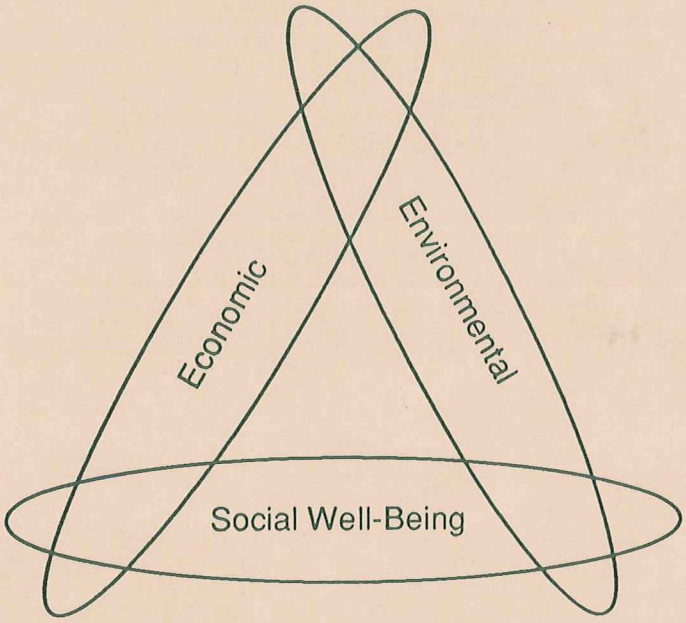
Polk County Sustainable Development Comprehensive Plan 1997



Polk County
Sustainable Development
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1997

Polk County Sustainable Development Comprehensive Plan

Contents

I. PLANNING OVERVIEW

A. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Interest is rapidly growing nationwide in finding better ways to create a balance between the economic, social and environmental aspects of change and development. This interest is fueled by the recognition that our traditional approaches, focusing on one aspect at a time, are increasingly costly and often fail to yield results that serve our long term collective interests. A new approach, one that seeks to anticipate and resolve conflicts up front within a holistic framework, is clearly needed to help strike that critical balance.

That new approach, known as "Sustainable Development," is gaining acceptance and application by localities and states in the United States and around the world. The concept has also gained considerable attention nationally as a direct result of its endorsement by the Clinton Administration and its early application within the federal government. The concept has been in practical use for some time in Canada and in Europe, and those examples can provide evidence of its effectiveness and best use.

Sustainable development recognizes the essential interdependence of people, economic activity and the environment. Since growth or change in any one of those realms will necessarily affect others, it strives to anticipate those affects and counter-balance them for the long term well-being of the community. Sustainable development takes place within the framework of a shared vision of the future and a set of guiding principles designed to move toward that vision. It is founded on the logical presumption that quality growth can take place in a way that maintains a healthy, diverse environment.

A key strength of the concept of sustainable development is that it lends itself to global thinking, recognizing that everything we do has consequences for our neighbors, near and far, and that we must work together to create the future. But perhaps its greater strength is that it also lends itself to acting locally, at the level where most real decision making takes place that shapes the future. Any effective system must ultimately meet the test of being implemented where people, the economy and the environment interact each and every day. It must be perceived by residents as accessible, sensitive to their needs, fair, and understandable to lay people.

Counties, as it happens within our governmental system, are well situated to play a lead role in putting sustainable development principles to work. At the local level, counties are unique in having significant activities in economic, social and environmental arenas. Looking across the country, most counties currently are involved to some significant degree in environmental and/or growth management issues.

It is also rather common today to find counties actively engaged in activities that directly or indirectly affect economic growth, business activity, and job creation.

Finally, most counties are actively involved in a wide array of activities that relate to social development and social well-being.

Counties are in the unique position of being the local partners with state and federal governments on one hand, and the common denominator for communities, cities, and other local entities on the other. They really provide the best meeting ground for bringing state and national goals together with local goals, needs and values in order to form a truly sustainable approach to managing economic, social and environmental aspects of development.

B. VISIONS OF THE FUTURE: POLK COUNTY IN 2008

The time is July 27th of the year 2008, the setting is Polk County, Minnesota and the warm rays of the sun have once again brought forth nature's bounty and beauty for all to enjoy. Today is a special day, for it is 150 years to the day that Governor Henry Sibley signed the original designation of a large area of Northwestern Minnesota as Polk County. Before the celebration begins, let us stop for a moment to look around to see what the county has become as it reaches this milestone.

Between 1997 and 2008, the Information Age, along with new technologies in the forms of high speed computing, telecommunications, robotics and biotechnology, have transformed many aspects of everyday life in Polk County. Most of the county residents have been trained or retrained in the technologies that make their jobs, their daily lives and even their entertainment, possible and rewarding. Many jobs, indeed whole industries that form the heart of the are economy of 2008 simply did not exist in 1997. Well-trained minds long ago replaced land and capital as the keys to real prosperity in the county. In fact, it is now well known that economic success is directly related to an area's ability to attract, retain and develop human talent, especially in critical skill areas.

Polk County in 2008 is rich in many of the most valued quality of life factors, thanks to good leadership, sound planning, sustainable development and a willingness to invest in the things that really matter. It is fortunate to have the blessings of abundant natural resources, outstanding education, advancing technology, quality public and private services, proximity to regional urban centers, great recreational resources, a high level of public safety, cultural opportunities, quality infrastructure and more. It is a place where the sense of community is alive and well, where people take their civic responsibilities seriously, and where the country traditions of neighbors helping neighbors in time of need are still routinely renewed.

C. LOOKING BACK

Polk County, when it was formed in 1858, was a vast, rich and diverse prairie landscape, carefully crafted by the hand of nature over a few thousands of years in the bed of the great Glacial Lake Agassiz. The Native Americans and a handful of people of European descent who lived in area made little lasting impression on land. Visitors of that era could stand on the Agassiz beach ridges and look westward across a seemingly endless sea of prairie grasses. By the time Polk county turned 50, in 1908, that landscape had been dramatically changed by immigrant farmers and others who worked tirelessly to turn prairies into small farms and timber into homes, buildings and the new towns that could be found every 7 to 10 miles along the rails and roads that crossed the county.

The population was booming as new settlers carved out new opportunities by hard work and ingenuity. At times in their rush to find fortune in the new land little thought was given to the longer range sustainability of development.

When Polk County turned 100 in 1958, it had become a modern, successful agricultural giant, whose farmers were feeding the world with the support of thriving small towns that provided both supplies and access to markets. By that time, farms were beginning to grow larger, better machinery was taking the place of labor, and large tracts of land had been idled as surplus in the Soil Bank, as part of a national effort to cut production. Population in the country was now beginning to decline as the shift from farming to city jobs was in full swing. The lack of diversity in the area economy spurred out migration in search of urban job opportunities.

The four decades between 1958 and 1996 was a defining time for Polk County. In 1958 the county economy was agricultural and most people in the area earned their living directly or indirectly from agriculture. Over the next 30 years, Polk County, along with much of rural Minnesota, suffered the effects of a long term decline in its dominant economic sector. The population became older and much more urban in this period, as many young people sought fortunes elsewhere and jobs consolidated in larger trade centers.

Manufacturing, health care, education, government and services were growing segments. The preservation of the natural environment for present and future, was becoming a growing concern.

By 1990, the county was well on the way to establishing a diversified economy in which agriculture plays a reduced, yet still significant role. By the mid-1990's, Polk County was experiencing significant job growth in services and manufacturing, population growth and housing shortages, especially in and around the three largest employment centers. A chronic shortage of high skilled workers emerged in the midst of this economic expansion. A lack of affordable housing options appears to be a major factor threatening to dampen the pace of growth. The continuing perception of the county as being isolated and lacking in high quality natural and recreational amenities, like lakes and trees, has been a limiting factor for some, even though Polk County is more richly endowed in these amenities than much of the nearby area. The challenge of selling the county's many quality of life strengths continues to require diligent efforts.

II. POLK COUNTY MILESTONES: FROM 1997 TO 2008

A. POPULATION

- County population has grown steadily and is now well over 40,000.
- The population continues to grow slightly older, but at a slower rate than the state as a whole, as the post-war boomers turn 60.
- Younger residents, ages 35 and under, have increased in number as good economic opportunities have emerged.
- The minority population has grown steadily, and now accounts for more than one of every five residents.
- Growth is concentrated near the county's larger cities, lakes, rivers and forested areas.
- East Grand Forks and Crookston have grown rapidly, and now have 3 of every 5 of Polk County's residents between them.
- Fosston has experienced some growth related to its industry and its role as a trade area service center.
- The central portion of the county has experienced growth around the lakes and other natural amenities.

B. HOUSING

- Housing of all types continues to be in great demand throughout the county and in the surrounding region.
- A growing percentage of Polk County residents are now living in apartments.
- Elder housing and supporting care complexes provide popular housing options for older residents.
- Traditional stick-built housing has become a luxury only a select few can really afford.
- Most new housing is now manufactured by robots in special factories and then assembled in just a few hours on site.

- Dramatic innovations using new materials and new manufacturing processes have cut costs and improved quality.

- Building codes, zoning-subdivision and utility regulations have been streamlined to eliminate rules that unnecessarily raise housing costs.

- Growing use is being made of planned unit developments, townhouses, small scale sewer systems and other designed approaches to manage costs and impacts.

C. PUBLIC SERVICES

- Public services have been scaled back in many areas, and innovations in design and delivery have improved outcomes at less cost.

- County government services are now usually delivered electronically through highly interactive, integrated systems.

- Education, for people of all ages, has again become the primary social and economic investment in the county.

- Both K-12 and higher education are now delivered in a variety of forms by both public and private systems offering many choices.

- Public resources for health and welfare services have begun to stabilize after a period of declining investment and system innovation.

- Some services once provided by the public are now almost exclusively delivered by private vendors.

D. TECHNOLOGY

- Telecomputing systems are common in nearly every home and are used by almost every resident on a daily basis for thousands of tasks.

- Education, banking, shopping, telephone, newspapers, mail, libraries, movies, and meetings now occur on these interactive systems.

- A visit to an elementary school reveals learners using interactive simulation systems to visit other planets to learn about them.

- Farms now use dozens of computer driven robots and smart machines to do almost all tasks, including driving the tractor.

- Manufacturing is almost entirely done by robotic systems that can do their tasks better, faster and cheaper than human labor.

- Biotechnology is transforming the plants growing in the county's fields and indoor growth chambers.

- Spatial technology is now widely used in the county for dozens of uses from guiding vehicles to recording property transactions.

E. ECONOMY

- Services now account for about two-thirds of the county economy.

- Much of the service economy is comprised of sophisticated services that employ highly trained people at higher wage levels.

- Wealth in the county is now created by adding knowledge to products and services that are sold around the world.

- Manufacturing is a key segment of the economy, but is no longer a major source of employment.

- Local and regional retail stores continue to provide basic products and selected products, where services are sold along with products.

- Much of today's retail trade is being done on-line in virtual malls that span the globe.

- Both industry and agriculture have made major commitments to sustainability and are making major efforts to eliminate pollution.

- Most of the county's communities now have one or more office centers catering to the areas growing force of telecommuters.

F. AGRICULTURE

- Agriculture in the county is now a high technology business, combining computers, robotics, biotechnology and information management.

- Commodities have largely disappeared in deference to designer crops that are engineered to produce high value end products.

- Processing is being transformed by designer crops and sophisticated new biorefining systems that create dozens of products from one crop.

- Farming makes extensive use of satellites (GPS) to target operations, chemicals and direct tractors that do field work without the farmer.

- Nearly all farmers are involved in one or more value-added processing ventures and earn substantial income from those activities.

- Sustainable farming techniques are now widely used throughout the county to conserve resources, reduce costs and increase profits.

G. ENVIRONMENT

- It is now common to examine nearly all new developments in light of their impact on economic, social and environmental sustainability.

- Water resources continue to be a major environmental challenge as the demands for recreation, industry and other uses remain strong.

- Traditional flooding problems continue, but are being reduced by flood plain restoration efforts, water retention and management efforts.

- Increased involvement of landowners and volunteers has improved fish and wildlife habitat maintenance and restoration.

- Remarkable strides are being made in improving the county's rivers and expanding their use as recreation corridors.

- Development in environmentally sensitive areas has been limited to prevent anticipated problems.

III. DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTY

The following maps and text describe the population and resources of Polk County. These maps have been produced by the planning team and the Regional Development Commission as part of this planning process. The information contained in these maps is taken from county records, state data bases available to the County and the United States census. The County planning team working with the Regional Commission has developed a cost effective mapping capability at the Regional Commission that the County should be able to utilize in the future for both planning and as an extension of daily county administration.

Physical and Capital Resources

Polk County is a large and diverse area. The county is almost 50 miles north to south and over 60 miles east to west. The western one-third of the county is a flat lake bed that is highly valued for agriculture. As the land rises to the east there are a series of gravel beach ridges that provide water and gravel. The beach ridges merge into a lake district with a number of high quality lakes. The eastern part of the county is a diverse agricultural area with many cattle operations.

Civil Divisions

Polk County contains seventy-three local government units. They include 15 cities and 58 townships. One half the population lives in two cities, East Grand Forks (population 8,658) and Crookston (population 8,119). The only other government unit to have more than 1,000 people is the city of Fosston, with a population of 1,529. Fourteen townships have less than 100 people (Map: Civil Divisions of Polk County).

Land Use and Cover

Polk County is largely agricultural. In 1989 four fifths (1555 square miles) of the County was in cultivation. The next largest land uses are: grassland/shrub land (6.8%, 133 square miles) and deciduous forest (6.6%, 129 square miles). Almost 4% (77 square miles) is water or wetlands. One and one half percent is in urban/ industrial uses. In the townships of the Red River Valley the land is virtually all in cultivation. East of the beach ridges, cultivation still is the dominant land use, but the landscape is more varied, with most of the grass/shrub lands along the beach ridges, and the forest lands around the lakes and in the southeast corner of the county in Columbia Township (Map Polk County Land Cover).

Surficial Geology

The Polk County landscape is the result of glacial activity. The west forty percent of the

county is the flat lake bed of glacial Lake Agassiz. Between the uplands of south eastern Polk County and the lake plain are a series of sand and gravel beach ridges where there are valuable gravel deposits, relic prairie landscapes, and hilly areas with recreation potential. The county has two areas of end moraines which are rolling to hilly, and contain most of the recreation lakes (Map: Polk County Surficial Geology). The hilly areas are where the highest potential for water erosion occurs.

Surficial Aquifers

Ground water is an important but limited resource in Polk County. Almost all of the easily accessible ground water resources in the county are associated with the beach ridges. The Crookston water supply comes from the beach ridge aquifers east of the city. The map (Polk County Surficial Aquifers) shows where these resources intersect with the surface. These are the principal areas of ground water recharge. They are also the areas where surface land use has the highest potential to contaminate ground water.

Natural Amenities of Polk County

The areas with the most scenic value in the county are shown on the map titled: Natural Amenities of Polk County. This map combines three variables, forested land, land slope and water. The areas where hills, trees and water overlay are places that have the most potential value for outdoor recreation and in the long run residential development. Three areas stand out on this map; Columbia Township southeast of Fosston, the area surrounding and southwest of Union Lake and the area northeast of McIntosh.

Transportation System

Polk County has an extensive road network built on section line roads, but the all purpose road heavy duty road network is less extensive (Map: 1996 Polk County Road Restrictions). The major trade centers are connected by all weather roads, but some of the rural agriculture areas are more than 3 miles from all weather roads. The areas adjacent to the all weather road network are the most potentially valuable sites for large processing or industrial facilities.

1995 Estimated Land Market Value Per Square Mile

Property values vary greatly across Polk County. The areas with the highest property values (over $1200.00 per acre) are the large trade centers, the townships in the Red River Valley surrounding East Grand Forks and southeast toward Crookston, and the lake area containing Maple and Union Lakes. The lowest property values (less than $420.00 per acre) occur in the eastern Polk County and the beach ridge areas between Crookston and Maple Lake (Map: Estimated Market Value: land only).

Dwelling Density

The areas of highest dwelling density occur in the towns. The next highest class occurs in the townships surrounding Grand Forks, the area just east of Crookston, the lake district containing Maple and Union Lakes and in the townships surrounding Fosston (Map: Polk County Dwelling Density).

Seasonal Dwelling Density

Seasonal dwellings are concentrated in the lake regions, with the highest concentrations on Maple and Union lakes. There are lower densities of seasonal dwellings in three southeastern townships of the county where there is scattered development on small lakes and scattered hilly woodlands. There are also scattered areas of seasonal dwellings for seasonal agricultural workers (Map: Seasonal Recreational Dwellings).

Human Resources

In 1993, Polk County had a population of 32,673 slightly up (0.3 percent) from 1990. Virtually all of this growth took place in and near the East Grand Forks and Crookston corridor, and the lake district of Maple and Union lakes. In general these same areas are also the most densely settled rural areas. Other agricultural areas of the county have continued a long-term trend of population loss driven by agricultural automation. The oldest populations in the county are the declining smaller trade centers with health care facilities for the elderly.

Population Density

The population and dwelling density in Polk County share similar patterns. The highest densities are in the towns. The other areas with higher than average densities are in the townships adjacent to Grand Forks and the Red River, the area immediately east of Crookston, the lake district and the townships south and east of Fosston (Map: Population Density by Township).

Median Age of Population

In general the population of Polk County is older than the state average, and has been steadily getting older. The average age is about 35 years, about 10 percent above the state average. The areas with the greatest concentration of elderly tend to be the declining farm trade centers with care facilities for the elderly, with the City of Fertile being the oldest with a average age of 58 years.

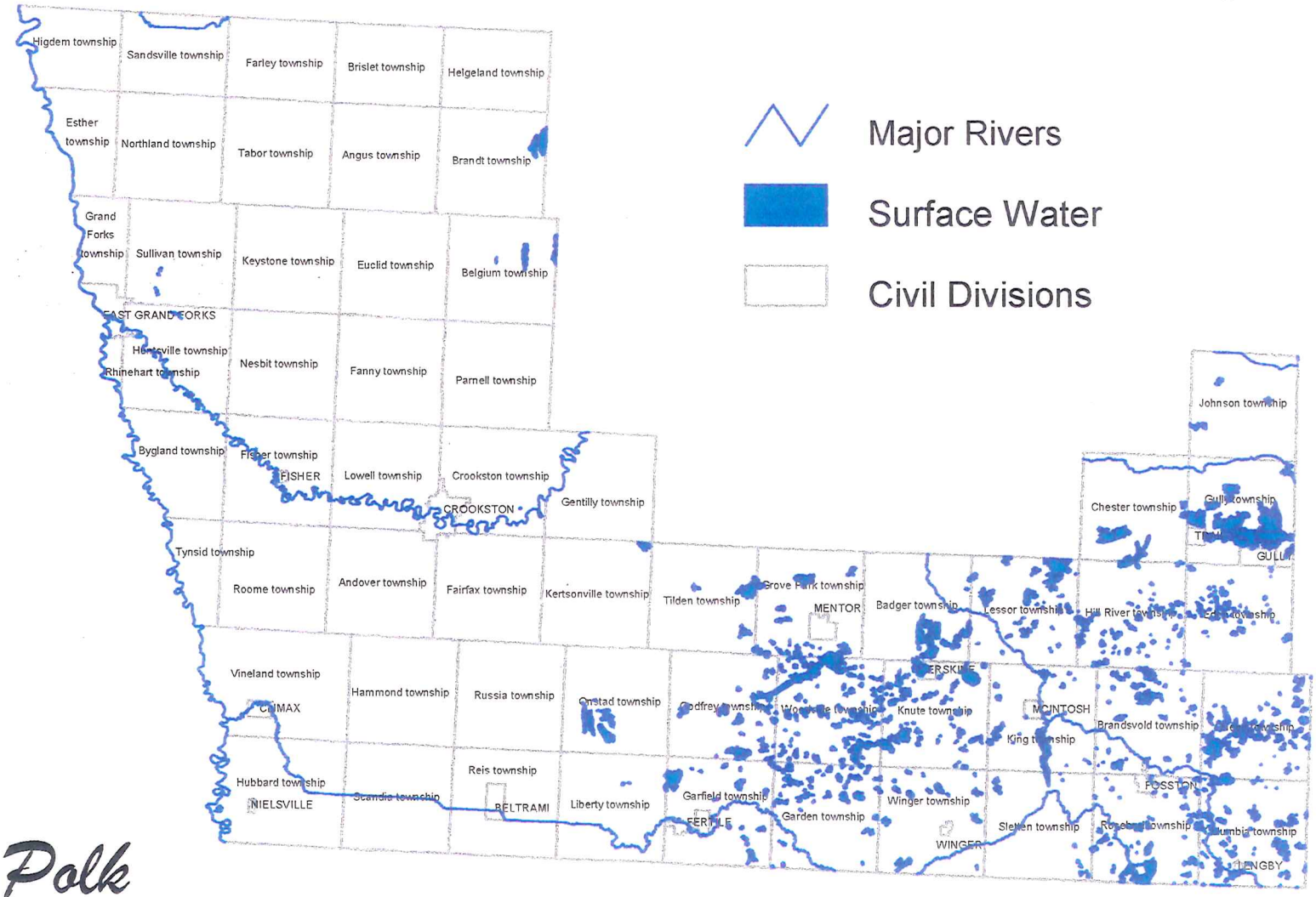
Percent of Population Over Age 65

In general the elderly population is distributed in areas away from population growth. The proportion of elderly is lowest in the corridor area between and surrounding East Grand Forks and Crookston. The lake district of Maple and Union Lake has a relatively high number of elderly, but it also has a significant number of school age children with parents commuting to Crookston and East Grand Forks(Map: Population Over Age 65).

