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

July 9, 2018

Regulatory Branch
SAS-2010-00442

PUBLIC NOTICE
Savannah District

The Savannah District has received a mitigation banking instrument modification request, pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1344), as follows:

Project Number: SAS-2010-00442

Applicant: Mr. Aaron McWhorter
Soque River Conservation, LLC
1487 Black Dirt Road
Whitesburg, Georgia 30185

Agent: Mr. Sean Miller
Mitigation Management
1551 Jennings Mill Road
Unit 1800-B
Watkinsville, Georgia 30677

Location of Proposed Work: The project site is located within an approximate 140-acre site, west of Wall Bridge Loop and Wall Bridge Road, Habersham County, Georgia (Latitude 34.625888, Longitude -83.526126).

Description of Work Subject to the Jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

The bank sponsor, Soque River Conservation, LLC, has requested a modification to their existing mitigation banking instrument (BI), which was approved on June 4, 2013. The modification request includes the following activities: 1.) To remove any stream channels previously restored within the Soque River floodplain where the valley slope does not allow for what would be considered a fully functional stream system; 2.) To enhance/restore previously restored wetland areas within the project area based on confired hydric soil analysis; 3.) Restore existing streams with the goals of promoting increased bedform diversity, reduced sediment supply from streambank erosion, restored floodplain conectivity, increased macroinvertebrate diversity and abundance, and establishment of an appropriate riparian buffer. 4.) To establish a mixture of vegetative preservation and restoration/enhancement buffers surrounding the streams

and wetlands; 5.) To re-plant specific wetland and stream restoration areas with an appropriate plant regime for uplands, riparian areas, streambanks, and various hydrology units within the wetland areas; and 6.) To bring the BI into compliance with current Savannah District Regulatory Mitigation Banking standards (i.e. financial assurances, adaptive management criteria and contingency plans, long-term management, signage, invasive spececis and nuisance animals, etc.).

To accommodate these changes, stream and wetland credit generation would change, performance and success criteria would change, and the monitoring schedule would be updated.

The proposed modification would result in a total of 330.71 wetland credits, which is a 59.12 wetland credit increase (12.23 wetland credits associated with conservation easement) and 73,873.7 stream credits, which is a 616.01 stream credit decrease (2,175.4 stream credits associated with conservation easement).

BACKGROUND

This Public Notice announces a request for authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The applicant's proposed work may also require local governmental approval.

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.

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

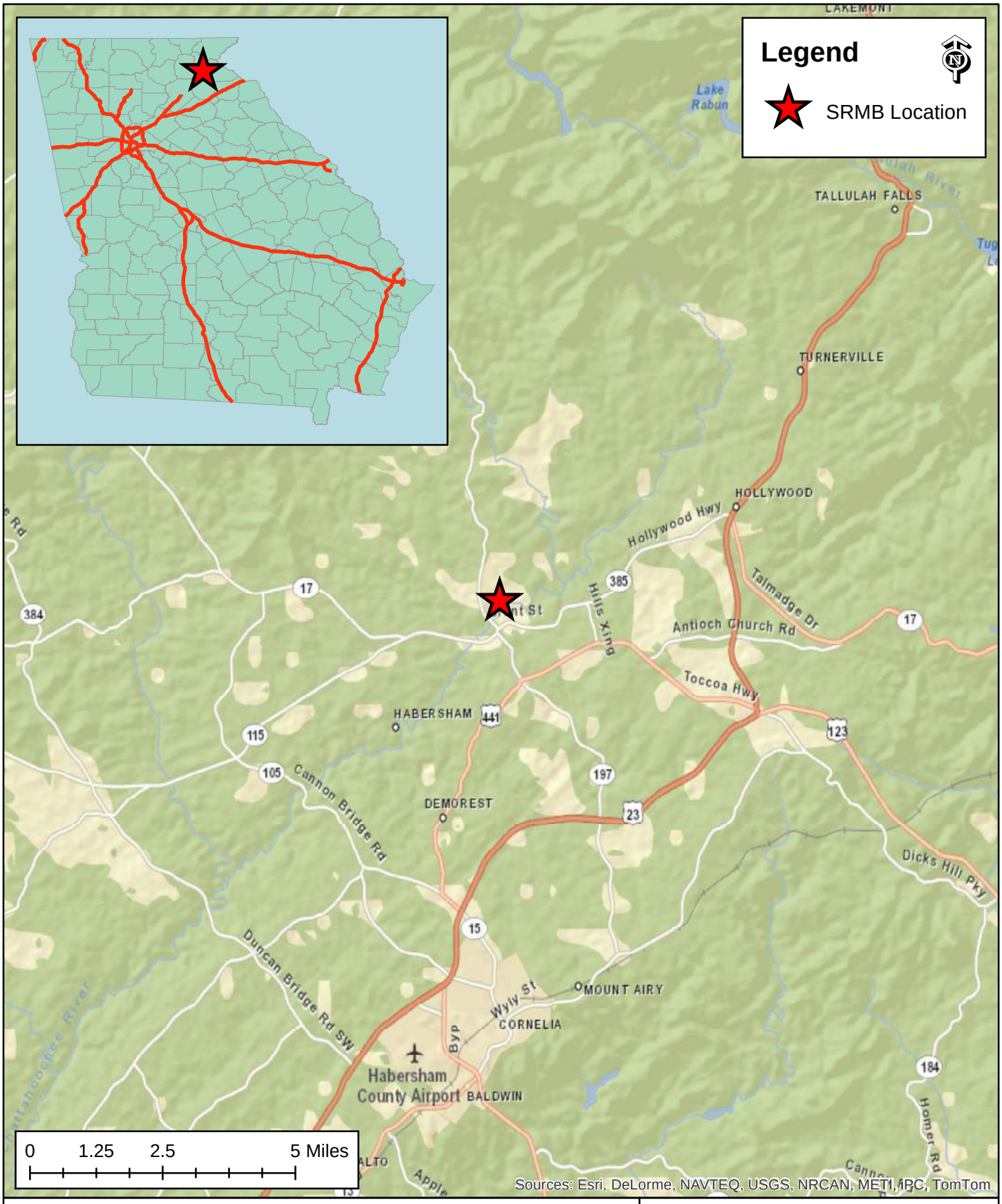
Public Interest Review: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. 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 the modification 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.

