

Ray County Community Lake

Ten-Year Area Management Plan
FY 2018-2027





Wildlife Division Chief

21 March 2018

Date

OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** Ray County Community Lake, # 5404
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1954
- **Acreage:** 159
- **County:** Ray
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Wildlife
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Wildlife
- **Statement of Primary Purpose:**

A. Strategic Direction

The Ray County Community Lake is managed to provide quality upland, grassland, forest, woodland, and lake habitats for game and non-game species, while providing public recreational opportunities compatible with natural resource management.

B. Desired Future Condition

The desired future condition of Ray County Community Lake is to provide a 25-acre fishing lake surrounded by quality upland, grassland, forest, and woodland habitats.

C. Federal Aid Statement

N/A

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

I. Special Considerations

- A. **Priority Areas:** Crooked River Priority Watershed
- B. **Natural Areas:** None

II. Important Natural Features and Resources

- A. **Species of Conservation Concern:** None observed.
- B. **Caves:** None
- C. **Springs:** None

III. Existing Infrastructure

- 23-acre Ray County Community Lake
- 1 concrete boat ramp
- 7 fishing piers (1 American with Disabilities Act [ADA] accessible)
- 2 privies (2 ADA accessible)
- 4 parking lots (1 ADA accessible)
- 3 picnic tables (2 ADA accessible)
- 0.7 miles of maintained gravel public access roads

IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations

- A. Deed Restrictions or Ownership Considerations:** Federal funds may be used in the management of this land. Fish and wildlife agencies may not allow recreational activities and related facilities that would interfere with the purpose for which the State is managing the land. Other uses may be acceptable and must be assessed in each specific situation.
- B. Federal Interest:** None
- C. Easements:** Consolidated Public Water Supply District #2 waterline easement, public road right of way easements.
- D. Cultural Resource Findings:** No known cultural resources.
- E. Endangered Species:** None observed.
- F. Boundary Issues:** None

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Provide quality habitat for upland game and grassland species.
- 2) Provide healthy deer and turkey populations.
- 3) Provide a diverse mixture of quality native and agricultural vegetation.
- 4) Provide healthy and sustainable woodland and forest habitat.

Management Objective 1: Manage for quality upland grassland wildlife.

Strategy 1: Increase and maintain quality nesting, brood rearing, and covey headquarters by converting and managing open lands using management techniques including but not limited to prescribed fire, herbicides, native plantings, disking, food plots, and the agriculture crop permittee program. (Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Monitor quail populations annually. (Wildlife)

Strategy 3: Create and maintain soft edge habitat adjacent to open lands using management techniques including, but not limited to herbicides, mechanical treatments, and prescribed fire. (Wildlife)

Management Objective 2: Manage for healthy deer and turkey populations.

Strategy 1: Provide diverse habitat including agricultural and native food types. Manage using tools including but not limited to prescribed fire, agriculture crop permittee program, and food plots for optimum deer forage and turkey brood rearing habitat. (Wildlife)

Management Objective 3: Manage for a diverse mixture of native vegetation and agricultural food sources.

Strategy 1: Implement annual disturbances to establish and maintain native vegetation. (Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Implement agricultural practices for disturbance to provide quality forage and brood rearing habitat for grassland species. (Wildlife)

Strategy 3: Annually treat invasive vegetation with herbicides, mechanical treatments, and prescribed fire. (Wildlife)

Strategy 4: Establish food plots with a variety of crops (e.g., grain, forage and green browse) to control vegetative succession as well as to maintain established fire lines around prescribed burn units. Seek to provide food for wildlife throughout the seasons. (Wildlife)

Management Objective 4: Manage for healthy and sustainable woodland and forest habitat benefitting the Ray County Community Lake watershed.

Strategy 1: Monitor and treat any invasive vegetation with herbicides, mechanical treatments, and/or prescribed fire. (Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Plant native trees and vegetation, as needed, to maintain adequate riparian corridors within the watershed of Ray County Community Lake per the Missouri Department of Conservation (Department) *Missouri Watershed Protection Practice Recommended Practices for Missouri Forests: 2014 Management Guidelines for Maintaining Forested Watersheds to Protect Streams* (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2014). (Wildlife, Forestry, Fisheries, Private Land Services)

Strategy 3: Implement forestry practices to maintain sustainable and diverse forest and woodland habitat, per the *Missouri Forest Management Guidelines: Voluntary Recommendations for Well-Managed Forests* (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2014). (Forestry, Wildlife)

VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Provide quality sportfish populations.
- 2) Manage for native aquatic vegetation.
- 3) Provide aquatic habitat to enhance sport fishery.
- 4) Manage riparian corridor.

