

BOISE RIVER IMPORTANT BIRD AREA

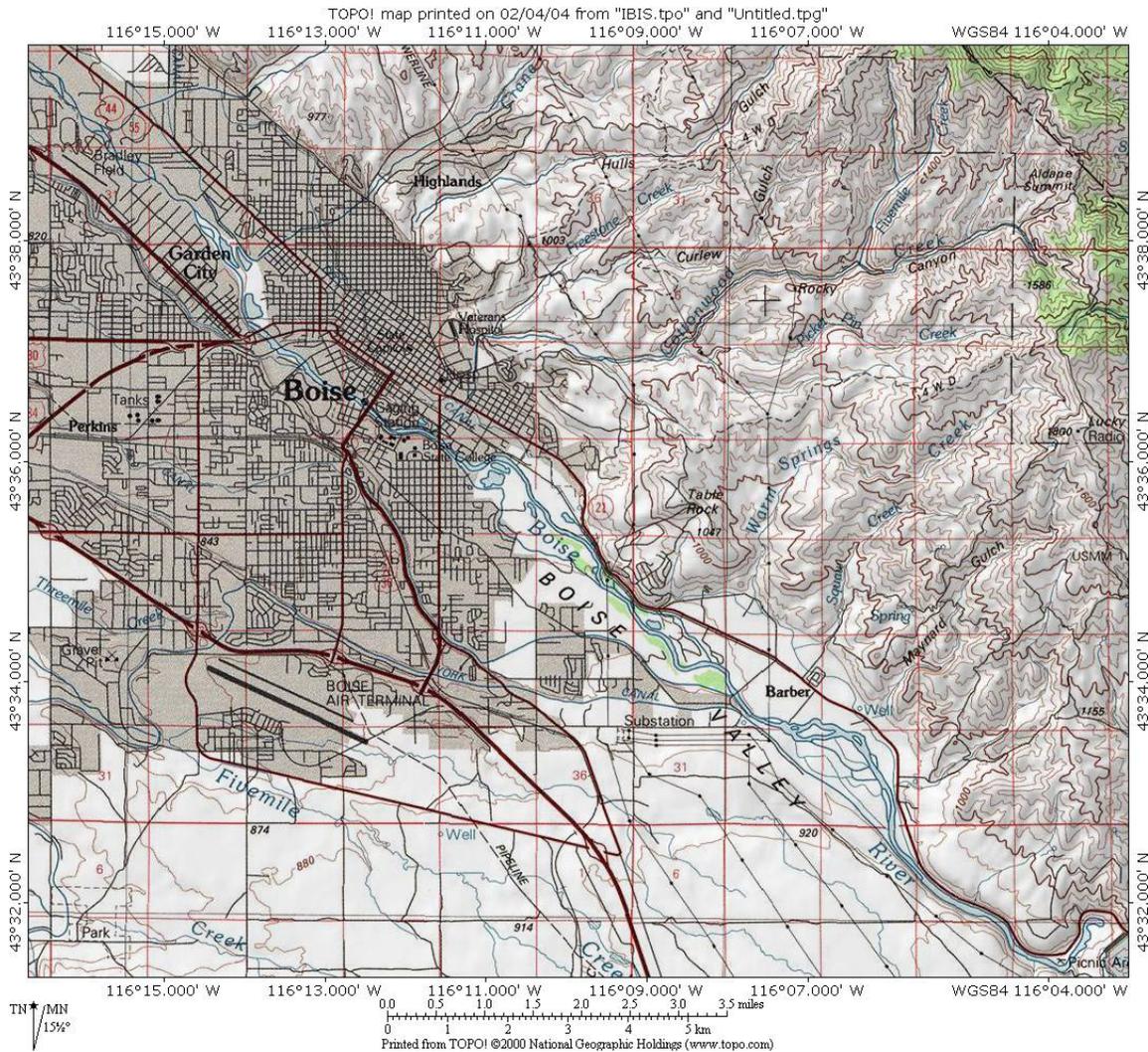
IBIS MONITORING PLAN

Revision Date:
11/18/2010

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1) Site Description



Boundaries and ownership:

Boundaries: River from Lucky Peak Dam to Glenwood Bridge, Boise

Ownership: Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, municipal, private

Focal species using the site and timing of use:

Osprey can be seen on the river throughout the spring and summer months, as well as waterfowl (Canada Goose, Mallard, Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser), waterbirds (Pied-billed Grebe, American Coot, Double-crested Cormorant) and shorebirds (Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper). Bald Eagles winter in area. Large flocks of waterfowl (particularly Canada Goose, Mallard, and American Wigeon, but also Wood Duck, Common and Barrow's Goldeneye), and gulls (California and Ring-billed) also use the river during the winter months.

