

7. Lands 20/20 Briefing

Commission Meeting December 13, 2024

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Why Does WDFW Buy Land?

Protecting Land and Water for Wildlife and People



In service to our Mission

RCW 79a.15 – Acquisition of Habitat Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Lands

*“It is therefore the **policy of the state to acquire as soon as possible the most significant lands for wildlife conservation and outdoor recreation purposes before they are converted to other uses**, and to develop existing public recreational land and facilities to meet the needs of present and future generations.”*

Specifically, to:

- Conserve and restore the diversity of Washington’s fish and wildlife species and habitats*
- Enhance sustainable wildlife-related outdoor recreation, including fishing, hunting, and wildlife viewing*
- Improve management of current WDFW Lands*
- Preserve opportunity for continued working lands for agriculture, forestry, and other sectors of the outdoor economy, when and where compatible*



The How – Acquisition Principles

Protecting Land and Water for Wildlife and People



- *Collaborative prioritization.*
- *Consider all conservation alternatives, including fee title vs. easement.*
- *Prioritize long-term opportunities for public recreation and access.*
- *Prioritize long-term ecological value in light of climate change impacts.*
- *Prioritize acquisitions that create larger contiguous tracts for habitat value and ease of management.*
- *Consider conservation easements as parcels become more isolated.*
- *Prioritize ecologically or socially important lands that are at risk for loss in the near term.*



Strategic Acquisition Priorities

- **Goal 1: Conserve and protect native fish and wildlife**
 - *Aquatic Habitats, Conserve and protect native fish and wildlife*
 - *Critical Habitat for Specific Species, Conserve and protect native fish and wildlife*
 - *Terrestrial Habitats*
- **Goal 2: Provide sustainable fishing, hunting and other wildlife-related recreational and commercial experiences**
- **Goal 3: Promote a healthy economy, protect community character, maintain an overall high quality of life, and deliver high quality customer service**
- **Goal 4: Build an effective and efficient organization by supporting our workforce, improving business processes, and investing in technology**



[WDFW Strategic Acquisition Priorities.pdf](#)



Questions WDFW Asks (Lands 20/20 Application)

Protecting Land and Water for Wildlife and People



- *Willing seller*
- *Fee title/conservation easement*
- *Compelling goal, conservation value*
- *Threat/risk*
- *Climate change risk (infrastructure, species, habitat)*
- *Planning integration*
- *Strategic Acquisition Priorities*
- *Species/Habitat plans*
- *Recreation value*
- *Cost of Stewardship/Management*
- *Weed management needs*
- *Real Estate due diligence*
- *Known hazards/risks*
- *Water rights/fences/culverts, etc.*
- *Partnerships/local support/outreach*



Acquisition Steps

Scoping
and Need

Lands 20/20

Funding

Land
Transaction

Integrating
Ownership



Schedule 2024

Regional Visits – April/May

Announcement – May 30

Applications due – July 26

Tech Team – Aug. 22

Funding Team – Sept. 11

EMT – Oct. 2

Tribal Preview – Oct. 10

Tribal Consultation – Oct. 30 – Nov. 27

Public Review – Oct. 30 – Nov. 27

Commission Briefing – Dec. 13

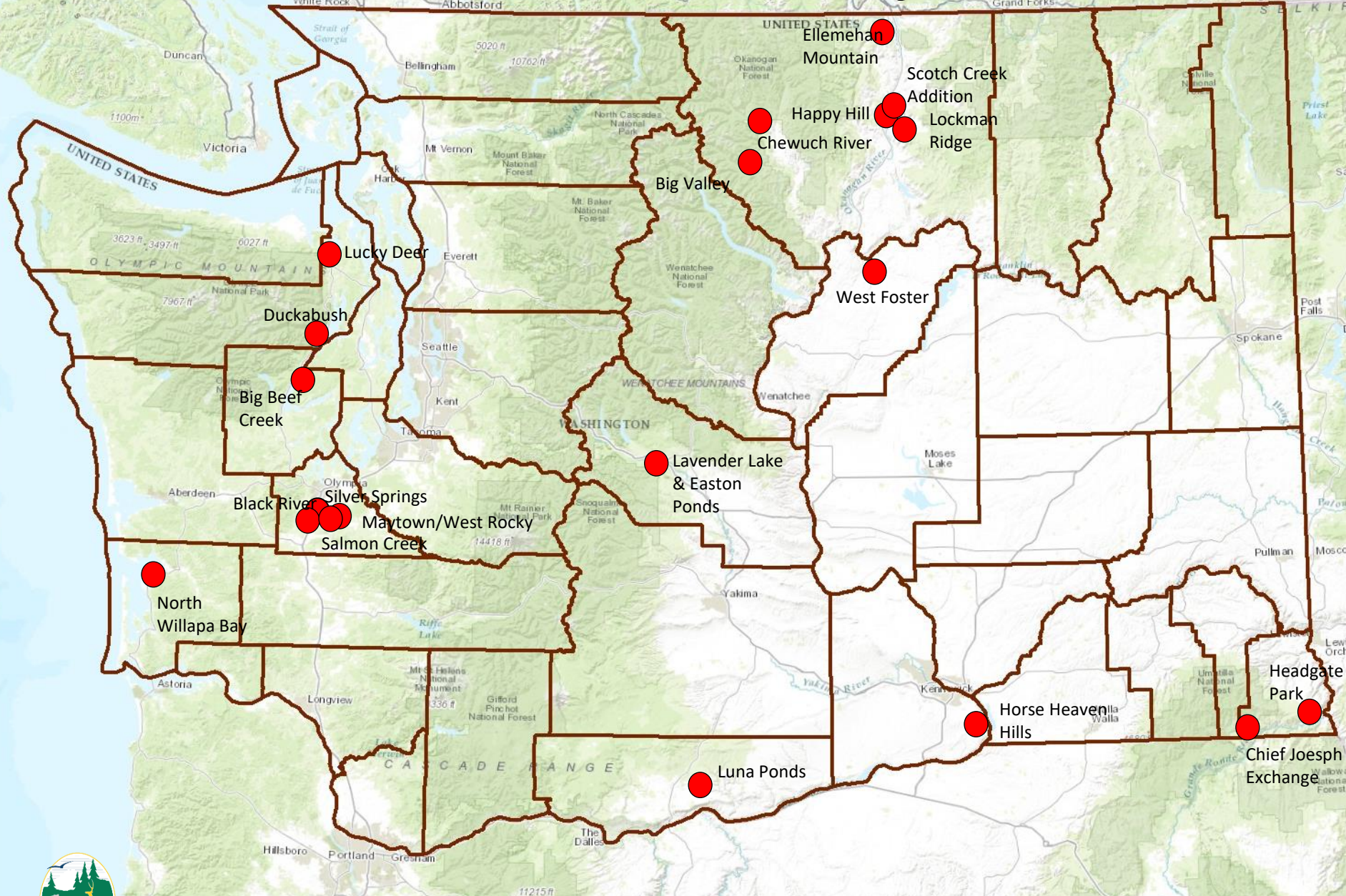
Director Approval

- *21 applications received*
- *1 not moving forward. 325 acres*
- *20 applications advancing*
- *13,749 acres*

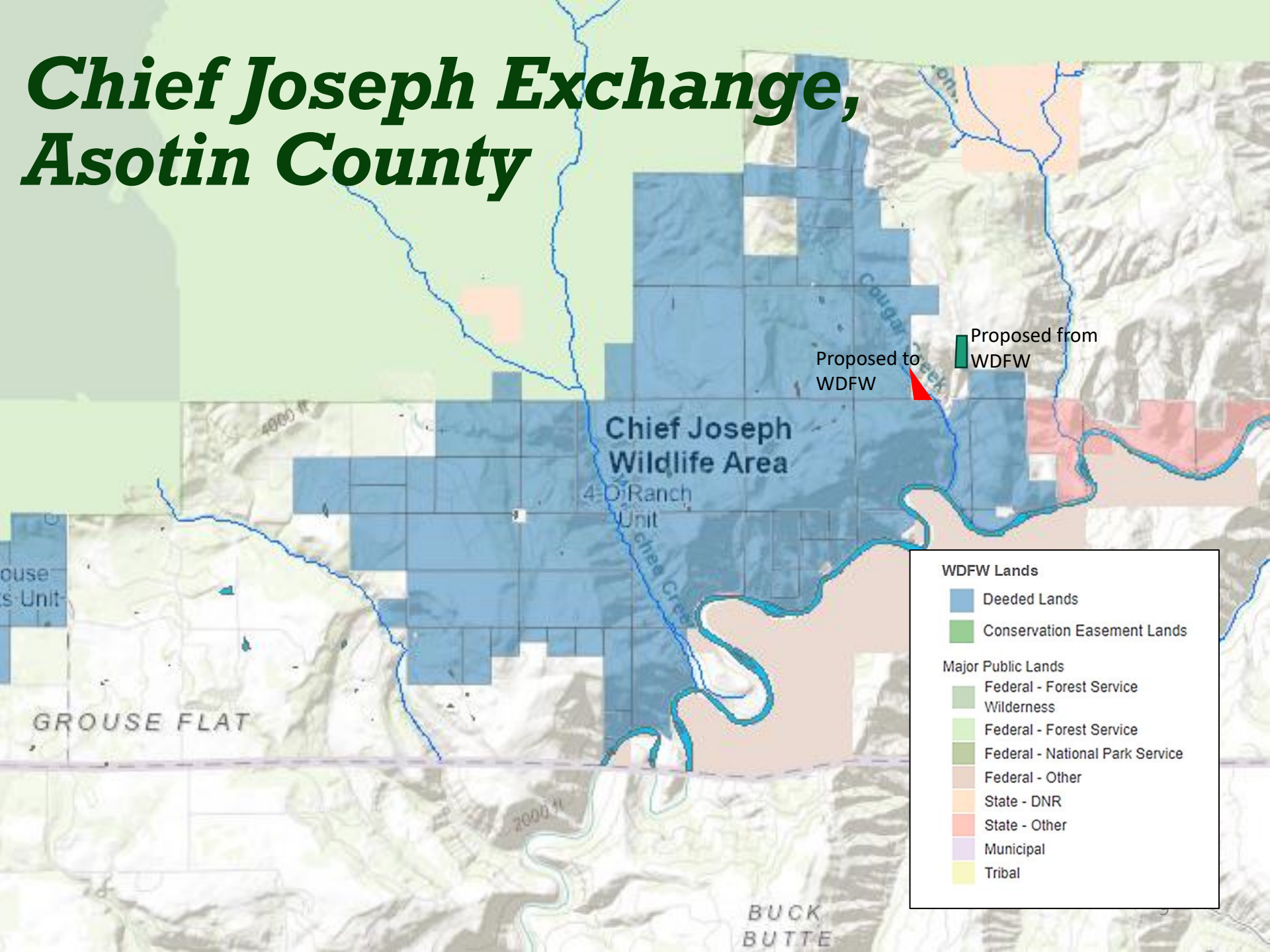
NOTE: this is the annual cycle, true EXEMPTIONS and Expedited Review also occur



Lands 20/20 2024 Projects



Chief Joseph Exchange, Asotin County



Proposed to
WDFW

Proposed from
WDFW

Chief Joseph
Wildlife Area

4-D Ranch
Unit

4-D House
Unit

GROUSE FLAT

BUCK
BUTTE

WDFW Lands

- Deeded Lands
- Conservation Easement Lands

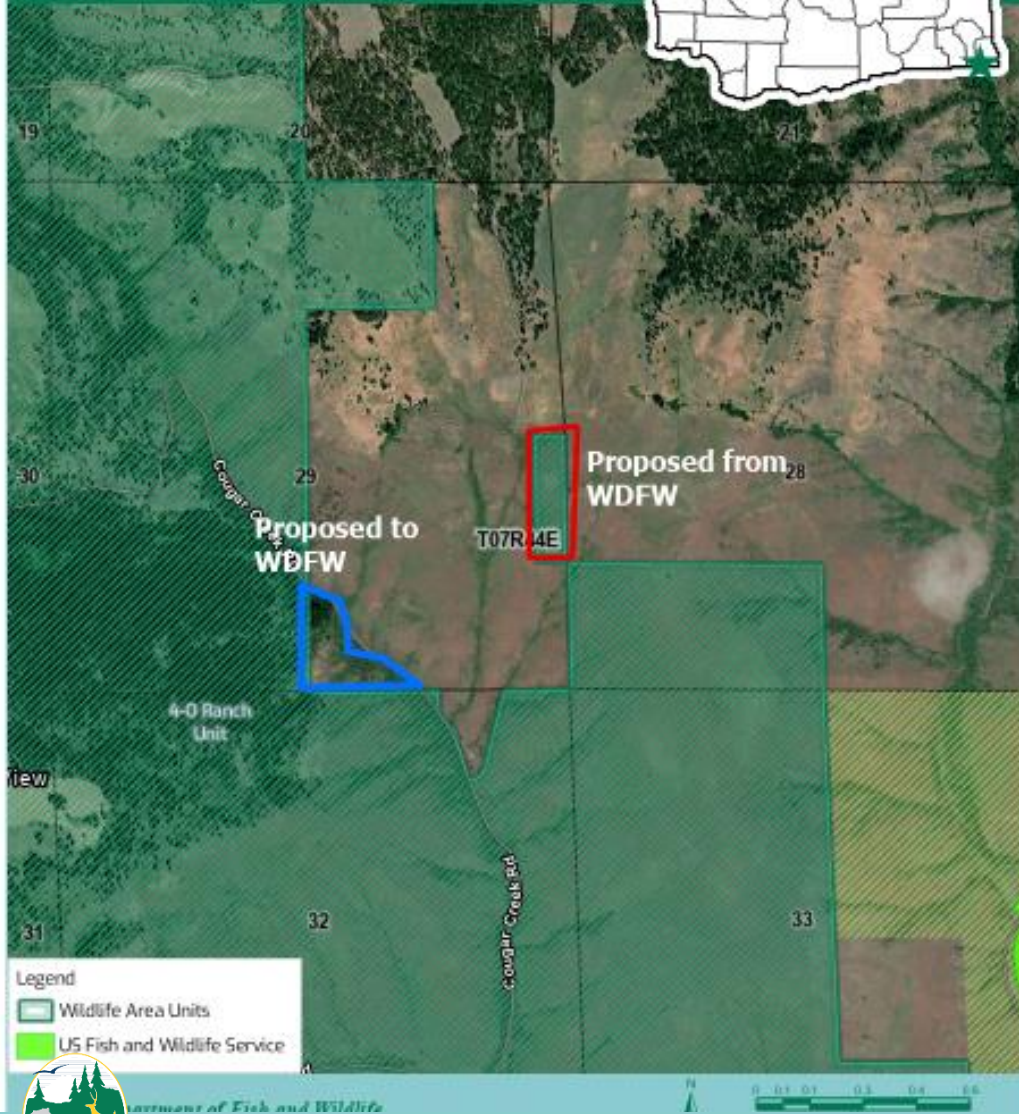
Major Public Lands

- Federal - Forest Service Wilderness
- Federal - Forest Service
- Federal - National Park Service
- Federal - Other
- State - DNR
- State - Other
- Municipal
- Tribal

Chief Joseph Exchange

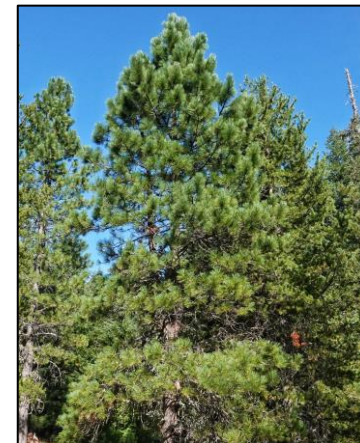
County: Asotin

Parcel Map



Chief Joseph Exchange, Asotin County

- WDFW Acres - 10
- Exchange Acres -13
- 4 –O Unit
- Chief Joseph Wildlife Area



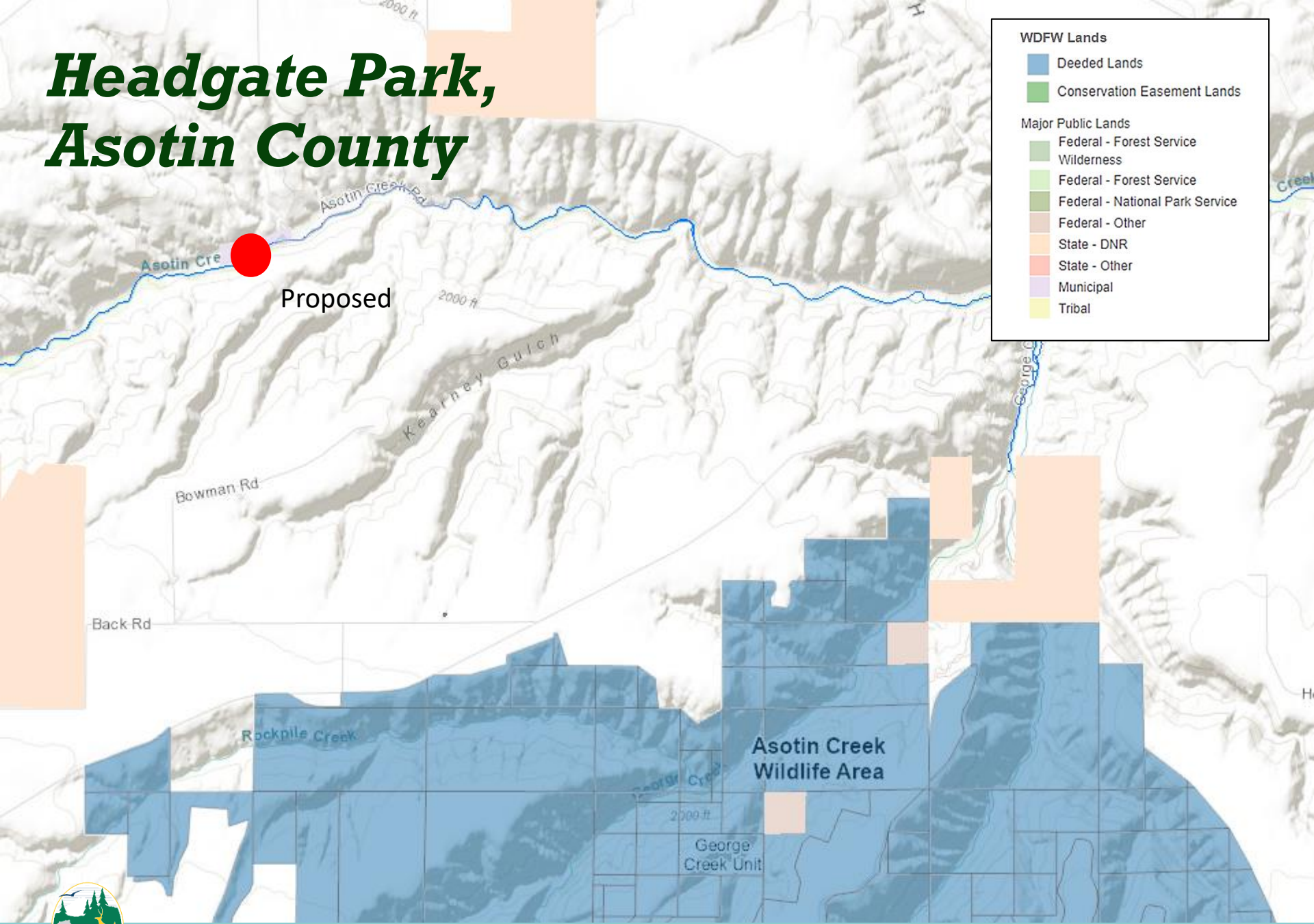


Chief Joseph Exchange, Asotin County

- WDFW property has a spring that exchange landowner uses for livestock
- Exchange owner has 13 acres inside the boundary fence of the WLA
- Simplifies landownership and management
- Habitat: curl leaf mahogany stands, native grassland, Ponderosa pine woodlands
- Species: Elk, mule deer, cougar, big horn sheep, grouse, steelhead
- Recreation: Removes an inaccessible 10-acre parcel and provides 13-acre parcel the public can easily access for a variety of activities including hunting and hiking



