

Patrick Bridge Access

Ten-Year Area Management Plan FY 2019-2028



Lisa D. Allen
Forestry Division Chief

8-2-18
Date

PLANNING TEAM

Michael Hullinger, Resource Forester

AJ Pratt, Fisheries Regional Supervisor

Randall Roy, Wildlife Management Biologist

Susan Farrington, Natural History Biologist

Jerry Kiger, Conservation Agent

Tom Lecker, Conservation Agent

Larry Lindeman, Outdoor Skills Specialist

Christin Byrd, Private Land Conservationist

Michael Smith, Construction and Maintenance Superintendent

OZARK REGION

RCT Chair

Michael D. Smith
Signature

7-17-2018
Date

FORESTRY DIVISION

Forest Management Chief

John Tuttle
Signature

7-25-2018
Date

OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** Patrick Bridge Access, #7301
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1973
- **Acreage:** 161 acres
- **County:** Ozark
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Forestry
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Forestry
- **Statements of Purpose:**
 - A. Strategic Direction**

Provide fishing access and recreational opportunities on the North Fork River of the White River.
 - B. Desired Future Condition**

The desired future condition of Patrick Bridge Access is a mostly forested river access along the North Fork of the White River, with some wildlife habitat management and hunting opportunities in the uplands.
 - C. Federal Aid Statement**

This area, or a portion thereof, was acquired and developed with Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars to provide land or facilities for public outdoor recreation.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

- I. Special Considerations**
 - A. Priority Areas:** North Fork River – Stream Reach Conservation Opportunity Area, Priority Forest Landscape, North Fork of the White River Trout Stream
 - 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:** Occurs in the North Fork River Oak-Pine Woodland\Forest Hills Landtype Association. This landtype consists of broad ridges, side slopes, broad entrenched valleys, and steep dissected areas near streams. Sinkhole depressions, losing streams, caves, cliffs, and springs are common (Missouri Department of Conservation, 1997).

III. Existing Infrastructure

- Two parking lots with concrete pads (Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA] accessible)
- Three privies (ADA accessible)
- Twelve campsites with picnic tables
- One gravel canoe launch ramp
- Althea Spring Trail, 0.3 miles

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.
- This land must provide land/facilities for public outdoor recreation in perpetuity. 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: None

D. Cultural Resources Findings: No known cultural resources.

E. Endangered Species: 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.

F. Boundary Issues: None

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations

Patrick Bridge Access contains 135 acres of bottomland forest and oak-hickory woodland in various stages of regeneration. There are also 14 acres of old fields.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Maintain a healthy forested riparian corridor along the North Fork of the White River.
- 2) Protect the water quality of the Althea Spring Branch and the North Fork of the White River.

Management Objective 1: Maintain a healthy forested riparian corridor along the North Fork of the White River.

Strategy 1: Maintain appropriate stocking level in the riparian corridor as recommended in the *Watershed and Stream Management Guidelines for Lands and Waters Managed by Missouri Department of Conservation* (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2009). (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Monitor for invasive species and treat any known populations. (Forestry)

Strategy 3: Monitor upland woodlands and forests for decline due to insects and diseases. (Forestry)

Strategy 4: Allow field east of the campground to regenerate into native tree cover. (Forestry)

VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations

Patrick Bridge Access is located along the North Fork of the White River's Blue and Red Ribbon trout area. There are fair populations of bass, suckers, and trout. Althea Spring is the 23rd largest spring in Missouri, discharging approximately 12 million gallons of water per day.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Protect the water quality of the Althea Spring Branch and the North Fork of the White River and their associated species of conservation concern.

Management Objective 1: Protect and maintain water quality.