Colonies: Great Blue Heron

Location of type 1 and 2 habitat within the site:

Functional Group	Type 1 Habitat	Type 2 Habitat
waterbirds	open water, emergent vegetation	shoreline
large waders	breeding colonies, emergent vegetation	rest of shoreline
waterfowl	open water, shoreline during breeding season	shoreline
shorebirds	exposed mudflats during spring/fall migration	rest of shoreline
gulls and terns	all areas	none

Access to the type 1 and 2 habitat and visibility of the birds:

The river is easily accessible to the public, as a paved greenbelt follows the river for the majority of the IBA. A few sections of the site are not accessible via the greenbelt, and may not be accessible at all because of private land ownership. Some of these areas may be reached by boat, but this needs to be checked. Birds are very visible from the greenbelt.

Conservation issues:

- Water pollution and water diversion/channelization is a potential problem
- Residential and commercial development, as well as recreational development and overuse are all serious issues.
- Recreation and development results in serious disturbance to birds in the area.
- Drought

Conservation measures taken, in progress, or proposed:

Past and current surveys:

- Christmas Bird Counts
- Annual Bald Eagle count

Potential survey methods

Description

- a. Colony counts for nesting Great Blue Herons.
- b. Census for waterfowl and other waterbirds on the open water from shoreline along greenbelt and hiking trails through Barber Park area. Migration and winter surveys will be more productive, as heavy use by waterbirds is primarily during these seasons.
- c. Census for migrating shorebirds from shoreline along greenbelt, or using a boat.

Selection bias: None known

Measurement error and bias: May not be any

Needed pilot studies: None may be needed, other than determining how to survey sections of river not accessible by the greenbelt.

Contact:

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2) Aquatic Bird Survey Logistics

Timing: Late Fall through Early Spring is the most productive time to survey this site, and surveys should be run in the morning (finish by noon). Bird use is quite low during the summer months, and may not be an efficient use of survey time. Surveys should be run monthly from November through March, during the same week each month (e.g, 1st week). If adding additional surveys (e.g, bi-weekly), try to space them as evenly as possible (e.g, first and third week of the month). Where established, timing of surveys is outline in 'Section Protocols'.

Survey Route: From Discovery Park to the Glenwood Bridge in Garden City (see maps in following section). This route is divided into 7 sections: Discovery, Barber, Park Center, Boise, Americana, Veterans, and Glenwood. A separate datasheet will be used for each section, and generally only one section can be completed in a morning. The exception: Discovery and Barber can be completed in one morning, if the Discovery section is conducted by bicycle. All sections are open to the public, so no permission is needed prior to conducting these surveys.

Section Protocols:

Discovery: This section begins at Discovery Park and continues along the greenbelt to the historical site marker immediately west of Ben's Crow Inn (see attached map). This section can be surveyed either on bike or on foot, using binoculars. A scope should not be necessary. Count all birds along the river.

Barber: This section begins at the Barber Pool Visitor Center behind the Shakespeare Festival (see attached map). There are three overlook points from which to see aquatic birds in Barber Pool: one directly behind the visitor center, and two along a short trail southwest of the center. Be sure to not double-count birds at these three points. A scope may be necessary at this location. After surveying from these three points, return to your vehicle and drive to Barber Park (travel west on Warm Springs and turn left on Eckert Road). Follow the dirt trail, on foot, along the river from Barber Park to the Park Center Blvd entrance near Bown's Crossing. There are multiple points along this route to step off the path and survey the river. Some of these points are fairly close together, so be sure to keep track of which birds have already been counted. This route section should be surveyed with binoculars. A scope is not necessary.

