

# Haysler A. Poague Conservation Area

## Twenty-Year Area Management Plan

FY 2018-2037



*Joel W. Pratta*

Wildlife Division Chief

*6/8/2018*

Date

## Haysler A. Poague Conservation Area Management Plan Approval Page

### PLANNING TEAM

Monte McQuillen, Wildlife Management Biologist

Mike Bayless, Fisheries Management Biologist

Scott Hollabaugh, Resource Forester

Larry Rizzo, Natural History Biologist

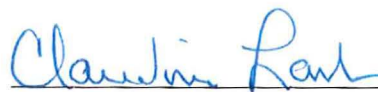
Andy Bullock, Conservation Agent

Cynthia Green, Education Consultant

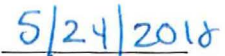
Dave Niebruegge, Private Land Conservationist

### KANSAS CITY REGION

RCT Chair



*Signature*



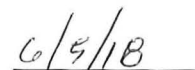
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### WILDLIFE DIVISION

Wildlife Management Chief



*Signature*



*Date*

## OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** Haysler A. Poague Conservation Area, #5101
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1951
- **Acreage:** 879 acres
- **County:** Henry
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Wildlife
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Wildlife
- **Statements of Purpose:**
  - A. Strategic Direction**

The management emphasis is to maintain forest and upland habitat for game and non-game species, provide fishing opportunities, and provide the public with compatible outdoor recreational opportunities.
  - B. Desired Future Condition**

The desired future condition of Haysler A. Poague Conservation Area (CA) is a mature forest and woodland habitat that provides for a diversity of wildlife species and offers public recreational opportunities, including hunting, primitive camping, access to boat ramps, and bank-fishing.
  - C. Federal Aid Statement**

N/A

## GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

- I. Special Considerations**
  - A. Priority Areas:** Big Creek Bottomland Forest – Forest and Woodland Conservation Opportunity Area, Big Creek Bottomland Forest – Wetland Conservation Opportunity Area
  - B. Natural Areas:** None
  
- II. Important Natural Features and Resources**
  - A. Species of Conservation Concern:** None observed.
  - B. Caves:** None
  - C. Springs:** None
  
- III. Existing Infrastructure**
  - Nine parking lots
  - Five boat ramps
  - 14 fishable strip pits (77 acres total)

**IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations**

- A. Deed Restrictions or Ownership Considerations:** None
- B. Federal Interest:** Federal 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.
- C. Easements:** None
- D. Cultural Resources Findings:** No known cultural resources.
- E. Endangered Species:** None observed.
- F. Boundary Issues:** None

**MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

**V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations**

Haysler A. Poague CA is 879 acres and is largely made up of mine spoils that have not been reclaimed. The area contains approximately 719 acres of woodlands and 83 acres of old fields.

**Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) The area's topography is made up of unclaimed mine spoils with limited prospects for management of the upland and woodland communities. The uplands that are accessible are dominated by river birch and American elm.
- 2) White-tailed deer, turkey, rabbits, fox and gray squirrels, furbearers, and grassland birds can be found on the area and a suite of migratory birds seasonally frequent the area.
- 3) Management of the woodland and forest community is restricted due to the area's limited access.

**Management Objective 1: Allow uplands to go through succession and revert to forest and woodland communities.**

Strategy 1: Assist upland succession with supplemental plantings of native hardwood species. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 2: Maintain healthy forest and woodland communities, with management emphasis on wildlife habitat.**

Strategy 1: Allow forests and woodlands to mature toward an old growth condition. (Wildlife, Forestry)

## VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Provide quality public fishing opportunities through monitoring and maintaining a healthy fish population.
- 2) A small first-order tributary to Fields Creek cuts through the eastern portion of the area.

### **Management Objective 1: Provide quality public fishing opportunities.**

Strategy 1: Monitor fish populations with periodic sampling and make any necessary adjustments. (Fisheries)

Strategy 2: Stock channel catfish with supplemental stocking as needed. (Fisheries)

Strategy 3: Manage aquatic vegetation to provide fish habitat while controlling nuisance vegetation. (Fisheries)

### **Management Objective 2: Maintain adequate stream corridors to protect and enhance water quality and aquatic habitat.**

Strategy 1: Protect existing riparian corridors, according to the Missouri Department of Conservation's *Watershed and Stream Management Guidelines for Lands and Waters Managed by Missouri Department of Conservation* (2009). (Wildlife, Fisheries)

## VII. Public Use Management Considerations

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Provide for fishing, hunting, and viewing opportunities.
- 2) Provide primitive camping opportunities.
- 3) Improve educational and interpretive opportunities.
- 4) Maintain area infrastructure to provide access to fishing opportunities. The area provides opportunities for bank fishing, with limited access by area roads and boat.

