

Wildlife and Habitat Assessment

for

Ritchie Bros. Properties Auction Facility – Exit 68 Lewis County, Washington

Prepared For:

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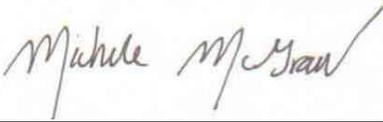
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SIGNATURE

The information and data in this report were compiled and prepared under the supervision and direction of the undersigned.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michele McGraw". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Michele McGraw
Wildlife Biologist IV

INTRODUCTION

Ecological Land Services, Inc. (ELS) was contracted by Ritchie Bros. Properties to conduct four breeding bird, habitat, and wildlife surveys within the 16-parcel site located west of Interstate 5 and north of Exit 68. The surveys were conducted in order to collect information about current habitat and species use by birds as well as informally documenting observed use by amphibians, reptiles, and mammals. This *Wildlife and Habitat Assessment* follows the requirements of the *Lewis County Code (LCC), Wildlife Habitat, Article IV (C) 17.35A*.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed relocation site of the Ritchie Bros. Auctioneer facility is approximately 203 +/- gross acres in size. Currently it is used for hay production and livestock grazing. Three buildings will be constructed onsite: an auction building, providing for the administration of the facility as well as the actual auction event, a refurbishing building, providing optional improvements for the equipment to be sold, and a check-in building monitoring the incoming and outgoing equipment from the site. The remaining 80 +/- acres primarily located along the south, west and north property lines will be set-aside as open space, native landscaped earthen berms for a visual barrier, stormwater facilities, mitigation areas, and buffer zones to be preserved.

The applicant proposes to grade and improve approximately 123 +/- acres of the site and make it suitable for the display of equipment and buildings which will impact 0.99 acres of Category III and Category IV emergent wetlands (Wetlands A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, and I). A Preliminary Mitigation Plan (ELS 2010) proposes onsite wetland creation at a 2:1 ratio to compensate for onsite wetland impacts. Additionally, wetland, wetland and stream buffer, and native upland landscape berms will be enhanced with native trees and shrubs providing foraging, nesting, perching, and shelter habitat as well as protection and screening for the onsite mitigation area. The native upland landscape berms will be located along North Military and Koontz Roads and will cover approximately 11.0 acres onsite. Dimensions on the landscape berms will be approximately 100 +/- feet wide by 15 +/- feet at top of berm.

The proposed wetland mitigation will create 1.98 acres, of Category III, forested and scrub-shrub wetland to mitigate for the 0.99 acres of impacts to onsite Category III and IV wetlands. The mitigation will also include the preservation and enhancement of 4.68 acres of existing onsite wetland as well as 18.03 acres of onsite wetland/stream buffer habitat. The existing wetland and buffer habitat consists primarily of monotypic emergent vegetation and provides little habitat value or functional value. The proposed enhancement of existing habitat and creation and enhancement of new wetland habitat will increase the existing habitat corridor connections on and offsite and provide additional foraging, nesting, perching, and shelter while increasing the overall function and value of the onsite habitat.

METHODOLOGY

Reviewed Literature

As part of the research gathered to determine the priority species and habitat associated with the project site, ELS biologists reviewed pertinent literature, and requested agency database information to determine important habitats and species within and adjacent to the site. The database information consisted of the following:

- U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Species of Concern List on May 25, 2010, (Appendix A).
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Habitat and Species Report and Maps on April 23, 2010 (Appendix B).
- Washington Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Natural Heritage Program Information System Search on May 25, 2010.

Delineated Habitat

ELS evaluated the study site for wetlands in October and November 2009. Wetlands were flagged using consecutively numbered fluorescent flagging tape or pin flags. Boundaries were subsequently surveyed by Foresight Surveying, Inc. Vegetation, hydrology, and soil data were collected from twenty-eight test plots to verify boundaries of the wetlands. The ELS wetland delineation followed the Routine Determination Method according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, *Wetlands Delineation Manual* (Environmental Laboratory 1987) and *Interim Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast Region* (USACE 2008), and the Washington State Department of Ecology, *Washington State Wetlands Identification and Delineation Manual* (DOE 1997). USACE jurisdictional wetlands labeled A through U, and one jurisdictional stream were delineated onsite, as shown in Figure 2. Lewis County has adopted the WDOE *Western Washington Wetland Rating Form, LCC 17.35A.580(1)*. Based on the Wetland Rating Form, the onsite wetlands are considered Category III and Category IV wetlands.