Percent of Population Under Age 18

The distribution of children in relation to the total population in Polk County is highest in the growing urban center of East Grand Forks and Crookston and in the townships surrounding Crookston. The areas with fewest children are in the Maple and Union Lakes area and in the townships surrounding Fosston (Map: Percent of Population Under Age 18).

Civil Divisions of Polk County



Major Rivers

Surface Water

Civil Divisions

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Polk County, Minnesota

10 0 10 20 Miles

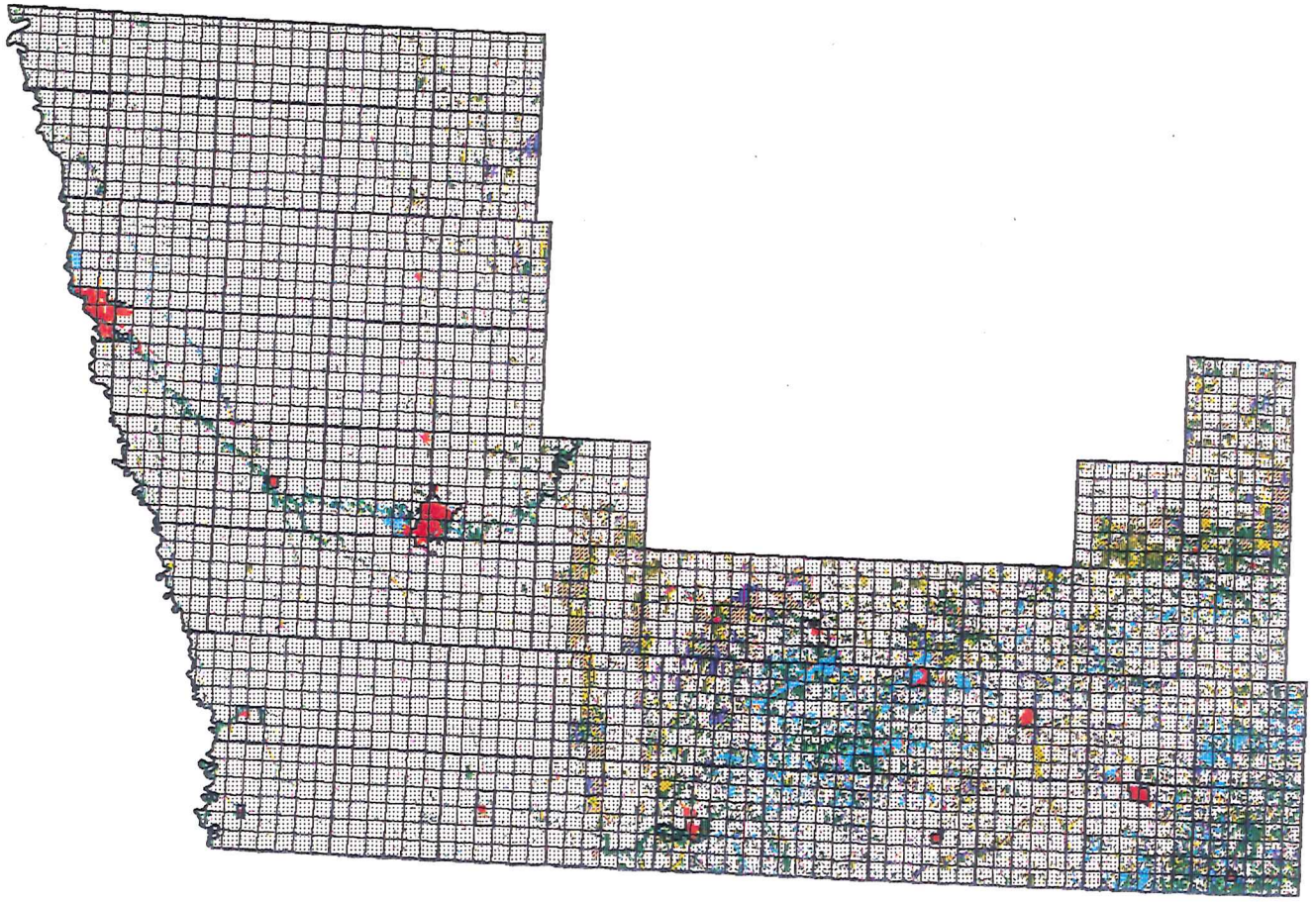
Information supplied by 1990 U.S.Census

Polk County

Northwest RDC

Land Use Planning
Information Services

Polk County Land Cover



Land cover was interpreted from 1989 photos. Data layers were supplied by The Board of Soil and Water Resources.

- Urban and Industrial
- Farmstead and Rural residents
- Rural Residential Development Complexes
- Other Rural Developments
- Cultivated Land
- Transitional or Idle Cultivated Land
- Open Shrub Grassland
- Closed Shrub Grassland (deciduous)
- Deciduous Forest
- Water
- Wetlands
- Gravel or Sand Pits and Open Mines
- Exposed Soil, Sandbars, and Sand Dunes
- Unclassified

Scale: 0 13 26 mi

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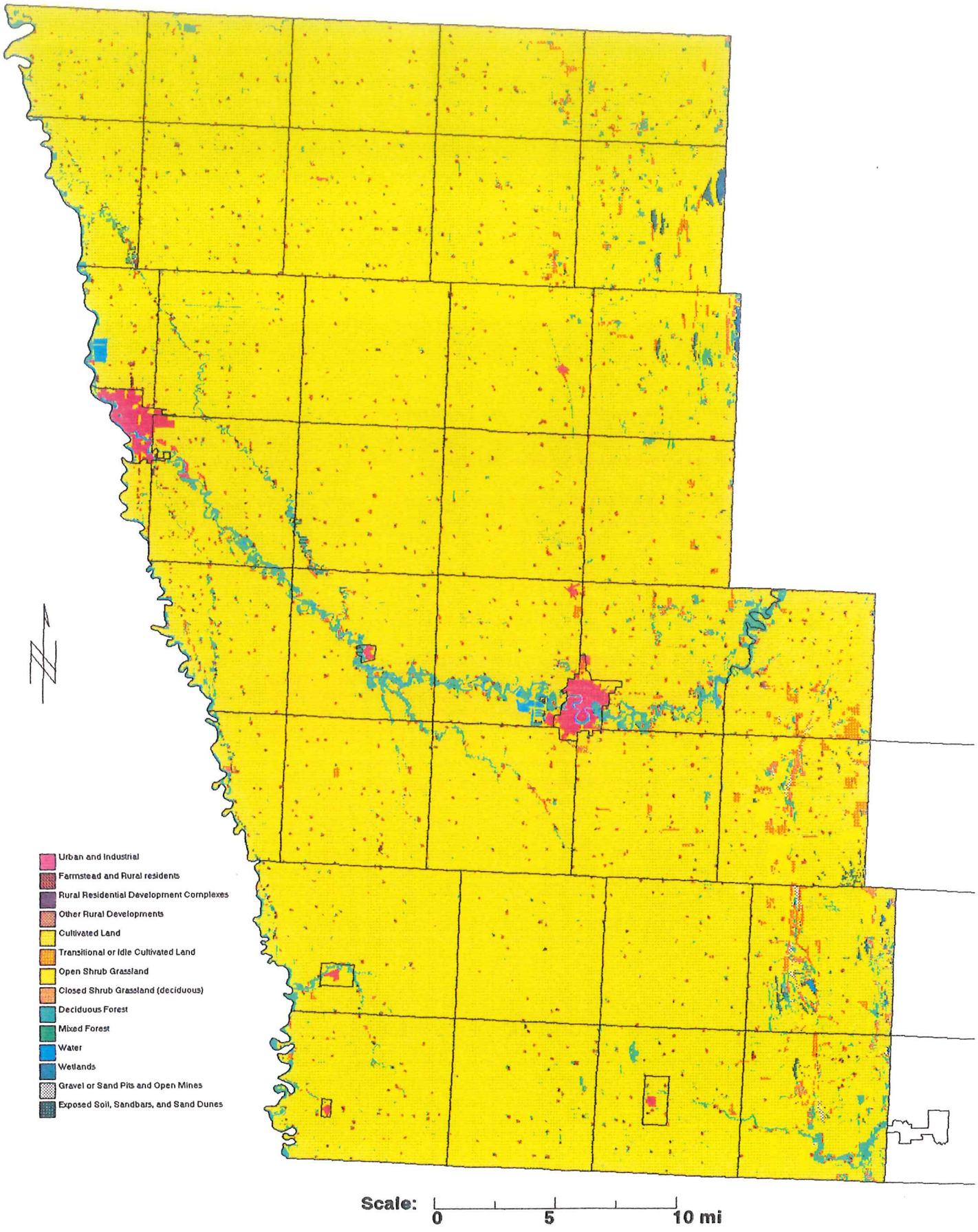
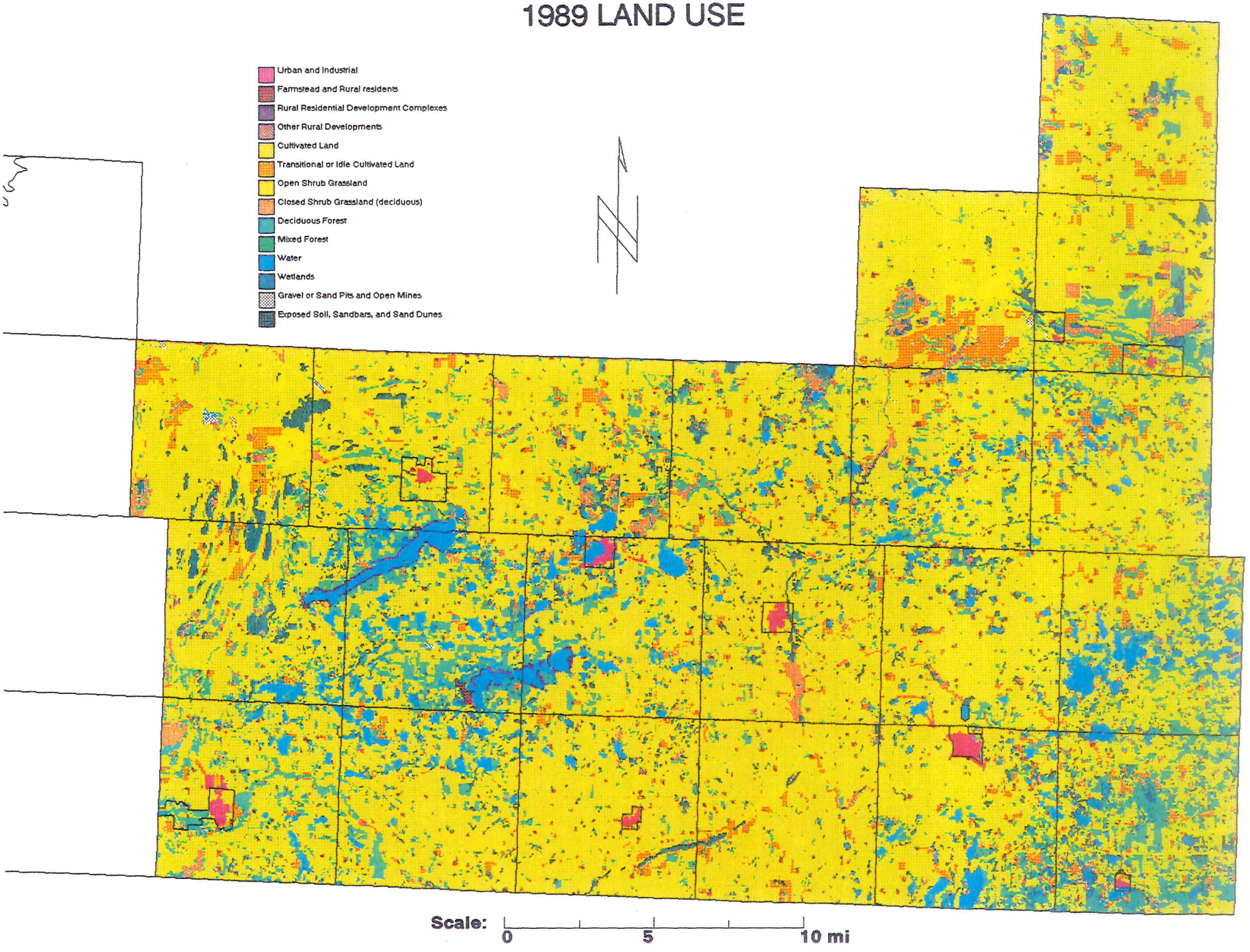
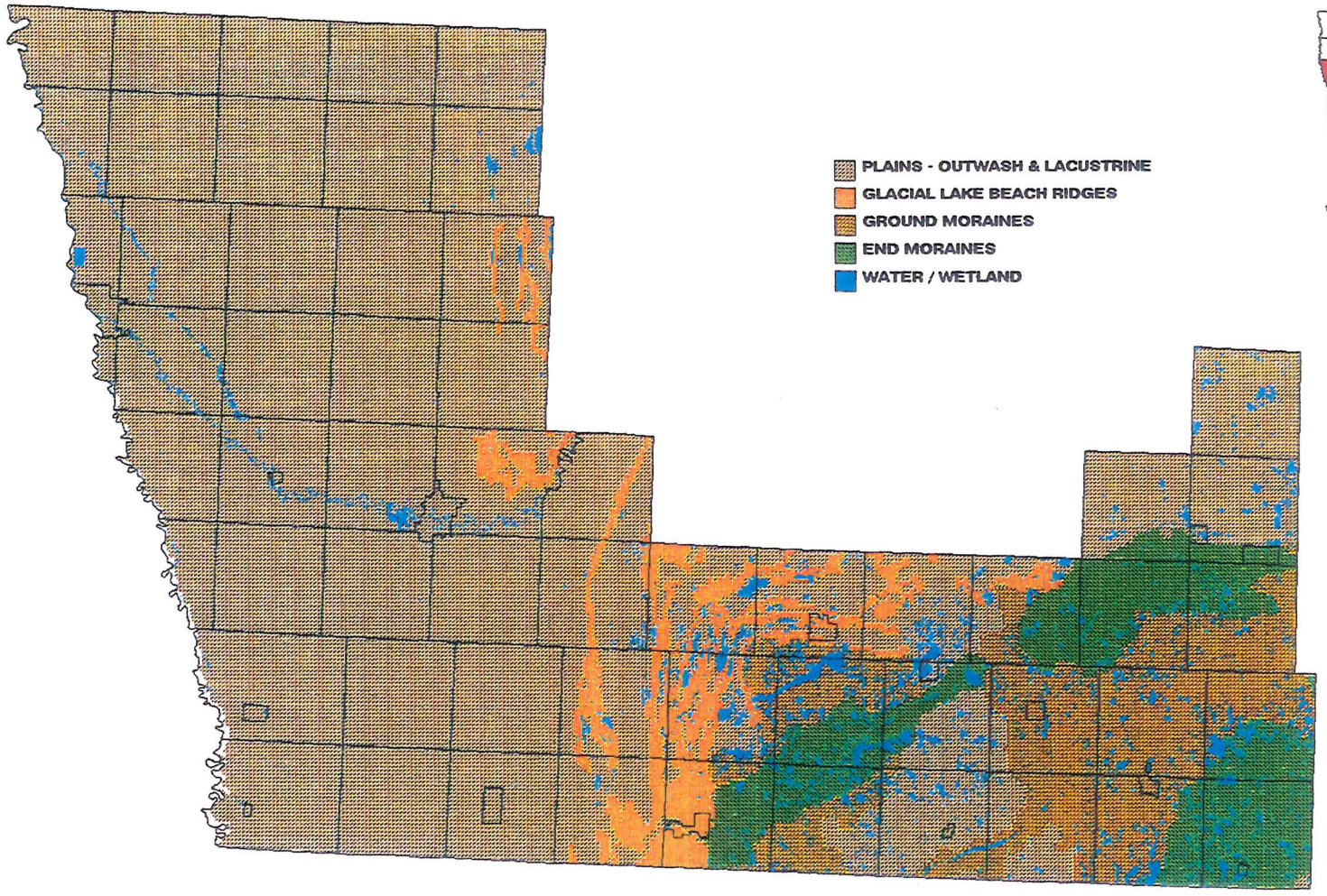
WEST POLK COUNTY LAND USE



EAST POLK COUNTY
1989 LAND USE



POLK COUNTY MINNESOTA
SURFICIAL GEOLOGY



MetaDynamics
Winning Solutions For A Changing World

Information compiled from Minnesota Soils Atlas.