Management Objective 1: Manage for quality angling opportunities on 23-acre Ray County Community Lake.

Strategy 1: Conduct annual fish surveys to monitor for quality largemouth bass and bluegill sportfish populations. (Fisheries)

Strategy 2: Stock channel catfish, when needed to maintain quality angling opportunities. (Fisheries)

Strategy 3: Consider a total lake and fishery renovation to eliminate gizzard shad; increase angling access, pan fish growth, lake longevity, and angling efficiency; and decrease vegetation density and chances for future fish kills. (Fisheries)

Management Objective 2: Manage for native aquatic vegetation.

Strategy 1: Plant native aquatic vegetation. (Fisheries)

Strategy 2: Treat aquatic nuisance vegetation with herbicide. (Fisheries)

Management Objective 3: Increase aquatic habitat in 23-acre lake.

Strategy 1: Install brush piles to enhance sport fish recruitment and add fish holding structure in strategic locations in the main lake as natural fish structure deteriorates (Figure 4). (Fisheries)

Strategy 2: Maintain fishing jetties by utilizing rip-rap on jetty points and jetty toes to reduce erosion and provide additional shoreline fishing opportunities. (Fisheries, Design and Development)

Management Objective 4: Manage riparian corridors within the watershed of Ray County Community Lake to reduce potential soil erosion and deposition in the lake.

Strategy 1: Maintain existing native vegetation along corridors, per the Missouri Department of Conservation (Department) *Missouri Watershed Protection Practice Recommended Practices for Missouri Forests: 2014 Management Guidelines for Maintaining Forested Watersheds to Protect Streams* (Missouri Department of Conservation, 2014). (Private Land Services, Fisheries, Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Plant native vegetation along drainages to maintain 50 feet of vegetation along corridors. (Wildlife)

Strategy 3: Monitor and treat any exotic and noxious vegetation with herbicides, mechanical treatments, and/or prescribed fire. (Private Land Services, Fisheries, Wildlife)

Strategy 4: Continue to work with landowners within the watershed to encourage soil conservation practices and maintain riparian corridors. (Private Land Services, Fisheries, Wildlife,)

VII. Public Use Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Keep regulations up-to-date.
- 2) Maintain infrastructure and access to area resources.

Management Objective 1: Keep regulations up-to-date.

Strategy 1: Annually evaluate regulations and update as needed. (Wildlife)

Management Objective 2: Maintain infrastructure and provide public access to area resources.

Strategy 1: Maintain area accesses for multiple user groups through signage and special use permits. (Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Mow/maintain the grassy areas around parking lots designated for primitive camping. Mow to a shorter height than what is required for areas not used for camping. (Wildlife)

VIII. Administrative Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Provide defined area boundaries through Department signage.

Management Objective 1: Maintain area infrastructure at current levels.

Strategy 1: Maintain area infrastructure in accordance with Department guidelines and at currently identified maintenance level (2). (Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Replace older, block-style privies with modern privy style, for ease of maintenance and safeguarding of water quality. (Design and Development, Wildlife)

Management Objective 2: Maintain clearly identified property lines.

Strategy 1: Inspect and maintain boundaries on a regular cycle. (Wildlife)

Strategy 2: Resolve boundary issues with adjoining landowners as they arise. (Wildlife)

MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE

All strategies for this management plan are considered ongoing.

APPENDICES

Area Background:

Ray County Community Lake is located 2 miles north of Richmond in Ray County. To reach the lake from US Highway 13, take West 128th Street west 1 mile and then North Garner Road south 1 mile to area entrance.

