

McDonald County River Accesses

Cowskin Access
Deep Ford Access
Mount Shira Access

Ten-Year Area Management Plan FY 2016-2025



Lisa B. Allen

Forestry Division Chief

4-22-16

Date

McDonald County River Accesses Management Plan Approval Page

PLANNING TEAM

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SOUTHWEST REGION

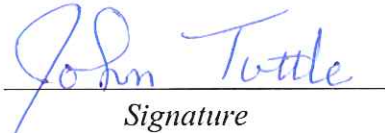
RCT Chair


Signature


Date

FORESTRY DIVISION

Forestry Management Chief


Signature


Date

OVERVIEW

Area Name	Area Number	Date Acquired	Acreage	County	Administrative Responsibility	Maintenance Responsibility
Cowskin Access	6610	1966	41	McDonald	Forestry	Forestry
Deep Ford Access	8512	1985	42	McDonald	Forestry	Forestry
Mount Shira Access	6616	1966	26	McDonald	Forestry	Forestry

Statements of Purpose:

A. Strategic Direction

These areas are managed to provide public fishing access to the Big Sugar Creek and Elk River for both boat and bank anglers.

B. Desired Future Condition

The desired future condition of these accesses is to provide both boat and bank access while maintaining appropriate riparian corridors along Big Sugar Creek and Elk River.

C. Federal Aid Statement

Cowskin Access and Mount Shira Access : This land, or a portion thereof, was acquired (and developed) with Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars to provide land or facilities for public outdoor recreation.

Deep Ford Access: N/A

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

I. Special Considerations

Area Name	Priority Area	Natural Area	Other
Cowskin Access	Lower Elk River Aquatic Conservation Opportunity Area (COA)	None	Stream Smallmouth Bass Special Management Area; Ozark-Warmwater-Large River
Deep Ford Access	Big Sugar Creek Terrestrial COA, Priority Forest Landscape, Big Sugar Creek Fisheries Priority Watershed	None	Demonstration – Stream bank stabilization project
Mount Shira Access	Big Sugar Creek Terrestrial COA, Priority Forest Landscape	None	Stream Smallmouth Bass Special Management Area Ozark-Warmwater-Small River

II. Important Natural Features and Resources

Area Name	Species of Conservation Concern	Caves	Springs
Cowskin Access	Yes ¹	None	None
Deep Ford Access	Yes ¹	None	None
Mount Shira 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.

III. Existing Infrastructure

Area Name	Concrete Ramp	Gravel Bar Access	Parking Area #	Privy
Cowskin Access	1	None	1	None
Deep Ford Access	None	1	1	None
Mount Shira Access	None	1	1	None

IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations

Area Name	Deed Restrictions	Ease-ments	Federal Interest	Cultural Resources	Endangered Species	Boundary Issues
Cowskin Access	None	None	Yes ¹	None known	Yes ³	None
Deep Ford Access	None	None	Yes ²	None known	None observed	None
Mount Shira Access	None	None	Yes ¹	None known	Yes ³	None

¹ Federal funds (Land and Water Conservation Fund) were used in the development and acquisition of this land. This land must provide land/facilities for public outdoor recreation in perpetuity. 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.

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 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.

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Maintain adequate riparian corridors.
- 2) Prevent soil erosion.
- 3) Control invasive and exotic species.

Management Objective 1: Maintain riparian corridors as specified in the Missouri Department of Conservation's (the Department's) *Watershed and Stream Management Guidelines* (2009).

Strategy 1: Allow natural vegetative processes to continue (Forestry).

Strategy 2: Replace dead trees through natural tree regeneration or via tree planting, as needed, to maintain riparian cover (Forestry, Fisheries).

Strategy 3: Control access by restricting vehicles to parking lots, boat ramps or boat launching areas (Forestry, Protection).

Management Objective 2: Prevent soil erosion due to infrastructure.

Strategy 1: Ensure roads and road-side drainages are managed to reduce runoff, sedimentation and erosion (Design and Development).

Management Objective 3: Control invasive and exotic species.

