



## Decision and Finding of No Significant Impact for the Granite Moccasin Project

United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Forest Service, Flathead National Forest, Flathead County, Montana

**Proposal Name:** Granite Moccasin Project

**Proposal Tracking Number:** 292863

**Agency Name:** USDA Forest Service

**Unit Name:** Flathead National Forest – Hungry Horse Ranger District

### Documentation Informing the Finding of No Significant Impact

This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) incorporates by reference the environmental assessment, including its appendices and the proposal record.

### Decision: Activities Approved

I approve the proposed action as described in the “Proposed Action” section of the Granite Moccasin Project’s Environmental Assessment (updated October 2026). Table 1 and table 2 below summarize these approved activities. The proposed action also includes the project design features in Appendix A of this document; the maps in Appendix B, which show treatment units and road management; and Appendix C, which lists the treatments by unit.

The environmental assessment (hereafter, the EA) evaluates proposed vegetation management, fuels reduction, and whitebark pine restoration activities across approximately 4,930 acres within a 67,536-acre project area. Road activities include maintaining about 80 miles of haul routes. This work includes about 8 miles of new National Forest System (NFS) roads that would be made impassable after the project and about 0.75 miles of temporary roads. Public access would not change for any type of use (motorized or nonmotorized) as part of this project.

I am making one minor modification to the proposed action: I am dropping from treatment unit 70, a 20-acre seed tree unit near Marias Pass. This responds to public concerns about resource compatibility with the adjacent Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest. This update appears in table 1 and figure 5 of Appendix B. This does not preclude me from considering vegetation management activities in this vicinity in future projects.

**Table 1. Summary of approved vegetation management activities.**

| <b>Proposed vegetation treatments</b>                                             | <b>Acres</b>  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Commercial thin                                                                   | 770           |
| Improvement cut                                                                   | 250           |
| Seed tree                                                                         | 967*          |
| Clearcut                                                                          | 150           |
| Shelterwood                                                                       | 194           |
| Group selection                                                                   | 40            |
| Hardwood release                                                                  | 23            |
| Salvage                                                                           | 3             |
| <b>Total approved commercial treatment</b>                                        | <b>2,397*</b> |
| Precommercial thin                                                                | 283           |
| Understory removal                                                                | 214           |
| Hazardous fuel thin                                                               | 47            |
| Prescribed burn                                                                   | 240           |
| Whitebark pine restoration – daylight/release                                     | 427           |
| Whitebark pine restoration – daylight/release and plant                           | 182           |
| Whitebark pine restoration – planting                                             | Up to 426**   |
| Whitebark pine restoration – prescribed burn and plant                            | 583           |
| <b>Total approved noncommercial treatment</b>                                     | <b>2,402</b>  |
| Utility corridor expansion (includes mechanical and hand thinning)                | 131           |
| <b>Total approved vegetation treatment acres (commercial and noncommercial) *</b> | <b>4,930</b>  |

\* Acres values have been adjusted here to reflect unit 70 (20 acres) being dropped from approved activities compared to proposed activities shown in table 1 of the EA.

\*\* Note that planting is only expected to occur in portions of whitebark pine restoration – planting units; up to 426 acres out of 852 acres (total treatment unit acreage for planting) could be planted.

**Table 2. Summary of approved road management activities**

| <b>Proposed road management</b>                         | <b>Miles</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| New NFS roads – impassable status                       | 7.60         |
| Temporary road construction                             | 0.75         |
| NFS haul routes (includes new system road construction) | 79.85        |

The EA also considers a No-Action Alternative, as required by section 40807(c)(1)(b) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). This alternative provides a baseline for comparing the impacts of the proposed action but does not meet the project’s purpose and need. The EA also lists alternatives that were considered but dismissed; consistent with § 1b.6(b)(2), these were not carried forward for detailed analysis.

## Determination of No Significant Impacts

I have determined that the proposed activities will not result in significant impacts, based on the analysis in the Granite Moccasin Project's EA under the "Environmental Impacts" section and the additional review in the "Other Environmental Impacts" and "Other Environmental Reviews" sections. The proposal record also supports this determination. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required.

In reaching this determination, and consistent with requirements at 7 CFR 1b.2(f)(3)(iii), I considered the short- and long-term adverse and beneficial effects on the resources by the proposed action versus taking no action, and I summarize my rationale below. Vegetation management is an established practice on the Flathead National Forest, and the proposed activities do not involve unique or unknown risks.

### Short- and Long-term Adverse or Beneficial Consequences

#### Terrestrial Ecosystems and Vegetation

The EA indicates that stands are currently overstocked, disease-prone, and increasingly vulnerable to insects and wildfire (EA pp. 17–24). The proposed action would improve long-term forest health by reducing stand density, increasing structural diversity, and restoring more resilient species compositions, including whitebark pine (EA pp. 6–7, 24–25). Short-term adverse effects from localized soil disturbance are minor and mitigated through design features (see PDF-SOILS-01 through 14).

Road work would include both new and temporary construction. New system roads would be cleared of vegetation and remain cleared while they stay in the road system, which results in short-term and long-term adverse effects. Temporary roads would also be cleared initially—a short-term adverse effect—but then restored to allow vegetation to re-establish.

Effects to old-growth would be limited to 43 acres across units 50 and 110. In unit 50, removal of dead and disease-susceptible trees would improve short-term resilience and create openings for planting more resilient species, helping stabilize a stand already affected by root disease and bark beetles. All live old-growth trees would be retained, and road use would rely on existing templates to limit disturbance. Unit 110 is a small salvage area confined to removing wind-felled trees accessible from an existing road. Additionally, design features PDF-TEV-01 and 02 promote old growth.

Proposed regeneration harvests would create short-term openings (larger than 40 acres) with low canopy cover, but this would facilitate establishment of desired species and contribute to forest patterns consistent with forest plan desired conditions (for example, FW-DC-TE&V-03 and 18). None of these openings, alone or in combination, would exceed maximum opening sizes identified in table 21 of the forest plan. Canopy cover decreases would be well-distributed through the project area and emphasized within the wildland-urban interface (WUI), which contributes to the forest plan objective to reduce fuels in the WUI (FW-OBJ-FIRE-01). (EA pp. 25–26)

Under the no-action alternative, dense stands would continue to decline, with increased susceptibility to drought, insect mortality, and large, high-severity wildfires—especially in the WUI where shade-intolerant conifers and ladder fuels are concentrated (EA pp. 22–23). These trends would elevate risks to infrastructure, nearby communities, and public health.

### **Fire and Fuels**

The EA describes existing hazardous fuel conditions in high-risk areas, specifically the WUI (pp. 6-7) and the expected fire and fuels effects of the proposed action (pp. 32-24). The proposed action would reduce surface and ladder fuels in strategic locations to lower risk to nearby communities and infrastructure, including the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway and utility corridors. These treatments also improve firefighter safety when wildfires occur in the area.

Although the total acreage proposed for treatment is modest, its targeted placement within the WUI provides substantial benefit. By breaking up continuous fuel beds, treatments reduce flame lengths, crown-fire potential, and overall fire intensity in key locations. Thinning increases canopy base height and reduces stand density, shifting likely fire behavior from crown fire to more manageable surface fire. These changes improve firefighter safety, create defensible terrain, enhance visibility and maneuvering space, and increase the likelihood of successful initial attack.

Short-term increases in surface fuels from thinning slash can locally elevate flame lengths, and reduced canopy cover may temporarily increase surface fire spread rates. Prescribed burning produces short-duration smoke during implementation. These adverse effects are short-lived, localized, and do not increase crown-fire potential because ladder fuels are removed and canopy base height is raised.

With no action, elevated wildfire risk would persist for communities, infrastructure, and natural resources, as well as for firefighters who would respond to a wildfire in the project area (EA p. 31).

Utility corridor expansion treatments largely focus on removing trees within striking distance of the utility lines. Due to the steep, sloping terrain, the utility corridor in the project area was extensively reviewed by Forest Service specialists to identify viable locations where treatments are both needed to address fuel hazards and where they could be safely done. Implementation of this treatment type in eleven units would decrease hazardous fuels in the utility corridor which is consistent with forest plan guidelines FW-GDL-FIRE-04 and 05.

### **Aquatic Resources**

Short-term adverse effects to aquatic resources would only occur during project implementation and includes small amounts of sediment input above current levels in bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout streams, including critical habitat for bull trout (see tables 21 and 22 in the EA); along with potential displacement of individual cutthroat when culverts are upgraded within the Pinnacle Creek drainage. Bull trout and their critical habitat are not present in Pinnacle Creek. Despite the minor sediment delivery, the proposed action is not expected to cause short- or long-term impacts to water quality, aquatic habitat

(including riparian/wetland habitat and critical bull trout habitat), or aquatic species populations (including bull trout, and westslope cutthroat trout) across the project area. Project design features, BMPs, and the maintenance of the functionality of riparian management zones ensure that no changes to water quality beneficial use classifications or watershed condition framework ratings are expected for any aquatic resources.

With no action, aquatic conditions remain generally stable but would not receive the long-term benefits of the three culvert replacements.

## **Wildlife**

The EA provides detailed analysis of wildlife effects across several species and habitats, describing both short-term and long-term beneficial and adverse effects. In reaching this FONSI, I relied on those analyses to determine whether any of these consequences rise to significance. Short-term adverse effects are primarily related to disturbance from vegetation treatment activities, including noise, human presence, equipment movement, and habitat disruption during active operations. Long-term beneficial effects largely stem from improved forest health and resilience, which support a range of wildlife habitats.

For grizzly bear, temporary changes to open motorized route density (OMRD), total motorized route density (TMRD), and secure core (CORE) would occur, but all changes remain compliant with FW-STD-IFS-03 and all other plan components. Spring and denning habitat occur throughout the affected grizzly bear subunits. Design features and restrictions on implementation would reduce effects to those habitats. Forage and cover occur across the affected subunits, and proposed vegetative treatments would enhance grizzly bear forage. Short-term disturbance may temporarily reduce habitat effectiveness or cause individual bears to avoid treatment units during operations (EA pp. 42–47). Disturbance during sensitive periods can cause energetic costs or displacement.

The Granite Moccasin Project lies within nine lynx analysis units (LAUs), which were used to analyze effects on Canada lynx and their critical habitat. A total of 154 VEGS5 exemption acres would be applied across the Stanton Grant, Paola Ridge, and Bear Creek LAUs. For VEGS6, 322 exemption acres and 124 exception acres would be applied across the Stanton Grant, Bear Creek, Essex Java, Slippery Bill, and Paola Ridge LAUs. Eligible exemption and exception acres were identified using an overlay with the HFRA (16)(B)-defined WUI layer (project file Q-003).

Designated critical habitat within the affected LAUs ranges from 75 to 91 percent. The proposed action would increase potential lynx foraging habitat (PCE1a) and decrease potential denning habitat (PCE1c), while retaining a mosaic of forest habitats that allows lynx to travel and forage throughout the affected LAUs. Short-term adverse effects include local loss of dense horizontal cover in treated stands and temporary reduction in the structural complexity used for hunting and movement (EA pp. 51–56).

Forest ungulates, including elk, mule deer, whitetail deer, mountain goats, and moose, may experience short-term displacement or avoidance of areas with active machinery, and sudden reductions in cover can increase temporary vulnerability during hunting seasons (EA p. 63).

