

# TOWN OF PLOVER

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2005

Town of Plover Town Board

Marathon County Conservation, Planning & Zoning  
Department

URS, Inc.  
MSA

September 2005

# **Town of Plover Conditions and Issues**

**September 2005**

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## List of Acronyms

**303 (d) list**—waters designated as “impaired” under section 303 (d) of the U.S. Clean Water Act.

**AADT**—Annual Average Daily Traffic

**AHI**—Architecture & History Inventory (a database of the Wisconsin Historical Society).

**BMPs**—Best Management Practices

**CCC**—Civilian Conservation Corps (a 1930s construction and conservation program).

**CCR&R**—Child Care Resource and Referral Network

**CDBG**—Community Development Block Grant

**CES**—Cropland Evaluation System (Marathon County)

**Comm 83**—Chapter 83 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code under the Department of Commerce, setting standards for regulation of private sewage systems.

**CRP**—Conservation Reserve Program

**CTH**—County Trunk Highway

**CWA**—Central Wisconsin Airport

**DCPZ**—Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (Marathon County)

**DWD**—Department of Workforce Development

**EMS**—Emergency Medical Services

**ERW**—Exceptional Resource Waters, a designation by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

**FCL**—Forest Crop Law

**FEMA**—Federal Emergency Management Agency

**FIRM**—Flood Insurance Rate Maps

**HOME**—Home Investment Partnerships Program

**HUD**—U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

**LHOG**—Local Housing Organization Grant

**LOS**—Level of Service (related to amount of traffic and congestion on a roadway, measure from Level A, no congestion and freely moving traffic, to Level F, traffic gridlock).

**LWRMP**—Land and Water Resource Management Plan (Marathon County)

**MFL**—Managed Forest Law

**MPO**—Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

**NCHC**—North Central Health Care

**NCWRPC**—North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

**NHI**—Natural Heritage Inventory

**NRHP**—National Register of Historic Places

**NTC**—Northcentral Technical College

**ORW**—Outstanding Resource Waters, a designation under the U.S. Clean Water Act.

**PASER**—Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating

**PMP**—Pavement Management Plan

**SHPO**—State Historic Preservation Office

**SNA**—State Natural Area

**STF Data**—Summary Tape File, referring to data files of the 2000 U.S. Census.

**STH**—State Trunk Highway

**TIP**—Transportation Improvement Program (Marathon County)

**USDA**—United States Department of Agriculture

**UW-MC**—University of Wisconsin—Marathon County

**WDA**—Wisconsin Department of Agriculture

**WDNR**—Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

**WDOA**—Wisconsin Department of Administration

**WDOT**—Wisconsin Department of Transportation

**WHEDA**—Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority

**WISLR**—Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads

**WPS**—Wisconsin Public Service Corporation

# 1. Introduction and Summary

The Town of Plover's *Conditions and Issues Report* documents the current conditions in the community and identifies primary issues or concerns that the Town may want to address in the future. This report includes information about Plover in the areas of demographics, natural resources, land use, transportation, utilities, housing, cultural resources, community facilities, parks, economic development, and intergovernmental cooperation. The report provides a foundation for development of the final plan, which will outline policies and actions that the Town can take to address identified issues and guide future growth in Plover. Some key findings in this report include:

- The Town of Plover is located in northeast Marathon County with Harrison on the north and Shawano County on the east. Plover has experienced strong population growth over the past three decades, with an increase of 281 persons, or 69 percent, since 1970. Plover has higher numbers of children than the County or State, and has a median age of 33.3, significantly younger than the County and State median ages.
- Development potential in the Town is limited in some areas because land is in public ownership. Over 1,200 acres along the Plover River are held by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). Private owners have set aside over 800 acres under the Forest Crop Law (FCL).
- High bedrock levels in the northwest sector of Plover make water availability unpredictable and may limit waste

disposal options, thus making that area less suitable for development.

- Plover has an abundance of natural resources, and residents are concerned about preserving the environment, including woodlands, wetlands and open spaces.
- Plover residents want to manage new development and preserve the rural character of the Town. They are considering whether to update their zoning code and also examining whether there is a need to increase the two-acre minimum lot size.
- Road conditions have been judged as poor, and some deferred maintenance is likely the result of budget constraints. There are also road use conflicts that will need to be addressed as residential and agricultural and logging uses all need appropriate access.
- Residents within Plover use individual on-site waste disposal systems and have private wells, conditions that will continue in the Town.
- Most housing in Plover is single family and is likely to remain that way.
- The Town of Plover does not own or operate any public parks, but has the 190-acre Dells of the Eau Claire Park on its western boundary.
- Plover has its own fire and ambulance service and has a mutual aid agreement with the Village of Birnamwood.

## 2. Demographics

This analysis is intended to describe the existing demographics of the Town of Plover and identify the major demographic trends impacting Plover over the next few decades. Both Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin are also listed for comparison.

### Population and Households

#### Historical Trends

As shown in Table 2-1, Plover has experienced strong population growth over the past three decades, growing by 281 persons, or 69 percent. Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin both grew by over 20 percent over the same time period. Household growth over the past decade was higher than for either the County or State. Plover is one of the few Towns to show an increase in average household size since 1970. The average household size remained the same since 1990, and is substantially higher than that of the County or State.

**Table 2-1: Demographic Change, 1970-2000**

	1970	1980	1990	2000	% change 1970 to 2000	% change 1990 to 2000
<b>Total Population</b>						
<b>Plover</b>	405	553	568	686	+69%	+21%
<b>County</b>	97,457	111,270	115,400	125,834	+29%	+9%
<b>State</b>	4,417,821	4,705,767	4,891,769	5,363,675	+21%	+10%
<b>Total Households</b>						
<b>Plover</b>	154	203	189	229	+49%	+21%
<b>County</b>	29,771	37,865	41,534	47,402	+59%	+14%
<b>State</b>	1,328,804	1,652,261	1,822,118	2,084,544	+57%	+14%
<b>Average Household Size</b>						
<b>Plover</b>	2.63	2.72	3.01	3.00	+14%	0%
<b>County</b>	3.27	2.90	2.75	2.60	-20%	-5%
<b>State</b>	3.22	2.35	2.68	2.50	-22%	-7%

Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Administration

Table 2-2 describes the percentage of population in various age groups. Plover varied from the County and State in several categories. Plover had higher percentages of children through age 19. In addition, Plover had higher or equal percentages in age categories 25 through age 54. These figures contributed to Plover’s significantly lower median age of 33.3, as compared to 36.3 and 36.0 for the County and State, respectively.



**Table 2-2: Population by Age Group, 2000**

Age Group	Percent of Population		
	Plover	County	State
Under 5 years	8.3	6.4	6.4
5 to 9 years	9.0	7.5	7.1
10 to 14 years	9.8	8.0	7.5
15 to 19 years	8.0	7.7	7.6
20 to 24 years	3.4	5.4	6.7
25 to 34 years	14.0	13.0	13.2
35 to 44 years	16.0	16.5	16.3
45 to 54 years	14.1	13.9	13.7
55 to 59 years	4.5	4.8	4.7
60 to 64 years	2.5	3.8	3.8
65 to 74 years	6.4	6.4	6.6
75 to 84 years	2.8	4.8	4.7
85 years and over	1.2	1.7	1.8
<b>Median Age</b>	33.3	36.3	36.0

*Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Administration, 2000*

**Population Forecasts**

Table 2-3 indicates population projections for Plover and for Marathon County. These projections were completed by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) (2003). Projections were based on the population from the 2000 Census, and projected in five-year increments until 2030. The percentage change in population growth from 1980 to 2000 was used as the basis for future growth. Table 2-3 uses the moderate growth rate. Estimates were completed for low growth (-5%), and high growth (+5%) as well. The moderate growth percent change from 2000 to 2030 for Plover is 13.9 percent, slightly higher than the projected State change of 13.3 percent.

**Table 2-3: Population Projections – 2000-2030**

	Total Population by Year						
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>Plover</b>	686	702	718	734	750	766	782
<b>County</b>	125,834	128,632	131,430	134,217	137,022	139,820	142,618

*Source: Marathon County 2030 Population and Employment Projections Methodology Report, NCWRPC, 2003*

Table 2-3b shows population projections completed by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA), Demographic Services Center. The WDOA population projections are recognized as Wisconsin’s official population projections in accordance with Wisconsin Statute 16.96. These projections are based on the same historical time period as those developed by NCWRPC, however more recent years carry a greater weight in the WDOA’s projected populations. Additionally, the WDOA projections are based on the historical population trends of individual communities, whereas the NCWRPC projections are based on trends in the planning sub-areas.

The NCWRPC projections provide a baseline to determine trends in the sub-area. They are useful in identifying future population beyond the borders of individual communities. The WDOA projections are more useful at the local municipality level. The WDOA projections in Table 2-3b show a faster rate of growth for Plover than the NCWRPC projections. The WDOA projects a population of 782 by 2010, an increase of 14 percent within a decade.

**Table 2-3b: Population Projections – 2000-2030**

	Total Population by Year							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% change
<b>Plover</b>	686	735	783	831	880	928	948	+38%
<b>County</b>	125,834	130,242	134,504	138,836	143,308	147,112	150,255	+19%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration  
 2030 numbers projected from 2025 DOA estimates based on countywide growth rate rates

**Household Forecasts**

Like the population projections, household projections were also calculated using both NCWRPC and WDOA population data. Table 2-4 indicates projected households for Plover and for Marathon County. These projections are based on the population projections shown in Table 2-3 divided by the average household size of 3.00 (Table 2-1) in Plover in 2000. Plover shows a 14 percent change, or 32 additional households by 2030, compared to 13 percent change for Marathon County.

**Table 2-4: Household Projections – 2000-2030**

	Total Households by Year							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% change
<b>Plover</b>	229	234	239	245	250	255	261	+14%
<b>County</b>	48,585	49,665	50,745	51,821	52,904	53,985	55,065	+13%

Source: Marathon County 2030 Population and Employment Projections Methodology Report, NCWRPC, 6/03

Table 2-4b includes household projections based on population projections completed by the WDOA and assumes an average persons-per-household of 3.00 in Plover in 2000. Like the WDOA population projections, the WDOA household projections show an increase of 14 percent by 2010.

**Table 2-4b: Household Projections – 2000-2030**

	Total Households by Year							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% change
<b>Plover</b>	229	249	273	294	316	337	347	+52%
<b>County</b>	47,702	50,109	52,902	55,589	58,181	60,283	62,035	+30%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration  
 2030 numbers projected from 2025 DOA estimates based on countywide growth rate rates

**Education and Income Levels**

According to 2000 Census data, 83.9 percent of Town of Plover residents have a high school education or higher. (Table 2-5) This compares to 83.8 percent for the County, and 85.1 percent for the State. In Plover, 12.9 percent of residents have a bachelor’s degree or higher. This is lower than the number of persons with a bachelor’s degree or higher in the County and State with 18.3 percent and 22.4 percent respectively.

**Table 2-5: Educational Attainment (population age 25 and over)**

Educational Attainment	Plover		County	State
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than 9th Grade	22	5.3	8.2	5.4
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	45	10.8	8.0	9.6
High School Graduate	213	51.1	38.0	34.6
Some College, No Degree	47	11.3	18.3	20.6
Associates Degree	36	8.6	9.2	7.5
Bachelor's Degree	42	10.1	12.6	15.3
Graduate or Professional Degree	12	2.9	5.7	7.2
Percent high school graduate or higher		83.9	83.8	85.1
Percent bachelor's degree or higher		12.9	18.3	22.4

Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Administration, 2000

Median household income for Town of Plover residents was \$42,250 in 2000. This is slightly lower than Marathon County with a median of \$45,165, and the State overall at \$43,791. Income distribution among all income levels is approximately proportionate to levels observed County- and State-wide.

**Table 2-6: Household Income Levels, 2000**

Income Level	Plover		County	State
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than \$10,000	23	10.0	5.9	7.1
\$10,000 - \$14,999	17	7.4	5.4	5.8
\$15,000 - \$24,999	31	13.5	12.3	12.7
\$25,000 - \$34,999	26	11.4	13.1	13.2
\$35,000 - \$49,999	41	17.9	19.4	18.1
\$50,000 - \$74,999	65	28.4	25.2	22.7
\$75,000 - \$99,999	18	7.9	10.5	10.9
\$100,000 - \$149,000	7	3.1	5.4	6.4
\$150,000 - \$199,999	1	0.4	1.3	1.5
\$200,000 or More	-	-	1.6	1.5
Total Households	229	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Median Household Income</b>	\$42,250	-	\$45,165	\$43,791

Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Administration, 2000

### Employment Characteristics

Table 2-7 illustrates the breakdown, by occupation, of the employed population of the Town of Plover in 2000. The “employed population” is defined as people living in the Town who are 16 years and older. In 2000, the Town had an employed population of 323. Most residents were employed in production, transportation and material moving occupations, and management, professional and related occupations.

Employment projections are included in the Economic Development section.

**Table 2-7: Occupation by Sector, 2000**

Sector	Number	Percent
Management, professional, and related occupations	94	29.1
Service occupations	32	9.9
Sales and office occupations	52	16.1
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	10	3.1
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	24	7.4
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	111	34.4
<b>Total Employed*</b>	323	100

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration

\* “Total Employed” represents employed civilian population 16 years and over

### Demographic Trends

- Plover has experienced strong population growth over the past three decades, growing by 69 percent while the County and State both grew by over 20 percent.
- Household growth over the past decade was higher than for either the County or State. The average household size is 3.00, much higher than that of the County or State.
- Plover had more children, up to age 19, and greater or equal percentages of people aged 25 to 54. As a result, Plover’s median age is 33.3, significantly lower than the County at 36.3 and the State at 36.0.

- 83.9 percent of Plover residents have a high school education or higher, compared to 83.8 percent for the County, and 85.1 percent for the State.
- In Plover, 12.9 percent of residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, slightly lower than the number of persons with a bachelor's degree or higher in the County (18.3 percent) and the State (22.4 percent).
- Median household income for Plover was slightly lower at \$42,250 than either the County or State medians.
- Both population and households in Plover are expected to grow about 14 percent between 2000 and 2030 (NCWRPC projections).
- In 2000, Plover had an employed population of 323, with the largest number of residents employed in production, transportation and material moving occupations, and management, professional and related occupations.

### 3. Natural Resources

Because natural resource features do not follow geo-political boundaries, it is important to consider their patterns and inter-relationships on a broader scale. In addition, many of the programs for protecting or mitigating impacts to natural resources are administered at the County, State or Federal level. Thus, an overview of recent county-wide natural resource planning efforts is described below, followed by a description of local natural resource conditions. Of particular interest are geographic areas of the landscape encompassing valued natural resources features grouped below by resource type, including water, soil and biological resources.

#### Recent Planning Efforts Related to Natural Resources

In the last decade, several plans were prepared by the County specifically to address protection and management of natural resources. These plans may be used to guide local policy and decision making regarding resource management and protection. In addition to the plans listed below, Marathon County and several local communities have adopted park and outdoor recreation plans that discuss natural resource based recreational facilities and protection strategies. These are described in more detail in the Parks section.

- **Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan (LWRMP)** - In 2001, Marathon County adopted a LWRMP in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes (Wisconsin Act 27, Chapter 92.10). The primary

intent of this plan is to identify a vision for natural resource management in Marathon County and outline strategies to protect the quality and quantity of soil and water resources. Marathon County encompasses portions of 22 watersheds. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has ranked these watersheds according to water pollution impacts and designated five as “priority” watersheds to receive special planning and funding through the voluntary, State-funded Priority Watershed Program. The County’s Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (DCPZ) works with the WDNR to implement the program. Program funding is used to hire staff to assist in developing management plans for each watershed and to provide cost sharing to landowners for implementation of “best management practices” (BMPs) to achieve the program objectives.

- **Marathon County 2001 Groundwater Protection Guide** – This guide is an extension of the efforts established with adoption of the Marathon County Groundwater Plan in 1988. It is intended to guide local and County officials in setting policy. It also serves as a resource of information about groundwater and other natural resources and recommends strategies to address issues related to groundwater protection.
- **Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan, 1996-2005** – This plan includes recommendations to guide management of forest land in Marathon County in accordance with the County Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department’s mission to manage and protect the County forest on a sustainable basis for

ecological, economic, educational, recreational, and research needs of present and future generations. It provides substantial information on existing forest resources as well as information regarding the roles of the various agencies and regulatory framework related to forest management.

## **Water Resources**

Marathon County contains abundant water resources. Many have remained in a fairly pristine state and others need focused efforts to improve water quality. Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW) designations are derived from an amendment to the U.S. Clean Water Act, which directed states to identify waters that were largely unaffected by pollution and should remain that way. States were required to develop “anti-degradation” policies to protect these waters from pollution. As a result, wastewater entering an ORW must be as clean as the water in the “outstanding” water body. The anti-degradation policies only apply to point sources of pollution, such as an industrial discharge pipe. However, Wisconsin has other programs in place to control non-point source pollution, such as animal waste and pesticides in farm runoff, urban runoff, and failing septic systems.

The Wisconsin Natural Resources Board also wanted to extend higher levels of protection to top trout waters. As such, the WDNR established a second category of waterways to be protected under the anti-degradation policy; these are the ERW. Wastewater entering ERW must meet minimum clean water standards, although higher standards are encouraged where feasible.

ORW in Plover include:

- Plover River
- Norrie Brook

There are no ERW in Plover.

Water resources that have been significantly degraded are identified as “impaired waters.” Four of the 22 watersheds in Marathon County have been identified as “impaired waters” on the “303 (d) list” of the U.S. Clean Water Act. The list identifies waters that do not meet current water quality standards and merit water quality improvement and protection. There are no impaired waters in Plover. Nearby impaired waters include:

- Springbrook in the Town of Harrison

Resource management plans for impaired watersheds are currently being done as part of the Priority Watershed Program, a State-funded, voluntary program administered by the County. The County’s resource management planning efforts are described in more detail in the *Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan* (2001).

## **Resources in Plover**

**Streams/Rivers** – The Plover River flows through the center of Plover and is classified ORW. Aniwa Creek flows from the Plover River in the northeast section of the Town. The Eau Claire River flows through the northwest section of Plover and includes the Dells of the Eau Claire County Park. A segment of

Norrie Brook flows through extreme southeast Plover and is also classified as ORW. Plover is within the watershed of the Lower Eau Claire River, and the Plover and Little Plover River watershed. (Figure 3-1 and Figure 3-2).

**Floodplains** - Floodplains consist of land likely to be covered by floodwater during the regional (100-year) flood. Floodplain areas are based on information compiled by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The floodplain includes the floodway and the flood fringe.

In the Town of Plover, the areas within the 100-year floodplain are along the Eau Claire River, and in several scattered areas along the eastern boundary of Plover, east of CTH D. Some of the floodplain is associated with the Aniwa Creek area, while to the south, it is adjacent to Norrie Brook. There is a small floodplain area in south central Plover, on either side of CTH N.

**Wetlands** – Wetlands in Wisconsin were defined by the State Legislature in 1978 as: *"an area where water is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophytic (water-loving) vegetation and which has soils indicative of wet conditions."*

Programs in three levels of government - local, State and Federal - regulate activities in wetlands. There are dozens of wetland types in Wisconsin, characterized by vegetation, soil type and degree of saturation or water cover. Some of the more prominent wetland types are:

- ***Aquatic Bed*** wetlands contain plants growing entirely on or in a water body no deeper than 6'. Plants may include pondweed, duckweed, lotus and water-lilies.
- ***Marshes*** are characterized by standing water and dominated by cattails, bulrushes, pickerel-weed, lake sedges and/or giant bur-reed.
- ***Sedge or "Wet" Meadows*** wetlands may have saturated soils, rather than standing water, more often than not. Sedges, grasses and reeds are dominant, but look also for blue flag iris, marsh milkweed, sneeze-weed, mint and several species of goldenrod and aster.
- ***Scrub/Shrub*** wetlands include bogs and alder thickets and are characterized by woody shrubs and small trees such as tag alder, bog birch, willow and dogwood.
- ***Forested*** wetlands include bogs and forested floodplain complexes. They are characterized by trees 20 feet or more in height such as tamarack, white cedar, black spruce, elm, black ash, green ash and silver maple.

Wetlands in Plover are primarily forested wetlands. The largest areas are along the Plover River throughout the Town. Other areas are in the Aniwa Creek vicinity and near Norrie Brook, both along the eastern edge of Plover. One large forested wetland is northeast of the intersection of CTH D and Pine View Road. Associated with the forested wetlands but covering smaller areas are some emergent/wet meadow and scrub/shrub wetlands. (Figure 3-3).

**Groundwater** – Groundwater is generally available in volumes adequate for irrigation, domestic use, or any industrial activity, in most of Plover. There is a segment in Plover, roughly the area west of CTH Y, where groundwater is in short supply because of high bedrock levels. In most areas of Plover, groundwater is found at shallow depths. (Figure 3-4 and Figure 3-5).

## **Soil Resources**

**Soils Types** – The majority of Plover has Kennan-Hatley soils, prominent along the glacial moraine adjacent to the Plover River throughout the County. Immediately adjacent to the Plover River is Chetek-Rosholt-Oesterle, a soil found on outwash plains and stream terraces. To the northwest where bedrock levels are high, soil types include Fenwood-Rietbrock-Rozellville and Marathon-Mylrea-Moberg. (Figure 3-6).

Given that the average allowable soil loss rate for Marathon County is 4.4 tons per acre per year, the susceptibility for soil erosion in Plover is low, with soil loss of 1.0 – 2.0 tons/acre/year.

**Prime Farm Soils** – Figure 3-7 illustrates soils that have been identified as prime farm soils according to the Marathon County Cropland Evaluation System (CES). This system establishes a basis from which one parcel of land can be compared to another. It rates soils on their ability to produce food, feed, forage, and fiber crops. It is based upon the knowledge that soil properties affect yields. The system is non-biased, defendable, and can be consistently applied.

Additional information on Marathon County CES can be obtained from Marathon County DCPZ.

There are scattered areas of prime farm soils in Plover. The heaviest concentrations are located in the north central area just east of the Eau Claire River, in sections along the Plover River particularly in the southwest, and in scattered locations in the southeast.

These class designations refer to the quality of soils for growing crops and are based on United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) classifications. Class 1 soils are the best soils in Marathon County for growing all crops. Class 2 soils are also very good agricultural soils, however, they may be prone to wetness and are therefore less desirable than Class 1 soils. It should be noted that not all prime farm soils are used for farming; some have been developed with residential or other uses, others are found in wetland areas. The “prime farm soils” designation simply indicates that these soils are good productive farmland.

**Steep Slopes** – Steep slopes in Plover are scattered, but the largest areas are associated with the Plover River. There is also a segment on the east bank of the Eau Claire River. Steep slopes are defined as slopes with gradients over 12 percent. Figure 3-8 illustrates where steep slopes exist and separates them into two categories. Category D includes areas with slopes between 12 and 20 percent. Category E includes areas where slopes are all greater than 15 percent.



## Biological Resources

**Vegetation** – According to land cover maps, the majority of Plover is woodland. Over 800 acres have been set aside under the Forest Crop Law (FCL) in Plover. In addition the WDNR owns 1,200 acres along the Plover River. Cropland is the next most prominent use, with segments in the northwest and scattered across the southern one-third of the Town.

**Wildlife Resources and Habitat** – Wildlife resources include a variety of game and non-game species of birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians that typically live in Marathon County. Common types of wildlife include deer, bear, badger, wolf, wild turkeys, raccoon, squirrels, songbirds, waterfowl and raptors. Wildlife resources are abundant in the many undisturbed sanctuaries, refuges, reserves, and scattered habitats located throughout the County. Numerous other species of migrating birds use habitat in Marathon County for food, shelter, and resting stops during seasonal migration.

There is a significant amount of wildlife habitat in Marathon County. In addition to County parks and forest units, major wildlife habitat areas include: the George W. Mead Wildlife Area, the McMillan Marsh State Wildlife Management Area, and Rib Mountain State Park.

**State Natural Areas (SNAs)**—The Dells of the Eau Claire River Park in Plover is one of two SNAs in Marathon County (along with the Big Eau Pleine Woods in Big Eau Pleine Park). Designated an SNA in 1973, the Dells of the Eau Claire River was identified because of the impressive bedrock outcrops at the dells and the adjacent forest. There are over 400 sites in the

SNA program, which is part of the WDNR Bureau of Endangered Resources.

SNAs protect outstanding examples of native natural communities, significant geological formations, and archaeological sites. Management of SNAs includes provision for scientific research and compatible, low-impact recreational activities.

**Threatened and Endangered Species** – The WDNR’s Bureau of Endangered Resources maintains Wisconsin’s Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI). The Inventory identifies Natural Communities, and Endangered, Threatened, or Special Concern plants and animals throughout the State. Plover has representatives of Endangered, Threatened and Special Concern species. They include the following:

### Communities:

- **Dry Cliff Community** - These dry vertical bedrock exposures occur on many different rock types, which may influence species composition. Scattered pines, oaks, or shrubs often occur. However, the most characteristic plants are often the ferns, common polypody (*Polypodium vulgare*) and rusty woodsia (*Woodsia ilvensis*), along with herbs such as columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*), pale corydalis (*Corydalis sempervirens*), juneberry (*Amelanchier* spp.), bush-honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*), and rock spikemoss (*Selaginella rupestris*).

- **Moist Cliff Community** - This "micro-community" occurs on shaded (by trees or the cliff itself because of aspect), moist to seeping mossy, vertical exposures of various rock types, most commonly sandstone and dolomite. Common species are columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), the fragile ferns (*Cystopteris bulbifera* and *C. fragilis*), wood ferns (*Dryopteris* spp.), rattlesnake-root (*Prenanthes alba*), and wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*). The rare flora of these cliffs vary markedly in different parts of the State. Driftless Area cliffs might have northern monkshood (*Aconitum noveboracense*), those on Lake Superior, butterwort (*Pinguicula vulgaris*), or those in Door County, green spleenwort (*Asplenium viride*).
- **Northern Mesic Forest Community** - This forest complex covered the largest acreage of any Wisconsin vegetation type prior to European settlement. Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) is dominant or co-dominant in most stands, while hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) was the second most important species, sometimes occurring in nearly pure stands with white pine (*Pinus strobus*). Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) can be a co-dominant with sugar maple in the counties near Lake Michigan. Other important tree species were yellow birch (*Betula allegheniensis*), basswood (*Tilia americana*), and white ash (*Fraxinus americana*). The groundlayer varies from sparse and species poor (especially in hemlock stands) with woodferns (especially *Dryopteris intermedia*), bluebead lily (*Clintonia borealis*), clubmosses (*Lycopodium* spp.), and Canada mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*) prevalent, to lush and species-rich with fine spring ephemeral displays. After old-growth stands were cut, trees such as quaking and bigtoothed aspens (*Populus tremuloides* and *P. grandidentata*), white birch (*Betula papyrifera*), and red maple (*Acer rubrum*) became and still are important in many second-growth Northern Mesic Forests.
- **Soft, Seepage Shallow Lake Community**—This lake community has a shallow, soft bottom lake with a cold water seep entering the system. It should support a good fish/minnow population.
- **Northern Wet Forest Community** - These weakly minerotrophic conifer swamps, located in the North, are dominated by black spruce (*Picea mariana*) and tamarack (*Larix laricina*). Jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*) may be a significant canopy component in certain parts of the range of this community complex. Understories are composed mostly of sphagnum (*Sphagnum* spp.) mosses and ericaceous shrubs such as leatherleaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*), Labrador-tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*), and small cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*) and sedges such as (*Carex trisperma* and *C. paupercula*). The NHI has split out two entities, identified (but not strictly defined) by the two dominant species (see Black Spruce Swamp and Tamarack Swamp).
- **Open Bog Community** - These non-forested bogs are acidic, low nutrient, northern Wisconsin peatlands dominated by Sphagnum spp. mosses that occur in deep layers, often with pronounced hummocks and hollows. Also present are a few narrow-leaved sedge species such as (*Carex oligosperma* and *C. pauciflora*), cotton-grasses (*Eriophorum* spp.), and ericaceous shrubs, especially bog

laurel (*Kalmia polifolia*), leatherleaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*), and small cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccus*). Plant diversity is very low but includes characteristic and distinctive specialists. Trees are absent or achieve very low cover values as this community is closely related to and intergrades with Muskeg. When this community occurs in southern Wisconsin, it is often referred to as a Bog Relict.

**Flora:**

- **Deam’s Rockcress** (*Arabis missouriensis var deamii*)— Deam’s Rockcress is included among Rare Vascular Plants in the State and is classified as of Special Concern. Special Concern species are those species about which some problem of abundance or distribution is suspected, but not yet proved. The main purpose of this category is to focus attention on certain species before they become threatened or endangered.

**Fauna:**

- **Red-shouldered Hawk** (*Buteo lineatus*)— Listed in 1979, the red-shouldered hawk is one of thirteen species of birds that are on the State Threatened list. The red-shouldered hawk is identified in the critically imperiled category because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences or very few remaining individuals) or because of some factor making it especially vulnerable to extirpation from the State. Habitat of the red-shouldered hawk includes mature floodplain forests along major rivers, including the Wisconsin River to Wausau, and the Wolf River to Shawano.

**Issues**

- **Preservation of Natural Resources**— Residents recognize the wealth of natural resources such as rolling hills, farmland and woodlands present in Plover and support their preservation.
- **WDNR Land Ownership**— In some Towns, there are concerns about State or County ownership of additional land because it removes property from the tax base. It may be useful for Plover residents to discuss State and County ownership and ensure that there is good communication between the Town and the respective agencies.

## 4. Land Use

The Town of Plover is located in northeastern Marathon County. It lies east of the Town of Easton, north of Norrie and south of the Town of Harrison. Main routes to Plover include CTH N on the south, CTH Z, and STH 52 on the north.

### Current Pattern of Land Use

The Town of Plover is divided topographically from the rest of Marathon County by a glacial moraine. This area, with its rolling hills, lakes and forests, is marked by the various rivers that divide the land as they flow toward the Wisconsin River. In terms of its soils, Plover appears to be most similar to areas to the south. Only the northwest corner of Plover, beyond the Eau Claire River, has the high bedrock area similar to Easton.

Plover is predominantly woodland. Over 800 acres are set aside under the Forest Crop Law (FCL) in the Town, while another 1,200 acres are privately owned by forest products companies. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) owns 1,200 acres along the Plover River as State park land, while almost 200 acres form the Dells of Eau Claire Park, owned by Marathon County.

Crop land is most concentrated in the southeast quadrant, with some scattered locations in the northwest as well. In general, these areas also reflect the location of prime farm land in the Town. Despite the high amount of woodland in the Town, there are still over 1,400 acres of land held in Farmland Preservation Contracts.

Residential development appears to be the most dense in the southern edge of the Town, particularly along CTH N and Pine View Road. Settlement has also been fairly strong along CTH D and CTH Y. There are no villages in Plover, and almost no commercial activities.

**Existing Land Use** – For purposes of this report, existing land cover was used as a proxy for existing land use. This was done to achieve consistency in describing existing land uses in the various municipalities participating in the Marathon County comprehensive planning effort. Table 4-1 describes the various land use cover categories and Figure 4-1 illustrates the existing land cover. The acreage and percent of land shown on Table 4-1 were determined from aerial photos and are not intended to be accurate to the parcel level or correspond directly to acreages calculated from plat maps.

**Table 4-1: Land Use Cover Classification, 2000**

Land Cover Category	Description	Acres	% of Total Land Area
<b>Single Family Residential</b>	One family structures, farm residences, mobile homes	469	2.04
<b>Multi-Family Residential</b>	Multiple family structures with three or more households, condos, duplexes, apartments	0	0
<b>Commercial Services</b>	Retail stores, taverns, restaurants, truck stops, gas stations, farm coops, farm implement dealerships, automobile dealerships, business offices, motels/hotels, offices, telephone/gas company	8	0.03
<b>Industrial</b>	Saw/paper/lumber mills, dairies, industrial parks, trucking operations, distribution centers	0	0
<b>Quarries/Gravel Pits</b>	Mining operations	10	0.04
<b>Cropland</b>	Tilled agriculture, prime farmland	4,300	18.68
<b>Specialty Crops</b>	Ginseng, orchards, vineyards, nurseries, groves, cranberries, etc.	24	0.10
<b>Other Agriculture</b>	Fallow, pasture and undetermined agriculture, power lines and towers, water towers, municipal wells	2,027	8.80
<b>Public/Quasi-Public</b>	Schools, churches, cemeteries, town halls, fire departments, National Guard	0	0
<b>Recreation</b>	Ball fields, golf courses, playgrounds, parks, trails, camp grounds, shooting ranges	2	0.01
<b>Woodlands</b>	Forested land	11,812	51.30
<b>Water</b>	Open waters, such as lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, creeks, reservoirs, etc. (including wetlands)	3,165	13.75
<b>Transportation</b>	Airports, highways, road right-of-ways, railroads, logging roads	467	2.03
<b>Barren Land</b>	Unused open land in wooded areas, along streams, along roadsides	741	3.22
<b>Total Land Area</b>		23,024	100%

Source: Marathon County Land Use Cover Database  
 Note: percentages are rounded to the nearest hundredth.

## Current Land Use Plans and Regulations

**Land Use Plan** – Plover does not have a land use plan.

**Zoning** – Plover has its own zoning code, but it has not been updated recently. Figure 4-2 illustrates the existing pattern of zoning in the Town.

**Shoreland Zoning** - Shoreland, shoreland wetlands, and floodplain regulations are applicable in all geographic areas of the County. Wisconsin law mandates Counties to adopt and administer a zoning ordinance that regulates land use in shoreland/wetland and floodplain areas for the entire area of the County outside of villages and cities. This ordinance supersedes any Town ordinance, unless a Town ordinance is more restrictive. The shoreland/wetland and floodplain area covered under this zoning is the area that lies within 1,000 feet of a lake and within 300 feet of a navigable stream or to the land ward side of a floodplain, whichever distance is greater.

**Farmland Preservation Program** – The State of Wisconsin has a Farmland Preservation Tax Credit Program. The goals of the program are twofold: to preserve Wisconsin farmland by means of local land use planning and soil conservation practices and to provide property tax relief to farmland owners. Landowners keeping land in agricultural use can claim a credit on their State income tax by obtaining a zoning certificate, if the land is exclusive agriculture zoned (8 towns in Marathon County), or sign a contract with the State. The program requires that a landowner be a Wisconsin resident, own a minimum of 35 or more acres of contiguous land, and produce gross farm receipts of \$6,000 or more in the last year, or

\$18,000 in the last three years. The income requirement can be satisfied by having 35 acres or more enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Landowners must also comply with County soil and water conservation standards. Contracts can range from 10 to 25 years, and remain in effect regardless of change in ownership. Despite the high amount of woodland in Plover, there are still over 1,400 acres of land held in Farmland Preservation Contracts. There are heavy concentrations in the area east of CTH D along the eastern border, in the southwest on either side of the Plover River, and in smaller segments elsewhere. (Figure 4-3).

**Forest Crop Law and Managed Forest Law (MFL)**

With a large amount of forest land in the County, forest tax laws have a major effect on land uses. Because the tax laws require 25- to 50-year contracts, they are a good indicator of the amount of land that is effectively kept from development for the near future.

In the State, over 2.6 million acres are enrolled under the FCL and the MFL. Because high taxes had encouraged the cutting of timber for revenue, the laws were developed to encourage better forest management and provide tax relief to the woodland owners. Land set aside under the FCL (which was combined into the MFL in 1986) required at least 40 acres in one quarter-quarter section, set aside under a 25- or 50-year contract, and public access for hunting and fishing activities. Current contracts will continue until their expiration dates. This land is typically shown in plat books to identify locations. Land set aside under the FCL in Marathon County is often owned by forest products companies, although many

individuals also own large enough parcels to participate. Over 800 acres are set aside under the FCL in Plover.

The MFL was enacted in 1985 and requires at least 10 acres of contiguous forest land. Because of the smaller acreage requirement, many individual landowners take advantage of the MFL. Landowners may close to the public up to 80 acres of their forest lands set aside under MFL. The remaining program acres must be open to public access for hunting, fishing, hiking, sight-seeing and cross-country skiing. Landowners must choose a 25- or 50-year contract. The landowner pays an Acreage Share Amount as part of their tax bill in lieu of taxes. Current rates through 2007 are \$0.83 per acre for land open to the public and \$1.95 per acre for closed land.

Table 4-2 indicates land in Plover currently enrolled in the FCL and/or MFL programs. Land enrolled under FCL has declined as those contracts expire, while there have been major increases in both open and closed land under the MFL.

**Table 4-2: Land in Forest Preservation Programs (in acres), 1998 – 2002**

Year	Forest Crop Law (FCL)	Managed Forest Law (MFL) open	Managed Forest Law (MFL) closed
1998	2,436	1,357	1,380
2002	844.7	2,411.5	1,981.9
Change	-1,591.3	+1,054.5	+601.9
% Change	-65.3%	+77.7%	+43.6%

Source: Data compiled by local assessors with Municipal Board of Review

## Development Trends

**Land Supply** – Land potentially available for future development (residential and non-residential) between 2000 and 2030 was estimated by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) based on the land cover categories shown in Table 4-1. Land categorized as barren, crop land, forest land, other agriculture, and specialty crop was considered “available” for future development. Land categorized as already developed, such as residential or commercial, or areas that cannot easily be developed, such as wetlands or waterways, were considered “unavailable” for future development. In the Town of Plover, 18,897 acres are identified as available for future development and 4,128 are considered unavailable. It should be noted that in Plover, almost 1,500 acres are in public ownership and are not, in actuality, available for development (Table 4-3).

