APPENDIX B
ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN REPORT

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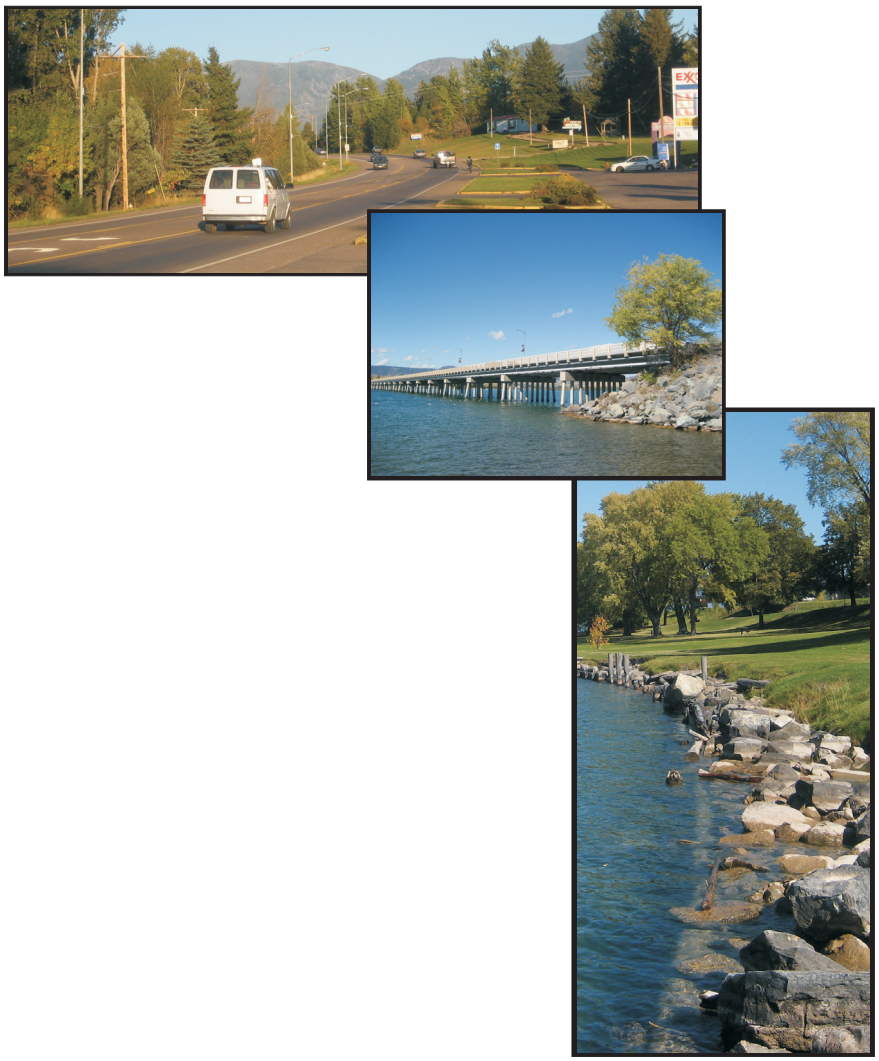

US 93 Polson
Corridor Study

Montana Department of Transportation

Environmental Scan

US 93
Polson Corridor Study

November 2010

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

BMPs	Best Management Practices
BOR	Bureau of Reclamation
CAA	Clean Air Act
CECRA	Comprehensive Environmental Cleanup and Responsibility Act
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CWA	Clean Water Act
DNRC	Department Of Natural Resource And Conservation
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EO	Executive Order
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Maps
FPPA	Farmland Protection Policy Act
GIS	Geographic Information System
LUST	Leaking Underground Storage Tank
LWCF	Land and Water Conservation Funds
LWQD	Local Water Quality District
MCA	Montana Code Annotated
MDEQ	Montana Department Of Environmental Quality
MDT	Montana Department Of Transportation
MEPA	Montana Environmental Policy Act
MFWP	Montana Department Of Fish, Wildlife, And Parks
MNHP	Montana Natural Heritage Program
MP	Milepost
MPDES	Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
MSAT	Mobile Source Air Toxics
NAC	Noise Abatement Criteria
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NHP	Natural Heritage Program
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NPL	National Priority List
NPS	National Park Service
NRC	National Response Center
NRHP	National Register Of Historic Places
NRIS	Natural Resource Information System
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
RCRA	Resource Conservation And Recovery Act
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
TRI	Toxics Release Inventory
USACOE	U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers

USC	United States Code
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	U.S. Fish And Wildlife Service
UST	Underground Storage Tank
Section 4(f)	Section 4(f) of the 1966 Department of Transportation Act
Section 6(f)	Section 6(f) of the National Land and Water Conservation Funds Act

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The US 93 Polson Corridor Study (Study) is a refined analysis of the US 93 corridor through the City of Polson. This Study will consider the feasibility of an alternative route, including those potential alternative routes brought forward in the 1996 US 93-Evaro to Polson Environmental Impact Statement. General corridors for analysis will be identified based on input from local government, the public, and other agencies (e.g., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, etc.).

The primary objective of this Environmental Scan Report is to identify the environmental resources present within the Study area and to determine any potential impacts and/or constraints applicable to the US 93 Polson Corridor Study.

1.2 Geographic Setting

The City of Polson is situated along the southern shore of Flathead Lake, within the boundaries of the Flathead Indian Reservation. Polson is the county seat of Lake County. According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total land area of 2.7 miles^2 (7.0 km^2). The City serves as a local center for agriculture and small manufacturing in the surrounding 30-mile radius. Approximately five miles southeast of Polson, Kerr Dam, a hydroelectric generating facility, is located on the Lower Flathead River.

US Highway 93 is part of the National Highway System and serves as an important transportation link in western Montana for national, international, and local travel. This Study will look at various feasible alternative routes within the Study boundaries. Figure 1 illustrates the designated Study boundaries within Townships 22 and 23 North, Range 20 West.

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Figure 1
Corridor Study Boundary
US 93 Polson Corridor Study

Polson City Limit
US 93
MT 35
Secondary 354
Corridor Study Boundary
Local Road
Mile Post

US-93 Polson Corridor Study

2 Physical Environment

2.1 Air Quality

In Montana, air quality problems are usually related to urban areas and areas sensitive to temperature inversions, such as mountainous regions or river valleys. The two criteria pollutants known to have the greatest adverse impact on Montana's air quality are particulate matter and carbon monoxide. Particulate matter generally comes from residential wood burning, vehicles traveling on unpaved roads, and sand and gravel from winter traction material. Likewise, carbon monoxide comes primarily from residential wood burning and motor vehicles.

Under the federal Clean Air Act (Title 42 United States Code, Chapter 85), specific allowable ambient concentrations for criteria pollutants have been established in order to protect human health and welfare. These allowed pollutant concentration levels are known as the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Certain areas of special natural, scenic, recreational, or historic value are provided special protection under the CAA from significant deterioration. These areas have been designated as Class I Airsheds. Only small increases in existing ambient pollutant concentrations from major stationary sources are allowed in these areas, provided the proposed increase does not violate the NAAQS. Class I increments (the maximum allowed increase in ambient concentration) have been established for sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, and nitrogen dioxide. The Flathead Indian Reservation has been designated as a Class I Airshed. As such, special protections apply within the Study area.

In addition, certain geographical regions that violate the NAAQS are designated as 'non-attainment areas'. Non-attainment areas receive special attention and mitigation efforts in order to improve the ambient air quality to the established standards. The Study area is located within a designated non-attainment area for particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 microns or less (PM_{10}). See Figure 2 for a map depicting the PM_{10} non-attainment area boundaries. The US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), in cooperation with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe (CSKT), has regulatory authority in the Study area. Because the Study area is located in a nonattainment area, transportation conformity will be required. Transportation conformity ensures that any proposed project will comply with the approved plan to bring an area into compliance with the NAAQS. A regional emissions analysis will be necessary if the proposed project is considered "regionally significant" as defined in 40 CFR 93.101 since there is no metropolitan planning organization for the City of Polson. The project may also require a hot-spot analysis for PM_{10}, or any other pollutants that may be of concern at the time of project development.

Any improvement options forwarded from the corridor study into project development will need to be evaluated to determine if the project is regionally significant according to the Federal Highway Administration letter of July 17, 2008. In addition, the effects of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change may need to be considered.

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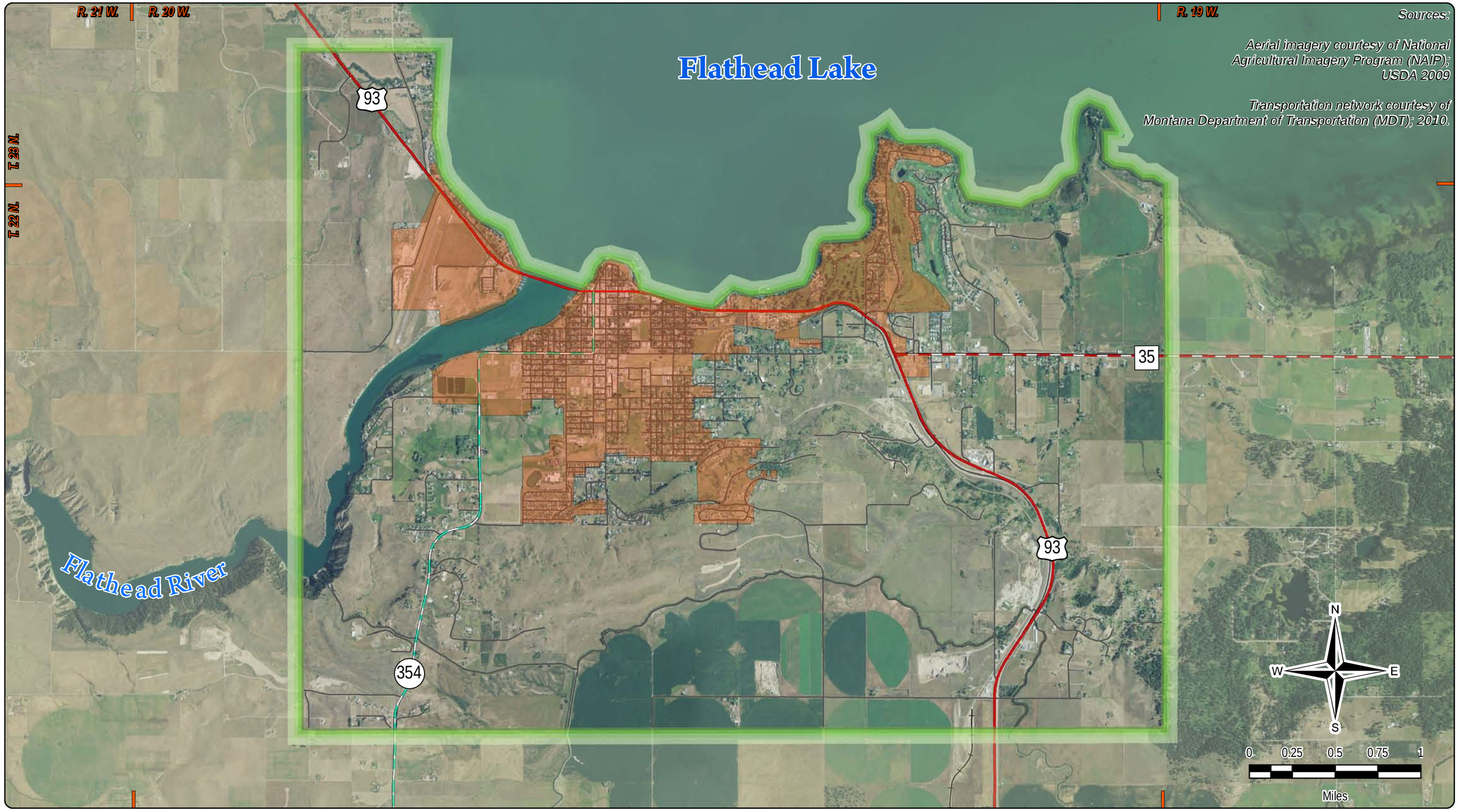

