



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

Mississippi Branch
Regulatory Division

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, MOBILE DISTRICT
P.O. BOX 2288
MOBILE, ALABAMA 36628-0001

February 20, 2019

**JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE SAM-2018-00630-DEM
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
OFFICE OF POLLUTION CONTROL**

**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES
DMR-180271**

**PROPOSED IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE JACKSON
COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING FACILITY, WETLANDS ASSOCIATED WITH
THE ESCATAWPA RIVER, JACKSON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This District has received an application for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 10 of the River and Harbors Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Please communicate this information to interested parties.

**APPLICANT: Jackson County Board of Supervisors
Post Office Box 998
Pascagoula, Mississippi 39568**

**AGENT: Ms. Wendy Barnes
8500 Jim Ramsay Road
Vanceleave, Mississippi 39565**

LOCATION: Wetlands associated with the Escatawpa River, Section 23, Township 7 South, Range 5 West, Latitude 30.42968 North, Longitude -88.453093 West, Orange Grove, Jackson County, Mississippi.

WORK: The applicant proposes to place fill material in 5.99 acres of jurisdictional wetlands for the construction of a law enforcement training facility. The proposed facility would be comprised of long and short-range firing lanes, a classroom facility, and associated parking. The proposed firing range has been designed and would be constructed according to standards set forth in the "2012 Range Design Criteria" issued by the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Health, Safety and Security. The 37.0-acre subject parcel contains approximately 23.0 acres of jurisdictional wetlands. The applicant is proposing to fill approximately 5.99 acres, leaving approximately 17.01 acres undisturbed to be utilized as a buffer for surrounding residential and commercial areas.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: The proposed project involves property located on the north side of Highway 90, Orange Lake, Jackson County, Mississippi. The subject location on the southern end was previously utilized as a recreational facility containing a softball and baseball field, concession stands and parking areas. This facility has been abandoned; however, the property still belongs to the County and has been continuously maintained through mowing. The area on the northern end is densely forested. A natural gas pipeline runs along the western boundary. The surrounding area includes commercial businesses along the highway, a moderately developed subdivision to the west, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Grand Bay Wildlife Refuge to the north and east.

PROJECT PURPOSE: As stated by the applicant, "The Jackson County Sheriff's Department is a law enforcement agency consisting of more than 230 employees and is located in Southeast Mississippi. The Sheriff's Department currently has no facilities of its own on which to conduct required firearms training and has historically shared Pascagoula Police Department's firing range. However, this situation has reached critical mass in that the Sheriff's Department is unable to conduct necessary training due to the number of law enforcement agencies utilizing the Pascagoula Police Department range. There are currently 15 law enforcement and military agencies sharing Pascagoula Police Department's range. The Jackson County Sheriff's Department is by far the largest of these agencies in terms of actual personnel utilizing this resource. Approximately four years ago, we recognized that we were unable to provide our deputies with an adequate amount of training due to the scheduling congestion among the 15 agencies sharing Pascagoula's range." The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) initially determined the basic project purpose is construction of a law enforcement training facility and would not be considered a water dependent activity. Additional review will be performed by the USACE and cooperating agencies.

AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION: The applicant has requested to place fill material into 5.99 acres of 23.0 acres of jurisdictional wetlands. As stated by the applicant, "Efforts to avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands have been taken throughout the development of the design of the proposed project; however, due to certain project site requirements and other constraints, some impacts are unavoidable. To offset these unavoidable impacts, the County proposes to purchase the appropriate number of mitigation credits from an approved wetland mitigation bank." Best management practices would be utilized throughout the construction phase of this project.

ALTERNATIVES: As stated by the applicant's Agent, "This is the only property the County owns that has the acreage necessary to construct a range that did not share a border with a densely populated residential area; which would cause a very negative public impact." The applicant looked at five additional alternative locations. Additional review of alternatives will be performed by the USACE and cooperating agencies.

MITIGATION: According to the applicant's Agent to compensate for the loss of 5.99 acres of low quality palustrine wetlands, "the County proposes to purchase the appropriate number of mitigation credits from an approved wetland mitigation bank".

