

Western Avenue Marsh Nature Area

Location: 7600 Western Avenue

Nature Area Size: 21.65 Acres

Description

Western Avenue Marsh Nature Area is located east of Brookview Park and is surrounded by residential neighborhoods. The nature area is mostly wetland and floodplain, and access is limited; sidewalk is located along the southern edge of the marsh along Western Avenue. There are no amenities present.

Forest and Woodlands

Approximately half of the Western Avenue Marsh Nature Area is wooded but the majority is wooded swamp, dominated by box elder and aspen trees. Wooded upland is limited to a few areas of higher ground, but is dominated by similar species.

Wetlands

The Western Avenue Marsh is a large wetland complex, and dominates the nature area. The majority of the wetland is cattail marsh, or box elder-dominated hardwood swamp. It appears that the wetland included some ditches, which have since filled in but are visible in the vegetation signatures.

Aquatic Resources

There are no specific aquatic resources present, although the size of the wetland complex could be considered a resource in itself.

Prairie and Grassland

No significant areas of prairie or grassland are present within the Western Marsh Nature Area.

Invasive Species

Reed canary grass is prevalent throughout the wet meadow portions of the wetland. By survey data, the density of reed canary grass is reduced, which appears to be related to the wetland hydrology increasing, and may be indicative of a transition to increased cattail marsh.

Purple loosestrife is also present, at approximately 10% cover within the emergent marsh habitats. Purple loosestrife was not surveyed here in 2003, but was present in low densities.

| Table 5.19 Invasive Species Cover Percent Change 2003-2013 | | | |
|--|------------|--------------|----------|
| Description | %Cover2003 | % Cover 2013 | % Change |
| Reed Canary Grass | 90 | 70 | -20 |
| Purple Loosestrife | n/a | 10 | n/a |

Site Recommendations

Natural Resources

The Western Marsh Nature Area is primarily a wetland and flood storage area. Specific recommendations include reed canary grass and purple loosestrife removal. Areas of wooded wetland are also present, and are dominated by less-desirable species. Selective removal of these wooded species, and planting of higher quality species could improve the quality of the wetland.

Amenities

Improve physical access (high)

No access currently exists to the Western Avenue Marsh. Without access, it is difficult to consider the Western Avenue Marsh as a Nature Area. Trail access may be possible along the eastern edge of the site from Western Avenue to Harold Avenue. This would provide a trail linkage that would cross the marsh, connecting Harold Avenue to Western Avenue. This trail extension would involve working with the adjacent property owner to gain access to Harold Avenue on the north end.

Install entry signs (high)

Currently there is only visual access to the Western Avenue Marsh Nature Area and no signs identify this area at this time. Location signs should be installed at the intersection of Winnetka Avenue and Western Avenue and at a proposed access point along the southeastern edge of the marsh.

Install pet waste disposal system (high)

Western Marsh Nature Area should include a waste disposal systems for dogs; one at the Western Avenue entry. This will keeps the trail through the nature area clean and attractive.

Install educational sign (medium)

The marsh area would provide an excellent opportunity to learn about a hardwood swamp and wet meadow habitat. Two signs could be installed; one at the corner of Winnetka and Western Avenues and the other near the wet meadow.

Install bench (low)

Install two benches; one along Western Avenue and one along a proposed trail.

Install trash/recycling receptacle (low)