Habitat types and land uses were documented during the bird surveys and the wetland delineation.

Bird Survey

The bird surveys were based on the *Handbook for Field Methods for Monitoring Landbirds* (C. John Ralf et al. May 1993). Fifteen (15) survey points were mapped approximately 250 meters apart. Approximately 5 minutes were spent at each point documenting birds by auditory and/or visual observations as well as documenting evidence observed of mammals, reptiles, or amphibians. Four surveys were conducted during the early morning hours of April and May 2010.

LITERATURE FINDINGS

Reviewed literature

WDFW Mapped Species and Habitat

According to database information received from WDFW, no listed bird, mammal, fish species or priority habitat are mapped within approximately one mile of the project site.

Washington Department of Natural Resources

According to WDNR Natural Heritage Program, no records for rare plants or high quality ecosystems occur within the vicinity of the project.

Washington Department of Natural Resources Stream Type Mapping

WDNR maps a Type F stream (fish bearing) in the northern portion of the site.

Field Findings

Species

The only priority species observed during the bird surveys was the American bald eagle. Bald eagles are listed as a species of concern by the USFWS and as a state sensitive species by WDFW. ELS visually observed a single bald eagle soaring and flying over the site on April 16 and May 7. Bald eagle nests were not observed by ELS nor mapped by WDFW within or adjacent to the project site. Below is a list of documented observations and point locations during the bird surveys:

Date: April 6, 2010

Time: 8:30 am to 10:30 am

Weather: 80 percent cloud cover, approximately 55 degrees with a light wind and rain.

Birds	Observations	Point Location
American crow	Visual, auditory	Points 1, 3, 7, 6, 15, 11, 10,
American kestrel	Visual	Points 5,12
American robin	Visual, auditory	Points 1, 2, 7, 6, 15, 11, 13, 14, 10, 8, 12,
Black-capped chickadee	Visual, auditory	Point 1
Common raven	Visual, auditory	Points 3, 6, 13, 5,
European starling	Visual	Points 14,
Lesser goldfinch	Auditory	Point 1
Mallard	Visual	Point 2 (pair)
Mourning dove	Visual	Point 9
Northern harrier	Visual	Points 5, 4, 10
Scrub jay	Visual, auditory	Point 6
Song sparrow	Visual, auditory	Points 2, 15,
Spotted towhee	Visual, auditory	Points 1, 13,
Steller's jay	Visual, auditory	Points 1, 7, 13, 8, 9,
Violet-green swallow	Visual	Point 11
Others	Observations	Point Location
Coyote	Visual (scat)	Point 8
Eastern cotton tail	Visual	Point 10

Date: April 16, 2010

Time: 8:00 am to 10:00 am

Weather: 70 percent cloud cover, approximately 55 degrees with a moderate light wind.

Birds	Observations	Point Location
American bald eagle	Visual	Point 5 (fly over)
American crow	Visual, auditory	Points 4, 14, 8, 9,
American goldfinch	Visual, auditory	Points 1, 5
American kestrel	Visual	Points 5, 4
American robin	Visual, auditory	Points 2, 4, 3, 6, 7, 10, 12, 11, 3, 8, 9, 5, 4, 1, 11, 7
Anna's humming bird	Auditory	Points 4, 1,
Black-capped chickadee	Auditory	Points 7, 15, 12, 6
Canada geese	Visual	Point 14 (fly over)
Common raven	Auditory	Point 5 (fly over)
Common yellowthroat	Visual, auditory	Points 2, 1, 11
European starling	Visual	Point 3
Evening grosbeak	Auditory	Point 4
House finch	Visual, auditory	Point 14
Mourning dove	Visual	Point 10 (fly over), 1
Northern flicker	Auditory	Points 10, 14
Orange-crowned warbler	Auditory	Points 2, 6, 2, 9, 1

