



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, SAVANNAH DISTRICT  
1025 BUFORD DAM ROAD  
BUFORD, GEORGIA 30518

January 31, 2024

Regulatory Division  
SAS-2024-00073

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**Savannah District**

The Savannah District has received a Prospectus describing the establishment and operation of a proposed wetland compensatory mitigation bank (Bulltown Wetland Mitigation Bank) 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-2024-00073

Bank Sponsor: Mr. Joseph Usher  
Bulltown Place, LLC  
4 Marsh Harbor Drive, North  
Savannah, Georgia 31410

Project Agent: Mr. Brandon Smith  
Hodges, Harbin, Newberry & Tribble, Inc.  
617 Stephenson Avenue, Suite 110  
Savannah, Georgia 31405

Location of Proposed Work: The Bulltown Wetland Mitigation Bank is proposed on a 324.8-acre portion of a larger, 803.06-acre property located north of Jones Road, west of Black Island Road and generally bisected east/west by Horsepen Island Road, in unincorporated northwestern McIntosh County, Georgia (centered at approximately latitude 31.6325, longitude -81.4558). The project site generally incorporates portions of both Big Mortar Swamp and Horsepen Island. The project is located in the

Ogeechee River Coastal sub-basin (8-digit hydrologic unit code (HUC) 03060204), within the Upper South Newport River watershed (12-digit HUC 030602040601). Please refer to the enclosed Figure 1: Vicinity Map and Figure 4: USGS Topographic Map for more detailed information concerning the location of the proposed mitigation bank.

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

The proposed primary service area (Ogeechee River Basin sub-basin) would serve the following 8-digit HUCs and portions of the listed counties:

- *Ogeechee River Coastal (03060204)*: Bryan, Chatham, Liberty, Long, and McIntosh Counties;
- *Canoochee River (03060203)*: Bryan, Bulloch, Candler, Emanuel, Evans, Liberty, Long, and Tattnall Counties;
- *Lower Ogeechee River (03060202)*: Bryan, Chatham, Effingham, Emanuel, Bulloch, Screven, and Jenkins Counties; and
- *Upper Ogeechee River (03060201)*: Burke, Emanuel, Glascock, Greene, Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Taliaferro, Warren, and Washington Counties.

The proposed secondary service areas (portions of the Altamaha River Basin and portions of the Lower Savannah River Basin within Georgia) would serve the following 8-digit HUCs and portions of the listed counties:

- *Cumberland-St. Simons (03070203)*: Brantley, Camden, Glynn, and Wayne Counties;
- *Altamaha River (03070106)*: Appling, Glynn, Jeff Davis, Long, McIntosh, Montgomery, Tattnall, Toombs, and Wayne Counties;
- *Ochoopee River (03070107)*: Candler, Emmanuel, Johnson, Laurens, Montgomery, Truetlen, Toombs, Tattnall, and Washington Counties;
- *Lower Oconee River (03070102)*: Baldwin, Hancock, Jones, Washington, Wilkinson, Johnson, Bleckley, Laurens, Treutlen, Wheeler, and Montgomery Counties;
- *Lower Savannah River (03060109)*: Chatham, Effingham, and Screven Counties; and
- *Brier Creek (03060108)*: Burke, Columbia, Glascock, Jefferson, Jenkins, McDuffie, Richmond, Screven, and Warren Counties.

The Sponsor's proposed GSA for this bank is depicted in the enclosed Figure 9: Standard Service Area Map.

Description of Mitigation Bank: The Bank Sponsor has requested approval to develop a new wetland bank mitigation to serve as compensatory wetland mitigation for the proposed primary and secondary service areas (as described above). The Sponsor describes the proposed project site as... *characterized primarily by active agriculture fields (blueberries, 173.8-acres), varying stages of pine plantation (96.8-acres), riverine lands (50.9-acres) and roadbeds (3.3-acres). The majority of the historic wetlands on the property have greatly reduced wetland functions due to the extensive ditch network, as well as agriculture and silviculture beds that effectively function as ditches themselves by steering drainage towards the site ditches.* More specifically, existing land cover on the project site is detailed in the following table, and as depicted in the enclosed Figure 5: 2022 Aerial Imagery and Figure 21: Present Site Conditions Map.

<b>Existing Site Conditions</b>		
<b>Land Type</b>	<b>Present Vegetation</b>	<b>Area (acres)</b>
Wetland	Clear-Cut Wetland (PEM)	26.3
	Planted Pine/Clear-Cut Wetland (PEM1)	18.5
Upland	Agricultural Production	169.1
	Agricultural Use	4.7
	Hardwoods/Clear-Cut	24.6
	Planted Pine	77.2
	Planted Pine/Clear-Cut	1.1
	Road	3.3
<b>Total</b>		<b>324.8</b>

The Sponsor has indicated that the wetland treatment areas on the proposed project site would target slope wetlands (associated with existing managed pine and cultivated blueberry fields), as well as riverine wetlands. As a component of the preliminary baseline data collection, the Sponsor has completed a site-specific soils verification, the findings of which is detailed in the enclosed Figure 7: Site Specific Soil Assessment Map. The proposed conceptual mitigation plan for the project consists of the actions summarized within the table, below, in addition to the enclosed Figure 23: Proposed Mitigation.

