

Appendix O

Threatened and Endangered Species

MEMORANDUM

Date: March 13, 2026

**Re: Desktop Wildlife Habitat Assessment Memorandum, Cottage
Grove BESS Project, Washington County, Minnesota**

File R0071487.00

To: LSP CG Storage LLC

From: Westwood Professional Services

Executive Summary

The Mississippi River is located 0.6-miles south of the Project Area, and a known Bald Eagle nest is located 0.8-miles northwest of the Project Area. Suitable nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat for Bald Eagles appears extensively available in the vicinity surrounding the Project, however, it appears absent within the Project Area. While Bald Eagles may pass through the Project Area, they are not anticipated to utilize it for nesting. If a Bald Eagle nest is encountered in the vicinity of the Project, the USFWS recommended 660-foot setback should be implemented for all Project related construction activities. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) Natural Heritage Review (NHR) Letter states that the Project has the potential to impact the Blanding's Turtle through direct fatalities and habitat disturbance/destruction. Potentially suitable habitat for the western regal fritillary appears to be present within the Project Area; however, at this time there are no state or federal endangered species regulatory protections afforded to this species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Minnesota-Wisconsin Federal Endangered Species Determination Key reached a determination of "no effect" for the Higgins eye, salamander mussel, monarch butterfly, and Whooping Crane; therefore, no further consideration for these species is anticipated to be needed at this time (**Appendix C**). The USFWS Rusty Patched Bumblebee Range (RPBB) Wide Determination Key reached a determination of "may - not likely to adversely affect" for the RPBB; further consideration for this species is recommended (**Appendix D**).

Introduction

LSP CG Storage LLC is proposing to develop and construct the Cottage Grove BESS Project (Project), an energy storage system facility located on approximately 6.8 acres in Washington County, Minnesota (Project Area) (**Exhibit 1**). The objectives of this survey were to: 1) identify habitat quality and types within the Project Area that may support federally listed threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate species, or designated critical habitats, and any state listed threatened, endangered, rare species, or significant habitats, and species protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) (16 U.S.C. 668-668d) (collectively, "T&E Species"); and 2) identify the probability of T&E species occurrence within the Project Area and their potential to be affected by the Project's development, construction, or operation. Below is a synopsis of the desktop wildlife habitat assessment effort.

Background

The Project Area elevation ranges from 794 to 808 feet above sea level. Elevations are mostly consistent throughout the Project Area but gradually increase from east to west. Topography within the Project Area is generally flat with gradual slopes and drainages (**Exhibit 2**). According to the National Land Cover Database (NLCD) (MRLC 2024), landcover within the Project Area is entirely composed of varying levels of developed land (**Exhibit 3**). The National Wetland Inventory (NWI) indicates the presence of one wetland within the Project Area (USFWS 2024a). The National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) indicates no waterbodies or flowlines are present within the Project Area (**Exhibit 4**) (USGS 2024).

Federally listed threatened or endangered species are afforded protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (as amended) (16 U.S.C. 1531–1544), which is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The ESA authorizes the listing of species and prohibits the taking, possession, sale, and transport of listed species. The term “take” means to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. A permit is required to take a species when the taking is incidental to an otherwise lawful activity.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR), under Minnesota’s Endangered Species Statute 84.0895, (Sec. 84.0895 MN Statutes), provides protection of plant and animal species listed as threatened or endangered at the state level. The Statute is supported under Minnesota Administrative Rule 6134.0100 to 6134.0400 that lists the species included in each category. Minnesota Administrative Rule 6212.1800 to 6212.2300 creates regulations for the species designated at endangered or threatened (Minnesota Rules, Chapter 6134, Parts 6212.1800 to 6212.2300).

Methods

Westwood conducted a desktop review of publicly available environmental review data, including aerial imagery, land cover, wetlands, waterways, and T&E species data resources. T&E species that may occur within the Project Area or surrounding region were reviewed using the following resources:

- USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) (2026a) (**Appendix A**)
- MNDNR Natural Heritage Review (NHR) (2026a) (**Appendix B**)
- USFWS Minnesota-Wisconsin Federal Endangered Species Determination Key (2026b) (**Appendix C**)
- USFWS Rusty Patched Bumblebee Range (RPBB) Wide Determination Key (2026c) (**Appendix D**)

The USFWS has developed the IPaC database to identify federally listed species that have potential to occur in a specified area. Westwood queried IPaC to determine if federally threatened, endangered, proposed, or candidate species or critical habitats have the potential to occur within the Project Area (**Appendix A**).

MNDNR has developed the NHR to identify state listed species that have potential to occur within the state. Westwood requested a review of the Project Area through MNDNR NHR for records of federal or state listed rare, threatened, or endangered species, and ecologically significant areas, and in and within the vicinity of the Project Area (**Appendix B**).

Westwood investigated the probability of occurrence (i.e., zero, low, moderate, or high) in the Project Area for species of wildlife and plants that are federally, or state listed as proposed, endangered or threatened. Westwood's best professional judgement definitions of zero, low, moderate, and high probabilities can be described as follows:

- A **zero** probability of occurrence was assigned when the species has no chance of occurring in the Project Area at any time.
- A **low** probability of occurrence was assigned when the species had not been documented in the region from any known source and suitable habitat is absent or largely very limited or of low quality.
- A **moderate** probability of occurrence was assigned to species that have been documented in the region and relatively suitable habitat is present within the Project Area.
- A **high** probability was assigned when the species has been documented in the region and/or highly suitable habitat is available.

Two probability ranges, such as "low to moderate" or "moderate to high," are employed when the quality of habitat remains uncertain or the extent of potentially suitable habitat is unable to be accurately determined at the desktop level.

Similarly, Westwood evaluated the probability of a species to be affected (i.e., zero, low, moderate, or high) by the Project's development or operation. Westwood's best professional judgement definitions of zero, low, moderate, and high probabilities can be described as follows:

- A **zero** probability of being affected was assigned when a species has a zero probability of occurring in the Project Area at any time and/or its habitat has zero probability of being impacted by Project development or operation.
- A **low** probability of being affected was assigned when a species occurrence is low and suitable habitat is largely absent, or when a Project implements appropriate species-specific avoidance and minimization measures during development and operation.
- A **moderate** probability of being affected was assigned to species documented in the region that have potential to occur in the Project Area and/or suitable habitat is present within or in the immediate vicinity (<1-mile) of the Project Area.
- A **high** probability of being affected was assigned when the species has been documented in the Project Area and/or impacts to suitable habitat are unavoidable.

Results

Westwood conducted an IPaC coordination with USFWS on March 10, 2026 (**Appendix A**). Please note that IPaC results are only valid for 90 days. The results of the effort identified six species federally designated as endangered (FE), proposed endangered (PE), proposed threatened (PT), or non-essential experimental population (NEP) that may occur within the Project Area or surrounding region. The Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), protected under the BGEPA (16 U.S.C. 668-668d), was also identified by the IPaC. These species and their listing status are provided in **Table 1**.

TABLE 1: IPaC* AND BGEPA SPECIES WITH THE POTENTIAL TO OCCUR IN THE PROJECT AREA

Common Name (<i>Scientific Name</i>)	Status ¹ (Federal/State)
Birds	

Common Name (<i>Scientific Name</i>)	Status ¹ (Federal/State)
Bald Eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	BGEPA/--
Whooping Crane (<i>Grus americana</i>)	NEP/--
Mollusks	
Higgins Eye (Pearlmyssel) (<i>Lampsilis higginsii</i>)	FE/SE
Salamander Mussel (<i>Simpsonaias ambigua</i>)	PE/SE
Insects	
Monarch Butterfly (<i>Danaus plexippus</i>)	PT/--
Rusty Patched Bumble Bee (<i>Bombus affinis</i> ; RPBB)	FE/--
Western Regal Fritillary (<i>Argynnis idalia occidentalis</i>)	PT/--
¹ BGEPA = Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act; NEP = Non-essential Experimental Population; FE = Federally Endangered; PE = Proposed Endangered; PT = Proposed Threatened; SE = State Endangered	
*The accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days.	

A MNDNR NHR request was submitted on March 11, 2026. An automated response was received on March 11, 2026, and identified the presence of state endangered or threatened species within Project Area or the surrounding vicinity. A response letter was received on March 11, 2026, which identified two state threatened species as potentially occurring within the Project Area or surrounding region (MNDNR 2026a) (**Appendix B**). These species and their listing status are provided in **Table 2**.

TABLE 2: STATE PROTECTED SPECIES WITH THE POTENTIAL TO OCCUR IN THE PROJECT AREA

Common Name (<i>Scientific Name</i>)	Status ¹ (Federal/State)
Birds	
Loggerhead Shrike (<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>)	--/ST
Reptiles	
Blanding's Turtle (<i>Emydoidea blandingii</i>)	--/ST
¹ ST = State Threatened	

A summary of the identified species, their conservation status, habitat preferences, probability of occurring within the Project Area, and potential to be affected by Project construction and operation are provided in **Table 3** below.

TABLE 3: SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIALLY OCCURRING WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA OR SURROUNDING REGION

Species	Federal Status ¹	State Status ¹	Habitat	Probability of Occurrence within Project Area	Potential to be Affected
BIRDS					
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	BGEPA	--	Bald Eagles typically nest in mature trees adjacent to bodies of water but sometimes nest at greater distances from water if closer nesting locations are occupied (Buehler 2022).	High ; based on aerial imagery and street view, the Project Area appears to contain no suitable nesting, roosting or foraging habitat. However, there are multiple occurrences in the surrounding vicinity, suggesting that Bald Eagles will potentially pass through the Project Area (iNaturalist 2025). Additionally, preferred nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat is located along the Mississippi River approximately 0.6- miles south of the Project Area.	Low ; suitable nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat appears absent within the Project Area. However, there is suitable nesting and roosting habitat within 660ft, north of the Project Area. If a Bald Eagle nest is within 660ft of the Project Area, the nest should be appropriately buffered.
Loggerhead Shrike <i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	--	ST	Loggerhead Shrikes are known to utilize grasslands, prairies, pastures, and croplands where they use scattered shrubs, fences, or small trees as perching sites (MNDNR 2026b).	Low ; based on aerial imagery, the Project Area does not appear to contain suitable habitat.	Low ; suitable nesting and foraging habitat appears absent from the Project Area. Additionally, the MNDNR response letter (Appendix B) notes that the presence of Loggerhead Shrikes within the Project Area is unlikely. Impacts to Loggerhead Shrikes are not anticipated to occur and no further coordination for this species is necessary.
Whooping Crane <i>Grus americana</i>	NEP	--	Within Minnesota, Whooping Cranes are known to use managed wetlands on refuges and wildlife areas, riverine systems, flooded agricultural fields and cattle ranches, and harvested cornfields (Urbanek and Lewis 2020, USFWS n.d.a).	Low ; based on aerial imagery and street view, the Project Area appears to contain no suitable stopover habitat.	Low ; the Minnesota-Wisconsin Endangered Species Determination Key reached a determination of no effect (Appendix C). Based on the limited suitable habitat and intentions of the proposed Project, impacts to Whooping Cranes are not anticipated to occur and no further coordination for this species is recommended. <i>Note: NEPs are populations that have been established within a species' historic range to aid in</i>

Species	Federal Status ¹	State Status ¹	Habitat	Probability of Occurrence within Project Area	Potential to be Affected
					<i>recovery; however, NEP populations do not receive any federal protections.</i>
MOLLUSKS					
Higgins Eye (Pearlymussel) <i>Lampsilis higginsii</i>	FE	SE	In Minnesota, the Higgins Eye is only known to occur within the Mississippi river and its large tributaries (MNDNR 2026c). This species occupies a variety of substrates including sand, gravel, and large rocks (MNDNR 2026c).	Zero ; according to NHD (2024), no flowlines are known to occur within the Project Area.	Zero ; the Minnesota-Wisconsin Endangered Species Determination Key reached a determination of no effect (Appendix C). Based on the lack of suitable habitat observed within the Project Area, impacts to Higgins eye are not anticipated to occur and no further coordination for this species is recommended.
Salamander Mussel <i>Simpsonaias ambigua</i>	PE	SE	Salamander Mussels require specific habitat conditions that include flat rocks and rock ledges in flowing water (MNDNR 2026d). Additionally, their specific habitat needs to be occupied by their host, the mudpuppy salamander (<i>Necturus masculosus</i>) (MNDNR 2026d).	Zero ; according to NHD (2024), no flowlines are known to occur within the Project Area.	Zero ; the Minnesota-Wisconsin Endangered Species Determination Key reached a determination of no effect (Appendix C). Based on the lack of suitable habitat observed within the Project Area, impacts to Salamander Mussels are not anticipated to occur and no further coordination for this species is recommended.
REPTILES					
Blanding's Turtle <i>Emydoidea blandingii</i>	--	ST	Blanding's turtles use upland areas, up to and over a mile away from wetlands and other types of water body types, for nesting (MNDNR 2026a). Calm, shallow waters including wetlands associated with rivers and streams with adequate aquatic vegetation are	High ; there appears to be limited mapped wetlands within the Project Area (Exhibit 3); however, internal reports and photos show that there is a vegetated wetland area located in the southwestern portion of the Project Area that may contain suitable foraging and overwintering habitat.	High ; the MNDNR indicated the Project has the potential to impact Blanding's turtles through direct fatalities and habitat disturbance/destruction (Appendix B).

