

Biological Resources

**Ontonagon County Airport
Schuster Field (OGM)
Runway 17/35 Approach Clearing**

Report prepared for

Ontonagon County, Michigan

Report prepared by

**Mead
& Hunt**
www.meadhunt.com

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1. Introduction

The Ontonagon County Airport – Schuster Field (OGM, Airport or SPONSOR) is located approximately three miles southwest of Ontonagon along M-64 in Ontonagon Township, Ontonagon County, Michigan. The Airport is owned and operated by the county of Ontonagon and is included in the Federal Aviation Administration’s (FAA) National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS). The State of Michigan designated the Airport as a Tier 1, B-I facility in the 2008 Michigan Airport System Plan (MASP). The Airport has a single runway, Runway 17/35, which is paved in asphalt and is 3,503 feet in length and 75 feet in width.

The Airport property covers approximately 449 acres within the Floodwood River – Frontal Lake Superior Watershed (HUC12: 040201010112) which drains to Lake Superior to the north. The surrounding land uses consist primarily of undeveloped lands, some farmland, and low-density rural residential properties. A project location map is presented in Appendix A.

To address potential obstructions located north of the Runway 17 end, the SPONSOR proposes to clear and grub approximately four acres of land to create a surface that can be easily maintained by existing Airport equipment. Unmaintained vegetation has the potential to become obstructions to the approach surface of Runway 17.

Further, to address potential obstructions associated with the recently implemented FAA “localizer performance with vertical guidance” (LPV) precision approach to Runway 35, the SPONSOR proposes to clear obstructions identified as penetrations to this approach and transitional surfaces. The future sheet of the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) dated 2006 planned for a larger non-precision approach for Runway 35; however, it was associated with the construction of a future runway extension. Since the LPV approach is now implemented, it is considered current conditions and existing obstructions associated with the precision approach to Runway 35 must be addressed. Although the new LPV precision approach greatly enhances the utility of the Airport, it is likely that the new approach would be suspended by the Michigan Department of Transportation, Office of Aeronautics (MDOT AERO) during their next Airport inspection because of obstructions to the approach, the primary surface, and the transitional surface.

Major development items of the proposed action, which will be covered in this Short Form EA include:

- Clearing, grubbing, and grading of 1.2 acres in wetland areas
- Clearing only (with no ground disturbance) of 7.7 acres in wetland areas
- Clearing and grubbing of 21.7 acres in upland areas

In support of a Short Form EA for the proposed project, a wetland delineation was conducted by Mead & Hunt, Inc. (Mead & Hunt) within an Area of Interest (AOI) over two field visits on June 24 – 28 and July 15 – 22, 2019. The AOI comprised 127.5 acres located in Section 34, Township 52 North, Range 40 West and Section 3, Township 51 North, Range 40 West, Ontonagon County, Michigan. Subsequent to this field work, an obstructions analysis identified obstructions south of the original area of interest. Field work conducted on August 11-12, 2020 examined this additional area which included the northern part of Section 10, Township 51 North, Range 40 West. The AOI (both original and extended) comprises 148.0 acres.

A review of threatened and endangered species for the proposed site was also conducted. This report summarizes the results of the field investigation and presents a review of biological resources that may be present within or near the project area.

A. Site Description

The AOI covers approximately 127.5 acres on Airport property. The project area is approximately 1,000 ft wide and 5,910 ft long, covering the approach surfaces for each runway end and the Building Restriction Line (BRL) which extends laterally 495 ft from the runway centerline. This area was extended in 2020 to include an additional 20 acres south of the original AOI to cover tree obstructions identified in an obstructions analysis. The airfield is accessed from the north via Airport Road and a small terminal building and several hangars sit on this end of the airfield.

The runway safety areas (RSA) at either end of the runway as well as areas on either side of the runway are regularly mowed. A mix of turf grasses and other graminoid vegetation and forbs cover these managed areas. Outside of the actively maintained areas surrounding the runway, the dominant vegetation is a mixture of low shrubs and trees. Wetter areas support alders and willows among a mixture of graminoid and forb vegetation indicative of northern shrub thicket habitat. Upland trees primarily consist of paper birch, aspen, and sugar maple.

The Airport is located on a narrow plateau between two perennial creeks, Weigel Creek on the west and Dreiss Creek on the east, both of which flow north. Dreiss Creek is outside of the AOI but an unnamed tributary to Weigel Creek flows within the AOI near the Runway 35 end. Steep topographic drops are associated with the narrow floodplains of both creeks.

An agricultural field lies at the southeastern end of the AOI which was fallow at the time of this investigation. At the southern end of the runway, a long narrow meadow consisting of upland forbs and grasses is situated on the western side. To the west of this meadow, the plant community transitions to a shrub and forested wetland associated with the tributary to Weigel Creek. Beaver activity was evident as several lodges and associated shallow pools were observed along this unnamed tributary as well as numerous chewed stumps.

Two ditches parallel the runway and drain to the north. On the western side of the runway, the ditch ultimately drains to Weigel Creek; on the eastern side, the ditch parallels the runway and makes an easterly turn just south of the hangar apron to drain to the east. Flows eventually reach Dreiss Creek off airport property.

The terrain within the AOI associated with the airfield generally is fairly flat and slopes from south to north. The high point at about 688 ft is near the southern extent of the AOI and the terrain falls on a gentle grade of about 1% to the north end at approximately 624 ft. Topographic mapping (contour interval generated at 2-feet) from the National Elevation Dataset (NED) is presented in Appendix B.

2. Site Observations

Outside of the actively maintained areas surrounding the runway, the eastern and southern portion of the AOI is a mixture of meadow vegetation and low shrubs with scattered trees. Wetter areas support alders and willows among a mixture of graminoid and forb vegetation most indicative of northern shrub thicket habitat.

Much of the floodplain of the unnamed tributary to Weigel Creek on the west side of the AOI is forested where steep topographic drops from the runway area are seen. North of the Runway 17 RSA and west of Airport Road is another area of forested habitat. Upland trees primarily consist of paper birch and sugar maple. Most of the northern portion of the AOI is a mixture of meadow vegetation and low shrubs with small patches of larger trees dominated by aspen.

Construction of the runway and clearing of surrounding vegetation in the early 1960s removed existing woody cover and construction of two drainage ditches paralleling the runway at the same time altered the surrounding natural drainage patterns and groundwater levels. Vegetation in these areas has remained in a mix of upland, wet meadow, and shrubs since that time.

A. Wet Meadow Areas

(1) East of Runway

Wet meadow areas east of the runway and south of the hangar area consist primarily of a mixture of grasses and forbs with scattered trees and low shrubs. Taller shrubby vegetation was more prevalent in the northern portion of this area while these gave way to low shrubs and emergent wetland or upland vegetation further south. At the southern end of this area, soils become dry enough to enable row cropping or haying in drier years (Figures 1 and 2).

Herbaceous and graminoid vegetation within the eastern wet meadow area of the AOI consisted of:

- Sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*: FACU),
- Kentucky blue grass (*Poa pratensis*: FACU),
- Reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*: FACW),
- Graceful sedge (*Carex gracillima*: FACU),
- Pale sedge (*Carex pallescens*: FAC),
- Blunt broom sedge (*Carex tribuloides*: FACW),
- Bird's-foot-trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*: FACU),
- Tall buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*: FAC),
- Common or Soft rush (*Juncus effusus*: OBL),
- Dark-green bulrush (*Scirpus atrovirens*: OBL),
- Woolgrass (*Scirpus cyperinus*: OBL),
- Brownish beaked rush (*Rhynchospora capitellata*: OBL),
- Fringed sedge (*Carex crinita*: OBL),
- Northern dewberry (*Rubus flagellaris*: FACU),
- Dwarf raspberry (*Rubus pubescens*: FACW),

- Canada goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*: FACU),
- Late goldenrod (*Solidago gigantea*: FACW), and
- Bog goldenrod (*Solidago uliginosa*: OBL).

Shrubs present in the eastern meadow area included:

- Alder (*Alnus incana*: FACW),
- Sandbar willow (*Salix interior*: FACW),
- Meadow willow (*Salix petiolaris*: FACW),
- Bebb's willow (*Salix bebbiana*: FACW),
- Peach-leaf willow (*Salix amygdaloides*: FACW),
- Dwarf raspberry (*Rubus pubescens*: FACW),
- Low Sweet blueberry (*Vaccinium angustifolium*: FACU), and
- Teaberry (*Gaultheria procumbens*: FACU).

Ferns present included:

- Sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*: FACW),
- Bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*: FACU), and
- Royal fern (*Osmunda spectabilis [regalis]*: OBL).



Figure 1. Eastern Meadow Area (North end). View to the west.



Figure 2. Eastern Meadow Area (South end). View to the north.

