



SCAN *South Carolina Association of Naturalists*
Post Office Box 5651, Columbia, South Carolina 29250-5651

May 2020

Hello Fellow SCAN Members!

The COVID-19 pandemic has definitely altered our lives. With the recommendations to limit social interactions and the closing of many parks, many of us are staying home or only venturing to open areas in our vicinity. The governmental restrictions on groups over 10 was the reason for the cancellation of our March and April outings.

As South Carolina slowly reopens and restrictions ease a bit, the officers have decided that we should proceed with our May outing. We encourage all members to respect the social distancing requests of other members. I know this will be difficult for huggers like me, but we must do our best!

I apologize for the lateness of this newsletter. I was trying to outwait the Forest Service's temporary suspension of issuing camping permits. As of late Friday afternoon, there were no updates available.

Our annual trip to Hell Hole Swamp and the surrounding areas of the Francis Marion National Forest will be a little different this year. We will still try to camp, perhaps on private property close to the Hell Hole gathering area. We will not have our Saturday evening potluck dinner. Each person is responsible for bringing their own food and supplies. It might actually make it a bit easier on everyone! Please plan to join us, either for the weekend or for a Saturday soodle.

If you plan on camping, please contact me directly so we can discuss the plan one-on-one.

We look forward to seeing you!

Kim McManus

Francis Marion National Forest / Hell Hole Swamp

Berkeley County, SC

May 23, 2020 10:30am (Day Trip)

May 21 – 24/25, 2020 (Car Camping)

Cell phone service in the forest is sketchy at best, so here are contacts should you need assistance in finding the campground:

Marcus Sizemore

Kim McManus

On Saturday May 23, SCAN will visit the Francis Marion National Forest. We'll gather at the Hell Hole Road campground at 10:30am. From there, we'll break out into smaller groups for exploration. Options include road cruising for snakes and herps, visiting pitcher plant bogs, scouting Carolina Bays, bird watching, and seeking out unusual wildflowers. Marcus Sizemore has some leads on a few interesting locations to examine, depending on recent rainfall and river levels.

Potential locations include:

- Hampton Plantation State Historic Site - 2 miles of trails with a variety of upland habitats, old rice fields, and boardwalks.
- Halfway Creek Campground / Palmetto Trail Swamp Fox Passage – a variety of wetland and upland habitats
- Little Wambaw Swamp Wilderness

Here is a writeup Marcus found on the Little Wambaw Wilderness:

Little Wambaw Swamp Wilderness is a 5,179-acre river-bottom land of hardwoods and cypress-tupelo sloughs in Francis Marion National Forest. The area was logged once upon a time and today, most access to the wilderness area is via the old railroad tramways. About 60 acres in the southwestern portion of the swamp are thought to be virgin timber but even the second-growth timber is impressively large. The understory, though, is a dense mat of pickerel weed, bladderwort and wild orchid.

The earthen tramways offer high ground for hiking and perhaps camping but there are many slow-moving cross streams in the area and the bridges over those are long gone: be prepared to go wading in waist-deep water. Most folks do their camping at the Buck Hall Recreation Area to the south and access the earthen tramway system from there. Best time to visit is winter and early spring when water and insect levels are at their lowest.

This will be SCAN's eighth year taking part in the annual 'Under a Low Country Moon' interpretive weekend. Under a Low Country Moon (ULCM) is comprised of a group of naturalists who have met on Memorial Day weekend annually since 2001. The weekend includes lots of road cruising, with stops for on-foot exploration. There are a few ponds and creeks that can be traversed in a kayak or canoe. Evening activities include road cruising, star gazing, s'more eating contests, and, if we're very lucky, musical interludes by several of our talented friends.

ULCM members will start setting up camp on Thursday. The last stragglers don't leave until lunchtime on Monday. Both hotel and rustic camping options are available. The campground is simply a field (mowed by our own Paul Kalbach and Randy McManus (thanks Paul and Randy!)) or a piece of private property with no amenities in the vicinity, so plan to pack in and pack out everything you need. The closest hotels are approximately 30 minutes away in Moncks Corner. Feel free to join in the fun for as long as you like!

Due to ongoing efforts to keep the spread of COVID-19 to a minimum, we encourage everyone to bring everything they need. There will be no communal food or supplies this year. The nearest restroom is ~15 minutes away in Jamestown at the gas station (BP/Kangaroo).

