Big Tavern Creek Accesses

Boeckman Bridge Access
Brays Access
Madden Ford Access
Wilson Camp Access

Fifteen-Year Area Management Plan

FY 2017-2031

Lisa D. Allen
Forestry Division Chief

12-20-16
Date

Big Tavern Creek Accesses Management Plan Approval Page

PLANNING TEAM

Greg Stoner, Fisheries Management Biologist

Paul Johnson, Resource Forester

Chris Newbold, Natural History Biologist

Mike Jones, Protection District Supervisor

Jodi Moulder, Private Lands Conservationist

Brian Flowers, Outdoor Skills Specialist

Craig Gemming, Fisheries Regional Supervisor

CENTRAL REGION

RCT Chair _____ *Signature* 12/1/2016 *Date*

FORESTRY DIVISION

Forest Management Chief _____ *Signature* 12/19/16 *Date*

OVERVIEW

Area Name	Area Number	Year Acquired	Acreage	County	Administrative Responsibility	Maintenance Responsibility
Boeckman Bridge Access	7101	1973	55	Miller	Forestry	Forestry
Brays Access	8244	1982	30	Miller	Forestry	Forestry
Madden Ford Access	8243	1982	164	Miller	Forestry	Forestry
Wilson Camp Access	8248	1982	149	Miller	Forestry	Forestry

Statements of Purpose:

A. Strategic Direction

These areas were obtained with the primary intent to provide access to Big Tavern Creek and to protect Missouri species of conservation concern. The larger accesses provide additional benefits to areas users such as bird watching, hunting, limited hiking, and nature study.

B. Desired Future Condition

The desired future condition of the Big Tavern Creek Accesses is to provide quality riparian corridor in Big Tavern Creek and provide public recreational access to the Big Tavern Creek.

C. Federal Aid Statement

- Boeckman Bridge Access, or a portion thereof, was acquired with Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration funds to restore and manage sport fish, conserve and restore sport fish habitat (or a buffer to protect that habitat) and provide public access for sport fishing.
- Brays Access, Madden Ford Access, and Wilson Camp Access: N/A

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

I. Special Considerations

Area Name	Priority Areas	Natural Areas
Boeckman Bridge Access	Tavern Creek Priority Watershed	None
Brays Access	Tavern Creek Priority Watershed	None
Madden Ford Access	Tavern Creek Priority Watershed	None
Wilson Camp Access	Tavern Creek Priority Watershed	None

II. Important Natural Features and Resources

Area Name	Species of Conservation Concern	Caves	Springs
Boeckman Bridge Access	Yes[1]	None	None
Brays Access	Yes[1]	None	None
Madden Ford Access	Yes[2]	Yes[3]	Yes[4]
Wilson Camp Access	Yes[1]	None	None

[1] 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.
[2] Species of conservation concern are not known from this site, but are found in the surrounding area. Area managers should consult annually with the natural history biologist.
[3] Records kept with the Missouri Department of Conservation (Department) natural history biologist. Managers should follow the Cave Management policy found in the Department Resource Policy Manual. All caves on conservation areas are closed or restricted to public access. The fungus that causes White-Nose Syndrome in bats has been documented in Missouri, resulting in the Department's White-nose Syndrome Action Plan that limits public access to protect bats.
[4] Records kept with Department natural history biologist.

III. Existing Infrastructure

Area Name	Boat Ramps	Parking Lots
Boeckman Bridge Access	None	None
Brays Access	None	None
Madden Ford Access	None	1 lot (8 cars)
Wilson Camp Access	None	1 lot (6-10 cars)

IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations

Area Name	Deed Restrictions	Federal Interest	Easements	Cultural Resources	Endangered Species	Boundary Issues
Boeckman Bridge Access	None	Yes[1]	Yes[3]	Yes[5]	Yes[6]	None
Brays Access	None	Yes[2]	None	None	Yes[6]	None

Madden Ford Access	None	Yes[2]	Yes[4]	Yes[5]	Yes[7]	None
Wilson Camp Access	None	Yes[2]	No	None	Yes[6]	None

[1] Uses of land acquired with federal funds may not interfere with the purpose for which it was acquired. Closures to sport fishing must be based on the recommendations of the state fish and wildlife agency for fish and wildlife management purposes. Federal funds may also 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.
[2] 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.
[3] An electric utility easement was granted to Three Rivers Electric Cooperative out of Linn, Missouri.
[4] A three-phase electric utility easement was granted to Gascosage Electric Company out of Dixon, Missouri.
[5] Yes, records kept with the Department environmental compliance specialist. Managers should follow best management practices for cultural resources found in the Department Resource Policy Manual.
[6] Endangered species are known from this area. Area managers should consult the Natural Heritage Database annually and review all management activities with the natural history biologist.
[7] Endangered species are not known from this site, but are found in the surrounding area. Area managers should consult annually with the natural history biologist.

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

V. <u>Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations</u>

Challenges and Opportunities:

1) Maintain healthy, sustainable, and diverse forests and woodlands which are approaching biological maturity and are mostly even-aged.
2) Reduce bank erosion. Establish or maintain mixed bottomland hardwood/shrub species along area riparian corridors.
3) Control invasive species.

Management Objective 1: Manage forest resources to protect the stream bank (i.e., to reduce bank erosion) and to benefit wildlife.

Strategy 1: Establish and/or maintain a riparian corridor with a minimum width of 200 feet from the stream bank, except where impractical due to existing infrastructure. (Forestry)

Management Objective 2: Where applicable, maintain healthy forests and woodlands through active forest management.

Strategy 1: Inventory the forest resource at both Madden Ford Access and Wilson Camp Access following a predetermined inventory schedule. Madden Ford Access inventory is due in 2017 and Wilson Camp Access was recently completed and will be up for inventory again in 2030. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Implement prescribed plan for Wilson Camp Access, as determined by the forest inventory by the end of 2020. Likewise, implement prescribed plan for Madden Ford Access by 2022. (Forestry)

Strategy 3: Utilize a variety of sustainable forest management techniques to promote healthy forest and woodland communities including, but not limited to, timber stand improvement, firewood cutting, salvage cuttings, tree planting, and seeding. (Forestry)

Strategy 4: To minimize soil loss utilize Best Management Practices during forest and woodland management as described in the Department's manuals: *Missouri Watershed Protection Practice* manual (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2014) and the *Missouri Forest Management Guidelines: Voluntary Recommendations for Well-Managed Forests* (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2014). (Forestry)

Management Objective 3: Implement an integrated pest management plan to control the spread of invasive species.

Strategy 1: Annually assess the spread of invasive species and develop an appropriate management strategy. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Utilize the best known management tools and tactics to aggressively attack infestations, in an effort to move toward eradication. (Forestry)

Management Objective 4: Where appropriate, maintain open land acres for wildlife.

