
- ⇒ Ensuring Plan recommendations look to preserve such key resources as our Legacy places and State Natural Areas.
- ⇒ Involving resource agencies at key times during the planning process.

The following sections on agricultural, water, natural and recreational, and cultural resources include inventories meant to 1) ensure resources plans are considered in the transportation planning process, and 2) provide spatial aids in the environmental consultation process. Each section also includes a general discussion of mitigation options that may be considered for proposed actions.

Agricultural Resources

Agricultural resources are protected by the Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981, by local agricultural preservation plans, and by local zoning regulations. The purpose of the Act is to “minimize the extent to which Federal programs contribute to the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses, and to assure that Federal programs are administered in a manner that, to the extent practicable, will be compatible with State, unit of local government, and private programs and policies to protect

farmland.” The Act is enforced by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)—a department of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

If a federally-funded project has the potential to convert important farmland to non-farm use, the NRCS must assess the level of impact proposed. The NRCS uses a land evaluation and site assessment (LESA) system to establish a farmland conversion impact rating score on proposed sites of federally-funded and assisted projects. This score is used as an indicator for the project sponsor to consider alternative sites if the potential adverse impacts on the farmland exceed the recommended allowable level.

Inventory

Agricultural Resource Plans

- ⇒ *La Crosse County Land and Water Resource Management Plan 2020-2029*—The purpose of this plan is to:
 - Identify and prioritize natural resources issues and concerns for La Crosse County;
 - Develop a coordinated effort to resolve those issues and concerns;
 - Provide guidance for cooperating agencies to assist in implementing the Plan;
 - Develop activities, goals, and objectives that give clear direction for implementation of the Plan; and,
 - Obtain financial assistance to implement the Land and Water Resource Management Plan.

The plan is required by Chapter 92 of the Wisconsin State Statutes. *Farmland Preservation Plan*—This Plan was created by ordinance in 2012 as part of the *La Crosse County, Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan, 2007-2027*. The purpose of this plan is to encourage the use of planning and farmland preservation tools to limit non-agricultural development in areas with favorable conditions for agricultural enterprises.

This plan is required by Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin State Statutes.

- ⇒ *Winona County Comprehensive Plan Update 2014* –Winona County does not have standalone farmland preservation plan; however, it adopted an Ag Preservation Ordinance in 1989 as based on the comprehensive plan current at that time. The existing comprehensive plan update addresses agriculture resources with the goal of preserving and promoting agriculture as a viable land use activity. To assist in preserving farmland, Winona County participates in the Minnesota Agricultural Land Preservation Program, Chapter 40A of the Minnesota Statutes. According to the statute, any county outside the Twin Cities metropolitan area may prepare a

proposed agricultural land preservation plan for review by the Commissioner of Agriculture. Counties adopting such a plan may offer restrictive covenants on qualifying land limiting its use to agriculture or forestry. In return, farmers receive tax credits, protection for normal agricultural practices, and other benefits. As of 2017 39,623 acres in Winona County are protected by agricultural preserves covenants. (Minnesota Dept. of Agriculture, Minnesota Agricultural Land Preservation Program Legislative Report, 2016 and 2017)

- ⇒ *Houston County Comprehensive Land Use Plan (1998 - reauthorized in 2008)*—Houston County does not have a standalone farmland preservation plan, but it does address farmland preservation in its comprehensive plan.

Data Inventory

The NRCS maintains a database of soil conditions for the United States. These data include a soil attribute describing the soil by its value as prime or important farmland: “all areas are prime farmland,” “prime farmland if drained,” and “farmland of statewide importance.” Prime farmland is defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as farmland that has the *best combination* of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and that is available for these uses. Farmland of statewide importance is land other than prime farmland that is of statewide or local importance in the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, or oilseed crops as determined by the appropriate State or local unit of government agency or agencies.

Of the 204,134 acres within the planning area, about 20.2 percent of the soils have conditions conducive for prime and important farmland:

- ⇒ All areas are prime farmland: 24,559 acres (12.0 percent).
- ⇒ Prime farmland if drained: 3,841 acres (1.9 percent).
- ⇒ Farmland of statewide importance: 12,750 acres (6.2 percent).

Of the 41,150 acres of prime and important farmland in the planning area, 40,052 acres or 97% reside in a natural or farmed state, and 92% of the natural or farmed acreage occurs in areas five-or-more acres in size.

The planning area includes only one designated agricultural enterprise area, the Halfway Creek Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA), which is an area where the local community has prioritized preservation of farmland and agricultural development. Designation of an AEA under the Working Lands Initiative is a tool that the local community can use to help promote the future viability of existing agricultural and agriculture-related land use. Once an area is officially designated as an AEA, eligible farmers owning land within the area may enter into a farmland preservation agreement with the state. This enables the landowners to receive tax credits in exchange for agreeing to keep their farm in agricultural use for at least 15 years.

Figure 1 illustrates the 1,621 acres of the Halfway Creek AEA in the towns of Holland and Onalaska. Roughly, 68% of the AEA is comprised of prime and important farmland.

Figure 2 illustrates the Halfway Creek AEA and all undeveloped prime and important farmland in the planning area.

Protection & Mitigation

As a means of protecting farmland, La Crosse County has prepared a Farmland Preservation Plan that recommends several “farmland protection tools”:

⇒ Educational Tools:

- Options Review for Developers. With this tool, the County could request that property owners wishing to urbanize their property would be required to meet with government institutions or conservation organizations to discuss farmland and open space preservation alternatives.

– Workshops.

⇒ Financing Tools:

- Use Value Assessment. This tool allows agricultural land to be assessed at a lower rate, thus lowering property taxes, by assessing for use rather than market value.
- Managed Forest Law. The goal of this program is to encourage long-term sound forest management. Land owners with parcels of at least 10 acres of forestland and who manage their land for forest products, water quality, wildlife habitat, and public recreation are eligible for a lower tax rate.

⇒ Planning Tools:

- Comprehensive Plans.
- Sewer Service Area Plans.

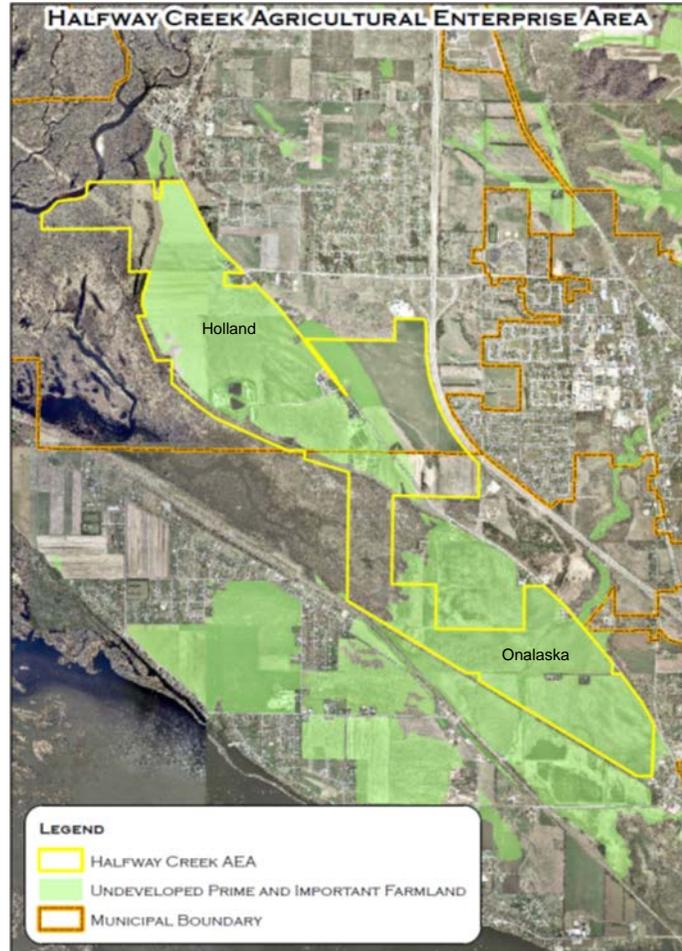


Figure 1: Halfway Creek Agricultural Enterprise Area.

⇒ Regulatory Tools:

- Transfer of Development Rights.
- Conservation Easement.
- Urban Growth Boundary.
- Conservation Subdivision Design.
- Infill Development and Increased Densities in Urban Areas.
- Traditional Agricultural Zoning.
- State-certified Farmland Zoning.

⇒ Right-to-Farm Laws. These laws support the economic vitality of farming by discouraging neighbors from filing lawsuits against agricultural operations and prohibiting local governments from enacting ordinances that would impose unreasonable restrictions on agriculture.

⇒ Voluntary Tools:

- Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) Program. This program was established as part of the 2009 Working Lands Initiative to help fund the acquisition of farmland in Wisconsin to permanently protect it from development.
- Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEA). An AEA is a contiguous land area devoted primarily to agricultural use and locally targeted for agricultural preservation and agribusiness development.
- The Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP). This program provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and ranchland in agricultural uses.

⇒ Bargain Sales and Property Donations. This tool has been used more in La Crosse County for preserving natural land than farmland. Property owners have deeded their land to the Mississippi Valley Conservancy for preservation and recreation.

The Minnesota Agricultural Land Preservation Program, Chapter 40A of the Minnesota Statutes, helps counties in Minnesota preserve agricultural land. Under this program, farmers may receive property tax credits for preserving their farms for long-term agricultural use. Eligible farmers must place a restrictive covenant on their land, limiting its use to agriculture or forestry.