Park Center: This section begins at the east end of Park Center Blvd, near Bown's Crossing (ending location of previous section; see attached map). Walk the greenbelt trail from this entrance to the Park Center Bridge near the IDFG Headquarters. There are multiple points along this route to step off the path and survey the river. Some of these points are fairly close together, so be sure to keep track of which birds have already been counted. The western half of the section is fairly open with good visibility of the river. Birds along this section should be counted as encountered. There are also a few ponds along the southern side of the trail, that should be included in the count. This section can be surveyed with binoculars, although a scope may be useful for surveying the ponds.

Boise: This section, which should be run during the first week of the month, starts on the north side of the Park Center Bridge near IDFG Headquarters, and ends at the Americana Bridge (see attached map). All birds can be counted from along the greenbelt and a few of the bridges, with a pair of binoculars (as detailed below). No distinct survey points are needed, so birds should be counted as you encounter them along the way, and you may leave the greenbelt briefly to get closer, or better, vantage points. Follow the greenbelt on the north side of the river from the Nature Center to the Broadway Bridge. Use the west side walkway to count birds from the center of the bridge, facing west. Then return to the greenbelt on the north side. Count birds in the large Julia Davis Park pond (you may leave the greenbelt for a closer look, but remain on the south side of the pond and do not encircle the pond). Follow the greenbelt on the north side until the BSU Friendship Bridge (next to the library). Cross the bridge, count birds from the center of the bridge, and continue on to the greenbelt on the south side of the river. Follow the greenbelt to the Ann Morrison Park bridge, and count birds from the center of the bridge, facing west (unless you were unable to count any birds to the east prior to reaching bridge, in which case birds to the east may also be counted from the bridge). Return to the greenbelt on the south side of the river and follow to the Americana Bridge. Finish by counting birds in the deep pool by the bridge. Throughout this section (particularly in parks) you will likely encounter large flocks of geese and ducks. Birds that are close to the river (i.e., within 100m) should be included in the count, as they are likely using the river regularly. For the large goose flocks that congregate at Ann Morrison Park, estimate (e.g., ~1000) numbers as best you can from the greenbelt and include this estimate in the 'Comments' section at the bottom of the datasheet.

Americana: This section begins on the north side of the Americana Bridge, and ends at the Veteran's Memorial Parkway Bridge (see attached map). Walk the greenbelt trail along the northern side of the river, counting all birds in the river and in the 3 large ponds on the north side of the trail. This section can be surveyed with a pair of binoculars, although a spotting scope may be helpful for surveying ponds. There are no distinct survey points along this section, so birds should be counted as encountered. Towards the western end of this section, the route passes through a dense riparian area. Include any birds detected in this area.

Veterans: This section runs from the north side of the Veterans Memorial Parkway Bridge to the Plantation Foot Bridge at mile marker 4.5 (see attached map). Although lighting may be better starting at the Veterans end of the route, this route can be run in either direction. Walk the greenbelt trail along the northern side of the river, counting all birds in the river. This section can be surveyed with just a pair of binoculars. There are no distinct survey points along this section, so birds should be counted as encountered.

Glenwood: This section runs from mile marker 4.5 (Plantation Foot Bridge), south along the river to the Glenwood Bridge, and ends at the Plantation Country Club golf course on the north side of the river. This section can be surveyed with just a pair of binoculars. There are few distinct survey points along this section, so birds should be counted as encountered. The survey route starts at

the Plantation Foot Bridge. Count west of the bridge then walk straight (southwest) to the far side of the island, and count birds along the southern bow in the river. Return to the trail and head west along the south side of the river to the Glenwood Bridge. Cross the bridge, counting birds from the center of the bridge, and proceed to the parking lot on the north side of the river. Count from the parking area and along the short trail to the east that ends at a gate, with a 'No Trespassing' sign. Record any birds you can see upriver from this viewpoint. The survey ends here.

Datasheet Protocols: Before beginning a survey, fill out the 'Date', 'Observer(s)', 'site' (Boise River), 'Section' (e.g., Barber), and 'start time' (military time). A separate datasheet should be used for each survey section.

When conducting a survey, mark each observed aquatic bird in the "Tally" section of the appropriate species. If you see a species that is not on the list, add the species to one of the blank lines below '[Yellowlegs], Lesser'. Although not on the official list, if you see Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, or Belted Kingfisher, record them as well. If any young aquatic birds are present, denote these individuals with a circle around the number present (see datasheet for example).

