

Central Region Towersites

Branch Towersite
Camdenton Conservation Service Center
Freeburg Towersite
Proctor Towersite
Rocky Mount Towersite

Fifteen-Year Area Management Plan FY 2018-2032



Lisa B. Allen

Forestry Division Chief

1-04-18

Date

Central Region Towersites Management Plan Approval Page

PLANNING TEAM

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RCT Chair

Thomas M. Strother III
Signature

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FORESTRY DIVISION

Forest Management Chief

Justine Gaetner
Signature

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OVERVIEW

Area Name	Area Number	Year Acquired	Acreage	County	Administrative Responsibility	Maintenance Responsibility
Branch Towersite (TS)	4641	1946	40	Camden	Forestry	Forestry
Camdenton Conservation Service Center (CSC)	4631	1946	45	Camden	Forestry	Forestry
Freeburg TS	4909	1949	12	Maries	Forestry	Forestry
Proctor TS	4612	1946	115	Morgan	Forestry	Forestry
Rocky Mount TS	4805	1948	40	Miller	Forestry	Forestry

Statements of Purpose:

A. Strategic Direction

These areas are managed to provide the agency a means for detecting wildfire, and provide the public limited access for hunting or wildlife viewing opportunities.

B. Desired Future Condition

The desired future condition for the Central Region Towersites are areas maintained for their historical significance, fire detection benefits and access that provides the public with opportunities for recreation. Maintain structural integrity of the towers and other facilities to ensure safety of Missouri Department of Conservation (Department) personnel and the public. Manage surrounding forests to ensure healthy, sustainable, forest resources and to protect groundwater and surface water quality.

C. Federal Aid Statement

N/A

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

I. Special Considerations

Area Name	Priority Areas	Natural Areas
Branch TS	Little Niangua River Aquatic Conservation Opportunity Area, Fisheries Priority Watershed, Priority Forest Landscape	None
Camdenton CSC	None	None
Freeburg TS	Maries River Aquatic Conservation Opportunity Area, Fisheries Priority Watershed	None
Proctor TS	None	None
Rocky Mount TS	None	None

II. Important Natural Features and Resources

Area Name	Species of Conservation Concern	Caves	Springs
Branch TS	None	None	None
Camdenton CSC	None	None	None
Freeburg TS	None	None	None
Proctor TS	None	None	None
Rocky Mount TS	None	None	None

III. Existing Infrastructure

Area Name	Fire Towers	Radio Towers	Garage	Parking Lot #	Privy	Other
Branch TS	1	1	1	1	1	1 (1-acre) non-stocked pond
Camdenton CSC	1	1	3	2 ¹	1	1 two-lane archery range, 5 picnic tables, staffed office ¹ , walking trail (easy 0.1 miles ¹ , moderate 1.0 mile)
Freeburg TS	1	None	None	1	None	None
Proctor TS	1	None	1	1	1	None
Rocky Mount TS	None	None	1	1	None	None

¹ Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible

IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations

Area Name	Deed Restrictions	Federal Interest	Ease-ments	Cultural Resources	Endangered Species	Boundary Issues
Branch TS	None	Yes ¹	Yes ^{2,3}	None known	None observed	None
Camdenton CSC	None	Yes ¹	None	None known	None observed	None
Freeburg TS	None	Yes ¹	Yes ⁴	None known	None observed	None
Proctor TS	None	Yes ¹	None	None known	None observed	None
Rocky Mount TS	None	Yes ¹	Yes ⁵	None known	None observed	None

¹Federal funds may 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.

²Utility easement (waterline)

³Land Use Agreement with Southwest Volunteer Fire Department. Southwest Volunteer Fire Department entered into a perpetual agreement with the Department for use of a 1-acre parcel to construct a two-bay garage for trucks and other firefighting equipment.

⁴Utility easement (electric)

⁵Private land road easement

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations

Management of the terrestrial communities associated with each towersite will center on providing access to the public to enjoy forest and wildlife resources.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Limited tract size prevents substantial habitat management on the towersites.
- 2) Maintain upland forest resources.
- 3) Manage the resources to provide diverse wildlife habitat.
- 4) Control invasive species.

Management Objective 1: Manage forest resources to improve their health, productivity and sustainability.

Strategy 1: Maintain a 15-year forest inventory schedule for all towersites with 40 acres or more of forest. Rocky Mount Towersite was recently inventoried in 2015 and is scheduled again in 2030. Proctor Towersite is scheduled for 2019. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Implement best management practices following potential forest management activities according to the *Missouri Watershed Protection Practice Recommended Practices for Missouri Forests* (2014) and the *Missouri Forest Management Guidelines: Voluntary Recommendations for Well-Managed Forests* (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2014). (Forestry)

Management Objective 2: Improve the diversity of wildlife habitat on areas greater than 40 acres.

Strategy 1: Reduce the frequency and/or acreage of mowing on open fields. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Utilize the best known practices to enhance natural communities identified through forest inventory. Provide diverse habitats using agricultural, mechanical and chemical treatments; prescribed fire; and promoting native food types, including hard tree, soft tree, and shrub mast. (Forestry)

Management Objective 3: Reduce invasive species and control their spread.

Strategy 1: Identify problematic invasive species and the current extent on each towersite. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Utilize an integrated pest management approach to control problematic species including but not limited to biological, mechanical, chemical and other treatments, as needed. (Forestry)

VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Maintain watering sources for wildlife.
- 2) Protect ephemeral streams during land management activities.

Management Objective 1: Maintain fishable and fishless ponds to benefit wildlife.

Strategy 1: Monitor pond dams for damage or erosion. Remove undesirable brush or make repairs as needed. (Forestry, Design and Development)

Strategy 2: Maintain current conditions in the fishless ponds and do not stock them with fish. (Fisheries)

Management Objective 2: Protect ephemeral streams from excess sediment or erosion while conducting land management activities.

Strategy 1: Implement best management practices, as described in the *Missouri Watershed Protection Practice Recommended Practices for Missouri Forests* (2014) during and after management projects to prevent erosion and minimize environmental impacts. (Forestry)

VII. Public Use Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Provide public access for the use and enjoyment of area resources.
- 2) Inform the public of recreational opportunities available at these areas.
- 3) Maintain areas in a desirable condition.
- 4) Address vandalism issues associated with area infrastructure.

Management Objective 1: Maintain access to lands open for public use, associated with towersites.

Strategy 1: Annually maintain parking lot infrastructure. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Seasonally maintain service trails. (Forestry)

Strategy 3: Annually inspect and maintain area boundary signs. (Forestry)

Management Objective 2: Maintain public access to the Camdenton CSC fire tower, Proctor fire tower, and Freeburg fire tower for scenic viewing.

Strategy 1: Annually allow daytime-only access for scenic viewing. (Forestry)

Management Objective 3: Continue to inform the public of opportunities at these areas.

Strategy 1: Maintain area regulation signage in accordance with Missouri Department of Conservation policy. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Ensure that signs regulating open and closed times are posted and maintained. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Maintain and update the Atlas database as needed. (Forestry)

Management Objective 4: Maintain towers and building infrastructure.

Strategy 1: Annually address maintenance needs for the towers and associated buildings. (Forestry, Design and Development)

Strategy 2: Annually address vandalism issues through appropriate enforcement tactics. (Protection)

Management Objective 5: Maintain the Camdenton CSC archery shooting range.