### **Management Objective 1: Provide public fishing, hunting, and viewing opportunities.**

Strategy 1: Maintain infrastructure for easy access for area users. (Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Monitor strip pits annually for nuisance aquatic plants and vegetation around strip pit edges and address issues as they arise. (Wildlife)

### **Management Objective 2: Provide camping opportunities at designated areas.**

Strategy 1: Maintain existing camping sites. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 3: Improve educational and interpretive opportunities on Haysler A. Poague CA.**

Strategy 1: Communicate recreational opportunities to the public (e.g., using brochures, Atlas database). (Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Communicate to teachers, students, scout groups, and youth groups the uniqueness of the area to facilitate as a possible destination for ecology classes, school programs, and workshops. (Wildlife, Outreach and Education)

**VIII. Administrative Considerations**

**Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Maintain area infrastructure so that it is safe and inviting to the public.
- 2) Build relationships with neighboring landowners.
- 3) Consider land acquisition, when available.

**Management Objective 1: Maintain area infrastructure.**

Strategy 1: Maintain area infrastructure in accordance with the Department guidelines and at currently identified maintenance level. (Wildlife, Design and Development)

**Management Objective 2: Facilitate a good working relationship with neighboring landowners.**

Strategy 1: Work with neighbors to minimize any boundary, trespass, or any other issues affecting Haysler A. Poague CA or private property. (Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Promote habitat management on neighboring landowner properties. (Wildlife, Private Lands)

**Lands Proposed for Acquisition:**

When available, adjacent land may be considered for acquisition from willing sellers. Tracts that improve area access, provide public use opportunities, contain unique natural communities and/or species of conservation concern, or meet other Department priorities, as identified in the annual Department land acquisition priorities, may be considered.

## MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE

All strategies for this management plan are considered ongoing.

	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27	FY 28	FY 29	FY 30	FY 31	FY 32	FY 33	FY 34	FY 35	FY 36	FY 37
<b>Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations</b>																				
<i>Objective 1</i>																				
Strategy 1					X										X					

## APPENDICES

### Area Background:

Haysler A. Poague Conservation Area is in Henry County, 4 miles northwest of Clinton. The Missouri Department of Conservation acquired this area in 1951 from a donation from Haysler A. Poague. Mr. Poague was a lifelong Henry County resident, where he practiced law and pursued his admiration for conservation. The area is managed to preserve forest and woodland communities and provide recreational opportunities such as, hunting, fishing, nature viewing, studying, and photography.

The conservation area has been shaped by the early coal mining that occurred here. The area contains un-reclaimed mine ground with steep ridges and 14 strip pits that are scattered throughout the area.

### Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Feet	% of Area
Woodland	719		82
Old Field	83		9
Strip Pits	77		9
<b>Total</b>	<b>879</b>		<b>100</b>
Stream Frontage ( Tribes Fields Creek)		3,147	

### Public Input Summary:

The draft Haysler A. Poague Conservation Area Management Plan was available for a public comment period Aug. 1–31, 2017. The Missouri Department of Conservation received comments from three respondents (Appendix A). The Haysler A. Poague Area 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 Haysler A. Poague Conservation Area Management Plan public comment period.

### **Suggests increasing the crappie population and adding crappie fishing to the Atlas database area summary.**

The Department did not stock crappie at Poague CA and does not recommend stocking crappie in ponds less than 100 acres in size. Crappie have a tendency to overpopulate and exhibit stunted growth in small ponds; when we see a small pond with low numbers of crappie, that is considered ideal. This will allow for better growth of existing fish and allow anglers to take an



occasional large crappie from these ponds. As a result, there is no plan to stock crappie on the area.

Because crappie are low in number, we do not want to add crappie to the Atlas database. When we add fish to this database, we look at the average angler's ability and opportunity to expect to catch a given species during a fishing trip to the area. Since we have no plans to actively manage the limited crappie on this area, we do not want to provide increased expectations for anglers looking to fish for crappie.

