

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

JOHNSON GAME PRODUCTION AREA DISPOSAL

LINCOLN COUNTY, SOUTH DAKOTA

January 2019

Prepared by:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program Region 6 Denver, Colorado

&

South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks Division of Wildlife Pierre, South Dakota

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PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

The Johnson Game Production Area (GPA) is located in southeast South Dakota (SD) adjacent to and part of a larger GPA complex that includes Newton Hills State Park (SP) (Figure 1). Newton Hills SP is owned and managed by the Parks and Recreation Division of South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (SDGFP), but for purposes of this draft Environmental Assessment (EA), use of the term SDGFP will refer to the Wildlife Division of SDGFP and Newton Hills SP to the Parks and Recreation Division of SDGFP.

SDGFP acquired the Johnson GPA in February 1966. Grant funds from the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration (PR) Act, a grant program administered by the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR) of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), provided 75% of the cost of the acquisition through Grant W-73-L-41. The property was purchased to provide game production habitat and public hunting opportunities.



Figure 1

SDGFP is now requesting approval from the WSFR program to remove the Federal interest in a 3.39-acre

parcel, known as Tract 1, within the 154.65-acre Johnson GPA in Lincoln County, South Dakota (Figure 2).

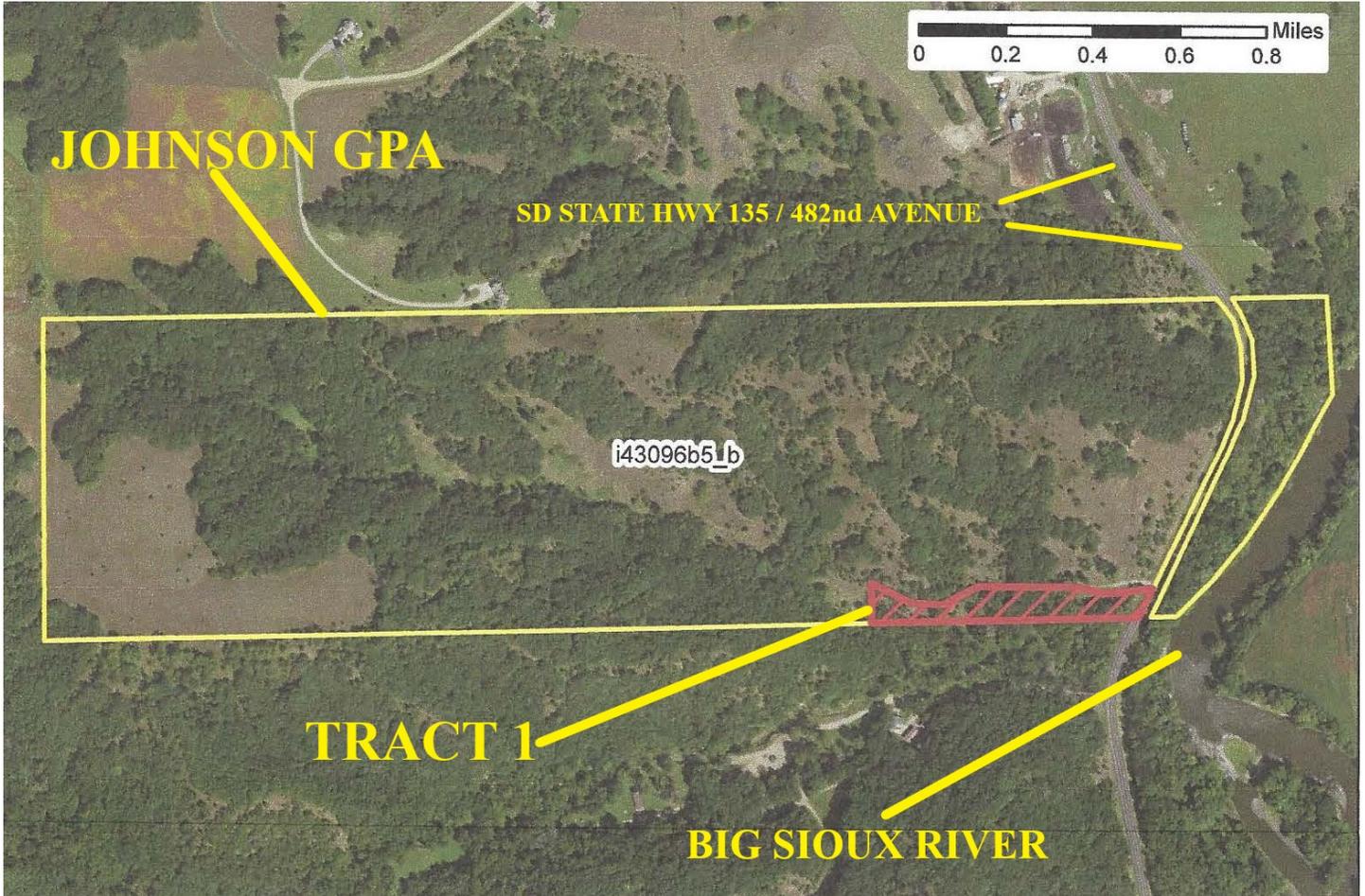


Figure 2

While the Johnson GPA still serves the purposes for which it was acquired, Tract 1 alone provides minimal wildlife habitat management and public hunting access opportunities, as it currently consists primarily of a management trail utilized by SDGFP staff for land stewardship purposes. Consequently, it is being considered as part of a property exchange project involving a portion of Newton Hill SP and adjacent property owned by the Boy Scouts of America (BSA).

Disposing of Tract 1 would not diminish or impede current wildlife habitat management activities, public hunting use, or SDGFP management access of the remaining 151 acres in Johnson GPA. Upon evaluating the effects of the proposed property disposal, SDGFP has determined that the affected wildlife resources and public interests would be unaffected by the proposed disposal and loss of Federal interest.

WSFR approval of removing the Federal interest in Tract 1 constitutes a federal action subject to the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended. The Service is therefore required to prepare an EA to analyze the effects on the human environment and document the findings. The Service will use this draft EA and associated public review process to determine if the proposed action (i.e. removing the Federal interest in Tract 1) is likely to result in significant impacts to the human environment. If it is determined there are no significant adverse impacts, the Service will issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). If it

is determined, conversely, that significant impacts might occur by removing the Federal interest in Tract 1, the Service will be required to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to assess the impacts.

ALTERNATIVES

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is removal of the Federal interest in Tract 1, which will allow SDGFP to consider a potential future land exchange involving portions of Newton Hills SP and the BSA property.