<b>Proposed Mitigation Activities</b>	<b>Area (acres)</b>
Vegetative & Hydrologic Restoration	248.4
Vegetative Restoration & Hydrologic Enhancement	41.7
Horsepen Road Removals	2.2
Upland Buffer	7.2
Wetland Buffer	2.8
Upland Inclusion	22.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>324.8</b>

The Sponsor's preliminary mitigation plan includes the removal of existing agricultural and silvicultural beds that drain toward Big Mortar Swamp and Horsepen Swamp, implementation of "ditch reach plugs" within approximately 46,806 linear feet of existing ditches onsite, removal of drainage tiles (when encountered), pine stem removal, as well as replanting the recently clearcut area with the wetland vegetative community historically present on the site. These activities are intended to restore the hydroperiods indicative of the riverine and slope wetland systems the Sponsor contends are characteristic of the unimpaired site conditions. The Sponsor indicates that there is abundant material for backfilling of ditches given the presence of spoil along the ditches, the amount of grading proposed within the blueberry fields, and the availability of potential borrow areas that adjoin the proposed bank boundary. Please refer to Figure 24: Proposed Mitigation Activities for more details on the conceptual mitigation plan.

The existing blueberry and pine bedding would be mechanically graded, and a drum mulcher would then be employed to mulch the downed vegetation, which is anticipated to also eliminate the remaining portions of the existing beds. After all site clearing is conducted, the entire mitigation area would be subjected to a prescribed burn. The entire site would then be reestablished with native bottomland bare root tree seedlings on ten-foot centers (440 trees/acre). The Sponsor also plans to remove all secondary access roads throughout the project site, and to install "low water swales" along Horsepen Island Road, "to allow for historic water movements and patterns to be restored". Future ecological performance of the project would be monitored as per the enclosed Figure 25: Hydrologic Monitoring Units and Figure 26: Vegetation Monitoring Units.

Oversight: This compensatory 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 Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and/or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act for projects located within the prescribed GSA.

Oversight of this compensatory mitigation bank will be by a group of Federal and State agency representatives collectively referred to as the Interagency Review Team (IRT). The IRT is chaired by the Corps and is typically comprised of representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division and Coastal Resources 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/or Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The Corps provides no guarantee that any particular individual or general permit will 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 development of the proposed Bulltown Wetland 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 to consider and evaluate this proposed mitigation bank. The complete Prospectus can be viewed and downloaded online from our Regulatory Information Banking and In-Lieu Fee Tracking System (RIBITS) website at [https://ribits.ops.usace.army.mil/ords/f?p=107:0:14757029607351:APPLICATION\\_PROCESS=AP\\_DB\\_DOC:::AI\\_STRING,AI\\_ID:attachment,134592](https://ribits.ops.usace.army.mil/ords/f?p=107:0:14757029607351:APPLICATION_PROCESS=AP_DB_DOC:::AI_STRING,AI_ID:attachment,134592). If you are unable to view or download the Prospectus, please contact Mr. Justin Hammonds, Chief, Special Projects Team, at [justin.a.hammonds@usace.army.mil](mailto:justin.a.hammonds@usace.army.mil), or by phone at 678-804-5227. Written comments received will be considered by the Corps in evaluating this proposal.

Preliminary review of the Prospectus indicates that: 1) An environmental impact statement will not be required; 2) 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) will be affected; and, 3) No cultural or historical resources considered eligible or potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places will be affected according to a website review of known listed properties. Additional information may change any of these preliminary findings.