Directions:

Forest Road 158 / Hell Hole Road

33°10'41.7"N 79°45'59.4"W

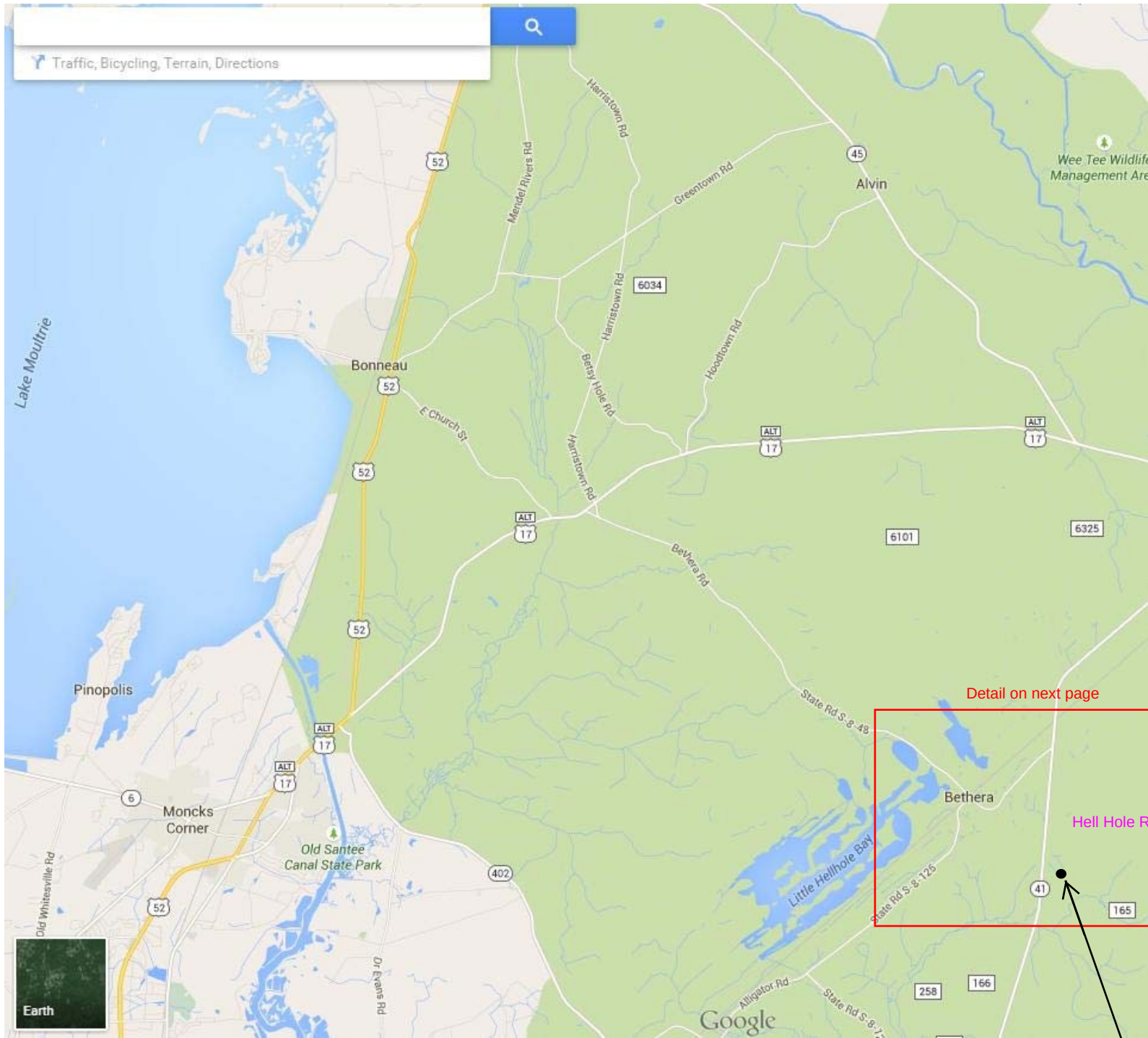
33.178249, -79.766493

From the Interstate:

1. From 1-26E, take exit 194 towards Road 16 / Jedburg / Pinopolis
2. Turn LEFT on Jedburg Rd and go 5.1 miles.
3. Turn RIGHT on US-176E and go 0.4 miles.
4. Turn LEFT on Black Tom Road / State Road S-8-467 and go 5.7 miles.
5. Keep RIGHT to continue on State Road S-8-413 and go 0.2 miles.
6. Turn LEFT at the 2nd cross street onto US-17 Alt N / South Live Oak Drive and go 5.5 miles.
7. Use the left 2 lanes to turn slightly LEFT onto US-17 Alt N / US-52 W / N US Hwy 52 and go 1.9 miles.
8. Take a slight RIGHT onto US-17 Alt N and go 5.6 miles.
9. Turn RIGHT onto Bethera Road / State Road S-8-48.
10. After 0.2 miles, continue on Bethera Road and go 5.4 miles.
11. Turn RIGHT onto SC-41 S and go 2.5 miles.
12. Turn LEFT onto Hell Hole Road / Forest Road 158.
13. Take the first RIGHT into the campground.

