

WIS 64 Freeway/Expressway Designation And Preservation Study
Project Summary
ID 8110-01-03

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) has undertaken a freeway/expressway designation and preservation study for WIS 64 between 150th Avenue and WIS 65 in St. Croix County. A location map is shown in **Appendix 1**.

The designation and preservation study was initiated in 2009 and included public involvement, local and resource agency coordination, preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA), and a public hearing. Since the public hearing, additional coordination and alternative identification work has occurred for the section between the Apple River and 110th Street. This document summarizes the additional alternative analysis and coordination completed.

The purpose and need for the WIS 64 study is as follows:

- WIS 64 corridor preservation
 - Preserve regional mobility
 - Maintain long-term safety and operations on WIS 64
 - Preserve public investment in the WIS 64 freeway/expressway previously constructed
- Develop a long-term plan for the WIS 64 freeway/expressway in concert with local land use planning efforts

Planning Study Summary

The WIS 64 study planning and preservation action was undertaken in order to identify the required improvements and associated right-of-way needs to convert WIS 64 to a freeway and/or expressway in the future, when warranted by traffic and safety needs. Existing WIS 64 is constructed to freeway standards (grade-separations; no at-grade access) between 150th Avenue and the Apple River and to expressway standards (some at-grade intersection access) from the Apple River to WIS 65.

This action was undertaken to consider preservation (official mapping) under Wis. Stat. 84.295(10) of any future right-of-way needs to preserve those lands until construction of any improvements are warranted. Construction of the actual freeway/expressway conversion is not scheduled and any future projects would include additional design effort, environmental documentation, public involvement, and resource agency coordination.

The draft EA was approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in July 2014 and included a full range of alternative development (25 concepts screened to 4 detailed study alternatives) to document the recommended preferred alternative to designate WIS 64 as a freeway/expressway. The EA included identification of the future improvements and right-of-way needs at select intersection improvement locations between the Apple River and WIS 65 to preserve this expressway section of WIS 64.

Alternative 4 was recommended as the preferred alternative in the EA since it provides for preservation of regional mobility (primary need) while providing safe and reasonable access to adjacent properties along WIS 64. This alternative ensures effective connectivity to the local road system while minimizing environmental, social, and economic impacts. The preferred Alternative 4:

- Eliminates left-turns and crossing movements within the expressway section of WIS 64
- Balances local access needs and traffic circulation with lower misdirection than other alternatives (misdirection for local traffic traveling both westerly and easterly on WIS 64 was an important factor during local agency coordination and public involvement)
- Protects the natural environment with fewer direct impacts (wetlands, farmlands, right of way) than the other alternatives
- Protects the social environment with fewer property owners impacted and fewer relocations

The EA recommended preferred alternative included the following for the WIS 64 corridor:

- 150th Avenue to Apple River - freeway designation only, no right-of-way preservation required
- Apple River to 110th Street – expressway designation with right-of-way preservation for future construction of a proposed overpass; the Preferred Alternative 4 includes a proposed overpass between 85th Street/Rivers Edge Drive and 95th/100th Street with right-in/right-out connections at the existing at-grade intersections
- 110th Street to WIS 65 – expressway designation with right-of-way preservation for future construction of a proposed overpass; the Preferred Alternative included a jug handle overpass at County CC with a right-in/right-out connection at County K/4th Street; this alternative was proposed to be preserved as part of the WIS 64 action since the City of New Richmond had adopted this option under a previous local action

The detailed study alternatives and impact matrix from the EA (July 2015) are shown in **Appendix 2**. The impact matrix used a weighted system to help determine the best alternative through weighting direct impacts as well as other factors identified by the advisory committee including misdirection travel times and local circulation. This matrix help identify the detailed study alternatives presented in the EA.

Public Hearing

A public hearing was held in August 2014. The public hearing was held to gather testimony for official public record on the environmental aspects of the proposed freeway/expressway action. This public hearing did not address the freeway/expressway designation and future right-of-way preservation (official mapping) under Wis. Stat. 84.295(10) for the Preferred Alternative.

Testimony from the public hearing included support for the preferred alternative as well as requests that WisDOT consider or revisit alternatives for access between the Apple River and the 110th Street interchange. The testimony for considering potential changes was provided primarily from the Town of Somerset and Town of Star Prairie and adjacent property and business owners. The testimony to consider additional study can be summarized as follows:

- Provide consideration for placing the access closer to 85th Street/ Rivers Edge Drive
 - To make use of this higher trafficked existing intersection
 - To better facilitate direct access to and from the Rivers Edge Campground which can host a number of large events in a year (concerts, etc.) and for regular patrons that tube on the Apple River and camp
 - To provide for any long-term development near 85th Street/Rivers Edge Drive
- Provide consideration for placing the old WIS 64 bridge back into public ownership and extending a southern frontage road from 85th Street to WIS 35 over the Apple River to help reduce traffic entering WIS 64 at 85th Street
 - The existing bridge is located on 180th Avenue along the south side of WIS 64 between the Apple River and 85th Street; this bridge was placed into private ownership as part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) commitments that were made during the planning of WIS 64 to its current freeway/expressway configuration

- Provide consideration for selection of an alternative at a later date when it is warranted and can be based on development plans and traffic needs at that time (defer the selection of an alternative and preservation of any future right-of-way)

Additional Alternatives Study

Since the public hearing was held in August 2014, the WIS 64 study team completed additional development and review of potential access options near the 85th Street/Rivers Edge Drive intersection. These alternatives were presented at a local officials meeting in October 2015. Officials from St. Croix County, Town of Somerset, and Town of Star Prairie as well as representatives from Rivers Edge Campground attended the meeting.

Similar comments to the public testimony summarized above were provided at the meeting and the attendees desired an alternative where traffic accessing Rivers Edge Campground from the west were not required to pass by Rivers Edge Drive in order to access the Rivers Edge Drive area.

The alternatives presented at the local officials meeting were modifications of the EA Preferred Alternative 4 and are outlined as follows:

- The Preferred Alternative 4 (documented in EA) includes a proposed overpass between 85th Street/Rivers Edge Drive and 95th/100th Street with right-in/right-out connections at the existing at-grade intersections (no changes presented)
- Alternative 4B includes the overpass provided for in Alternative 4 and proposed frontage/service roads north and south of WIS 64 over the existing privately owned bridges along 180th Avenue (south) and within the Rivers Edge Campground property (north)
- Alternative 4C1 includes the overpass provided for in Alternative 4 along with a proposed overpass located directly at 85th Street/Rivers Edge Drive and jug handle connections
- Alternative 4C2 includes the overpass provided for in Alternative 4 along with a proposed overpass located just west of 85th Street/Rivers Edge Drive and jug handle connections at the existing intersection
- Alternative 4C3 includes the overpass provided for in Alternative 4 along with a proposed overpass located just east of 85th Street/Rivers Edge Drive and jug handle connections at the existing intersection

Exhibits of the additional alternatives evaluated are shown in **Appendix 3**. The exhibit for Alternative 4B also includes some additional engineering to help define the potential impacts in the Apple River area.

Because the public and local agencies indicated that good local circulation across WIS 64 for all towns north and south of WIS 64 was important; Alternatives 4C1, 4C2, and 4C3 include the proposed jug handle overpass at 85th Street/Rivers Edge Drive in addition to the improvements proposed provided in the preferred Alternative 4. The overpass location in Alternative 4 was determined from public and local input to best provide local circulation for all outlying areas north and south of WIS 64.

The impacts and costs of the various alternatives presented at the local officials meeting are shown in **Appendix 4**.

- Alternatives 4C1, C2, and C3 would yield similar impacts as Alternatives 2 and 3 vetted in the original EA; while Alternatives 4C1, 4C2, and 4C3 would meet local and property owner desires, the much higher impacts of these alternatives could not be justified through the NEPA process (National Environmental Policy Act)
- Alternative 4B could enhance local circulation for preferred alternative but would require local action to place one or both privately held bridges back into public ownership

The impact matrix from the EA was also updated to include the additional alternatives and is shown in **Appendix 5**. The impact matrix demonstrates Alternative 4 still as the preferable alternative.

A summary of local and public opinion gathered on the additional alternatives includes the following:

- There was no desire from Rivers Edge Campground for the proposed northern river crossing on Alternative 4B since this would impact the campground operations
- Ultimately the attendees felt that solutions with access directly at 85th Street/Rivers Edge Drive were the only desirable options.
- In general there was not consensus about the long-term preferred engineering and safety solution that serves all residents while balancing social and environmental impacts.

Summary

Based on the information presented in the EA as well as the additional analysis completed, Alternative 4 is still recommended as the preferred alternative as it preserves mobility (primary need) and safety along WIS 64 while best minimizing environmental and social impacts. This long-term planning alternative would not foreclose or preclude other options from being considered for WIS 64 if and when improvement projects are warranted between the Apple River and 110th Street. All prudent and feasible alternatives will need to be studied at that time in order to follow the NEPA process which is required to use federal funding.

