

Addendum No. 1

to June 15, 1998

Wisconsin Lake Planning Grant Report

HALF MOON LAKE

Polk County, Wisconsin

Prepared for

Half Moon Lake Protection & Rehabilitation district

November 17, 1998

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Map Files and Printing Provided by the
Polk County Land Conservation Department

Parcel Data Prepared by the
Polk County Land Information Office

Introduction

Of four wetland areas evaluated in a June 1998 planning grant report, Tamarack Bay Wetlands and Harder Creek Bottomlands were identified as top priorities for protection. This report uses recommendations in the June report to develop more detailed acquisition and other protection recommendations. Acquisition may take various forms including purchasing fee title or obtaining a perpetual conservation easement. Map products were developed to more clearly communicate these recommendations.

Because activities in uplands adjacent to wetlands can negatively impact the integrity of wetlands and ultimately the water quality of Half Moon Lake, gaining control of these areas is recommended in the June report. A buffer of 100 feet is generally adequate to remove sediment and phosphorus that may enter a stream or lake. However, steeply sloped areas do not serve as adequate buffers, and wider buffers are recommended for wildlife habitat protection.

Figure 1 shows the wetland areas of Tamarack Bay and Harder Creek. Each is ringed by two tiers of lines. The first (shown in red) represents a 100 foot setback from the wetland edge, the second (shown in green) represents a 300 foot setback from the wetland edge. These lines are intended to be used as a general guide in determining an appropriate buffer width.

Harder Creek Bottomlands

The Harder Creek Bottomlands is the top priority area for water quality protection. More than half of the water that enters Half Moon Lake flows through this area. The protective buffer of vegetation along the creek and wetland has been degraded by grazing in some portions of the lower reaches of the creek. Logging in the bottomland or on adjacent slopes could also threaten water quality of the creek and Half Moon Lake.

Acquisition of the wetland and portions of the upland is recommended to adequately buffer Harder Creek as it flows through the two approximately 40 acre parcels north of Half Moon Lake. Recommended borders for acquisition are indicated with yellow lines in Figure 2. The parcel immediately to the north of the lake is the first priority for acquisition. A buffer 300 feet from the wetland edge to the top of the slope is suggested on the west side because of steep slopes in this area. Other buffer boundaries avoid a farmstead area and follow parcel lines. This buffer as outlined is approximately 20 acres, of which about 14 acres is wetland. An extensive wetland area buffers the creek on the eastern side.

The recommended buffer on the next 40 acre parcel north follows the property boundary on the northern, western, and southern edges. On the eastern edge, the buffer boundary is set back about 100 feet from the edge of the wetland. Near the buildings, the set back is only about 66 feet. It may be possible to relocate the driveway to set the buffer back

further. This outline creates a 22 acre parcel to be protected. A three acre triangle on the southwest corner of the property is probably buildable, and would allow a 100 foot set back from the wetland. However, access through the property does not appear possible because of existing wetland and the creek.

Tamarack Bay Wetlands

Tamarack Bay Wetlands were identified as the second priority for water quality protection and recreational development and the first priority for wildlife habitat and biodiversity protection. The wetlands are made up of diverse plant communities including floating and fixed peatlands, marsh, and swamp, which support an impressive diversity of aquatic and wetland vegetation. The bay and the extensive (over 20 acre) wetland have a wilderness atmosphere because they are accessible only by small watercraft through a narrow channel and are bordered by wooded slopes. The bay is fed by an intermittent stream (Tamarack Creek) which enters on its north end. A smaller intermittent drainage enters the bay from the northwest.

The most important area for protection is along Tamarack Creek where crop fields are farmed to the edge of the wetlands surrounding the stream. A buffer 100 feet from the wetland edge is recommended for this location as illustrated in Figure 3. Three separate buffer segments are outlined on the map. The two owned by Mark Nelson are approximately 9 acres each. The buffer segment owned by Don Nelson is approximately 9.5 acres.

Crop fields which drain to the smaller drainage to the northwest should also be examined more closely. A vegetated waterway in the cropfield may be beneficial to decrease the sediment and nutrient load carried in this channel. Additional buffering on cropland owned by Mark Nelson to the north of Tamarack Bay is also recommended to decrease flow of sediment into the wetland, although it is of lower priority than the buffers described above.

