

Natural Community and Rare Plant Surveys of State Forest Lands - 2026



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Michigan Natural Features Inventory
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Cover Photo: McManus Corner pine barrens, Traverse City Forest Management Unit. Photo by Joshua G. Cohen.

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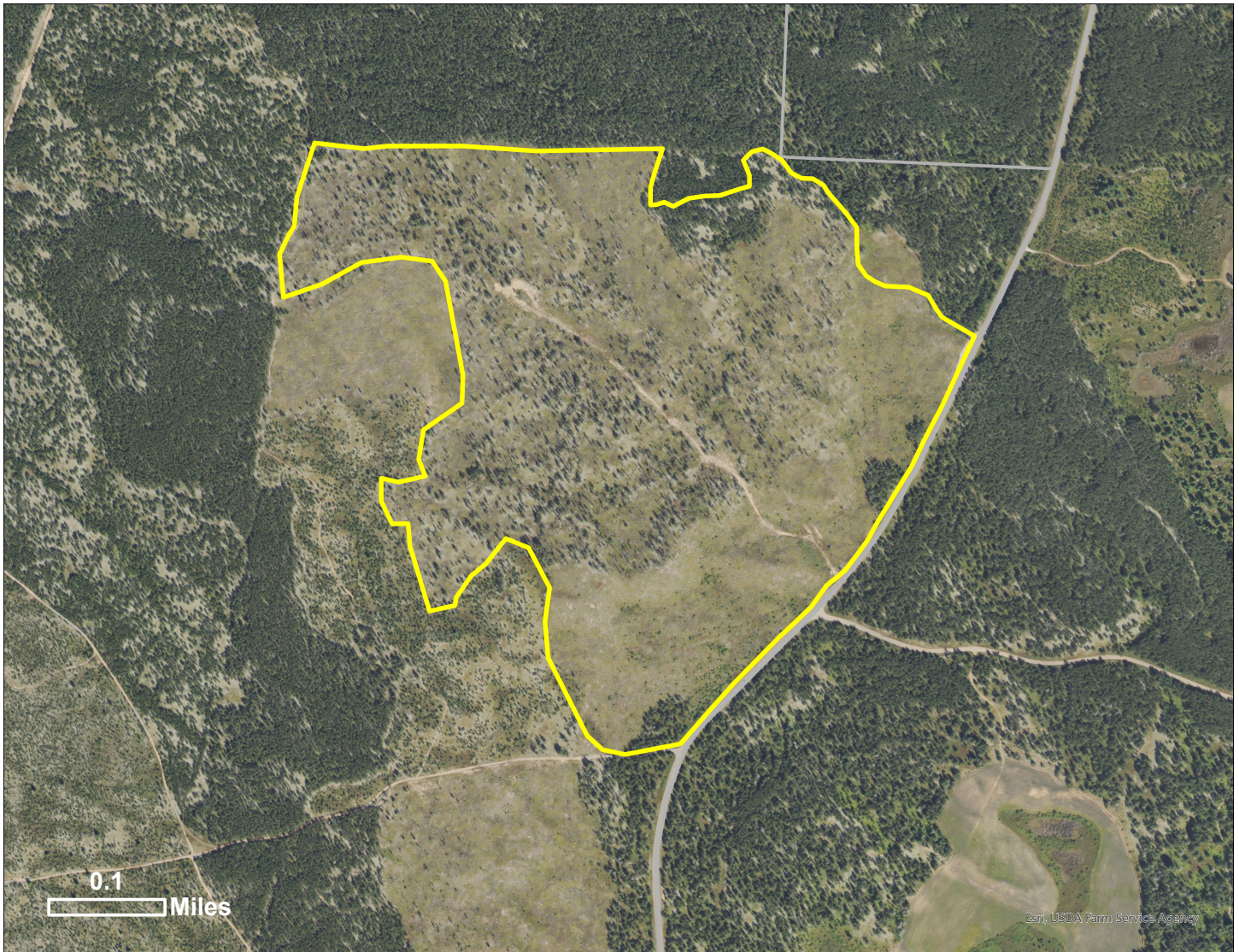
Funding for this project was provided by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Forest Resources Division (FRD).

Baraga Compartments 8, 11, and 12

Surveys targeted the Baraga Plains pine barrens (EO ID 4388). Following the 2026 surveys, the element occurrence rank of D was confirmed and the mapped boundary of the EO was updated with recent aerial imagery. Although the size of the element occurrence increased from 74 to 115 acres, the current impacts of fire suppression, timber operations, and scarification may result in the degradation of this pine barrens from a D rank to a Historical rank. We recommend the implementation of fire stewardship to prevent this from happening and to maintain this area as an Ecological Reference Area. Portions of this pine barrens occurred on U.S. Forest Service land but were clearcut in preparation for conversion to a jack pine plantation. This portion of the site is now mapped as Baraga Plains West pine barrens (EO ID 28636) and is ranked as a Historical site (H rank). Portions of the Baraga Plains pine barrens that recently burned in a 2007 fire event were mapped as a separate pine barrens EO, Baraga Plains Southwest (EO ID 28638). Due to the response to fire, this site has increased plant species diversity and an EO rank of C. This pine barrens occurs on both USFS and State Forest land. In addition, the Baraga Plains North pine barrens (EO ID 28502) was surveyed and the EO rank of CD was confirmed. Due to the addition of high-quality barrens south of Robillard Lake, the acreage of this barrens was increased from 54 to 100 acres.



