Ellsworth Township
Master Plan

Lake County, Michigan
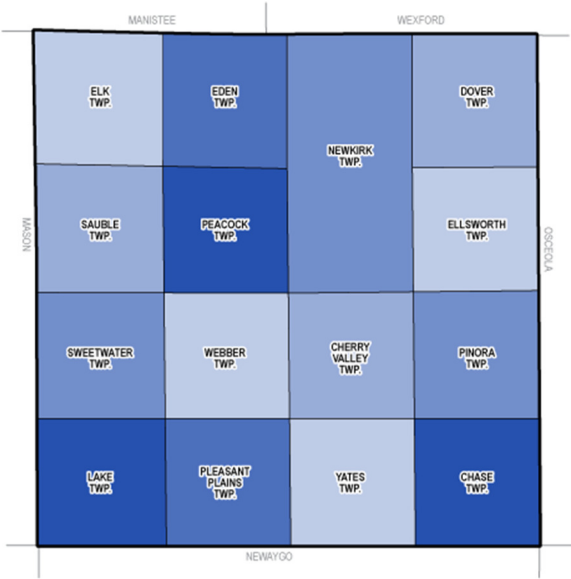
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Master Planning Committee: John Trimberger, Robert Long, Robert Hess, Dave Middleton, Robert Verlinde, and Rebecca Weipert.

MISSION STATEMENT

Ellsworth Township will govern with honesty, integrity and transparency to provide our citizens with the best possible conditions to live, work and play in a cost effective manner while preserving and improving their quality of life, providing for economic growth and protecting our natural resources. We will seek opportunities to maintain and improve our economic

vitality and development opportunities by encouraging community involvement.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This document is a guide for the future growth and development of Ellsworth Township, intended to encourage development decisions based on community character, the capability and the use of the land, and the needs and desires of the community.

LEGAL BASIS OF PLANNING

The State of Michigan authorizes local municipalities to develop community planning through the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008 (formally authorized under the Township Planning Act 168 of 1959). Under this act, townships have the responsibility to develop and adopt a plan for the future development of their community. The Ellsworth Township Board followed the directives of this act in the preparation of this Master Plan.

UNDERSTANDING THE MASTER PLAN

A master plan acts as a guide for the future management and development of the Township. The Master Plan serves as the basis for the development and growth in the

Township. Its purpose is to promote public health, safety, and general welfare of the community.

HOW THE MASTER PLAN AFFECTS YOU AS A RESIDENT OR PROPERTY OWNER

As a resident or property owner, it is important that you understand that this plan is a policy guide and not an ordinance or regulation. This plan is a guide to frame policy and has no legal basis to directly impact your property immediately or in the long term.

As a concerned member of Ellsworth Township, this plan will help you to understand the:

- Vision for the future of Ellsworth Township
- Proposed land uses for your property and neighboring properties
- Overall direction and development of the Township including housing density and land division, commercial and industrial development, agricultural lands and open spaces, natural resources, environmental protection, roads and transportation, infrastructure, utilities, and services
- Protection and wise use of natural resources including lakes, rivers and creeks, wetlands, forests, grasslands, groundwater, and soils

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

This plan is based on a process that considered various aspects and characteristics of the community that were collected, analyzed and processed before being integrated into the plan. These included community character, community meetings and feedback, census and other data, community needs, natural resources, land capability, environmental restrictions, maps, studies and reports, availability of services, existing land uses and development, and regional issues.

PLANNING PHILOSOPHY

Ellsworth Township officials believe very strongly that the Township's Master Plan should reflect the values and vision of its residents. While they recognize that it is impossible to achieve complete consensus on every issue, much effort was made to

represent the will of the people in the development of this plan. As such, the Township has developed this plan around the principle of maintaining a rural, peaceful community that holds private property rights in the highest regard. This plan was developed knowing that the citizens of Ellsworth Township support minimal government regulation in order to protect the basic health, safety and welfare of its residents while working with other government agencies and organizations, where appropriate, to provide additional services.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Ellsworth Township Board should use and reference this document on a regular basis in their decision-making and policy development processes to ensure that the community vision provided in this plan is implemented.

Officials should refer to this plan to provide justification for land use decisions and encourage other decision-making bodies (such as the Lake County Road Commission, Lake County Board of Commissioners, Village of Luther, school districts, neighboring townships, etc.) to review this plan for compatibility, coordination and consistency.

This plan is developed to guide the daily decisions of Township officials while guiding the development of the community over time toward its vision. This plan is designed to be implemented over a 20 year period and should be followed by officials while remaining flexible. All officials should read this plan in its entirety as decisions should be guided by the plan as a whole. In order to remain relevant, the Township will review this plan every 5 years and adjust as needed.
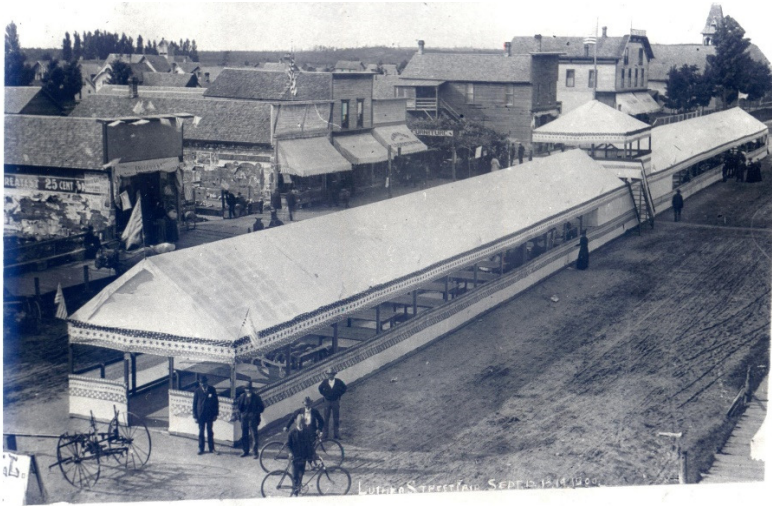
Luther Mill Pond – Circa early 1900's

Luther Mill Pond – Present Day

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Village of Luther Street Fair - Circa 1900   **Village of Luther-Present Day**

LOCATION

Ellsworth Township is an idyllic rural region located in the northeast area of Lake County, Michigan. The Township shares the Village of Luther along its west side with Newkirk Township. Ellsworth Township has access to larger municipal cities and towns: LeRoy (13.5 miles east), Reed City (23 miles southeast), Cadillac (28 miles northeast), Big Rapids (35 miles southeast), White Cloud (47 miles southwest), and Baldwin (21 miles southwest).

DESCRIPTION

Ellsworth Township encompasses an area of both land and water within 35.4 square miles. The land consists of 35.2 square miles of the township, while the water has the remaining .2 square miles.

The vast majority of the land within Ellsworth Township is privately owned, with some state land (2592 acres). The densely forested Township includes extensive wetlands, rivers (the Pine River and the Little Manistee River), lakes (Big Spring Lake, Rockwell Lake, and Howe Lake), and ponds (Luther Millpond). These natural features

allow Township residents and tourists to enjoy the simplistic sights and recreational activities throughout all seasons.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

The population of Ellsworth Township consists of a strong community of local residents, retirees, vacationers, and seasonal residents. In summer months, an increase in the population comes from these members of the community as they travel from other areas of Michigan and the U.S. As noted below, the Township has a relatively small population of 826 people. The Township's high number of undeveloped roads and lack of larger, neighboring cities could be the main reasons for the low population. The West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission has calculated that the average population for Ellsworth Township will have a steady increase until 2040.
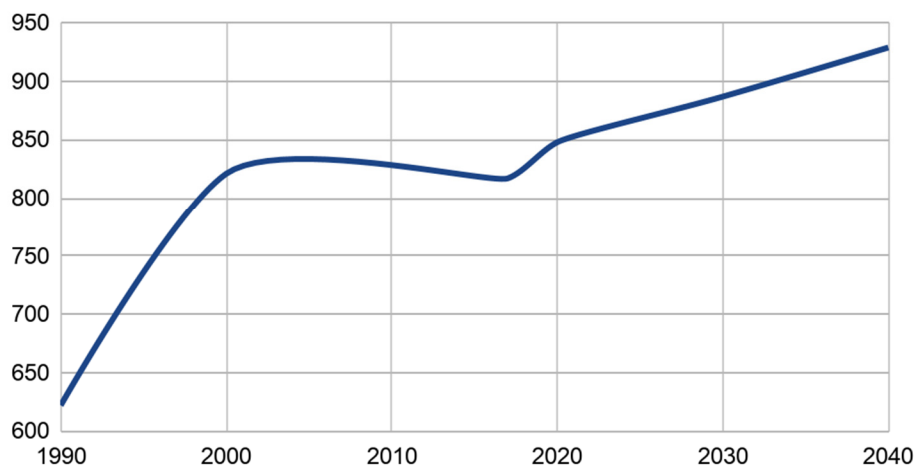
Statistics provided by the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission

In Ellsworth Township, there are 826 people (48% males and 52% female) in 184 total households. There are 192 families with children under the age of 18 and 143 households with someone 65 years old or over living alone. The racial makeup of the Township is 92% White, 5% Hispanic, 1% from two or more races, 1% African-

American, 1% Native American, and 0% Asian. The population density of Ellsworth Township is 23.3 persons per square mile (MTA Website, taken from the 2010 census).