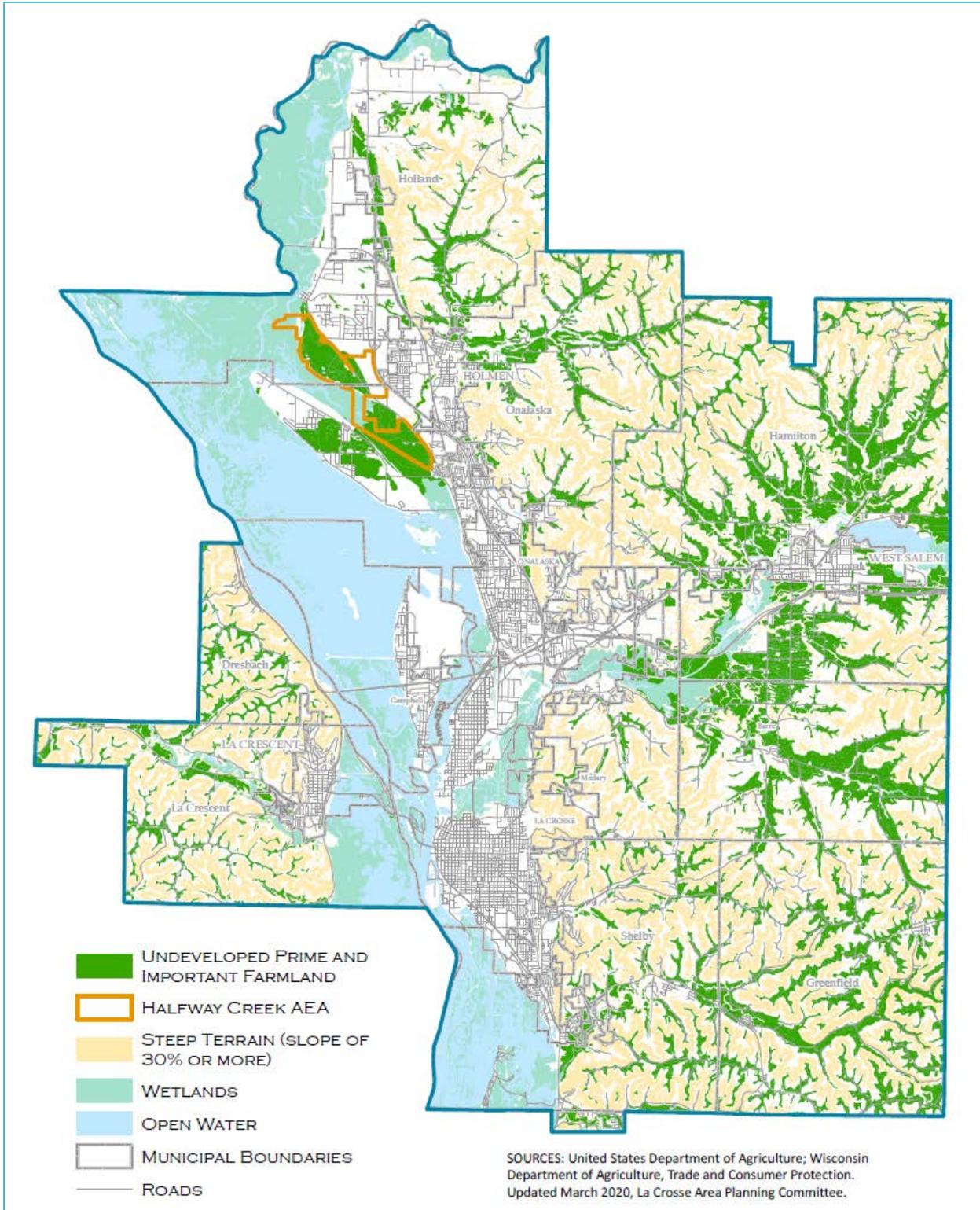


Figure 2: Undeveloped prime and important farmland. Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture; Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

Water Resources

Water resources are sources of water that are useful or potentially useful. They include surface waters, groundwater, wetlands, stormwater, and wastewater.

Inventory

Water Resource Plans

- ⇒ *La Crosse County Land and Water Resource Management Plan 2020-2029*—The purpose of this plan is to:
 - Identify and prioritize natural resources issues and concerns for La Crosse County;
 - Develop a coordinated effort to resolve those issues and concerns;
 - Provide guidance for cooperating agencies to assist in implementing the Plan;
 - Develop activities, goals, and objectives that give clear direction for implementation of the Plan; and,
 - Obtain financial assistance to implement the Land and Water Resource Management Plan.

This plan is required by Chapter 92 of the Wisconsin State Statutes.

- ⇒ *Houston County Comprehensive Water Plan (adopted 1/10/2017 – expires 12/31/2026)*—The purpose of this plan is to identify the primary water resource concerns of local citizens and outline strategies to address those concerns through sound public policy, coordinating implementation with cooperating agencies and partners.

This Plan is required by Chapter 103B of the Minnesota State Statutes.

- ⇒ *Extended Winona County Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan (January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2023)* —The purpose of this plan is to establish goals and a related set of objectives and actions to protect, enhance, and manage water resources within Winona County in cooperation with local, regional, and state partners.

This Plan is required by Chapter 103B of the Minnesota State Statutes.

- ⇒ *La Crosse Sewer Service Area Water Quality Management Plan 2013-2035*—The purpose of this plan is to indicate the most cost effective and environmentally sound waste water treatment configuration for the sewer service planning area, to protect surface and ground water from point and non-point sources of pollution, and to meet the requirements of the Clean Water Act and Wisconsin State Administrative Code Chapter NR 121.

- ⇒ *The State of the Bad Axe-La Crosse River Basin, 2002*—This report provides an overview of land and water resource quality, identifies challenges facing these resources, and outlines actions the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and its partners can take to protect and restore the natural resources throughout the basin.
- ⇒ *Coon Creek Watershed Plan, 2011*—The purpose of this plan is to analyze and evaluate the condition of the watershed, resulting in an overview of conditions and recommendations for resource management.

Data Inventory

Watersheds

Watersheds (or drainage basins) are land areas that catch rain or snow and drain to marshes, streams, rivers, lakes, or ground water. They are important because they provide us with drinking water, water to irrigate crops, and recreational opportunities, such as swimming and boating, to name a few.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) organizes watersheds of the United States into a hydrologic system that divides and subdivides the U.S. into successively smaller watersheds all called “hydrologic units.” Hydrologic units are used for collecting and organizing hydrologic data.

The hydrologic unit system divides and subdivides the United States into four nested levels of units. The largest units are called regions and represent either the drainage area of a major river, such as the Upper Mississippi River region, or the combined drainage areas of a series of rivers, such as the Souris-Red-Rainy region, which ultimately drain into Lake Winnipeg and Hudson Bay. The successively smaller units within regions are subregions, accounting units, and cataloging units. For descriptive purposes, we will refer to the largest watersheds as regions, the next largest or “subregions” as basins, and “accounting units” and “cataloging units” as watersheds.

As illustrated in Figure 3 Wisconsin lies within the Upper Mississippi and Great Lakes Regions; and Minnesota lies within the Upper Mississippi, the Great Lakes, and the Souris-Red-Rainy Regions. Wisconsin is divided into 24 basins, while Minnesota is divided into 10 basins. Some of the basins extend into neighboring states (Illinois, Iowa, and North and South Dakota) and Canada.

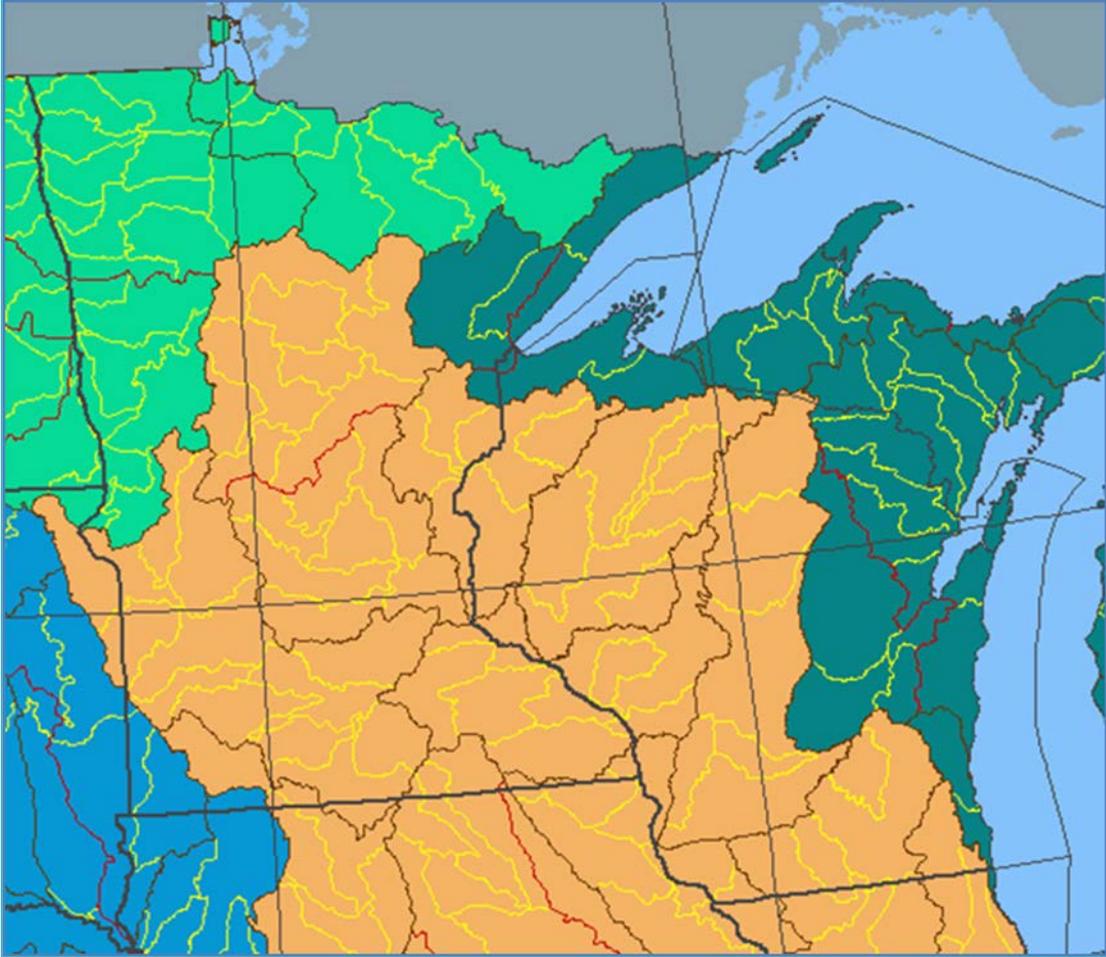


Figure 3: Hydrologic regions in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Source: www.nationalatlas.gov, USGS.

Figure 4 illustrates the basins—the Lower Mississippi River, the Black River, and the Bad Axe-La Crosse River—and watersheds—the Root River, the Mississippi River – La Crescent, the Little La Crosse River, the Lower Black River, the Lower La Crosse River, and the Coon Creek—of the Upper Mississippi River Region that influence our planning area.