Baraga Plains pine barrens (EO ID 4388). Photo by Connor C. Wojtowicz.



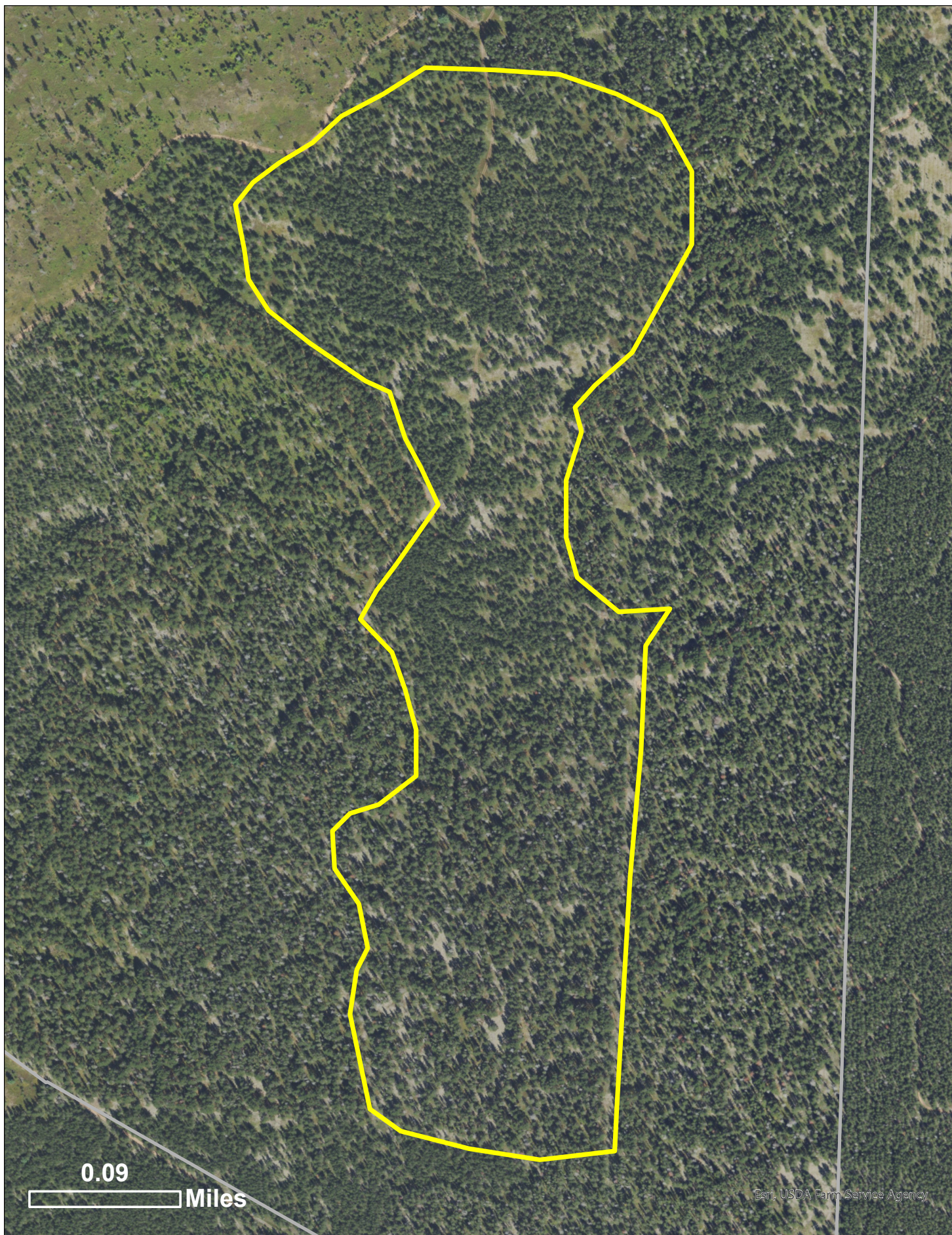
2022 aerial photograph of Baraga Plains pine barrens (EO ID 4388).