Scale: 0 10 20 mi

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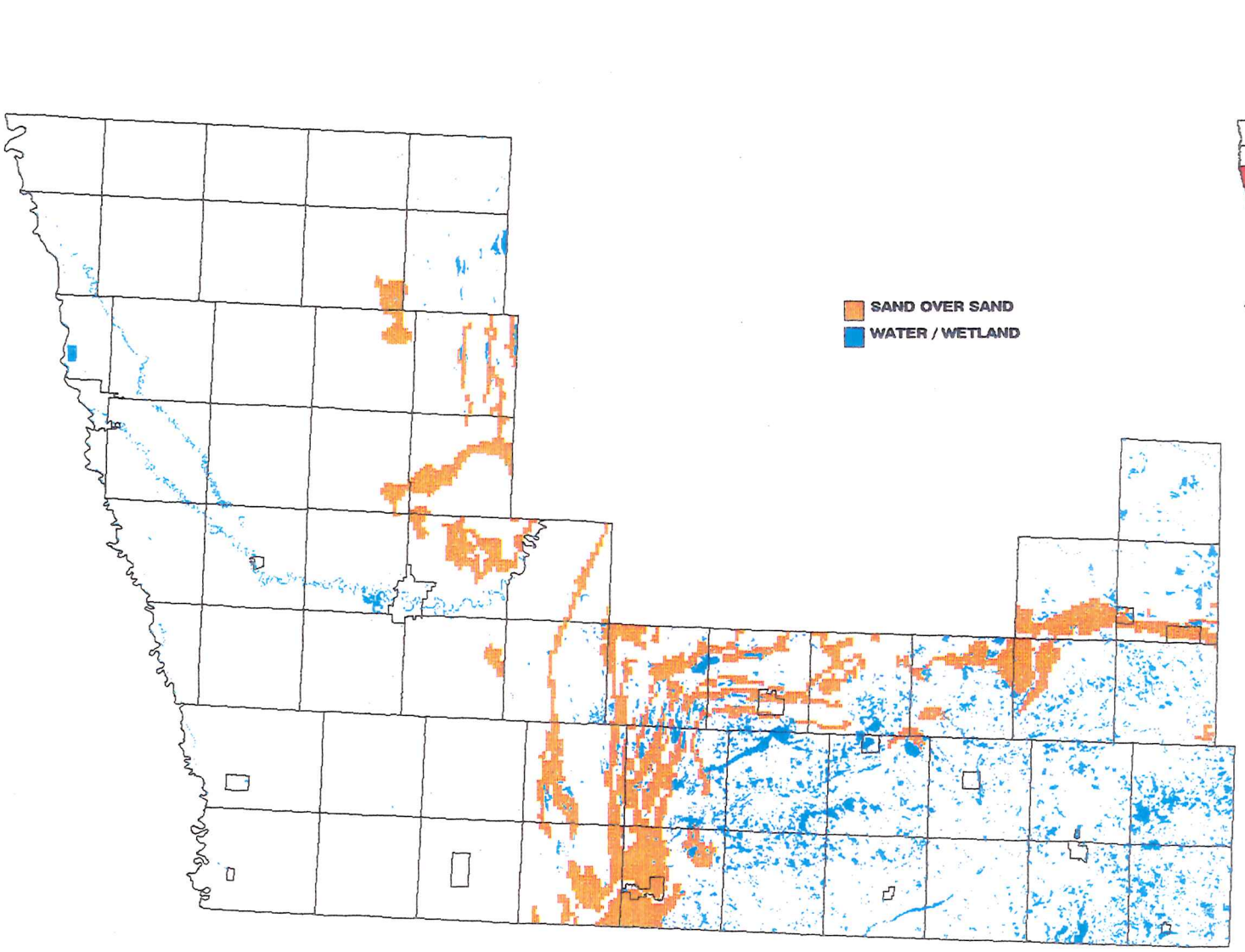
POLK COUNTY MINNESOTA
SURFICIAL AQUIFERS



MetaDynamics
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Scale: 0 10 20 mi

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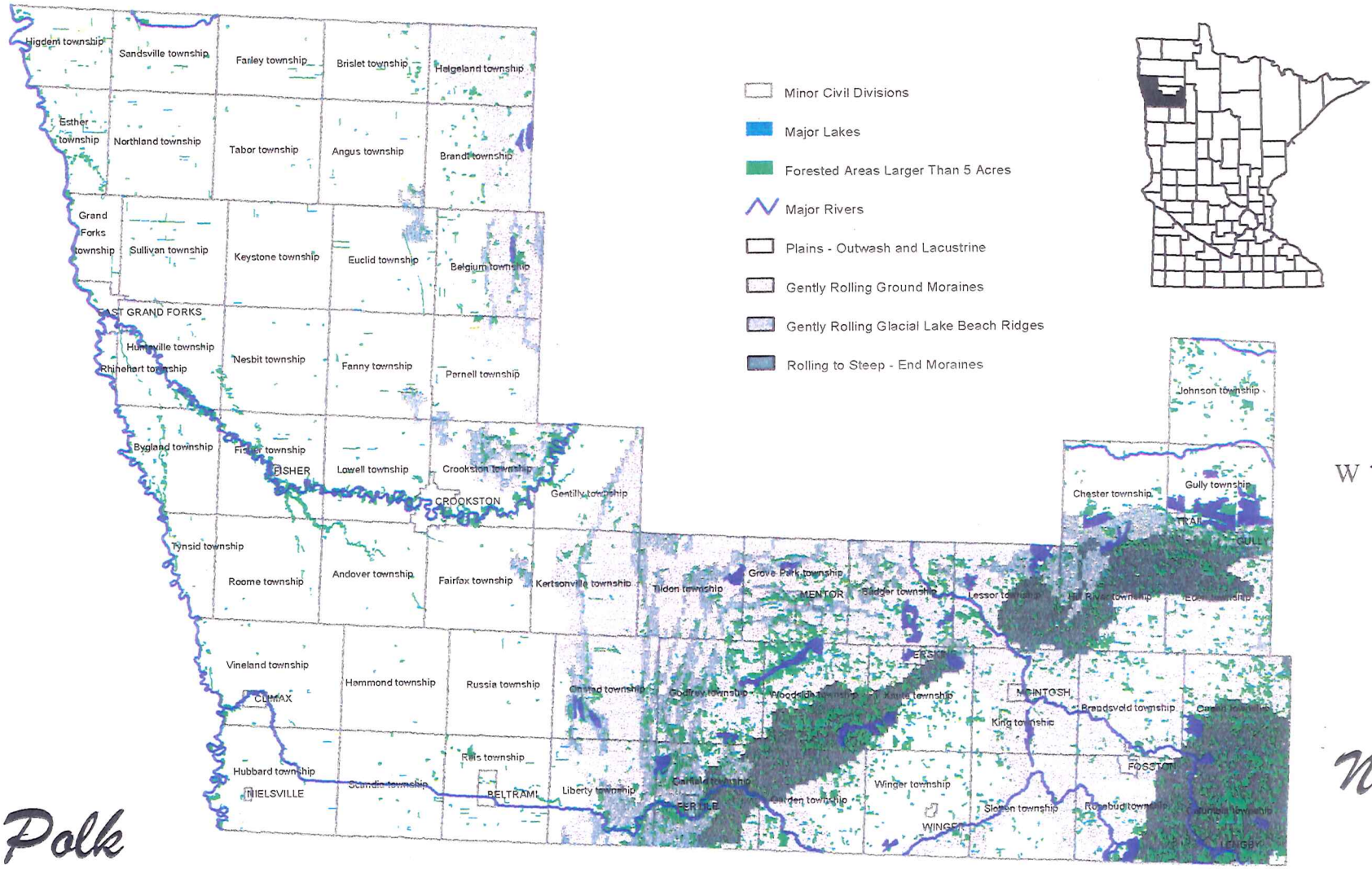
Information compiled from Minnesota Soils Atlas.

Natural Amenities of Polk County



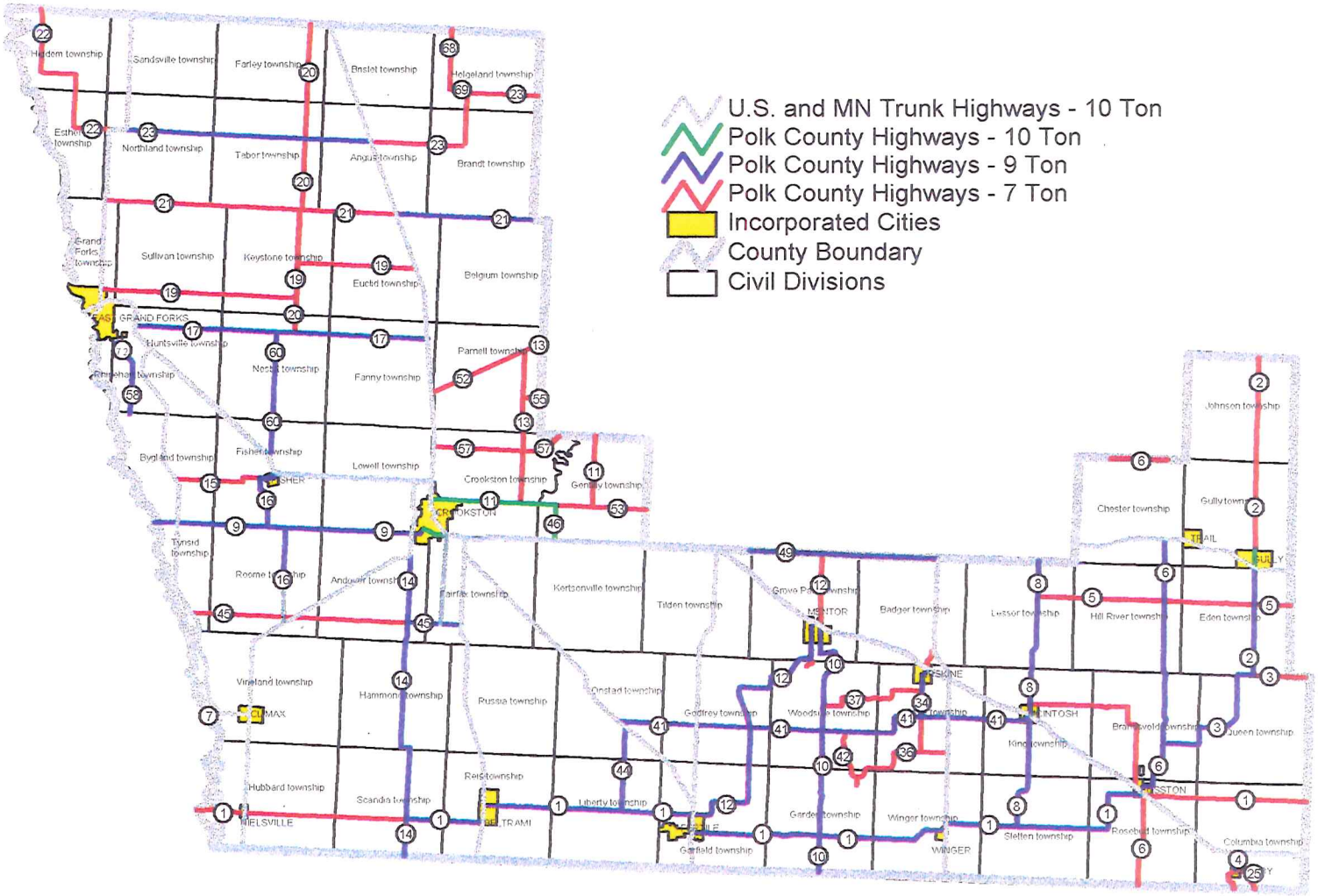
Polk County

Northwest RDC

Land Use Planning Information Services

Information provided by Minnesota Soils Atlas, Minnesota Land Cover Project, 1990 U.S. Census and the United States Geological Survey

1996 Polk County Road Restrictions



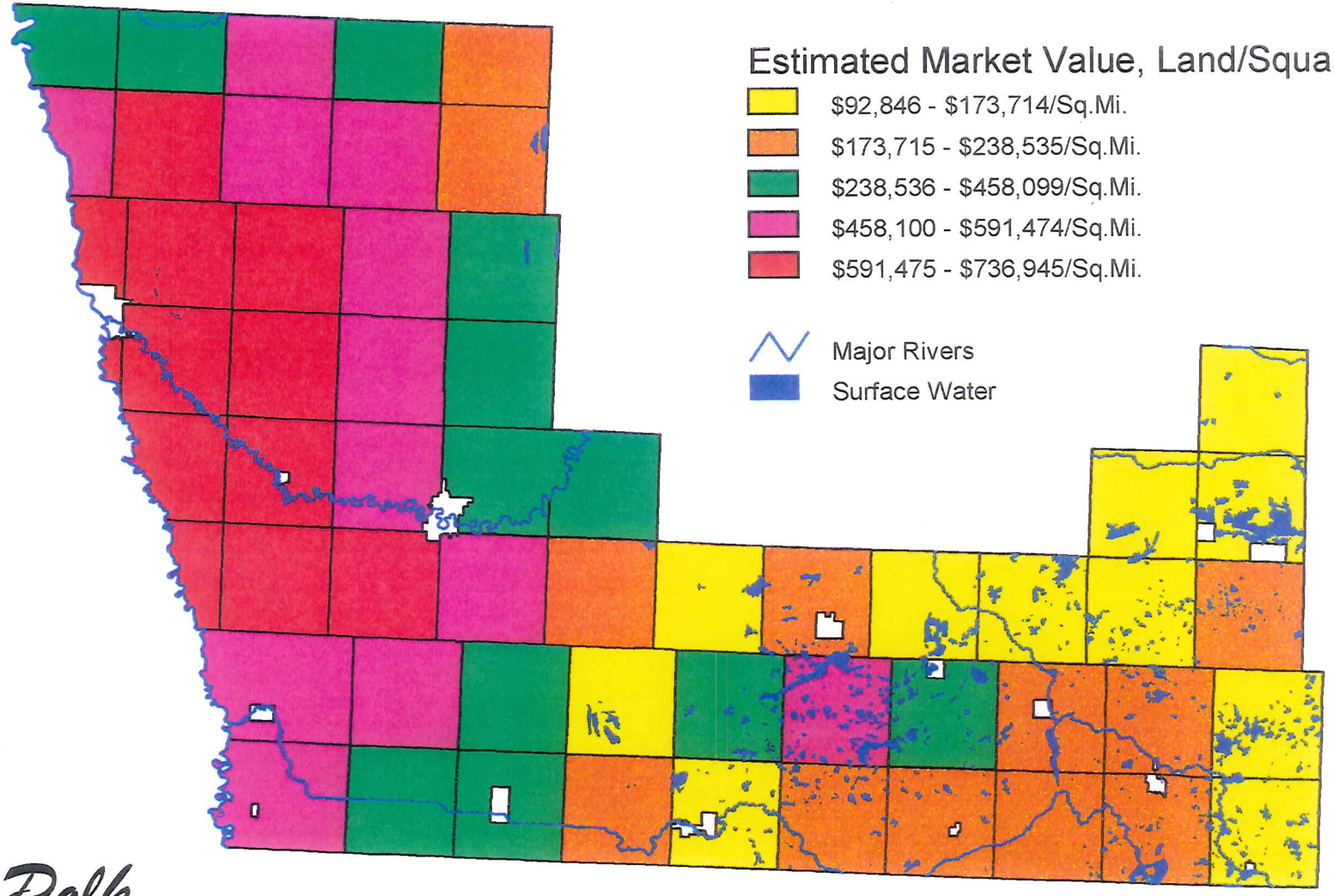
Polk County, Minnesota

Northwest RDC

Land Use Planning
Information Services

Road Restriction information provided by the Polk County Highway Engineer's Office. SRL, 3/97

Estimated Market Value



Estimated Market Value, Land/Square Mile

- $92,846 - $173,714/Sq.Mi.
- $173,715 - $238,535/Sq.Mi.
- $238,536 - $458,099/Sq.Mi.
- $458,100 - $591,474/Sq.Mi.
- $591,475 - $736,945/Sq.Mi.

Major Rivers

Surface Water

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W E

S

Polk County Minnesota

Polk County

10 0 10 20 Miles

Information supplied by Polk County Assessor,s Office 1996, and 1990 U.S.Census

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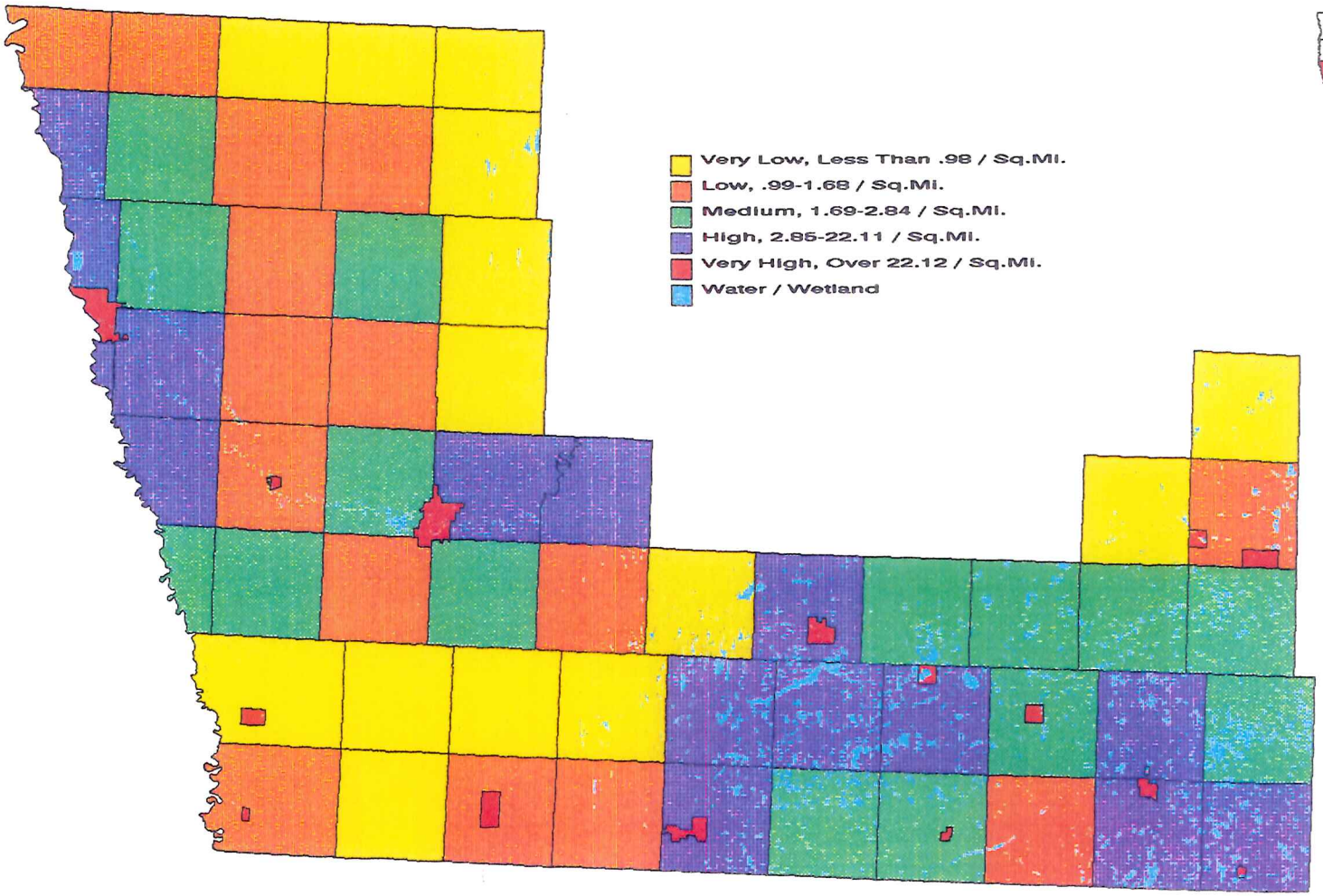
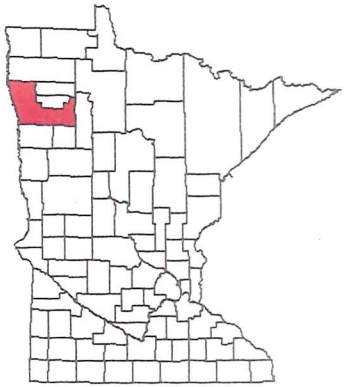
POLK COUNTY MINNESOTA
DWELLING DENSITY





Polk County

MetaDynamics
Winning Solutions For A Changing World

Scale: 0 10 20 mi

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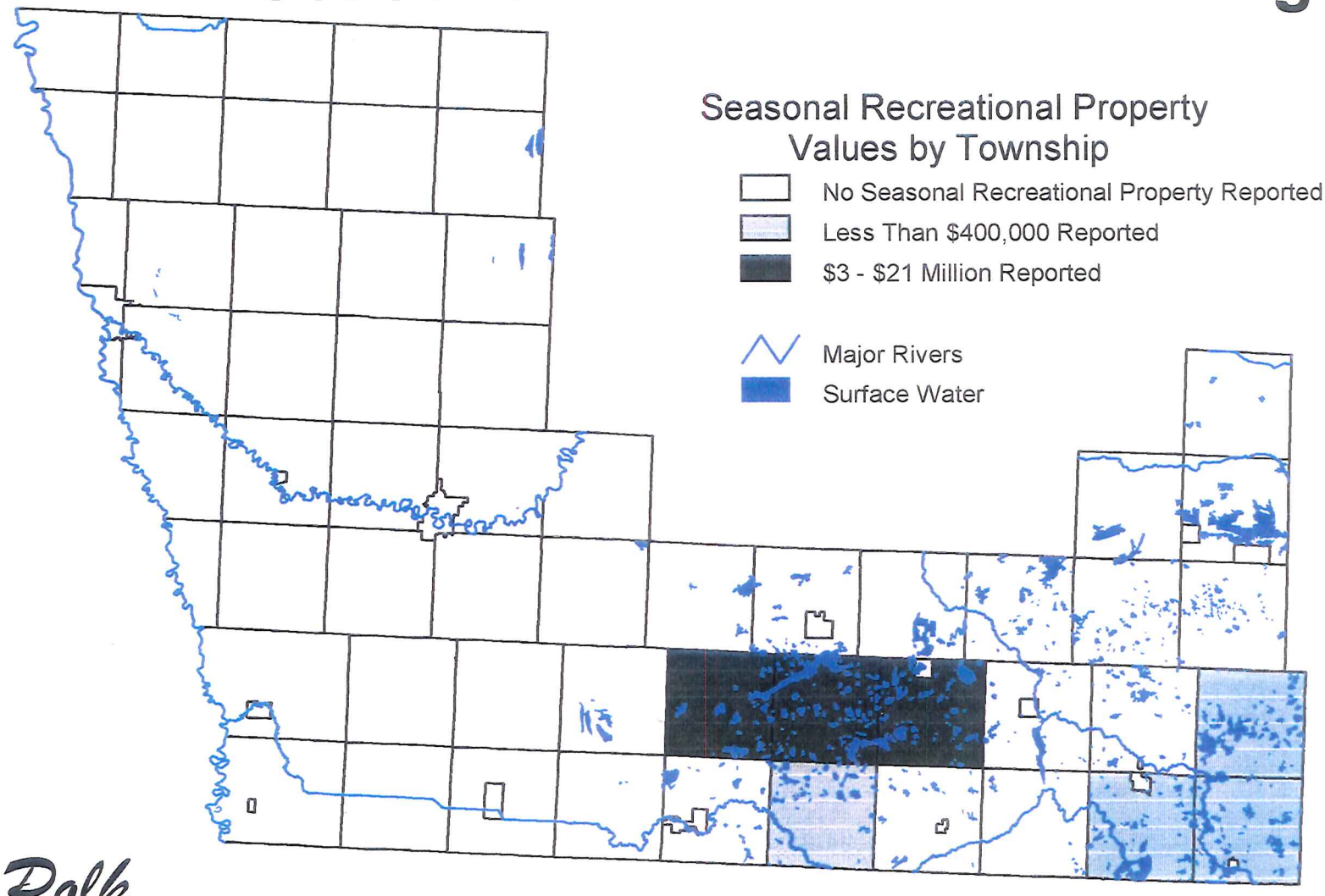
Information supplied by U.S. Census, 1990.

