U.S. Department of Agriculture | NRCS-CPA-52
Natural Resources Conservation Service | 04/2023

ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION WORKSHEET

A. Client Name: Barnes County Water Resources District

B. Conservation Plan ID # (as applicable):
Program Authority (optional): PL-566

D. Client's Objective(s) (purpose):
Lower the elevation of 10 Mile Lake by 4 feet to alleviate damages caused by excess surface and ground water. Increase crop production in the watershed by bringing land back into crop production and installation of subsurface drainage in existing crop fields.

C. Identification # (farm, tract, field #, etc. as required):
Portions of the following 12-digit HUCs are included in the project area: Orren Slough 090202040103, Tomahawk Lake 090202040104, Silver Creek 090202030703, and Baldhill Creek 090202030808. Barnes County, ND

E. Need for Action:
Excessive wet conditions have lead to damage to roads, residences and crop fields. Response times for emergency services have slowed significantly due to the effects high water levels have had on area infrastructure. The project would bring some former agricultural land back into production, and would implrove water management for other existing ag. land.

H. Alternatives

No Action √ if RMS ☐	*Alternative 1* √ if RMS ☐	*Alternative 2* √ if RMS ☐
Conditions would remain the same. Ag production would continue as it has been, farming more acreage during dry periods and less during wet periods. Prolonged wet periods would result in salinity and compaction issues creeping higher on the landscape, and productivity would go down. During dry periods, ag. production would follow the water line down the landscape as possible. During dryer periods, road O&M would be typical of other roads in the area. During excessively wet periods, damage to roads would increase, potentially becoming a chronic issue.	Practices to be installed: Open Channel (582), Structure for Water Control (587), Subsurface Drain (606), Drainage Water Management (554), Critical Area Planting (342), Wetland Restoration (657). Water control structure would be placed at the lake outlet. An 8.35 mile outlet channel would be constructed to lower the level of 10 Mile Lake 4 feet. Tile drainage, with drainage water management systems would be installed on 13,329 acres of cropland (including lake perimeter) for increased production and salinity management. Mitigation requirements for the project would be 1,254 acres of deepwater habitat, 539 acres of lacustrine fringe wetlands, and 1,612 acres of depressional wetlands.	Practices to be installed: Open Channel (582), Structure for Water Control (587), Subsurface Drain (606), Drainage Water Management (554), Critical Area Planting (342), Wetland Restoration (657).Water control structure would be placed at the lake outlet. An 8.35 mile outlet channel would be constructed to lower the level of 10 Mile Lake 4 feet. Tile drainage, with drainage water management systems, would be more limited compared with Alt 1, however still applied around the lake for salinity management. Mitigation requirements for the project would be 1,254 acres of deepwater habitat, 539 acres of lacustrine fringe wteland, and 156 acres of depressional wetlands.

Resource Concerns

In Section "F" below, analyze, record, and address concerns identified through the Resources Inventory process (see FOTG Section 3 - Resource Concerns List and Planning Criteria for guidance).