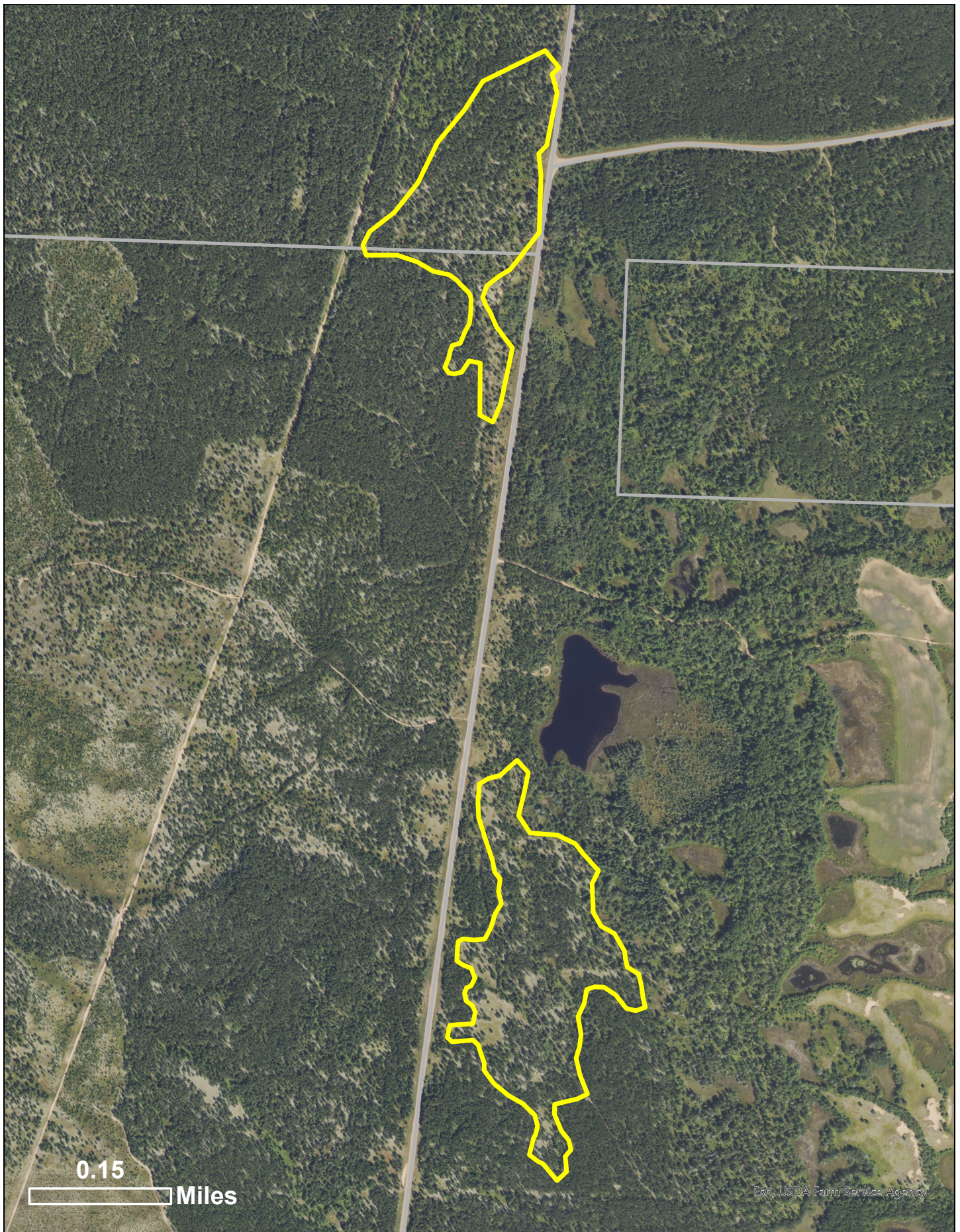
Baraga Plains North pine barrens (EO ID 28502).
Photo by Connor C. Wojtowicz.



Baraga Plains West pine barrens (EO ID 28636).
Photo by Connor C. Wojtowicz.



2022 aerial photograph of Baraga Plains West pine barrens (EO ID 28636).

