

N.E. LOCKWOOD CREEK ROAD FISH & WILDLIFE HABITAT CONSERVATION AREAS ASSESSMENT

LaCenter, Washington



Prepared for:

La Center School District
725 Highland Road
La Center, WA 98629

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November 30, 2017



OLSON
ENVIRONMENTAL LLC
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES • GIS • HABITAT RESTORATION

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FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT CONSERVATION AREAS ASSESSMENT

Project: NE Lockwood Creek Road Properties
Applicant: La Center School District
Location: South of NE Lockwood Creek Road, La Center,
Washington
Legal Description: NE & SE ¼s of Sec. 02, T04N, R01E, W. M., Clark County
Serial Number(s): 209118-000 (5.58 ac.), 209119-000 (7.91 ac.) & 209120-000
(9.78 ac.)
Study Area Size: 23.27 acres
Jurisdiction: Currently Clark County/Soon Annexed to City of La
Center
Watershed: East Fork of the Lewis River
Zoning: R1-75
ComPlan: UL
Assessment by: Kevin Grosz, PWS
Site Visit(s): August 15, 18 & November 20, 2017
Report Date: November 22, 2017

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report details the results of a fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas assessment conducted by Olson Environmental, LLC (OE) for the La Center School District. The study area is located on the eastern edge of La Center, Washington, south of N.E. Lockwood Creek Road (Fig. 1). This report identifies the extent of any fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas and associated buffers found within the study area as defined and regulated by the City of LaCenter Critical Areas Ordinance – Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (18.300.090(2)). Currently, the study area is located in an area that is under the jurisdiction of Clark County, however, the School District plans on having the parcel annexed into the City’s Urban Growth Boundary. Therefore, this report addresses this critical area under the City of La Center’s Municipal Code (LMC).

The study area (23.27 acres) consists of three parcels (209118-000, 208119-000 & 209120-000) on the east edge of La Center. Currently, the northern two parcels is an open grassland, pasture area. The southern parcel appears to previously have been used as a chicken rearing area. The buildings have been removed, but much of the area consists of impervious surfaces and debris. The site is relatively flat, sloping slightly from north to south (Fig. 2). Through the course of the assessment two habitat areas were identified that are regulated under 18.300.090(2).

2.0 HABITAT ASSESSMENT

The habitat assessment was conducted in accordance with the LaCenter Critical Areas Ordinance (18.300) under Section 18.300.090(2) Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation

Areas (FWHCA). The City has determined that critical areas, including FWHCA are valuable and fragile natural resources that provide many valuable social and ecological functions if maintained in their natural state. Buffers associated with these critical areas are essential to the maintenance and protection of the functions and values of these natural features. Habitats/Species identified as needing protection under the FWHCA are outlined in (18.300.090(2)(a) as follows:

- (i) Riparian – which are defined as those areas immediately adjacent to waterways that contain elements of both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems that mutually influence each other;
- (ii) Endangered or Threatened – Federally listed endangered fish and wildlife species or habitats that are associated with these species;
- (iii) Local Habitat Areas – Species/habitats that are of local concern due to their population status or sensitively to habitat manipulation or are game species. These areas are nominated by the City or private citizens;
- (iv) Priority Habitats/Species (PHS) Areas – Areas with primary associated with identified state/federally-listed monitor/candidate species as specified in Washington Department of Wildlife Policies 4802 and 4803.

Based on this criterion, OE conducted a habitat survey and assessment within the project boundary. Riparian and habitat resource information provided by Clark County GIS Priority Habitat and Species Maps (Fig. 3) were reviewed to determine the potential habitats that may occur within the study area. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Priority Habitat and Species program was also consulted to determine the presence of endangered, threatened, or rare (ETR) species within the vicinity of the study site. Additionally, the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) - Natural Heritage Program (NHP) was referenced to determine the presence of endangered, threatened or rare plants that have been identified within the vicinity of the study site. DNR Water Type Maps were also referenced to determine if any mapped streams occur within the study area (Fig. 4).

