



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Texas Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office
500 East McCarty Lane
San Marcos, TX 78666
(512) 353-0011 Ext 236

November 28, 2016

Mike Montagne
USFWS, TXFWCO
500 E McCarty Lane
San Marcos TX 78666

Re: Big Cypress Paddlefish Reintroduction Project Phase 2, Mid-Project Summary

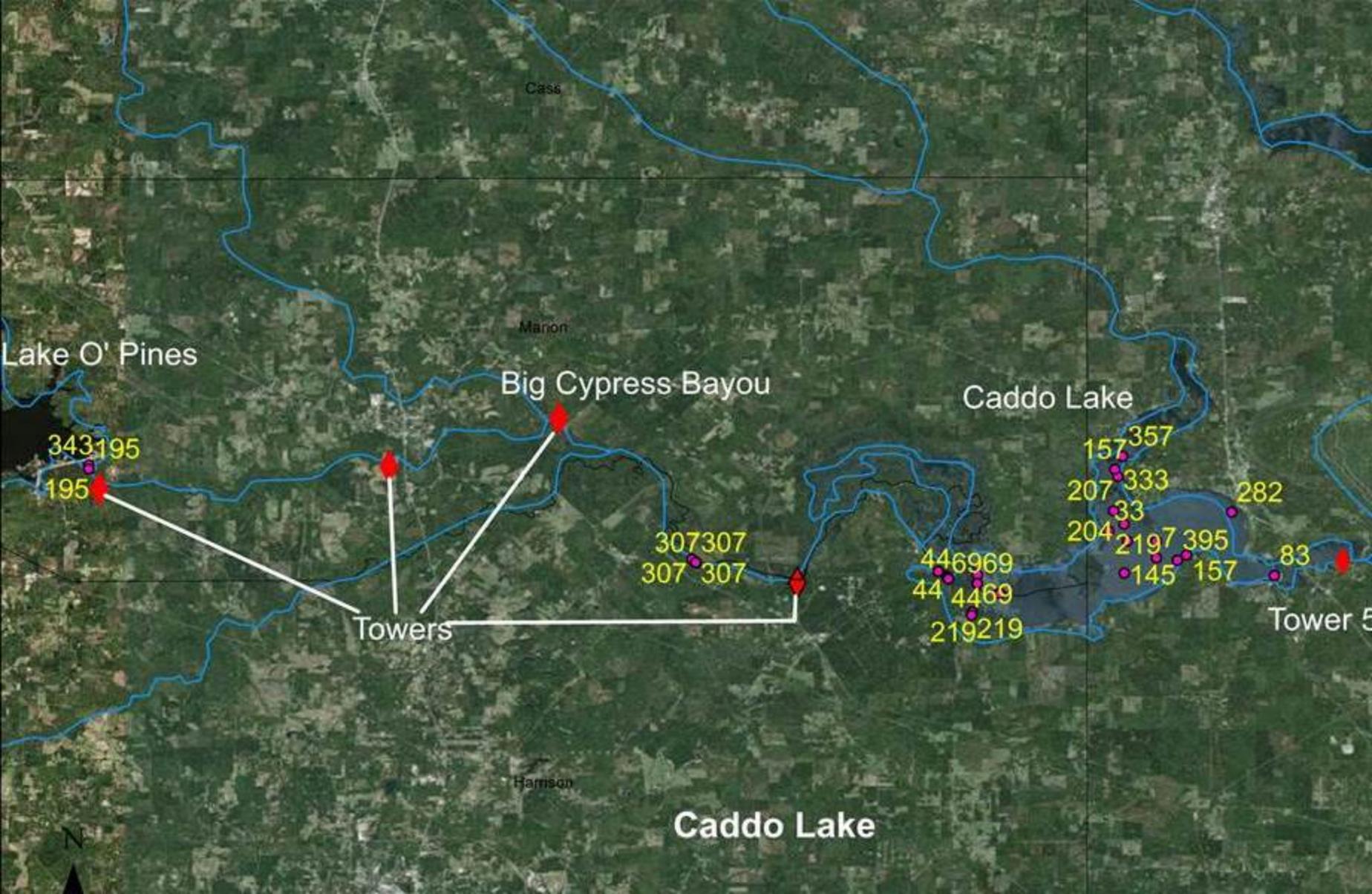
The Texas Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (TXFWCO) began Phase 2 of the Paddlefish Reintroduction Project (the Project) on April 26, 2016, by implanting radio transmitters in 27 one-year old paddlefish being reared at Tishomingo National Fish Hatchery (TNFH). Of the 27 paddlefish implanted, 21 survived, and on May 18, 2016, they and approximately 600 others, were transported by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, from TNFH to Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge (CLNWR) and released at the Starr Ranch Boat Ramp.

