

Cuivre Island Conservation Area

Ten Year Area Management Plan FY 2013-2022




Wildlife Division Chief


Date

Cuivre Island Conservation Area Management Plan Approval Page

PLANNING TEAM

Andy Tappmeyer, MDC Wildlife Management Biologist

Danny Brown, MDC Fisheries Management Biologist

Jeff Bakameyer, MDC Resource Forester

James Bolden, MDC Conservation Agent

Colleen Scott, MDC Interpretive Site Manager

Jeff Esley, MDC Private Land Conservationist

ST LOUIS REGION

St. Louis RCT Chair



Signature

5/2/2014
Date

WILDLIFE DIVISION

Unit Chief



Signature

5/15/14
Date

OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** Cuivre Island Conservation Area, # 8801
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1988
- **Acreage:** 1,461 acres
- **County:** Lincoln and St. Charles
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Wildlife
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Wildlife
- **Statements of Primary Purpose:**
 - A. Strategic Direction**

Manage for wildlife, bottomland forest, and wetland resources with emphasis on wildlife and bottomland forest and compatible recreational opportunities.
 - B. Desired Future Condition**

The desired future condition of Cuivre Island Conservation Area (CA) is a healthy bottomland forest.
 - C. Federal Aid Purpose:**

N/A

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

I. Special Considerations

- A. Priority Areas:** Confluence Conservation Opportunity Area (COA); Brushy Fork Aquatic COA; The Nature Conservancy Portfolio Site; Audubon Missouri Important Bird Area;
- B. Natural Area:** 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:** None
- D. Other:** Occurs in the St. Charles/Lincoln Alluvial Plain Landtype Association (LTA) within the Mississippi River Alluvial Plain. This LTA consists of alluvial plain, numerous streams and drainage ditches on it, and the Mississippi River channel with numerous islands. Colluvial aprons and alluvial fans, created by loess and silt eroded from the bluffs, spread out on the alluvial plain. Much of the main bottom was historically wet prairie and marshes, and timber was restricted to strips along the rivers and on islands. Today, the alluvial plain has been drained in most places and converted to cropland. However, substantial

bottomland forest and wetlands, as well as a variety of river habitats, exist along the river and on islands. Wetlands kept intact by recreation clubs are especially prominent in St. Charles County. This stretch of river is popular for river recreation, and there are numerous public lands and river accesses. Urbanization exerts strong development influences in St. Charles and Lincoln Counties. (Nigh 2002).

III. Existing Infrastructure

- 1 parking lot
- 1 gravel boat ramp
- Eight stop log structures
- Three wells
- Three electric motor well pumps (2000 gpm)

IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations

- A. Deed restrictions or ownership considerations:** No deed restrictions are present on the mainland portion, Turkey Island, or the south portion of Cuivre Island. MDC manages the north portion of Cuivre Island under a long term Fish and Wildlife license from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps-owned portion was acquired to provide wildlife habitat as mitigation for the construction of the Melvin Price Lock and Dam.
- 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:** Utility easement to supply electric to pump station
- D. Cultural resources findings:** None known.
- E. Hazards and hazardous materials:** None observed.
- F. Endangered species:** None observed.
- G. Boundary Issues:** Establishing accurate and identifiable boundary markers is a priority for this property.

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations

Cuivre Island CA contains approximately 1,180 acres of forests, of which 900 acres is US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) property and managed by MDC through a Fish and Wildlife License Agreement. The USACE retains the right and responsibility for the

management of forest resources on USACE property. MDC Forest Management Objectives, Strategies and Timetable have been synched with the forest management plans and objectives of USACE for Cuivre Island and all forest management activities will be coordinated annually with USACE. Forest management will be directed at maintaining a healthy forest natural community for wildlife habitat.

The forest on Cuivre Island CA can be described as a typical bottomland river forest with dominant species including silver maple and cottonwoods and with other species including pecan, box elder and some bur oak mixed in.

Cuivre Island CA has approximately 140 acres of land that has been reforested mostly to hard wood mast-producing species such as pecan, swamp white oak, bur oak, pin oak and some hickory. Part of this reforestation area is on the mainland and the remainder is on the island.

There are approximately 60 acres of old sloughs on the island that can be flooded by three pumps on the area to provide wetland habitat. These sloughs are connected by a ditch system with stop log structures to maintain water levels.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Manage the forest community.
- 2) Maintain reforestation areas.
- 3) Manage slough areas.

Management Objective 1: Maintain healthy trees and forest with management emphasis on wildlife habitat.

