



Brett J. Cyphers  
*Executive Director*

## Northwest Florida Water Management District

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152 Water Management Drive, Havana, Florida 32333-4712  
*(U.S. Highway 90, 10 miles west of Tallahassee)*

Phone: (850) 539-5999 • Fax: (850) 539-2693

December 28, 2017

Mr. Larry Olney  
DEP-OSLER-MS 2500  
2600 Blair Stone Rd  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-2400

Re: Semi-Annual Progress Report 27

Dear Mr. Olney,

Please accept this submittal as the 27th semi-annual progress report for the Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank (SHLMB). This report was written in accordance with Specific Condition 27.

**Please provide a brief description of permit requirements met and extent of work completed since the previous report:**

1. All interim permit requirements have been met. The site continues to develop in accordance with the mitigation banking permit. In 2017, a total of 100 species were observed within they hydric pine flatwoods restoration on the west side of Dry Pond during the annual monitoring. Quantitative transect data showed an average vegetation cover 86.8%. This is a significant increase from the two herbaceous species and 98% shrub cover observed during the baseline documentation. The restored sandhills continue to thrive, and a total of 119 sandhill species were observed adjacent to Little Deep Edge Pond in 2017.
2. Fishing and hunting continued at the SHLMB throughout the fall without incident in accordance with Specific Condition 8 and Attachment A of the permit.
3. In accordance with Specific Condition 8, security and law enforcement continued at the bank without any violations.
4. Due to the fire ban, no burning was conducted at the SHLMB during the summer and fall of 2017. The burn ban was lifted in July past the normal fire cycle for growing burns within the sandhills and wet flatwoods.
5. **Exotic Fauna and Vegetation**  
Specific Condition 22, 25

Surveys of nuisance species are conducted throughout the year. No exotic vegetation was observed at the SHLMB in 2017.

The feral hog removal program at the SHLMB was very successful in 2017 with a total of 36 hogs removed, 33 from trapping program and 3 through hunting. Hog damage within the wetlands has

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been minimal and greatly reduced from previous years. Game cameras have been deployed across the site in key locations and are checked daily for the presence of feral hogs. Gaps in perimeter fencing have been fixed and the fence is patrolled weekly for damage (Table 1).

Table 1. Hog eradication conducted at the SHLMB during 2017

Date	Hog(s)		
	M	F	total
1/24/2017		1	
1/24/2017		1	
1/24/2017		1	
4/13/17		1	1
4/27/17	6	12	18
5/2/17	4	1	5
5/6/17	1		1
5/12/17	1		1
5/29/17	1		1
6/20/17	1		1
6/29/17		1	1
8/30/17	4	0	4

**36**

6. The UF Research Station in Quincy was contracted to grow 30,000 plants from seed collected from sandhill species at the Bank. In July and August of 2017, a total of 29,000 plants were installed in June, 2017. The research station had grown and extra 2,000 plants and installed the additional plants to insure area diversity. Grass species planted include switch grass (*Panicum virgatum*) and lovegrass (*Eragrostis elliottii*). Other sandhill species planted include partridge pea (*Chamaecrista fasciculata*), summer farewell (*Dalea pinnata*), shortleaf shooting star (*Liatris tenuifolia*) and gopher apple (*Geobalanus oblongifolius*) (Figure 1).
7. Site inspections were conducted in August 2017 to determine if any additional shrub reduction is needed at the SHLMB. Due to the absence of planned burns, shrub reduction using herbicide treatments was determined to be needed to keep shrub densities below 5% within the areas treated. A total of 26.2 acres of mixed titi and fetterbush shrubs were treated within the hydric flatwoods (Figure 2).

**Restoration activities anticipated within the next 6 months:**

1. Surveys for nuisance and exotic species will continue in the spring of 2018 in accordance with specific condition 22.
2. Water Level gauges will continue to be measured in 2018 in accordance with Specific Condition 12.
3. Approximately 600 acres of sandhill and hydric pine flatwoods will be burned prior to July.
4. Feral hog control will trapping will continue in April of 2018 after hunting season ends.
5. Surveys for shrub reduction needs and nuisance species control will continue in 2018.

6. A supplemental planting of long leaf pine will be installed within the 37 acres sand hill restoration adjacent to the check station in January of 2018. The longleaf pine will be installed at a rate of 436 trees per acre.

