

PUBLIC NOTICE

**CHARLESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
69A Hagood Avenue
Charleston, South Carolina 29403-5107**

REGULATORY DIVISION
Refer to: P/N # SAC-2011-00833

May 13, 2013

Pursuant to Sections 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1341) and the South Carolina Coastal Zone Management Act (48-39-10 et.seq.) a Prospectus has been submitted to the Department of the Army and the South Carolina Interagency Review Team by

**AUDUBON SOUTH CAROLINA
ATTN: MR. NORMAN BRUSWIG
FRANCIS BEIDLER FOREST
336 SANCTUARY ROAD
HARLEYVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA 29448**

for a proposal to establish and operate a mitigation bank within and adjacent to

FOUR HOLE SWAMP

at a location near the Audubon Center and Sanctuary at Francis Beidler Forest in Dorchester County, South Carolina (Latitude 33.200688 N, Longitude -80.354210 W).

In order to give all interested parties an opportunity to express their views

NOTICE

is hereby given that written statements regarding the proposed work will be received by the Corps of Engineers until

12 O'CLOCK NOON, FRIDAY, JUNE 14, 2013

from those interested in the activity and whose interests may be affected by the proposed work.

The proposed project consists of establishing a mitigation bank that is located within the Four Hole Swamp, Edisto River, North Edisto River, and South Edisto River watersheds (USGS 8-digit Hydrologic Unit Codes 03050205, 03040206, 030400203, 03040204). The National Audubon Society has operated an in-lieu fee program similar to the proposed mitigation bank in the Four Hole Swamp watershed since 2000. The proposed project will convert the existing in-lieu fee program into an umbrella mitigation bank that is consistent with regulations published by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (33 CFR Parts 325 and 332) entitled, *Compensatory Mitigation for Losses of Aquatic Resources* (Mitigation Rule).

Audubon South Carolina (ASC) will buy and protect lands approved by the Interagency Review Team from interested and willing landowners within the proposed Target Acquisition Areas (TAAs). The primary TAA for the proposed mitigation bank includes 42,280 acres of land surrounding the 16,900-acre Audubon Center and Sanctuary at Francis Beidler Forest as shown on Appendix II Map 6A. The bank sponsor has also identified a secondary TAA (71,807 acres) that extends into the main stem of the Edisto River and upstream into the North Fork and South Fork of the Edisto River as shown on Appendix II Map 6B. Property already owned by and protected by the National Audubon Society will only be incorporated into the proposed mitigation bank, if ASC proposes and the IRT approves the restoration and/or enhancement of aquatic resources on these properties.