The area was purchased in in 1954 to provide public fishing as well as to provide protection to the watershed downstream. Existing agricultural fields were converted to native warm season grass stands to improve water quality draining into the lake. The lake provides fishing, picnicking, and wildlife viewing opportunities including an Americans with Disabilities Act accessible fishing jetty.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Feet	% of Area
Grassland (non-prairie)	74		47
Forest and woodland	31		19
Lakes/ponds	23		15
Old field	21		13
Open land	6		4
Infrastructure	4		2
Total	159		100
Stream Frontage		0	

Public Input Summary:

The draft Ray County Community Lake Management Plan was available for a public comment period July 1–31, 2016. The Missouri Department of Conservation received comments from four respondents (Appendix A). The Ray County Community Lake Planning Team carefully reviewed and considered these ideas as they finalized this document. A brief summary of public input themes, including how they were incorporated or why they were not, can be found below. Rather than respond to each individual comment, comments are grouped into general themes and are addressed collectively.

Department responses to themes and issues identified through the Ray County Community Lake Management Plan public comment period.

Appreciates recent brush removal, but concerned with weed growth. Wonders if there are plans to plant forbs?

District staff are currently controlling invasive species as well as monitoring native plant response in order to apply quality habitat management efficiently. Money is currently allocated

in the budget to complete a pollinator/forb planting on the acres that were treated. Future management of these acres will include invasive species control and prescribed burning.

Suggests adding wood duck nest boxes in appropriate locations.

Due to staffing constraints, area staff would not be able to maintain wood duck boxes. However, opportunities may exist for volunteers to maintain some boxes if the interest arises.

Suggests adding a hiking trail.

Due to budget and staffing restraints we are not able to add area infrastructure at this time.

Suggests improving access to Ray County Community Lake for users who are disabled.

Concerned that disabled accessible fishing jetty is not maintained and far from the parking area.

The issues with the disabled accessible fishing jetty have been identified by area staff. Plans for needed repairs are pending and are likely to occur in the near future.

Concerned about the amount of dust created by gravel road.

North Garner Road is not maintained by the Department. Issues related to dust created by traffic should be directed to the Richmond Special Road District.

Interested in working with the Department to maintain stream crossing on neighboring landowner's property.

Staff have made a site visit over the summer and are currently working with this neighboring landowner.

References:

Missouri Department of Conservation. (2009). *Watershed and stream management guidelines for lands and waters managed by Missouri Department of Conservation*. Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Department of Conservation.

Missouri Department of Conservation. (2014). *Missouri forest management guidelines: Voluntary recommendations for well-managed forests*. Jefferson City, MO: Conservation Commission of the State of Missouri.

Missouri Department of Conservation. (2014). *Missouri watershed protection practice recommended practices for Missouri forests: 2014 management guidelines for maintaining forested watersheds to protect streams*. Jefferson City, MO: Conservation Commission of the State of Missouri.

Maps:

Figure 1: Area Map

Figure 2: Vegetation Map

Figure 3: Easement Map

Figure 4: Ray County Community Lake Fishing Regulations Map

Figure 5: Watershed Map

Additional Appendices:

Appendix A: Ray County Community Lake Management Plan Public Comments

Figure 1: Area Map

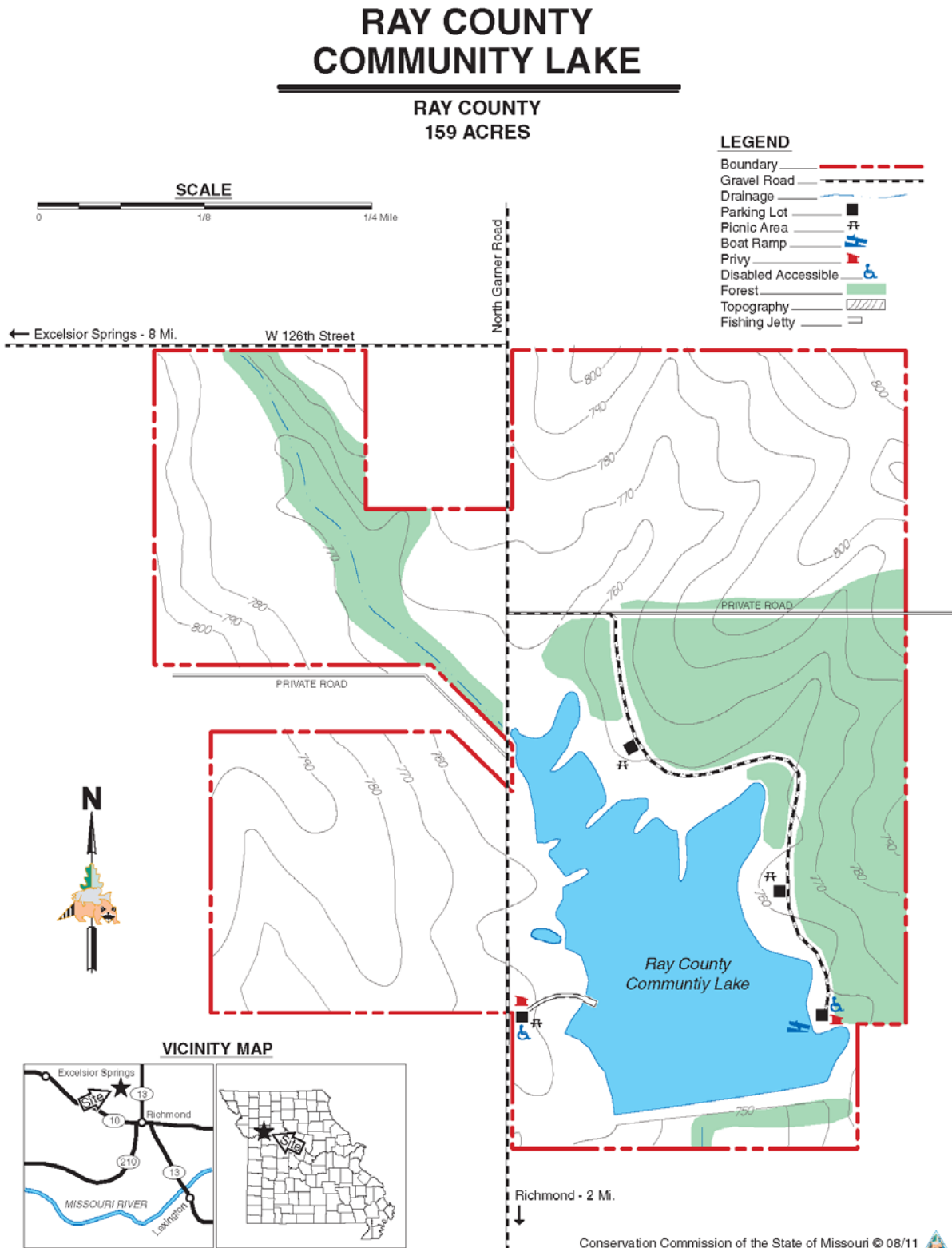


Figure 2: Vegetation Map



Legend

Habitat Cover Types	 Old Field
 Openland	 Woodland
 Forest	 Permanent Water
 Grassland	 Infrastructure

