

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Forest Service

Land Management Plan Amendment
to the
John M. Bethea State Forest Ten-Year Land Management Plan

March 2023

The Florida Forest Service (FFS) is requesting ARC approval of a Land Management Plan Amendment to the John M. Bethea State Forest (JMBSF) Ten-Year Land Management Plan. The FFS plans to construct a new employee residence. The FFS-managed JMBSF is an approximately 37,700-acre, multiple-use state forest, located in Baker County. The Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida (BOT) and the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) both hold an undivided 50% interest to the affected portion of the state forest.

There is currently one mobile home site located within the footprint of the existing JMBSF Headquarters facility. The existing homesite was originally set up for a 50-foot single wide mobile home in 2008. The site was furnished with a 40' by 60' elevated pad, a residential septic tank and drain field, potable water supplied from the State Forest headquarters well, underground phone service line, and a 200-amp electrical service panel. The footprint of the existing homesite is approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ acre in size.

The newly planned homesite will have a similar footprint and furnishings as the existing homesite and will utilize some of the infrastructure already in place such as the improved driveway along the eastern fence line, electrical service from the transformer box, and headquarters potable well water supply.

FFS staff and a certified archaeological resource monitor (ARM) surveyed the proposed site areas for threatened or endangered species and possible historical and/or archaeological evidence. They concluded no known archeological sites occur in the project area, as well as, no evidence of threatened or endangered species were observed at the project site vicinity.

FFS additionally consulted with the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI), the Division of Historic Resources (DHR), and SJRWMD regarding the proposed activities. SJRWMD may require an Environmental Resource Permit, and FNAI noted there is one rare plant, *Hartwrightia floridana*, that has been documented in the general area, but based on old specimens. Because the proposed ground-disturbing activity will be in a previously disturbed area, and because their staff was unable to locate this species at JBSF in 2020, it is unlikely that this species is present in the proposed project footprint. Consulting agency (FNAI, DHR, SJRWMD) response letters are included with this request, as are applicable maps and photos of the proposed site.



1018 Thomasville Road
Suite 200-C
Tallahassee, FL 32303
850-224-8207
www.fnai.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Todd Knapp

FROM: Geoffrey Parks, Research Scientist, FNAI

SUBJECT: John M. Bethea State Forest employee site

DATE: January 5, 2023

We have reviewed the information provided about the proposed employee housing at John M. Bethea State Forest. The FNAI database does not show any documented rare or imperiled species or other sensitive resources in the footprint of the project.

There is one rare plant, *Hartwrightia floridana*, that has been documented in the general area. This documentation based on old specimens. Because the proposed ground-disturbing activity will be in a previously-disturbed area, and because our staff was unable to locate this species at JBSF in 2020, it is unlikely that this species is present in the proposed project footprint.

We are otherwise aware of no sensitive resources that would be impacted by this project.

We appreciate the opportunity to review these proposed improvements.



Florida Resources
And Environmental
Analysis Center

Institute of Science
And Public Affairs

The Florida State University



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

RON DESANTIS
Governor

CORD BYRD
Secretary of State

Florida Forest Service
Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
3125 Conner Boulevard
Suite I-266, Mail Stop C-25
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1650

January 24, 2023

Re: DHR No.: 2022-8632
Project: John M. Bethea Employee Homesite Development

To Whom It May Concern:

Our office reviewed the referenced project in accordance with Chapter 267, *Florida Statutes*, and implementing state regulations, for possible effects on historic properties listed, or eligible for listing, in the *National Register of Historic Places*, or otherwise of historical, architectural or archaeological value.

It is the opinion of this agency that ground disturbing activities for the above project be monitored by someone who has completed our Archaeological Resource Management (ARM) training program. Once a project is complete, the monitor should submit the appropriate monitoring forms to this agency. In the event that unmarked human remains are encountered during permitted activities, all work shall stop immediately and the proper authorities notified in accordance with Section 872.05, *Florida Statutes*.

If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Tobias, Historic Sites Specialist, by email at Jennifer.Tobias@dos.myflorida.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelly L. Chase" with "For" written below it.