Strategy 1: Annually maintain the shooting range boundary signs to ensure safe recreational use for all area users. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: Annually inspect and maintain as needed all infrastructure associated with the shooting range, including benches, bow hangers, targets, and distance markers. (Forestry)

Management Objective 6: Maintain the interpretive Forest/Savanna trail on the Camdenton Conservation Service Center.

Strategy 1: At least once annually remove the leaf litter from the trail to establish the designated path. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: At least twice annually remove hazard trees near the hiking trail. (Forestry)

Strategy 3: Provide interpretive maps located in Camdenton CSC. (Site Administration)

Strategy 4: Maintain, as needed, the trail markers associated with the interpretive trail map. (Forestry)

VIII. Administrative Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Maintain historical information pertaining to each fire tower.
- 2) Provide annual maintenance to both Branch and Camdenton CSC area radio towers.

Management Objective 1: Preserve the historical significance of each fire tower.

Strategy 1: Document and file the historical significance of each towersite including photos to preserve the background on each. (Forestry)

Management Objective 2: Provide non-public access for annual maintenance of the radio towers, as needed.

Strategy 1: Annually maintain mowed service trails and security fencing associated with the radio towers. (Forestry)

Strategy 2: At least twice a year, trim trees, grass, and remove brush as necessary to maintain guy wire lanes, guy wire anchor points, radio fence and enclosure. (Forestry)

APPENDICES

Public Input Summary:

The draft Central Region Towersites Management Plan was available for a public comment period August 1–31, 2016. The Missouri Department of Conservation received comments from six respondents (Appendix A). The Central Region Towersites 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 Central Region Towersites Management Plan public comment period.

Supports invasive species removal and control. Suggests washing mowing and farming equipment before moving to other areas.

The Department will continue efforts to control invasive species, educate the public, and make an attempt to minimize the spread of invasive species from one area to the next.

Appreciates Rocky Mount Towersite for archery deer hunting opportunities. Suggests changing regulations from archery and firearms turkey hunting to archery methods only turkey hunting for safety reasons.

Rocky Mount Towersite meets the minimum requirements for the size and scale of areas that are open under statewide regulations for spring and fall turkey season.

Appreciates preserving fire towers.

The Department will maintain fire towers for the purpose of wildfire suppression and interpretation.

Supports allowing public to climb fire towers.

The Department will continue to allow access to a select few fire towers for the purpose of nature viewing and historic interpretation.

References:

Missouri Department of Conservation. (2014). *Missouri forest management guidelines Voluntary recommendations for well-managed forests*. Jefferson City, MO: Conservation Commission of the State of Missouri.

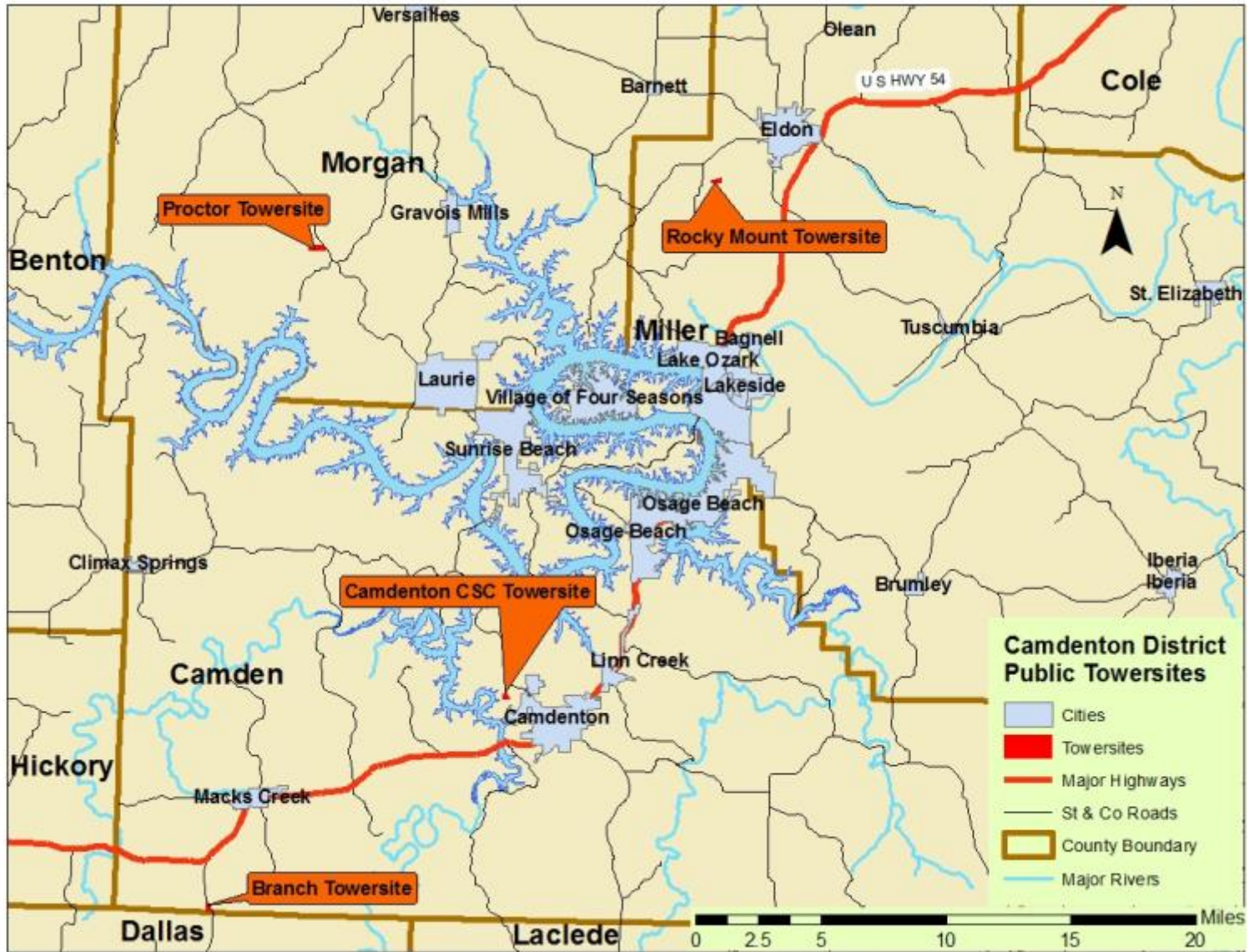
Missouri Department of Conservation. (2014). *Missouri watershed protection practices recommended for Missouri forests: 2014 management guidelines for maintaining*

forested watersheds to protect streams. Jefferson City, MO: Conservation Commission of the State of Missouri.