(2) South of Runway 35

Areas south of the Runway 35 end consist primarily of a large expanse of wet meadow and uplands covered by a mixture of graminoids, forbs, and shrubs (Figures 3 and 4). Shrubs occur generally in small copses, sometimes along with aspen, or as on the western side of the AOI, as a large drainageway alder thicket. A drainage swale running along the western side drains areas from the south, before splitting to carry flows to the west towards the unnamed tributary to Weigel Creek through the drainageway alder thicket or to the north to the west runway ditch.

The plant community observed within the southern meadow areas of the AOI consisted of:

- Reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*: FACW),
- Sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*: FACU),
- Kentucky blue grass (*Poa pratensis*: FACU),
- Graceful sedge (*Carex gracillima*: FACU),
- Blunt broom sedge (*Carex tribuloides*: FACW),
- Pale sedge (*Carex pallescens*: FAC),
- Fringed sedge (*Carex crinita*: OBL),
- Bird's-foot-trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*: FACU),
- Field horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*: FAC),
- Tall buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*: FAC),
- Ox-eye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*: UPL),
- Fringed loosestrife (*Lysimachia ciliata*: FACW),
- Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium albidum*: FACU),
- English plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*: FACU),
- Blueflag (*Iris versicolor*: OBL),
- Common or Soft rush (*Juncus effusus*: OBL),

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Site Observations

- Dark-green bulrush (*Scirpus atrovirens*: OBL),
- Woolgrass (*Scirpus cyperinus*: OBL),
- Canada goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*: FACU),
- Late goldenrod (*Solidago gigantea*: FACW),
- Sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*: FACW),
- Bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*: FACU),
- Alder (*Alnus incana*: FACW),
- Meadow willow (*Salix petiolaris*: FACW),
- Bebb's willow (*Salix bebbiana*: FACW), and
- Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*: FAC).



Figure 3. Meadow Area South of Runway 35. View to the east.



Figure 4. Typical alder thicket, South of Runway 35. View to the northwest.

(3) Amended Area South of Runway 35

Wetlands in the amended project area of interest (south of the two-track road) are forested. The area is characterized by an even-age stand of sugar and red maple, green ash, bigtooth and quaking aspen, and balsam fir (Figure 5). The understory was dominated by fringed sedge, horsetail, and a variety of ferns and fern-allies. Many low areas were covered by water-stained leaves with little herbaceous vegetation. The two-track road acts to inhibit drainage to the north, allowing water to collect in the low areas.

The plant community observed within the amended area of the AOI consisted of:

- Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*: FACU),
- Red maple (*Acer rubrum*: FAC),
- Balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*: FAC),
- Quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*: FAC),
- Bigtooth aspen (*Populus grandidentata*: FACU),
- Paper birch (*Betula papyrifera*: FACU),
- Alder (*Alnus incana*: FACW),
- Green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*: FACW),
- Sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*: FACW),
- Cinnamon fern (*Osmundastrum cinnamomeum*: FACW),
- Fringed sedge (*Carex crinita*: OBL),
- Woodland Horsetail (*Equisetum sylvaticum*: FACW),
- Purple Meadow-Rue (*Thalictrum dasycarpum*: FACW),
- Partridge-Berry (*Mitchella repens*: FACU),
- Bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*: FACU),
- Lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*: UPL),
- Large-Leaf Aster (*Eurybia macrophylla*: UPL), and
- Prickly Tree-club-moss (*Dendrolycopodium dendroideum*: FACU).



Figure 5. Amended AOI area, South of Runway 35. View to the north.

B. Floodplain Forested Area

The western side of the AOI is dominated by one forested wetland, Wetland 1. At the southern end of the wetland, there is a sharp topographic break from the airfield to the bed of the unnamed tributary to Weigel Creek. The vegetation within Wetland 1 is a mix of forest and shrub species. The steep-sided western bank of the tributary's floodplain is dominated by trees while the creek bed is dominated by a mix of shrubs, graminoids, and shallowly-rooted aquatics (Figure 5). The effects of beaver activity were apparent throughout the floodplain wetland as shallow pools associated with beaver dams were observed (Figures 6 and 7). The tributary flows to the northwest outside of the current AOI but the Wetland 1 boundary continues northward along the west side of the AOI and is dominated by aspen, alder, and large expanses of reed canary grass. No definable bed and banks were observed within the AOI.

The plant community within the forested area consisted of:

- Red maple (*Acer rubrum*: FAC),
- Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*: (FACU),
- Green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*: FACW),
- Paper birch (*Betula papyrifera*: FACU),
- Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*: FAC),
- Balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*: FAC),
- Reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*: FACW),

- Red osier dogwood (*Cornus alba*: FACW),
- Alder (*Alnus incana*: FACW),
- Bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*: FACU),
- Fringed sedge (*Carex crinita*: OBL),
- Sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*: FACW),
- Cinnamon fern (*Osmundastrum cinnamomeum*: FACW), and
- Field horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*: FAC).



Figure 6. Unnamed Tributary, Shallow pool. View to the west.



Figure 7. Unnamed Tributary. View to the northwest.

C. North of Runway 17

The Runway 17 RSA is a graded flat surface covered by turf grasses regularly maintained by mowing. To the west of the RSA is a mix of emergent, shrub, and forest species. Along the RSA grade slope to the north, emergent vegetation gives way to shrubs and trees further to the west.

The infield area between the RSA and the parking lot is regularly mowed and is covered by forbs and graminoids such as Bird's-foot-trefoil, Kentucky blue grass, selfheal, path rush, and dark-green bulrush. A swale carries infield drainage on this side of the RSA to the north along Airport Road.

North of the RSA, the emergent herbaceous vegetation transitions to a large copse of aspen trees before opening to a large expanse of reed canary grass dotted with patches of willow. The forested northern portion is dominated by quaking aspen with paper birch in drier areas.

Due to relatively recent brush clearing operations (based on personal communication), an area north of the existing RSA showed some rutting and fallen woody debris along the western edge of the tree line. The base of the RSA showed evidence of rutting and soil disturbance that now collects precipitation and runoff from the RSA.

The plant community within this area included:

- Graceful sedge (*Carex gracillima*: FACU),
- Sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*: FACU),
- Kentucky blue grass (*Poa pratensis*: FACU),
- Bird's-foot-trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*: FACU),
- Tall buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*: FAC),
- Selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*: FAC),
- Common or Soft rush (*Juncus effusus*: OBL),
- Dark-green bulrush (*Scirpus atrovirens*: OBL),
- Woolgrass (*Scirpus cyperinus*: OBL),
- Path rush (*Juncus tenuis*: FAC),
- Reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*: FACW),
- Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium albidum*: FACU),
- Canada goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*: FACU),
- Late goldenrod (*Solidago gigantea*: FACW),
- Meadow horsetail (*Equisetum pratense*: FACW),
- Fringed sedge (*Carex crinita*: OBL),
- Stalk-grain sedge (*Carex stipata*: OBL),
- Pale sedge (*Carex pallescens*: FAC),
- Bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*: FACU),
- Sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*: FACW),
- Alder (*Alnus incana*: FACW),
- Meadow willow (*Salix petiolaris*: FACW),
- Paper birch (*Betula papyrifera*: FACU), and
- Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*: FAC).

D. Wildlife

During the field investigations conducted in June and July of 2019, evidence of several mammals was observed at this site, either through direct observation or personal communication with local contacts. Bears and wolves are reported to utilize this area and wolf scat was observed on the runway. Beaver activity was evidenced by chewed stumps, lodges, and shallow pools in the floodplain of the unnamed tributary to Weigel Creek. A white-tailed deer was spotted near the northern end of the AOI.

Mammals observed or reported to be on site included:

- Black bear (*Ursus americanus*)
- White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*)
- Beaver (*Castor canadensis*)
- Gray wolf (*Canis lupus*)

E. Site Topography

The terrain within the AOI associated with the airfield generally is fairly flat and slopes from south to north. The high point at about 680 ft is near the southern extent of the AOI and the terrain falls on a gentle grade of about 1% to the north end at approximately 624 ft. Topographic mapping (contour interval generated at 2-feet) from the National Elevation Dataset (NED) is presented in Appendix B.

3. Biological Assessment

A. Regulatory Background

(1) Endangered Species Act

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) requires all Federal agencies to use their authorities to conserve endangered and threatened species in consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Under the Section 7 implementing regulations (50 CFR Part 402), Federal agencies must review their actions to determine whether they may affect endangered or threatened species or critical habitat. To accomplish this, Federal agencies must determine whether any listed species may be present in the action area and whether that area overlaps with critical habitat.

If one or more listed species may be present in the action area – or if critical habitat overlaps with the action area – agencies must evaluate the potential effects of their action. If no species or their critical habitat are present or affected, no consultation is required.

(2) Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act

Under Part 365 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (1994, as amended) (NREPA), threatened and endangered species are protected from being taken or harmed during project activities. An environmental review must be completed for the project area to identify whether any threatened and endangered species may be affected by the project actions. Permits may be required by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) for project activities.

B. Listed Species

(1) Federal

Mead & Hunt accessed and reviewed threatened and endangered species information provided in the USFWS's Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) database for the project (<https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>, accessed February 8, 2021). Appendix C provides the Federal list of threatened and endangered species that may occur in the AOI. No critical habitat under USFWS jurisdiction was found in the project area. No migratory birds of concern were identified in the vicinity of the project area of interest.

