



**Bear Trap Creek Connector Study
KICKOFF STUDY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #1
Wednesday, September 3rd at 1:00 P.M.**

Attendees:

Julie Baldwin	NYDOT
Kevan Busa	City DPW
Daniel Ciciarelli	Town of Salina
Megan Costa	Onondaga County Department of Planning
Owen Kerney	City Planning
Elizabeth Bough Martin	Onondaga County Office of the Environment
Joey DiStefano	SMTC
Mario Colone	SMTC

Meeting Minutes:

Mr. DiStefano started the meeting at 1:05. He started by asking SAC members to briefly introduce themselves and the organizations they represent.

Project purpose

Mr. DiStefano then went over the main goals of the study, the tasks outlined in the scope, and the project study area. Ms. Costa suggested expanding the area to include Park Street connecting to both Old Liverpool Road and Buckley. Mr. DiStefano said while the official study area is what was adopted in the Scope, this study is looking at this area regarding connections to the greater trail network, though more focused on connecting with the Candle Factory development.

Initial conditions review

Mr. DiStefano briefly highlighted some historical maps of the study area, noting previous residential development for New Americans of the time before 1-81. He noted there will be no general public engagement effort for this study due to extensive public support from all ends of this trail noted in previous studies. Still, the scope outlines two focus group meetings with property owners and key stakeholders.

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Mr. DiStefano then summarized the reports that propose a version of the connection between the Bear Trap Creek Bikeway trailhead on 7th North Street and the Regional Market Area. These include:

- SMTC's RTC/Market Area Study
- SMTC's Mattydale US-II study
- City of Syracuse's Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan
 - Project 6A
 - Project 6B
- Onondaga County Empire State Trail Local Economics Opportunities Plan
- SMTC's Bike Commuter Corridor Study
- City DPW's original UPWP application
- County Planning's initial idea

He then summarized some initial issues and opportunities from this literature review. This list included:

- The need to cross 7th North Street and potential conflicts with heavy vehicles
- The tall yet narrow rail bridge across 7th North Street limits any separated bike/ped facilities
- I-81 right-of-way provides an opportunity for the connection, as does the internal road networks (Terminal Road, Luther Avenue, Albion Avenue)
- Every reviewed study/plan includes a connection under the Park Street rail bridge
- The existing yet dilapidated Ley Creek Trail provides an opportunity for a separated trail, including its existing bridge over Ley Creek
- OCDOT's Loop-the-Lake project provides an opportunity to connect to the greater regional trail network (Empire State Trail, Onondaga Creekwalk)

When discussing plans along Park Street under the rail bridge, Ms. Baldwin and Mr. Busa noted improvements that are planned to be implemented soon, including clankers to notify heavy vehicle drivers as well as a turnaround for these drivers that will be immediately east of the rail bridge under the I-81 overpass. Ms. Baldwin pointed out how this could complicate plans for a road diet and implementation of a shared use path for pedestrians and cyclists along Park Street under the rail bridge.

Mr. Busa also noted an upcoming improvement along Park Street from Hiawatha Boulevard to Washington Square Park in the form of a 10-foot shared use path along the north side of the road.

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Regarding the existing Bear Trap Creek Bikeway, Mr. Ciciarelli shared the Bear Trap Creek Bikeway was constructed by NYSDOT and is currently maintained by the Town of Salina.

Ms. Costa described some of the bike/ped improvements to the Candle Factory. These included the potential implementation of crossings for Buckley Road and Old Liverpool Road as well as some improvements by the developer within the City boundary. This was echoed by Mr. Ciciarelli, adding a desire for a roundabout at the intersection of Old Liverpool Road/Park Street/Buckley Road, all owned at that intersection by OCDOT.

Mr. Ciciarelli and Ms. Costa noted the Salina Comprehensive Plan needs to be submitted by the end of September, so that will be incorporated into this plan when it does, though zoning updates are being worked on and are expected to come later.

Ms. Bough Martin described some details about wetland mapping for this project; that general wetland mapping is all informational and DEC needs individually delineated wetlands for every project. She pointed out if wetlands are hydraulically connected, they will all share the same Class I protection.

Fieldwork

Mr. DiStefano then walked the SAC through pictures from SMTC's fieldwork of both the 7th North area and the Park Street area. Major takeaways from 7th North Street include:

- High levels of stress experienced by SMTC staff as pedestrians at the intersection of Terminal Road and 7th North Street caused by the high volume of heavy vehicle traffic, making any on-road bike facilities in that corridor undesirable.
- 3 cyclists and a standing Veo e-scooter were observed in the area in the approximately 30-minute period
- Severe damage along the southern side of 7th North Street due to heavy vehicles. Enormous pot-holes, dislodged and entirely open manhole structures posing extreme danger to pedestrians at the southwest corner of the 7th North Street/Terminal Road intersection
- There is some existing pedestrian infrastructure, ADA compliant amenities at the Luther Ave approach to the signalized intersection with 7th North.
- Two business managers came out to say hi (UniFirst and Allegiance Trucks). UniFirst expressed desire to separate their driveway from Sposato Floor Covering driveway, which sparked the idea to close the driveway from Old 7th North Street and 7th North Street to force all traffic to use the signalized intersection at Luther Ave.

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- Ends of E/W Terminal Roads felt very unwelcoming to any traffic, let alone recreational cyclists.

Takeaways from the Park Street area fieldwork include:

- 5-6 pedestrians observed, most did not appear to be experiencing homelessness.
- Park Street has wide shoulders with room for bike/ped improvements.
- Ley Creek Trail is extremely dilapidated.
- There is a desire path branching south of Park Street, west of Ley Creek and rail line that appears to run under access ramps.

Ms. Baldwin noted there exists a gravel road owned by CSX for maintenance purposes just east of Ley Creek running south of Park Street that includes at-grade rail crossings, which will not be available for public use.

Timeline – Next steps

Mr. DiStefano outlined the next steps for the study, indicating a focus group for early November. He provided a list of potential stakeholders to attend the focus group including property owners (CNY Regional Market, Pilot Truck Stop Rep, NBT Bank Stadium/County Parks, owner of large vacant parcel), bike advocacy and social groups (Syracuse Bike Party, The Bike Club 315, Bike CNY, Syracuse Urbanism Collective), and a food access advocacy group (SOFSA).

Mr. DiStefano said he will follow up with SAC members over email if they have any other recommendations for who to include in the focus group. Ms. Bough Martin suggested including National Grid to discuss the remediation of Ley Creek and the potential to plug into that project to include this trail along Ley Creek. Mr. DiStefano informs the SAC he will also follow up individually about some agency specific items.

Finally, a brief conversation and workshop was conducted around some large printed ortho-maps of the study area. The meeting ended at 2:50PM.

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Bear Trap Creek Connector Study STUDY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #2 Thursday, January 8th at 10:00 A.M.

Attendees:

Julie Baldwin	NYSDOT
Neil Burke	City DPW
Kevan Busa	City DPW
Megan Costa	Onondaga County Department of Planning
Ellison McMahon	Onondaga County Department of Planning
Owen Kerney	City Division of Sustainability and Planning
Elizabeth Bough Martin	Onondaga County Office of the Environment
Chris Rauber	OCDOT
Troy Waffner	Onondaga County Department of Planning
Joey DiStefano	SMTC
Mario Colone	SMTC
Danielle Krol	SMTC

Meeting Minutes:

A. Introductions

Mr. DiStefano started the meeting at 10:03am with a quick review of the agenda and introductions for everyone.

B. Project purpose, study area, timeline

Mr. DiStefano noted the priority of the project is off-road treatments while also examining on-road treatments. He shared a picture of a bike locked next to a poorly placed bike rack at the Regional Market. He reviewed the project's scope and the study area, saying this study will also examine connections to the regional trail network outside of the study area. He reminded the SAC of road ownership. He also pointed out he is waiting to hear



from the new Town of Salina Councilor if they'd be interested in participating on the SAC. If so, Mr. DiStefano will update them following this SAC meeting.

He reviewed bike and pedestrian crashes, crash severity, and crash counts. He noted there were many heavy vehicle crashes internally at the Pilot site and along 7th North Street, including one fatal crash between a heavy vehicle and a pedestrian at Terminal Road and 7th North Street. He shared a map of proposed connections to review issues and opportunities. These included:

- Issue: heavy vehicle traffic at 7th North and Terminal Road intersection.
- Issue: narrow rail bridge on 7th North.
- Opportunity: using I-81 ROW.
- Opportunity: potential for using internal road network.
- Issue and Opportunity: all studies examined in area show bike/ped connection under rail bridge on Park Street.
- Opportunity: connections to future loop the lake.
- Issue and Opportunity: National Grid property along Ley Creek, also a Superfund Site.

C. Additional fieldwork

Mr. DiStefano highlighted some photos of additional fieldwork conducted by staff, starting with 7th North Street and Hiawatha Boulevard. Along its northern section, Hiawatha has an infrequent yet active rail line along the western curb ending before 7th North. Hiawatha is about 36 feet in width along the entire corridor (curb to curb), with no on-street parking, so there is ample space for improvement. There are also intermittent sidewalks along the corridor of wide-ranging quality.

The Syracuse side of 7th North Street is dominated by Eaton Crouse-Hinds, with the factory to the north and multiple parking lots serving workers to the south. These parking lots are connected to the business via 2 mid-block crossings to the east and a signalized intersection at Hiawatha which includes a crosswalk and pedestrian signals. Along the



southern side of 7th North Street, west of Hiawatha heading to the rail bridge, there is a wide space between the utility poles and a fence protecting a parking lot. Approaching the rail bridge, a desire path appears in this wide space, before ultimately jutting into the road's shoulder. Near the bridge, there are many small structures including an empty billboard, a splintering and leaning utility pole for wires going under the bridge, and a large metal structure also for utility wires going over the bridge. While there is only room for a 2-foot shoulder on either side of 7th North Street under the bridge, there is also over 5 feet of space between the support columns and concrete wall.

The existing Ley Creek Trail along Park Street under I-81 was largely in disuse, but the bridge seemed to be in great condition. People have been staying along that part of the trail under I-81 for protection from the elements. Mr. DiStefano is asked about ownership and maintenance of the trail. He shares his understanding of some history – how in the 1970s and early '80s, NYSDOT slightly rerouted I-81 by building a new bridge and redesigning interchanges connecting to Onondaga Lake Parkway, Old Liverpool Road, and Buckley Road. While sharing concerns about bike and pedestrian mobility around the bridges, Mr. Rauber said he also believed the State built the bridge underneath. This is also how the existing Bear Trap Creek Bikeway was created, as well as the existing Ley Creek Trail. Ms. Baldwin confirmed the State built these. There was another conversation about ownership, resulting in the existing Bear Trap Creek Bikeway being maintained by the Town of Salina, as said in the SAC I meeting minutes by then Town Councilor Ciciarelli. Ms. Krol shared a document from 1977 that indicated the authority responsible for maintenance of the Ley Creek Trail associated with this state effort is Onondaga County.

Mr. DiStefano described a walk along the Bear Trap Creek Bikeway the day after Christmas, where he saw only two cyclists along the entire trail. He noted the three trailheads at 7th North Street, Richfield Boulevard, and Mattydale Shopping Center as well as the excellent quality of the new clear sound barriers.



D. Review Focus Group #1

The first Focus Group was held on November 3rd, 2025. Mr. DiStefano reviewed the goals and big takeaways from the meeting. There were four attendees (Stephen Erwin of Clinton's Ditch and Trucking Association of New York, Travis Glazier of National Grid, Jaynelle Nixon PhD of the Syracuse Urbanism Collective and the Syracuse Women's and Gender non-conforming people's (SWAG) Bike Fest, and Maura Ackerman of the Syracuse Onondaga Food Systems Alliance). The group identified 5 qualities of good bike infrastructure:

- Accessible to all (leisure and commuters)
- Connectivity (to origins, destinations, and to the surrounding bike network)
- Safety (and visibility)
- Form fits function (not over- or under-designed)
- Enjoyable (visually appealing, along natural water elements)

The group's highest preference for the connections was using the National Grid property along Ley Creek. Improvements along Hiawatha were also discussed. There was unanimous concern about the heavy vehicle volume entering Terminal Road, including trucks parking along 7th North near the Pilot station. There was also discussion of the 7th North rail bridge, with no clear solution reached at the Focus Group. Finally, there was a strong desire to utilize the bike/ped bridge along the Ley Creek Trail under I-81 and over Ley Creek.

E. Big-picture plans

Mr. DiStefano reviewed big-picture plans for the connection. First was to keep pedestrians and cyclists off Terminal Road due to safety concerns from conflicts with heavy vehicles. Second, he noted the complications of the connection along Ley Creek due to it being a Superfund site with ongoing litigation. From conversations with Travis Glazier and the Focus Group, there was a clear and desirable long-term path towards building this connection through payment as a public amenity from the Superfund process, including not only a shared-use path but also fishing and kayak/canoe launches. Mr. Burke responded that



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he knows there is a strong desire here, but this effort needs to broadly consider lines of sight, facility ownership and maintenance as well as perceptions of safety. He said these are things that plague the existing Ley Creek Trail. It's removed and far away and can feel a little lawless, let alone being overgrown. He was worried that a trail along Ley Creek would fall into the same sort of condition. Ms. Baldwin added there has been a consistent homeless encampment underneath the I-81 overpass along the existing Ley Creek Trail. Mr. Burke added if there were perhaps more access points, it might help that feeling of seclusion. Ms. Bough Martin pointed out there were no signs of homeless encampments along the Murphy's Island trail that is similarly disconnected. Ms. Krol noted perhaps some lighting could help. Mr. DiStefano responded by pointing to the list of qualities of good infrastructure created by the Focus Group. He said a lot of these issues also stem from a lack of connectivity – to origins, to destinations, and to the surrounding trail networks. He posited there could be more usage of the existing Ley Creek Trail as well as the Bear Trap Creek Bikeway if they were better connected to the surrounding neighborhoods and destinations.