For connectivity, active operations can temporarily disrupt wildlife movement through project units (EA pp. 59–61). These short-term adverse effects are localized in time and place, and the EA shows they are limited by design features, seasonal restrictions, and retention of key structural elements (Appendix A pp. 87).

For grizzly bear and lynx, vegetation management can reduce dense forest cover in treated units for multiple decades, a long-term adverse effect. In some areas, this results in sustained reductions in hiding cover or structural features used for denning, hunting, or resting (EA pp. 46, 55). Although the EA shows these changes are not widespread enough to constitute habitat loss at a scale relevant to population viability, they still represent long-term adverse effects at the site scale. For forest ungulates, reduced cover may alter habitat suitability in certain stands for several years until vegetation regrows (EA p. 63). The EA also notes that connectivity could be affected if vegetation removal created large, contiguous openings; however, it concludes that retained patches, treatment patterns, and unit sizes prevent such outcomes (EA pp. 60–61). Thus, while some long-term adverse effects occur, they remain below thresholds associated with significant impacts.

The short-term beneficial effects are limited but present. Vegetation treatments can create new forage opportunities for ungulates soon after operations, due to increased sunlight on the forest floor and growth of early-seral vegetation (EA p. 63). For predators such as lynx, some short-term increases in prey availability can occur as stand openings promote small mammal populations (EA p. 56). For grizzly bear, berry-producing shrubs may benefit from reduced canopy cover in certain stands, though these benefits typically accrue over several growing seasons rather than immediately (EA pp. 42–47).

The long-term beneficial effects identified in the EA are more substantial. For grizzly bear, long-term habitat quality improves through reduced wildfire risk across secure core habitat, as severe wildfire can eliminate cover and food resources at landscape scales (EA pp. 46–47). For lynx, treatment units are designed to retain important habitat features, and long-term stand development is expected to provide improved structural diversity and patchiness associated with resilient lynx habitat (EA pp. 51–56). For forest ungulates, long-term increases in forage quality and quantity are expected due to reduced stand density and enhanced understory production (EA p. 63). Wildlife connectivity benefits from retaining forest structure throughout movement corridors, reducing the likelihood of landscape-level fragmentation and protecting long-term dispersal pathways (EA pp. 59–61). These benefits are reinforced by localized reductions in the risk of high-severity wildfire, which with no-action could cause extreme, long-term habitat losses for most wildlife species.

In comparing these effects under 7 CFR 1b.2(f)(3)(iii), I conclude that, although the proposed action introduces adverse effects, particularly short-term disturbance and localized long-term reductions in forest cover, the EA shows these effects are limited in extent and magnitude. They do not rise to significance due to the application of design features that include spatial and temporal restrictions (Appendix A), the limited acreage affected compared to the broader available habitat in the project area (see the Potentially Affected Environment sections for wildlife, EA pp. 44-45, 53-56, and 61-62), and the strong long-term ecological benefits associated with reducing stand density, improving habitat patchiness, and lowering the risk of high-severity wildfire in some locations. The no-action alternative avoids short-term adverse effects and some long-term adverse effects (such as, reduced dense forest cover for grizzly bear and lynx) but carries appreciable long-term adverse consequences in the form of increased wildfire risk and deterioration of habitat resilience (EA pp. 46, 56, 62). These tradeoffs support my determination that the proposed action does not result in significant impacts to wildlife when evaluated in totality.

### **Scenery**

Vegetation treatments will be visually apparent in some areas but are designed to meet forest plan direction for scenery. Changes are consistent with expected patterns in an actively managed forest. No action would retain current visual conditions but increase risk of largescale, abrupt scenic changes from high-severity fire (EA pp. 64-65). Under either the Proposed Action or No-Action Alternative, utility corridors will continue to be visually apparent in some places (EA 64). I discuss scenery impacts in the wild and scenic river corridor in the next section.

### **Wild and Scenic Rivers**

Treatments within the wild and scenic river corridor are limited in scope and designed to maintain outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs) while meeting the purpose and need to reduce tree density or improve vegetation conditions, or both (EA pp. 13, 64-65).

The proposed action includes approximately 401 acres of vegetation management treatments occurring within the designated wild and scenic river corridor (Management Area 2a) along the Middle Fork Flathead River, which is classified as recreational. All work occurs in the uplands, outside the riverbanks and channel of the river. Approximately 620 feet of NFS road is proposed in Management Area 2a. This new system road would use a historic road template to serve units 8 and 9. Short term effects are limited to temporary noise (recreation and wildlife outstandingly remarkable values) and minor, widely dispersed visual changes (scenery and recreation outstandingly remarkable values). Long-term effects are beneficial, as the project would improve forest resilience, reduce risk of high-severity wildfire, and reduce road sediment delivery through application of best management practices on existing NFS roads. These effects contribute to maintaining or improving fisheries and scenery outstandingly remarkable values. The proposed action would maintain the free-flowing condition, water quality, and outstandingly remarkable values for which the Middle Fork was designated.

I considered the concern raised by some members of the public regarding potential effects to the scenery ORV of the proposed utility corridor expansion (seven units of this treatment occur in the wild and scenic river corridor). I also considered the context: the utility corridor existed at the time this section of the Middle Fork Flathead River was designated as a wild and scenic river with a recreational classification in 1976. The forest plan explicitly allows timber harvesting for multiple-use purposes and to achieve desired vegetation conditions in recreational river segments, and it allows the presence of utility corridors in Management Area 2a (MA2a-SUIT-02 and 05; forest plan p. 92).

Under the No-Action Alternative, there would be no short-term effects, but long-term adverse effects may occur as fuel loads increase and risk of large, unplanned disturbances—such as wildfire or disease and insect outbreaks—rise. These events could affect water quality, scenery, recreation, and fisheries outstandingly remarkable values.

### **Inventoried Roadless Areas**

I considered potential effects to the nine roadless characteristics and found the Granite Moccasin Project would have neutral to beneficial long-term effects on the roadless area characteristics of the Bear-Marshall-Scapegoat-Swan Inventoried Roadless Area 1485. Temporary disruptions to dispersed recreation may occur during logging operations, but these effects would be limited in duration and scope. Because treatments make up a small percentage of this roadless area (approximately 5 percent of this roadless area lies within the Granite Moccasin project area), the magnitude of any effects would be small. Over 70 percent of proposed treatments in roadless areas are focused on whitebark pine restoration. Treatments would serve to create a mosaic of conditions that support a diversity of plant and animal species, including the listed whitebark pine and Canada lynx. Other roadless characteristics would be largely unaffected (project file K001).

### **Other Effects**

I did not identify other cause-effect concerns that warranted detailed analysis in the environmental assessment. This should not be interpreted to mean there are no other effects to resources such as at-risk plant species, recreation, or soils. Rather, when considering potential effects in the context of the project's scope and scale—and the interdisciplinary team's deliberate design of unit boundaries and inclusion of design features—I found other adverse effects to be limited or negligible. The EA summarizes these effects on pp. 60 and 68-70, supported by the proposal record.

### **Economic Impacts**

The proposed commercial treatment would produce approximately 25,000 ccf (12.5 million board feet) of timber, generating an estimated \$393,979 in revenue (before noncommercial costs). The project would also create up to 83 direct and 69 indirect jobs, contributing up to \$11,091,000 in labor income. These represent both short-term economic benefits (timber production and employment) as well as long-term support for a sustainable wood products industry.

If the proposed action is not implemented, the Flathead National Forest would forgo this expected timber revenue and associated economic contributions. Vegetation treatments that reduce fuel loading also reduce long-term economic risks by protecting infrastructure, utilities, transportation corridors, recreational opportunities, and WUI communities, outweighing the upfront costs of proactive fuels management (EA pp. 70-71).

### **Irreversible or Irretrievable Commitments**

The EA (p. 70) describes irreversible and irretrievable commitments of federal resources. The project would not result in irreversible impacts. It would, however, cause short-term irretrievable commitments of soil and potential timber production within temporary and system road footprints while those roads are in use. Temporary roads generally last five years or less, and system roads may remain for many decades. Once roads are no longer needed, reclamation could return soils to productive use.

Vegetation removal is an irretrievable commitment for the time needed for biomass to regrow. For grizzly bear, regeneration treatments reduce cover, but dense sapling cover is expected to return in about 20 years. Canada lynx foraging habitat removed through thinning or harvesting would be irretrievably lost until dense sapling forage conditions reestablish, typically within 20 to 40 years. Vegetation treatments in areas providing ungulate hiding cover would similarly result in irretrievable cover losses until stands regrow enough to provide effective hiding cover again.

### **Consistency with Other Laws and Other Legal Considerations**

This project is consistent with applicable laws and regulations (EA pp. 72-75).

The Granite Moccasin Project is authorized under the Fuels and Forest Health Emergency Action Determination (EAD) issued by the Secretary of Agriculture under section 40807 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and is exempt from the project-level predecisional administrative review process at 36 CFR 218.

### **Conclusion of Tradeoffs**

After considering the short- and long-term adverse and beneficial effects, as well as the irretrievable commitments of some federal resources, I conclude that the proposed action does not result in significant impacts under 7 CFR 1b.2(f)(3)(iii). Adverse effects are limited, localized, and reduced through design features; while beneficial effects—including reducing tree density in the WUI, improved ecosystem resilience, and timber production—are substantial. For these reasons, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

## Anticipated Implementation of Authorized Activities

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I intend to implement the approved activities immediately. I anticipate the first timber sale from this project, along with supporting road work, may occur in late 2026 or early 2027.

## Signature and Authorization Date

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**Date signed:**

**ROBERT DAVIES**

Digitally signed by ROBERT  
DAVIES  
Date: 2026.10.06 08:56:28 -06'00'

Robert Davies, District Ranger

## Appendices

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### Appendix A: Project Design Features

These project design features (PDF) are an integral part of the proposed action and are considered requirements should the proposed action be selected. Many concerns expressed during the public involvement processes were addressed through development of design features to avoid or reduce potential environmental impacts.

Forest Service direction, forest plan standards and guidelines, and all other laws, regulations, and policies that relate to managing NFS land apply to the proposed activities and are repeated here only if clarification is required.

#### Air Quality

PDF-AIR-01: On the Flathead National Forest, prescribed burning is generally accomplished when dilution, dispersal, and mixing conditions are considered fair to excellent. Prescribed burning requires a permit from the Montana/Idaho Airshed Group and the burn must be implemented within the regulatory framework (FW-DC-AQ-01). This includes daily approval from the Flathead County Air Quality hotline and the Montana/Idaho Airshed Group.

#### Aquatics

PDF-AQ-01: Application of site appropriate best management practices (BMPs) for water quality and forestry management would follow guidance detailed in volume 1 of the National Core BMP Technical Guide and associated Forest Service manual direction, Montana Guide to the Streamside Management Zone Law and Rules and Montana Forestry BMPs. (FW-STD-WTR-02, FW-GDL-WTR-01, FW-STD-RMZ-01, FW-STD-RMZ-02, FW-STD-RMZ-06, FW-STD-IFS-06, FW-STD-IFS-07, FW-GDL-IFS-03, FW-GDL-IFS-04, FW-GDL-IFS-05, FW-GDL-IFS-06, FW-GDL-IFS-07, FW-GDL-IFS-09, FW-GDL-IFS-10). Applies to all actions.