Strategy 1: Use prescribed fire and other management techniques as a means to perpetuate early successional habitat. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Where appropriate on Madden Ford Access and not in close proximity to Big Tavern Creek, install annual food plots to benefit wildlife and to aid future land management goals. (Forestry)

VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

1) Maintain stream water quality to support a healthy ecosystem.
2) Raise public awareness of invasive species.

Management Objective 1: Improve long-term stream stability and ecological function of Big Tavern Creek on all areas according to Department guidelines (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2009).

Strategy 1: Maintain a minimum 200-foot wide, wooded riparian corridor on all lands bordering Big Tavern Creek. (Forestry)

Management Objective 2: Inform access users about the negative impacts of introducing non-native invasive species.

Strategy 1: Post educational signage pertaining to zebra mussels and Asian carp at area accesses. (Forestry, Fisheries)

Management Objective 3: Continue to provide stream-based angling opportunities.

Strategy 1: Maintain angler access points. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Continue to manage riparian areas for stream stability and provide quality in-stream habitats for fish and other aquatic organisms. (Forestry)

VII. Public Use Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

1) Maintain clean, safe, and user-friendly accesses for public use.
2) Maintain quality public area experiences.
3) Increase public recognition as a valuable aquatic resource
4) Where appropriate on larger accesses, accommodate a variety of consumptive and non-consumptive uses associated with the forest, fish, and wildlife resources.
5) Provide up-to-date fishing regulation information.
6) Provide public access to Big Tavern Creek.

Management Objective 1: Inform anglers of fishing regulations.

Strategy 1: Keep up-to-date fishing regulations for Big Tavern Creek posted at all accesses. (Forestry, Fisheries)

Strategy 2: Provide clear and appropriate signing and information to convey area regulations, permitted activities, opportunities and limitations while providing clarity for enforcement authority. (Forestry)

Management Objective 2: Provide public access to Big Tavern Creek.

Strategy 1: Provide recreational fishing and boating/floating access to Big Tavern Creek. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Provide for other public recreational opportunities, such as bird watching, hunting, limited hiking, and nature study, where feasible. (Forestry)

Strategy 3: Evaluate the need for additional infrastructure including parking lots and trails to facilitate public access to Big Tavern Creek. (Forestry)

Management Objective 3: Ensure the areas are kept safe and attractive for area users while ensuring compliance with the *Wildlife Code of Missouri*.

Strategy 1: Conservation agents will patrol the areas to ensure compliance with the *Wildlife Code of Missouri* and to assist in keeping the area safe and attractive for area users. (Protection)

VIII. <u>Administrative Considerations</u>

Challenges and Opportunities:

1) Maintain area accesses.
2) Resolving any boundary line disputes with adjoining landowners.
3) Acquisition of land.

Management Objective 1: Maintain area accesses.

Strategy 1: Maintain area accesses according to Department policy. (Forestry)

Management Objective 2: Resolve boundary line disputes if and when they arise.

Strategy 1: As needed, Forestry division will request surveys to better determine boundary locations. (Forestry)

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

All strategies for this management plan are considered ongoing.

APPENDICES

Public Input Summary:
The draft Big Tavern Creek Accesses Management Plan was available for a public comment period July 1–31, 2016. The Missouri Department of Conservation received comments from two respondents (Appendix A). The Big Tavern Creek Accesses 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 Big Tavern Creek Accesses Management Plan public comment period.

Concerned Wilson Camp Access management activities have caused increased erosion on neighboring property.
Miller County is responsible for maintenance of the bridge near Wilson Camp Access and has installed rip rap to armor the bridge infrastructure. Department personnel are available to consult with landowners regarding land and water resource management on their property.

Appreciates management of accesses.
Comments from the public are always welcome. It is good to know that management of these accesses does not go unnoticed and is appreciated by our area visitors.

References:
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.

Missouri Department of Conservation. (2014). *Missouri forest management guidelines: Voluntary recommendations for well-managed forests.* Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Department of Conservation.

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: Missouri Department of Conservation.

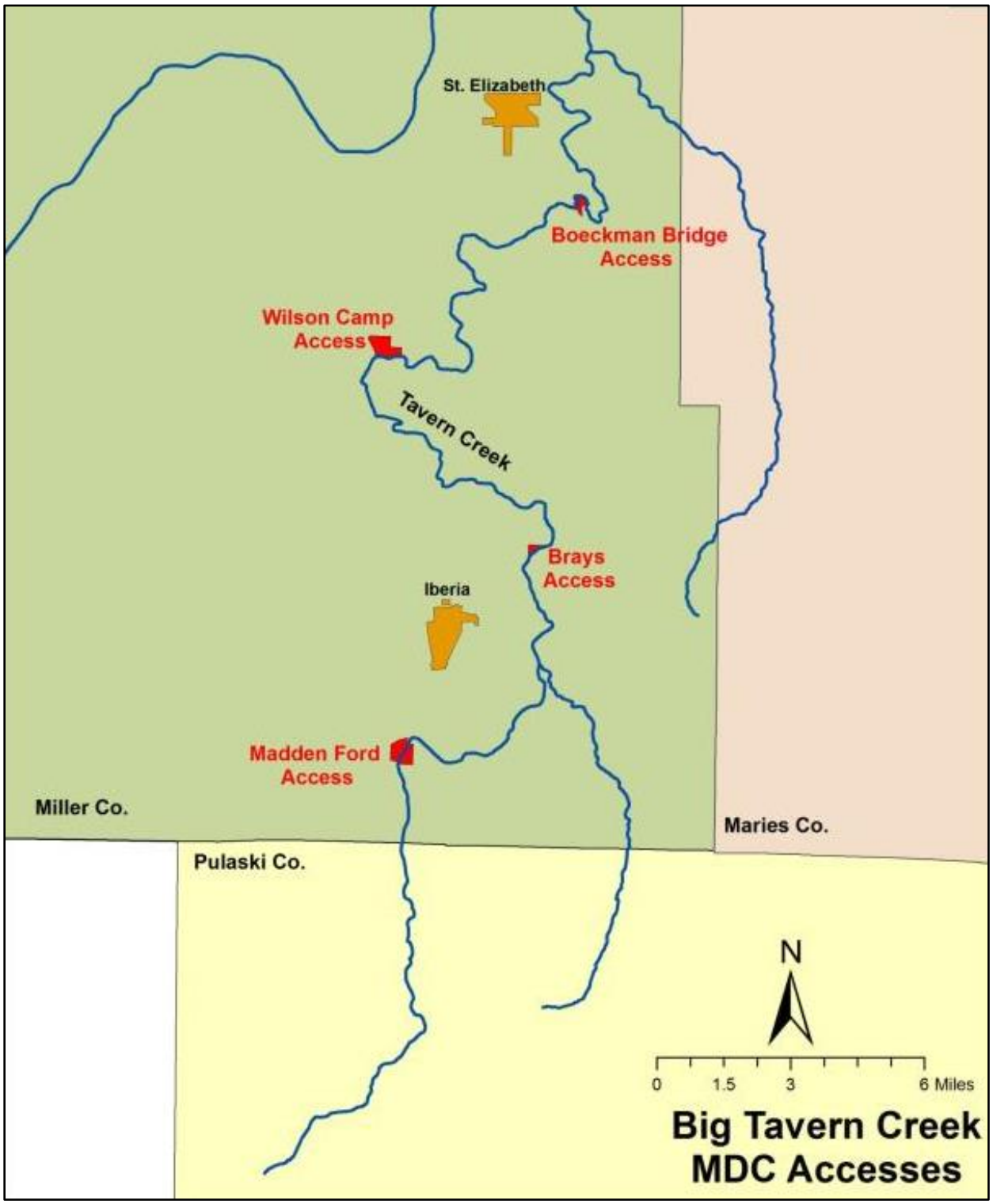
Appendices:

Appendix 1. Missouri Department of Conservation Accesses on Big Tavern Creek
Appendix 2. Boeckman Bridge Access Area Background
Appendix 3. Boeckman Bridge Access Map
Appendix 4. Boeckman Bridge Access Covertype Map
Appendix 5. Boeckman Bridge Access Easement Map
Appendix 6. Brays Access Area Background
Appendix 7. Brays Access Map
Appendix 8. Brays Access Covertype Map
Appendix 9. Madden Ford Access Area Background
Appendix 10. Madden Ford Access Map
Appendix 11. Madden Ford Access Covertype Map
Appendix 12. Madden Ford Access Easement Map
Appendix 13. Wilson Camp Access Area Background
Appendix 14. Wilson Camp Access Map
Appendix 15. Wilson Camp Access Covertype Map

Additional Appendices:

Appendix A. Big Tavern Creek Accesses Management Plan Public Comments

Appendix 1. Missouri Department of Conservation Accesses on Big Tavern Creek



Appendix 2. Boeckman Bridge Access Area Background

Boeckman Bridge Access was acquired in 1982 to provide river access for launching canoes or small boats, for bank fishing opportunities and for other stream oriented aquatic management opportunities on Big Tavern Creek. This creek is home to a variety of aquatic life and is considered a good spotted bass and smallmouth bass fishery. This access is directly associated with Boeckman Bridge which is found on the area along Boeckman Bridge Road. The area is named after this bridge, which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979.

As far back as 1992, the area had a reputation as a "party spot," particularly in the vicinity of the bridge. In the summer of 2000, the Department received a complaint from the local representative regarding the party atmosphere, going as far as to insist that the Department dispose of the area. As a result, the area was unofficially closed to the public in May 2002; area signs and the parking lot were removed. Later in 2002, the area's historic suspension bridge was replaced with a concrete bridge. Issues with partying declined as a result of the new bridge design and increased enforcement efforts. The area was re-opened in 2010. The parking lot has not been re-built, requiring visitors to park along the county road.

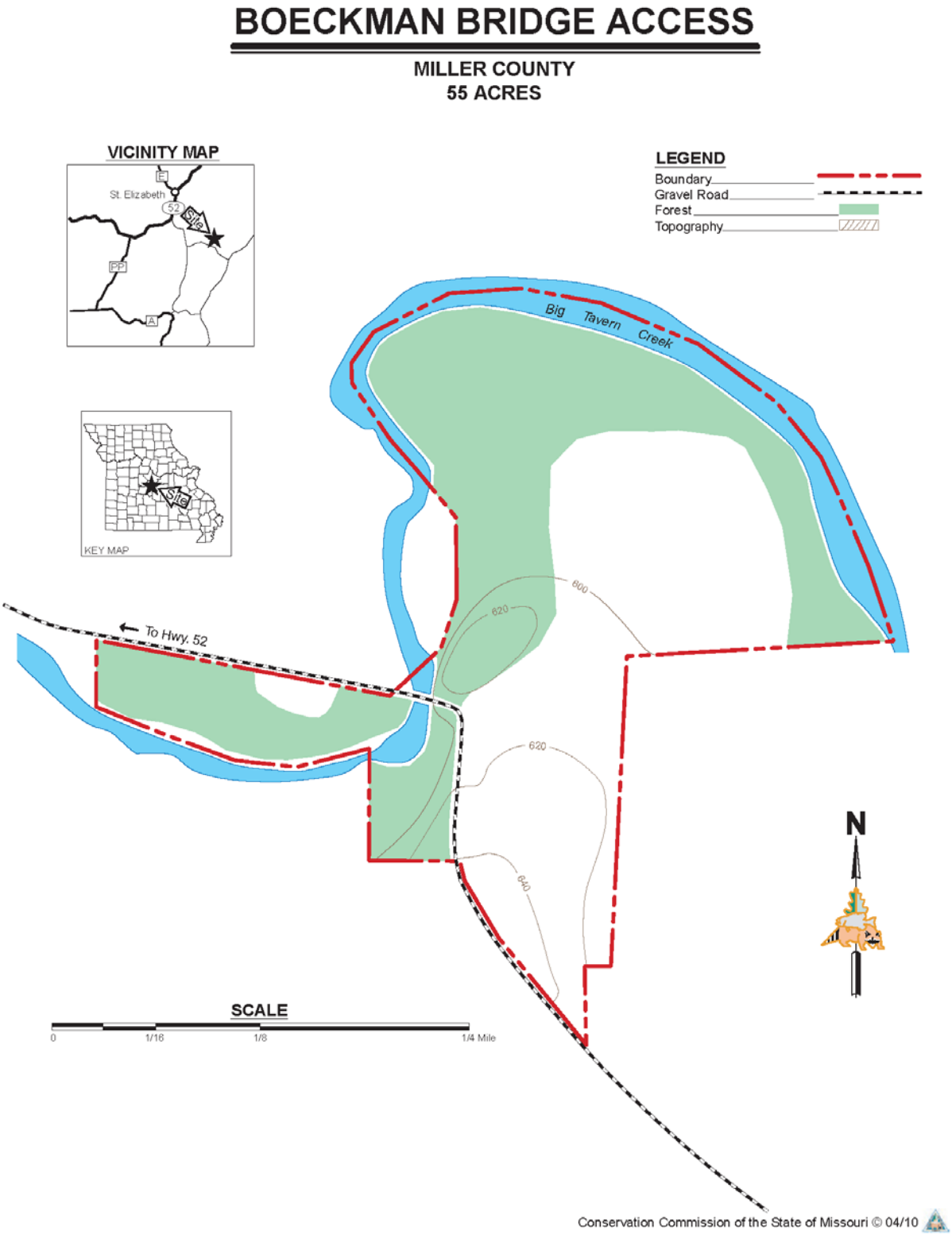
Legal Description: Township 40N, Range 12W, Section 10

Area Location/Directions: Go about 1 mile south of St. Elizabeth on Highway 52. Turn left on Brushy Creek Road at the cantilever sign followed by a second left onto Boeckman Bridge Road. Follow additional signs into the area.

