



Maumee AOC Advisory Committee

February 10, 2022 9:30am – 11:30am

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AGENDA

- **Welcome & Meeting/Call Logistics** (Cherie Blair, Ohio EPA) (5 mins)
- **Vote: Chair & Vice-Chair** (Kris Patterson, PCS) (5 mins)
- **Vote: Minutes** (Chair) (5 mins)
- **Update from BUI 3a, 6, 14a Biological subcommittee** (Josh Miller, USGS) (30 mins)
 - Status of lower Ottawa River TBD projects
 - Status of Maumee River habitat feasibility study
- **Vote: Recommendations on Maumee River Aquatic MAP projects** (15 mins)
- **US EPA Task Force Leader Report** (Leah Medley, GLNPO) (5 mins)
 - Federal Budget Update
 - Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act Focus Area distribution plan
- **Ohio EPA AOC Coordinator Report** (Cherie) (10 mins)
 - Upcoming events
 - MAP Updates
 - Funding Updates
- **Facilitating Organization's Report** (Kris) (10 mins)
 - Financial update
 - Support grant update
 - Suggestions on new future activities
- **MAP Spotlight**
 - Projects at & near the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, Jason Lewis, US FWS (20 mins)
- **Partner Updates** (10 mins)
- **Public Comments & Adjourn** (5 mins)
- **Next meetings for 2022**
May 12, August 11, December 8 at 930am



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MINUTES

Attendance: Cherie Blair, Kris Patterson, Jason Lewis, Deanna Bobak, Mike Pniewski, Vanessa Dick Steigerwald, Jenny Carter-Cornell, Jim Carter, Amanda Kovach, Andrew Timmis, Ryan Alison, Paul Hotz, Ashlee Decker, Beth Sparks-Jackson, Alexis Sakas, Kris Barnswell, Kari Gerwin, Sally Gladwell, Scott Butterworth, Josh Miller, Deborah Miller, Tim Schetter, Laura Sullivan, Archie Lunsey, Leah Medley, Amber Bellamy, Bryan Hinterberger, Paul Rasmussen, Lynn Ackerson, Mike Libben, DJ Mears, Shawna Towns, Liv Simkins Bullock

- **Welcome & Meeting/Call Logistics:** Cherie Blair, Ohio EPA welcomed everyone to the Teams meeting.
- **MAP Spotlight** (*agenda item was moved up to accommodate the speaker's time constraints*)
Jason Lewis, US FWS, gave a virtual presentation on the projects at & near the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. Several AOC MAP projects have occurred or are underway near there. Jason went through updates on progress for fish passage and Pool 2; Navarre Marsh (Ducks Unlimited led) and connecting it to Toussaint; Toussaint East & West projects completion and exceeding goals; and Schiller and Fox units. Significant work over the last few years has added to the ONWR and made habitat and management improvements. Planning is also underway for future work on Crane Creek and reconnecting it. FWS is very thankful for the funding and AOC prioritization.
- **Vote: Chair & Vice-Chair:** Kris Patterson, PCS, helped initiate 2022 nominations and vote for Chair & Vice Chair roles. Ryan Allison nominated Mike Pniewski and Jenny Carter-Cornell. Jenny welcomed and encouraged any other nominations. Jenny seconded Mike's nomination and he seconded hers. Hearing none, Mike & Jenny accepted and a vote was held. Motions passed with 6 yes's. Mike & Jenny abstained from the final vote.
- **Vote: Minutes:** Mike asked for a motion & vote on the December 2021 minutes that were distributed. Jenny asked for some minor corrections and with those changes, made a second motion to approve the minutes. The motion passed with 6 yes's. Jim Carter abstained since he missed that meeting.
- **Update from BUI 3a, 6, 14a Biological subcommittee:** Josh Miller, USGS, gave a presentation outlining the results of the Maumee River habitat feasibility study and the discussions of the working group. Josh outlined the multi-agency feasibility steps that helped gather extensive information on the conditions around the islands in the focus area, including Delaware & Clark islands, the Audubon island complex, and some smaller remnant islands such as Marengo. The feasibility team used all of the multi-agency reports and analysis, alongside community input and rough preliminary cost estimates, to recommend narrowing the focus areas to Delaware Island and Audubon complex. After discussing various ways to prioritize the funding and maximize the AOC benefit moving forward, the MAAC decided to recommend focusing funding on fully funding Delaware Island and using remaining funding for modified restoration work at the Audubon island complex. However, the next step, Engineering and Design, will also inform what and how much is feasible at each project location. Leah Medley congratulated the feasibility team and the MAAC on working through these decisions well and scaling down the work to be more attainable. She also cautioned that US EPA is seeing costs rise significantly on projects so future planning and costing should be very mindful of that caution.