PDF-AQ-02: Hand treatment in inner RMZs as allowable through the forest plan (USFS 2018b) would avoid saturated areas and riparian vegetation while also being consistent with the State Streamside Management Zone Law & Rules (Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation 2006)(FW-GDL-WTR-01, FW-STD-RMZ-01, FW-STD-RMZ-02, FW-STD-RMZ-06, FW-GDL-RMZ-01). Applies to all hand treatments within RMZs.

PDF-AQ-03: No activities would be permitted within category 4a RMZs identified as fens, peatlands, or bogs. Treatment in previously unmapped or newly discovered RMZs would be consistent with the forest plan (USFS 2018b) and RMZ treatment elsewhere in the unit, unless otherwise prescribed by the Forest Hydrologist. Applies to all treatments.

PDF-AQ-04: Mechanical treatment within the inner RMZ of both Marion Creek and Essex Creek may occur to salvage blow-down so long as equipment does not leave the existing roadway and the action is consistent with the State SMZ law. Downed timber in streams, on stream banks, or spanning streams shall be retained unless it compromises infrastructure or human safety. Applies to unit 110.

PDF-AQ-05: To maintain free-flowing streams, new, replacement, and reconstructed stream crossing sites (culverts, bridges, and other stream crossings) would accommodate at least the 100-year flow, including associated bedload and debris (FW-STD-WTR-02, FW-STD-IFS-06, FW-STD-IFS-07). Applies to all new, replacement and/or reconstructed stream crossings.

PDF-AQ-06: Equipment storage, storage of fuels and toxicants, maintenance or refueling (other than for portable pumps associated with prescribed fire) would not be permitted within the RMZ (FW-STD-RMZ-01, FW-STD-RMZ-03). Applies to all activities.

PDF-AQ-07: All drafting hoses would be fitted with a minimum of a one-quarter inch screen to prevent intake of fish and other aquatic species. During the spawning season for native fish, pumping sites should be located away from spawning gravels. Consult the area fish biologist for site selection (FW-GDL-WTR-05, FW-STD-WTR-01). Applies to prescribed fire, dust abatement.

PDF-AQ-08: To protect spawning fish, eggs, and embryos, in-stream management activities (culvert installation, replacement, or removal) that may disturb native salmonids or that have the potential to directly deliver sediment to their habitats should be limited to times outside of spawning and incubation seasons for those species: Westslope cutthroat trout inoperable activity period is May 1 through July 15, bull trout September 1 through March 15 (FW-GDL-WTR-05)(table 3).

**Table 3. Inoperable periods for specific fish species**

| Forest Road Number     | Westslope Cutthroat Trout Inoperable Period | Bull Trout Inoperable Period | Additional Guidance                                                   |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1638                   | May 1 through July 15                       | None                         | One crossing in Lower Pinnacle Creek                                  |
| 1637                   | May 1 through July 15                       | None                         | Two crossings in Upper Pinnacle Creek                                 |
| 895F                   | May 1 through July 15                       | September 1-March 15         | Proposed road S14, one crossing of unnamed tributary to Granite Creek |
| All other forest roads | May 1 through July 15                       | September 1-March 15         | Consult area fish biologist                                           |

PDF-AQ-09: All drafting equipment would be cleaned prior to use within the project area (FW-GDL-WTR-07). Guidelines and recommendations from the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group and the National Wildfire Coordinating group can be found at Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks' website<sup>1</sup>. Applies to prescribed fire, stream dewatering (for culvert work), and dust abatement.

<sup>1</sup> [https://fwp.mt.gov/binaries/content/assets/fwp/conservation/ais/reports/nrcg-how-to-guide-for-decontamination-of-wildfire-equipment- 1.pdf](https://fwp.mt.gov/binaries/content/assets/fwp/conservation/ais/reports/nrcg-how-to-guide-for-decontamination-of-wildfire-equipment-1.pdf).

**At-Risk Plant Species**

At-risk plant species include those listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act (for example, whitebark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*) and Spalding's catchfly (*Silene spaldingii*)), all plant species of conservation concern, and state-listed plant species of concern (SOC) documented in the Montana Natural Heritage Program database (for example, water howellia (*Howellia aquatilis*)).

PDF-PLANTS-01: If individuals or populations of any undocumented at-risk plant species are discovered during implementation, work will immediately stop in that area until the forest botanist can evaluate the site. Newly discovered individuals or populations will be protected as necessary to retain population viability (FW-GDL-PLANT-DIV-02, FW-DC-PLANT-01, FW-DC-PLANT-03, FW-DC-PLANT-04).

PDF-PLANTS-02: Avoid damage to existing whitebark pine of all size classes to the extent possible. Applies to all units (FW-DC-PLANT-01, FW-DC-PLANT-03, FW-DC-PLANT-04).

PDF-PLANTS-03: Felling of competing trees will be directional, away from any existing whitebark pine. Applies to activities in units 080, 094, 095, 600-608, 614-621, and 628 (FW-DC-PLANT-01, FW-DC-PLANT-03, FW-DC-PLANT-04).

PDF-PLANTS-04: Where felled trees are piled for burning, arrange slash pile edges at least 20 to 25 feet away from existing whitebark pine to avoid scorching. Applies to activities in units 080, 094, 095, 600-608, 614-621, and 628 (FW-DC-PLANT-01, FW-DC-PLANT-03, FW-DC-PLANT-04).

PDF-PLANTS-05: Reduce fuel loads adjacent to existing whitebark pine by pulling logs and slash at least 20 to 25 feet away and implement ignition patterns that minimize fire intensity to whitebark pine individuals. Applies to whitebark pine prescribed burn units 622-624 (FW-DC-PLANT-01, FW-DC-PLANT-03, FW-DC-PLANT-04).

PDF-PLANTS-06: Considering operational feasibility, implement ignition patterns that minimize fire intensity to whitebark pine individuals. Applies to prescribed burn unit 700. (FW-DC-PLANT-01, FW-DC-PLANT-03, FW-DC-PLANT-04).

PDF-PLANTS-07: The project will implement the following conservation measures from the Biological Opinion for the Rangewide Whitebark Pine Programmatic for Forest Management Activities: Forest Service Regions 1, 2, 4, and 5 (FWS 2025).

- a. The Forest Service will provide education for identification of five-needle pines and implementation of conservation measures.
- b. Intentionally damaging or killing identified plus, elite, or phenotypically rust resistant whitebark pine tree will only occur in situations where health and human safety are at risk.

- c. The Forest Service will take appropriate actions to protect high value agency investments for whitebark pine. These differ by region and may include seed orchards, genetically diverse areas, established high-quality cone collection areas, and whitebark pine reforestation sites.
- d. Except where necessary to accomplish forest management goals or provide for human safety, forest management activities will retain whitebark pine trees that are free from insect or disease infestation or are otherwise healthy and cone-producing.
- e. Where removal of whitebark pine may be necessary to accomplish forest management goals, whitebark pine trees with the highest reproductive potential (already cone producing, healthy, high crown ratio) will be identified as the highest priority to retain.
- f. Reforestation goals for tree species other than whitebark pine will follow silvicultural prescription goals and will include considerations for whitebark pine regeneration where appropriate. Generally, existing whitebark pine trees will be avoided and will be considered as part of the target spacing of planted seedlings. Reforestation with whitebark pine will follow the Conservation Activities programmatic consultation.
- g. Transportation and operations activities will be located to minimize impacts to mature whitebark pine trees where feasible. Existing disturbed sites and travel routes will be used to the maximum extent possible.
- h. A Pesticide Use Proposal is completed and followed for all use of pesticides (USDA Form FS-2100-2).
- i. Utilize appropriate buffers for pesticide applications that are based on the chemical, application method, site conditions, and size class of whitebark pine present, to avoid damage or mortality of whitebark pine.

## **Fuels**

PDF-FUELS-01: Burn plans will be prepared prior to the use of prescribed fire. These plans will determine the environmental conditions and resources necessary to meet objectives and minimize the possibility of escape (FW-DC-FIRE-05).

PDF-FUELS-02: Appropriate signing or other cautionary measures will be implemented in conjunction with prescribed burning to ensure public safety. Public notice will be given prior to prescribed burning activities (FW-DC-FIRE-01).

PDF-FUELS-03: Prior to conducting prescribed burns, the Flathead National Forest will conduct the following activities to notify the local public of burning projects. These include but are not limited to posting news releases on social media sites, displaying maps and burn information at the local Forest Service office, and preparing a list of contacts for each prescribed burn to be notified by phone, site visit, or mail (FW-DC-FIRE-06).

PDF-FUELS-04: Hazard trees, defined as a tree that has potential to cause property damage, personal injury or fatality in the event of failure, should be removed within two tree-lengths of structures, private property, administrative sites, fuel breaks, and portions of units along open roads to increase suppression safety and effectiveness (FW-DC-FIRE-01, FW-DC-FIRE-05, FW-DC-FIRE-07, FW-GDL-FIRE-01) FW-GDL-FIRE-04).

### **Heritage**

PDF-CR-01: If any newly discovered heritage resources are identified during project implementation, work in the area will stop and heritage staff will be contacted.

PDF-CR-02: To protect heritage resources, provisions shall be included in applicable contracts, agreements, and special-use permits for properties that are unevaluated, eligible for, or listed in the National Register of Historic Places (FW-STD-CR-01).

### **Non-Native Invasive Plant Species**

PDF-NNIS-01: Off-road equipment would be power-washed or steam cleaned on the undercarriage and chassis before transport to the project area. Off-road equipment includes all logging and construction machinery for vegetation treatments, except for log trucks, chip vans, service vehicles, water trucks, pickup trucks, cars, and similar vehicles. This cleaning shall remove all soil, plant parts, seeds, vegetative matter, or other debris that could contain or hold seeds. All subsequent entries of equipment from outside the project area back to the project area shall be treated in the same manner as the initial entry (FW-DC-NNIP-02).

PDF-NNIS-02: Herbicides will be sprayed within the road prism along designated haul routes before log hauling begins and after all purchaser activities are completed. Treatments would only occur from June 1 to July 15 or September 1 to September 30. Treatment of invasive plants would be consistent with the strategy outlined in the noxious and invasive weed control environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact. Specific roads and mileage would be prepared in consultation with the forest invasive species coordinator (FW-DC-NNIP-02).

PDF-NNIS-03: To reduce the probability of establishment of new non-native invasive plant populations, areas where soils are disturbed by construction activities (for example, temporary road construction, landings, and skid trails) conducted or authorized by the Forest Service, should be reseeded as soon as practical, during the appropriate time of year, using certified weed-free native seed mixes (FW-GDL-NNIP-01, FW-GDL-WL-03).

### **Recreation**

PDF-REC-01: Trails should be protected during project implementation. Any damage to NFS trails during vegetation management activities, and associated site preparation and post-harvest fuels work, would be repaired.

PDF-REC-02: For public safety, workers would be required to post signs at access points warning the public of vegetation management activities and any closures. Public will be informed of road closures and other impacts to recreation access.

PDF-REC-03: Where feasible to minimize disruptions to administrative and public use, conduct operations in units that may require closures of NFS Trails 156 (Granite Creek) and 154 (Morrison Creek) in August and September. Applies to: Units 090, 089, 097, 419, 418.

