

Coldwater Conservation Area

Ten-Year Area Plan
FY 2017-2026



Lisa B. Allen

Forestry Division Chief

5-23-17

Date

Coldwater Conservation Area Management Plan Approval Page

PLANNING TEAM

Alan Lamb, Conservation Agent

Mark McLain, Wildlife Management Biologist

Jeremy Pulley, Private Land Conservationist

Dave Knuth, Fisheries Management Biologist

Bruce Henry, Natural History Biologist

Pat Holloway, Conservation Education Consultant

Shane Botard, Resource Forester

SOUTHEAST REGION

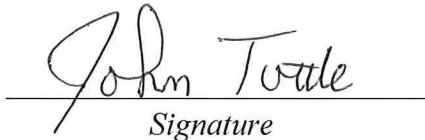
RCT Chair


Signature

5-2-17
Date

FORESTRY DIVISION

Forest Management Chief


Signature

5-22-17
Date

OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** Coldwater Conservation Area, #4634
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1952
- **Acreage:** 10,738 acres
- **County:** Wayne
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Forestry
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Forestry
- **Statement of Primary Purpose:**

A. Strategic Direction

The primary purpose of the area is to provide hiking, hunting, nature viewing, and other outdoor recreational opportunities; and to produce timber products for the local economy. This will be accomplished by managing the area's forest and field resources for the benefit of wildlife and timber production.

B. Desired Future Condition

The desired condition of the Coldwater Conservation Area (CA) is to have healthy and productive forest, woodland, savanna, old field, and warm-season grass areas that provide habitat for wildlife and timber products.

C. Federal Aid Statement

This area or a portion thereof (Compartment 3 and parts of Compartments 1, 2, 4, and 7), was acquired with Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration funds to restore and manage wildlife, conserve and restore suitable wildlife habitat and provide public access for hunting or other wildlife-oriented recreation.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

I. Special Considerations

A. **Priority Areas:** Coldwater Terrestrial Conservation Opportunity Area, Coldwater Aquatic Conservation Opportunity Area, Priority Forest Landscape

B. **Natural Areas:** N/A

II. Important Natural Features and Resources:

A. **Species of Conservation Concern:** Species of conservation concern are not known from this site, but are found in the surrounding area. Area managers should consult annually with the natural history biologist.

B. **Caves:** None

C. **Springs:** None

III. Existing Infrastructure:

- One fire tower, fenced
- One Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessible hunting zone
- Six parking lots
- Approximately 19 miles of roads
- 47 permanent wildlife watering holes

IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations:

A. Deed Restrictions: No restrictions apply to the area.

B. Federal Interest: Uses of land acquired with federal funds may not interfere with the purpose for which it was acquired. 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:

- One easement for Exxon Mobile (pipeline)
- One easement for Black River Electric
- Two easements for the Missouri Department of Transportation along Highways 34 and 67

D. Cultural Resource Findings: No known cultural resources.

E. Endangered Species: None observed.

F. Boundary Issues: Establishing accurate and identifiable boundary markers is a priority for this area.

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations:

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Controlling the potential spread of invasive species on the area.
- 2) The size of the area allows for the opportunity to implement different management techniques to provide quality wildlife habitat, timber harvesting opportunities for the local economy, and hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities for the public.

Management Objective 1: Maintain the woodland and savanna areas for ecological and wildlife habitat purposes.

Strategy 1: Continue to implement prescribed burning and mechanical tree thinning as needed. (Forestry)

Management Objective 2: Manage the forested area for wildlife habitat and timber production.

Strategy 1: Conduct scheduled forest inventories to make informed forest management decisions. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Implement the necessary forest management treatments, such as forest thinning and timber stand improvement to encourage mast production, provide cover for wildlife, and increase timber volume growth. (Forestry)

Management Objective 3: Manage the open fields for wildlife habitat.

