

NOTICE OF PROPOSED ACTION IN A FLOODPLAIN

Executive Order 11988 Floodplain Management Review

The Nature Conservancy

Project: Holly Shelter Game Land Peatland Restoration Project

Location: Holly Shelter Game Land, Pender County, North Carolina

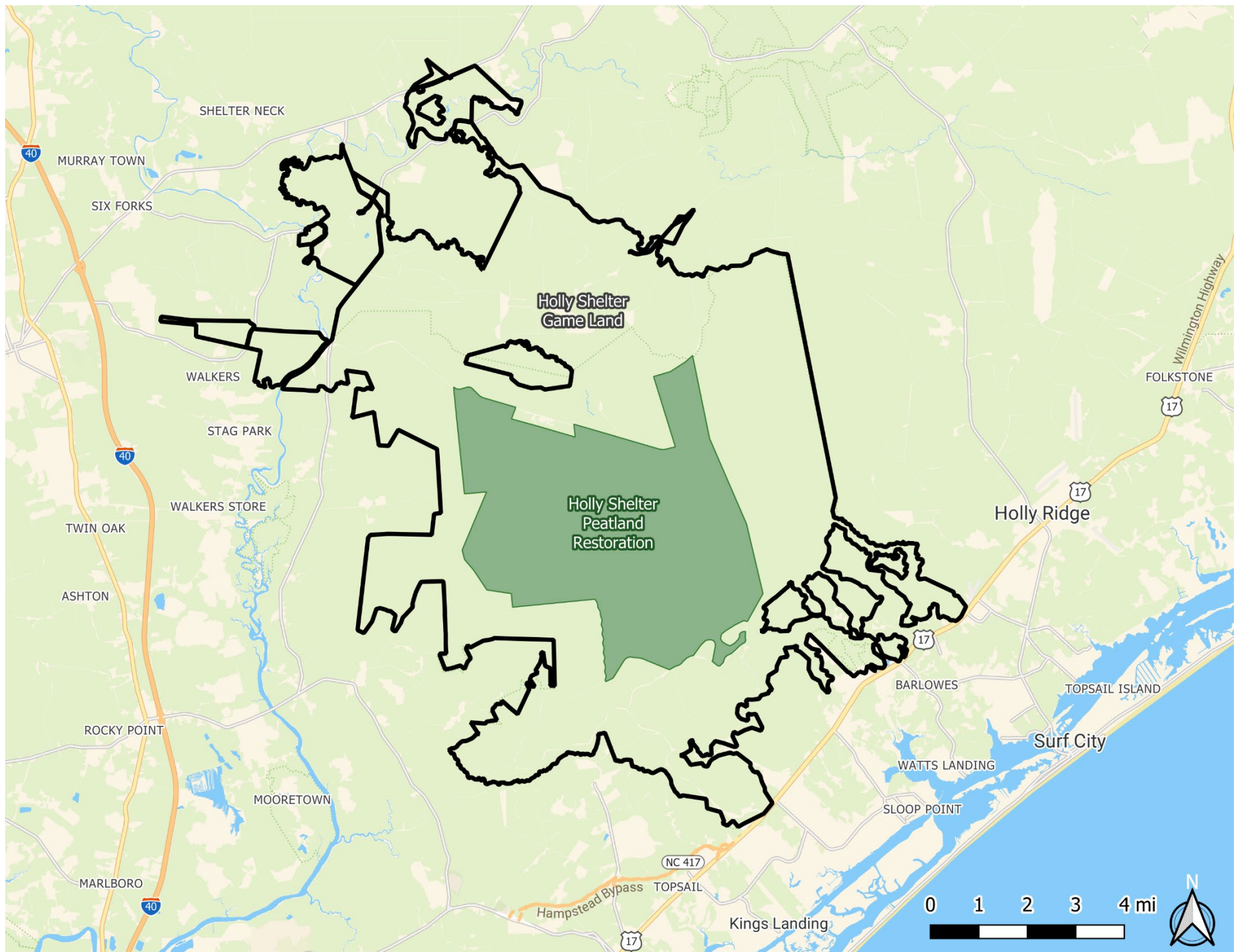
Funding Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Program