Strategy 1: Minimize sedimentation to streams and tributaries from land management practices and/or road and parking lots, as recommended in the Department's *Watershed and Stream Management Guidelines for Lands and Waters Managed by Missouri Department of Conservation* (2009) and the Department's *Missouri Watershed Protection Practice Recommended Practices for Missouri Forests: 2014 Management Guidelines for Maintaining Forested Watersheds to Protect Streams* (2014). (Forestry, Design and Development)

Strategy 2: Continue regular area cleanup and monitor public disturbance in sensitive areas. (Forestry)

VII. Public Use Management Considerations

Public use facilities include a 0.3-mile hiking trail to Althea Spring, canoe launch, three ADA-accessible privies, 12 camping spots (with grills and picnic tables), and ADA-accessible parking.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Provide for quality river access and recreation.
- 2) Facilitate a good working relationship with neighboring landowners.

Management Objective 1: Provide for quality river access and recreation.

Strategy 1: Conduct annual area maintenance activities on the parking lots, campgrounds, privies, and boat ramp that will provide for a clean and safe user experience. (Forestry, Protection)

Strategy 2: Continue regular patrol of area, especially during periods of heavy use. (Protection)

Strategy 3: Maintain signage for area regulations and traffic flow. (Forestry)

Management Objective 2: Facilitate a good working relationship with neighboring landowners.

Strategy 1: Work with neighbors to minimize any boundary, trespass, or any other issues affecting Patrick Bridge Access. (Forestry)

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.
- 2) Maintain clearly defined boundary lines.
- 3) Consider acquisition of land, when available.

Management Objective 1: Maintain area infrastructure and boundary lines.

Strategy 1: Maintain area infrastructure in accordance with Department guidelines. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Maintain clearly defined area boundary lines every five to seven years, or as needed. (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:

	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28
Administrative Considerations										
<i>Objective 1</i>										
Strategy 2	X					X				

APPENDICES

Area Background:

Patrick Bridge Access is in Ozark County, about 8 miles northwest of Caulfield. Karl Schmidt donated 74 acres to the Missouri Department of Conservation (the Department) in 1973 in honor of his mother, Helen L. Schmidt, to be used as a public campground and river access. In 1980 the Department approved the purchase of 87 additional acres from Mr. Schmidt. This additional piece south of the river is known as Althea Spring. Althea Spring is named for the daughter of the previous owner, Dr. Patrick.

The North Fork of the White River flows through the area for approximately 1.75 miles. Most of the area is oak-hickory woodland or bottomland forest types. There are some relatively steep bluffs along part of the river.

Before Department acquisition, management of the area included timber harvest, open fields, old home sites, and other buildings. Mr. Schmidt allowed locals to utilize the river banks for fishing and boat launching. After acquisition, the Department constructed roads, parking lots, privies, 12 campsites, paths to the river, and a canoe launch area. Trees were planted in the east field in 1990. A timber harvest was authorized in 1994 for the part of the area east of H Highway and north of the campground. The north field was burned in 2014 to maintain native grasses but will be left to grow into forest.

The area is open to the public from 4 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily. Hunting is allowed under statewide regulation.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Feet	% of Area
Forest and Woodland	135		84
Old Field	14		9
Improved Public Use Area	12		7
Total	161		100
Stream Frontage		9,240	

Public Input Summary:

The draft Patrick Bridge Access Management Plan was available for a public comment period Feb. 1–28, 2017. The Missouri Department of Conservation received comments from 10 respondents (Appendix A). The Patrick Bridge Access Planning Team carefully reviewed and considered these ideas as they finalized this document. A 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 Patrick Bridge Access Management Plan public comment period.

Suggests managing the old field north of the campground as food plot for wildlife.

Old fields provide habitat to wildlife in the form of cover, and we do not have the staff time for managing food plots on all small conservation areas. Our best opportunities for supplementing wildlife through alternatives to native habitat, such as food plots, are on larger conservation areas where there is a diversity of habitat in close proximity to each other.

Suggests moving or rebuilding the canoe access area to avoid flood damage.

We are currently looking at ways to alleviate damage due to flooding while also providing public access.

Suggests adding an additional takeout on the upstream side of Patrick Bridge.

