



United States Department of the Interior

Fish and Wildlife Service

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FEB 02 2016

Robert K. Larimore
Chief, Environmental Management Division
Department of the Army
Fort Benning, Georgia 31905-5000

Re: FWS Log No. 2016-CPA-0284

Dear Robert Larimore:

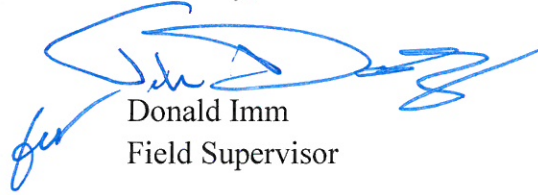
This letter is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) response to your letter dated January 26, 2016, regarding the installation of a water main along Wildcat Road in the Malone Small Arms Range Complex on Fort Benning in Chattahoochee County. We submit the following comments under provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703, *et seq.*), and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Act), as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531, *et seq.*).

The Department of the Army is requesting comment on the installation of a water main within the 200 foot buffer of two RCW cavity trees (7440 and 7441) within cluster M06-M. The minimization measures taken to avoid possible impact include; 1) All three staging areas will be outside of the 200 foot buffer of any cavity tree along water main route. 2) Construction and installation will not reduce foraging habitat, cause fragmentation, or negatively impact dispersal distances. 3) Construction will be limited to daylight hours, and take place outside of breeding season., and 4) Fort Benning will monitor cluster M06-M during the construction stage to insure no damage occurs to the habitat and all equipment remains within the established staging areas. Execution of the above conditions are believed to reduce the likelihood of negative impact due to construction and installation of the water main along Wildcat Road.

Based on the information you provided, no further action is required under section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act. However, if new information becomes available or changes in the project occur that may involve federally listed species, further consultation with the Service will be required.

If you have any questions or concerns about this consultation or the consultation process in general, please feel free to contact David Caldwell at (706) 544-6030.

Sincerely,

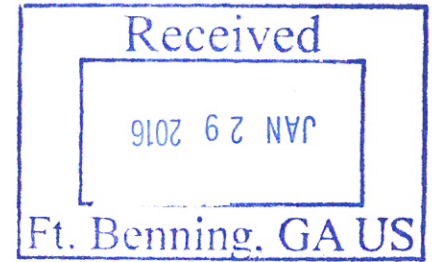
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Donald Imm', is written over the printed name. The signature is stylized and includes a large loop at the end.

Donald Imm
Field Supervisor



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
US ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND
ATLANTIC REGION
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY GARRISON
1 KARKER STREET, MCGINNIS-WICKAM HALL
FORT BENNING, GEORGIA 31905-5000



26 January, 2016

Conservation Branch

Dr. Donald Imm
Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
West Park Center
105 West Park Drive, Suite D
Athens, GA 30605

Dear Dr. Imm:

Fort Benning is proposing to install (construct) a section of water main on the west side of the Malone Small Arms Range Complex (Malone Complex) along Wildcat Rd. (Enclosure 1). The water main will be installed on the east side (shoulder) of Wildcat Rd. and will supply water to several Malone training ranges. Water main installation along Wildcat Rd. is tentatively scheduled to begin in February 2016 and be completed by the end of March 2016.

Although no red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW) habitat will be impacted by the construction (i.e. no pine trees will be removed), water main installation along Wildcat Rd. (near the intersection of Wildcat and St. Mary's Rd.) will occur within 200ft of inactive RCW cavity tree #7440 and active cavity tree #7441 (Enclosure 2). Both cavity trees are associated with RCW cluster M06-M. The installation within the cavity tree 200ft buffers may take more than two hours. Water main installation will not occur within 200ft of any other cavity trees other than #7440 and #7441. Additionally, equipment staging areas (three total) will not be located within 200ft of any cavity tree (Enclosure 1).

Fort Benning took the following considerations and minimization measures into our analysis for this proposed project:

- a. Since no current, potential, or future RCW habitat will be removed that could cause fragmentation of foraging habitat, there is no chance for decreased dispersal distances of sub-adult and adult RCWs or increased breeding territory vacancies that could result from this project.
- b. Construction occurring within 200ft of the two cavity trees associated with RCW cluster M06-M will take place well beyond the drip line (greater than 75ft). Furthermore,

all construction equipment to be used on site will be located in staging areas (open areas) well outside the 200ft cavity tree buffers. This will ensure that RCW cavity trees are not damaged directly or indirectly by construction activities.

c. Construction is anticipated to take no more than two months maximum, will be restricted to daylight hours when RCWs are foraging away from the cluster and will take place outside of the RCW breeding season. Consequently any noise disturbance or disruption of nesting activities associated with construction activities will be avoided.

d. Fort Benning will monitor cluster M06-M during the construction period and will coordinate with the contractor to ensure no damage to habitat occurs and that construction equipment and materials are maintained in the designated staging areas.

Although construction activities will take place within 200ft of two cavity trees and may exceed the maximum two hour limit, Fort Benning concludes that this project is not likely to adversely affect the RCW at cluster M06-M.

Fort Benning requests your review and concurrence with this action. The point of contact is Mr. Jonathan Neufeldt at 706-544-7705 or jonathan.h.neufeldt.civ@mail.mil. A copy of this letter has been provided to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - West Georgia Field Office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert K. Larimore", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert K. Larimore
Chief, Environmental Management
Division

Enclosures

Malone Complex Water Main Installation West (Wildcat Rd.)

