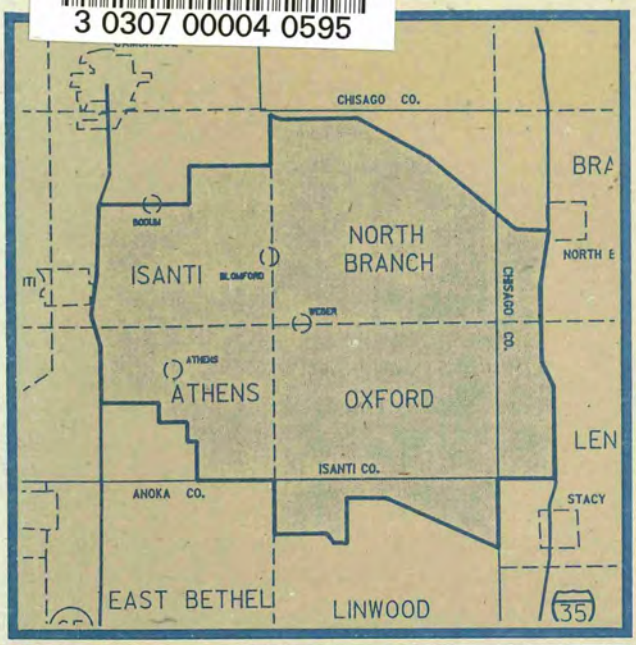
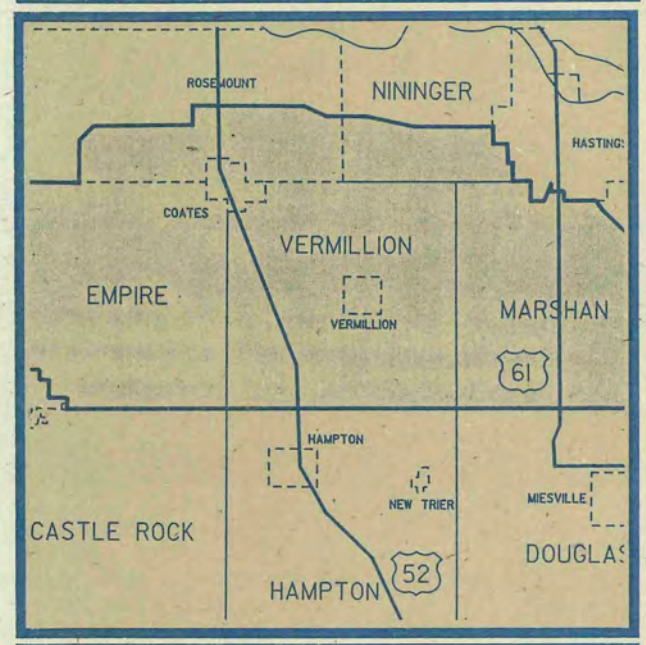
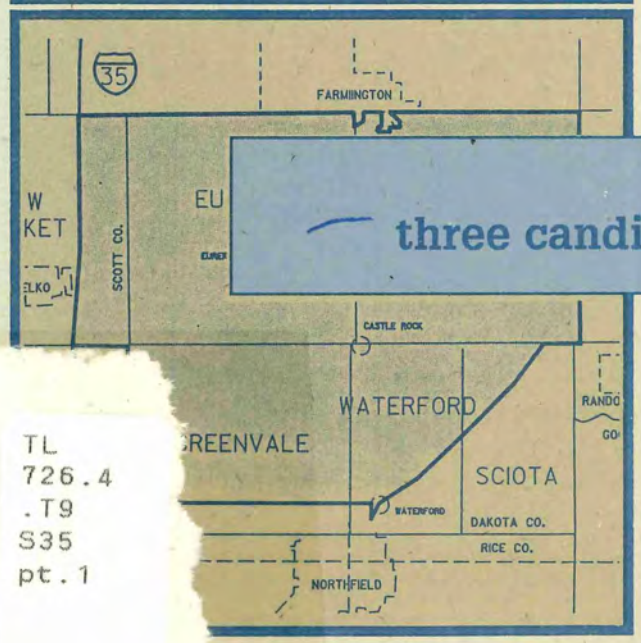
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SELECTING A SEARCH AREA FOR A NEW MAJOR AIRPORT

January, 1991

Part one: three candidate areas

The first in a series of reports to the Twin Cities Area

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This report was adopted by the Council's New Airport Search Area Advisory Task Force on Dec. 21 and by the Metropolitan Council on Jan. 10, 1991.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Three candidate search areas have been identified and recommended for further consideration as areas for a potential new major airport to serve the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and the State of Minnesota. A search area is a large tract of land within which an airport site can be selected. The candidate search areas are:

Anoka-Isanti-Chisago Candidate Search Area, approximately 102 square miles, located north of the Twin Cities primarily in Isanti County;

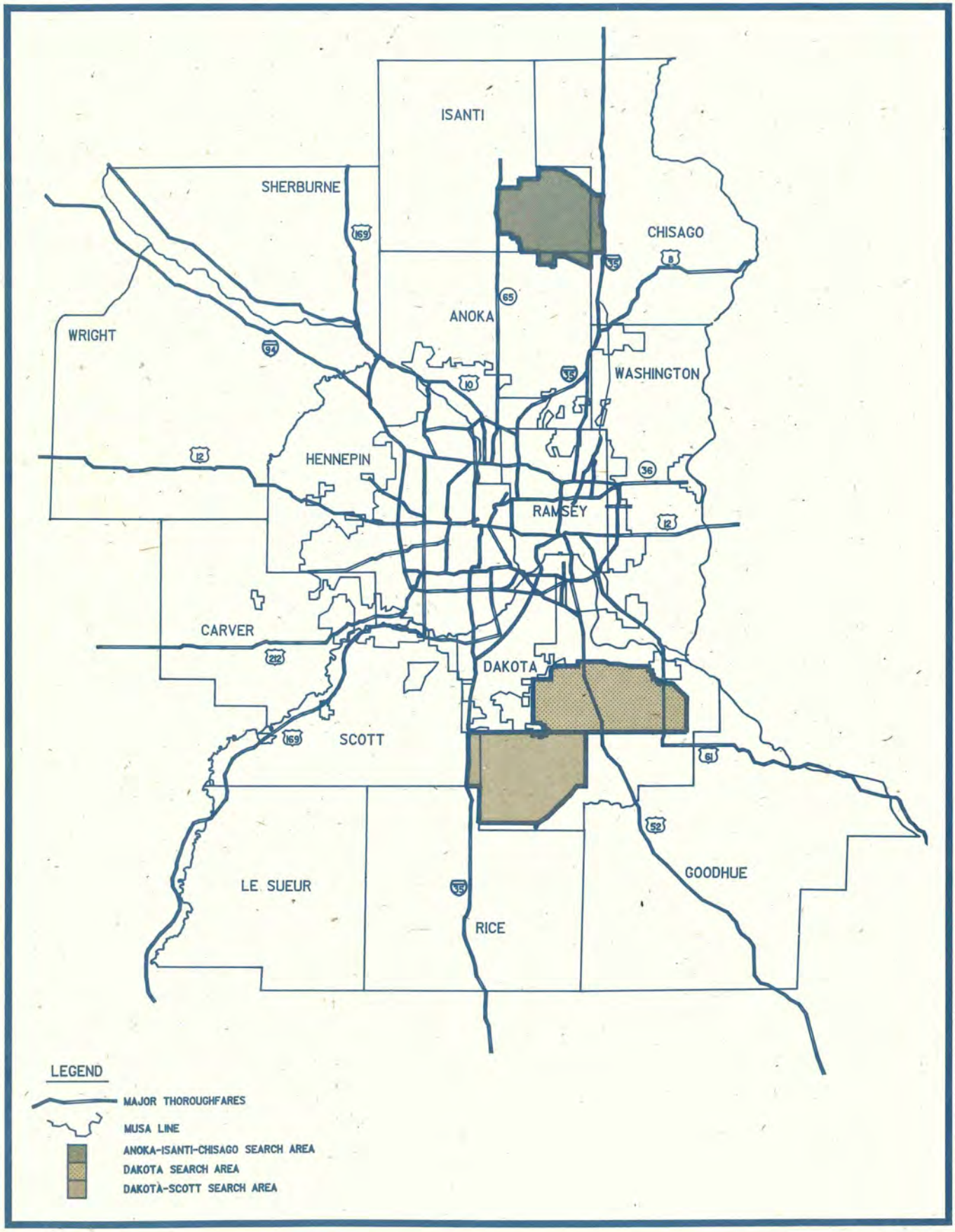
Dakota Candidate Search Area, 115 square miles, located southeast of the Twin Cities in Dakota County; and

Dakota-Scott Candidate Search Area, 113 square miles, located south of the Twin Cities primarily in Dakota County (See Figure 1).

- The candidate search areas were identified using criteria adopted by the Council in May, 1990 upon the recommendation of its 37-member New Airport Search Area Advisory Task Force. The task force also has screened land in the 14-county study area in and around the Twin Cities to determine the availability of land suitable for developing a new major airport. Eight sectors, within the 14-county study area, were studied during the screening process. Portions of three form the candidate search areas.

- The task force and the Council will hold public meetings on the three candidate areas and conduct further analysis during the next 12 months before the Council designates a single, final search area by January 1, 1992. The following phase of the new airport track will be conducted by the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) beginning in 1992. The MAC has up to four years to select a specific site within the final search area, complete development plans and prepare an environmental assessment.

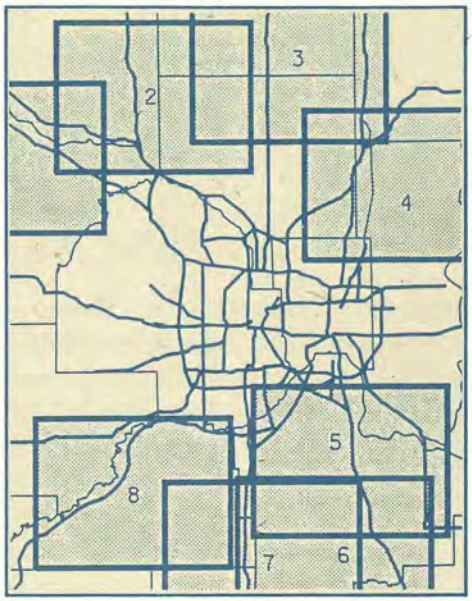
CANDIDATE SEARCH AREAS *Figure 1*



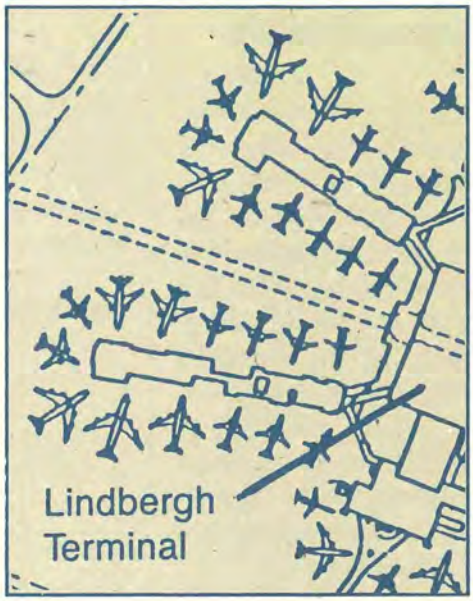
INTRODUCTION

This report contains information on three proposed candidate search areas for a potential new major airport. The search areas are large tracks of land within which an airport site can be selected. Under the Metropolitan Airport Planning Act of 1989, the Metropolitan Council has been charged with identifying a search area for the location of a potential new major airport to serve the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and the State of Minnesota.

New major airport planning is part of a comprehensive process called the dual-track strategy. This strategy is designed to preserve the region's airport options for the future and to decide how best to meet airport capacity needs.



One track focuses on a new airport option. The first phase of this track--the selection of candidate search areas--is the subject of this report. By the end of 1991 a single search area will be designated where a new replacement airport could be located. The Metropolitan Council and its New Major Airport Search Area Advisory Task Force are doing the search-area work. Once a final search has been designated, the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) will do detailed site planning and determine the precise location within the search area where the airport would be located. The MAC will then conduct an environmental evaluation and prepare a detailed plan for the facility.



The second track focuses on possible ways to improve the capacity of the current airport. The MAC is conducting this planning, and is focusing on meeting aviation needs projected to the year 2020.

The studies and recommendations concerning both tracks will converge in 1996 in a report to the legislature by the Council and MAC on how best to address the long-term airport needs of the region. More information about the dual track can be found in *Twin Cities Major-Airport Planning: A Citizen's Guide* available from either the Council or the MAC.

This is the first of a series of three reports which will document progress toward designating a search area.

SELECTION PROCESS METHODOLOGY

Creating a Task Force

In early 1989, the Council created a 37-member New Major Airport Search Area Advisory Task Force to guide the search area designation process. The task force was formed following a day-long community forum that was convened to identify major airport issues and concerns of the broader Twin Cities community. The forum resulted in the identification of issues and several major elements that are key to designating a search area--access, geographic location, environmental impacts, cost and economic development. The factors formed the bases for the search area selection criteria. The task force's membership reflects the diverse interests and viewpoints identified at the forum--major air transport users, airlines, local officials, community groups, environmentalists, business community and economic development interests in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and in Greater Minnesota (See Appendix for roster).

Setting Search Area Selection Criteria

During 1989, the task force reviewed the steps taken by other areas in the country that considered major new airport construction during the past 25 years. The review included the Twin Cities' experience in the late 1960's and early 1970's. Federal and state requirements affecting airports were also reviewed. Search area selection criteria were drafted and reviewed throughout the first half of 1990. The criteria, adopted by the Council in May upon the recommendation of the task force, are as follows:



Metropolitan Access

Ground transportation access by residents and businesses is a primary concern. Accessibility can be measured by the availability of major thoroughfares, by travel times and by physical distance.



Environmental Impacts

The environment is one of the most complex issues that has to be addressed in the siting and development of an airport. Federal and state guidelines, policies and processes have been developed to address the impacts of large scale projects and airport development. Environmental factors that must be addressed include physical features such as wetlands, floodplains and rivers, biological features such as plant and animal habitat, and airport development/operation factors such as noise and air quality. Noise and air quality impacts will be considered in greater detail at the final search area designation and site selection stages.



General Land Requirements

One of the fundamental factors in selecting an airport search area is the size and design of the potential airport. The Metropolitan Airports Commission is to have a new airport conceptual design adopted by Jan. 1, 1991 for use in the designation of a final search area. Selection of candidate search areas has been based on the largest of several alternative conceptual designs.



Airspace Considerations

A new major airport would be the primary airport for the region and have priority for this portion of the national airspace system. The current airport would close if a new airport is built. The airspace relationship to other existing airports would need to be reexamined. There are also specific impacts that will be important at the site selection stage, such as the location of tall towers and power lines.



Search Area Characteristics

Topography and density of development must be considered primarily because of their impact on the cost of development and acquisition. This factor is even more important at the site selection stage.



Policy Considerations

Few policy limits have been placed on the search area process. There are several policy considerations in the search area designation equation. One is governed by federal and state policies for environmental reviews. The second is a state law that says that at least one major or primary metropolitan airport must be as nearly equidistant as possible from the city halls of Minneapolis and St. Paul. This law, however, has not been viewed as an eliminating factor in the search area process. If the best search area does not meet exactly the requirement, the Council and the task force will consider recommending a change to the law.

Reviewing the Availability of Land

As a part of the screening process, the legislature called for a report on whether or not suitable land was available in the 14-county study area for a major new airport.[1] Based on a broad review of geographic information on accessibility, major environmentally sensitive areas and topography, the task force concluded that suitable land is available in the study area for a major new airport. The report was adopted by the task force and approved by the Council in November 1990 for submission to the legislature (See Bibliography).

[1]The 14 counties are Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Goodhue, Hennepin, Isanti, LeSueur, Ramsey, Rice, Scott, Sherburne, Washington and Wright.

Applying the Criteria

The criteria were applied to the information developed as part of the land availability report. Eight geographic sectors were screened to assure consistent and full examination of all the areas in a broad band of land on the north and south sides of the urbanized area. Figure 2 shows the screening sectors. The task force then held seven small group work sessions with the staff and consultants to review each sector in detail and determine its advantages and disadvantages. The following summarizes the application of the criteria.

Sector 1: Wright-Sherburne

Sector 1 is located in the northwestern part of the 14-county study area. This sector is generally well served by major highways, particularly Interstate Hwy. 94, but its distance and travel time from the metropolitan core (Downtown Minneapolis, Downtown St. Paul and Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport [MSP]) are significant drawbacks. The eastern portion of the sector contain significant numbers of lakes, streams and wetlands. The rural densities are high in the eastern portion and lower in the western portion. The sector has sufficient flat land for a new airport site. The sector is not equidistant from the downtowns of Minneapolis and St. Paul and the places where potentially suitable airport sites exist in the western portion exacerbate the equidistant issue.