- **Vote: Recommendations on Maumee River Aquatic MAP projects:** After discussion and agreement, Sally Gladwell motioned to approve the Delaware Island and Audubon Island complex focus for these MAP projects. Ryan Allison seconded and motion passed with 6 yes's. Tim Schetter and DJ Mears abstained.
- **US EPA Task Force Leader Report:** Leah Medley, GLNPO, gave a brief update on Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act. US EPA is still working on a Focus Area distribution plan but it's likely that a significant amount of it will support AOC work. It likely won't support new AOC projects but hopefully will mean less phases for projects or supporting really big dollar amount projects, especially for GLLA work. The January allocations for MAPs aren't finalized yet but the discussion for the Maumee went really well.
- **Ohio EPA AOC Coordinator Report:** Cherie went over the status of many of the current MAP projects. She will update & distribute updated MAP tables soon, as the new allocations are released. Ohio EPA expects to prepare BUI Removal documents for BUI 1 & 11 this year & will ask for the MAAC concurrence. Cherie highlighted the upcoming Ohio AOC Summit (for only Ohio AOC leaders), SOLE Conference with AOC sessions, and US EPA AOC Conference. Watch for more information soon on the US EPA AOC Conference to be distributed. Ohio EPA is negotiating the next capacity grant with US EPA, for 5 years this time. Local facilitating organization grants will be negotiated soon as well.

Cherie also provided an update on the Ottawa River NRDA settlement funds, after an inquiry at the previous meeting. Ducks Unlimited received \$850,000 in settlement funds and is purchasing 2 properties (a third fell through) in Sandusky and Erie counties (outside of the AOC). Properties will be turned over to ODNR.

- **Facilitating Organization's Report:** Kris gave a brief report and asked for suggestions on future MAAC activities. She will be putting together the next proposal for AOC support grant. The current grant is underspent still, although work is picking up for the contractors to support NPS-IS updates and outreach materials. Additional Rack Cards to highlight projects are in development along with future DMDS & website updates.
- **Partner Updates:** Many partners gave brief updates or informational announcements. FWS mentioned the Bullhead study report should be available soon. ODNR asked for additional leads on properties in the Swan Creek, Blue Creek area. They found 1 property, based on prior leads, and need a few more. Blue Week for the Oak Openings will be celebrated in May and the Kitty Todd expansion, Sandhill Crane restoration, will be featured by TNC with a ribbon cutting & public tour. Lucas County Engineers 2-stage Ditch project on Van Fleet is starting. The Clark Island project, through H2Ohio, will be collaborating with the developing Maumee Island (Delaware island complex) habitat project.
- **Public Comments & Adjourn:** No public comment so the meeting was adjourned by the Chair.
- **Next meetings for 2022**
August 11, December 8 at 930am

