

REVISED*
NOTICE OF PREPARATION
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
for the
PROPOSED ANNAPOLIS AREA TIMBERLAND CONVERSIONS PROJECT

SUMMARY INFORMATION

Project Name: Annapolis Area Timberland Conversions Project

Project Location: Roessler Site: 36451 Annapolis Road, APN 122-090-008, near the town of Annapolis, Sonoma County, California

Martin Site: Sleepy Hollow Road, APN 122-090-007, near the town of Annapolis, Sonoma County, California.

Lead Agency: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Lead Agency Contact: Mr. Allen Robertson, Deputy Chief for Environmental Protection

Send Comments to: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, Ca 94244-2460
Email: SacramentoPublicComment@fire.ca.gov

Comment Period Ends: February 18, 2008

Scoping Meeting: A scoping meeting was held on October 19, 2006 at Horicon Elementary to receive comments on the proposed scope of the EIR for the Annapolis Area Timberland Conversion Project. A new scoping meeting will not be held.

* Since the release of the previous NOP, dated October 2, 2006, the Martin (hereafter referred to as the "Sleepy Hollow Vineyard project") has been revised to include a 1.5-acre irrigation reservoir, designed to provide 11 - 12 acre-feet of storage capacity. This revised NOP is being circulated to allow for public and agency comment on the revised project. The Roessler Project remains unchanged.

It should also be noted that new text describing the revised Sleepy Hollow Vineyard project components are underlined and italicized.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) is the lead agency for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Annapolis Area Timberland Conversions Project (proposed project), which includes the Roessler and Martin project areas. The scope of the EIR has been proposed based upon a determination by CDF that the project may have a significant effect on the environment. CDF has directed the preparation of the EIR in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Once a decision is made to prepare an EIR, the lead agency must prepare a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to inform all responsible and trustee agencies that an EIR will be prepared (CEQA Guidelines Section 15082). The purpose of the NOP is to provide agencies with sufficient information describing both the proposed project and the potential environmental effects to enable the agencies to make a meaningful response as to the scope and content of the information to be included in the EIR. CDF is also soliciting comments on the scope of the EIR from interested persons.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In order to facilitate the development of vineyards, the proposed project includes the issuance of Timberland Conversion permits for both the Roessler and Martin sites, which would exempt a total of 37 acres (8 acres on Roessler and 29 on Martin) from Forest Practice Act tree stocking (tree planting) requirements. In addition, each site requires the approval of a Timber Harvest Plan. The Martin site is hereafter referred to as the "Sleepy Hollow Vineyard."

Project Location and Setting

The proposed project consists of two project sites, Roessler and Sleepy Hollow. Both properties are located within a half mile from Annapolis Road on Little Creek Road (Roessler) and Sleepy Hollow Road (Sleepy Hollow) just outside the town of Annapolis (See Figure 1, Regional Location Map and Figure 2, Project Locations Map). The proposed project areas are located between Grasshopper Creek and Little Creek, which are both within the Gualala River basin.

It should be noted that the Roessler and Sleepy Hollow sites are relatively small projects within the same watershed, Little Creek watershed, which is a sub-watershed within the Gualala River watershed. Combining the Roessler and Sleepy Hollow projects into a single EIR would facilitate the streamlining of the CEQA process by eliminating the need for two separate environmental assessments on similar projects within the same watershed approximately 2,000 feet apart.

Roessler

The Roessler site is located along gently sloped minor ridgelines occurring on the south-facing slope above Little Creek, a tributary to Buckeye Creek, which flows to the Gualala River (See Figures 3a, Roessler Location Map, and 3b, Roessler Site Map).

The property consists of approximately 40 acres, of which less than 3 acres have been converted to a home site, shop, and vineyard conversion areas. The project proposes to convert an additional 8 acres for vineyard establishment. Land uses surrounding the Roessler portion of the proposed project are rural residential and timber parcels. The Sonoma County Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) for the property is 122-090-008 with an address of 36451 Annapolis Road.

The Roessler property slopes range from three to 60 percent with an average of 27 percent across the site. The surrounding area is characterized by steep incised coastal drainages with coastal forest vegetation consisting of second growth redwood and Douglas-fir.

Sleepy Hollow

The Sleepy Hollow site is located on a broad, generally south-facing, flat ridgetop within the Little Creek watershed, which flows to the Gualala River (See Figures 4a, Sleepy Hollow Location Map, and 4b, Sleepy Hollow Site Map). The property consists of approximately 64.85 acres. Total development area is estimated in the Erosion Control Plan as 29 acres. Vineyard perimeter edges, existing roads, swale offsets, staging area, irrigation reservoir, and field avenues reduce gross and plantable vineyard area to approximately 23.8 acres and 17.8 acres respectively (See Figure 4b).