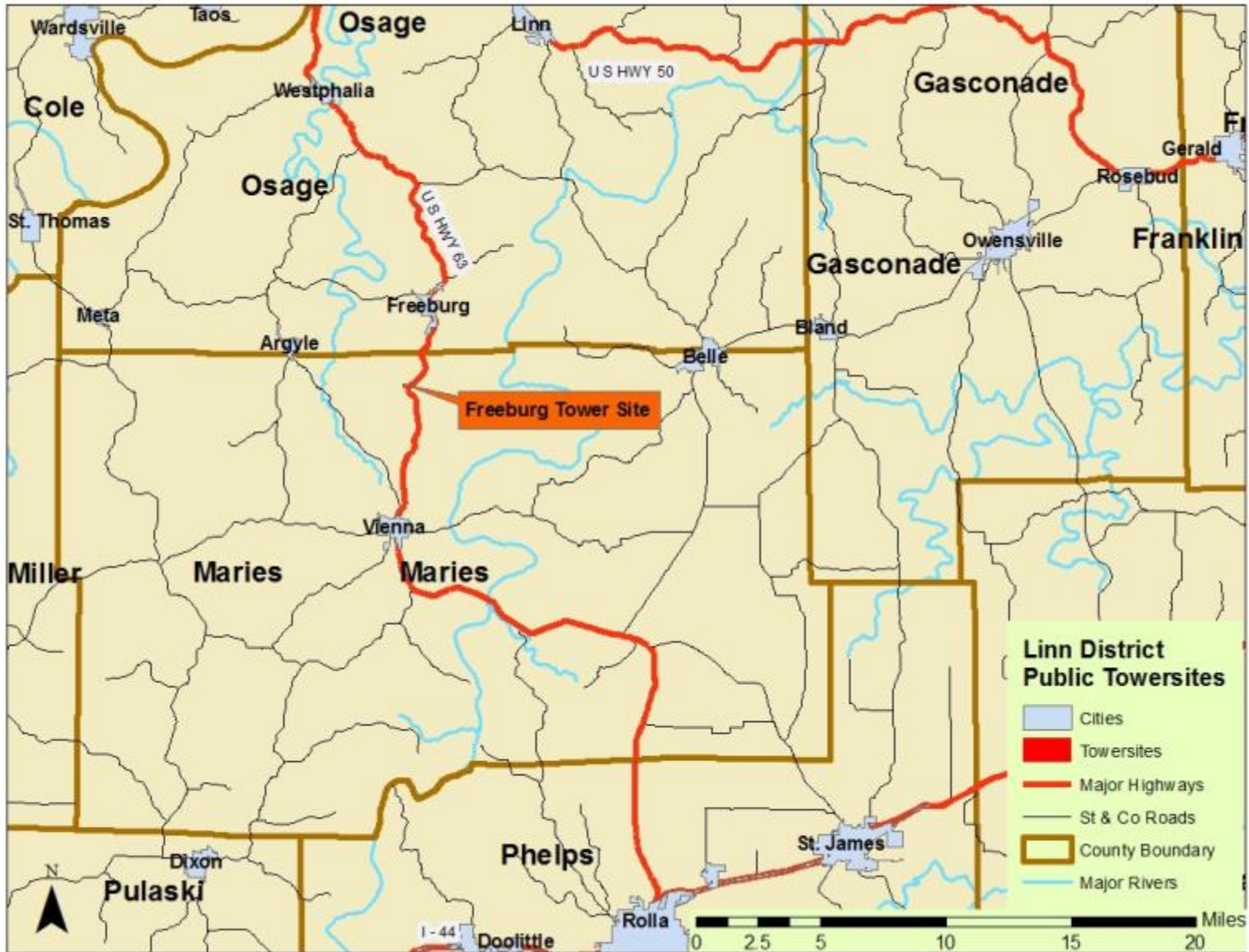
Appendices:

- Appendix 1. Camdenton District Towersite Locations
- Appendix 2. Linn District Towersite Locations
- Appendix 3. Branch Towersite Area Background
- Appendix 4. Map of Branch Towersite
- Appendix 5. Map of Branch Towersite Utility Easement and Land Use Agreement
- Appendix 6. Map of Branch Towersite Covertypes
- Appendix 7. Camdenton Conservation Service Center Area Background
- Appendix 8. Map of Camdenton Conservation Service Center
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- Appendix 10. Freeburg Towersite Area Background
- Appendix 11. Map of Freeburg Towersite
- Appendix 12. Map of Freeburg Towersite Utility Easement
- Appendix 13. Map of Freeburg Towersite Covertypes
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- Appendix 20. Map of Rocky Mount Towersite Covertypes
- Appendix A. Central Region Towersites Management Plan Public Comments

Appendix 1. Camdenton District Towersite Locations



Appendix 2. Linn District Towersite Locations



Appendix 3. Branch Towersite Area Background

Branch Towersite is located approximately 5 miles south of Macks Creek near Branch, Missouri. The area is approximately 40 acres. It is mostly forested with a mixture of hardwood and pine plantations. Open areas consist of old field shrubby grasslands and small food plots. One pond is located directly southwest of the tower.

Branch Towersite was purchased in 1946. It was planned as a conservation farming/forestry demonstration site due to its close proximity to the highway. Several species of pines were planted, pasture improvements were implemented and a pond was constructed. The original wooden tower was replaced in 1956 with a steel Aermotor Tower. This tower is considered inactive.

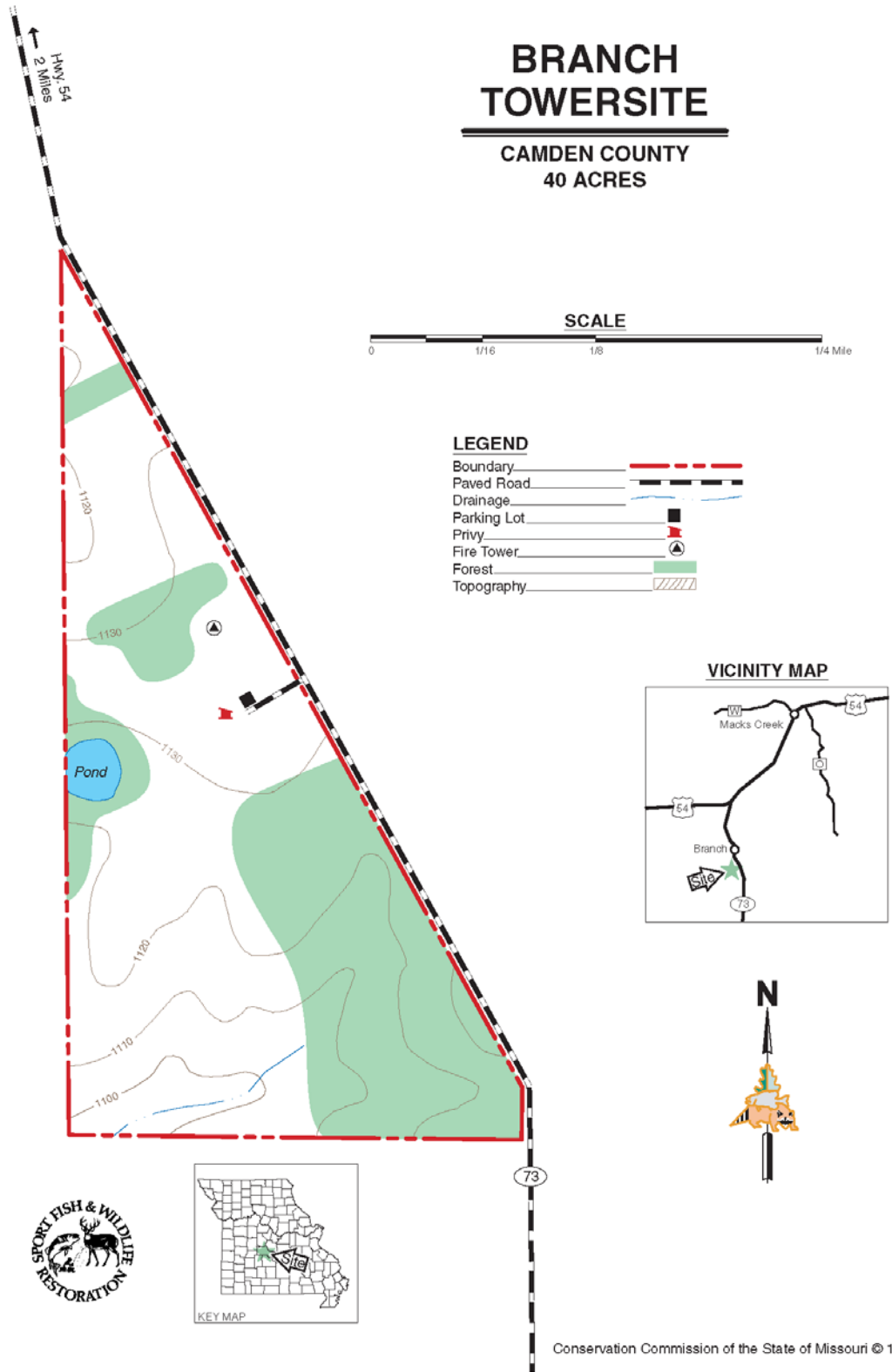
Legal Description: Township 37 North, Range 19 W, Section 34.