Headgate Park, Asotin County



Headgate Park

County: Asotin



Headgate Park, Asotin County

- 28 Acres
- Water Access Area
- Asotin Creek Wildlife Area



Headgate Park, Asotin County

- Habitat: riparian, grasslands
- Species: steelhead, bull trout, elk
- Recreation: Wildlife viewing, serves as a starting point for hunting and is a popular recreation site for existing fishpond and Asotin Creek



Big Valley Addition, Okanogan County

WDFW Lands

- Deeded Lands
- Conservation Easement Lands

Major Public Lands

- Federal - Forest Service Wilderness
- Federal - Forest Service
- Federal - National Park Service
- Federal - Other
- State - DNR
- State - Other
- Municipal
- Tribal

Proposed



Big Valley Unit

Methow Wildlife Area

Rendezvous Unit

Lewis Butte

Gunn Ranch Rd

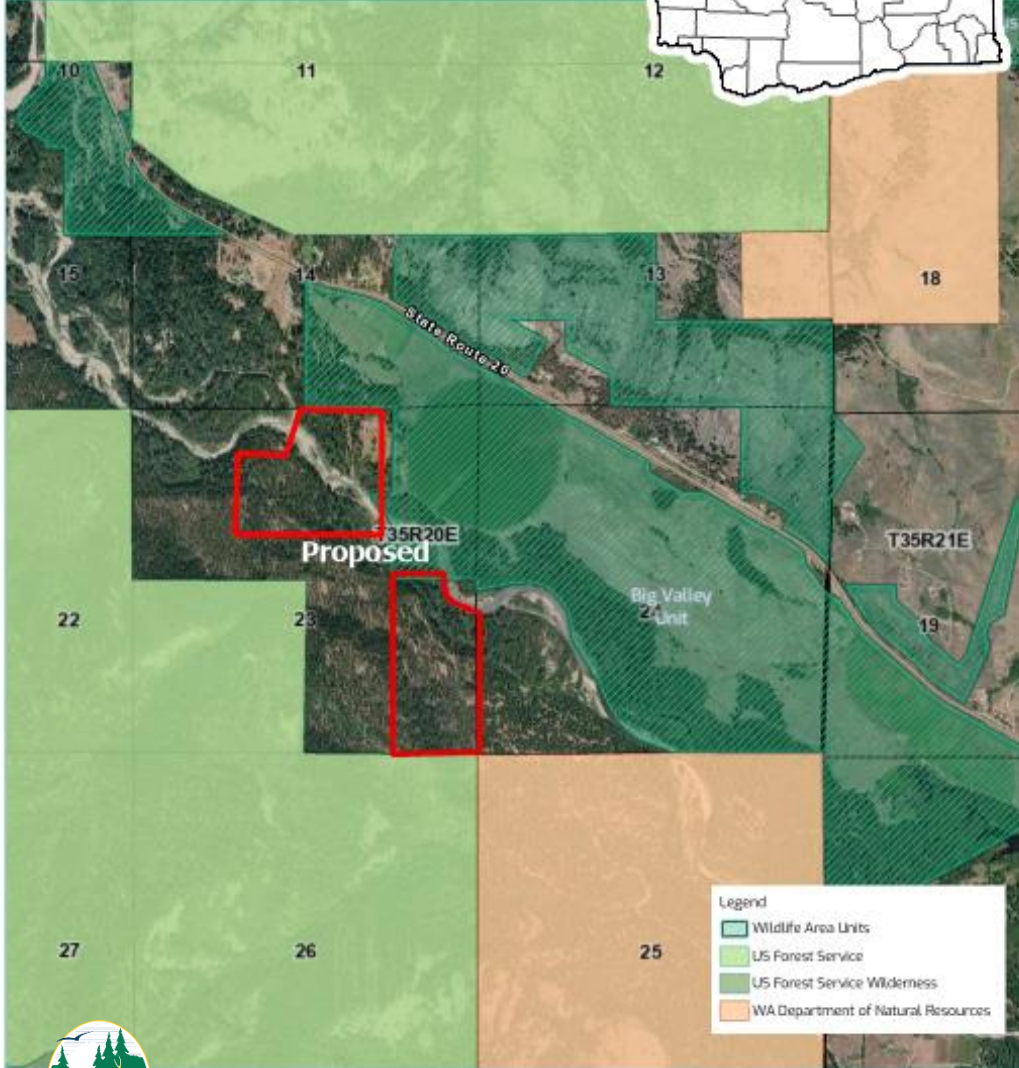
Wolf Creek Rd



Big Valley Addition

County: Okanogan

Parcel Map



Big Valley Addition, Okanogan County

- 142 acres
- Big Valley Unit
- Methow Wildlife Area





Big Valley Addition Okanogan County

- Habitat: riverine, floodplain, mixed riparian woodlands, and wetlands along the Methow River corridor.
- Species: Upper Columbia spring chinook, bull trout, rainbow trout, western gray squirrel, mule deer, and white-tailed deer
- Recreation: provides ample wildlife appreciation, hunting, fishing, and year-round trail related recreation
- Conservation Partner: Methow Conservancy



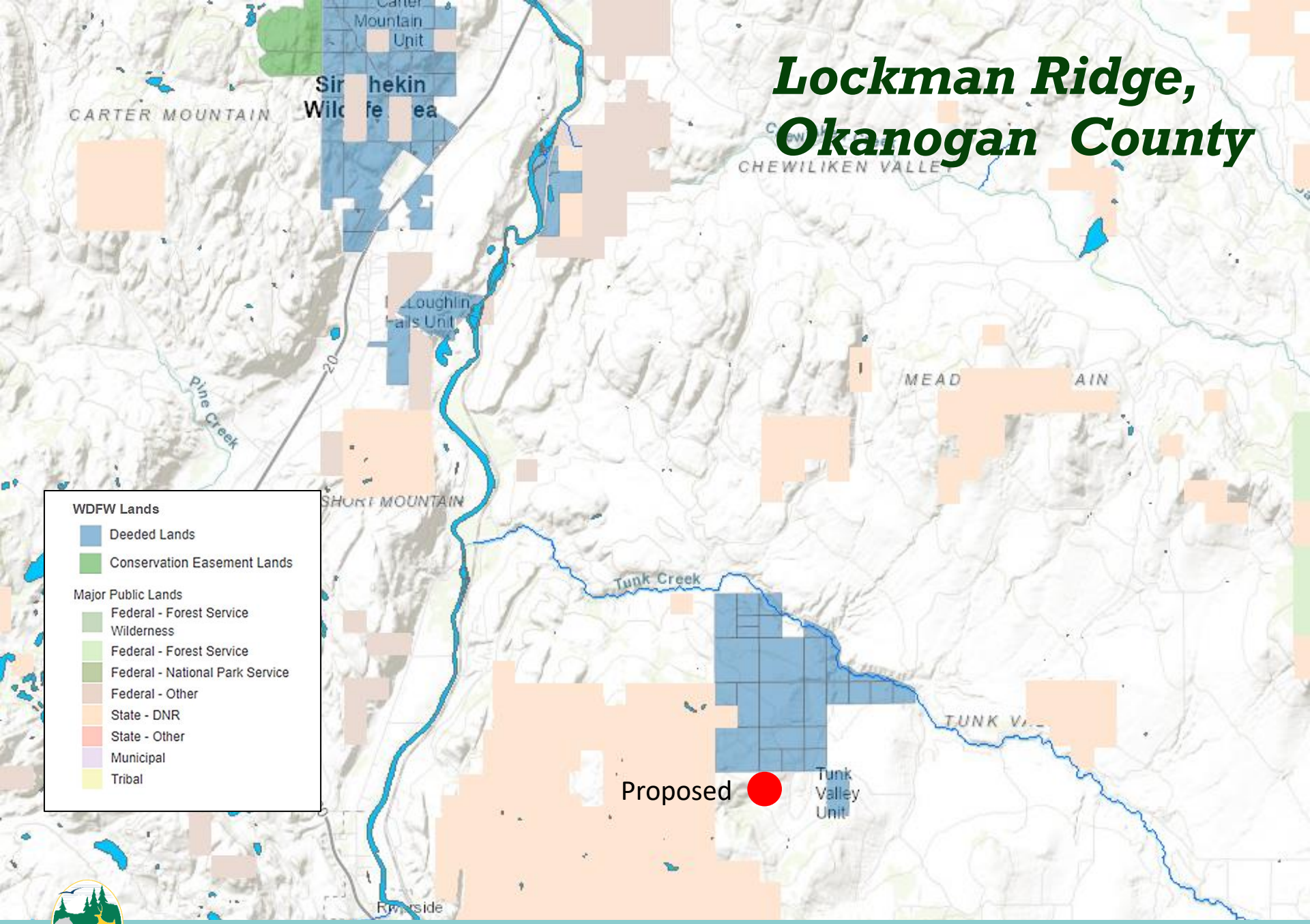
Lockman Ridge, Okanogan County

WDFW Lands

- Deeded Lands
- Conservation Easement Lands

Major Public Lands

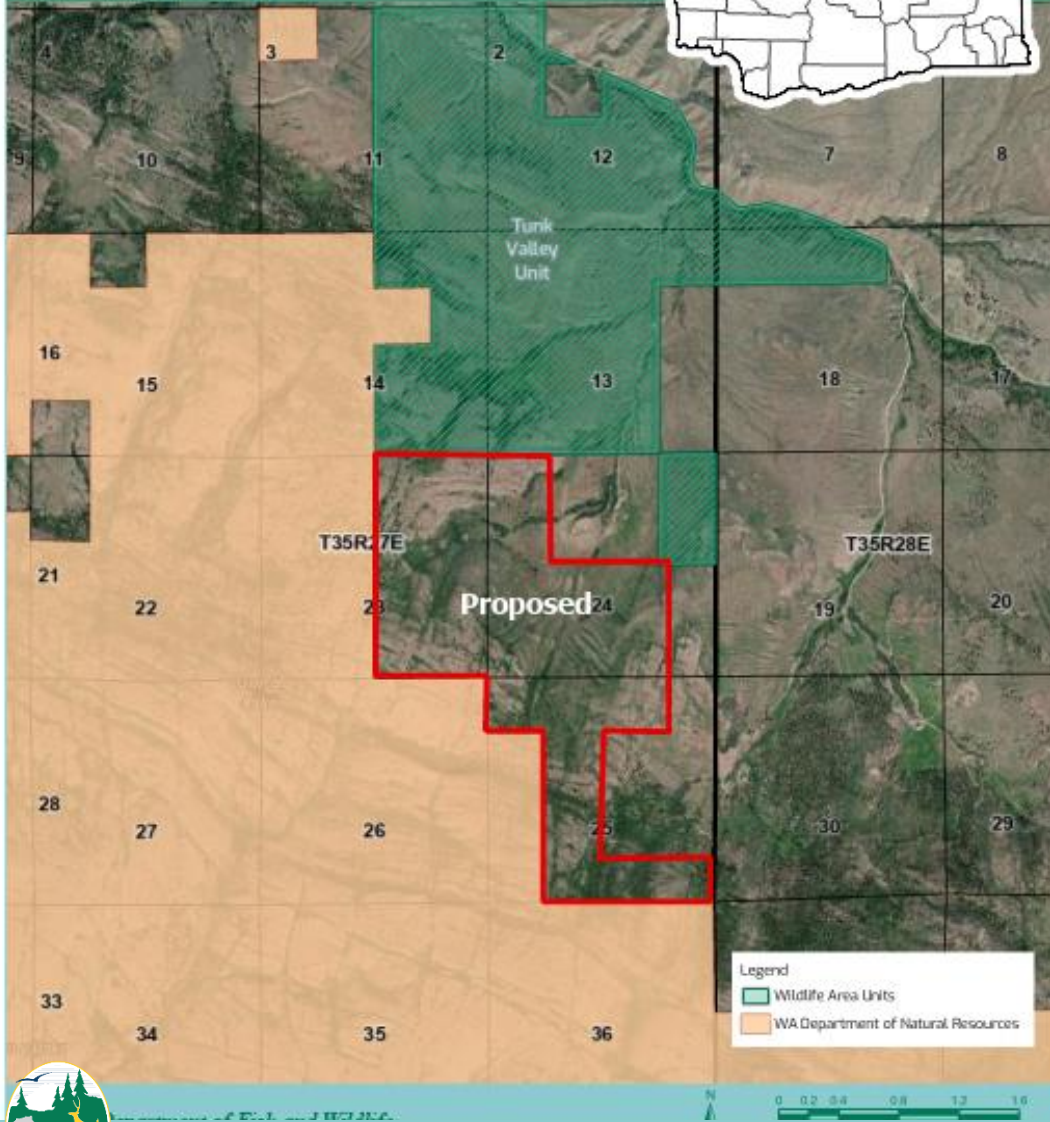
- Federal - Forest Service Wilderness
- Federal - Forest Service
- Federal - National Park Service
- Federal - Other
- State - DNR
- State - Other
- Municipal
- Tribal



Lockman Ridge

County: Okanogan

Parcel Map



Lockman Ridge, Okanogan County

- 960 acres
- Tunk Valley Unit
- Scotch Creek Wildlife Area



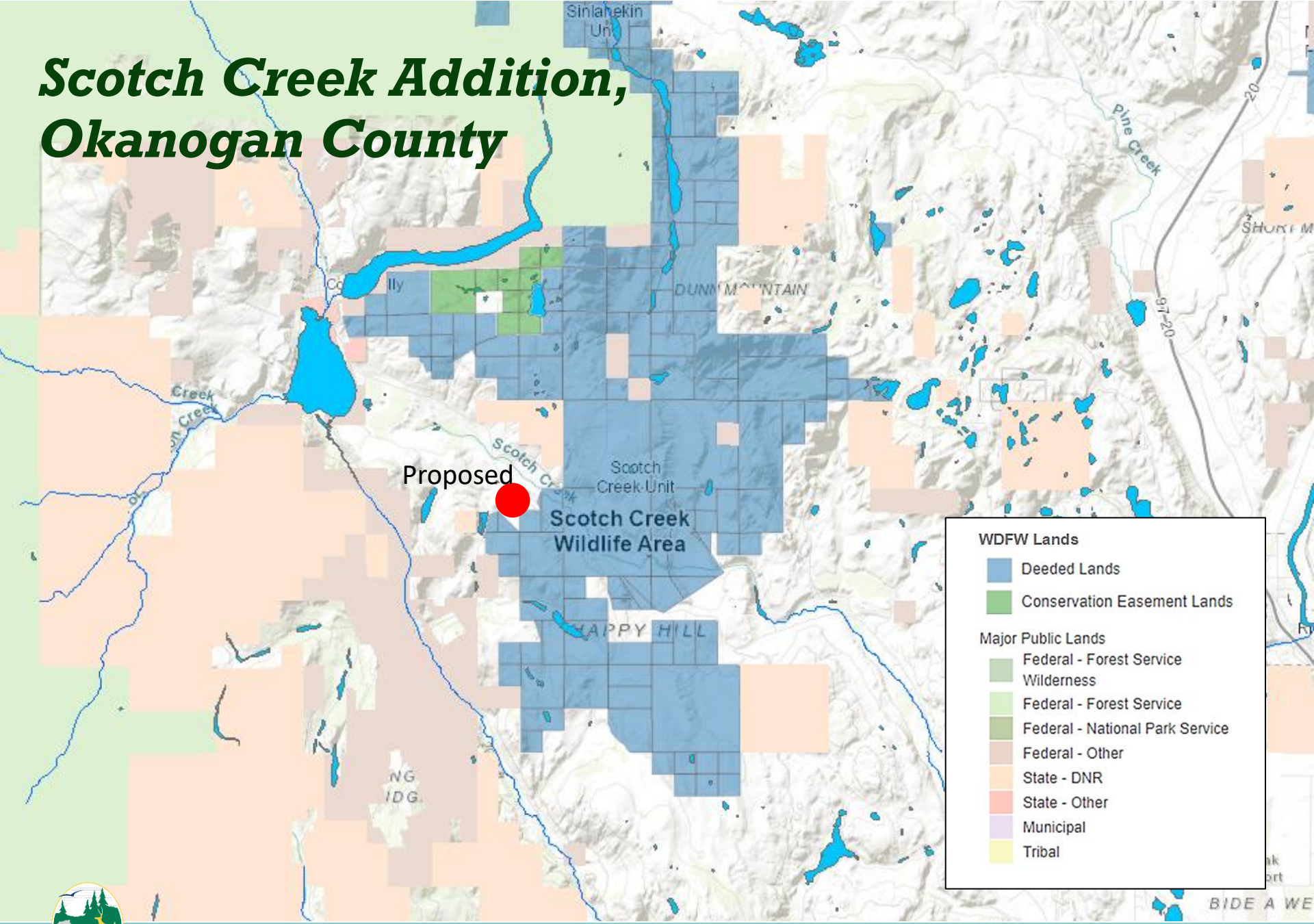


Lockman Ridge, Okanogan County

- Habitat: critical biodiversity corridor comprised of mixed habitats such as shrubsteppe, mixed conifer, and riparian.
- Species: elk and deer, including mule deer winter range, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, golden eagle
- Recreation: Ample wildlife-related recreation in the forms of hiking, biking, horseback riding, and nature viewing and high-quality hunting opportunities, particularly big game.
- Conservation Partner: Conservation Northwest



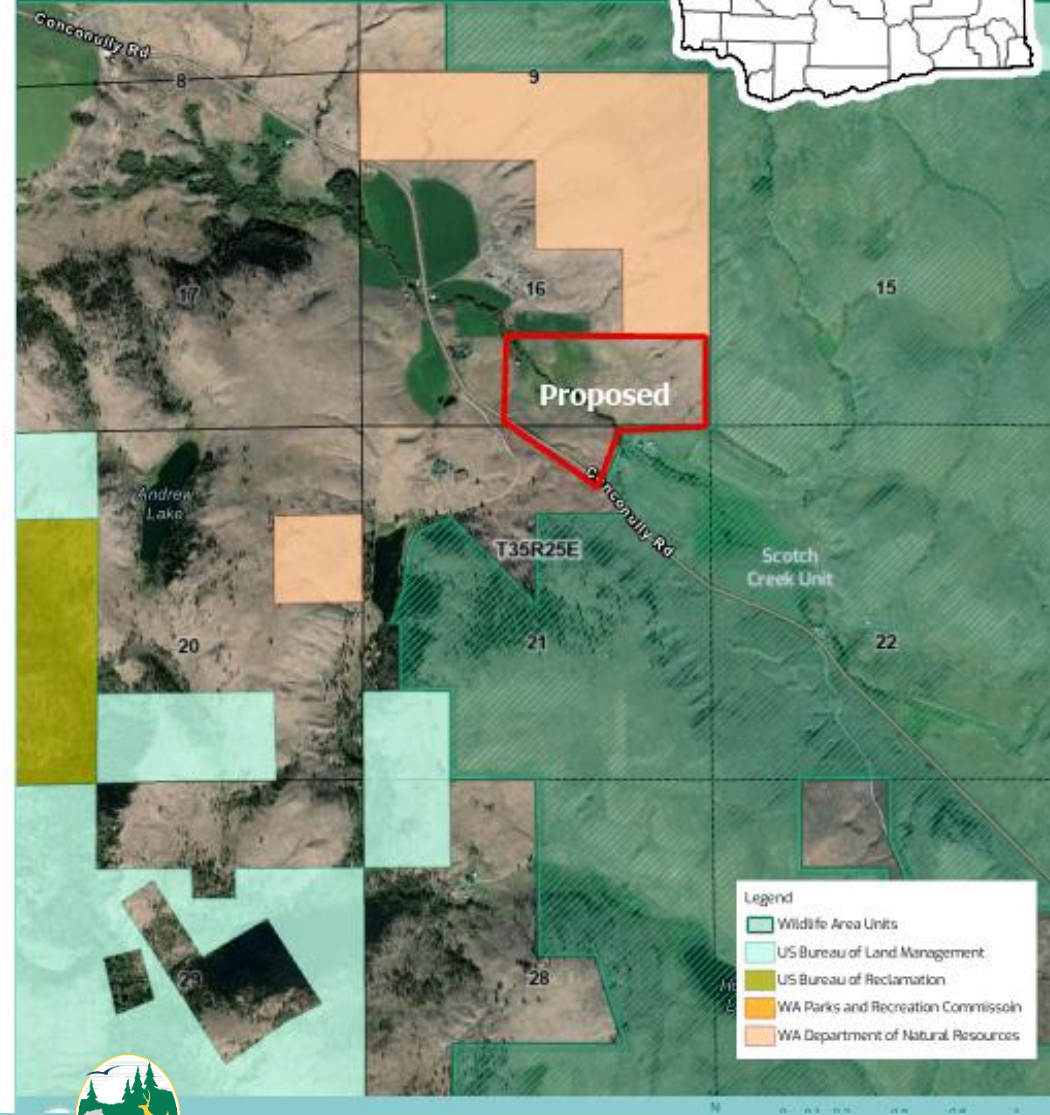
Scotch Creek Addition, Okanogan County



Scotch Creek Addition

County: Okanogan

Parcel Map



Scotch Creek Addition, Okanogan County

- 93 acres
- Scotch Creek Unit
- Scotch Creek Wildlife Area





Scotch Creek Addition, Okanogan County

- Habitat: grassland, birch dominated riparian, emergent wetland
- Species: white-tailed deer, mule deer, primary winter forage for State Endangered Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, which actively use these parcels, gray wolf
- Recreation: excellent wildlife viewing and hunting opportunities and will give the public the chance to experience high-quality riparian and riverine habitats