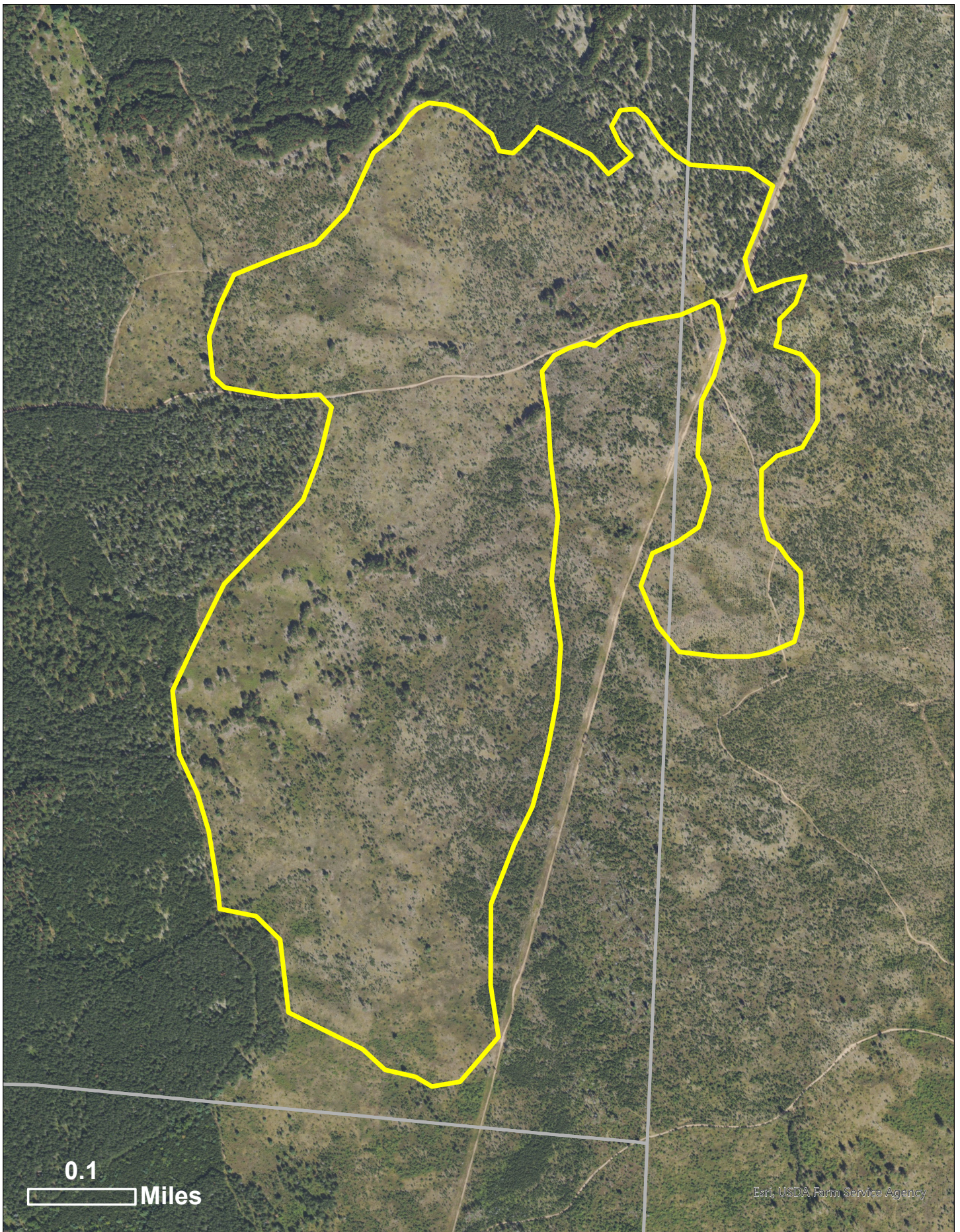


2022 aerial photograph of Baraga Plains North pine barrens (EO ID 28502).



Baraga Plains Southwest (EO ID 28638). Photos by Jesse M. Lincoln.





2022 aerial photograph of Baraga Plains Southwest (EO ID 28638).

Crystal Falls Compartment 79

Surveys targeted the Lost Lake poor fen (EO ID 17306, AB Rank) and the Lost Lake submergent marsh (EO ID 17305, AB Rank). Following the 2026 surveys, the element occurrence rank of AB was confirmed for both the poor fen and the submergent marsh.