Species	Federal Status ¹	State Status ¹	Habitat	Probability of Occurrence within Project Area	Potential to be Affected
			preferred. Small temporary wetlands are frequently used for foraging, basking, and mating. In Minnesota, shrub wetlands are used throughout the year. Overwintering occurs in waters at least 3 feet deep that do not fully freeze in winter (MNDNR 2026e).		
INSECTS					
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	PT	--	Monarch butterflies lay their eggs on milkweed species (<i>Asclepias</i> sp.), which can be found in a variety of habitats, including wetlands, roadside ditches, and grasslands. Adults forage on a variety of flowering plants (USFWS n.d.b).	Low to Moderate ; the entirety of the Project Area is classified as developed. Additionally, aerial imagery, street view, internal reports and photos show that non-developed areas of grass appear to be maintained (mowed lawn) regularly to maintain lawn height. However, internal reports and photos show that there is a vegetated wetland area located in the southwestern portion of the Project Area that may contain suitable foraging habitat.	Low ; the Minnesota-Wisconsin Endangered Species Determination Key has reached a determination of no effect (Appendix C). Based on the limited amount of suitable habitat within the Project Area, impacts to the monarch butterfly are not expected. <i>Note: There are currently no protection requirements for this species; however, this species is currently under review for listing as threatened under the federal ESA (89 FR 100662). If the species is reclassified as threatened or endangered prior to Project completion, further assessment is warranted.</i>
Rusty Patched Bumble Bee <i>Bombus affinis</i>	FE	--	In Minnesota, RPBBs are known to occur in a variety of habitats including native prairies, forests, agricultural lands, grasslands, and along roadsides (MNDNR 2026f). The RPBB forages on a variety of flowering species including wild bergamot	High ; the Project Area is located within the RPBB High Potential Zone (HPZ) (Exhibit 5) (USFWS 2025). The entire Project Area site is classified as developed. Additionally, aerial imagery, street view, internal reports and photos show that non-developed areas of grass appear	Low or Moderate ; limited suitable foraging habitat appears present within the Project Area; the Range Wide Rusty Patched Bumble Bee Determination Key has reached a determination of “may affect - not likely to adversely affect” (Appendix D). If clearing of flowering vegetation is not anticipated, the potential to be affected is low. If clearing of flowering vegetation is anticipated, the potential to be affected is moderate.

Species	Federal Status ¹	State Status ¹	Habitat	Probability of Occurrence within Project Area	Potential to be Affected
			(<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>), spotted Joe Pye weed (<i>Eutrochium maculatum</i>), and Culver's root (<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>) (Wolf et al. 2022)	to be maintained (mowed lawn) regularly to maintain lawn height. However, internal reports and photos show that there is a vegetated wetland area located in the southwestern portion of the Project Area that may contain suitable foraging habitat.	
Western Regal Fritillary <i>Argynnis idalia occidentalis</i>	PT	--	In Minnesota, Western Regal Fritillaries primarily inhabit native prairies where its host plant, violets (<i>Viola</i> spp.), are present (MNDNR 2026g).	Low to Moderate the entirety of the Project Area is classified as developed. Additionally, aerial imagery, street view, internal reports and photos show that non-developed areas of grass appear to be maintained (mowed lawn) regularly to maintain lawn height. However, internal reports and photos show that there is a vegetated wetland area located in the southwestern portion of the Project Area that may contain suitable foraging habitat.	Low or Moderate ; limited suitable habitat appears present within the Project Area. If clearing of flowering vegetation is not anticipated, the potential to be affected is low. If clearing of flowering vegetation is anticipated, the potential to be affected is moderate. <i>Note: There are currently no protection requirements for this species; however, this species is currently under review for listing as threatened under the ESA (89 FR 63888). If the species is reclassified as threatened or endangered prior to Project completion, further assessment is warranted.</i>
¹ BGEPA = Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act; FE = Federally Endangered; NEP = Non-essential Experimental Population; PE = Proposed Endangered; PT = Proposed Threatened; SE = State Endangered; ST = State Threatened.					

Conclusion

Suitable nesting, foraging, and roosting habitat for the Bald Eagle appears to be absent within the Project Area; however, suitable nesting and roosting habitat appears to be present within 660 feet north of the Project Area, and a known Bald Eagle nest is located approximately 0.8-miles northwest of the Project (iNaturalist 2025). Additionally, the Mississippi River is located 0.6-miles south of the Project Area and provides suitable nesting, foraging, and roosting habitat. Given the amount of suitable habitat in the vicinity, it is possible that Bald Eagles will pass through the Project Area. However, based on the apparent absence of suitable nesting and foraging habitat within the Project Area and the extensive availability of high-quality habitat in the immediate vicinity, Bald Eagles are not anticipated to utilize the Project Area for nesting, and as such, impacts to Bald Eagles are not anticipated to occur. If a Bald Eagle nest is encountered within 660 feet of the Project prior to or during development, appropriate setbacks should be applied. Potentially suitable habitat for the Blanding's turtle appears present within the Project Area, but limited to a small, vegetated wetland in the southwest portion of the Project Area.

Potentially suitable habitat for the western regal fritillary appears to be present, but limited to a small, vegetated wetland in the southwest portion of the Project Area. There are no state or federal endangered species regulatory protections afforded to the western regal fritillary; as such, no further actions are recommended at this time.

The Minnesota-Wisconsin determination key reached a determination of "no effect" for the Higgins eye, salamander mussel, monarch butterfly, and whooping crane; therefore, no further consideration for this species is anticipated to be needed at this time (**Appendix C**). The USFWS Rusty Patched Bumble Bee Range Wide Determination Key reached a determination of "may affect - not likely to adversely affect" (**Appendix D**); the USFWS assumes Rusty Patched Bumble Bee presence in HPZs unless surveys following USFWS protocol are performed to confirm absence.

To minimize risk of take, the following recommendations should be considered:

- If a nest is present, USFWS recommends that any Bald Eagle nest be buffered by at least 660 feet from project activities.
- MNDNR requests confirmation that the following conservation measures for the Blanding's turtle will be implemented:
 - Avoid wetland and aquatic impacts during overwintering season, between September 15 and April 15, if the area is suitable for overwintering.
 - Wetlands and aquatic habitats that freeze solid to the bed (no liquid water) are not suitable overwintering habitat; however, Blanding's turtles will overwinter in wetlands and aquatic habitat where ice has closed over the water's surface.
 - Limit erosion and sediment control to wildlife friendly erosion control.
 - Check bare ground within construction areas for turtles before the use of heavy equipment or any ground disturbance.
 - The Blanding's turtle flyer must be given to all contractors working in the area (**Appendix E**).
 - If turtles are in imminent danger, move them by hand out of harm's way; otherwise, they are to be left undisturbed.
 - Report any sightings using the DNR Plant and Animal Observation Form (MNDNR, n.d.).

- If the above conservation measures are not feasible, further coordination with MNDNR is recommended. A full list of MNDNR recommendations can be found in **Appendix B.**
- If construction takes place after the monarch butterfly or western regal fritillary are listed, further assessment for avoidance and minimization measures may be warranted.
- Further coordination with the USFWS and MNDNR for the RPBB is recommended. BMPs should be implemented to limit the use of insecticides and herbicides to mitigate impacts to nearby potentially suitable habitat.

Please contact the Westwood Project Manager at (952)-937-5150 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

WESTWOOD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, INC.

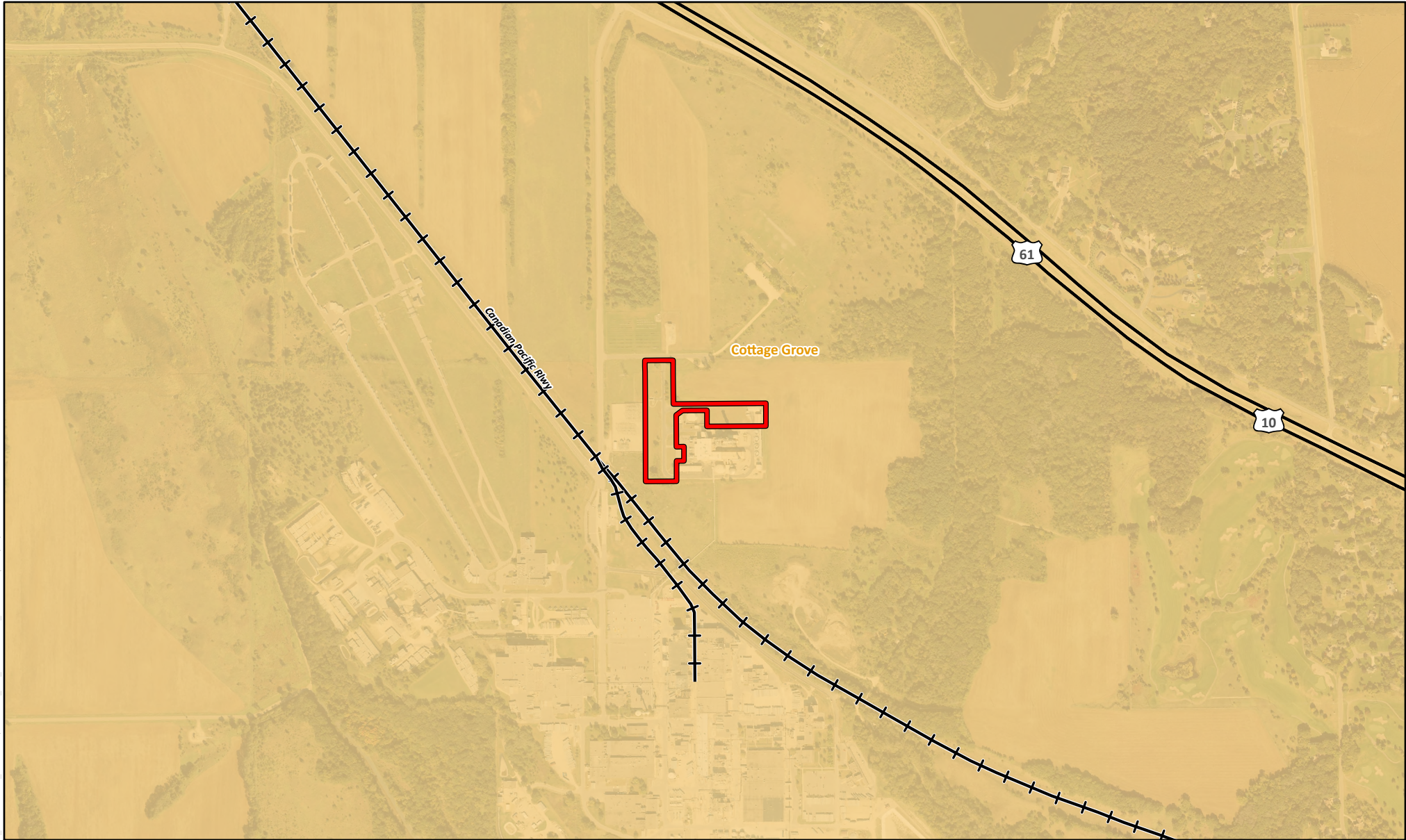
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Exhibits

