

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

REGULATORY DIVISION

Refer to: P/N SAC-2019-00641

February 12, 2021

Pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. 403), Sections 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344), a prospectus has been submitted to the Department of the Army and the South Carolina Interagency Review Team by

Audubon South Carolina
Attn: Mr. Justin Stokes
635 Rutledge Avenue #107
Charleston, SC 29403

for a proposal to establish and operate a wetland and stream mitigation bank that is adjacent to the

SAVANNAH RIVER

At a location approximately 3.0 miles west of SC Highway 121 on Silver Bluff Road, Aiken County South Carolina, (Latitude: 33.3185°, Longitude: -81.8374 °), Jackson SC U.S. Geological Service Quadrangle sheets.

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** until

30 Days from the Date of this Notice

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

The proposed project consists of establishing a freshwater wetland and stream mitigation bank in the Middle Savannah River watershed (8-digit Hydrologic Unit Code 03060106). The proposed 475.3-acre mitigation site includes approximately 292.8 acres of wetlands and 6,036 linear feet of non-wetland waters.

The proposal is to enhance 21.1 acres of freshwater wetlands through removal of loblolly pine and replanting with native hardwood species. 122.9 acres of wetland will be enhanced through plugging ditches, installation of low flow crossings, removal of loblolly pine, and replanting native species. 148.8 acres of wetland will be enhanced through selective removal of loblolly pine, replanting native species, and removing hydrological impairments. 6,036 linear feet

of stream will be restored through Priority 1 stream restoration and stream buffer enhancement. An existing Conservation Easement is already on the property. The bank sponsor, using a more restrictive conservation easement, will protect the mitigation bank site.

NOTE: This public notice and associated plans are available on the Corps' website at:
<http://www.sac.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/PublicNotices> .

Also, according to the Prospectus, the proposed mitigation bank will provide in-kind compensatory mitigation for authorized impacts to aquatic resources located within the in the Middle Savannah River Watershed. The work required to complete the proposed activities on the mitigation site may be authorized under Nationwide Permit #27 after reviews by the Corps, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, and the Interagency Review Team.

The District Engineer has concluded that the discharges associated with this project, both direct and indirect, should be reviewed by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control in accordance with provisions of Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. As such, this notice constitutes a request, on behalf of the applicant, for certification that this project will comply with applicable effluent limitations and water quality standards. The applicant is hereby advised that supplemental information may be required by the State to facilitate the review.

This notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Implementation of the proposed project would impact 0 acres of estuarine substrates and emergent wetlands utilized by various life stages of species comprising the shrimp, and snapper-grouper management complexes. The District Engineer's initial determination is that the proposed action would not have a substantial individual or cumulative adverse impact on EFH or fisheries managed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The District Engineer's final determination relative to project impacts and the need for mitigation measures is subject to review by and coordination with the NMFS.

Pursuant to the Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (as amended), the Corps has reviewed the project area, examined all information provided by the applicant, and the District Engineer has determined that the project is not likely to adversely affect any Federally endangered, threatened, or proposed species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated or proposed critical habitat. This public notice serves as a request for written concurrence from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or the National Marine Fisheries Service on this determination.

In accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA, the District Engineer has consulted South Carolina ArchSite (GIS), for the presence or absence of historic properties (as defined in 36 C.F.R. 800.16)(1)(1)), and has initially determined that historic properties, are present; moreover, these historic properties may be affected by the undertaking. This public notice serves to notify the State Historic Preservation Office that the Corps plans to initiate Section 106 consultation on these historic properties. Individuals or groups who would like to be consulting parties for the purposes of the NHPA should make such a request to the Corps in writing within 30 days of this public notice. To ensure that other historic properties that the District Engineer is not aware of are not overlooked, this public notice also serves as a request to the State Historic Preservation Office and other interested parties to provide any information they may have with regard to historic properties.

The District Engineer's final eligibility and effect determination will be based upon coordination with the SHPO and/or THPO, as appropriate and required and with full consideration given to the proposed undertaking's potential direct and indirect effects on historic properties within the Corps-identified permit area.

