

PROPOSED LAND TRANSACTIONS

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Summary Sheet

Meeting dates: November 7 & 8, 2014
Agenda item: PROPOSED LAND TRANSACTIONS
Presenter(s): Julie Sandberg

Background summary:

The Department is recommending the following actions:

- Item 1 – Proposed Acquisition of 2005 (+/-) acres in Asotin County
 - Item 2 – Proposed Transfer of 54 acres in Snohomish County
-

Policy issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:

Protecting critical fish and wildlife habitat, providing public recreational opportunity, and responsible property management.

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

Item 1 – This acquisition is part of the Mountain View 4-O project funded by the Recreation and Conservation Office through a competitive grant process. The project has also successfully competed for funding through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Section 6 nationwide competitive grant process. The project has broad support including the Wild Sheep Foundation, the Mule Deer Foundation, the Canyon Birders, the Tri-State Steelheaders, the Kelly Creek Flycasters and the Blue Mountain Land Trust. It has also been reviewed with local officials including the Asotin County Commission.

Item 2 –The Stillaguamish Tribe is committed to managing this site for Coho broodstock collection and public access. Snohomish County is also interested in partnering on public access as they have recently acquired adjacent property.

Action requested:

Approval of the proposed land transactions as presented.

Draft motion language:

Move to approve the proposed land transactions as presented.

Justification for Commission action:

This action will provide protection for critical fish and wildlife habitat, provide public recreational opportunity, and address responsible property management.

Communications Plan:

WDFW will provide a press release informing the public of this action and proceed forward to closing these transactions.

**Budget Detail for November 7-8, 2014 Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting
Land Acquisition Agenda Item**

| Item | Acres | Purchase Price | Project Name | *Fund Source | Approp. Authority | Approp. Balance | Original Grant Amount | Pre Action Grant Balance | **Post Action Grant Balance |
|------------------|---------|-----------------|--|--------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ODOM/4-O Phase 4 | 2,005.8 | \$ 3,653,522.00 | Mountain View 4-O Ranch Land Acquisition | USFWS-S6 | Q53 | \$ 4,016,893.00 | \$ 3,700,000.00 | \$ 570,898.00 | \$ - |
| | | | Mountain View 4-O and Hanson Ridge | RCO - WWRP | Z41 | -- | \$ 4,600,000.00 | \$ 1,597,328.00 | \$ - |
| | | | Mountain View 4-O Ranch 2014 | USFWS-S6 | P22 | \$ 27,600,049.00 | \$ 2,000,000.00 | \$ 2,000,000.00 | \$ 405,098.00 |

USFWS-S6 = US Fish & Wildlife Service Section 6 Grant

RCO -WWRP= Recreation Conservation Office - Washington Wildlife Recreation Program

** Post Action Grant Balance

The reduction in the grant balance includes anticipated closing costs such as taxes, escrow fees and title insurance.

**STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
WILDLIFE PROGRAM
LANDS DIVISION
REAL ESTATE SERVICES**

November 7, 2014

TO: Philip Anderson, Director

FROM: Julie Sandberg,
Real Estate Services Manager

SUBJECT: ITEM 1: PROPOSED ACQUISITION OF ODOM/4-O LAND & LIVESTOCK, LLC PROPERTY, PHASE 4, 4-O RANCH UNIT, BLUE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE AREA COMPLEX, ASOTIN COUNTY.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) successfully negotiated an option to purchase, in multi-year phases, approximately 11,973 acres from Milton Odom II and 4-O Land & Livestock, LLC. Phase 1 was purchased on January 5, 2012 and covered 2,181.55 acres; Phase 2 was purchased on June 27, 2013 and covered 1,613.78 acres; and, Phase 3 was purchased on March 21, 2014 and covered 2,637.66 acres. The current proposed Phase 4 will cover 2,005.84 acres.

This acquisition is part of the Mountain View 4-O project which was evaluated and approved through the Lands 20/20 process. The purpose of the project is to protect miles of creek and river riparian zone for the benefit of steelhead and bull trout, and to manage terrestrial habitat for the benefit of deer, bighorn sheep and elk. This phase is being funded by grants from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Recreation and Conservation Office under the Washington Wildlife and Recreation program. Authority for this acquisition is provided in the capital budget.

