

# **Environmental Assessment**

Administrative Draft

Proposed East Elementary School Site  
1100 Northeast 11th Avenue  
Grand Rapids, Minnesota

*Prepared For*

**City of Grand Rapids**

Project B1813367  
March 22, 2019

Braun Intertec Corporation

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## **A. Summary**

The Proposed Project includes converting park land (the Site) and three residential parcels into a school area and constructing a new K-5 facility on the Site. In order to construct the new school (the East School), approximately 6.22 acres of land within the Grand Rapids Sports Complex would need to be converted from park land (the Site). The area to be converted includes a parking lot, soccer field, playground, and open space. In addition, the pedestrian walkway that currently connects the parking lot to the northern portions of the park would be replaced with a new walkway, which would cause temporary impacts to the Grand Rapids Sports Complex. The loss of park land would be offset by the purchase of a 1.4-acre private park located within Grand Rapids (the Replacement Site). The Replacement Site is currently a privately owned park consisting of green space and trails that is open to the public.

The proposed project will have a minor impact on:

- Air quality
- Sound (noise impacts)
- Circulation, transportation
- Energy resources
- Recreation resources

The proposed project will result in the conversion of 6.2 acres of park property for educational use (the Site). The existing park area to be converted includes a parking lot, a soccer field, playground, and open green space. The parking lot will remain in place with minor alterations and will be accessible to park users. The open green space will be replaced with a replacement park in a different part of the City of Grand Rapids (the Replacement Site). The playground will be replaced by play features associated with the proposed new school. The soccer field will be re-established within the current Grand Rapids Sports Complex in an open area.

## **B. Background, Purpose, Need**

### **B.1. Background**

The Site is located along Northeast 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Sports Complex Road in Grand Rapids, Minnesota (Figure 1). The Proposed Project includes approximately 9.82 acres composed of three separate parcels

and a portion of a fourth parcel, which is the park land to be converted (the Site). The three parcels are occupied by three residences, and the partial lot (the park land) is occupied by a soccer field, playground, open space, and a parking lot (Figure 2). The surrounding property is occupied by the existing Grand Rapids Sports Complex to the north and east, residences to the south, and Robert J. Elkington Middle School to the west. The eastern portion of the Site property is currently owned by the City of Grand Rapids as part of a park and the remainder of the Site is owned by the Independent School District #318. The Site is accessible via Northeast 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Sports Complex Road. Property details for the Proposed Project are listed in following tables:

<b>Address:</b>	No address assigned
<b>City:</b>	Grand Rapids
<b>County:</b>	Itasca
<b>State:</b>	Minnesota
<b>Property Identification Number:</b>	91-015-3201
<b>Owner:</b>	City of Grand Rapids
<b>Latitude:</b>	47.244060 North
<b>Longitude:</b>	-93.510604 West
<b>Section, Township, Range:</b>	S15, T55N, R25W
<b>Elevation:</b>	1,300 feet above mean sea level
<b>Size:</b>	32.4 acres (total parcel)

<b>Address:</b>	1126, 1202, 1208 Northeast 11th Avenue
<b>City:</b>	Grand Rapids
<b>County:</b>	Itasca
<b>State:</b>	Minnesota
<b>Property Identification Number:</b>	91-015-3202, 91-015-3211, 91-015-3206
<b>Owner:</b>	Independent School District 318
<b>Latitude:</b>	47.244060 North
<b>Longitude:</b>	-93.510604 West
<b>Section, Township, Range:</b>	S15, T55N, R25W
<b>Elevation:</b>	1,300 feet above mean sea level
<b>Size:</b>	3.6 acres

Property details for the Replacement Site are listed in the following table:

<b>Address:</b>	100 Pokegama Ave N
<b>City:</b>	Grand Rapids
<b>County:</b>	Itasca
<b>State:</b>	Minnesota
<b>Property Identification Number:</b>	91-410-4510, 91-410-4520, 91-410-4530, 91-410-4540, 91-410-4550
<b>Owner:</b>	CK Blandin Foundation
<b>Section, Township, Range:</b>	S21, T55N, R25W
<b>Elevation:</b>	1,300 feet above mean sea level
<b>Size:</b>	1.4 acres

## **B.2. Purpose and Need**

The Proposed Project is construction of a new Independent School District 318 (ISD 318) K-5 elementary school adjacent to the existing Sports Complex to serve the Grand Rapids area (the East School). The proposed project would require conversion of 6.22 acres of park land (the Site) within the Grand Rapids Sports Complex to educational use in order to construct the new school (Figure 3). The area to be converted includes a parking lot, soccer field, playground, and open space. In addition, the pedestrian walkway that currently connects the parking lot to the northern portions of the park would be replaced with a new walkway. The park land converted will be replaced by the acquisition of a 1.4-acre park which is privately owned and contains open park land and trails along the Mississippi River (Figure 4).

The purpose of the Proposed Project is to reduce overcrowding of existing elementary schools in the ISD 318 by providing an additional elementary school.

According to an ISD 318 Facility Plan, the current volume of students exceeds capacity of the existing elementary schools. Compared to the 2004/2005 K-5 population, there has been an increase of 18% for this age group between the four existing schools. Additionally, data provided by the State of Minnesota Demographic Center indicates between 2015 and 2025 the population for Itasca County is expected to increase by 3.1%. Students in the existing schools currently must use non-classroom designated areas, including but not limited to, hallways, converted closets, and space under stairways as work space to complete schoolwork.

The proposed project would assist in accommodating elementary students from ISD 318 and would allow for future expansion.

## **C. Project Alternatives**

A number of project alternatives were considered, including the no-build alternative, and are described briefly below.

### **C.1. Alternative 1 – No-build Alternative**

The no-build alternative would not construct a new K-5 elementary facility at the East site, and the existing park facilities and schools would continue to be used as they currently exist. The no-build alternative would require short term solutions to accommodate the existing elementary students but

may not provide adequate capacity for the projected increase in students. These short-term solutions would not solve the long term issues associated with schools that are already over capacity, and would not meet the project need to provide a safer, academically accommodating facility. For these reasons, the no-build alternative was rejected as not meeting the project purpose and need.

## **C.2. Alternative 2 –Expansion of Existing Facilities**

This alternative includes improvements to the existing elementary schools in Grand Rapids in place of constructing the new school and would have no impact on the existing park land. This alternative would require increasing the size of each existing school to allow reintroduction of fifth graders to the schools and provide adequate academic space. In order to sufficiently expand the schools to accommodate the student volume, each location would require property acquisition to meet Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) size guidelines. All of the existing schools are located within developed areas of the City of Grand Rapids limits, and are surrounded by residences and businesses. The existing sites are between 5.0 and 8.5 acres in size, but MDE guidelines indicate a need of approximately 14.1 to 19.5 acres for each facility, which would be a two to three-fold increase in property size. This alternative would require acquisition of approximately 68 residential properties as well as City land. Additional issues with expansion were identified during preliminary planning for the project, primarily structure of City streets, which further limits re-use or expansion of existing sites. For these reasons, the expansions of existing facilities alternative was removed from consideration for not meeting the project purpose and need.

## **C.3. Alternative 3 – Location Alternative**

Alternative site locations were considered during preliminary project planning. The alternative sites would not impact the existing park land. Several sites around the greater Grand Rapids area were evaluated for use as a new school, but only one location (in addition to the preferred alternative) met the size requirements. That location is within the City of Cohasset adjacent to the Mississippi River, and has wetlands within the property. Although the alternative site met the size requirements, based on desktop review it would have impacts to wetlands and would require substantial infrastructure improvements to produce a feasible site as well as improvements to the existing road system to handle the capacity of vehicles and buses which would be required to use the route each day. Additionally, one of the goals for the school system is to incorporate community vision into the proposed plan, including providing facilities with reasonable geographic distribution. The location alternative was determined impracticable for these reasons, and was removed from further consideration.

#### **C.4. Alternative 4 – Preferred Alternative**

The preferred alternative includes converting some park land into school area and constructing a new K-5 facility on the Site. The facility would be located in the northeast portion of the City and would operate for the adjacent geographic region. The proposed design would accommodate 900 students but also retain ability for expansion if needed. The design incorporates all of the MDE guidelines and is consistent with the City of Grand Rapids Master Plan (2011).

In order to construct the new school (the East School), approximately 6.22 acres of land within the Grand Rapids Sports Complex would need to be converted from park land (the Site). The area to be converted includes a parking lot, soccer field, playground, and open space. In addition, the pedestrian walkway that currently connects the parking lot to the northern portions of the park would be replaced with a new walkway, which would cause temporary impacts to the Grand Rapids Sports Complex. The park land would be replaced by a new park located in a separate location in the City of Grand Rapids.

#### **C.5. Land Conversion Environmental Review Process**

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) act was passed by congress in 1964 to “strengthen the health and vitality of the citizens of the United States” through outdoor recreation. The LWCF act created a trust fund, (primarily from offshore drilling leases) that is used to acquire, plan and develop outdoor recreation facilities. Congress annually appropriates the funds among the states to provide grants for state and local governments to create outdoor recreation areas. The funds are also used by federal agencies to obtain lands, waters or resources that help achieve federal natural, cultural, wildlife and recreation management goals (National Park Service 2016).