Area Location: From Macks Creek, Branch Towersite is located 3 miles west on Highway 54, then an additional 2 miles south on Highway 73.

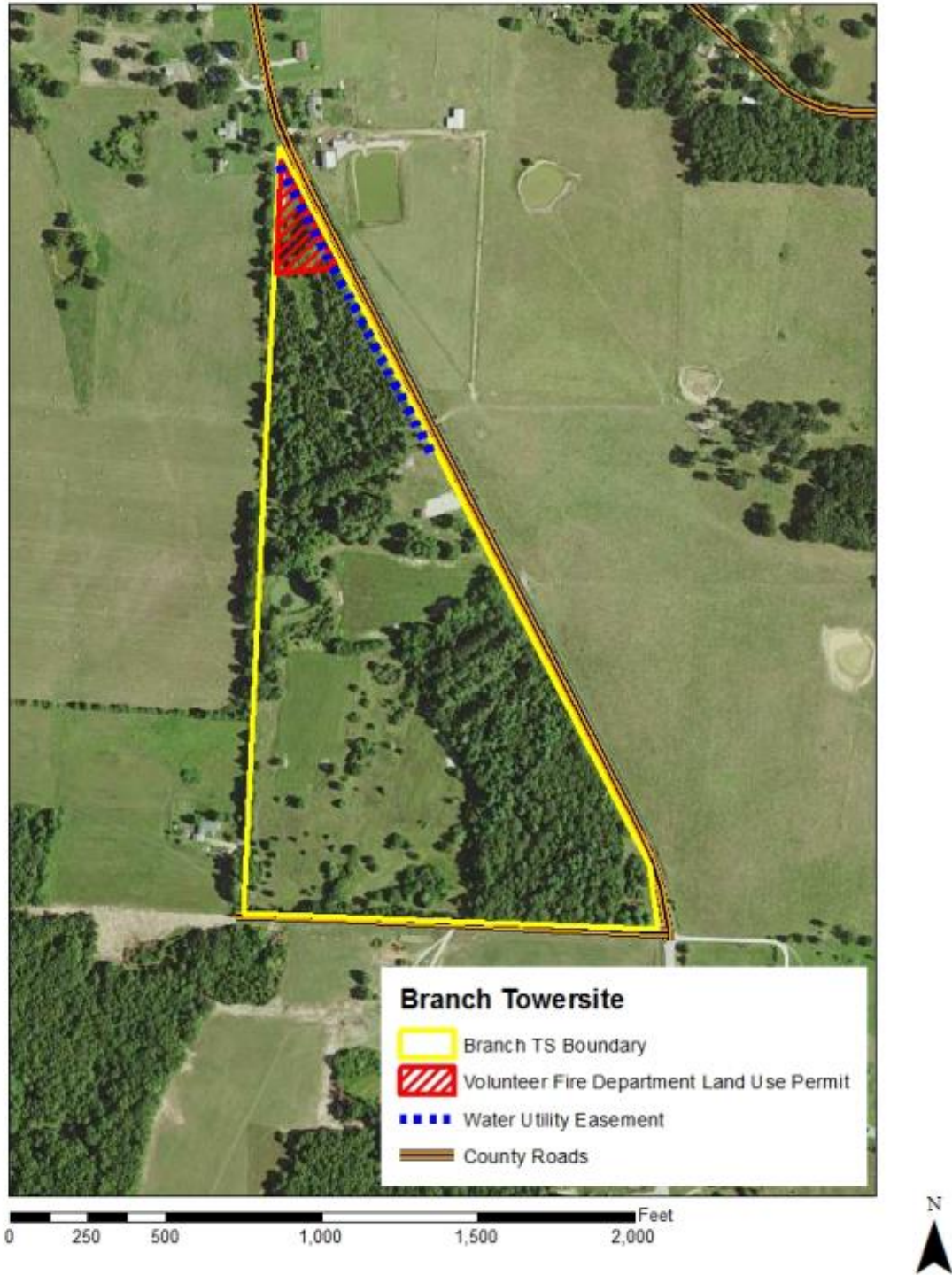
Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	% of Area
Forest and woodland	29	73
Old field	10	25
Pond	1	2
Total	40	100

Appendix 4. Map of Branch Towersite



Appendix 5. Map of Branch Towersite Utility Easement and Land Use Agreement



Appendix 6. Map of Branch Towersite Covertypes



Appendix 7. Camdenton Conservation Service Center Area Background

The Camdenton Towersite is located at the Camdenton Conservation Service Center approximately 3 miles northwest of Camdenton. This area is 45 acres and is mostly forested. It is a designated wildlife viewing area only and is not open for hunting. Area users have access to the 100-foot fire tower for scenic viewing, but are restricted to a platform at 80 feet. A 1.25-mile interpretive hiking trail is also open during daylight hours for public scenic viewing (e.g., of native oak hickory forest and woodland habitats). The area includes a service center facility open to the public and contains office space for field employees.

Camdenton Towersite was purchased in 1941 for the purpose of erecting a fire tower. The first tower was 60 feet tall and was constructed in the early 1940s. It was replaced by the current tower in 1983.