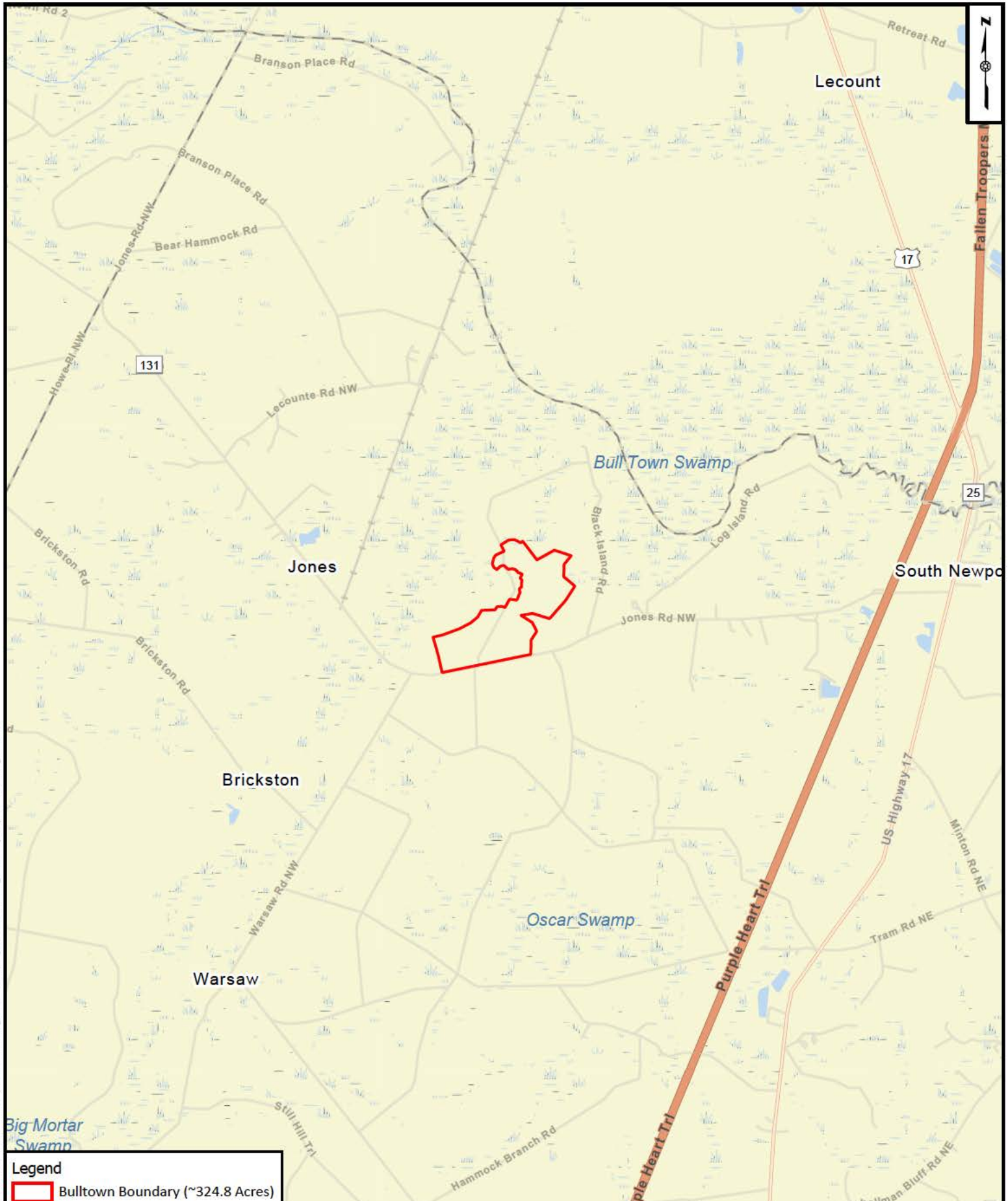
Comment Period: Anyone wishing to comment on this proposal should submit comments by email to [justin.a.hammonds@usace.army.mil](mailto:justin.a.hammonds@usace.army.mil). Alternatively, you can submit comments in writing by mail to: Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District, Regulatory Division, Attention: Mr. Justin Hammonds, 1025 Buford

Dam Road, Buford, Georgia 31518, no later than 30 days from the date of this notice. Please refer to the Project Name (Bulltown Wetland Mitigation Bank) and the Regulatory Division file number (SAS-2024-00073) in your comments.

If you have any further questions concerning this matter, please contact Mr. Justin Hammonds, at 678-804-5227, or via e-mail at [justin.a.hammonds@usace.army.mil](mailto:justin.a.hammonds@usace.army.mil).

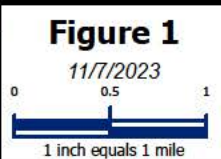
#### Enclosures

1. Figure 1: Vicinity Map
2. Figure 4: USGS Topographic Map
3. Figure 9: Standard Service Area Map
4. Figure 5: 2022 Aerial Imagery
5. Figure 21: Present Site Conditions Map
6. Figure 7: Site Specific Soil Assessment Map
7. Figure 23: Proposed Mitigation
8. Figure 24: Proposed Mitigation Activities
9. Figure 25: Hydrologic Monitoring Units
10. Figure 26: Vegetation Monitoring Units