Figure 2
PM_{10} Non-Attainment Area
US 93 Polson Corridor Study

- PM_{10} Non-Attainment Area
- US 93
- MT 35
- Secondary 354
- Corridor Study Boundary
- Local Road

US-93 Polson Corridor Study

2.2 Soil Resources and Prime Farmland

The Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981 (Title 7 United States Code, Chapter 73) has as its purpose "to minimize the extent to which federal programs contribute to the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses, and to assure that federal programs are administered in a manner that, to the extent practicable, will be compatible with State, unit of local government, and private programs and policies to protect farmland."

Farmland is defined by the Act in Section 4201 as including prime farmland, unique farmland, and farmland, other than prime or unique farmland, that is of statewide or local importance.

Prime farmland soils are those that have the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, and forage; the area must also be available for these uses. Prime farmland can be either non-irrigated or lands that would be considered prime if irrigated. Farmland of statewide importance is land, in addition to prime and unique farmlands, that is of statewide importance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops.

Information on soils from the US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) was obtained to determine the presence of prime and unique farmland in the Study area. The Lake County soil surveys indicate that the predominant soil types within the Study area include silt, sandy, and gravelly loams. Prime farmland, as well as farmland of statewide and local importance, exists within the Study area. Figure 3 illustrates the farmland classifications present in the Study area.

The Form NRCS-CPA-106: Farmland Conversion Impact Rating for Corridor Type Projects is a way for the NRCS to keep inventory of the Prime and Important farmlands within the state. Project activities associated with the construction of a alternative route in the Study area will likely create impacts to the soil map units with prime and important farmland status; thus it is likely required that a NRCS-CPA-106 Form be completed. The process for completing this form requires mapping of the prime and important farmlands to be converted to non-farmable land, coordination with the NRCS, and final completion of the conversion form.

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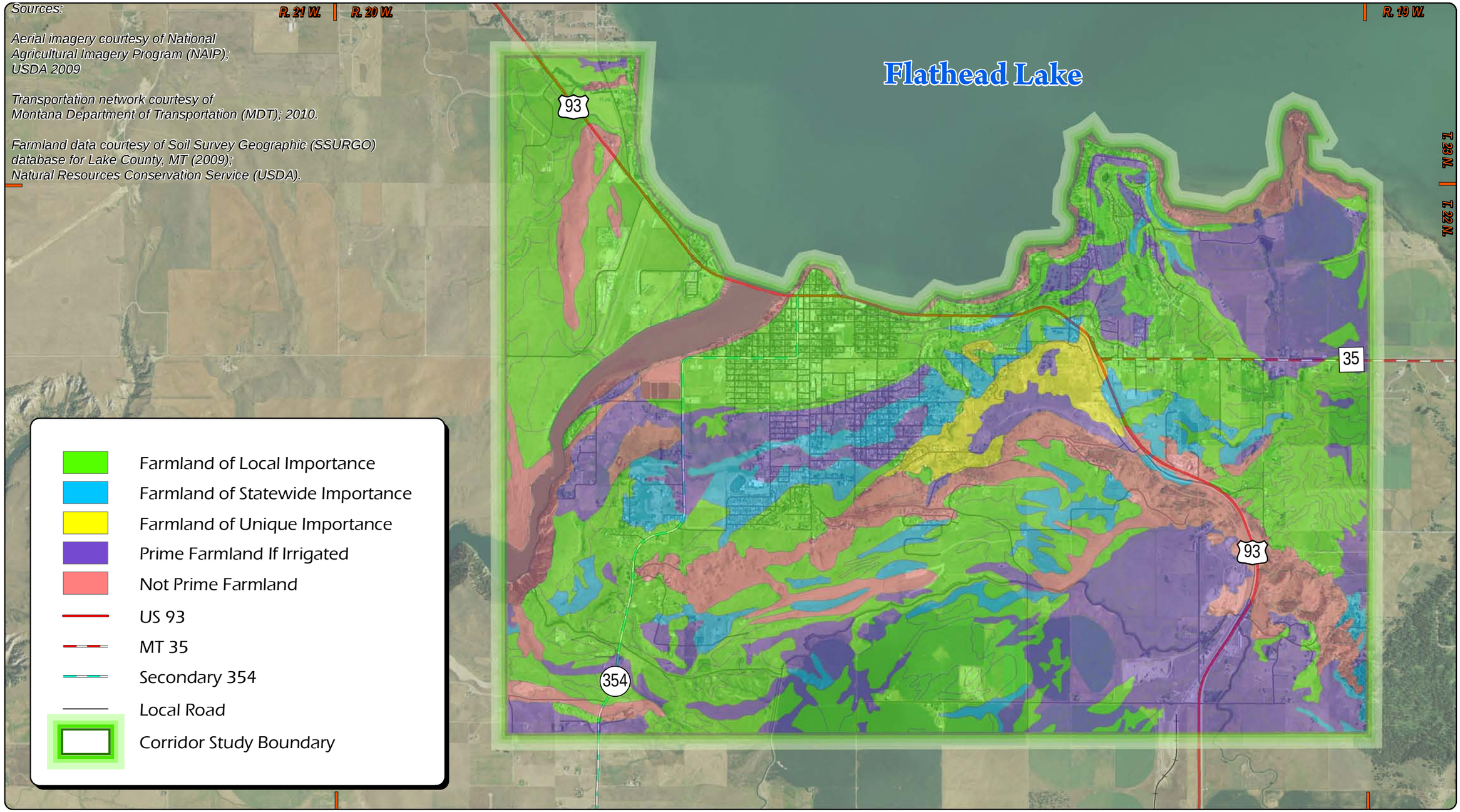

Figure 3
Prime Farmland
US 93 Polson Corridor Study

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0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1
Miles

US-93 Polson Corridor Study
93

2.3 Geologic Resources

The City of Polson is located at the base of Polson Moraine, a terminal moraine that forms the prominent hill just south of Flathead Lake and the City. This moraine is an east-west elongated glacial feature formed by the receding valley glacier. Polson is located on a north-facing slope that ranges in elevation between 2,900 and 3,000 feet above mean sea level. The Flathead River and its tributaries drain the entire area.

Seismic information was reviewed for fault lines and seismic hazard areas. This geologic information can help determine any potential design and construction issues related to embankments and road design. Appendix A contains a map showing the major faults in Montana. A belt of seismicity known as the Intermountain Seismic Belt extends through western Montana, from the Flathead Lake region in the northwest corner of the state through Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, and into southern Nevada. In western Montana, the Intermountain Seismic Belt is up to 100 kilometers (62 miles) wide and parallels the Rocky Mountains. The state of Montana adopted the seismic standards set by the Uniform Building Code (which establishes building design standards used by architects and engineers) to assess the seismic risk in Montana. These standards were adopted in order to provide earthquake design standards for regional construction. The Intermountain Seismic Belt appears to be predominantly classified as zone 3 on the Uniform Building Code seismic risk scale of 0 (low risk) to 4 (high risk).

2.4 Water Resources

2.4.1 Surface Water

Polson is situated along the southern shore of Flathead Lake, the largest natural, freshwater lake in the western United States. Along the west side of the Mission Valley, the Flathead River flows from the south end of Flathead Lake to the confluence with the Clark Fork River. Approximately two miles south of Polson is the Pablo Reservoir/Pablo National Wildlife Refuge, a lake with wetlands providing habitat for birds and other wildlife. In addition, several irrigation canals are present within, and south of Polson.

The CSKT administers Tribal Ordinances 64 A and 87A which deal with Flathead Lake shoreline structures and dredge and fill activities on all other waterbodies within the Reservation. In addition, the CSKT has been granted ‘treatment as a state’ by the USEPA under Section 106 of the federal Clean Water Act (Title 33 United States Code, Chapter 26). The CSKT has authority to set water quality standards for waterbodies within the Reservation. The CSKT also has authority to implement the Section 401 program of the federal Clean Water Act. Section 401 requires applications for a Federal license or permit which may result in a discharge into waters of the United States to obtain a certification from the responsible governmental authority that such discharge will comply with the applicable provisions of the Clean Water Act. Section 401 certification from the CSKT would be required for any permit issued by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) for the discharge of dredged or fill material.

The CSKT, under USEPA oversight, has authority over all waters located entirely within the tribal reservation and is responsible for assessing the condition of these water bodies. With the exception of Flathead Lake, no information on the existing condition of the identified water bodies was found. Because Flathead Lake exists both inside and outside of the Reservation

boundary, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has assessed this lake as required under Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act. Section 303(d) requires states to develop a list, subject to USEPA approval, of water bodies that do not meet state water quality standards. When water quality fails to meet the established standards, the state determines the causes and sources of pollutants in a sub-basin assessment and sets maximum pollutant levels, called total maximum daily loads (TMDL).

A TMDL sets maximum pollutant levels in a watershed. The TMDLs become the basis for implementation plans to restore the water quality to a level that supports its designated beneficial uses. The implementation plans identify and describe pollutant controls and management measures to be undertaken (such as best management practices), the mechanisms by which the selected measures would be put into action, and the individuals and entities responsible for implementation projects.

MDEQ has listed Flathead Lake in its 2008 Integrated 303(d)/305(b) Water Quality Report for Montana. Flathead Lake is listed as partially supporting aquatic life beneficial uses. The probable causes of impairment include mercury, total nitrogen, total phosphorus, polychlorinated biphenyls, and sedimentation/siltation. TMDLs are required to address the factors causing these impairments. When TMDLs are prepared and implementation plans are in place, any construction practices will have to comply with the requirements set forth in these plans.

