



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
SAVANNAH DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
1590 ADAMSON PARKWAY, SUITE 200
MORROW, GEORGIA 30260-1777

DEC 19 2014

Regulatory Division
SAS-2011-00814

JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE
Savannah District/State of Georgia

The Savannah District has received an application for a Department of the Army Permit, pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344).

The comment period for the Department of the Army Permit application will close 30 days from the date of this public notice. Written comments, including suggestions for modifications or objections to the proposed work, stating reasons thereof, are being solicited from anyone having interest in this permit, and must be submitted so as to be received on or before the last day of the comment period. Written comments concerning the Department of the Army Permit application must reference the Applicant's name and the Permit Application Number, and be forwarded to the Corps of Engineers at the above address.

Application Number: SAS-2011-00814

Applicant: John Workman
Waste Management of Metro Atlanta, Inc.
1850 Parkway Place
Marietta, Georgia 30067

Agent: Mr. Erik Alford
Ecological Solutions, Inc.
630 Colonial Park Drive
Roswell, Georgia 30075

Location of Proposed Work: The proposed project site is approximately 397 acres and is a component of the overall 914-acre property, associated with the existing Pine Bluff Landfill facility, located west of East Cherokee drive and east of Griffin Way, City of Ball Ground, Cherokee County, Georgia (latitude 34.273822, longitude -84.397957).

Description of Work Subject to the Jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: The proposed project will involve a redesign of the existing 397 acre Pine Bluff Landfill expansion site which was previously permitted by the State in 1992. The State permitted expansion project was never constructed. The proposed project to date is to no longer construct the previously authorized expansion configuration and design but to re-configure the expansion site to allow for additional capacity and to allow for a

configuration which allows for more efficient operations and maintenance of the proposed and existing facilities.

The existing landfill uses a Subtitle-D liner and leachate collection system which consists of a combination of a 60 mil geomembrane, compacted soil with maximum soil permeability, and a geosynthetic clay liner. The leachate collection system will consist of a series of perforated pipes placed along a protective cover layer covering the landfill floor and side slopes. The proposed expansion site would continue to use this same liner and collection system. Leachate will be transported to a wastewater treatment plant for treatment and disposal. No leachate will be used to water roads outside the waste disposal cells. Groundwater monitoring stations, including monitoring well spacing, monitoring well construction, sampling schedules, sampling parameters, etc. will be installed in accordance to State guidelines. In addition, a 200-foot buffer will be maintained around the site, per State regulations.

The project, as proposed by the applicant, would impact 11 streams and 7 wetlands for a total of 10,300 linear feet of jurisdictional streams, including 4,037 linear feet of perennial streams, 5,252 linear feet of intermittent streams, and 1,013 linear feet of ephemeral streams and 1.7 acres of forested wetlands. The Applicant is proposing to acquire 69,006.2 stream mitigation credits and 13.86 wetland mitigation credits from an USACE approved mitigation bank(s) servicing the primary service area of the proposed project.

BACKGROUND

This Joint Public Notice announces a request for authorizations from both the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the State of Georgia. The Applicant's proposed work may also require local governmental approval.

The Applicant's stated purpose for the proposed expansion/redesign of the Pine Bluff Landfill is to provide additional municipal solid waste capacity and address operational and environmental issues that exist with the current State approved and authorized design. The applicant believes the capacity needed for waste disposal for the metro-Atlanta area is anticipated to increase 46.8 percent from 2010 to 2030. The applicant does not believe the current configuration of the proposed expansion which was authorized by the State in 1992, will meet the increase in projected populations for metro-Atlanta. The applicant proposes to expand the landfill facilities in a different configuration which will add additional capacity to service the metro-Atlanta area. By redesigning the existing permitted facility design which was previously authorized by the State in 1992, the proposed landfill will go from originally impacting 1,921 linear feet of stream and 0 wetland impacts to impacting the currently proposed 10,300 linear feet of stream and 1.7 acres of wetlands. The Pine Bluff Landfill has a remaining capacity of approximately 35 million cubic yards, with an expected remaining lifespan of 25 years, based on use rates from the past five years. The applicant believes the 25 year life span

could be much less based on increased population projections. The proposed project would provide an additional 23,862,950 cubic yards of capacity, increasing the high end projected life of the facility to almost 42 years.

The applicant currently has another pending individual application with the USACE for the expansion of the R&B Landfill, located in Banks County, Georgia. The R&B landfill does overlap in service area with the Pine Bluff service area. The applicant believes both expansions are needed to service the long term disposal of metro-Atlanta.

STATE OF GEORGIA

Water Quality Certification: The Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division, intends to certify this project at the end of 30 days in accordance with the provisions of Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, which is required for a Federal Permit to conduct activity in, on, or adjacent to the waters of the State of Georgia. Copies of the application and supporting documents relative to a specific application will be available for review and copying at the office of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Georgia Environmental Protection Division, Watershed Protection Branch, 7 MLK, Jr. Drive, Suite 450, Atlanta, Georgia 30334, during regular office hours. A copier machine is available for public use at a charge of 25 cents per page. Any person who desires to comment, object, or request a public hearing relative to State Water Quality Certification must do so within 30 days of the State's receipt of application in writing and state the reasons or basis of objections or request for a hearing. The application can also be reviewed in the Savannah District, US Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Division, 1590 Adamson Parkway, Suite 200 Morrow, Georgia 30260-1777.

State-owned Property and Resources: The Applicant may also require assent from the State of Georgia, which may be in the form of a license, easement, lease, permit or other appropriate instrument.

Stream Buffer Variance: the project as proposed would impact approximately 9,287 linear feet of state waters as well as their associated buffers. A stream buffer variance will be required by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division.

US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

The Savannah District must consider the purpose and need and the impacts of the Applicant's proposed work, prior to a decision on issuance of a Department of the Army Permit.

Cultural Resources Assessment: The Applicant conducted a Phase I cultural resources survey of the proposed expansion site in February of 2012, in order to locate and identify cultural resources within the project area and assess resource significance. The findings of the survey concluded 44 previously recorded archeological sites are

within or proximal to the project area. Of these 44 sites, 17 are in the proposed expansion project area, five are in the Area of Potential Effects (APE), and 22 are within the currently operating landfill tract. A field survey was conducted to revisit the 17 previous recorded sites, but due to additional clearing, logging, erosion and/or reduction of surface visibility due to regenerative growth, only four of these sites could be relocated. The field survey did result in 13 new archeological sites and 8 isolated finds. A review of the National Register of Historic Places and Cherokee County Historic Structures Survey revealed one state recognized structure, CK-28, which is within 1.6km of the project area but outside the APE. The NRHP eligibility status of CK-38 is unknown. No standing architecture greater than 50 years of age was observed in the project APE. It should be noted the Riggins Cemetery is reported to be within the Pine Bluff facility property but was not found during initial surveys in 1993 or during the last survey in 2012. The Applicant has recommended the 17 archeological sites and the eight isolated finds be considered ineligible for NRHP listing. The applicant believes no additional cultural resources work is warranted for the proposed project.

Endangered Species: Pursuant to Section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), we request information from the U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the U.S. Department of Commerce, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the National Marine Fisheries Service; or, any other interested party, on whether any species listed or proposed for listing may be present in the area.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Information, Planning, and Conservation database, six federally protected species are known to occur within Cherokee County. These species include four federally endangered species, the Amber darter (*Percina antesella*), Etowah darter (*Etheostoma etowahae*), the Gray bat (*Myotis grisescens*), and Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalists*), one federally threatened species, the Cherokee darter (*Etheostoma scotti*), and one proposed endangered species, the northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*). The Georgia Department of Natural Resources conducted darter surveys in 1996 and identified Cherokee darters along Riggins Creek, which is within the property boundaries, and Edward Creek, which is downstream of the landfill property. An aquatic protected species survey was conducted by Ecological Solutions in 2011 to verify the presence of protected species and potential habitat. Ecological Solutions concluded there is no suitable habitat for the Etowah Darter or the Amber Darter within the proposed project area, nor did they find the presence of the Etowah Darter or Amber Darter during their field survey. Ecological Solutions concluded there is suitable habitat and the presence of Cherokee Darters within the proposed project area and anticipates impacts to the Cherokee darter which may result in an adverse affect to this species. The applicant recommends a darter management plan to mitigate for the proposed impacts. Ecological Solutions concluded there is suitable foraging and/or roosting habitat for the Indian Bat, Gray bat, and Northern Long-eared bat. The proposed project involves clearing activities of some of this potential habitat which may affect the Indiana bat, Gray bat, and Northern Long-eared bat. The applicant proposed the implementation of a Bat Habitat Management

Plan to mitigate for potential effects to the Indiana Bat, Gray bat, and Northern Long-eared bat. The applicant is requesting Section 7 Consultation for all potential effects to protected species in association with the proposed Pine Bluff Landfill Expansion project.

Public Interest Review: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors, which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership and in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

Consideration of Public Comments: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Native American Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Application of Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines: The proposed activity involves the discharge of dredged or fill material into the waters of the United States. The Savannah District's evaluation of the impact of the activity on the public interest will include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, under the authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act.

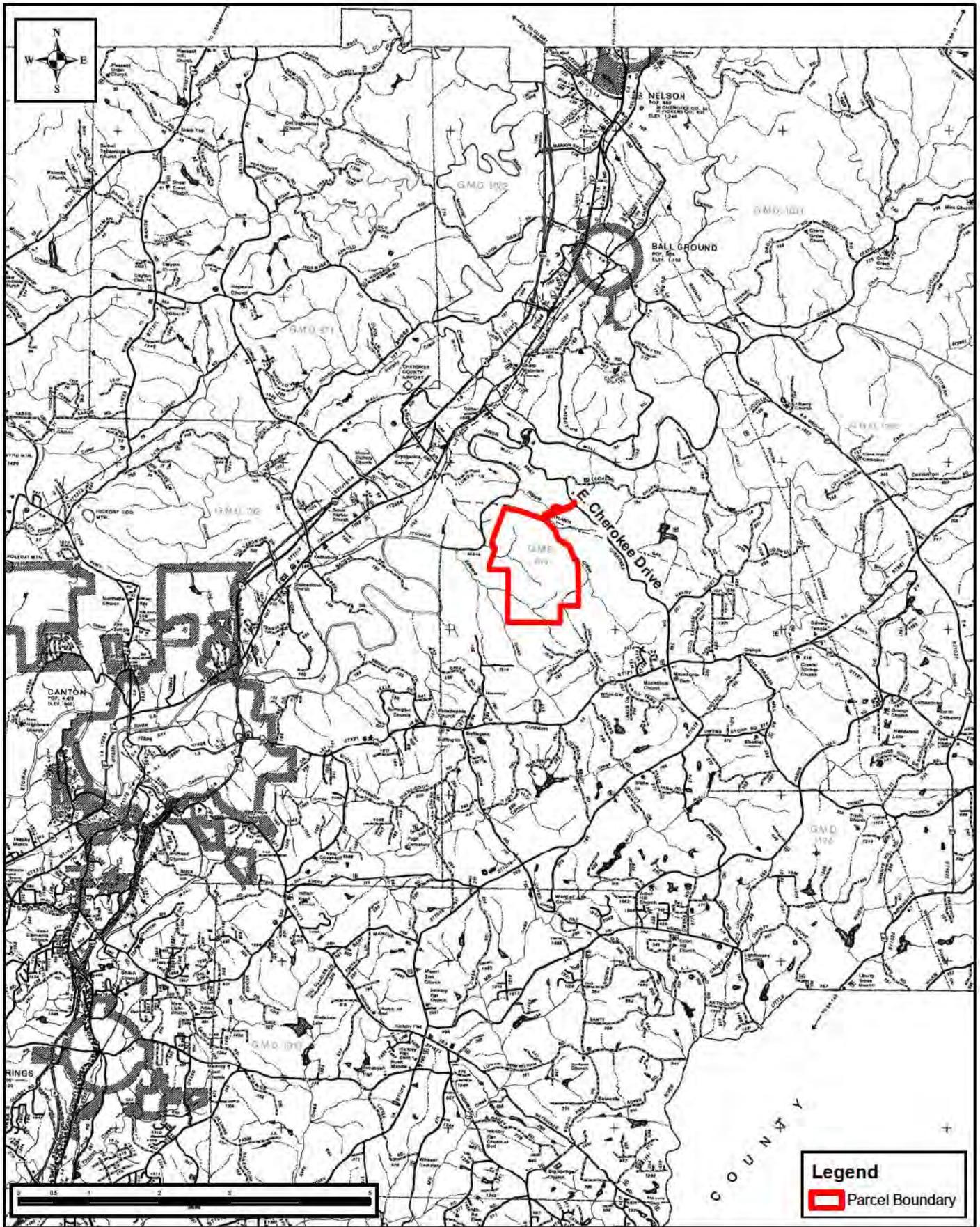
Public Hearing: Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application for a Department of the Army Permit. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for requesting a public hearing. The decision whether to hold a public hearing is at the discretion of the District Engineer, or his designated appointee, based on the need for additional substantial information necessary in evaluating the proposed project.