Cottage Grove BESS Project
Washington County, Minnesota



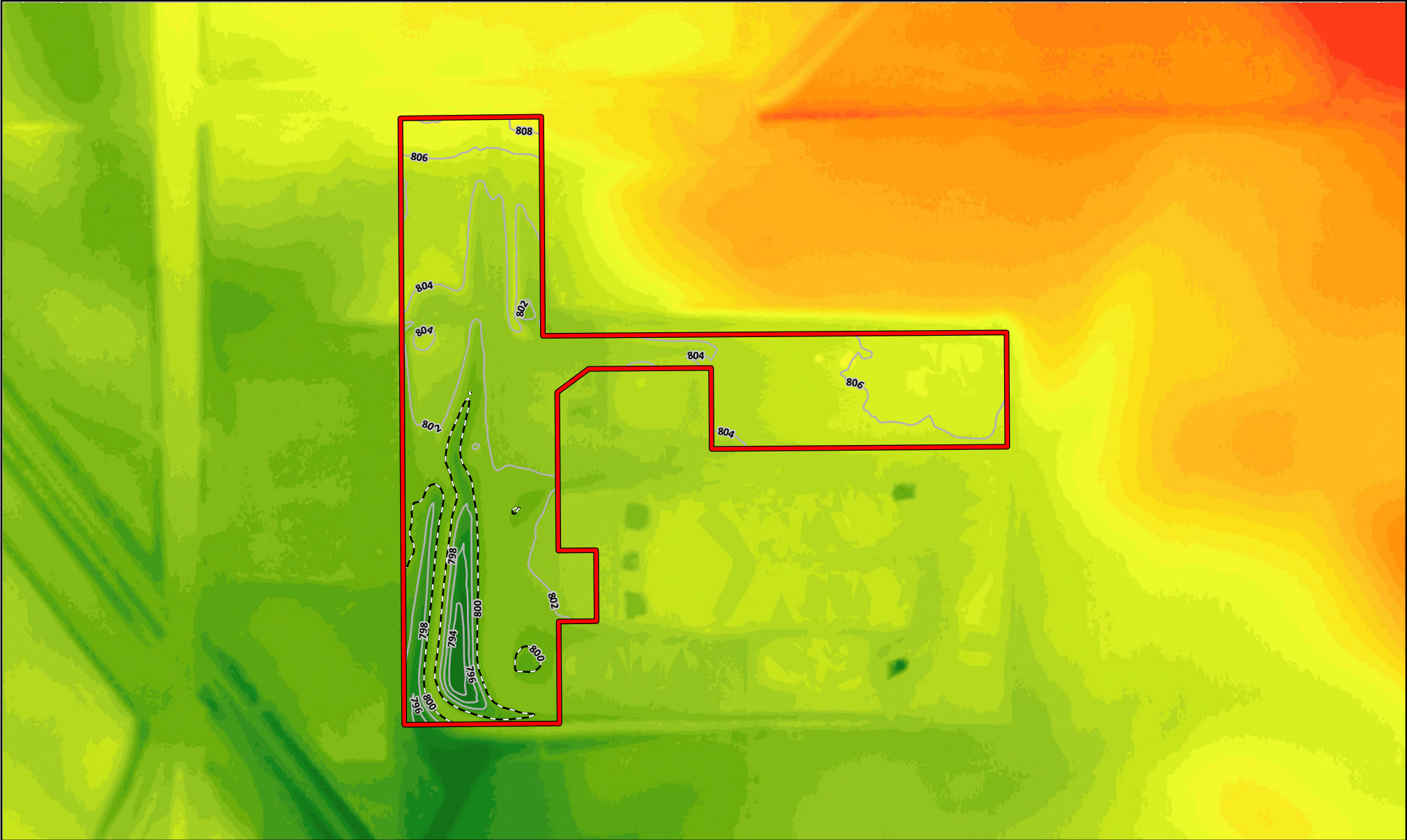
Data Source(s): Westwood (2026); NAIP (2025); U.S. Census Bureau (2025).



Westwood

Toll Free (888) 937-5150 westwoodps.com

Cottage Grove BESS Project		Washington County, Minnesota
Project Location		Exhibit 1
Legend Project Area Municipal Boundary Railroad Major Road		



Data Source(s): Westwood (2026); MnTopo (Accessed 2026).



Westwood
Toll Free (888) 937-5150 westwoodps.com

Cottage Grover BESS Project

Washington County, Minnesota

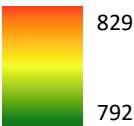
Topography & Elevation

Exhibit 2

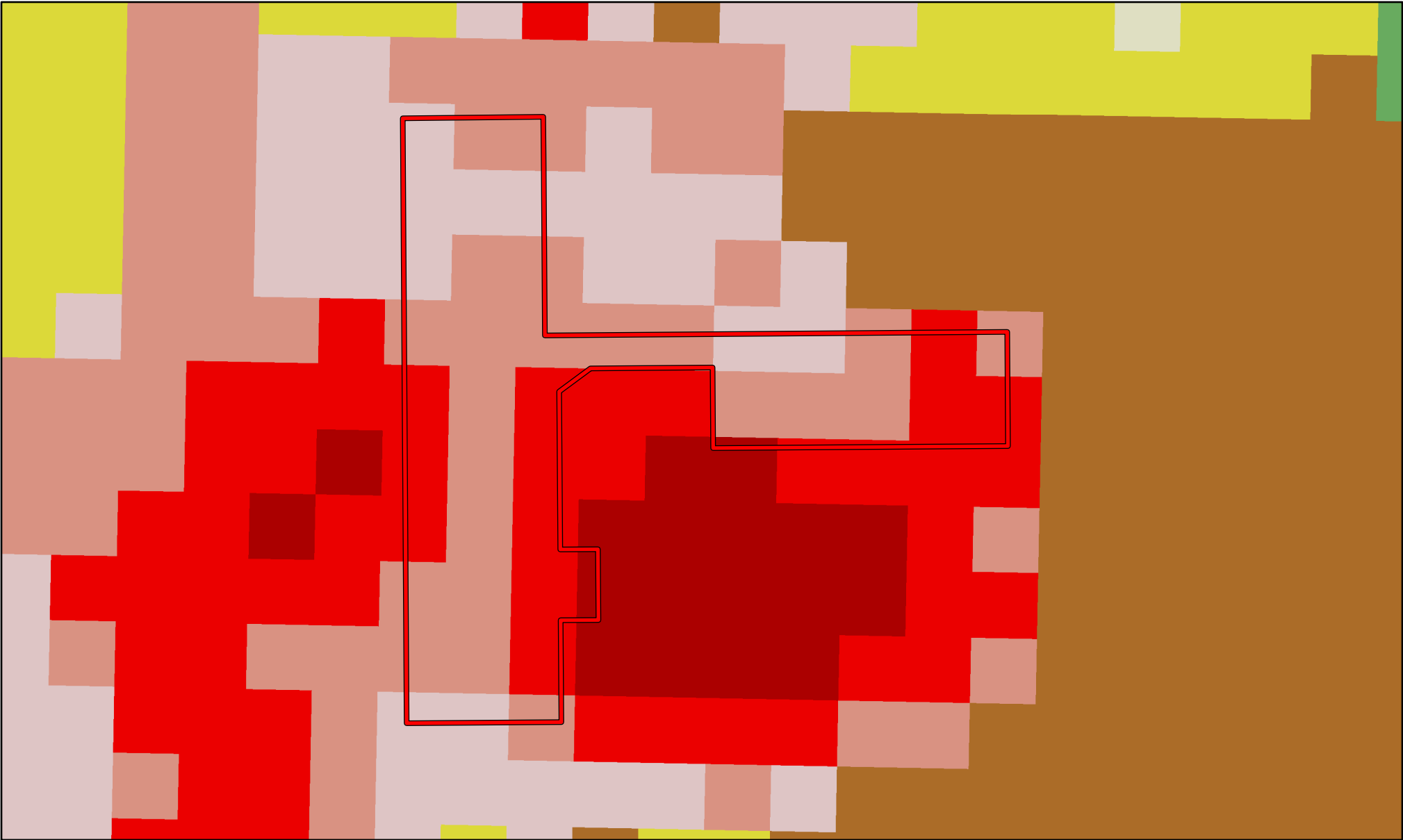
Legend

-  Project Area
-  10ft Contour
-  2ft Contour

Elevation (Feet)



829
792



Data Source(s): Westwood (2026); NLCD (2024).



Westwood
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Cottage Grover BESS Project

Washington County, Minnesota

Land Cover

Exhibit 3

Legend

 Project Area

NLCD Classification

 Developed, Open Space

 Developed, Low Intensity

 Developed, Medium Intensity

 Developed, High Intensity

 Deciduous Forest

 Hay/Pasture

 Cultivated Crops



Data Source(s): Westwood (2026); NAIP (2025); NWI (2025).



Westwood
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Cottage Grover BESS Project

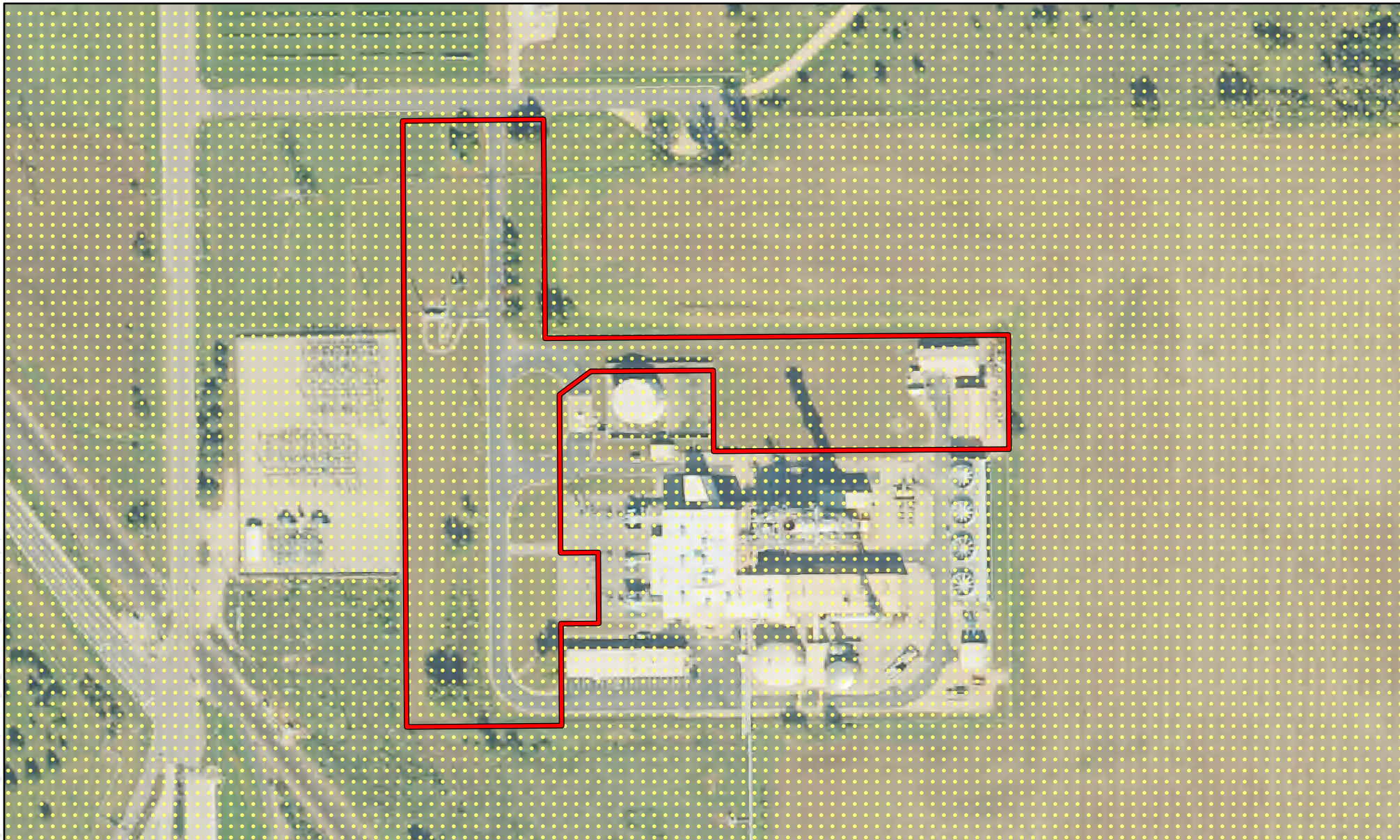
Washington County, Minnesota

Water Resources

Exhibit 4

Legend

-  Project Area
-  NWI Wetlands



Westwood

Toll Free (888) 937-5150 westwoodps.com

Biological Resources

Legend

 Project Area

RPBB Zone

 High Potential Zone

Washington County, Minnesota

Exhibit 5

Appendix A

USFWS IPaC

Cottage Grove BESS Project
Washington County, Minnesota



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Minnesota-Wisconsin Ecological Services Field Office
3815 American Blvd East
Bloomington, MN 55425-1659
Phone: (952) 858-0793



In Reply Refer To:

03/10/2026 20:02:48 UTC

Project Code: 2026-0060765

Project Name: Cottage Grove BESS Project

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

This response has been generated by the Information, Planning, and Conservation (IPaC) system to provide information on natural resources that could be affected by your project. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) provides this response under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531-1543), the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668-668d), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703-712), and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 *et seq.*).