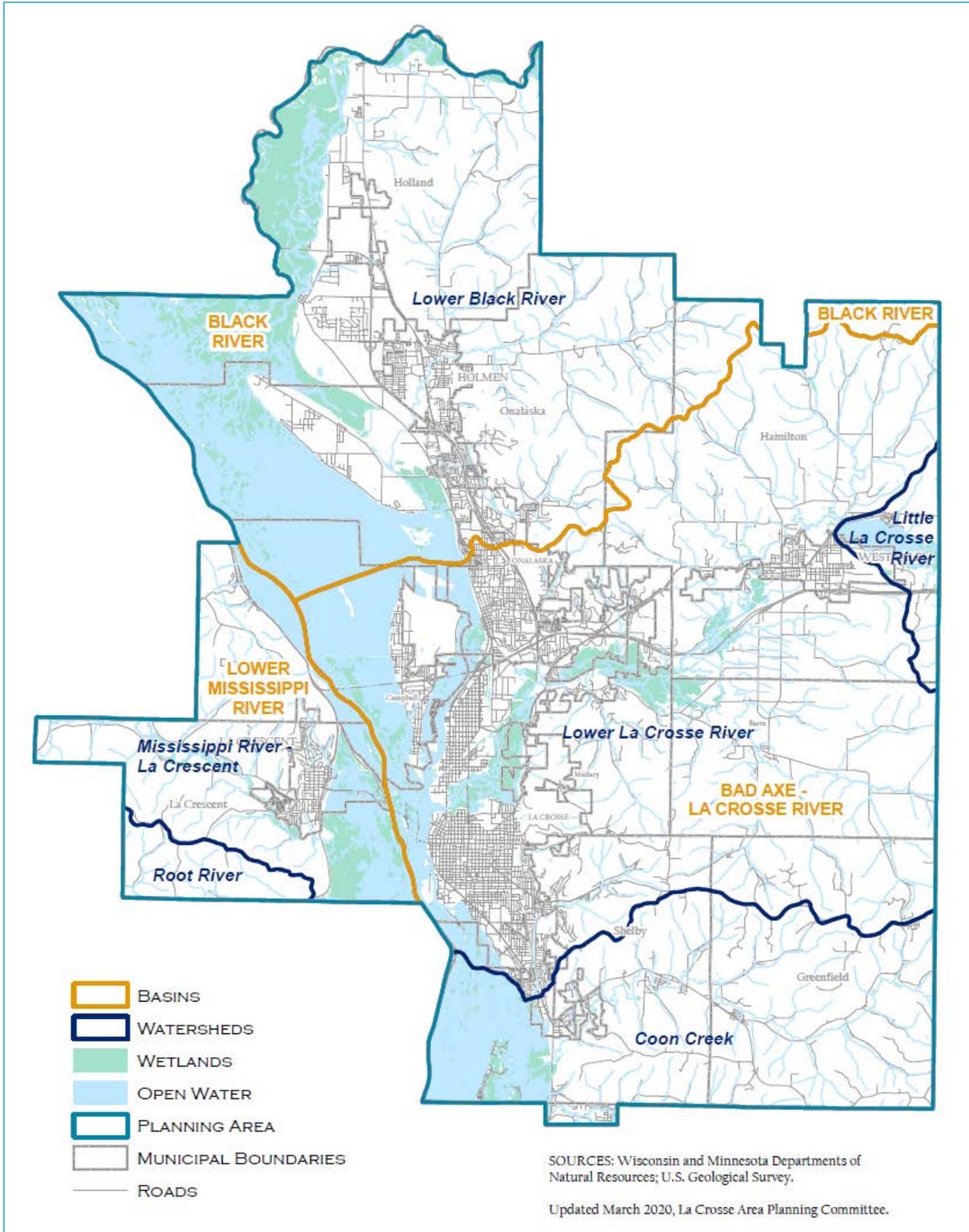


Figure 4: Basins and watersheds. Sources: Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources; U.S. Geological Survey.

Table 1 summarizes the relationships among the communities, watersheds, and basins.

Table 1: Basins and Watersheds of the LAPC Planning Area

Basin	Watershed	Communities
Lower Mississippi River	Mississippi River – La Crescent	Townships of Dresbach, La Crescent; city of La Crescent
	Root River	Township of La Crescent
Bad Axe – La Crosse River	Lower La Crosse River	Towns of Campbell, Hamilton, Medary, Barre, Shelby, Greenfield; village of West Salem; cities of La Crosse, Onalaska
	Little La Crosse River	Towns of Hamilton, Barre; village of West Salem,
	Coon Creek	Towns of Shelby, Greenfield, Bergen; city of La Crosse
Black River	Lower Black River	City of Onalaska; towns of Onalaska, Holmen, Holland, Campbell

Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters

Waters designated as Outstanding Resources Waters (ORWs) or Exceptional Resource Waters (ERWs) are surface waters that provide outstanding recreational opportunities, support valuable fisheries and wildlife habitat, have good water quality, and are not significantly impacted by human activities. ORWs, specifically, have excellent water quality and high-quality fisheries. They do not receive wastewater discharges nor will any be allowed unless the quality of the discharges meets or exceeds the quality of the receiving water. ORWs include national and state wild and scenic rivers and Class I (highest quality) trout streams. The LAPC planning area has no outstanding resource waters.

ERWs have excellent water quality and valued fisheries, but they may already receive wastewater discharges or may receive future discharges necessary to correct environmental or public health problems. The planning area has three exceptional resource waters: Bostwick Creek in the town of Barre; and Larson Coulee Creek and Hoyer Creek in the town of Hamilton (Figure 5).

Impaired Waters

The Clean Water Act requires states to adopt water quality standards to protect lakes, streams, and wetlands from pollution. The standards define how much of a pollutant (bacteria, nutrients, turbidity, mercury, etc.) can be in the water and still meet designated

uses, such as drinking water, fishing, and swimming. A water body is “impaired” if it fails to meet one or more water quality standards.

Water quality standards regulate how clean a water body should be. The standards consist of the water body’s designated uses, water quality criteria to protect those uses and determine if they are being attained, and antidegradation policies to help protect high quality water bodies. States designate uses based on their goals and expectations for their waters.

Table 2 summarizes and Figure 5 illustrates the region’s ORW and ERW and impaired waters. The top water pollutants found in the planning area include mercury, phosphorous, sediment, and PCBs. Since the last MTP was adopted in 2015, a portion of Bostwick Creek has been added to the impaired waters list for total phosphorous.

Table 2: Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters and Impaired Waters

Name	Status	Pollutant(s)
Black River	Impaired	Mercury
Bostwick Creek – CTH M to La Crosse River	Impaired	Total phosphorous
Bostwick Creek – CTH M to headwaters	ERW; Class I trout stream	N/A
Bostwick Creek – Barre Mills to CTH M	ERW; Class II trout stream	N/A
Larson Coulee Creek	ERW; Class I trout stream	N/A
Hoyer Creek	ERW; Class I trout stream	N/A
Gill Coulee Creek – La Crosse River to unnamed creek (1.39 mi)	Impaired; Class III trout stream	Sediment
Gill Coulee Creek – unnamed creek to headwaters (3.47 mi)	Impaired; Class II trout stream	Sediment
Halfway Creek	Impaired; Class III trout stream	Sediment
Long Coulee Creek	Impaired; warm water forage fish; Class II trout stream	Sediment
Johnson Coulee Creek	Impaired; limited aquatic life; Class II trout stream	Sediment
Mississippi River	Impaired; warm water sport fish	Total phosphorous; mercury; PCBs
La Crosse River	Impaired	Total phosphorous
Neshonoc Lake	Impaired	Total phosphorous; sediment; mercury; PCBs
Pine Creek, MN	Impaired	Escherichia coli

Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Wetlands

Wetlands are part of the foundation of our nation's water resources and are vital to the health of waterways and communities that are downstream. Wetlands—which include swamps, marshes, bogs, and fens—feed downstream waters, trap floodwaters, recharge groundwater supplies, remove pollution, and provide fish and wildlife habitat. Wetlands are also economic drivers because of their key role in fishing, hunting, agriculture, and recreation.

Since the last MTP update in 2015, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has digitally mapped La Crosse County wetlands. The digital wetland maps are accessible through the La Crosse County GIS system and are a valuable tool in identifying/evaluating wetland areas.

Figure 5 illustrates the outstanding and exceptional resource waters, impaired waters, and wetlands in the planning area.

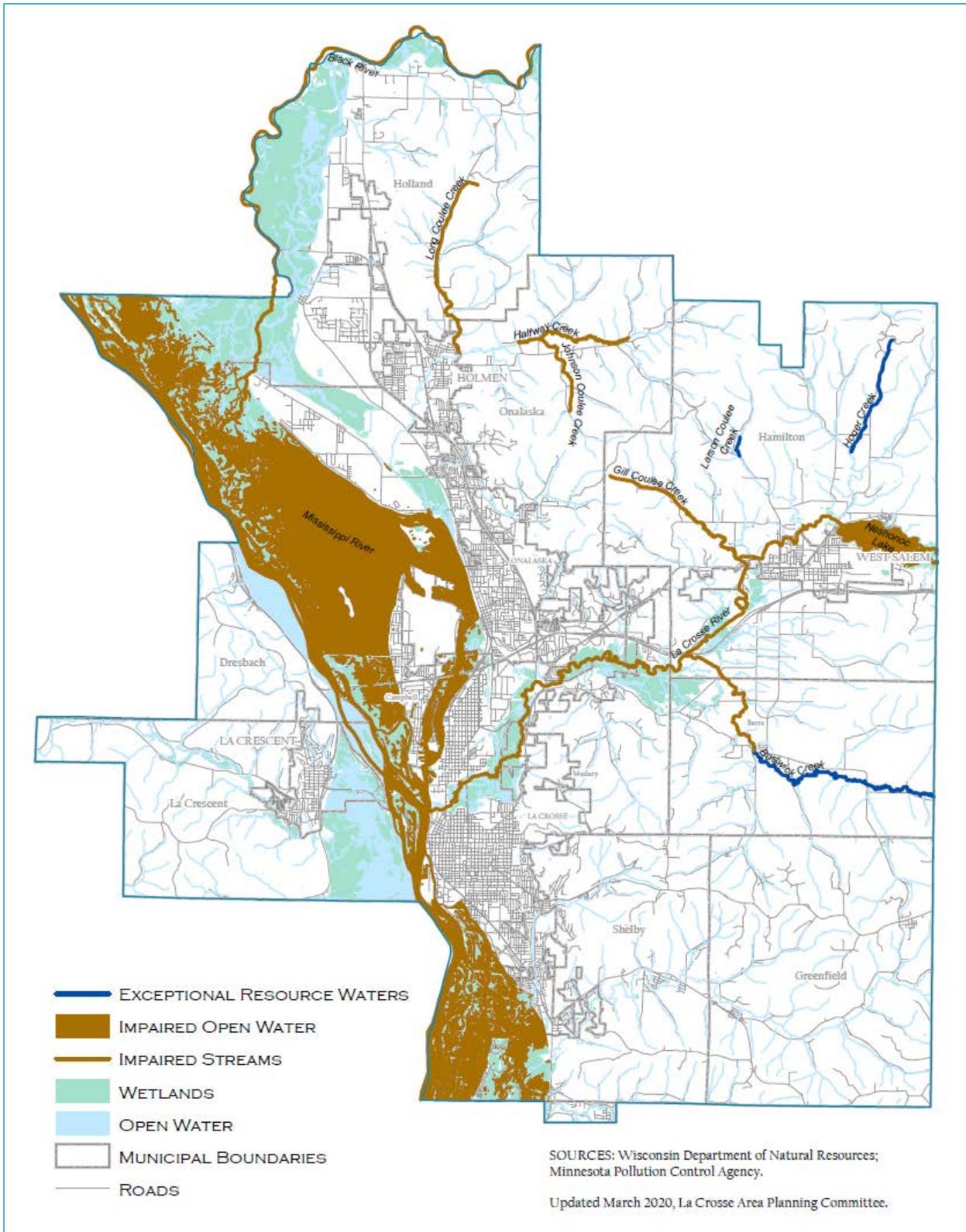


Figure 5: Outstanding and exceptional resource waters and impaired waters. Sources: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

Protection & Mitigation

The process of avoiding and minimizing impacts to regulated aquatic resources occurs through the regulatory programs established by federal and state resource agencies authorized to implement the Clean Water Act and other federal Acts designed to protect the quality of our water and wetlands. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) are the authorized agencies in their respective states and they engage in several activities to protect our waters and wetlands. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is charged with implementing Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The St. Paul District of the USACE oversees the program in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Watershed Planning

Coulee Vision 2040 (CV 2040) has been the MTP for the LAPC since its approval on September 16, 2015. Its vision, goals, and land use plan were generated out of an extensive public input process and access to timely data (i.e. 2010 Decennial Census data; 2010-2040 population, household, and employment projections; 2010-2011 6-inch aerial photography).