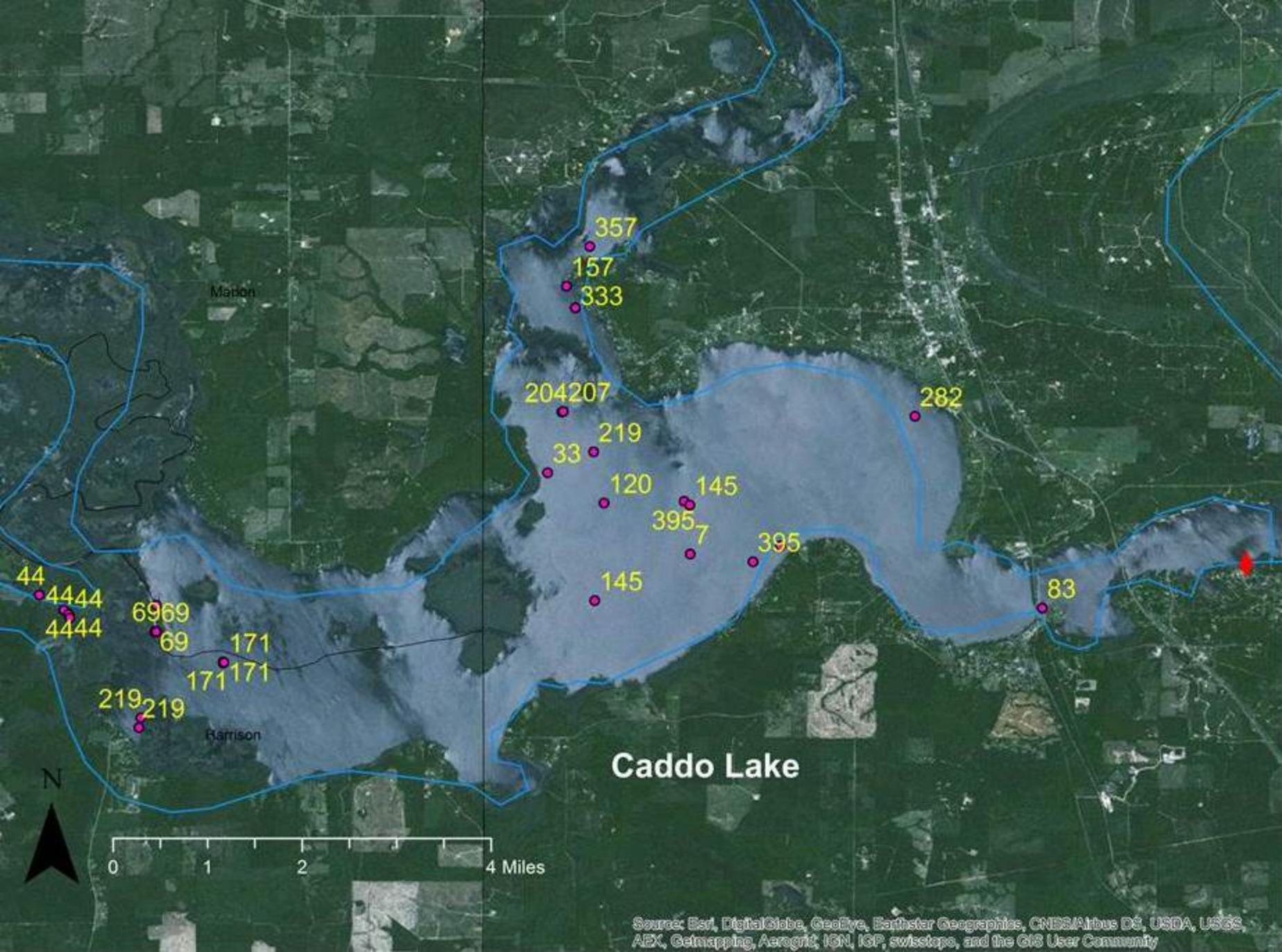
Two new data logging towers were installed, in addition to the three towers already in place from Phase 1, to detect the tagged fish passing by certain points in the Big Cypress System. These data loggers search constantly for the radio signals transmitted by the tags that were implanted in the paddlefish. In addition to the towers, the TXFWCO, with help from CLNWR and the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, have conducted six boat tracking searches.

The tracking has covered over 300 miles in the Big Cypress Bayou and Caddo Lake, and resulted in contact with all but one of the original 21 fish. Many of them have been contacted several times over the first six months of the project. Five of the original 21 have either shed their tags or have died.

