

# **DRAFT**

# **Long Ridge**

# **Conservation Area**

## **Ten-Year Area Management Plan**

### **FY 2017-2026**



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## OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** Long Ridge Conservation Area, # 9503
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1995
- **Acreage:** 1,813 acres
- **County:** Franklin
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Forestry
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Forestry
- **Statements of Purpose:**
  - A. Strategic Direction**

Manage for wildlife and woodland resources with emphasis on woodland species and compatible recreational opportunities.
  - B. Desired Future Condition**

The desired future condition of Long Ridge Conservation Area (CA) is a healthy open woodland system for people to use and enjoy.
  - C. Federal Aid Statement**

N/A

## GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

### I. Special Considerations

- A. Priority Areas:** Meramec River Hills Priority Forest Landscape, Middle Bourbeuse River Fisheries Priority Watershed, Meramec River Watershed Important Bird Area
- 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:** Yes, records kept with 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 this and other 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.
- C. Springs:** None

**III. Existing Infrastructure**

- Five parking lots
- Green Trail (multi-use hike/horse trail, 1.9 miles)
- Blue Trail (multi-use hike/horse trail, 2.4 miles)
- Yellow Trail (multi-use hike/horse trail, 2.4 miles)
- Red Trail (multi-use hike/horse trail, 1.9 miles)
- Five wildlife watering holes (0.1 acres total)

**IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations**

- A. Deed Restrictions or Ownership Considerations:** Mineral rights (SE1/4 NW1/4 and SW1/4 NE1/4, Section 9, Township 41 North, Range 2 West)
- 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:** One ingress/egress easement
- D. Cultural Resources 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) Invasive species such as bush honeysuckle, garlic mustard, sericea lespedeza, and spotted knapweed occur on the area.
- 2) This area provides excellent opportunities to restore and manage open oak woodland natural communities; however the proximity to subdivisions and other dwellings provide challenges when conducting land management activities such as prescribed fire.

**Management Objective 1:** Identify and reduce the abundance of invasive plant species.

**Strategy 1:** Monitor the multi-use trails, parking lots, county road frontage, and bottomland wooded areas for the presence of invasive plants. (Forestry)

**Strategy 2:** Use chemical and mechanical methods to treat and reduce invasive plant species. (Forestry)

**Management Objective 2:** Enhance and restore open woodland communities. Current open and future woodland management units are shown on Figure 5.

**Strategy 1:** Conduct a forest inventory to obtain forest stand data prior to making management decisions within the current and future woodland management units. (Forestry)

**Strategy 2:** Utilize commercial tree thinning, non-commercial tree thinning, and/or controlled burning to enhance and restore open woodland management units, as time and resources permit. (Forestry)

**Strategy 3:** Conduct evaluations after open woodland management activities to determine the effectiveness of treatments. Treatments include, but are not limited to prescribed burning, non-commercial tree thinning, commercial timber sales, and invasive species control. (Forestry)

**Management Objective 3:** Enhance and maintain wildlife habitat and hunting opportunities.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain existing wildlife food plots. (Forestry)

**Strategy 2:** Increase the brushy cover on the field edges by edge feather or hinge cutting trees. (Forestry)

**Strategy 3:** Maintain snag and den trees throughout the area as specified in the *Missouri Watershed Protection Practice Recommended Practices for Missouri Forests: 2014 Management Guidelines for Maintaining Forested Watersheds to Protect Streams* (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2014). (Forestry)

**Management Objective 4:** Protect soil during management activities.

**Strategy 1:** During timber harvesting activities install best management practices to prevent soil erosion. In addition, follow all suggested management practices according to the *Missouri Watershed Protection Practice Recommended Practices for Missouri Forests: 2014 Management Guidelines for Maintaining Forested Watersheds to Protect Streams* (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2014). (Forestry)

**Strategy 2:** Install water bars, water turnouts, and other best management practices on the multi-use trails to minimize soil erosion and runoff. (Forestry)

## VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations

### Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Sensitive karst features exist on the area.

**Management Objective 1:** Maintain and manage the vegetation on the area in ways that promote healthy streams and karst communities.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain appropriate native vegetation around streams and karst features. (Forestry)

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

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Conflicting public use is a challenge on this area. The proximity to Interstate 44 and to the town of Sullivan makes this area popular for deer and turkey hunting, as well as horseback riding on the multi-use trail. Conflicts between archery deer hunters and multi-use trail users exist primarily between Oct. 15 and the beginning of the November portion of firearms deer season.

