

# Barron County

# Farmland Preservation Plan

---

*August 2015*

## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>Background / Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>	
> Barron County Farmland Preservation Development Policy	2	
> Regional Location	3	
> Public Participation	4	
> Other Plans	4	
<b>Land Use Conditions and Trends</b>	<b>6</b>	
> Municipal Expansion	6	
> Population	7	
> Housing	8	
> Economic Growth and Business Development	8	
<b>Other Conditions and Trends</b>	<b>9</b>	
> Transportation	9	
> Utilities and Energy	10	
> Waste Management	11	
> Communications	11	
> Environmental Preservation	11	
> Community Facilities and Services	13	
<b>Agricultural Resources</b>	<b>14</b>	
> Topography	14	
> Soils	14	
> Geology	16	
<b>Agricultural Conditions and Trends</b>	<b>17</b>	
> Agricultural Land Use	18	
> Key Infrastructure	19	
> Agricultural Production / Enterprises / Specialties	19	
<b>Goals for Agricultural Development</b>	<b>21</b>	
<b>Determination of Farmland Preservation Areas</b>	<b>23</b>	
<b>Appendix</b>		
Appendix A	Barron County Farmland Preservation Plan Map Area	24
Appendix B	Town Farmland Preservation Area Maps	25
Appendix C	Planning Process / Public Meeting	26

# **Barron County Farmland Preservation Plan**

## **Executive Summary**

### Purpose

This document is a comprehensive revision and update of the Barron County Farmland Preservation Plan originally adopted in 1979. The original plan was created in order to be consistent with the Farmland Preservation Program, which provided tax credits to qualified agricultural lands. The plan served as the foundation for preserving Barron County's farms by tying farmland preservation to land-use planning and allowed farmers who participated in the program to take part in the tax relief offered by the State of Wisconsin. Land use decisions since have been primarily consistent with the 1979 plan as agriculture continues to be the primary cultural and economic force in Barron County. The enactment of the Working Lands Initiative in 2009 effectively rewrote the state Farmland Preservation Program and mandated all counties to revise their current Farmland Preservation Plans and enforcing ordinances for recertification.

The Working Lands Initiative is comprised of three program components: a revised Farmland Preservation Program and two new programs – the Agricultural Enterprise Area Program and the Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement Program. Counties which voluntarily participate in the Farmland Preservation Program will afford local farmers, meeting income and conservation standards, the ability to apply for income tax credits. Farmland Preservation Plan updates are needed to assess the current trends and development pressures within each county as well as to continue to promote the economic development of agriculture.

Under the Working Lands Initiative, changes to farmland preservation planning include:

- Modernizing farmland preservation plans to meet current land use challenges
- Providing flexibility for designating areas planned for farmland preservation
- Requiring consistency between local plans

This Farmland Preservation Plan is to guide and manage growth and development in a manner that will preserve the rural character, protect the agricultural base and natural resources, and contribute to the safety, health, and prosperity of Barron County's communities. This Farmland Preservation Plan focuses on Barron County's land use planning and zoning approach to farmland preservation and identifies "farmland preservation areas" within the county.

Through farmland preservation zoning, Barron County partners with county-zoned towns that have, or are interested in, an exclusive farmland preservation zoning district.

## **Background / Introduction**

### **Barron County Farmland Preservation Development Policy**

Barron County is, and will continue to be, an agricultural community. Farming has shaped the landscape of the county and agriculture continues to be a vital component of the county's economy. Agriculture has historically maintained a strong presence in the county and ensuring its continued viability into the future will require planning and consideration today. Due to the importance of agriculture within the local and regional economy, it is necessary to encourage farmland preservation, protect natural resources, and minimize conflicts between farm and nonfarm land uses. Agricultural related business and infrastructure that supports agriculture will be encouraged in order to maintain a strong agricultural component of the County's economy.

This Farmland Preservation Plan update continues and reaffirms the county's commitment to farmland preservation and to Barron County's agricultural heritage. The Barron County Farmland Preservation Plan is intended to protect agricultural lands and associated natural areas from development contrary to agricultural use and to minimize fragmentation of these lands.

The county's efforts are focused on preserving all remaining agricultural land, not just large uninterrupted blocks of flat "prime" agricultural soils. Since the adoption of the original plan, farm families have utilized lands in all corners of Barron County and have worked towards managing these lands for future agricultural use. Barron County encourages all agricultural land owners and operators to participate in management planning, and does not wish to exclude anyone who desires to participate. Individual conservation farm plans developed through the Farmland Preservation Program are a way to ensure understanding and implementation of best management practices as well as helping to illustrate the breadth and diversity of agriculture in the county.

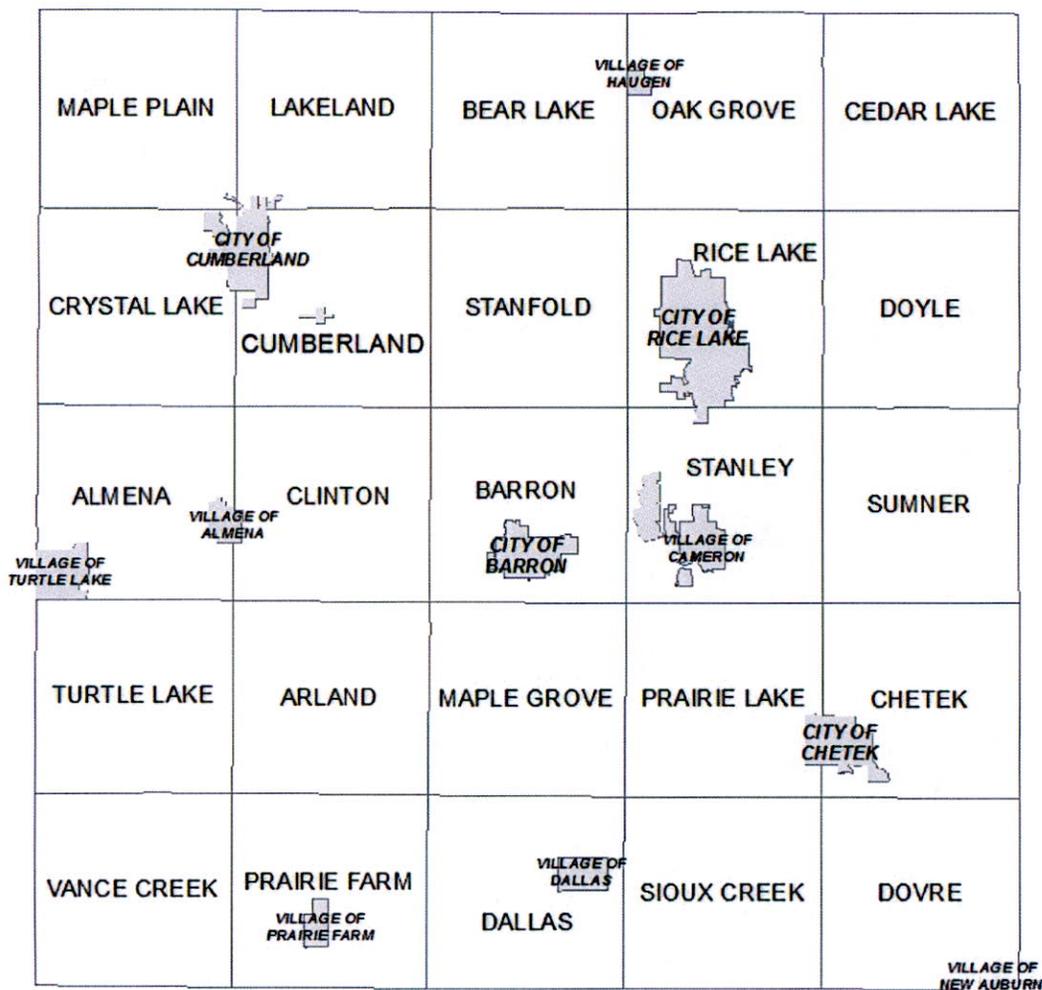
This Farmland Preservation Plan describes goals and policies relating to farmland preservation as well as identifying and mapping farmland preservation areas within Barron County. Barron County shall continue to promote and assist with implementation of practices which preserve the quality and sustainability of soil, water, and other natural resources as well as administering those plans developed under the Farmland Preservation Program.

This plan is intended to satisfy the requirements of Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 91 and to maintain Barron County's eligibility for benefits available to farmers through the *Working Lands Initiative*.

**Regional Location**

Barron County is located in west central Wisconsin. Nearby major urban areas include the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area to the southwest and the Eau Claire-Chippewa Falls area to the southeast. Although Barron County is not adjacent to either urban area, development in the county has been directly influenced by these areas, especially the shoreland areas.

**Project Location Map  
Barron County, Wisconsin**



## **Public Participation**

There were numerous opportunities for the public to be involved in the planning process. Each of the 25 towns had the opportunity to attend a public meeting in which County staff described the *Working Lands Initiative* and the process to be undertaken to update the Barron County Farmland Preservation Plan. Town officials were also invited to an informational meeting to discuss and review the criteria used in determining the farmland preservation plan area maps. Public meetings were also held before the Barron County Zoning and Soil and Water Conservation Committees and other stakeholders, including the general public, to discuss and develop goals, objectives and policies. This plan includes data collected in conjunction with the development of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan which includes a 2008 Opinion Survey that was distributed to a representative group of County residents to ascertain their opinions on countywide planning concerns. A public hearing was also held before the Barron County Zoning and Land Conservation Committees to consider adoption of the updated plan.

## **Other Plans**

### **Barron County Land Use Plan – 2001**

The purpose of the Barron County Land Use Plan is to develop a set of informational resources and a policy framework to assist the county and local units of government in managing development. To address growth and development occurring in Barron County, the Land Use Plan explores the physical and socio-economic conditions of the county, identifies what residents believe are the main development issues affecting the county, and articulates a countywide development policy to guide the county and local governments.

### **Barron County Comprehensive Plan (2010-2030)**

In 1999, the Wisconsin Legislature enacted legislation that provided a new framework for the development, adoption, and implementation of comprehensive plans by counties, cities, villages, and towns. The Barron County Board of Supervisors adopted the *Barron County Comprehensive Plan* in 2010 in accordance with Wis. Stats. 66.1001, to provide guidance on land use issues for a 20 year timeframe. The plan includes goals, objectives and policies regarding:

- Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources

- Economic Development
- Land Use
- Housing
- Utilities and Community Facilities
- Transportation
- Intergovernmental Relations

### **Land and Water Resource Management Plan – 2011**

Barron County has developed a land and water resource management plan to identify the soil and water resource concerns within the county. In identifying concerns, specific practices and programs (voluntary and regulatory) are provided to protect the resources while assisting landowners in meeting State Agricultural Performance Standards. The conservation compliance provisions, as well as landowner incentives to implement best management practices, will be administered through this LWRM plan.

### **Barron County Strategic Plan (2014 – 2019)**

The Barron County Strategic Plan is a short term roadmap for organizational development. It answers questions of what our County does (services), who we do it for (customers) and how we excel at what we do (accomplishments). Many goals of the farmland preservation plan are integrated in the Barron County Strategic Plan, recognizing the importance of agricultural to the safety, health, and prosperity of the community.

### **Floodplain and Shoreland Zoning Ordinance**

Barron County shoreland, wetland, and floodplain regulations are applicable in all unincorporated areas of the County. The shoreland/wetland and floodplain area covered under this zoning is the area that lies within 1,000 feet of a lake and 300' of a navigable stream or to the landward side of a floodplain, whichever is greater. While the county adopted and enforces shoreland regulations within Barron County, the WDNR maintains oversight responsibilities to ensure compliance with State Statutes.

### **Non-metallic Mining Ordinance**

The intent of non-metallic mining regulation is to minimize environmental impacts of mining and to assure that proper reclamation of the mining site occurs. By requiring reclamation plans

for operational activities, the county can minimize off-site discharges, groundwater concerns, public nuisances, and sediment releases. In areas of Barron County that are designated for farmland preservation, the county will consider formally incorporating language into this ordinance to specify acceptable post-mining agricultural land use.

### **General Zoning**

Barron County's General Code of Ordinances were adopted to promote and protect public health, safety, comfort, convenience, aesthetics and other aspects of the general welfare; to fix reasonable standards to which buildings and structures shall conform; to regulate and restrict lot coverage and population density; to guide the proper distribution and location of various land uses by the establishment of zoning districts which are applied where the County has zoning jurisdiction; to promote the safety and efficiency of the streets and highways; to provide for adequate light, air, sanitation, and drainage; to conserve natural resources; and to provide safety from fire, flooding, water pollution, contamination and other hazards.

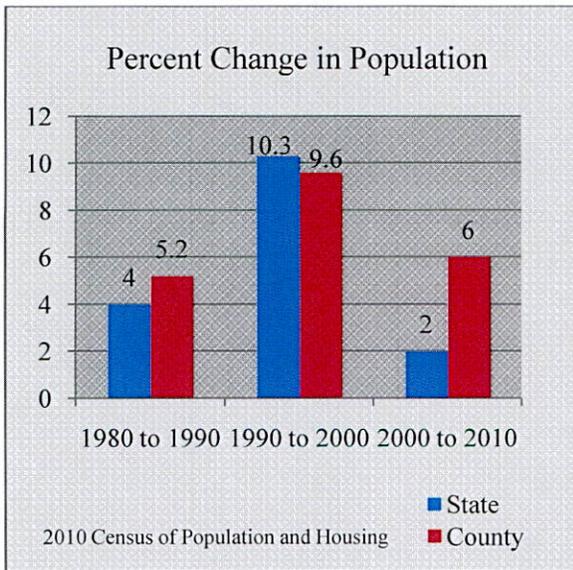
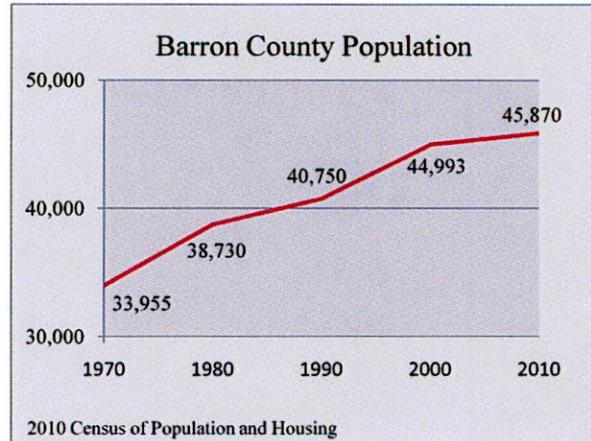
## **Land Use Conditions and Trends**

### **Municipal Expansion**

Barron County covers 862 square miles and is home to 25 towns, 7 villages and 4 cities for a population of approximately 46,020 people, according to the 2010 U.S. Census. With population growing around 6% from 2000 to 2010, municipal expansions will occur over time and will be an issue for agricultural preservation in Barron County. As municipalities expand, the expansion occurs through annexation and often results in the loss of agricultural land. Extraterritorial zoning is utilized in parts of the county to protect the municipal interests for development and not for protection of agricultural lands.

## Population

The population of Barron County has been steadily increasing. The increase from 1980 to 2010 was 15.6%. From 2000 to 2010, the county population rose by 907 which was an increase of 2%. The largest increase occurred from 1990 to 2000. In that time the county population climbed by 5,032 for an 11.2% increase.



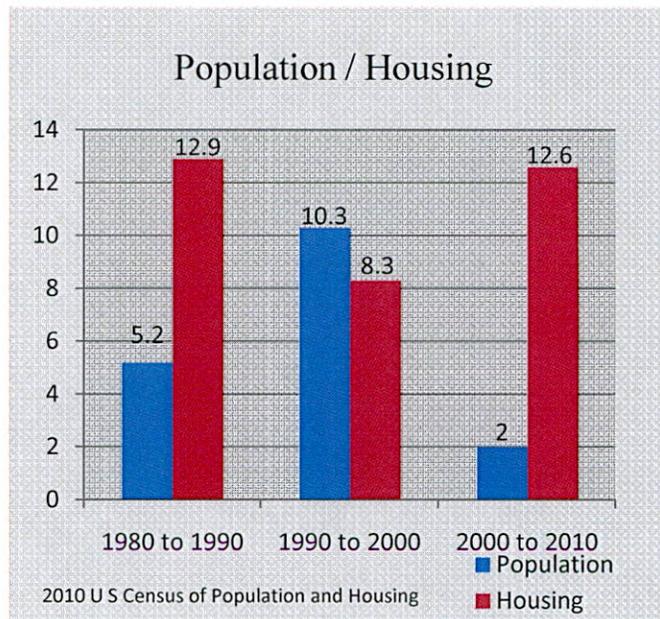
Barron County's population is anticipated to increase by 3,980 people between 2015 and 2030, according to a December 2013 report by the UW-Madison Applied Population Laboratory. Unincorporated areas should expect a 2,515-person increase. The same study projects unincorporated areas to add 1,417 new households in the same time frame with a decrease in persons per households from 2.5 in 2015 to 2.41 in 2030.

Looking ahead, Barron County's population is expected to grow moderately over the next several decades. In 2013 the Wisconsin Department of Administration released a report detailing the population projections for the years 2010 – 2040. In the year 2030 Barron County is projected to have a population of 50,640, which is a 9.5% increase from the 2010 census.

## Housing

The increase in the total number of households from 2000 – 2010 was 12.6% with an increase in population during the same time period of 2%. Barron County’s increase in the number of households was .5% less than that of the State of Wisconsin; however, the increase in population was 4% less than the state.

These statistics follow the trend of more homes being used to house fewer people, thus having housing growing at a faster rate than the population in the county. The number of households by 2030 is predicted to increase by 14% with a population increase of 9.5%. The location and density will determine its impact on the agricultural community of Barron County. Barron County assessment records indicates there are 3,210 undeveloped residentially assessed tax parcels in the county’s towns, indicating a potential supply of properties available for residential land use.



## Economic Growth and Business Development

Agriculture and the food processing/packaging-related businesses represent an important economic force in Barron County. This industry includes family-owned farms and related businesses and industries that provide equipment, services, and other products needed to process, market and deliver food and agriculture-based products to consumers. The production, sale and processing of Barron County’s farm products generates employment, economic activity, income and tax revenue.

According to a 2014 report by the University of Wisconsin-Extension, Barron County Agriculture: Value and Economic Impact, agriculture provided a total of 9,076, or 30%, of the county’s workforce. This workforce includes production jobs (farm owners/managers/farm

employees), agricultural service jobs (veterinarians, crop and livestock consultants, feed and fuel suppliers, food processors, farm machinery manufacturers and dealers, barn builders, agricultural lenders, custom crop services, crop and livestock transport) and processing jobs.

