

# JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE

December 04, 2017

United States Army  
Corps of Engineers  
New Orleans District  
Regulatory Branch, OD-SW  
7400 Leake Avenue  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70118

(504) 862-1445

[Pierre.P.Castaing@usace.army.mil](mailto:Pierre.P.Castaing@usace.army.mil)

Project Manager  
Pierre Castaing  
Permit Application Number  
MVN-2017-00599-WRR

State of Louisiana  
Department of Environmental Quality  
ATTN: Water Quality Certifications  
Post Office Box 4313  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821-4313

(225) 219-3225

Project Manager  
Elizabeth Hill  
WQC Application Number  
WQC 170726-02

Interested parties are hereby notified that a permit application has been received by the New Orleans District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to: [ ] Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of March 3, 1899 (30 Stat. 1151; 33 USC 403); and/or [X] Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (86 Stat. 816; 33 USC 1344).

Application has also been made to the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Water Quality Certifications, for a Water Quality Certification (WQC) in accordance with statutory authority contained in LRS30:2047 A(3), and provisions of Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (P.L.95-17).

## **GERONIMO DROP ZONE EXPANSION IN VERNON PARISH**

**NAME OF APPLICANT:** Department of Defense, Fort Polk, c/o C. Blaine Johnson, with Arabie Environmental Solutions, LLC, P.O. Box 928, Lake Charles, Louisiana 70601.

**LOCATION OF WORK:** Project site is located south of the Geronimo Drop Zone, Fort Polk, Louisiana, in Vernon Parish, as shown on the attached drawings.

Latitude: 31.1046/Longitude: -92.9525 Hydrologic Unit Code: 080800204 Calcasieu-Mermentau.

**CHARACTER OF WORK:** Clear 41 acres to expand the capability of Fort Polk's Geronimo Drop Zone to accommodate modern training requirements. A total of 3.8 acres of forested wetlands will be permanently impacted via clearing and grading, and redistributing approximately 17,000 cubic yards of native earthen material. The applicant agrees to compensate for wetland impacts by purchasing credits at a Department of the Army approved mitigation bank, should a DA permit be issued.

The comment period for the Department of the Army Permit and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality WQC will close **20 days** from the date of this joint public notice. Written comments, including suggestions for modifications or objections to the proposed work, stating reasons thereof, are being solicited from anyone having interest in this permit and/or this WQC request and must be mailed so as to be received before or by the last day of the comment period. Letters concerning the Corps of Engineers permit application must reference the applicant's name and the Permit Application Number, and be mailed to the Corps of Engineers at the address above, **ATTENTION: REGULATORY BRANCH**. Similar letters concerning the Water Quality Certification must reference the applicant's name and the WQC Application number and be mailed to the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality at the address above. Individuals or parties may request an extension of time in which to comment on the proposed work by writing or e-mailing the Corps of Engineers Project Manager listed above. Any request must be specific and substantively supportive of the requested extension, and received by this office prior to the end of the initial comment period. The Section Chief will review the request and the requestor will be promptly notified of the decision to grant or deny the request. If granted, the time extension will be continuous to the initial comment period and, inclusive of the initial comment period, will not exceed a total of 30 calendar days.

The application for this proposed project is on file with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality and may be examined during weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Copies may be obtained upon payment of costs of reproduction.

### **Corps of Engineers Permit Criteria**

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public, federal, state, and local agencies and officials, Indian Tribes, and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine whether to make, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

The New Orleans District is unaware of properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places near the proposed work. The possibility exists that the proposed work may damage or destroy presently unknown archeological, scientific, prehistorical, historical sites, or data. Copies of this public notice are being sent to the State Archeologist and State Historic Preservation Officer regarding potential impacts to cultural resources.

The New Orleans District has determined that the proposed activity will have no effect on any listed threatened or endangered species based on the Standard Local Operating Procedure for Endangered Species of Louisiana (SLOPES), dated October 22, 2014, between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services Office.

Our initial finding is that the proposed work would not affect any species, nor affect any habitat designated as critical to the survival and recovery of such species, listed as endangered by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

This notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The applicant's proposal would result in the destruction or alteration of **N/A** acres of EFH utilized by various life stages of red drum and penaeid shrimp. Our initial determination is that the proposed action would not have a substantial adverse impact on EFH or federally managed fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico. Our final determination relative to project impacts and the need for mitigation measures is subject to review by and coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