The Polson Airport's runway extends into the Flathead River, and includes a seaplane parking area. If an improvement option is forwarded into project development, alignment of any river crossing will need to account for these facilities.

2.4.2 Groundwater

Groundwater from seven wells supplies the City of Polson's municipal water supply system. Five of these wells derive groundwater from a confined unconsolidated to semi-consolidated valley-fill aquifer. Within this aquifer, groundwater flow is to the north, toward Flathead Lake. The other two wells obtain water from a confined bedrock aquifer on the west side of Polson and the Flathead River. Groundwater flow direction in this bedrock aquifer is from the west to east, towards Flathead Lake and the Flathead River. Aquifer thickness is at least 363 feet. More detailed information is available in the Source Water Delineation and Assessment Report included in Appendix B. The City of Polson is currently seeking another well location to be added to the municipal water supply system.

2.4.3 Irrigation

The Flathead Irrigation District is located within the Study area. Under the Flathead Irrigation Project, which includes the Jocko Valley, Mission, and Flathead Irrigation Districts, there is an estimated 1,300 miles of canals and lateral ditches in the distribution system. Capacities of major canals affecting both the Mission and Flathead Irrigation Districts are: the Tabor Feeder Canal, 200 cfs, Pablo Feeder Canal, 500 cfs, and the Pablo "A" canal 485 cfs. The Flathead pumping system supplies water to the Pablo Reservoir and to the western portion of the Polson area. The pumps are operated only when there is a need to supplement gravity supplies. The irrigation canals present in the Study area are shown in Figure 4. In certain instances, irrigation ditches may be considered jurisdictional waterways; therefore, specific regulatory requirements may apply to work within these structures.

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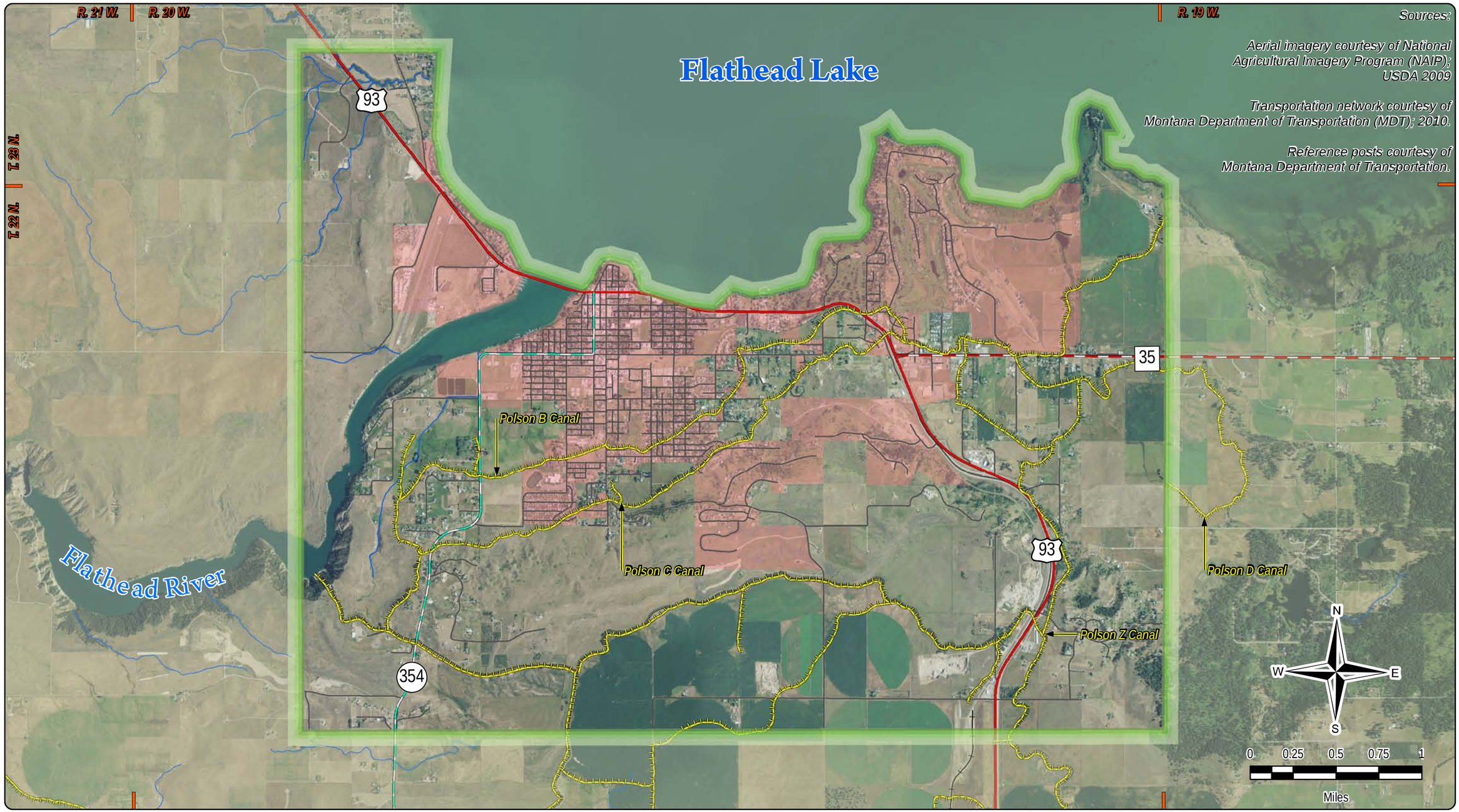

Sources:

Aerial imagery courtesy of National Agricultural Imagery Program (NAIP); USDA 2009

Transportation network courtesy of Montana Department of Transportation (MDT); 2010.

Reference posts courtesy of Montana Department of Transportation.

Figure 4
Irrigation
US 93 Polson Corridor Study

- Polson City Limit
- US 93
- MT 35
- Secondary 354
- Corridor Study Boundary
- Canal
- Stream
- Local Road

US-93 Polson Corridor Study

2.4.4 Wetlands (EO 11988)

The USACOE defines wetlands as those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, fens, and other similar areas.

National Wetland Inventory (NWI) Mapping is available for the Study area. Wetlands identified in Study area are shown in Figure 5. Although the NWI maps were reviewed for general wetland locations present in the Study area, it is important to note that these maps are not accurate or detailed enough for MDT project wetland identification and delineation. The NWI map is not intended to be a complete identification and/or delineation of wetlands present in the project area. NWI maps are typically generated based on aerial and satellite imagery. They are generated by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and are based on the USFWS definition of wetlands, which differs from the USACOE definition of wetlands that MDT is required to use in wetland identification and delineation. Additional wetland mapping may be available from the CSKT.

Formal wetland delineations will need to be conducted according to standard USACOE defined procedures if an improvement options is forwarded during the project development process. Jurisdictional determinations of wetlands will also be conducted during the project development process. Wetland impacts should be avoided to the greatest extent practicable. All unavoidable wetland impacts will need to be mitigated as required by the USACOE. Potential mitigation sites should be investigated and constructed prior to project impacts. The USACOE generally requires that compensatory mitigation occur in the same watershed as the impacts. The Lower Clark Fork and Flathead watersheds are located within the Study area. Coordination with the USACOE will be necessary to determine the appropriate location of any mitigation site.

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Figure 5
Wetlands
US 93 Polson Corridor Study

Wetland Area
US 93
MT 35
Secondary 354
Corridor Study Boundary
Local Road

US-93 Polson Corridor Study

2.4.5 Wild and Scenic Rivers

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Title 16 United States Code, Chapter 28), created by Congress in 1968, provides for the protection of certain selected rivers, and their immediate environments, that possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values. Under the Act, rivers are classified as wild, scenic, or recreational. Wild rivers are those that are free of impoundments and are generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive. Scenic rivers are those that are free of impoundments, are accessible in places by roads, with watersheds or shorelines still largely undeveloped. Recreational rivers are those that are readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shorelines, and that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past. Regardless of classification, each river is administered with the goal of protecting and enhancing the values that caused it to be designated. Protection is provided through voluntary stewardship by landowners and river users, and through regulation and programs of federal, state, local, and/or tribal governments. The Act limits how much land the federal government is allowed to acquire.

The U.S. National Park Service (NPS) website was accessed for information on river segments that may be located within the study area with wild and scenic designation. The designated National Wild and Scenic River systems in western Montana include the Middle Fork of the Flathead River (headwaters to South Fork confluence), the North Fork of the Flathead River (Canadian border to Middle Fork confluence), and the South Fork of the Flathead River (headwaters to Hungry Horse Reservoir). None of these river segments are located within the Study area.

2.5 Floodplains (EO 11988) and Floodways

Executive Order (EO) 11988, Floodplain Management, requires federal agencies to avoid direct or indirect support of floodplain development whenever a practicable alternative exists. EO 11988 and 23 CFR 650 Part A requires an evaluation of project alternatives to determine the extent of any encroachment into the base floodplain. The base flood (100-year flood) is the regulatory standard used by federal agencies and most states to administer floodplain management programs. A “floodplain” is defined as lowland and relatively flat areas adjoining inland and coastal waters, including flood-prone areas of offshore islands, with a one percent or greater chance of flooding in a given year. As described in FHWA’s floodplain regulation (23 CFR 650 Part A), floodplains provide natural and beneficial values serving as areas for fish, wildlife, plants, open space, natural flood moderation, water quality maintenance, and groundwater recharge. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) issued flood map for the Study area is shown in Figure 6. Coordination with Lake County should be conducted during the project development process to determine if floodplain permits are required.