Ellsworth Township's population is put further into detail by age. There are 17% of people 10 years old or younger, 12% of people between the ages of 10 and 17, 4% of people between the ages of 18 and 24, 10% of people between the ages of 25 and 34, 12% of people between the ages of 35 and 44, 13% of people between the ages of 45 and 54, 14% of people between the ages of 55 and 64, and 18% of people over the age of 65 (MTA Website, taken from the 2010 census). There is a higher number of older residents compared to youth, as the Township tends to draw in more retired citizens with its quiet atmosphere and low-cost living.

The population of Ellsworth Township is also spread out into household living. There are 192 families with children under the age of 18 in homes, 149 of them are married families, 43 are single-parent (female) families, and there are 0 single-parent (male) families. Senior citizens, 65 years old or over, account for 143 homes. The average number of people per household is 4.44 per home and the average number of families per household is 1.00 (MTA Website, taken from the 2010 census).

Housing

Within Ellsworth Township, the majority of types of housing units consist of owner-occupied homes with single families. There has been an increase in the number of seasonal homes over the past few years, contributing to the occupied housing number.

With 609 housing units, Ellsworth Township has an average density of 17.3 housing units per square mile. Of the housing units, 296 are occupied or owner-occupied and 175 are rented. There are 138 vacant or unoccupied homes, some accounting for seasonal residents. Mobile homes are distributed in the number of owner-occupied or unoccupied housing units in Ellsworth Township and they have a number of 187 (MTA Website, taken from the 2010 census).

The median structure year of built homes in Ellsworth Township is 1989. The median housing value of owner-occupied housing units is $101,400. The median owner costs for owner-occupied housing units with a mortgage was 104. Within the Township,

123 people do not have a cost for mortgage for owner-occupied housing units. The median rent for units was $817 (MTA Website, taken from the 2010 census).

Ellsworth Township understands that different housing options for families and individuals are needed to suit their economic settings. The Township recognizes that owner-occupied residents and/or seasonal residents use their land for the purpose of recreation, so Ellsworth Township encourages the future of these uses so that they may contribute to the preservation and future of the rural community.

Median Housing Values
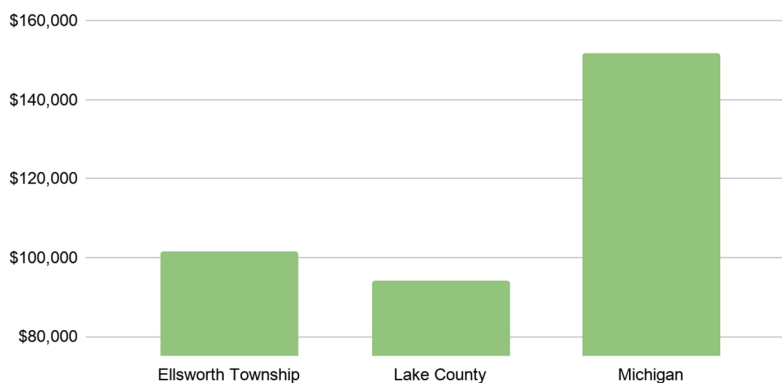
(MTA Website, taken from the 2010 census)

Economic

The income levels of people living in Ellsworth Township is higher than that of Lake County. However, poverty is still a main concern in the Township as many individuals and families face this struggle. There are very limited employment opportunities in the area, and as a result, many residents commute considerable distances for their employment.

The median income for a household is $35,455, while the median income for a family is $43,438. Ellsworth Township's per capita income is $16,293. The Township has 501 people employed (16 years old and over) and 161 below the poverty line. (Not all people in the Township reported status', consequently, not equaling the population number.)

Ellsworth Township recognizes the need to encourage economic growth within the community. A plan for economic growth for the Township's large and small businesses and the future plan of the joint purchase of Luther Elementary School has been developed. The Lake County Economic Development Alliance plans to encourage economic development within the County. (More detailed information in **Growth and Development** subsection of Chapter 3.)

Education

Ellsworth Township has a moderately low average of high school completion, along with their average higher education completion. There are 41% of people that have fulfilled high school completion, 34% that have had some college or an associate's degree, 2% with Bachelor's degrees, and 4% with Master's degrees.

PLACES

The Village of Luther shares its area about equally with Newkirk Township on the west and Ellsworth Township on the east. Luther is a popular destination in Ellsworth Township as it offers places such as convenience and grocery stores, hardware store, restaurants and bars, a bank, churches, the Luther Lion's Club, a senior center, a local library and museum, campgrounds, and outdoor recreational activities.

Luther will continue to be the commercial development location lead by general stores of the community. The small, rural community of Luther will maintain low density residential developments.

ENVIRONMENT

Topography

The terrain of Ellsworth Township is composed of moderately high to high terrain. The north and west sides of the Township are at moderately high terrain, while the central part, east and south sides are at high terrain. The Township has an average elevation of 1,165 feet above sea level.

Geology

The bedrock geology of Ellsworth Township is primarily composed of Mississippian and Pennsylvanian sedimentary deposits. These sedimentary rocks consist of shales, sandstones, and evaporates. There are deposits of the Marshall Sandstone, the Michigan Formation, and the Saginaw Sandstone. The Township also has thick glacial deposits of unconsolidated material. These deposits range greater than 800 feet in thickness within Ellsworth Township.

Soils

Ellsworth Township soils are categorized in Northern Michigan and Wisconsin Sandy Drift soils. A map of the Township's soil types is found on page 35. The most prominent type of soil, sandy soil, is found in nearly all locations of the Township, except a small portion of the east side and northeast corner. While the east side and northeast corner of the Township have sandy soils, the soils in these areas are excessively drained or well drained compared to the prominent soils in most other areas in the Township.

Land Cover

Before logging in the 19th Century, Ellsworth Township was composed of Beech-Sugar Maple-Hemlock forests, White Pine-mixed hardwood forests, mixed conifer

swamps, Hemlock-White Pine forests, Cedar swamps, mixed Pine-Oak forests, shrub swamps/emergent marshes, rivers/creeks and lakes.

Today, the Township is composed of deciduous forests, evergreen forests, row crops, pasture/hay, wooded wetlands, rivers/creeks, lakes and low-density residential uses. These types of land cover provide suitable habitat for wildlife, scenery with beautiful landscapes for country living, and uses for outdoor recreation such as hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, snowmobiling, ORV-ing and other activities.

Ellsworth Township plans to protect its natural environment from negative impacts of development to ensure the beauty of the natural attractions.

Hydrography

Ellsworth Township has an abundance of water resources throughout its land such as rivers, creeks, ponds, and lakes. The map on page 34 shows the wetlands in the Township. The few small lakes in the Township are Big Spring Lake, located in the central part of section 8; Rockwell Lake, located in the northern part of section 17; and Howe Lake, located on the north side of section 26 and south side of 23.

Ellsworth Township has several running streams: Hersey Creek, located primarily in section 36; Lincoln Creek, located primarily in section 30; the Pine River, located primarily in sections 1, 2, 3, 10, and 11 of the Township; and the Little Manistee River, located primarily in sections 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 29. The Luther Millpond is also a well-used, man-made body of water, just below the Little Manistee River headwaters in Ellsworth Township.

POLITICAL

Ellsworth Township has a five member Township Board consisting of a Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer and two Trustees. All of the members of the Township Board are elected officials serving four year terms. Lake County currently does not have county zoning and has no plans to implement county zoning. Six townships within the County currently have local zoning: Lake, Peacock, Pleasant Plains, Sauble, Webber, and Yates.