**Management Objective 1:** Maintain the area in a way that invites the public to use the property.

**Strategy 1:** Mark and maintain boundary lines every seven years. (Forestry)

**Strategy 2:** Keep area regulations posted on sign boards. Regularly pick up trash and keep the grass on the edge of the parking lots mowed. (Forestry)

**Strategy 3:** Conduct periodic enforcement patrols. (Protection)

**Management Objective 2:** Proactively work with area users to minimize conflict during high use times.

**Strategy 1:** Post the dates of deer and turkey hunting seasons so that multi-use trail users are aware that hunters may be in the area. (Forestry)

**Strategy 2:** Avoid issuing special use permits that conflict with deer and turkey hunting seasons. (Forestry)

**Strategy 3:** Monitor the hunting pressure during deer and turkey hunting seasons and recommend area specific regulation changes when appropriate. (Forestry and Protection)

## **VIII. Administrative Considerations**

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Maintain area infrastructure.

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

**Strategy 1:** Maintain area infrastructure according to Department guidelines. (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**

Strategies are considered ongoing unless listed in the following table:

	<b>FY17</b>	<b>FY18</b>	<b>FY19</b>	<b>FY20</b>	<b>FY21</b>	<b>FY22</b>	<b>FY23</b>	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY25</b>	<b>FY26</b>
<b>Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations</b>										
<i>Objective 2</i>										
Strategy 1	X			X			X			X
<i>Objective 4</i>										
Strategy 2	X	X	X	X	X					
<b>Public Use Management Considerations</b>										
<i>Objective 1</i>										
Strategy 1					X					

## APPENDICES

### Area Background:

Long Ridge Conservation Area is located in Franklin County, 6 miles north of Sullivan on Ridge Road. The Department purchased the property for the 1,813 acre area in 1995. The area includes 9 miles of developed multi-use trails and five parking areas. Parking lots near the Green and Blue multi-use trails are large enough to accommodate horse trailers.

The area is open from 4 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.

### Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Miles	% of Area
Forest and Woodland	1,758		97
Old Field and Cedar Thickets	45		2
Fields	10		<1
Wildlife Watering Holes	<1		<1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,813</b>		<b>100</b>
Stream Frontage – Intermittent Streams		5	
Stream Frontage – Permanent Streams		0.5	

### References:

Missouri Department of Conservation. (2012). Geographic Information System layer. 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 practices recommended for Missouri forests: 2014 management guidelines for maintaining forested watersheds to protect streams*. Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Department of Conservation.

