



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, SAVANNAH DISTRICT
100 WEST OGLETHORPE AVENUE
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31401

September 12, 2023

Regulatory Division
SAS-2023-00205

PUBLIC NOTICE
Savannah District

The Savannah District has received a Prospectus describing the establishment and operation of a proposed wetland compensatory mitigation bank (Long Branch Mitigation Bank (LBMB)) for Federal and State permits as described below:

The comment period for the proposal 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 proposal, and must be submitted to be received on or before the last day of the comment period. Written comments concerning this proposed mitigation bank and Department of the Army Permit Application must reference the Sponsor's name and the Permit Application Number and be forwarded to the US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) at the above address, or via the email listed at the end of this notice.

This public notice does not imply, on the parts of the Corps or other agencies, either favorable or unfavorable opinion of the work to be performed but is issued to solicit comments regarding the factors on which final decisions will be based.

Application Number: SAS-2023-00205

Sponsor: Mr. David Urban
RAI-Long Branch, LLC
5550 Newbury St Suite B
Baltimore, Maryland 21209

Agent: Mr. Ethan Roberson
HGS, LLC
1551 Jennings Mill Road, Unit 1400-B
Watkinsville, Georgia 30677

Location of Proposed Work: The project is proposed on an approximately 1,334-acre site located directly east of the intersection of East Old Savannah Road and Edna Lanier Road, and west of the Ogeechee River, approximately ten (10) miles southeast of the City of Millen, in Jenkins County, Georgia (centered at approximately latitude 32.6829°, longitude -81.8833°). Please refer to the enclosed Project Location Map (Figure 1), Aerial Imagery exhibit (Figure 2), and Existing Conditions exhibit (Figure 18) for more details on the project location.

Description of Mitigation Bank: The Sponsor proposes to establish a commercial wetland mitigation bank on the project site. As currently conceptualized, the project would involve 334.89 acres of wetland restoration, 497.80 acres of wetland enhancement, 249.32 acres of wetland preservation and 254.00 acres of upland buffer. Although stream treatments are not currently proposed for credit generation, the Sponsor has indicated that stream hydrology sources will be protected to support the riverine wetland functions of the project. The spatial configuration of the proposed conceptual restoration/enhancement treatments is provided on the Conceptual Mitigation Plan exhibit (please refer to Figure 19). While a network of roads exists throughout the proposed bank boundary, these areas are not included in the total acreage of the project. The Sponsor has indicated that portions of these roads will be further evaluated and may potentially be proposed for removal as part of restoration design efforts that would be submitted in a Draft Banking Instrument.

The Sponsor has provided a list of project objectives for the LBMB, including the following: 1) re-establish appropriate hydrology and saturation duration of existing hydric soil within the proposed bank; 2) improve wetland groundwater interactions by restoring hydrologic connectivity of wetlands to adjacent streams and removal of anthropogenic barriers; 3) restore groundwater processes by filling agricultural and silviculture drainage ditches and increase floodplain connectivity through the removal of anthropogenic barriers which impede groundwater interactions with adjacent wetlands; 4) improve aquatic and terrestrial wildlife habitat and habitat connectivity within the proposed bank by re-establishing diverse natural vegetative communities via planting an appropriate structure and composition of forest, shrub, and/or herbaceous species characteristic of reference natural vegetative communities; 5) improve volume of large woody debris and contributing organic matter by reestablishing appropriate vegetative communities within the proposed bank to sustain these functions; 6) increase infiltration/baseflow to streams while slowing stormwater through the establishment of vegetative buffer zones; and 7) establish a mixture of vegetative preservation and restoration/enhancement of surrounding upland areas that will help maintain and protect functions regained through the wetland preservation and restoration/enhancement. The Sponsor has proposed to utilize the Savannah District's 2021 Standard Operating Procedure for Compensatory Mitigation, but has not currently proposed an estimate of the potential mitigation credits that could be generated from the project.