Strategy 1: Monitor forest for invasive exotic vegetation. Assess feasibility of treatment and develop possible plan for control (Wildlife).

Strategy 2: Retain and protect existing den trees (Wildlife).

Management Objective 2: Maintain reforestation areas.

Strategy 1: Monitor the reforestation areas for invasive exotic species. Assess feasibility of treatment and develop possible plan for control (Wildlife).

Strategy 2: Evaluate and perform timber stand improvement as needed on reforestation areas to decrease naturally occurring soft mast trees and promote planted hardwood trees. (Wildlife)

Management Objective 3: Maintain slough areas.

Strategy 1: Maintain drainages to facilitate water manipulation and improve wetland management by controlling beaver and muskrat populations (Wildlife).

Strategy 2: Control and set back woody succession using appropriate methods

(Wildlife).

Strategy 3: Monitor the area for invasive exotic species. Assess feasibility of treatment and develop possible plan for control (Wildlife).

VI. Public Use Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Provide for hunting, fishing and viewing opportunities.
- 2) Maintain relationships with neighboring land owners.
- 3) Manage access area to minimize trash and property destruction.

Management Objective 1: Provide public hunting, fishing and viewing opportunities.

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

Strategy 2: Seasonally flood slough areas to provide wetland habitat and waterfowl hunting opportunities (Wildlife).

Strategy 3: Maintain boat access to allow access to the Cuivre and Mississippi Rivers for hunting and fishing activities (Wildlife and Design & Development).

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

Strategy 1: Work with neighbors to minimize any boundary, trespass or other issues affecting Cuivre Island CA and adjoining private property (Wildlife).

Management Objective 3: Work to minimize area property destruction and littering.

Strategy 1: Patrol area on a regular basis (Wildlife and Protection).

Strategy 2: Arrange for special patrols to curb area abuse problems (Protection).

VII. Administrative Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Maintain area infrastructure at current levels.
- 2) Acquisition of land.
- 3) Investigate changing the licensing agreement on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers owned portion of the area to include it with the General Plan lands operated by MDC.
- 4) Investigate property line concerns on mainland portion of area.

Management Objective 1: Maintain area infrastructure at current levels.

Strategy 1: Maintain area infrastructure in accordance to MDC guidelines and at currently identified maintenance level (1) (Wildlife).

Strategy 2: Investigate paving a portion of the entrance.

Management Objective 2: Acquisition of land

Strategy 1: 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 land acquisition priorities will be considered.

Management Objective 3: Investigate changing operating licensing agreement.

Strategy 1: Work with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on licensing agreements as they near expiration.

Management Objective 4: Investigate the southwest mainland property line issues.

Strategy 1: Request survey of property line.

MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE

Strategies are considered ongoing unless listed in the following table:

	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
Terrestrial Resource Management										
Objective 1										
Strategy 2		X		X		X		X		X
Objective 2										
Strategy 2			X			X			X	
Objective 3										
Strategy 2		X			X				X	
Administrative Consideration										
Objective 1										
Strategy 2		X								
Objective 3										
Strategy 1										X
Objective 4										
Strategy 1			X							

APPENDICES

Area Background:

Cuivre Island Conservation Area is located in Lincoln and St. Charles Counties, near Old Monroe. Access to the area is by Dalbow Road, off Highway 79. The majority of the area is an island within the Mississippi River navigation pool 26, between river miles 235 and 238.

The area was purchased through a cooperative effort among the Conservation Department, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and The Nature Conservancy. Most of the 1,461-acre area was acquired to provide wildlife habitat as mitigation lands for the construction of the Melvin Price Lock and Dam 26.

Cuivre Island Conservation Area consists of three separate tracts of land. Cuivre Island, at 1,240 acres, is mostly timbered, with 80 acres of old field, 40 acres of reforestation and 60 acres of sloughs. The island can be reached by boat from the mainland tract during normal river conditions.

The 100-acre mainland tract was mostly open cropland when the Conservation Department purchased the property. Most of that open land has been planted with a variety of bottomland hardwood trees as part of a bottomland reforestation effort. Experimental methods were used to grow these trees at a local nursery and to establish this new forest on the area. These experimental methods seemed to work well. They will likely be used at a number of other reforestation sites around the state.

Turkey Island is 120 acres of mostly forested land and is a recent addition to the area.

The area is closed from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. except for authorized fishing and hunting activities. Facilities include a parking lot and a gravel boat ramp providing access into the Mississippi River/Cuivre Slough.