### Maps:

Figure 1: Location Map

Figure 2: Area Map

Figure 3: Current Land Cover

Figure 4: Infrastructure

Figure 5: Woodland Management Units

Figure 6: Easement Map

Figure 1: Location Map

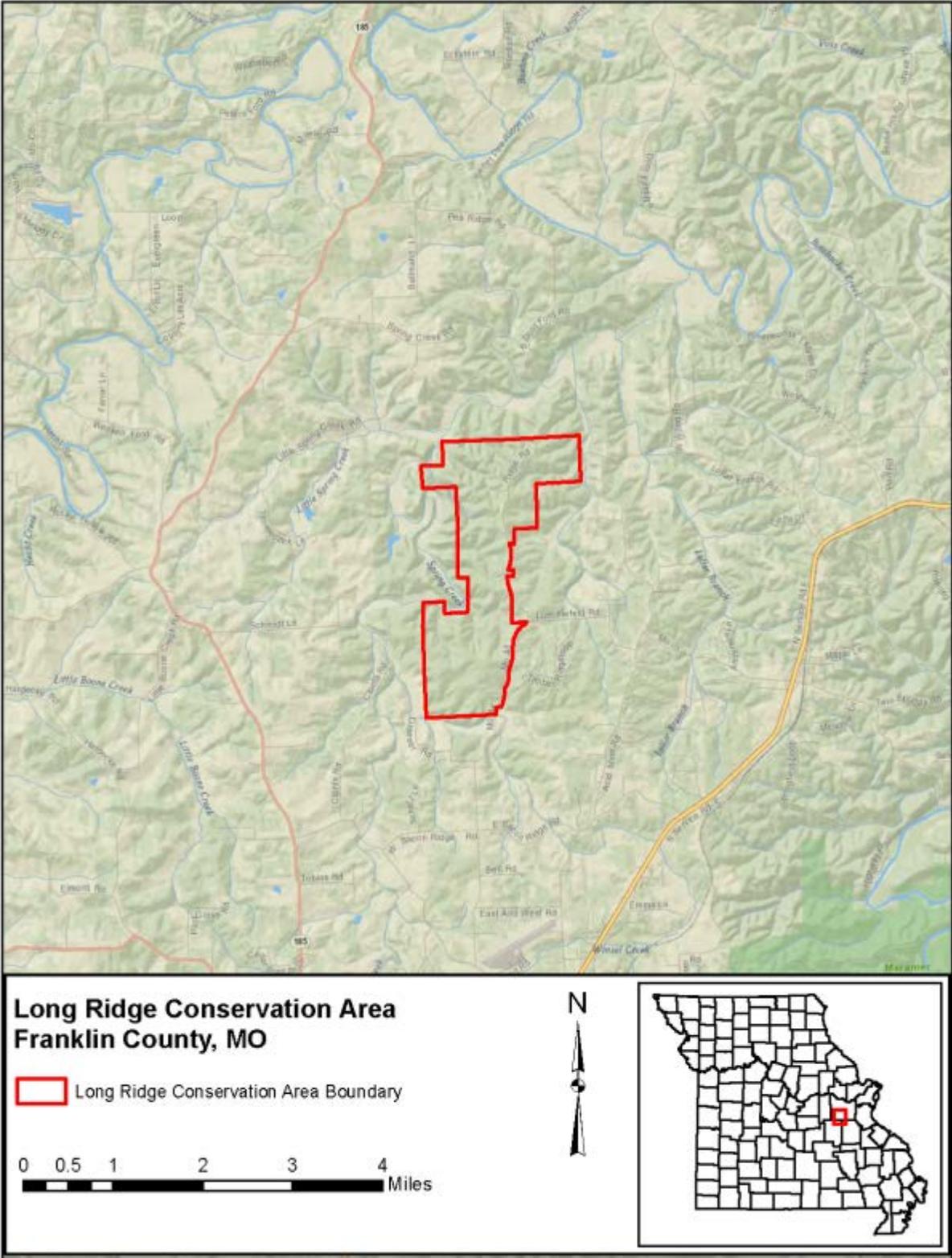


Figure 2: Area Map