This led to a discussion prompted by Ms. Costa about how the SAC wants to view the recommendations in this study – do we want to think about short-term wins, or long-term visioning? Mr. Colone shared staff originally envisioned recommendations as tiers of preference but perhaps sharing short-term and long-term improvements could be a better fit. Ms. Costa said between the City, State, County, and Town of Salina, we need to discuss where we want to go with overall trail connections. Mr. Burke shared the initial idea for this study from 2018, hoping to create a trail that hugged I-81 and connected to the Regional Market as part of the 81-Community Grid project, but the vision of this project has changed with 81 construction currently well underway with little changes planned to this segment of the highway. Ms. Costa suggested including a desire for specific improvements along Ley Creek with long-term recommendations, and this does not preclude us from also recommending improvements along Hiawatha Boulevard in the short-term as well. She said we can still push the Ley Creek idea forward and say we're committed to it, while also adding short-term pieces that have great value as well.



Mr. Rauber agreed, pointing out we do not want to take Ley Creek off the table entirely because it could be a community benefit, serving as a cap on environmental remediation. He continued, saying the County has put other trails on Superfund sites and it is okay with DEC as well. Even if the rest of the site is contaminated, there can still be fencing or signage so people stay on the trail. He raised questions about what contaminations are in the site, noting PCBs don't move through soil quickly, and some parts per million would be okay to leave in. Ms. Bough Martin stated there were a lot of pollutants on the site, but the primary one is PCBs. Mr. DiStefano summarized the conversation by asking the SAC if everyone agrees to describing Ley Creek as a long-term vision and Hiawatha Boulevard improvements as a short-term vision, to which no SAC members pushed back. Ms. Bough Martin added OCRRA is doing a traffic study at the 7th North Street and Terminal Road intersection and would connect SMTC with the OCRRA engineering team.

F. Photo-simulation and draft concepts

Mr. DiStefano displayed photo-simulations for SAC comments and questions. He started with an oblique air-photo of 7th North Street from Terminal Road to Ley Creek. First, he showed an illustration of OCDOT's 3R project, then additions for this study. Those additions included a center stripe along the existing Bear Trap Creek Bikeway, a landing area for cyclists and pedestrians to safely wait before crossing 7th North Street, a shared-use path where trucks currently park along 7th North Street, then finally that path turning down the western side of Ley Creek towards Park Street, lined with solar powered lights as well as other amenities including a fishing pier and a kayak/canoe launch. Mr. Busa added a note for the concept to include green paint for bikes to cross. Mr. DiStefano also shared an idea floated by the Focus Group to instead cross using an RRFB or HAWK signal closer to Ley Creek, though the importance to cross at the signalized intersection was prioritized.

Second, Mr. DiStefano shared a photo simulation of Hiawatha Boulevard, displaying a cycle track on the west side of the road, protected by a curb. He also floated the idea of a striped shared-use path and flex post treatment like the Empire State Trail along Towpath



Road. Mr. Busa asked if this study would consider buffered bike lanes instead of a cycle track or a concept like Towpath Road. If there is space, Mr. Busa suggested a buffered bike lane. Mr. DiStefano asked how the City would feel about a vertical delineator like flex posts. Mr. Busa was supportive of the idea. Ms. Costa asked if the study could extend the Hiawatha concept through the entire corridor for consistency's sake. Mr. DiStefano said he could create a plan view concept for the entire corridor including sidewalks. Mr. Burke stated at the southern end of the Study Area's stretch of Hiawatha Boulevard, the City is currently finishing a project with an 8-10-foot-wide shared use path along the northern curb line between Hiawatha Boulevard and Washington Square. Mirza with City Engineering is the City's project manager for this.

Finally, the SAC was shown the framework of some improvements to the Park Street area, including a shared use path/sidewalk along a segment of Park Street, a road diet along the segment underneath the Park Street rail bridge, and a shared use path down Ley Creek, crossing Park Street ultimately connecting into the planned Loop-the-Lake trail to be included in a long-term vision. Looking to the future, the SAC was shown base photos for future photosims. These included ideas from around the corridor including:

- a shared use path along the southern side of 7th North Street in Syracuse where the remains of fenceposts currently exist.
- a shared use path or potential sidewalk along Park Street.

G. Questions for SAC members

Mr. DiStefano asked SAC members about their existing projects in the study area, and whether they could provide any updates. He first asked City representatives about the clanker and truck turnaround project on the east side of the Park Street rail bridge. Mr. Burke noted this is proceeding with details being ironed out about the turnaround. The City is working with NYSDOT to utilize the space between the I-81 overpass support structures. OCWA has some sort of protection 10 ft in the ground that could be creating a conflict. Mr. Burke said the design for the system is essentially done after adjustments are made with OCWA. He



anticipates this to go to bid this winter. When asked about including a road diet concept along this segment of Park Street, Mr. Burke said he had no conflict with this. Mr. DiStefano noted an estimate from a 2018 traffic count showed this segment of Park Street at around 13,000 AADT. No City representatives discouraged a road diet concept in this study.

Mr. DiStefano asked about the City's Mobility Improvements RTC/Regional Market Area TIP project (PIN 375717). Mr. Burke said it is in the hands of engineering and to reach out to Mary Robison.

Mr. DiStefano asked if there were any updates OCDOT could share about the 7th North Street 3R paving Project (PIN 375676). He noted we had a brief conversation with Dave Cooper about it. Mr. Rauber did not share any further details.

Mr. DiStefano asked OCDOT if there were any updates to the Onondaga Lake Canalways Trail – Salina Extension Project (PIN 375622) commonly known as the completion of Loop-the-Lake. Mr. Rauber said the concepts he had previously shared with SMTC are no longer drafts; they are final and can be incorporated into SMTC's report. He said we could share the alignment at the next meeting. Also, any connections to this would not have to cross a railroad again.

Lastly, Mr. DiStefano asked for final feedback about the potential connection under the 7th North Street rail bridge. Mr. Burke said as long as the area between the metal columns and concrete walls were cleaned up, he has no issue with people using it. No SAC members had any critique for putting up a sign telling cyclists to dismount and walk their bikes under the bridge.

H. Next steps

Mr. DiStefano outlined next steps for the project, including a 2nd Focus Group in February. He listed currently represented groups, as well as two more he is hoping to confirm for Focus Group 2. After he asked the SAC about who else to invite, Ms. Bough Martin pointed out a traffic study being initiated by OCRRA and she'll connect them with SMTC.



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Ms. Baldwin suggested including Eaton Crouse Hinds manufacturing with the business and parking lots adjacent to the area.

Mr. DiStefano ended the meeting at 11:40 am and promised the SAC members he'd return those 10 minutes at the end of the next meeting.



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**Bear Trap Creek Connector Study
STUDY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #3
Friday, April 10th at 10:00 A.M.**

Attendees:

Julie Baldwin	NYSDOT
Elizabeth Bough Martin	Onondaga County Office of the Environment
Ellison McMahon	Onondaga County Department of Planning
Owen Kerney	City Division of Sustainability and Planning
Chris Rauber	OCDOT
Page Steinhardt	Town of Salina
Meghan Vitale	City DPW
Troy Waffner	Onondaga County Department of Planning
Joey DiStefano	SMTC
Mario Colone	SMTC
Danielle Krol	SMTC

Meeting Minutes:

A. Introduction

Mr. DiStefano started the meeting at 10:06am with a quick review of the agenda and introductions for everyone.

B. Project purpose, study area, timeline

Mr. DiStefano reviewed study progress up to this point, including the two focus groups and direct targeted outreach. He also noted the private ownership of Ley Creek Drive and part of Harborside Drive. He shared some concepts for what the report will look like, with a focus on appearance, visuals, and graphics to increase public accessibility.

C. Summary of Focus Group feedback, issues and opportunities

Mr. DiStefano summarized issues and opportunities. He pointed out high volumes of heavy vehicle traffic along the segment of 7th North Street between the I-81 ramps and



Terminal Road that would make cycling or walking stressful/dangerous. He mentioned the narrow yet tall rail bridge along 7th North Street, restricting bike/ped improvements along the road shoulder. He also noted the local road network in the study area with primarily industrial land use and zoning. He pointed out Park Street, describing the potential bike/ped improvements noted in several studies along this corridor specifically underneath this corridor's rail bridge, as well as the numerous plans and projects around this corridor.

He noted opportunities, especially the National Grid property along the Salina side of Ley Creek within the study area. This is also a Superfund site, meaning this could be a potential funding source for improvements after cleanup. He shifted to East Hiawatha Boulevard, with 18-foot travel lanes without any permitted parking, low traffic volumes, and low travel speeds, making this corridor a great candidate for on-road bike infrastructure improvements. He then pointed out the multiple ongoing projects in the study area: City improvements around RTC/Regional Market area, OCDOT improvements along 7th North Street and two phases of Loop-the-Lake, City potential "clanker" and truck turnaround project on Park Street, and drafts of potential improvements of CSX rail line including the Amtrak station and both Park Street and 7th North Street bridges. Ms. Baldwin noted the bridge along Ley Creek Trail was turned over to County Parks Department, but the trail was turned over to the City. Mr. Rauber added that County Parks is looking to get that bridge inspected.

Mr. DiStefano pointed to the five principles described by Focus Group 1 (Accessible to all, Connectivity, Safety/Visibility, Form Fits Function, and Enjoyable/Visually Appealing) and how they were used to inform concepts. The two primary takeaways from Focus Group 2 were 1) a strong preference for separated/protected facility from both bike advocates and partners in heavy vehicle industries and 2) a deep focus on specific treatments, such as countdown pedestrian crossing timers.

D. Big-picture plans

Mr. DiStefano walked the SAC through the three specific paths discussed in the document, one following Luther Ave and I-81 ROW, one primarily along Ley Creek and National Grid, and one entirely on-road along 7th North Street and East Hiawatha Boulevard. He also mentioned Park Street and the potential for a road diet and connectivity from the Candle Factory Apartments, Galeville, and the completed Loop-the-Lake trail to the Regional Market area. He noted the Superfund side boundary, which follows the National Grid property. He also noted the lilac area in the Superfund maps labeled as a capped landfill.



Councilor Steinhardt mentions that the parcel is being examined as a potential solar farm that will not disparage the landfill cap.

E. Review photo-simulation and draft concepts

Mr. DiStefano then began reviewing the draft concepts.

7th North Street – Oblique

Mr. DiStefano noted the Focus Group members' and other stakeholders' preferences for physical separation of bike infrastructure as well as countdown timers for pedestrian signals. Councilor Steinhardt mentions trucks parking illegally along 7th North Street is being enforced more often. Ms. Bough-Martin suggested SMTC check in with OCRRA about their transportation impact study on their reopening and expanded facilities north of the 7th North and Terminal Road/Ley Creek Drive intersection. Mr. Steinhardt mentioned there are draft plans to extend Veo's geofence into Mattydale and Galeville. Regarding the shared use path along 7th North Street in this concept, Mr. Rauber mentioned the possibility of closing the ditch to provide more separation between the trail and traffic or locating it on the opposite side of the ditch. This could guarantee a width of 10-foot with a wide separation from traffic.

Mr. DiStefano raised stakeholders' and Focus Group members' desires to move the crossing closer to Ley Creek, but explained the concepts show the crossing at the eastern side of 7th North and Terminal Road because it is easier to control traffic and include a dedicated pedestrian crossing phase to the signal timing. When prompted, no SAC members raised concerns with the proposed crossing at the Terminal Road intersection.

7th North Street – Path under CSX rail bridge

Mr. DiStefano explained the next concept, which would utilize the 6-foot bikeable shoulders in OCDOT's 7th North Street pavement project. This concept showed single-directional paths in the space between the columns and the concrete walls of the CSX rail bridge. Ms. Vitale noted a lack of clarity of this single-directional path here and requested more explanation in the text/visuals.

7th North Street – Shared use path and improved crossing

Mr. DiStefano walked the SAC through the concept showing an improved crossing at the signalized intersection at the entrance to Midstate Spring on 7th North Street. There were no comments on this concept.



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East Hiawatha Boulevard – Buffered bike lanes

Mr. DiStefano described the buffered bike lane concept along East Hiawatha Boulevard. 5-foot bike lanes, 2-foot buffers, 11-foot travel lanes.

Park Street – Oblique

Mr. DiStefano showed this concept, explaining its purpose is to highlight potential connectivity in this area, of trails, neighborhoods, and destinations. Ms. Baldwin requested the inclusion of the existing Ley Creek Trail in the concept. She also noted NYSDOT will be looking at the crossing near the Candle Factory sign. Even more, she mentioned the CSX/NYSDOT project is exploring the potential to lower the road and/or raise the bridge to increase the rail bridge's clearance. This includes a federal earmark for design.

Park Street – Shared use path to Buckley Road

Mr. DiStefano noted that this concept does not necessitate the reduction of any travel lanes, just utilizes existing pavement width.

Park Street – Road diet, improved crossing and sidewalk

East Hiawatha Boulevard – Sidewalk audit

Intersection of Hiawatha and Grant

These final concepts were discussed at the end of the meeting, noting initial data analyses indicate a road diet along Park Street is possible, but more analysis is needed to further validate a road diet, as well as the potential to close the access ramp to Park Street. Finally, conversations about the intersection of Hiawatha and Grant Boulevards resulted in a preference for the bike box concept over the protected intersection concept.

