



# BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PLAN



# The Opportunity

Biodiversity, the rich variety of life on earth, is imperative because of its profound impact on the functioning and resilience of ecosystems. It encompasses the incredible array of species, genes, and ecosystems that coexist and interact. Biodiversity provides numerous essential services, including clean air and water, pollination, climate regulation, and nutrient cycling. Moreover, it holds tremendous cultural, aesthetic, and recreational value, enriching our lives and connecting us to nature.

At Big River Steel, we not only proudly call Arkansas, The Natural State, our home, but strive to ensure that our state remains deserving of this cherished title.

We believe that recognizing and safeguarding biodiversity is vital for sustaining life on our planet, supporting human well-being, and preserving the beauty and integrity of our natural world.



## How Steel Production Can Impact Biodiversity

The production of steel does not employ or reserve large areas of land or have a significant effect on biodiversity in the surrounding natural environment. However, for any industrial construction project, there are always potential environmental risks for which to be mindful. Potential risks may include:

- Vegetation loss and conversion including impacts to habitats supporting notable species
- Felling of trees and effects on roosting bats and nesting birds
- Loss of ponds and impacts to watercourses with associated amphibians and fish
- Disruption of large mammal movements

That is why Big River Steel has made it a priority to not only identify protected areas or areas of high biodiversity value surrounding our operational site, but to proactively take the appropriate measures to protect and restore our adjoining native habitats.

# Our Environmental Stewardship and Policy Commitments

Big River Steel is a company that places the utmost importance on environmental stewardship and upholding natural resources. We are committed to following all regulations including those related to waterway protection, fish and wildlife preservation, and threatened and endangered species and critical habitat conservation. In addition, we have implemented comprehensive biodiversity management strategies to effectively manage and preserve the ecosystems surrounding our site and identified protected areas. As loyal stewards, we believe it is our responsibility to demonstrate respect and care for the world we all share.

## Waterway Policies

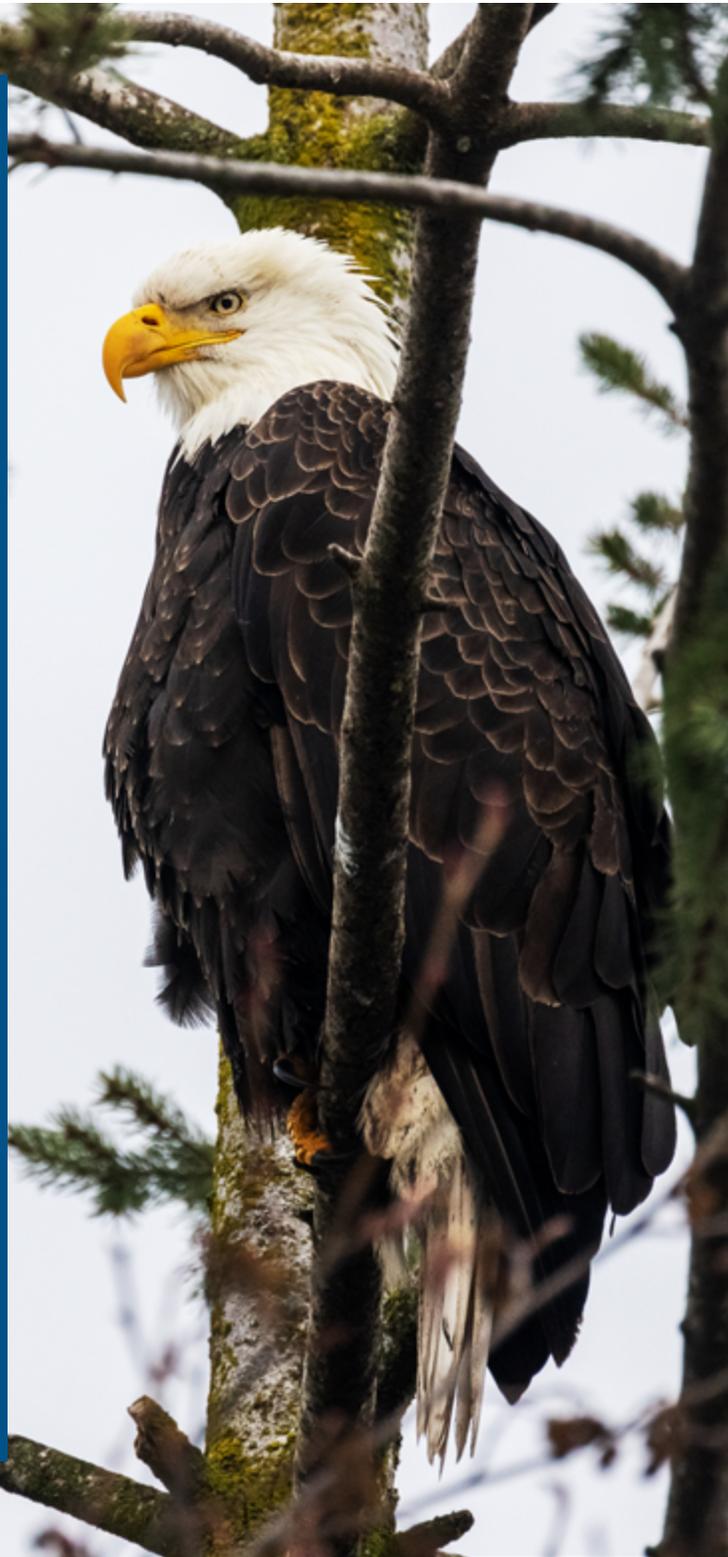
There are risks associated with neglecting waterway policies, including detrimental effects on aquatic ecosystems, compromising water quality, and endangering the delicate balance of marine life. Big River Steel adheres to the following policies:

- Clean Water Act of 1977
- Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899
- Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974

## Fish and Wildlife/Threatened and Endangered Species and Critical Habitat Policies

Species that occupy, breed, forage, rear, rest, hibernate, or migrate through the project site have the potential to be impacted. Regulations relevant to fish, wildlife, and endangered species include:

- Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
- Endangered Species Act of 1973
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act
- Executive Order 13112 (Invasive Species)



# Biodiversity Management Strategies: Mitigate, Monitor, Maintain

Our Biodiversity Management Plan serves as a valuable resource for Big River Steel, offering guidance on monitoring both the facility property and designated mitigation areas. Its purpose is to ensure that existing biodiversity is maintained while detecting any issues or causes for concern that may arise.

By providing monitoring guidance, the plan enables the tracking of environmental condition changes that could impact local biodiversity. Moreover, it aids in identifying deteriorating conditions and determining the underlying causes of potential harm, allowing for timely corrective actions to be taken by Big River Steel.

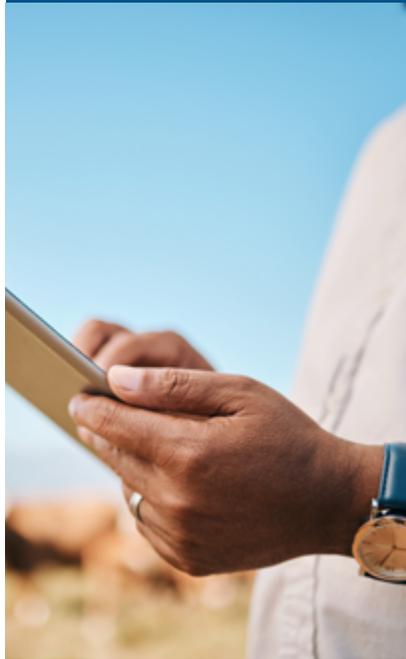
## Mitigation

Identify and prioritize biodiversity features and components



## Monitoring

Collect and report data on permitted mitigation areas



## Maintenance

Corrective measures for achieving healthy/diverse native biomes



## Standards of Success

- Achieving an **herbaceous vegetative** cover along the mitigation stream buffer of 90% within 1 year
- Establishing a **native warm-season grass community** within 60% of the total vegetated community along the stream buffer within 3 years
- Achieving 80% vegetative coverage with desirable **wetland tree species** in the wetland mitigation area within 5 years
- Achieving a **75% survival rate of planted trees** within the wetland mitigation area by year 3
- Achieving a minimum of **150 stems per acre** for woody species within the wetland mitigation area surviving by year 5
- Maintaining **adequate wetland hydrology** in the wetland mitigation area for 5 years (21 days of continuous saturation during the growing season)

# Our Management Outcomes

## What We've Accomplished

Through our biodiversity management process, Big River Steel has proudly achieved notable milestones. We have successfully collaborated with the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, Mississippi County, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma to preserve significant archeological sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Additionally, through our continued environmental restoration efforts, we have played a vital role in restoring stream channels, creating new wetland habitats, and enhancing existing wetland ecosystems. These efforts have had a positive impact on both cultural heritage preservation and the overall ecological health of the areas involved, fostering biodiversity and supporting the sustainability of these important natural environments.

## Continued Conservation

Maintaining our conservation efforts plays a crucial role in safeguarding our environment, and Big River Steel is dedicated to upholding this responsibility. To ensure the preservation of ecological habitats, we will advance our biodiversity management plan, focusing on protecting and maintaining the natural balance on and around our facility.

As shown in the photos below, our dedicated staff rescued a honeybee hive found in the plant's shipping area. By sharing such stories, we aim to raise awareness and inspire others to join us in our conservation endeavors.



At Big River Steel, it is essential for us to consistently explore new ways to improve our environmental stewardship practices. By staying proactive and open to innovative approaches, we can discover and implement more effective strategies for conserving biodiversity, reducing our environmental footprint, and promoting sustainable practices. Embracing this continuous improvement mindset will enable us to evolve as responsible environmental stewards and make a positive, lasting impact on our planet's health.

## Learn More

For more information on Big River Steel's water stewardship efforts or questions, contact us at [green@bigriversteel.com](mailto:green@bigriversteel.com).