

APPENDIX K

Biotic Resources

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Biotic Resources

This appendix contains documents relating to the analysis of biotic resources at MSP. A Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) Natural Heritage Information System (NHIS) data review was completed for the Study Area to identify known Federal or State-listed endangered, threatened, special concern, or critical habitat areas on or within one mile of the Study Area. A habitat review was then conducted for the one State-listed threatened flora species, the kittentail.

The following documents are referenced in Chapter 5, *Environmental Consequences* and attached to this appendix:

- 1 MNDNR NHIS Response Letter
- 2 Kittentail Report

Attachment 1:
MNDNR NHIS Response Letter



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

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June 10, 2011

Correspondence # ERDB 20110486

Mr. Mark Miller
Liesch Associates
13400 15th Avenue North
Plymouth, MN 55441

RE: Natural Heritage Review of the proposed Minneapolis – St. Paul International Airport 2020 Improvements, Hennepin County

Township (N)	Range (W)	Section(s)
27	23	6
28	24	25 & 36
28	23	29-32

Dear Mr. Miller,

The Minnesota Natural Heritage Information System has been queried to determine if any rare species or other significant natural features are known to occur within an approximate one-mile radius of the proposed project. For the results of this query, please refer to the enclosed database reports (please visit the Rare Species Guide at <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/rsg/index.html> for more information on the biology, habitat use, and conservation measures of these rare species). As requested per the data request form, I am providing the database reports only and have not evaluated the potential for the proposed project to adversely affect these rare features. Please note that the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) should address whether the proposed project has the potential to adversely affect these rare features and, if so, the EAW should describe any measures that will be taken to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts.

The Natural Heritage Information System (NHIS), a collection of databases that contains information about Minnesota’s rare natural features, is maintained by the Division of Ecological and Water Resources, Department of Natural Resources. The NHIS is continually updated as new information becomes available, and is the most complete source of data on Minnesota’s rare or otherwise significant species, native plant communities, and other natural features. However, the NHIS is not an exhaustive inventory and thus does not represent all of the occurrences of rare features within the state. Therefore, ecologically significant features for which we have no records may exist within the project area.

The enclosed results include an Index Report and a Detailed Report of records in the Rare Features Database, the main database of the NHIS. To control the release of specific location information, which might result in the destruction of a rare feature, both reports are copyrighted.

The Index Report provides rare feature locations only to the nearest section, and may be reprinted, unaltered, in an environmental review document (e.g., EAW or EIS), municipal natural resource plan, or report compiled by your company for the project listed above. If you wish to reproduce the index report for any other purpose, please contact me to request written permission. **The Detailed Report is for your personal use only as it may include specific location information that is considered nonpublic data under Minnesota Statutes, section 84.0872, subd. 2. If you wish to reprint or publish the Detailed Report for any purpose, please contact me to request written permission.**

For environmental review purposes, the Natural Heritage letter and database reports are valid for one year; they are only valid for the project location (noted above) and the project description provided on the NHIS Data Request Form. Please contact me if project details change or if an updated review is needed.

Please note that locations of the gray wolf (*Canis lupus*), federally-listed as threatened and state-listed as special concern, and the Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*), federally-listed as threatened, are not currently tracked in the NHIS. As such, the Natural Heritage Review does not address these species.

Furthermore, the Natural Heritage Review does not constitute review or approval by the Department of Natural Resources as a whole. Instead, it identifies issues regarding known occurrences of rare features and potential effects to these rare features. Additional rare features for which we have no data may be present in the project area, or there may be other natural resource concerns associated with the proposed project. For these concerns, please contact your DNR Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist (contact information available at http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/ereview/erp_regioncontacts.html). Please be aware that additional site assessments or review may be required.

Thank you for consulting us on this matter, and for your interest in preserving Minnesota's rare natural resources. An invoice will be mailed to you under separate cover.

Sincerely,



Lisa Joyal
Natural Heritage Review Coordinator

enc. Rare Features Database: Index Report
 Rare Features Database: Detailed Report
 Rare Features Database Reports: An Explanation of Fields

Attachment 2:
Kittentail Report

Habitat Review for *Besseyia Bullii* (Kittentails)



Prepared For:
Metropolitan Airports Commission



Prepared By:



Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.

