
MEMORANDUM

TO: MARK JOHNSON; JOE PAVELKO
FROM: NICK BANCKS
SUBJECT: ML20, CH. 104, ART. 1, SEC. 2, SUBD 5(C) RESILIENT HABITAT FOR
HERITAGE BROOK TROUT AMENDMENT SUMMARY REQUEST
DATE: OCTOBER 18, 2023

In partnership with The Nature Conservancy, Minnesota Land Trust, and Trout Unlimited (TU), The Trust for Public Land (TPL) has been working in select watersheds across Southeast Minnesota to protect, restore and enhance habitats to ensure the unique cold-water systems of the region remain resilient and healthy.

TPL's intended focus under this grant partnership has been to acquire and enhance high-quality habitat adjacent to, or containing portions of headwaters, streams, and springs that support the preservation of aquatic systems. To date TPL has successfully completed restoration work was on approximately 25 acres of degraded habitat on Yucatan WMA (previously acquired by TPL in 2017) adjacent to Girl Scout Camp Creek, a designated trout stream with a viable population of heritage brook trout. This restoration work removed woody invasives, such as common buckthorn and boxelder, along the stream corridor and adjacent grasslands in preparation for seeding with native tallgrass prairie species.

Unfortunately, despite a targeted outreach effort and several potential projects moving through the early stages of the acquisition process, no acquisitions were secured within the allotted funding time frame (July 2020 – June 2023). Of our allocated \$857,000 approximately \$771,000 of TPL's funds remain unspent, with the majority of our spent funds (\$86,000) utilized on the aforementioned project along Girl Scout Camp Creek. Fortunately, an opportunity has presented itself to support one of our partners, TU, in their restoration work which will allow for TPL spend down a significant portion of our allocation while also completing two significant restoration and enhancement projects on public lands TPL previously acquired under past OHF appropriations. To this end **TPL would like to request an amendment to shift money in our budget from our acquisition line item to our contracts line item.** A summary of each project, including estimated cost, is provided below.

Maple Creek

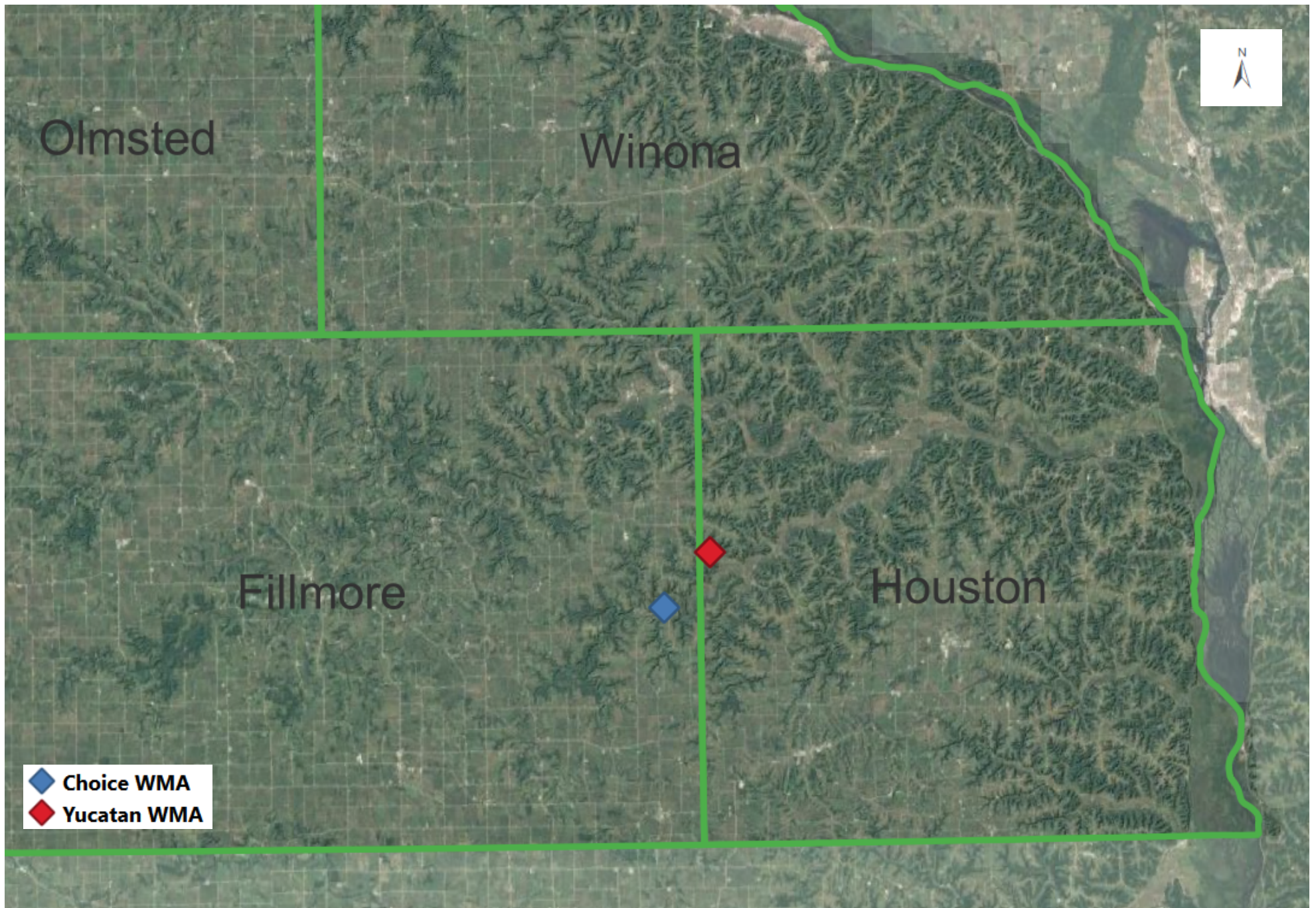
MNTU is restoring a 3,500' segment of Maple Creek running through Choice WMA in Fillmore County on land previously protected by TPL. Maple Creek currently supports a healthy population of heritage strain brook trout, despite the presence of brown trout. The stream was recently hammered by severe flooding, increasing the scope of work. The project is in the final permitting and construction bidding phase and can be constructed next summer. However, due to the change in scope, MNTU does not have enough funding to construct all of it. MNTU would shift some funding from contracts to professional services to cover the increased design and construction oversight work and look to TPL to provide approximately \$300,000 in construction funding. In-stream habitat will be enhanced, bank erosion halted, and riparian vegetation managed for long term resilience of the native brook trout population.

