

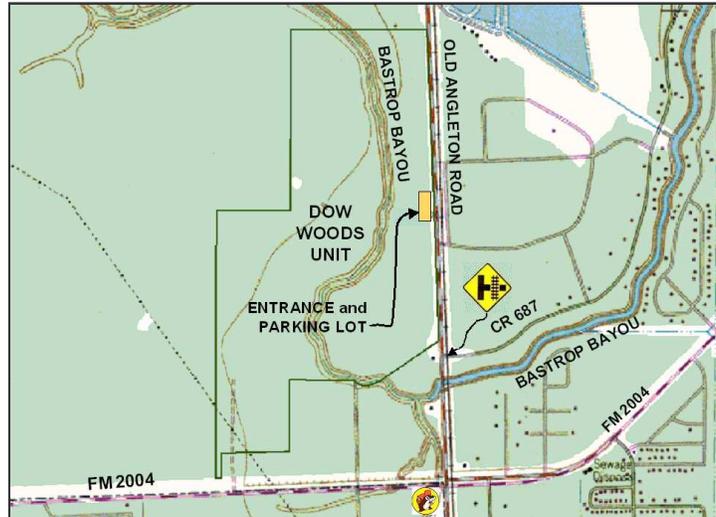
DOW WOODS REPORT

By Neal McLain

Here's a monthly report about our efforts on behalf of US Fish & Wildlife Service for facilities at the new Dow Woods Unit of San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge.

The Dow Woods Unit is located north of FM2004 near Old Angleton Road. The entrance gate is off Old Angleton Road about a half mile north of FM2004. This property was donated to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service by The Dow Chemical Company in December 2008. Bastrop Bayou crosses the property, flowing north to south.

The property is covered by extensive old growth forest—Live Oak, Water Oak, and Hackberry. For many years, the property had been used as a pasture for cattle, with the result that few understory plants could survive. But within the past few years, an entire understory has emerged, with numerous Yaupon and palmetto.



Bastrop Bayou flowing through the Dow Woods Unit. Photo: David Plunkett

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Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges has obtained a grant from the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department for the construction of trails and a restroom and storage building. Cradle of Texas Chapter member Marty Cornell led the effort to obtain this grant.

Several members of the COT Chapter are working with members of FOBWR and USFWS staff to complete the construction of these facilities.

We have completed the final design of the restroom and storage building. It contains two restrooms and an attached storage room for mowing equipment and other tools.

We have issued construction specifications to several bidders. Bids are due March 12, and we expect to have a reasonable choice of bids.

We have conducted surveys of two trails, the John Tveten Trail in the northeast quadrant of the unit, and an as-yet-unnamed trail lying in the southeast quadrant. USFWS personnel Curtis Jones, Shane Kasson, and Tom Schneider led the survey teams, assisted by COT Chapter members Ed Johnson, Neal McLain, Denis Mudderman, Archie Pratt, and Kirby Rapstein.

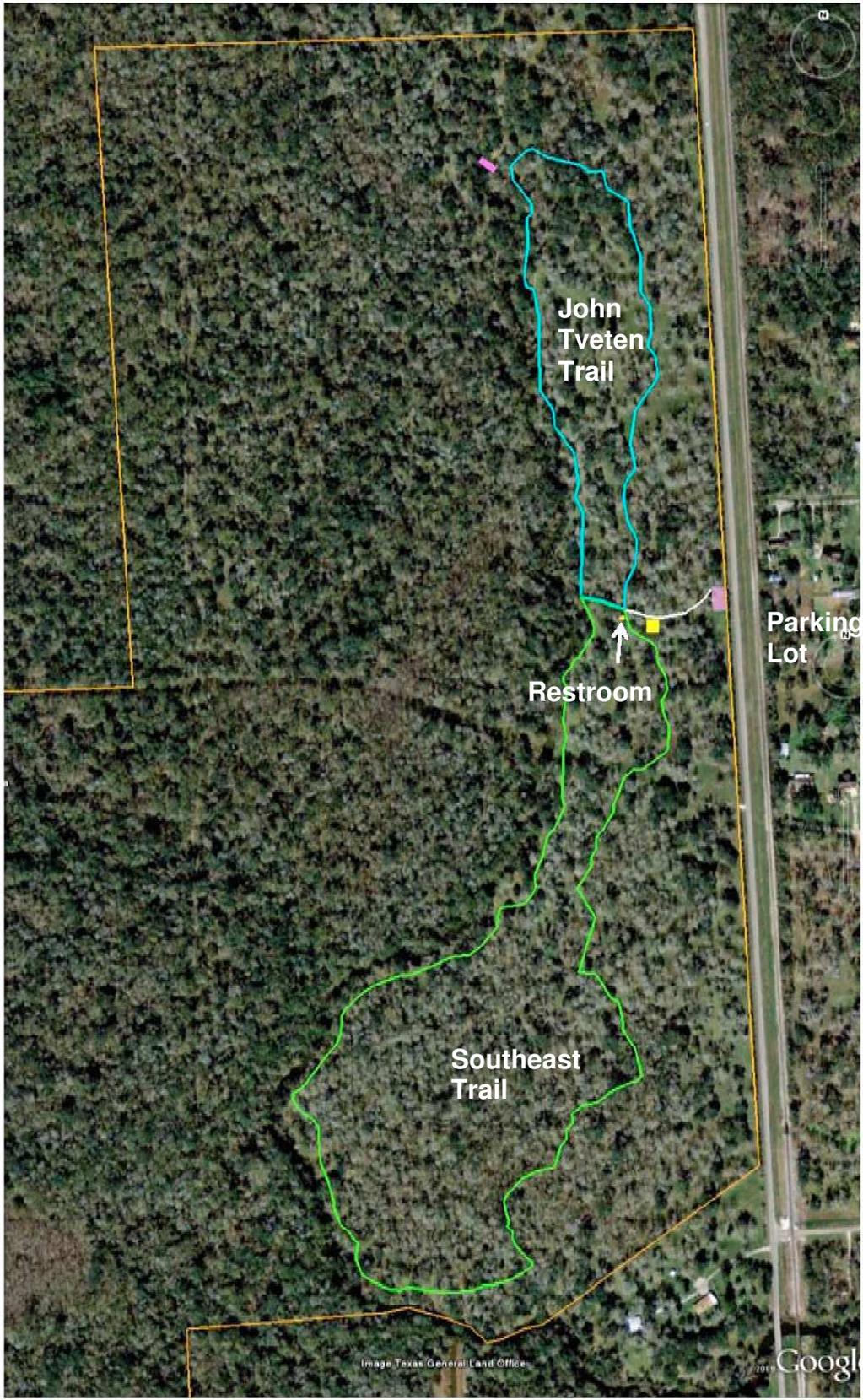
Denis Mudderman has prepared a detailed map of the trail based on the trail survey data. A copy of his map is shown on the following page.

We are now in the process of evaluating various trail construction options. Archie Pratt is leading this effort. The boardwalk crew—Don VanDragt, Gerald Forrest, Mark Hazelrigg, Billy Heck, Jerry Krampota, Archie Pratt, and Kirby Rapstein—is anxious to get started.

At the moment, we are concentrating our efforts on trails located east of the bayou. We plan to construct a trail on the west side of the bayou in the future after the completion of further engineering studies.



Dow Woods Report



Dow Woods Unit proposed trail map. Map prepared by Denis Mudderman based on field survey data conducted during January and February 2010.