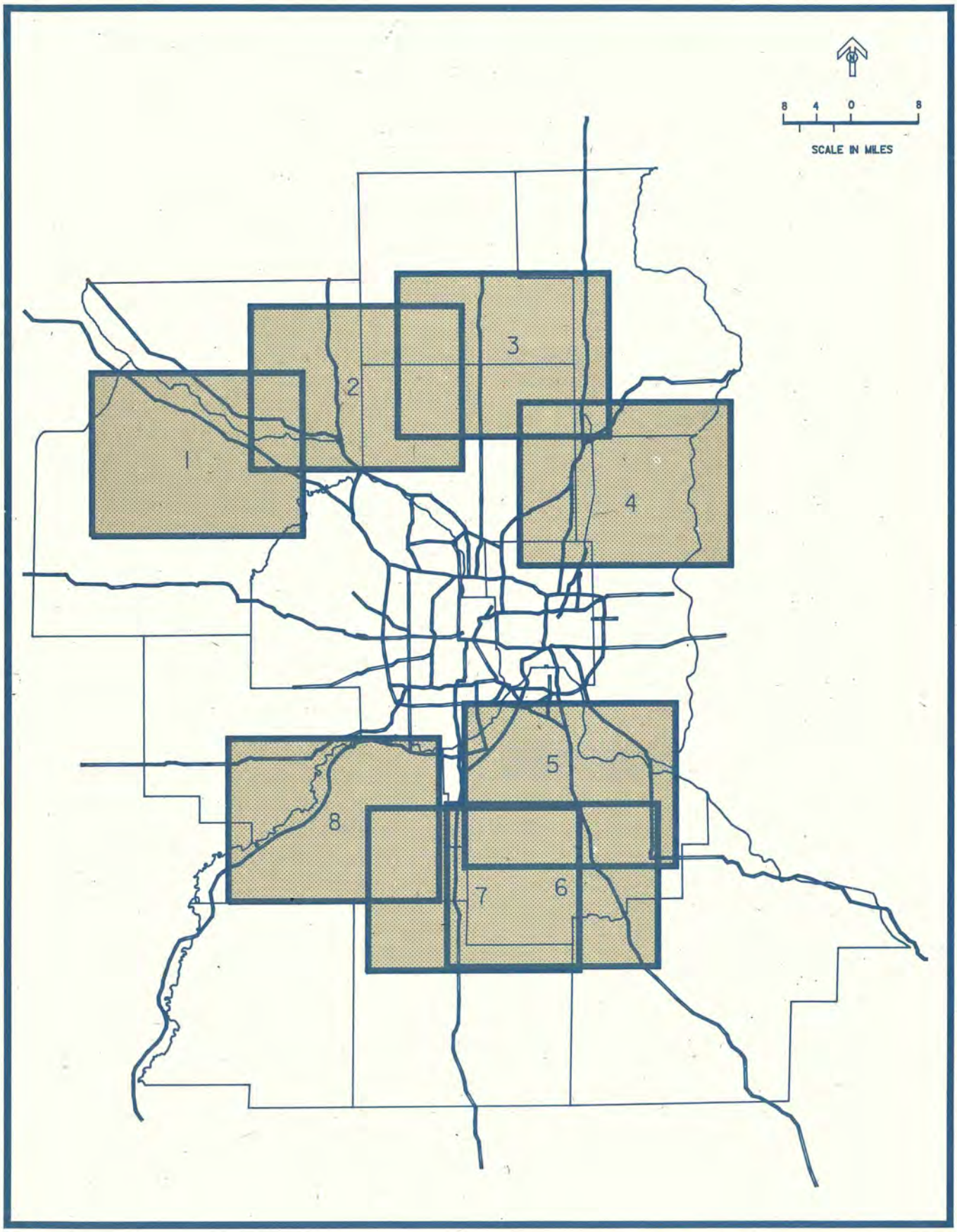
Sector 2: Sherburne-Anoka-Isanti

Sector 2 is situated in the north/northwestern part of the study area. The sector is served by Hwys. 10 and 169, but these thoroughfares do not afford good access to the metropolitan core. These highways are often congested from vacation/recreational travel. There are no interstate freeways in this sector. The environment is a major issue. Wetlands are prevalent in the sector particularly in the Anoka-Isanti portion. There are significant numbers of biotic communities. Biotic communities are plant or animal life of particular concern. The Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge and Sand Dunes State Forest in the western portion of the sector present a significant impedient to the siting of an airport. Significant local topographic relief can be found in the Anoka county portion of the sector. Rural densities are quite high in the areas along the major highways. Combining the screening factors results in limited flexibility for locating a search area in this sector. The best potential exists along Hwy. 169 in the northern portion of the sector. However, this area raises the equidistant issue.

Sector 3: Anoka-Isanti-Chisago

Sector 3 is located in the northern part of the study area. The sector is served by Hwy. 65 in the west and Interstate Hwy. 35 on the east. The sector is approximately 30 miles from the downtowns of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Peak-hour travel time from both downtowns is approximately 60 minutes. The Anoka and western Isanti County portions of the sector, including the Cedar Creek Natural History Area of the University of Minnesota, have significant numbers of wetlands and biotic communities. There are significant numbers of lakes and streams particularly associated with Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Area in the Anoka and Chisago County portions of the sector. The rural densities are very high throughout the Anoka County portion and along Hwy. 65 and I-35. The sector has little topographic relief that would pose a problem in siting an airport. The sector is basically equidistant from the two Twin Cities downtowns. Several possible airport locations appear possible in the southeastern Isanti County portion of the sector.

SCREENING SECTORS *Figure 2*



Sector 4: Anoka-Washington

Sector 4 is situated in the northeastern part of the study area. The sector has good time and distance access via I-35W and I-35E and is the closest to the metropolitan core of the northern sector locations. The sector has very significant environmental issues that could impede and may prevent the location of a new airport. There are a large number of lakes, wetlands, biotic communities and parks in the sector. The proximity of the St. Croix Wild and Scenic River on the east is an important location issue. There are several areas of significant relief in Washington County. Rural densities are quite high as the area is close to the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA). Since I-35W and I-35E converge in the sector, it is generally equidistant to the two Twin Cities downtowns. Overall, it is difficult to find adequate land for an airport search area in the sector.

Sector 5: Dakota

Sector 5 is located in the southeastern part of the study area. The sector is served by Hwy. 52 and Hwy. 61. The sector has very good accessibility from the metropolitan core, including good connections to I-494 and Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP). There are no interstate freeways through the sector. A connection to I-35 will require a new east-west link. There are relatively few environmental issues in this sector, offering flexibility in airport siting. The Minnesota Zoo is located to the northwest outside the sector. The sector is basically flat and there are some localized areas of relief. The rural densities are quite low reflecting the agricultural land uses prevalent throughout the sector. The western boundary of the sector adjoins the MUSA and is a growing suburban residential locale. This may present some problems in orienting an airport site. The sector is generally equidistant to the two downtowns. Overall the sector offers good flexibility for selecting several airport sites.

Sector 6: Dakota-Goodhue

Sector 6 is situated in the southeastern part of the study area and overlaps a large part of Sector 5 on the north. The sector shares many of the characteristics of Sector 5. Hwy. 52 provides highway access on the east and I-35 forms the western border. The sector is further away in distance than Sector 5 but has good thoroughfare access. The rural densities are the lowest among the sectors reflecting the general agricultural base of the sector. There are a number of small streams in the sector. Stream segments have been altered. Drainage ditches reflect the agricultural use of the land. Wetlands and biotic communities are evident primarily in the western and southern edges of the sector. Significant relief is visible on the eastern side of the sector. The sector is generally equidistant from the two downtowns. The central part offers good flexibility for the siting of an airport.

Sector 7: Scott-Rice-Dakota

Sector 7 is found in the southern part of the study area. The eastern half of the sector overlaps Sector 6. I-35 traverses the middle of the sector and provides good access to the metropolitan core. The sector is approximately 30 miles and equidistant from the two downtowns. Environmental concerns are found primarily in the Scott and Rice County portions of the sector where there are significant numbers of wetlands and biotic communities. Significant topographic relief is also evident in the Scott and Rice County portions. Rural densities are low in this agricultural area. The overlap portion with Sector 6 has several potential locations for airport sites.

Sector 8: Carver-Scott

Sector 8 is located in the southwestern part of the study area. Access is provided by Hwy. 169 and I-35 on the eastern edge. However, the sector has relatively poor time access to the metropolitan core. Large numbers of lakes, streams and wetlands are located throughout the sector. The Minnesota River system provides an important wildlife refuge and many biotic communities are found within the river's tributaries. Significant topographical relief exists throughout the sector particularly along the Minnesota River in Carver and Scott Counties. Rural densities are high compared to other southern sectors. There are few potential areas suitable for an airport. The sector is not equidistant from the two downtowns.

Results of Candidate Search Area Screening

The task force used the criteria and reached a consensus on the general location of three candidate search areas in portions of Sectors 3, 5, 6 and 7. The specific boundaries of the candidate search areas were refined following additional technical analysis. Specific boundaries are necessary to apply the Council's guidelines for reviewing land use changes in the candidate and final search areas (See Appendix for technical description and detailed maps).

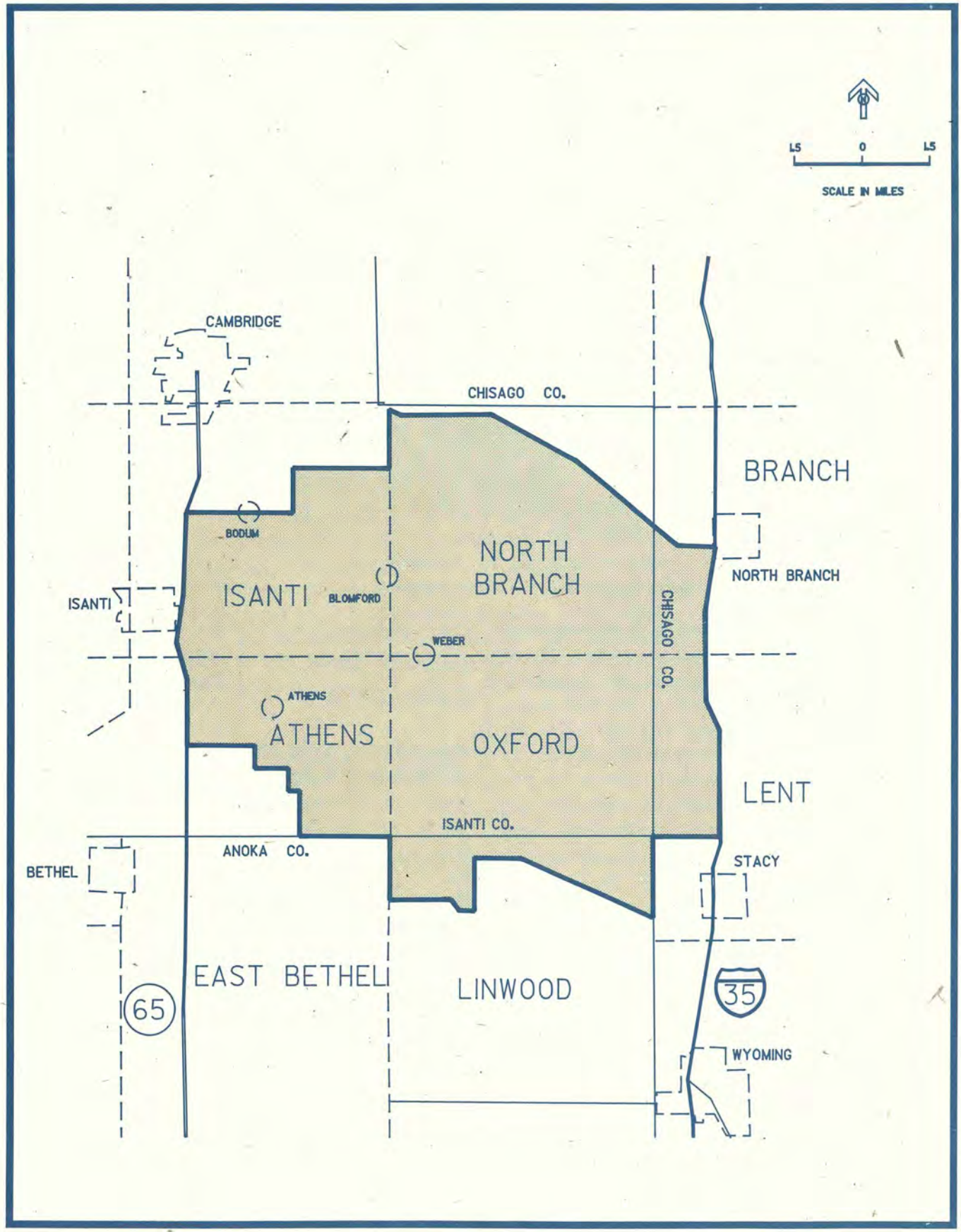
These land use protections are now in effect. Certain land use protections will apply to the final search area until 1997. After the MAC selects a site and the Council approves the site, additional land use controls will take effect. These controls will apply up to five miles from the boundary of an airport site located in the seven county metropolitan area.

Candidate Search Area Descriptions

The three candidate search areas have been identified: Anoka-Isanti-Chisago, Dakota and Dakota-Scott (See Figures 3, 4 and 5, and also see Figures 21, 22, and 23 in the Appendix). They are profiled below. The profile includes a description of their location, a summary of their accessibility (See Figures 6 to 13), environmental concerns (See Figures 14 to 17), and their advantages and disadvantages (see Figures 18 to 20). The size of a final airport site, while considerably smaller than that of a search area, will need to include a buffer zone, potentially out three to five miles, encircling the final airport site. A site can be located anywhere in a search area.

ANOKA-ISANTI-CHISAGO CANDIDATE SEARCH AREA

Figure 3



Location

The Anoka-Isanti-Chisago candidate search area is centered on Isanti County north of the Twin Cities (see Figure 3). The area is roughly 11 miles east-west, and 11 miles north-south. Its southern border edges into northern Anoka County and its eastern border extends slightly into Chisago County. The area contains approximately 102 square miles, or 65,000 acres. It is located generally southeast of Cambridge, southwest of North Branch, northwest of Stacy and northeast of Bethel. The portions of the area with the best potential for an airport site are located outside the seven-county metropolitan area.

The search area consists of all the land located within an area with the following boundaries: starting at the northwest corner of the area, its northern boundary begins at the intersection of Hwy. 65 and Isanti County Rd. 19, just south of Cambridge, and runs east along County Rd. 19, north on County Rd. 12 and east again on Hwy. 95 to I-35 in Chisago County. The eastern boundary follows I-35 south to just north of Stacy. Its southern boundary goes west following the Anoka County line, dips south into Anoka County, continues west again following the Anoka County line, then curves northwest into Isanti County along Isanti County Rd. 56 to Hwy. 65. The western boundary runs north along Hwy. 65 back up to the starting point, County Rd. 19.

Access

The Anoka-Isanti-Chisago candidate search area is served by Hwy. 65 in the west and I-35 in the east. The area is located about 35 miles north of both Minneapolis and St. Paul downtowns, providing equal access to both city centers. Barring additional transportation improvements by the year 2010, peak-hour travel time from the downtowns to the area would be about 70 minutes. It is the farthest search area from MSP, at about 45 miles away. Peak-hour travel time from MSP would be about 70 to 75 minutes. The area does not provide good access to Rochester or Mankato, but it is about 60 miles from St. Cloud.

Environment

There are some lakes in the southeastern portion of the search area and some wetlands throughout the area, particularly in its northern portion. Biotic communities are found primarily in association with wetlands and lakes. The search area is close to the Carlos Avery State Wildlife Management Area to the south, and the University of Minnesota's Cedar Creek Natural History Area to the south and west. Also to the south is the Anoka and Isanti Counties Game Refuge. Two other smaller wildlife areas are nearby. One is to the south and the other, the Athens State Wildlife Area, is just outside the area's western boundary. A small wildlife area lies within the southern part of the search area.

Advantages and Disadvantages

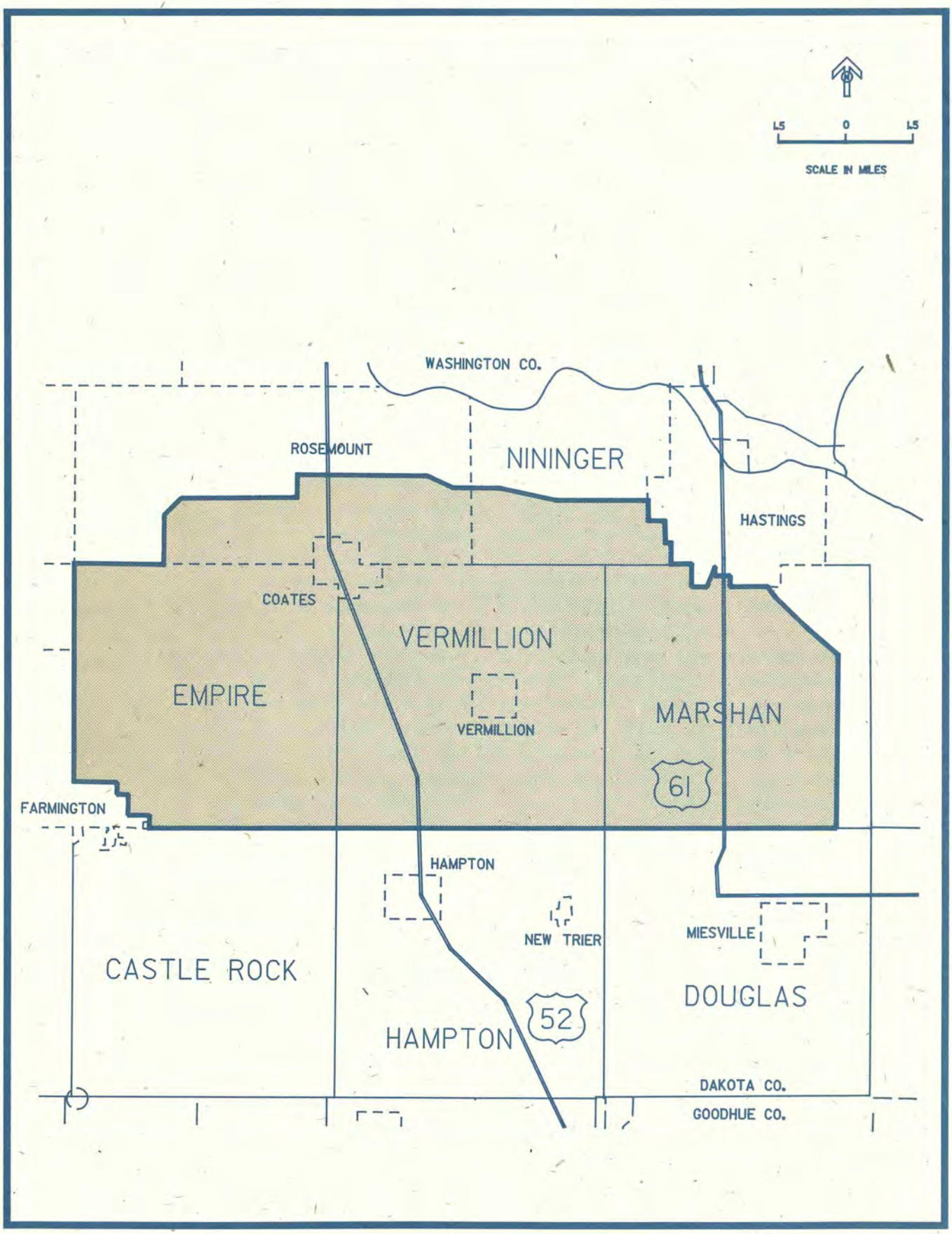
The Anoka-Isanti-Chisago candidate search area has good access to population centers to the south via I-35 and Hwy. 65. The area is essentially equidistant from Minneapolis and St. Paul downtowns. Some areas of low density exist within the search area, and there are fewer wetlands and lakes in the area's western portion. There are several possible airport orientations in the central Isanti County portion of the area.

Among the disadvantages are numerous environmental concerns. They include a large number of wetlands in some areas, proximity to the Carlos Avery Wildlife Refuge and the University of Minnesota Cedar Creek Natural History Area. The area has a relatively high water table. It contains a large number of biotic communities, and a large population of birds and water fowl.

Other disadvantages include relatively high household densities throughout the Anoka County portion and along Hwy. 65 and I-35. The area also is located a significant distance from the region's population centers.