Current Land and Water Types (see Figure 4):

Land/Water Type	Acres	Miles	% of Area
Forest	1181		81
Reforestation	140		10
Old Field	80		5
Wetlands	60		4
Total	1461		100
River Frontage Mississippi River/ Cuivre Slough		3.0	
River Frontage Mississippi River		2.5	

Public Input Summary:

The draft Cuivre Island Conservation Area Management Plan was available for a public comment period December 1–31, 2013. The Missouri Department of Conservation received comments from one respondent (Appendix A). The Cuivre Island Area 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.

MDC responses to themes and issues identified through Cuivre Island public comment period**Would like to see additional land acquired, if available.**

The Missouri Department of Conservation purchases land from willing sellers. As land in this area becomes available, staff will review its ability to meet program benefits of the Conservation Department and work to acquire lands that meet the needs of forest, fish and wildlife.

Would like to have hiking trails on Cuivre Island CA.

The areas labeled as Service Roads on the map also serve as trails and are available for hiking on the area. Since the Service Roads on the island cover most of the area, there are no plans to expand the trail system.

References:

Nigh, Timothy A. and Walter A. Schroeder. 2002. *Atlas of Missouri Ecoregions*. Missouri Department of Conservation.

Additional Appendices:

Appendix A. Draft Cuivre Island Area Plan Public Comments

Maps:

Figure 1: Area Map

Figure 2: Aerial Map

Figure 3: Topographical Map

Figure 4: Current Vegetative Map

Appendix A. Draft Cuivre Island Area Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (December 1-31, 2013)

If land becomes available, definitely purchase it. The more public land for any outdoor activity the better. This also increases the protection of fauna of all kinds. Is it possible to add hiking on the mainland and/or the islands. This is an area where bird watching might occur and access to different areas on foot would be a plus.