**Legend**  
 Bulltown Boundary (~324.8 Acres)

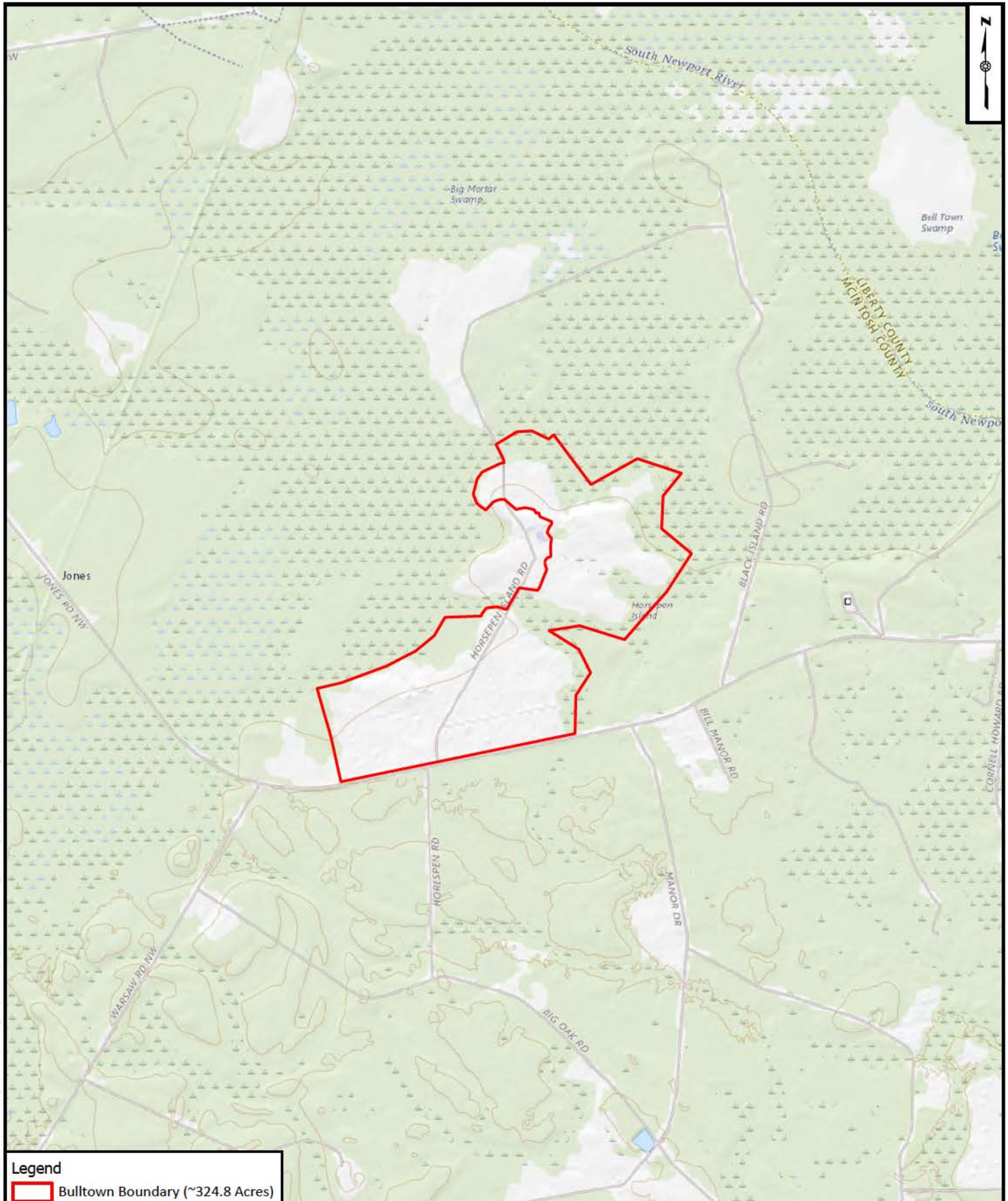
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**Vicinity Map**  
 Bulltown Place, LLC  
 Bulltown Mitigation Bank  
 McIntosh County, Georgia

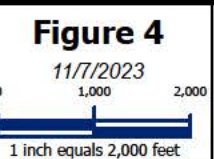
**HHNT**  
 HODGES, HARBIN,  
 NEWBERRY & TRIBBLE, INC.  
 Consulting Engineers

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**Legend**  
 Bulltown Boundary (~324.8 Acres)

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**USGS Topographic Map**  
 Bulltown Place, LLC  
 Bulltown Mitigation Bank  
 McIntosh County, Georgia

**HHNT**  
 HODGES, HARBIN,  
 NEWBERRY & TRIBBLE, INC.  
 Consulting Engineers

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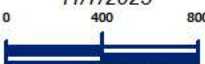




Notes:  
 1. Imagery obtained from Google Earth Pro, dated: 11/2022.

Legend  
 Bulltown Boundary (~324.8 Acres)

