



PART 2:

SURVEY DATA FORMS



TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 1
Jasper Wetland

Map: B1
Acres 11

This site is a wetland that saddles Jasper Road, with a pond on the south side of the road.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 5 Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

- | | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Field without Crops | Aquatic |
| Farm | Wetland |
| Ditch | Woodland |
| Residential | Other |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ROS, CBSH, SB, ADUD

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs	Common Teasel	Plant Diversity:	3
Grass		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen American kestrel, bluejay, red-winged blackbird, killdeer

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 23

Site Comments

This site is a wetland that saddles Jasper Road, with a pond on the south side of the road. The horses pastured here have kept adjacent grasslands cropped. The wetlands are relatively few. A population of fireflies has reportedly been known to frequent this site. Efforts promoting enhancement would be medium as a result of the presence of several noxious weeds and Russian olives.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 2
Panama Res

Map: A1
 Acres 408

Panama Reservoir is a crown jewel natural area. The reservoir is large, isolated from human disturbances, and consistently holds water.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 5 Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 6

Agriculture Lands with Crops	Agriculture
Field without Crops	Aquatic
Farm	Grassland
Ditch	Wetland
Residential	Woodland
Oil Well	

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: RF, ADUD, SFB, CHSH, RCSH, SBWU

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	5
Forbs	Common Teasel	Grassland Value:	2
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5 great egret, great blue heron, meadow vole,

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present State or federally listed species potentially present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 31

Site Comments

Panama Reservoir is a crown jewel natural area. The reservoir is large, isolated from human disturbances, and contains water year round. These features are a boon to waterfowl such as American pelicans and duck species on Boulder County’s Species of Special Concern list such as green-winged teals and wood ducks. Bald eagles nest nearby and forage for fish in the reservoir. Use of the site is significant in spring and fall for migrating water birds (wading birds such as plovers), waterfowl (ducks), and songbirds. Summer use and nesting by these same groups as well as raptors such as osprey is also significant. Songbirds such as warblers, house wrens, flickers, woodpeckers, and others nest in the riparian forest. Numerous piles of broken concrete on the site may provide burrow sites for rock squirrels. Bats are likely abundant due to their high water needs and the potential for agricultural moths as prey. Trees and shrubs adorning the reservoir’s edge provide food and cover for mammals and nesting sites for birds. Amphibians such as salamanders and chorus frogs make use of the vegetated shallow areas. Enhancement effort should be low, however, the three species of noxious weeds on site pose a serious risk to the quality of the site and should be controlled immediately and monitored into the

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY

future.



Site #: 3

Leggett Ditch at Panama Res

Map: A1

Acres 11

Leggett Ditch is an agricultural ditch that is well vegetated and forms and extension of Panama Reservoir habitat.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

Agriculture Lands with Crops

Aquatic

Field without Crops

Wetland

Natural Area

Other

Residential

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CSL, RCSH, LWDA

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Forbs	Diffuse Knapweed	Ground Disturbance:	5
Grass	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	2
Litter		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

northern harrier

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area

Wildlife Species Seen cliff swallow, herring gull, rock dove, red-winged blackbird, northern harrier, red-tailed hawk, chipping sparrow, black-capped chickadee, killdeer, northern flicker, Canada goose, house finch

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 18

Site Comments

Leggett ditch is an agricultural ditch. It is an important site because of its proximity to Panama Reservoir, as it provides a functional extension of the extensive riparian habitat surrounding the reservoir. The banks are entirely vegetated, typically with weedy forbs and reed canary grass. Agricultural lands surround the site and provide open (adjacent) habitat preferred by many raptor species. Occasional box elders, plains cottonwoods, and others provide perch sites for the raptors and important habitat for songbirds, many of which were seen and heard during the site visit.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 4

Map: A1

Wetland Lateral South of Panama Res

Acres 3

This site is a pond and an irrigation water outlet with good value to wildlife.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Agriculture Lands with Crops

Aquatic

Field without Crops

Grassland

Farm

Wetland

Ditch

Woodland

Residential

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CHSH, PCSI, SBH, RCSH

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Ground Disturbance: 5

Forbs

Plant Diversity: 3

Grass

Grassland Value: 2

Litter

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

meadow vole, tiger salamander

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen bank swallow, red-tailed hawk, black-capped chickadee, great horned owl

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 23

Site Comments

This site, comprised of a pond with an inlet and an irrigation water outlet, is located between North Boulder Creek and County Line Road. The pond is fringed with occasional cottonwoods and mowed up to the edge of the wetlands in some places. In other places, it is mowed all the way up to the edge of the pond. The pond is typically full and drawn down only during occasional dry spells. There is probably high wildlife use of the area due to the combination of water, cottonwoods, cattails, and the open undeveloped environment.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 5
Little Wetland

Map: A1
Acres 2

This site is a medium-sized pond with steep sides and well-developed trees along its banks.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

Agriculture Lands with Crops	Aquatic
Field without Crops	Grassland
Farm	Wetland
Ditch	Woodland
Residential	

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: RF, RCSH, CHSH, SBH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	2
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4 great blue heron, black-crowned night heron

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor	One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen western meadowlark, blue jay, bullfrog, black-billed magpie, northern flicker

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 23

Site Comments

This site is comprised of a medium-sized pond with steep sides and well-developed trees along its banks. The trees include cottonwoods, crack willows, Siberian elms, and Russian olives. Trees provide cover and nesting sites for migratory as well as summer resident songbirds. Waterfowl are likely present during the migration season. Although the banks are steep, preventing development of emergent wetlands, the mature trees could be harmed by alteration of the banks. The combination of mature trees and water are the wildlife attractions to this site.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 6
Confluence Park

Map: A1
 Acres 50

This area comprises the confluence of Boulder Creek and Coal Creek and provides excellent wildlife habitat.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 5 Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| Agriculture Lands with Crops | Aquatic |
| Field without Crops | Wetland |
| Farm | Woodland |
| Creek | Other |
| Oil Well | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: RF, ADUD, CHSH, CWTS, APS, WRSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Common Teasel	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	5
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5 great blue heron, gray catbird, brown thrasher, sharp-shinned hawk,
 Swainson's hawk, wood duck

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen blue jay, black-capped chickadee

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 27

Site Comments

This site is a crown jewel for wildlife habitat value as well as wetlands functionality. The area was viewed only from the N end at Highway 52 due to denial of access. From this vantage point and review of the aerials, it is apparent that the area provides excellent riparian habitat along Coal Creek, Boulder Creek, and their confluence. The riparian vegetation is well-developed with a diverse combination of structure from mature cottonwoods, large patches of coyote willows, and an understory of grasses and forbs. Numerous songbirds make a stopover here during migration. Others, such as house wrens and warblers, nest here during summer. White-tailed deer use the riparian corridor for movement, cover, and forage as do many other mammal species such as raccoons, foxes, and numerous small mammals including meadow voles. Reptiles such as garter snakes and amphibians such as Woodhouse's toads are likely present. It appears this section of creek was left intact and not gravel mined, which allowed the natural meanders to be maintained and the vegetation to flourish. Prairie dogs present on adjacent lands add to the wildlife value as prey for raptors and coyotes. A medium amount of effort should be made to enhance this site, including the eradication of Russian-olives and teasel.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 7
Pond 7

Map: A1
Acres 23

This site is a reclaimed gravel pond that provides an important stopover for waterfowl during migration.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4 Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

Agriculture Lands with Crops	Aquatic
Field without Crops	Wetland
Residential	Woodland
	Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CBSH, ADUD, PCSI

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs	Dalmatian	Plant Diversity:	3
Grass	Toadflax	Grassland Value:	0
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%
Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5

Wildlife Species of Concern:
great blue heron, northern harrier, meadow vole, common muskrat, tiger salamander

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen red-tailed hawk, woodpecker

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 23

Site Comments

This site is comprised of a reclaimed gravel pond and associated wetland. It is situated in a weedy field and is adjacent to mowed agricultural fields. Cattail wetlands are also adjacent. The area appears to be part of an old Boulder Creek tributary channel. Young cottonwoods and Russian- olives are in the southern portion of the cattail wetlands area. This site is an important waterfowl stop over for migration. During migration, birders report excellent birding at this site. Due to denied access, this site was viewed from adjacent roads, etc.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 8
Pond 8

Map: A1
Acres 10

This natural draw is ponded up at the upstream end and stays moist or running most of the time.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops
Farm

Aquatic
Wetland
Woodland
Other

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: GFWM, ROS, CHSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs	Bull Thistle	Plant Diversity:	3
Grass		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%
Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Wildlife Species of Concern:
yellow-headed blackbird

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen white-crowned sparrow

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 19

Site Comments

This site is a natural draw with a pond at the upstream end. There is an adjacent oil well. The draw has sloping sides leading up to (mostly) weedy fields. It stays moist or running most of the year. Birds and other wildlife are abundant in the trees and draw. The cattails provide habitat for blackbirds, including the possibility of the yellow-headed blackbird, a Boulder County Species of Special Concern. Efforts toward enhancement of this site should include control of the Canada thistle, bull thistle, and Russian-olives.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 9

North Boulder Creek North

Map: A2

Acres 140

This site is the northernmost section of Boulder Creek in the planning area. Sinuosity is present, along with well developed vegetation, adjacent ponds, and prairie dogs.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 5

Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Farm

Wetland

Creek

Woodland

Natural Area

Other

Residential

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: RF, CWTS, RCSH, BTPH, CHSH, EW

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Common Teasel

Ground Disturbance: 5

Shrubs

Forbs

Plant Diversity: 5

Grass

Grassland Value: 2

Litter

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 30%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5

great blue heron, great egret, burrowing owl, black-crowned night heron, ferruginous hawk, meadow vole, tiger salamander

Primary Factors Present

Secondary Factors Present

Water or wetland is present
 State or federally listed species potentially present
 Site serves as a migration or movement corridor
 Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding
 Prairie dogs present

Site is larger than 3 acres
 Site is adjacent to another natural area
 One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition
 Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen blue jay, American robin, northern flicker, black-billed magpie, European starling, black-capped chickadee, black-tailed prairie dog

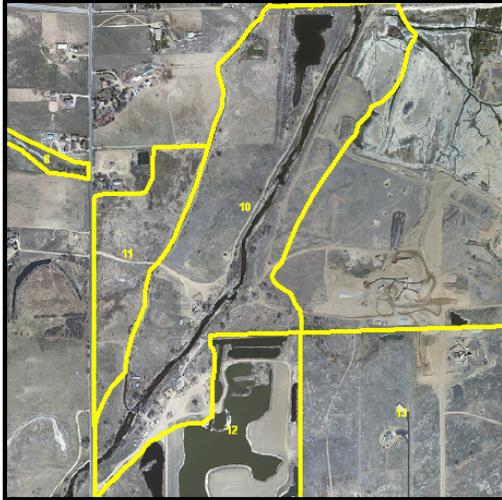
Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 29

Site Comments

Within the planning area boundary, this site is the northernmost section of Boulder Creek. Sinuosity is present, along with well developed vegetation, adjacent ponds, and black-tailed prairie dogs. All of these things contribute to the wildlife habitat value of the site. Monarch butterflies may feed on stands of milkweed, and red-wing blackbirds may nest in the cattails. It is also likely that songbirds store up their energy reserves here during migration and nest here during the summer. Great blue herons may fish in the creek and gravel ponds present on this site, raptors and coyotes may hunt for prairie dogs, and tiger salamanders may breed in the gravel ponds and rest in the prairie dog burrows. Garter snakes may forage on the creek bank and bull snakes may hunt for mice. Enhancement potential is low at this site as it is in good condition. Because of its high quality habitat and the abundant wildlife already using the site, enhancement efforts would be low. As is the case with other high quality sites such as Panama Reservoir and Confluence Park, controlling the common teasel on this site is highly recommended so that it does not spread and lower plant and habitat diversity.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 10

North Boulder Creek South

Map: A1

Acres 82

This site comprises a heavily disturbed section of Boulder Creek.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

- Field without Crops
- Creek
- Ditch
- Residential
- Oil Well
- Gravel Mining

- Aquatic
- Wetland
- Woodland
- Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: BTPH, RCSH, CWTS, ADUD, PCSI, RF

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Spotted Knapweed	Ground Disturbance:	3
Shrubs	Common Teasel	Plant Diversity:	4
Forbs		Grassland Value:	2
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 60%

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5

Wildlife Species of Concern:

burrowing owl, great blue heron, black-crowned night heron, ferruginous hawk, meadow vole

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present State or federally listed species potentially present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Prairie dogs present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen northern flicker, black-tailed prairie dog, eastern cottontail, black-capped chickadee, European starling

Enhancement Effort: High

Summary Rating: 25

Site Comments

This site has been heavily disturbed in the past, with gravel mining along the north and west. Heavy construction vehicles and equipment have obviously been present. This portion of the creek has been previously altered and lacks sinuosity. Vegetation along the creek includes cottonwoods and willows, but lacks the native understory it originally had. Currently, the understory is dominated by reed canary grass. Though storage equipment and other anthropogenic materials are present on the site, this area has high wildlife value due to the presence of the creek, a gravel pond, and black-tailed prairie dogs. Enhancement efforts would be very high, and include removal of storage materials, creek bank restoration, weed control, and planting of native shrubs and forbs. Reconfiguration of the stream channel would also be beneficial.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 11

Map: A1

Field between County Line/NBC

Acres 20

This site comprises uplands with prairie dogs, wetlands and an adjacent ditch.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

- Creek
- Natural Area
- Residential

- Aquatic
- Wetland
- Woodland
- Other

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ADUD, BTPH, PCSI, ROS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Diffuse Knapweed	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs	Spotted Knapweed	Plant Diversity:	3
Grass	Canada Thistle	Grassland Value:	2
Litter	Common Teasel		

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 20%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

bald eagle, northern harrier, burrowing owl, tiger salamander

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Prairie dogs present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen black-tailed prairie dog

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 21

Site Comments

This site is a field of converted grassland with prairie dogs, wetlands, and the Gooding A. and D. Plumb Ditch. This area has important wildlife habitat as a result of its close proximity to Boulder Creek and the fact that it has three different habitat types. Value to wildlife is good. Enhancement efforts would be medium and include weed control, especially control of the four noxious weeds present, diffuse knapweed, spotted knapweed, Canada thistle, and common teasel.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 12

North Boulder Creek Gravel Ponds

Map: A1

Acres 71

This site comprises a farm with reclaimed gravel pits.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Farm

Woodland

Oil Well

Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ADUD, ROS, PCSI, CWTS

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Tamarisk

Ground Disturbance: 4

Shrubs

Forbs

Grass

Plant Diversity: 3

Grassland Value: 2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 5%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

great blue heron, muskrat, meadow vole, tiger salamander

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen Canada goose, killdeer, belted kingfisher, western meadowlark, egret, northern flicker, American robin, great blue heron

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 21

Site Comments

This site is a farm with reclaimed gravel pits, some of which are poorly vegetated and contain tamarisk. Others, at the northern end, have cottonwoods and willows at their fringe. Russian olives line the western pond. The upland portions are grazed. Wildlife habitat value is high at the northern end and low at the southern end. There are fish in the North Pond. Enhancement would include the eradication of weeds and Russian-olives, and some native seeding.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 13
North Field

Map: A2
Acres 148

This site is an active gravel mine with weedy forbs and prairie dogs. It is divided into 3 portions.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 0 Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 2

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| Agriculture Lands with Crops | Woodland |
| Field without Crops | Other |
| Farm | |
| Natural Area | |
| Oil Well | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ADUD, BTPH, PCSIX, ROS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	4
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 30% Wildlife Species of Concern:
Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4 burrowing owl

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Prairie dogs present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen black-tailed prairie dog, bald eagle, coyote, white-tailed deer, desert cottontail

Enhancement Effort: High

Summary Rating: 13

Site Comments

This site is an active gravel mine with weedy forbs and black-tailed prairie dogs in all unmined areas. The site is divided into 3 parts by the access easement for the water treatment plant. Once the site is no longer used to actively mine gravel, enhancement efforts will be high for the long term. Black-tailed prairie dogs dig underground tunnel systems that can decrease soil erosion and runoff caused by gravel mining by channeling rainwater into the water table. The presence of the prairie dogs can also improve soil composition by reversing soil compaction from heavy machinery. This helps prepare the site for planting native grass and forb species in the future. However, because of the prairie dogs, revegetation efforts may be compromised

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 14

Field at County Line and 52

Map: A1

Acres 146

Site consists of a large open area with prairie dogs throughout.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 0

Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

Field without Crops

Agriculture

Natural Area

Woodland

Residential

Other

Oil Well

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ISAP, BTPH, CSL, PCSIX

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	4
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	2
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 60%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5

burrowing owl

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
State or federally listed species potentially present Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding Prairie dogs present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen black-tailed jackrabbit, eastern cottontail, house finch, white-tailed deer, coyote, western meadowlark, black-tailed prairie dog, common grackle, band-tailed pigeon, red-tailed hawk (past), burrowing owl (past)