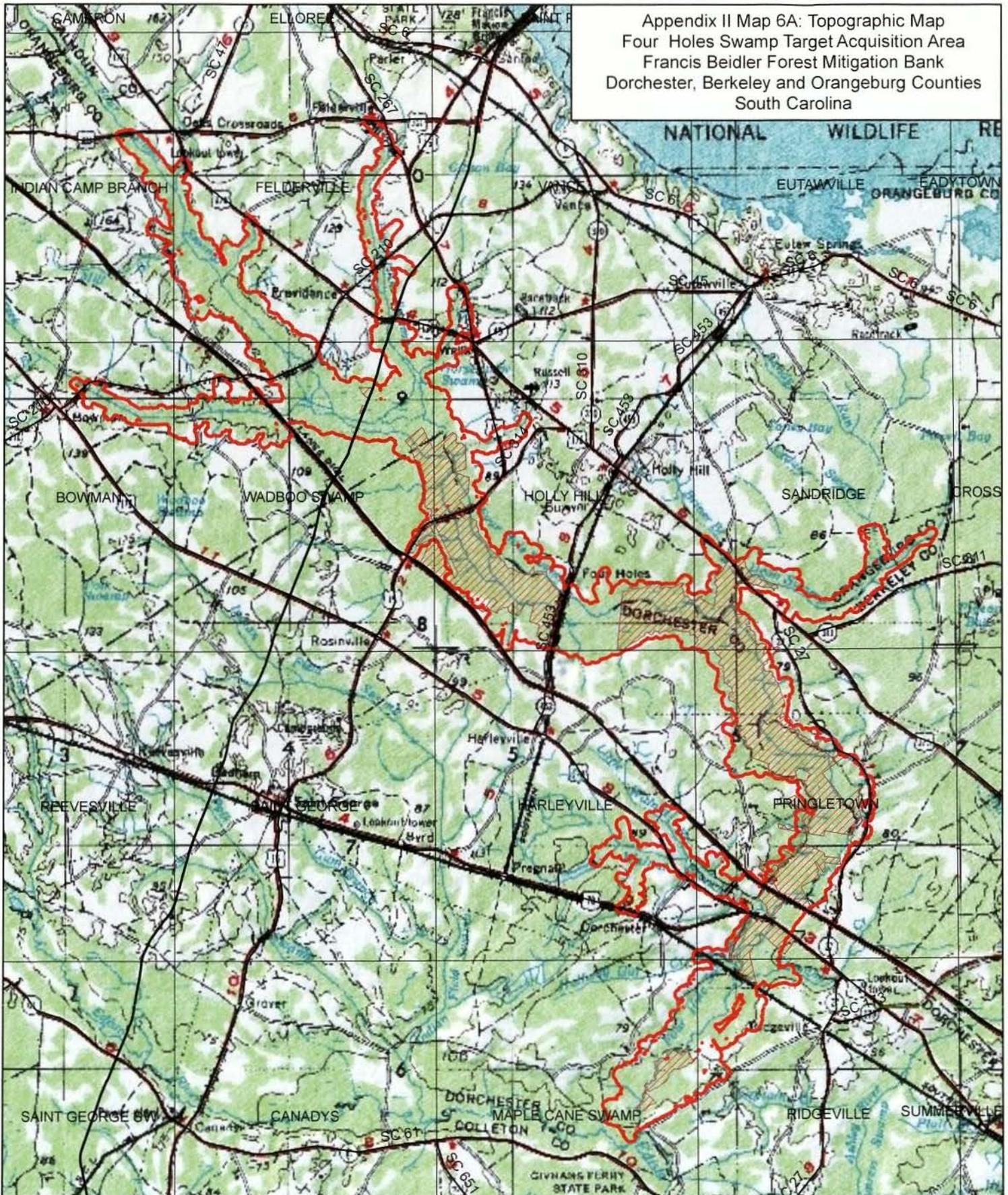
The current goal for expansion of Francis Beidler Forest is 20,000 acres owned in fee and 10,000 acres protected by conservation easements. The overall goals of the proposed mitigation bank include: 1) creating the largest wetland preserve possible (20,000 acres or more) for the purpose of providing high quality habitat for breeding, wintering, and migratory birds and other plant and animal species, 2) protecting upland habitat to both buffer wetlands and improve habitat for the entire life cycle of many wetland dependent species, 3) protecting high quality habitat corridors by connecting Francis Beidler Forest to other high quality habitats such as Brosnan Forest, and 4) adding to landscape-scale and ecosystem-level conservation efforts in the Ashepoo-Combahee-Edisto (ACE) Basin.

According to the Prospectus, restoration will not be an essential element of the proposed mitigation bank. Protecting the forested wetlands of Four Hole Swamp and downstream portions of the Edisto River and their swamp tributaries will be the priority of the proposed mitigation bank. However, restoration is a natural next step in preserve design and functional enhancement of this growing body of protected land. Restoration needs and opportunities will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and a project specific mitigation work plan will be submitted to the IRT for review and approval in each instance. Work required to restore and/or enhance aquatic resources may be authorized under Nationwide Permit #27 after review by the Corps, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, and the Interagency Review Team.

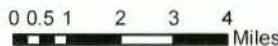
The proposed mitigation bank will provide in-kind compensatory mitigation for authorized impacts to aquatic resource functions and services associated with future development activities within the Middle Atlantic Coastal Plain and Sea Islands Coastal Marsh ecoregions, as shown on the attached Service Area Map. Consultation and coordination requirements in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the National Historic Preservation Act will be conducted once specific properties are identified for preservation and mitigation work plans are developed for restoration and/or enhancement activities associated with the proposed mitigation bank.

The Prospectus for the proposed mitigation bank is available for review by appointment between the hours of 9:00 am and 4:00 pm Monday through Friday at the address listed above. Please note if information about the location of Federally listed Threatened or Endangered species or the location of cultural resources is included in this Prospectus, this portion of the document may be withheld in accordance with the appropriate statutes for the protection of this information. If there any questions concerning the proposed mitigation bank or the information included in this public notice please contact Mr. Nat Ball by e-mail at nathaniel.i.ball@usace.army.mil or by telephone at 843-329-8044.