Comment Period: Anyone wishing to comment on this application for a Department of the Army Permit should submit comments in writing to the Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District, Attention: Elisha Bradshaw, 1590 Adamson Parkway, Suite 200, Morrow, Georgia 30260-1777, no later than **30 days** from the date of this notice. Please refer to the Applicant's name (Mr. John Workman, Waste Management of Metro Atlanta, Inc.) and the Permit Application Number (SAS-2011-00814) in your comments.

If you have any further questions concerning this matter, please contact Ms. Elisha Bradshaw, Project Manager, Piedmont Branch at 678-422-2723 or via email at Elisha.A.Bradshaw@usace.army.mil.

Enclosures:

- 1. Site Location Map**
- 2. Site Topographic Map**
- 3. Jurisdictional Maps**
- 4. Comparison of Existing Design to Proposed Design**
- 5. Historic and Present Cherokee Darter Populations**
- 6. Conservation Measures**
- 7. Onsite Alternatives - Options 1-5 (Option 5 Applicant's Preferred)**



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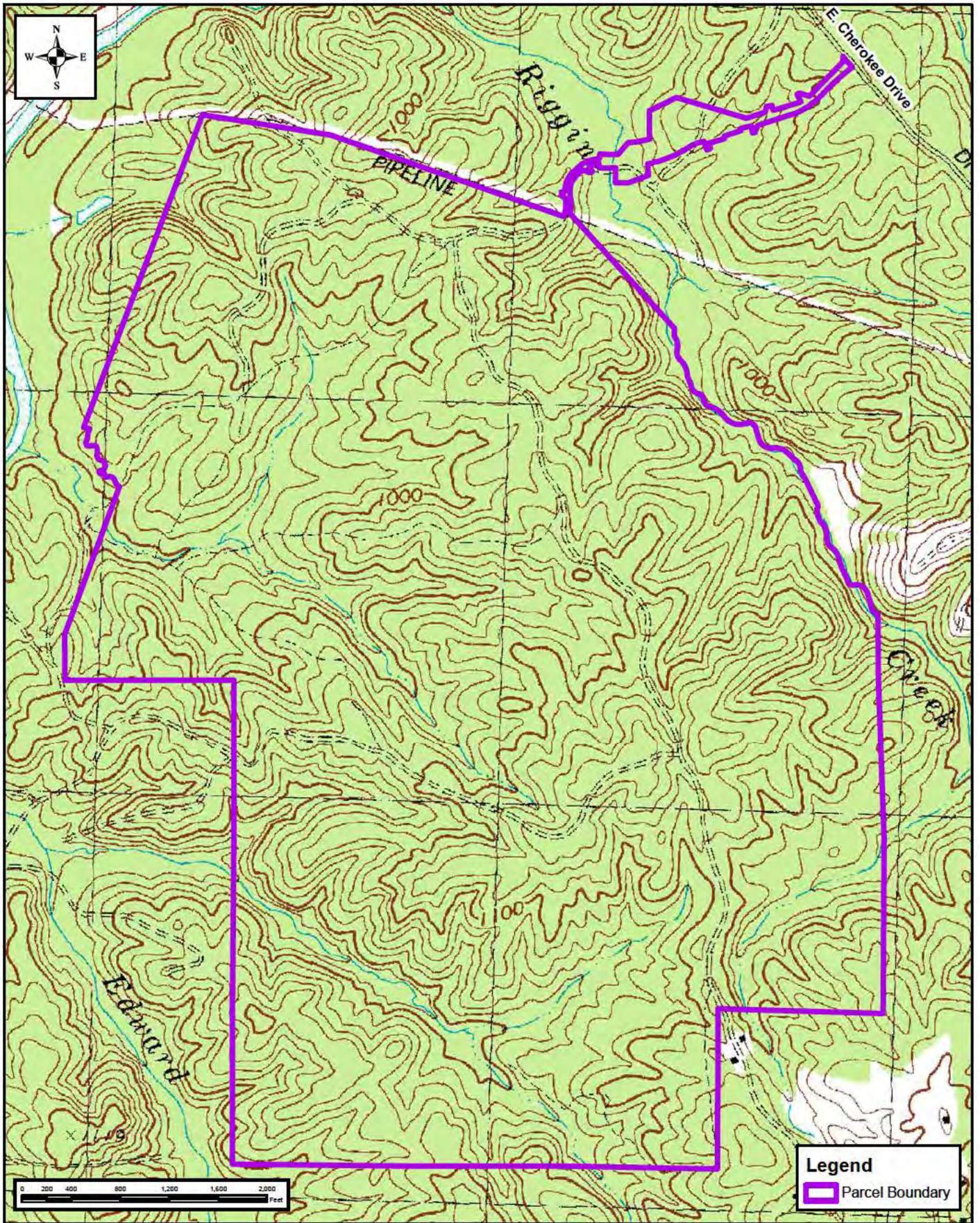
Waste Management of the South Atlantic
 Pine Bluff Landfill
 Cherokee County, Georgia

October 2011
 20226-002



Site Location Map

Figure 1



20226-002_JD_topo.mxd

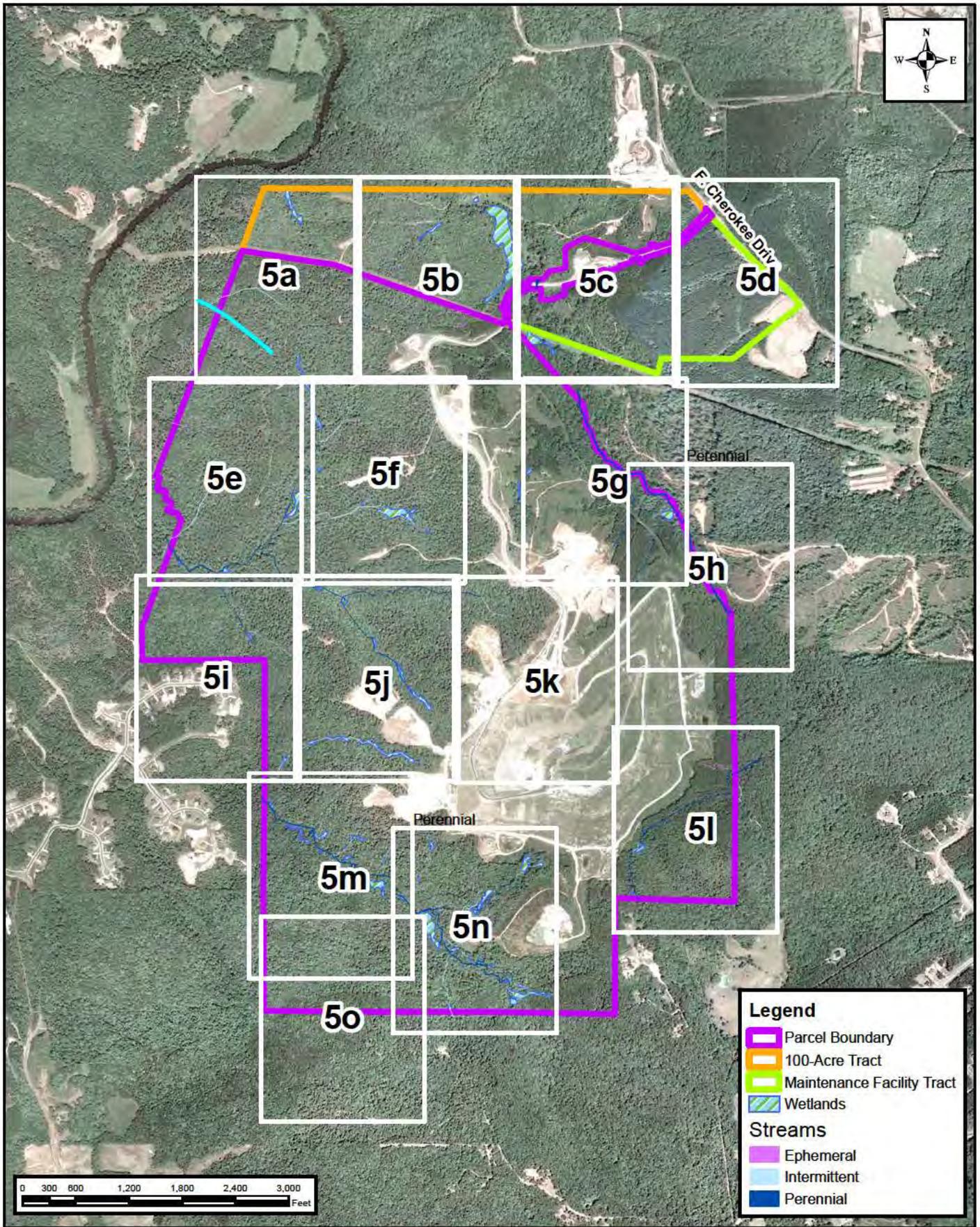
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Site Topographic Map

Figure 2



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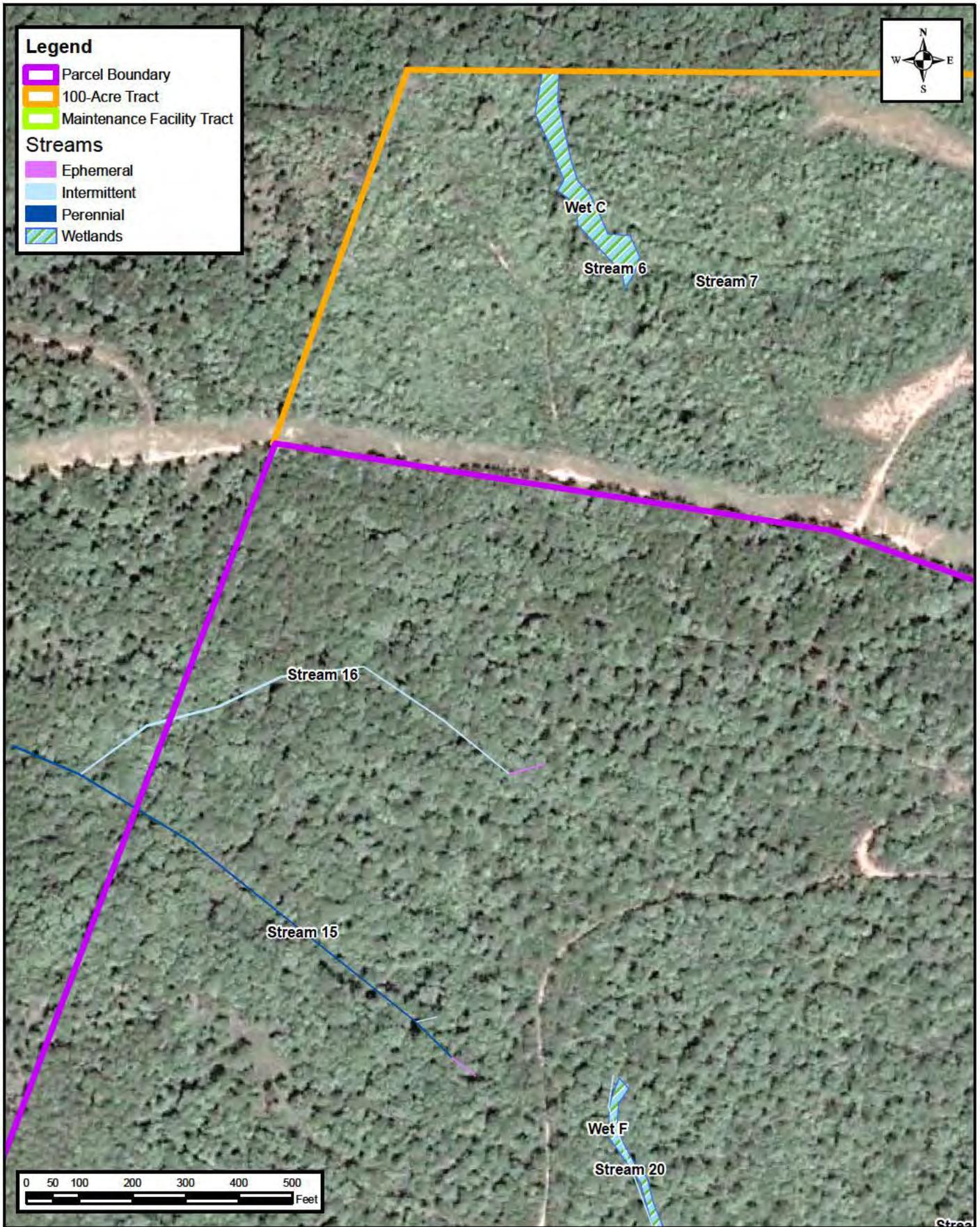
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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 5