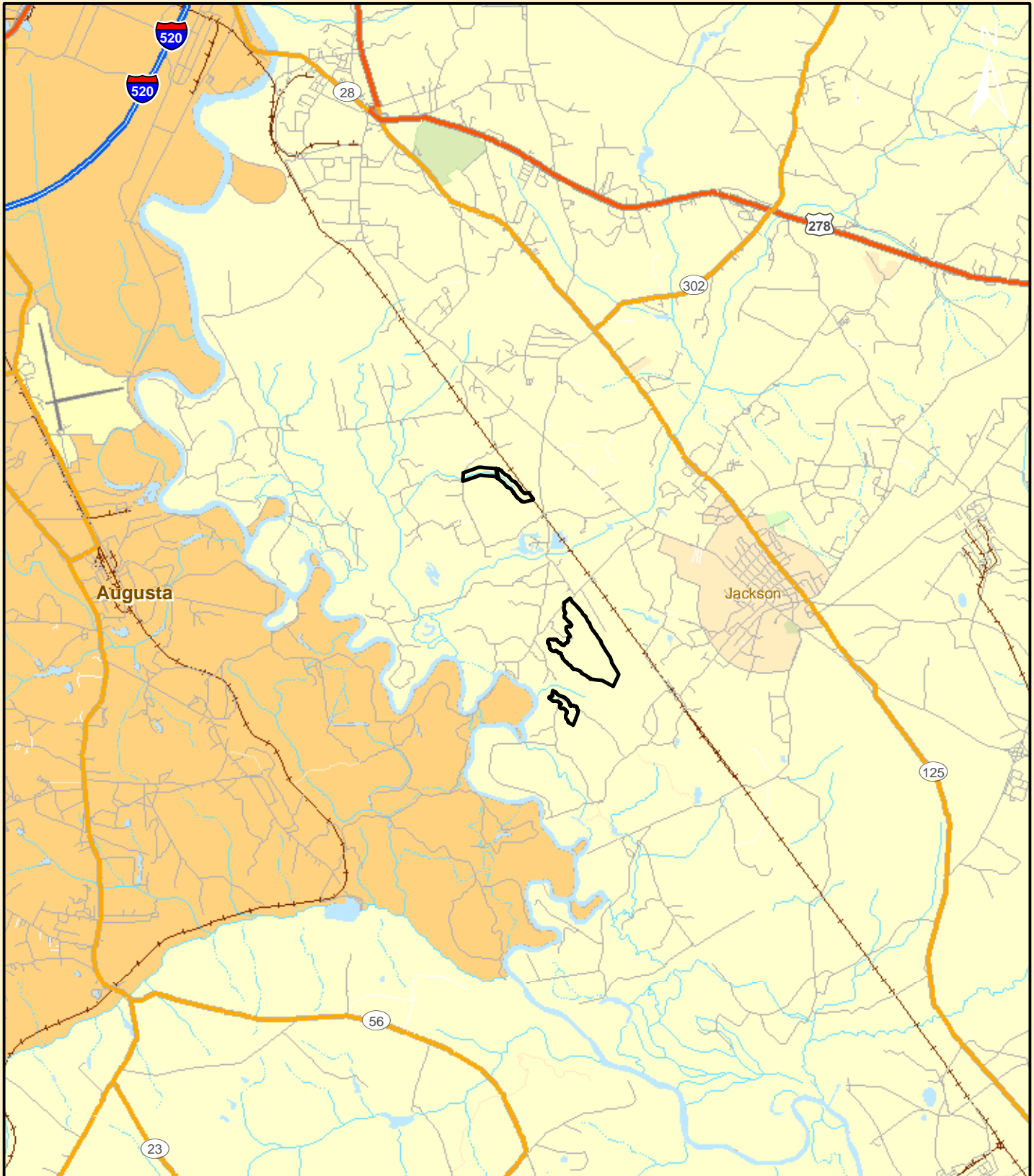
Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for a public hearing shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

The decision whether to approve or deny the proposed mitigation bank will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the activity on the public interest. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the project must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the project will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. In cases of conflicting property rights, the Corps cannot undertake to adjudicate rival claims.

The Corps is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this project. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the activity. **Please submit comments in writing, identifying the project of interest by public notice number, to the following address:**

**US Army Corps of Engineers
Attention: Regulatory Division
69A Hagood Avenue
Charleston, South Carolina 29403**

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. If there are any questions concerning the proposed mitigation bank or the information included in this public notice please contact Shawn by e-mail at shawn.a.boone@usace.army.mil or by telephone at 843-329-8044.



SBMB Boundary

Prepared By:

sligh environmental consultants, inc.
 31 Park of Commerce Way, Suite 200B
 Savannah, Georgia 31405
 phone (912) 232-0451
 fax (912) 232-0453

Figure 1: Project Location Map
Silver Bluff Mitigation Bank
Aiken County, South Carolina

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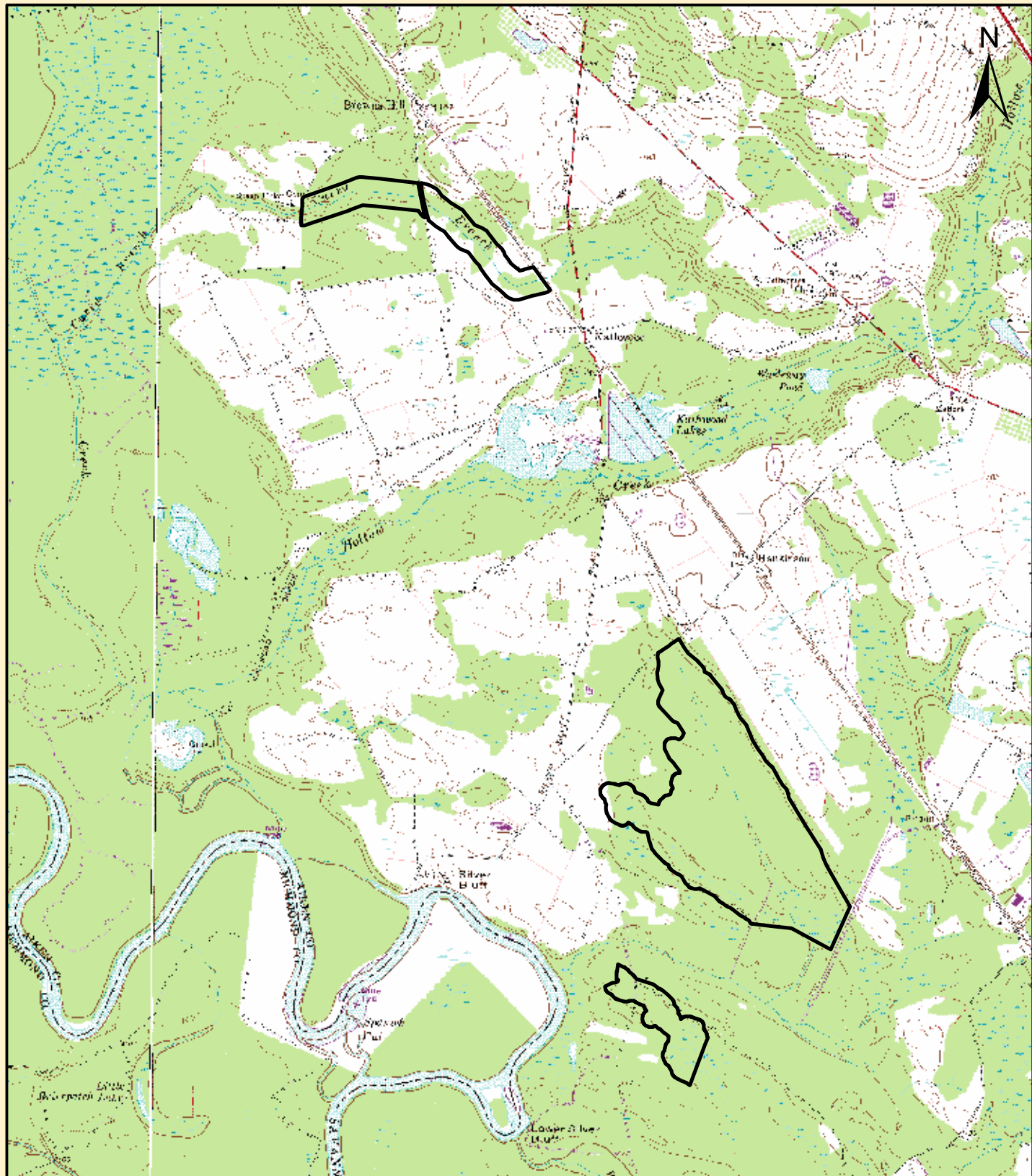
Miles