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 15

Site Comments

This site consists of a large open area with black-tailed prairie dogs throughout. Large portions of the site are mowed for hay, but weedy stands are unmowed. This area may provide important foraging grounds for ferruginous hawks. Scattered cottonwoods may also provide excellent perching and nesting sites for songbirds and raptors. Pockets of clay soil hold water and could provide habitat for chorus frogs in spring. No county listed noxious weeds are observed. Enhancement measures taken here would include decreasing the weed cover (non-noxious), and would require minimal effort. This site is adjacent to a number of other natural area sites. Maintaining the site as is by controlling weeds already present, by keeping the area open so raptors can spot their prairie dog prey, and not allowing new weed infestations are the best practices for this site.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 15
Three Ditch Park

Map: B1
 Acres 148

This site comprises portions of three ditches.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4 Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 5

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Agriculture Lands with Crops | Agriculture |
| Field without Crops | Aquatic |
| Farm | Wetland |
| Ditch | Woodland |
| Residential | Other |
| Oil Well | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: RF, ADUD, CGH, RCSH, CWTS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Common Teasel	Ground Disturbance:	4
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	4
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen red-winged blackbird, horse, northern flicker, American robin, coyote

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 24

Site Comments

This site contains portions of three ditches--Boulder Weld Ditch, Boulder Creek Ditch, and Lower Boulder Ditch. The ditches add wildlife habitat value to the site. Hayfields occur throughout the site adjacent to the ditches. Boulder Weld and Lower Boulder ditches were dry at the time of the site visit in October, but Boulder Creek Ditch carried a large amount of water. The ditches are varied in their vegetation and include riparian forest, extensive willow patches, solid stands of reed canary grass, and some upland weedy areas. Ephemeral pools form in the horse pasture from time to time, due either to a high water table or general ditch leakage. These pools are essential breeding habitat for chorus frogs in spring and early summer. Wildlife enhancement measures would be to ensure that breeding frogs are not disturbed by the horses. Plant enhancement measures are to control and monitor the common teasel on site, requiring low effort.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 17

Boulder Creek Gravel Ponds

Map: A2

Acres 141

This site comprises three recently reclaimed large gravel ponds with a very narrow vegetative fringe and prairie dogs in the uplands.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Subdivision

Grassland

Natural Area

Woodland

Oil Well

Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ADUD, PCSIX, WWH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	4
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	6

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 5% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4 burrowing owl, muskrat

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Prairie dogs present	One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition

Wildlife Species Seen European starling, Brewer's blackbird, belted kingfisher, Bonaparte's gull, Canada goose

Enhancement Effort: High

Summary Rating: 25

Site Comments

This site is comprised of three large, recently reclaimed gravel ponds. The banks contain sparsely vegetated fringes. Other portions of the site are residential. The banks of the reclaimed ponds are steeply sloped, which precludes development of emergent wetland vegetation. Several young plains cottonwoods have started to appear, but weedy annuals dominate the upland area. A small prairie dog colony is present at the north central end of the site. This site could be enhanced by regrading the banks to encourage vegetation development. The wildlife value is high due to the presence of the prairie dogs as prey for raptors and ponds as habitat for waterfowl.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 18
Vegetated Field

Map: A2
 Acres 112

This site comprises a swale and an upland area with prairie dogs.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 0 Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 3

Field without Crops	Wetland
Oil Well	Woodland
Gravel Mining	Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: BTPH, ROW, PCSIX, CBSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	2
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	4
Forbs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	3
Grass	Common Teasel	Grassland Value:	2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 45% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3 burrowing owl

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Prairie dogs present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen red-tailed hawk, American kestrel, white-tailed deer

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 14

Site Comments

Half of this site is a swale supporting a woodland of Russian olives with very large stands of teasel. White-tailed deer bed in the swale and bands of native rabbit-foot, cattails and bulrushes occur at the edges. The other half of the site is a disturbed upland with black-tailed prairie dogs. The western half of the site may be part of a historic, meandering tributary of Boulder Creek with its water table close to the surface. There are operating oil wells in the vicinity. Enhancement effort would be medium due to the potential to control the common teasel on site and the Russian-olives. The presence of prairie dogs is desirable in terms of raptor prey, but enhancing the upland grassland through planting is not cited as an enhancement measure that would currently be successful at this site.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 19

Map: A2

Boulder/Weld and Lower Boulder Creek Ditches Acres 42

This is a lowland drainage area surrounded by Boulder Weld County Ditch and Lower Boulder Ditch.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

Agriculture Lands with Crops

Aquatic

Field without Crops

Wetland

Farm

Woodland

Ditch

Oil Well

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CHSH, RCSH, SB

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 4

Tree

Musk Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 5

Forbs

Canada Thistle

Plant Diversity: 3

Grass

Grassland Value: 0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

meadow vole, northern harrier

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen northern flicker, red-winged blackbird, common grackle, American kestrel

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 18

Site Comments

This site is a lowland drainage area with Boulder and Weld County ditch at the northwest end and Lower Boulder Ditch along the southern, eastern, and northern edges. The natural drainage channel is hard to discern, but cattail wetlands (containing reed canary grass) occur along the natural drainage. The site is likely a significant habitat for red-winged blackbirds. Site enhancement should include eradicating Canada thistle.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 20
Pond 20

Map: B2
Acres 2

This pond site is surrounded by a farm and a development.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 2

Field without Crops

Wetland

Subdivision

Woodland

Farm

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSI, ROS, CHSH

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Ground Disturbance: 5

Forbs

Plant Diversity: 2

Grass

Grassland Value: 0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen red-winged blackbird, black-billed magpie

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 15

Site Comments

This site consists of a pond that is surrounded by a farm and a development. The pond has a narrow fringe of cattails. This site has relatively low wildlife value due to its small size and isolation from other natural areas.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 21

Map: A2

Wishbone Ditches

Acres 62

This site is the corridor of ditches formed by Cottonwood Extension Ditch and Community Ditch.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

Field without Crops

Wetland

Subdivision

Woodland

Ditch

Other

Residential

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ADUD, PCSI, CWTS, SB

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

burrowing owl

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen house finch, mourning dove

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 18

Site Comments

This site consists of Community Ditch which starts at a fork to the north of Highway 52, and the Cottonwood Extension Ditch with a branch veering to the west, south of Highway 52 and west of County Road 7. Willow patches and occasional cottonwoods grace the eastern fork in places, but otherwise the eastern ditch is characterized by horseweed, ragweed, sedge, wheatgrass, and sunflowers. The western fork is more homogeneous and is characterized by sedge, intermediate wheatgrass, and annual sunflowers. At the northern end of the site, prairie dogs occur in the area between the two ditches.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 22

Map: A2

Field East of Waverly Wetlands

Acres 29

This site is a previously cultivated field currently in pasture. A small pond with cattails and an irrigation ditch occur on the site.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2

Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 2

Field without Crops

Wetland

Ditch

Other

Oil Well

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: DCAP, CHSH

Vegetation Structure:

Grass

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Musk Thistle

Canada Thistle

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Ground Disturbance: 4

Plant Diversity: 2

Grassland Value: 2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 40%

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Wildlife Species of Concern:

tiger salamander, burrowing owl

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Prairie dogs present	Site is adjacent to another natural area

Wildlife Species Seen western meadowlark

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 15

Site Comments

This site consists of a previously cultivated field currently in pasture, a small pond with cattails, and an irrigation ditch. The pond was dry at the time of the site visit in October, but is likely seasonally wet and acquires water by means of runoff from the surrounding fields. The irrigation ditch is lined with non-noxious weeds such as reed canary grass, rumex, smooth brome, and milkweed. There are also several Russian-olives, locusts, and a single cottonwood. This pond provides habitat for amphibians. Enhancement efforts should include control of the noxious weeds present, which should be done carefully so as not to jeopardize amphibians.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 23
Waverly Wetlands

Map: A2
 Acres 89

This site is a large wetland area. Ponds occur both north and south of Highway 52.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 5 Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops	Aquatic
Farm	Wetland
Natural Area	Woodland
Oil Well	Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ROS, EW, CHSH, PCSI, PWTW, CSL

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	5
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5 tiger salamander, muskrat, meadow vole, northern harrier

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen red-winged blackbird, belted kingfisher, red-tailed hawk, European starling, canvasback, northern harrier, Swainson's hawk

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 27

Site Comments

This site is a large wetland with ponds occurring both north and south of Highway 52. High plant diversity is due to the juxtaposition of seven wetland and upland plant alliances. The presence of amphibians, reptiles, waterfowl, songbirds, raptors, small mammals, and their predators indicates that this site has high wildlife value. This site has medium enhancement effort attached to it, as a result of the presence of Canada thistle and Russian-olives. Monitoring is recommended after control so that weed infestations cannot establish in the future.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 24
Large Open Field

Map: A2
 Acres 67

This site is a large open field with prairie dogs present.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 0 Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 3

Agriculture Lands with Crops	Wetland
Field without Crops	Woodland
Farm	Other
Natural Area	
Oil Well	

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ADUD, BTPH, CDMA, ROS, CWTS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	4
Grass		Grassland Value:	2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 25% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4 burrowing owl, muskrat

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Prairie dogs present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen red-tailed hawk, white-tail deer, European starling, racoon, crawfish

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 17

Site Comments

This site is a large open field. There is no above ground water, but the water table may be close to the surface. Two or three oil wells are present on site as well as many escaped agricultural crops. The north end of the site's eastern boundary is bounded by a ditch lined with reed canary grass. Weedy upland annual forbs dominate the site, though an abundance of sedges and grasses are interspersed. Rabbit foot grass, reed canary grass, and sedges are present in patches. The area contains extensive prairie dog burrows, but the inhabitants have either been exterminated or naturally died out. There is still a small colony in the northeast portion of the site. This area could be a potential prairie dog relocation site.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 25
Dark Polygon

Map: A2
 Acres 16

This site is a field with added moisture provided by the Lower Boulder Ditch, and some woodlands.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:	Habitat Types Present: 3
Agriculture Lands with Crops	Aquatic
Field without Crops	Wetland
Natural Area	Woodland
Oil Well	

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CDMA, PCSI, ROS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover 5
Tree		Ground Disturbance: 5
Forbs		Plant Diversity: 3
Grass		Grassland Value: 0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5 tiger salamander, northern harrier, meadow vole

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition

Wildlife Species Seen red-tailed hawk, American robin, white-crowned sparrow, rock dove

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 21

Site Comments

This site is a field, wetlands, and a small woodland. Added moisture likely seeps from the Lower Boulder Ditch, as evidenced by expanses of Nebraska sedge and a grove of cottonwoods and Russian olives. The ditch contained water in late September, and runs along the east end. A number of wildlife habitat values are represented.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 26

Map: A2

Horseshoe Shelter Belt

Acres 3

This site is a shelter belt surrounding a residence and another building. There is a concrete lined ditch at the north end.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 1

Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 2

Field without Crops

Woodland

Farm

Other

Natural Area

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: SB, CSL, SBH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	2
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

brown thrasher, northern harrier

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition

Wildlife Species Seen American robin, common grackle, house finch, Bullock's oriole, black-capped chickadee, coyote

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 13

Site Comments

This site is a shelter belt surrounding a residence and one other building. There is a concrete lined ditch at the north edge, which likely leaked in earlier years and fed the shelter belt trees, allowing them to establish before being lined in concrete. The shelter belt is comprised of cottonwoods, Russian olives, conifers, and others, with an understory of grasses and forbs. Shelter belts provide a unique habitat element for certain species of wildlife such as the brown thrasher.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 27
Boomerang

Map: A2
Acres 17

This narrow site contains Community Ditch, with scattered cottonwoods along the edge.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Field without Crops | Aquatic |
| Farm | Grassland |
| Natural Area | Wetland |
| Residential | Woodland |
| Oil Well | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSI, CHSH, CWH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	4
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 5% Wildlife Species of Concern:
Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3 northern harrier

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen northern flicker, western meadowlark, northern harrier

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 23

Site Comments

This site straddles Community Ditch, which has scattered cottonwoods along its edges. Young cottonwoods at the north end of the site will grow and add to the existing stands in the coming years. Other vegetation includes reed canary grass, sedges, and wheatgrass. Paralleling the ditch, an oxbow/backwater boomerang is covered in duckweed, Rumex, and cattails. The cottonwoods provide good nesting habitat for songbirds and raptors. A small black tailed prairie dog colony lies just west of the site

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 28

Map: A2

Field East of boomerang

Acres 26

This site is probably a borrow pit. It is entirely revegetated with crested wheat grass, (which has no value to wildlife) and another grass.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 0

Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

Field without Crops

Grassland

Ditch

Woodland

Natural Area

Other

Oil Well

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSIX, CWH, ADUD

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 0

Tree

Musk Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 0

Grass

Plant Diversity: 1

Grassland Value: 2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

American white pelican

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area

Wildlife Species Seen American white pelican

Enhancement Effort: High

Summary Rating: 10

Site Comments

This site is probably a borrow pit. It is entirely re-vegetated with crested wheatgrass and another grass, neither of which has value to wildlife. Enhancement of this site can restore its habitat value for native grassland species such as thirteen-lined ground squirrels, pocket mice, and black-tailed prairie dogs. Enhancement measures would likely be successful here because it is a relatively large natural area adjacent to another natural area (27) and the site is open. The aforementioned rodents, along with the cottonwoods establishing on the site's north end, would provide prey and perching sites potentially attracting raptors to the area and thereby improving the area's wildlife habitat quality.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 31
Pond 31

Map: B1
Acres 22

This site is predominately a gravel pond with mowed edges on the south and east sides.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 5 Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:	Habitat Types Present: 4
Agriculture Lands with Crops	Aquatic
Field without Crops	Wetland
Subdivision	Woodland
Natural Area	Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: SB, CBSH, CWTS, ADUD, PCSI

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4 brown thrasher, wood duck, northern harrier

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen Canada goose, black-capped chickadee

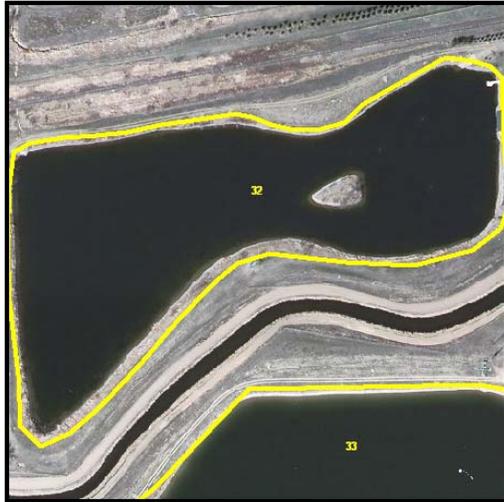
Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 24

Site Comments

This site is predominately a gravel pond with mowed edges on the southern and eastern sides. The northern and western banks are more vegetated with larger cottonwoods and Russian olives. Coyote willows are also present on the vegetated banks, though the entirety of the pond is lined with rip rap. The area to the north of the pond supports several mature cottonwoods, which, along with the adjacent shelter belt, provide excellent songbird nesting habitat and perching sites for raptors. The pond could also be useful to waterfowl. Enhancement efforts would be medium, and would include the eradication of the musk thistle and Russian olives.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 32
Pond 32

Map: B1
Acres 8

This site is a reclaimed gravel pond with wetlands and woodlands, adjacent to the Lower Boulder Ditch.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 5 Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 3

Agriculture Lands with Crops	Aquatic
Farm	Wetland
Ditch	Woodland
Natural Area	
Residential	

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSI, CHSH, CWTS, ROS, EW

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover 5
Tree		Ground Disturbance: 5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity: 4
Forbs		Grassland Value: 0
Grass		

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5 great blue heron, great egret, muskrat, meadow vole, tiger salamander

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen red-tailed hawk, barn swallow

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 25

Site Comments

This site is comprised of a gravel pond adjacent to Lower Boulder Ditch. A broad fringe of vegetation consisting of cattail wetlands, cottonwoods, and coyote willows surrounds the pond. The area is dominated by native vegetation with only a few weedy species interspersed. This site could provide excellent habitat for waterfowl and songbirds, as well as reptiles and amphibians. Small mammals may also frequent the pond. Enhancement effort should be medium, and include the removal of weeds and Russian olives.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 33
Pond 33

Map: B1
Acres 73

This site is comprised of two large adjacent gravel ponds.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4 Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Agriculture Lands with Crops | Aquatic |
| Field without Crops | Grassland |
| Farm | Woodland |
| | Other |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CWH, PCSI, ADUD, SBH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	2
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3 American white pelican

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen Bonaparte's gull, bullsnake, American kestrel

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 22

Site Comments

This site is comprised of two large, adjacent gravel ponds. The banks appear to be concrete or rip rap lined and vegetation is sparse. The areas surrounding the ponds are dominated by weedy annuals, smooth brome, and crested wheatgrass. Wetland fringe is absent and, with the exception of a few young cottonwoods, there is no cover for wildlife.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 34

Map: B1

Wetland North of Railroad

Acres 6

This site comprises an unnamed drainage and the surrounding wetland habitat.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Farm

Grassland

Natural Area

Wetland

Residential

Woodland

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CBSH, WWH, PCSI

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Musk Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 5

Forbs

Dalmatian

Plant Diversity: 3

Grass

Toadflax

Grassland Value: 4

Litter

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen red-winged blackbird, European starling