Agencies take a watershed approach to protecting our waters. This includes a circular process of monitoring, assessment and integrated reporting, and management. Specific tasks involve:

- ⇒ **Water Quality Standards development** to set the appropriate level of protection by:
 - Determining the types of activities the water should support;
 - Developing water quality criteria to protect these uses from excess pollution;
 - Establishing an antidegradation policy to maintain and protect existing uses and high-quality waters; and,
 - Identifying general policies to implement these protection levels in point source discharge permits.
- ⇒ **Water quality management planning** to implement plans to protect, maintain, or restore water quality. High quality waters are identified in the states' outstanding and exceptional resources waters lists. Waters that do not meet water quality standards are identified in the states' impaired waters lists, which state why the water is not meeting standards and what pollutants or indicators need to be addressed to restore aquatic health.
- ⇒ **Water Quality Monitoring** to provide supporting information in developing Total Daily Maximum Loads (TMDLs) for waters listed on the states' 303(d) impaired waters lists.

To identify and restore impaired waters, Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act requires states to:

1. Assess all waters of the state to determine if they meet water quality standards.
2. [List](#) waters that do not meet standards (also known as the 303d list) and update every even-numbered year.
3. Conduct total maximum daily load (TMDL) studies in order to set pollutant reduction goals needed to restore waters. Alternatives to TMDLs (the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still safely meet water quality standards) include Environmental Accountability Projects (EAPs), where management actions are underway and the anticipated outcome is full restoration of water quality standards.

The level of monitoring is greatly dependent on the types and sources of impairments as well as the size and complexity of the watershed to be monitored. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources maintains a TMDL webpage providing monitoring information, technical guidance and additional information on TMDL standards.

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act

The mission of the Corps of Engineers' Regulatory Program is to protect the nation's aquatic resources, while allowing reasonable development through fair, flexible and balanced permit decisions. The Corps evaluates permit applications for essentially all construction activities that occur in the nation's waters, including wetlands.

Under Section 404, a Corps permit is required for the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. Many waterbodies and wetlands in the nation are waters of the U.S. and are subject to the Corps' Section 404 regulatory authority.

Project Mitigation

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the USACE encourage that everything possible be done to avoid and minimize impacting aquatic resources. In cases where unavoidable impacts are expected to occur, the agencies recommend searching for compensatory mitigation—the restoration, establishment, enhancement, and/or preservation of aquatic resources for the purpose of offsetting those impacts. Sources of compensatory mitigation include:

- ⇒ **Mitigation banks.** One or more sites where aquatic resources such as wetlands or streams are restored, established, enhanced and / or preserved for the purpose of providing compensatory mitigation in advance of authorized impacts to similar resources. Currently, La Crosse County has no wetland banks; however, WisDOT does have one wetland bank (Mill Bluff) in parts of Monroe and Juneau Counties and one

in Crawford County (Bell Center). MnDOT has one large wetland bank in Houston County for Minnesota projects.

- ⇒ **In-lieu fee program.** A program that involves the compensatory mitigation of aquatic and related terrestrial resources through funds paid to a government or non-governmental natural resource management organization.
- ⇒ **Permittee-responsible mitigation.** Individual projects constructed by permittees to provide compensatory mitigation for activities authorized by Corps of Engineers' permits.

Ideally, mitigation should be located within the same watershed as the impact site and should be located where it is most likely to successfully replace lost functions and services. The Corps considers the type and location options for mitigation in the following order although flexibility in approach can be exercised on a project-specific basis: mitigation bank credits, in-lieu fee program credits, permittee-responsible mitigation under a watershed approach, permittee-responsible mitigation through on-site and in-kind mitigation, and permittee-responsible mitigation through off-site and/or out-of-kind mitigation. More information can be found in the document, 2013 Guidelines for Wetland Compensatory Mitigation in Wisconsin, prepared by the USACE and the WDNR.

As previously discussed, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has digitally mapped La Crosse County wetlands. The digital wetland maps are accessible through the La Crosse County GIS system and are a valuable tool to more fully assess the potential impacts of projects on these resources.

Natural & Recreational Resources

The use of parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges for a transportation purpose is subject to Section 4(f) of 49 U.S.C. 303 and 23 U.S.C. 138 and possibly Section 6(f) of 16 U.S.C. 2509. The intent of Section 4(f) is to protect parkland and other included land from use by transportation agencies. Transportation agencies using Federal funds are prohibited from using such lands unless 1) no feasible or prudent alternative to the use is available and 2) the project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the protected resource.

The intent of Section 6(f) is to protect land used for outdoor recreational purposes. The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (LAWCON) stipulates that any land planned, developed, or improved with LAWCON funds cannot be converted to a use other than an outdoor recreational use unless replacement land of at least equal fair market value and reasonably equivalent usefulness is provided. Anytime a transportation project will cause such a conversion, regardless of funding source, replacement land must be provided.

The inventories provided include areas that are locally important, which may not be covered under Sections 4(f) or 6(f).

Inventory

Natural & Recreational Resource Plans

- ⇒ *Wisconsin's Strategy for Wildlife Species of Greatest Conservation Need*, 2005.
- ⇒ *Fish, Wildlife and Habitat Management Plan*, 2007.
- ⇒ *Wisconsin Land Legacy Report*, 2006.
- ⇒ *Wisconsin Karner Blue Butterfly Habitat Conservation Plan*, 1999.
- ⇒ *Coulee Experimental State Forest*, 2009.
- ⇒ *The 2019-2023 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*, 2019.
- ⇒ *Minnesota's 2014-2018 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*, 2014.
- ⇒ *Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan*, 2008
- ⇒ *Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare: An Action Plan for Minnesota Wildlife*, 2006.
- ⇒ *Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Conservation Plan*, 2006.
- ⇒ *Karner Blue Butterfly Recovery Plan*, 2003.
- ⇒ *Higgins Eye Pearlymussel Recovery Plan*, 2004.
- ⇒ *National Recovery Plan for Northern Monkshood*, 1983.
- ⇒ *La Crosse County Outdoor Recreation Plan 2019-2024*.
- ⇒ *La Crosse County Land & Water Resource Management Plan 2020-2029*, 2019.
- ⇒ *Hixon Forest Comprehensive Plan*, 2005.
- ⇒ *A Land Use Management Plan for the La Crosse River Valley*, 1997.
- ⇒ Local comprehensive plans.

Data Inventory

The resources of interest inventoried below are based on the resources outlined in the Facilities Development Manual (FDM) that are required to be considered during the environmental review process. Some of those resources—wild rivers, scenic urban waterways, national and state parks, and national forests—are not present in the planning area.

Natural & Recreational Resources

Areas of natural interest are often areas of recreational interest. Outstanding and exceptional resource waters and fish refuges provide opportunities for fishing; parks, trails,

and forests provide opportunities for hiking, biking, and birdwatching; and, wildlife management areas and natural areas provide opportunities for recreation and education.

- ⇒ **National Refuges:**
 - Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge
- ⇒ **State Trails:**
 - Great River State Trail
 - La Crosse River State Trail
- ⇒ **State Forests:**
 - Coulee Experimental Forest
- ⇒ **State Wildlife Management Areas:**
 - Van Loon Wildlife Area
 - Mississippi Islands Wildlife Area
- ⇒ **State Natural Areas:**
 - Holland Sand Prairie
 - Great River Trail Prairies State Natural Area
 - Midway Railroad Prairie State Natural Area
 - Van Loon Floodplain Savannah
 - Van Loon Bottoms
- ⇒ **Legacy Places (Western Coulee and Ridges Ecological Landscape):**
 - La Crosse River
 - Black River
 - Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge
 - Coulee Coldwater Riparian Resources
 - Coulee Experimental Forest
- ⇒ **Other Ecologically Significant Places**
 - Half Moon Bottoms
 - Black River Savannah
 - Coulee Forests
- ⇒ **High Quality Trout Streams**

The natural resources in the area also serve as recreational resources for boaters, kayakers, fishermen, hunters, snowmobilers, bicyclists, and others. Access to our major water bodies occurs at several boat access sites—official sites verified by the Wisconsin and Minnesota

Departments of Natural Resources and unofficial sites identified by local users. Table 3 identifies the boat access sites in the planning area, their type of access to the water, and the waterbody accessed.

Figure 6 illustrates the natural and recreational resources in the planning area. These include boat access sites (by Map # from Table 3), state-classified trout streams, official blue trails (a designated kayaking/canoeing water trail), wildlife and natural areas, and state-managed recreation lands (state trails and forests). Trout streams are classified by quality where Class I streams are of the highest quality, allowing for sufficient natural reproduction to sustain populations of wild trout at or near carry capacity. Class II trout streams have some natural reproduction, but not enough to utilize available food and space. Stocking is required to maintain a desirable sport fishery. Class III trout streams have marginal trout habitat with no natural reproduction occurring. These streams require annual stocking of trout to provide for trout fishing. The planning area has about 19 miles of Class I, 40 miles of Class II, and 20 miles of Class III trout streams.

Table 3: Boat Access Sites

Map #	Site Name	Access	Waterbody Accessed
1	Black River Landing	Ramp	Black River
2*	Lytles Landing Canoe Launch	Carry-in	Black River
3	Nelson Park Landing	Ramp	Lake Onalaska
4	Fishermans Road	Ramp	Lake Onalaska-Mississippi River
5	Fishermans Road	Ramp	Lake Onalaska-Mississippi River
6	Fisherman Road Landing	Ramp	Black River-Mississippi River
7	Upper French Island Spillway Landing	Ramp	Lake Onalaska
8	Lower French Island Spillway	Ramp	French Slough
9	Neshonoc Swarthout Park Boat Ramp	Ramp	Neshonoc Lake
10	Neshonoc South Boat Ramp	Ramp	Neshonoc Lake
11	Veterans Memorial Park Canoe Launch	Carry-in	La Crosse River
12	West Copeland Landing / West Copeland Canoe/Kayak Launch	Ramp & Carry-in	Black River-Mississippi River
13	Northside Beach Boat Ramp 1	Ramp	Black River-Mississippi River
14	Northside Beach Boat Ramp 2	Ramp	Black River-Mississippi River
15	La Crosse Municipal Boat Harbor	Ramp	Mississippi River
16	Green Island Park Boat Ramp	Ramp	Mississippi River
17	Goose Island Boat Ramp 2	Ramp	Wigwam Slough-Mississippi River
18	Wigwam Slough	Ramp	Wigwam Slough-Mississippi River
19	Brice Prairie Channel Landing	Ramp	Lake Onalaska-Mississippi River
20	Brice Prairie Walk-in Access	Carry-in	Lake Onalaska
21	Lake Onalaska Ramp	Ramp	Lake Onalaska
22**	New Channel	Carry-in	Black River-New Channel
23**	Earl's Landing	Ramp	La Crosse River
24**	Unknown – Medary Ln	Ramp	La Crosse River
25**	Unknown – USFWS	Ramp	Mississippi River
26	Lower I-90 Landing	Ramp	Mississippi River
27	Upper I-90 Access	Ramp	Mississippi River
28**	Unknown – Pine Creek	Carry-in	Pine Creek
29**	Unknown – Twilite St	Carry-in	Blue Lake
30	7 th St. Canoe/Kayak Launch	Carry-in	Mississippi River

*Accessible to persons with disabilities.