Ellsworth Township neighbors are Dover Township (north), LeRoy Township of Osceola County (east), Pinora Township (south), and the southern portion of Newkirk Township (west). Also, the Township shares its corners with the northern portion of Newkirk Township (northwest), Burdell Township of Osceola County (northeast), Lincoln Township of Osceola County (southeast), and Cherry Valley Township (southwest).

Ellsworth Township recognizes that society has further developed in interactions, resulting in a greater need for services. The trends in the amount of resources have motivated the Township to implement creative uses of funding and sharing of resources. The Township should, during the correct circumstances, work with neighboring townships and Lake County on projects that aid the residents and property owners of Ellsworth Township.

TOWNSHIP SERVICES

Police Protection

Ellsworth Township is protected by the Lake County Sheriff's Department, located in Baldwin. The Michigan State Police services the Township through the Hart Post No. 62. Services are also received from the Lake County Jail, Lake County Courthouse, and Lake County Animal Control, all located in Baldwin. The Michigan

Department of Natural Resources and conservation officers also contribute to the safety of the Township by enforcing laws for the protection of natural resources.

The Lake County Jail is located in Baldwin. The North Lake Correctional Facility, located just north of Baldwin, closed in 2017. It reopened as a GEO Group (privately owned) facility taking in male only medium and maximum security prisoners in late 2019.

Fire Protection

Ellsworth Township is protected by the Luther Fire District #1; a part-time volunteer department located in Luther. Other fire departments from neighboring communities can be called to provide additional assistance. The Ellsworth Township 911 Emergency Services Map is on page 33.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources field office, located in Baldwin, provides services and equipment for the safety of prescribed burns and wildfires.

Emergency Medical Services/Ambulance Services/911 Services

Ellsworth Township is serviced by the Lake County Ambulance Service and Lake County Life EMS, both located in Baldwin. The Township's 911 emergency phone service is through Lake County Central Dispatch, also located in Baldwin.

Hospitals

The closest hospitals from Ellsworth Township are Spectrum Health Reed City Hospital (23 miles away), and Munson Healthcare Cadillac Hospital (28 miles away).

Cemeteries

The Pleasant Hill Cemetery (located in Luther) and the East Ellsworth Cemetery and Valley Cemetery (both located in Ellsworth Township) are all maintained by Ellsworth Township.

Library

The Luther Area Public Library is located in Luther and provides Ellsworth Township with services such as computers with printers (color and photo included), Wi-Fi, videos, DVDs, music CDs, copy, fax, lamination, yellow and blue trash bags, tax forms, plat books. The library also has an extensive collection of books for children, tweens, young adults and adults. It also hosts several community events a year including Summer Reading Programs, Cinema Saturdays, Craft Clubs, a Holiday Open House and book and bake sales.

Post Office

Ellsworth Township's United States Government Post Office is located in Luther

Road Commission

Ellsworth Township's roads are maintained by the Lake County Road Commission located in Baldwin.

Township Buildings

Ellsworth Township maintains the Ellsworth Township Hall located in Luther. The hall provides office space for the Township officials, records storage, and a public meeting room for various Township meetings.

Waste Disposal/Recycling

Ellsworth Township uses Waste Management, Republic Services and Independent Rural Waste Services (IRWS) for waste disposal and recycling.

TRANSPORTATION

Roads

The maintenance of roads within Ellsworth Township is provided by the Township and Lake County Road Commission. Ellsworth Township has very few paved roads compared to other townships. 'Old M-63' runs through the south end of the Village of Luther to the east side of the Township. The remaining main, paved roads include North Hawkins Road, North Raymond Road, East 4 ½ Mile Road, East 5 Mile Road,

Raymond Road, looking South

North State Road, and North Douglas Road. Other roads are gravel and maintained as local roads. Seasonal roads are not maintained by the Lake County Road Commission.

EDUCATION

Ellsworth Township's intermediate school district is the Wexford-Missaukee ISD. Some students in the Township may choose to attend Baldwin or Reed City area schools under the Michigan 'Schools of Choice' program.

K-12 Schools

Pine River Area Elementary school provides education to students in kindergarten through third grades (located in LeRoy). The school district for this elementary school is Pine River Area Schools.

Students attending Pine River Middle School obtain education in grades four through seven (located in LeRoy). The school district for this middle school is Pine River Area Schools.

Pine River High School equips students with knowledge for future preparedness in grades eight through twelve (located in LeRoy). The school district for this high school is Pine River Area Schools.

Colleges/Universities

Ellsworth Township has surrounding colleges and universities including: Baker College of Cadillac (28 miles northeast); Ferris State University (34 miles southeast); and West Shore Community College (45 miles west).

LAND FRAGMENTATION

The division of land (including developmental patterns and parcel size, scope, and scale) in a township can greatly affect the character of the community. The Ellsworth Planning Commission, if established, will make recommendations for land division. It is crucial for developing and implementing a policy that fits the needs for the community.

Federal Lands

There are no federally owned public lands in Ellsworth Township.

State Lands

The total of state-owned public lands in Ellsworth Township is 2,592 acres. Most of these parcels of land are large, ranging between 120 to 396 acres with the smallest being 20 acres.

The state-owned public lands include both river systems (the Little Manistee River and the Pine River) within the Township, along with one of two creeks (Lincoln Creek). These parcels of land are relatively protected because of their status as state land, but the Township should develop a policy to protect future division and proper uses of the parcels.

Private Lands

Ellsworth Township's privately-owned parcels cover the majority of land in the Township. Most of the parcels are between 10 and 80 acres, but some range up to 320 acres. The vast majority of the parcels are in the 10 to 40 acres range and the 40 to 100 acre range. There are several privately owned parcels of 100 acres or more.

The Township should develop a policy identifying the promotion of large parcels to continue the rural living community.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Throughout Lake County, parks and recreation have been a driving factor of outdoor enjoyment for residents and/or visitors in Ellsworth Township. The Township's plentiful and beautiful natural resources offer many opportunities for recreation to the residents and visitors of the area. The Pere Marquette State Forest provides numerous outdoor activities such as fishing, hunting, hiking, camping and ORV riding on these public lands. 2019 Snowmobile and ORV maps are attached on page 31 and page 32. These maps are updated annually.

AGRICULTURE

Ellsworth Township has approximately 3,618 acres of land devoted to agriculture. The main crops are grains (consisting of corn, soybeans, rye and wheat), hay and Christmas trees. The Township's soils and groundwater availability allow for production of many agricultural and horticultural crops, with the proper nutrient regime and pH adjustment. Ellsworth Township is close to existing horticulture processing plants in Oceana County, where those agricultural interests are developed. A map of the Township's Future Land Use Plan is on page 29.

BUSINESS

Local businesses are a very important aspect of Ellsworth Township and its residents. They provide income and access to an array of basic provisions, services, and social interaction. The businesses in the Township will hopefully continue to be owned by local residents in the future. The Township should develop policies to increase business growth by encouraging home-based businesses, rather than commercially-owned businesses in Luther. The industries that the Township could have, should be small and utilize forest products and/or their waste by-products. Additionally, Ellsworth Township should seek out an agreement with surrounding areas, such as Baldwin, Big Rapids and Cadillac, to direct industrial development in the appropriate industrial areas. The Future Land Use Map on page 29 shows the areas suggested for commercial development.

CHAPTER 3
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

COMMUNITY VISION

In the years to come, Ellsworth Township will continue to maintain a quiet, peaceful, and rural community, surrounded by its beautiful and bountiful natural resources, wildlife, and year-round recreational opportunities.

Residential development remains low density while blending with the surrounding natural environment; commercial business development remains focused in the immediate vicinity of Luther with buildings whose facades reflect the nature that surrounds them; and industrial development is directed toward the Village of Luther, Baldwin or Leroy industrial park and their surrounding townships.

Natural and historical areas of special value to the community are identified, protected, and preserved.

Natural resources, including lakes, rivers and creeks, wetlands, groundwater, forests, grasslands and soils are protected and preserved through the appropriate policies.

AGRICULTURE
Goal:

Preserve farmland for agricultural uses, especially lands with prime, productive agricultural soils. The Land Use Map on page 29 shows land open for agriculture or forest residential housing.