Happy Hill, Okanogan County

WDFW Lands

- Deeded Lands
- Conservation Easement Lands

Major Public Lands

- Federal - Forest Service Wilderness
- Federal - Forest Service
- Federal - National Park Service
- Federal - Other
- State - DNR
- State - Other
- Municipal
- Tribal

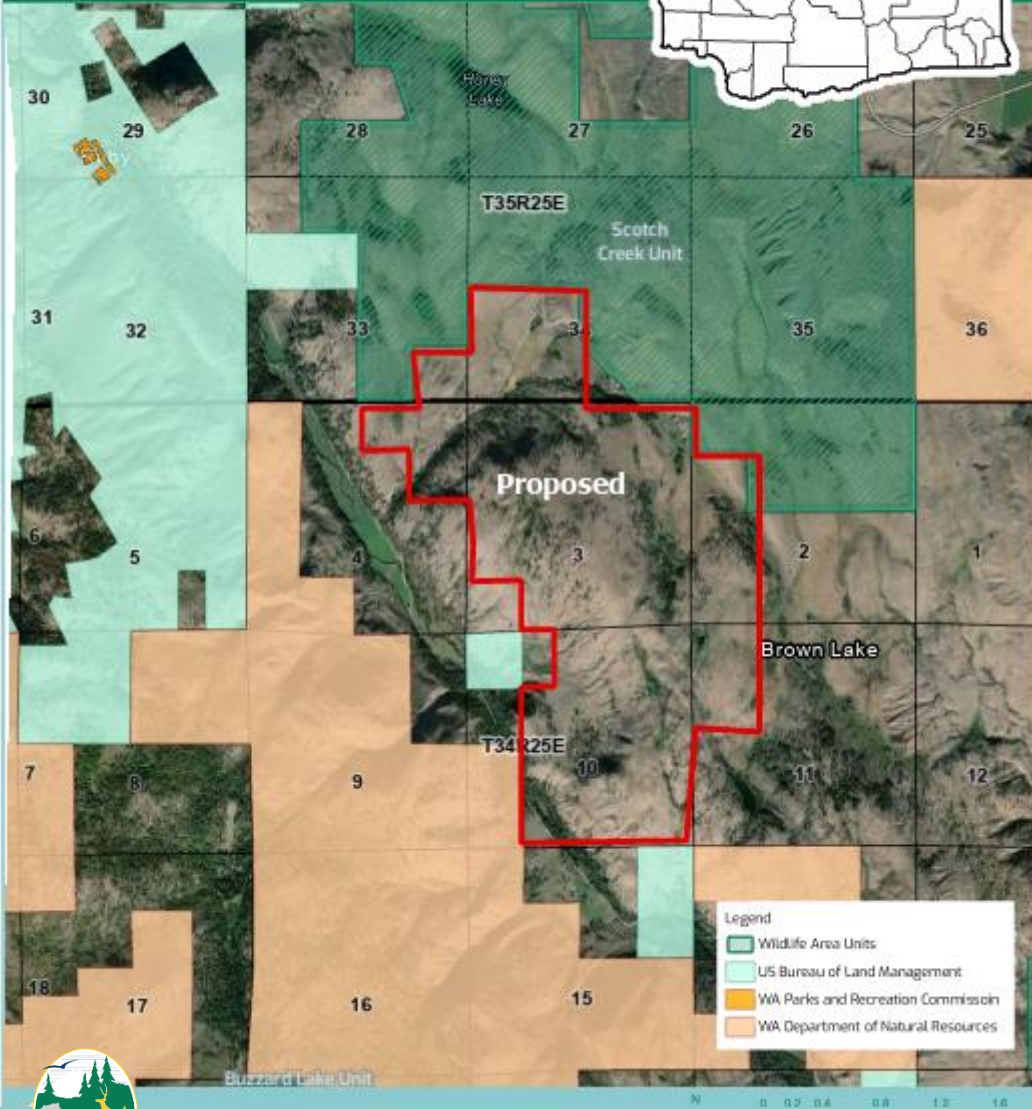
Proposed



Happy Hill

County: Okanogan

Parcel Map



Happy Hill, Okanogan County

- 1372 acres
- Scotch Creek Unit
- Scotch Creek Wildlife Area



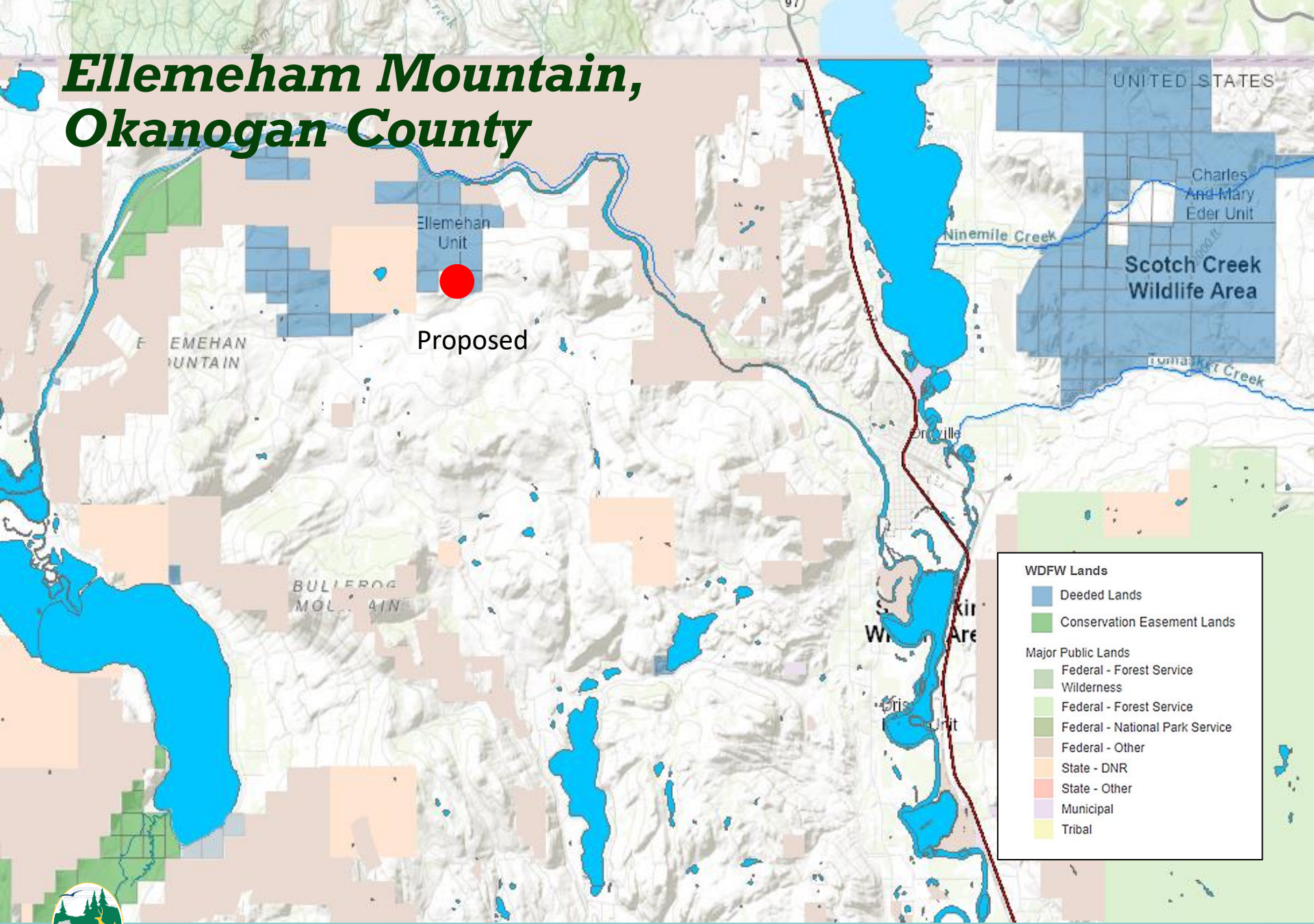


Happy Hill, Okanogan County

- Habitat: critical shrubsteppe, emergent wetland
- Species: mule deer winter and migratory corridors, supports the recovery of State Endangered Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, gray wolf, and golden eagle
- Recreation: Wildlife viewing, hunting, and edible plant foraging



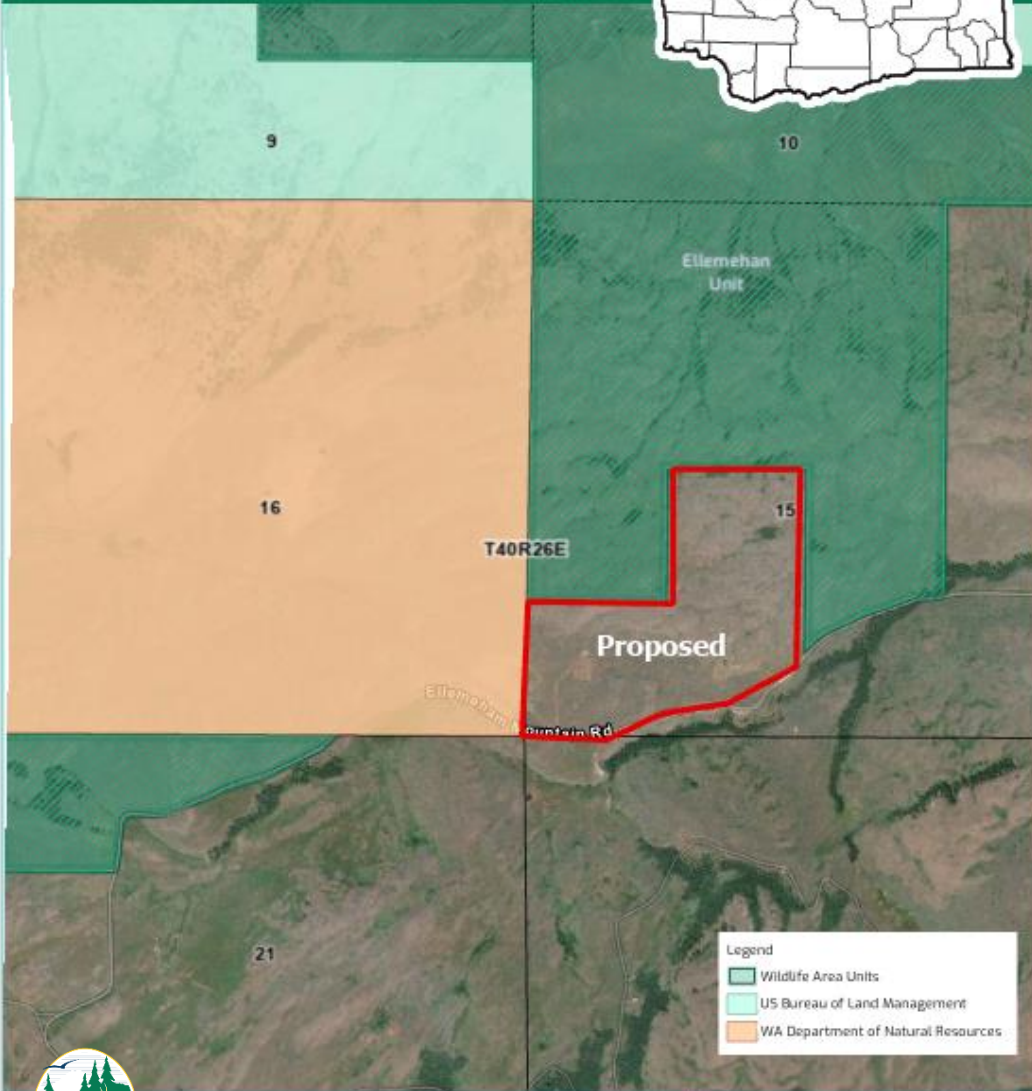
Ellemeham Mountain, Okanogan County



Ellemehan Mountain

County: Okanogan

Parcel Map



Ellemehan Mountain, Okanogan County

- 109 Acres
- Ellemehan Unit
- Scotch Creek Wildlife Area

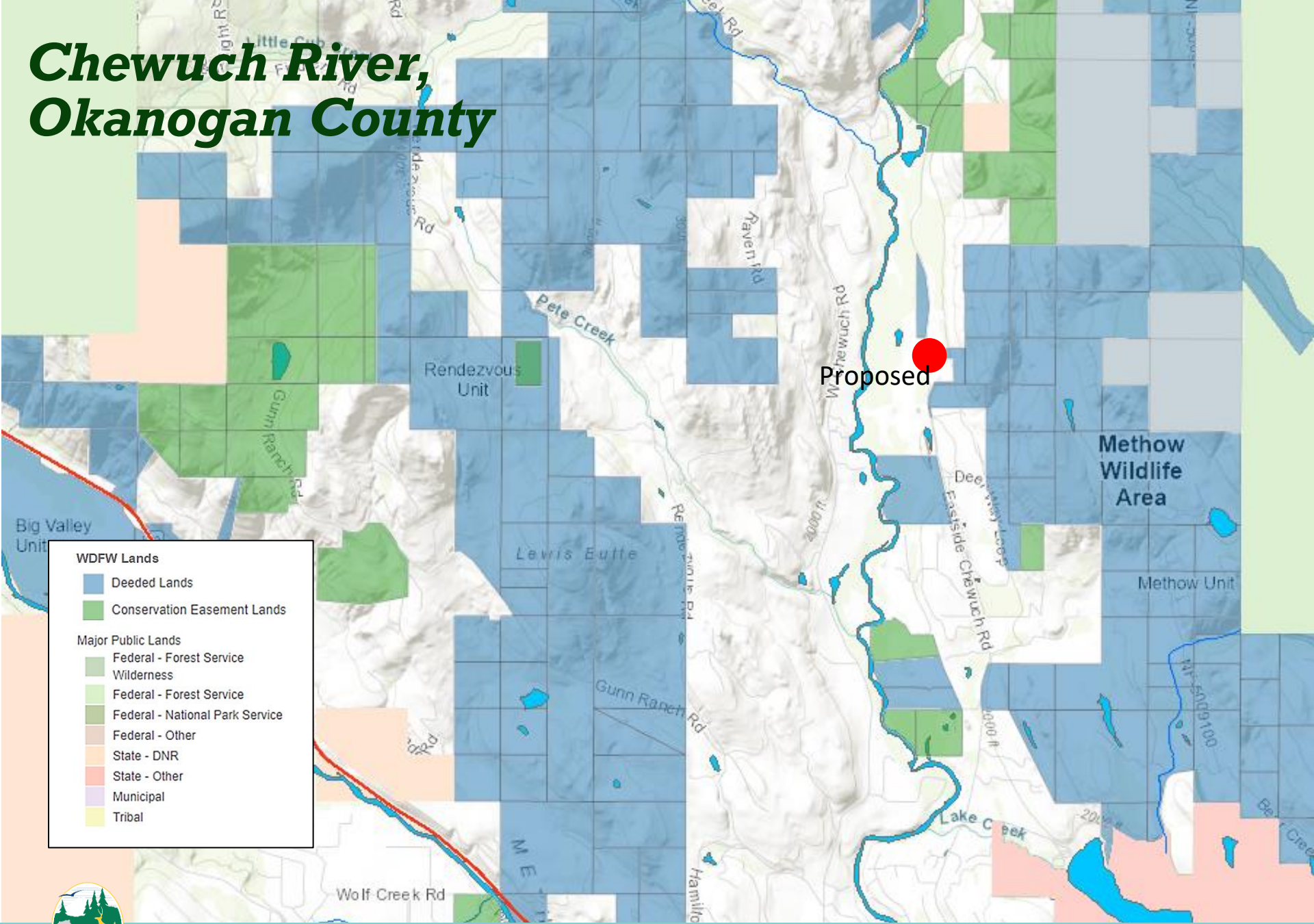


Ellemeham Mountain, Okanogan County

- Improves the management of the Ellemeham Unit and landscape connectivity
- Supports working land with a grazing lease
- Habitat: high quality shrubsteppe, riparian, aspen stands
- Species: mule deer, wolves, golden eagles, Townsend big eared bat
- Recreation: wildlife viewing, hunting opportunities