20226-002_JD_line_del0a.mxd

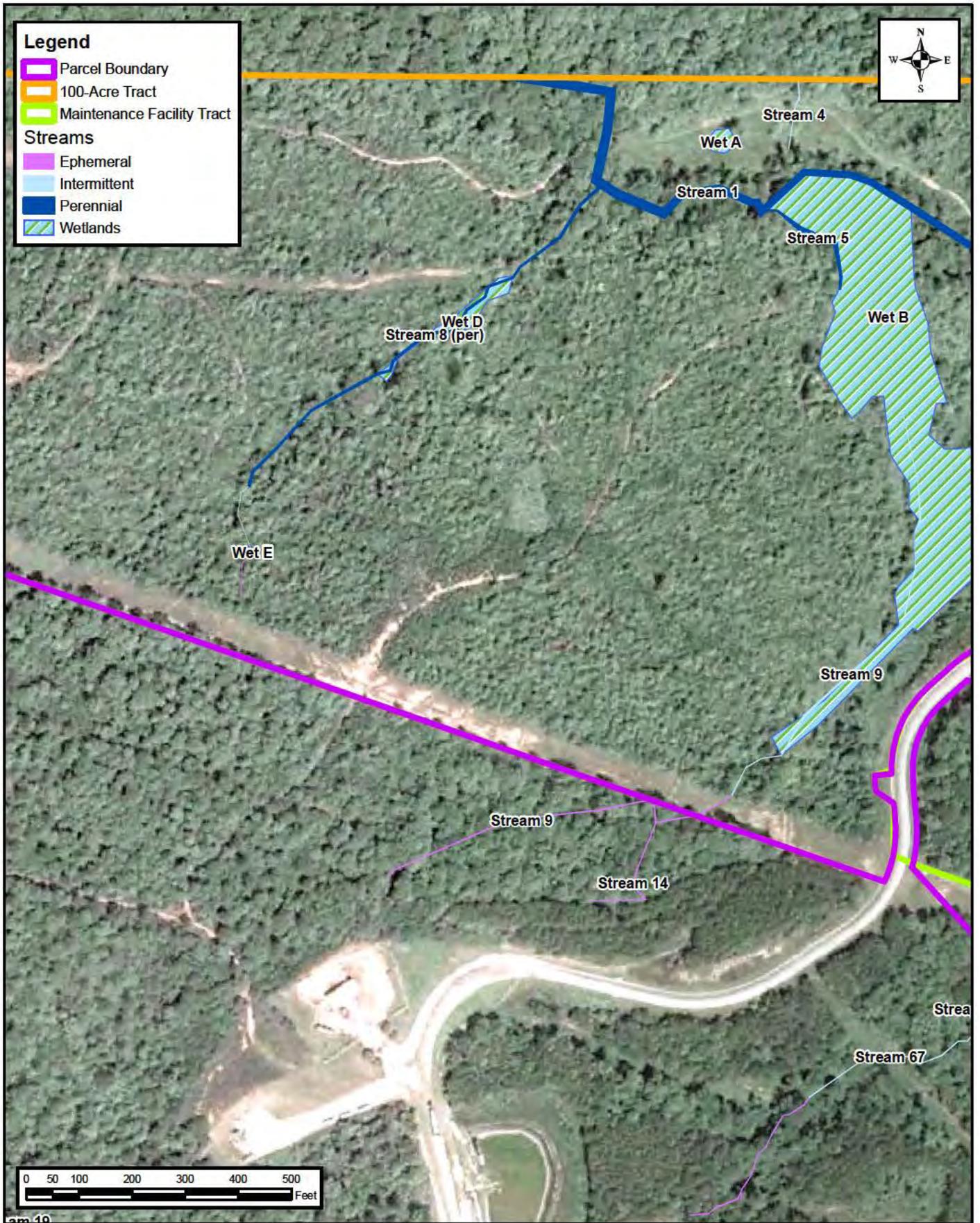
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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 5a



20226-002_JD_de#b.mxd

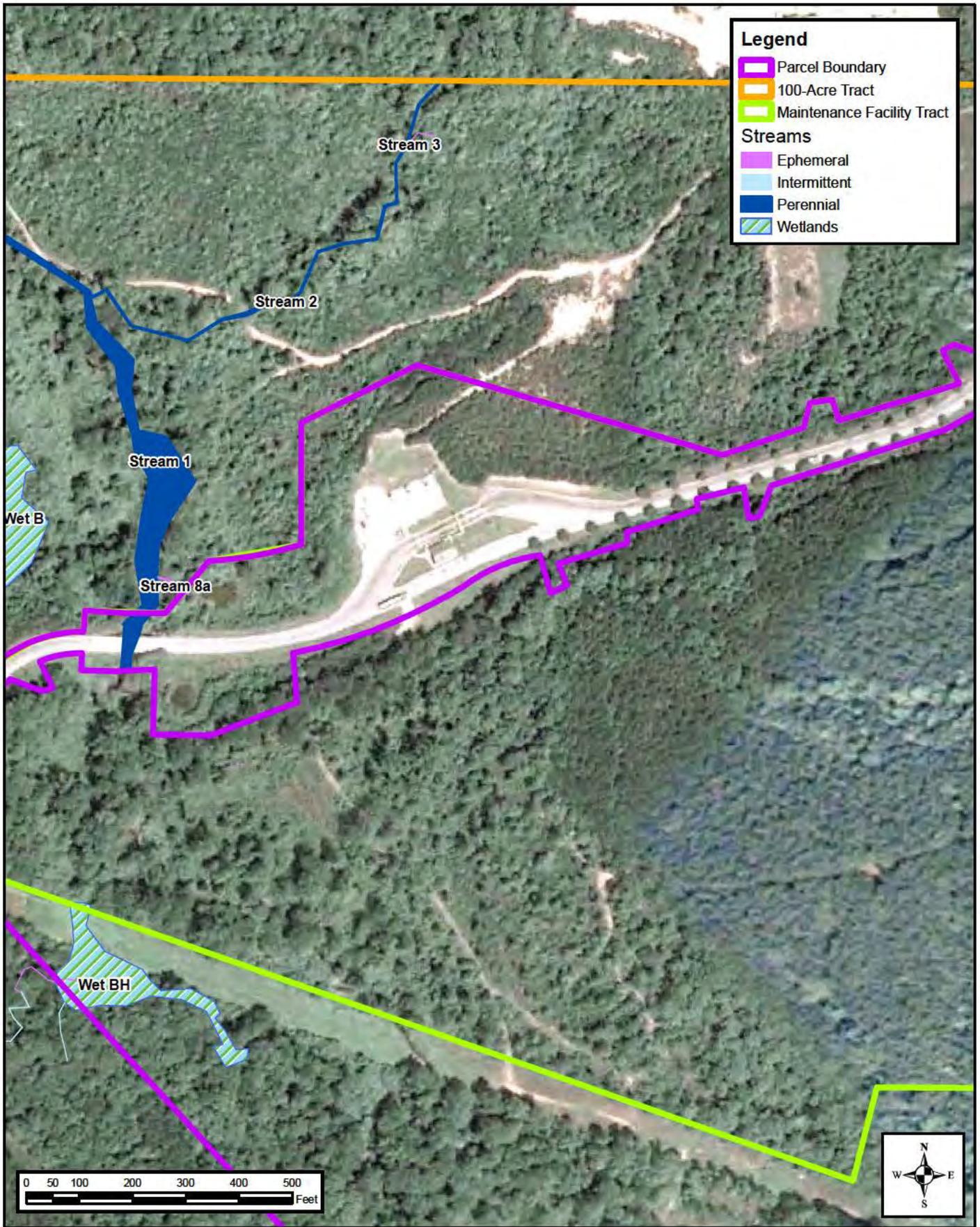
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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 5b



20226-002_JD_line_del0c.mxd

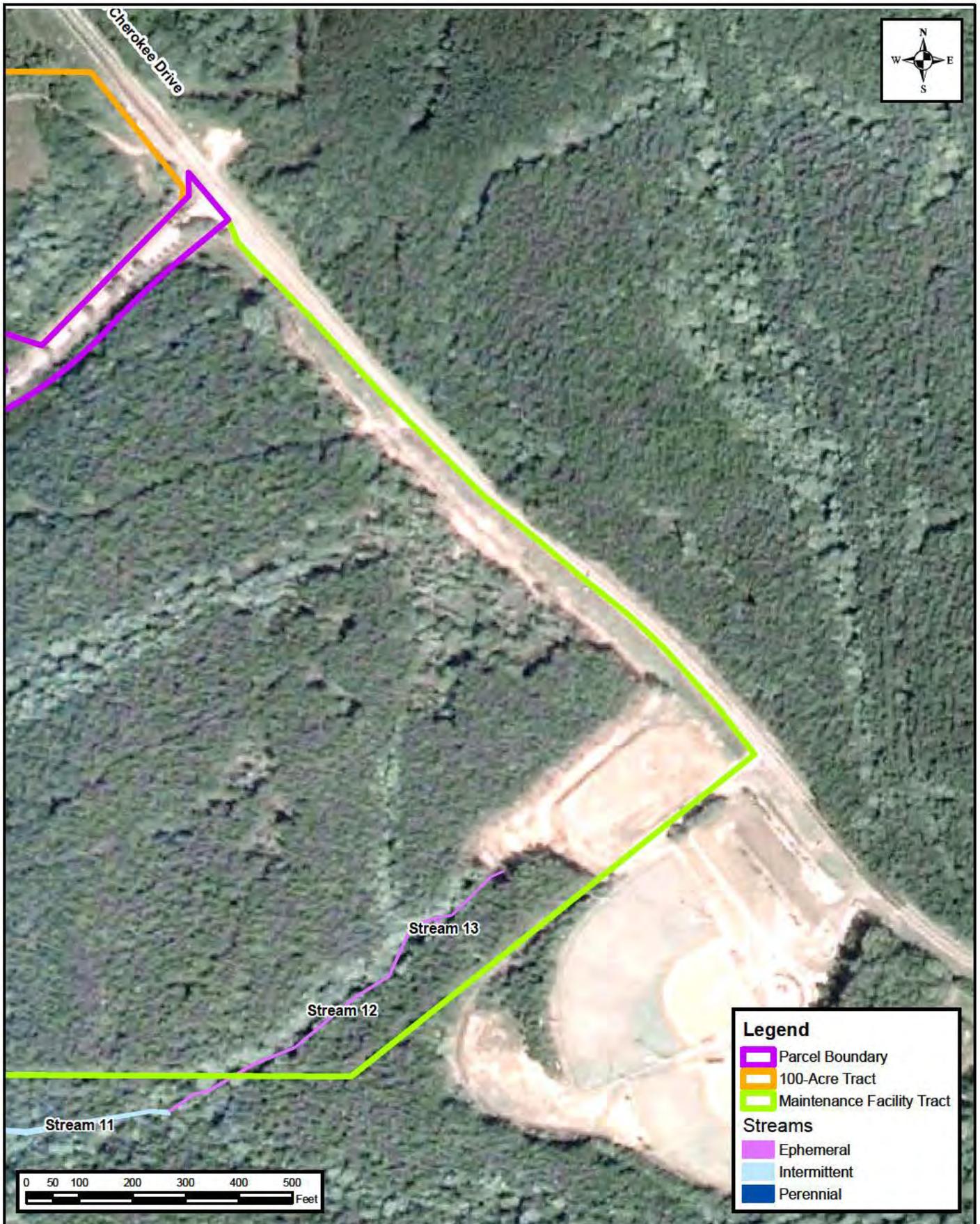
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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 5c