DAKOTA CANDIDATE SEARCH AREA

Figure 4



Location

This Dakota candidate search area is located completely within Dakota County (See Figure 4). The area is roughly 17 miles east and west, and 8 miles north and south. It covers about 115 square miles, or 74,000 acres. It comprises major parts of Empire, Vermillion, Nininger and Marshan Townships. The search area is generally located east of Farmington, south of Rosemount (including a southern portion of Rosemount), southwest of Hastings, and north of Miesville, New Trier and Hampton.

The search area consists of all land located within an area with the following boundaries: starting at the area's northwest corner, the area's northern boundary begins at a point where Lakeville, Apple Valley and Rosemount all meet. The boundary runs east along the southern city limits of Rosemount, moves north into the southern portion of Rosemount and continues east along W. 145th St., E. 140th St. and finally Hwy. 55 to Hastings. The eastern boundary follows the Hastings city limits southeast to Hwy. 316, follows Hwy. 316 southeast to County Rd. 91, and then follows it south to E. 220th St. The southern boundary follows 220th St. west all the way to Farmington. The western boundary runs northwest around Farmington and then north along the border between Farmington and Empire Twp. to Rosemount, the starting point.

Access

The Dakota candidate search area is the closest to the Twin Cities. It is located just under 20 miles from downtown St. Paul and about 25 miles from downtown Minneapolis. Peak-hour travel time in 2010 would be about 35 to 40 minutes from downtown St. Paul and about 40 to 45 minutes from downtown Minneapolis depending on the location of the site within the search area. It is the closest of the search areas to MSP. It is About 15 to 20 miles from MSP. The area's peak-hour travel time from MSP would be about 35 minutes. This search area provides good access to Rochester and Mankato, (just under 50 miles), but is not convenient to St. Cloud.

Environment

As an active farming area, the Dakota candidate search area has few wetlands, except for the southwestern portion near tributaries of the Vermillion River. No lakes of substantial size exist within the area. The area has few biotic communities. The area is traversed by the Vermillion River and the northern portions of the area are close to the Mississippi and Lower St. Croix Rivers. The area contains the Bellwood State Game Refuge near its eastern border, and Spring Lake Park and the Hastings Wildlife Management Area are located just to the north of the area.

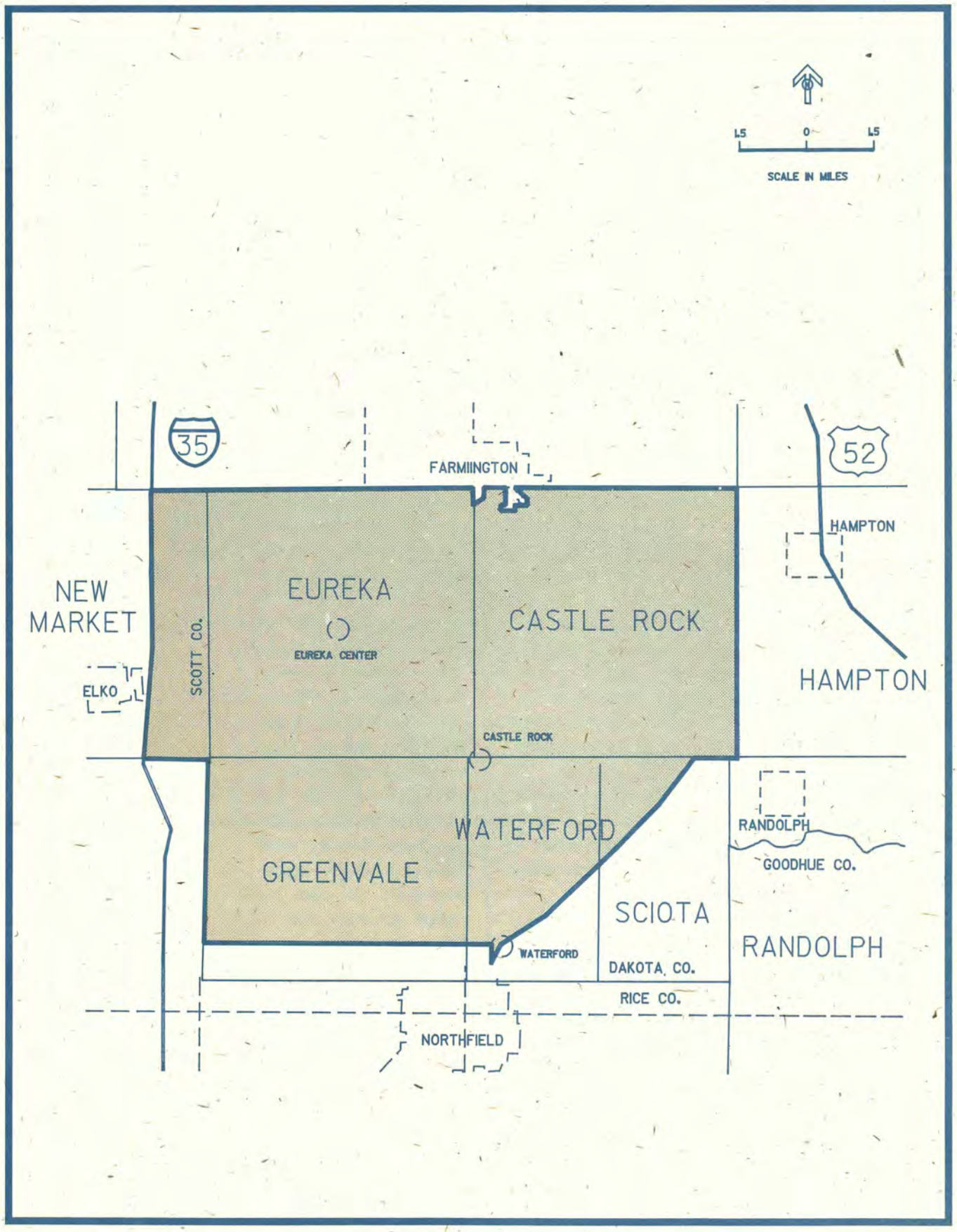
Advantages and Disadvantages

Among the advantages of the Dakota candidate search area are its relative lack of wetlands and biotic communities, its flat topography, and limited environmental constraints east of Vermillion and in the Coates area. The area has generally low household density. The distances to Minneapolis and St. Paul downtowns are not to far. More access could be created by extending Cedar Av. and Lafayette Freeway. The Pine Bend Refinery could serve as a buffer to an airport site. The area has several potential sites, offering flexibility.

Among the disadvantages is the presence of commercial farmland, some of which would be taken for airport use. The eastern portion of the search area is close to Hastings and close to the St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers. Access is primarily limited to one major north-south road, Hwy. 52, which would require upgrading. A road connection to I-35 probably would be needed. The Minnesota Zoo is located to northwest of the area. The area also includes the location of the proposed Dakota County solid waste resource recovery plant near Coates.

DAKOTA-SCOTT CANDIDATE SEARCH AREA

Figure 5



Location

The Dakota-Scott search area is located almost completely in Dakota County, but extends slightly into eastern Scott County (See Figure 5). The search area is roughly 13 miles east and west, and 10 miles north and south. It covers approximately 113 square miles, or 72,000 acres. The area is generally east of Hwy. I-35, south of Lakeville and Farmington, west of Hampton and Randolph, and north of Northfield.

The search area consists of all land located within an area with the following boundaries: starting at the northwest corner of the area, the northern boundary begins at the intersection of I-35 and the Lakeville city limits. The boundary runs east, following the southern city limits of Lakeville and Farmington, and continues east along Hwy. 50 to the eastern boundary of Castle Rock Twp. The area's eastern boundary runs south along the eastern boundary of Castle Rock Twp. to W. 280th St. The southern boundary runs west along 280th St., then southwest following County Rd. 47 (Northfield Blvd.) to Hwy. 3, where it jogs north to County Rd. 96, which it follows west to the Dakota-Rice County line. The western boundary runs north along the Dakota-Rice County line to W. 280th St., where it jogs west briefly to I-35 and then continues north to the starting point at County Rd. 9 at Lakeville.

Access

The Dakota-Scott candidate search area is located just under 30 miles from both Minneapolis and St. Paul downtowns, providing equal access to both city centers. Peak-hour travel time from those city centers to the area would be about 50 to 55 minutes. The area is located about 25 miles from MSP, with a peak-hour travel time of about 40 minutes. The area provides good access to Rochester and Mankato (just under 50 miles), but the location is not convenient to St. Cloud.

Environment

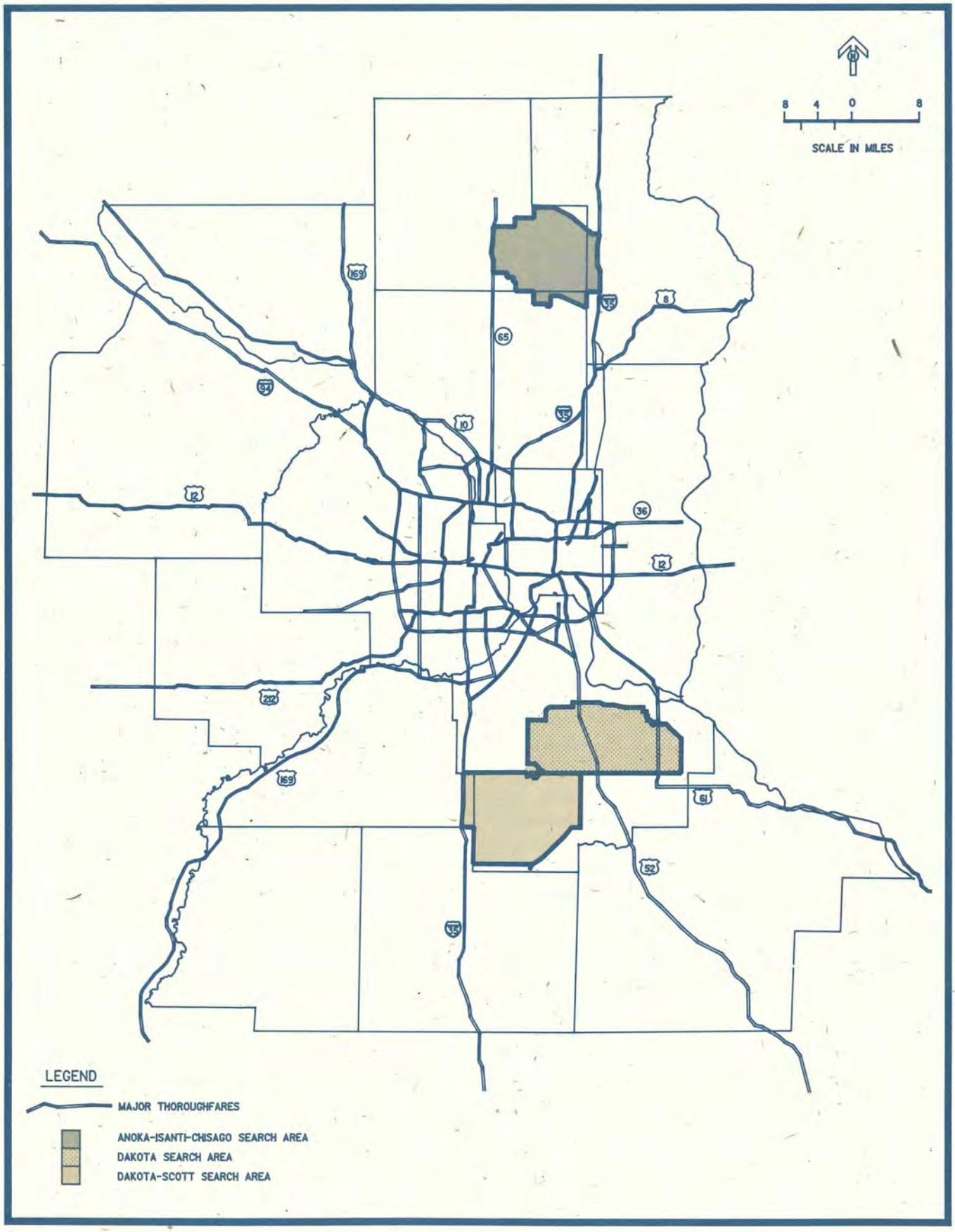
Another area of active farming, the Dakota-Scott candidate search area has portions with few wetlands and only a few lakes. The largest is Chub Lake. The Vermillion River traverses the northwestern section of the area and Chub Creek crosses the southern portion. None of the rivers within the area are prone to flooding. Few biotic communities are located in the area, although the Carlton College State Game Refuge is located just to the south.

Advantages and Disadvantages

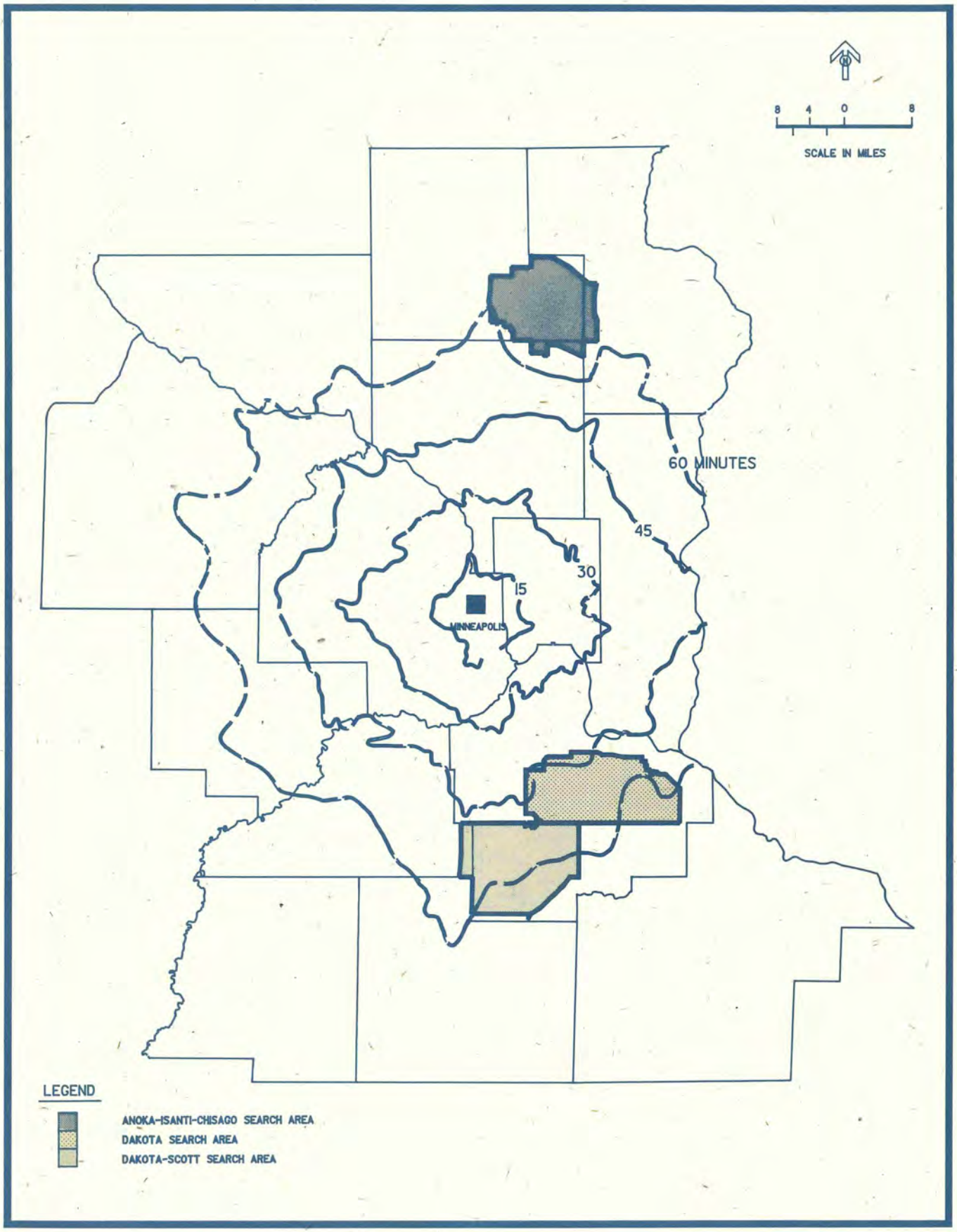
Among the strengths of the Dakota-Scott candidate search area are its relative lack of biotic communities and few wetlands in its eastern portion. The area has good access from Cedar Av., Hwy. 3, and I-35, which forms its western boundary. The area is essentially equidistant from Minneapolis and St. Paul downtowns. The area has low housing density and flight patterns would be better able to avoid the developed and developing portions of the region. Good potential for sites exists in the area.

Weaknesses include the wetlands and hilly areas that increase in number in the western portion of the area. The area is relatively distant from Metro Area population centers, particularly the northern and northwestern portions. Access across the I-35 bridge over the Minnesota River would need to be improved.