**Maumee AOC Coordinator Report
for the Maumee AOC Advisory Committee
February 10, 2022**

- **WildMAPs** (*BUI 14b: Wildlife Habitat*)
 - The Kitty Todd Expansion project will wrap up this month. It was extended from December to February due to issues with Toledo Edison removing power and poles.
 - ODNR Division of Forestry is still looking for replacement project acreage to acquire for enhancement, restoration, and protection. If you know of any possible property in western Lucas, eastern Fulton, or northeastern Henry counties, please let me or Don Schmenk know ASAP.
 - An updated Summary Table of the WildMAPs will be provided at the next MAAC meeting.
 - A detailed narrative tracking of the WildMAPs is available upon request.
- **AquaMAPs** (*BUI 3a, 6, 14a: Fish Pops, Benthic Pops, Fish Habitat*)
 - All of the FFY21 funded projects are underway. Many are preparing or have distributed RFPs for E&D. Six projects were sent for Section 106 Tribal Consultation in late January. Four additional projects will be sent out later this Spring.
 - Ten AquaMAPs were submitted for direct GLNPO-GLRI funding consideration in January
 - Ohio's AOC Program hopes to hear what allocations the Maumee AOC received (if any) later this month.
 - The AOC Program plans to make additional funding request for Maumee AOC projects in March and/or May.
 - Three projects were submitted for NOAA Partnership funding consideration via the Great Lakes Commission and Ducks Unlimited.
 - The AOC Program doesn't expect to hear about these projects for several months.
 - An updated Summary Table of the AquaMAPs will be provided at the next MAAC meeting.
 - A narrative tracking of the AquaMAPs is available upon request.
- **SedMAPs** (*BUIs vary by project site, GLLA contaminated sediment*)
 - Ohio continues to work with federal partners to make progress on these projects.
 - LOTS of data was collected in 2021. It is starting to come back from the labs. I will update the committee when more information is available.
 - An updated Summary Table of the SedMAPs will be provided at the next MAAC meeting.
 - A narrative tracking of the SedMAPs is available upon request.
- **Misc. MAPs** (*BUIs 1, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11*)
 - **BUI 1: Fish & Wildlife Consumption** – BUI removal package to be prepared in 2022.
 - **BUI 4: Deformities & Tumors** – Ohio EPA is reviewing a report from US FWS regarding the brown bullhead and fish community data collected in 2021. I will update the committee at a future mtg.
 - **BUI 7: Dredging** – Waiting for sediment data collected in 2021 to be available.
 - **BUI 10a: Beach Closings (advisories)** – Project is funded. QAPP is approved. Project is underway.
 - **BUI 8b: Eutrophication** – Ohio EPA is reviewing the data collected in 2021. I will update the committee at a future meeting.
 - **BUI 11: Aesthetics** – BUI removal package to be prepared in 2022.
- **AOC Program Updates**
 - Ohio EPA is working on our next "capacity" grant with GLNPO. This award will be for 5 years, instead of 3 as the last two awards. We will be incorporating Environmental Justice and Climate Resiliency into this award, so expect more discussion of these topics in the future.

- Ohio AOC Summit – Feb. 22: This event is expected to have virtual and in-person options. In-person will be in the Lorain area. Several MAAC members have committed to attend and represent the Maumee AOC.
- State of Lake Erie Conference – March 16-17 in Cleveland: This event has both virtual and in-person options. There is an AOC Session that will include several Maumee AOC related presentations. <https://iaglr.org/sol/sole22/>
- US AOC Conference – May 24-26 in Muskegon, MI: The details and format are still in being determined. I will let you know when there is more information on logistics, agenda, in-person vs remote participation and travel scholarships for local advisory members. https://www.michigan.gov/egle/0,9429,7-135-3308_3333-547532--,00.html
- **Other Updates**
 - At the last MAAC meeting there was an inquiry about the status of the Ottawa River NRD settlement funded projects. Here is what I was able to find to share with you.
 - Ducks Unlimited received an \$850,000 NRDA grant.
 - The proposal was to buy up to three properties depending on budget. One of the target properties (in Ottawa County) fell through as the landowner decided not to sell. At this time, it looks like DU will just buy two tracts with the NRDA funds.
 - DU has purchased one property in Sandusky County thus far (as described below) and have a signed purchase agreement to buy the second. The second property is a 99.6-acre property in Erie County that will be transferred to ODNR-Division of Wildlife.
 - **Kathryn Pearson Trust.** The original acquisition target was a 27.53-acre parcel. However, Gary Pearson, sole Trustee for the Kathryn Pearson Trust, offered an additional 9.55 acres of adjacent forested property with direct access off State Route 6. The Ohio Division of Wildlife (ODOW) wanted the additional acres, so DU entered into a Purchase and Sale Agreement with the seller in mid-December 2020 to acquire 37.08 acres. A boundary survey was required to split the 9.55 acres from a larger parcel and to combine the 37.08 acres into one new parcel. DU acquired the 37.08-acre Kathryn Pearson Trust property in March 2021. Transfer to ODOW was completed in June 2021 to expand the adjacent Pickerel Creek Wildlife Area.



Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge Complex:

Maumee Area of Concern GLRI Project Update



Jason P. Lewis

Refuge Manager

14000 West State Route 2

Oak Harbor, Ohio 43449

(419) 898-0014 ext. 30

(419) 340-2922 mobile

Jason_Lewis@fws.gov

“There can be no greater issue than that of conservation in this country”, Theodore Roosevelt, August 6, 1912.