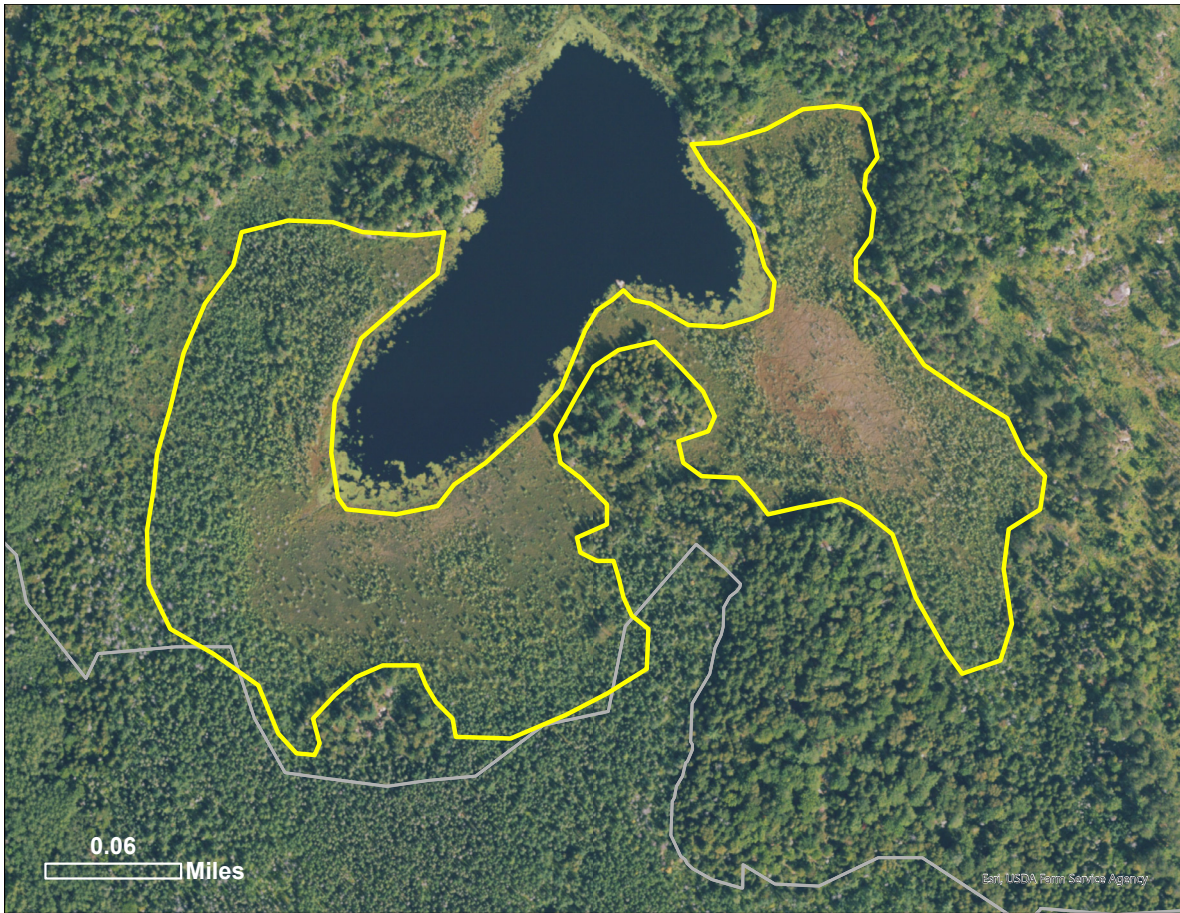
Lost Lake poor fen (EO ID 17306). Photos by Joshua G. Cohen.





Lost Lake submergent marsh (EO ID 17305). Photos by Joshua G. Cohen.





2022 aerial photograph of Lost Lake poor fen (EO ID 17306).



2022 aerial photograph of Lost Lake submergent marsh (EO ID 17305).