Area infrastructure will be maintained at current levels due to budget and staffing restraints.

Suggests patrolling the area more frequently. Concerned with noise and illegal activities from other campers.

Department conservation agents regularly patrol the areas, but cannot be everywhere at once due to the large areas they cover. In addition, the Department utilizes law enforcement agreements with Ozark County Sheriff's Offices to maintain a supplemental and periodic enforcement presence on the area. The public can call one of our local offices or call a Ozark County Sheriff's Office to report illegal activity and details (date of incident, time of day, location on conservation area, etc.) to assist the Department in investigations.

Suggests placing a limit on the number of persons and vehicles per campsite to better manage camping activities.

Patrick Bridge Access is open for public use from 4 a.m. to 10 p.m. Camping is allowed anytime in seven designated camping areas and is limited to a period of 14 consecutive days in any 30-day period. Groups of more than 10 people must obtain a special use permit prior to camping. Only two camping units are permitted in each site in areas with established campsites. Quiet hours are in effect from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. daily. Visitors who are not occupying a campsite are required to leave the campground by 10 p.m. Department conservation agents regularly patrol the areas, but cannot be everywhere at once due to the large areas they cover. In addition, the Department utilizes law enforcement agreements with Ozark County Sheriff's Offices to maintain a supplemental and periodic enforcement presence on the area. The public can call one of our local offices or call the Ozark County Sheriff's Office to report illegal activity and details

(date of incident, time of day, location on conservation area, etc.) to assist the Department in investigations.

Suggests increasing the accessibility of the trail leading to Althea Spring.

Area infrastructure will be maintained at current levels due to budget and staffing restraints.

Suggests improving trails from the campground to the White River.

Area infrastructure will be maintained at current levels due to budget and staffing restraints.

Suggests adding a marker in honor of the Paul Patrick family home.

There is a policy in place for memorial markers on conservation areas. Information can be obtained by contacting the area manager.

Appreciates the efforts made by the Department to conserve natural spaces.

The area planning team appreciates this comment and will continue to manage the area to maintain healthy communities of forests, woodlands, and old field as well as the public use area for Missouri's fish, forest, and wildlife, as well as for people to enjoy these natural resources.

References:

Missouri Department of Conservation. (1997). *Ozark region resource inventory*. Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Department of Conservation.

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 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: Land Cover Map

Figure 3: Aerial Map

Figure 4: Topographic Map

Additional Appendices:

Appendix A: Patrick Bridge Access Management Plan Public Comments

Figure 1: Area Map

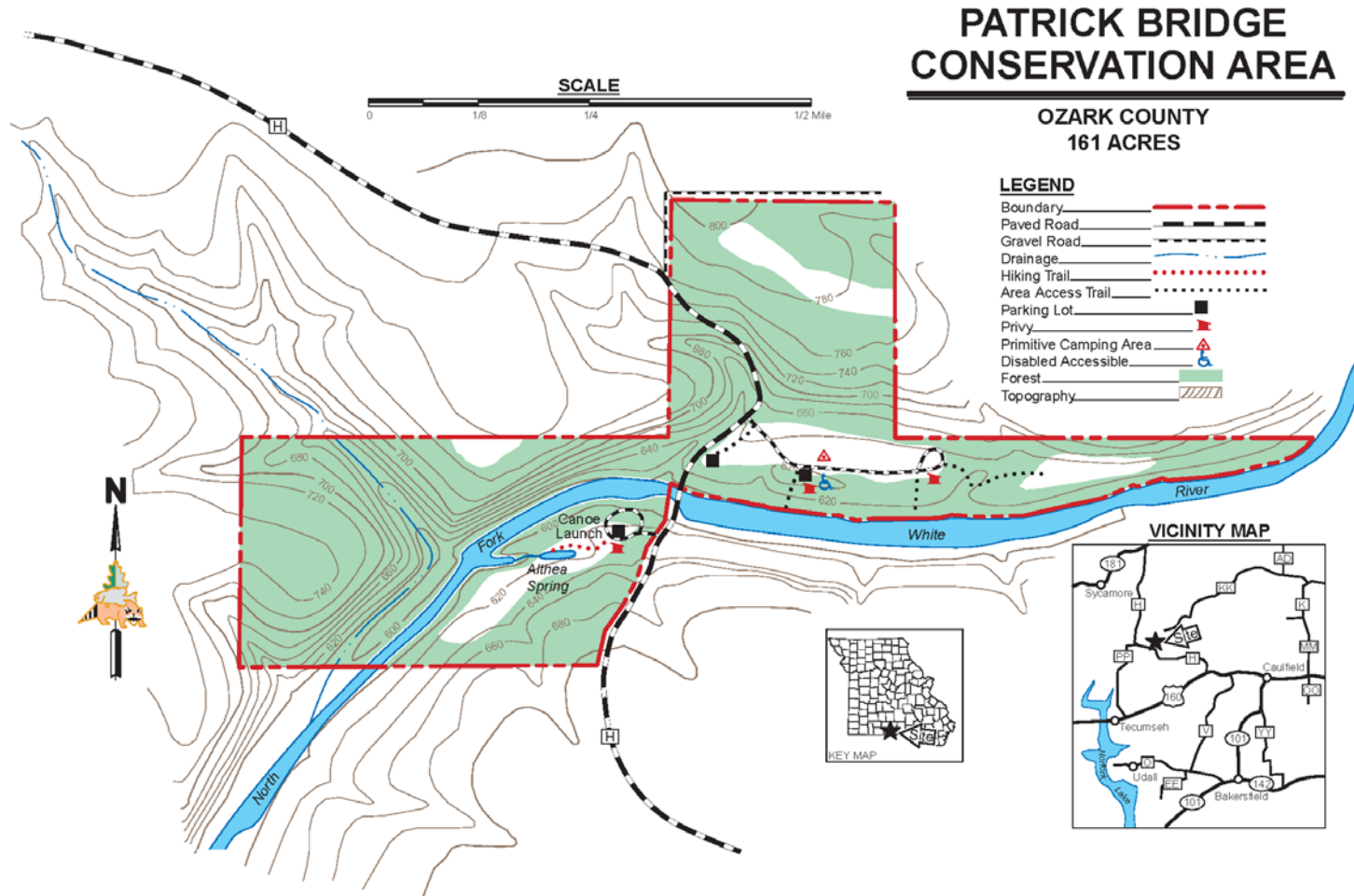


Figure 2: Land Cover Map