Alissa S. Lotane
Director, Division of Historical Resources and State Historic Preservation Officer

Division of Historical Resources
R.A. Gray Building • 500 South Bronough Street • Tallahassee, Florida 32399
850.245.6300 • 850.245.6436 (Fax) • FLHeritage.com





St. Johns River Water Management District

Michael A. Register, P.E., Executive Director

4049 Reid Street • P.O. Box 1429 • Palatka, FL 32178-1429 • 386-329-4500 • www.sjrwmd.com

January 30, 2023

Todd Knapp, State Lands Supervisor
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Florida Forest Service

Re: Ground Disturbance Approval Request - New Employee Site on John M. Bethea State Forest

Dear Mr. Knapp,

Thank you for reaching out to the St. Johns River Water Management District (District) for comments on the proposed new employee site on John M. Bethea State Forest. As co-owners of John M. Bethea State Forest with the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (TIITF), the District supports the request to amend the management plan as described in the Employee Homesite Development Narrative documents provided to the District via email on December 29, 2022. Pursuant to paragraph 23 of the Cooperative Lease Agreement between TIITF and the District, the District approves the requested level of ground disturbance described in those documents.

Please note that an Environmental Resource Permit may be required for the proposed activities. This will involve review and approval of your permit application by District regulatory staff. Please contact Craig McCammon at CMcCammon@sjrwmd.com or (904) 730-6267. If you have any questions on this response, please contact Brian Emanuel at (386) 329-4377 or bemanuel@sjrwmd.com. The District values the partnership we have with the Florida Forest Service. We are glad to lend our support to expand the Florida Forest Service's capacity.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Register, P.E.
Executive Director

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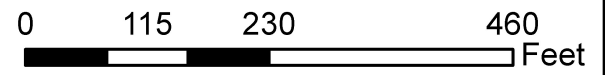
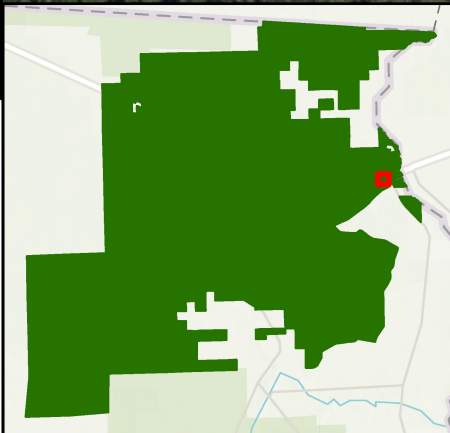
Douglas Burnett
ST. AUGUSTINE

Cole Oliver
MERRITT ISLAND

Janet Price
FERNANDINA BEACH



John M. Bethea State Forest Employee Homesite Development Existing Facilities & Proposed Site Location



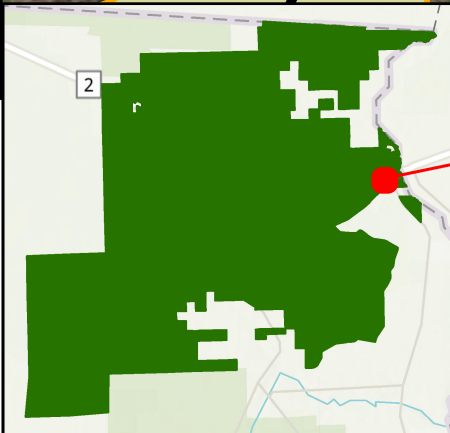
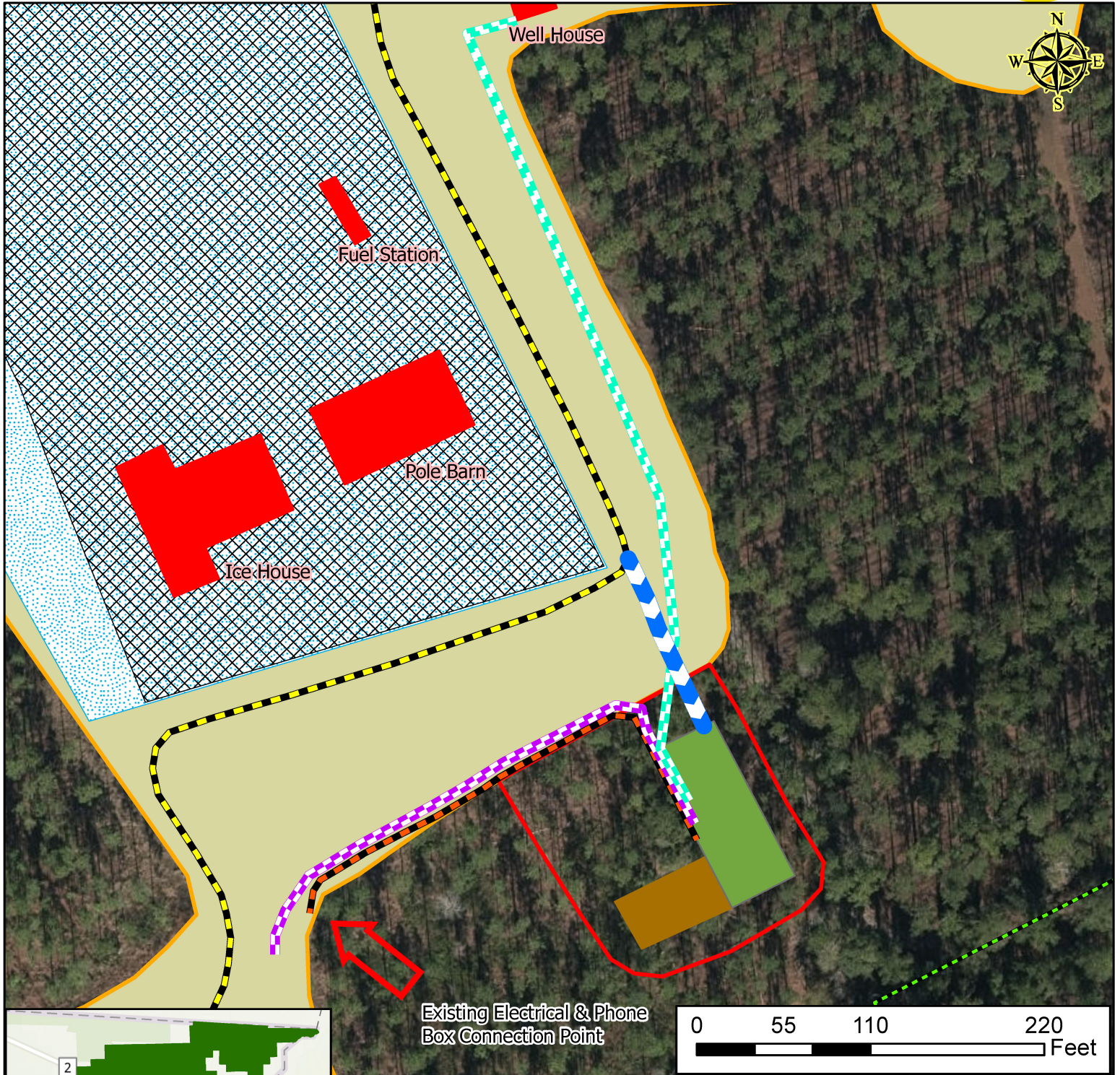
DISCLAIMER
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Created By: Ethan Darnell 4/6/2022