Strategy 1: Maintain old field and warm-season grass habitats through prescribed burning, mowing, herbicide treatments, and other appropriate management techniques. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Continue to manage food plot areas through proper farming techniques to provide wildlife browse. (Forestry)

Management Objective 4: Control invasive plant species.

Strategy 1: Monitor all areas including pipeline and roadways for invasive species. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Control invasive species infestations using appropriate measures. (Forestry)

VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations:

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Manage the Coldwater Aquatic Conservation Opportunity Area with care to maintain the integrity of the permanent stream and the intermittent streams that cross the conservation area.
- 2) Maintain the riparian buffer zones along the intermittent stream banks to protect water quality and aquatic species.

Management Objective 1: Protect the area's streams.

Strategy 1: Maintain or restore a 100-foot riparian buffer zone along the intermittent streams on the area. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Implement streamside management zones during timber harvests according to the Missouri Department of Conservation (the Department) watershed protection practices manual (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2014). In addition, follow the guidance in this document when maintaining and constructing roadways and conducting timber harvests to prevent erosion. (Forestry)

VII. Public Use Management Considerations:

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) The area’s close proximity to Highway 67 and its large size provide the public with access to quality outdoor recreational opportunities.

Management Objective 1: Expand hunting opportunities for disabled users.

Strategy 1: Implement a new disabled accessible hunting zone on Compartment 6. (Forestry)

VIII. Administrative Considerations:

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) As a result of the area’s large size and high public use (especially during hunting seasons), the challenge is keeping the area free of litter and maintaining area signs and boundaries.

Management Objective 1: Maintain area signs, parking lots, and information boards.

Strategy 1: Post and maintain signs and area parking lots as necessary. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Maintain fence around fire tower. (Forestry)

Management Objective 2: Maintain the area’s boundary.

Strategy 1: Paint the boundary line with blue paint on an established 7-year rotational basis. (Forestry)

MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE

Strategies are considered ongoing unless listed in the following table:

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

APPENDICES

Area Background:

The Missouri Department of Conservation purchased the first tract of the Coldwater Conservation Area (CA) in 1952 with partial funding from the Pittman-Robinson Act. This first acquisition was referred to as the “main tract.” It consisted of Compartments 2, 3, and 4 and totaled 3,727 acres. This tract was acquired for the primary purpose of restoring wildlife populations in the area.

Additional tracts of land were purchased during the 1950s and 1960s with the main goal of providing more recreational opportunities for the public and to produce forest products. Much of the forested land had been “high graded” and was also damaged from livestock grazing and wild fires, or improperly managed fires. Managers worked to protect the forest from fires and to improve the timber quality through forest stand improvement practices. In 1954, the Cascade Fire Tower was constructed on Compartment 6 in order to help with fire detection. Starting in 1987, managers began to create permanent openings on the area in order to create green browse and nesting cover for wildlife. Numerous other management practices have been implemented on Coldwater CA in order to improve wildlife habitat and promote the production of high-quality timber products. Management techniques included intermediate thinnings, regeneration harvests, and prescribed fire to create woodland and savanna habitat and to maintain old field and warm-season grass habitats. Wildlife watering holes were also constructed across the area in order to create a permanent source of water. Some of the most recent management activities include a 519-acre intermediate thinning on Compartment 4, a 28-acre forest thinning to improve woodland habitat on Coldwater CA 6, and a 697-acre woodland burn on Compartment 2.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Miles	% of Area
Upland Forest	8,151		76
Woodland	2,142		20
Savanna	320		3
Old Fields/Upland Fields	70		<1
Cropland	23		<1
Grassland	20		<1
Impounded Water	12		<1
Total	10,738		100
Intermittent Stream Frontage		33.2	
Permanent Stream Frontage (Turkey Creek)		0.4	

Public Input Summary:

The draft Coldwater Conservation Area Management Plan was available for a public comment period June 1–30, 2016. The Missouri Department of Conservation received comments from two respondents (Appendix A). The Coldwater Conservation 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.