Site visits were conducted on August 15, 18 and November 20, 2017 in which the entire site was traversed on foot to determine the presence or absence of any of the above listed fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas. Results from the in-office review and the on-site habitat assessment are detailed below.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As discussed above, an in-office review of available fish, wildlife and plant data was conducted for areas within and near the project site prior to the site visit. This information was utilized to determine if priority habitats and/or ETR species were previously identified within the study site and to aid in surveying for these habitats and species. Upon completion of the in-office review, a site visit was conducted to identify any priority habitat conservation areas and classify the habitat types. The results of the office review and on site investigation are discussed below.

3.1 RIPARIAN

Riparian habitat areas are those areas immediately adjacent to waterways that contain elements of both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems that mutually influence each other. WAC 222-16-031, relating stream classification, is the City's classification system for streams. Waters of the State includes lakes, rivers, ponds, streams, inland waters, underground waters, salt waters, and all other surface waters and watercourses within the jurisdiction of the state of Washington as classified in WAC 222-16-031. This classification system classifies waters as Type S (shoreline), Type F (fish bearing), Type Np (non fish bearing perennial) and Type Ns (non fish bearing seasonal) waterways.

Both the Clark County GIS Habitat Map and the Washington DNR Map indicate non-fish bearing (Type Ns) streams on or adjacent to the study area in the northwest and southeast corners of the properties (Figs. 3 & 4). It appears that the stream in the northwest corner has been previously piped across the property north of the study area. Currently, the pipe outfall is located near the west property line of the study area as shown in Figure 5. The stream on or near the southeastern portion of the property is located in a roadside ditch as shown in Figure 5. Both of these streams are Type Ns. According to LMC Table 18.300.090(2)(f) Type Ns streams are protected by a 75-foot riparian buffer (Fig. 5).

3.2 ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES

No species listed as threatened or endangered or their habitats were identified on the study area. However, threatened fish species listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act occur in the East Fork of the Lewis River which is the project watershed. These listed fish species are chum salmon (*Oncorhynchus keta*), Coho (*O kisutch*), Chinook (*O. tshawytscha*) and steelhead (*O. mykiss*).

3.3 LOCAL HABITAT AREAS

Locally important habitats and species areas are legislatively designated and mapped by the City. No locally important habitats or species are mapped within the study site.

3.4 PRIORITY HABITAT AND SPECIES

Priority Habitat and Species (PHS) areas are identified by and consistent with WDFW priority habitats criteria, including areas within one thousand feet of individual species point sites. The City defers to WDFW in regards to classification, mapping and interpretation of priority habitat and species.

The Clark County PHS maps were reviewed to determine the likelihood of priority habitats and sensitive species within the study site (Fig. 3). The WDFW was also contacted to determine if any known endangered, threatened, sensitive species, priority

habitat, or priority species are known to occur within the study area. The only priority habitat identified within the study area is the riparian habitat described above.

The DNR Natural Heritage Program was reviewed to determine the presence of known ETR plant species within the project area. The review indicated that no known occurrences of any ETR plant species are located within Section 02 of Township 04 North, Range 01 East, W.M.

3.5 HABITAT TYPES

To assess the habitat functions and potential habitat present within the property, vegetative communities were classified into habitat types and assessments were made of each community. One vegetative plant community was observed within the study area - Agriculture, Pasture and Mixed Environs. A summary of this habitat type found within the site is given below and a map of the habitat type is shown in Figure 6.

Table 1. Habitat Types within the Study Area (Fig. 6).

Habitat Types (Johnson and O’Neil, 2001)	Acres within Study Area
Agriculture, Pasture & Mixed Environs	23.27
Total	23.27 acres

Agriculture, Pasture and Mixed Environs

This is the only habitat type that occurs within the study area. The plant community consists of native and non-native grasses and forbs. Most of the study area is used for hay or pasture. Vegetation that occurs in this habitat type consists of reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), tall false rye grass (*Schedonorus arundinaceus*), bent grass (*Agrostis capillaris*, *A. stolonifera*), blackberry (*Rubus* spp.), velvet grass (*Holcus lanatus*) and sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*). A tree row that consists of Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) and black cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera*) runs east-west across the southern portion of the property. A shrub row that consists mainly of hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta*) borders the west property line.