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 A. Brannon, 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 and the application number in your comments. If you have any further questions concerning this matter, please contact Elisha A. Brannon, Project Manager, Piedmont Branch at (678) 804-5226.

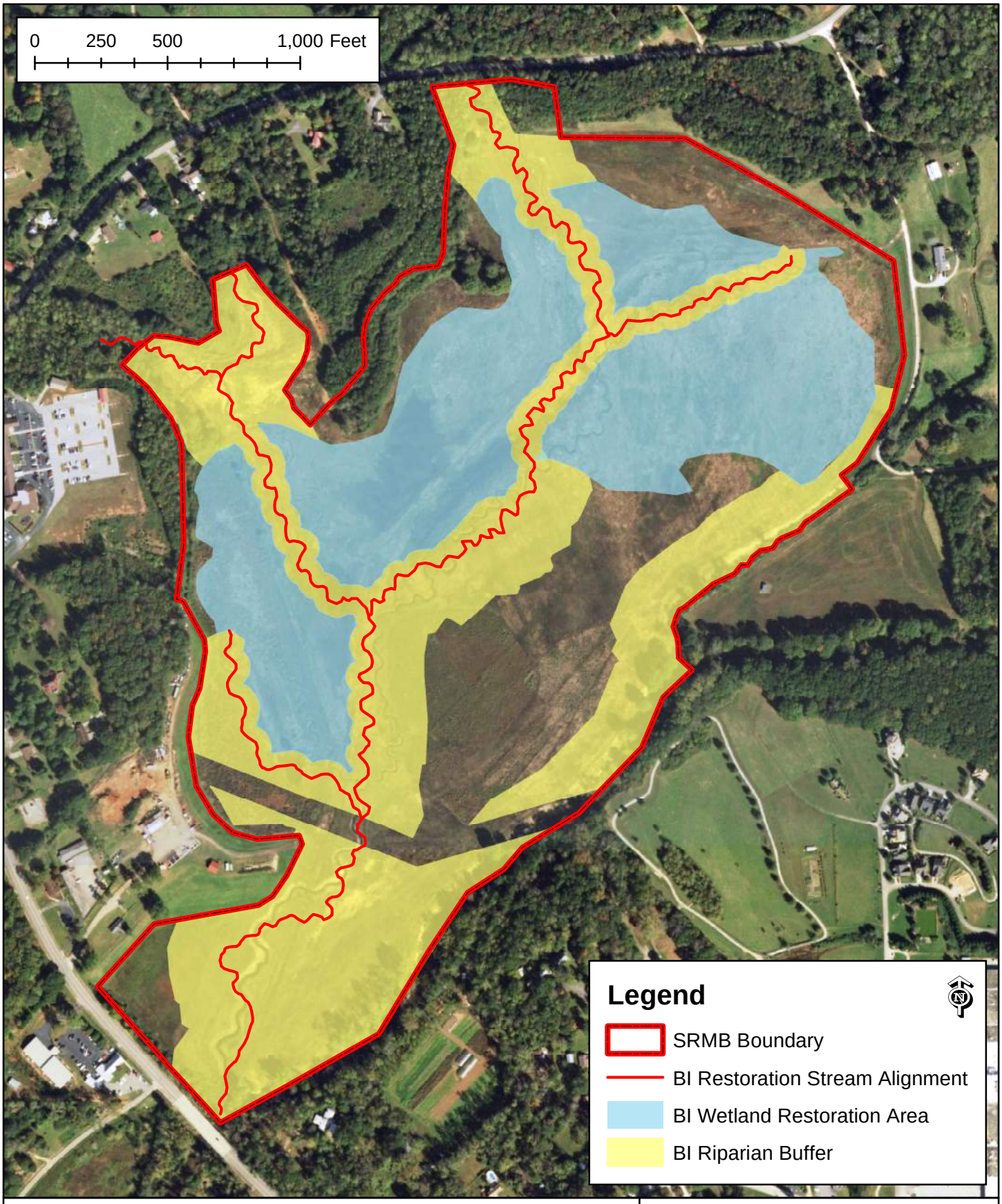
Enclosures

1. Project Location
2. 2014 BI Mitigation Work Plan
3. 2018 Modification Mitigation Work Plan



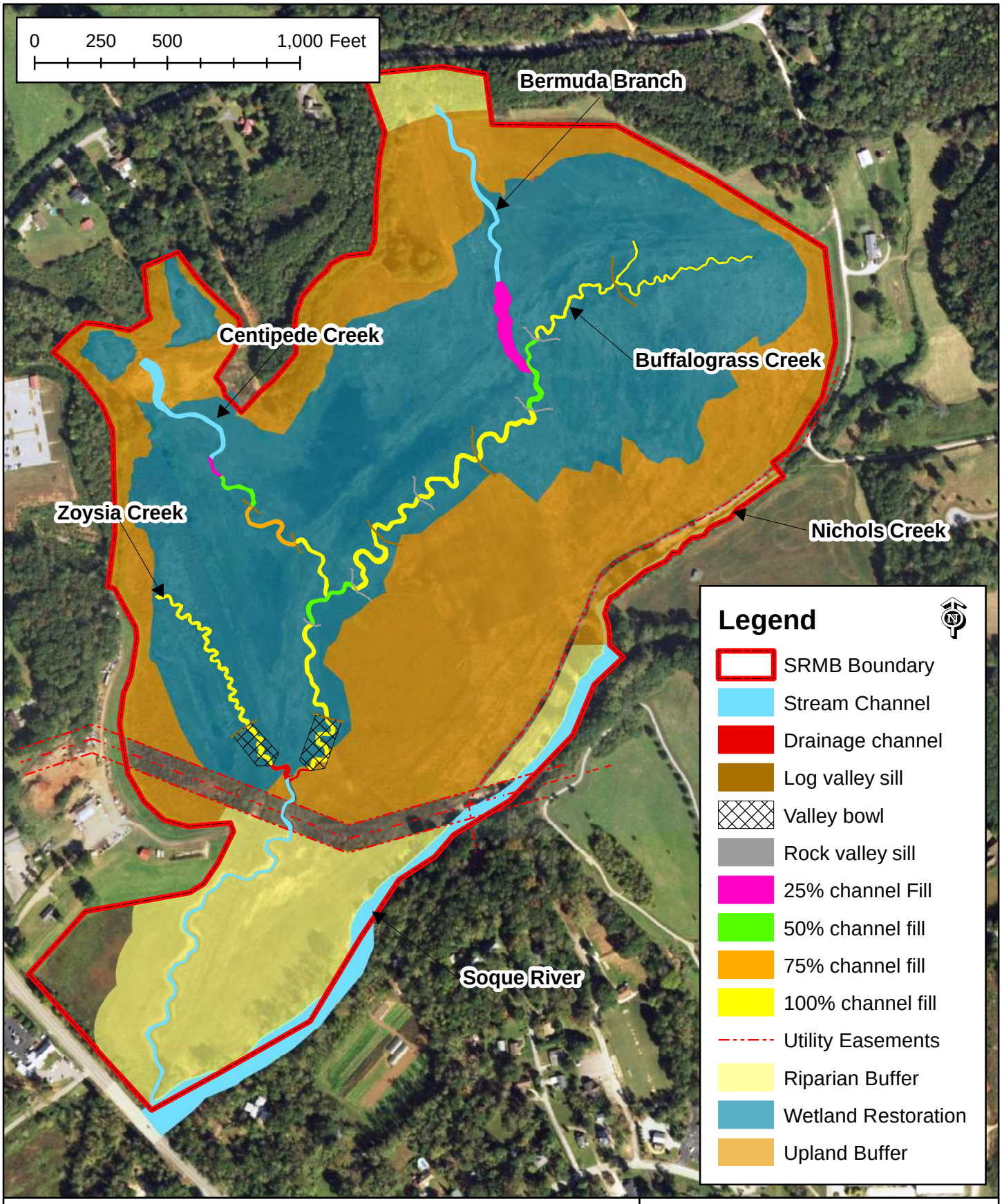
MAP 1
PROJECT LOCATION
SOQUE RIVER MITIGATION BANK
HABERSHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA
BANKING INSTRUMENT MODIFICATION

MITIGATION MANAGEMENT



MAP 4
BI AUTHORIZED RESTORATION PLAN
SOQUE RIVER MITIGATION BANK
HABERSHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA
BANKING INSTRUMENT MODIFICATION

MITIGATION MANAGEMENT



MAP 20
PROPOSED RESTORATION PLAN
SOQUE RIVER MITIGATION BANK
HABERSHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA
BANKING INSTRUMENT MODIFICATION

MITIGATION MANAGEMENT