Objectives:

1. Develop ordinances that encourage agricultural production and avoid potential conflicts between agricultural producers, landowners, and residential property owners over the Right-to-Farm Act and GAAMPS (Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices).

2. Permit flexibility for hobby farms and other agricultural related activities.
3. Permit the herd/flock size of confined feedlot operations per state statute and Right-to-Farm Act and locate them away from lakes, streams, wetlands, and the Village of Luther.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Goal:

Protect natural resources such as rivers, lakes and creeks, wetlands, grasslands, forests, and soils from the negative impacts of development.

Objectives:
1. Ensure environmentally-sound development through the utilization of the site plan review process that minimizes disruption to natural features including lakes, rivers and creeks, wetlands, forests, and soils.
2. Consider a wetlands ordinance for wetlands under 5 acres in size that protects the natural functions of wetlands and prevents alteration of their natural state.
3. Maintain low-to medium-density development around lakes and low-density development along rivers and creeks by developing a lake overlay district and a river overlay district that extends protections provided by Michigan's Natural River Act.
4. Consider zoning provisions to discourage the large scale clearing of land for development without proper review and approval.
5. Work with local agencies to educate landowners on the benefits of implementing best practices when developing land.
6. Work with the Department of Natural Resources, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, other local agencies, and landowners with large, private tracks of land to encourage land management practices that promote natural resource and wildlife habitat protection.
7. Consider the development of greenways throughout the Township by utilizing the site plan review process to coordinate the interconnection of open spaces between parcels.

8. Work with organizations associated with the Pine River and Little Manistee Watershed Council to protect rivers and creeks in the Township.

9. Encourage septic tank maintenance on all properties.

10. Develop regulations that prohibit the export of water resources from the Township.

11. Encourage native plantings and other landscaping buffers on new developments.

12. Require natural vegetative buffer strips along lakes, rivers, and creeks not covered by the Natural Rivers Act.

13. Encourage design which considers and incorporates elements of a rural and quiet lifestyle, providing open space viewing opportunities for as many residents as possible.

14. Discourage development in floodplain and wetland areas.

15. Develop regulations to prevent destruction and erosion of lake, river, and creek banks and work with organizations to restore and improve those with damage.

16. Encourage a "no-clear" setback along roads to protect the natural, rural character of the Township.

17. Consider beautification routes along targeted Township roads.

18. Work with area conservation groups to educate property owners about non-regulatory incentives for preserving wildlife habitat and open spaces (including conservation easements).

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Goal:

Preserve rural character through growth management by limiting density and determining appropriate locations for various types of development.

Objectives:

1. Form a Planning Commission to develop zoning ordinances for the preservation of the Township's natural and existing characteristics, along with its future growth.

2. Combat blight, abandoned/dangerous homes, junk, and visual clutter in the Township.

3. Concentrate on commercial, multi-family, trailer park, and denser single family development in and around Luther.

4. Develop regulations to encourage appropriate home-based businesses and cottage industries in rural residential areas and small industries near Luther with appropriate infrastructure.

5. Consider requiring planned unit development review or conservation design for developments with over 3 dwelling units.

6. Require site plan review if more than 3 land splits are being created.

7. Promote conservation design and conservation easements to help protect large tracts of open space.

8. Encourage residential development that is of a scale and design that blends well with adjacent land use and existing natural features and does not interfere with the natural drainage of the area and protects groundwater and adjacent surface waters.

9. Evaluate the scope and appropriateness of permitted uses allowed in the rural residential district.

10. Develop a rural sign ordinance to regulate signs in a manner appropriate to the rural nature of the Township.

11. Evaluate the amount of commercially zoned land in the Township to ensure the amount is appropriate in relation to infrastructure, if needed.

12. Provide flexibility for tourism-based businesses in the Township.

13. Require minimum commercial development standards including landscaping, screening, minimal pavement, minimal "light pollution", and parking lot connectivity between adjacent commercial businesses.

14. Encourage commercial development design that fits with the rural, natural character of the Township.

15. Because of a lack of public services, utilities and infrastructure to support industrial development in the Township, large industrial uses are not contemplated in this plan. The Township should seek out agreements with

nearby communities that can support necessary public infrastructure to direct industrial development into their industrial areas until infrastructure supporting it becomes available in the Township.

16. Develop mandatory "point of sale" septic tank inspections for all real estate transactions where the premises is served by a septic tank.

17. Work with the Lake County District 10 Health Department to insure all existing septic tank regulations are enforced.

18. Encourage development of small industries utilizing our forest products or the waste, or by-products from them.

19. Consideration should be given to locating walk-in clinics, PT facilities, child care and other services in the former Luther Elementary school, if acquired.

TRANSPORTATION

Goal:

Preserve existing road infrastructure, improve the quality of existing roads and control access, land use options, and development densities along Township roadways to protect community character and traffic carrying capacities.

Objectives:

1. Maximize Township road improvements with the recently passed, 3/4 mil Township tax using an appointed road review committee to work with the Lake County Road Commission.

2. Minimize development density along non-paved roads.

3. Avoid sprawling of potential commercial development outside of Luther.

4. Coordinate road projects and access management efforts with the Lake County Road Commission.

5. Protect the viewscape and scenic corridors along roadways to maintain the natural, rural character of the Township.

6. Encourage work with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to maintain forest roads and trails in the Pere Marquette State Forest for all motorized vehicles where appropriate.

7. Any industrial/manufacturing development should be located along primary roads and away from residential development.
8. Develop standards for private roads and insure private road access to any structures will accommodate all emergency vehicles.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Goal:

Collaborate with Lake County, the Village of Luther, Baldwin and neighboring townships, along with federal, state, and local agencies when appropriate to expand and improve community services, protect natural resources, and more effectively utilize limited financial resources.

Objectives:
1. Regularly meet with surrounding communities on an informal basis to discuss issues of mutual concern and to explore opportunities for collaboration.
2. Provide public safety and other services through intergovernmental service agreements.
3. Participate in regional recreation planning to share limited community resources and increase state funding opportunities.
4. Promote intergovernmental and interagency coordination and cooperation to develop regional trails and other recreational facilities.

RECREATION AND TOURISM

Goal:

Maintain and expand recreational and tourism opportunities that positively impact the local economy and enhance the quality of life.

RECREATION AND TOURISM

Objectives:

1. Encourage local businesses to work with the Lake County Economic Development Alliance (LCEDA) to encourage economic growth and development by promoting the area's recreational and tourist attractions and encourage cottage industries and small industries to locate here.
2. Encourage local businesses to provide amenities that attract tourists.
3. Utilize signage along major roads to direct people toward recreational and tourist locations in the area.
4. Encourage individuals to locate in the Township at least on a seasonal basis.
5. Cooperate in the development of camps for non-motorized bike and hiking trails and provide amenities where needed.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal:

Provide residents with the best available infrastructure available at reasonable costs.

Objectives:

1. Provide fiber and/or wireless internet service to all residents and businesses at a minimum of 25Mpbs download and 3Mpbs upload speeds by 2021. By 2024, increase the download speeds to 100Mpbs and the upload speeds to 20Mpbs at reasonable costs.
2. Encourage DTE to make natural gas available to residents of Luther and surrounding areas. Pursue grants that help make this available to residents.
3. Develop regulations for the installation of alternate energy sources such as wind turbines and solar panel farms that provide the least negative impact to residents.

CHAPTER 4
SHORT TERM GOALS

Ellsworth Township is looking to the future for the Township's growth and its residents. With this Master Plan, we are starting the process of planning for the future with some short term goals to be accomplished within the next 5 years, at which time this plan must be reviewed per state law. We encourage citizens in the Township to become a part of any of the commissions or boards we establish to review this document and any other documents created. Participation by residents creates ownership in the Township's future.

Ellsworth Township should establish a Planning Commission to plan for future use within the Township, appropriate for maintaining its rural scenic character and protecting its natural resources. Ordinances will be designed to protect public health, safety, and welfare to guide our future growth. Those ordinances will likely include minimum lot sizes, trash disposal, minimum requirements for any industrial development, private road standards, regulate residential, industrial, commercial, agricultural, and open space development and 'point of sale' or transfer septic tank regulations if suitable regulations are not passed by the state legislature by 2020. The GEO facility in Webber Township is essential in order to meet the expected growth and housing needs in our community.

