



# GOMESA PHASE II PROJECT FUNDING

## Request for Funding FY2026

Submission ID: #202509161352

### PROJECT SUMMARY

#### 1. Title of Project

Jackson County Estuary Habitat Restoration - Containment Berm Project

#### 2. Location of Project

Restoration Site 1: Big Lake, Pascagoula River in Jackson County; Site 2: Old Fort Bayou in Jackson County

#### 3. Requesting Organization:

Jackson County Board of Supervisors

#### 4. Requesting Agency Representative

a. Name:

Barry Cumbest

b. Phone:

(228) 769-3403

d. Email:

Barry\_Cumbest@co.jackson.ms.us

c. Address:

P.O. Box 998

Pascagoula Mississippi

#### 5. Funding Requested:

\$2000000

#### 6. Have any other State or Federal funding sources been identified for the project?

No

#### 7. If yes, enter amount and source of additional funds:

\$

#### Source of Additional Funds:

Jackson County

#### 8. Total Project Funds

\$2600000



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### 9. Provide Brief Project Description/Overview:

Much of Jackson County's population lies in proximity to coastal, riverine, and estuarine waters. Because the local way of life and economy is deeply tied to the coastline, the maintenance of waterways and coastal bayous through dredging is as essential

as roadway maintenance. As storm frequencies and intensities continue to increase, the dredging program in Jackson County has become a continuous, year-round endeavor, and interactions with submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) and marsh grass impacts are unavoidable considerations for timely work.

Recognizing that coastal resource conservation is a fundamental priority to the County, The Jackson County Board of Supervisors proposes an approximately 10-acre estuary habitat restoration project for two essential coastal habitat types within

Jackson County: submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) and estuarine marsh. The project includes the creation of Restoration Site I, an approximately 6.43-acre SAV site located in Big Lake in the Pascagoula River system, and Restoration Site II, an approximately 5.0-acre marsh site located in Old Fort Bayou near the Back Bay of Biloxi.

The Board of Supervisors is requesting GOMESA grant funds to support the construction of a containment berm around each of the sites. The Board proposes to construct the berm with reclaimed sand dredged from planned USACE shipping channel maintenance projects within adjacent waterways, contingent upon site conditions and feasibility. Once this initial containment

berm project is completed at each site, the water bottom elevation behind each berm will be raised to a level that will support

SAV and marsh grass establishment and propagation as a part of the Jackson County Dredging Program. The containment berms will protect and support the future SAV and marsh grass restoration sites against tidal forces within the Pascagoula River

and Old Fort Bayou.

The Board of Supervisors is currently working with the United States Army Corps of Engineers-Mobile District to establish a permittee responsible mitigation (PRM) plan, which aims to address and reduce the regulatory review process timeline for wetland and SAV impacts done by County dredging. The completed Restoration Sites I & II will serve to mitigate for future marsh grass and SAV impacts that occur as a result of maintenance dredging efforts.

### 10. LIST Project Goals/Objectives:

The project goal is to streamline and optimize the SAV mitigation permitting process for recurring waterway maintenance dredging performed by the County. The objective is to Construct containment berms for both Restoration Sites I & II, which will support the creation of 6.43 acres of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) habitat in Big Lake and 5.0 acres of estuarine marsh habitat in Old Fort Bayou.

### 11. Which of the following authorized uses set forth in the GOMESA Act does this project fall under? Explain SPECIFICALLY and in detail how the project meets the required criteria. Check all that apply - At least one must be checked.

(A) Projects and activities for the purposes of coastal protection, including conservation, coastal restoration, hurricane protection, and infrastructure directly affected by coastal wetland losses

The County has many public access areas and waterfront property navigational routes that become buried with sediment that is deposited during storm events and everyday tidal and current movements. These local bayous serve as paths for recreation and industry-specific transportation, as well as marine evacuation routes for residents and emergency services during and after hurricane events. Further, by reducing built up sediment in local bayous, hydraulic efficiency is increased which reduces



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drainage and flooding problems. This project will support the County's effort to maintain these essential waterway routes.