Since the release of the previous NOP, dated October 2, 2006, the Sleepy Hollow Vineyard project has been revised to include a 1.5-acre irrigation reservoir, south of the staging area, designed to provide 11 - 12 acre-feet of storage capacity. The proposed reservoir has been designed to capture only direct precipitation and upland sheet flow runoff in man-made conveyance structures. The design volume is in excess of annual irrigation demand for the vineyard, and allows for any seepage and evaporation losses, unavailable low pool volume, and back-to-back dry year conditions. An impermeable liner will be specified in the design, to eliminate seepage losses. Installation of the irrigation reservoir will eliminate the need for the use of groundwater for irrigation purposes, and the on-site well would be used for domestic purposes only. Land uses surrounding the Sleepy Hollow portion of the proposed project are rural residential and timber parcels. The property is located in Sonoma County (APN 122-090-007).

The Sleepy Hollow property slopes average approximately five percent throughout the project and range up to 18 percent in isolated areas. The elevation ranges from 600 feet to 750 feet mean sea level. The vegetative cover on the site consists of a mosaic of conifer timber and hardwoods. The area is moderately stocked with second growth redwood and Douglas-fir with pockets of regeneration. Hardwood species include pacific madrone, tanoak, and chinkapin. The understory vegetation is heavy and includes tanoak brush, huckleberry, and perennial grasses.

Other Required Permits And Approvals

Other permits and approvals required to complete this project include:

- Timberland Conversion Permit – approved by CDF
- Timber Harvest Plan – approved by CDF
- Grading Permit and Erosion Control Plan – issued by Sonoma County (ministerial)
- Streambed Alteration Agreement (Roessler Conversion) – Department of Fish and Game

It should be noted that the proposed project applications, Roessler Timberland Conversion Plan Application and Sleepy Hollow Timberland Conversion Plan Application, were filed on March 8, 2004 and March 30, 2004, respectively. Therefore, the Annapolis Area Timberland Conversions Project would be exempt from Sonoma County Ordinance No. 5651 (a recently-approved timberland conversion ordinance) per Section II (a) of the ordinance, which states "Notwithstanding any other provision of this ordinance, the provisions of Section I of this ordinance shall not apply to any of the following...any major timberland conversion for which a timberland conversion application was accepted as complete for filing by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and environmental review initiated by that department as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act, prior to October 4, 2005, including those projects that subsequently undergo changes to their project description or additional environmental review."

Project Components

The proposed project includes the issuance of two Timberland Conversion Permits, exempting the landowners from the requirement to meet Forest Practice Rules stocking upon completion of timber operations, in order to facilitate the development of two vineyards. The proposed project also includes two Timber Harvest Plans (THP) permitting timber operations for the purposes of converting the properties. The affected areas would remain zoned Resources and Rural Development.

The timber harvest would remove all trees and vegetative debris within the "conversion area". Vineyard blocks would have deep cultivation, installation of irrigation systems and fences, vineyards and cover crops planted. Additional roads would be established on the project sites to access timber within the project area, and facilitate the vineyard operations following conversion.

Timber harvesting and conversion operations would not occur within the standard Class II and Class III watercourse protection zones that are adjacent to the timberland conversion areas.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The EIR is proposed to focus on the following technical environmental issues with all other potential impacts including air quality, noise, population and housing, public services, and traffic addressed in the Initial Study (which will be included as an appendix to the EIR):

Aesthetics

The Aesthetics analysis will summarize existing regional and project area aesthetics and visual setting and will also describe project specific aesthetics issues regarding development of the proposed project such as scenic vistas, trees, historic buildings, scenic highways, existing visual character or quality of the site and its surrounding areas, as well as light and glare. The analysis will also include the identification of the thresholds of significance, identification of impacts, and the development of mitigation measures and monitoring strategies.

Biological Resources

This chapter of the EIR will summarize the setting and describe the potential effects to timber resources, plant communities, wildlife, and wetlands including adverse effects on rare, endangered, candidate, sensitive, and special-status species for the project site. This chapter will include an analysis of the existing setting, identification of the thresholds of significance, identification of impacts, and the development of mitigation measures and monitoring strategies. The appropriate agencies such as the California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the NOAA Fisheries (formerly the National Marine Fisheries Service), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be consulted.

Cultural Resources

This analysis will describe the potential construction-related effects to historical, archaeological, and paleontological resources. This chapter of the EIR will include analysis of the existing setting, identification of the thresholds of significance, identification of impacts, and the development of mitigation measures and monitoring strategies.

Geology and Soils

This chapter will summarize the setting and describe the potential effects from earthquakes, landslides and liquefaction as well as identification of any unique geological features within the project site. This chapter of the EIR will include an analysis of the existing setting, identification of the thresholds of significance, identification of impacts, and the development of mitigation measures and monitoring strategies.

