

CRITICAL AREAS REPORT

Platinum Holdings LLC Property

Tax Parcel 62642015
725 NW Pacific Highway
La Center, WA 98629



Prepared by:

Jim Barnes
Cascadia Ecological Services, Inc.
14205 NW 56th Avenue
Vancouver, WA 98685
jim@cascadia-inc.com
(360) 601-8631

Prepared for:

Devin Barboza
Platinum Industrial
PO Box 1540
Woodland, WA 98674
(360) 852-3237
devinjb@platinumind.com

January 12, 2024



Executive Summary

This report details the results of a critical areas report conducted by Cascadia Ecological Services, Inc. (CES) on behalf of the applicant, Platinum Industrial, for Clark County Tax Parcel 62642015. This report identifies the extent of critical areas identified within or in the immediate vicinity of the study area, as defined and regulated by Chapter 18.300 of the City of La Center Municipal Code (City of La Center, 2024).

The proposal is to construct a residential duplex housing unit on the approximately 1.56-acre study area which is zoned as Multi-Use (MU). The property is located within the jurisdiction of the City of La Center in the NW ¼ of Section 3, Township 4N, Range 1E of the Willamette Meridian.

During a site visit completed by Cascadia Ecological Services, Inc. (CES) staff on January 8, 2024, it was determined that a DNR Type Ns (non-fish bearing and seasonal) stream is located within the east portion of the study area flowing from north to south. The stream is a tributary to the East Fork Lewis River which is located approximately 0.3 miles to the south of the study area. It is regulated by the City of La Center as a Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Area and would be classified as a seasonal stream with a defined channel requiring a buffer width of 75 feet.

No other sensitive plant, fish, or wildlife species are currently known to occur within the confines, or immediate vicinity of, the study area. This report documents the investigation, best professional judgment, and conclusions of CES. It is recommended that the findings in this report be verified by the City of La Center prior to the commitment of significant planning and financial resources to the project.

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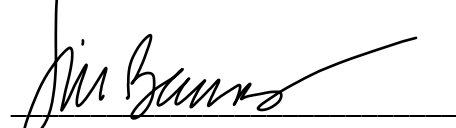
Appendix B — Site Photos

Acronyms and Abbreviations

CES	Cascadia Ecological Services, Inc.
Client	Devin Barboza
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
HUC	Hydrologic Unit Code
LCCAO	La Center Critical Areas Ordinance
OHWM	Ordinary High Water Mark
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
WDFW	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
WRIA	Water Resource Inventory Area

Statement of Qualifications

Cascadia Ecological Services, Inc. (CES) is a multi-disciplined environmental consulting company based in Vancouver, Washington. CES was established in 2001 and specializes in wetland delineation, habitat assessment, permitting, and mitigation. This report was completed by Jim Barnes, president and owner of CES. The information contained herein documents the investigation, best professional judgment, and recommendation of CES. All assumptions made and relied upon are complete and accurate.



Jim Barnes
President
Cascadia Ecological Services, Inc.

Chapter 1. Introduction

The Applicant contracted with CES to complete a critical areas report for a proposed residential duplex housing unit on Tax Parcel 62642015 in La Center, Washington.

The purpose of the report is to identify and describe regulated critical areas, and sensitive plant, fish, and wildlife species within the confines or immediate vicinity of the study area. This report facilitates the applicant's efforts to:

1. Avoid or minimize impacts to critical areas during the project design process.
2. Document critical area boundary determinations for review and verification by the City of La Center.
3. Provide early indications of sensitive species within the study area.
4. Provide background information for a future critical areas mitigation plan, if required.

This report is anticipated to support permits locally through the City of La Center.

Chapter 2. Project Information

2.1 Location

Site Location: 725 NW Pacific Highway, La Center, WA 98629 (Figure 1 of 7).

Study area: 1.56 acres

Tax Parcel: 62642015

County: Clark

Section, Township and Range: NW 1/4, S3, T4N, R1E of the Willamette Meridian

Latitude/Longitude: 45.86495 N. / -122.67313 W

WRIA: 27 - Lewis watershed

HUC: 17080005 – Lower Cowlitz

2.2 Purpose and Description

The applicant is completing due diligence to determine the extent of critical areas and buffers on the property prior to developing a site plan for a future residential duplex housing unit. The project is being undertaken to provide needed housing units for the growing area of La Center, Washington.