Exhibit Date: September 14, 2020

Drawn By: BWW

Reviewed By: DJP

Job Number : 01-18-035



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**Figure 2: USGS - Jackson Quad
 Silver Bluff Mitigation Bank
 Aiken County, South Carolina**

3,000 Feet
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Project Site

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Figure 3: Watershed Map
Silver Bluff Mitigation Bank
Aiken County, South Carolina

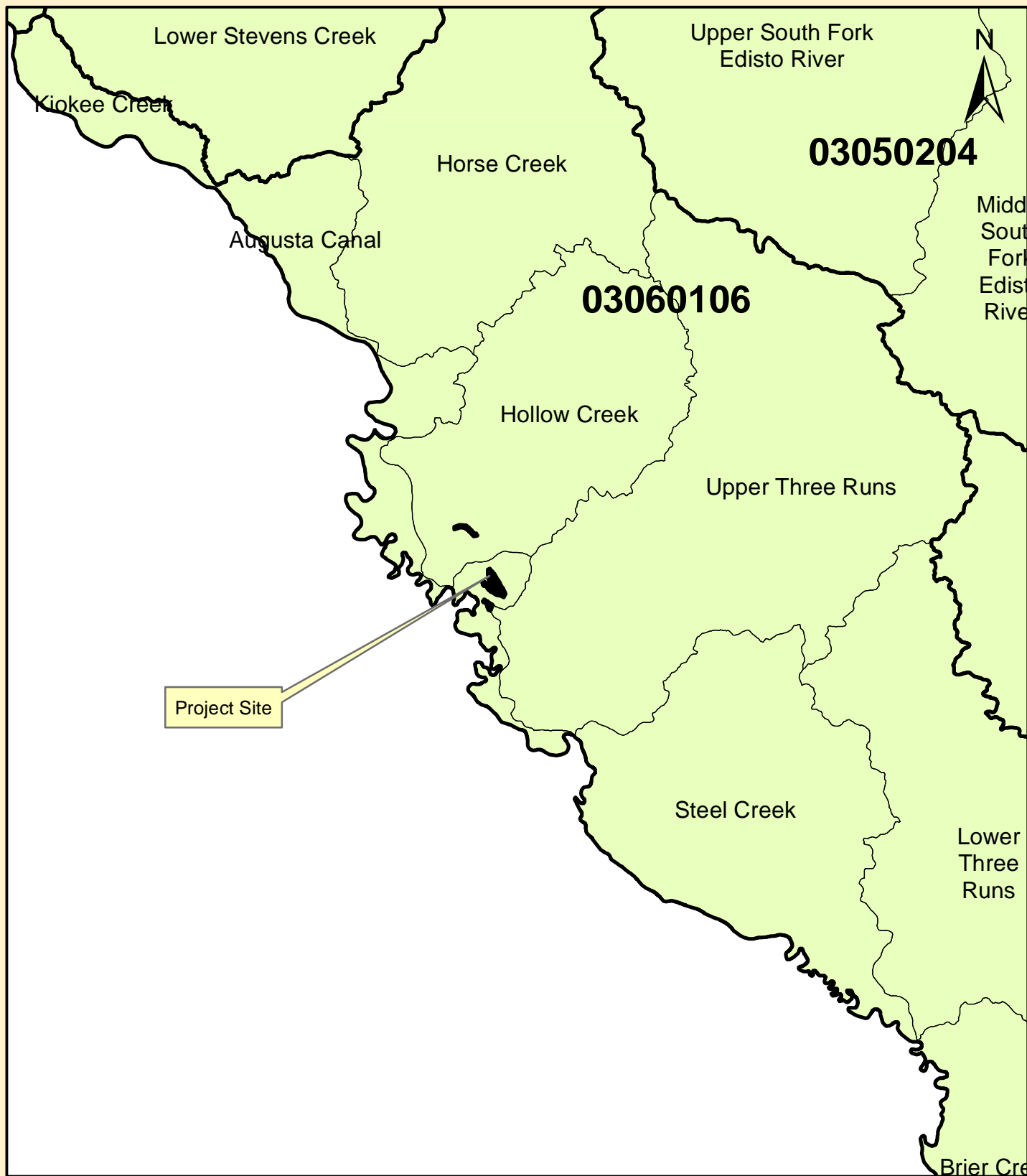
40 Miles

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**Figure 4: Sub-Watershed Map
 Silver Bluff Mitigation Bank
 Aiken County, South Carolina**

