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Phone (512) 463-7847, Fax (512) 475-2053

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

TO: File

FROM: T. Clay Schultz, Ph.D., Director, Regional Water Project Development

Clay Schultz Digitally signed by Clay Schultz Date: 2025.04.04 07:54:18 -05'00'

DATE: April 4, 2025

SUBJECT: Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas
TWDB SWIFT Project No. 51092
Eagle Mountain Water Treatment Plant – 35 MGD Expansion
Total Commitment Amount: $125,000,000
Loan No. L1001828

The environmental review for the proposed City of Fort Worth (City) Eagle Mountain Water Treatment Plant – 35 MGD Expansion project has been completed consistent with 31 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 363.14. The City is proposing to use $125,000,000 in financing from the State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT) Program to expand the capacity of the Eagle Mountain Water Treatment Plant (WTP) by 35 million gallons per day (MGD) by constructing new treatment structures at the existing plant site that will tie into the existing raw water supply and treated water storage. The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) committed this financing on July 23, 2024. The City closed the financing on November 21, 2024.

This environmental review is documented by the enclosed Environmental Determination (ED), which contains mitigative environmental conditions that will be applied to the project to avoid significant adverse impact to threatened or endangered species and protected migratory bird species.

Based on a detailed environmental review of the planning information, the Environmental Data Form received by the TWDB on January 15, 2025, with the supplementary materials submitted to the TWDB on February 20, 2025, the project meets the requirements of 31 TAC § 363.14 with the following special and standard environmental conditions:

<u>Special Environmental Conditions</u>

- To ensure compliance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, per an agreement with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), all construction and/or vegetation clearing activities within 1,000 feet of potential whooping crane (*Grus americana*) habitat will be performed outside of the whooping

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crane migration season, March 19 through April 30 and October 20 through November 24.

- As per an agreement with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Ecological & Environmental Planning Program (TPWD Project No. 52641), to ensure compliance with Texas Parks and Wildlife Code, Chapters 12, 64, 67, and 68 the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA), as amended, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and applicable federal regulations pertaining to protected and invasive species, the following measures will be implemented:
    - Vegetation clearing must be excluded during the general bird nesting season and tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*) pupping season, March 15 through September 15, to avoid adverse impacts to breeding birds and tricolored bats. If vegetation clearing during this time is unavoidable, the area proposed for disturbance will be surveyed by a qualified biologist to identify occupied nests and pupping habitat, not more than five days prior to clearing activities. If occupied nests or bat roosts or hibernacula are observed during surveys, a vegetation buffer area of no less than 100 feet in diameter will remain around the nest or roost until all young have fledged; however, the size of the buffer zone depends on various factors and can be coordinated with the local or regional USFWS office.
    - The length of trenches left open at any given time during construction will be minimized. Trenching and backfilling activities will be kept close together in time. Trenches and excavation areas will be covered overnight and/or inspected every morning or if left open longer than two daylight hours to ensure no wildlife species have been trapped. If trenches cannot be backfilled the day of initial trenching, then escape ramps will be installed every 300 feet, in the form of short lateral trenches or wooden planks sloping to the surface at an angle of less than 45 degrees, at a ratio one horizontal foot for every one foot of depth.
    - Contractors and construction crews will be informed of the potential for protected species to occur in the project area and to avoid impacts to all wildlife encountered. If wildlife are encountered, the animals will be allowed to leave the area safely. Wildlife in danger from project activities that will not readily leave the site can be translocated to a nearby area with similar habitat. Any translocations of reptiles will occur within 100-200 yards from the initial encounter location. State-listed species will be handled only by persons with authorization obtained through the TPWD.
    - For soil stabilization and revegetation, no-till drilling, hydromulching (avoiding plastic ingredients), and/or hydroseeding will be used rather than erosion control blankets or mats, which pose an entanglement hazard to wildlife. If erosion control blankets or mats cannot be avoided, products that contain no netting or loosely woven natural fiber netting will be used, avoiding any type of plastic netting.
    - To the extent practicable, the project will be designed to utilize the minimum amount of nighttime light needed for safety and security for lighted structures at the wastewater treatment plant. Lights will be focused downward with

cutoff luminaries to avoid light emitting above the horizontal. Lighting will only be illuminated when needed, will only be as bright as needed, will be fully shielded, and will minimize blue light emissions.

