

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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From: Orange County
Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation (DEAPR)
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ORANGE COUNTY ACCEPTS CONSERVATION EASEMENTS TO PROTECT NATURAL AREAS ON TWO PROPERTIES

On December 19, Orange County accepted two conservation easements on 47 acres of land for natural resource conservation purposes. Conservation easements are written agreements that permanently protect land for its natural or cultural resource values, while leaving it in private ownership. The two projects were accomplished through the County's Lands Legacy program.

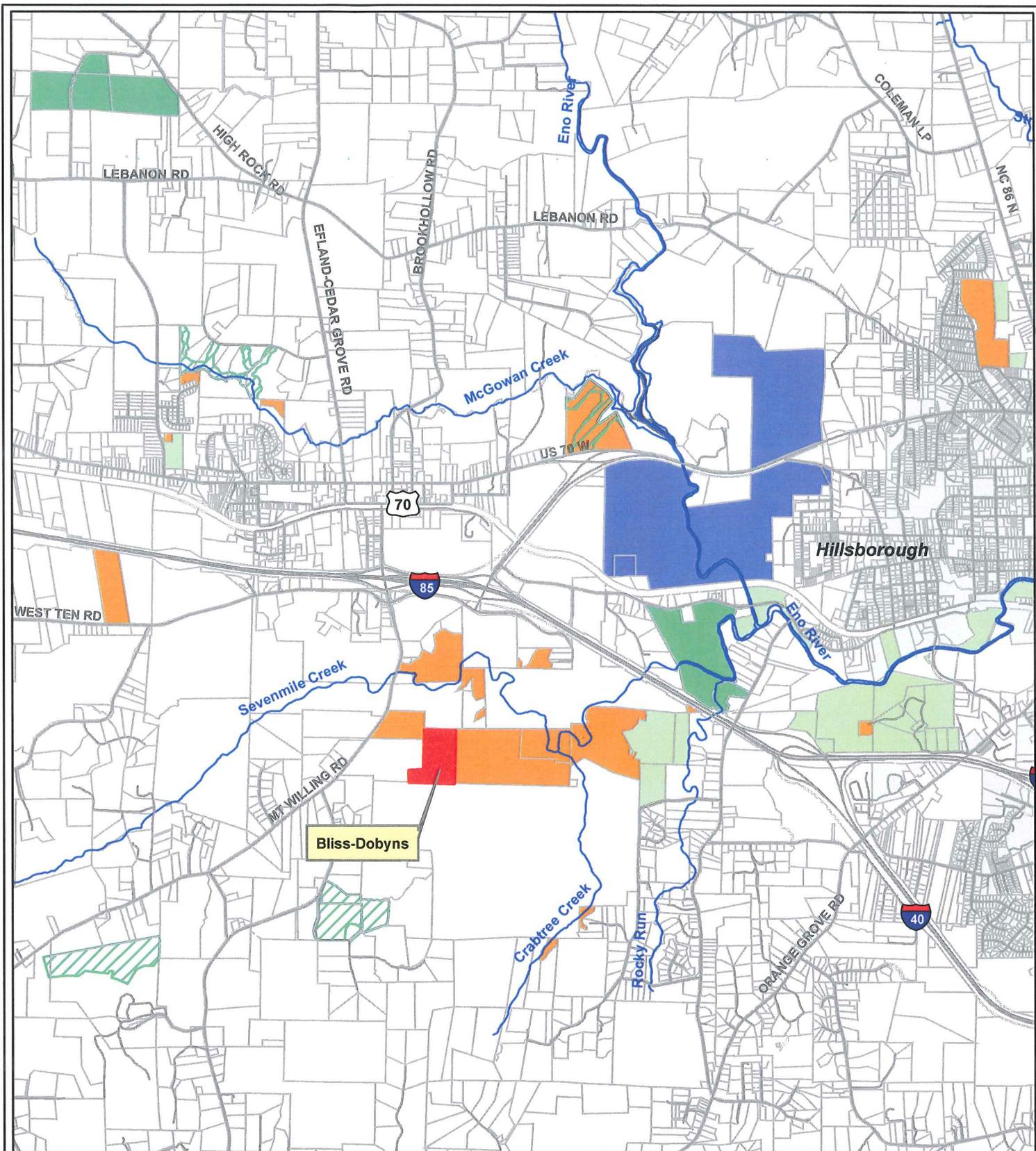
Michael Hughes and Dale Morgan donated a conservation easement that will protect an 11-acre portion of their land in southwestern Orange County. The forested site includes 1,200 linear feet of Collins Creek, which is on the State of North Carolina's 303d list of "impaired" streams. The site contains natural communities and diverse forest habitat and for a variety of native plants and wildlife. The conservation easement prohibits future subdivision and limits future improvements to the construction of nature trails and bridge crossings. Commercial timbering is prohibited; however some trees may cut to prevent personal injury and property damage, and to remove non-native species.