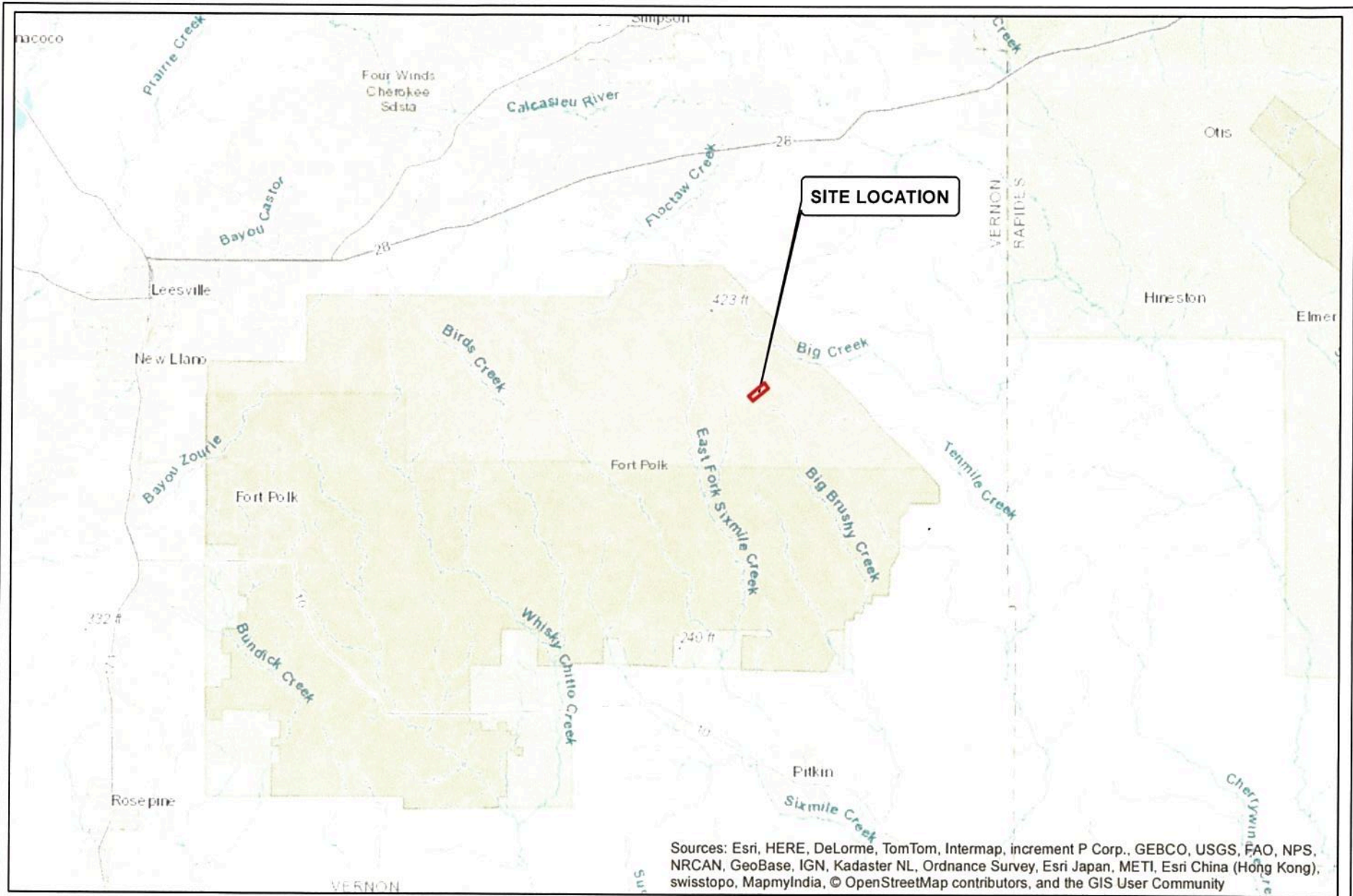
If the proposed work involves deposits of dredged or fill material into navigable waters, the evaluation of the probable impacts will include the application of guidelines established by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. Also, a certification that the proposed activity will not violate applicable water quality standards will be required from the Department of Environmental Quality, Water Quality Certifications, before a permit is issued.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

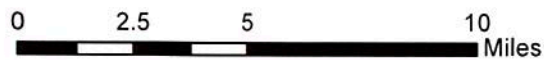
You are requested to communicate the information contained in this notice to any other parties whom you deem likely to have interest in the matter.