Congress intended recreation areas established by public funds to be permanent and solely used for outdoor recreation as stated in Section 6(f) of the LWCF act. Conversion of any property established by funds from the LWCF to a use other than outdoor recreation must be approved by the National Park Service (NPS) and/or the applicable state. Conversions of outdoor recreation property require replacement property to offset the loss from the conversion. The replacement lands chosen must be an addition to an existing recreation facility or provide a viable, self-sustaining outdoor recreation unit for a new facility. A conversion request requires environmental review of the proposed conversion and discussion of all previously rejected alternatives (Minnesota Department of Natural Resources). This review typically consists of an environmental assessment (EA).



The following sections of this EA provide a description of the proposed land conversion and potential environmental consequences. Descriptions and discussion of other alternatives previously considered including the No-Action alternative are provided in the previous sections.

## **D. Affected Environment**

### **D.1. Geologic Resources**

Based on the topographic map (Figure 1), the Site is at an elevation of approximately 1300 feet above mean sea level (MSL) and is relatively level with a gentle slope to the southeast.

The National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil survey identified two main soils at the Site: the Goodland silt loam and the Shooker very fine sandy loam. Detailed descriptions of the Site's soils and the percentage of Site coverage are listed in the table below:

<b>Soil Type</b>	<b>Map Unit Symbol</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Percentage of Site Coverage</b>
Shooker very fine sandy loam	72	Poorly drained very fine sandy loam clay loam and loam, moderately high to high permeability, not subject to flooding or ponding, rated as hydric	19
Goodland silt loam, 1 to 10 percent slopes	617B	Well drained silt loam and fine sandy loam to gravelly sand, moderately high to high permeability, not subject to flooding or ponding	81

The surficial geology of the Site and Replacement Site is primarily made up of glacial lake deposits consisting predominantly of silt and clay. Glacial till and outwash deposits of the Des Moines Lobe are also present at the Site. Des Moines Lobe till typically consists of gray, calcareous silts or clays with shale and limestone clasts. Glacial outwash deposits consist of sorted granular material; usually sand and gravel (Hobbs et. al 1982).

Bedrock geology at the Site and Replacement site primarily consists of the Bemidji and Giants Range batholith granitoid rocks along with the Virginia Formation. The Bemidji and Giants Range batholiths consist of granite and granodiorite with small intrusions of tonalite and monzonite. The Virginia Formation is composed of shale, siltstone, feldspathic greywacke, volcanic clastic rocks and thin lenses of a Banded Iron Formation (interbedded layers of iron minerals, typically magnetite or hematite and iron poor rocks like shales or cherts) (Morey and Meints 2000).

Minor grading will be necessary prior to construction at the Site but is not expected to impact the remainder of the park land. No grading or other work will be necessary at the Replacement Site as it is already developed as a park. No special geological resources are known to be present on the Site or the Replacement Site.

Based on the topographic map (Figure 1), the Replacement Site is at an elevation of approximately 1274 feet above MSL and parallels the Mississippi River with gentle slopes to the north towards the river.

The NRCS soil survey identified the soils at the Replacement Site as the Zimmerman loamy fine sand. Detailed descriptions of the Site's soils and the percentage of Site coverage are listed in the table below:

Soil Type	Map Unit Symbol	Description	Percentage of Site Coverage
Zimmerman loamy fine sand, 1 to 8 percent slopes	A60B	Excessively drained loamy find sand and fine sand	100

## **D.2. Air Quality**

The Proposed Project is not anticipated to have a major impact on air quality at the Site or the Replacement Site. The current residences on the Site will be replaced by the proposed school, off-setting the changes in air quality. Traffic volumes to the park area will increase when the school is in session but are expected to be unchanged when the school is not in session, which is when the remainder of the park land is likely to be used.

No changes are anticipated with the Replacement Site, as it has already been developed as a park area.

## **D.3. Sound (Noise Impacts)**

The proposed project and conversion is in the parking lot and one athletic field. The proposed school will use the existing parking, with minor revisions, resulting in no negligible changes in sound from that land use. The proposed conversion is not expected to result in a change in noise levels in the remainder of the park as the school is not as active on evenings and weekends or when school is not in session, when the remainder of the park is likely used. There will likely be an increase in noise levels near the school at the beginning and end of each school day. The impacts are expected to be minor and short in duration.

The Replacement Site is already a park and no noise impacts are anticipated from continued use as a park.

#### **D.4. Water Quality/Quantity**

No surface waters are present on the Site. Surface waters within 1 mile of the Site include Crystal Lake and a section of the Mississippi River downstream from the Paper Mill Reservoir. The MnDNR Public Waters Inventory (PWI) lists Crystal Lake (372W) as a protected wetland. Crystal Lake is approximately 0.65 miles west of the Site and the Mississippi River located is approximately 0.90 miles to the south. Based on the distance from the Site, water quality of the surface waters are not expected to be impacted by the conversion of park land and the proposed project.

According to published geologic information, groundwater at the Site is primarily located within the quaternary age unconsolidated sediments (MPCA). The depth to groundwater in the area is between 10 and 40 feet below ground surface (Adams 2016). Regional groundwater flow in the area is presumed to be generally south towards the Mississippi River but may vary locally due to other lakes, streams or wetlands and also may vary seasonally. The conversion of park land and the proposed project are not expected to impact groundwater at the Site.

The Site is not located within a Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) wellhead protection or drinking water supply management area. Within a 1/4 mile of the Site nine wells are listed on the MDH Minnesota Well Index. Details regarding each of these wells are listed in the table below.

Unique ID	Well Name	Depth (ft)	Aquifer	Listed Use	Date
485556	Salmela, Leonard	116	Quaternary-buried	Domestic	07/09/1992
719783	Kennedy, Matthew & Colleen	85	Quaternary-buried	Domestic	05/26/2005
561473	City of Grand Rapids	78	Quaternary-water table	Irrigation	07/25/1995
572763	Rinne, Terry & Kathy	83	Quaternary-water table	Domestic	11/02/1995
471862	Trappe, Fred	67	Quaternary-buried	Domestic	05/25/1991
482008	Goehring, William	61	Quaternary-water table	Domestic	05/12/1992
233201	USGS 16-J	195	Not Listed	Scientific Investigation	08/00/1958

Unique ID	Well Name	Depth (ft)	Aquifer	Listed Use	Date
197670	Akre, Myrtke	62	Quaternary-water table	Domestic	05/25/1983
562858	Eichorn, Mitchell	320	Virgina Formation	Domestic	07/26/1995

The proposed project will be connected to City of Grand Rapids utilities and is not expected to impact wells near the Site.

No surface waters are present on the Replacement Site but the Mississippi River is located adjacent to the north. The water quality of the Mississippi River is not expected to be impacted by the continued use of the Replacement Site as a park.

According to published geologic information, groundwater at the Replacement Site is primarily located within the quaternary age unconsolidated sediments (MPCA). The depth to groundwater in the area is less than 20 feet below ground surface (Adams 2016). Regional groundwater flow in the area is presumed to be generally north towards the Mississippi River. The continued use of the Replacement Site as a park is not expected to impact groundwater.

The Replacement Site is located within a Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) wellhead protection and drinking water supply management area. However, continued use of the Replacement Site as a park is not expected to impact the wellhead protection area or the drinking water supply management area.

Two wells are listed on the MDH Minnesota Well Index within a ¼ mile of the Replacement Site. Details regarding each of these wells are listed in the table below.

Unique ID	Well Name	Depth (ft)	Aquifer	Listed Use	Date
233197	USG 21-G	250	Not Listed	Scientific Investigation	07/00/1958
594556	MW4	23	Quaternary-water table	Monitor Well	01/27/1999

The continued use of the Replacement Site as a park is not expected to impact wells.

#### **D.5. Stream Flow Characteristics**

No streams are present on or adjacent to the Site. No streams are anticipated to be impacted by the proposed project.

The Mississippi River is adjacent to the Replacement Site. However, the Replacement Site is already developed as a park and no additional changes are planned for the park area. Continued use of the Replacement Site as a park is not expected to impact the river.

#### **D.6. Marine/Estuarine**

No marine or estuarine features are present in the area of the Site or the Replacement Site.

#### **D.7. Floodplains/wetlands**

Based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood insurance map, community panel number 270200 0775 A, the Site is not located within a floodplain. According the National Wetland Inventory (NWI) map, no wetlands are present on the Site.

A portion of the Replacement Site is located within the 100-year floodplain. However, no actions are planned for the Replacement Site as it is already developed as a park. The Mississippi River is located adjacent to the Replacement Site. According to the (NWI) map, no other wetlands are present on or adjacent to the Replacement Site. No impacts are anticipated to the Mississippi River as the Replacement Site is already developed as a park.

#### **D.8. Land Use/Ownership Patterns; Property Values; Community Livability**

In addition to the conversion of park property, the proposed project will involve removal of three residences and converting those parcels to school property. No other properties in the area will be affected by the proposed project.