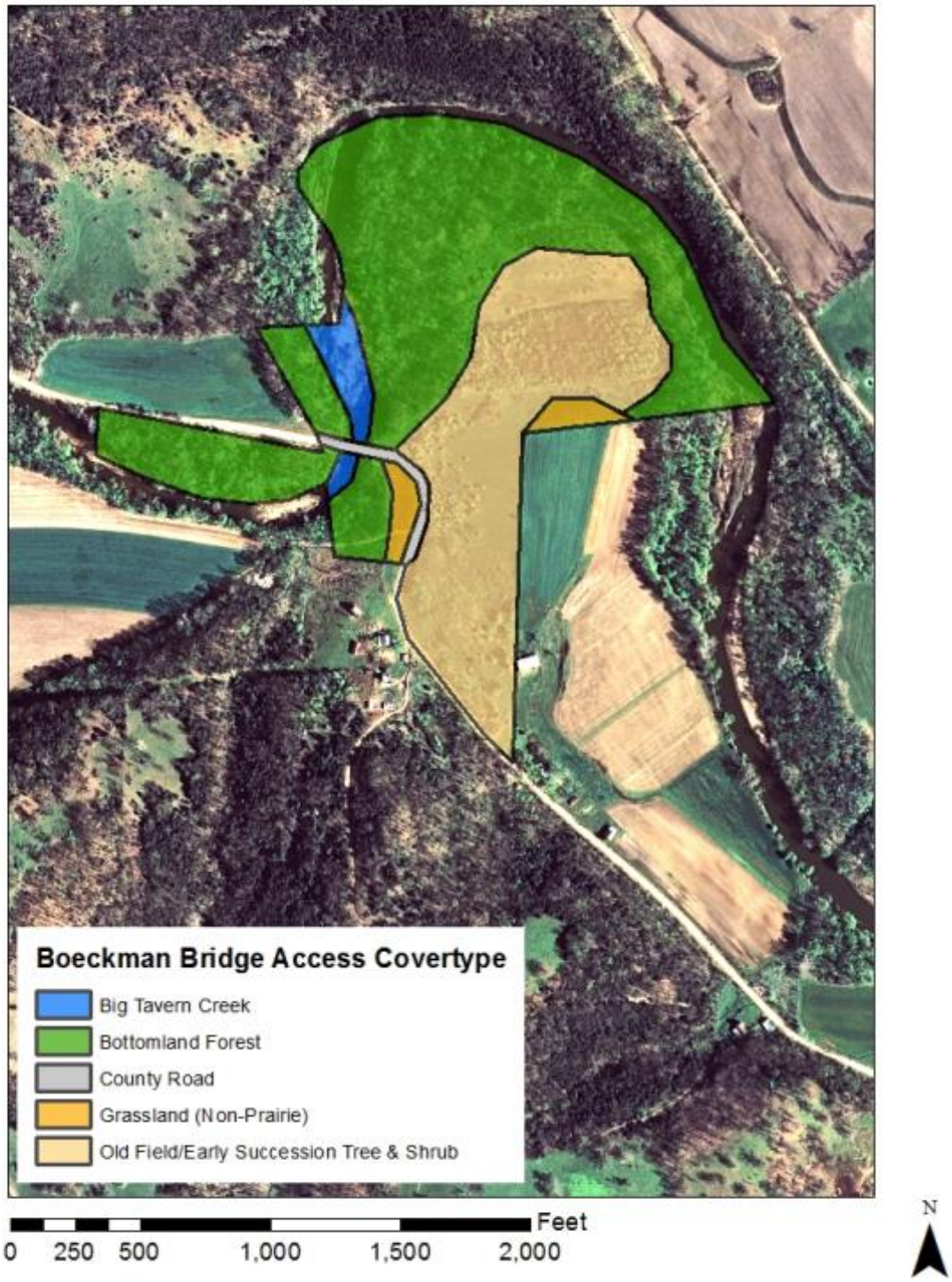
Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Miles	% of Area
Old Fields/Early Succession Tree & Shrub/ Grassland (Non-Prairie)	27		49
Forest/Woodland	27		49
Big Tavern Creek	1		2
Total	**55**		**100**
Stream Frontage		2	