Katherine Bliss and Brian Dobyms granted a conservation easement over their 35-acre property located southwest of Hillsborough. The property includes the family's residence surrounded by a mixed hardwood forest that borders the County's Seven Mile Creek nature preserve. The Bliss-Dobyms land drains to Sevenmile Creek and eventually to the Eno River. The conservation easement prohibits future subdivision and limits future development to the one existing home site and associated residential and agricultural uses of the property. Nature trails and hunting are allowed, but commercial timbering is prohibited. The County compensated the landowners with a payment of \$117,000 equal to 75 percent of the fair market value of the development rights that were removed from their property.

The owners of both properties intend to take advantage of the NC Conservation Tax Credit program—available for easement donations that occurred prior to December 31, 2013. They will also pursue enhanced federal tax deductions available for qualified easement donations, which also expired at the end of 2013.

“Thanks to the vision of these two families, we’ve been able to protect 47 acres of significant natural resource land in Orange County,” stated County Commissioners Chair Barry Jacobs. “The conservation easements allow them to retain control of their property and to preserve their quality of life, yet assure protection of their sensitive acreage from development pressures and other degradation. These easement purchases are further success of our Lands Legacy program.”

With these acquisitions, the Lands Legacy program has conserved 3,078 acres of land for a variety of public purposes, including new parkland, nature preserves, watershed buffers, and farmland conservation. Over \$4 million in Federal and State grant funds have been used to match County land conservation funds in order to accomplish these projects.