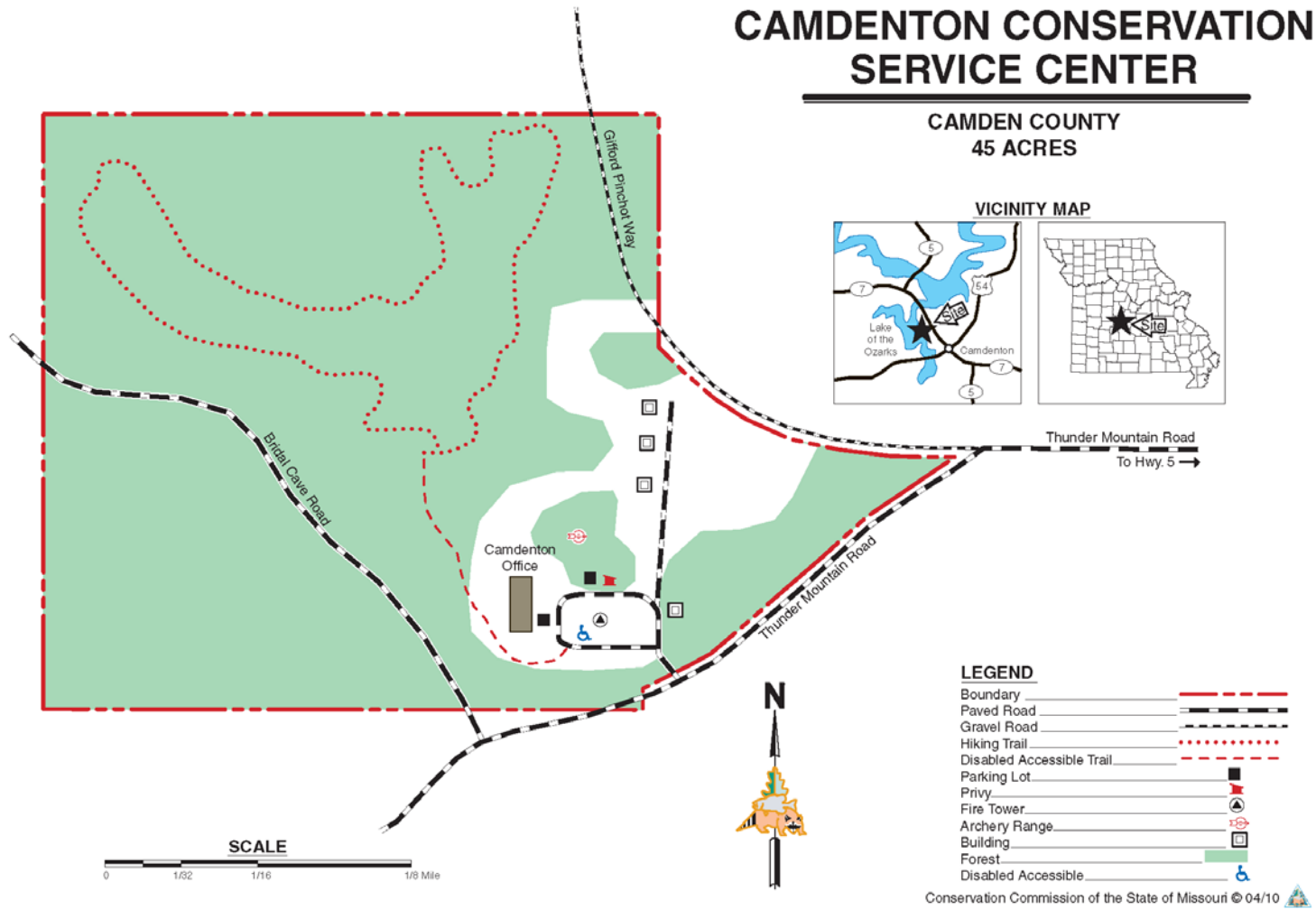
Legal Description: Township 38 North, Range 17 W, Section 22.

Area Location: From the junction of Highways 54 and 5, take Highway 54 west to Business Highway 5. Then take Business Highway 5 north to Old Route 5. Turn left and take an immediate left onto Thunder Mountain Road. Continue west 0.6 miles to the office.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	% of Area
Forest and woodland	36	80
CSC facilities	6	14
Grassland (non-prairie)	3	6
Total	45	100

Appendix 8. Map of Camdenton Conservation Service Center



Appendix 9. Map of Camdenton Conservation Service Center Covertypes



Appendix 10. Freeburg Towersite Area Background

Freeburg Towersite is located in Maries County 5.5 miles north of Vienna. Directly north of the tower is an oak/hickory forest and woodland complex. The tower resides in the parking lot just off County Road 209. Excluding hunting, this area is open for public recreation under special regulations.

The 12-acre towersite was purchased in 1948 and was developed for the purpose of wildfire detection. In the late 1960s, the original wooden tower was replaced with the current steel tower.

Legal Description: Township 41 North, Range 9 W, Section 29.

Area Location: From Vienna, take Highway 63 north about 5.5 miles to County Road 209. Turn west and proceed 0.25 miles. The towersite is on the north side of the road.

Current Land and Water Types:

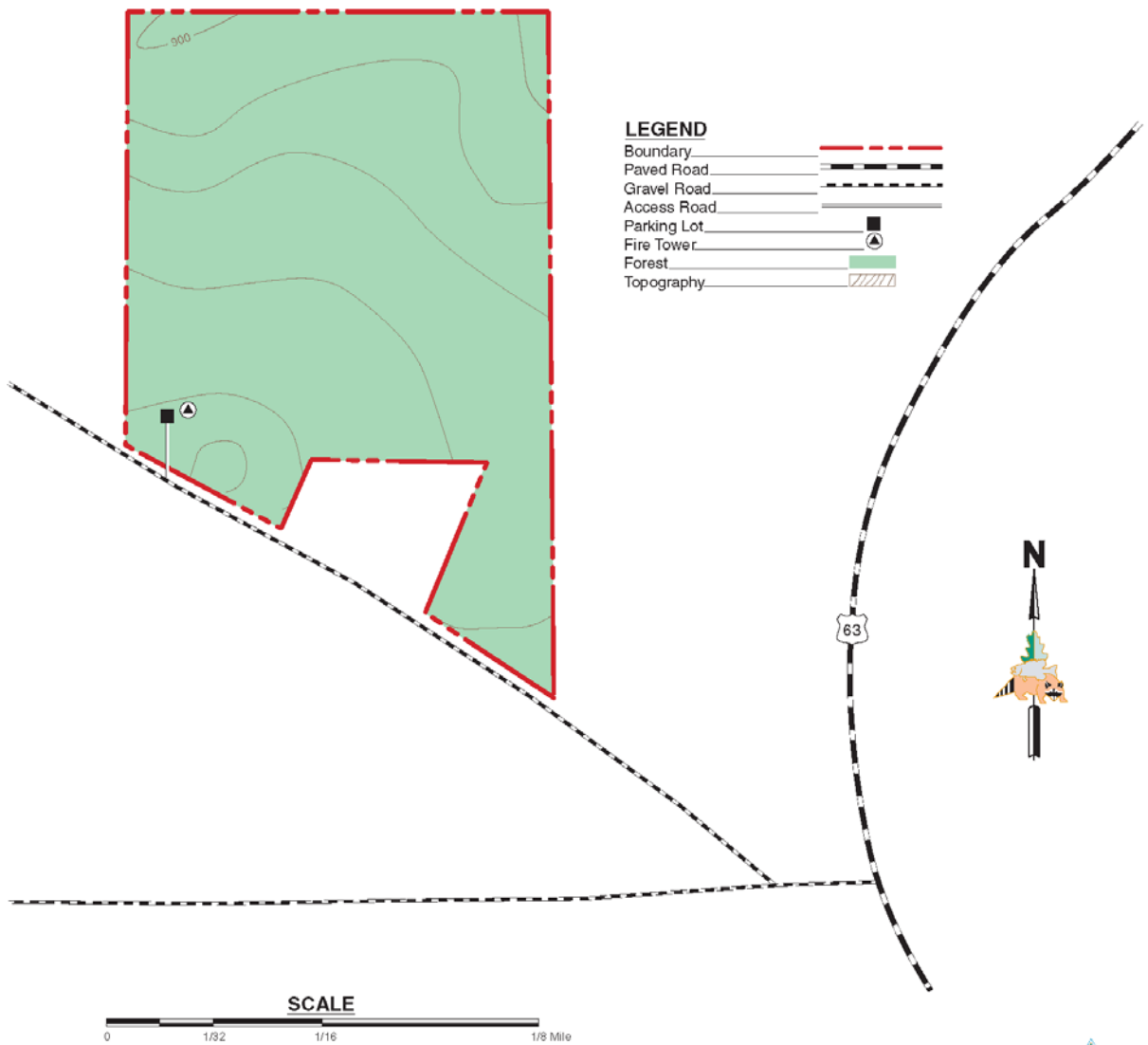
Land/Water Type	Acres	% of Area
Forest and woodland	11	92
Parking lot and lawn	1	8
Total	12	100