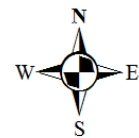
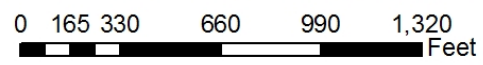
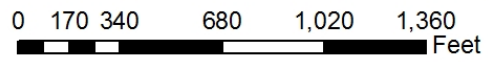
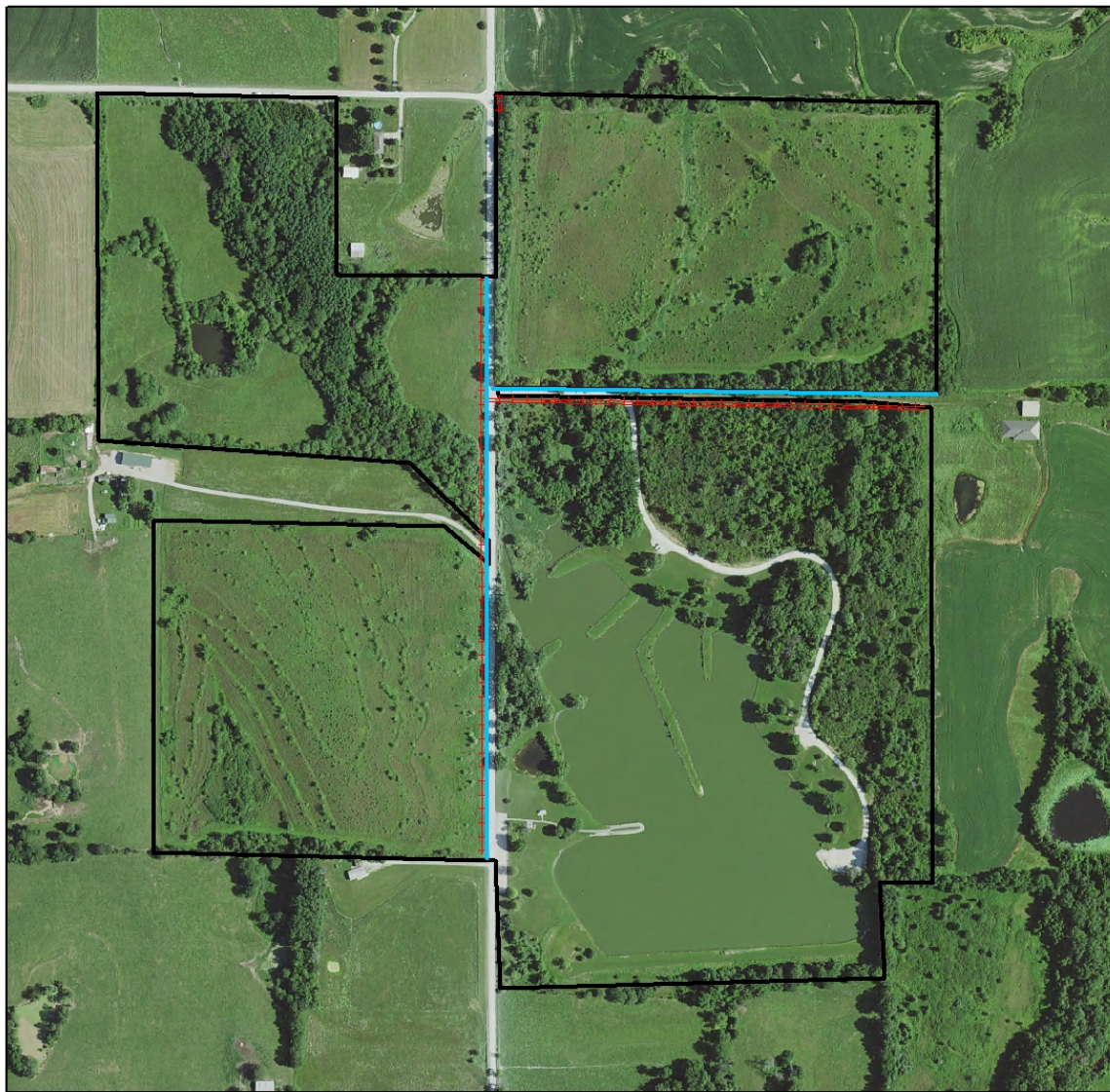





