



United States Department of the Interior

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge
44843 County Road 19
Odessa, Minnesota 56276



Date: June 24th, 2024
To: Interested Hayers
Subject: 2024 Refuge Hay Units

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge will be allowing hay cutting on 11 units of the Refuge this year.

Hay units are as follows:

Unit 1: Highway 75 Dam spillway. There are approximately 27 acres in this field. It consists mainly of brome, some warm season native grasses, and bird's foot trefoil. Access is through the gated maintenance road on the northwest side of the unit. ****If the successful bidder on this site is successful on any other units, this unit should be harvested last and equipment should be thoroughly cleaned after use to avoid spread of bird's foot trefoil seeds****

The management goal is to keep this key dam component free of trees and other woody vegetation.

***Unit 2: Ruby Red Peninsula. There are approximately 39 acres in this field.** It consists mainly of brome, sweet clover, and warm season native grasses. The edges of this unit have a lot of woody debris washed up from spring flooding. Interested hayers should use caution with machinery on field edges, and could receive payment deductions for piling (within designated areas in the unit) or removing woody debris from the perimeter of the site. Access to the unit is via gravel road that converts to a two track through a field of wildflowers and alfalfa. Stay on the two track to avoid interfering with a bee study. The unit's western edge is easily recognized by the straight line of sweet clover and grasses without wildflowers or alfalfa and flagging.

The management goal is to add habitat heterogeneity to the landscape and to reduce the coverage of sweet clover stalks on the unit and to remove woody debris on the perimeter.

Unit 3: Pool 4a. There are approximately 22 acres in this field. This unit progresses into wetland to the north, and care should be taken not to cause rutting, potentially limiting the realized acres hayed. This unit consists mainly of brome, sweet clover, warm season native grasses, phragmites, and cattail. There are no approaches into this unit from CR 15/19. Access is via the gated levee on the south side of the unit.

The management goal is to add habitat heterogeneity to the landscape and to reduce the coverage of sweet clover stalks on the unit.

Unit 4: Auto Tour Route Loop. There are approximately 37 acres in this field. This unit

consists mainly of brome, sweet clover, and warm season native grasses. Access from the auto tour road is possible along either the north or south of the unit.

The management goal is to add habitat heterogeneity to the landscape, to keep the unit free of trees, and to reduce the coverage of sweet clover stalks on the unit.

Unit 5: Yellow Bank North. There are approximately 106 acres in this field. This unit consists mainly of brome and warm season native grasses. There is a wetland on the north end of the unit, and care should be taken not to cause rutting, potentially limiting the realized acres hayed. Access is through the locked gates at the northeast and southwest corners of the and a gravel road that defines the north boundary.

The management goal is to add habitat heterogeneity to the landscape, to keep the unit free of trees, and to reduce the coverage of sweet clover stalks on the unit.

Unit 6: Yellow Bank North. There are approximately 73 acres in this field. This unit consists mainly of brome, warm season native grasses, phragmites, and reed canary grass. Access is at an approach on the southwest corner of the unit along Highway 40. The northern boundary is defined by a large ditch.

The management goal is to add habitat heterogeneity to the landscape and to keep the unit free of trees.

Unit 7: Yellow Bank North. There are approximately 67 acres in this field. This unit consists mainly of brome, warm season native grasses, and native forbs. Access is from approaches along CR 15. The southern boundary is defined by a ditch.

The management goal is to add habitat heterogeneity to the landscape, to keep the unit free of trees, and to reduce the coverage of sweet clover stalks on the unit.

***Unit 8: Southeast Prairie. There are approximately 20 acres in this field.** This unit consists mainly of brome, warm season native grasses, and native forbs. The north boundary of the unit is marked by an old field edge near the top of the field slope. Access is through a pole gate on CR 15. The herbicide Milestone VM may be used on this site. According to the label, this chemical has no haying restrictions.

The management goal is to add habitat heterogeneity to the landscape and to keep the unit free of trees.