### **Scenery**

PDF-SCE-01: Shape individual units, to the extent feasible, economically and technically, to create a natural-appearing unit. Vegetation treatment units should avoid symmetrical shapes, straight lines and angles, disproportionate (to surrounding untreated units) opening and cluster sizes, and artificial lines and patterns. Additionally, treatments should follow natural topographic breaks and changes in vegetation, treat the entire landform and along roadways and trails vary unit sizes, widths, shapes and distances from center lines as much as possible (FW-GDL-SCN-03).

Applies to all units with a desired scenic integrity objective (SIO) of high; this excludes units proposed for utility corridor expansion or whitebark pine restoration. Excluded units (the shorter list) are: 1, 2, 3, 5, 14, 44, 51, 55a, 200, 201, 800 (utility corridor expansion); and all 600-level units (whitebark pine restoration).

PDF-SCE-02: Along lands of other ownership boundaries, use irregular clumping and blending of unit edges to avoid introducing dominating lines that could result from introducing unnatural appearing edges (FW-GDL-SCN-03). Vegetation patterns should mimic adjacent vegetation patterns on lands not managed by NFS where feasible. This applies to units 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 13a, 14, 17, 29, 30, 40, 43, 100, 101, 101a, 400.

PDF-SCE-03: Tree marking paint on leave trees in these units would be assessed post-harvest, if needed the district may use brown paint to cover the tree marking paint to reduce the potential visual effects from open roads and recreational trails.

PDF-SCE-04: Stump heights on cut trees in these units would be assessed post-harvest, if needed the district may cut stumps lower to reduce the potential visual effects from open roads and recreational trails.

### **Soils**

PDF-SOILS-01: All mechanized units that remove commercial products would be logged using designated skid trails. Equipment would occasionally leave the trails to access trees or accomplish other activities. (FW-DC-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-02). Applies to all mechanized treatment units.

PDF-SOILS-02: Skid trail spacing width must average at least 75 feet in all ground-based harvest units. The goal is to occupy less than 15 percent of the treatment area with disturbance from skid trails, temporary roads and landings associated with past and proposed activities (FW-DC-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-02). Applies to all mechanized treatment units.

PDF-SOILS-03: All existing roads and skid trails would be reused to the extent feasible. If roads or trails cannot be reused, their extent and location must be considered when laying out additional skid trails (FW-DC-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-02). Applies to all mechanized treatment units.

PDF-SOILS-04: In units 006, 008, 024, 046, 055, 061 all mechanical activities will be treated under winter conditions OR ensuring an adequate slash mat with dry soils to minimize detrimental soil disturbance and impacts to soils. If winter harvesting, then it will be restricted to frozen ground or snow cover conditions. Winter logging requires that there is enough snow to prevent muddy water from mixing into the snow where equipment operates. This generally requires about ten inches of settled snow, but required depth varies with the snow conditions. It takes more dry powder snow than wet dense snow to protect the soil surface. Soils must be frozen enough to prevent deformation of the soil surface where equipment operates.

In units 75, 101 and 423, where winter harvesting is not feasible because of wildlife habitat, ensure an adequate slash map with dry soils to minimize detrimental soil disturbance and impacts to soils.

Unit 800: If this unit is harvested with mechanical equipment, ensure sufficiently frozen or snow covered soils as described above (FW-DC-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-02).

Applies to Units 6, 8, 24, 46, 55, 61, 75, 101, 423 and 800 and all other mechanical units harvested utilizing winter logging or logging over a slash-mat.

PDF-SOILS-05: Units not harvested under winter conditions will be harvested when soil is dry as determined by the hand feel method. Sale Administrators or Contracting Officer's Representatives will monitor soil moisture conditions prior to allowing equipment to begin operations in summer. This monitoring must be documented in the Timber Sale Inspection Report or Daily Diary (FW-DC-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-02). Applies to all mechanized treatment units.

PDF-SOILS-06: Machine piling treatments to reduce fuel loadings shall be implemented to minimize soil disturbance as follows:

- All mechanical piling will be accomplished with excavators.
- Restrict piling machinery to designated routes used for harvest operations where fuel loads are moderate or low. Where fuel loads are high (or designated routes do not exist), limit off-trail machine travel to no more than two passes on any piece of ground.
- Operators shall plan travel paths to make full use of the machine's capability (e.g., using full boom reach of machine) to limit ground disturbance and minimize number of off trail passes needed to achieve treatment objectives.
- Where feasible, pile fuels on existing disturbances (e.g., skid trails and landings) to minimize additional detrimental soil impacts from burning.

(FW-DC-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-02). Applies to all mechanized treatment units.

PDF-SOILS-07: Mastication treatments to reduce fuel loadings shall be implemented to minimize soil disturbance as follows:

- When using a boom-mounted implement, operators shall plan necessary off-trail travel paths to make full use of the machine's capability (e.g., using the full boom reach of the machine) to limit ground disturbance and minimize the number of passes needed to achieve treatment objectives.
- When using a machine with a front-mounted fixed masticating head, work in long, linear swaths to the extent practicable to avoid unnecessary pivoting and turning, which results in soil displacement damage. Excavator-mounted implements are preferred.
- Operators should not allow masticating heads to contact the soil surface, which can result in detrimental churning and mixing of the soil.
- Machines shall make no more than two passes over any piece of ground (when not on primary skid trails or landings).
- Depth of masticated material should not exceed three to six inches depth, on average, to allow regeneration of the herbaceous layer and prevent detrimental soil heating in the event of wild- or prescribed fire. If greater depths are expected, use another removal method.

(FW-DC-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-02). Applies to all mechanized treatment units.

PDF-SOILS-08: Sustained slopes greater than 40 percent will be: 1) excluded from unit boundaries; 2) treated by hand; or 3) completed with cable systems or other mechanized approaches that adequately protect soils. Six units are proposed for potential tethered harvesting, of those six units 30, 31 and 76 do not have any soils concerns for tethered harvesting. Units 23, 25 and 32 have some potentially unstable soils. These units will be field reviewed (by a watershed specialist, preferably a Soil Scientist) prior to implementing tethered harvesting techniques to ensure that there aren't concerns with slope stability. Following field review, additional design features may need to be considered. In areas where landslide-prone soils exist, ground-based equipment will not operate on slopes over 40 percent (units: 18, 71, 76, 77, 98, 202, 203, 204 and 305) (FW-DC-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-02, FW-GDL-SOIL-01). Applies to all mechanized treatment units.

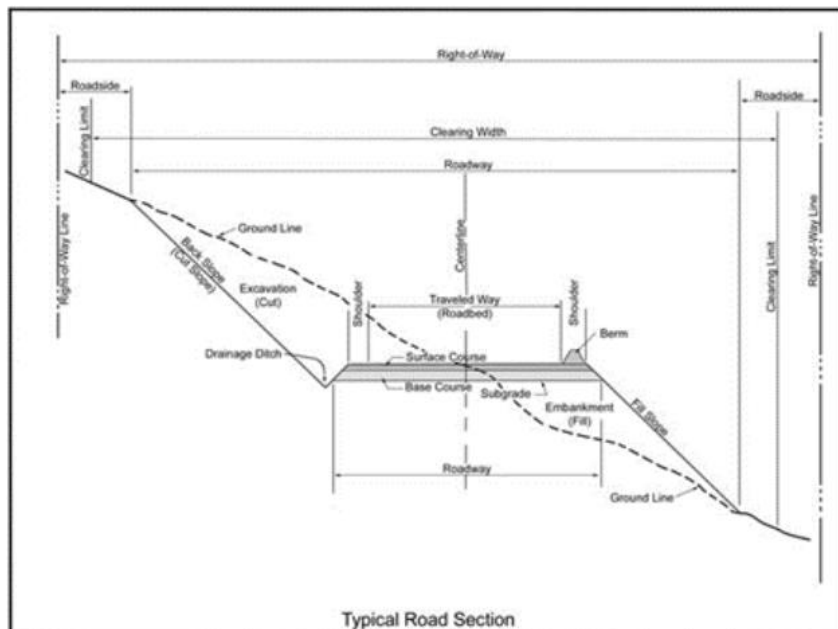
PDF-SOILS-09: Prescribed burning prescriptions would be prepared and implemented to generally not exceed moderate soil burn severity conditions (Parsons et al. 2010).

PDF-SOILS-10: All temporary and obliterated roads would be reclaimed by any site-appropriate combination of the following:

- Removing any installed culverts or temporary bridges;
- Recontouring the entire template to natural ground contour (as shown in figure 1);

- Pulling in berms and placing the topsoil back on the road surface;
- Where re-contouring is unnecessary due to lack of slope, scarifying with excavator teeth to a depth sufficient to ameliorate detrimental soil compaction (usually between two and 12 inches);
- Seeding with a native plant mix specified by the Forest Botanist;
- Placing woody material on the template; and
- Planting native shrubs/trees to augment natural vegetation.

(FW-DC-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-01, FW-STD-SOIL-02, FW-STD-SOIL-03, FW-STD-SOIL-04). Applies to all temporary and obliterated roads.



**Figure 1. Diagram of typical road section**

PDF-SOILS-11: Units 071 and 071a, and the proposed temporary road S11 associated with them, may be located on soils that are potentially unstable. Both the unit and the proposed road location will be reviewed in the field prior to implementation to ensure stability is maintained (if possible, by a Soil Scientist or Hydrologist).

PDF-SOILS-12: Where tethered operations are approved, maintain ground cover in corridors or skid trails to minimize soil displacement and erosion. Where conditions allow, it is recommended that machinery operates on a slash mat within corridors and skid trails. Following harvest, slash would cover approximately 65 percent of the trail to a depth of approximately 2–3 inches (approximately 10–15 t/a) or other erosion control measures would be installed.

PDF-SOILS-13: Where tethered operations are approved, harvest activities must be mitigated by operation under constant tension. Harvest operations would not exceed 60 percent (or whatever slope is determined) slope.

PDF-SOILS-14: Designated tethered skid corridors would be spaced at least 50 feet apart.

### Terrestrial Ecosystems and Vegetation

PDF-TEV-01: To promote future old growth, all harvest units adjacent to old-growth stands will leave all live trees greater than 17 inches diameter at breast height of the following species within 300 feet of old-growth edges: western larch, western white pine, black cottonwood, and ponderosa pine (FW-GDL-TE&V-6). Applies to units: 47, 49, 89, 90, 92, 93, 97, 402, 403, 418, and 423.

PDF-TEV-02: Treatment in units identified as old-growth would not modify the characteristics of the stand to the extent that stand density and trees per acre above a specific size and age class are reduced to below the criteria in Green et al. (2011). In addition, large, downed woody material (greater than 9 inches diameter at breast height), and/or large snags (greater than 15 inches diameter at breast height) would be retained to maintain old-growth characteristics and associated wildlife habitats within residual stands (FW-STD-TE&V-01). Applies to units 50 and 100.

PDF-TEV-03: [Skipped.]<sup>2</sup>

PDF-TEV-04: The desired range of downed wood varies by location, see table 4.