The Phase 4 acquisition is located in Asotin County, approximately 12 miles southwest of Anatone, in the southwest portion of the larger project area. It includes one and a half miles on both sides of Wenatchee Creek and a number of springs and small drainages that feed into it. The southern area contains nearly a mile along the Grande Ronde River. These water corridors benefit federally threatened Chinook salmon, Snake River steelhead, bull trout, and interior redband trout along with an abundance of amphibians and riparian dependent avian species. The water associated habitats have always been key to fish and wildlife species in this part of the state.

This acquisition contains some of the best wildlife mosaic currently available. Historically, the property has been managed as a working ranch with a focus on wildlife habitat providing trophy big game hunting opportunities. Management practices include scattered dry land farming, moderate cattle grazing and timber production. The value of this property includes riparian habitats beneficial to endangered fish species and forestland and high meadow complexes beneficial to ungulates including bighorn sheep, deer and elk.

The property will be managed within the Wildlife Program as part of the 4-O Ranch Unit, Blue Mountain Wildlife Area Complex. Operation and maintenance costs for this phase are estimated at \$16,000 to address weed control and litter issues. The WLA budget has received an increase in federal PR funding to manage the new properties. Payment in-lieu of property tax is estimated at \$2000. This Phase will be acquired for the approved reviewed appraised value of:

\$3,653,522 for 2,005.84 Acres

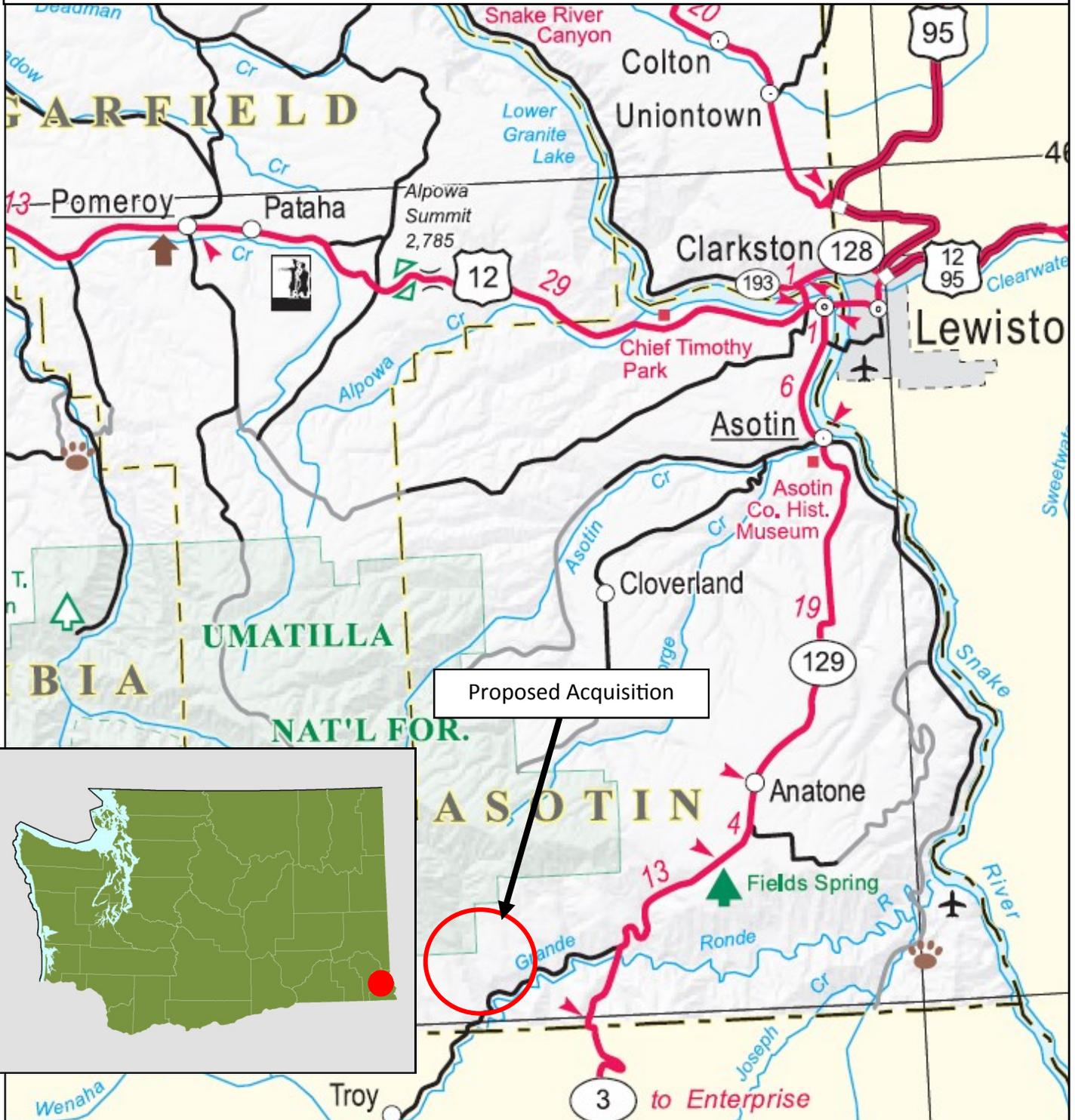
The Department recommends the Commission approve the acquisition of the 2,005.84 (+/-) - acre Phase 4 of the Milton Odom, II and 4-O Land & Livestock, LLC property for \$3,653,522.