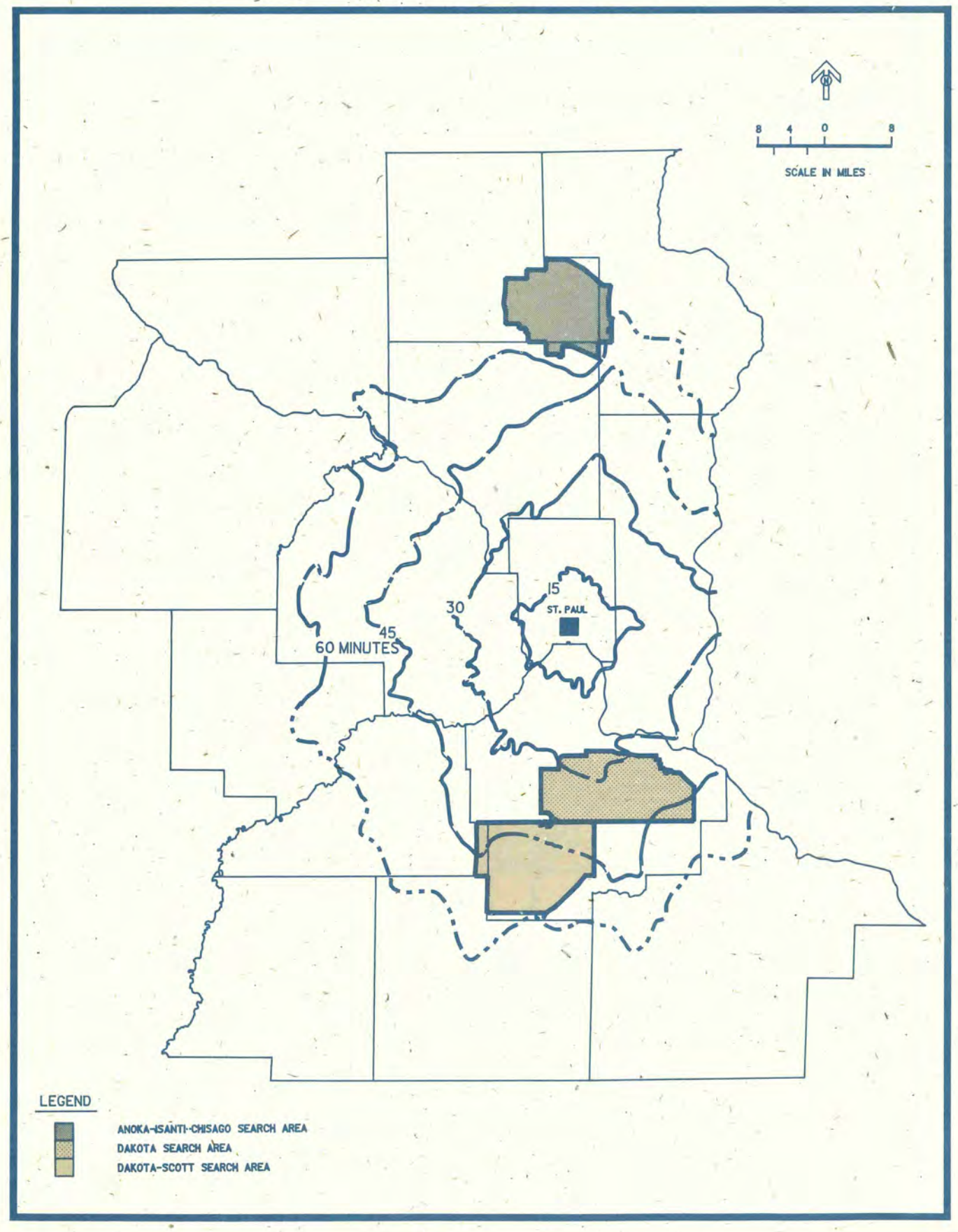
MAJOR THOROUGHFARES *Figure 6*



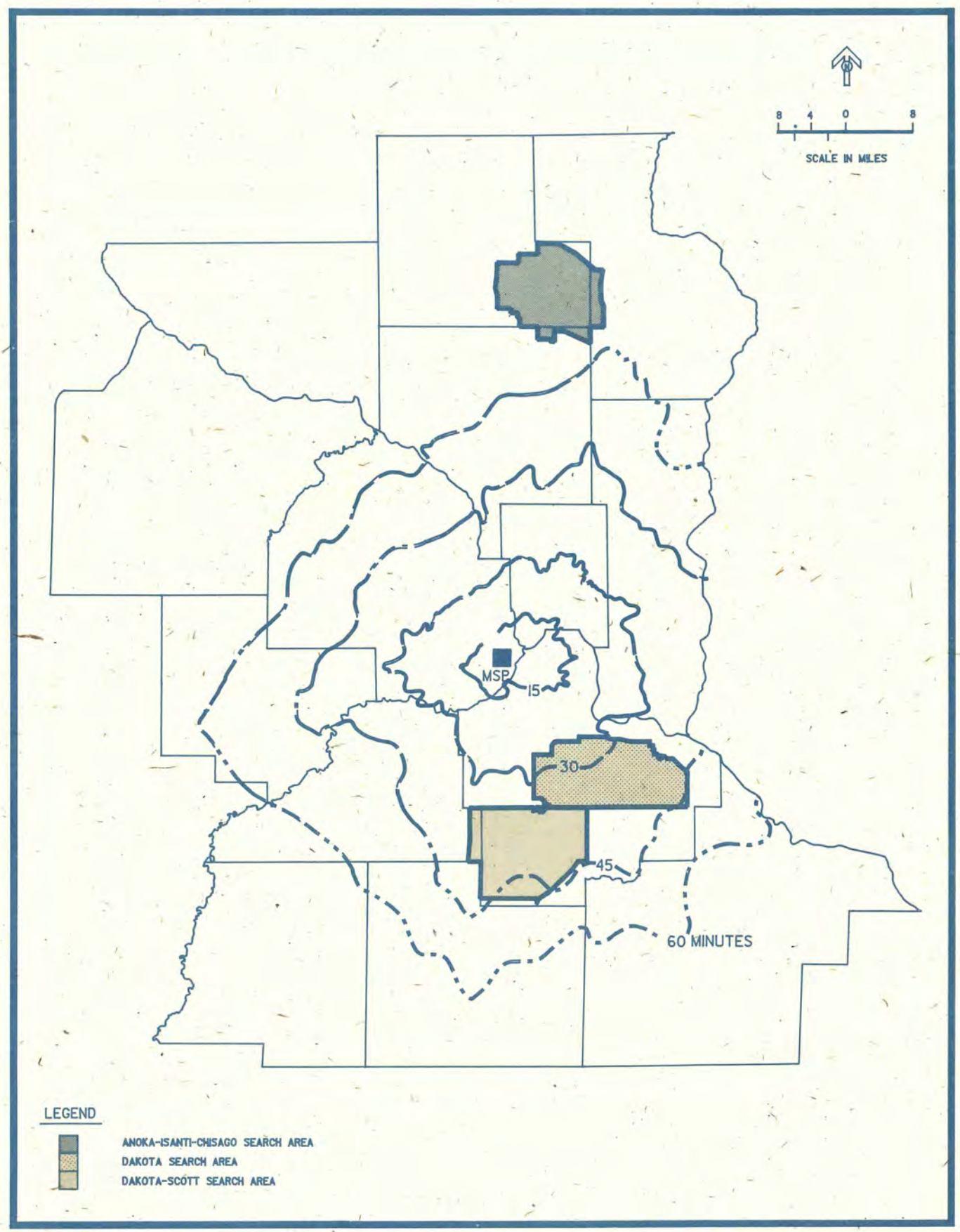
2010 PEAK HOUR TRAVEL FROM MINNEAPOLIS CBD *Figure 7*



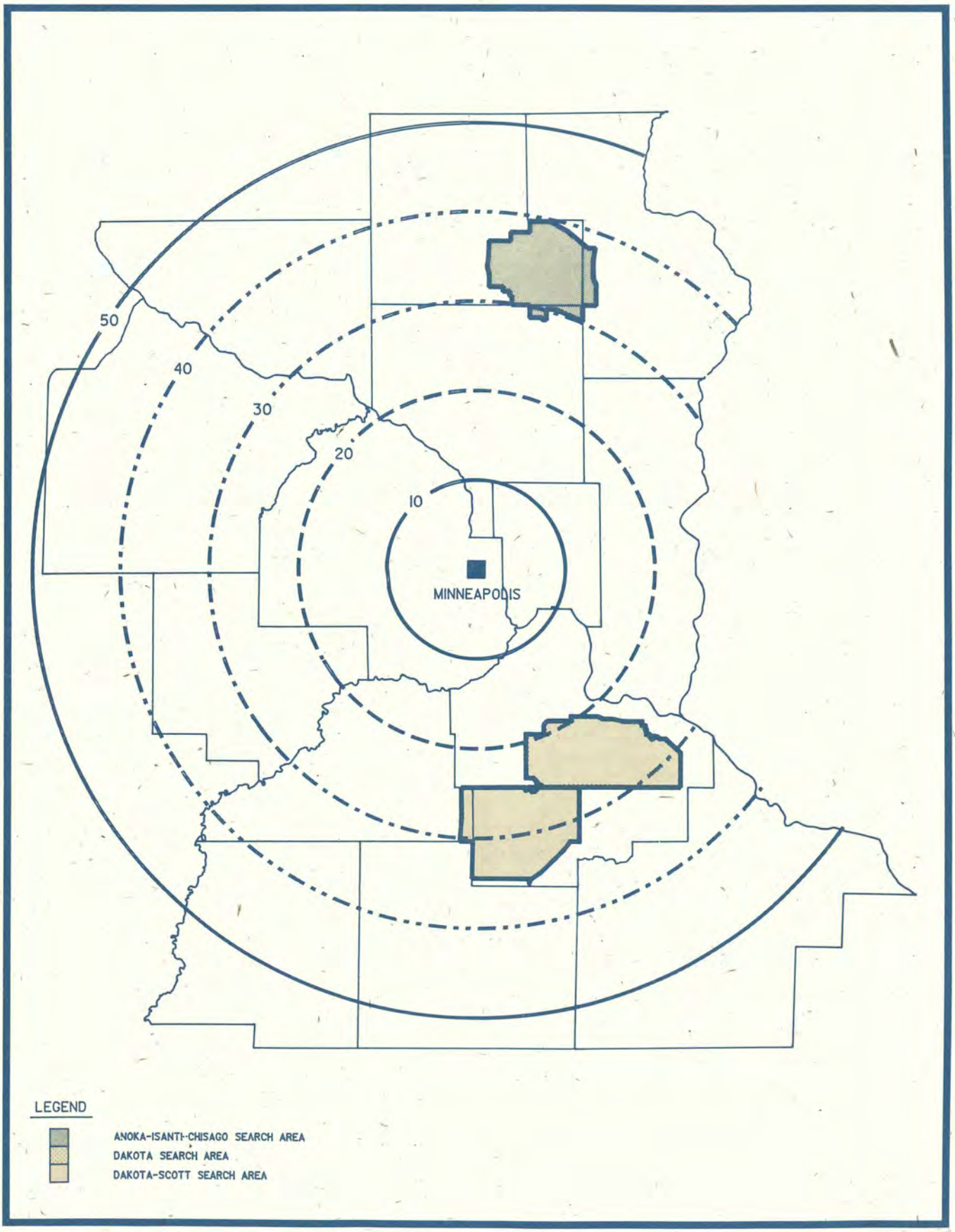
2010 PEAK HOUR TRAVEL TIME FROM ST. PAUL CBD *Figure 8*



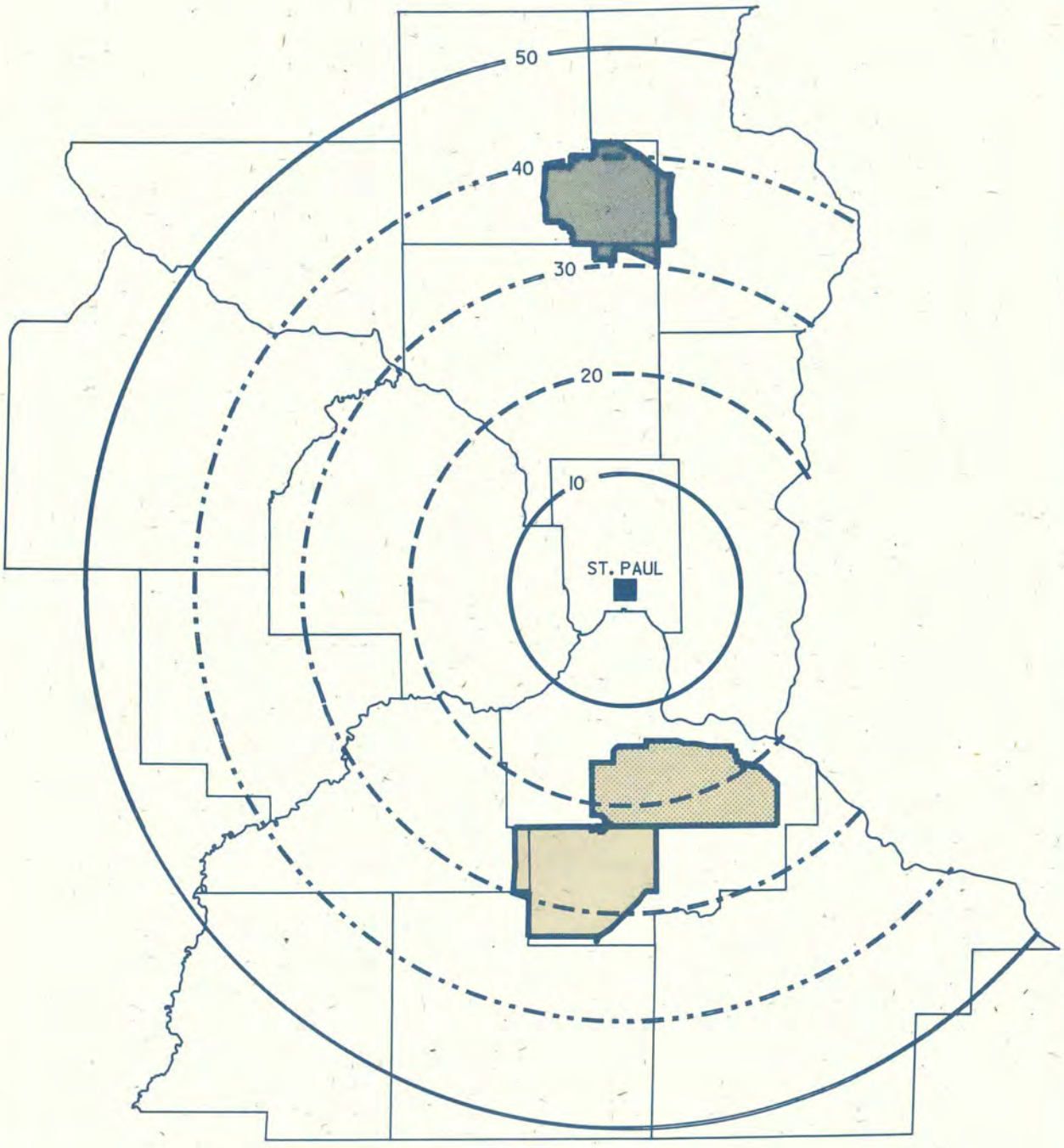
2010 PEAK HOUR TRAVEL TIME FROM MSP *Figure 9*