**(B) Mitigation of damage to fish, wildlife, or natural resources.**

This project proposes to mitigate for impacts incurred through the County's waterway dredging program. The construction of this project will reestablish lost plant communities in a protected area designated by the County and preserved in perpetuity as part of the State of Mississippi's Tidelands Trust Program.

**(C) Implementation of a federally-approved marine, coastal, or conservation management plan**

**(D) Mitigation of the impact of Outer Continental Shelf activities through funding of onshore infrastructure projects.**



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### 12. Project Timetable/Milestones:

1. Request Funding, September 2025
2. Complete Design, December 2025
3. PRM Approval, January 2026
4. Funding Award, April 2026
5. Award Bid, May 2026
6. Begin Construction, July 2026
7. Complete Construction, December 2026

### 13. Project Timing

Short-term (3 year or less)



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### APPLICATION SUMMARY QUESTIONNAIRE

#### 14. Current status of architectural/engineering plans & specifications for this project (if applicable):

##### Group 1:

In Progress

##### Group 2:

Funds budgeted

#### 15. In what way does this project meet the goals and objectives of the Department of Marine Resources, which includes enhancing, protecting and conserving the marine interest of Mississippi for present and future generations.?

Jackson County has a growing number of neighborhoods containing waterfront properties with very restricted navigation access due to shallow water depths, as well as many public access areas such as boat launches, docks, and piers that become buried with sediment that is suspended and deposited during storm events. Not only do these local bayous serve as paths for recreation and industry-specific transportation, they serve as marine evacuation routes for businesses, residents, and emergency services during and after hurricane events. Further, by reducing built up sediment in local bayous, hydraulic efficiency is increased which reduces drainage and flooding problems. For these reasons, dredging is a continuous, year-round necessity in Jackson County, where unavoidable interactions with SAV and marsh habitats must be managed to balance navigation needs with ecological protection. Both SAV and marsh ecosystems are recognized as vital nurseries for various crustacean and bivalve species, foraging and nesting grounds for wading birds, and the first line of defense against biodiversity decline. Restoration Sites I & II aim to mitigate damage to natural resources by restoring essential habitat functions lost through dredging. Marsh and SAV communities impacted as a result of County dredging projects will be reestablished in a protected area designated by the County and preserved in perpetuity as part of the State of Mississippi's Tidelands Trust Program. The Board of Supervisors only proposes to use GOMESA grant funding for the construction of the sediment containment berms. Filling of the sites will coincide with future County dredging projects, utilizing dredged material with compatible soil composition to raise bottom elevations and support the successful establishment of target plant communities. Supplemental work, such as native plantings, invasive species removal, and monitoring, is proposed to be funded independently by the County. Jackson County has a vested interest in conserving Mississippi's marine resources, which support both its economy and its cultural heritage. As the populations and industries continue to grow in size and complexity, the need for waterway maintenance will only increase, requiring a more efficient plan for long-term stewardship of marine resources through the Jackson County Dredging Program. The construction of this project will allow the Jackson County Board of Supervisors to more efficiently maintain and implement dredging efforts across the County and effectively sustain the balance between ecological protection and infrastructure management.

#### 16. Estimated number of years to completion:

1.5

#### 17. Estimated Completion Date:

December 2026

#### 18. Prioritize if your agency has submitted multiple projects:



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### BUDGET

Category	Total
Salaries	
Travel	
Architecture & Engineering	600000
Legal	
Consulting	
Construction	2000000
Site Work	
Equipment	
Indirects	
Other	
Total	2600000

#### Attachments

1. jackson-county-estuary-habitat-restoration---containment-berm-project.pdf

I hereby certify under penalty of perjury that all information contained in this application packet is true and correct. I have not knowingly or intentionally provided any false information. I understand that a false statement on this application may be grounds for rejection of my application or termination of the award. In addition, a false statement may be punishable under applicable state or federal laws, which may also result in a fine and/or imprisonment.