While the scope of the Proposed Action is limited to removing the Federal interest in Tract 1, such action would assist in a contemplated property exchange involving Newton Hills SP and BSA properties. As contemplated, the exchange would result in a net gain in property owned and managed jointly by SDGFP and Newton Hills SP, as property proposed to be received by SDGFP is larger (10.51 acres) than the combined Tract 1 (3.39 acres) and Newton Hills SP property (3.23 acres).

If disposed of through the contemplated exchange, Tract 1 under BSA ownership would likely remain as it exists currently, consisting primarily of an access trail. BSA's interest in Tract 1 is in regards to providing a safe and adequate access route to a now difficult to access portion of their existing property; acquiring Tract 1 would serve this purpose. Safe and adequate access to portions of their existing property is also BSA's motivation for acquiring the 3.23-acre portion of Newton Hills SP; again, accomplished via the contemplated exchange. Further, SDGFP and Newton Hills SP benefit from receiving the 10.51 acre BSA property as it provides additional access to the Big Sioux River for water-based recreational purposes, and completes a two-mile long corridor of SDGFP lands owned and managed lands along the Big Sioux River between the Johnson GPA and the McKee GPA.

An appraisal and appraisal review of the Johnson GPA, including Tract 1 – has been prepared in accordance with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practices (USPAP) and Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions (UASFLA). The appraiser concluded that the current market value of Tract 1 is \$8,700.00.

No Action

If no action is taken, SDGFP will continue to own Tract 1, the Federal interest will remain in the property, and the potential land exchange involving Newton Hills SP and BSA will likely be unachievable.

Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Analysis

Disposal of Tract 1 via public auction was also considered as an option available to SDGFP. However, disposing of Tract 1 as a stand-alone property would not provide a potential buyer with an economic parcel, as local zoning would restrict its use to agricultural or recreation purposes. Additionally, if Tract 1 was sold by public auction to a private buyer, the opportunity to complete a potential property exchange with Newton Hills SP and BSA would be eliminated.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Location

Tract 1 of the Johnson GPA is located four miles south of Canton in Lincoln County, SD, along SD State Highway 135 (aka 482nd Avenue). It abuts the Big Sioux River, which denotes the border between Lincoln County, SD and Sioux County, Iowa. The tract is described legally as the N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, and Lot 1 of NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 12 in Township 97 North, Range 49 West of the 5th PM, Lincoln County, South Dakota. Tract 1 is separately platted, and is legally described as Johnson GPA Tract 1, an addition to Gov't Lot 1 and the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 12 in Township 97 North, Range 49 West of the 5th PM, Lincoln County, South Dakota.

Prime and Unique Farmlands

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Tract 1 soils consist of Shindler Renner complex (SmF), Shindler and Talmo soils (StD); Lamo silty clay loam (La), and Alcester silty clay loam (AcB) (Figure 3). Both Lamo silty clay loam and Alcester silty clay loam are considered prime farmland. This area is not currently in agricultural use, and it is anticipated that the area will remain in non-agricultural use under other ownership. The complete NRCS soil resource report is included in Appendix A.

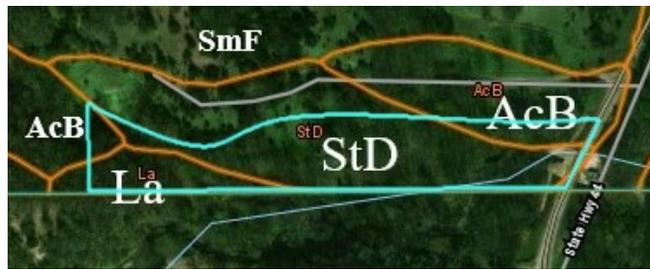


Figure 3

Wetlands and Floodplains

According to information from the National Wetlands Inventory website, no wetlands occur on Tract 1 (Figure 4), and according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, a small portion on the extreme east side of Tract 1 lies within the 100-year floodplain of the Big Sioux River (Figure 5).

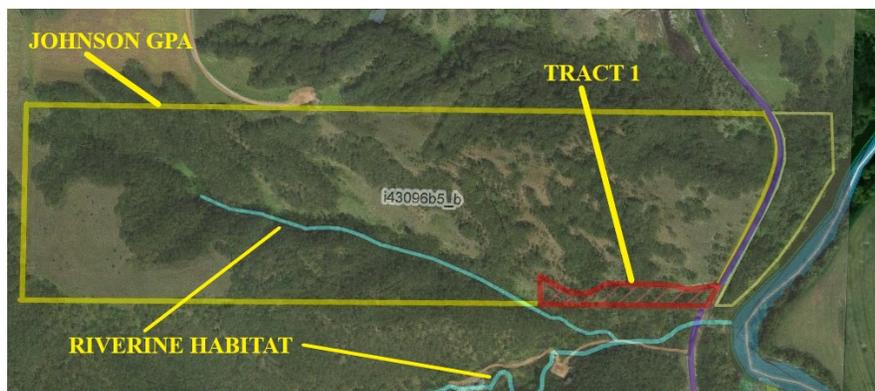


Figure 4

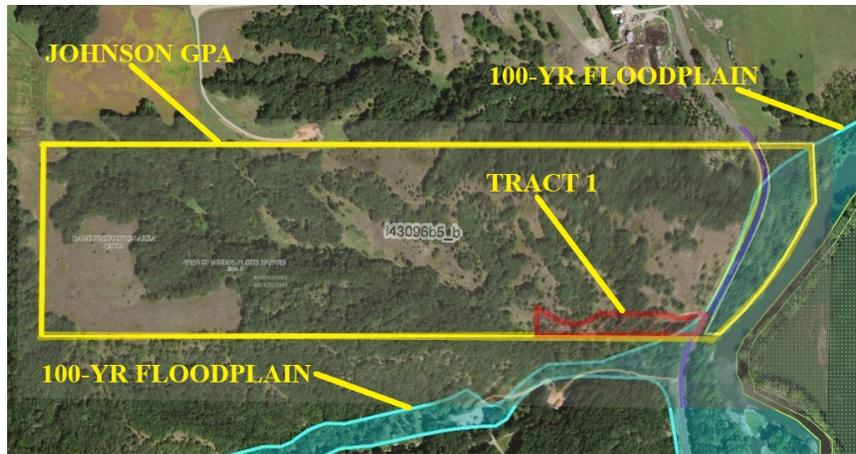


Figure 5

Vegetation

Tract 1 is entirely an upland site containing a plant community typical of the soil types contained therein. Grassland species include big bluestem (*Androporon gerardii*), little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), green needlegrass (*Stipa viridula*), sideoats grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*), and needleandthread (*Stipa comata*), with increasing amounts of smooth brome (*Bromus inermis*) and Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*). Additionally, the site also supports several deciduous trees such as bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpus*), green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), as well as a community of Eastern redcedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), which are characterized as an aggressive invader into native prairie sites.