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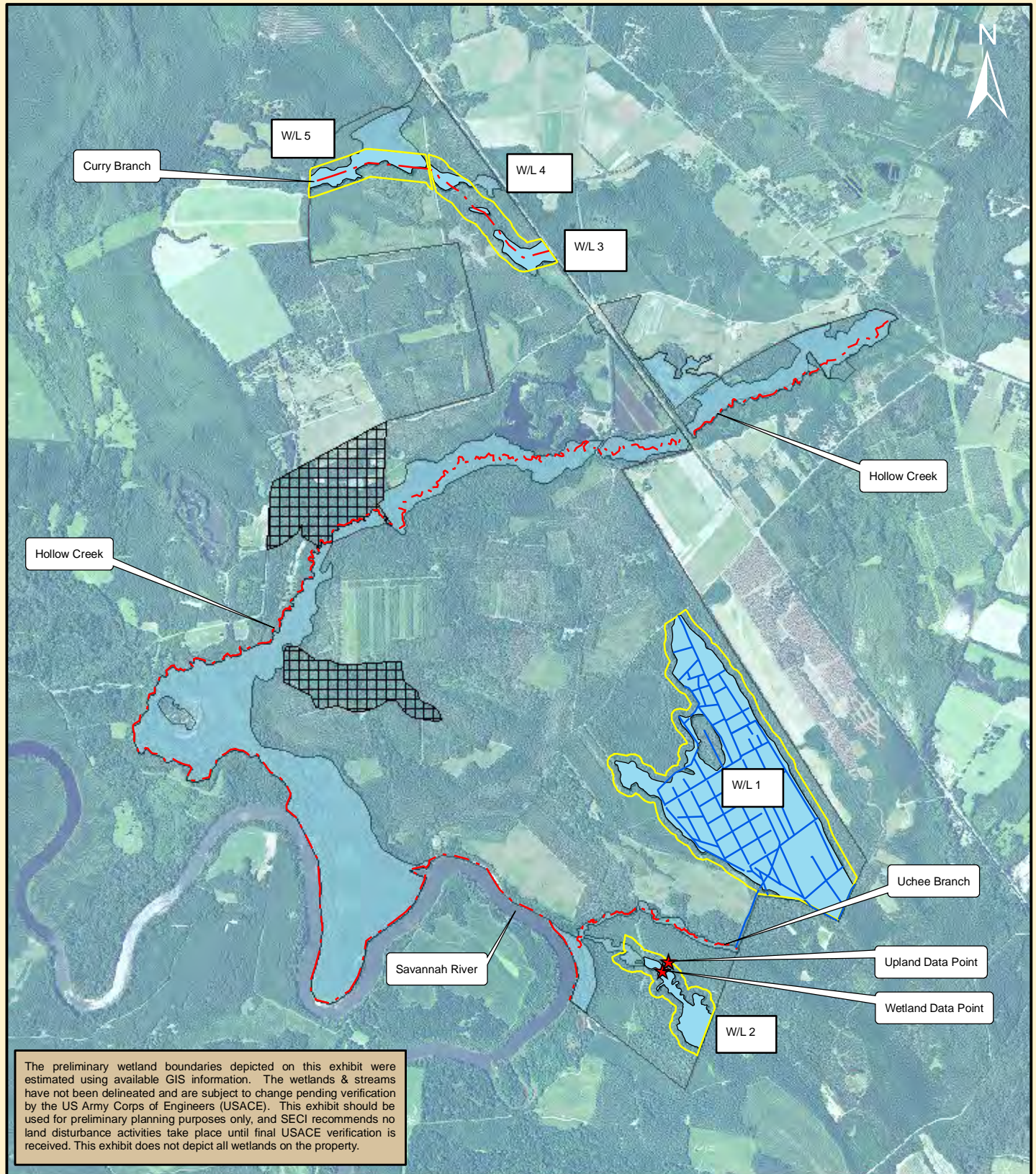
Miles

Exhibit Date: September 14, 2020

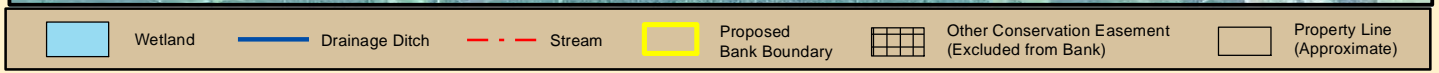
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The preliminary wetland boundaries depicted on this exhibit were estimated using available GIS information. The wetlands & streams have not been delineated and are subject to change pending verification by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). This exhibit should be used for preliminary planning purposes only, and SECI recommends no land disturbance activities take place until final USACE verification is received. This exhibit does not depict all wetlands on the property.