I certify that the above referenced agency / entity has given me the authority to submit this application.

Name

Phone

Date

Barry Cumbest

228-769-3403

09/16/2025



## PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

### Jackson County Estuary Habitat Restoration – Containment Berm Project in Jackson County, MS

#### **PROJECT NAME:**

Jackson County Estuary Habitat Restoration – Containment Berm Project

#### **PROJECT LOCATION:**

Big Lake within the Pascagoula River basin & Old Fort Bayou in Jackson County, MS

#### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The Jackson County Board of Supervisors proposes a compensatory mitigation project to restore 10 acres of critical aquatic habitat in Jackson County, Mississippi, enhancing ecological resilience and offsetting unavoidable habitat losses from navigation improvements.

The project includes two sites: Mitigation Site I, a 6.43-acre submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) restoration area in Big Lake, and Mitigation Site II, a 5.0-acre estuarine marsh restoration area in Old Fort Bayou.

The Board of Supervisors is requesting GOMESA grant funds to support the construction of the containment berm around each of the sites. Both sites will be built by raising bottom elevations with dredged material to support natural expansion of adjacent habitats, supplemented with plantings of target species as needed to ensure successful establishment of SAV and marsh communities.

#### **PROJECT GOALS:**

1. Create 6.43 acres of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) habitat in Big Lake and 5.0 acres of estuarine marsh habitat in Old Fort Bayou.
2. Streamline and optimize the SAV mitigation permitting process for recurring waterway maintenance dredging performed by the County.

#### **PROJECT BENEFITS:**

1. Restoration of marsh grass & SAV ecosystems impacted by dredging activities.
2. Timely maintenance of local bayous that serve as paths for recreation, industry-specific transportation, and marine evacuation routes for businesses, residents,

and emergency services during and after hurricane events.

#### **PROJECT TASKS:**

1. Construct containment berms for both Restoration Sites I & II.
2. Elevate site bottoms & establish marsh grass and SAV communities.

#### **PROJECT TIMETABLE:**

- Request Funding SEP 2025
- Complete Design DEC 2025
- PRM Approval JAN 2026
- Funding Award APR 2026
- Award Bid MAY 2026
- Construction Start JUL 2026
- Complete Construction DEC 2026