Wildlife Resources

Despite its size and location, several resident and migratory wildlife species occur on Tract 1 based on season. Common game species that likely occur on and around the area of Tract 1 include white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), Eastern cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), and wild turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*), and non-game species include red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), and striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*).

Federally-Listed Species

According to the Fish and Wildlife Service website “Information for Planning and Consultation,” the following Federally-listed species may occur in Lincoln County, SD, or Lyon and Sioux Counties in Iowa.

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Northern Long-eared Bat (<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>) | Threatened |
| Red Knot (<i>Calidris canutus rufa</i>) | Threatened |
| Topeka Shiner (<i>Notropis topeka (=tristis)</i>) | Endangered & Critical Habitat |
| Prairie Bush-clover (<i>Lespedeza leptostachya</i>) | Threatened |
| Western Prairie Fringed Orchid (<i>Platanthera praeclara</i>) | Threatened |

None of these species are known to occupy or occur on either Tract 1 or the Johnson GPA.

State Species of Special Concern

A search of rare species tracked by the South Dakota Natural Heritage Program found occurrences for the norther redbelly snake (*Storeria occipitomaculata*) and black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) on the Johnson GPA. Neither species is a state listed threatened or endangered species, nor a species of greatest conservation need as per the South Dakota Wildlife Action Plan.

Historic and Cultural Resources

According to the South Dakota State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), no cultural or historic properties are known to occur on Tract 1.

Recreation

Tract 1 alone, while open to public hunting and other wildlife related recreation, offers little opportunity for these activities due to its small size and being situated next to 482nd Avenue, a heavily-used high traffic use paved county highway.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Alternative 1 and 2

Documentation from the South Dakota Natural Heritage Program supporting the conclusion that neither alternative will result in impacts to Federally-listed species or State Species of Concern is attached as Appendix B.

Additionally, neither Alternative 1 (the Proposed Action) nor Alternative 2 (No Action) will result in any impacts to historical, cultural, or archaeological resources since none of these resources are known to occur on Tract 1. The SHPO concurred with the determination that no historic properties would be affected by either alternative as evidenced by a copy of the letter from the SHPO which is attached as Appendix C.

Alternative 1 - Proposed Action

The proposed action of removing the Federal interest in Tract 1 is an administrative action and would not result in any loss of SDGFP land base devoted to wildlife habitat. If the proposed action of removing the Federal interest is successful, Tract 1 would then be available as a needed component of the contemplated exchange involving SDGFP, Newton Hills SP, and BSA. Subsequently, if the contemplated property exchange were to be completed, a net gain in property devoted to wildlife habitat and public access would be achieved as the property proposed to be received by SDGFP and Newton Hills SP is larger (10.51 acres) than the combined Tract 1 (3.39 acres) and Newton Hills SP property (3.23 acres).

Tract 1 under BSA ownership would likely remain as it exists currently, consisting primarily of an access trail. BSA's interest in Tract 1 is in regards to providing a safe and adequate access route to a now difficult to access portion of their existing property; acquiring Tract 1 would serve this purpose. Safe and adequate access to portions of their existing property is also BSA's motivation for acquiring the 3.23 acre portion of Newton Hills SP; again, accomplished via the contemplated exchange. Under BSA ownership, the Newton Hills SP tract would likely remain as it currently exists.

Further, SDGFP, Newton Hills SP, and the public benefit from receiving the 10.51 acre BSA property as it provides additional access to the Big Sioux River for water-based recreational purposes, and completes a 2-mile long corridor of SDGFP lands owned and managed lands along the Big Sioux River between the Johnson GPA and the McKee GPA. The BSA property under joint ownership and management by SDGFP and Newton Hills SP would be devoted to wildlife habitat, public hunting access, and river access for boating and fishing.

If disposed of, SDGFP resources currently devoted to managing Tract 1 would then be directed to more efficient and effective management and public use opportunities on other GPAs in the area and the property acquired from BSA if the contemplated exchange is completed. Resources currently devoted to management of the Newton Hills SP tract are negligible, and a disposal would have no impact on future resources devoted to operating and maintaining Newton Hills SP.

Alternative 2 - No Action

Under the No Action alternative, SDGFP would retain ownership and management responsibilities of Tract 1 as it currently exists, and would eliminate the opportunity to complete the potential property exchange with Newton Hills SP and BSA. Newton Hills SP and BSA properties would remain in their respective ownerships.

Summary of Impacts

The following table summarizes impacts to identified resources for both the Preferred Alternative and the No Action alternative.

| Resource | Impacts by Alternative | |
|---|--|--|
| | Preferred Action | No Action |
| Prime & Unique Farmland | Tract 1 contains a small amount of prime farmland. These areas are currently not in crop production. Under the preferred action of removing the federal interest, and the subsequent potential exchange project, it is anticipated Tract 1 will remain as-is in an undeveloped and non-cropped condition. | There will continue to be no impact on these resources as Tract 1 contains only a very small amount of prime farmland, and will remain in an undeveloped and non-cropped condition. |
| Floodplains and Wetlands | Under the preferred action of removing the federal interest, no positive or negative impact on floodplains and wetland resources would result. Further, floodplains and wetland resources would also not be positively or negatively impacted through the contemplated exchange made possible by removing the federal interest from Tract 1. | Under a continued federal interest in Tract 1, and the contemplated property exchange thus unavailable, there would be no positive or negative impact on floodplains and wetland resources. |
| Vegetation | Consisting of a vegetation composition typical for its landscape and current use, the proposed action of removing the federal interest will not affect the existing vegetation community on Tract 1. | Consisting of a vegetation composition typical for its landscape and current use, the vegetation community will remain unchanged and there will be no impacts under this alternative. |
| Wildlife | The proposed action of removing the federal interest in Tract 1, and the subsequent potential exchange project, will not negatively impact the local wildlife species composition, population levels, or wildlife related recreation value of Tract 1 or the remaining Johnson GPA Wall Lake GPA property. | Under continued ownership by SDGFP, there would be no impacts on the existing wildlife resources. |
| Federally Listed Species | The proposed action of removing the federal interest in Tract 1, and the subsequent potential exchange project, will not negatively impact federally listed species, as none are known to occur on the property. | Under continued ownership by SDGFP, there would be no impact to federally listed species, as none are known to occur on the property. |
| State Species of Special Concern | The proposed action of removing the federal interest in Tract 1, and the subsequent potential exchange project, will not negatively impact state listed threatened or endangered species, or species of greatest conservation need, as none are known to occur on the property. | Under continued ownership by SDGFP, there would be no impact to state listed threatened or endangered species, or species of greatest conservation need, as none are known to occur on the property. |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Historic and Cultural Resources</p> | <p>A Level I records search was conducted for Tract 1 of the Johnson GPA, with no historic properties identified, and the South Dakota SHPO concurred with the determination of No Historic Properties Affected. See Appendix C for a copy of the concurrence letter from the SHPO.</p> | <p>Tract 1 contains no known historic and cultural resources, and therefore No Historic Properties Affected by this alternative.</p> |
| <p>Recreation and Public Use</p> | <p>Given the size of Tract 1 and current use, no positive or negative impact on public hunting and related wildlife recreation would result under preferred action of removing the federal interest. However, public recreation (e.g. hunting and water based recreation access to the Big Sioux River) would be enhanced through the contemplated exchange made possible by removing the federal interest from Tract 1.</p> | <p>Under a continued federal interest in Tract 1, and the contemplated property exchange thus unavailable, there would be no positive or negative impact on public hunting and related wildlife recreation opportunities.</p> |