Seasonal Recreational Dwellings



Seasonal Recreational Property Values by Township

- No Seasonal Recreational Property Reported
- Less Than $400,000 Reported
- $3 - $21 Million Reported
- Major Rivers
- Surface Water

N
W E
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10 0 10 20 Miles

Polk County, Minnesota

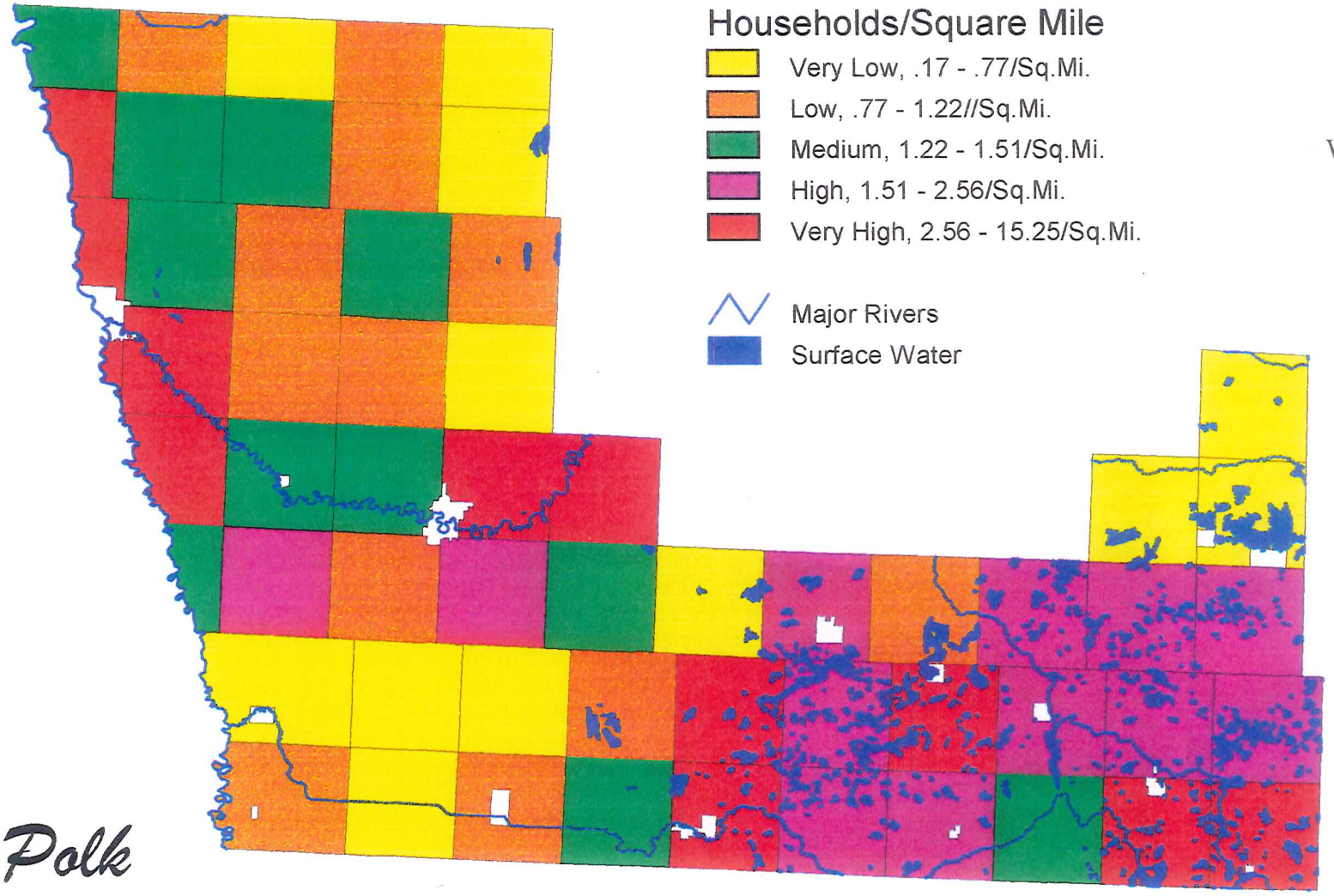
Polk County

Northwest RDC

Land Use Planning Information Services

Information supplied by Polk County Assessor's Office 1996, and the 1990 U.S. Census

Household Density by Township



Polk County, Minnesota

Polk County

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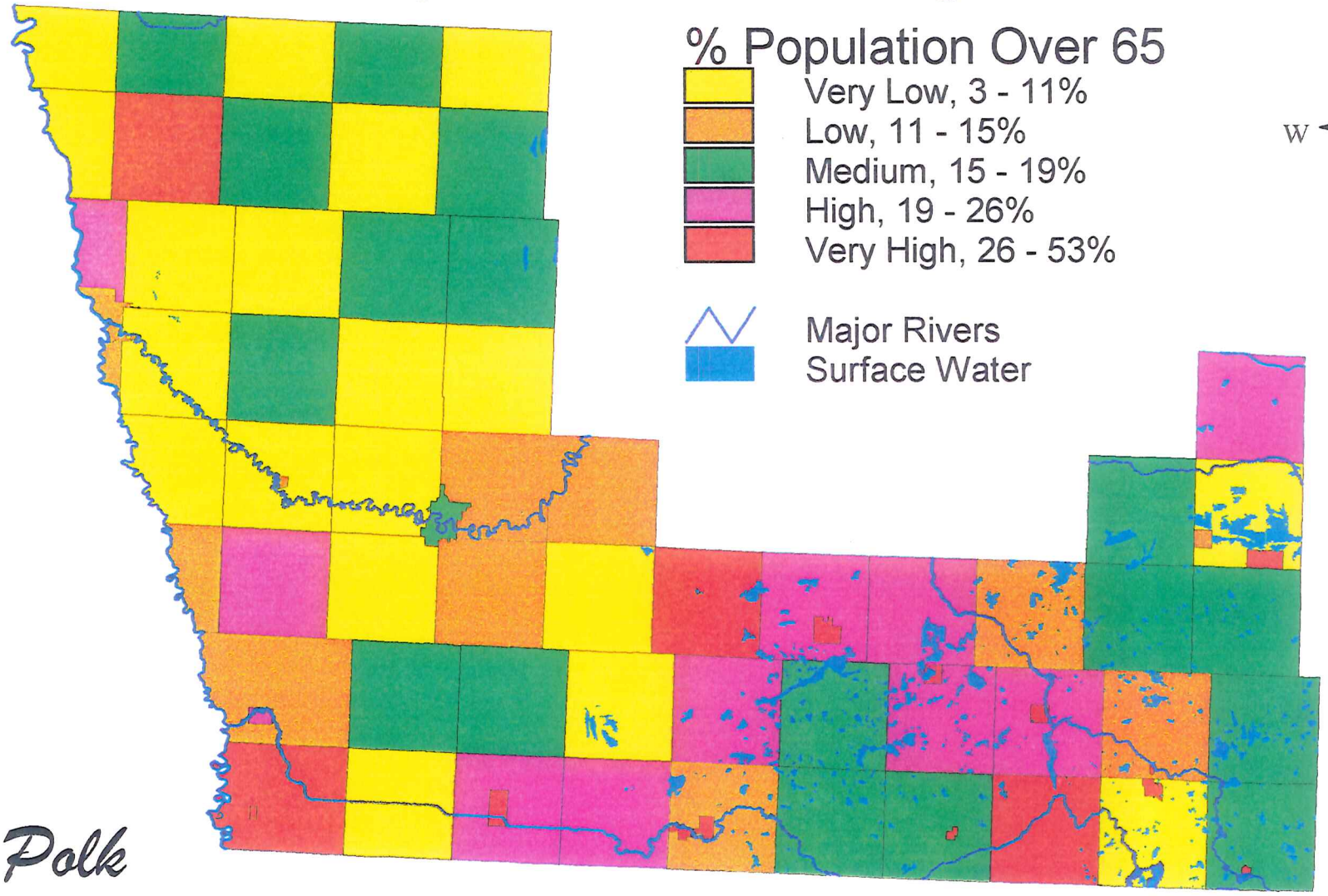
Land Use Planning
Information Services

Information provided by 1990 U.S.Census

Population Over Age 65



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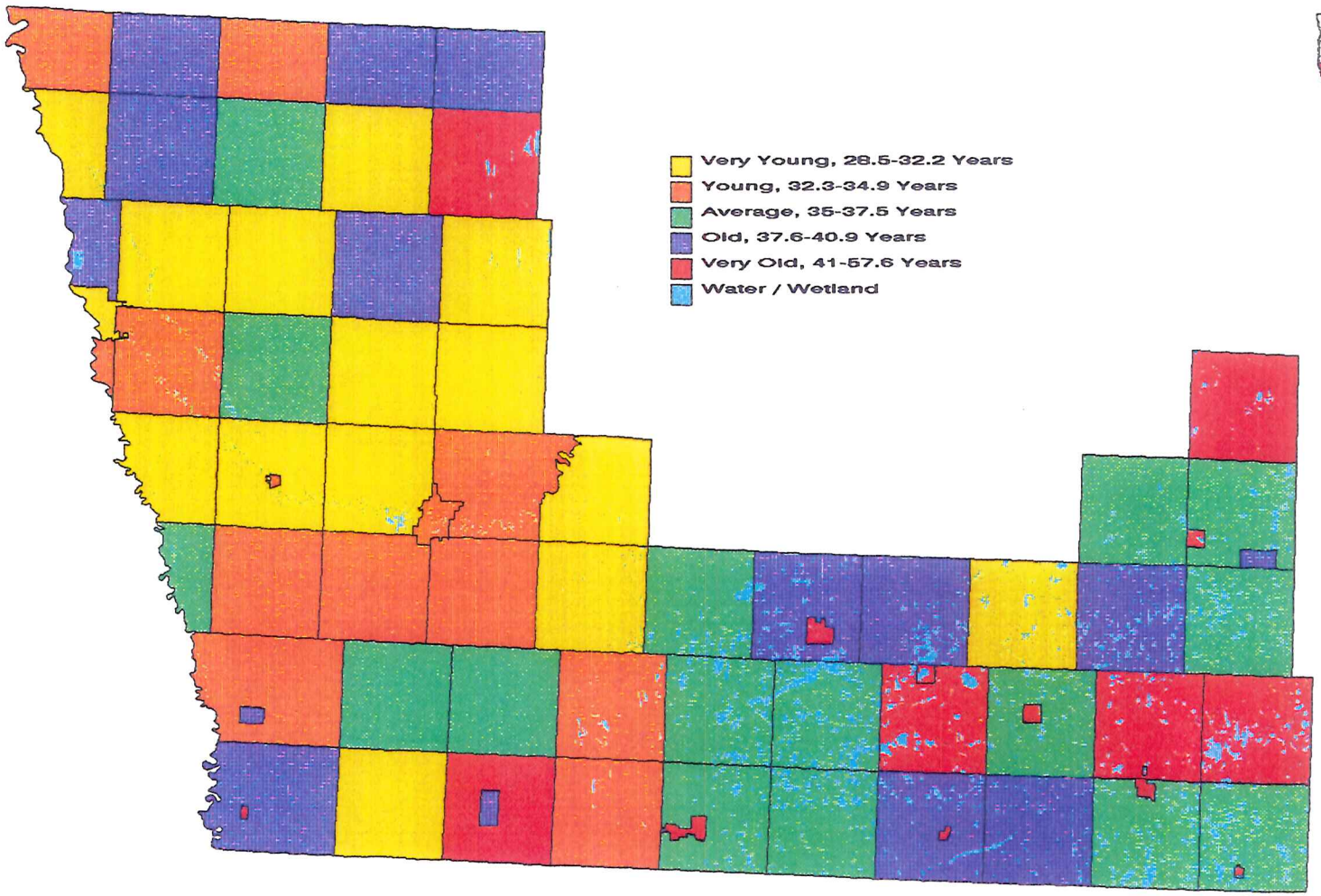
POLK COUNTY MINNESOTA
MEDIAN AGE OF POPULATION



Scale: 0 10 20 mi

Information supplied by U.S. Census, 1990.

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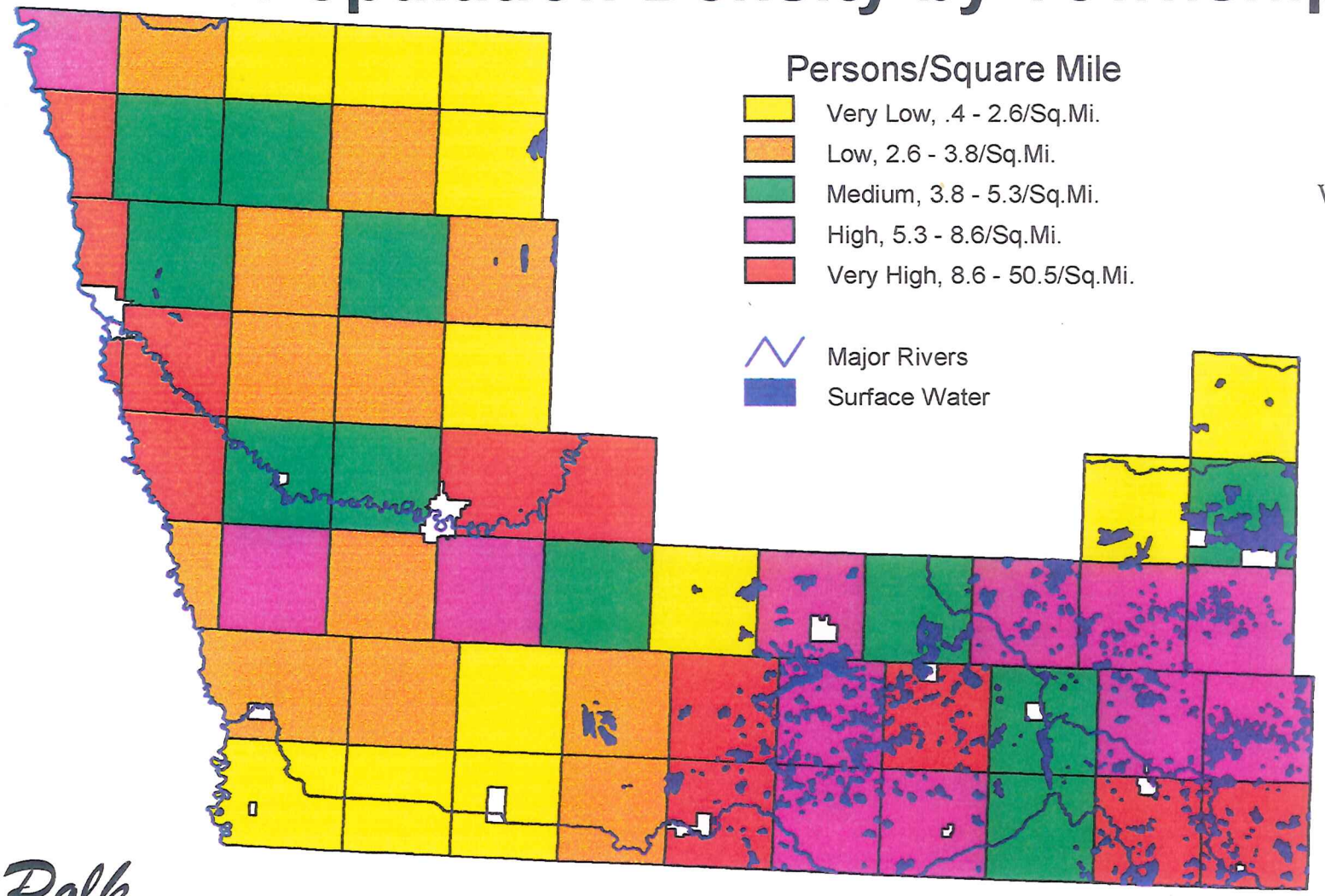
Population Density by Township



Polk County, Minnesota

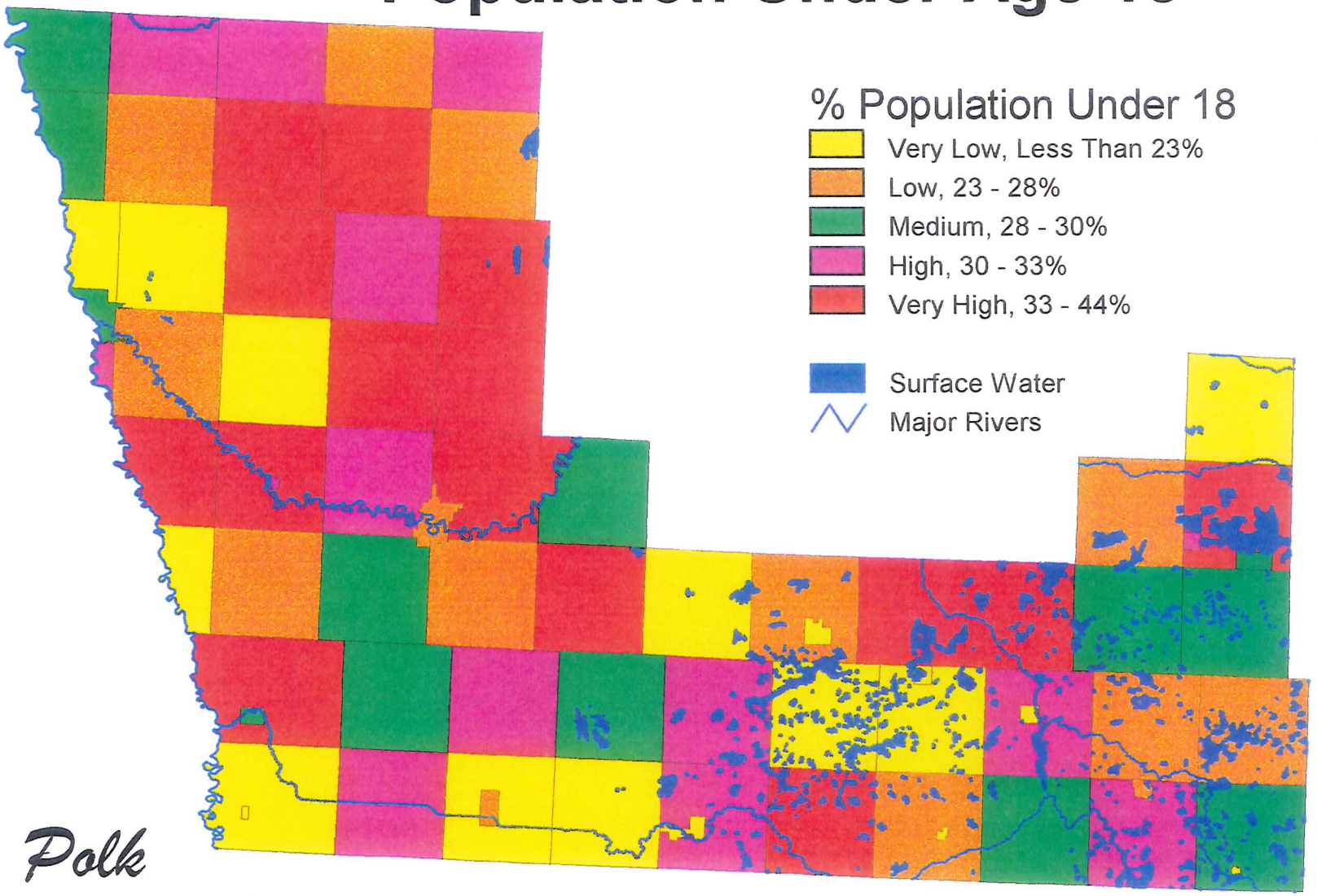
Polk County

Northwest RDC

Land Use Planning Information Services

Information supplied by 1990 U.S.Census

Population Under Age 18



IV. Major Goals

Major goals have been developed for economic growth and jobs, social well-being and environment and conservation.