Also provided in Appendix C is USFWS consultation for the identified listed species. Table 1 summarizes the species identified in the project area.

Table 1. IPaC Species List

Species Name	Common Name	Status
<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Northern Long-eared Bat	Threatened
<i>Lynx canadensis</i>	Canada lynx	Threatened
<i>Calidris canutus rufa</i>	Rufa Red knot	Threatened

(2) State of Michigan

Mead & Hunt requested a Transportation Preliminary Database Search from the EGLE. This review did not identify any occurrences of State-listed threatened and endangered species, Tier 1 Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake (EMR) designated habitat, Michigan Mussel Protocol Group 1/Group 2 (state) and Group 3 (federal) T&E Mussels, or Northern long-eared or Indiana bats (Appendix D).

Mapped 303 regulated wetlands were identified in three areas within 500 feet of the project AOI. A wetland delineation was conducted over three site visits and a report is provided separately. The database search also identified the potential for Section 10 Waters in the project vicinity. Correspondence with the US Corps of Engineers (USACE) confirmed the absence of any Section 10 regulated Waters (Appendix D).

C. Northern Long-eared Bat (NLEB)

(1) Habitat Requirements

The Northern Long-eared Bat (NLEB) hibernates in winter in caves and mines, preferring the constant temperatures, high humidity, and no air currents present in these landscape features. Summer finds them roosting singly or in colonies underneath bark, in cavities or crevices of both live trees and snags. Potential roosts can be varied but suitable roost trees exhibit loose or exfoliating bark and/or dead or dying trees that contain cracks and crevices. The NLEB seems to be flexible in selecting roost trees, with the suitability of bark or presence of cavities or crevices being important.

“Suitable summer habitat for NLEB and Indiana bat consists of a wide variety of forested/wooded habitats where they roost, forage, and travel. This habitat may also include some adjacent and interspersed non-forested habitats such as emergent wetlands and adjacent edges of agricultural fields, old fields, and pastures. This includes forests and woodlots containing potential roosts, as well as linear features such as fencerows, riparian forests, and other wooded corridors. These wooded areas may be dense or loose aggregates of trees with variable amounts of canopy closure. NLEBs are typically associated with upland forests with generally more canopy cover than Indiana bats. NLEBs seem to be focused in upland, mature forests with occasional foraging over forest clearings, water, and along roads. However, most NLEB hunting occurs on forested hillsides and ridges, rather than along riparian areas preferred by the Indiana bat.

Many species of bats, including the Indiana bat and NLEB, consistently avoid foraging in or crossing large open areas, choosing instead to use tree-lined pathways or small openings. Thus, isolated patches of forest may not be suitable for foraging or roosting unless the patches are connected by a wooded corridor.” (USFWS, 2018)

(2) Habitat Assessment

The majority of the AOI is covered by graminoids, forbs, and shrubs. Woody vegetation within the AOI occurs along the edges of the AOI and in copses north of the Runway 17 RSA. The forested areas, a mixture of both upland and wetland community types, is dominated by red maple, green ash, paper birch, and aspen. Shrubs along the unnamed tributary to Weigel Creek consist of alder and willow. Alder thickets are present in the southwest corner of the AOI and along the edge boundary of the AOI.

No known NLEB hibernacula or roost trees are documented for this part of Ontonagon County (USFWS, 2016).

The more open habitat composed of graminoids, forbs, and shrubs adjacent to the runway is less desirable to the NLEB in meeting its foraging requirements although edge habitat along forested areas provides greater feeding opportunities as well as protection from predators. The NLEB has been found using tree species as roost sites that occur within the wooded areas at the Airport. Upland forested landscapes generally seem to be preferred by the NLEB for both roosting and foraging. In the larger landscape surrounding the Airport, many areas remain in mature forest habitat, especially along the two stream corridors on either side of the Airport.

From information provided by Mead & Hunt and consultation provided by the USFWS Michigan Determination Key (Appendix C), the proposed “action “May Affect” the Northern Long-eared Bat (NLEB). However, the Action complies with the final 4(d) rule with incidental take covered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s January 5, 2016, Intra-Service Programmatic Biological Opinion on the final 4(d) rule for the NLEB addressing “Activities Excepted from Take Prohibitions.” As such, no further consultation is required for NLEB.”

The proposed project activities include tree removal on the west side of the AOI and clearing of woody vegetation at both ends of Runway 17/35. Tree removal will be accomplished during recommended time periods appropriate for minimizing impacts to any potential bat populations. These measures will be consistent with recommended conservation measures designed to take place outside of the summer roosting period (April through September), and optimally during the winter months (October 1 through March 31 when possible).

D. Canada Lynx

(1) Habitat Requirements

This medium-sized cat with its long legs and large paws makes it highly adapted to areas with deep snow cover such as those found in the boreal forests of Canada and extensions of these forests into the contiguous US. Lynx generally require large expanses of boreal forest to support their home ranges (USFWS, 2014). The lynx’s principal prey is snowshoe hare.

“Lynx prefer dense, mature stands of boreal forest and other conifer or mixed-conifer stands. They will inhabit second growth forests, and even will tolerate small clear-cuts as long as adjacent blocks of mature conifer stands are left. Lynx utilize large hollow logs, over turned stumps, and thick brush for den sites.

Any management that promotes snowshoe hare populations while retaining large blocks of conifers on the larger landscape will likely benefit this species. It is quite shy of humans, so areas of minimal intrusion (roads, snowmobile trails, campsites, etc.) should be maintained. The species is still threatened by illegal poaching, natural population lows combined with continued human-induced mortality, mismanagement of mature coniferous forests, and incidental trapping.”

(<https://mnfi.anr.msu.edu/species/description/11476/Lynx-canadensis>, accessed February 4, 2020).

At the Federal level, critical habitat for the lynx has been designated in portions of the western US and for the western Great Lakes area in northeastern Minnesota but none in the Upper Peninsula (<https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp0/profile/speciesProfile?sld=3652>, accessed February 4, 2020). No occurrences are reported in Ontonagon County from the Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI).

(2) Habitat Assessment

The project area likely does not support habitat for the lynx. While human population is sparse in this general area, it has been present over a long period of time. Airport operations while infrequent are a constant presence in the general area. Most of the AOI is covered by grasses, forbs, and shrubs and only in the forested areas associated with the two creeks – Weigel and Dreiss creeks – would the lynx find potentially suitable habitat. The northern portion of the AOI contains only small copses of trees and is near a fairly busy highway where human intrusion is likely high. Therefore, the project area provides limited potential habitat for the lynx.

From information provided by Mead & Hunt and consultation provided by the USFWS Michigan Determination Key (Appendix C), the USFWS finds the proposed action “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” (NLAA) the Canada Lynx. During a 30-day review period (starting April 2, 2021), the USFWS may seek additional information to verify the determination. If the USFWS does not request additional information with the 30-day review period, the proposed project may proceed on the terms of the NLAA concurrence provided in Appendix C.

E. Rufa Red Knot

(1) Habitat Requirements

This shorebird is in the Sandpiper family. It nests in the far north, mostly well above the Arctic Circle, and migrates to its winter range along shorelines around the world, south to Australia, and southern South America. The red knot forages on tidal flats and sandy areas for mollusks, insects, green vegetation, and seeds. In migration and winter, the red knot feeds on small invertebrates that live in mud of intertidal zones, especially small mollusks, marine worms, and crustaceans. On breeding grounds, the birds feed mostly on insects, especially flies and will eat much plant material, especially early in breeding season (when insects may be scarce), including shoots, buds, leaves, and seeds (<https://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/red-knot>, accessed February 5, 2020).

(2) Habitat Assessment

The project area provides limited habitat potential for this species. The AOI consists of wet meadow, shrub and forest land, and forested wetland, habitats that do not support the red knot's biological needs for food and nesting.

The rufa red knot is a migratory bird, nesting and breeding far to the north before migrating to over-wintering sites in southern shoreline regions of the US. The AOI provides little suitable habitat for this migratory species.

From information provided by Mead & Hunt and consultation provided by the USFWS Michigan Determination Key (Appendix C), the USFWS concurs that the proposed action will have "No effect" on the rufa red knot. No further consultation is required for this species.

F. Rusty Patched Bumblebee

(1) Habitat Requirements

The project area is located within the historical range of the rusty patched bumble bee (*Bombus affinis*) (RPBB) as shown on the FWS habitat map (<https://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/insects/rpbb/rpbbmap.html>, accessed January 21, 2020). No Low or High Potential Zones are identified for Ontonagon County. The RPBB historically is associated with grasslands and tallgrass prairies of the Upper Midwest. This type of habitat provides nesting sites, overwintering sites, and nectar and pollen from an abundant array of forbs.