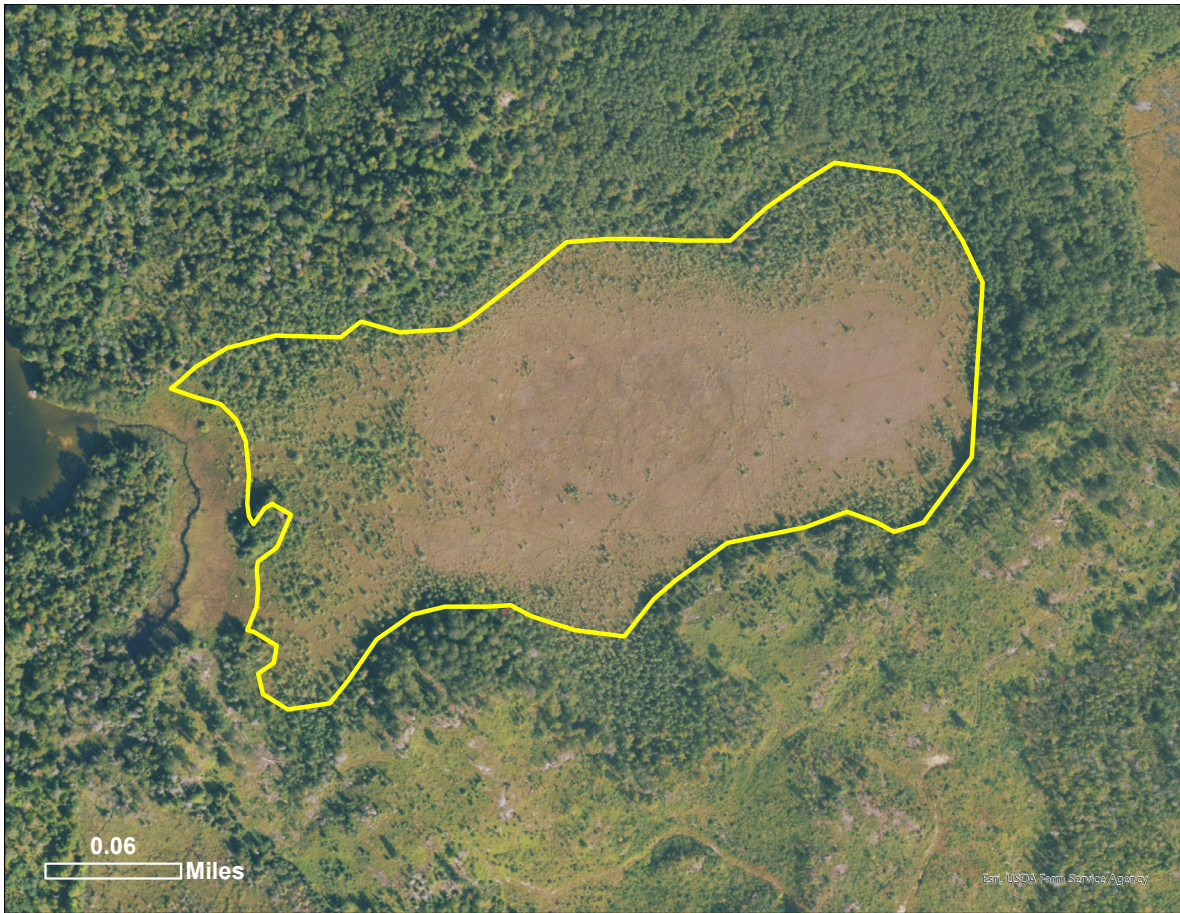
Crystal Falls Compartment 84

Surveys targeted the Rock Lake poor fen (EO ID 17308, AB Rank). Following the 2026 surveys, the element occurrence rank of AB was confirmed. During the course of the survey, a high-quality northern fen was documented along the north end of Rock Lake (Rock Lake, EO ID 28645, B Rank).



Rock Lake poor fen (EO ID 17308). Photos by Joshua G. Cohen.





2022 aerial photograph of Rock Lake poor fen (EO ID 17308).



2022 aerial photograph of Rock Lake northern fen (EO ID 28645).



Rock Lake northern fen (EO ID 28645). Photos by Joshua G. Cohen.

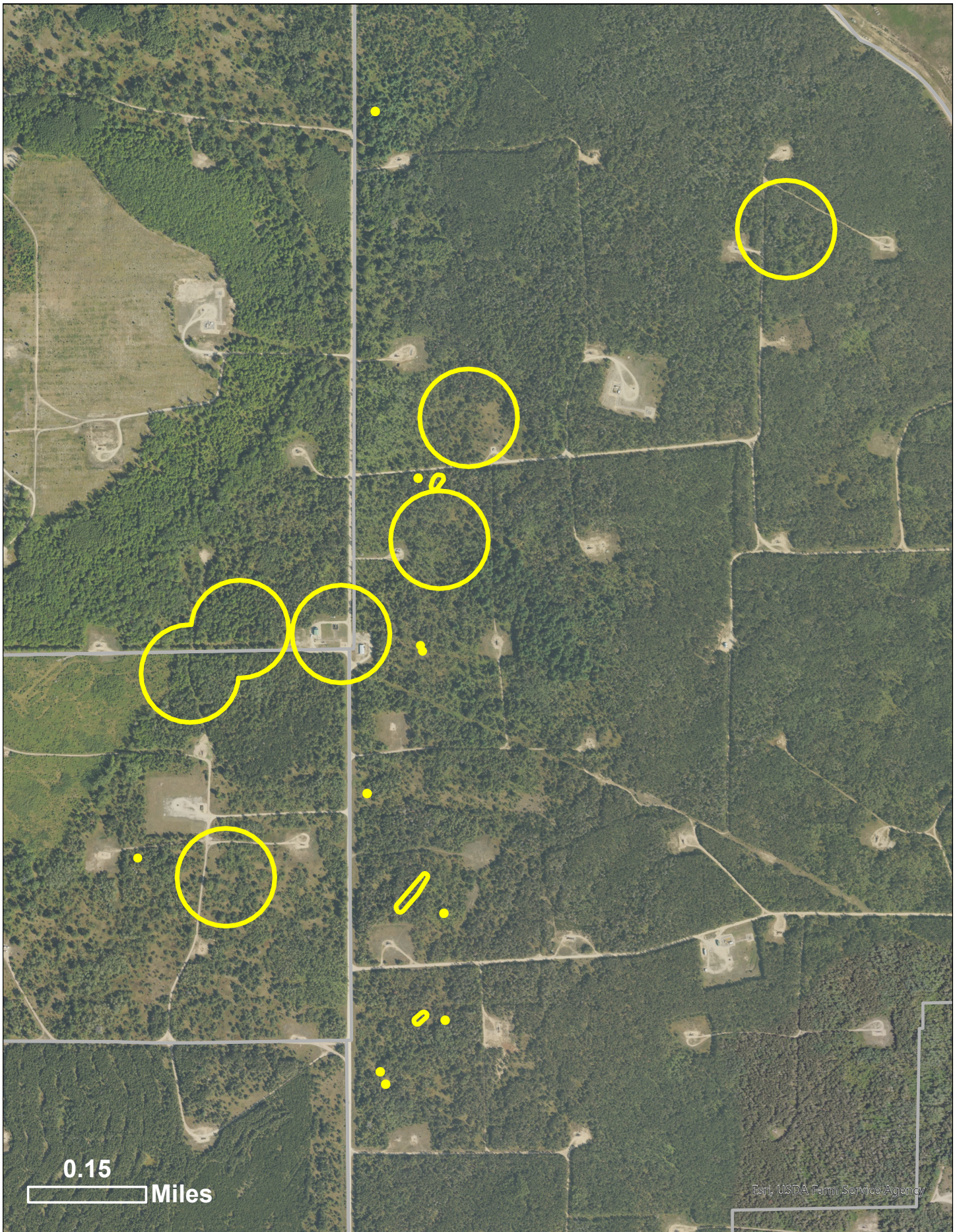


Grayling Compartment 189

Surveys targeted population of Hill's thistle (*Cirsium hillii*, State Special Concern, EO ID 2065). Following the 2026 survey, the EO rank of B was confirmed due to the large population size that has persisted since 1992 or earlier. Surveys resulted in the expansion of the population extent southward on the east side of Kalkaska County Line Road with 116 individuals counted across the entirety of the survey area.