Property values near the Site are not expected to be impacted by the proposed project as a school is already present in this area. The remainder of the park will continue to be used as a park. The 6.2 acres of park land lost by this conversion will be replaced with 1.4 acres of replacement park property, resulting in a net loss of 4.8 acres of park property from the proposed project. However, some of the 6.2 acres of converted park property are occupied by a parking lot. This parking lot will remain and will be accessible by park users, thus off-setting the net loss of park property.

The Replacement Site is private property that has been converted to a privately-owned park that is open to the public. Property values are not expected to be impacted by changing the park from a privately-owned park to a publically-owned park.

## **D.9. Circulation, Transportation**

The proposed project is not anticipated to have any significant impact on the traffic and circulation for the Grand Rapids Sports Complex. The parking lot and road currently used by the Grand Rapids Sports Complex will remain and will be accessible to the park after the proposed project is complete. Additional traffic will likely be generated by the proposed new school. The traffic impacts are expected to be primarily limited to the start and end of days when school is in session.

The Replacement Site is currently a privately-owned park that is open to the public. No changes in traffic or circulation are expected as the use will remain functionally the same.

## **D.10. Living Resources**

According to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Protected Species Review (Information for Planning and Conservation – IPAC) and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR) Natural Heritage Information System (NHIS) request, living resources are not expected to be impacted by the proposed project. The Proposed Project Area is currently occupied by a parking lot, maintained lawns and fields, and residential buildings. A copy of the IPAC report and NHIS response are attached as Appendix A.

The Replacement Site is currently a privately-owned park that is open to the public and is adjacent to the Mississippi River. The park consists of landscaped turfgrass, ornamental trees and walking paths, so native vegetation and habitat for native species is very limited, consisting primarily of roosting trees and a narrow band of woody riparian vegetation along the river. The NHIS response has not been received. In lieu of an NHIS review, an online query was made of state-listed species in Itasca County and a review of habitat and likelihood of impact is provided below. An IPaC review of the site identified three federally-listed species in the region (see attached table of listed species and attached IPaC review).

Most state and federally listed species known from the area do not and are not anticipated to be present at the Replacement Site because appropriate habitat is absent. A few aquatic species could potentially occur in the Mississippi River adjacent to the Replacement Site. However, no alterations to the Replacement Site, shoreline, or river are planned. Therefore, no impact to protected species are anticipated from the Proposed Project.

#### **D.11. Unique Ecosystems**

No unique ecosystems are known to be present in the area of the Site.

The Replacement Site is currently a privately-owned park that is open to the public and is adjacent to the Mississippi River. The river is a unique ecosystem. However, no changes to the park or shoreline are planned, so no impacts to this unique ecosystem are anticipated.

#### **D.12. Unique or Important Wildlife/Wildlife Habitat**

No unique or important wildlife/wildlife habitat are known to be present in the area of the Site.

The Replacement Site is currently a privately-owned park that is open to the public and is adjacent to the Mississippi River. The river provides unique and important wildlife habitat. The park consists of landscaped turfgrass, ornamental trees and walking paths, so wildlife habitat is limited, consisting primarily of roosting trees for birds along the river. No changes to the park or shoreline are planned, so no impacts this unique and important wildlife habitat are anticipated.

#### **D.13. Unique or Important Fish/Habitat**

No unique or important fish/habitat are known to be present in the area of the Site.

The Replacement Site is currently a privately-owned park that is open to the public and is adjacent to the Mississippi River. The river provides unique and important fish habitat. However, no changes to the park or shoreline are planned, so no impacts this unique and important fish habitat are anticipated.

#### **D.14. Invasive Species**

The Site is currently occupied by a parking lot, residential buildings, a play area, and maintained green space. The proposed project is not anticipated to result in a significant change in plant communities or invasive species.

The Replacement Site is currently a park with open space and trails. No changes in plant communities or invasive species is anticipated from the conversion of this park to a public park.

#### **D.15. Recreation Resources**

The proposed project will result in the conversion of 6.2 acres of park property. The park area to be converted includes a parking lot, a soccer field, playground, and open green space. The parking lot will remain in place with minor alterations as part of the proposed project and will be accessible to park users. The open green space will be replaced with a replacement park in a different part of the City of Grand Rapids. The playground will be replaced by play features associated with the proposed new school. The soccer field will be replaced with a new field within the Grand Rapids Sports Complex.

The Replacement Site will continue to provide additional open green space and walking trails along the Mississippi River. No changes in recreation resources are anticipated for the Replacement Site as it will continue to operate as a park.

#### **D.16. Accessibility**

The proposed project will utilize the existing parking lot with minor alterations, and will allow for use by the park. Accessibility will not be impacted by the conversion of park property and the proposed project.

No changes are planned for the Replacement Site and therefore no changes to accessibility are expected.

#### **D.17. Overall Aesthetics**

The soccer field and playground in the portion of the park that is within the proposed project will be replaced by a school. The school will be designed to blend with the architecture and style of buildings in the property area. The soccer field will be replaced with a new field to be constructed in the remainder of the park. Replacement green space will be provided by a replacement park (the Replacement Site) located in a separate area of the City of Grand Rapids.

#### **D.18. Cultural and Historic Resources**

The Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) was consulted for a review of potential historic properties within the Site and the Replacement Site. The Minnesota SHPO found no historic properties eligible for or currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places within the Site or the Replacement Site. A copy of their response is provided as Appendix B. The proposed project area was undeveloped land prior to the early 1990s when the existing sports complex was built. The SHPO letter



indicated there were no historic or cultural resources identified within the project area. Therefore, no impacts from the proposed project are anticipated.

#### **D.19. Socioeconomics**

The Proposed Project includes the construction of a new school. Students and staff are expected to be drawn from the other schools and in the area, resulting in no net change in socioeconomics of the area due to the proposed project or the conversion of the park property.

The Replacement Site is currently a privately-owned park that is open to the public. No change in socioeconomics is expected from the conversion to a public park.

#### **D.20. Minority and Low-Income Populations**

The proposed project, including the conversion of park property and the Replacement Site, is not expected to have impacts on minority and low-income populations.

#### **D.21. Energy Resources**

The proposed project will result in increased energy use for the Site as the new building is expected to use more energy to heat, cool, and light, than the existing residences. However, the proposed project will not require upgrades or additions to the energy grid or supply system for electricity or natural gas in the area.

No changes in energy resources are anticipated for the Replacement Site as it is already developed as a park and will remain in its current configuration.

#### **D.22. Other Agency or Tribal Land Use**

The Site and Replacement Site are not located within tribal lands are therefore not anticipated to have any impact on tribal land use or other agency land use.

#### **D.23. History of Contamination**

The Site was undeveloped land prior to the early 1990s when the existing sports complex was built. Given its history as undeveloped land and current use as athletic fields, significant contamination is not

expected to be present on the Site. Debris from the demolition of the current residences will be appropriately managed to prevent contamination of the Site and surrounding area.

The Replacement Site is already developed as a park with no known contamination.

## D.24. Other Resources

No other resources are expected to be impacted by the proposed project for the Site or the Replacement Site.

## E. Consultation, Coordination and List of Preparers

This Environmental Assessment was completed with the consultation and coordination of the following:

Agency	Agency Address	Contact
City of Grand Rapids		
Minnesota Historical Society – State Historic Preservation Office	50 Sherburne Avenue, Administration Building 203, Saint Paul MN 55155	Sarah J. Beimers, (651) 201-3285
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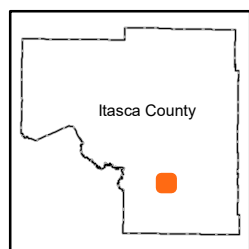
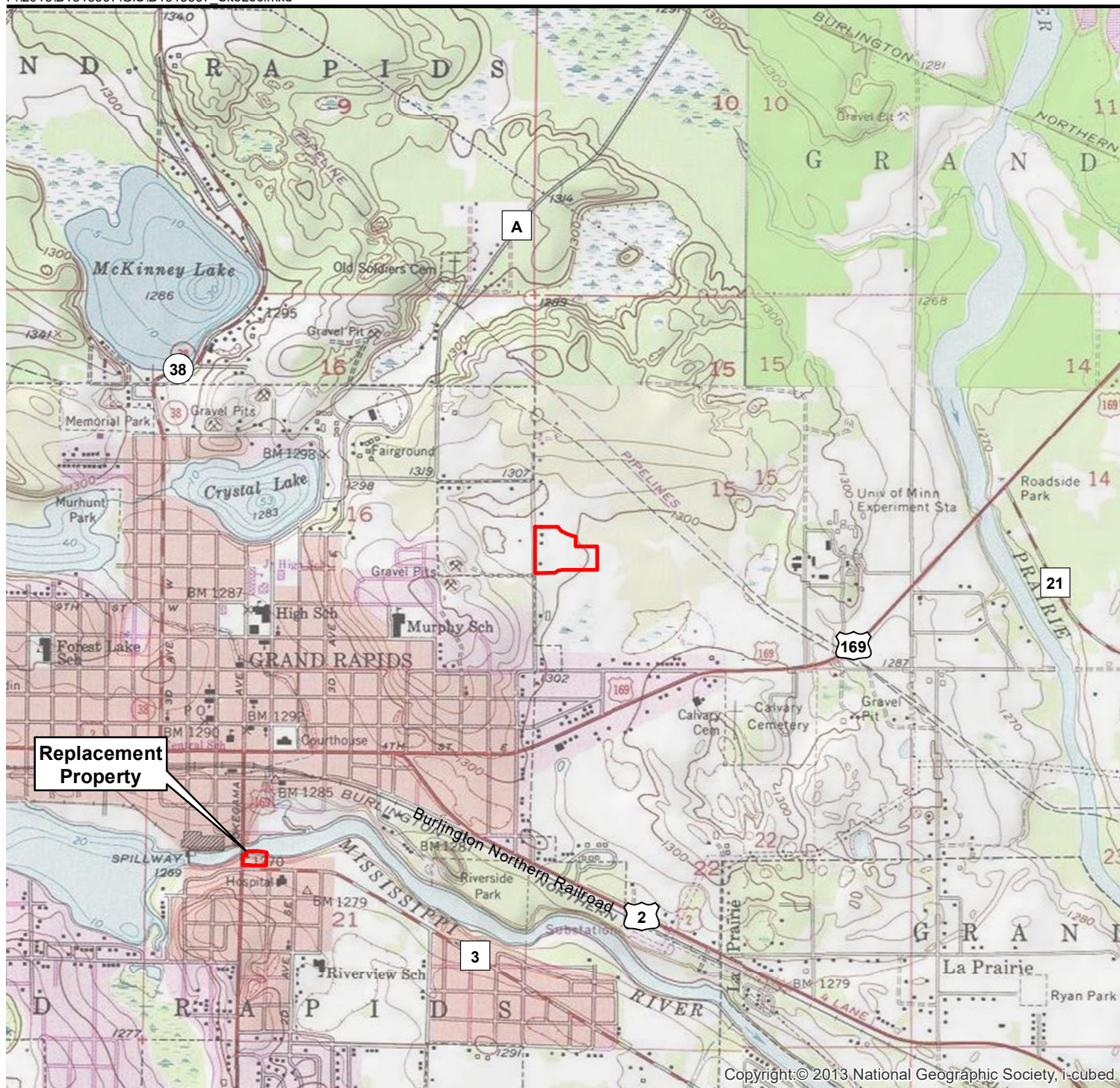
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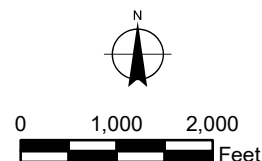
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## Figures





Data Source:  
USGS Quadrangle



1 inch = 2,000 feet

**BRAUN  
INTERTEC**  
The Science You Build On.

11001 Hampshire Avenue S  
Minneapolis, MN 55438  
952.995.2000  
braunintertec.com

Project No:  
B1813367

Drawing No:  
B1813367\_SiteLoc

Drawn By: FER  
Date Drawn: 1/9/2019  
Checked By: BTR  
Last Modified: 3/18/2019

Proposed Elementary School

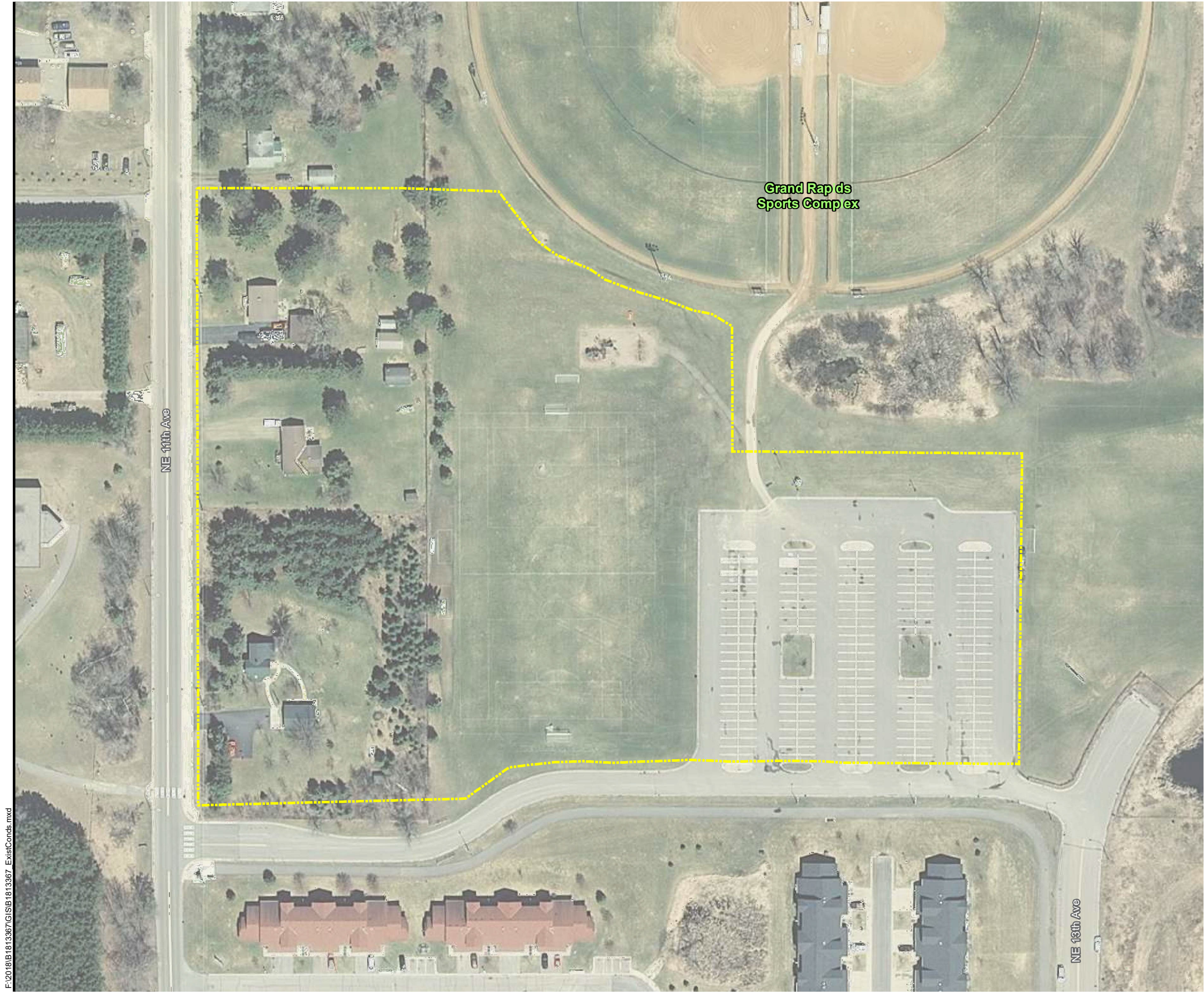
1100 Northeast 11th Avenue

Grand Rapids, Minnesota


**Site Location Map**

Figure 1



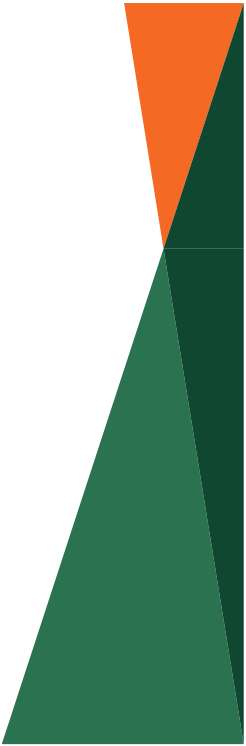


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 Approximate Project Boundary

**BRAUN  
INTERTEC**  
The Science You Build On.

11001 Hampshire Avenue S  
Minneapolis, MN 55438  
952.995.2000  
braunintertec.com



Drawing Information

Project No:  
B1813367

Drawing No:  
B1813367\_ExistConds

Drawn By: CMF  
Date Drawn: 1/10/2019  
Checked By: BR  
Last Modified: 3/18/2019