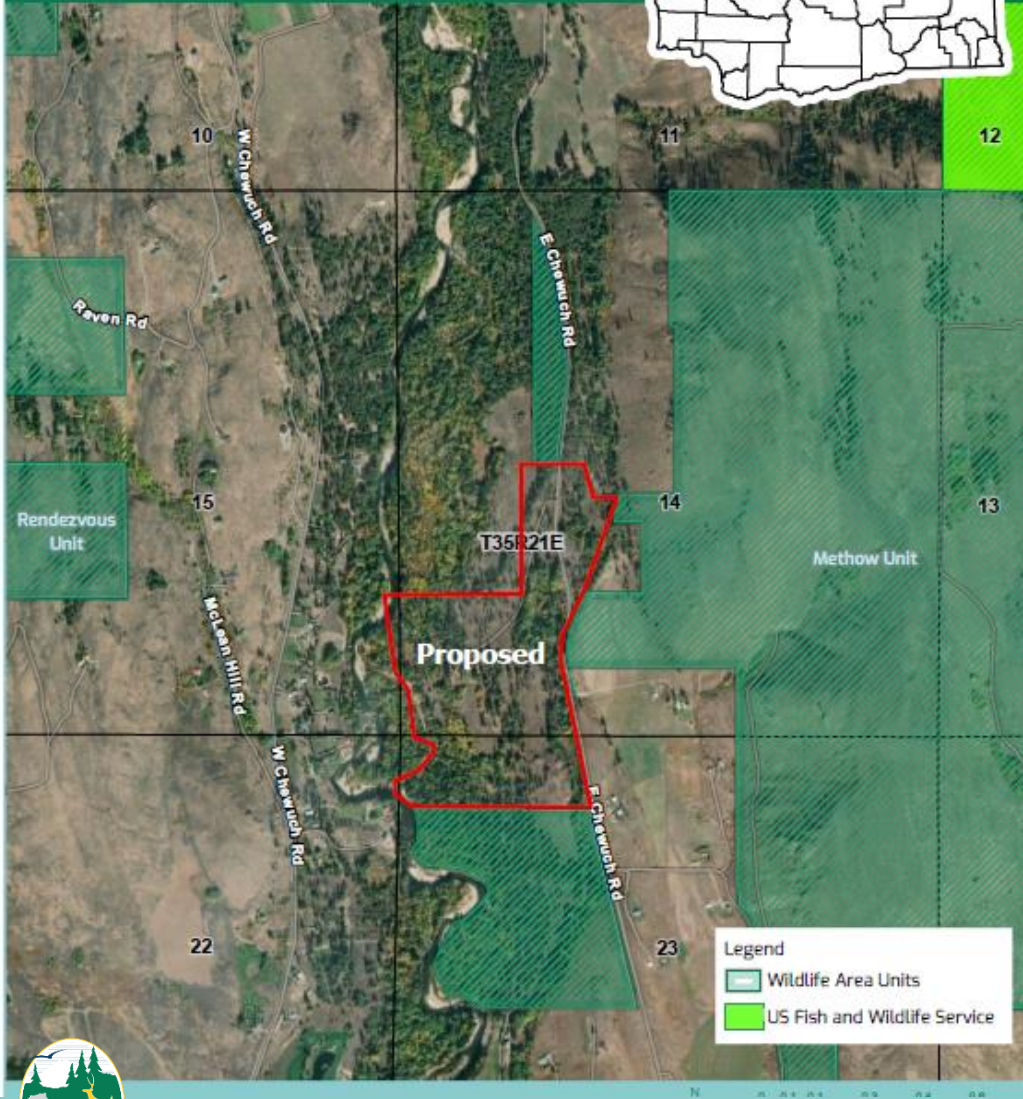
Chewuch River, Okanogan County



Chewuch River

County: Okanogan

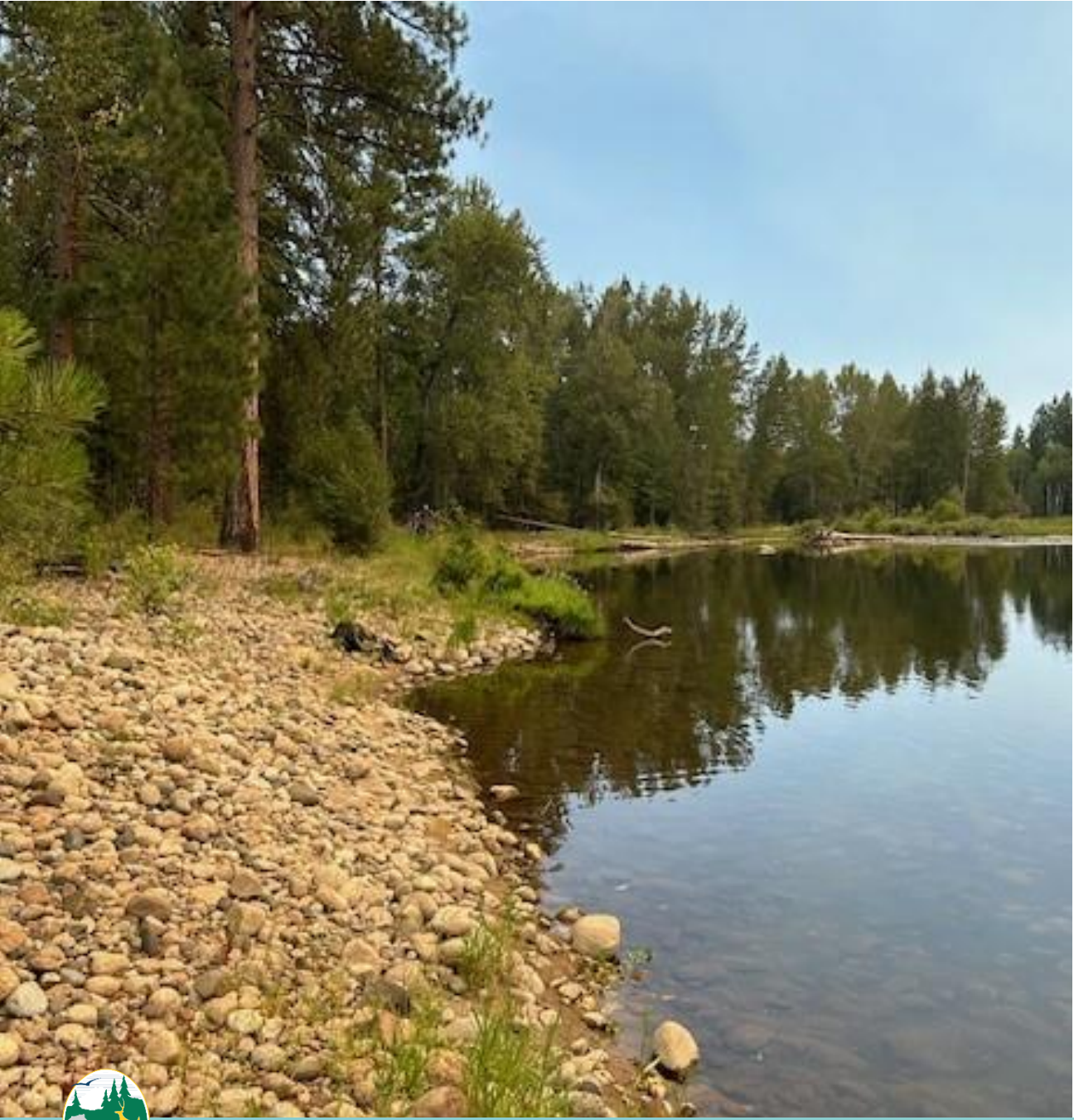
Parcel Map



Chewuch River, Okanogan County

- 90 acres
- Methow Unit
- Methow Wildlife Area



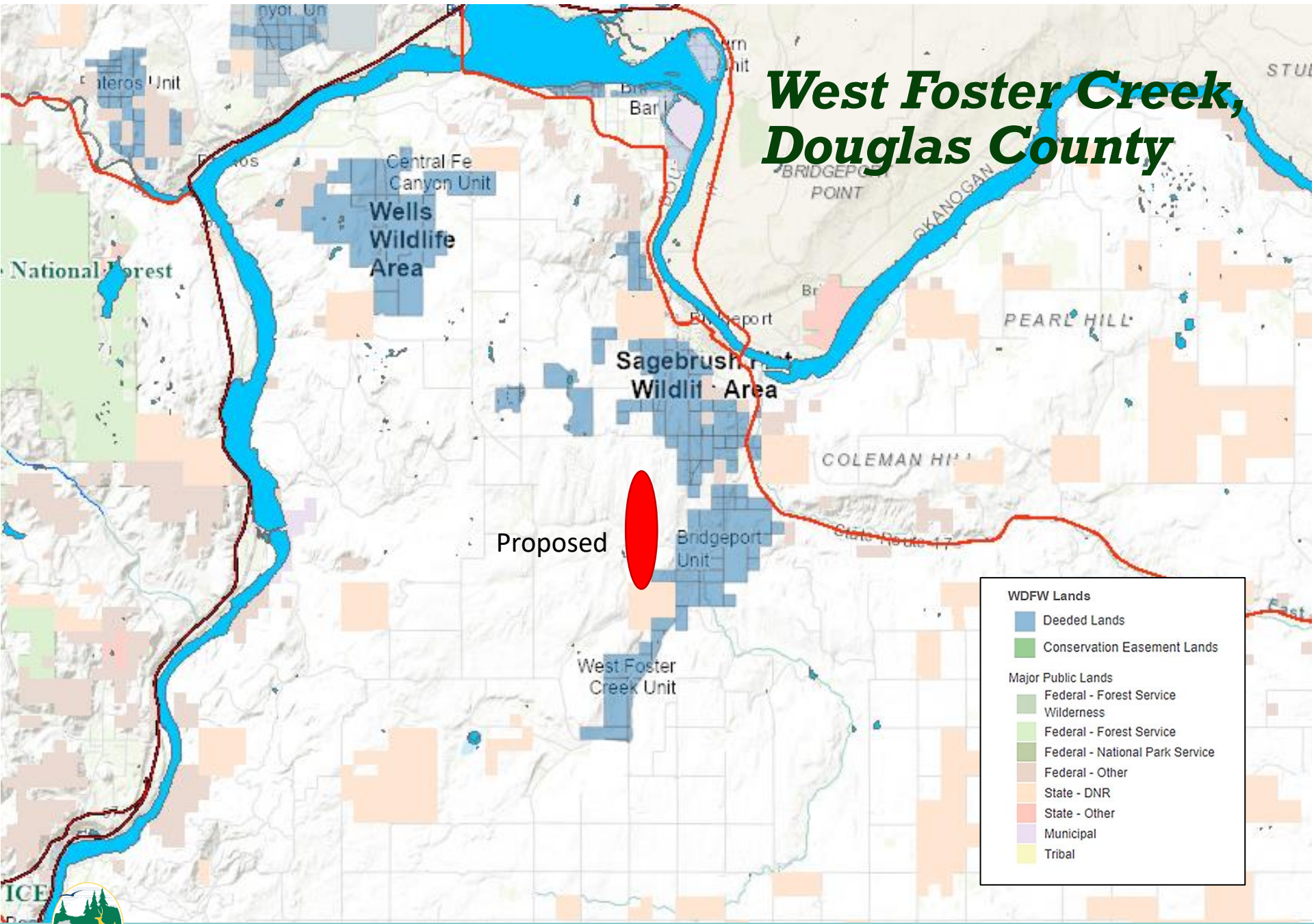


Chewuch River, Okanogan County

- Habitat: forested wetland, riverine floodplain
- Species: mule deer, western gray squirrel, Sandhill crane, bull trout, rainbow trout, Upper Columbia steelhead
- Recreation: wildlife viewing, hunting, fishing
- Conservation Partner: Methow Conservancy



West Foster Creek, Douglas County



Proposed

WDFW Lands

- Deeded Lands
- Conservation Easement Lands

Major Public Lands

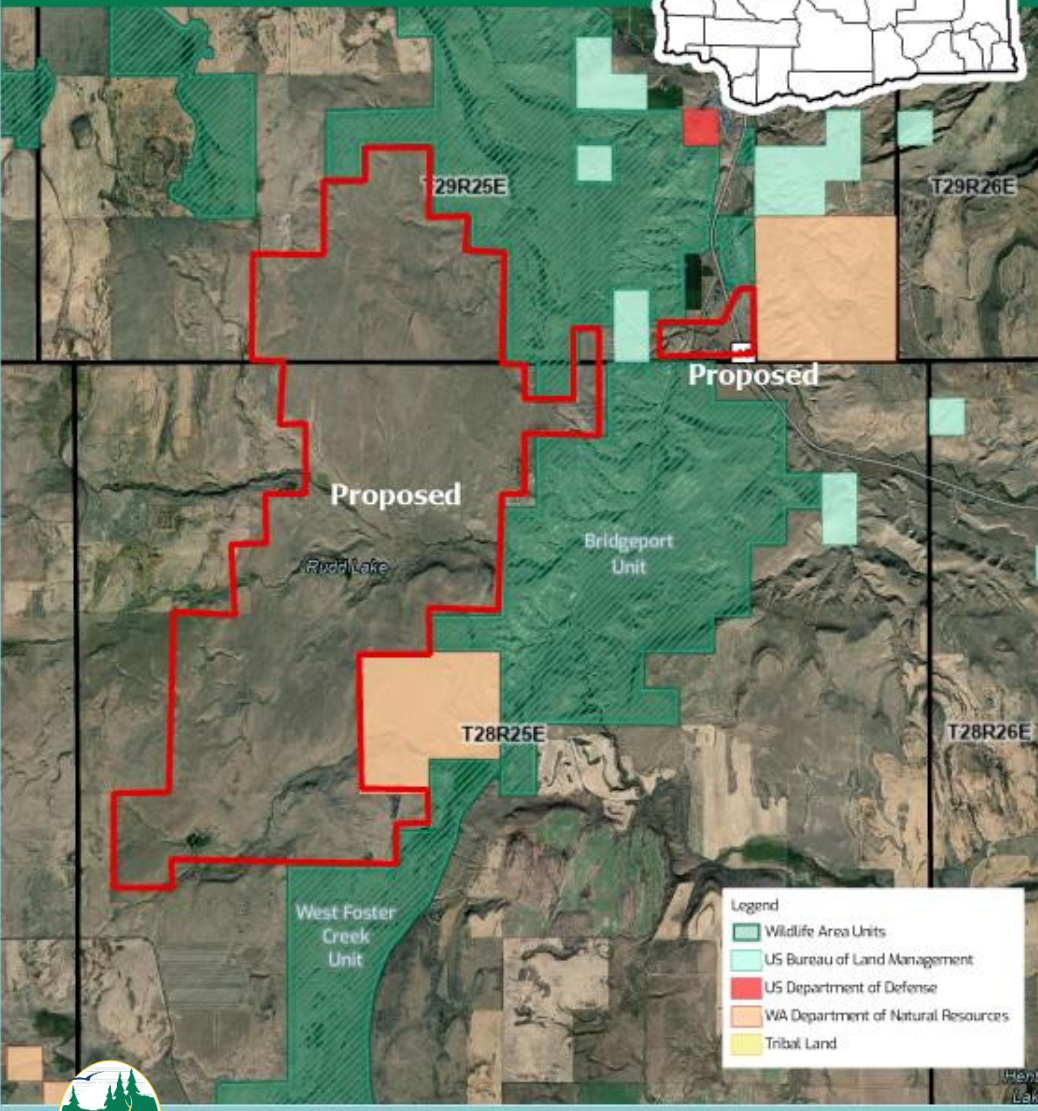
- Federal - Forest Service Wilderness
- Federal - Forest Service
- Federal - National Park Service
- Federal - Other
- State - DNR
- State - Other
- Municipal
- Tribal



West Foster Creek

County: Douglas

Parcel Map



West Foster Creek, Douglas County

- 5,100 acres
- West Foster Creek Unit
- Sagebrush Flat Wildlife Area

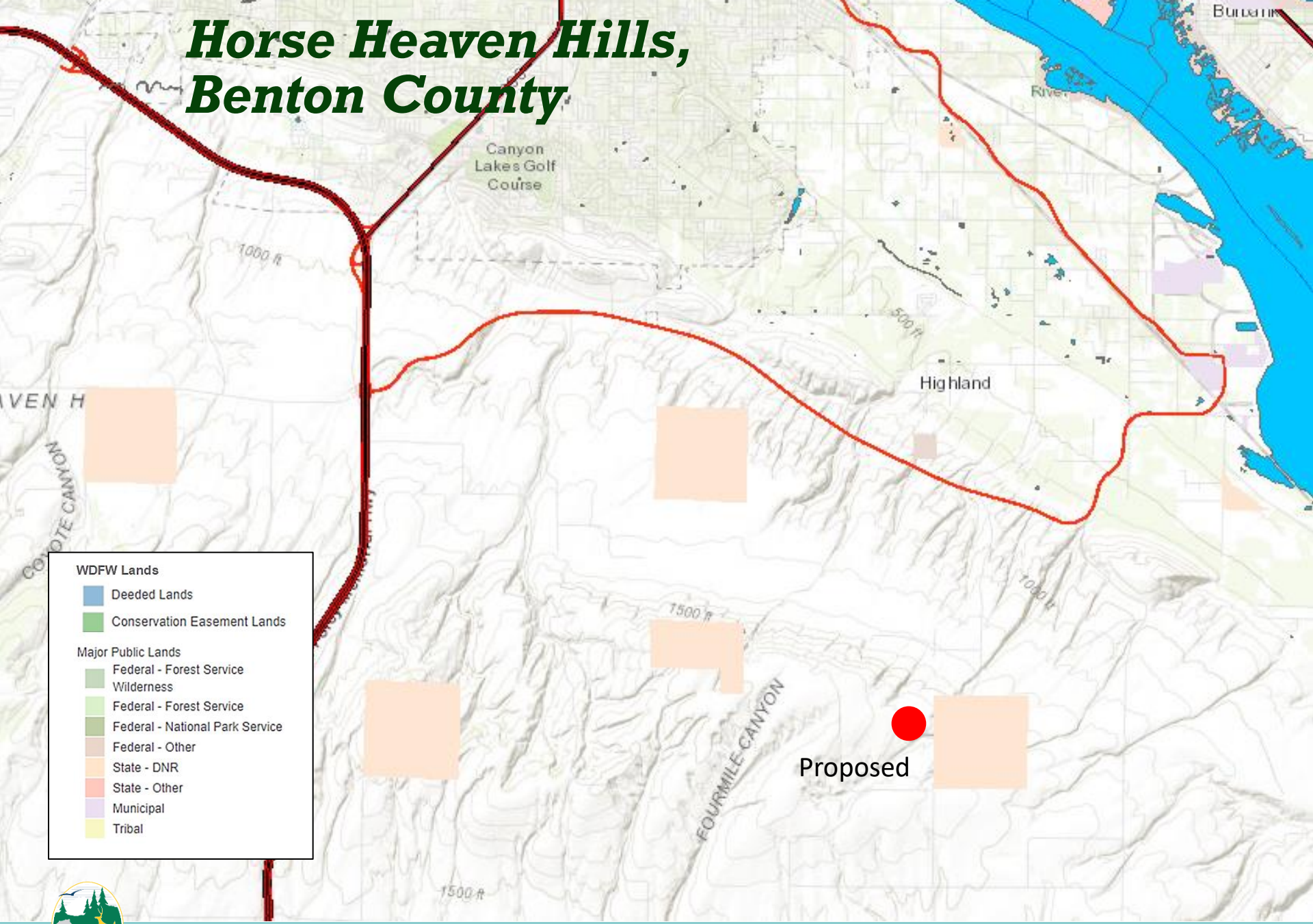


West Foster Creek, Douglas County

- Habitat: steppe & shrubsteppe
- Species: Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, greater sage grouse
- Recreation: wildlife viewing and hunting opportunities



