

# Blue Lick Conservation Area

## Fifteen-Year Area Management Plan FY 2017-2031



  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Wildlife Division Chief

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Blue Lick Conservation Area Management Plan Approval Page

### PLANNING TEAM

Steven Noll, Wildlife Management Biologist

Leon Borges, Wildlife Biologist

Chris Newbold, Natural History Biologist

A.J. Campbell, Resource Forester

Michelle Dalbey, Aquaculture Specialist

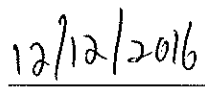
Ryan Lueckenhoff, Private Lands Conservationist

Andrew Mothershead, Conservation Agent

### CENTRAL REGION

RCT Chair

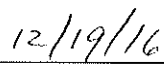
  
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Date

### WILDLIFE DIVISION

Wildlife Management Chief

  
Signature

  
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## OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** Blue Lick Conservation Area, # 9301
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1993
- **Acreage:** 390 acres
- **County:** Saline County
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Wildlife
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Wildlife
- **Statement of Purpose:**
  - A. Strategic Direction**
    - Manage open land habitats for early successional wildlife species.
    - Maintain and enhance wetlands, old fields, and grassland communities.
    - Maintain limited agricultural food plots for wildlife benefit.
    - Manage woodland/forest and riparian corridor communities using best management practices.
  - B. Desired Future Condition**

The desired future condition of Blue Lick Conservation Area (CA) is examples of healthy bottomland forest; an opportunistic wetland that provides habitat for waterfowl and shorebirds; and a diverse grassland restoration.
  - C. Federal Aid Statement**

N/A

## GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

- I. Special Considerations**
  - A. Priority Areas:** None
  - B. Natural Areas:** None
- II. Important Natural Features and Resources**
  - A. Species of Conservation Concern:** Species of conservation concern are known from this area. Area managers should consult the Natural Heritage Database annually and review all management activities with the natural history biologist.
  - B. Caves:** None
  - C. Springs:** Yes, records kept with Missouri Department of Conservation (Department) natural history biologist.
  - D. Other:** Blackwater River frontage (5,000 feet), Finney Creek frontage (4,900 feet), wetland areas, and saline seep natural communities

**III. Existing Infrastructure**

- Three water control structures
- Three low level berms
- Two gravel parking lots

**IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations**

**A. Deed Restrictions or Ownership Considerations:** None

**B. Federal Interest:** Federal funds may be used in the management of this land. Fish and wildlife agencies may not allow recreational activities and related facilities that would interfere with the purpose for which the State is managing the land. Other uses may be acceptable and must be assessed in each specific situation.

**C. Easements:** None

**D. Cultural Resource Findings:** No known cultural resources.

**E. Endangered Species:** None observed.

**F. Boundary Issues:** None

**MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

**V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations**

**Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Manage and control invasive woody vegetation in wetlands.
- 2) Manage and control invasive species in old fields and grasslands.

**Management Objective 1:** Increase and maintain diversity of moist soil plants in flood plain areas and wetland areas.

**Strategy 1:** Apply management techniques using water control structures at appropriate intervals during various times of year to increase and maintain plant diversity on one-third of the wetlands and flood plain acres per year. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Apply appropriate herbicides or use other techniques, as needed, to control reed canary grass, Johnson grass, and woody vegetation in the wetlands. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 2:** Control invasive species in old fields, grasslands, and forests.

**Strategy 1:** Utilize appropriate management techniques including but not limited to herbicide treatment, mechanical manipulation, and prescribed fire to reduce and manage invasive species. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 3:** Manage current food plots with small grain crops and green browse for wildlife benefit.

**Strategy 1:** Use equipment to plant small grain food plots, create soil disturbance in fields, and establish green browse plots. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 4:** Use results of planned 2017 forest inventory to guide forest prescriptions.

**Strategy 1:** Implement management activities prescribed after the 2017 forest inventory in fiscal years 2018-2020 to improve forest health. (Forestry)

**Strategy 2:** Follow best management practices to minimize erosion or negative water quality impacts in the Blackwater River and Finney Creek watershed when conducting management efforts (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2014). (Forestry)

## VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Establish and maintain a 100-foot wide riparian corridor along the Blackwater River and Finney Creek.