3.6 RESIDENT WILDLIFE

Animals observed during the site visit included western scrub-jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), Steller ’s jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*), robin (*Turdus migratorius*), black-capped chickadee (*Poecile atricapilla*), and red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamacicensis*). Due to the historic agricultural uses on the properties, wildlife habitat is of low quality. Wildlife likely to utilize the site includes toads, salamanders, small fossorial mammals, larger migrating mammals, small mammals, snakes, and residential and migratory birds.

4.0 REGULATORY ISSUES

The City has implemented the FWHCA (18.300.090(2)) to provide protection for critical habitat areas within the City’s jurisdiction. This ordinance establishes protective buffers

for critical areas and specifies that certain permits and approvals be obtained for projects containing habitat conservation areas or their associated buffers. Through the course of this study two Type Ns streams were identified on or near the property. Both of these streams are protected by a 75-foot riparian buffer according the LMC 18.300.090(2).

The habitat boundaries and classifications shown in this report have been determined using the most appropriate field techniques and best professional judgment of the environmental scientist. It should be noted that the City and WDFW have the final authority in determining the habitat boundaries and categories under their respective jurisdictions. It is recommended that this habitat assessment report be submitted to these agencies for concurrence prior to starting any development or planning activities that would affect priority habitat found on this site.

5.0 LITERATURE CITED

Johnson, D. and T. O'Neil. 2001. Habitat Relationships of Oregon and Washington. Oregon State University Press, Corvallis, Oregon

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2008. Priority Habitat and Species List. Olympia, Washington. 172pp.

Washington Department of Natural Resources. 2009. Natural Heritage Program. www.dnr.wa.gov/researchscience/topics/naturalheritage/pages/amp_nh.aspx.

Washington Department of Natural Resources. 2009. Forest Practice Water Typing Maps. www.dnr.wa.gov/BusinessPermits/Topics/ForestPracticesApplications/Pages/fp_watertyping.aspx

ATTACHMENTS

FIGURE 1 – PROJECT LOCATION

FIGURE 2 – CLARK COUNTY LIDAR TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