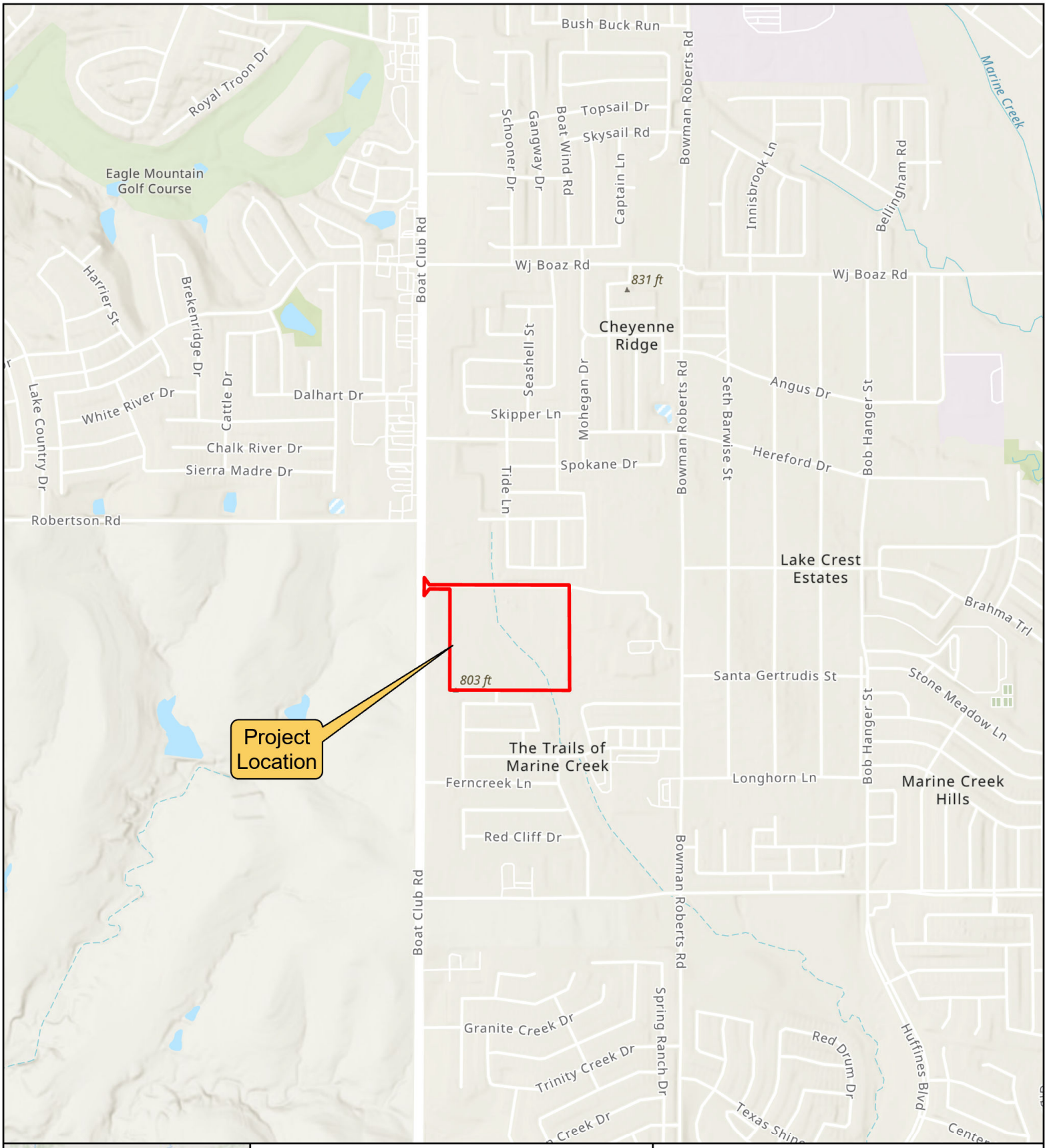
- The City of Fort Worth (City) will minimize the loss of habitat and vegetation removal and will retain vegetative riparian buffers along waterbodies to the extent practicable. The City will avoid disturbing microhabitats in waterways such as snags, brush piles, fallen logs, creek banks, pools, and gravel stream bottoms.
- If the tricolored bat or monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) become federally listed prior to or during vegetation clearing and/or construction, the City will conduct additional coordination with the USFWS to ensure compliance with the ESA.