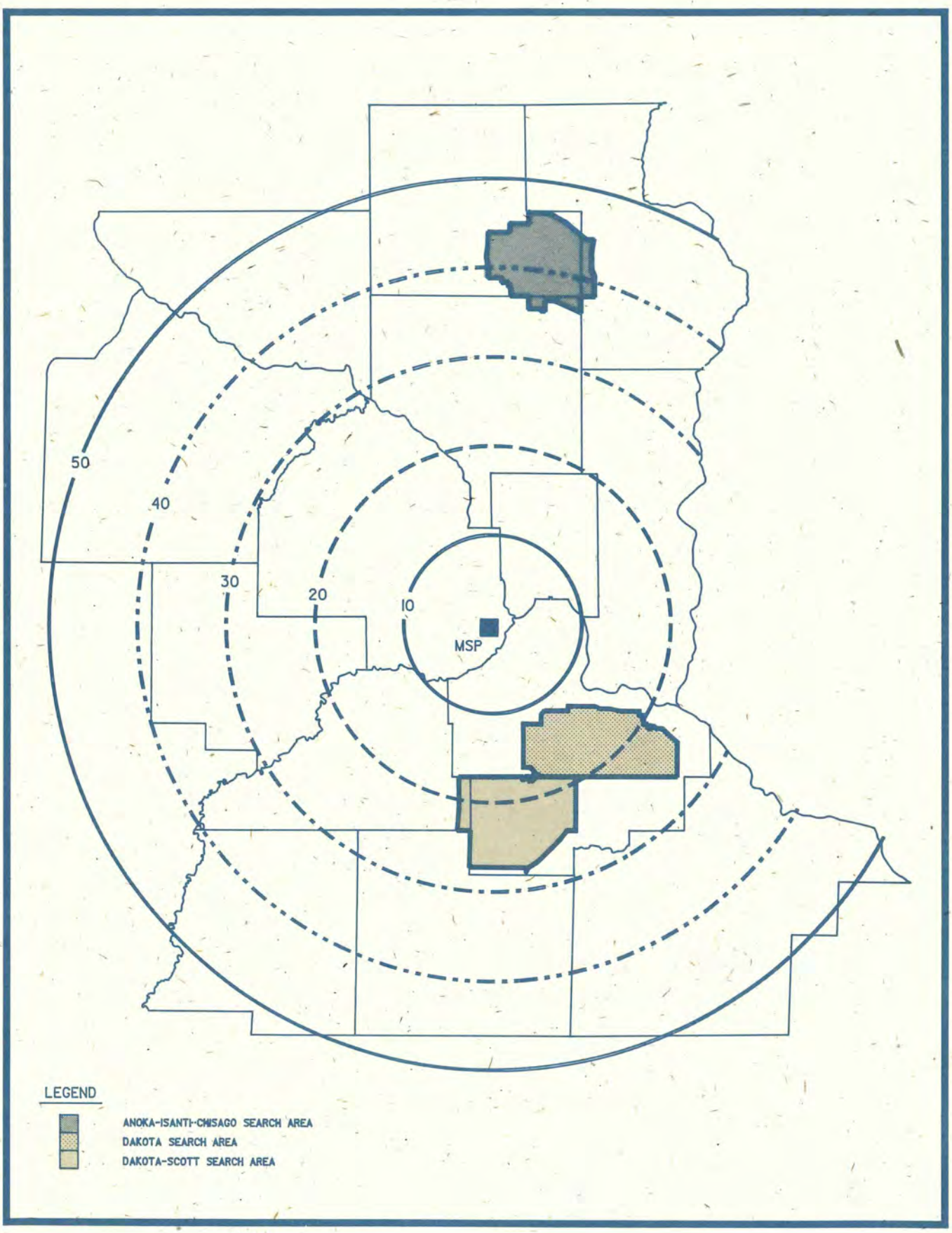
MILES FROM MINNEAPOLIS CBD *Figure 10*



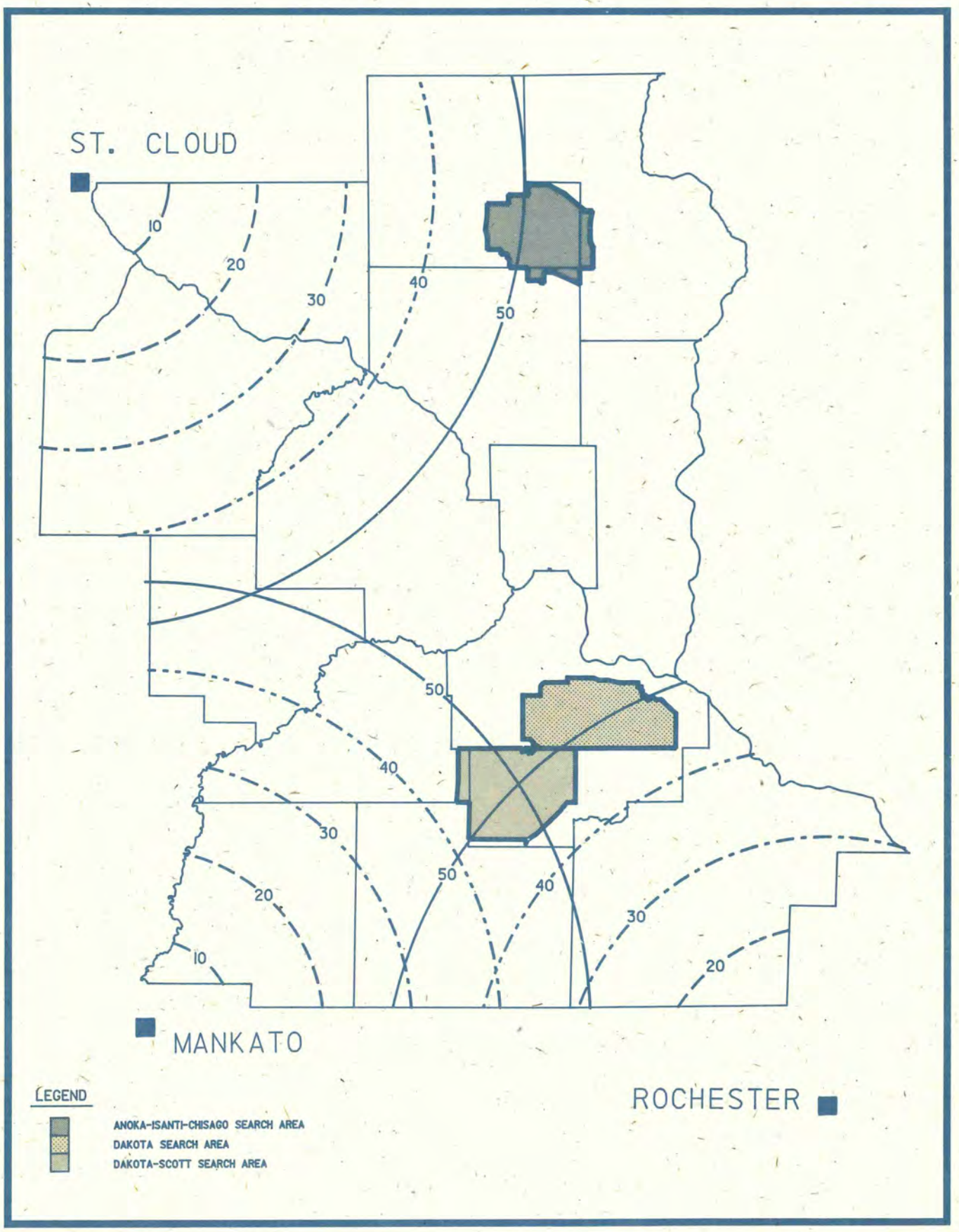
MILES FROM ST. PAUL CBD *Figure 11*



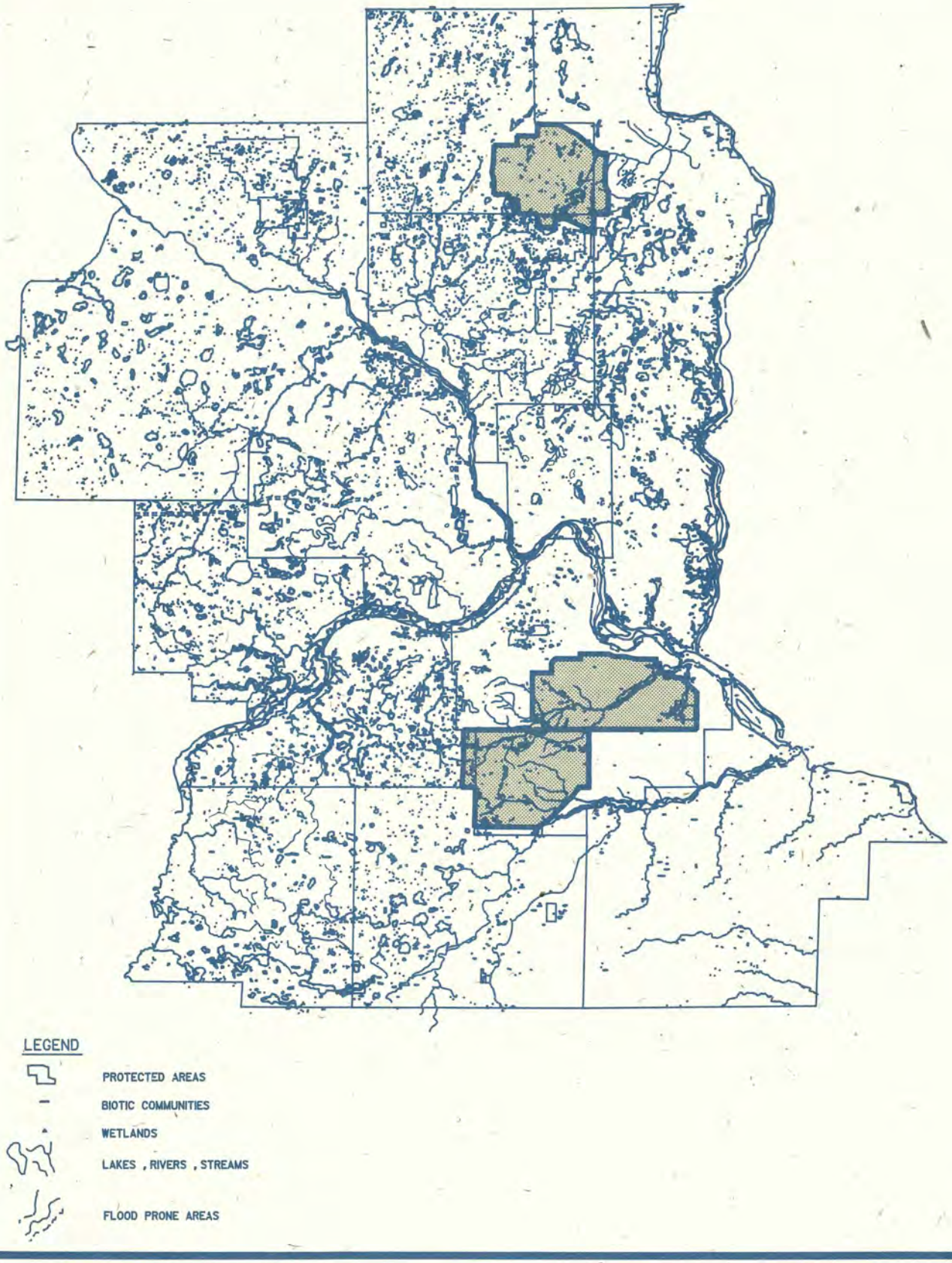
MILES FROM MSP *Figure 12*



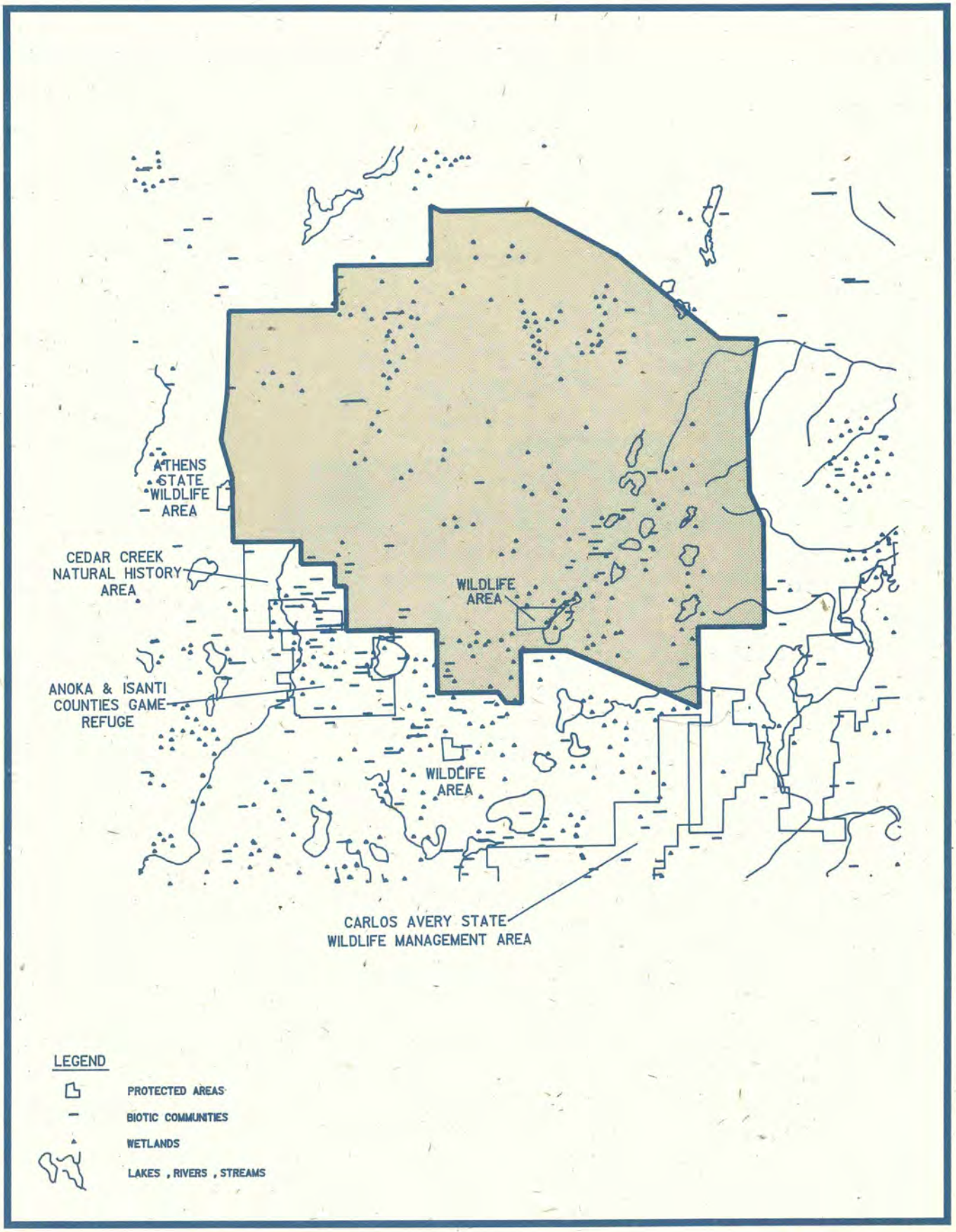
MILES FROM MANKATO, ST. CLOUD, ROCHESTER *Figure 13*



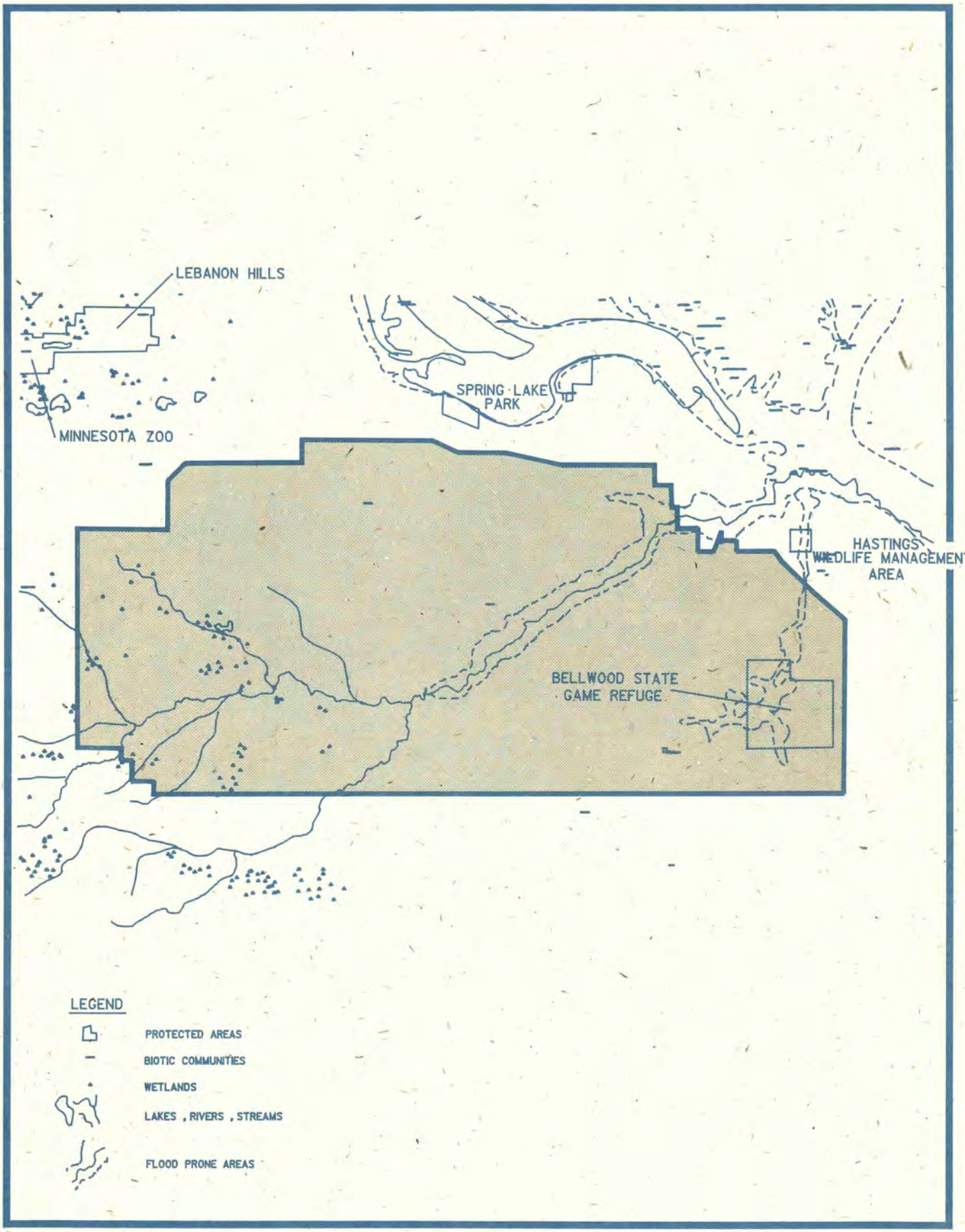
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS *Figure 14*



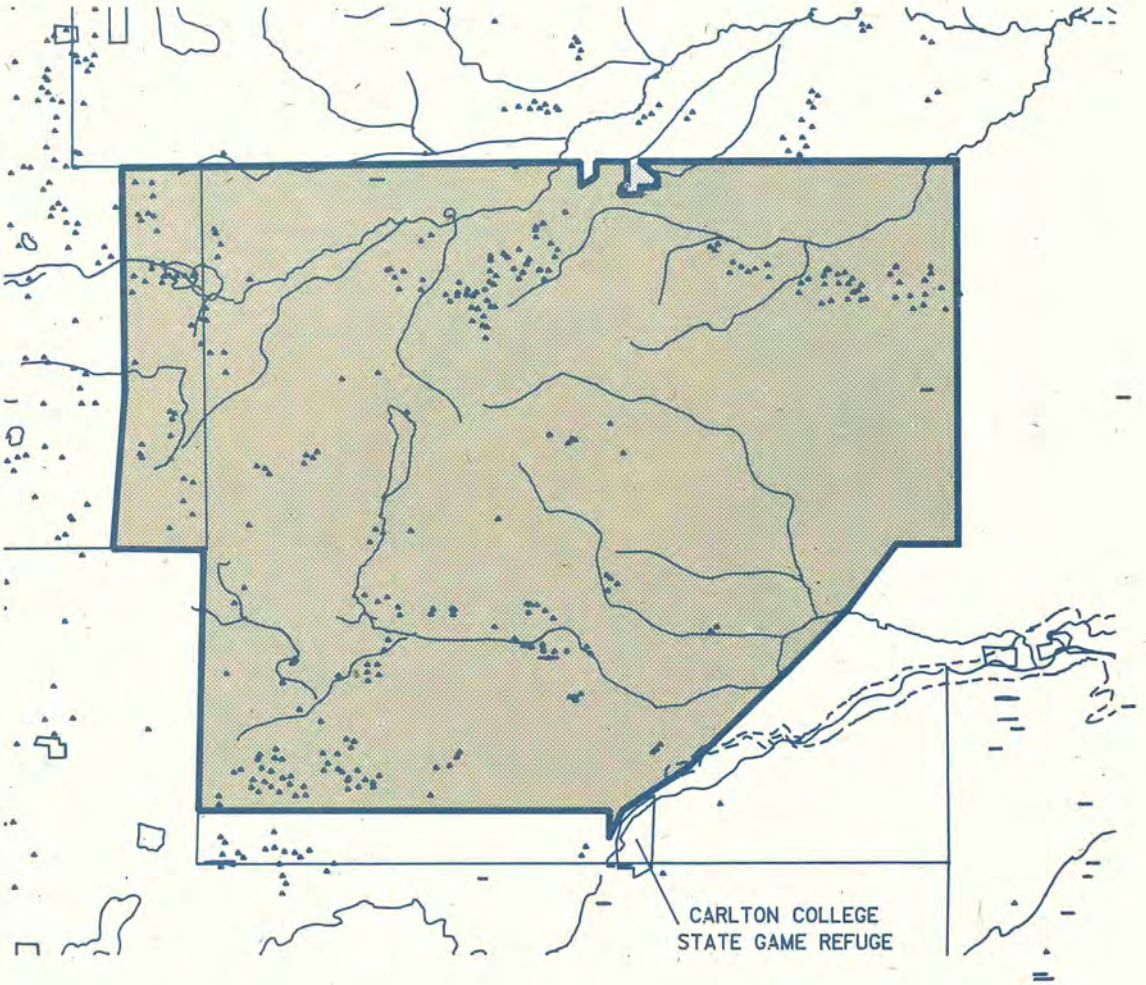
ANOKA - ISANTI - CHISAGO SEARCH AREA *Figure 15*



DAKOTA SEARCH AREA *Figure 16*



DAKOTA - SCOTT SEARCH AREA *Figure 17*

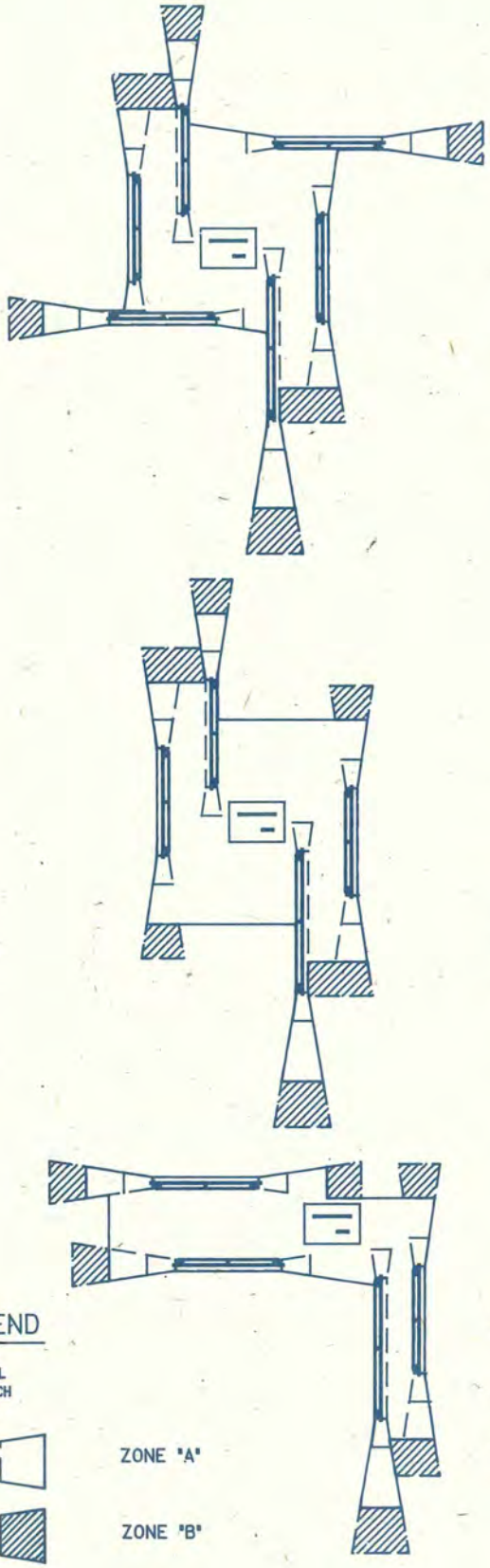


LEGEND

- PROTECTED AREAS
- BIOTIC COMMUNITIES
- WETLANDS
- LAKES , RIVERS , STREAMS
- FLOOD PRONE AREAS

PRELIMINARY NEW AIRPORT CONCEPTS *Figure 18*

CONCEPTS SHOWN
NOT TO SCALE



CONCEPT 1

ZONE "A" - AIRPORT BOUNDARY INCLUDED IN ZONE "A" - 9369 AC.