(2) Habitat Assessment

The MNFI lists the RPBB as a Special Concern species. Most documented occurrences of the bumble bee in Michigan are confined to lower Michigan and although much of the state has not been surveyed, there are no documented occurrences of the species in Ontonagon County.

The project area is within the historical range of the RPBB. Potential grassland habitat likely exists on the parcel, especially in the less disturbed open meadow areas east and south of the runway. Therefore, the project area could provide potential habitat for the RPBB and vegetation management could take this into consideration.

Section 7 consultation and incidental take permits are not needed in the historical range of the bumble bee where none have been observed since before the year 2000.

4. Conclusion

The forested areas on the edges of the site may provide roosting and breeding habitat for the Northern Long-eared bat; however, trees will be removed during recommended time periods appropriate for minimizing impacts to any potential bat populations. From information provided by Mead & Hunt and consultation provided by the USFWS Michigan Determination Key (Appendix C), the proposed action “May Affect” the Northern Long-eared Bat (NLEB). However, the proposed project complies with the final 4(d) rule with incidental take covered by the USFWS’s January 5, 2016, Intra-Service Programmatic Biological Opinion on the final 4(d) rule for the NLEB addressing “Activities Excepted from Take Prohibitions.” As such, no further consultation is required for NLEB.

Most of the AOI is covered by grasses and forbs and only in the forested areas surrounding the AOI would the Canada lynx find suitable habitat. Therefore, the project area provides limited potential habitat for the lynx. Consultation with the USFWS on the proposed action determined that the project meets the criteria for a “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” (NLAA) for the Canada lynx. The USFWS did not request additional information with the 30-day review period (ending May 3, 2021); accordingly, the proposed project may proceed on the terms of the NLAA concurrence provided in Appendix C.

The project area provides limited habitat potential for the migratory rufa red knot. USFWS concurs with the assessment that the proposed action will have “No effect” on the bird.

The project area could provide potential habitat for the RPBB and is within its historical range. Section 7 consultation and incidental take permits are not needed in the historical range of the bumble bee where none have been observed since before the year 2000.

The Michigan EGLE indicates no further actions for state listed endangered species review are needed.

5. References

Michigan Department of Natural Resources, 2015. MICHIGAN WOLF MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATED 2015. Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division Report No. 3604. Lansing, Michigan. June 11, 2015.

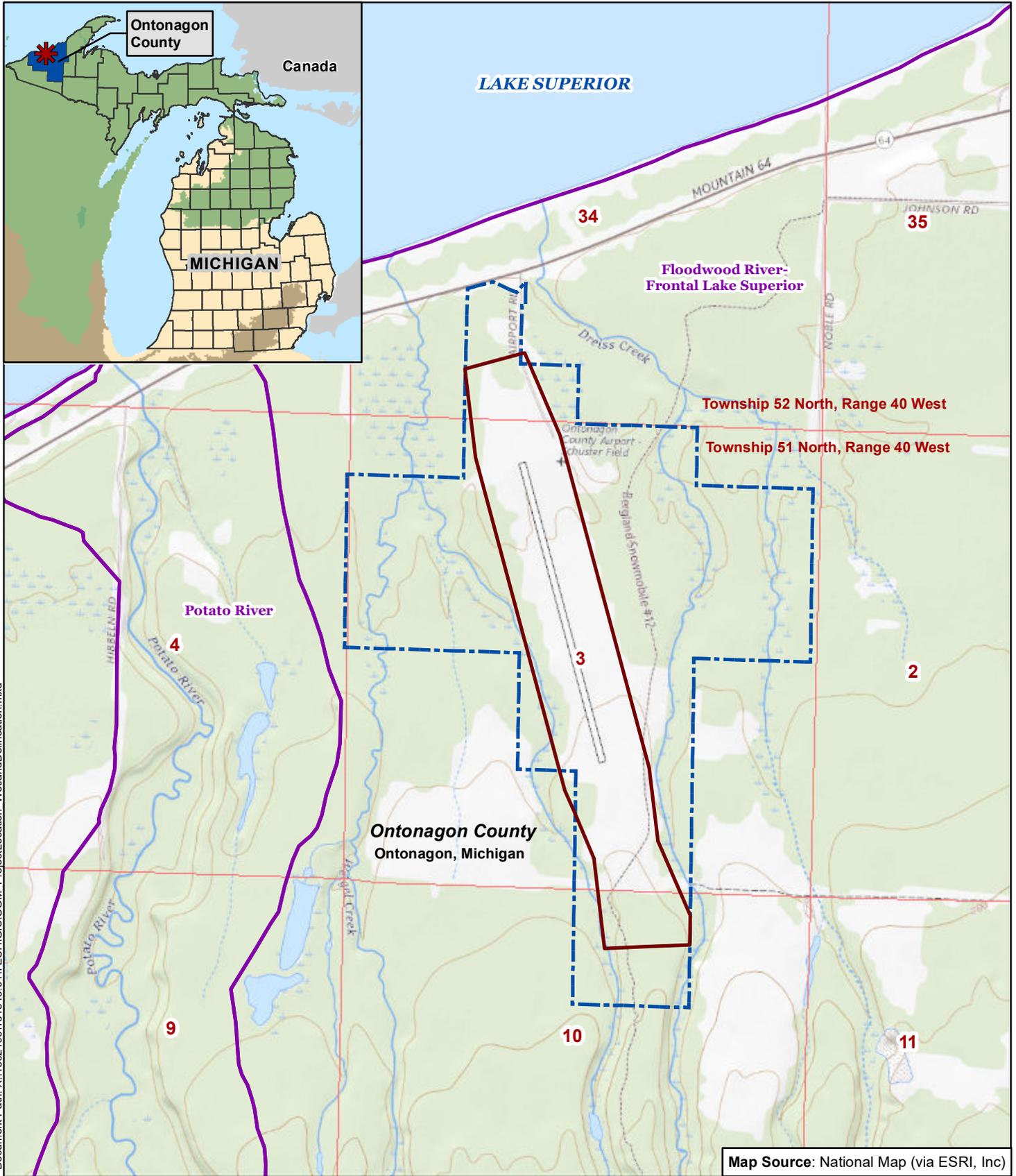
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2014. Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Revised Designation of Critical Habitat for the Contiguous United States Distinct Population Segment of the Canada Lynx and Revised Distinct Population Segment Boundary; Final Rule. 50 CFR Part 17. Published in the Federal Register, September 12, 2014.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2016. Michigan Northern Long-eared Bat *Hibernicula* and Roost Tree Locations (Updated July 22, 2016). Accessed from <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/EastLansing/te/nleb/pdf/MINLEBFactSheet22July2016.pdf>, February 9, 2021.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2018. Programmatic Biological Opinion for Transportation Projects in the Range of the Indiana Bat and Northern Long-Eared Bat. Prepared by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Midwest Regional Office, Bloomington, Minnesota. Revised February 2018.

Waltz, Alex and Kim Alan Chapman, 2014. Northern Long-Eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) in Minnesota: A Summary of Relevant Literature. Applied Ecological Services, Inc. Accessed from <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/Endangered/mammals/nleb/index.html>, February 5, 2020.

Appendix A. Project Location Map



Document Path: X:\1502400\161543.01\T ECHGIS\OGM_Protect\Location - WetlandDelineation.mxd