Additional review of mitigation requirements will be performed by the USACE and cooperating agencies. Final compensatory mitigation will be evaluated by the USACE and cooperating resource agencies throughout the review process for the proposed project.

The applicant has applied for certification from the State of Mississippi in accordance with Section 401(a)(1) of the Clean Water Act and upon completion of the required advertising; a determination relative to certification will be made.

The applicant has applied for coastal zone consistency from the State of Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (DMR) in accordance with Section 57-15-6 of the Mississippi Code Annotated (DMR-180271).

This public notice is being distributed to all known interested persons in order to assist in developing facts on which a decision by the USACE can be based. For accuracy and completeness of the record, all data in support of or in opposition to the proposed work should be submitted in writing setting forth sufficient detail to furnish a clear understanding of the reasons for support or opposition. The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact, 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 benefits, 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, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, protected species, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food production and in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

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

Evaluation of the probable impacts involving deposits of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States will include the application of guidelines established by the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and Appendix C of 33 CFR 325, the undertaking defined in this notice is being considered for the potential to effect cultural and historic properties within the permit area. In accordance with Appendix C of 33 CFR Part 325, the USACE has determined that the permit area is the overall project footprint to include the 37-acre parcel. We are seeking comment from the State Historic Preservation Officer, Federally-recognized American Indian tribes, local historical societies, museums, universities, the National Park Service, and the general public regarding the existence or the potential for existence of significant cultural and historic properties which may be affected by the work. The USACE has determined that the proposed project would have "**no potential to cause effects**" on cultural resources in the permit area.

Preliminary review of this application and the U.S. Department of the Interior List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants indicated the following species may be present within the watershed: The Dusky Gopher Frog (*Rana sevosa*) (E), the Mississippi Sandhill Crane (*Grus Canadensis pulla*) (E), the Loggerhead Sea Turtle (*Caretta Caretta*) (E), the Yellow-blotched Map Turtle (*Graptemys flavimaculata*) (T), the Alabama Red-Bellied Turtle (*Pseudemys alabamensis*) (E), the Gopher Tortoise (*Gopherus Polyphemus*) (T), the Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*) (T), and the Louisiana Quillwort (*Isoetes louisianensis*) (E). Preliminary review of this application and the U.S. Department of the Interior's List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants for the watershed suggest that the proposed activity will have **no effect** on listed endangered or threatened species. This determination is being coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service via this public notice.