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**Figure 5: Map of Aquatic Resources
 Silver Bluff Mitigation Bank
 Aiken County, South Carolina**

3,000
 Feet

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**Figure 10: 1999 Aerial Photograph
Silver Bluff Mitigation Bank
Aiken County, South Carolina**

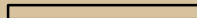
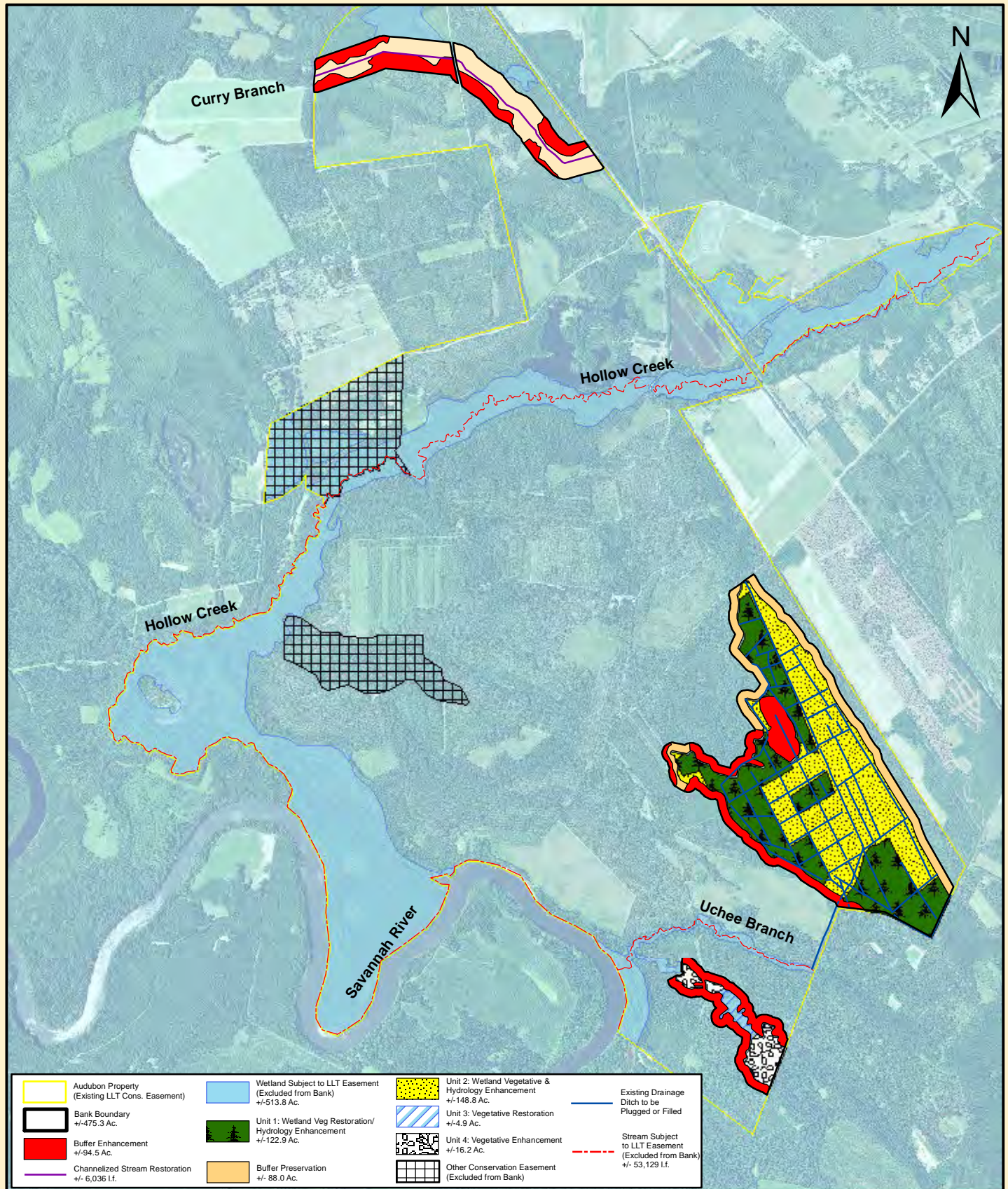
 2,500 Feet

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Figure 11: Overall Mitigation Exhibit
Silver Bluff Mitigation Bank
Aiken County, South Carolina