**Please provide a brief description of problems encountered and solutions undertaken:**

No problems occurred at the SHLMB within the last six months. The site continues to develop and site management is in compliance with permit conditions.

If you have any questions, or comments, please feel free to contact me at 850-539-5999.

**Certification**

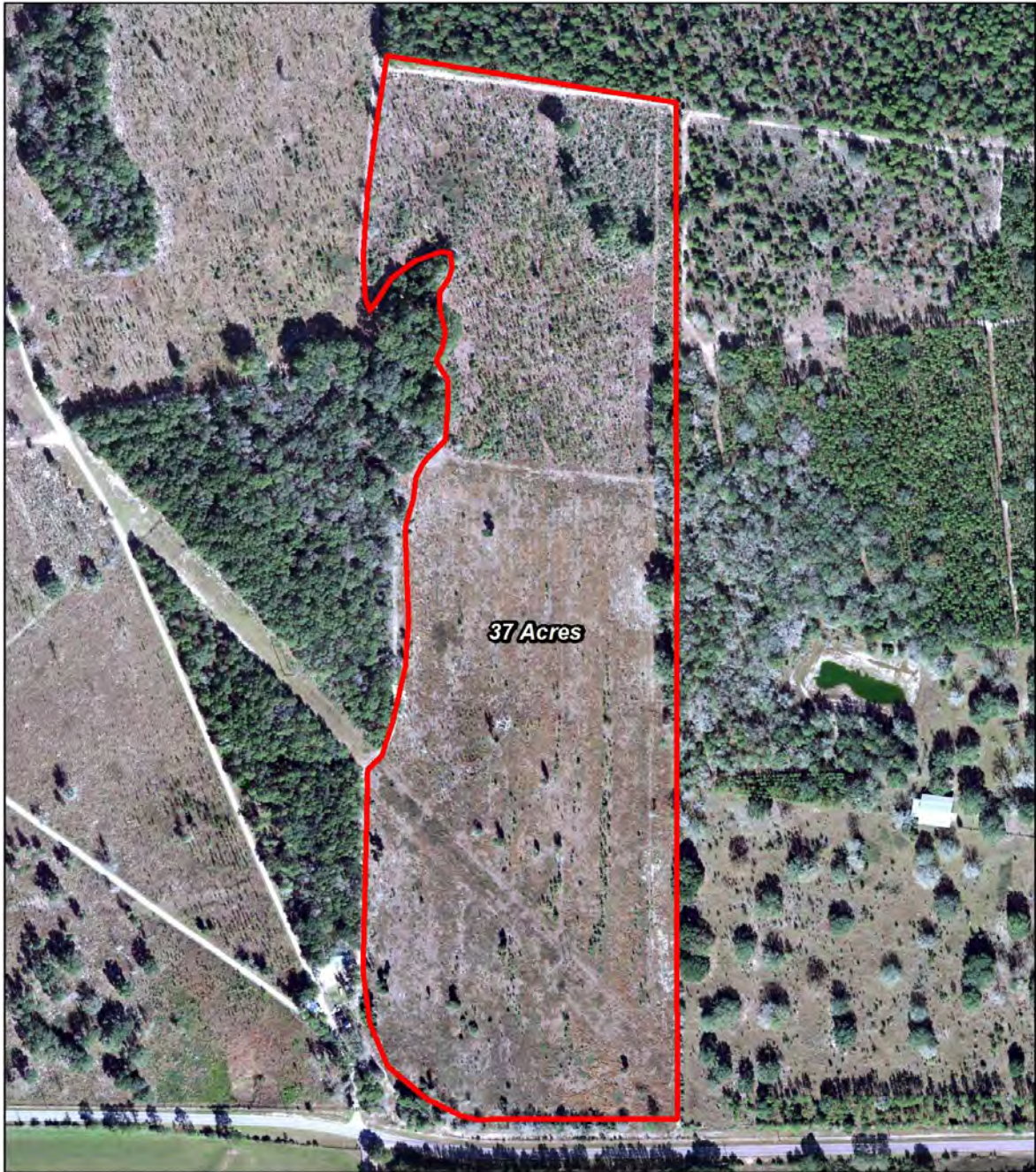
I certify that this report represents true accurate and representative description of the activities and site conditions at the time of this report. This semi-annual report was written in accordance with Specific Condition 27, of the permit.