Project Information

Proposed Elementary  
School

1100 Northeast  
11th Avenue

Grand Rapids,  
Minnesota

**Existing  
Conditions**

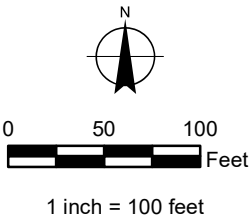
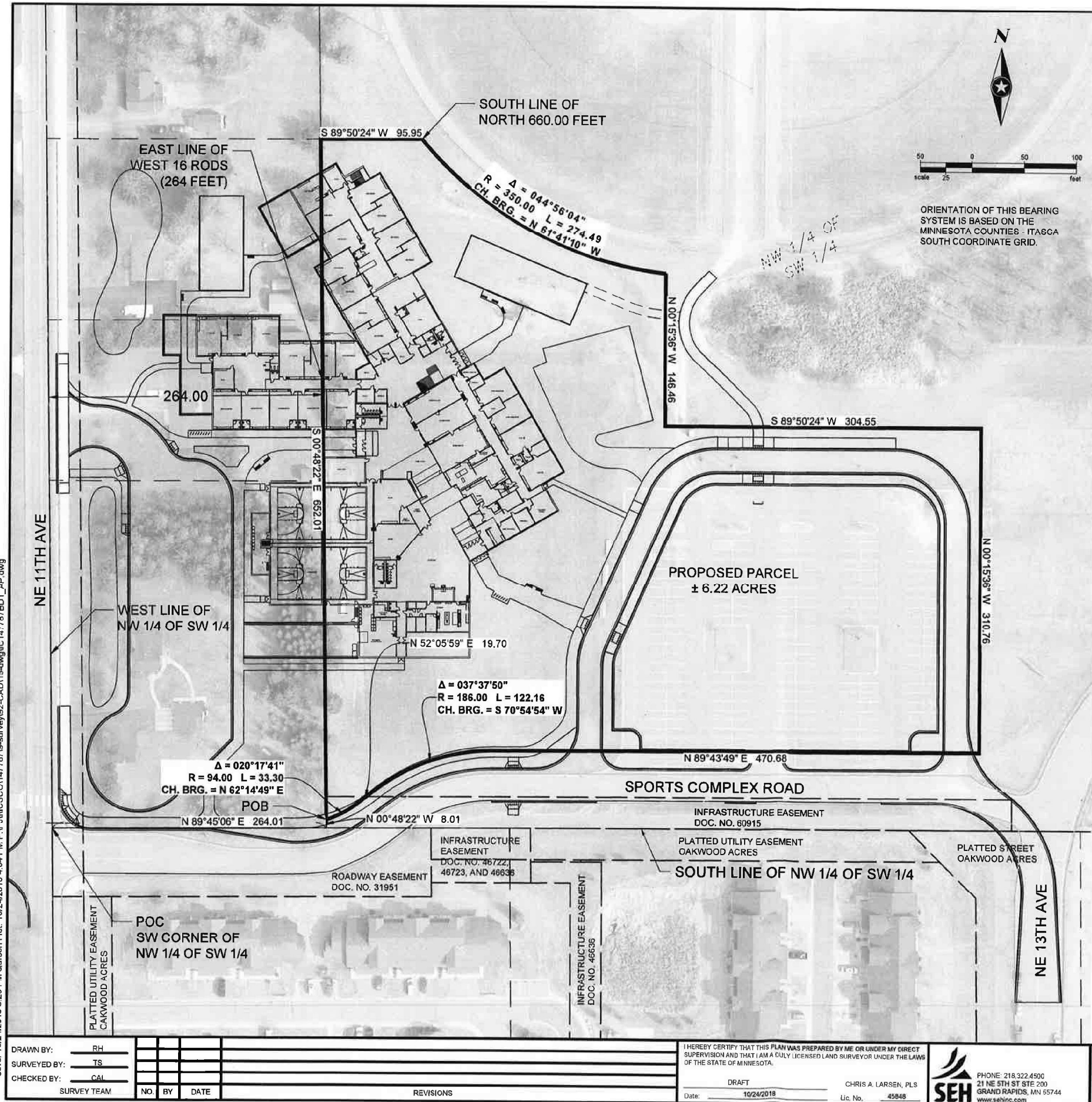


Figure 2



F:\2018\B1813367\GIS\B1813367\_SEHSrvyPln.mxd


Save: 10/24/2018 3:20 PM darsen Plot: 10/24/2018 3:04 PM P:\F\JUNICSON\1477819-survey\92-CAD\15-dwg\1C1477819D1\_AP.dwg





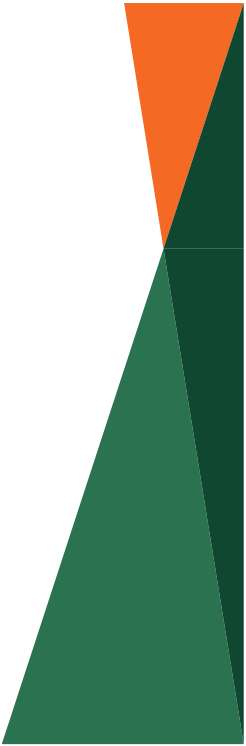


F:\2018\B1813367\GIS\B1813367\_RPEXistConds.mxd

 Replacement Property

**BRAUN  
INTERTEC**  
The Science You Build On.

11001 Hampshire Avenue S  
Minneapolis, MN 55438  
952.995.2000  
braunintertec.com



Drawing Information

Project No:  
B1813367

Drawing No:  
B1813367\_RPEXistConds

Drawn By: CMF  
Date Drawn: 1/10/2019  
Checked By: BR  
Last Modified: 3/18/2019

Project Information

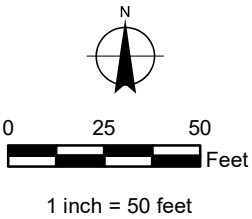
Proposed Elementary  
School

100 Pokegama Ave N

Grand Rapids,  
Minnesota

**Existing  
Conditions -  
Replacement  
Property**

Figure 4





## **Appendix A**

### **Protected Species Review - Site**



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

March 6, 2019

**Correspondence # ERDB 20190263**

Mr. Ben Ruhme  
Braun Intertec Corporation  
11001 Hampshire Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55438

RE: Natural Heritage Review of the proposed Proposed Elementary School,  
T55N R25W Section 15; Itasca County

Dear Mr. Ruhme,

As requested, the above project has been reviewed for potential effects to known occurrences of rare features. Given the project details provided with the data request form, I do not believe the proposed project will negatively affect any known occurrences of rare features.

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 rare or otherwise significant species, native plant communities, and other natural features. However, the NHIS is not an exhaustive inventory and thus does not represent all of the occurrences of rare features within 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 (noted above) and the project description provided on the NHIS Data Request Form. Please contact me if project details change or for an updated review if construction has not occurred within one year.

The Natural Heritage Review does not constitute review or approval by the Department of Natural Resources as a whole. Instead, it identifies issues regarding known occurrences of rare features and potential effects to these rare features. If needed, please contact your [DNR Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist](#) to determine whether there are other natural resource concerns associated with the proposed project. Please be aware that additional site assessments or review may be required.

Thank you for consulting us on this matter, and for your interest in preserving Minnesota's rare natural resources. Please include a copy of this letter in any state or local license or permit application. An invoice will be mailed to you under separate cover.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samantha Bump". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Samantha Bump  
Natural Heritage Review Specialist  
[Samantha.Bump@state.mn.us](mailto:Samantha.Bump@state.mn.us)

Links: DNR Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist Contact Info  
[http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/ereview/erp\\_regioncontacts.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/ereview/erp_regioncontacts.html)



# United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Minnesota-Wisconsin Ecological Services Field Office  
4101 American Blvd E  
Bloomington, MN 55425-1665  
Phone: (952) 252-0092 Fax: (952) 646-2873  
<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/Endangered/section7/s7process/step1.html>



In Reply Refer To:  
Consultation Code: 03E19000-2019-SLI-0334  
Event Code: 03E19000-2019-E-00866  
Project Name: Grand Rapids New Elementary School

February 01, 2019

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

## To Whom It May Concern:

The attached species list identifies any federally threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species that may occur within the action area the area that is likely to be affected by your proposed project. The list also includes any designated and proposed critical habitat that overlaps with the action area. This list is provided to you as the initial step of the consultation process required under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act, also referred to as Section 7 Consultation.

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 requires that actions authorized, funded, or carried out by Federal agencies not jeopardize federally threatened or endangered species or adversely modify designated critical habitat. To fulfill this mandate, Federal agencies (or their designated non-federal representatives) must consult with the Service if they determine their project may affect listed species or critical habitat. Agencies must confer under section 7(a)(4) if any proposed action is likely to jeopardize species proposed for listing as endangered or threatened or likely to adversely modify any proposed critical habitat.

Under 50 CFR 402.12(e) (the regulations that implement Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act) the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally. You may verify the list by visiting the ECOS-IPaC website <http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/> at regular intervals during project planning and implementation and completing the same process you used to receive the attached list. As an alternative, you may contact this Ecological Services Field Office for updates.

Please use the species list provided and visit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Region 3 Section 7 Technical Assistance website at - <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/section7/>

[s7process/index.html](#). This website contains step-by-step instructions that will help you determine if your project will have an adverse effect on listed species or critical habitat and will help lead you through the Section 7 process.

For all **wind energy projects** and **projects that include installing towers that use guy wires or are over 200 feet in height**, please contact this field office directly for assistance, even if no federally listed plants, animals or critical habitat are present within the action area.

Although no longer protected under the Endangered Species Act, be aware that bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668 *et seq.*) and Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703 *et seq.*), as are golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*). Projects affecting these species may require measures to avoid harming eagles or may require a permit. If your project is near a bald eagle nest or winter roost area, see our Eagle Permits website at <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/midwestbird/EaglePermits/index.html>. The information available at this website will help you determine if you can avoid impacting eagles or if a permit may be necessary.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. Please include the Consultation Tracking Number in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- Migratory Birds

## 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**

4101 American Blvd E

Bloomington, MN 55425-1665

(952) 252-0092

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## Project Summary

Consultation Code: 03E19000-2019-SLI-0334

Event Code: 03E19000-2019-E-00866

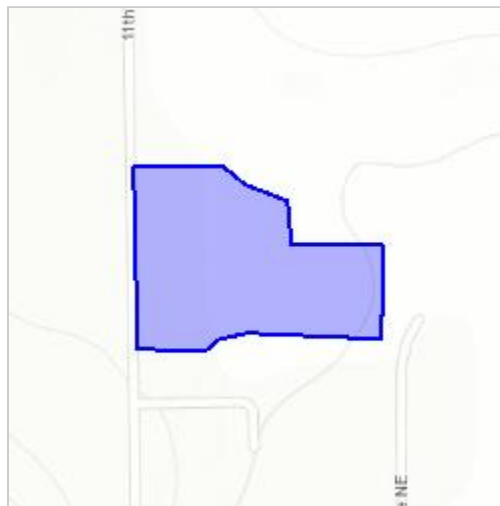
Project Name: Grand Rapids New Elementary School

Project Type: LAND - DISPOSAL / TRANSFER

Project Description: Land conversion will occur with a portion of the Grand Rapids Sports complex being converted to school district property for construction of a new elementary school.