Hazards

The Hazards analysis will summarize the setting and describe the potential for existing or possible hazardous materials on-site, or impacts that could result from implementation of the proposed project. This chapter of the EIR will include analysis of the existing setting, identification of the thresholds of significance, identification of impacts, and the development of mitigation measures and monitoring strategies.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The Hydrology and Water Quality chapter will summarize setting information and identify potential impacts on irrigation drainage, stormwater drainage, flooding, groundwater, seepage, and water quality. Consideration will include on-site as well as off-site infrastructure facilities. The chapter will also include a description of the existing setting, identification of the thresholds of significance, identification of impacts, and the development of mitigation measures and monitoring strategies. In addition, the Hydrology and Water Quality chapter will further address the issue of irrigation water supply.

Land Use

The Land Use chapter of the EIR will evaluate the consistency of the proposed project with CDF and Sonoma County's adopted plans and policies. The analysis includes a review of the County's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, as well as any other appropriate documents, to address consistency issues. In addition, the Land Use chapter will assess the compatibility of the proposed project with the surrounding land uses, both existing and proposed. The analysis will further include a discussion regarding the conversion of timberland to agricultural and non-agricultural uses.

Cumulative Impacts

The Cumulative Impacts chapter of the EIR will evaluate the cumulative development that would occur independent of, but during the same timeframe as, the proposed project, or in the reasonably foreseeable future. These projects must be within the project vicinity and of sufficient size to affect the anticipated future conditions of the project site. In this context, cumulative impacts are those that, if added to the anticipated impacts of the proposed project, would increase the severity of the significance of impacts of the project, or increase impacts from the project not anticipated to be significant from the project alone to reach significant levels cumulatively.

DISCUSSION OF ALTERNATIVES

In accordance with Section 15126.6(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, several project alternatives, including the No Project Alternative, will be analyzed. The alternatives analysis would "describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the

location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives". The analysis would include sufficient information about each alternative to allow meaningful evaluation, analysis, and comparison with the proposed project. The significant effects of the alternatives are discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the proposed project. The discussion will identify and analyze the "environmentally superior alternative."

SUBMITTING COMMENTS

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed project is addressed and all significant issues are identified, written comments are invited from all interested parties. Written comments concerning the proposed CEQA analysis for the Annapolis Area Timberland Conversions Project should be directed to the name and address below:

Mr. Allen Robertson
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460
(916) 657-0300
SacramentoPublicComment@fire.ca.gov

Written comments are due to CDF at the location addressed above by 4:00 p.m. on February 18, 2008.