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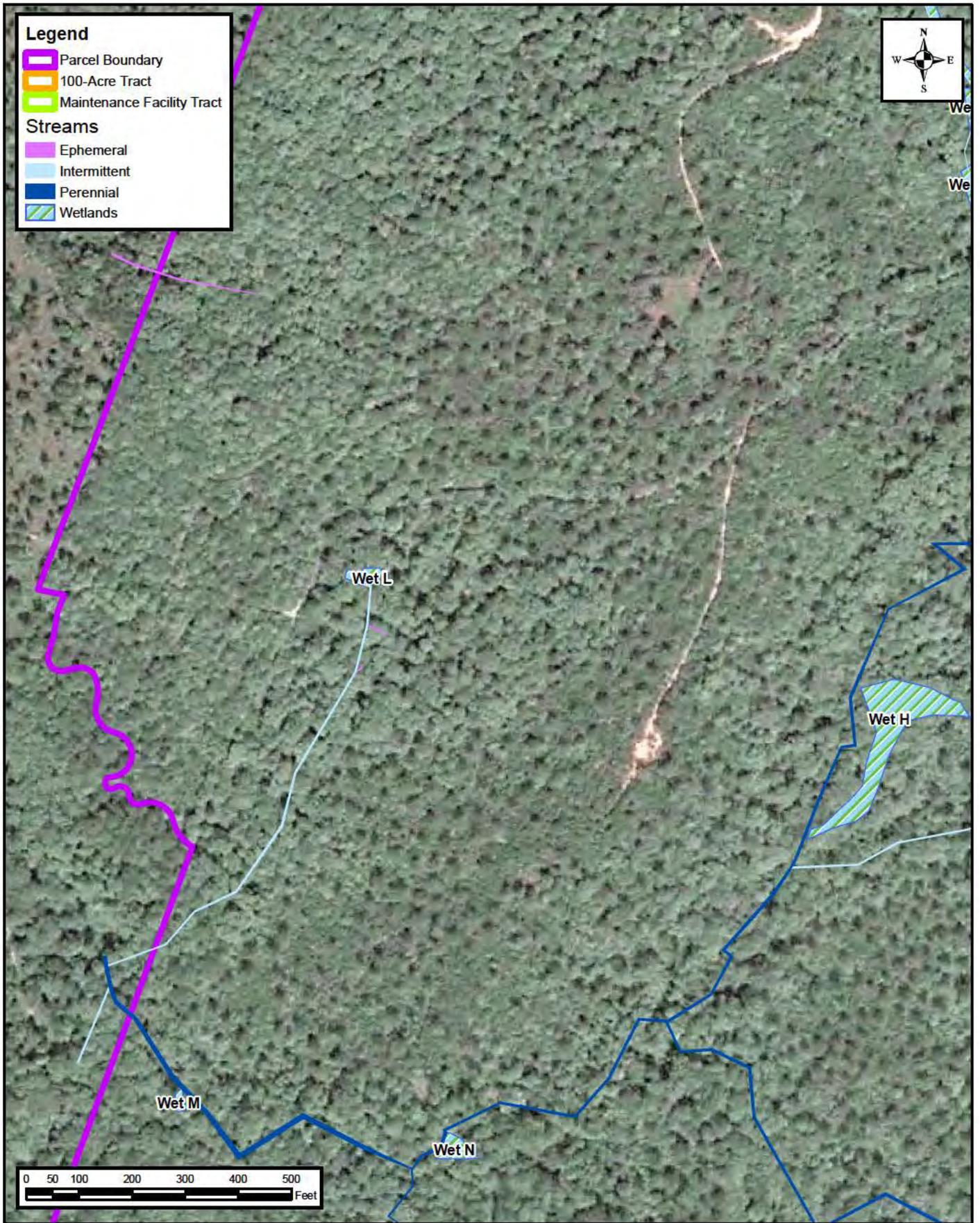
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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 5d



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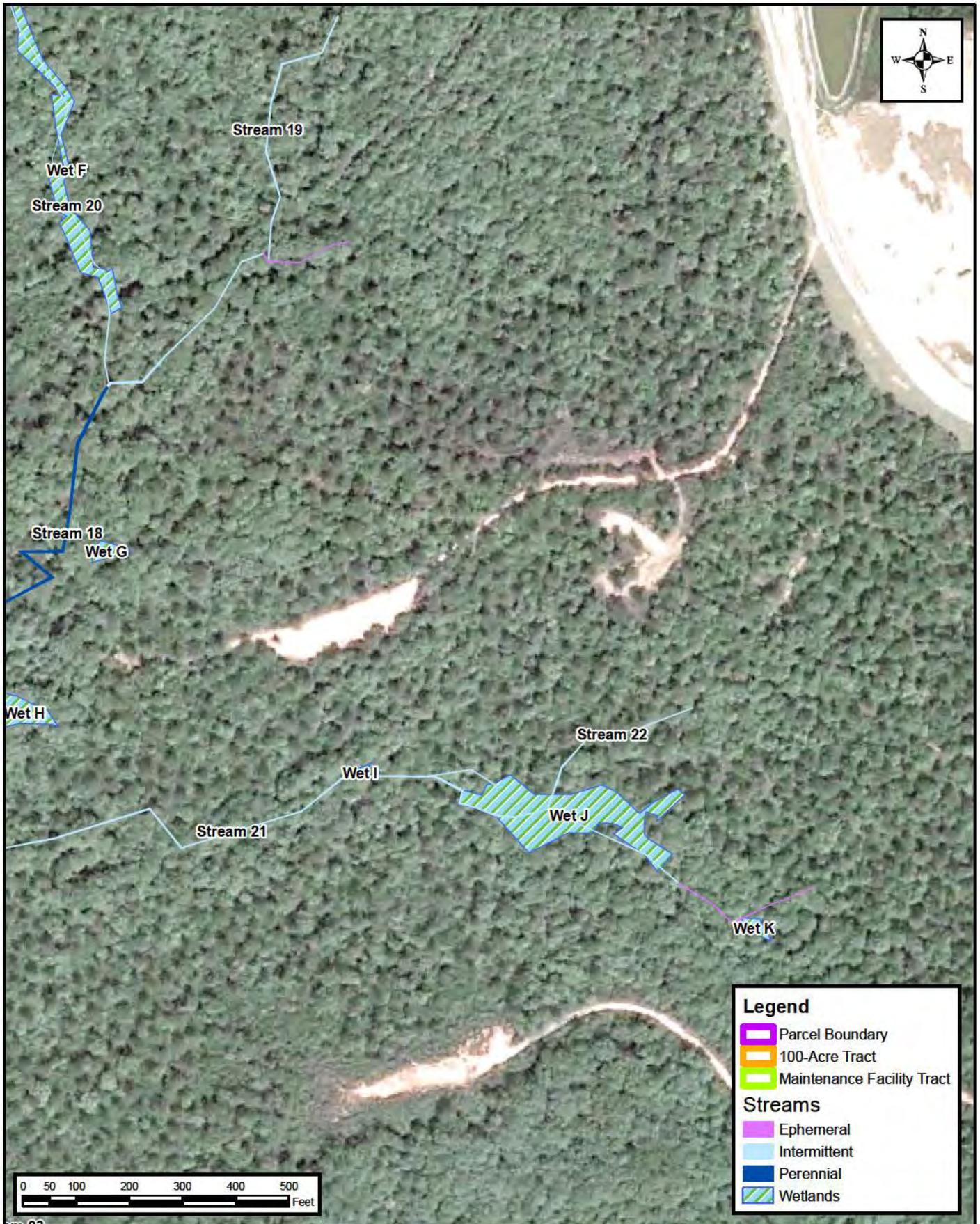
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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 5e



20226-002_JD_line_del0f.mxd

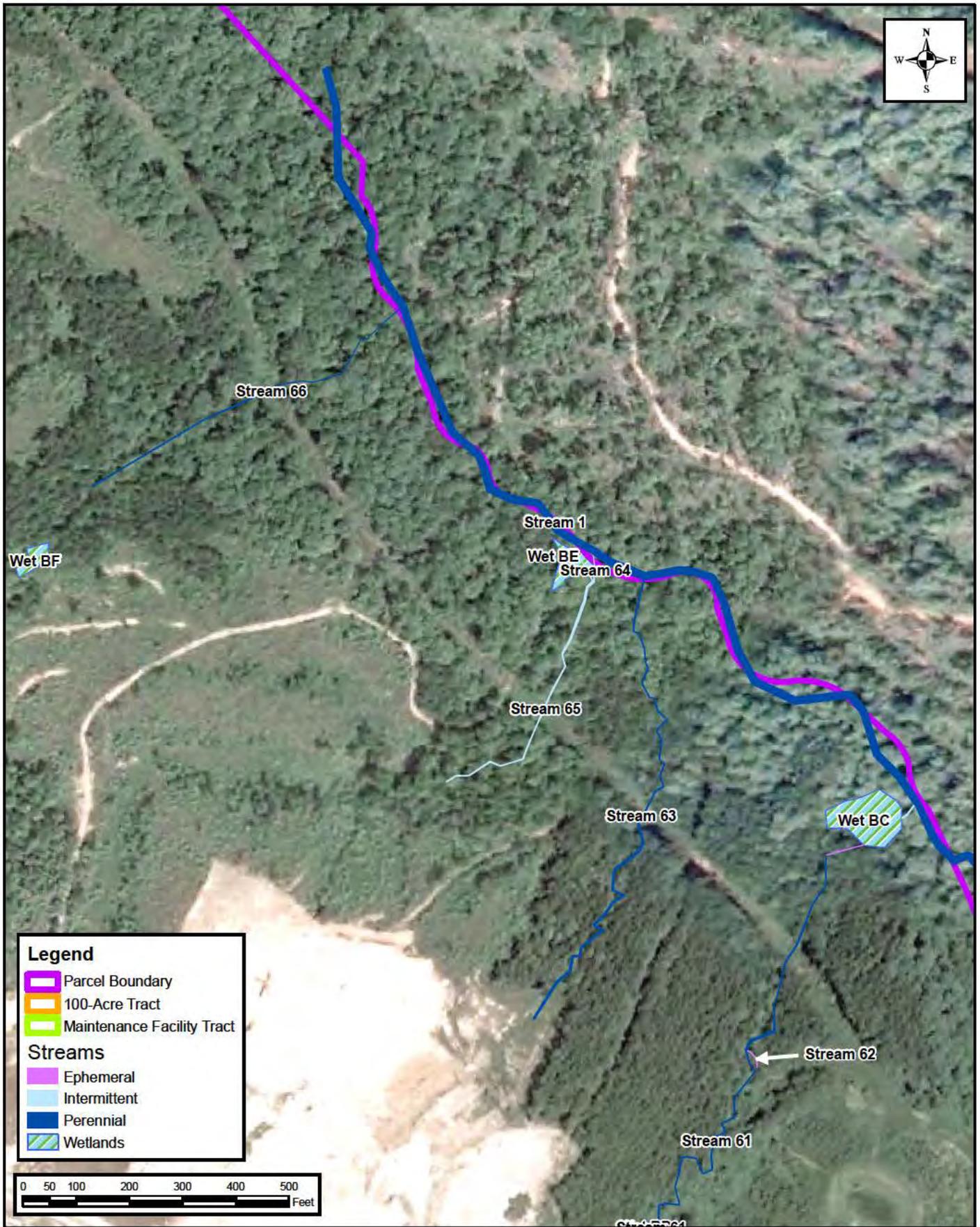
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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 5f



20226-002_JD_line_del0g.mxd

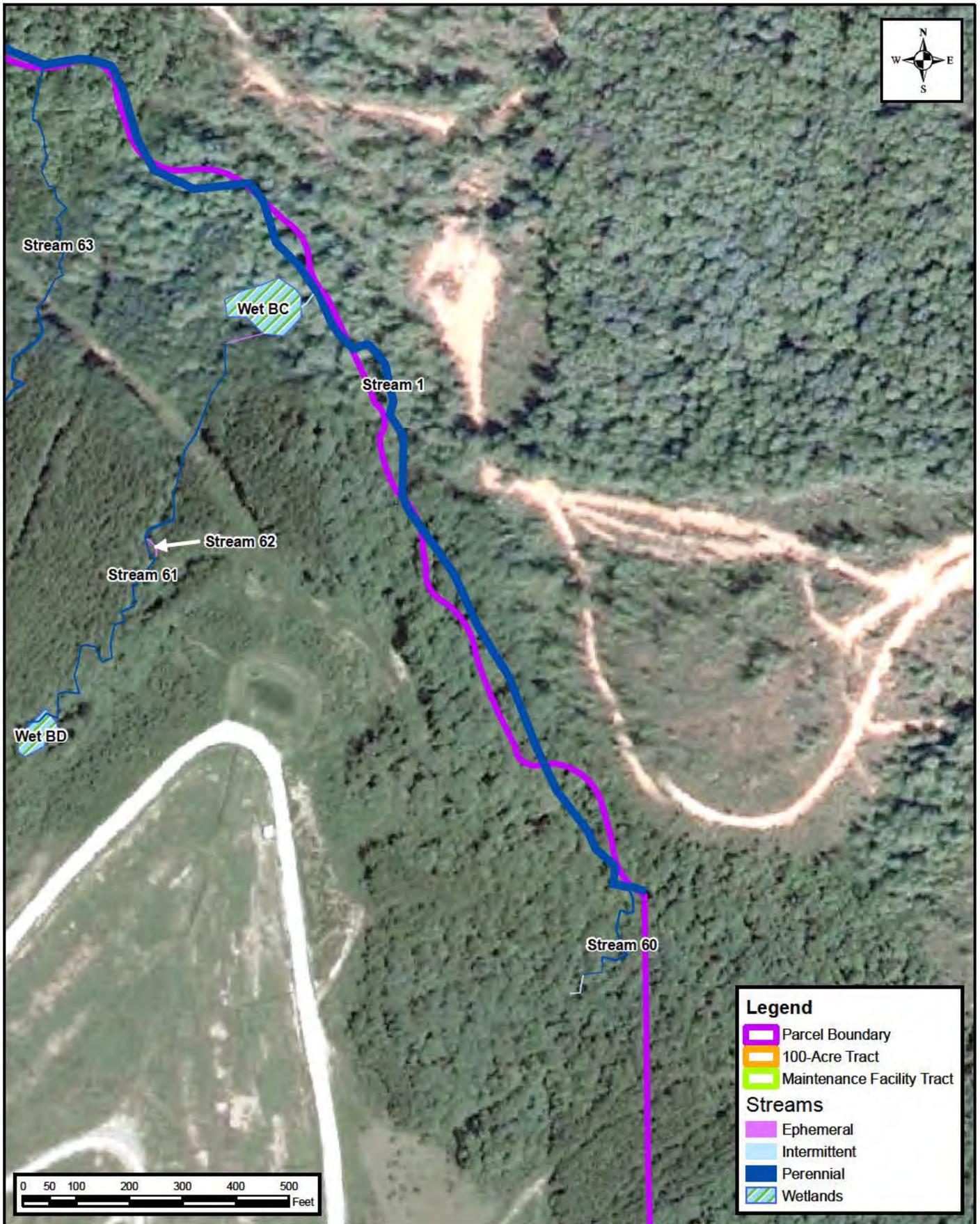
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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 5g