The Federal Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) might provide payments to these landowners for setting aside the recommended buffer areas. Don Nelson, in fact, currently has enrolled his fields in this program through 1999. Don is currently eligible to extend that sign up through the middle of December 1998. A special continuous sign up program provides payments for buffer areas along streams, lakes, and wetlands. Areas planted to grass extend 100 feet and are referred to as filter strips. Areas planted to zones of trees and grasses extend 150 feet and are referred to as riparian buffers. To be eligible, fields must show a history of planting row crops. The fields owned by Mark Nelson do not show this history - they have been planted to hay for several years. However, Mr. Nelson recently acquired the property and could be currently growing row crops. Crop records for 1997 and 1998 were not available.

Protection of Tamarack Bay and its wetlands is recommended to preserve this unique assemblage of communities. Acquisition of the wetlands and a narrow (100-300 foot) band of uplands surrounding the bay would adequately protect this area. There are ten landowners that own land surrounding the bay as shown in Figure 4. Full ownership and addresses are included in Appendix A. Although the area of floating bog is technically lake bed and therefore owned by the residents of Wisconsin, the landowners may not have the same understanding. The bay and surrounding bog are, in fact, included in the acreage of each parcel.

Because of the complexity of working with this number of landowners, it is recommended that the Half Moon Lake District first focus efforts on acquiring the buffer parcels described above rather than working on acquisition around the bay. As those initial goals are reached, or as opportunities present themselves, the District could begin working on the larger acquisition project around Tamarack Bay.

Recreational trails could be developed to increase accessibility to Tamarack Bay. Its location near the town beach and picnic area provides parking and ready access. Access to Tamarack Bay would allow more people to appreciate its plant and animal life, and hopefully increase the motivation to protect the area. The Lake District should continue further discussion of the desirability of pursuing this option.

Reference Maps

Farm fields are grouped in tracts by landowner and managed in field units for the purpose of United States Department of Agriculture programs. Tract and field references, which are compiled by section on aerial photos, are important tools for management of areas involving crop fields. For example, the map of section 23 of Milltown Township (T35N, R17W) shows that cropland owned by Don Nelson (Tract 2698) is currently enrolled in the Federal Conservation Reserve Program. Aerial photos for the areas discussed in this report are included in Appendix B. Figure 5 provides a reference map to locate the appropriate section.

Funding Sources

The June report outlines various tools for protection of property including purchasing the fee title to the property or purchasing a conservation easement. Potential funding sources that utilize these and other tools are listed with a brief description below.

FEDERAL SOURCES

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

This program pays farmers an annual payment for 10-15 years to take crop fields out of production for conservation purposes. Farmers make bids for enrolling their fields in the program. Sign up periods are open only occasionally for most fields. A sign up is currently open through mid December 1998. In this general sign up fields must be classified as highly erodible (labeled HEL on the aerial photos) and have a history of growing row crops such as corn or soybeans.

Crop fields or degraded pastures that surround streams, wetlands, and lakes are eligible for the filter strip or buffer strip CRP program at any time. Cost sharing is also provided to plant appropriate vegetation within these areas. The CRP program may be used in conjunction with easement acquisition, but CRP payments are not always transferred with change in ownership.

STATE SOURCES

Department of Natural Resources

Lakes Protection Grants

These grants provide 75% of the cost of projects. The remainder must be matched by the Lake District or another non-state funded source. The application deadline is May 1 of each year. There is a category for wetland restoration and protection in this grant program.

Contact: Dan Ryan (715-635-4073)

National Recreational Trails Act

Provides up to 100% funding for acquisition of land and development of recreational trails.

Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP)

Part of state Stewardship program. Stewardship dollars are available to nonprofit organizations. The Lake District may need to cooperate with another organization to access this funding source.

Additional Stewardship and other DNR-administered programs may provide funding for the projects. DNR grant specialists are available to assist with selecting a program and making application.

Contact: Diane Conklin (715-635-4130)

Wisconsin Natural Areas Program

This program protects biological diversity in Wisconsin by preserving natural communities. Tamarack Bay may be a good candidate for the program. Listing as a state natural area may provide Tamarack Bay with added funding and protection.