Bear Trap Creek Connector Study Focus Group Meeting

Monday, Nov 3, 2025

10am – 11:30am

SMTC Lower level conference room

Attendees:

Joey DiStefano, SMTC

Mario Colone, SMTC

Danielle Krol, SMTC

Maura Ackerman, SOFSA

Jaynelle Nixon, SUC, SWAG

Stephen Erwin, Clinton's Ditch Cooperative, Trucking Association of New York

Travis Glazier, National Grid

Mr. DiStefano began the meeting at 10:08am with introductions and an overview of the agenda. He explained who the SMTC is and the purpose of the Bear Trap Creek Connector Study.

Mr. DiStefano reminded attendees that maps and files associated with the project are available here: [Focus Group #1 - Workshop](#) He moved through the slides that explained the Bear Trap Creek Connector Project while noting the project in the area that are further along (OCDOT's 7th North Pavement Project and Loop the Lake, the City's Park Street bike/ped improvements and truck turnaround with clankers.)

The first interactive task was the question "What makes good (bike) infrastructure? Each attendee was asked to note on index cards 3 factors that they feel make bike (or really any means of transportation) infrastructure good. The group ultimately came up with the following 5 items:

- Accessible to all user – types, from leisure riders to commuters
- Connectivity
- Safety – visibility of pedestrians
- Form fits function – appropriate design for its use
- Enjoyable – visually appealing

Mr. Glazier added some design specs to create good bike paths: 10-12 foot widths, smooth climbs, sloped curbs. Ms. Nixon shared a strong preference of the center yellow line, signaling to riders and walkers to look for conflicts and avoid collisions. She gave the example of painted footprints along a bikepath in Buffalo. Ms. Ackerman emphasized the importance of enjoyability in bike infrastructure: clear signage, pleasant views and sounds, comfort.

Mr. DiStefano said these are the attributes we will measure trail alignments against later in the meeting.

Mr. Glazier mentioned the pedestrian bridge under I-81 that crosses over Ley Creek. He stated that this is underutilized and appears to be in great condition. He mentioned that when they were building a similar bridge for the Loop the Lake Trail, it had to be of a certain height to accommodate a canoe with specific requirements (a person standing in a canoe that's 6-feet tall, etc.). When

discussing the Pilot property, he said it was someone involved in the “Save 81” effort. Not sure if Emmi or Mangano. He suggested looking up old articles about a DestiNY research facility possibly going into this area.

Mr. Glazier asked about the OCDOT 7th North St project, wanting to know about pedestrian crossings and/or ped access points. Mr. DiStefano and Mr. Colone shared details about the current plan for 7th North Street, including a road diet and a crosswalks across 7th North Street and Terminal Road at the Pilot entrance, noting these concepts are not yet final.

Mr. DiStefano shared about the history of the area, including red-lining maps. He noted that there are still 3 single-family homes that exist in the Pilot area.

Mr. DiStefano emphasized that making a connection between the Bear Trap Creek Trail to other existing trails and the Regional Market has been suggested in numerous other studies.

Mr. DiStefano walked through initial data collection including the new Town of Salina Comprehensive Plan as well as traffic volumes and heavy truck traffic information highlighting lots of issues with truck volumes.

The group discussed the RR bridge over 7th North Street (between Pilot and Hiawatha) and how little room there is to include bike/ped accommodations under the bridge. Mr. Glazier said bicyclists essentially must take the lane because there is no room. Mr. Erwin asked “can you get behind and eliminate truck area? What about ped crossing to 7th North?” Mr. Glazier said the brownfield is a problem. He gave the example of how the bridge over the CSX tracks not far from the amphitheater was built on a superfund site and they worked around the trails – it wasn’t an issue to do this. There needs to be enough community support. Remediation was able to continue while the trails were being built and still after they were built. Could be an option for this location. Mr. DiStefano said there is the Superfund site along Ley Creek, so the same process can be replicated along Ley Creek.

Mr. DiStefano discussed the timeline and next steps. This group will meet again in February to discuss plan view maps and photo simulations, including tiered recommendations.

Mr. DiStefano then moved into the workshop portion of the meeting and reviewed each colored line on the map, along with the photos taken at various points along each option.

Purple Line (on-road facilities along 7th North, then down Hiawatha):

- Mr. Glazier said he has bicycled on Hiawatha, not a lot of traffic. Largely industrial but with several homes and people.
- He repeated under the railroad bridge on 7th North is the difficult piece.
- Cooper Crouse Hinds is busy all times of the day. It’s a good connection but safety-wise, not so great.
 - The traffic that is there is local industrial with trucks driving by you.
- The group agreed that separated bike lane/shared use path would be a preference here.
- Ms. Ackerman noted it would benefit existing residents and calm any traffic. There is no sidewalk or very limited and/or dilapidated

- SMTC staff said this study can make a recommendation to improve Hiawatha and increase ped safety
- Mr. Glazier mentioned this is a BOA area
- Ms. Ackerman asked about the connections on Park Street. Mr. DiStefano said these are forthcoming and are part of a City's study right now.

Blue Line (crossing 7th north at Terminal Road intersection, following 7th north SE until Ley Creek, then following Ley Creek to Ley Creek Trail bridge):

- Mr. Glazier said neighborhoods where the Pilot is now were bought out in 1960s/1970s due to draining issues and flooding.
- Mr. Glazier said Ley Creek is fishable and is navigable by kayak. Has seen people on e-bikes with their fishing gear along it.
- Overall, the group liked Blue/Purple Lines because they seem to avoid the most conflict, especially with Heavy Vehicles.
- Ms. Nixon suggested a shared-use path on NE side of 7th North from traffic light at Terminal Rd heading southeast towards RR bridge but then cross 7th North at Ley Creek instead of at the Terminal Rd intersection, potentially using an RRFB or HAWK to cross 7th North.

Red Line (7th North to Old 7th North, down Luther to then I-81 ROW to Ley Creek Trail) and Yellow Line (down Terminal Road to E Terminal Road, then a path through private property to Ley Creek Trail):

- Mostly ran out of time to discuss these options in detail
- Overall, focus group members agreed on a strong preference to avoid conflicts with heavy vehicles, which both paths contain.

Mr. DiStefano stopped the meeting at 11:30 with plans to follow up with stakeholders over email.

From: [Steve Erwin](#)
To: [Joseph DiStefano](#)
Subject: RE: SMTC - Bear Trap Creek Connector Study Focus Group 2
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 12:44:23 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

NOTE: This message came from outside of the organization. Use caution with all attachments and links in this message.

Joseph, unfortunately, I am not going to be able to attend the meeting today. I have just been advised that I need to attend a production meeting at 1 pm. Having said that, I went over all the info you sent, and here are my thoughts on all of this.

I think the path along Lay Creek is best. While Hiawatha is certainly wide enough for bike lanes, getting to Hiawatha along 7th North is not, in my opinion, really safe. My concern is with the RR bridge. It just doesn't seem wide enough to have safe passage. I think that the Lay Creek route may be more expensive, but in the end, could be a really scenic route and the safest traffic-wise given the options.

I noticed there was nothing regarding a bike lane on Terminal Road. That makes me very happy. In my opinion, Terminal Road is not a viable option for a bike lane and would be extremely dangerous given the amount of heavy truck traffic on that road. I like moving the cross over from the north side of 7th North to the south side as far to the east as possible. Again, it just keeps the bike traffic as far as possible from the truck traffic.

Again, sorry I won't be able to make it, but unfortunately, I must attend this production meeting. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you.

Stephen D Erwin
Director of Transportation
Clinton's Ditch Cooperative Co Inc
8478 Pardee Rd.
Cicero, NY 13039

Bear Trap Creek Connector Study Focus Group Meeting

Wednesday, Mar 4, 2026

1:30pm – 3:00pm

SMTC Lower-level conference room

Attendees:

Joey DiStefano, SMTC

Mario Colone, SMTC

Maura Ackerman, SOFSA

Alex Lawson, Syracuse Bike Party, CNY Fair Housing

Travis Glazier, National Grid

Mr. DiStefano began the meeting at 1:36pm with introductions and an overview of the agenda. He moved through the slides that explained the Bear Trap Creek Connector Study and progress completed to date that included data collection and mapping, fieldwork, identification of issues and opportunities, two Study Advisory Committee meetings, review of the first Focus Group meeting and development of draft concepts. Ms. Ackerman entered the meeting at this time.

Mr. DiStefano then moved on to discuss the several draft concepts and asked Focus Group attendees for their comments, thoughts, and opinions. He pointed to a rating worksheet in front of everyone that is based on the five attributes Focus Group attendees identified at the first meeting for what makes for good bicycle infrastructure. Though no attendee filled out the matrix during the meeting it was used/referenced throughout the discussion. The following was noted for each concept.

7th North Street Oblique – connection to Ley Creek

- The group asked about the pedestrian countdown signal in the concept and part of Onondaga County DOT's 7th North Street paving preliminary design plans: would the pedestrian signal show the actual time? The group preferred a countdown.
- At the 7th North Street and Terminal Road intersection, the County's plan appears to keep the existing two lanes heading southeast toward Syracuse. The group asked if it is possible for the current through/right lane to be just a right turn only lane into Terminal Road? The group would prefer the city-bound approach of 7th North Street to include a right turn only lane, opening room for better bike/pedestrian amenities on the other side of the intersection.
- The group asked if flex posts or other vertical separation be added adjacent to the shared use path suggested along 7th North Street.
- They also asked if there will be curbing on 7th North Street.
- Mr. DiStefano raised the concerns of both Mr. Sposato of the Pilot Travel Center as well as Mr. Erwin of Clinton's Ditch Cooperative Company and representing the Trucking Association of New York, both of whom wanted to but ultimately could not attend the Focus Group. He shared their strong preference for discouraging biking and walking along Terminal Road. Both also shared if any potential bike or pedestrian infrastructure were built along

this segment of 7th North Street that it must be protected and separated from car and heavy vehicle traffic.

7th North Street – path under bridge

- This concept shows the potential to utilize the space between the metal columns and the concrete wall for single-directional 5 to 6 foot shared use paths.
- The group generally liked the idea and recognized the constraint due to the metal columns. The group asked if they still serve a structural function.
 - Discussion ensued about how the columns could function as a vertical separation between vehicles and traffic vs potential removal for guard rails.
- The group suggested thinking about adding some art to the side walls and lighting underneath the bridge.

7th North Street – City shared-use path

- Group members noted placemaking (artwork, screening) could help make this area more visually appealing.
 - The barbed wire fence was especially unappealing.
 - One group member suggested a partnership with the newer business owner. (Midstate Spring?)
- Conversation shifted to a potential crossing at the traffic signal to enter/exit the Midstate Spring parking lot. A bike/pedestrian crossing at the signal or somewhere else before the bridge on the City side may be needed.
 - Discussion about potential grade issues on the NE side of 7th North Street along Eaton Crouse-Hinds, possibility of elevating a path instead of cut and fill.
 - Another option discussed would be an RRFB or HAWK signal much closer to the rail bridge, which would mean challenging sightlines for City-bound traffic crossing under the bridge.

Hiawatha Boulevard – buffered bike lanes (w/cross section)

- The group noted there appears to be room for something more than a 2-foot buffered bike lane. What about a cycle track?
- The group added, similar to the 7th North Street shared-use path comment about flex posts, could those be used here?
- Mr. DiStefano mentioned conversations with a representative from the City which included concerns about velocity differential in car/bike crashes and increased severity, the costs of hardscaping a protection along this corridor, and managing snow storage/removal with flex posts.

Park Street - oblique

- All group members supported the ideas visualized here.
- There was discussion about the importance of connecting to the completed Loop-the-Lake trail.
 - The currently identified crossing included a bad sightline for merging lane onto Park Street, which contains the assumed majority of incoming traffic.

- The group asked if the two inbound split ramps to Park Street could be combined into one, seeming overbuilt for the area.
 - The group noted closing the City-bound yield lane and pushing traffic to the stoplight on Park Street could calm traffic and solve the potential bad sightline conflict.

Park Street – shared use path (w/cross section)

- The group generally supported this concept on Park Street, which does not expand outside the existing pavement.
- The group asked why this study is visualizing flex posts here but not on the Hiawatha concept.
- Mr. DiStefano pointed to Towpath Road in DeWitt as a local example which would make recreating similar treatments more achievable.

Park Street – road diet

- Most conversation for this crossing was skipped for time.