ITEM 1: PROPOSED ACQUISITION ODOM/4-O LAND & LIVESTOCK, LLC PHASE 4

COUNTY: ASOTIN COUNTY

LEGAL: SECTIONS 1, 2, 3, 4 & 12 TOWNSHIP 6N, RANGE 43 E, W.M.
SECTIONS 34 & 35 TOWNSHIP 7 N, RANGE 43 E, W.M.

ACRES: 2005 (+/-)

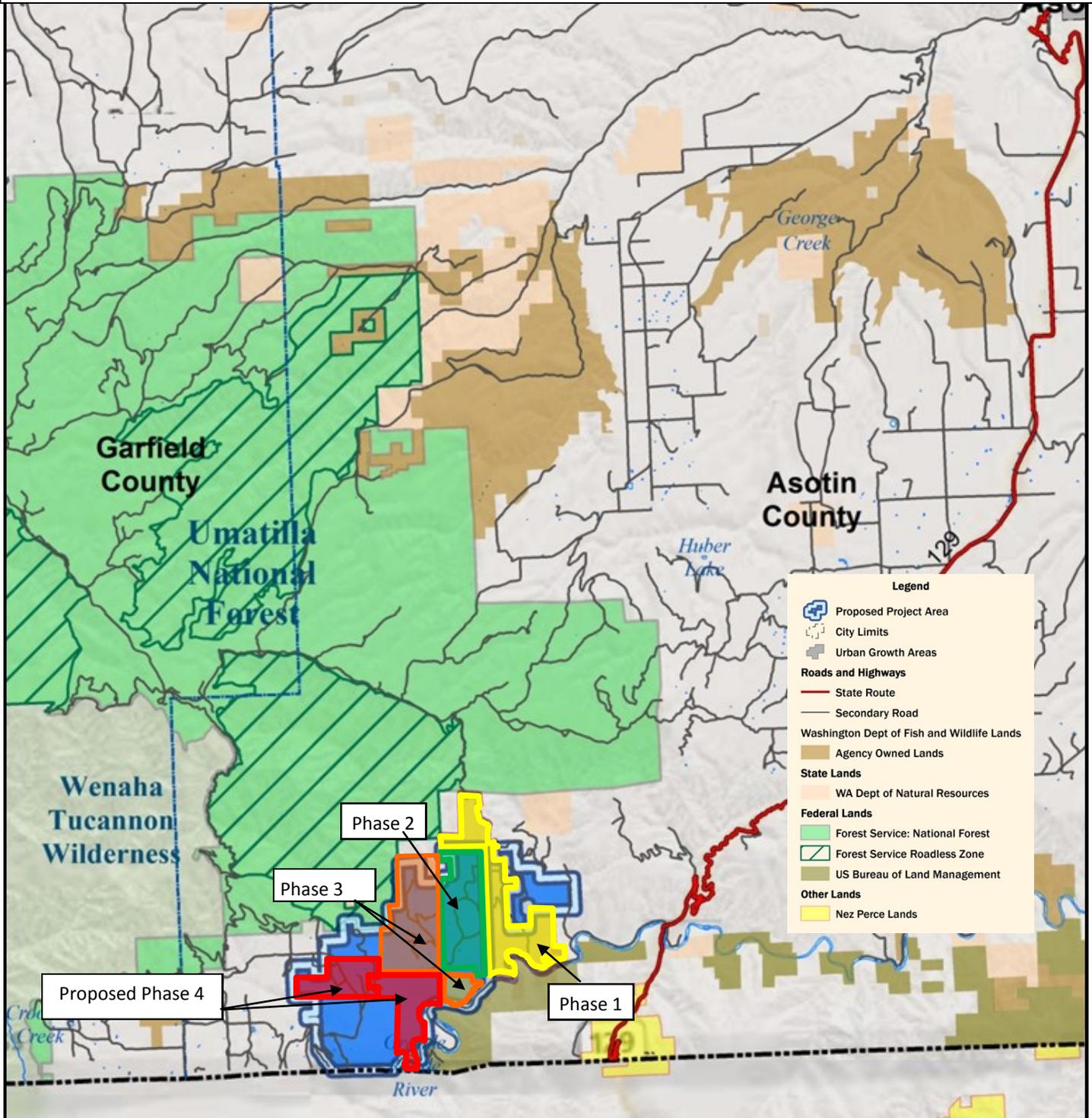


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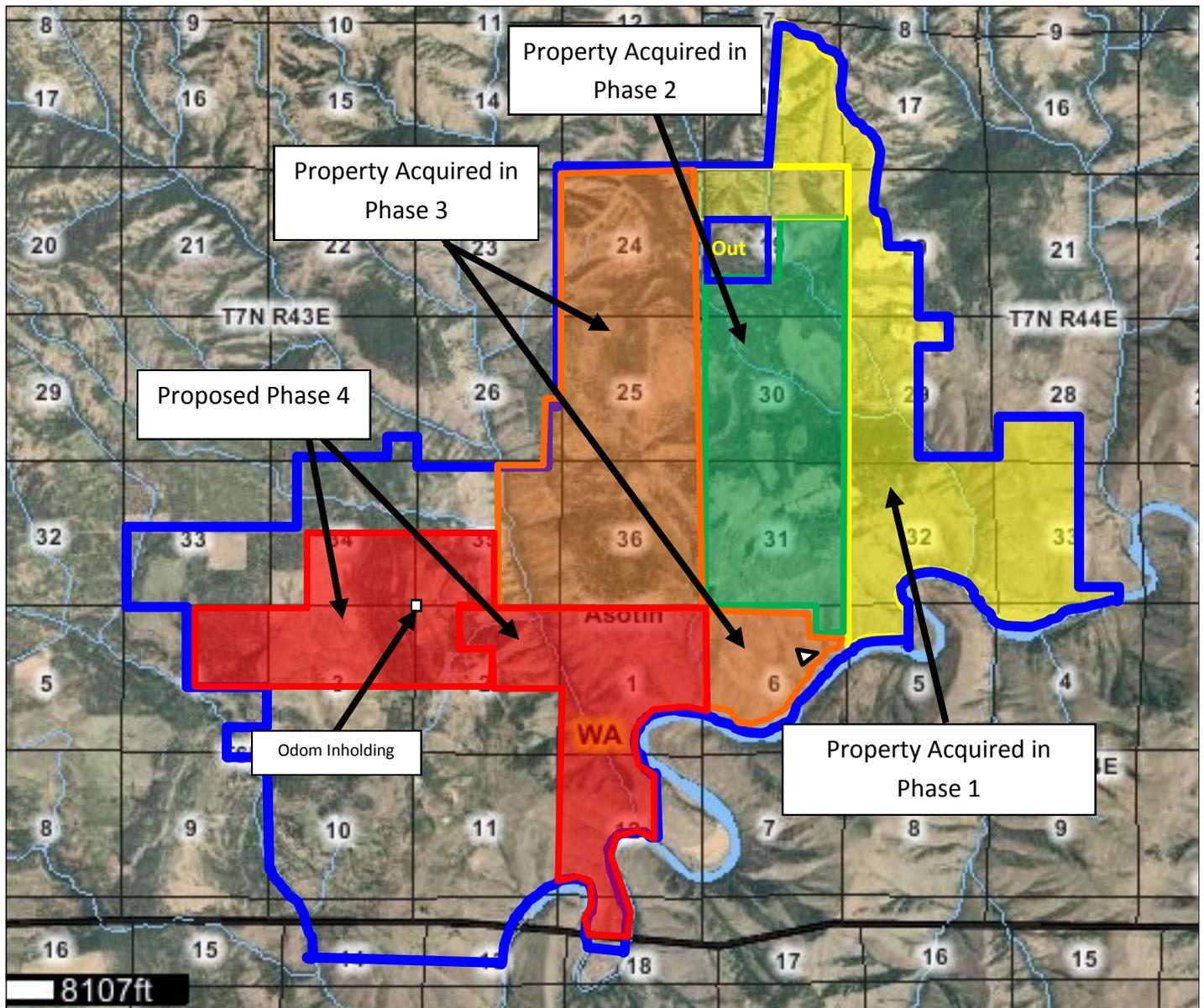