When you have completed the survey, record the 'End Time', tally up each species, and enter the total number of individuals per species in the 'Total' column.

3) Colony Count Logistics

Species: This site contains a moderately-sized Great Blue Heron rookery that has been active for a number of years.

Timing: The rookery should be surveyed in late April/early May prior to the cottonwoods leafing out. Once the trees have leaves, it is very difficult to see the nests and get an accurate count.

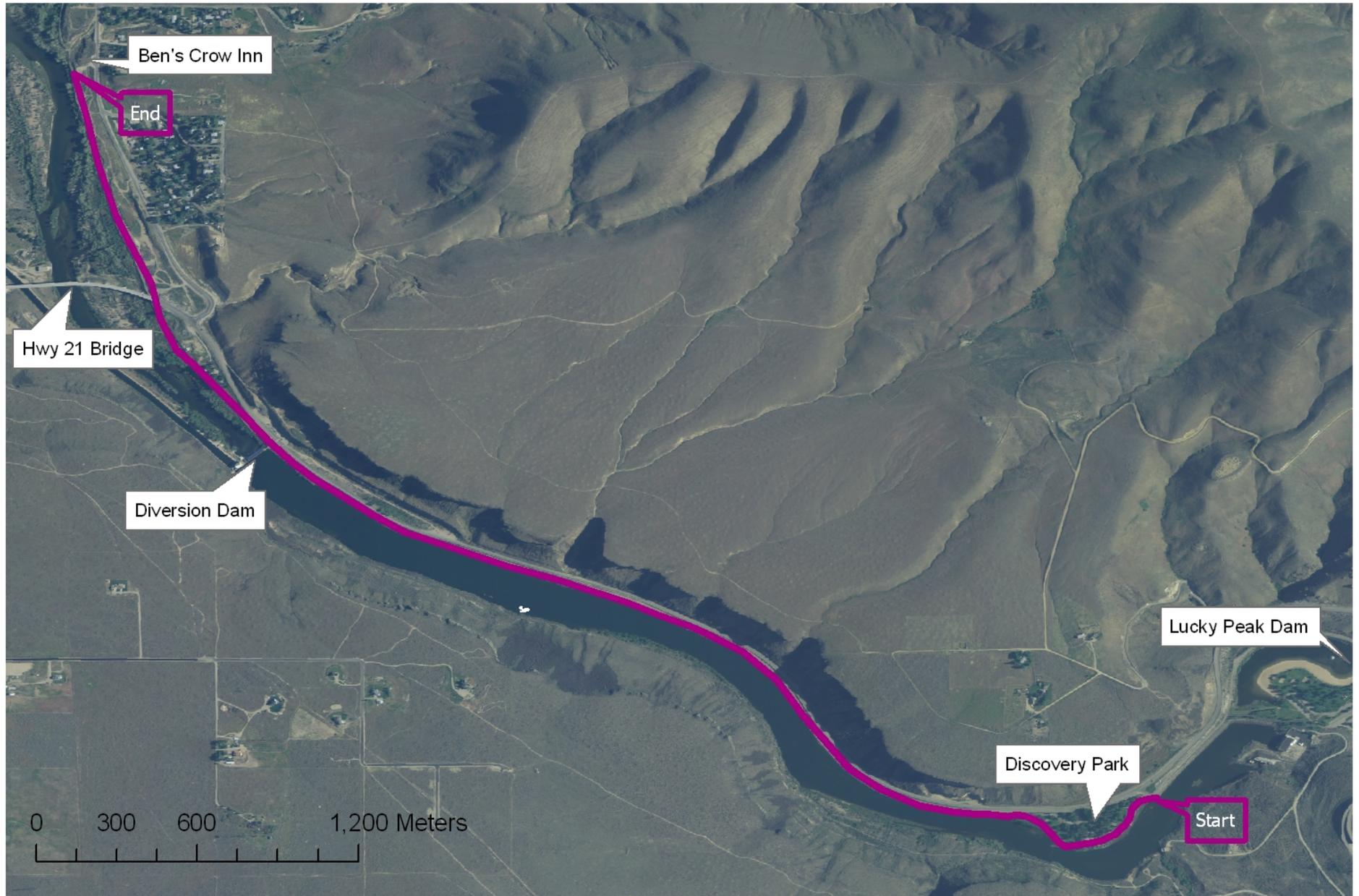
Survey Location: This colony is located near the Park Center Blvd entrance to the river, near Bown's crossing (see below). It can be viewed from a few locations, but is reliably surveyed from the river side of the colony. Walk the dirt trail along the river until the rookery comes into view. Then go off-trail to get closer the rookery – try to keep disturbance of the vegetation, and the herons, to a minimum. Stop advancing once the herons begin to become agitated.