Hiawatha Boulevard – sidewalk audit

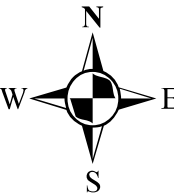
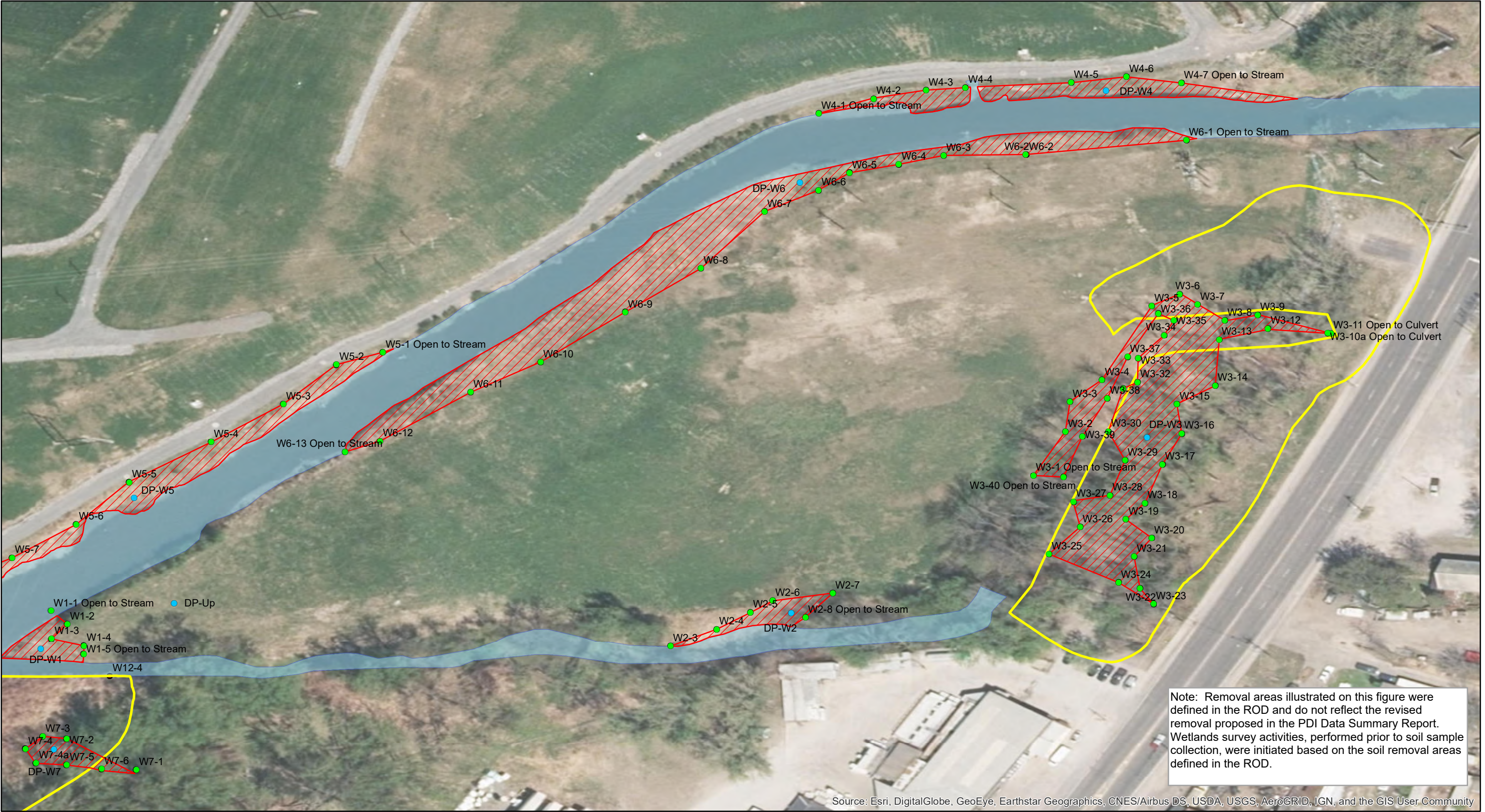
With limited time, Mr. DiStefano showed the Hiawatha Boulevard sidewalk visual and quickly pointed out the Hiawatha Boulevard and Grant Boulevard intersection. The primary intention for this visualization was to show where sidewalks exist in good condition, can be replaced in bad condition, or can be added where they do not exist.

This concept visualized two options for the intersection of existing Grant Boulevard buffered bike lanes and potential buffered bike lanes on Hiawatha Boulevard. The first showed a similar treatment to what exists at the intersection of Grant Boulevard and LeMoyne Avenue: bike boxes to enable safe left turns on bikes and crossbike striping in both directions. The second visualized a buffered bump-out concept that protects bicyclists at corners wanting to make a left turn from traffic. While both were supported by the remaining group members, the buffered bump-out concept was preferred.

The meeting concluded at 3:00pm. Mr. DiStefano noted that if attendees would like to fill out the concept matrix provided at the meeting, those could be emailed to him.

Attachment 5
Surveyed Wetlands Map

Ley Creek Wetlands and Habitat Assessment



0 30 60 120 180 240 Feet

Legend



Ley Creek



Wetlands



Wetland Data Points



Soil Removal Areas

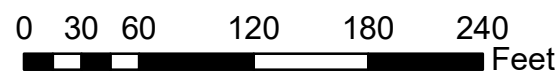
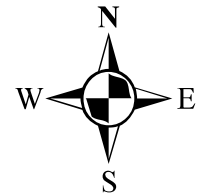
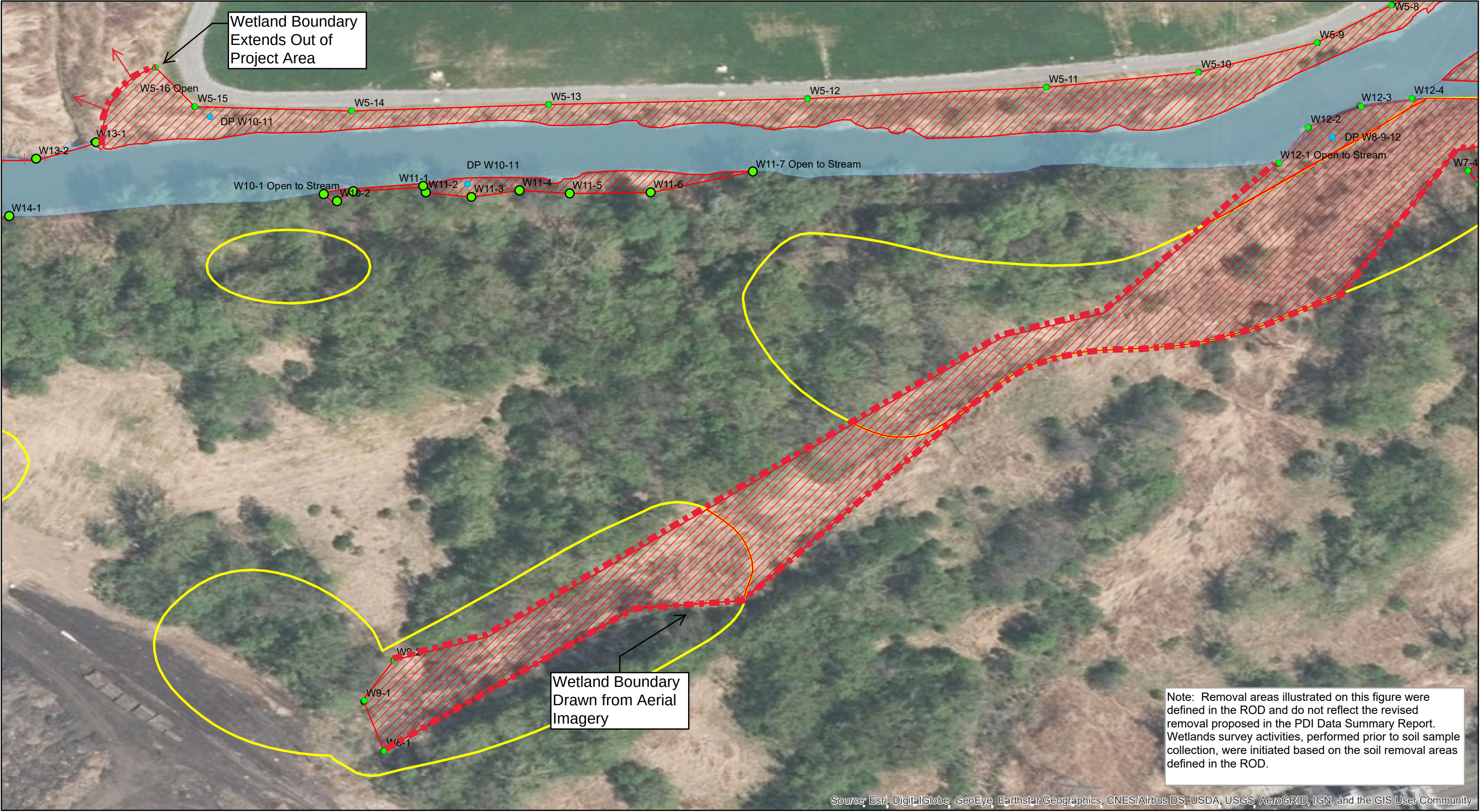


Wetland Boundary Markers



Inside Fringe-Wetland Boundary

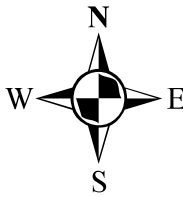
Ley Creek Wetlands and Habitat Assessment



Legend

- Ley Creek
- Wetlands
- Wetland Data Points
- Soil Removal Areas
- Wetland Boundary Markers
- Inside Fringe-Wetland Boundary

Ley Creek Wetlands and Habitat Assessment



0 30 60 120 180 240 Feet

Legend



Ley Creek



Wetlands



Wetland Data Points



Soil Removal Areas

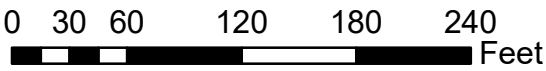


Wetland Boundary Markers



Inside Fringe-Wetland Boundary

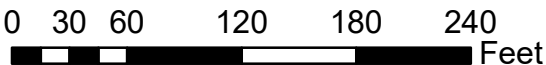
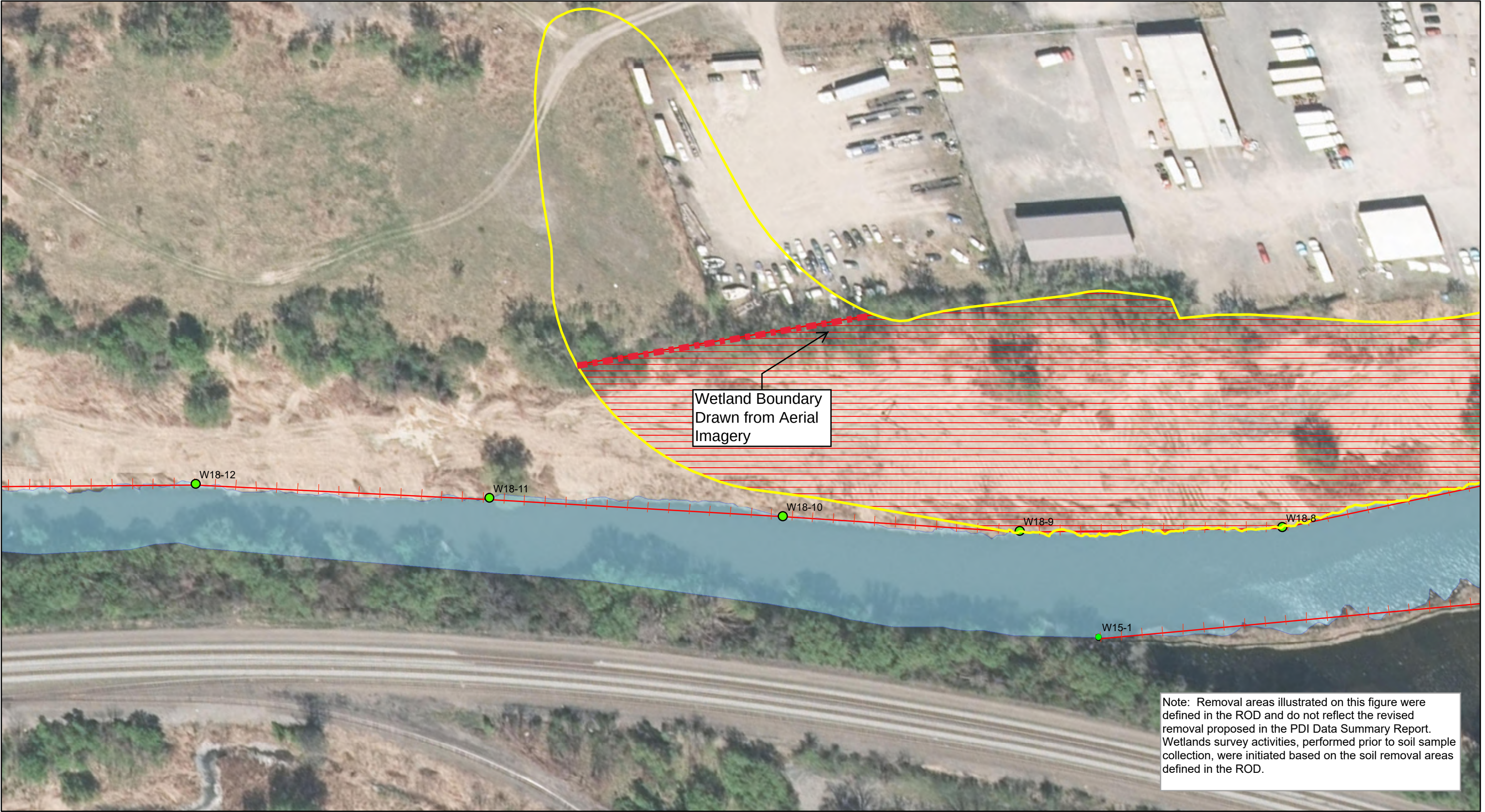
Ley Creek Wetlands and Habitat Assessment



Legend

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
|  Ley Creek |  Wetlands |  Wetland Data Points |
|  Soil Removal Areas |  Wetland Boundary Markers |  Inside Fringe-Wetland Boundary |

Ley Creek Wetlands and Habitat Assessment



Legend

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ley Creek | Wetlands | Wetland Data Points |
| Soil Removal Areas | Wetland Boundary Markers | Inside Fringe-Wetland Boundary |