Cedar Point NWR Pool 2 Project

Update

- Easement donation
- ACOE permit issued
- Engineering and design completed
- Tree clearing
- Dredging marsh channel

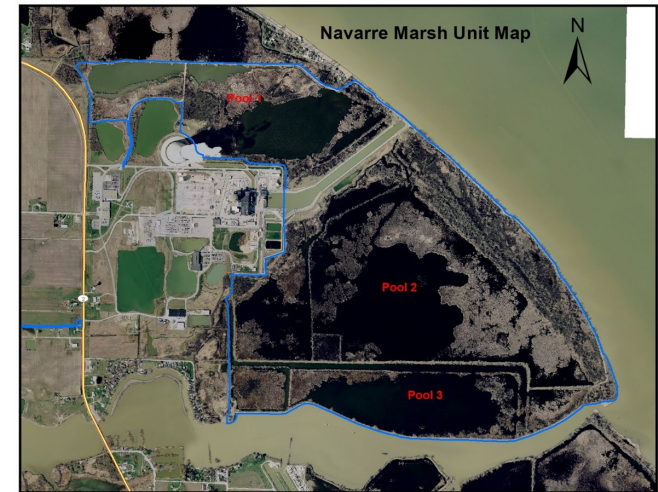




Navarre Marsh Coastal Reconnection Project- 779.2 acres

Update

- DU Project lead E&D
- Pool 3 & 2 E&D at 85%
- E&D for Phase 1 complete
- Tree and brush clearing complete
- Environmental compliance and permitting underway

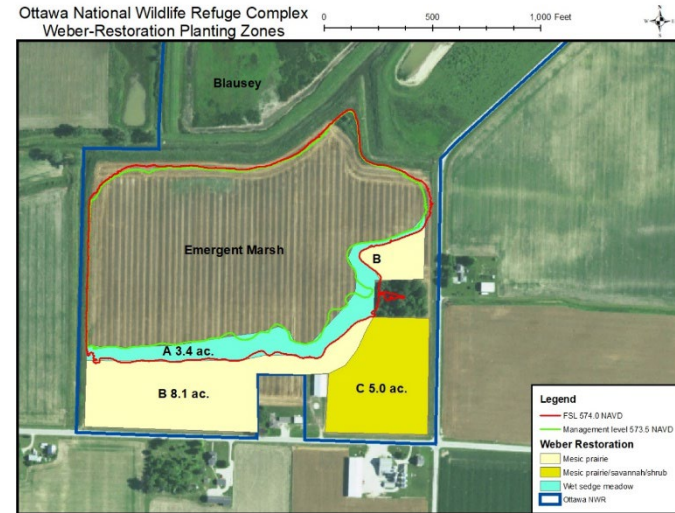




Toussaint East & West Project

Update

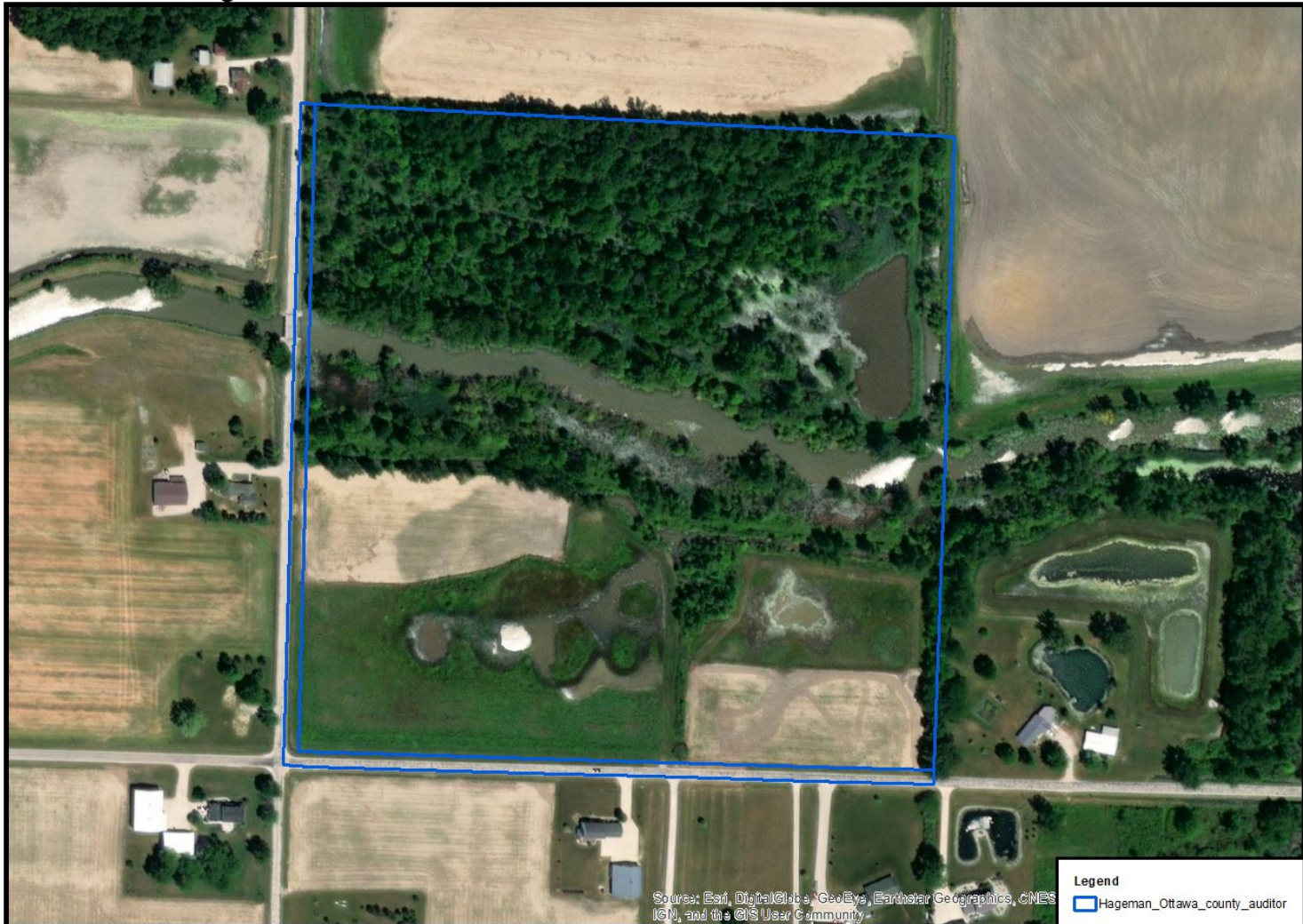
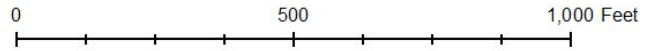
- DU acquired 203 acres and transferred title to FWS.
- DU closing Feb. on 39.6 acre parcel with restoration Summer 2022.
- 155 acres agricultural land restored to wetlands and native habitats