Unit 9: Southeast Prairie. There are approximately 32 acres in this field.** This unit contains wetland areas, and care should be taken not to cause rutting, potentially limiting the realized acres hayed. This unit consists mainly of brome, reed canary grass, warm season native grasses, and native forbs. Access is from the locked gate at the parking lot on the southeast side of the unit. The herbicide Milestone VM may be used on this site. According to the label, this chemical has no haying restrictions. *If the successful bidder on this site is successful on any other units, this unit should be harvested last and equipment should be thoroughly cleaned after use to avoid spread of crown vetch seeds****

The management goal is to add habitat heterogeneity to the landscape and to keep the unit free of

trees.

Unit 10: Southeast Prairie. There are approximately 9 acres in this field. This unit consists mainly of brome, sweet clover, warm season native grasses, and native forbs. Access is from the locked gate on the southeast side of the unit. The west boundary is marked by a white flag along the south fence line and continues straight north through the lone Russian olive tree. The north and eastern boundary is marked by the Russian olive tree and the top of the hillslope (rocks are likely on this boundary). The herbicide Milestone VM may be used on this site. According to the label, this chemical has no haying restrictions.

The management goal is to add habitat heterogeneity to the landscape and to keep the unit free of trees.

***Unit 11: Low Road. There are approximately 80 acres in this field.** This unit consists mainly of brome, warm season native grasses, reed canary grass, and native forbs. Access is from a maintenance road with a locked gate on County Hwy 15/19, just south of Big Stone NWR headquarters and the bridge over the Minnesota River. The west and east boundaries are marked by white flags.

The management goal is to add habitat heterogeneity to the landscape, prepare a bed for some chemical treatments on smooth brome, and to keep the unit free of trees.

***All acreages are approximate and may be less due to terrain or tree stands. Care should be taken to avoid rutting in wet areas – hayers will be held responsible for excessive damage due to unfavorable soil conditions.**

One cutting of hay will be allowed starting July 15, 2024 after a Special Use Permit is issued and signed by the hayer and Refuge. Bales must be removed within 7 days after baling, but no later than August 15, 2023 (*October 1 for units 2, 8, 9, and 11). Wetlands can be hayed if they are dry enough to get equipment into the area without rutting the ground. Prior to bidding, a site visit is STRONGLY encouraged. Cooperators are responsible for following all terms and conditions identified in the special use permit.

Permittees will be selected based on receipt of sealed high bid for each of the hay units. Sealed bids are due at the refuge office **no later than 12 pm (noon) July 10th 2024.**

Please contact Refuge Biologist Brandon Semel at (320) 808-9470 or brandon_semel@fws.gov if you have any questions about the units or bidding process.

Sincerely,

Mike Budd
Project Leader

2024 Haying Permit Special Conditions

Permit # 32640-24-

1. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reserves the right to modify the timing of haying or terminate the SUP if habitat conditions warrant.
2. All equipment for haying, including ATVs and UTVs, must be clean and free of invasive species plant material, including seeds, before entering any Refuge, WPA, or Service easement. The Refuge Manager reserves the right to inspect and deny the use of any equipment/vehicle/horse etc. that appears to contain invasive species plant material or seeds.
3. Haying outside the boundary of the successfully bid upon unit is not permitted and subject to penalties and fines.
4. One cutting of hay is permitted starting July 15th, 2024.
5. The entire unit must be cut, baled, and removed. This includes all woody vegetation. Vegetation that is cut must be removed from the unit.
6. Bales must be removed from the unit within one week (7 days) after baling, but no later than August 15, 2024 (***October 1, 2024 for units 2, 8, 9, and 11**).
7. Permittee assumes all liability for damages occurring due to haying operations including damage to refuge lands and facilities.
8. Any deviations from the special conditions must be approved by the Refuge Manager and designee in advance.
9. Payment is due upon receipt of invoice.
10. Failure to comply with special conditions may result in the forfeiture of future haying privileges and future consideration for bidding on any Refuge programs.

Permittee signature

Date



BID SHEET
National Wildlife Refuge System

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge
44843 County Road 19
Odessa, MN 56276



APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Name (Proposal Submitter): _____

Partner Name (if applicable): _____

Name of Business or Farm: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Tax ID #: _____ Phone Number: _____ Work Cell

E-mail Address: _____

Successful bidders will be required to provide their Social Security Number at the time the permit is issued. Before a permit is issued, the successful bidder will be required to visit the site with Refuge staff.