#### **FUNDING REQUESTED:**

\$ 2,000,000.00

#### **COST SHARE FUNDS:**

\$ 600,000.00 from JCBO

#### **TOTAL PROJECT COST:**

\$ 2,600,000.00

#### **PROJECT PARTNERS/BENEFICIARIES:**

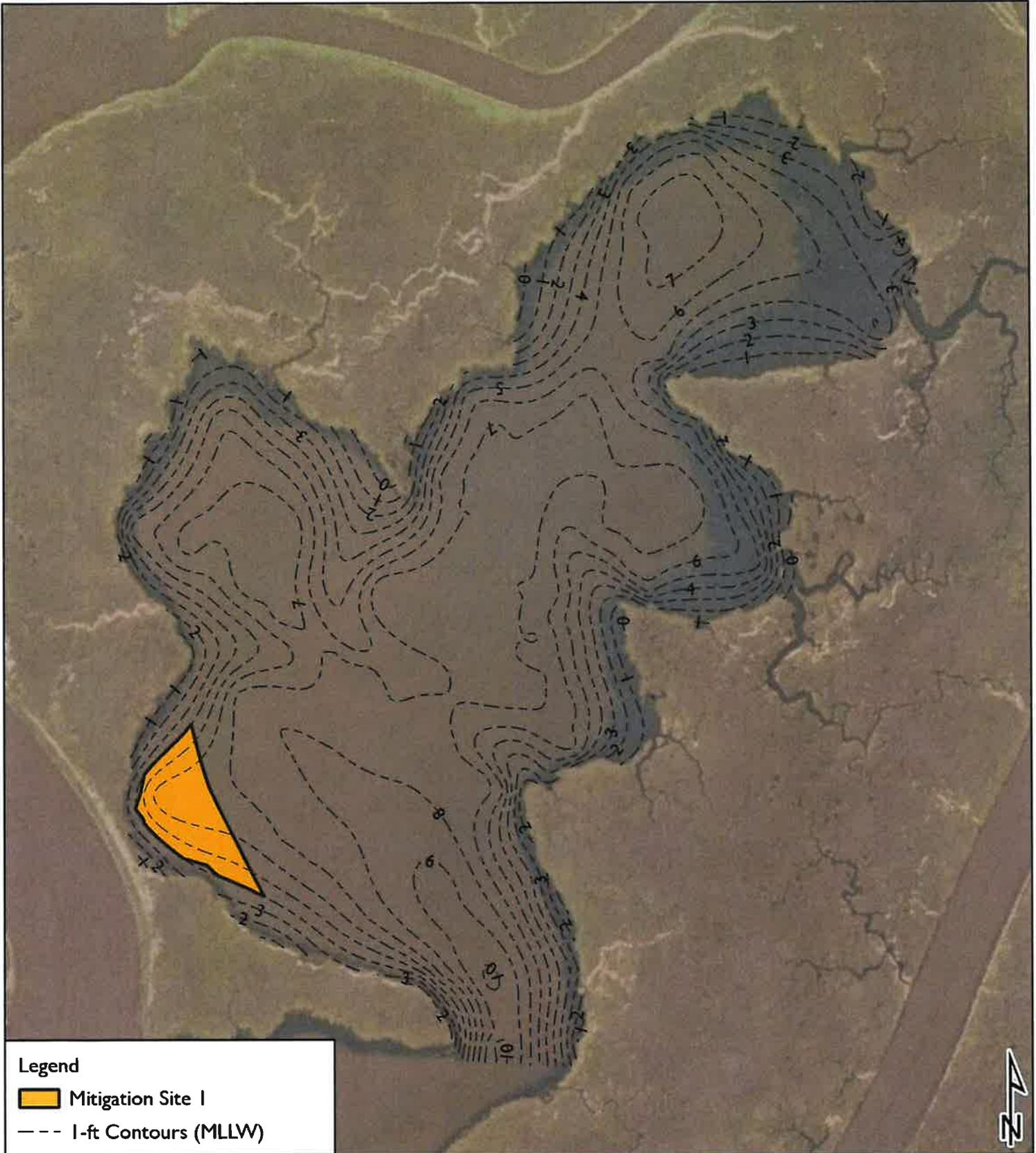
Jackson County Board of Supervisors  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Mobile District  
MS Dept. of Marine Resources  
Local Residents

#### **PROJECT CATEGORY:**

- ✓ Coastal Restoration/Protection
- ✓ Hurricane Protection

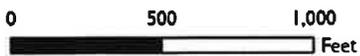






**Legend**

- Mitigation Site I
- 1-ft Contours (MLLW)



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 State Plane  
Mississippi East FIPS 2301 Feet