Department responses to themes and issues identified through the Coldwater Conservation Area public comment period.

Suggests closing roads through Compartment 7 during turkey season to allow for walk-in hunting only. Concern that vehicle traffic through this area disturbs hunting and is unsafe.

The area planning team is in favor of this suggestion and plans to designate part of Compartment #7 and Compartment #5 as a walk-in hunting area only during the spring turkey season. Designating areas of Compartment #7 and #5 as walk-in hunting areas only will improve the quality of the hunting during the spring turkey season by reducing vehicular traffic through the area.

Suggests developing 10-12 miles of multi-use trails on the largest tract of Coldwater CA.

There are already a number of established multi-use trails in the area around Coldwater CA that provide equestrian opportunities. Multi-use trails are present on Sam A. Baker State Park, Castor River CA, University Forest CA, Wappapello Corps of Engineer land, and the Mark Twain National Forest. Creating a multi-use trail on Coldwater CA would cause additional land disturbance and the establishment and maintenance of the trail would cause an increased work load on the staff that manages the area. Coldwater CA also allows horseback riding on its roads that are open to vehicular traffic. The largest tract of Coldwater CA has approximately 10 miles of roads that can be used for horseback riding.

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: Topographic Map

Figure 3: Compartment Map

Figure 4: Land Cover Map

Figure 5: Easement Map

Additional Appendices:

Appendix A. Coldwater Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Figure 1: Area Map