I. Effects of Alternatives

F. Resource Concerns and Existing/ Benchmark Conditions (Analyze and record the existing/benchmark conditions for each identified concern)	*No Action* — **Amount, Status, Description** *(Document both short and long term impacts)*	*No Action* — √ if does NOT meet PC	*Alternative 1* — **Amount, Status, Description** *(Document both short and long term impacts)*	*Alternative 1* — √ if does NOT meet PC	*Alternative 2* — **Amount, Status, Description** *(Document both short and long term impacts)*	*Alternative 2* — √ if does NOT meet PC
SOIL						
Wind erosion Topsoil is vulnerable to wind erosion due to tillage practices used to dry and warm the soil for earlier spring planting. Planner average estimated erosion is 8 T/ac/yr	No Change	☑ NOT meet PC	The resultant lowered lake level and water table will likely result in more no till/reduced till practice adoption as the soils will have improved drainage, however these practices are not required or included in the Plan/EA. Estimated erosion rates may be reduced if tillage practices are voluntarily adopted. It's also possible erosion would increase if some operators continued with conventional tillage.	☑ NOT meet PC	The resultant lowered lake level and water table will likely result in more no till/reduced till practice adoption as the soils will have improved drainage, however these practices are not required or included in the Plan/EA. Estimated erosion rates may be reduced if tillage practices are voluntarily adopted. It's also possible erosion would increase if some operators continued with conventional tillage. Compared with alt 1, the total erosion is expected to be greater.	☑ NOT meet PC
Compaction Planner observed compaction issues occur due to perceived need for tillage to dry soils out. Also through the use of land rollers on wet soils, especially adjacent to wetlands	No Change	☑ NOT meet PC	The resultant lowered lake level and water table will lead to dryer soil conditions which will be be less vulnerable to compaction from land rolling. Also, less, or no tillage will be needed to complete field work in the affected fields.	☑ NOT meet PC	The resultant lowered lake level and water table will lead to dryer soil conditions which will be be less vulnerable to compaction from land rolling. Also, less, or no tillage will be needed to complete field work in the affected fields. This effect is less acres when compared with Alt 1.	☑ NOT meet PC
Concentration of salts or other chemicals Salinity is observed around wetlands or drained wetlands.	No change	☑ NOT meet PC	Soils ringing the lowered lake and other wet cropland are expected to be affected by saline discharge. Subsurfce Drains and DWM will improve the soil condition.	☐ NOT meet PC	Soils ringing the lowered lake are expected to be affected by saline discharge. Subsurfce Drains and DWM will improve the soil condition. This effect is less acres when compared with Alt 1.	☐ NOT meet PC
		☐ NOT meet PC		☐ NOT meet PC		☐ NOT meet PC
WATER						
Ponding and flooding A long term wet cycle has increased lake and wetland volumes and increased their surface areas, reducing cropable	Surface water levels of Ten Mile Lake will continue fluctuate widely. Issues with road damage, residential basement flooding, and emergency services access to rural residents will continue during wet periods.	☑	Surface water level of Ten Mile Lake would no longer expand to the point of causing damages currently being experienced. 580 acres of former lake bottom and non-cropland wouuld be brought into production and tiled to prevent future salinity issues. 13,329	☐	Surface water level of Ten Mile Lake would no longer expand to the point of causing damages currently being experienced. 340.4 acres of former lake bottom and non-cropland wouuld be brought into production. 2,132.7 acres of cropland adjacent to the outlet channel	☐

