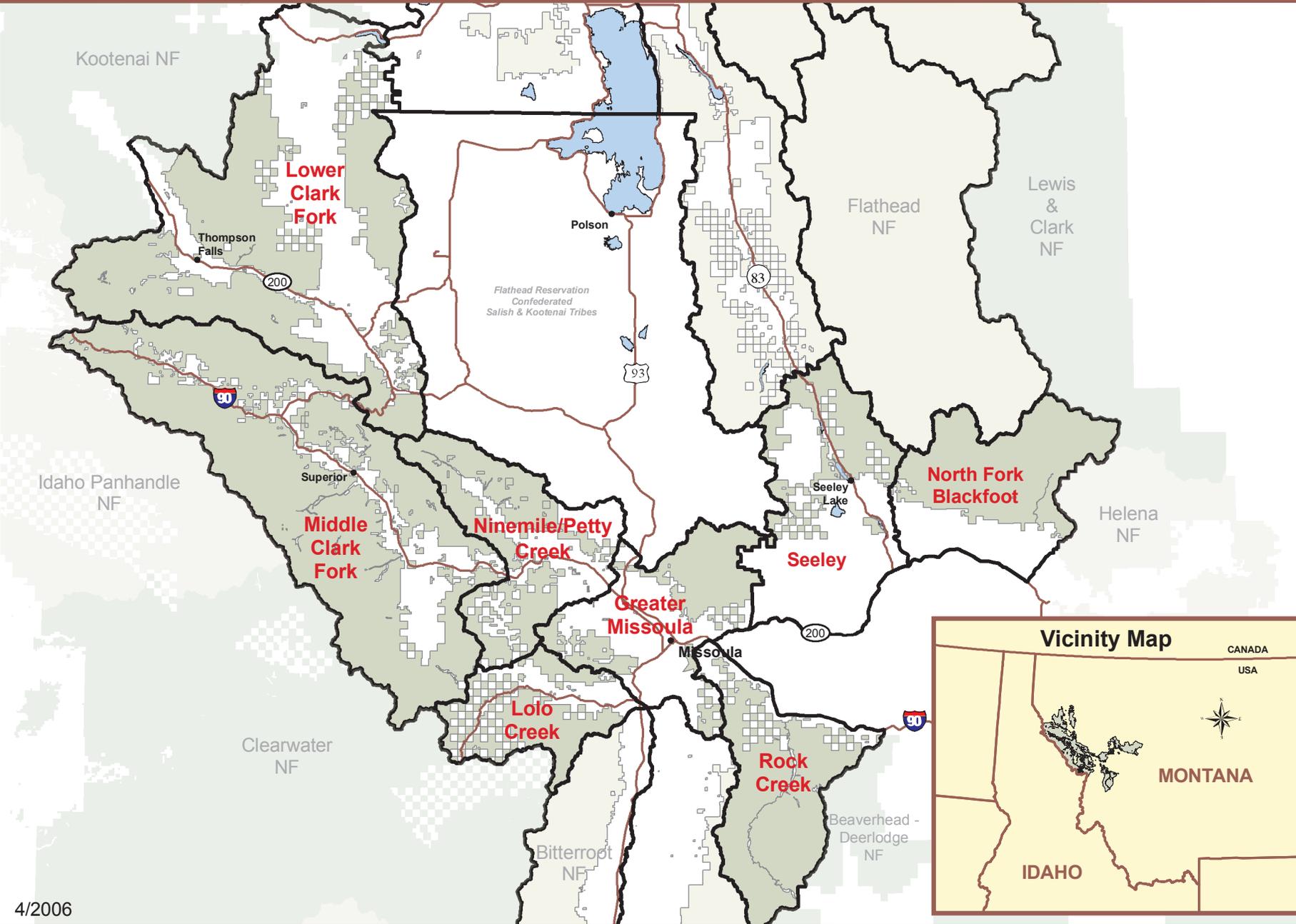


# Lolo National Forest Geographic Areas

Figure 3



## Geographic Area Desired Conditions Component

### Introduction

<p>Plan Components</p> <p><b>Desired Conditions</b></p> <p>Objectives</p> <p>Suitability of Areas</p> <p>Special Areas</p> <p>Guidelines</p>
--