BID INFORMATION:

Write your bid amount for the corresponding Unit(s) in the space(s) provided below. If you are not bidding on a particular unit, leave that space blank or write N/A.

Please note, bids are to be based on the individual units, not by the ton or per acre basis. Haying can begin July 15, 2024. All bales must be removed from the units within 7 days of baling, but no later than August 15, 2024 (*October 1 for units 2, 8, 9, and 11).

Unit 1 Bid: _____

*Unit 2 Bid: _____

Unit 3 Bid: _____

Unit 4 Bid: _____

Unit 5 Bid: _____

Unit 6 Bid: _____

Unit 7 Bid: _____

*Unit 8 Bid: _____

*Unit 9 Bid: _____

Unit 10 Bid: _____

*Unit 11 Bid: _____

Bid: _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Sealed bids must be received by 12:00 pm July 10th, 2024. Please scan and email your bid to brandon_semel@fws.gov or drop off to bid box in front of main office:

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge
44843 County Road 19
Odessa, MN 56276
320-273-2191 Office

I have read and, if selected, agree to the permit conditions listed in the bid package. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

NOTICES

All information you provide will be considered in reviewing this application. False, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or representations made in the application may be grounds for revocation of the permit and may be punishable by fine or imprisonment (18 U.S.C. 1001).

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

Authority: The information requested is authorized by the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act (16 U.S.C. 668dd-ee) and the Refuge Recreation Act (16 U.S.C. 460k-460k-4).

Purpose: To collect the applicant's information to process permits allowing for commercial activities such as: guiding hunters, anglers or other outdoor users; commercial filming; agriculture; rental of cabins and trapping while on the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Routine Uses: The information will be used by the refuge's administrative office for processing Commercial Activity Special Use permits. More information about the routine uses maybe found in the Systems of Records Notice, FWS-5 National Wildlife Refuge Special Use Permits.

Disclosure: Providing the information is voluntary. However, submission of information is required to process and approve commercial activity usage on the National Wildlife Refuge System.

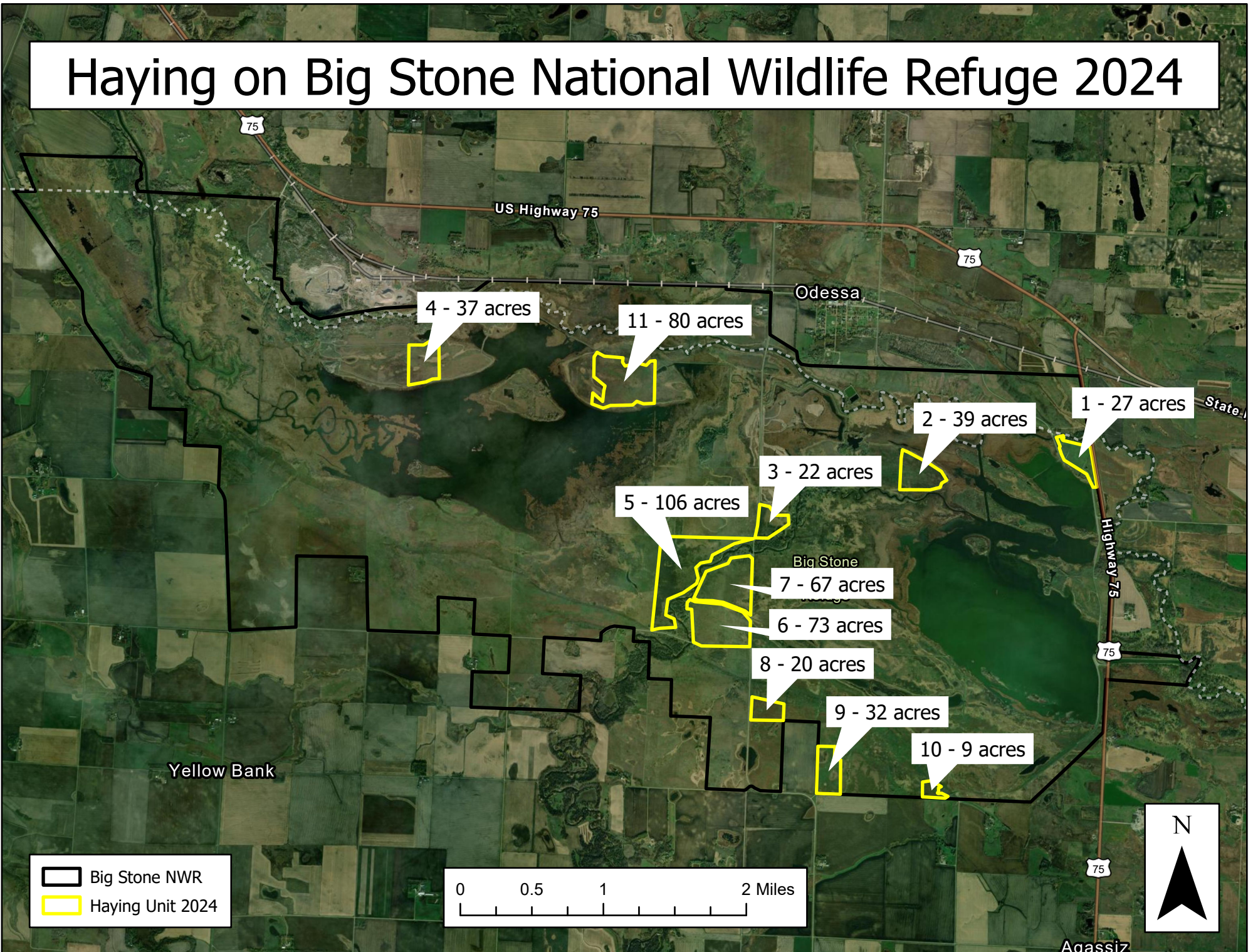
PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT

We are collecting this information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501) to evaluate the qualifications, determine eligibility, and document permit applicants and to respond to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act of 1974. The information that you provide is required to obtain or retain a benefit; however, failure to provide all required information is sufficient cause for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to deny a permit. False, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or representations made in the application may be grounds for revocation of the Special Use Permit and may be punishable by fine or imprisonment (18 U.S.C. 1001). According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. OMB has approved this information collection and assigned control number 1018-0102.

ESTIMATED BURDEN STATEMENT

The public reporting burden for this information collection varies based on the requested specific refuge use. We estimate the relevant public reporting burden for the Commercial Activity Special Use Permit Application form to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Service Information Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: AMAD-ARM-PPM, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803, or via email to Info_Coll@fws.gov. Please do not send your completed form to this address.

Haying on Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge 2024



Big Stone NWR
Haying Unit 2024

0 0.5 1 2 Miles



Hay Unit #1: ~27 acres

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge: Spillway



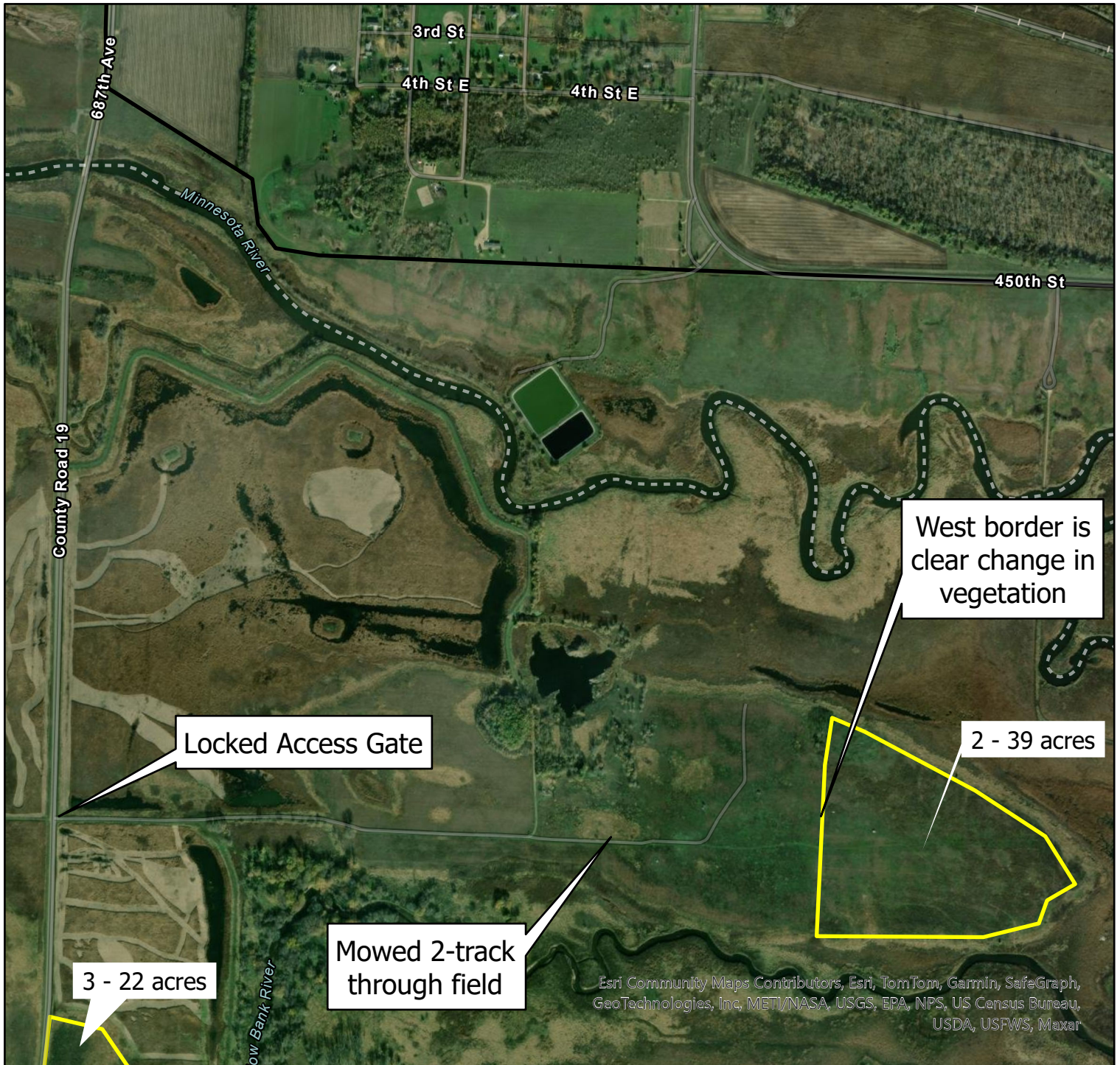
Legend

- Big Stone NWR
- Haying Unit 2024



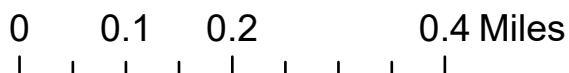
Hay Unit #2: ~39 acres

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge: Ruby Red



Legend

- Big Stone NWR
- Haying Unit 2024



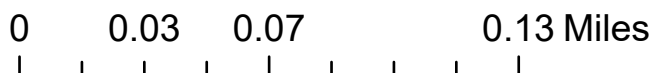
Hay Unit #3: ~22 acres

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge: Pool 4a



Legend

- Big Stone NWR
- Haying Unit 2024



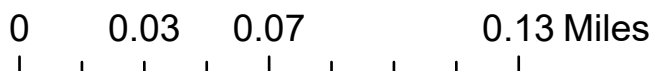
Hay Unit #4: ~37 acres

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge: Auto Tour



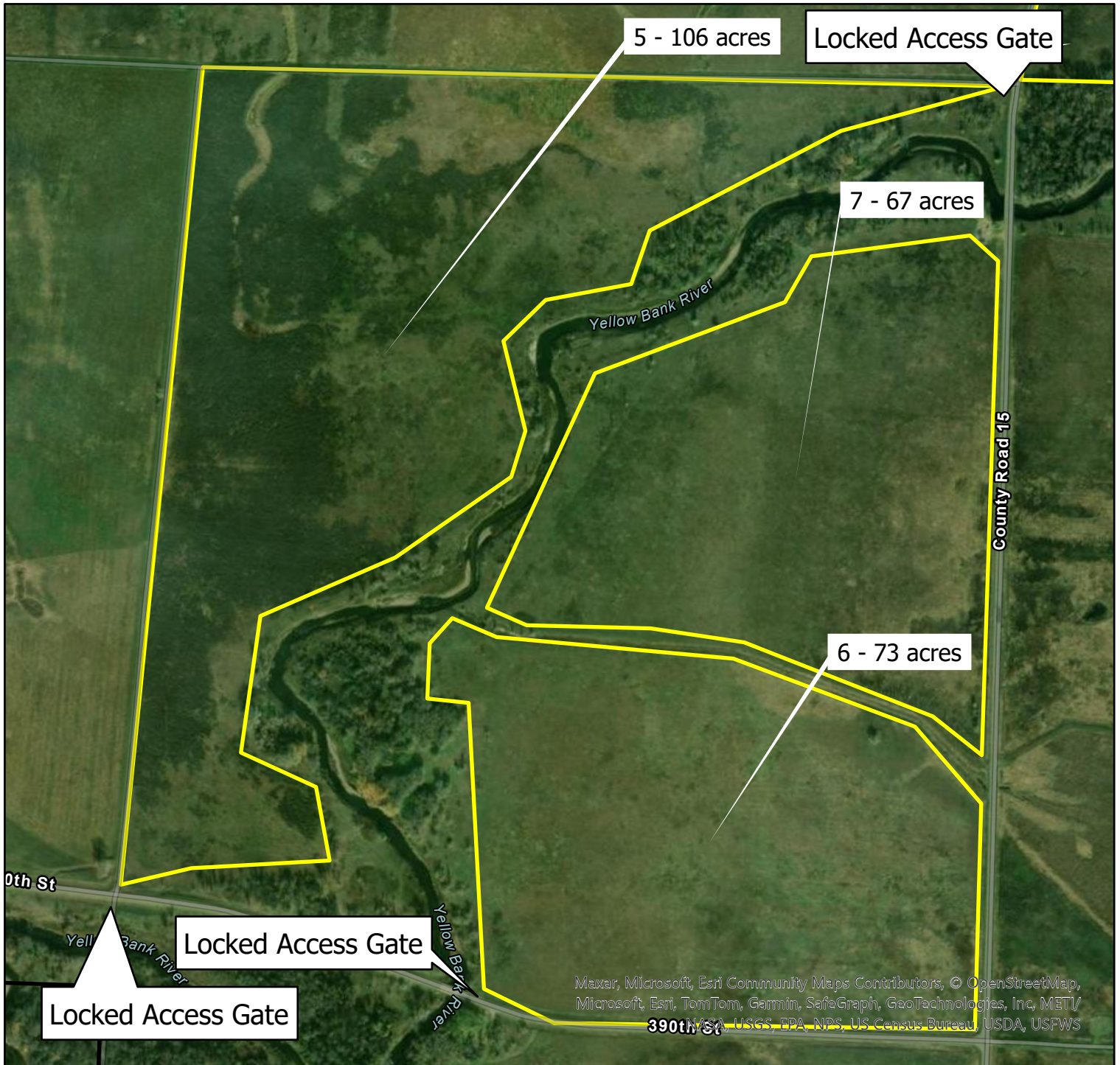
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- Big Stone NWR
- Haying Unit 2024