FIGURE 3 – CLARK COUNTY GIS PRIORITY HABITAT/SPECIES MAP

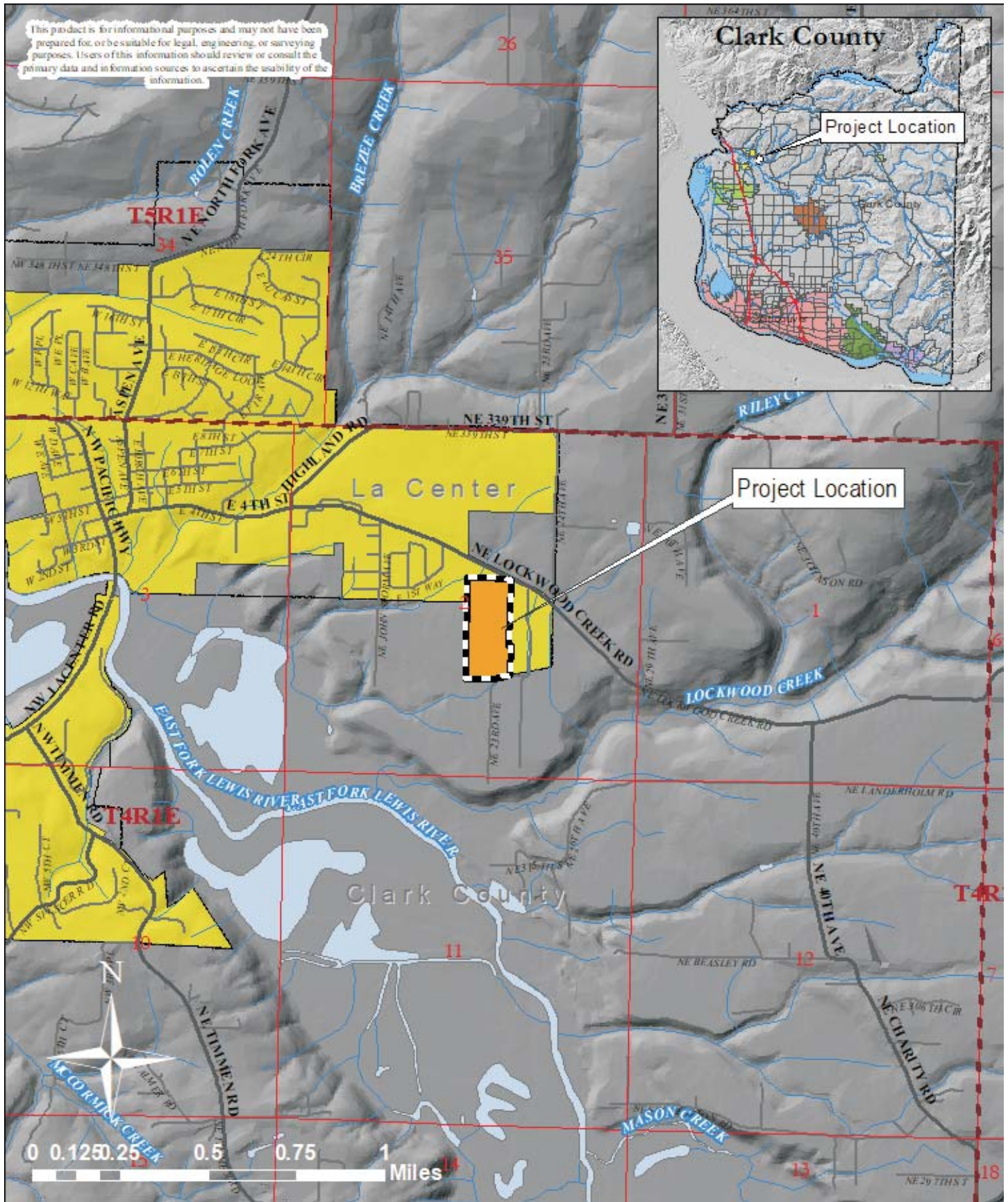
FIGURE 4 – DNR WATER TYPING MAP

FIGURE 5 – IDENTIFIED PRIORITY HABITAT/SPECIES AREAS

FIGURE 6 – OBSERVED HABITAT TYPES

PHOTO-SHEET 1 – PHOTOGRAPHS OF PROJECT AREA

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APPLICANT:
 La Center School District
 725 Northeast Highland Avenue
 La Center, WA 98629