2.3 Existing Site Conditions

The study area is within the urbanized zone of the City of La Center and is developed with one residential duplex building. The property is accessed via a paved driveway extending east from NW Pacific Highway. The site topography generally slopes from west to east. According to the Clark County GIS, slopes range from 5 to 15 percent on the site. Approximately 0.97 acres of the property is forested, mainly within a riparian corridor containing a seasonal stream which flows

from north to south along the east side. A cleared grassland area exists along the east side of the stream and there are some mowed grassland areas to the north and east of the duplex building. Because the property is within the urban zone of the city, most of the surrounding parcels are developed as single or multi-family residential housing units.

Chapter 3. Methods

This chapter summarizes the methods used to comply with local, state, and federal guidance. The presence of critical areas was assessed by traversing the property on foot. Observation of vegetation, hydrology, and soils in conjunction with data from National Wetland Inventory maps of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS, 2024), the USDA NRCS Web Soil Survey (USDA, 2024), and aerial photos were used to determine the presence of wetlands. The presence or non-presence of wetlands were determined by using the Routine Determination Methodology of the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast Region (USACE, 2010). Property data were obtained from Clark County MapsOnline (Clark County, 2024) website. Wetlands were rated according to the guidance of the Washington State Wetland Rating System (Hruby, T., 2014). The local guidance for critical areas was obtained from the City of La Center Municipal Code (18.300 – Critical Areas) (City of La Center, 2023).

Critical area locations and features are described in Chapter 4 and shown on Figure 7. For the purposes of this report, CES used an Arrow 100 Submeter GNSS GPS receiver to map critical area boundaries. The locations of critical areas detailed in this report have not been surveyed as of the date of this report or verified by the City of La Center.

For the purposes of determining the presence of wetlands, observations of indicators of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soil, and wetland hydrology were made.

Vegetation was divided into three strata; tree, shrub, and forb, and each layer was classified using the prevalence index (a weighted-average wetland indicator status of all plant species in the sample plot) and the dominance test (more than 50% of the dominant plant species across all strata are rated obligate, facultative wet or facultative). The 2021 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers National Wetland Plant List – Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast Region was used to classify plants. Wetland indicator status ratings and their ordinal rating Categories, based on ecological descriptions, are as follows:

Indicator Status* (abbreviation):

Obligate (OBL) - Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands

Facultative Wetland (FACW) - Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands

Facultative (FAC) - Commonly occurs as either a hydrophyte or non-hydrophyte

Facultative Upland (FACU) - Occasionally is a hydrophyte, but usually occurs in uplands

Upland (UPL) - Rarely is a hydrophyte, almost always in uplands

*Source: Lichvar and Gillrich (2011)

Hydrology was determined using two methods: (1) visually, if the water table is at or above the surface, or (2) with a soil pit. The presence of standing water, depth to free water in the soil pit,

and depth to saturated soils were recorded. Other primary and secondary hydrology indicators were recorded, such as presence of watermarks, sediment deposits, drift deposits, iron deposits, hydrogen sulfide odor, geomorphic position, and drainage patterns in wetlands.

Soil pits were dug to a depth of 12-18 inches to determine if indicators of hydric soils were present. In wetlands, hydric soil supports the growth and regeneration of vegetation that has adapted to grow in saturated/inundated and low-oxygen conditions (USGS, 2023). Soil colors were determined from a moist sample with the Munsell Soil Color Chart. This information is all recorded on the Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast Region Corps Routine Wetland Determination Data Form that is filled out for each sample point and included with this report.

The condition of buffers within 150 feet of the critical areas was qualitatively assessed using the following criteria:

- Dominant land use (e.g., agriculture, residential, commercial, industrial).
- Dominant buffer vegetation type (tree, shrub, herb, vine, un-vegetated).
- Dominant cover of invasive plants by species.

Chapter 4. Observed Critical Areas

3.1 Wetlands

Due to the slopes and well-drained soil types present on the site, surface water drains towards a forested ravine located in the east part of the property. No low lying depressional areas are present. Although the open area east of the stream corridor is dominated by reed canarygrass (*Phalaris arundinacea*, FACW), the soils do not have any hydric indicators nor was any surface soil saturation present. During the week prior to the site visit, the La Center area had received 1.44 inches of measurable precipitation according to the website Weather Underground.

Based on the observations taken during the site visit, it was determined that no wetlands exist on the study area.

The NRCS Web Soil Survey indicates the following soil types on the property:

- Hillsboro silt loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes (HoC)
- Hillsboro silt loam, 30 to 65 percent slopes (HoG)
- Odne silt loam, 0 to 5 percent slopes (OdB)

The non-hydric Hillsboro series consists of deep, well drained soils that formed in mixed alluvium. Hillsboro soils are on terraces and have slopes of 0 to 20 percent.