Horse Heaven Hills, Benton County



Horse Heaven Hills

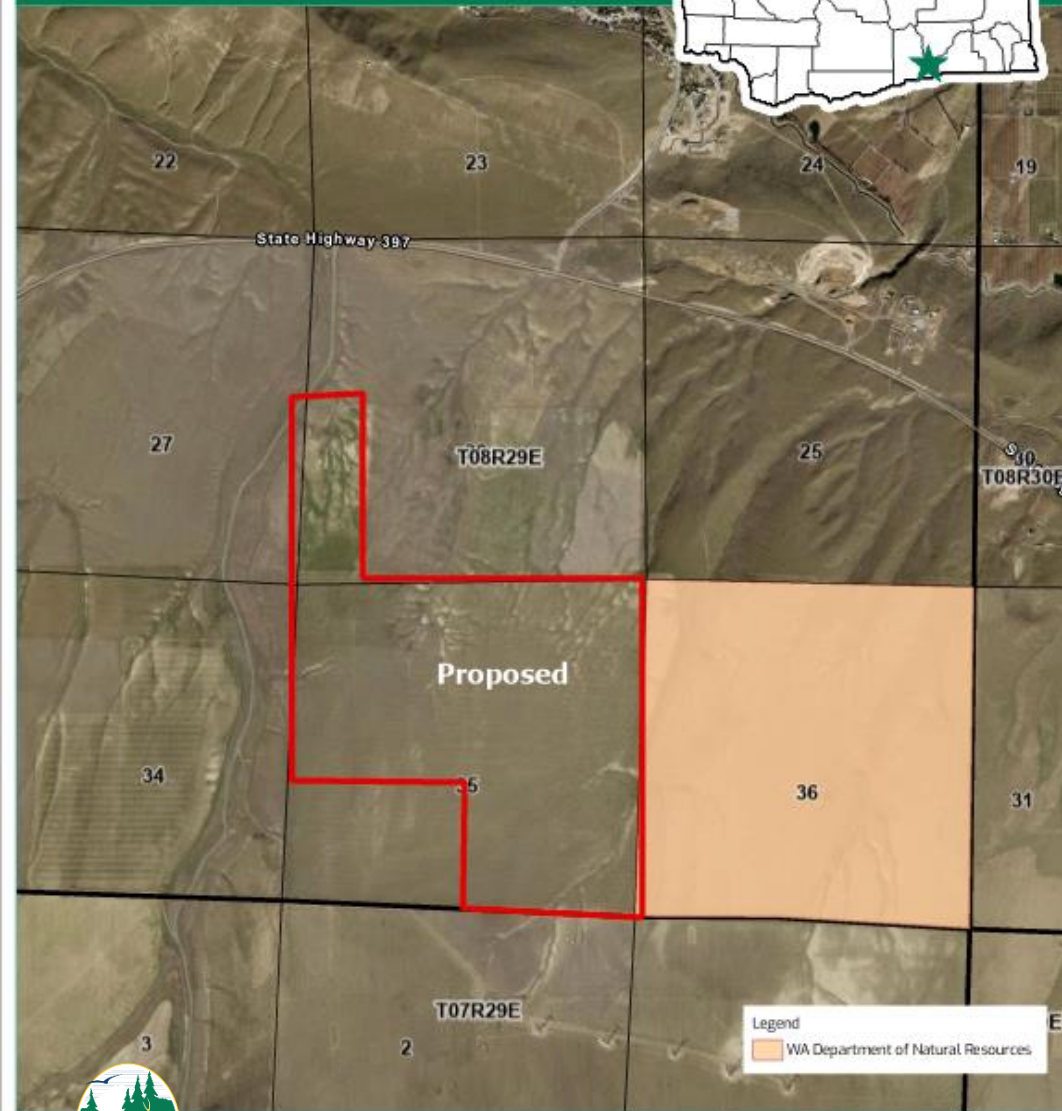
County: Benton

Parcel Map



Horse Heaven Hills, Benton County

- 535 acres
- Horse Heaven Hills Unit
- Sunnyside-Snake River Wildlife Area



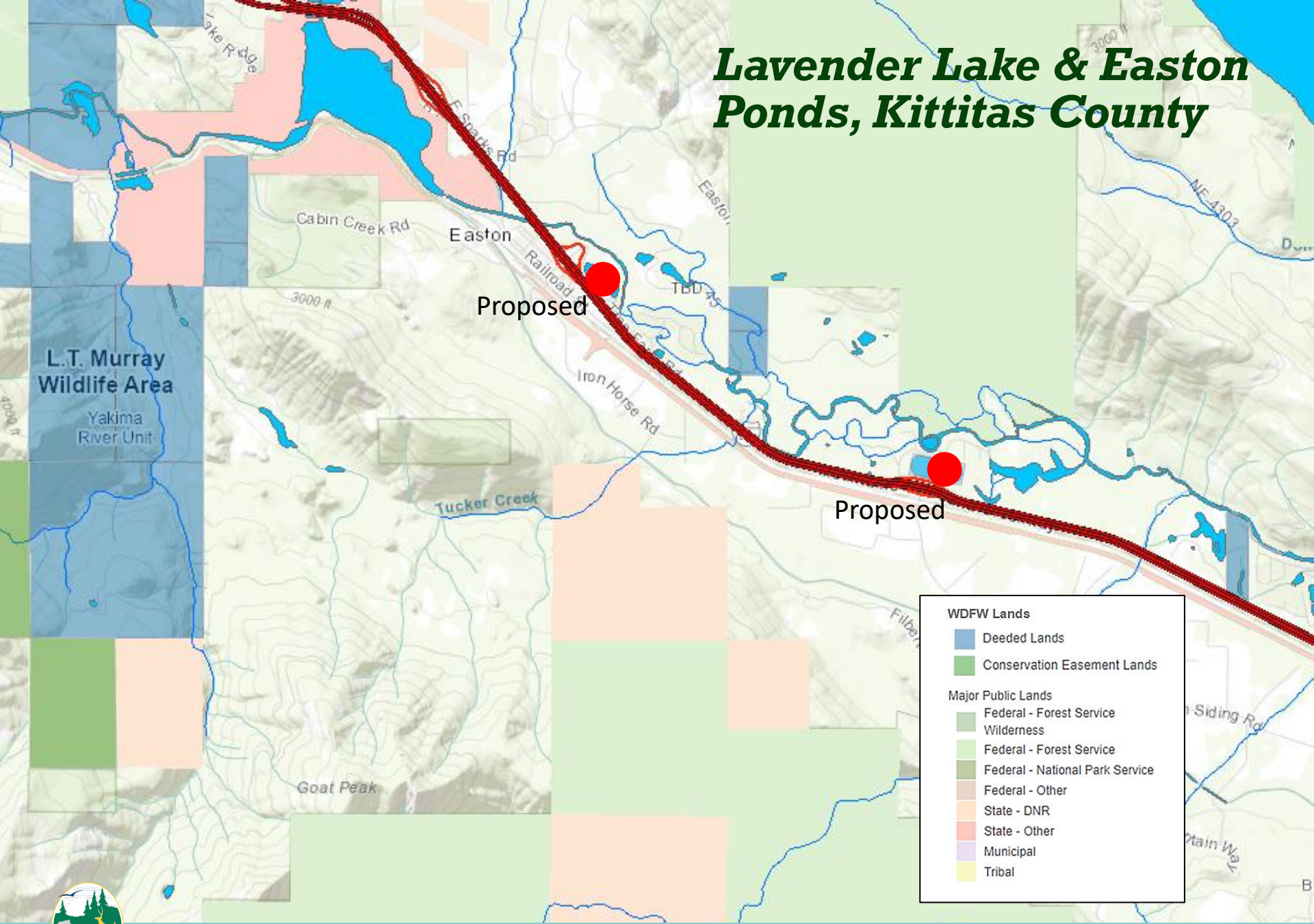


Horse Heaven Hills, Benton County

- Habitat: shrubsteppe
- Species: burrowing owl, ferruginous hawk, American badger, loggerhead shrike, Townsend ground squirrel
- Recreation: hiking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing



Lavender Lake & Easton Ponds, Kittitas County



WDFW Lands

- Deeded Lands
- Conservation Easement Lands

Major Public Lands

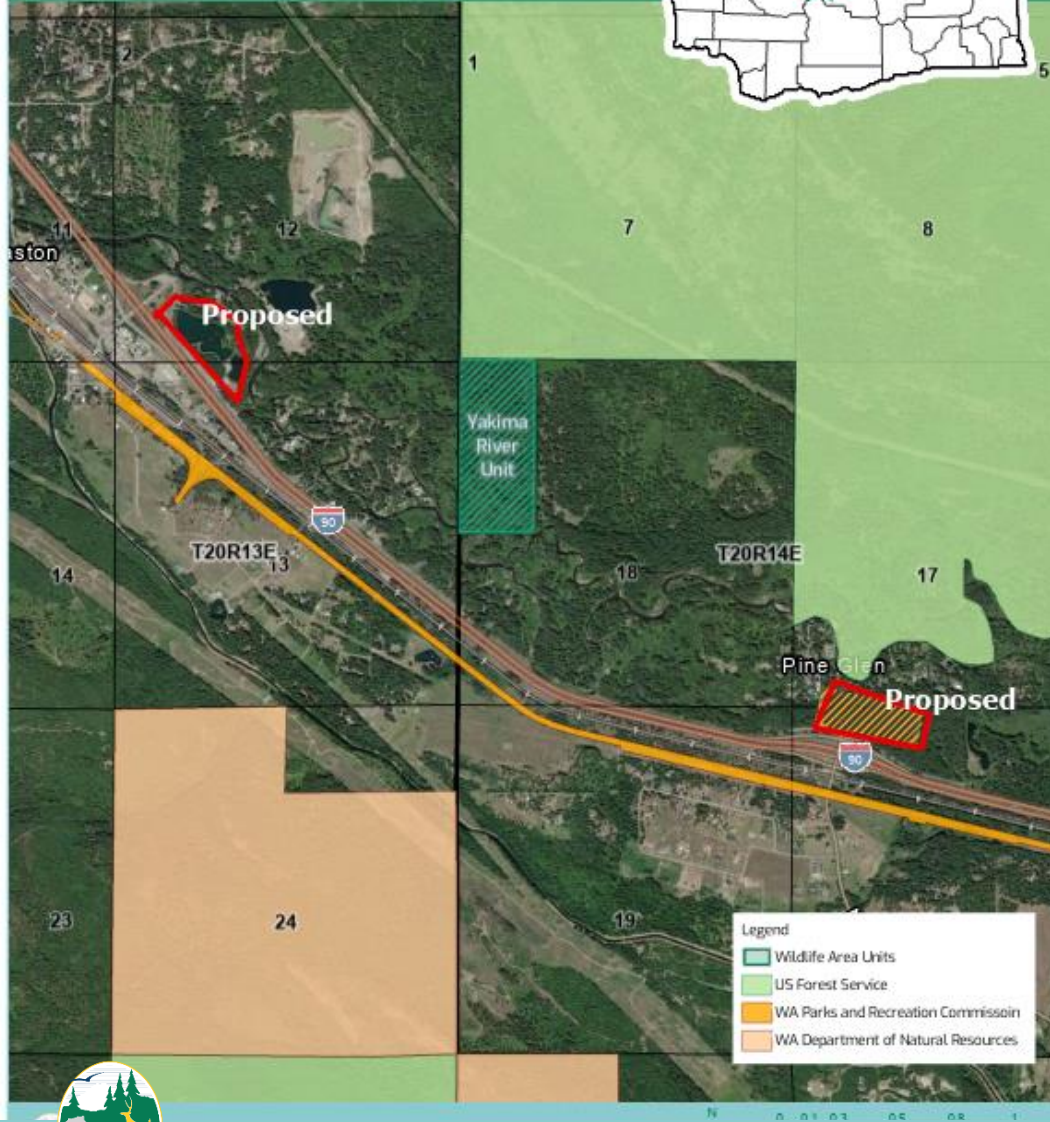
- Federal - Forest Service Wilderness
- Federal - Forest Service
- Federal - National Park Service
- Federal - Other
- State - DNR
- State - Other
- Municipal
- Tribal



Lavender Lake & Easton Ponds

County: Kittitas

Parcel Map



Lavender Lake & Easton Ponds, Kittitas County

- 45 Acres
- Water Access
- Yakima River Unit
- L.T. Murray Wildlife Area



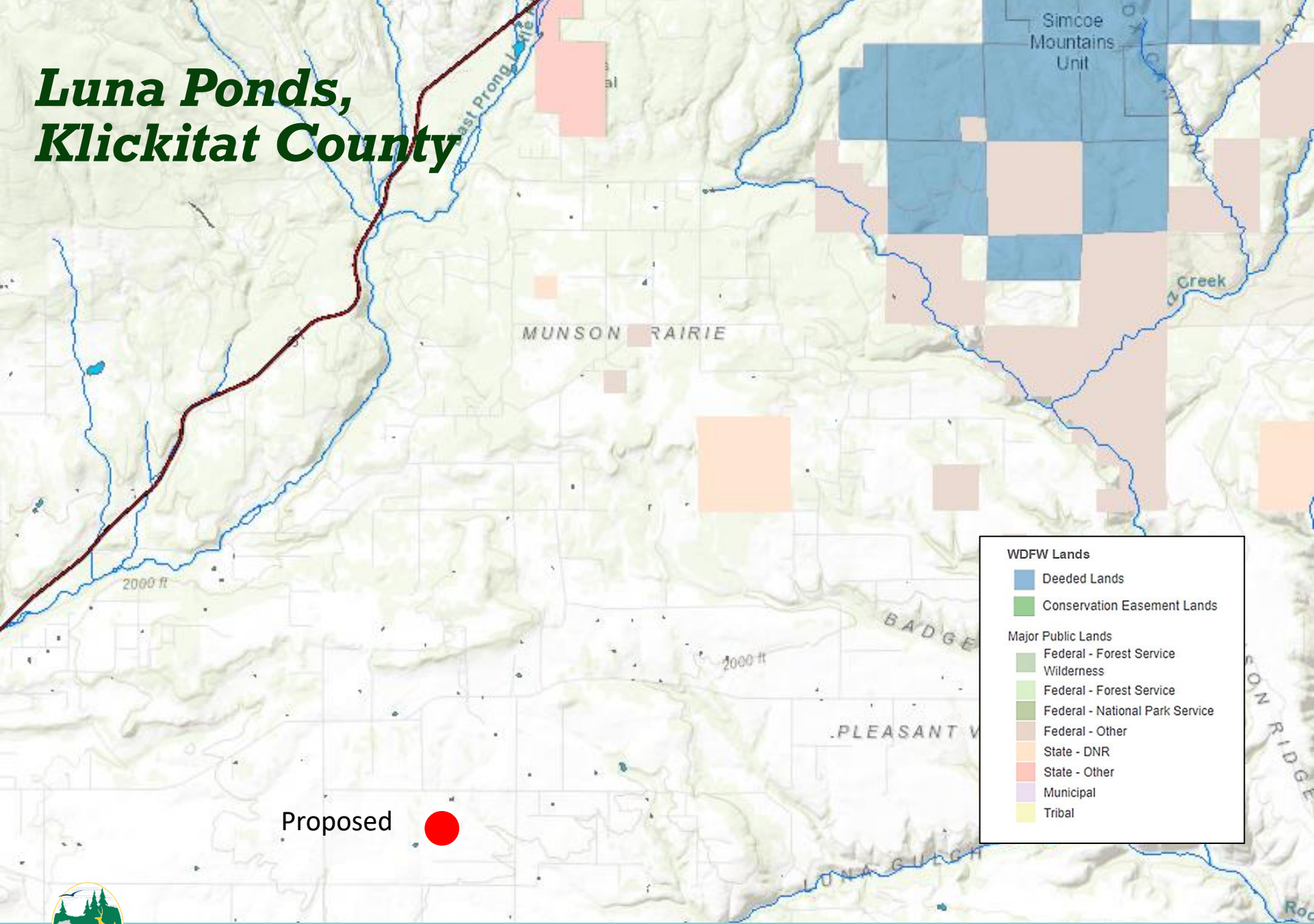


Lavender Lake & Easton Ponds, Kittitas County

- Lavender Lake is under current WDFW management, owned currently by WSDOT
- Habitat: freshwater lake
- Species: rainbow trout
- Recreation: popular fishing areas



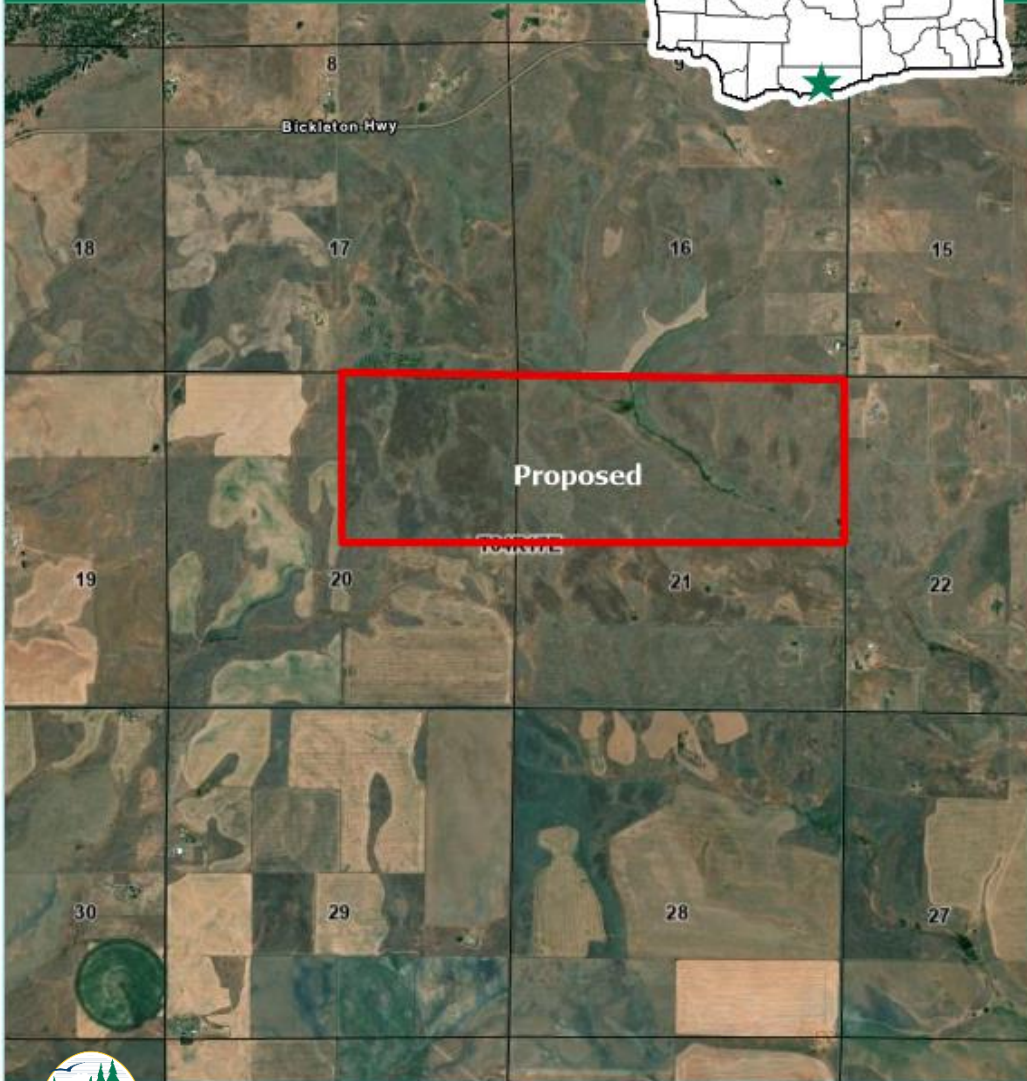
Luna Ponds, Klickitat County



Luna Ponds

County: Klickitat

Parcel Map



Luna Ponds, Klickitat County

- 480 Acres
- Simcoe Unit
- Klickitat Wildlife Area



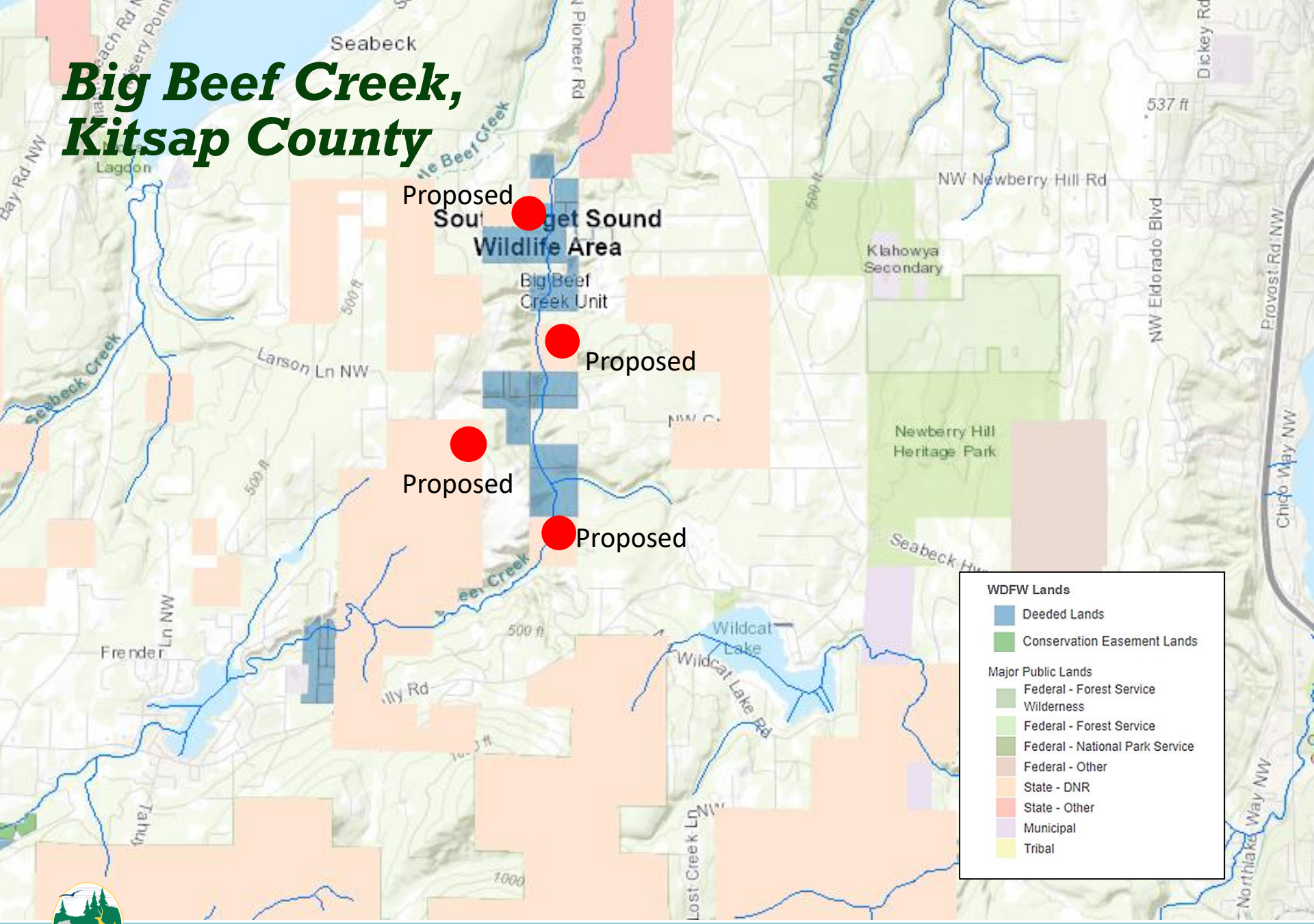


Luna Ponds, Klickitat County

- Habitat: Columbia basin foothill & canyon dry basin grassland, intermountain basin big sagebrush steppe
- Species: mule deer winter range, pheasant, waterfowl, western fence lizard
- Recreation: wildlife viewing, hunting, hiking, horseback riding