Ley Creek Wetlands and Habitat Assessment



0 30 60 120 180 240 Feet

Legend



Ley Creek



Wetlands



Wetland Data Points



Soil Removal Areas



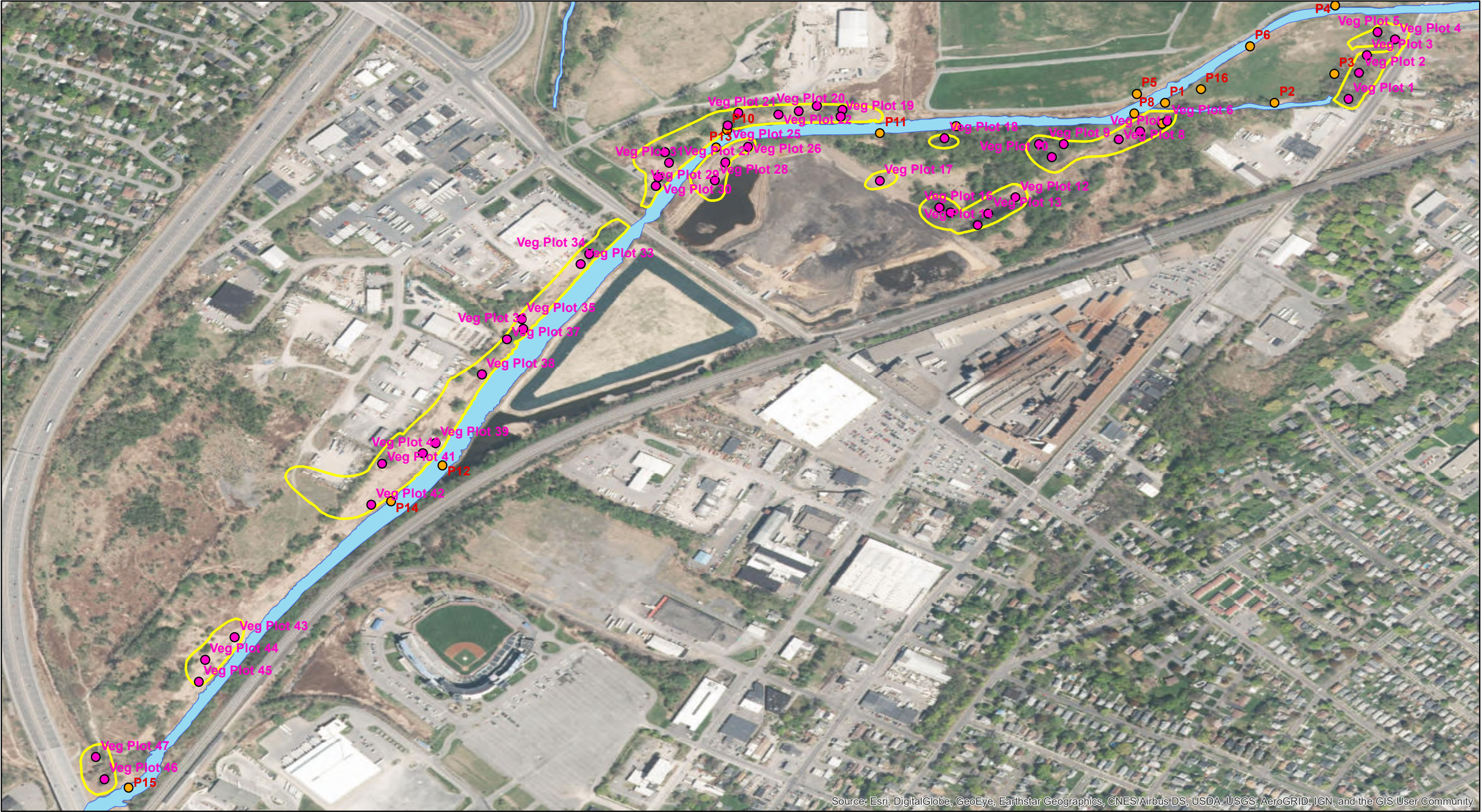
Wetland Boundary Markers



Inside Fringe-Wetland Boundary

Attachment 6
Photographic Log

Ley Creek Wetlands and Habitat Assessment

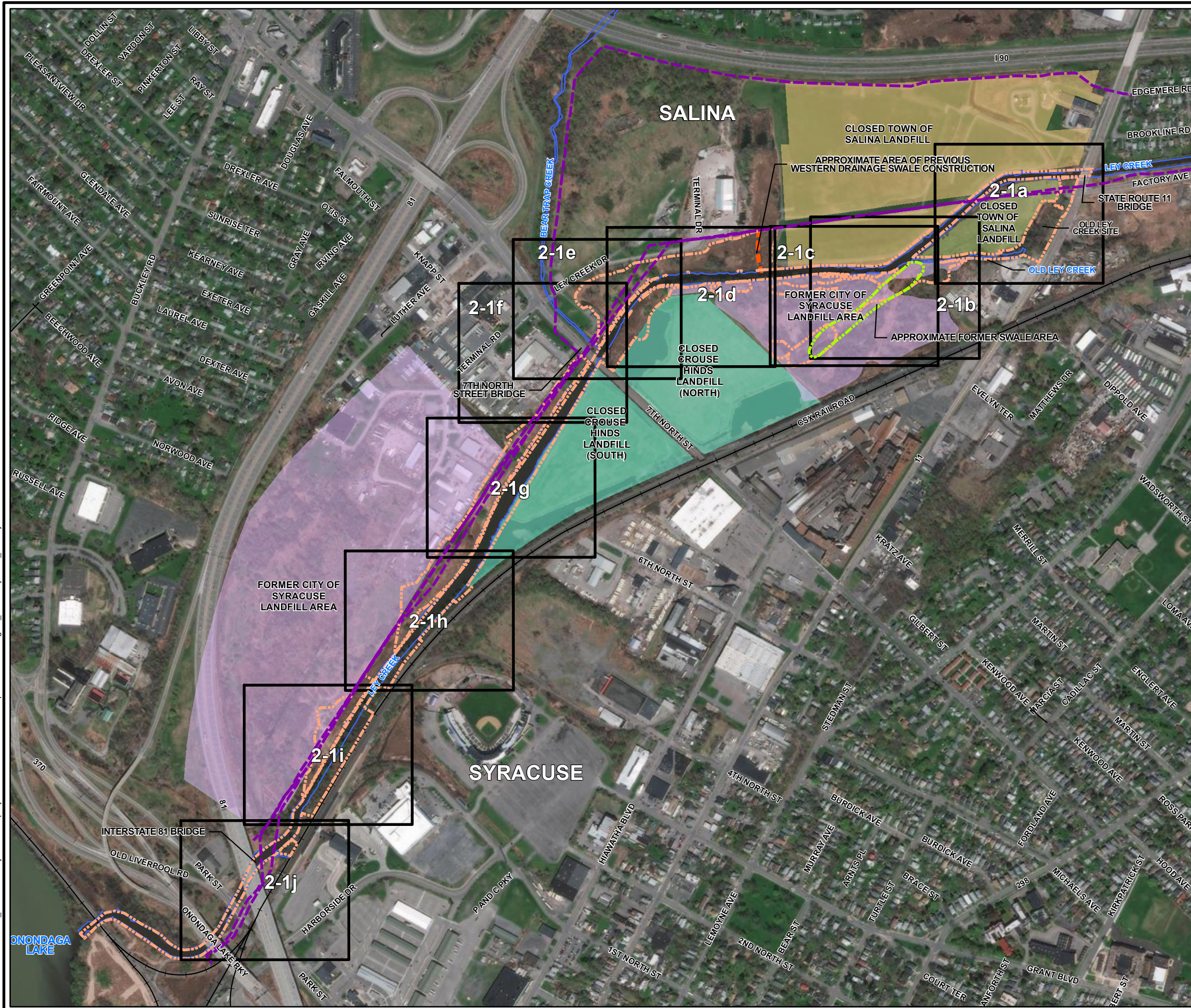


0 180 360 720 1,080 1,440 Feet

Legend

-  Ley Creek
-  Veg Plots and Photo Points
-  Soil Removal Areas
-  Wetland Photo Points

Note: Veg Plots were photographed and assigned a label of V##, corresponding to their numeric value.



LEGEND:

- RAILROAD
- PIPELINE
- CREEK SHORELINE (APPROXIMATE)
- APPROXIMATE EXTENT OF LOWER LEY CREEK SUBSITE AND ADJACENT UPLAND SOIL AREAS
- FORMER CITY OF SYRACUSE LANDFILL AREA
- CLOSED CROUSE HINDS LANDFILL
- CLOSED TOWN OF SALINA LANDFILL
- CLOSED TOWN OF SALINA LANDFILL - PARCEL 6 EXCAVATION LIMITS

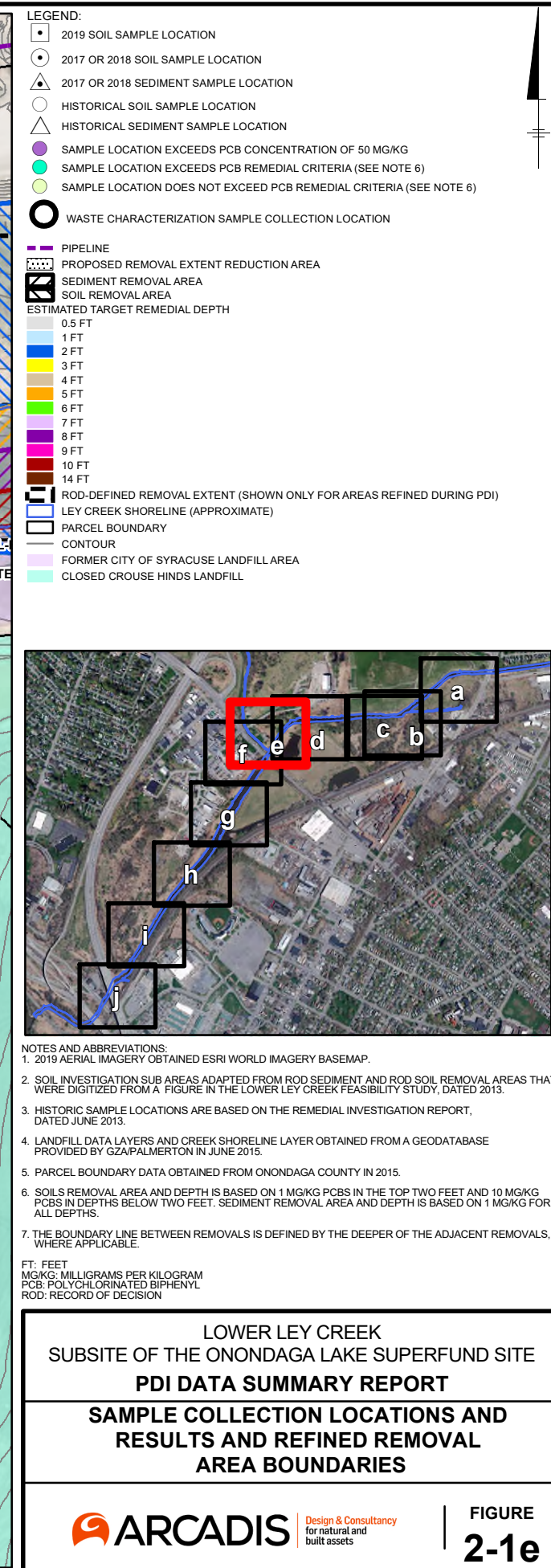
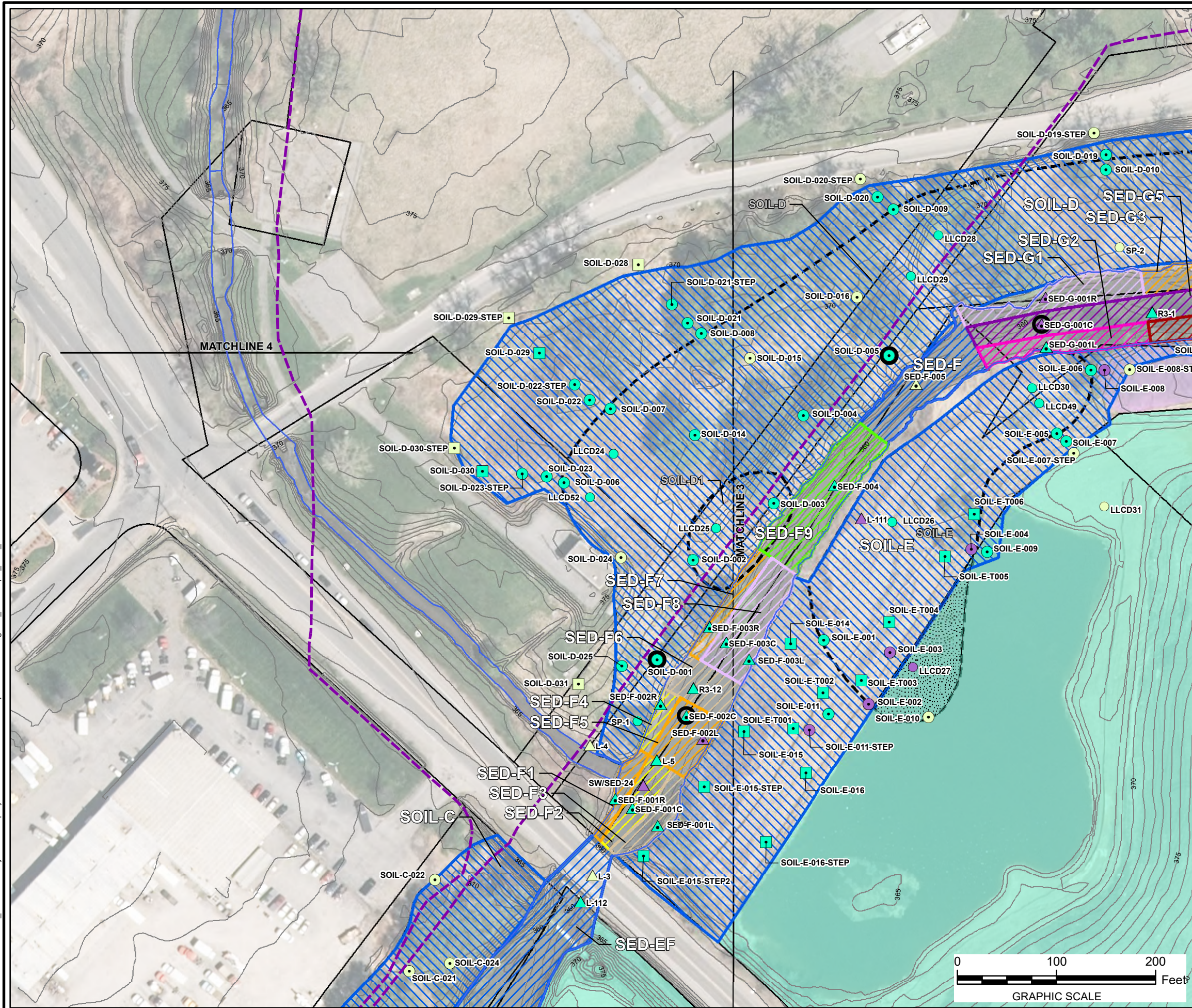