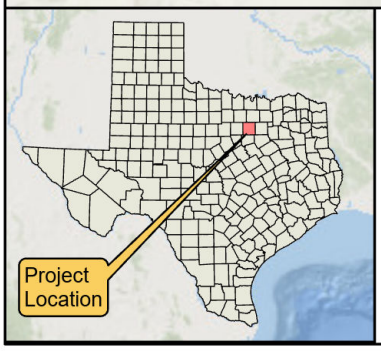
<u>Standard Environmental Conditions</u>

- Consistent with the TWDB Supplemental Construction Contract Conditions (TWDB-0552), the City will abide by the standard emergency condition for the discovery of cultural resources.
- Consistent with the TWDB Supplemental Construction Contract Conditions (TWDB-0552), the City will abide by the standard emergency condition for the discovery of threatened and endangered species.

With the addition of these requirements, design funds may be released once all other requirements are satisfied.

Enclosures





Project Area

0 0.125 0.25
Miles

N

Regional Location Map

Eagle Mountain Water Treatment Plant Expansion
Project Number 105176

City of Fort Worth
Tarrant County, TX

Source: Esri World Topographic Map

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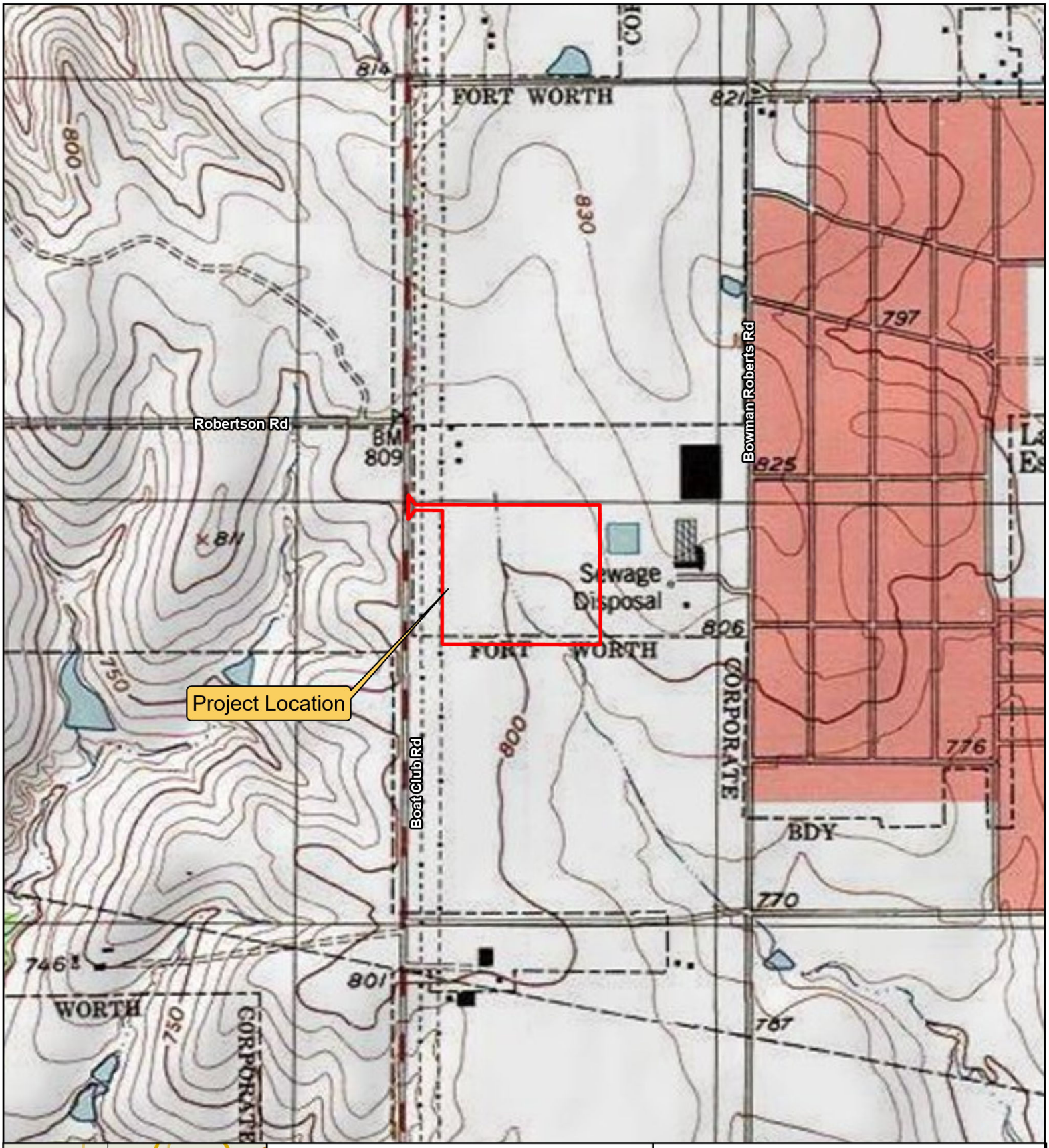