PURPOSE: Habitat Assessment

Project Location Map
 N.E. Lockwood Creek Road
 La Center, Washington

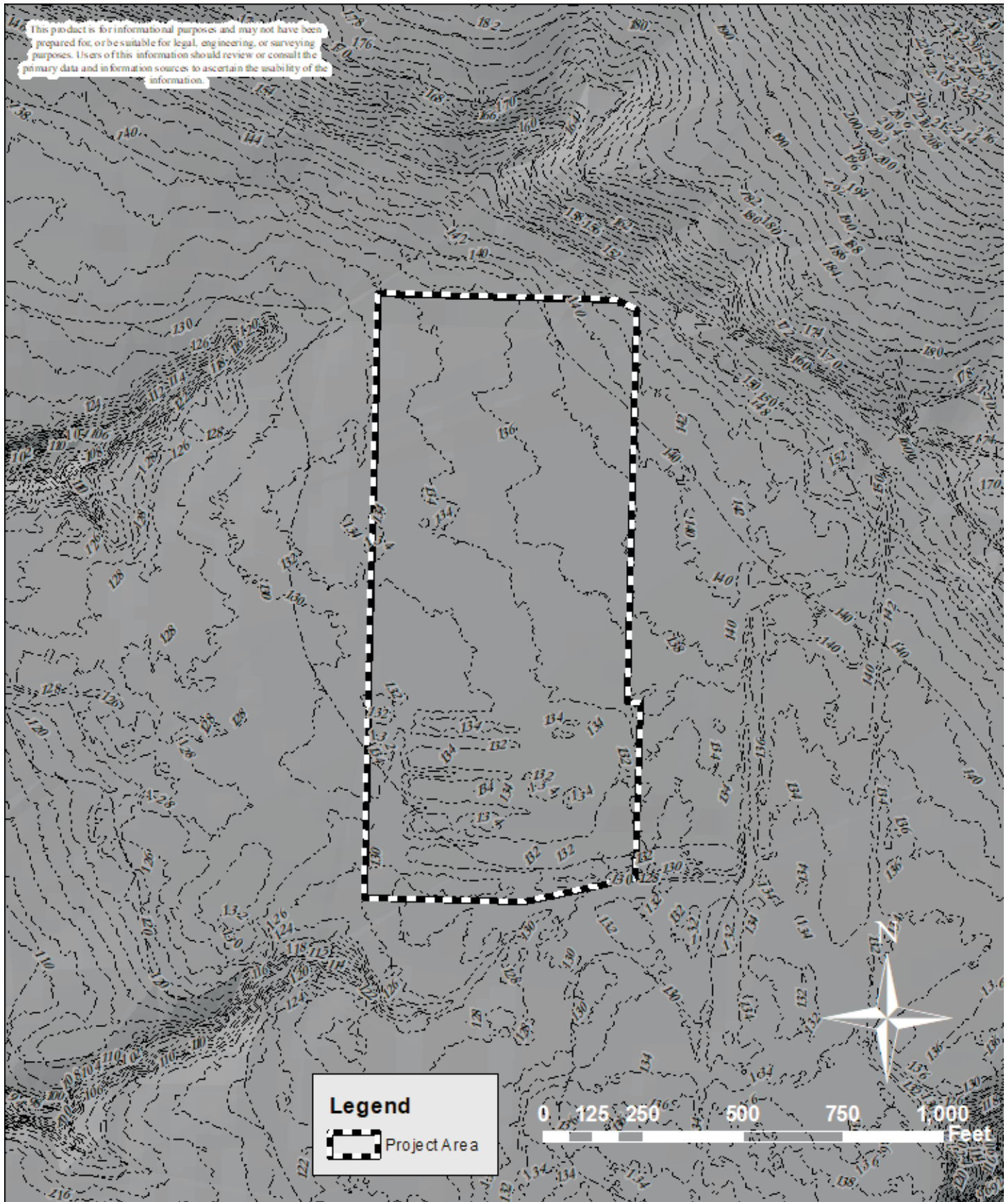


222 E. Evergreen Blvd., Vancouver, WA 98604 ph: 360-693-4656 fax: 360-699-6242

PROPOSED ACTIVITIES IN:
 East Fork of the Lewis River
LEGAL: SE & NE 1/4s of Section 02, T4N,
 R1E, W.M.
NEAR: La Center, Washington
COUNTY: Clark County
DATE: November 30, 2017

Figure 1

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APPLICANT:
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 La Center, WA 98629

PURPOSE: Habitat Assessment

Clark County LiDAR Topographic Map
N.E. Lockwood Creek Road
La Center, Washington



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Figure 2

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Legend

 Project Area

Clark County Priority Habitat Species

Habitat Type:

-  Non-riparian Habitat Conservation Area
-  Riparian Habitat Conservation Area
-  Species



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

APPLICANT:
 La Center School District
 725 Northeast Highland Avenue
 La Center, WA 98629