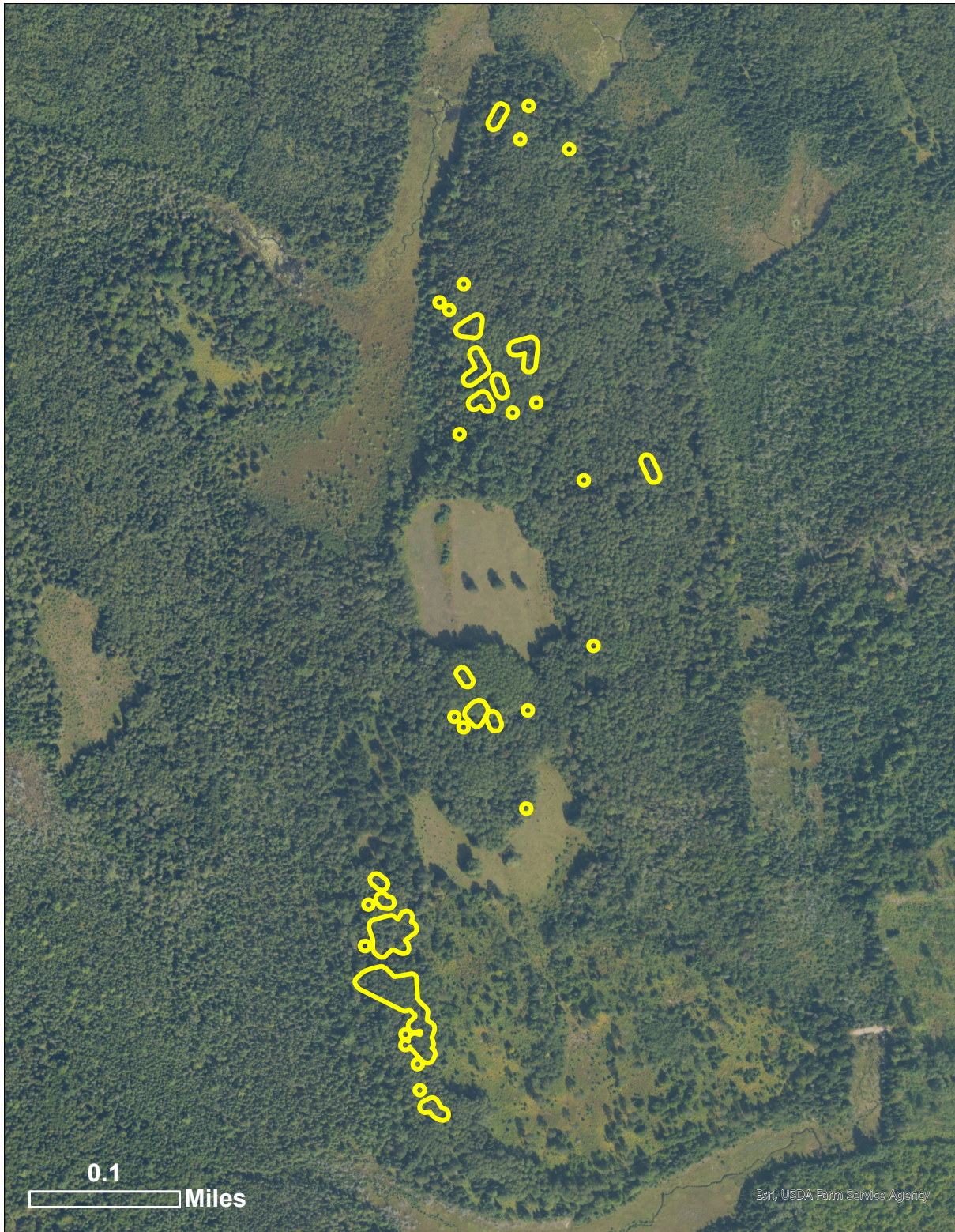
Hill's thistle (*Cirsium hillii*, State Special Concern, EO ID 2065). Photo by Connor C. Wojtowicz.



2022 aerial photograph of Hill's thistle (*Cirsium hillii*) population in Grayling Compartment 189 (EO ID 2065).