Project Location:

Approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/47.24365320728656N93.510211122297W>



Counties: Itasca, MN

---

## Endangered Species Act Species

There is a total of 3 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 Fisheries<sup>1</sup>, 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.

## Mammals

NAME	STATUS
Canada Lynx <i>Lynx canadensis</i> Population: Wherever Found in Contiguous U.S. There is <b>final</b> critical habitat for this species. Your location is outside the critical habitat. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3652">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3652</a>	Threatened
Gray Wolf <i>Canis lupus</i> Population: MN There is <b>final</b> critical habitat for this species. Your location is outside the critical habitat. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4488">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4488</a>	Threatened
Northern Long-eared Bat <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045</a>	Threatened

## Critical habitats

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

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# Migratory Birds

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act<sup>1</sup> and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act<sup>2</sup>.

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described [below](#).

- 
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)

The birds listed below are birds of particular concern either because they occur on the [USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern](#) (BCC) list or warrant special attention in your project location. To learn more about the levels of concern for birds on your list and how this list is generated, see the FAQ [below](#). This is not a list of every bird you may find in this location, nor a guarantee that every bird on this list will be found in your project area. To see exact locations of where birds and the general public have sighted birds in and around your project area, visit the [E-bird data mapping tool](#) (Tip: enter your location, desired date range and a species on your list). For projects that occur off the Atlantic Coast, additional maps and models detailing the relative occurrence and abundance of bird species on your list are available. Links to additional information about Atlantic Coast birds, and other important information about your migratory bird list, including how to properly interpret and use your migratory bird report, can be found [below](#).

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, click on the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY at the top of your list to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
<b>Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i></b> 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. <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626</a>	Breeds Dec 1 to Aug 31
<b>Bobolink <i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i></b> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.	Breeds May 20 to Jul 31

---

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Golden-winged Warbler <i>Vermivora chrysoptera</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8745">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8745</a>	Breeds May 1 to Jul 20

## 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 and understand the FAQ “Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report” before using or attempting to interpret this report.

### Probability of Presence (■)

Each green bar represents the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during a particular week of the year. (A year is represented as 12 4-week months.) A taller bar indicates a higher probability of species presence. The survey effort (see below) can be used to establish a level of confidence in the presence score. One can have higher confidence in the presence score if the corresponding survey effort is also high.

How is the probability of presence score calculated? The calculation is done in three steps:

1. The probability of presence for each week is calculated as the number of survey events in the week where the species was detected divided by the total number of survey events for that week. For example, if in week 12 there were 20 survey events and the Spotted Towhee was found in 5 of them, the probability of presence of the Spotted Towhee in week 12 is 0.25.
2. To properly present the pattern of presence across the year, the relative probability of presence is calculated. This is the probability of presence divided by the maximum probability of presence across all weeks. For example, imagine the probability of presence in week 20 for the Spotted Towhee is 0.05, and that the probability of presence at week 12 (0.25) is the maximum of any week of the year. The relative probability of presence on week 12 is  $0.25/0.25 = 1$ ; at week 20 it is  $0.05/0.25 = 0.2$ .
3. The relative probability of presence calculated in the previous step undergoes a statistical conversion so that all possible values fall between 0 and 10, inclusive. This is the probability of presence score.

### Breeding Season (■)

Yellow bars denote a very liberal estimate of the time-frame inside which the bird breeds across its entire range. If there are no yellow bars shown for a bird, it does not breed in your project area.

### Survey Effort (I)

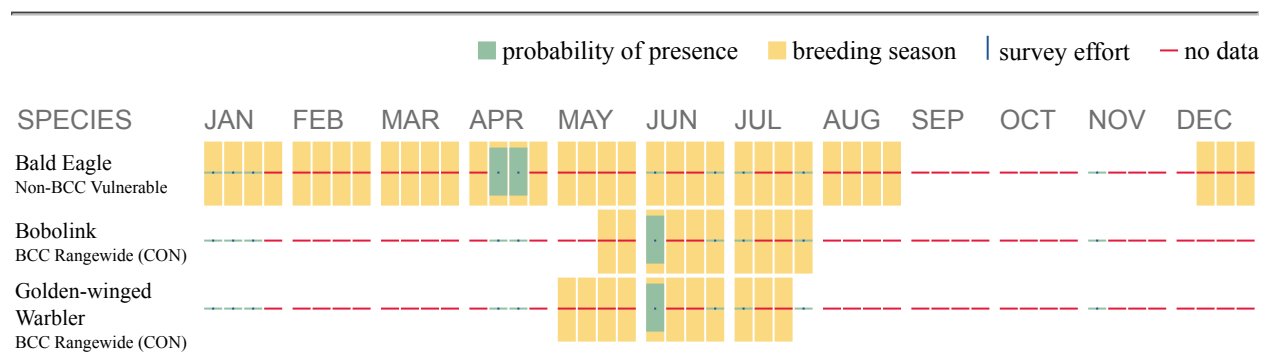
Vertical black lines superimposed on probability of presence bars indicate the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps. The number of surveys is expressed as a range, for example, 33 to 64 surveys.

### No Data (—)

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

### Survey Timeframe

Surveys from only the last 10 years are used in order to ensure delivery of currently relevant information. The exception to this is areas off the Atlantic coast, where bird returns are based on all years of available data, since data in these areas is currently much more sparse.



Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Birds of Conservation Concern <http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/managed-species/birds-of-conservation-concern.php>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/project-assessment-tools-and-guidance/conservation-measures.php>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/pdf/management/nationwidestandardconservationmeasures.pdf>

## Migratory Birds FAQ

**Tell me more about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds.**

[Nationwide Conservation Measures](#) describes measures that can help avoid and minimize impacts to all birds at any location year round. Implementation of these measures is particularly important when birds are most likely to occur in the project area. When birds may be breeding in the area, identifying the locations of any active nests and avoiding their destruction is a very helpful impact minimization measure. To see when birds are most likely to occur and be breeding in your project area, view the Probability of Presence Summary. [Additional measures](#) and/or

[permits](#) may be advisable depending on the type of activity you are conducting and the type of infrastructure or bird species present on your project site.

**What does IPaC use to generate the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location?**

The Migratory Bird Resource List is comprised of USFWS [Birds of Conservation Concern \(BCC\)](#) and other species that may warrant special attention in your project location.

The migratory bird list generated for your project is derived from data provided by the [Avian Knowledge Network \(AKN\)](#). The AKN data is based on a growing collection of [survey, banding, and citizen science datasets](#) and is queried and filtered to return a list of those birds reported as occurring in the 10km grid cell(s) which your project intersects, and that have been identified as warranting special attention because they are a BCC species in that area, an eagle ([Eagle Act](#) requirements may apply), or a species that has a particular vulnerability to offshore activities or development.

Again, the Migratory Bird Resource list includes only a subset of birds that may occur in your project area. It is not representative of all birds that may occur in your project area. To get a list of all birds potentially present in your project area, please visit the [E-bird Explore Data Tool](#).

**What does IPaC use to generate the probability of presence graphs for the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location?**

The probability of presence graphs associated with your migratory bird list are based on data provided by the [Avian Knowledge Network \(AKN\)](#). This data is derived from a growing collection of [survey, banding, and citizen science datasets](#).

Probability of presence data is continuously being updated as new and better information becomes available. To learn more about how the probability of presence graphs are produced and how to interpret them, go to the Probability of Presence Summary and then click on the "Tell me about these graphs" link.

**How do I know if a bird is breeding, wintering, migrating or present year-round in my project area?**

To see what part of a particular bird's range your project area falls within (i.e. breeding, wintering, migrating or year-round), you may refer to the following resources: [The Cornell Lab of Ornithology All About Birds Bird Guide](#), or (if you are unsuccessful in locating the bird of interest there), the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology Neotropical Birds guide](#). If a bird on your migratory bird species list has a breeding season associated with it, if that bird does occur in your project area, there may be nests present at some point within the timeframe specified. If "Breeds elsewhere" is indicated, then the bird likely does not breed in your project area.

**What are the levels of concern for migratory birds?**

---

Migratory birds delivered through IPaC fall into the following distinct categories of concern:

1. "BCC Rangewide" birds are [Birds of Conservation Concern](#) (BCC) that are of concern throughout their range anywhere within the USA (including Hawaii, the Pacific Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands);
2. "BCC - BCR" birds are BCCs that are of concern only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA; and
3. "Non-BCC - Vulnerable" birds are not BCC species in your project area, but appear on your list either because of the [Eagle Act](#) requirements (for eagles) or (for non-eagles) potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities (e.g. offshore energy development or longline fishing).