Threatened and Endangered Species

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirement for obtaining a Technical Assistance Letter from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

Consultation Technical Assistance

Please refer to our [Section 7 website](#) for guidance and technical assistance, including [step-by-step instructions](#) for making effects determinations for each species that might be present and for specific guidance on the following types of projects: projects in developed areas, HUD, CDBG, EDA, USDA Rural Development projects, pipelines, buried utilities, telecommunications, and requests for a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) from FEMA.

We recommend running the project (if it qualifies) through our **Minnesota-Wisconsin Federal Endangered Species Determination Key (Minnesota-Wisconsin ("D-key"))**. A [demonstration video](#) showing how-to access and use the determination key is available. Please note that the Minnesota-Wisconsin D-key is the third option of 3 available d-keys. D-keys are tools to help Federal agencies and other project proponents determine if their proposed action has the potential to adversely affect federally listed species and designated critical habitat. The Minnesota-Wisconsin D-key includes a structured set of questions that assists a project proponent in determining whether a proposed project qualifies for a certain predetermined consultation outcome for all federally listed species found in Minnesota and Wisconsin (except for the northern long-eared bat- see below), which includes determinations of “no effect” or “may affect, not likely to adversely affect.” In each case, the Service has compiled and analyzed the best available information on the species’ biology and the impacts of certain activities to support these determinations.

If your completed d-key output letter shows a "No Effect" (NE) determination for all listed species, print your IPaC output letter for your files to document your compliance with the Endangered Species Act.

For Federal projects with a “Not Likely to Adversely Affect” (NLAA) determination, our concurrence becomes valid if you do not hear otherwise from us after a 30-day review period, as indicated in your letter.

If your d-key output letter indicates additional coordination with the Minnesota-Wisconsin Ecological Services Field Office is necessary (i.e., you get a “May Affect” determination), you will be provided additional guidance on contacting the Service to continue ESA coordination outside of the key; ESA compliance cannot be concluded using the key for “May Affect” determinations unless otherwise indicated in your output letter.

Note: Once you obtain your official species list, you are not required to continue in IPaC with d-keys, although in most cases these tools should expedite your review. If you choose to make an effects determination on your own, you may do so. If the project is a Federal Action, you may want to review our section 7 step-by-step instructions before making your determinations.

Using the IPaC Official Species List to Make No Effect and May Affect Determinations for Listed Species

1. If IPaC returns a result of “There are no listed species found within the vicinity of the project,” then project proponents can conclude the proposed activities will have **no effect** on any federally listed species under Service jurisdiction. Concurrence from the Service is not required for **no effect** determinations. No further consultation or coordination is required. Attach this letter to the dated IPaC species list report for your records.
2. If IPaC returns one or more federally listed, proposed, or candidate species as potentially present in the action area of the proposed project – other than bats (see below) – then project proponents must determine if proposed activities will have **no effect** on or **may affect** those species. For assistance in determining if suitable habitat for listed, candidate, or proposed species occurs within your project area or if species may be affected by project activities, you can obtain [Life History Information for Listed and Candidate Species](#) on our office website. If no impacts will occur to a species on the IPaC species list (e.g., there is no habitat present in the project area), the appropriate determination is **no effect**. No further consultation or coordination is required. Attach this letter to the dated IPaC species list report for your records.

3. Should you determine that project activities **may affect** any federally listed, please contact our office for further coordination. Letters with requests for consultation or correspondence about your project should include the Consultation Tracking Number in the header. Electronic submission is preferred.

For projects that intersect with or are adjacent to Tribal lands: The Service has federal Trust responsibilities and a strong commitment to working with Tribal governments to help sustain fish and wildlife resources for future generations. Tribal governments should be provided with sufficient opportunity to express their perspectives and/or concerns for proposed projects. If your project intersects with Tribal lands or impacts culturally sensitive resources, please engage with the federally recognized Tribe to ensure they have an opportunity to provide input on this project.

Northern Long-Eared Bats

Northern long-eared bats occur throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin and the information below may help in determining if your project may affect these species.

Suitable summer habitat for northern long-eared bats consists of a wide variety of forested/wooded habitats where they roost, forage, and travel and may also include some adjacent and interspersed non-forested habitats such as emergent wetlands and adjacent edges of agricultural fields, old fields and pastures. This includes forests and woodlots containing potential roosts (i.e., live trees and/or snags ≥ 3 inches dbh for northern long-eared bat that have exfoliating bark, cracks, crevices, and/or hollows), as well as linear features such as fencerows, riparian forests, and other wooded corridors. These wooded areas may be dense or loose aggregates of trees with variable amounts of canopy closure. Individual trees may be considered suitable habitat when they exhibit the characteristics of a potential roost tree and are located within 1,000 feet (305 meters) of forested/wooded habitat. Northern long-eared bats 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 and evaluated for use by bats. If your project will impact caves or mines or will involve clearing forest or woodland habitat containing suitable roosting habitat, northern long-eared bats could be affected. For bat activity dates, please review Appendix L in the [Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern Long-Eared Bat Survey Guidelines](#).

Examples of unsuitable habitat include:

- Individual trees that are greater than 1,000 feet from forested or wooded areas,
- Trees found in highly developed urban areas (e.g., street trees, downtown areas),
- A pure stand of less than 3-inch dbh trees that are not mixed with larger trees, and
- A monoculture stand of shrubby vegetation with no potential roost trees.

If IPaC returns a result that northern long-eared bats are potentially present in the action area of the proposed project, project proponents can conclude the proposed activities **may affect** this species **IF** one or more of the following activities are proposed:

- Clearing or disturbing suitable roosting habitat, as defined above, at any time of year,
- Any activity in or near the entrance to a cave or mine,
- Mining, deep excavation, or underground work within 0.25 miles of a cave or mine,
- Construction of one or more wind turbines, or

- Demolition or reconstruction of human-made structures that are known to be used by bats based on observations of roosting bats, bats emerging at dusk, or guano deposits or stains.

If none of the above activities are proposed, project proponents can conclude the proposed activities will have **no effect** on the northern long-eared bat. Concurrence from the Service is not required for **No Effect** determinations. No further consultation or coordination is required. Attach this letter to the dated IPaC species list report for your records.

If any of the above activities are proposed, and the northern long-eared bat appears on the user's species list, the federal project user will be directed to either the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat range-wide D-key or the Federal Highways Administration, Federal Railways Administration, and Federal Transit Administration Indiana bat/Northern long-eared bat D-key, depending on the type of project and federal agency involvement. Similar to the Minnesota-Wisconsin D-key, these d-keys help to determine if prohibited take might occur and, if not, will generate an automated verification letter. Additional information about available tools can be found on the Service's [northern long-eared bat website](#).

Whooping Crane

Whooping crane is designated as a non-essential experimental population in Wisconsin and consultation under Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act is only required if project activities will occur within a National Wildlife Refuge or National Park. If project activities are proposed on lands outside of a National Wildlife Refuge or National Park, then you are not required to consult. For additional information on this designation and consultation requirements, please review "[Establishment of a Nonessential Experimental Population of Whooping Cranes in the Eastern United States](#)."

Other Trust Resources and Activities

Bald and Golden Eagles - Although the bald eagle has been removed from the endangered species list, this species and the golden eagle are protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to survey the area for any migratory bird nests. If there is an eagle nest on-site while work is on-going, eagles may be disturbed. We recommend avoiding and minimizing disturbance to eagles whenever practicable. If you cannot avoid eagle disturbance, you may seek a [permit](#). A [nest take permit](#) is always required for removal, relocation, or obstruction of an eagle nest. For communication and wind energy projects, please refer to additional guidelines below.

Migratory Birds - The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) prohibits the taking, killing, possession, transportation, and importation of migratory birds, their eggs, parts, and nests, except when specifically authorized by the Service. The Service has the responsibility under the MBTA to proactively prevent the mortality of migratory birds whenever possible and we encourage implementation of [recommendations that minimize potential impacts to migratory birds](#). Such measures include clearing forested habitat outside the nesting season (generally March 1 to August 31) or conducting nest surveys prior to clearing to avoid injury to eggs or nestlings.

Communication Towers - Construction of new communications towers (including radio, television, cellular, and microwave) creates a potentially significant impact on migratory birds, especially some 350 species of night-migrating birds. However, the Service has developed [voluntary guidelines for minimizing impacts](#).

Transmission Lines - Migratory birds, especially large species with long wingspans, heavy bodies, and poor maneuverability can also collide with power lines. In addition, mortality can occur when birds, particularly hawks, eagles, kites, falcons, and owls, attempt to perch on uninsulated or unguarded power poles. To minimize these risks, please refer to [guidelines](#) developed by the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee and the Service. Implementation of these measures is especially important along sections of lines adjacent to wetlands or other areas that support large numbers of raptors and migratory birds.

Wind Energy - To minimize impacts to migratory birds and bats, wind energy projects should follow the Service's [Wind Energy Guidelines](#). In addition, please refer to the Service's [Eagle Conservation Plan Guidance](#), which provides guidance for conserving bald and golden eagles in the course of siting, constructing, and operating wind energy facilities.

State Department of Natural Resources Coordination

While it is not required for your Federal section 7 consultation, please note that additional state endangered or threatened species may also have the potential to be impacted. **Please contact the Minnesota or Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for information on state listed species that may be present in your proposed project area.**

Minnesota

[Minnesota Department of Natural Resources - Endangered Resources Review Homepage](#)

Email: Review.NHIS@state.mn.us

Wisconsin

[Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources - Endangered Resources Review Homepage](#)

Email: DNRERReview@wi.gov

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. Please feel free to contact our office with questions or for additional information.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- USFWS National Wildlife Refuges and Fish Hatcheries
- Bald & Golden Eagles
- Migratory Birds
- Wetlands

OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Minnesota-Wisconsin Ecological Services Field Office

3815 American Blvd East

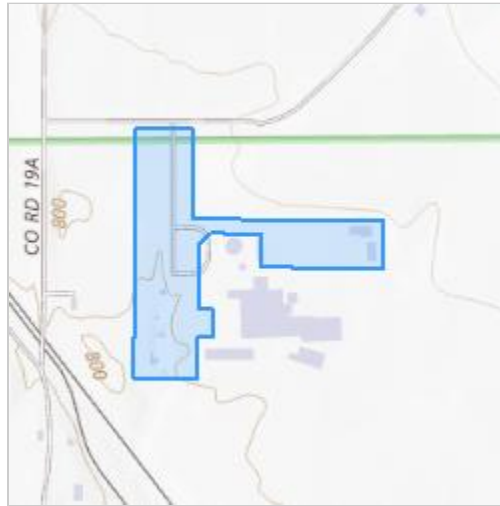
Bloomington, MN 55425-1659

(952) 858-0793

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2026-0060765
Project Name: Cottage Grove BESS Project
Project Type: Power Gen - Other
Project Description: Proposed BESS facility.
Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@44.7961176,-92.9099750511343,14z>



Counties: Washington County, Minnesota

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 6 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

-
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

BIRDS

NAME	STATUS
Whooping Crane <i>Grus americana</i> Population: Eastern Migratory NEP - U.S.A. (AL, AR, FL, GA, IL, IN, IA, KY, LA, MI, MN, MS, MO, NC, OH, SC, TN, VA, WI, WV) No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/758	Experimental Population, Non-Essential

CLAMS

NAME	STATUS
Higgins Eye (pearlymussel) <i>Lampsilis higginsii</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5428	Endangered
Salamander Mussel <i>Simpsonaias ambigua</i> There is proposed critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6208	Proposed Endangered

INSECTS

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> There is proposed critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743	Proposed Threatened
Rusty Patched Bumble Bee <i>Bombus affinis</i> There is proposed critical habitat for this species. Your location overlaps the critical habitat. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9383 General project design guidelines: https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/project/LYNITPRFBZCYRMLHVPYOHQGIQY/documents/generated/9225.pdf	Endangered
Western Regal Fritillary <i>Argynnis idalia occidentalis</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/12017	Proposed Threatened

CRITICAL HABITATS

There is 1 critical habitat wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction.

NAME	STATUS
Rusty Patched Bumble Bee <i>Bombus affinis</i> https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9383#crithab	Proposed

USFWS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE LANDS AND FISH HATCHERIES

Any activity proposed on lands managed by the [National Wildlife Refuge](#) system must undergo a 'Compatibility Determination' conducted by the Refuge. Please contact the individual Refuges to discuss any questions or concerns.