Geographic Service Area: The proposed Geographic Service Area (GSA) is the defined area within which this bank can reasonably be expected to provide appropriate compensation for impacts to aquatic resources. The proposed GSA for this bank would

include the Ogeechee Service Area, which consists of the Upper Ogeechee (8-digit Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) 03060201), Lower Ogeechee (03060202), Canoochee (03060203), and Ogeechee Coastal (03060204) as the Primary Service Area. The Lower Savannah and Altamaha River Service Areas are proposed as the Secondary Service Area, to include Middle Savannah (03060106), Brier (03060108), Lower Savannah (03060109), Lower Oconee (03070102), Altamaha (03070106), Ohoopsee (03070107), and Cumberland-St. Simons (03070203). Please refer to the Proposed Service Area Map (Figure 7) for more details regarding the proposed Primary and Secondary Service Areas for the LBMB.

Oversight: This mitigation bank may be considered one of a number of practicable alternatives available to applicants to compensate for unavoidable impacts associated with permits issued under the authority of Sections 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act for projects located within the approved GSA.

Oversight of this compensatory mitigation bank would be by a group of Federal and State agency representatives collectively referred to as the Interagency Review Team (IRT). The IRT shall be chaired by the Savannah District, Corps, and is comprised of representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division.

The actual approval of the use of this mitigation bank for a specific project is the decision of the Corps pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The Corps provides no guarantee that any particular individual or general permit would be granted authorization to use this compensatory mitigation bank to compensate for unavoidable impacts associated with a proposed permit, even though mitigation from this bank may be available.

Authority: A public notice regarding the proposed mitigation bank is required pursuant to Title 33 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 325 and 332, and Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 230, entitled “Compensatory Mitigation for Losses of Aquatic Resources, Final Rule”, published in the Federal Register on April 10, 2008.

Consideration of Public Comments: The Corps 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 this proposed mitigation bank. The Prospectus can be reviewed via the Savannah District’s “Bank & ILF Sites” link on

the Regulatory In-lieu Fee and Bank Information Tracking System (RIBITS) website, within the “Cyber Repository” for the Long Branch Mitigation Bank.

Written comments received will be considered by the Corps in evaluating this proposal. Comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards and flood plain values (in accordance with Executive Order 11988), land use, navigation, shore erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, consideration of property ownership, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the public.

Preliminary review, provided by the Sponsor, indicates that: 1) No species of fish, wildlife, or plant (or their critical habitat) listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (PL 93-205) would be adversely affected; and 2) No cultural or historical resources considered eligible or potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places would be affected according to a literature review of known listed properties. Additional information may change any of these preliminary findings.

Comment Period: Anyone wishing to comment on this application for a Department of the Army Permit should submit comments via email to tyler.j.brock@usace.army.mil or in writing to: Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District, Attention: Tyler Brock, 100 West Oglethorpe Avenue, Savannah, Georgia 31401, no later than **30 days** from the date of this notice. Please refer to the Sponsor's name (RAI-Long Branch, LLC) and the assigned Regulatory file number (SAS-2023-00205) in your comments.

If you have any further questions concerning this public notice, please contact Tyler J. Brock, Project Manager, Coastal Branch at 912-652-5139, or tyler.j.brock@usace.army.mil.

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1. Figure 1: Project Location Map
2. Figure 2: Aerial Imagery
3. Figure 18: Existing Conditions
4. Figure 19: Conceptual Mitigation Plan
5. Figure 7: Proposed Service Area Map