**Management Objective 1:** Maintain a forested riparian corridor along the Blackwater River and Finney Creek.

**Strategy 1:** Allow trees to regenerate in the riparian corridors. (Wildlife)

## VII. Public Use Management Considerations

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Provide recreational opportunities for the public.

**Management Objective 1:** Provide area users compatible and inviting opportunities for recreation, education, and information.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain accurate area information and regulations through annual review of the Atlas database, area brochures, posted information, and staff contacts with area users. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Promote compatible safe opportunities for hunting, fishing, birding, hiking, nature photography, and bird watching. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 3:** Monitor and document multiple-use conflicts or concerns. Identify timing, seasons, and special use permit options to minimize and resolve potential conflicts. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 4:** Work with Protection Division personnel to enforce existing area regulations and identify any needed changes. (Protection)

**Management Objective 2:** Provide public fishing opportunities in the Blackwater River and Finney Creek.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain the area in a manner that invites public use. (Fisheries)



## APPENDICES

### Area Background:

Blue Lick Conservation Area was purchased for the saline seep natural community areas located on the area, which provide a unique habitat. The area was also purchased for its upland and wetland habitat to provide public land in Saline County for hunting, river fishing, and related outdoor activities.

### Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Feet	% of Area
Forest	247		63
Grassland	81		20
Wetland	46		12
Old Fields	9		3
Cropland	4		1
Infrastructure	2		<1
Impounded Water	<1		<1
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>		<b>100</b>
Stream Frontage (Blackwater River ~5,000 feet, Finney Creek ~4,900 feet)		9,900	

### Public Input Summary:

The draft Blue Lick Conservation Area Management Plan was available for a public comment period August 1–31, 2016. The Missouri Department of Conservation received comments from four respondents (Appendix A). The Blue Lick Conservation Area Planning Team carefully reviewed and considered these ideas as they finalized this document. A brief summary of public input themes, including how they were incorporated or why they were not, can be found below. Rather than respond to each individual comment, comments are grouped into general themes and are addressed collectively.

Department responses to themes and issues identified through the Blue Lick Conservation Area Management Plan public comment period.

### **Supports invasive species removal and control. Suggests washing mowing and farming equipment before moving to other areas.**

Invasive species control is an ever growing task that many of our staff works with on a nearly daily basis. Staff is made aware of the potential that vehicle and equipment movements can inadvertently move plant seeds. Care is taken to clean equipment when moving to a native prairie or other high quality natural community.



**Suggests adding and maintaining wood duck nest boxes.**

When properly maintained, wood duck boxes can provide quality nesting opportunities for wood ducks. However, the nesting success of the wood ducks takes annual maintenance of bedding material, box quality, and box placement. Area staff would be happy to do the initial installation of the boxes; however the annual maintenance can be difficult with limited staff time. This would certainly be a possible volunteer opportunity for the future. Contact the area manager if interested in volunteering. Wood duck boxes are not necessary if there are a sufficient number of snags on the area.

**Suggests allowing only archery on the north side of the area and only allowing alternative methods on the south side of the area.**

Dividing an area into different zones in this manner would create confusion and complications, in addition to adding to the amount of signage to maintain. We have chosen to not create multiple hunting method zones within a single conservation area in regards to deer or turkey.

**Appreciates area for recreational opportunities such as fishing and hunting.**

Thank you very much!

**References:**

Missouri Department of Conservation. (2014). *Missouri watershed protection practice recommended practices for Missouri forests: 2014 management guidelines for maintaining forested watersheds to protect streams*. Jefferson City, MO: Conservation Commission of the State of Missouri.