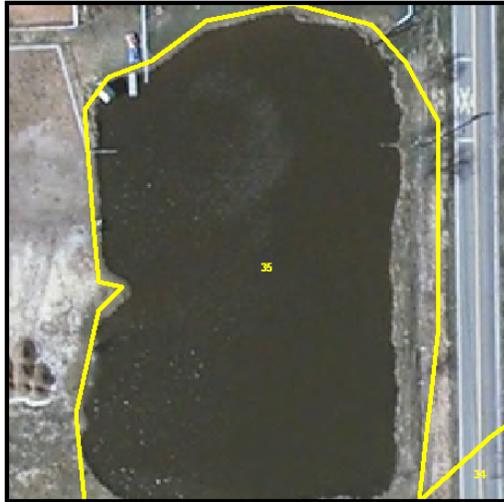
Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 25

Site Comments

This site comprises an unnamed north-south drainage and the surrounding wetland habitat. Abandoned railroad tracks run east-west through the site. The area is mainly cattail bulrush wetland with some small areas of wheatgrass and upland forbs. The site could act as a movement corridor for mammals and could provide nesting habitat for songbirds like red-winged blackbirds. A population of fireflies reportedly occurs on this property, especially south of the railroad tracks. Mosquito control had a negative impact on them in 2007. The most beneficial site enhancement measure would be controlling and/or eradicating noxious weeds.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 35
Pond 35

Map: B1
Acres 1

Pond 35 is a small pond that may be used agriculturally.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

- Field without Crops
- Farm
- Ditch
- Natural Area

- Aquatic
- Wetland
- Woodland
- Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CBSH, ROS, ADUD

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 2

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen red-winged blackbird, European starling

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 17

Site Comments

Pond 35 is located just north of the Lower Boulder Creek Ditch. Stables are present just north of the pond, and water may be used agriculturally. The pond is small but present year-round, with a cattail bulrush wetland fringe on the south and west sides. The pond appears too small to support substantial waterfowl or shorebird usage. Russian ollives should be removed, so enhancement efforts would be medium.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 36

Map: B1

Field North of Boulder Creek

Acres 14

This field North of Boulder Creek consists of a small pond and a cattail wetland area.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Farm

Grassland

Creek

Wetland

Residential

Woodland

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CBSH, WM, SBH, ROS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

tiger salamander, northern harrier, meadow vole

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen red-tailed hawk

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 21

Site Comments

This site is a field north of Boulder Creek consisting of a small pond and a cattail wetland area. The cattail wetlands are either supported by creek seepage or by a pond that is not visible. Adjacent areas seem to be abandoned alfalfa hay fields. The area may serve as a migration corridor for mammals, raptors, and songbirds. A large prairie dog colony on the east side of the road may serve as food for raptors. Tiger salamanders and other amphibians might utilize the site's small pond. The presence of Russian olives implies medium enhancement effort

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 37
Leggett Ditch

Map: B1
 Acres 9

This site is defined by the section of Leggett Ditch that runs through its length.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

- Field without Crops
- Farm
- Ditch
- Residential

- Grassland
- Woodland
- Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: SBH, LWDA, SB

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	4
Forbs		Grassland Value:	2
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3 muskrat, meadow vole

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen northern flicker, red-tailed hawk, bullsnake

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 21

Site Comments

This site is defined by the section of Leggett Ditch that runs the length of the polygon. The ditch runs seasonally and has steeply sloping banks. Little wetland vegetation is present, though there is some reed canary grass along the banks. Large crack willows, plains cottonwoods, and some Russian olives follow the ditch throughout the polygon and provide habitat for songbirds and small mammals. This site is also a potential movement corridor. At the time of the site visit in early October, no water was present and vegetation was predominately weedy. A few bird species and a bullsnake were observed. Enhancement at this site involves control of weeds, albeit not noxious weeds, as none of those are present. Russian olives should also be removed.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 38
Shelter Belt at Hwy 287

Map: B1
 Acres 3

This site is a shelter belt along Hwy 287.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 3

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Agriculture Lands with Crops | Grassland |
| Field without Crops | Wetland |
| Farm | Woodland |
| Ditch | |
| Oil Well | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: SBH, SB, RCSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 18

Site Comments

This site is a shelter belt, east of Highway 287. The shelter belt appears to have added moisture, perhaps seepage from Leggett Ditch. The vegetation includes plains cottonwoods, aspen, Russian olives, and crack willows. The shelter belt provides habitat for amphibians, reptiles, songbirds, and mammals. At the time of the site visit, water was absent and no wildlife was observed.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 40
Wise Woods

Map: B1
 Acres 7

This site is a planted woodland and is unique in the Erie planning area.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 1 Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 2

Agriculture Lands with Crops	Woodland
Field without Crops	Other
Residential	

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: SB, BETW, CSL, CCS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	2
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen great-horned owl, white-tailed deer, hoary bat, northern flicker, eastern cottontail, bullsnake, garter snake, red-tailed hawk, turkey vulture, ring-necked pheasant

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 13

Site Comments

This site is a woodland known as Wise Woods. First planted in the 1860s by the Wise family, this site is unique in the Erie planning area in terms of ecological type. Surrounded by agricultural and pasture lands, it is an oasis of trees with attendant shade, bird nesting sites, cover, and food resources. In spring, the forest is likely teeming with bird activity. There is a great horned owl nest and the third largest black walnut tree in the state, which has been nominated for the notable tree program. Enhancement efforts would be medium in terms of thinning trees in order to daylight some of the older, more established trees. However, since the understory is weedy and has species like Canada thistle, too much thinning would actually enhance the weeds. Thus, forb and shrub planting would ideally accompany the thinning. Although the summary rating is low, this site has great value as a natural area for the reasons mentioned above.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 41

Map: B1

Boulder Creek Gravel Ponds East

Acres 18

This site comprises two reclaimed gravel ponds and adjacent wetlands and uplands, and is adjacent to Boulder Creek.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 5

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

- Agriculture Lands with Crops
- Field without Crops
- Farm
- Creek
- Natural Area
- Residential

- Aquatic
- Grassland
- Wetland
- Woodland

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSI, ROW, CBSH, CHSH, RF, KBH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover 5
Tree		Ground Disturbance: 5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity: 3
Forbs		Grassland Value: 2
Grass		

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

Wildlife Species of Concern:

great blue heron, meadow vole, muskrat, tiger salamander, barn owl, black-crowned night heron

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen black-billed magpie, Canada goose, northern flicker, American robin, bullfrog, American coot, mallard, great blue heron

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 25

Site Comments

This site is comprised of two reclaimed gravel ponds and their adjacent wetlands and uplands. The site is not weedy. An adjacency to Boulder Creek creates a high water table allowing the diverse plant alliances to flourish. Fertilizer from nearby agricultural fields finds its way to the site's gravel ponds, resulting in some eutrophication (algae is visible). With its proximity to Boulder Creek and its well-developed vegetation along the banks of the ponds, this site is an important migratory corridor for waterfowl, songbirds, bats, and white-tailed deer. Great blue herons likely come to forage. Enhancement efforts would be medium, as the eradication of Russian olives would be most beneficial.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 42

Map: B1

Wetlands near Wise Woods

Acres 11

This site is a wetland bounded on the southeast by the Lower Boulder Ditch.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops

Agriculture

Farm

Wetland

Ditch

Woodland

Residential

Other

Oil Well

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ASBH, PCSI, CWTS, ADUD, CHSH

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 4

Tree

Canada Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 5

Shrubs

Forbs

Grass

Litter

Plant Diversity: 4

Grassland Value: 0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

meadow vole, yellow-headed blackbird

Primary Factors Present

Secondary Factors Present

Water or wetland is present

One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition
Three or more habitat types are present
Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 19

Site Comments

This site contains a wetland and is bounded to the southeast by Lower Boulder Ditch. No standing water was visible at the site visit in October. The site contains alfalfa, weedy upland species, a stand of coyote willows, scattered cottonwoods, a cattail wetland (in poor condition), and a line of shrubs (chokecherry and plum) along the road. The mature cottonwoods and coyote willows provide habitat for songbirds and small mammals. No wildlife was observed on the site, but residents report yellow-headed blackbirds and red-winged blackbirds. The presence of yellow-headed blackbirds is noteworthy in that they require larger expanses of cattails than do red-winged blackbirds, and they are a species of special concern. Enhancement efforts would be low and would involve the eradication of noxious weeds.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 43
Island Pond

Map: B1
Acres 20

This site is a weedy field with a pond that contains an island.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Field without Crops | Aquatic |
| Farm | Grassland |
| Ditch | Woodland |
| Natural Area | Other |
| Residential | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ROW, ADUD, CWH, RF

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover 2
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance: 4
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity: 3
Forbs	Scotch Thistle	Grassland Value: 2
Grass		
Litter		

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen European starling, coyote, northern flicker, red-winged blackbird, black-capped chickadee

Enhancement Effort: High

Summary Rating: 19

Site Comments

This site is dense with county listed noxious weed species including scotch thistle, Canada thistle, and musk thistle. A shelter belt of Russian olives and plains cottonwoods borders the wetland in the southeast portion of the site. No wetland or vegetation is evident in the area. A ditch that runs to the pond is lined by Russian olives. The “island pond” itself supports coyote willow, aspen, and Russian olives. The water is low and almost completely stagnant. Weedy forbs are at least knee-high and provide some cover for mammals moving through. Enhancement efforts for this site would be high, as the site is so overgrown with noxious weeds that tilling and replanting would likely be necessary.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 45
Shelter Belt at Leyner Ditch

Map: B1
 Acres 5

The site is a field and shelter belt.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 1 Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 3

- | | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Field without Crops | Aquatic |
| Farm | Woodland |
| Ditch | Other |
| Natural Area | |
| Residential | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSIX, BTPH, ADUD

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	3
Grass		Grassland Value:	2
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 5% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3 northern harrier

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Prairie dogs present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen

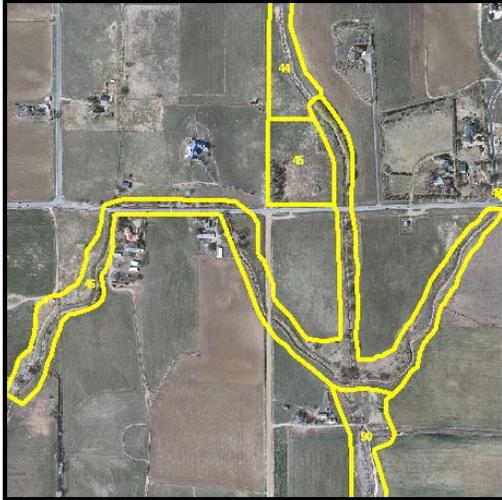
Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 16

Site Comments

This site is a field and shelter belt associated with an unnamed drainage not on the site. The site has seven large plains cottonwoods adjacent to a weedy field dominated by disturbed annual forb species (lactuca, mustards). A few prairie dog burrows are present, likely as overflow from an adjacent colony, but no prairie dogs are observed. Northern harriers may forage for voles in the fields on and off this site.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 46

Map: B1

Leyner Cottonwood Ditch at Isabelle

Acres 21

This narrow site encompasses a section of the Leyner Cottonwood Ditch.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Farm

Wetland

Ditch

Woodland

Natural Area

Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CWS, RCSH, ROS, PCSI, CSL, SBH

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Musk Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 5

Forbs

Plant Diversity: 3

Grass

Grassland Value: 0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

meadow vole, northern harrier

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen blue jay, northern flicker

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 19

Site Comments

This site is a narrow meander that follows the Leyner Cottonwood Ditch. The ditch appears seasonally wet. Although it was dry during the site visit in October, reed canary grass and cattails were growing in it. The ditch banks have steep slopes and vegetation in the ditch is tall and dense. Small mammals likely make nests and runways in this rank vegetation. Mature cottonwoods in adjacent areas have numerous species of songbirds nesting in them. Control of the musk thistle and Russian olives is recommended.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 47

Map: B1

Leyner Cotton Ditch South

Acres 8

This narrow site encompasses a section of the Leyner Cottonwood Ditch.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2

Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

- Field without Crops
- Subdivision
- Farm
- Ditch
- Natural Area
- Residential
- Oil Well

- Aquatic
- Wetland
- Other

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CSL, CDMA, RCSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	4
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 2

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen blue jay, house finch

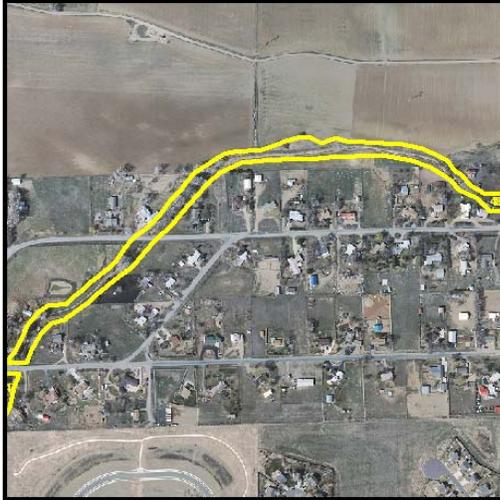
Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 13

Site Comments

This narrow site follows a portion of the Leyner Cottonwood ditch. There are a couple of large cottonwoods on the steep ditch banks that are in poor condition due to a lack of water and the compacted soil. The ditch has some riprap and asphalt lining in places and vegetation is virtually absent along the channel. At least four different species of songbirds were observed. This site is surrounded by a subdivision on both sides and a mowed field of weedy upland species including Russian thistle, goosefoot, lactuca, and clover. Enhancement measures could include discontinuing mowing along the ditch edges. Other efforts, such as re-shaping the ditch banks and seeding the banks with native vegetation, are probably not possible because of ditch ownership and management for irrigation. However, even small enhancement efforts would make the area more desirable for wildlife. The subdivision community would benefit from enhancement measures by seeing plant diversity increase and by eventually seeing more wildlife including songbirds, migrating birds, and small mammals.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 48

Map: B1

Leyner Cotton Ditch Northwest

Acres 5

This site comprises a shallow section of Leyner Cottonwood ditch located in a residential area.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2

Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

- Farm
- Ditch
- Natural Area
- Residential

- Aquatic
- Wetland
- Woodland

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: SBH, RCSH, CWS, ROS, PCSIX

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen songbirds (2 species)

Enhancement Effort: High

Summary Rating: 15

Site Comments

This site is located in a residential area and is comprised of a shallow section of the Leyner Cottonwood ditch. The ditch banks are highly eroded and surrounded by mowed lawns on either side. A significant amount of riprap lines this section of the ditch and it appears that landowners are using the area to dispose of tires, large pieces of metal, etc. No water was flowing in early October. While there are some large cottonwoods and crack willows present, no wetland fringe exists. The trees could provide nesting for songbirds. The mowed lawns preclude extensive use by wildlife. Enhancement is unlikely as this area is essentially part of a lawn.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 49

Map: B1

Leyner Cotton Ditch East

Acres 14

This site is a section of the Leyner-Cottonwood Ditch that has a cottonwood woodland in its northeast corner bend.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Farm

Wetland

Ditch

Woodland

Oil Well

Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSIX, PWTW, ROW, ADUD, CWTS

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Ground Disturbance: 5

Shrubs

Plant Diversity: 3

Forbs

Grass

Grassland Value: 0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

meadow vole, northern harrier

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
<p>Water or wetland is present Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding</p>	<p>Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor</p>

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 19

Site Comments

This site follows a section of the Leyner Cottonwood ditch that has a cottonwood woodland in its northeast corner bend. This woodland is in good condition with a well-developed herbaceous understory and a large patch of willows. The area appears to be seasonally flooded and provides excellent nesting habitat for songbirds. The ditch itself is steeply banked and relatively homogeneous with reed canary grass and smooth brome dominating and occasional cottonwoods intervening. Enhancement efforts should focus on cutting down and eradicating the grove of Russian olive trees onsite.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 50

Map: B1

Lateral Feeder to Thomas Reservoir

Acres 25

This site consists of an upland field, South Boulder Canyon Ditch, and a wetland, with planted native prairie species.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Subdivision

Aquatic

Residential

Grassland

Oil Well

Wetland

Woodland

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CBSH, CWTS, CDMA, ROW, PPOF, WWH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	4
Forbs		Grassland Value:	4
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5

tiger salamander, muskrat, meadow vole

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present State or federally listed species potentially present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen red-winged blackbird, sparrow, coyote, vole, eastern cottontail, northern pocket gopher

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 27

Site Comments

The northern half of this site consists of an old upland field that has been planted with native prairie species including blue gramma, prairie bush clover, and little bluestem. Alfalfa and rye species are also present to a lesser degree. South Boulder Canyon Ditch runs through the site. A wetland is also present. Cottontail scat, coyote scat, and pocket gopher mounds are present. The site is teeming with songbirds. Red-winged blackbirds, sparrows, and other songbirds were heard. The 6 to 8 foot tall cattails make this an excellent habitat for red-winged blackbirds. Voles and other small mammals also inhabit the site. Timing of enhancement is critical at this site. Although wildlife is using the area extensively, patches of musk thistle, Canada thistle, and Russian olives threaten the current quality of the site. It is recommended that these two noxious weeds and non-native trees be controlled as soon as possible before they take over large areas and compromise native prairie species and good wildlife habitat. This site is surrounded by a subdivision.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 51