surface areas, reducing cropable acres and impacting roads.		NOT meet PC	acres of cropland adjacent to the constructed outlet channel would be tile drained, with drainage water management structures installed. Management plan for the outlet structure would ensure releases of water from the lake would not cause downstream flooding.	NOT meet PC	would be tiled, with drainage water management structures installed. Management plan for the outlet structure would ensure releases of water from the lake would not cause downstream flooding.	NOT meet PC
Seasonal high water table A long term wet cycle has increased the frequency of negative impacts from high water tables, including reducing the cropable acres and reduced yields.	Seasonal high water table would continue to negatively affect residences and farmsteads. Farming would remain difficult in wet years. Poor production would continue.	☑ NOT meet PC	Water table would be lower on a much more consistant basis. Alleviating negative impacts caused by the high water table under the no action alternative. 13,329 acres of cropland adjacent to the lake and the outlet channel would be tiled, enabling the controll of the seasonally high water table. Production would improve in yield and consistency. 580 additional acres would be brought into production.	☐ NOT meet PC	Water table would be lower on a much more consistant basis. Alleviating negative impacts caused by the high water table under the no action alternative. 2,132.7 acres of cropland adjacent to the project could have drainage water management practices installed, enabling the controll of the seasonally high water table. Production would improve in yield and consistency. 340.4 additional acres would be brought into production.	☐ NOT meet PC
Salts transported to surface water	No change.	☑ NOT meet PC	Installation of subsurface tile drainage systems on 13,329 acres of adjacent cropland could impact downstream water quality by leaching excess nutrients, herbicides, and salts into surface water.	☑ NOT meet PC	Installation of subsurface tile drainage systems on 2,132.7 acres of cropland adjacent to the lake could impact downstream water quality by leaching excess nutrients, herbicides, and salts into surace water.	☑ NOT meet PC
F. Resource Concerns and Existing/ Benchmark Conditions (Analyze and record the existing/benchmark conditions for each identified concern)	**I. Effects of Alternatives (continued)**					
	No Action		***Alternative 1***		***Alternative 2***	
	Amount, Status, Description *(Document both short and long term impacts)*	**√ if does NOT meet PC**	**Amount, Status, Description** *(Document both short and long term impacts)*	**√ if does NOT meet PC**	**Amount, Status, Description** *(Document both short and long term impacts)*	**√ if does NOT meet PC**
AIR						
Emissions of Particulate Matter (PM) and PM Precursors Air quality is periodically degraded by tillage practices and traffic on gravel roads.	No Change. The AOI is consistent with other rural areas in the eastern part of North Dakota.	☑ NOT meet PC	Increased crop production will slighly increase annual truck/tractor emissions and fugitive dust. Construction will temporarily increase emissions and fugitive dust potentially impacting residents in Dazey and rural residents adjacent to construction.	☑ NOT meet PC	Increased crop production will slighly increase annual truck/tractor emissions and fugitive dust, this impact will be slighly less compared with alt 1. Construction will temporarily increase emissions and fugitive dust potentially impacting residents in Dazey and rural residents adjacent to construction.	☑ NOT meet PC
		☐ NOT meet PC		☐ NOT meet PC		☐ NOT meet PC
PLANTS						
Plant productivity and health High water table and flooding have reduced crop yeilds.	No change. High water table and flooding will continue to hinder crop production in the AOI.	☑ NOT meet PC	Consistent water levels and lowered water table would result in improved crop production. Crop production would be made possible in some of the former lake bottom and non-cropland.	☐ NOT meet PC	Consistent water levels and lowered water table would result in improved crop production. Crop production would be made possible in some of the former lake bottom non-cropland.	☐ NOT meet PC
Plant structure and composition High water table and flooding have resulted in an increase of wetland vegetation compared with before the wet cycle where more acres were in cropland land use.	No change.	☑ NOT meet PC	Plant diversity would be reduced to monocultrue crops once drainage and drainage water management systems are installed. Although mitigation efforts will create conditions similar to what is currently present, it will be in a different location.	☐ NOT meet PC	Plant diversity would be reduced to monocultrue crops once drainage and drainage water management systems are installed. Although mitigation efforts will create conditions similar to what is currently present, it will be in a different location.	☐ NOT meet PC
		☐ NOT meet PC		☐ NOT meet PC		☐ NOT meet PC
ANIMALS						
Terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates Wetland buffers and some odd areas of non-cropland provide habitat for a variety of terrestrial wildlife and invertabrates	No Change	☑ NOT meet PC	Conversion of wetlands will destroy most if not all the habitat for terrestrial animals and invertabrates in the affected fields. Mitigation efforts will replace the lost habitat, though in a different location.	☐ NOT meet PC	Conversion of wetlands will destroy most if not all the habitat for terrestrial animals and invertabrates in the affected fields. Mitigation efforts will replace the lost habitat, though in a different location.	☐ NOT meet PC
Aquatic habitat for fish and other organisms Ten Mile Lake and other wetlands in the AOI provide habitat for numerous species of amphibians, fish, and invertabrates.	No Change	☑ NOT meet PC	Conversion of wetlands will destroy most if not all the habitat for aquatic animals and invertabrates in the affected fields. Reduced depth of Ten Mile Lake may adversely affect fish species that may currently be present in the lake. Mitigation efforts will replace the lost habitat, though in a different location.	☐ NOT meet PC	Conversion of wetlands will destroy most if not all the habitat for aquatic animals and invertabrates in the affected fields. Reduced depth of Ten Mile Lake may adversely affect fish species that may currently be present in the lake. Mitigation efforts will replace the lost habitat, though in a different location.	☐ NOT meet PC
		☐		☐		☐