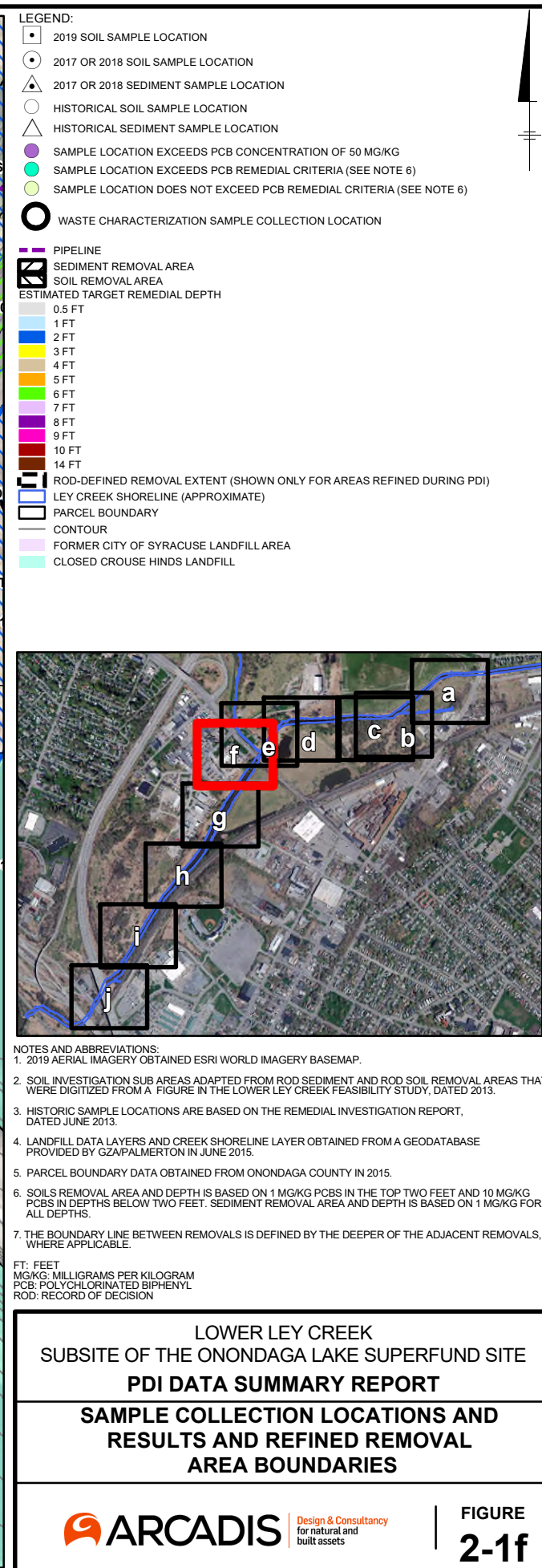
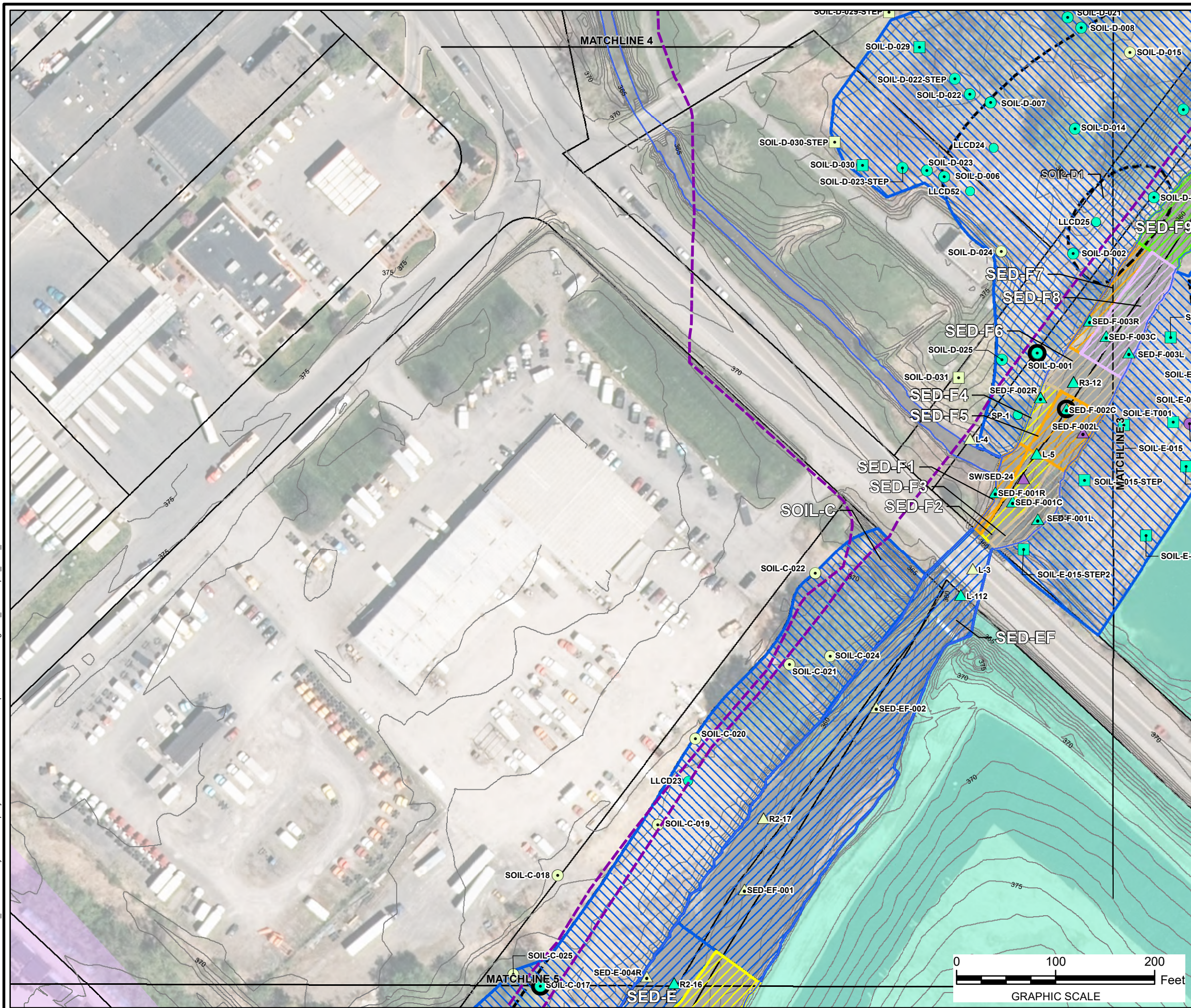
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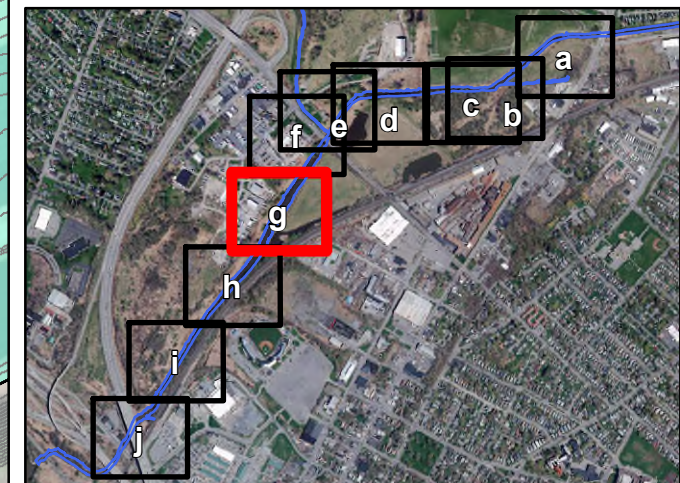
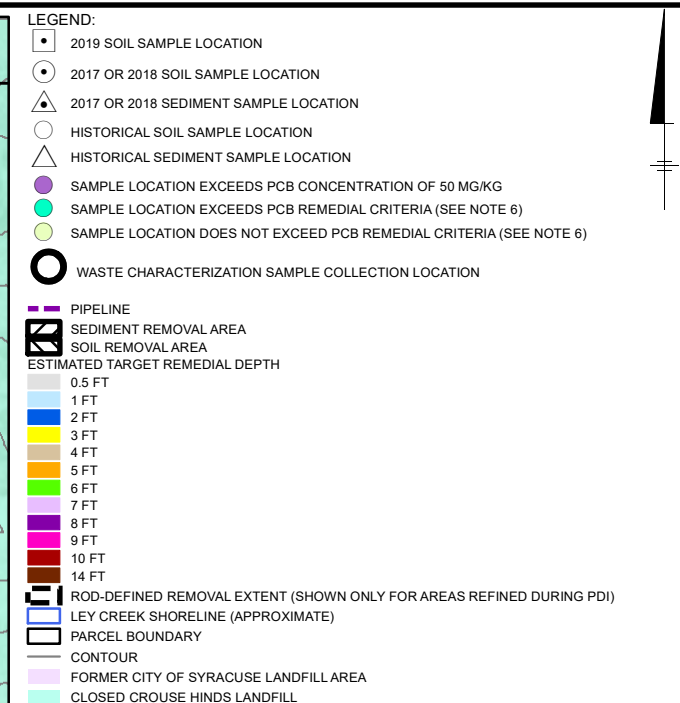
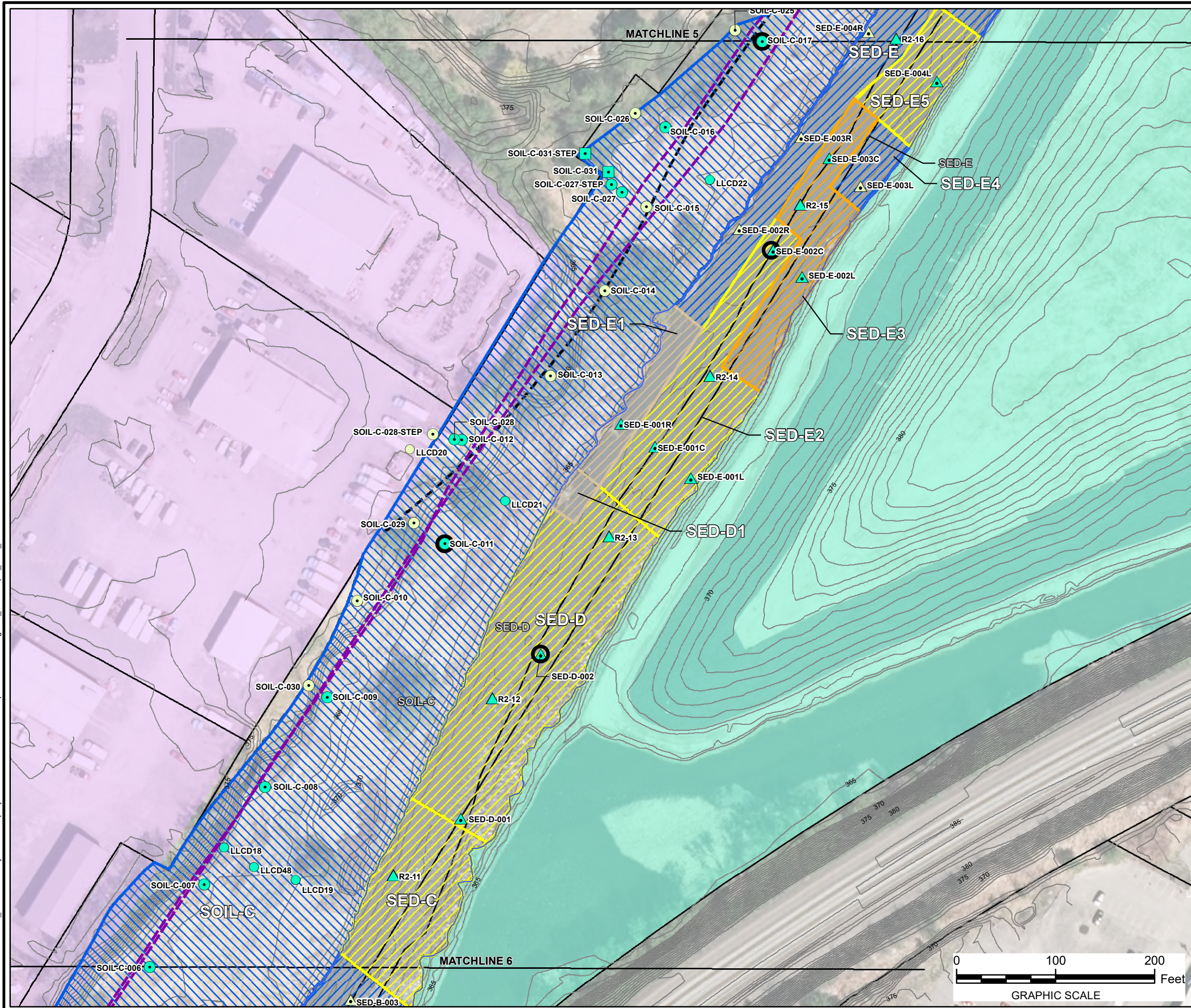
1. SEPTEMBER 2019 NATIONAL AGRICULTURE IMAGERY PROGRAM (NAIP) IMAGERY OBTAINED FROM ESRI IMAGE SERVICE.
2. LANDFILL DATA LAYERS AND CREEK SHORELINE LAYERS OBTAINED FROM A GEODATABASE PROVIDED BY GZA/PALMERTON IN JUNE 2015.
4. PIPELINE, ROAD AND RAILROAD DATA LAYERS WERE OBTAINED FROM ELECTRONIC FILES PROVIDED BY HYDROGEOLOGIC, INC. IN JULY 2015.