THERE ARE NO REFUGE LANDS OR FISH HATCHERIES WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA.

BALD & GOLDEN EAGLES

Bald and Golden Eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act ² and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) ¹. Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to Bald or Golden Eagles, or their habitats, should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate avoidance and minimization measures, as described in the various links on this page.

-
1. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
 2. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

There are Bald Eagles and/or Golden Eagles in your [project](#) area.

Measures for Proactively Minimizing Eagle Impacts

For information on how to best avoid and minimize disturbance to nesting bald eagles, please review the [National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines](#). You may employ the timing and activity-specific distance recommendations in this document when designing your project/activity to avoid and minimize eagle impacts. For bald eagle information specific to Alaska, please refer to [Bald Eagle Nesting and Sensitivity to Human Activity](#).

The FWS does not currently have guidelines for avoiding and minimizing disturbance to nesting Golden Eagles. For site-specific recommendations regarding nesting Golden Eagles, please consult with the appropriate Regional [Migratory Bird Office](#) or [Ecological Services Field Office](#).

If disturbance or take of eagles cannot be avoided, an [incidental take permit](#) may be available to authorize any take that results from, but is not the purpose of, an otherwise lawful activity. For assistance making this determination for Bald Eagles, visit the [Do I Need A Permit Tool](#). For assistance making this determination for golden eagles, please consult with the appropriate Regional [Migratory Bird Office](#) or [Ecological Services Field Office](#).

Ensure Your Eagle List is Accurate and Complete

If your project area is in a poorly surveyed area in IPaC, your list may not be complete and you may need to rely on other resources to determine what species may be present (e.g. your local FWS field office, state surveys, your own surveys). Please review the [Supplemental Information](#)

[on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#), to help you properly interpret the report for your specified location, including determining if there is sufficient data to ensure your list is accurate.

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to bald or golden eagles on your list, see the "Probability of Presence Summary" below to see when these bald or golden eagles are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Oct 15 to Aug 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#), specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

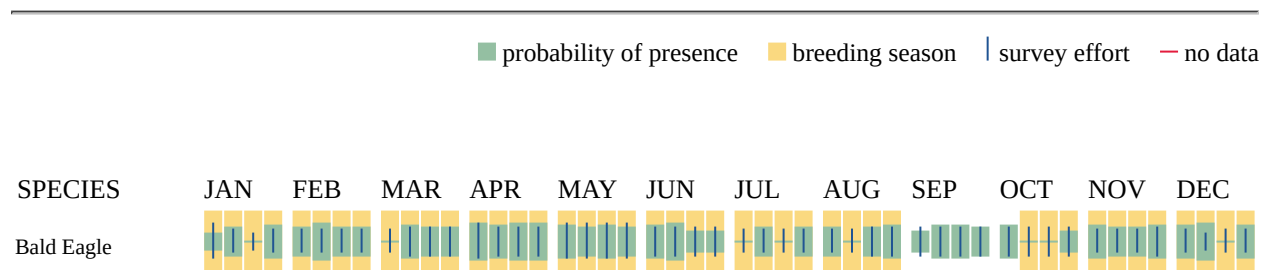
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



Non-BCC
Vulnerable

Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incidental-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide avoidance and minimization measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

MIGRATORY BIRDS

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) ¹ prohibits the take (including killing, capturing, selling, trading, and transport) of protected migratory bird species without prior authorization by the Department of Interior U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service).

-
1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
 2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the "Probability of Presence Summary" below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626	Breeds Oct 15 to Aug 31
Black-billed Cuckoo <i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9399	Breeds May 15 to Oct 10

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Bobolink <i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9454	Breeds May 20 to Jul 31
Chimney Swift <i>Chaetura pelagica</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9406	Breeds Mar 15 to Aug 25
Eastern Whip-poor-will <i>Antrostomus vociferus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10678	Breeds May 1 to Aug 20
Grasshopper Sparrow <i>Ammodramus savannarum perpallidus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8329	Breeds Jun 1 to Aug 20
Henslow's Sparrow <i>Centronyx henslowii</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3941	Breeds May 1 to Aug 31
Lesser Yellowlegs <i>Tringa flavipes</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9679	Breeds elsewhere
Pectoral Sandpiper <i>Calidris melanotos</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9561	Breeds elsewhere
Prairie Loggerhead Shrike <i>Lanius ludovicianus excubitorides</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8833	Breeds Feb 1 to Jul 31
Prothonotary Warbler <i>Protonotaria citrea</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9439	Breeds Apr 1 to Jul 31
Red-headed Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9398	Breeds May 10 to Sep 10

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Ruddy Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres morinella</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10633	Breeds elsewhere
Rusty Blackbird <i>Euphagus carolinus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9478	Breeds elsewhere
Semipalmated Sandpiper <i>Calidris pusilla</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9603	Breeds elsewhere
Upland Sandpiper <i>Bartramia longicauda</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9294	Breeds May 1 to Aug 31
Wood Thrush <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9431	Breeds May 10 to Aug 31

PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

Breeding Season (■)

Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

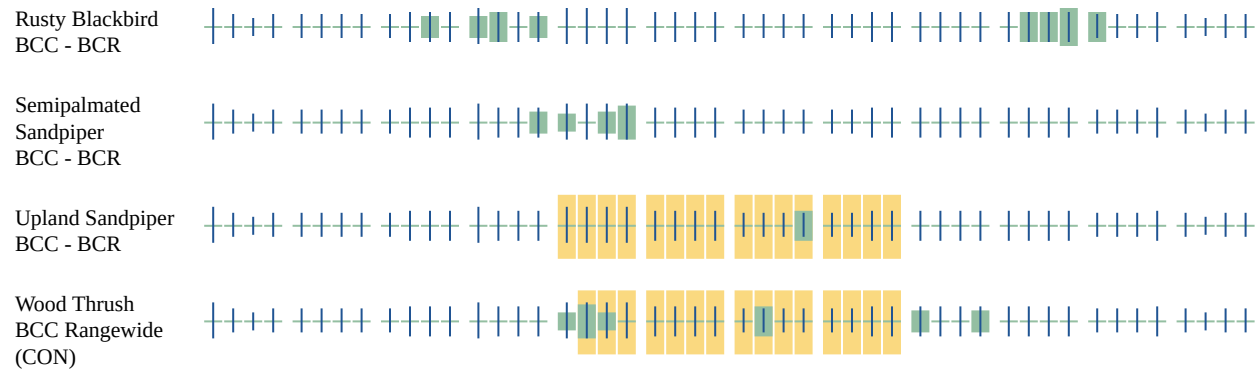
Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.





Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incidental-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide avoidance and minimization measures for birds
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

WETLANDS

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

Please note that the NWI data being shown may be out of date. We are currently working to update our NWI data set. We recommend you verify these results with a site visit to determine the actual extent of wetlands on site.

THERE ARE NO WETLANDS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA.

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Private Entity
Name: Mike Greisiger
Address: 10170 Church Ranch Way
Address Line 2: Suite 201
City: Westminster
State: CO
Zip: 80021
Email: mike.greisiger@westwoodps.com
Phone: 8889375150

Appendix B

MNDNR NHR

Cottage Grove BESS Project
Washington County, Minnesota



Formal Natural Heritage Review - Cover Page

See next page for results of review. A draft watermark means the project details have not been finalized and the results are not official.

Project Name: Cottage Grove BESS: Clone Of 2025-00811

Project Proposer: Westwood Professional Services

Project Type: Power, Other

Project Type Activities: Grading

TRS: T27 R21 S27

County(s): Washington

DNR Admin Region(s): Central

Reason Requested: Federal Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Assessment

Project Description: This project is a proposed battery energy storage system in the permitting stages of planning.

Existing Land Uses: Land use in the Project Area is primarily industrial with areas of mowed grass.

Landcover / Habitat Impacted: Industrial and mowed grass.

Waterbodies Affected: none.

Groundwater Resources Affected: unknown

Previous Natural Heritage Review: No

Previous Habitat Assessments / Surveys: No

SUMMARY OF AUTOMATED RESULTS

Category	Results	Response By Category
Project Details	No Comments	No Further Review Required
Ecologically Significant Area	No Comments	No Further Review Required
State-Listed Endangered or Threatened Species	Needs Further Review	State-protected Species - Needs Further Review
State-Listed Species of Special Concern	Comments	Recommendations
Federally Listed Species	Comments	Visit IPaC for Federal Review RPBB High Potential Zone



March 11, 2026

Project Name: Cottage Grove BESS: Clone Of 2025-00811

Project Proposer: Westwood Professional Services

Project Type: Power, Other

Project ID: MCE #2025-00811-02

AUTOMATED RESULTS: FURTHER REVIEW IS NEEDED

As requested, the above project has undergone an automated review for potential impacts to rare features. Based on this review, one or more rare features may be impacted by the proposed project and further review by the Natural Heritage Review Team is needed. You will receive a separate notification email when the review process is complete and the Natural Heritage Review letter has been posted.

Please refer to the table on the cover page of this report for a summary of potential impacts to rare features. For additional information or planning purposes, use the Explore Page in Minnesota Conservation Explorer to view the potentially impacted rare features or to create a Conservation Planning Report for the proposed project.

If you have additional information to help resolve the potential impacts listed in the summary results, please attach related project documentation in the Edit Details tab of the Project page. Relevant information includes, but is not limited to, additional project details, completed habitat assessments, or survey results. This additional information will be considered during the project review.

Cottage Grove BESS: Clone Of 2025-00811

Aerial Imagery With Locator Map



0 0.130.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

 Project Boundary

Project Type: Power, Other

Project Size (acres): 6.82

County(s): Washington

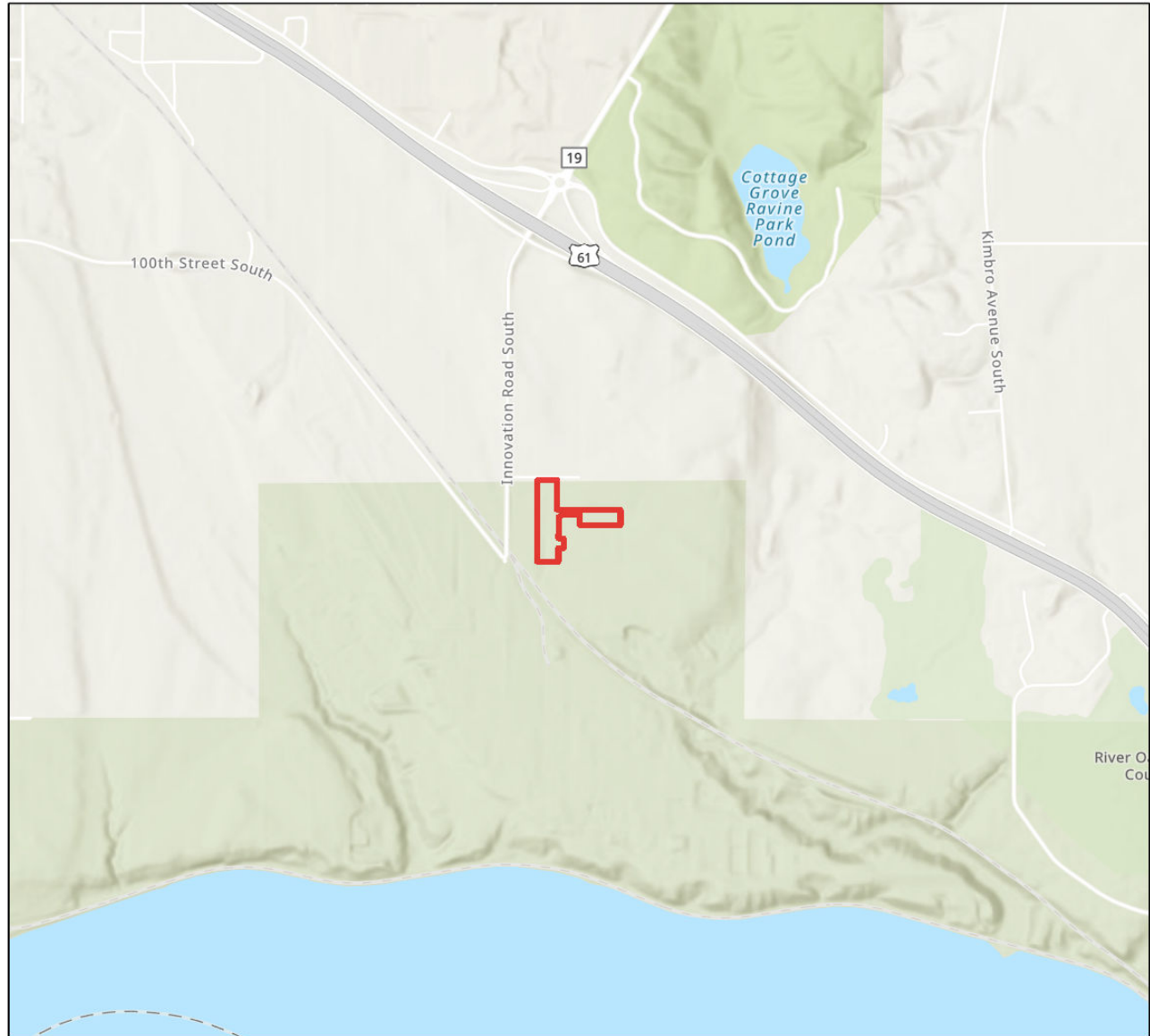
TRS: T27 R21 S27

Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, USFWS
County of Dakota, Metropolitan Council, MetroGIS, MN Dept Natural Resources,
Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS,



Cottage Grove BESS: Clone Of 2025-00811

USA Topo Basemap With Locator Map



0 0.130.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

 Project Boundary

Project Type: Power, Other

Project Size (acres): 6.82

County(s): Washington

TRS: T27 R21 S27

Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, USFWS
County of Dakota, Metropolitan Council, MetroGIS, MN Dept Natural Resources,
Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS,





Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Division of Ecological & Water Resources
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

March 11, 2026

Mike Greisiger
Westwood Professional Services

RE: Natural Heritage Review of the proposed Cottage Grove BESS: Clone of 2025-00811,
T27N R21W Section 27; Washington County

Dear Mike Greisiger,

For all correspondence regarding the Natural Heritage Review of this project please include the project ID **MCE-2025-00811-02** in the email subject line.