September 2011

Project Location

The Metropolitan Airports Commission owns and operates the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport in Hennepin County, Minnesota. The proposed 2020 transportation improvements under the Airlines Remain Scenario include a portion of Trunk Highway (TH) 5 near the Glumack Drive and TH 5 Interchange. This area is located within Section 30, Township 28N, and Range 24W. See Appendix A for a vicinity map (Figure 1).

Description and Status of *Besseyia bullii* (Kittentails)

Besseyia bullii (Kittentails) is a native perennial found in the Upper Midwest/Great Lakes states. The kittentail was added to the State Endangered Species in 1984 when only 5 of the 21 previously documented sites were known to survive. After further investigation and review by the County Biological Survey, Kittentails were reclassified to the State Threatened Species List (<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/rsg/profile.html?action=elementDetail&selectedElement=PDSCR09030>, Accessed September 21, 2011).

Habitat

Kittentails are found primarily in oak savanna communities, along with dry-mesic oak woodlands and dry-mesic oak-pine woodlands. The majority of the populations in Minnesota are restricted to bluffs and terraces along major rivers in the state. The kittentail prefers partial to open light and upper slopes. Some populations are found on north-facing slopes in prairie habitats where soils are most often sandy and well-drained. The kittentail blooms from late April to late May with the flowering spike and basal leaves remain visible through the summer (<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/rsg/profile.html?action=elementDetail&selectedElement=PDSCR09030>, accessed September 21, 2011). Some associated species include white oak (*Quercus alba*), Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), and little blue stem (*Andropogon scoparius*) (<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/biodiversity/index.asp?mode=info&Grp=20&SpecCode=PDSCR09030>, accessed September 21, 2011).

Project Area

The project area was reviewed for potential to be prime habitat for the kittentail to thrive. Five different areas (A-E) were reviewed to determine dominant vegetation, percent tree cover, and potential for the kittentails. There were no kittentails found as a part of the review. Below is a description of the five areas reviewed and potential for the kittentails.

Area A:

Area A was located between north and southbound TH 5 (Figure 2 in Appendix A). This area was vegetated between the north and south bound lanes. This area had a dominant species of cattails (*Typha angustifolia*), stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*), smooth brome (*Bromus inermis*), and staghorn sumac (*Rhus typhina*). This area receives salt from the roadway. Due to the current vegetation (mostly non-native species), landscape position, and amount of salt received from the roadway, the potential for this area to support the kittentail is unlikely.

Area B:

Area B was located between the entrance ramps to the airport and southbound TH 5 (Figure 2 in Appendix A). This area was vegetated median between the north and southbound lanes. This area had a dominant species of stinging nettle, smooth brome, and staghorn sumac. This area receives salt from the roadway and is mowed a couple of times a year. Due to the current

vegetation (mostly non-native species), landscape position, amount of salt received from the roadway, and mowing throughout the year, the potential for this area to support the kittentail is unlikely.

Area C:

Area C was located within the return to terminal loop (Figure 2 in Appendix A). The area included a limestone bluff adjacent to a portion of the roadway. This area had a dominant species of quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), stinging nettle, smooth brome, Chinese elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*), and staghorn sumac. It appeared that a few evergreen trees were also planted within this area. The majority of the area appeared to be landscaped with frequent mowing. The other areas had 100 percent tree cover. Due to the current vegetation, current maintenance, and the previous disturbance in this area, the potential for this area to support the kittentail is unlikely.

Area D:

Area D was located between the exit ramp from the airport and south bound TH 5 (Figure 2 in Appendix A). This area was vegetated between the north and south bound lanes. This area had a dominant species of stinging nettle, smooth brome, and staghorn sumac. This area receives salt from the roadway and is mowed a couple of times a year. Due to the current vegetation, landscape position, and mowing throughout the year, the potential for support the kittentail is unlikely.