**Table 4. Desired downed wood condition by unit**

| Location                                                   | Desired downed wood condition*                                      | Unit number                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Within the WUI                                             | 8 to 12 tons per acre of material greater than 3 inches in diameter | 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 13a, 14, 17, 17a, 18, 18a, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 30, 31, 32, 33, 36, 37, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 47a, 49, 50, 51, 55, 55a, 56, 57, 58, 59, 59a, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 66a, 66b, 67, 68, 100, 101, 101a, 110, 400, 403, 406, 901, and 903 |
| Outside WUI and within RMZ portions of all treatment units | 25 tons per acre of the longest and largest diameter available      | 27, 28, 29, 69, 71, 71a, 73, 74, 75, 76a, 77, 77, 77, 77, 80, 81, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86, 87, 89, 90, 92, 93, 94, 98, 402, 411, 412, 415, 418, and 419.                                                                                                                  |
| Units adjacent to old-growth stands                        | Leave all material greater than 9 inches in diameter                | 47, 49, 89, 90, 92, 93, 97, 402, 403, 418, and 423                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

\*Amounts of downed woody material are based on naturally occurring material to be left in units, where it is available.

PDF-TEV-05: Hardwood and mature cone-bearing whitebark pine trees would not be targeted for removal and would be left intact to the extent possible, considering operational feasibility (FW-DC-TE&V-08 and -09).

PDF-TEV-06: To avoid cutting trees on private property, Forest survey personnel must be contacted prior to implementing precommercial thinning activities in unit 302.

<sup>2</sup> This number inadvertently skipped over when numbering design features in Appendix A of the EA. Not updated here to maintain consistency with the EA and other project files where design features may be cited.

PDF-TEV-07: Within timber harvest units, all snags of western larch, ponderosa pine, and black cottonwood greater than 20 inches diameter at breast height shall be retained. Additionally, the minimum number of snags or live snag replacement trees to be retained within timber harvest areas are shown in table 5 (GA-MF-STD-02, FW-GDL-RMZ-10, FW-GDL-TEV-10).

**Table 5. Retention of snags and live trees**

| Unit(s)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Forest Type               | Potential vegetation type | Minimum number of snags greater than 12" diameter at breast height. | Minimum number of snags or live replacement trees (greater than 15" diameter at breast height.) | Minimum number of snags or live replacement trees (greater than 20" diameter at breast height.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| RMZ Harvest areas                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | All                       | All                       | All available                                                       | All available                                                                                   | All available                                                                                   |
| All harvest units except those listed below                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | All except lodgepole pine | Cool moist                | N/A                                                                 | 5                                                                                               | 2                                                                                               |
| 47, 49, 89, 90, 92, 93, 97, 402, 403, 418, and 423                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | All                       | All                       | All available                                                       | All available                                                                                   | All available                                                                                   |
| 17, 17a, 18, 18a, 21, 24, 26, 27, 37, 42, 43, 44, 51, 55, 55a, 56, 57, 58, 59, 59a, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 67, 68, 69, 71, 71a, 73, 74, 75, 76, 76a, 77, 80, 81, 82, 84, 86, 87, 89, 90, 92, 93, 96, 97, 98, 100, 400, 406, 407, 408, 411, 412, 415, 418, 419, 423, 901, 902, 903 | Lodgepole pine            | All                       | N/A                                                                 | 2                                                                                               | 1                                                                                               |

<sup>1</sup>Upon agreement by the Forest Service, dead trees may be felled when necessary for safety under the State Safety Code. All dead trees which are required to be left standing and are felled for safety reasons shall be left on site.

PDF-TEV-08: Tree removal in units located within the inventoried roadless area would primarily occur within the small tree size class (up to 9.9 inches diameter at breast height). Applies to all or portions of units: 10, 13a, 17, 18, 46, 47a, 55, 55a, 58, 59a, 61, 62, 92, 400, 406, 407, 901, 902, 903.

## Transportation

PDF-TRANS-01: Impassable roads will remain on the inventoried National Forest Road system network. These roads will receive treatments designed to eliminate the need for maintenance or future entries to maintain road drainage. They will be left in a condition that presents minimal resource risk even if maintenance is not performed. Impassable roads do not contribute to the total motorized route density and will not be buffered for secure core; they will be managed as inaccessible to wheeled motorized vehicles and will meet the forest plan's impassable definition. All new system roads will be managed as impassable. Minimum treatments will include:

- Re-contouring the first 50 to 300 feet unless the road has other features that make the road impassable.

- In level topography, rock barriers and placement of natural debris will be used to make the road junction unattractive as a travel way and preclude motorized use.
- Culverts aligned with stream channels will be assessed for retention.
- Water bars shall be installed on ditched roads and placed to intercept ditch water near existing cross-drains. Spacing and placement shall be dependent on-site specific conditions.
- All disturbed areas will be seeded/mulched and stabilized through application of site appropriate BMPs.

**Wildlife – Miscellaneous**

PDF-WL-01: Hunting, transporting of hunters, and transporting of game would be prohibited by timber, road building, or other contract workers while working on or off roads closed to motorized vehicle use by the public.

PDF-WL-02: Personal use firewood gathering would not be allowed by contractors or other workers on newly constructed roads or any other roads not open to public motorized use.

PDF-WL-03: To maintain connectivity and movement of wildlife, leave patches at least 5 acres in size will be established within the unit. During layout the wildlife biologist will work with timber to establish the most appropriate location. Unit: 67, 43, 42, 45.

PDF-WL-04: Newly constructed fire lines should be located away from public access points to prevent their use as motorized travel routes. FW-GDL-FIRE-03.

Units: where post-harvest prescribed fire is assigned.

**Wildlife – Canada Lynx**

PDF-WL-05: Effects from landscape prescribed fire unit 700 are intended to occur within the unit boundary. There is a small area that is outside WUI that will have potential desired fire effects. To accomplish this, no ignitions will occur within 300' of the HFRA (16)(B)-defined WUI boundary.

**Wildlife – Riparian Habitat**

PDF-WL-06: Outer RMZ treatment in mapped category 4 A wetlands, excluding those identified as fens, peatlands, or bogs, would be allowed in up to 50 percent of their circumference to maintain undisturbed areas. Prioritize treatments to reduce conifer competition to hardwood tree species and early seral shrub species (FW-DC-RMZ-01 & 03-06, FW-DC-TE&V-09) Units: 071, 071a and 101.

**Wildlife – Timing Restrictions**

PDF-WL-07: If an active gray wolf den or rendezvous site is discovered near proposed activities, wildlife biologist will be notified. Those activities would not occur within one-quarter mile of the site from April 1 to July 1 to reduce the risk of disturbance to breeding gray wolves (FW-GDL-WL DIV-05).

PDF-WL-08: If an active bald eagle nest is discovered near proposed activities, those activities, wildlife biologist will be notified. Those activities would not occur within one-quarter mile of the active nest site from February 1 to August 15 to reduce the risk of disturbance to nesting bald eagles (FW-GDL-WL DIV-05).

PDF-WL-09: If an active northern goshawk nest is discovered near proposed activities, wildlife biologist will be notified. Those activities would not occur within one-quarter mile of active nests from March 1 to August 15 to reduce the risk of disturbance to nesting northern goshawks (FW-GDL-WL DIV-05).

PDF-WL-10: To reduce the risk of disturbance to the grizzly bear population, project activities would not occur in spring habitat during the spring period (April 1 to June 30). Some management activities may need to be completed during the spring period to meet resource objectives. Implementors will consult district biologist in these situations. For any excepted activities, the duration of the activity and use of restricted roads may be limited (FW-GDL-TE&V-01). Applies to Units: 18, 25, 26, 36, 42, 50, 51, 55, 61, 63, 64, 65, 66, 66b, 67, 71, 76, 77, 80, 89, 100, 110, 300, 301, 302, 304, 319, 400a, 406, 413, 418, 419, 423, 501, 502, 600, 601, 603, 605, 606, 608, 621, 622, 624, 800, 903.

PDF-WL-11: To protect grizzly bear denning habitat, listed units should not be implemented December 1 – March 30. Applies to Units: 27, 28, 67, 68, 73, 76, 76a, 80, 81, 82, 85, 90, 92, 93, 97, 98, 94, 402, 407, 408, 410, 411, 412, 418, 423.

PDF-WL-12: To avoid disturbance to sensitive denning locations, unit 623 will only be implemented during the fall burn window (FW-GDL-WL DIV-05).

PDF-WL-13: To avoid disturbance to wolverine during the denning period, listed units should not be implemented January 15- May 15. Applies to Units: 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 71, 77, 076a, 80, 81, 85, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 402, 403, 407, 411, 423, 501.

PDF-WL-14: To avoid disturbance to harlequin duck during the breeding season, list units should not be implemented April 15 – August 15 in consultation with the district wildlife biologist (FW-GDL-WL DIV-05). Applies to Units: 84, 89, 90, 418, and 419.

### **Wildlife – Grizzly Bear—Human Conflict**

PDF-WL-15: Contractors, operators, and their employees will be informed of procedures for safely working and recreating in grizzly bear country and of food and wildlife attractant storage special order prior to beginning work and annually thereafter, to reduce the risk of grizzly bear-human conflicts (FW-GDL-WL-01).

PDF-WL-16: If a contractor, permittee, lessee, operator, or their employee elects to camp on NFS lands other than in a developed recreation site, the site should be evaluated and written authorization (for example, a campsite agreement that includes the food/attractant storage special order) should be provided before the campsite is established. The purpose is to reduce the risk of grizzly bear-human conflicts (FW-GDL-WL-02).

PDF-WL-17: If needed to resolve grizzly bear-human conflict situations, activities would be modified, cancelled, suspended, or temporarily ceased (FW-GDL-TE&V-04).

**Wildlife – Grizzly Bear—Access Management**

PDF-WL-18: Project is designed so that on-the-ground implementation of activities affecting access management conditions (for example, activities requiring use of temporary or restricted roads) would not exceed 5 years per subunit to reduce the potential of grizzly bears being disturbed or displaced (FW-GDL-IFS-01). Exceptions may be made where necessary, however, if an extension is required, reasons would be documented in writing prior to authorization of the extension.

PDF-WL-19: There would be no net decrease to the baseline for secure core and no net increase to the baseline open motorized route density or total motorized route density in the affected bear management subunits post-project (FW-STD-IFS-02).

PDF-WL-20: Access management conditions in each affected bear management subunit should be restored to pre-project levels within one year after completion of project activities to reduce the duration of grizzly bear displacement or disturbance due to project-related activities (FW-GDL-IFS-02).

PDF-WL-21: Motorized public access would remain restricted on closed roads during implementation. If berms are removed to access treatment units, install temporary gates or effective barriers as needed and berms would be reinstalled once project activities are complete (Lynx HU O2, Lynx HU O5, Lynx HU G3, FW-STD-IFS-02).

PDF-WL-22: Low-altitude helicopter and unmanned aerial systems (UASs) flights for implementation of prescribed burns would not occur from December 01 through June 30. This would reduce the risk of disturbance to wolverines in modeled wolverine maternal denning habitat (FW-GDL-WL-04) and would avoid disturbances during the grizzly bear denning and den emergence periods. In addition, helicopter use would be limited to no longer than 48 consecutive hours in duration to limit disturbance to grizzly bears.

PDF-WL-23: The 10-year running average for temporary changes to access management conditions will not exceed 5 percent increase in open motorized route density, 3 percent increase in total motorized route density, and 2 percent decrease in secure core (FW-STD-IFS-03).

- Administrative motorized use may occur on restricted roads during the non-denning season. During the non-denning season, activities exceeding motorized use on restricted roads may occur on roads without limitation for implementation of project activities.
- Activities that exceed administrative motorized use and contribute to open motorized route density calculations will be monitored annually during implementation. Exceptions may be made for exceeding administrative motorized use for roads in project area if annual implementation monitoring shows temporary increases in access densities are below that anticipated by the analysis and motorized use above administrative thresholds can be completed consistent with FW-STD-IFS-03.