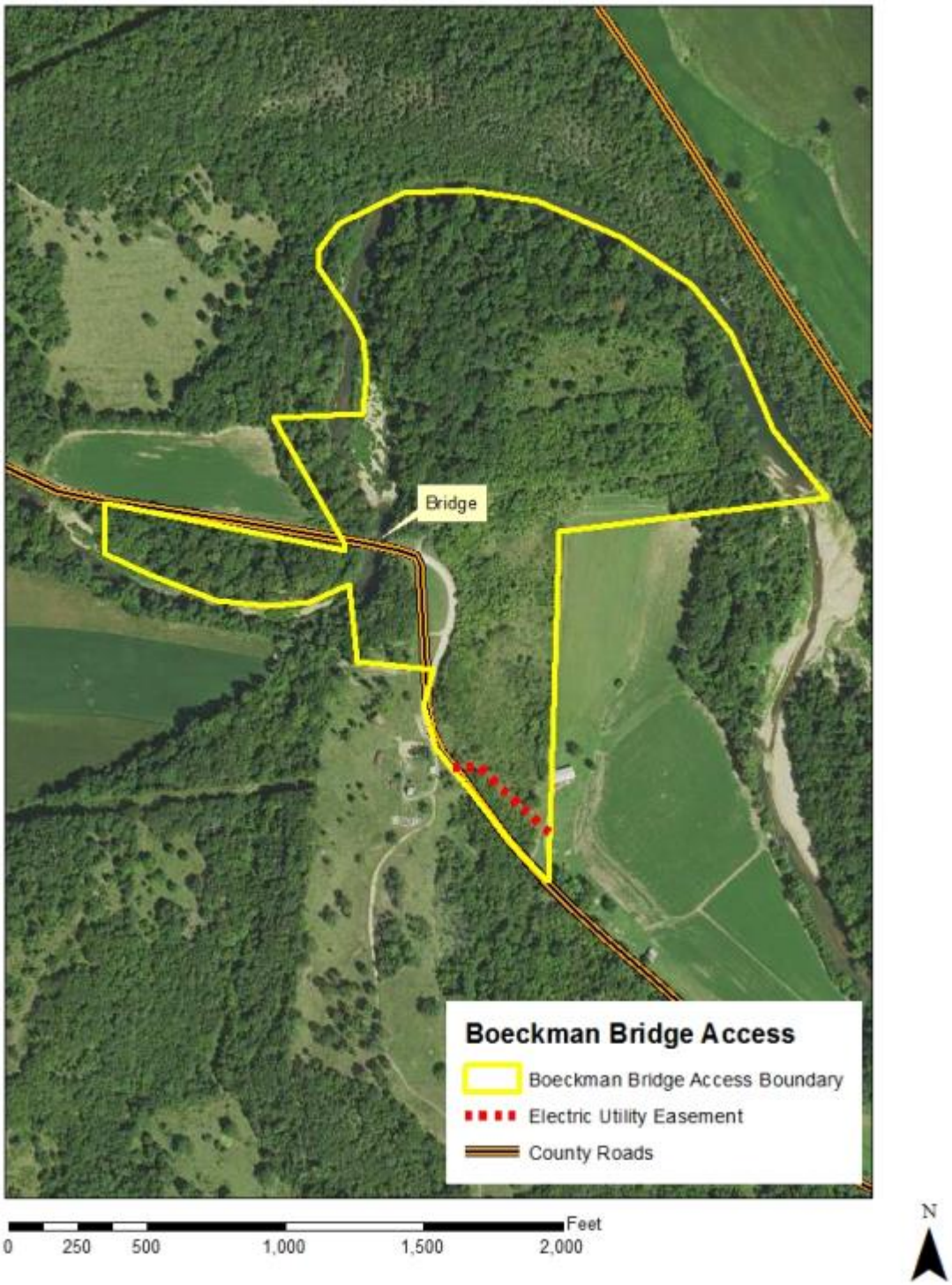
Appendix 3. Boeckman Bridge Access Map



Appendix 4. Boeckman Bridge Access Covertype Map



Appendix 5. Boeckman Bridge Access Easement Map



Appendix 6. Brays Access Area Background

Brays Access was acquired in 1982 to provide public wade and bank fishing opportunities on Big Tavern Creek. This creek is home to a variety of aquatic life and is considered a good spotted bass and smallmouth bass fishery. Access to Tavern Creek requires a 0.25-mile hike down a steep grade with no trail. The area is named after the nearby historic community of Brays, Missouri.

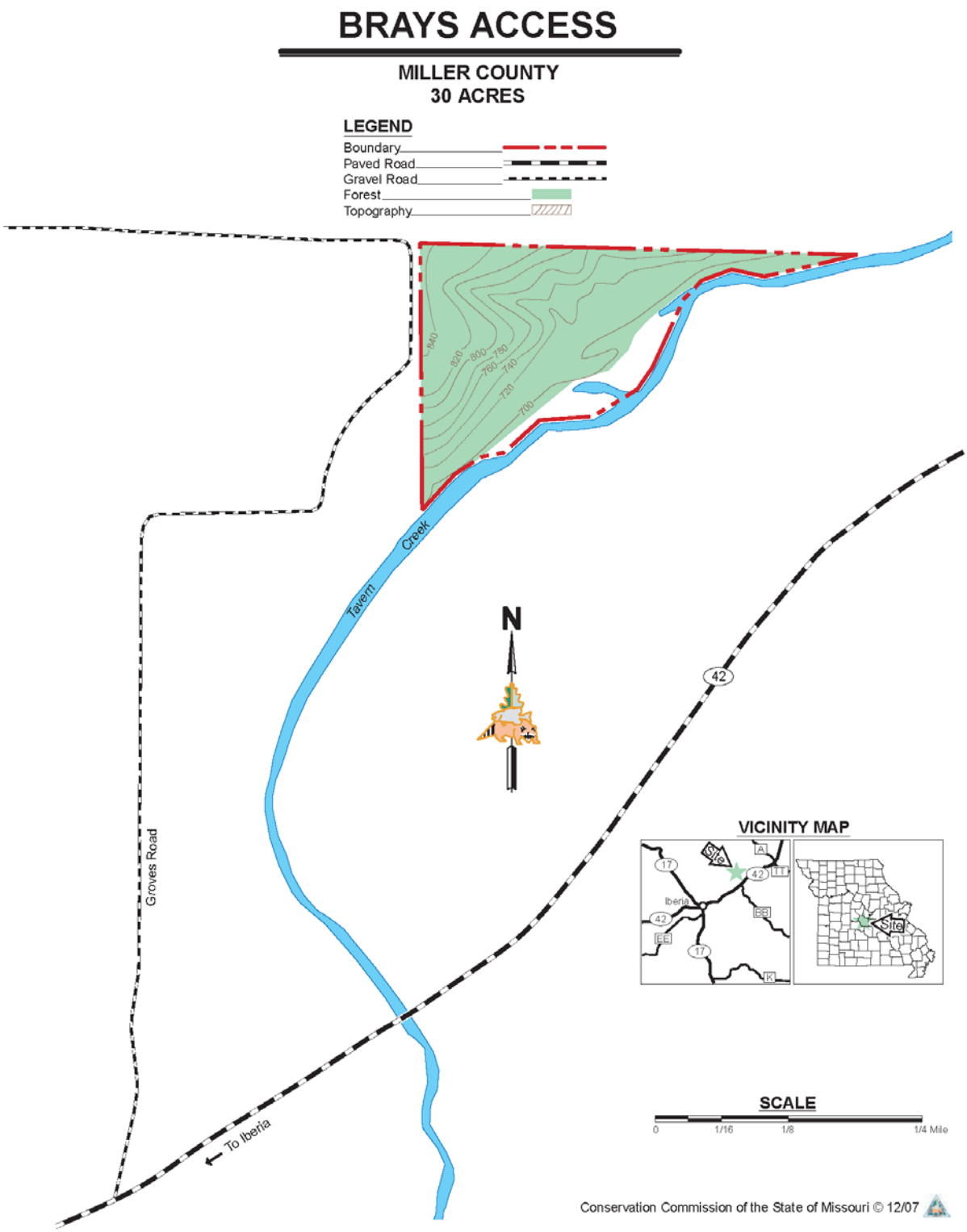
Legal Description: Township 39N, Range 12W, Sections 16 and 17

Area Location/Directions: Go east of Iberia on Highway 42 about 2 miles to the second gravel road to the north (Groves Road). Go 0.75 miles to Tavern Creek. Access requires a 0.25 mile hike down a steep grade (no trail).