As requested, the [Minnesota Natural Heritage Information System](#) has been reviewed to determine if the proposed project has the potential to impact any rare species or other significant natural features. Based on the project details provided with the request, the following rare features may be impacted by the proposed project:

State-listed Species

- [Blanding's turtles](#) (*Emydoidea blandingii*), a state-listed threatened species, have been documented in the vicinity of the proposed project. Blanding's turtles use upland areas up to and over a mile distant from wetlands, waterbodies, and watercourses. Uplands are used for nesting, basking, periods of dormancy, and traveling between wetlands. Factors believed to contribute to the decline of this species include collisions with vehicles, wetland drainage and degradation, and the development of upland habitat. Any added mortality can be detrimental to populations of Blanding's turtles, as these turtles have a low reproduction rate that depends upon a high survival rate to maintain population levels.

This project has the potential to impact this rare turtle through direct fatalities and habitat disturbance/destruction due to activities associated with the proposed project. Minnesota's Endangered Species Statute (Minnesota Statutes, section 84.0895) and associated Rules (Minnesota Rules, part 6212.1800 to 6212.2300 and 6134) prohibit the take of threatened or endangered species without a permit. **As such, please contact Review.NHIS@state.mn.us to confirm that the following measures will be implemented:**

- Avoid wetland and aquatic impacts during overwintering season, between September 15 and April 15, if the area is suitable for overwintering.
 - Wetlands and aquatic habitats that freeze solid to the bed (no liquid water) are not suitable overwintering habitat. However, Blanding's turtles will overwinter in wetlands and aquatic habitat where ice has closed over the water's surface.
- Limit erosion and sediment control to [wildlife friendly erosion control](#).

- Check bare ground within construction areas for turtles before the use of heavy equipment or any ground disturbance.
- The [Blanding's turtle flyer](#) must be given to all contractors working in the area.
- Report any sightings using the [DNR Plant and Animal Observation Form](#).
- If turtles are in imminent danger, move them by hand out of harm's way; otherwise, they are to be left undisturbed. Directions on how to move turtles safely can be found at [Helping Turtles Across the Road](#).

If the above measures are not feasible, please contact Review.NHIS@state.mn.us as a project-specific avoidance plan will likely be needed to demonstrate avoidance.

Additional Blanding's turtle avoidance measures may include, but are not limited to, the following recommendations:

- Recommendations from List 1 of the [Blanding's turtle fact sheet](#). If greater protection for turtles is desired, implement recommendations from List 2.
- [Loggerhead shrikes](#) (*Lanius ludovicianus*), a state-listed endangered bird, have been documented historically in the vicinity of the project site. Loggerhead shrikes use grasslands that contain short grass and scattered perching sites such as hedgerows, shrubs, or small trees. They can be found in native prairie, pastures, shelterbelts, old fields or orchards, cemeteries, grassy roadsides, and farmyards. The presence of this bird is unlikely; therefore, we do not anticipate any impacts. In the unlikely event of a sighting, please report using the [DNR Plant and Animal Observation Form](#).
- Please visit the [DNR Rare Species Guide](#) for more information on the habitat use of state-listed species and recommended measures to avoid or minimize impacts.

Federally Protected Species

- To ensure compliance with federal law, conduct a federal regulatory review using the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) online [Information for Planning and Consultation \(IPaC\) tool](#).

Environmental Review and Permitting

- Please include a copy of this letter and the MCE-generated Final Project Report in any state or local license or permit application. Please note that measures to avoid or minimize disturbance to the above rare features may be included as restrictions or conditions in any required permits or licenses.

The Natural Heritage Information System (NHIS), a collection of databases that contains information about Minnesota's rare natural features, is maintained by the Division of Ecological and Water Resources, Department of Natural Resources. The NHIS is continually updated as new information becomes available and is the most complete source of data on Minnesota's native plant communities, rare species, and other rare features. However, the NHIS is not an exhaustive inventory and does not contain the locations of all rare features in the state. Therefore, ecologically significant features for which we have no records may exist within the project area. If additional information becomes available regarding rare features in the vicinity of the project, further review may be necessary.

For environmental review purposes, the results of this Natural Heritage Review are valid for one year; the results are only valid for the project location and project description provided with the request. **If project details change or the project has not occurred within one year, please resubmit the project for review within one year of initiating project activities.** Resubmit by selecting *Clone Project as Draft* on the project page in MCE.

The Natural Heritage Review does not constitute project approval by the Department of Natural Resources. Instead, it identifies issues regarding known occurrences of rare features and potential impacts to these rare features. Visit [Natural Heritage Review](#) for additional information regarding this process, survey guidance, and other related information. For information on the environmental review process or other natural resource concerns, please contact your [DNR Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist](#).

Thank you for consulting us on this matter and for your interest in preserving Minnesota's rare natural resources.

Sincerely,

James Drake

Digitally signed by James Drake
Date: 2026.03.11 13:55:34 -05'00'

Natural Heritage Review Specialist

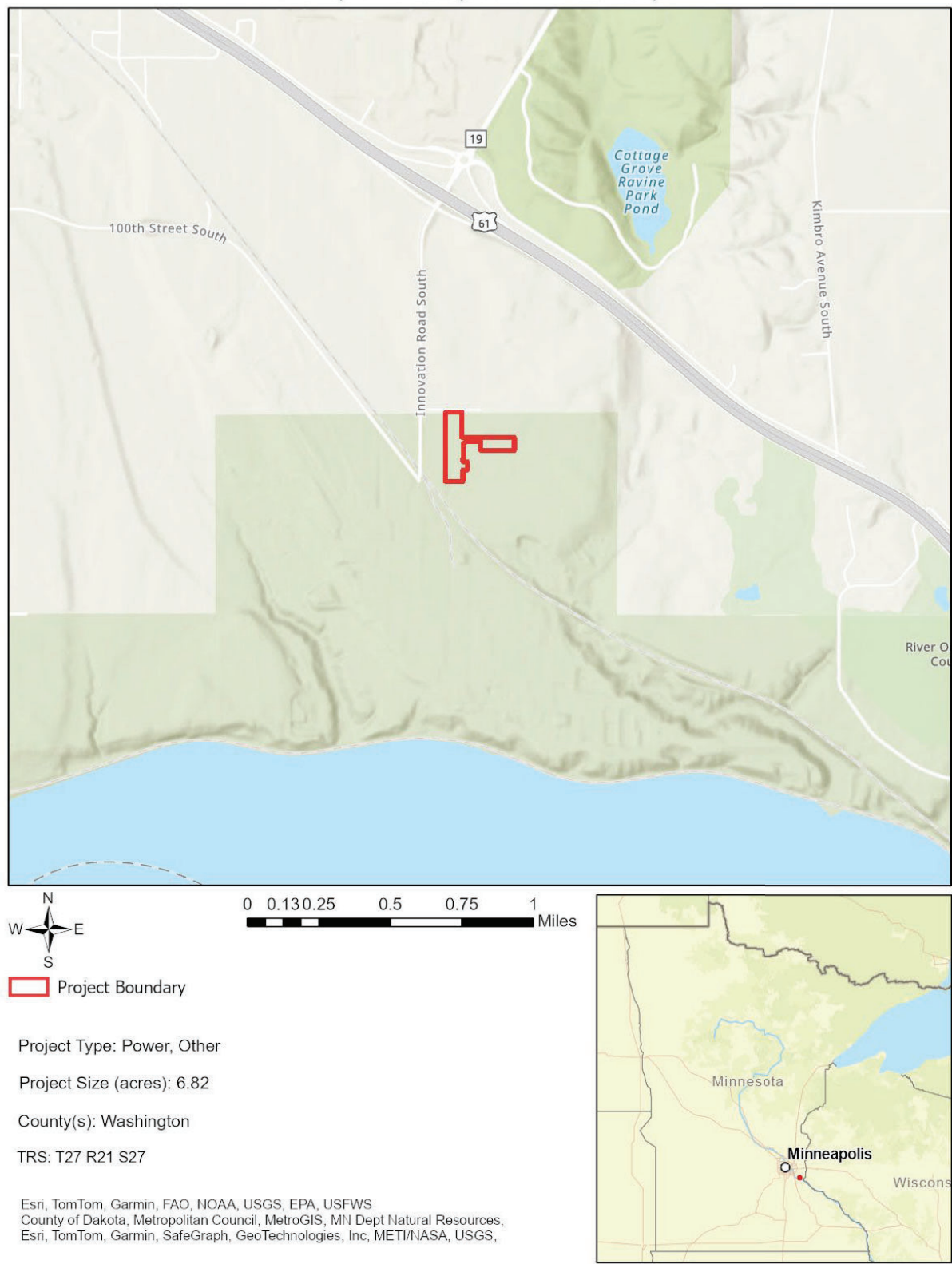
james.f.drake@state.mn.us

Cc: Melissa Collins

For more project details, see the MCE-generated Final Project Report, available on the MCE project page.

Cottage Grove BESS: Clone Of 2025-00811

USA Topo Basemap With Locator Map



Appendix C
Minnesota-Wisconsin Federal
Endangered Species
Determination Key

Cottage Grove BESS Project
Washington County, Minnesota



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Minnesota-Wisconsin Ecological Services Field Office
3815 American Blvd East
Bloomington, MN 55425-1659
Phone: (952) 858-0793



In Reply Refer To:

03/10/2026 20:08:55 UTC

Project code: 2026-0060765

Project Name: Cottage Grove BESS Project

Subject: Technical Assistance letter for 'Cottage Grove BESS Project' for specified threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location consistent with the Minnesota-Wisconsin Endangered Species Determination Key (Minnesota-Wisconsin DKey).

Dear Mike Greisiger:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) received on **March 10, 2026** your effect determination(s) for the 'Cottage Grove BESS Project' (Action) using the Minnesota-Wisconsin DKey within the Service's Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system. The Service developed this system in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C 1531 et seq.).

Based on your responses to the Service's Minnesota-Wisconsin DKey, you made the following effect determination(s) for the proposed Action:

Species	Listing Status	Determination
Higgins Eye (pearlymussel) (<i>Lampsilis higginsii</i>)	Endangered	No effect
Monarch Butterfly (<i>Danaus plexippus</i>)	Proposed	No effect
	Threatened	
Salamander Mussel (<i>Simpsonaias ambigua</i>)	Proposed	No effect
	Endangered	
Whooping Crane (<i>Grus americana</i>)	Experimental	No effect
	Population, Non-Essential	

Determination Information

Thank you for informing the Service of your "No Effect" determination(s). No further coordination is necessary for the species you determined will not be affected by the Action.

Additional Information

Sufficient project details: Please provide sufficient project details on your project homepage in IPaC (Define Project, Project Description) to support your conclusions. Failure to disclose important aspects of your project that would influence the outcome of your effects determinations may negate your determinations and invalidate this letter. If you have site-specific information that leads you to believe a different determination is more appropriate for your project than what the Dkey concludes, you can and should proceed based on the best available information.