While this alternative best meets purpose and need (mobility and safety along WIS 64) while protecting resources, at this time there is not consensus about the desirable location of direct local access to WIS 64 between the Apple River and 110th Street. Because of the need for additional coordination, **WisDOT will not proceed with the right-of-way preservation action** in order to better accommodate any planning that may occur by the local units of government for considering local circulation needs between the Apple River and WIS 65.

Local officials have responsible authority to address local circulation for any existing and planned development. Local circulation to address existing and future development in the 85th Street/Rivers Edge Drive area is not an emerging state highway need and thus state and federal funds cannot be expended to fund such improvements without demonstrating a direct need related to the long-term preservation of WIS 64 corridor.

Local units of government also have statutory authority, state statute 61.35 for Villages and state statute 60.10(2)c for Towns to officially map local access needs. Further consideration could be given by the local municipalities to plan for long-term circulation in this area via some of the alternatives discussed in this study including:

- A frontage/service road via 180th Avenue over the Apple River; place existing bridge back in public ownership and strongly consider placing the existing bridge within River Edge property public ownership as depicted in Alternative 4B
- An overpass and local road connections at 85th Street/Rivers Edge Drive

Any local official mapping in this area would not foreclose or preclude consideration of any future options for improving WIS 64. Local official mapping or comprehensive planning for any local roadways would be considered as part of any future improvement project for WIS 64, if and when future improvements are warranted along WIS 64.

While the WIS 64 study will not result in near term right-of-way preservation, the coordination and work completed in the study will provide a valuable resource for any state, regional, and local planning efforts. In the event safety or operational needs emerge sooner between the Apple River and 110th Street, the

data in this study can be used as a starting point for project development to help streamline early coordination and alternative development.

While WisDOT shall continue to work with the local officials and regional agencies along the WIS 64 corridor as part of any planning and maintenance needs, WisDOT will be completing the following tasks in order to close out the WIS 64 study:

- Proceed with the WIS 64 freeway/expressway designation
 - This action would include freeway/expressway designation only and no preservation of future right-of-way would be included; designation would occur as follows:
 - 150th Avenue to Apple River – freeway designation
 - Apple River to WIS 65 – expressway designation
- Continue to coordinate with St. Croix County, Town of Somerset, and Town of Star Prairie for local access needs between the Apple River and 110th Street
- Continue to coordinate with St. Croix County and the City of New Richmond for local access needs near County K/4th Street and County CC
- Median closures of the 85th Street/Rivers Edge Drive and 95th/100th Street intersections as safety issues arise

Appendices

Appendix 1: Project Location Map

Appendix 2: Alternatives and Impact Matrix from EA (July 2014)

Appendix 3: Additional Alternative Analysis at 85th St/Rivers Edge Dr. (October 2015) Appendix 4: Impact Summary for Additional Alternatives (October 2015)

Appendix 5: Updated Impact Matrix with Additional Alternatives (May 2016)

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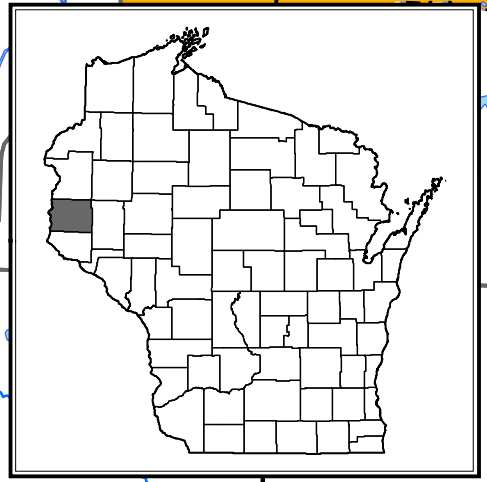
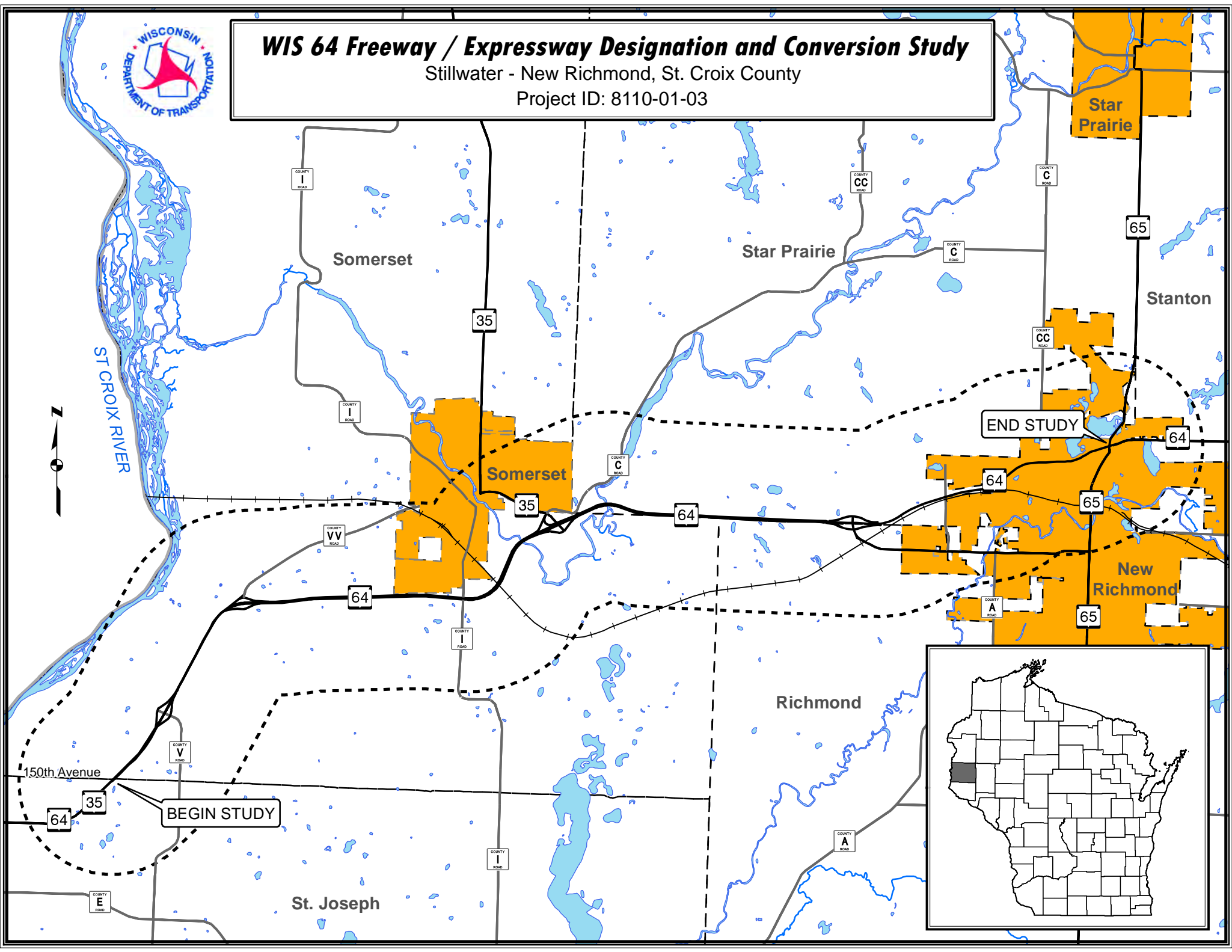
Appendix 1: Project Location Map