The hydric Odne series consists of deep, poorly drained soils formed in alluvium in basins and drainageways on terraces. Slopes are 0 to 1 percent. This soil is mapped primarily within the northeast portion of the study area in the vicinity of the stream corridor.

The forested riparian area is dominated by an overstory of big-leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*, FACU), Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*, FACU), and black cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera*, FAC). The shrub layer is dominated by beaked hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta*, FACU) and vine maple (*Acer circinatum*, FAC). The ground layer is mainly swordfern (*Polystichum munitum*, FACU) and

English ivy (*Hedera helix*, FACU). Armenian blackberries (*Rubus armeniacus*, FAC) are also present in the riparian zones, especially along the outer fringes.

3.2 Fish and Wildlife Habitat Areas

A DNR Type Ns (non-fish bearing and seasonal) stream is located within the east portion of the study area flowing from north to south. The stream has a defined channel along its entire length within the property and flows through an intact forested riparian zone. Approximately 100 feet north of the south property line, an area of erosional downcutting is occurring and a hanging waterfall exists (Photo 4). The eroded stream corridor is wider in this area and continues off-site to the south. It does not appear that any recent additional upstream downcutting has occurred, likely because the soils are firmer and more resistant to erosional processes.

Per Table 18.300.090(2)(f) of the LCCAO, Type Ns streams with high mass wasting potential are afforded a riparian ecosystem area buffer of 75 feet.

Chapter 5. Regulatory Jurisdiction

A City of La Center critical areas permit is required for any proposed development in critical areas or their buffers. The applicant must avoid and minimize impacts to critical areas as much as possible. Any impacts that cannot be avoided require mitigation.

Prior to undertaking any work within regulated critical areas or buffers detailed in this report, it is recommended to consult with the city regarding current permitting requirements.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

Based on observations taken during the field visit and review of the supporting documentation listed in this report, the study area contains fish and wildlife habitat areas that would be regulated under Chapter 18.300 of the LCCAO.

This report documents the investigation, best professional judgment, and conclusions of CES. It should be used at your own risk unless it has been reviewed and approved in writing by the City of La Center under their jurisdictional standards.

Chapter 7. References

- City of La Center. (2023, January 9). *La Center Municipal Code Chapter 18.300 Critical Areas*. Retrieved from <https://www.codepublishing.com/WA/LaCenter/#!/LaCenter18/LaCenter18300.html#18.300>
- Clark County. (2024, January 9). *Clark County MapsOnline*. Retrieved from <https://gis.clark.wa.gov/mapsonline/>
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- WDFW. (2024, January 9). *PHS on the Web*. Retrieved from PHS on the Web: <http://apps.wdfw.wa.gov/phsontheweb/>
- WDNR. (2024, January 9). *Forest Practices Application Mapping Tool*. Retrieved from <https://fpamt.dnr.wa.gov/default.aspx>

Appendix A — Figures

Figure 1 of 7 – Location Map

Figure 2 of 7 – Elevation Contour Lines (NAVD 88)