Future project changes: The Service recommends that you contact the Minnesota-Wisconsin Ecological Services Field Office or re-evaluate the project in IPaC if: 1) the scope or location of the proposed Action is changed; 2) new information reveals that the action may affect federally listed species or federally designated critical habitat in a manner or to an extent not previously considered; 3) the Action is modified in a manner that causes effects to listed species or designated critical habitat; or 4) a new species is listed or critical habitat designated. If any of the above conditions occurs, additional consultation with the Service should take place before project changes are final or resources committed.

Species-specific information

Freshwater Mussels: Freshwater mussels are one of the most critically imperiled groups of organisms in the world. In North America, 65% of the remaining 300 species are vulnerable to extinction (Haag and Williams 2014). Implementing measures to conserve and restore freshwater mussel populations directly improves water quality in lakes, rivers, and streams throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin. An adult freshwater mussel filters anywhere from 1 to 38 gallons of water per day (Baker and Levinton 2003, Barnhart pers. comm. 2019). A 2015 survey found that in some areas, mussels can reduce the bacterial populations by more than 85% (Othman et al. 2015 in Vaughn 2017). Mussels are also considered to be ecosystem engineers by stabilizing substrate and providing habitat for other aquatic organisms (Vaughn 2017). In addition to ecosystem services, mussels play an important role in the food web, contributing critical nutrients to both terrestrial and aquatic habitats, including those that support sport fish (Vaughn 2017). Taking proactive measures to conserve and restore freshwater mussels will improve water quality, which has the potential to positively impact human health and recreation in the States of Minnesota and Wisconsin.

You have indicated that your Action will have no effect (NE) on Federally listed mussel species. However, state-listed mussels may occur in your Action area. Contact the Minnesota or Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to determine effects to state-listed mussels.

Bald and Golden Eagles: Bald eagles, golden eagles, and their nests are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (54 Stat. 250, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 668a-d) (Eagle Act). The Eagle Act prohibits, except when authorized by an Eagle Act permit, the “taking” of bald and golden eagles and defines “take” as “pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, molest or disturb.” The Eagle Act’s implementing regulations define disturb as “... to agitate or bother a bald or golden eagle to a degree that causes, or is likely to cause, based on the best scientific information available, (1) injury to an eagle, (2) a decrease in its productivity, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior, or (3) nest abandonment, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior.”

If you observe a bald eagle nest in the vicinity of your proposed project, you should follow the [National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines \(May 2007\)](#). For more information on eagles and conducting activities in the vicinity of an eagle nest, please visit our [regional eagle website](#) or contact Margaret at Margaret.Martin@fws.gov. If the Action may affect bald or golden eagles, additional coordination with the Service under the Eagle Act may be required.

Additional Species Requiring Review

In addition to the species described above, the following species or critical habitats may also occur in your project area and are not covered by this conclusion:

- Rusty Patched Bumble Bee *Bombus affinis* Endangered
- Western Regal Fritillary *Argynnis idalia occidentalis* Proposed Threatened

Coordination with the Service is not complete if additional coordination is advised above for any species.

Action Description

You provided to IPaC the following name and description for the subject Action.

1. Name

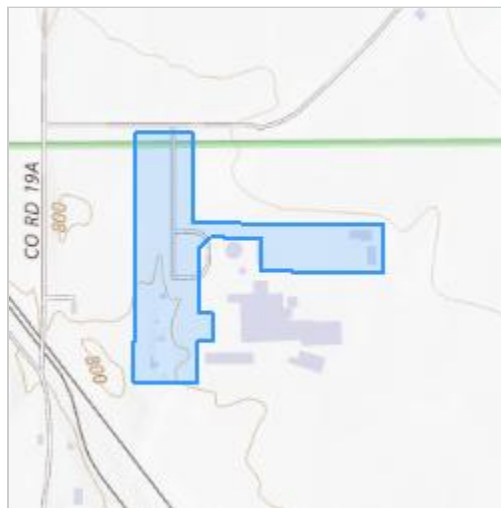
Cottage Grove BESS Project

2. Description

The following description was provided for the project 'Cottage Grove BESS Project':

Proposed BESS facility.

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@44.7961176,-92.9099750511343,14z>



QUALIFICATION INTERVIEW

1. This determination key is intended to assist the user in evaluating the effects of their actions on Federally listed species in Minnesota and Wisconsin. It does not cover other prohibited activities under the Endangered Species Act (e.g., for wildlife: import/export, Interstate or foreign commerce, possession of illegally taken wildlife, etc.; for plants: import/export, reduce to possession, malicious destruction on Federal lands, commercial sale, etc.) or other statutes. Additionally, this key DOES NOT cover wind development, purposeful take (e.g., for research or surveys), communication towers that have guy wires or are over 450 feet in height, aerial or other large-scale application of any chemical (such as insecticide or herbicide), and approval of long-term permits or plans (e.g., FERC licenses, HCP's).

Click **YES** to acknowledge that you must consider other prohibitions of the ESA or other statutes outside of this determination key.

Yes

2. Is the action being funded, authorized, or carried out by a Federal agency?

No

3. Is the action being conducted by or on behalf of a Federally recognized Tribe?

No

4. Does the action involve the installation or operation of wind turbines?

No

5. Does the action involve purposeful take of a listed animal?

No

6. Does the action involve a new communications tower?

No

7. Does the activity involve aerial or other large-scale application of ANY chemical, including pesticides (insecticide, herbicide, fungicide, rodenticide, etc)?

No

8. Will your action permanently affect local hydrology?

No

9. Will your action temporarily affect local hydrology?

No

10. Will your project have any direct impacts to a stream or river (e.g., Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD), hydrostatic testing, stream/road crossings, new stormwater outfall discharge, dams, other in-stream work, etc.)?

No

11. Does your project have the potential to impact the riparian zone or indirectly impact a stream/river (e.g., cut and fill; horizontal directional drilling; construction; vegetation removal; pesticide or fertilizer application; discharge; runoff of sediment or pollutants; increase in erosion, etc.)?

Note: Consider all potential effects of the action, including those that may happen later in time and outside and downstream of the immediate area involved in the action.

Endangered Species Act regulation defines "effects of the action" to include all consequences to listed species or critical habitat that are caused by the proposed action, including the consequences of other activities that are caused by the proposed action. A consequence is caused by the proposed action if it would not occur but for the proposed action and it is reasonably certain to occur. Effects of the action may occur later in time and may include consequences occurring outside the immediate area involved in the action. (50 CFR 402.02).

No

12. Will your action disturb the ground or existing vegetation?

Note: This includes any off-road vehicle access, soil compaction (enough to collapse a rodent burrow), digging, seismic survey, directional drilling, heavy equipment, grading, trenching, placement of fill, pesticide application (herbicide, fungicide), vegetation management (including removal or maintenance using equipment or prescribed fire), cultivation, development, etc.

Yes

13. Will your action include spraying insecticides?

No

14. Does your action area occur entirely within an already developed area?

Note: Already developed areas are already paved, covered by existing structures, manicured lawns, industrial sites, or cultivated cropland, AND do not contain trees that could be roosting habitat. Be aware that listed species may occur in areas with natural, or semi-natural, vegetation immediately adjacent to existing utilities (e.g. roadways, railways) or within utility rights-of-way such as overhead transmission line corridors, and can utilize suitable trees, bridges, or culverts for roosting even in urban dominated landscapes (so these are not considered "already developed areas" for the purposes of this question). If unsure, select NO..

Yes

15. Does the action have potential indirect effects to listed species or the habitats they depend on (e.g., water discharge into adjacent habitat or waterbody, changes in groundwater elevation, introduction of an exotic plant species)?

No

16. [Semantic] Does the project intersect the Salamander mussel AOI?

Automatically answered

Yes

17. [Hidden Semantic] Does the action area intersect the monarch butterfly species list area?

Automatically answered

Yes

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency: Private Entity
Name: Mike Greisiger
Address: 10170 Church Ranch Way
Address Line 2: Suite 201
City: Westminster
State: CO
Zip: 80021
Email: mike.greisiger@westwoodps.com
Phone: 8889375150

Appendix D
Rusty Patched Bumblebee
Range Wide Determination
Key

Cottage Grove BESS Project
Washington County, Minnesota



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Minnesota-Wisconsin Ecological Services Field Office
3815 American Blvd East
Bloomington, MN 55425-1659
Phone: (952) 858-0793



In Reply Refer To:

03/12/2026 15:52:47 UTC

Project code: 2026-0060765

Project Name: Cottage Grove BESS Project

Federal Nexus: no

Federal Action Agency (if applicable):

Subject: Technical Assistance letter for 'Cottage Grove BESS Project' for rusty patched bumble bee that may occur in your proposed project location consistent with the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee Range Wide Determination Key (RPBB DKey).

Dear Mike Greisiger:

This letter records your determination using the RPBB DKey within the Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system provided to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on **March 12, 2026**, for 'Cottage Grove BESS Project' (here forward, Project). This project has been assigned Project Code '2026-0060765' and all future correspondence should clearly reference this number. **Please carefully review this letter. Your Endangered Species Act (Act) requirements are not complete.**

Ensuring Accurate Determinations When Using IPaC Determination Keys

The USFWS developed the IPaC system and associated species' determination keys in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA; 87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). All information submitted by the Project proponent into the IPaC must accurately represent the full scope and details of the Project. **Failure to accurately represent or implement the Project as detailed in IPaC or the RPBB DKey, invalidates this letter.**

Determination for the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee

Based on your answers and the assistance of the USFWS' RPBB DKey, you made the following effect determination for the proposed Action:

Species	Listing Status	Determination
Rusty Patched Bumble Bee (<i>Bombus affinis</i>)	Endangered	NLAA

Coordination with the USFWS regarding the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee is complete.

Thank you for considering federally listed species during your project planning.

Other Species and Critical Habitat that May be Present in the Action Area

The IPaC-assisted determination key for the rusty patched bumble bee **does not** apply to the following ESA-protected species and/or critical habitat that also may occur in your Action area:

- Higgins Eye (pearlymussel) *Lampsilis higginsii* Endangered
- Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus* Proposed Threatened
- Salamander Mussel *Simpsonaias ambigua* Proposed Endangered
- Western Regal Fritillary *Argynnis idalia occidentalis* Proposed Threatened
- Whooping Crane *Grus americana* Experimental Population, Non-Essential

Critical Habitats:

- Rusty Patched Bumble Bee *Bombus affinis* Endangered

Coordination with the USFWS is advised for any species and/or critical habitat listed above.

You should coordinate with our Office to determine whether the Action may affect the species and/or critical habitat listed above and if further consultation is required. Note that reinitiation of consultation would be necessary if a new species is listed or critical habitat designated that may be affected by the identified action before it is complete.

If you have any questions regarding this letter or need further assistance, please contact the local Ecological Services Field Office and reference Project Code '2026-0060765' associated with this Project. See the top of this letter for the Project Code.

Additional Information

Sufficient project details: Please provide sufficient project details on your project homepage in IPaC (Define Project, Project Description) to support your conclusions. Failure to disclose important aspects of your project that would influence the outcome of your effects determinations may negate your determinations and invalidate this letter. If you have site-specific information that leads you to believe a different determination is more appropriate for your project than what the Dkey concludes, you can and should proceed based on the best available information.

Future project changes: The Service recommends that you contact the local Ecological Services Field Office or re-evaluate the project in IPaC if: 1) the scope or location of the proposed Action is changed; 2) new information reveals that the action may affect rusty patched bumble bee in a manner or to an extent not previously considered; 3) the Action is modified in a manner that causes effects to rusty patched bumble bee; or 4) or critical habitat is designated. If any of the

above conditions occur, additional consultation with the Service should take place before project changes are final or resources are committed.

Species-specific information

Bald and Golden Eagles: Bald eagles, golden eagles, and their nests are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (54 Stat. 250, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 668a-d) (Eagle Act). The Eagle Act prohibits, except when authorized by an Eagle Act permit, the “taking” of bald and golden eagles and defines “take” as “pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, molest or disturb.” The Eagle Act’s implementing regulations define disturb as “... to agitate or bother a bald or golden eagle to a degree that causes, or is likely to cause, based on the best scientific information available, (1) injury to an eagle, (2) a decrease in its productivity, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior, or (3) nest abandonment, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior.”

If you observe a bald eagle nest in the vicinity of your proposed project, you should follow the National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (May 2007). For more information on eagles and conducting activities in the vicinity of an eagle nest, please visit our regional eagle website or contact the local Ecological Services Field Office. If the Action may affect bald or golden eagles, additional coordination with the Service under the Eagle Act may be required.