Darrell S. Barbara  
Chief, Western Evaluation Section

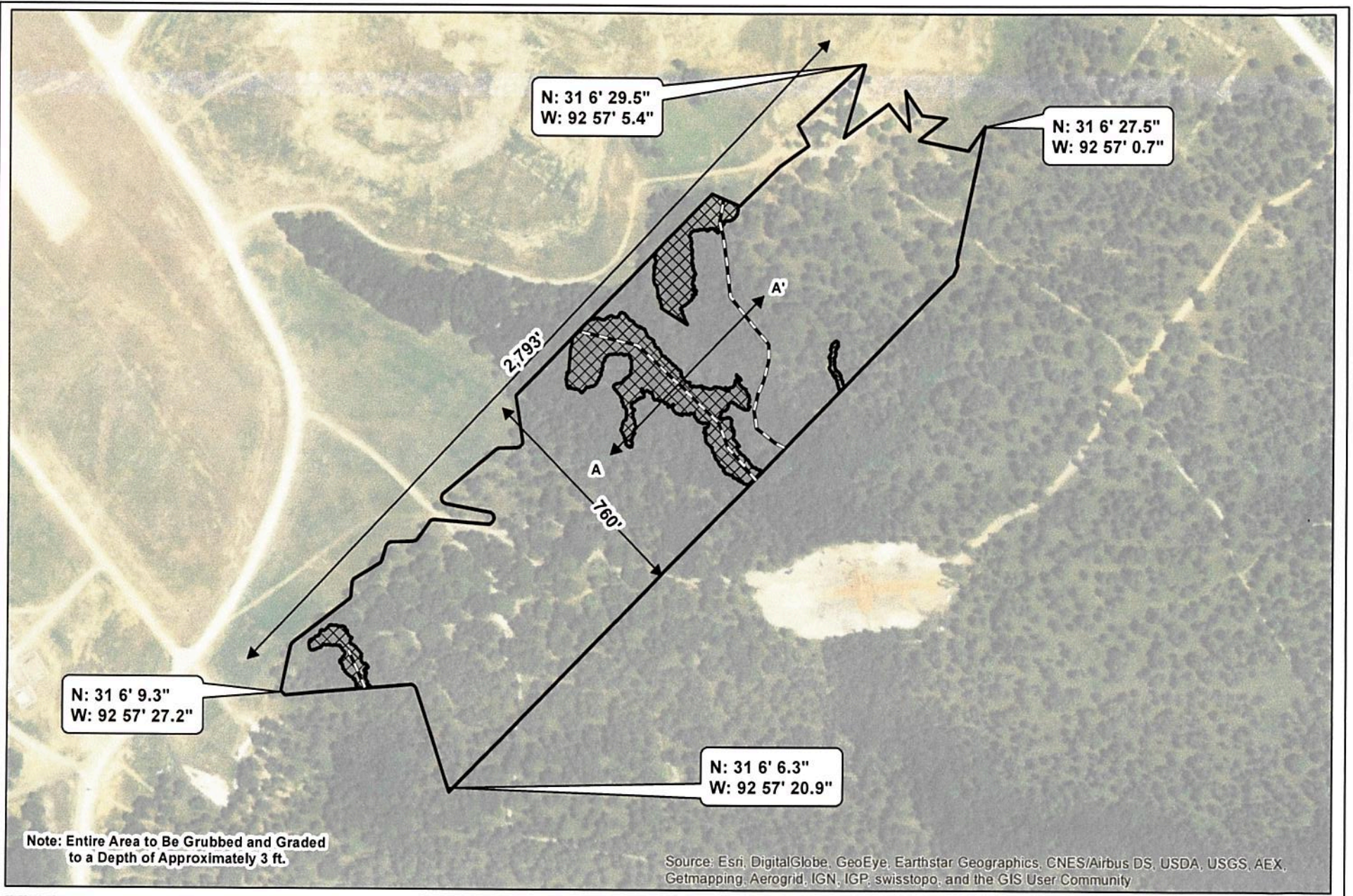
Enclosure



 **SITE LOCATION**






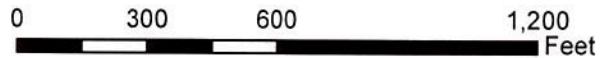
		<b>FIGURE 1 VICINITY MAP</b>	
PERMIT APPLICATION FORT POLK DROP ZONE EXPANSION VERNON PARISH, LOUISIANA			
Drawn By:	CRH	Date:	3/10/17
Checked By:	CBJ	Date:	3/10/17
		AES Project #	11574
		Revised:	