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David C. Clayton  
Environmental Scientist  
Qualified Mitigation Supervisor

## Sandhill Restoration Planting (37 Acres)



Northwest Florida Water Management District  
Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank (SHLMB)  
Section 6, Township 1 North, Range 14 West  
Washington Co., Florida

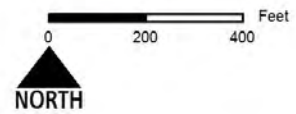


Figure 1. Sandhill restoration, longleaf pine and native forbs and grasses plantings (37 acres)

## Treatment Areas



Northwest Florida Water Management District  
Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank (SHLMB)  
Section 6, Township 1 North, Range 14 West  
Washington Co., Florida

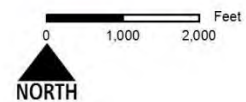


Figure 2. Herbicide shrub reduction within hydric pine flatwoods (26.2 acres)



Figure 3. 11/14/17. Dry Pond Facing North, Management Unit 1

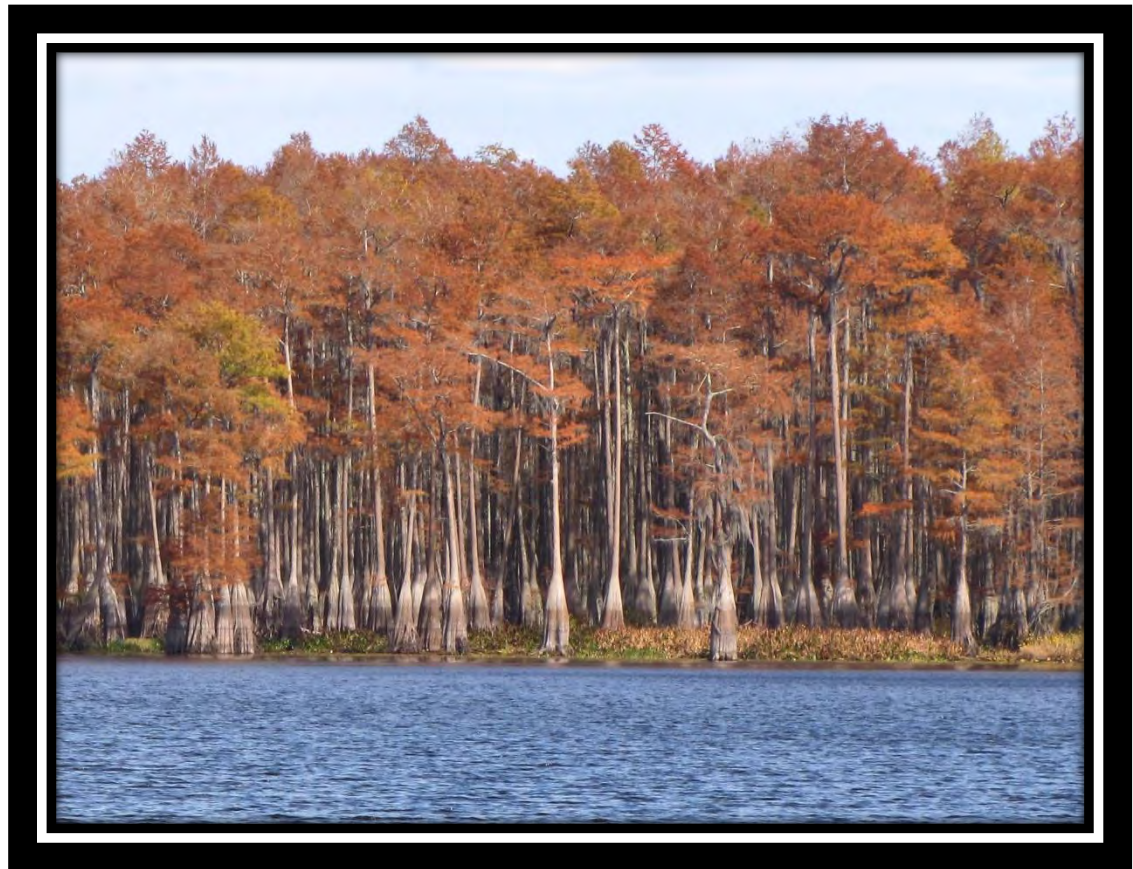


Figure 4. 11/14/17. Dry Pond Facing East, Management Unit 1



Figure 5. 11/14/17. Dry Pond Cypress Strand, Facing West, Management Unit 1



Figure 6. Facing North. Sandhill enhancement, Management Unit 12.