

DRAFT

Rippee Conservation Area

Fifteen-Year Area Management Plan

FY 2017-2031



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OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** Rippee Conservation Area, # 6412
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1964
- **Acreage:** 419 acres
- **County:** Douglas
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Forestry
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Forestry, Design and Development
- **Statements of Purpose:**
 - A. Strategic Direction**

Manage for multiple resource use with emphasis on the forest, associated wildlife species, protection of the watershed, and compatible recreational opportunities. Provide outdoor activities and opportunities for multiple user groups.
 - B. Desired Future Condition**

The desired future condition of Rippee Conservation Area (CA) is a healthy forest/woodland, riparian, and glade landscape with diverse old fields and grassland habitat.
 - C. Federal Aid Statement**

This area, 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.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

- I. Special Considerations**
 - A. Priority Areas:** Priority Forest Landscape
 - B. Natural Areas:** Bryant Creek Natural Area is 52 acres. The portion of Bryant Creek that flows through this natural area is designated as an Outstanding State Resource Waters by the Missouri Clean Water Commission. Bryant Creek supports a number of native fish species from smallmouth bass and longear sunfish to a variety of minnows and darters. This 1.5 miles of stream is a small part of the larger 39 mile Bryant Creek. Across its entirety, Bryant Creek harbors 15 fish and crayfish species that are endemic to the Ozarks.
 - 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:** None

II. Existing Infrastructure

- Three parking lots
- Three privies
- Camping area (15 individual camp sites with tables and grills)
- Picnic area (four sites with tables and grills)

IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations

A. Deed Restrictions or Ownership Considerations: None

B. Federal Interest: 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.

C. Easements: County Roads 328 and 329

D. Cultural Resources Findings: Yes, records kept with the Missouri Department of Conservation (the Department) environmental compliance specialist. Managers should follow best management practices for Cultural Resources in the Department Resource Policy Manual.

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

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Improve, manage, and restore forest, woodland, and old field landscapes.
- 2) Improve habitat for wildlife.
- 3) Improve habitat and natural diversity by limiting and reducing the spread of invasive plant species.

Management Objective 1: Maintain, enhance, and restore forest/woodland natural communities.

Strategy 1: Implement management recommendations as outlined in the 2015 forest inventory. Conduct the next forest inventory in 2030. (Forestry, Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Implement best management practices to prevent erosion when conducting timber harvesting activities, 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, Wildlife)

Management Objective 2: Maintain and enhance wildlife habitats.

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

Strategy 2: Improve forest wildlife habitat with forest and woodland management practices that might include timber harvesting, pre-commercial forest thinning, herbicide use, and/or prescribed fire. (Forestry)

Management Objective 3: Reduce the impact of invasive plant species on natural communities.

Strategy 1: Continue to control invasive species, including fescue, Johnson grass, sericea lespedeza, spotted knapweed, and autumn olive with mechanical, prescribed fire, and chemical methods. (Forestry, Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Monitor the area for new invasive species. Suppress any infestations that may develop using appropriate methods. (Forestry, Wildlife)

VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Manage and protect karst land features and the Bryant and Rippee Creek watersheds.

Management Objective 1: Protect and enhance the riparian corridor and karst features on the area.

Strategy 1: Minimize sedimentation within the area from land management practices and/or road systems that will affect biodiversity of unique habitats by following the practices recommended 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, Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Maintain a riparian corridor with a minimum of 100 feet from the top of the bank on each side for third-order and larger streams, as recommended in the *Missouri Watershed Protection Practice* guidelines (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2014). (Forestry)

VII. Public Use Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Provide for hunting and viewing opportunities.
- 2) Balance area use by stakeholders.

Management Objective 1: Provide public hunting and viewing opportunities.

Strategy 1: Conduct annual management activities that will provide habitat for a diverse suite of species, using techniques such as prescribed fire, herbicide applications, food plots, and mechanical treatments. (Forestry, Wildlife)

Management Objective 2: Provide a balance of activities allowed on the area to promote conservation and sustainability of the areas resources.

Strategy 1: Continue to monitor area use and limit special use permits that could impact use by other stakeholders. (Forestry)

VIII. Administrative Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Resolve any boundary line disputes with adjoining landowners.
- 2) Acquire land, when available.