Contact: Thomas Meyer (608-266-0394)

POLK COUNTY SOURCES

Balsam Branch Watershed Project

This state-funded project is administered by the Polk County Land Conservation Department. Funding is available to protect land by either acquisition or conservation easement. Conservation easements may be held by the Department of Natural Resources or Polk County. Cost sharing is also available to plant shoreline buffers, restore drained wetlands, and reduce erosion on crop fields among other practices. Several wetlands have been restored and a shoreline buffer planted in the Half Moon Lake Watershed through this program.

County Cost Share Program

A cost share program is currently under development for Polk County. This program may provide more flexibility than state-sponsored programs and offer funding outside designated watershed areas.

The county may have access to other conservation funding sources. They also have staff who could assist the Lake District in coordinating installation of best management practices and in acquiring property or conservation easements.

Contact: Jeff Timmons (715-485-8699)

County Parks Development Fund

Polk County collects a park development fee in lieu of donated park land for subdivisions. The county currently charges \$350 per subdivision lot. Policies for distribution of these funds have not yet been developed, but there is a potential to use the funds for property acquisition for wetlands and lake protection.

Contact: Jim Johnston (715-485-9170)

Balsam Branch Partnership

Although not a funding source, the Partnership may provide opportunities for collaborative effort if the District pursues development of Tamarack Bay for educational purposes. The Balsam Branch Partnership, whose mission is to create and sustain an environmental area for all ages and all seasons, currently focuses their work along the Balsam Branch south of Highway 8.

Contact: Cheryl Bursik (715-268-4666)