PURPOSE: Habitat Assessment

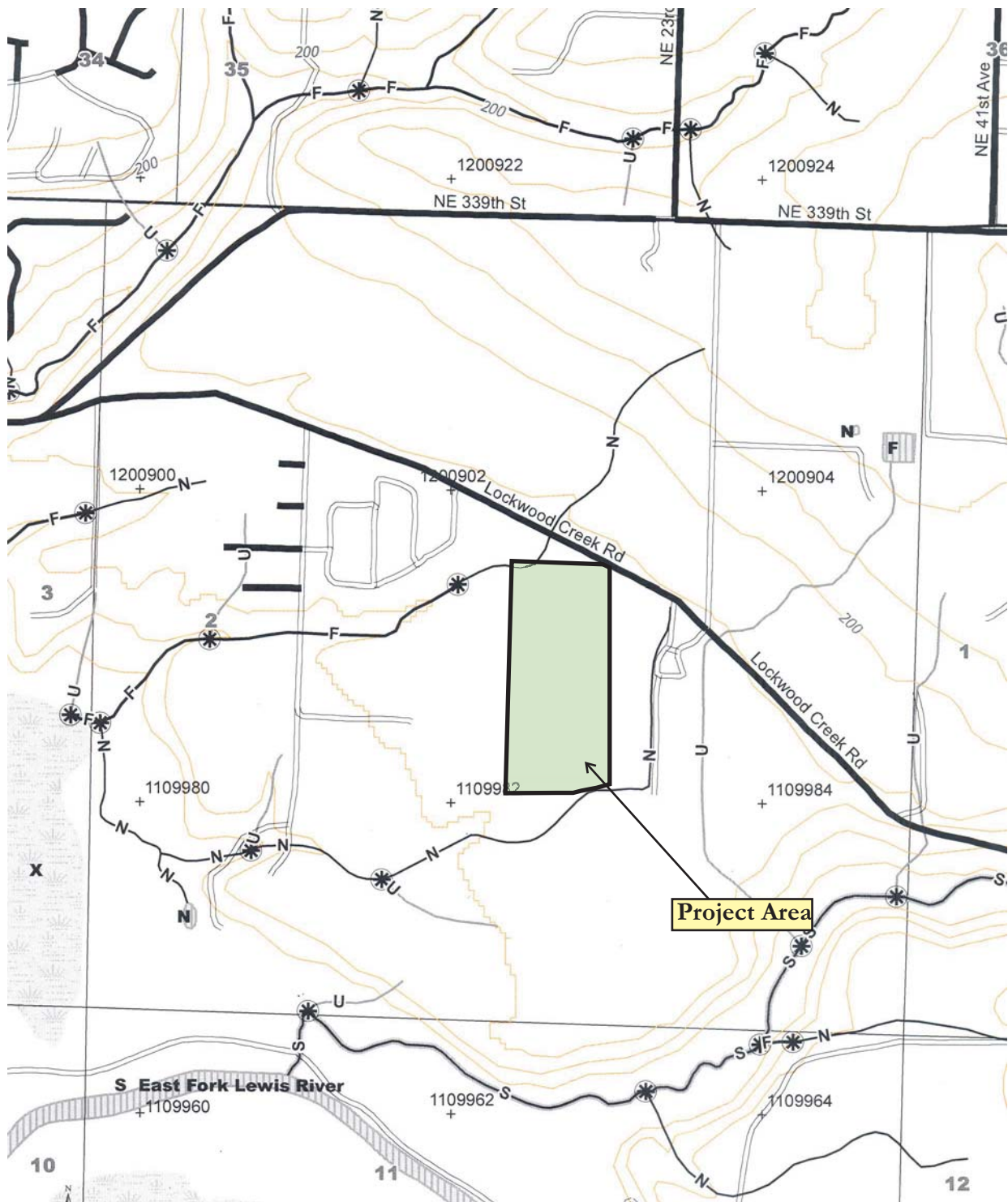
Clark County GIS Priority Habitat/Species Map
 N.E. Lockwood Creek Road
 La Center, Washington



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Figure 3



N
Not to Scale

APPLICANT:
La Center School District
725 Northeast Highland Avenue
La Center, WA 98629