Red-tailed hawk	Visual	Point 6 (pair flying over)
Savanna sparrow	Auditory	Points 4, 3, 10, 12, 11, 13, 14, 8, 9, 5, 1
Scrub jay	Visual, auditory	Points 4, 15,
Song sparrow	Visual, auditory	Points 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 8, 5, 4,
Spotted towhee	Auditory	Points 7, 4
Steller's jay	Auditory	Point 5
Varied thrush	Auditory	Point 1
Violet-green swallow	Visual	Point 1
Yellow-rumped warbler (Audubon)	Visual, auditory	Point 4
Others	Observations	Point Location
Eastern Cotton tail	Visual	Point 7
Pacific tree frog	Auditory	Point 3
Coyote scat	Visual	Point 1

Date: April 30, 2010

Time: 9:30 am to 11:30 am

Weather: 100 percent cloud cover, approximately 48 degrees

Birds	Observations	Point Location
American crow	Visual, auditory	Points 15, 10, 9
American goldfinch	Visual, auditory	Point 1
American robin	Visual, auditory	Points 2, 3, 7, 15, 6, 14, 4, 1, 12, 13, 5
Anna's hummingbird	Auditory	Point 7
Barn swallow	Visual	Point 1
Black-capped chickadee	Auditory	Points 2, 5
Black-throated gray warbler	Visual, auditory	Point 6
Brewer's blackbird	Auditory	Point 9
Common raven	Visual	Points 7, 5
Common yellowthroat	Auditory	Points 2, 7, 6, 1
European starling	Visual, auditory	Points 2, 3, 7, 15, 12, 14, 11, 8, 4
House finch	Visual, auditory	Points 13, 14,4
House wren	Auditory	Point 9
Mourning dove	Auditory	Point 17,
Northern flicker	Visual, auditory	Point 1
Northern Harrier	Visual	Points 4, 12,
Red-tailed hawk	Visual	Point 1 (perched on post)
Ruby-crowned kinglet	Auditory	Point 7
Savannah sparrow	Visual, auditory	Points 2, 3, 15, 12, 14, 13, 5
Scrub jay	Auditory	Point 6
Song sparrow	Visual, auditory	Points 2, 7, 5, 6, 10, 13, 5, 1, 9
Spotted towhee	Auditory	Points 7, 15
Violet-green swallow	Visual	Points 11, 1
White-crowned sparrow	Visual, auditory	Point 10
Yellow-crowned sparrow	Visual	Point 6

Date: May 7, 2010

Time: 9:30 am to 11:30 am

Weather: 30 percent cloud cover, approximately 50 degrees

Birds	Observations	Point Location
American bald eagle	Visual	Point 11 (soar over site)
American crow	Auditory	Point 14
American goldfinch	Visual, auditory	Points 3, 7, 6, 10, 12, 11, 12, 8,

American robin	Visual, auditory	Points 2, 3, 7, 15, 6, 12, 14, 13, 9, 4, 1, 12
Barn swallow	Visual	Point 7
Black-capped chickadee	Auditory, visual	Point 6
Black-headed grosbeak	Auditory	Point 7
Brewers blackbird	Auditory, visual	Points 6
Brown-headed cowbird	Auditory, visual	Points 6, 9
Common yellowthroat	Auditory	Points 7, 12, 8, 4, 1
Dark-eyed junco	Auditory, visual	Point 15
Epidomax flycatcher	Visual	Point 1
European starling	Visual, auditory	Points 2, 3
Northern flicker	Visual, auditory	Point 6
Orange-crowned warbler	Auditory	Point 5
Red-tailed hawk	Visual, auditory	Points 2, 12 (fly over), 7 (immature perched in tree), 8, 5, 15 (pair soaring)
Savannah sparrow	Visual, auditory	Points 3, 7, 10, 12, 11, 13, 8, 5,
Scrub jay	Visual	Points 6, 9, 8,
Song sparrow	Visual, auditory	Points 2, 7, 6,10, 12, 14, 13, 9,5, 4, 15
Steller's jay	Visual, auditory	Points 3, 7, 15, 6, 12, 14, 5,
Violet-green swallow	Visual, auditory	Points 10, 8,
Western tanager	Auditory	Point 11
White-crowned sparrow	Visual, auditory	Points 11, 4,
Yellow-rumped warbler	Visual, auditory	Points 210, 12, 1
Others	Observations	Point Location
Coyote	Visual	Point 6

Potential Species

Below is a list of species that may migrate through or inhabit the project site at some time of the year, but were not identified during the site visits:

Mammals: Elk, black-tailed deer, black bear, raccoon, opossum, rodents, moles, and weasels.