WIS 64 Freeway / Expressway Designation and Conversion Study

Stillwater - New Richmond, St. Croix County

Project ID: 8110-01-03



ST CROIX RIVER

Somerset

Star Prairie

Stanton

New Richmond

Richmond

St. Joseph

Star Prairie

END STUDY

BEGIN STUDY

150th Avenue

COUNTY I ROAD

COUNTY CC ROAD

COUNTY C ROAD

COUNTY C ROAD

COUNTY CC ROAD

COUNTY C ROAD

COUNTY VV ROAD

COUNTY I ROAD

COUNTY V ROAD

COUNTY E ROAD

COUNTY I ROAD

COUNTY A ROAD

COUNTY A ROAD

35

35

64

64

64

65

65

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64

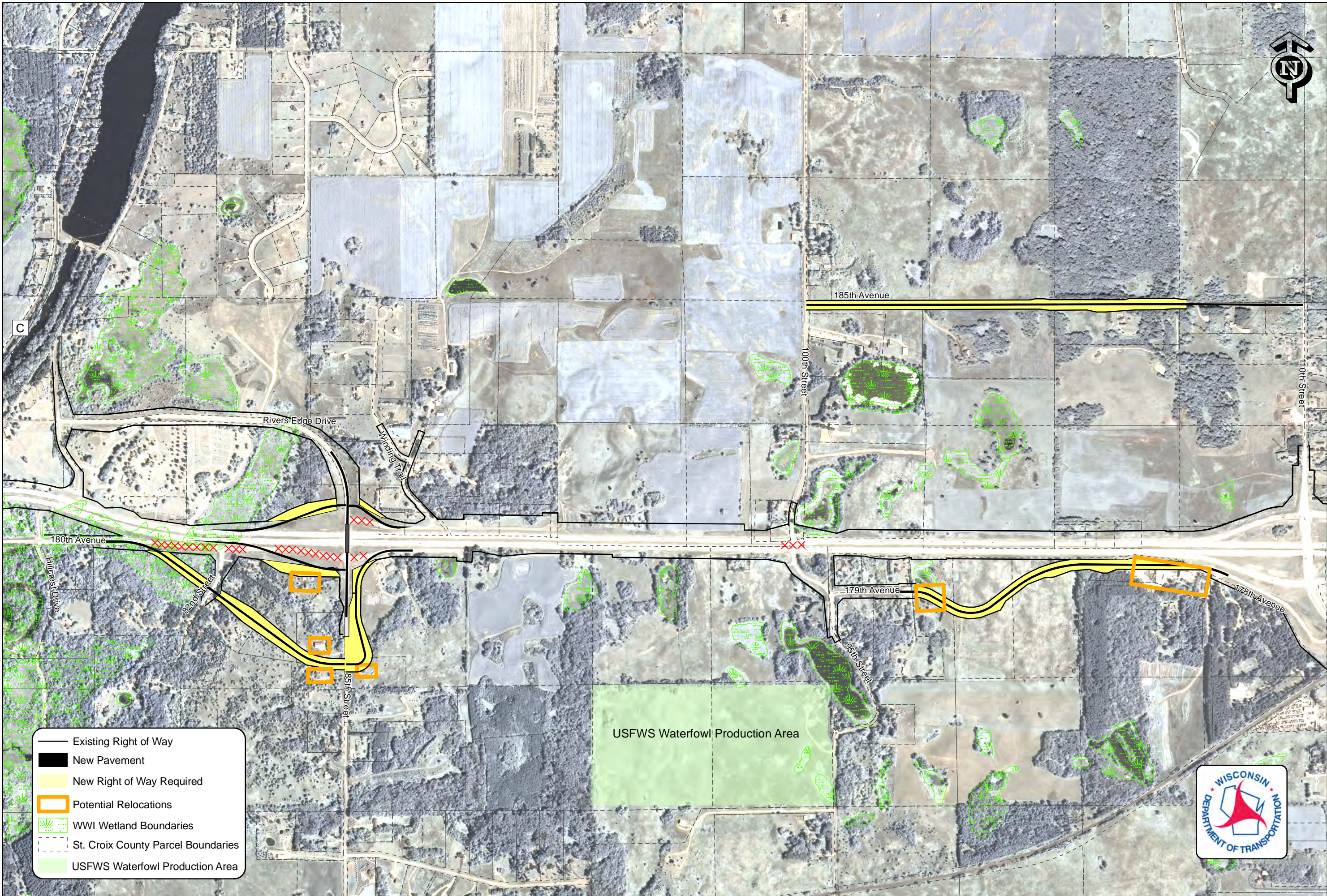
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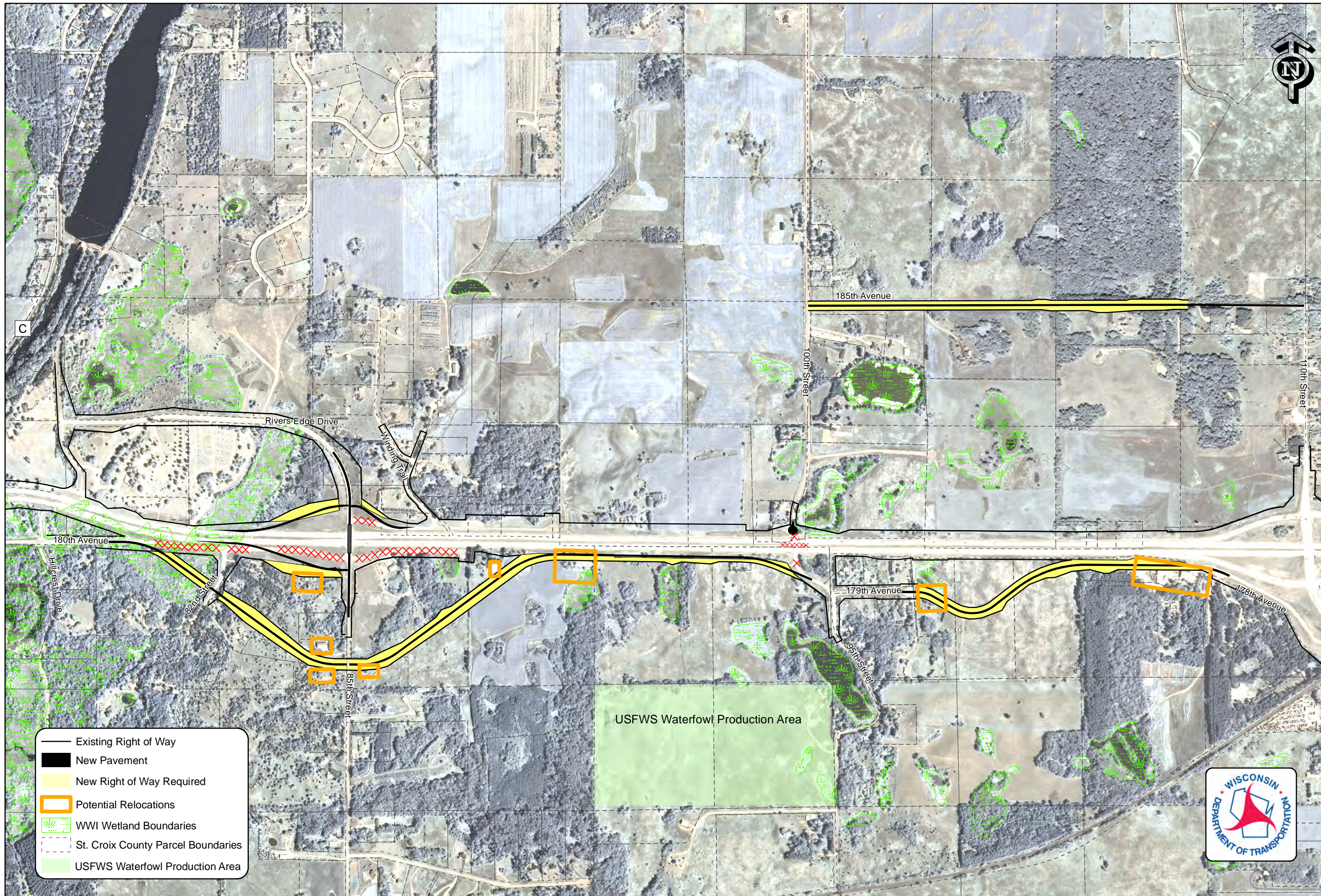
150th Avenue

Appendix 2: Alternatives and Impact Matrix from EA (July 2014)