Although it is important to try to avoid and minimize impacts to all birds, efforts should be made, in particular, to avoid and minimize impacts to the birds on this list, especially eagles and BCC species of rangewide concern. For more information on conservation measures you can implement to help avoid and minimize migratory bird impacts and requirements for eagles, please see the FAQs for these topics.

### **Details about birds that are potentially affected by offshore projects**

For additional details about the relative occurrence and abundance of both individual bird species and groups of bird species within your project area off the Atlantic Coast, please visit the [Northeast Ocean Data Portal](#). The Portal also offers data and information about other taxa besides birds that may be helpful to you in your project review. Alternately, you may download the bird model results files underlying the portal maps through the [NOAA NCCOS Integrative Statistical Modeling and Predictive Mapping of Marine Bird Distributions and Abundance on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf](#) project webpage.

Bird tracking data can also provide additional details about occurrence and habitat use throughout the year, including migration. Models relying on survey data may not include this information. For additional information on marine bird tracking data, see the [Diving Bird Study](#) and the [nanotag studies](#) or contact [Caleb Spiegel](#) or [Pam Loring](#).

### **What if I have eagles on my list?**

If your project has the potential to disturb or kill eagles, you may need to [obtain a permit](#) to avoid violating the Eagle Act should such impacts occur.

### **Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report**

The migratory bird list generated is not a list of all birds in your project area, only a subset of birds of priority concern. To learn more about how your list is generated, and see options for identifying what other birds may be in your project area, please see the FAQ "What does IPaC use to generate the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location". Please be aware this report provides the "probability of presence" of birds within the 10 km grid cell(s) that overlap your project; not your exact project footprint. On the graphs provided, please also look carefully at the survey effort (indicated by the black vertical bar) and for the existence of the "no data" indicator (a red horizontal bar). A high survey effort is the key component. If the survey effort is high, then the probability of presence score can be viewed as more dependable. In

---

contrast, a low survey effort bar or no data bar means a lack of data and, therefore, a lack of certainty about presence of the species. This list is not perfect; it is simply a starting point for identifying what birds of concern have the potential to be in your project area, when they might be there, and if they might be breeding (which means nests might be present). The list helps you know what to look for to confirm presence, and helps guide you in knowing when to implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize potential impacts from your project activities, should presence be confirmed. To learn more about conservation measures, visit the FAQ “Tell me about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds” at the bottom of your migratory bird trust resources page.

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## **Appendix B**

### **Protected Species Review – Replacement Site**



# United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Minnesota-Wisconsin Ecological Services Field Office  
4101 American Blvd E  
Bloomington, MN 55425-1665  
Phone: (952) 252-0092 Fax: (952) 646-2873  
<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/Endangered/section7/s7process/step1.html>



In Reply Refer To:

March 14, 2019

Consultation Code: 03E19000-2019-SLI-0621

Event Code: 03E19000-2019-E-01533

Project Name: Replacement Site for Grand Rapids Sports Complex land

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

## To Whom It May Concern:

The attached species list identifies any federally threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species that may occur within the action area the area that is likely to be affected by your proposed project. The list also includes any designated and proposed critical habitat that overlaps with the action area. This list is provided to you as the initial step of the consultation process required under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act, also referred to as Section 7 Consultation.

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 requires that actions authorized, funded, or carried out by Federal agencies not jeopardize federally threatened or endangered species or adversely modify designated critical habitat. To fulfill this mandate, Federal agencies (or their designated non-federal representatives) must consult with the Service if they determine their project may affect listed species or critical habitat. Agencies must confer under section 7(a)(4) if any proposed action is likely to jeopardize species proposed for listing as endangered or threatened or likely to adversely modify any proposed critical habitat.

Under 50 CFR 402.12(e) (the regulations that implement Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act) the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally. You may verify the list by visiting the ECOS-IPaC website <http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/> at regular intervals during project planning and implementation and completing the same process you used to receive the attached list. As an alternative, you may contact this Ecological Services Field Office for updates.

Please use the species list provided and visit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Region 3 Section 7 Technical Assistance website at - <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/section7/>



[s7process/index.html](#). This website contains step-by-step instructions that will help you determine if your project will have an adverse effect on listed species or critical habitat and will help lead you through the Section 7 process.

For all **wind energy projects** and **projects that include installing towers that use guy wires or are over 200 feet in height**, please contact this field office directly for assistance, even if no federally listed plants, animals or critical habitat are present within the action area.

Although no longer protected under the Endangered Species Act, be aware that bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668 *et seq.*) and Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703 *et seq.*), as are golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*). Projects affecting these species may require measures to avoid harming eagles or may require a permit. If your project is near a bald eagle nest or winter roost area, see our Eagle Permits website at <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/midwestbird/EaglePermits/index.html>. The information available at this website will help you determine if you can avoid impacting eagles or if a permit may be necessary.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. Please include the Consultation Tracking Number in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- Migratory Birds

## 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**

4101 American Blvd E

Bloomington, MN 55425-1665

(952) 252-0092

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## Project Summary

Consultation Code: 03E19000-2019-SLI-0621

Event Code: 03E19000-2019-E-01533

Project Name: Replacement Site for Grand Rapids Sports Complex land

Project Type: LAND - ACQUISITION

Project Description: Park land that will be used as a replacement site for the recreational lands lost at the Grand Rapids sports complex from conversion for construction of a new elementary school.

Project Location:

Approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/47.231810554231394N93.52760353483967W>



Counties: Itasca, MN

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## Endangered Species Act Species

There is a total of 3 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 Fisheries<sup>1</sup>, 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.

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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.

## Mammals

NAME	STATUS
Canada Lynx <i>Lynx canadensis</i> Population: Wherever Found in Contiguous U.S. There is <b>final</b> critical habitat for this species. Your location is outside the critical habitat. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3652">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3652</a>	Threatened
Gray Wolf <i>Canis lupus</i> Population: MN There is <b>final</b> critical habitat for this species. Your location is outside the critical habitat. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4488">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4488</a>	Threatened
Northern Long-eared Bat <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045</a>	Threatened

## Critical habitats

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

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# Migratory Birds

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act<sup>1</sup> and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act<sup>2</sup>.

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described [below](#).

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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)

The birds listed below are birds of particular concern either because they occur on the [USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern](#) (BCC) list or warrant special attention in your project location. To learn more about the levels of concern for birds on your list and how this list is generated, see the FAQ [below](#). This is not a list of every bird you may find in this location, nor a guarantee that every bird on this list will be found in your project area. To see exact locations of where birds and the general public have sighted birds in and around your project area, visit the [E-bird data mapping tool](#) (Tip: enter your location, desired date range and a species on your list). For projects that occur off the Atlantic Coast, additional maps and models detailing the relative occurrence and abundance of bird species on your list are available. Links to additional information about Atlantic Coast birds, and other important information about your migratory bird list, including how to properly interpret and use your migratory bird report, can be found [below](#).

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, click on the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY at the top of your list to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
<b>Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i></b> 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. <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626</a>	Breeds Dec 1 to Aug 31
<b>Bobolink <i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i></b> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.	Breeds May 20 to Jul 31

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NAME	BREEDING SEASON
<b>Golden-winged Warbler</b> <i>Vermivora chrysoptera</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8745">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8745</a>	Breeds May 1 to Jul 20

## 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 and understand the FAQ “Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report” before using or attempting to interpret this report.

### Probability of Presence (■)

Each green bar represents the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during a particular week of the year. (A year is represented as 12 4-week months.) A taller bar indicates a higher probability of species presence. The survey effort (see below) can be used to establish a level of confidence in the presence score. One can have higher confidence in the presence score if the corresponding survey effort is also high.

How is the probability of presence score calculated? The calculation is done in three steps:

1. The probability of presence for each week is calculated as the number of survey events in the week where the species was detected divided by the total number of survey events for that week. For example, if in week 12 there were 20 survey events and the Spotted Towhee was found in 5 of them, the probability of presence of the Spotted Towhee in week 12 is 0.25.
2. To properly present the pattern of presence across the year, the relative probability of presence is calculated. This is the probability of presence divided by the maximum probability of presence across all weeks. For example, imagine the probability of presence in week 20 for the Spotted Towhee is 0.05, and that the probability of presence at week 12 (0.25) is the maximum of any week of the year. The relative probability of presence on week 12 is  $0.25/0.25 = 1$ ; at week 20 it is  $0.05/0.25 = 0.2$ .
3. The relative probability of presence calculated in the previous step undergoes a statistical conversion so that all possible values fall between 0 and 10, inclusive. This is the probability of presence score.

### Breeding Season (■)

Yellow bars denote a very liberal estimate of the time-frame inside which the bird breeds across its entire range. If there are no yellow bars shown for a bird, it does not breed in your project area.