Appendix 11. Map of Freeburg Towersite

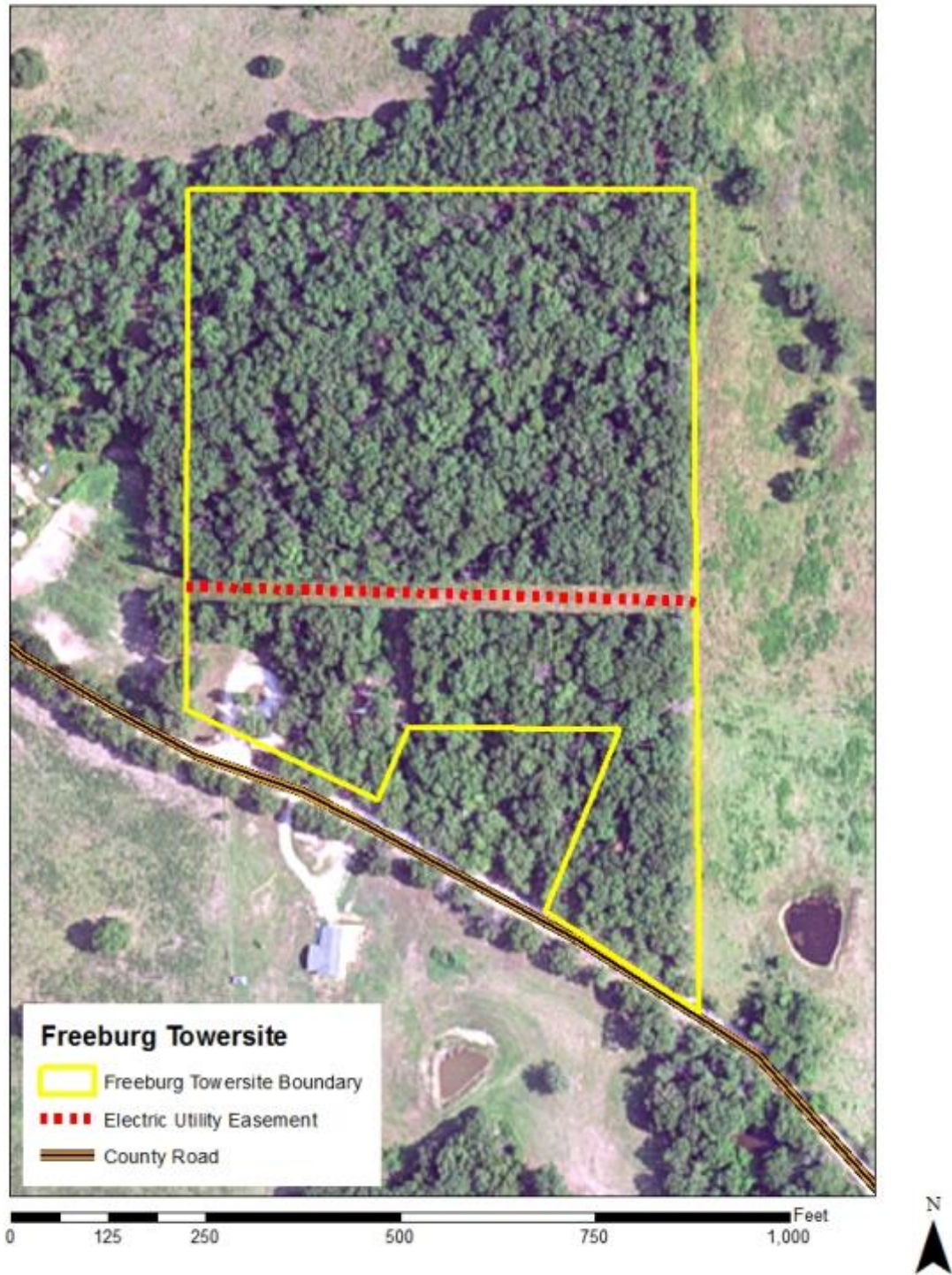
FREEBURG TOWERSITE

MARIES COUNTY
12 ACRES

VICINITY MAP



Appendix 12. Map of Freeburg Towersite Utility Easement



Appendix 13. Map of Freeburg Towersite Towersite Covertypes



Appendix 14. Proctor Towersite Area Background

Proctor Towersite is located in Morgan County on Highway 135 South of Versailles. This area is approximately 115 acres. It is entirely forested with oak/hickory and pine plantation cover types. Area users have access to the fire tower for scenic viewing. This area is open for public recreation and hunting under special regulations.

The tower property was acquired in 1944 through a land donation. It was developed into a public area in 1946. The first tower constructed was 60 feet tall and was made out of wood in 1947. In 1974 the State Forester approved the relocation of the Swedeborg tower from Pulaski County to the Lake Ozark District to replace the wooden structure at Proctor.