**Figure 1
Regional Location Map**

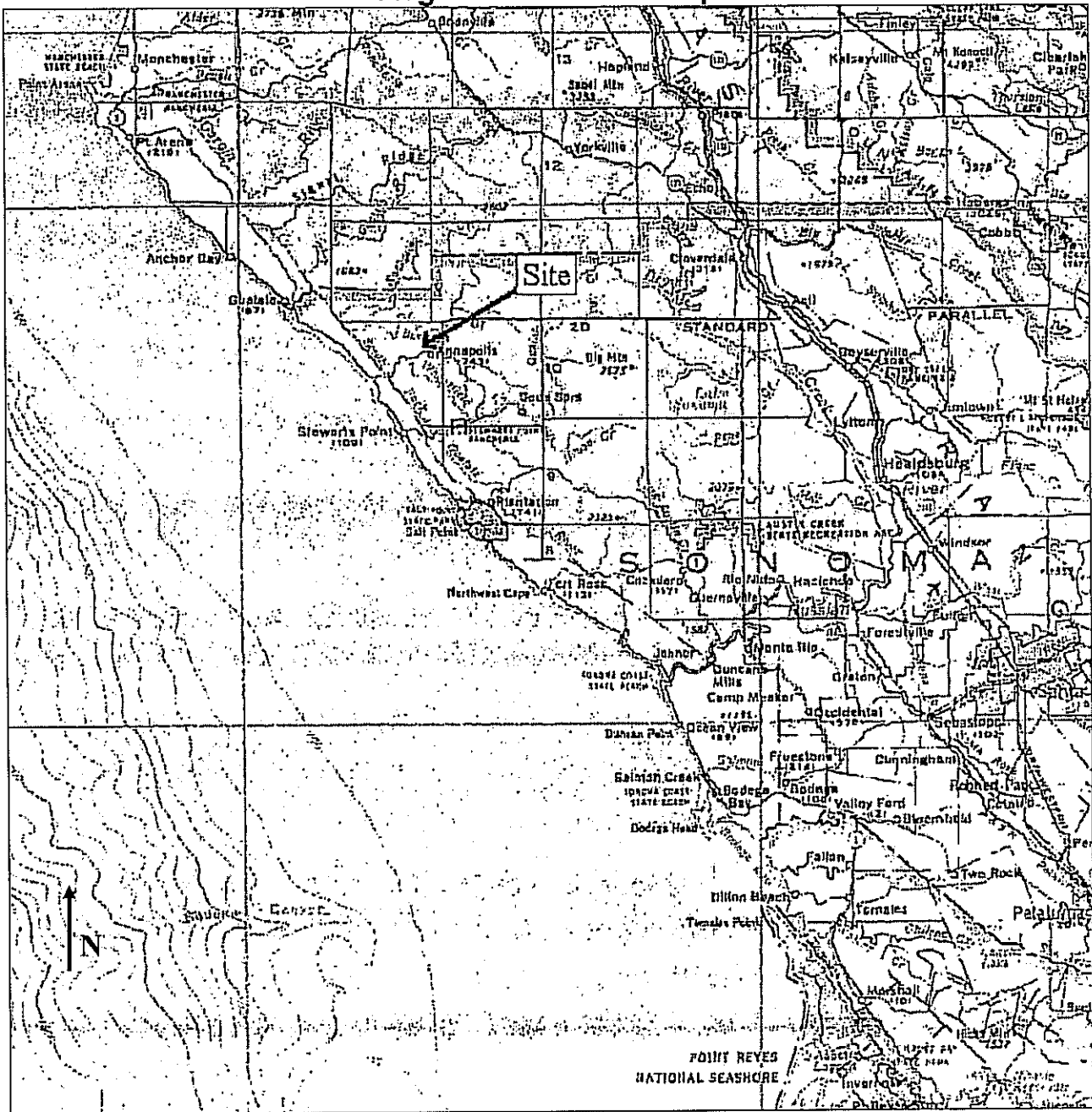


Figure 2
Project Locations Map