Field East of Boulder Creek

Map: B1

Acres 19

This site is a pasture in good condition.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Farm

Wetland

Creek

Woodland

Natural Area

Other

Residential

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: DCAP, ROS, PCSI, CHSH

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Musk Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 4

Forbs

Plant Diversity: 2

Grass

Grassland Value: 0

Litter

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

tiger salamander

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen American robin, northern flicker

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 16

Site Comments

The site is a horse and cow pasture. It is in good condition, not overgrazed. A couple of wetland/pond complexes dot the site and provide habitat for the introduced bullfrog and possibly, the tiger salamander. Chorus frogs may breed in shallow ponds that form. Vegetation around the ponds is preferentially grazed and therefore not well-developed. Pasture grasses and forbs are introduced and the site could benefit from enhancement efforts such as seeding in more of the native already present onsite (e.g. Indian ricegrass) and cutting down Russian olives.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 52
Meller Street Field South

Map: B1
 Acres 3

This site is a dense wetland area within a subdivision.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Field without Crops | Aquatic |
| Subdivision | Grassland |
| Ditch | Wetland |
| Natural Area | Woodland |
| Residential | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CBSH, CWTS, WWH, PCSI

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	4
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	2
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4 yellow-headed blackbird

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen red-winged blackbird, blue jay, northern flicker

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 21

Site Comments

This site is a wetland area bordered by a subdivision. It is probable that the nitrogen and phosphorus from the nearby lawns and mown areas are contributing to the nutrient loads in the lowland areas of the polygon. The cattails and willows present are tall, dense, and vigorous. The shrubs and cattails in the ditch are teeming with songbirds, especially red-winged blackbirds. There is Canada thistle on either side of the water in a ditch lateral. The water is stagnant for the most part, but underground springs are apparent in areas where the duckweed disperses. This site is generally in good condition with the exception of the Canada thistle. Continued monitoring and control of weeds is recommended.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 53
Meller Street Field North

Map: B1
 Acres 17

This site is comprised of a picnic area and, below this, a channel.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 5

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Field without Crops | Agriculture |
| Subdivision | Aquatic |
| Ditch | Wetland |
| Natural Area | Woodland |
| Residential | Other |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CBSH, CAH, CSL, RCSH, PCSI

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs	Tamarisk	Plant Diversity:	2
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen

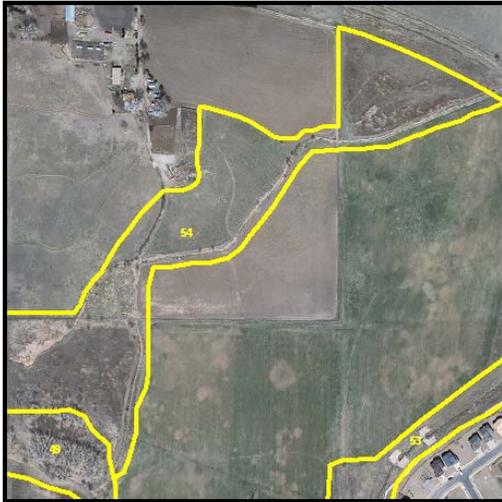
Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 19

Site Comments

This site comprises a picnic area and, below this, a channel. The channel is lined on both sides by rip rap measuring approximately 20 x 40 ft. The water flows fast through the channel. These areas of riprap and erosion netting continue intermittently into the northeast portion of the Site. The vegetation is scattered in the ditch and consists mainly of coyote willow and plains cottonwoods further away from the banks. The water is shallow and stagnant in the northeast as the channel dead ends in a concrete lined pond beside a trailer park. The fields are open and mown. Parts of the site are very open, lacking cover for wildlife trying to use the area as a corridor. A Swainson's hawk nest has been spotted on site.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 54
Three Triangles

Map: B1
 Acres 18

Three Triangles is a pasture near Leyner Cottonwood Ditch.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2 Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 2

- | | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Field without Crops | Woodland |
| Farm | Other |
| Natural Area | |
| Residential | |
| Oil Well | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ROS, DCAP, LWDA

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	0
Forbs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 2

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 11

Site Comments

Three Triangles is comprised of a ditch (appears to be a lateral of the Leyner Cottonwood ditch) and a pasture that seems to be seasonally flooded in places, as evidenced by the presence of reed canary grass near the center. The structure of the herbaceous cover provides marginal habitat for wildlife. Weeds dominate the site. The area could benefit from weed control and cutting down the Russian olives.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 55
Boulder Weld Ditch

Map: B1
 Acres 9

This portion of Boulder Weld Ditch runs northeast and is surrounded by agricultural pastures.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Field without Crops | Aquatic |
| Farm | Grassland |
| Ditch | Woodland |
| Natural Area | Other |
| Residential | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ROS, PCSI, LWDA, WTFH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	2
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3 muskrat

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: High

Summary Rating: 20

Site Comments

This portion of Boulder Weld Ditch runs northeast. At the time of the site visit, water was present, but the vegetation surrounding the ditch was very weedy and disturbed. Cattle were grazing near the area. No songbirds, raptors, or mammals were observed or are expected at this site. The continuation of the ditch to the west of the site seemed to be in better condition and a more suitable wildlife habitat than this area. Efforts toward site enhancement should focus on controlling noxious weed, eradicating Russian olives, and planting native trees in their place.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 56

Boulder Weld Gravel Ponds

Map: B1

Acres 8

This site is a heavily grazed pasture with two gravel ponds.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Farm

Wetland

Ditch

Woodland

Natural Area

Other

Residential

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ROS, PCSIX, DCAP, RCSH

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Ground Disturbance: 4

Grass

Plant Diversity: 2

Litter

Grassland Value: 0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

northern harrier

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen Canada goose, ring-necked duck

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 17

Site Comments

This site is a pasture and two gravel ponds. The uplands are heavily grazed by cattle and horses. The two gravel ponds have a very narrow wetland fringe, suggesting steep banks that preclude development of the vegetation. Russian olives and reed canary grass are dominant. The few mature cottonwoods on site provide perching and nesting habitat for raptors as well as songbirds. Although there are no prairie dogs onsite, they are present on adjacent sites. Enhancement effort is medium to address the control of Russian olives. If more effort were put in, however, the pond banks could be regraded and revegetated.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 58

Field S of Jasper Road

Map: B1

Acres 12

This site is predominately a mowed field adjacent to a residential development and bounded by the Boulder and Weld County Ditch.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 2

Field without Crops

Wetland

Subdivision

Other

Farm

Ditch

Natural Area

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: RCSH, MF, LWDA

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Musk Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 4

Forbs

Canada Thistle

Plant Diversity: 2

Grass

Litter

Grassland Value: 0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen dragonfly

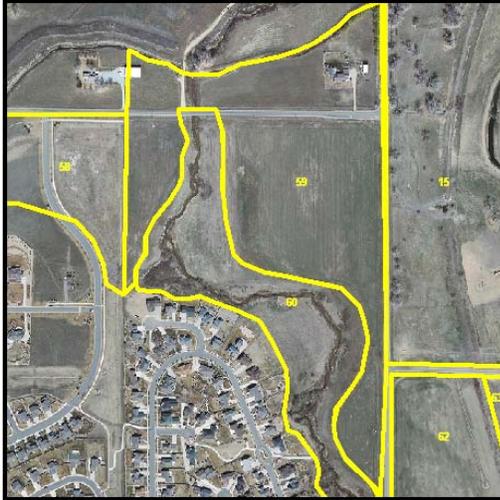
Enhancement Effort: High

Summary Rating: 15

Site Comments

The Field South of Jasper Road is predominately a mowed field adjacent to a residential development to the south and bounded on the west by the Boulder Weld ditch. The ditch held water at the time of the site visit but, other than reed canary grass, contained mostly weedy upland species. The majority of the site is currently of little use to wildlife. The site has high potential to be a valuable site, though, if efforts such as replanting the banks with native grasses/forbs and potentially recontouring the channel are undertaken.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 59
Erie Village Field

Map: B1
 Acres 33

Erie Village Field flanks Coal Creek, and consists of cultivated corn to the west and alfalfa to the east.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:	Habitat Types Present: 3
Field without Crops	Agriculture
Subdivision	Woodland
Creek	Other
Natural Area	

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CC, CAH, ADUD, CWTS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3 northern harrier

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen red-tailed hawk, cabbage moth, butterfly, turtle

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 19

Site Comments

The Erie Village Field flanks Coal Creek. To the west, south, and east, the site is surrounded by other large natural areas. In these areas immediately adjacent to the site, there is a cultivated corn field to the west and an alfalfa field to the east. At the southernmost tip of the site, the vegetation is more similar to that along Coal Creek. Due to the proximity of the creek, the site could be considered a wildlife movement corridor. Two red-tailed hawks and one turtle of indistinguishable species were observed. Habitat enhancement efforts should include the eradication of noxious weeds such as Canada thistle and monitoring to prevent reestablishment.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 60

Erie Village at Coal Creek

Map: B1

Acres 19

This site is a section of Coal Creek adjacent to a busy county road and a subdivision.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Subdivision

Grassland

Creek

Woodland

Residential

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: SBH, CSB

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Canada Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 4

Shrubs

Forbs

Grass

Plant Diversity: 2

Litter

Grassland Value: 2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

meadow vole, muskrat, Preble's meadow jumping mouse

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present State or federally listed species potentially present	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen red-tailed hawk, house finch, barn swallow, black-billed magpie

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 18

Site Comments

This site is a section of Coal Creek. It does have sinuosity. It is mowed and adjacent to a busy county road and a subdivision. The creek appears to be riprap lined in places, but not throughout. Further upland, the site is weedy and dominated by smooth brome. Cottonwoods and willows along the creek are in good condition, and create a stretch of excellent habitat for Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse, other small mammals, and migratory songbirds. Due to the proximity of the highway, enhancement efforts should realistically be low.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 61 Map: B1
Coal Creek from County Line to Lower Boulder Acres 14
 This site is a section Coal Creek with disturbed and incised banks.

Wetlands:
 Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context
 Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops	Aquatic
Creek	Wetland
Ditch	Woodland
Natural Area	Other
Residential	

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CSL, RF, RCSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	4
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	2
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area

Wildlife Species Seen cabbage moth, eastern cottontail, coyote, northern flicker

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 18

Site Comments

This section of Coal Creek flows well, but the banks to the north and east are highly disturbed and incised, having a slope greater than 90% in places. The banks are mainly lined with reed canary grass and coyote willows which are weedy and overgrown. The trees are primarily cottonwoods and crack willows, with some Russian olives interspersed. The upper reaches of the creek banks consist of mostly Russian thistle and lambsquarter. The coyote willows likely serve as a movement corridor for small mammals and some of the mature trees could be used as nesting sites for songbirds. Enhancement efforts should focus on cutting down Russian olives and recontouring the steep banks to improve erosion control.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 62
Bell Tower Field North

Map: B1
 Acres 26

This site is a field adjacent to Coal Creek.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 0 Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 2

- Field without Crops Woodland
- Subdivision Other
- Creek
- Natural Area
- Residential
- Oil Well

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: DCAP, CWTS, CSL

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	1
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	1
Litter		Grassland Value:	2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 10% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Prairie dogs present	Site is adjacent to another natural area Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen black-tailed prairie dog (two)

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 11

Site Comments

This site appears to have been under cultivation at some point, but now consists of plowed dirt, bindweed, Russian olive, and other weedy species. The plowed bare ground dominates. A small fringe of Russian thistle, prickly lettuce, and other dense weeds surrounds the border of the site. A small stand of coyote willows, which is most related to the adjacent Boulder Creek ditch, is present in the northeast corner of the site. From the observer's vantage point, one prairie dog and a few burrows were observed. The site may have greater occupation by prairie dogs, although relatively little wildlife use is expected on this site due to the lack of vegetative cover and the very small number of prairie dogs observed. The prairie dog extent shown on Map 4 comes from a different source. Enhancement efforts should consist of reseeded and stabilizing areas of bare soil with native species.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 63

Map: B1

Field at Lower Boulder Ditch

Acres 111

This site is a very large field adjacent to Coal Creek and Lower Boulder Ditch.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 1

Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 2

Field without Crops

Woodland

Subdivision

Other

Creek

Natural Area

Residential

Oil Well

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: BTPH, OR, ADUD

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Musk Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 3

Forbs

Canada Thistle

Plant Diversity: 2

Grass

Grassland Value: 2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 25%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

burrowing owl, Swainson's hawk

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present State or federally listed species potentially present Prairie dogs present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition

Wildlife Species Seen black-tailed prairie dog, northern flicker, black-billed magpie, red-tailed hawk

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 13

Site Comments

The field at Coal Creek and Lower Boulder ditch appears to be an abandoned orchard. Fruit trees are clumped in the Northern part of the polygon. A small stand of cattails is present, but there is no visible water. The southern part of the area consists of dense weedy forbs. A large prairie dog colony occupies approximately 25% of the site. Wildlife use of the site would likely revolve around the fruit trees and prairie dogs as sources of sustenance for other animals, but the lack of large trees for nesting or roosting makes this possibility less likely. Boulder Creek ditch is the northeastern boundary of the site.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 64

Map: B1

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Acres 18

This site is a field between Coal Creek and the Lower Boulder Ditch.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 0

Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 2

Field without Crops

Woodland

Creek

Other

Ditch

Natural Area

Residential

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CSL, RF, MF

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	3
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	2
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen black-tailed prairie dog, coyote, eastern cottontail

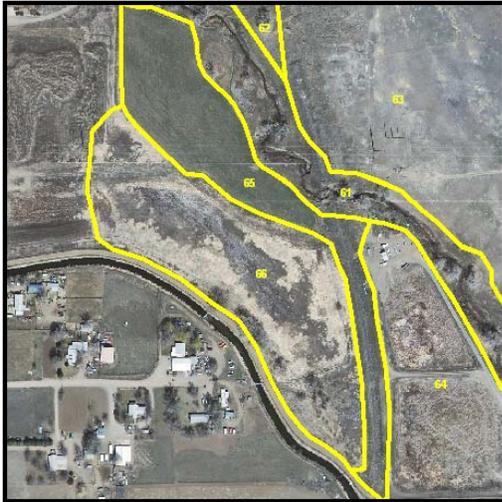
Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 10

Site Comments

This site lies between Coal Creek and the Lower Boulder Ditch. It consists of an overgrown weedy field, a mown field with a few planted trees, and a water treatment plant. The adjacent field (to the north) could serve as a wildlife movement area for coyotes, rabbits, and other mammals. Songbirds could use the trees in the shelter belt along the creek. Small mammals could conceivably use the weedy field to the south for cover or movement. Enhancement efforts should be low because, although this site does contain weedy forbs that could be managed, prairie dogs were seen on the adjacent site and are likely to colonize. The mapped prairie dog habitat on Map 4 indicates their potential presence. The best enhancement for this area is to try to maintain it as is and not let noxious weeks establish and degrade its current wildlife habitat value.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 65

Bell Tower Field South

Map: B1

Acres 6

This site is comprised of an alfalfa field bounded by Coal Creek and a driveway.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 1

Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

- Agriculture Lands with Crops
- Field without Crops
- Natural Area
- Residential

Habitat Types Present: 3

- Agriculture
- Woodland
- Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ASBH, ADUD, ROS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	0
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen house finch, sparrow

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 13

Site Comments

This site is comprised of an alfalfa field bounded by Coal Creek on one side and a driveway with a patch of Canada thistle on the other. House finches and sparrows were observed. Enhancement effort should be medium and consist of controlling Canada thistle and cutting out the Russian olive trees.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 66
Lahando

Map: B1
Acres 10

This site is a weedy field.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 2

- Field without Crops
- Creek
- Ditch
- Natural Area
- Residential

- Woodland
- Other

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: RF, ECCS, ADUD

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	3
Grass		Grassland Value:	0
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

meadow vole, northern harrier, brown thrasher

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen northern flicker, feral cat

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 17

Site Comments

This site is a weedy field with a road and Lower Boulder Ditch on one side and another natural area (site 65) on the other side. It appears that the field contains water at times, as some wetland forbs are present and the soil is moist. Reed canary grass is present. Near the road, the vegetation becomes more weedy and disturbed—cheatgrass, smooth brome, and musk thistle are present. Small mammals could potentially use the low vegetation for habitat and songbirds could nest in the trees. Habitat enhancement effort is considered low, as weed control would be feasible and recommended as beneficial.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 67
B1-B2 Field

Map: B2
 Acres 4

This site is a field with Erie Coal Creek Ditch along one side and a detention pond.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4
 Subdivision Aquatic
 Ditch Wetland
 Woodland
 Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ADUD, NSH, PCSI, CHSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4 meadow vole, muskrat, tiger salamander, Swainson's hawk

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen coyote, house finch

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 21

Site Comments

This site is a field that encompasses a section of Erie Coal Creek Ditch, and a detention pond. It is a strip of land with a trail along its length. The site is embedded in a subdivision. A couple of large cottonwoods provide shade along the trail, cover, and nesting sites for songbirds and woodpeckers. The high value of this site lies in its diverse habitat types and water bodies. Enhancement efforts would be low (and recommended) because of the high visibility of the site and the relatively small amount of musk thistle that can be controlled.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 68