Project Location

Ontonagon County - Schuster Field



Legend

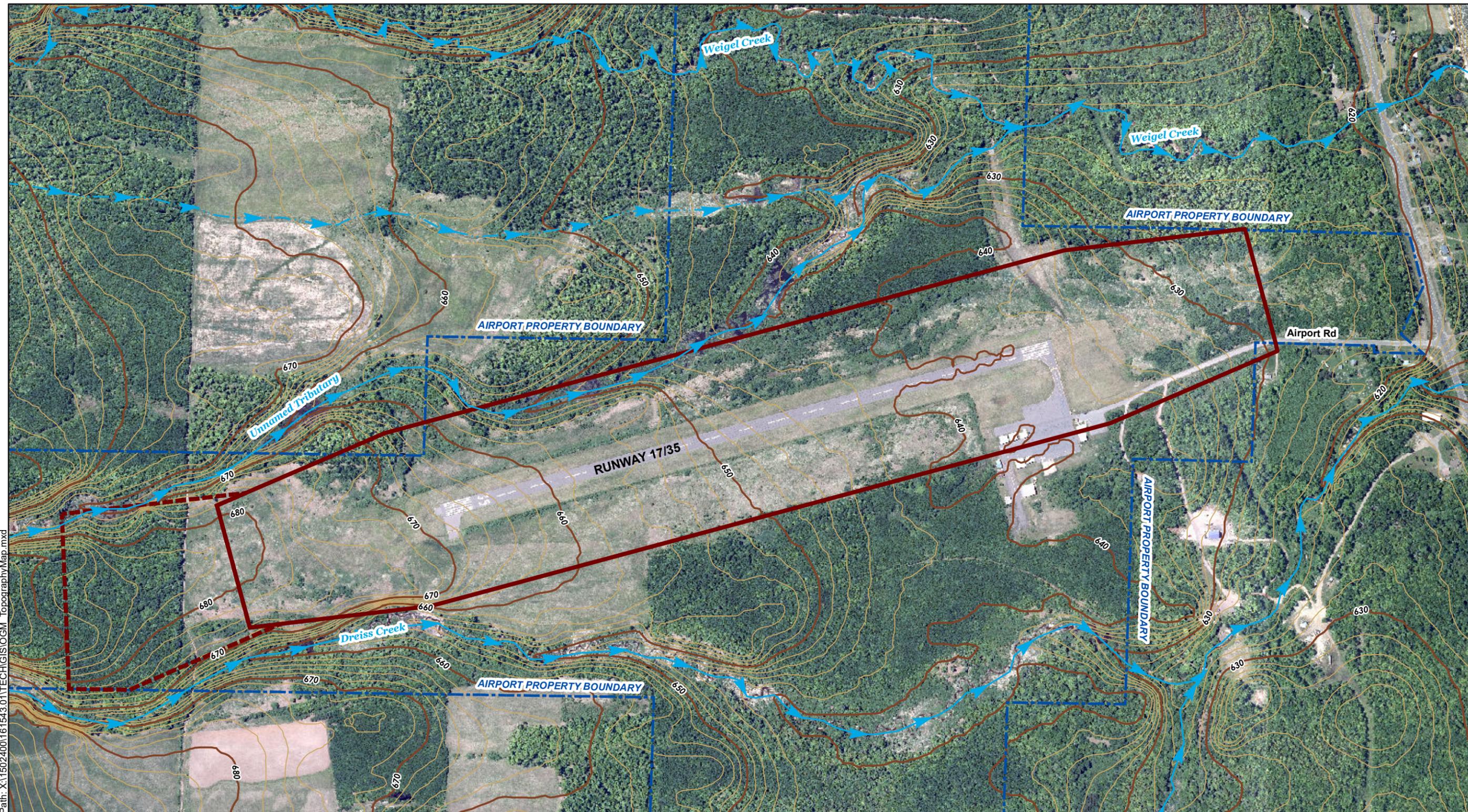
- LRR SUBREGION**
- K
 - L
 - M

- SECTION LINE
- PROPERTY BOUNDARY
- AREA OF INTEREST (AOI)
- WATERSHED BOUNDARY (HUC12)

Project Information

T52N, R40W, Section 34 and T51N, 40W, Sections 3 and 10
 Ontonagon County - Schuster Field
 Ontonagon County, MI
 LRR subregion: K
 USACE Regional Supplement: NC/NE
 Area of Interest = 148.0 acres
 Field work conducted: June 24 - 28, 2019,
 July 15 - 22, 2019, and Aug 11-12, 2020

Appendix B. Site Topography



Path: X:\1502400\161543.01\TECHGIS\OGM_TopographyMap.mxd

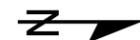
Image Source: AGIS Survey, Quantum Spatial, July 2019

Topography Map Ontonagon County Schuster Field

Data Sources:
 Airport Property Boundary: OGM Airport Layout Plan
 Elevation: 2-foot contours generated from USGS NED
 n47w090 1/3-arc second DEM 2013
 Streams: Michigan Geographics Framework Hydrography Lines (v17a)

Legend

	AREA OF INTEREST (2019)	Contour Type		INDEX CONTOUR
	AREA OF INTEREST (2020)		INTERMEDIATE CONTOUR	
	PROPERTY BOUNDARY			
Stream Type				
	STREAM			
	INTERMITTENT STREAM			



Project Location

T52N, R40W, Section 34 and
 T51N, 40W, Sections 3 and 10
 Ontonagon County Schuster Field
 Ontonagon County, MI
 LRR subregion: K
 USACE Regional Supplement: NC/NE
 Area of Interest = 148.0 acres
 Field work conducted: June 24 - 28, 2019,
 July 15 - 22, 2019, and Aug 11-12, 2020

Appendix C. USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) Documentation and Coordination



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Michigan Ecological Services Field Office
2651 Coolidge Road Suite 101
East Lansing, MI 48823-6360
Phone: (517) 351-2555 Fax: (517) 351-1443

<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/section7/s7process/step1.html>

In Reply Refer To:

February 08, 2021

Consultation Code: 03E16000-2021-SLI-0635

Event Code: 03E16000-2021-E-02358

Project Name: Ontonagon-Schuster Field Runway 17/35 Approach Clearing

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The attached species list identifies any federally threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project or may be affected by your proposed project. The list also includes designated critical habitat if present within your proposed project area or affected by your project. This list is provided to you as the initial step of the consultation process required under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act, also referred to as Section 7 Consultation.

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 requires that actions authorized, funded, or carried out by Federal agencies not jeopardize federally threatened or endangered species or adversely modify designated critical habitat. To fulfill this mandate, Federal agencies (or their designated non-federal representative) must consult with the Fish and Wildlife Service if they determine their project may affect listed species or critical habitat.

There are several important steps in evaluating the effects of a project on listed species. Please use the species list provided and visit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Region 3 Section 7 Technical Assistance website at <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/section7/s7process/index.html>. This website contains step-by-step instructions to help you determine if your project may affect listed species and lead you through the section 7 consultation process.

Under 50 CFR 402.12(e) (the regulations that implement section 7 of the Endangered Species Act), the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. You may verify the list by visiting the ECOS-IPaC website (<http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>) at regular intervals during project planning and implementation and completing the same process you used to receive the attached list.

For all **wind energy projects** and **projects that include installing towers that use guy wires or are over 200 feet in height**, please contact this field office directly for assistance, even if no federally listed plants, animals or critical habitat are present within your proposed project area or may be affected by your proposed project.

Please see the “Migratory Birds” section below for important information regarding incorporating migratory birds into your project planning. Our Migratory Bird Program has developed recommendations, best practices, and other tools to help project proponents voluntarily reduce impacts to birds and their habitats. The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act prohibitions include the take and disturbance of eagles. If your project is near an eagle nest or winter roost area, see our Eagle Permits website at <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/eagle/permits/index.html> to help you avoid impacting eagles or determine if a permit may be necessary.

Executive Order 13186: *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, obligates all Federal agencies that engage in or authorize activities that might affect migratory birds, to minimize those effects and encourage conservation measures that will improve bird populations. Executive Order 13186 provides for the protection of both migratory birds and migratory bird habitat. For information regarding the implementation of Executive Order 13186, please visit <https://www.fws.gov/birds/policies-and-regulations/administrative-orders/executive-orders.php>.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. Please include the Consultation Tracking Number in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
 - USFWS National Wildlife Refuges and Fish Hatcheries
 - Migratory Birds
 - Wetlands
-

Official Species List

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Michigan Ecological Services Field Office

2651 Coolidge Road Suite 101

East Lansing, MI 48823-6360

(517) 351-2555

Project Summary

Consultation Code: 03E16000-2021-SLI-0635

Event Code: 03E16000-2021-E-02358

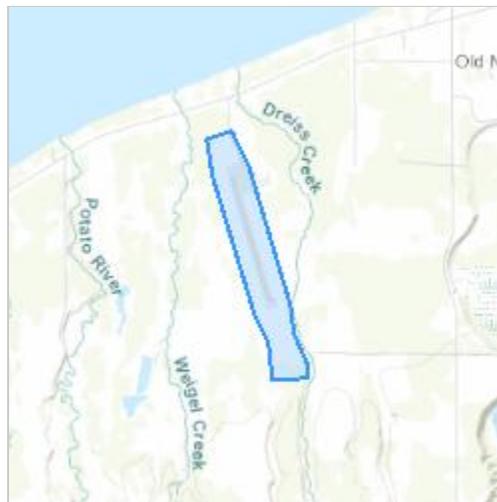
Project Name: Ontonagon-Schuster Field Runway 17/35 Approach Clearing

Project Type: LAND - CLEARING

Project Description: To address potential obstructions located north of the Runway 17 end, the Airport proposes to clear and grub approximately four acres of land to create a surface that can be easily maintained by existing Airport equipment. Further, to address potential obstructions associated with the recently implemented FAA “localizer performance with vertical guidance” (LPV) precision approach to Runway 35, the Airport proposes to clear obstructions identified as penetrations to this approach and transitional surfaces.

Project Location:

Approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@46.844298249999994,-89.36658080039749,14z>



Counties: Ontonagon County, Michigan

Endangered Species Act Species

There is a total of 3 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species. Note that 1 of these species should be considered only under certain conditions.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

-
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

Mammals

NAME	STATUS
Canada Lynx <i>Lynx canadensis</i> Population: Wherever Found in Contiguous U.S. There is final critical habitat for this species. The location of the critical habitat is not available. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3652	Threatened
Northern Long-eared Bat <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045 General project design guidelines: https://ecos.fws.gov/docs/tess/ipac_project_design_guidelines/doc5664.pdf	Threatened

Birds

NAME	STATUS
Red Knot <i>Calidris canutus rufa</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. This species only needs to be considered under the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only actions that occur along coastal areas during the Red Knot migratory window of MAY 1 - SEPTEMBER 30. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1864	Threatened

Critical habitats

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

USFWS National Wildlife Refuge Lands And Fish Hatcheries

Any activity proposed on lands managed by the [National Wildlife Refuge](#) system must undergo a 'Compatibility Determination' conducted by the Refuge. Please contact the individual Refuges to discuss any questions or concerns.