2,500

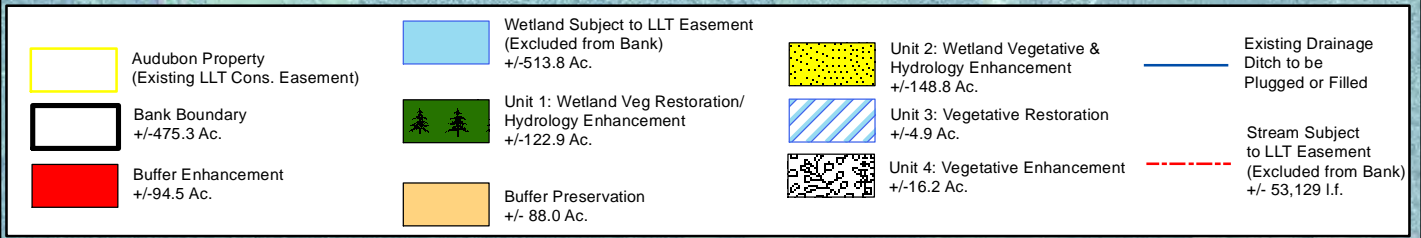
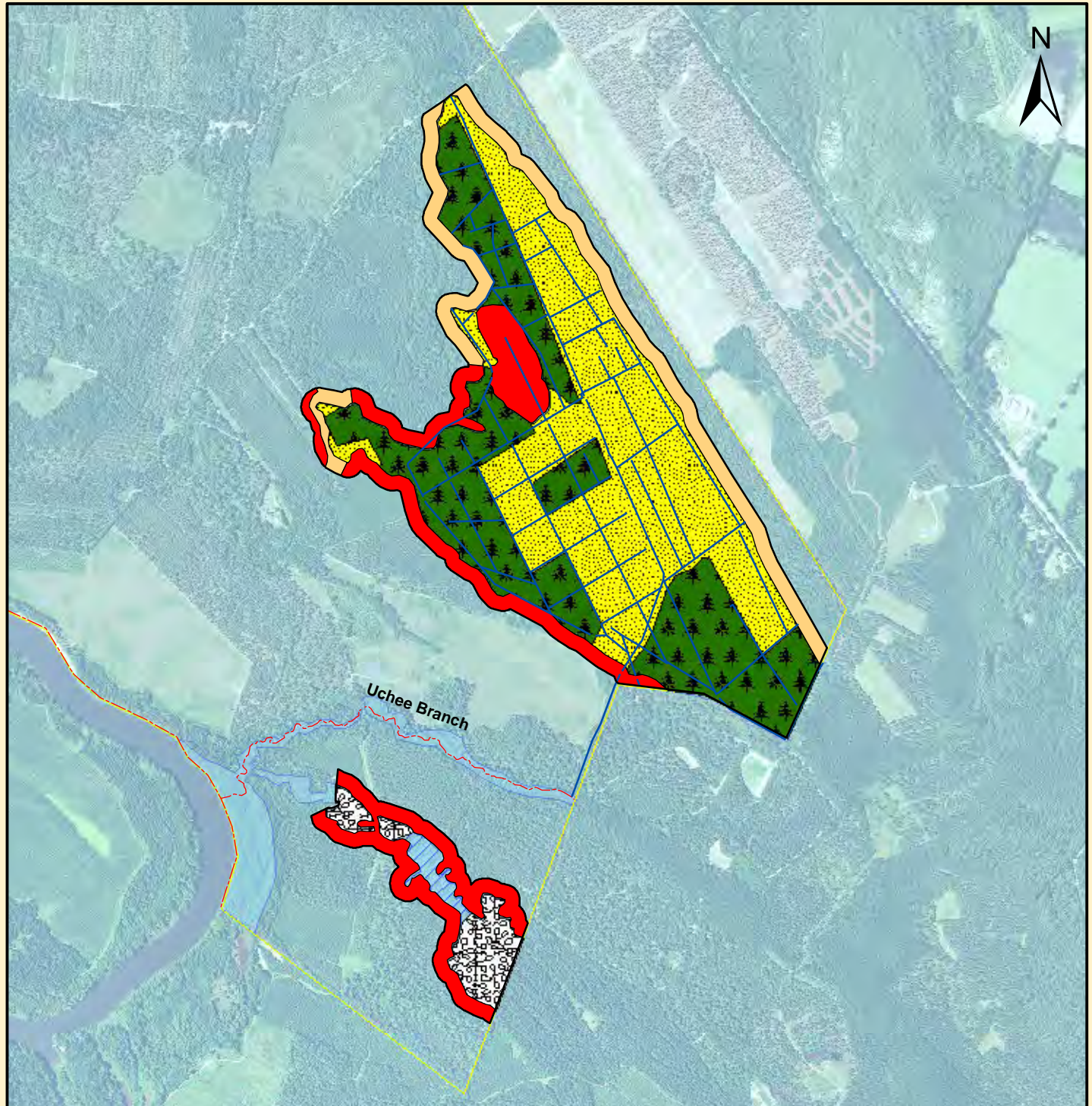
Feet

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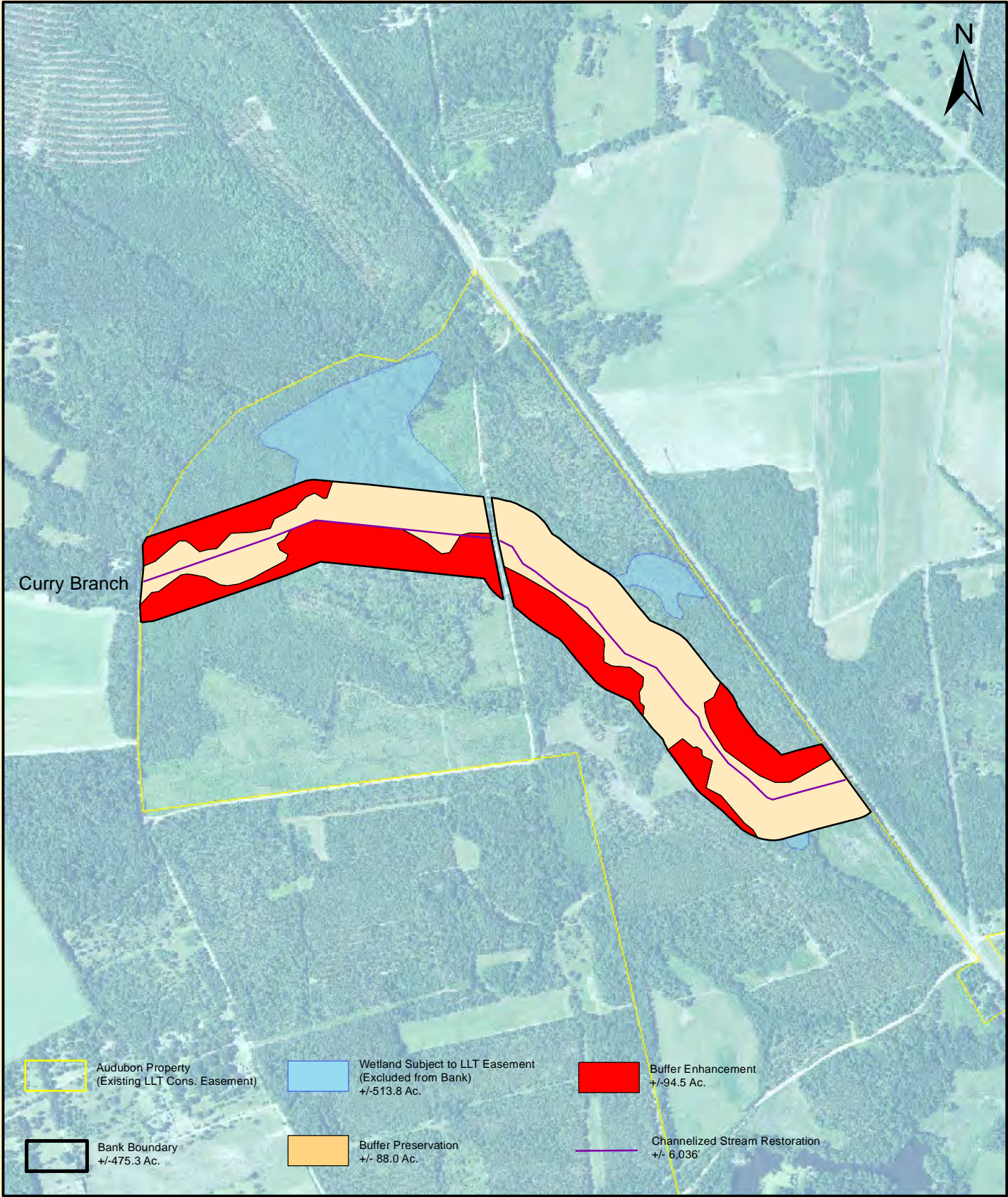