Management Objective 1: 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.

APPENDICES

Area Background:

The original acquisition includes two separate tracts. In August 1964, 280 acres were purchased from Our Lady of the Assumption Abbey for \$7,000 using Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration funds. Upstream about one mile, a 10.7-acre tract was purchased from John Follis in October 1985 and named Evans Access. The primary purpose of acquiring both tracts was to provide public access to Bryant Creek. Although separate, the previous Evans Access tract is now part of Rippee Conservation Area. In 1980, a 128-acre tract was purchased from Don Spurlock using Department funds.

Before Department acquisition, the area was farmed for cattle, hay, and row crops. The property has a distant history of abuse such as high-grade timber harvesting and wildfire damage to the forest.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	% of Area
Upland Forest/Woodlands	341.7	82
Grassland (non-prairie)	34	8
Cropland	25.5	6
Other (campground, roads and parking lots)	7.5	2
Glade	6	1
Old Field	4	1
Total	418.70	100

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.

Maps:

Figure 1: Area Map

Figure 2: County Location Map

Figure 3: Topographic Map

Figure 4: Aerial Map

Figure 5: Land Cover Map

Figure 1: Area Map

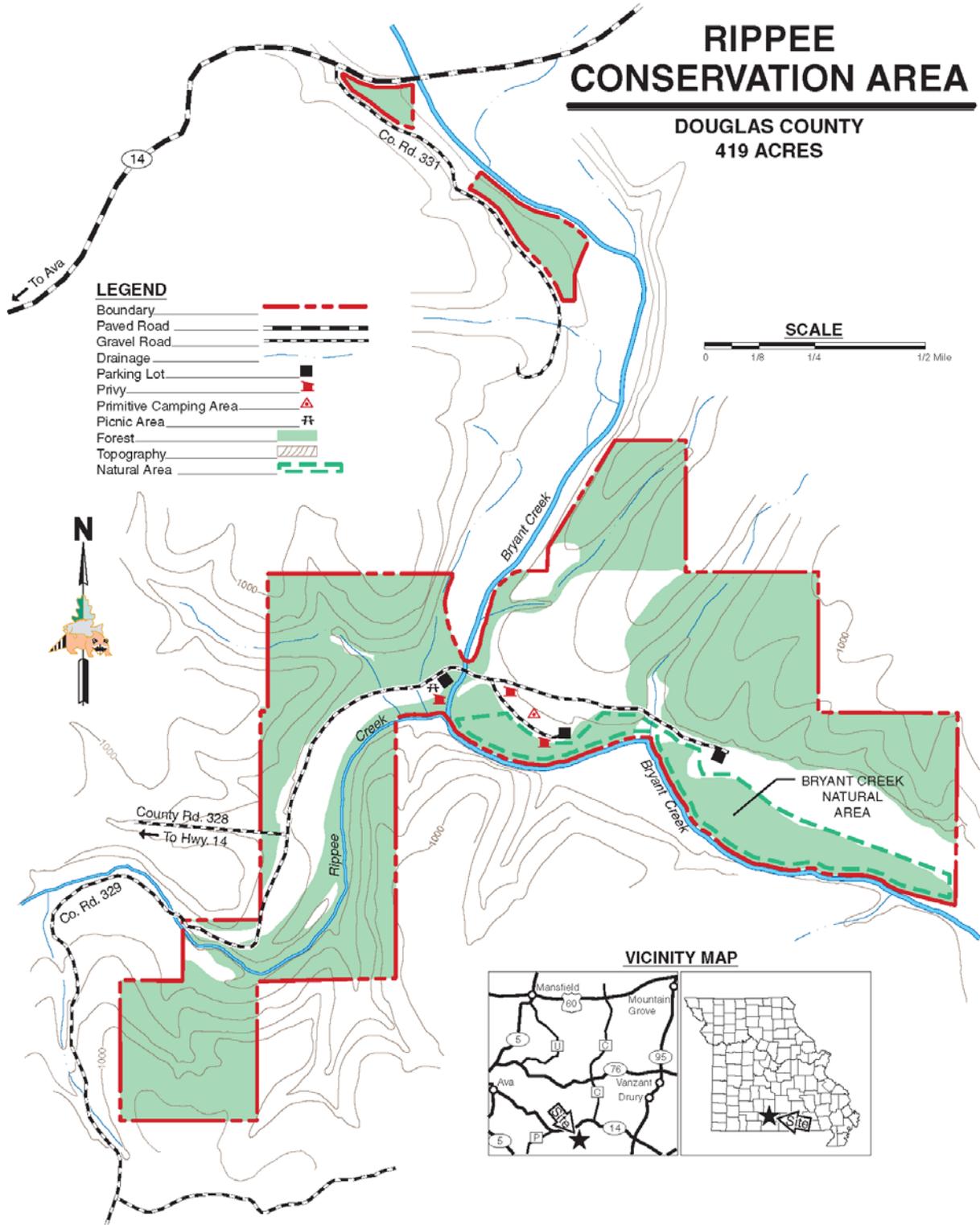