**Table 4-3: Public Owned Land (in acres), 1998-2002**

Year	County Owned	State Owned	Federal Owned
1998	222.9	1,247.3	0
2002	195.9	1,247.3	0
Change	-27	0	0
% Change	-12.1%	0	0

*Source: Data compiled by local assessors with Municipal Board of Review*

**Land Demand** – An estimate of land needed for future residential development was based on projected new dwelling units between 2000 and 2030 derived from WDOA household projections and the average density of dwelling units per acre in the community. The average density was calculated using the total acres of residential land on the 2000 land use/cover

map divided by the number of households according to the 2000 Census. It was assumed that the density would remain constant between 2000 and 2030. Future acres needed for residential development were then estimated by multiplying the projected number of households in 2030 by the average density. In the Town of Plover, is estimated that 241 acres of land will be needed to accommodate new residential development through 2030.

Between 1990 and 2002, 77 sanitary permits for residential development were approved in the Town of Plover. This represents an average of 6.4 new homes constructed each year. In Plover, there is some expectation of residential development as a result of the new hospital and the new Wausau East High School, both being built on the eastern side of the County. Although these facilities are some distance from Plover, new residential development is anticipated.

The NCWRPC estimated land needed for non-residential development based on projected changes in local employment and an estimated current average density of 3.32 employees per acre in the Eastern Group planning sub-area. In the Town of Plover, it is estimated that only 5 acres will be needed to accommodate new non-residential development through 2030. This small acreage reflects the anticipated decline in employment, due primarily to loss of farm employment. Even though employment is estimated to decline, loss of acreage devoted to farming or other non-residential land uses should not occur. Rather, farm acres may remain constant, while the number of farm employees declines.

**Land Values** – Table 4-4 shows the change in per acre assessed land values in Plover between 1998 and 2002. It also indicates percent change in acreage and land value for the Town compared to Marathon County. Plover’s per acre assessed land values showed declining values in the residential and agricultural categories. The amount of residential acres increased. The largest decline in acres was 140 acres from agriculture, while swamp and waste land increased by 71 acres. A portion of this change can be explained by a change in assessment practices in this period, in which unusable agricultural land was assessed at a lower rate as swamp and waste land or forest.

Although anecdotal information indicates that land values are high because of the demand for recreational property for hunting and fishing, the assessed values shown in Table 4-4 do not show great changes in values in either category.

In Marathon County as a whole, land classified as Swamp and Waste Land had the highest percent increase in acreage of all categories (74.8 percent) and the highest percent increase in value per acre (137 percent).



**Table 4-4: Per Acre Assessed Land Values (in dollars), 1998 – 2002**

Year	Residential		Commercial		Manufacturing		Agriculture		Swamp & Waste Land		Forest	
	Acres	Land Only	Acres	Land Only	Acres	Land Only	Acres	Land Only	Acres	Land Only	Acres	Land Only
1998	505	\$2,275	11	\$1,055	0	\$0	5,518	\$335	1,928	\$378	8,126	\$571
2002	612	\$2,242	11	\$1,055	0	\$0	5,378	\$215	1,999	\$393	8,105	\$571
Chg.	+107	\$-33	0	\$0	0	\$0	-140	\$-120	+71	\$15	-21	\$0
Percent Change Comparison												
	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)	Acres	Land (\$)
Town	+21.2	-1.5	0	0	0	0	-2.5	-35.8	+3.7	+4.0	-0.3	0
County	+21.2	+5.6	+38.4	-4.0	-0.5	+34.4	-11.2	-47.6	+74.8	+137.0	+1.0	+91.8

Source: Data compiled by local assessors with Municipal Board of Review

## Opportunities and Constraints

- **Water Availability** – The high bedrock level in the northwest quadrant limits residential or industrial development because of the difficulty of drilling wells and having adequate water.
- **Ice Age Trail** – A segment of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail lies on CTH Y (the Town’s western boundary with Easton) and extends into Eau Claire Dells Park. There are additional proposed segments that would continue through Plover. The presence of the Trail may offer the Town opportunities to provide services or amenities for Trail users.

## Issues

- **Parcel Size and Development Patterns** – The Town is concerned about the two-acre minimum lot size and would like to increase it to 3-5 acres, particularly for subdivision lots.
- **Zoning Code Update** – The Town has recognized some problems that might be addressed by an updated zoning code. For example, the Town would like to see mobile homes grouped into parks, rather than individually scattered through the Town, and may consider other regulation of mobile homes. They have also identified concerns about animal units per acre under their current zoning. These and other issues might be addressed by an updated zoning code.

- **Zoning and Planning** – Residents were not certain about whether the Zoning Committee of the Plan Commission was active. As planning proceeds, particularly if the Town decides to update the Zoning Code, there will be a need to establish a Zoning Committee to guide this process.
- **Rural Character and Natural Resources** – The Town desires to retain its rural, agricultural character. There is support for retaining farmland, as well as the rolling hills, woodlands and natural features. The Town may want to consider methods to preserve its natural environment while facing increased development pressure.
- **Tax Values** – The Town has concerns about additional forest cropland and County-owned land because of the loss of tax base. The Town is struggling to keep up with required road maintenance and other needs and does not want to lose additional tax base.
- **Rural/Urban Conflicts** – The Town has had some complaints about road use, such as farmers and loggers using roads to haul manure and logs, increased dust and the impact of these uses on residents. Such issues are likely to continue with the combination of agricultural uses and rural residential development, and the Town may want to search for ways to address the conflicts.

## 5. Transportation

### Background

#### Recent Transportation Plans

Transportation planning in Marathon County is coordinated between Marathon County Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (DCPZ) staff and the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the body designated by the Federal Department of Transportation to be responsible for transportation planning in the metropolitan area. Marathon County provides staff for the Wausau Area MPO. The County also does transportation planning for areas outside the Wausau metropolitan area.

County transportation planning efforts are presented in various plans and studies. Findings and recommendations in these plans should be integrated into local community planning efforts when relevant and appropriate. Recent transportation plans prepared by Marathon County include:

- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** – The TIP includes all programmed transportation projects receiving Federal and/or State funds. The TIP was adopted in October 2001 and is updated every two years.
- **State Trunk Highway 29 Corridor Land Use Review (1997)** – This plan was prepared by a multi-departmental team working with communities along the STH 29 corridor in the western part of Marathon County. The primary goal

was to identify recommendations to allow local communities to protect STH 29 from impacts related to unplanned growth.

- **Marathon County Functional / Jurisdictional Highway Classification Study (1998)** – This plan identifies and groups classes of roadways that provide similar levels of service. The plan recommended that the unit of government having the greatest basic interest in the roadway’s function would carry out the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the classified roadways.

### Road Network

#### Functional Classification of Roads/Jurisdiction

*(WDOT Facilities Development Manual)*

A functionally classified road system is one in which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they provide, ranging from a high degree of travel mobility to land access functions. At the upper limit of the system (principal arterials, for example), are those facilities that emphasize traffic mobility (long, uninterrupted travel), whereas at the lower limits are those local roads and streets that emphasize access.

The functional classifications are generally defined as:

**Principal Arterials** serve corridor movements having trip length and travel density characteristics of an interstate or interregional nature. These routes generally serve all urban

areas greater than 5,000 population or connect major centers of activity, the highest traffic volumes and the longest trip desires.

**Minor Arterials**, in conjunction with principal arterials, serve cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing intra-community continuity and service for trips of moderate length, with more emphasis on land access than principal arterials.

**Collectors** provide both land access service and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial areas. The collector system distributes trips from arterials through the area to local streets. The collectors also collect traffic from local streets and channel it onto the arterial system.

**Local Streets** comprise all facilities not on one of the higher systems. They serve primarily to provide direct access to abutting land and access to higher order systems. Local streets offer the lowest level of mobility, and through-traffic movement on this system is usually discouraged.

**Jurisdiction** - Roads are commonly classified in one of two ways: by ownership or by purpose. Jurisdictional responsibility refers to ownership of a particular road, while functional classification, as described above, identifies the road by the Level of Service (LOS) it provides.

Jurisdiction refers to governmental ownership, not necessarily responsibility. For example, some State-owned roads are maintained by local jurisdictions. Additionally, the designation of a public road as a “Federal-aid highway” does not alter its

ownership or jurisdiction as a State or local road, only that its service value and importance have made that road eligible for Federal-aid construction and rehabilitation funds.<sup>1</sup>

Ownership is divided among the Federal, State, and local governments. States own over 20 percent of the national road network. The Federal Government has responsibility for about 5 percent, primarily in national parks, forests, and Indian reservations. Over 75 percent of the road system is locally controlled.

In some cases, local municipalities are responsible for conducting routine maintenance and minor repairs on State and Federal highways within their jurisdictional boundaries. In return, the State generally provides financing to those jurisdictions. However, major repairs and reconstruction are generally still the responsibility of the State Department of Transportation. Roadway jurisdictions (i.e. U.S., State, and County highways) are indicated in Figure 5-1.

### **Major Road Facilities**

Following is a brief description of the major road facilities located in Plover. Functional classification, jurisdiction, and Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), when available, are summarized for all major roads.

- **STH 52** follows the Town of Plover’s northern border with Harrison. STH 52 is designated as a minor arterial.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration Conditions and Performance Report.

Between CTH Y and Eau Claire River Road, STH 52 had an AADT of 1,700 in 1998 and 1,600 in 2001. The 1998 AADT volume was 1,800 between the intersection of Nolan Road (Town of Harrison) and Highland Drive. A 2001 traffic count was not available at this location.

- **CTH Z** is an east-west major collector through Plover. CTH Z between CTH Y and Pleasant Drive had an AADT volume of 1,100 in 1998 and 1,000 in 2001.
- **CTH N** is the southern border of Plover and an east-west major collector connecting Plover to the Village of Birnamwood to the east and to the City of Wausau to the west. CTH N had a 1998 AADT volume of 1,300 west of the intersection with CTH Y; a 2001 traffic count was not available at this location. Between the CTH D south and north intersections, CTH N had an AADT volume of 1,400 in 1998 and 1,200 in 2001.
- **CTH Y** is designated a major collector in the western side of Plover, providing a connection to Hatley and STH 29 to the south. CTH Y north of the intersection with CTH N had an AADT of 690 in 1998 and 800 in 2001. Between the Eau Claire River Road and STH 52, CTH Y had an AADT volume of 720 in 1998 and 1,300 in 2001.
- **CTH D** is classified as a local road and provides a connection to Birnamwood to the southeast and CTH Z to the north. Traffic counts were not available for this segment of CTH D.

**Road Maintenance** – The Town’s road system has been identified as in poor condition, since only a few Town roads are paved. Recently, the Town has been receiving complaints about farmers hauling manure and log trucks and their impact on road condition. There have also been complaints about dust from gravel roads. The need for better maintenance may be hampered somewhat by budget constraints.

**Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER)** – The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) requires all incorporated communities to prepare a Pavement Management Plan (PMP) using a pavement rating system for their local roads. These plans were to be submitted for review by December 2001. The data from these plans is intended to provide the foundation for the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR), which is a computer resource that will enable communities and the State to begin to assess Wisconsin’s local roadway system.

The PASER system, which was designed by the Transportation Information Center of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the rating system used most by Wisconsin communities. PASER rates road surfaces on a scale of 1 to 10. This scale is broken down as follows:

- “1” and “2” = very poor condition
- “3” = poor condition
- “4” and “5” = fair condition
- “6” and “7” = good condition
- “8” = very good condition
- “9” and “10” = excellent condition

In addition to its use in the new WISLR, the rating system gives communities a detailed assessment of the appropriate maintenance method for each road segment under their jurisdiction. This assessment is then incorporated into the community’s PMP.

Figures 5-2 and 5-3 and Table 5-1 illustrate the WISLR road assessment done in 2004 by surface type and condition rating. As shown, the majority of roads in the Town are paved with asphalt. Roads exhibiting a surface condition rating at or below “Fair” should be examined to determine what type of reconstruction or strengthening is necessary. Roads that display a surface rating of “Good” or better will only require minimal preventative maintenance to maintain safe travel conditions. Those roads without data should be examined to ensure safe travel conditions exist along these routes. Only about 40% of the roads in the Town are rated in “Good” or better condition and will require only preventative maintenance. However, roughly 34 miles of roadways will require some sort of reconstruction.

**Table 5-1: Summary of Pavement Conditions**

Surface Type Code (miles)						
Unimproved Road	Graded Earth Road	Gravel Road	Wearing Surface	Cold Mix Asphalt on Concrete	Cold Mix Resurfacing with < 7" Base	Cold Mix Resurfacing with > 7" Base
	0.53	26.75				
Cold Mix Asphalt Base < 7"	Cold Mix Asphalt Base > 7"	Hot Mix Asphalt on Concrete	Hot Mix Resurfacing	Hot Mix Asphalt Pavement	Concrete Pavement	Brick or Block Pavement
5.56	20.55		1.02	1.00		

Surface Condition Rating - WISLR Data						
No Data	Failed	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
0.09	1.58	11.71	20.97	12.91	5.98	2.17

Source: WDOT (WISLR), 8/10/04

## Land Use and Transportation

**Access Management** – Wisconsin was one of the first states to recognize the relationship between highway operations and the use of abutting lands. Under Chapter 233, the WDOT was given the authority to establish rules to review subdivision plats abutting or adjoining State trunk highways or connecting highways. Regulations enacted by WDOT establish the principles of subdivision review. They require new subdivisions to: (1) have internal street systems; (2) limit direct vehicular access to the highways from individual lots; (3) establish building setbacks; and (4) establish access patterns for remaining unplatted land.

Marathon County issues driveway permits and implements access restrictions on all properties fronting a lettered County road. The *County Trunk Highway Access-Driveway Policy* addresses the requirements regarding culverts, access width, slope, visibility and spacing. The policy is available through the Marathon County Highway Department.

**Trip Patterns** – Most residents commute to Wausau and Antigo for employment.

## **Other Transportation Modes**

**Pedestrian** – There are no public sidewalks in Plover.

**Bicycle**--The *Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan for the Non-Urbanized Area of Marathon County, Wisconsin, 1996* identified **recommended** bicycle routes in Marathon County. These recommended routes were based on traffic counts and condition of pavement. Formal action has not occurred to adopt these as **designated** bicycle routes. Suggested bicycle routes in Plover include CTH D, CTH Y, CTH Z and a short section of Eau Claire River Road. (Figure 5-4)

**Transit** – Elderly, needy, and disabled transit service is provided throughout the County through North Central Health Care (NCHC). The services include semi-fixed routes that are scheduled, and demand services available with a 48-hour notice. Information and services are available by calling 848-4555.

**Rail** – There are no rail lines serving Plover.

**Airports** – The Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA) is a joint venture of Marathon and Portage Counties. It is the only airport within Marathon County or neighboring counties that provides scheduled air passenger services. The CWA is located east of Mosinee and accessible via I-39. The terminal has been modernized and highway access reconstructed to be more convenient. Since 1982 more than \$24,000,000 has been spent to keep the airport ready to serve the needs of the region. Service is provided through Mesaba/Northwest, United/United Feeder Service and Skyway/Midwest Express, offering 24 flights per day that connect through Minneapolis, Chicago, Detroit and Milwaukee. There are nine air freight and express flights daily.

## **Issues**

- **Road Conditions**—Town roads are judged as in poor condition, with few roads paved. Complaints have been raised about farm and logging truck use, and their impacts on road condition, as well as dust from gravel roads. Road maintenance appears to be an issue for Plover residents.
- **Funding**— Future road maintenance and improvement costs and funding options may be limited, depending on State aid availability. Existing road conditions are likely the result of budgetary constraints.
- **Road Use Conflicts**—Road use conflicts, between commuter traffic and farm and logging traffic, will likely continue to grow as more residential development occurs and may require additional attention to manage these conflicts.

## 6. Utilities

This section describes the existing conditions and issues relative to utilities available to the Town of Plover, including sewage disposal, water supply, power supply, and telecommunication facilities and services. It also describes existing conditions with regard to surface water management.

### Private Utilities

Most unincorporated areas of Marathon County use private on-site waste disposal systems for sewage disposal and obtain potable water from private wells. The Town of Plover does not provide public sewer or water service. All development uses private wells and waste disposal systems. The Town, which has its own zoning, requires a minimum lot size of two acres for installation of individual waste disposal systems and wells.

### On-Site Waste Disposal Systems

Chapter 15 of the *General Code of Ordinances for Marathon County* requires private waste disposal systems on all premises intended for human habitation or occupancy that are not served by public sewer. The County Code incorporates by reference rules, regulations, and laws in the Wisconsin Statutes and Wisconsin Administrative Code governing private waste disposal systems, including:

- **Comm 83** – This refers to Chapter 83 in the Wisconsin Administrative Code under the Department of Commerce. It sets standards for regulation of private waste disposal

systems. This code was updated in 2000 and now allows the use of new concepts and technologies through a system of individual component approval. Standards for effluent are based on a drinking water standard, although nitrates are generally exempted.

**Types of Systems** – Under the revised Comm 83 standards, property owners have a wider array of system options than previously available. Septic tanks can be steel, concrete, fiberglass or plastic, but they all must now be equipped with a filter to prevent the movement of solids out into the soil absorption component. In addition, rock in drainfields may now be substituted with specifically engineered foam peanuts bound in mesh or plastic chambers.

On-site waste disposal systems generally fall into four categories:

- **Conventional Systems** – These systems include an absorption field that is buried under the natural ground level. These systems cannot be built in areas where soils do not allow percolation due to high clay content or bedrock where groundwater is too near the surface, or where soils percolate too rapidly and thus pose problems for groundwater contamination.
- **Mound Systems** – These systems include an absorption field that is constructed above ground, creating a “mound.” This type of system is generally used where clay soils, groundwater, rapid permeability or bedrock prevent construction of conventional systems.



- **Mechanical Treatment Components** – These components generally replace or augment the septic tank component and may include aerobic treatment tanks and/or self-contained artificial media or sand filters to clean the effluent prior to its discharge into the soil absorption component.
- **Holding Tanks** - Holding tanks are considered the system of last resort and are only allowed if other types of septic systems cannot be used. Temporary holding tanks (e.g., less than 2 years) are sometimes allowed in areas where public sewer is approved for installation in the near future.

**Permit Requirements** – The Marathon County Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (DCPZ) reviews and issues permits for private waste disposal systems. Soil and site evaluations are required to determine if the proposed system is suitable for the specific property and location before a permit will be issued. If deemed necessary, floodplain and/or wetland delineation may also be required prior to permit issuance. In addition, a maintenance agreement must be submitted prior to permit issuance. All septic tanks installed on or after July 1, 1980, are required to be pumped at least once every three years.

**On-Site Waste Disposal Systems** – All development in Plover uses on-site waste disposal systems. Depth to bedrock may pose problems for some waste disposal systems in the northwest section of Plover, particularly in areas near CTH Y and the Eau Claire River. Other than the northwest sector, soils throughout the rest of Plover are generally suitable for septic tanks. (Figure 6-1 and Figure 6-2).

**Water Wells** – All development in Plover receives water from private wells. There is generally an abundant supply of good water in the Town, however, closer to the border with Easton, water can be difficult to find.

## Surface Water Management

In 2001, Marathon County adopted a Land and Water Resource Management Plan (LWRMP) in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes (Wisconsin Act 27, Chapter 92.10). The primary intent of this plan is to identify a vision for natural resource management in Marathon County and outline strategies to protect the quality and quantity of soil and water resources.

The County is particularly concerned about nonpoint sources of pollution, including failing septic systems, urban runoff, and issues often identified with rural areas such as soil erosion, animal waste and pesticides. Nonpoint pollution is best addressed by watershed. Marathon County encompasses portions of 22 watersheds as shown on Figure 6-3. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has ranked these watersheds according to water pollution impacts and designated five as “priority” watersheds to receive special planning and funding through the voluntary, State-funded Priority Watershed Program. Preparation of resource management plans for the following watersheds is currently underway:

- Springbrook in the Town of Harrison;
- Upper Yellow River in the Town of Spencer;
- Upper Big Eau Pleine in western Marathon County;

- Lower Big Eau Pleine in the south-central part of the County
- Lower Big Rib River

There are currently no watersheds identified for special planning and funding in Plover.

## **Electrical and Gas Utilities**

The Town of Plover receives electric power from Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS). There is no natural gas service. Residents use individual propane tanks for gas.

There is an existing major power line in Plover, running along the western boundary adjacent to CTH Y and then running northeast into Harrison (Figure 6-4).

## **Telecommunication Facilities and Services**

- Television/Cable providers—
- Telephone/Fiber Optics— Verizon
- Cell towers— There are no cell towers in Plover.

## **Solid Waste Management**

The Town of Plover contracts with a private company for waste management. Municipal, commercial and industrial waste is accepted at the Marathon County Landfill in Ringle. User fees collected at the landfill defray the cost of landfill operations.

The Marathon County Solid Waste Management Department is in charge of waste management for non-hazardous solid waste. It consists of the 575-acre landfill, recycling programs, composting, and waste-to-energy. The Department opened a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility in May 1997, where County residents can drop off hazardous waste free of charge.

## **Recycling**

Recycling pick-up is provided by a private contractor.

## **Issues**

- **Water Availability** – The high bedrock level in the northwest quadrant limits residential or industrial development because of the difficulty of drilling wells and having adequate water.

## 7. Housing

Housing is a significant aspect of any comprehensive planning effort. This section is an inventory and analysis of housing conditions in the Town of Plover. Housing in the Town is predominantly single family, with almost 90% owner-occupied. Approximately 12% of housing units were constructed over the last decade, and housing values are lower than median values for Marathon County as a whole.

Data contained in this section reflect two methodologies of data collection employed by the U.S. Census. The source of data collected for the first table is from 2000 Census, Summary Tape File (STF)-1 Data, which was collected through a household-by-household census and represents responses from every household within the country. To get more detailed information, the U.S. Census also randomly distributes a long-form questionnaire to 1 in 6 households throughout the nation. Tables utilizing this sample data are identified in the footnote below each table and are labeled “STF-3 Data.” It should be noted that STF-1 and STF-3 data may differ for similar statistics, due to survey limitations, non-response, or other attributes unique to each form of data collection.

### Housing Inventory

#### Housing Type and Tenure

As shown in Table 7-1, the 2000 Census shows the Town of Plover has 229 occupied housing units. The majority of these units (89%) are owner-occupied. The Town has an average

household size of 3.00 persons. 16% of all households are classified as being “1 person households.” 21% of Town households have a householder 65 years or older.

**Table 7-1: Number of Housing Units by Type and Tenure**

Area	Plover	Marathon County	Wisconsin
Total Occupied Housing Units	229	47,702	2,084,544
Owner Occupied Units	204	36,091	1,426,361
Renter Occupied Units	25	11,611	658,183
Average Household Size	3.00	2.6	2.50
% Owner Occupied	89.1	75.7	68.4
% 1 Person Households	15.7	23.6	26.8
% With Householder 65 years or older	21	21.7	21.5

Source: 2000 Census, STF-1 Data

### Changes in Housing Stock

Table 7-2 notes changes in the housing stock between 1990 and 2000 according to U.S. Census Data. Total housing units have increased by 37 while the number of occupied housing units rose by 45. Vacancy fell from 16% to 11%. The number of owner-occupied housing units increased by 33 or 19%. The census reports increases in the number of single-family units.

**Table 7-2: Changes in Housing Stock**

	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b># Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Total Housing Units	223	260	37	17%
Occupied Housing Units (Households)	187	232	45	24%
Vacancy %	16%	11%	--	--
Owner Occupied Housing Units	173	206	33	19%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	14	26	12	86%
Owner Occupied Housing Units as percent of Total	93%	89%	--	--
Number of Homes for Seasonal/Rec Use	19	17	-2	-11%
Number of Single Family Homes	188	225	37	20%
*Detached	186	220	34	18%
**Attached	2	5	3	150%
Number of Duplexes	2	2	0	0%
Multi Family Units 3-9 units	0	0	0	--
Multi Family Units 10+	0	0	0	--

Source: U.S. Census, 1990, 2000 STF-3 Data

\* This is a 1-unit structure detached from any other house

\*\*In row houses (sometimes called townhouses), double houses, or houses attached to nonresidential structures, each house is a separate, attached structure if the dividing or common wall goes from ground to roof.

**Housing Age**

The age of a community’s housing stock typically reflects several important factors including size, offered amenities, and overall maintenance costs. Age of the dwelling often reflects different regional and national trends in housing development. Housing predating the 1940s, for example, was typically smaller and built on smaller lots. In subsequent decades, both average lot and housing unit sizes have increased. For example, average houses constructed in the 1980s and 1990s

are typically much larger than housing built in previous decades. This can be seen in both the rural and more urban environments of Marathon County. Additional bedrooms, bathrooms, and attached garage space are among the amenities found in newer housing units.

**Table 7-3: Age of Community Housing Stock**

<b>Total Units</b>	<b>Year Built</b>								
	<b>1999 to March 2000</b>	<b>1995 to 1998</b>	<b>1990 to 1994</b>	<b>1980 to 1989</b>	<b>1970 to 1979</b>	<b>1960 to 1969</b>	<b>1950 to 1959</b>	<b>1940 to 1949</b>	<b>1939 or earlier</b>
260	6	19	8	57	48	19	21	14	68
100%	2%	7%	3%	22%	18%	7%	8%	5%	26%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, STF-3 Data

Table 7-3 shows housing age for the community. In the Town of Plover, data show that to date, housing development peaked in the 1970s and 1980s. Recent housing growth from the 1990s makes up approximately 12% of the total housing stock. That is slightly lower than overall percentages for the County. The Census reports that housing units built in the 1990s make up 13% of the County’s overall housing stock.

**Physical Housing Stock**

Table 7-4 looks at several select measures of physical condition and compares them to figures for Marathon County and Wisconsin. The median housing unit size in the Town of Plover is similar in size compared to the overall figures for the

County and State, as measured by number of rooms. Just over 86% of the community’s housing stock is classified as single family. That is higher than overall figures for the County or State. At the time of the 2000 census, no housing units within the Town were within structures with more than 10 units. Census data indicate that the Town has a small percentage of houses lacking complete plumbing facilities.

**Table 7-4: Physical Housing Stock**

Community	Median Rooms	Characteristic (%)			
		1 unit, detached or attached	In buildings with 10 or more units	Lacking complete plumbing facilities	Lacking complete kitchen facilities
<b>Plover</b>	5.8	86.54%	0.00%	1.15%	0.00%
<b>Marathon County</b>	5.8	76.10%	4.50%	0.90%	0.90%
<b>Wisconsin</b>	5.4	69.30%	9.40%	1.40%	1.50%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, STF-3 Data

## Housing Values

### Median Value

Table 7-5 shows housing value statistics for the community, County and State. Specifically, the column to the right shows the median (or middle value) of select owner-occupied housing units for each specified area. This value includes only single-family houses that are located on less than 10 acres. Additionally, this statistic only considers housing units without a business or medical office on the property. Census data indicates that the Town of Plover has a median housing unit value below that of the County.

**Table 7-5: Median Housing Value**

	Median Value (dollars)
<b>Plover</b>	\$77,100
<b>Marathon County</b>	\$95,800
<b>Wisconsin</b>	\$112,200

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, STF-3 Data

### Range of Values

Table 7-6 shows the range of housing values that exist in the community. Compared to the overall percentages for Marathon County, the Town of Plover has greater percentages of housing units valued at less than \$100,000 than the County.

**Table 7-6: Range of Housing Values**

Number of Houses per Housing Value Category	Plover	Marathon County
< \$49,999	12	1,459
%	16%	5%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	50	13,405
%	65%	49%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	15	8,220
%	19%	30%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0	2,368
%	0%	9%
\$200,000 or more	0	1,714
%	0%	6%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, STF-3 Data

### Housing Affordability

Several factors impact the varied levels of housing affordability in Marathon County. These factors include rent and mortgage payments, maintenance expenses, lot size, and required or desired amenities for the home. Household size and income

are also key factors contributing to what housing options are available and accessible to residents.

Statistically speaking, those spending in excess of 35% of their total household income on housing costs may be facing affordability difficulties. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recommends that rental-housing costs not exceed 30% of the monthly income. HUD also indicates that mortgage lenders are more willing to make loans if the scheduled mortgage payment is less than 29% of the monthly household income. The percentage of households in the Town of Plover that pay more than 35% of their income on housing costs is similar to that of the County and State among owner-occupied households.

Additionally, Table 7-7 shows that select Town median owner-occupied costs, both with and without a mortgage, are less than median figures for Marathon County. Median renter costs appear to be consistent between the Town and County. Technical documentation from the Census states that contract rent is the monthly rent agreed to or contracted for, regardless of any furnishings, utilities, fees, meals, or services that may be included. For vacant units, it is the monthly rent asked for the rental unit at the time of enumeration. Gross rent is the contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, water and sewer) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.) if these are paid by or for the renter. (*U.S. Census STF 3 Technical Documentation Guide*)

**Table 7-7: Housing Affordability**

	Owner Occupied			Renter Occupied		
	Median selected monthly owner costs <sup>1</sup>			Median selected monthly renter costs <sup>1</sup>		
	With Mortgage	No Mortgage	% <sup>2</sup>	Median Contract Rent	Median Gross Rent	% <sup>2</sup>
<b>Plover</b>	\$735	\$221	12%	\$400	\$517	0%
<b>Marathon County</b>	\$916	\$295	10%	\$423	\$484	20%
<b>Wisconsin</b>	\$1,024	\$333	9%	\$473	\$540	25%

<sup>1</sup>In dollars

<sup>2</sup>Percent paying over 35% of household income on housing

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, STF-3 Data

## Special Housing

In Marathon County, housing for seniors and populations with special needs is primarily provided in the urbanized areas in and around Wausau. The Marathon County Aging and Disability Resource Center, the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, and the Marathon County United Way all maintain a list of these housing options throughout the County. As the number of elderly persons increases in the coming years, there will most likely be a greater need for these types of housing options. This trend will be seen throughout Marathon County, the State of Wisconsin, and the U.S.

## Senior Housing

The Eastern area of Marathon County is served by the senior housing Home Sweet Home in the Village of Hatley, as well as

four additional facilities in the Village of Birnamwood. This area is also served by facilities in the City of Antigo and the Wausau region. This region, along with the rest of Marathon County, will most likely need additional senior housing in the coming years, as the senior population continues to increase.

## Assistance Programs

There are a variety of State and Federal housing programs geared at addressing housing issues. Grants and low interest loans are available for counties, communities, or individual homeowners. The following housing resources are available to participants as specified by program.

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)-Small Cities Housing**
- **Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)**
  - Rental Rehabilitation Program
  - Home Owner and Accessibility Rehabilitation Program
  - Home Ownership Program
  - Wisconsin Fresh Start Initiative provides at-risk young people with education, skills, and career direction leading to economic self-sufficiency.
- **Homeless Programs (Wisconsin Department of Administration [WDOA])**
  - HUD Emergency Shelter Grants
  - State Shelter Subsidy Grants
  - Transitional Housing

- **Local Housing Organization Grant (LHOG)**

State grants are available to enable community-based organizations, tribes and housing authorities to increase their capacity to provide affordable housing opportunities and services.
- **HOME Loans and Home Improvement Loans (Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority [WHEDA])**
- **Housing-Related Consumer Protection Services (Wisconsin Department of Agriculture [WDA])**

The Trade and Consumer Protection Division is responsible for the investigation of unfair and deceptive business practices and handles individual consumer complaints involving landlord/tenant complaints, and home improvement transactions.

## Issues

- **Mobile Home Regulation**— There is interest in exploring options for maintenance, upkeep, and location of mobile home units in Plover.
- **New Residential Growth**— The Town supports some new residential growth, but has not identified specific locations or development areas.

## 8. Cultural Resources

Cultural resources is a broad term that can encompass many aspects of our heritage. Cultural resources may include archaeological sites and cemeteries, historic buildings and landscapes, historic transportation routes, or traditional cultural properties important to American Indians or other cultural groups. Cultural resources are those elements around us that signify our heritage and help to evoke the sense of place that makes an area distinctive. Cultural resources include buildings, sites and landscapes that help communities retain their sense of identity in an increasingly homogenized society.

### Brief History of the Town of Plover

The Town of Plover was established in 1890, and was part of the logging enterprises that also occurred in Harrison to the north in this era. The community of Hogarty, located on the Harrison/Plover town line and named for early settler John Crump Hogarty, was the primary community in the Town. Although logging occurred early on, Plover had more suitable land for farming and became more identified with dairying. By the 1920s, Plover had a local club of the County Holstein Association. The settlers included American Indians who had long resided in the area, Scandinavians, Germans, and a colony of Dutch settlers.

In 1902, Dutch residents of Milwaukee sent representatives to scout available farm land in Marathon County. Their pastor ultimately purchased 80 acres in section 31 of Plover, a

purchase that attracted other Dutch settlers to nearby Easton and Ringle as well over the next decade.

The Town of Plover contains the Eau Claire Dells State Park, developed by Marathon County in the 1930s. The Dells Park contains gorges, rapids and waterfalls that make it a picturesque location for a park. The park improvements, including bridges, walkways, and viewing locations appear to be of Depression-era public works program construction. Buildings such as the park shelter may also be significant in the park, an important cultural resource in the community.

### Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)

There are no properties in Plover listed on the NRHP. The Town does not have a local historic preservation commission.

The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains the Wisconsin Architecture & History Inventory (AHI) that identifies any properties that may have been surveyed in the past; the Inventory does not convey special status and may not be current. The inventory may be reviewed at [www.wisconsinhistory.org/ahi/index.html](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/ahi/index.html). There are two historic properties in Plover that have been previously surveyed and included in the AHI.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has identified no archaeological sites and/or historic cemeteries in Plover. However, the Plover River is locally known as an important location for archaeological materials.



**Cemeteries, Burial Mounds, Other Burials** – Wisconsin Statute 157.70 provides for the protection of all human burial sites, including all marked and unmarked burials and cemeteries. There are currently 133 cemeteries and burial areas identified in Marathon County, and it is likely that other cemeteries and burials may be present. Suspected burial mounds or unmarked burials must be reported to the State Burial Sites Preservation Office. If human remains are uncovered during excavation, all work must cease pending review of the Burial Sites Preservation Office. All cemeteries and burials in Marathon County should be catalogued under Wis. Stat. 157.70 to provide maximum protection of these sites.

## Issues

- **Lack of Current Information** – Although a brief countywide historic properties survey was carried out in 1975-77, there has been no update. Many properties identified at that time may be gone, while other properties not previously surveyed may now be evaluated in a new context. It is necessary for the community to have current information about cultural resources in order to maximize planning and make the best use of historic properties. This is particularly important in Plover, where few properties have been previously identified.
- **No Recognition Process** – Outside the City of Wausau, there is no process to recognize historic buildings or begin to plan for their protection. Once historic properties are identified, towns and villages do not have an established

mechanism for recognizing them or integrating them into ongoing planning processes.

- **Rural Character and Historic Resources** -- In Marathon County, residents have expressed a strong desire to preserve the rural character of the County and raised concerns about increasing ex-urban development and the decline of working farms. An important part of rural character is the rural landscape and the buildings that convey that sense of place. While it is important to address the location and type of new development, there is also a need to preserve some visible reminders of rural character, including working farms. Without preserving some of the existing resources, including farmsteads and farmlands, the very characteristics that attracted residents will increasingly be lost.
- **Protection of Archaeological Sites and Cemeteries** – Cultural resources planning includes identification and protection of archaeological sites and historic cemeteries. The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains a list of reported sites and cemeteries, representing a fraction of sites that are actually present. This information is often overlooked and should be incorporated into the planning process for local communities. With both the Eau Claire and Plover Rivers present, archaeological materials could be anticipated and should be surveyed.

## 9. Community Facilities

This element describes the community facilities and services provided to the Town of Plover. It describes schools, libraries, public protection services, hospitals and child care services available to residents.

### Schools

#### Primary and Secondary Schools

The Town of Plover is served by two public school districts: the Unified School District of Antigo serves the area north of CTH Z, and the Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District serves the area south of CTH Z.

The Unified School District of Antigo has nine elementary schools, a middle school, and high school. Residents of Plover attend Pleasant View Elementary located on CTH HH in Langlade County, and Antigo Middle and Antigo High School in Antigo. Aniwa Elementary in the Harrison area is scheduled to close and students will attend other schools. The district had 2,898 students in 2002-2003 school year. The student population is declining, and the district has closed a number of elementary schools in recent years. Therefore, no additional facilities are required for the foreseeable future.

The Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District operates three elementary schools and one high school. Residents of the Town of Plover attend Birnamwood Elementary and Middle School (1-8) and Wittenberg-Birnamwood High School (9-12).

Enrollment in the district is declining. The kindergarten center in Eland has been closed and children attend kindergarten in each elementary school. Long range planning is considering creation of a separate junior high school. (Figure 9-1).