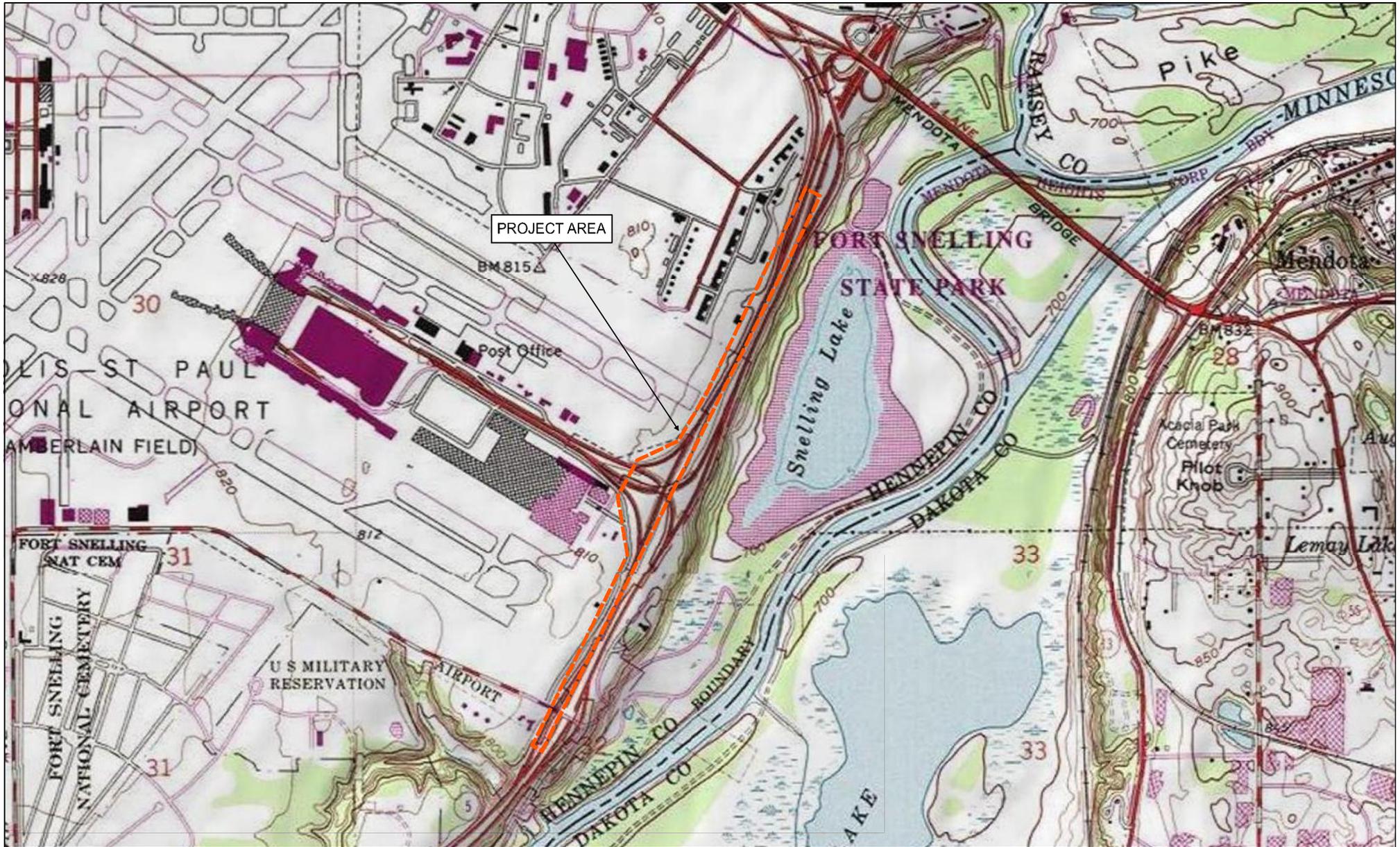
Area E:

Area E was located adjacent to the entrance ramp from Post Road to south bound TH 5 (Figure 2 in Appendix A). This area had a dominant species of stinging nettle, smooth brome, Chinese elm, and staghorn sumac. This area receives salt from the roadway and is mowed a couple of times a year. Due to the current vegetation, landscape position, and mowing, the potential for this area to support the kittentail is unlikely.

Conclusion

The potential for kittentail habitat within the project area is minimal. The landscape position, coverage of non-native vegetation, previous disturbance and ongoing maintenance activities within the project area reduces the chance for kittentails being present. Further site survey is not recommended.