Ellsworth Township expects to have a minimum of 25Mpbs download and 3Mpbs upload internet service within the next 2 years and 100Mpbs download and 20Mpbs upload internet service available to all its residents in the next 5 years. The service will be provided via fiber where possible and wireless service in more inaccessible or low-density areas. Today, broadband service is an important part of the quality of life for everyone. It is essential for all businesses; for seniors to communicate with family members and with their health care providers; and for students of all ages for their studies in acquiring technological support. This availability is also important in keeping the millennials in our community and encouraging our non-residents to lengthen their stay in our community.

It is our intent to establish a Road Improvement Committee to review the Township's road needs. We also plan to work with the Lake County Road Commission for the best expenditure of the 3/4 mil Township tax passed in 2018 for the purpose of improving our secondary roads.
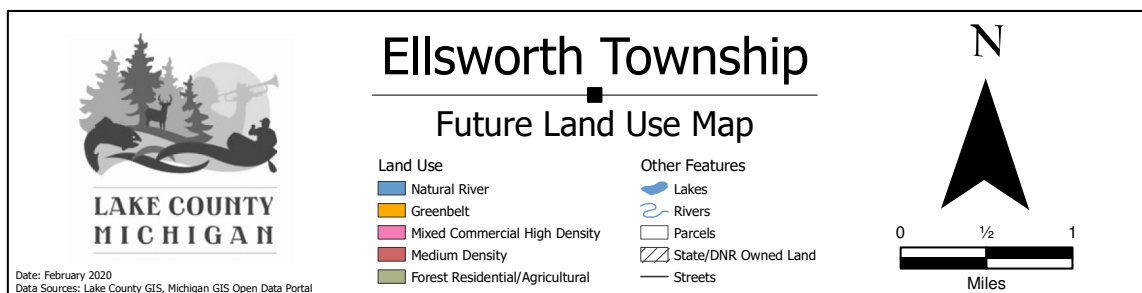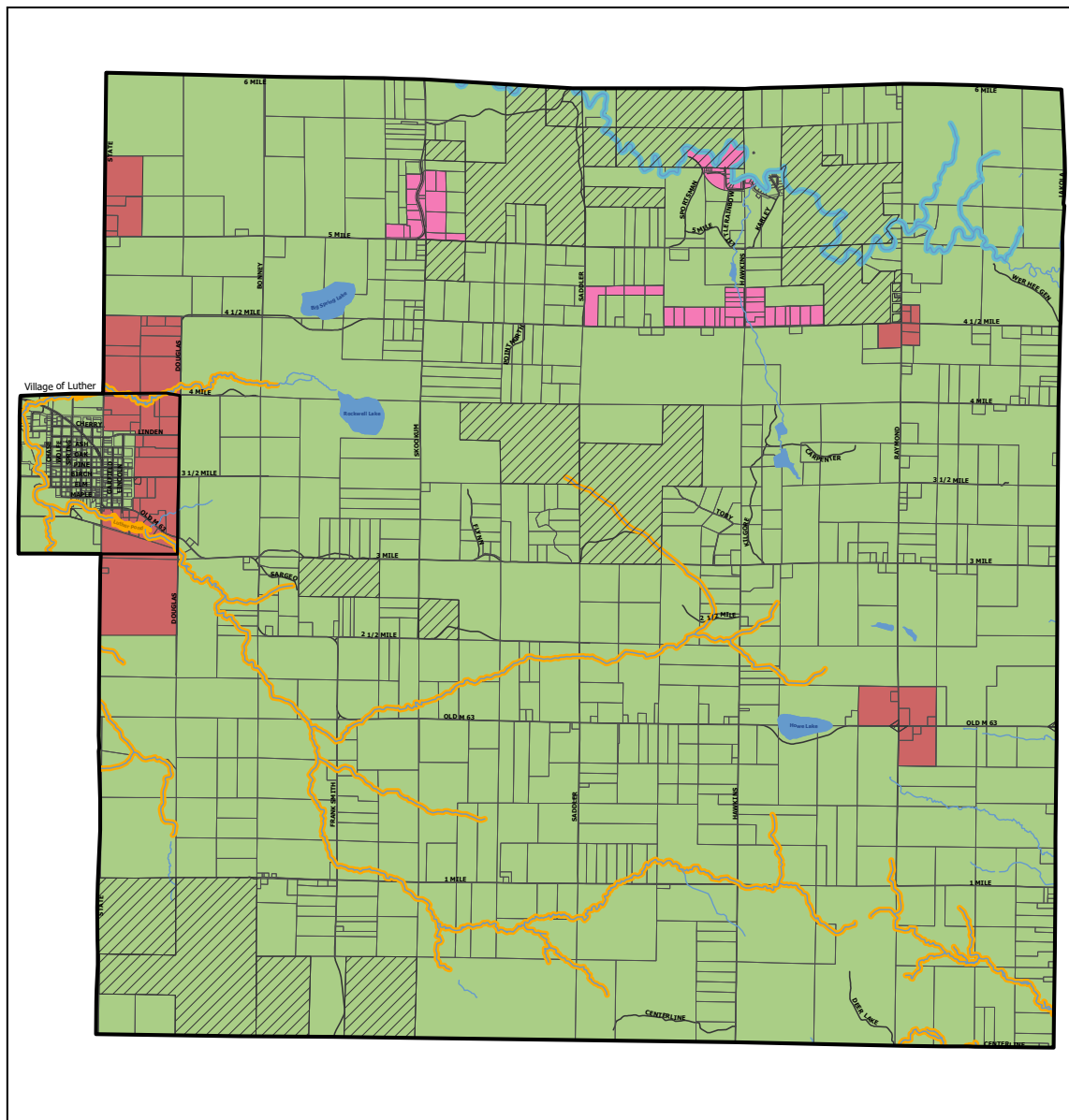
Ellsworth Township will continue to work with the Lake County Economic Development Alliance to review potential small business, cottage industry and suitable agricultural and development and promote the area's natural resource and outdoor recreational opportunities. It is expected to work with the Alliance on the development of the Four-County LEAD bike trails, hiking and cross-country ski trails, and canoeing, and provide amenities where possible. We will also work with them on advertising Lake County as a designation for ORV trail riding and snowmobiling.

We will also work with the Village of Luther and surrounding units of government on projects of mutual interest and need for our residents including fire protection and EMS services.
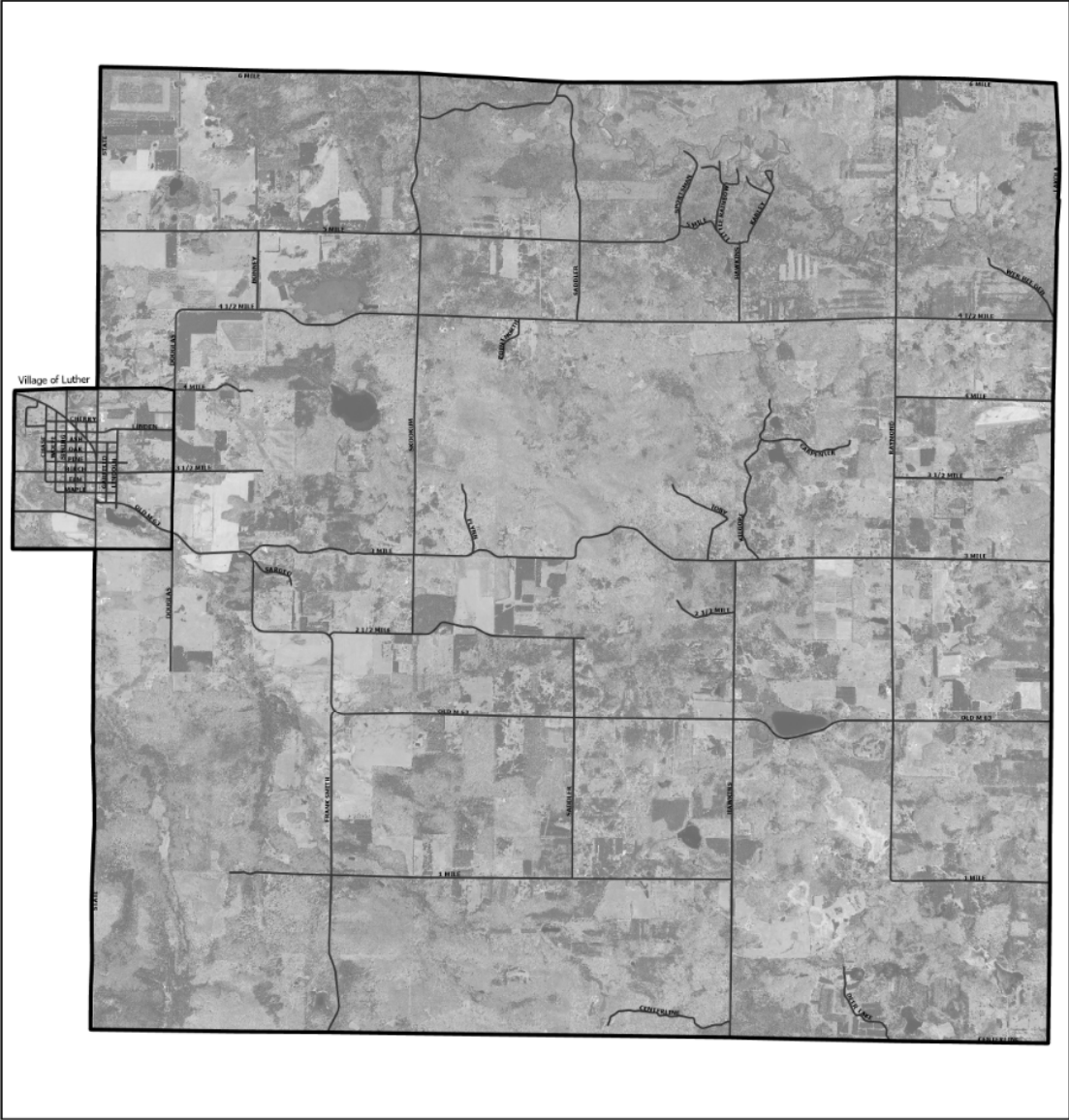
CHAPTER 5
MAPS