Figure 3: Easement Map



Legend

-  Electric Pole/Line
-  Water Line
-  RCCL Boundary

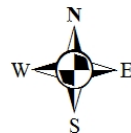


Figure 4: Ray County Community Lake Fishing Regulations Map

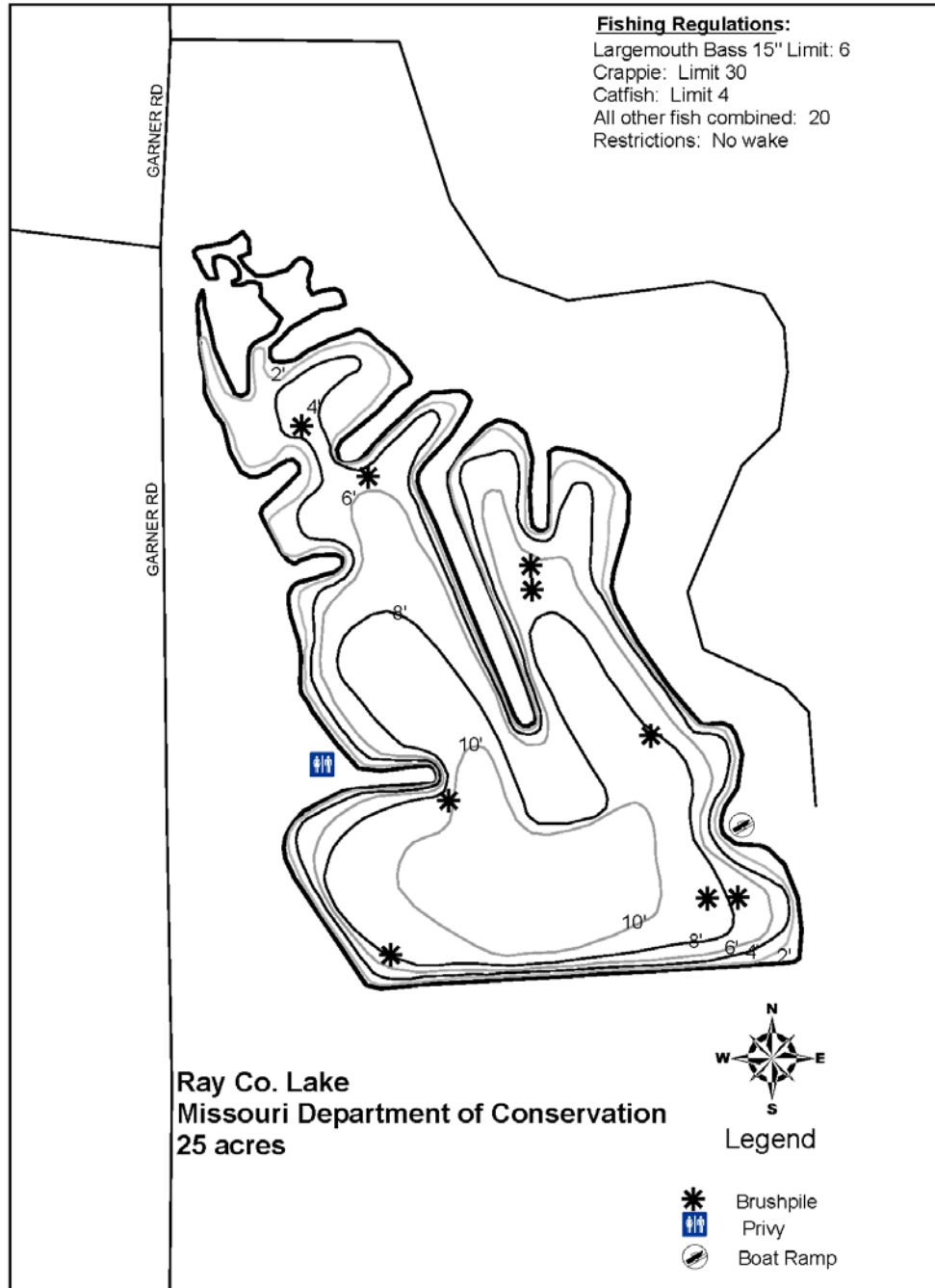
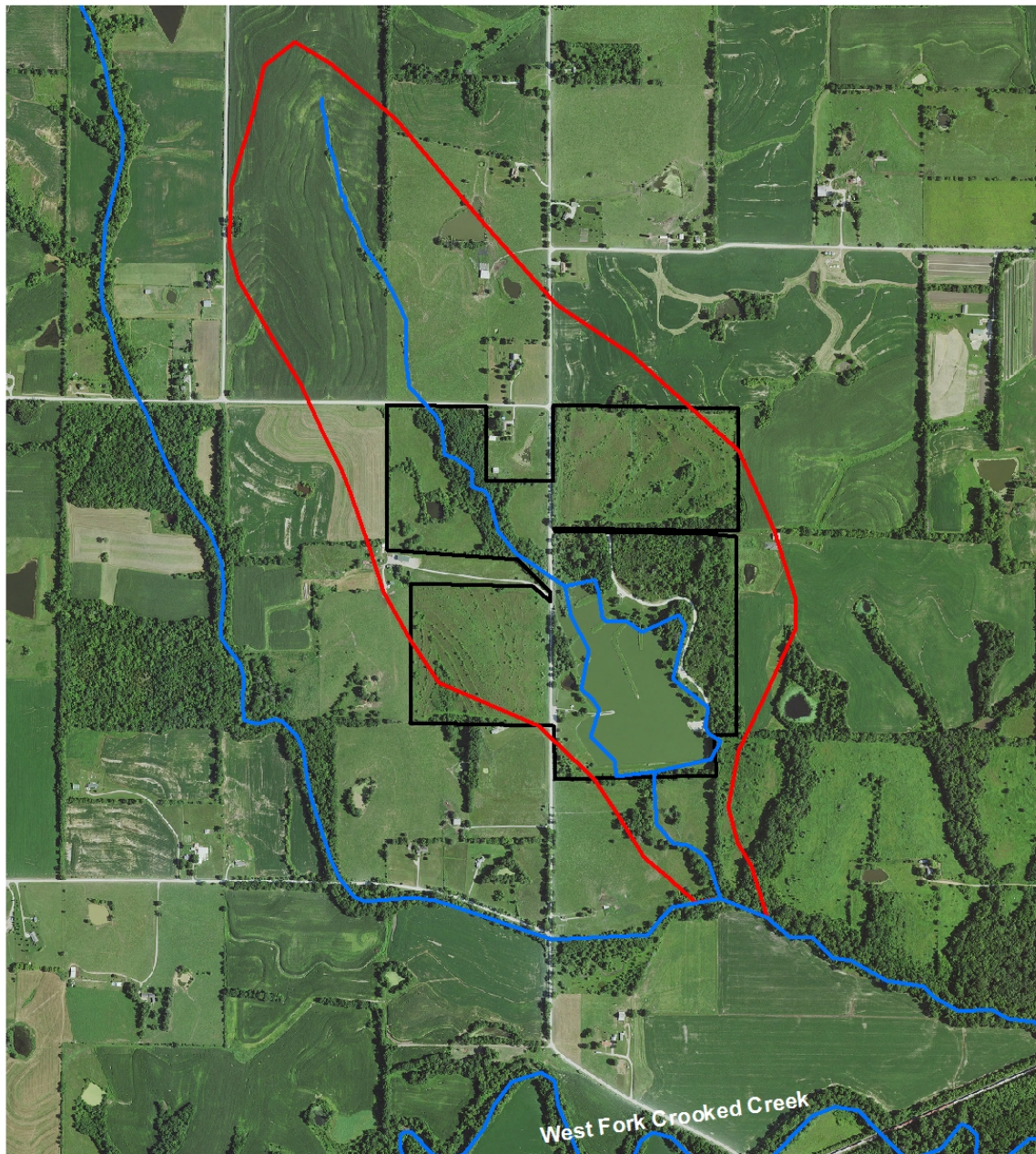