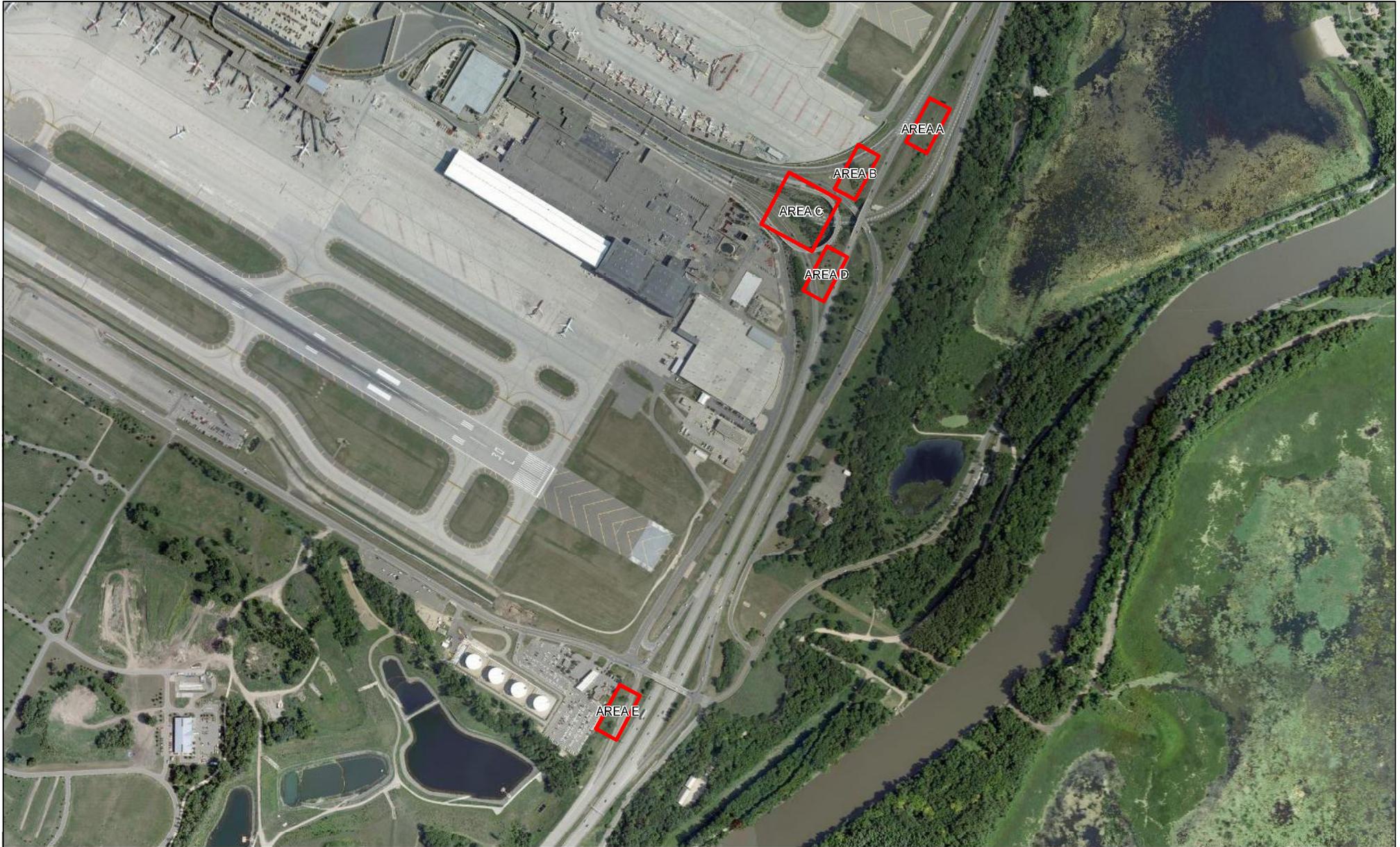
APPENDIX A



1,000 500 0 Feet



Figure 1. Vicinity Map



500 250 0 Feet



Figure 2. Investigated Areas