**These sites have not been verified by the Departments of Natural Resources.

Source: Wisconsin & Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources; local sources.

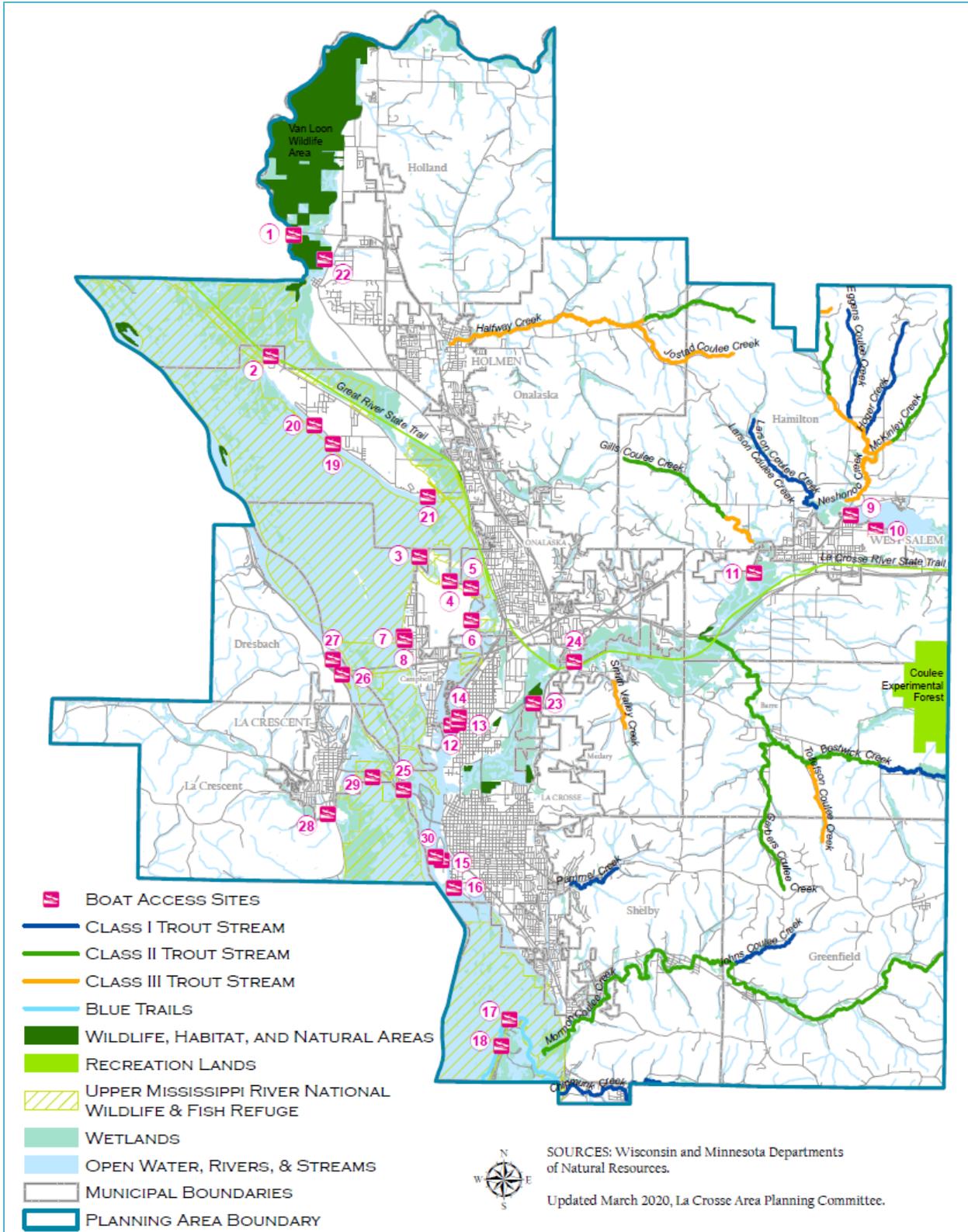


Figure 6: Natural and recreational resources. Sources: Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources.

Endangered & Threatened Species

An important aspect of the human use of our natural resources is how native species are impacted. Congress passed the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1973, recognizing the “esthetic, ecological, educational, recreational, and scientific value to our Nation and its people.” The Act further expresses concern that many of our native plants and animals are in danger of becoming extinct. The purpose of the ESA is to protect and recover imperiled species and the ecosystems upon which they depend. The FWS administers the ESA for terrestrial and freshwater species and is responsible for “listing” endangered and threatened species. In order to comply with the ESA, states have created rules for state transportation agencies to work with their departments of natural resources to determine the presence of endangered or threatened species within a project area.

Within the planning area Natural Heritage Inventory lists identify 45 endangered species, 49 threatened species and 146 special concern species. Endangered, threatened, and special concern species locations are not illustrated because of the sensitivity of the resource. Their locations within the planning area are known by town and range. The information provides a general reference only. It should not be used as a substitute for DNR review of a specific project area.

All the endangered and threatened species in the planning area are listed on the following charts with their state and/or federal designation. Due the number of the special concern species in the planning area, selected (based on special concern status and federal designation) special concern species¹ are listed on the charts:

- ⇒ **Birds** (Table 4): No birds are on the federal list for being endangered or threatened. Four birds found in the planning area are designated on the federal list as species of concern, they include the Black Tern, Cerulean Warbler, Henslow’s Sparrow, and the Loggerhead Shrike. Absent from the table is the Bald Eagle as it was removed from the state endangered lists in the 1990’s and the federal list in 2007. Eagles and their nests are still federally protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

¹ The State Departments of Natural Resources (DNRs) maintain a Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) for their respective states. The NHI provides an inventory of all Federal- and State-listed birds, fish, herptiles (reptiles and amphibians, collectively), invertebrates, mammals, plants, and communities, with their occurrences recorded by town and range. The inventory also includes species determined to be of special concern and natural communities of high quality. Special concern species are those species about which some problem of abundance or distribution is suspected, but not yet proved. The main purpose of this category is to focus attention on certain species before they become threatened or endangered.

The Wisconsin list was compiled from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Web site on October 2, 2019 and is current as of April 19, 2019. The Minnesota list was obtained from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources by written request and was received in January 2020. The data are valid for one year.

Table 4: Birds Listed in the Natural Heritage Inventory

Common Name	State & Federal (U.S.) Status
Acadian Flycatcher	THR: WI
Bell's Vireo	THR: WI
Black Tern	END: WI; SPEC CON: U.S.
Cerulean Warbler	THR: WI; SPEC CON: U.S.
Forster's Tern	END: WI
Great Egret	THR: WI
Henslow's Sparrow	THR: WI; SPEC CON: U.S.
Hooded Warbler	THR: WI
Kentucky Warbler	THR: WI
King Rail	END: MN
Loggerhead Shrike	END: WI; SPEC CON: U.S.
Peregrine Falcon	END: WI
Red-shouldered Hawk	THR: WI
Worm-eating Warbler	END: WI
Yellow-crowned Night Heron	THR: WI
Yellow-throated Warbler	END: WI

Source: Natural Heritage Inventory, Wisconsin & Minnesota DNRs.

- ⇒ **Herptiles** (Table 5): No herptile species within the planning area are federally listed as threatened or endangered. Blanding's Turtle and the Wood Turtle are listed as federal species of concern. Blanchard's Cricket Frog is listed as endangered in both Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Table 5: Herptiles Listed in the Natural Heritage Inventory

Common Name	State & Federal (U.S.) Status
Blanchard's Cricket Frog	END: MN, WI
Blanding's Turtle	THR: MN; SPEC CON: U.S.
Gophersnake	SPEC CON-Protected: WI
Gray Ratsnake	SPEC CON-Protected: WI
North American Racer	SPEC CON-Protected: WI
Slender Glass Lizard	END: WI
Wood Turtle	THR: WI; SPEC CON: U.S.

Source: Natural Heritage Inventory, Wisconsin & Minnesota DNRs.

- ⇒ **Fish** (Table 6): No fish species within the planning area are federally listed as threatened or endangered. The Crystal Darter is the only species federally listed as a species of concern. The Skipjack Herring and the Pallid Shiner are endangered in both Wisconsin and Minnesota and the Black Buffalo and Paddlefish are listed as threatened in both states. Overall there are thirteen fish species in the planning area that are endangered for threatened.

Table 6: Fish Listed in the Natural Heritage Inventory

Common Name	State & Federal (U.S.) Status
Black Buffalo	THR: MN, WI
Blue Sucker	THR: WI
Bluntnose Darter	END: WI
Crystal Darter	END: WI, MN; SPEC CON: U.S.
Gilt Darter	THR: WI
Goldeye	END: WI
Paddlefish	THR: MN, WI
Pallid Shiner	END: MN, WI
Redfin Shiner	THR: WI
River Redhorse	THR: WI
Shoal Chub	THR: WI
Skipjack Herring	END: MN, WI
Starhead Topminnow	END: WI

Source: Natural Heritage Inventory, Wisconsin & Minnesota DNRs.

- ⇒ **Invertebrates** (Table 7): There are eight invertebrates in the planning area that are federally protected. Nine-teen invertebrates are listed as endangered by the either the state of Wisconsin or the state of Minnesota. Two invertebrates, the Higgins' eye and Sheepsnose are federally and listed by both states as endangered mussels. Two species of bumble bees (Rusty Patched and Yellowbanded) also appear as federally listed invertebrates as endangered and species of concern.

Table 7: Invertebrates Listed in the Natural Heritage Inventory

Common Name	State & Federal (U.S.) Status
Buckhorn	END: MN; THR: WI
Butterfly	END: WI; THR: MN
Ebonyshell	END: MN, WI
Elephant Ear	END: WI
Elktoe	THR: MN; SPEC CON-Protected: WI
Fawnsfoot	THR: WI
Higgins' Eye	END: MN, WI, U.S.
Karner Blue Butterfly	END: U.S.

Table 7: Invertebrates Listed in the Natural Heritage Inventory (continued)

Common Name	State & Federal (U.S. Status)
Mapleleaf	SPEC CON-Protected: WI
Monkeyface	THR: MN, WI
Mucket	THR: MN
Ottoo Skipper Butterfly	END: WI
Pecatonica River Mayfly	END: WI
Phlox Moth	END: MN
Purple Wartyback	END: WI
Regal Fritillary Butterfly	END: WI; SPEC CON: U.S.
Rock Pocketbook	END: MN; THR: WI
Rusty Patched Bumble Bee	END: U.S.
Salamander Mussel	THR: WI; SPEC CON: U.S.
Sheepnose	END: MN, WI, U.S.
Snuffbox	END: WI, U.S.
Spectaclecase	END: WI, U.S.
Spike	END: MN
Wartyback	THR: WI
Washboard	END: MN; SPEC CON-Protected: WI
Yellow & Slough Sandshells	END: WI
Yellowbanded Bumble Bee	SPEC CON: U.S.

Source: Natural Heritage Inventory, Wisconsin & Minnesota DNRs.

- ⇒ **Plants** (Table 8): The Northern Monkshood and Hill's Thistle are the only plants in the planning area federally listed as endangered and species of concern, respectively. State Natural Heritage Inventory lists identify twenty-two plants in the planning area that are threatened and eleven plants that are endangered.