Appendix II Map 6A: Topographic Map
 Four Holes Swamp Target Acquisition Area
 Francis Beidler Forest Mitigation Bank
 Dorchester, Berkeley and Orangeburg Counties
 South Carolina

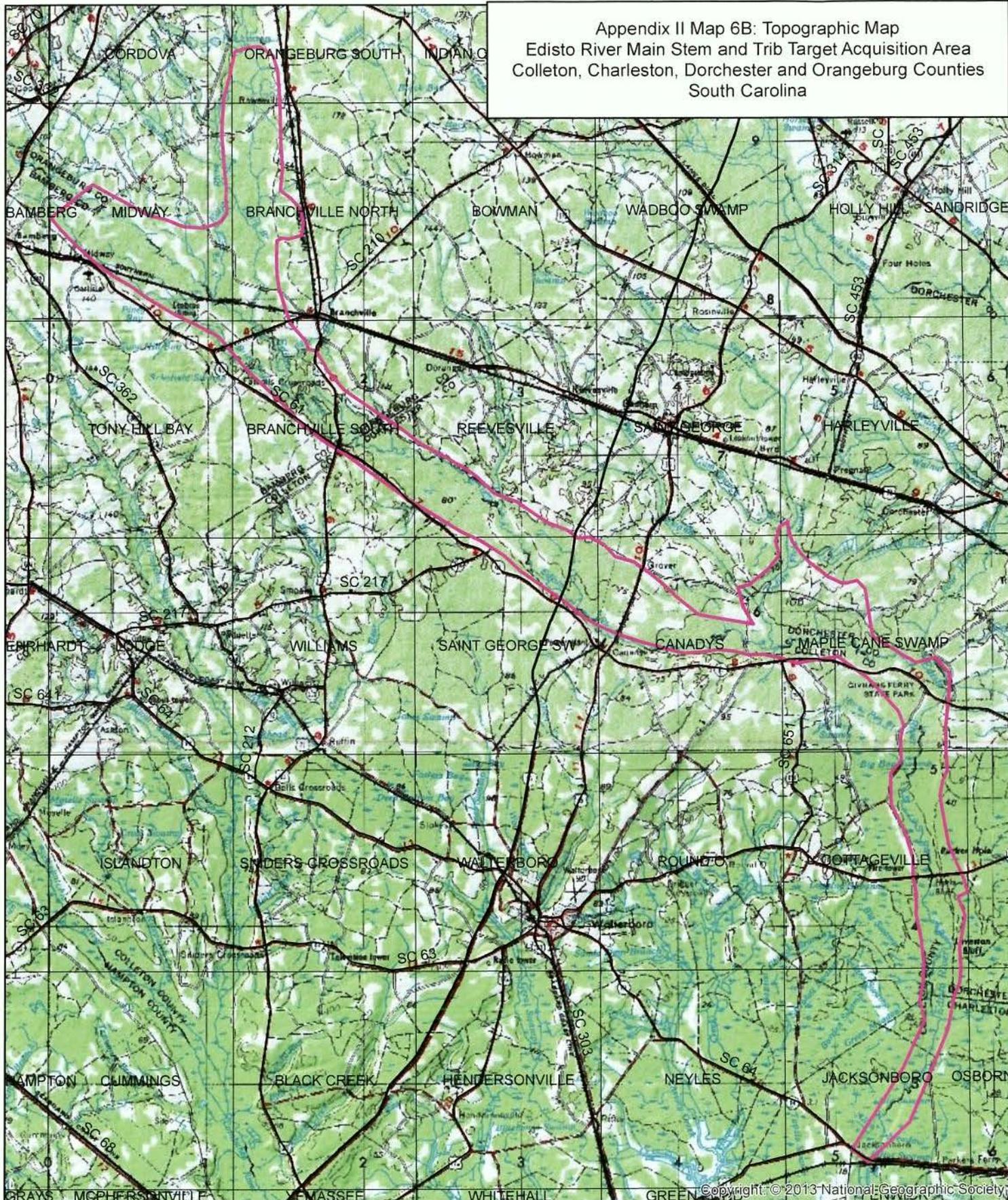


 Four Holes Swamp Target Acquisition Area



1:227,244

Appendix II Map 6B: Topographic Map
 Edisto River Main Stem and Trib Target Acquisition Area
 Colleton, Charleston, Dorchester and Orangeburg Counties
 South Carolina