Birds: Shore birds, ducks, song birds, and birds of prey.

Habitat and Land Uses

The project site consists of open fields historically used for hay production (south-central) and cattle grazing (north-central). A small scrub-shrub and forested area is located in the east-central portion of the site (Figure 2). Open agricultural fields, forested areas, and single-family residential homes are located on the west end, north of the site.

Wetlands ranging from 44 square feet to 154,952 square feet have been delineated onsite by ELS. ELS previously drafted a *Critical Areas Report for Ritchie Bros. Auction Facility – Exit 68*, April 13, 2010 that summarizes the findings of a site investigation completed between October and November 2009. The *Critical Areas Report* followed the requirements of the local jurisdiction and the *Lewis County Code (LCC), Critical Areas, Chapter 17.35A*.

CONCLUSIONS

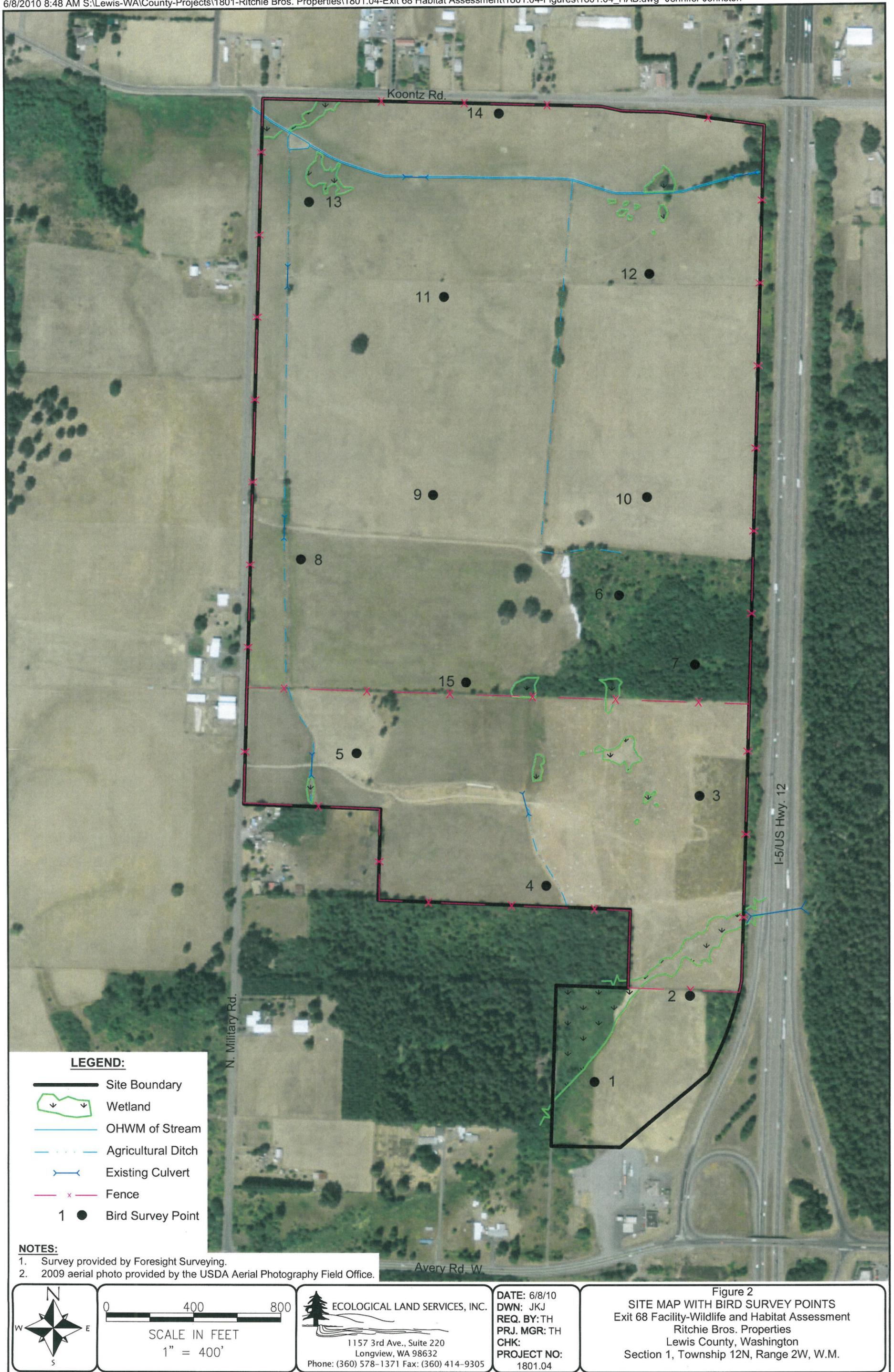
There are no federal or state threatened or endangered species observed or mapped within the project site. The only priority species observed was the bald eagle. According to a neighbor bald eagles have been observed onsite, this is consistent with our findings. Bald eagle nests were not observed by ELS nor mapped by WDFW within or adjacent to the project site. It is ELS's opinion that the proposed project will not negatively impact bald eagle perching due to the native trees that will be planted in the stream buffer, wetlands, and upland landscape berms, as well as vertical snags and large woody debris that will