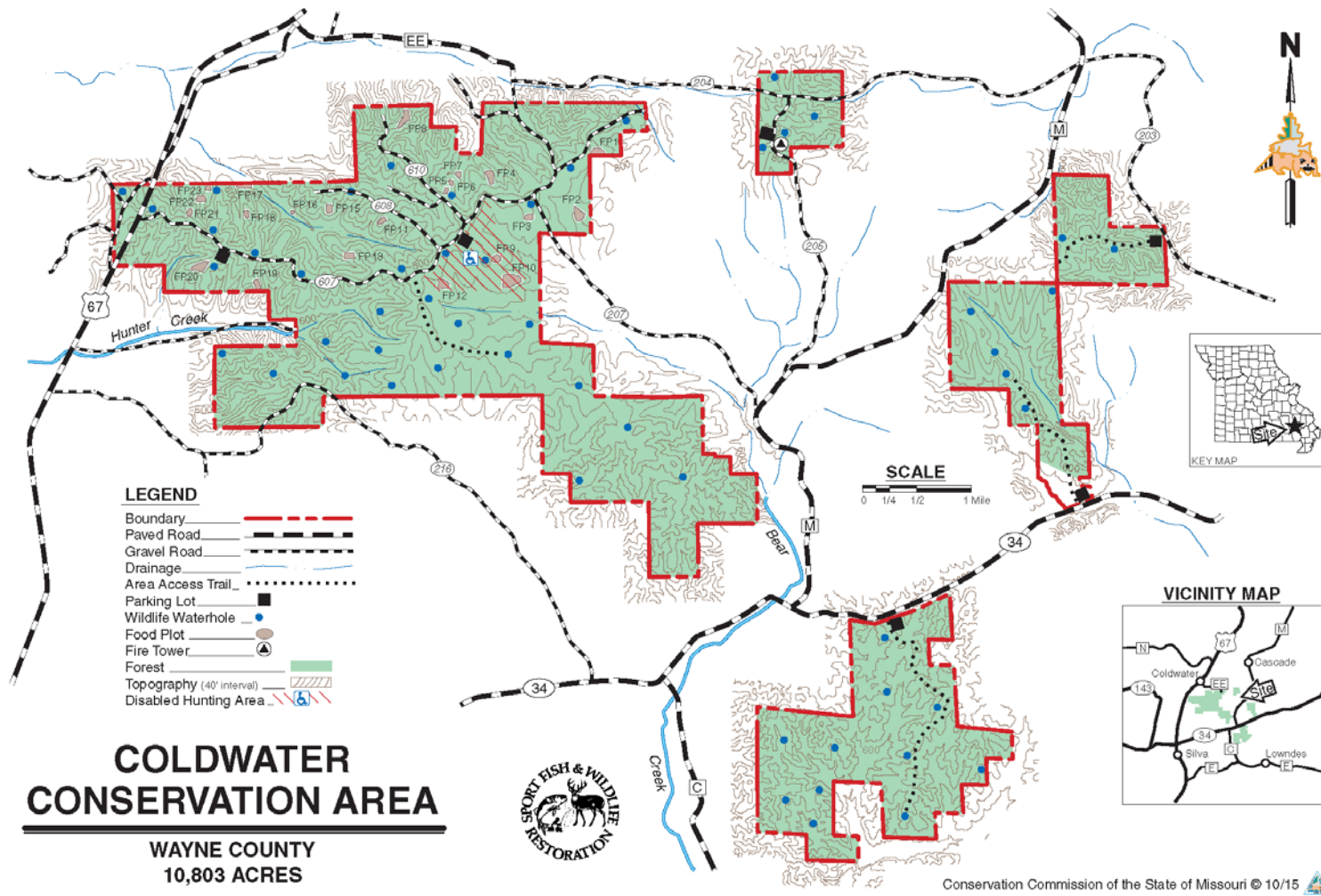


Figure 2: Topographic Map