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**Figure 5**  
 11/7/2023  
  
 1 inch equals 800 feet

**2022 Aerial Imagery**  
 Bulltown Place, LLC  
 Bulltown Mitigation Bank  
 McIntosh County, Georgia

**HHNT**  
 HODGES, HARBIN,  
 NEWBERRY & TRIBBLE, INC.  
 Consulting Engineers

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**Legend**

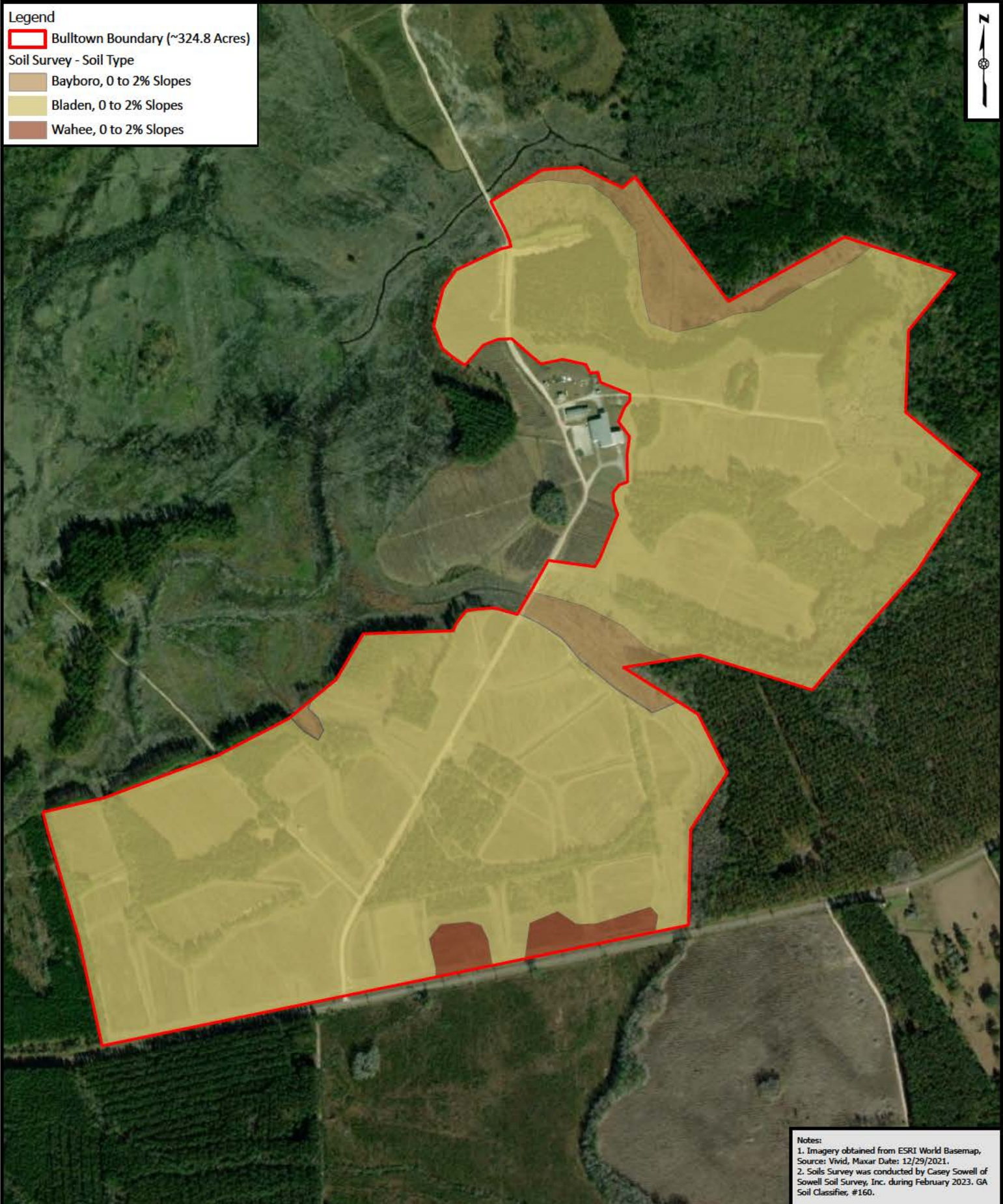
 Bulltown Boundary (~324.8 Acres)

**Soil Survey - Soil Type**

 Bayboro, 0 to 2% Slopes

 Bladen, 0 to 2% Slopes

 Wahee, 0 to 2% Slopes

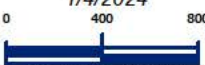


**Notes:**

1. Imagery obtained from ESRI World Basemap, Source: Vivid, Maxar Date: 12/29/2021.
2. Soils Survey was conducted by Casey Sowell of Sowell Soil Survey, Inc. during February 2023. GA Soil Classifier, #160.

