Salt-Cedar Herbicide Application
Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge
Statement of Work

Introduction

Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge (NWR or refuge) is situated in north central Oklahoma within Alfalfa County. The topography consists of flat to rolling hills with elevations in the range of 1,125 - 1,155 feet above mean sea level. The climate is semiarid with rainfall averaging 29 inches. There is potential for severe thunderstorms with large hail and tornadoes. Summer temperatures may frequently reach above 100° F and winter temperatures below 0° F.

The refuge consists of 32,196 acres divided into four major habitat types: uplands, salt flats, open water, and wetlands. The uplands (~2,900 ac.) consist mainly of mixed-grass prairie, dominated by switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*), Indiangrass (*Sorghastrum nutans*), and little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), with either scattered or congested saltcedars(*Tamarix spp.)*. Some upland areas also consist of scattered plum (*Prunus* spp.) thickets, cottonwood (*Populus* spp.) trees, roughleaf dogwood (*Cornus drummondii*), eastern redcedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), and black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*). The unique salt flats (~13,135 ac.) are virtually flat averaging about 1 foot slope per mile and devoid of vegetation. Open water within the Salt Plains NWR consists of the Great Salt Plains Lake and Sandy Creek Bay. The lake is fed by the East, Middle, and West Branches of the Salt Fork of the Arkansas River, Sandy Creek, Twin Springs Creek, Cottonwood Creek, and several smaller creeks. Vegetated wetlands on Salt Plains NWR consist of freshwater ponds, freshwater emergent wetlands, freshwater forested/shrub wetlands, and riverine habitats. Many wetlands are congested with salt cedar, johnsongrass (*Sorghum halepense*), cocklebur (*Xanthium* spp.), phragmites (*Phragmites australis*), and cattail (*Typha* spp.).

Salt Plains NWR has implemented a species-specific Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPMP) for the control and/or eradication of salt cedar from the salt flats and peripheral habitats. Work supported by this IPMP promotes hydrological function, enhances critical habitat for federally-endangered whooping cranes (*Grus americana*), increases migratory stopover habitat for federally-threatened piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), improves nesting habitat for snowy plovers (*Charadrius nivosus*) and least terns (*Sterna antillarum*), and lastly, increases the amount of available migratory stopover habitat for other shorebirds and waterbirds.

Salt cedar eradication on the salt flats, and control efforts in adjacent habitats will enhance habitat supporting approximately 22% of the continental breeding population of snowy plovers. These habitat enhancements are projected to increase the amount of breeding habitat by approximately 1,500 acres (11% more than present). Increasing nesting habitat for the snowy plover could preclude the need for additional protection (federally listing) of this population. By improving designated critical habitat conditions for the whooping crane, this project increases

the amount of preferred stopover habitat and contributes to recovery action 1.5.4.3 in the whooping crane recovery plan. The actions identified in the recovery plan contribute to the recovery of whooping cranes and to their eventual down or de-listing.

Scope of Work

Salt Plains NWR is seeking contractor services for approximately **300 acres** (more or less, depending on funding availability) of salt cedar control within Priority Area 2 of IPMP (see attached map). The work shall consist of application of refuge furnished herbicide (Imazapyr) and adjuvant (non-ionic surfactant) within project area. Application will consist of individual plant treatments and small pockets of plants on islands within Salt Fork of the Arkansas River. Project area is within Salt Fork of the Arkansas River and adjacent area which can be prone to flooding and wet soil conditions. Access by ground can be limited or challenging during wet conditions.