Pigeon River Country Compartment 18

Surveys targeted population of ram's head lady-slipper (*Cypripedium arietinum*, State Special Concern, EO ID 28083). Following the 2026 survey, the EO rank was adjusted from E (extant) to AB due to the large population size of ram's head lady-slipper and the relatively intact landscape with limited access that the population is found in. The extent of the population was expanded in all four cardinal directions with 1,777 individuals counted, 342 which were fruiting at the time of the survey. This occurrence is one of three in the state that constitute over 1,000 individuals.



2022 aerial photograph of ram's head lady-slipper (*Cypripedium arietinum*) population in Pigeon River Country Compartment 18 (EO ID 28083).

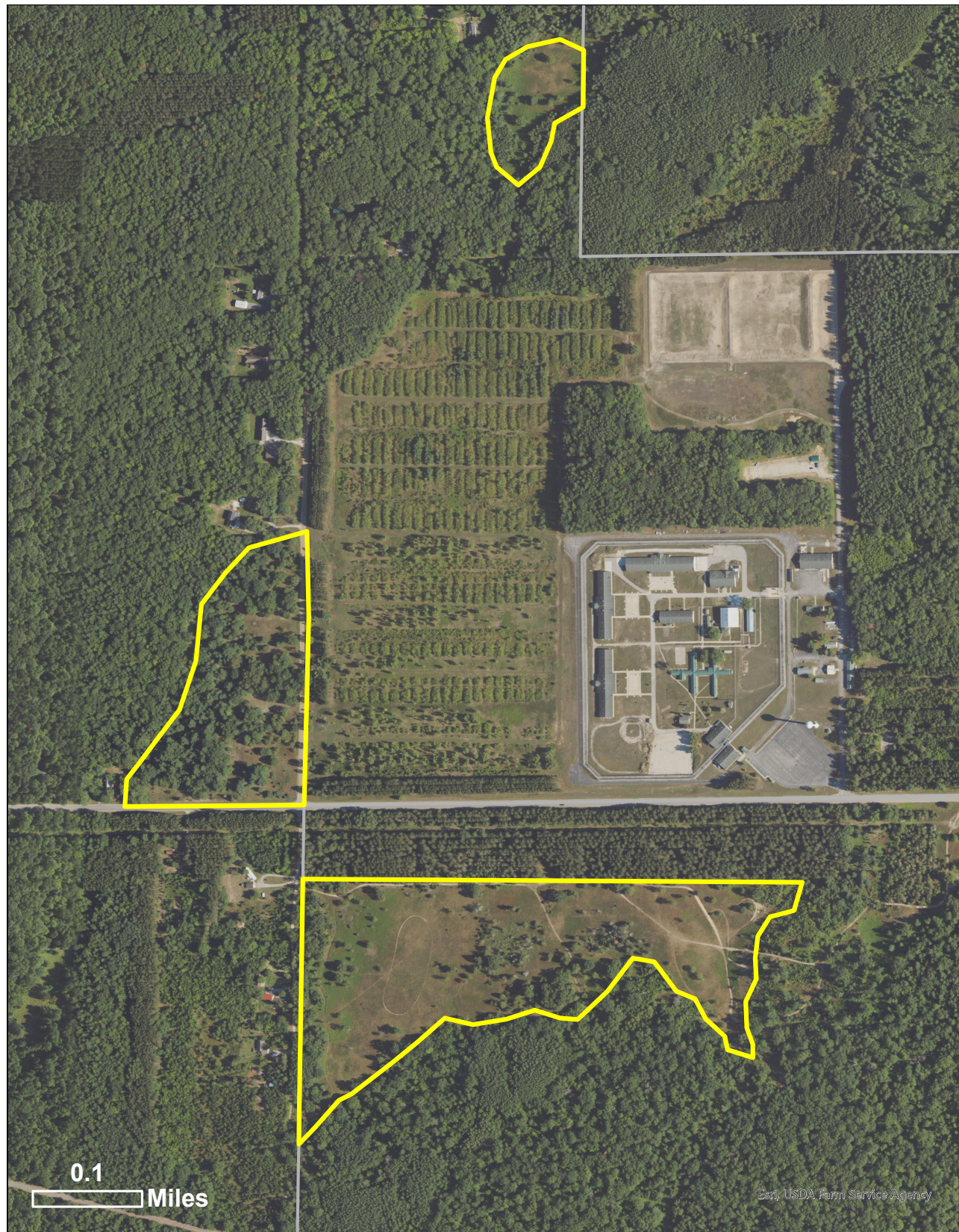


Ram's head lady-slipper (*Cypripedium arietinum*, State Special Concern) (above) and typical habitat where it was found in Pigeon River Country Compartment 18. Photos by Connor C. Wojtowicz.



Traverse City Compartment 57

Surveys targeted the McManus Corner pine barrens (EO ID 1527, C Rank). Following the 2026 survey, the element occurrence rank was confirmed. We encourage the continued application of fire stewardship as well as the removal of Scotch pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) along the western margin of the barrens.



2022 aerial photograph of McManus Corner pine barrens (EO ID 1527).



McManus Corner pine barrens (EO ID 1527). Photos by Joshua G. Cohen.