Agriculture accounts for \$535.9 million, or 29.9%, of the county's total income and generates \$2.0 billion, 46.4% of the county's total economic activity. Agricultural processing is a specialty within the county and contributes \$1.6 billion to the county's economy. The processing of milk into dairy products account for \$349.9 million, and the processing of other agricultural products, such as poultry, accounts for another \$1.27 billion.

In 2014 Barron County was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in the state in the number of turkeys raised and the value of poultry products produced, 7<sup>th</sup> for vegetables harvested and 8<sup>th</sup> in the total value of agricultural products sold.

Industrial and business parks within the incorporated areas of the county have properties available for development. The Barron County Land Use ordinance contains provisions which allow for agriculture-related business in our unincorporated towns. Barron County's Office of Economic Development is available to provide assistance with many aspects of business development.

Business development can benefit a community in a variety of ways including: enhancing the quality of life through increasing wages and better worker training, creating new jobs, encouraging sustainable development, and allowing a community to be more competitive for attracting residents and a labor force.

## **Other Conditions and Trends**

### **Transportation**

#### **Highways**

Barron County is served by 1,973 miles of roads under State, County and local jurisdiction. Major north/south highways include USH 53, USH 63 and STH 25. Major east/west highways include USH 8 and STH 48.

The County Highway System, which includes 21 highways, has been well maintained and provides the county with a highway network that is easily accessible in all areas of the county. A public opinion survey completed for the Barron County Comprehensive Plans states that 90% of residents feel the County's current road network is adequate.

## **Railroads**

Rail service is an important component of the local economy. A recent increase in nonmetallic mining in Barron County has prompted the improvement of existing railroad lines in the county. The reconstruction of the CN railroad line from Poskin to the east county line was completed in 2013. The Union Pacific railroad line extends south from the Village of Cameron to the county line, and a new transload facility will be in operation by 2016. Greater opportunities are now available, with the improvements rail lines, for the transport of agricultural products and supplies.

## **Airports**

Barron County is served by four airport facilities: Barron, Chetek, Cumberland and Rice Lake. The Barron, Chetek and Cumberland are classified as Basic Utility, and the Rice Lake airport has a classification of Transport/Corporate. The Rice Lake Regional Airport is located in central Barron County and provides for corporate, small passenger and cargo jet aircraft.

## **Utilities and Energy**

Residents of Barron County are served by seven electricity providers: Rice Lake Utilities, Barron Light and Water, Cumberland Municipal Utility, Barron Electric Co-op, Dairyland Power Co., Jump River Electric Cooperative, and Xcel Energy. Access to natural gas is limited in to mainly urban areas and where there are transmission lines, it is provided by WE Energies. Recent development in the nonmetallic mining industry has resulted in the extension of transmission lines which may result in greater access in the rural areas of the county.

Groundwater supplies all of the county's water needs. Private wells are the source of water outside the incorporated areas of the county. Private on-site wastewater treatment systems (POWTS), commonly referred to as septic systems, service nearly all of the rural areas.

Agricultural crops may be grown as a renewable energy resource in Barron County should producers desire to do so. Several area farmers have experimented with growing oil seed crops for producing biodiesel and straight vegetable oil fuel. Currently, a small biodiesel production facility resides in the county. Many county residents utilize local wood products/byproducts for heating. Solar, geothermal, and wind energy are being explored on a small scale. Barron

County's Waste to Energy Facility (WTE) has the ability to generate electricity with excess steam.

A community survey for the 2010 Comprehensive Plan states that support is also strong for pursuing wind and solar energy. Barron Electric Cooperative has recently installed a solar array at their Barron location.

## **Waste Management**

At the time the original Farmland Preservation Plan was adopted, it was noted that there were sixteen waste disposal sites in the county, most of which were small municipal sites. In 1986 Barron County developed the Barron County Incinerator and Recycling Center, a Waste to Energy Facility (WTE), located in the Town of Turtle Lake. The facility incinerates waste, and through this process, generates steam. A cooperative agreement is in place with an adjacent cheese manufacturing operation, Saputo Cheese, which utilizes the steam in their cheese production.

In 2008 Barron County adopted a Flow Control Ordinance requiring all household waste, with the exception of waste from the City of Rice Lake, be directed to the Waste to Energy facility. Currently there are no operating landfills in Barron County.

## **Communications**

The ability to communicate and share data is vital today. Cellular telephone service is available throughout the county as is emergency 911 service. Strength of the signal will vary depending on tower locations and topography. Recent changes in state law relating to the location of communication towers are expected to improve the strength of signals throughout the county. Due to the increase in use of wireless communication for public safety, business, and personal use, the location of communication towers in the agricultural areas of the county has increased and has some impact on agriculture. Wisconsin Continuously Operating Reference Stations (WISCORS) are now available in the county providing high accuracy GPS for farm operators utilizing Precision GPS Agriculture.

## Environmental Preservation

Protection of the environment is important in order to preserve the natural resources relied upon by all. Natural resources are continually facing significant pressure from development and agricultural activities. With development there is an increased demand for groundwater, land and raw materials. Development policies and management techniques need to be established to minimize impacts on these resources. The desire for country living, and other irreversible forms of development, has the potential of negatively impacting the natural resources of the county.

Barron County Soil and Water Conservation Department promotes environmental preservation through supplying financial, technical, and planning assistance to landowners in the county. Programs administered by the Department consist of the Farmland Preservation Program, information and education programs and animal manure management. Additional programs are available through the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The Barron County Soil and Water Conservation Department conducts a countywide soil erosion transect survey, which involves collecting cropping and tillage data at selected points across the county. The information is used to estimate erosion rates in Barron County.

Barron County has 364 lakes, covering 18,289 acres, and 470 miles of rivers and streams lying within 26 watersheds. According to the WDNR, there are 15 Outstanding Resource Waters and 13 Exceptional Resource Waters classifications within Barron County as well as 20 impaired water bodies on the EPA(303d) list. The main impairments are due to excessive Phosphorus. The major rivers in Barron County are the Red Cedar and Hay Rivers. Smaller rivers and streams include the Chetek, Yellow and Vermillion Rivers. Surface waters of Barron County drain into 10 main watershed basins. These watersheds are:

Red Cedar Lake	North Fork Clam River
Brill / Red Cedar Rivers	Upper Apple River
Yellow River	Beaver Brook
Hay River	South Fork Hay River
Lake Chetek	Pine Creek / Red Cedar River

Barron County is working with The Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership in the writing of a comprehensive watershed management plan focusing on water quality in the Red Cedar River Watershed. The Partnership has been organized to share and gather information about the various

efforts underway to improve the water quality of the streams, rivers and lakes of the Red Cedar River Watershed. The completed plan will be an EPA nine element plan.

Groundwater quantity and quality remains substantial, though shallow sand and gravel aquifers can be susceptible to contamination. The “Atlas of Groundwater Resources and Geology of Barron County,” a publication completed in 1987, contains a comprehensive groundwater study.

The county also implements a Shoreland-Wetland Overlay District in order to prevent water pollution and maintain stable and healthy conditions. The district protects fish spawning grounds and aquatic life by preserving shore cover within the county. The county should direct development away from environmentally sensitive areas.

### **Community Facilities and Services**

The type and quality of local services are two of the most important reasons why people and businesses are attracted to and choose to remain within a county. Features such as parks, schools, and protective services help define a community's character. Healthcare, childcare and schools are examples of services that are often important to the residents of a community, while utilities, power supply and power transmission capabilities are examples of services that are often most important to businesses and industries.

Understanding the location, use and capacity of utilities and facilities is an important consideration when planning for the future. This information, coupled with demographic trends and projections, provides a realistic picture of service supply and demand.

The demand for public utilities and community facilities will increase. However, the exact needs to expand, rehabilitate, or create new utilities and community facilities are difficult to determine. The needs for each town will vary according to growth pressure and the level of service that is deemed publicly acceptable. The efficient siting of high quality community facilities and services boosts property values and contributes to many aspects of the quality of life within Barron County.

Within Barron County educational opportunities are available that focus on the agricultural needs of the community. The Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College in Rice Lake offers programs in Dairy Herd Management and Farm Business and Production Management. Many agriculture-related programs and workshops are coordinated by the local UW-Extension Office for local agricultural producers. The Barron County Soil & Water Conservation Department also holds several farmer & landowner workshops annually as well as producing an annual newsletter informing operators of programs, deadlines, and other important issues.

## **Agriculture Resources**

### **Topography**

Local areas of Barron County are part of larger geographic structures sharing some common characteristics or connections. Physically, Barron County is part of the “Central Plain,” “Western Upland,” and “Northern Highland” physiographic provinces of Wisconsin. The Central Plain region extends southeasterly from northern Polk and southern Burnett Counties to south-central Wisconsin and then northeasterly to Marinette County and the Michigan border. The Western Upland region extends parallel to the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers from Barron County to the Illinois border and to the east 30 to 75 miles. The Northern Highland region includes nearly all of the area north of the Central Plain regions with the exception of the very northern part of the state.

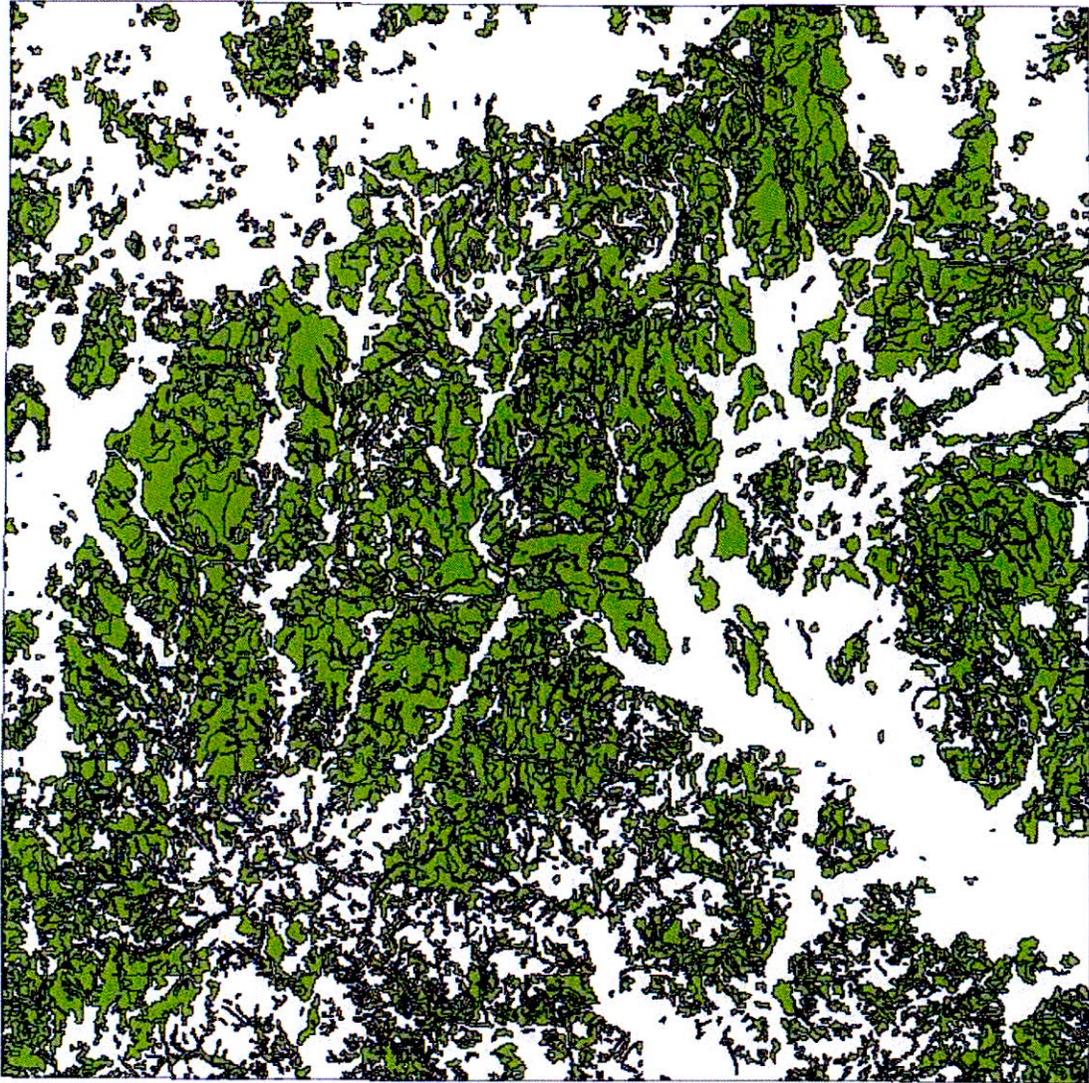
Generally, the topography of Barron County is quite diverse as the result of two distinct periods of glaciation. Pitted glacial outwash covers portions of the county resulting in many wetlands, and areas of uneven topography. A series of glacial end moraines rim the county on the western, northwestern, northern and eastern portions of the county this is the area where the majority of the lakes are located. The area between the most recent end moraines is where much of the County’s best agricultural land is found.

### **Soils**

The areas targeted for farmland preservation are those areas which are actively farmed. As a whole, those areas correspond with the location of the county’s productive soils or those soils considered to be “prime” for farming. For the purpose of this plan, “prime agricultural soils” are those defined as such in the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Barron County Soil Survey, 1999. Please note that location of these soils does not automatically represent agricultural use. Some of these soils support woodlands and other open space uses and some have been converted to non-farm development. Conversely, best management practices can overcome class ratings of soils; thus, a key goal is preservation of large, undisturbed tracts of farmland. Of the total land acres in Barron County; 384,634 are classified as Class I, II and III soils by the NRCS. These soils make up nearly 68% of the total lands acres in the county. Today, nearly 230,700 acres or 40% of Barron County land is under agricultural production. The USDA’s 2012 Census of Agriculture states that of the land in farms, 65.5% is cropland, 19.8% is

woodland, 7.8% is pastureland, and 7% is other uses. Figure 1 illustrates ‘Prime Agricultural Soils.’

**Figure 1**  
**Barron County “Prime” Agricultural Soils**



## **Geology**

Barron County is underlain by nearly all Cambrian sediments which overlie an ancient broad plain of granite bedrock. The Cambrian formations consist of beds, or strata, of sandstones, siltstones, and shales, which vary considerably in thickness and other characteristics.

The Cambrian sandstone, pre-Cambrian quartzite, and dolomite bedrock regions within the county also form the division of three physiographic provinces that comprise parts of the county. These provinces are the Central Plain (Cambrian sandstone), which covers most of the county, the Northern Highland (pre-Cambrian quartzite), which includes part of the northeastern part of the county, and the Western Upland (dolomite), which covers the west-southwest portion of the county.

## Agricultural Conditions and Trends

The trends in Barron County show that agriculture continues to be a strong presence in the county. The total number of farms in the county has decreased by 22% from 1997 to 2012. Although the total number of acres has decreased, agricultural land use is at 46%.

Number of Farms / Average Size			
Year	Number of Farms	Total Acres	Average Size (acres)
1997	1681	359388	214
2002	1647	351930	214
2007	1484	324196	218
2012	1322	309750	234

Census of Agriculture, 1997-2012

Farmland Average Price / Acre, 2004-2014		
Year	Ag land without buildings	Ag Land with buildings
2004	1453	2073
2005	1663	2814
2006	1896	5218
2007	1841	3619
2008	1985	2776
2009	2296	2904
2010	2452	2756
2011	2553	2497
2012	2960	3055
2013	4132	4101
2014	3579	5459

Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics, 2004-2014

The farmland sale prices in the county for a ten year period, 2004 to 2013, indicates that agricultural land values are rising. Although the agricultural land values are increasing, there is agricultural land being changed to other uses. From 2010 to 2014 there were 10,176 acres of agricultural land sold with only 795 acres or 7% being diverted to others uses. From 1999 to 2003 the percentage of land changed to other uses was 21% of the total acres sold. The increases in land value and fewer acres being changed to other uses has been attributed to the increase commodity prices.

Recently, Barron County has seen an increase in the demand for cropland. Investments made in the county’s agricultural community appear to be fueling this demand as fewer, larger farm operations require more land to expand their businesses. The use of irrigation has contributed to

the amount of available productive agricultural land with approximately 11,500 acres utilizing irrigation. Out-of-state landowners currently control over 15,000 acres of farmland in the county as well any property they may be renting.

According to the Status of Wisconsin Agriculture 2014, the Wisconsin farm numbers have stabilized from decades of decline. This stability in part reflects that more retired farmers continue to live on their farms instead of moving to town. The report also states that just over half of Wisconsin farmers in 2012 fell into the “retirement” and “off-farm occupation” categories. For active farms, the age of the principal operator is 55.3 years. The figure below breaks down the size of operations. Barron County has experienced an increase of its largest farming operations by 44% from 1997 to 2014. The other increase was in the 10 to 49 acre category with an increase of 15% with all other categories having decreases.

Farms by Size (acres)						
Year	1 to 9	10 to 49	50 to 179	180 to 499	500 to 999	1,000 or more
1997	29	241	645	470	87	23
2002	40	336	647	645	120	34
2007	66	328	538	412	105	35
2012	57	278	522	320	104	41

### Agricultural Land Use

Table 1 indicates land area, based on the 2014 assessment classifications for all of Barron County. With over 46% of land is assessed for agricultural use, agriculture is the dominant land use in Barron County.

**Table1 – Land Use by Assessment Classification**

Classification	Land Area (acres)	Percent of Land Area
Agricultural	262,569	46.11
Woodlands	167,198	29.36
Other/Undeveloped	63,501	11.15
Residential	29,955	5.26

Governmental/Institutional/Utility	20,699	3.63
Lakes	19,197	3.37
Commercial	4,132	.73
Manufacturing	2,225	.39

From 2004 to 2014, the amount of agricultural land has dropped slightly. Table 2 is the change (per assessment classification) in total acreage of the unincorporated areas of Barron County. This indicates that land use in Barron County has been relatively stable over this period of time.

**Table 2 – Changes in Land Use (acres)**

Year	Residential	Commercial	Manufacturing	Agricultural	Undeveloped	Forest/AgForest	Other
2004	23,040	2,907	498	264,934	55,411	121,250	4,223
2014	24,651	2,726	1,596	256,028	62,356	112,723	4,304
	+1,611	-181	+1,098	-8,906	+6,945	-8,527	+81

**Key Infrastructure**

Barron County’s agricultural community supports and depends on an extensive agriculture infrastructure. The Jennie-O Turkey Store, Seneca Foods, and McCain Foods USA are the county’s major food processors. Saputo Foodservice USA and Comstock Creamery (a part of the Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery) produce cheese. Many local businesses also provide smaller-scale processing. Several large grain storage and/or drying facilities exist along major transportation routes. On-farm storage facilities for milk, grain, feed, equipment, and manure are commonplace. Investment in farm irrigation systems has continued. Agriculture cooperatives and local retailers serve as outlets for seed, feed, fertilizer, fuel, and other supplies. Custom services such as soil testing, spraying, harvesting, livestock transport and manure spreading are available. Veterinary services also exist locally including a regional Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in Barron. There are several resident auction services specializing in agricultural products and properties. Farm implements and parts/service can be obtained at several sites within the county. Forestry services and processors are also found in the county. Several organized local farmers’ markets and ag-tourism businesses provide for direct sales.