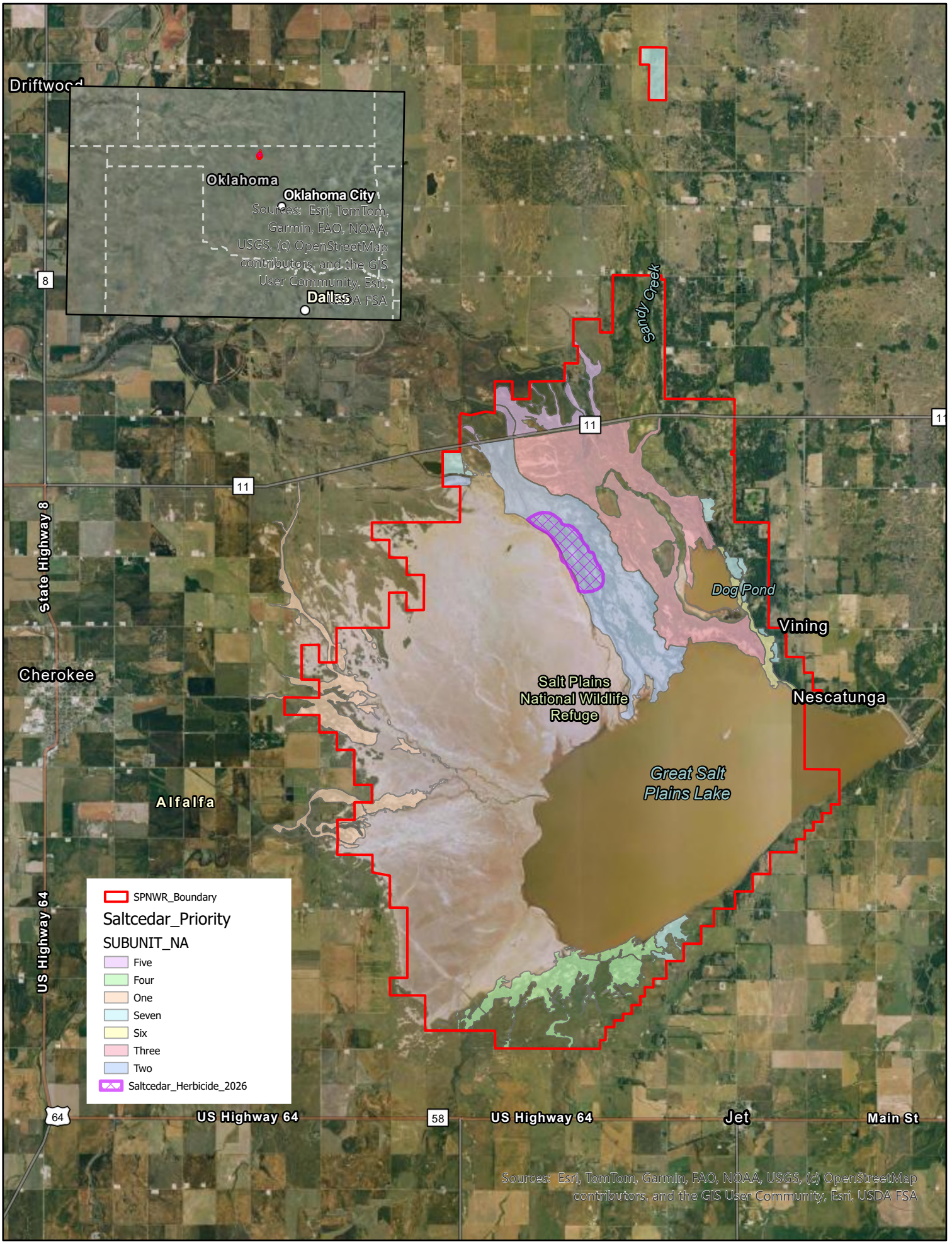
Elements of contracted services include:

- Project area will be defined by refuge staff as a polygon within Priority Area 2 and provided to contractor in printed map, shapefile, and/or georeferenced pdf.
- Contractor will apply herbicide at 1% volume to volume plus 0.25% non-ionic surfactant as individual plant spot treatment and until foliage is wetted. For larger infestations, contractor can apply herbicide at 2 quarts plus 0.25% non-ionic surfactant not to exceed 10 total gallons of solution per acre.
- Application of herbicide must be applied a minimum of 24 hours before forecasted precipitation.
- Contractor will follow requirements and recommendations provided on herbicide label to reduce spray drift and off target damage.
- Contractor is responsible for providing all appropriate personal protective equipment, secondary containment, and any other safety equipment and procedures specified by OSHA for fueling and pesticide mixing and loading.
- Contractor is responsible for acquiring and maintaining all federal and state licenses, certifications and permits as required.
- Contractor is responsible for identifying any hazards that could affect personnel or equipment and mitigating those hazards before starting operations.
- Contractor will coordinate all activities with refuge staff. Provide refuge with GPS generated spray log and log of amount of herbicide applied.
- Contractor will provide all materials, minus herbicide and adjuvant, personnel, and equipment required to complete service.
- Contractor will remove all excess materials, trash, etc from project area at end of service.

Period of Performance

The period of performance is between May 1, 2027, to October 15, 2027. Contractor will contact Salt Plains NWR at least 72 hours prior to initiation of project.