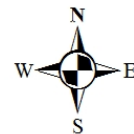
Figure 5: Ray County Community Lake Watershed Map



Legend

-  STREAMS
-  RCCL Watershed
-  RCCL Boundary

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 Miles



Appendix A: Ray County Community Lake Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (July 1-31, 2016):

Nice that MDC cut alot of the brush back. However this year over growing in weeds. Need better access for those of us that are hanicapped. One dike that is accessable, that is not maintained, really. Parking closer to the lake would be a much better help. Thanks

We have lived immediatly north of Ray County Lake since 1988. A portion of the watershed draining into the lake is on our property.

We were impressed last year when a contractor came in to remove brush and cut trees to clean up portions of the property that had overgrown over more than 25 years. It was our understanding that the plan was to plant forbs. Instead, however, at least a portion of the newly mowed property is now overgrown again, now with weeds. We regret to say it looked better before. We recently corresponded with an MDC employee who indicated the department was experimenting with vegetation growth. The jury seems to still be out on the results of the experiment, and more aggressive action based on the terrestrial resource management strategies would appear to be more beneficial.

Also, with regard to the efforts to control the watershed and drainage area, we would be willing to consider proposals from MDC to help maintain the stream crossing our property.

DUST, DUST, DUST; Something needs to be done about the dusty road. Dust is on everything including the person trying to fish. When you come home in your very expensive vehicle, you have a mess. We need a walking trail for excersize or bird watching and just taking your children out in the country. We believe it would double the activity if the dust was taken care of.

Install and maintain Wood Duck nest boxes in appropriate locations.