Big Beef Creek, Kitsap County



WDFW Lands

- Deeded Lands
- Conservation Easement Lands

Major Public Lands

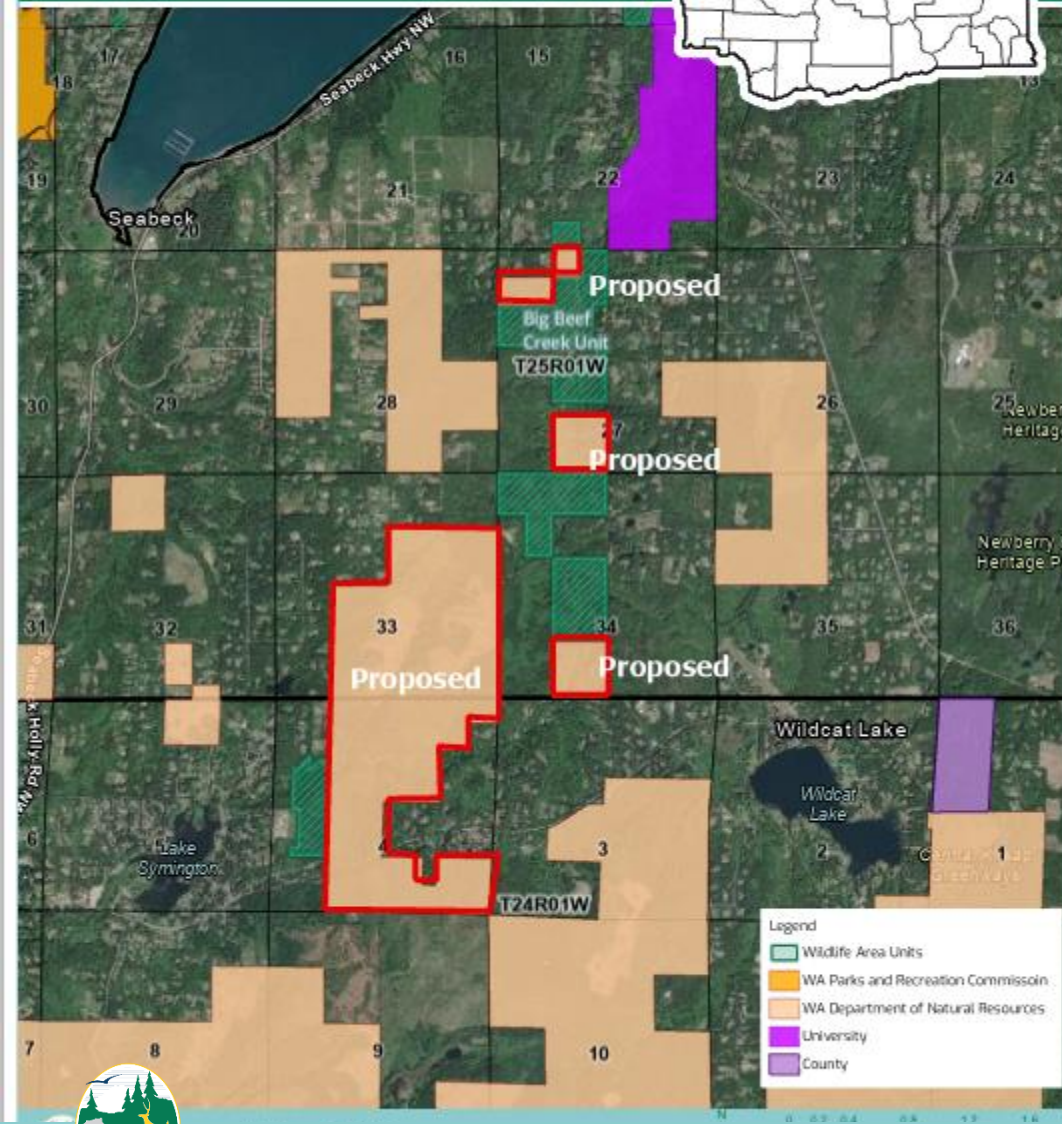
- Federal - Forest Service Wilderness
- Federal - Forest Service
- Federal - National Park Service
- Federal - Other
- State - DNR
- State - Other
- Municipal
- Tribal



Big Beef Creek

County: Kitsap

Parcel Map



Big Beef Creek, Kitsap County

- 451 acres
- Big Beef Creek Unit
- North Olympic Wildlife Area
- Owned by DNR, possible Trust Land Transfer



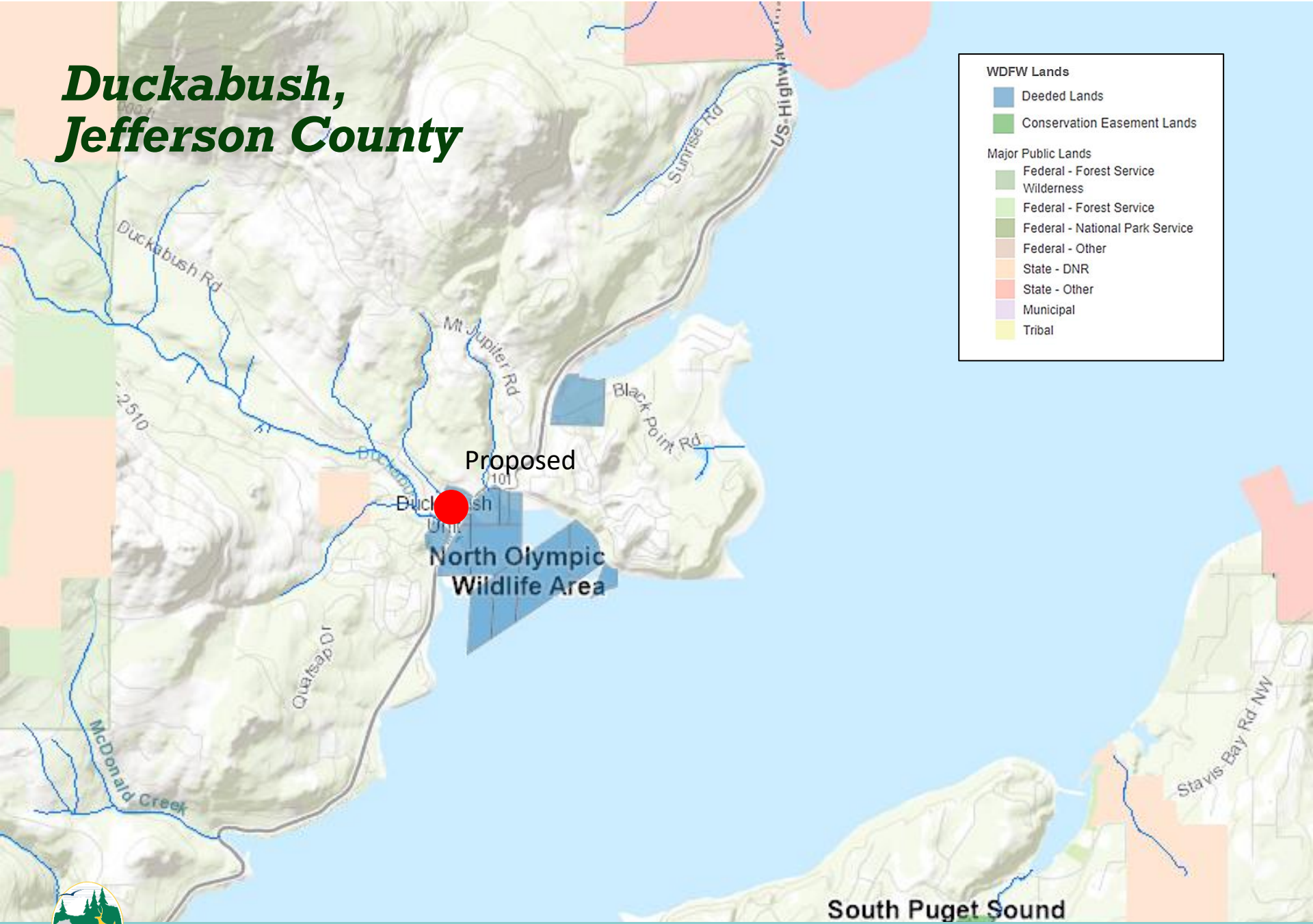


Big Beef Creek, Kitsap County

- Habitat: in-stream, floodplain, wetland, and riparian
- Species: waterfowl, blue heron, bald eagle, osprey, and pileated woodpecker, and a management buffer for spotted owl
- Recreation: wildlife viewing, hunting, fishing



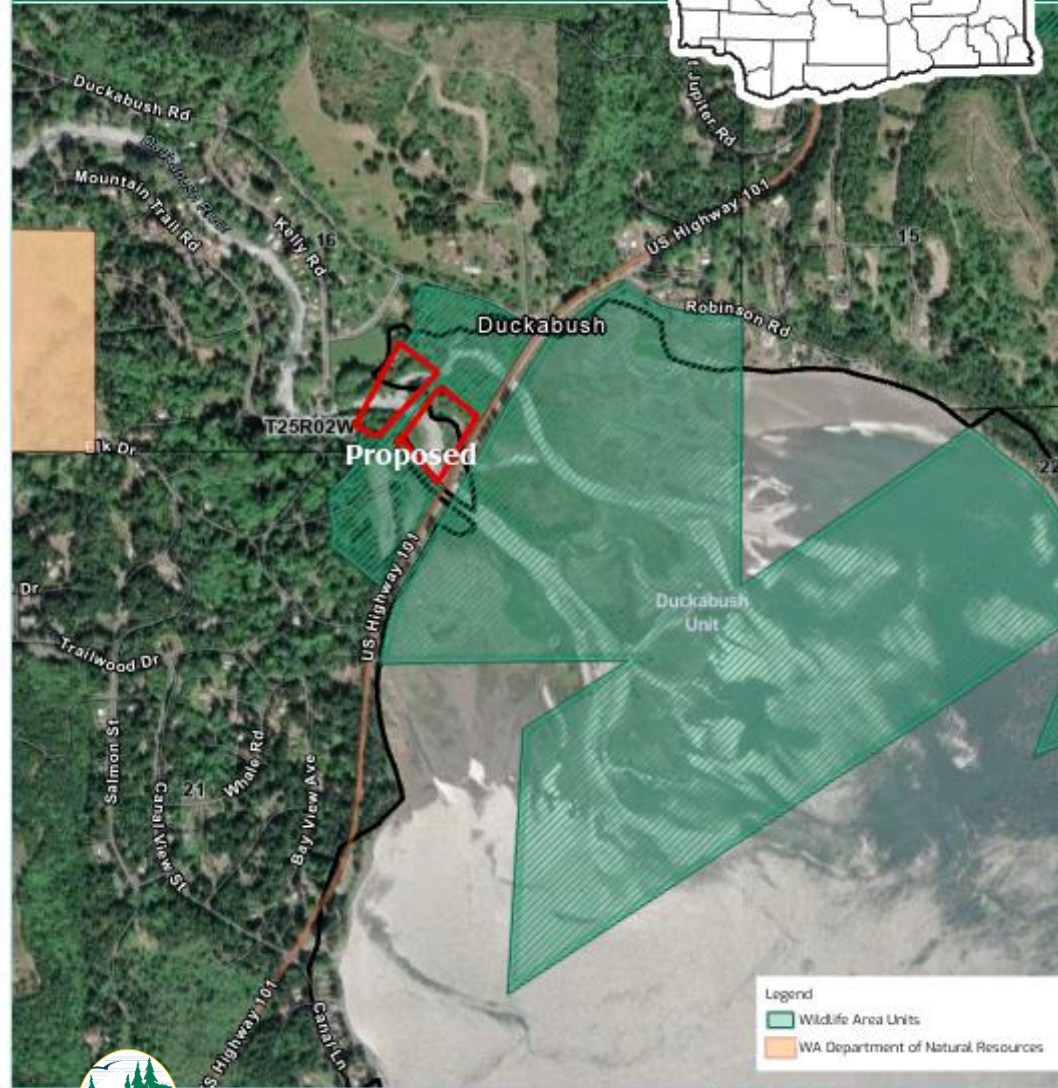
Duckabush, Jefferson County



Duckabush

County: Jefferson

Parcel Map



Duckabush, Jefferson County

- 6.3 Acres
- Duckabush Unit
- North Olympic Wildlife Area



Duckabush, Jefferson County

- Habitat: natural nearshore habitat – integral part of Duckabush Restoration project
- Species: summer chum and Puget Sound Chinook—both ESA-listed species—Puget Sound steelhead, hard shell clams, waterfowl concentrations
- Recreation: wildlife viewing, shell fishing, hunting
- Conservation Partners: Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement



Lucky Deer, Jefferson County



Lucky Deer

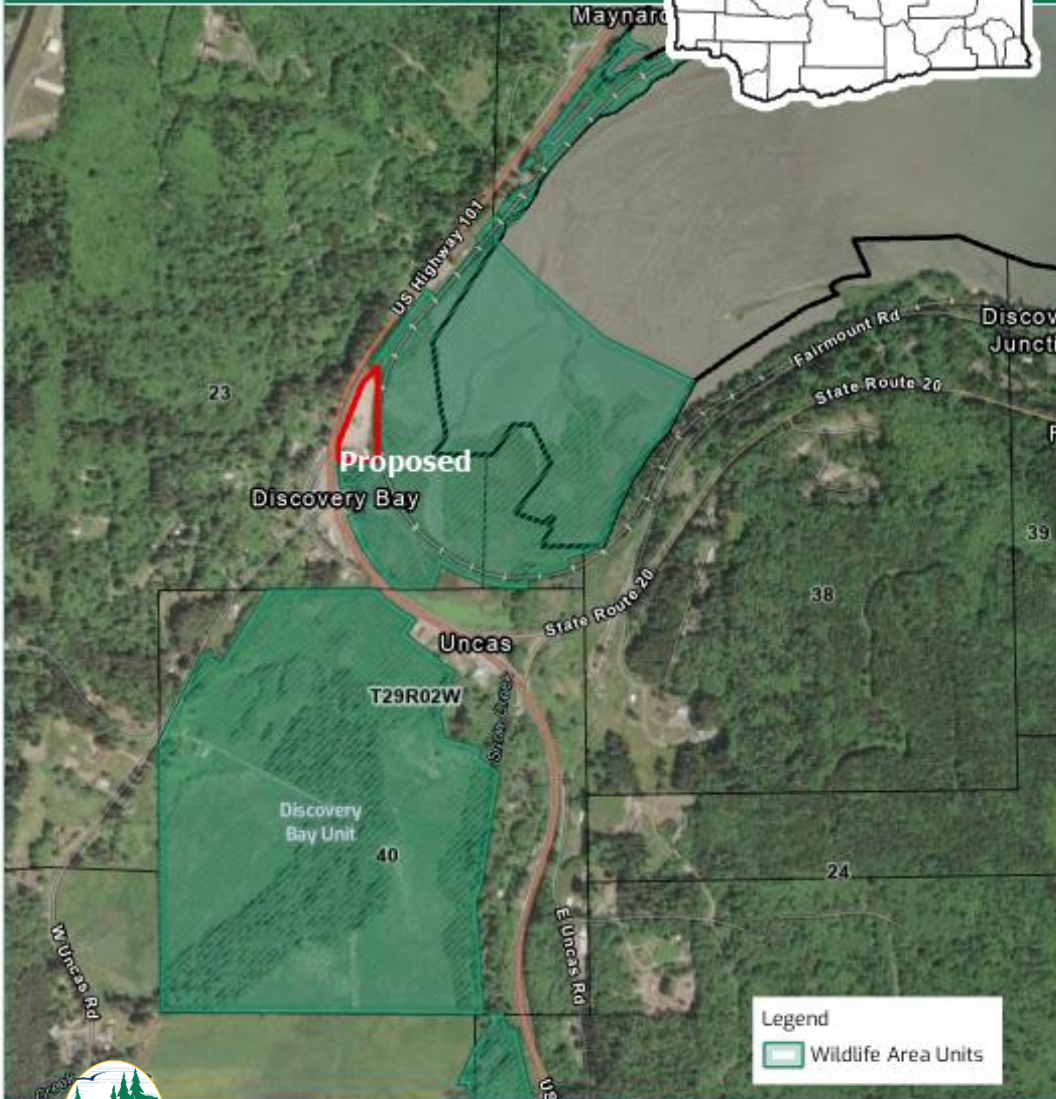
County: Jefferson

Parcel Map



Lucky Deer, Jefferson County

- .29 acres
- Discovery Bay unit
- North Olympic Wildlife Area
- Inholding



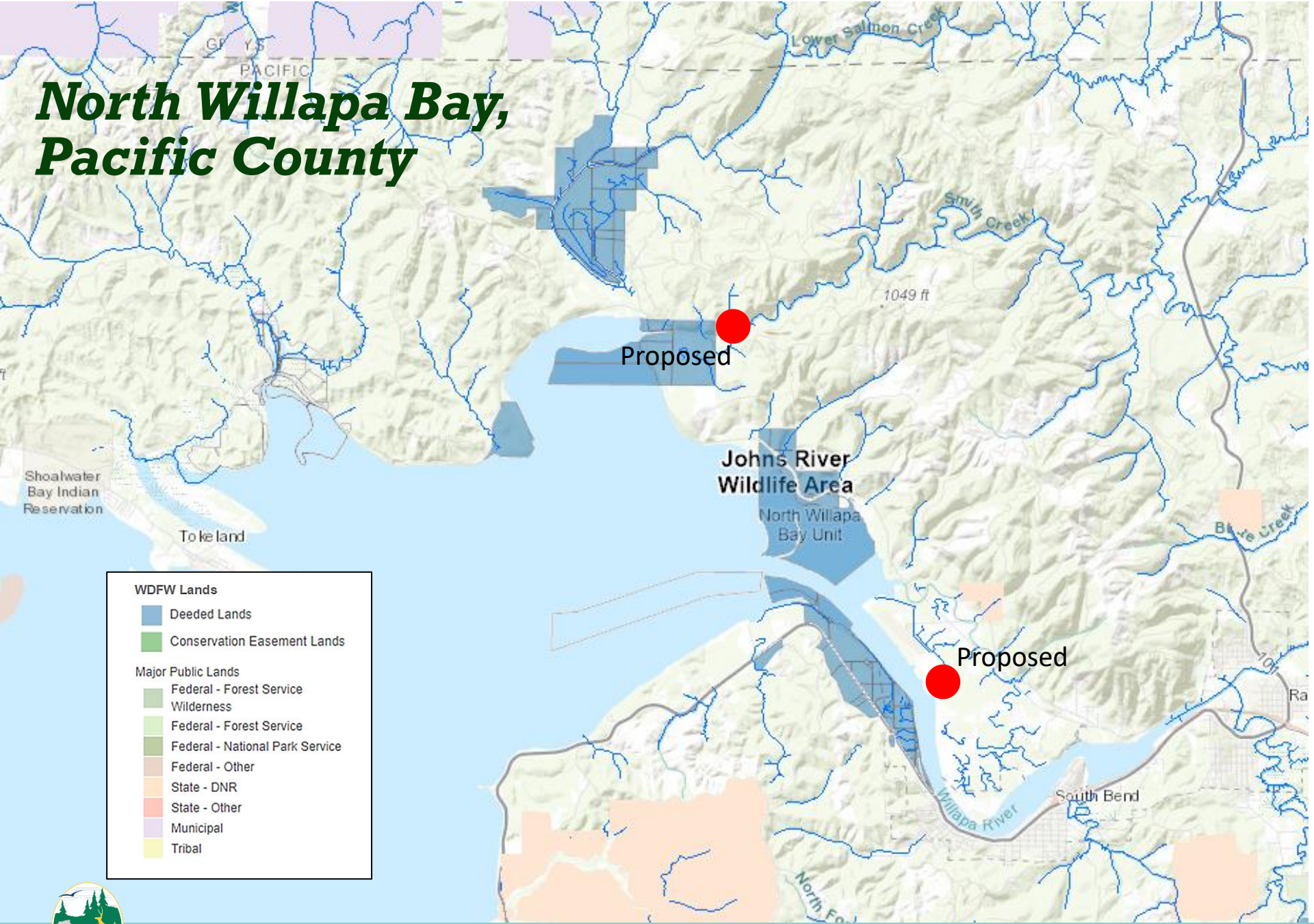


Lucky Deer, Jefferson County

- Habitat: tidal flats, mud marsh, and low riparian forest
- Species: summer chum, coho, and Puget Sound winter steelhead
- Recreation: Olympic Discovery Trail very near the property, wildlife viewing.
- Conservation Partners: Jefferson Land Trust, North Olympic Salmon Coalition