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**Figure 7**  
 1/4/2024

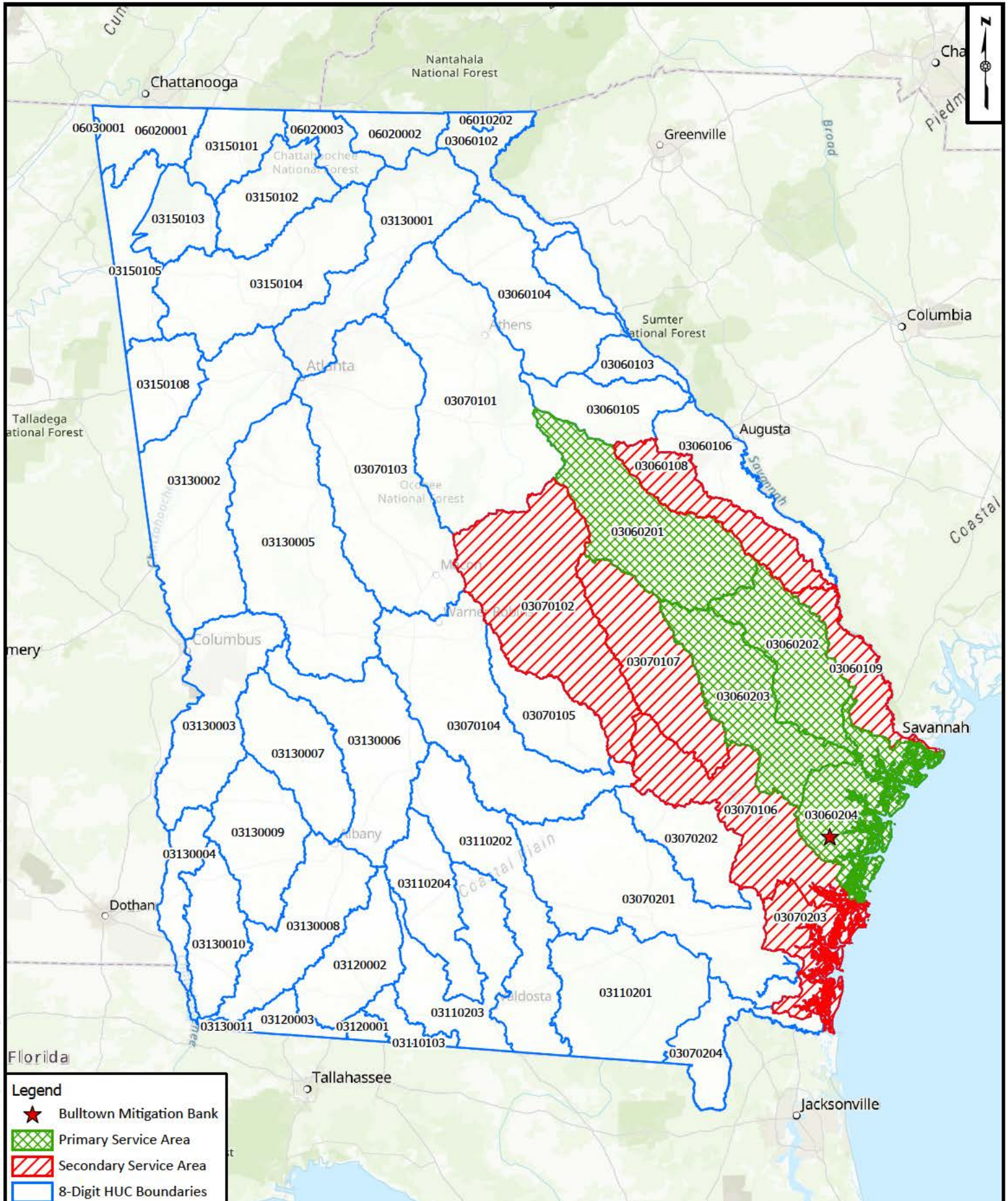


1 inch equals 800 feet

**Site Specific Soil Assessment Map**  
 Bulltown Place, LLC  
 Bulltown Mitigation Bank  
 McIntosh County, Georgia

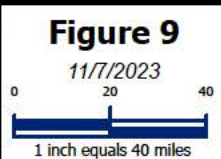
**HHNT**  
 HODGES, HARBIN,  
 NEWBERRY & TRIBBLE, INC.  
 Consulting Engineers

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- Legend**
- ★ Bulltown Mitigation Bank
  - ▨ Primary Service Area
  - ▨ Secondary Service Area
  - ▭ 8-Digit HUC Boundaries

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**Standard Service Area Map**  
 Bulltown Place, LLC  
 Bulltown Mitigation Bank  
 McIntosh County, Georgia



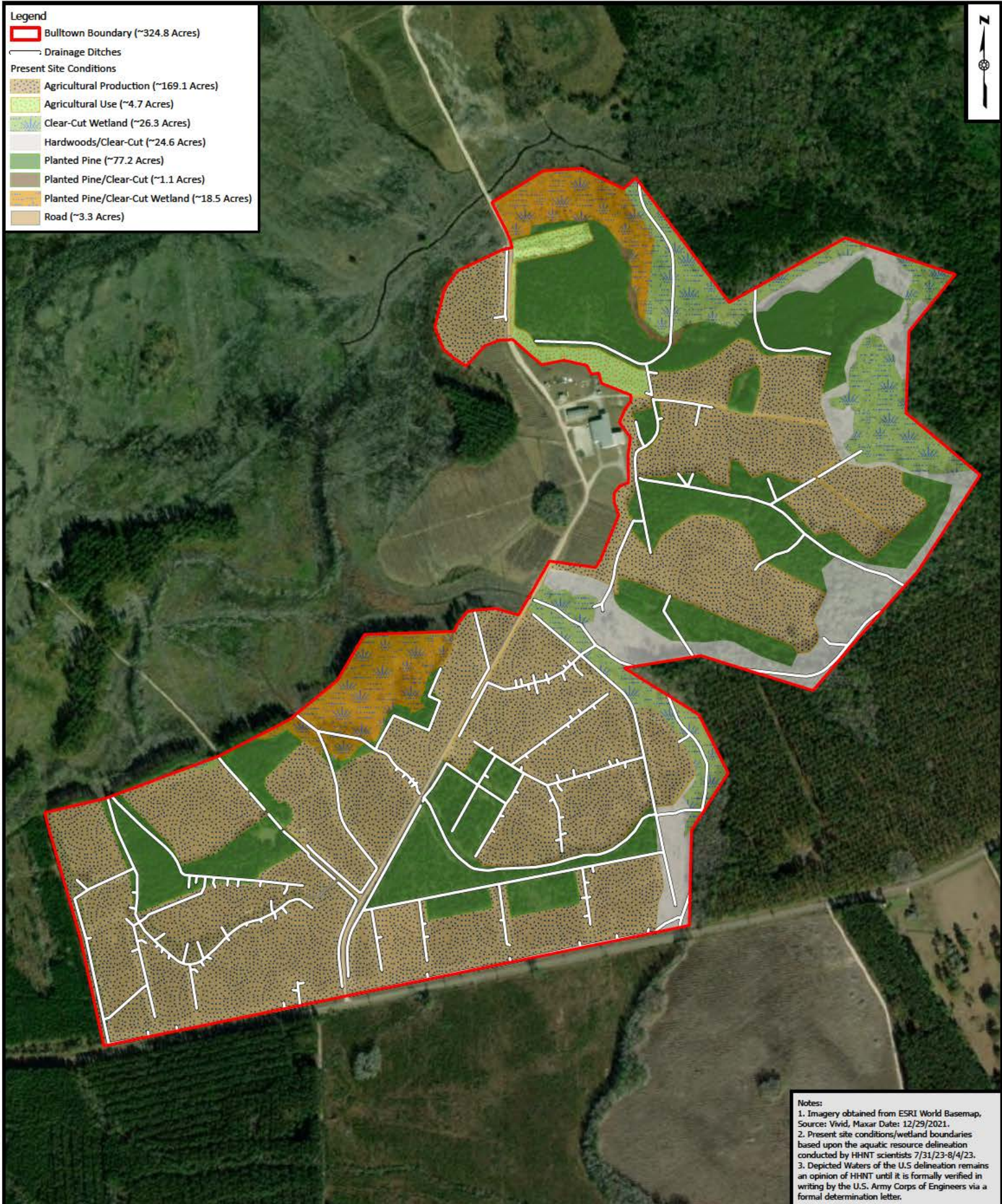
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**Legend**