Bliss-Dobyns Conservation Easement Vicinity Map

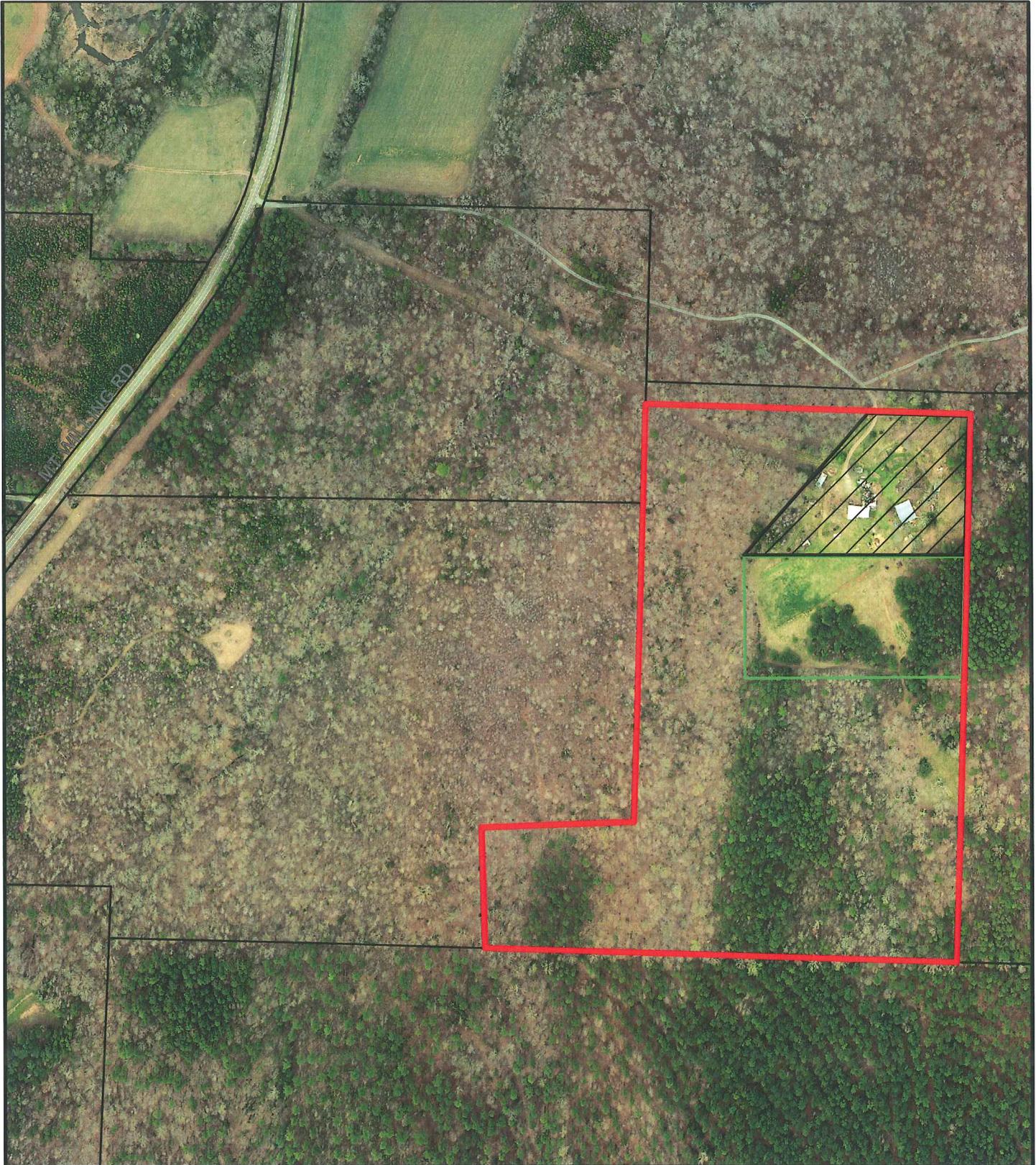
- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--------------------------|
|  | Bliss & Dobyns property |  | Duke University property |
|  | Conservation easements held by others |  | Streets |
|  | Conservation easements held by Orange County |  | Lakes & reservoirs |
|  | Orange County parkland & openspace |  | Major streams |
|  | Non-county parkland & open space |  | Parcel boundary |
| | |  | Municipal boundary |



1 inch = 3,880 feet

Map prepared by Land Records/GIS Division
6/25/2013 for Dept. of Environment,
Agriculture, Parks & Recreation <OC 220K
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Bliss-Dobyns Conservation Easement (35.46 acres)
Aerial Map

- Bliss-Dobyns property boundary
- Residential envelope (4.1 acres)
- Agricultural envelope (4.8 acres)
- Parcel boundary

2012 Orthophotos



1 inch = 384 feet

Dept. of Environment, Agriculture, Parks & Recreation
 Map by Land Records/GIS Division 8/29/2013
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Hughes-Morgan Conservation Easement