There are no private schools in Plover.

**Table 9-1: Unified School District of Antigo Enrollment**

Year	Enrollment PreK-12
1996-1997	3,172
1997-1998	3,121
1998-1999	3,117
1999-2000	3,073
2000-2001	3,029
2001-2002	3,022

Source: State of Wisconsin, Department of Public Instruction

**Table 9-2: Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District Enrollment**

Year	Enrollment PreK-12
1996-1997	1,511
1997-1998	1,505
1998-1999	1,505
1999-2000	1,464
2000-2001	1,449
2001-2002	1,432

Source: State of Wisconsin, Department of Public Instruction

#### Post-Secondary Educational Facilities

**University of Wisconsin – Marathon County (UW-MC)** - UW-MC, located in Wausau, offers lower level (freshman/sophomore) college classes, leading to a baccalaureate degree. Associate Degrees are offered in Arts & Sciences, and Bachelor’s Degrees (through collaborative degree programs with UW Oshkosh and UW Stevens Point)

offered in Business Administration, General Studies, and Nursing. Enrollment in 2002-2003 was approximately 1,300 students.

**Northcentral Technical College (NTC)** - NTC, located in Wausau, offers 40 one- and two-year programs and certificates in business, technical, health and industrial fields. Approximately 2,300 full- and part-time students attend classes, although more than 16,000 people take at least one class annually.

## **Libraries**

The Town of Plover is served by the public library located in the Birnamwood Elementary School, and by the Antigo Public Library, 617 Clermont Street, in Antigo. Plover is also served by the Marathon County Public Library system. The Village of Hatley is working with Marathon County to plan and construct a new branch library in the Village in the near future that would be accessible to Plover residents. The Wausau Headquarters Library, located on First Street in downtown Wausau, completed an expansion to 82,000 square feet in 1995. This new main Wausau Library is open seven days a week and offers over 555,800 volumes, including books, magazines and other materials, as well as internet access. A new Rothschild Area Branch Library was recently constructed on Grand Avenue, and has 3,240 square feet of space with over 31,500 volumes.

## **Public Protection**

### **Police**

Law enforcement is provided by the County sheriff. (Figure 9-2).

### **Fire and Emergency Response**

The Town of Plover has its own volunteer fire department and ambulance service. They also have a mutual aid agreement with Birnamwood. (Figure 9-3).

**E-911 Dispatch Service** - The Marathon County Sheriff's Department Communications Division provides E-911 Dispatch for all Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies in Marathon County. The Communications Division services 85 user agencies and also provides alert paging support for the Emergency Management Office, District Attorney, and Medical Examiners Office.

The users are served by a microwave linked voted repeater radio system, consisting of a control center at the Sheriff's Department, and nine remote radio tower sites spread throughout the County. The system is also utilized by the Marathon County Highway Department and the Wausau Fire Department to support their radio communications. The 37 base radio transmitters and 479 mobile radios that make up the integrated system are maintained and serviced by the Sheriff Department's radio technician.

## Hospitals

The major hospital in Marathon County is Wausau Hospital at 425 Pine Ridge Boulevard in Wausau. Wausau Hospital was created in the 1970s from a merger of St. Mary's Hospital and Memorial Hospital. A new building was completed in 1979 and expansions followed in 1982 and 1992. The 321-bed facility is a multi-specialty regional health center serving a 12-county region in north central Wisconsin. Annual admissions in 2001 totaled 13,631.

Wausau Hospital and its parent corporation, Community Health Care, and other nearby hospitals are part of the Wisconsin Valley Health Network. Hospitals nearby that are part of the network and may serve Marathon County residents include Langlade Memorial Hospital, Antigo.

Birnamwood General Clinic is part of the Community Health Care network. The Clinic serves local needs and is located at 400 Railroad Street in the Village.

Shawano Medical Center is located at 309 N. Bartlette Street in Shawano. Shawano Medical Center offers an array of services including rehabilitation services, a 24-hour emergency room, and a convenient care clinic. There are 12 active physicians on staff, most affiliated with the Theda Care Physicians Clinics or the Menominee Tribal Clinic. There are also a number of visiting specialists available for consultation. Shawano Medical Center is one of over 50 hospitals in the nation that are affiliated with Planetree, Inc., a non-profit organization founded on patient-centered care.

St. Joseph's Hospital in Marshfield and St. Michael's Hospital in Stevens Point are both operated by Ministry Health Care. St. Joseph's Hospital is located at 611 Saint Joseph Avenue in Marshfield and offers a full array of services, specialty services and a complete rehabilitation unit. St. Michael's is a fully accredited acute care facility with 181 beds and nearly 200 doctors on staff. It is located at 900 Illinois Avenue in Stevens Point.

Working in conjunction with St. Joseph's Hospital is the Marshfield Clinic. Marshfield Clinic began in 1916 when six physicians decided to join their efforts. The Marshfield Clinic has grown to over 700 physicians with 41 Regional Centers in Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. Marshfield Clinic first established satellite locations in 1976. Offices in Marathon County are located in Athens, Colby/Abbotsford, Marathon, Mosinee, Schofield (Everest Center), Stratford, and Wausau (4 locations). There is a Marshfield Clinic in Wittenberg.

Ministry Health Care announced plans in July 2002 to construct a 104-bed, \$100 million hospital and medical office complex in Weston near the intersection of STH 29 and CTH X. The hospital is planned to open in 2005. (Figure 9-4).

**North Central Health Care (NCHC)** – In addition to the hospitals and clinics described above, Marathon County is served by NCHC, a public agency, that also serves Langlade and Lincoln counties. The NCHC main campus is located at 2400 Marshall Street in Wausau. Additional offices are located in Antigo (Langlade Health Care Center) and Merrill and Tomahawk (Lincoln Health Care Center). According to their web site, NCHC offers outpatient, day hospital, community

support and inpatient services for mental/emotional problems; vocational, life skill training, early intervention, housing and care management services for the developmentally disabled; and assessment, individual and outpatient group counseling, intensive programming, day hospital, referral for residential and inpatient treatment, and education for alcohol and other drug problems. Services for detoxification and for persons suffering from problems with gambling addiction are also offered.

NCHC operates a nursing home (Mount View Care Center) that offers skilled nursing services at the main campus in Wausau. This facility has a licensed capacity of 320 and serves persons requiring either short term or long term skilled nursing care because of complex physical needs, psychiatric and neurological diseases, dementia or behavior problems.

### **Child Care**

The Wisconsin Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Network is a membership organization made up of 17 community-based CCR&R agencies serving the State of Wisconsin.

CCR&R agencies assist parents in selecting quality childcare, help to increase the supply of childcare in areas that may be lacking sufficient care, offer information and technical support to potential child care providers, and give technical assistance and support to existing childcare programs.

Each agency manages a database of existing childcare providers and programs, collects data about childcare rates,

provider and teacher salaries, the number of parents and children using their services, the type of care requested and the children's ages.

The community-based CCR&R agencies that provide services to Marathon and adjacent counties are:

**Table 9-3: Child Care Referrals**

<b>Counties</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Taylor	Child Care Connection	<a href="http://www.childcareconnectionrr.org">http://www.childcareconnectionrr.org</a> / (800) 848-5229
Shawano	Community Child Care Connection	800-738-8899

### **Issues**

No community facilities issues have been identified by the Town of Plover.

## 10. Parks

### Existing Parks, Trails and Open Space

#### Local Parks and Recreation Facilities

The Town of Plover does not own or operate any public parks.

#### County or State Parks, Forest and Trails

Several County and State parks are located within driving distance of Plover (Figure 10-1). These include:

**The Dells of the Eau Claire Park** - One of the jewels in the Marathon County park system is located in the Town of Plover: the Dells of the Eau Claire Park located off CTH Y. The Dells of the Eau Claire Park surrounds geologic features created by the Eau Claire River. Ancient volcanic rock palisades and potholes carved in the rock by falling water created a unique place at the dells and gorge. The park is 190 acres bisected by the river. A dam upstream from the falls creates an impoundment that has a swimming beach and changing rooms. A large Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)-era shelter is located north of the falls area. Park facilities include picnic tables, grills, drinking fountains, and children's play equipment. There are extensive trails located along both sides of the river, including a portion of the Ice Age Trail.

**Harrison-Hewitt Forest Unit** - North of Plover, Marathon County owns and maintains the Harrison-Hewitt Forest Unit that is 8,424 acres in size located on both sides of the Town

line between Hewitt and Harrison. The forest is made up of mixed upland woods, marshes, and water impoundments. Recreational opportunities include hunting, snowmobiling, and hiking. One of the forest's special features is the Bitzke Bird Walk, completed in 1992. The Bitzke Bird Walk passes a number of wetlands and impoundments, with some sections including boardwalks through wetlands. The trail includes interpretive displays and many opportunities for viewing waterfowl.

**Rib Mountain State Park** - Rib Mountain State Park is located within the Town of Rib Mountain. The park's main feature is Rib Mountain, which at 1,924 feet above sea level is one of the highest elevations in the State of Wisconsin. The park surrounds the mountain and has the following facilities: a picnic area with 65 tables, a camping area with 31 developed sites, 3 hiking trails, a nature trail, and a downhill skiing area with 12 runs.

#### Park System Needs

No park or recreational needs have been identified by the Town of Plover.

## 11. Economic Development

The condition of the local economy directly influences local growth and development, and therefore must be considered when planning for a community's future. Employment patterns and economic trends generally occur on a regional scale. Oftentimes residents of one community work in another. Similarly changes in a major industry can impact jobs and growth far beyond the community where the business is physically located.

It is therefore important to understand a local community's economy in light of its regional context. The following section provides a brief overview of the economy in Marathon County, in terms of key economic sectors and the regional labor force. A more specific description includes Plover employment trends, major local employers or industries, and where most residents work. Potential economic development opportunities and/or issues regarding the local economy are also identified.

### County Economic Environment

Originally, the Marathon County economy was based on forest resources and diversified agriculture. Increased population and infrastructure – railroads, roads and dams for power enabled the area to evolve beyond simple agricultural and logging operations. Resources that once left the area unprocessed were transformed into finished products in the County, providing employment opportunities and adding value in forest products and agricultural processing. A number of related manufacturing operations grew up in the area, some based on

forest products and agricultural products, others supplying the existing industries with fabricated metal products. As these industries progressed, so did industries such as transportation, communications, public utilities, government, trade, finance, insurance and real estate. The County now enjoys a well-diversified economy.

### Agricultural Economy

Located in the agricultural area of eastern Marathon County, the economic health and vitality of Plover is affected by the economic health of the agricultural economy. However, the agricultural economy is subject to national and international pressures, creating challenges for rural areas seeking to adapt to the changing economic environment and preserve their rural agricultural heritage.

The Marathon County agricultural economy is in a depressed state due to a downturn in prices for agricultural goods such as milk and ginseng. At the same time that prices for farm commodities are low, cash rents for Wisconsin farmland have increased, and the percentage of farm equity associated with real estate values has increased significantly. The average cost for agricultural land being converted to non-farm uses has increased from \$544 per acre in 1990 to nearly \$1,200 per acre in 2000; this compares with the average cost for agricultural land continuing in agricultural use, which has increased from \$612 per acre in 1990 to nearly \$1,000 per acre in 2000. When farms are not profitable and the value of land rises, farmers have a harder time competing for the land base.

Other forces that create an environment of change in the rural area:

- Net farm profits are increasingly a function of Federal United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) support payments.
- The average age of the current agricultural owner/operator is nearly 55; a large number are nearing retirement.
- The low entry rate into agriculture reflects the high capital investment and low profit margins.
- The number of dairy herds decreased by 10 percent (1,565 to 951 farms) in the past 13 years, and the total number of cows decreased from 77,000 in 1990 to 64,000 in 2000, a decrease of 17 percent.
- Dairy production is now more concentrated; the average size of dairy herds increased from 42 cows in 1990 to 62 cows in 2001. Nearly 50 dairies have over 300 animal units (200 cows), and 12 dairies have more than 1,000 animal units (more than 700 cows).
- Local milk production is not sufficient to reliably meet the demand of local dairy processors.
- Crop land and open space are being broken up into smaller fields by rural residences.
- Crop land production is being concentrated into fewer, larger operations.

- Soil erosion is increasing and soil organic matter content is decreasing.
- Environmental regulation of farms by the State and Federal government continues to increase. Agriculture is identified as a major non-point source of water pollution (sediment and nutrients) in the U.S.
- Larger farm equipment damages local roads and farm traffic is increasing.
- Conflicts between various land uses in rural areas are increasing.

*\* Source: Marathon County Task Force on the Rural Economy, Agricultural Issues in Marathon County, January 10, 2003 and Report of the Marathon County Task Force on the Rural Economy, April 2003.*

## **Key Economic Sectors**

Key sectors of a regional economy can be identified by size, by growth or decline in employment, or by a concentration of the industry in the local area exceeding the national concentration. An industry that shows a higher concentration of employment than the national average is considered a “basic industry” and is identified by a technique called “Location Quotient” analysis. Basic industries are those sectors that export a product or service from the local community into the national or international economy. They are a critical part of the “economic engine” for a region, affecting the growth and health of many dependent sectors such as retail, transportation, construction, and local services.



**Table 11-1: Marathon County Top 10 Industry Groups Based on Number of Employees (March 2001)**

Industry Group	Employers	Employees	Numeric change	
			1-year	5-year
Health Services	139	4,646	251	-276
Lumber & Wood Products	41	4,438	-30	253
Educational Services	22	3,792	108	243
Eating and Drinking Places	192	3,554	219	335
Fabricated Metal Products	32	3,458	-184	168
Insurance Carriers	24	3,339	-171	*
Miscellaneous Retail	120	3,142	206	1,206
Paper and Allied Products	11	2,649	4	*
Industrial Machinery & Eqmt	37	2,642	41	697
Wholesale Trade – Durable	164	2,521	-89	63

\*data suppressed to maintain confidentiality

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, ES-202, December 2001

### Local Economic Environment

The population of Marathon County grew from 115,400 in 1990 to 125,834 in 2000, an increase of 10.3% compared to an 8.5% increase in the State and 8.7% in the U.S. The most recent estimates show an annual growth rate of 0.7% in all three jurisdictions. (Wisconsin Department of Administration [WDOA], Demographic Services, 2002) Population growth has been concentrated in the urbanized area surrounding Wausau.

Table 11-2 illustrates population and sectors of employment within the Town of Plover. In 2000, there were 177 people

employed within the Town of Plover. Data show that most people in Plover were self-employed or in farming.

Because neither self-employment or farm employment are covered under the State’s unemployment compensation law, totals in that category were estimated by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC), using the Agricultural Census and figures from Wisconsin’s Department of Workforce Development (DWD).

**Table 11-2: Population and Employment by Sector, 2000**

POPULATION	686
<b>EMPLOYMENT:</b>	
Commercial	--
Manufacturing	--
Service	4
Other	14
Self-Employed/Farm	159
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>177</b>

Source: Marathon County 2030 Population and Employment Projections Methodology Report, NCWRPC, 6/03

### Employment Projections

Information on employment in Marathon County is gathered separately for non-farm and farm employment. The DWD collects data on non-farm employment. The DWD estimated non-farm employment in Marathon County to be 49,407 in 1990 and 65,630 in 2000. This represents about a 33 percent increase over ten years. Data on farm employment is collected by the Census of Agriculture and consists of hired farm labor and operators. In 1987, farm employment in Marathon County

was estimated to be 11,643 and in 1997 it was estimated to be 8,298. This represents a decrease of almost 29 percent.

The NCWRPC computed employment projections, using a low, moderate, and high growth scenario, based on the assumption that the historical growth rates described above would continue through 2030. The moderate projections are shown in Table 11-3.

**Table 11-3: Employment Projections in 5-Year Increments**

	Total Employment by Year						
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>Plover</b>	177	174	170	167	164	160	157
<b>County</b>	72,508	75,625	78,742	81,859	84,976	88,093	91,210

*Source: Marathon County 2030 Population and Employment Projections Methodology Report, NCWRPC, 6/03*

The projections indicate declining employment for the Town of Plover. By the year 2030, it is estimated that the Town of Plover will provide employment for 157 workers. This estimate reflects an 11 percent employment decline, and reflects the historical countywide decline in agricultural employment of almost 29 percent between 1987 and 1997.

Table 11-4 shows the percent change in projected employment using the low, moderate and high growth scenario. The low and moderate growth percentages are similar for Plover because of the relatively low numbers involved in the decline. Projected employment growth varies from a decrease of 13 percent (154 workers) under the low growth scenario to an increase of 11 percent (196 workers) under the high growth scenario.

**Table 11-4: Percent Change in Employment, 2000-2030**

	Percent Change in Employment by Growth Rate		
	Low Growth	Moderate Growth	High Growth
<b>Plover</b>	-13% (154)	-11% (157)	11% (196)
<b>Marathon County</b>	21%	26%	34%

*Source: Marathon County 2030 Population and Employment Projections Methodology Report, NCWRPC, 6/03*

## Major Local Employers

There are no large employers in Plover. The majority of Plover residents commute to Wausau and Antigo for employment. As noted in Table 11-2, most residents are classified as self-employed or in farming.

## Issues

No economic development issues have been identified in Plover.

## 12. Intergovernmental Cooperation

This analysis presents an inventory of existing mechanisms that the Town of Plover uses to coordinate with other units of government, including: Marathon County, adjacent towns, the school district, the State of Wisconsin and the Federal government. The purpose of this analysis is to identify the existing cooperative mechanisms and summarize the major challenges and issues regarding intergovernmental cooperation and regional planning, including

- Opportunities to reduce or eliminate duplication of services;
- Incompatible goals, policies and development;
- Mechanisms for conflict resolution;
- Opportunities for joint planning and decision making.

Mechanisms for cooperation and coordination primarily take the form of intergovernmental agreements, leases and contracts, and regulatory authority. These can occur between the Town of Plover and other local, regional, State or Federal entities. Following is a brief description of the various functional areas and services that require intergovernmental coordination at various levels.

### Shared Public Services and Facilities

**Law Enforcement-** Law enforcement is provided by the County sheriff.

**Fire and Emergency Response-** The Town of Plover has its own volunteer fire department and ambulance service. They also have a mutual aid agreement with Birnamwood.

**Utilities-** The Town does not provide sewer or water services; residents have private sewage systems and individual wells.

### Relationships to Other Government Entities

**Surrounding Municipalities—** The Town of Plover is bordered by the Town of Harrison to the north, Shawano County to the east, Town of Norrie to the south, and Town of Easton to the west. These surrounding municipalities are concurrently preparing comprehensive plans, which will increase opportunities for coordination and cooperation on matters of common interest.

**School District-** Plover is divided into two school districts. Residents south of CTH Z are in the Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District. Residents north of CTH Z are located in the Antigo School District.

**Marathon County-** The County provides several services to the Town including: law enforcement through the Sheriff's Department, 911 dispatch service, access permits, maintenance and improvement of County Highways, planning and permitting oversight regarding shoreland, wetland and floodplain regulation, private sewage system regulation, and animal waste and manure management. The County also provides oversight on compliance with County soil and water conservation policy for the Farmland Preservation Program.

**Regional Agencies-** The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) provides planning and mapping assistance.

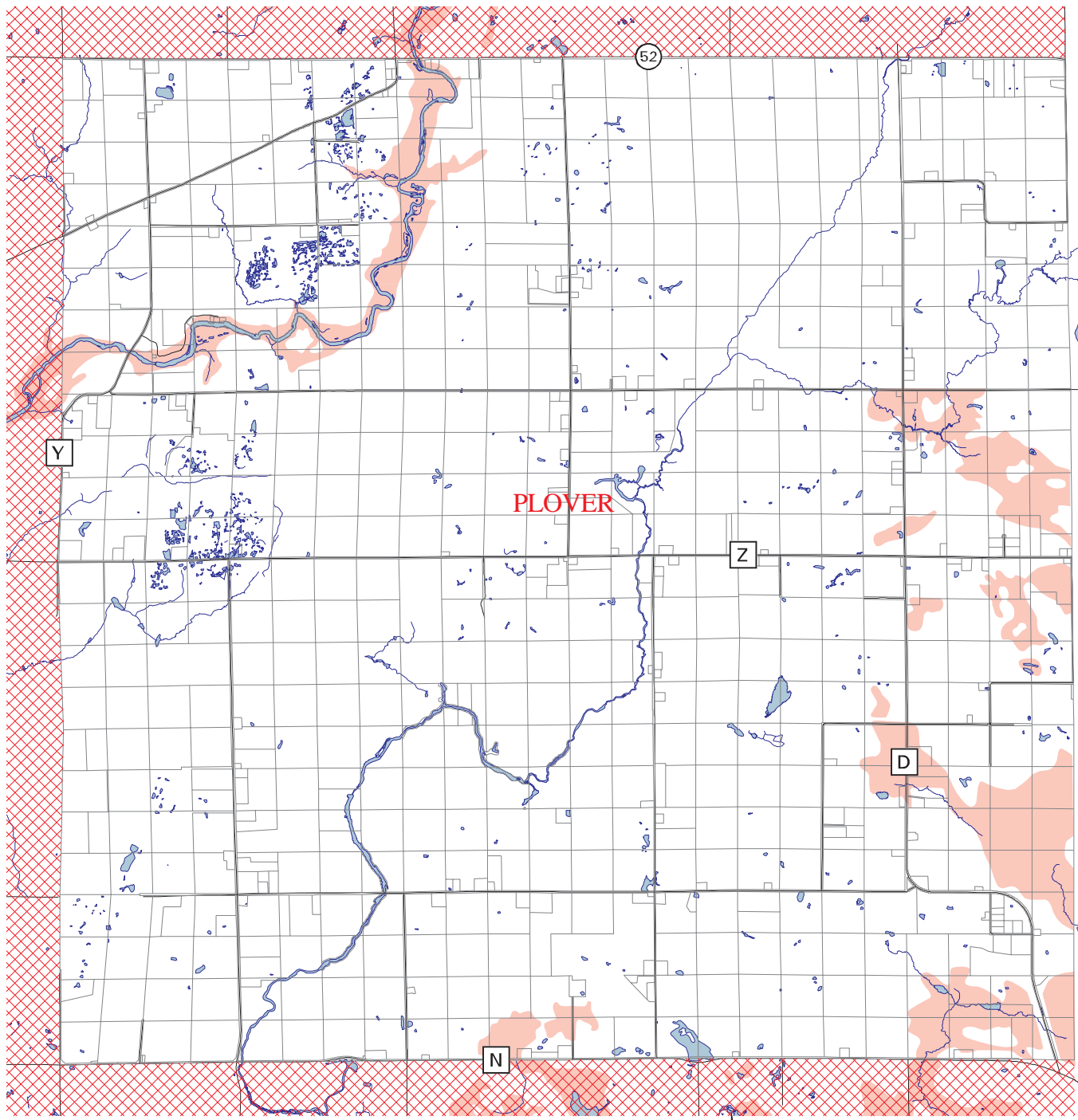
**State and Federal Agencies-** The Town has little direct contact with State or Federal agencies. However State agencies regulate certain activities such as access onto State roads, shoreland, floodplain and wetland zoning oversight, navigable waters protection, compliance with water quality standards, farmland preservation tax credits and managed forest tax credit programs.

### **Cooperative Plans or Agreements**

**Mutual Aid—** The Plover fire department and ambulance service has a mutual aid agreement with Birnamwood.

### **Existing or Potential Conflicts**

No existing or potential conflicts have been identified by the Town of Plover.

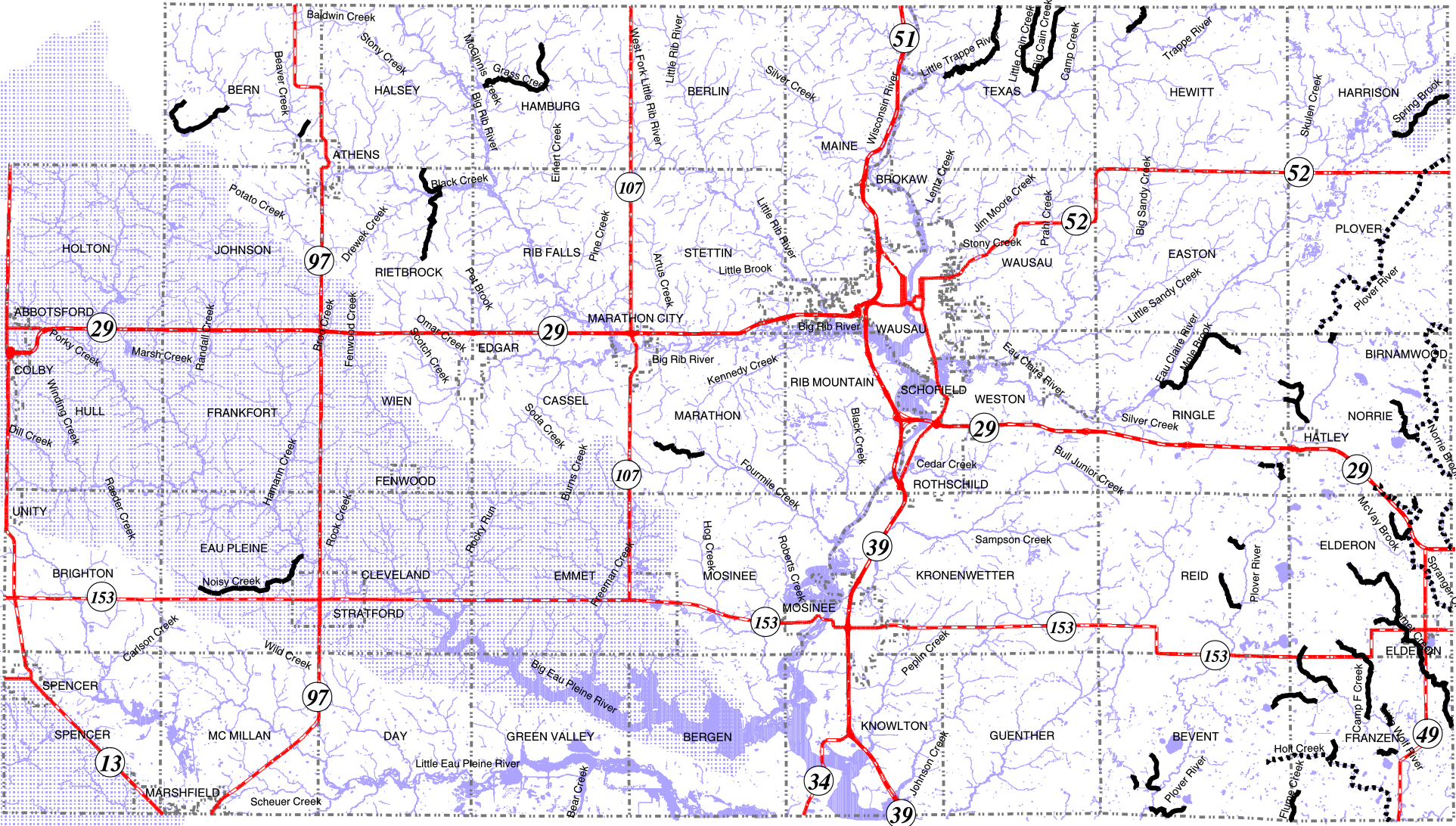


■ FEMA Floodplain

▨ Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 3-1  
 100 Year Floodplain  
 PLOVER

# MARATHON COUNTY OUTSTANDING & EXCEPTIONAL RESOURCE AND IMPAIRED WATERS

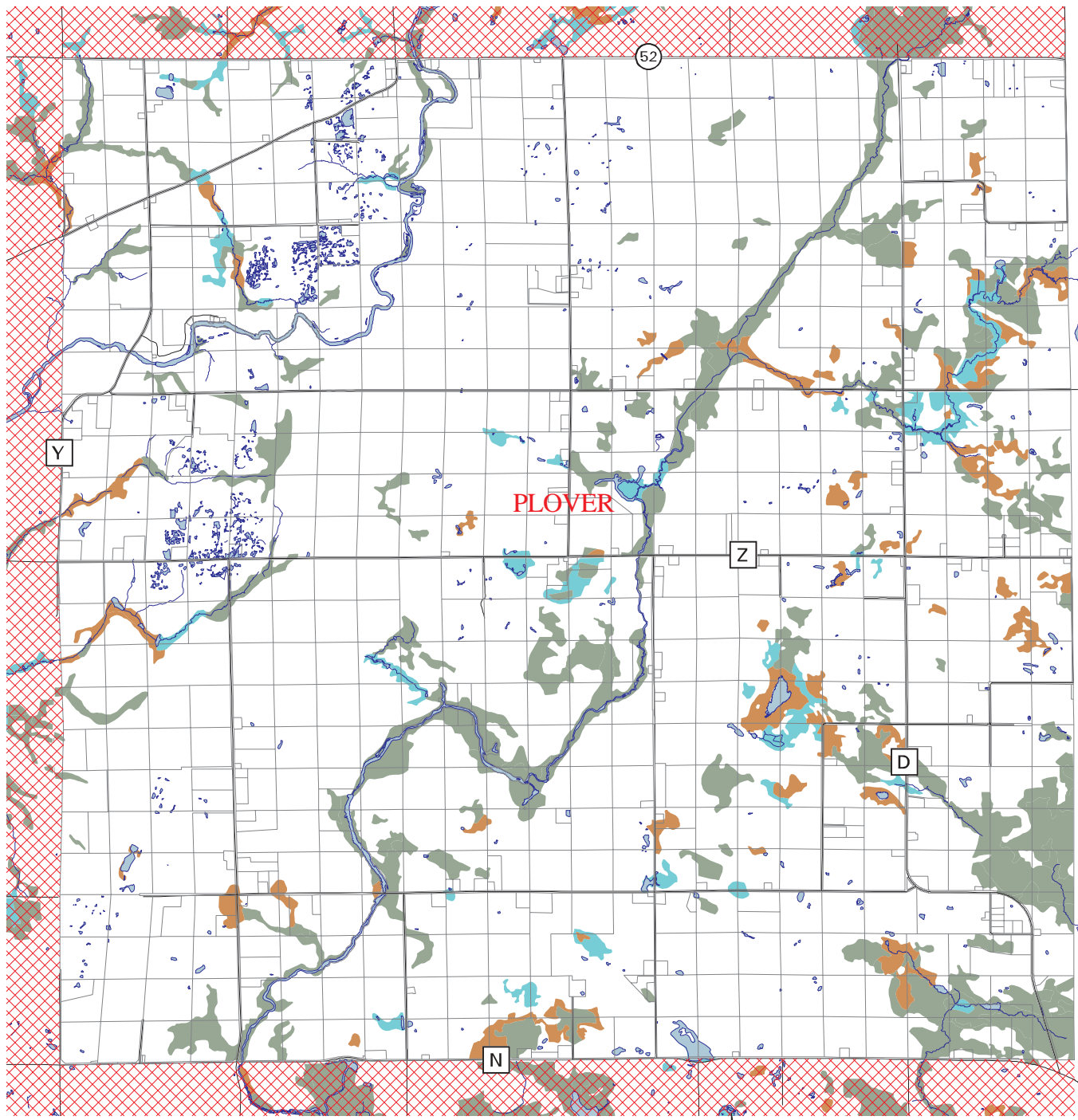


**Exceptional  
Outstanding  
State & Us Highways  
Municipal Boundary  
Water Features  
Impaired Waters**



O & E Resource and Impaired Waters  
Data from the WIDNR

Figure 3-2

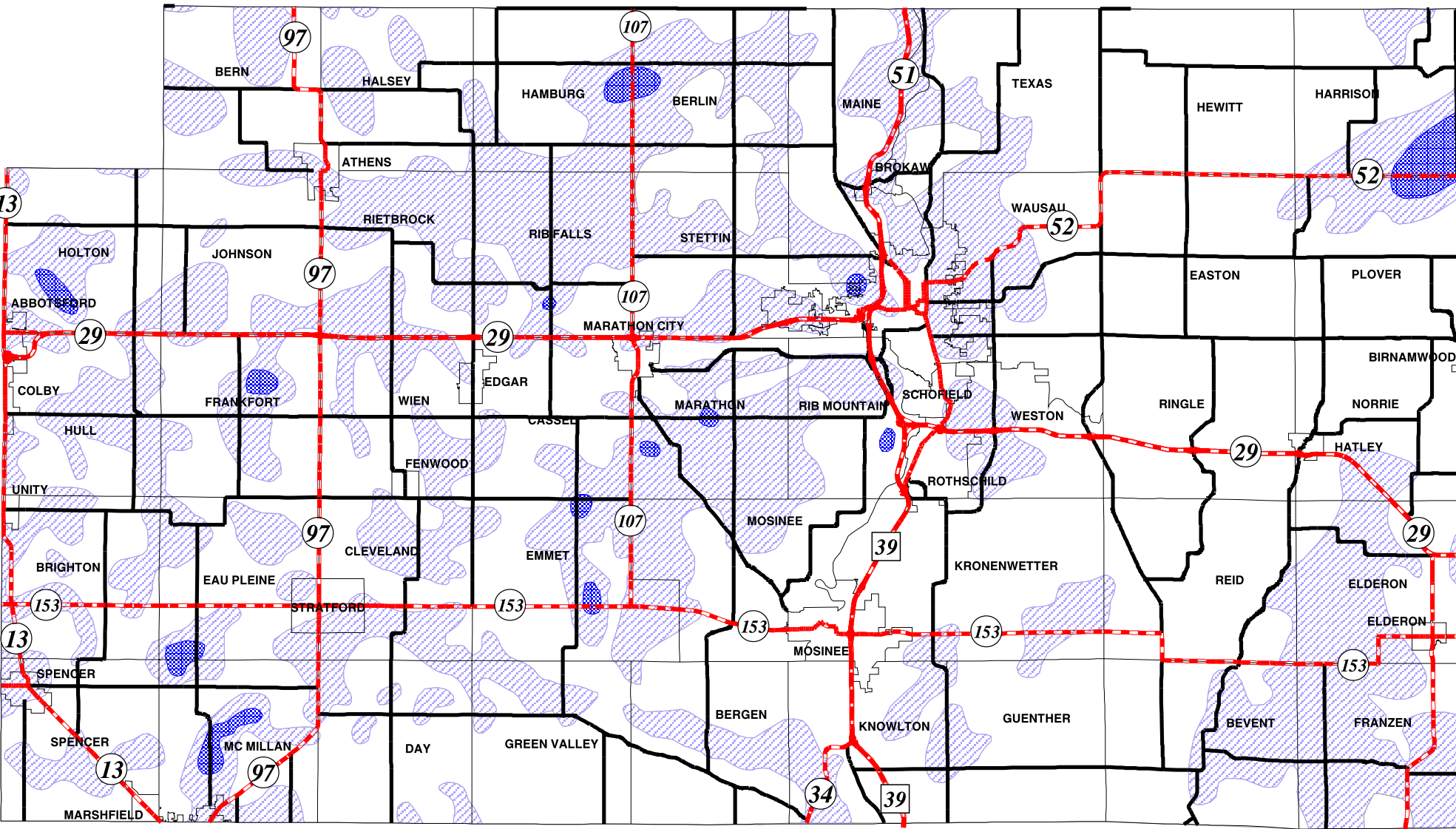


- Aquatic beds
- Emergent/wet meadow
- Filled/draind wetland
- Forested
- Scrub/shrub
- Flats/unvegetated wet soil

Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 3-3  
**Wetland Types**  
**PLOVER**

# MARATHON COUNTY DEPTH TO GROUND WATER



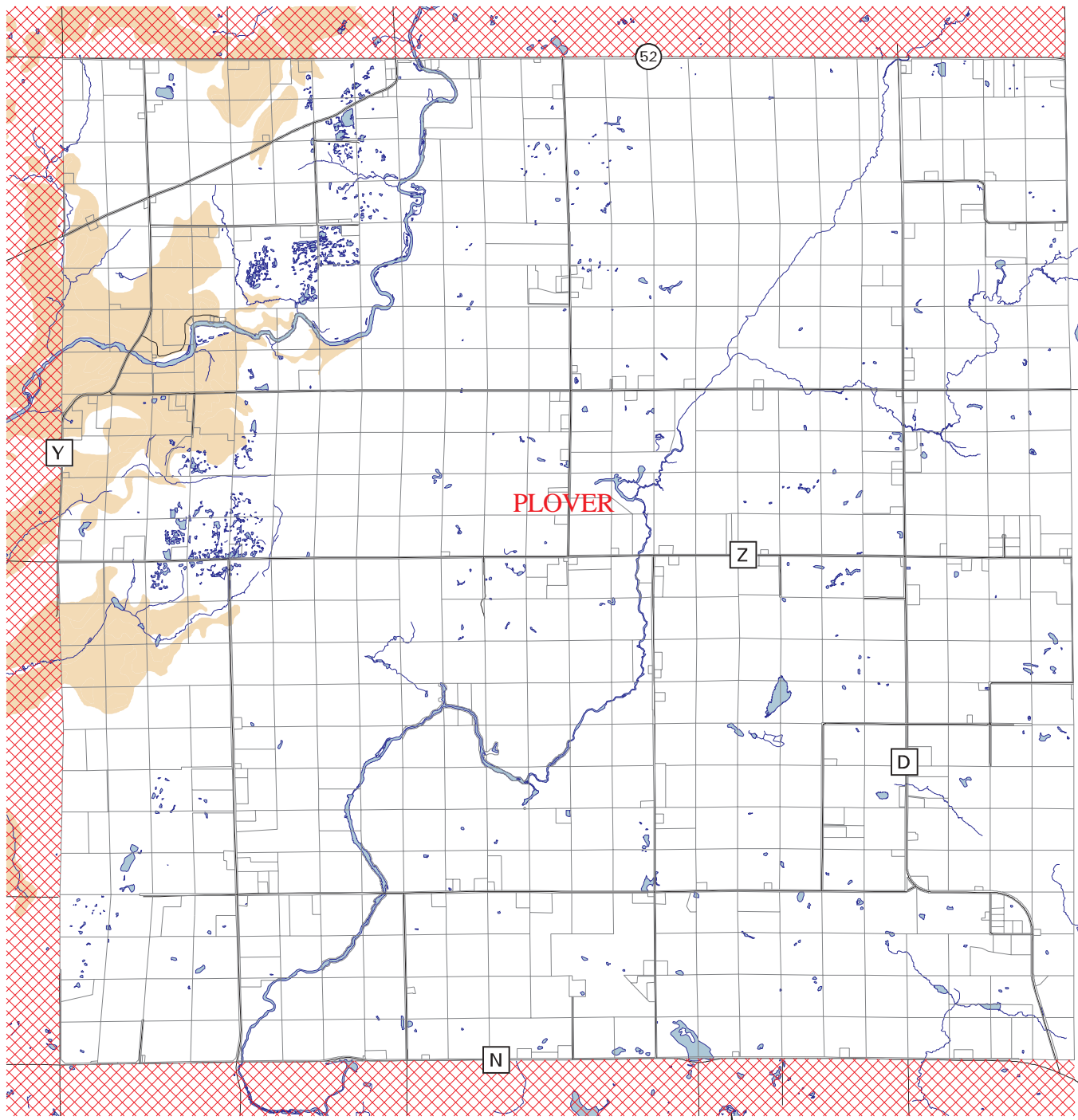
- State & Us Highways
- County Roads
- Municipal Boundary
- Ground Water Depth**
- 0-20 feet
- 20-50 feet
- >50 feet



Source: "Irrigable Lands Inventory --- phase 1 Groundwater and Related Information", I.D. Lippett and R.G. Hennings, MP -81-1, WGNHS 1981.