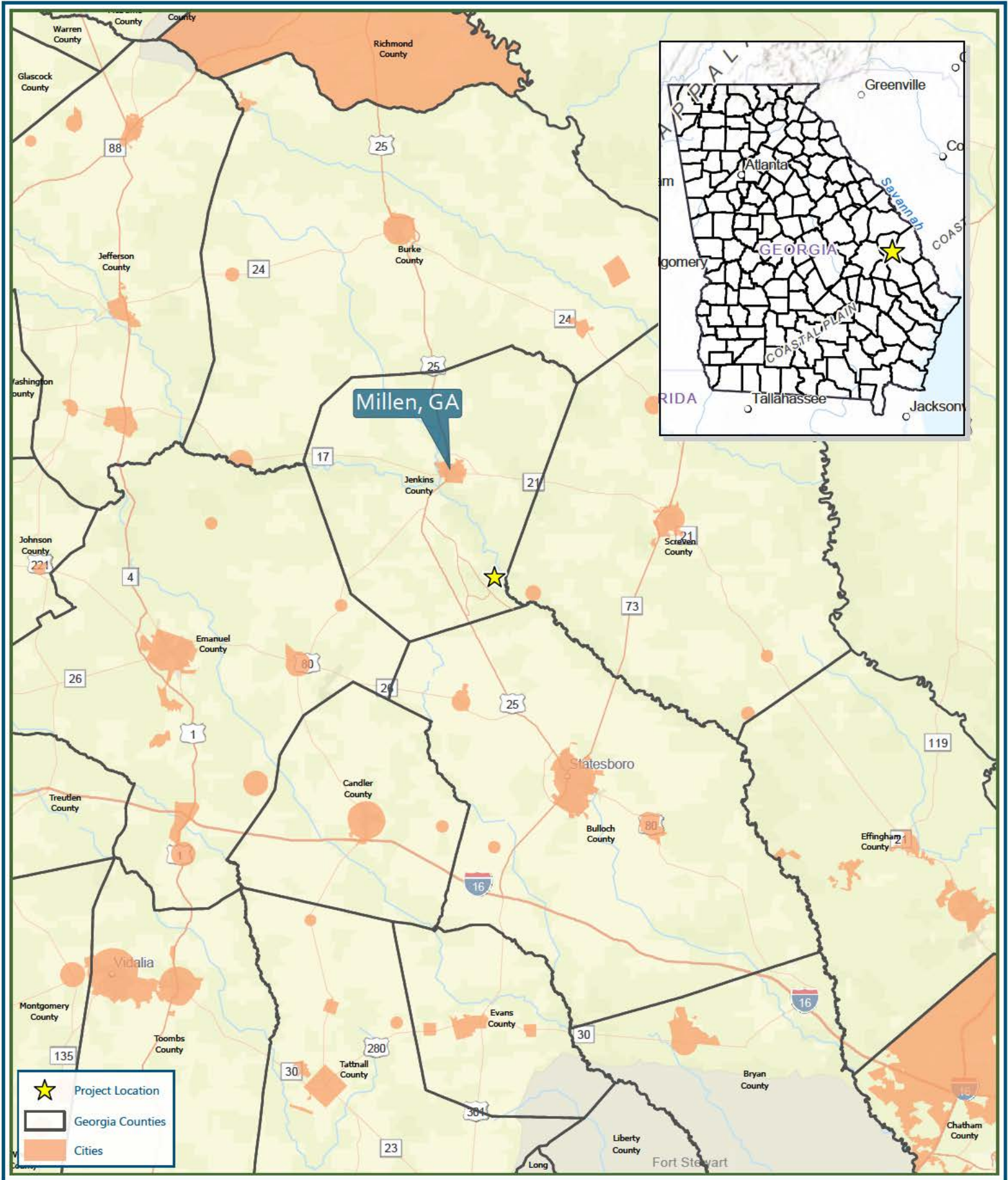


Figure 1
Project Location

Long Branch Mitigation Bank
2023 Prospectus



Reference: Project limits are approximate. The property boundaries depicted on this map have not been surveyed and are for prospect assessment purposes only. This information is not to be used as final legal boundaries.
Data Source: USGS
County: Jenkins County, Georgia
Coordinates: 81.8699°W 32.6647°N
Spatial Reference: NAD 1983 2011 StatePlane Georgia East FIPS 1001 Ft US