Figure 1: Tamarack Bay and Harder Creek Generalized Buffers



LEGEND

- 300 Foot Buffer
- 100 Foot Buffer
- Wetland Boundaries

800 0 800 1600 Feet

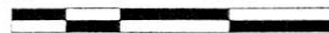


Figure 2. Harder Creek Bottomlands

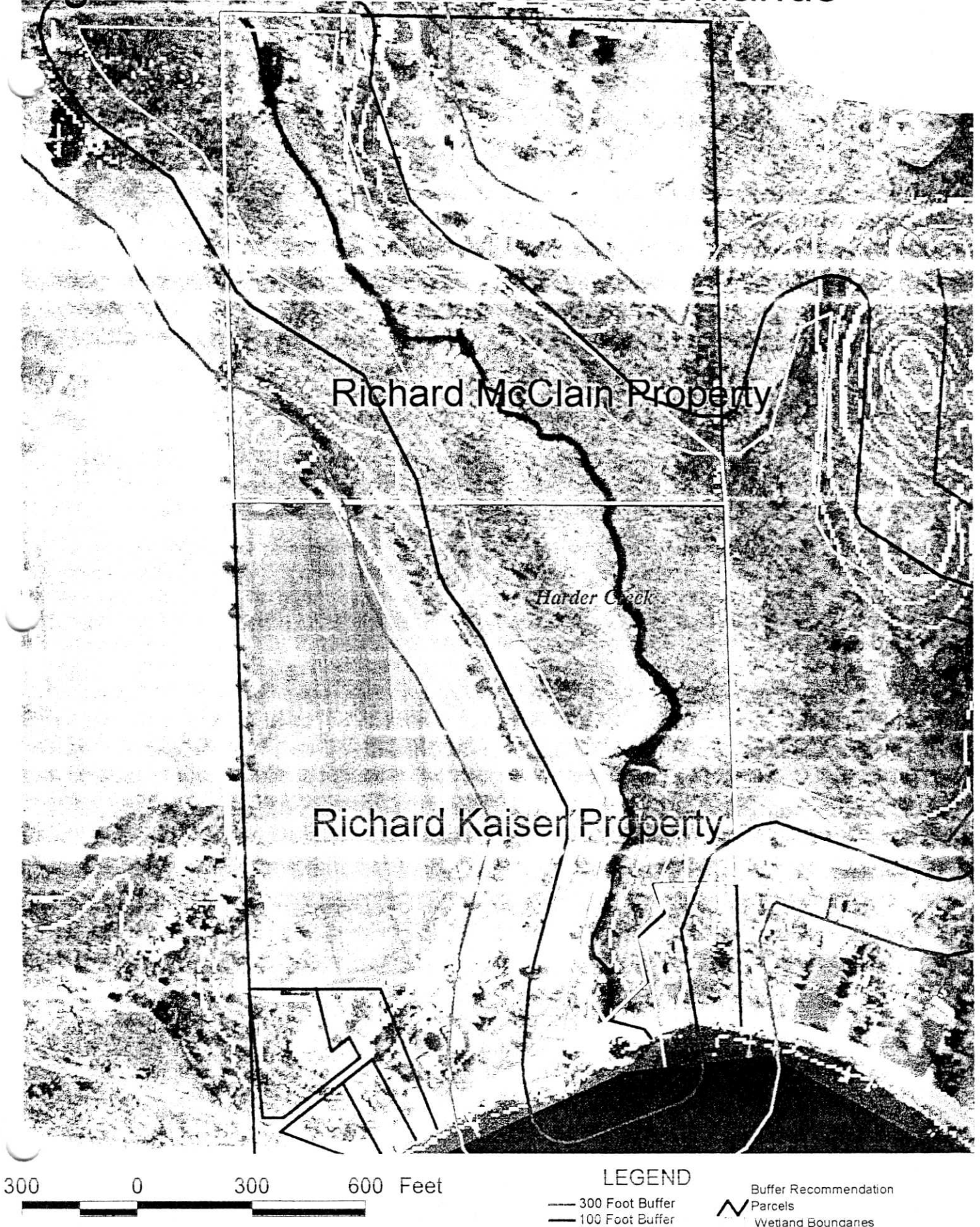
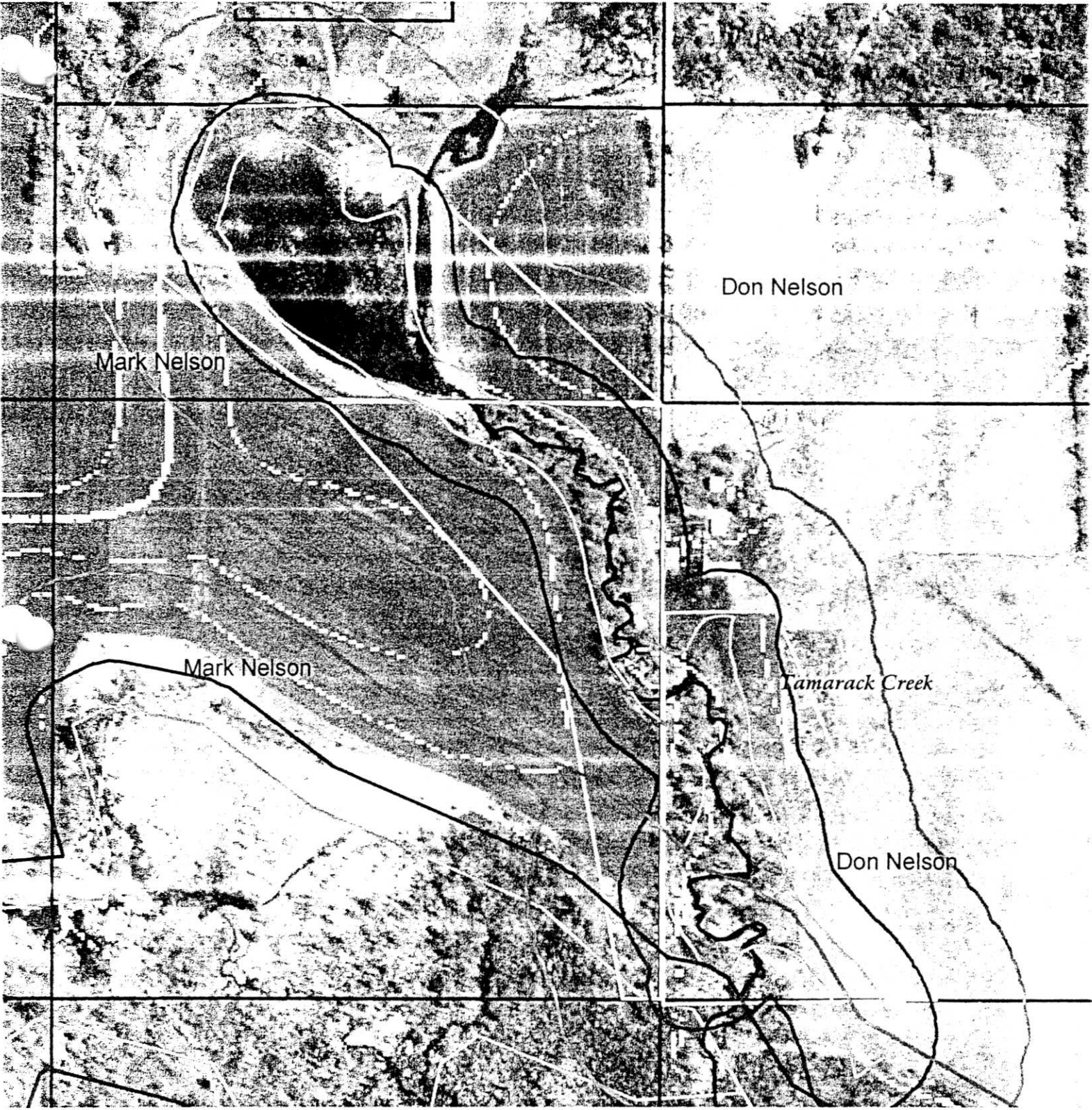


