

Disposition of Property by Ground Lease and Dedication as a Nature Preserve – The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

ISSUE OVERVIEW

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro requests the disposition of real property by ground lease to Alamance County in exchange for property management and monitoring services. In addition, the request includes designating the property as a nature preserve per G.S. 143B-135.264.

UNC Greensboro proposes entering into a 30-year ground lease with Alamance County for four deeded parcels of approximately 61 acres at the Three College Observatory at the annual rate of \$1. The observatory is primarily used by UNC Greensboro. The property is forest land located in rural Alamance County. UNC Greensboro desires to keep the surrounding property undeveloped and “dark” to optimize the use of the observatory telescope. In exchange for the ground lease, Alamance County will survey the property and mark the boundaries; routinely monitor the property for trespassing, encroachments, and other illegal activities; and manage the property for conservation and passive recreational purposes under an approved management plan. The university proposes the cost of the lease to a local government entity at a rate below market value justified by the exchange for property management and monitoring services.

Alamance County desires to utilize the undeveloped portion of the property to construct hiking trails connecting to the adjacent Cane Creek Mountains Natural Area. Phase I of this area opened to the public in 2020.

Furthermore, G.S. 143B-135.264 provides for dedication of State-owned lands as nature preserves with approval from the North Carolina Council of State. The proposed dedication would make allowances for the university to continue operating the observatory, including using and maintaining the access road and periodically cutting or pruning the vegetation surrounding the observatory compound so it does not impede the telescope’s view. Dedication of the property as a nature preserve will ensure dark skies and allow the property to become a component of the surrounding Cane Creek Mountains Natural Area.

The terms of the lease will include the following key provisions:

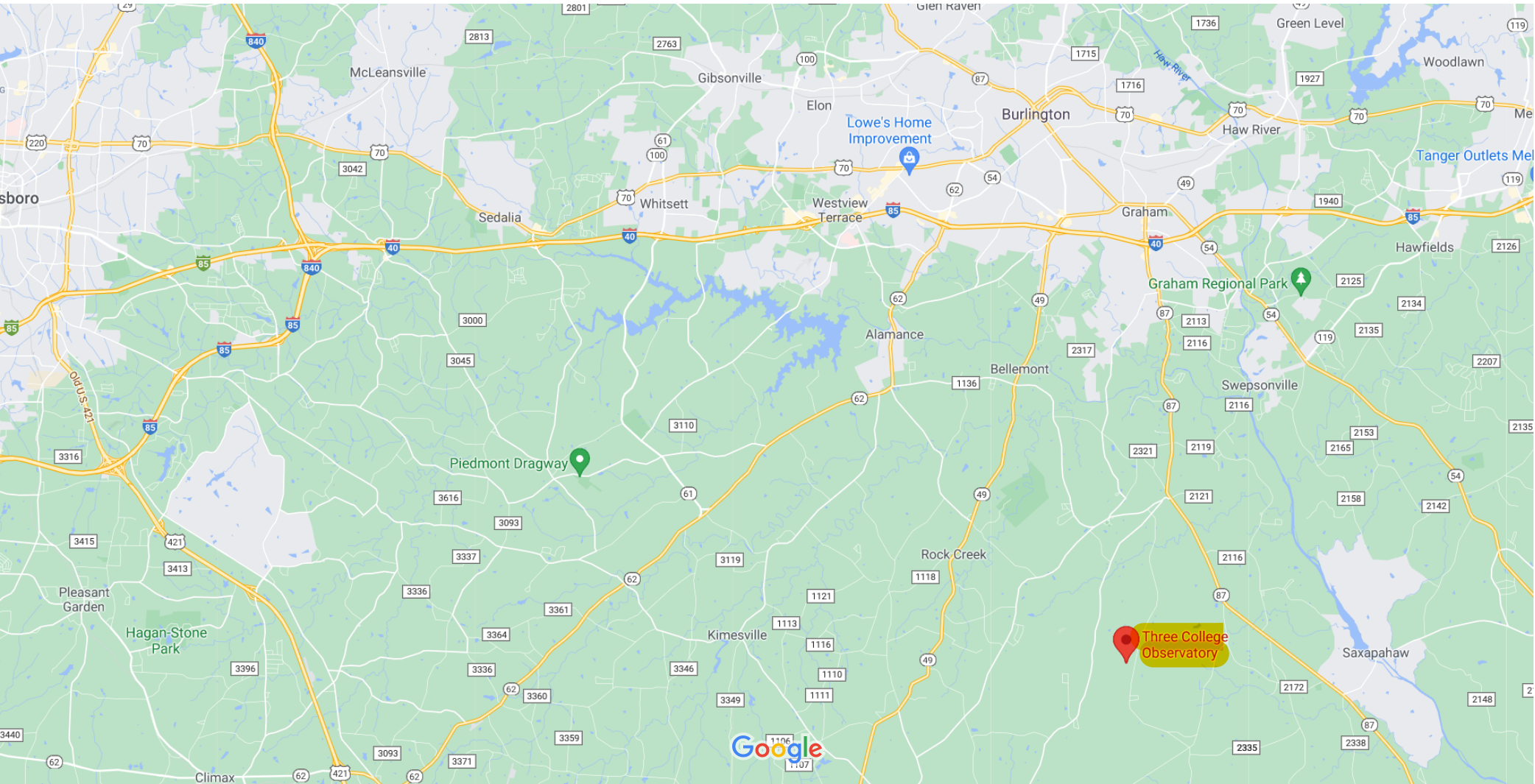
- Either party may terminate with one year’s written notice;
- Alamance County will be prohibited from erecting or placing any lighting on the property;
- All improvements, including trail locations, will require approval by UNCG and other applicable State agencies; and
- Alamance County must abide by the conditions of a nature preserve dedication, serve as a “secondary custodian” of the property and manage it according to an approved management plan.