Coldwater CA

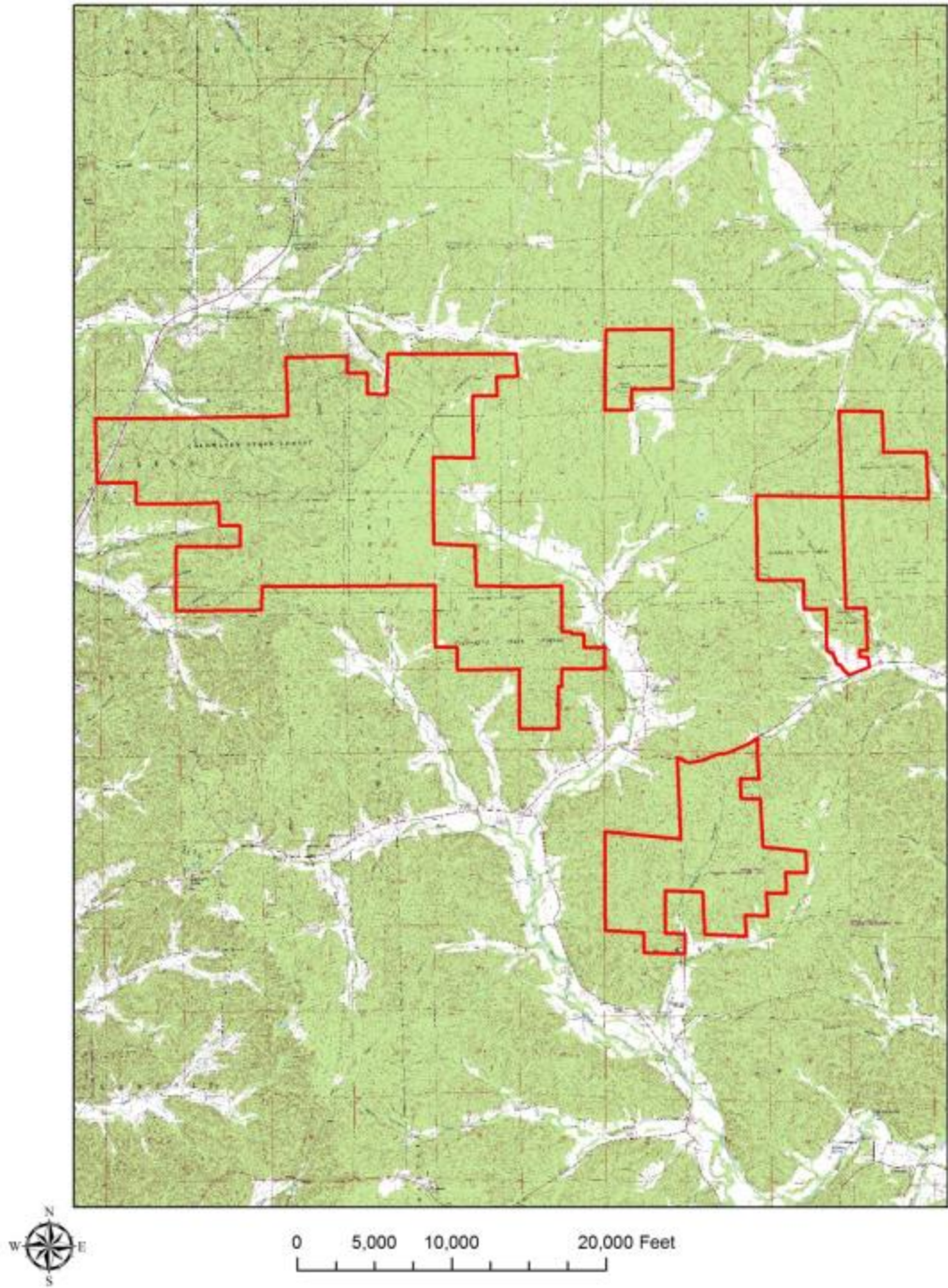


Figure 3: Compartment Map