Map: B2

Ditch and Field segment

Acres 16

This site is a narrow segment with a stretch of the Erie Coal Creek Ditch and the adjacent mowed pasture with willow stands.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2

Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 2

Field without Crops

Woodland

Subdivision

Other

Farm

Natural Area

Oil Well

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: LWDA, DCAP, CWTS, PCSI

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Musk Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 2

Shrubs

Forbs

Plant Diversity: 2

Grass

Grassland Value: 0

Litter

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 2

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area

Wildlife Species Seen American robin, western meadowlark

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 12

Site Comments

This site encompasses a stretch of the Erie Coal Creek Ditch/Cottonwood Extension Ditch and the adjacent mowed pasture that includes a couple of large willow stands. This section of the ditch is entirely weedy and has an unpaved access road alongside. Construction activity is occurring at the north end. It appears that the main road is being widened and paved. Wildlife value of this site is in the cover and nesting sites provided by the willow stands and the ditch. It is important that enhancement efforts control the musk thistle present onsite and also monitor the area for more weed infestations related to construction.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 69
Bison Ranch

Map: B2
Acres 22

This site is a medium-sized field that is bisected by the Erie Coal Creek Ditch, with a large pond at the southern end.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

- | | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Field without Crops | Aquatic |
| Farm | Wetland |
| Ditch | Woodland |
| Natural Area | Other |
| Residential | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: SB, ADUD, CHSH, RCSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	2
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen American robin

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 18

Site Comments

This site is a field bisected by the Erie Coal Creek Ditch with a large pond at the southern end. A dirt road runs the full length of the ditch on the site. The pond is partially riprap lined. The nearby uplands are almost entirely weedy. There is some use of the site by wildlife. The banks of the pond are steep and cut, reducing wetland vegetation and value to wildlife. Efforts to improve the area for wildlife should focus on re-shaping and seeding pond banks.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 70

Map: B2

Coal Creek at Old Town

Acres 35

This site is a large field with Coal Creek running along the western boundary of the site.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Ditch

Wetland

Natural Area

Woodland

Residential

Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSI, ROS, CHSH, RCSH, DCAP

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 4

Tree

Musk Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 5

Shrubs

Canada Thistle

Plant Diversity: 3

Forbs

Grass

Grassland Value: 0

Litter

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

Primary Factors Present

Secondary Factors Present

Water or wetland is present
Site serves as a migration or movement corridor

Site is larger than 3 acres
Site is adjacent to another natural area
One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition
Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 21

Site Comments

This site is a large field with Coal Creek running along its western edge. It is characterized by a narrow corridor of riparian vegetation, mostly willows, and steep banks. There is a lack of terracing along the creek banks. Enhancement efforts could be high, because terracing of creek banks would allow for development of the riparian vegetation and add greatly to natural resource values. Medium effort, though, would still be beneficial and includes the eradication of noxious weeds and Russian olives. This site is adjacent to site 71, which is highly recommended for grassland restoration. Cutting out Russian olives is recommended.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 71
Tracked Field

Map: B2
 Acres 55

This site is a large field between the cemetery and Coal Creek.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 3

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Field without Crops | Grassland |
| Creek | Wetland |
| Ditch | Other |
| Natural Area | |
| Residential | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ADUD, CSL, RCSH, SDH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Forbs	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Grass	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	3
		Grassland Value:	4

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition

Wildlife Species Seen eastern cottontail, coyote

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 22

Site Comments

This site is a large field below the cemetery and near Coal Creek. Ryegrass and cheat grass dominate. Cottonwood Extension Ditch runs along the bottom of the sloping field. Overall species diversity is low in this relatively homogenous site because it is dominated by escaped cultivated rye. However, a large number of natives such as salsify, sand sage, sand dropseed, buffalo grass, and sagewort are present. The presence of a good number of upland native species is noteworthy, and efforts should be made to protect them. This site is unique in this regard. The rolling topography presents a feature of interest. With Cottonwood Extension Ditch on the site and Coal Creek adjacent, this area has value to wildlife as an open but uncultivated field. Grass and forb seeds are plentiful for small mammals and seed eating birds. Meadowlarks surely nest here in spring. This site presents a unique opportunity for restoration or enhancement in upland habitat with the removal of non-natives and planting or seeding with natives. This site presents the best site in the planning area for native grassland restoration.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 72
Cemetery

Map: B2
 Acres 11

This is the historic Erie cemetery.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 0

Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 2

Field without Crops
 Natural Area

Grassland
 Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CSL, ADUD, BGH, SDH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	3
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	2
Forbs		Grassland Value:	4
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 2

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is adjacent to another natural area

Wildlife Species Seen cottontail scat

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 13

Site Comments

This is a cemetery, comprised mainly of introduced and weedy species. Its historic nature has value for humans, and there are great views from its hilltop location. Wildlife habitat value is low.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 73
Anteater Polygon

Map: B2
 Acres 36

This oddly-shaped site is a field with a small segment of the Erie Coal Creek Ditch/Cottonwood Extension Ditch.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

- | | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Field without Crops | Aquatic |
| Subdivision | Wetland |
| Farm | Woodland |
| Creek | Other |
| Natural Area | |
| Oil Well | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSI, RCSH, ADUD, CWS, CSL

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs	Common Teasel	Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen coyote, pocket gopher, songbirds

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 19

Site Comments

This site encompasses a curved north-south segment of the Erie Coal Creek Ditch/ Cottonwood Extension Ditch. The channel is wide throughout, ranging between three and five feet, and the water flows quickly. The banks are steep, and the western bank has overhanging coyote willow shading part of the channel. There is a mowed strip within a few feet of the riparian vegetation along the eastern bank, which has allowed Canada thistle and a small patch of teasel to flourish. Most areas were mowed in the open field and musk thistle was found along the edges of the road in these upland areas. Species diversity consisted of some aggressive and weedy species including goldenrod and reed canary grass. Birds were perched in cottonwoods overlooking the channel, and pocket gopher mounds and coyote scat was observed. Habitat enhancement, including grading the eastern bank of the channel and removing trash, could greatly improve the value of this site for wildlife.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 74

Coal Creek at Erie Commons

Map: B2

Acres 78

This site encompasses a relatively natural and very sinuous one mile section of Coal Creek.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4

Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Subdivision

Wetland

Creek

Woodland

Natural Area

Other

Oil Well

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CSL, ADUD, CWTS, PCSI, RCSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	4
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	4
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5

Swainson's hawk

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present State or federally listed species potentially present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen morning dove, western meadowlark, red-winged blackbird, northern flicker, European starling, house finch, song sparrow

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 24

Site Comments

This site encompasses a relatively natural and very sinuous one mile section of Coal Creek. The flood control potential is very good on the east side. The west side has soil piled up and houses built close to the creek in places. The banks at the creek are relatively steep and could be regraded or terraced. Sloughing is occurring in places. Adjacent grasslands contain a number of native grasses such as side-oats grama and big bluestem. A cottonwood snag along the creek provides perching for raptors such as red-tailed hawks. Scattered cottonwoods with a continuous understory of coyote willow present excellent habitat for migratory and nesting songbirds. Many birds were seen and heard during the site visit. Coal Creek is a significant wildlife corridor, and this section represents a stretch of it in relatively good condition. Enhancement (some weed control, bank stabilization, terracing in places) could be very beneficial.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 75
Big Draw

Map: B2
 Acres 177

This site is a shooting range with interesting topography created by rolling hills and swales.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 2

- Field without Crops
- Subdivision
- Natural Area

- Agriculture
- Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ADUD, CSL, ISAP

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Forbs	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	3
Grass	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	2
		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

ferruginous hawk, plains harvest mouse, hispid pocket mouse

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present State or federally listed species potentially present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition

Wildlife Species Seen western meadowlark

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 13

Site Comments

This site comprises a large field with interesting topography created by rolling hills and swales. Monoculture stands of rye grass dominate the site and have out-competed other vegetation. This abundance of rye grass has kept the area devoid of other weeds. This also means that native species are few. The site is used as a shooting range. Utility lines overhead provide excellent perches for raptors such as ferruginous hawks that would forage on the adjacent prairie dog colonies. Access was denied to the site, and the evaluation was conducted from aerials and adjacent roads.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 76

Map: B2

Grandview Rectangular Field

Acres 116

Grandview Rectangular Field is predominately a mowed field with a high percentage of bare ground, adjacent to the shooting range (site 75).

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 0

Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 1

Field without Crops

Other

Subdivision

Natural Area

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CSL

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Forbs		Ground Disturbance:	3
Grass		Plant Diversity:	1
		Grassland Value:	2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 20%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5

burrowing owl

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present State or federally listed species potentially present Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding Prairie dogs present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen black-tailed prairie dog

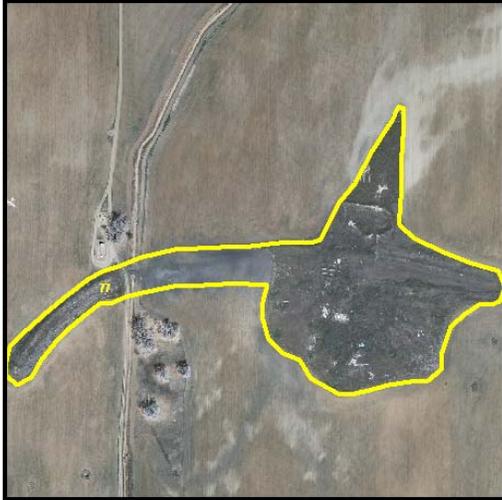
Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 12

Site Comments

Grandview Rectangular Field is predominately a mowed field with a high percentage of bare ground, adjacent to the shooting range (site 75). A prairie dog colony was noted within the site. The vegetation consisted mainly of weedy forbs. No trees or shrubs were present. Wildlife in this polygon is likely confined to prairie dogs and burrowing owls, as there was no observable water or shelter present. Due to the prairie dog colony, however, this area would be suitable as a raptor hunting ground. Enhancement could include the planting of natives, but it presently looks as though the area is slated for residential development.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 77
Amoeba

Map: B2
Acres 11

This site was composed of a small portion of the Community Ditch on the western side and several plains cottonwoods groves within the "body" of the amoeba.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2 Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 3

- | | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Field without Crops | Wetland |
| Farm | Woodland |
| Residential | Other |
| Oil Well | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CSL, PCSIX, CWS, CDMA

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	4
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	4
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 2

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 13

Site Comments

This site is composed of a field with a small portion of the Community Ditch on the western side and several plains cottonwoods groves. There is a high school to the south of the polygon and several high school students were visiting the site when we were there. The banks of the tributary were steeply sloped, allowing for very little wetland vegetation. Along the edges of the narrow road, there was an abundance of Canada thistle. The western extension of the site also contained Nebraska sedge. The mowing and the close proximity to the high school reduce the wildlife value of the site, but songbirds could reside in the numerous mature cottonwoods. The open fields may make good hunting grounds for raptors such as red-tailed hawks. Some weed control would be beneficial at this site.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 78
Dark Field

Map: B2
 Acres 29

This polygon is adjacent to a ditch on its western border. It is a nice size and shape and is not too weedy, with the exception of some cheatgrass.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 1 Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 2
 Field without Crops Woodland
 Farm Other
 Ditch
 Oil Well

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSI, CSL, CWTS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen songbird

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 13

Site Comments

This site is adjacent to a ditch on its western border. The Canada thistle was not too extensive. However, weedy grasses such as cheatgrass and weedy forbs dominated the understory. It is mainly, however, dominated by weedy forbs. Though the site is not mowed, the vegetation is short, most likely due to a lack of water. The grass is higher along the edges. Thus, the center of the site might attract hawks preying on rodents. Though we did not observe or hear any wildlife, animals along with native plant species would probably thrive here. Restoration efforts should be medium to control the Canada thistle and remove the large amounts of garbage.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 79
Creek W of I-25

Map: B2
 Acres 40

This site is comprised of a shelter belt between two active agricultural fields.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2 Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

Agriculture Lands with Crops	Grassland
Field without Crops	Wetland
Farm	Woodland
Oil Well	Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: SBH, RCSH, CBSH, SB

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	2
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen coyote scat, northern flicker

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 18

Site Comments

This site comprises a shelter belt between two active agricultural fields. The land slopes down toward the shelter belt, so its primary source of seasonal water appears to be from field run off/irrigation. There is a patch of cattails on the northern portion (across Road 10) that continues to just beyond the road on the southern portion. Species diversity is low—vegetation consists mainly of weedy and aggressive species such as reed canary grass. There are also some stressed or diseased cottonwoods. Concerning wildlife, we observed a flicker and some coyote scat. The sickly trees and lack of wildlife are likely due to the fields, lack of water, and root restriction. Shelter belts such as this one, in the middle of a large expanse of open fields, are very important to wildlife.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 80
Long Draw

Map: B2
 Acres 38

This site is an agriculturally disturbed swale channel that slopes down to the east.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2 Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

Agriculture Lands with Crops	Agriculture
Field without Crops	Wetland
Farm	Woodland
Residential	Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSI, ADUD, RCSH, CGH, CC, CHSH, ROS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	3
Grass	Common Teasel	Grassland Value:	0
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 17

Site Comments

This site is a swale channel that slopes down to the east. It has been disrupted by agricultural activity, with crops growing right up to the edge of the swale. Cornfields and hayfields are adjacent. A small duckweed and algae covered pond exists next to the farmhouse. Fertilizer on the adjacent agricultural fields, however, will continue to cause the buildup of algae and duckweed. The swale is weed dominated, with the exception of some manna grass and Indian ricegrass. The open area to the east is dominated by smooth brome. Though the vegetation is not native, this area to the east benefits wildlife due to the lack of cultivation. Overall, though, this site has relatively low value to wildlife. Enhancement potential at the pond could include bank reshaping, weed control, and planting of native vegetation.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 81
Beasley Slew

Map: B2
 Acres 11

Beasley Slew is a small natural drainage running through a tree farm.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4 Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

Agriculture Lands with Crops	Aquatic
Field without Crops	Wetland
Farm	Woodland
Ditch	Other
Residential	

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CGAH, LWDA, PCSI, ADUD, RCSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	3
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs	Common Teasel	Plant Diversity:	4
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5 muskrat, tiger salamander, meadow vole, northern harrier, sharp-shinned hawk

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 24

Site Comments

Beasley Slew is a small natural drainage running through “the tree farm”. It is a small meandering drainage with terracing. Native cottonwoods, willows, and shrubs grace its banks, though introduced reed canary grass is also present. Teasel is present along the lower end of the ditch. Many species of potential concern may occur at this site. The owner mentioned a very large turtle after a flood event in 1999, and the site as a whole has flood control related enhancement efforts attached.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 83

Map: B2

Little Dry Creek Tributary

Acres 32

The site appears to be a narrow strip of land with a continuous strip of unmown vegetation.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2

Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Agriculture Lands with Crops

Aquatic

Field without Crops

Wetland

Farm

Woodland

Creek

Other

Oil Well

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CBSH, CSL, PCSI, CWS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	4
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen red-tailed hawk

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 16

Site Comments

This site is a narrow piece of land with a continuous strip of unmown vegetation. Access was only possible at the far eastern edge and the western third of this polygon, as gated roads block the entrances. Though intermittent groups of cattails are present, the vegetation consists mostly of weedy forbs. Interstate Stone is located adjacent to the northeast corner of the site. A small manmade pond with floating scum is located near the northeast corner of the polygon. Peering into the center of the site from the aforementioned corner, upland weeds (prickly lettuce, kochia, Russian thistle) and other upland herbaceous plants dominate. The cottonwoods and crack willows are scattered throughout the site. The western portion of the site has an alfalfa field to the north and a cultivated field of hay or corn to the south. The area appears seasonally wet and the water is directed under the road and into the site through a metal pipe. The banks are not steep per se, but they are in poor condition in terms of value to wildlife. Enhancement could include planting along the eastern portion of the site and noxious weed control.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 84

Leyner Cottonwood Ditch

Map: C1

Acres 11

This site encompasses a section of the Leyner Cottonwood Ditch and a triangle of pasture.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Agriculture Lands with Crops

Aquatic

Field without Crops

Grassland

Farm

Woodland

Ditch

Other

Oil Well

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: RF, ADUD, SBH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Russian Knapweed	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs	Scotch Thistle	Grassland Value:	2
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

meadow vole, northern harrier

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen spotted towhee, mallard, pocket gopher

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 23

Site Comments

This site encompasses a section of the Leyner Cottonwood Ditch and a triangle of pasture. The ditch contained water in October and is well-vegetated, mimicking a small stream. Cottonwoods, Russian olives, and crack willows dominate, with an understory of smooth brome and weeds. Irrigated alfalfa hay fields are adjacent. Young cottonwoods are a testament to the successful recruitment of this tree species in the drainage. The riparian forest lining the ditch provides a naturalized patch of habitat embedded in the agricultural landscape. Enhancement efforts should focus on thinning and/or eradicating Russian olive trees from the site and controlling the three species of noxious weeds present.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 85
Bullhead Gulch

Map: C1
 Acres 14

This natural swale drainage appears to feed into the Leyner Cottonwood ditch.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4 Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

- | | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Field without Crops | Aquatic |
| Farm | Wetland |
| Ditch | Woodland |
| Natural Area | Other |
| Residential | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ADUD, PCSI, CBSH, CWTS, RCSI, ROS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs	Scotch Thistle	Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4 meadow vole, northern harrier

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen house finch, black-billed magpie, racoon, striped skunk, song sparrow, red-winged blackbird

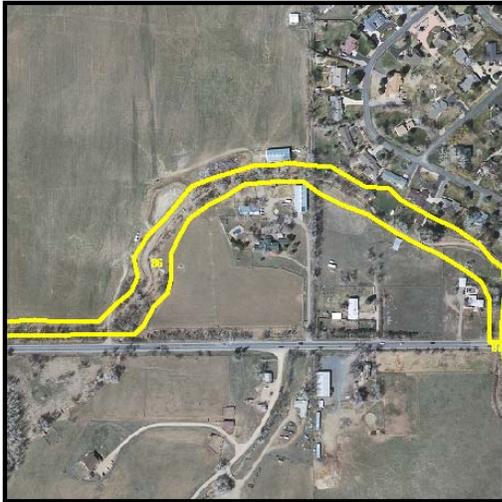
Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 22

Site Comments

This natural swale drainage appears to feed into the Leyner Cottonwood Ditch. It contains water, and likely has more perennial flows now than it did historically, due to development upstream. The water carrying capacity of the drainage will increase in importance as development continues. This low-lying drainage swale has scattered mature cottonwoods, some of which have snags that provide nesting for cavity-nesting birds such as house wrens and flickers. Young cottonwoods are establishing and will enhance the site as they mature. The drainage is well vegetated and provides important wildlife habitat amidst alfalfa fields. Songbirds are abundant (red-winged blackbirds, house finches, song sparrows), as are the tracks of raccoons and skunks. Enhancement efforts could consist of noxious weed control.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 86
South Boulder Canyon Ditch

Map: C1
 Acres 6

South Boulder Canyon Ditch is a concrete lined ditch that contained no water in October.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 1 Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Field without Crops | Aquatic |
| Farm | Grassland |
| Ditch | Woodland |
| Natural Area | Other |
| Residential | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: RF, CSL, SBH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3 northern harrier, meadow vole

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 17

Site Comments

South Boulder Canyon Ditch is concrete lined and contained no water in October. A shelter belt of crack willows, Russian olives, and plains cottonwoods lines the ditch. Weedy forbs such as prickly lettuce, Russian thistle, milkweed, and kochia were dense in places. No wildlife was observed, but the ditch is a potential migration corridor for mammals. Songbirds and raptors would most likely nest in the shelter belt trees. Raptors could hunt in adjacent abandoned fields. No prairie dogs were seen in the vicinity. Enhancement efforts should consist of noxious weed control and Russian olive eradication.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 87
Prince 2 Lake

Map: C1
 Acres 29

Prince 2 Lake is a medium sized reservoir with a mown field surrounding it.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:	Habitat Types Present: 3
Field without Crops	Aquatic
Subdivision	Woodland
Farm	Other
Residential	

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: MF, PCSI, ADUD

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover 5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance: 5
Forbs		Plant Diversity: 2
Grass		Grassland Value: 0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3 northern harrier, meadow vole

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen gull, killdeer, minnow, monarch butterfly

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 18

Site Comments

Prince 2 Lake is a medium sized reservoir with a mown field surrounding it. There is little to no wetland vegetation along the shoreline. A few scattered plains cottonwoods are present on the south side of the lake. Herring gulls and killdeer were present in and around the lake. Waterfowl likely stop over during migration. Other wildlife use is somewhat limited due to the lack of vegetation and cover. Enhancement at this site would include creating natural banks (grading) and revegetation.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 88
Erie Lake

Map: C1
Acres 70

Erie Lake is a large riprap lined reservoir. The banks are very steep in places, which may be due to low water levels at this time of year.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

- | | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Field without Crops | Aquatic |
| Subdivision | Wetland |
| Farm | Woodland |
| Residential | Other |
| Oil Well | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: MF, EW, DCAP, SB

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3 great egret

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen American crow, herring gull, snowy egret, trout

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 20

Site Comments

Erie Lake is a large riprap lined reservoir. The banks are very steep in places, which may be the result of low water levels at this time of year. There are some scattered cottonwoods in the polygon. Disturbed abandoned agricultural fields surround the lake and bare ground is abundant. A small ditch that is lined with cattails and curly dock leads into the lake. A stand of plains cottonwoods, coyote willow, and Russian olive was present near the adjacent housing development. A small stand of plains cottonwoods was present on the north side of the reservoir. Despite the riprap and lack of vegetation along the banks, this reservoir provides good habitat for waterfowl. Trout and gulls were present in the reservoir, and a snowy egret was seen here previously. Enhancement efforts should be related to planting native grasses, forbs, and shrubs in the areas of bare ground.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 89

Map: C1

Wetland North of Prince 1 Lake

Acres 9

This site is a field with scattered Russian olives and plains cottonwoods, and a weedy upland area.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 0

Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

Field without Crops

Grassland

Subdivision

Woodland

Farm

Other

Residential

Oil Well

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ROS, PCSI, ADUD, SBH

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 4

Tree

Musk Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 5

Forbs

Canada Thistle

Plant Diversity: 3

Grass

Grassland Value: 2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen northern flicker

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 14

Site Comments

This area does not actually seem to be a wetland. Scattered Russian olives and plains cottonwoods are present in an otherwise weedy upland area. A large amount of Canada thistle and some musk thistle are interspersed with wheat grasses and smooth brome. The tree stands would most likely provide good songbird habitat. There could be some use by mammals as a movement corridor. Habitat enhancement should include weed control and cutting down Russian olives.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 90

Map: C1

Lateral

Acres 21

This site contains the southern end of the Leyner Cottonwood Ditch and a creek shelter belt.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

- Field without Crops
- Farm
- Ditch
- Natural Area
- Residential
- Oil Well

- Aquatic
- Wetland
- Woodland
- Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: RF, CHSH, LWDA

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen red-tailed hawk, northern flicker

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 20

Site Comments

This site contains the southern end of the Leyner Cottonwood Ditch, which provides water for a riparian forest that includes Russian olives, plains cottonwoods, crack willows, and coyote willows in the northern portion of the polygon. As the ditch winds south, trees become sparser and weedy forbs become a larger component along the creek. Cattail wetland patches are present at the north end of the polygon and down south at the creek outpocket. The vegetation along the creek could provide habitat for songbirds and a movement corridor for mammals.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 91
Horizontal Lateral

Map: C1
 Acres 3

This site is a narrow strip between two tilled fields.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 0 Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Field without Crops | Grassland |
| Farm | Wetland |
| Ditch | Woodland |
| Natural Area | Other |
| Oil Well | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: SBH, CSL, PCSIX, RCSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen red-tailed hawk

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 15

Site Comments

This site is a narrow strip between two tilled fields. Canada thistle surrounds the site along the borders of the polygon. Vegetation within the polygon is tall, but trampled and lying in an eastward direction. There is a narrow channel running east/west along the length of the site. There is some reed canary grass associated with this low area, but it does not appear seasonally wet. It is more likely that this shelter belt used to be only as wide as the channel, but when the farmers began to mow a little farther back from its edges, the Canada thistle and smooth brome were able to proliferate, with the end result being smooth brome domination of the area. This site is an example of a classic shelter belt in that the cottonwoods were planted between two fields. Enhancement potential here is low. Although this site is adjacent to another natural area, it is long and thin and located between two fields. The main thing that could be done here is controlling the Canada thistle. This, however, would be a challenge. It is possible that birds use the cottonwoods as a stop over point between fields.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 92
Elmwood Reservoir

Map: C1
 Acres 44

This site contains is a shallow depression.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 1 Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 2

- | | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Field without Crops | Woodland |
| Subdivision | Other |
| Farm | |
| Ditch | |
| Natural Area | |
| Residential | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSIX, CSL, ADUD, CWTS, ROS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs	Bull Thistle	Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen American crow, red-tailed hawk, mourning dove, other songbirds, blue jay

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 13

Site Comments

This site contains “Elmwood Reservoir” according to the aerial photograph. On the ground, however, there is a low depression in the middle of the polygon. This depression consists of xeric upland grass and forb species, scattered young Russian olives on the south side, and young cottonwoods moving in from the east. There is no water. It appears that residents of the adjacent subdivision use this area to dump slash along the northeast side of the polygon. The large cottonwoods scattered throughout the southeastern portion of the site are either snags or have leaf cover on less than 50% of the tree. Mourning doves inhabit the adjacent subdivision rooftops and the large scattered cottonwoods. Enhancement effort is medium in terms of native species planting, halting the spread of musk thistle, cutting down Russian olives and putting an end to the dumping of slash here. This dumping is likely providing a seed source for weeds. Access to the site from the subdivision is blocked by a barbed wire fence. Creating walking and hiking trails through the site could enhance local residents’ interest in planning natives and managing the area.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 93
SE of Elmwood Reservoir

Map: C1
 Acres 4

This site, adjacent to a Town of Erie Water Treatment Plant, comprises an east-west running ditch along its southern border.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2 Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

- | | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Field without Crops | Aquatic |
| Subdivision | Wetland |
| Farm | Woodland |
| Ditch | Other |
| Natural Area | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: RCSH, PCSI, CWS, CSL

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	3
Grass		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3 northern harrier, meadow vole

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen red-tailed hawk, black-billed magpie, mourning dove

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 17

Site Comments

This site is privately owned, adjacent to a Town of Erie Water Treatment Plant, and comprised of an east-west running ditch along its southern border. This channel is seasonally wet and dominated by reed canary grass, Canada thistle, and sedges. The majority of this site is open—trees and shrubs are found only along the ditch, and there are mowed sedges and alfalfa in the western third of the polygon, which is maintained by the private landowner. A few open air buildings containing old farm equipment are located in the southern portion of the site. These are good places for bats to nest, especially since they are adjacent to the ditch, which could serve as a seasonal water source. Enhancement potential is low for the site, but the Canada thistle that lines the ditch should be controlled promptly to prevent quick proliferation.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 94

Map: A2

Boulder/Weld Ditch Tributary

Acres 23

This site is a lowland swale drainage. It is currently being developed and is grazed in other portions.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 1

Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

Agriculture Lands with Crops

Agriculture

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Subdivision

Woodland

Ditch

Natural Area

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ISAP, CWTS, PCSI, CGH, BTPH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 15%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 2

burrowing owl

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Prairie dogs present	Site is adjacent to another natural area

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 12

Site Comments

This site is a lowland swale drainage. A small cottonwood grove occurs at the southern end and prairie dogs are present on one quarter of the site or less. It is currently being developed and is grazed in some portions and mowed in others. Enhancement efforts should be low because of anticipated development and presence of prairie dogs.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 95
S Boulder Canyon Ditch

Map: C1
 Acres 4

This site is a triangular field with South Boulder Canyon Ditch running through it.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:	Habitat Types Present: 4
Field without Crops	Aquatic
Subdivision	Wetland
Farm	Woodland
Ditch	Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSI, CWTS, MF, CSL, RCSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover 5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance: 5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity: 3
Forbs		Grassland Value: 0
Grass		

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3 northern harrier, meadow vole

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen butterfly

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 19

Site Comments

This site, an area surrounding South Boulder Canyon Ditch, consists of mowed fields and residential developments. The ditch was dry in October. Coyote willow and reed canary grass are present along the ditch. Although no wildlife was observed during the site visit, the site is along a ditch and may serve as a corridor. The close proximity to roads and houses may provide value for humans. The lack of vegetation serves as a good starting point for enhancement with plantings of natives along the ditch.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 96
Suburban Draw

Map: C1
 Acres 4

This site is a ditch tributary of the Leyner Cottonwood Ditch in a subdivision.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 5

Subdivision
 Ditch

Aquatic
 Grassland
 Wetland
 Woodland
 Other

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: GATF, PCSI, WWH, LWDA, CBSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	4
Forbs		Grassland Value:	4
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen black-billed magpie

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 27

Site Comments

This site is a materialized tributary of the Leyner Cottonwood Ditch. It runs behind houses in a subdivision and provides a little riparian oasis for wildlife amidst suburbia. Cottonwoods and green ash provide complete shade along the banks. Garter snakes, deer mice, red fox, house finches, magpies, and others use this corridor for nesting and foraging. Enhancement efforts should focus on the removal of Canada thistle.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 97
S Field E of County Line Road

Map: C1
 Acres 7

This site consists mainly of upland weedy forbs and ground disturbance is high here.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:	Habitat Types Present: 4
Field without Crops	Aquatic
Farm	Wetland
Creek	Woodland
	Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ADUD, CSL, PCSIX, CBSH, RCSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover 5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance: 3
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity: 3
Forbs		Grassland Value: 0
Grass		

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3 great blue heron

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen western meadowlark, great blue heron

Enhancement Effort: High

Summary Rating: 18

Site Comments

This site consists mainly of an upland disturbed alliance, but ground disturbance has been high here—there is a dirt road winding throughout the polygon. Also, the depressions and microtopography are a result of dirt being dug up in one location and moved elsewhere. A tributary to Coal Creek runs through the southwest corner of the site. The banks are extremely steep. On the East side, the slope is practically vertical and has exposed sandy soil. The water channel is degraded and dominated by a rose species in some areas and reed canary grass and cattails in other places. The few scattered cottonwoods on site are young and not vigorous. They probably have root damage due to ground disturbance. There is trash and pollution in and around the water, creating suds in one part of the channel. The whole site is disturbed and dominated by weedy species such as cheatgrass, tumble mustards, and prickly lettuce. There is no evidence of prairie dogs on site, but they are present across airport road. Meadowlarks are nesting somewhere on site and a Great Blue Heron flew overhead, but there was no further evidence of wildlife in this polygon. Enhancement efforts would be great, as the banks could be graded, the site could be planted, and the small percentage of noxious weeds could be managed.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 99

Map: C1

Field at South end East County Line Road

Acres 27

This site is the northeast corner of a cattail marsh and swale tributary of Coal Creek.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Farm

Wetland

Natural Area

Woodland

Oil Well

Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ADUD, BTPH, CHSH, ROS

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Musk Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 5

Forbs

Common Teasel

Plant Diversity: 4

Grass

Grassland Value: 2

Litter

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 30%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5

yellow-headed blackbird, burrowing owl, meadow vole, northern harrier

Primary Factors Present

Secondary Factors Present

Water or wetland is present
State or federally listed species potentially present
Site serves as a migration or movement corridor
Prairie dogs present

Site is adjacent to another natural area
Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen black-tailed prairie dog, red-tailed hawk, European starlings, black-billed magpie

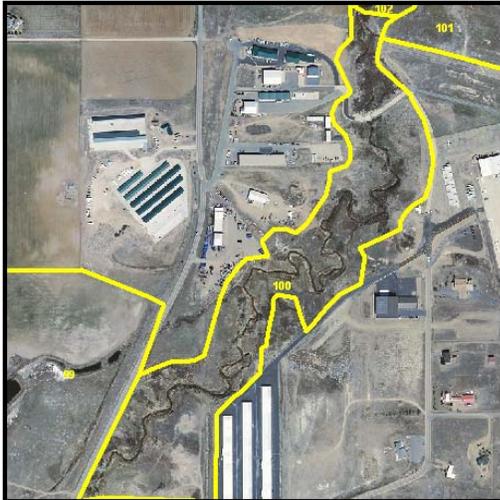
Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 26

Site Comments

This site is the northeast corner of a cattail marsh and swale tributary of Coal Creek. This wetland is used by wildlife such as red-winged blackbirds, meadow voles, tiger salamander, possibly yellow-headed blackbirds and northern harriers. In spring and fall, migrating birds stop over. Its proximity to Coal Creek affords it prime location as adjunct habitat. The presence of prairie dogs adds further to its wildlife habitat value to raptors and other predators. Enhancement efforts would be medium and should include weed control and the eradication of the Russian olives. If more effort were put in to this site, its connection to Coal Creek would be very ecologically beneficial.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 100
Coal Creek at Airport

Map: C1
 Acres 33

This site is a section of Coal Creek west of the airport.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 5 Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:	Habitat Types Present: 3
Field without Crops	Aquatic
Farm	Woodland
Creek	Other
Natural Area	

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSI, CWTS, ADUD, WSTS, BTPH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover 4
Tree	Diffuse Knapweed	Ground Disturbance: 5
Shrubs	Musk Thistle	Plant Diversity: 4
Forbs	Canada Thistle	Grassland Value: 2
Grass	Common Teasel	
Litter		

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 20% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5 bank swallow, burrowing owl, rock squirrel

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present State or federally listed species potentially present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding Prairie dogs present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen black-tailed prairie dog, desert cottontail, black-capped chickadee

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 26

Site Comments

This site is a section of Coal Creek west of the airport. The uplands are used for industrial purposes, and, as a consequence, weeds flourish there. The creek is sinuous and serves in wetlands functionality, although the banks are extremely steep throughout, vertical in places. The banks, which are dominated by coyote willow, contain patches of natives such as snowberry, clematis, and scattered cottonwoods. The control of noxious weeds would require little effort and be beneficial to the quality of the site. Bank restoration is also recommended, but would require a greater effort.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 101
Airport North