North Willapa Bay, Pacific County



WDFW Lands

- Deeded Lands
- Conservation Easement Lands

Major Public Lands

- Federal - Forest Service Wilderness
- Federal - Forest Service
- Federal - National Park Service
- Federal - Other
- State - DNR
- State - Other
- Municipal
- Tribal



North Willapa Bay

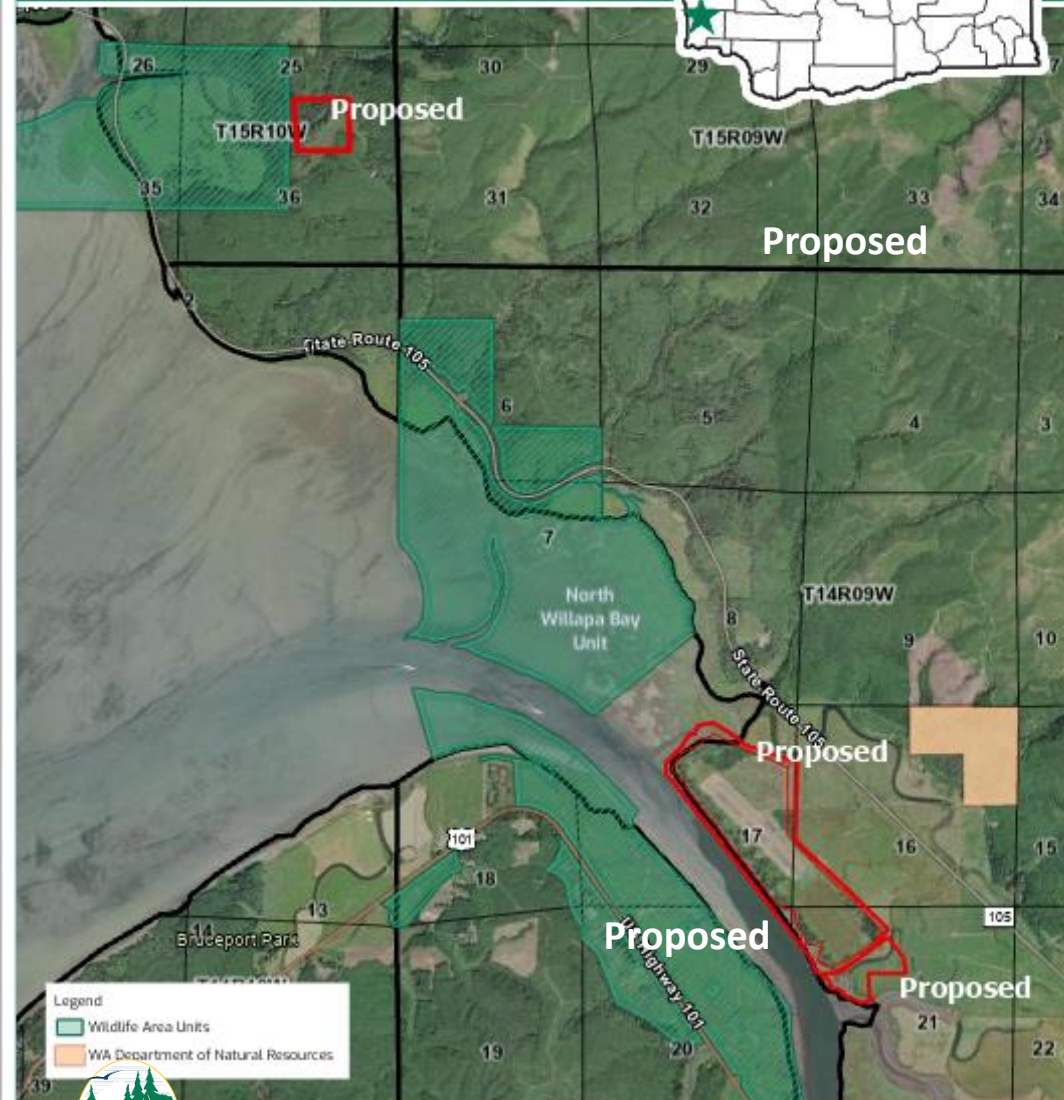
County: Pacific

Parcel Map



North Willapa Bay, Pacific County

- 75 acres
- North Willapa Bay Unit
- Johns River Wildlife Area
- Three properties



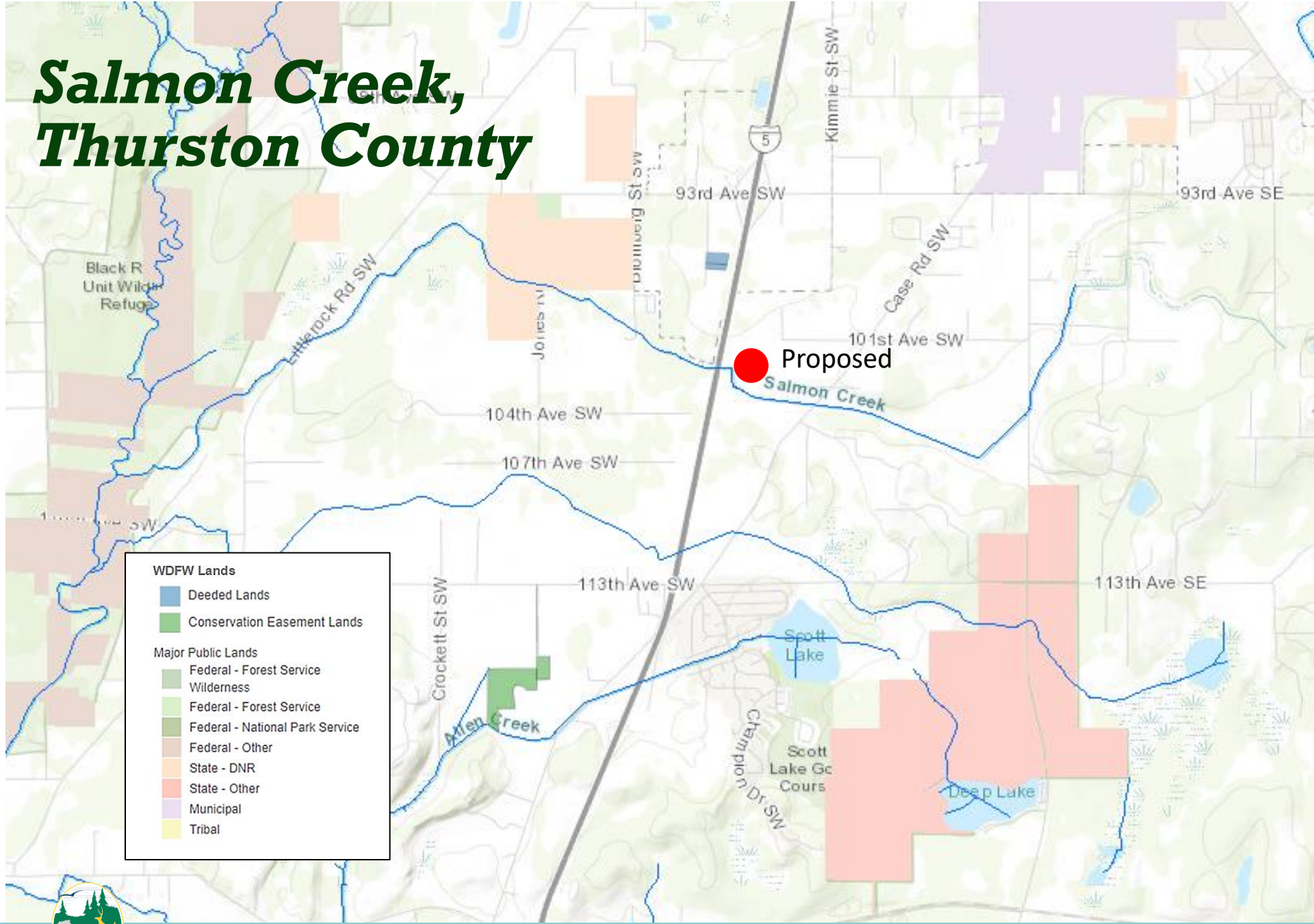


North Willapa Bay, Pacific County

- Habitat: wetland, riparian, and shoreline forest
- Species: marbled murrelet, North American green sturgeon, dusky Canada goose, winter steelhead, waterfowl
- Recreation: wildlife viewing, hunting, fishing, hiking



Salmon Creek, Thurston County



WDFW Lands

- Deeded Lands
- Conservation Easement Lands

Major Public Lands

- Federal - Forest Service Wilderness
- Federal - Forest Service
- Federal - National Park Service
- Federal - Other
- State - DNR
- State - Other
- Municipal
- Tribal



Salmon Creek

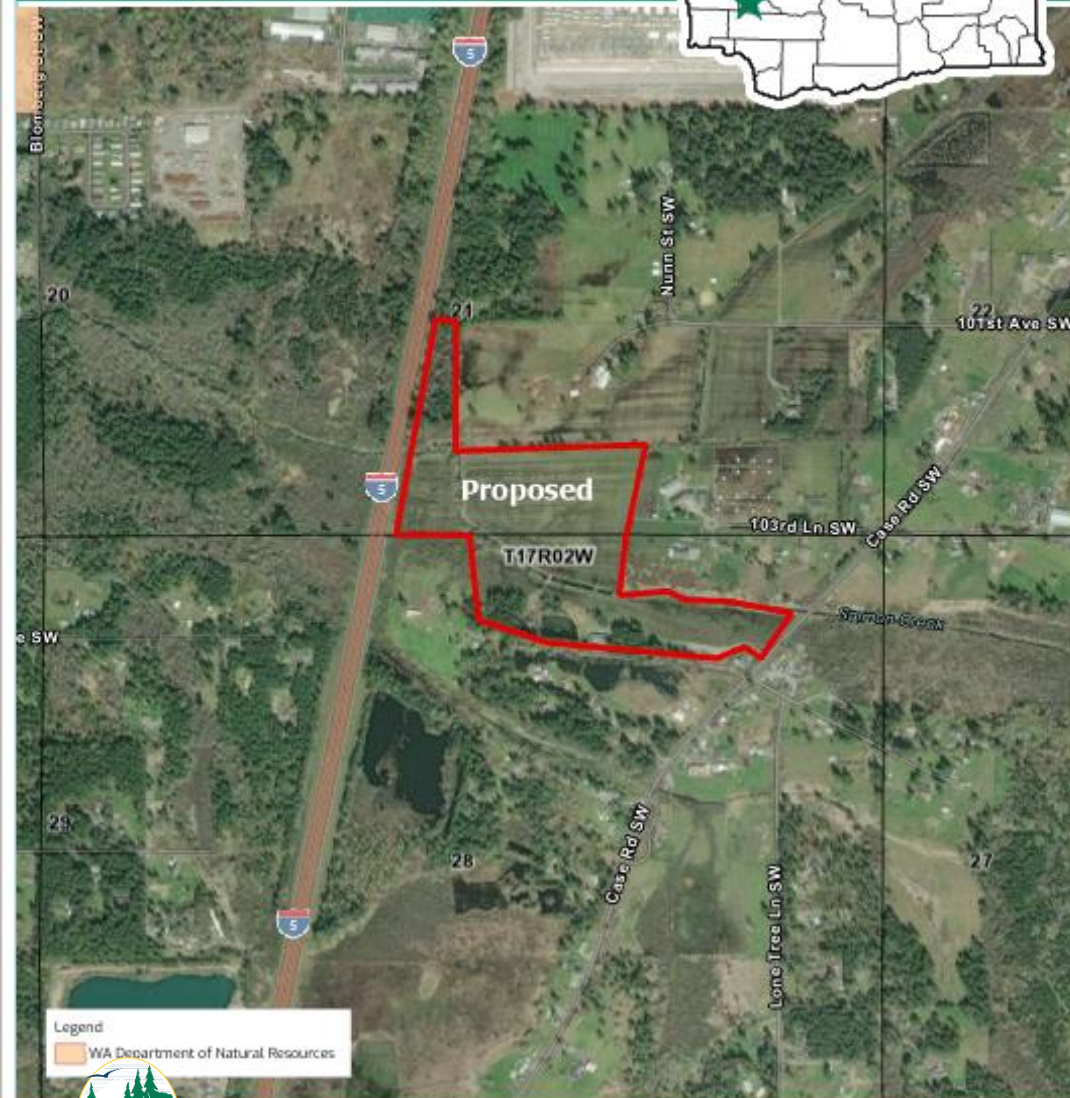
County:Thurston

Parcel Map



Salmon Creek, Thurston County

- 44 Acres
- Salmon Creek
- Scatter Creek Wildlife Area



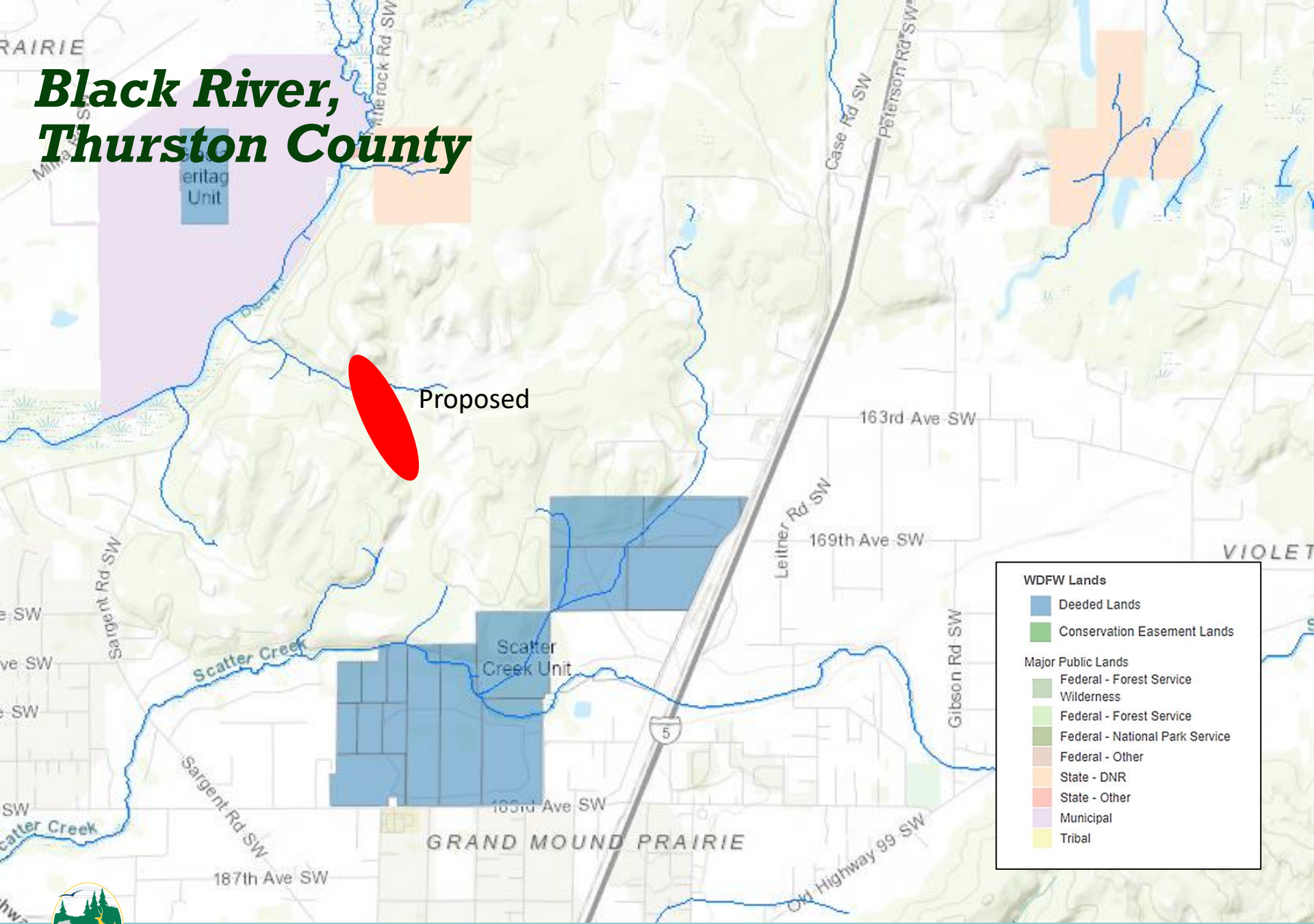


Salmon Creek, Thurston County

- Habitat: reed canary grass, freshwater wetlands, riparian
- Species: Oregon spotted frog, Olympic mudminnow, Cope's giant salamander, hoary and silver haired bat
- Recreation: wildlife viewing, bird watching
- Conservation Partners: USFWS, Aquatic Species Restoration Plan



Black River, Thurston County



WDFW Lands

- Deeded Lands
- Conservation Easement Lands

Major Public Lands

- Federal - Forest Service Wilderness
- Federal - Forest Service
- Federal - National Park Service
- Federal - Other
- State - DNR
- State - Other
- Municipal
- Tribal



Black River

County: Thurston

Parcel Map



Black River, Thurston County

- 2,382 acres
- Scatter Creek Vicinity
- Pass Thru to partner
- Possible area to support future wildlife crossing over I-5