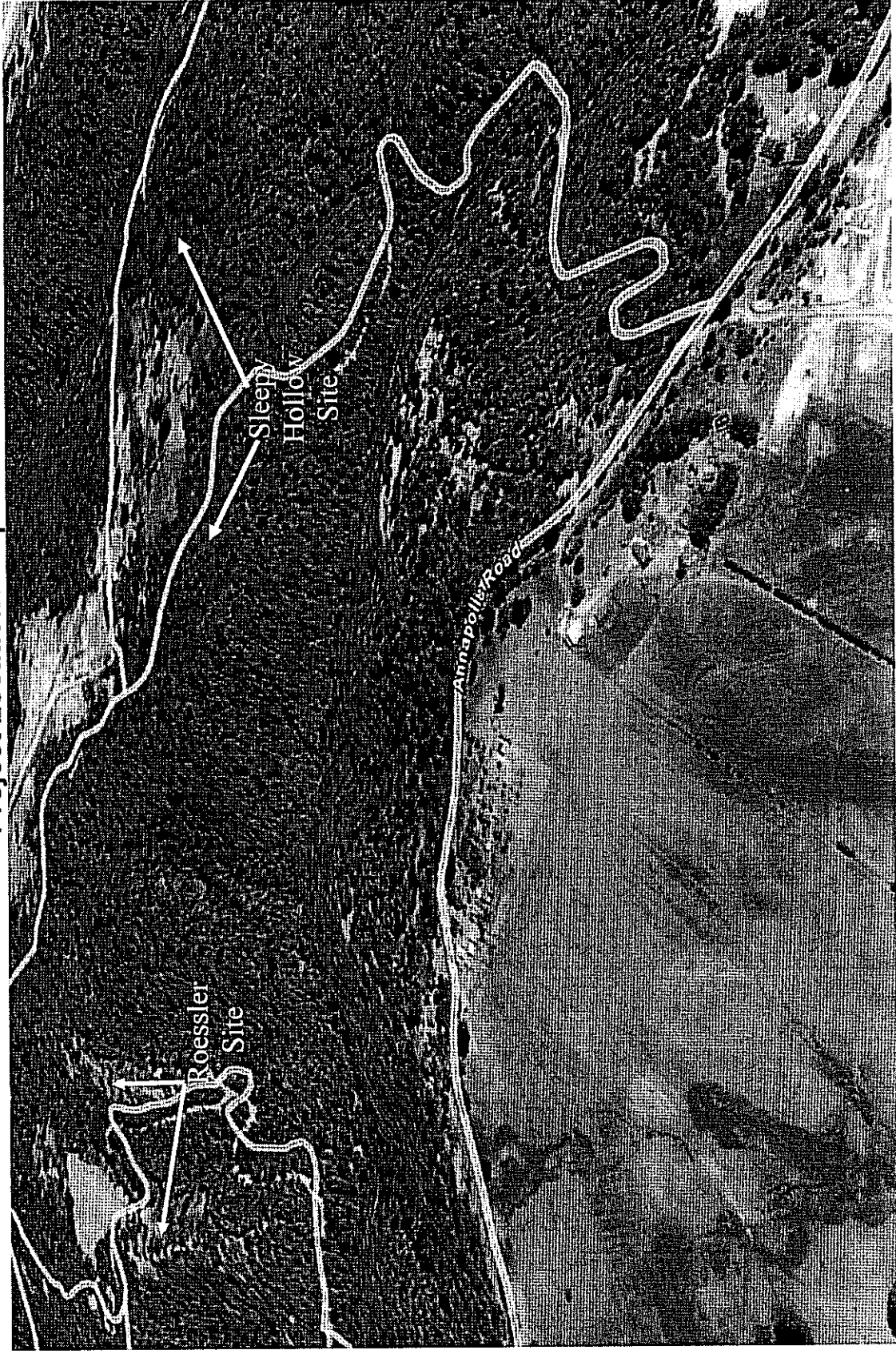


Figure 3a
Roessler Location Map

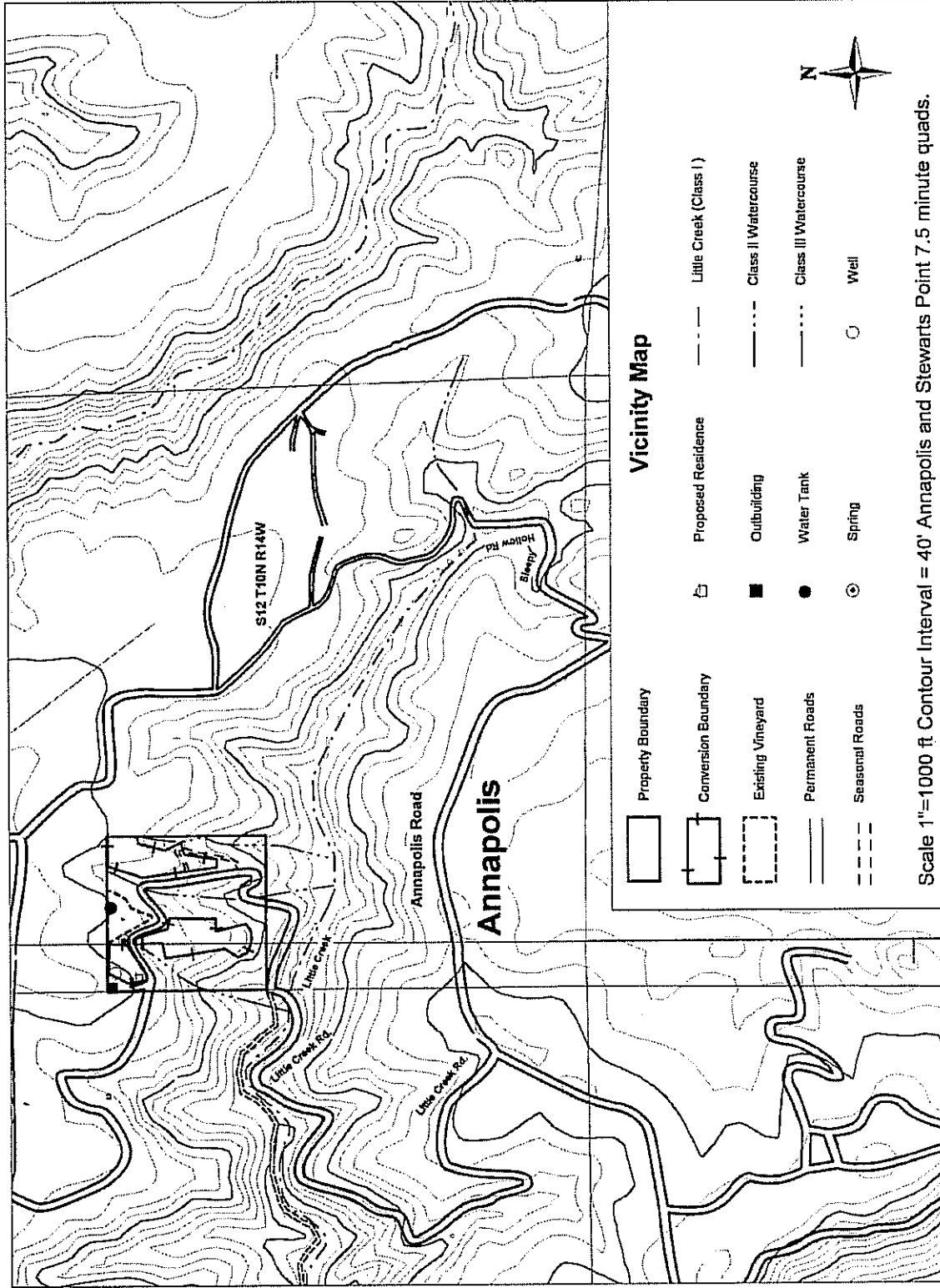


Figure 3b