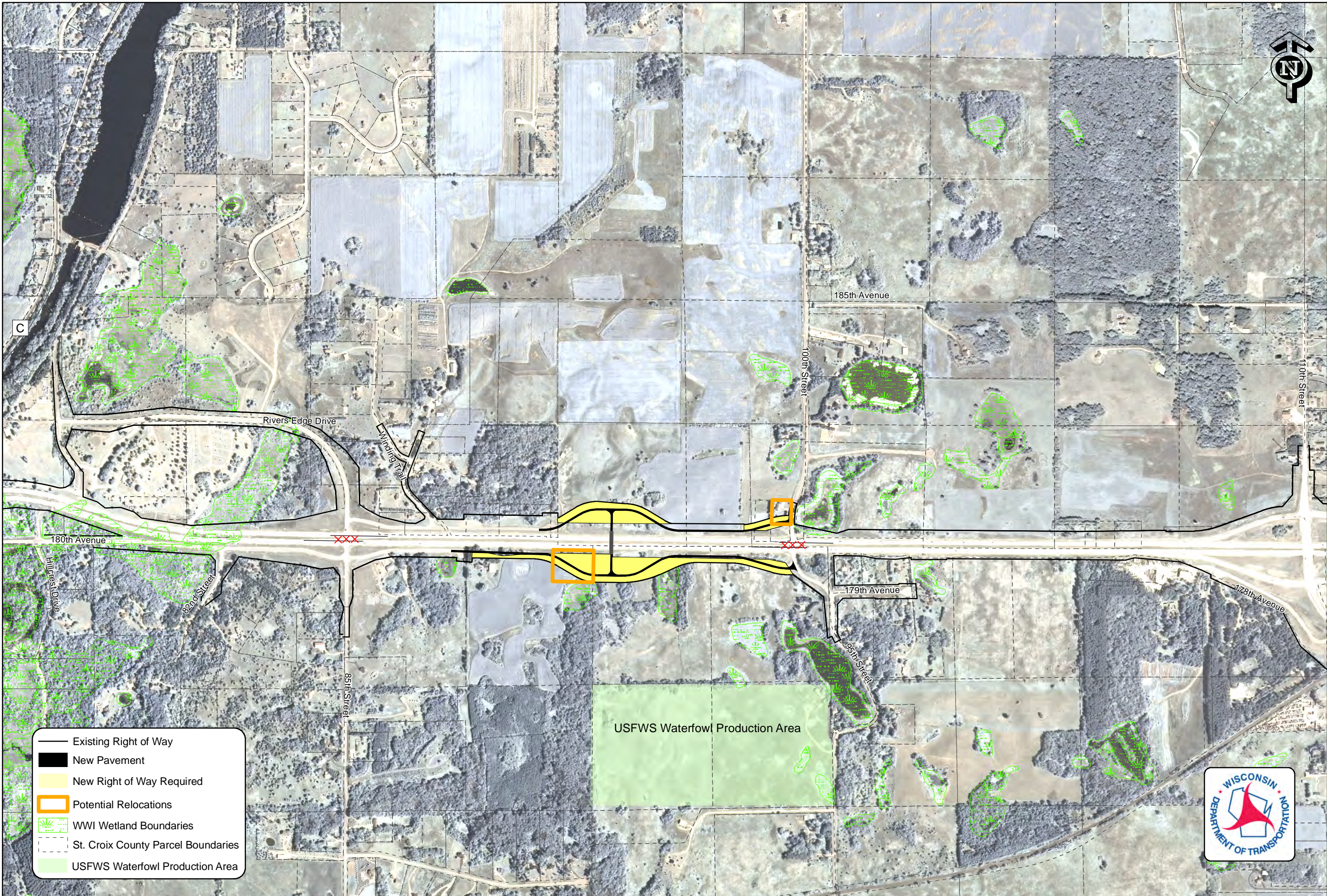
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- New Pavement
- New Right of Way Required
- Potential Relocations
- WWI Wetland Boundaries
- St. Croix County Parcel Boundaries
- USFWS Waterfowl Production Area





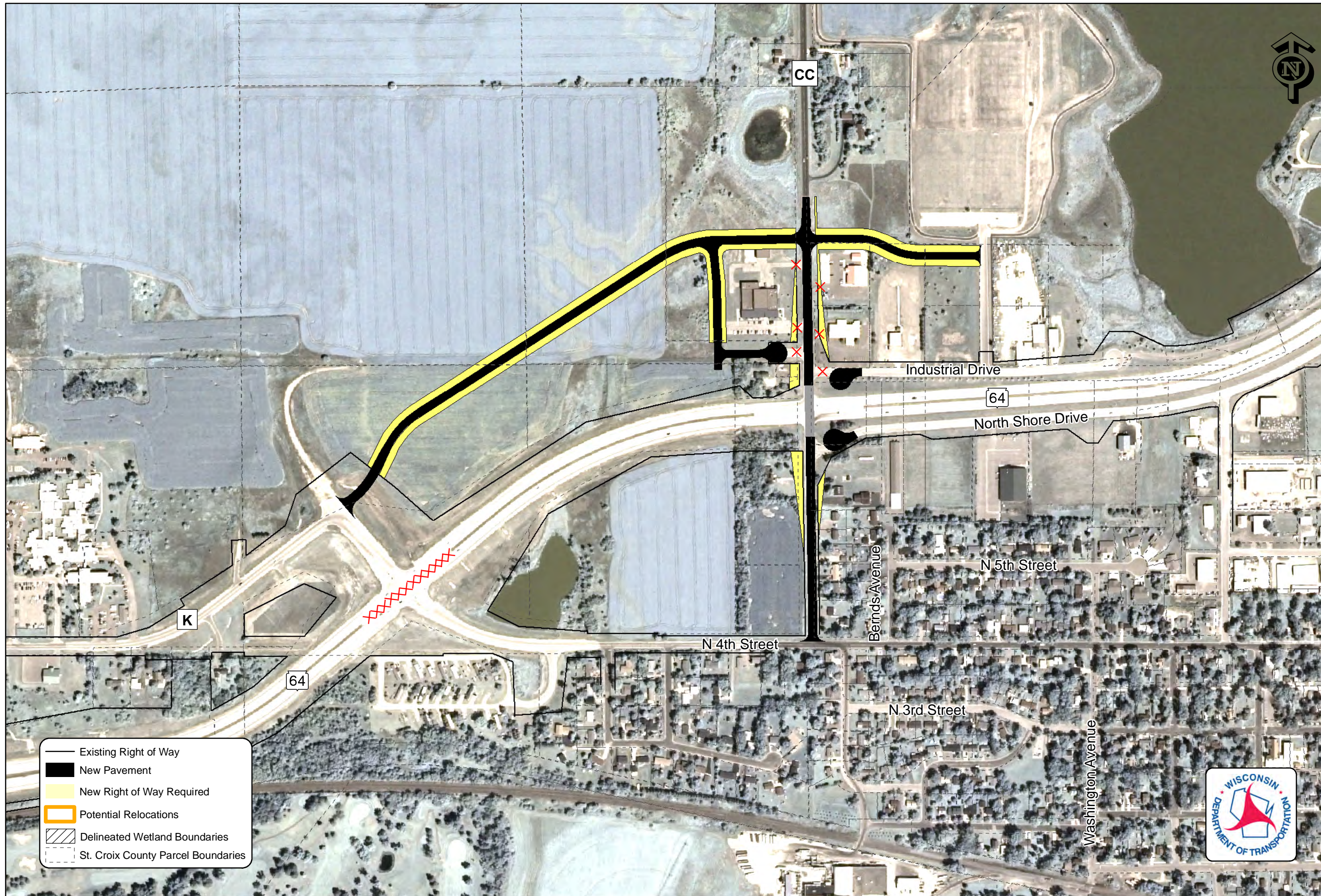
- Existing Right of Way
- New Pavement
- New Right of Way Required
- Potential Relocations
- ▨ WWI Wetland Boundaries
- - - St. Croix County Parcel Boundaries
- USFWS Waterfowl Production Area











- Existing Right of Way
- New Pavement
- New Right of Way Required
- Potential Relocations
- ▨ WWI Wetland Boundaries
- - - St. Croix County Parcel Boundaries
- USFWS Waterfowl Production Area