		☐ NOT meet PC		☐ NOT meet PC		☐ NOT meet PC
ENERGY						
Energy efficiency of farming/ranching practices and field operations	No Change. Fuel efficiency is poor when having to operate in wet, heavy soils. Additional passes are often required to prepare fields for planting.	☑ NOT meet PC	Land with properly installed drainage should be easier to get equipment across fields. Field operations should take fewer passes to accomplish goals.	☑ NOT meet PC	Land with properly installed drainage should be easier to get equipment across fields. Field operations should take fewer passes to accomplish goals. Improvements would be limited to those areas immedeately adjacent to Ten Mile Lake where DWM practices will be installed.	☑ NOT meet PC
Energy efficiency of equipment and facilities	No Change	☑ NOT meet PC	Increased energy used to pump water out of subsurface tile lines, where gravity outlets are not feasible, on 13,329 acres of new tile drainage.	☑ NOT meet PC	Increased energy used to pump water out of subsurface tile lines, where gravity outlets are not feasible, on 2,133 acres of new tile drainage.	☑ NOT meet PC
Human Economic and Social Considerations						
Public Health and Safety Roads have periods of closure during spring runoff and homes experience basement flooding issues.	Increased response times by emergency services to reach residences within the AOI. Basements will continue to experience flooding issues.		Roads will consistently be in good repair, therefore, reducing response times by emergency services. Residential and Commercial basements should have much fewer issues with flooding.		Roads will consistently be in good repair, therefore, reducing response times by emergency services. Residential and Commercial basements should have much fewer issues with flooding.	
Capital A long term we cycle has increase road operation and maintencance costs and reduced agricultural income.	O&M on township roads will continue to be high. Leading to higher property taxes. Plant productivity will continue to be depressed. Leading to lower revenue for producers		Federal funding through PL-566 would be approximately 54% of total costs, if the proejct had been feasible, leaving an large cost to be funded by state and local sources.		Federal funding through PL-566 would be approximately 54% of total costs, if the proejct had been feasible, leaving an large cost to be funded by state and local sources.	
Land Use Land use is primarily intensive cropping with some haying mixed in. Acres previously in cropped land use have increased hayland and wildlife landuse acres.	No change in land use will occur.		This alternative will make 580.4 acres previously under water or wildlife landuse available for cropping. Although the converted acres will be mitigated, it will be in a different location		This alternative will make 340.4 acres previously under water or wildlife landuse available for cropping. Although the converted acres will be mitigated, it will be in a different location	

Special Environmental Concerns: Environmental Laws, Executive Orders, Policies, etc.

In Section "G" complete and attach Environmental Procedures Guide Sheets for documentation as applicable. Items with a "●" may require a federal permit or consultation/coordination between the lead agency and another government agency. In these cases, effects may need to be determined in consultation with another agency. Planning and practice implementation may proceed for practices not involved in consultation.