Roessler Conversion Site Map

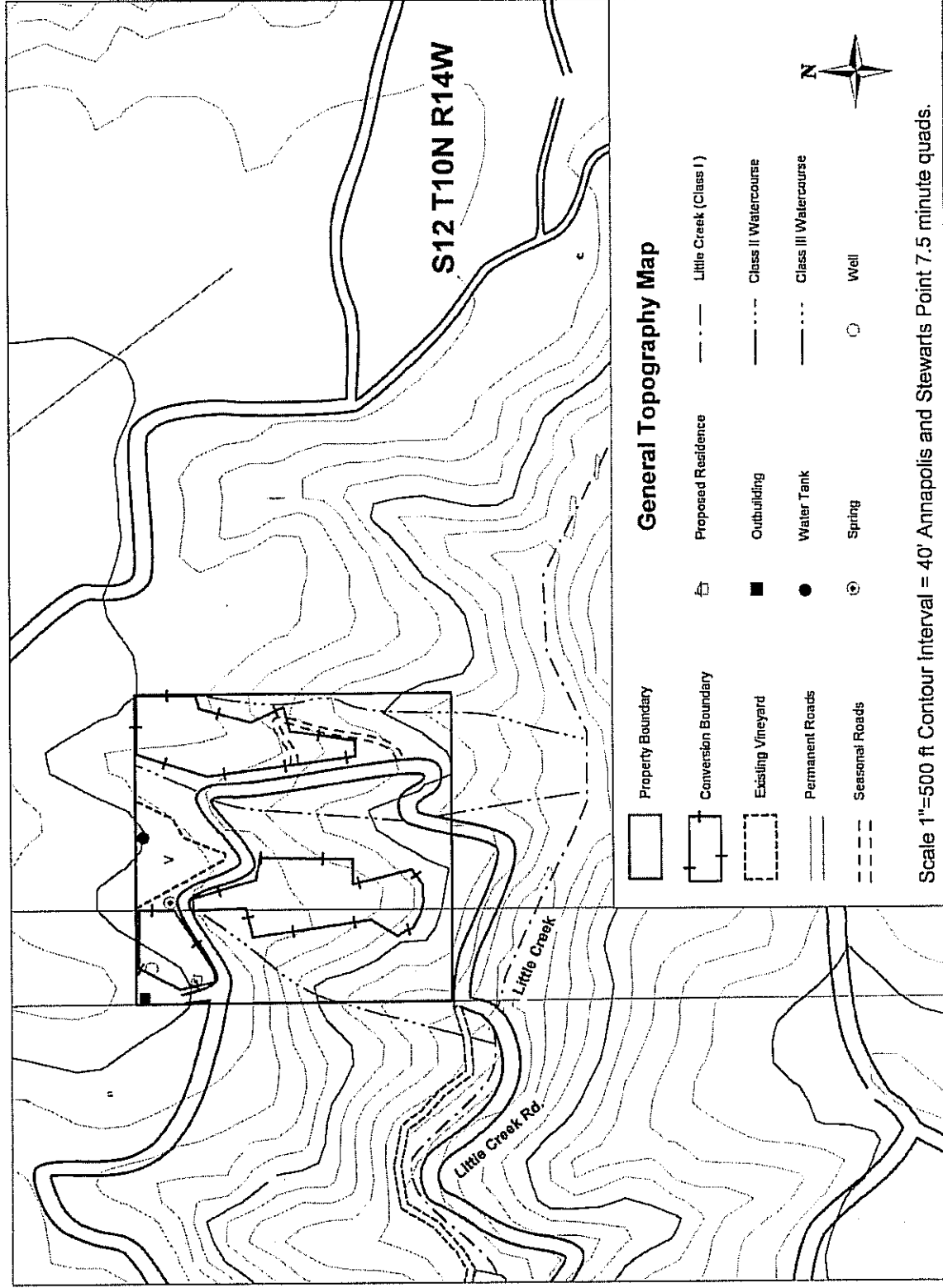


Figure 4a
Sleepy Hollow Location Map