**Appendix B: Treatment Maps**

The maps associated with this document are intended to depict physical features as they generally appear on the ground and may not be used to determine title, ownership, legal boundaries, legal jurisdiction, including jurisdiction over roads or trails, or access restrictions that may be in place on either public or private land. Obtain permission before entering private lands, and check with appropriate government offices for restrictions that may apply to public lands. Lands, roads and trails within the boundaries of the National Forest may be subject to restrictions on motor vehicle use. Obtain a Motor Vehicle Use Map or inquire at the local Forest Service Office for motor vehicle access information. Natural hazards may or may not be depicted on the maps, and land users should exercise due caution. These maps may not be suitable for navigation

This appendix contains maps showing treatments across the project area, west to east. Overlap occurs across the five maps.

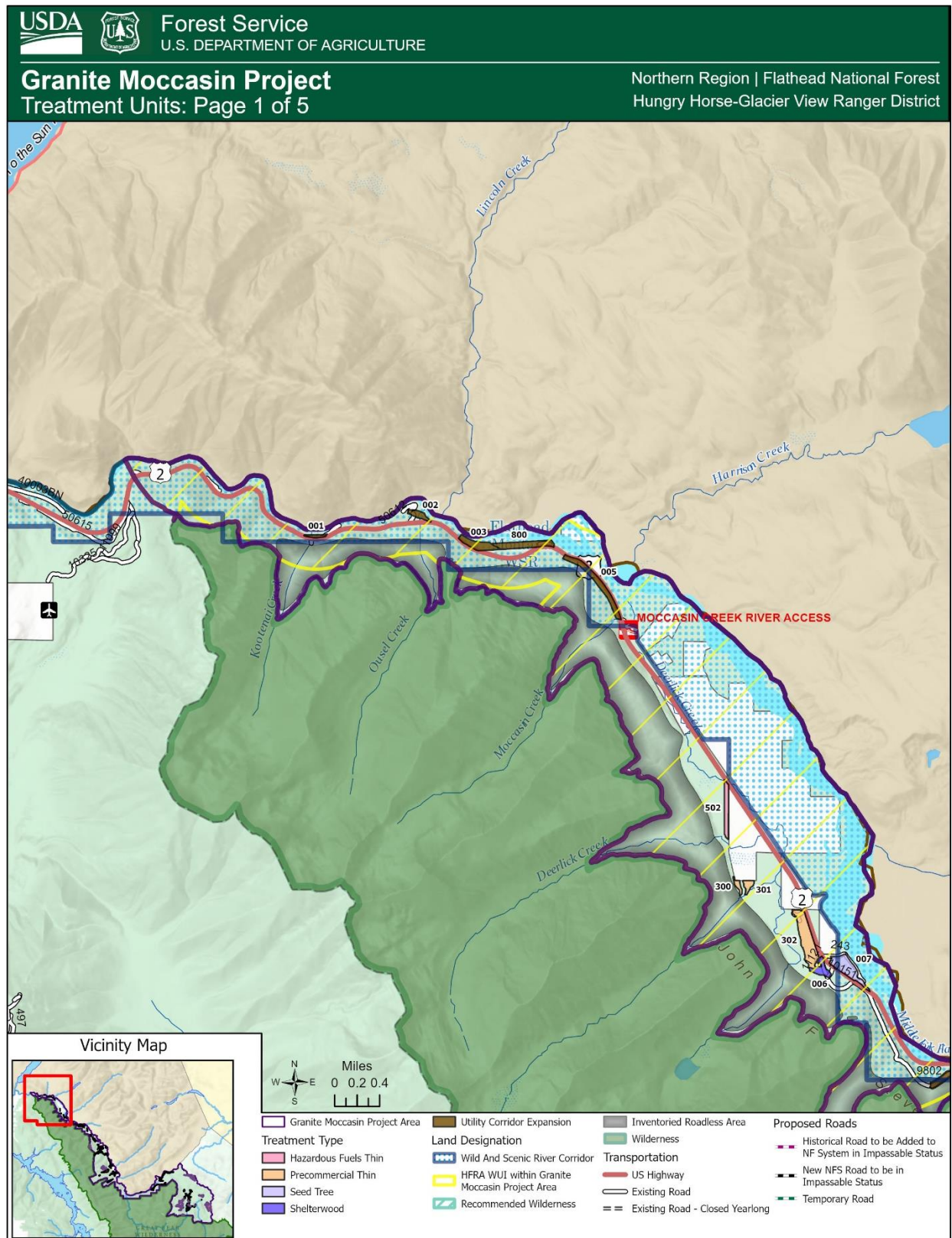


Figure 2. Granite Moccasin: Activities approved, map 1 of 5

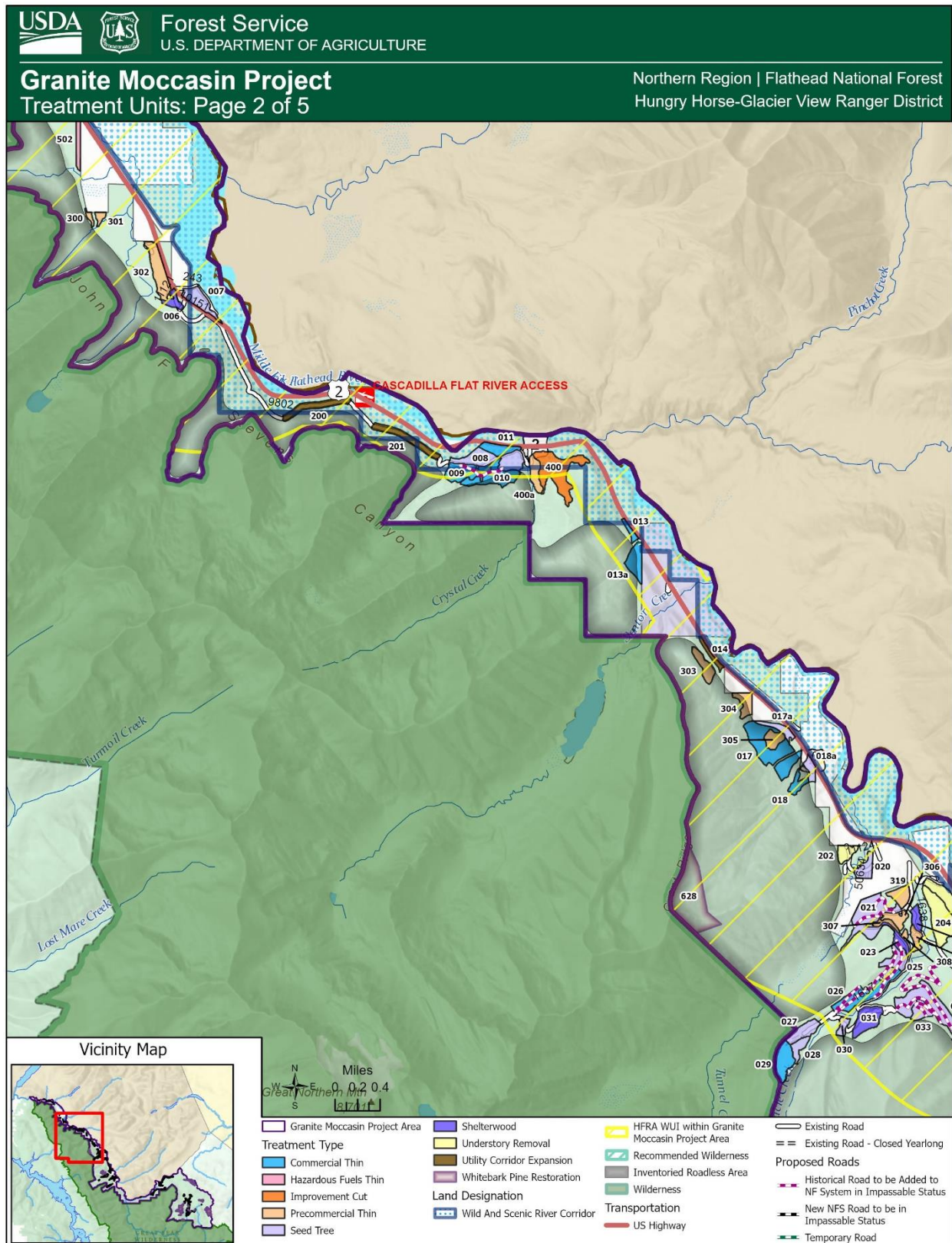


Figure 3. Granite Moccasin: Activities approved, map 2 of 5

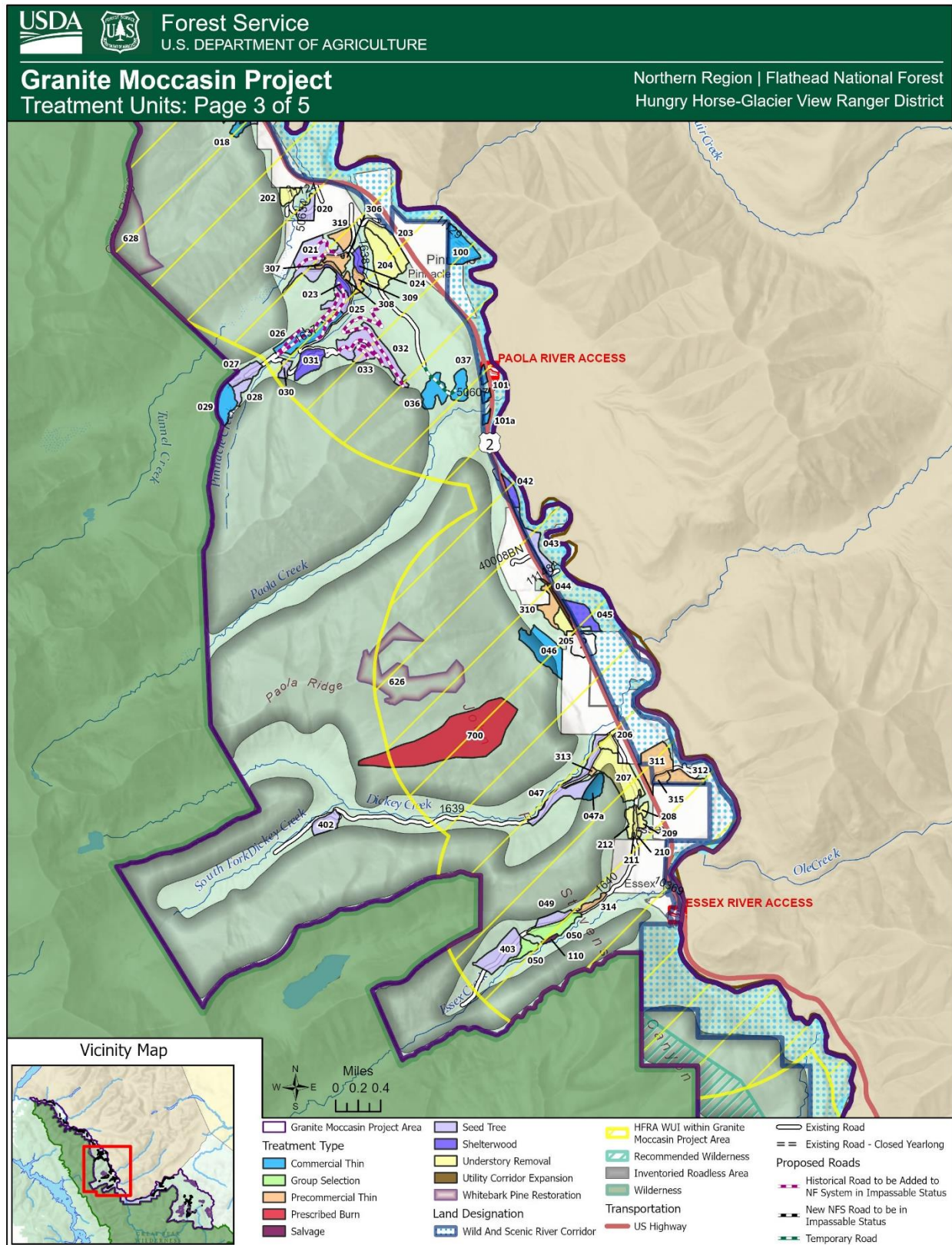


Figure 4. Granite Moccasin: Activities approved, map 3 of 5

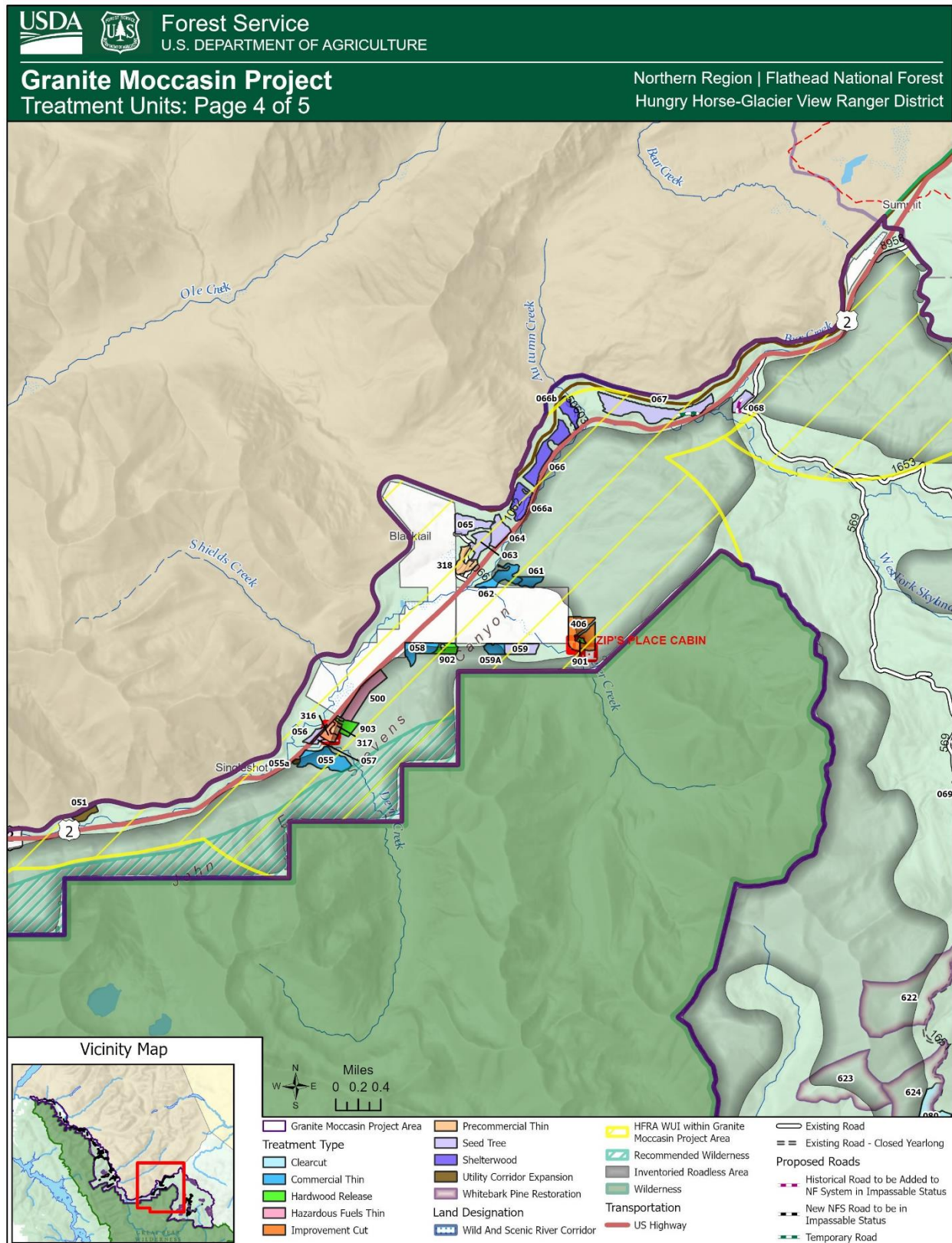


Figure 5. Granite Moccasin: Activities approved, map 4 of 5

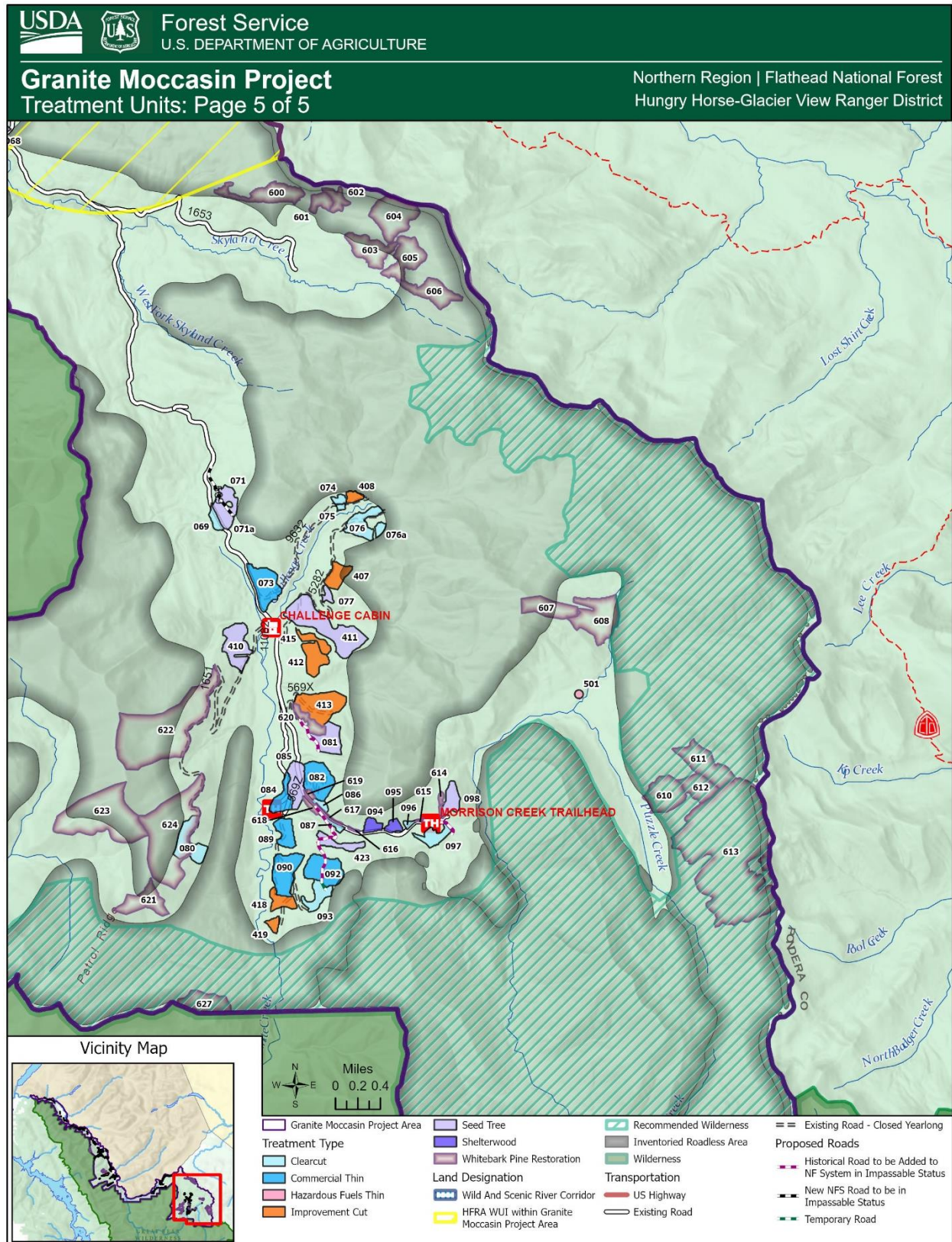


Figure 6. Granite Moccasin: Activities approved, map 5 of 5

## Appendix C: Proposed Vegetation Treatments by Unit

The following table provides a list of the proposed vegetation treatments by unit and which management area(s) they occur in. Locations of all treatments in the project area are displayed in Appendix B: Treatment Maps.

**Table 6. Proposed vegetation treatments by unit**

| Unit | Acres* | Treatment                  | Treatment Method | Management Area |
|------|--------|----------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 001  | 2      | Utility Corridor Expansion | Ground Based     | 2a              |
| 002  | 6      | Utility Corridor Expansion | Ground Based     | 2a              |
| 003  | 14     | Utility Corridor Expansion | Ground Based     | 2a              |
| 005  | 21     | Utility Corridor Expansion | Ground Based     | 2a              |
| 006  | 12     | Shelterwood                | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 007  | 23     | Seed Tree                  | Hand             | 2a, 6a          |