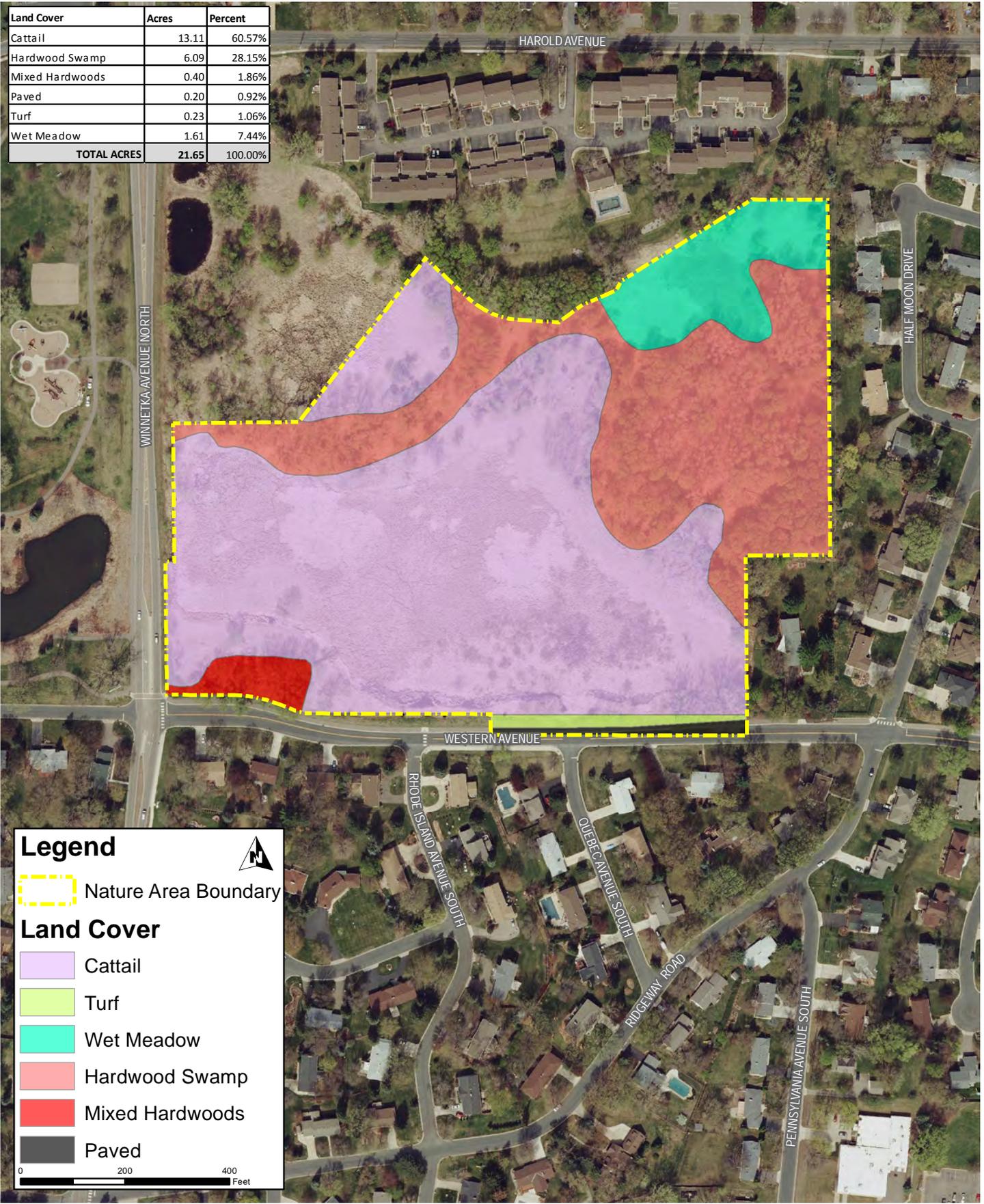
Install a trash receptacle near the proposed access point along Western Avenue.

Table 5.20 Western Avenue Marsh Nature Area Improvement Priorities

| Priority | Management Type | Description | Action | Qty | Unit | Unit Cost | Cost Opinion |
|----------|---------------------------------|---|---|-----|------|-----------|--------------|
| Medium | Upland woods and hardwood swamp | Improve forest health, diversity | Remove undesirable trees, establish native woodland communities | 12 | Acre | \$500 | \$6,000 |
| Medium | Wetland Meadow | Manage reed canary grass | Remove reed canary grass | 13 | Acre | \$500 | \$6,500 |
| High | Amenity | Provide continuity of entry sign design through nature area system | Install new sign at entry | 3 | Each | \$5,000 | \$15,000 |
| High | Amenity | Provide continuity of trash receptacle design throughout nature area system | Install new waste/ recycle trash receptacle at entry | 1 | Each | \$2,000 | \$2,000 |
| High | Amenity | Provide dog walkers with pet waste disposal system at key access point | Install new pet waste disposal system | 3 | Each | \$600 | \$1,800 |
| Medium | Amenity | Provide natural resources education | Install interpretive sign | 1 | Each | \$3,000 | \$3,000 |
| Medium | Access/Amenity | Improve access | Extend trail, pavement improvements (6' wide asphalt) | 500 | LF | \$125 | \$50,000 |
| Low | Amenity | Provide continuity of bench design through nature area system | Install new benches at entry and on deck overlook | 2 | Each | \$1,500 | \$3,000 |



| Land Cover | Acres | Percent |
|--------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Cattail | 13.11 | 60.57% |
| Hardwood Swamp | 6.09 | 28.15% |
| Mixed Hardwoods | 0.40 | 1.86% |
| Paved | 0.20 | 0.92% |
| Turf | 0.23 | 1.06% |
| Wet Meadow | 1.61 | 7.44% |
| TOTAL ACRES | 21.65 | 100.00% |



