PERDIDO RIVER WMA – PHASE II MITIGATION FIRST ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

US 90 Escambia County
SAJ-2007-5634 IP-AWP Issued 09/19/08

Impact: **US 90 Perdido River Bridge (4.14-acre permanent impact, 1-acre temporary impact)**

Mitigation: **Perdido River WMA – Phase II**
Monitoring Date: **November 6, 2008**

SCOPE

Replacement of the Perdido River Bridge off US 90 will result in the loss of 4.14 acres of moderate quality bottomland hardwood forested wetlands. The impacts will occur at the Florida/Alabama state lines.

PROPOSED MITIGATION

To compensate for the loss of wetland function associated with the US 90 bridge replacement forested wetland restoration will occur within the adjacent Perdido River WMA. The restoration plan was reviewed and approved by the Interagency Review Team (IRT). It was determined that restoring 67 acres within the adjacent Perdido River WMA would more than generate the 11.72 UMAM credits needed to offset the wetland impacts associated with the bridge replacement.

Background:

In 2006, the NWFWMD acquired (fee-simple) 5,456 acres from the International Paper Company (IP) to form the Perdido River Water Management Area (WMA (Figure 1). These lands consist of a mosaic of forested wetlands and upland buffers, with extensive cover of loblolly and slash pine plantation. Harvesting rights for merchantable timber stands have been reserved by IP through 2011; the purchase price for this acquisition was ~$12,000,000. Most funding came from the Florida Forever program, although $480,000 of FDOT mitigation funding was used for acquisition of 220 acres of the IP lands to offset impacts associated with construction of the US 90 Escambia Co. Weigh Station[1].

Phase II Mitigation:

This project will restore and enhance ~67acres (Figure 2) of mostly 6-year old bedded pine plantation (loblolly pine planted 2002) to a mixture of ~38 acres of Forested Mixed Wetlands – FLUCCS 630, ~16 acres of Hydric Pine Flatwoods – FLUCCS 625, and ~13 acres of Mesic Pine Flatwoods – FLUCCS 411.

WORK SCHEDULE

- Removal of extensive windrows, that may be altering the historic hydrology : **Will be initiated in 2009**
- Thinning of pine trees in the flatwoods area to less than 150 trees per acre:: **Will be completed in 2009,**
- Single or double drum roller chop of wet flatwoods and upland flatwoods to reduce shrub cover**. Will be completed in 2009**
- Herbicide treatment of nuisance native shrubs to assist in shrub reduction. **Will be completed in 2009.**
- Annual monitoring (photo-documentation and inspection of mitigation site by a qualified biologist or wetland scientist to estimate survival of planted vegetation and percent cover of any exotic / invasive plant species), if required, for five years after shoreline restoration or duration of permit. **First annual monitoring complete**
- Re-introduction of fire through cool season burn. **Burn to be implemented in winter 09/10.**
- Re-planting of hardwood species in bottomland hardwood areas and wire grass in wet flatwood areas. Winter 09/10-12
- Potential additional herbicide treatment of shrubs. **Ongoing**

SUCCESS CRITERIA

-Desired species showing evidence of increasing coverage

-No more than 1% coverage of invasive exotic and 5% nuisance native and non invasive exotic species unless otherwise specified in a management plan

-Increase in appropriate herbaceous, shrub and / or tree species

-Kind and total coverage of species appropriate for management goals and target natural community

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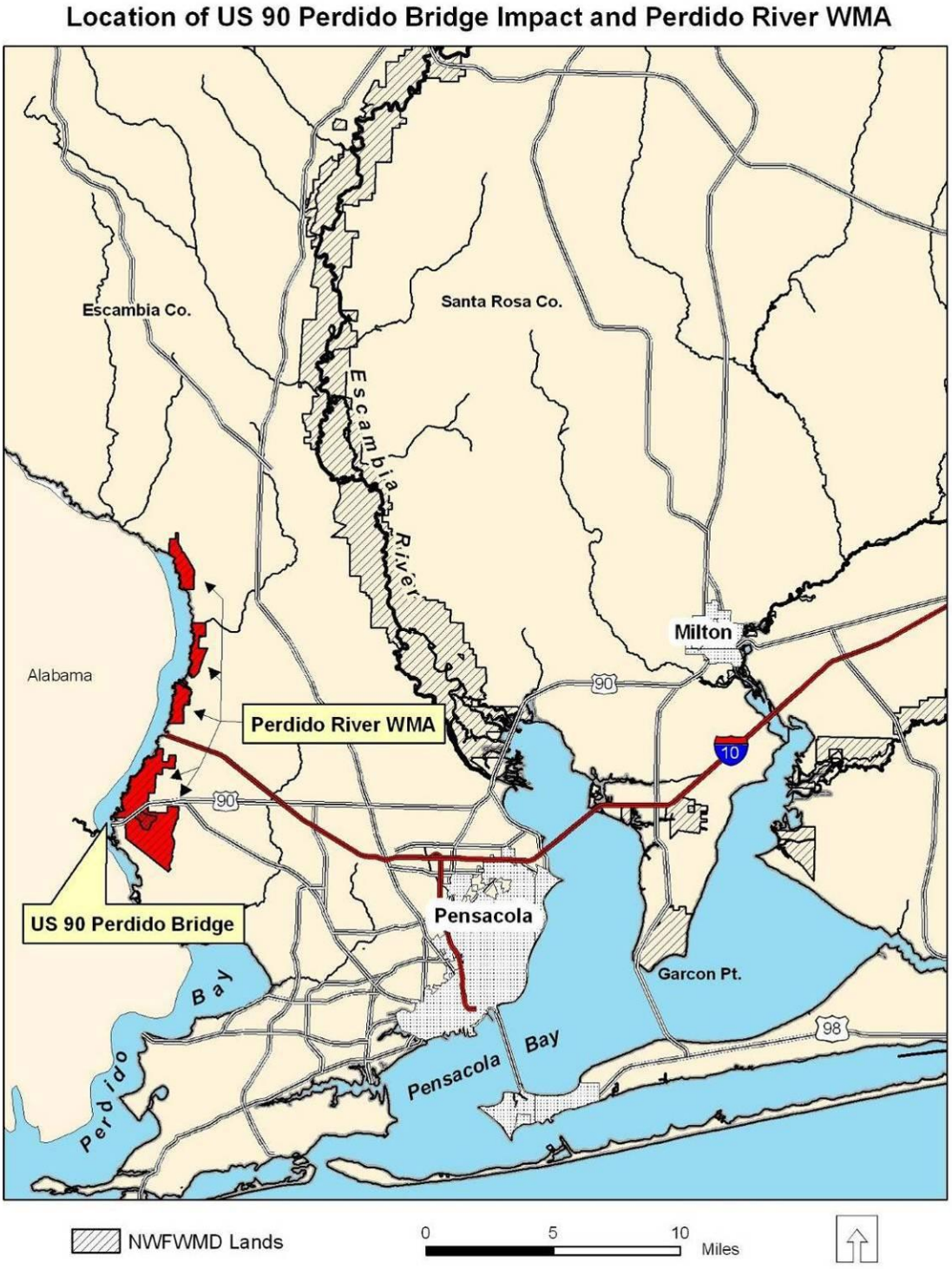