Girl Scout Camp Creek

Girl Scout Camp Creek is a tributary of the South Fork of the Root River located on the Yucatan Wildlife Management Area protected by an earlier TPL land protection purchase. Girl Scout Camp Creek supports a healthy population of heritage strain brook trout, despite degraded habitat. Because the headwaters of this

watershed have been protected, MNTU would seize the opportunity to address the entire stream from the uplands on down. Planned work includes placing water retention ponds in the draws that drain down to the stream channel. These will provide wildlife habitat and enhance in-stream habitat by reducing peak flows and sedimentation. The work on the wildlife ponds can be accomplished within the grant window and TPL would utilize approximately \$100,000 for this enhancement work.

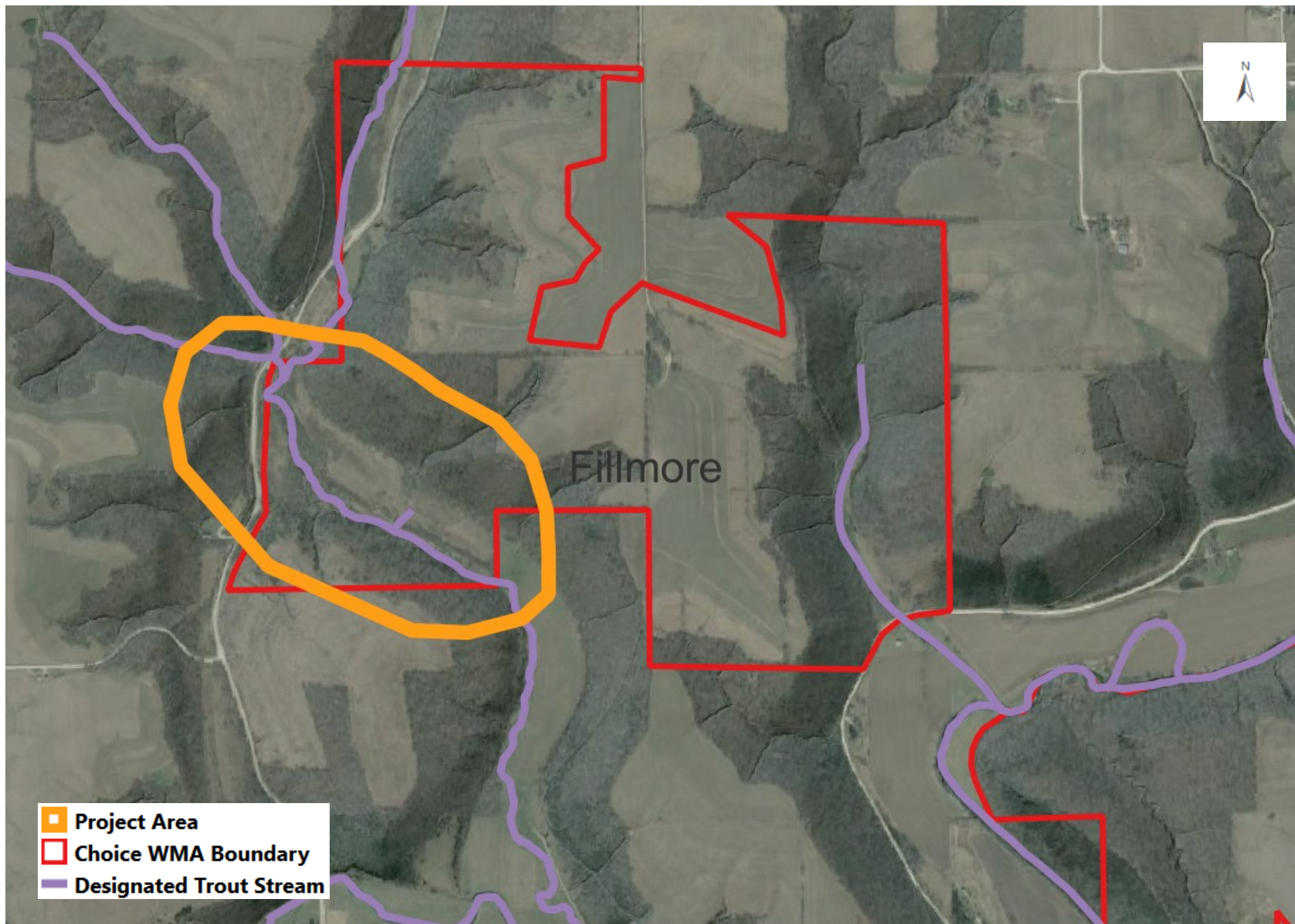
Attachments: Project Map(s)