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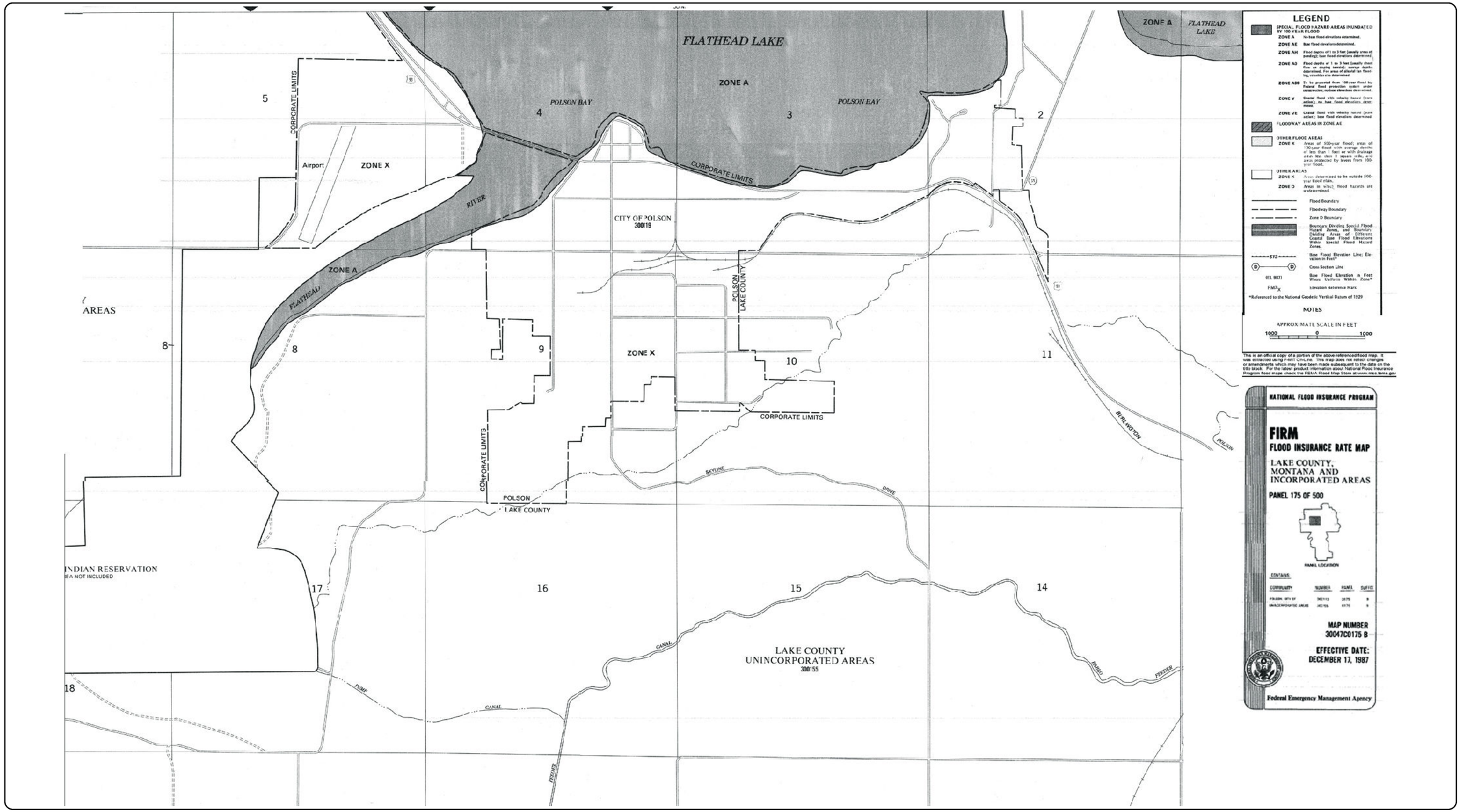

Figure 6
Surface Waters/Floodplain
US 93 Polson Corridor Study

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2.6 Hazardous Substances

The Montana Natural Resource Information System (NRIS) database was searched for documented leak sites within the Study area. The identified sites are summarized in Table 1 below. Abandoned mine sites were also identified in the Study area and are shown in Figure 7. Additional unknown contaminated sites may be identified during the project development process and/or during construction.

If an improvement option is forwarded into project development, further evaluation may be needed at specific sites to determine if contamination will be encountered during construction. This may include reviewing DEQ files and conducting subsurface investigation activities to determine the extent of soil and groundwater contamination. If it appears that contaminated soils or groundwater could be encountered during construction, handling/disposing of the contaminated material will need to be conducted in accordance with State, Federal, Tribal, and local laws and rules.

Table 1 – Leaking Tank Sites in Polson

Facility Name	Facility Address	Facility ID	Release ID	Date of Release	Priority
POLSON CONOCO (FOUR CORNERS) #193	1ST ST E & US HIGHWAY 93	2406862	193	08-Dec-89	1.4 - High Priority Characterization
BEACON TIRE CENTER INC #198	49523 US Highway 93	2403406	198	12-Dec-89	1.4 - High Priority Characterization
TOWN PUMP INC POLSON #370	50667 US Highway 93	2408717	370	31-Aug-90	2.0 - Medium Priority Characterization
PIER 93 #487	9 2ND AVE W	2405957	487	09-Nov-90	1.4 - High Priority Characterization
NEWGARD OIL CO INC #635	610 MAIN ST	2404559	635	19-Jan-88	1.4 - High Priority Characterization
FORMER SALISH INN #770	110 MAIN ST	2412393	770	11-Jun-91	5.0 - Pending Closure
BIGFOOT DISCOUNT #1099	1ST ST E & 2ND AVE E	2412641	1099	18-Feb-92	4.0 - Ground Water Management
SAFEWAY INC #1585	104 2ND AVE E	2413105	1585	10-Mar-93	1.4 - High Priority Characterization
MAC MONT WAREHOUSE #1691	801 5TH AVE E	2413137	1691	20-May-93	3.0 - Medium Priority Remediation
TOWN PUMP INC POLSON #2037	50667 US Highway 93	2408717	2037	13-Dec-93	2.0 - Medium Priority Characterization

Facility Name	Facility Address	Facility ID	Release ID	Date of Release	Priority
POLSON OPTICAL BUILDING PARTNERSHIP #2131	49487 Us Highway 93	2413352	2131	15-Mar-94	2.0 - Medium Priority Characterization
FORMER SALISH INN #2462	110 MAIN ST	2412393	2462	21-Oct-92	1.4 - High Priority Characterization
LAKE COUNTY REFUSE SHOP #3152	54825 US HIGHWAY 93	2411060	3152	13-May-97	2.0 - Medium Priority Characterization
BJORK DISTRIBUTING INC 7TH AVE E #3190	500 7TH ST E	2413447	3190	24-Jun-97	2.0 - Medium Priority Characterization
MORTON CARDTROL ISLAND & BULK #3249	204 DIVISION ST	2413301	3249	08-Oct-97	2.0 - Medium Priority Characterization
FARM BUREAU INSURANCE CHECKERS BEAUTY #3347	13 3RD AVE E	5613843	3347	30-Jan-98	5.0 - Pending Closure
POLSON BAY GROCERY 025 #4102	50451 US Highway 93	2405770	4102	02-May-02	5.0 - Pending Closure
GINA HINES RESIDENCE #4391	33736 Finley Point Rd	9995001	4391	07-Feb-05	2.0 - Medium Priority Characterization
UNOCAL BULK PLANT #4422	203 DIVISION ST	5613778	4422	18-Aug-98	1.4 - High Priority Characterization
DALE GILLESPIE #4457	1500 HILLCREST DR	9995020	4457	06-Dec-05	5.0 - Pending Closure
FORMER AMOCO #4542	2nd St East	6015070	4542	30-Jan-06	1.1 - High Priority/ Emergency response

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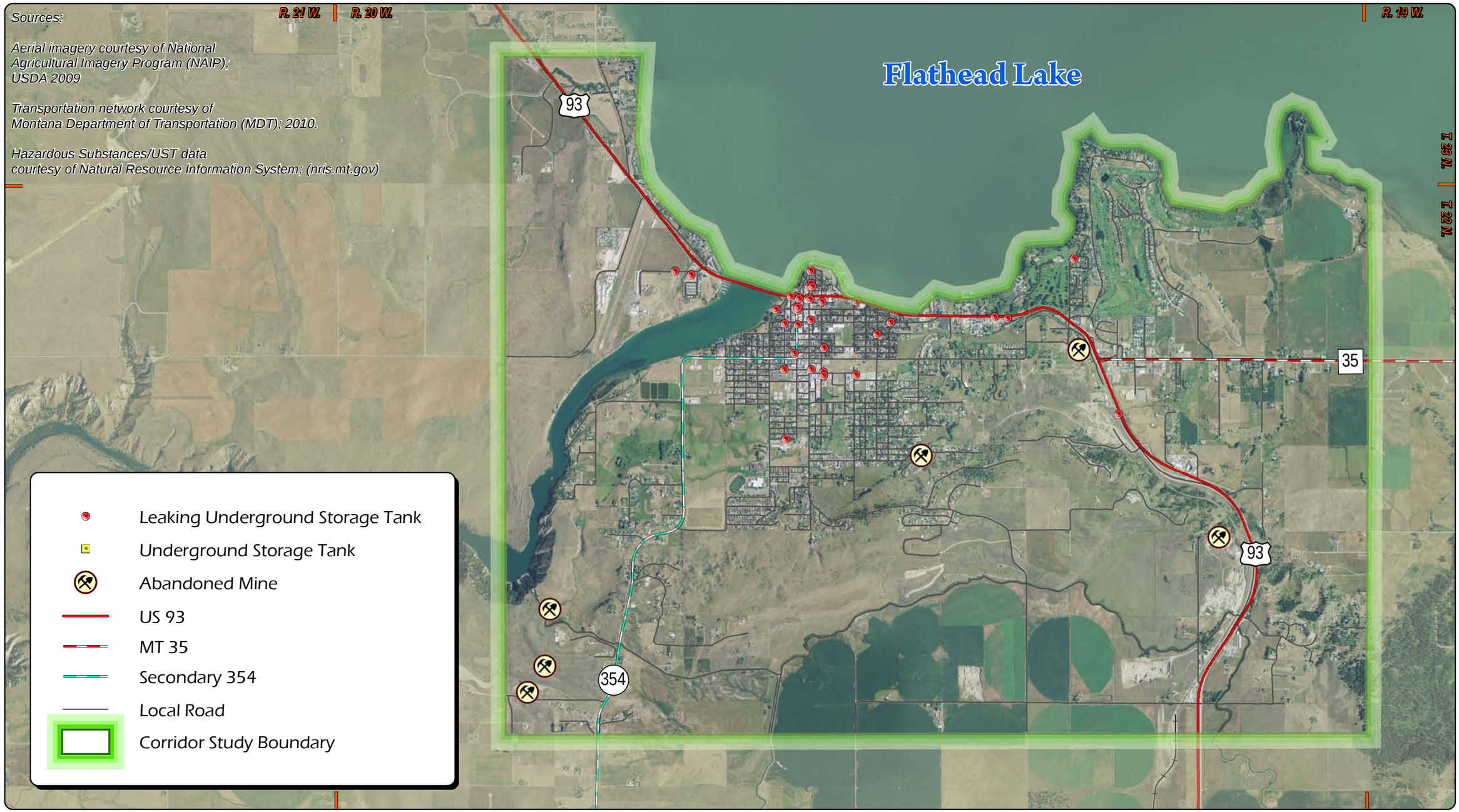

Figure 7
Hazardous Substances/Leaking Tanks
US 93 Polson Corridor Study

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Miles

US-93 Polson Corridor Study
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3 Biological Resources

Biological resources in the Study area were identified using maps, aerial photographs, Montana Natural Heritage Program data, and the endangered, threatened, proposed, and candidate species list for Montana counties. This limited survey is not intended to be a complete and accurate biological survey of the Study area. Rather, a complete biological survey of the Study area will be conducted in accordance with accepted practices if an improvement option is forwarded during the project development process. CSKT biologists should be contacted for local expertise of the project area.