 Edisto River Secondary Target Acquisition Area 71,807 acres

0 0.75 1.5 3 4.5 6 Miles

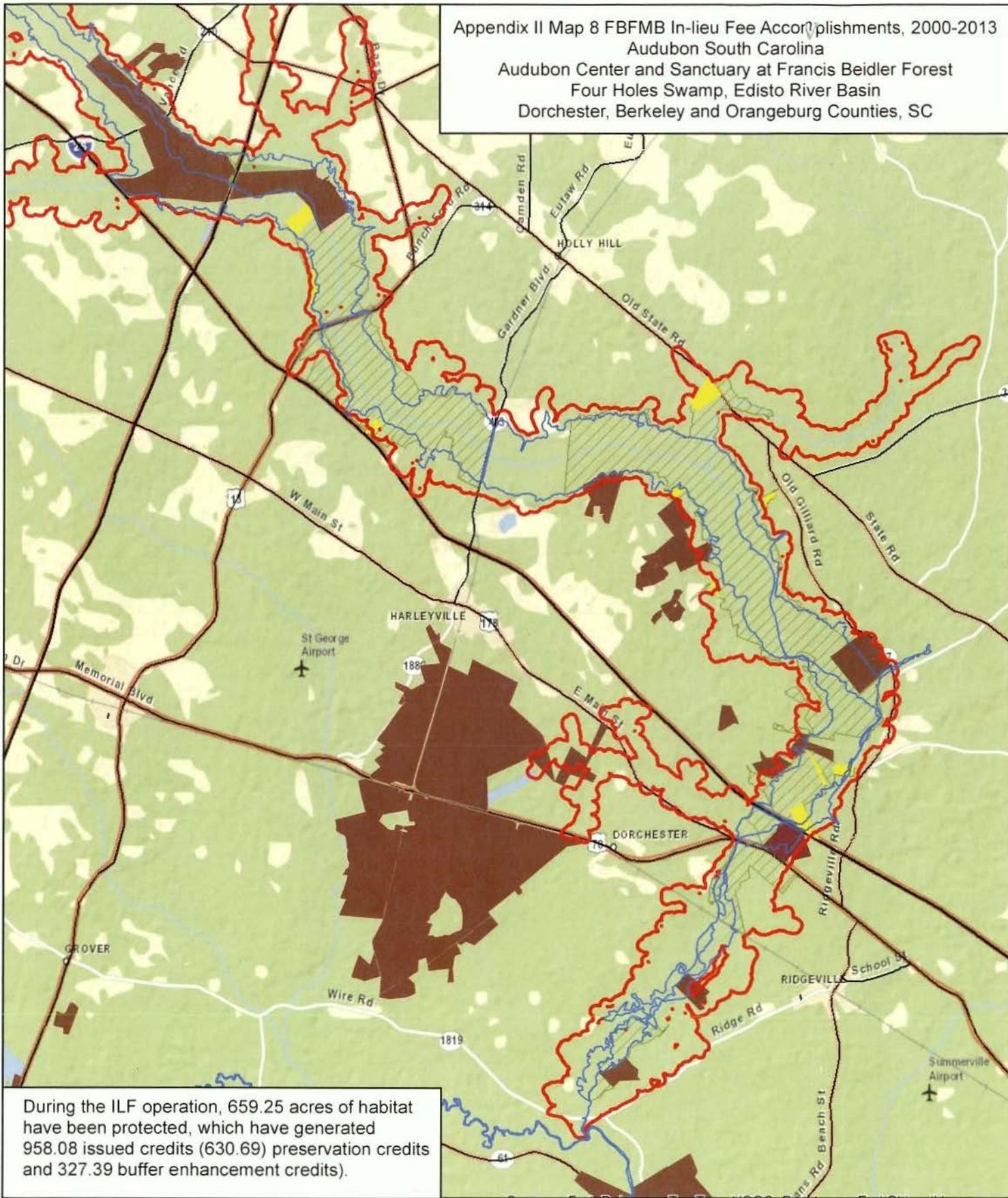
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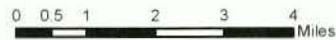
Audubon SOUTH CAROLINA