JACKSON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

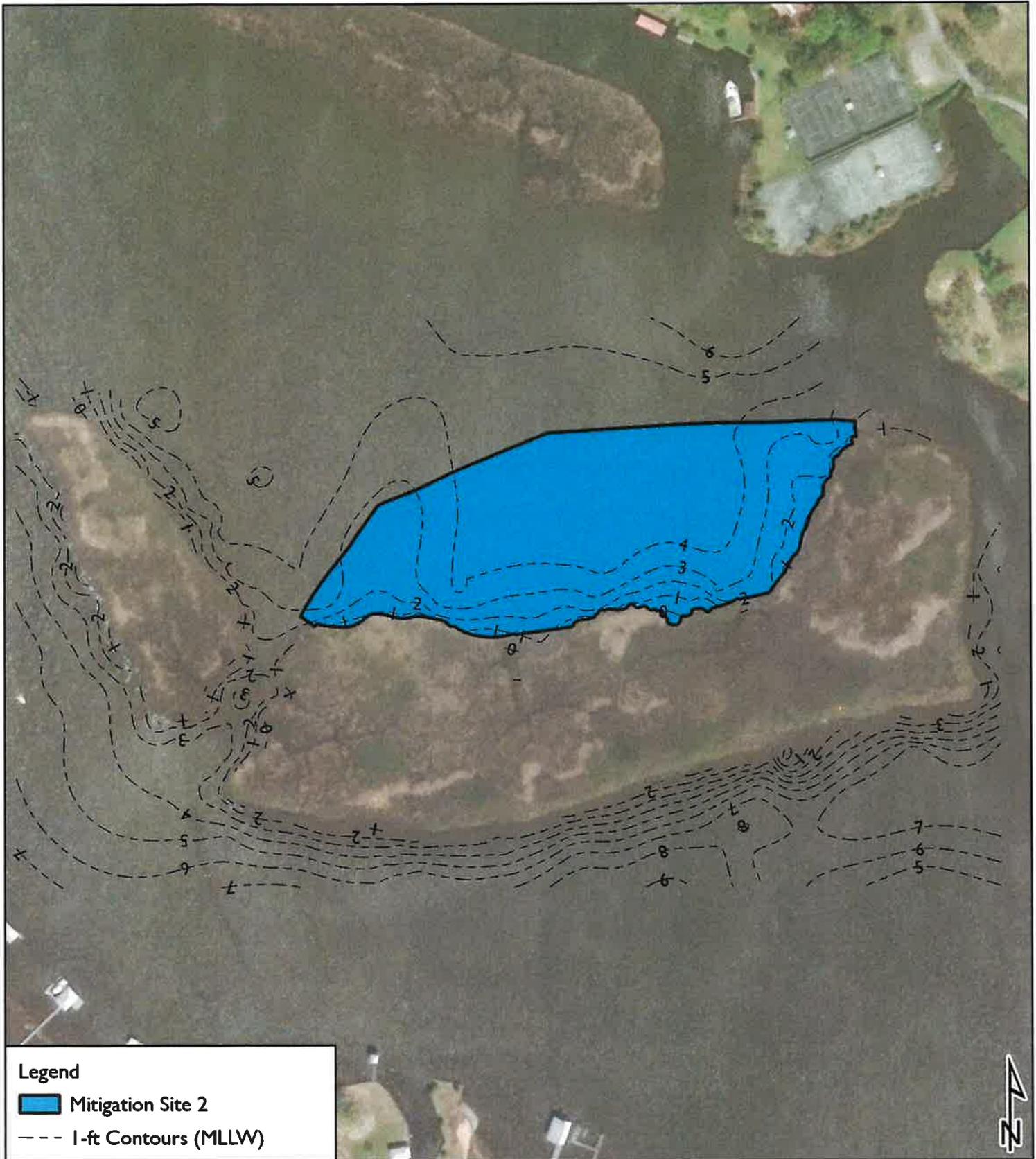
Jackson County, MS

Site I Existing Bathymetry

**CYPRESS**  
Environment & Infrastructure

FIGURE 3





**Legend**

- Mitigation Site 2
- - - 1-ft Contours (MLLW)

0                      250                      500  
 Feet

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 State Plane  
 Mississippi East FIPS 2301 Feet