Figure 3 of 7 – Soils Inventory

Figure 4 of 7 –Wetlands Inventory

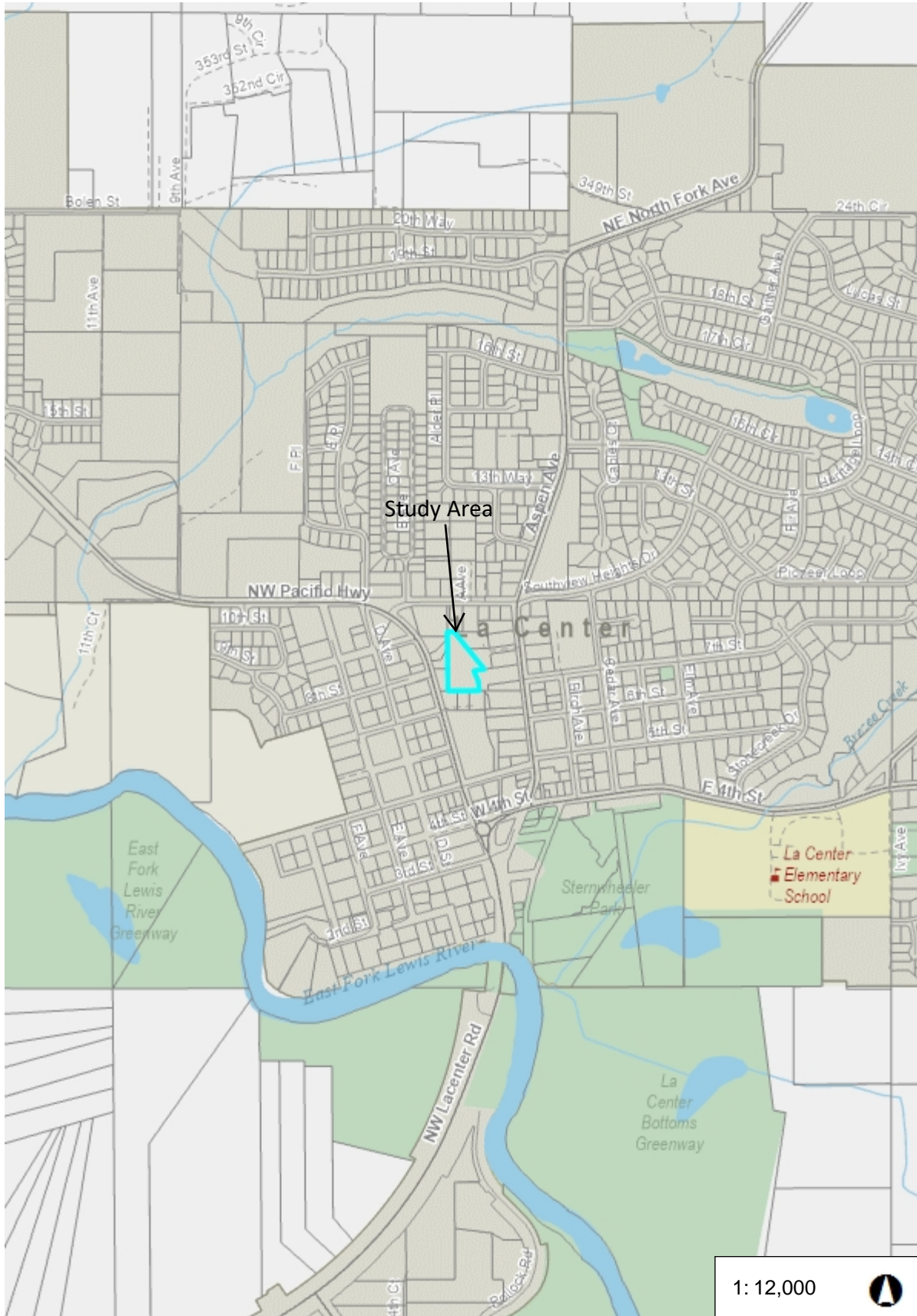
Figure 5 of 7 – Water Features and Watersheds

Figure 6 of 7 – Priority Habitats and Species Group

Figure 7 of 7 – Identified Critical Areas



Figure 1 of 7. Location Map
Critical Areas Report
Project: Platinum Holdings LLC Property



Legend

□ Taxlots

Location:
725 NW Pacific Highway
La Center, WA 98629

Tax Parcel: 62642015

Section-Township-Range
NW ¼ of Section 3, Township
4N, Range 1E

Lat: 45.86502 N;
Long: -122.67315 W

County: Clark

Client:
Devin Barboza
Platinum Industrial
PO Box 1540
Woodland, WA 98674
(360) 852-3237
devinjb@platinumind.com

Date: 1/12/24

Notes:

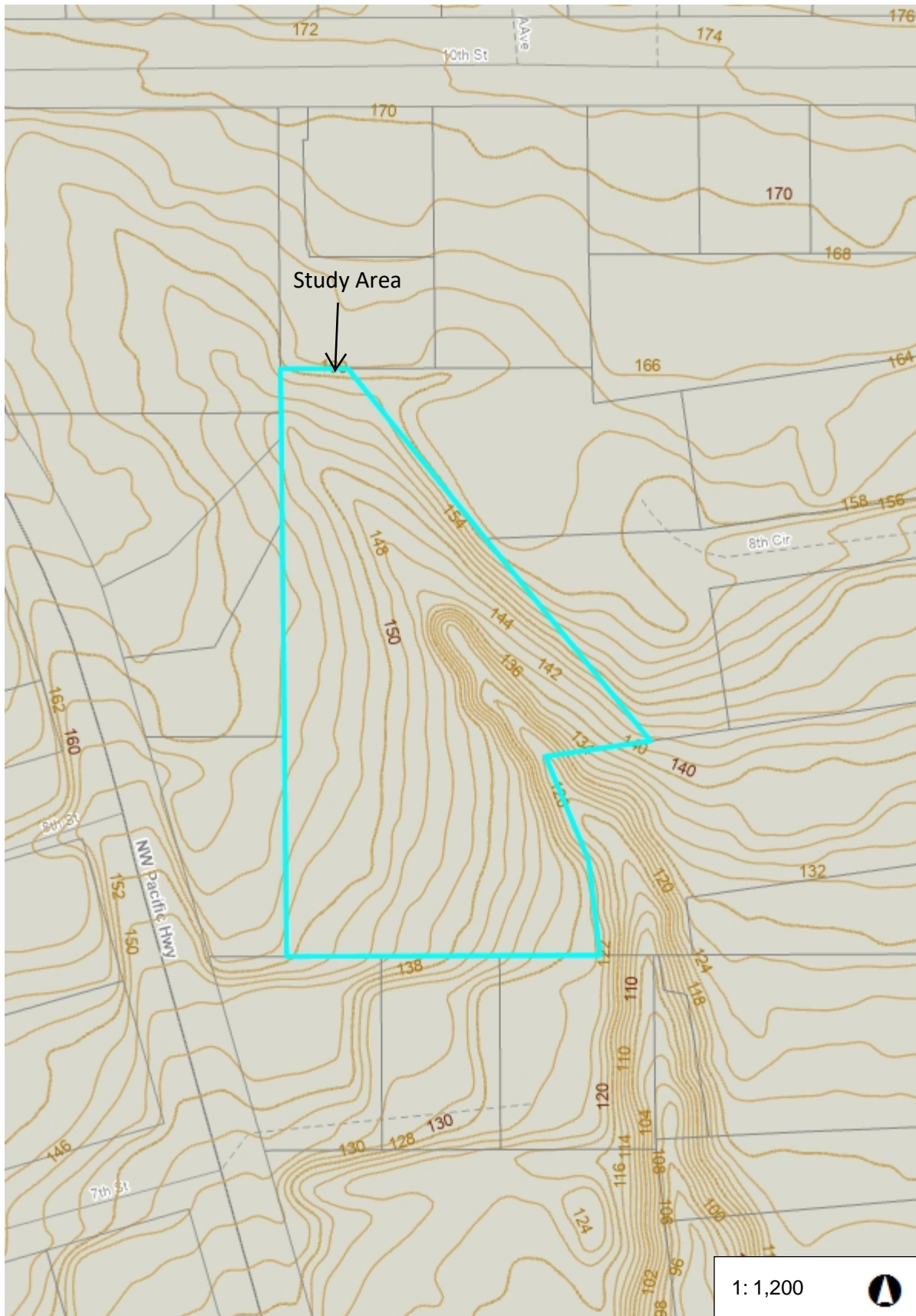
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Clark County, WA. GIS - <http://gis.clark.wa.gov>

This map was generated by Clark County's "MapsOnline" website. Clark County does not warrant the accuracy, reliability or timeliness of any information on this map, and shall not be held liable for losses caused by using this information. Taxlot (i.e., parcel) boundaries cannot be used to determine the location of property lines on the ground.



Figure 2 of 7. Elevation Contour Lines (NAVD 88)
Critical Areas Report
Project: Platinum Holdings LLC Property



Legend

- Taxlots
- Contours Lines - 2 ft
- Contours Lines - 10 ft
- Contours Lines - 100 ft