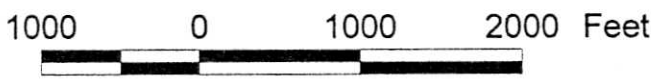
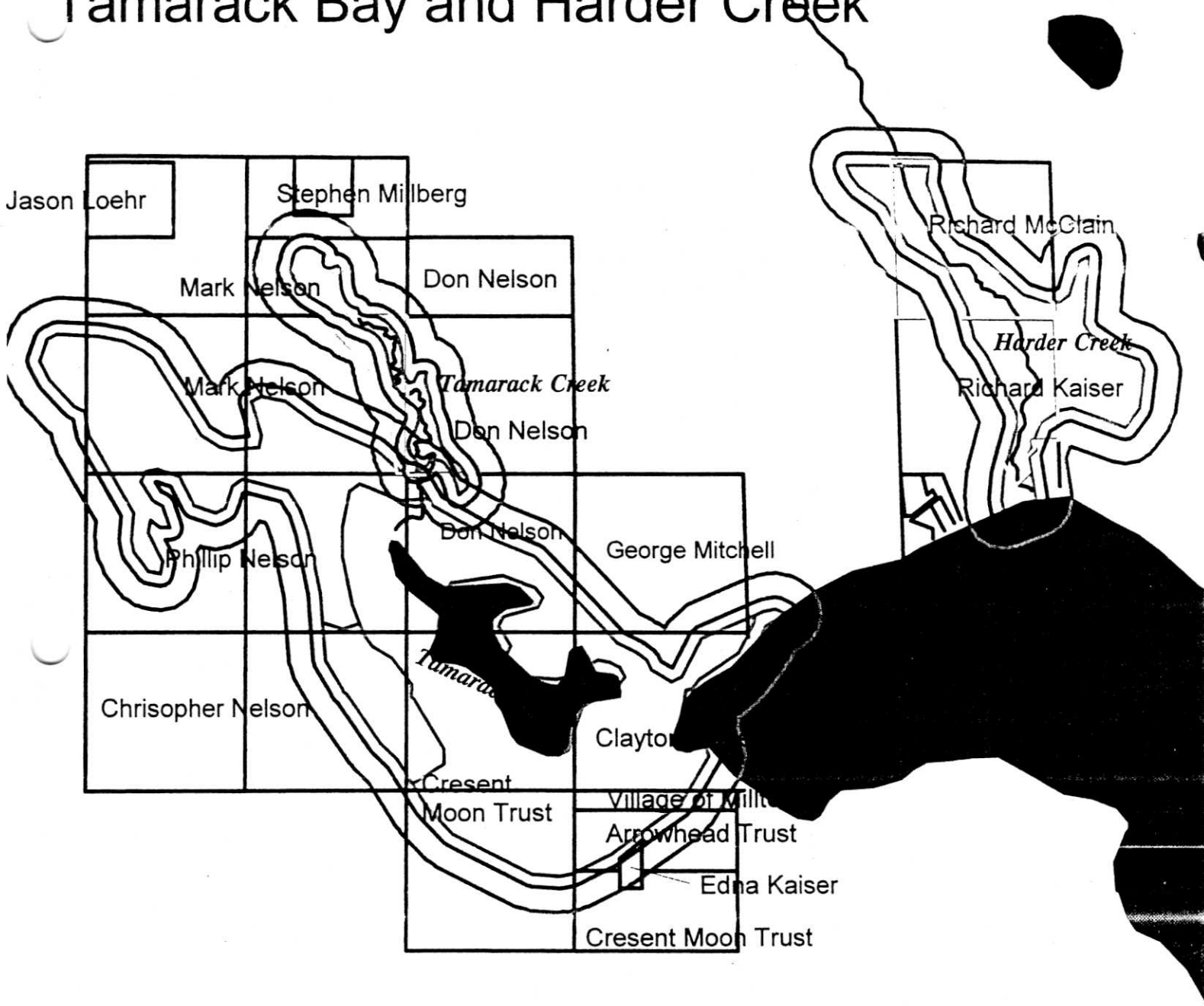
Figure 3. Tamarack Creek