**Agricultural Production / Enterprises / Specialties**

As indicated previously, Barron County is a leader in turkey production and vegetable harvesting and was 8<sup>th</sup> in the value of agricultural products sold. In addition to these specialties, the county is a large producer of milk and grains.

The 2013 Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics showed Barron County to be home to 271 milk cow herds (253 Grade A) as well as 66,000 cattle & calves. These Statistics also show 100,000 acres of corn grain, 16,200 acres of corn silage, 38,400 acres of soybeans, and 21,600 acres of hay alfalfa harvested in 2012. Barron County currently has 5 CAFO (Confined Animal Feeding Operation) permits, according to the WI Department of Natural Resources’ website.

Agricultural Production (Acres)				
Year	Corn/grain	Corn/silage	Soybeans	Alfalfa
2011	98,200	22,800	32,500	25,000
2012	100,000	16,200	38,400	21,600

2013 Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics

The dairy industry in the county remains strong despite a decrease in the number of dairy farms. The number of dairy farms had dropped 62% from 1997 to 2012. However, the number of cows in the county only dropped by 30% in that same time frame.

Number of Dairy Farms / Cows				
Year	1997	2002	2007	2012
# of farms	702	461	336	264
# of cows	33,883	26,790	23,512	23,722

National Agricultural Statistical Service

With the drop in the number of cows, the pounds of production also decreased. The production decreased by 27% which is significantly less than the number of cows. The relatively low drop in

production is due to the rise in production per cow. In 1995, cows were producing 14,900 pounds of milk. In 2012, that production had risen to 17,900 pounds, an increase of 16.8%.

Milk Production			
Year	Number of Cows	Milk / Cow	Production / 1,000 lbs
1995	37,500	14,900	558,750
2000	31,500	16,900	532,350
2005	25,937	16,600	415,000
2009	24,200	16,700	404,140
2012	24,500	17,900	438,550

National Agricultural Statistics Service

## Goals for Agricultural Development

### Farmland Preservation Goals

- It is the goal of the Barron County to protect, preserve and keep in production as much of the County’s agricultural land as possible and maintain a viable local agricultural economy.
- It is a goal of Barron County to make as many landowners as possible eligible for tax credits under the Working Land Initiative.
- It is the goal of Barron County to direct housing to areas designated for non-agricultural development.
- It is the goal of Barron County to support a variety of existing and future agricultural activities and products that contribute to a strong local economy, the health of county residents and the sustainability of our natural environment.

### Objectives

- Protect agricultural land from development.
- Protect existing farm culture within the county.
- Preserve large, contiguous blocks of farmland.
- Utilize land use controls to ensure preservation of valuable farmland.
- Utilize best management practices to promote soil health and protect natural resources.
- Plan new growth in areas that will not adversely impact planned agricultural areas of the county.

### Policies

- Support the creation of Agricultural Enterprise Areas
- Support the creation of Farmland Preservation Zoning Districts which are consistent with the Farmland Preservation Plan and Comprehensive Plan. Update the Zoning Ordinance

Goals, policies, strategies and proposed action to increase housing density in areas that are not identified as farmland preservation areas

**Goal**

- Continue to allow higher housing density in areas designated for non-agricultural development.

**Policies**

- Residential development in farmland preservation zoned areas shall not exceed the density ratio standard established in Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin Statutes
- Clustered residential development should be promoted to minimize land use impacts and increase housing density

**Strategies**

- Identify, maintain and promote the rehabilitation of the existing housing stock

## **Determination of Farmland Preservation Areas**

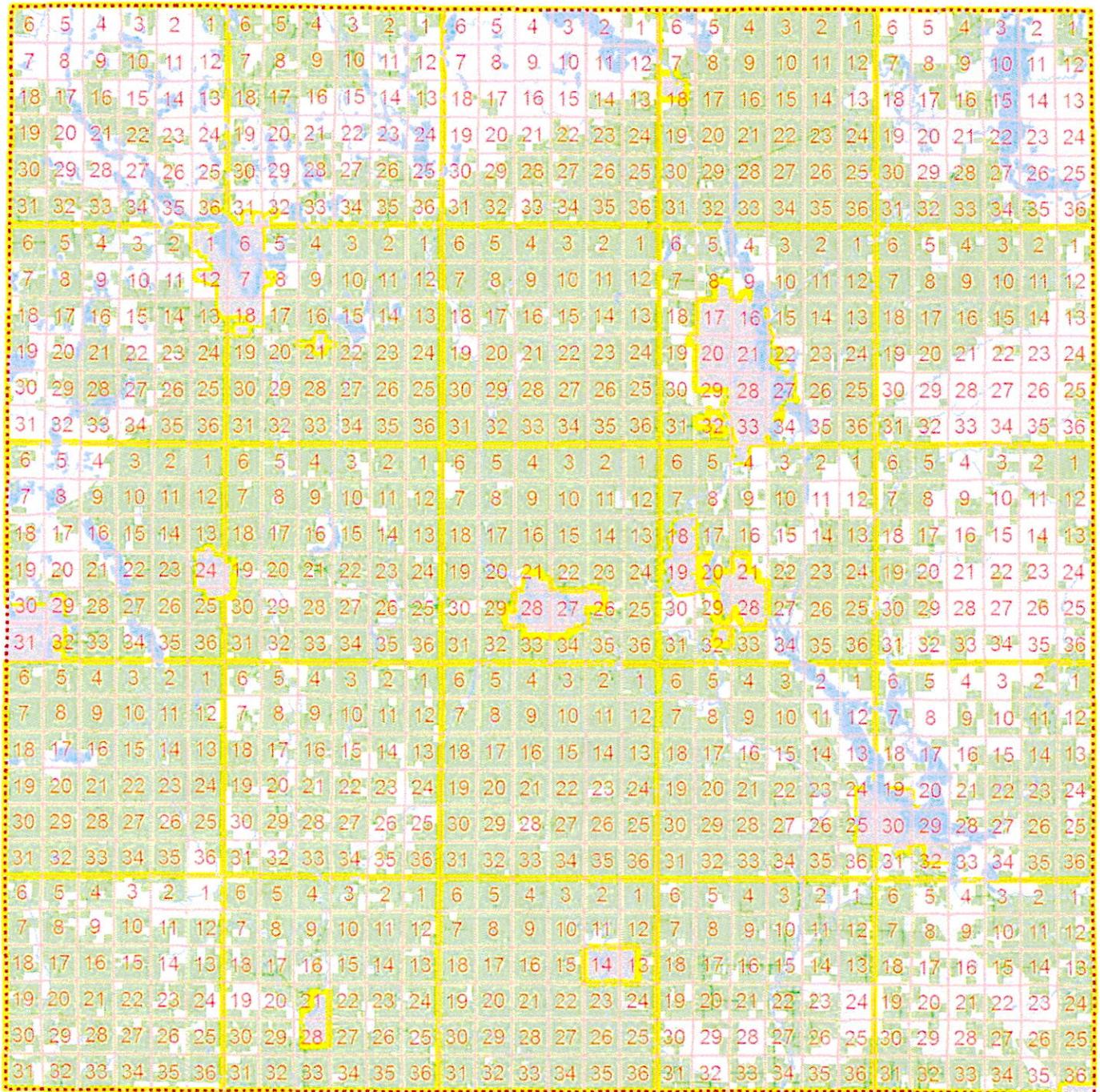
Several objective, consistent, and quantitative criteria were used to determine areas which should be integrated into the Farmland Preservation Areas. We began with a foundation of working lands currently managed for agriculture. Tax parcels containing an Agricultural (G4) assessment classification were selected to establish areas which are currently devoted primarily to agricultural use. The statutory land use classification established in Wisconsin provides for a uniform system of the use classification. While only a portion of a tax parcel may be classified as agricultural production, incorporating the entire tax parcel allows for inclusion of agricultural forest, open space, and other areas associated with the agricultural use as well as providing for uninterrupted blocks of preserved area. Current management of these working lands as agricultural infers the existence of soils and/or conditions suitable and productive for the variety of commodities generated by Barron County's farmers. Finally, to continue protection for lands historically managed for agriculture, the areas currently zoned in the exclusive agricultural district (A-1) were incorporated into the Farmland Preservation Area. Mapping these criteria has illustrated the existence of contiguous tracts of land which can and should be preserved for agricultural purposes.

In the Extraterritorial Zoning Areas for the City of Barron and City of Rice Lake, city zoning district maps were used to delineate agricultural areas for the Farmland Preservation Area.

Areas **excluded** from the Farmland Preservation Area include non-metallic mining reclamation plan, processing, or transload areas, and areas zoned as residential, business, industrial, mineral reservation, or unincorporated village. Also excluded are parcels which were created via recorded subdivision plats. These areas were developed for purposes other than agriculture.

# Appendix A – Barron County Farmland Preservation Area Map

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP BARRON COUNTY



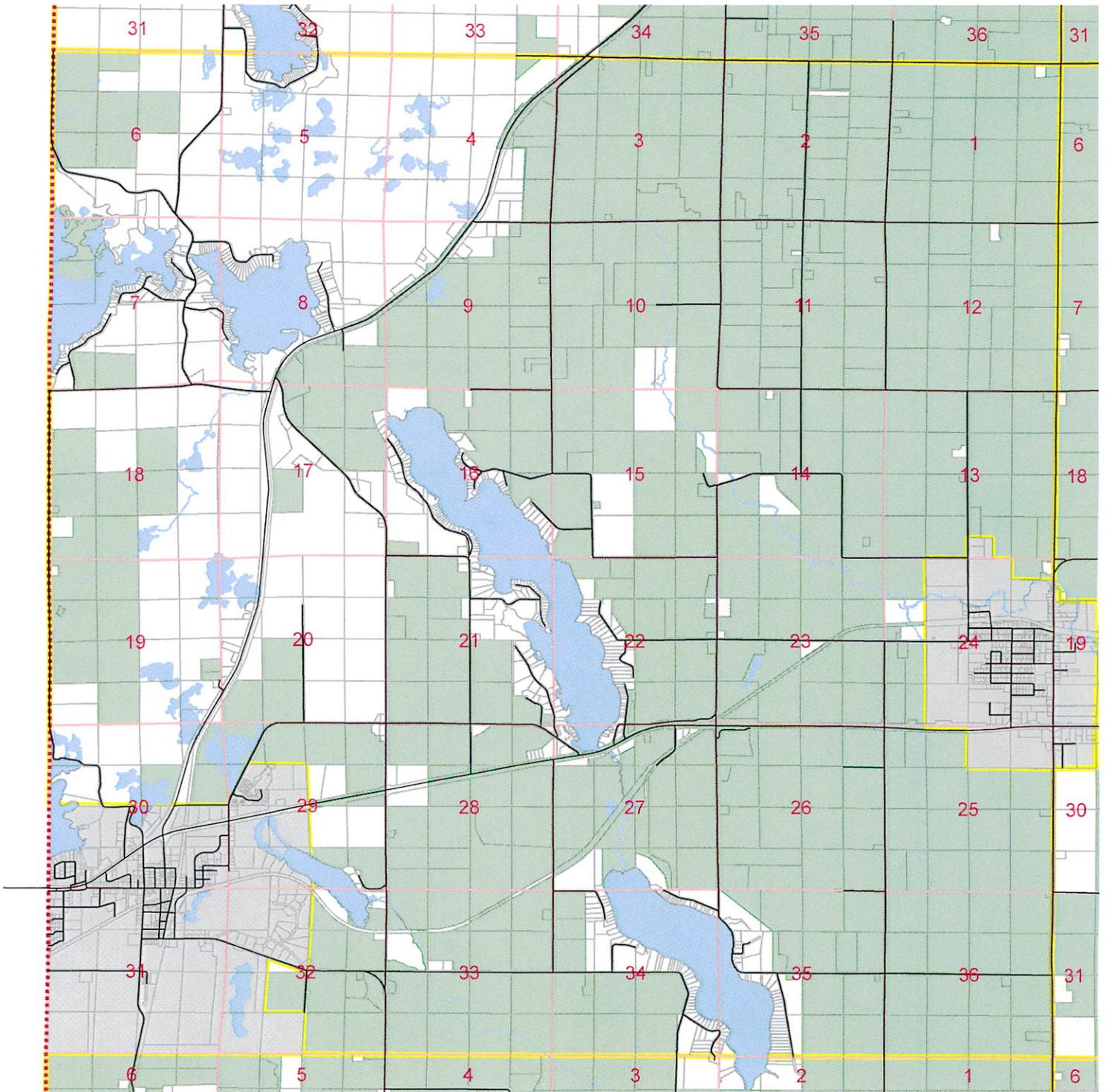
The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA

# Appendix B – Town Farmland Preservation Area Maps

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF ALMENA BARRON COUNTY



The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.

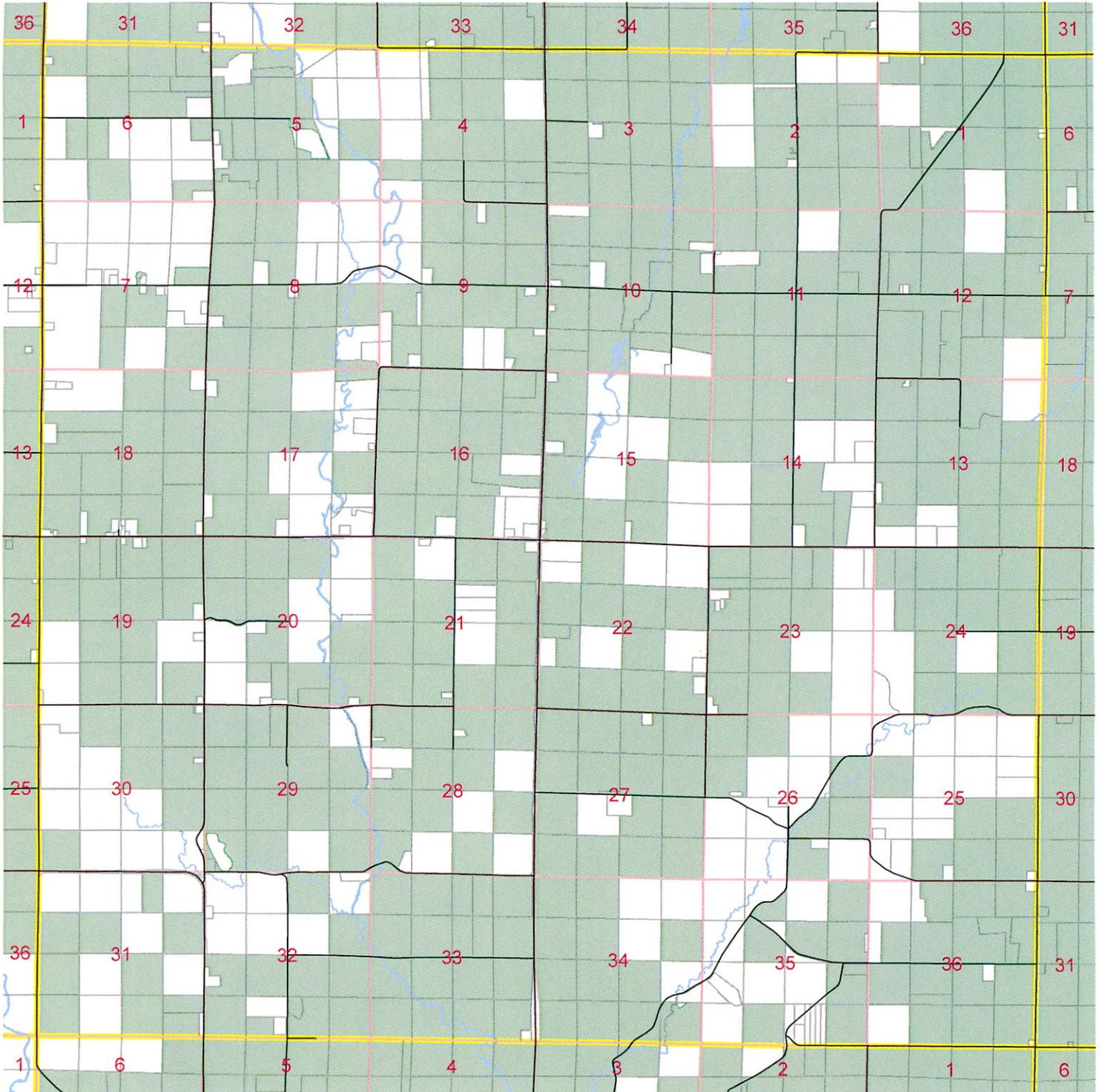


- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

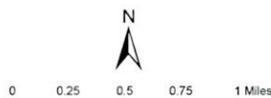
# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP

## TOWN OF ARLAND

### BARRON COUNTY



The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.