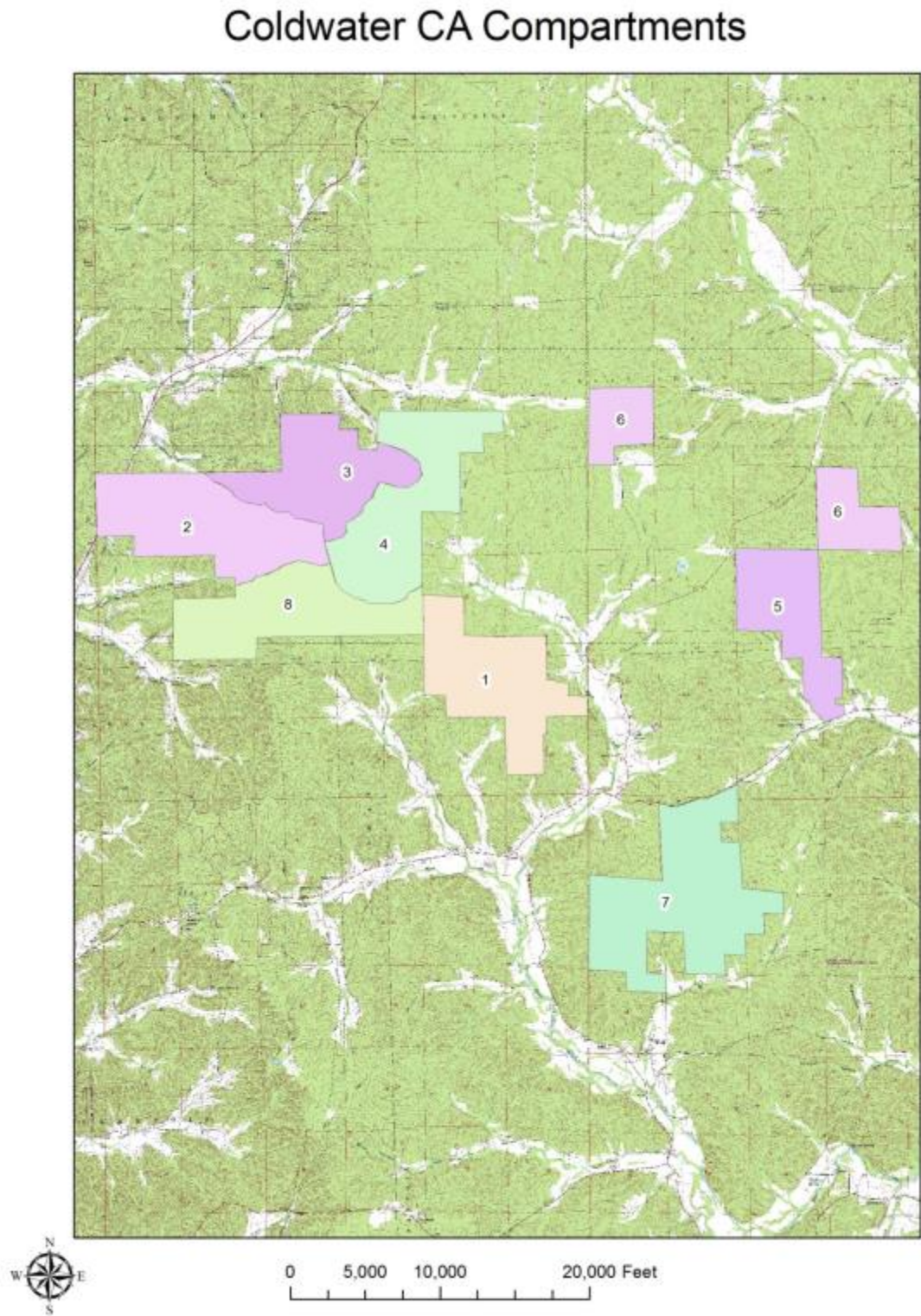


Figure 4: Land Cover Map