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
Figure 12: Wetland Restoration/Enhancement Mitigation Exhibit
 Silver Bluff Mitigation Bank
 Aiken County, South Carolina


1,500 Feet

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



 Audubon Property
(Existing LLT Cons. Easement)

 Wetland Subject to LLT Easement
(Excluded from Bank)
+/- 513.8 Ac.

 Buffer Enhancement
+/- 94.5 Ac.

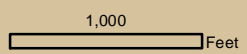
 Bank Boundary
+/- 475.3 Ac.

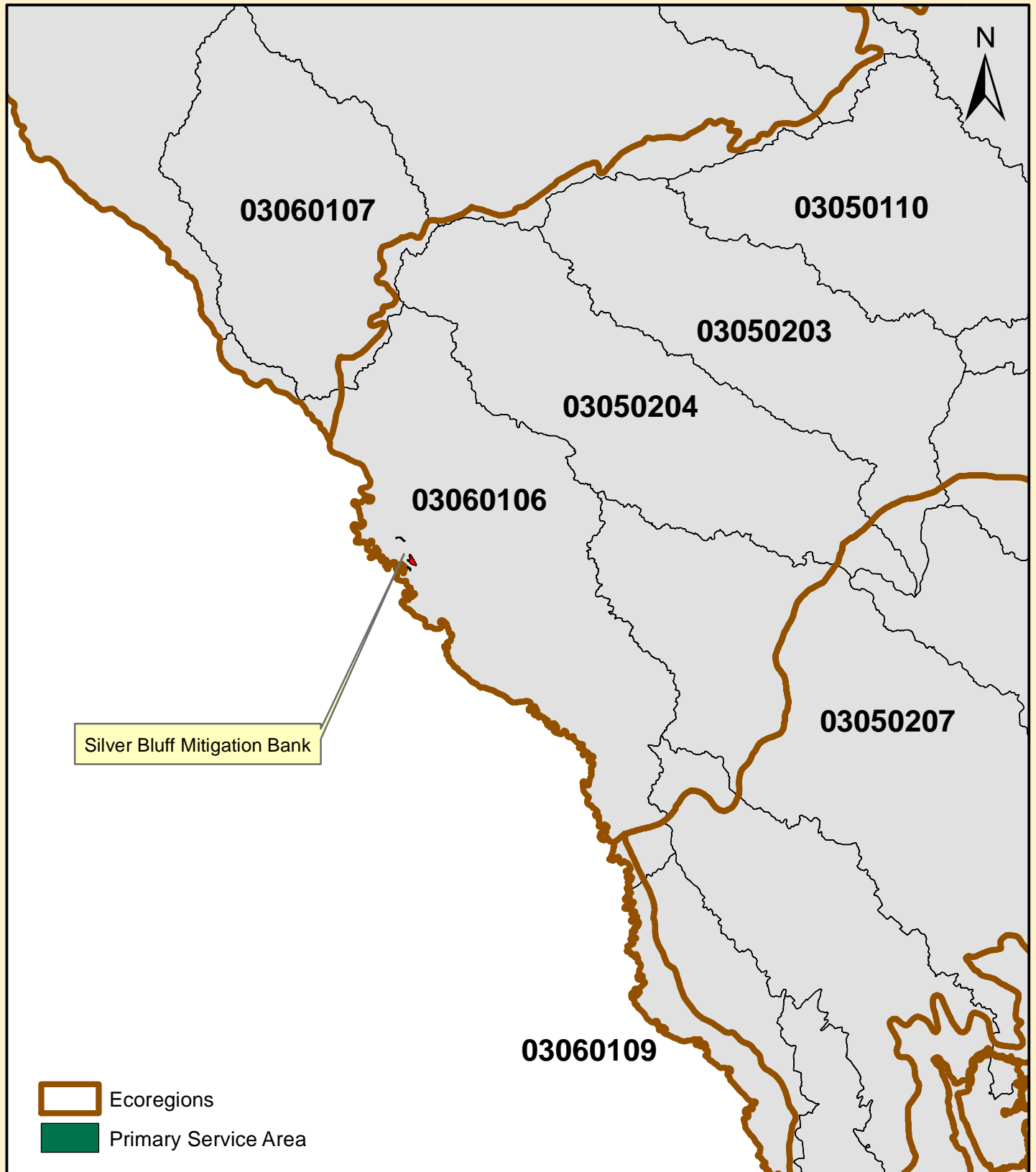
 Buffer Preservation
+/- 88.0 Ac.