Table 8: Plants Listed in the Natural Heritage Inventory

Common Name	State & Federal (U.S.) Status
Black Huckleberry	THR: MN
Brittle Prickly-pear	THR: WI
Carey's Sedge	THR: WI
Carolina Anemone	END: WI
Catchfly Grass	THR: MN
Clasping Milkweed	THR: MN
Clustered Broomrape	THR: WI
Davi's Sedge	THR: MN
Dotted Blazing Star	END: WI
Dwarf Milkweed	THR: WI



Table 8: Plants Listed in the Natural Heritage Inventory (continued)

Common Name	State & Federal (U.S.) Status
Ground-plum	END: WI
Hairy Meadow Parsnip	END: WI
Hairy Wild Petunia	END: WI
Hill's Thistle	THR: WI; SPEC CON: U.S.
Intermediate Sedge	END: WI
Large Water-Starwort	THR: WI
Muskroot	THR: WI
Nodding Rattlesnake-root	END: WI
Northern Monkshood	THR: WI; END: U.S.
Pale Green Orchid	THR: WI
Pale Purple Coneflower	THR: WI
Pink Milkroot	END: WI
Prairie Parsley	THR: WI
Purple Milkweed	END: WI
Rock Clubmoss	THR: MN
Round-fruited St. John's Wort	THR: WI
Roundstem Foxglove	THR: WI
Sand Violet	END: WI
Silver Bladderpod	THR: WI
Small Skullcap	END: WI
Snow Trillium	THR: WI
White Lady's-slipper	THR: WI
Witch-hazel	THR: MN

Source: Natural Heritage Inventory, Wisconsin and Minnesota DNRs.

- ⇒ **Mammals** (Table 9): The Northern Long-Eared Bat was listed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in 2015 as threatened. The Prairie Vole and Woodland Vole are listed as mammals of special concern on the Natural Heritage Inventories.

Table 9: Mammals Listed in the Natural Heritage Inventory

Common Name	State & Federal (US) Status
Northern Long-Eared Bat	THR: U.S.
Prairie Vole	SPEC CON: MN
Woodland Vole	SPEC CON: MN, WI

Source: Natural Heritage Inventory, Wisconsin & Minnesota DNRs.

- ⇒ **Natural Communities** (Table 10): A community is an assemblage of different plant and animal species, living together in a particular area, at a particular time, in a specific habitat. The NHI Program tracks examples of all types of natural communities that are deemed significant because of their undisturbed condition, size, what occurs around them, or for other reasons.

Bird rookeries and places of communal hibernation for snakes, turtles, frogs, or salamanders (herp hibernaculum) are included in the NHI as special concern in Wisconsin.

Table 10: Natural Communities

Common Name	Significant Location(s)
Alder Thicket ¹ (WI)	Along La Crosse River
Bird Rookery (WI)	
Colonial Waterbird Nesting Area (MN)	
Dry Bedrock Bluff Prairie (Southern) (MN)	R.J. Dorer State Forest
Dry Cliff (WI)	Hixon Forest
Dry Mesic-Prairie (WI)	Midway Railroad Prairie State Natural Area
Dry Prairie (WI)	Hixon Forest
Eastern Red-cedar Thicket (WI)	
Emergent Marsh (WI)	Along Mississippi & Black Rivers
Floodplain Forest (WI)	Along Mississippi and Lower Black Rivers
Mesic Sandstone Cliff (Southern) (MN)	
Moist Cliff (WI)	
Northern Bulrush-Spikerush Marsh (MN)	
Northern Dry-mesic Forest (WI)	
Northern Wet Forest ² (WI)	La Crosse marsh
Oak Barrens (WI)	
Oak-Shagbark Hickory Woodlands (MN)	
Oak Woodland (WI)	
Pine Barrens (WI)	
Pine Relict (WI)	
Red Oak – White Oak (Sugar Maple) Forest (MN)	
Riverine Lake/Pond (WI)	
Sand Barrens (WI)	
Sand Beach/Sandbar (River) (MN)	
Sand Prairie (WI)	Holland Sand Prairie
Seepage Meadow/Carr (MN)	



Table 10: Natural Communities (continued)

Common Name	Significant Location(s)
Shrub-Carr (WI)	
Silver Maple – (Virginia Creeper) Floodplain Forest (MN)	Upper Mississippi River Wildlife & Fish Refuge
Southern Dry Forest (WI)	Hixon Forest
Southern Dry-Mesic Forest (WI)	Hixon Forest
Southern Mesic Forest (WI)	Hixon Forest
Southern Sedge Meadow (WI)	Along La Crosse & Black Rivers
Submergent Marsh (WI)	
Swamp White Oak Terrace Forest (MN)	

¹Recommended that entire river corridors be protected and sustained from the lowlands well into the uplands; buffers within floodplains should be used to prevent compaction, trampling, and sedimentation.

²Recommended to block and/or buffer tamarack stands when possible.

Source: Natural Heritage Inventory, Wisconsin and Minnesota DNRs.

Protection & Mitigation

Protection of our natural and recreational resources is accomplished through federal and state regulations, and local ordinances. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the Minnesota and Wisconsin DNRs are the agencies authorized to enforce these regulations. Local plans and programs reinforce state goals and establish local goals and objectives.

Plans & Programs

Federal

- ⇒ **Department of Transportation Act of 1966:** Section 4(f) stipulates that the FHWA and other DOT agencies cannot approve the use of publicly-owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or public and private historical sites unless:
 - There is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land; and,
 - The action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from use.
- ⇒ **Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (LWCFA):** Section 6(f) protects federal grant-assisted recreation sites from conversion to some other use.
- ⇒ **Endangered Species Act:** The FWS is responsible for administering the Endangered Species Act. To fulfill its responsibilities, the FWS:
 - Identifies and assesses declining species that may need Act protection and takes steps to conserve those species.

- Lists candidate species as endangered or threatened and designating critical habitat. The FWS also delists species determined to no longer need Act protection.
- Protects, conserves, and restores listed species.
- Consults with other Federal agencies to help them fulfill their obligations.
- Issues permits to “take” listed species under certain conditions.
- Helps permit applicants prepare Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) that minimize and mitigate the effects of their take.
- Provides grants to States under Section 6 of the Act.

States

- ⇒ **Natural Heritage Inventory programs:** The Wisconsin and Minnesota DNRs are responsible for maintaining data on the locations and status of rare species, natural communities, and natural features. Dynamic Working Lists are updated as new information becomes available.
- ⇒ **Endangered and Threatened Species List:** The states’ lists serve to restrict the taking, possession, or marketing of species threatened with extinction. The annual process of updating the Natural Heritage Working List provides the primary triggers that initiate a comprehensive assessment of a species and can result in revisions to the Endangered and Threatened Species List (official list).
- ⇒ **Natural Heritage Conservation Program:** The Program’s policy recommends that the official list be reviewed at least every five years or as needed. “As needed” triggers include recovery goals met, immediate need for protection, or significant new data on a single species or group of species. Wisconsin law (Chapter NR 27.04) also allows any three persons to petition the DNR to review the status of any listed or unlisted wild animal or plant.
- ⇒ **Endangered Resources Review Program:** This program helps customers and partners comply with Wisconsin’s endangered species laws and helps conserve rare plants, animals, and habitats. The Wisconsin DNR works with landowners, businesses, communities, and others to consider the potential impacts of land development, planning, and management projects on rare and sensitive species and habitats very early in the project planning process.
- ⇒ **State Natural Areas programs:** These programs protect outstanding natural communities, significant geological formations, and archaeological sites.
- ⇒ **Wildlife Action Plans:** These plans identify Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and outline priority conservation actions to protect species and their

habitats. SGCN have low and/or declining populations that are in need of conservation action. They include species that are:

- Already listed as threatened or endangered;
 - At risk because of threats to their life history needs or habitats;
 - Stable in number in-state, but declining in adjacent states or nationally; or,
 - Of unknown status in-state and suspected to be vulnerable.
- ⇒ **Prairie and Wetland Restoration Plans**
- ⇒ **Native Prairie Bank Program:** This program allows Minnesota landowners to protect native prairie on their property through a conservation easement with Minnesota DNR.
- ⇒ **Landowner Incentive Program:** This program helps Wisconsin private landowners create and manage habitat for species that are rare or declining.
- ⇒ **Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans:** These plans are required by the LWCF to help allocate federal conservation funds equitably among communities.

Local

- ⇒ **County Outdoor Recreation Plans:** These plans qualify the Counties and their local units of government to apply for grants under the LWCF and State Stewardship Funds.
- ⇒ **The Blufflands – A Plan for Conservation and Recreation Throughout the La Crosse – La Crescent Region:** The plan organizes a regional approach to the conservation and recreational use of blufflands in the La Crosse/La Crescent area. The plan is to be used by public and private stakeholders throughout the region to guide the acquisition of conservation land and easements, coordinate restoration activities and recreation access.
- ⇒ **Hixon Forest Comprehensive Plan:** The plan calls for a portion of the property to be managed for protection of the rare natural communities such as dry prairie, dry cliff and mesic to dry-mesic southern woodlands, which contain natural communities including valuable plants and animal species. The remaining property will be managed for habitat areas. The property is to be open to the public for hunting, hiking, wildlife watching, and a variety of low-impact recreational activities.

Conservation and Mitigation Banking

Conservation banks are parcels of land containing natural resources that are conserved and managed for life for specified listed species and used to offset impacts occurring elsewhere to the same resources on non-bank lands. These banks are established for long-term

protection of a specific species that is impacted on a project site. Because the planning area contains no conservation banks, natural areas lost from major transportation projects are compensated outside the region through restoration, compensation, and mitigation banking.

Cultural Resources

“Cultural” resources here refer to historic, archaeological, and tribal resources. The Federal government has enacted several acts to protect these resources from transportation agencies using Federal funds:

- ⇒ The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Section 106 protects cultural resources that are on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).
- ⇒ The Archaeological Resources Protection Act protects archaeological resources on tribal lands and non-tribal lands under Federal jurisdiction.
- ⇒ The Department of Transportation Act of 1966, Section 4(f) protects all historic areas as well as all publicly-owned public parks and waterfowl and wildlife refuges.
- ⇒ The Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987, Section 123(f), created a fund for the preservation or mitigation of historic bridges.

The NRHP is the official list of the Nation’s historic places deemed worthy of preservation. The NRHP is part of a national program administered by the National Park Service (NPS) to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America’s historic and archaeological resources. The NPS relies significantly on State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPO) to carry out such activities as surveying, evaluating, and nominating significant historic buildings, sites, structures, districts, and objects to the National Register.

Inventory

Cultural Resource Plans

- ⇒ *An Intensive Architectural and Historical Survey Report of La Crosse County*, 2004.
- ⇒ *Wisconsin Historic Preservation Plan 2006-2015*, 2005.
- ⇒ *Management Plan for Historic Bridges*, 2006.
- ⇒ *A New Season: Preservation Plan for Minnesota’s Historic Properties 2012—17*, 2012.