Figure 2: County Location Map

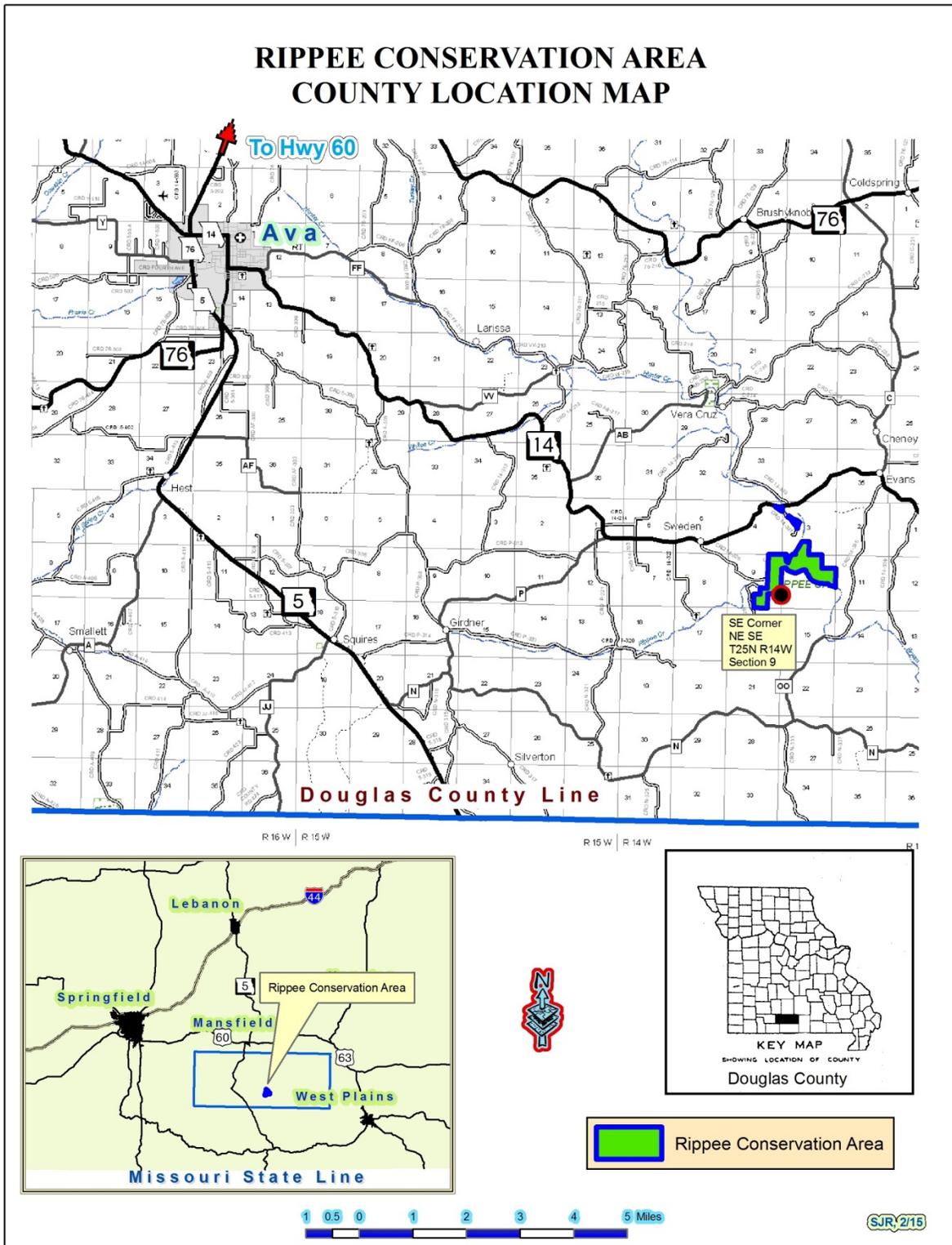


Figure 3: Topographic Map

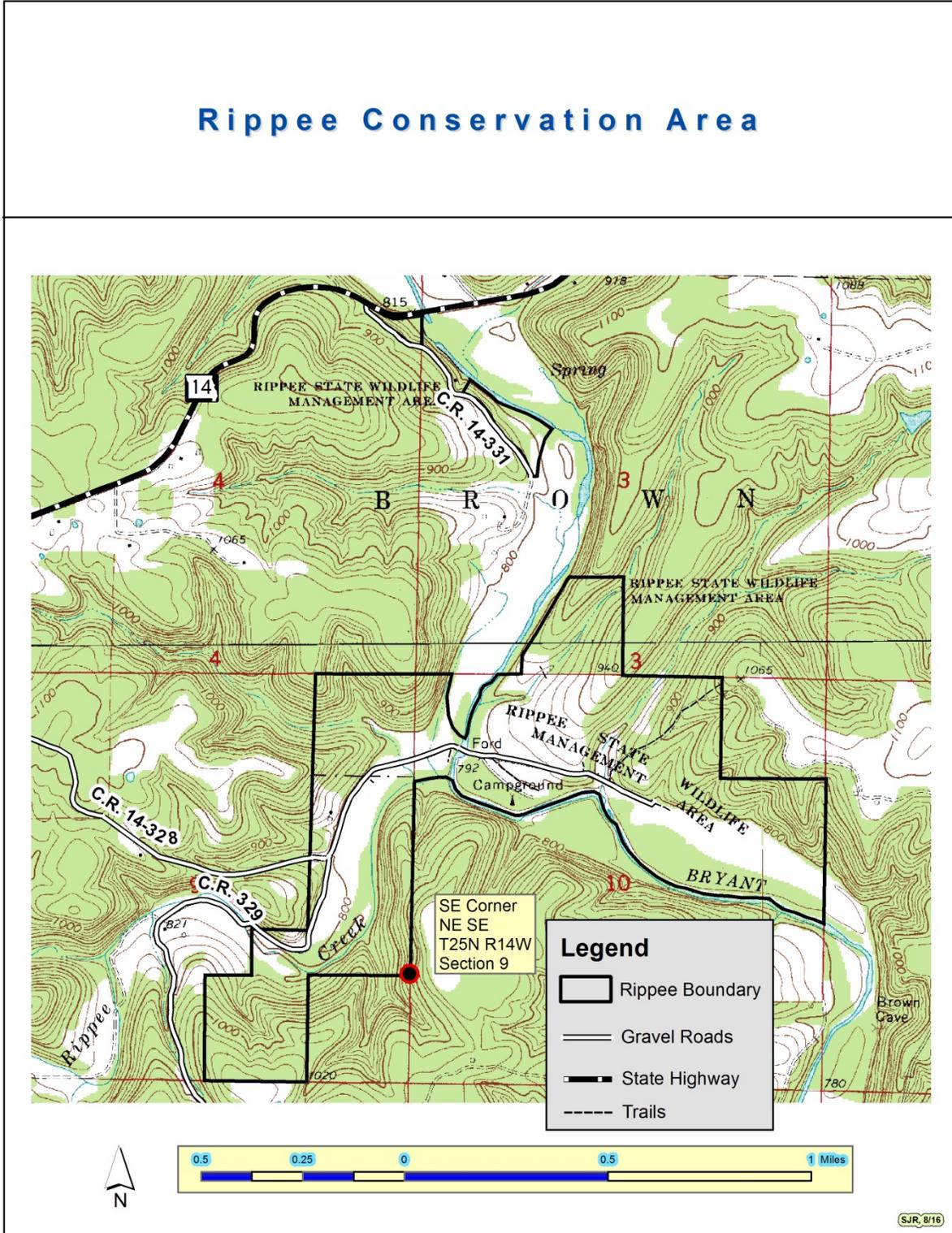


Figure 4: Aerial Map

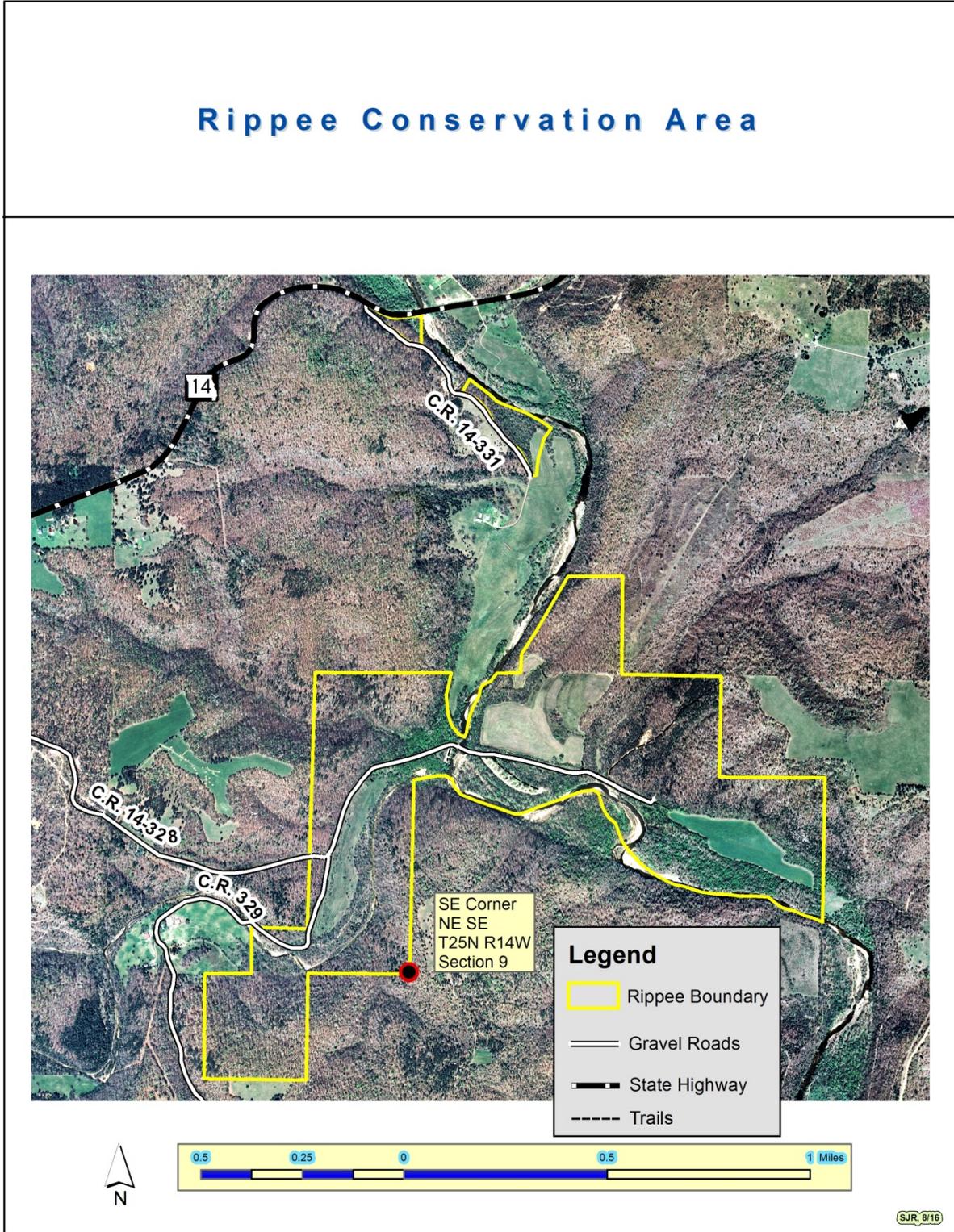
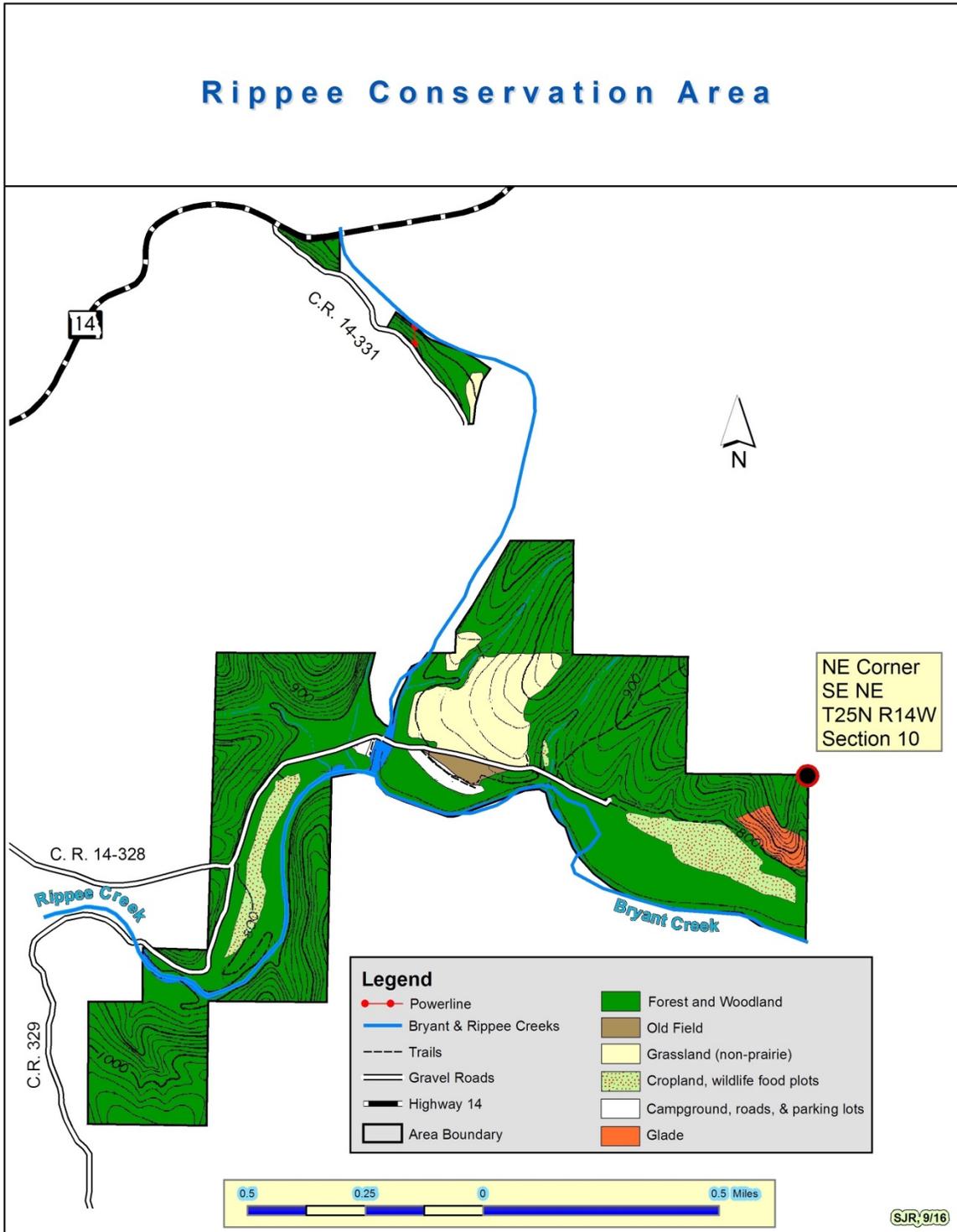


Figure 5: Land Cover Map



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