G. Special Environmental Concerns (Document existing/ benchmark conditions)	**J. Impacts to Special Environmental Concerns**					
	No Action		***Alternative 1***		***Alternative 2***	
	Document all impacts (Attach Guide Sheets as applicable)	√ if does NOT meet PC	Document all impacts (Attach Guide Sheets as applicable)	√ if needs further action	Document all impacts (Attach Guide Sheets as applicable)	√ if needs further action
●Clean Air Act *Guide Sheet* North Dkota has no identified non-attainment areas.	No Effect	☐	May Affect Temporary impacts expected during construction will be minimized with BMP's and construction specifications.	☐	May Affect Temporary impacts expected during construction will be minimized with BMP's and construction specifications	☐
●Clean Water Act / Waters of the U.S. *Guide Sheet* Silver Creek along with a tributary that begins within the AOI is listed as an impaired water. Silver Creek is a tributary to the Baldhill Creek. The eastern boundary of the AOI is adjacent to the Baldhill Creek which is labeled as an "Impaired Water" according to CWA 303d. Baldhill Creek discharges into Lake Ashtabula/Sheyenne River which is also labeled as an impaired water under 303d of the CWA. The AOI contains many lacustrine, palustrine and riverine wetlands.	No Effect	☐	May Affect USACE would need to make a CWA determination for wetlands, if the project were to proceed to a full PL-566 plan. Up to 1,254 acres of deepwater habitat and 539 acres of lacustrine fringe wetlands (or more/less based on field wetland delineation) would potentially need to be mitigated under CWA due to lowering of the lake level by 4 feet. Up to 1,611.9 acres of palustrine wetlands (or more/less based on field wetland delineation) would potentially need to be mtiigated under CWA due to tile drainage installed in crop fields. Note that E.O. 11990 would require mitigation for these drained wetlands, even if USACE determined the wetlands were not regulated under CWA.	☑	May Affect USACE would need to make a CWA determination for wetlands, if the project were to proceed to a full PL-566 plan. Up to 1,254 acres of deepwater habitat and 539 acres of lacustrine fringe wetlands (or more/less based on field wetland delineation) would potentially need to be mitigated under CWA due to lowering of the lake level by 4 feet. Up to 155.6 acres of palustrine wetlands (or more/less based on field wetland delineation) would potentially need to be mtiigated under CWA due to tile drainage installed in crop fields. Note that E.O. 11990 would require this mitigation for these drained wetlands, even if USACE determined the wetlands were not regulated under CWA.	☑
●Coastal Zone Management *Guide Sheet* n/a		☐		☐		☐
Coral Reefs *Guide Sheet* n/a		☐		☐		☐
●Cultural Resources / Historic Properties *Guide Sheet* A review of the state Cultural	No Effect	☐	May Affect This alternative would require initiating Section 106 consultation with tribes and NDSHPO and the	☑	May Affect This alternative would require initiating Section 106 consultation with tribes and NDSHPO and the	☑