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

SDGFP acquired the Johnson GPA in February 1966 to provide game production habitat, wildlife refuge, and public hunting opportunities. In the years since, SDGFP has managed wildlife habitat on the property and provided for wildlife related recreation opportunities consistent with the purpose for which the area was acquired. Tract 1 consists of a small parcel of the larger Johnson GPA. Disposing of the federal interest in Tract 1, and potentially exchanging Tract 1 for other more desirable property, will afford SDGFP additional management opportunities (including eliminating potential conflicting use) without impacting opportunities for wildlife management and wildlife related recreational opportunities on the larger Johnson GPA property.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATON

The Service will accept all public comments related to this proposed action for (30) thirty days from the date when the assessment is published on the Service website. Additionally, legal notices will be printed in the following newspapers: Sioux Falls Argus Leader

EA PREPARATION

Paul Coughlin
Habitat Program Administrator
South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks
523 East Capitol Ave – Foss Building, Pierre, SD
57501

Tanna Zabel
Federal Aid Coordinator
South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks
523 East Capitol Ave – Foss Building, Pierre, SD
57501

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6
Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program
P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, CO

APPENDIX A



**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF
GAME, FISH AND PARKS**

523 EAST CAPITOL AVENUE | PIERRE, SD 57501

July 10, 2018

Tanna Zabel
Federal Aid Coordinator
SD Department of Game, Fish & Parks
523 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

RE: Johnson GPA Track 1 WSFR Interest Disposal

Dear Tanna,

I have conducted a search of the South Dakota Natural Heritage Database (SDNHD) of the above listed property and found no records of federal listed threatened and endangered species in the immediate vicinity. Please note that many places in South Dakota have not been surveyed for rare or protected species and the absence of any additional species from the database does not preclude its presence.

"No effect" This project(s) will have "no effect" on threatened, endangered, or candidate species as it involves localized disturbance. Based on current information, this project will have no effect on state listed or federally listed threatened, endangered, or candidate species and will have no significant impact on fish or wildlife resources. If threatened, endangered, or candidate species are encountered during construction, the Department of Game Fish and Parks shall initiate consultations with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services to determine appropriate steps to avoid any effects to these species, including cessation of construction.

Signature



**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF
GAME, FISH AND PARKS**

523 EAST CAPITOL AVENUE | PIERRE, SD 57501

DATE: 07/05/2018
TO: Casey Mehls
FROM: Tanna Zabel 
SUBJECT: Johnsons GPA Tract 1 WSFR Interest Disposal

The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks – Wildlife Division (SDGFP) plans to remove the encumbered Federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) Program interest of 3.39 acres of the Johnson Game Production Area (GPA).

The Johnson Game Production Area is described legally as the North Half of the Northwest Quarter (N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$), the Northwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter (NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$), and Government Lot One (1) of the Northeast Quarter (NE $\frac{1}{4}$) of Section Twelve (12), Township Ninety-Seven (97) North, Range Forty-Nine (49) West of the 5th P.M. Contained within the 154.65 acre Johnson GPA is the 3.39 acre platted tract (Johnson GPA Tract 1) proposed for WSFR interest disposal.

Please see the location depicted on the attached maps.

Submitted for your review in fulfillment of the requirements of NEPA and the ESA; please review and consider the following species:

Species considered:

Interior least tern, Piping plover, Rufa red knot, Whooping crane, Higgins eye pearlymussel, Scaleshell mussel, Pallid sturgeon, Topeka shiner, Western prairie fringed orchid, Leedy's roseroot, American burying beetle, Dakota skipper, Poweshiek skipperling, Black-footed ferret, Northern long-eared bat, Shovelnose sturgeon, Eskimo curlew, Gray wolf and Rusty-patched bumble bee where appropriate by site.

The rusty patched bumble bee is listed as a federal endangered species in South Dakota, but it is considered historical and not extant in the state. Therefore we have determined a "no effect" on this species from the proposed actions.

Are any **federally listed endangered species** known to occur either permanently or temporarily in the immediate vicinity of this GPA? If so, could you offer some direction as to how we might proceed to minimize and avoid adverse effect or significant impact to those species.

Thank you for your reviewing assistance in the pursuit of accomplishing this project.

Thanks Casey!