Figure 3-4

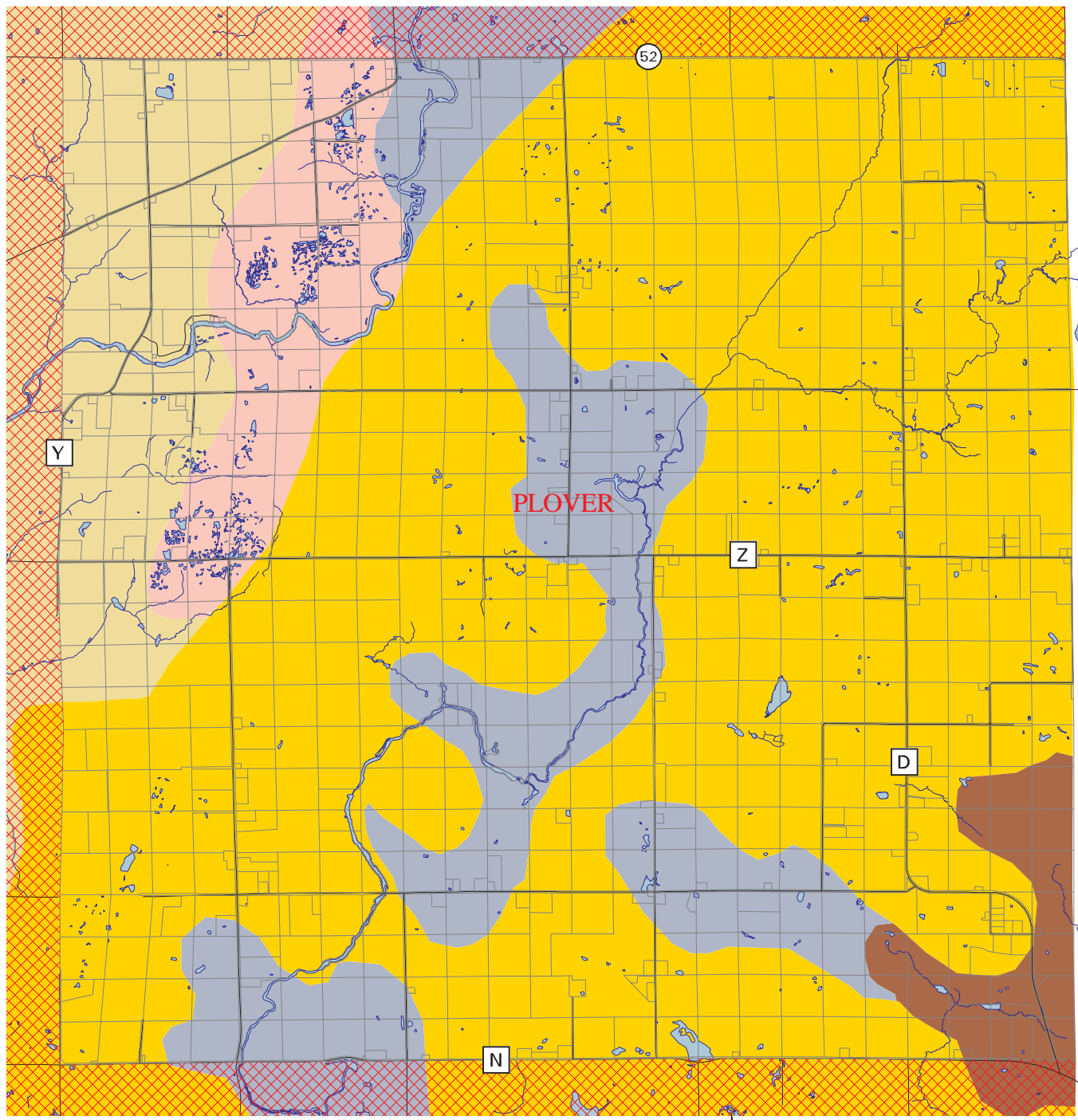




- 0 - 20" (Quarries)
- 20 - 40 "
- 40-60"
- >60"

Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

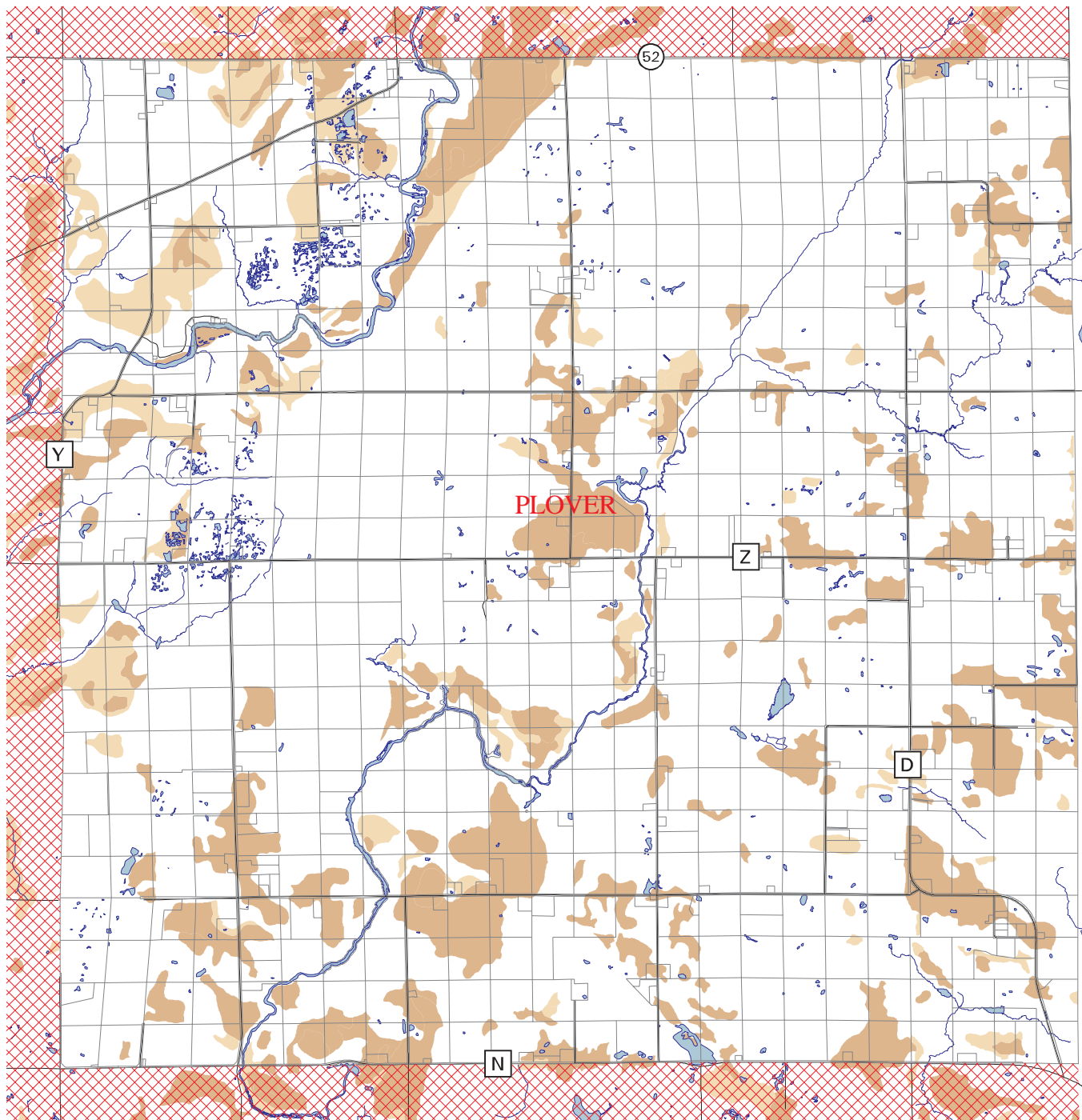
Figure 3-5  
 Depth To Bedrock  
 PLOVER



- |                         |                               |                           |                    |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Magnor-Cable            | Marathon-Mylrea-Moberg        | Mahtomedi-Fordum-Sturgeon | Cathro-Seelyeville |
| Loyal-Withee-Marshfield | Fenwood-Rietbrock-Rozellville | Chetek-Rosholt-Oesterle   |                    |
| Kennan-Hatley           | Mosinee-Meadland-Dancy        | Mahtomedi-Graycalm-Meehan |                    |

Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 3-6  
 Soil Associations  
 PLOVER

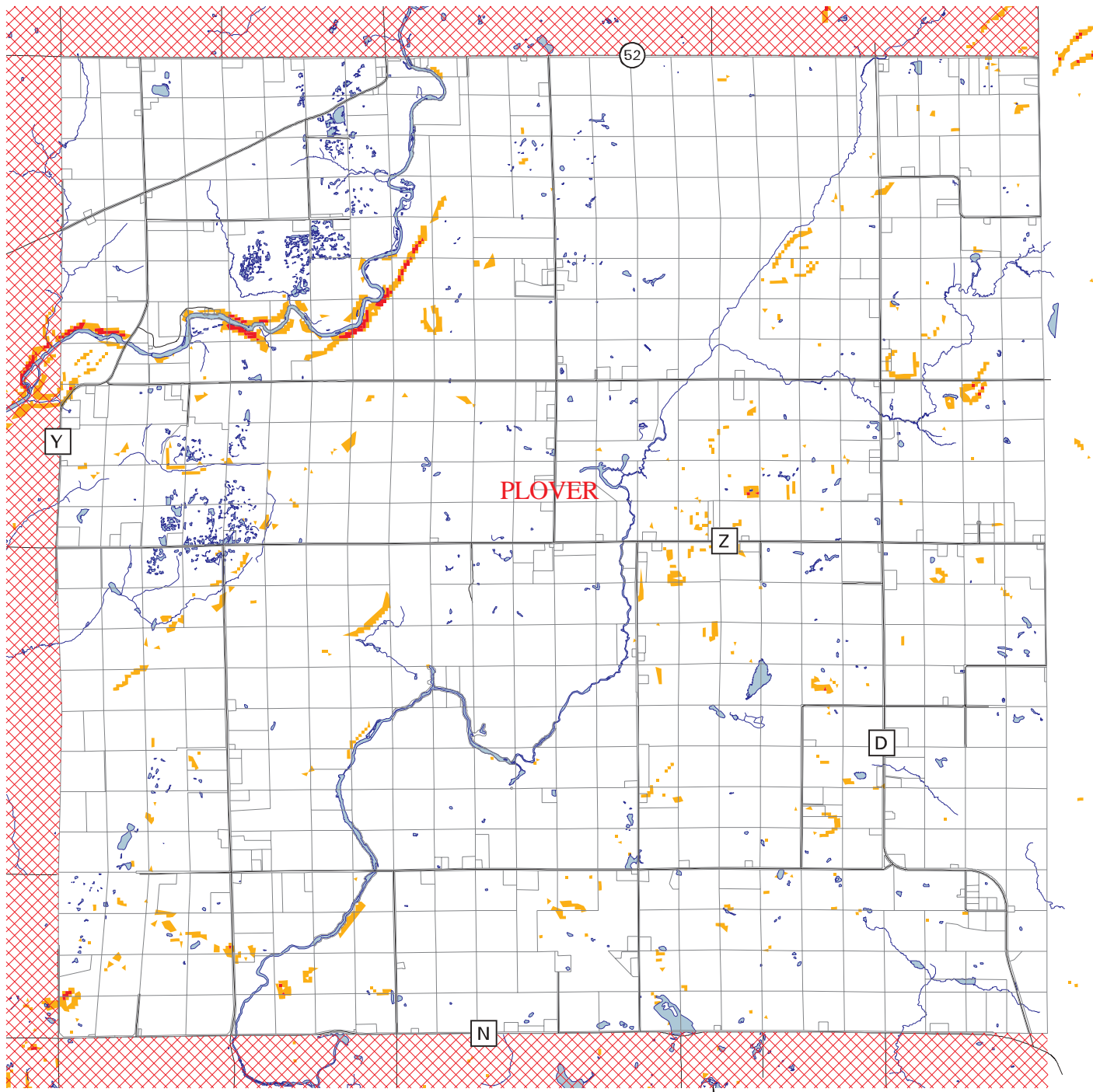


Group 1: The soils in this group are the very best in Marathon County. The USDA classification for these soils are prime farmland Class 2 due to climate and growing season length. They are well suited for growing all crops.

Group 2: The soils in this group are very good agricultural soils. They also are designated as prime farmland Class 2. These soils differ by having restricted drainage. In wet years they are more difficult to work and crops needing well drained condition (alfalfa, ginseng) do very poorly.

Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 3-7  
**Prime Farm Land**  
**PLOVER**

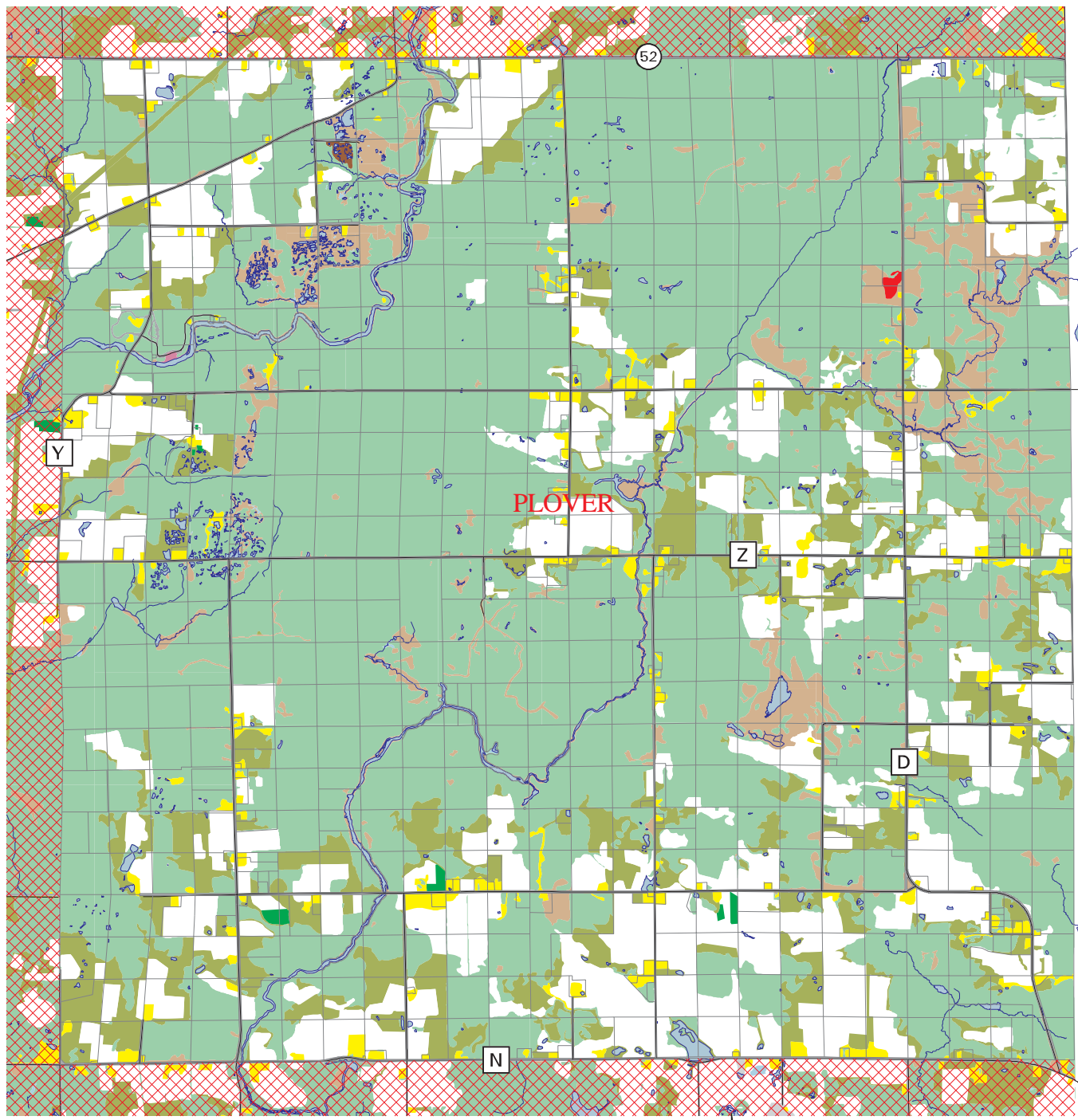


■ D - generally 12-20% slopes

■ E - generally greater than 15% slopes.

⊠ Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 3-8  
 Slopes  
 PLOVER

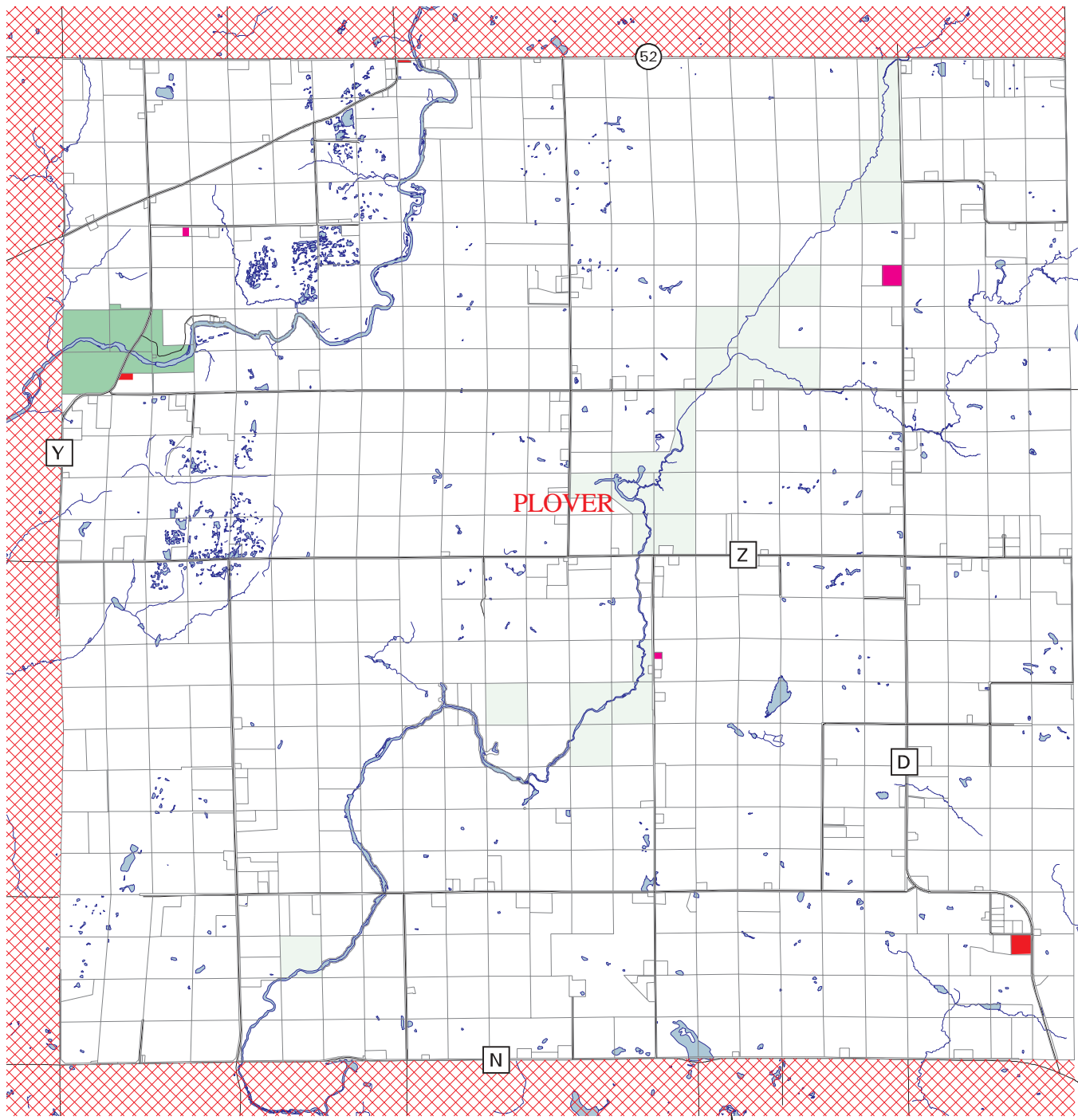


- |                           |                      |                     |            |                    |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Single Family Residential | Industrial           | Specialty Crops     | Recreation | Transportation     |
| Multi-Family Residential  | Quarries/Gravel Pits | Other Agriculture   | Woodlands  | Vacant/Barren Land |
| Commercial Services       | Crop Land            | Public/Quasi-Public | Water      |                    |

Indicates other Municipality

Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

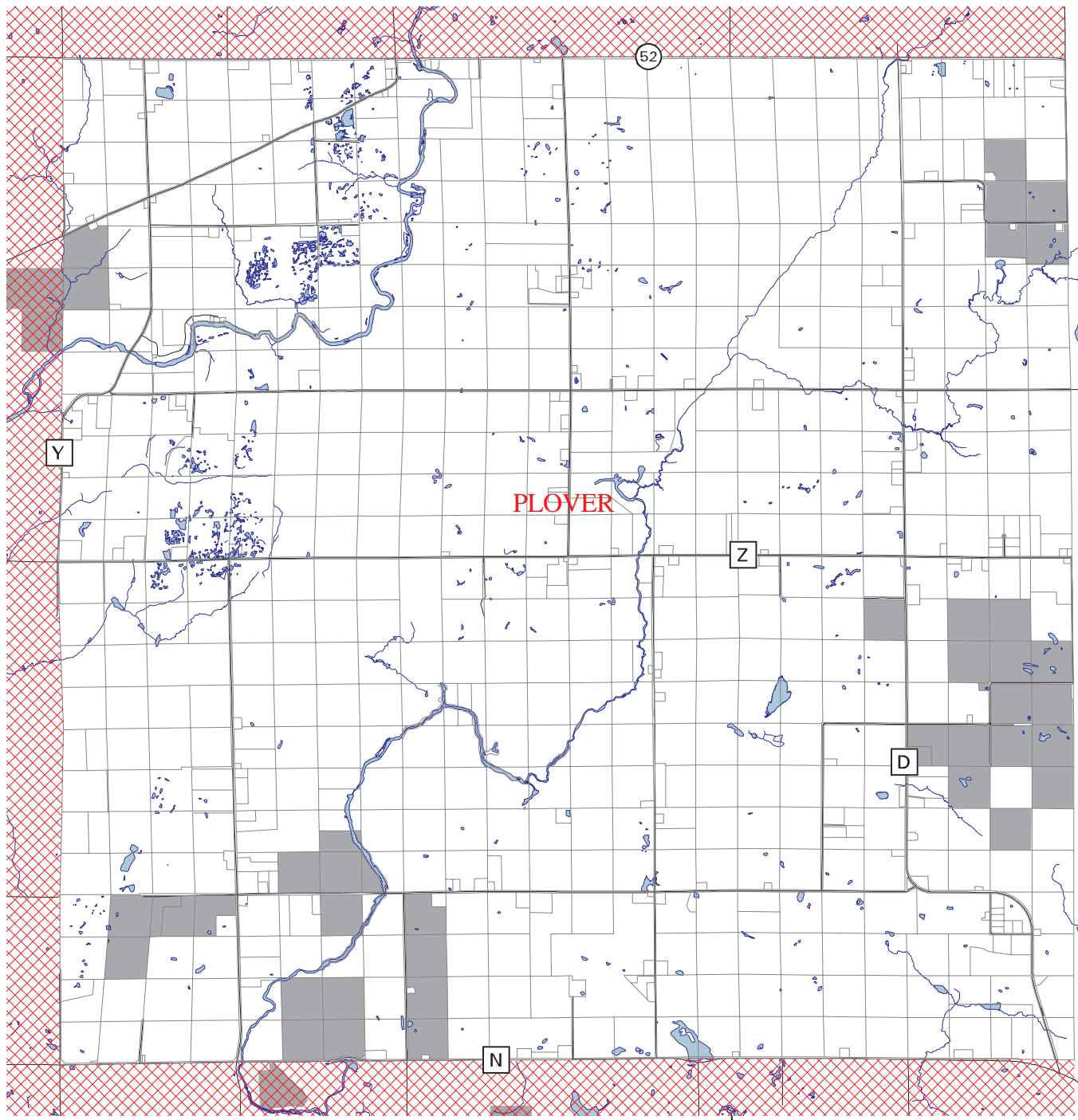
Figure 4-1  
 2000 Landuse/Landcover  
 PLOVER



- |           |       |       |       |      |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| ■ RS-1/20 | ■ RM  | ■ RP  | ■ M-1 | □ HI |
| ■ RS-1/40 | □ A-1 | □ CV  | ■ M-2 |      |
| ■ RS-2    | ■ A-2 | ■ C-1 | ■ RC  |      |

 Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 4-2  
**Local Zoning**  
**PLOVER**

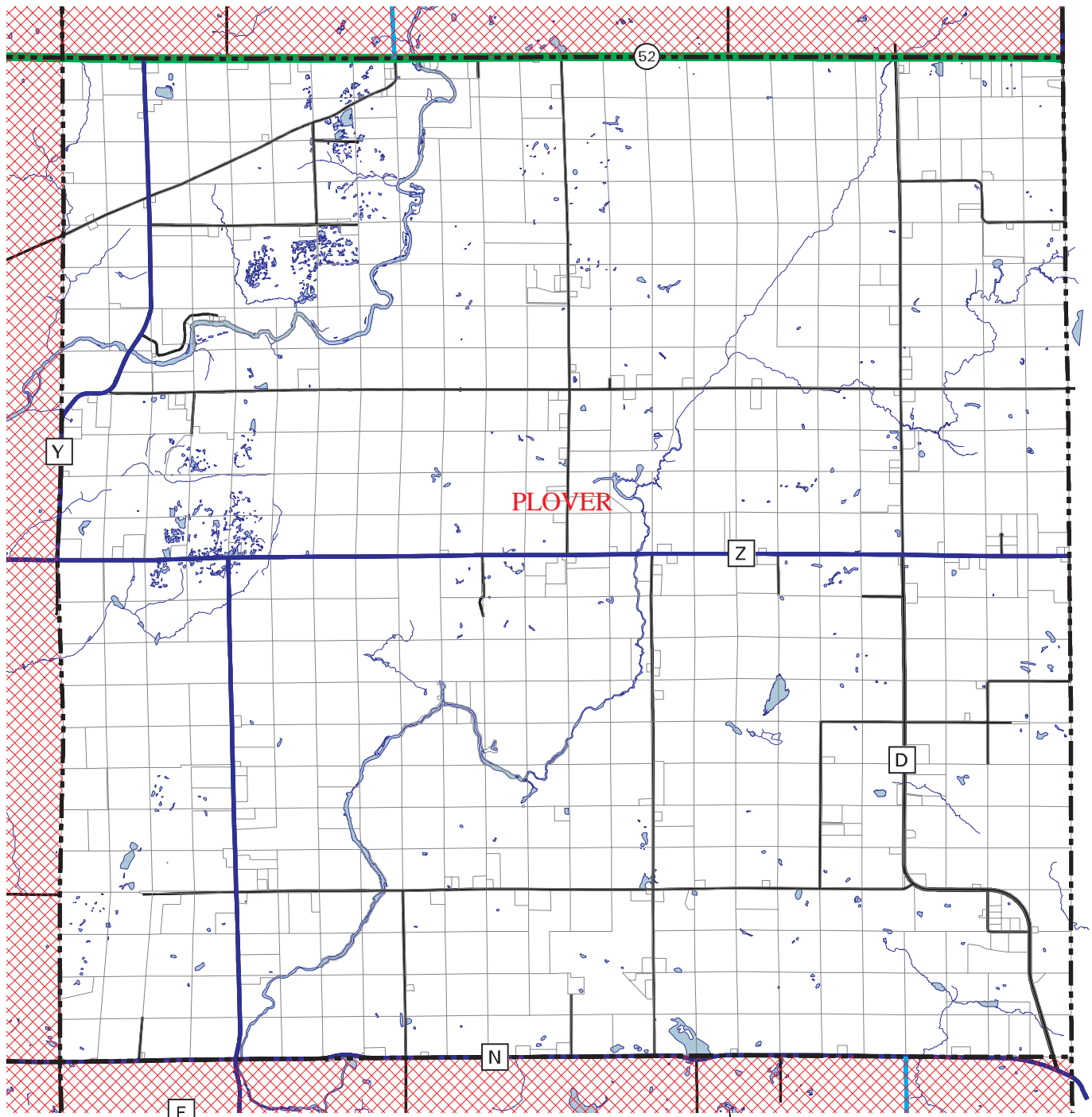


- Exclusive ag zoning
- Farmland pres contracts

 Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Exclusive Ag & Farmland Preservation  
 PLOVER

Figure 4-3



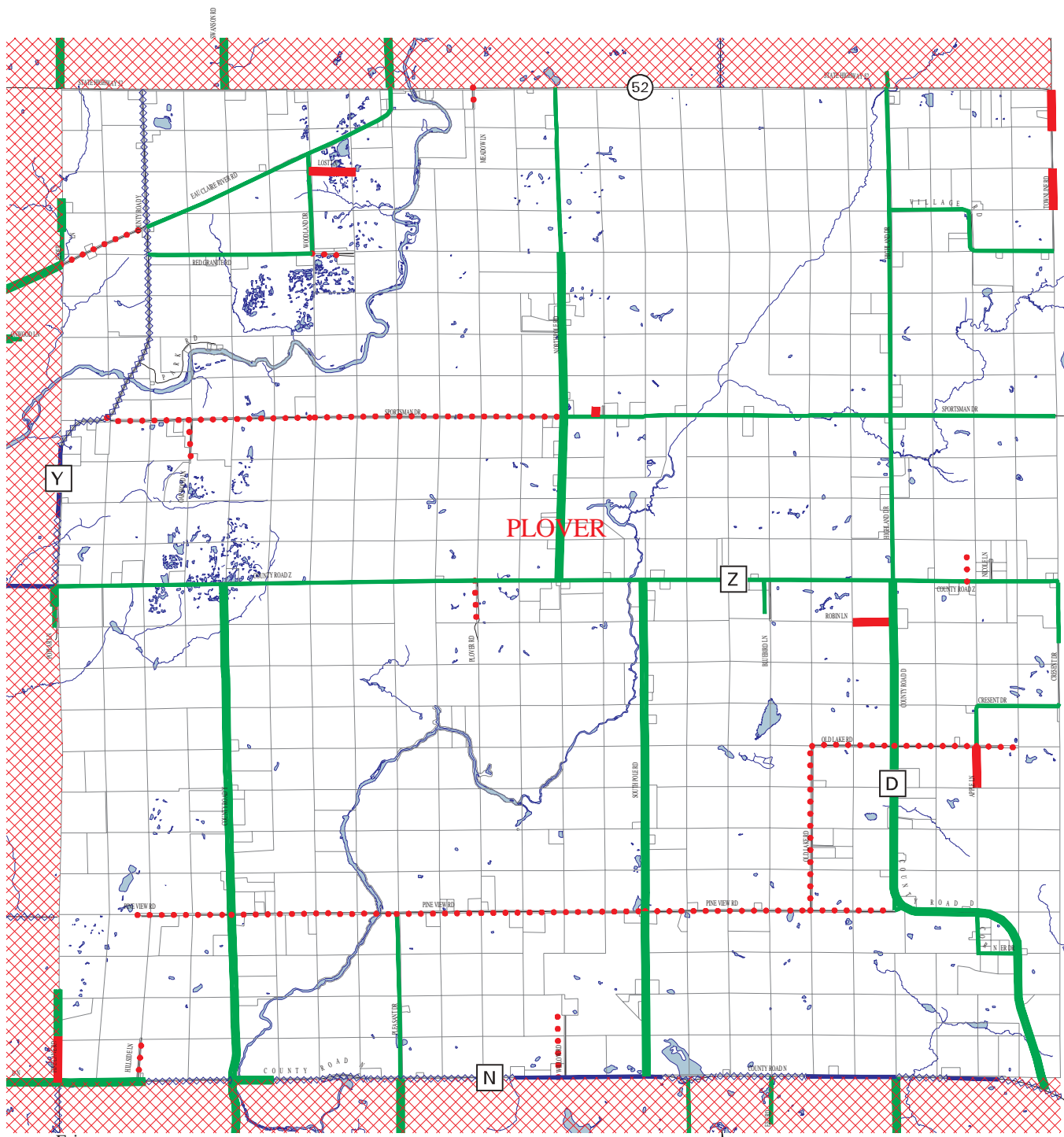
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector

- F County Highways
- 52 State Highways
- 51 US Highways
- 39 Interstate

X Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 5-1  
**Functional Classification of Roads**  
**PLOVER**





- No Data
- Failed
- Very Poor
- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- ◆◆◆ Very Good
- Excellent

 Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 5-2  
 Road Surface Rating  
 PLOVER