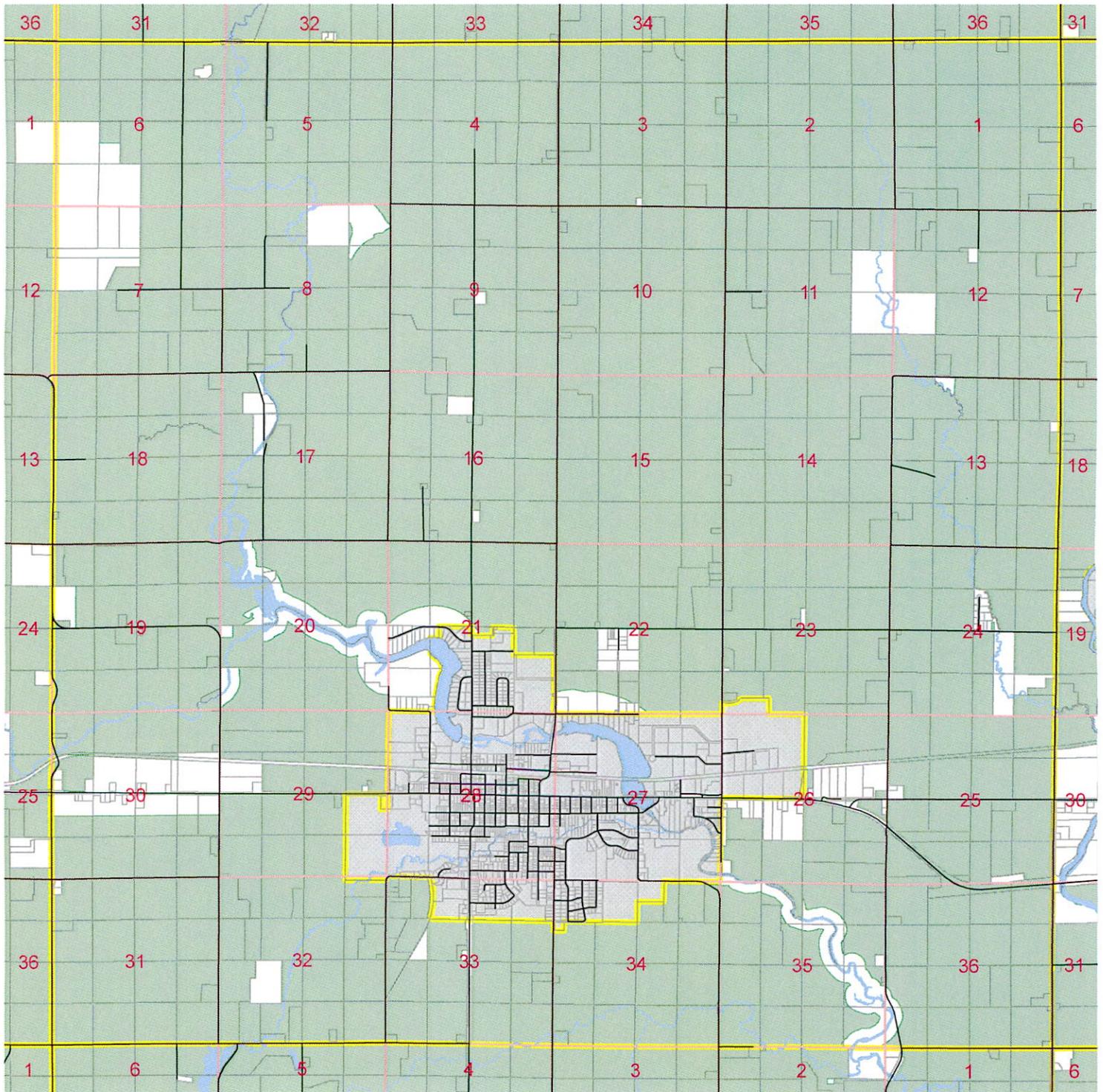


-  COUNTY BOUNDARY
-  SECTION
-  PARCEL BOUNDARY
-  SURFACE WATER
-  TOWN BOUNDARY
-  CITY
-  VILLAGE
-  FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  ROAD

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP

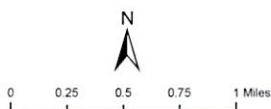
## TOWN OF BARRON

### BARRON COUNTY



- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

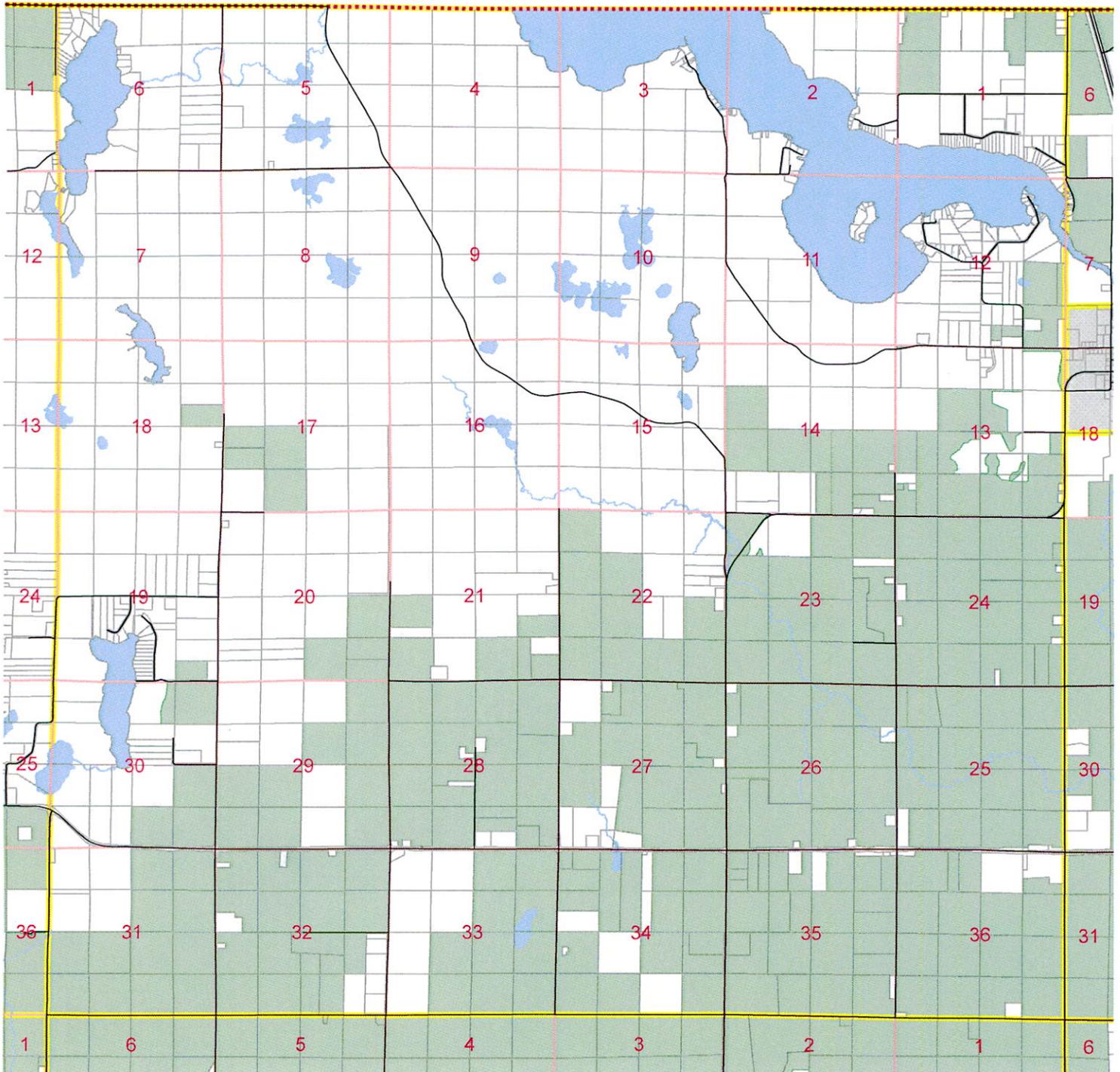
The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



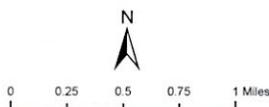
# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP

## TOWN OF BEAR LAKE

### BARRON COUNTY

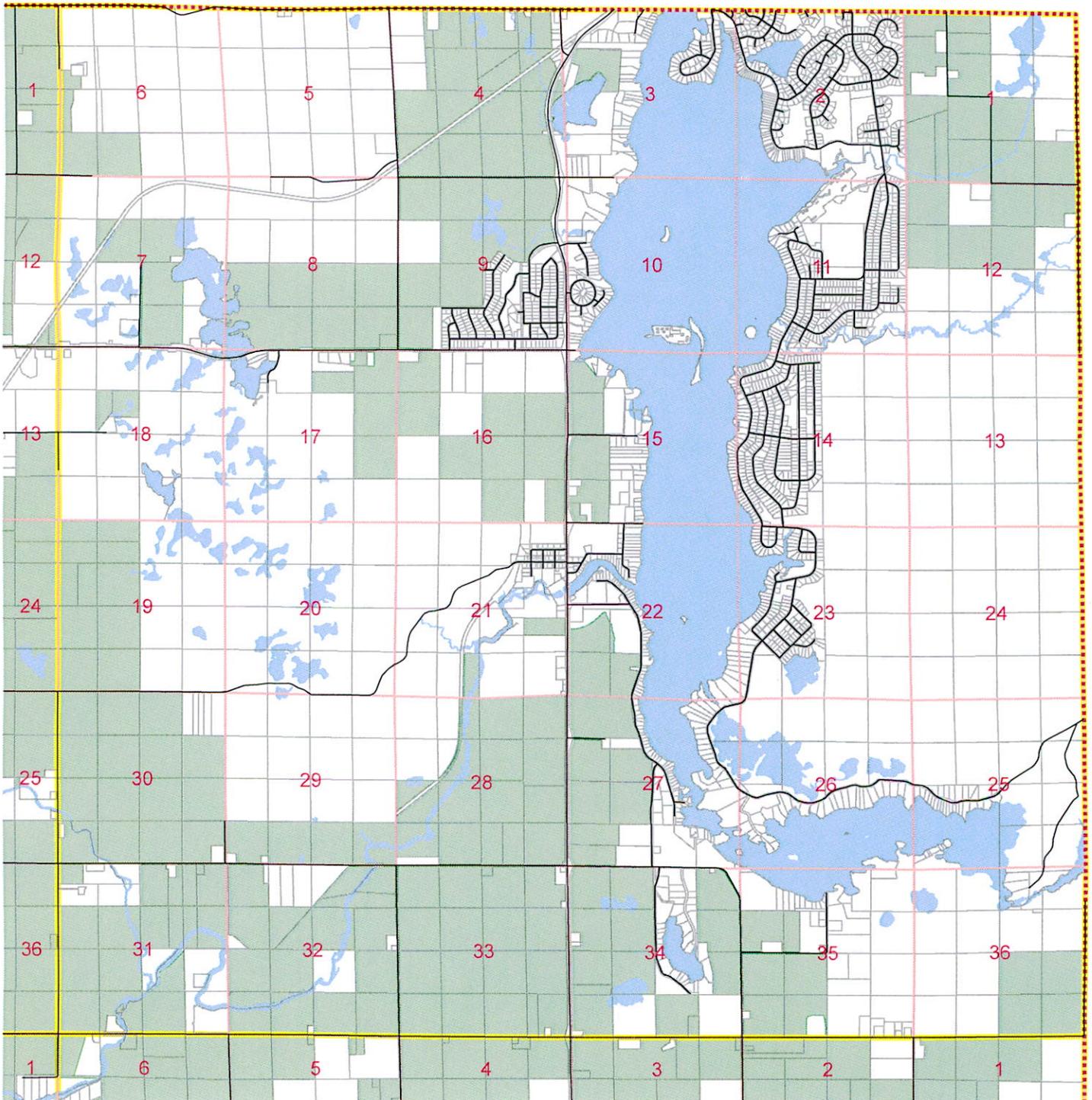


The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



-  COUNTY BOUNDARY
-  SECTION
-  PARCEL BOUNDARY
-  SURFACE WATER
-  TOWN BOUNDARY
-  CITY
-  VILLAGE
-  FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  ROAD

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE BARRON COUNTY

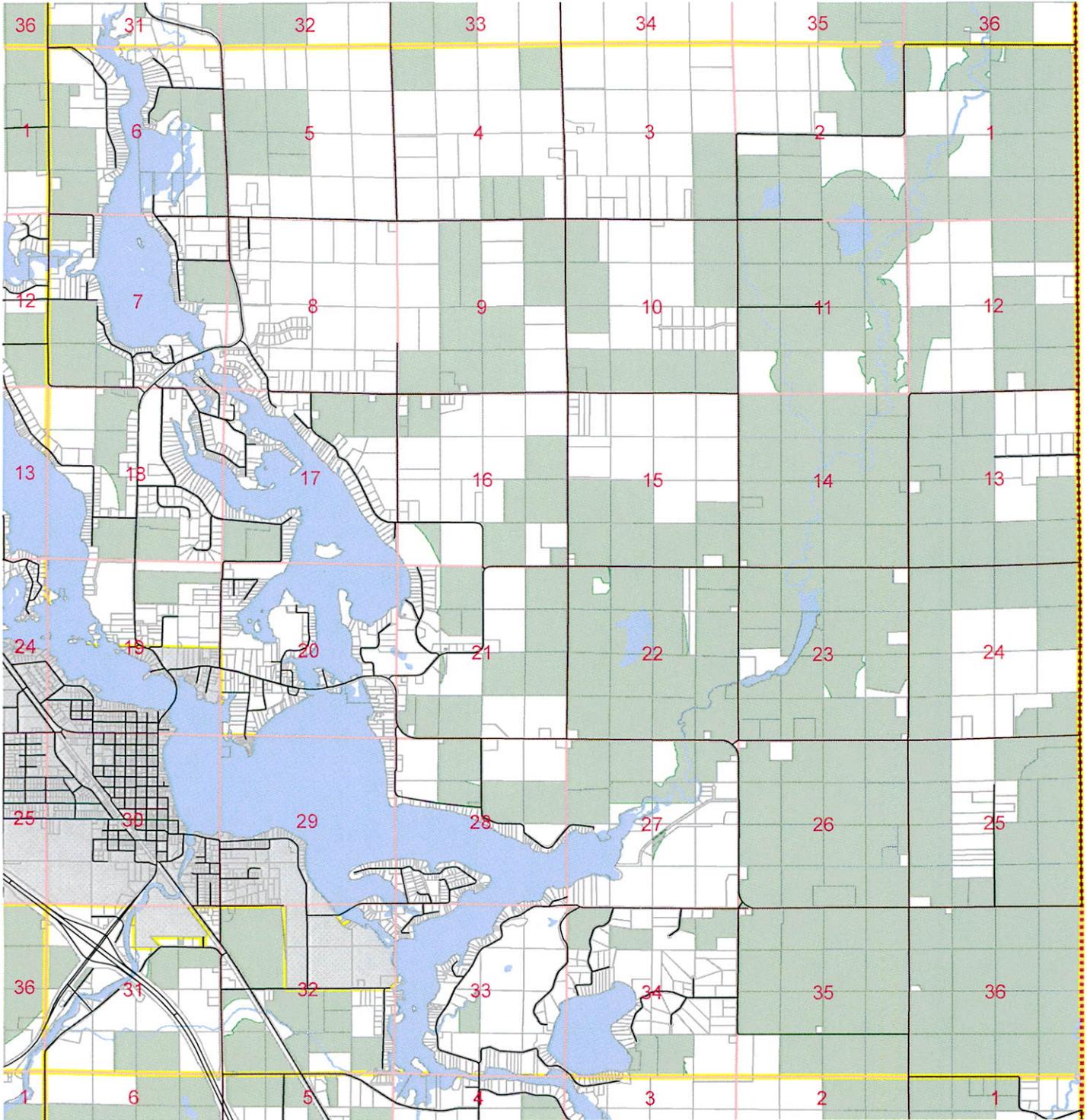


- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

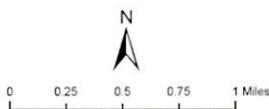
The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF CHETEK BARRON COUNTY

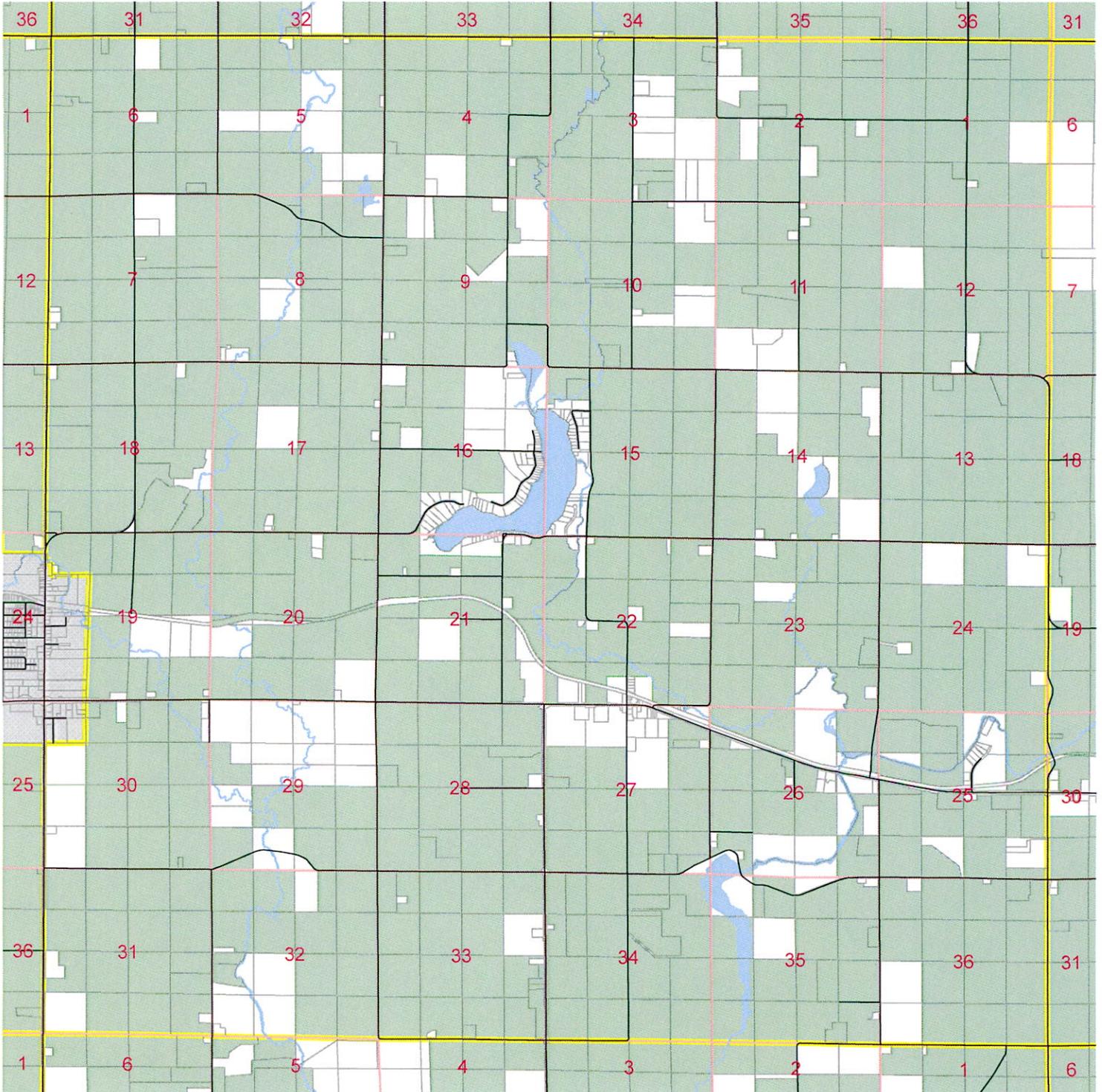


The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

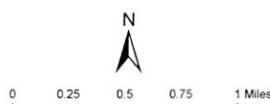
# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF CLINTON BARRON COUNTY



The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.