Resource Information System has identified 3 previous cultural resource surveys and 15 recorded archeological sites and structures within the proposed project area. The State Historic Preservation Office and surrounding tribes would be consulted during the planning process.			completion of a Class III Cultural Resource Survey.		completion of a Class III Cultural Resource Survey.	
●Endangered and Threatened Species *Guide Sheet* A USFWS Ipac evaluation was completed for the Ten Mile Lake project area and no ciritical habitats exist for any endangered, threatened, or candidate species. Three species were listed as potentially present Northern Long-Eared Bat (endangered), Dakota Skipper (threatened) and Monarch Butterfly (candidate)	No Effect	☐	May Affect Habitat for the NLEB - large trees - are very limited within the project area, and are not likely to removed. Although wetlands and associated habitat will be mitigated to another location, removal of vegative buffers around wetlands may have negative impacts to monarch butterflies and/or dakota skipppers that may be present in the project area.	☑	May Affect Habitat for the NLEB - large trees - are very limited within the project area, and are not likely to be removed. Although wetlands and associated habitat will be mitigated to another location, removal of vegative buffers around wetlands may have negative impacts to monarch butterflies and/or dakota skipppers that may be present in the project area.	☑
Environmental Justice *Guide Sheet* One Census block group is present in the AOI. No populations were disproportionately represented within this group, compared with the state, county or other nearby block groups.	No Effect	☐	No Effect	☐	No Effect	☐
●Essential Fish Habitat *Guide Sheet* n/a		☐		☐		☐
Floodplain Management *Guide Sheet* Not present, ndram.sc.gov	No Effect	☐	No Effect	☐	No Effect	☐
Invasive Species *Guide Sheet* Zebra Mussels and Curly Leaf Pondweed have been documented in Lake Ashtabula, making their presence in the Baldhill Creek likely. Several noxious weeds are commonly present in the region including Canada Thistle, Musk Thistle, Leafy Spurge, and Absinthe Wormwood.	No Effect	☐	May Affect Aquatic invasive species present in Lake Ashtabula and the Baldhill Creek will have direct access to Ten Mile Lake via the drainage channel proposed by this project. Terrestrial invasive species presence may be increased in disturbed areas after construction of the structure and channel are complete. Mitigation measures to prevent the spread of zebra mussels may be costly.	☑	May Affect Aquatic invasive species present in Lake Ashtabula and the Baldhill Creek will have direct access to Ten Mile Lake via the drainage channel proposed by this project. Terrestrial invasive species presence may be increased in disturbed areas after construction of the structure and channel are complete.Mitigation measures to prevent the spread of zebra mussels may be costly.	☑
●Migratory Birds/Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act *Guide Sheet* The lack of tall trees makes the presence of eagle nests unlikely. Other migratory birds listed as species of concern that may be found in the AOI throughout the year are Black Tern, Franklin's Gull, Leasser Yellow Legs, Northern Harrier, Pectoral Sandpiper, and Willet	No Effect	☐	May Affect Construction would take place outside of the primary nesting season, therefore no actions from this project should result in the "take" of any migratory bird species. Migratory birds may be displaced with the removal of existing shoreland habitat; the timing and placement of mitigation sites may impact migratory birds.	☐	May Affect Construction would take place outside of the primary nesting season, therefore no actions from this project should result in the "take" of any migratory bird species. Migratory birds may be displaced with the removal of existing shoreland habitat; the timing and placement of mitigation sites may impact migratory birds.	☐
Natural Areas *Guide Sheet* There are 7 US FFWS Waterfowl Production areas, 1 Easement Refuge, 1 ND Game & Fish Wildlife Management Areas within 5 miles of Ten Mile Lake.	No Effect	☐	May Affect The project may affect the natural aesthetics of 10 mile lake.	☐	No Effect The project may affect the natural aesthetics of 10 mile lake.	☐
Prime and Unique Farmlands *Guide Sheet* 72% of the farmland in the	No Effect	☐	No Effect No farmland will be converted to non-ag. use through this project.	☐	No Effect No farmland will be converted to non-ag. use through this project.	☐

proposed project area is designated as prime farmland, or prime if drained.						
Riparian Area *Guide Sheet* The Baldhill Creek is located at the far eastern edge of the AOI; Baldhill Creek empties into the Sheyenne River downstream of the AOI. Both are bordered by a mix of native herbaceous vegetation, crop and hay/pastureland. There are numerous fresh water emergent wetlands within the AOI intersected by large and small drains. The larger wetlands in the AOI are lined with native and introducrd herbaceous vegetation. Smaller wetlands within the cropland are typically unbuffered.	No Effect	☐	May Affect Both large and small wetlands within the AOI may be affected by surface and/or subsurface drainage due to this project.	☑	May Affect Both large and small wetlands located in fields adjacent to Ten Mile Lake may be affected by surface and/or subsurface drainage due to this project.	☑
Scenic Beauty *Guide Sheet* Except for Lake Ashtabula, the landscape is under intensive agricultural management.	No Effect	☐	May Affect The scenic beauty of the 10-mile lake may be adversely impacted by the lake drawdown.	☐	May Affect The scenic beauty of the 10-mile lake may be adversely impacted by the lake drawdown.	☐
•Wetlands *Guide Sheet* According to USFWS NWI data, there are 7,488.6 acres of wetlands within the project AOI. 3,237.5 ac. are lacustrine, 4,025.9 ac. are palustrine, and 225.6 ac. are riverine. Of that, 1,611 acres (not includeing Ten Mile Lake) are not protected by a conservation easement or fee-title ownership.	No Effect	☐	May Affect The project would result in loss of an estimated of 1,254 acres of deepwater habitat, 539 acres of lacustrine fringe wetlands, and 1,611.9 acres of palustrine wetlands. These would be mitigated for elsewhere within the Red River Basin under NDIRT requirements.	☑	May Affect The project would result in loss of an estimated of 1,254 acres of deepwater habitat, 539 acres of lacustrine fringe wetlands, and 1,611.9 acres of palustrine wetlands. These would be mitigated for elsewhere within the Red River Basin under NDIRT requirements.	☑
•Wild and Scenic Rivers *Guide Sheet* n/a		☐		☐		☐