LOWER LEY CREEK
SUBSITE OF THE ONONDAGA LAKE SUPERFUND SITE
PDI DATA SUMMARY REPORT

SITE LAYOUT







NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS:

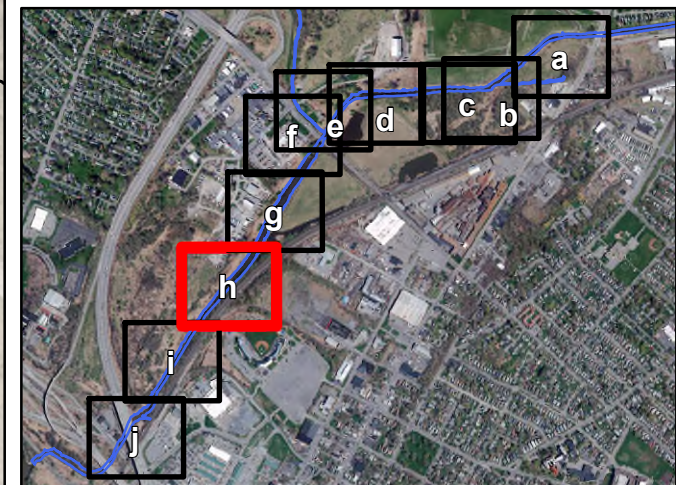
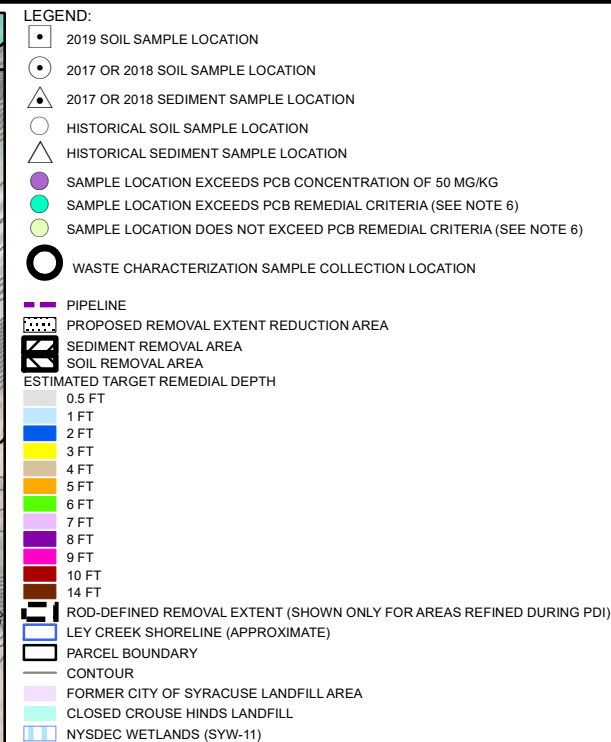
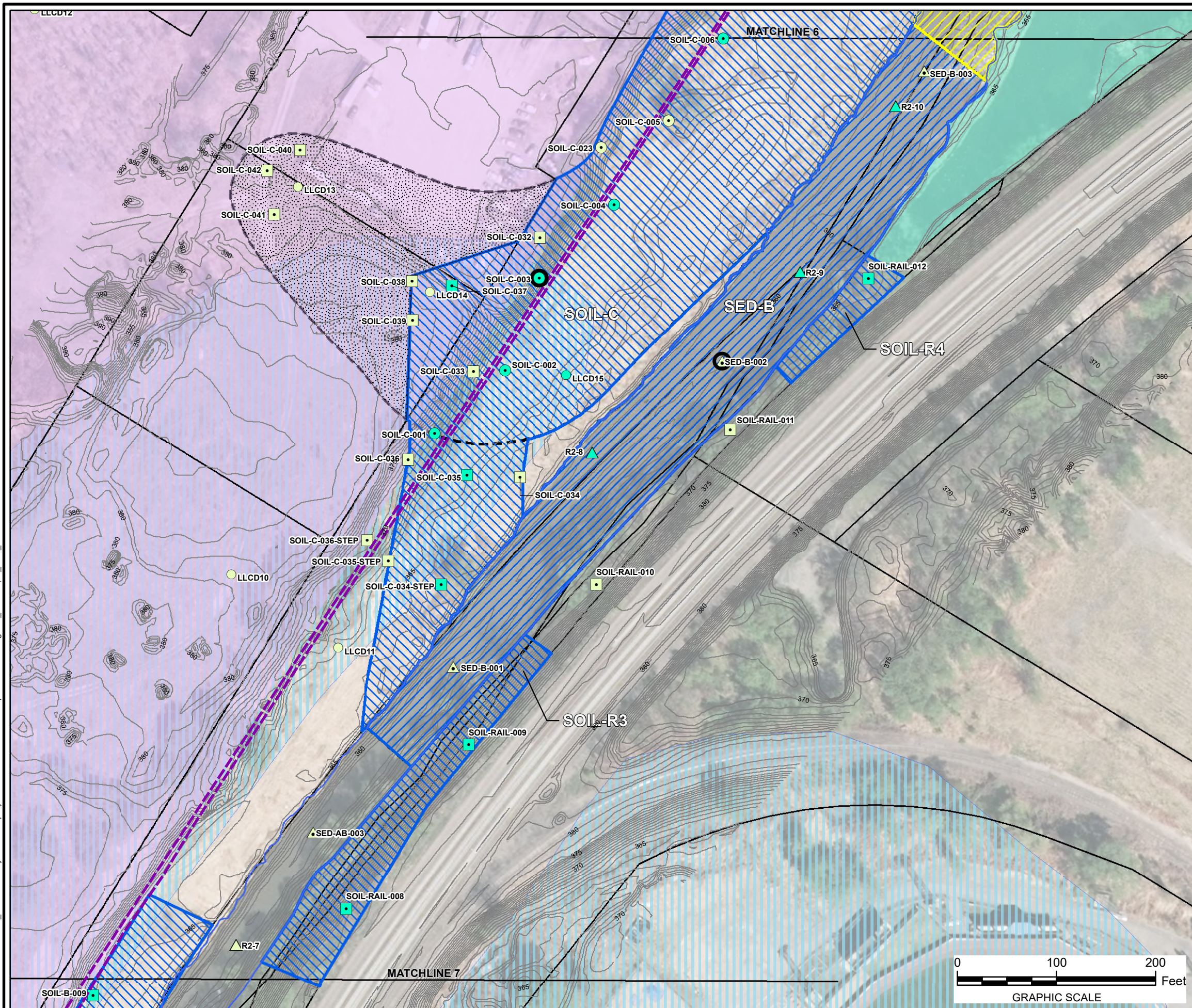
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- HISTORIC SAMPLE LOCATIONS ARE BASED ON THE REMEDIAL INVESTIGATION REPORT, DATED JUNE 2013.
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- PARCEL BOUNDARY DATA OBTAINED FROM ONONDAGA COUNTY IN 2015.
- SOILS REMOVAL AREA AND DEPTH IS BASED ON 1 MG/KG PCBs IN THE TOP TWO FEET AND 10 MG/KG PCBs IN DEPTHS BELOW TWO FEET. SEDIMENT REMOVAL AREA AND DEPTH IS BASED ON 1 MG/KG FOR ALL DEPTHS.
- THE BOUNDARY LINE BETWEEN REMOVALS IS DEFINED BY THE DEEPER OF THE ADJACENT REMOVALS, WHERE APPLICABLE.

FT: FEET
MG/KG: MILLIGRAMS PER KILOGRAM
PCB: POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYL
ROD: RECORD OF DECISION

LOWER LEY CREEK
SUBSITE OF THE ONONDAGA LAKE SUPERFUND SITE
PDI DATA SUMMARY REPORT
**SAMPLE COLLECTION LOCATIONS AND
RESULTS AND REFINED REMOVAL
AREA BOUNDARIES**

ARCADIS Design & Consultancy
for natural and
built assets

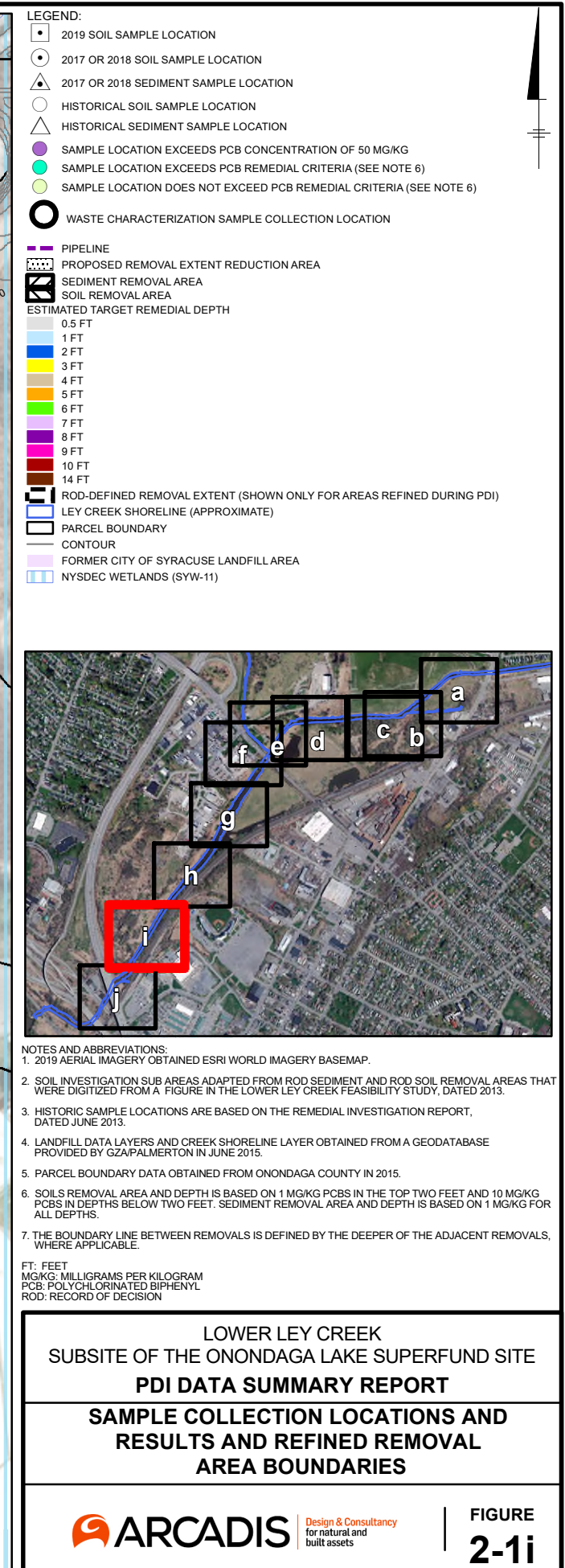
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2-1g**

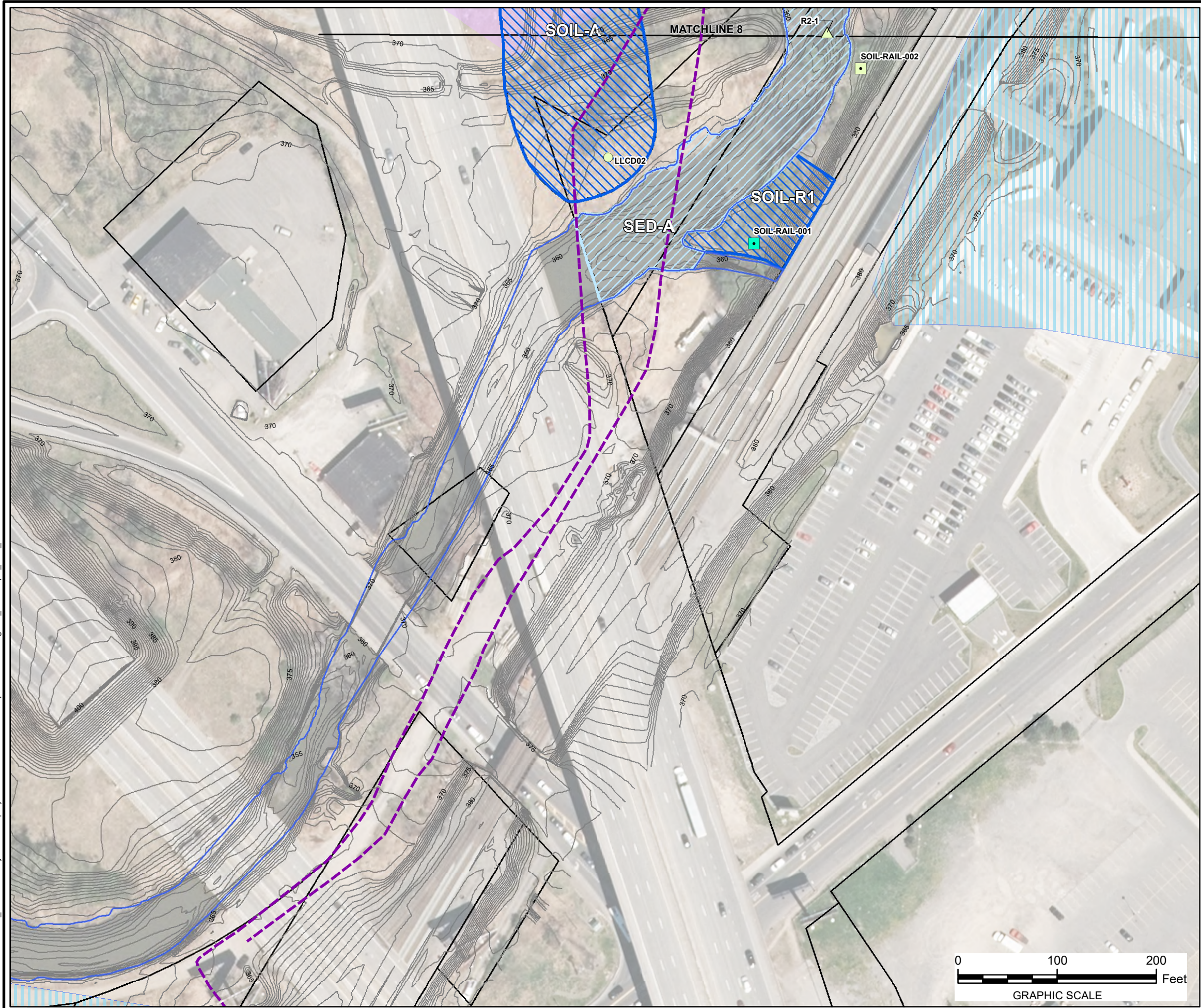


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PDI DATA SUMMARY REPORT
**SAMPLE COLLECTION LOCATIONS AND
RESULTS AND REFINED REMOVAL
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LEGEND:

- 2019 SOIL SAMPLE LOCATION
- 2017 OR 2018 SOIL SAMPLE LOCATION
- 2017 OR 2018 SEDIMENT SAMPLE LOCATION
- HISTORICAL SOIL SAMPLE LOCATION
- HISTORICAL SEDIMENT SAMPLE LOCATION
- SAMPLE LOCATION EXCEEDS PCB CONCENTRATION OF 50 MG/KG
- SAMPLE LOCATION EXCEEDS PCB REMEDIAL CRITERIA (SEE NOTE 6)
- SAMPLE LOCATION DOES NOT EXCEED PCB REMEDIAL CRITERIA (SEE NOTE 6)
- WASTE CHARACTERIZATION SAMPLE COLLECTION LOCATION
- PIPELINE
- SEDIMENT REMOVAL AREA
- SOIL REMOVAL AREA
- ESTIMATED TARGET REMEDIAL DEPTH
- 0.5 FT
- 1 FT
- 2 FT
- 3 FT
- 4 FT
- 5 FT
- 6 FT
- 7 FT
- 8 FT
- 9 FT
- 10 FT
- 14 FT
- ROD-DEFINED REMOVAL EXTENT (SHOWN ONLY FOR AREAS REFINED DURING PDI)
- LEY CREEK SHORELINE (APPROXIMATE)
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- CONTOUR
- FORMER CITY OF SYRACUSE LANDFILL AREA
- NYSDEC WETLANDS (SYW-11)

NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS:

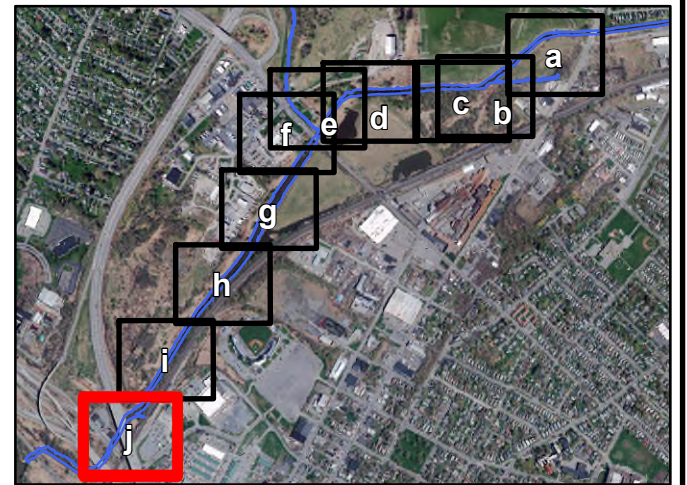
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ROD: RECORD OF DECISION

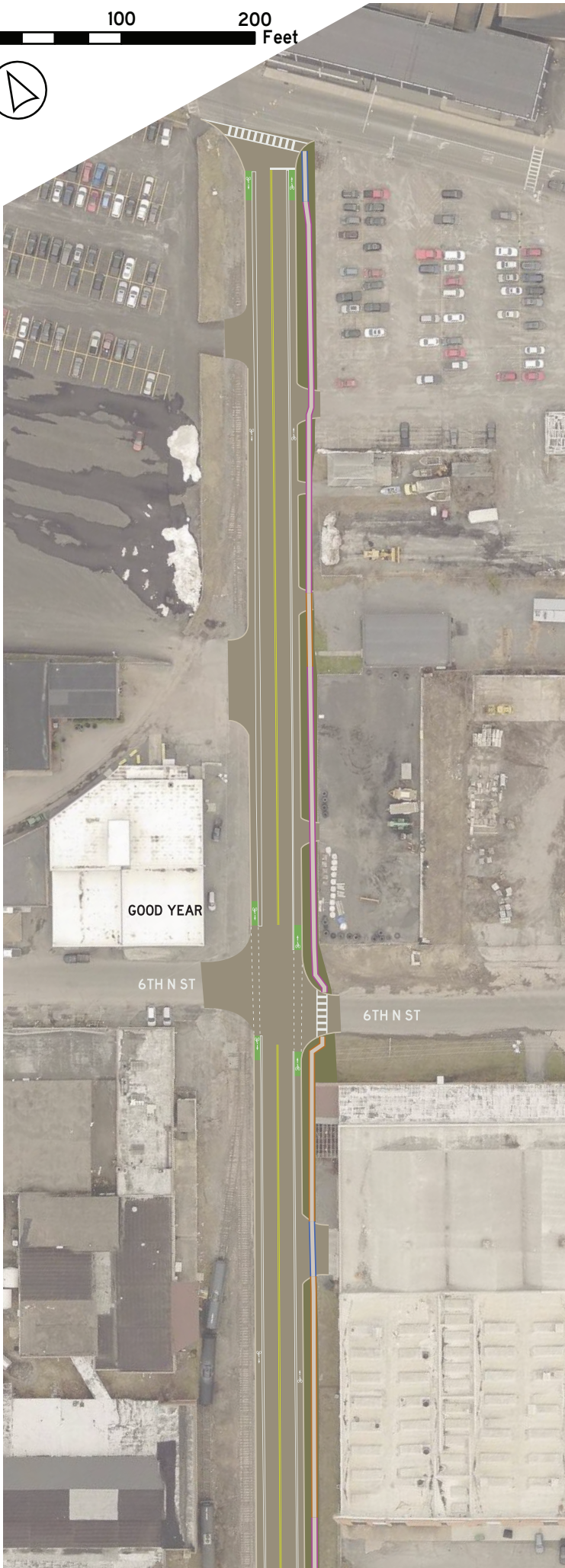
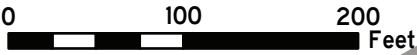
LOWER LEY CREEK
SUBSITE OF THE ONONDAGA LAKE SUPERFUND SITE
PDI DATA SUMMARY REPORT
**SAMPLE COLLECTION LOCATIONS AND
RESULTS AND REFINED REMOVAL
AREA BOUNDARIES**

ARCADIS Design & Consultancy
for natural and
built assets

**FIGURE
2-1j**



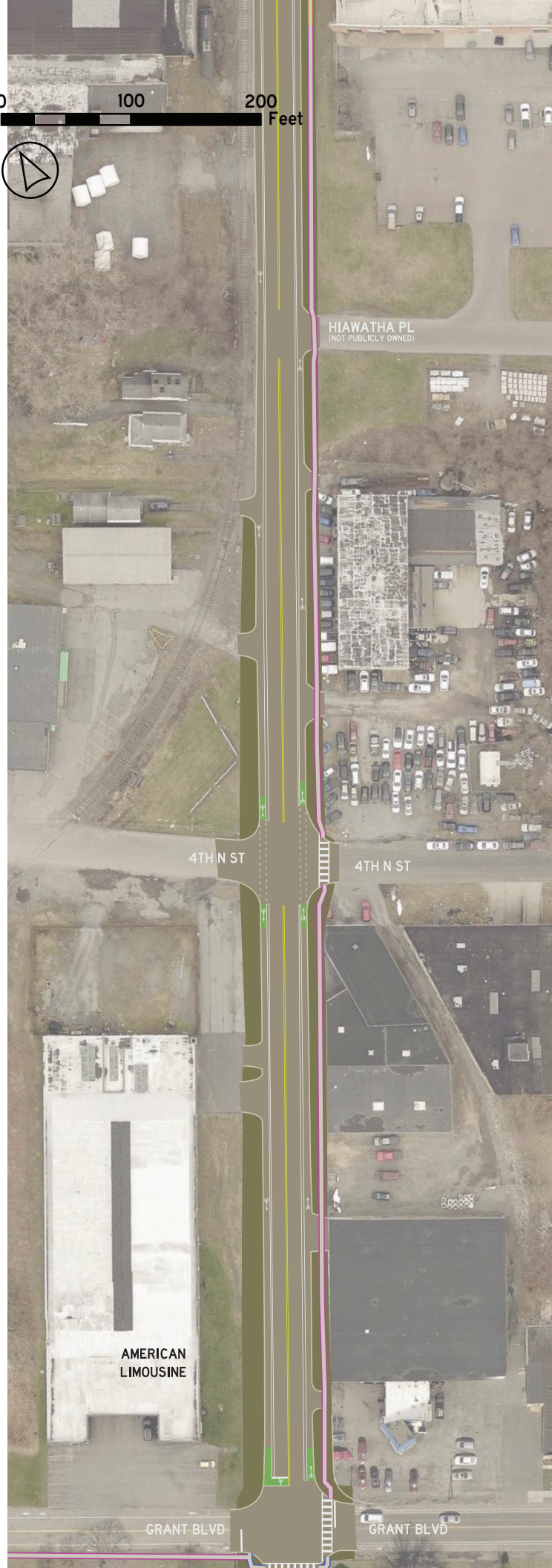
APPENDIX D - Hiawatha Blvd Sidewalk Audit



- Existing good quality sidewalks
- Existing poor quality sidewalks
- No existing sidewalks

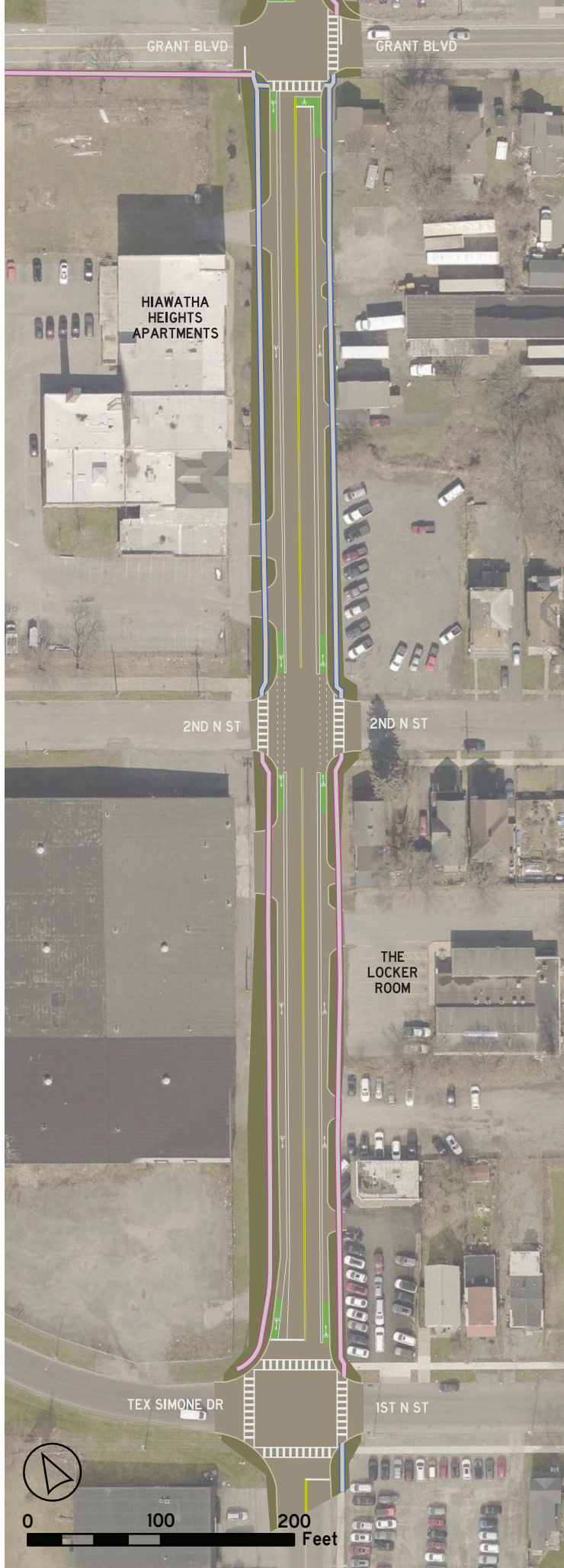


0 100 200 Feet



- Existing good quality sidewalks
- Existing poor quality sidewalks
- No existing sidewalks





- Existing good quality sidewalks
- Existing poor quality sidewalks
- No existing sidewalks