Toussaint East & West Project

Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge Complex
Hageman-Aerial



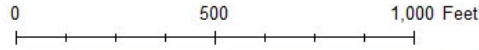
Legend
Hageman_Ottawa_county_auditor

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES
IGN, and the GIS User Community



Toussaint East & West Project

Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge Complex
Buehler-Aerial 2017

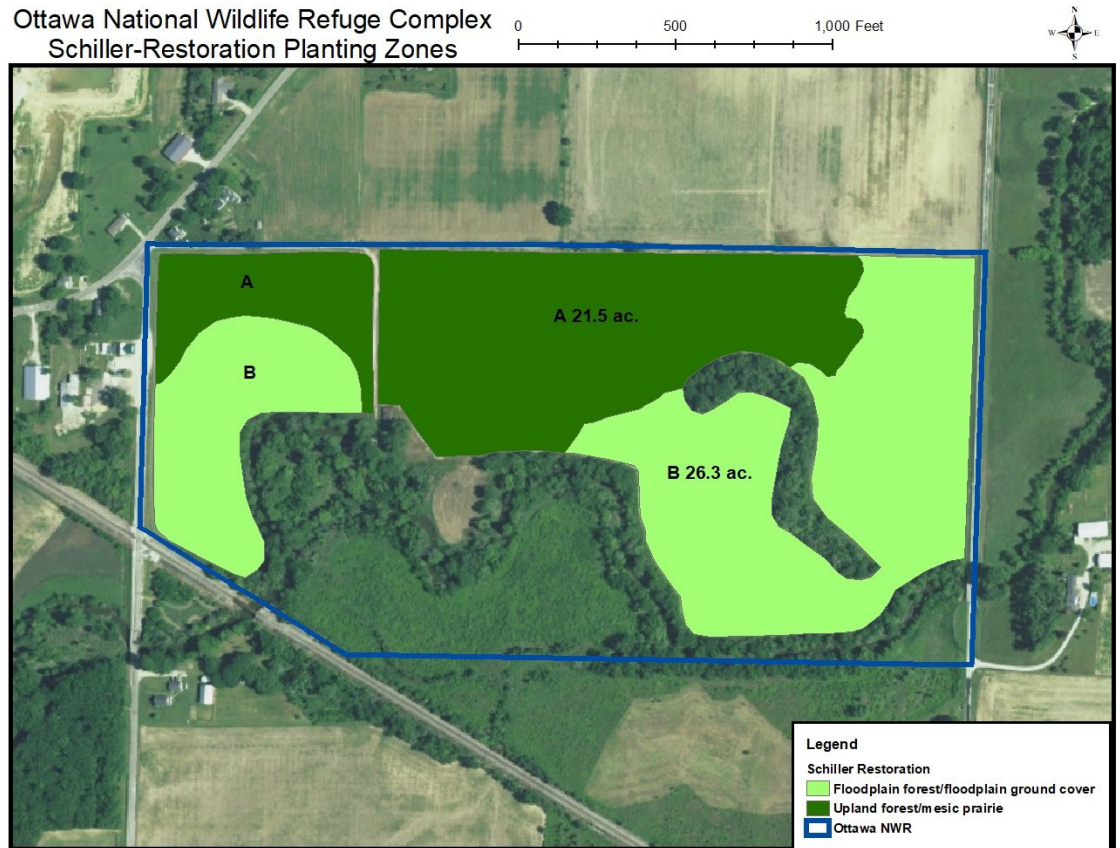




Toussaint East & West Project



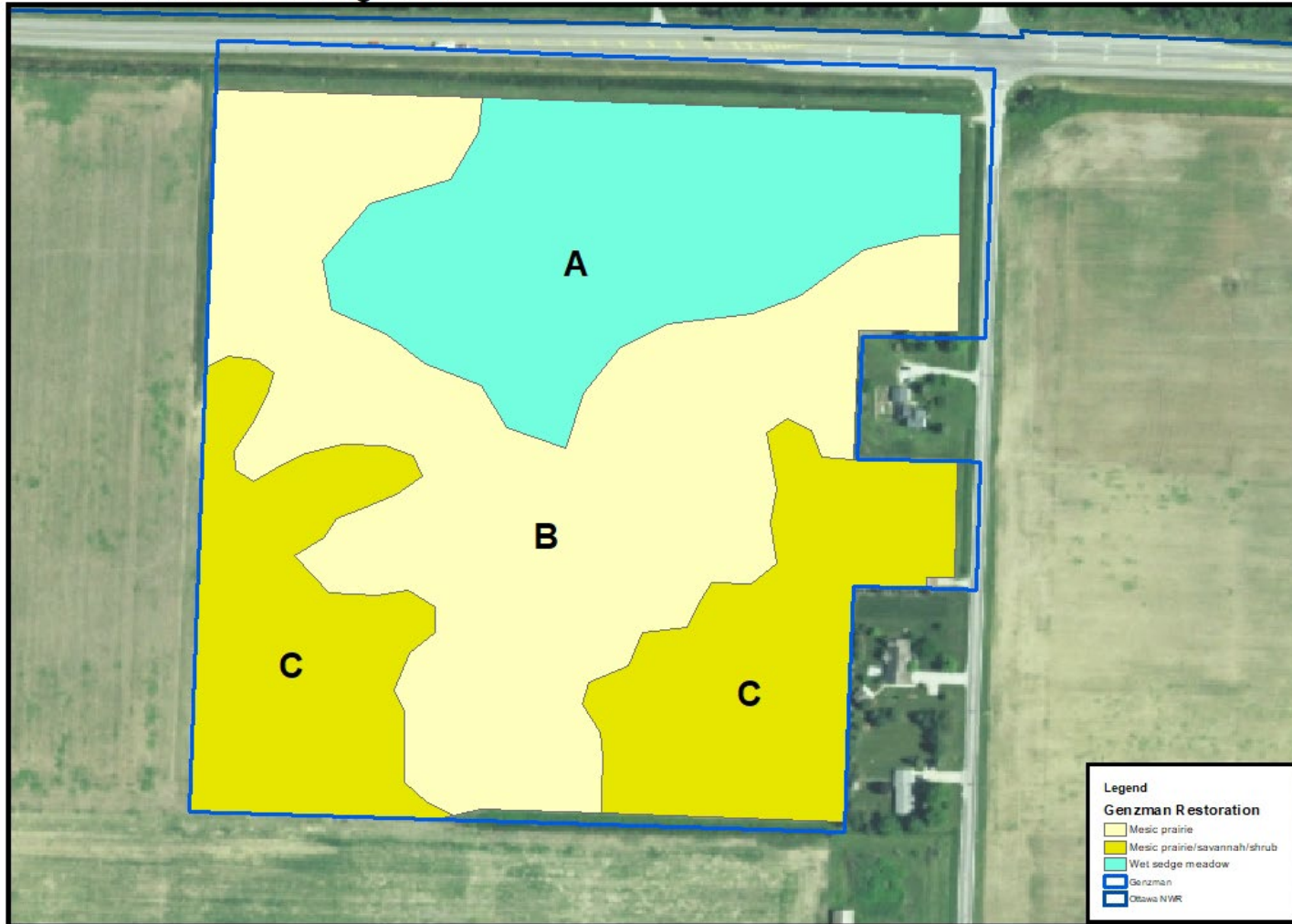
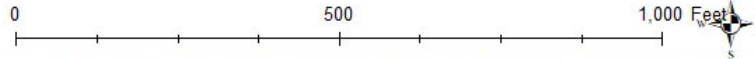
Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge Complex
Schiller-Restoration Planting Zones