K. Other Agencies and Broad Public Concerns	***No Action***	***Alternative 1***	***Alternative 2***
Easements, Permissions, Public Review, or Permits Required and Agencies Consulted.	No permits or easements necessary	A US ACOE 404 permit will be required. Mitigation easements will be necessary. Land purchase will be needed. ND DWR permit will be needed. Public vote may be needed. Formal measures may be required for preventing the spread of ANS.	404 permit will be necessary. Mitigation easements will be necessary. Land purchase will be needed. ND DWR permit will be needed. Public vote may be needed.Formal measures may be required for preventing the spread of ANS.
Cumulative Effects Narrative (Describe the cumulative impacts considered, including past, present and known future actions regardless of who performed the actions)	No effect. Damage to public and private infrastructure will continue during wet periods.	Cropland productivity will improve due to controlled water table. O&M of public and private infrastructure will stabilize and be more consistent. Wildlife habitat quality and quantity will continue to decrease as the drainage effects make more land farmable.	Cropland productivity will improve across the AOI due to controlled water table. O&M of public and private infrastructure will stabilize and be more consistent. Wildlife habitat quality and quantity will continue to decrease as the drainage effects make more land farmable.
L. Mitigation (Record actions to avoid, minimize, and compensate)	No mitigation required	2,881.9 wetland acres requred. Deep Water Habitat: 1,254 ac. Lacustrine Fringe: 539 ac. Palustrine (pothole) wetlands: 1083.6 ac. Riverine: 5.3 ac.	1,948.6 wetland acres required. Deep Water Habitat: 1,254 ac. Lacustrine Fringe: 539 ac. Palustrine (pothole) wetlands: 155.6 ac. Riverine: 0.0 ac.
M. Preferred Alternative — √ preferred alternative	☑	☐	☐
M. Preferred Alternative — Supporting reason	Alternatives 1 and 2 were found to be infeasible for PL-566 due to a benefit to cost ratio < 1, therefore the No Action alternaive is the preferred alternative		

N. Context (Record context of alternatives analysis)
The significance of an action must be analyzed in several contexts such as society as a whole (human, national), the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality.

-Town or city

-Sub-watershed (ex. 12-digit HUC, or smaller)

-County

O. To the best of my knowledge, the data shown on this form is accurate and complete:

In the case where a non-NRCS person (e.g. a TSP) assists with planning they are to sign the first signature block and then NRCS is to sign the second block to verify the information's accuracy.

Signature (TSP if applicable)	Title	Date

Signature (NRCS)	Title	Date

If preferred alternative is not a federal action where NRCS has control or responsibility and this NRCS-CPA-52 is shared with someone other than the client, then indicate to whom this is being provided.

The following sections are to be completed by the Responsible Federal Official (RFO)

NRCS is the RFO if the action is subject to NRCS control and responsibility (e.g., actions financed, funded, assisted, conducted, regulated, or approved by NRCS). These actions do not include situations in which NRCS is only providing technical assistance because NRCS cannot control what the client ultimately does with that assistance and situations where NRCS is making a technical determination (such as Farm Bill HEL or wetland determinations) not associated with the planning process.