**Figures:**

Figure 1: Area Map

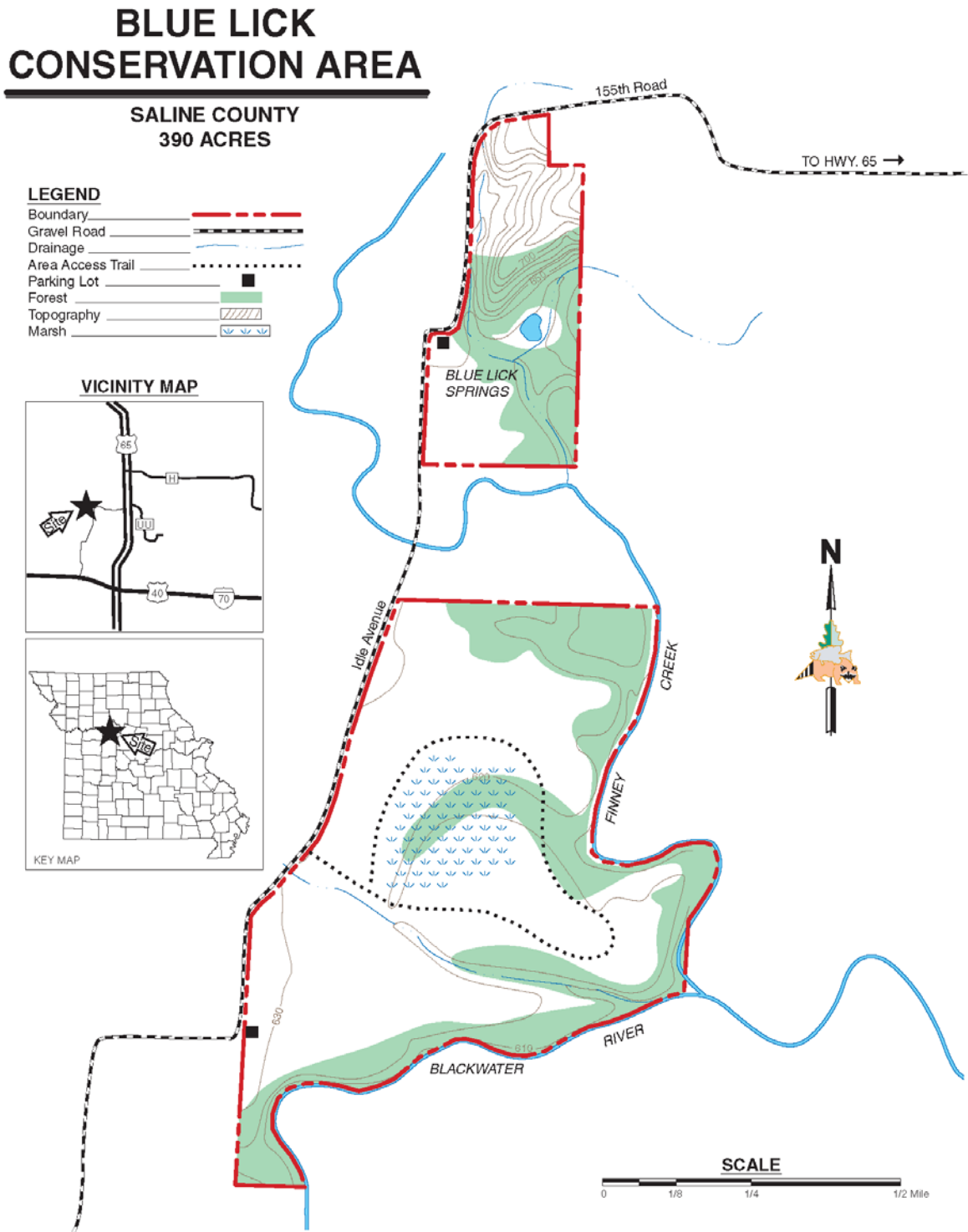
Figure 2: Aerial Photo/Infrastructure Map

Figure 3: Cover Type Map

**Additional Appendices:**

Appendix A: Blue Lick Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Figure 1: Area Map