Strategy 1: Periodically monitor area for invasive and exotic species and use appropriate strategies for management (Forestry, Fisheries).

VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Prevent excessive stream bank erosion.

Management Objective 1: Ensure that infrastructure does not increase bank erosion.

Strategy 1: Boat ramps and primitive launch areas will be installed and maintained to have a low profile on the bank to prevent back eddies and scouring currents (Design and Development).

VII. Public Use Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Provide public access along Big Sugar Creek, Elk River and Flat Creek.

- 2) Inform the public of opportunities available at these areas.
- 3) Maintain areas in a desirable condition.

Management Objective 1: Maintain suitable public access at each area.

Strategy 1: Ensure existing infrastructure is maintained to Department standards (Design and Development).

Management Objective 2: Continue to inform the public of the opportunities at these areas.

Strategy 1: Maintain signage at the accesses in accordance with Department policy (Forestry).

Strategy 2: Work with local media specialist to highlight underutilized resources (Fisheries, Forestry, Wildlife, Outreach and Education).

Strategy 3: Maintain up-to-date information of all river accesses on Department Web page (Forestry).

VIII. Administrative Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Lands Proposed for acquisition.

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 McDonald County River Accesses was available for a public comment period December 1-31, 2015. The Missouri Department of Conservation received no comments during this time period.

References:

Missouri Department of Conservation. (2009). *Watershed and stream management guidelines for lands and waters managed by Missouri Department of Conservation*. Jefferson City, Missouri: Missouri Department of Conservation.

Appendices:

Appendix 1. McDonald County Accesses on the Elk River and Big Sugar Creek

Appendix 2. Cowskin Access (Elk River) Area Background

Appendix 3. Map of Cowskin Access

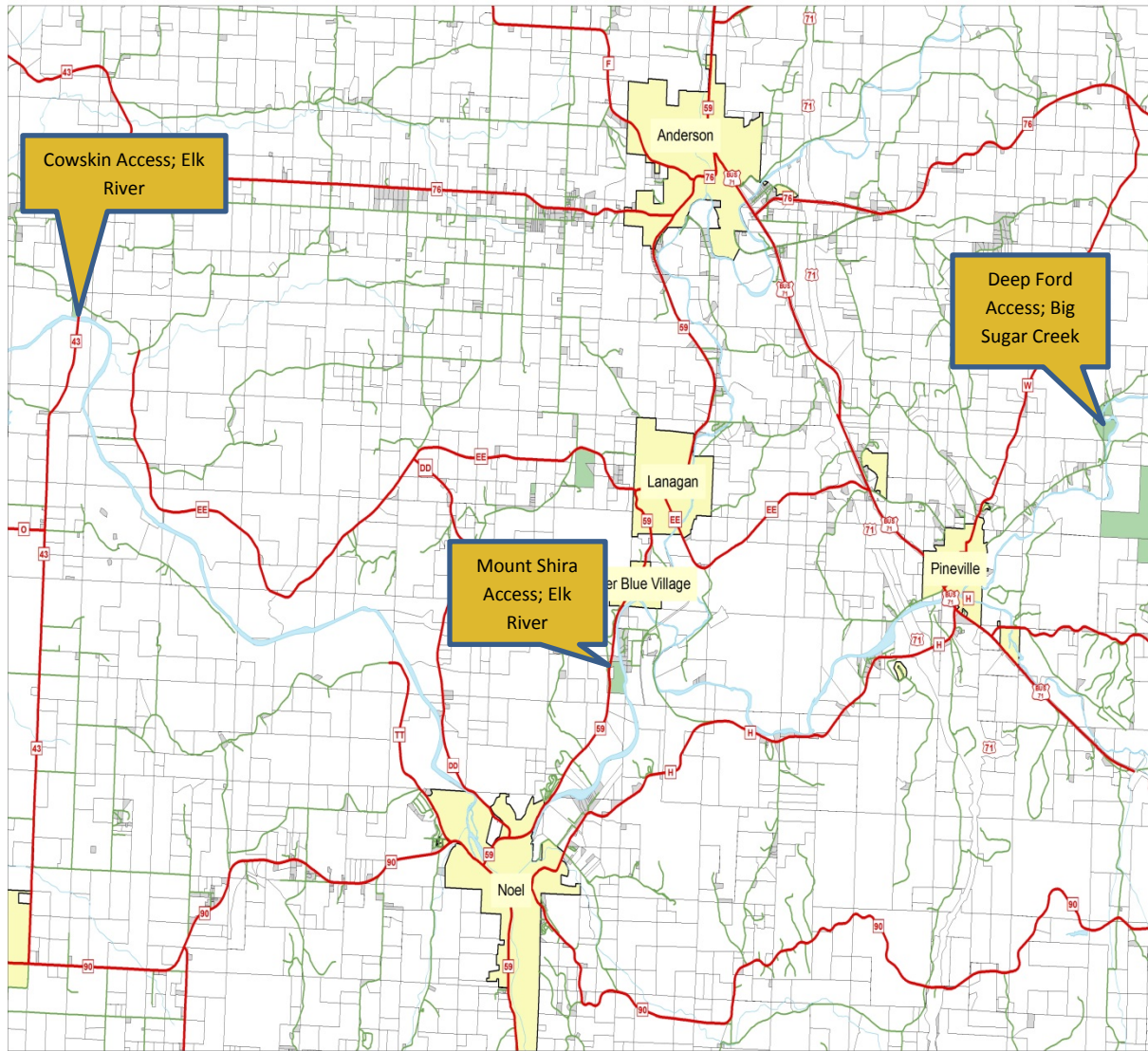
Appendix 4. Deep Ford Access (Big Sugar Creek) Area Background