Action Description

You provided to IPaC the following name and description for the subject Action.

1. Name

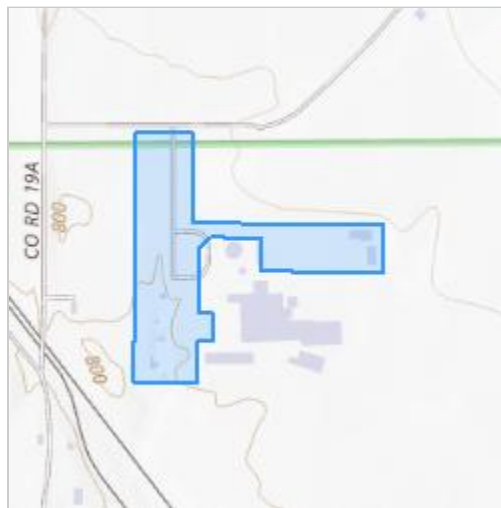
Cottage Grove BESS Project

2. Description

The following description was provided for the project 'Cottage Grove BESS Project':

Proposed BESS facility.

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@44.7961176,-92.9099750511343,14z>



QUALIFICATION INTERVIEW

1. Is the action authorized, funded, or being carried out by a Federal agency?

No

2. Does the action area overlap with a rusty patched bumble bee high potential zone?

Automatically answered

Yes

3. Does the action include - or is it reasonably certain to cause - intentional take of rusty patched bumble bee (rusty patched bumble bee) that is not covered under a scientific recovery permit under section 10(A)1(a) of the Endangered Species Act or under a cooperative agreement with a state agency?

Note: This could include, for example, surveys or studies that include handling or capture of the species. Whether "Project Review" surveys using USFWS protocols were conducted as part of the action is addressed later in this key.

No

4. Does the action include – or is it reasonably certain to result in – construction of one or more new roads or rail lines that will result in vehicle traffic speeds at 45mph or higher in a rusty patched bumble bee HPZ? For example, answer NO if the project will construct a low speed (< 30 mph) road (Such as Forest Service Road Maintenance Levels 1 -3 (refer to <https://www.fs.usda.gov/eng/pubs/pdf/05771205.pdf>).

No

5. Does the action include – or is it reasonably certain to result in – the addition of one or more travel lanes that are likely to increase vehicle speeds to at least 45mph on one or more existing roads in a rusty patched bumble bee HPZ? For example, answer NO if considering a travel lane addition that maintains road with low speeds (< 30 mph).

No

6. Is an increase in vehicular traffic speeds to over 45mph to an existing road in one or more HPZs a likely outcome of the federal action? For example, answer NO if the federal action will increase if traffic speeds would stay relatively low (e.g., 30 mph).

No

7. Does the action include – or is it reasonably certain to cause – the use of commercial/ managed bees (e.g., the use of honeybees or managed bumble bees to pollinate crops).

No

8. Is there habitat for nesting, foraging, and/or overwintering for the rusty patched bumble bee in the action area?

Note: Please refer to the [ESA Section 7\(a\)\(2\) Voluntary Implementation technical assistance for Rusty Patched Bumble Bee](#) .

No

9. Will the proposed action restore habitat for the species in the action area? For a description of rusty patched bumble bee nesting and foraging habitats, see the [section 7 guidelines](#).

Note: that if the action may affect areas outside of the immediate project footprint that contain rusty patched bumble bee habitat, answer 'yes.' This may include, for example, use of application of any pesticide (e.g., insecticide, herbicide, or fungicide) that may drift or be otherwise transported outside of the targeted area.

Yes

10. Have "Project Review" surveys for rusty patched bumble bees already been conducted in the action area according to [Service-approved protocols](#)? If you don't know, answer 'no'.

No

11. Does the action include collection of seed from native species?

No

12. Does the action include, or will it cause the application of insecticides or fungicides?

No

13. Does the action include, or will it cause activities to control native rodent species?

No

14. Does the action include, or will it cause planting or seeding of non-native plant species?

No

15. Will the action include or cause herbicide use?

Yes

16. Will herbicide application methods include only wiping individual plants with a wick or glove, cut-stump, spot-spraying, or basal bark treatments?

No

17. Will herbicides be applied when the rusty patched bumble bee is likely to be foraging on the affected plants in a manner that could result in direct exposure of individuals to the herbicide mixture?

No

18. Will the action cause an increase in the extent or duration of surface flooding or soil saturation in rusty patched bumble bee overwintering or nesting habitat in a High Potential Zone?

Note: This may occur, for example, as a result of activities or structures that impound water, otherwise alter or interrupt existing drainage patterns, or that affect surface runoff.

No

19. Will the action cause ground disturbance in rusty patched bumble bee habitat within a High Potential Zone?

Yes

20. Will the ground disturbance within the High Potential Zone affect more than 0.25 acre (0.1 hectare) of rusty patched bumble bee nesting habitat (upland grasslands, shrublands, and forest edges that contain native sources of pollen and nectar)?

Note: Please refer to the [ESA Section 7\(a\)\(2\) Voluntary Implementation technical assistance for Rusty Patched Bumble Bee](#) Table 1, p. 12.

No

21. Will the ground disturbance within the High Potential Zone affect more than 0.25 acre (0.1 hectare) of rusty patched bumble bee overwintering habitat (i.e., forested areas with native plants that provide springtime pollen and nectar, with uncompacted soils and not dominated by invasive plant species, like buckthorn)?

Note: For a more detailed description of rusty patched bumble bee overwintering dates and habitat, see the [section 7 guidelines](#).

No

22. Will the action include or cause effects to native vegetation in rusty patched bumble bee habitat?

Yes

23. Will the action cause effects to native vegetation in rusty patched bumble bee habitat within the High Potential Zone during the nesting period (April 15 to October 10)?

Note: Effects could occur as a result of mowing, cutting, grazing, prescribed fire, tree removal, spot-application of herbicide, tree clearing, and/or other activities. Effects could occur as a result of activities carried out outside of the nesting period if they result in reduced forage availability during a subsequent nesting period.

Yes

24. Will the action remove or otherwise make foraging resources unavailable to the rusty patched bumble bee on 2.0 acres (0.8 ha) or more of foraging habitat within an HPZ?

Note: Answer 'yes' even if the forage is unavailable only temporarily. Effects could occur as a result of activities carried out outside of the nesting period if they result in reduced forage availability during a subsequent nesting period on 2.0 acres (0.8 ha) or more within an HPZ. This excludes effects to vegetation in newly planted habitats if they occur before the beginning of the third growing season after the initial seeding. For a description of foraging habitat, see the rusty patched bumble bee [section 7 guidelines](#).

No

25. Does the action include the use of prescribed fire during the overwintering period?
Overwintering dates are October 11 to April 14.

No

26. Will the action result in the regular, re-occurring, or permanent removal, reduction, or conversion of any existing rusty patched bumble bee habitat?

No

IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION

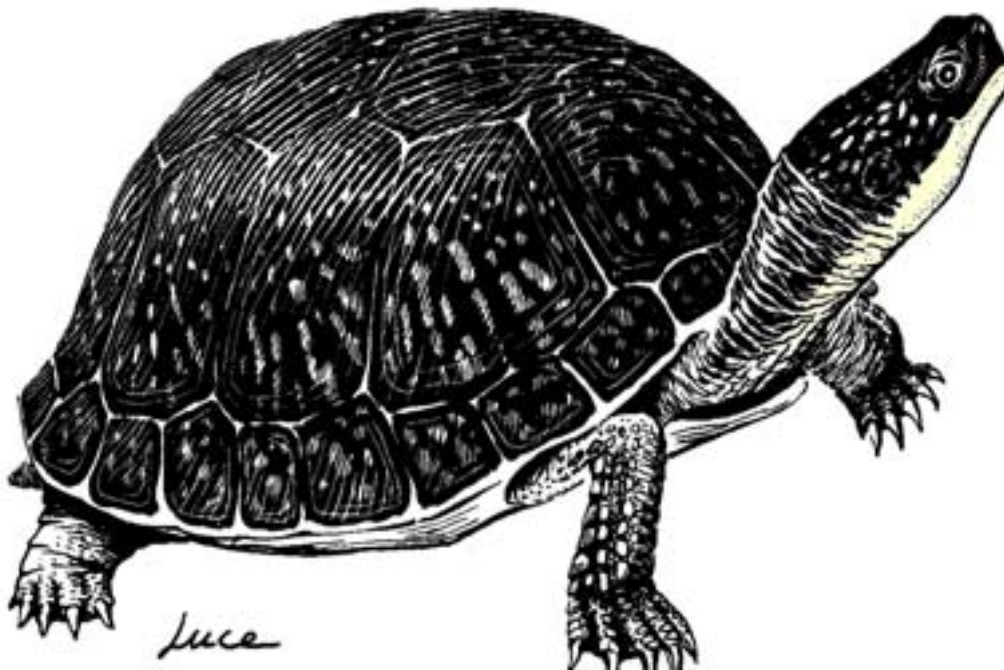
Agency: Private Entity
Name: Mike Greisiger
Address: 10170 Church Ranch Way
Address Line 2: Suite 201
City: Westminster
State: CO
Zip: 80021
Email: mike.greisiger@westwoodps.com
Phone: 8889375150

Appendix E

Blanding's Turtle Flyer

Cottage Grove BESS Project
Washington County, Minnesota

CAUTION



BLANDING'S TURTLES MAY BE ENCOUNTERED IN THIS AREA

The unique and rare Blanding's turtle has been found in this area. Blanding's turtles are a State Threatened species and are protected under Minnesota Statute 84.095, Protection of Threatened and Endangered Species. Please be careful of turtles on roads and in construction sites. For additional information on turtles, or to report a Blanding's turtle sighting, contact the DNR Nongame Specialist nearest you: Bemidji (218-308-2641); Grand Rapids (218-327-4518); New Ulm (507-359-6033); Rochester (507-280-5070); or St. Paul (651-259-5764).

DESCRIPTION: The Blanding's turtle is a medium to large turtle (5 to 10 inches) with a black or dark blue, dome-shaped shell with muted yellow spots and bars. The bottom of the shell is hinged across the front third, enabling the turtle to pull the front edge of the lower shell firmly against the top shell to provide additional protection when threatened. The head, legs, and tail are dark brown or blue-gray with small dots of light brown or yellow. A distinctive field mark is the bright yellow chin and neck.

Illustration by Don Luce, from Turtles in Minnesota, Natural History Leaflet No. 9, June 1989, James Ford Bell Museum of Natural History

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING IMPACTS TO BLANDING'S TURTLE POPULATIONS

(see Environmental Review Fact Sheet Series for full recommendations)

- A flyer with an illustration of an adult Blanding's turtle should be given to all contractors working in the area. Homeowners should also be informed of the presence of Blanding's turtles in the area.
- Turtles which are in imminent danger should be moved, by hand, out of harms way. Turtles which are not in imminent danger should be left undisturbed to continue their travel among wetlands and/or nest sites.
- If a Blanding's turtle nests in your yard, do not disturb the nest, and do not allow pets near the nest.
- Blanding's turtles do not make good pets. It is illegal to keep this threatened species in captivity.
- Silt fencing should be set up to keep turtles out of construction areas. It is critical that silt fencing be removed after the area has been revegetated.
- Small, vegetated temporary wetlands should not be dredged, deepened, or filled.
- All wetlands should be protected from pollution; use of fertilizers and pesticides should be avoided, and run-off from lawns and streets should be controlled. Erosion should be prevented to keep sediment from reaching wetlands and lakes.
- Roads should be kept to minimum standards on widths and lanes.
- Roads should be ditched, not curbed or below grade. If curbs must be used, 4" high curbs at a 3:1 slope are preferred.
- Culverts under roads crossing wetland areas, between wetland areas, or between wetland and nesting areas should be at least 36 in. diameter and flat-bottomed or elliptical.
- Culverts under roads crossing streams should be oversized (at least twice as wide as the normal width of open water) and flat-bottomed or elliptical.
- Utility access and maintenance roads should be kept to a minimum.
- Because trenches can trap turtles, trenches should be checked for turtles prior to being backfilled and the sites should be returned to original grade.
- Terrain should be left with as much natural contour as possible.
- Graded areas should be revegetated with native grasses and forbs.
- Vegetation management in infrequently mowed areas -- such as in ditches, along utility access roads, and under power lines -- should be done mechanically (chemicals should not be used). Work should occur fall through spring (after October 1st and before June 1st).