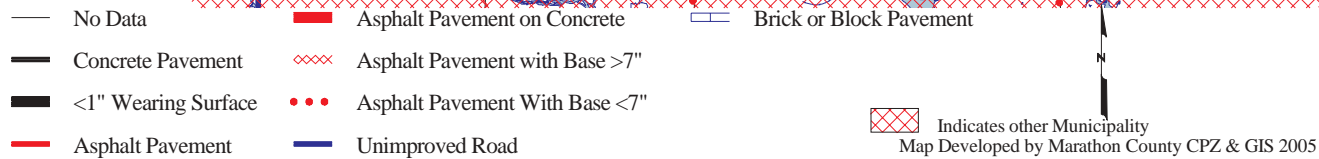
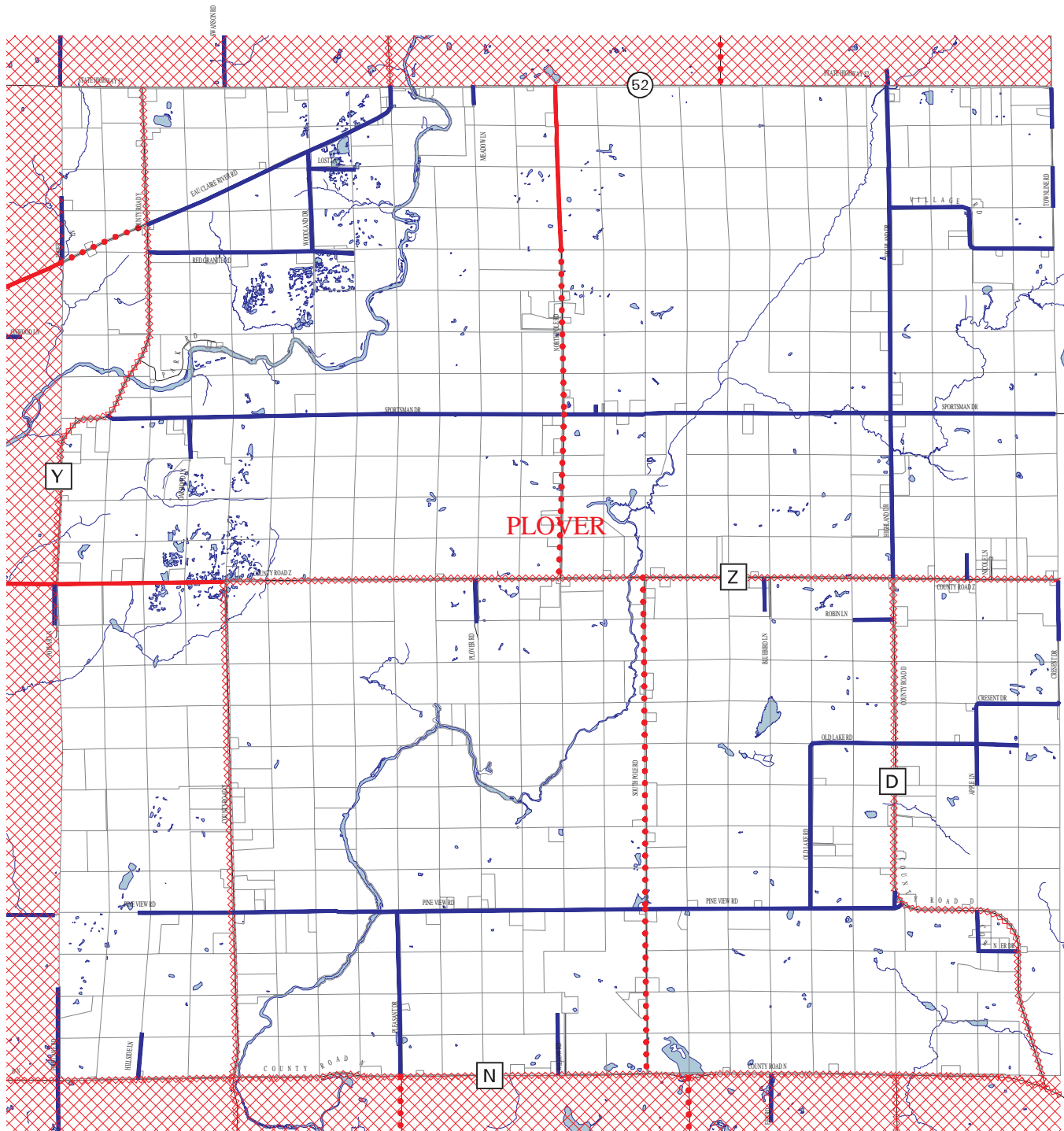
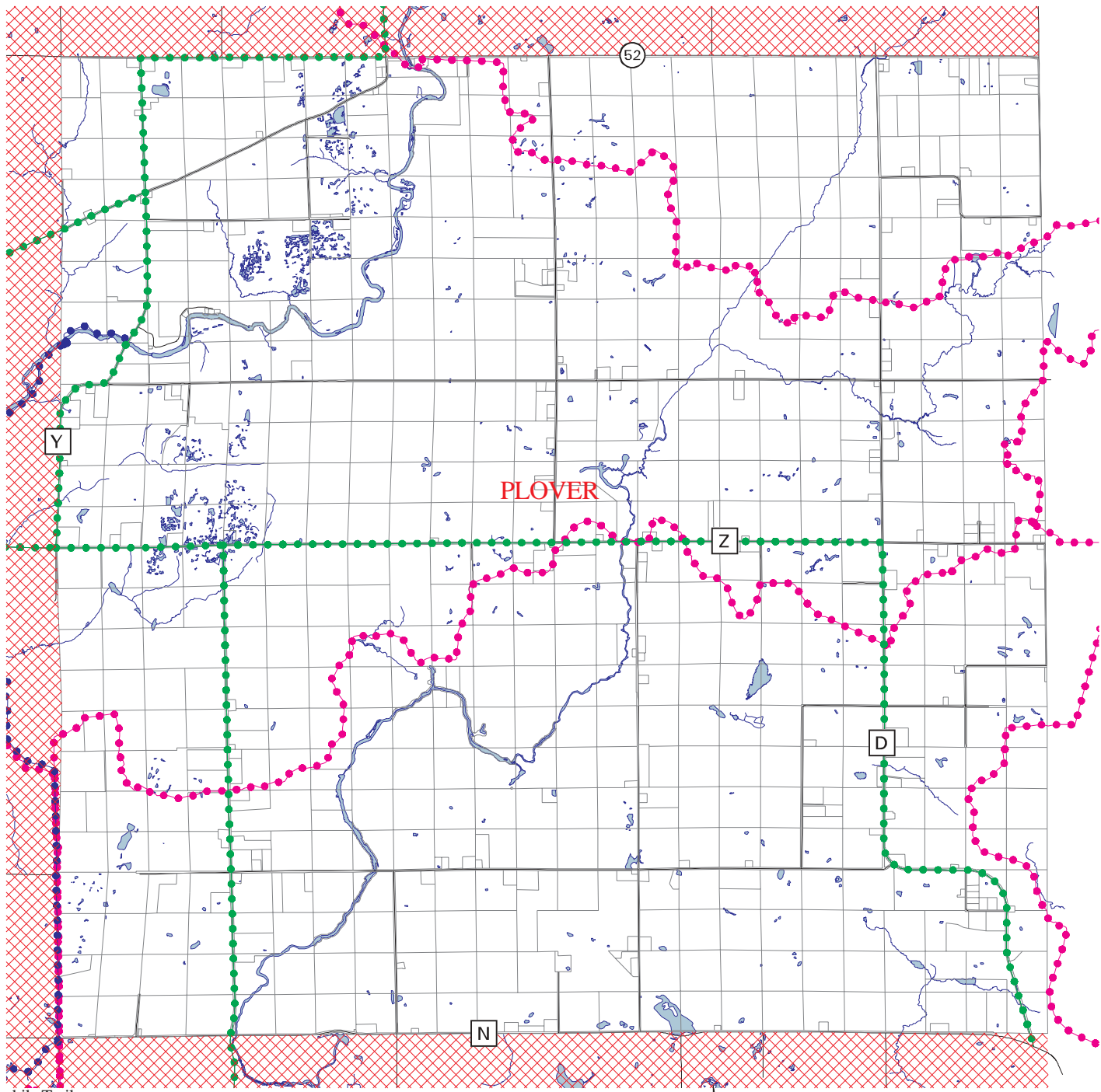


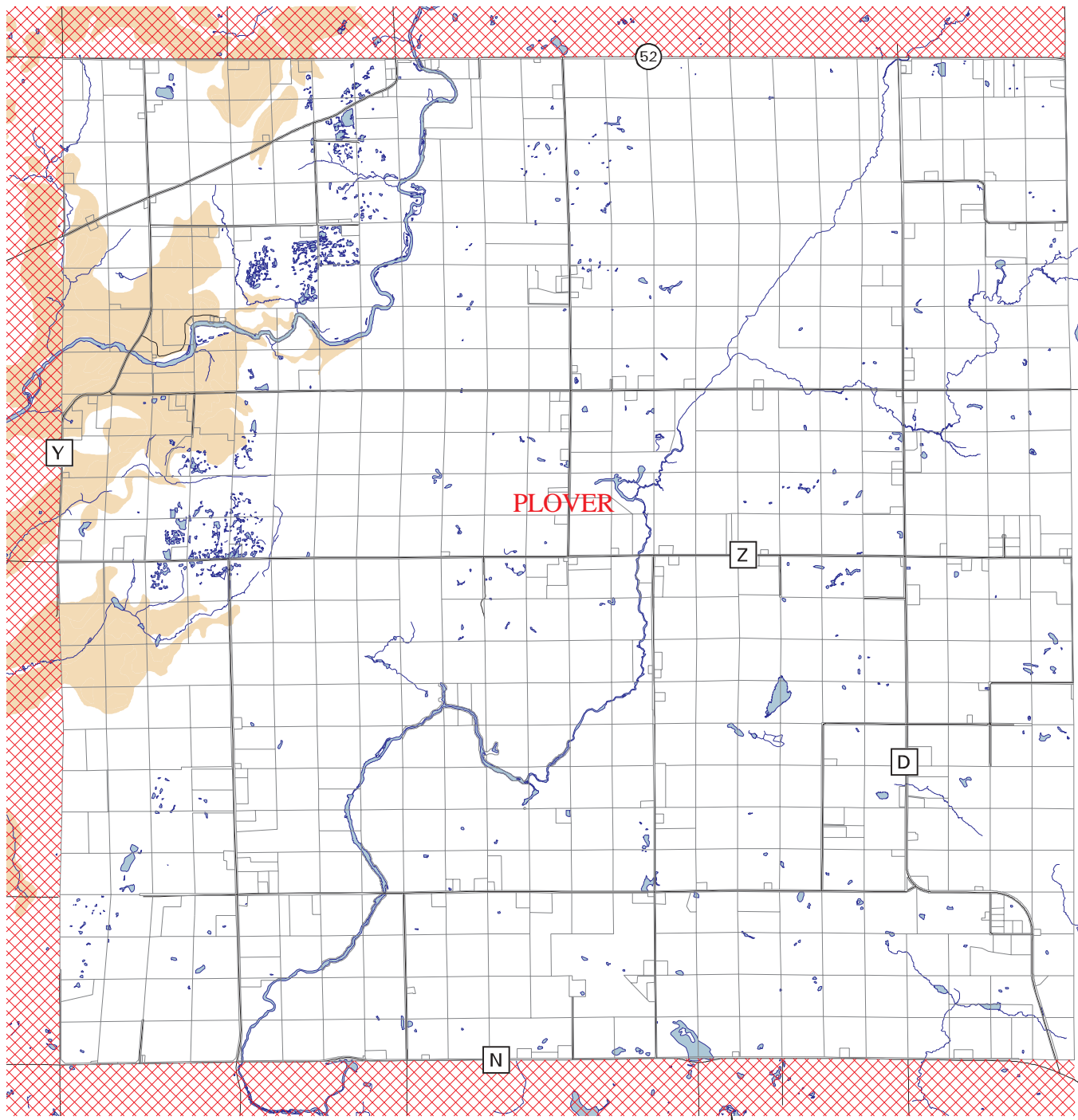
Figure 5-3  
**Road Surface Types**  
**PLOVER**



- 2001 Snowmobile Trails
- Mountain Bay Trail
- Ice Age Trail
- Suggested Bike Routes

 Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

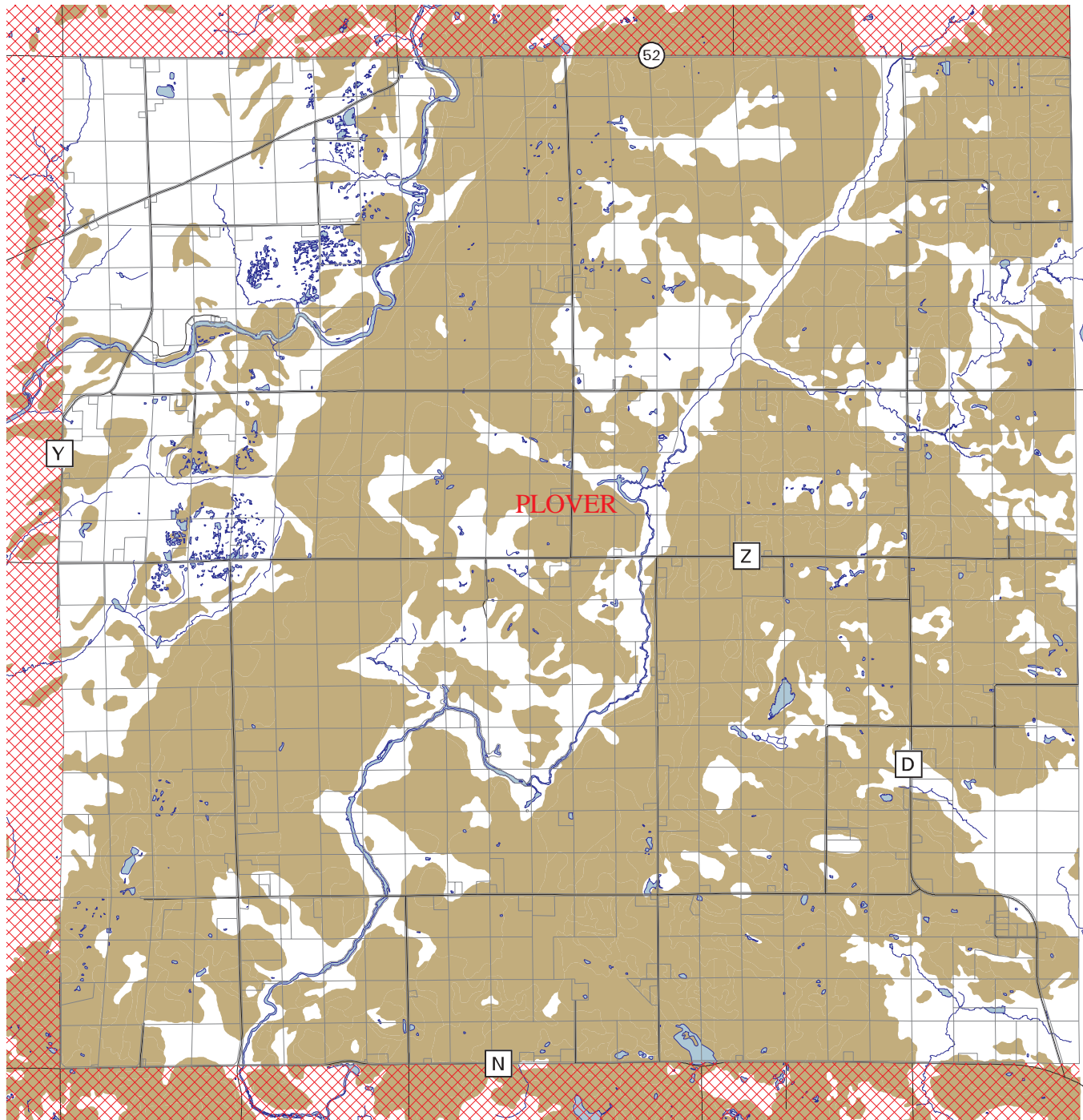
Figure 5-4  
**Trails**  
**PLOVER**



- 0 - 20" (Quarries)
- 20 - 40 "
- 40-60"
- >60"

Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 6-1  
 Depth To Bedrock  
 PLOVER



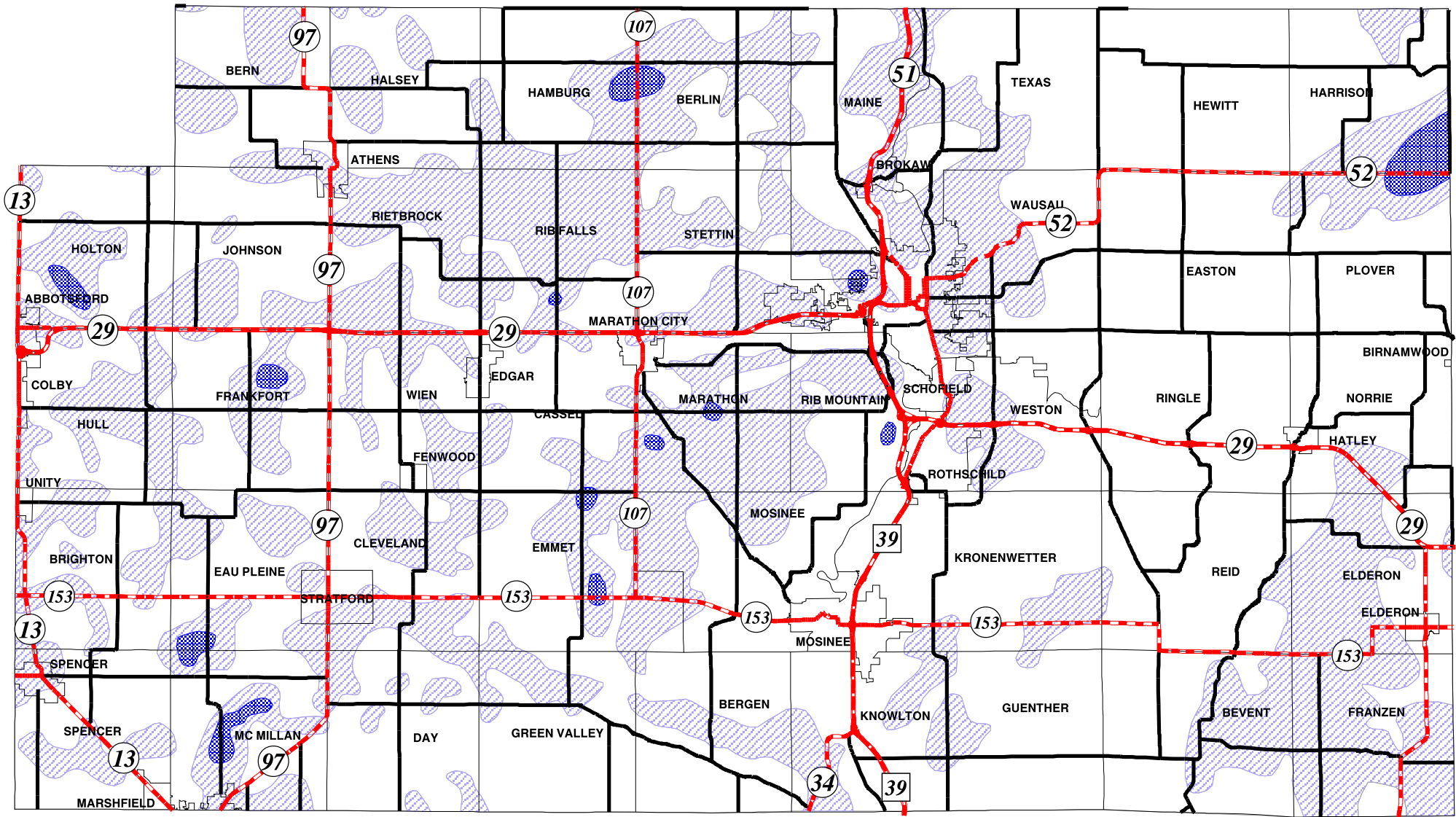
■ Soils suitable for septic systems w/soil absorption component

▨ Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Suitable Soils-Septic Tank Absorption  
 PLOVER

Figure 6-2

# MARATHON COUNTY DEPTH TO GROUND WATER



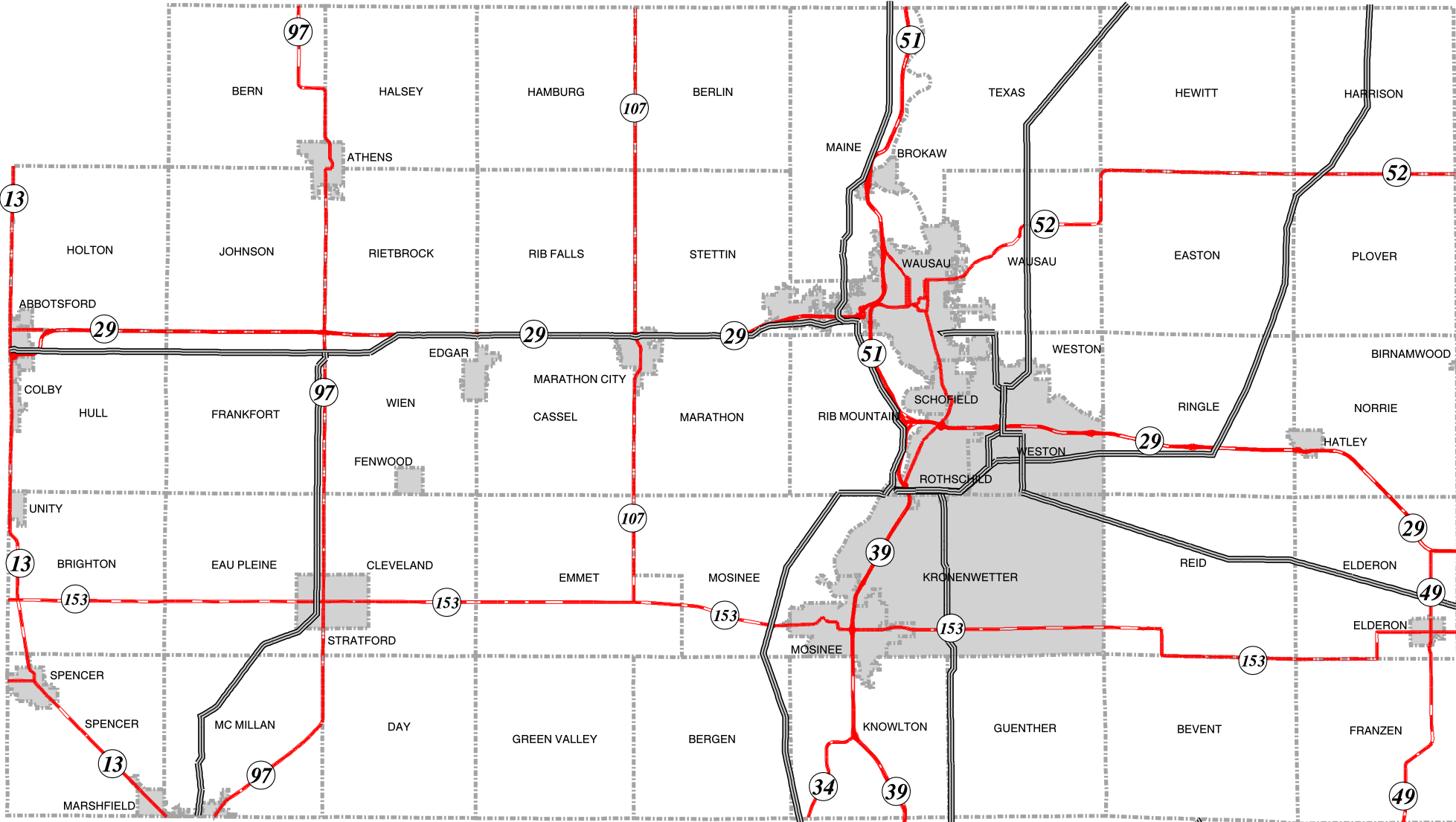
- State & Us Highways
- County Roads
- Municipal Boundary
- Ground Water Depth**
- 0-20 feet
- 20-50 feet
- >50 feet



Source: "Irrigable Lands Inventory --- phase 1  
Groundwater and Related Information", I.D. Lippett  
and R.G. Hennings, MP -81-1, WGNHS 1981.

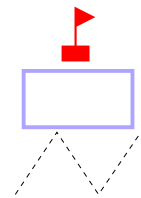
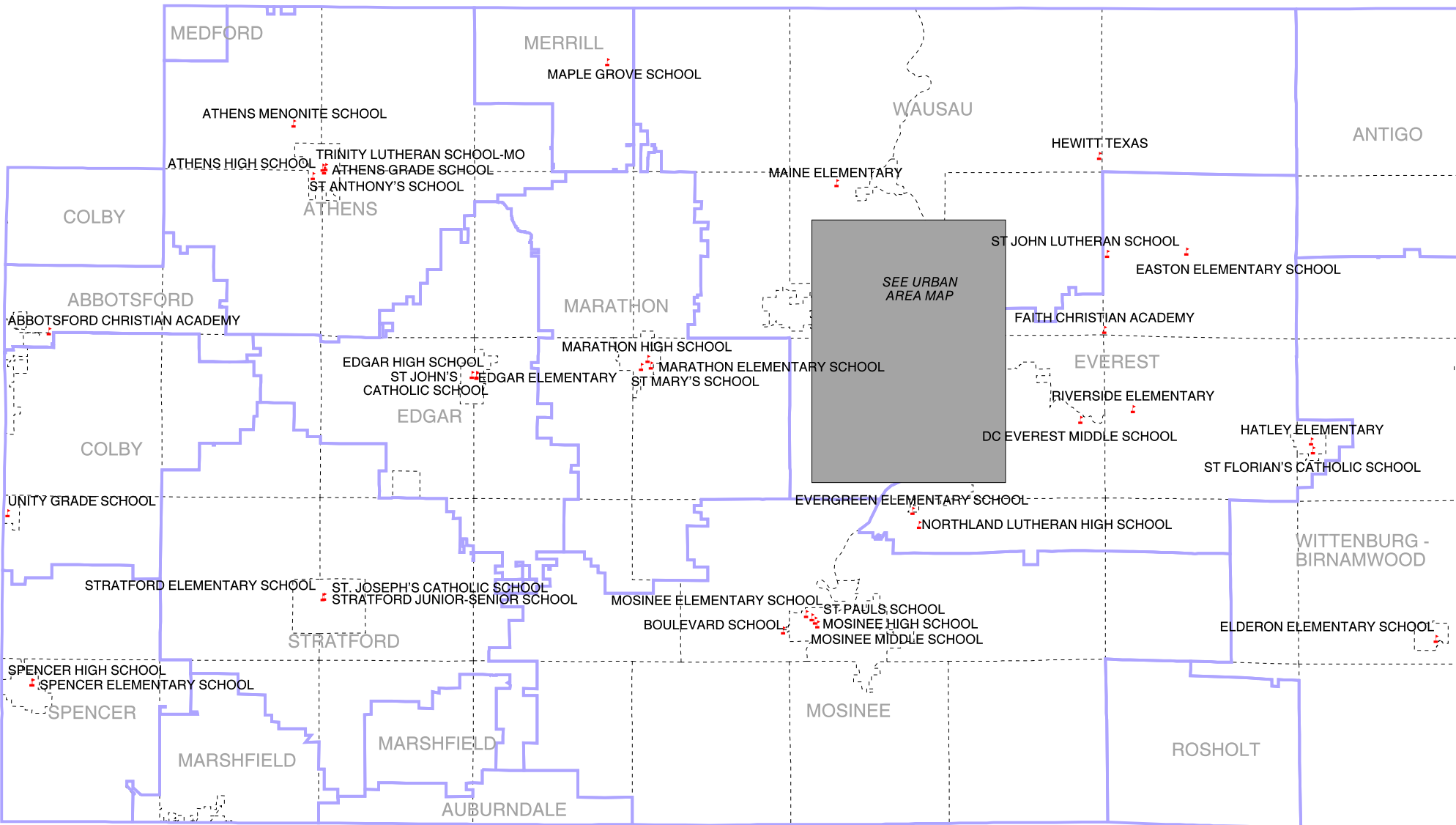
Figure 6-3

# MARATHON COUNTY EXISTING POWERLINES



Existing Power Lines  
 State & Us Highways  
 Municipal Boundary  
 Incorporated Municipality

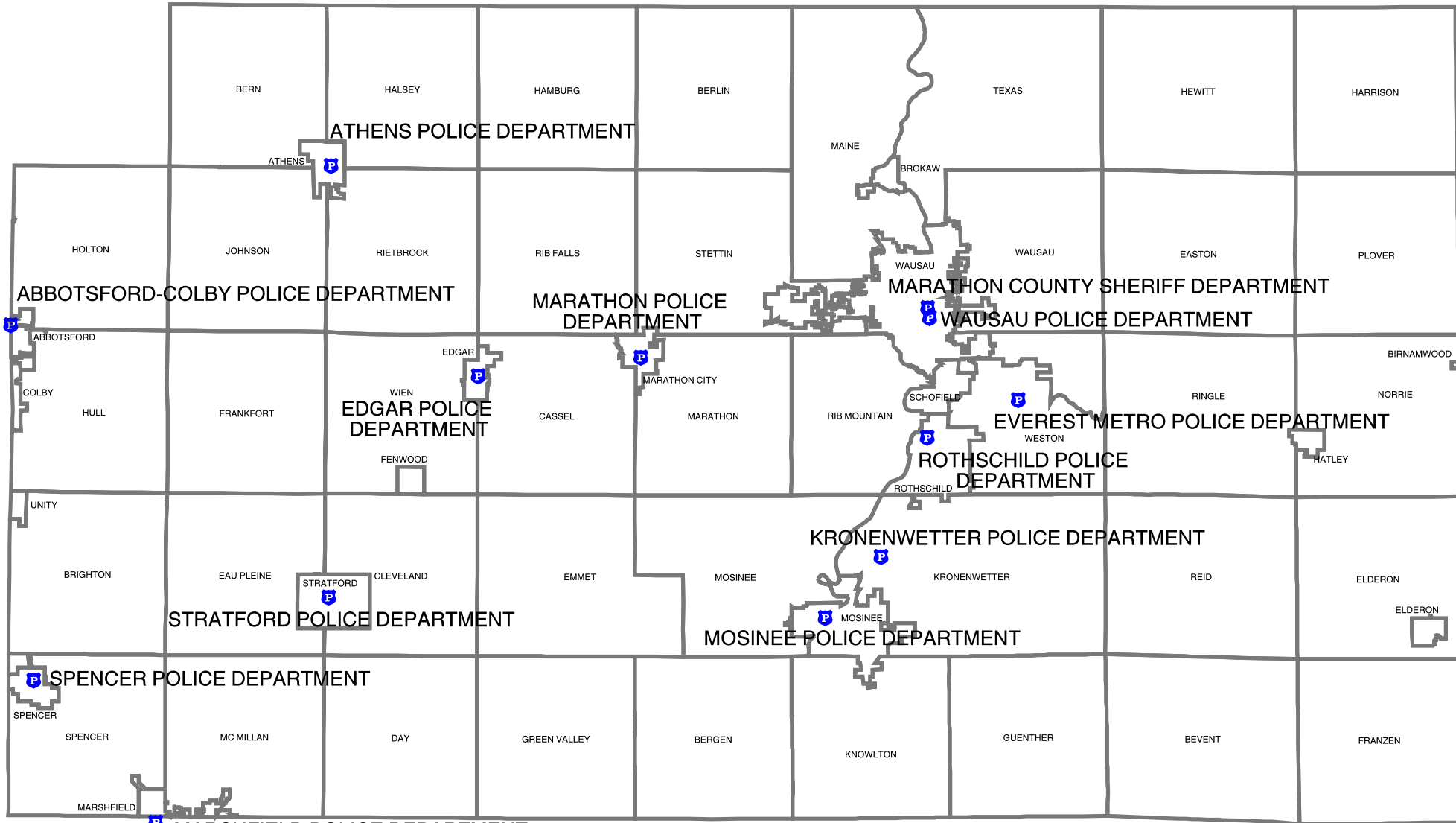
# MARATHON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS RURAL AREA MAP



**School Locations**  
**School District Boundary**  
**Municipal Boundary**

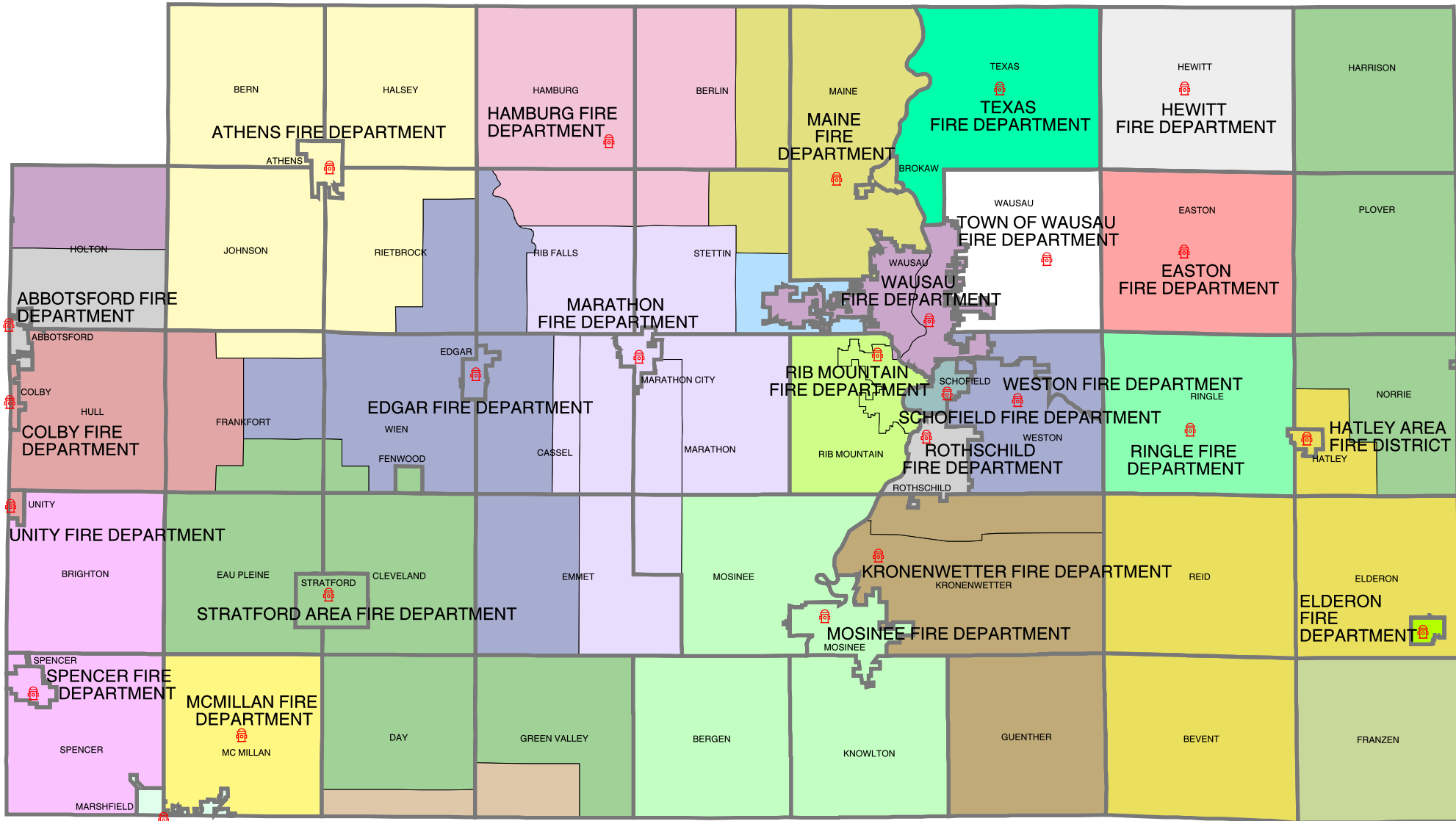




# MARATHON COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT



 Police Department  
 Municipal Boundary

# FIRE DEPARTMENTS & SERVICE AREAS



 Fire Department  
 Municipal Boundary

**Fire Service Districts**

	ABBOTSFORD		MARATHON
	ATHENS		MARSHFIELD
	AUBURNDALE		MOSINEE
	BIRNAMWOOD		MOSINEE
	COLBY		RIB MOUNTAIN
	DORCHESTER		RINGLE
	EASTON		ROTHSCHILD
	ELDERON		SCHOFIELD
	FAMILY		SPENCER
	HAMBURG		STRATFORD
	HEWITT		TEXAS
	KRONENWETTER		WAUSAU
	MAINE		WAUSAU (town)
	MAINE/RIB MTN		WESTON
			WITTENBERG