Toussaint East & West Project

Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge Complex
Genzman Planting Zones



Legend

Genzman Restoration

- Mesic prairie
- Mesic prairie/savannah/shrub
- Wet sedge meadow

Genzman
Ottawa NWR

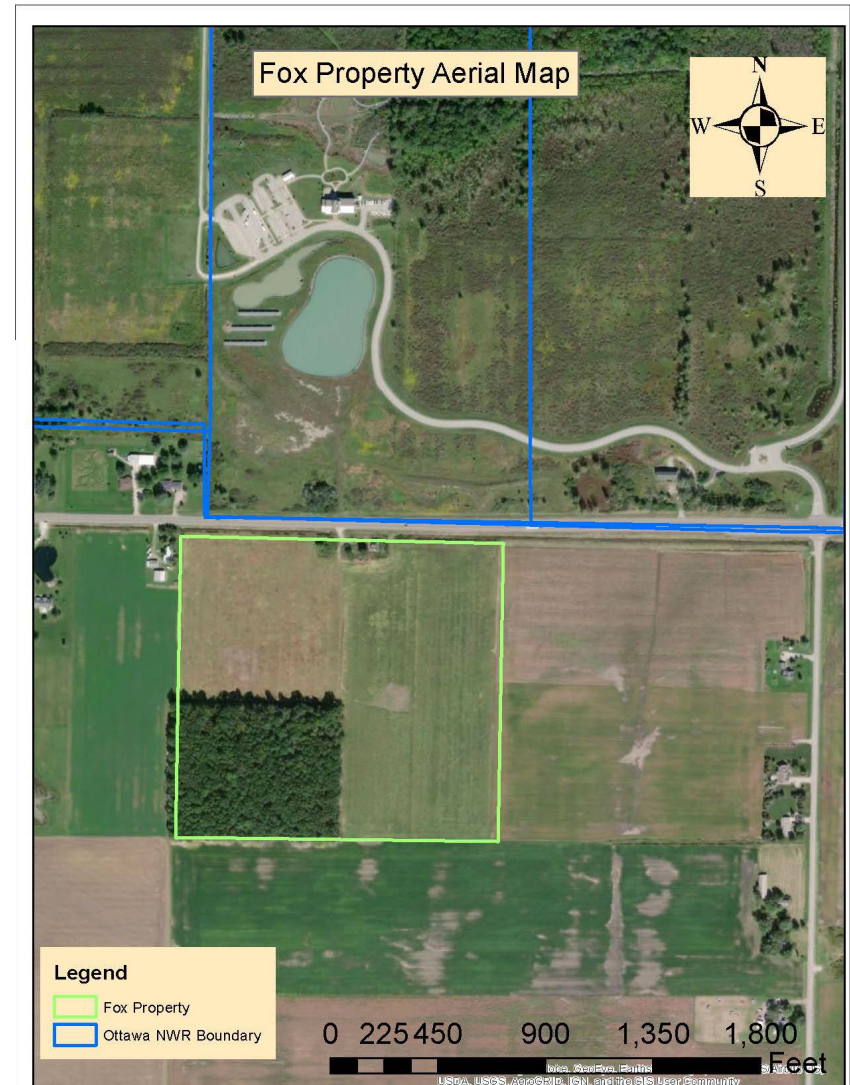
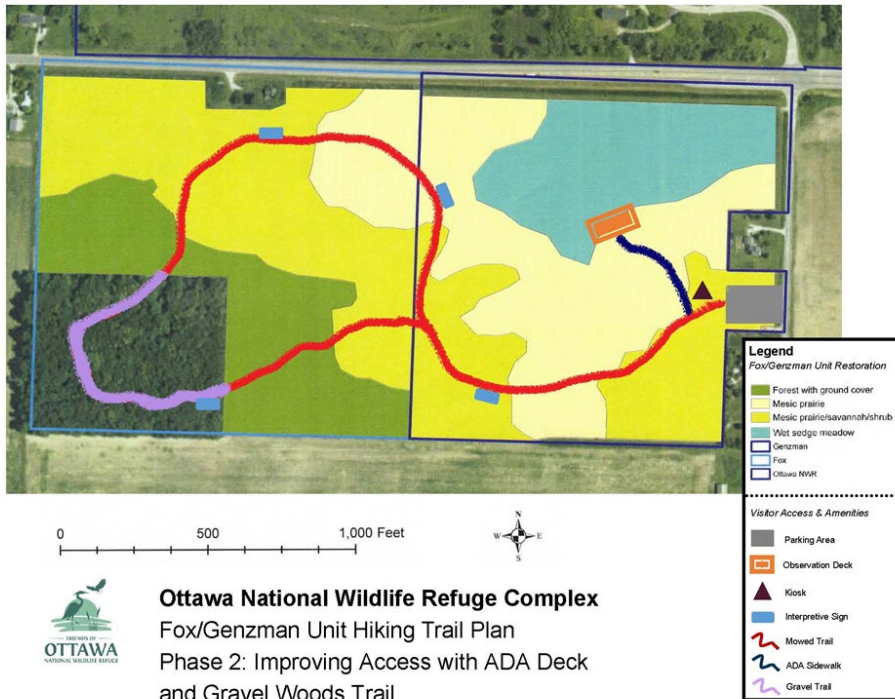