Major economic goals call for a continued effort to expand and diversify job opportunities and improve income. This includes encouragement of growth of modern telecommunications infrastructure, developing a joint zoning and transportation map, encouraging orderly growth of residential areas by working closely with growing cities and adjoining townships, and designating areas where large feed lot and agriculture-related processing operations can be located.

Major social goals include maintaining a strong sense of community, increased utilization of the elderly through their experience, capital and volunteer time, continued improvement of residents' understanding of county programs, and developing programs to improve county government performance, and thus become more efficient. The plan also encourages state managers to become more familiar with local problems by promoting mobility assignments where state rule makers would spend time working in related local government programs.

Major environmental/conservation goals include maintaining groundwater resources. The highest priority sites area high-yielding aquifers used for drinking water, and those connected to major recreation resources such as lakes and rivers. Active management of the principal lake resources is important because the lakes are the principal source of recreation, residential development and tourism. The county is also encouraged to produce an official wetlands map with local input and a local management plan.

A. ECONOMIC GROWTH & JOBS

1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: **Assist and encourage economic growth and job creation across all sectors of the county, by expanding and diversifying job opportunities;**

Action Steps: Continue to support the efforts of agencies such as Minnesota Job Service, Northwest Minnesota Private Industry Council, the Northwest Technical College and the University of Minnesota at Crookston, who provide financial support and job training opportunities to the area's work force, and a link to the region for technology transfer and outreach.

Encourage the continuation of Community Education and Continuing Education programs in communities throughout the county, which arrange workshops, computer and internet training, giving employers and employees convenient and affordable access to advanced training.

Goal: **Encourage the growth of a modern telecommunications infrastructure, and support improvements in local telecommunications networks and an improved local communication system;**

Action Steps: Encourage new and innovative private-public partnerships to foster growth in this area.

Continue to support the efforts of various agencies, like the Red River Trade Corridor, who coordinate their funding with local input to boost economic development in the area.

Goal: **Encourage development of policies to encourage and diversify economic growth into high growth service-related areas;**

Action Step: Encourage economic development in high-growth employment areas in the county. Employment growth trends are highest in service-producing industries such as trade, business services, health services and transportation. The computer and data processing services industry, which has become well-established in the state, is another high-growth industry.

Goal: **Foster the development of an atmosphere where creative skills can be put to work;**

Action Steps: Bring together assets within the community, and information and skills outside the community to take advantage of the resources available.

Recognize and utilize resources by creating networking opportunities for people to talk to each other, and share ideas, information and resources.

Pursue unconventional ideas, such as the recent, significant role the state has played in the movie-making industry.

Goal: **Continue to support strategies to create and tap local capital and link it to business opportunities;**

Action Step: Encourage participation by agriculture-related businesses in programs such as the Valley Ventures Park, a small business incubator designed to provide assistance to start-up businesses through business management assistance, access to research and technical assistance, and mentoring opportunities.

Goal: **Encourage the use of well-planned public and private financing partnerships to enhance economic development efforts;**

Action Steps: Foster a positive attitude toward economic development in the county. Leadership is more important than location, and attitude is more important than size.

Utilize new and innovative public and private partnerships that build on entrepreneurial strengths to create successes.

Become a region of problem-solvers, where creative energy is evident in ongoing community programs and new community projects.

Focus on factors that can be controlled, not on factors outside our control, such as location. Train and encourage leaders to maximize our area's strengths.

Engage in active planning as a region, with lots of participation in the development of specific blueprints for action which specify who does what, when and what is expected to happen as a result. Develop plans that are sufficiently flexible to respond to changing conditions, and enable leaders to respond quickly to new opportunities.

Encourage community leaders to assist communities in articulating what residents want the community to be like in 5, 10 or 25 years. Find sufficient consensus to not only articulate the vision, but also to make it understandable, so that everyone has a chance to support it.

Goal: **Continue to support and work with agencies that foster and stimulate economic growth.**

Action Steps:

Develop high quality and easily used information bases and services to aid economic development. Low interest financing business start-ups and expansions, technical assistance in loan packaging and business plan development, and easily accessible building and site information are essential elements to economic development.

Continue to support local strategies to secure economically diverse and profitable businesses through effective marketing strategies and business development activities and incentives, such as bonding, and tax increment financing.

Support ideas such as small business incubators, and innovative school-to-work programs offered in area cities.

Continue to encourage the economic development role played by such agencies as the Northwest Minnesota Initiative Fund, Northwest Regional Development Commission, and Minnesota Department of Trade and Economic Development in encouraging business growth and diversity in the area.

2. AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Goals:

Further develop and strengthen the agriculture production zoning classification in the county ordinance that protects farmland.

Ensure that the county maintains a strong agricultural base well into the future without degrading the resource base on which agriculture is dependent.

Action Steps:

Designate areas where large feedlot operations can be located. Activate a task force to study the issue and provide the task force with a good information base on county resource and settlement patterns relating to feedlot impacts.

As of June 19, 1996, Polk County has adopted a one-year interim zoning ordinance which prohibits the construction of new feedlots, or the expansion of existing feedlots beyond an additional 200 animal units. This interim ordinance has been adopted to allow sufficient time for the county to study the environmental and social issues related to the operation of large feedlots.

Designate areas where large agricultural-related processing plants can be located. Activate a task force to study the issue and provide the task force with a good information base on county resource and settlement patterns relating to processing plant impacts and needs, taking into consideration such issues as:

- availability of water
- water quality
- soil characteristics
- potential for groundwater, surface or air contamination
- access to appropriate transportation routes.

Implement sections of the Local Water Plan relating to agriculture land practices and land and water management.

3. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Goal: **Improve, preserve, and maintain a safe, efficient, and high quality highway transportation system. The functional uses of each public road in the county needs to be determined for each of the levels of government that maintain each segment of road.**

Action Steps:

Develop priorities for maintenance and improvement of each road segment by utilizing the amount of use and functional classifications of each road segment and an updated land use map which reflects current and future land uses.

Maintain a database for roads based on segments, which includes a survey, location of utility lines by type, and right of way distances and ties to parcel records.

Review and update, if necessary, the existing construction standards for each segment of road in each functional class.

Approach the Minnesota Department of Transportation and offer Polk County as a pilot county for regional transportation planning.

Develop policies which promote the use of frontage roads in densely populated areas along highways to minimize traffic flow and safety issues.

Promote policies and projects that encourage local traffic to stay off high speed roads in areas of rural non-farm settlement. Solutions should include better planning and development, along with use of frontage and backage roads.

Develop corridor plans for control of aesthetics, signage and litter in scenic areas of the county. (Highest priority areas should include: Beach ridges-adjacent to U.S. 2 east of Crookston, central lake region roads near and adjacent to Maple Lake and the County Park areas, and the eastern lakes and hills near Trail, Lengby and Fosston.)

Encourage aesthetics along all highways in the county.

Develop conceptual intersection plans combined with setback regulations that allow for intersection upgrading in the future at major intersections in the highway network.

(Highest priority areas should include intersection areas along U.S. 2 and 220 adjacent to East Grand Forks and the U.S. 2 and the Crookston bypass intersection east of Crookston).

Develop highway plans that emphasize commodity road development, and anticipate the development of industrial processing sites near, but not in the major county trade centers and with adequate water supplies and sewage treatment capacity.

Candidate sites exist in east of Fosston, west of Crookston near the Red Lake River, and east of East Grand Forks near U. S. 2.

Goal: **Support the maintenance and safe use of the remaining railroad system and maintain abandoned railroad right of way intact where feasible.**

Action Steps: Encourage continued operation of the remaining railroads through linkages to the commodity highway system and by allowing appropriate land uses adjacent to railroads.

Carefully study the four abandoned rail corridors in the county for alternate corridor uses.

Develop county land use controls which reflect the transportation of hazardous materials on trains. Draft needed amendments to the County zoning ordinance and make this material available to cities for their information and possible use.

Facilitate development of a system for tracking hazardous wastes on trains. Tie this system to an emergency response and warning system. Work with Burlington Northern Corporation and the County Sheriff's office to facilitate fast and accurate information exchange.

Goal: **Support continued development of the airport system serving the county.**

Action Step: Manage the four airports in the county as part of the state system.

Goal: **Support a high level of management, and maintenance of a safe, efficient and high quality pipeline transportation and electrical transmission systems.**

Action Steps: Create a detailed map of pipelines and pumping stations and integrate with other county parcel records.

Develop county land use controls which reflect the transportation of hazardous materials in pipelines.

Draft needed amendments to the county zoning ordinance and make this material available to cities for their information and possible use.

Facilitate development of a system for tracking hazardous wastes in pipelines in the county. This system needs to be tied to an emergency response and warning system. Work with pipeline corporations and the County Sheriff's office to facilitate fast and accurate information exchange.

4. RECREATION AND TOURISM

Goal: **The quality of the recreation resource needs to be maintained, protected and improved through active management, monitoring and protection.**

Action Steps: Develop and maintain a county outdoor recreation and tourism plan covering both public and private facilities. This should prioritize key recreation resources such as: Maple Lake County Park, Fertile Sand Hills, beach ridges, Pembina Trail, Rydell Refuge, natural prairie and calcarious fens.

Require that management plans for State and Federal lands contained within the county be on file with the county. This will promote cooperation and will be a valuable input into county and local government priority setting for recreation and tourism development.

Work with other units of government to promote development of trails for snowmobiling, four wheeling, skiing, hiking, horseback riding, birdwatching and bicycling, where potential for use is high.

Improve, maintain and promote the recreational resources already established within the county, such as Tilborg Park.

B. SOCIAL GOALS

Social goals include maintaining a strong sense of community, increased utilization of the elderly through their experience, capital and volunteer time, continued improvement of residents' understanding of county programs, and developing programs to improve county government performance, and thus, become more efficient.

1. COMMUNITIES

Goals:

Consider the enhancement of the quality of life of each resident of and visitor to Polk County when all county policies are developed.

Strive to maintain a strong sense of community, such as sense of family and feeling of safety when developing goals and policies that affect children, schools, other community-based organizations, medical care and emergency services.

Strive for increased resident input on social policy issues.

Action Steps:

Assist with efforts of area agencies to encourage growth and diversity of the county's population.

Take a leadership role in encouraging and financially assisting efforts to diversify the county's economy.

Encourage and financially assist efforts to diversify the area's economy, providing increased economic opportunities for the county's younger residents.

Develop and implement a county-wide approach to economic development.

Assist communities in planning for continued growth in the lakes, rivers and forested areas of the county, and integrate efforts into the overall plan for the county.

Establish and maintain a community billboard outside the courthouse on the corner of Summit and Broadway. Explore establishment of a second community bulletin board in eastern Polk County.

Coordinate the development of a county internet page with subsections of communities and service organizations.

Make county personnel available on a contract basis to help local jurisdictions manage their affairs. For example, the county personnel officer could assist small cities on personnel matters. Also, job sharing can be pursued.

Continue development of a fully integrated 911 system for the county. Coordinate 911 with surveying and parcel numbering update needs.

Provide leadership and encourage joint efforts between communities to address common problems and opportunities.

2. HOUSING

Goals:

Work cooperatively with growing cities and adjoining townships to ensure the availability of serviced building sites, enabling the county to sustain economic growth while keeping the cost of lots affordable.

Develop cluster and planned unit development regulations as part of the comprehensive plan to allow residential development expansion into agricultural areas, while minimizing the displacement of agricultural land.

Action Steps:

Target areas within townships adjoining growing cities as projected growth areas, and take the steps necessary to ensure that they are zoned appropriately and that consideration is given to the availability of necessary utilities. Potential growth areas include areas adjacent to East Grand Forks on both the north and south, areas adjacent to and surrounding Crookston on the west, south and east, and the area adjacent to the east side of Fosston.

Inventory existing lots in towns for potential residential uses. An initial inventory was carried out for all towns in the county with the exception of Crookston and East Grand Forks through an internship program with the University of Minnesota at Crookston. That inventory should be maintained and periodically updated (Appendix A).

Encourage the development of larger scale projects to maximize efficiency and affordability.

Establish a system whereby all governmental units in the county can build into their systems land parcel identification numbers.

Coordinate efforts of communities and area agencies in the county to develop affordable, quality housing for all county residents.

Upgrade and rehabilitate existing housing stock through financial incentives to developers.

Support community efforts to provide suitable housing facilities for the county's growing elderly population.

Encourage the use of alternative building techniques to reduce costs and improve the quality of new housing. Sponsor a pilot project in manufactured housing linking manufactured housing product directly to the development process.

Analyze proposed new zoning and utility regulations to examine their impact on housing costs, and periodically review existing zoning and utility regulations to ensure that they do not unnecessarily adversely impact housing costs.

Assist communities and townships in designating areas for growth in housing development.

Encourage the use of alternative sewage disposal systems to reduce costs and improve the quality of waste disposal. Sponsor a pilot project utilizing new sewer technology.

4. GOVERNMENT

Goals:

Deliver the highest-quality, most cost-effective services possible to county residents.

Use the Comprehensive Plan to link together the various plans of each county department into a overall coordinated program.

Establish the Comprehensive Plan as the foundation for policy-making, work plan preparation and program evaluations in areas of water and related land management, transportation, law enforcement, human service programs, and basic record keeping.

Be actively involved in the establishment of rules and regulations on a state level which affect Polk County residents.

Design each county program to take maximum advantage of federal, state and private financial resources to the fullest extent possible without compromising county program goals.

Promote close working relationships and consistency between the county, cities and townships regarding the expansion of urban service areas, for residential, commercial and industrial growth.

Promote cooperation with area counties by working together on common goals and common issues.

Review the Comprehensive Plan on a periodic basis.

Action Steps:

Ask each county program and department to structure their annual work program goals around the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Develop a strategic plan for modernization and linking together of county records. This plan needs to integrate both data base and geographic information system needs. An important element of this plan is the development of a land parcel-based data system built around geographic based real estate codes containing historic records of title easements and improvements.

Integrate the 911 emergency response program with the land parcel system to maximize ease of update and program effectiveness.

Promote mobility assignments, where state rule makers would spend time working in related local government programs, to make state government more responsive.

Offer the county as a site for pilot studies by state and county based organizations as part of employee training and recognition and as a way to capture more outside financial and intellectual support.

Each county program should list important sources of outside financial assistance and plans to seek that assistance as part of an annual plan, .

Supply the schools with education materials on the major county programs and county program managers should be made available to present their programs to classes. This should be one of the duties of a program manager.

Develop a continuous student intern program and senior volunteer program to enter and process county records. This would allow continuous updating of county information and familiarize students and seniors with government functions.

Begin an annual student government day, where students run the county. This would be patterned after the student legislature program.

Maintain a commitment to the principles of sustainable development through an ongoing process of open communication of ideas and information. Encourage representatives from the economic, social and environmental sectors to continue to meet periodically to discuss comprehensive planning issues.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL/CONSERVATION GOALS

Goals:

Sustain and enhance resource productivity while improving the environmental qualities and aesthetics of Polk County.

Work toward a sustainable policy that balances the needs of agriculture, land owners and the environment.

Continue development of the comprehensive water and land resource data base, and development of programs to keep this information current. This data base should consist of variables describing the land resource its quality and its relative location to markets.

Minimize and work to prevent increased sediment load and flow variability into county rivers and lakes.

Action Steps:

Develop programs to monitor changes in resources and their use. Highest priority should be monitoring water quality and land use changes.

Design a county program to update physical and biological resource variables as part of the normal ongoing administrative processes. Include this in the design of new county information systems.

The goals and objectives for the Polk County Comprehensive Water Plan Five Year Revision are attached to the Comprehensive Plan as Appendix A. This document needs to be an integral part of the comprehensive plan and can serve as an important vehicle for implementing the goals and policies of the plan.

Seniors and volunteers can assist in providing continuous monitoring of water quality and related land use changes in the County.

Remote sensing technology can also be employed to monitor changes in resources and their uses. Offer Polk County as a pilot for land use update utilizing satellite technology and existing record systems.

1. GROUND WATER

Goal:

The quality of the ground water resource needs to be maintained, protected and improved. The highest priority sites are high yielding aquifers used for drinking water, and those connected to major recreation resources, such as lakes and rivers.

Action Steps:

Develop a comprehensive working plan for protecting ground water resources, particularly aquifers used for human and animal consumption. Part of this plan needs to define and protect wellhead recharge areas through zoning. Develop a management plan for each groundwater aquifer in the county.

Incorporate ground water protection areas into the County Zoning Map. The most sensitive areas are shown on the Surficial Aquifers map. In the areas shown on this map, ground water is recharged directly from the land above it (Figure: Impact of Development on Sandy Outwash Plains Ground Water Quality).

Separate abandoned wells into priority sites and seal accordingly. The highest priority sites are wells that enter a buried aquifer by passing through an impervious material (for example, heavy clay over a sand aquifer).

Give priority to a septic tank management program in areas adjacent to major water resources and aquifers used for public and private water supplies.

Promote an effective and low cost program that emphasizes yard vegetation and lawn management that protect ground water quality in areas of surficial aquifers and in shoreland areas.

Discourage the development of large feedlots and agricultural processing plants in surficial aquifer areas, to maintain high quality ground water supplies. The best locations may be near, but not on surficial aquifers, enabling the facilities to utilize the resource without degrading it.

Intensive irrigation in sandy surficial aquifer areas is not compatible with high water quality without special land management practices.

Consider zoning land where irrigation will be permitted.

2. RIVERS

Goal: **Maintain, protect and improve the quality of the river resource through active management, monitoring and protection.**

Action Steps:

Rate each river segment in Polk County for water quality, volume of flow, fish resources, degree of naturalness, and amount of water available for domestic, agricultural, or industrial use.

Develop a strategic plan for use and preservation of the river systems from this inventory. Include designation of key sites for water storage to augment low flows in periods of major drought, and reduce flood damage. Locate key sites where surplus water is available for water appropriation for economic development.

Encourage recreational use of rivers where appropriate, especially continued emphasis on the Red Lake River as a canoe and boating route.

Encourage preservation of natural river corridors. At minimum preserve a representative sample of each local river type should be noted. Large water users need to consider appropriateness of how water is used in their processes versus how clean it needs to be.

Encourage coordination of activities with surrounding watershed districts to improve water quality in rivers that are common to Polk County and other surrounding counties. (Appendix B: Comprehensive Local Water Plan).

3. WETLANDS

Goal: **Maintain, protect and improve the quality of the wetland resource through active management, monitoring and protection.**

Action Steps: Produce an Official County Wetlands Map with local input and a local management plan. This will help provide management consistency throughout the county and its departments and state agencies when dealing with wetland issues.

The Official County Wetlands Map can initially be based on the National Wetlands Inventory digital files. The Polk County SWCD should check this map for accuracy. Each wetland should be given a unique identification number and the county should identify the key functions each wetland serves for each of the major functions listed in the amended wetlands law. The county should then determine management priorities for each basin as part of the water planning process.

Close coordination between the county and townships in wetland mitigation is necessary for road construction.

4. LAKES

Goal: **Develop and maintain the high quality lake resources, which are important to the county because lakes are the principle base for recreation, residential development and tourism.**

Action Steps: Develop an overall strategy or management plan for each of the major lakes and their immediate watersheds (especially Union and Maple Lakes.) This strategy needs to include watershed wide land use development guidelines, programs to protect water quality and recreation management goals for shorelines and water surface areas.

Most prime lakeshore in the County is now developed, and developmental pressure is now concentrating on lesser-value lakeshore where fish and wildlife values are high. The county needs to determine how much lakeshore to keep in an undeveloped state.

Decisions will soon have to be made between residential development and hunting on some public water bodies.

A program to preserve key spawning areas should be developed.

Water use is increasing, but the size of the water resource is not. Per acre pressure from fishing, boating, personal watercraft and sailing are projected to increase. There is a need to more intensively manage water surface use through enforcement and water surface management.

Existing public lakeshore on the best lakes is scarce, so the existing public land will need to be carefully managed and developed to maximize public benefit.

Careful management is needed in the developed shoreland areas. Encourage low impact lawn management and landscaping practices that control erosion and runoff.

Lake district-wide sewage treatment systems would improve property and water quality of highly developed lakes. This can be accomplished with central or neighborhood sewage treatment systems through cooperation of Lake Improvement Districts, local water planning, rural utility cooperatives (RUD) and the county.

Another dry period similar to the 1930's would reduce lake levels in Polk County by as much as ten feet. This would have significant negative impacts on property values, lakeshore residential areas and public water-based outdoor recreation activities. Develop plans to cope with lower water levels: at a minimum, draw maps showing the lakes at low water levels.