Figure 1: Location of Perdido River WMA and Impact

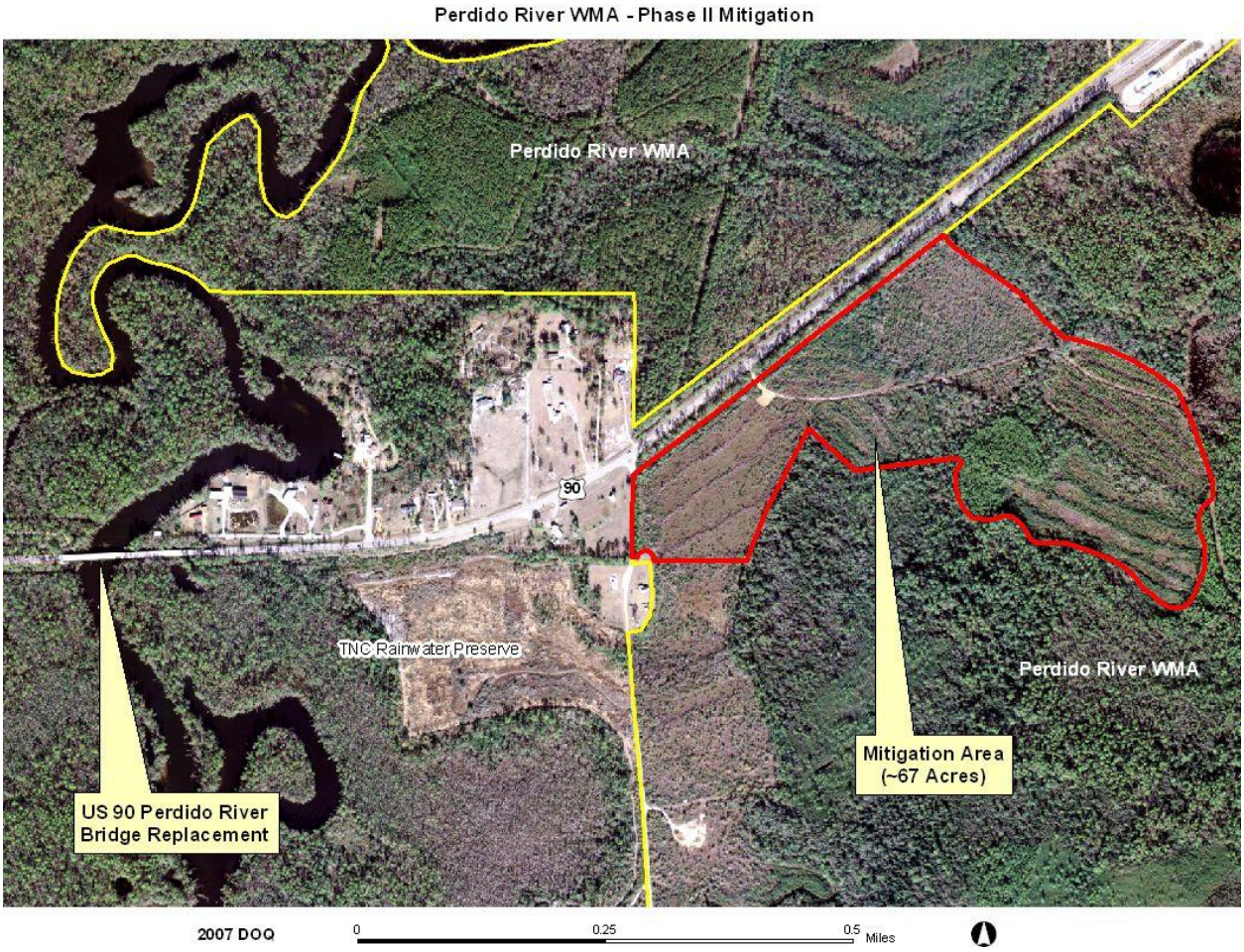

Figure 2: Impact Site and Mitigation Site

Hydric Pine Flatwoods Restoration Area

Hydric Pine Flatwoods Restoration Area

Forested Mixed Wetlands Enhancement Area

Mesic Pine Flatwoods Enhancement Area