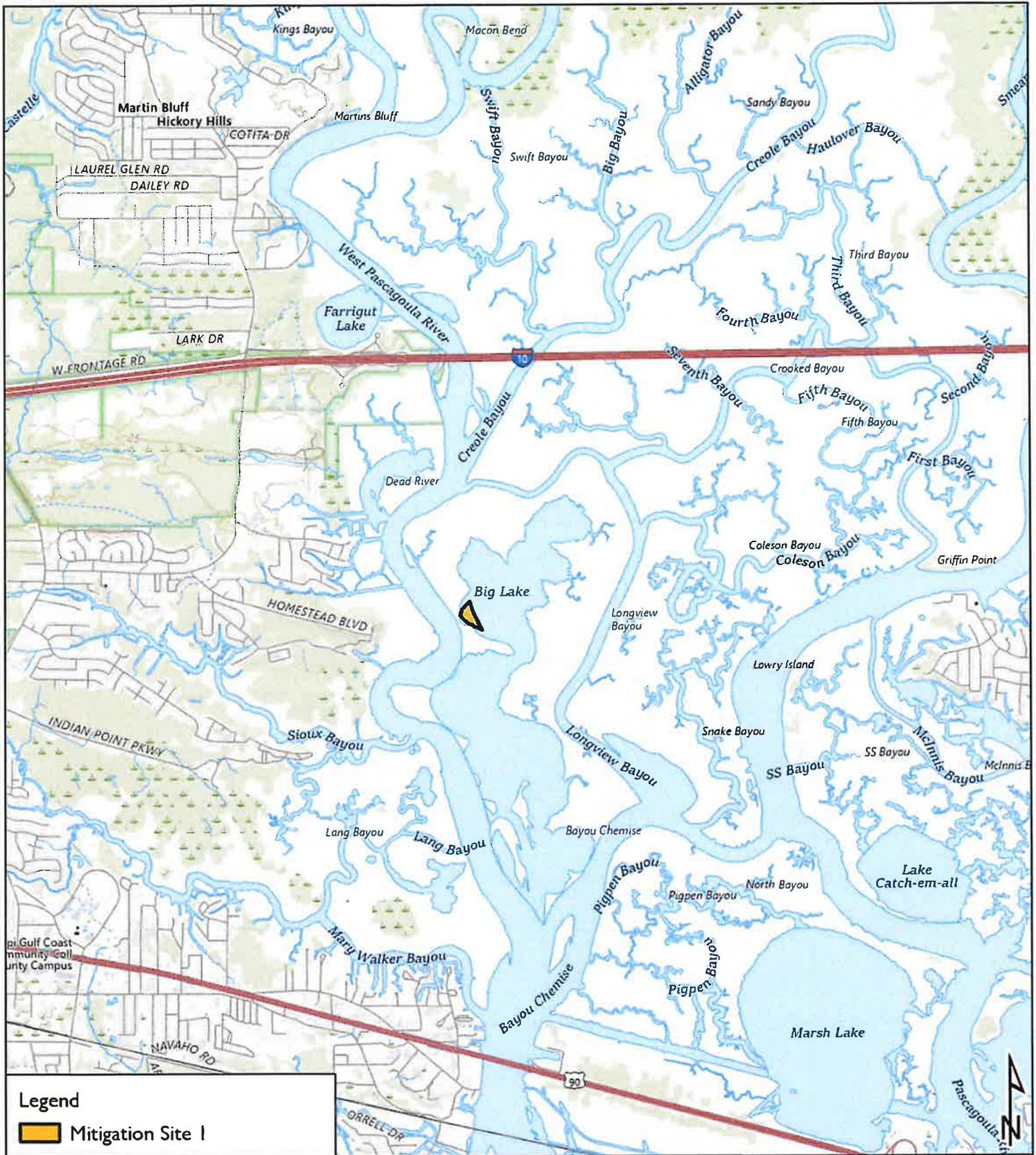
JACKSON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
 Jackson County, MS