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ACRES: 2005 (+/-)



**STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
WILDLIFE PROGRAM
LANDS DIVISION
REAL ESTATE SERVICES**

November 7, 2014

TO: Philip Anderson,
Director

FROM: Julie Sandberg
Real Estate Services Manager

**SUBJECT: ITEM 2: PROPOSED TRANSFER OF LAND
STILLAGUAMISH TRIBE
FORTSON PONDS, SNOHOMISH COUNTY**

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has received a request from the Stillaguamish Tribe to transfer ownership of approximately 54 acres of land between State Route 530 and the North Fork Stillaguamish River, west of Darrington. The land is known as Fortson Ponds. It was purchased in 1999 with a grant from the Critical Habitat portion of the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) for the purpose of coho rearing and public access to the river.

Due to budget cuts to the Fish Passage Section of the Agency, WDFW has not been able to manage the site for about ten years. The Tribe has been using the site to capture Coho broodstock for their US/Canada wild stock indicator program. WDFW does not have a Coho program on the Stillaguamish River.

The Tribe is committed to continue managing the site for Coho broodstock collection and public access. Fortson Ponds is contiguous with a tribally-owned parcel immediately downstream. The Tribe has agreed to assume WDFW's obligations on the WWRP contract and has dedicated resources to maintaining and checking on the site regularly. The Tribe is in the midst of restoring instream and riparian habitat within this reach and feels it can provide more active stewardship of Fortson Ponds than WDFW has been able to.

WDFW has considered the Tribe's request and determined that the transfer proposal is beneficial to the department. It is an opportunity to assist in a partnership with the Tribe that has immediate and long-term benefits for fish and wildlife and public access to the North Fork Stillaguamish. With public access to the area increasing considerably, the transfer to the tribe will relieve WDFW of the responsibility to upgrade the site to meet minimal public access safety requirements and long term management of the site. The department believes that the transfer will result in more efficient and effective management of the site.