Ellsworth Township Future Land Use Plan

Ellsworth Township

Future Land Use Map

Land Use
- Natural River
- Greenbelt
- Mixed Commercial High Density
- Medium Density
- Forest Residential/Agricultural

Other Features
- Lakes
- Rivers
- Parcels
- State/DNR Owned Land
- Streets

LAKE COUNTY
MICHIGAN

Date: February 2020
Data Sources: Lake County GIS, Michigan GIS Open Data Portal

N

0   ½   1

Miles

Ellsworth Township Streets and Borders Map

Ellsworth Township
Overview Map

LAKE COUNTY
MICHIGAN

Date: February 2020
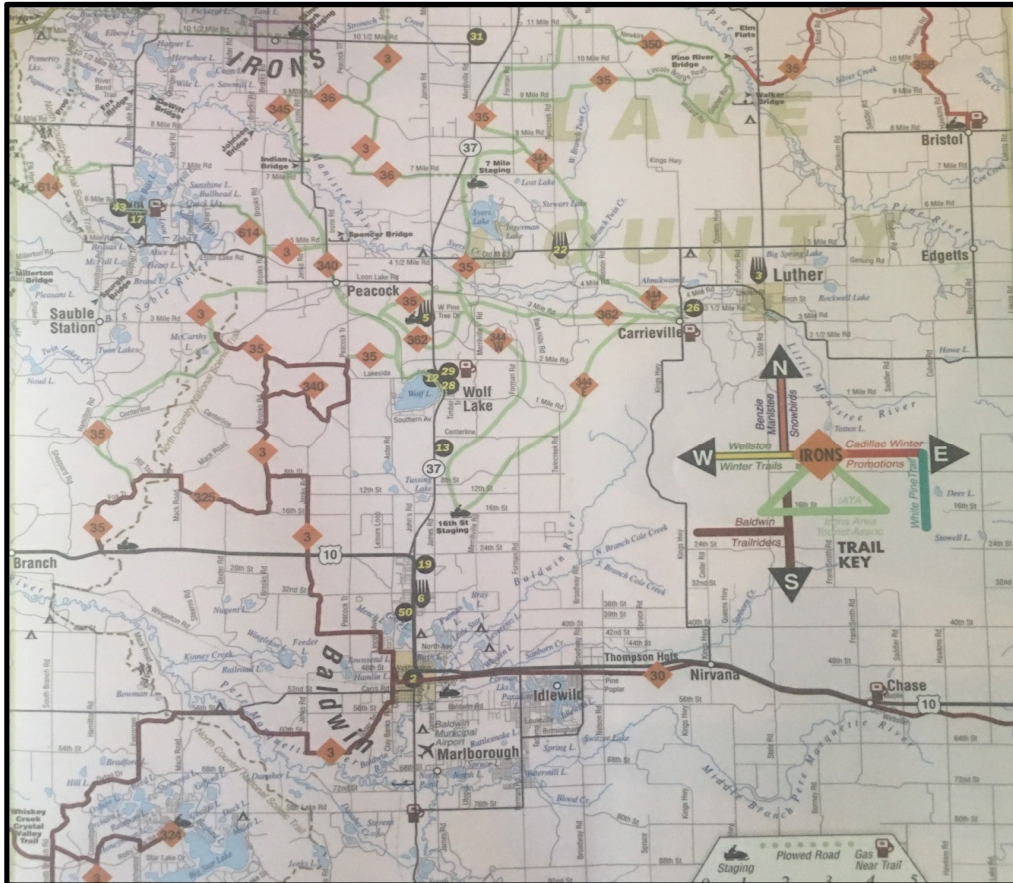Data Sources: Lake County GIS, Michigan GIS Open Data Portal

N

0   ½   1
Miles

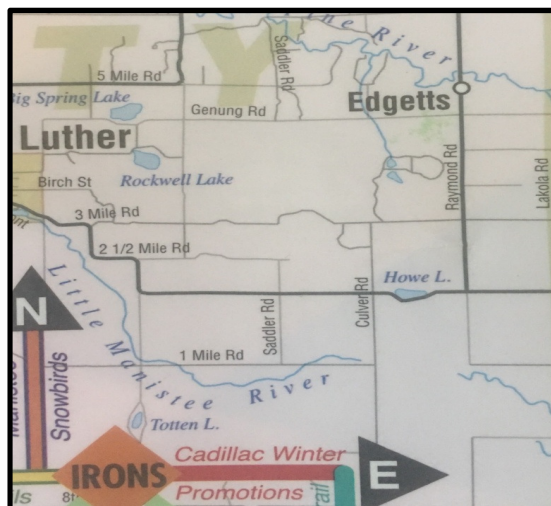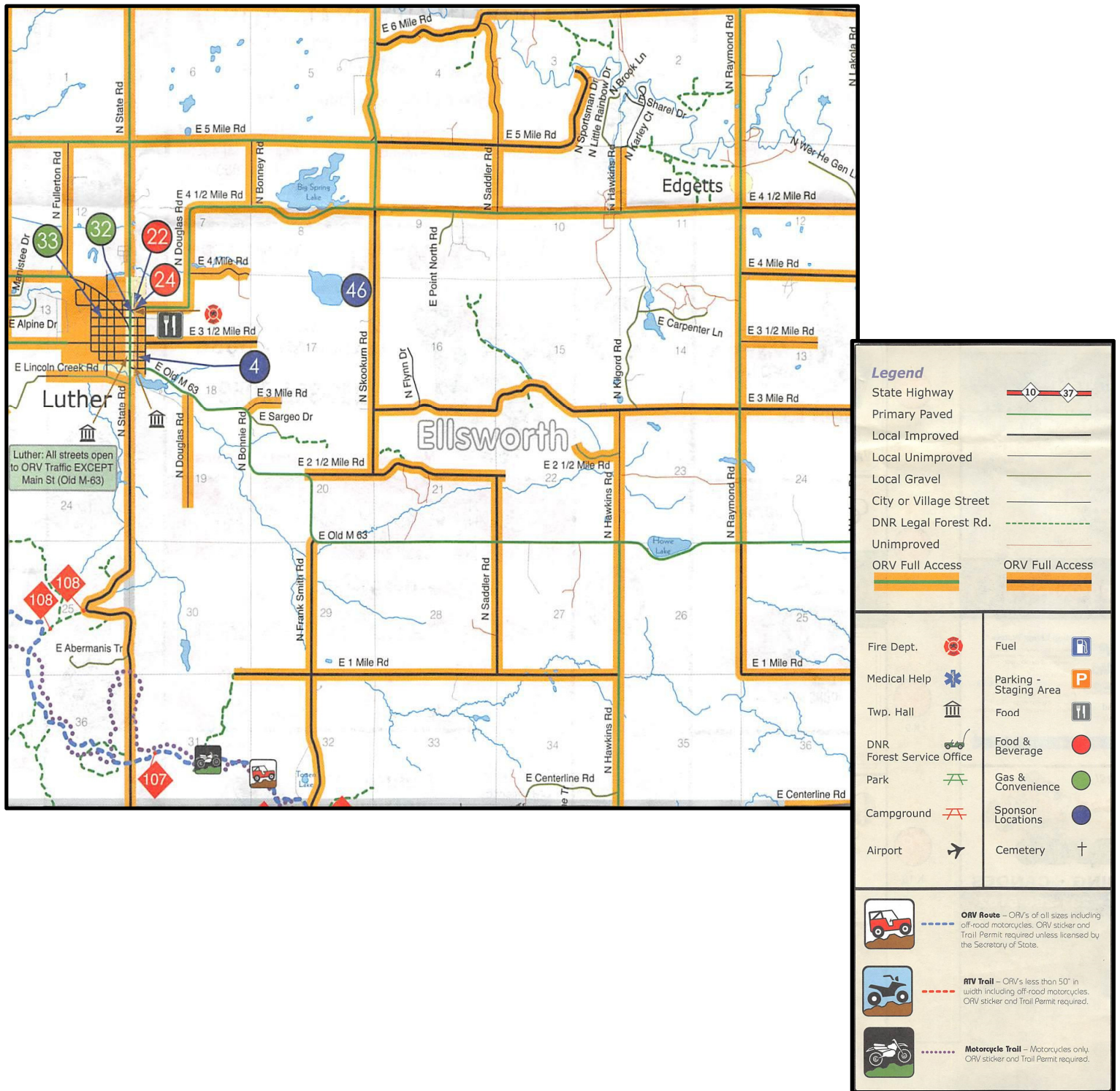# 2019 Lake County Snowmobile Trail Map