| 008  | 45     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 2a              |
| 009  | 30     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 2a, 6a          |
| 010  | 34     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 2a, 5c, 6a      |
| 011  | 16     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 2a              |
| 013  | 6      | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 013a | 22     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 5c, 6a          |
| 014  | 7      | Utility Corridor Expansion | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 017  | 64     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 5c, 6a          |
| 017a | 11     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 018  | 29     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 5c, 6a          |
| 018a | 9      | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 020  | 15     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 021  | 57     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6c              |
| 023  | 12     | Shelterwood                | Cable            | 6c              |
| 024  | 10     | Shelterwood                | Ground Based     | 6c              |
| 025  | 19     | Seed Tree                  | Cable            | 6c              |
| 026  | 39     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6b, 6c          |
| 027  | 19     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 028  | 12     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 029  | 27     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6a, 6b          |
| 030  | 8      | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 031  | 28     | Shelterwood                | Cable            | 6b              |
| 032  | 66     | Seed Tree                  | Cable            | 6a, 6b, 6c      |
| 033  | 15     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 036  | 30     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6a, 6c          |
| 037  | 20     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6c              |
| 042  | 11     | Shelterwood                | Ground Based     | 2a              |
| 043  | 23     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 2a              |
| 044  | 6      | Clearcut                   | Ground Based     | 6c              |
| 045  | 28     | Shelterwood                | Ground Based     | 2a              |