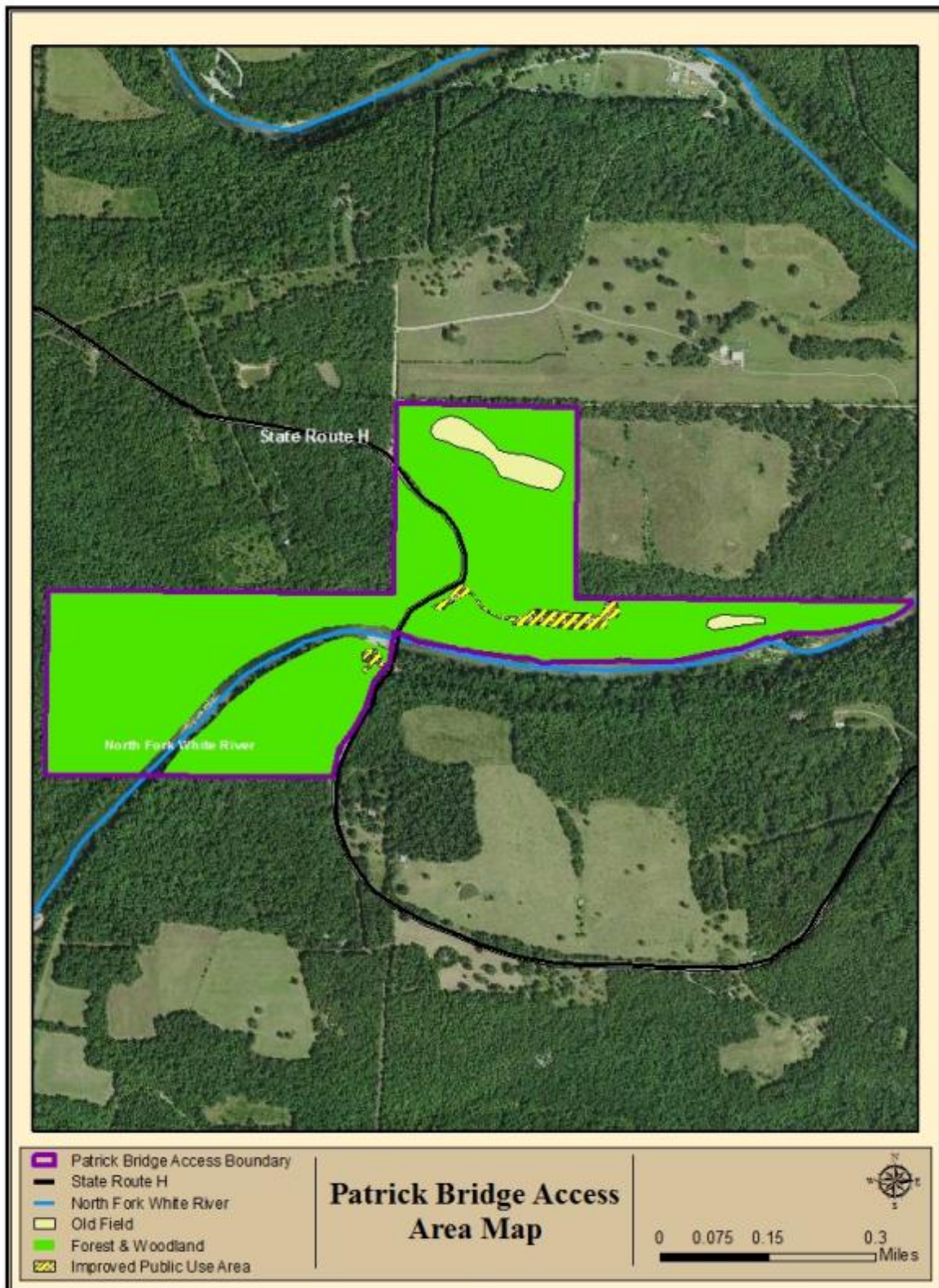


Figure 3: Aerial Map