HBT Projects

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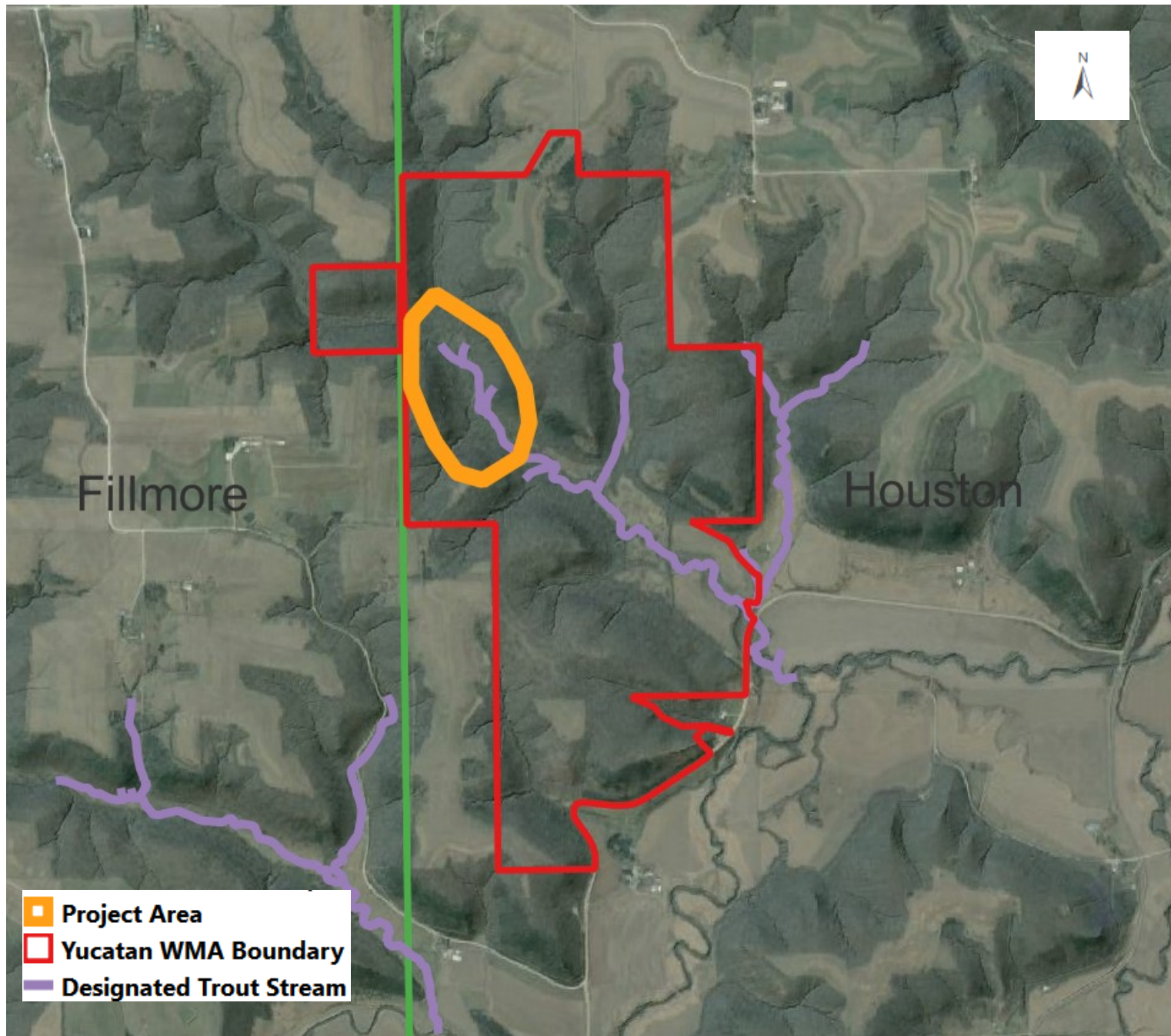




Choice WMA: Maple Creek Project

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Yucatan WMA: Girl Scout Camp Creek Project

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