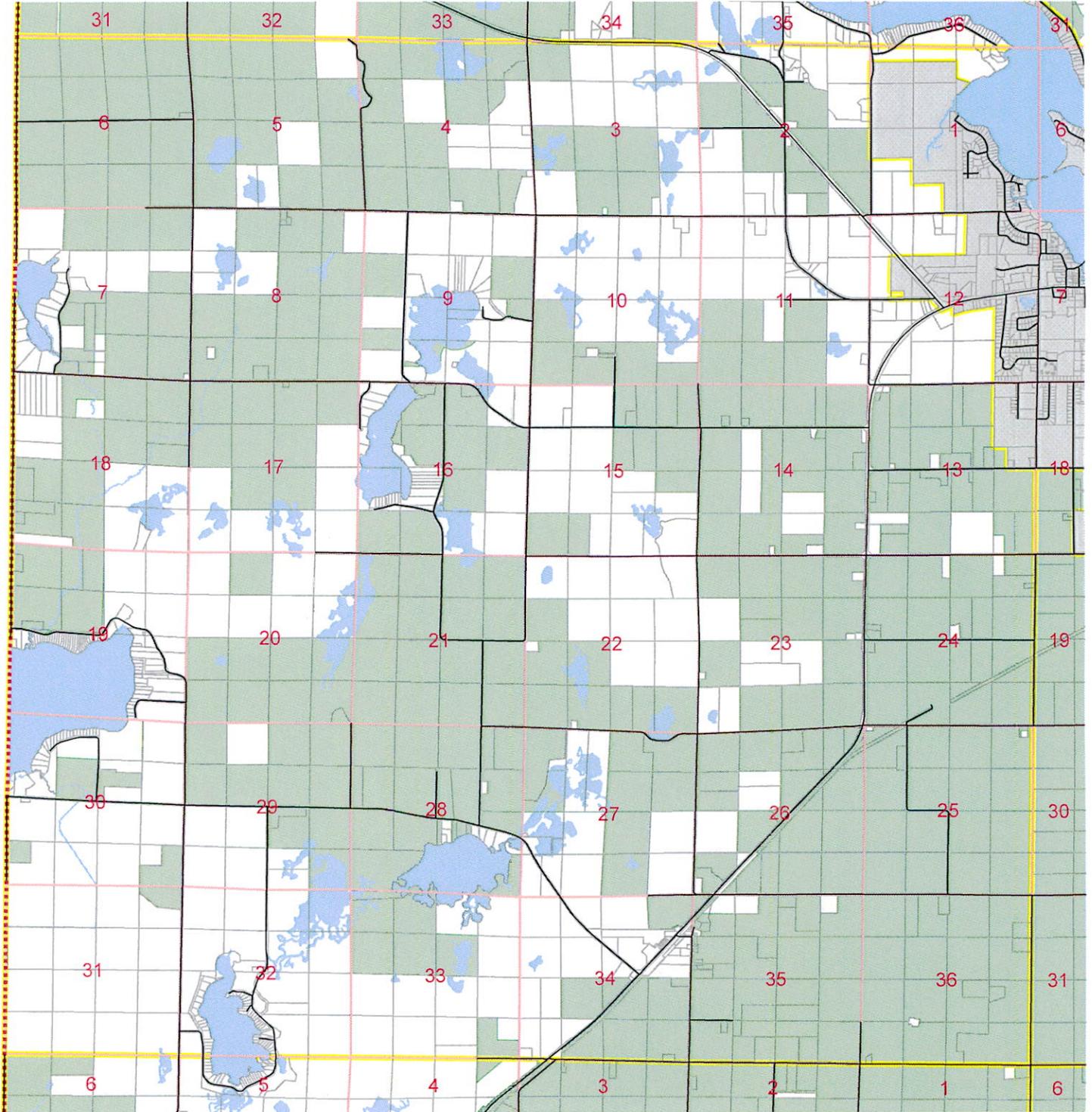


PREPARED BY: BARRON COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND SERVICES  
08/19/15



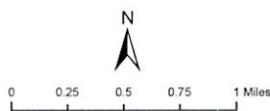
- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF CRYSTAL LAKE BARRON COUNTY

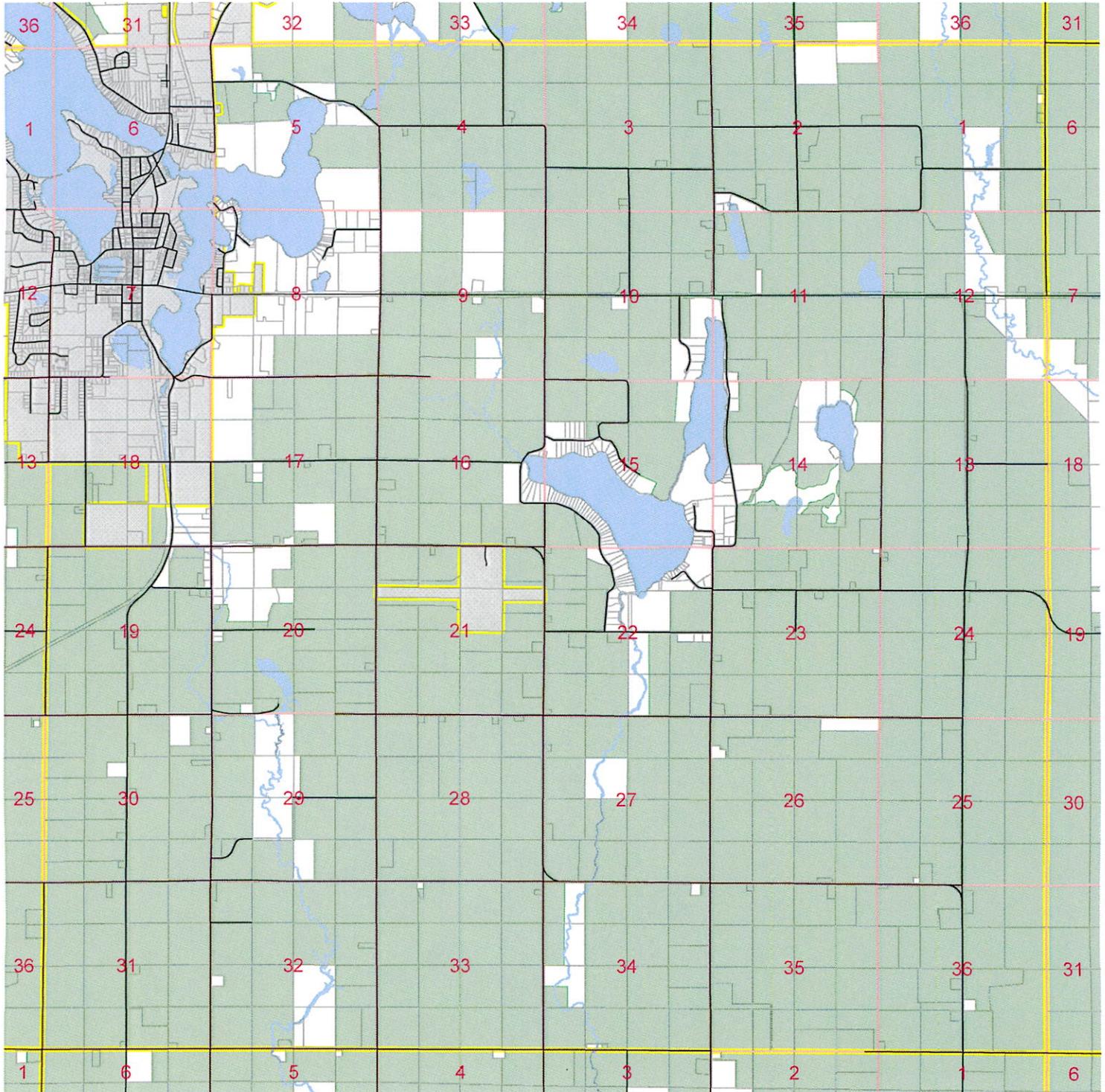


- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

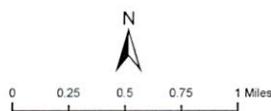
The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF CUMBERLAND BARRON COUNTY



The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.

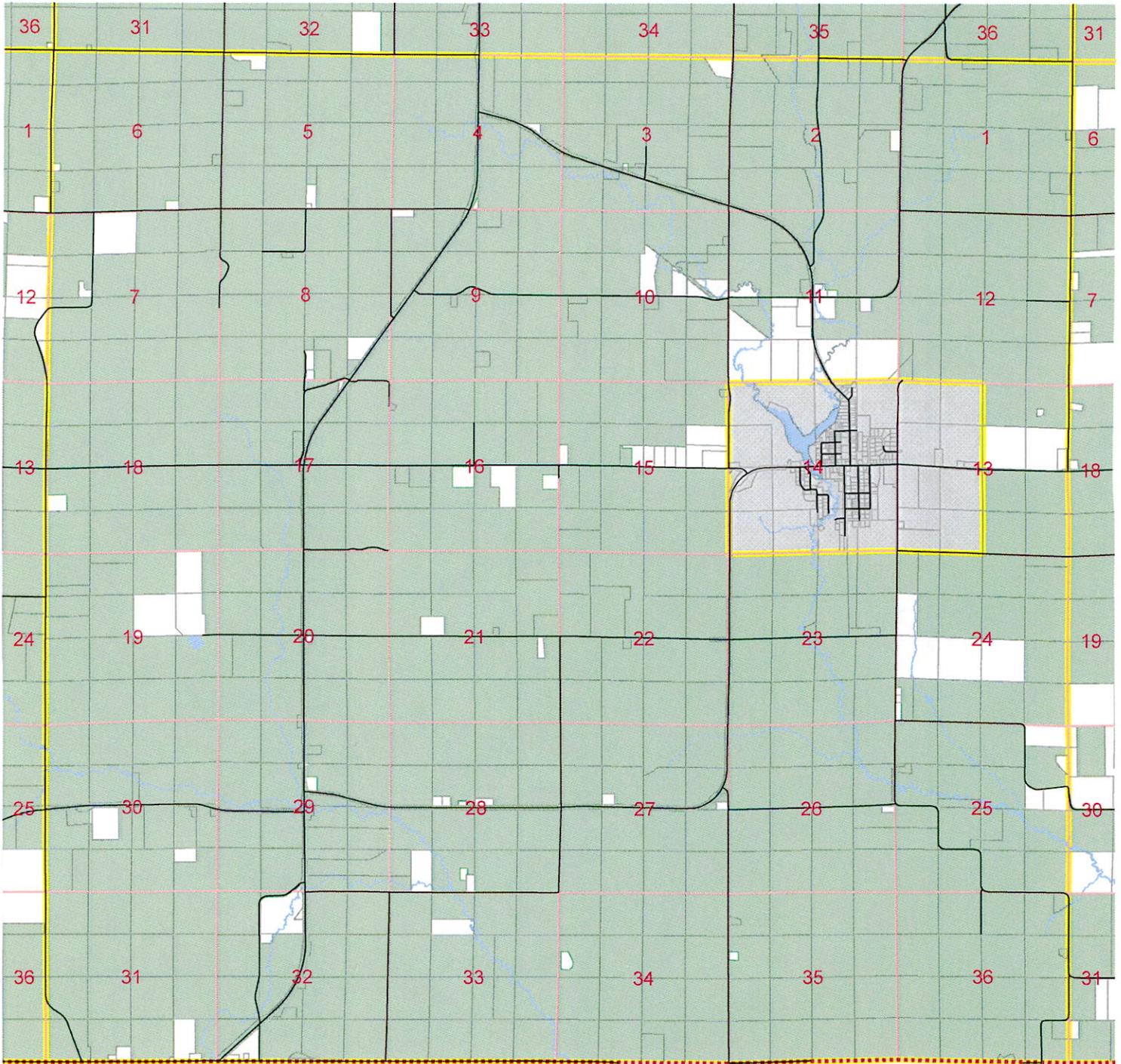


- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

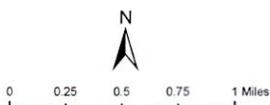
# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP

## TOWN OF DALLAS

### BARRON COUNTY

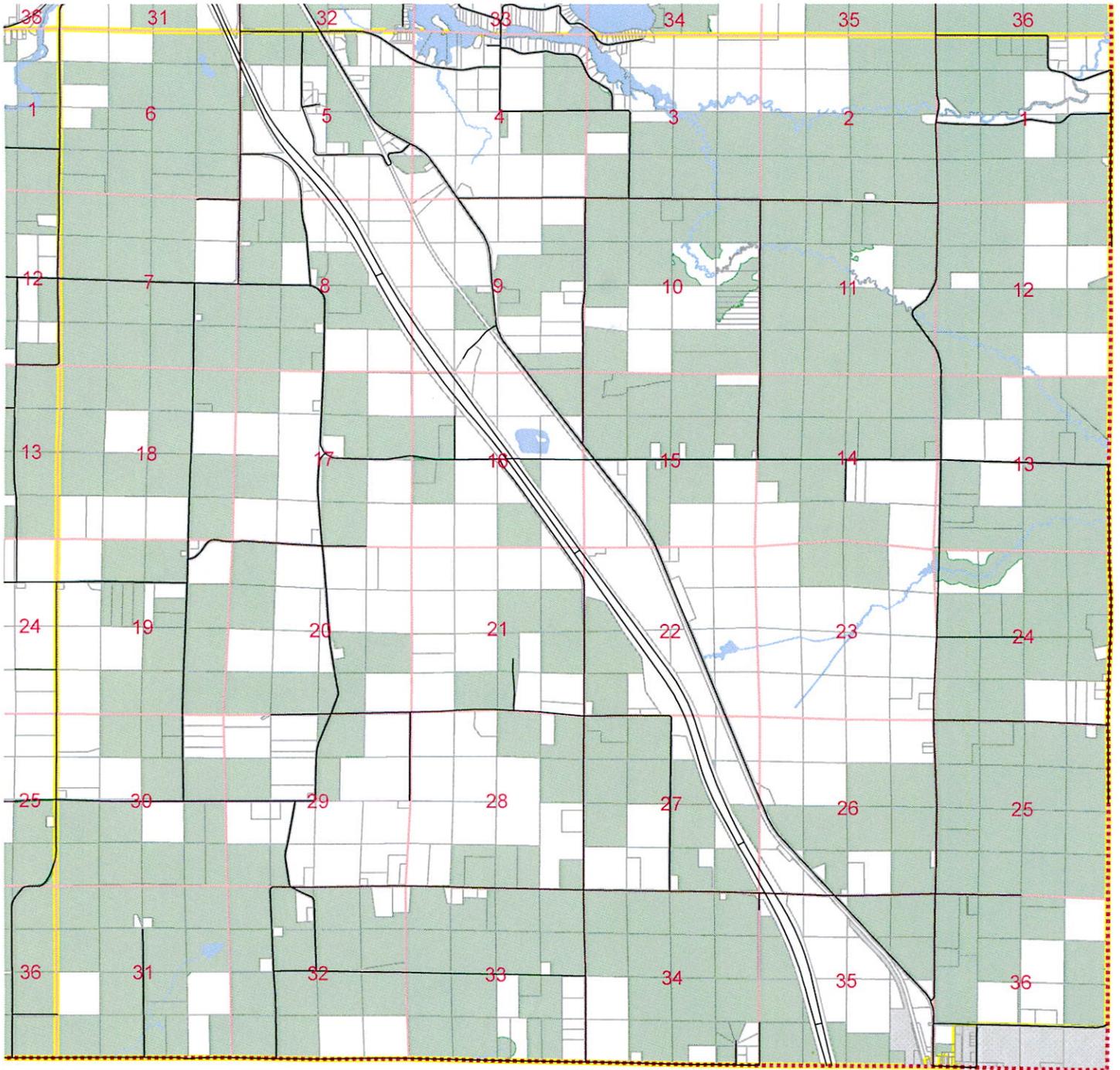


The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.

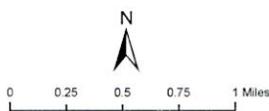


-  COUNTY BOUNDARY
-  SECTION
-  PARCEL BOUNDARY
-  SURFACE WATER
-  TOWN BOUNDARY
-  CITY
-  VILLAGE
-  FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  ROAD

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF DOVRE BARRON COUNTY

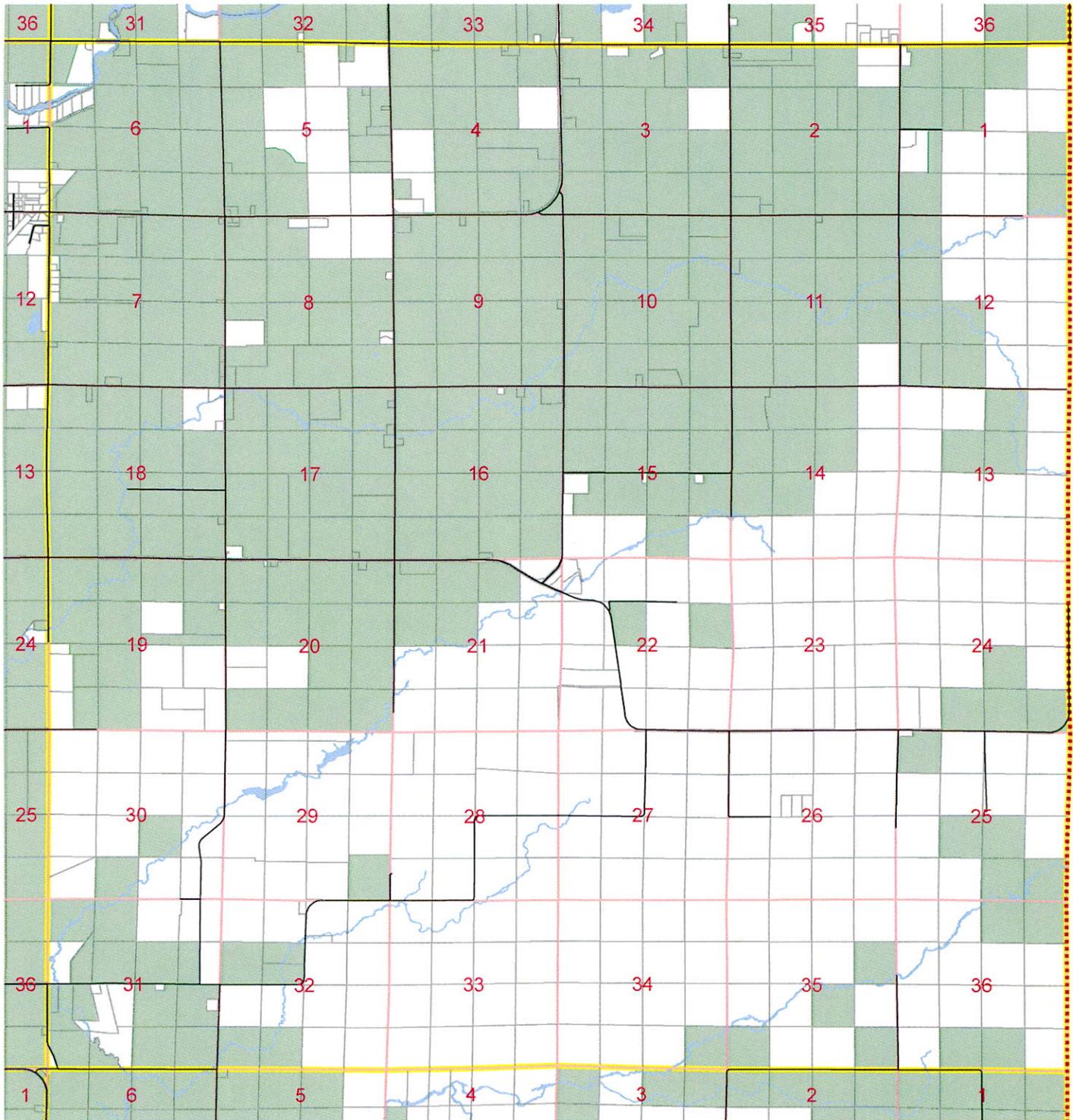


The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



-  COUNTY BOUNDARY
-  SECTION
-  PARCEL BOUNDARY
-  SURFACE WATER
-  TOWN BOUNDARY
-  CITY
-  VILLAGE
-  FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  ROAD

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF DOYLE BARRON COUNTY



The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.