*Note: Maps are updated annually

2019 Ellsworth Township Snowmobile Trail Map
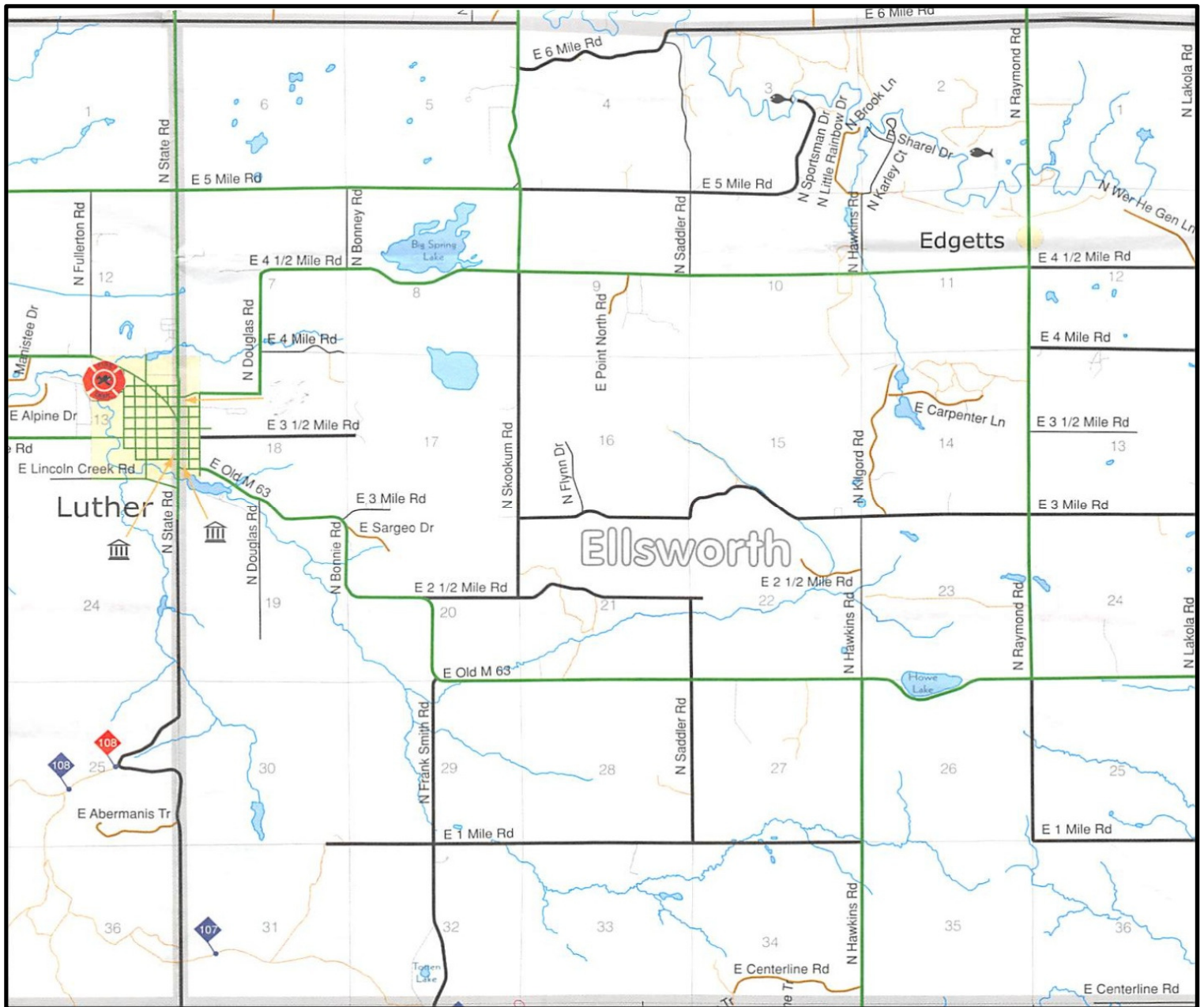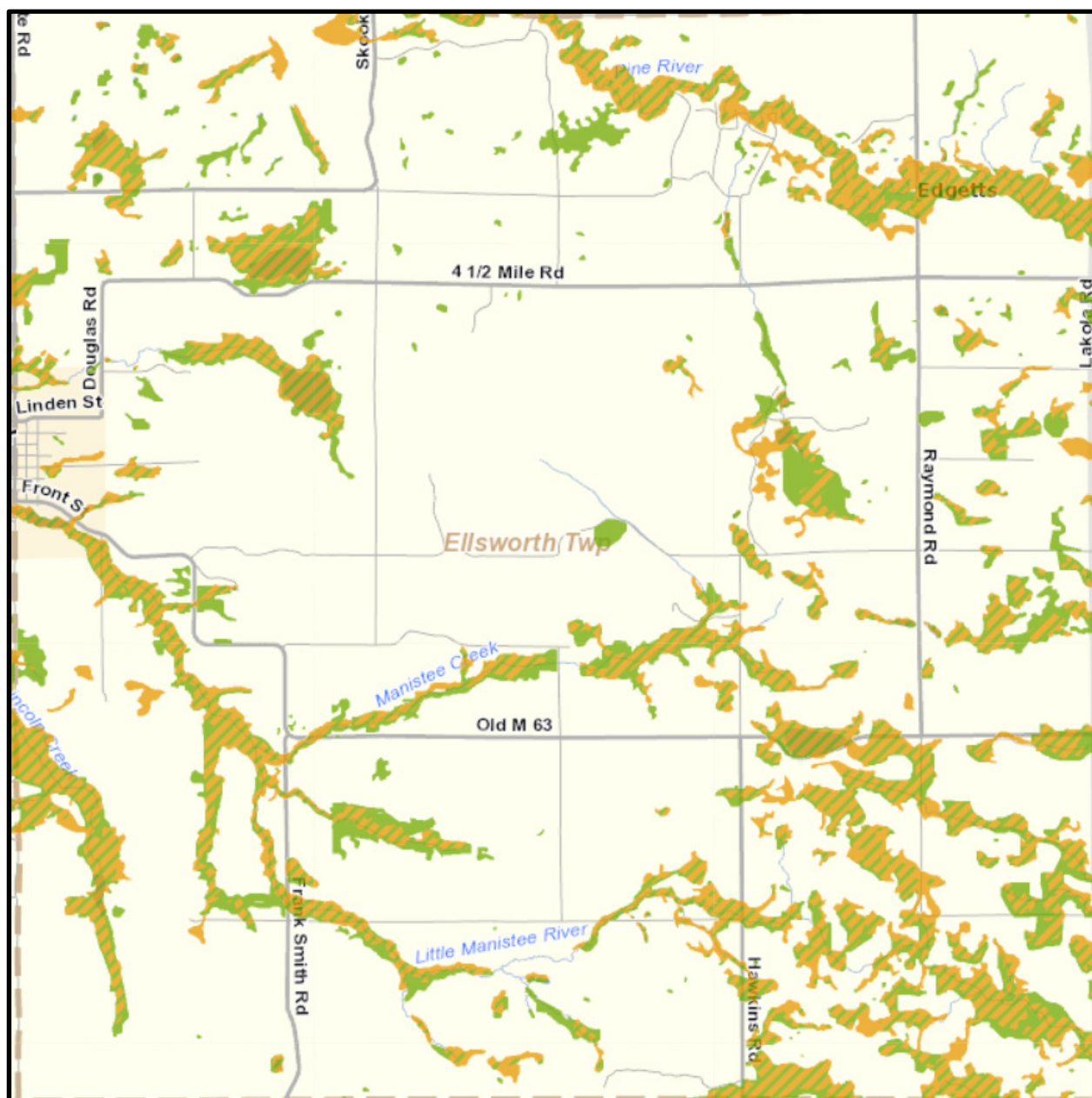
2019 Ellsworth Township ORV Trail Map