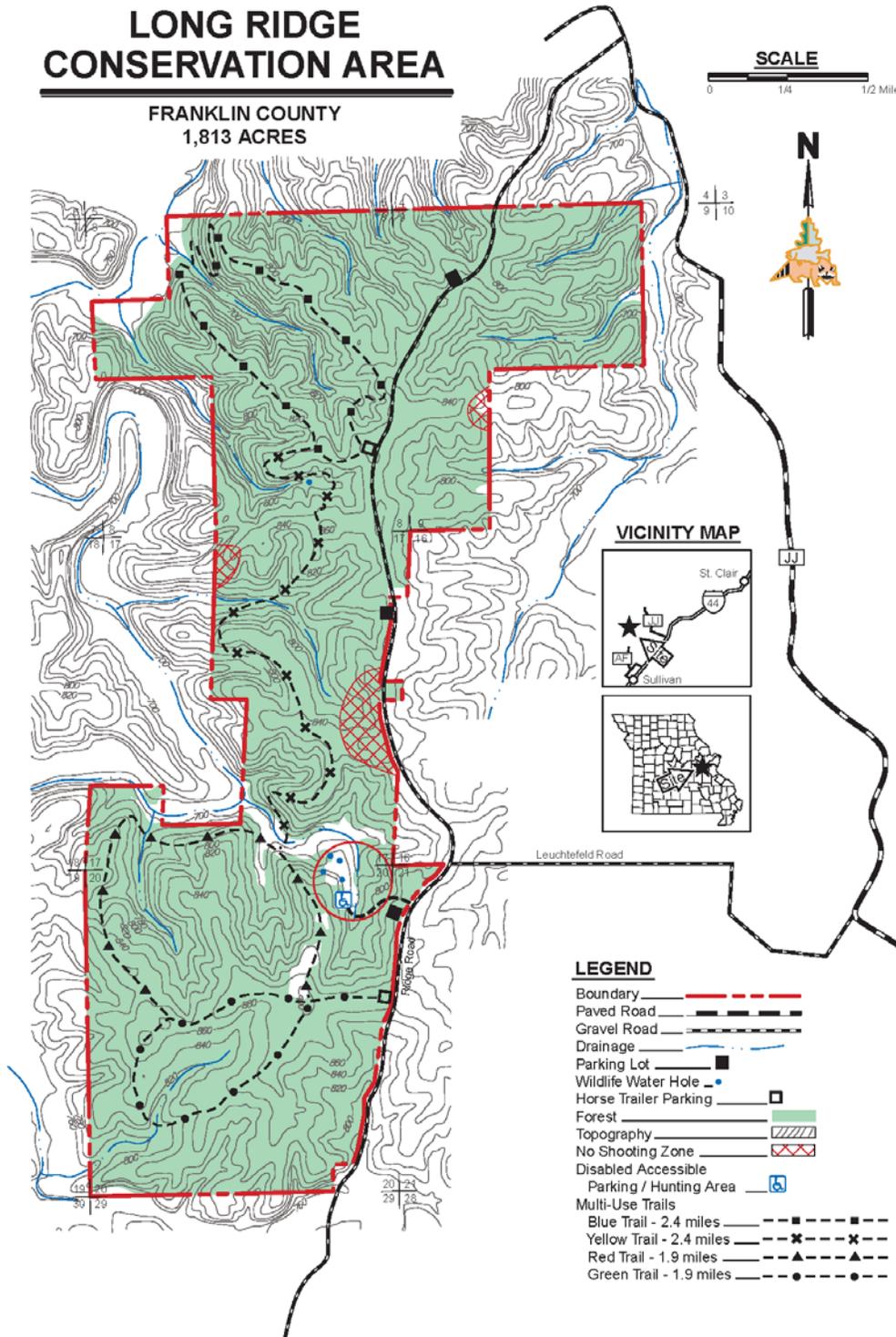


Figure 3: Current Land Cover

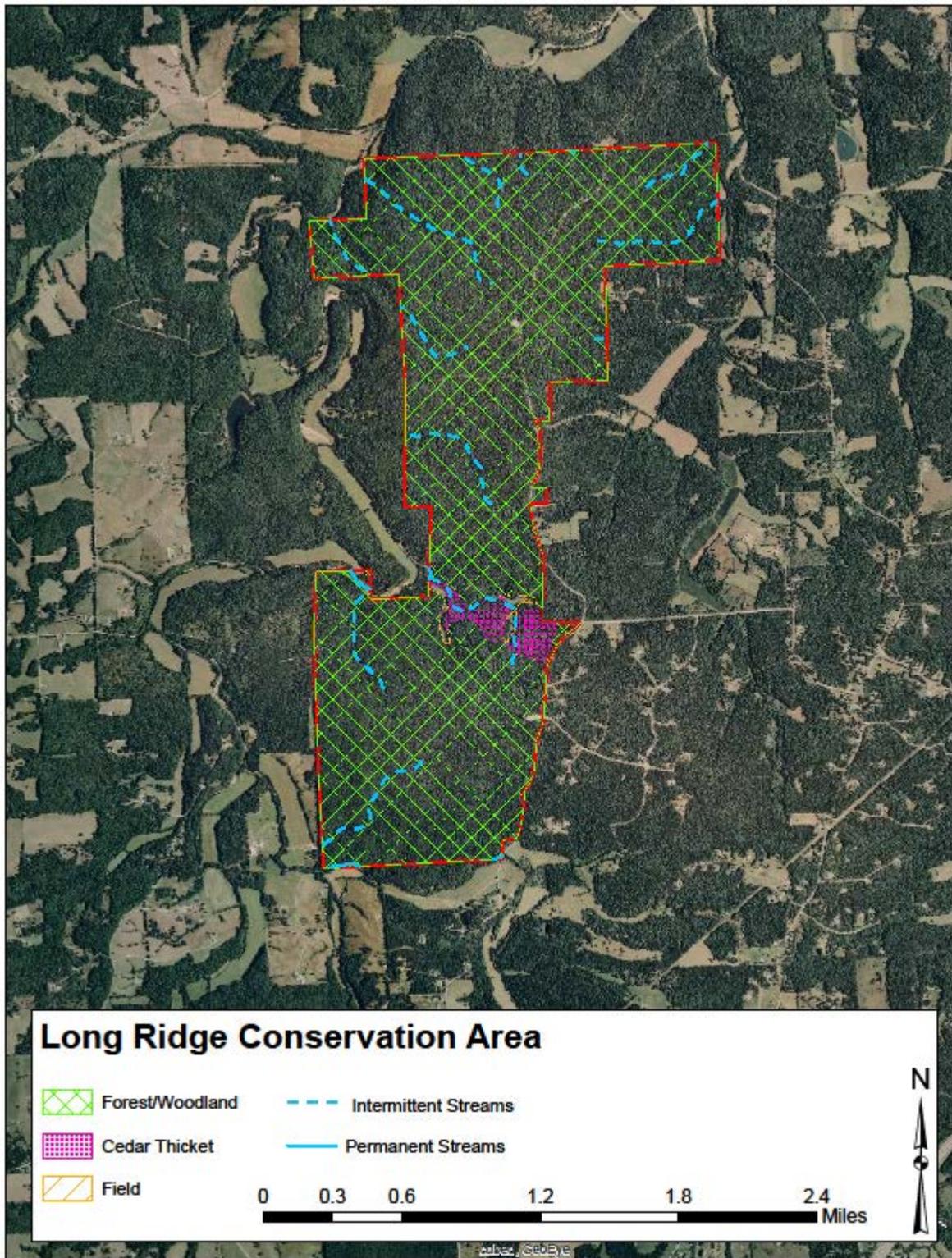