Legend

Nature Area Boundary

Land Cover

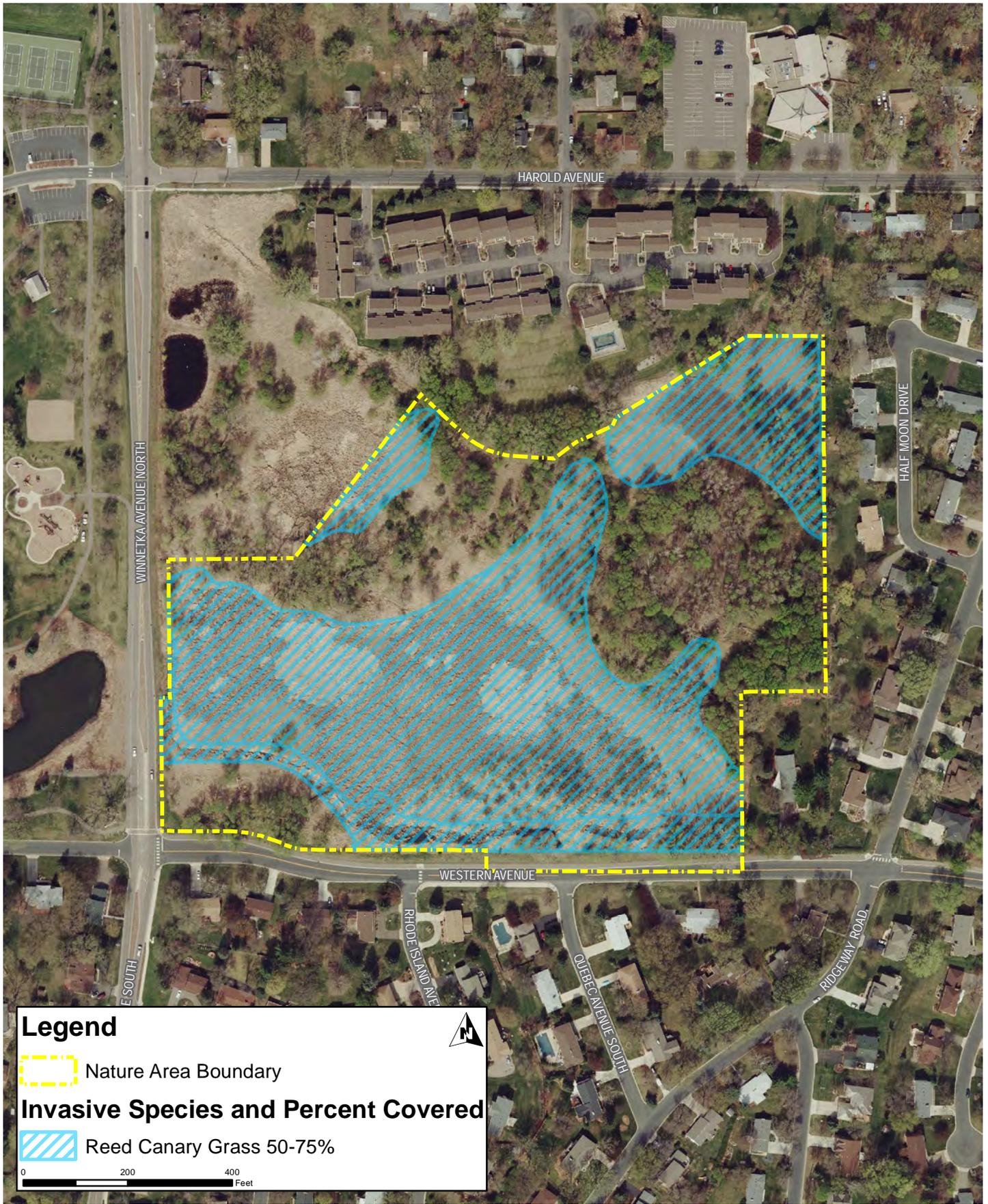
- Cattail
- Turf
- Wet Meadow
- Hardwood Swamp
- Mixed Hardwoods
- Paved