Map: C1
 Acres 34

This site has runway roads on its south and east sides and polygon 102 to its west.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 0 Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 2

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Field without Crops | Grassland |
| Farm | Other |
| Creek | |
| Natural Area | |
| Residential | |

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ADUD, CSL, CWH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Grass		Ground Disturbance:	5
Litter		Plant Diversity:	2
		Grassland Value:	2

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen black-tailed prairie dog scat

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 13

Site Comments

This site is a field with airport runway roads on its south and east sides and polygon 102 to its west. Vegetation is an upland disturbed alliance with crested wheatgrass, rye species, and some weedy species including cheatgrass and bindweed. The southern and eastern edges are mowed in approximately 150 and 20 foot strips, respectively. There is a mowed strip from the south leading to the wind sock in the polygon. Enhancement efforts should be low. There is a subdivision just east of the site that might take an interest in the area if it were managed or restored, but the nearby runway strips and constant air traffic make this less likely. Prairie dog scat was seen, but it was isolated and there was no other evidence of their presence. There appear to be areas where holes were dug and filled in the southern mowed portion of the site—it is unclear if these are old prairie dog burrows. If so, it is probable that burrowing owls might nest here. The aeriels indicate that there is burrowing owl habitat to the West. There is prairie dog habitat in the northern portion of the site.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 102

Coal Creek North of airport

Map: C1

Acres 28

This site is a section of Coal Creek northwest of the airport.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 5

Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

Agriculture Lands with Crops

Aquatic

Field without Crops

Woodland

Farm

Other

Natural Area

Oil Well

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSI, CWTS, ADUD, PWTW, BETW, CCS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs	Common Teasel	Plant Diversity:	4
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5

bank swallow, Swainson's hawk

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen eastern cottontail, pocket gopher

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 25

Site Comments

This site is a section of Coal Creek northwest of the airport. The creek maintains sinuosity and wetlands functionality, although the banks are steep throughout and often steeply incut. Vegetation in the creek is dominated by native trees and shrubs. Non-native Russian olives were not seen, which is refreshingly unusual. The uplands are weed dominated. Coal Creek is a critical wildlife corridor and presents an excellent stopover for migratory songbirds. Forage and cover are abundant for nesting songbirds, amphibians, reptiles, small mammals, carnivores, and ungulates. Enhancement that would benefit this site involve weed control. Efforts could also be made to restore the creek bank, but that would be a large undertaking.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 103

Strip W of Coal Creek

Map: C1

Acres 6

This site is a swale created by a dyke/road at its eastern edge. It may have been a natural wetland previously, but has since been altered.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2

Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

Agriculture Lands with Crops

Aquatic

Field without Crops

Woodland

Farm

Other

Natural Area

Oil Well

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSI, ADUD, CWTS, ECCS

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Musk Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 5

Shrubs

Forbs

Plant Diversity: 3

Grass

Grassland Value: 0

Litter

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 16

Site Comments

This site is a swale created by a dyke/road at its eastern edge. It may have been a natural wetland previously, but has since been altered. This strip contains coyote willows and scattered cottonwoods. The noise level is very high due to the helicopter and airplane activity at the adjacent airport. The understory is dominated by escaped cultivated sage. Wildlife use of the site is probably low due to the high level of noise disturbance, though a nesting Swainson's hawk and coyotes were observed by a resident.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 104
Pond 104

Map: C1
Acres 12

This site is an abandoned detention pond or stock pond.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops
Farm
Oil Well

Aquatic
Wetland
Woodland
Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CWTS, PCSI, ADUD, ECCS, PWTW, RCSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	3
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4 rock squirrel

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen black-capped chickadee, american goldfinch, northern flicker

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 19

Site Comments

This site appears to be a detention pond or stock pond that has been abandoned. Dry in October, bare patches in the basin testify to its seasonal water-holding capacity. It is likely an ephemeral pool providing significant breeding habitat for chorus frogs in spring. Goldfinches were foraging on thistles. In spring, this site provides a little oasis to birds, bats, amphibians, and others. The significance of this site to wildlife is in the shallow water in the middle of a large expanse of cultivated fields.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 105
Thomas Reservoir

Map: C1
 Acres 27

Thomas reservoir is a large gravel pond that appears to be under restoration.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4 Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 2
 Field without Crops Aquatic
 Subdivision Woodland

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: MF, CWTS, PCSI, CWS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	3
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	2
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3 great egret

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen European starling

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 17

Site Comments

Thomas Reservoir is a large gravel pond that appears to be under restoration. Plains cottonwoods, chokecherry, coyote willow, crack willow, and blue spruce have been planted and appear to be doing well. The reservoir banks are mostly riprap lined and there are large areas surrounding the reservoir that are up to 90% bare ground. These bare areas have reportedly been seeded with natives. A strong enhancement recommendation is to cease mowing in order to allow native plants to flourish. Songbirds could nest in the larger surrounding trees. Waterfowl mostly likely make use of the reservoir, but other wildlife use seems transitory and minimal.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 106
Nesting Site

Map: C1
 Acres 3

This parcel with raptor nests is slated for development.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 0

Wetland Value: 1

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

Field without Crops
 Subdivision

Grassland
 Woodland
 Other

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CSL, ADUD, PCSIX, CWH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	2
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

Swainson's hawk, great horned owl

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
State or federally listed species potentially present Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen great horned owl (nesting in 2006), red-tailed hawk nest (in 2007)

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 15

Site Comments

This site represents a parcel to be developed for real estate. On the eastern edge along the side of the building, there is a strip of mowed Kentucky bluegrass. Smooth brome grows along the edge of the site. The cottonwood trees where the raptors nest are in the south-central portion of the site. One of them is almost directly next to the sidewalk. Future construction on this site could be detrimental to the health of the two already declining cottonwood trees with raptor's nest(s). The site is bordered by Bonnell Road to the south and by an industrial area with storage facilities to the east.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 107

Coal Creek at Commons

Map: C2

Acres 123

This site is a large area of converted grassland with a section of Coal Creek, a pond, native grasses, and prairie dogs.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Subdivision

Grassland

Creek

Woodland

Natural Area

Other

Viewshed: None

Vegetation

Plant Communities: GFWM, CWS, CWTS, ADUD, BGH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	4
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	3
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	4
Forbs		Grassland Value:	4
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5

Swainson's hawk, meadow vole, muskrat.

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present State or federally listed species potentially present Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen coyote scat, red-tailed hawk, northern flicker

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 26

Site Comments

This site is a large area of converted grassland with a section of Coal Creek, a pond, and prairie dogs. The open, disturbed uplands consist of a substantial proportion of unmown musk thistle, mustards, and rye overlooking the steep bank of the perennial stream channel. Further away from the channel, the fields are flat and contain mostly weedy species, though a significant amount of native blue grama is present. Erosion has resulted in thirty foot vertical walls along curves in the creek that surround a medium-sized pond. Seventy-five percent of the pond is surrounded by a thin fringe of vegetation, while twenty-five percent is unvegetated. The stream is intermittently rip rap lined. It is wide (15-20 ft.) in places near the pond with a good amount of coyote willow and other vegetation on its banks and growing as islands out of the channel bottom. The bank slope overlooking the pond is extremely steep and eroded. Waterfowl likely make use of the pond in spring, summer, and fall months, and songbirds likely nest in the coyote willows around the channel. In terms of habitat enhancement, it would be easy to vegetate this twenty-five percent and further improve site quality. As a site with remnant native prairie grasses, this site is worthy of consideration for restoration.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 108

Map: B2

Field West of landfills

Acres 53

This site is a strip of grassland west of the old landfill, with a concrete trail running through its length, and Coal Creek to the west.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 2

Field without Crops

Grassland

Subdivision

Other

Creek

Natural Area

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: BGH, ADUD, CSL

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Shrubs

Musk Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 5

Forbs

Canada Thistle

Plant Diversity: 3

Grass

Grassland Value: 6

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 15%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

burrowing owl, Swainson's hawk

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present State or federally listed species potentially present Prairie dogs present	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen coyote scat

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 24

Site Comments

This site is a strip of grassland west of the old landfill, with a concrete trail running through its length, and Coal Creek to the west. Prairie dogs are present at the northern end, especially where the soil was previously dug up for trail construction. The native blue grama grass is present, as is the noxious weed musk thistle. Enhancement by weed control is encouraged. A swale comes in at the south end as a tributary of Coal Creek.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 109

Map: C2

Unnamed tributary of Coal Creek

Acres 26

This site consists of a tributary of Coal Creek and a detention pond adjacent to a subdivision.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4

Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 5

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Subdivision

Grassland

Creek

Wetland

Natural Area

Woodland

Oil Well

Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CBSH, ADUD, CWTS, WTFH, PCSI

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Canada Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 5

Shrubs

Plant Diversity: 4

Forbs

Grass

Grassland Value: 4

Litter

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5

Swainson's hawk

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen coyote, pair of red-tailed hawks, red-winged blackbird, house finch, eastern cottontail

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 30

Site Comments

This site consists of a tributary of Coal Creek and a detention pond adjacent to a subdivision. The detention pond has sloping sides and contains cattails and duckweed. The tributary creek performs an important wetland function and is lined with natives including cattails, switchgrass, coyote willows, and cottonwoods. The uplands are mostly mowed and contain a number of natives such as blue grama and side-oats grama, which were likely part of the revegetation mix, as they line the sidewalk in this open space. Sand sage is also present and likely part of the original vegetation community. This site would benefit immensely from removing the mowing from the drainage swale in those locations where native grasses are doing well. In some places, however, weeds dominate and mowing should be continued. The drainage provides excellent opportunities for bats to drink as they exit their roost sites in the evening. It is not known where such roost sites (buildings) might be, but bat houses are to be encouraged. Coyotes, cottontails, and songbirds are abundant.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 110

Coal Creek Tributary South of Airport

Map: C2

Acres 25

This site is a tributary of Coal Creek that crosses Highway 7.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4

Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Field without Crops
Subdivision
Creek

Habitat Types Present: 4

Aquatic
Wetland
Woodland
Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CHSH, ADUD, CWTS, RCSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Shrubs	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	4
Grass		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present State or federally listed species potentially present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen songbirds

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 25

Site Comments

This site is a tributary of Coal Creek that crosses Highway 7. The tributary appears to be perennial (water was present at the time of the site visit). A large coyote willow, stands of cattails, and reed canary grass are present along the tributary. The banks are steep and vegetation becomes dominated by weedy annuals just above the water's edge. The creek winds through a field of upland weeds. This site could be used by amphibians (frogs), songbirds, and possibly muskrats and meadow voles. Site 110 provides continuous cover to mammals and would be important as a movement corridor. As the creek moves away (N) of Highway 7, vegetation becomes weedier (lots of musk thistle) and the ADUD alliance becomes dominant. The banks become steeper as well. A large prairie dog colony is adjacent but, at present, there are no trees available for raptor use.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 118

Map: C2

Pond 118

Acres 1

Pond 118 is a medium sized pond at the junction of Highway 7 and the main Vista Ridge entrance.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Subdivision

Aquatic

Creek

Wetland

Natural Area

Woodland

Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CHSH, CWTS, MF

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Shrubs

Ground Disturbance: 5

Forbs

Plant Diversity: 2

Grass

Grassland Value: 0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 20

Site Comments

Pond 118 is a medium sized pond at the junction of Highway 7 and the main Vista Ridge entrance. It is surrounded by mowed grass and has virtually no bank. Outpockets of the pond contain sizable groves of cattails and some coyote willows. Some eutrofication is occurring on the pond surface. Due to its proximity to heavily trafficked areas and lack of sloped banks, little wildlife use is expected. Occasionally, migrating waterfowl may stop over. Frogs are the most likely inhabitants of this pond.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 119
Pond 119

Map: C2
 Acres 1

Pond 119 is across the road (E) of pond 118. It has almost no wetland fringe.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2 Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 3

Subdivision	Aquatic
Creek	Wetland
Natural Area	Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CHSH, MG

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Grass		Ground Disturbance:	5
		Plant Diversity:	1
		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 14

Site Comments

Pond 119 is across the road (E) of pond 118. It has almost no wetland fringe. The banks are dominated by mowed grass, though there are a few small patches of unhealthy looking cattails. There is no other vegetation present, and it is unlikely that this site is used often or readily by any type of wildlife. The pond is at the heavily trafficked junction of Highway 7 and the main Vista Ridge entrance. Some amphibians could use the site as a habitat. There is also potential for migrating water fowl, but any prolonged use is doubtful.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 120

Map: C2

Pond 120

Acres 0

Pond 120 is a small pond that holds little water.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2

Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

Subdivision
Creek

Aquatic
Woodland
Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSI, ADUD, CWTS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	2
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 15

Site Comments

Pond 120 is a small pond that holds little water. It resembles a large puddle with several young cottonwoods and otherwise disturbed annuals. There are also two small coyote willows present. This pond could be of some use to amphibians. Its ephemeral nature; proximity to construction; and barren, steep banks make it an unlikely habitat for wildlife.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 121
Pond 121

Map: C2
 Acres 3

Pond 121 is a large gravel pond with a broad wetland fringe of cattails and bulrushes.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 5

Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Subdivision
 Creek

Aquatic
 Wetland
 Woodland
 Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: PCSI, CWTS, CBSH, ADUD, RCSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Diffuse Knapweed	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	4
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

great egret, great blue heron, tiger salamander

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Prairie dogs present	One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 25

Site Comments

Pond 121 is a large gravel pond with a broad wetland fringe of cattails and bulrushes. Reed canary grass, coyote willows, and a few young plains cottonwoods are also present along the banks. It appears that a tributary of Little Dry Creek feeds this pond. No waterfowl were observed, but they are expected to frequent this pond due to the magnitude of vegetation. Amphibians, including tiger salamanders, could also use this site. The only drawbacks of this pond are its close proximity to a golf course and the weedy annuals that grow on the upper banks.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 122

Map: C2

Pond 122

Acres 1

Pond 122 (a tributary of Coal Creek) is a small gravel pond along the golf course in Vista Ridge

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Subdivision

Aquatic

Creek

Wetland

Natural Area

Woodland

Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CBSH, ADUD, PCSI, CWTS

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Canada Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 5

Shrubs

Forbs

Grass

Plant Diversity: 3

Grassland Value: 0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen cottontail scat

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 21

Site Comments

Pond 122 (a tributary of Coal Creek) is a small gravel pond along the golf course in Vista Ridge. It has a narrow wetland fringe consisting mostly of cattails and bulrush. The banks are virtually nonexistent, and the surrounding vegetation is dominated by weedy upland annuals. A few scattered small cottonwoods and coyote willows are present along the banks. Due to the lack of cover (other than the cattails), waterfowl and songbird usage would be minimal. Amphibians would more likely make use of this site. This area could be enhanced by reducing weed cover with little effort. The planting of native shrubs is also recommended, but would require considerably more effort.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 123

Map: C2

Pond 123

Acres 1

This site, which is named Pond 123, is actually not a pond, but a (seemingly) man-made, sinuous stream connecting ponds 122 and 124.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

Subdivision

Aquatic

Creek

Wetland

Natural Area

Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CHSH, EW, ADUD

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Forbs

Canada Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 5

Grass

Dalmatian

Plant Diversity: 4

Toadflax

Grassland Value: 0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen red fox scat

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 19

Site Comments

This site, which is named Pond 123, is actually not a pond, but a (seemingly) man-made, sinuous stream connecting ponds 122 and 124. It is lined with large rocks and rip rap. There are isolated outpockets of cattails. Emergent wetland vegetation and duckweed are present along the stream. Above the narrow wetland vegetation, the banks become dominated by weedy annuals. The stream could be used by amphibians (small eddies are present) and the rocks could serve as cover/nesting habitat for birds or small mammals. Enhancement efforts should focus on weed control.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 124

Map: C2

Pond 124

Acres 1

Pond 124 is at the Northern end of pond/stream 123.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Subdivision

Aquatic

Creek

Wetland

Natural Area

Woodland

Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CWTS, PCSI, CBSH, MF

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Canada Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 19

Site Comments

Pond 124 is at the Northern end of pond/stream 123. Three quarters of its banks are the mowed lawn of a golf course. The remaining quarter of the banks are dominated by cattail/bulrush and scattered with a few small plains cottonwoods and coyote willows. Due to the proximity to a subdivision and golf course, wildlife use is expected to be low. Redwing blackbirds could use the cattails for cover and nesting. Also, waterfowl could pass through this area. No other use is expected, given the replacement of most bank vegetation with the golf course. The eradication of Canada thistle would be beneficial.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 125

Map: C2

Pond 125

Acres 1

Pond 125 is a gravel pond. Three quarters of the banks are lined with rip rap, while the remaining bank quarter is very narrow, and contains a slender wetland fringe.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Subdivision
Creek

Aquatic
Wetland
Woodland
Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CBSH, CWTS, ADUD

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Shrubs	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Forbs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen mallard, herring gull