3.1 Fish and Wildlife

The Pablo National Wildlife Refuge is located south of the Study area. Within the borders and adjacent to this wildlife refuge, nesting Bald Eagles, trumpeter swans, and common Loons, as well as numerous small mammals and species of waterfowl have been documented.

Riparian and river, stream or creek habitats should be avoided to the greatest extent practicable, including but not limited to, Flathead River and Flathead Lake. Fish and wildlife species use waterway corridors during all life stages. Encroachment into the wetted width of any waterway and the associated riparian habitat should be limited to the absolute minimum necessary for the construction of the proposed project. Soils, vegetation, and flooding data can be utilized in determining the extent of riparian habitat.

3.1.1 Threatened and Endangered Species

The federal list of threatened and endangered species is maintained by the USFWS. Species on this list receive special protections under the Endangered Species Act (Title 16 United States Code, Chapter 35). An ‘endangered’ species is one that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. A ‘threatened’ species is one that is likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future. The USFWS also maintains a list of species that are candidates or proposed for possible addition to the federal list.

Lake County has been documented to possess the endangered Gray Wolf, threatened Grizzly Bear and the threatened Canada Lynx, as well as critical habitats for these species. The gray wolf has been removed and re-listed from the threatened and endangered species list several times. The most recent re-listing occurred August 5, 2010. Transient movements of Grizzly Bears may occur within the Study area. The Study area is unlikely to possess any suitable habitat or see any transient use by Canada Lynx, however. The Flathead River along the western border of the Study area contains a viable recreational fishery and critical habitats for the threatened Bull Trout.

Further evaluation of potential impacts to all threatened, endangered, proposed, or candidate species will need to be conducted during the project development process if a improvement option is forwarded. Updated critical habitat maps should be consulted during the project development process.

3.1.2 Species of Concern

Montana Species of Concern are native animals within the state that are considered to be "at risk" due to declining population trends, threats to their habitats, and/or restricted distribution. Designation of a species as a Montana Animal Species of Concern is not a statutory or regulatory classification. Instead, these designations provide a basis for resource managers and decision-makers to direct limited resources to priority data collection needs and address conservation needs proactively. Each species is assigned a state rank that ranges from S1 (greatest concern) to S5 (least concern). Other state ranks include SU (unrankable due to insufficient information), SH (historically occurred), and SX (believed to be extinct). State ranks may be followed by modifiers, such as B (breeding) or N (non-breeding).

Table 2 lists the eight animal species of concern that the Montana Heritage Program has records of in the Study area. The results of a data search by the Montana Natural Heritage Program reflect the current status of their data collection efforts. These results are not intended as a final statement on sensitive species within a given area, or as a substitute for on-site surveys. On-site surveys would need to be completed during the project development process.

Table 2. Montana Animal Species of Concern

	Scientific Name	**Common Name**	**State Rank**
Mammals	*Corynorhinus townsendii*	Townsend's Big Eared Bat	S2
	Canis lupus	Gray Wolf	S3
Birds	*Gavia immer*	Common Loon	S3B
	Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Bald Eagle	S3
	Numenius americanus	Long-billed Curlew	S3B
	Ammodramus savannarum	Grasshopper Sparrow	S3B
	Dolichonyx oryzivorus	Bobolink	S3B
Fish	*Salvelinus confluentus*	Bull Trout	S2

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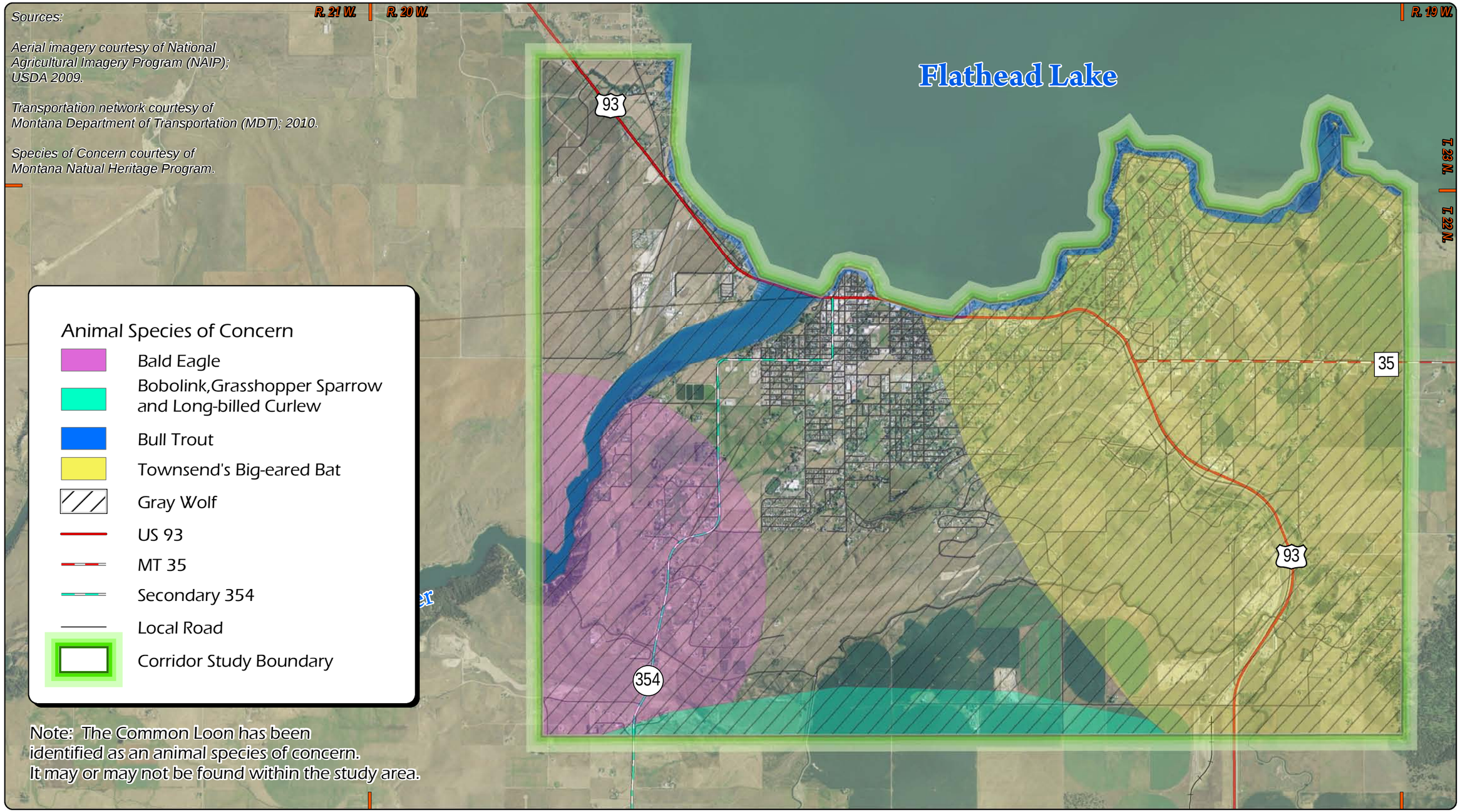

Figure 8
Animal Species of Concern
US 93 Polson Corridor Study

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Miles

US-93 Polson Corridor Study
93

3.1.3 Wildlife and Traffic Concerns

During the project development process, CSKT wildlife biologists will need to be consulted to determine what measures, if any, are needed to address wildlife crossings along the proposed improvement option. Some wildlife crossings have already been installed along US93 within the Study area.

3.2 Vegetation

The Study area is largely comprised of a short grassland prairie ecosystem with inclusions of willow, cottonwood, ponderosa pine, and mountain mahogany. The grasslands support livestock grazing, and have been tilled for small grain and hay production. Dominant species associated with the Polouse grassland have also been identified in the Study area.

3.2.1 Threatened and Endangered Species

As discussed in Section 3.1.1, the federal list of threatened and endangered species is maintained by the USFWS. Species on this list receive special protections under the Endangered Species Act. The threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate plant species list for Montana counties was consulted. This list generally identifies the counties where one would reasonably expect the species to occur, not necessarily every county where the species is listed.

According to the USFWS, two plant species are listed as threatened in Lake County: the Spalding's Campion *Silene spaldingii* and the Water Howellia *Howellia aquatilis*. An evaluation of potential impacts to all threatened, endangered, proposed, or candidate species would need to be conducted during the project development process.

3.2.2 Species of Concern

Montana Species of Concern are native plants in the state that are considered to be "at risk" due to declining population trends, threats to their habitats, and/or restricted distribution. As described in Section 3.1.2, designation of a species as a Montana Species of Concern is not a statutory or regulatory classification. Instead, these designations provide a basis for resource managers and decision-makers to direct limited resources to priority data collection needs and address conservation needs proactively.

Table 3 lists the three plant species of concern that the Montana Heritage Program has records of within the Study area. The results of a data search by the Montana Natural Heritage Program reflect the current status of their data collection efforts. These results are not intended as a final statement on sensitive species within a given area, or as a substitute for on-site surveys. On-site surveys would need to be completed during the project development process.

Table 3. Montana Plant Species of Concern

Scientific Name	Common Name	State Rank
Acorus americanus	Sweet Flag	SH
Carex lacustris	Lake-bank Sedge	S1
Dichanthelium oligosanthes	Scribner's Panic Grass	S1

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Figure 9
Plant Species of Concern
US 93 Polson Corridor Study

Plant Species of Concern
- Lake-bank Sedge
- Sweetflag
- Local Road

- Corridor Study Boundary
- US 93
- MT 35
- Secondary 354

US-93 Polson Corridor Study

3.2.3 Noxious Weeds

Noxious weeds degrade habitat, choke streams, crowd native plants, create fire hazards, poison and injure livestock and humans, and foul recreation sites. Areas with a history of disturbance are at particular risk of weed encroachment.

The following noxious weeds have been identified as present in Lake County: Leafy Spurge, Spotted Knapweed, Russian Knapweed, Dalmatian Toadflax, and Sulphur Cinqueful. Spotted Knapweed is known to be present within the Study area. The Study area will need to be surveyed for noxious weeds during the project development process.

To reduce the spread and establishment of noxious weeds and to re-establish permanent vegetation, disturbed areas will need to be seeded with desirable plant species. County Weed Control Supervisors should be contacted prior to any construction activities regarding specific measures for weed control.

