

# Urich Conservation Area

## Fifteen-Year Area Management Plan

FY 2018-2032



  
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Wildlife Division Chief

26 MARCH 2018  
Date

**Urich Conservation Area Management Plan Approval Page**

**PLANNING TEAM**

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**KANSAS CITY REGION**

RCT Chair

Claudia Lamb      3/15/2018  
Signature                      Date

**WILDLIFE DIVISION**

Wildlife Management Chief

Michael Schwan      3/22/18  
Signature                      Date

## OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** Urich Conservation Area, # 6407
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1964
- **Acreage:** 480 acres
- **County:** Henry
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Wildlife
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Wildlife
- **Statements of Purpose:**
  - A. Strategic Direction**

The management emphasis of Urich Conservation Area (CA) is to provide recreational fishing opportunities while maintaining forest and open land habitats for wildlife diversity.
  - B. Desired Future Condition**

The desired future condition of Urich CA is healthy woodland, wetland, aquatic, and grassland communities in a diverse habitat complex.
  - C. Federal Aid Statement**

N/A

## GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

- I. Special Considerations**
  - A. Priority Areas:** Big Creek Bottomland Forest – Forest and Woodland Conservation Opportunity Area; Big Creek Bottomland Forest – Wetland Conservation Opportunity Area
  - B. Natural Areas:** None
  
- II. Important Natural Features and Resources**
  - A. Species of Conservation Concern:** None observed.
  - B. Caves:** None
  - C. Springs:** None
  
- III. Existing Infrastructure**
  - Three parking lots
  - Gravel road, 0.4 miles
  - Ten fishless ponds, 2.0 acres total

**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 Resources Findings:** No known cultural resources.
- E. Endangered Species:** None observed.
- F. Boundary Issues:** Establishing accurate and identifiable boundary markers is a priority for this property.

**MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

**V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations**

Urich CA contains approximately 200 acres of old fields that were previously cropped (before purchase). Several acres of warm-season grass were restored in portions of the old fields. The area also contains a 40-acre wetland adjacent to Big Creek and approximately 200 acres of forest that consists primarily of hardwoods.

**Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Early successional fields provide habitat for various wildlife species, including bobwhite quail, white-tailed deer, turkey, rabbits, and grassland birds. Urich CA has several open fields that were planted to native grasses and converted to other early successional vegetation types. Plant composition in these fields has changed over time, making them less desirable to wildlife.
- 2) Big Creek floods the bottomlands on Urich CA for long durations causing oak and hickory species to die and preventing recruitment of desirable hardwoods. The wetlands are largely made up of a diversity of plants including buttonbush and willow. Invasive species like rose mallow (*Hibiscus lasiocarpus*) will continue to be a threat into the future.
- 3) Excessively dry and excessively wet weather patterns have produced unfavorable growing conditions that have severely stressed upland forests, leading to widespread oak decline. Ensuring that declining upland forests are regenerating with desirable species will be a challenge.
- 4) Invasive plants continue to be a threat. Sericea lespedeza, Japanese honeysuckle, multi-flora rose, and tall fescue are well-established. These species will present a management challenge in achieving healthy woodland, wetland, aquatic, and grassland communities.

**Management Objective 1:** Maintain early successional habitat and provide cover and food for wildlife.

**Strategy 1:** Manage old fields using methods that provide early successional habitat and cover. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Treat any invasive vegetation infestations as they develop. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 3:** Provide crop and idle field rotations that will benefit a variety of upland wildlife species. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 4:** Manage wetland using methods that will promote early successional moist soil plants, as opportunity allows. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 2:** Promote healthy forests, with a management emphasis on wildlife habitat.