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 19

Site Comments

Pond 125 is a gravel pond. Three quarters of the banks are lined with rip rap, while the remaining bank quarter is very narrow, and contains a slender wetland fringe. This fringe consists of cattails and coyote willows, with weedy annuals such as rumex, wheatgrass, lactuca, and Canada thistle growing all the way up to the edge of the pond. The lack of a sloping bank and close proximity to the golf course make this a poor wildlife habitat. A mallard was observed during the site visit, indicating that similar waterfowl are also likely present. Frogs and other amphibians could dwell in this pond, but the presence of so much rip rap along the banks reduces this possibility. Weed control would be beneficial.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 126

Map: C2

Pond 126

Acres 1

Pond 126 is a relatively small gravel pond with a limited wetland fringe of cattails and bulrushes.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 3

Field without Crops
Subdivision

Aquatic
Wetland
Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CBSH, ADUD

Vegetation Structure:

Forbs

Grass

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Canada Thistle

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Ground Disturbance: 5

Plant Diversity: 2

Grassland Value: 0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen red-tailed hawk, red-winged blackbird, herring gull, eastern cottontail

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 19

Site Comments

Pond 126 is a relatively small gravel pond with a limited wetland fringe of cattails and bulrushes. Beyond the wetland fringe, the ground is moist and most likely holds groundwater, but the vegetation is comprised of disturbed annuals (lactuca, Canada thistle, crested wheatgrass, kochia, Russian thistle). A red-tailed hawk, gulls, and a single red winged blackbird were observed at the pond. Although the pond is surrounded by residences within a subdivision, waterfowl likely frequent this site. Red winged blackbirds are expected to use the cattails. This site could also be of use to frogs and other amphibians. Though water was circulating through a pump, the pond appeared slightly stagnant and eutrofied. Enhancement efforts should focus on the removal of the Canada thistle.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 128
Pond 128

Map: C2
 Acres 2

This site includes a gravel pond near the North end of the Vista Ridge subdivision.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:	Habitat Types Present: 4
Field without Crops	Aquatic
Subdivision	Wetland
Creek	Woodland
	Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CHSH, PCSI, CWTS, ADUD

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover 5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance: 5
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity: 3
Grass		Grassland Value: 0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present	One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen mallard, American robin

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 19

Site Comments

This site includes a gravel pond near the north end of the Vista Ridge subdivision. The pond supports a narrow wetland fringe consisting of young plains cottonwoods, some coyote willows, and a small stand of cattails. Outside of the fringe, the vegetation shifts to include predominately disturbed upland annuals (prickly lettuce, curly dock, crested wheatgrass, kochia, Russian thistle, and musk thistle). A golf course borders the pond on the southern and western edges, houses border the eastern edge, and open space borders the north. The wetland fringe is most likely too narrow and the cottonwoods are too small to support extensive wildlife use. While some waterfowl could use this pond (mallards were observed), lack of vegetative cover and shoreline prevent broader usage. This pond could be enhanced by reducing the amount of weedy upland species and planting native vegetation around the banks. The gravel pond appears to be fed by a tributary of nearby Coal Creek. Recommendations for enhancement include the eradication of noxious weeds and reseeding with natives.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY



Site #: 131

Map: C2

Little Dry Creek Rectangle

Acres 6

This site is a well-vegetated detention pond built to contain potential flood flows coming from Little Dry Creek.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 5

Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Agriculture Lands with Crops

Aquatic

Field without Crops

Wetland

Farm

Woodland

Ditch

Other

Residential

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CSL, CBSH, ROS, PCSI, CWTS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5

Swainson's hawk, green-winged teal, bald eagle, double-crested cormorant, common merganser, black-crowned night heron, yellow-

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present State or federally listed species potentially present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen red-winged black bird, American kestrel, kingfisher, mallard, mourning dove, rock dove, house finch, striped skunk, racoon, red fox, coyote, bull frog, turtle, common merganser, garter snake, bull snake, perch, catfish, grass carp.

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 25

Site Comments

This site is a detention pond built at the request of the Army Corps of Engineers to contain potential flood flows coming from Little Dry Creek. Such flows have not materialized, however, and the owner draws water to the pond from a lateral of Community Ditch. The sides of the pond slope nicely and are lined with cattails. Some cottonwoods and Russian olives also occur. Discussions with the landowner revealed great biodiversity in migratory waterfowl, raptors, songbirds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. Perch, catfish, and grass carp occur in the pond. The removal of the Russian olives is recommended, so enhancement effort is considered medium.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY

Site Image Not Applicable.

Site #: N/A

Map:

Gooding A and D Plumb Ditch

Acres 0

The Gooding A and D Plumb Ditch takes off on the west bank of Boulder Creek and parallels the creek (maps A1 and A2) until it exits the planning area at the north end.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 2

Wetland Value: 2

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 4

Field without Crops
Farm

Aquatic
Wetland
Woodland
Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: RCSH, ROS, LWDA

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	3
Forbs		Plant Diversity:	2
Grass		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
	Three or more habitat types are present Site is potentially part of a corridor, or a lower quality corridor

Wildlife Species Seen starlings

Enhancement Effort: High

Summary Rating: 15

Site Comments

The Gooding A and D Plumb Ditch takes off from the west bank of Boulder Creek and parallels the creek (maps A1 and A2) until it exits the planning area at the north end. It traverses fields and pastures. The banks are sparsely vegetated and flanked with access roads on both sides. They are mostly lined with concrete, rip rap, and eroded soil, and, in many places, the slope nears 100%. This ditch is a poor representation of a wildlife corridor, and the low feasibility of restoration leads to a low enhancement potential. Overall, required enhancement efforts would be high, due to the need for bank restoration and the sheer size of the ditch. The eradication of Russian olives would also be beneficial and slightly less difficult.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY

Site Image Not Applicable.

Site #: N/A

Map:

Community Ditch

Acres 0

Community Ditch is a narrow channel with dense weedy vegetation.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 2

Agriculture Lands with Crops

Grassland

Field without Crops

Other

Residential

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: LWDA, CSL, SBH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Forbs		Ground Disturbance:	5
Grass		Plant Diversity:	2
Litter		Grassland Value:	0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 3

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor	One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen house finch

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 16

Site Comments

Community ditch is a narrow channel with a field extending to the edge of the ditch on one side and an agricultural field on the other side. There is a narrow fringe (less than five feet) of dense weedy vegetation that is left unmowed on either side of the ditch. Enhancement efforts should be low and focus on increasing the vegetative fringe.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY

Site Image Not Applicable.

Site #: N/A
Boulder/Whiterock Ditch

Map:
Acres 0

This site comprises a primarily rip rap lined ditch with access roads on both sides.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 4

Agriculture Lands with Crops	Aquatic
Farm	Wetland
	Woodland
	Other

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: LWDA,CWS,RCSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs	Common Teasel	Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 4

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen common raven

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 20

Site Comments

The Boulder/Whiterock ditch is flanked by access roads to the north and south. The ditch is partially rip rap lined and has 15-foot steep banks. The ditch supports a continuous stand of crack willow which could be used by nesting songbirds and as perching areas for raptors hunting in adjacent fields. Enhancement efforts will be low and consist of controlling the noxious weeds. Due to the close proximity of the road, monitoring for new weed infestations is recommended.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY

Site Image Not Applicable.

Site #: N/A

Map:

Leyner Cottonwood Ditch

Acres 0

Leyner Cottonwood Ditch traverses from the western edge of the planning area to Coal Creek. Vegetation and habitat value varies along the length of the ditch.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3

Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 6

Agriculture Lands with Crops

Agriculture

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Subdivision

Grassland

Farm

Wetland

Ditch

Woodland

Natural Area

Residential

Oil Well

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: RF,ADUD,SBH,CWS,RCSH,RLS,PCSI,CSL,CDMA,CWSA,PCSIX,PCTW,CWTS

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Musk Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 5

Shrubs

Canada Thistle

Plant Diversity: 3

Forbs

Grass

Grassland Value: 0

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen spotted towhee, mallard, northern pocket gopher, raccoon, skunk, northern flicker, bluejay, house finch, other songbirds

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 24

Site Comments

Leyner Cottonwood Ditch enters the planning area at the west end of map C-1 and traverses a meandering path to Coal Creek. In sites 84, 85, 49, and 90, adjacent vegetation is well-developed. These sections of the ditch support deer, small carnivores, small mammals, raptors, woodpeckers, amphibians, and reptiles. Ditches provide a movement corridor for wildlife, as well as nesting habitat for songbirds. Migrating songbirds use these corridors as a resting and foraging stop. Red fox, coyote, deer, skunk, and raccoon are in abundance. Other sections of the ditch present a narrower band of vegetation, and have less to offer wildlife.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY

Site Image Not Applicable.

Site #: N/A
South Boulder Canyon Ditch

Map:
Acres 0

South Boulder Ditch enters the planning area at the southwest corner and traverses northwest to join the Leyner Cottonwood Ditch.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 5

Agriculture Lands with Crops	Aquatic
Field without Crops	Grassland
Subdivision	Wetland
Farm	Woodland
Ditch	Other
Natural Area	
Residential	
Oil Well	

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: RF,CSL,SBH,MF,PCSI,ADUD,RCSH,CWS,CSL,CWTS

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	3
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5 northern harrier, meadow vole, muskrat

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen gulls, killdeer, minnow, monarch butterfly, red-tailed hawk, black-billed magpie, mourning dove

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 23

Site Comments

South Boulder Ditch enters the planning area at the southwest corner and traverses northwest to join the Leyner Cottonwood Ditch. It is generally not well-vegetated, but still provides water and cover for wildlife moving across the landscape. Native plantings along the banks would greatly enhance aesthetics and wildlife use.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY

Site Image Not Applicable.

Site #: N/A
Lower Boulder Ditch

Map:
Acres 0

Lower Boulder Ditch is the longest ditch in the planning area. It enters the planning area at the west end on map B-1 and traverses east towards Coal Creek.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 5 Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 5

Agriculture Lands with Crops	Agriculture
Field without Crops	Aquatic
Subdivision	Wetland
Farm	Woodland
Creek	Other
Ditch	
Natural Area	
Residential	
Oil Well	

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CHSH,SB,DCAP,ROS,EW,PCSI,PWTW,CSL,ASBH,BTBH,OR,MF,ECCS,RF,ADUD,C
 GH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	5
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5 meadow vole, northern harrier, yellow-headed blackbird,

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present State or federally listed species potentially present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen redwing blackbird, northern flicker, robin, coyote, common grackle, American kestrel, kingfisher, european starling, swainson's hawk, barn swallow, cabbage moth, cottontail, magpie

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 28

Site Comments

Lower Boulder Ditch is the longest ditch in the planning area. It enters the planning area at the west end on map B-1 and traverses east towards Coal Creek. A small portion of the ditch is located on map B-2 where it intersects Coal Creek, but it meanders back onto map B-1 for a brief period. Lower Boulder ditch then cuts the southeast corner of map A-1 before continuing its northeasterly pattern. The ditch then winds northeast across map A-1, goes around Waverly Wetlands (site 23), and exits the planning area at the northeast corner. It is bounded by dirt roads on both sides. This ditch carries a large amount of water and was running full in October. Wildlife habitat is more limited on this ditch compared with others because of the canal aspect. In other words, the large amount of fast flowing water surrounded by dirt roads is not an attractive wildlife habitat. Lower Boulder Creek, however, plays an essential role in providing water to such areas as Waverly Wetlands.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY

Site Image Not Applicable.

Site #: N/A
Boulder and Weld County Ditch

Map:
Acres 0

Boulder and Weld County Ditch takes off from Boulder creek near the western edge of the planning area.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 5 Wetland Value: 3

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 6

Agriculture Lands with Crops	Agriculture
Field without Crops	Aquatic
Farm	Grassland
Ditch	Wetland
Natural Area	Woodland
Residential	
Oil Well	

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: ROS,PCSI,LWDA,WTFH,CDMA,ADUD,BTPH,CWTS,WE,CHSH,PWTW,CSL,RF,CG
H,RCSH

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree	Musk Thistle	Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs	Canada Thistle	Plant Diversity:	5
Forbs	Common Teasel	Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5 meadow vole, muskrat, northern harrier

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen red-wing blackbird, northern flicker, robin, coyote, kingfish, red-tailed hawk, european starling, northern harrier, swainson's hawk, white-tailed deer, raccoon, crayfish, white-crowned sparrow, rock dove

Enhancement Effort: Medium

Summary Rating: 27

Site Comments

Boulder and Weld County Ditch takes off from Boulder creek near the western edge of the planning area. It meanders through Boulder County Open Space (map B-1), crosses Coal Creek, crosses through Waverly Wetlands (map A-2), and exits at the northeast end of the planning area. It parallels Lower Boulder Ditch for long stretches. In places where this ditch traverses Waverly Wetlands (site 23) and Dark Polygon (site 25), plant species diversity is very high and wildlife use is maximized. Mostly, it traverses agricultural lands with few trees and shrubs. It has great value to wildlife as a corridor and source of water. Enhancement efforts should focus on eradicating Russian olives and noxious weeds along the ditch. The planting of native tree species is also recommended, but would require considerably more effort.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY

Site Image Not Applicable.

Site #: N/A
Leggett Ditch

Map:
Acres 0

Leggett Ditch enters the planning area at the east (Map 4), passes along the west side of Panama Reservoir (site 2) and exits north, always north of Boulder Creek.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 3 Wetland Value: 4

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use: Habitat Types Present: 5

Agriculture Lands with Crops	Aquatic
Field without Crops	Grassland
Farm	Wetland
Ditch	Woodland
Natural Area	Other
Residential	

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: CSL,RCSH,LWDA,SBH,SB

Vegetation Structure:	County-listed Noxious Weeds:	Noxious Weed Cover	5
Tree		Ground Disturbance:	5
Shrubs		Plant Diversity:	4
Forbs		Grassland Value:	0
Grass			
Litter			

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0% Wildlife Species of Concern:
 Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5 meadow vole, muskrat, northern harrier

Primary Factors Present	Secondary Factors Present
Water or wetland is present Site serves as a migration or movement corridor Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding	Site is larger than 3 acres Site is adjacent to another natural area One of the three vegetation structure types is in good condition Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen northern flicker, red-tailed hawk, bull snake, cliff swallow, herring gull, rock dove, red-wing blackbird, shipping sparrow, black-capped chickadee, killdeer, canada goose, house finch

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 24

Site Comments

Leggett Ditch enters the planning area at the east (map B1), passes along the west side of Panama Reservoir (site 2) and exits north, always north of Boulder Creek. Traversing mostly agricultural lands, it contains pockets and patches of trees and shrubs (sites 3 and 37), where songbirds were in great abundance. These patches are very important for nesting habitat, migratory stopover, and for foraging and denning areas for small mammals, carnivores, amphibians, and reptiles.

TOWN OF ERIE NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY

Site Image Not Applicable.

Site #: N/A

Map:

Erie Coal Creek/Cottonwood Extension

Acres 0

This ditch, known by two names, Erie Coal Creek Ditch and Cottonwood Extension Ditch, takes off from Coal Creek on Map 6. Vegetation includes mostly grasses and forbs and the ditch provides an important wildlife movement corridor.

Wetlands:

Wetland Functionality: 4

Wetland Value: 5

Landscape Context

Nearby Land Use:

Habitat Types Present: 5

Agriculture Lands with Crops

Agriculture

Field without Crops

Aquatic

Subdivision

Wetland

Farm

Woodland

Creek

Other

Ditch

Natural Area

Residential

Oil Well

Viewshed: From Site

Vegetation

Plant Communities: RF,ADUD,CGH,RCSH,CWTS,NSH,PCSI,CHSH,LWDA,DCAP,SB,CSL,CWS

Vegetation Structure:

County-listed Noxious Weeds:

Noxious Weed Cover 5

Tree

Musk Thistle

Ground Disturbance: 5

Shrubs

Canada Thistle

Plant Diversity: 5

Forbs

Common Teasel

Grassland Value: 0

Grass

Litter

Wildlife Habitat

Prairie Dog Habitat: 0%

Wildlife Species of Concern:

Overall Wildlife Habitat Quality: 5

meadow vole, muskrat, swainson's hawk, northern harrier

Primary Factors Present

Secondary Factors Present

Water or wetland is present
Site serves as a migration or movement corridor
Site is an irreplaceable source of food and cover, or important for breeding

Site is larger than 3 acres
Three or more habitat types are present

Wildlife Species Seen coyote, cottontails, American robin, house finch, western meadowlark, European starling, Northern flicker, red-winged blackbird

Enhancement Effort: Low

Summary Rating: 27

Site Comments

This ditch, known by two names, Erie Coal Creek Ditch and Cottonwood Extension Ditch, takes off from Coal Creek on map C1. Although it takes off on the west bank of Coal Creek, it crosses the creek (sites 107/108) and lies mostly to the east of the creek. It traverses all 6 maps, parallels the east side of Coal Creek as it goes north through multiple open space sites (74, 71, 69, and 67) and residential neighborhoods, and then heads northeast through agricultural lands. Vegetation is mostly grasses (sedges, ryegrass, wheatgrass, reed canary grass) and forbs (horseweed, ragweed) with occasional patches of shrubs (willows) and trees (cottonwoods). As with other ditches, this ditch provides an invaluable resource to wildlife as a movement corridor, and for local wildlife such as white-tailed deer, coyotes, garter snakes, and others, and a stopover for migrating songbirds.

Enhancement efforts should focus on weed control.