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Miles	% of Area
Forest/Woodland	30		100
Stream Frontage		0.4	

Appendix 7. Brays Access Map



Appendix 8. Brays Access Covertype Map

Appendix 9. Madden Ford Access Area Background

Madden Ford access was acquired in 1982 to provide public wade and bank fishing opportunities on Big Tavern Creek. This creek is home to a variety of aquatic life and is considered a good spotted bass and smallmouth bass fishery. Although found in the upper reaches of Big Tavern Creek, Madden Ford Access does provide some bank fishing opportunities, but also provides other wildlife- related opportunities including, hunting, hiking and wildlife viewing. The area is named after the historic road that borders the access, which was likely named after one of two prominent families which settled this area of Miller County in the early 1800's.

Madden Ford Access was purchased for $61,172 ($373/acre).

Legal Description: Township 38N, Range 13W, Sections 1, 2, 11, and 12

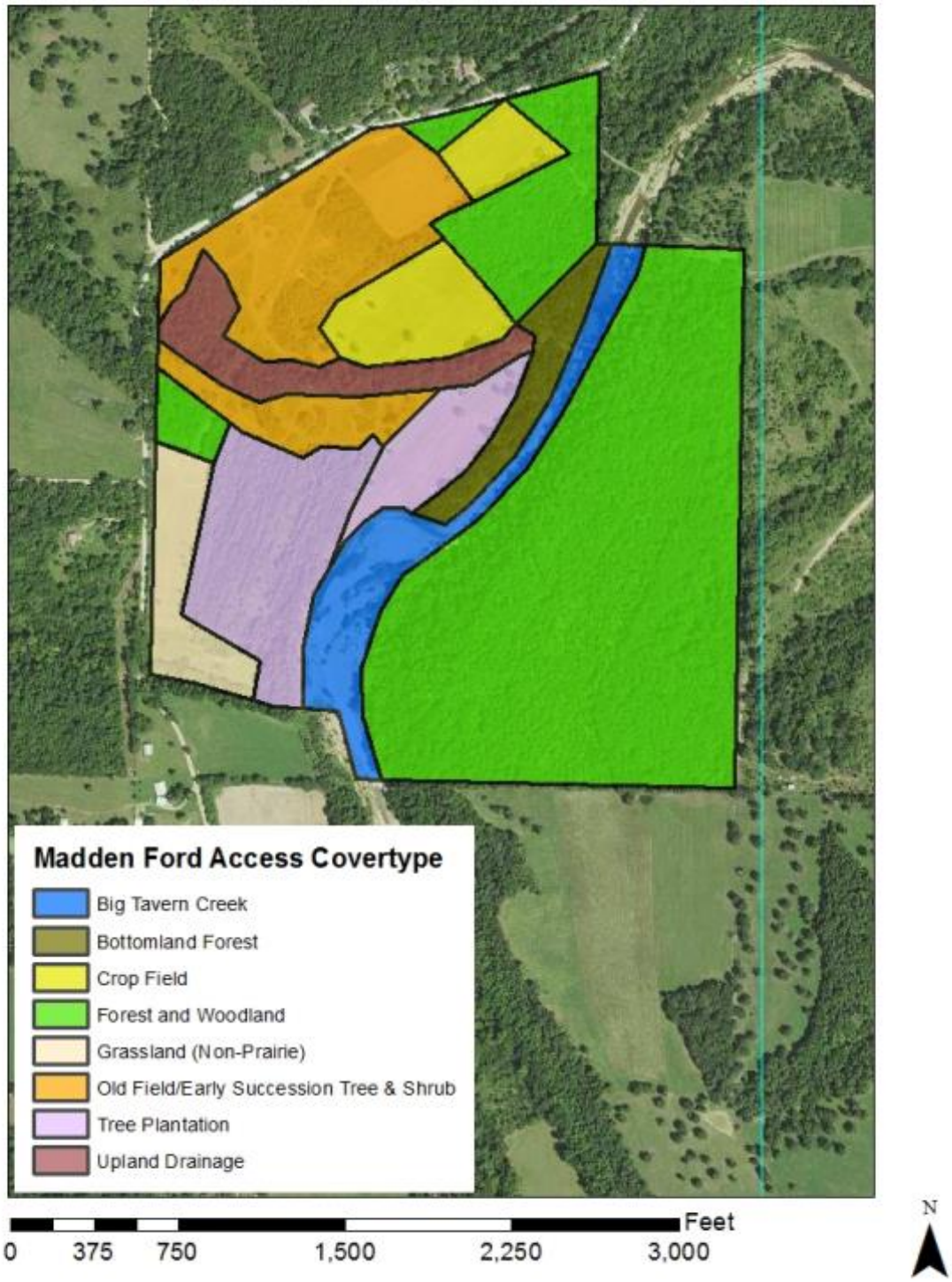
Area Location/Directions: Madden Ford Access is south of Iberia off Highway 17, and west on County Road 17-42 (Madden Ford Road). After turning on Madden Ford Road, cross two low-water bridges and watch for boundary signs.

Current Land and Water Types:

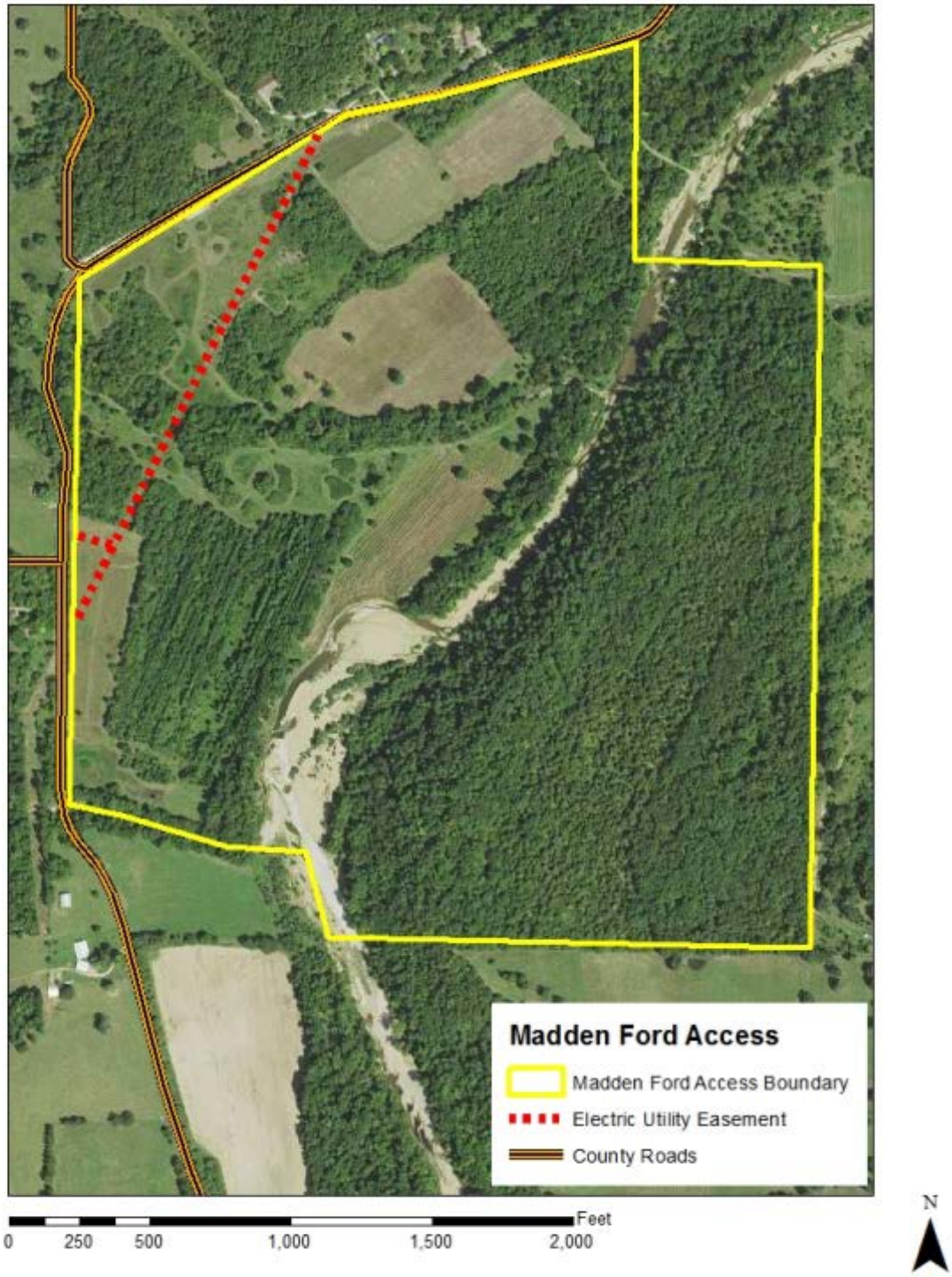
Land/Water Type	Acres	Miles	% of Area
Forest/Woodland	80		49
Old Fields/Early Succession Tree, Shrub/Grassland (Non-prairie)	30		18
Tree Plantation	20		12
Bottomland Forest/ Upland drainage	13		8
Big Tavern Creek	11		7
Crop Fields	10		6
Total	**164**		**100**
Stream Frontage (Permanent Stream)		1	
Stream Frontage (Intermittent Stream)		0.75	

Appendix 10. Madden Ford Access Map

Appendix 11. Madden Ford Access Covertype Map



Appendix 12. Madden Ford Access Easement Map



Appendix 13. Wilson Camp Access Area Background

Wilson Camp Access was acquired in 1982 to provide river access for launching canoes or small boats, for bank fishing opportunities and for other stream oriented aquatic management opportunities on Big Tavern Creek. This creek is home to a variety of aquatic life and is considered a good spotted bass and smallmouth bass fishery.

The area is named after early settler John Wilson who immigrated with his family to Missouri in 1810. Wilson and his family took up residence in a nearby cave for a period of two years before constructing a log home in the same area. Prior to his death, Wilson requested that his remains be preserved and temporarily buried in the cave with a keg of whiskey. After a period of seven years, Wilson was to be exhumed, put on display, and with funding supplied from his estate, surviving family members where to host a party. Unfortunately, all was accomplished accept for the later planned party. The Civil War occurred shortly after his death, and surviving family members simply forgot about his request until peace returned to the area. By the time his request was remembered, the temporary tomb had been vandalized. The whiskey had been stolen and the body was found unpreserved. This rather odd, yet true story has become a local legend for Miller County.

The historic Kliethermes suspension bridge on the western (downstream) border of the area was recently replaced by the Missouri Department of Transportation with a concrete span bridge.

In February 1996, 2,600 black walnuts were planted in 8-acre stand #5. A forestry stand inventory was completed in 1996.

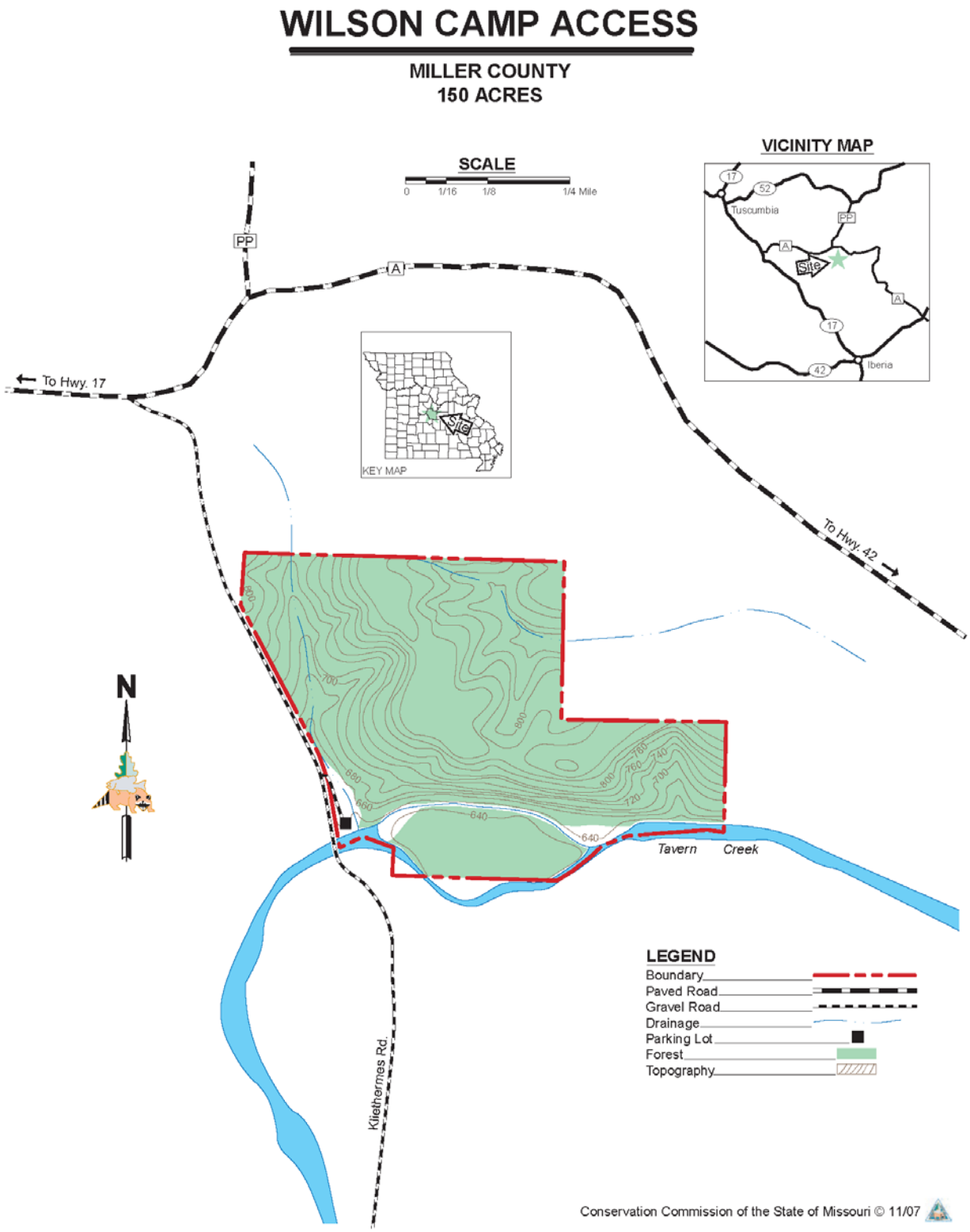
Legal Description: Township 40N, Range 13W, Section 25