Develop plans to provide continuation of a viable family resort and camping industry as part of the county recreation base on the major recreation lakes. This could include leasing public access rights in resorts.

The most valuable and scarce water resource in the county is high quality lakeshore. Give serious consideration to the creation of a new recreation lake via impoundment and excavation.

5. WASTE DISPOSAL

Goal: **Minimize waste production, while continuing to improve both residential and business recycling programs.**

Action Steps: Emphasize the importance of senior volunteers working with young people in recycling efforts.

Give a high priority to businesses that utilize waste products as their raw material input.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

POLK COUNTY LOT INVENTORY:
This appendix documents existing fully serviced lots in cities as a source for new residential housing units.

APPENDIX B

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE POLK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER PLAN FIVE YEAR REVISION

APPENDIX A

Polk County

LOT INVENTORY

Over the past quarter century, rural communities have drastically declined in population. The population in Polk County is no exception. Through conducting a lot inventory of vacant residential, industrial and commercial lots, we are able to do two things: draw conclusions and classify the available lots. The major conclusion being that the county has experienced a residential shift from rural areas to the more urban communities of Crookston and East Grand Forks. This may be due, in part, to the lack of employment opportunities within the county and rural areas in general. With this information, we are also able to provide data on the available lots for future sale, reconditioning, and/or development.

The categories that the lots have been placed into are based on distinguishable characteristics of each lot. Each has been photographed and placed into one of six categories. the categories are: high income housing, medium income housing, low income housing, business incubators, restoration housing and available lots. By categorizing, we enable potential customers to choose a lot by specific features that interest him or her.

High Income Housing (5) - Residential housing that, within its respected community, is considered to be on the high market end of the spectrum. Although we cannot compare high income housing within Crookston to high income housing within Erskine, we are able to consider the market value within its respective community. High income housing is generally the larger residential houses within its respective community and is placed on a valuable piece of property.

Medium Income Housing (11) - Housing that is considered to be in the mid-range of value and is generally housing that is of medium size.

Low Income Housing (13) - Housing that is on the low end of the market spectrum. This housing is relatively small and may need some repairs to them. These houses are generally older complexes that need constant upkeep and provide cheap housing for small families.

Commercial and Industrial Incubators (13) - These buildings are vacant and offer new businesses a place to occupy without having to build a new facility within the respective community. These buildings are generally located on the main streets of their communities and have housed in the past a variety of other businesses.

Restoration Housing (10) - These houses have been vacant for one or more seasons, which makes them in need of repairs before they can be occupied. These houses may or may not have been condemned by the housing authority, and must be reconditioned if they are to be placed on the market for sale.

Available Lots (21) - These are lots that have sewer and water available to these sites. These lots are open for urban growth within each community and provide places for residential housing. These lots vary in location in each community and provide a variety of locations on each city block.

ACTION STEPS

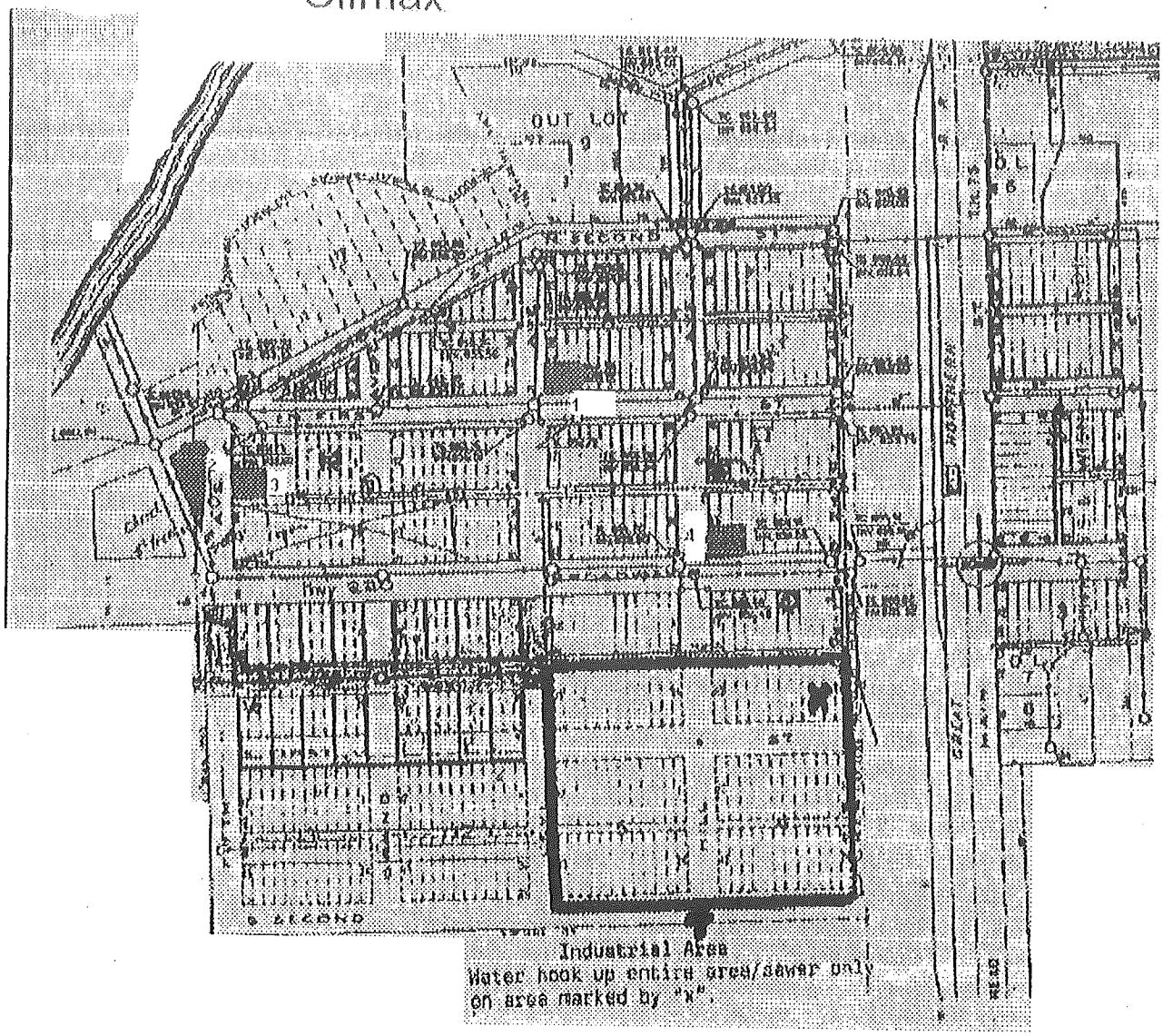
With all of these lots on inventory within the county (70), one serious problem must be addressed: What should be done with these lots to ensure the economic welfare of Polk County's rural communities. With a variety of programs to choose from, which choice would benefit the entire community? Some of the programs to chose from include Habitat for Humanity, HUD, Elderly Day Services, Mentoring Houses,

and Housing Task Force. Some other alternatives are lot reconditioning, emergency training houses, and residential development. Whatever the choice may be, this decision must be evaluated based on the following considerations:

- appropriate zoning standards
- availability of necessary utilities
- quality and affordable housing
- the possibility of future implementation of necessities relative to automated mapping possibility of offering financial incentives for upgrading existing stock
- increasing elderly housing needs
- using alternative building materials to reduce costs and waste while improving quality
- assisting communities in designating areas for growth in housing

These considerations are in keeping with the Regional Blueprint for Northwestern Minnesota developed by the Northwest Regional Development Commission (NWRDC), Headwaters Regional Development Commission (HRDC), the Northwest Minnesota Initiative Fund (NWMIF), and the Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED). The Blueprint identified a lack of quality and affordable housing for employed households as an obstacle for economic development in rural communities. These obstacles must be overcome to allow economic growth within the rural communities to take place. With such an abundance of lots on inventory, we must take whatever action is necessary to promote "sustainable development" within the county.

Climax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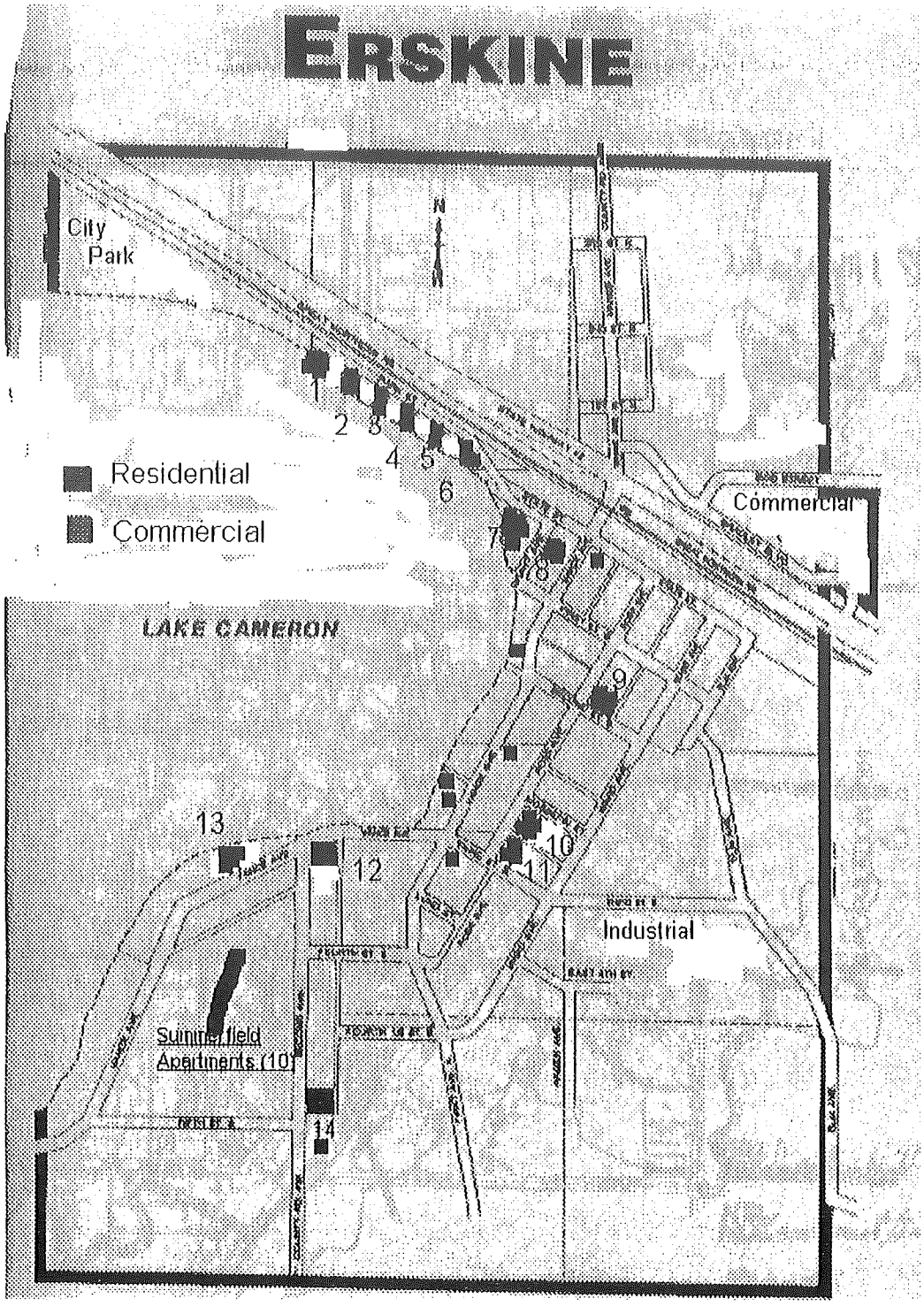
ERSKINE
City Park
N
Residential
Commercial
LAKE CAMERON
Commercial
Industrial
Summerfield Apartments (10)
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2
3
4
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10
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13
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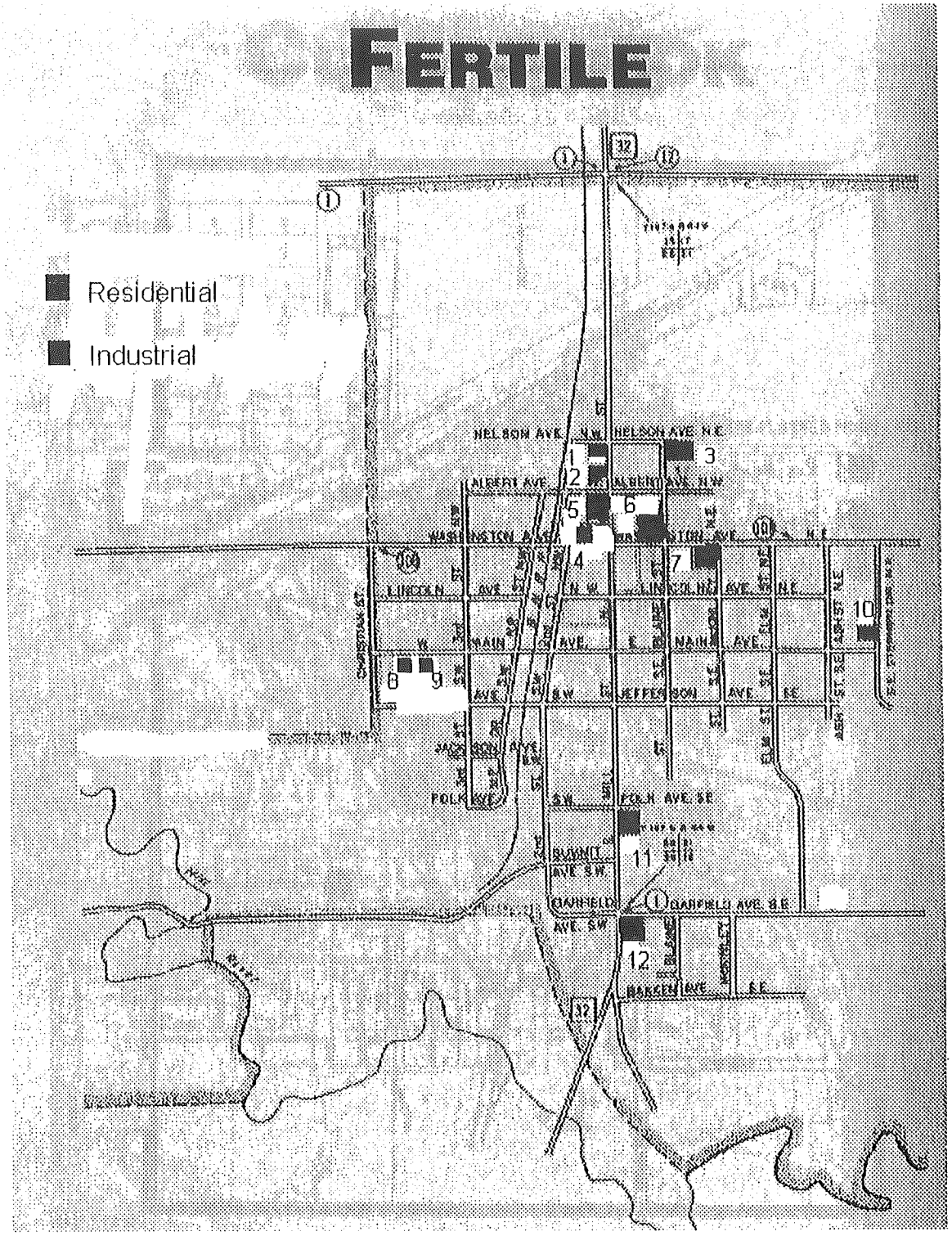
FERTILE