ZONE "B" - 1804 AC.

TOTAL - 11173 AC.

CONCEPT 2

ZONE "A" - AIRPORT BOUNDARY INCLUDED IN ZONE "A" - 9027 AC.

ZONE "B" - 1789 AC.

TOTAL - 10816 AC.

CONCEPT 3

ZONE "A" - AIRPORT BOUNDARY INCLUDED IN ZONE "A" - 7277 AC.

ZONE "B" - 1601 AC.

TOTAL - 8878 AC.

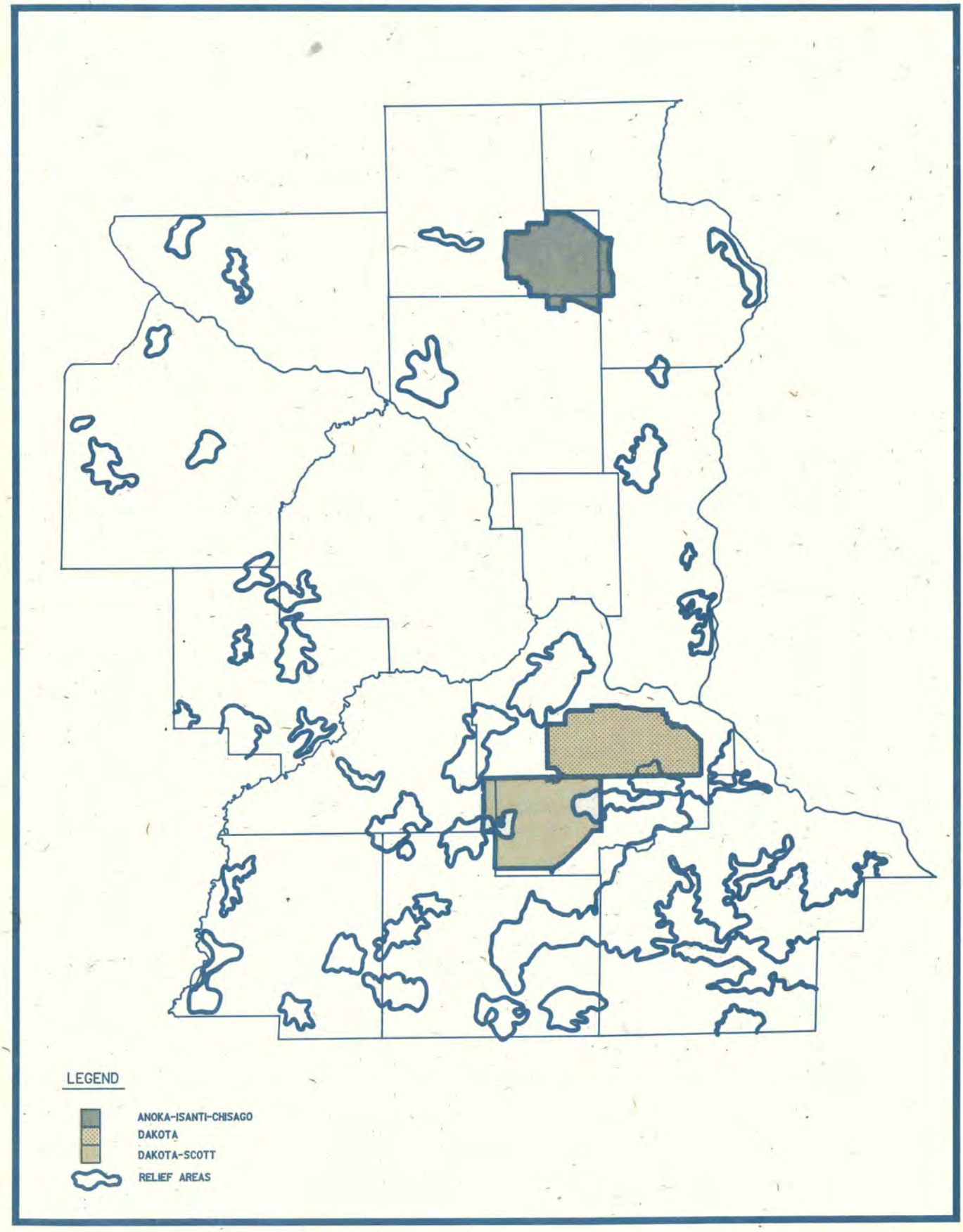
LEGEND

FEDERAL APPROACH ZONE

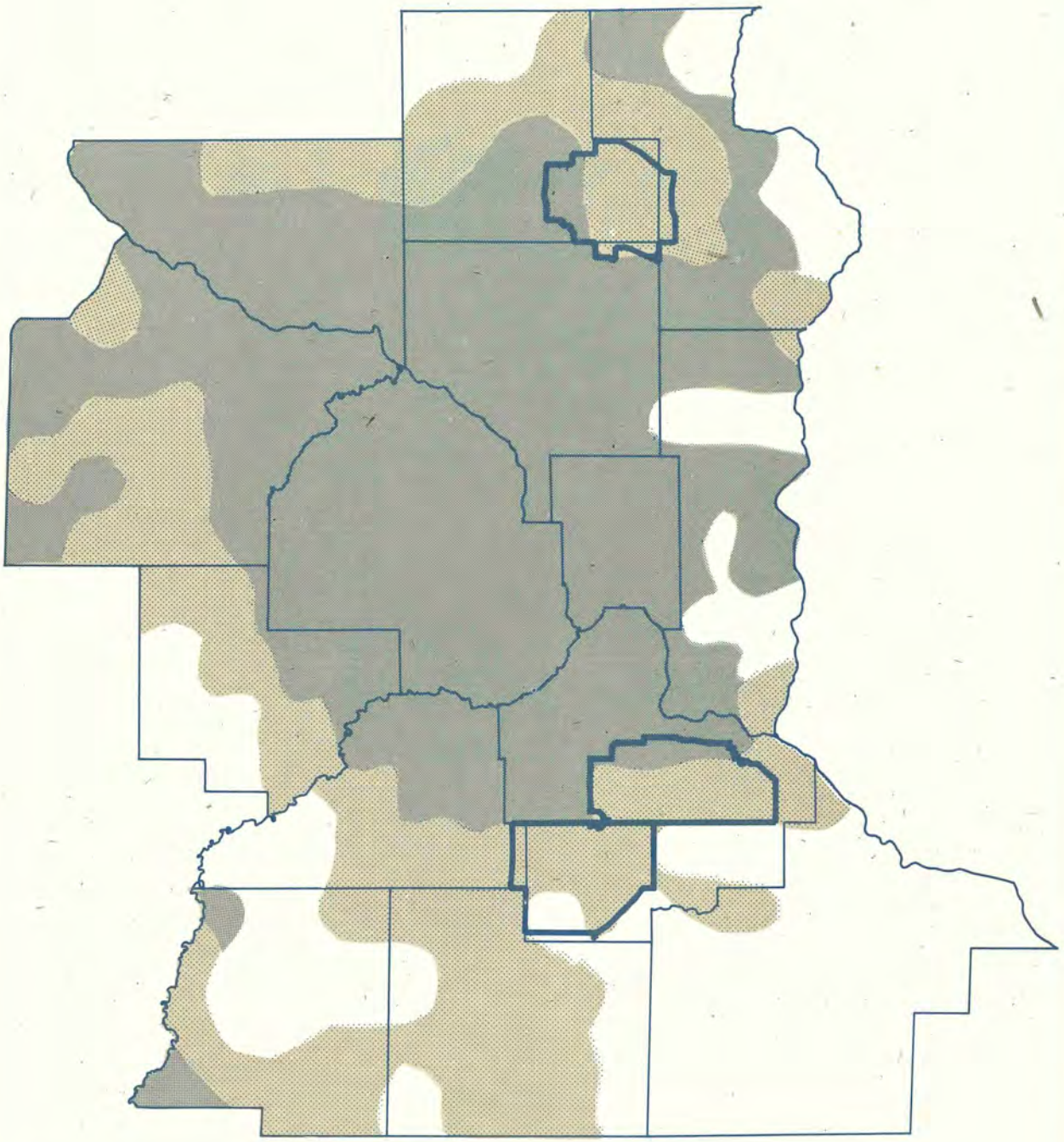
ZONE "A"

ZONE "B"

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANT RELIEF *Figure 19*



RURAL HOUSEHOLD DENSITIES *Figure 20*



THE NEXT STEPS IN THE DESIGNATION PROCESS

The task force and the Council are forums through which the region can get the information it needs to evaluate the candidate search areas and to move toward consensus on a single search area. As a result, the process for the next 12 months is an open one, and there will be many opportunities for groups, individuals, public agencies and officials to provide and share information and to be heard. A general schedule follows. Interested parties can get on a mailing list to get notices of major meetings. Organizations should contact the Council for special meetings. Call the Council at 291-6359 for more information.

Jan.-March 1991	Public agencies review candidate search areas and provide information as part of environmental evaluation of the areas.
Feb.-March 1991	Public meetings in each candidate search area, series of meetings with local officials, local groups, and interested parties, and meetings throughout area.
June 1991	Task Force proposes one search area.
July-Aug. 1991	Task Force holds public meetings on recommended search area.
Sept. 1991	Task Force recommends final search area to Council.
Oct.-Nov. 1991	Public meetings and public hearing on recommended search area.
Dec. 1991	Council designates final search area.
Jan. 1992	MAC begins a study of up to four years to select a site within the search area and to prepare a plan for a new possible airport.

APPENDIX

Technical Description of Candidate Search Areas and Detailed Maps

Anoka-Isanti-Chisago Candidate Search Area

All land within an area with boundaries described as follows: Beginning at a point at the intersection of the centerline of Highway 65 and County Road 19; thence easterly and northerly along the centerline of County Road 19 to the centerline of County Road 12; thence northerly along said centerline to the centerline of Highway 95; thence southerly and easterly along said centerline to the centerline of Interstate Highway 35; thence southerly along said centerline to the centerline of 245 Avenue Northeast; thence westerly along said centerline to the centerline of County Road 11 ; thence southerly along said centerline toe the centerline of Ryan Lake Drive Northeast; thence northwesterly along said centerline to the centerline of 237th Avenue Northeast; thence westerly along said centerline to the centerline of Typo Creek Drive; thence southerly along said centerline to the centerline of 227th Avenue Northeast; thence westerly and northerly along said centerline to the centerline of 229th Avenue Northeast; thence westerly along said centerline to the centerline of Sunset Road Northeast; thence northerly along said centerline to the Anoka County - Isanti County Border; thence westerly along said county border to the southeast corner of Section 22, Township 34N, Range 23W, Isanti County; thence northerly to the northeast corner of Section 22, Township 34N, Range 23W, Isanti County; thence westerly along the northern boundary of said Section 22 to the centerline of County Road 56; thence northerly and westerly along said centerline to the centerline of State Highway 65; thence northerly to the point of beginning; all roads, streets, highways, and political jurisdiction boundaries as they exist as of December 21, 1990; all being in the Counties of Anoka, Chisago or Isanti, Minnesota.

Dakota Candidate Search Area

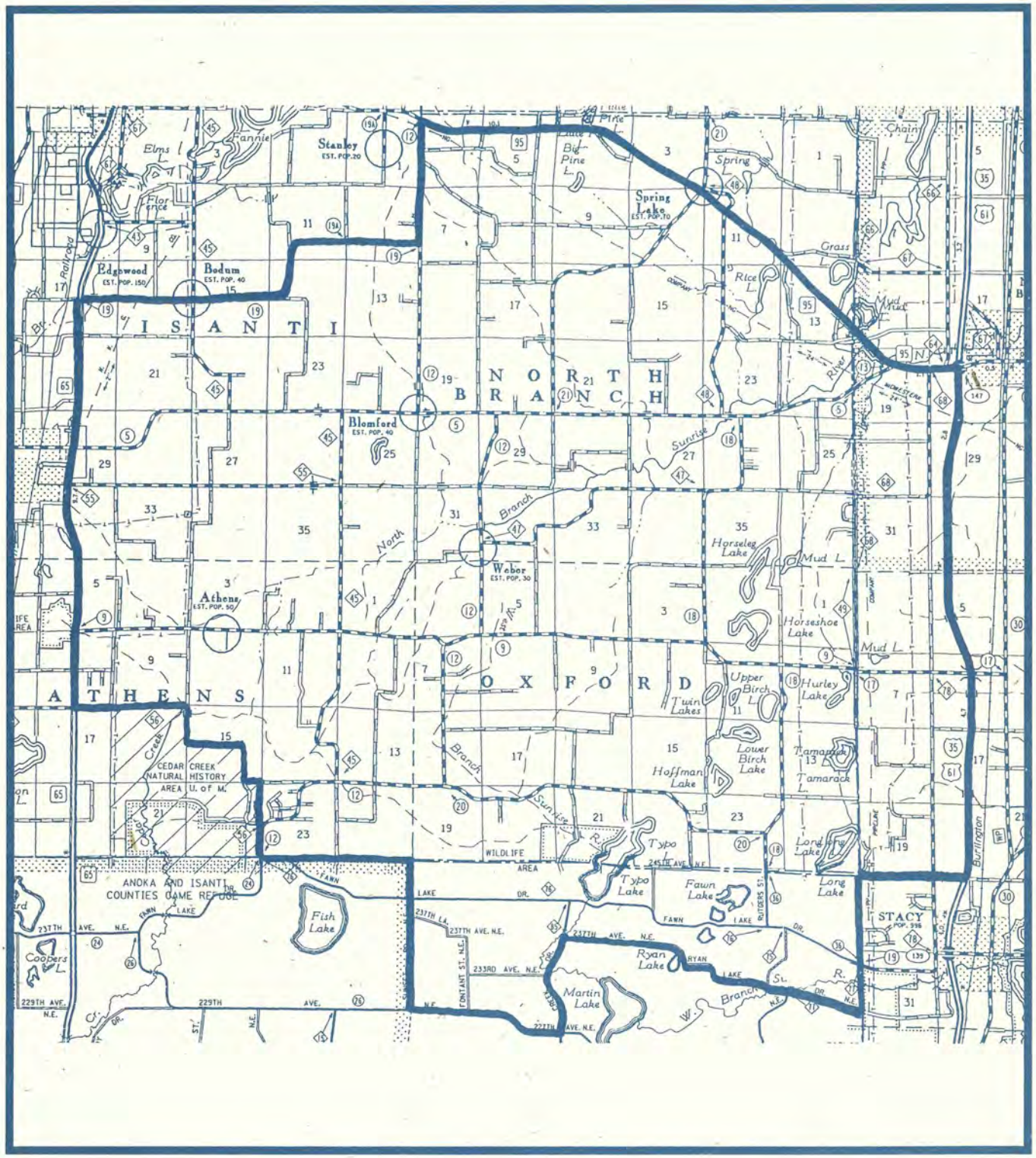
All land within an area with boundaries described as follows: beginning at a point located at the northwest corner of Section 6, Township 114N, Range 19W, Dakota County, said point also being a common point of the corporate limits of Apple Valley, Rosemount, and Lakeville; thence easterly along the southern corporate limit of Rosemount to the centerline of Biscayne Avenue; thence northerly along said centerline to the centerline of County Road 42; thence easterly along said centerline to the centerline of Blaine Avenue; thence northerly along said centerline to the centerline of County Road 38; thence easterly along said centerline to the centerline of County Road 42; thence northeasterly along said centerline to the centerline of State Highway 55; thence easterly along said centerline to the corporate limits of Hastings; thence southerly and easterly along said corporate limits to the centerline of Highway 316; thence southeasterly along said centerline to the centerline of County Road 91; thence southerly along said centerline to the centerline of 220th Street East; thence westerly along said centerline and its extension to the corporate limits

of Farmington; thence northerly and westerly to the point of beginning; all roads, streets, highways, and political jurisdiction boundaries as they exist as of December 21, 1990; all being in the County of Dakota, Minnesota.