4 Social and Cultural Resources

4.1 Demographic Information

To provide a context in which to evaluate social impacts, characteristics of the existing population are presented below in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4: US Census Bureau Demographic Information

Area	Population (2008)	Population % Change (4/1/00 thru 7/1/08)	Median Household Income (2008)	Persons Below Poverty (2008)	Persons per Square Mile (2000)
Lake County	28,690	8.2%	$38,505	21.3%	17.7
State of Montana	967,440	7.2%	$43,948	14.1%	6.2

As shown in Table 4, Lake County has experienced a higher growth rate than the State of Montana as a whole. Lake County also has a greater percentage of persons living below the poverty line. As shown in Table 5 below, the median household income for the City of Polson was estimated to be $21,870 in the year 2000, well below the average for the state of Montana at that time.

Table 5: City of Polson
US Census Bureau 2000 Data

Total Population	4,041
White (%)	78.2
African American (%)	0.1
American Indian/Alaska Native (%)	16.1

Total Population	4,041
Asian (%)	0.5
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander (%)	0.1
Hispanic/Latino (%)	2.3
2 or more races (%)	4.5
Median Household Income	$21,870
Persons Below Poverty	19.8

4.2 Environmental Justice

Title VI of the US Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (Title 42 United States Code, Chapter 21) and Executive Order (EO) 12898 require that no minority, or, by extension, low-income person shall be disproportionately adversely impacted by any project receiving federal funds. For transportation projects, this means that no particular minority or low-income person may be disproportionately isolated, displaced, or otherwise subjected to adverse effects. Environmental justice would need to be addressed if an improvement option is forwarded during the project development process.

4.3 Archaeological Resources

The Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) was contacted to determine the presence of any known cultural and/or historic sites within the Study area. The file search yielded one previously recorded cultural resource site. This site is listed as a prehistoric lithic scatter. Although only one cultural site was identified in the file search, there are undoubtedly many more archeological sites located along the Flathead River and in undeveloped areas outside of Polson. As shown in Figure 10, MDT has designated areas as 'Sensitive' where there is a high likelihood that intact archaeological sites are present (Note: Not all of the areas designated as 'Sensitive' have the potential for intact archaeological sites. The 'Sensitive' designation includes other resources, as well.). If an improvement option is forwarded into project development, on the ground fieldwork and coordination with the CSKT will be necessary to determine where additional cultural resources are located.

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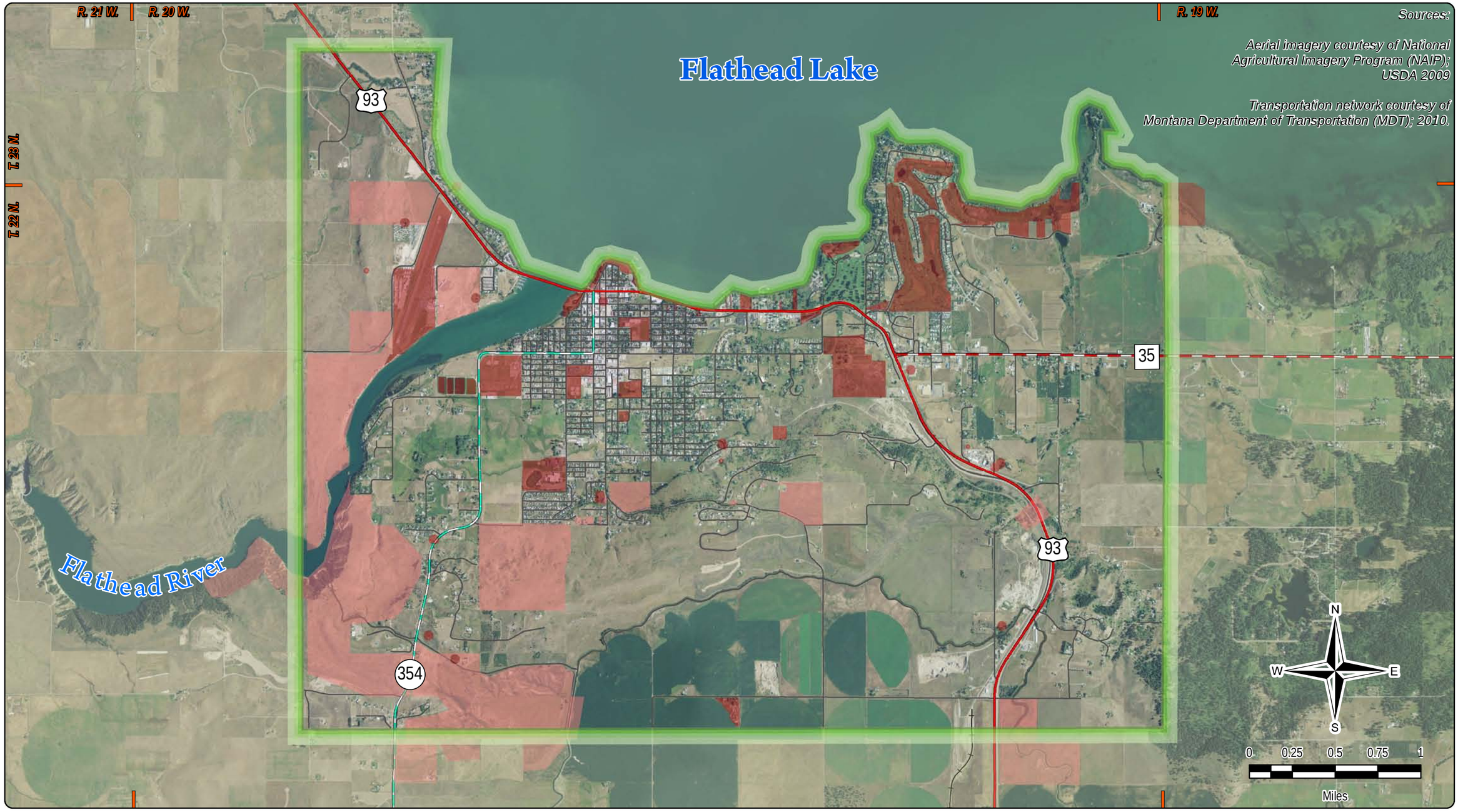

Figure 10
Sensitive Areas
US 93 Polson Corridor Study

US 93
MT 35
Secondary 354
Local Road

Corridor Study Boundary
Avoid Area
Sensitive Area

US-93 Polson Corridor Study

4.4 Historic Resources

The file search conducted by SHPO also revealed 62 previously recorded historic properties within the Study area. Most of these historic properties are residences located within the City of Polson. The list of previously recorded cultural and historic sites is contained in Appendix C.

If improvement options are forwarded from this Study and are federally-funded, a cultural resource survey of the Area of Potential Effect for this project as specified in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (Title 16 United States Code, Chapter 1; 36 CFR 800) will need to be completed. Coordination with the Tribal Historic Preservation Office would be required. Section 106 requires Federal agencies to "take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties." The purpose of the Section 106 process is to identify historic properties that could be affected by the undertaking, assess the effects of the project and investigate methods to avoid, minimize or mitigate any adverse effects on historic properties.

4.5 Land Ownership

Geographic Information System (GIS)-based information was reviewed to assess the amount of area in the study corridor that is public versus privately owned, as well as to identify tribal trust lands. The land ownership map for the Study area is shown if Figure 11. The CSKT should be contacted to identify any new tribal lands that have been acquired.

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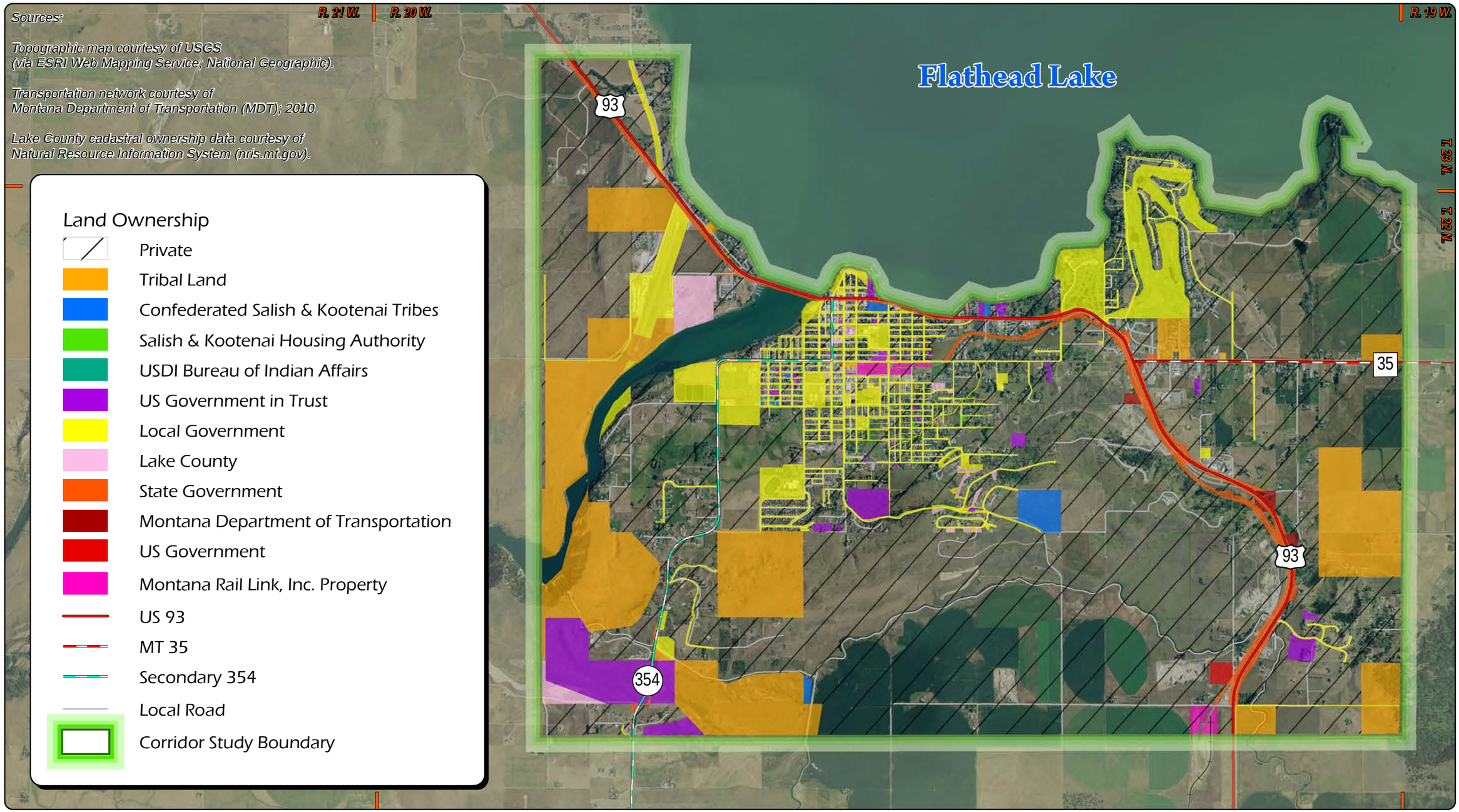

Figure 11
Land Ownership
US 93 Polson Corridor Study

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4.6 Protected Resources

Reviews were also conducted to determine the presence of known Section 6(f) and Section 4(f) properties within the Study area.