Federal Aid Project Proposal

Johnson GPA Tract 1 WSFR Interest Removal

South Dakota
Department of
Game, Fish and Parks

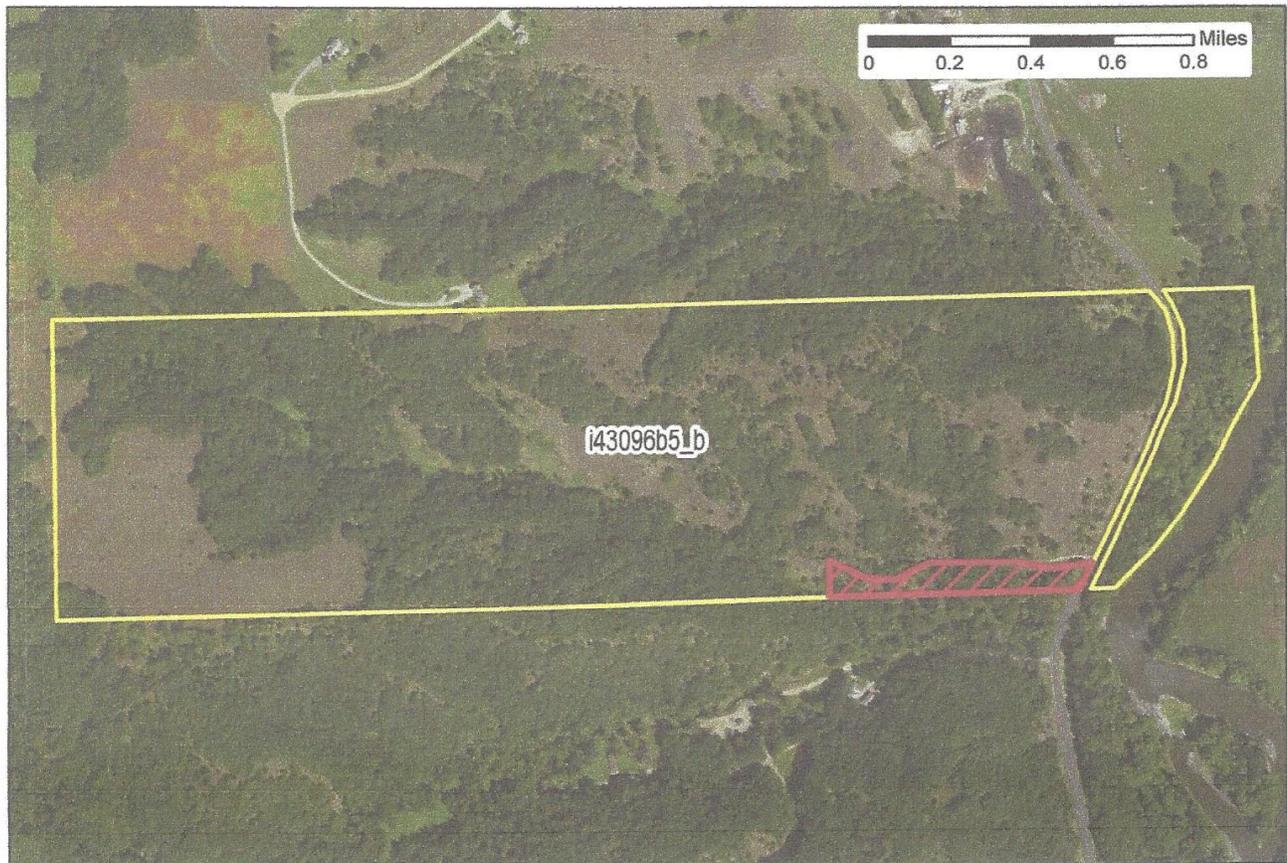
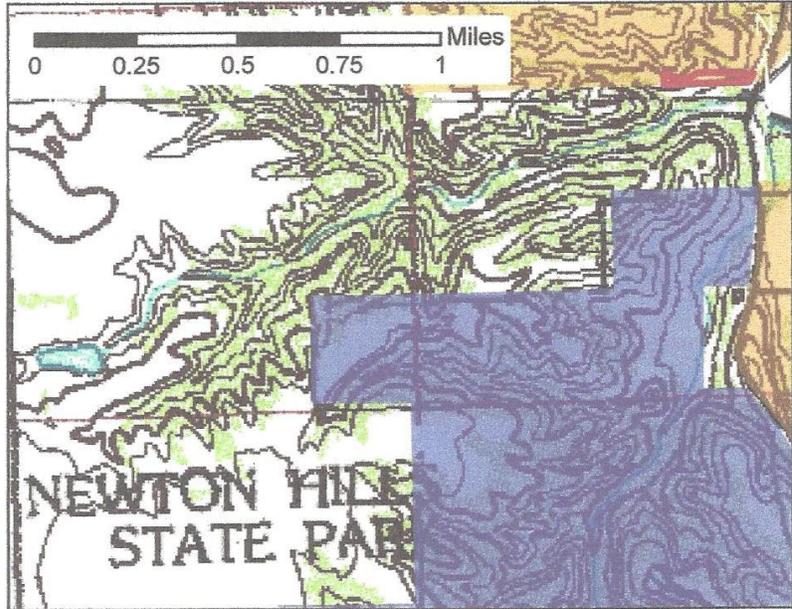
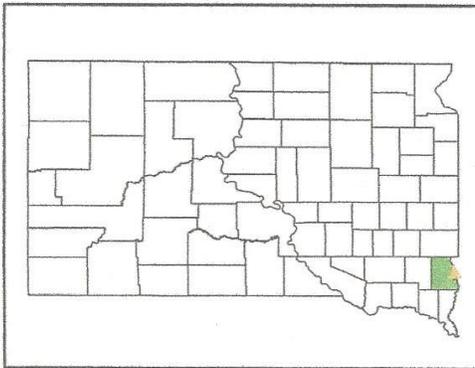
Description of Project: Johnson GPA Tract 1 WSFR Interest Removal