**Strategy 1:** Monitor forest for invasive vegetation, diseases, and insects. Suppress any infestations that may develop. (Forestry)

**Strategy 2:** Inventory forest to determine the amount, size, distribution, and species composition of existing regeneration. (Forestry)

**Strategy 3:** Utilizing a variety of management techniques, including but not limited to tree planting, to ensure desirable regeneration is occurring in flood and oak decline affected areas. (Forestry)

**Strategy 3:** Retain and protect existing snag and den trees. (Forestry)

## VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Big Creek, a major tributary to the South Grand River, runs through the northeast corner of the area.
- 2) The area contains 10 small non-stocked ponds. These shallow ponds do not provide quality fishing opportunities, but an acre wetland adjacent to Big Creek, a 40-acre wetland (adjacent to Big Creek), and the area ponds contain a few small fish that can have a negative impact on the ponds' amphibian populations.

**Management Objective 1:** Maintain and protect a healthy watershed by implementing best management practices.

**Strategy 1:** All management activities on Urich CA will follow the *Watershed and Stream Management Guidelines for Lands Managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation* (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2009). (Wildlife, Fisheries)

**Strategy 2:** Maintain a 100-foot forested corridor along each side of Big Creek. (Forestry)

**Management Objective 2:** Maintain and improve amphibian survival and recruitment in area ponds.

**Strategy 1:** Depopulate fish from area ponds using physical or chemical techniques. (Fisheries)

## **VII. Public Use Management Considerations**

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Management opportunities exist on the wetlands to retain water and offer more dependable waterfowl hunting.
- 2) Provide fishing opportunities and easier access to Big Creek. Current access to Big Creek is a quarter mile from the parking lot, across an old field, and through thick vegetation.
- 3) Continue to develop relationships with neighboring landowners. Conflicts with boundary and trespass issues have occurred in the past between area users and neighboring landowners.

**Management Objective 1:** Provide public hunting and viewing opportunities.

**Strategy 1:** Conduct annual management activities that will provide habitat for a diversity of species. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Allow trapping on area, as appropriate, through the special use permitting guidelines. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 3:** Maintain parking lots, trails, and roads to aid area users in accessing various portions of the area. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 4:** Complete a feasibility study to look for opportunities to alter drainage to improve water holding capabilities. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 2:** Provide public fishing opportunities.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain bank-fishing opportunities along Big Creek by mowing access trail. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 3:** Improve educational and interpretive opportunities on Urich CA.

**Strategy 1:** Communicate to the public recreational opportunities (using brochures and Atlas database). (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Communicate to teachers, students, scout groups, and youth groups the uniqueness of the area to facilitate as a possible destination for ecology classes, school programs, and workshops. (Outreach and Education)

**Management Objective 4:** Facilitate a good working relationship with neighboring landowners.

**Strategy 1:** Establish regular communication with neighbors through periodic visits or phone calls to minimize any boundary, trespass, or any other issues affecting Urich CA or private property. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Promote habitat management on neighboring landowner properties. (Private Land Services)

## VIII. Administrative Considerations

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Maintain area infrastructure at current levels with three parking lots and 0.4 miles of gravel roads.
- 2) Much of the land around Big Creek has been developed for waterfowl hunting.
- 3) Area location is far from any staffed office making it more difficult to perform management activities.

**Management Objective 1:** Maintain area infrastructure.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain area infrastructure in accordance with the Department guidelines and at currently identified maintenance level. (Wildlife)

### **Lands Proposed for Acquisition:**

When available, adjacent land may be considered for acquisition from willing sellers. Tracts that improve area access, provide public use opportunities, contain unique natural communities and/or species of conservation concern, or meet other Department priorities, as identified in the annual Department land acquisition priorities, may be considered.

**MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE**

Strategies are considered ongoing unless listed in the following table:

	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32
<b>Terrestrial Resource Management</b>															
<i>Objective 2</i>															
Strategy 2						X									
Strategy 3						X									
<b>Aquatic Resource Management</b>															
<i>Objective 2</i>															
Strategy 1				X										X	
<b>Public Use Management</b>															
<i>Objective 3</i>															
Strategy 2	X					X					X				



## APPENDICES

### Area Background:

Urich CA is in Henry County, 2 miles northeast of Urich. The Department acquired this area in 1964 and manages it to preserve forest, upland habitat, and hunting/fishing recreation. The area is also here to provide the public with opportunities for viewing, studying, and photographing forest and upland plants and animals.

### Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Feet	% of Area
Forest	240		50
Old Field	200		42
Wetland	40		8
<b>Total</b>	<b>480</b>		<b>100</b>
Stream Frontage		1,750	

### Public Input Summary:

The draft Urich Conservation Area was available for a public comment period June 1–30, 2017. The Missouri Department of Conservation received no comments during this time period.

### References:

Missouri Department of Conservation. (n.d.). *Missouri Natural Heritage database records [Arc Geographic Information System datafiles]*. Retrieved from Missouri Department of Conservation shape files.

Missouri Department of Conservation. (2009). *Watershed and stream management guidelines for lands and waters managed by Missouri Department of Conservation*. Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Department of Conservation.

Nigh, T. A., & Schroeder, W. A. (2002). *Atlas of Missouri ecoregions*. Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Department of Conservation.

### Maps:

Figure 1: Area Map

Figure 2: Aerial Map

Figure 3: Topographic Map

Figure 4: Current Vegetation Map










Figure 1: Area Map

# URICH CONSERVATION AREA

HENRY COUNTY  
480 ACRES



**LEGEND**

- Boundary 
- Gravel Road 
- Area Access Trail  
(No Vehicles Permitted) 
- Drainage 
- Parking Lot 
- Fishless Pond 
- Marsh 
- Forest 
- Topography 

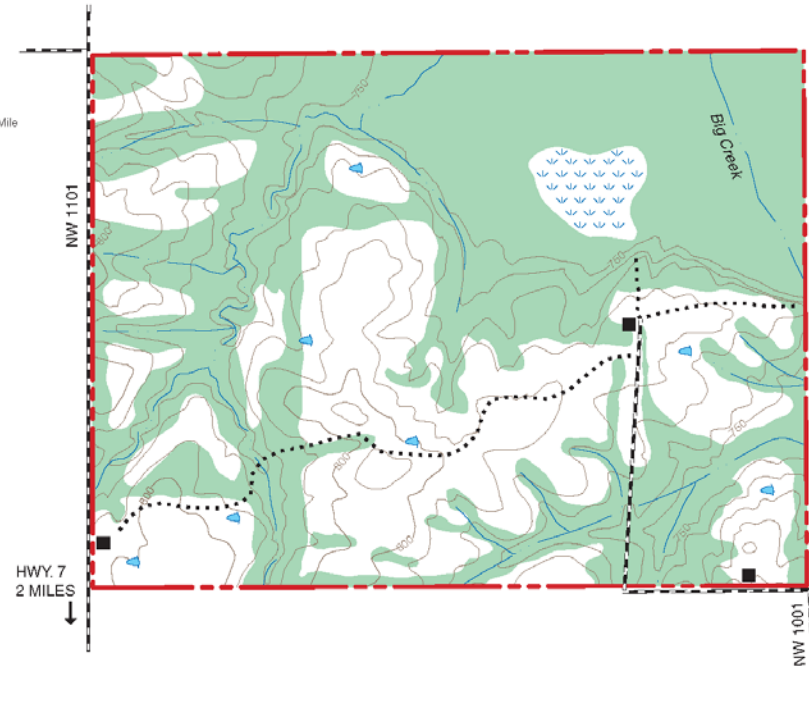
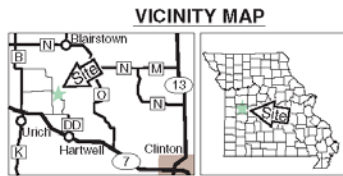