**Suggests allowing gas boat motors on strip pits.**

The strip pits on Poague CA range in size from 2 to 12 acres. Many people enjoy the peaceful qualities of fishing small ponds without the noise provided by gas powered boat motors. Sixteen years ago, Department staff determined that the current regulation for the use of boats and motors on Department ponds and lakes provides for the maximum protection for the water body while allowing reasonable public use. Using gas powered motors on ponds as small as these pits can create wakes that cause increased shoreline erosion, and stir bottom sediments that can lead to poor water quality and suspension of nutrients causing increased algae growth in these small systems. Weighing the potential for the negative impacts versus the ability of anglers to get around these small lakes with an electric motor, we do not see a need to change the current regulation.

**Suggests managing strip pits for largemouth bass.**

Most Department ponds are managed for largemouth bass, bluegill, and channel catfish. Biologists, however, must also consider what any given pond is "good" at producing. Anglers and appropriate regulations can help biologists better manage for certain species. We must take into account fish reproduction, the ability of the pond to provide adequate forage for young and old fish, and mortality rates from natural causes and fishing pressure and harvest. These strip pits/ponds are often steep-sided and have conductivities that make them hard to sample with our electrofishing equipment and nets. Staff has sampled them in the past and will continue to do so. Calling our office to discuss your catch and what you have experienced while on the water can also help add to our knowledge of the fish populations in these ponds.

**Appreciates the Department's efforts in conserving Missouri's resources.**

Thank you for your kind words. Staff work hard and enjoy providing these opportunities for Missouri citizens.

**References:**

Missouri Department of Conservation. (2009). *Watershed and stream management guidelines for lands and waters managed by Missouri Department of Conservation*. Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Department of Conservation.

**Maps:**

Figure 1: Area Map

Figure 2: Aerial Map

Figure 3: Topographic Map

Figure 4: Current Vegetation Map

**Additional Appendices:**

Appendix A: Haysler A. Poague Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Figure 1: Area Map