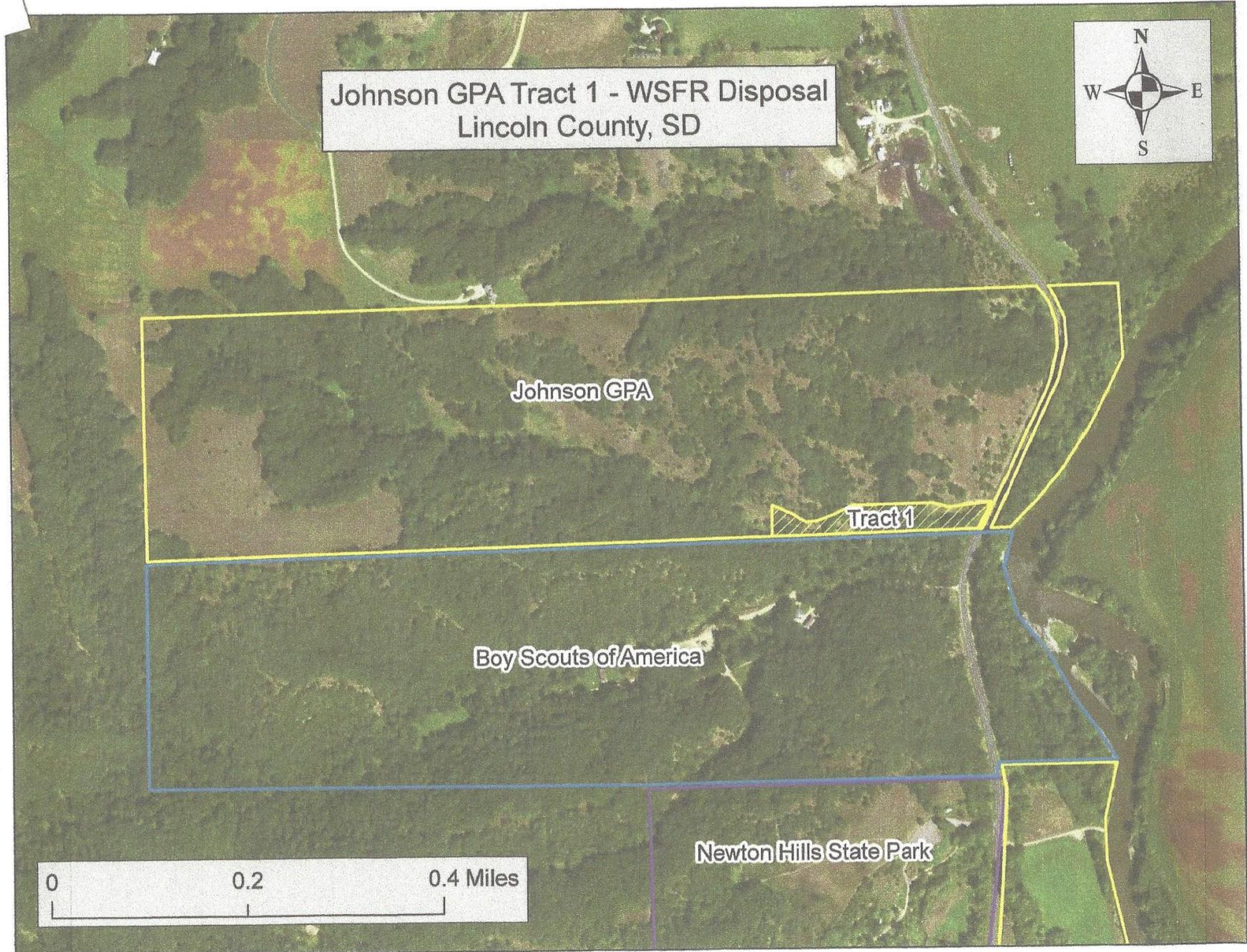
County: Lincoln

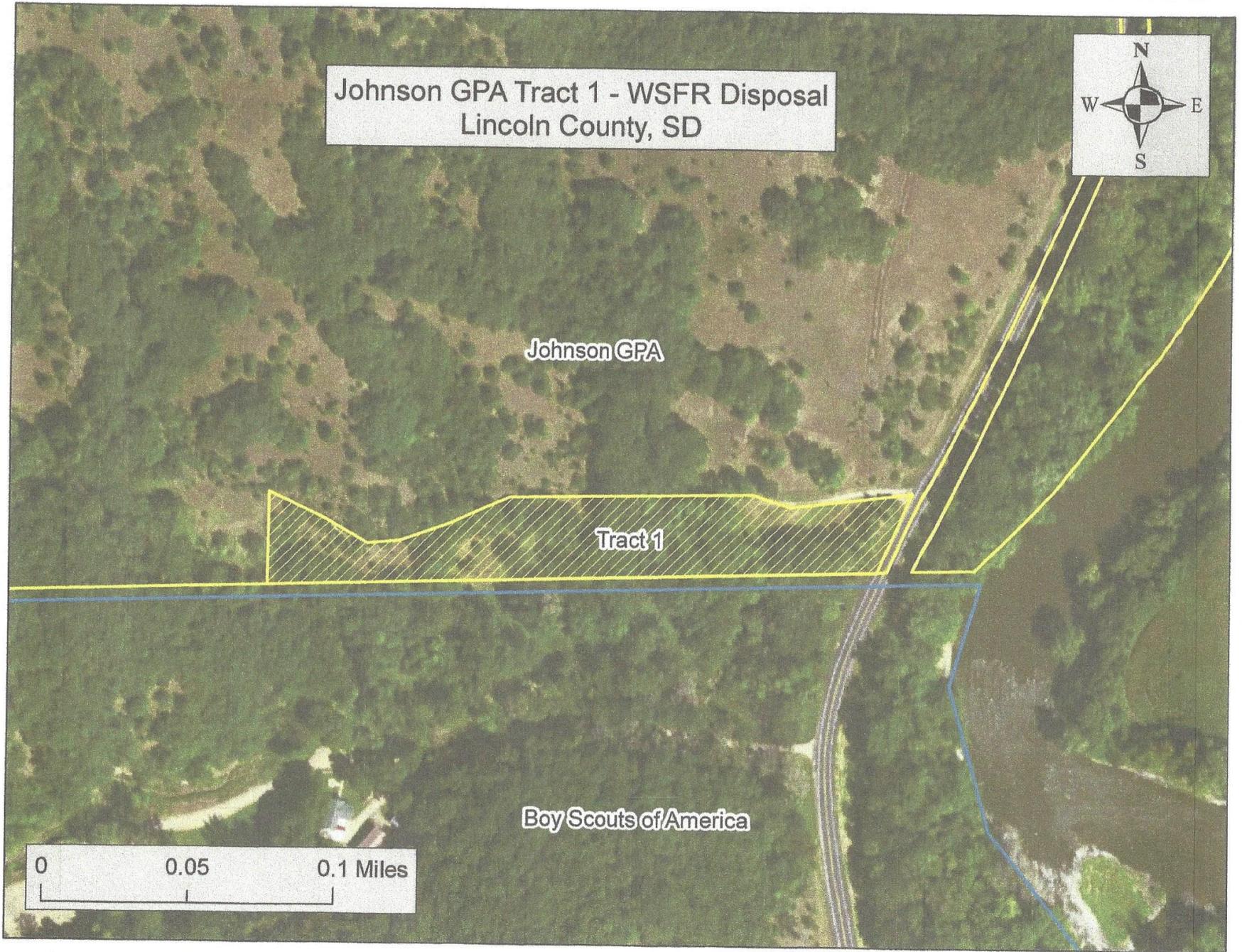
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Quadrangles: i43096b5_b

Lat: 43.23950 Long: -96.57414







APPENDIX B



July 31, 2018

Ms. Tanna Zabel
Department of Game, Fish and Parks
Foss Building
523 East Capitol
Pierre, SD 57501



SECTION 106 PROJECT CONSULTATION

Project: 180723001F – Johnson GPA Tract 1 Federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) Program Interest Disposal
Location: Lincoln County (USFWS/GFP)

Dear Ms. Zabel:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above referenced project pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), and the documents entitled “Programmatic Agreement between the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, and the South Dakota State Historic Preservation Officer regarding United States Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Restoration Programs, Endangered Species Act Grant Program (and Other Small Grant Programs Administered by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service)”. The South Dakota Office of the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurs with your determination regarding the effect of the proposed undertakings on the non-renewable cultural resources of South Dakota.