Data Inventory

Historic Places

The inventories provided below represent registered and locally-designated historic places. They are grouped by registered places (Table 11)—those listed in the State and/or National Historic Registers and protected by Federal and State laws—and by locally-designated places (Table 12)—those listed by a municipality and protected by ordinance. Places that are registered are not necessarily locally-designated and those that are locally-designated are not necessarily registered. An asterisk next to a place in the table of registered places denotes those that are also locally-designated. The table of locally-designated places illustrates only locally designated places.

Only registered places are protected from Federal action and are required to be considered in the environmental review process. Locally-designated places are considered here for additional historic reference. Communities with historic preservation ordinances have more power to protect their historic places than communities without such an ordinance. The cities of La Crosse and Onalaska and La Crosse County have ordinances for the protection of historic places.

National Register of Historic Places and the State Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is the Nation's official list of cultural resources determined worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect historic and archeological resources. Places listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

In both Minnesota and Wisconsin, the State Historic Preservation Office is the administrator of the National Register of Historic Places. The Minnesota and Wisconsin State Register of Historic Places and the National Register of Historic Places listing for the planning area are identical.

Table 11 lists the places listed in the National Register of Historic Places and the State Register of Historic Places as of January 1, 2020 that fall within the planning area.

Table 11: National and State Register of Historic Places

Property	Location
10 th and Cass Streets Neighborhood Historic District	La Crosse
23 rd and 24 th Streets Historic District	La Crosse
Agger Rock Shelter**	Address restricted, Holland
Anderson, Mons, House*	410 Cass St, La Crosse
Barron, E.R., Building	426-430 Main St, La Crosse
Bridge No. 1-6 (McGilvray Road)*	Van Loon Wildlife Area, Holland
Callahan, John L., House*	933 Rose St, La Crosse
Cargill, William W., House**	235 West Ave S, La Crosse
Cass and King St Residential Historic District*	La Crosse
Chambers-Markle Farmstead*	6104 STH 35, Shelby
Chase, Dr. H. H., and Henry G. Wohlhuter Bungalows*	221 & 223 11 th St S, La Crosse
Chicago, Milwaukee, and Saint Paul Railway Passenger Depot*	601 Saint Andrew St, La Crosse
Christ Church of La Crosse*	831 Main St, La Crosse
Daniel Cameron House	429-35 7 th St S, La Crescent
District School No. 1 (Wilson School House)*	W5718 USH 14/61, La Crosse
Edgewood Place Historic District	2520, 2526, 2532, 2537, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2546 Edgewood Place, La Crosse
Freight House*	107-109 Vine St, La Crosse
Funke, Joseph B., Company	101 State St, La Crosse
Garland, Hamlin, House*	357 W Garland St, West Salem
Gund Brewing Company Bottling Works	2130 South Ave, La Crosse
Gundersen, Dr. Adolph and Helga, Cottage	1000 USH 14/61, La Crosse
Hixon, Gideon C., House*	429 7 th St N, La Crosse
La Crosse Armory	2219 South Avenue, La Crosse
La Crosse Commercial Historic District*	La Crosse
La Crosse County School of Agriculture and Domestic Economy (Onalaska High School)	700 Wilson Ave, Onalaska
La Crosse Plow Company	525 North Second, La Crosse
La Crosse State Teachers College Training School Building (Morris Hall)	1615 State St, La Crosse
Lavery-Martindale House*	237 10 th St S, La Crosse
Loeffler, Otto and Ida, House	1603 Main St, La Crosse
Losey Memorial Arch*	1407 La Crosse St, La Crosse
Main Hall—La Crosse State Normal School*	1724 State St, La Crosse
Maria Angelorum Chapel	901 Franciscan Way, La Crosse
Midway Village Site	Address restricted, Onalaska
Mundstock, Carl August, Farm	USH 14/61, N side, E of jct. w/STH 35, Shelby
Nichols, Frank Eugene, House (Lumber Barron Inn)	421 2nd Ave N, Onalaska
Oehler Mill Complex	W5539 & W5565 CTH MM, Shelby
Olson Site**	Address restricted, Onalaska



Table 11: National and State Register of Historic Places (continued)

Property	Location
Ott, Will, House	1532 Madison St, La Crosse
Our Lady of Sorrows Chapel	519 Losey Blvd S, La Crosse
Overhead Site	Address restricted, Shelby
Palmer Brother's Octagons	358 Leonard St N* & STH 108, West Salem
Physical Education Building-La Crosse State Normal School (Wittich Hall)	UW La Crosse, La Crosse
Powell Place	200-212 Main St, La Crosse
Roosevelt School	1307 Hayes Street, La Crosse
Roosevelt, W. A., Company	230 N Front St, La Crosse
Samuels' Cave*	Address restricted, Barre
Sand Lake Archaeological District	Address restricted, Onalaska
Sand Lake Site (47Lc44)	Address restricted, Onalaska
Smith Valley School*	4130 Smith Valley Rd, Medary
Swennes Archaeological District	Address restricted, Hamilton
U.S. Fish Control Laboratory* (LACVB)	410 Veterans Memorial Dr, La Crosse
Valley View Site	Address restricted, Medary
Vincent, James, House	1024 Cass St, La Crosse
Waterworks Building (Pump House)*	119 King St, La Crosse
West Salem Village Hall**	103 Leonard St S, West Salem
Wisconsin Telephone Company Building	125 4th St N, La Crosse
Zeisler, George, Building*	201 Pearl St, La Crosse

*Places are also locally designated.

**Only on the State Register of Historic Places.

Sources: National Register of Historic Places; Wisconsin Historical Society, State Register of Historic Places; Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office.

Locally Designated Historic Places

All the incorporated municipalities (La Crescent, La Crosse, Onalaska, Holmen, and West Salem) within the planning area have some type of historical preservation society or commission. Four of the municipalities (Onalaska, La Crosse, La Crescent, and West Salem) have ordinances (Chapter 3, Chapter 2.27, chapter 150.15-20 and Chapter 3.15, respectively) that serve to protect their locally designated places. La Crosse County, as the only county in Wisconsin with a historic preservation commission, “safeguard[s] the County's historic, prehistoric, and cultural heritage” in the unincorporated areas through its Historic Sites Preservation Commission, which was created by Chapter 22 of the La Crosse County code of ordinances.

Table 12 lists locally designated historic places within the planning area that are not on the NRHP. Locally designated places that are also on the National Register are identified in Table 11. The table does not include designated places that have been demolished.

Table 12: Locally Designated Historic Places

Property	Location
Anderson, Mons, House	410 Cass St., La Crosse
Anderson (Dr. Wendell A.) Home	924 Cass St, La Crosse
Asbury Cemetery	N6093 CTH H ZZ, Town of Onalaska
Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church (Midway Town Hall)	W7052 Second St., Town of Onalaska
Batavian Bank Building	319 Main St, La Crosse
Bentley-Wheeler House	950 Cass St, La Crosse
Boathouses	Mississippi & Black Rivers
Bodega Brew Pub	122 4th St S, La Crosse
Brick Streets (20th St & 17th Pl: Main to Cass)	La Crosse
Burgermeister Building	323 Pearl St, La Crosse
Burr Oak Tree	112 State St, Holmen
Burton, Frank A., House	1018 Cass St, La Crosse
Burton, George/Belle, House	1428 Main St, La Crosse
Burton, S. S., House	929 King St, La Crosse
Charlestown Inn Halfway House	W6266 CTH. D, Holland
City Cast Iron Drinking Fountains	La Crosse
Civil Conservation Corp Camp	McHugh Rd, Holmen
Colman-Skaff, House	207 West Ave., La Crosse
Concordia Ballroom Hall	1129 La Crosse St, La Crosse
Cooperative Creamery	Holmen
Crosby, W.W., House	221 10th St S, La Crosse
Easton-Copeland House	1327 Cass St, La Crosse
Funke, Joseph B., Company.	101 State St, La Crosse
Gantert, Stephan, House	1307 Main St, La Crosse
German Reformed Church	901 4th St S, La Crosse
Grand Crossing Tower/Railroad Car	Copeland Park, La Crosse
Grand Hotel Commercial Block	205 Pearl St, La Crosse
Halfway Creek Lutheran Church	W6016 CTH W, Holland
Howard/Kumm House	4115 Bank Dr, Shelby
Heideman House	823 Adams St, La Crosse
Heileman City Brewery Beer Stube	1000 3rd St S, La Crosse
Heileman, Gottlieb/Johanna, House	925 3rd St S, La Crosse
Hixon, Frank P., House	1431 King St, La Crosse
Holley, J.M., House	230 8th St N, La Crosse
Hollywood Theater	123 5th Ave S, La Crosse
Holmen Canning Company	Legion St W, Holmen
Holway, N.B./Jesse, House	1419 Cass St, La Crosse
Jacobus House	608 6th St N, La Crosse
James Foundry	100 King St, La Crosse
J.B. Catenbury Building	531-535 Main St., La Crosse
Jostad's Store	Main St & State St, Holmen



Table 12: Locally Designated Historic Places (continued)

Property	Location
Kendhammer, Frank/Alice	751 22nd St N, La Crosse
Kinnear, Dr. R. M. I., House	222 10th St S, La Crosse
Kroner, Adam/Minnie, House	947 Division St, La Crosse
Kroner, Fred, Hardware Company	300 3rd St S, La Crosse
Kroner, Fred, House	923 Cameron St, La Crosse
La Crosse Footware (portion of south façade)	1407 St Andrew St, La Crosse
La Crosse Public Library-North Branch	1552 Kane St, La Crosse
Leonard, Thomas, Home	99 Jefferson St E, West Salem
Long Coulee School	Holmen
Luther College Historical Marker	Holmen
Magill Brothers Building	800 Rose St, La Crosse
Maple Shade School	Holmen
Martindale, Cyphus, House	714 Cass St, La Crosse
Masonic Temple	724 Main St, La Crosse
McMillan Building	401 Main St, La Crosse
Meason, L. E., House	208 9 th St S, La Crosse
Metzger, Calvin Manuel/George, House	1025 Main St., La Crosse
Mosher, Mildred E., House	1028 7 th St. S., La Crosse
Myrick Park	2007 La Crosse St, La Crosse
Native American Archaeological Sites	Long Coulee area, Holland
New Amsterdam Presbyterian Church	N7283 John St, Holland
New Amsterdam School	Holland
Olson/Weigel Home	N1904 Wedgewood Dr, Shelby
Onalaska Brewery	849 2 nd Ave SW, Onalaska
Old Fountain Hotel & Sacia Cemetery	W6533 CTH T, Holland
Original Bishops House	608 11 th St S, La Crosse
Ott Pure Oil Station	4 th St & Cass St, La Crosse
Pamperin Cigar Company Building	113 2 nd St S, La Crosse
Percley Bentley House	938 Cass St, La Crosse
Pertzsch, Irving and Alberta, House	229 2 nd Ave. North, Onalaska
Pettibone Beach House	1002 Pettibone Dr N, La Crosse
Pettibone Gazebo	1006 Pettibone Dr S, La Crosse
Pettibone, A. M., House	143 8 th St S, La Crosse
Potter, William E., Building (façade only)	107-109 3 rd St S, La Crosse
Ranum-Nelson House	1132 Rose St, La Crosse
Ray, George H., House	204 10 th St S, La Crosse
Rediske Cobbler Shop	6 th St & Badger St, La Crosse
Riverside Park	La Crosse
Rivoli Theater	117 4 th St N, La Crosse
Ruble, Ariel P., House	N4785 CTH M, Hamilton
Rynning, Erik/Cathinka, House	1418 Charles St, La Crosse