Protocol: The objective for this survey is to get a complete count of active nests. Active nests are those that are attended by one or more adults. Using binoculars, or a spotting scope, count all nests that have at least one adult heron present. An adult is considered "present" if it is sitting in, standing next to, or actively tending to a nest. This count should not take more than 15 minutes to complete. Once you feel confident that you have counted all active nests, return to the trail to let the herons settle back down.

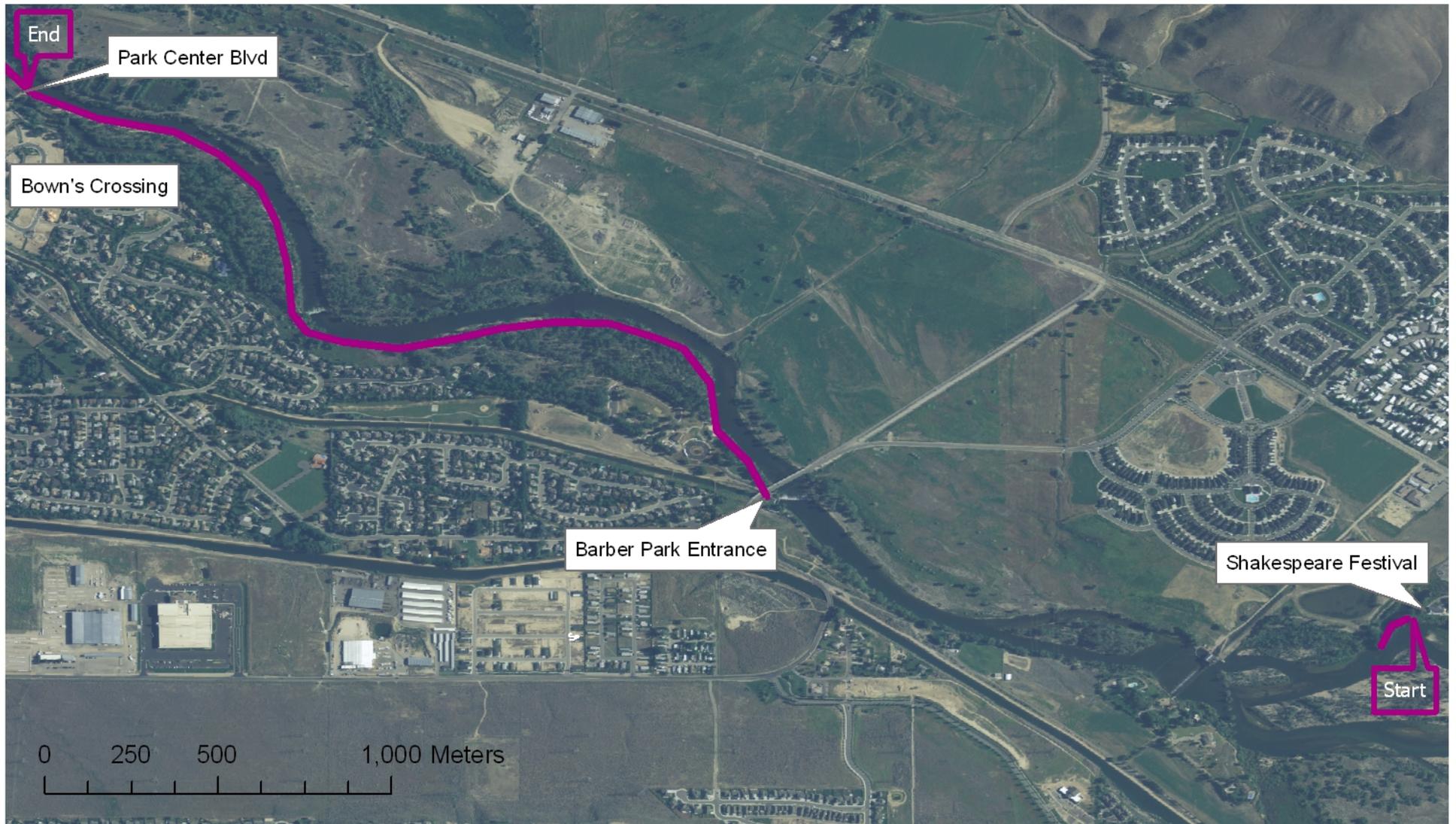
4) Survey Maps with Route Delineations

BOISE RIVER SURVEY SECTION: DISCOVERY



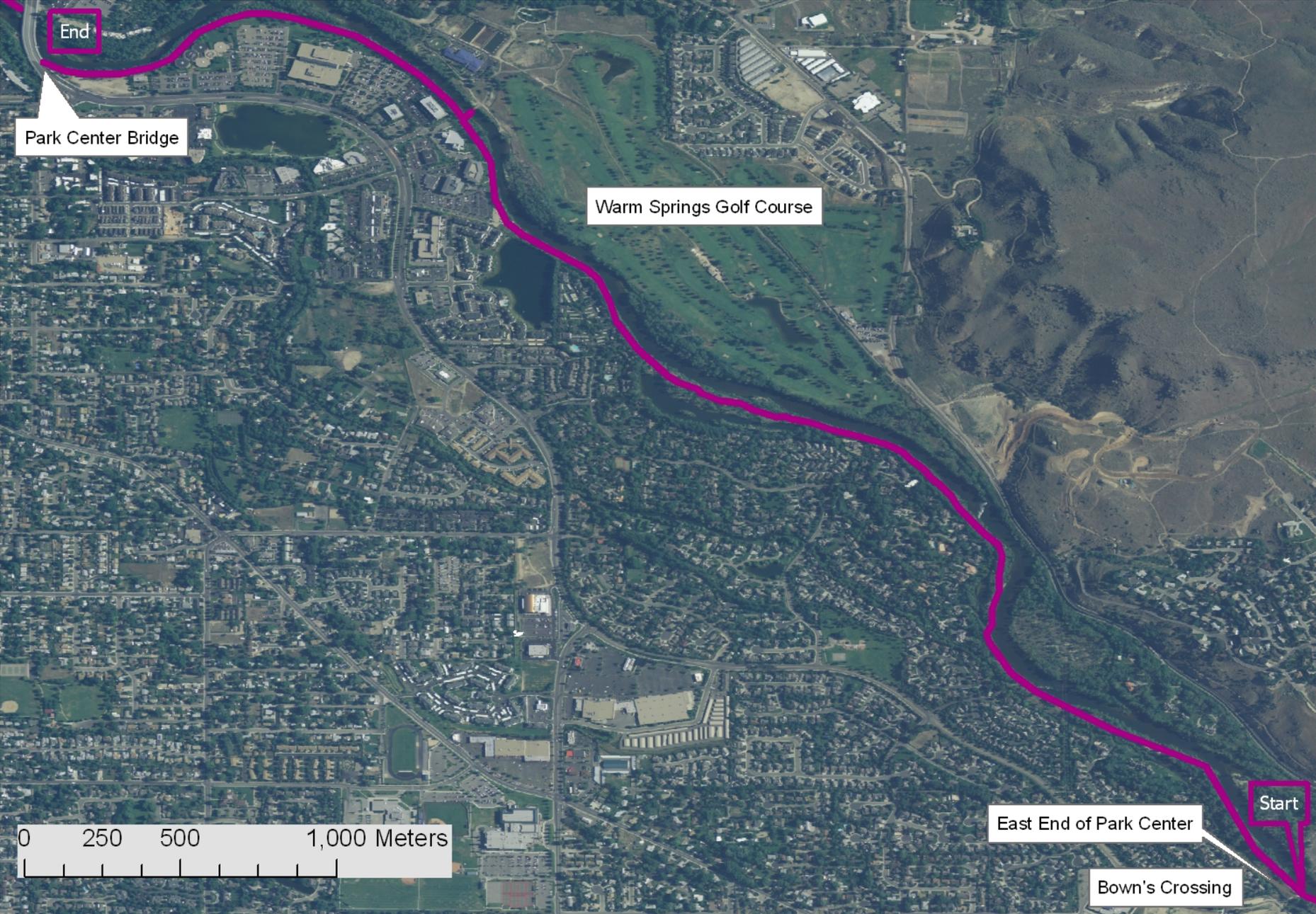
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BOISE RIVER SURVEY SECTION: BARBER