On July 23, 2018, we received your letter dated July 19, 2018, and attachments concerning the interest disposal of 3.39 acres of land located within the Johnson GPA for transfer to the Boy Scouts of America. Based on the information provided, the project area has been previously surveyed, and no cultural properties were identified in the current area of potential effects (APE).

Therefore, we concur with the determination of “No Historic Properties Affected” for this undertaking. Activities occurring in areas not identified in your request will require the submission of additional documentation pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 800.4.

If historic properties are discovered or unanticipated effects on historic properties are found after the agency official has completed the Section 106 process, the agency official shall avoid, minimize or mitigate the adverse effects to such properties and notify the SHPO and Indian tribes

that might attach religious and cultural significance to the affected property within 48 hours of the discovery, pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 800.13.

Concurrence of the SHPO does not relieve the federal agency official from consulting with other appropriate parties, as described in 36 C.F.R. § 800.2(c).

Should you require additional information, please contact Paige Olson at Paige.Olson@state.sd.us or (605)773-6004.

Sincerely,

Jay D. Vogt
State Historic Preservation Officer



Paige Olson
Review and Compliance Coordinator



SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF GAME, FISH AND PARKS

523 EAST CAPITOL AVENUE | PIERRE, SD 57501

July 19, 2018

Paige Hoskinson Olson, Review and Compliance Coordinator
State Historic Preservation Center
Cultural Heritage Center
900 Governor's Drive
Pierre, SD 57501

Re: Johnson GPA Tract 1 WSFR Interest Disposal

Dear Ms. Hoskinson Olson:

The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks – Wildlife Division (SDGFP) plans to remove the encumbered Federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) Program interest of 3.39 acres (Tract 1) of the Johnson Game Production Area (GPA). In fulfillment of the requirements of Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act, I ask that you give concurrence.

South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks (SDGFP) acquired the 154.65 acre Johnson Game Production Area (GPA) in January 1966 using WSFR Program funds – specifically the Pittman-Robertson Program – as a part of the Small Game Habitat Restoration Project Grant #W-73-L-41 (the original project name was the Newton Hills Area). Located in Lincoln County South Dakota, the Johnson GPA is 4 miles south of Canton, 20 miles south of Sioux Falls; and adjacent to or in the immediate vicinity of several other popular GPAs, Newton Hills State Park (NHSP), a Boy Scout of America (BSA) camp, and the Big Sioux River. The property has been managed as a GPA since its acquisition, providing wildlife habitat, public hunting, and other compatible wildlife related recreation opportunities.

The Johnson Game Production Area is described legally as the North Half of the Northwest Quarter (N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$), the Northwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter (NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$), and Government Lot One (1) of the Northeast Quarter (NE $\frac{1}{4}$) of Section Twelve (12), Township Ninety-Seven (97) North, Range Forty-Nine (49) West of the 5th P.M. Contained within the 154.65 acre Johnson GPA is the 3.39 acre platted tract (Johnson GPA Tract 1) proposed for WSFR interest disposal. Maps of the property and platted area are attached.

Recently SDGFP was approached by Boy Scouts of America (BSA) representatives with a proposal to exchange several small tracts of land. The proposed exchange would involve 10.51 acres of BSA property, 3.23 acres of NHSP property, and 3.39 acres of the Johnson GPA – platted as and legally described as Johnson GPA Tract 1. The proposed exchange would benefit the BSA camp by improving access to currently inaccessible portions of the camp property, while also benefitting SDGFP (both the Wildlife Division and the Parks and Recreation Division) by providing additional access to the adjacent Big Sioux River. After careful consideration by SDGFP and BSA, it was determined the proposed exchange would be of mutual benefit to all parties involved, and have no detrimental effect on the continued use and purpose of either the remaining GPA or NHSP.



Exchanges involving State owned property such as this are governed by existing State laws and regulations, and occur occasionally over time. However, when a proposed disposal involves a GPA encumbered with a Federal WSFR interest, SDGFP must also comply with the additional requirements governing disposal of WSFR properties. In the case of the proposed exchange with BSA and NHSP, it would then also be required that the BSA and NHSP tracts also be subject to many of these same requirements, particularly the valuation process. The valuation process alone, when requiring appraisals and appraisal reviews that are in compliance with the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions (UASFLA) would render the proposed exchange cost prohibitive. By removing the Federal WSFR Program interest from the 3.39 acre Johnson GPA Tract 1, SDGFP and the BSA could then utilize the less onerous and less expensive Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP) appraisal standards to determine values, and proceed with the proposed exchange in compliance with existing State laws and regulations governing such exchanges.

The Preferred Action is to remove the encumbered Federal interest in the property. The Preferred Action allows SDGFP to address the proposed future exchange of properties. A search of the SDARMS Database indicates that there are several archeological sites currently on the Johnson GPA, but these sites are not within the Tract 1 land that is being proposed to remove the Federal encumbrance. Our records indicate that the Johnson GPA and Newton Hills State Park each had an archeological survey completed in 2009. SDARMS Database records are enclosed.

Given the above information, we recommend a determination of "No Historic Properties Affected" for the Tract 1 land of the Johnson GPA. However, we will await your written concurrence or alternate recommendations.

Thank you for your review and assistance in accomplishing this disposal of property.