Area Location/Directions: To get to Wilson Camp Access, go 4.2 miles southeast of Tuscumbia on Highway 17. Head east on Route A for 4.4 miles to County Road A-6. At the cantilever, sign turn right on County Road A-6. Go 0.5 miles to Wilson Camp Access.

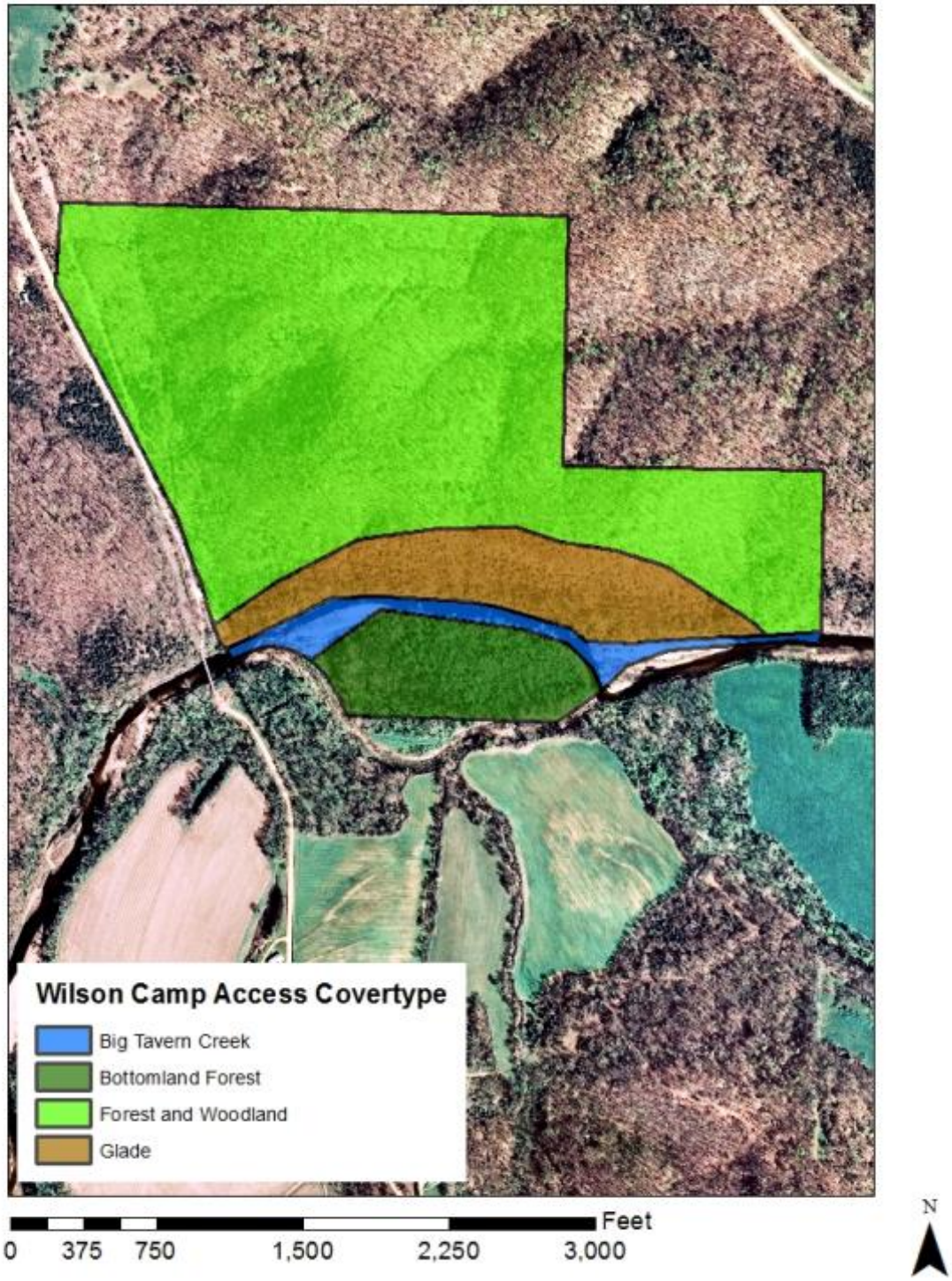
Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Miles	% of Area
Forest/Woodland	110		73
Glade	19		13
Bottomland Forest	14		9
Big Tavern Creek	7		5
Total	**150**		**100**
Stream Frontage		0.5	

Appendix 14. Wilson Camp Access Map



Appendix 15. Wilson Camp Access Covertype Map



Appendix A. Big Tavern Creek Accesses Management Plan Public Comments

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

The issue of soil erosion is mentioned in several instances of the Tavern Creek Accesses Management Plan. I am a property owner with other of my family members that borders the Tavern Creek Wilson Camp Conservation area on both sides. My concern is that soil erosion has increased on my property as a result of the rip-rap boulders used to control the erosion of the bridge and access point of Wilson Camp. Water flows at points of least resistance. The southeast side of the creek, (opposite of the Wilson Camp bank access that is heavily laden with rock) has taken a dramatic hit of erosion and now has a vertical bank from my property to the creek bed. The water that used to run on the north side of the creek bed, (adjacent to the Camp Access) has been deferred to the south side of the creek's bank. As a property owner I would appreciate that I be included in your erosion plans discussion/activity concerning this area. Respectfully,
First of all, I appreciate all the work you have provided. THANKS! I have one concern if you have control of this situation. The ********* Farm borders Southeast on the Big Tavern. There is a terrible erosion problem on the creek bank. It will eventually destroy the bottom field. We don't have the money or man power to stop this. We have tried in the past, helped, but failed. What I'm asking from you, is if someone could look at this on site to evaluate. I'm not asking for an elaborate excavation process, but just to kill the willows that are gathering gravel at the location where the creek bed once ran free. Once brush is dead, let mother nature do the rest. You can call me at ***-***-**** or email. Thanks