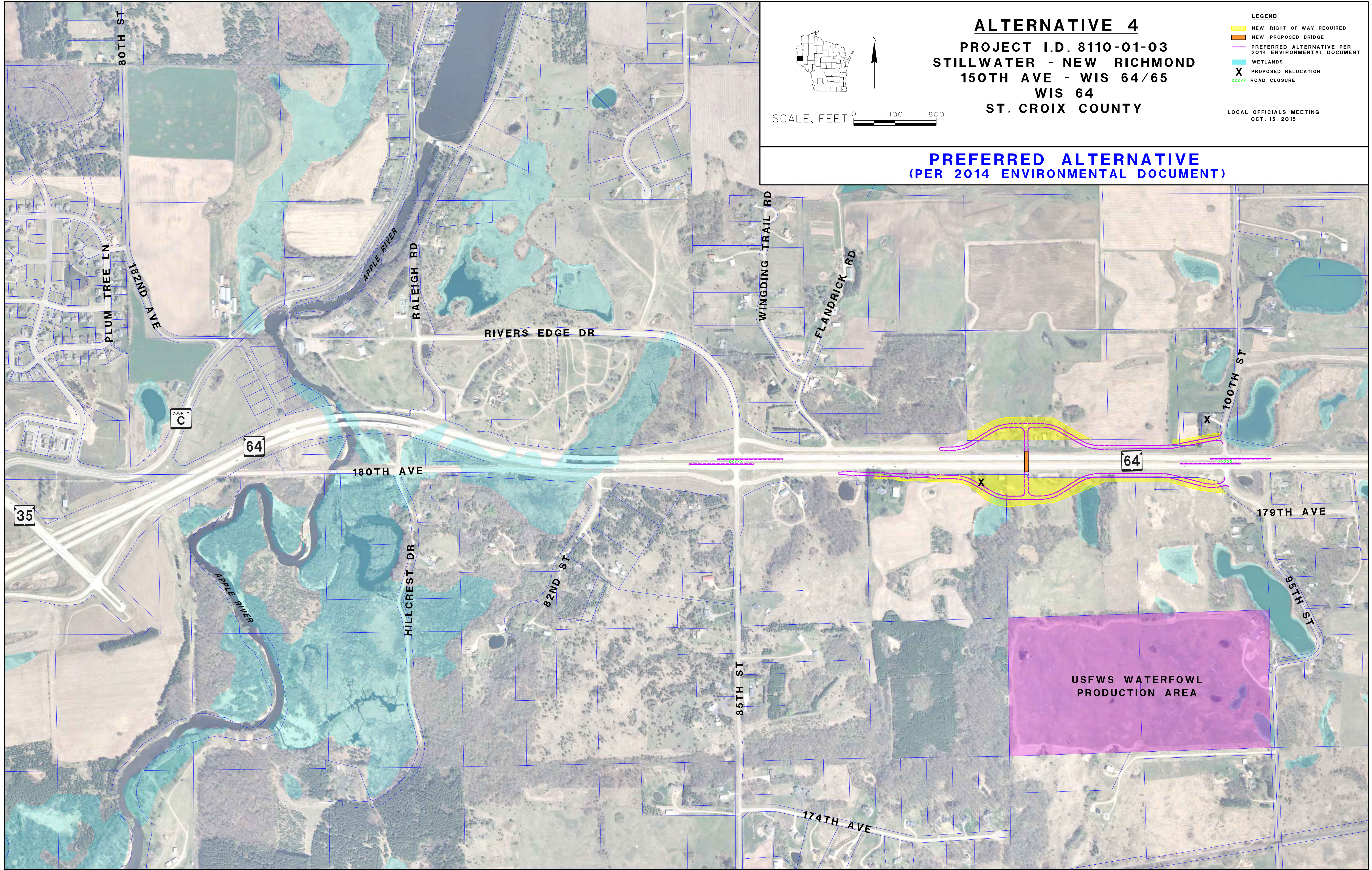




-  Existing Right of Way
-  New Pavement
-  New Right of Way Required
-  Potential Relocations
-  Delineated Wetland Boundaries
-  St. Croix County Parcel Boundaries

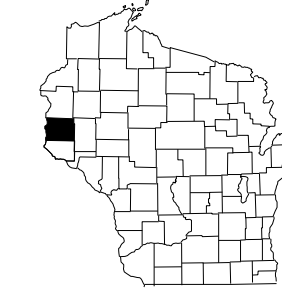


Appendix 3: Additional Alternative Analysis at 85th St/Rivers Edge Dr (October 2015)



ALTERNATIVE 4

**PROJECT I.D. 8110-01-03
STILLWATER - NEW RICHMOND
150TH AVE - WIS 64/65
WIS 64
ST. CROIX COUNTY**



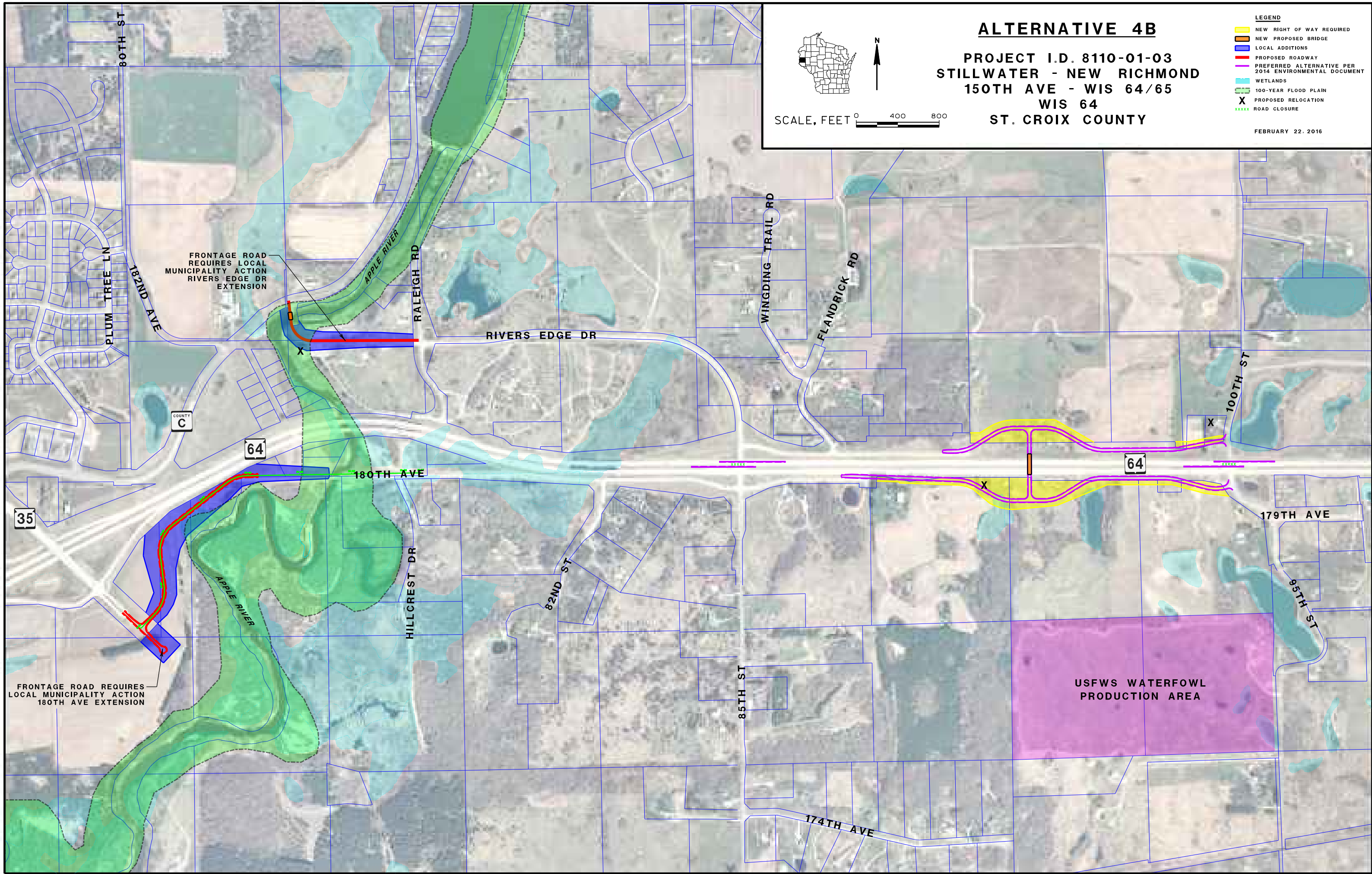
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- LEGEND**
- NEW RIGHT OF WAY REQUIRED
 - NEW PROPOSED BRIDGE
 - PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE PER 2014 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT
 - WETLANDS
 - X PROPOSED RELOCATION
 - ROAD CLOSURE

LOCAL OFFICIALS MEETING
OCT. 15. 2015

**PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE
(PER 2014 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT)**

**USFWS WATERFOWL
PRODUCTION AREA**



ALTERNATIVE 4B

PROJECT I.D. 8110-01-03
 STILLWATER - NEW RICHMOND
 150TH AVE - WIS 64/65
 WIS 64
 ST. CROIX COUNTY

- LEGEND**
- NEW RIGHT OF WAY REQUIRED
 - NEW PROPOSED BRIDGE
 - LOCAL ADDITIONS
 - PROPOSED ROADWAY
 - PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE PER 2014 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT
 - WETLANDS
 - 100-YEAR FLOOD PLAIN
 - X PROPOSED RELOCATION
 - XXXXX ROAD CLOSURE