LEGEND

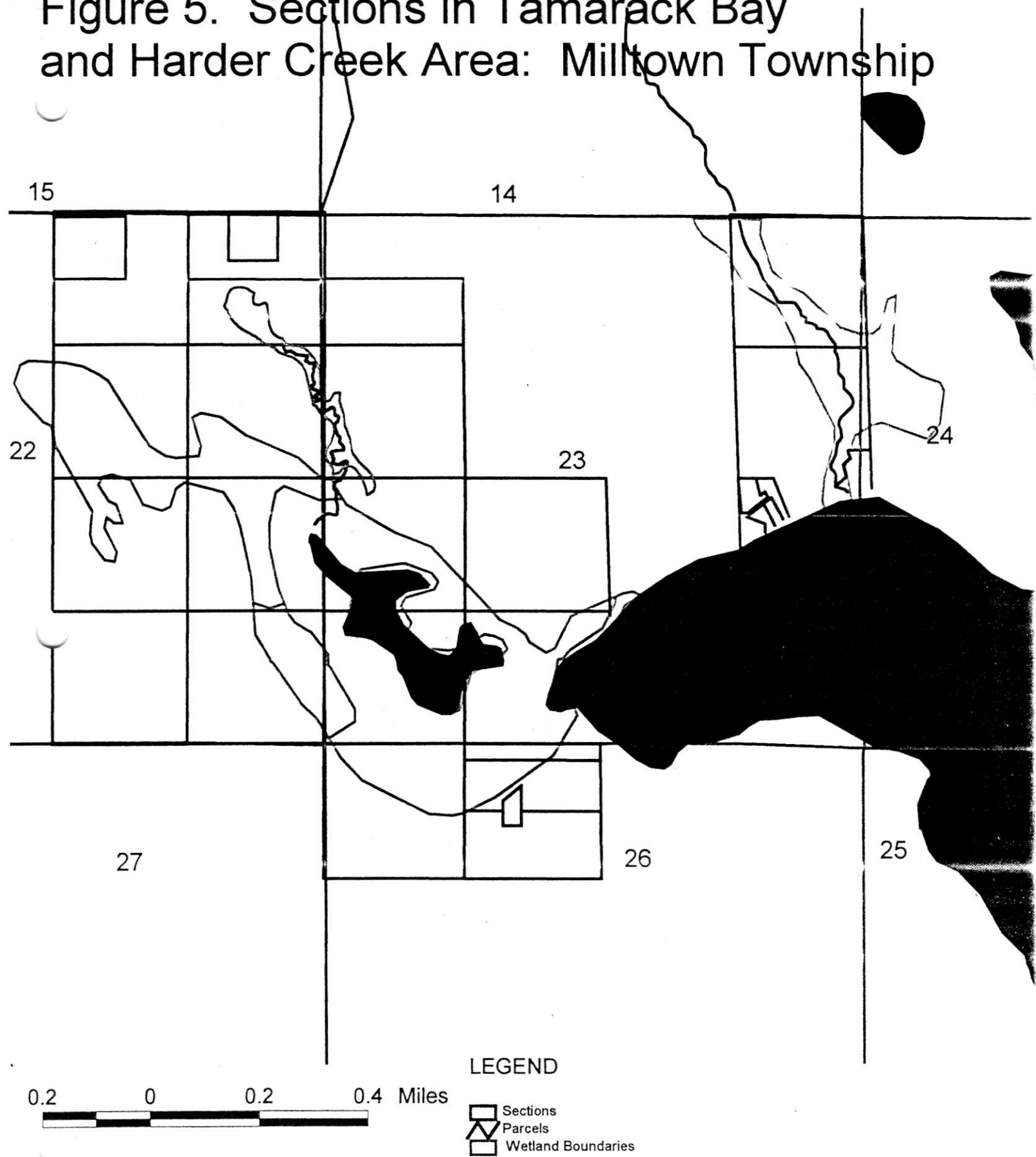
- Recommended Buffers
- Parcels
- Wetland Boundaries

