

# Section 6

## Special Areas

### 6.1 Introduction

The Haines Branch Watershed is home to several unique and special areas. These special areas contain ecological, archeological, cultural or other resources of significant community value that merit special stewardship considerations and/or are subject to special regulatory requirements. The presence of such resources in these areas merits special consideration during the planning and development of capital improvement plans and projects. The following sections summarize the special areas identification methodology, results and recommendations.

### 6.2 Methodology

The methodology used to identify special areas within the watershed is summarized as follows:

1. Coordinate with the City, County and NRD to identify and locate the special areas.
2. Obtain existing reports, GIS files, websites and other existing data containing information regarding the special areas.
3. Develop a list of the identified special areas and the corresponding documents and resources that are available providing information regarding the special areas.
4. Develop GIS maps of the special areas.
5. Use the special area maps and data to evaluate what, if any, effect potential capital improvement projects might have on special areas and what measures need to be considered in the implementation of the capital improvement projects to mitigate the potential effects.

### 6.3 Evaluation Results

The following Special Areas were identified for consideration during CIP development:

- Wetlands – Both Saline and Freshwater wetlands are present in the Haines Branch Watershed.
  - Resources:
    - Saline Wetlands Conservation Partnership (SWCP)  
<http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/parks/ParksFacilities/wetlands/wetlandspartnership.htm>
    - Implementation Plan for the Conservation of Nebraska's Eastern Saline Wetlands (2003)
    - Salt Valley Greenway and Prairie Corridor Master Plan (August 31, 2012)
    - Lincoln/Lancaster County 2040 Comprehensive Plan (Adopted October 25/ October 31, 2011)
    - Lancaster County / Lincoln, NE GIS data
- Salt Valley Greenway and Prairie Corridor – The Salt Valley Greenway is a ribbon of open space and greenway links within the Salt Valley drainage basin. The Prairie

Corridor on Haines Branch is one of the key connecting corridors in the Salt Valley Greenway, linking Pioneers Park and Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center, important resources for tallgrass prairie and environmental education.

- Resources:
  - Salt Valley Greenway and Prairie Corridor Master Plan (August 31, 2012)
  - Lincoln/Lancaster County 2040 Comprehensive Plan (Adopted October 25/ October 31, 2011)
  - Lancaster County / Lincoln, NE GIS data (inc. Natural Resources Geographic Information System (NRGIS))
- Proposed Critical Habitat, Endangered Species – The Tiger Beetle is listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) known to have historically occurred within the Haines Branch Watershed. Any CIP project with a nexus to the federal government (requiring a federal permit, receiving federal funding, etc) that has the potential to impact the Tiger Beetle or its Proposed Critical Habitat will require coordination with the USFWS to minimize or avoid the impact.
  - Resources:
    - Habitat Conservation Plan by NE Game and Parks Commission due 2013
    - Proposed Revision of Critical Habitat for Salt Creek Tiger Beetle, USFWS, June 3, 2013
    - Recovery Outline for the Salt Creek Tiger Beetle, Nebraska Ecological Services Field Office, USFWS, February 2009
    - Salt Valley Greenway and Prairie Corridor Master Plan (August 31, 2012)
    - Lincoln/Lancaster County 2040 Comprehensive Plan (Adopted October 25/ October 31, 2011)
    - Lancaster County / Lincoln, NE GIS data
- Native Grassland
  - Resources:
    - Salt Valley Greenway and Prairie Corridor Master Plan (August 31, 2012)
    - Lincoln/Lancaster County 2040 Comprehensive Plan (Adopted October 25/ October 31, 2011)
    - Lancaster County / Lincoln, NE GIS data
- Woodland
  - Resources:
    - Salt Valley Greenway and Prairie Corridor Master Plan (August 31, 2012)
    - Lincoln/Lancaster County 2040 Comprehensive Plan (Adopted October 25/ October 31, 2011)
    - Lancaster County / Lincoln, NE GIS data

- Wellhead Protection – Nebraska’s Wellhead Protection (WHP) Program is a voluntary program which assists communities and other public water suppliers in preventing contamination of their water supplies. The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) is the lead agency for Wellhead Protection Plan approval.
  - Resources:
    - Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality  
<http://www.deq.state.ne.us/GroundW.nsf/Pages/WHPA>
    - Lincoln/Lancaster County 2040 Comprehensive Plan (Adopted October 25/ October 31, 2011)
    - Lancaster County / Lincoln, NE GIS data
  
- Home Owner's Association – Long View Estates
  - Resources:
    - Lancaster County / Lincoln, NE GIS data
  
- Parks
  - Resources:
    - Lincoln/Lancaster County 2040 Comprehensive Plan (Adopted October 25/ October 31, 2011)
    - Lancaster County / Lincoln, NE GIS data

Figures 6-1 through 6-2 illustrate the location of the identified special areas.





## **6.4 Special Area Recommendations**

The Haines Branch Watershed Study Area is unique in that it contains vast areas of Native Grasslands, Salt Valley Greenway and Parks. These special areas dominate the middle and lower portion of the study area with parks north of the main stem and grasslands and Salt Valley Greenway both north and south of the main stem. The Haines Branch Study Area is also one of the few watersheds in the City/NRD future growth area that contains proposed critical habitat.

The recommended approach to Capital Improvement Projects in or near Special Areas is to avoid or minimize the potential negative effects of CIP projects on the special areas, as well as to help plan CIP projects in locations that may help to protect the Special Areas. Section 7 of this report presents the Special Areas affected by each CIP, as appropriate, and indicates potential approaches to avoiding or minimizing the CIP's impact.

In general, CIPs near ecologically sensitive special areas will require, at a minimum, the installation of robust erosion, sediment and stormwater controls as well as perimeter fencing and/or tree protection fencing to restrict construction disturbance. Protection against erosion and sedimentation will be especially critical for wetland habitats, as will water quality protection for saline wetlands. Culturally important areas will require the installation of perimeter controls to avoid encroachment. Recreationally important special areas (e.g. Parks, etc) will require coordination to protect existing and planned infrastructures, while respecting and protecting the designated uses of the area.