Appendix 5. Map of Deep Ford Access

Appendix 6. Mount Shira Access (Elk River) Area Background

Appendix 7. Map of Mount Shira Access

Appendix 1. McDonald County Accesses on the Elk River and Big Sugar Creek



Appendix 2. Cowskin Access (Elk River) Area Background

Cowskin Access was purchased in 1966. The area is mainly forested with a small mowed grass field for picnics along the Elk River. Anglers typically use the boat launch area for access to good populations of bass and catfish. There are no gravel bars located on this area. The area has a concrete boat ramp for canoes and small boats.

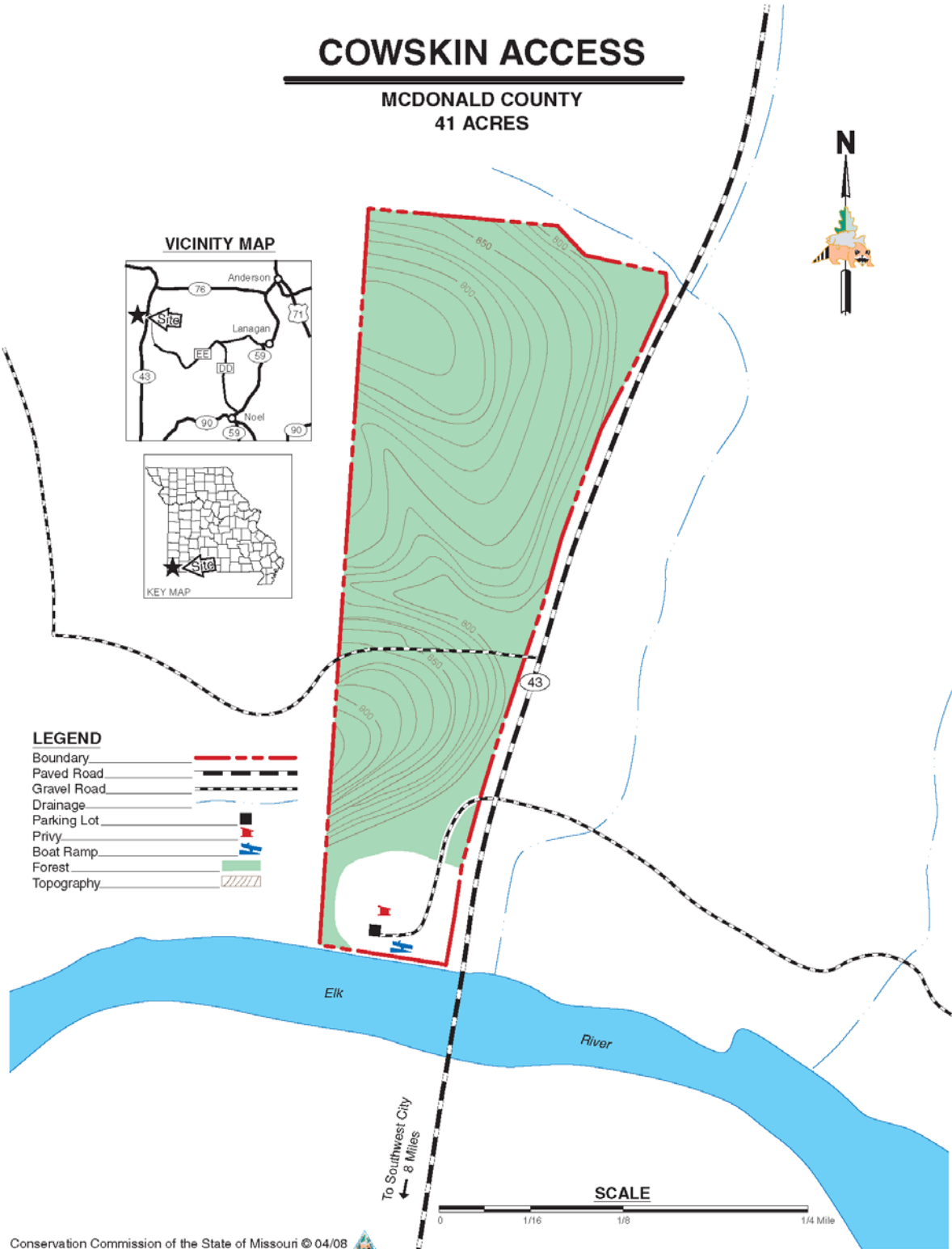
Legal Description: Township 22 N, Range 34 W, Section 22

Area Location: Cowskin Access is located 8 miles north of Southwest City on Highway 43.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Miles	% of Area
Upland Forest	38.0		93
Old Fields/Upland Fields	2.8		7
Total	40.8		100
Stream Frontage (first-order and above)		0.10	

Appendix 3. Map of Cowskin Access



Appendix 4. Deep Ford Access (Big Sugar Creek) Area Background

Deep Ford Access was purchased in 1985. The area is mainly forested with a few old fields. Bank anglers have a large length of bank to provide access to areas that hold good populations of bass, and sunfish; and fair populations of catfish. This area also maintains a gravel launch ramp for canoes to the Big Sugar Creek.