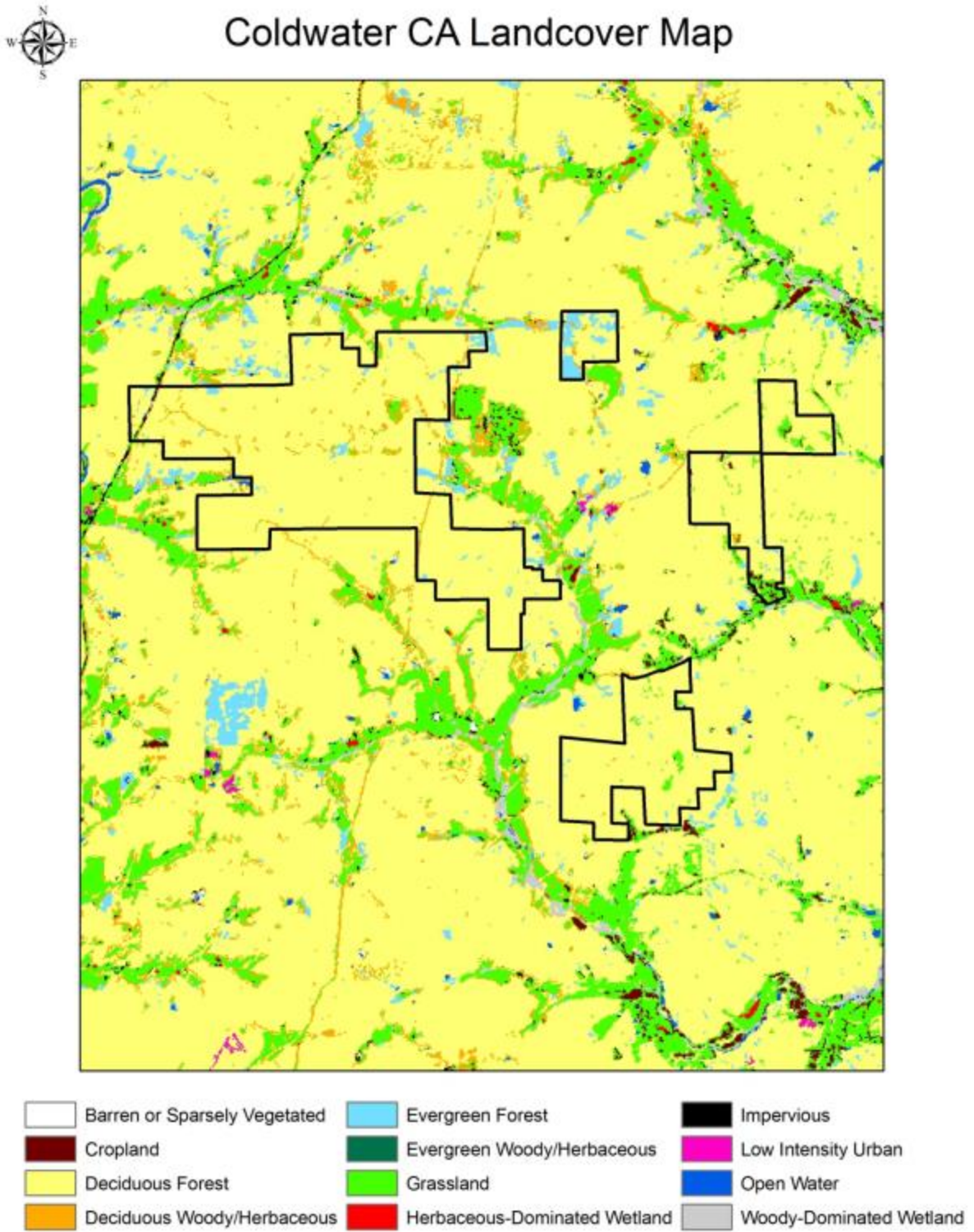
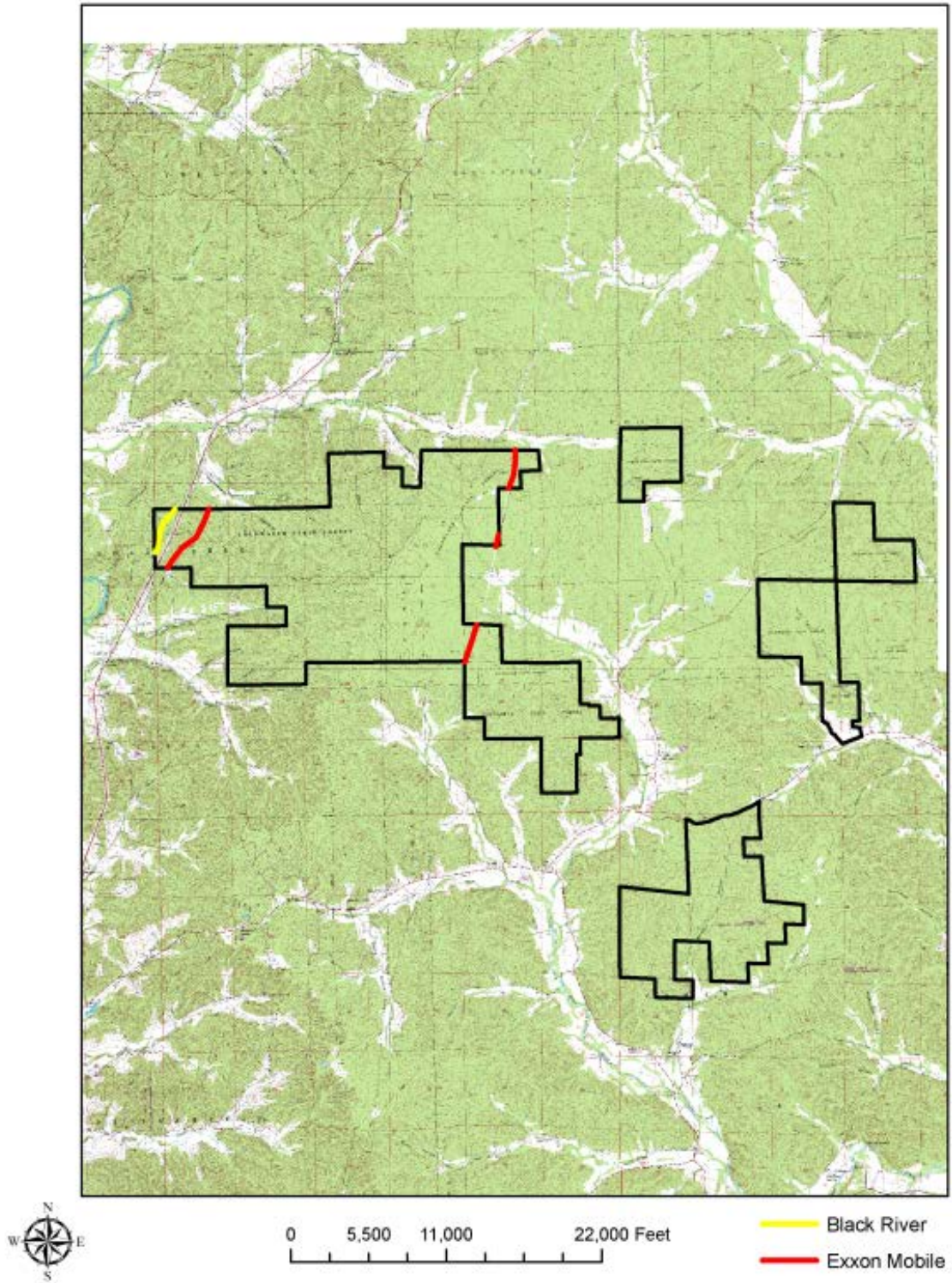