Funds will not be expended on covered UAS, as defined in OPM-11, for achieving approved objectives and will not be operated on Department-managed lands


Driftwood
Oklahoma
Oklahoma City
Dallas
Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Esri, USDA FSA
8
Sandy Creek
11
11
State Highway 8
Dog Pond
Vining
Cherokee
Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge
Nescatunga
Great Salt Plains Lake
Alfalfa
US Highway 64
SPNWR_Boundary
Saltcedar_Priority
SUBUNIT_NA
Five
Four
One
Seven
Six
Three
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64
US Highway 64
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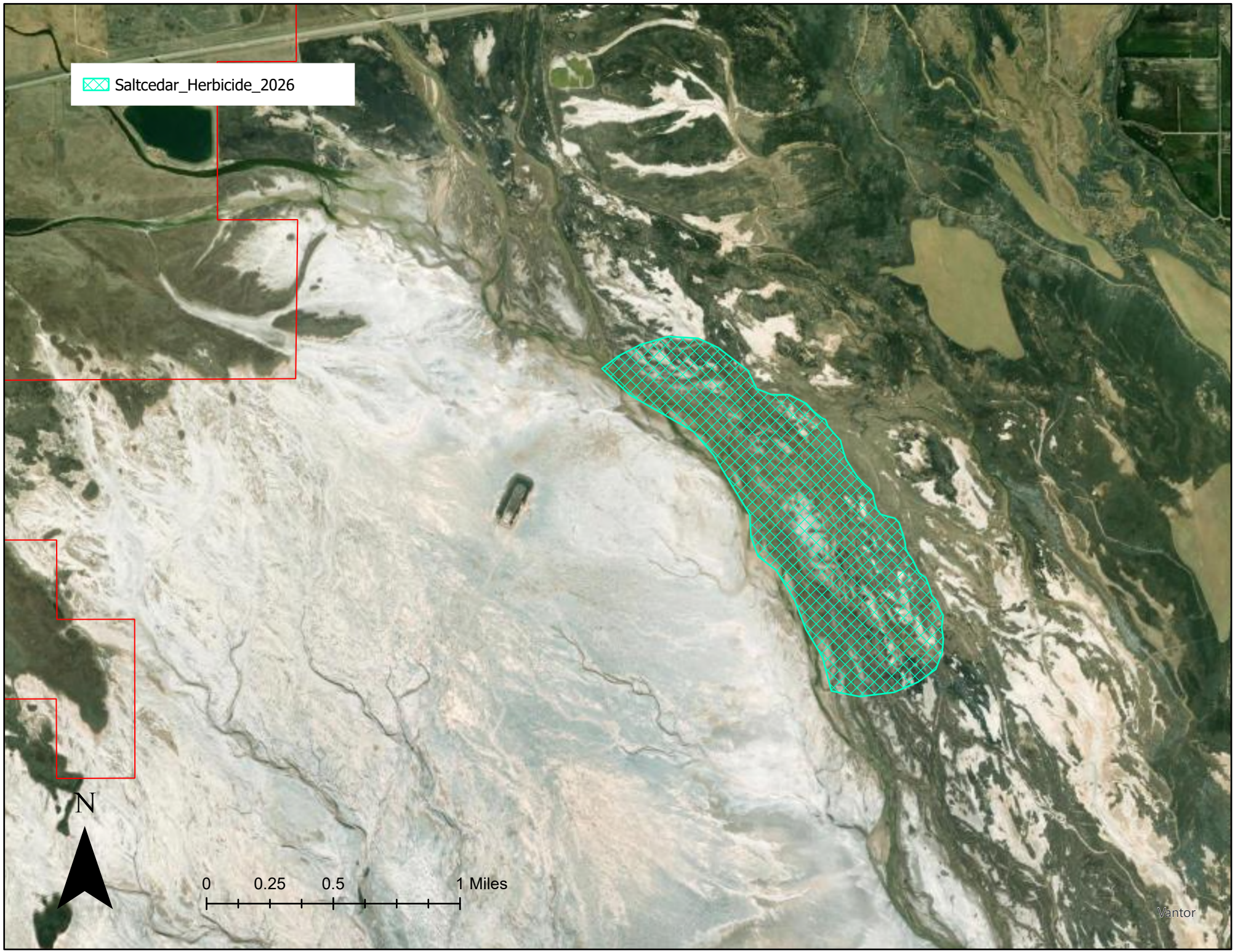
Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Esri, USDA FSA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