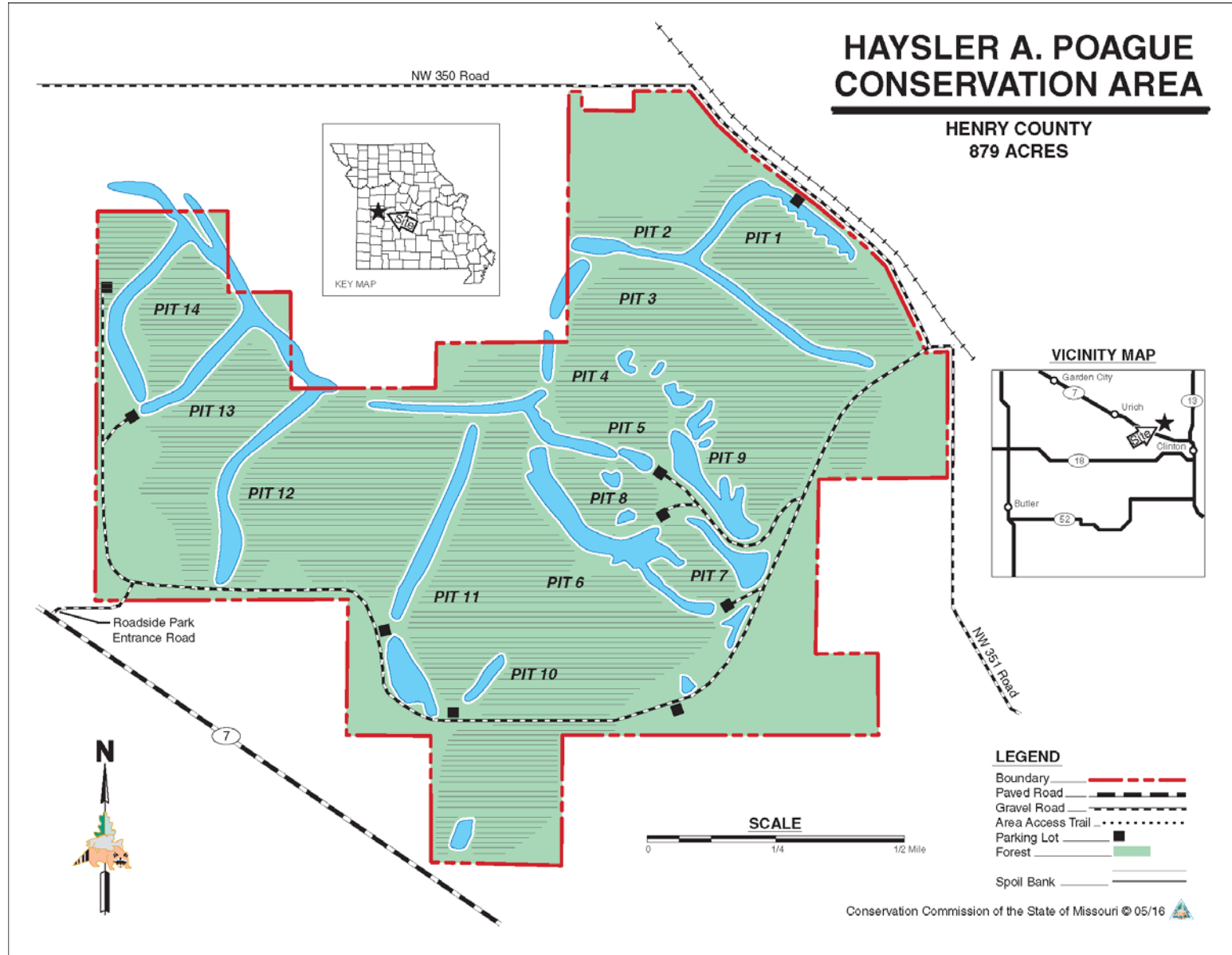


Figure 2: Aerial Map

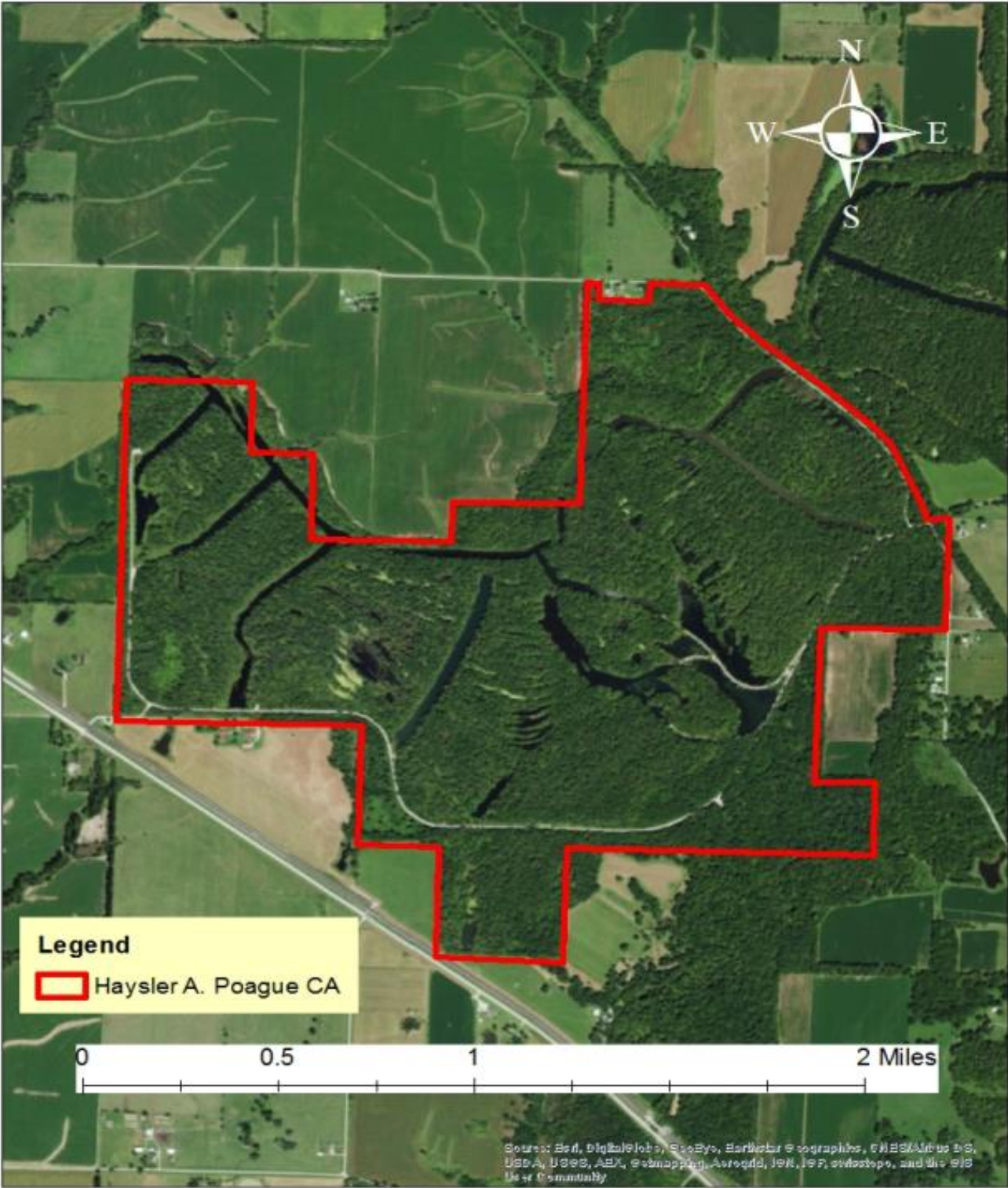


Figure 3: Topographic Map

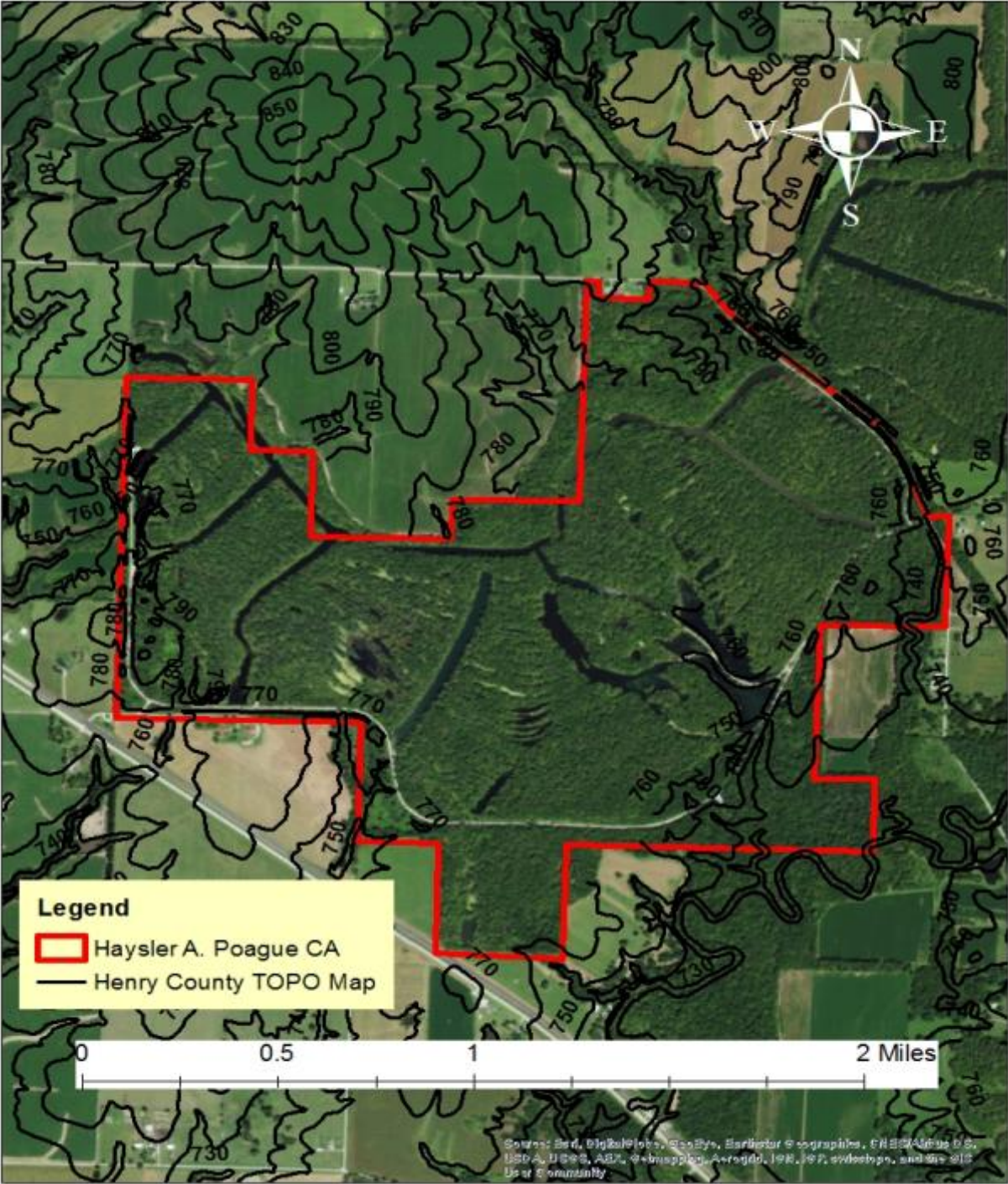
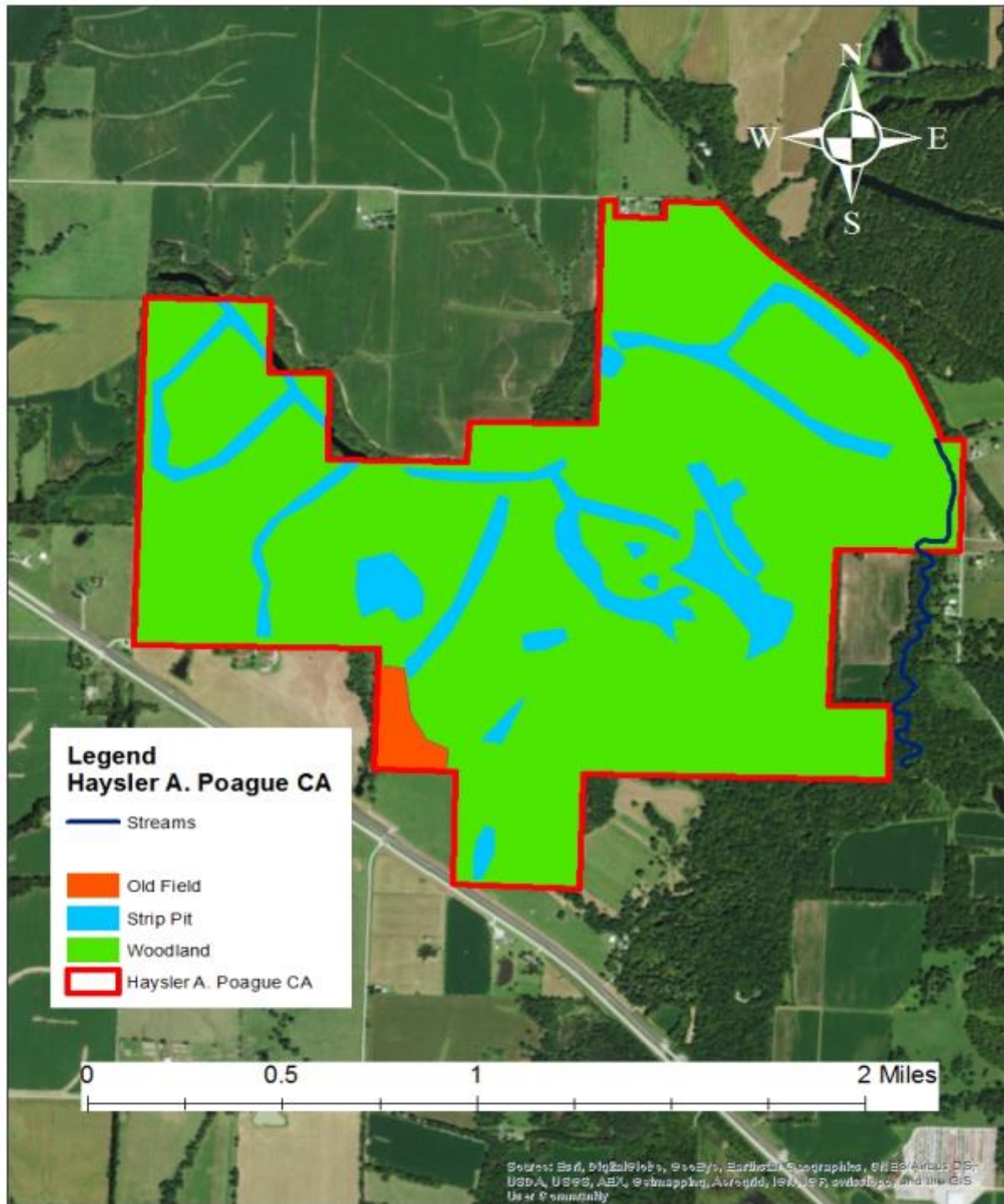


Figure 4: Current Vegetation Map



**Appendix A: Haysler A. Poague Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (Aug. 1–31, 2017):

Thank you for your continued investment in Missouri Conservation. I often take for granted the privilege of getting out with my wife and enjoying the REcreation of the MO outdoors. Or taking neighbors or church friends out in my boat and teaching them to fish.
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Thank you for all you do!

I see that channel catfish stocking was specifically mentioned, along with regular monitoring and maintenance of other fish populations. I have caught crappie in there before, but would like to see an increased focus on the crappie population as well (the Atlas page for Poague doesn't say anything about crappie being present, either).
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I would like to see gas boat motors allowed on strip pits and for them to be managed for largemouth bass.
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