While the forest-wide desired conditions indicate broad trends which we expect to see over the next 10 to 15 years, we recognize that individual places across the Lolo National Forest have unique characteristics and conditions. These places, referred to as “geographic areas,” define a landscape that people associate with on the Forest. Identifying these areas gives us the opportunity to fine-tune our forest-wide management to better respond to more local

conditions and situations. The Lolo National Forest has been divided into the following eight geographic areas (see vicinity map on previous page):

- Greater Missoula
- Lolo Creek
- Lower Clark Fork
- Middle Clark Fork
- Ninemile/Petty Creek
- North Fork Blackfoot
- Rock Creek
- Seeley Lake

### Geographic Areas

Each geographic area description provides the following:

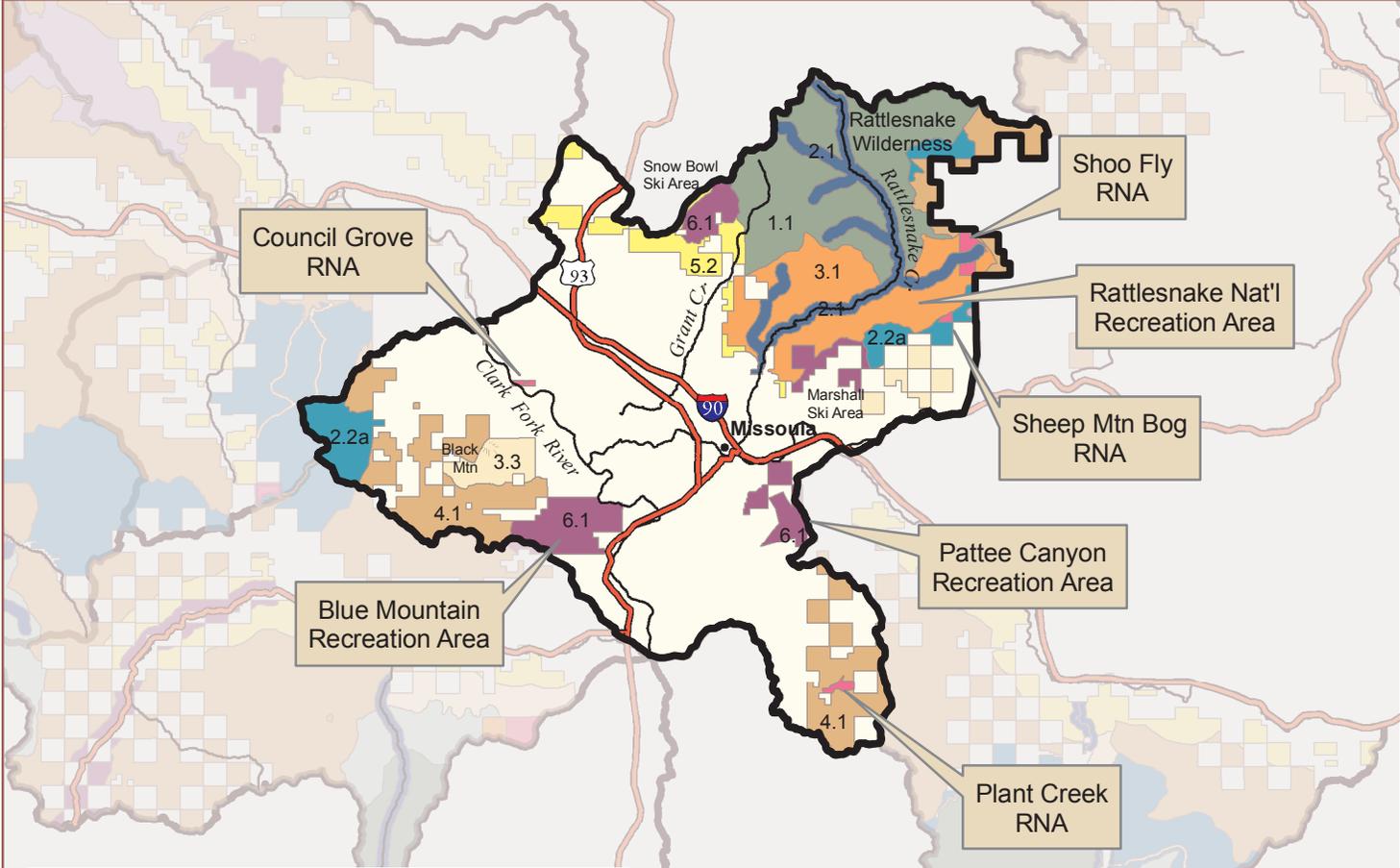
**Geographic area map** shows management areas (defined in Chapter 2) and acres in each, locations of unique features, primary population centers, and major rivers and roads.