The disposition by ground lease and dedication as a nature preserve is requested to optimize the use of the Three College Observatory telescope and ensure the surrounding area is properly monitored and supervised as an undeveloped, natural resource.

This item was approved by the University Space and Property Review Committee (USPRC) on August 16, 2021 and the UNC Greensboro Board of Trustees on September 30, 2021.

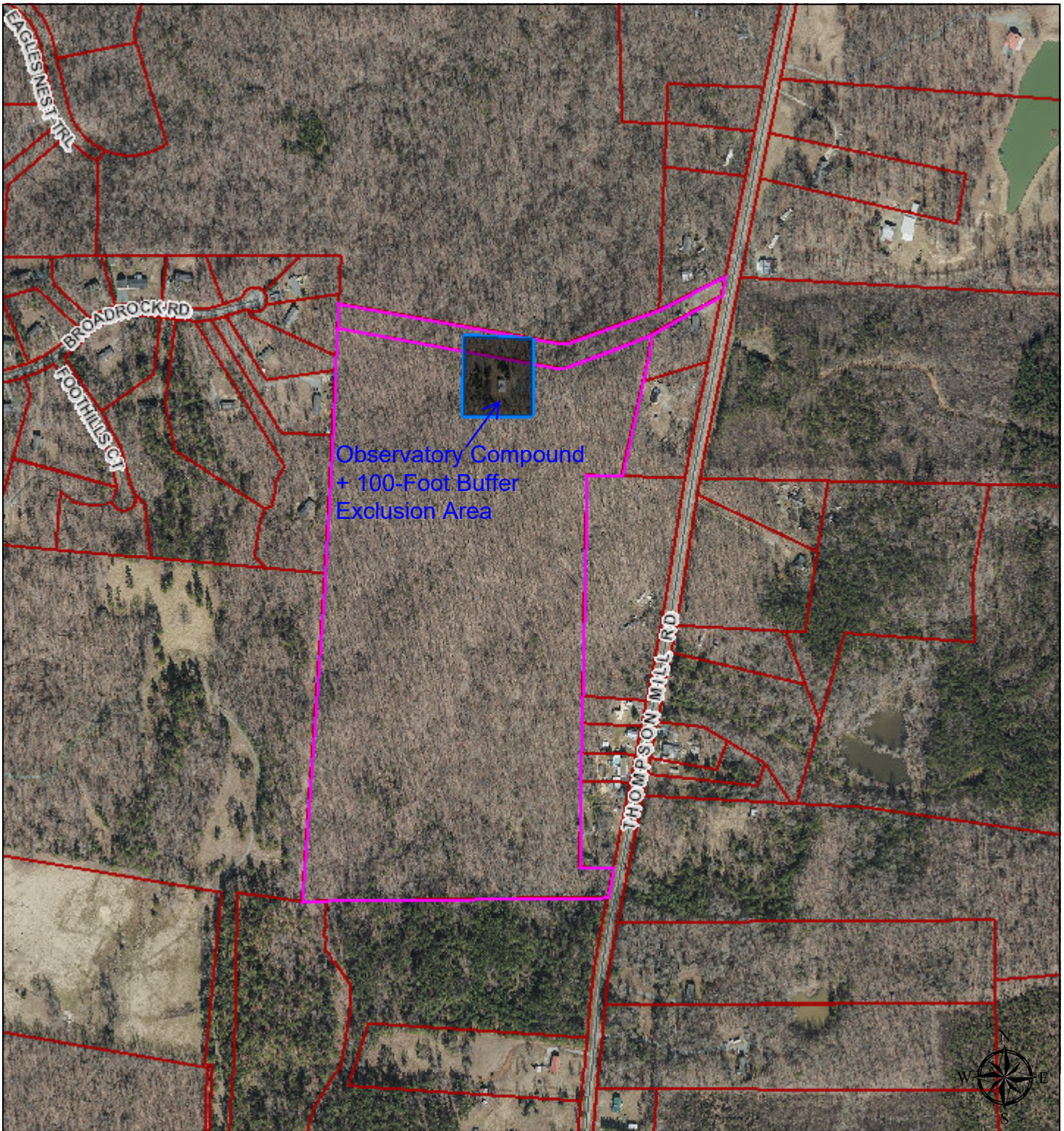
RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the disposition of property by ground lease and dedication as a nature preserve. The dedication of property as a nature preserve requires approval from the Council of State.