Fox Unit Nature Preserve



Update

- Restored 30 acres native ground cover
- Reforestation – 25.8 acres native trees and shrubs





Fox Unit Nature Preserve





Camp Sabroske Project

Update

- NOAA & DU are the fiscal agents
- FWS is managing the land acquisition (66.72 acres)
- Appraisal complete
- FWS & Friends Camp Sabroske MOU (in progress)

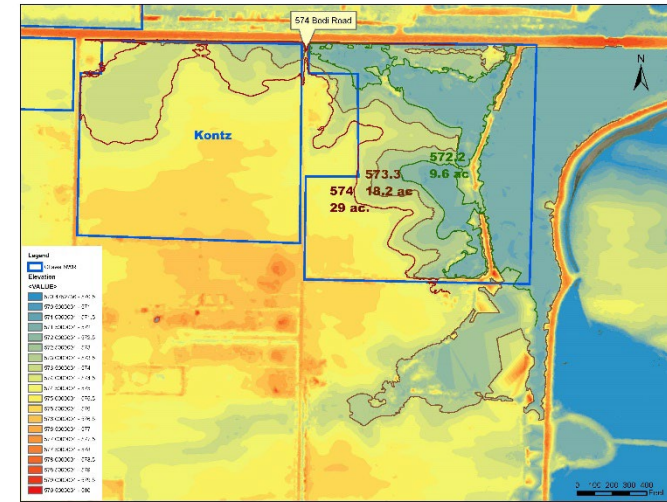
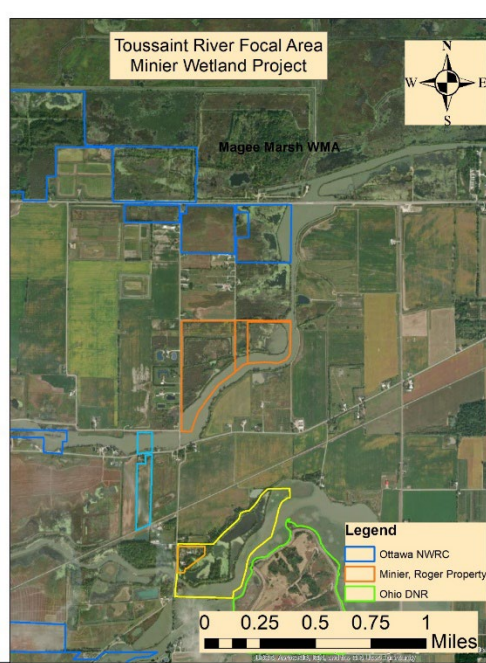




Oxbow Channel & Wetland Enhancement/Reconnection in Turtle Creek Lacustrary

Update

- Ottawa Co. SWCD doing E&D
- Kontz dike cleared
- FWS working on allocating funding to Ottawa Co. Engineers Office for Bodi Road project
- FWS is waiting on a revised boundary plat/legal for Minier acquisition





H2Ohio Coastal Reconnection Projects Ottawa Project & Darby Marsh Project





Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge Supporting the Maumee AOC

Thank you!