Legend

State Highway		10 37
Primary Paved		
Local Improved		
Local Unimproved		
Local Gravel		
City or Village Street		
DNR Legal Forest Rd.		
Unimproved		
ORV Full Access	ORV Full Access	

Fire Dept.		Fuel	
Medical Help		Parking - Staging Area	P
Twp. Hall		Food	
DNR Forest Service Office		Food & Beverage	(red)
Park		Gas & Convenience	(green)
Campground		Sponsor Locations	(blue)
Airport		Cemetery	†

ORV Route – ORV's of all sizes including off-road motorcycles. ORV sticker and Trail Permit required unless licensed by the Secretary of State.

ATV Trail – ORV's less than 50" in width including off-road motorcycles. ORV sticker and Trail Permit required.

Motorcycle Trail – Motorcycles only. ORV sticker and Trail Permit required.

Luther: All streets open to ORV Traffic EXCEPT Main St (Old M-63)

Ellsworth Township 911 Emergency Services Map
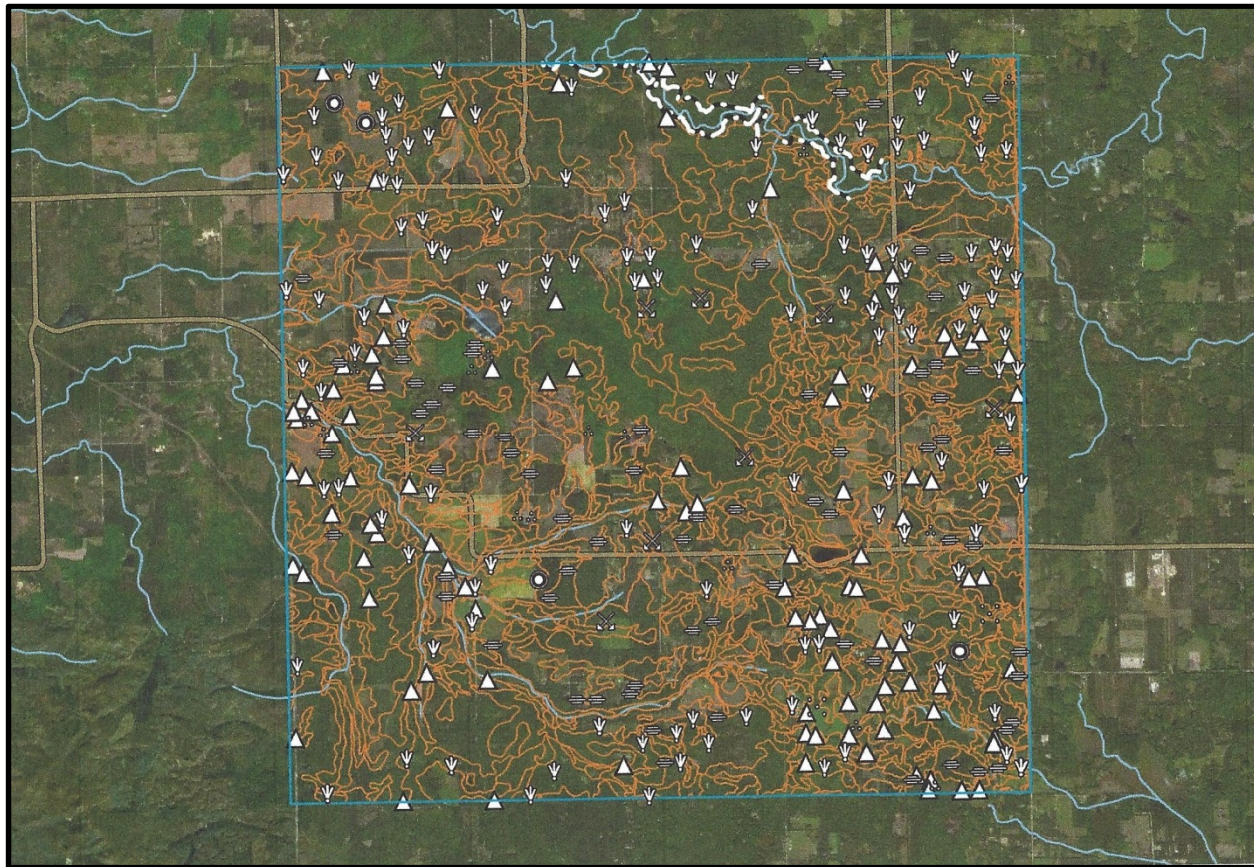
Ellsworth Township Wetlands Map

Wetlands as identified on NWI and MIRIS maps

Soil areas which include wetland soils

Wetlands as identified on NWI and MIRIS maps and soil areas which include wetland soils

Ellsworth Township Soils Map

MAP LEGEND

Area of Interest (AOI)
☐ Area of Interest (AOI)

Soils
☐ Soil Map Unit Polygons
∿ Soil Map Unit Lines
▪ Soil Map Unit Points

Special Point Features
◉ Blowout
⊠ Borrow Pit
✕ Clay Spot
◇ Closed Depression
✕ Gravel Pit
∴ Gravelly Spot
⊕ Landfill
Λ Lava Flow
⚓ Marsh or swamp
⚒ Mine or Quarry
◉ Miscellaneous Water
○ Perennial Water
∨ Rock Outcrop
+ Saline Spot
∷ Sandy Spot
⊜ Severely Eroded Spot
◇ Sinkhole
⊳ Slide or Slip
∅ Sodic Spot

☰ Spoil Area
◔ Stony Spot
⊗ Very Stony Spot
⋎ Wet Spot
△ Other
∙– Special Line Features

Water Features
∿ Streams and Canals

Transportation
+++ Rails
— Interstate Highways
— US Routes
— Major Roads
— Local Roads

Background
▨ Aerial Photography

MAP INFORMATION

The soil surveys that comprise your AOI were mapped at 1:15,800.

Please rely on the bar scale on each map sheet for map measurements.

Source of Map: Natural Resources Conservation Service
Web Soil Survey URL:
Coordinate System: Web Mercator (EPSG:3857)

Maps from the Web Soil Survey are based on the Web Mercator projection, which preserves direction and shape but distorts distance and area. A projection that preserves area, such as the Albers equal-area conic projection, should be used if more accurate calculations of distance or area are required.

This product is generated from the USDA-NRCS certified data as of the version date(s) listed below.

Soil Survey Area: Lake and Wexford Counties, Michigan
Survey Area Data: Version 12, Sep 7, 2018

Soil Survey Area: Osceola County, Michigan
Survey Area Data: Version 13, Sep 6, 2018

Your area of interest (AOI) includes more than one soil survey area. These survey areas may have been mapped at different scales, with a different land use in mind, at different times, or at different levels of detail. This may result in map unit symbols, soil properties, and interpretations that do not completely agree across soil survey area boundaries.

Soil map units are labeled (as space allows) for map scales 1:50,000 or larger.

Date(s) aerial images were photographed: Oct 4, 2011—Sep 19 2016

The orthophoto or other base map on which the soil lines were compiled and digitized probably differs from the background imagery displayed on these maps. As a result, some minor shifting of map unit boundaries may be evident.