Legend	
	Forest Boundary
	Structures
	Fenced Storage Yard
	Pavement or Rock
	Pond
	Driveway
	Proposed Homesite
	Existing Facilities Footprint
	Project Location



John M. Bethea State Forest Employee Homesite Development Proposed Layout & Infrastructure Plan



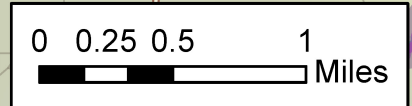
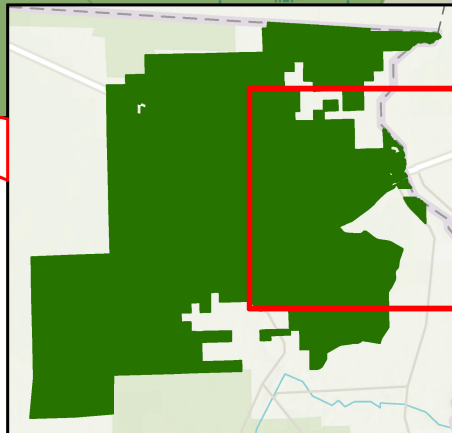
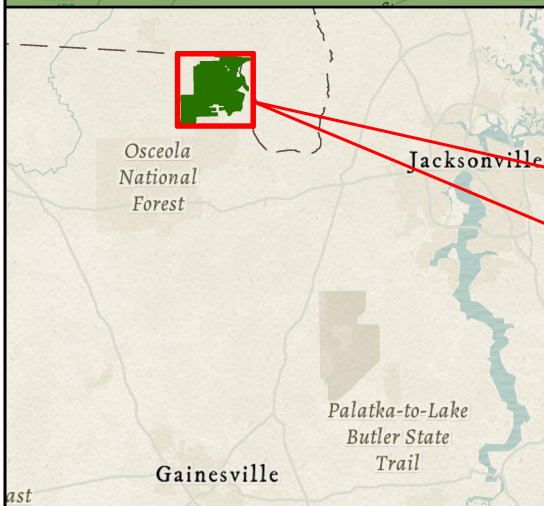
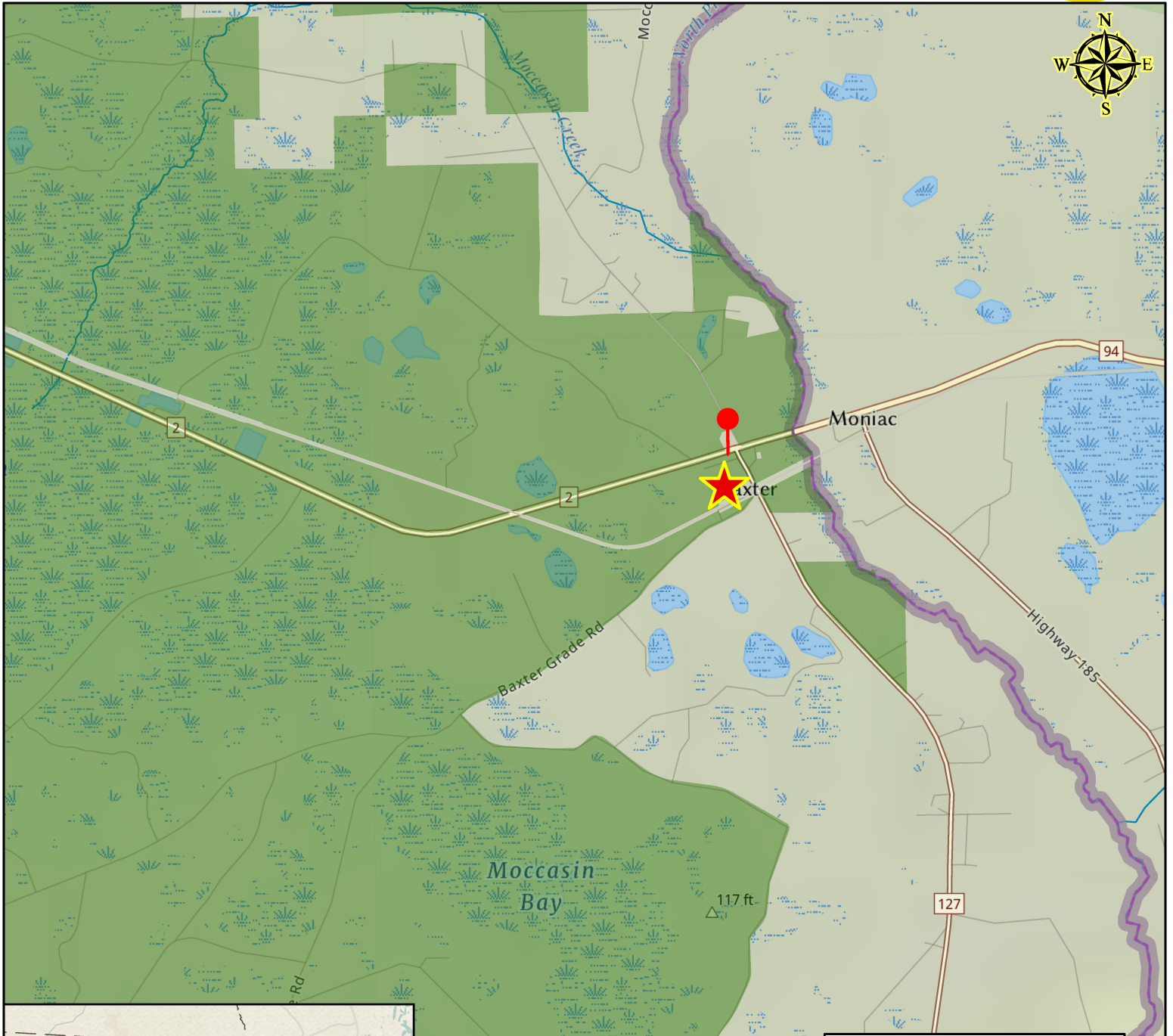
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Legend			
	Forest Boundary		Existing Facilities Footprint
	Structures		Proposed Septic System
	Fenced Storage Yard		Mobile Home or RV Pad
	Pavement or Rock		Underground Electric Line
	Pond		Potable Water Supply Line
	Existing Driveway		Underground Phone Line
	Proposed Homesite		Driveway Capping



John M. Bethea State Forest Employee Homesite Development Location Map



Legend

- Project Location
- John M. Bethea S.F.
- John M. Bethea SF Headquarters



John M. Bethea State Forest Employee Homesite Development Photos



Figure 4 (Above): From location of homesite; Facing North.



Figure 5 (Above): From location of homesite; Facing East



John M. Bethea State Forest Employee Homesite Development Photos



Figure 6 (Above): From location of homesite; Facing South.



Figure 7 (Above): From location of homesite; Facing West.