

2.8 Endangered, Threatened & Rare Species and High Quality Natural Areas

The Deep River-Portage Burns Waterway watershed is home to large variety of endangered, threatened, and rare (ETR) species and high quality natural communities. Based on information from the Indiana Natural Heritage Data Center, nearly 400 observations (element occurrences) of ETR species, including plants, reptiles, amphibians, birds, mammals, crayfish, mollusk and crayfish have been documented. Additionally, 32 high quality natural communities, including forest, savanna, prairie and wetland habitats, are located in the watershed. A list of the observations included in the Natural Heritage Data Center database is included in the appendices.

Figure 35 shows the general location of ETR observations and high quality natural community in relation to managed lands. The NPS, DNR, local land trusts, parks departments and environmental organizations have focused a great deal of their land conservation efforts around these areas. However, high concentration areas do remain unprotected that could serve as corridors or adjacent to existing managed lands. Notable areas include along the Little Calumet River and Deep River, downstream of Lake George. Conservation of these land areas is not only important to protect critical habitat for ETR species, but also in protecting the variety of services (ecosystem services) that benefit society and the watershed as a whole. Flood water attenuation and nutrient sequestration by riparian wetlands would be an example.

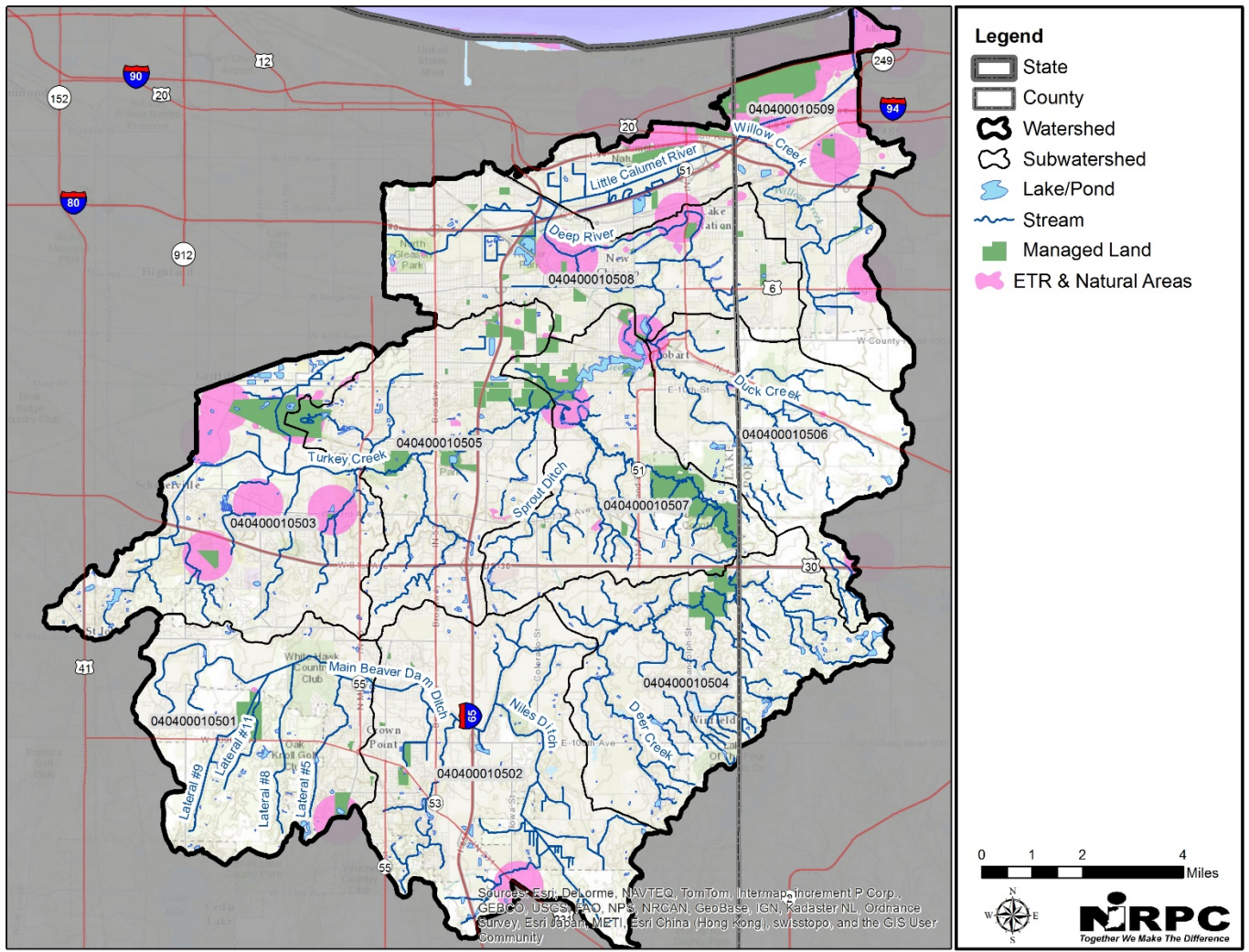


Figure 35 Endangered, Threatened & Rare Species and High Quality Natural Areas in Relation to Managed Lands