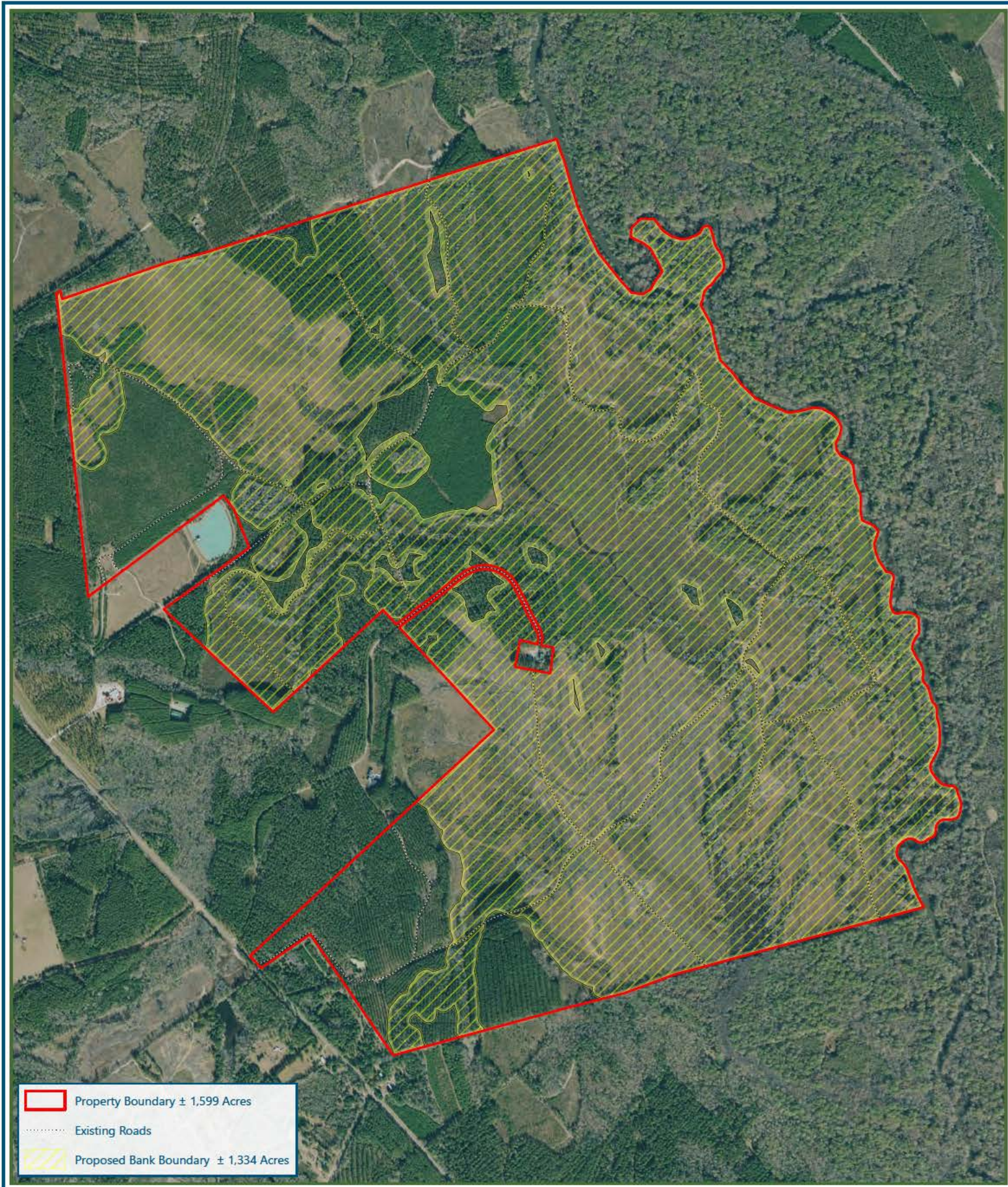
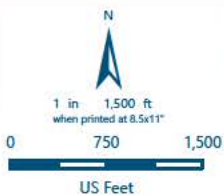


Figure 2
Aerial Imagery

Long Branch Mitigation Bank
2023 Prospectus



Reference: Project limits are approximate. The property boundaries depicted on this map have not been surveyed and are for prospect assessment purposes only. This information is not to be used as final legal boundaries.