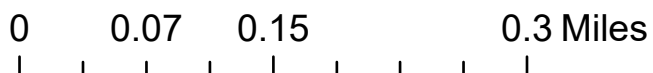
Hay Units #5, 6, and 7

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge: Yellow Bank



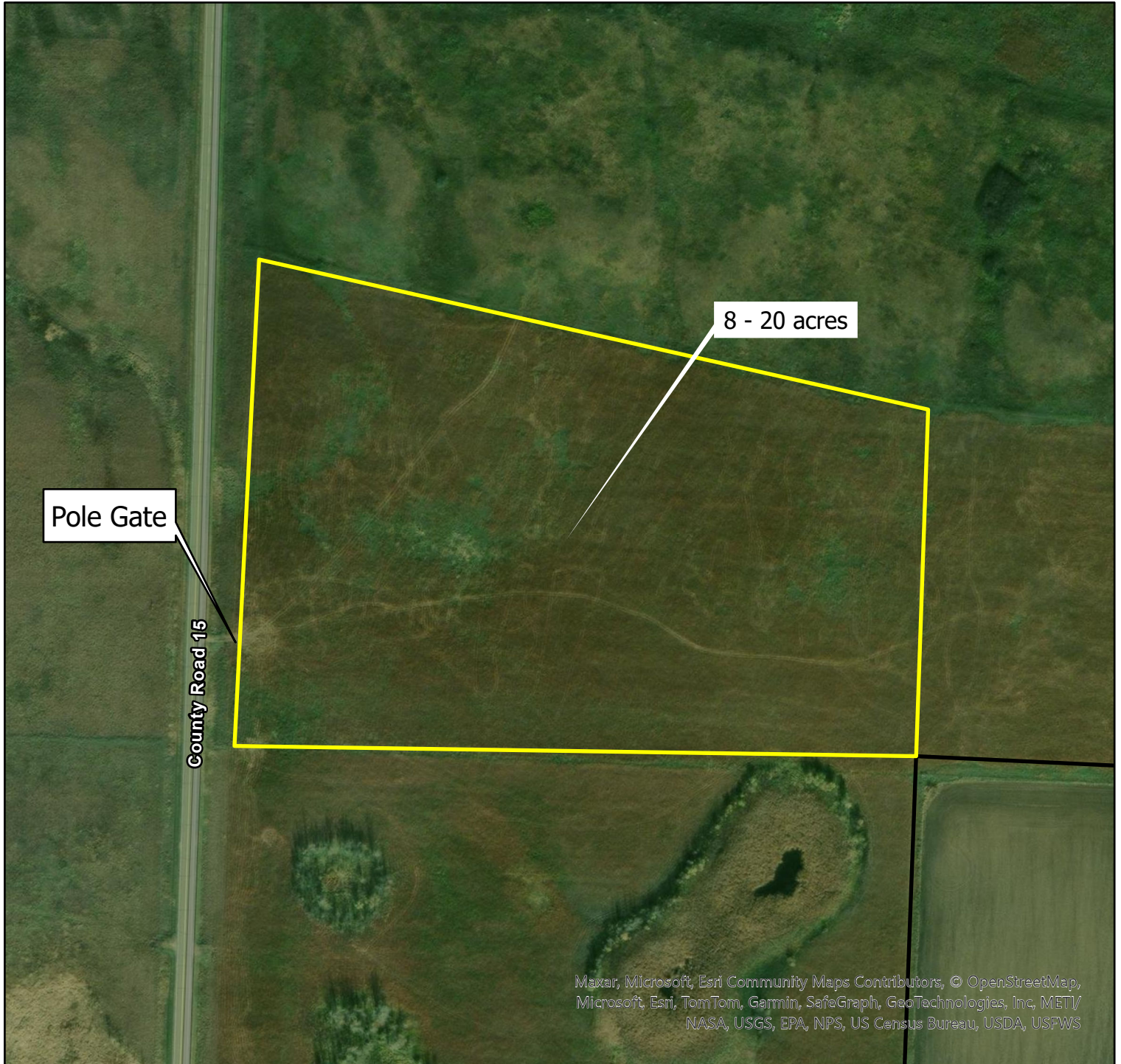
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- Big Stone NWR
- Haying Unit 2024



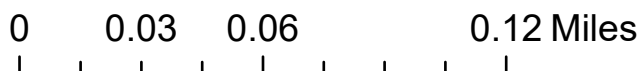
Hay Unit #8: ~20 acres

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge: SE Prairie



Legend

- Big Stone NWR
- Haying Unit 2024



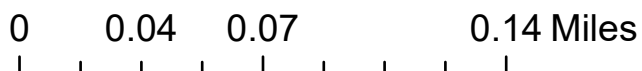
Hay Unit #9: ~32 acres

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge: SE Prairie



Legend

- Big Stone NWR
- Haying Unit 2024



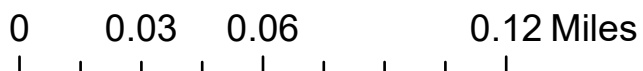
Hay Unit #10: ~9 acres

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge: SE Prairie



Legend

- Big Stone NWR
- Haying Unit 2024



Hay Unit #11: 80 acres

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge: Low Road



Legend

- Big Stone NWR
- Haying Unit 2024