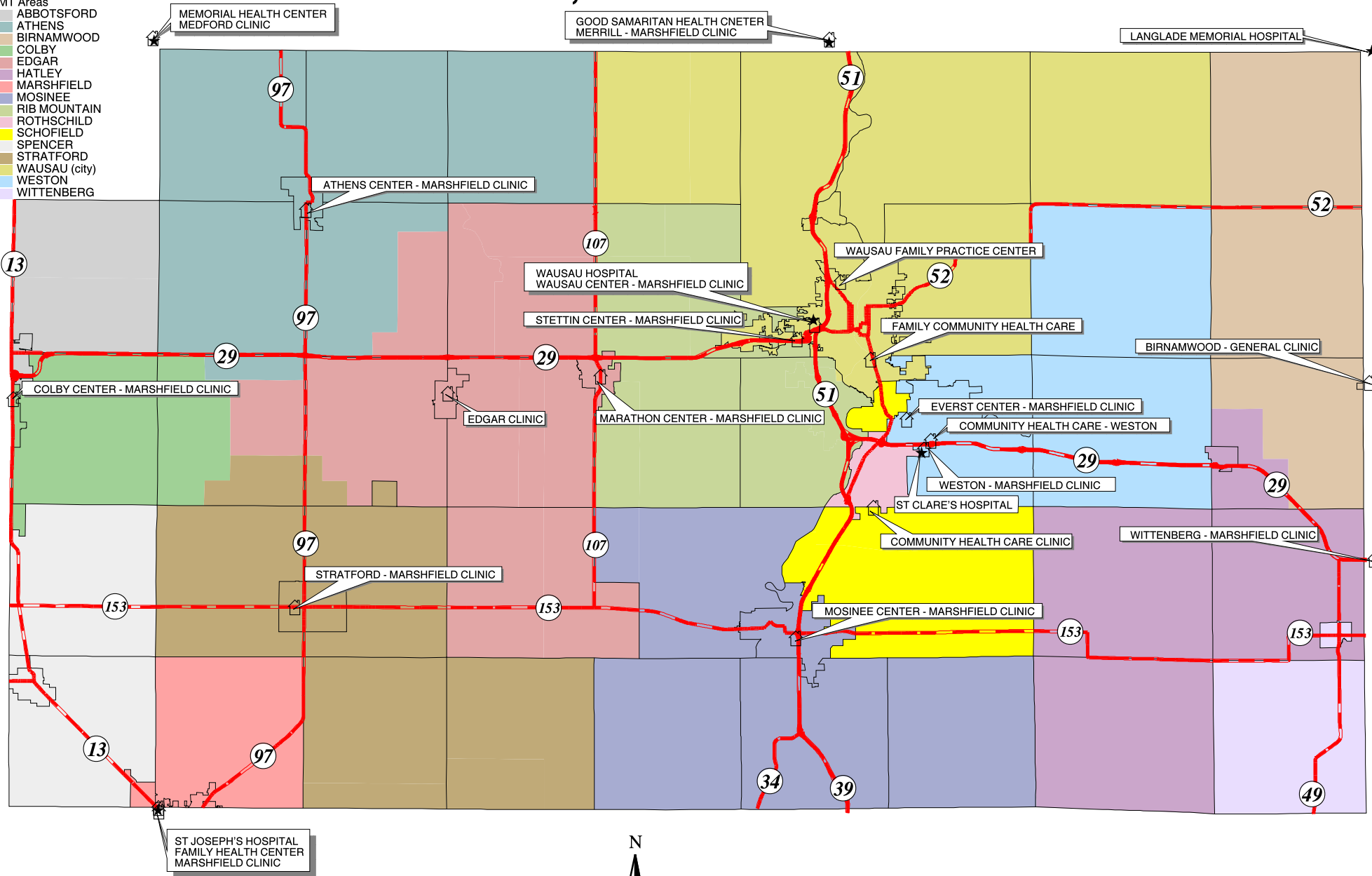


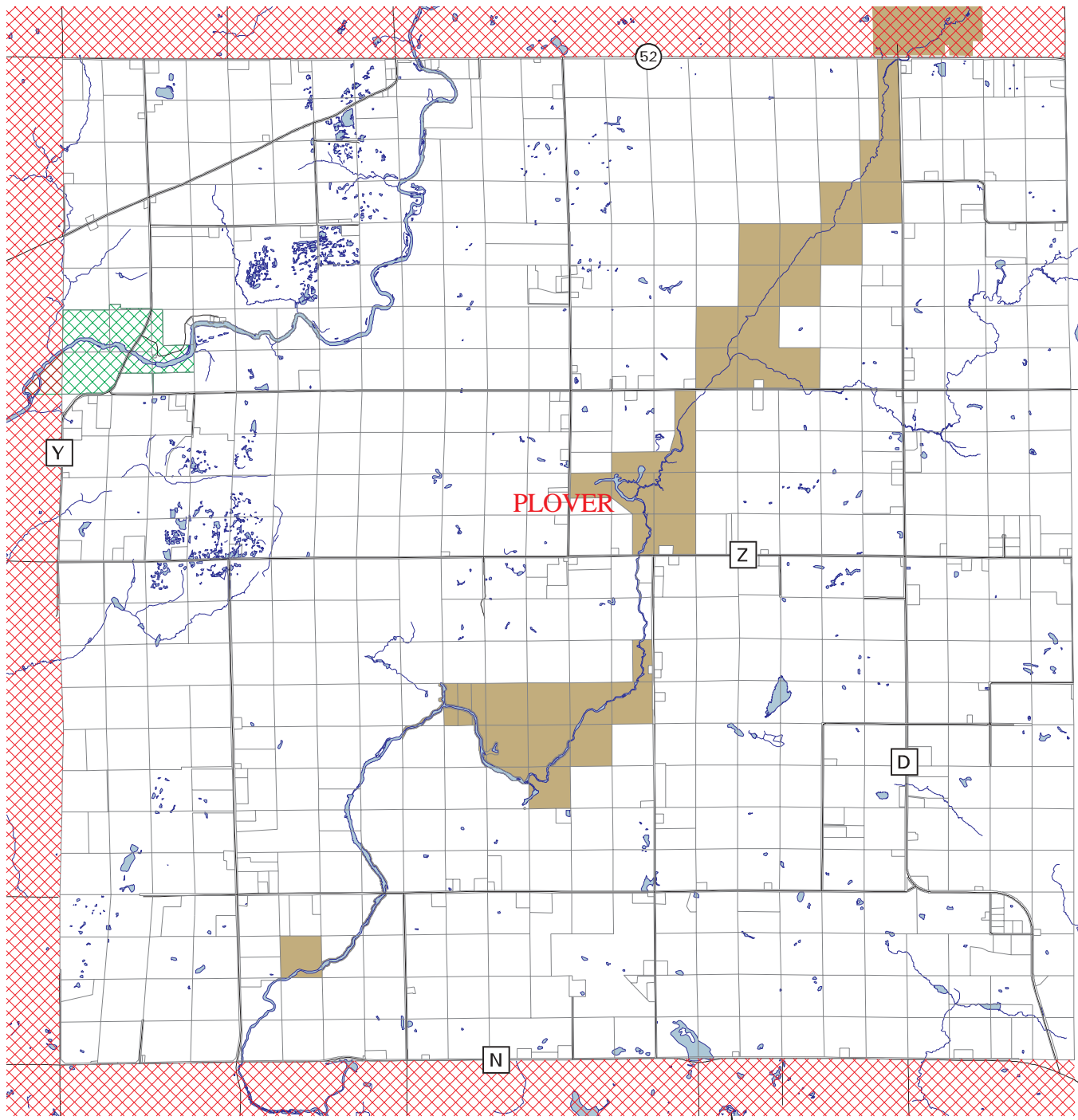
Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 9-3

# MARATHON COUNTY AREA HOSPITALS, CLINICS & EMS ZONES

- Healthcare Facilities
- CLINIC
  - HOSPITAL
  - State & US Highways
  - Municipal Boundary
- EMT Areas
- ABBOTSFORD
  - ATHENS
  - BIRNAMWOOD
  - COLBY
  - EDGAR
  - HATLEY
  - MARSHFIELD
  - MOSINEE
  - RIB MOUNTAIN
  - ROTHSCHILD
  - SCHOFIELD
  - SPENCER
  - STRATFORD
  - WAUSAU (city)
  - WESTON
  - WITTENBERG





- Municipal Parks
- County Forest Units
- County Parks
- State Parks

Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005



Figure 10-1  
**Recreation Facilities**  
**PLOVER**

**Town of Plover**

**Comprehensive Plan**

***Goals, Objectives, Policies & Implementation***

*September 2005*

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## List of Acronyms

**303 (d) list**—waters designated as “impaired” under section 303 (d) of the U.S. Clean Water Act.

**AADT**—Annual Average Daily Traffic

**AHI**—Architecture & History Inventory (a database of the Wisconsin Historical Society).

**BMPs**—Best Management Practices

**CCR&R**—Child Care Resource and Referral Network

**CDBG**—Community Development Block Grant

**CES**—Cropland Evaluation System (Marathon County)

**CIP**—Capital Improvement Program

**Comm 83**—Chapter 83 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code under the Department of Commerce, setting standards for regulation of private sewage systems.

**CRP**—Conservation Reserve Program

**CTH**—County Trunk Highway

**CWA**—Central Wisconsin Airport

**DWD**—Department of Workforce Development

**EMS**—Emergency Medical Services

**EMT**—Emergency Medical Technician

**ERW**—Exceptional Resource Waters, a designation by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

**FEMA**—Federal Emergency Management Agency

**FIRM**—Flood Insurance Rate Maps

**HOME**—Home Investment Partnerships Program

**HUD**—U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

**LHOG**—Local Housing Organization Grant

**LRTP**—Long Range Transportation Plan (Prepared by the Wausau Metro Planning Organization for the Metro area).

**LWRMP**—Land and Water Resource Management Plan (Marathon County)

**MPO**—Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

**NCHC**—North Central Health Care

**NCWRPC**—North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

**NRHP**—National Register of Historic Places

**NTC**—Northcentral Technical College

**ORW**—Outstanding Resource Waters, a designation under the U.S. Clean Water Act.

**PASER**—Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating

**PMP**—Pavement Management Plan

**SHPO**—State Historic Preservation Office

**STF Data**—Summary Tape File, referring to data files of the 2000 U.S. Census.

**STH**—State Trunk Highway

**TDP**—Transit Development Plan (Wausau Area Transit System)

**TIP**—Transportation Improvement Program (Marathon County)

**USDA**—United States Department of Agriculture

**USH**—U.S. Highway

**UW-MC**—University of Wisconsin—Marathon County

**WATS**—Wausau Area Transit System

**WDA**—Wisconsin Department of Agriculture

**WDNR**—Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

**WDOA**—Wisconsin Department of Administration

**WDOT**—Wisconsin Department of Transportation

**WHEDA**—Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority

**WISLR**—Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads

**WPD**—Wetland Protection District

**WPS**—Wisconsin Public Service Corporation



## 1. Introduction

This document represents the core of the Town of Plover Comprehensive Plan. It outlines the community's goals and objectives to address the issues and opportunities identified in the *Conditions and Issues Report* and guide future growth. Goals and objectives have been developed relative to each of the required plan elements. For each of the goals and objectives, specific policies, strategies and/or actions are recommended to enable the community to achieve them. The Implementation Element at the end of this document compiles and prioritizes all the recommended action steps and identifies who is responsible for implementation.

Coordinating planning efforts with other jurisdictions was integral to the local comprehensive planning process. By working in sub-area groups, participating in county-wide planning workshops, and directly communicating with neighboring communities, all participating local municipalities have taken steps to foster intergovernmental cooperation and land use coordination. To achieve a level of broad consistency, all participating municipalities worked together to identify common likes, dislikes and concerns impacting their respective sub-areas. These were distilled into ten countywide guiding principles that describe a broad, shared vision of the future of Marathon County.

Local plans must also address the State's fourteen planning goals outlined in Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001, to the extent applicable. The sub-area concerns are summarized below and the State planning goals and countywide guiding principles are summarized in Appendix A and B, respectively.

## Sub-Area Concerns

Following is a list of concerns shared by the four rural planning sub-areas outside of the Wausau metropolitan area. These were developed through a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) exercise to identify aspects of the sub-areas that participants liked, disliked, or had concerns about. Because many of the concerns were shared by all the rural sub-areas, they were consolidated into one list as follows:

### General Concerns:

#### ***Local Development Control***

- Maintain local control of development regulation
- Private property rights

#### ***Degree of Regulation***

- Prefer minimal development regulation, but open to some regulation to protect prime farmland, rural character, natural resources and water quality
- Managed development preferred

### Land Use and Development:

#### ***Preserve Rural Character***

- Rural settings (small farms dotting landscape)
- Low population density (1, 2 and 5 acre lots)
- Ample open space, woodlands, natural areas, etc.
- Small town living – familiar, friendly, safe
- Concentrate commercial and industrial development in cities or villages

***Farm/Non-farm Conflicts***

- Increased demand (from new residents) for higher level of service, paved roads, etc.
- Traffic conflicts between passenger vehicles and farm equipment
- Road paving and dust control – Costs? Benefits?
- Road damage from heavy farm equipment
- Increased complaints about farm smells, dust, noise

***Urban Fringe Development***

- Annexation - lack of control over where, when and what might develop
- Some support for cooperative boundary agreements to manage growth at urban edge
- Planned development preferred - but wary of over regulation

***Identity and Appearance***

- Lack of design/aesthetics control for commercial and industrial development (buildings, landscaping, signs)
- Cluttered appearance of major road corridors (signs, power lines, no landscaping)
- Improve housing maintenance in some neighborhoods
- Land use conflicts – i.e. old industrial adjacent to residential

**Preservation and Protection of Resources:**

***Preserve/Protect Natural Resources***

- Preserve woodlands (highest ratings in survey responses), wetlands, rivers
- Protect/maintain natural character and scenic quality
- Maintain access to natural areas

**Fiscal/Economic:**

***Strong and Diverse Tax Base***

- Loss of land, jobs and population due to annexation
- Loss of taxable land due to public purchase (e.g. County Forests)
- Redevelop under-utilized land, particularly along Wisconsin River
- Maintain/foster diverse mix of land uses
- Competition for industrial development – particularly between urban and fringe areas

***Farmland Preservation (primarily economic issue)***

- Loss of small/family farms to development or larger farms
- Mega farms [also concerns about environmental impacts]
- Decreasing number of active farms
- Conversion of farms to non-farm development
- Land value inflation (high taxes)

**Infrastructure:**

***Traffic and Transportation System***

- Too many driveway openings on busy road corridors
- Lack of future street planning
- Limited river crossings
- New interchange locations and loss of highway access
- Highway frontage roads – access limitations

***Protect Water Supply***

- Depletion or degradation due to high volume users (mega farms, new high school, industry)
- Limited access to water for wells in some areas (bedrock, etc.)

***Sewer and Septic System Availability***

- Poor soil drainage limits suitability for on-site waste treatment systems in some areas
- “Comm83” opens more areas for on-site treatment systems
- Interest in looking at alternatives to centralized wastewater treatment

***Cost Efficient Community Services***

- Shared services generally good – fragmentation an issue in some areas
- Maintain and improve services w/o increasing taxes
- How/who will pay for increased services
- Lack of transit access in rural and fringe areas

- **Objective:** An objective is a statement that describes a specific course of action to achieve a goal or address an issue.
- **Policy:** A policy is a general course of action or rule of conduct to be followed to achieve community goals and objectives.
- **Strategies:** As the name implies, strategies are strategic approaches that may involve a series of individual actions to achieve a specific goal or objective.
- **Actions:** An action describes a specific effort that will be undertaken to achieve a specific goal or objective.

**Goals, Objectives, Policies, Strategies & Actions**

This section is intended to address issues and opportunities as identified by the Town of Plover in its *Conditions and Issues Report*. These issues and opportunities are captured in the policies, strategies and actions set forth with the intent of achieving the goals identified by the community. These goals work in concert with the goals set forth by the State of Wisconsin (Appendix A) and Marathon County (Appendix B).

**Definitions:**

- **Goal:** A goal is a statement that describes a desired future condition. The statement is broad in scope and describes general concepts or things the community hopes to accomplish.

## 2. Natural Resources Element

Town of Plover residents are concerned about preservation of natural resources, and has developed an overall goal statement for the protection of these resources:

*“[It is Plover’s goal] to continue to provide natural habitat and to encourage the continuation of all wildlife, plants, trees, wetlands and streams in the Town of Plover.”*

The Town has developed the following goals and actions to demonstrate its support.

**Goal 1:** Protect and enhance the Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) in Plover from intensive development.

- **Objective: To minimize intensive development in areas that could affect views of, or the water quality and habitat, of ORWs.**
- **Objective: To establish a required minimum frontage and lot size on property along the Plover and Eau Claire River frontages.**
- **Objective: To support restoration of native vegetation along ORWs.**
- **Objective: To protect and enhance the Plover River as a particularly important waterway and natural habitat.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover encourages the protection and enhancement of local ORWs.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Establish guidelines for development located near ORWs, including type and use.
- Establish a required minimum lot size along river frontages.
- Initiate discussions with the County and WDNR to evaluate current development practices.
- Work with UW-Extension, the County, and the WDNR on how to implement conservation buffers and native vegetation.

**Goal 2: Protect and enhance the woodlands in Plover.**

- **Objective:** To support commercial forestry businesses and their ongoing provision of forest land for public hunting.

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover encourages the protection and enhancement of local woodlands.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Maintain contact with the owners of local forestry businesses to review and revise regulations for public hunting and recreation.

**Goal 3: Protect wetlands from development activity.**

- **Objective:** To continue working with the WDNR and Marathon County to ensure appropriate preservation of wetlands and shorelines.

**POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover discourages development in areas that will negatively affect wetlands.

**STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Take wetland regulations into consideration when reviewing development applications.
- Report violations to WDNR and the County.

**Goal 4: Protect the Town's water resources, including potable water.**

- **Objective: Work with the WDNR and Marathon County to protect critical groundwater recharge areas.**

**POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover strongly supports the protection of water resources.

**STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Work with Marathon County and the WDNR to identify areas where development or agriculture could impact the water table and overall water quality.

- Work with Marathon County and UW-Extension to address uncontrolled runoff and overuse of agricultural chemicals.

### 3. Land Use Element

Major land uses in the Town of Plover are largely divided between woodlands and cropland. Residential development in Plover has been influenced by limited transportation access heavily wooded areas. Like many other rural towns, residential development in Plover has lined the primary roads, but is also scattered throughout the Town. Plover has developed an overall land use goal:

*“To preserve the uniqueness of the Town of Plover.”*

#### **Goal 1: Proactively plan for increased demand for rural residential land development.**

- **Objective: To identify areas where different types of residential development, such as large lots or subdivisions, may occur.**
- **Objective: Inform potential developers of low-yield water areas.**
- **Objective: To manage residential development in order to minimize development-related costs for the Town.**

#### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover wishes to minimize costs of development by the Town.
- The Town of Plover encourages development in areas that can be served by available infrastructure and water.

#### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Evaluate future development requests to ensure that the revenue generated from the taxes on these developments will exceed the expenditures required to provide services to them.
- Work with the County to identify and map areas where different residential development types should occur, such as the most appropriate place for large lots.
- Direct future residential uses on land with available infrastructure.
- Make low-yield water maps available to potential new developers.
- Develop guidelines for transferring some costs of new development to the developer.

#### **Goal 2: Provide tools for managing growth.**

- **Objective: To base land use decisions on Plover’s adopted plan for future development.**
- **Objective: To update/modify the zoning code to provide regulatory options for land use decision-making.**
- **Objective: To develop/update a subdivision ordinance with design standards to provide for orderly residential development.**
- **Objective: To revise and update the mobile home ordinance.**

- **Objective: Continue use of conditional use permits and standards for mining operations to help minimize land use conflicts.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover encourages the use and adoption of tools to manage new growth.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Use the adopted plan for future development as a tool when reviewing development applications.
- Review the zoning code and update to reflect current and future development trends/plans.
- Identify shortfalls in the existing mobile home ordinance and develop ideas for revision.
- Develop and adopt subdivision regulations that are consistent with the future plan.
- Work with current mine operators to develop reasonable land use standards and permit regulations.
- Maintain the current Conditional Use Permit process.

### **Goal 3: Preserve the rural character settlement pattern and unique qualities of Plover.**

- **Objective: To determine an appropriate lot size (currently two acres) that will support Plover's concept of rural character and protect significant resources.**
- **Objective: To direct rural residential uses away from sensitive lands such as wetlands, creeks and rivers.**

- **Objective: To support development that preserves rural character (i.e., horse riding stables).**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover recognizes its rural character as an important and attractive asset.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Review and discuss a larger lot size, and determine if it should be town-wide or only in certain sensitive areas.
- Consider County and WDNR guidelines for setbacks from sensitive areas such as streams, rivers and wetlands when reviewing development applications. Report violations.
- Guide higher density development to areas that would not greatly compromise rural character.
- Consider types of development which are preferred to preserve rural character (i.e. horse riding stables)

### **Goal 4: Reduce farm/non-farm conflicts.**

- **Objective: Education residents on how to minimize conflicts between non-farm residents and farms and their operating characteristics.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover supports the minimization of farm/non-farm conflicts.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Create an document/brochure that will be attached to each new building permit, which describes the Town's values, conflict potential, and other issues relating to farm/non-farm conflicts.

**Goal 5: Support current levels of public land ownership in Plover.**

- **Objective: To maintain the Plover tax base by discouraging the County and State from purchasing additional land in the Town.**

**POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover discourages the purchase of Town lands by public entities.

**STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Pursue private entities for future purchase of land.
- Communicate the wishes of the Town to the County.

**Goal 6: Determine whether nuisance issues (dilapidated buildings, abandoned junk and refuse) should be regulated.**

- **Objective: To develop an ordinance governing nuisance issues in Plover.**
- **Objective: Continue the annual clean-up process to encourage better maintenance of properties.**

**POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover encourages the development of regulations for mobile homes and nuisance issues.

**STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Compile a list of the types of things that are currently issues in Plover and possibly should be governed via ordinance.
- Implement a nuisance ordinance, as applicable.
- Continue to evaluate the annual clean-up process to best serve the community.

**Goal 7: Ensure that development in the area of the Ice Age Trail complements proposed recreational activity.**

- **Objective: To review development plans near the Trail for land use compatibility with the Trail.**

**POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover encourages compatible use along the Ice Age Trail.

**STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Develop a list of land uses that would be complementary/compatible with the trail and use this list when reviewing development plans near the trail.
- Develop a list of land uses that would definitely NOT be compatible with or desired near the trail.

**Accommodating Future Growth**

**Future Land Use** – The Town of Plover Future Land Use map, shown in Figure 3-1 illustrates the anticipated future pattern of land uses. The map includes fourteen land use categories to guide where new residential and non-residential development should be



**Town of Plover**

encouraged to locate or where development should be discouraged. Descriptions of each land use category and the number of acres within each category are provided in Table 3-1. Figure 3-3 shows areas with development constraints due to environmental conditions such as wetlands and floodplains, or policy constraints such as restrictive zoning or other programs (i.e., Exclusive Agriculture, Forest Crop Law). Areas where existing development precludes additional development are also shown.

A majority of the future land use in the Town of Plover is anticipated to be in woodland and cropland/other agriculture (combined 84%). Only two percent of land is designated for residential use. These will be mostly single-family homes on larger lots scattered throughout the Town along County and other major roads.

**Table 3-1: Future Land Use, 2005**

Land Cover Category	Description	Acres	% of Total Land Area
<b>Single Family Residential</b>	One family structures, farm residences, mobile homes	516	2%
<b>Multi-Family Residential</b>	Multiple family structures with three or more households, condos, duplexes, apartments	0	0
<b>Commercial Services</b>	Retail stores, taverns, restaurants, truck stops, gas stations, farm coops, farm implement dealerships, automobile dealerships, business offices, motels/hotels, offices, telephone/gas company	8	<1%
<b>Industrial</b>	Saw/paper/lumber mills, dairies, industrial parks, trucking operations, distribution centers	0	0
<b>Quarries/Gravel Pits</b>	Mining operations	93	<1%
<b>Cropland</b>	Tilled agriculture, prime farmland	4,265	19%
<b>Other</b>	Fallow, pasture and undetermined	2,162	9%

Land Cover Category	Description	Acres	% of Total Land Area
<b>Agriculture</b>	agriculture, power lines and towers, water towers, municipal wells		
<b>Public/Quasi-Public</b>	Schools, churches, cemeteries, libraries, government buildings, National Guard, utility facilities.	0	0
<b>Park and Recreation</b>	Public and private parks, trails, ball fields, golf courses, playgrounds, camp grounds, shooting ranges, etc.	1,417	6%
<b>Woodlands</b>	Privately-owned forested land, including nurseries, paper mill forests, etc.	12,880	56%
<b>Water and Wetlands</b>	Open waters, such as lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, creeks, reservoirs, etc.	172	<1%
<b>Transportation</b>	Airports, highways, road right-of-ways, railroads, logging roads	458	2%
<b>Barren Land</b>	Unused open land in wooded areas, along streams, along roadsides	1,066	5%
<b>Total Land Area</b>		23,037	100%

Source: Marathon County

**Land Needs** – Projections of future population and employment growth in the Town of Plover are provided in the *Issues and Conditions* report. These were used to estimate the amount of land needed to accommodate future residential and non-residential development over the next 20 years. Acreage projections were based on assumptions about density of houses per acre and employees per acre.

It is estimated over the next 20 years, 241 additional acres will be needed to accommodate future residential development and 5 additional acres are needed for future non-residential development. Sufficient acreage to meet estimated demand for new development has not been provided in the appropriate land use categories on the future land use map. At this time, Plover has chosen not to identify future land uses on a map. Figure 3-1 is a

## Town of Plover

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reflection of current (2005) land uses, and plats that have recently been approved, or are anticipated to be approved in the near future. Approximately 75% of Plover residents surveyed in 2000 indicated they would like things to stay the same in the Town regarding character and amount of new development. The Town Board also believes that due to large forest tracts in the town and limited access to highways, commercial development is unlikely to occur. For these reasons, the Town wishes to continue the current method of development review, but will utilize the actions set forth in this plan in the review process.

Land developed for new residential and commercial use will most likely be converted from agricultural use and limited woodland use, instead of subdividing existing residential lots. This trend is illustrated in Table 3-2.

**Table 3-2: Acreage Projections, 2005-2030**

	Estimated Acreage Needed by Year					
	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>Agricultural</b>	20373	20323.8	20275.6	20227.4	20179.2	20131.0
<b>Residential</b>	516	564.2	612.4	660.6	708.8	757.0
<b>Non-Residential</b>	101	102	103	104	105	106

*Source: Acreage based on estimates from Regional Planning Commission dated 10/29/03 and Marathon County*

The agricultural category includes cropland, other agriculture, woodlands and barren land use categories. The residential category includes single-family and multi-family uses. The non-residential category includes commercial, industrial and quarry uses. This table does not include land use categories that are generally not developable, such as public/quasi-public, recreation, water/wetlands, and transportation.

**Consistency between Land Use and Zoning** – Land use and zoning designations are related, but not necessarily identical. Land use categories tend to be fairly general whereas zoning districts regulate specific land uses and development requirements. Because the land use categories are general it is common for more than one zoning district to correspond to each land use category. It is also possible that some zoning districts might be consistent with more than one land use designation.

Achieving consistency between land use and zoning is required by State Statutes. This generally occurs when a community is considering a proposed zoning change. The decision to approve a zoning change must be based on the adopted comprehensive plan, and specifically, the future land use map. Generally, if a the requested zoning is consistent with the land use designation on the property it should be approved, unless unique circumstances indicated the rezoning would negatively impact surrounding properties or the community. If a rezoning request is not consistent with the land use designation, the community should consider denying the rezoning request.

In situations where a rezoning request is not consistent with the land use designation - but the community believes the requested zoning is appropriate in the specific location and would benefit the community - the zoning change can be approved, however, the land use map should be amended accordingly to establish land use and zoning consistency. The process for amending the land use map is discussed in greater detail in the Implementation Element.

## 4. Transportation Element

The following goals, objectives and actions reflect Plover's desire to achieve its overall transportation goal:

*"To provide the best possible road conditions to promote safety and convenience to the people of the Town of Plover."*

### Goal 1: Maintain and improve Town roads.

- **Objective: To continue the annual review of roads, bridges, culverts and other safety issues to determine annual repairs.**
- **Objective: To blacktop one mile of road each year in the Town.**
- **Objective: To consider implementing a dust reduction program.**
- **Objective: To find adequate sources of revenue to fund needed road improvements.**
- **Objective: To seek cooperation from road users whose heavy vehicles result in increased maintenance costs.**
- **Objective: To work with the Marathon County Sheriff's Department to enforce weight limits on Town roads.**

## POLICIES

- The Town of Plover supports programs to help maintain and improve the condition of Town roads.

## STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Meet annually to prioritize and program road repair and improvements.
- Initiate talks with the County and the State about sources on revenue to fund road improvements.
- Develop and document criteria to assist in the decision-making process of whether or not to pave a roadway. Meet annually to decide which segment of road will be blacktopped that year.
- Meet with the County Sheriff's Department to discuss the enforcement of weight limits on Town roads.
- Solicit input from the County and other Towns which use dust reduction programs.
- Consider the value and cost of a dust reduction program in the Town, and investigate cost-sharing.
- Consider implementation of Conditional Use Permits for users whose use of the roads results in increased maintenance costs for the Town.

### Goal 2: Ensure that new development will not have negative impacts on the local road network.

- **Objective: To develop standards for new roads and access to Town roads in new development.**
- **Objective: To establish developer contributions to road improvements that serve new developments.**

- **Objective: To develop/formalize criteria for determining when roads should be paved to clarify the decisionmaking process.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover encourages more planning for the relationship between roads and new development.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Make roadway considerations a part of the standard development review.
- Adopt and implement new development guidelines for roads and access to Town roads.
- Adopt and implement new subdivision road design criteria that will ensure that new roads can handle additional traffic volumes in the future, in areas that are projected for growth.
- Require added lane or shoulder width and/or sidewalks along certain roads in new subdivisions.
- Acclimate developers to new regulations/guidelines by holding meetings or creating a brochure that accompanies the development application.
- Consider implementation of Conditional Use Permits for users whose use of the roads results in increased maintenance costs for the Town

### **Goal 3: Improve traffic safety within the Town.**

- **Objective: To develop criteria for safety and efficient traffic management for use in review of driveway permits on Town roads.**

- **Objective: To look for opportunities to minimize road use conflicts.**
- **Objective: To prohibit use of blacktop roads for animal crossing.**
- **Objective: To work with Marathon County to investigate safety issues on such heavily used roads as CTH Y, CTH Z, and STH 52.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover will work with many parties to make sure that traffic safety is improved within the Town.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Consider development of a driveway permitting process that examines various safety and road management issues.
- Meet to discuss and list safety issues associated with CTH Y, CTH Z, and STH 52.
- Initiate discussions with Marathon County on the identified issues at CTH Y, CTH Z, and STH 52.
- Research and brainstorm methods of preventing animal crossings on blacktopped roads (roadside planting methods, etc.)

### **Road Improvements**

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation requires all incorporated communities to prepare a Pavement Management Plan using a pavement rating system for their local roads. These plans were to be submitted for review by December 2001. The

**Town of Plover**

data from these plans is intended to provide the foundation for the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR), which is a computer resource that will enable communities and the State to begin to assess Wisconsin’s local roadway system.

The PASER system, which was designed by the Transportation Information Center of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the rating system used most by Wisconsin communities. PASER rates road surfaces on a scale of 1 to 10.

This scale is broken down as follows:

- “1” and “2” = very poor condition
- “3” = poor condition
- “4” and “5” = fair condition
- “6” and “7” = good condition
- “8” = very good condition
- “9” and “10” = excellent condition

In addition to its use in the new WISLR, the rating system gives communities a detailed assessment of the appropriate maintenance method for each road segment under their jurisdiction. This assessment is then incorporated into the community’s Pavement Management Plan. WISLR ratings and surface types in the Town of Plover are shown on Figures 4-1 and 4-2, and summarized in Table 4-1.

**Table 4-1: Summary of Pavement Conditions**

Surface Type Code (miles)						
Unimproved Road	Graded Earth Road	Gravel Road	Wearing Surface	Cold Mix Asphalt on Concrete	Cold Mix Resurfacing with < 7" Base	Cold Mix Resurfacing with > 7" Base
	0.53	26.75				
Cold Mix Asphalt Base < 7"	Cold Mix Asphalt Base > 7"	Hot Mix Asphalt on Concrete	Hot Mix Resurfacing	Hot Mix Asphalt Pavement	Concrete Pavement	Brick or Block Pavement
5.56	20.55		1.02	1.00		

Surface Condition Rating - WISLR Data						
No Data	Failed	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
0.09	1.58	11.71	20.97	12.91	5.98	2.17

Source: WDOT (WISLR), 8/10/04

The roads that display a surface rating of “Good” or better will only require minimal preventative maintenance to promote safe travel conditions. Further information is necessary for those roads that display no surface rating data. This data collection effort will help ensure safe travel conditions along those routes.

**Paving Gravel Roads** – Approximately 27 miles of roads within the Town remain unpaved. When paving gravel roads, there are many factors that should be taken into consideration. Appendix F outlines some general guidelines to help the Town decide if or when to pave gravel roads.

## 5. Utilities Element

The Town of Plover does not provide public sewer or water service. All development relies on private wells and waste disposal systems. Plover residents are concerned with planning for efficient private waste disposal systems, protecting the Town's water supply, and improving telecommunication services.

### Goal 1: Protect the supply of potable water.

- **Objective: Work with the WDNR and Marathon County to protect critical groundwater recharge areas.**
- **Objective: Inform potential developers of low-yield water areas.**

#### POLICIES

- The Town of Plover supports the maintenance and protection of its water supply.

#### STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Work with Marathon County and the WDNR to identify areas where development or agriculture could impact the water table and overall water quality.
- Work with Marathon County and UW-Extension to address uncontrolled runoff and overuse of agricultural chemicals.
- Make low-yield water maps available to potential new developers.

### Goal 2: Plan for efficient on-site sanitary waste disposal systems.

- **Objective: To ensure that lot sizes are adequate for private waste disposal systems.**

#### POLICIES

- The Town of Plover encourages appropriate and efficient use of on-site sanitary waste disposal systems.

#### STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Develop and adopt a minimum lot size relative to a certain size of waste disposal systems.
- Reinforce DNR and County guidelines for installing waste disposal systems within a certain distance from wetlands, rivers, or streams.
- Report known waste disposal violations to the County.

### Goal 3: Improve telecommunication services.

- **Objective: To determine whether residents desire/need improved cellular telephone, cable television or other telecommunication services.**

#### POLICIES

- The Town of Plover supports improvement of local telecommunications services, as needed.

**STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Poll residents on availability and need of telecommunication services.
- Actively pursue companies that provide needed services to implement additional service in the Town.

## 6. Housing Element

Looking into the future, Plover is most concerned with guiding new housing to areas that will best utilize areas already served by public utilities. Plover's overall goal statement reads:

*"[It is Plover's goal] to provide the means where land may be planned and developed for residential uses, under standards that offer flexibility, encourage good design, provide for open spaces and preservation of natural features. Land planning should minimize the present and future burdens upon the community as a whole that result from poor planning."*

### **Goal 1: Plan for rural residential development to address concerns about waste disposal systems, adequacy of water supply and to preserve rural character in the Town.**

- **Objective: To encourage housing development in areas that can best be served with infrastructure including water capacity and road access.**
- **Objective: To locate new residential units in areas that will have minimal impact on farmland and will have appropriate services.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover supports adequate and thorough planning for rural residential development.

- The Town of Plover encourages development in areas that can be served by available infrastructure and water.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Distinguish areas that are preferable to the Town for new rural residential development.
- Direct development to areas already served with utilities and road access.
- Make low-yield water maps available to potential new developers.

### **Goal 2: Ensure the safety of mobile home units.**

- **Objective: To revise and update the mobile home ordinance.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover supports revision of the current mobile home ordinance.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Establish review criteria for mobile home regulations to see if it needs to be updated.
- Keep a database of all addresses and fire numbers. Work on identifying the information of those that aren't listed.
- Insert a flyer or letter in the tax statement informing residents that fire numbers are available.
- Reiterate these actions in the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan.



## 7. Cultural Resources Element

Although there are no properties in Plover listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Town wishes to cooperate with any future studies done by Marathon County. The Town does not have a local historic preservation commission.

### **Goal 1: Preserve historically significant buildings and sites.**

- **Objective: To work with the County Historical Society or others to identify historic resources so they may be considered in future planning.**
- **Objective: To ensure that any known cemeteries, human burials or archaeological sites are protected from encroachment by roads or any development activities.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover supports the preservation of historically significant buildings and sites.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Identify historic buildings, cemeteries/burials, and archaeological sites, and make maps readily available for project planning and development review.
- Consult with the County Historical Society and other organizations to discuss potential sites.

## 8. Community Facilities Element

The Town of Plover is served by the Unified School District of Antigo and the Wittenburg-Birnamwood School District. The Town has its own volunteer fire department and ambulance service. They also have a mutual aid agreement with Birnamwood. Plovers's goals reflect the desire to support existing facilities and services, and to look for ways to ensure that the most efficient emergency service is being provided.

### Goal 1: Support and maintain existing community facilities.

- **Objective: To maintain the Town Hall as a seat of local government and community meeting hall.**

#### POLICIES

- The Town of Plover recognizes the importance of the Town Hall as a gathering place for the community and as a government center of the Town.

#### STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Identify necessary repairs and allocate funds to maintain and/or improve the Town Hall on a regular basis.

### Goal 2: Ensure sufficient fire and emergency service protection.

- **Objective: To continue to participate in the Birnamwood Area Fire Department, Inc. and the**

**Birnamwood Area Ambulance Service, Inc. and maintain and improve equipment.**

- **Objective: To maintain an adequate number of trained volunteer fire department and emergency service staff.**

#### POLICIES

- The Town of Plover recognizes the importance of a well-trained, well-equipped, and well-staffed volunteer fire department.

#### STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Develop a list of improvements or new equipment that is needed by the fire department.
- Continue to participate in quarterly meetings with the Birnamwood Area Fire Department.
- Schedule separate meetings with the fire department to discuss any special concerns.
- Develop criteria for the minimum number of people on staff adequately to serve the area.

## 9. Parks Element

The Town of Plover does not own or operate any public parks, but the County-operated Dells of the Eau Claire Park is located off CTH Y. While the Town sees no need for additional parkland at this time, it wishes to support existing facilities, and to coordinate future amenities with the Ice Age Trail.

### **Goal 1: Support the Marathon County park system and the nearby facilities available for Plover residents.**

- **Objective: To encourage adequate funding for maintenance of local Marathon County parks such as the Dells of the Eau Claire on CTH Y.**

#### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover recognizes the County and local park systems as an important asset to the community.

#### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Initiate conversations with the County to learn of plans for improvements or maintenance to Dells of the Eau Claire and other area parks.
- Communicate support of park improvements and funding to the County.

### **Goal 2: Ensure that development in the area of the Ice Age Trail complements proposed recreational activity.**

- **Objective: To consider whether the Town should make any improvements or enhance infrastructure to serve Ice Age Trail users.**

#### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover encourages compatible land use along the Ice Age Trail.

#### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Meet with Ice Age Trail officials and users to identify areas where local infrastructure may serve to enhance the trail experience (connecting trails/sidewalks, water fountains, etc.)
- Prioritize identified trail projects and determine if funding is available, or determine cost-sharing.
- Identify land parcels that might be suitable and preferable for trail parking. Initiate conversations with Ice Age Trail officials about purchasing this land.

## 10. Economic Development Element

Employment opportunities within the Town of Plover are limited to mostly agricultural employment, as there is limited commercial and industrial use within the Town. As overall agricultural employment is anticipated to decrease in Marathon County overall, the Town of Plover is expected to see a decrease in overall employment through the year 2030. The Town recognizes the importance of agriculture to its economy, and has set forth goals and actions to maintain a viable agricultural base.

### **Goal 1: Strengthen the viability of the local agricultural economy to ensure that existing farms are able to remain in agriculture as long as they choose.**

- **Objective: To discourage development in areas with large blocks of farmland.**
- **Objective: To encourage the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for agriculture to increase productivity of farmland.**

### **POLICIES**

- The Town of Plover supports agriculture as a prime economic force in the Town.

### **STRATEGIES/ACTIONS**

- Review Town ordinances to ensure that they encourage appropriate types of secondary agricultural businesses to locate in the Town.

- Adopt guidelines or ordinances to guide residential development to certain areas, away from active farmland.
- Work with UW-Extension, Marathon County, and the NRCS to implement farmland conservation practices, including BMPs.

## 11. Intergovernmental Cooperation Element

The Town of Plover recognizes the importance of good communication, and its goals and actions indicate its desire to work effectively with other communities.

### Goal 1: Coordinate development with surrounding communities.

- **Objective:** To communicate with surrounding communities when proposed development is on a boundary or the development could have impacts on the adjacent community.

### POLICIES

- The Town of Plover encourages communication with adjacent communities when new development potentially affects those communities, or occurs on the border with those communities.

### STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Maintain a list of the appropriate person(s) to call when development is occurring on the Town boundary or may have and impact on another community.
- Meet with potentially affected communities to disclose potential impacts and discuss possible mitigation or cooperation.

### Goal 2: Encourage participation by Town officials and residents in all levels of government.

- **Objective:** To encourage local officials to participate in county and state government activities and organizations.
- **Objective:** To continue to seek regular participation and feedback from residents through surveys, informational public meetings, newsletters or other activities.

### POLICIES

- The Town of Plover encourages local officials and residents to participate in local planning activities and organizations.

### STRATEGIES/ACTIONS

- Invite representatives from county and state activities and organizations to speak at Town meetings.
- Attend meetings held by surrounding communities and the County, to which the Town is invited.
- Designate a main contact person who will be responsible for organizing and/or distributing public information materials.
- Develop a survey which can be mailed out to residents, asking for suggestions or feedback on proposed or recently constructed projects (roads, residential developments, etc.)

## 12. Implementation Element

The primary reason a community prepares a comprehensive plan is to establish a framework to influence decisions regarding management of growth and regulation of development to maintain the desired community character, and to set priorities for public expenditures. To be effective, this plan should be actively used as a tool to guide decisions concerning:

- The implementation and enforcement of regulatory ordinances based on the goals and objectives identified in this plan.
- The development of programs and support systems that further the goals and objectives set forth in this plan.
- The implementation of specific community improvements as identified in the comprehensive plan.
- The establishment and support of a continued planning process providing for periodic review and updates to this plan and other land use control measures.

### Implementation Tools

Having the appropriate tools to implement the recommendations in this comprehensive plan is critical. The most common implementation tools are the Town official controls or regulatory codes. In particular, the zoning ordinance and subdivision (or land division) regulations comprise the principal regulatory devices used to protect existing development and guide future growth and development as identified in this comprehensive plan. There are also non-regulatory approaches to implementing the comprehensive plan; these generally involve decisions about how the community will spend its limited funding resources on capital improvements and staffing.

The State planning law requires that by January 1, 2010 certain programs and/or actions that affect land use must be consistent with the locally adopted comprehensive plan. To meet this deadline, the Town of Plover should update related ordinances on or before the year 2010. The Town Board officially adopts these regulatory and land use control measures as ordinances (or as revisions to the existing ordinances).

- **Zoning Ordinance and Map:** Zoning is used to manage and control how land is used and developed. Zoning ordinances typically establish detailed regulations concerning how land may be developed, including setbacks, the density or intensity of development, and the height and bulk of building and other structures. The general purpose of zoning is to minimize undesirable side effects resulting from development by segregating and/or buffering incompatible uses and by maintaining standards that ensure development will not negatively impact the community's character or environment.

The establishment of zoning districts and the zoning map indicates where specific types of development can and should be located. Zoning districts shown on the zoning map should be coordinated with the land use plan and map. While the zoning map and land use map do not need to directly match at the time the land use map is adopted, the intent is that the land use map will serve as a guide indicating how the property should eventually be zoned. Therefore, indiscriminate zoning changes may result in weakening of the comprehensive plan. In fact, changes to zoning district boundaries should only be made if they are consistent with the adopted land use map.

However, there may be situations where changing the zoning district boundary makes sense and is in the best interest of the

community. If changing the zoning would result in a conflict with the future land use map, the land use map should also be changed. However, the future land use map should only be changed if it does not accurately reflect the community's desired land use pattern. Achieving consistency between zoning and land use designation is also discussed in the Land Use Element.

As discussed below, the comprehensive plan (and future land use map) should be periodically reviewed and updated to adjust for unforeseen changes or events that were not considered at the time the initial plan and land use map were developed.

The Town Board makes the final decisions regarding changes to the content of the zoning ordinance and the district map **[only in munis with own zoning]**. These decisions are preceded by public hearings and recommendations of the plan commission.

- **Subdivision (Land Division) Ordinance:** Subdivision regulations serve as an important function by ensuring the orderly development of unplatted and/or undeveloped land. These regulations may set forth reasonable regulations for lot sizes, road access, street design, public utilities, storm water drainage, parks and open space, and other improvements necessary to ensure that new development will be an asset. The Board makes the final decisions on the content of the subdivision ordinance. These decisions are preceded by public hearings and recommendations of the plan commission.
- **Capital Improvement Plan (CIP):** This is an ongoing financial planning program that allows local communities to

plan ahead for capital expenditures and minimize unplanned expenses. A capital improvement plan consists of a list of proposed projects according to a schedule of priorities over a four-to-six year period. It identifies needed public improvements, estimates their costs, and identifies financing methods and sources. Public improvements or expenditures typically considered in a CIP include:

- Public buildings (i.e., fire and police stations)
- Park and trail acquisition and development
- Roads and highways (maintenance and new construction/paving)
- Utility system construction/expansion, treatment plants, water towers, wells, etc.
- Joint school and other community development projects
- Fire and police protection equipment

A CIP is simply a method of planning for and scheduling expenditures for public improvements over a period of several years in order to maximize the use of limited public funds. Each year the CIP should be reviewed and extended one year to compensate for the previous year that was completed. This keeps the improvement program current and allows for modifications to meet the community's changing needs.

The preparation of a CIP is normally a joint responsibility between the Town Board, plan commission, staff, and citizen commissions. The preparation of a capital improvement program may vary from community to community depending on local preferences, the local form of government and available staff. The proposed capital improvement plan should be reviewed in light of the priorities outlined in the comprehensive plan.

### **Plan Adoption, Monitoring, and Amendments**

While this comprehensive plan is intended to provide a long-term framework to guide development and public spending decisions, it must also respond to the continuous stream of changes that occur in the community and/or region that may not have been foreseen when the plan was initially adopted. It is appropriate that some elements of the plan are rarely amended while others are subject to updating on a more regular basis. Plan maps should also be updated periodically. In general, key maps, such as the future land use map, should be reviewed annually to make sure they are still current.

**Plan Adoption:** The first step in implementing this plan involves adoption of the plan by local officials. The formal review and adoption process involves plan review by the Plan Commission (or other planning committee) who must adopt the plan by resolution of majority vote. The Plan Commission recommendation is forwarded to the Town Board who must adopt the plan by ordinance (of majority vote). A public hearing is required to allow public comment on the ordinance prior to Board final action to adopt the plan. Adoption formalizes the plan document as the framework to guide local development decisions

over the next 20 years. The adopted plan should also be recognized as a tool for communicating the community's land use policy and goals and objectives regarding coordination of growth and development.

**Plan Use, Monitoring and Evaluation:** The adopted plan should be used as a tool by the Town of Plover when making land use and development decisions. Decisions concerning private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions should be consistent with the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations outlined in this plan.

Although this plan describes policies and actions for future implementation, it is impossible to predict the exact future condition of the Town of Plover. As such, the goals, objectives, and actions in this plan should be monitored on a regular basis to maintain concurrence with changing conditions and respond to unanticipated events.

This plan should be evaluated at least every 5 years, and updated at least every 10 years. Members of the Town Board, Plan Commission, and any other local decision-making bodies should periodically review the plan and identify areas that might need to be updated. The evaluation should involve first reviewing the goals and objectives to ensure they are still relevant and reflect current community desires. Then the strategies and actions should be reviewed and refined to eliminate completed tasks and identify new approaches if appropriate. The evaluation should also include an updated timetable of actions to clarify priorities.

**Plan Amendments:** The Town of Plover Comprehensive Plan may be amended at any time by the Town Board following the



same process described above for initial Plan adoption, regardless of how minor the proposed amendment or change. Amendments may be appropriate throughout the lifecycle of the plan, particularly if new issues emerge or trends change. These amendments will typically consist of minor changes to the plan text or maps. Large-scale changes or frequent amendments to meet individual development proposals should be avoided or the plan loses integrity. A list of criteria to determine the merits of proposed amendments is included in Table 12-1.

As noted above, proposed amendments must be reviewed by the Plan Commission prior to final action and adoption by the Town Board. The public should be notified of proposed Plan changes and allowed an opportunity for review and comment. For major amendments, the Town might consider soliciting public opinion through surveys and/or community meetings prior to the official public hearing.

**Plan Updates:** According to the State comprehensive planning law, comprehensive plans must be updated at least once every ten years. As opposed to the more routine amendments described above, plan updates often involve re-writing of whole sections of the plan document and significant changes to supporting maps. A plan update should include a thorough examination of the community's goals and objectives based on an analysis of current growth trends and major changes that have occurred since the plan was initially adopted or last amended. Plan updates must be formally adopted following the same procedure described above for initial plan adoption.

**Table 12-1: Criteria to Consider When Reviewing Plan Changes**

- 1.** The change is consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the Town of Plover Comprehensive Plan.
- 2.** The change does not create an adverse impact on public facilities and services that cannot be mitigated.
- 3.** Development resulting from the change does not create an undue impact on surrounding properties. Such development should be consistent with the physical character of the surrounding neighborhood or would upgrade and improve its viability.
- 4.** The change allows a more viable transition to the planned uses on adjacent properties than the current land use.
- 5.** The change does not have a significant adverse impact on the natural environment including trees, slopes and groundwater, or the impact could be mitigated by improvements on the site or in the same vicinity.
- 6.** There is a change in Town actions or neighborhood characteristics that would justify a change.
- 7.** The change corrects an error made in the original plan.
- 8.** There is a community or regional need identified in the comprehensive plan for the proposed land use or service.
- 9.** The change does not adversely impact any landmarks or other historically significant structures or properties unless mitigated through relocation, commemoration or dedication.

## Consistency Among Plan Elements

The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that the Implementation Element describe how each of the required elements will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the plan. Since the Town of Plover completed all planning elements simultaneously, no known inconsistencies exist. It is noted that some overlap naturally exists between the nine plan elements. Where deemed appropriate, goals, objectives, and actions have been repeated under all applicable elements to ensure they do not get “lost”.

This Comprehensive Plan also references previous and concurrent related planning efforts (e.g. LRTP, Groundwater Study) to ensure they are considered in planning decisions in conjunction with the recommendations of this Plan. Summary descriptions of recent and concurrent planning efforts are provided in the *Conditions and Issues Report*. Recommendations from other plans have been summarized and incorporated in this plan as deemed appropriate, to foster coordination and consistency between plans. Some related plans, such as the *Marathon County Hazard Mitigation Plan*, are incorporated by reference in this plan and are essentially considered appendices of this plan even though they are separate documents.

## Action Plan

The table below provides a detailed list of major actions to complete in order to implement this comprehensive plan. It compiles the major short, mid, and long-term priorities described in each of the nine plan elements. It also identifies the parties that will play key roles in implementing the actions.

Table 1-4 is intended to be used by local officials in setting priorities for capital budgeting and resource allocation. It is expected that this table will be reviewed annually and revised, as necessary, to respond to changing priorities, financial limitations, and other unforeseen events. It should be noted that many of the actions require considerable cooperation with others, including the citizens of Plover, staff, and other local/county/state agencies.

Priority ranking is defined as follows:

- Immediate = ASAP
- Short-term = 1-4 years
- Mid-term = 5-9 years
- Long-term = 10+ years
- On-going = Current activities that should continue indefinitely

**Table 12-2: Implementation Plan Actions**

Action	Priority
<b>Natural Resources</b>	
Establish guidelines for development located near ORWs, including type and use.	Short-term
Establish a required minimum lot size along river frontages.	Short-term
Initiate discussions with the County and WDNR to evaluate current development practices.	Short-term
Work with UW-Extension, the County, and the WDNR on how to implement conservation buffers and native vegetation.	Short-term
Maintain contact with the owners of local forestry businesses to review and revise regulations for public hunting and recreation.	Ongoing
Take wetland regulations into consideration when reviewing development applications.	Ongoing
Report violations to WDNR and the County.	Ongoing
Work with Marathon County and the WDNR to identify areas where development or agriculture could impact the water table and overall water quality.	Short-term
Work with Marathon County and UW-Extension to address uncontrolled runoff and overuse of agricultural chemicals.	Short-term
<b>Land Use</b>	
Evaluate future development requests to ensure that the revenue generated from the taxes on these developments will exceed the expenditures required to provide services to them.	Short-term
Work with the County to identify and map areas where different residential development types should occur, such as the most appropriate place for large lots.	Immediate
Direct future residential uses on land with available infrastructure.	Ongoing
Make low-yield water maps available to potential new developers.	Mid-term
Develop guidelines for transferring some costs of new development to the developer.	Short-term
Use the adopted plan for future development as a tool when reviewing development applications.	Immediate

Action	Priority
Review the zoning code and update to reflect current and future development trends/plans.	Short-term
Identify shortfalls in the existing mobile home ordinance and develop ideas for revision.	Short-term
Develop and adopt subdivision regulations that are consistent with the future plan.	Ongoing
Work with current mine operators to develop reasonable land use standards and permit regulations.	Short-term
Maintain the current Conditional Use Permit process.	Ongoing
Review and discuss a larger lot size, and determine if it should be town-wide or only in certain sensitive areas.	Short-term
Consider County and WDNR guidelines for setbacks from sensitive areas such as streams, rivers and wetlands when reviewing development applications. Report violations.	Ongoing
Guide higher density development to areas that would not greatly compromise rural character.	Ongoing
Consider types of development which are preferred to preserve rural character (i.e. horse riding stables)	Short-term
Create an document/brochure that will be attached to each new building permit, which describes the Town's values, conflict potential, and other issues relating to farm/non-farm conflicts.	Short-term
Pursue private entities for future purchase of land.	Ongoing
Communicate the wishes of the Town to the County.	Ongoing
Compile a list of the types of things that are currently issues in Plover and possibly should be governed via ordinance.	Short-term
Implement a nuisance ordinance, as applicable.	Short-term
Continue to evaluate the annual clean-up process to best serve the community.	Ongoing
Develop a list of land uses that would be complementary/compatible with the trail and use this list when reviewing development plans near the trail.	Short-term
Develop a list of land uses that would definitely NOT be compatible with or desired near the trail.	Short-term

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<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	
Meet annually to prioritize and program road repair and improvements.	Ongoing
Initiate talks with the County and the State about sources on revenue to fund road improvements.	Short-term
Develop and document criteria to assist in the decision-making process of whether or not to pave a roadway. Meet annually to decide which segment of road will be blacktopped that year.	Short-term
Meet with the County Sheriff's Department to discuss the enforcement of weight limits on Town roads.	Short-term
Solicit input from the County and other Towns which use dust reduction programs	Short-term
Consider the value and cost of a dust reduction program in the Town, and investigate cost-sharing.	Mid-term
Consider implementation of Conditional Use Permits for users whose use of the roads results in increased maintenance costs for the Town.	Short-term
Make roadway considerations a part of the standard development review.	Short-term
Adopt and implement new development guidelines for roads and access to Town roads.	Short-term
Adopt and implement new subdivision road design criteria that will ensure that new roads can handle additional traffic volumes in the future, in areas that are projected for growth.	Mid-term
Require added lane or shoulder width and/or sidewalks along certain roads in new subdivisions.	Mid-term
Acclimate developers to new regulations/guidelines by holding meetings or creating a brochure that accompanies the development application.	Short-term
Consider implementation of Conditional Use Permits for users whose use of the roads results in increased maintenance costs for the Town	Short-term
Consider development of a driveway permitting process that examines various safety and road management issues.	Short-term

<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Meet to discuss and list safety issues associated with CTH Y, CTH Z, and STH 52.	Short-term
Initiate discussions with Marathon County on the identified issues at CTH Y, CTH Z, and STH 52.	Short-term
Research and brainstorm methods of preventing animal crossings on blacktopped roads (roadside planting methods, etc.)	Mid-term
<b>Utilities</b>	
Work with Marathon County and the WDNR to identify areas where development or agriculture could impact the water table and overall water quality.	Short-term
Work with Marathon County and UW-Extension to address uncontrolled runoff and overuse of agricultural chemicals.	Short-term
Make low-yield water maps available to potential new developers.	Mid-term
Develop and adopt a minimum lot size relative to a certain size of waste disposal systems.	Short-term
Reinforce DNR and County guidelines for installing waste disposal systems within a certain distance from wetlands, rivers, or streams.	Ongoing
Report known waste disposal violations to the County.	Ongoing
Poll residents on availability and need of telecommunication services.	Mid-term
Actively pursue companies that provide needed services to implement additional service in the Town.	Mid-term
<b>Housing</b>	
Distinguish areas that are preferable to the Town for new rural residential development.	Short-term
Direct development to areas already served with utilities and road access.	Ongoing
Make low-yield water maps available to potential new developers.	Mid-term
Establish review criteria for mobile home regulations to see if it needs to be updated.	Short-term
Keep a database of all addresses and fire numbers. Work on identifying the information of those that aren't listed.	Short-term

**Town of Plover**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Insert a flyer or letter in the tax statement informing residents that fire numbers are available.	Short-term
Reiterate these actions in the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan.	Immediate
<b>Cultural Resources</b>	
Identify historic buildings, cemeteries/burials, and archaeological sites, and make maps readily available for project planning and development review.	Mid-term
Consult with the County Historical Society and other organizations to discuss potential sites.	Ongoing
<b>Community Facilities</b>	
Identify necessary repairs and allocate funds to maintain and/or improve the Town Hall on a regular basis.	Ongoing
Develop a list of improvements or new equipment that is needed by the fire department.	Ongoing
Continue to participate in quarterly meetings with the Birnamwood Area Fire Department.	Ongoing
Schedule separate meetings with the fire department to discuss any special concerns.	Short-term
Develop criteria for the minimum number of people on staff adequately to serve the area.	Short-term
<b>Parks and Recreation</b>	
Initiate conversations with the County to learn of plans for improvements or maintenance to Dells of the Eau Claire and other area parks.	Short-term
Communicate support of park improvements and funding to the County.	Short-term
Meet with Ice Age Trail officials and users to identify areas where local infrastructure may serve to enhance the trail experience (connecting trails/sidewalks, water fountains, etc.)	Short-term
Prioritize identified trail projects and determine if funding is available, or determine cost-sharing.	Short-term
Identify land parcels that might be suitable and preferable for trail parking. Initiate conversations with Ice Age Trail officials about purchasing this land.	Mid-term

<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>
<b>Economic Development</b>	
Review Town ordinances to ensure that they encourage appropriate types of secondary agricultural businesses to locate in the Town.	Short-term
Adopt guidelines or ordinances to guide residential development to certain areas, away from active farmland.	Short-term
Work with UW-Extension, Marathon County, and the NRCS to implement farmland conservation practices, including BMPs.	Ongoing
<b>Intergovernmental Cooperation</b>	
Maintain a list of the appropriate person(s) to call when development is occurring on the Town boundary or may have and impact on another community.	Immediate
Meet with potentially affected communities to disclose potential impacts and discuss possible mitigation or cooperation.	Short-term
Invite representatives from county and state activities and organizations to speak at Town meetings.	Short-term
Attend meetings held by surrounding communities and the County, to which the Town is invited.	Short-term
Designate a main contact person who will be responsible for organizing and/or distributing public information materials.	Immediate
Develop a survey which can be mailed out to residents, asking for suggestions or feedback on proposed or recently constructed projects (roads, residential developments, etc.)	Mid-term

## Appendix A

### State Comprehensive Planning Goals

Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001 requires that the goals, objectives, policies, and programs of local governmental units be consistent with the fourteen planning goals in the State planning legislation, which include:

1. Promote the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.
2. Encourage neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
3. Protect natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes and woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
4. Protect economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
5. Encourage land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state government, and utility costs.
6. Preserve cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.
7. Encourage coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
8. Build community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
9. Provide an adequate supply of affordable housing for all income levels throughout each community.
10. Provide adequate infrastructure and public services and a supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
11. Promote the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional, and local levels.
12. Balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.
13. Plan and develop land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
14. Provide an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that provides mobility, convenience, and safety, which meets the needs of all citizens including transit-dependent and disabled.

## Appendix B

### Marathon County Guiding Principles

Participants in the Marathon County comprehensive planning process worked cooperatively, through several meetings with sub-area groups, to develop a set of guiding principles that describe broad characteristics of a desired future for their communities and Marathon County. The guiding principles consist of a series of statements that reflect shared values and priorities regarding future growth and development. These principles were used to provide a general frame of reference for developing local goals and objectives. The ten guiding principles include:

- 1. Respect Local Governance** - Planning in Marathon County should build on local town, village and city government as a system that is unique, has served residents well, and is a strong component of local identity.
- 2. Preserve Working Agriculture** - Agriculture has been central to the culture and economy of Marathon County for over 100 years. Farming has been a way of life for generations of county residents and is fundamental to both community and individual identity. Efforts such as protecting prime farmland from development, exploring niche markets, and supporting cooperative practices can be implemented at the local level to help maintain and preserve working agriculture.
- 3. Maintain a Sense of Place** - As Marathon County's population grows and changes, communities will need to ensure that important physical features, buildings, and landscapes that exemplify their local identity are retained.

These features provide a sense of heritage and continuity that contribute to a community's identity and sense of place.

- 4. Preserve Rural Character** - Shifts in the farm economy and urban expansion are altering the County's rural landscape characterized by working farms, woodlands, rolling hills, marsh areas, and plentiful water bodies. As open spaces, farms, and woodlands are being lost or fragmented by development, Marathon County communities will need to make some important choices in order to preserve the qualities and character of the rural landscape.
- 5. Safeguard Natural Resources** - Marathon County is graced with abundant natural resources including numerous rivers, wetlands, forests, and wildlife. Careful stewardship of natural resources is essential to protect against fragmentation and degradation and ensure these resources continue to contribute to the ecology, character, quality of life, and economy of Marathon County into the future.
- 6. Foster Managed Growth and Coordinated Development** - Managing growth is important to ensure that no area is overwhelmed by development, land use conflicts are minimized, and development occurs in a quality manner that minimizes impacts on natural resources. Managing growth requires coordination of land uses and infrastructure, within and between communities, and recognizes that high quality growth in any one community will benefit surrounding communities as well.
- 7. Cost-Effective and Efficient Provision of Public Services** - Marathon County residents are clear in their desire to keep local taxes reasonable. One of the most effective

means to keep taxes under control is to ensure that public services are efficiently organized to provide the best service possible for the taxpayer dollar. Communities have a responsibility to provide the highest level of services possible given limited resources. To ensure cost-effective public services, local communities may want to consider options such as greater coordination, cost-sharing and consolidation if such efforts improve access to services and service delivery.

concern for many communities, often as a result of annexation, increases in public land ownership, and shifting economic markets. Efforts to attract additional revenue generators and coordinate with adjacent municipalities can help communities protect and preserve their local tax base.

**8. Build Social and Civic Capacity** - Marathon County residents take pride in their long tradition of local government. Ideally, participation in community affairs embraces and builds upon the diversity of cultures and values present in the community. Providing opportunities to share ideas and participate in community decision-making is essential to building and maintaining a strong sense of local community.

**9. Support Rural Service Centers** - Rural centers are part of a web of services that support residents, give local identity and are part of the rural way of life that residents want to preserve. Most villages in the County grew as centers to provide goods and services for nearby farmers, but have evolved as rural activity centers including the local school, churches, and some goods and services. Just as city neighborhoods are stronger with nearby commercial services, rural areas are stronger with nearby villages that provide a central meeting place to connect with other rural residents. As more people move to rural areas, it makes sense to concentrate new development in areas that can efficiently provide utilities and other services.

**10. Preserve and Enhance Local Tax Base** - A strong tax base allows a community to deliver needed services to residents while helping to keep taxes low. Erosion of local tax base is a



# Appendix C

## Ordinances and Resolutions for Adoption

# Appendix D

## Public Participation Plan

# Appendix E – Bibliography of Planning Related Studies, Regulations and Resources

## Natural Resources

- **Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan (LWRMP)** - In 2005, Marathon County adopted the LWRMP in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes (Wisconsin Act 27, Chapter 92.10). The primary intent of this plan is to identify a vision for natural resource management in Marathon County, to outline strategies to protect the quality and quantity of soil and water resources and to ensure compliance of state agricultural performance standards and local ordinances.
- **Marathon County 2001 Groundwater Protection Guide** – This guide is an extension of the efforts established with adoption of the *Marathon County Groundwater Plan* in 1988. It is intended to guide local and County officials in setting policy to safeguard groundwater resources. It also serves as a resource of information about groundwater and other natural resources and recommends strategies to address issues related to groundwater protection.
- **Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan, 2006 - 2015**  
This plan includes recommendations to manage and protect the county forest on a sustainable basis for ecological, economic, educational, recreational, and research needs of present and future generations. It provides substantial information on existing forest resources and information regarding the roles of the various agencies and regulatory framework related to forest management. The Marathon County Board of Supervisors will consider approval of the plan in September 2005 and the DNR will do so in December 2005.
- **Soil Survey for Marathon County**, published in 1990 by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service and updated in 2003.
- **Marathon County Cropland Evaluation System (CES)** - This system rates soils on their ability to produce food, feed, forage, and fiber crops. The system is non-biased, defensible, and can be consistently applied.
- **Farm Preservation Program** is an income tax credit program administered by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture (WDA), Trade & Consumer Protection. The goals of the program are twofold: to preserve Wisconsin farmland by means of local land use planning and soil conservation practices and to provide property tax relief to farmland owners. Landowners keeping land in agricultural use can claim a credit on their state income tax by obtaining a zoning certificate (if the land is zoned “exclusive agriculture”) or by signing a contract with the State.
- **Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan**, adopted in 1982, eight towns have adopted Exclusive Agriculture Zoning. These include: Stettin, Marathon, Mosinee, Hull, Brighton, Eau Pleine, McMillan, and Day. The intent of this zoning classification is to minimize fragmentation of farmland by imposing a minimum lot size of 35 acres. In order to adopt Exclusive Agriculture zoning, a municipality must be enrolled in the Farmland Preservation Program.

- ***Marathon County Non-metallic Mining Ordinance***, adopted in 1989 requires reclamation of these sites to a purposeful and acceptable landscape appearance and use. The program is administered by the County DCPZ and includes incentives to reclaim abandoned excavations.
- ***Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) maps*** provided by the State of Wisconsin include general information on endangered resources are appropriate for general planning and assessment purposes only. The locations of endangered resources that are not considered vulnerable to collection are identified at the town level in Marathon County. Locations of more vulnerable species are generalized to minimize the potential for collection or disruption.

## Land Use

- ***General Code of Ordinances for Marathon County*** includes several sections that specifically address land use and various development activities. Some of these include:
  - **Chapter 11 (Animal Waste and Manure Management)** includes regulations to prevent animal waste material from entering water bodies through issuance of construction permits for new and modified manure storage facilities. The ordinance also regulates the closure of abandoned manure storage facilities, mismanaged manure storage facilities and the application of manure onto cropland.
  - **Chapter 17 (Zoning Code)** includes development restrictions in shoreland and wetland areas and a wellhead protection overlay district that encompasses recharge areas for municipal water supply wells. Local communities in Marathon County may adopt their own zoning code, adopt the County zoning code, or choose to have no zoning.
  - **Chapter 16 (County Forests)** prescribes rules and regulations for the administration of County forests in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources. Provides for the establishment, protection, development and management of County forests to provide sustained yield of forest products for commercial use and the associated benefits of soil and water conservation, scenic and recreational values, fish and game resources, multiple-use purposes and related uses.
  - **Chapter 18 (Land Division)** The County's land division regulations apply in all unincorporated areas of the County. However, where a town has land division regulations that are more restrictive than the County's, the local regulations apply. Chapter 18 includes regulations for minimum lot sizes, street design and access requirements, land dedication, surface drainage and erosion control.
  - **Chapter 19 (Parks and Recreation)** includes regulations regarding use and management of all lands and water previously and subsequently acquired by the County for park or recreational purposes or placed under the jurisdiction of the Park Commission and including without limitation, parks, beaches, swimming pools and privately owned lands, the use of which has been granted or leased to the County for park, recreational or like public purposes.
  - **Chapter 21 (Non-metallic Mining)** includes requirements for reclamation that minimize impacts on groundwater quantity and quality.

- ***Marathon County Hazard Mitigation Plan (2005)*** – This plan, prepared in accordance with Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) directives of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, outlines strategies for pre-disaster planning and hazard mitigation. The intent is to minimize the effects of potential disasters and help streamline the administration of disaster relief.
- ***Forest Crop Law (FCL) and Managed Forest Law (MFL)*** - the FCL and the MFL programs were developed to encourage better forest management and provide tax relief to woodland owners. Land set aside under the FCL (which was combined into the MFL in 1986) required at least 40 acres in one quarter-quarter section, set aside under a 25- or 50-year contract, and public access for hunting and fishing activities. The MFL was enacted in 1985 and requires at least 10 acres of contiguous forest land. Landowners may close to the public up to 80 acres of their forest lands set aside under MFL. The remaining program acres must be open to public access for hunting, fishing, hiking, sight-seeing and cross-country skiing. Landowners must choose a 25- or 50-year contract. The landowner pays an Acreage Share Amount as part of their tax bill in lieu of taxes.

## **Transportation**

Studies related to transportation are listed below under the jurisdiction who prepared the plan.

**1. Marathon County (Conservation, Planning, and Zoning Department (CPZ) and/or Highway Department)** is responsible for completing/updating/assisting with several plans/policies/studies relating to transportation including:

- ***State Trunk Highway 29 Corridor Land Use Review (1997)***
  - Recommends actions or measures local communities can make to protect areas within the STH 29 corridor from the negative impacts related to unplanned growth.
- ***Marathon County Functional / Jurisdictional Highway Classification Study (1988)***
  - Identifies and groups classes of roadways that provide similar levels of service. The plan recommended that the unit of government having the greatest basic interest in the roadway's function would carry out the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the classified roadways.
- ***Marathon County Program Evaluation Team (P.E.T.) Transportation Services Recommendations (2002)***
  - These recommendations, under direction of the Marathon County Human Services Committee, are intended to address issues related to specialized transportation services provided by various Marathon County Departments, including issues related to overlapping services.
- ***Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan for the Non-Urbanized Area of Marathon County, Wisconsin (1996)***
  - Identifies suggested bicycle routes in Marathon County outside the Wausau area. Routes were based on traffic counts and condition of pavement. Formal action has not occurred to adopt these as officially designated bicycle routes.
- ***Marathon County Paratransit Study (2001)***
  - Studied paratransit services within the Wausau area provided primarily by Wausau Area Transit System Plus (WATS+). Identified issues with regard to

providing demand responsive services for persons in the Greater Wausau Area and Marathon County. Provides a plan for enhancing paratransit services over a five-year period primarily geared toward controlling costs and increasing efficiency and trip sharing on the WATS+ system.

- **County Trunk Highway Access-Driveway Policy**
  - Available through the Marathon County Highway Department, addresses the requirements regarding culverts, access width, slope, visibility and spacing. Marathon County issues driveway permits and implements access restrictions on all properties fronting a lettered county road.

**2. Wausau Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MPO) -** The MPO is responsible for completing/updating/assisting with several plans relating to transportation in the metropolitan area including:

- **Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the Wausau Metropolitan Area (1996)**
  - The LRTP addresses needed improvements to the transportation system serving the Wausau urbanized area. LRTP recommendations are based on the relationship between land use policy and transportation facilities and services, including roadways, transit, bikeways, pedestrian ways, air, inter-city bus, and the movement of goods by air, rail, and truck. The 1996 plan was reaffirmed in 2001 and will be updated by 2005.
- **Local Arterial Circulation Plan (2000)**
  - The purpose of this plan was to guide public and private sector decisions concerning the infrastructure, right-of-way, Level of Service (LOS), land use compatibility, and safety needs of the local arterial transportation system over the next 20 to 30 years.
- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**
  - The TIP includes all programmed transportation projects receiving federal and/or state funds. The TIP for 2005 – 2007 was adopted in 2005 and is updated every two years.
- **Wausau Area Transit System (WATS) Transit Development Plan (TDP) (1999)**
  - The TDP is updated every five years and provides a five-year capital improvement program and service recommendation plan. This plan is being updated in 2005.

**3. Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) –** WDOT has completed several statewide plans relating to most modes of transportation, including:

- **Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020**
  - Considers the highway system's current condition, analyzes future uses, assesses financial constraints and outlines strategies to address Wisconsin's preservation, traffic movement, and safety needs. The plan is updated every six years to reflect changing transportation technologies, travel demand and economic conditions in Wisconsin.
- **Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020**
  - Outlines statewide and local measures to increase walking and promote pedestrian safety. The plan also clarifies the WDOT role in addressing

pedestrian issues and meeting pedestrian needs by establishing policies for better integrating pedestrian travel into the transportation system.

- **Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020**
  - Presents a blueprint for improving bicycling conditions and encouraging bicycling in the state and calls for the implementation of metropolitan area bicycle plans that have been prepared by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs).
- **Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020**
  - Developed by WDOT, identifies information related to the state's aviation system. The plan is used by WDOT's Bureau of Aeronautics to pre-qualify airport improvement projects submitted by airport sponsors for funding consideration.
- **Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report (2004)**
  - Developed by WDOT, summarizes critical rail transportation issues, suggests opportunities for public sector involvement, and points out areas where additional research is needed. This report reflects input and guidance from a variety of sources including a State Rail Advisory Committee and a Rail Industry and Shippers' Advisory Group. The information in this report was originally intended for a State Rail Plan 2020. WDOT decided to incorporate the rail planning efforts into *Connections 2030*, WDOT's long-range all-mode transportation plan, and release the Issues and Opportunities Report in the interim. *Connections 2030* is currently being developed by WDOT, and is scheduled to be completed by Spring 2006.

#### 4. Federal Highway Administration:

- **Federal Highway Administration's Highway Functional Classification: Concepts, Criteria and Procedures**
  - Outlines Federal regulations that States must follow to classify roadways.

#### Utilities

- **Sewer Service Area "208" Plans** - Section 208 of the Clean Water Act passed in 1972 required the preparation of area-wide water quality management plans. This was translated at the State level through NR 121 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code, which requires that water quality management plans also address sanitary sewer service needs for 20 years into the future. These requirements form the basis of Sewer Service Area "208" Plans. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has review and approval authority over Sewer Service Area plans; however, the technical work to prepare the plan is typically done by local government staff.
  - Wausau Urban Area Sewer Service Plan for the Year 2000 (1981) – initial "208" Plan
  - Major Amendment to the Wausau Sewer Service Area Boundary completed in 1992 (City of Wausau) and 1998 (Towns of Kronenwetter and Rib Mountain, Villages of Weston and Rothschild).
  - Current amendment in progress; with all communities in the sewer service area participating. It is anticipated that the plan will be approved by the DNR in December, 2005.

- **Chapter 15 - General Code of Ordinances for Marathon County** incorporates by reference rules, regulations, and laws in the Wisconsin Statutes and Wisconsin Administrative Code governing private sewage systems.
- **Wellhead Protection Plans** - The State of Wisconsin mandates that **wellhead protection plans** be developed for any municipal well proposed after May 1, 1992. These plans must be approved by the WDNR before a community can use the new well. Section NR 811.16(5) of the Wisconsin Administrative Code defines specific requirements for required wellhead protection plans.