Proposed Lease Area

APPENDIX H



October 27, 2021

Alamance County GIS

1:6,799

Three College Observatory Lease Area
Approx. 60 acres, subject to survey

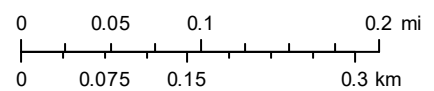
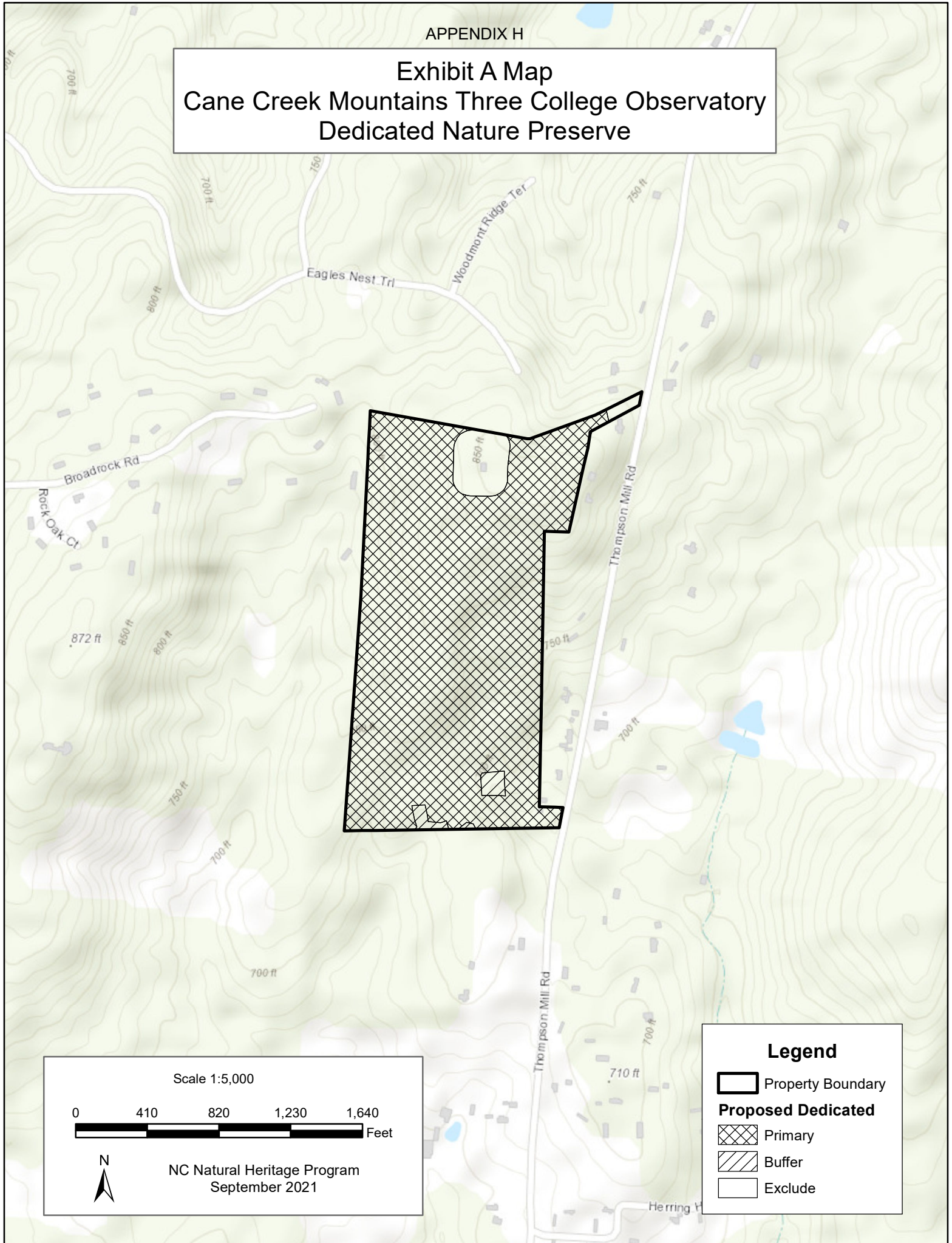