**Unique characteristics and general overview** provides a brief characterization of the area such as landscape features, primary land uses and ownership patterns, resource and recreational uses, and an indication of social and economic factors.

**Geographic area desired conditions** describe what we want to achieve in specific geographic areas that are not necessarily covered by forest-wide desired conditions. While all resources have been considered, the only desired conditions specified here are those that are not adequately addressed by forest-wide desired conditions.

Figure 4

# Lolo National Forest Greater Missoula Geographic Area



**Legend**

Geographic Area

**Management Areas**

- 1.1 Designated Wilderness
- 1.2 Recommended Wilderness
- 2.1 Eligible or Suitable Wild & Scenic Rivers
- 2.2a Backcountry (non-motorized travel)
- 2.2b Backcountry (limited motorized travel)
- 3.1 Areas Under Special Management
- 3.2 Research Natural Areas
- 3.3 General Forest Low Intensity Management
- 4.1 General Forest Moderate Intensity Management
- 5.1 General Forest High Intensity Management
- 5.2 Residential Forest Intermix
- 6.1 High Use Recreation Complexes or Use Areas

MA	Acres
1.1	29,035
1.2	0
2.1	11,609
2.2A	9,154
2.2B	87
3.1	18,234
3.2	1,135
3.3	6,651
4.1	28,678
5.1	0
5.2	7,139
6.1	13,017
<b>Total</b>	<b>124,739</b>



## Greater Missoula Geographic Area

### Unique Characteristics

- The recreational-urban interface of the Lolo National Forest and the city of Missoula where access to Forest Service lands is available from the city limits.
- Rattlesnake Creek is a state designated municipal watershed.
- The Rattlesnake Wilderness.
- Three high-use recreation areas: Rattlesnake National Recreation Area (RNRA), Pattee Canyon, and Blue Mountain.
- Rattlesnake National Recreation Area is the only NRA in the Northern Region of the Forest Service.
- Snowbowl ski area.
- There are four research natural areas (RNAs): Sheep Mountain Bog, Shoofly Meadows, Council Grove, and Plant Creek.
- Rattlesnake Creek and Gold Creek have waters designated as critical habitat for bull trout.

### General Overview

Missoula is home to a large and growing population which frequently visits and recreates on the Lolo National Forest. The Rattlesnake National Recreation Area and Rattlesnake Wilderness (RNRAW), Pattee Canyon, and Blue Mountain areas are considered “backdoor” recreation areas because of their proximity to residential development. Part of the popular Rattlesnake National Recreation Area is important as big game winter range.

Approximately 59 percent of this geographic area is within designated wilderness, recommended wilderness, or other primitive settings. About 41 percent of this geographic area offers opportunities for higher intensities of resource management activities.

The Missoula area offers float fishing on the Blackfoot, Bitterroot, and Clark Fork rivers. The Rattlesnake National Recreation Area, Pattee Canyon, and Blue Mountain areas are popular for new recreational uses such as disc golf (olf) and mountain biking. The Snowbowl ski area is popular with intermediate and advanced skiers.

The Greater Missoula area is likely to continue experiencing a large increase in population and subdivision of private and industrial lands. This change in ownership pattern is expected to create additional wildland urban interface along the Lolo National Forest boundary.

The area east of Highway 93 includes a large portion of intermixed lands used for recreational activities and industrial forestry.

Rattlesnake Creek and its tributaries have been found eligible and suitable for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River System<sup>1</sup>.

## Desired Conditions

### Watersheds and Aquatic Habitat

- Aquatic habitat and water quality in this geographic area would be sufficient to support healthy bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout communities. Rattlesnake Creek and its tributaries would serve as strongholds and recruitment sources to the middle Clark Fork River.

### Wildlife and Plant Species Diversity

- The Rattlesnake Wilderness and RNRA would have effective wildlife habitat connectivity to benefit movement of wide-ranging species such as wolf, lynx, and grizzly bear.
- The Rattlesnake, Pattee Canyon, and Blue Mountain trailheads would have less area covered by invasive plant species.