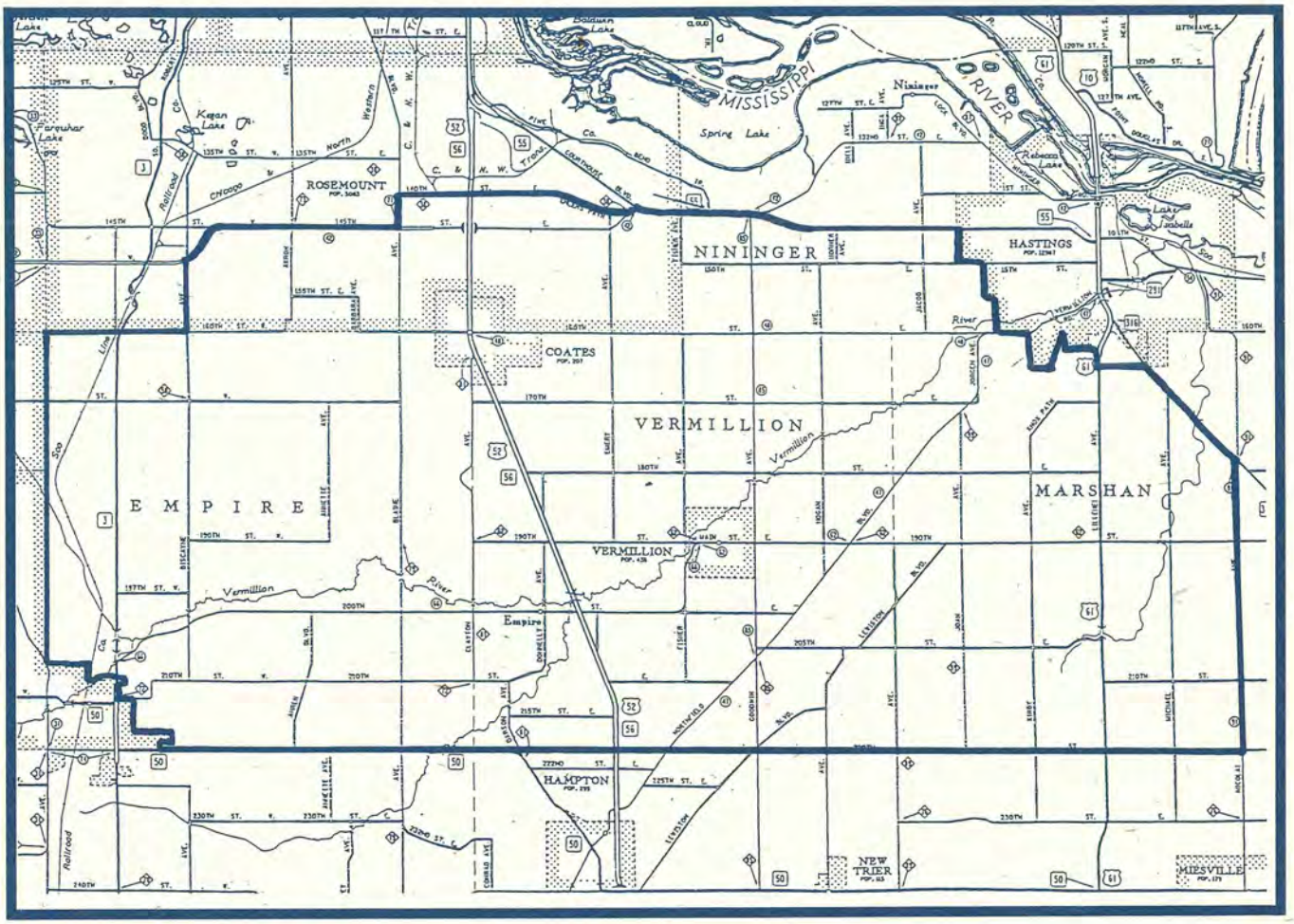
Dakota-Scott Candidate Search Area

All land within an area with boundaries described as follows: beginning at a point located at the intersection of the southern Dakota County Border and the Centerline of Interstate Highway 35; thence easterly along the southern corporate limit of Lakeville to the corporate limit of Farmington; thence easterly along the southern corporate limit of Farmington to the intersection of the corporate limits of Farmington with State Highway 50; thence easterly along said centerline to the eastern line of Castle Rock Township; thence southerly along said eastern township line to the centerline of 280th Street West; thence westerly along said centerline to the centerline County Road 47 (Northfield Boulevard); thence southwesterly along said centerline to the centerline of State Highway 3; thence northerly along said centerline of State Highway 3 to the centerline of County Road 96; thence westerly along the centerline of County Road 96 to the Dakota County - Rice County Border; thence northerly along said county border to 280th Street West; thence westerly along said county border to the centerline of Interstate 35; thence northerly along said centerline to the point of beginning; all roads, streets, highways, and political jurisdiction boundaries as they exist as of December 21, 1990; all being in the Counties of Dakota or Scott, Minnesota.

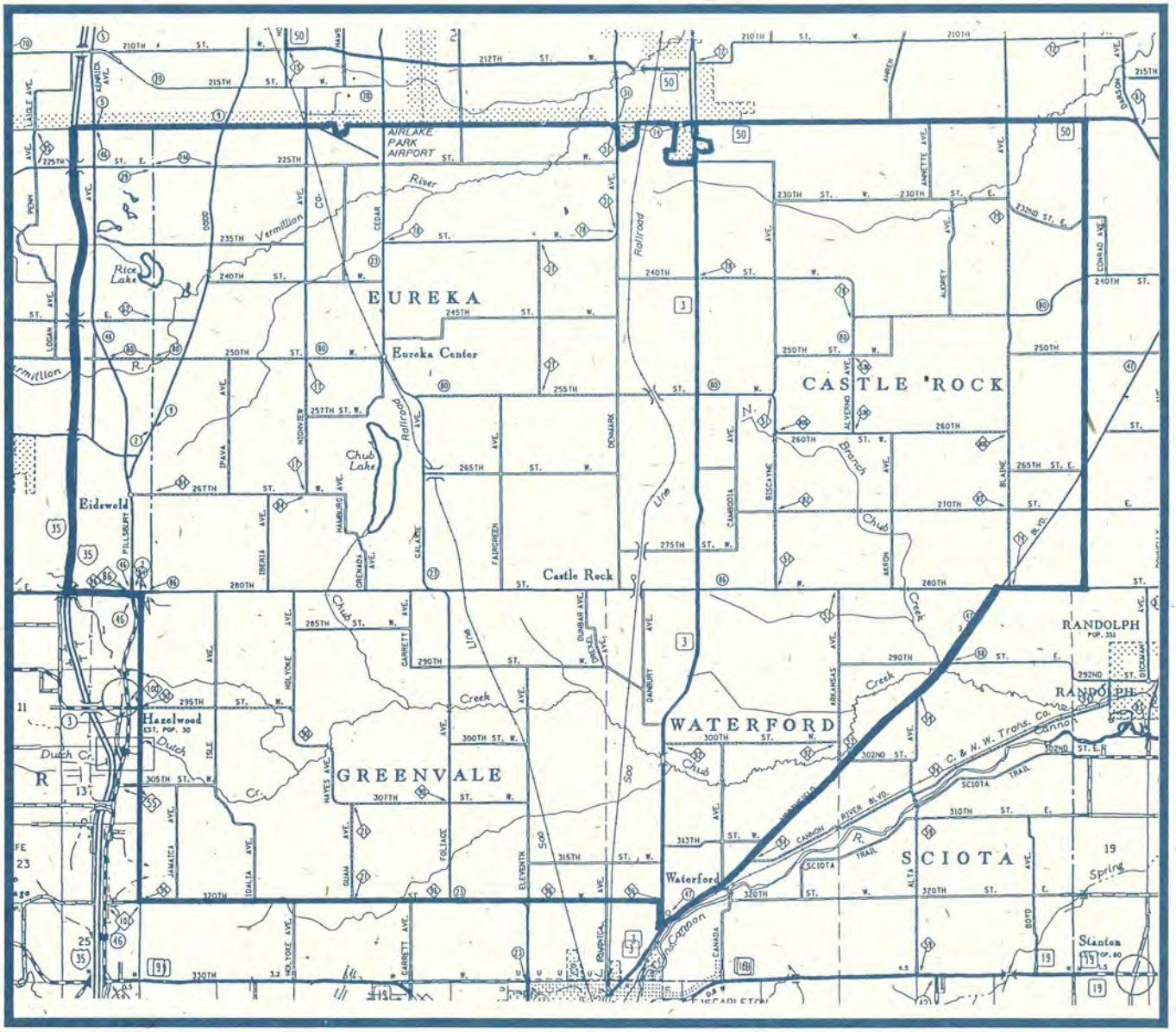
ANOKA - ISANTI - CHISAGO CANDIDATE SEARCH AREA *Figure 21*



DAKOTA CANDIDATE SEARCH AREA *Figure 22*



DAKOTA - SCOTT CANDIDATE SEARCH AREA *Figure 23*





Roster: New Airport Search Area Advisory Task Force

Josephine Nunn, cochair
Dick Beens, cochair
Liz Anderson
Beverly Boyd
Larry Buegler
Wayne Burggraaff
Steve Cramer
Jan Del Calzo
Marilyn Deneen
James Dommel
Ted Furber
Kathleen Gaylord
Benjamin Griggs
Edward Gutzmann
William Harper, Sr.
Beverly Hauschild
James Hearon III
Phylis Hiller
Gene Hollenstein
James Jensen
Raymond R. Krause
Thomas C. Kayser
John Labosky
David Lawrence
Kay Louis
Thomas Morin
E. Craig Morris
Roberta Opheim
William Peterson
John Pidgeon
J. Michael Podawiltz
Dottie Rietow
Larry Sawyer
John Tschida
Ray Waldron
Marcy Waritz
Robert Worthington

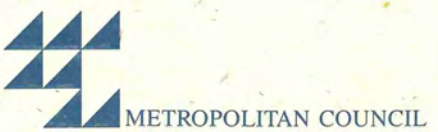
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Metropolitan Council. *Twin Cities Major-Airport Planning: A Citizen's Guide.* December, 1990.

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Profile of Dakota Candidate Search Area

Introduction

This is a summary of information on the Dakota candidate search area and on airport planning now under way in the Twin Cities Area. The Dakota search area is one of three candidate search areas being evaluated for a potential new major airport. Search areas are large tracts of land within which a smaller airport site will be selected.

Siting a Search Area, then an Airport, is Mandated by State Law.

Under the Metropolitan Airport Planning Act of 1989, the Metropolitan Council has been charged with designating a search area for the location of a potential new major airport to serve the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and the State of Minnesota. Under the same law, the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) is to select an airport site within the designated search area. The legislature ultimately decides if the site should be put into a landbank for future use or whether construction should begin.

Who is Conducting the Planning?

The Metropolitan Council and its 41-member New-Airport Search Area Advisory Task Force are doing the search-area work. The membership of the task force reflects the diverse interests and viewpoints of the region and the state--citizens, major air transport users, airlines, local officials, community groups, environmentalists, business community and economic development interests in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and in Greater Minnesota. Recently, representatives from the search areas were added to the task force.

The Metropolitan Council is a unit of government that conducts long-range planning for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.

The Siting is Part of a Larger, Comprehensive Airport Planning Process.

New major airport planning is part of a comprehensive process called the "dual-track" strategy. This strategy is designed to preserve the region's airport options for the future and to decide how best to meet airport capacity needs.

One track focuses on a new airport option. By the end of 1991, a single search area will be designated where a new replacement airport could be located. Once a final search has been designated, the MAC, which owns and operates Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport (MSP), will do detailed site planning and determine the precise location within the search area where the airport would be located.

The other track focuses on possible ways to improve the capacity of the current airport. The MAC is conducting this planning.

Three Airport Search Areas are Now being Evaluated.

The areas are:

- Anoka-Isanti-Chisago Candidate Search Area, approximately 102 square miles, located north of the Twin Cities primarily in Isanti County;
- Dakota Candidate Search Area, 115 square miles, located southeast of the Twin Cities in Dakota County; and
- Dakota-Scott Candidate Search Area, 113 square miles, located south of the Twin Cities primarily in Dakota County.

Search Area Selection Criteria

The task force and the Council selected the three areas based on six general criteria. They are access to the metropolitan area, environmental impacts, general land requirements of an airport,

airspace, characteristics of candidate search areas (topography and development density) and existing law and metropolitan policies. The criteria will continue to be used to designate a single search area.

Eight sectors, within an original 14-county study area*, were looked at during the initial screening process. Portions of three form the candidate search areas.

Dakota Candidate Search Area Characteristics

Location

The search area is located completely within Dakota County (See map on p. 5). The area is roughly 17 miles east and west, and 8 miles north and south. It covers about 115 square miles, or 74,000 acres. It comprises major parts of Empire, Vermillion, Nininger and Marshan Townships. The search area is generally located east of Farmington, south of Rosemount (including a southern portion of Rosemount), southwest of Hastings, and north of Miesville, New Trier and Hampton.

Access

The Dakota candidate search area is the closest to the Twin Cities. It is located just under 20 miles from downtown St. Paul and about 25 miles from downtown Minneapolis. Peak-hour travel time in the year 2010 would be about 35 to 40 minutes from downtown St. Paul and about 40 to 45 minutes from downtown Minneapolis depending on the location of the site within the search area. It is the search area closest to MSP. It is about 15 to 20 miles from MSP. The area's peak-hour travel time from MSP would be about 35 minutes. This search area provides good access to Rochester and Mankato, (just under 50 miles), but is not convenient to St. Cloud.

Environment

As an active farming area, the Dakota candidate search area has few wetlands, except for the southwestern portion near tributaries of the Vermillion River. No lakes of substantial size exist within the area. The area has few biotic communities (plant or animal life of particular concern). The area is traversed by the Vermillion River. The northern portions of the area are close to the Mississippi and Lower St. Croix Rivers. The area contains the Bellwood State Game Refuge near its eastern border, and Spring Lake Park and the Hastings Wildlife Management Area are located just to the north of the area.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Among the advantages of the Dakota candidate search area are its relative lack of wetlands and biotic communities, its flat topography, and limited environmental constraints east of Vermillion and in the Coates area. The search area has generally low household density. The distances to Minneapolis and St. Paul downtowns are not too far. More access could be created by extending Cedar Av. and Lafayette Freeway. The Pine Bend Refinery could serve as a buffering land use to an airport site. The area has several potential sites, offering flexibility.

Among the disadvantages is the presence of commercial farmland, some of which would be taken for airport use. The eastern portion of the search area is close to Hastings and close to the St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers. Access is primarily limited to one major north-south road, Hwy. 52, which would require upgrading. A road connection to Interstate Hwy. 35 probably would be needed. The Minnesota Zoo is located northwest of the area. The area also includes the location of the proposed Dakota County solid waste resource recovery plant near Coates.

*The study area counties are Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Goodhue, Hennepin, Isanti, LeSueur, Ramsey, Rice, Scott, Sherburne, Washington and Wright.

The Planning Process is an Open One

Three meetings with local officials and the public for the Dakota candidate search area are being held in February and March. They are as follows:

- *Thursday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m., for local officials of communities in search area, Dakota County Technical College, Room 1306, 1300 145th St. E.*

- *Thursday, March 7, 7 p.m., for local officials of communities adjacent to search area, Dakota Electric Headquarters Lunchroom, 4300 200th St. W., Farmington*

- *Wednesday, March 20, 7 p.m., for general public, Rosemount High School Student Center, 3335 142nd St. W., Rosemount*

Three meetings will also be held in February and March in each of the other two candidate search areas.

The task force and the Council are forums through which the region can get the information it needs to evaluate the candidate search areas and to move toward consensus on a single search area. As a result, the process is an open one, and there will be many opportunities for groups, individuals, public agencies and officals to provide and share information and to be heard.

Timing of Activities	
Feb.- March	*Meetings in the candidate search areas.*
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July-Aug.	*Task force holds public meetings on recommended search area.*
Sept.	*Task force recommends final search area to Council.*
Oct.-Nov.	*Public meetings and public hearing on recommended search area.*
Dec. 1991	*Council designates final search area.*
Jan. 1992	*MAC begins a study of up to four years to select a site within the search area and to prepare a plan for a possible new airport.*
Spring 1996	*Council, MAC make recommendations to legislature on how to proceed.*

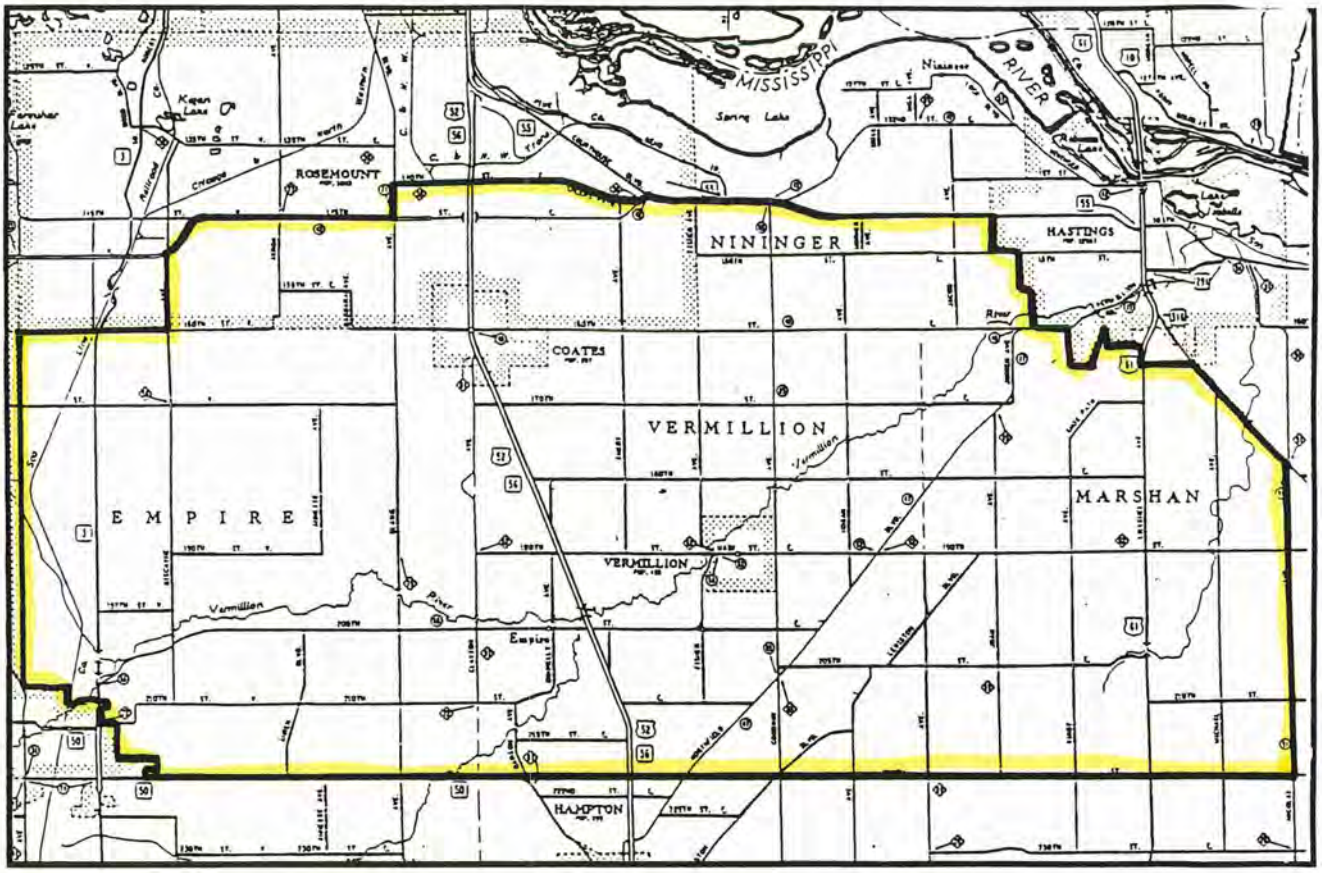
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New-Airport Search Area Advisory Task Force

Josephine Nunn, cochair
Dick Beens, cochair
Liz Anderson
Vernon Boettcher
Keith Boleen
Beverly Boyd
Wayne Burggraaff
Steve Cramer
Jan Del Calzo
Marilyn Deneen
James Dommel
Steve Empey
Ted Furber
Kathleen Gaylord
Benjamin Griggs
Edward Gutzmann
Chilton Hagan
Larry Hamre
William Harper, Sr.
Joseph Harris
Beverly Hauschild
James Hearon III
Phylis Hiller
Gene Hollenstein
James Jensen
Mark Karnowski
John Labosky
David Lawrence
Kay Louis
Thomas Morin
E. Craig Morris
Roberta Opheim
John Pidgeon
Gloria Pinke
J. Michael Podawiltz
Dottie Rietow
Larry Sawyer
John Tschida
Ray Waldron
Marcy Waritz
Robert Worthington

Metropolitan Council
Mears Park Centre, 230 E. Fifth St.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612 291-6359 TDD 291-0904

Publication No. 310-91-038
February 1991



This public meeting is part of the environmental review scoping process approved by the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board to aid in designating the search area for a new airport site. We are here to gather information from you about the potential environmental (and other) impacts a new airport could have as well as to allow you to participate directly in the decision-making process. The document that will be produced as part of the environmental review process is in lieu of an environmental impact statement and is as comprehensive or more comprehensive than an environmental impact statement.