PURPOSE: Habitat Assessment

DNR Water Typing Map
N.E. Lockwood Creek Road
La Center, Washington



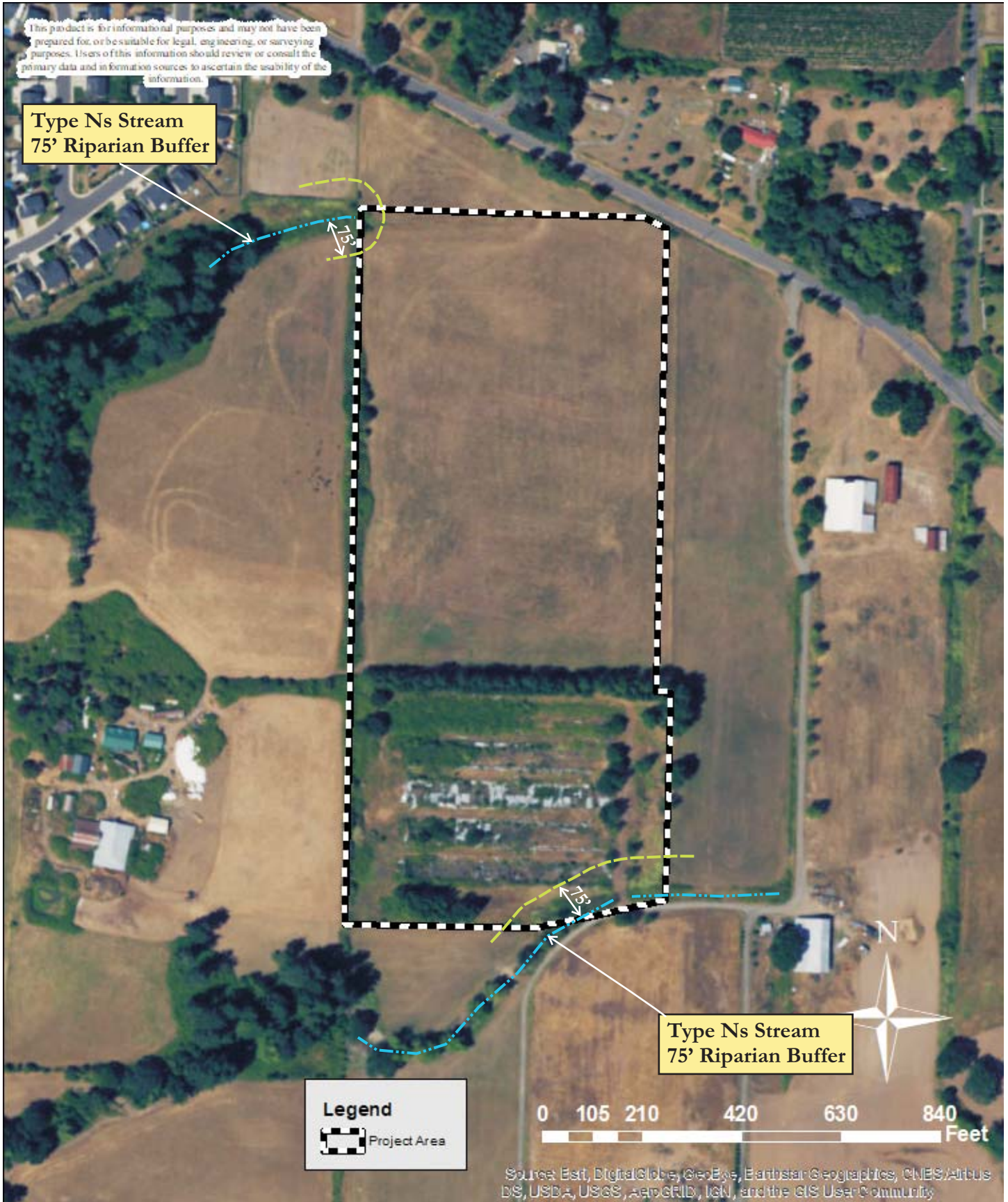
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Figure 4

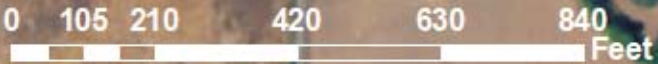
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Type Ns Stream
75' Riparian Buffer



Type Ns Stream
75' Riparian Buffer

Legend
 Project Area



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

APPLICANT:
 La Center School District
 725 Northeast Highland Avenue
 La Center, WA 98629

PURPOSE: Habitat Assessment

Identified Priority Habitat/Species Areas
 N.E. Lockwood Creek Road
 La Center, Washington