### Recreation

- “Pack it in-pack it out” would be commonly practiced for litter and dog feces.
- Party activity and vandalism would be minimal or non-existent.
- Adequate facilities would exist in developed recreation areas to meet group and individual picnicking demands.
- The Snowbowl ski area would be expanded if analysis indicates sufficient demand for a wider range of skier opportunities.
- The disc golf (olf) course and parking area at Pattee Canyon would be re-designed or separated from the picnic area.

<sup>1</sup> Information on the outstandingly remarkable values (ORV), for which the river was found eligible and its potential classification, is in the Plan Set of Documents.

***Rattlesnake National Recreation Area***

- Wildlife in key winter range in the Sawmill Gulch, Woods Gulch, and Strawberry Ridge areas would not be disturbed by recreational use or dogs. Dogs would be excluded from critical areas to avoid disturbance and stress on wildlife.

**Rattlesnake Wilderness**

- Dams in the Rattlesnake Wilderness, which are part of the Missoula municipal watershed, would be maintained and fully operational. Management and access to the dams would be coordinated with the Mountain Water Company.
- The Rattlesnake Wilderness would be relatively weed-free. Small and isolated weed infestations would be limited to the lower sections of wilderness trails. The public would commonly use “Leave No Weeds” practices.
- Commercial use would not exist in the Rattlesnake Wilderness.

**Access and Travel Management**

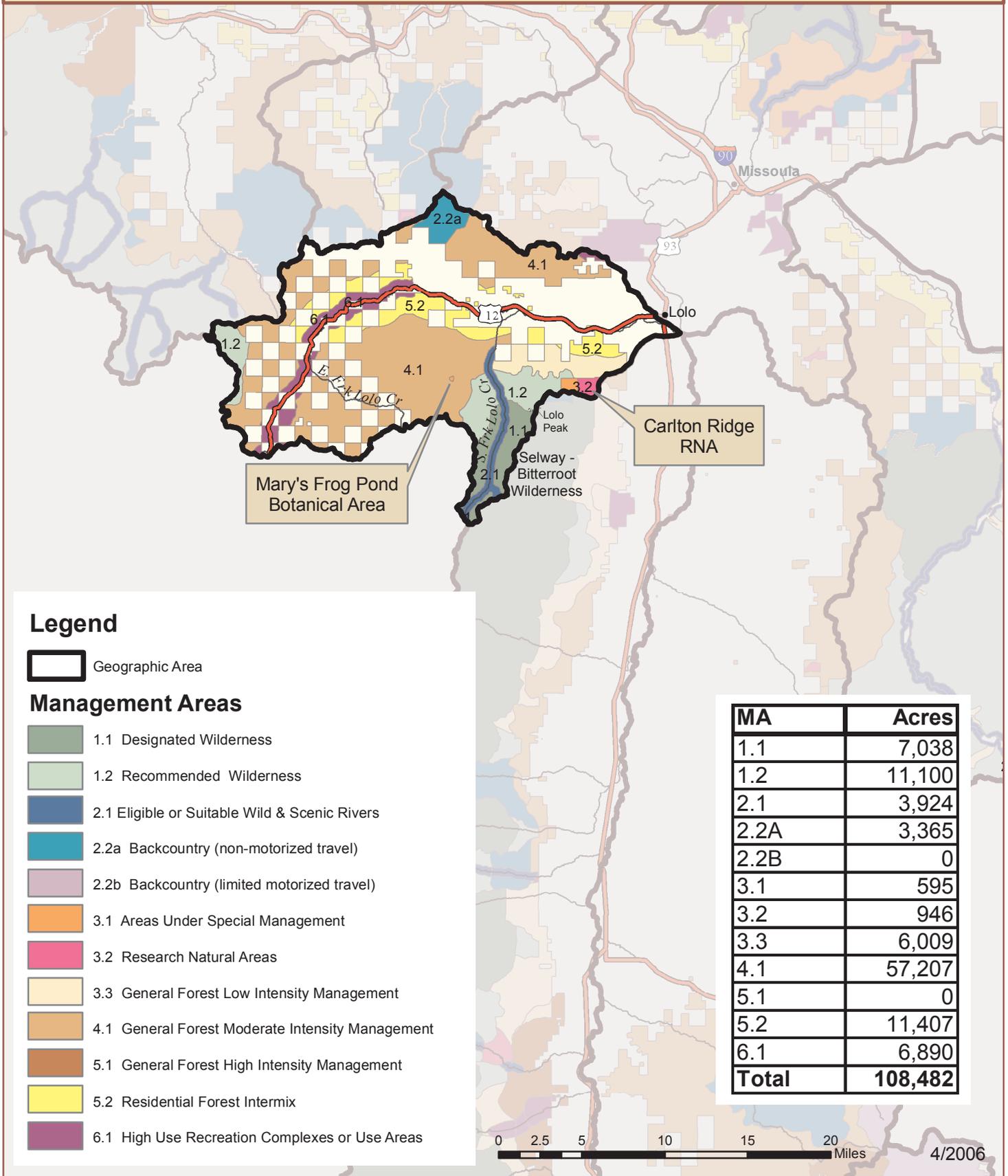
- A network of urban connector trails would provide access from urban to adjacent recreation areas.
- Trailhead parking areas would be available in areas of high recreation use.