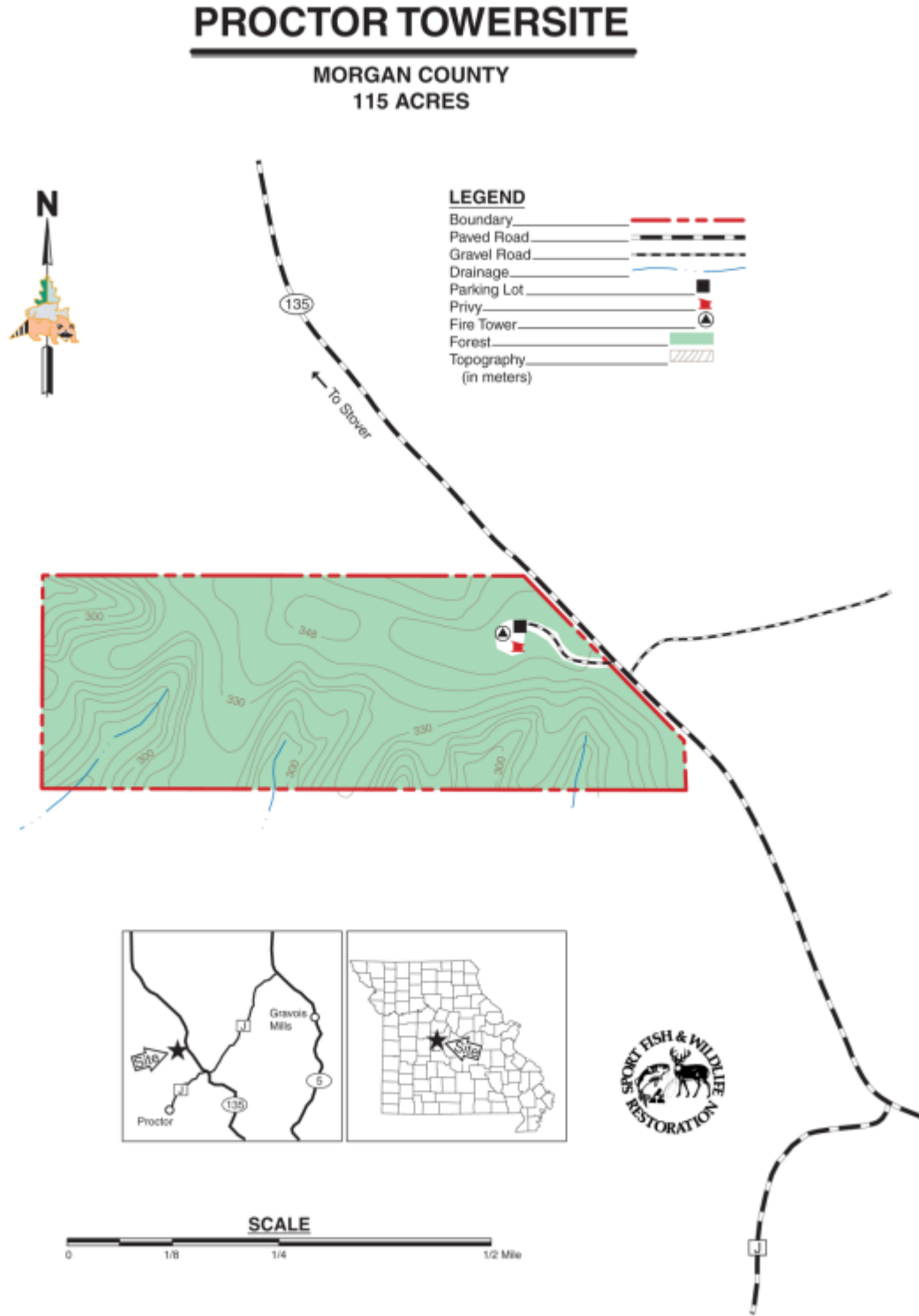
Legal Description: Township 41 North, Range 18 W, Section 28.

Area Location: From Versailles, take Highway 5 south, then Route J west (right), and Highway 135 north (right) 0.75 miles.

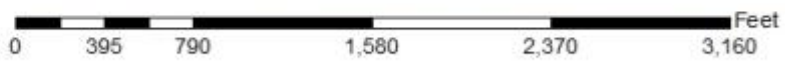
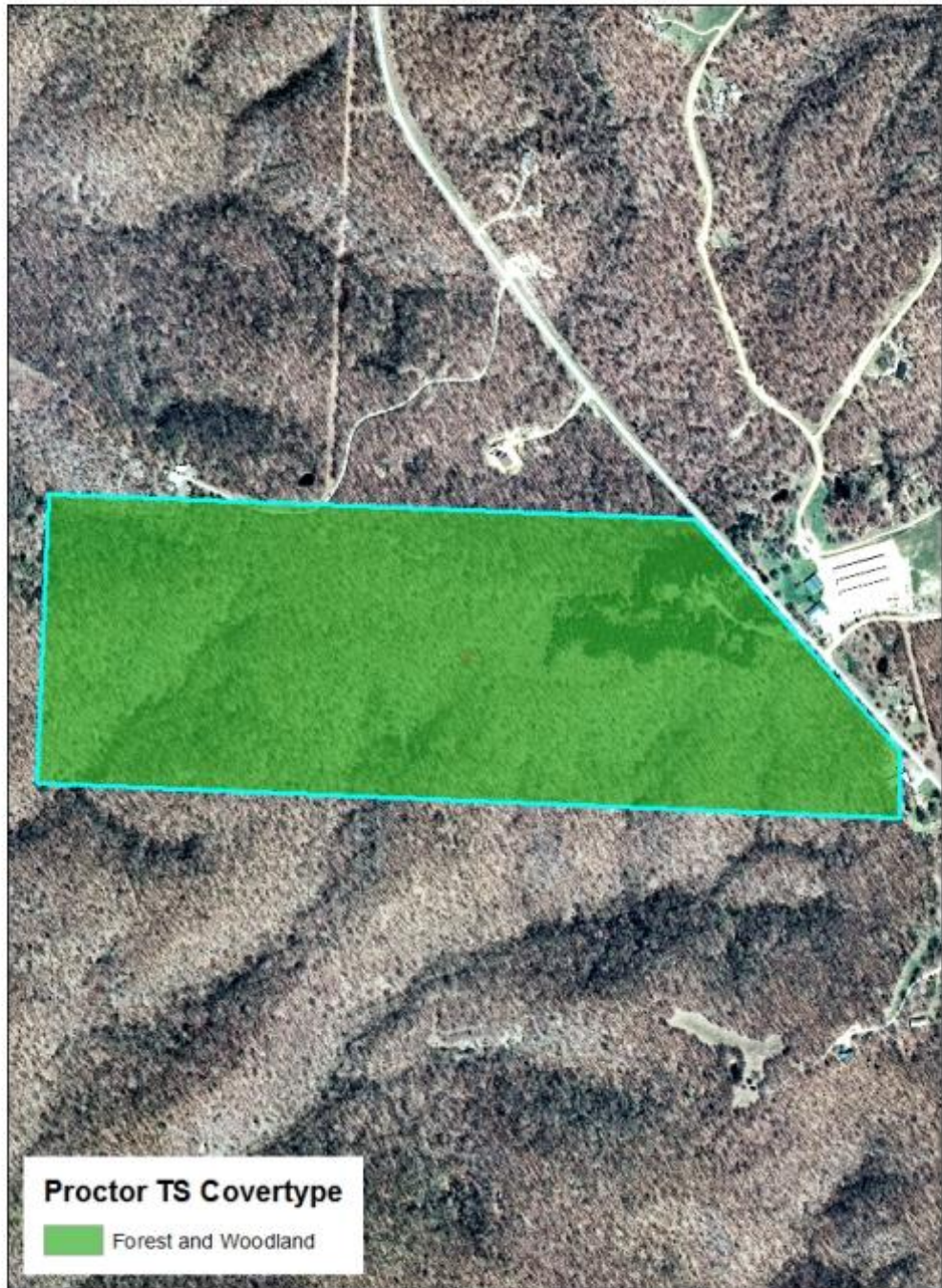
Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	% of Area
Forest and woodland	115	100

Appendix 15. Map of Proctor Towersite



Appendix 16. Map of Proctor Towersite Covertypes



Appendix 17. Rocky Mount Towersite Area Background

Rocky Mount Towersite is located in Miller County southwest of Eldon. The area is 40 acres. It is entirely forested, except for a small 0.5-acre glade opening. The cover type is predominantly oak/hickory forest and a woodland complex with a small pine plantation surrounding the tower. This area is open for public recreation and hunting under special regulations.

The 40-acre towersite was purchased in 1948 and was developed for the purpose of wildfire detection. In 2000 the tower was relocated to the Runge Conservation Nature Center in Jefferson City.