Table 12: Locally Designated Historic Places (continued)

Property	Location
St Elias Antiochian Orthodox Church	716 Copeland Ave, La Crosse
Salzer, Henry, House	1634 King St, La Crosse
Salzer Memorial Church	525 7 th St S, La Crosse
Sanford, Albert, House	119 17 th St S, La Crosse
Schintgen Building	225 3 rd St N, La Crosse
Schroeder, Leo, House	930 6 th St S, La Crosse
Scott, Argyle/Jesse, House	1721 King St, La Crosse
Segelke, Charles, House	504 5 th Ave S, La Crosse
Schmaltz Rd Stone Bridge	Greenfield
Spence, T. H., House	920 King St, La Crosse
Strassers Tavern	1310 Denton St, La Crosse
Strauss/Wing House	1004-1006 Main St, La Crosse
Tausche, Vincent, House	1202 Madison St., La Crosse
Torrance House	214 8 th St S, La Crosse
Traditions Restaurant (former Onalaska State Bank)	201 Main St, Onalaska
Tuteur-Steinam-Powell House	101 9 th St S, La Crosse
US Weather Bureau	432 Cass St, La Crosse
Veterans Memorial Pool	11 Campbell Rd., La Crosse
Villa St. Joseph Convent	W2658 STH 33, Greenfield
Washburn, C. C., House	612 Ferry St, La Crosse
Wesley United Methodist Church	721 King St, La Crosse
Withee House	112 10 th St S, La Crosse
Wright, John and Razy, Farm	W5670 CTH F, Medary
YMCA Building (original)	629 Main St, La Crosse

Sources: Cities of La Crosse and Onalaska; Historical Societies for La Crosse County, Holmen, West Salem, and La Crescent.

Tribal Lands

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires all federal agencies to consult with Indian Tribes for undertakings that may affect properties of traditional religious and cultural significance on or off Tribal lands. Tribal lands are lands held by the United States in trust for an Indian tribe or lands owned by an Indian tribe subject to federal restrictions against alienation (a transfer of the title to property by one person to another) and over which an Indian tribe exercises governmental power.

Table 13 lists the federally recognized Tribes with elected or appointed Tribal governments residing within Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Table 13: Tribes of Minnesota and Wisconsin

Wisconsin	Minnesota
Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians*	Bois Forte Band of Chippewa Indians*
Forest County Potawatomi Community*	Fond du Lac of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians*
Ho-Chunk Nation*	Grand Portage Band of Chippewa Indians*
Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians*	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
Lac Du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians*	Lower Sioux Indian Community*
Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin*	Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin*	Prairie Island Indian Community
Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians*	Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians
Sokaogon Chippewa Community*	Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux (Dakota) Community
St. Croix Band of Chippewa Indians*	Upper Sioux Community*
Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians*	White Earth Reservation*

*Tribes who have signed agreements with their respective Departments of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration.

Source: Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Transportation.

Of the Tribes listed, only the Ho-Chunk Nation is represented in the planning area. The Tribe holds legal interest in several parcels of Tribal land in the town of Holland at the La Crosse County / Trempealeau County border and on Brice Prairie in the town of Onalaska (see Figure 7).

Other parcels owned by the Tribe include the historic Three Rivers House (Masonic Temple) near downtown La Crosse and several residential properties in West Salem, Onalaska, and La Crosse. The Three Rivers House serves as the La Crosse branch office and the La Crosse Youth & Learning Center. The residential properties are owned under the Ho-Chunk Housing & Community Development Agency and the Home Ownership Program. These properties are not considered Tribal lands.

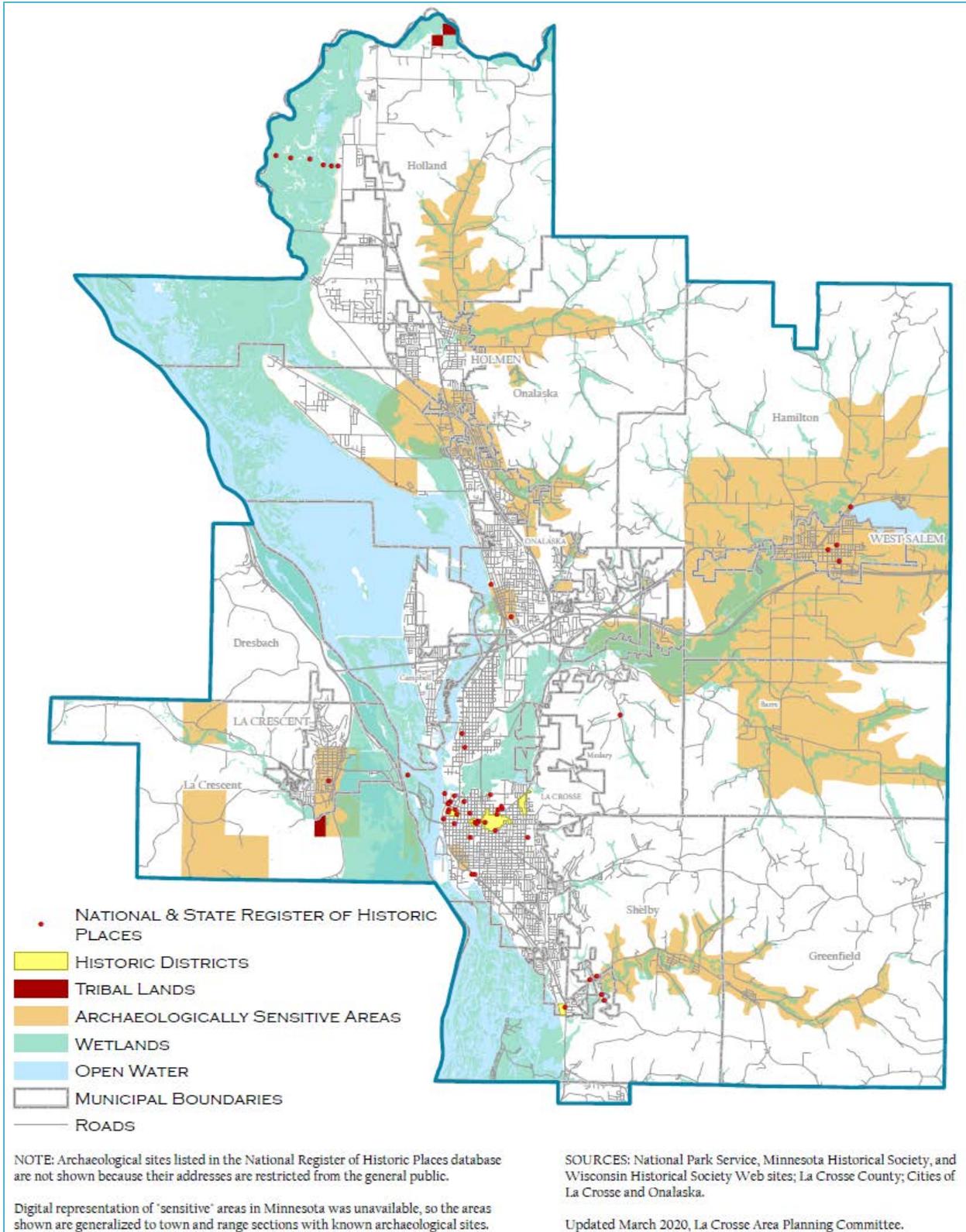


Figure 7: Cultural resources. Sources: National Park Service; Minnesota and Wisconsin Historical Societies; La Crosse County; cities of La Crosse and Onalaska.

Archaeological Sites

The State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO) run ongoing statewide survey programs that inventory prehistoric and historic archaeological sites that are described by type, function, time period, artifacts, general location, and setting. The locations of the sites are restricted from public viewing to protect these sites from being disturbed. The SHPOs map these sites in generalized “sensitive” areas (Wisconsin) or by town and range (Minnesota).

Figure 7 on the previous page illustrates the region’s cultural resources. The shaded areas represent archaeologically sensitive areas and city properties, historic districts, and tribal lands. Historic places listed in a table whose addresses have been restricted or made unavailable to the public are not illustrated in the map.

Preservation & Mitigation

National Historic Preservation Act

Preservation and mitigation of historic sites occurs through the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 process. Because the State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) for Minnesota and Wisconsin have memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with the DOTs and FHWA, mitigation is dealt with on a case-by-case basis, with the final mitigation decision made by the SHPO. Government-to-government consultation with the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) is required when Tribal land or Native American historic and/or archaeological sites could be impacted. The determination process involves:

- 1) Determining if Section 106 applies:
 - Is the Federal action an undertaking under 36 CFR Part 800?
- 2) Determining the area of potential effects and identifying and evaluating resources:
 - Is there a potential for historic properties to exist in areas affected by the undertaking?
 - If properties do exist, are they eligible or potentially eligible for the National Register?
- 3) Determining how historic properties will be affected.
- 4) Resolving adverse effects through avoidance, minimization, or mitigation.

Because NEPA is the decision-making process, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) feels integrating the Section 106 process into NEPA rather than after provides historic preservation its best chance to avoid or minimize adverse effects. Integration would result in historic properties being considered early in the process and becoming part of project alternative identification and selection.

The current practice of on-site, project-by-project mitigation, however, results in the loss of archaeological sites, historic structures and buildings, and traditional cultural properties and

sacred sites. The ACHP has proposed considering applying similar mitigation strategies to historic preservation as those used for environmental mitigation (off-site mitigation and mitigation banking for archaeological sites).

Tribal Consultation

Government-to-Government Relationships

Federal Executive Order 13175, *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments* (Nov. 6, 2000), sets forth the criteria agencies should follow when formulating and implementing policies that have tribal implications. It requires Federal agencies to establish a consultation process for interactions with Indian tribes in the development of regulatory policies that have tribal implications. The Memorandum of Tribal Consultation issued on November 5, 2009 reaffirms the legal and political relationship between the Federal government and Tribal governments and tasked executive departments and agencies with creating detailed plans of actions that they will take to implement Executive Order 13175.

To comply with Federal law, Wisconsin issued Executive Order 39 and Minnesota issued Executive Order 13-10 to affirm the government-to-government relationship at the State level. The outcome of these executive orders was the development of partnership agreements between the States and their respective Tribal governments. WisDOT, for example, has entered into a Tribal Partnership Agreement with all 11 of Wisconsin's Tribal governments. The agreement established a WisDOT Tribal Task Force comprised of WisDOT and Tribal officials to serve as a forum to discuss transportation issues and policies impacting Tribes.

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA)

The main purpose of NAGPRA is to protect Native American burial sites and associated items. Implemented by the Secretary of the Interior, the Act addresses the rights of lineal descendants, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations in certain Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of historical, traditional, or cultural importance central to the Native American group or culture itself. All Federal agencies are subject to NAGPRA.

Other State and Local Laws

Applicable laws in Wisconsin include the Historic Preservation Program, the Burial Sites Preservation Program, the Long-Range Public Building Program, Uniform Conservation Easement Act, and local ordinances. Applicable laws in Minnesota include the Minnesota Field Archaeology Act and the Minnesota Historic Sites Act.