**Site 2 Existing Bathymetry**

**CYPRESS**  
 Environment & Infrastructure

**FIGURE 4**





**Legend**

 Mitigation Site I

0 0.5 1 Miles

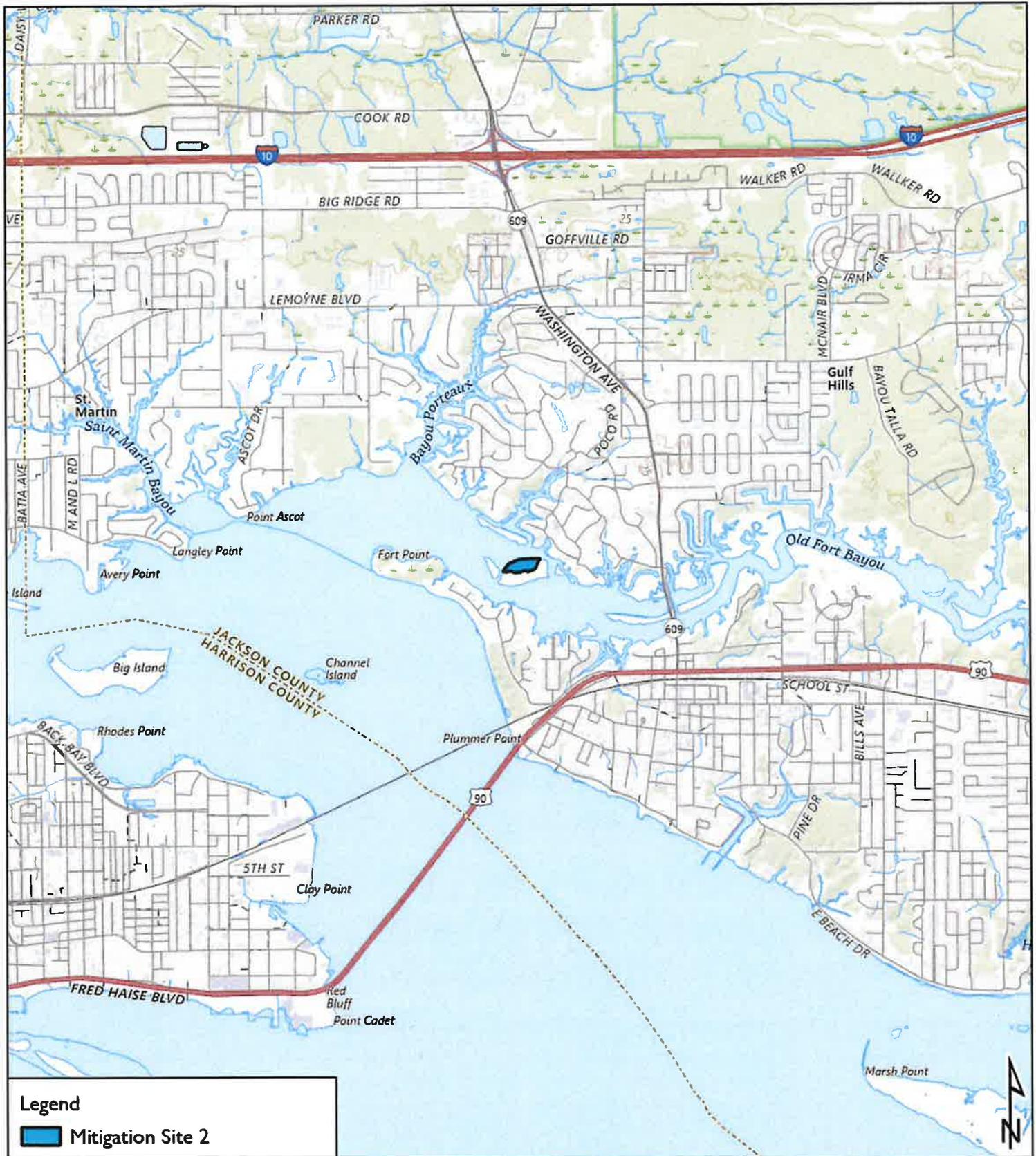
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 State Plane  
Mississippi East FIPS 2301 Feet

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Jackson County, MS

Site I USGS Topographic Map

**CYPRESS**  
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FIGURE 5



**Legend**

Mitigation Site 2

0      0.5      1  
 ─────────── Miles

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 State Plane  
 Mississippi East FIPS 2301 Feet

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Site 2 USGS Topographic Map

**CYPRESS**  
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**FIGURE 6**