Please contact me at 605-773-6228 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Tanna Zabel
Federal Aid Coordinator

Enclosures



Federal Aid Project Proposal

Johnson GPA Tract 1 WSFR Interest Removal

South Dakota
Department of
Game, Fish and Parks

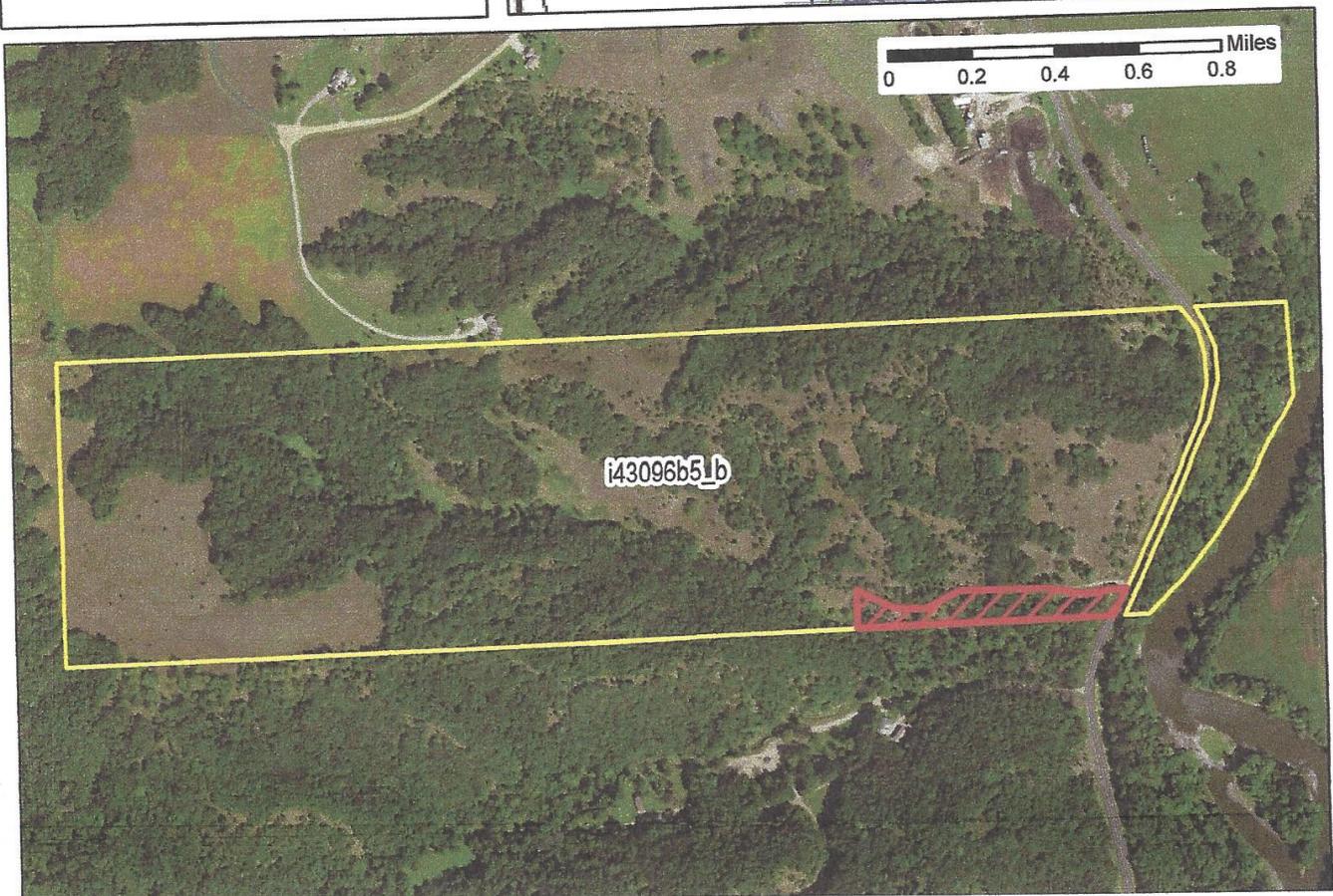
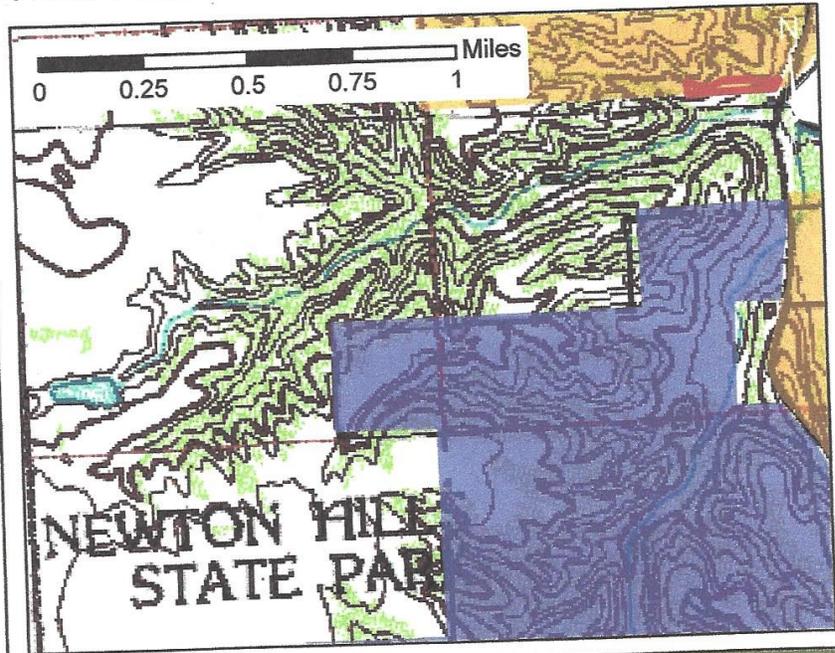
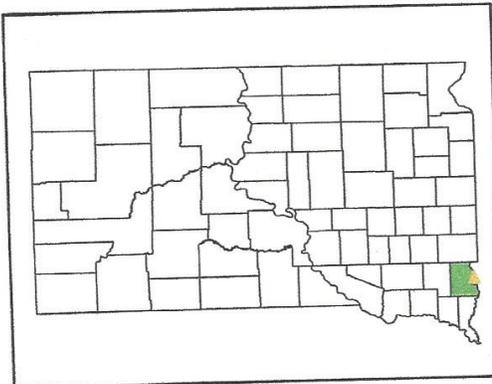
Description of Project: Johnson GPA Tract 1 WSFR Interest Removal

County: Lincoln

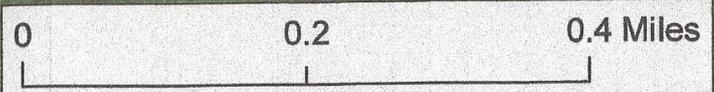
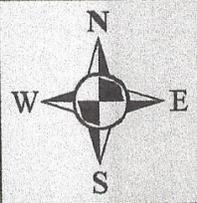
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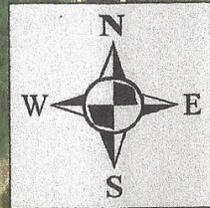
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Johnson GPA Tract 1 - WSFR Disposal
Lincoln County, SD



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Lincoln County, SD



Johnson GPA

Tract 1

Boy Scouts of America