Legend

- Wildlife Area Units
- WA Department of Natural Resources
- Cor



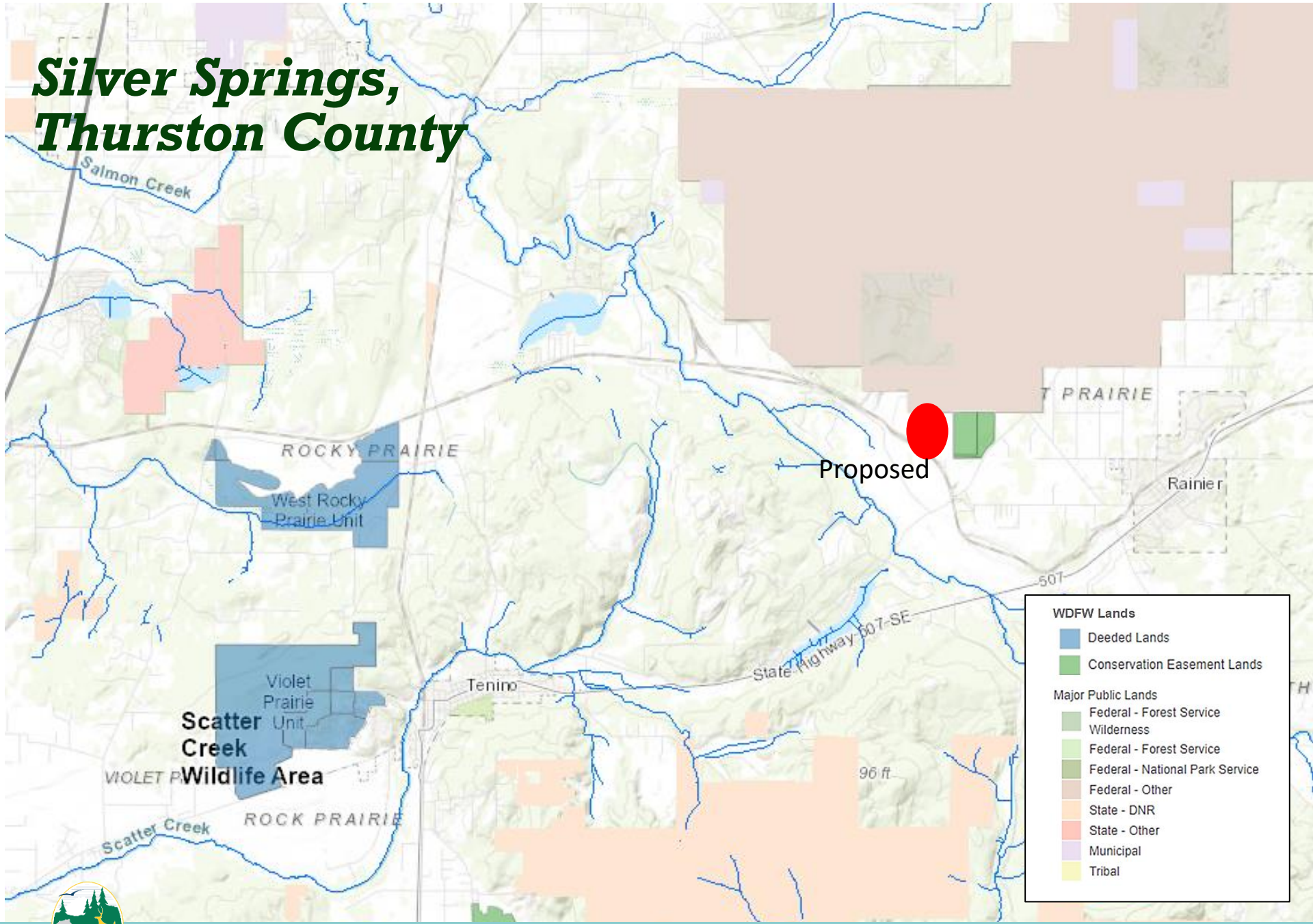


Black River, Thurston County

- Creates the largest wildlife corridor region between Black River riparian, Scatter Creek Wildlife Area, Capital Forest, and the Glacial Heritage Preserve
- Habitat: conifer forest
- Species: elk, Columbian black-tailed deer, coho, Townsend big eared bat, coastal cutthroat
- Recreation: this conservation easement will not include recreation



Silver Springs, Thurston County



Silver Springs

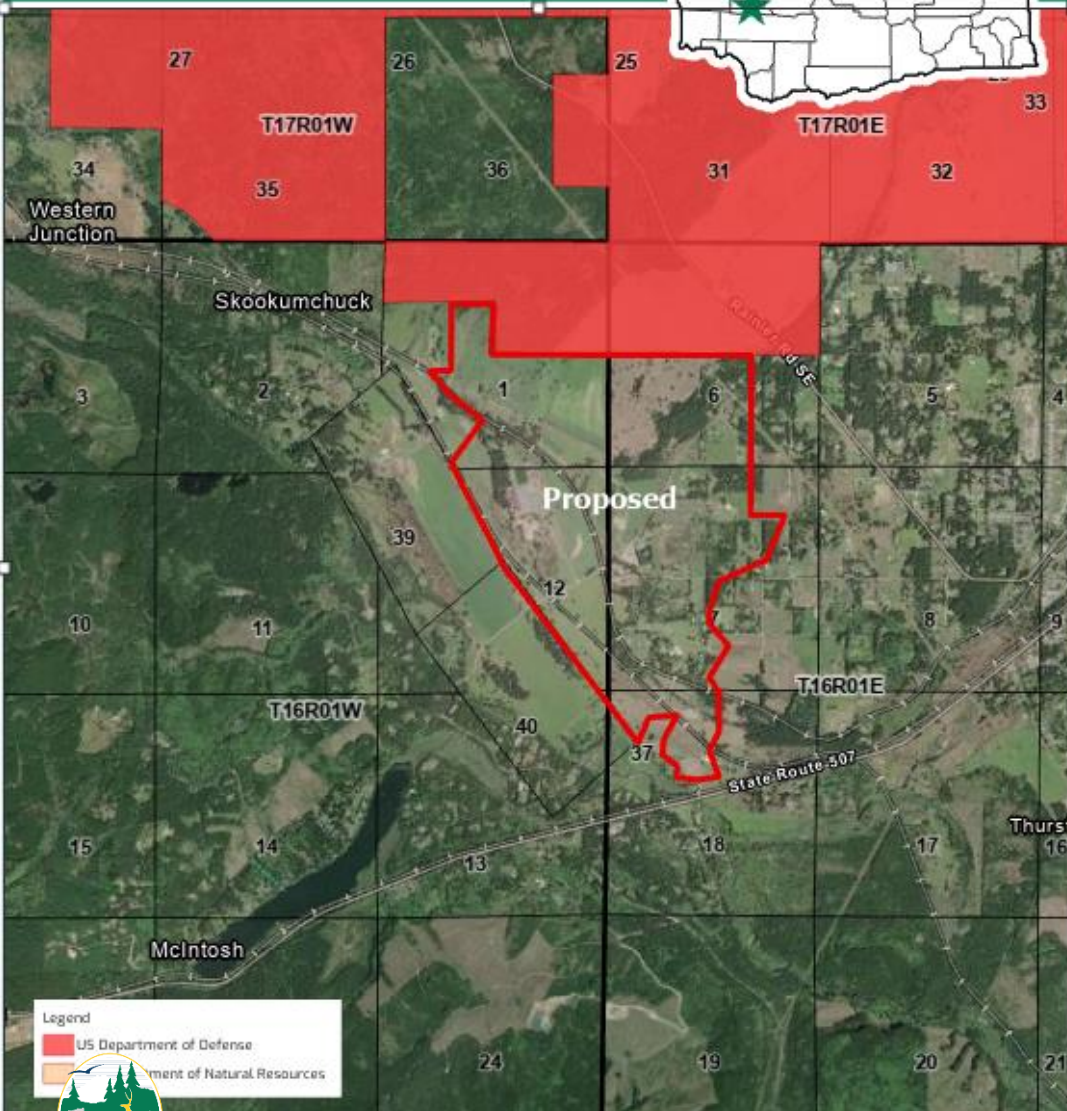
County: Thurston

Parcel Map



Silver Springs, Thurston County

- 1,100 Acres
- Scatter Creek Unit
- Scatter Creek Wildlife Area
- Conservation Partner: Joint Base Lewis McChord and Thurston County



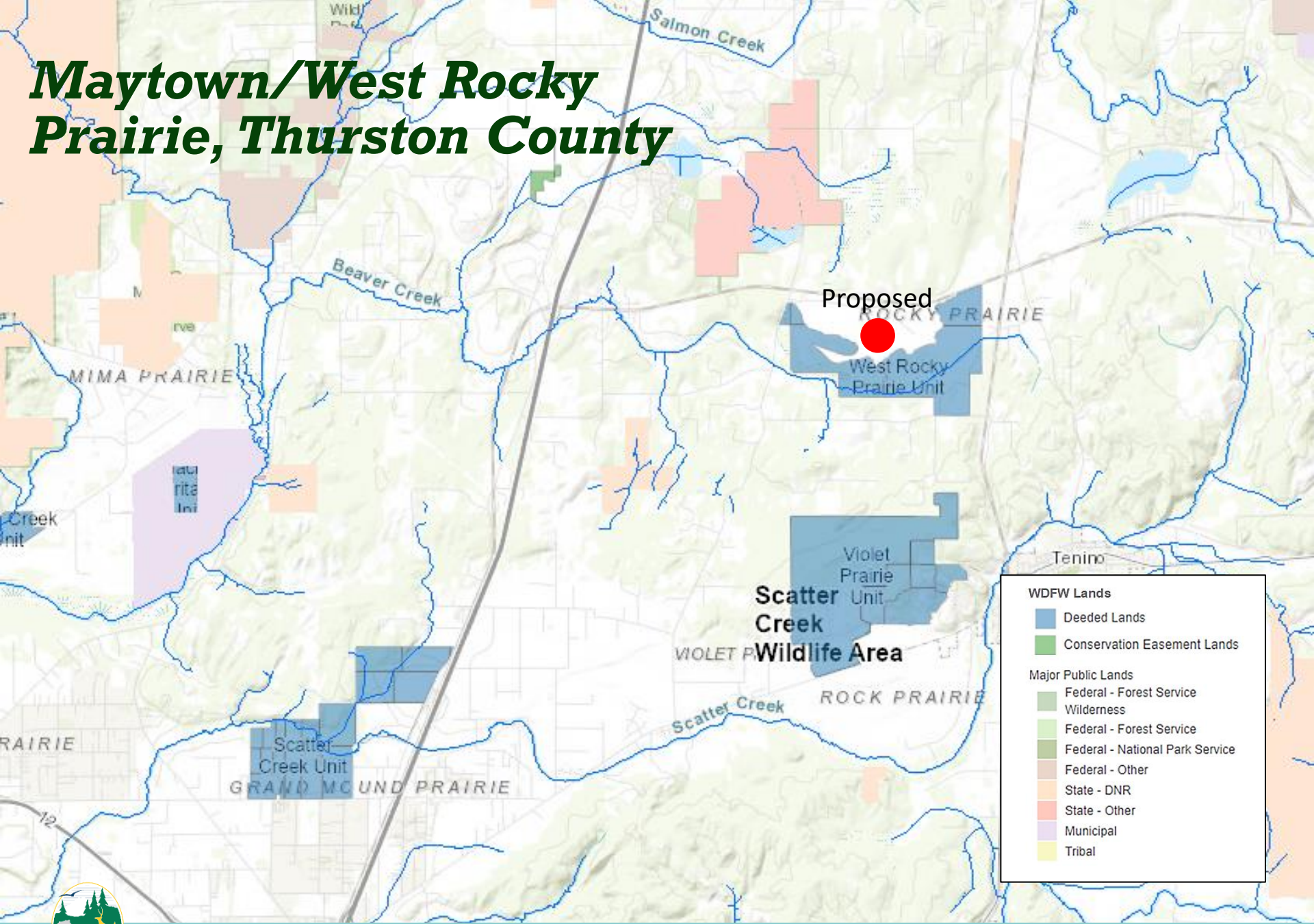


Silver Springs, Thurston County

- Habitat: prairie mosaic, Oregon white oak, wetland, and mima mounds
- Adjacent to JBLM ownership
- Species: Mazama pocket gopher, Taylor's checkerspot butterfly, Oregon vesper sparrow, streaked horned lark
- Recreation: wildlife viewing, fishing, hunting, hiking



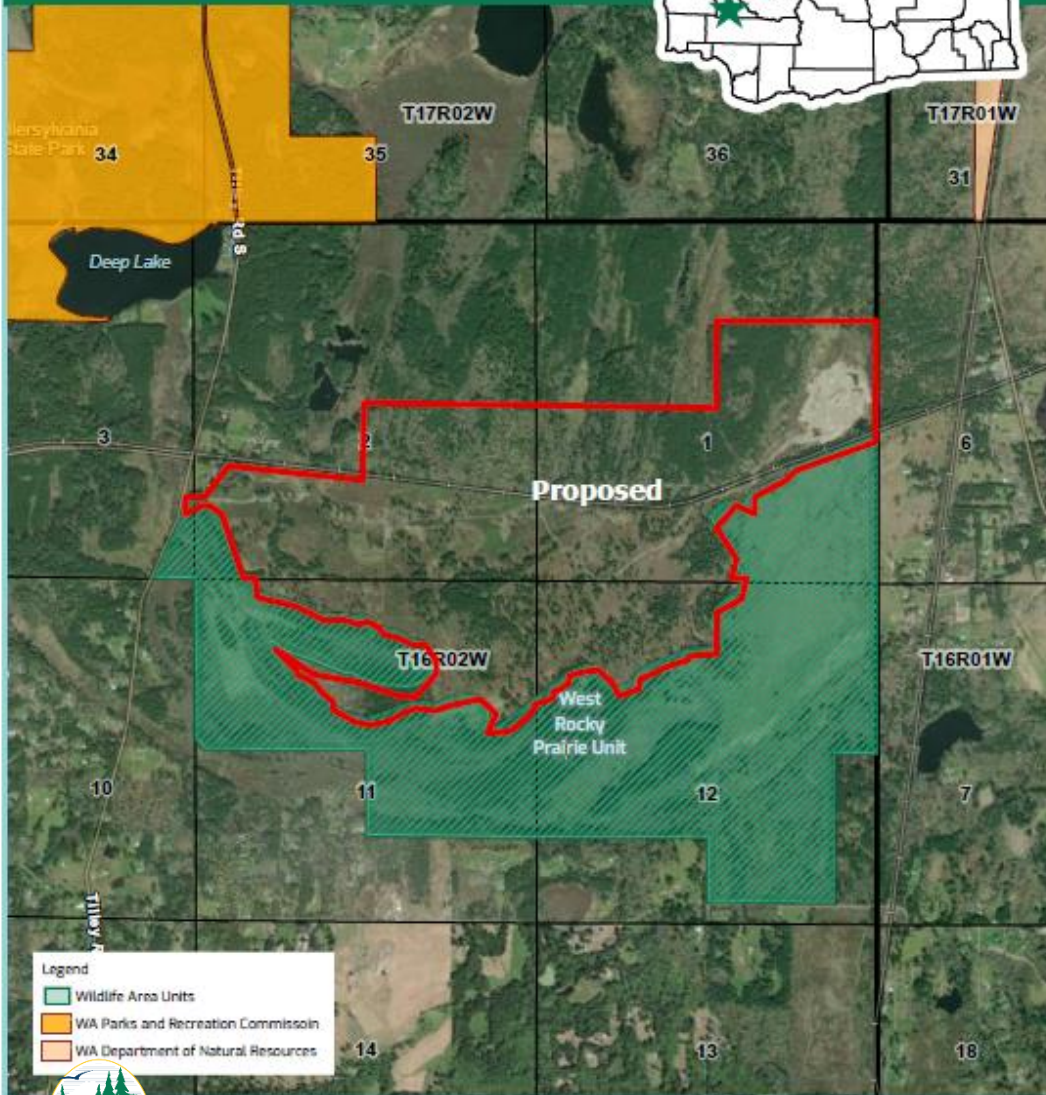
Maytown/West Rocky Prairie, Thurston County



Maytown/West Rocky

County:Thurston

Parcel Map



Maytown/West Rocky Prairie, Thurston County

- 743 acres
- West Rocky Prairie Unit
- Scatter Creek Wildlife Area



Maytown/West Rocky Prairie, Thurston County

- Habitat: Prairie oak woodland, stream, prairie mosaic, wetland
- Species: Taylor's checkerspot butterfly, federally threatened and state endangered streaked horned lark, state endangered Oregon vesper sparrow, state endangered western gray squirrel, Mardon skipper butterfly, and numerous endemic prairie butterfly species
- Recreation: wildlife viewing, hiking, hunting
- Conservation partners: Joint Base Lewis McChord, USFWS, Sentinel Landscape Partnership



PUBLIC REVIEW ***Comments***

10/30/2024 – 11/27/2024

- **117 comments received**
- 112 positive, 5 negative comments
- Some projects had general questions or suggestions of properties to include

Support from organizations:

- Black Hills Audubon Society
- Legacy Forest Defense Coalition
- Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society
- SCI First For Hunters
- Audubon Washington
- Friends of West Rocky Prairie

Opposition from organizations:

- Douglas County Cattleman's

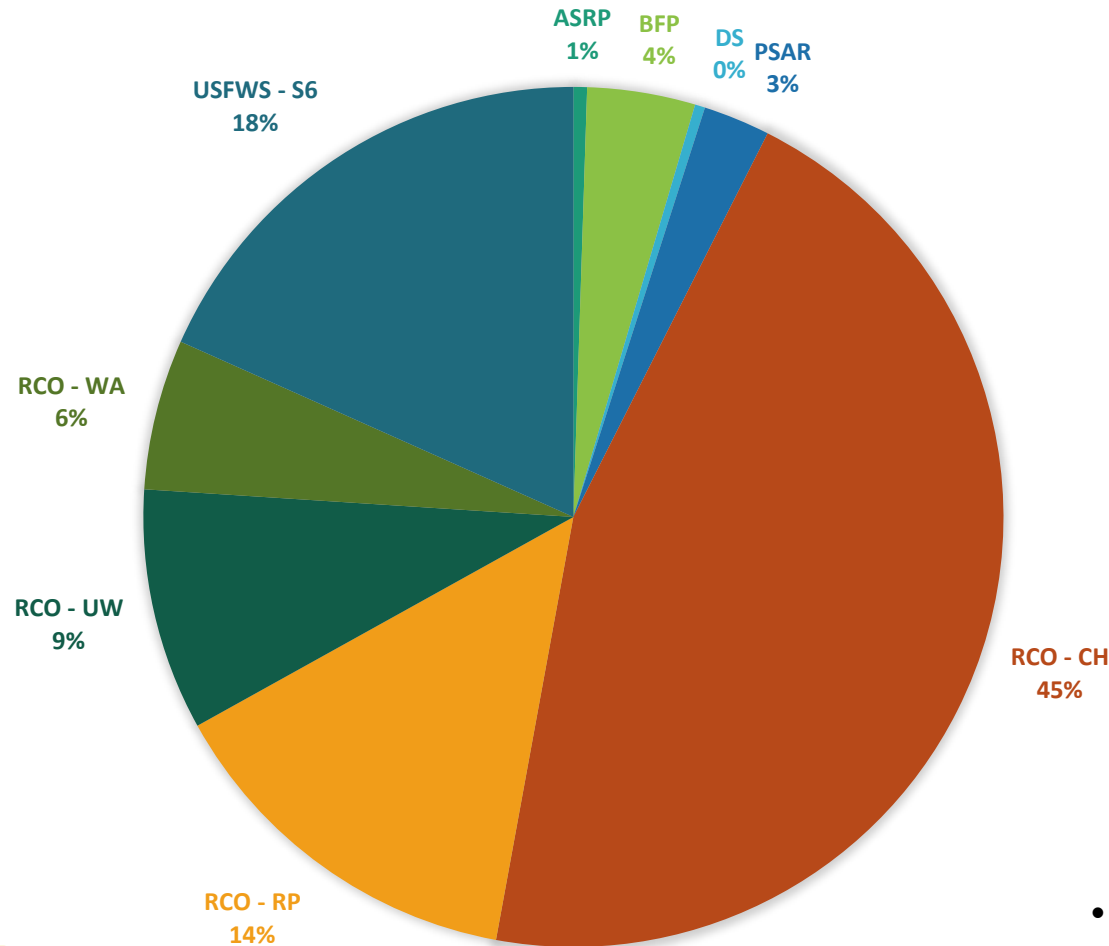


Questions



Acquisition Funding Sources

CURRENT FUNDING TREND 2014 - 2024



Current Funding Trend
2013 - 2023

- RCO/BFP – 2%
- RCO/WWRP RP – 18%
- RCO/WWRP/CH – 52%
- RCO/WWRP/UW – 5%
- RCO/WWRP/WA – 3%
- CB/ASRP – 1%
- PSAR – 1%
- USFWS/S6 – 17%
- Duck Stamp - 1%

- *Grant sources each have their own eligibility criteria and restrictions*