 Channelized Stream Restoration
+/- 6,036'

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Figure 13: Stream Restoration Exhibit
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**Figure 14: Service Area Map
Silver Bluff Mitigation Bank
Aiken County, South Carolina**

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**Figure 14: Service Area Map
Silver Bluff Mitigation Bank
Aiken County, South Carolina**

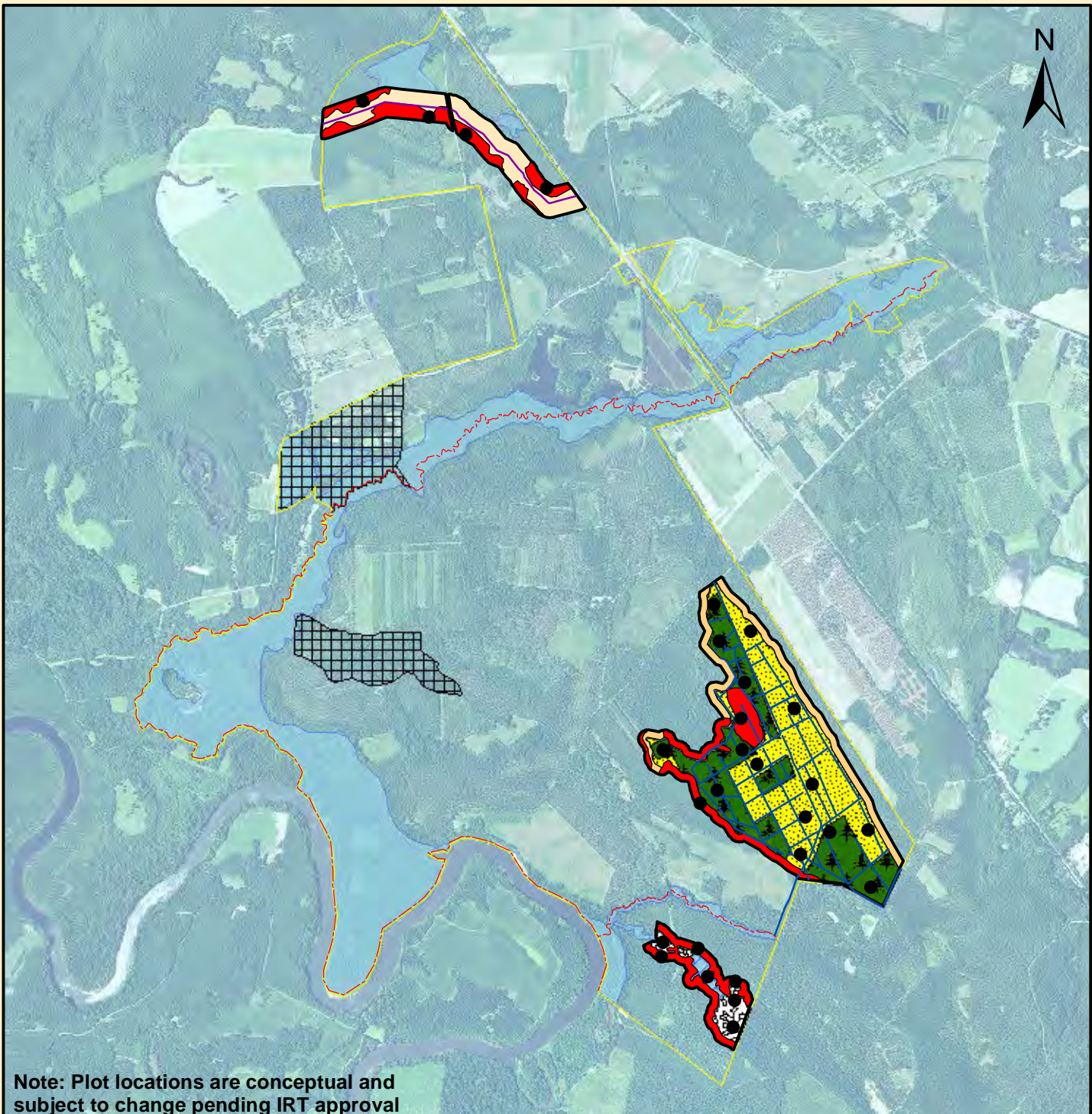
15 Miles

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Note: Plot locations are conceptual and subject to change pending IRT approval

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Audubon Property (Existing LLT Cons. Easement) | Wetland Subject to LLT Easement (Excluded from Bank) +/-513.8 Ac. | Unit 2: Wetland Vegetative & Hydrology Enhancement +/-148.8 Ac. | Existing Drainage Ditch to be Plugged or Filled |
| Bank Boundary +/-475.3 Ac. | Unit 1: Wetland Veg Restoration/ Hydrology Enhancement +/-122.9 Ac. | Unit 3: Vegetative Restoration +/-4.9 Ac. | Stream Subject to LLT Easement (Excluded from Bank) +/- 53,129 l.f. |
| Buffer Enhancement +/-94.5 Ac. | Buffer Preservation +/- 88.0 Ac. | Unit 4: Vegetative Enhancement +/-16.2 Ac. | Conceptual Veg. Monitoring Plot |
| Channelized Stream Restoration +/- 6,036 l.f. | Other Conservation Easement (Excluded from Bank) | | |

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Figure 16: Conceptual Vegetative Monitoring Plot Location Exhibit
 Silver Bluff Mitigation Bank
 Aiken County, South Carolina

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