Residential
Industrial
NELSON AVE. N.W.
NELSON AVE. N.E.
ALBERT AVE.
ALBERT AVE. N.W.
WASHINGTON AVE.
LINCOLN AVE. N.W.
LINCOLN AVE. N.E.
MAIN AVE.
JEFFERSON AVE. S.E.
FOLK AVE. S.E.
SUMMIT AVE. S.W.
GARFIELD AVE. S.E.
BARKER AVE.
CHESTNUT ST.
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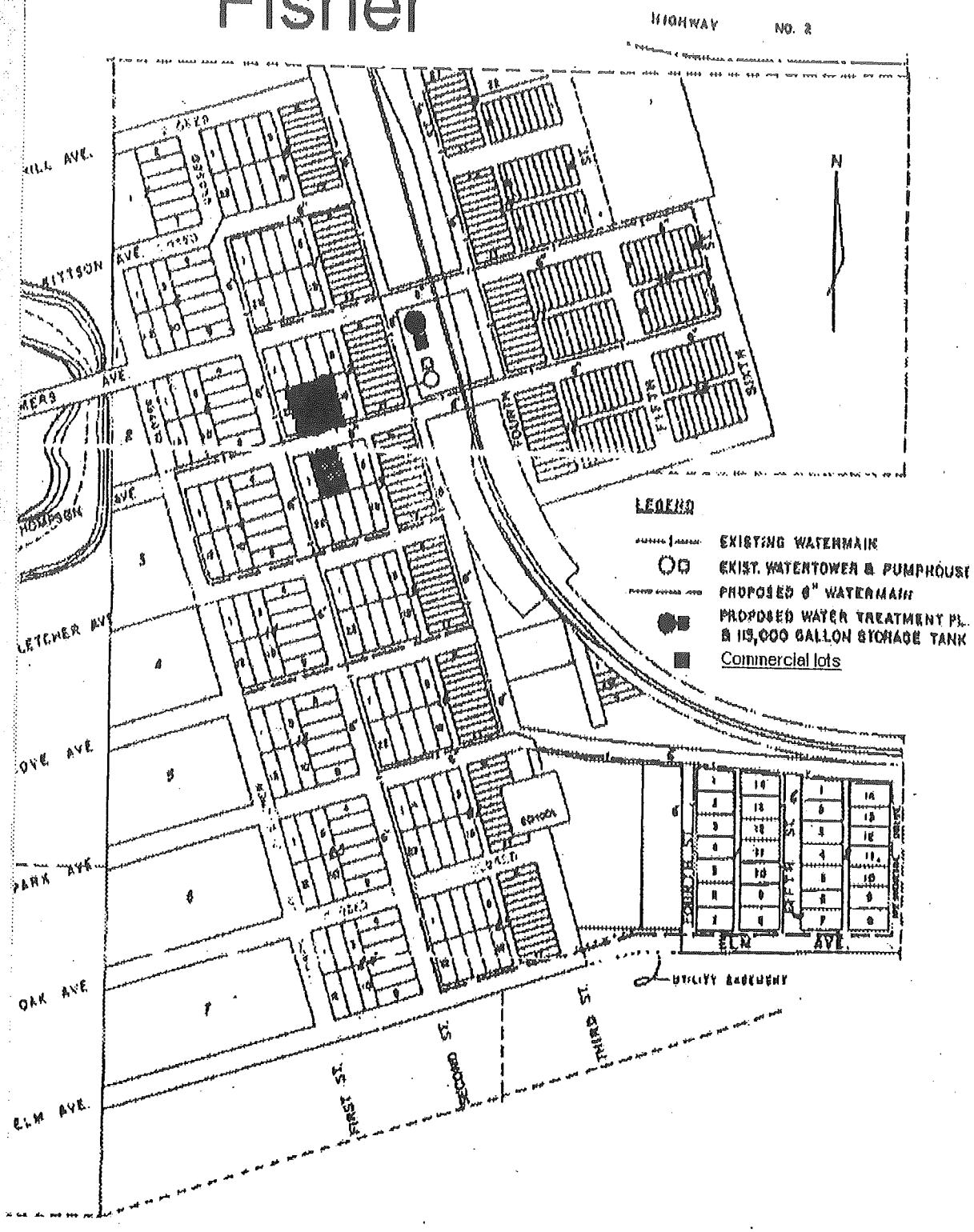
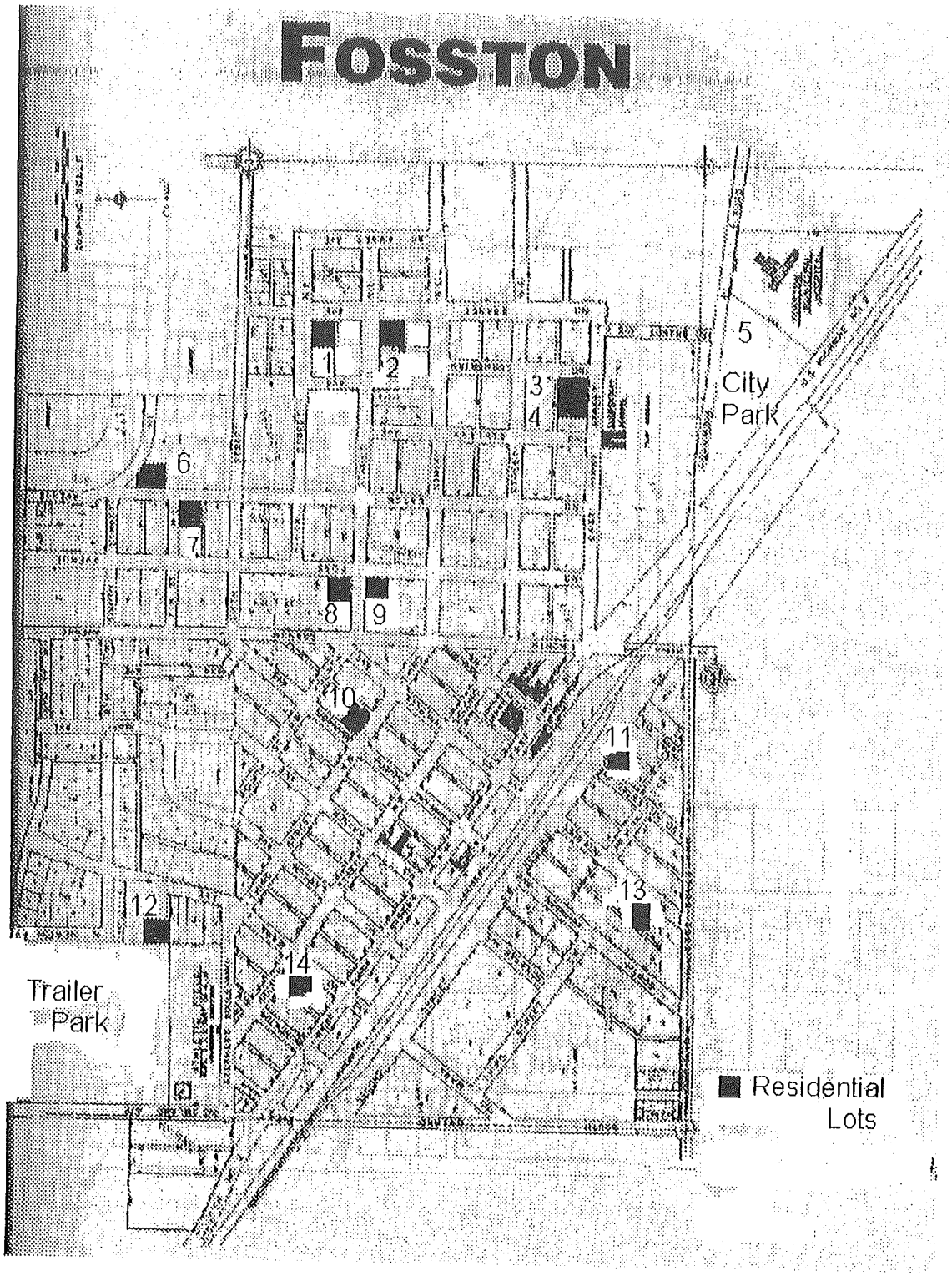
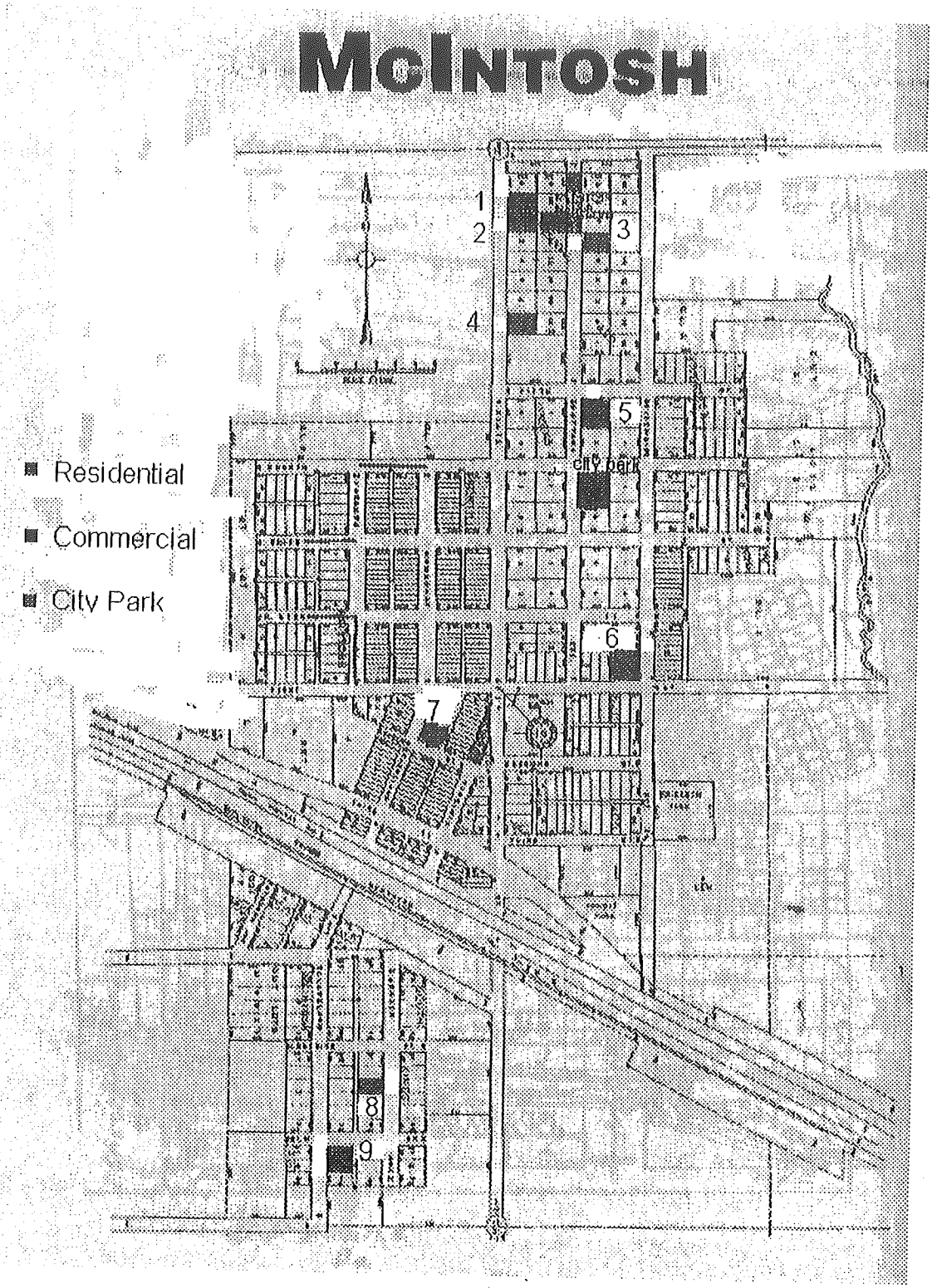
Fisher


HIGHWAY NO. 2
N
LEGEND
EXISTING WATERMAIN
EXIST. WATERTOWER & PUMPHOUSE
PROPOSED 8" WATERMAIN
PROPOSED WATER TREATMENT PL. & 115,000 GALLON STORAGE TANK
Commercial lots
UTILITY EASEMENT
ELM AVE.
OAK AVE.
PARK AVE.
FLETCHER AVE.
HUDSON AVE.
MEARS AVE.
HITTSON AVE.
FIRST ST.
SECOND ST.
THIRD ST.
FOURTH ST.
FIFTH ST.
SIXTH ST.
CHURCH


FOSSTON
1
2
3
4
5
City
Park
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
Trailer
Park
Residential
Lots

McINTOSH



APPENDIX B

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE POLK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER PLAN FIVE YEAR REVISION

NARRATIVE: *The following goals and objectives have been set by the Polk County Water Plan Task Force committee. Goals and Objectives are ranked according to the following system:*

- *High Priority (This category may have a variety of factors such as emergency situations which threaten or endanger water quality used for consumption, conditions which threaten public safety, or other criteria deemed of high priority to the Task Force Committee. If time and resources become available, this goal should be addressed by the Lead agency as soon as possible. These goals may need to be looked at to locate funding through sources such as grants.)*
- *Medium Priority (These goals may not have as immediate importance as those ranked high priority, however, long range benefits, availability of staff or funding at the present time to work on these projects may be considered of high enough importance to citizens of Polk County and the Task Force to be considered of high importance and thus a priority.)*
- *Low Priority (These goals are of high importance, but at the time of the ranking may not be considered under either of the two rankings, as they do not represent a program which indicates need for immediate action, or possibility for funding seems to be slim. Should the conditions or funding potential change, these programs may be upgraded by the Task Force Committee to priority, or high priority depending upon circumstance.)*

The Task Force Committee reserves the right to add projects or programs through the next five years, should new data or situations warrant action. These issues will be addressed at Committee meetings, and will be recorded in the meetings minutes.

EROSION

A) Water

1) ASSIST IN DEVELOPMENT OF EROSION CONTROL STRUCTURES AND WATER RETENTION AREAS.

These types of projects are considered high priority in Polk County. Over the past five years the realization that incorporation of water retention areas in plans for proper surface water control have become important. It is now viewed by many of the agencies dealing with water management, that use of such areas will improve water quality by providing filtration areas, wildlife habitat, velocity reduction in streams and ditches, and reduce property damage to landowners. The county, some townships and watershed districts are currently looking as several sites within Polk County that will serve as sites to establish water retention areas. It is expected that this will reduce the costs related to critical erosion problems.

Lead Agencies:

{SWCDs} will assist landowners in obtaining cost share to establish these practices. They will continue to seek additional funding in the form of grants, for projects which are approved by the District Boards and the Task Force. The Districts will continue to provide public education to increase knowledge of the benefits of best management practices for erosion prevention.

{Watersheds} will pursue establishment of floodwater retention sites (for example: Angus Oslo #4, Snake River site #2 and the March Impoundment).

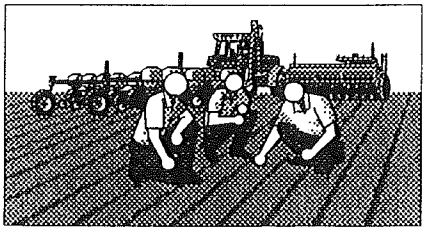
Supporting Agencies:

{NRCS / NW MN SRF Joint Powers Board} will assist in design, layout and inspection of control structures as time allows.

Priority ranking: High

Estimated Cost: The costs for these projects has not been determined at this time. Actual costs will be based on acquisition of land, types of structures needed at each site, and engineering needs.

Possible funding sources: Watershed Districts, Townships, Polk County, State Challenge Grants, private landowners, and LCMR Grants.



2) PROMOTE CONSERVATION TILLAGE.

This is an ongoing process. Much work has already been accomplished, but there continues to be a need to improve land use in order to assure the availability of quality water in the future. Because of the importance of this issue, the Task Force has deemed this a high priority objective.

Lead Agencies:

{Polk County Extension Service} will participate in education and demonstrations.

{NRCS} will encourage landowners and operators to leave crop residue for erosion prevention. They will also assist in tillage demonstrations.

{SWCDs} will work with NRCS and other agencies to provide information on conservation tillage methods to agriculture producers. They will also assist in tillage demonstrations.

Priority ranking: High

Estimated Cost: The Task Force has estimated the cost for continued implementation of this program to be $25,000.00 over the next five years. These funds will be used primarily for education including publications and demonstrations. Another 10,000.00 is estimated to be applied for by landowners for the purchase of no-till drills under the State Revolving Fund.

Possible funding sources: NRCS, SWCDs, Polk County Extension Service, grants, and the State Revolving Fund Ag. Loan Program.

3) BANK STABILIZATION (RIVER AND LAKE SHORELINE),

The Task Force views this topic as high priority and for the benefit of the entire county, but currently funding and personnel are not readily available. The Task Force will offer assistance through the expertise of cooperating agencies. Education and assistance in grant writing services will be the primary support offered.

Lead Agencies:

{SWCDs / Watershed Districts} for projects proposed, assistance will be offered to landowners for obtaining cost share and in project designs, in order to establish these practices. Districts will continue to seek additional funding in the form of grants, for projects which are approved by the District Board and the Task Force. They will continue to provide public education through the District newsletters and press releases.

Supporting Agencies:

{NRCS / NW MN SRF JOINT POWERS BOARD / US Army Corps of Engineers} Information and design assistance will be available for bank stabilization.

{DNR} Continue permit process and monitoring of lake shore development.

{Polk County Environmental Services} will administer county shoreland ordinances. The agency will also promote leaving shoreland in natural vegetation to prevent erosion.

Priority ranking: High

Estimated Cost: Not applicable as these projects are dealt with through specific agencies. It is possible that the combined efforts of all cooperating agencies will exceed several million dollars over the next five years.

Possible funding sources: ACP, State Cost Share, Challenge grants, Watershed Districts, property assessment, FEMA, State Grants, and DNR.

4) STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND STORMWATER CONTROL

Stormwater management issues are considered low priority in Polk County because of the small area of development in relation to the proportions of the entire county. When requested, the cooperating agencies will assist through sharing of existing data, technical assistance, and assessments.

Lead Agencies:

{Cities} Will develop stormwater plans for developing areas within municipalities based on needs, as information becomes available through MPCA.

Supporting Agencies:

{SWCDs} will write articles on stormwater management in order to pass new information on to the public.

{Polk Co. Highway} will assist with temporary and permanent Erosion Control plans.

{DNR} Will assist with education and development of plans as the need arises.

Priority ranking: Low

Estimated Cost: Costs for this project will be the responsibility of the individual or organization proposing construction projects.

Possible funding sources: The construction applicant will be responsible for costs, but will receive technical support through the relevant municipality and other agencies as time and expertise allows.

5) ENCOURAGE PLANTING OF A MINIMUM OF ONE ROD BUFFER STRIPS ALONG LEGAL DITCHES IN AREAS OF HIGH EROSION AND ENCOURAGE ESTABLISHMENT OF GRASSED WATERWAYS.

An estimated 1000 miles of county judicial ditches are in place in Polk County. An undetermined number of field and other ditch systems also exist. The task force hopes to identify and assist in correction of at least 1% of critical areas in Polk County in the next five years. The primary objective of the task force will be to educate the public as to the benefits of this practice.

Grassed waterways will be focused on as to the benefits to both landowners and the citizens within a watershed area. This will be achieved through public education and keeping landowners informed as to available technical and financial services which may assist in establishment of grassed waterways.

Lead Agencies:

{SWCDs} will work with other agencies to show land owners the benefits of this conservation measure. If funding should become available, assistance will be offered to landowners to implement this practice in areas where it is not currently practiced. The Districts will continue to improve public education on erosion and erosion control issues. This will be accomplished with Newsletters, brochures, newspaper articles, education presentations, and distribution of educational materials.

Supporting Agencies:

{Polk County Extension Service} Will provide education to the public.

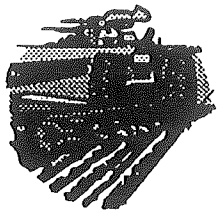
{Watershed Districts} will establish grass strips along legal ditches as the benefits are determined.

{NRCS} will provide information and specifications for seeding rates and species, as well as offer assistance in waterway design and installation.

Priority ranking: Low

Estimated Cost: The estimated cost of purchasing land in critical areas and establishing buffer strips or grassed waterways is $8000.00 per mile. Depending upon the circumstances, the county may need to purchase some acreage in order to address areas deemed critical by the task force or the county board. In some areas the landowner may be willing to install needed conservation measures if financial assistance should be located. This may require seeking grants or cost share to assist at specific sites which may be identified in upcoming annual plans or at task force meetings as high priority.

Possible funding sources: State Cost Share, ACP Cost share, Challenge Grants, Polk County through the County Ditch



6) REDUCE FARMING OF COUNTY ROAD DITCHES,

This goal will be achieved primarily through education of landowners along county road systems. Polk County Highway Department will contact landowners who are in violation to advise them of current regulations and responsibilities.

Lead Agencies:

{Polk Co. Highway} has a program implemented, in which advice is given to landowners when they are farming on highway right of way and to notify them that this practice is prohibited.

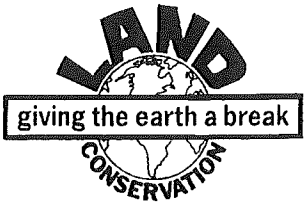
Supporting Agencies:

{NRCS / SWCDs} will provide information, write news releases, and one-on-one recommendations for side slopes and seedings.

Priority ranking: Low

Estimated Cost: The costs for this project are expected to be about $1,000.00 for the five year period. These expected costs will relate to publication of articles in the SWCD newsletters.

Possible funding sources: SWCDs and in-kind services offered through Polk County Highway Department.



B) Wind

Based on the data provided from a pilot program implemented by West Polk SWCD in the early 1980s, the area in the western portion of the county has been identified as having high potential for soil loss due to wind erosion. The study showed that 100% of the tillable acres is considered to have a soil loss equation of 2T or greater. The Task Force considers this to be a high concern because of the amount of sedimentation and potential for non-point source pollution which can result from wind erosion.

1) CROP RESIDUE MANAGEMENT

Lead Agencies:

{SWCDs} will promote residue management. They will assist with cooperator workshops on residue management as time allows. Will continue working with other agencies and landowners in order to improve public education on erosion and erosion issues. This will be accomplished through Newsletters, newspaper articles, brochures, presentations, etc.

{NRCS} will encourage erosion prevention and provide brochures as well as other information.

{Polk County Extension Service} Will provide demonstrations and public education.

Priority ranking: High

Estimated Cost: $5,000.00 over a five year period.

Possible funding sources: SWCDs, NRCS, Polk County Extension Service, Pembina Trail RC&D, and local implement dealers.

2) TREE PLANTINGS,

Lead Agencies:

{SWCDs} will continue to provide conservation trees, planting services and maintenance programs to landowners, in order to promote planting of windbreaks. They will continue to work towards the goal of 100 miles of living snowfence along US Highway 2 between East Grand Forks and Erskine. The Districts will work obtain a grant to cover the 25% of funding not covered by the ACP and state cost share for installation of windbreaks. (Should the ACP funds be cut completely, it may also be necessary to seek additional funding for this project.)

Supporting Agencies:

{NRCS} will use USDA Technical guide specifications and provide plant materials information.

{MNDOT} will provide technical information and recommendations on proposed tree plantings along state highways.

{Watersheds and Red River Management Board} may assist in public education, and be called on to assist in funding.

Priority ranking: Medium

Estimated Cost: $100,000.00 for trees, planting and maintenance.

Possible funding sources: ACP cost share, State Cost Share, Challenge Grants, Watershed Districts, LCMR grants, and private competitive grants.

3) BUFFER AND VEGETATIVE STRIPS (EXAMPLE CORN OR FLAX)

Lead Agencies:

{SWCDs} will work with NRCS and other agencies to promote this practice. As new information is made available on this conservation method, they will publish articles on new data.

{NRCS} will provide seeding rates, species, and design recommendations.

{Polk County Extension Service} Will provide demonstrations and education.

Priority ranking: Low

Estimated Cost: Education programs are estimated to cost $1,000.00 for the next five year period. If a grant for test plots could be located, an estimated $3,000.00 would be needed to conduct and develop test plots.

Possible funding sources: Polk County Extension Service, Pembina Trail RC&D, Watershed Districts, Challenge Grants through BWSR, and NRCS.

GROUNDWATER QUALITY

Groundwater is an important resource to all residents within the county. The Task Force has evaluated possible threats to groundwater quality, and developed the following goals for the next five years in order to maintain the current water quality.

A) Assist in Best Management Practices for Septic Systems

Lead Agencies:

{Polk County Environmental Services} will administer Polk County Zoning ordinances. Public education on the relationship of conforming septic systems, water quality and property values, will be emphasized.

Supporting Agencies:

{SWCDs} will continue to assist the county in locating abandoned septic systems on tax forfeit

property. Efforts to educate the public will continue.

{Cities} Participate in locating septic systems within the Crookston aquifer recharge area (at this point unknown). Assist in educating property owners about importance of properly constructed and maintained septic systems.

{Polk County Extension Service.} Cluster Issue for next year or two. Assist in public education.

{MPCA}will promote importance of best management practices for septic systems, and provide materials and information to local agencies as it becomes available. MPCA will notify local agencies of changes in state rules and regulations.