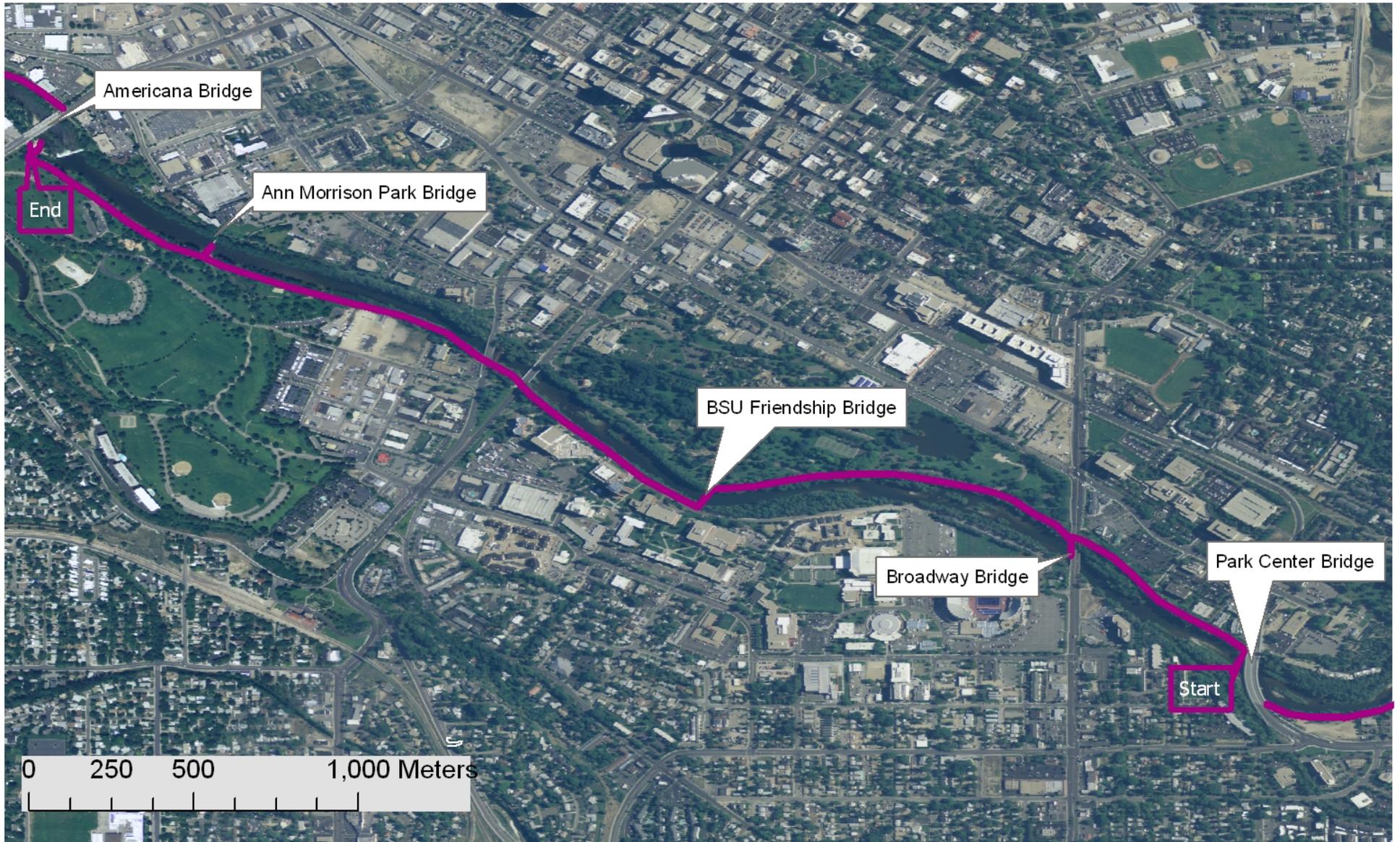


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BOISE RIVER SURVEY SECTION: PARK CENTER