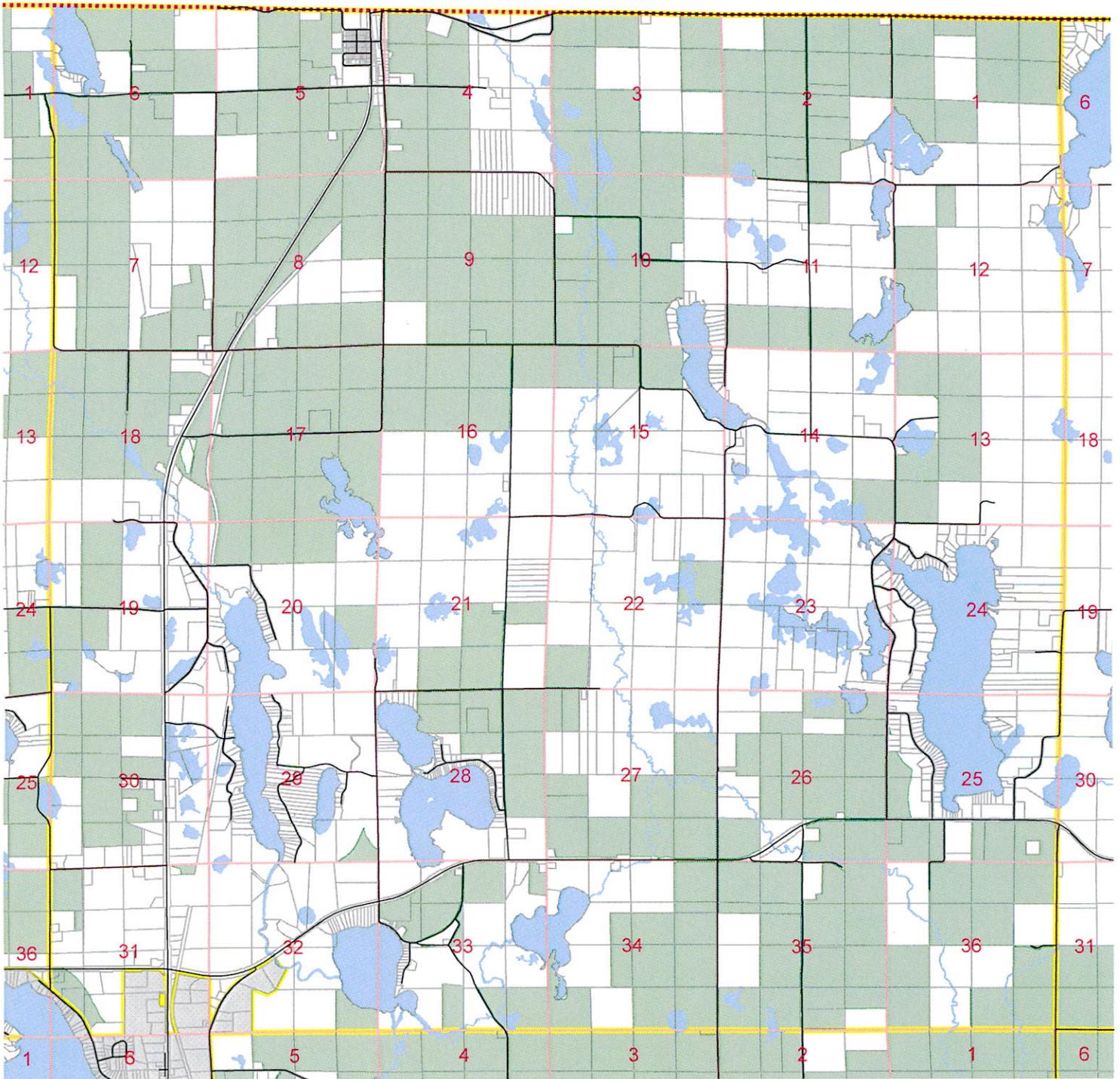


-  COUNTY BOUNDARY
-  SECTION
-  PARCEL BOUNDARY
-  SURFACE WATER
-  TOWN BOUNDARY
-  CITY
-  VILLAGE
-  FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  ROAD

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP

## TOWN OF LAKELAND

### BARRON COUNTY

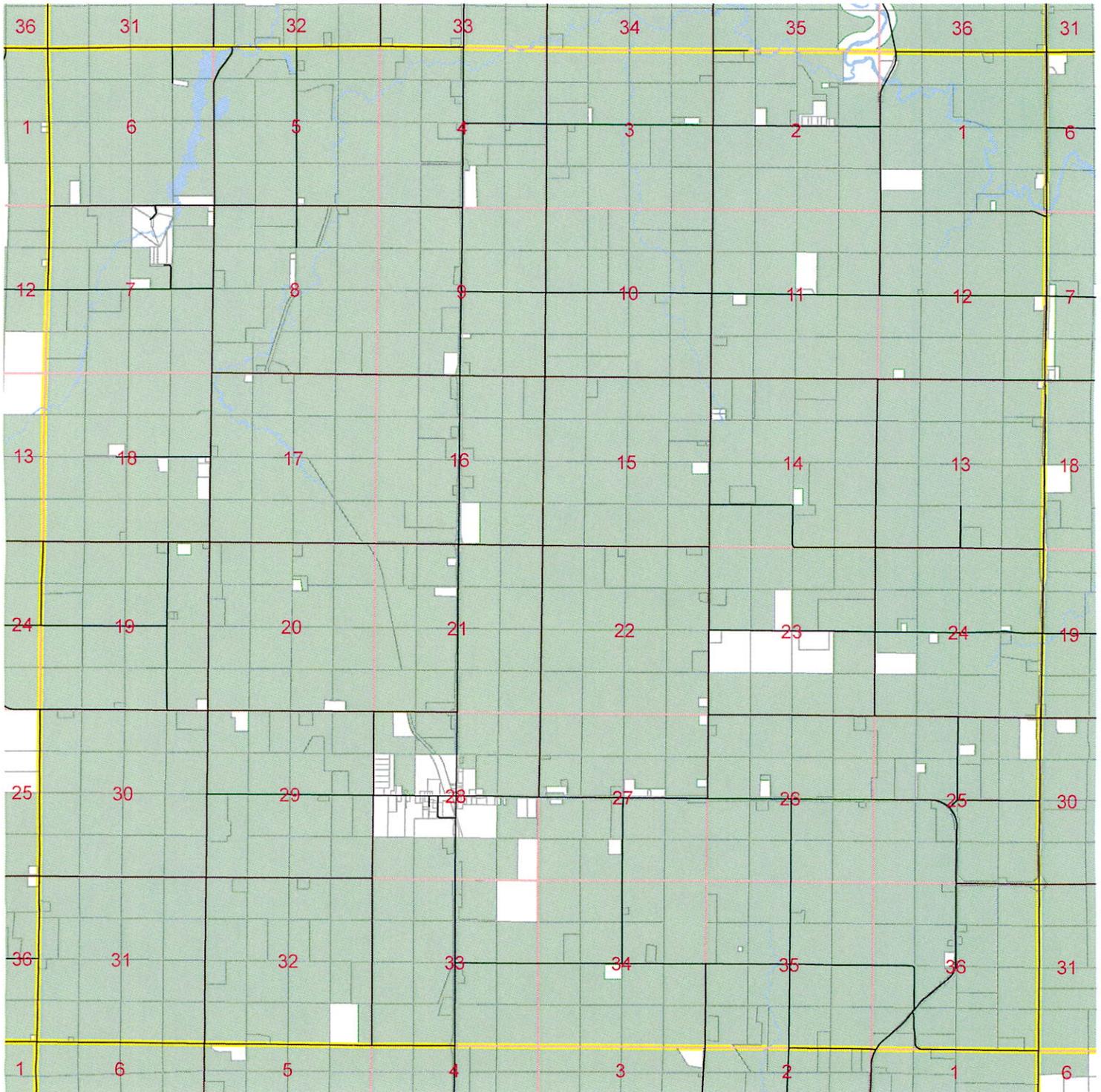


The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

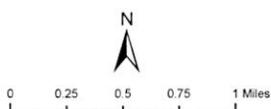
# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF MAPLE GROVE BARRON COUNTY



The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.

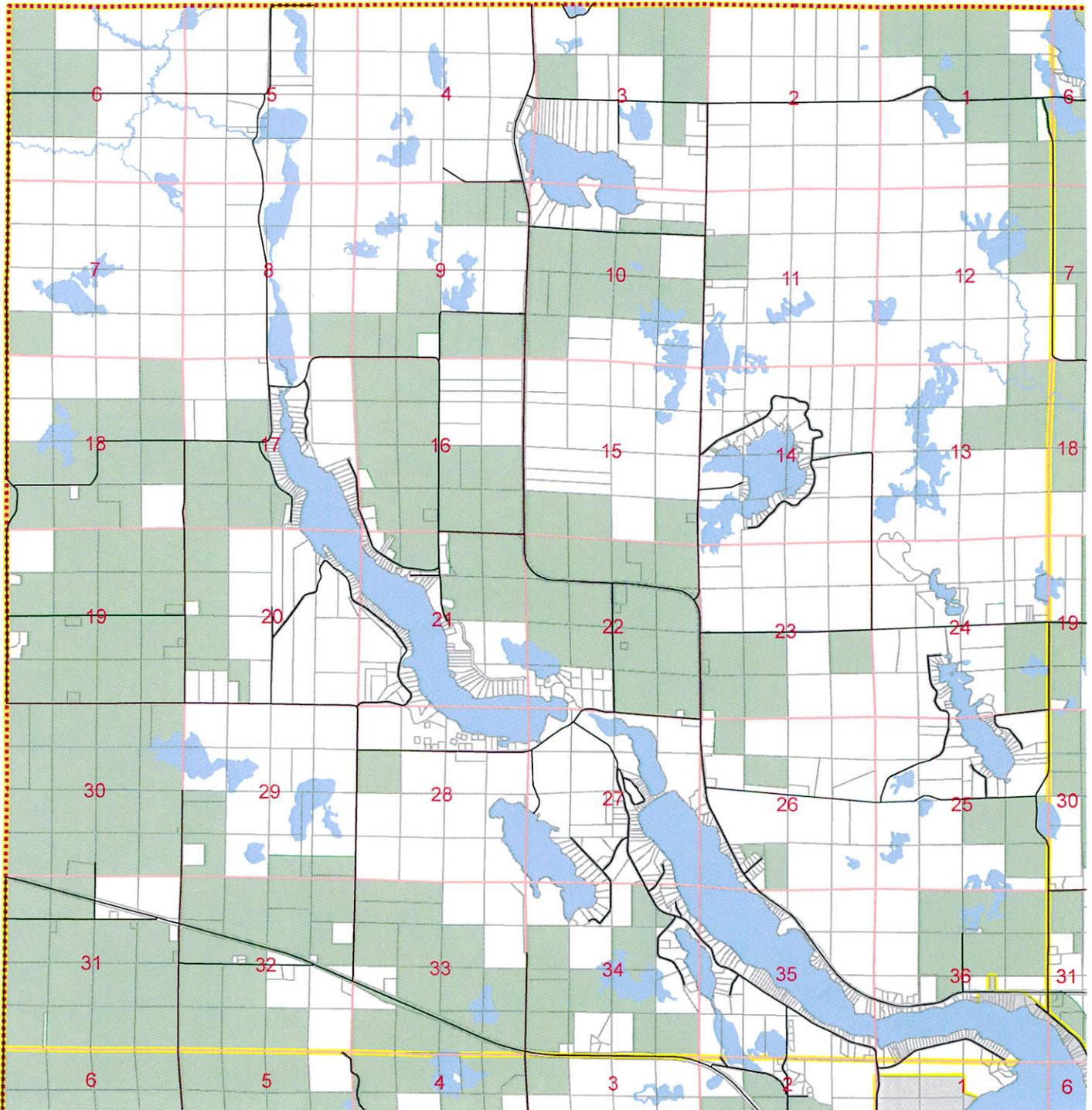


PREPARED BY: BARRON COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND SERVICES  
08/19/15



- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF MAPLE PLAIN BARRON COUNTY

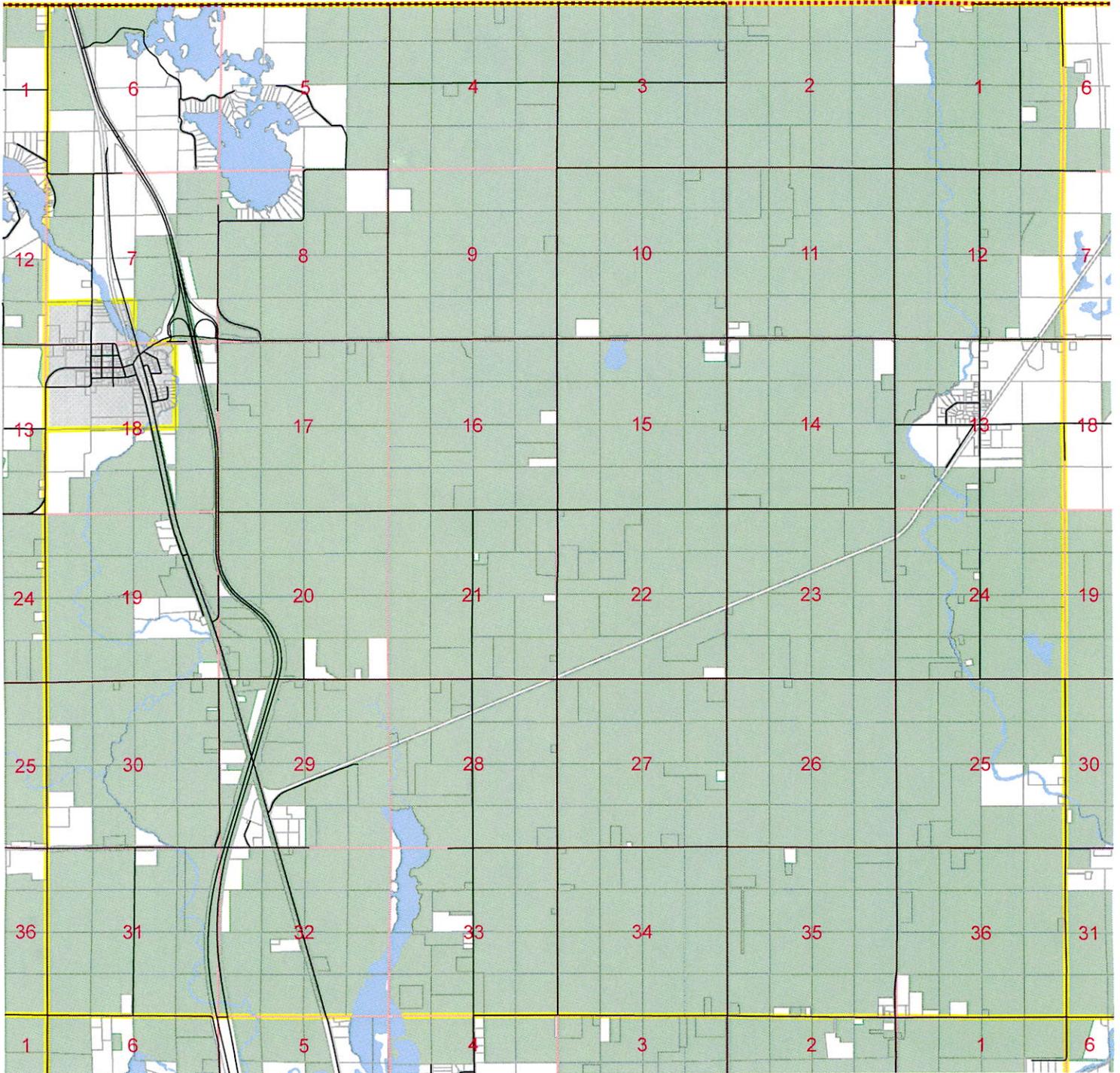


- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

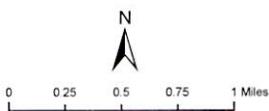
The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF OAK GROVE BARRON COUNTY

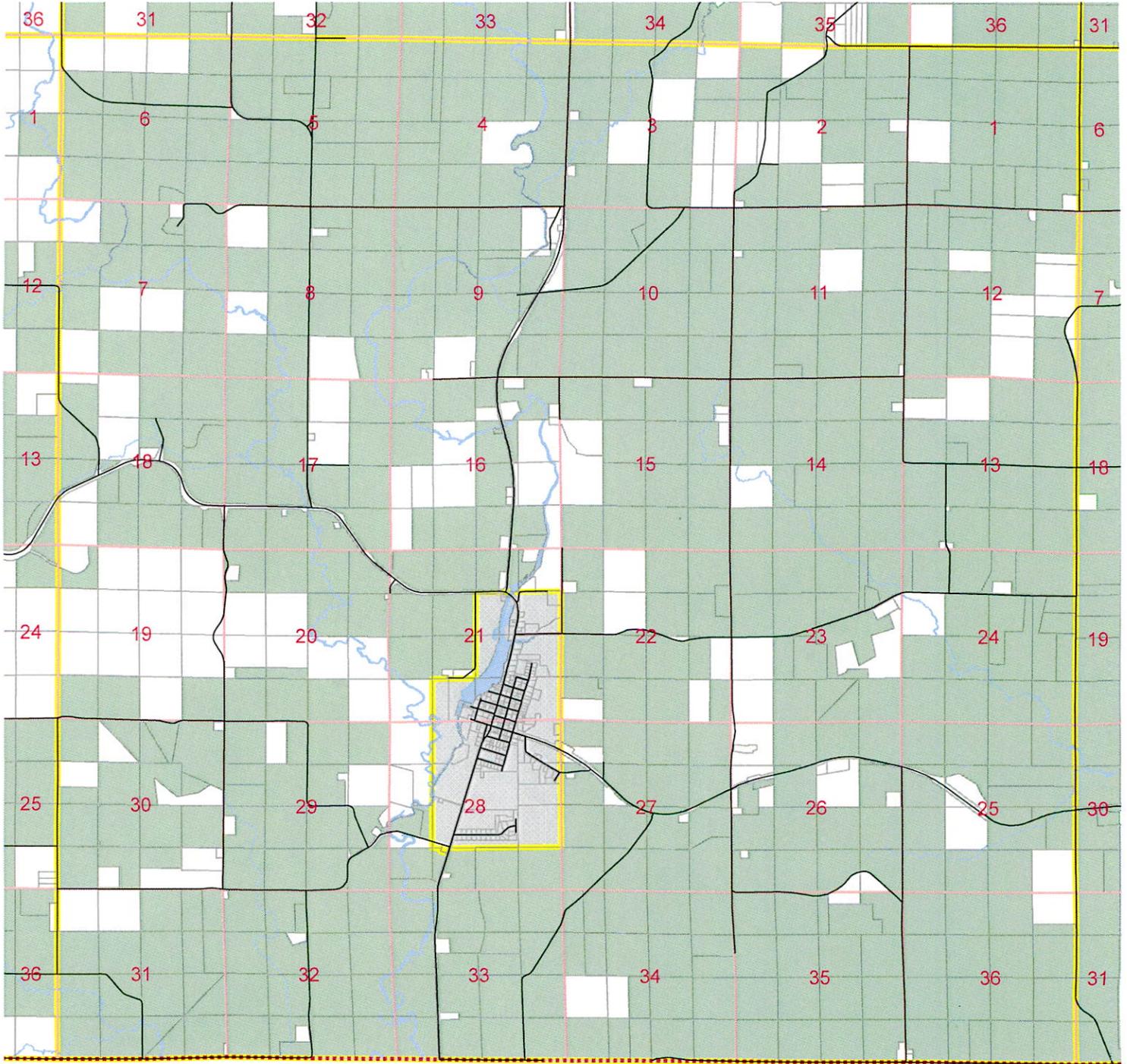


The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.