Please use the next page to write down any statements, comments, or questions you may have. Please also note on the map above any land use or other information you want to bring to our attention.

Please remove this page from the summary and give it to your group convener or drop it off at the registration table as you leave. Or, you can complete it at your convenience and mail it to:

Donna Mattson
Metropolitan Council
230 East Fifth St
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Comments:

Filling out this information is optional.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

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Dakota-Scott Candidate Search Area Characteristics

Location

The Dakota-Scott search area is located almost completely in Dakota County, but extends slightly into eastern Scott County (See map on page 5). The search area is roughly 13 miles east and west, and 10 miles north and south. It covers approximately 113 square miles, or 72,000 acres. The area is generally east of Interstate Hwy. 35, south of Lakeville and Farmington, west of Hampton and Randolph, and north of Northfield.

Access

The Dakota-Scott candidate search area is located just under 30 miles from both Minneapolis and St. Paul downtowns, providing equal access to both city centers. Peak-hour travel time from those city centers to the area would be about 50 to 55 minutes. The area is located about 25 miles from MSP, with a peak-hour travel time of about 40 minutes. The area provides good access to Rochester and Mankato (just under 50 miles), but the location is not convenient to St. Cloud.

Environment

Another area of active farming, the Dakota-Scott candidate search area has portions with few wetlands and only a few lakes. The largest is Chub Lake. The Vermillion River traverses the northwestern section of the area and Chub Creek crosses the southern portion. None of the rivers within the area are prone to flooding. Few biotic communities (plant or animal life of particular concern) are located in the area, although the Carlton College State Game Refuge is located just to the south.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Among the strengths of the Dakota-Scott candidate search area are its relative lack of biotic communities and few wetlands in its eastern portion. The area has good access from Cedar Av., Hwy. 3, and I-35, which forms its western boundary. The area is essentially equidistant from Minneapolis and St. Paul downtowns. The area has low housing density and flight patterns would be better able to avoid the developed and developing portions of the region. Good potential for sites exists in the area.

Weaknesses include the wetlands and hilly areas that increase in number in the western portion of the area. The area is relatively distant from Metro Area population centers, particularly the northern and northwestern portions. Access across the I-35 bridge over the Minnesota River would need to be improved.

*The study area counties are Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Goodhue, Hennepin, Isanti, LeSueur, Ramsey, Rice, Scott, Sherburne, Washington and Wright.

The Planning Process is an Open One

Three meetings with local officials and the public for the Dakota-Scott candidate search area are being held in February and March. They are as follows:

- *Thursday, Feb. 28, 7 p.m., for local officials of communities in search area, Dakota Electric Headquarters Lunchroom, 4300 200th St. W., Farmington*

- *Thursday, March 7, 7 p.m., for local officials of communities adjacent to search area, Dakota Electric Headquarters Lunchroom, 4300 200th St. W., Farmington*

- *Wednesday, March 20, 7 p.m., for general public, Rosemount High School Student Center, 3335 142nd St. W., Rosemount*

Three meetings will also be held in February and March in each of the other two candidate search areas.

The task force and the Council are forums through which the region can get the information it needs to evaluate the candidate search areas and to move toward consensus on a single search area. As a result, the process is an open one, and there will be many opportunities for groups, individuals, public agencies and officals to provide and share information and to be heard.

Timing of Activities	
Feb.- March	*Meetings in the candidate search areas.*
June	*Task force proposes one search area.*
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Jan. 1992	*MAC begins a study of up to four years to select a site within the search area and to prepare a plan for a possible new airport.*
Spring 1996	*Council, MAC make recommendations to legislature on how to proceed.*

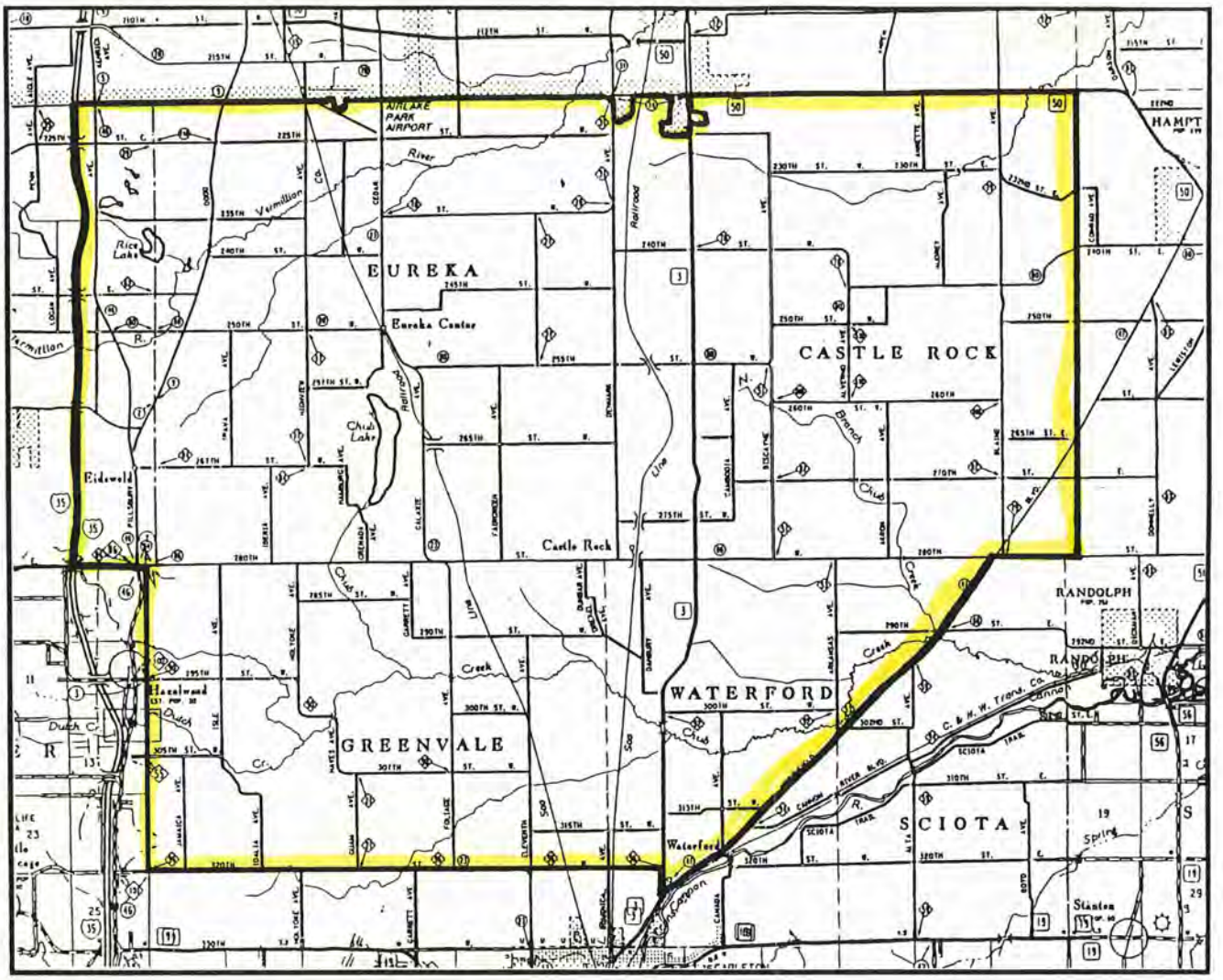
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New-Airport Search Area Advisory Task Force

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Dick Beens, cochair
Liz Anderson
Vernon Boettcher
Keith Boleen
Beverly Boyd
Wayne Burggraaff
Steve Cramer
Jan Del Calzo
Marilyn Deneen
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Steve Empey
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Benjamin Griggs
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February 1991



This public meeting is part of the environmental review scoping process approved by the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board to aid in designating the search area for a new airport site. We are here to gather information from you about the potential environmental (and other) impacts a new airport could have as well as to allow you to participate directly in the decision-making process. The document that will be produced as part of the environmental review process is in lieu of an environmental impact statement and is as comprehensive or more comprehensive than an environmental impact statement.

Please use the next page to write down any statements, comments, or questions you may have. Please also note on the map above any land use or other information you want to bring to our attention.

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Donna Mattson
Metropolitan Council
230 East Fifth St
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Comments:

Filling out this information is optional.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

Profile of Anoka-Isanti-Chisago Candidate Search Area

Introduction

This is a summary of information on the Anoka-Isanti-Chisago candidate search area and on airport planning now under way in the Twin Cities Area. The Anoka-Isanti-Chisago search area is one of three candidate search areas being evaluated for a potential new major airport. Search areas are large tracts of land within which a smaller airport site will be selected.

Siting a Search Area, then an Airport, is Mandated by State Law.

Under the Metropolitan Airport Planning Act of 1989, the Metropolitan Council has been charged with designating a search area for the location of a potential new major airport to serve the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and the State of Minnesota. Under the same law, the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) is to select an airport site within the designated search area. The legislature ultimately decides if the site should be put into a landbank for future use or whether construction should begin.

Who is Conducting the Planning?

The Metropolitan Council and its 41-member New-Airport Search Area Advisory Task Force are doing the search-area work. The membership of the task force reflects the diverse interests and viewpoints of the region and the state--citizens, major air transport users, airlines, local officials, community groups, environmentalists, business community and economic development interests in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and in Greater Minnesota. Recently, representatives from the search areas were added to the task force.

The Metropolitan Council is a unit of government that conducts long-range planning for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.

The Siting is Part of a Larger, Comprehensive Airport Planning Process.

New major airport planning is part of a comprehensive process called the "dual-track" strategy. This strategy is designed to preserve the region's airport options for the future and to decide how best to meet airport capacity needs.

One track focuses on a new airport option. By the end of 1991, a single search area will be designated where a new replacement airport could be located. Once a final search has been designated, the MAC, which owns and operates Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport (MSP), will do detailed site planning and determine the precise location within the search area where the airport would be located.

The other track focuses on possible ways to improve the capacity of the current airport. The MAC is conducting this planning.

Three Airport Search Areas are Now being Evaluated.

The areas are:

- Anoka-Isanti-Chisago Candidate Search Area, approximately 102 square miles, located north of the Twin Cities primarily in Isanti County;
- Dakota Candidate Search Area, 115 square miles, located southeast of the Twin Cities in Dakota County; and
- Dakota-Scott Candidate Search Area, 113 square miles, located south of the Twin Cities primarily in Dakota County.

Search Area Selection Criteria

The task force and the Council selected the three areas based on six general criteria. They are access to the metropolitan area, environmental impacts, general land requirements of an airport,

airspace, characteristics of candidate search areas (topography and development density) and existing law and metropolitan policies. The criteria will continue to be used to designate a single search area.

Eight sectors, within an original 14-county study area*, were looked at during the initial screening process. Portions of three form the candidate search areas.

Anoka-Isanti-Chisago Candidate Search Area Characteristics

Location

The Anoka-Isanti-Chisago candidate search area is centered on Isanti County north of the Twin Cities (See map on page 5). The area is roughly 11 miles east-west, and 11 miles north-south. Its southern border edges into northern Anoka County and its eastern border extends slightly into Chisago County. The area contains approximately 102 square miles, or 65,000 acres. It is located generally southeast of Cambridge, southwest of North Branch, northwest of Stacy and northeast of Bethel. The portions of the area with the best potential for an airport site are located outside the seven-county metropolitan area.

Access

The Anoka-Isanti-Chisago candidate search area is served by Hwy. 65 in the west and Interstate Hwy. 35 in the east. The area is located about 35 miles north of both Minneapolis and St. Paul downtowns, providing equal access to both city centers. Barring additional transportation improvements by the year 2010, peak-hour travel time from the downtowns to the area would be about 70 minutes. It is the farthest search area from MSP, at about 45 miles away. Peak-hour travel time from MSP would be about 70 to 75 minutes. The area does not provide good access to Rochester or Mankato, but it is about 60 miles from St. Cloud.

Environment

There are some lakes in the southeastern portion of the search area and some wetlands throughout the area, particularly in its northern portion. Biotic communities (plant or animal life of particular concern) are found primarily in association with wetlands and lakes. The search area is close to the Carlos Avery State Wildlife Management Area to the south, and University of Minnesota's Cedar Creek Natural History Area to the south and west. Also to the south is the Anoka and Isanti Counties Game Refuge. Two other smaller wildlife areas are nearby. One is to the south and the other, the Athens State Wildlife Area, is just outside the area's western boundary. A small wildlife area lies within the southern part of the search area.

Advantages and Disadvantages

The Anoka-Isanti-Chisago candidate search area has good access to population centers to the south via I-35 and Hwy. 65. The area is essentially equidistant from Minneapolis and St. Paul downtowns. Some areas of low density exist within the search area, and there are fewer wetlands and lakes in the area's western portion. There are several possible airport orientations in the central Isanti County portion of the area.

Among the disadvantages are numerous environmental concerns. They include a large number of wetlands in some areas, proximity to the Carlos Avery Wildlife Refuge and the University of Minnesota Cedar Creek Natural History Area. The area has a relatively high water table. It contains a large number of biotic communities, and a large population of birds and water fowl.

Other disadvantages include relatively high household densities throughout the Anoka County portion and along Hwy. 65 and I-35. The area also is located a significant distance from the region's population centers.

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The Planning Process is an Open One

Three meetings with local officials and the public for the Anoka-Isanti-Chisago candidate search area are being held in February and March. They are as follows:

- *Tuesday, Feb. 26, 7 p.m., for local officials of communities in search area, Isanti Middle School Cafeteria, 201 Centennial Dr. (also Co. Rd. 5)*

- *Wednesday, March 6, 7 p.m., for local officials of communities adjacent to search area, Isanti Middle School Cafeteria, 201 Centennial Dr. (also Co. Rd. 5)*

- *Monday, March 18, 7 p.m., for general public, North Branch High School Auditorium, County Rd. 14, North Branch.*

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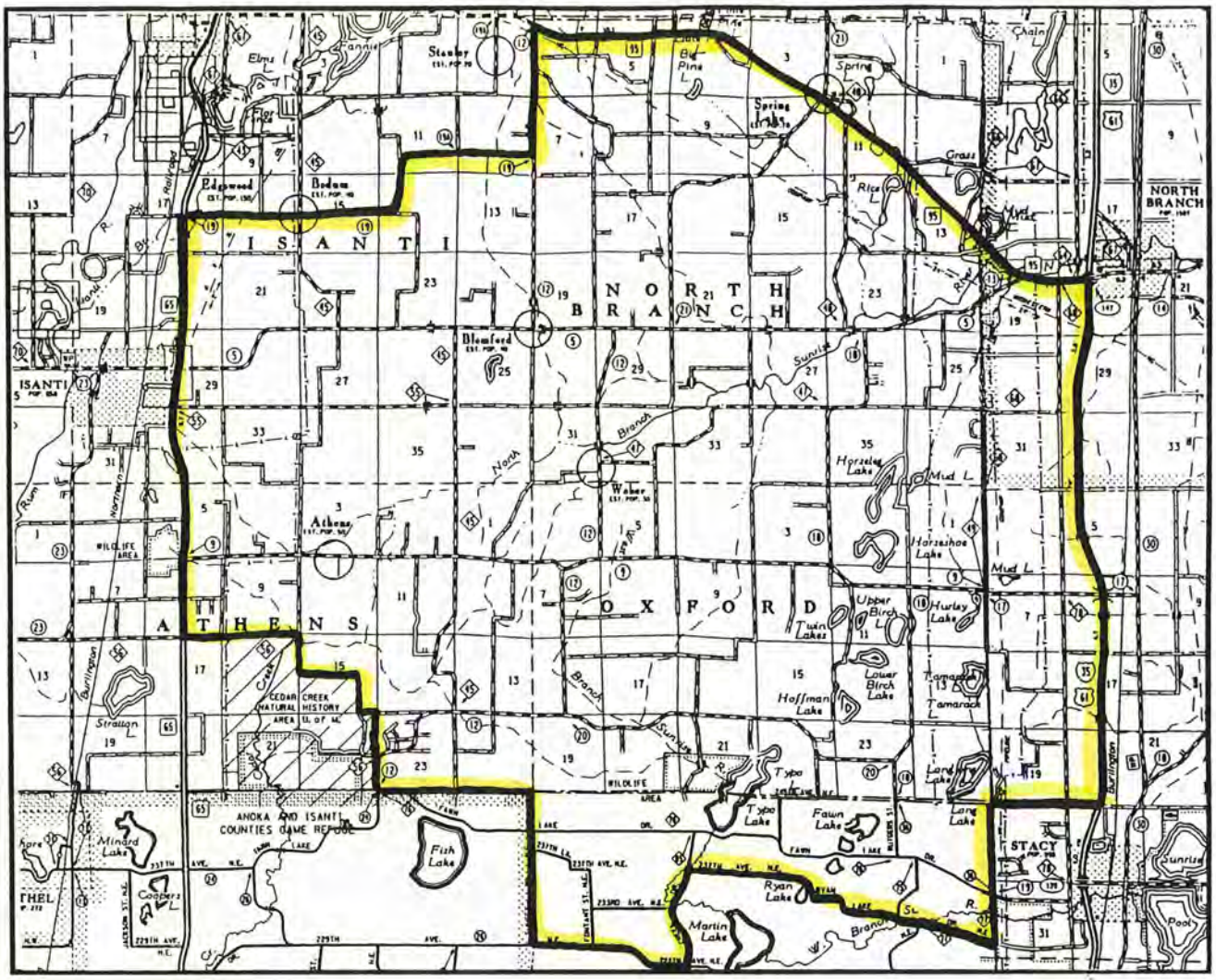
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