Reintroducing the paddlefish directly into the lake has resulted in the fish scattering all over lake and bayou in no particular pattern, whereas in Phase 1, stocking them in the river section resulted in 64% of the implanted fish to swimming upstream to the Lake o' the Pines Spillway, many of them staying there for extended periods of time.

An attempt was made in August 2016 to recapture some of the older previously released paddlefish and implant larger, longer lasting tags into the older fish, but none were captured at that time. More attempts will be made to recapture older fish and track their movements as they transition into adulthood.





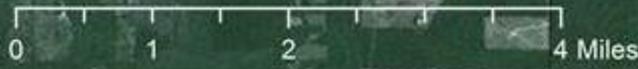
Marion

Barrison

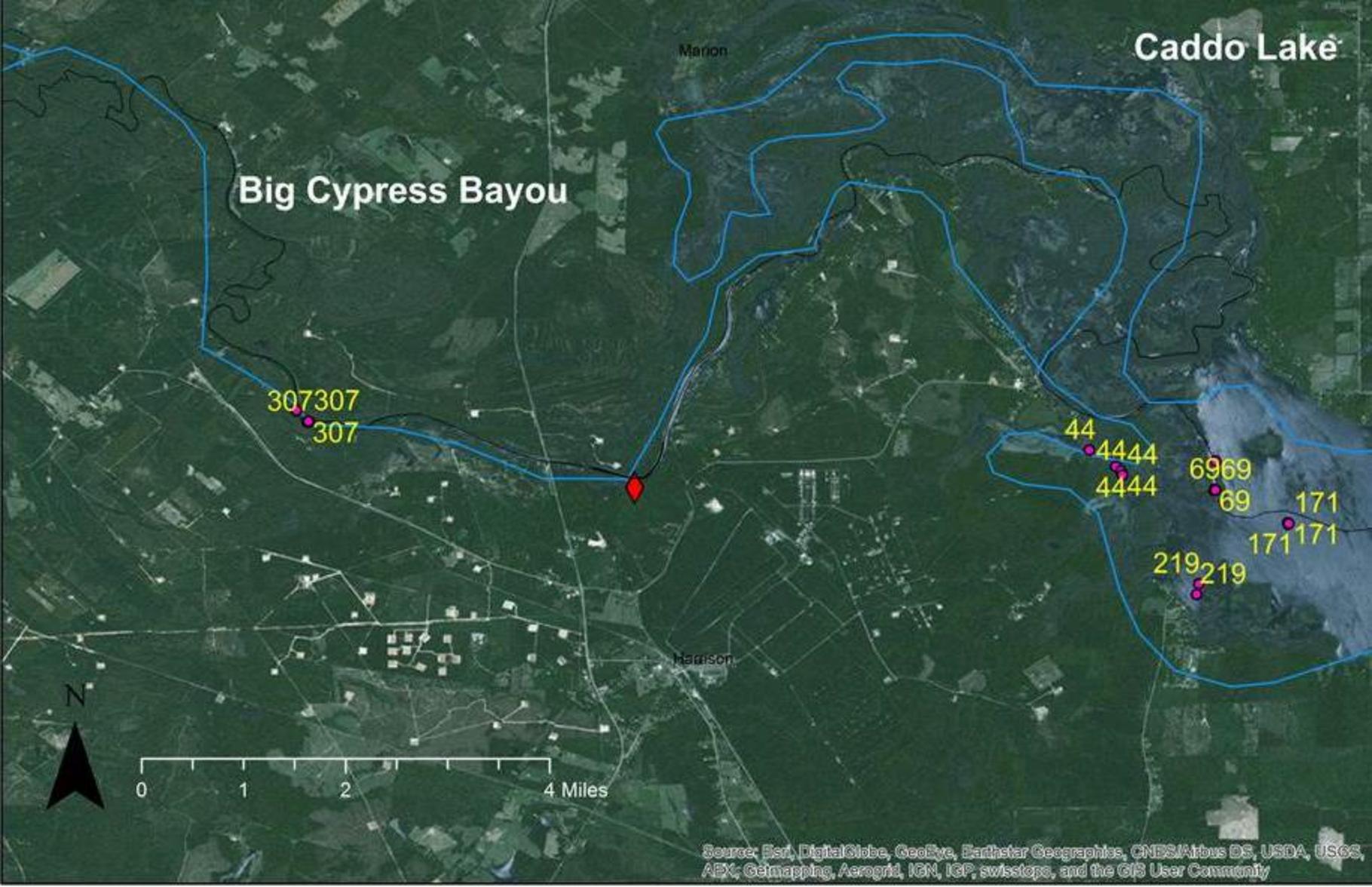
Caddo Lake

- 44
- 4444
- 4444
- 69
- 69
- 171
- 171
- 171
- 219
- 219

- 357
- 157
- 333
- 204
- 207
- 33
- 219
- 120
- 145
- 395
- 7
- 145
- 395
- 282
- 83