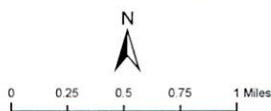


- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF PRAIRIE FARM BARRON COUNTY

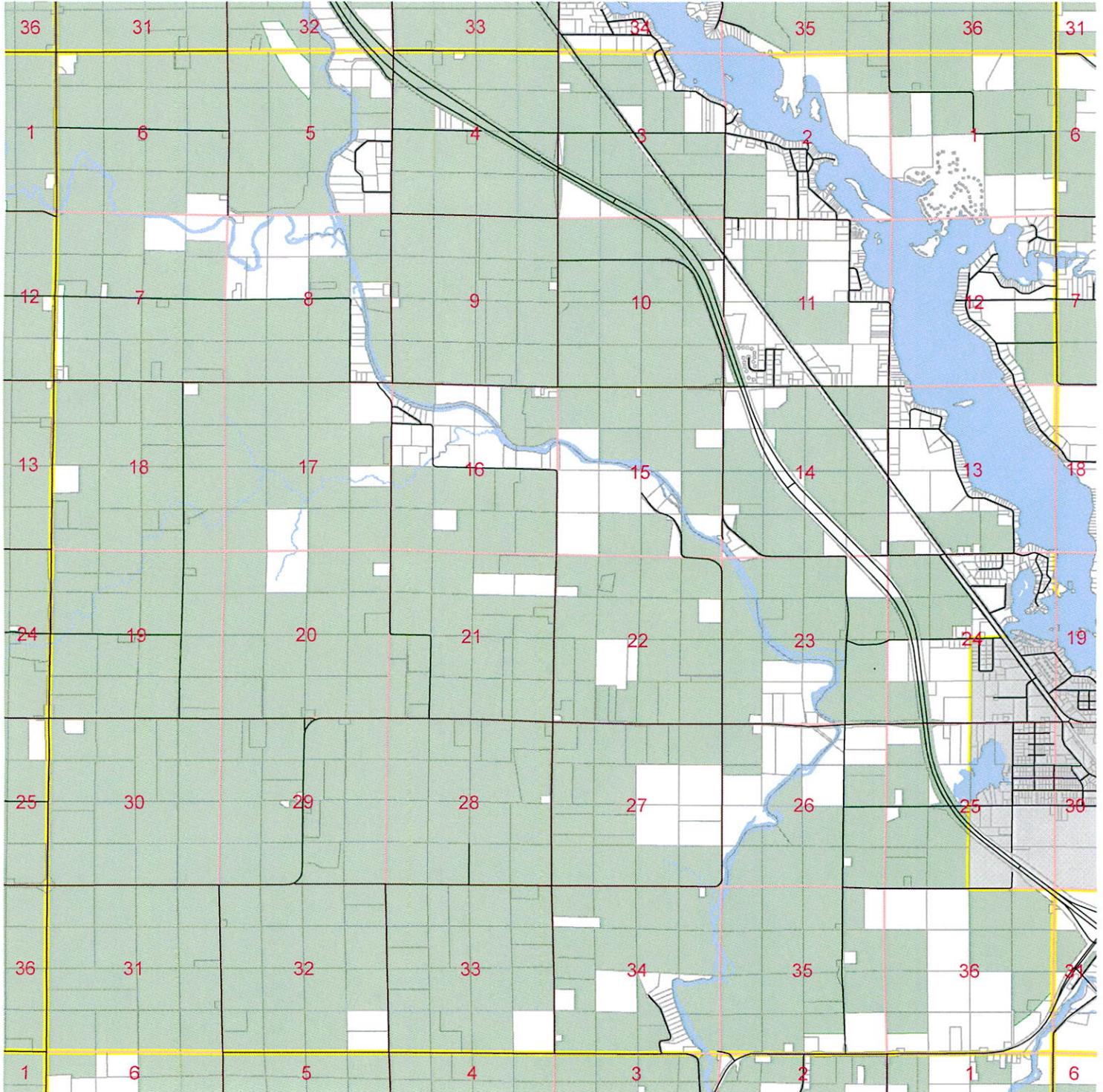


The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



-  COUNTY BOUNDARY
-  SECTION
-  PARCEL BOUNDARY
-  SURFACE WATER
-  TOWN BOUNDARY
-  CITY
-  VILLAGE
-  FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  ROAD

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF PRAIRIE LAKE BARRON COUNTY



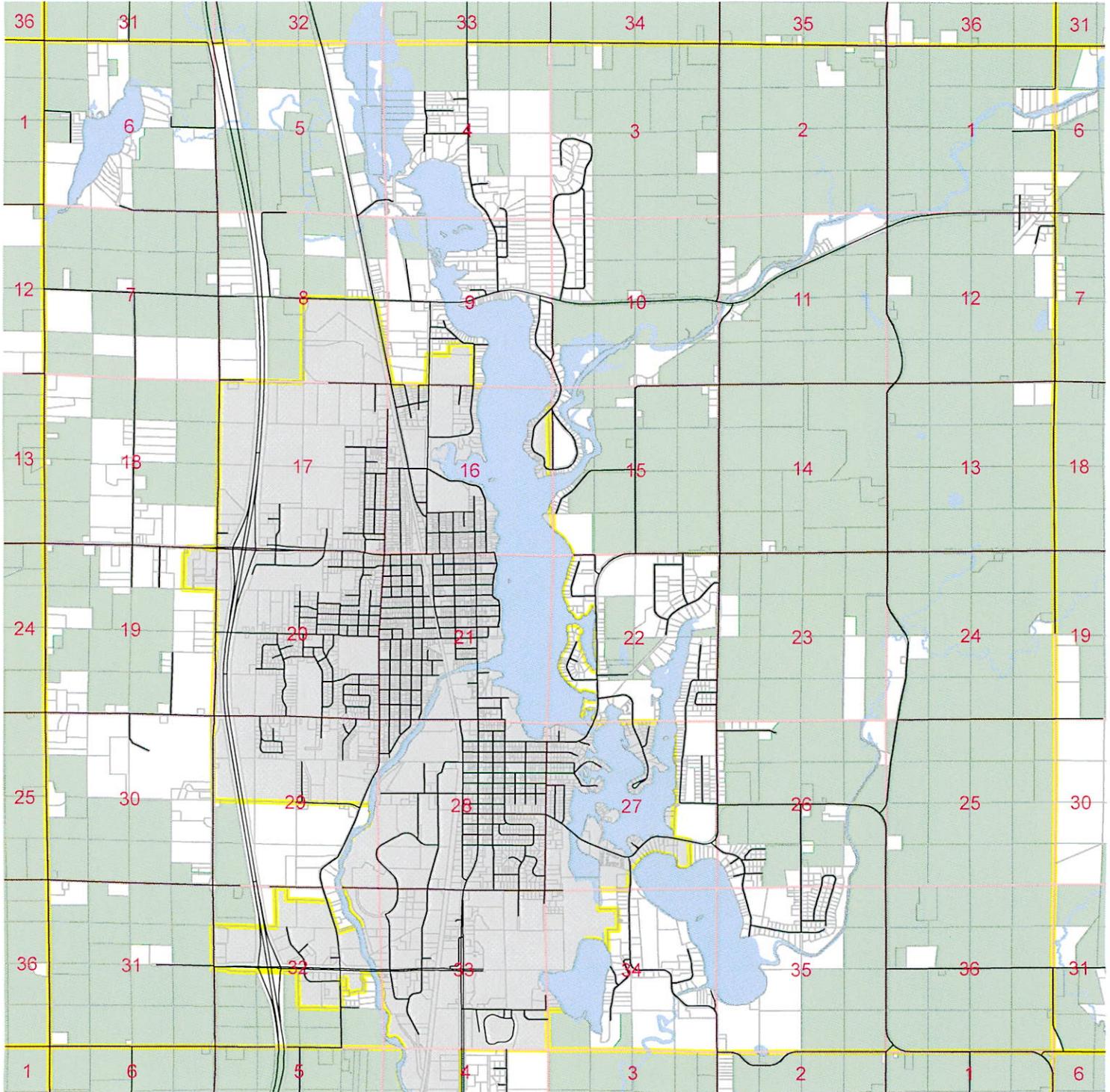
The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD



# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF RICE LAKE BARRON COUNTY

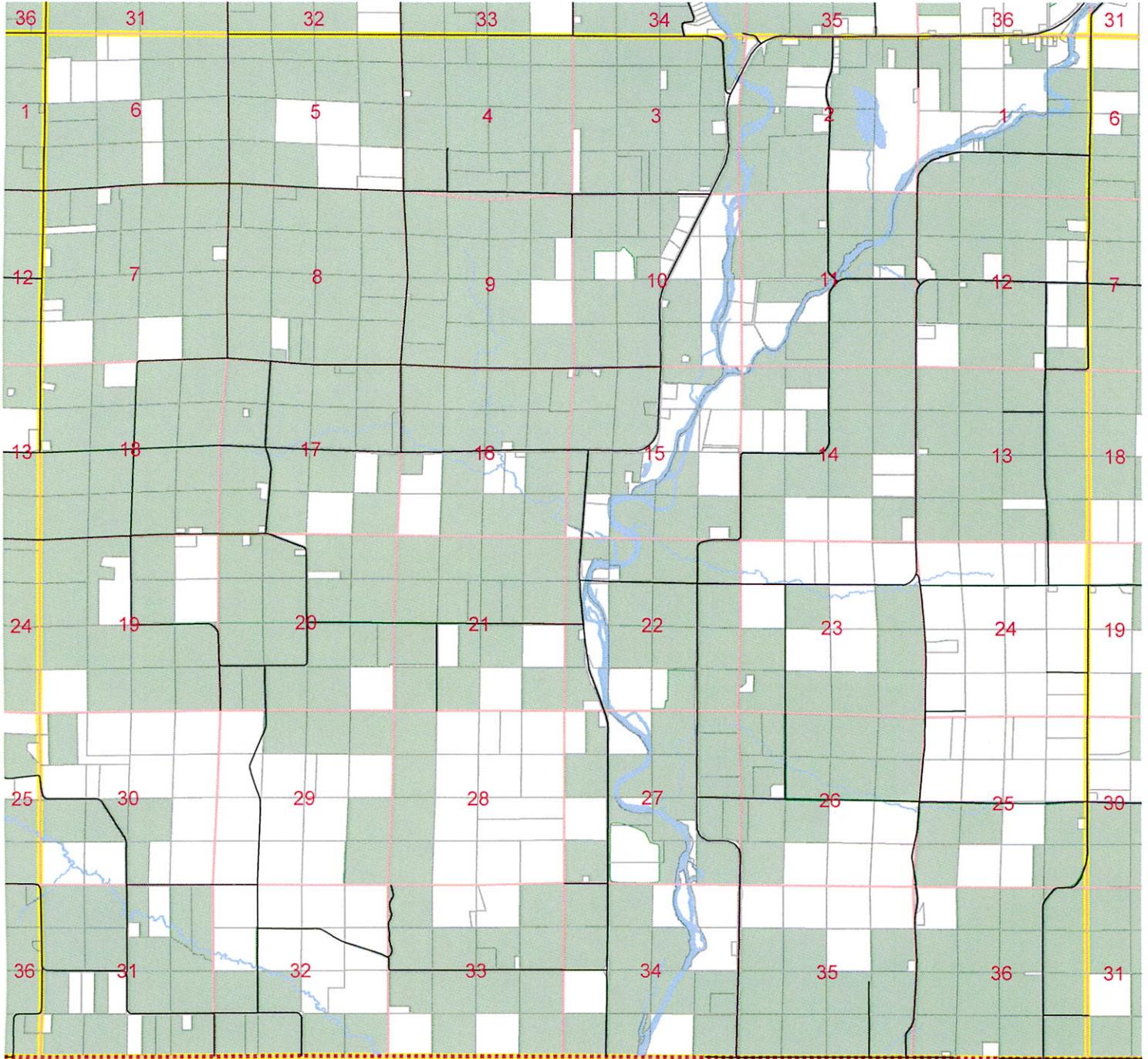


- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

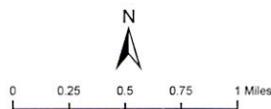
The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF SIOUX CREEK BARRON COUNTY

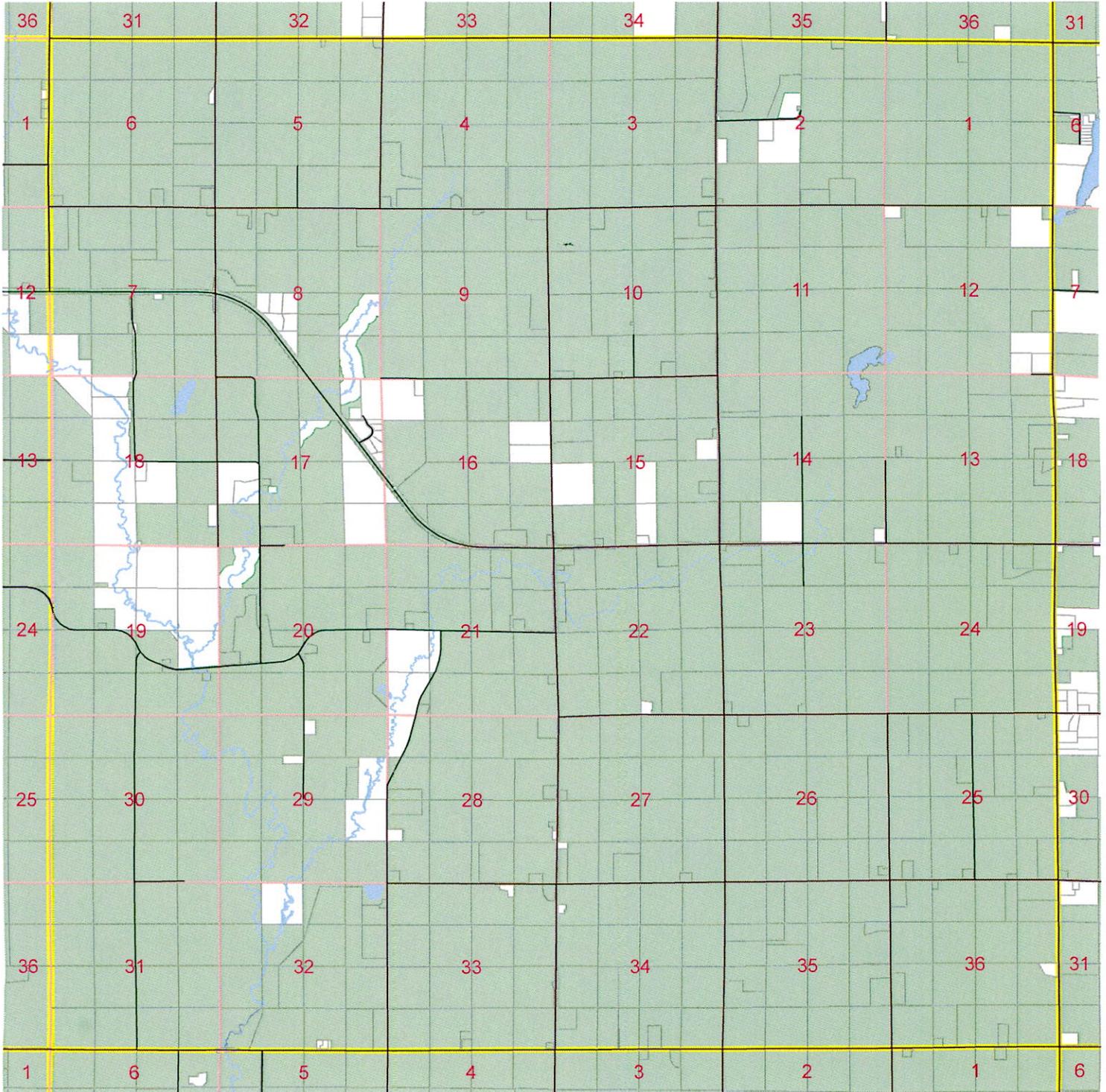


The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.