Figure 4: Infrastructure

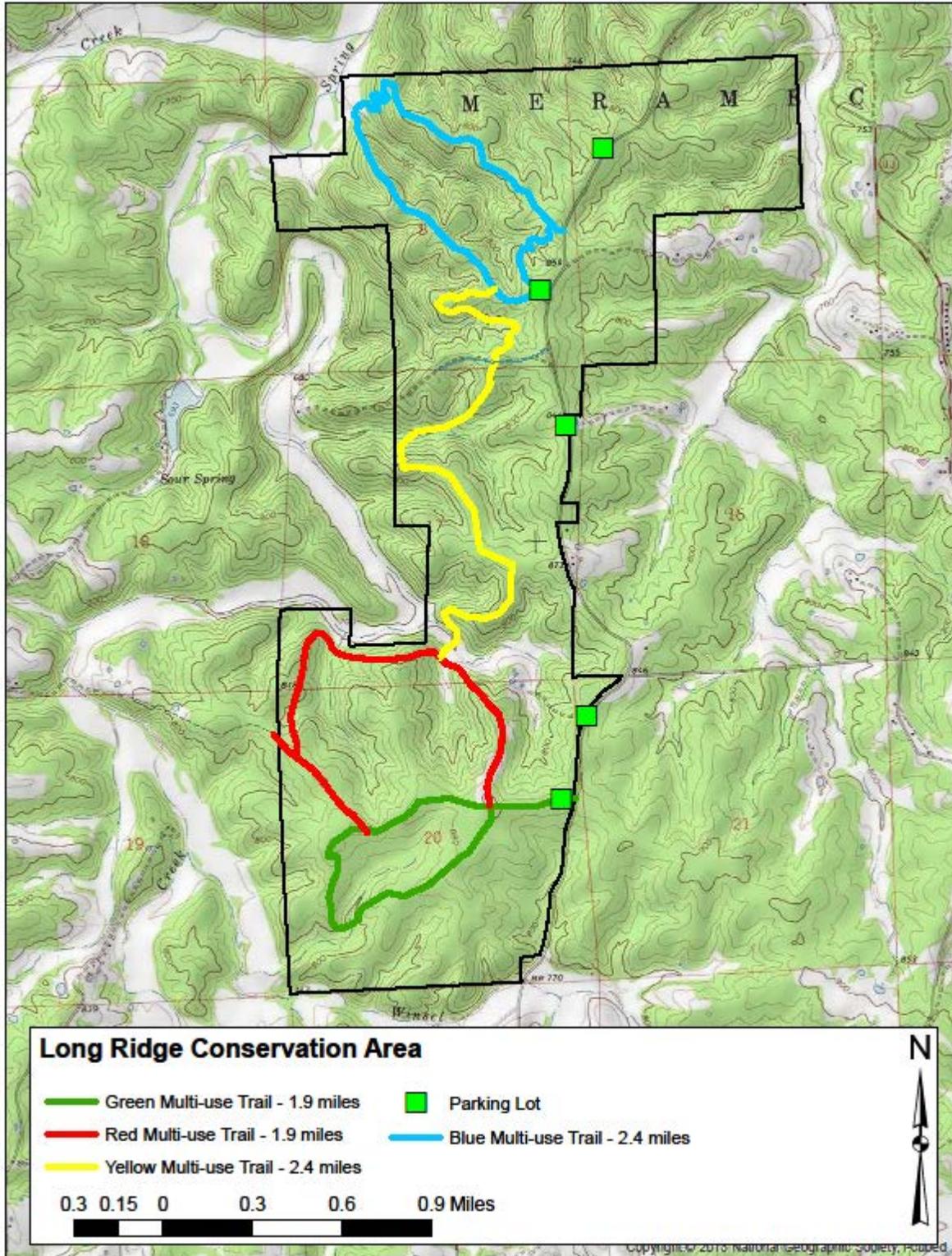


Figure 5: Woodland Management Units

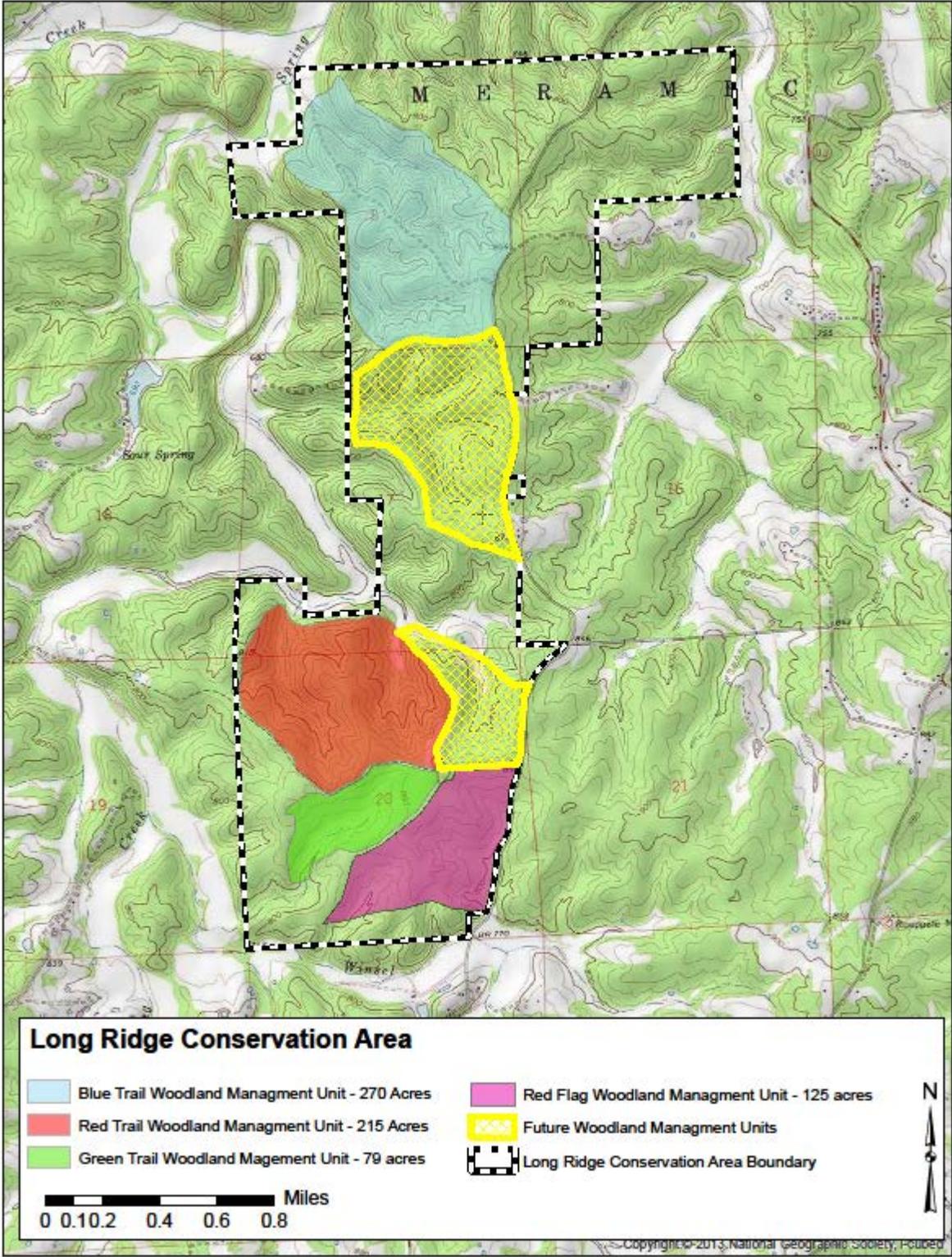