### Survey Effort (I)

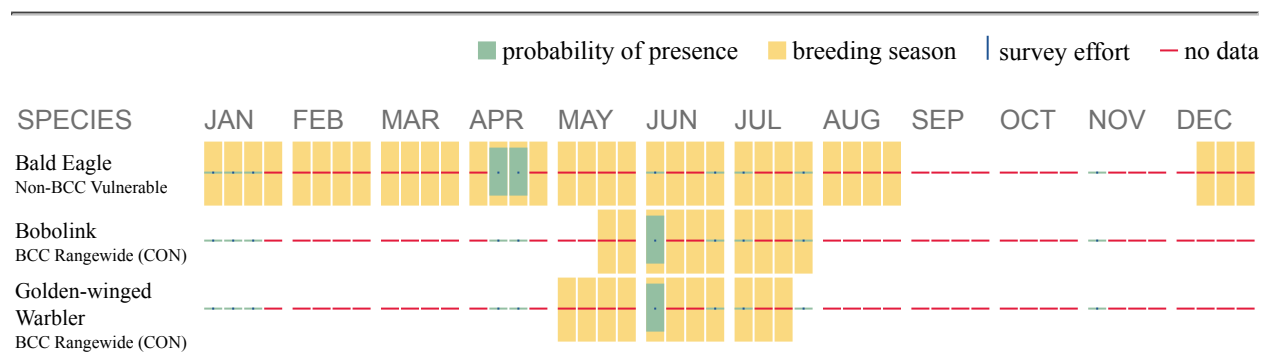
Vertical black lines superimposed on probability of presence bars indicate the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps. The number of surveys is expressed as a range, for example, 33 to 64 surveys.

### No Data (—)

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

### Survey Timeframe

Surveys from only the last 10 years are used in order to ensure delivery of currently relevant information. The exception to this is areas off the Atlantic coast, where bird returns are based on all years of available data, since data in these areas is currently much more sparse.



Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Birds of Conservation Concern <http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/managed-species/birds-of-conservation-concern.php>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/project-assessment-tools-and-guidance/conservation-measures.php>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/pdf/management/nationwidestandardconservationmeasures.pdf>

## Migratory Birds FAQ

**Tell me more about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds.**

[Nationwide Conservation Measures](#) describes measures that can help avoid and minimize impacts to all birds at any location year round. Implementation of these measures is particularly important when birds are most likely to occur in the project area. When birds may be breeding in the area, identifying the locations of any active nests and avoiding their destruction is a very helpful impact minimization measure. To see when birds are most likely to occur and be breeding in your project area, view the Probability of Presence Summary. [Additional measures](#) and/or

[permits](#) may be advisable depending on the type of activity you are conducting and the type of infrastructure or bird species present on your project site.

**What does IPaC use to generate the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location?**

The Migratory Bird Resource List is comprised of USFWS [Birds of Conservation Concern \(BCC\)](#) and other species that may warrant special attention in your project location.

The migratory bird list generated for your project is derived from data provided by the [Avian Knowledge Network \(AKN\)](#). The AKN data is based on a growing collection of [survey, banding, and citizen science datasets](#) and is queried and filtered to return a list of those birds reported as occurring in the 10km grid cell(s) which your project intersects, and that have been identified as warranting special attention because they are a BCC species in that area, an eagle ([Eagle Act](#) requirements may apply), or a species that has a particular vulnerability to offshore activities or development.

Again, the Migratory Bird Resource list includes only a subset of birds that may occur in your project area. It is not representative of all birds that may occur in your project area. To get a list of all birds potentially present in your project area, please visit the [E-bird Explore Data Tool](#).

**What does IPaC use to generate the probability of presence graphs for the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location?**

The probability of presence graphs associated with your migratory bird list are based on data provided by the [Avian Knowledge Network \(AKN\)](#). This data is derived from a growing collection of [survey, banding, and citizen science datasets](#).

Probability of presence data is continuously being updated as new and better information becomes available. To learn more about how the probability of presence graphs are produced and how to interpret them, go to the Probability of Presence Summary and then click on the "Tell me about these graphs" link.

**How do I know if a bird is breeding, wintering, migrating or present year-round in my project area?**

To see what part of a particular bird's range your project area falls within (i.e. breeding, wintering, migrating or year-round), you may refer to the following resources: [The Cornell Lab of Ornithology All About Birds Bird Guide](#), or (if you are unsuccessful in locating the bird of interest there), the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology Neotropical Birds guide](#). If a bird on your migratory bird species list has a breeding season associated with it, if that bird does occur in your project area, there may be nests present at some point within the timeframe specified. If "Breeds elsewhere" is indicated, then the bird likely does not breed in your project area.

**What are the levels of concern for migratory birds?**

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Migratory birds delivered through IPaC fall into the following distinct categories of concern:

1. "BCC Rangewide" birds are [Birds of Conservation Concern](#) (BCC) that are of concern throughout their range anywhere within the USA (including Hawaii, the Pacific Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands);
2. "BCC - BCR" birds are BCCs that are of concern only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA; and
3. "Non-BCC - Vulnerable" birds are not BCC species in your project area, but appear on your list either because of the [Eagle Act](#) requirements (for eagles) or (for non-eagles) potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities (e.g. offshore energy development or longline fishing).

Although it is important to try to avoid and minimize impacts to all birds, efforts should be made, in particular, to avoid and minimize impacts to the birds on this list, especially eagles and BCC species of rangewide concern. For more information on conservation measures you can implement to help avoid and minimize migratory bird impacts and requirements for eagles, please see the FAQs for these topics.

### **Details about birds that are potentially affected by offshore projects**

For additional details about the relative occurrence and abundance of both individual bird species and groups of bird species within your project area off the Atlantic Coast, please visit the [Northeast Ocean Data Portal](#). The Portal also offers data and information about other taxa besides birds that may be helpful to you in your project review. Alternately, you may download the bird model results files underlying the portal maps through the [NOAA NCCOS Integrative Statistical Modeling and Predictive Mapping of Marine Bird Distributions and Abundance on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf](#) project webpage.

Bird tracking data can also provide additional details about occurrence and habitat use throughout the year, including migration. Models relying on survey data may not include this information. For additional information on marine bird tracking data, see the [Diving Bird Study](#) and the [nanotag studies](#) or contact [Caleb Spiegel](#) or [Pam Loring](#).

### **What if I have eagles on my list?**

If your project has the potential to disturb or kill eagles, you may need to [obtain a permit](#) to avoid violating the Eagle Act should such impacts occur.

### **Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report**

The migratory bird list generated is not a list of all birds in your project area, only a subset of birds of priority concern. To learn more about how your list is generated, and see options for identifying what other birds may be in your project area, please see the FAQ "What does IPaC use to generate the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location". Please be aware this report provides the "probability of presence" of birds within the 10 km grid cell(s) that overlap your project; not your exact project footprint. On the graphs provided, please also look carefully at the survey effort (indicated by the black vertical bar) and for the existence of the "no data" indicator (a red horizontal bar). A high survey effort is the key component. If the survey effort is high, then the probability of presence score can be viewed as more dependable. In

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contrast, a low survey effort bar or no data bar means a lack of data and, therefore, a lack of certainty about presence of the species. This list is not perfect; it is simply a starting point for identifying what birds of concern have the potential to be in your project area, when they might be there, and if they might be breeding (which means nests might be present). The list helps you know what to look for to confirm presence, and helps guide you in knowing when to implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize potential impacts from your project activities, should presence be confirmed. To learn more about conservation measures, visit the FAQ “Tell me about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds” at the bottom of your migratory bird trust resources page.

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**Appendix C**  
**SHPO Correspondence**

December 19, 2018

Mr. Joe Hiller  
Division of Parks and Trails  
MN Dept. of Natural Resources  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4010

RE: Grand Rapids Sports Complex LAWCON Conversion, 1050 13th Avenue Northeast  
Grand Rapids, Itasca County  
T55 R25 S15 SW  
SHPO Number: 2019-0553

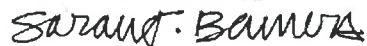
Dear Mr. Hiller:

Thank you for the opportunity comment on the above project. It has been reviewed pursuant to the responsibilities given the State Historic Preservation Officer by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and implementing federal regulations at 36 CFR 800, and to the responsibilities given the State Historic Preservation Office by the Minnesota Historic Sites Act and the Minnesota Field Archaeology Act.

Based on available information, we conclude that no historic properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places will be affected by the proposed project.

Please contact our Environmental Review Program at (651) 201-3285 if you have any questions regarding our review of this project.

Sincerely,



Sarah J. Beimers  
Environmental Review Program Manager

**mn** DEPARTMENT OF  
ADMINISTRATION  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

January 14, 2019

Mr. Joe Hiller  
Division of Parks and Trails  
MN Dept. of Natural Resources  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4010

RE: City of Grand Rapids Blandin Parkland Acquisition  
T55 R25 S21 NW  
Grand Rapids, Itasca County  
SHPO Number: 2019-0615

Dear Mr. Hiller:

Thank you for the opportunity comment on the above project. It has been reviewed pursuant to the responsibilities given the State Historic Preservation Officer by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and implementing federal regulations at 36 CFR 800, and to the responsibilities given the State Historic Preservation Office by the Minnesota Historic Sites Act and the Minnesota Field Archaeology Act.

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Sincerely,

*Sarah J. Beimers*

Sarah J. Beimers  
Environmental Review Program Manager