Exhibit A Map Cane Creek Mountains Three College Observatory Dedicated Nature Preserve



Legend

-  Property Boundary
- Proposed Dedicated**
 -  Primary
 -  Buffer
 -  Exclude

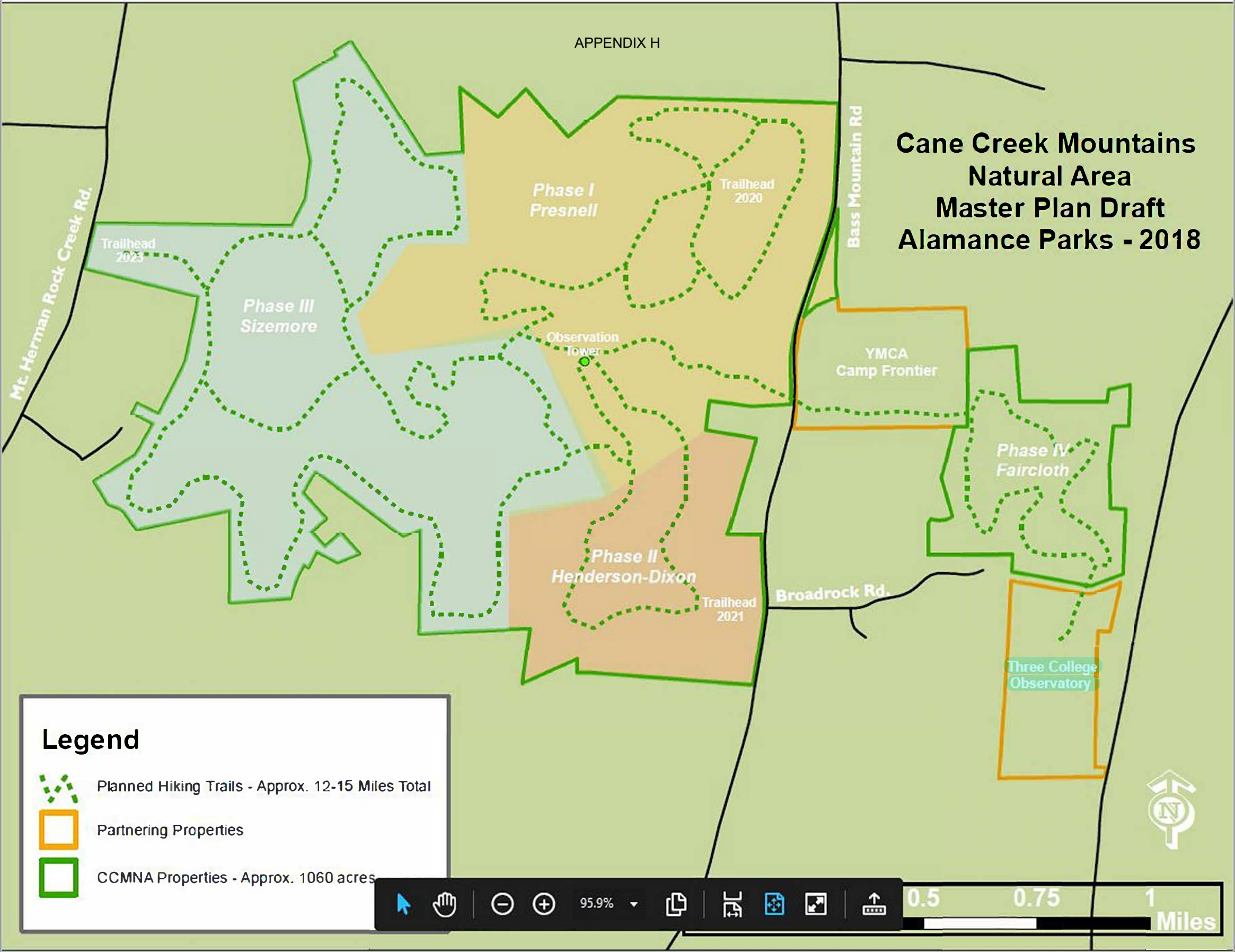
Scale 1:5,000

0 410 820 1,230 1,640 Feet



NC Natural Heritage Program
September 2021

Cane Creek Mountains Natural Area Master Plan Draft Alamance Parks - 2018



Legend

-  Planned Hiking Trails - Approx. 12-15 Miles Total
-  Partnering Properties
-  CCMNA Properties - Approx. 1060 acres

Map navigation and scale controls:

- Navigation icons: Pan (arrow), Hand (grip), Zoom In (plus), Zoom Out (minus), Full Screen (document), Print (printer), and other standard map controls.
- Scale: 0.5, 0.75, 1 Miles.
- Current zoom level: 95.9%.
- North arrow icon in the bottom right corner.