- Bulltown Boundary (~324.8 Acres)
- Drainage Ditches

**Present Site Conditions**

- Agricultural Production (~169.1 Acres)
- Agricultural Use (~4.7 Acres)
- Clear-Cut Wetland (~26.3 Acres)
- Hardwoods/Clear-Cut (~24.6 Acres)
- Planted Pine (~77.2 Acres)
- Planted Pine/Clear-Cut (~1.1 Acres)
- Planted Pine/Clear-Cut Wetland (~18.5 Acres)
- Road (~3.3 Acres)



**Notes:**

1. Imagery obtained from ESRI World Basemap. Source: Vivid, Maxar Date: 12/29/2021.
2. Present site conditions/wetland boundaries based upon the aquatic resource delineation conducted by HHNT scientists 7/31/23-8/4/23.
3. Depicted Waters of the U.S delineation remains an opinion of HHNT until it is formally verified in writing by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers via a formal determination letter.

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**Figure 21**  
 11/7/2023

1 inch equals 800 feet

**Present Site Conditions Map**  
 Bulltown Place, LLC  
 Bulltown Mitigation Bank  
 McIntosh County, Georgia

**HHNT**  
 HODGES, HARBIN,  
 NEWBERRY & TRIBBLE, INC.  
 Consulting Engineers

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Proposed Mitigation	
Type	Acres
Vegetative & Hydrologic Restoration	248.4
Vegetative Restoration & Hydrologic Enhancement	41.7
Horsepen Island Road	2.2
Upland Buffer	7.2
Wetland Buffer	2.8
Upland Exclusion	22.5



**Legend**

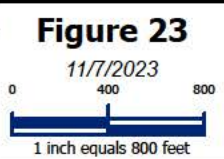
- Bulltown Boundary (~324.8 Acres)
- Drainage Ditches (46,806 Feet)

**Proposed Mitigation**

- Horsepen Island Road
- Vegetative & Hydrologic Enhancement
- Vegetative Restoration & Hydrologic Enhancement
- Upland Exclusion
- Upland Buffer
- Wetland Buffer

**Notes:**  
 1. Imagery obtained from ESRI World Basemap.  
 Source: Vivid, Maxar Date: 12/29/2021.

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**Proposed Mitigation**  
 Bulltown Place, LLC  
 Bulltown Mitigation Bank  
 McIntosh County, Georgia



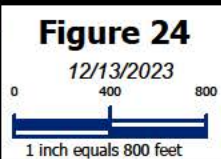
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Proposed Mitigation	
Type	Acres
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Horsepen Island Road	2.2
Upland Buffer	7.2
Wetland Buffer	2.8
Upland Exclusion	22.5



Legend	
	Bulltown Boundary (~324.8 Acres)
	Drainage Ditch Fill (46,806 Feet)
Proposed Mitigation Activities	
	Excluded
	Fill Ditches, Replant
	Remove Blueberry Beds & Field Crowns, Replant
	Remove Pine Beds, Clear Pines, Fill Ditches, Replant
	Remove Pine Beds, Fill Ditches, Replant
	Road
	Road Removal
	Road Removal/At Grade Crossing
	Road Road

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**Proposed Mitigation Activities**  
 Bulltown Place, LLC  
 Bulltown Mitigation Bank  
 McIntosh County, Georgia



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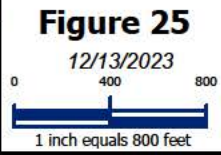
**Legend**

- Bulltown Boundary (~324.8 Acres)
- Monitoring Units**
- Monitoring Units
- Upland Exclusion
- Drainage Ditches (46,806 Feet)
- BaroTROLL
- Ditch Conveyance
- Groundwater Well
- Rain Gauge
- Proposed Mitigation**
- Horsepen Island Road
- Vegetative & Hydrologic Enhancement
- Vegetative & Hydrologic Restoration
- Vegetative Restoration & Hydrologic Enhancement
- Upland Exclusion
- Upland Buffer
- Wetland Buffer