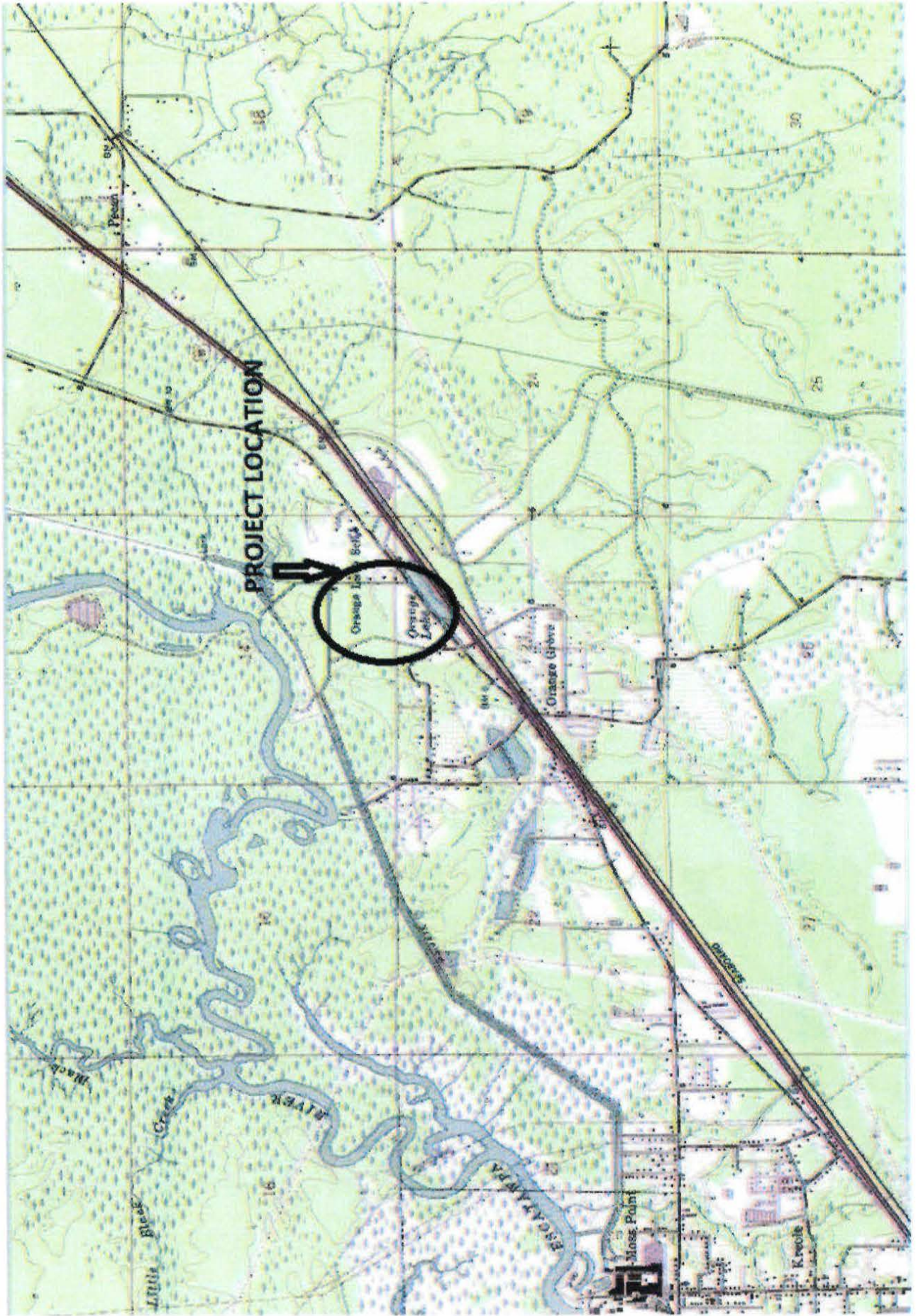
Correspondence concerning this Public Notice should refer to Public Notice Number **SAM-2018-00630-DEM**, and should be directed to the District Engineer, USACE, Mobile District, Attention: **Ms. Maryellen Farmer**, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Suite 104, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530, with a copy to the DMR, Attention: **Mr. Chris Pickering**, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Suite 501, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530, and a copy to Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Pollution Control, Attention: **Ms. Florance Bass, P.E.**, Post Office Box 2261, Jackson, Mississippi 39225, in time to be received within **30 days** of the date of this public notice.

If you have any questions concerning this publication, you may contact the project manager for this application, Ms. Farmer (maryellen.j.farmer@usace.army.mil), phone (228) 523-4116. Please refer to the above Public Notice number.