Figure 4. Land Ownership Surrounding Tamarack Bay and Harder Creek



- LEGEND
-  Recommended Buffers
 -  Parcels
 -  Wetland Boundaries
 -  300 Foot Buffer
 -  100 Foot Buffer

Figure 5. Sections in Tamarack Bay and Harder Creek Area: Milltown Township



APPENDIX A:
LANDOWNERS

LandownersParcel Computer Numbers

Arrowhead Trust C/O Marjorie Voss 1388 200th Avenue Balsam Lake, WI 54810	040-824-000
Crescent Moon Trust Voss, MJ & BD Trustees 1388 200th Avenue Balsam Lake, WI 54810	040-827-0000 040-629-0000 040-823-0000
H. Clayton and Dorothy A. Gage 2036 135th Street Milltown, WI 54858	040-631-0000
Edna Kaiser 1368 200th Avenue Balsam Lake, WI 54810	040-825-0000
Richard P. Kaiser 1315 County Road G Milltown, WI 54858	040-616-0000
Jason V. Loehr 205 N. 2nd Street, Apt. 4 Luck, WI 54853	040-577-100
Richard McClain Box 377 Milltown, WI 54858	040-609-0000
Stephen Jr. & Norene Milberg 1414 210th Avenue Milltown, WI 54858	040-576-0000 040-575-100
Milltown, Town and Village	040-632-0000
George & Myrtis Mitchell 2035 135th Street Milltown, WI 54858	040-630-0000
Christopher E. and Kelly J. Nelson 1475 200th Avenue Balsam Lake, WI 54810	040-607-0000 040-608-0000

LandownersParcel Computer Numbers

Donald F. & Iris J. Nelson
2072 140th Street
Milltown, WI 54858

040-628-0000
040-623-0000
040-626-0000

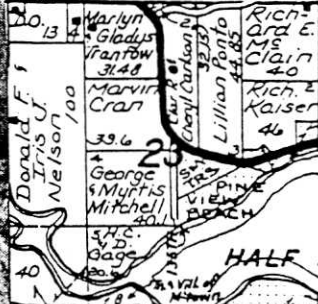
Mark C. Nelson
2810 Fairview Avenue
Roseville, MN 55113

040-578-0000
040-579-0000
040-575-0000
040-577-0000

Philip R. and Mary J. Nelson
1475 200th Avenue
Balsam Lake, WI 54810

040-605-0000
040-606-0000

APPENDIX B:
REFERENCE MAPS



Section _____ Town _____ Range Milltown
 NOT TO SCALE
 CROP YR _____

23-35-17



T 0244

NON AG

T 2698
 CRP
 HEL

19.1
 T 102

HEL T 2701

CRP
 HEL
 2A
 14.5

CRP
 HEL
 2B
 12.9

T 9607
 MT 9661
 4.0
 26.7
 9.3

NHEL

T 2703

23

HALF
 MOON
 LAKE

15.8

T 2487

Yr. Photo Section Town Range Milltown

92 L8 14-~~37~~³⁵ 17

NOT TO SCALE
CROP YR _____

FT 2283

1
(2.7)