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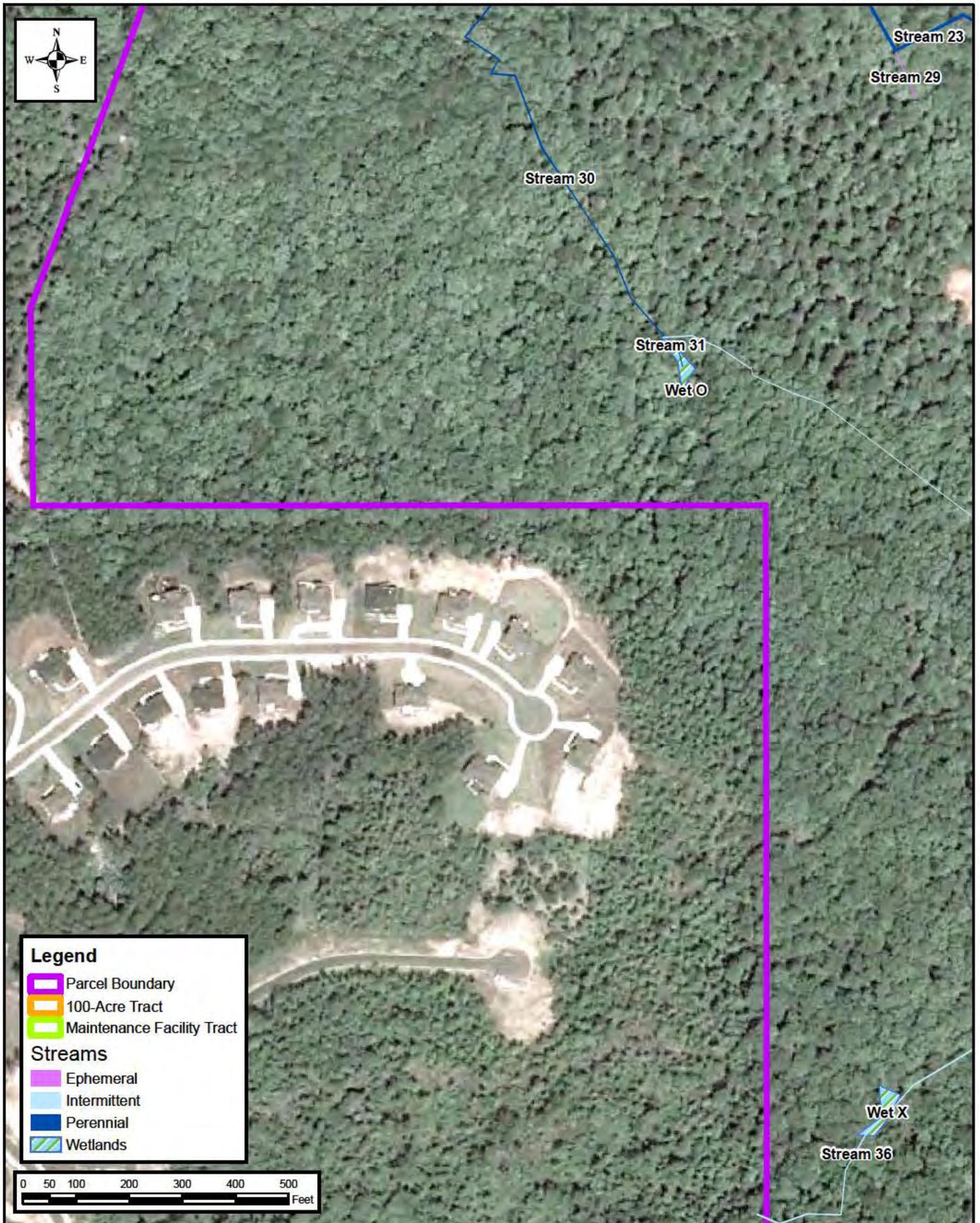
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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 5h



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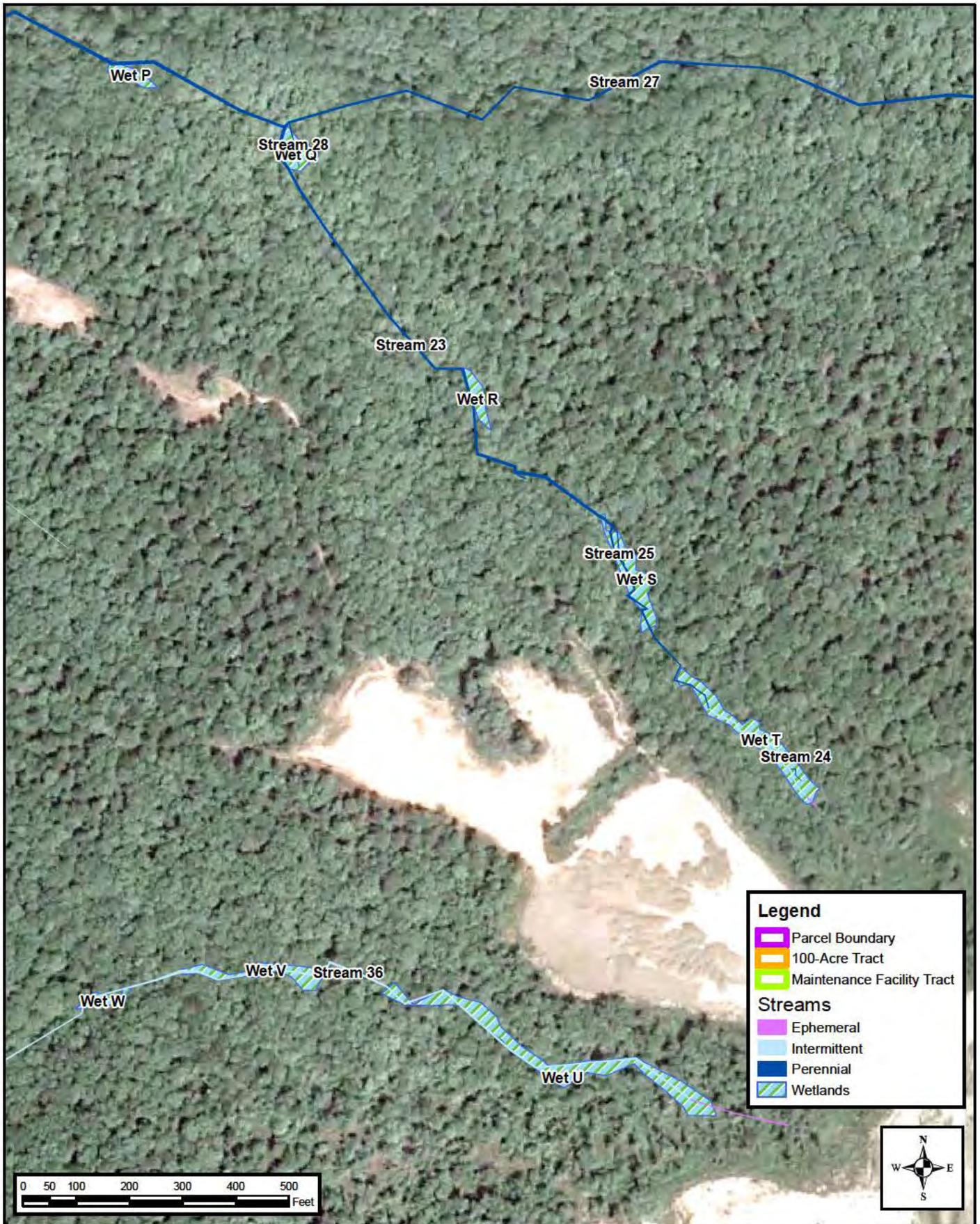
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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 5i



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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 5j



20226-002_JD_line_del0k.mxd

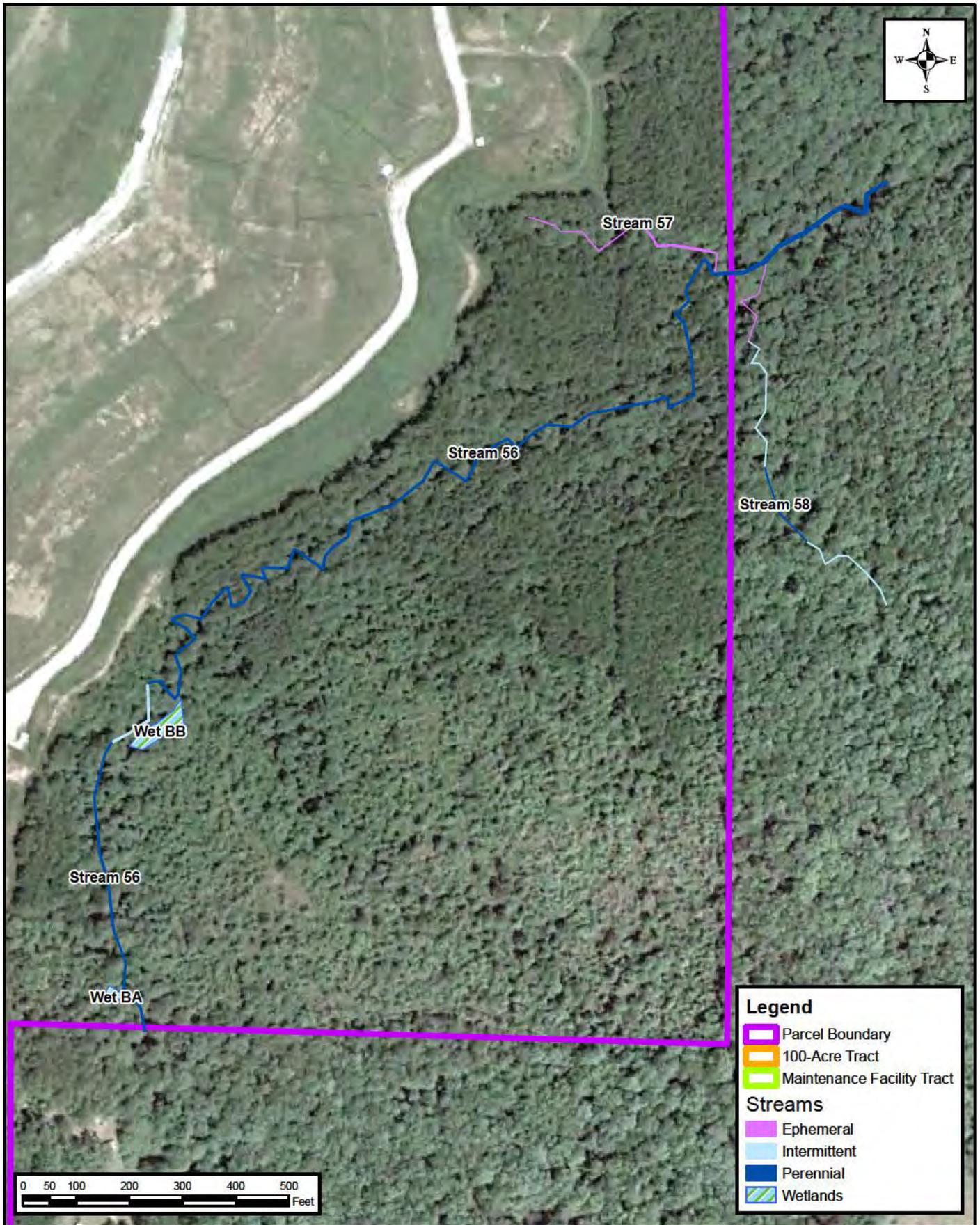
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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 5k