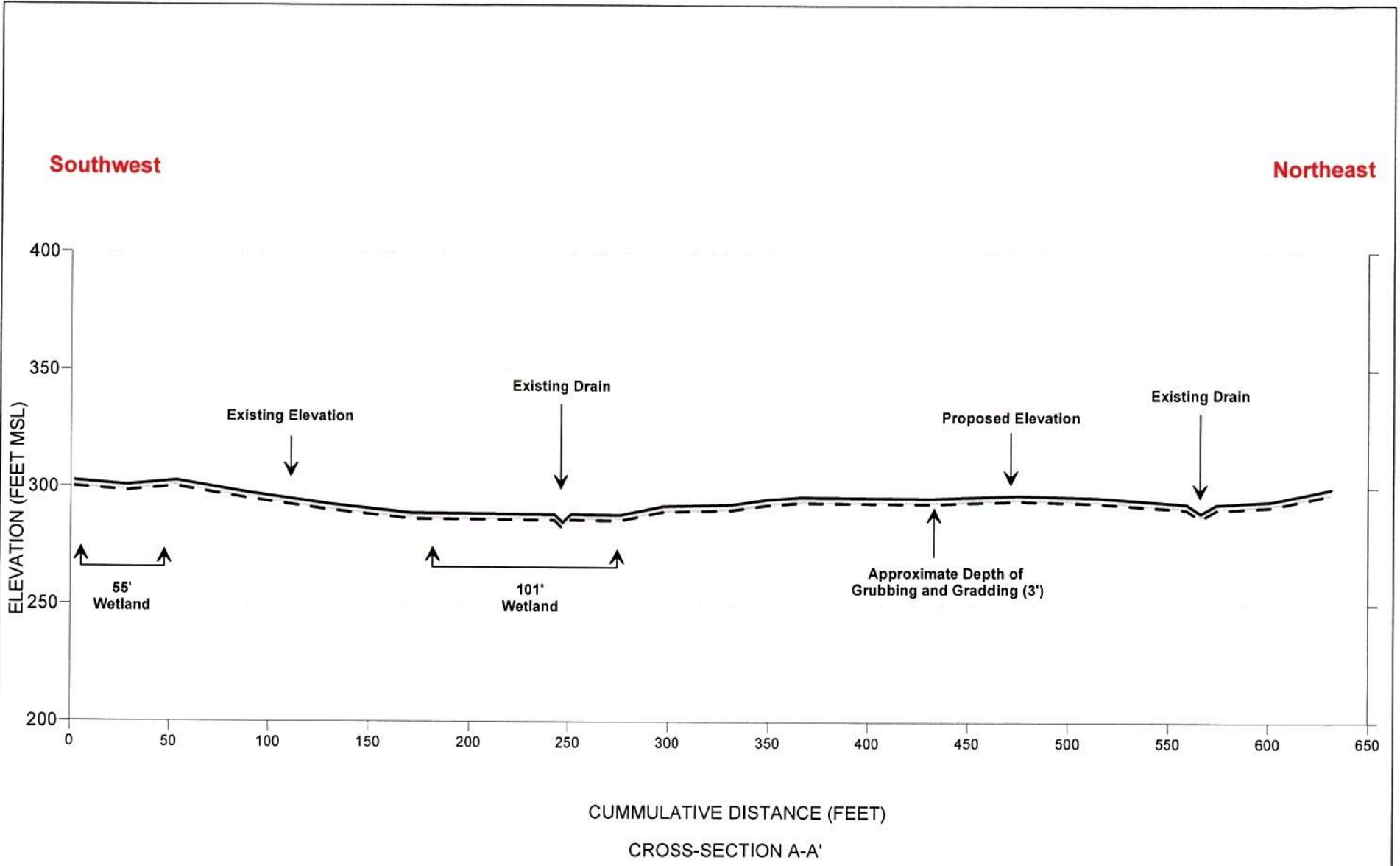
Note: Entire Area to Be Grubbed and Graded to a Depth of Approximately 3 ft.

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

-  NON-WETLAND (37.2 AC)
-  100% WETLAND (3.8 AC)
-  WATERS (1,830 FT)



	<b>FIGURE 2 SITE DIAGRAM</b>	
	PERMIT APPLICATION FORT POLK DROP ZONE EXPANSION VERNON PARISH, LOUISIANA	
Drawn By: CRH	Date: 04/07/17	AES Project # 11574
Checked By: CBJ	Date: 04/07/17	Revised:



**Note: Soils Will Be Redistributed in Wetland Areas Due to Grubbing And Grading;  
 However Contours And Elevations Will Remain Practically The Same as Pre-Construction.  
 Approximately 3.8 Acres of Wetlands Will Be Grubbed and Graded.**

**NOT TO SCALE  
 DIMENSIONS AS NOTED**

Area to be Grubbed and Graded to a Depth of Approximately 3 ft.

 ARABIE ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS	PERMIT APPLICATION FORT POLK DROP ZONE EXPANSION VERNON PARISH, LOUISIANA
<b>FIGURE 3          A-A' CROSS-SECTION</b>	
Drawn By: CRH	Date: 04/07/2017
AES Project #11574	