| Unit | Acres* | Treatment                  | Treatment Method | Management Area |
|------|--------|----------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 046  | 55     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6a, 6c          |
| 047  | 53     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6a, 6b, 6c      |
| 047a | 17     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 049  | 15     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6a, 7           |
| 050  | 40     | Group Selection            | Ground Based     | 7               |
| 051  | 8      | Utility Corridor Expansion | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 055  | 40     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6a, 6c          |
| 055a | 1      | Utility Corridor Expansion | Ground Based     | 5c              |
| 056  | 5      | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 057  | 3      | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 058  | 21     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 5c, 6a          |
| 059  | 18     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 059a | 10     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 061  | 10     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 062  | 23     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 063  | 19     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 064  | 20     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 065  | 24     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 066  | 37     | Shelterwood                | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 066a | 24     | Shelterwood                | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 066b | 15     | Shelterwood                | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 067  | 70     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 068  | 11     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 069  | 8      | Clearcut                   | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 071  | 17     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 5c, 6b          |
| 071a | 19     | Seed Tree                  | Cable            | 6b              |
| 073  | 45     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 074  | 5      | Clearcut                   | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 075  | 3      | Clearcut                   | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 076  | 31     | Clearcut                   | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 076a | 6      | Clearcut                   | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 077  | 6      | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 080  | 41     | Clearcut                   | Ground Based     | 5c, 6a          |
| 081  | 31     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 082  | 44     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 084  | 22     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6a, 6b          |
| 085  | 33     | Seed Tree                  | Cable            | 6b              |
| 086  | 5      | Clearcut                   | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 087  | 6      | Clearcut                   | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 089  | 23     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 090  | 45     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 6a, 6b          |
| 092  | 47     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 5c, 6b          |

| Unit | Acres* | Treatment                  | Treatment Method | Management Area |
|------|--------|----------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 093  | 23     | Clearcut                   | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 094  | 10     | Shelterwood                | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 095  | 9      | Shelterwood                | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 096  | 3      | Clearcut                   | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 097  | 19     | Clearcut                   | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 098  | 20     | Seed Tree                  | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 100  | 40     | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 2a              |
| 101  | 9      | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 2a              |
| 101a | 3      | Commercial Thin            | Ground Based     | 2a              |
| 110  | 3      | Salvage                    | Ground Based     | 7               |
| 200  | 23     | Utility Corridor Expansion | Hand             | 2a, 5a          |
| 201  | 24     | Utility Corridor Expansion | Hand             | 2a, 5a          |
| 202  | 13     | Understory Removal         | Hand             | 6a              |
| 203  | 32     | Understory Removal         | Hand             | 6c              |
| 204  | 51     | Understory Removal         | Hand             | 6c              |
| 205  | 14     | Understory Removal         | Hand             | 6c              |
| 206  | 11     | Understory Removal         | Hand             | 6c              |
| 207  | 64     | Understory Removal         | Hand             | 6a, 6c          |
| 208  | 6      | Understory Removal         | Hand             | 6c              |
| 209  | 5      | Understory Removal         | Hand             | 6c              |
| 210  | 2      | Understory Removal         | Hand             | 6c              |
| 211  | 6      | Understory Removal         | Hand             | 6c              |
| 212  | 10     | Understory Removal         | Hand             | 6c              |
| 300  | 3      | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 6a              |
| 301  | 5      | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 6a              |
| 302  | 34     | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 6a              |
| 303  | 17     | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 6a              |
| 304  | 15     | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 6a              |
| 305  | 14     | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 6a              |
| 306  | 13     | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 6c              |
| 307  | 6      | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 6c              |
| 308  | 3      | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 6c              |
| 309  | 10     | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 6c              |
| 310  | 20     | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 6c              |
| 311  | 46     | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 2a, 6c          |
| 312  | 18     | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 2a              |
| 313  | 2      | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 6c              |
| 314  | 7      | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 7               |
| 315  | 8      | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 2a              |
| 316  | 8      | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 2a              |
| 317  | 6      | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 5c, 6a          |
| 318  | 16     | Precommercial Thin         | Hand             | 6a              |

| Unit | Acres* | Treatment                                            | Treatment Method | Management Area |
|------|--------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 319  | 15     | Precommercial Thin                                   | Hand             | 6c              |
| 400  | 60     | Improvement Cut                                      | Ground Based     | 2a, 6a          |
| 400a | 16     | Precommercial Thin                                   | Hand             | 2a, 6a          |
| 402  | 21     | Seed Tree                                            | Ground Based     | 6a, 6b          |
| 403  | 48     | Seed Tree                                            | Ground Based     | 7               |
| 406  | 39     | Improvement Cut                                      | Ground Based     | 5c, 6a          |
| 407  | 22     | Improvement Cut                                      | Ground Based     | 5c, 6a          |
| 408  | 8      | Improvement Cut                                      | Ground Based     | 5c, 6a          |
| 410  | 45     | Seed Tree                                            | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 411  | 92     | Seed Tree                                            | Ground Based     | 5c, 6a, 6b      |
| 412  | 28     | Improvement Cut                                      | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 413  | 56     | Improvement Cut                                      | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 415  | 14     | Improvement Cut                                      | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 418  | 18     | Improvement Cut                                      | Ground Based     | 6a, 6b          |
| 419  | 7      | Improvement Cut                                      | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 423  | 19     | Seed Tree                                            | Ground Based     | 6b              |
| 500  | 32     | Hazardous Fuels Thin                                 | Ground Based     | 5c              |
| 501  | 3      | Hazardous Fuels Thin                                 | Hand             | 6a              |
| 502  | 12     | Hazardous Fuels Thin                                 | Hand             | 6a              |
| 600  | 53     | White Bark Pine (WBP) Restoration – Daylight/Release | Hand             | 5c              |
| 601  | 16     | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release                   | Hand             | 5a, 5c          |
| 602  | 17     | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release                   | Hand             | 5a, 5c          |
| 603  | 49     | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release                   | Hand             | 5a, 5c, 6a      |
| 604  | 70     | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release                   | Hand             | 5a              |
| 605  | 51     | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release                   | Hand             | 5a, 6a          |
| 606  | 44     | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release                   | Hand             | 5a              |
| 607  | 43     | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release                   | Hand             | 5c, 6a          |
| 608  | 78     | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release and Plant         | Hand             | 6a              |
| 610  | 56     | WBP Restoration – Planting**                         | Hand             | 1b, 6a          |
| 611  | 62     | WBP Restoration – Planting**                         | Hand             | 1b              |
| 612  | 35     | WBP Restoration – Planting**                         | Hand             | 1b              |
| 613  | 492    | WBP Restoration – Planting**                         | Hand             | 1b              |
| 614  | 5      | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release                   | Hand             | 6a              |
| 615  | 1      | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release                   | Hand             | 6a              |
| 616  | 2      | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release                   | Hand             | 6b              |
| 617  | 4      | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release                   | Hand             | 6b              |
| 618  | 6      | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release                   | Hand             | 6b              |
| 619  | 4      | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release                   | Hand             | 6b              |
| 620  | 19     | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release                   | Hand             | 6b              |
| 621  | 43     | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release                   | Hand             | 5c, 6a          |
| 622  | 229    | WBP Restoration – RxB and Plant                      | Hand             | 6a, 6b          |

| Unit | Acres* | Treatment                                    | Treatment Method | Management Area |
|------|--------|----------------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 623  | 161    | WBP Restoration – RxB and Plant              | Hand             | 5c, 6a          |
| 624  | 193    | WBP Restoration – RxB and Plant              | Hand             | 5c, 6a          |
| 626  | 164    | WBP Restoration – Planting**                 | Hand             | 5c              |
| 627  | 43     | WBP Restoration – Planting**                 | Hand             | 1b              |
| 628  | 104    | WBP Restoration – Daylight/Release and Plant | Hand             | 5a              |
| 700  | 240    | Prescribed Burn                              | N/A              | 5c              |
| 800  | 18     | Utility Corridor Expansion                   | Ground Based     | 2a              |
| 901  | 2      | Hardwood Release                             | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 902  | 10     | Hardwood Release                             | Ground Based     | 6a              |
| 903  | 11     | Hardwood Release                             | Ground Based     | 5c              |

\*Only management area portions of units greater than 1 acre are listed in the table above.

\*\*Planting is only expected to occur in portions (10 to 50 percent) of proposed WBP Restoration – Planting units. See treatment descriptions in the Proposed Action for additional information.

## Management Area Direction

The forest plan provides an integrated set of management direction that supports social, economic, and ecological sustainability and multiple uses of the Flathead National Forest's lands and resources. In addition to forestwide and geographic area direction, the forest plan designates management areas, each with assigned plan components such as desired conditions, suitable uses, and in some areas, standards or guidelines. The Granite Moccasin project area is divided among the management areas shown in table 7.

**Table 7. Management areas within the Granite Moccasin project area**

| Management area                                | Acres           | Management area description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1b Recommended Wilderness                      | 14,203<br>(21%) | Recommended wilderness areas preserve opportunities for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. The Forest maintains and protects the ecological and social characteristics that provide the basis for wilderness recommendation. Recommended wilderness areas are characterized by a natural environment where ecological processes such as natural succession, wildfire, avalanches, insects, and disease function with a limited amount of human influence. |
| 2a Wild and Scenic Rivers                      | 4,870<br>(7%)   | Congressionally designated wild and scenic river. The recreation and scenic section of the Middle Fork of the Flathead River is in the project area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 5a Backcountry Non-Motorized Year-Round        | 6,007<br>(9%)   | Backcountry area that provides for less developed recreation opportunities for year-round nonmotorized use.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 5c Backcountry Motorized Over-Snow Vehicle Use | 17,981<br>(27%) | Backcountry area that provides for less developed recreation opportunities for motorized over-snow vehicle use.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 6a General Forest Low-Intensity Veg. Mgmt.     | 13,613<br>(20%) | A low intensity of timber harvest is expected in Management Area 6a, and regularly scheduled timber harvest would not occur (it is unsuitable for timber production). Management Area 6a is in areas with a higher level of other resource considerations or site limitations that would restrict active vegetation management compared to Management Area 6b or Management Area 6c.                                                                                             |

| Management area                                 | Acres         | Management area description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6b General Forest Moderate-Intensity Veg. Mgmt. | 4,973<br>(7%) | A medium intensity of timber harvest is expected to occur in Management Area 6b, and these areas will have regularly scheduled timber harvest (suitable for timber production). Management Area 6b is in areas where other resource considerations or site limitations are expected to restrict active vegetation more than in Management Area 6c.                                                  |
| 6c General Forest High-Intensity Veg. Mgmt.     | 1,423<br>(2%) | A higher intensity of timber harvest is expected to occur in Management Area 6c compared to Management Area 6a or 6b, and these areas will have regularly scheduled timber harvest (suitable for timber production). Management Area 6c is in areas where other resource considerations or site limitations are expected to restrict vegetation treatments to a lesser degree than either 6a or 6b. |
| 7 Focused Recreation Area                       | 163<br>(1%)   | Focused recreation areas typically feature certain types of recreation activities that take place near or at a large lake or reservoir, developed ski area, large campground, or trail system. Portions of the Essex Nordic Groomed Trail System occur in the project area.                                                                                                                         |
| Non-Forest Service                              | 4,290         | Not applicable                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

### Geographic Area Direction

The forest plan divides the forest into six geographic areas and provides management direction specific to these areas that reflect community values and local conditions in the area. The Granite Moccasin project area is entirely within the Middle Fork Geographic Area. This project is consistent with all direction for the Middle Fork Geographic Area.

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