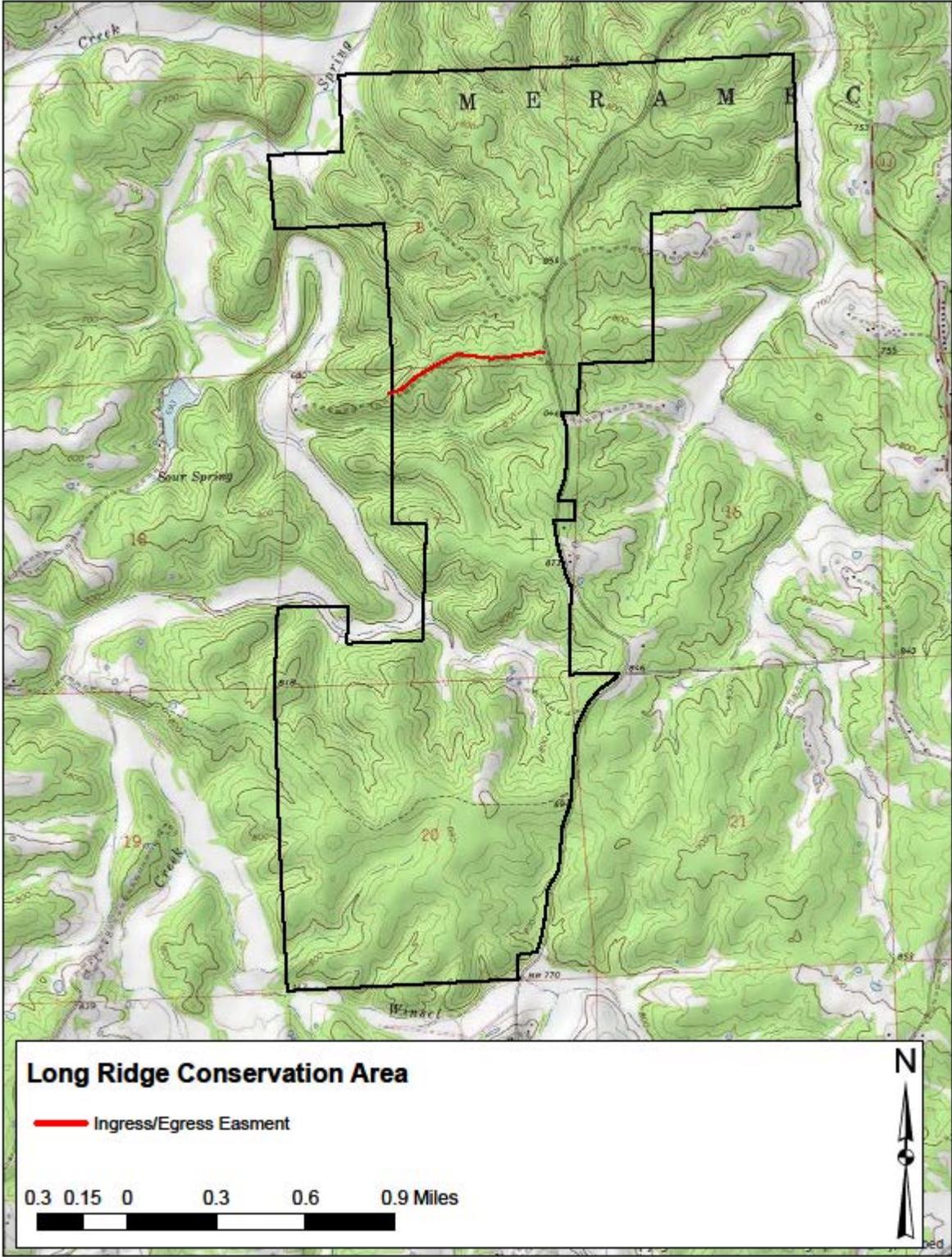


Figure 6: Easement Map



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