**Figure 2: Aerial Photo/Infrastructure Map**

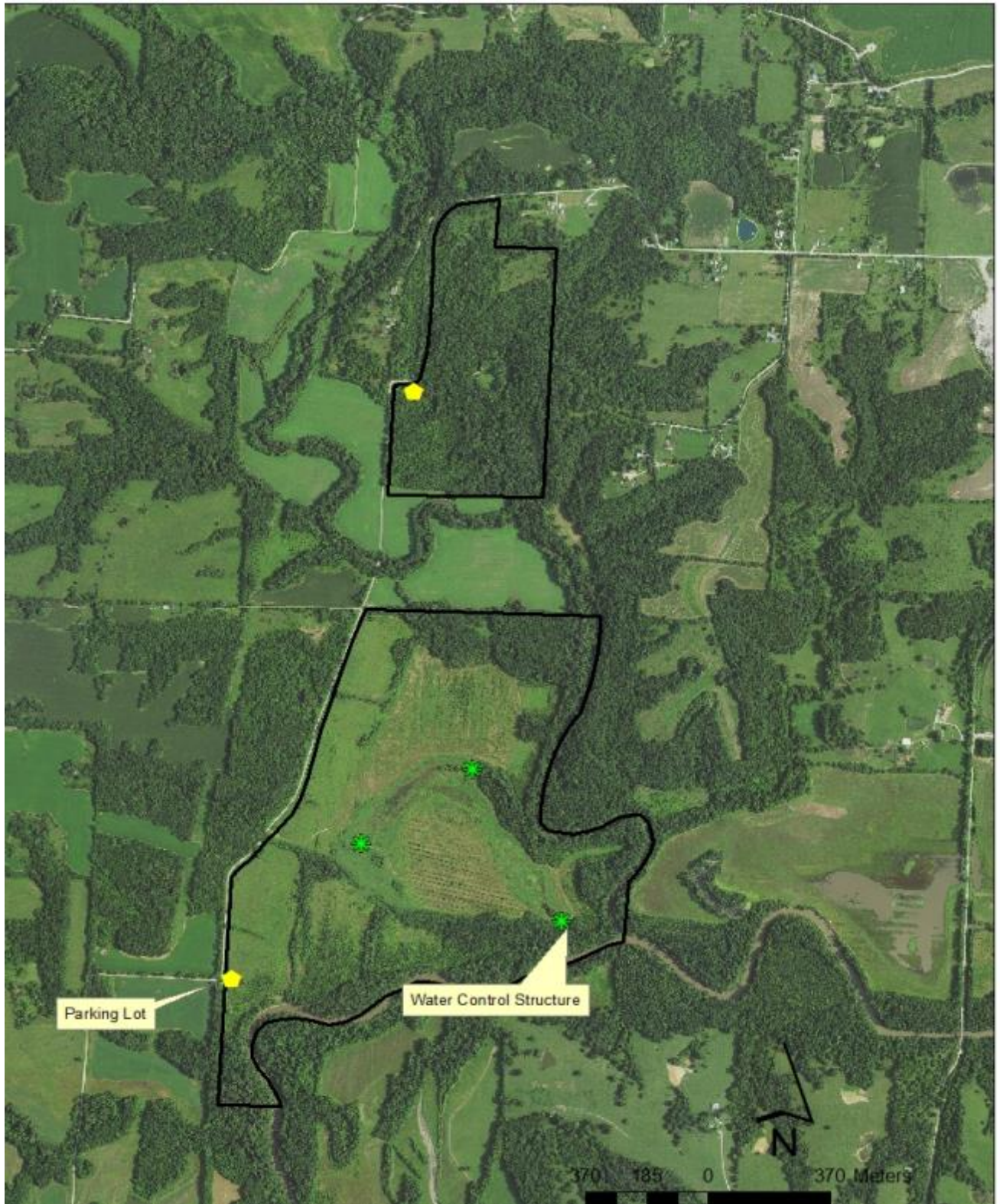
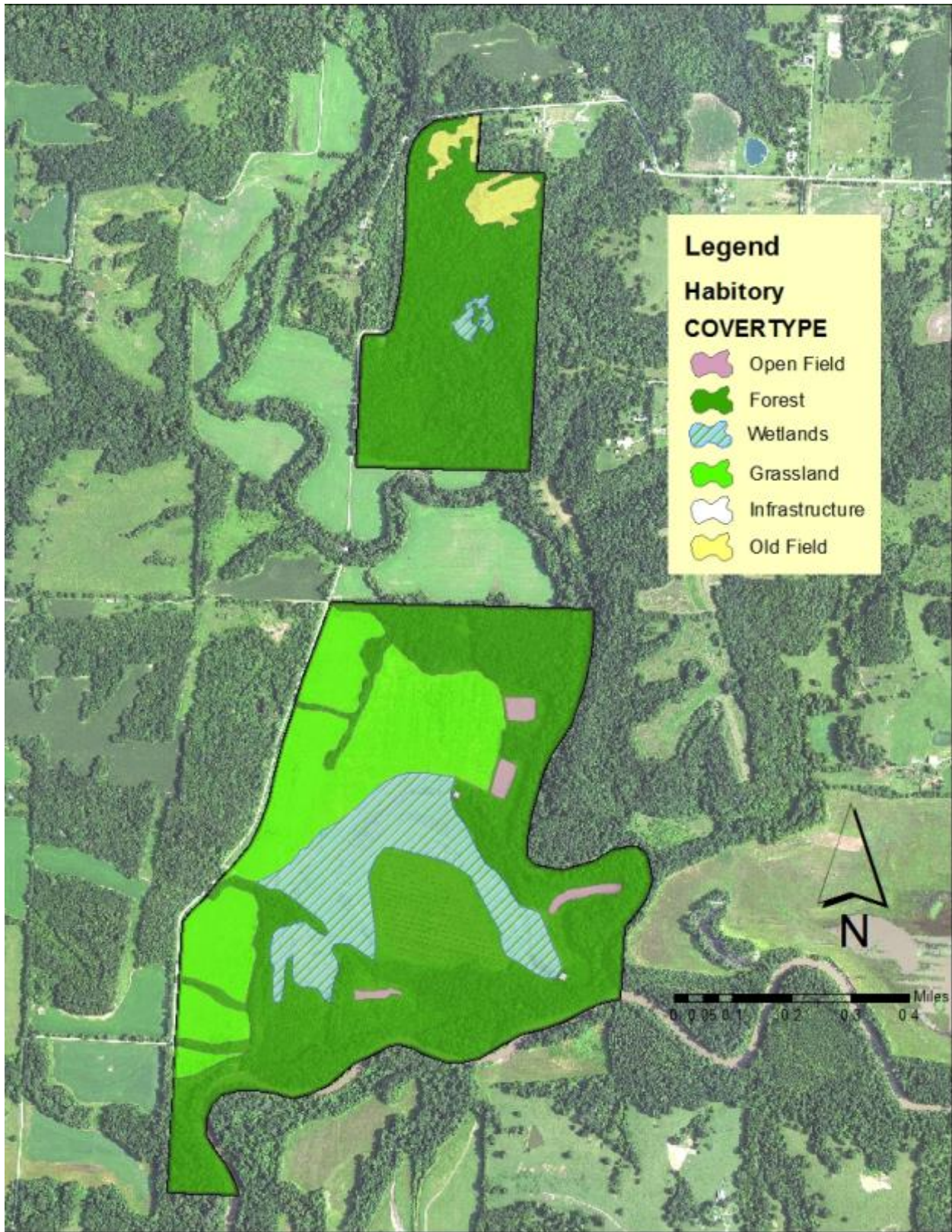


Figure 3: Cover Type Map



**Appendix A. Blue Lick Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (August 1-31, 2016):

This site is one of the best MDC CA (my professional opinion). This site is incredible with native species diversity. Reed Canary Grass must be prevented from the CA The number one Managament need is the control or reduction of non-native species. It is imperative that mowers and farmers wash their equipment before moving into a new area. There must be an active role in the control of exotic species. If there is not more of an active role then the remaining pristine sites will subcumb to exotic species and degrade ecological integrity.

Respectfully,

I love this area, its a perfect place to take the kids fishing or I can get away and do some bow hunting with out have to many people walking around.

change the gun seasons methods to separate the north section from the south section. allow archery only method on the north and allow black powder and or pistol only on the south side. nobody hunts this conservation area since they have changed it to archery only.

Provide wood duck nest boxes and maintain in appropriate areas.