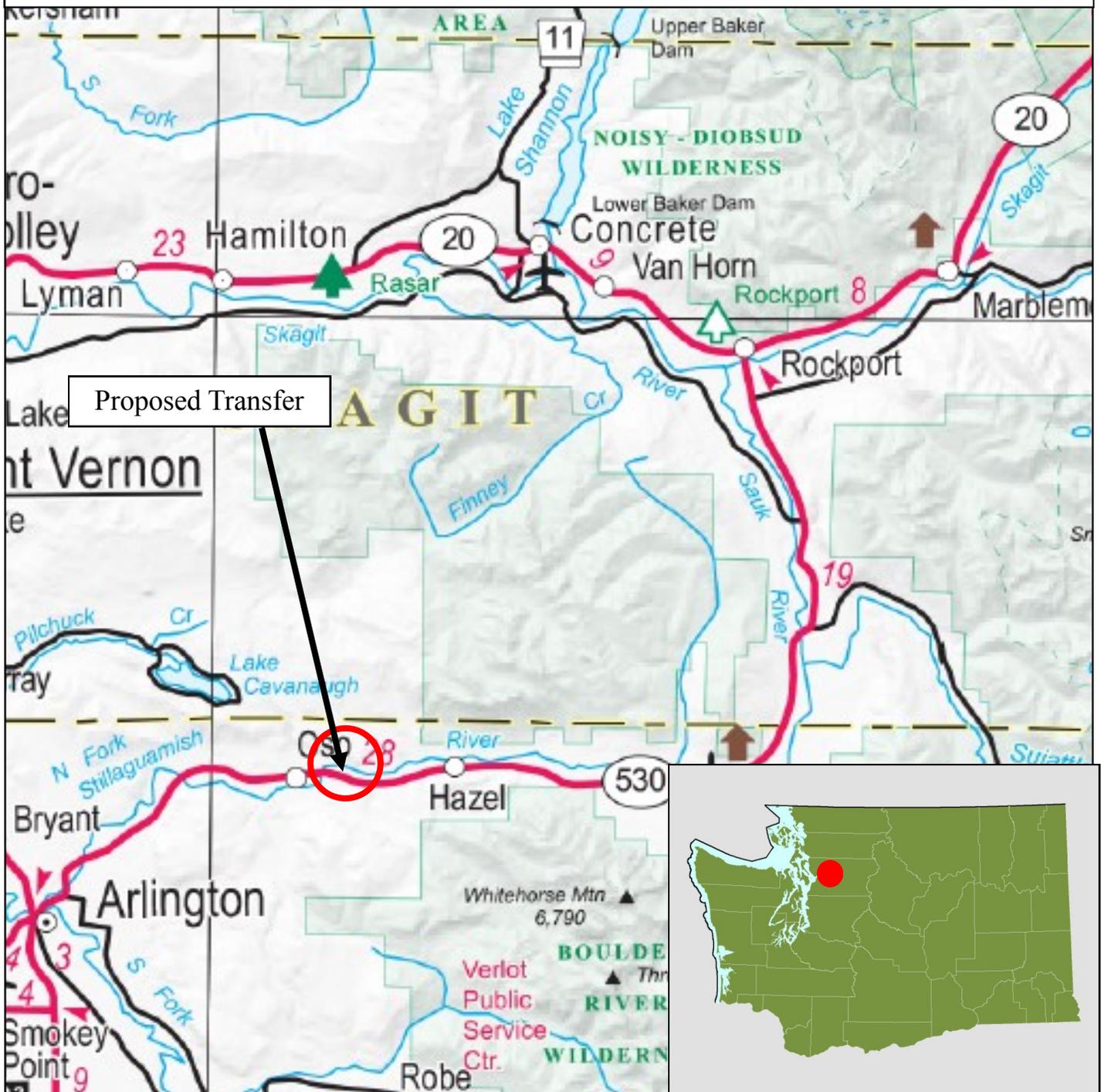
The department recommends that the Commission approve the transfer of this 54-acre parcel of land to the Stillaguamish Tribe.

**ITEM 2: PROPOSED TRANSFER
FORTSON PONDS PROPERTY**

COUNTY: SNOHOMISH COUNTY

LEGAL: SECTION 11, TOWNSHIP 32 N, RANGE 8 E, W.M.

ACRES: 54 (+/-)