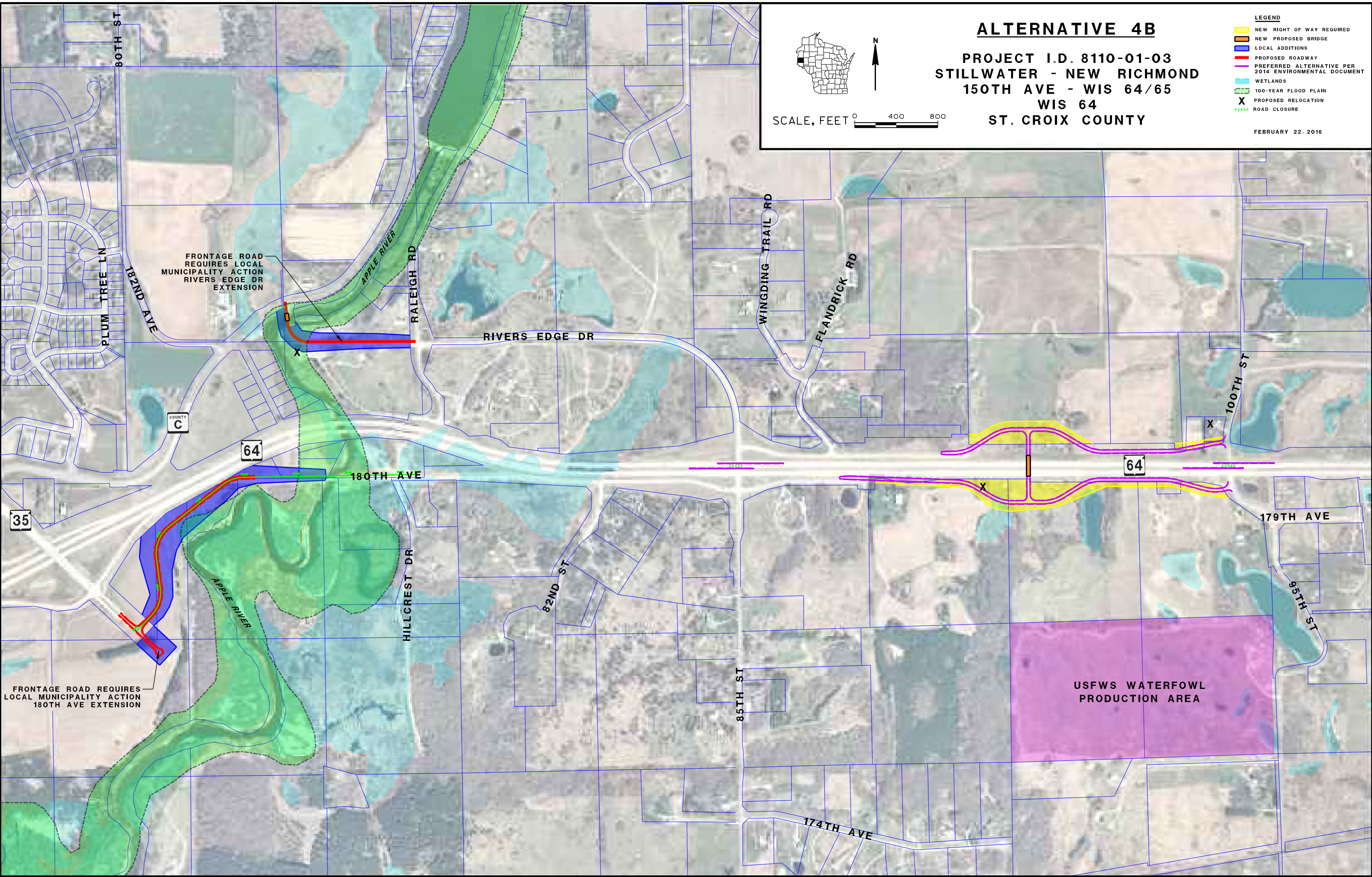
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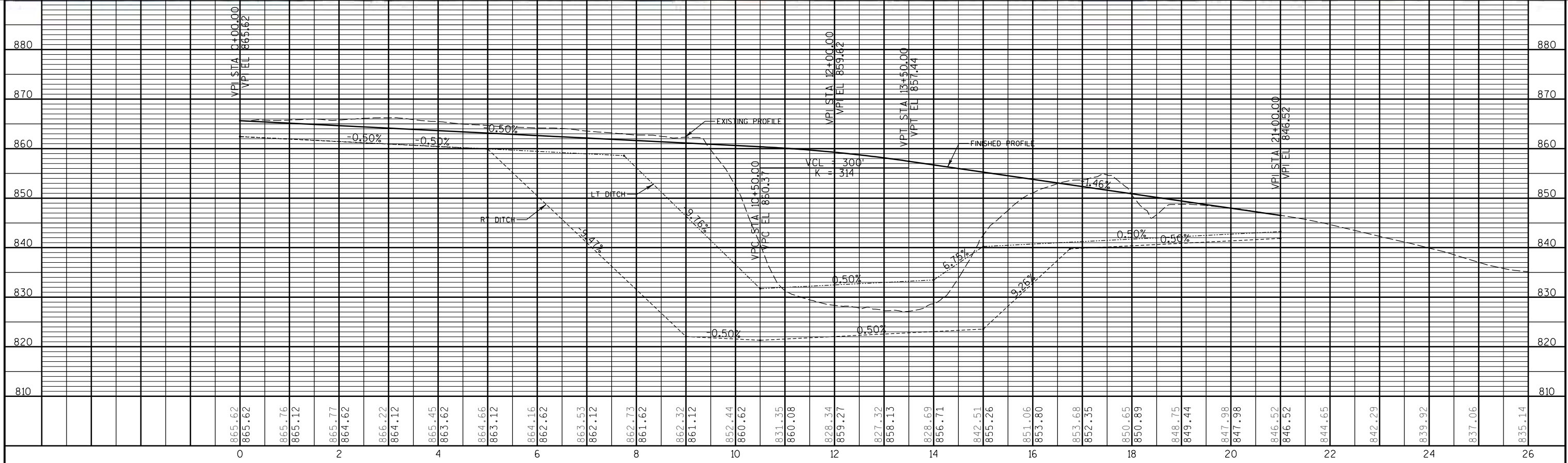
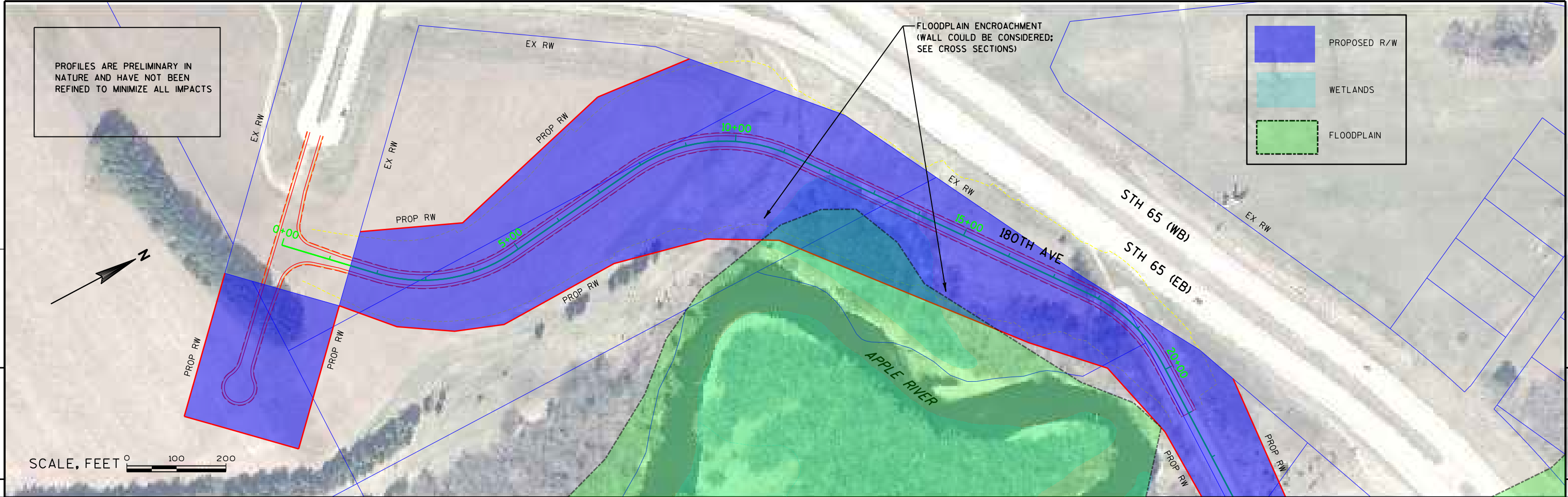
FEBRUARY 22, 2016