Purpose of Notice

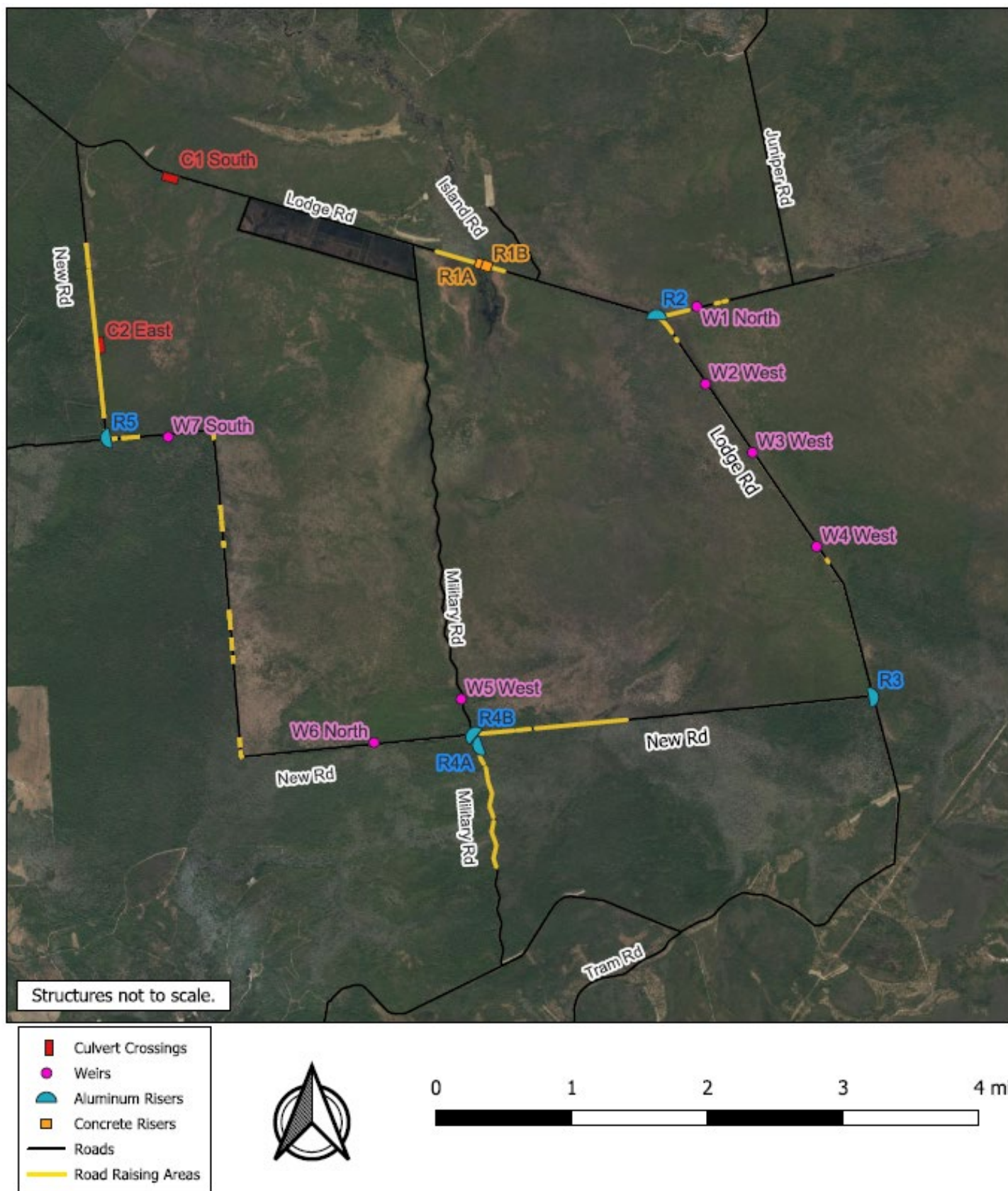
The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is providing notice that a proposed peatland restoration project within Holly Shelter Game Land will be implemented, in partnership with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, with funding provided through the U.S. EPA CPRG Program. Portions of the project are located within the FEMA-designated 100-year floodplain.

Project Description

The proposed 15,800-acre peatland restoration project will restore natural hydrology and ecological function within degraded pocosin peatland systems by rewetting drained peat soils to increase saturation, reduce emissions, enhance carbon sequestration, and lower the risk of catastrophic groundfires. Restoration activities include the installation of a) flashboard risers at five canal junctions and off-site drainage locations and b) seven sheet pile weirs within main drainage ditches to raise and manage groundwater levels to mimic pre-drainage conditions. Approximately five miles of existing access roads will be elevated to maintain a minimum of two feet of freeboard above planned water levels and improve recreational and management access throughout the restoration area. Together, these measures will create effective water management units that restore wetland and peatland function while supporting long-term site stewardship. Map 1 depicts the project boundary, and Map 2 shows the locations of the proposed restoration improvements.



Map 1: Holly Shelter peatland restoration project boundary (15,800 acres).



Map 2: Holly Shelter peatland restoration proposed improvements.

Project Benefits

The project is intended to restore peatland hydrology, improve wetland ecosystem function, enhance carbon sequestration and storage, reduce wildfire risk associated with drained peat soils, enhance wildfire fighting capabilities, improve water quality and watershed resilience, and maintain and enhance floodplain functions and values.

Floodplain Evaluation

The project occurs within an existing peatland and wetland ecosystem located in the floodplain. Because the resource being restored occurs within the floodplain, there is no practicable alternative location outside the floodplain that would achieve the project objectives. The project is expected to enhance natural floodplain functions including water storage, flood attenuation, groundwater recharge, aquatic habitat, and ecosystem resilience.

Measures to Minimize Adverse Effects

Compliance with all applicable permits and approvals; implementation of erosion and sediment control measures; limitation of disturbance to the minimum area necessary; use of best management practices to protect wetlands and surface waters; monitoring and adaptive management; and compliance with all US Army Corps of Engineers and State permit conditions.

Public Comments

Interested persons may submit comments concerning the proposed action and its location within the floodplain. Comments should be received within 15 days of publication of this notice.

Comments should be submitted to:

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