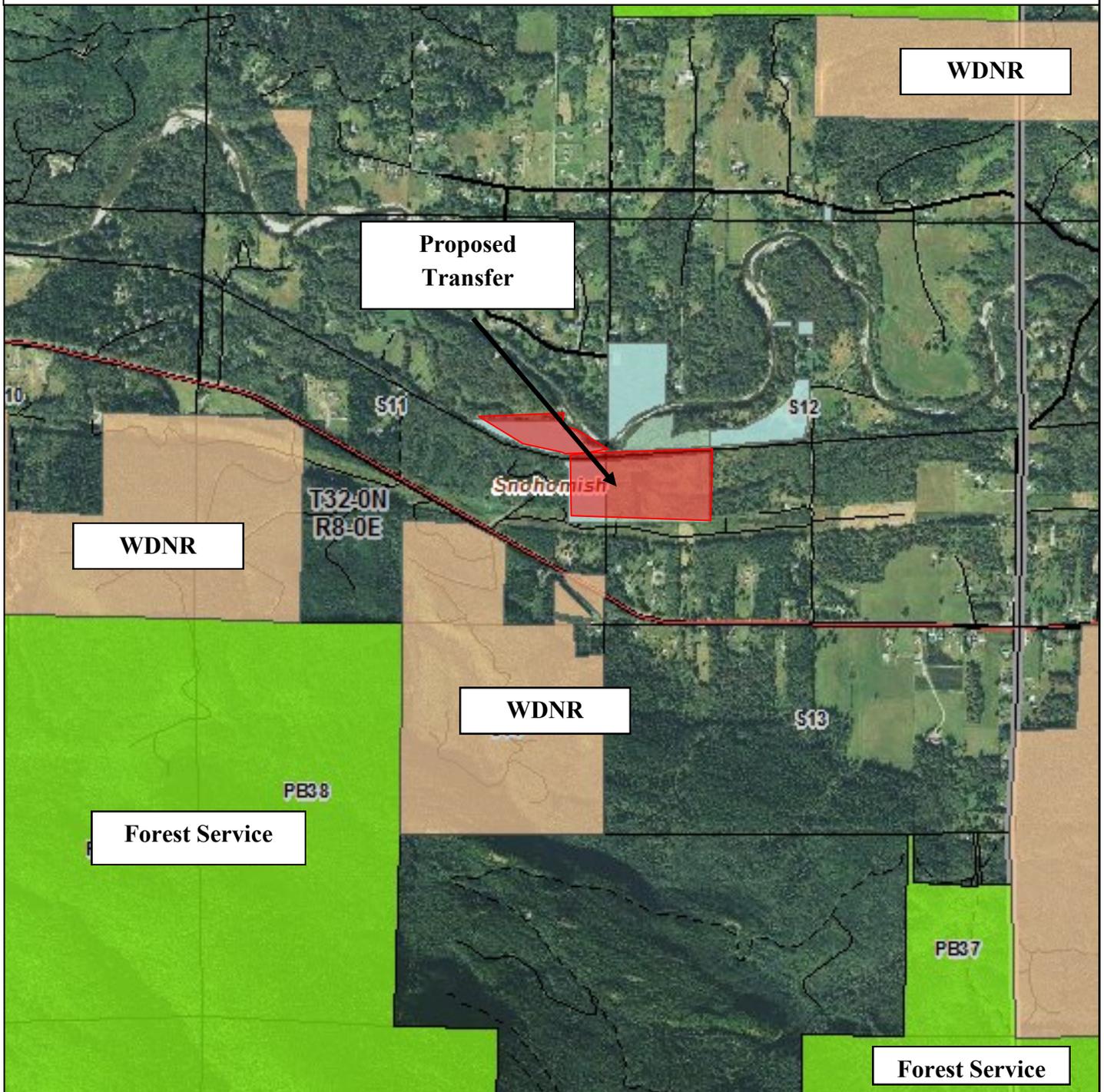


**ITEM 2: PROPOSED TRANSFER
FORTSON PONDS PROPERTY**

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LEGAL: SECTION 11, TOWNSHIP 32 N, RANGE 8 E, W.M.