THERE ARE NO REFUGE LANDS OR FISH HATCHERIES WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA.

Migratory Birds

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act¹ and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described [below](#).

1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

THERE ARE NO FWS MIGRATORY BIRDS OF CONCERN WITHIN THE VICINITY OF YOUR PROJECT AREA.

Migratory Birds FAQ

Tell me more about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds.

[Nationwide Conservation Measures](#) describes measures that can help avoid and minimize impacts to all birds at any location year round. Implementation of these measures is particularly important when birds are most likely to occur in the project area. When birds may be breeding in the area, identifying the locations of any active nests and avoiding their destruction is a very helpful impact minimization measure. To see when birds are most likely to occur and be breeding in your project area, view the Probability of Presence Summary. [Additional measures](#) or [permits](#) may be advisable depending on the type of activity you are conducting and the type of infrastructure or bird species present on your project site.

What does IPaC use to generate the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location?

The Migratory Bird Resource List is comprised of USFWS [Birds of Conservation Concern \(BCC\)](#) and other species that may warrant special attention in your project location.

The migratory bird list generated for your project is derived from data provided by the [Avian Knowledge Network \(AKN\)](#). The AKN data is based on a growing collection of [survey, banding, and citizen science datasets](#) and is queried and filtered to return a list of those birds reported as occurring in the 10km grid cell(s) which your project intersects, and that have been identified as warranting special attention because they are a BCC species in that area, an eagle ([Eagle Act](#) requirements may apply), or a species that has a particular vulnerability to offshore activities or development.

Again, the Migratory Bird Resource list includes only a subset of birds that may occur in your project area. It is not representative of all birds that may occur in your project area. To get a list of all birds potentially present in your project area, please visit the [AKN Phenology Tool](#).

What does IPaC use to generate the probability of presence graphs for the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location?

The probability of presence graphs associated with your migratory bird list are based on data provided by the [Avian Knowledge Network \(AKN\)](#). This data is derived from a growing collection of [survey, banding, and citizen science datasets](#).

Probability of presence data is continuously being updated as new and better information becomes available. To learn more about how the probability of presence graphs are produced and how to interpret them, go to the Probability of Presence Summary and then click on the "Tell me about these graphs" link.

How do I know if a bird is breeding, wintering, migrating or present year-round in my project area?

To see what part of a particular bird's range your project area falls within (i.e. breeding, wintering, migrating or year-round), you may refer to the following resources: [The Cornell Lab of Ornithology All About Birds Bird Guide](#), or (if you are unsuccessful in locating the bird of interest there), the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology Neotropical Birds guide](#). If a bird on your migratory bird species list has a breeding season associated with it, if that bird does occur in your project area, there may be nests present at some point within the timeframe specified. If "Breeds elsewhere" is indicated, then the bird likely does not breed in your project area.

What are the levels of concern for migratory birds?

Migratory birds delivered through IPaC fall into the following distinct categories of concern:

1. "BCC Rangewide" birds are [Birds of Conservation Concern](#) (BCC) that are of concern throughout their range anywhere within the USA (including Hawaii, the Pacific Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands);
2. "BCC - BCR" birds are BCCs that are of concern only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA; and
3. "Non-BCC - Vulnerable" birds are not BCC species in your project area, but appear on your list either because of the [Eagle Act](#) requirements (for eagles) or (for non-eagles) potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities (e.g. offshore energy development or longline fishing).

Although it is important to try to avoid and minimize impacts to all birds, efforts should be made, in particular, to avoid and minimize impacts to the birds on this list, especially eagles and BCC species of rangewide concern. For more information on conservation measures you can implement to help avoid and minimize migratory bird impacts and requirements for eagles, please see the FAQs for these topics.

Details about birds that are potentially affected by offshore projects

For additional details about the relative occurrence and abundance of both individual bird species and groups of bird species within your project area off the Atlantic Coast, please visit the [Northeast Ocean Data Portal](#). The Portal also offers data and information about other taxa besides birds that may be helpful to you in your project review. Alternately, you may download the bird model results files underlying the portal maps through the [NOAA NCCOS Integrative Statistical](#)

[Modeling and Predictive Mapping of Marine Bird Distributions and Abundance on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf](#) project webpage.

Bird tracking data can also provide additional details about occurrence and habitat use throughout the year, including migration. Models relying on survey data may not include this information. For additional information on marine bird tracking data, see the [Diving Bird Study](#) and the [nanotag studies](#) or contact [Caleb Spiegel](#) or [Pam Loring](#).

What if I have eagles on my list?

If your project has the potential to disturb or kill eagles, you may need to [obtain a permit](#) to avoid violating the Eagle Act should such impacts occur.

Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report

The migratory bird list generated is not a list of all birds in your project area, only a subset of birds of priority concern. To learn more about how your list is generated, and see options for identifying what other birds may be in your project area, please see the FAQ "What does IPaC use to generate the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location". Please be aware this report provides the "probability of presence" of birds within the 10 km grid cell(s) that overlap your project; not your exact project footprint. On the graphs provided, please also look carefully at the survey effort (indicated by the black vertical bar) and for the existence of the "no data" indicator (a red horizontal bar). A high survey effort is the key component. If the survey effort is high, then the probability of presence score can be viewed as more dependable. In contrast, a low survey effort bar or no data bar means a lack of data and, therefore, a lack of certainty about presence of the species. This list is not perfect; it is simply a starting point for identifying what birds of concern have the potential to be in your project area, when they might be there, and if they might be breeding (which means nests might be present). The list helps you know what to look for to confirm presence, and helps guide you in knowing when to implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize potential impacts from your project activities, should presence be confirmed. To learn more about conservation measures, visit the FAQ "Tell me about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds" at the bottom of your migratory bird trust resources page.

Wetlands

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

Please note that the NWI data being shown may be out of date. We are currently working to update our NWI data set. We recommend you verify these results with a site visit to determine the actual extent of wetlands on site.

FRESHWATER FORESTED/SHRUB WETLAND

- [PFO1/SS1C](#)
 - [PFO4/SS1C](#)
-



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Michigan Ecological Services Field Office
2651 Coolidge Road Suite 101
East Lansing, MI 48823-6360
Phone: (517) 351-2555 Fax: (517) 351-1443
<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/EastLansing/>

In Reply Refer To:

April 02, 2021

Consultation code: 03E16000-2021-TA-0635

Event Code: 03E16000-2021-E-04228

Project Name: Ontonagon-Schuster Field Runway 17/35 Approach Clearing

Subject: Verification letter for 'Ontonagon-Schuster Field Runway 17/35 Approach Clearing' for specified federally threatened and endangered species and designated critical habitat that may occur in your proposed project area consistent with the Michigan Determination Key for project review and guidance for federally listed species (Michigan Dkey).

Dear Brauna Hartzell:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) received on **April 02, 2021** your effect determination(s) for the 'Ontonagon-Schuster Field Runway 17/35 Approach Clearing' (the Action) using the Michigan DKey within the Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system. The Service developed this system in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) (87 Stat.884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

Based on your answers and the assistance in the Service's Michigan DKey, you made the following effect determination(s) for the proposed action.

Species	Determination
Threatened rufa red knot (<i>Calidris canutus rufa</i>)	No Effect
Threatened Canada lynx (<i>Lynx canadensis</i>)	NLAA
Threatened northern long-eared bat (<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>)	May Affect

Northern Long-eared Bat: The Action "May Affect" the Northern Long-eared Bat (NLEB). However, the Action complies with the final 4(d) rule with incidental take covered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's January 5, 2016, Intra-Service Programmatic Biological Opinion on the final 4(d) rule for the NLEB addressing "Activities Excepted from Take Prohibitions." As such, no further consultation is required for NLEB.

The Service will notify you within 30 calendar days if we determine that this proposed Action does not meet the criteria for a "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" (NLAA) determination for Federally listed species in Michigan. If we do not notify you within that timeframe, you may

proceed with the Action under the terms of the NLAA concurrence provided here. This verification period allows the Michigan Ecological Services Field Office to apply local knowledge to evaluation of the Action, as we may identify a small subset of actions having impacts that were unanticipated. In such instances, the Michigan Ecological Services Field Office may request additional information to verify the effects determination reached through the Michigan DKey.

Your agency has met consultation requirements by informing the Service of your “No Effect” determination(s). No consultation for is required for species that you determined will not be affected by the Action.