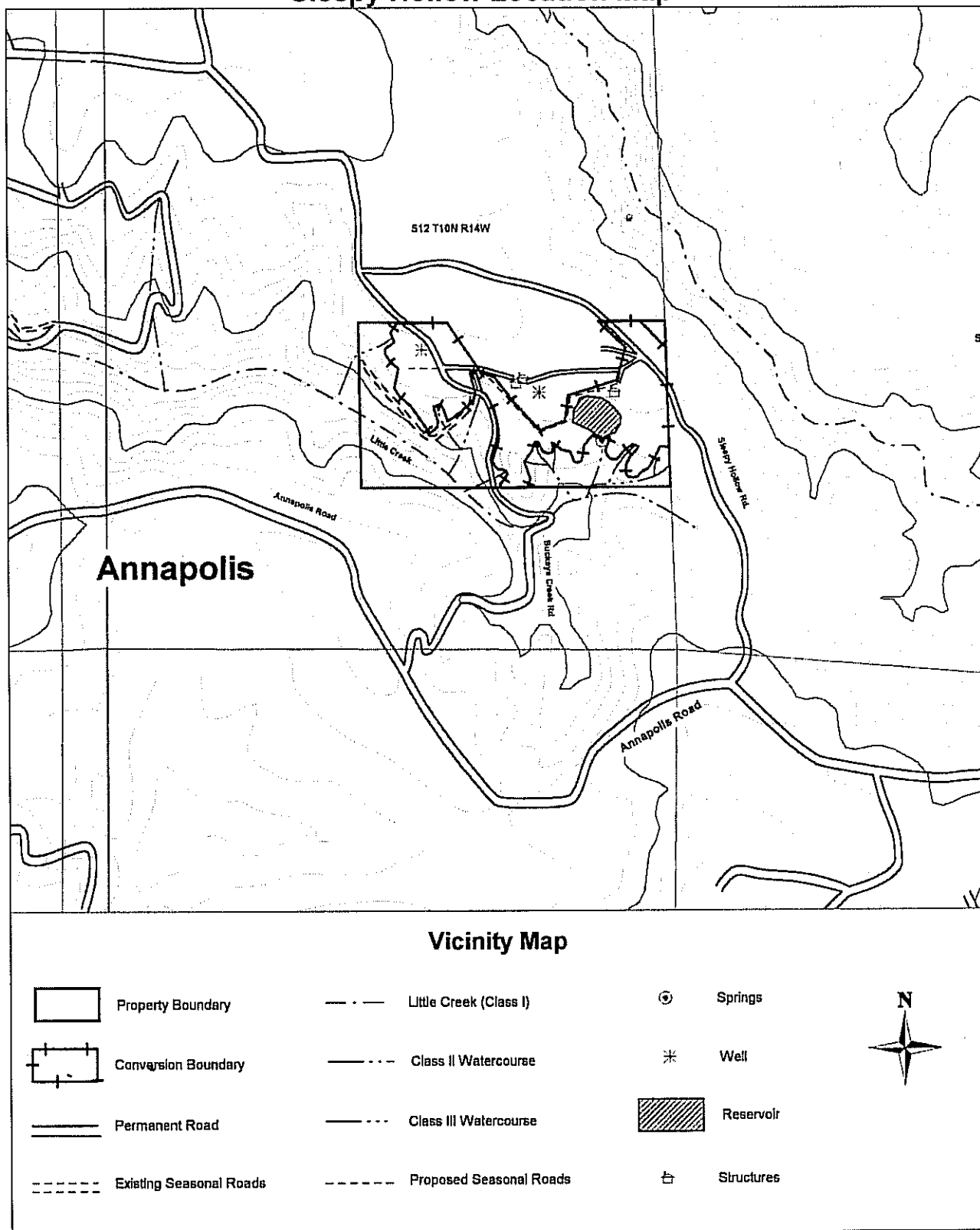
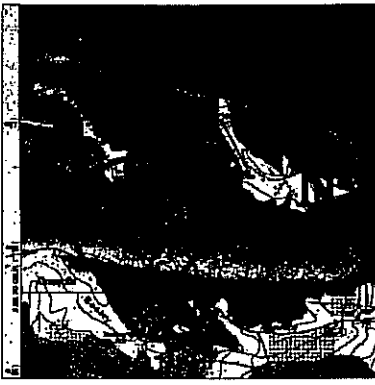
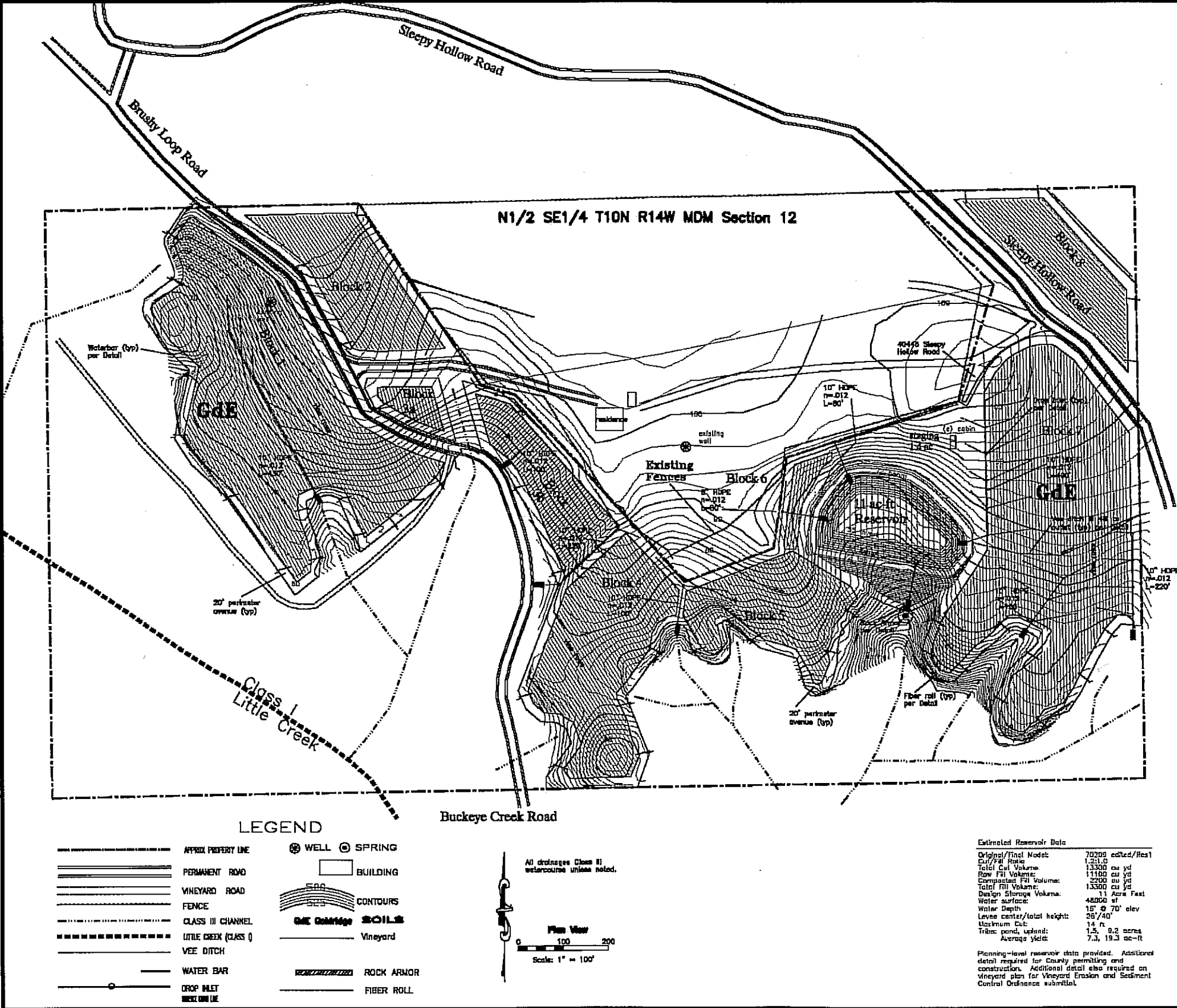