20226-002_JD_line_del01.mxd

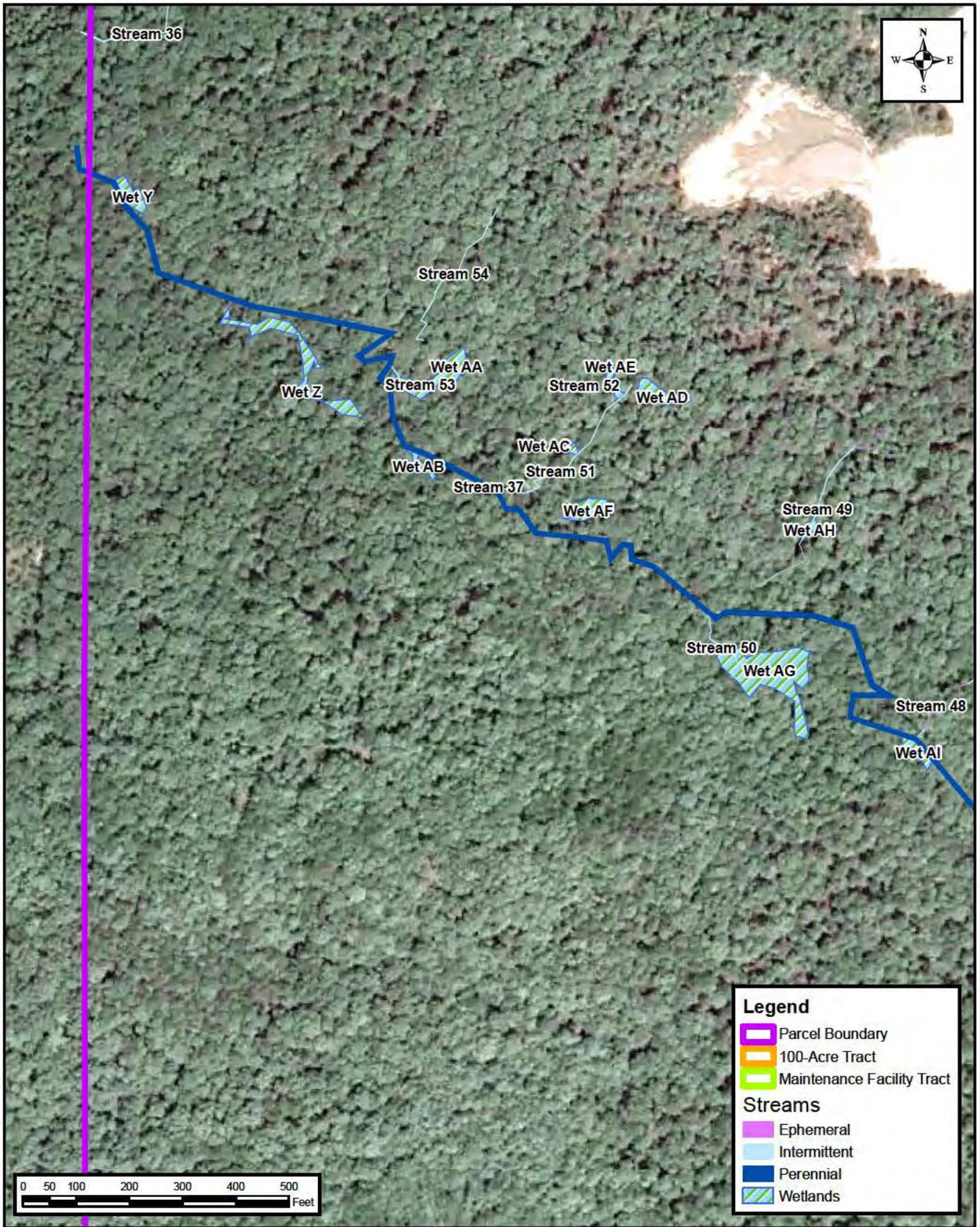
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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 51



20226-002_JD_de16m.mxd

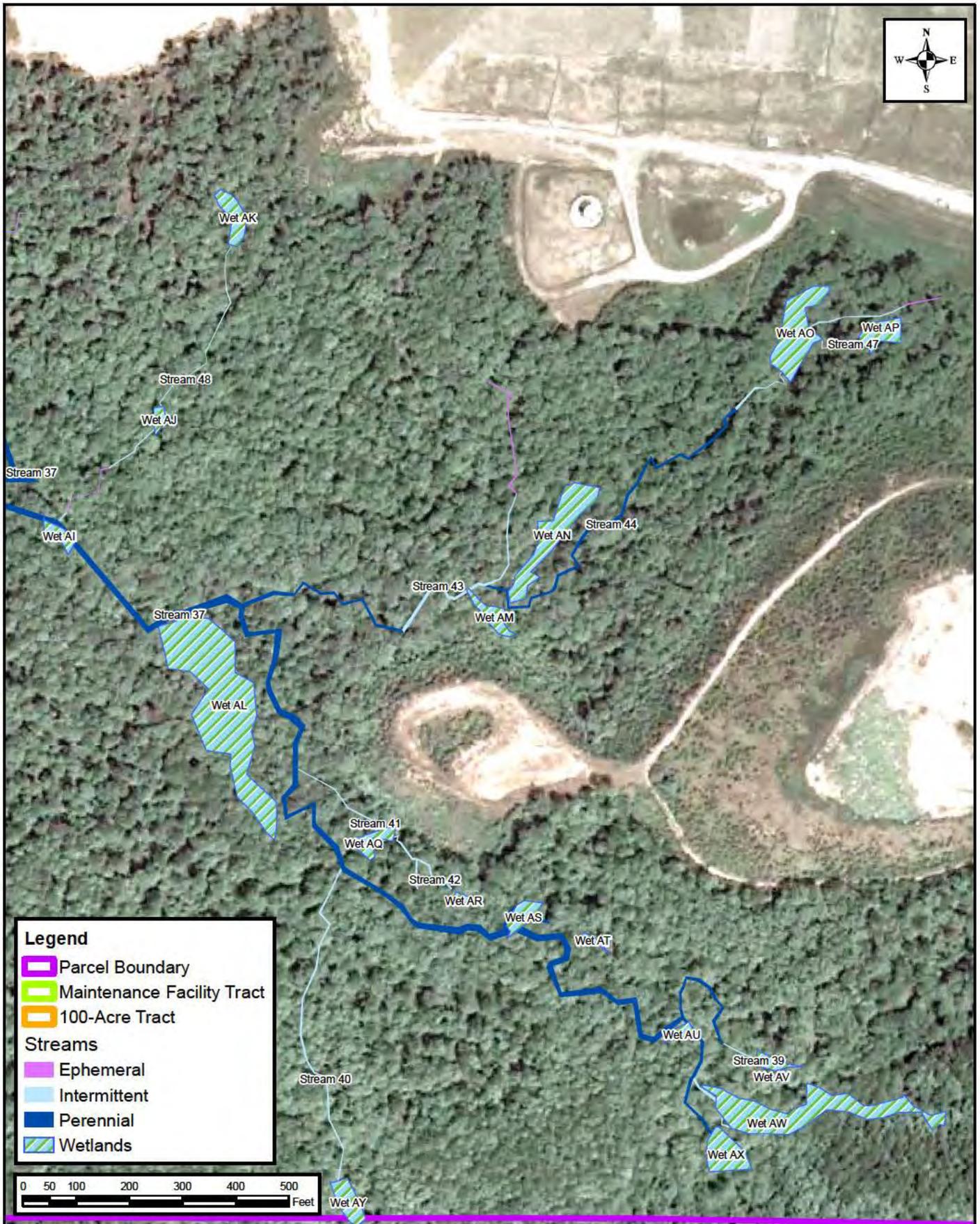
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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 5m



20226-002_JD_line_del0n.mxd

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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 5n



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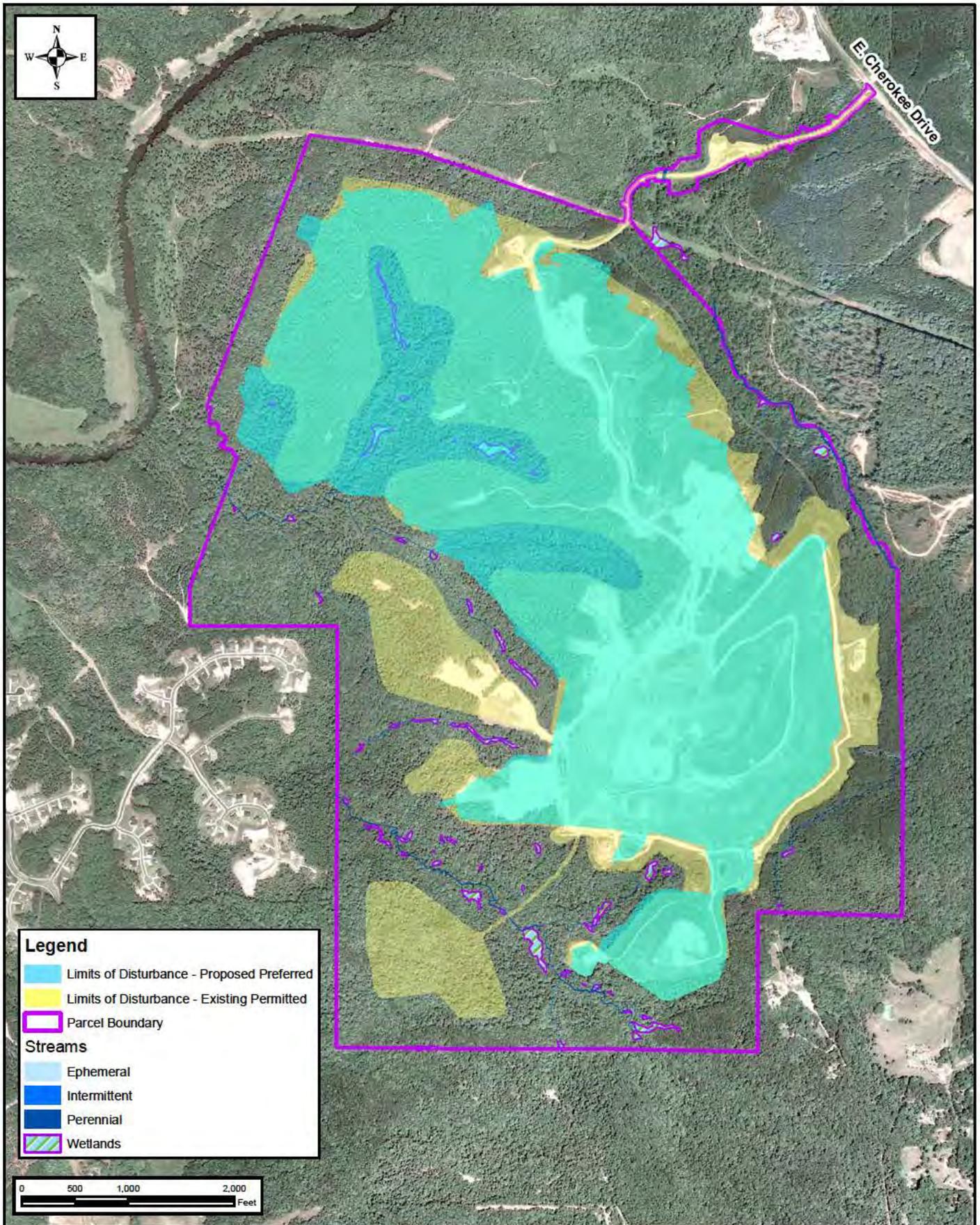
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Jurisdictional Systems