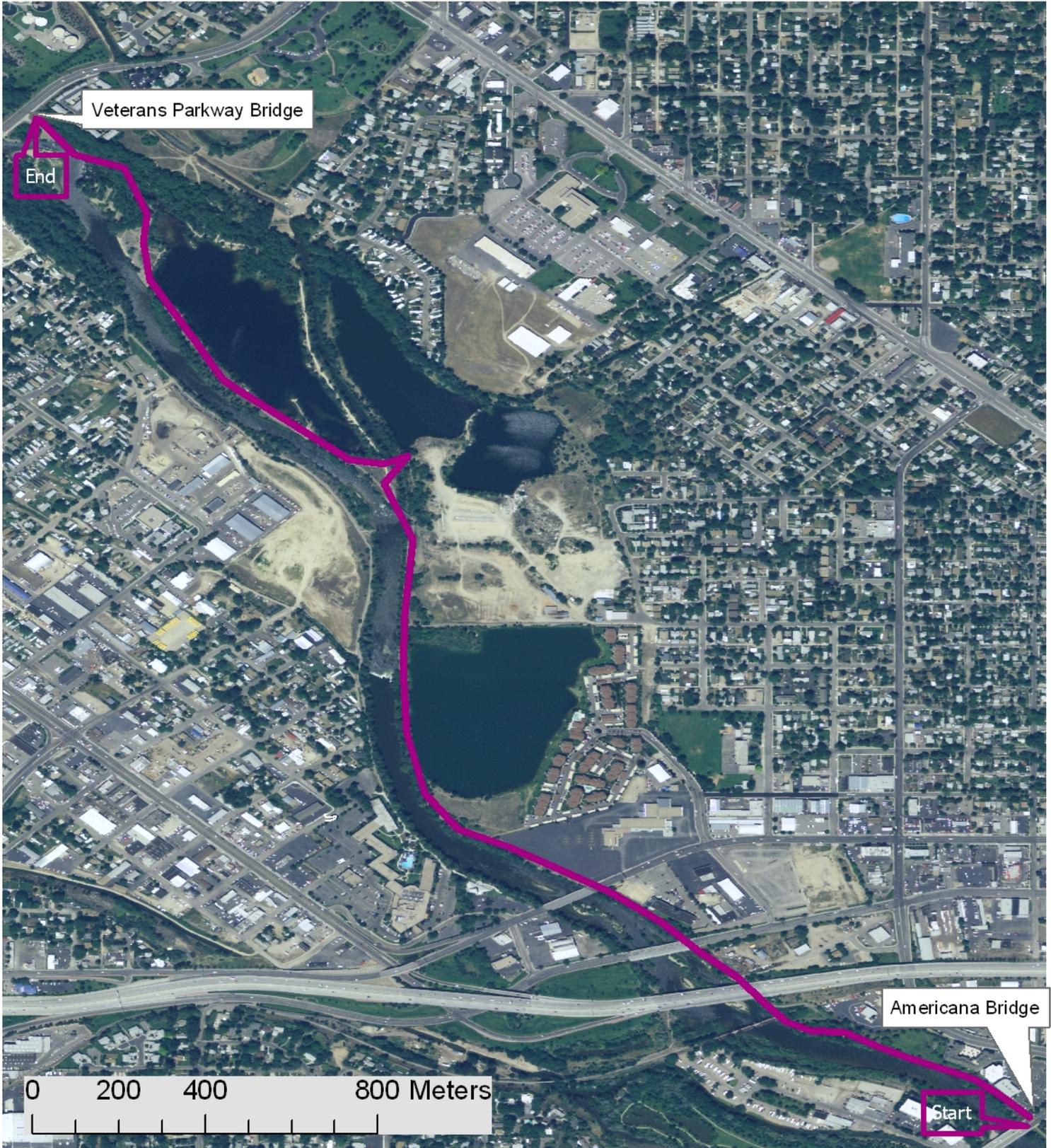


BOISE RIVER SURVEY SECTION: BOISE



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BOISE RIVER SURVEY SECTION: AMERICANA



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BOISE RIVER SURVEY SECTION: VETERANS



BOISE RIVER SURVEY SECTION: GLENWOOD