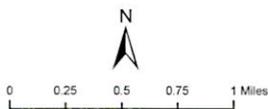


-  COUNTY BOUNDARY
-  SECTION
-  PARCEL BOUNDARY
-  SURFACE WATER
-  TOWN BOUNDARY
-  CITY
-  VILLAGE
-  FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  ROAD

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF STANFOLD BARRON COUNTY

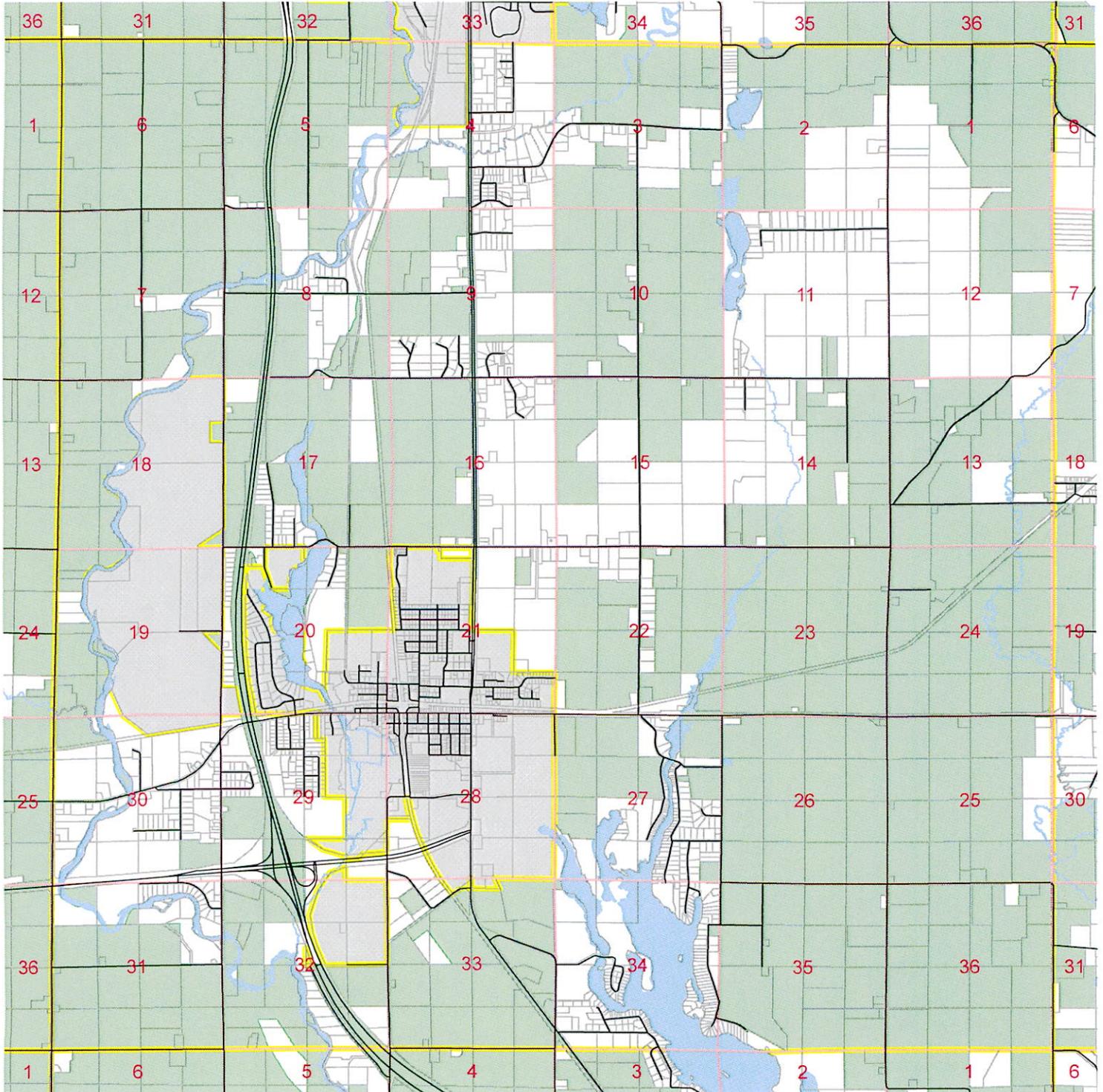


The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



-  COUNTY BOUNDARY
-  SECTION
-  PARCEL BOUNDARY
-  SURFACE WATER
-  TOWN BOUNDARY
-  CITY
-  VILLAGE
-  FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
-  ROAD

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF STANLEY BARRON COUNTY

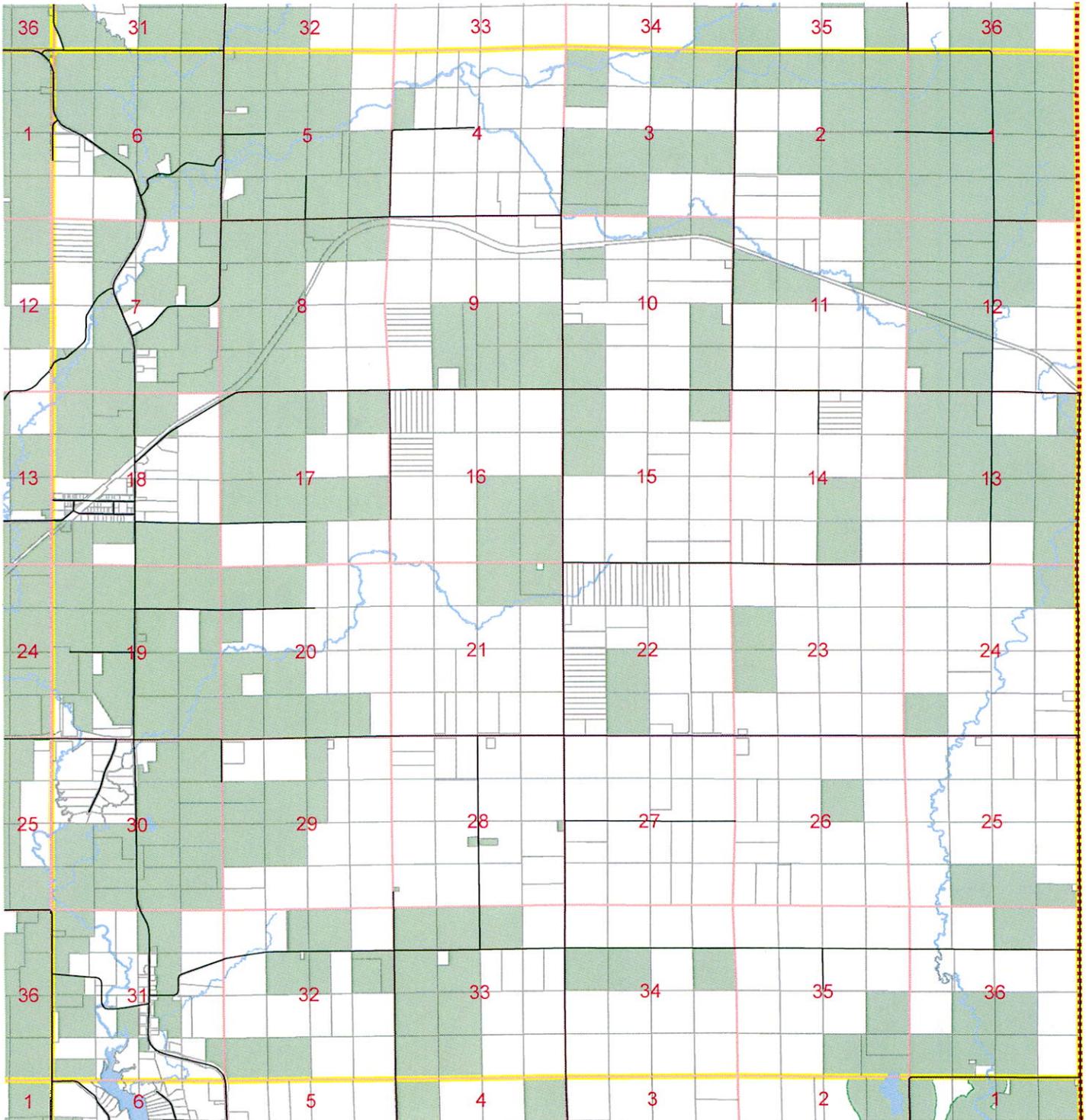


- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

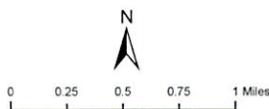
The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF SUMNER BARRON COUNTY

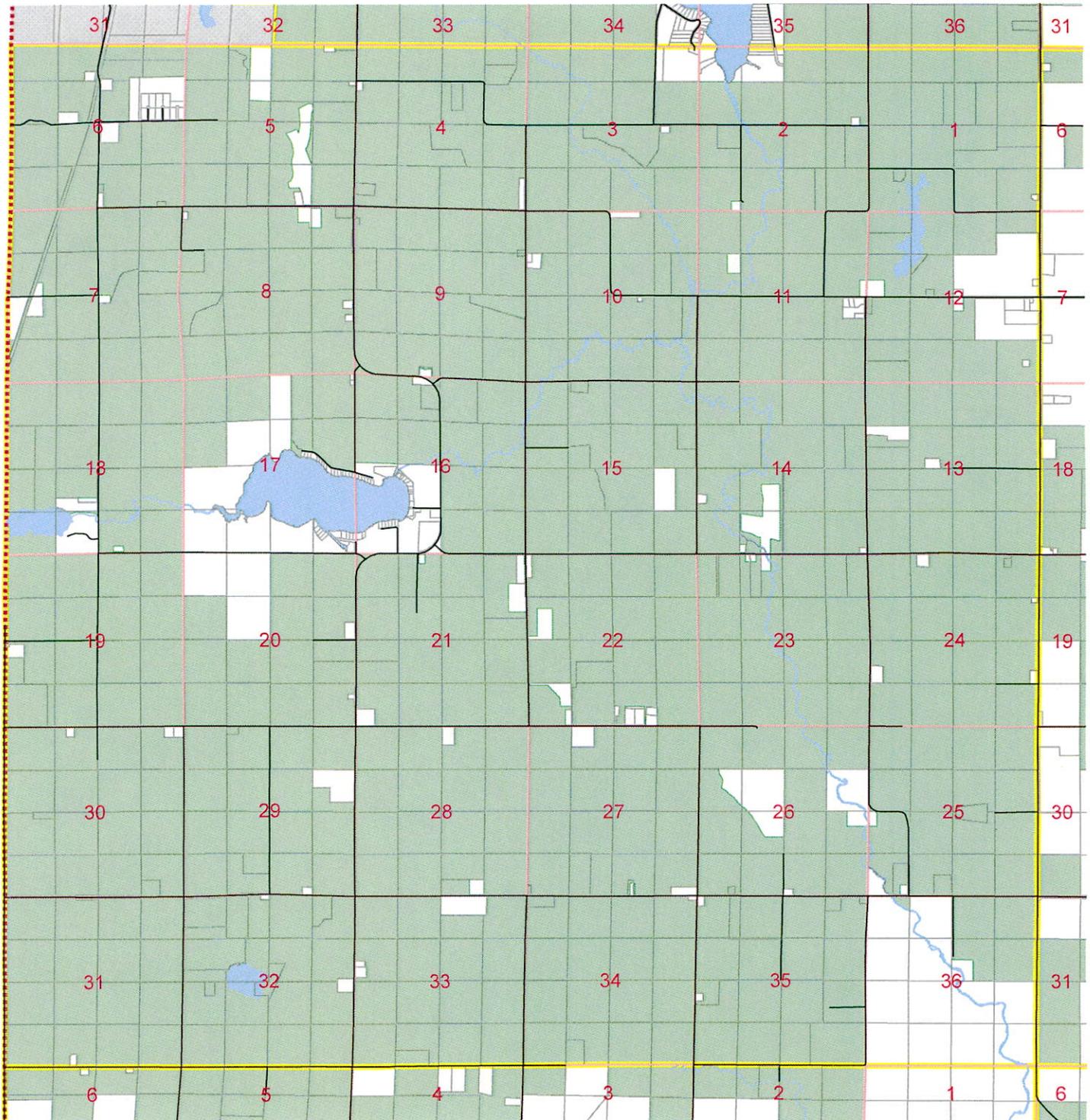


The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



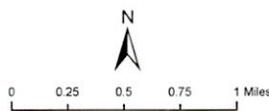
- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF TURTLE LAKE BARRON COUNTY



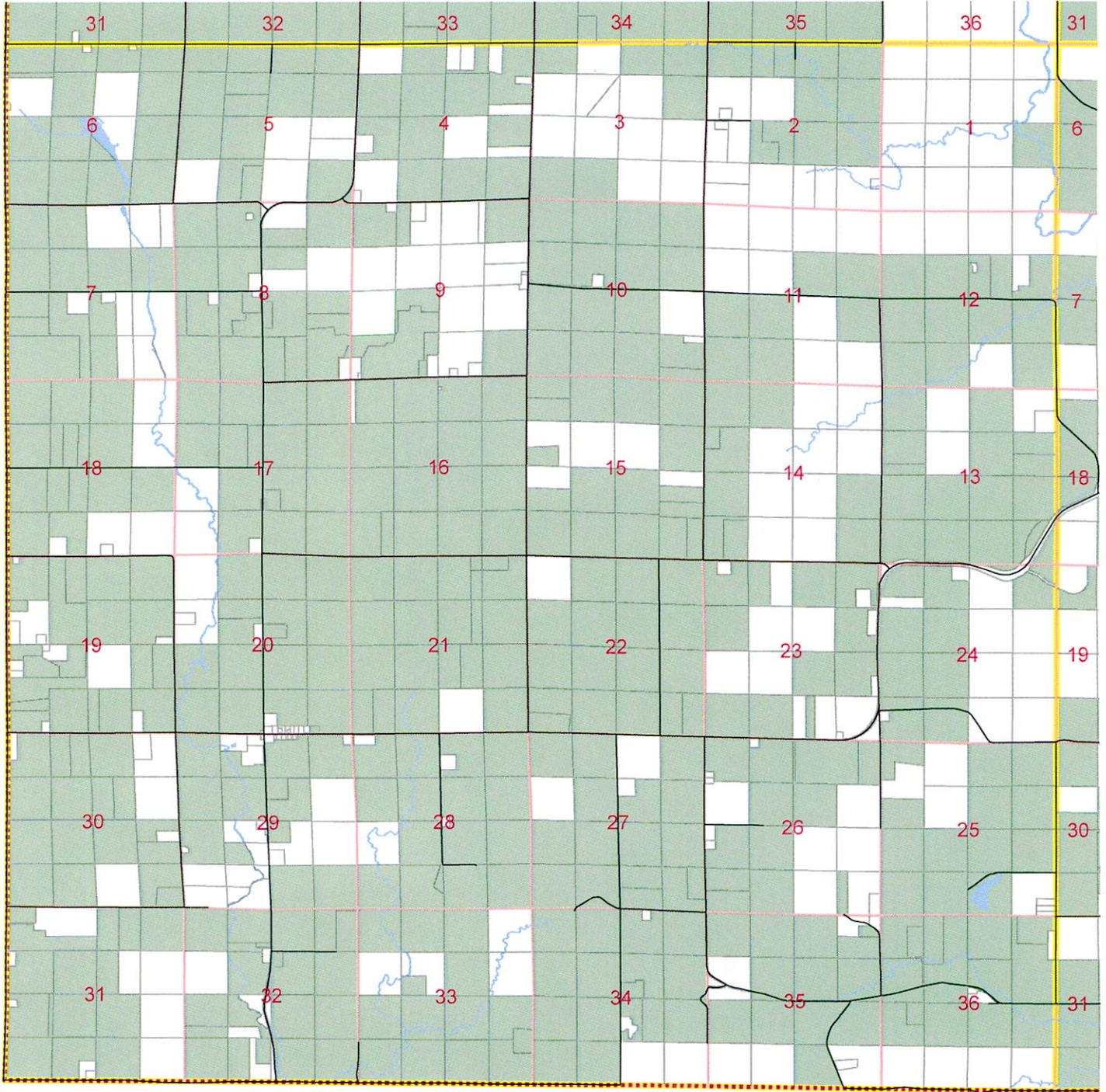
- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.

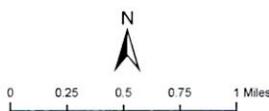


PREPARED BY: BARRON COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND SERVICES  
08/19/15

# FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP TOWN OF VANCE CREEK BARRON COUNTY



The Farmland Preservation Plan Maps supersede the Preferred Land Use Maps of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan when inconsistencies exist regarding non-agricultural development.



- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- SECTION
- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- SURFACE WATER
- TOWN BOUNDARY
- CITY
- VILLAGE
- FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- NON-FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA
- ROAD

## Appendix C – Planning / Public Meetings

### **Pre-planning meetings**

**July 2012 – January 2013**

Farmland Preservation Plan update was discussed at monthly committees meetings of the Zoning and Soil and Water Conservation Committees, the “Joint Committee”. Discussion included requirements of the new rules, the planning process, and timelines for completion.

### **Farmland Preservation Plan Extension February 25, 2013**

In January 2013 a request was presented to the Department of Agricultural for an extension of the December 31, 2013 deadline for adoption of the Farmland Preservation Plan per ss.91.14(4). Approval of the request was granted with an extension of the adoption date to December 31, 2015.

### **Committee Meetings**

**March 2015 – September 2015**

During the monthly meetings of the Committees, updates were provided on the draft plan being prepared by staff. Input from the committees was taken, and these meeting were open to the public, allowing for public comment.

### **Public Meeting**

**March 17, 2015**

A public meeting was held to discuss the need for revising the existing Farmland Preservation Plan and the changes to the rules as the result of the Working Land Initiative. Municipal officials and key stakeholders were invited to the meeting.

### **Joint Committee Meeting**

**July 20, 2015**

Staff presented criteria for establishment of the Farmland Preservation Plan Area Map and proposed county / town maps.

### **Public Meeting**

**July 21, 2015**

A public meeting was held to discuss the Farmland Preservation Plan draft and mapping criteria. Municipal officials, the Joint Committee, and the public

discussed issues related to agriculture, mapping criteria, and broad goals/policies of farmland preservation.

**Public Meeting**

**August 20, 2015**

The draft plan was reviewed with the emphasis on establishing objectives / goals / policies for the plan. Municipal officials and key stakeholders were notified of the meeting in addition to over 800 individual invitations within the farming community.

**Committee Action**

**September 2015**

Recommendation for the approval of the Draft Farmland Preservation Plan was made by the Soil and Water Conservation Committee on September 1, 2015 and the Zoning Committee on September 2, 2015.

**DATCP Approval**

**November 6, 2015**

The Department of Ag, Trade and Consumer Protection approved the draft plan on November 6, 2015.

**Committee Action**

**December 21, 2015**

Recommendation for the approval of the Farmland Preservation Plan was made by the Soil and Water Conservation Committee and by the Zoning Committee on December 21, 2015.

**County Board Adoption**

**December 21, 2015**

The Barron County Board of Supervisors approved the Farmland Preservation Plan on December 21, 2015.

**Revision to Barron County Land Use Ordinance – Exclusive Agriculture District**

To be completed