Data Source: USGS NAIP Imagery

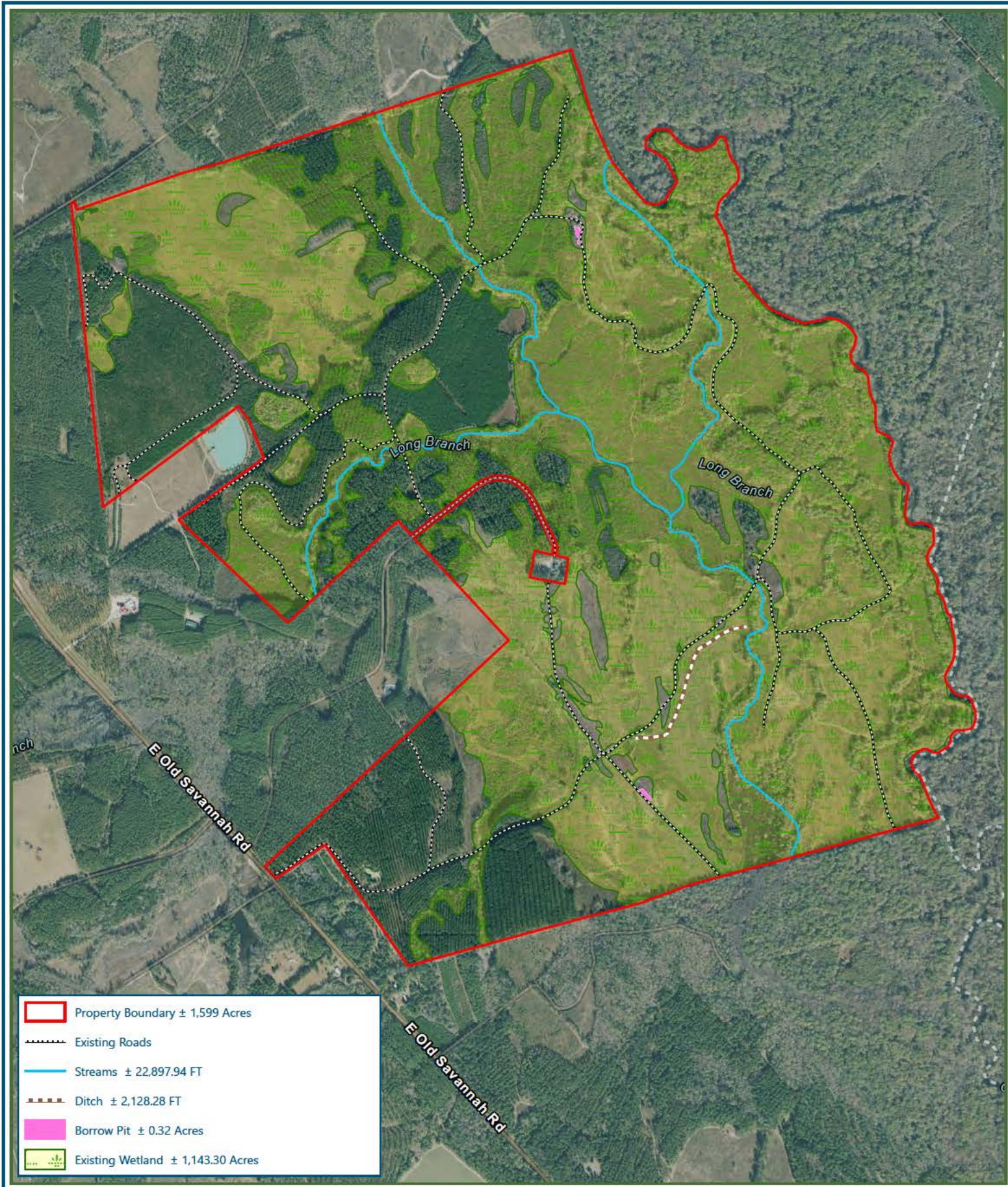
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Coordinates: 81.8839°W 32.6817°N

Spatial Reference:

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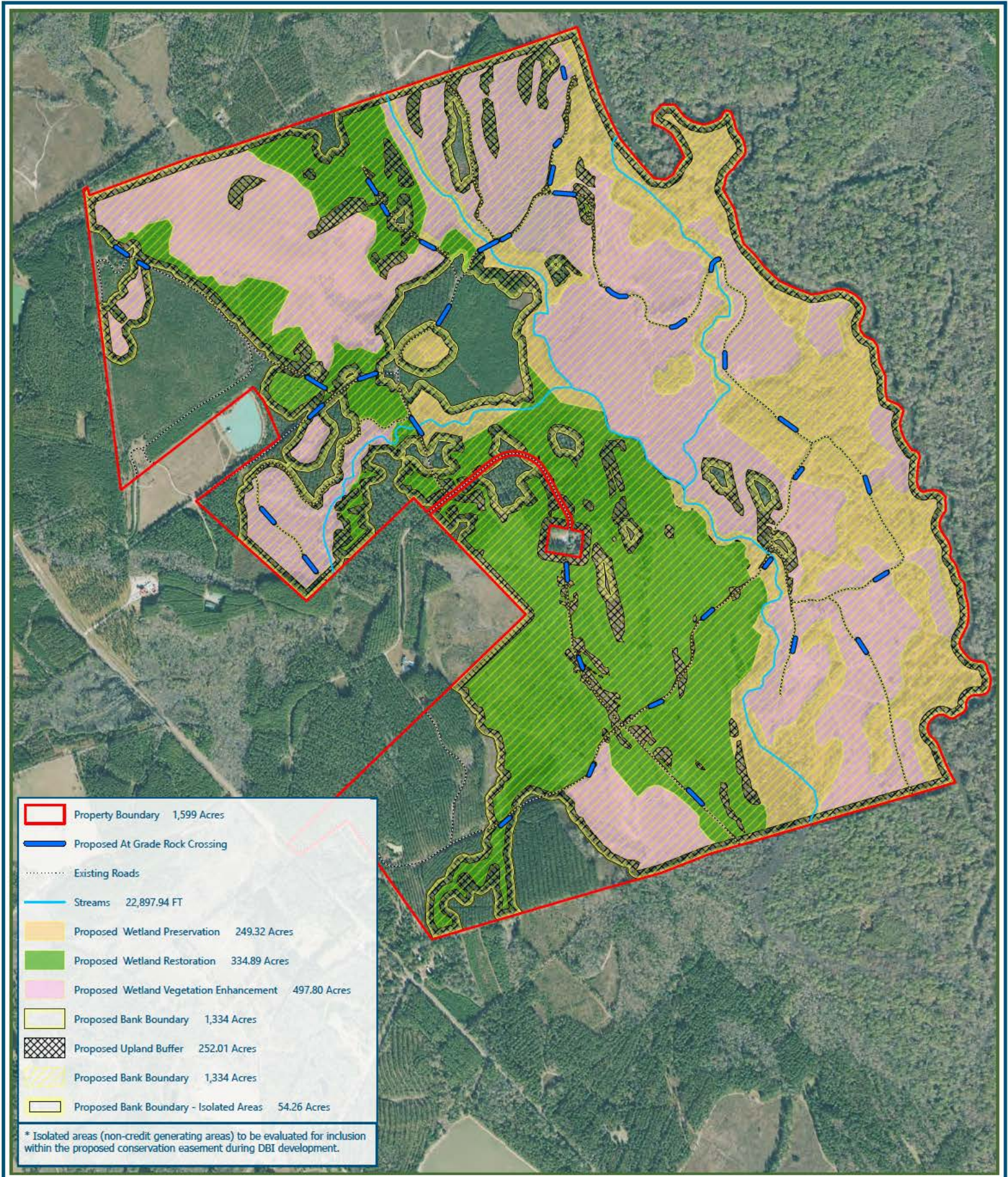
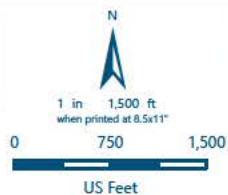


Figure 19
Conceptual Mitigation Plan

Long Branch Mitigation Bank
2023 Prospectus



Reference: Project limits are approximate. The property boundaries depicted on this map have not been surveyed and are for prospect assessment purposes only. This information is not to be used as final legal boundaries.

Data Source: USGS

County: Jenkins County, Georgia

Coordinates: 83.1529°W 32.6985°N

Spatial Reference: NAD 1983 2011 StatePlane Georgia West FIPS 1002 Ft US