# Lolo National Forest

## Lolo Creek Geographic Area

**Figure 5**



### Legend

Geographic Area

### Management Areas

- 1.1 Designated Wilderness
- 1.2 Recommended Wilderness
- 2.1 Eligible or Suitable Wild & Scenic Rivers
- 2.2a Backcountry (non-motorized travel)
- 2.2b Backcountry (limited motorized travel)
- 3.1 Areas Under Special Management
- 3.2 Research Natural Areas
- 3.3 General Forest Low Intensity Management
- 4.1 General Forest Moderate Intensity Management
- 5.1 General Forest High Intensity Management
- 5.2 Residential Forest Intermix
- 6.1 High Use Recreation Complexes or Use Areas

MA	Acres
1.1	7,038
1.2	11,100
2.1	3,924
2.2A	3,365
2.2B	0
3.1	595
3.2	946
3.3	6,009
4.1	57,207
5.1	0
5.2	11,407
6.1	6,890
<b>Total</b>	<b>108,482</b>

0 2.5 5 10 15 20 Miles

## Lolo Creek Geographic Area

### Unique Characteristics

- Lolo Peak is a prominent Missoula area landmark.
- Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness.
- South Fork Lolo Creek Recommended Wilderness.
- Mary's Frog Pond Botanical Area.
- Carlton Ridge Research Natural Area (RNA).
- The Nez Perce and the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trails.
- The Lolo Pass Recreation Area.

### General Overview

The southeast portion of this geographic area is mainly non-motorized, backcountry lands without roads. It includes Lolo Peak and the Lolo Creek recommended addition to the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness.

The western half of this geographic area has been managed primarily as timber lands with a large part of the upper watershed in checkerboard ownership. Some of the checkerboard private industrial timberlands are being offered for sale by Plum Creek Timber Company.

Approximately 24 percent of the geographic area is within designated wilderness, recommended wilderness or other primitive settings. About 76 percent of this geographic area offers opportunities for higher intensities of resource management activities.

The Lolo Creek Geographic Area includes 11,000 acres of recommended addition to the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness in the South Fork of Lolo Creek.

The corridor directly adjacent to U.S. Highway 12, from the town of Lolo west to Lolo Pass, has several developed campgrounds, picnic areas, interpretive sites, dispersed camping sites and national historic trails.

The South Fork Lolo Creek and No Name Creek have been found eligible and suitable for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River System<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Information on the outstandingly remarkable values (ORV), for which the river was found eligible and its potential classification, is in the Plan Set of Documents.

## Desired Conditions

### Watersheds and Aquatic Habitat

- Aquatic habitat and water quality in this geographic area would be sufficient to support healthy bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout communities. Lolo Creek and its tributaries would serve as strongholds and recruitment sources to the lower Bitterroot River.

### Wildlife and Plant Species Diversity

- In the Mary's Frog Pond Botanical Area, populations of *Drosera rotundifolia*, *Vaccinium accidentale* and *Menyanthes trifoliata* would persist.
- The Carlton Ridge RNA would expand to include critical alpine larch habitat in most of Section 23 (T29N, R21W), directly adjacent to the original RNA boundary.

### Heritage Resources

- The historic integrity of the Lolo Trail, which includes segments of the Lewis and Clark and the Nez Perce National Historic Trails, would have a pre-settlement appearance. The Lolo Trail would maintain a "self-discovery" experience.

### Recommended Wilderness

- Commercial use would not exist in the South Fork of Lolo Creek.