4.6.1 6(f) Resources

Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) Act (Title 16 United States Code, Chapter 1) applies to all projects that impact recreational lands purchased and/or improved with land and water conservation funds. The Secretary of the Interior must approve any conversion of property acquired or developed with assistance under this Act to other than public, outdoor recreation use. Several 6(f) properties summarized in Table 6 below have been identified within the Study area and are shown in Figure 12.

Table 6: LWCF 6(f) Resources

Name	Grant ID	Location
Polson Boettcher City Park	30-00017	On US 93 in Polson, turn onto road to Golf Course, stay to left to City Park (T22N; R20W; Sec 2)
Polson Waterfront Facility	30-00062	Through Polson on U.S. 93 to Main St., turn N on Main to docks (T22N; R20W; Sec 4)
Polson Boettcher Park Sewer Improvement	30-00155	On US 93 in Polson, turn onto road to Golf Course, stay to left to City Park (T22N; R20W; Sec 2)
Polson Golf Course – Renovation	30-00309	On U.S. 93 on east edge of Polson, between the Hwy and Flathead Lake (T22N; R20W; Sec 2)
Polson Tennis Courts Dev.	30-00402	1st St. E left on 5th, 2 1/2 blks. east, behind Lindeman & Middle Schools, behind football fields (T22N; R20W; Sec 4)
Polson Sports Complex	30-00543	In Polson, west on U.S. 93 to Main, left on Main to 7th Ave., W to sports complex (T22N; R20W; Sec 9)
O'Malley Ballpark Improvements	30-00644	300 11th Avenue East (T22N; R20W; Sec 9)
City of Polson Salish Point Project	30-00712	At Salish Point, near Kwa Tak Nuk Resort, on Flathead Lake (T22N; R20W; Sec 4)

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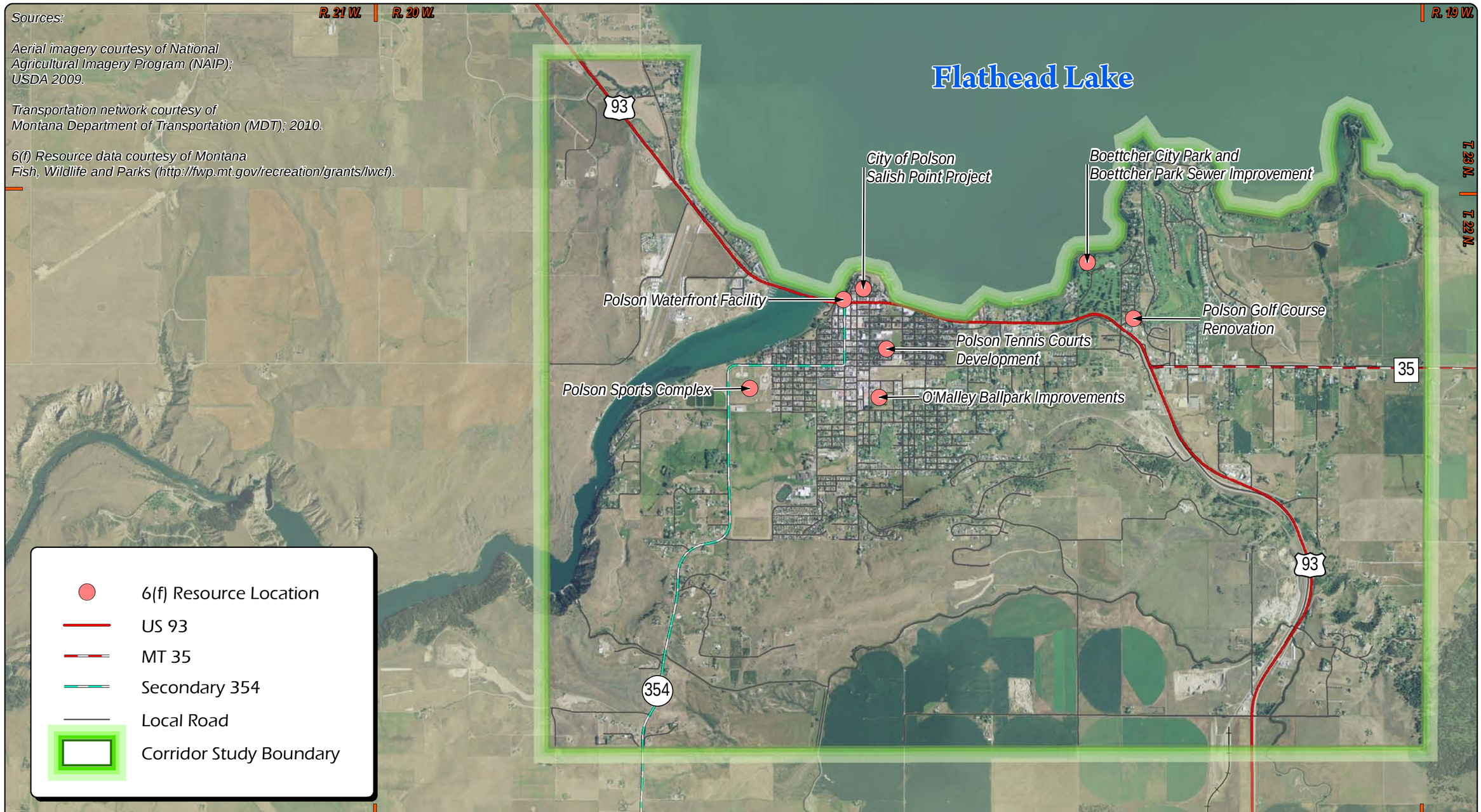

Figure 12
6(f) Resources
US 93 Polson Corridor Study

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US-93 Polson Corridor Study
93

4.6.2 4(f) Resources

Section 4(f) refers to the original section within the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (Title 49 United States Code, Chapter 3), which set the requirement for consideration of park and recreational lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites in transportation project development. Prior to approving a project that "uses" a Section 4(f) resource, FHWA must find that there is no prudent or feasible alternative that completely avoids 4(f) resources. "Use" can occur when land is permanently incorporated into a transportation facility or when there is a temporary occupancy of the land that is adverse to a 4(f) resource. Constructive "use" can also occur when a project's proximity impacts are so severe that the protected activities, features, or attributes that qualify a resource for protection under 4(f) are "substantially impacted". There are numerous potential Section 4(f) resources within the Study area. These 4(f) resources include any historic or archaeological sites on or eligible for inclusion in the National Register (see Sections 4.3 and 4.4 above), as well as significant publicly-owned parks, recreational areas, and wildlife or waterfowl refuges. Table 7 below lists the parks and recreational areas within the City of Polson that are likely 4(f) resources.

Table 7. City of Polson Parks and Schools

Name	Type of 4(f) Resource	Location
Boettcher City Park	Public Park	T22N; R20W; Sec 2
Polson Waterfront Facility	Public Recreational Area	T22N; R20W; Sec 4
Polson Golf Course	Public Recreational Area	111 Bayview Drive (T22N; R20W; Sec 2)
Polson Tennis Courts	Public Recreational Area	T22N; R20W; Sec 4
Polson Sports Complex	Public Recreational Area	T22N; R20W; Sec 9
O'Malley Ballpark	Public Recreational Area	300 11th Avenue East (T22N; R20W; Sec 9)
Salish Point	Public Recreational Area	T22N; R20W; Sec 4
City Docks	Public Recreational Area	Located next to Sacajewea Park (T22N, R 20W, Sec 4)
Ducharme Park	Public Park	On Highway 93
Mission Bay Park	Public Park	T23N, R20W, Sec 35
O'Malley Park	Public Park	T22N, R 20W, Sec 10
Pomajevich Park	Public Park	T22N, R 20W, Sec 10
Sports Complex (Kerr Dam Field)	Public Recreational Area	T22N, R 20W, Sec 9
Sacajewea Park	Public Park	T22N, R 20W, Sec 4

Name	Type of 4(f) Resource	Location
Riverside Park	Public Park	T22N, R 20W, Sec 4
Polson Middle School	Public School with recreation area	111 4th Ave E
Two Eagle River School	Public School with recreation area	58020 US Highway 93
Polson High School	Public School with recreation area	1712 2nd St W
Cherry Valley School	Public School with recreation area	107 8th Ave W
Linderman Elementary School	Public School with recreation area	312 4th Ave E
Valley View Elementary School	Public School with recreation area	42448 Valley View Rd
Polson 5-6 and 7-8 Schools	Public School with recreation area	1602 2nd Street West

4.7 Noise

If an improvement option is forwarded into project development, an extensive noise study would be required to determine where noise-sensitive land uses are located, what existing noise levels those areas are experiencing, and to estimate what future noise levels will be as a result of the project. Previous noise studies have been conducted in the Study area for the US Highway 93 Evaro to Polson EIS. If the project is expected to change traffic volumes on other routes, then off-project routes should also be studied for noise impacts. In areas of residential development, noise impacts (existing or predicted) may need to be mitigated. The most common mitigation is noise barriers in the form of walls and berms. Right-of-way acquisition to create a buffer zone is also a viable form of noise abatement.

4.8 Visual Resources

Visual resources refer to the landscape character, visual sensitivity, scenic integrity, and landscape visibility of a geographically defined view shed. The Polson view shed is part of a broad valley with surrounding mountains. Flathead Lake's Polson Bay is immediately north of the City. The hilly terrain surrounding the area provides a variety of opportunities for viewing Flathead Lake. The Flathead River flows southwest from Polson Bay, along the western side of the City of Polson. The Mission Mountains border the eastern portion of the City. The landscape also includes several man-made canals, croplands, existing vegetation, rural areas with ranches and scattered home sites, and the developed urban environment of Polson itself.