Priority ranking: High

Estimated Cost: $40,000.00 has been designated in the Ag. Loan program through the SRF.

Possible funding sources: Landowners will be responsible for these costs. They will be able to have the assistance of low interest loans through the SRF if they meet the program requirements. If grants should become available in the future, these will be sought.

B) Wellhead Protection

Lead Agencies:

{Cities} The City of Crookston will be developing a Wellhead Protection Plan using guidance provided by the state.

Supporting Agencies:

{SWCDs} will assist the cities and other public water suppliers within the county in locating existing data which will aide them in determining the area of their respective well head protection areas.

{Polk County Environmental. Services}will ensure through issuance of zoning permits that water quality will not be adversely affected.

{Polk County Extension Service}will assist in education of the public on the importance of well head protection.

Priority ranking: High

Estimated Cost: $100,000.00 for administrative costs to local municipalities and rural water suppliers. This will not cover any potential problems that may be discovered through the development of wellhead protection plans.

Possible funding sources: Funding for this program will be the responsibility of the municipalities or rural water suppliers designated to develop plans. It is hoped that some funding in the form of grants or allocations be offered by the state in the future.

C) Assist in the proper sealing of Abandoned Wells.

The task force estimates that approximately 100 abandoned wells each year will be sealed in Polk County. Based on current data, the cost of sealing wells averages about $500.00 each.

Lead Agencies:

{SWCDs} will work to obtain additional grants to continue abandon well sealing programs already begun. The SWCDs goal will be to seal as many as possible of the estimated 10,000 abandoned wells in the county over the next five years.

{Cities}} will participate in educating property owners of the importance of sealing abandoned wells. May assist in locating abandoned wells within Crookston aquifer recharge area.

Supporting Agencies:

{NRCS} will certify needs and completion on CFSA cost share projects, and assist on other projects as need arises.

Priority ranking: Medium

Estimated Cost: $250,000.00

Possible funding sources: CFSA cost share, BWSR challenge grants, and Landowners

D) Underground Storage Tanks

Lead Agencies:

{Cities} Participate in educating owners of underground and above ground storage tanks about importance of proper maintenance and safe handling practices.

{MPCA} will advise local government agencies and local units of governments, of changes in state regulations, and provide local agencies with educational materials as they become available.

Supporting Agencies:

{SWCDs} will assist in locating underground tanks on the county's tax forfeit properties.

Priority ranking: Low

Estimated Cost: This cost is unknown because of the varying circumstances and types of possible underground tanks.

Possible funding sources: Petro Fund, landowners, and MPCA.

E) Gravel Pits

Lead Agencies:

{Polk County Environmental. Services} Will develop and provide education on illegal dumpsites to explain the potential for groundwater contamination.

Supporting Agencies:

{Cities} Participate in educating owners and operators of gravel pits about the importance of proper handling of fuels, chemicals, lubricants, etc. Inform them of their role in protecting the quality of the groundwater. This would be done within the Crookston aquifer recharge area.

{DNR} Will work with the county to clean up and restore a few pits to natural conditions.

Priority ranking: Low

Estimated Cost: $25,000.00

Possible funding sources: DNR

SURFACE WATER

A) Water testing

Lead Agencies:

{UMC} has facilities to test many inorganic parameters in water, both surface and groundwater, and will assist in water testing.

Supporting Agencies:

{Cities} The City of Crookston may perform some testing of the Red Lake River as part of our well head protection plan (WHP). The City of East Grand Forks will make data available to agencies on current and past conditions of the Red Lake River.

{Polk County Extension Service} Will provide water testing clinics and education.

{Maple Lake Improvement District and Union-Sarah Lake Association} will conduct water tests of the lakes within their jurisdiction upon availability of funds.

Priority ranking: High

Estimated Cost:

Possible funding sources: In kind services of volunteers, Watershed Districts, municipalities, DNR, SWCDs, Aggasiz Environmental Learning Center, MPCA, State Health Department, University of MN Crookston, and the Improvement Districts of Maple, Union and Sarah Lakes.

B) Non-point source pollution,

Lead Agencies:

{SWCDs} The SWCDs will continue to work with landowners and agencies to identify and assist in reduction of non-point source pollution through promotion of best management practices.

{Watersheds} {NRCS} will encourage landowners to use good stewardship in regard to land use.

{Water and Light Dept. of the City of East Grand Forks} will work with the Task Force Committee and advise them of testing data from the cities water facility. Should levels of contamination within the Red Lake River become a concern, location of contaminants will be explored by the city and the Task Force Committee.

Supporting Agencies:

{The City of Crookston} Again, as part of the WHP plan, we will be identifying possible sources of non-point pollution and attempt to implement solutions to them within the recharge area.

Priority ranking: High

Estimated Cost: $2,000.00 for newsletters and education.

Possible funding sources: SWCDs, NRCS, the City of East Grand Forks, and the City of Crookston.

C) Drainage,

Lead Agencies:

{Polk County and the Watershed Districts} Will maintain existing drainage systems. Act upon petitions for new drainage systems.

{NRCS and NW MN SRF Joint Powers Board} will provide information and assistance on design.

{SWCDs} will continue to offer assistance to landowners for surveying and ditch maintenance. They will also distribute materials and education to the public including area schools.

Priority ranking: High

Estimated Cost:

Possible funding sources: Polk County and the Watershed Districts.

D) Shoreline protection,

Lead Agencies:

{Polk County Environmental. Services} will discourage changing natural shoreline and altering natural vegetation. They will administer Polk County Zoning Ordinance.

{NRCS and NW MN SRF Joint Powers Board} will assist with design and implementation.

Priority ranking: Medium

Estimated Cost: $50,000.00

Possible funding sources: DNR Shoreline Grant, Polk County, and townships.

E) Overland flooding,

Lead Agencies

{Watershed Districts} Maintain permit system to regulate culvert sizes, maintain drainageways, establish retention structures and maintain rivers.

{Polk County Environmental Services} will administer Polk County zoning ordinance to ensure orderly and compliant development in floodplain areas.

Supporting Agencies:

{NRCS} will maintain flood plain maps in the office and assist with information.

{SWCDs} will assist landowners with evaluation of practices to best meet the needs of their land. They will assist in funding through the state cost share program and other grants for installation of best management practices in order to reduce, control, or minimize overland flooding. Information and materials will be made available through the SWCD offices. Education programs and materials will continue to be provided to area schools.

Priority ranking: Medium

Estimated Cost: $2,000.00 for education

Possible funding sources: Watershed Districts, Polk County Environmental Services, NRCS, and SWCDs.

F) Investigate options to improve or protect water quality of county lakes,

Lead Agencies:

{Polk County Water Plan Task Force Committee}

Supporting Agencies:

{DNR} will encourage, cooperate when committees are formed. This will require grass roots support and involvement.

{MPCA} will advise local agencies of information and regulations as it becomes available.

{Polk County Environmental Services} will work with public and other agencies to process information and distribute data as it becomes available.

{SWCDs} will assist in collection and evaluation of data collected. The SWCDs will work as liaisons between landowners and agencies and will assist in distribution of new information as it becomes available.

{Polk County Watershed Districts} will assist in the evaluation of data as it becomes available. The watershed districts will assist in recommendations and the permitting process for projects deemed important for the improvement or maintenance of area lakes.

{Citizens Committees} have been established to work with agencies to develop strategies and plans that will maintain and/or improve Polk County Lakes.

Priority ranking: Medium

Estimated Cost: $200,000.00

Possible funding sources: DNR, MPCA, Polk County Environmental Services, SWCDs, Watershed Districts, and Citizens Committees.

G) Water assessment and prioritization of Wetlands within Polk County

Lead Agencies:

{Watershed Districts, County Highway Department, SWCDs, and MPCA} These agencies will develop plans to prioritize wetlands within the county, as well as to make assessment recommendations to the Task Force on water quality methodologies for future resource planning.

Supporting Agencies:

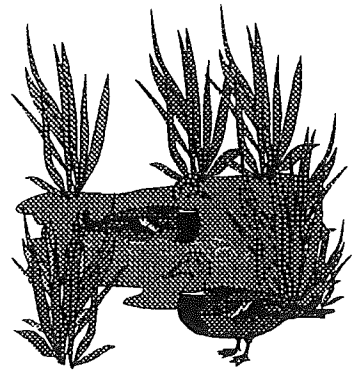
{The Water Plan Task Force}

When the above agencies have information and recommendations on assessments or wetland prioritization, these will be reviewed with the entire Task Force for approval.

Priority ranking: Medium

Estimated Cost: $200,000.00

Possible funding sources: BWSR Competitive Grants, Polk County, the State of Minnesota, Watershed Districts, and townships.



H) Snowdumping Sites (possible salt, chemical sand, etc. into rivers or lakes),

Lead Agencies:

{Cities} Find ways to minimize effects of chemical, salt and sand.

Priority ranking: Low

Estimated Cost: $10,000.00 to develop new sites and for education expenses.

Possible funding sources: Cities, Watershed Districts, and in kind services from Polk County Extension Service and the SWCDs.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

A) Feedlots,

Lead Agencies:

{SWCDs} have been appointed feedlot officers for Polk County. They will assist landowners through the permitting process and offer assistance to landowners for obtaining engineering from the NRCS or the NW MN Joint Powers Board. The SWCDs will continue to seek funding assistance for landowners through grants, cost share and low interest loan programs.

{Polk County Environmental Services} -will continue to work with MPCA, SWCD in permitting feedlots, administering County Zoning Ordinances, and checking complaints.

Priority ranking: High

Estimated Cost: $1,000,000.00 to develop sites and for education.

Possible funding sources: ACP cost share, State cost share, State Revolving Fund Loans, and landowners.

B) Recycling,

Lead Agencies:

{Polk County Environmental Services} Will provide public information, sites for drop off of materials, and information of where, what, and when. Businesses will be contacted to inform them on reducing reusing and recycling.

Supporting Agencies:

{City of Crookston} The City has a curbside recycling program in place which results in less solid waste at the landfill.

Priority ranking: High

Estimated Cost: $1,165,000.00

Possible funding sources: The State of Minnesota - SCORE, and Polk County

C) Old landfills,

Lead Agencies:

{Polk County Environmental Services} will continue to identify where old landfills are located through solicitation of information.

{City of East Grand Forks} The City's goal for this service is to reduce the solid waste going to the landfill. The City has a curbside recycling program available to all individual residential homes. Recycling bins and containers are available at yard waste sites in EGF for businesses and other people who do not have curbside service available to them.

Supporting Agencies:

{SWCDs} will assist the Polk County Environmental services in distribution of information through the quarterly newsletters.

Priority ranking: Medium

Estimated Cost: $5,000.00 for education, inventory and newsletters.

Possible funding sources: SWCDs and Polk County.

D) Household Hazardous Waste,

Lead Agencies:

{Polk County Environmental. Services} One day collection events in different areas of the county will be held annually to ensure the public is able to participate throughout the county. On going collection in Crookston will continue.

Supporting Agencies:

{City of Crookston} The city informs the public of the importance of disposing of household hazardous waste properly and encourages them to participate in the county's collection.

{City of East Grand Forks} The goal for this program is to remove hazardous chemicals from our waste stream and properly dispose of them. Annually, a collection day is available for all EGF and Polk County residents to bring in their wastes for proper disposal. This program is administered by the NW Minnesota Household Hazardous Waste facility located at Bagley, Minnesota.

{SWCDs} Will assist in providing staff for collections, and will promote the events in the quarterly newsletter.
{Polk County Extension Service}

Priority ranking: Medium
Estimated Cost: $200,000.00
Possible funding sources: MPCA, Polk County, and the City of East Grand Forks

E) *Solid Waste Disposal,*

Lead Agencies:

{Cities} The City of Crookston has its own garbage service for homes and disposes of that solid waste properly at the landfill. The city collects leaves and grass and has a compost site. For the City of EGF, the goal of this program is to properly dispose of all solid wastes at the proper landfills. The City has its own solid waste collection service offered to all residents and commercial accounts. A yard waste site is also available to all residents to dispose of grass clippings, small brush, etc.

{Polk County Environmental. Services} Will provide public information, sites and information to aide citizens in proper waste disposal.

Priority ranking: Medium
Estimated Cost: $5,390,000.00
Possible funding sources: Polk County and the City of East Grand Forks

F) *Pesticides,*

Lead Agencies:

{Polk County Environmental. Services} will conduct collection with the Department of Agriculture for farmers every two years. Ongoing pesticide jug collections will continue during farming seasons.

Supporting Agencies:

{Polk County Extension Service} Will assist with pesticide application training and education.

Priority ranking: Low
Estimated Cost: $5,000.00
Possible funding sources: Department of Agriculture, and Polk County

G) *Dumps,*

Lead Agencies:

{Polk County Environmental. Services} is continuing work to identify where dumps are located. They will follow up on complaints of illegal dumping and provide signs if necessary. Work with landowners on prevention will continue.

Supporting Agencies:

{DNR}

Priority ranking: Low
Estimated Cost: $15,000.00
Possible funding sources: Grants

H) *Salvage Recycling yards,*

Lead Agencies:

{MPCA}
{Polk County Environmental Services} continues to work with MPCA and dealers on conforming, consistent disposal of wastes, commodities and recycling.

Supporting Agencies:

{DNR} Will clean up approximately 10 sites on wildlife management areas in next five years. Possibly some adjacent to DNR land.

Priority ranking: Low
Estimated Cost: $5,000.00
Possible funding sources: MPCA, and Polk County

NATURAL RESOURCES

A) *CRP, WRP, Waterbank, RIM & PWP Easement Enrollments* (THE TASK FORCE WILL ENCOURAGE LAND RETIREMENT PROGRAMS FOR MARGINAL LAND OR LAND IN SENSITIVE WATER RECHARGE AREAS.) :

Many factors are considered when assessing areas for qualification in land retirement. Many areas in Polk County can be determined as sensitive based on current available data. As addressed in the assessments under sedimentation, most of Polk County has a greater than 2T soil loss due to wind erosion. More than 90% of presettlement wetlands have been drained within the county boundaries. An estimated 1,000 miles of county judicial ditches have been established and are maintained by the county. The possibility of the

termination of the federal CRP program may result in as many as 97,520 acres (8% of the entire county) of marginal agricultural land being put back into farming production. Over the past years these acres have been a valuable resource for reducing erosion, restoring wetlands, wildlife habitat, and providing filtration for some water recharge areas.

For these reasons the Task Force views that retirement of some marginal lands in the future to be of great importance.

Lead Agencies:

{SWCDs} will promote land retirement programs for marginal and sensitive lands. The Districts will assist landowners in the evaluation and application of land for the RIM and PWP programs. They will also promote the program and offer information on benefits to the landowner and to the environment. They will work to obtain easements under the RIM or PWP programs. They will also assist in plans for wetland banking.

{NRCS} will assist with providing information, plant species recommendations, seeding mixtures and rates for long term programs including WRP, CRP, RIM, PWP and Waterbank.

Supporting Agencies:

{Polk County Extension Service} Will provide information on retirement programs.

Priority ranking: High

Estimated Cost: If these programs develop a more substantial base, it is estimated by the SWCDs that the cost of easement programs could exceed $3,000,000.00 in landowner payments or acquisition costs in the next five year period.

Possible funding sources: USDA, DNR, The state of Minnesota, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, MN Waterfowl Association, Goose Unlimited, Ducks Unlimited, the Wildlife Federation, Pheasants Forever, and Local Sportsmen Organizations.

B) Wetlands & Wetland Banking,

The county will be working on locating, assessing and developing sites for wetland banking within the county over the next five years. Sites will be evaluated based on the methodology stated in the assessment portion of this document.

The task force currently has not conducted and inventory of priority wetlands in the county and will work to identify these wetlands in the next five years. The degree of detail will be directly related to the availability of staff and funds. If grants become available to bring on a temporary (full time) position, the task force will look into securing this type of assistance in order to compile a detailed inventory of priority wetlands within the county.

Lead Agencies:

{SWCDs} The district will work with the county, landowners and other agencies to locate, evaluate and develop restoration plans for land to be enrolled into wetland banking. They will work to obtain funding for the inventory through grant applications. The districts will continue to administer the Wetland Conservation Act for the county, and continue to provide public education on the status of the law and the importance of wetland to Polk County.

Supporting Agencies:

{Watershed Districts} will try to include wetland banking in Watershed District projects.

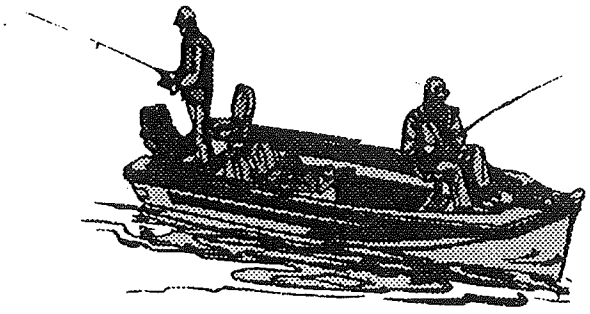
{Polk County Highway} Currently in the process of constructing / Rehabilitating wetland for mitigation.

{NRCS} will provide information and identification.

Priority ranking: High

Estimated Cost: $250,000.00

Possible funding sources: BWSR competitive Grants, DNR, MPCA, and Polk County.



C) Public Lands - Recreation,

Lead Agencies:

{DNR} Will continue acquisition and management - likely involve more people in the future.

Supporting Agencies:

{US Fish and Wildlife}

{NRCS and NW MN Joint Powers Board} will assist in layout and design recommendations.

Priority ranking: Low
Estimated Cost: Funding is subject to state legislative action.
Possible funding sources: LCMR, DNR, and US Fish and Wildlife.

E) Woodlots,

Lead Agencies:
{DNR Forestry} Provide information to landowners on management possibilities.
Supporting Agencies:
{NRCS} has technical guide specifications and information.
Priority ranking: Low
Estimated Cost: $1,000.00 for education or newsletters.
Possible funding sources: SWCDs, DNR, and Pembina Trail RC&D.

F) Endangered species (Plants and animals),

Lead Agencies:
{Polk County Extension Service}
{SWCDs} Information and education.
{DNR} MN Natural Heritage Program *Please note- Items with * are within purview of present program capabilities upon request. Others are contingent on having staff of our program resident in the region (i.e. - when CBS staff are there or if we ever get a regional ecologist based in Bemidji)*
Provide site specific data in digital form for county wide planning purposes upon request to appropriate agencies. Coordinate with local organization / agencies in monitoring selected key endangered resources. Coordinate with Co. Highway Dept. in development of guidelines to deal with endangered plants in rights of way, development of interpretive signs etc. (May be a long time coming) Develop management guidelines for endangered species that are present in the county. Coordinate with other organizations & agencies in development of educational & interpretive materials dealing with endangered species. Polk Co. has a real potential for "eco-tourism" based on its prairies with their prairie chickens and western fringed prairie orchids.
Supporting Agencies:
{NRCS} will maintain list in their office. They will discourage the destruction if possible on known sites.
Priority ranking: Low
Estimated Cost: $1,000.00 for education and newsletters.
Possible funding sources: DNR, SWCDs, and Polk County.

G) Fisheries,

Lead Agencies:
{DNR Fisheries} The DNR will continue fish and lake management programs.
Priority ranking: Low
Estimated Cost: $10,000.00 for administrative or management of the programs. This does not take into account restocking of fish in the area lakes.
Possible funding sources: DNR Fisheries

H) Education,

Goals and objectives for education in the upcoming years will continue to include the following education programs and activities:

- Arbor Day Presentations,
- Red River Valley Winter Shows booth,
- Fertile Fair,
- Fosston Fair,
- Small Grain Institute booth,

- Envirothon,
- Environmental Education Fall Day,
- SWCD Poster and Essay contest,
- Rydell Wildlife Refuge Youth Tour,
- Distribution of Educational Materials,
- CLWP Tours,
- Environmental Education Council,
- Education Treasure Trunks,
- Household Hazardous Waste Collections,
- Pesticide Container Collection, and
- Water Testing.

Lead Agencies:
{Polk County Water Plan Task Force Committee}
Supporting Agencies:
{NRCS} will provide information and participate in activities.
{MN Natural Heritage Program} Prepare educational materials regarding these resources in the county (probably forth coming within three years of completion of county biological survey. Conduct educational field trips for the public to observe natural communities, learn about endangered plants in rights of way, development of interpretive signs etc. Coordinate with other organizations and agencies in development of educational and interpretive materials dealing with endangered species.

Priority ranking: High
Estimated Cost: $300,000.00
Possible funding sources: SWCDs, Polk County Extension Service, Polk County Environmental Services, and Watershed Districts.