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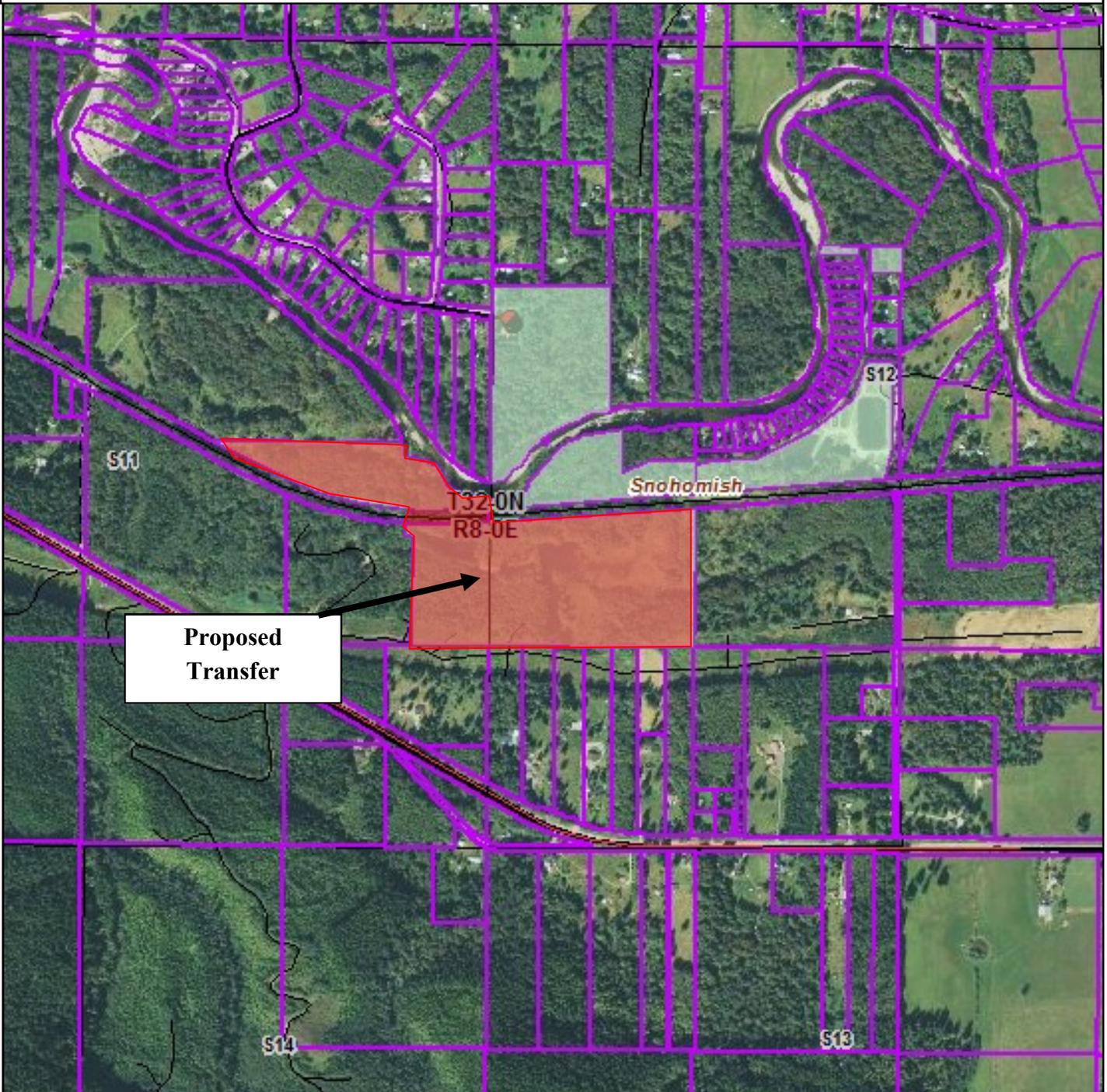


**ITEM 2: PROPOSED TRANSFER
FORTSON PONDS PROPERTY**

COUNTY: SNOHOMISH COUNTY

LEGAL: SECTION 11, TOWNSHIP 32 N, RANGE 8 E, W.M.

ACRES: 54 (+/-)



Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians

PO Box 277
3310 Smokey Point Drive
Arlington WA 98223

RECEIVED

SEP 12 2014

FISH AND
WILDLIFE COMMISSION

Miranda Wecker, Chair
Washington State Fish and Wildlife Commission
600 Capitol Way N.
Olympia, WA 98501-1091

RE: Fortson Ponds- Sponsor Change Amendment Request for RCO # 92-810

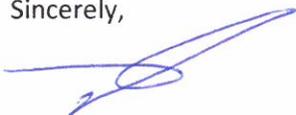
Dear Ms. Wecker-

The Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians has been approached by local WDFW staff to assume the Sponsor role of RCO project #92-810, known as Fortson Ponds. We understand that WDFW has been challenged to provide stewardship of the parcels in recent years, and is looking for another governmental organization to take over the management of this site. The Tribe owns a conservation parcel immediately downstream of Fortson and we have been working for years to restore the instream and riparian habitats along this reach. We have field crews that work in and around the parcels frequently throughout the year and have a good working relationship with Snohomish County Parks, whose Whitehorse Trail bisects the site. We have the resources and desire to steward this site going forward, and make a commitment to do so, if the Commission approves of the transfer to the Tribe.

In the last few months, our legal staff has worked with the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to craft a Special Condition addendum to the RCO agreement that is amenable to the Tribe. In part, it states that the Tribe will allow public access to the North Fork Stillaguamish and that we will continue to support special fishing events at the Fortson Ponds, such as a youth fishing derby. We formally request that the Commission allow the RCO to change the sponsor on RCO #92-810 from WDFW to the Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians.

Thank you for considering this matter, and please contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,



Ted Wright
Executive Director