Location:
725 NW Pacific Highway
La Center, WA 98629

Tax Parcel: 62642015

Section-Township-Range
NW ¼ of Section 3, Township
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Lat: 45.86502 N;
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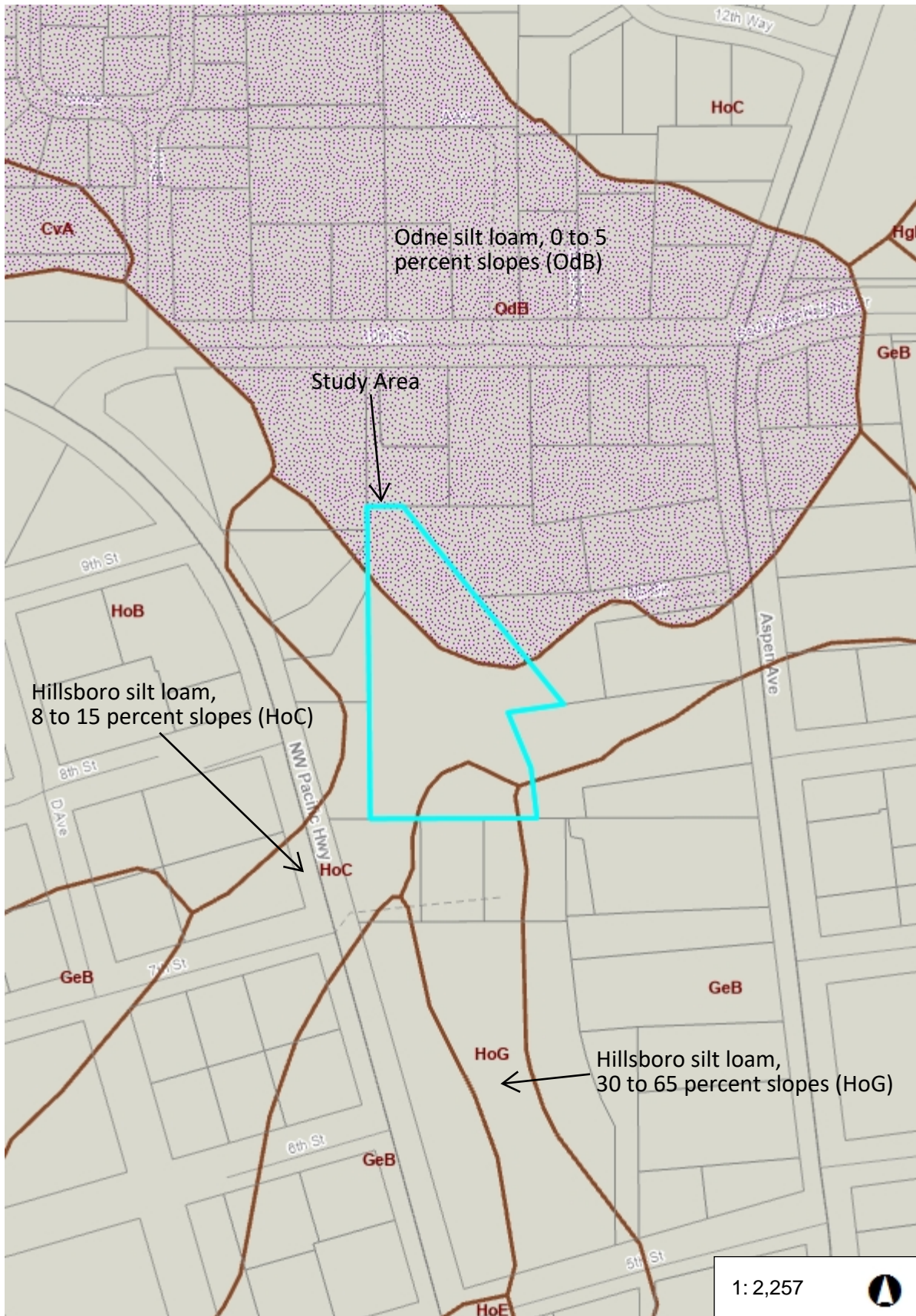
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Figure 3 of 7. Soils Inventory
Critical Areas Report
Project: Platinum Holdings LLC Property



Legend

- Taxlots
- Soil Type
- Hydric Soils

Location:
725 NW Pacific Highway
La Center, WA 98629

Tax Parcel: 62642015

Section-Township-Range
NW ¼ of Section 3, Township
4N, Range 1E

Lat: 45.86502 N;
Long: -122.67315 W

County: Clark

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Notes:

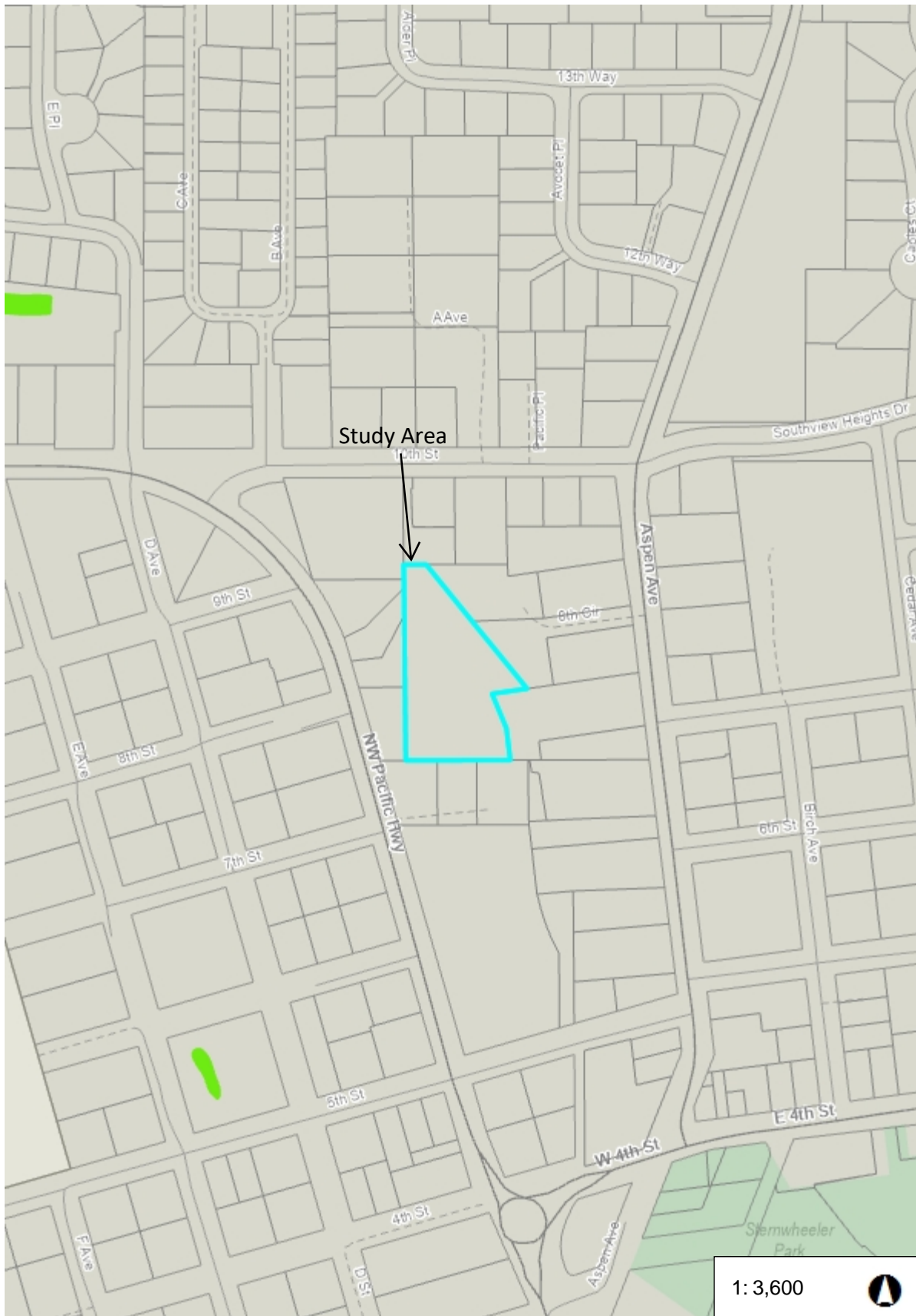
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WGS_1984_Web_Mercator_Auxiliary_Sphere
Clark County, WA. GIS - <http://gis.clark.wa.gov>

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Figure 4 of 7. Wetlands Inventory
Critical Areas Report
Project: Platinum Holdings LLC Property



Legend

- Taxlots
- Potential Wetlands Presence
- NWI Wetland

Location:
725 NW Pacific Highway
La Center, WA 98629

Tax Parcel: 62642015

Section-Township-Range
NW ¼ of Section 3, Township
4N, Range 1E

Lat: 45.86502 N;
Long: -122.67315 W

County: Clark

Client:
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Date: 1/12/24

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Figure 5 of 7. Water Features and Watersheds
Critical Areas Report
Project: Platinum Holdings LLC Property



Legend

- Taxlots
- Stream - DNR
- Lake - DNR
- Watershed
- Sub-Watershed

Location:
725 NW Pacific Highway
La Center, WA 98629

Tax Parcel: 62642015

Section-Township-Range
NW ¼ of Section 3, Township
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Lat: 45.86502 N;
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Notes:

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Figure 6 of 7. Priority Habitats and Species Group
Critical Areas Report
Project: Platinum Holdings LLC Property



Legend

- Taxlots
- Species**
 - Species Area
 - Adjacent to Species Area
- Habitat**
 - Habitat Area
 - Adjacent to Habitat Area
 - Riparian Habitat