From Charleston, SC to Hell Hole Road, Huger, SC 29450

1. Merge onto US-17 N / Arthur Ravenel Jr Bridge / Septima Clark Pkwy via the ramp to Mt Pleasant
2. At the end of the bridge, stay LEFT to continue on US-17 N / N Hwy 17 and go 7.7 miles.
3. Use the left 2 lanes to turn LEFT onto SC-41 N and go 23.2 miles.
4. Turn RIGHT onto Hell Hole Road / Forest Road 158.
5. Take the first RIGHT into the campground.

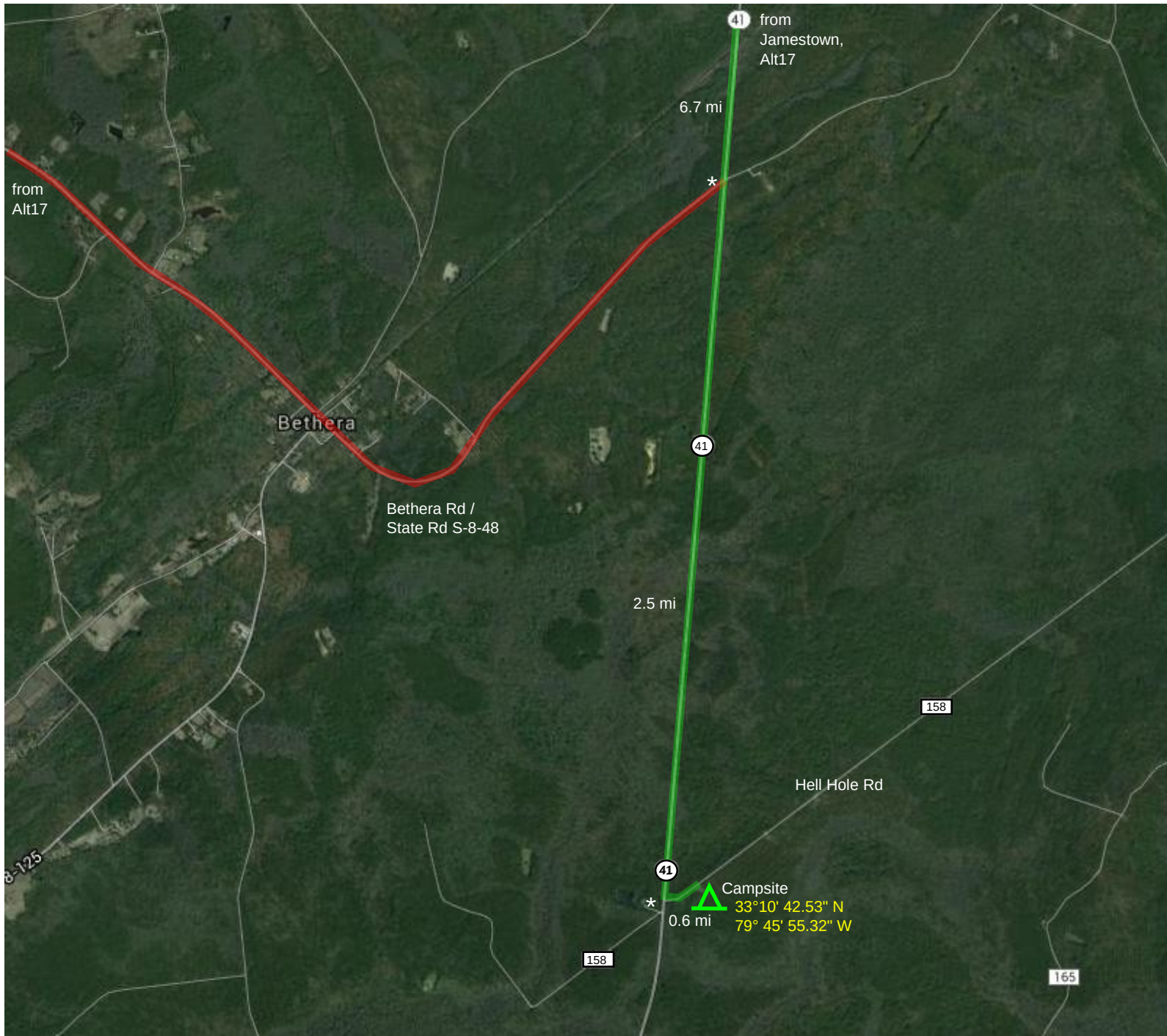


from I26

Hell Hole Campground

Detail on next page

Hell Hole R