Figure 2: Aerial Map

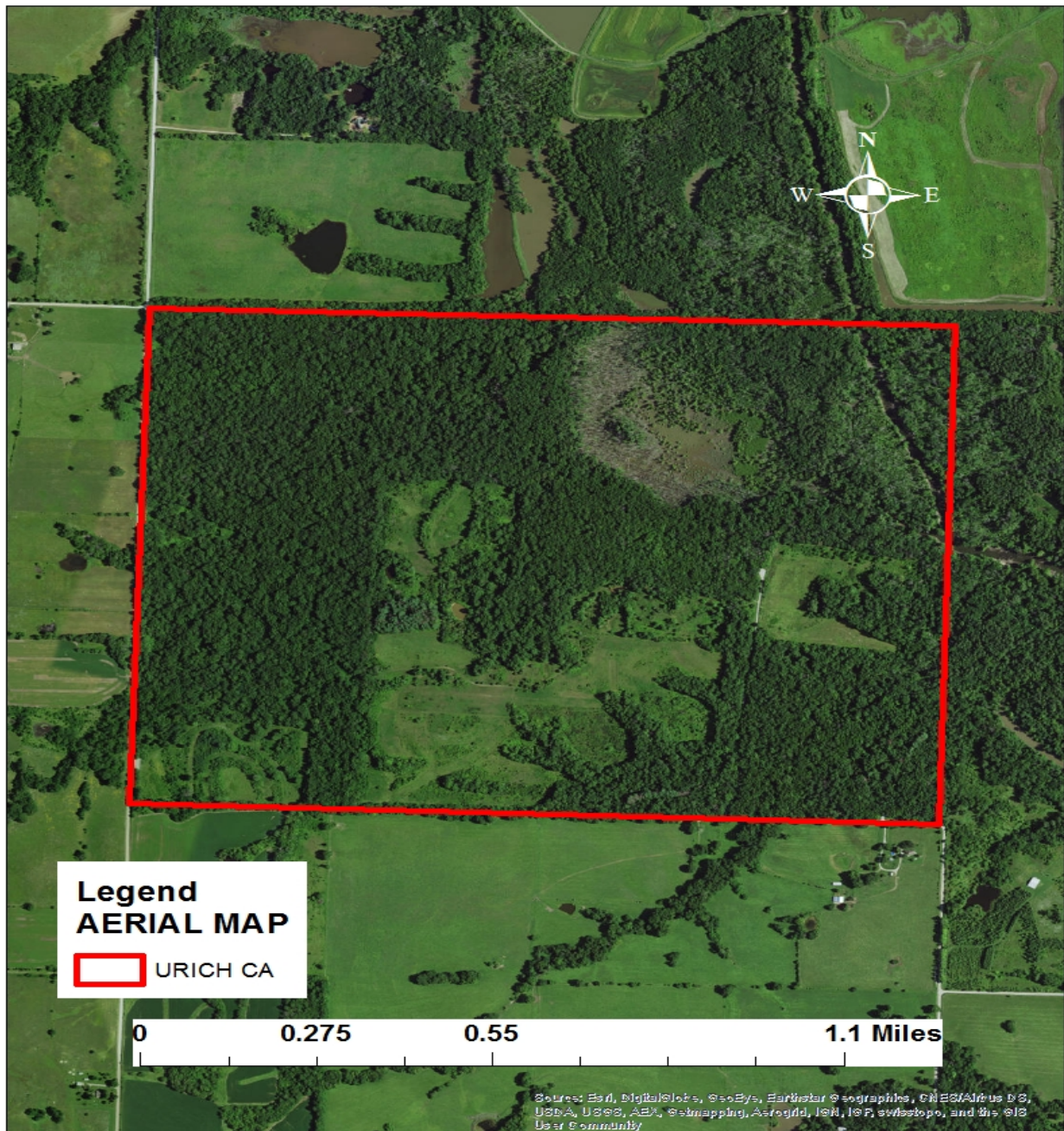


Figure 3: Topographic Map