The Service recommends that you contact the Service or re-evaluate the project in IPaC if: 1) the scope or location of the proposed Action is changed; 2) new information reveals that the action may affect listed species or designated critical habitat in a manner or to an extent not previously considered; 3) the Action is modified in a manner that causes effects to listed species or designated critical habitat; or 4) a new species is listed or critical habitat designated. If any of the above conditions occurs, additional consultation with the Service should take place before project changes are final or resources committed.

Bats of Conservation Concern:

Implementing protective measures for bats, including both federally listed and unlisted species, indirectly helps to protect Michigan’s agriculture and forests. Bats are significant predators of nocturnal insects, including many crop and forest pests. For example, Whitaker (1995) estimated that a single colony of 150 big brown bats (*Eptesicus fuscus*) would eat nearly 1.3 million pest insects each year. Boyles et al. (2011) noted the “loss of bats in North America could lead to agricultural losses estimated at more than \$3.7 billion/year, and Maine and Boyles (2015) estimated that the suppression of herbivory by insectivorous bats is worth >1 billion USD globally on corn alone. In captive trials, northern long-eared bats were found to significantly reduce the egg-laying activity of mosquitoes, suggesting bats may also play an important role in controlling insect-borne disease (Reiskind and Wund 2009). Mosquitoes have also been found to be a consistent component of the diet of Indiana bats and are eaten most heavily during pregnancy (6.6%; Kurta and Whitaker 1998). Taking proactive steps to help protect bats may be very valuable to agricultural and forest product yields and pest management costs in and around a project area. Such conservation measures include limiting tree clearing during the bat active season (April through October) and/or the non-volant season (June through July), when young bats are unable to fly, and minimizing the extent of impacts to forests, wetlands, and riparian habitats.

Bald and Golden Eagles: Bald eagles, golden eagles, and their nests are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (54 Stat. 250, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 668a-d) (Eagle Act). The Eagle Act prohibits, except when authorized by an Eagle Act permit, the “taking” of bald and golden eagles and defines “take” as “pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, molest or disturb.” The Eagle Act’s implementing regulations define disturb as “... to agitate or bother a bald or golden eagle to a degree that causes, or is likely to cause, based on the best scientific information available, (1) injury to an eagle, (2) a decrease in its productivity,

by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior, or (3) nest abandonment, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior.”

If the Action may impact bald or golden eagles, additional coordination with the Service under the Eagle Act may be required. For more information on eagles and conducting activities in the vicinity of an eagle nest, please visit <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/eagle/>. In addition, the Service developed the National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (May 2007) in order to assist landowners in avoiding the disturbance of bald eagles. The full Guidelines are available at <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/eagle/pdf/NationalBaldEagleManagementGuidelines.pdf>.

If you have further questions regarding potential impacts to eagles, please contact Chris Mensing, Chris_Mensing@fws.gov or 517-351-2555.

Bat References

Boyles, J.G., P.M. Cryan, G.F. McCracken, T.H. Kunz. 2011. Economic Importance of Bats in Agriculture. *Science* 332(1):41-42.

Kurta, A. and J.O. Whitaker. 1998. Diet of the Endangered Indiana Bat (*Myotis sodalis*) on the Northern Edge of Its Range. *The American Midland Naturalist* 140(2):280-286.

Reiskind, M.H. and M.A. Wund. 2009. Experimental assessment of the impacts of northern long-eared bats on ovipositing *Culex* (Diptera: Culicidae) mosquitoes. *Journal of Medical Entomology* 46(5):1037-1044.

Whitaker, Jr., J.O. 1995. Food of the big brown bat *Eptesicus fuscus* from maternity colonies in Indiana and Illinois. *American Midland Naturalist* 134(2):346-360.

Action Description

You provided to IPaC the following name and description for the subject Action.

1. Name

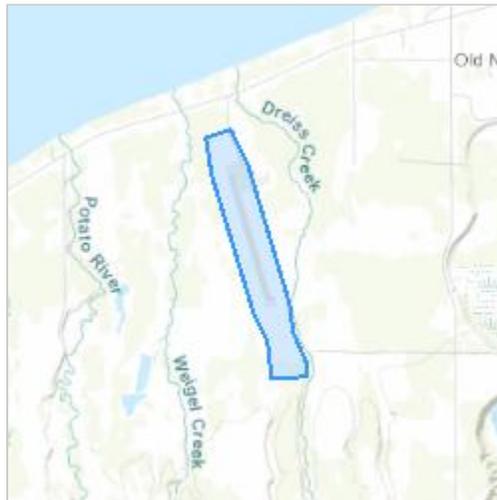
Ontonagon-Schuster Field Runway 17/35 Approach Clearing

2. Description

The following description was provided for the project 'Ontonagon-Schuster Field Runway 17/35 Approach Clearing':

To address potential obstructions located north of the Runway 17 end, the Airport proposes to clear and grub approximately four acres of land to create a surface that can be easily maintained by existing Airport equipment. Further, to address potential obstructions associated with the recently implemented FAA “localizer performance with vertical guidance” (LPV) precision approach to Runway 35, the Airport proposes to clear obstructions identified as penetrations to this approach and transitional surfaces.

Approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@46.844298249999994,-89.36658080039749,14z>



Qualification Interview

1. This determination key is intended to assist the user in the evaluating the effects of their actions on Federally listed species in Michigan. It does not cover other prohibited activities under the Endangered Species Act (e.g., for wildlife: import/export, Interstate or foreign commerce, possession of illegally taken wildlife, etc.; for plants: import/export, reduce to possession, malicious destruction on Federal lands, commercial sale, etc.) or other statutes. Click yes to acknowledge that you must consider other prohibitions of the ESA or other statutes outside of this determination key.

Yes

2. Is the action being funded, authorized, or carried out by a Federal agency?

Yes

3. Does the action involve the installation or operation of wind turbines?

No

4. Does the action involve purposeful take of a listed animal?

No

5. Does the action involve a new communication tower that uses guy wires or is over 200 feet in height?

No

6. Does the activity involve aerial or other large-scale application of any chemical (including insecticide, herbicide, etc.)?

No

7. Will your action permanently affect local hydrology?

No

8. Will your action temporarily affect local hydrology?

No

9. Will your project have any direct impacts to a stream or river (e.g., stream/road crossings, new stormwater outfall discharge, dams, other in-stream work, etc.)?

No

10. Does your project have the potential to indirectly impact the stream/river or the riparian zone cut and fill, horizontal directional drilling, construction, vegetation removal, discharge, etc.)?

Yes

11. Will your action disturb the ground or existing vegetation? This includes any off road vehicle access, soil compaction, digging, seismic survey, directional drilling, heavy equipment, grading, trenching, placement of fill, pesticide application, vegetation management (including removal or maintenance using equipment or chemicals), cultivation, development, etc.

Yes

12. Does your action occur entirely within an already-developed area (e.g., within an existing structure, graveled or paved lot, industrial site) that does not provide habitat for listed species? If unsure, select NO.

No

13. [Hidden Semantic] Does the action area intersect the rufa red knot AOI?

Automatically answered

Yes

14. [Hidden Semantic] Does the action area intersect the lynx AOI?

Automatically answered

Yes

15. Is there any potential for this action to harm Canada lynx directly (e.g., mammal trapping, poison bait)

No

16. [Hidden Semantic] Does this project intersect the northern long-eared bat AOI?

Automatically answered

Yes

17. Have you determined that the proposed action will have "no effect" on the northern long-eared bat? (If you are unsure select "No")

No

18. Is the project action area located within 0.25 miles of a known northern long-eared bat hibernaculum?

Note: The map queried for this question contains proprietary information and cannot be displayed. If you need additional information, please contact your State wildlife agency

Automatically answered

No

19. Will the action involve Tree Removal as defined in the 4(d) rule for northern long-eared bat??

Yes

20. Has a presence/absence bat survey or field-based habitat assessment following the Service's Range-wide Indiana Bat Summer Survey Guidelines been conducted within the action area?

No

21. Does the action include removal/modification of an existing bridge or culvert?

No

22. Does the action include tree cutting/trimming, prescribed fire, and/or pesticide application?

Yes

23. Is the entire action area contained within small, isolated forest patch(es) (that is, ≤ 5 acres and separated from other forest and connective corridors, such as tree lines, by >1000 ft)?

No

24. Will the action [clear \$\geq\$ 20 acres of forest or fragment a connective corridor](#) between 2 or more forest patches of at least 5 acres?

Yes

Project Questionnaire

If the project includes forest conversion, report the appropriate acreages below. Otherwise, type '0' in questions 1-3.

1. Estimated total acres of forest conversion:

30.6

2. If known, estimated acres of forest conversion from April 1 to October 31

0

3. If known, estimated acres of forest conversion from June 1 to July 31

0

If the project includes timber harvest, report the appropriate acreages below. Otherwise, type '0' in questions 4-6.

4. Estimated total acres of timber harvest

0

5. If known, estimated acres of timber harvest from April 1 to October 31

0

6. If known, estimated acres of timber harvest from June 1 to July 31

0

If the project includes prescribed fire, report the appropriate acreages below. Otherwise, type '0' in questions 7-9.