### Recreation

- Developed recreation sites would be managed so as to maintain the current quality of visitor experience.

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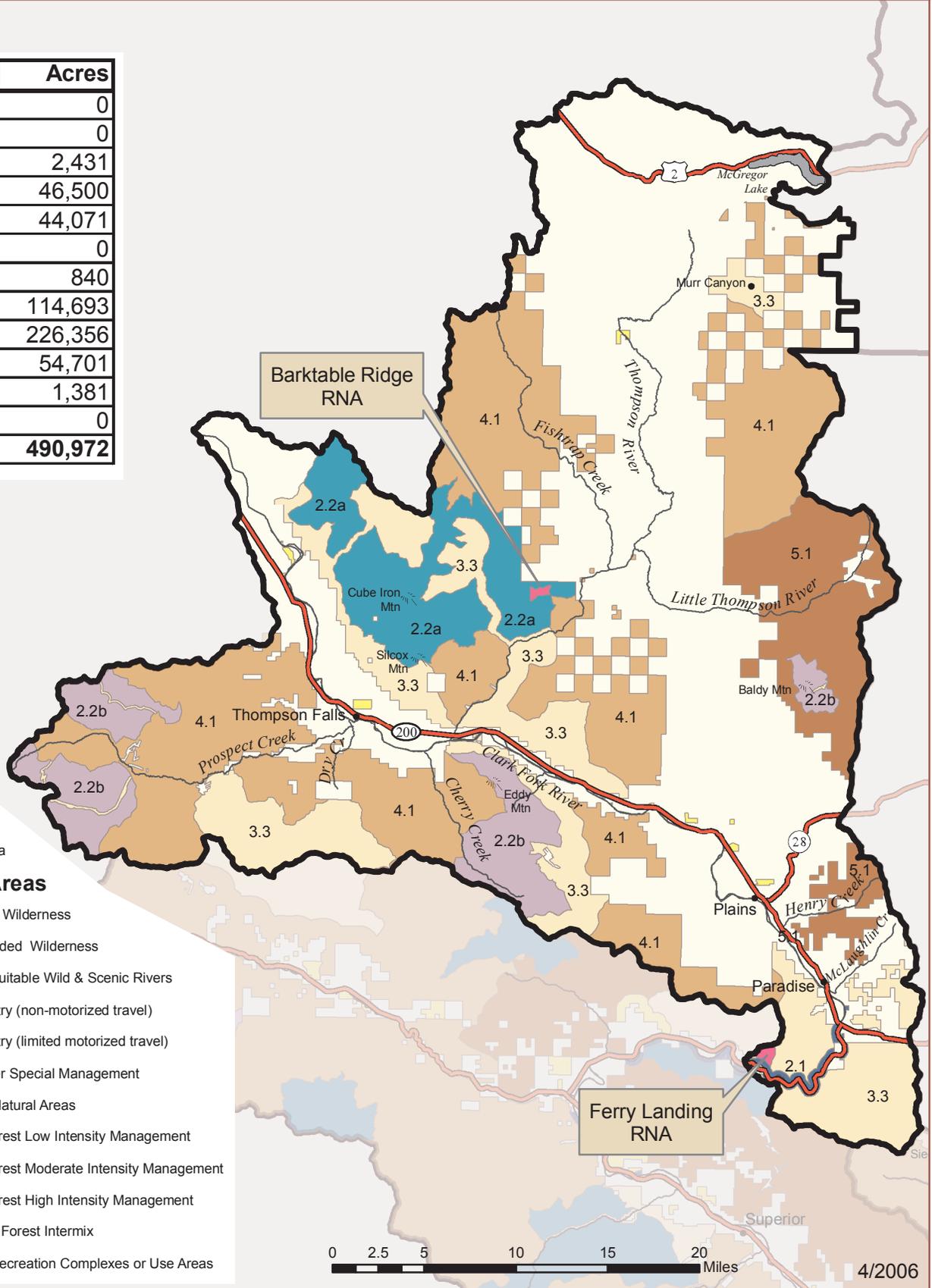


# Lolo National Forest

## Lower Clark Fork Geographic Area

**Figure 6**

MA	Acres
1.1	0
1.2	0
2.1	2,431
2.2A	46,500
2.2B	44,071
3.1	0
3.2	840
3.3	114,693
4.1	226,356
5.1	54,701
5.2	1,381
6.1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>490,972</b>