FRONTAGE ROAD
 REQUIRES LOCAL
 MUNICIPALITY ACTION
 RIVERS EDGE DR
 EXTENSION

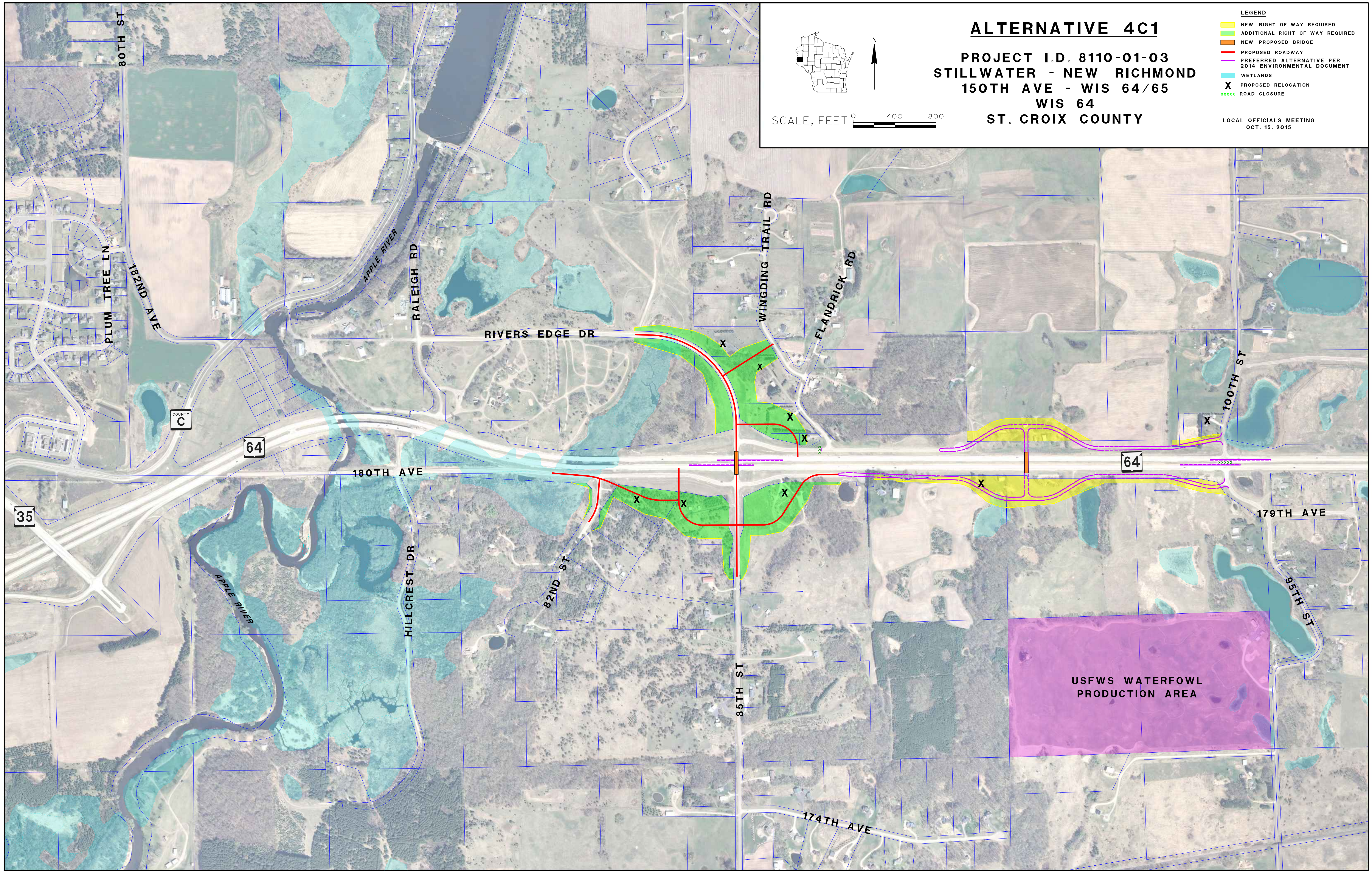
FRONTAGE ROAD REQUIRES
 LOCAL MUNICIPALITY ACTION
 180TH AVE EXTENSION

USFWS WATERFOWL
 PRODUCTION AREA



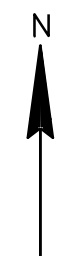
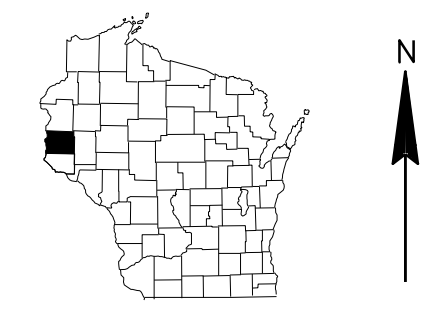


PROJECT NO:	HWY: STH 64	COUNTY: ST. CROIX	180TH AVE EXTENSION	SHEET	E
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ALTERNATIVE 4C1

**PROJECT I.D. 8110-01-03
 STILLWATER - NEW RICHMOND
 150TH AVE - WIS 64/65
 WIS 64
 ST. CROIX COUNTY**



SCALE, FEET 0 400 800

- LEGEND**
- NEW RIGHT OF WAY REQUIRED
 - ADDITIONAL RIGHT OF WAY REQUIRED
 - NEW PROPOSED BRIDGE
 - PROPOSED ROADWAY
 - PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE PER 2014 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT
 - WETLANDS
 - X PROPOSED RELOCATION
 - XXXXX ROAD CLOSURE
- LOCAL OFFICIALS MEETING
OCT. 15, 2015

**USFWS WATERFOWL
 PRODUCTION AREA**

ALTERNATIVE 4C2

PROJECT I.D. 8110-01-03
STILLWATER - NEW RICHMOND
150TH AVE - WIS 64/65
WIS 64
ST. CROIX COUNTY

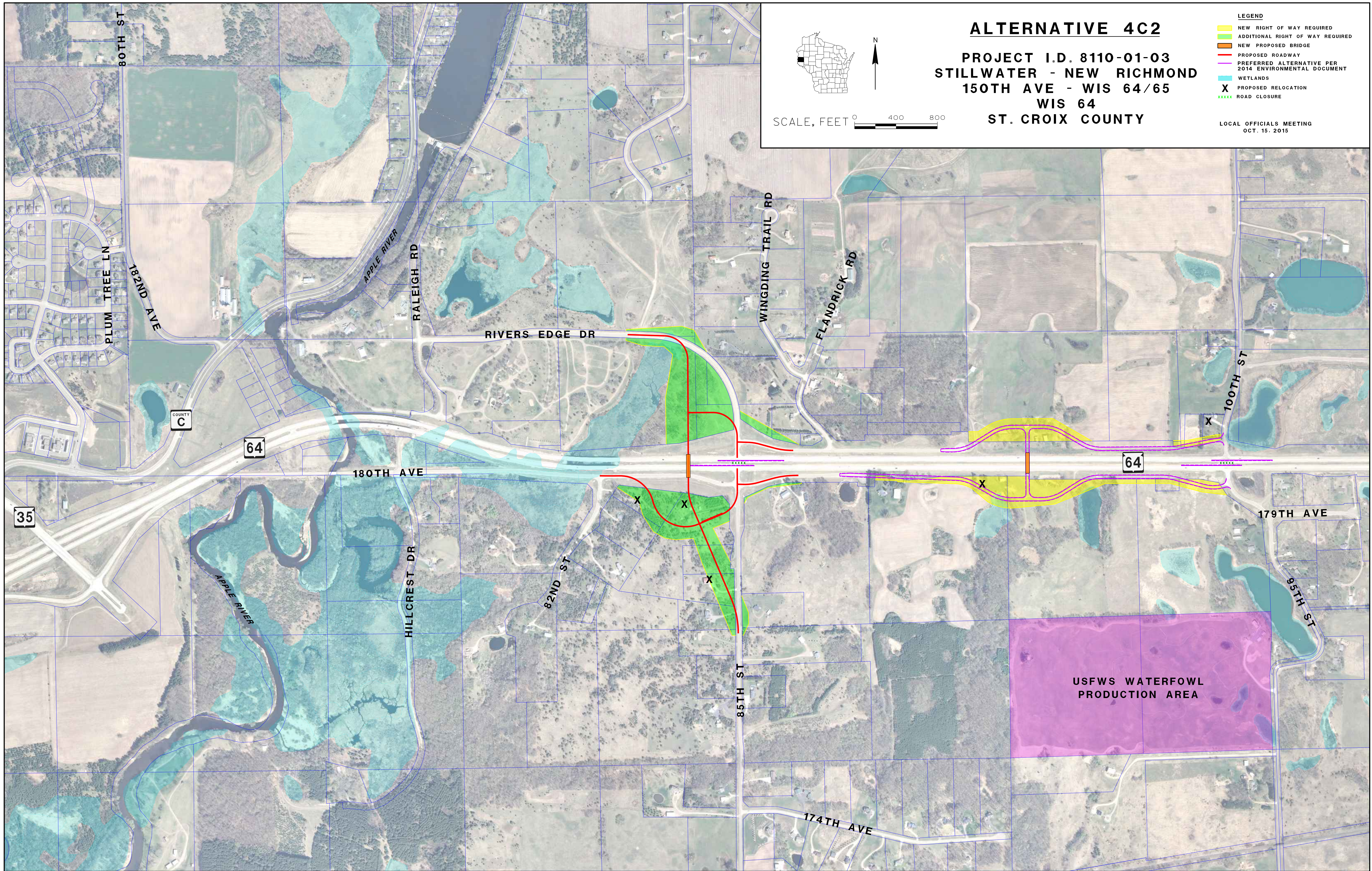


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LEGEND

- NEW RIGHT OF WAY REQUIRED
- ADDITIONAL RIGHT OF WAY REQUIRED
- NEW PROPOSED BRIDGE
- PROPOSED ROADWAY
- PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE PER 2014 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT
- WETLANDS
- X PROPOSED RELOCATION
- XXXXX ROAD CLOSURE