## **Parks and Recreation**

- **Marathon County Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for 1999-2004**, completed in May 1999, this plan identifies several needs related to parks and recreation and outlines several actions to address those needs.
  - The plan has received a one-year extension from the State of Wisconsin, and is in the process of being updated with a completion date in spring of 2006.
- **The Rivers Edge Master Plan**, adopted in June 1995, outlines a long-range (20-30 year) framework for improving access to the riverfront and enhancing the riverfront environment and provides a master plan to establish a bicycle/pedestrian trail along the banks of the Wisconsin River through the City of Wausau.

## **Economic Development**

- **Marathon County Workforce Profile**, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), annually in October.
- **Final Report**, Marathon County Task Force on the Rural Economy, April 2003.
- **Agricultural Impacts in Marathon County**, University of Wisconsin – Extension (UWEX), Ken Barnett and Steve Deller, February 2003.
- **Status of Wisconsin Agriculture**, 2003, UWEX, Mike Wildeck and Ed Jesse, April 2003.
- **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2002-2003**, North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC), June 2002.



# Appendix F: Guidelines for Paving Gravel Roads<sup>1</sup>

When a local government considers paving a road, it is usually with a view toward reducing road maintenance costs and providing a smooth riding surface. But paving may not be the right answer. After all, paving is expensive. Municipalities should consider the following factors to help them make the most cost-effective decision. Taken together, these factors provide a framework for careful decision-making.

## Traffic Demand

*The number and weight of vehicles affects a road's lifespan.* Generally speaking, the more vehicles using a road, the faster it will deteriorate. The average daily traffic volumes (ADT) used to justify paving generally range from a low of 50 vehicles per day (vpd) to 400 or 500 vpd. When traffic volumes reach this range, serious consideration should be given to some kind of paving. However, traffic volumes alone are merely guides.

*Types of traffic should also be considered.* Different types of traffic (and drivers) make different demands on roads. Will the road be used primarily by standard passenger cars or will it be a connecting road with considerable truck traffic or heavy farm equipment? Overloaded trucks are most damaging to paved roads. The functional importance of the road should also be considered. Generally speaking, a major road should probably be paved before residential or side roads are paved. On the other hand, a residential street may be economically sealed or paved while a road with heavy truck or farm equipment usage may best be surfaced with gravel and left unpaved until sufficient funds are available to place a thick load-bearing pavement on the road.

## Maintenance Considerations

The following questions should be considered when assessing costs associated with maintaining existing gravel roads:

- How often must new gravel be applied to the gravel road? (Some roads require more than others do.)
- How many times per year must the gravel road be graded?
- How often and in what locations should calcium chloride or other road stabilizers be applied?
- What is the plan for ditching and shouldering?

## Base and Drainage Needs

*"Build up the road base and improve drainage before paving."* This cardinal rule cannot be stressed enough. If the foundation fails, the pavement fails. If water is not drained away from the road, the pavement fails. Paving a road with a poor base or inadequate drainage is a waste of money. It is far more important to ask, "Does this road need strengthening and drainage work?" than it is to ask, "Should we pave this gravel road?"

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<sup>1</sup> "When to Pave a Gravel Road" Gravel Roads Maintenance and Design Manual (2001); Kentucky Transportation Center, University of Kentucky at Lexington, KY, adapted from an article from the Vermont Local Roads Program, Saint Michael's College; posted by Local Technical Assistance Program and the National Local Technical Assistance Program Association and sponsored by the US Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration.

## Safety and Design Considerations

***Paving a road tempts drivers to drive faster.*** As speed increases, the road must be straighter, wider, and as free as possible from obstructions for it to be safe. Paving low volume roads before correcting safety and design inadequacies encourages speeds that are unsafe, especially when the inadequacies "surprise" the driver. In areas with a large number of miles of low volume roads, it is difficult to reduce speeds by enforcement.

***Poorly designed and hazardous roads*** – Roads must be designed to provide safe travel for the expected traffic volume at the design speed. To do this a number of physical features must be considered:

- Sight Distance
- Design Speed
- Alignment and Curves
- Surface Friction
- Lane Width
- Superelevation

Some engineers insist that no road should be paved that is less than 22 feet wide. If this standard is accepted, gravel roads may need to be widened prior to paving. Likewise, bridges along these roads may need widening. It may also be necessary to remove trees or other obstructions such as boulders from the road edge. Considering these and other safety and design factors in the early stages of decision-making can help to achieve the most cost-effective road design that meets desired transportation needs.

***Geometric Guidelines for Very Low-Volume Local Roads (< 400 ADT):*** The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) publishes road design guidelines, including Geometric Guidelines for Very Low-Volume Local Roads (those with <400 ADT). Less stringent design criteria are generally acceptable on these low volume roads because:

- Lower traffic volumes present substantially reduced opportunities for multiple vehicle collisions, and
- Most drivers are familiar with the roadway design characteristics.

The guidelines offer more flexibility for road designers to maintain existing geometric features, which have not been shown to be a safety problem. Allowing less stringent design standards for very low volume roads provides an opportunity to reduce improvement costs, which may be better utilized elsewhere.

## Costs

The decision to pave a gravel road involves determining when it becomes economical to pave; and ultimately when the benefits of paving exceed the costs.

***Road Preparation Costs*** – Road preparation costs related to road bed construction activities that occur before paving actually takes place. Costs will vary greatly from project to project depending on topography, types of soils, and availability of good crushed stone or gravel, traffic demands and other factors. Road design should comply with standards in the municipality's road policy; which is one reason to carefully consider, and routinely update, what is contained in the road policy. For larger projects it may be desirable to hire an engineering consulting firm (another cost) to design the road and make cost estimations. For smaller projects construction costs can be fairly closely calculated by adding the estimated costs of materials, equipment and labor required to complete the job.

**Maintenance Costs** – Another financial consideration is to compare maintenance costs of a paved road to maintenance costs of a gravel road. To make a realistic comparison, estimate the years of pavement life (how long the pavement will be of service before it requires treatment or overlay) and the actual cost of paving. Then compare those costs with those associated with gravel roads as noted above.

**User Costs** – Not all road costs are directly reflected in a road budget. There is a significant difference in the cost to the user between driving on a gravel surface and on a paved surface. It costs more to operate vehicles on gravel surfaces than on paved surfaces, often 2 or 3 times greater than for bituminous or concrete roads in the same locations. There is greater rolling resistance and less traction, which increase fuel consumption. The roughness of the surface contributes to additional tire wear and influences maintenance and repair expenses. Dust causes extra engine wear, oil consumption and maintenance costs.

By including vehicle-operating costs with construction and maintenance costs, a more comprehensive total cost can be derived.

## **Public Opinion**

Public opinion as to whether to pave a road can be revealing, but it should not be relied upon to the exclusion of any one of the factors already discussed. If a decision to pave is not based on facts, it can be very costly. Public opinion should not be ignored, of course, but there is an obligation by government leaders to inform the public about other important factors before making the decision to pave.

## **Staged Construction**

Local government may consider using "stage construction design" as an approach to improving roads. This is how it works: A design is prepared for the completed road, from base and drainage to completed paving. Rather than accomplishing all the work in one season, the construction is spread out over three to five years. Paving occurs only after the base and drainage have been proven sufficient over approximately one year. Crushed gravel treated with calcium chloride serves as the wearing course for the interim period. Once all weak spots have been repaired, the road can be shaped for paving.

Following are some advantages to keeping a road open to traffic for one or more seasons before paving:

1. Weak spots that show up in the sub-grade or base can be corrected before the hard surface is applied, eliminating later expensive repair;
2. Risky late season paving is eliminated;
3. More mileage is improved sooner;
4. The cost of construction is spread over several years.

Note: Advantages may disappear if timely maintenance is not performed. In addition, the surface may deteriorate more rapidly because it is thinner than a designed pavement.

## **Summary**

Some existing local roads are not engineered to accommodate the traffic they receive. Larger volumes of heavy trucks and other vehicles are weakening these roads at a fast rate. Paving roads as a sole means of improving them without considering other factors can be a costly mistake. Careful consideration of the factors described above will help to assure local government officials that they are making the right decision before paving a gravel road.

## Appendix G: Economic Development Programs

The following list provides a summary of the major programs and resources available to assist with economic development efforts. This is not an exhaustive list and local officials are encouraged to contact Marathon County and MCDEVCO for more complete and current information.

### Federal Programs

***U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural, Development:*** Provides a wide range of programs aimed at farming and rural areas, including:

- **Business and Industry (B&I) Guaranteed Loan Program:** Provides financial backing for rural businesses to create and maintain employment. Assistance includes loans for working capital, machinery and equipment, buildings and real estate, and certain types of debt refinancing.
- **Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG) Program:** Provides grants to public entities, private nonprofit corporations, and Federally-recognized Indian Tribal groups to finance and facilitate small and emerging private businesses located outside a city or urbanizing area.
- **Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) Program:** Provides grants to promote sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs.

***Economic Development Administration (EDA):*** Provides a variety of assistance programs focusing on long-term economic growth targeted to areas with demonstrated need or economic distress, including:

- **Public Works Program:** Investments aimed at revitalization, expansion, and upgrades to physical infrastructure specifically to attract new businesses and generate private sector jobs. Examples: water and sewer facilities, rail spurs, port improvements, access improvements.
- **Economic Adjustment Program:** Assistance to mitigate local economic changes resulting from corporate restructuring, natural disasters, depletion of natural resources, or new federal laws or requirements.
- **Technical Assistance Program (Local):** Assistance to help fill knowledge and information gaps to help local leaders in distressed areas make informed decisions regarding economic development.

***U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA):*** The SBA provides financial, technical, and management assistance generally aimed at business startup and growth. Some programs include:

- **Certified Development Company (504 non-profit corporation) Loan Program:** Long-term, fixed-rate financing for major fixed assets, such as land and building improvements.

### Wisconsin State Programs

Most State programs are provided through the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, although other departments also offer limited programs. Primary State programs include:

- **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG):** There are several CDBG programs focusing on different aspects of economic development.
  - **Economic Development Program** – grants to establish loans for business start-up, retention, and expansion.
  - **Public Facilities for Economic Development Program:** Helps underwrite the costs of necessary public infrastructure to retain or create employment opportunities.
  - **Public Facilities Program:** Helps finance infrastructure and facilities to serve low and moderate income persons.
  - **Emergency Grant Program:** Helps restore or replace critical infrastructure damaged or destroyed as a result of natural or manmade catastrophes.
  
- **Community Based Economic Development Program (CBED):** Provides funding assistance to local governments and community-based organizations that undertake planning, development, and technical assistance projects supporting business development.
  
- **Main Street Program:** Supports efforts to help communities organize to revitalize their downtowns.
  
- **Wisconsin Technology Zone Program:** Offers tax-credits to high-tech firms that meet certain criteria.
  
- **Wisconsin Development Zone Program:** Tax benefit initiative to encourage private investment and improve both the quality and quantity of employment opportunities.
  
- **Enterprise Zone Program:** Provides tax incentives to new or expanding businesses whose projects will enhance distressed areas.
  
- **Industrial Revenue Bond (IRB) Program:** Allocation of Federal tax-exempt status on bonds that will be issued by a business to finance an expansion project. Program is limited to small and mid-size manufacturers with strong financial statements.

***Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD):*** This department offers several programs aimed at investing in the workforce, including programs in apprenticeship, vocational rehabilitation, employee training, child care, etc.

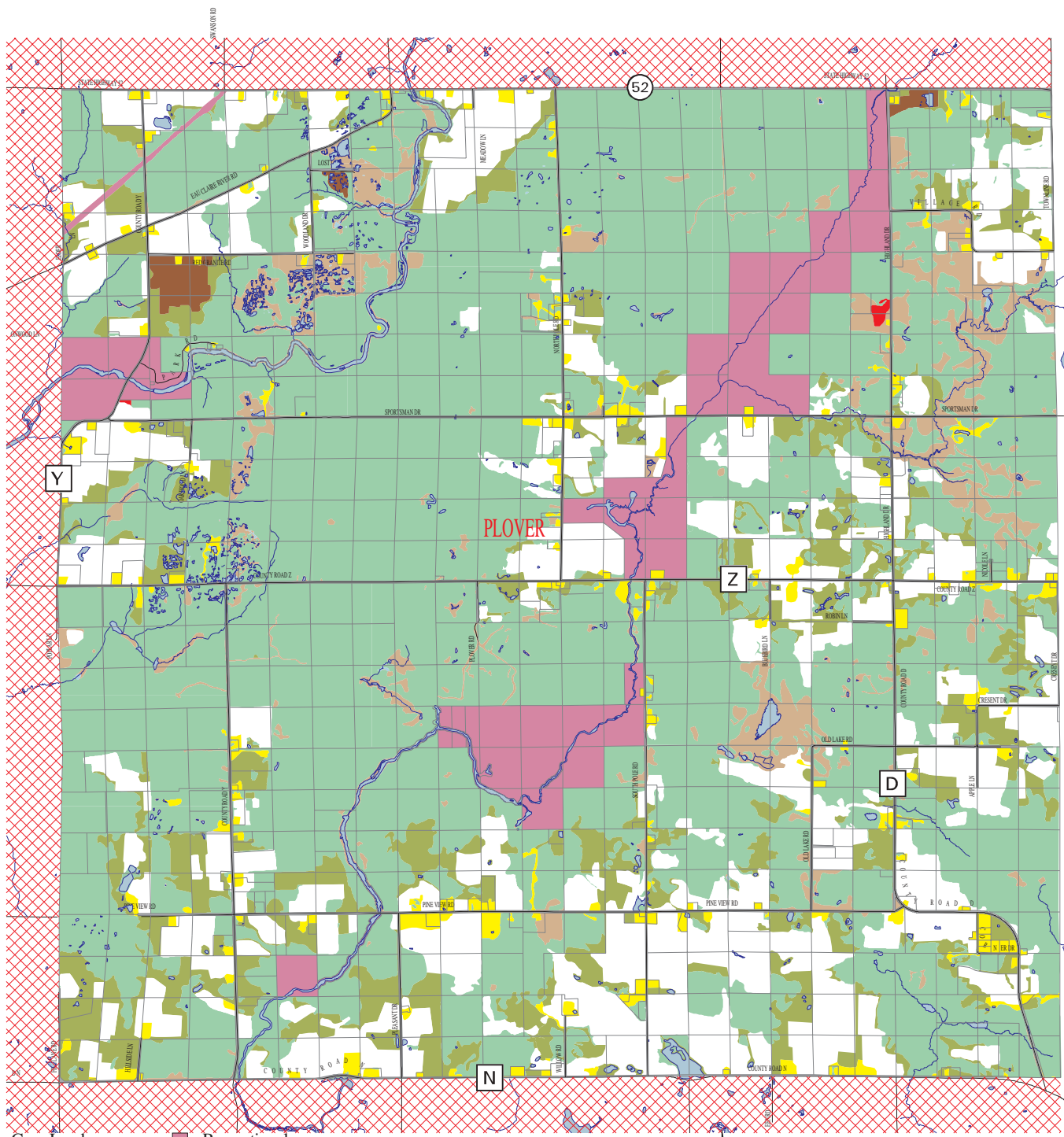
***Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR):*** The Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment consolidates state and federal clean up programs and provides assistance to help businesses clean up and re-use existing brownfield sites.

***Forward Wisconsin, Inc.:*** This is a State public-private marketing and business recruitment organization that focuses on marketing outside Wisconsin to attract new economic development to the State.

## County, Regional, and Local Programs

The primary financial assistance available at the County and local level are revolving loan funds. The primary entities in Marathon County that participate in economic development related efforts include:

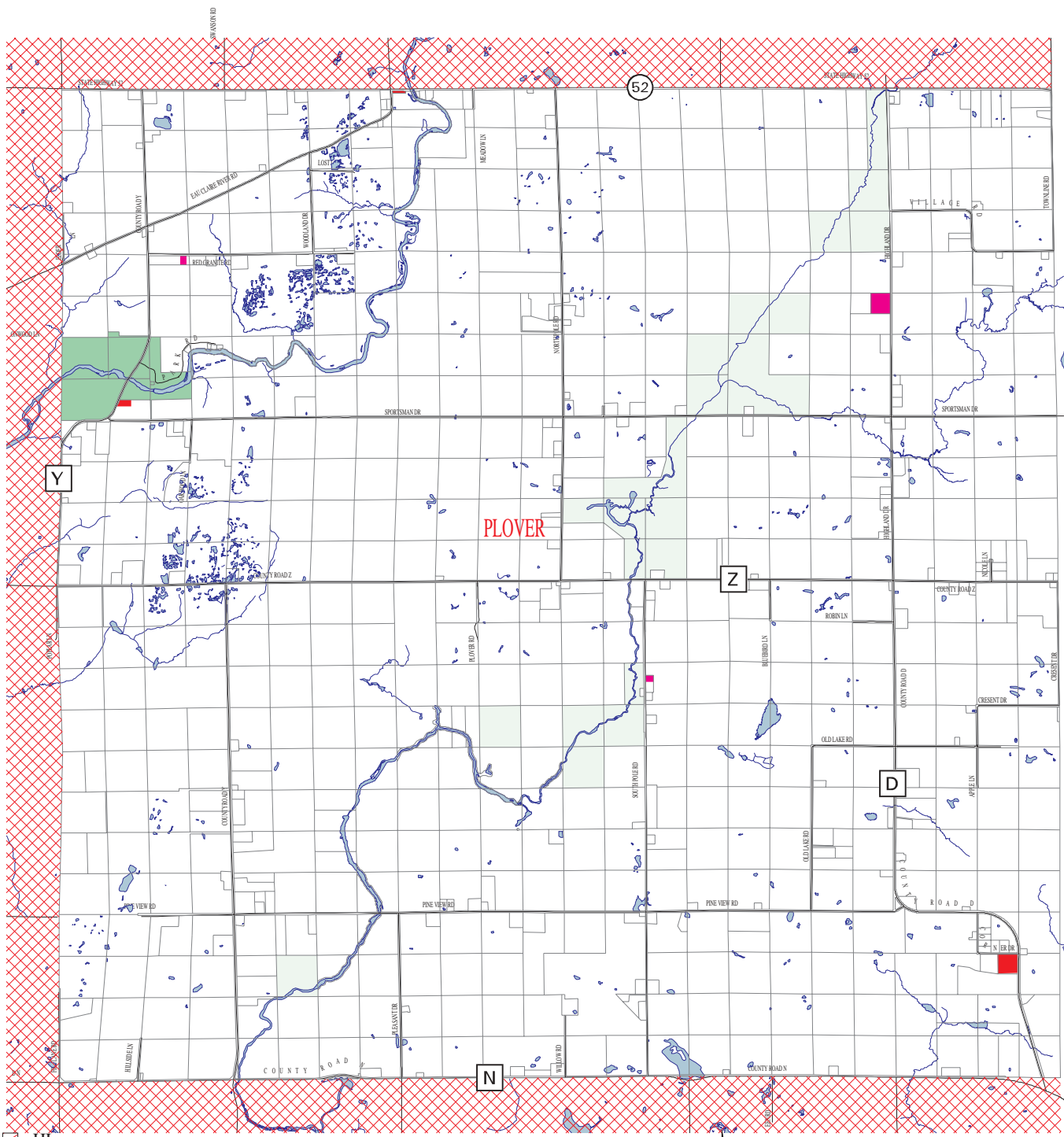
- **North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC):** The NCWRPC is a designated Economic Development District and provides services such as economic research, marketing, financial packaging, evaluation and analysis of public infrastructure needs that support private economic development activity. The NCWRPC also works with local units of government to maintain eligibility for certain grants.
- **North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC):** A regional organization created for the purpose of managing a regional revolving loan fund. The NCWDC is staffed by the NCWRPC.
- **Wausau Region/Marathon County Chamber of Commerce:** The Chamber provides leadership and support for economic development efforts in the region, including a variety of networking programs, mentoring services, workshops and business counseling services.
- **Marathon County Development Corporation (MCDEVCO):** This is the economic development arm of the Wausau Area Chamber of Commerce. MCDEVCO serves all businesses and communities in Marathon County. MCDEVCO works with individual business, municipalities, and the banking community to facilitate investment in the region. Specific programs administered by MCDEVCO include a revolving loan fund, a small business incubator, and job training funds.
- **Wausau/Central Wisconsin Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB):** The CVB promotes the area to the business and leisure traveler and provides information on the area to visitors and residents.



- Single Family Residential
- Commercial
- Quarry
- Barren
- Crop Land
- Other Agriculture
- Forest Land
- Public/Quasi-Public
- Recreational
- Transportation
- Water

Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 3-1  
 Future Land Use  
 PLOVER

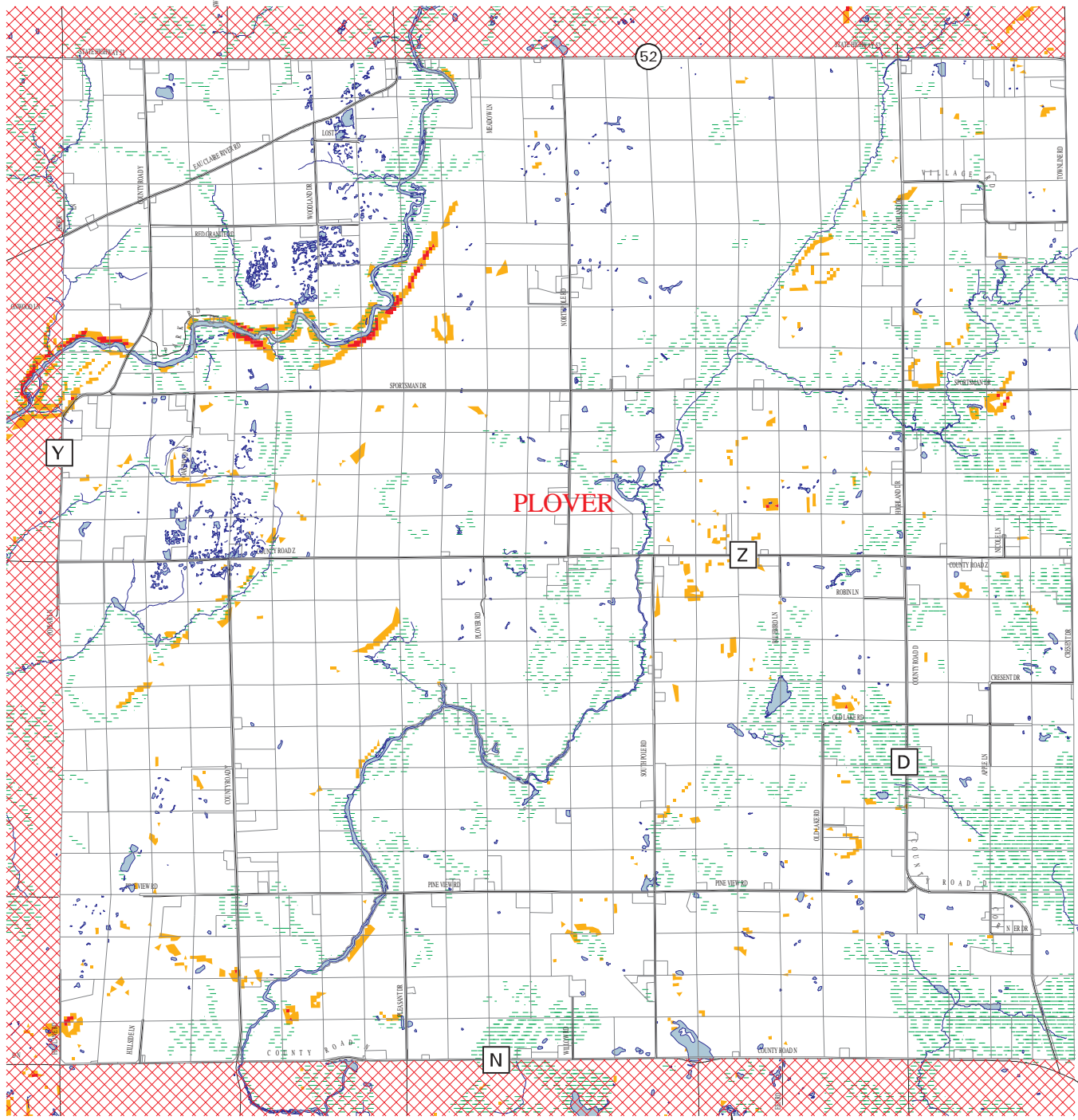


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|--|--|--|---|
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:yellow; border:1px solid black;"></span> RS-1/20      | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; border:1px solid black;"></span> A-1                         | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:darkred; border:1px solid black;"></span> C-1   | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; border:1px solid black;"></span> HI |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightyellow; border:1px solid black;"></span> RS-1/40 | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:tan; border:1px solid black;"></span> A-2   | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:magenta; border:1px solid black;"></span> M-1   |   |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightorange; border:1px solid black;"></span> RS-2    | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:yellow; border:1px solid black;"></span> RP | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightpink; border:1px solid black;"></span> M-2 |   |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightbrown; border:1px solid black;"></span> RM       | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; border:1px solid black;"></span> CV                          | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightgreen; border:1px solid black;"></span> RC |   |

Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 3-2  
**Local Zoning**  
**PLOVER**





- Environmental Constraints
- Slopes Generally 12-20%
- Slopes generally greater than 20%

Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 3-3  
**Development Constraints**  
**PLOVER**

- █ Principal Arterial
- █ Minor Arterial
- █ Major Collector
- █ Minor Collector

- F County Highways
- 52 State Highways
- 51 US Highways
- 39 Interstate

  Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

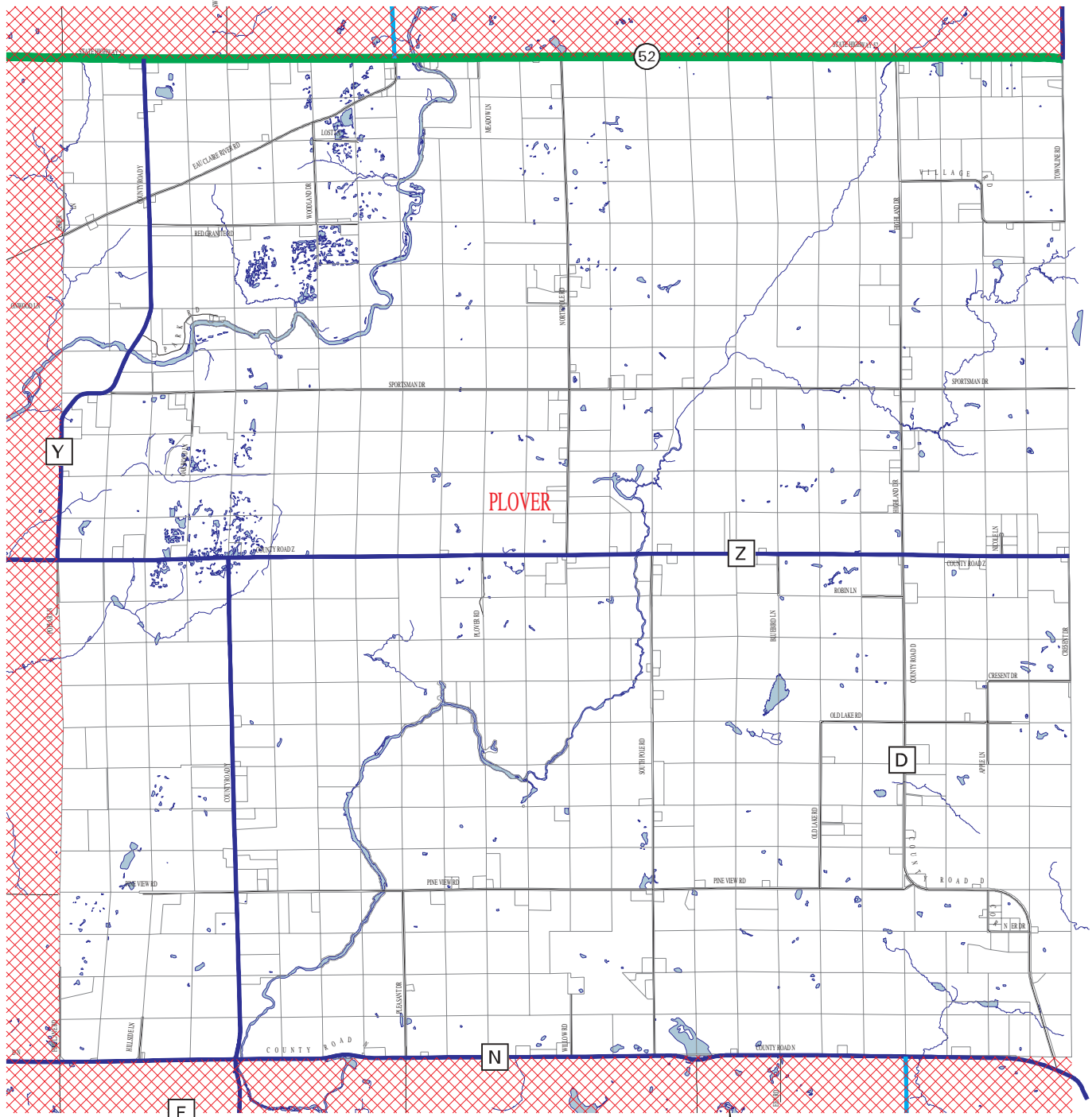
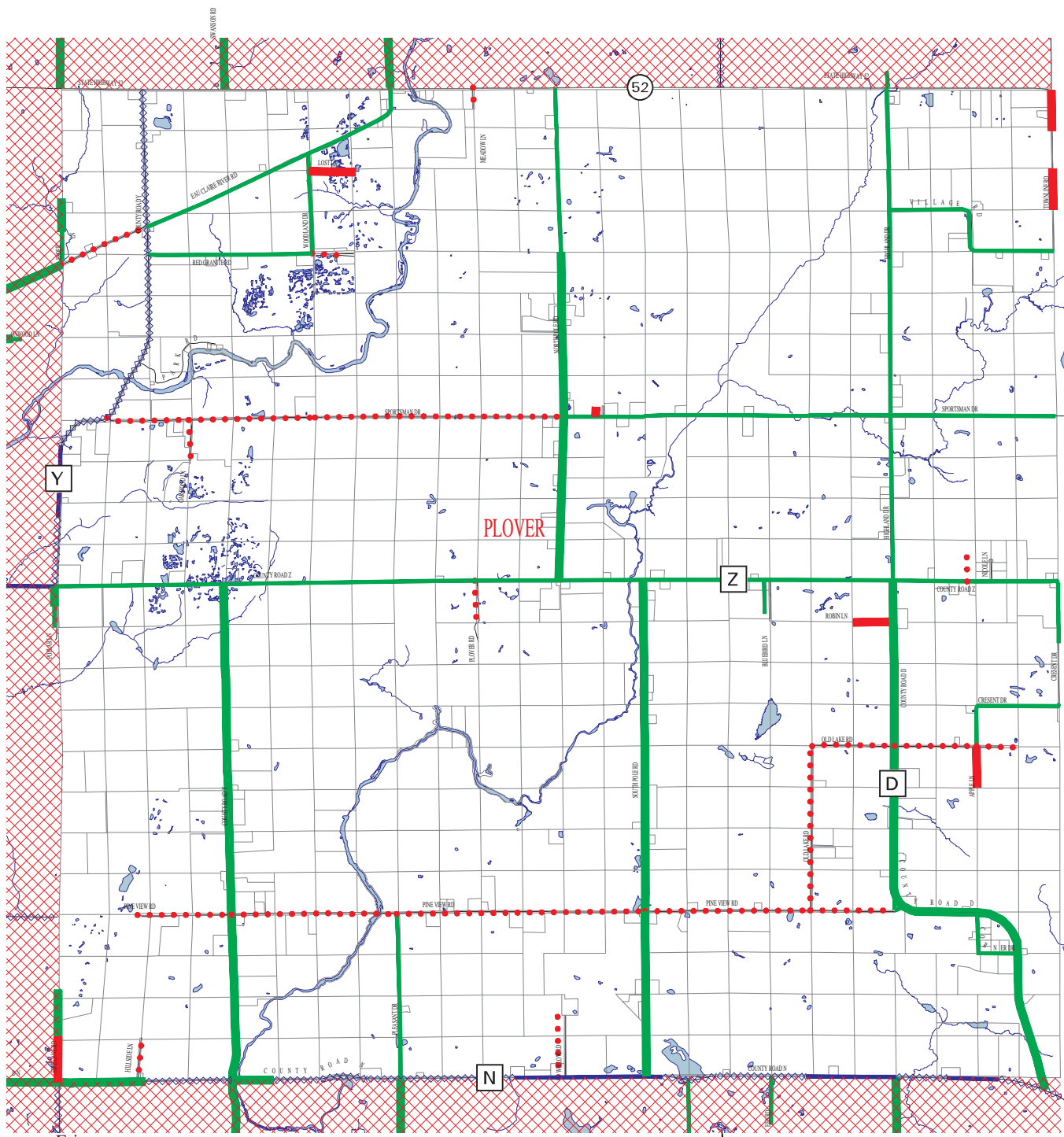


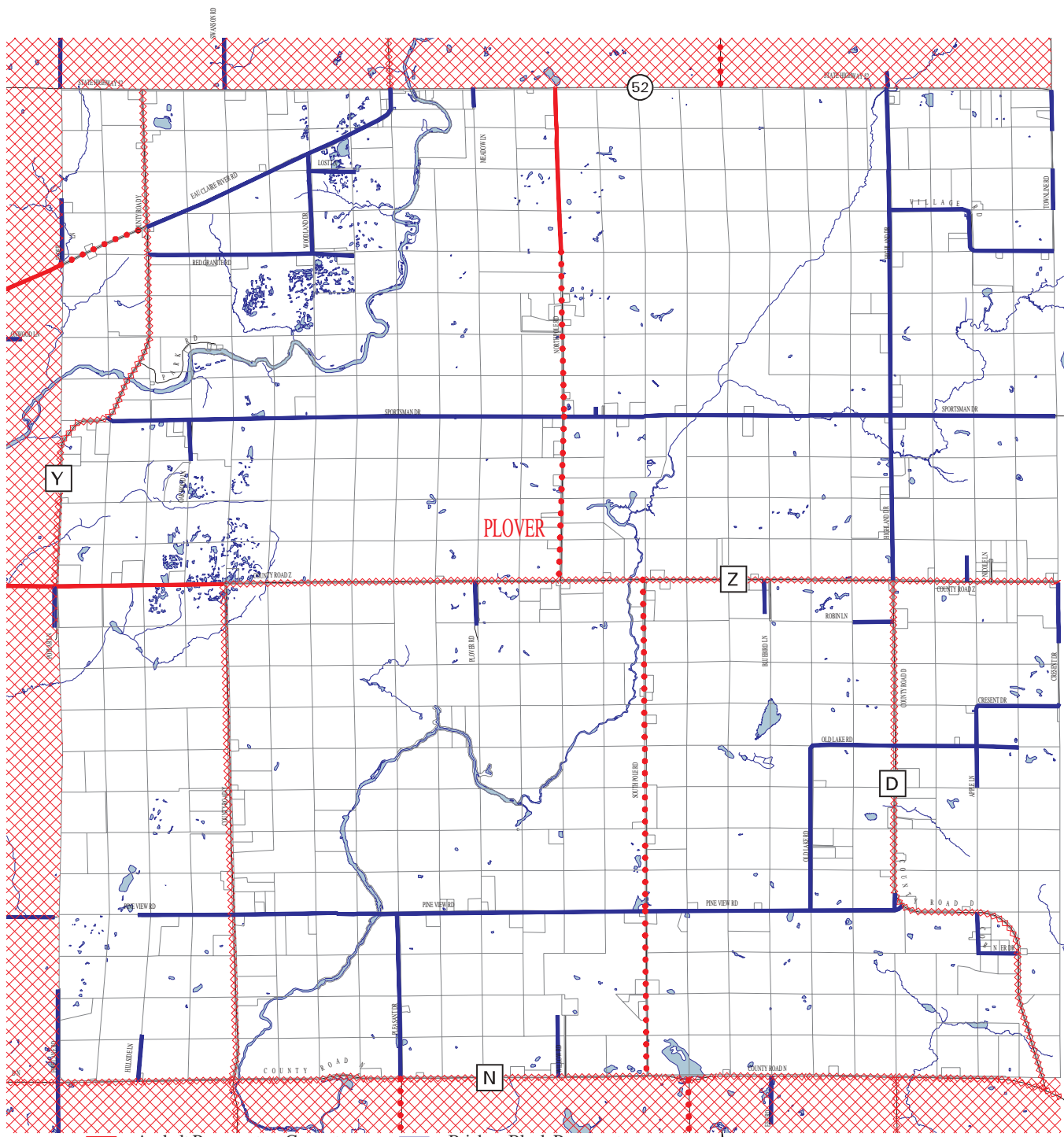
Figure 4-1  
**Functional Classification of Roads**  
**PLOVER**



- No Data
- Failed
- Very Poor
- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- ◆◆◆ Very Good
- Excellent

 Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 4-2  
 Road Surface Rating  
 PLOVER



- No Data
- Concrete Pavement
- <1" Wearing Surface
- Asphalt Pavement
- Asphalt Pavement on Concrete
- Asphalt Pavement with Base >7"
- Asphalt Pavement With Base <7"
- Unimproved Road
- Brick or Block Pavement

Indicates other Municipality  
 Map Developed by Marathon County CPZ & GIS 2005

Figure 4-3  
**Road Surface Types**  
**PLOVER**