Figure 5: Easement Map

Coldwater CA Easements



Appendix A. Coldwater Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (June 1-30, 2016):

To whom it may concern,

I would like to see all or part of section 7 of coldwater ca turned into a walk in area at least for the spring turkey season. The roads that lead through the area (at least this particular section) lead to a lot of vehicular pressure throughout the season. This area holds a good turkey population but is hammered by people driving the road and stopping every so often and calling. At times it is like a parade of road hunter after road hunter "checking for a gobble". This isn't only a hassle while hunting but it is also adding danger to the turkey season because those driving around aren't aware there may be other hunters who may have parked further down the road. Additionally these road drivers only pressure the turkeys further and father off the area onto private land surrounding it.

The extensive road make this are very easy to hunt but the added danger and pressure lead me to believe it would be better for the hunters and the game if the roads were closed during the season. This would lead to most hunters parking in the same area and then spreading out (by walking) in my opinion this would lead to a safer hunt by hunters being aware of each other's presence. Also it would relieve a lot of pressure that typically doesn't lead to a harvested turkey. There are multiple areas that could be used as the walk in hunting parking area and I think it would be a great improve the turkey hunting on the section. Coldwater provides a great hunting opportunity and I believe this would be a welcome addition and would enhance the hunting and hunter experience.

First, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Coldwater CA Draft Management Plan. Equestrian trail riders in Wayne County are well served with respect to public land riding opportunities thanks to trails available on MDC and Missouri State Park lands. That being said the large unit off U.S. 67 Highway offers a good venue to enhance those opportunities. The location near Highway 67 would make access convenient and safe for local users as well as those traveling from more distant points to the north and south

This large tract on Coldwater CA exhibits most desirable characteristics for development of a multi-use trail system. Strong points in favor of trail development are size of the unit (adequate for a minimum of 10-12 miles of trails), topography and landscape (upland), and a minimum of conflicting uses.

SMMBCH offers our services (availability of volunteers permitting) to help decide on the best location and then clear and mark the trails. We further offer to assist the Area Manager to develop a partnership with local trail users to assist with development and maintenance with the trails and associated infrastructure.