LOCAL OFFICIALS MEETING
OCT. 15, 2015



ALTERNATIVE 4C3

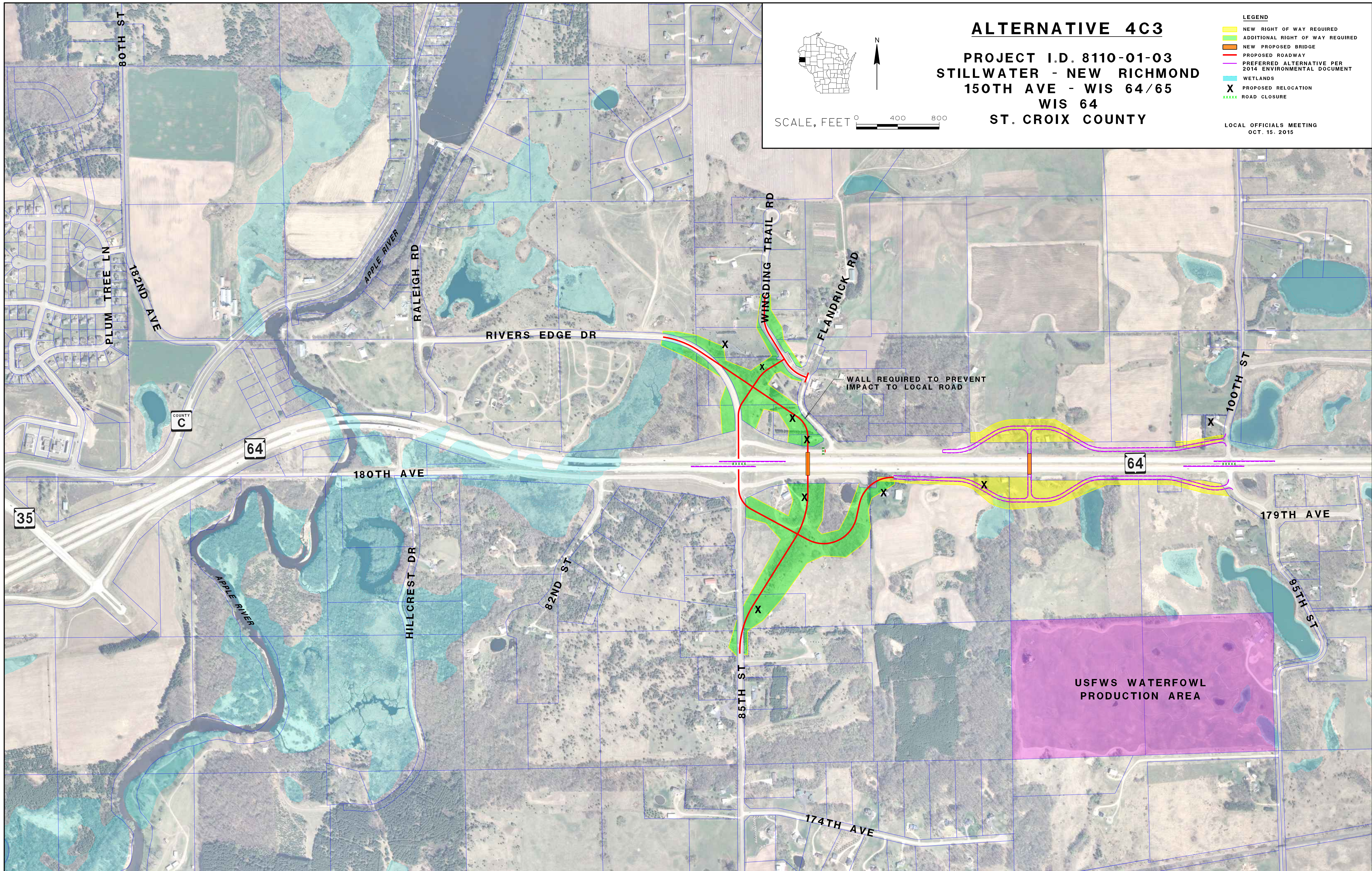
PROJECT I.D. 8110-01-03
STILLWATER - NEW RICHMOND
150TH AVE - WIS 64/65
WIS 64
ST. CROIX COUNTY

- LEGEND**
- NEW RIGHT OF WAY REQUIRED
 - ADDITIONAL RIGHT OF WAY REQUIRED
 - NEW PROPOSED BRIDGE
 - PROPOSED ROADWAY
 - PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE PER 2014 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT
 - WETLANDS
 - X PROPOSED RELOCATION
 - XXXXX ROAD CLOSURE



SCALE, FEET 0 400 800

LOCAL OFFICIALS MEETING
OCT. 15, 2015



Appendix 4: Impact Summary for Additional Alternatives (October 2015)

WIS 64 - Preliminary Alternative Impact Summary (1)

Alternative	Alternative Description	Estimated New Right-of-Way (acres)	Wetland (2) Natural Impact (acres)	Occupied Relocations	(4) Estimated Construction Cost (\$M)	(4) Estimated Real Estate Cost (\$M)
4	Overpass at 90th Street (preferred alt as shown in EA) (3)	24.3	0.6	2	\$ 11.4	\$ 0.9
4B	North/south frontage roads to WIS 35 and County C	17.4	1.2	1	\$ 10.1	\$ 0.6
4C1	On-alignment jughandle overpass at 85th Street	26.7	0.7	7	\$ 12.6	\$ 3.1
4C2	Jughandle overpass west of 85th Street existing alignment	27.1	0.4	3	\$ 14.0	\$ 1.4
4C3	Jughandle overpass east of 85th Street existing alignment	30.3	0.9	7	\$ 14.0	\$ 3.1

Notes:

(1) All impacts are estimated and are based upon the level of detail developed with the current alternatives.

(2) Wetland areas are based upon available WDNR and St. Croix County mapping. Field delineations are required in the future to determine actual wetland impact areas. Wetland areas are within existing and new right-of-way.

WIS 64 Alt 4/4C1 - Preliminary Alternative Impact Summary

Alternative	Alternative Description	Estimated New Right-of-Way (acres)	Wetland Natural Impact (acres)	Occupied Relocations	Estimated Construction Cost (\$M)	Estimated Real Estate Cost (\$M)
4	Overpass at 90th Street (preferred alt as shown in EA)	24.3	0.6	2	\$ 11.4	\$ 0.9
4C1	On-alignment jughandle overpass at 85th Street	26.7	0.7	7	\$ 12.6	\$ 3.1
		51.0	1.3	9	\$ 24.0	\$ 4.0

WIS 64 Alt 2 and 3 - Preliminary Alternative Impact Summary

Alternative	Alternative Description	Estimated New Right-of-Way (acres)	Wetland Natural Impact (acres)	Occupied Relocations	Estimated Construction Cost (\$M)	Estimated Real Estate Cost (\$M)
2	Half-diamond interchange with frontage roads (shown in EA)	43.8	1.5	8	\$ 19.6	\$ 3.1
		43.8	1.5	8	\$ 19.6	\$ 3.1
3	Half-diamond interchange with frontage roads (shown in EA)	50.1	1.5	9	\$ 21.9	\$ 3.3
		50.1	1.5	9	\$ 21.9	\$ 3.3

WIS 64 Alt 4/4C2 and 4/4C3 - Preliminary Alternative Impact Summary

Alternative	Alternative Description	Estimated New Right-of-Way (acres)	Wetland Natural Impact (acres)	Occupied Relocations	Estimated Construction Cost (\$M)	Estimated Real Estate Cost (\$M)
4	Overpass at 90th Street (preferred alt as shown in EA)	24.3	0.6	2	\$ 11.4	\$ 0.9
4C2	Jughandle overpass west of 85th Street existing alignment	27.1	0.4	3	\$ 14.0	\$ 1.4
		51.4	1.0	5	\$ 25.4	\$ 2.3
4	Overpass at 90th Street (preferred alt as shown in EA)	24.3	0.6	2	\$ 11.4	\$ 0.9
4C3	Jughandle overpass east of 85th Street existing alignment	30.3	0.9	7	\$ 14.0	\$ 3.1
		54.6	1.5	9	\$ 25.4	\$ 4.0

WIS 64 Alt 2 and 3 - Preliminary Alternative Impact Summary

Alternative	Alternative Description	Estimated New Right-of-Way (acres)	Wetland Natural Impact (acres)	Occupied Relocations	Estimated Construction Cost (\$M)	Estimated Real Estate Cost (\$M)
2	Half-diamond interchange with frontage roads (shown in EA)	43.8	1.5	8	\$ 19.6	\$ 3.1
		43.8	1.5	8	\$ 19.6	\$ 3.1
3	Half-diamond interchange with frontage roads (shown in EA)	50.1	1.5	9	\$ 21.9	\$ 3.3
		50.1	1.5	9	\$ 21.9	\$ 3.3

Appendix 5: Updated Impact Matrix with Additional Alternatives (May 2016)