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



Marion

Caddo Lake

Big Cypress Bayou

307307
307

44
4444
4444

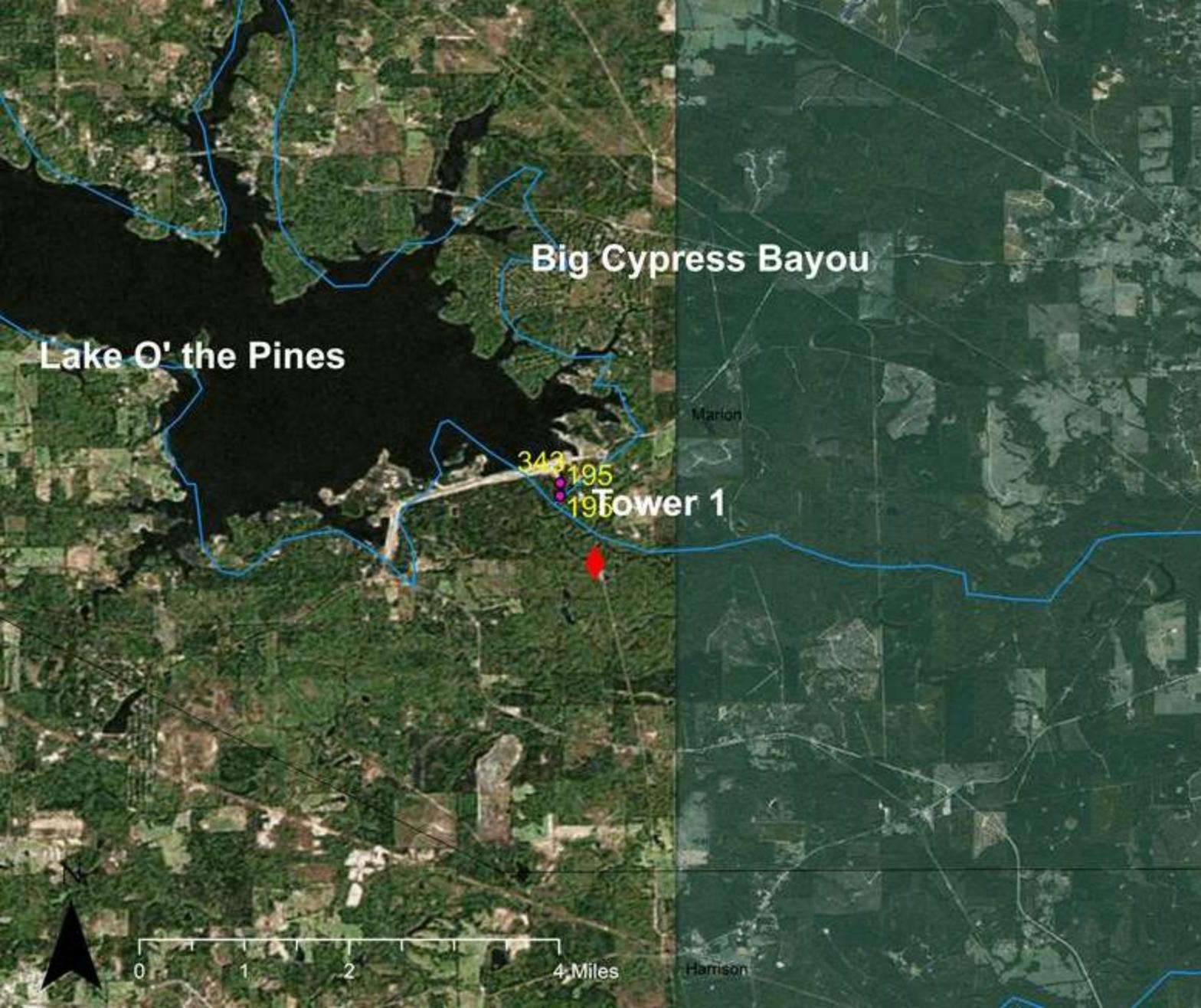
6969
69
171
171
171
219
219

Marion



0 1 2 4 Miles

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS,
ABX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



Lake O' the Pines

Big Cypress Bayou

342

195

195

Tower 1

Marion

Harrison

0 1 2 4 Miles