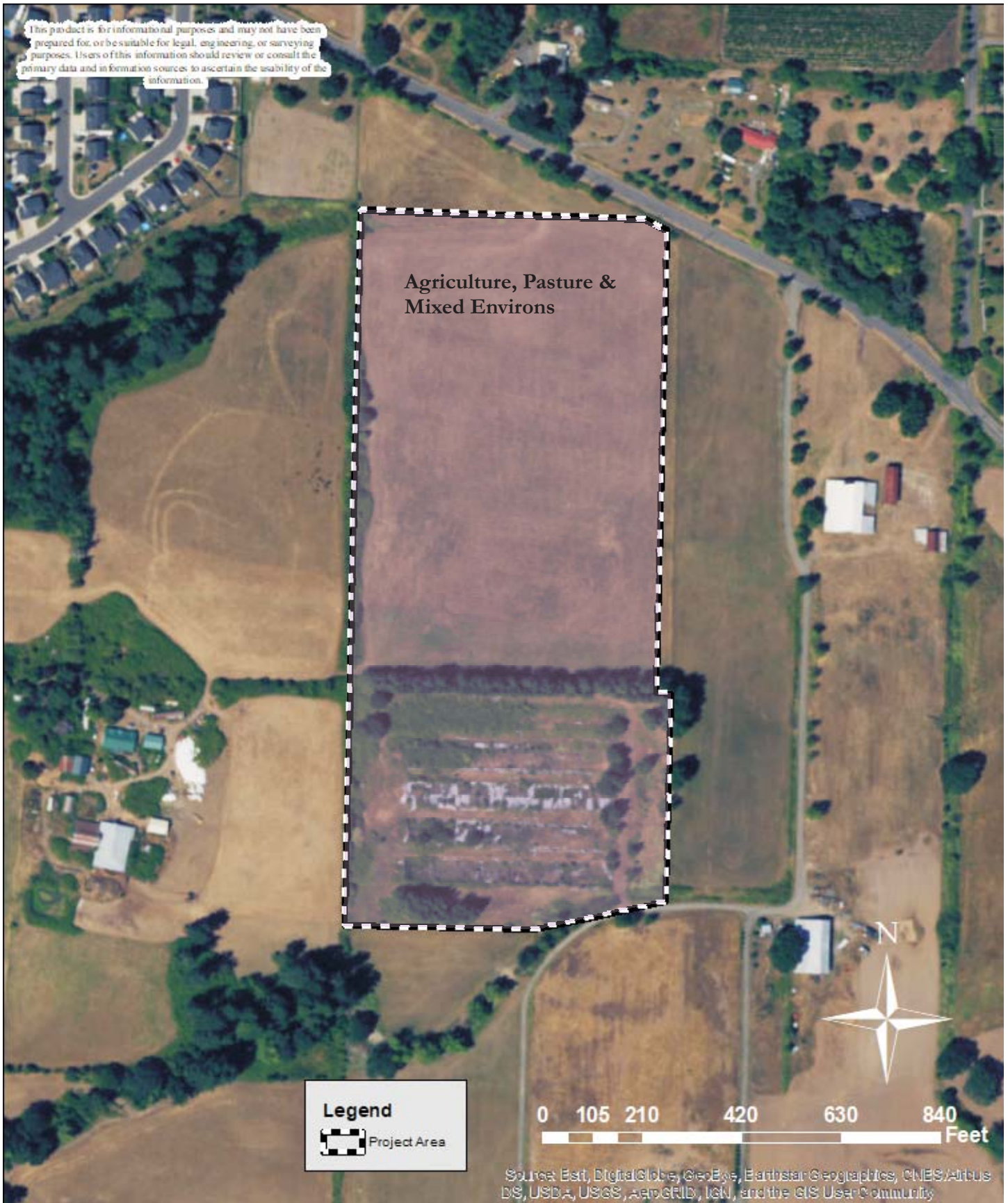


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Figure 5

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APPLICANT:
 La Center School District
 725 Northeast Highland Avenue
 La Center, WA 98629

PURPOSE: Habitat Assessment

Observed Habitat Types
N.E. Lockwood Creek Road
La Center, Washington



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Figure 6



Stream Southeast Corner



Stream Southeast Corner



Stream Northwest Corner



Underground Pipe Northwest Corner



Disturbed Area - South Parcel



Pasture

APPLICANT:
La Center School District
725 Northeast Highland Avenue
La Center, WA 98629

PURPOSE: Habitat Assessment

Study Area Photographs
N.E. Lockwood Creek Road
La Center, Washington



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Photo-Sheet 1