Legal Description: Township 22 N, Range 32 W, Section 34

Area Location: Deep Ford Access is located by taking Big Sugar Creek Road in Pineville, which runs east from the elementary school, and goes 3.5 miles east to the access.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Miles	% of Area
Old Fields/Upland Fields	28.1		67
Upland Forest	14.0		33
Total	42.1		100
Stream Frontage (first-order and above)		0.5	

Appendix 5. Map of Deep Ford Access

DEEP FORD ACCESS

MCDONALD COUNTY
42 ACRES



LEGEND

Boundary	
Paved Road	
Gravel Road	
Drainage	
Parking Lot	
Canoe Launch	
Forest	
Topography	



Appendix 6. Mount Shira Access (Elk River) Area Background

Mount Shira Access was purchased in 1966. The area is mainly old field grasslands with a small amount of bottomland timber. Bank anglers have a large length of bank to provide access to areas that hold good populations of bass and sunfish. The area includes a gravel boat launch area for canoes for accessing the Elk River.

Legal Description: Township 21 N, Range 33 W, Section 2

Area Location: Mount Shira Access is located 2 miles north of Noel on Highway 59.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Miles	% of Area
Old Fields/Upland Fields	22.0		85
Upland Forest	4.0		15
Total	26.0		100
Stream Frontage (first-order and above)		0.25	

Appendix 7. Map of Mount Shira Access