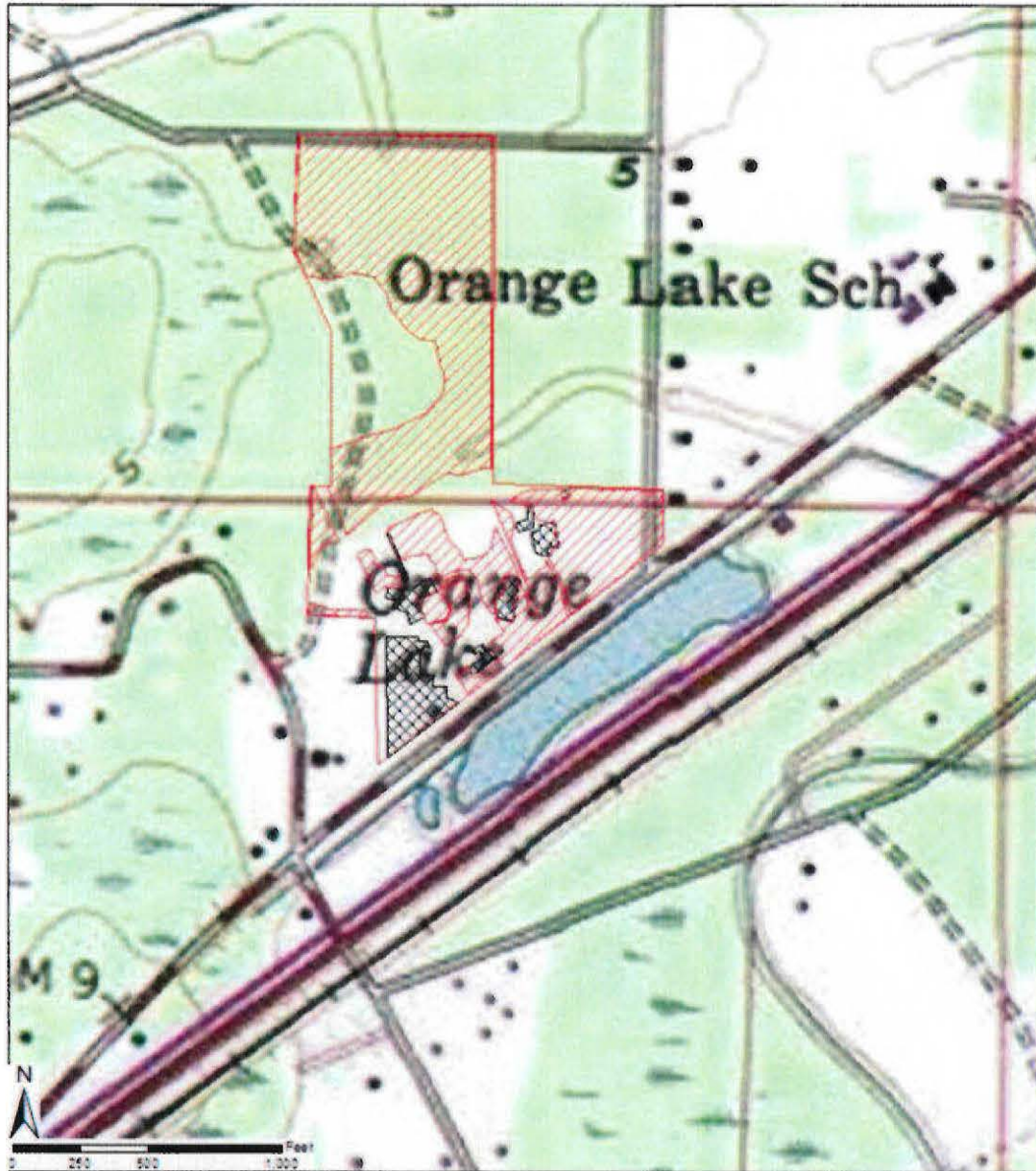
For additional information about our Regulatory Program, please visit our web site at: www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx.

MOBILE DISTRICT
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Enclosures



Topographical Map



- Legend**
-  Property Boundaries of Acre
 -  Wetland Delineation
 -  Building and Parking (includes abandoned)

Jackson County Board of Supervisors
County Gun Range, Jackson County MS




Wetland Delineation Survey (Revised)
Threatened & Endangered Species
October 2017

Wetland Consulting Services, Inc., 21 Autumn Run, Hattiesburg, MS 39402
601-550-2346, wetlandcs@comcast.net, wetlandconsultingservice.com