Location:
725 NW Pacific Highway
La Center, WA 98629

Tax Parcel: 62642015

Section-Township-Range
NW ¼ of Section 3, Township
4N, Range 1E

Lat: 45.86502 N;
Long: -122.67315 W

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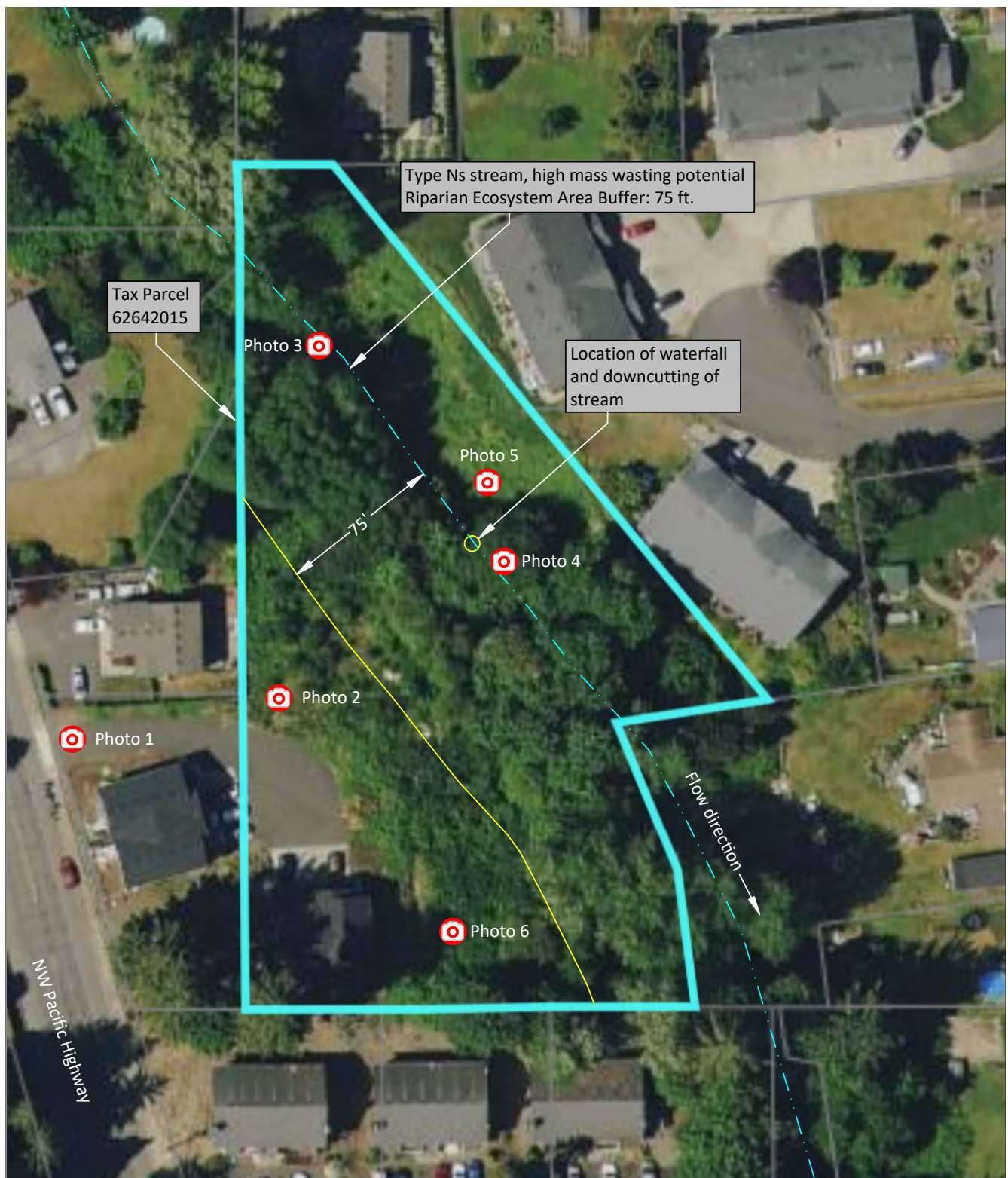
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Note: The stream location shown on this graphic was mapped using an Arrow 100 submeter accurate GNSS GPS receiver. Exact location should be determined by survey. Stream type designations and buffers are preliminary until verified by the City of La Center.

Aerial Photo Source: Clark County GIS 2024

--- Type Ns stream, high mass wasting potential
--- 75' Buffer Setback Line
Riparian Ecosystem Area Buffer: 75 ft.

⊙ - Photo Point



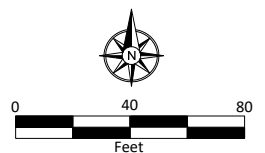
Figure 7 of 7 - Identified Critical Areas Critical Areas Report

Project: Platinum Holdings LLC Property
Location: 725 NW Pacific Highway, La Center, WA 98629
Legal: NW 1/4, S03, T4N, R1E of the Willamette Meridian
45.86495 N. lat. / -122.67313 W long.
County: Clark

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devinjb@platinmind.com



Appendix B — Site Photos



Photo 1. Entrance to study area at NW Pacific Highway facing east.



Photo 2. West boundary of the study area facing north.

Appendix B – Site Photos (cont.)



Photo 3. Seasonal stream along the east side of the property.



Photo 4. Location where stream downcutting is occurring.

Appendix B – Site Photos (cont.)



Photo 5. East side of the stream adjacent to Tax Parcel 62642035.



Photo 6. West side of stream corridor on the study area facing north.