Figure 4b
Sleepy Hollow Site Map



Location Sketch

USGS 7.5-min Quad map, Annapolis
Scale: 1" = 2500' 40' Contours

N1/2 SE1/4 S12 T10N R14W MDM

Notes:
* Site topography per linear interpolation of intermittent EDM points and other data. Elevations and dimensions approximate. Property boundary per field hubs and data provided by Hoffman Engineering and Geosure Surveying.
* Field verify critical elevations, dimensions, and vineyard and property limits at time of construction.
* Conform to channel effects and field limits as flagged by the Forester during site layout.
* Install temporary and permanent cover crops per T10P timeline criteria and prior to onset of winter rains per detailed specifications.
* A site topography map of a higher level of resolution will be required by Sonoma County at such time as the required Grading Permit and Vineyard Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance Applications are made.

Soil: D&E Delridge fine sandy loam 0-10%
Vegetation: Second growth mixed conifer and deciduous forest with brushy understorey.
Infrastructure: Cabin, shed, power line corridor, old fences, well.
Water and Riparian Features: All Class III watercourses have been avoided. There are no designated streams, lakes, reservoirs, wetlands, springs, or other water features within the vineyard blocks.

Erosion Control Revegetation
Install in all disturbed areas prior to November 1 and/or onset of winter rains.
1. Seed mix of min. 40 lb/ac.
20 pct Blondo bromes
20 pct Zorro fescue
20 pct Rose clover
2. 16-10-00 fertilizer at 150 lb/ac
3. Straw mulch at 4000 lb/ac
Grass or legumy for retention for slopes over 15 pct.
Use straw blanket on slopes over 2.5:1TV.

Timberland Conversion Areas			
Area	sq ft	Acres	Acres
Total Conversion	1263240		29.0
existing roads	70000		1.6
reservoir	97200		2.2
staging area	60200		1.4
Gross Vineyard			23.8
Block 1	213810		4.9
Block 2	61070		1.4
Block 3	51270		1.2
Block 4	97450		2.2
Block 5	58870		1.4
Block 6	8140		0.2
Block 7	227930		5.2
Block 8	56540		1.3
Net Vineyard			17.8
Perimeter Avenues			6.0

Sonoma County Vineyard Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance (VESCO) Sec. 30-74(b)(1) Statement:
The Engineer certifies that this Plan was prepared by Leo Erickson, PhD, AG400, CE4680, that the Plan contains information as required by VESCO Sec. 30-74, and that the Plan meets temporary and permanent measures believed sufficient to meet requirements of VESCO Sec. 30-73.



Erickson Engineering Inc.
Valley Ford CA 94972-0446
707/795-2498 Voice/Fax

17.8-Acre Vineyard
11 Acre-foot Reservoir

APN 125-580-007
SLEEPY HOLLOW VINEYARD
40418 Sleepy Hollow Road, Annapolis CA

Drawing:
71013.0mg
Date:
10.13.2007
Scale:
1" = 100'
Sheet:
C1