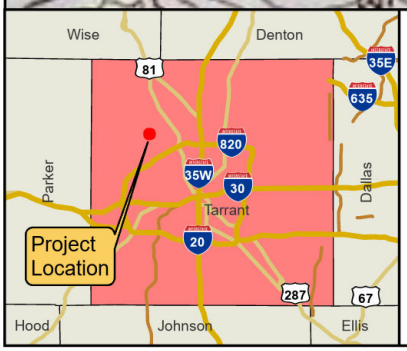

Project Area

0 1,000 2,000
Feet

N

USGS 7.5 Minute Topographic Map

Lake Worth Quadrangle

Eagle Mountain Water Treatment Plant Expansion
Project Number 105176

City of Fort Worth
Tarrant County, TX

Source: Fort Worth, TX 1985, HTMC 1991, ed.

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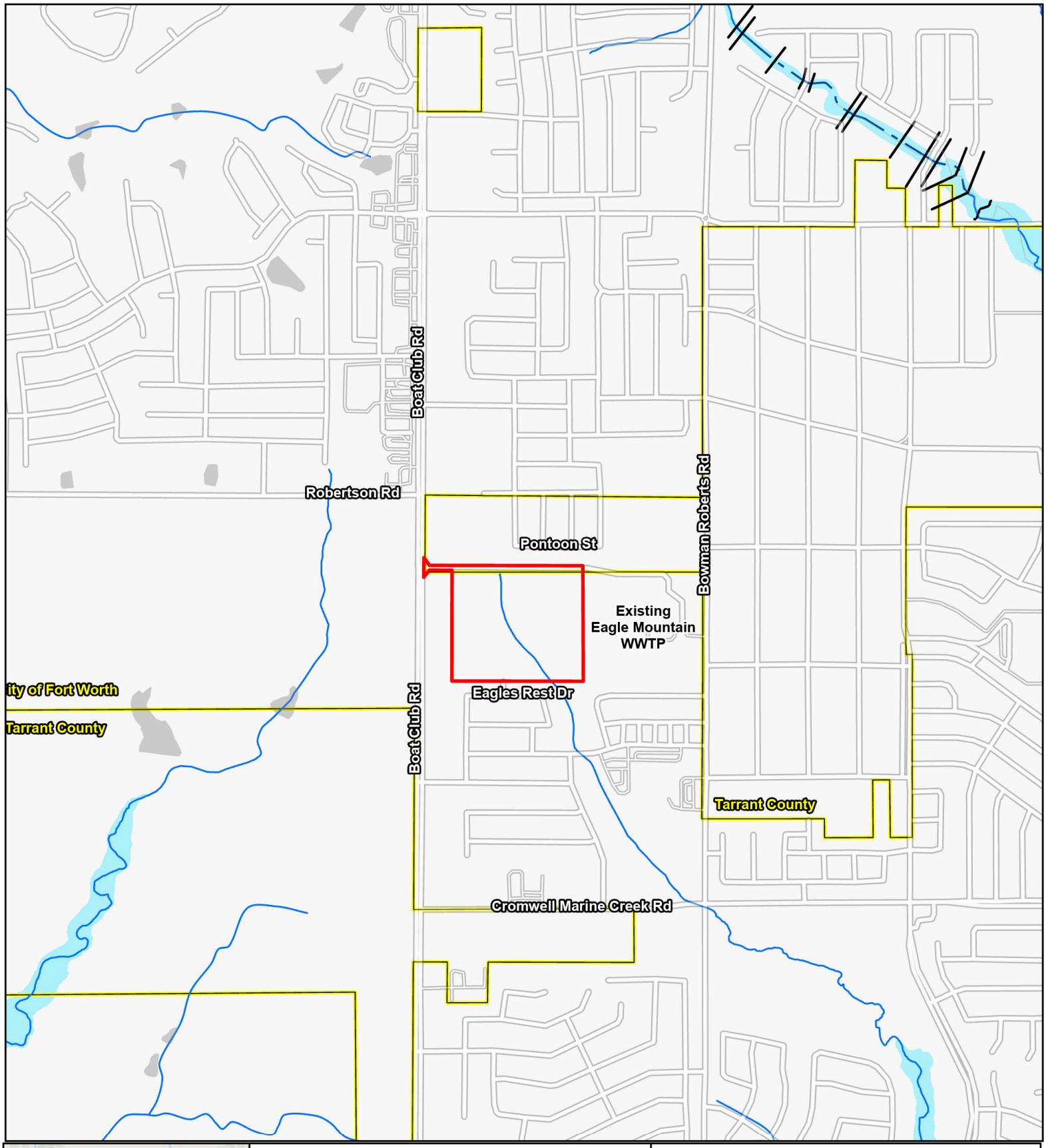

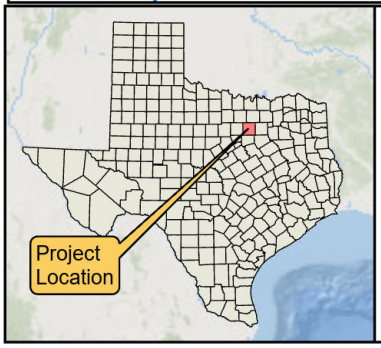

Project Area
City Boundary
100-year Floodplain
Stream Flowline
BFE
Cross Sections

0 1,200 2,400
US Feet

N

FEMA Floodplain Map

Eagle Mountain Water Treatment Plant Expansion
Project Number 105176

City of Fort Worth
Tarrant County, TX

Source: Esri Human Geography

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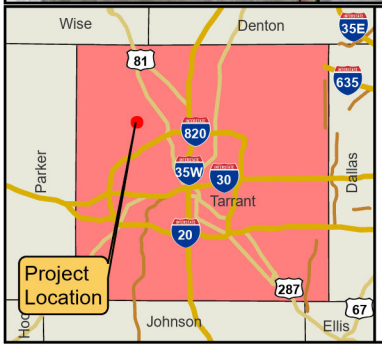

Project Area

Phase IV Expansion

0 200

Feet

N

Figure 3 - Project Layout

Eagle Mountain Water Treatment Plant Expansion

City of Fort Worth
Tarrant County, TX

Source: TNRIS Texas Imagery

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