**Notes:**  
 1. Imagery obtained from ESRI World Basemap.  
 Source: Vivid, Maxar Date: 12/29/2021.

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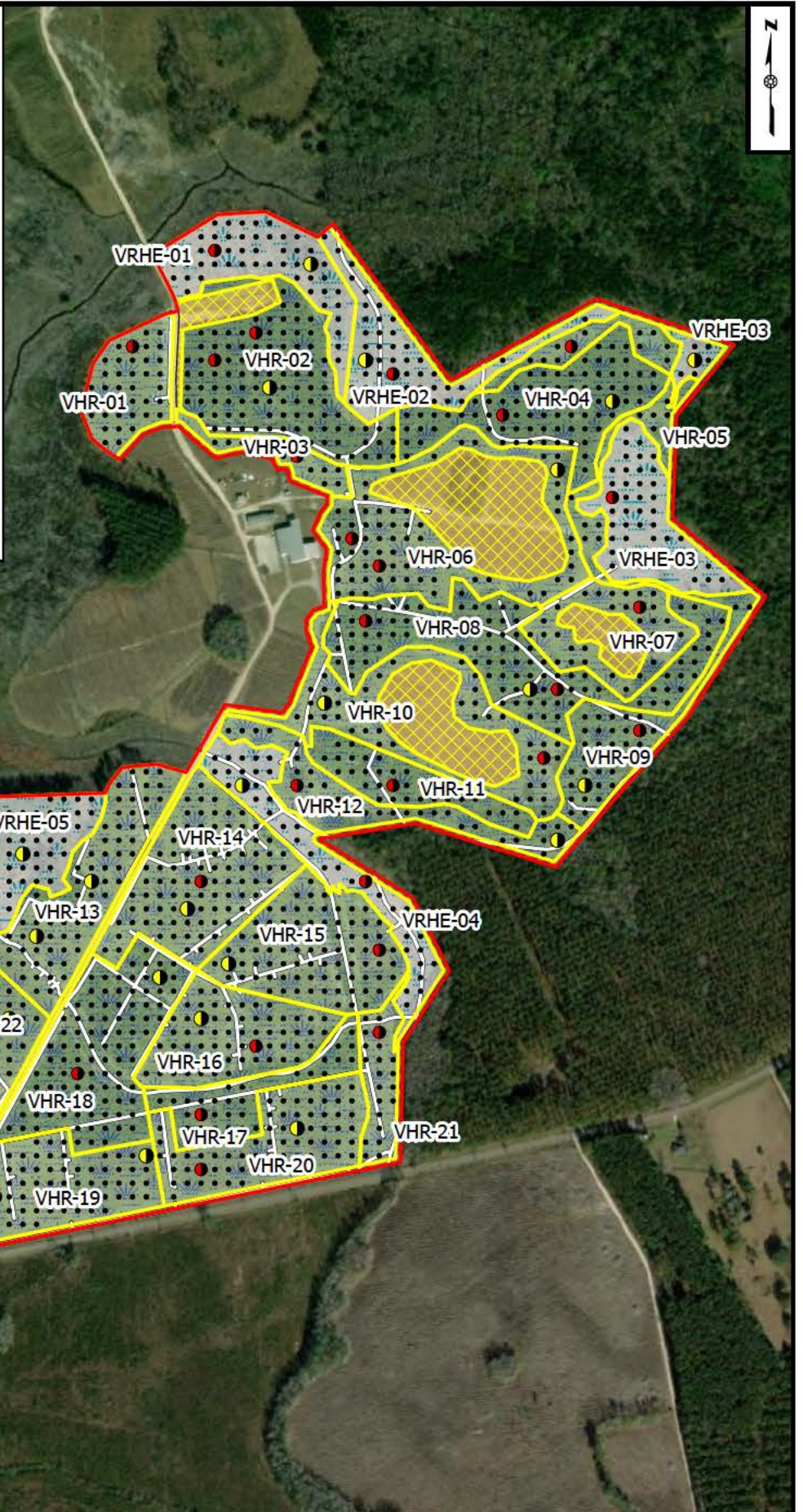
**Hydrologic Monitoring Units**  
 Bulltown Place, LLC  
 Bulltown Mitigation Bank  
 McIntosh County, Georgia

**HHNT**  
 HODGES, HARBIN,  
 NEWBERRY & TRIBBLE, INC.  
 Consulting Engineers

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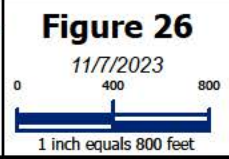
**Legend**

- Bulltown Boundary (~324.8 Acres)
- Monitoring Units**
- Monitoring Units
- Upland Exclusion
- Drainage Ditches (46,806 Feet)
- Vegetative Monitoring Locations**
- Vegetative Monitoring Plot
- Permanent Plot
- Random Plot
- Proposed Mitigation**
- Horsepen Island Road
- Vegetative & Hydrologic Enhancement
- Vegetative & Hydrologic Restoration
- Vegetative Restoration & Hydrologic Enhancement
- Upland Exclusion
- Upland Buffer
- Wetland Buffer



**Notes:**  
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**Vegetation Monitoring Units**  
 Bulltown Place, LLC  
 Bulltown Mitigation Bank  
 McIntosh County, Georgia

**HHNT**  
 HODGES, HARBIN,  
 NEWBERRY & TRIBBLE, INC.  
 Consulting Engineers

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