Hell Hole Campground



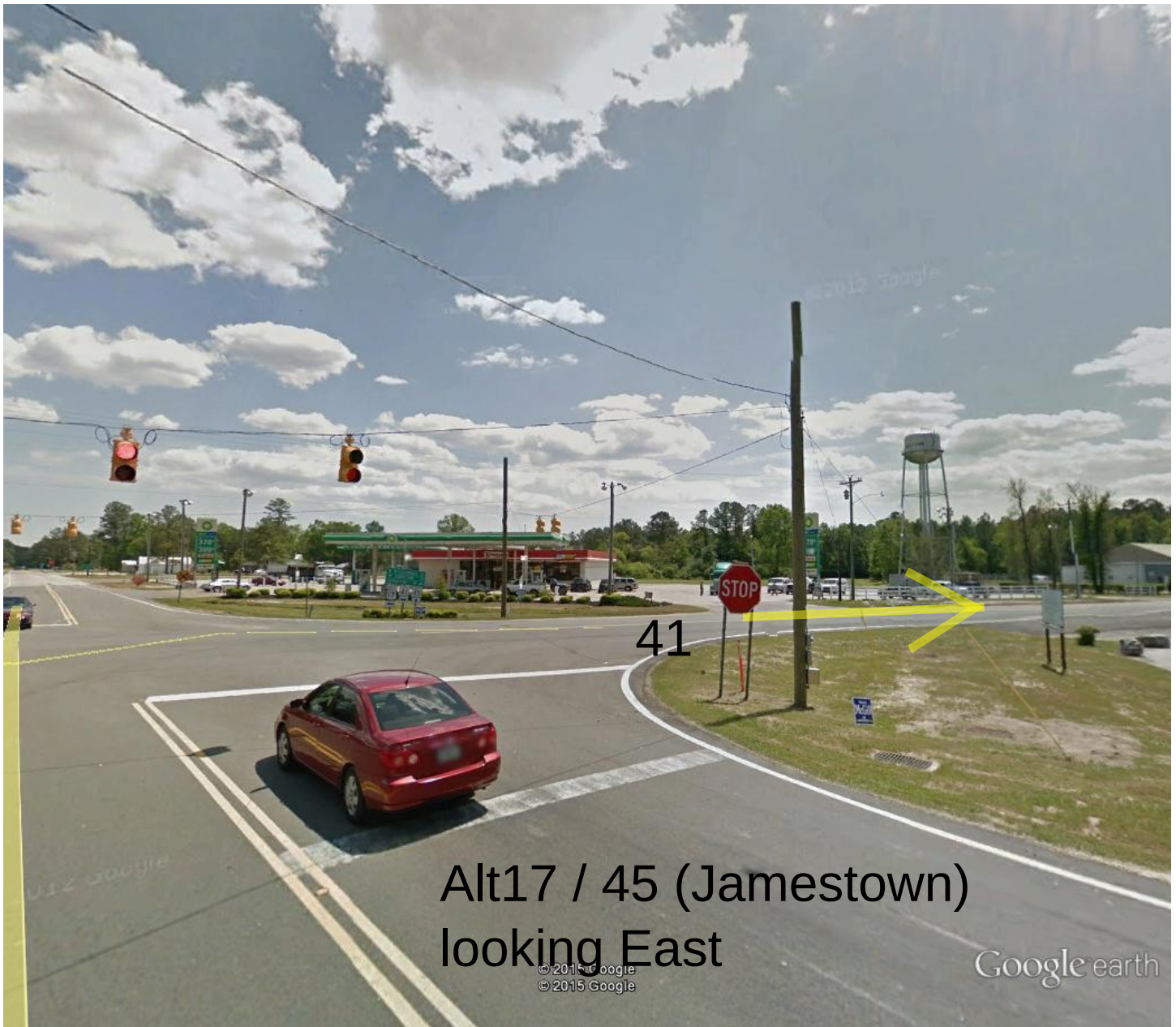
Google earth

feet 10
meters 3



Shortest route, but winding,
else continue N on Alt17, turn right on 41

Heading N on Alt17 out of
Moncks Corner, turn right, follow
Bethera Rd to 41, then right (South)
2.5 mi to Hell Hole Rd on left



Google earth

feet 10
meters 3



Longer route, but straight

Turn Right (South) on 41,
Hell Hole Rd on left, 9.2 mi



Google earth



Turn Left (heading E) on Hell Hole Rd,
Campground on right, 0.6 mi.



Google earth