Figure 1: Area Map

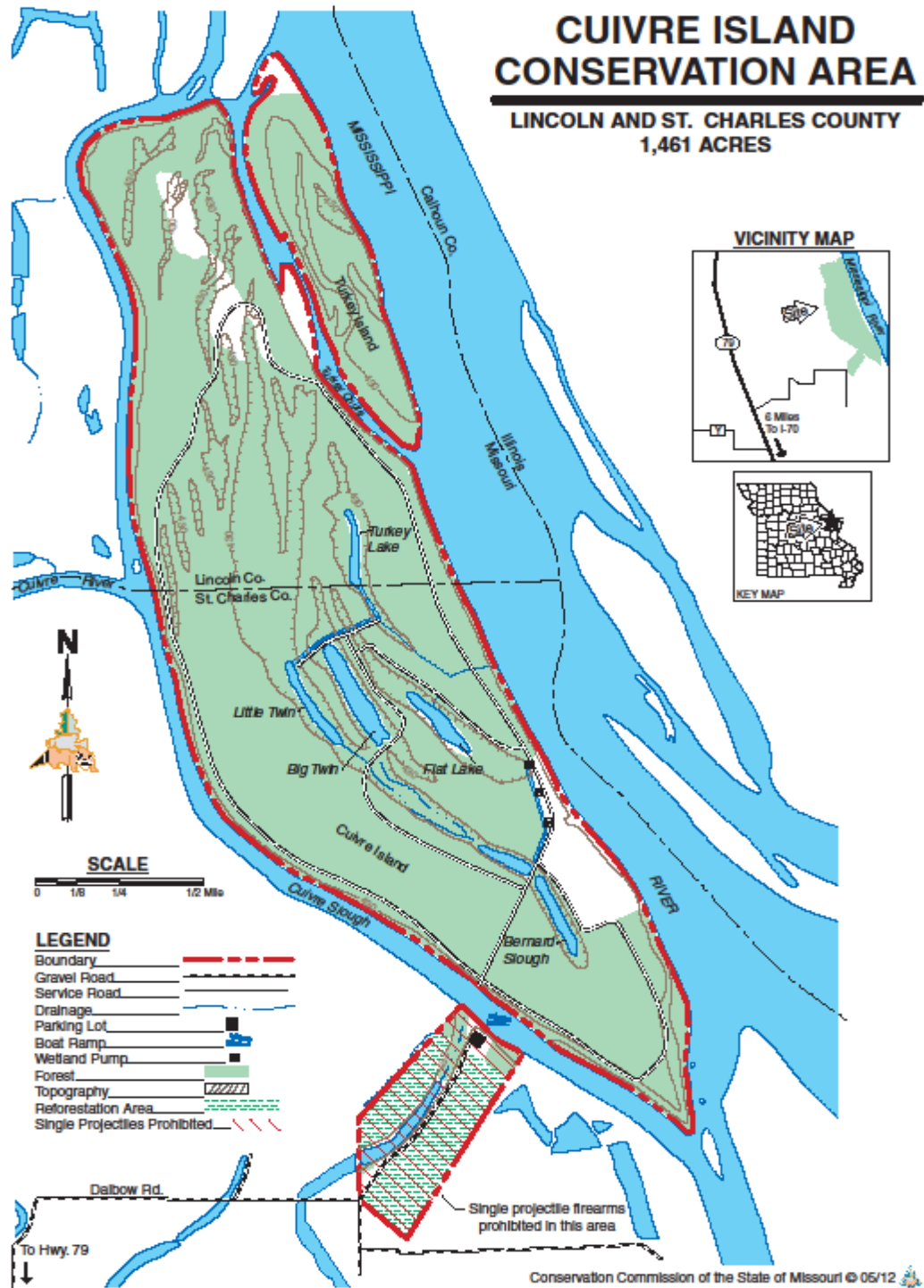


Figure 2: Aerial Map

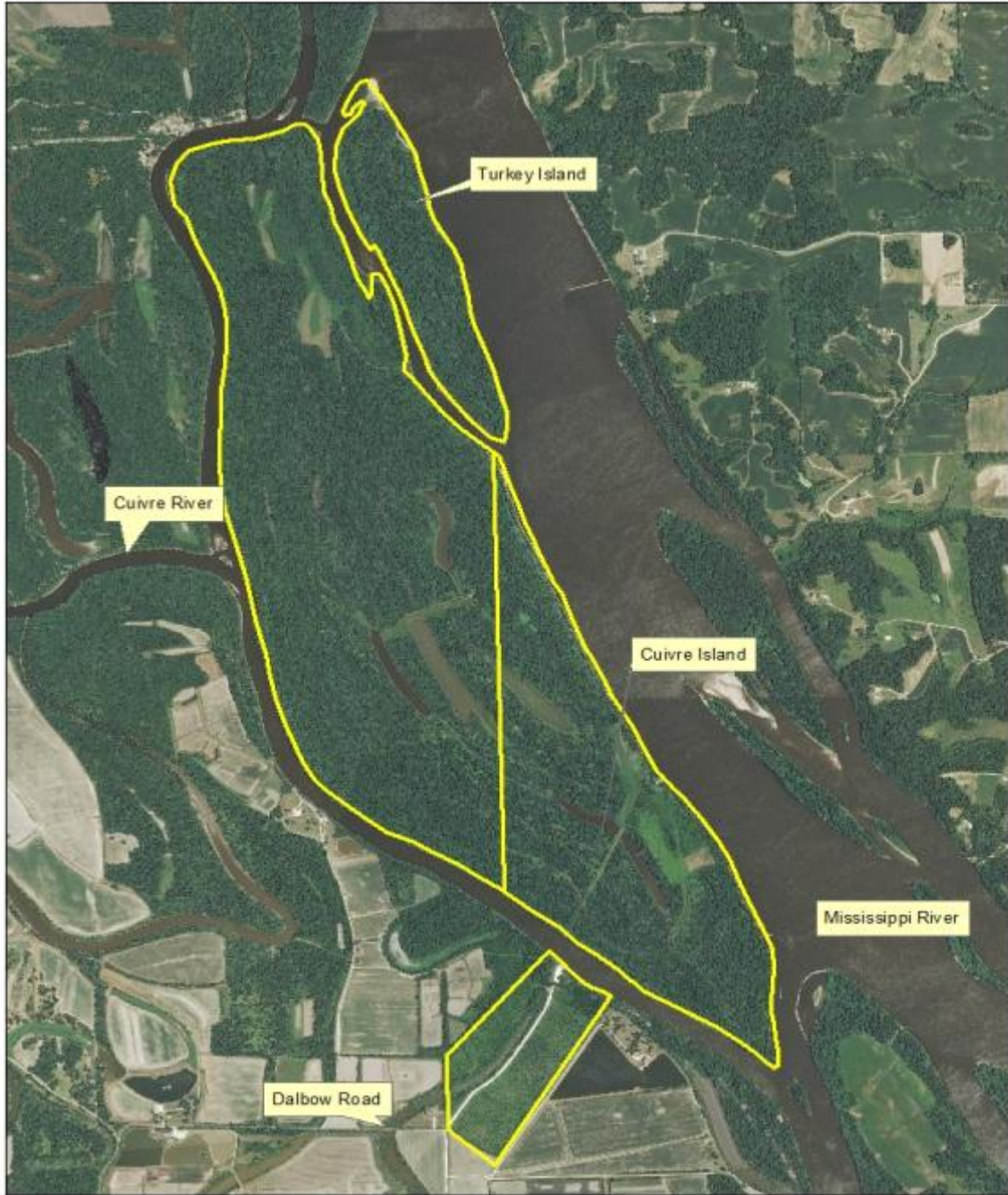