Legal Description: Township 41 North, Range 15 W, Section 7.

Area Location: From Eldon, take Route Y west, then Route Z south, then take the gravel road marked with signs for Dooley Cemetery (Glenwood Road/Z-2) east, then at the T-intersection (Gensert Road/Z-6) continue north 0.5 miles to the area.

Current Land and Water Types:






Land/Water Type	Acres	% of Area
Forest and woodland	39	98
Glade	1	2
Total	40	100

Appendix 18. Map of Rocky Mount Towersite

ROCKY MOUNT TOWERSITE

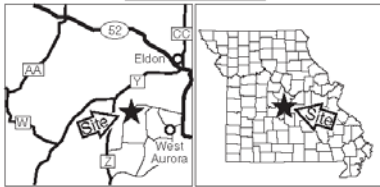
MILLER COUNTY
40 ACRES

LEGEND

- Boundary 
- Gravel Road 
- Parking Lot 
- Forest 
- Topography (Contour Interval - 6 Meters) 



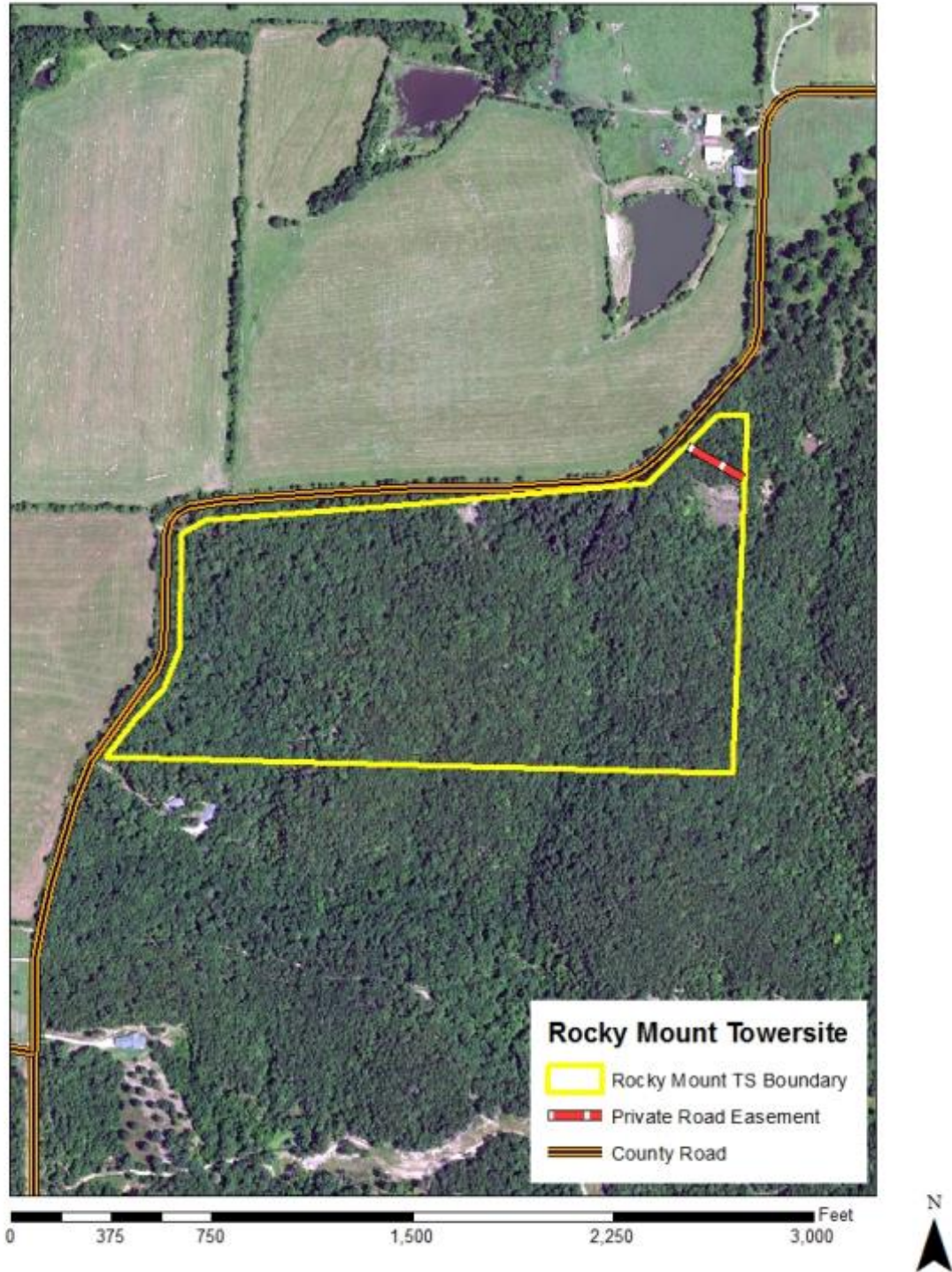
VICINITY MAP



SCALE



Appendix 19. Map of Rocky Mount Towersite Road Easement



Appendix 20. Map of Rocky Mount Towersite Covertypes



Appendix A. Central Region Towersites Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (August 1-31, 2016):

Some of the MDC lands are incredible with native species diversity while others are dominated by non-native species. The number one Management need is the control or reduction of non-native species. It is imperative that mowers and farmers wash their equipment before moving into a new area. There must be an active role in the control of exotic species. If there is not more of an active role then the remaining pristine sites will succumb to exotic species and degrade ecological integrity.

Respectfully,

Hello,

Thank you for your deliberate care and attention to keeping and preserving the towersites that we have remaining in Missouri (and especially those mentioned in the draft plan for the central region). The purpose that the fire towersites serve in telling the history of conservation across the country is very important and thank you for helping to keep that story alive here in Missouri. I just wish they were closer to where I lived and I would donate time and energy to help with their care and condition, whether it be by painting, replacing boards and steps, etc.

Thank you again, and keep up the great work!

Would love to see the tower off route 19 in Shannon county be open to the public again. I went there as a child several times and loved it. The view of the current river and the Ozark National Scenic Riverways was amazing. I hope I can take my child up there one day.

It would be nice if access to all of the towers would be provided. There very few towers and opportunities for the public to enjoy access to towers and to view the area from those elevations. The towers are part of our history most kids growing up in the 60s, 70s and 80s looked forward to climbing the towers and viewing the areas. It would be nice to pass that recreation on to our kids and grandkids

Over the years we have enjoyed stopping at these towers when and where they are open. A great travel break, always refreshing perspective changer, and they inspire a sense of adventure!

When our children were young these stops never failed to thrill them.

Climbing one is both physically and mentally challenging. My husband is a "recreation professional" and learned in his studies that most satisfying recreational experiences involve a level of perceived risk. These accomplish that!

It would please me if they were maintained, open to use, and the investment preserved for the future.

I have hunted Rocky Mount Towersite for the last 15 years for both deer and turkey, always with a bow. I love it that it is only archery for deer and it never gets too crowded. I hope that you keep the hunting regulations the same for this towersite except that I would like to see it go completely archery as I believe that during the turkey hunts you are allowed to use guns and I

have seen people come through the woods the last 2 years with guns when I have been deer hunting in the fall. I don't wear orange while deer hunting because it's archery only so it is nerve racking when I see the guns. Thanks for giving me a place to hunt for all these years.