Appendix A:
Major Faults in Montana

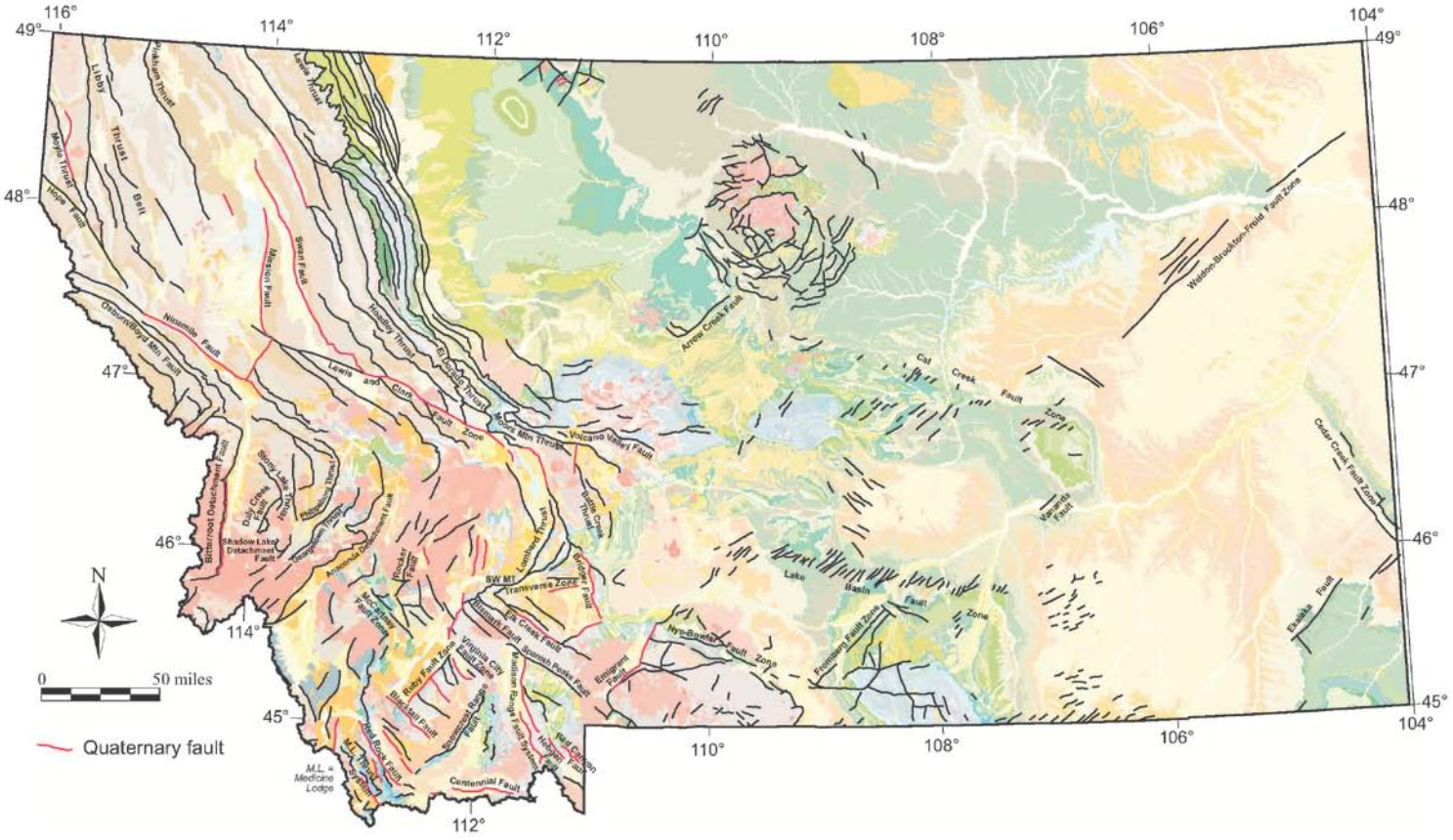

Figure 5. Major faults. Base map from plate 1. Quaternary faults from Stickney and others (2000).

Appendix B:
Source Water Delineation and Assessment Report

Appendix C:
SHPO File Search Results

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

Cultural Resource Information Systems Report

Report Date:
04/05/2010

Site #	Twp	Rng	Sec	Qs	Site Type1	Site Type 2	Time Period	Owner	NR Status
24LA0200	22 N	20W	2	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1930-1939	Private	Ineligible
24LA0189	22 N	20W	3	SE	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1940-1949	Private	Unresolved
24LA0198	22 N	20W	3	SE	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1910-1919	Private	CD
24LA0193	22 N	20W	3	SE	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1930-1939	Private	CD
24LA0196	22 N	20W	3	SE	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1930-1939	Private	Ineligible
24LA0195	22 N	20W	3	SE	Historic Residence	Historic Recreation/Tourism	1940-1949	Private	Ineligible
24LA0194	22 N	20W	3	SE	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1940-1949	Private	Ineligible
24LA0201	22 N	20W	3	SE	Historic Hotel	Null	1940-1949	Private	CD
24LA0197	22 N	20W	3	SE	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1940-1949	Private	CD
24LA0190	22 N	20W	3	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1940-1949	Private	Ineligible
24LA0191	22 N	20W	3	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1940-1949	Private	Ineligible
24LA0192	22 N	20W	3	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1940-1949	Private	Ineligible
24LA0184	22 N	20W	3	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1920-1930	Private	Ineligible
24LA0178	22 N	20W	3	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1920-1930	Private	Unresolved
24LA0177	22 N	20W	3	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1940-1949	Private	Unresolved
24LA0180	22 N	20W	3	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1920-1930	Private	undetermined
24LA0181	22 N	20W	3	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1940-1949	Private	CD
24LA0182	22 N	20W	3	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1930-1939	Private	Ineligible
24LA0183	22 N	20W	3	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1920-1930	Private	Ineligible
24LA0179	22 N	20W	3	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1910-1919	Private	CD
24LA0185	22 N	20W	3	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1920-1930	Private	Ineligible
24LA0186	22 N	20W	3	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1940-1949	Private	Ineligible
24LA0187	22 N	20W	3	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1930-1939	Private	Ineligible
24LA0188	22 N	20W	3	SW	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1940-1949	Private	CD
24LA0165	22 N	20W	4	SE	Historic Commercial Development	Null	1920-1930	Private	CD
24LA0164	22 N	20W	4	SE	Historic Commercial Development	Historic Hotel	Historic Period	No Data	CD
24LA0176	22 N	20W	4	SE	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1910-1919	Private	Ineligible
24LA0174	22 N	20W	4	SE	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1940-1949	Private	Ineligible
24LA0173	22 N	20W	4	SE	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1940-1949	Private	Unresolved
24LA0172	22 N	20W	4	SE	Historic Euro-American Site	Historic Residence	1940-1949	Private	Ineligible
24LA0082	22 N	20W	4	SE	Historic Hotel	Null	Historic More Than One Decade	Private	undetermined
24LA0169	22 N	20W	4	SE	Historic Commercial Development	Historic Urban Business Block	1930-1939	Private	CD
24LA0168	22 N	20W	4	SE	Historic Commercial Development	Historic Urban Business Block	1920-1930	Private	CD
24LA0167	22 N	20W	4	SE	Historic Commercial Development	Historic Urban Business Block	Historic More Than One Decade	Private	CD
24LA0166	22 N	20W	4	SE	Historic Commercial Development	Historic Urban Business Block	1940-1949	Private	Unresolved
24LA0058	22 N	20W	4	SE	Historic Euro-American Site	Null	Historic Period	Private	NR Listed
24LA0170	22 N	20W	4	SE	Historic Commercial Development	Historic Urban Business Block	1930-1939	Private	CD
24LA0263	22 N	20W	5	SW	Historic Irrigation System	Historic Vehicular/Foot Bridge	Historic More Than One Decade	BIA	undetermined
24LA0263	22 N	20W	5	SW	Historic Irrigation System	Null	Historic More Than One Decade	Combination	undetermined
24LA0076	22 N	20W	8	SE	Historic Architecture	Historic Residence	1920-1930	Private	undetermined
24LA0077	22 N	20W	8	SE	Historic Architecture	Historic Residence	1920-1930	Private	undetermined
24LA0078	22 N	20W	8	SE	Historic Architecture	Historic Residence	Historic Period	Private	Ineligible
24LA0080	22 N	20W	8	SE	Historic Architecture	Historic Residence	1920-1930	Private	undetermined
24LA0079	22 N	20W	9	SW	Historic Architecture	Historic Residence	1940-1949	Private	Ineligible
24LA0089	22 N	20W	11	Comb	Historic Railroad, Stage Route, Travel	Historic Railroad Building/Structure	Historic Period	Private	CD
24LA0101	22 N	20W	11	SE	Historic Road/Trail	Null	Historic More Than One Decade	MDOT Other	undetermined
24LA0089	22 N	20W	12	SW	Historic Railroad, Stage Route, Travel	Historic Railroad Building/Structure	Historic Period	Private	CD
24LA0090	22 N	20W	12	SW	Historic Agriculture	Historic Irrigation System	Historic Period	BIA	CD

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

Cultural Resource Information Systems Report

Report Date:
04/05/2010

Site #	Twp	Rng	Sec	Qs	Site Type1	Site Type 2	Time Period	Owner	NR Status
24LA0101	22 N	20W	12	SW	Historic Road/Trail	Null	Historic More Than One Decade	MDOT Other	undetermined
24LA0069	22 N	20W	13	Comb	Historic Railroad, Stage Route, Travel	Historic Vehicular/Foot Bridge	1950 and later	MDOT Other	undetermined
24LA0070	22 N	20W	13	Comb	Historic Railroad, Stage Route, Travel	Historic Railroad Bridge	1910-1919	Private	undetermined
24LA0088	22 N	20W	13	NW	Historic Log Structure	Historic Residence	Historic Period	Private	undetermined
24LA0090	22 N	20W	13	NW	Historic Agriculture	Historic Irrigation System	Historic Period	BIA	CD
24LA0089	22 N	20W	13	Oth	Historic Railroad, Stage Route, Travel	Historic Railroad Building/Structure	Historic Period	Private	CD
24LA0142	22 N	20W	13	SW	Historic Vehicular/Foot Bridge	Null	Historic More Than One Decade	MDOT	Ineligible
24LA0089	22 N	20W	14	SE	Historic Railroad, Stage Route, Travel	Historic Railroad Building/Structure	Historic Period	Private	CD
24LA0206	22 N	20W	14	SE	Historic Homestead/Farmstead	Historic Residence	1950 and later	Private	Ineligible
24LA0205	22 N	20W	14	SW	Historic Homestead/Farmstead	Historic Residence	No Data	Private	Ineligible
24LA0074	22 N	20W	17	SE	Historic Agriculture	Historic Residence	1920-1930	Private	undetermined
24LA0075	22 N	20W	17	SE	Historic Railroad, Stage Route, Travel	Historic Vehicular/Foot Bridge	1930-1939	Private	undetermined
24LA0073	22 N	20W	20	NE	Historic Railroad, Stage Route, Travel	Historic Railroad Building/Structure	Historic Period	Private	undetermined
24LA0072	22 N	20W	20	NW	Historic Architecture	Historic Residence	Historic Period	Private	undetermined
24LA0204	22 N	20W	22	NW	Historic Homestead/Farmstead	Null	1910-1919	Private	CD
24LA1044	23 N	20W	36	SE	Lithic Scatter	Null	Prehistoric Middle Period	Private	undetermined