Malone 22



U06

U07

M06-L

Malone 25

U08

U08-A

U09

M06-K

U04-A

U04

U09-B

U01-A

U01

M06

U03

U03-A

U01-B

M06-A

Malone 24

U02

Wildcat Road

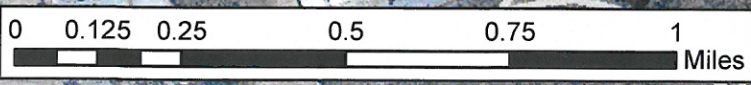
St. Mary's Road

Malone 1

Malone 2

M06-M

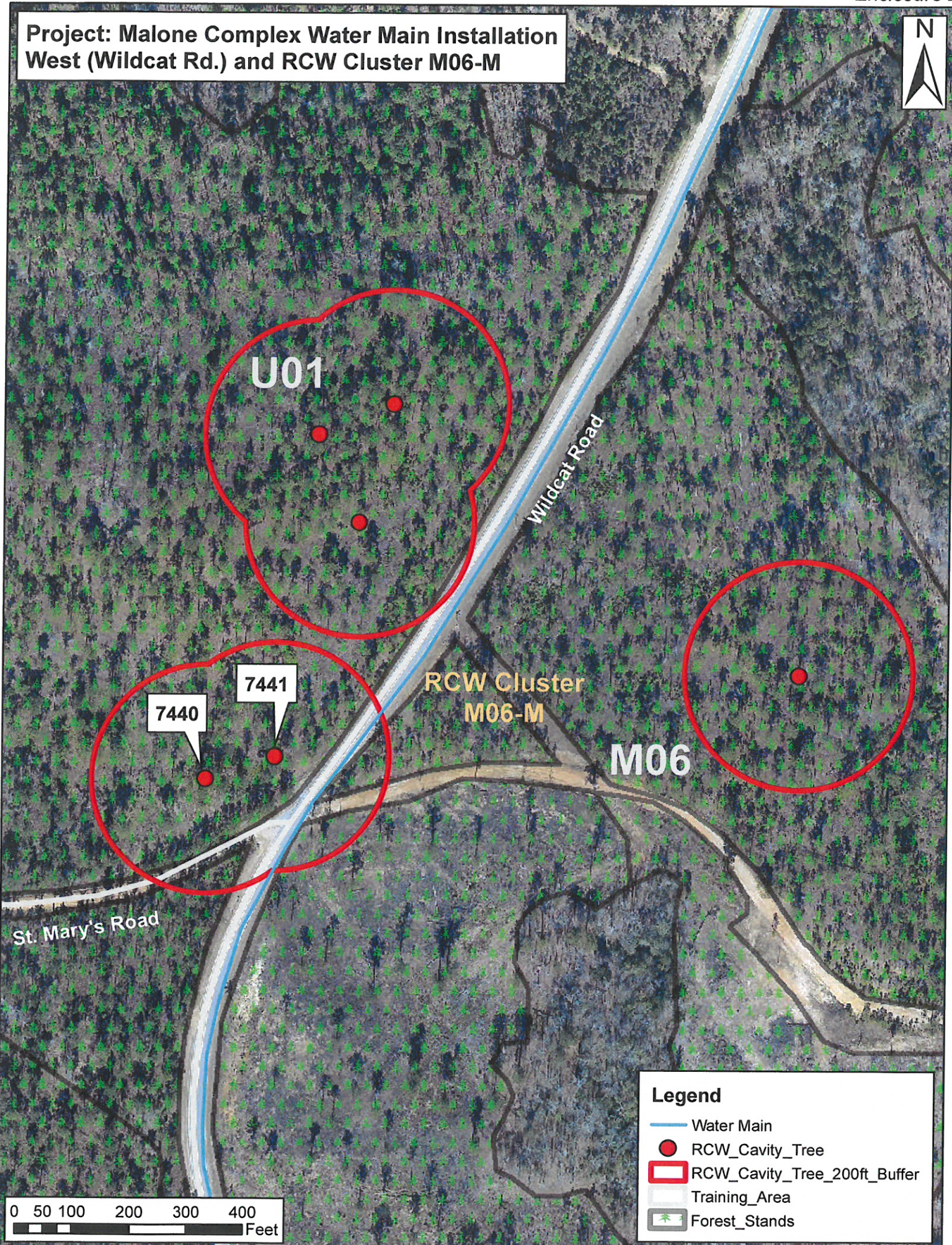
2nd Armored Division Rd.



Legend

- Water Main
- Equipment_Staging_Areas
- RCW_Cavity_Tree
- RCW_Cavity_Tree_200ft_Buffer
- Partition_HalfMile
- Military_Range_Area
- Training_Area
- Forest_Stands

Project: Malone Complex Water Main Installation West (Wildcat Rd.) and RCW Cluster M06-M



U01

Wildcat Road

RCW Cluster M06-M

M06

7440

7441

St. Mary's Road

Legend

-  Water Main
-  RCW_Cavity_Tree
-  RCW_Cavity_Tree_200ft_Buffer
-  Training_Area
-  Forest_Stands