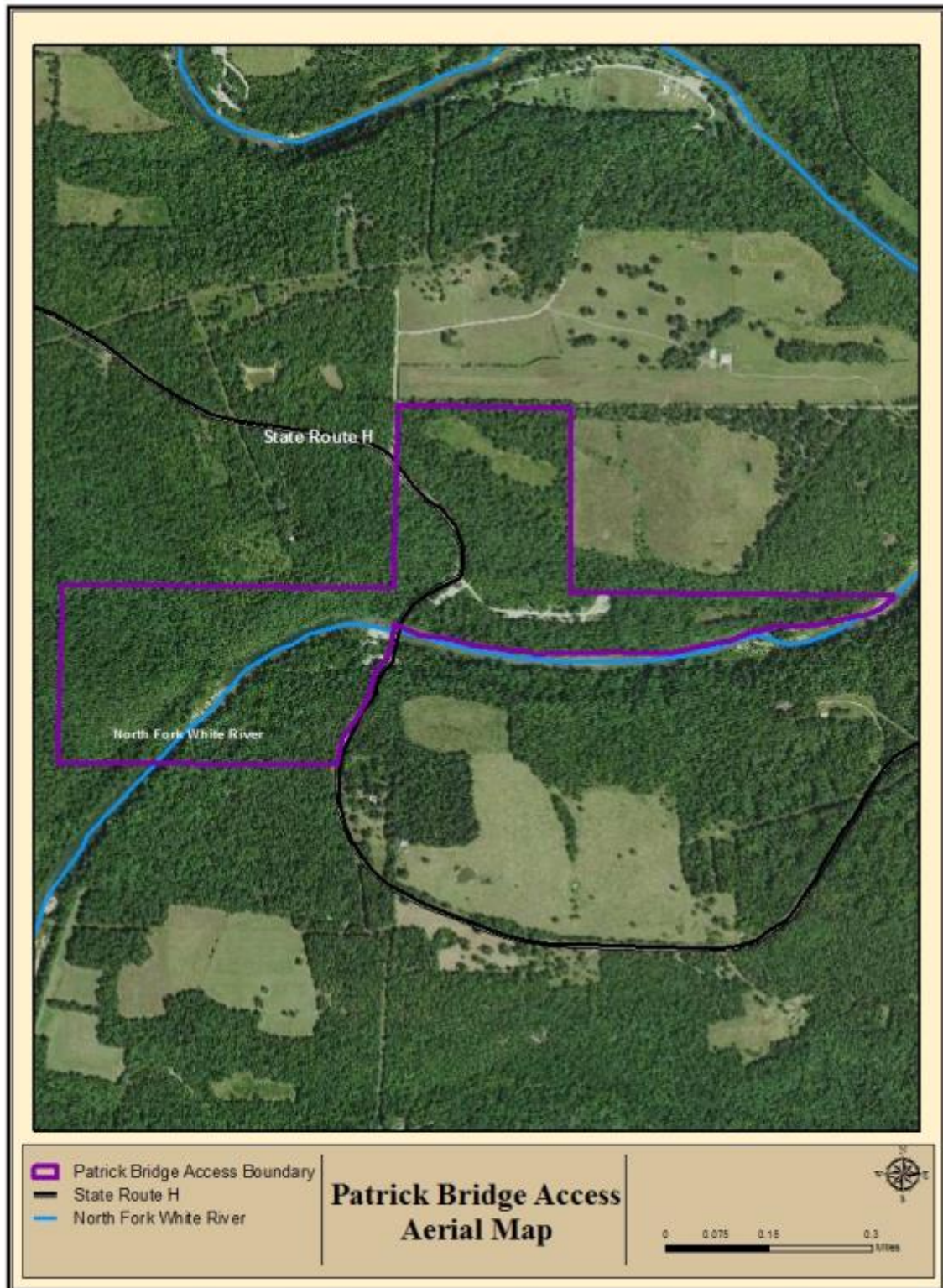
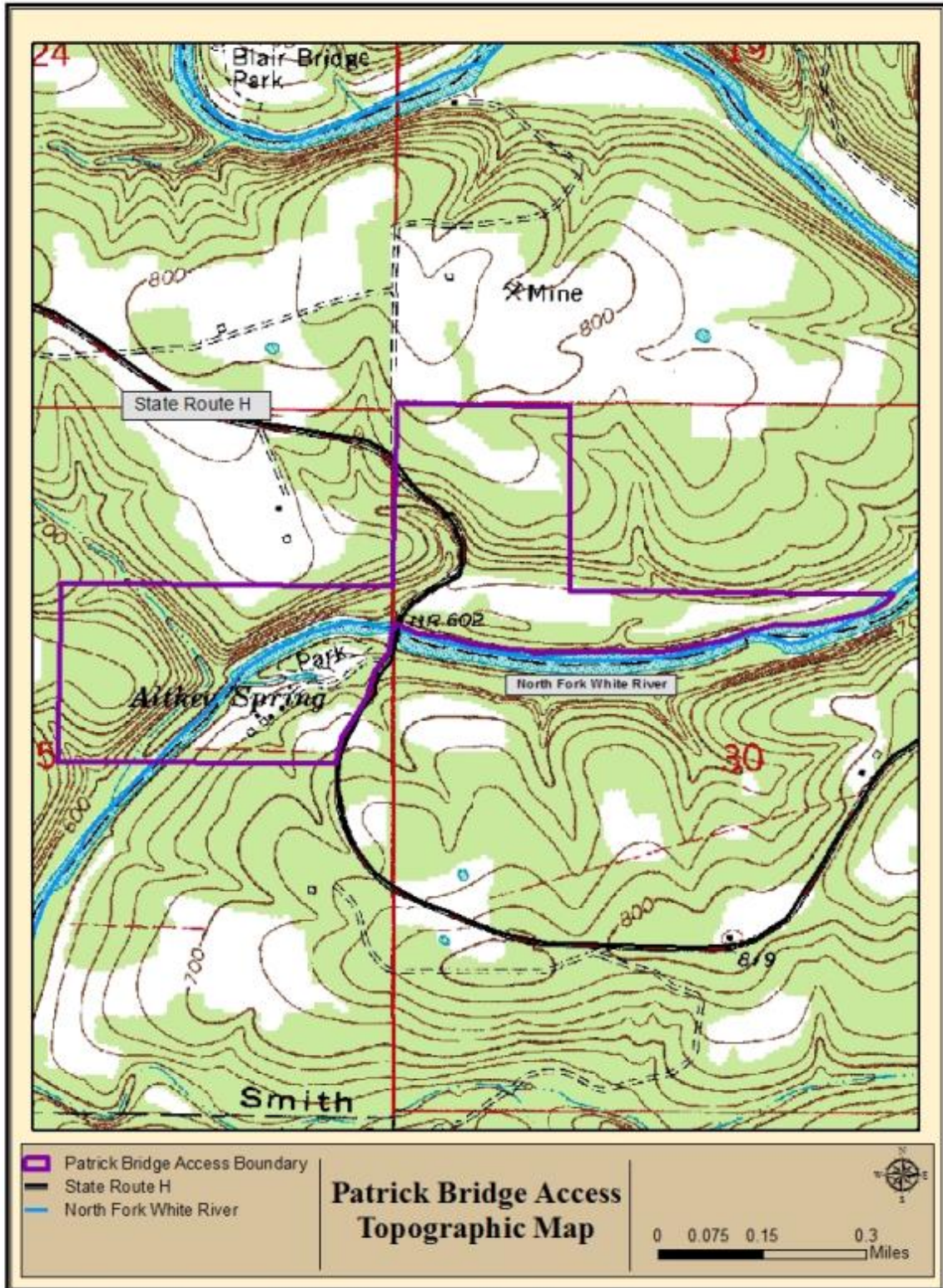