Aerial Map



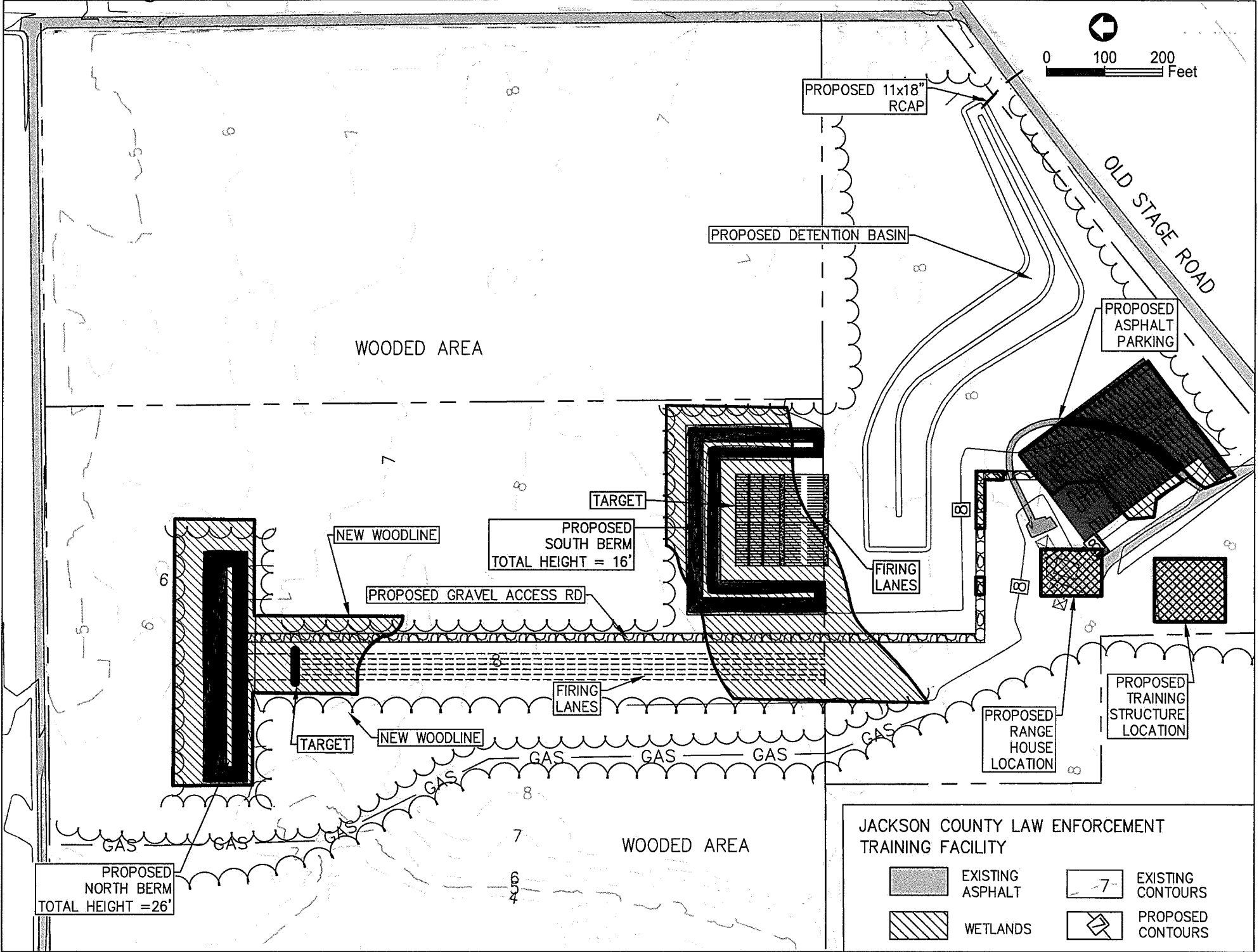
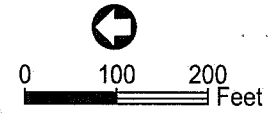
Legend

-  Property Boundary of site
-  Wetland Delineation
-  Building and Parking includes abandoned





Jackson County Board of Supervisors
County Gun Range, Jackson County, MS

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JACKSON COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING FACILITY

-  EXISTING ASPHALT
-  WETLANDS
-  EXISTING CONTOURS
-  PROPOSED CONTOURS