Vicinity Map

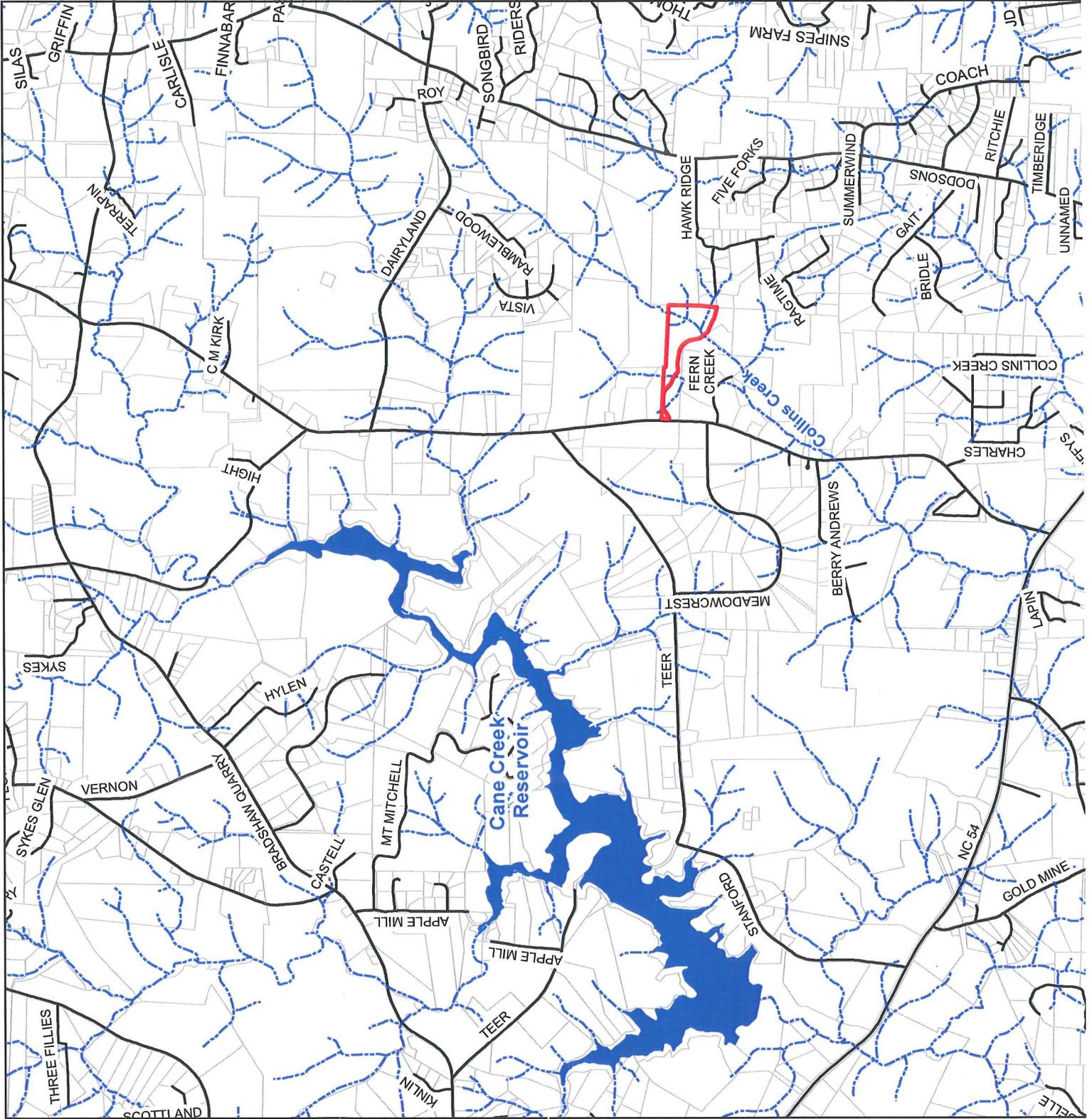
-  Hughes-Morgan boundary
-  Streams
-  Parcel boundary



1 inch = 3,365 feet



Dept. of Environment, Agriculture,
Parks & Recreation M.Jones 11/26/2013
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Hughes-Morgan Conservation Easement Site Map

Site Map

-  Hughes-Morgan boundary
-  Easement area (11.21 acres)
-  Parcel boundary
- 2012 aerial



1 inch = 369 feet



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