Figure 5o



20226-002_JD_nwi.mxd

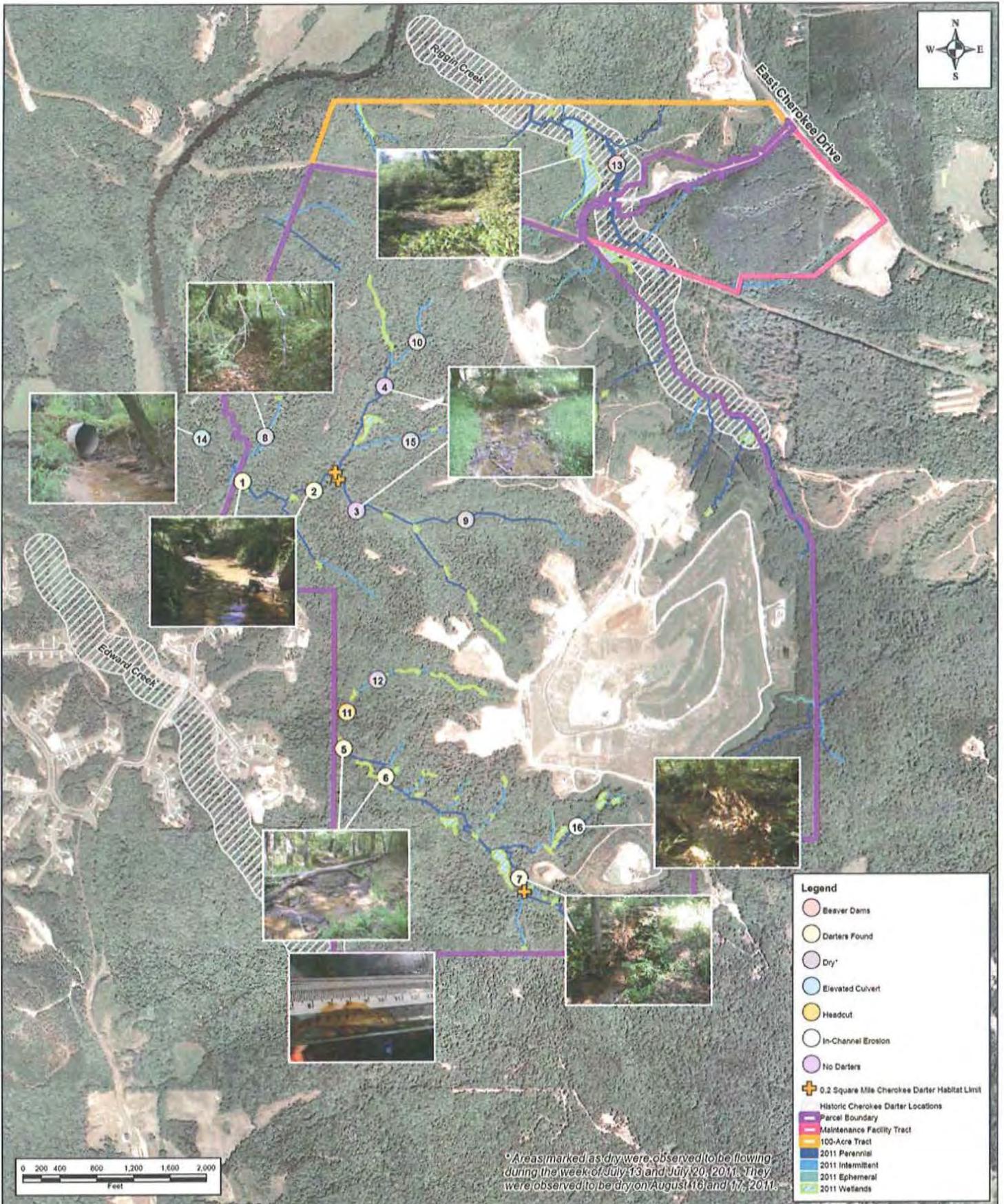
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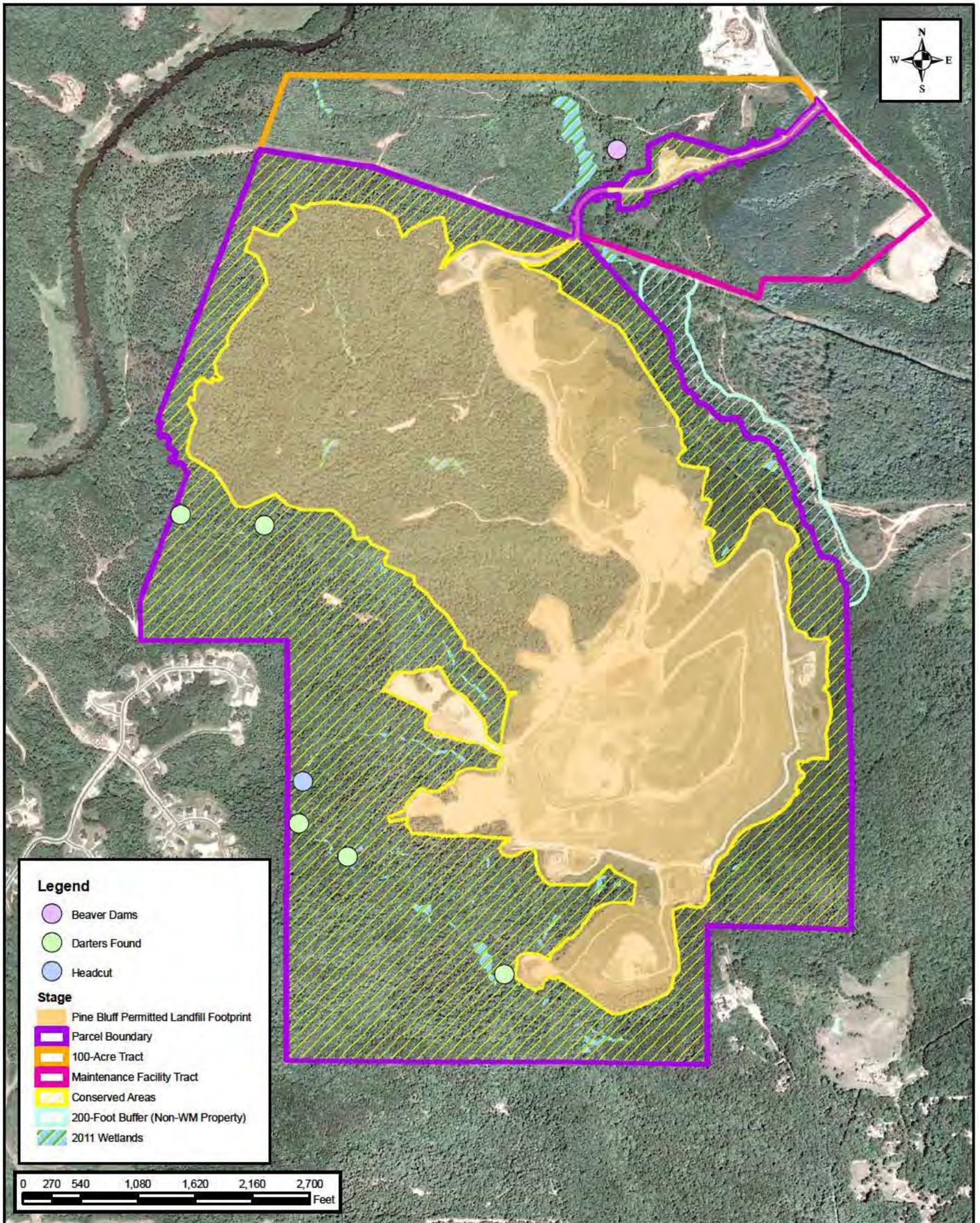
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Comparison of Existing Design to Proposed Design

Figure 2





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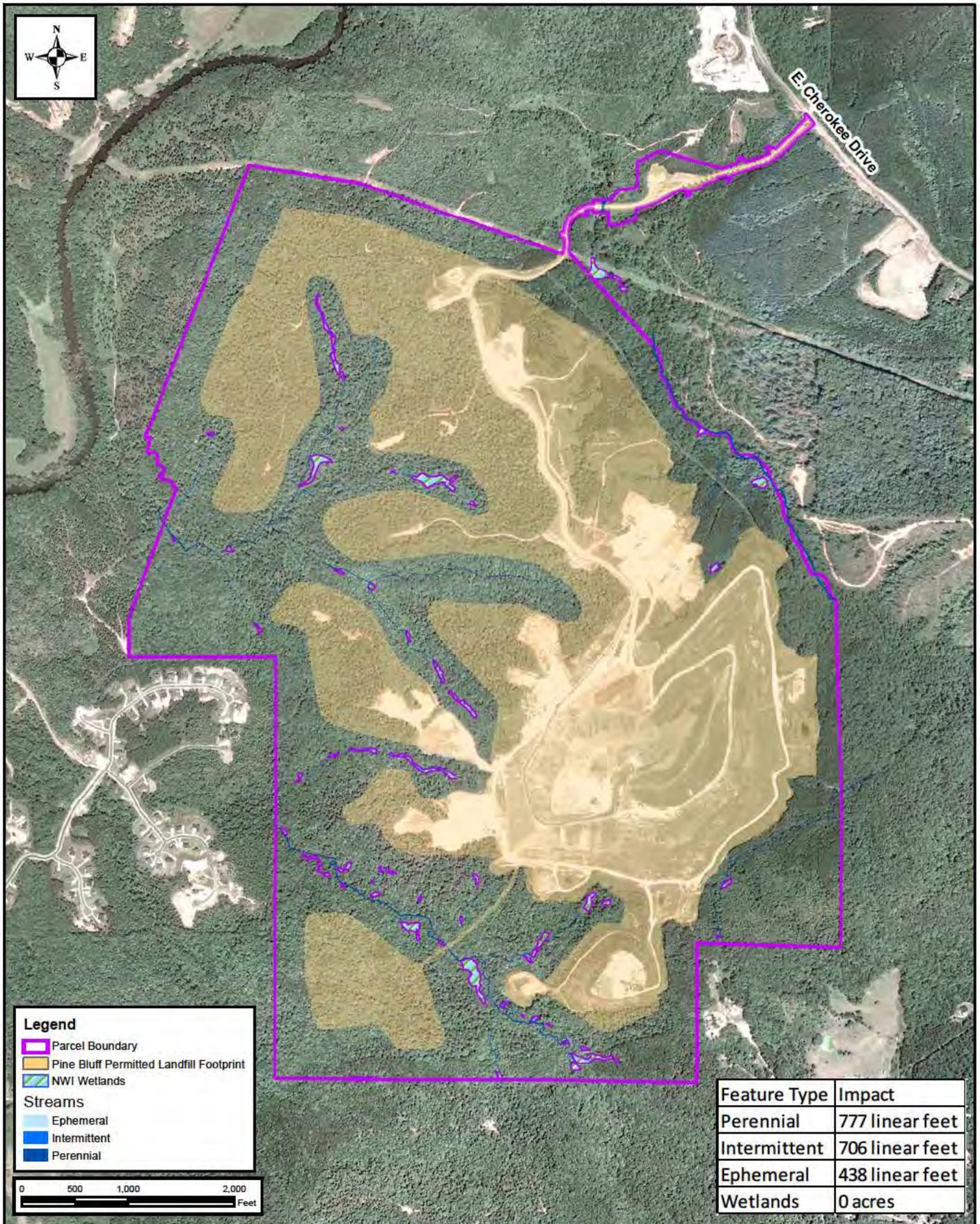
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Conservation Measures

Figure 8



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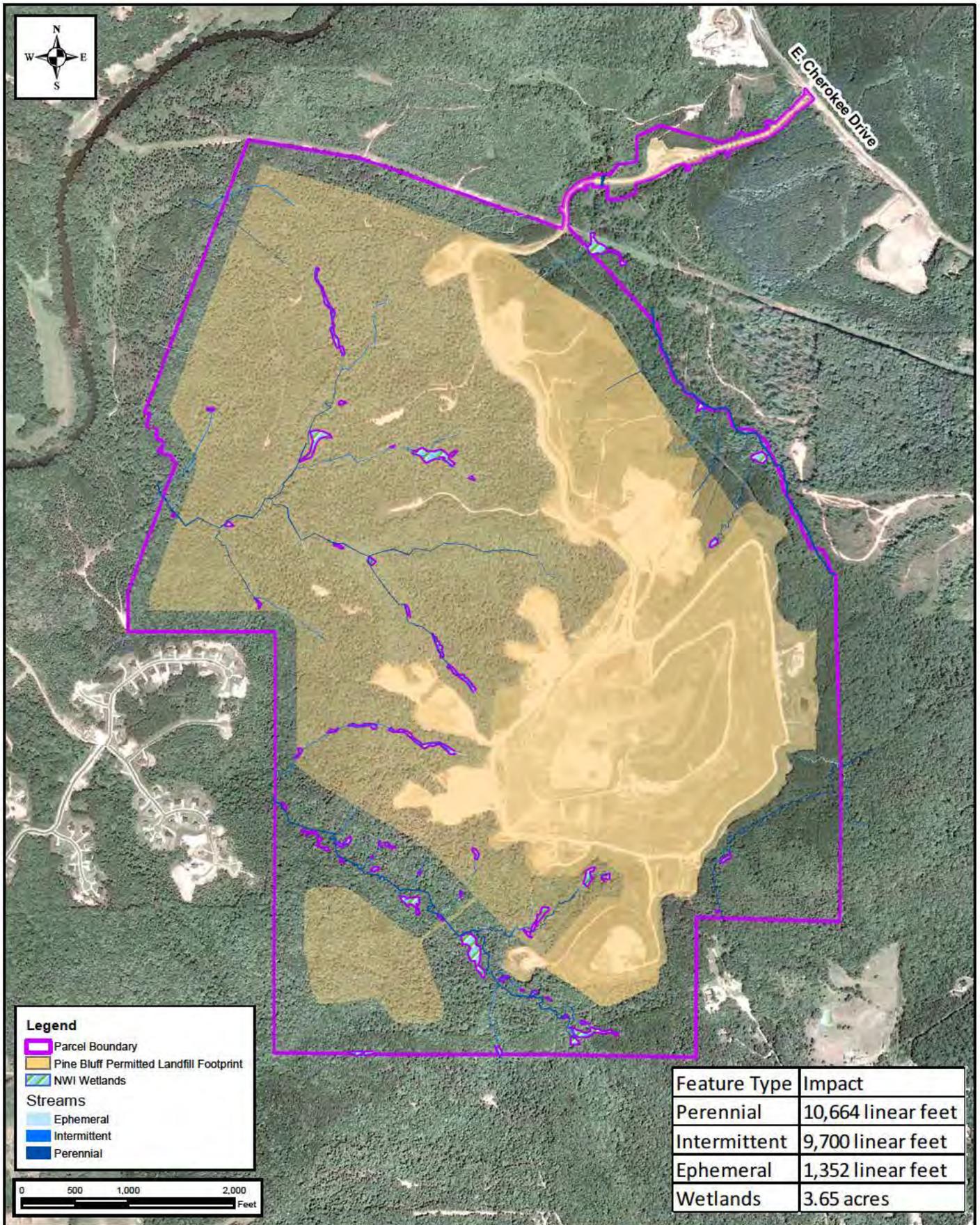
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Pine Bluff Option 1: Currently Permitted (No-Build)