be installed within the onsite mitigation areas as proposed in the “*Preliminary Mitigation Plan*” (ELS June 2010). As the native trees mature, they will provide additional perching and foraging opportunities over what occurs at the site currently.

Although the fragmented scrub-shrub habitat in the central eastern portion of the site will be impacted by the proposed project, it is ELS’s opinion that the mitigation will have a net increase in the habitat value of the site by for the following reasons: 1) wetland and buffer enhancement of the southernmost wetland area will extend the existing habitat corridor to the east and provide wildlife with additional shelter, foraging, and nesting than currently present, 2) wetland creation, stream enhancement, buffer enhancement, and native upland enhancement berms in the northern most portion of the site will increase the habitat diversity from a monotypic, cattle-impacted habitat to a diverse, multilayer riparian and wetland habitat, which will provide much needed foraging, perching, nesting, and shelter habitat in the project site.

References

- Ecological Land Services, Inc. (ELS). 2010. *Critical Areas Report for Ritchie Bros. Properties Auction Facility – Exit 68*, April 13, 2010
- Lewis County. 2000. Lewis County Code (LCC), Chapter 17.35 - Critical Areas. Chehalis, Washington.
- Lewis County Code (LCC), Wildlife Habitat, Article IV (C) 17.35A.
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- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). January 2, 2010. Priority Habitat and Species website. <http://wdfw.wa.gov/hab/phspage.htm>.
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- Handbook for Field Methods for Monitoring Landbirds (C. John Ralf et al. May 1993)
- Routine Determination Method according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wetlands Delineation Manual (Environmental Laboratory 1987) and
- Interim Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast Region (USACE 2008), and the
- Washington State Department of Ecology, Washington State Wetlands Identification and Delineation Manual (DOE 1997).

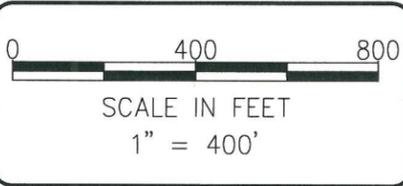


LEGEND:

-  Site Boundary
-  Wetland
-  OHWM of Stream
-  Agricultural Ditch
-  Existing Culvert
-  Fence
-  1 ● Bird Survey Point

NOTES:

1. Survey provided by Foresight Surveying.
2. 2009 aerial photo provided by the USDA Aerial Photography Field Office.



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DATE: 6/8/10
 DWN: JKJ
 REQ. BY: TH
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 CHK:
 PROJECT NO:
 1801.04

Figure 2
 SITE MAP WITH BIRD SURVEY POINTS
 Exit 68 Facility-Wildlife and Habitat Assessment
 Ritchie Bros. Properties
 Lewis County, Washington
 Section 1, Township 12N, Range 2W, W.M.