FT 2283

14

FT 2284

CRP
HEL

1
218

CRP
HEL

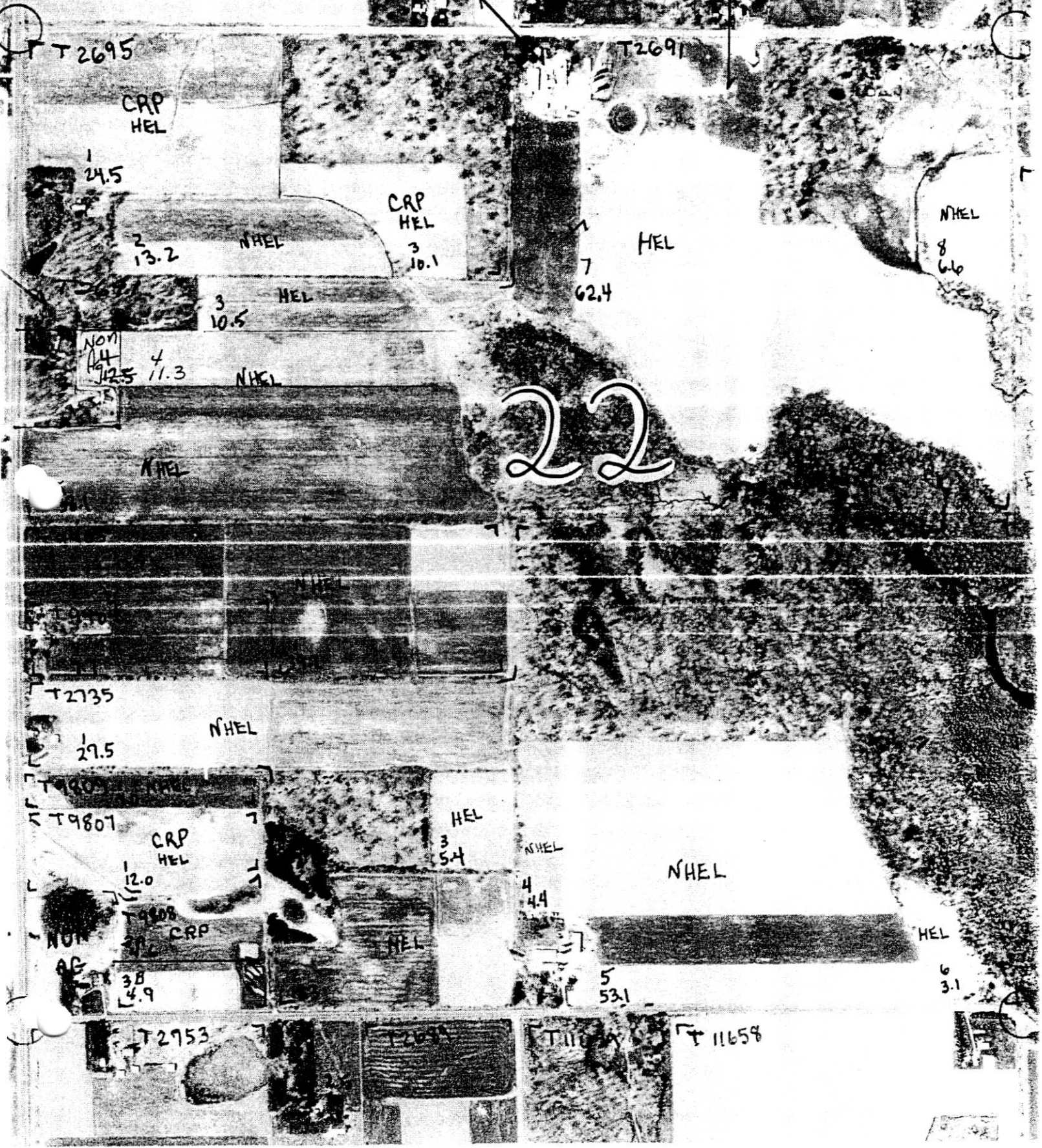
1
29
29
38
43

4
9.7

Yr. Photo Section Town Range *Milltown*

92 L9 22-35-17

NOT TO SCALE
CROP YR _____



22

T 2695

T 2691

CRP
HEL

1
24.5

CRP
HEL

2
13.2

NHEL

3
10.1

HEL

7
62.4

NHEL

8
6.6

3
10.5

HEL

Non
A4
92.5

4
11.3

NHEL

NHEL

T 2735

1
29.5

NHEL

T 980

T 9801

CRP
HEL

1
12.0

HEL

3
5.4

NHEL

NHEL

4
4.4

Non
AG

T 9808
CRP

3
38
4.9

HEL

5
53.1

HEL

6
3.1

T 2753

T 2699

T 11657

T 11658

Yr. Photo Section Town Range Milltown

92 L9 27-35-17

NOT TO SCALE
CROP YR _____

HEL

6
3.1

38
4.9

5
53.1

T 2953

T 2691

T 1110

T 11653

NHEL

1
31.8

1
4.0

2
51.6

1
54.5

27

17.0

BALS

92 L9 26-35-17

NOT TO SCALE
CROP YR. _____

HEL

26

136.4

HEL

2
8.4

6.4

SAM

92 MP. SE-SE-

HALE MOON LAKE

25

FT/2387 FT/2388

HEL