Figure 3: Topographical Map

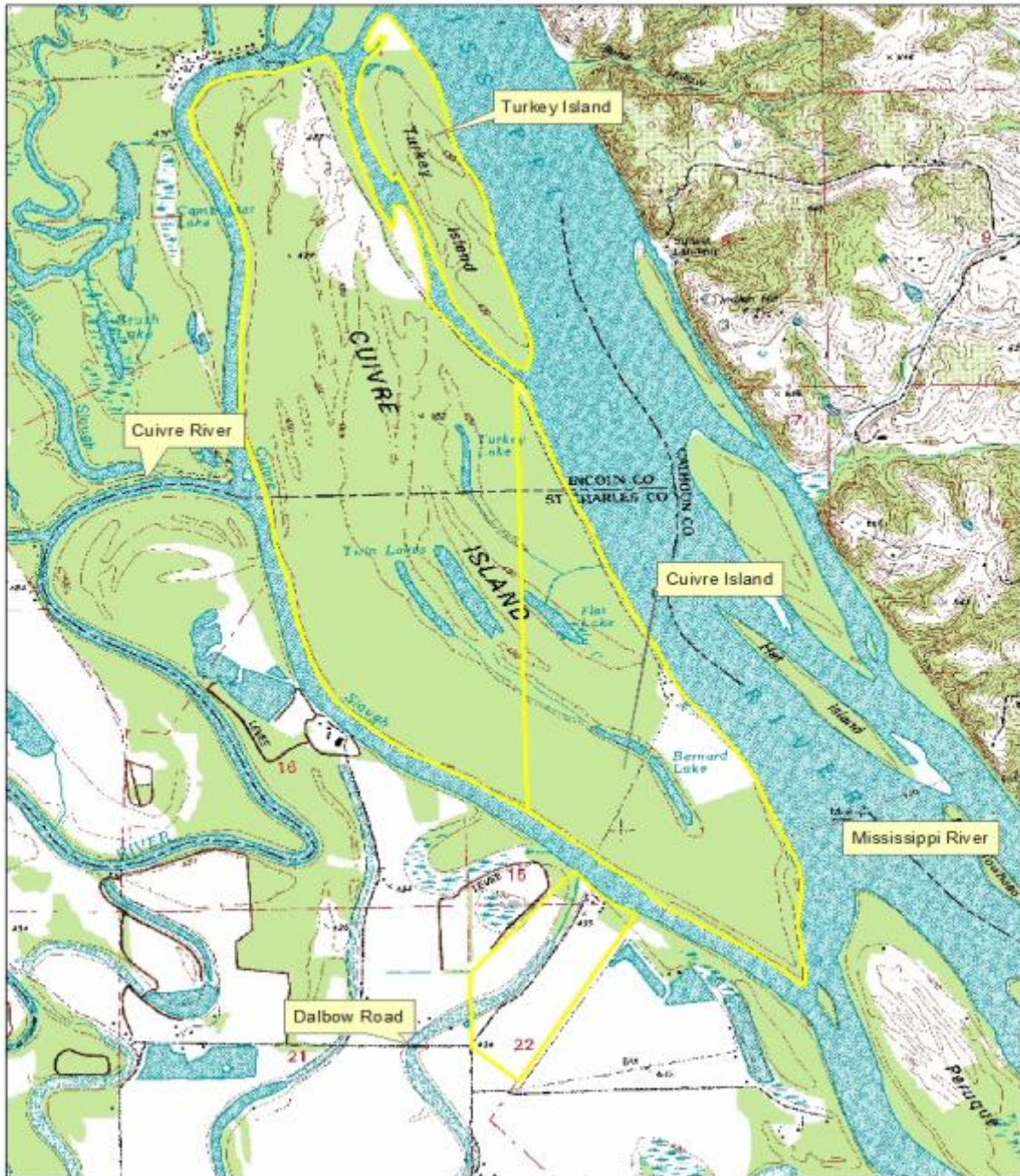


Figure 4: Current Vegetative Map