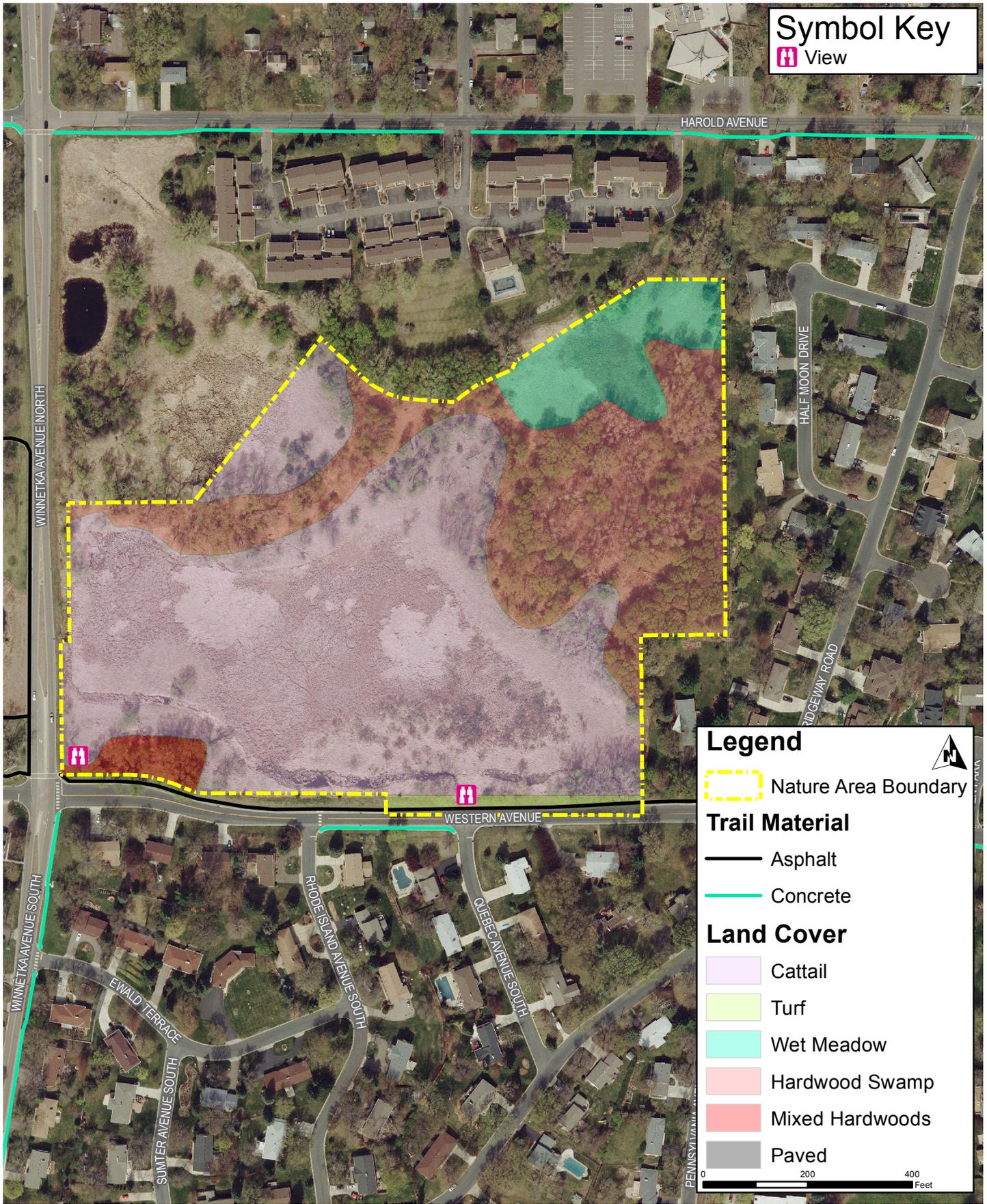
0 200 400 Feet

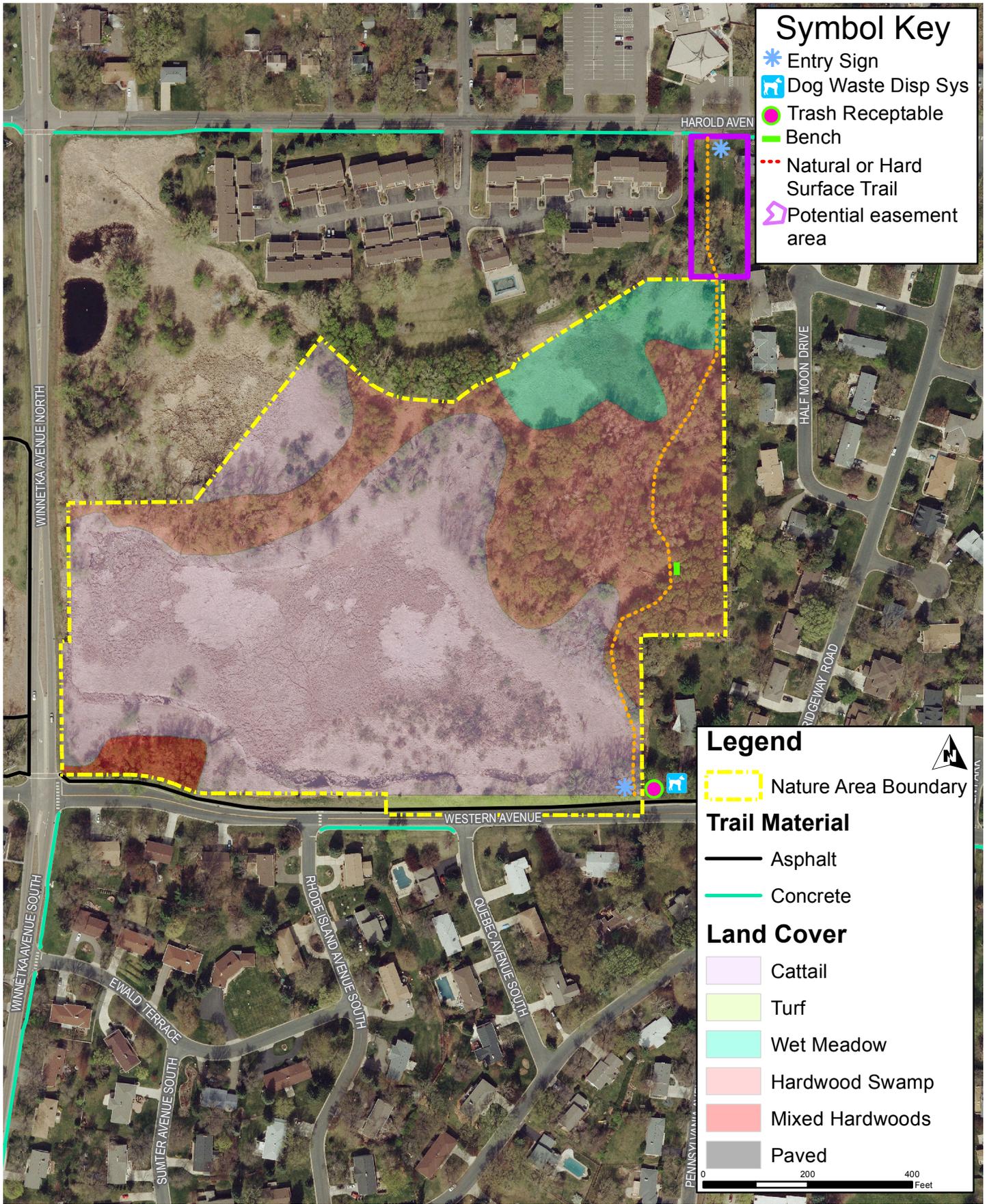


Western Avenue Marsh Nature Area- Land Cover
Golden Valley Natural Resources Management Plan

FIGURE 5.58







Symbol Key

- Entry Sign
- Dog Waste Disp Sys
- Trash Receptable
- Bench
- Natural or Hard Surface Trail
- Potential easement area

Legend

N

- Nature Area Boundary

Trail Material

- Asphalt
- Concrete

Land Cover

- Cattail
- Turf
- Wet Meadow
- Hardwood Swamp
- Mixed Hardwoods
- Paved

0 200 400 Feet

Western Avenue Marsh - Photographs



Western Avenue Marsh - Photographs