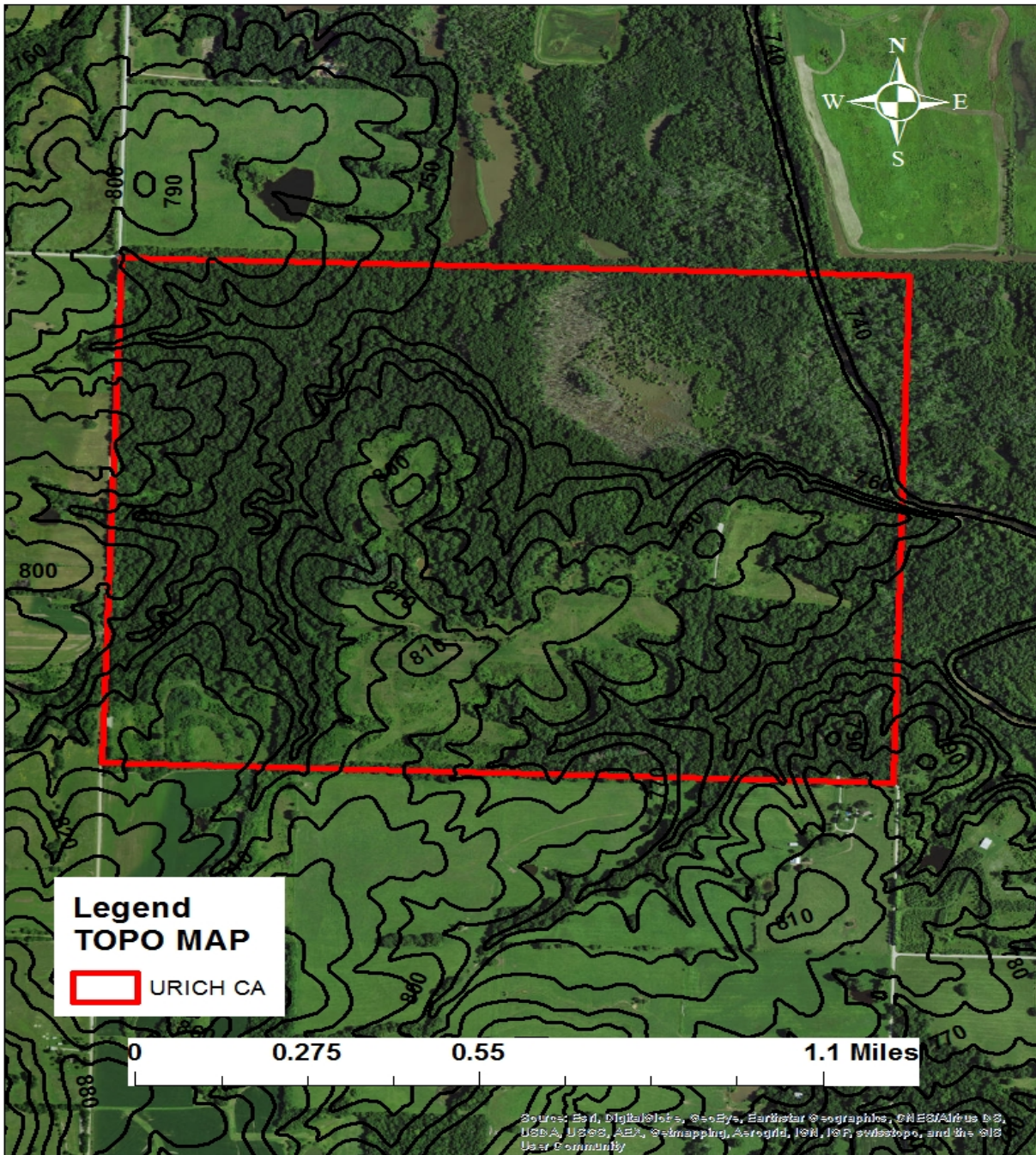


Figure 4: Current Vegetation Map