Figure 4: Topographic Map



Appendix A: Patrick Bridge Access Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (February 1-28, 2017):

<p>No issue with the recommendations. What should also be considered is adding a take out on the east or upstream side of Patrick bridge. This would enhance access to the river above the bridge. Particularly in high water when it can be difficult and dangerous to travel under the bridge.</p>
<p>This is great, as a lifelong Missouri resident I've always appreciated the care and planning that goes in to making our natural spaces last forever. Thank you for continuing your efforts on behalf of mine and future generations. Cheers.</p>
<p>There is a huge need for more more patrol due to drug usage and squatters in the area. There also needs to be a noise curfew</p>
<p>I agree with the plan's objectives and goals. Having had a VERY bad camping experience there about three years ago, I would especially support Objective 1, Strategy 2 (protection). My wife and I had such a terrible experience at this campground with noisy, rowdy and drunk campers on a warm Spring weekend about three years ago that we will not camp in an unsupervised campground again. Campsites were overcrowded which amplified the numbers of misbehaving people. Threats were made against us when we asked politely to not play a radio next to our tent after 10 pm. I would suggest placing a limit on the number of vehicles and persons allowed on a campsite in order to give agents and law enforcement a leg to stand on in order to manage behavior in the campground.</p>
<p>As a caregiver for someone in a wheelchair I would like to comment on the wheelchair accessibility of this area. Specifically the part of the C.A. just downstream of the bridge. First the privy and designated paved parking area in front of it are appreciated. But after that the wheelchair accessibility of the area ends. The trailhead leading down to Althea Spring is barely navigable around the pipe gates. Wheelchair users need to carefully navigate around narrow passages of the boulders. As far as the trail itself it is fairly accessible except near the end at the spring branch overlook. Some exposed tree roots on the surface make it impassible with a wheelchair. The path down to the spring outflow is completely inaccessible. A boardwalk down to it would be greatly appreciated. As a member of a wheelchair user family and lover of the outdoors, it is very difficult to see some of these beautiful springs from a wheelchair. With some minor improvements this area could be a 100 percent accessible gem of the Ozarks. Thank you for considering my comments.</p>
<p>We camp several times each summer at the Patrick Bridge Access Area, and we have for over 25 years. I am sure unless changes are made, we will not camp there again. There has been a gradual decline in law enforcement patrolling the campgrounds and problems have arisen such as loud music, partying, fights, and obvious drug use. Last summer we were kept awake all night with loud music (and I mean loud enough to hurt), screaming, yelling, and people walking through our camp. Also, dogs are allowed to run around without being leashed, and once we had an unfriendly pit bull get off his chain and visit our camp. We witnessed people openly smoking marijuana and passing pipes. In the rare occasion that an officer patrolled the area, they just</p>

drove through instead of actually stopping and checking things out. We have had possessions stolen, one time being our tent! Also people place pup tents on the sites to hold a place, then never use the tent all weekend. One family that basically lives there all summer keeps most of the sites closed this way, and people who hold weekday jobs can not get to the campgrounds early enough to get a campsite. Camping last year was scary to say the least and honestly I am afraid to go back.

We enjoyed camping at the Patrick Bridge Campground because it is such a beautiful place. Our children have spent many enjoyable summer days there. We camp, kayak, canoe, hike, and enjoy nature. I noticed last year the campgrounds were clean and neat. I only wish other people that camped there came to enjoy camping, not to have a week (months) long drug and alcohol party.

Some suggestions we have about the management plan are:

More law enforcement ACTIVELY patrolling the area, not just driving through

An enforced quiet time.

An enforced "dogs on leash" law, and "no dangerous dogs" law

No squatters. No unoccupied campgrounds. No drugs.

A wider bridge

Not allowing people to pull through the boat launch and park on the gravel bar.

Repairing the paths from the campground to the river

More camp sites

It would be exciting to see changes made to this area. As I said before, we have enjoyed this area for years and years, and we would love to see our grandchildren enjoy it, but not at the risk of their safety. We would gladly pay a camping fee if it would help keep the area safe and clean.

I disagree with strategy 4. the plan to let the north field go back to forest. I think it should be a food plot for deer and turkeys, ect... right now it is in lespedeza, yuck!!!, spray it, burn it, plow it under, just get rid of the lespedeza. also as our population grows open areas to hunt in get rarer. You could use my money, yes I buy tags every year and my taxes on fishin' and huntin' supplies, to make a food plot attractive to waterfowl as it is close to the river. same with the open area along the east by the river past the parking/camping area.

My name is *****. I am the great great granddaughter of Paul Patrick. I walked the area a couple of years ago. I agree that there needs to be some clean up and better restrooms. I love the old trees along the river and the seclusion for fishing and relaxing that is provided. Was dismayed that I could no longer find the ruins of the old house. I would like if somehow a more informative marker could be put up as to the Paul Patrick family that lived there.

Conduct a study to relocate/rebuild the canoe access area. With each high water episode the canoe launch area becomes almost unusable.

On behalf of Sho-Me Power Electric Cooperative, we have no comments or concerns regarding the Patrick Bridge Access Management Plan. Thank you for keeping us informed of the Plan.