Appendix II Map 8 FBFMB In-lieu Fee Accomplishments, 2000-2013

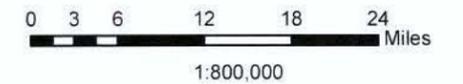
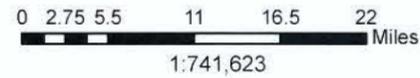
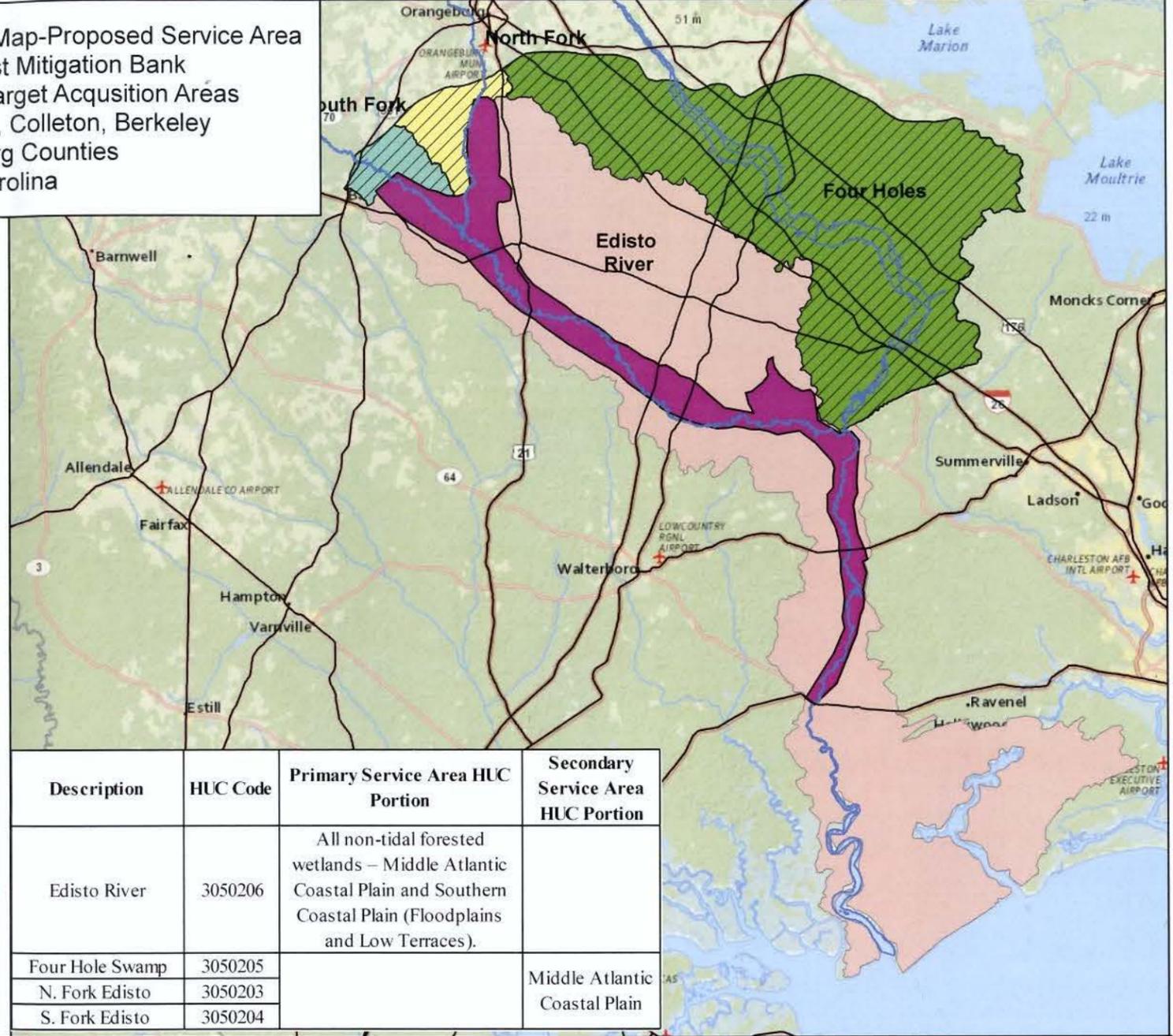
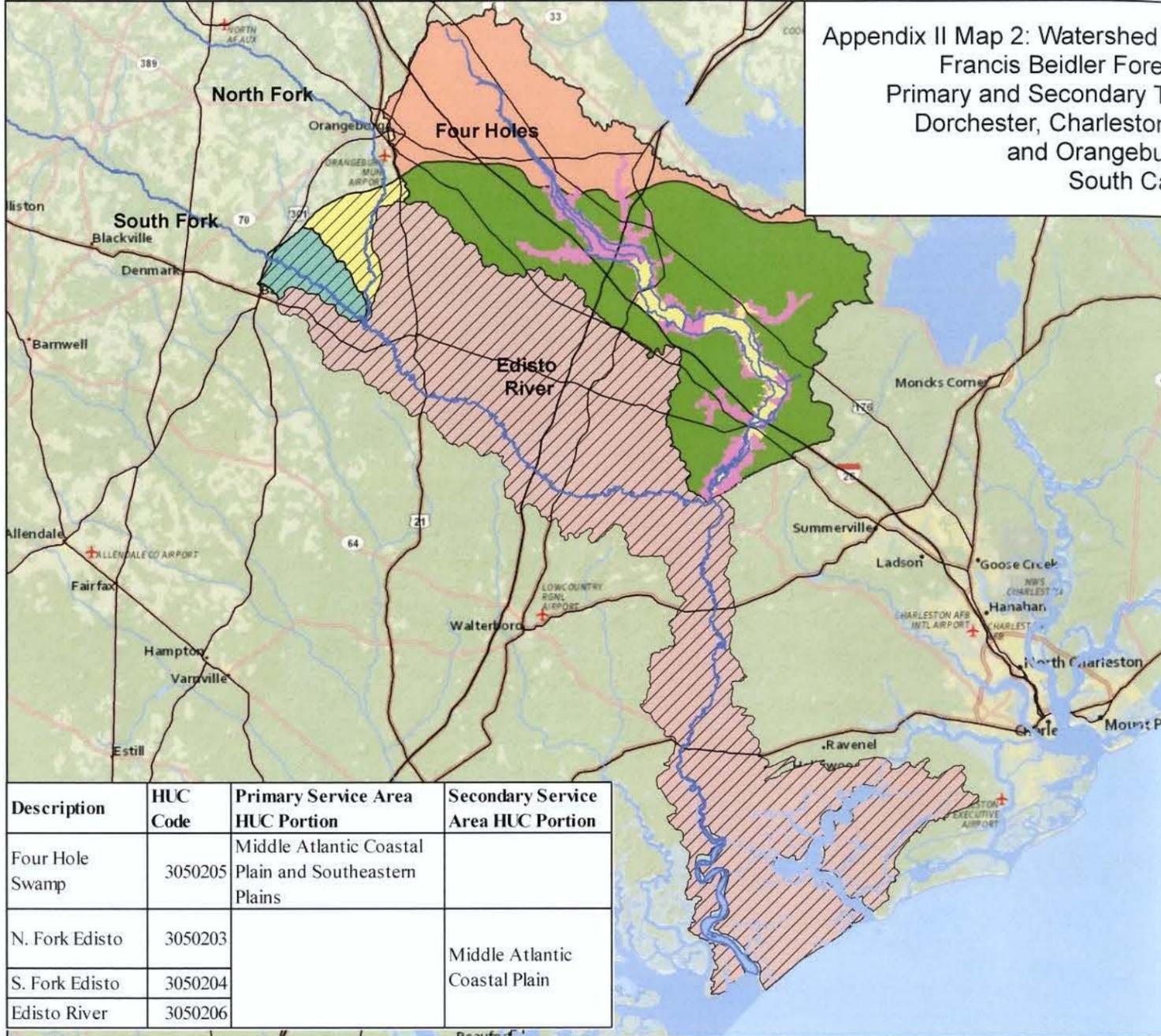
Audubon South Carolina
 Audubon Center and Sanctuary at Francis Beidler Forest
 Four Holes Swamp, Edisto River Basin
 Dorchester, Berkeley and Orangeburg Counties, SC



- Four Holes Swamp Target Acquisition Area
- Protected Lands owned and managed by Audubon Center and Sanctuary at Francis Beidler Forest
- Other Protected Lands, including Federal, State and Private
- Tracts NAS sold mitigation credits through In Lieu Fee Bank



Appendix II Map 2: Watershed Map-Proposed Service Area
Francis Beidler Forest Mitigation Bank
Primary and Secondary Target Acquisition Areas
Dorchester, Charleston, Colleton, Berkeley
and Orangeburg Counties
South Carolina



- Francis Beidler Forest (FBF): Core
- FBFMB: Four Holes Swamp Primary Target Acquisition Area 42,280 acres
- Four Holes Swamp Middle Atlantic Coastal Plain
- Edisto River Secondary Target Acquisition Area 71,807 acres
- Four Holes Swamp Southeastern Plains
- Edisto River Mid-Atlantic Coastal Plain (Floodplains and Low Terraces)
- North Fork Edisto River Middle Atlantic Coastal Plain
- South Fork Edisto River Middle Atlantic Coastal Plain