P. Determination of Significance or Extraordinary Circumstances

To answer the questions below, consider the severity (intensity) of impacts in the contexts identified above. Impacts may be both beneficial and adverse. A significant effect may exist even if the Federal agency believes that on balance the effect will be beneficial. Significance cannot be avoided by terming an action temporary or by breaking it down into small component parts.

If you answer ANY of the below questions "yes" then contact the State Environmental Liaison as there may be extraordinary circumstances and significance issues to consider and a site specific NEPA analysis may be required.

Yes	No	
☐	☑	• Is the preferred alternative expected to cause significant effects on public health or safety?
☐	☑	• Is the preferred alternative expected to significantly affect unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas?
☐	☑	• Are the effects of the preferred alternative on the quality of the human environment likely to be highly controversial?
☐	☑	• Does the preferred alternative have highly uncertain effects or involve unique or unknown risks on the human environment?
☐	☑	• Does the preferred alternative establish a precedent for future actions with significant impacts or represent a decision in principle about a future consideration?
☐	☑	• Is the preferred alternative known or reasonably expected to have potentially significant environment impacts to the quality of the human environment either individually or cumulatively over time?
☐	☑	• Will the preferred alternative likely have a significant adverse effect on ANY of the special environmental concerns? Use the Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheets to assist in this determination. This includes, but is not limited to, concerns such as cultural or historical resources, endangered and threatened species, environmental justice, wetlands, floodplains, coastal zones, coral reefs, essential fish habitat, wild and scenic rivers, clean air, riparian areas, natural areas, and invasive species.
☐	☑	• Will the preferred alternative threaten a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements for the protection of the environment?

Q. NEPA Compliance Finding (check one)

The preferred alternative:		Action required
☑	1) is **not a federal action** where the agency has control or responsibility.	Document in "R.1" below. No additional analysis is required
☐	2) is a federal action **ALL** of which is **categorically excluded** from further environmental analysis **AND** there are **no extraordinary circumstances as identified in Section "P".**	Document in "R.2" below. No additional analysis is required
☐	3) is a federal action that has been **sufficiently analyzed** in an existing Agency state, regional, or national NEPA document **and** there are no predicted significant adverse environmental effects or extraordinary circumstances.	Document in "R.1" below. No additional analysis is required.
☐	4) is a federal action that has been sufficiently analyzed in another Federal agency's NEPA document (EA or EIS) that addresses the proposed NRCS action and its' effects **and has been formally adopted by NRCS**. NRCS is required to prepare and publish its own Finding of No Significant Impact for an EA or Record of Decision for an EIS when adopting another agency's EA or EIS document. (**Note: This box is not applicable to FSA)**	Contact the State Environmental Compliance Liaison for list of NEPA documents formally adopted and available for tiering. Document in "R.1" below. No additional analysis is required
☐	5) is a federal action that has **NOT** been sufficiently analyzed or may involve predicted significant adverse environmental effects or extraordinary circumstances and may require an EA or EIS.	Contact the State Environmental Compliance Liaison. Further NEPA analysis required. Explain in Notes Section.

R. Rationale Supporting the Finding

R.1 Findings Documentation	If a PL-566 Watershed Plan were to proceed on this project, an EIS would be necessary given the extent of impacts to wetlands and wildlife habitat, as well as concerns regarding water quality and invasive species. Given the economic analysis results, however, the project was found infeasible for PL-566. Therefore, No Action is the preferred federal alternative.
R.2 Applicable Categorical Exclusion(s) **(more than one may apply)** 7 CFR Part 650 *Compliance With NEPA*, subpart 650.6 *Categorical Exclusions* states prior to determining that a proposed action is categorically excluded under paragraph (d) of this section, the proposed action must meet six sideboard criteria. See NECH 610.116.	

I have considered the effects of the alternatives on the Resource Concerns, Economic and Social Considerations, Special Environmental Concerns, and Extraordinary Circumstances as defined by Agency regulation and policy and based on that made the finding indicated above.

S. Signature of Responsible Federal Official:

Signature	Title	Date

Additional Notes