7. Estimated total acres of prescribed fire

0

8. If known, estimated acres of prescribed fire from April 1 to October 31

0

9. If known, estimated acres of prescribed fire from June 1 to July 31

0

Appendix D. State of Michigan Resource Listing and Coordination



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY
LANSING



LIESL EICHLER CLARK
DIRECTOR

June 30, 2020

Ms. Lisa Linna
Ontonagon County Airport-Schuster Field
35932 Airport Road
Ontonagon, Michigan 49953

Dear Ms. Linna:

SUBJECT: Transportation Preliminary Database Search
Project Name: OGM Rwy 17 RPZ Short Form EA / Ontonagon, MI
Site Name: 66-OGM Rwy 17 RPZ Short Form EA
Submission Number: HP0-8HV5-JCS17
Location: T51N, R40W, Section 03, Ontonagon County

This letter provides the results of the Transportation Preliminary Database Search that was requested on **June 4, 2020**, for the above subject project. The Transportation Preliminary Map/Database Review includes a database search for the following concerns within 500-feet of the project location:

- Historical occurrences of state-listed threatened or endangered (T&E) species within the MNFI database*
- Tier 1 Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake (EMR) designated habitat
- Michigan Mussel Protocol Group 1/Group 2 (state) and Group 3 (federal) T&E Mussels
- Known contamination locations
- State-regulated 303 wetlands
- Section 10 regulated waterways

Mapped 303 regulated wetlands were noted in the database as being observed within 500 feet of your project area at the following locations:

- Airport Road (east side) from approximately 700 LF south of M-64 to the vicinity of the airport parking lot entrance (northern-most small lot)
- West side of Runway 17/35 through much of the project buffer zone.
- East side of Runway 17/35 from approximately 2,770 LF north of Perander Road south through the remainder of the project buffer zone.

The database review also shows the far northern end of your project area (along and north of an east-west line approximately 140 LF north of the small parking lot) lies within the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Section 10 regulated waterways area. You will need to contact USACE to determine whether any specific areas of the project fall under Section 10 jurisdiction. You will also need to confirm whether any existing wetlands within the project area fall under federal jurisdiction.

The database search **did not** indicate any occurrences for state-listed T&E species, EMR habitat, mussels, Northern long-eared bats or Indiana bats, and contaminated sites,

** Historical occurrence data for state-listed T&E species were provided to the Water Resources Division (WRD) by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI). These data are not based on a comprehensive inventory of the state. The lack of data for any geographical area shall not be construed to mean that no significant features are present. In addition, although the MNFI maintains high standards of quality control, there is no warranty as to the fitness of the data for any purpose, nor that the data are necessarily accurate or complete.*

The only way to obtain a definitive statement on the status of threatened and endangered species is to have a qualified biologist perform a complete field survey of the proposed project area. Under Part 365, Endangered Species Protection, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, "a person shall not take, possess, transport, . . . fish, plants, and wildlife indigenous to the state and determined to be endangered or threatened," unless first receiving an endangered species permit from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). The presence of threatened or endangered species does not preclude activities or development but may require alterations to the project. To obtain or submit an endangered species permit, please contact Ms. Casey Reitz, MDNR, at 517-284-6210 or reitzc@michigan.gov.

This review does not include a comprehensive search for federally listed species. The project location must be screened using the self-service United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) IPaC website. If your project will potentially impact a federally listed T&E species, you should contact USFWS Ecological Services Field Office at 517-351-2555 or eastlansing@fws.gov to begin the consultation process. If your project requires a permit from the WRD, the application submission should include documentation from USFWS of concurrence/approval.

This letter does not include a review of potential lake, stream, wetland, or floodplain impacts caused by your project that may require a permit from our office. A copy of this letter should be provided as an attachment to any future Joint Permit Application submitted for this location. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at prysbym1@michigan.gov or 517-899-7316.

Sincerely,



Michael Prysby, P.E.
Transportation Review Unit
Water Resources Division

cc: USFWS
Ms. Casey Reitz, MDNR

From: [Battle, Jean M CIV USARMY CELRE \(USA\)](#)
To: [Brauna Hartzell](#)
Cc: [William Ballard](#); [Gustafson, John \(EGLE\)](#)
Subject: RE: OGM Ontonagon Airport MiWaters Review question- Corps Response
Date: Friday, April 2, 2021 4:28:47 PM

Hello Brauna

The proposed project is in an area where the state of Michigan has assumed authority under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. There are no Section 10 Navigable Waters within the project boundaries shown on the attachments you provided. Therefore no Corps permit is required.

Thank you for checking with the Corps of Engineers. The file number is LRE-2021-00427-266. Please keep this email for your records and let me know if you have any questions.

Jean

Jean Battle
Regulatory Project Manager
Marquette Regulatory Field Office
(906) 228-2833; during the COVID-19 office closure call (906) 281-8942
Jean.M.Battle2@usace.army.mil

Please visit our Detroit District Regulatory website at
<http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/Missions/RegulatoryProgramandPermits.aspx>

We would appreciate your feedback. Our National Customer Service Survey is located at
http://corpsmapu.usace.army.mil/cm_apex/f?p=regulatory_survey

From: Brauna Hartzell <brauna.hartzell@meadhunt.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 1, 2021 5:23 PM
To: Battle, Jean M CIV USARMY CELRE (USA) <Jean.M.Battle2@usace.army.mil>
Cc: William Ballard <william.ballard@meadhunt.com>
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] RE: OGM Ontonagon Airport MiWaters Review question

Good afternoon!

Mead & Hunt is working with the Ontonagon Airport on an obstruction clearing project. We have completed a wetland delineation and are in the process of completing environmental documentation for the project. We had a MiWaters database search done and it indicated that there might be some Section 10 waters within or near our project area. The database search documentation is attached as is a project location map.

There are wetlands at the northern end of the project area. However, proposed tree clearing activities in this area include no ground disturbance and will occur near the end of the runway to the

west of Airport Road. There are no impacts to wetlands east of Airport Road. Attached is a wetland boundary map for the northern end of the project area.

We contacted Michigan EGLE (John Gustafson) for clarification and his response is below. He suggested contacting you in regards to the reference to potential Section 10 waters for the project area. Can you please let us know if there are any Section 10 Waters within our project area?

Thank you for your assistance with this request. Please contact me with any questions.

Brauna

BRAUNA HARTZELL, GISP

GIS ANALYST, WATER

(Pronouns She, Her, Hers)

Mead & Hunt

Direct: 608-443-0456 | [Transfer Files](#)

[meadhunt.com](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)



From: Gustafson, John (EGLE) <GUSTAFSONJ2@michigan.gov>

Sent: Friday, March 26, 2021 9:37 AM

To: Brauna Hartzell <brauna.hartzell@meadhunt.com>

Cc: William Ballard <william.ballard@meadhunt.com>

Subject: RE: OGM Ontonagon Airport MiWaters Review question

Hi Brauna,

When a project is ran through the MiWaters database for review, a buffer is created around the site boundaries to ensure that any nearby special interests that may impact the project are considered. In this case the proximity to Lake Superior and the Coastal Zone Boundary may have triggered the USACE hit. In very basic terms, the corps still regulates wetlands that are adjacent or directly connected to a navigable waterway or any work below 603.1 IGLD, but their jurisdiction with wetlands has fluctuated quite a bit the last few years based on what rule/court case they are administering their programs by. Based on my review of the site, I am doubtful that the corps would regulate the wetlands on this project, but if you wish to get a final determination from the corps, you can contact Jean Battle, Jean.M.Battle2@usace.army.mil, (906) 281-8942, at the Marquette regulatory field office.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks, and have a great day,

John G.

From: Brauna Hartzell <brauna.hartzell@meadhunt.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 25, 2021 12:44 PM
To: Gustafson, John (EGLE) <GUSTAFSONJ2@michigan.gov>
Cc: William Ballard <william.ballard@meadhunt.com>
Subject: OGM Ontonagon Airport MiWaters Review question

CAUTION: This is an External email. Please send suspicious emails to abuse@michigan.gov

Hi John,

We are working towards finishing the EA document for the Ontonagon Airport Runway Tree Clearing project. We received the attached MiWaters database search. Fortunately, there were no listed species found in the database search.

We are a bit puzzled by the second to last paragraph and reference to Section 10 regulated waters being near our project area. I did a search for Section 10 Waters on the Detroit District's web site (list current as of 2018) and did not find any streams listed that are close. Lake Superior is obviously just to the north but our project area does not impact that at all. The letter suggests contacting the USACE for more info but we thought we would check in with you first to see if you might be able to provide some insight. Can you please provide further info on any Section 10 Waters in the project area? If not, could you provide a contact at the Corps to follow-up with?

Thanks very much!

Best,
Brauna

BRAUNA HARTZELL, GISP
GIS ANALYST, WATER
(Pronouns She, Her, Hers)
Mead & Hunt
Direct: 608-443-0456 | [Transfer Files](#)
meadhunt.com | [LinkedIn](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)

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