Figure 2



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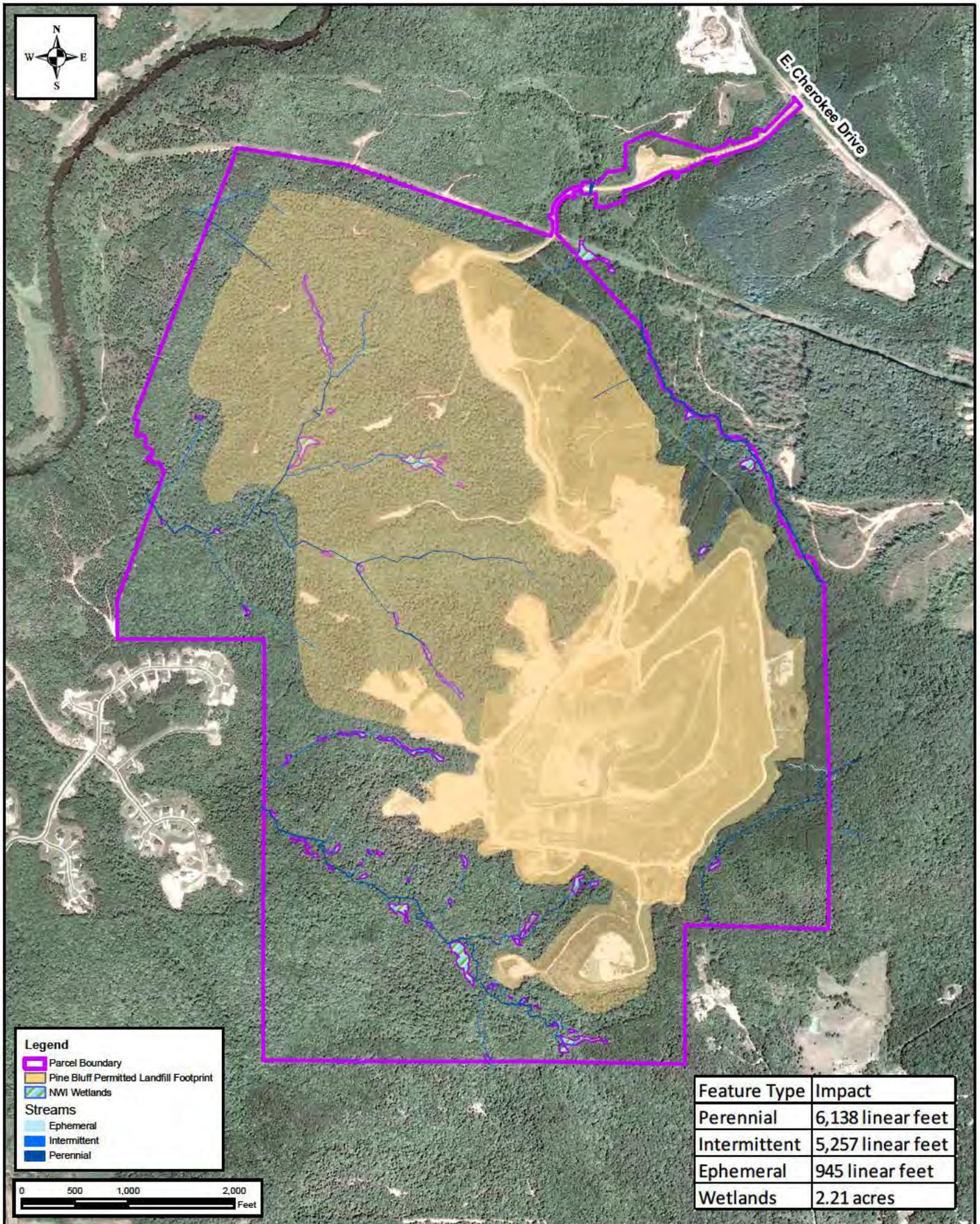
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Pine Bluff Option 2

Figure 3



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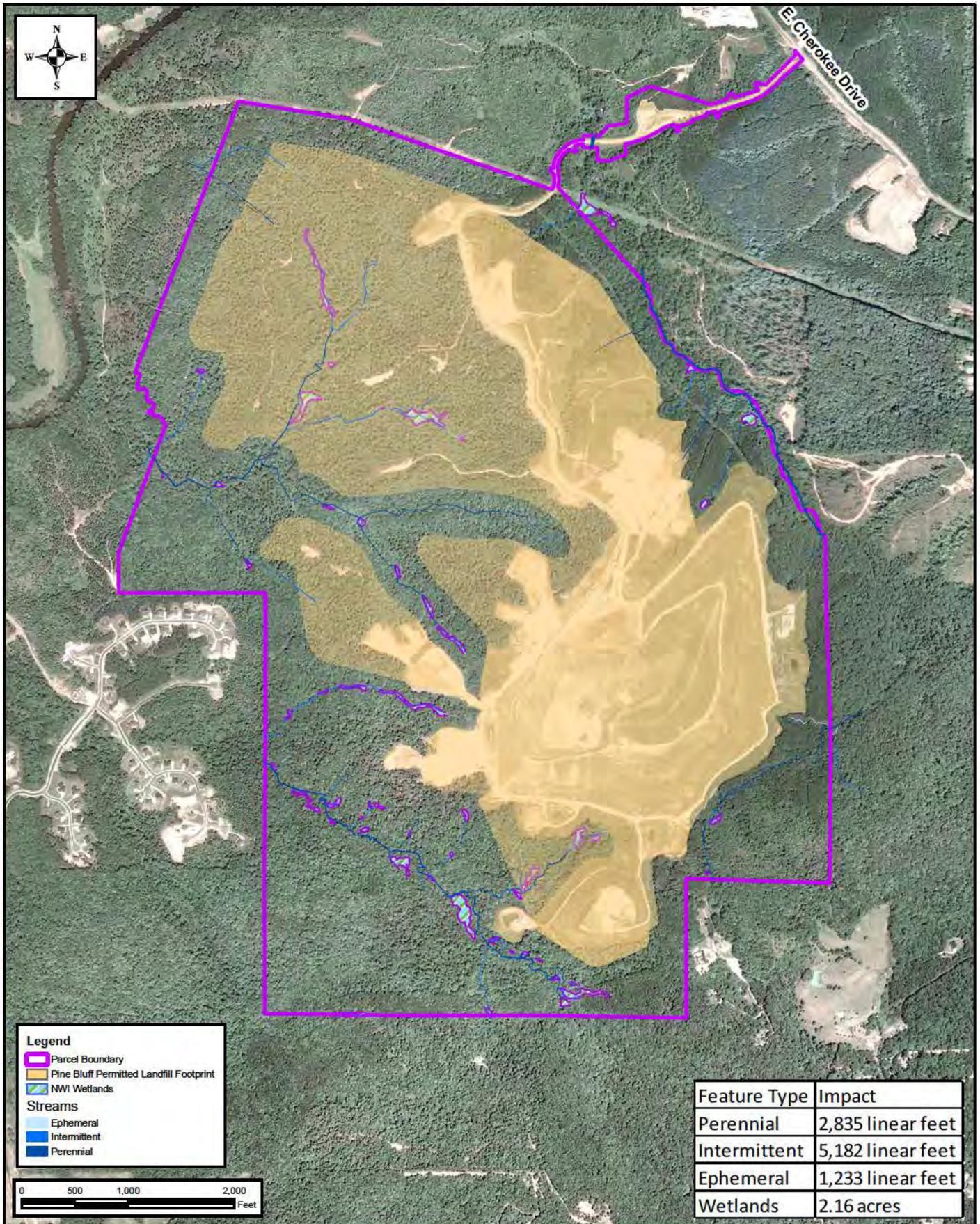
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Pine Bluff Option 3

Figure 4



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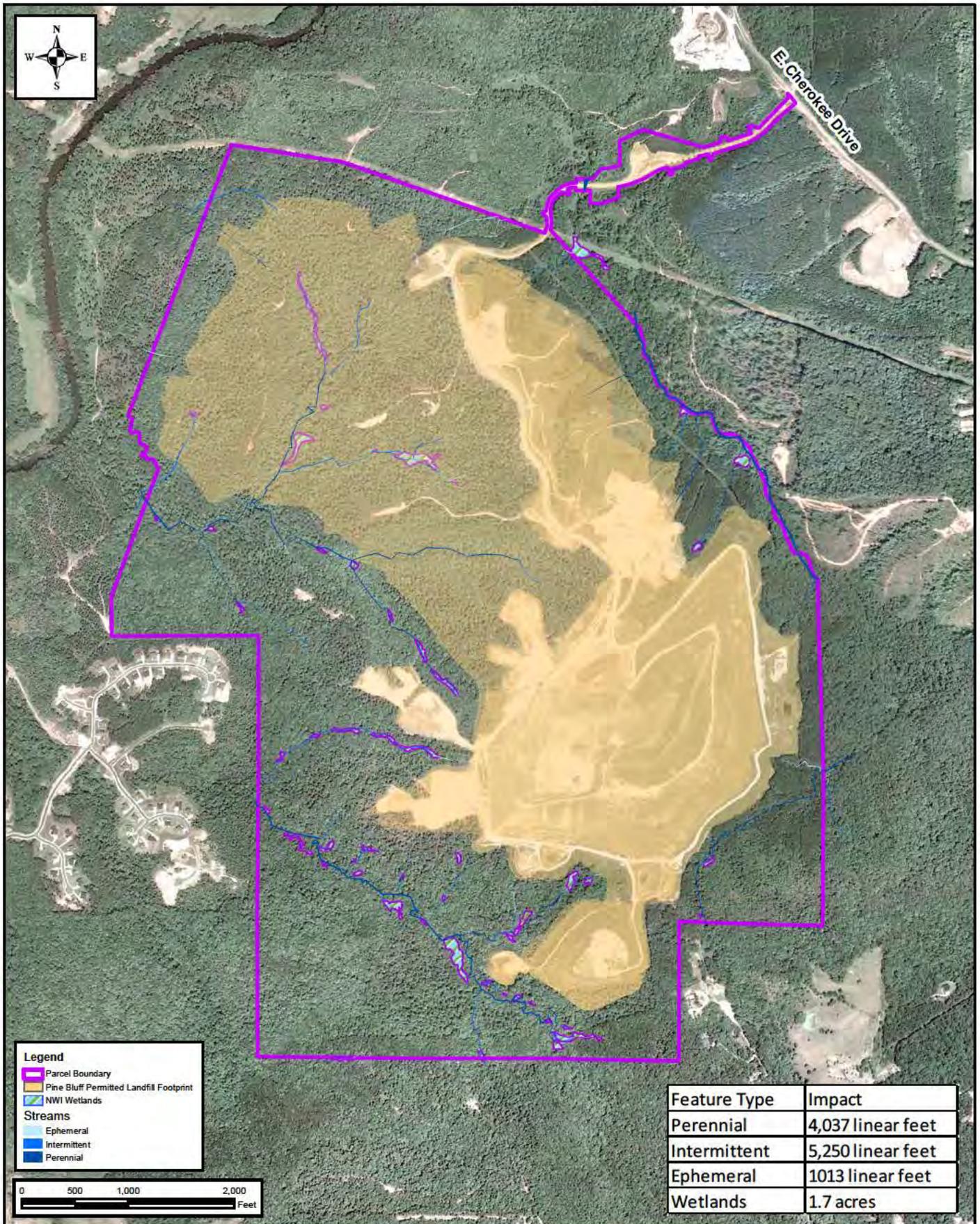
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Pine Bluff Option 4

Figure 5



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Pine Bluff Option 5 (Preferred Alternative)

Figure 6