



File Code: 1950

Date: July 31, 2013

Dear Interested Publics:

The former Bear Creek #44 range allotment is located on the St. Francis National Forest approximately five miles southeast of Marianna, Arkansas in Sections 9 and 16 of Township 1 North, Range 4 East in Lee County (see attached map.). The allotment was approximately 44 acres in size. In 2010 the grazing permit was terminated and is no longer used for cattle grazing due to sinkhole hazards and lack of a water source. The pond on the allotment failed due to soil piping and is no longer needed. We are proposing to decommission the pond by leveling the dam and filling and stabilizing the interior using heavy equipment. Fertilizing, seeding, mulching, encapsulating the fill soil in geotextile (to help stabilize it), and other erosion-control measures will be conducted to stabilize the disturbed area. The disturbed area may cover up to two (2) acres and is located only in Section 9.

The proposed action is consistent with the requirements of the Revised Ozark-St. Francis National Forests' Land and Resource Management Plan and would be conducted in compliance with all federal, state and local laws and regulations in place to protect the human and natural environments. If approved, it would be implemented this calendar year.

The entire St. Francis National Forest has been surveyed to locate archeological sites and historic properties. The proposed project area received close interval pedestrian surveys and no archeological sites or historic properties will be adversely affected by the proposed action.

At this time, it is anticipated that this project will be categorically excluded from documentation in an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement under Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Chapter 30 Section 32.2 (6): *Timber stand and/or wildlife habitat improvement activities that do not include the use of herbicides and do not require more than 1 mile of low standard road construction.* [36 CFR 220.6(e)(6)]

Pursuant to 36 CFR 215.5, I am requesting comments on this proposal. The opportunity to comment ends 30 days following the date of publication of a legal notice in the newspaper of record, *The Helena World*, Helena, Arkansas.

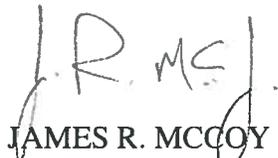
Only those persons, non-Federal organizations or entities that comment or otherwise express interest during the formal 30-day comment period will be eligible to appeal the subsequent decision on this project. In order to secure appeal eligibility, each individual or representative must either sign the comments or verify identity upon request. All comments received, including those submitted anonymously will be considered; however, only those who submit a comment and provide a mailing address will be notified when the Decision for this project is signed. All comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this project and will be available for public inspection.



Written comments can be submitted to our mailing address, e-mailed, faxed, delivered or presented in person to our offices. Written, hand-delivered, or verbal comments will be accepted during normal business hours of 7:30 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays. Please include your name, mailing address, telephone number, and the title of the project (*Bear Creek Allotment Pond Decommissioning*). Send comments regarding the proposed action to me, District Ranger James R. McCoy, 1001 East Main, Mountain View, AR 72560 or to the St. Francis District Office located at 2955 Highway 44, Marianna, Arkansas. Our phone number is (870) 269-3228 and fax number is (870) 269-3000. E-mail comments should be submitted in a common digital format at comments-southern-ozark-stfrancis-stfrancis@fs.fed.us.

If you have questions regarding this proposed action please contact me or Deputy District Ranger Mary Maercklein at (870) 295-5278. Thank you for your time and your interest in the management of the St. Francis National Forest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J.R. McCoy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "M".

JAMES R. MCCOY
District Ranger, Sylamore-St. Francis Ranger
Districts

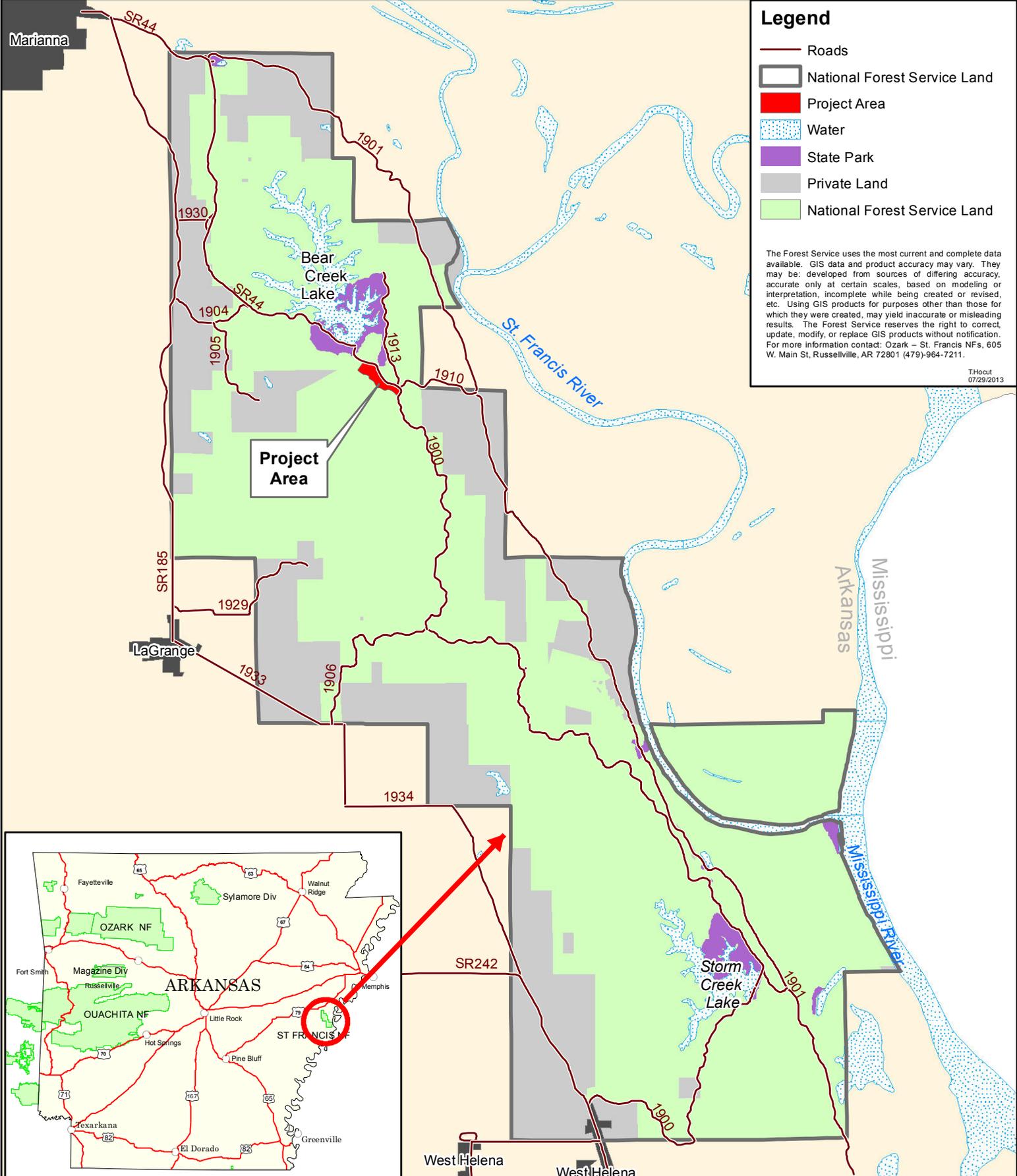
Enclosure



St. Francis National Forest

Bear Creek Allotment Pond Commissioning

Township 1 North, Range 4 East, Section 9



Legend

- Roads
- National Forest Service Land
- Project Area
- Water
- State Park
- Private Land
- National Forest Service Land

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T.Hout
07/29/2013