### Legend

Geographic Area

### Management Areas

- 1.1 Designated Wilderness
- 1.2 Recommended Wilderness
- 2.1 Eligible or Suitable Wild & Scenic Rivers
- 2.2a Backcountry (non-motorized travel)
- 2.2b Backcountry (limited motorized travel)
- 3.1 Areas Under Special Management
- 3.2 Research Natural Areas
- 3.3 General Forest Low Intensity Management
- 4.1 General Forest Moderate Intensity Management
- 5.1 General Forest High Intensity Management
- 5.2 Residential Forest Intermix
- 6.1 High Use Recreation Complexes or Use Areas

0 2.5 5 10 15 20 Miles

## Lower Clark Fork Geographic Area

### Unique Characteristics

- The Clark Fork River, Noxon and Thompson reservoirs are popular recreation areas for floating and fishing.
- Glacial Lake Missoula features across the landscape.
- The St. Regis to Paradise Cutoff National Forest Scenic Byway.
- The Prospect Creek and Thompson River scenic routes.
- Large, easily viewable bighorn sheep population.
- Productive, moist-forested ecosystems.
- Barktable Ridge and Ferry's Landing research natural areas (RNAs).
- Bull trout critical habitat is designated in the Thompson River, Fishtrap Creek, Prospect Creek, and Graves Creek.

### General Overview

This geographic area encompasses the scenic mountains and valleys of the lower Clark Fork River and its major tributaries, the Flathead and Thompson rivers, and Prospect Creek. Private lands on the open valley bottoms and lower mountain slopes are mainly rural, agriculture, or industrial forest lands. Intermingled corporate and state lands exist.

About 19 percent is within designated wilderness, recommended wilderness or other primitive settings. Approximately 81 percent of the Lower Clark Fork Geographic Area offers opportunities for higher intensities of resource management activities.

This geographic area retains a rural character. Population growth in recent years has been primarily due to an increasing draw as a retirement community. Recreation is an increasingly important part of the local economy.

The Cube Iron-Silcox and Fishtrap areas north and east of Thompson Falls are part of the Cabinet-Yaak grizzly bear core recovery area. There are limits on timber management activities of one entry every ten years into core habitat. Motorized routes (roads and trails) in the grizzly bear management unit currently exceed the desired condition.

Fairly large portions of the Thompson River drainage are in mixed ownership, primarily a checkerboard pattern of ownership with Plum Creek. Murr Creek Canyon, which flows into the Thompson River, is a deep canyon feature that retains a semi-primitive setting in the midst of an area of intermingled ownership that has been heavily roaded.

The main Prospect Creek drainage includes a paved highway, several high-voltage utility lines, a petroleum pipeline, and an increasing number of private developments. Prospect Creek is considered a bull trout stronghold for the lower Clark Fork watershed.

The Cutoff section of the Clark Fork River has been found eligible and suitable for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River System<sup>1</sup>.

## Desired Conditions

### Watershed and Aquatic Habitat

- Aquatic habitat and water quality in this geographic area would be sufficient to support healthy bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout communities. Prospect Creek, Fishtrap Creek, and the West Fork Thompson River and their tributaries would serve as strongholds and recruitment sources to the lower Clark Fork and Thompson rivers.

### Wildlife and Plant Species Diversity

- Substantial open grasslands would continue to serve as important big game winter and summer range which would support bighorn sheep. Healthy range conditions would have low fuel levels, absence of weeds and Douglas-fir encroachment, and would be resilient to fire.
- The Thompson River and Cherry Peak areas would have effective wildlife habitat connectivity in order to benefit north-south movement of wide-ranging species such as wolf, lynx, and grizzly bear.
- There would be a positive trend in grizzly bear numbers in the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Grizzly Bear Recovery Zones<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Information on the outstandingly remarkable values (ORV), for which the river was found eligible and its potential classification, is in the Plan Set of Documents.

<sup>2</sup> Useful management guidance may be found in *Biological Opinion for the Kootenai, Idaho Panhandle, and Lolo National Forest Land and Resource Management Plans Amendment for Motorized Access Management within the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Grizzly Bear Recovery Zones*, found in the Plan Set of Documents.

**Recreation**

- Interpretation and access to the Clark Fork River would be maintained and enhanced.
- The Ferry Landing trailhead, river access, and Cascade Campground would remain open.

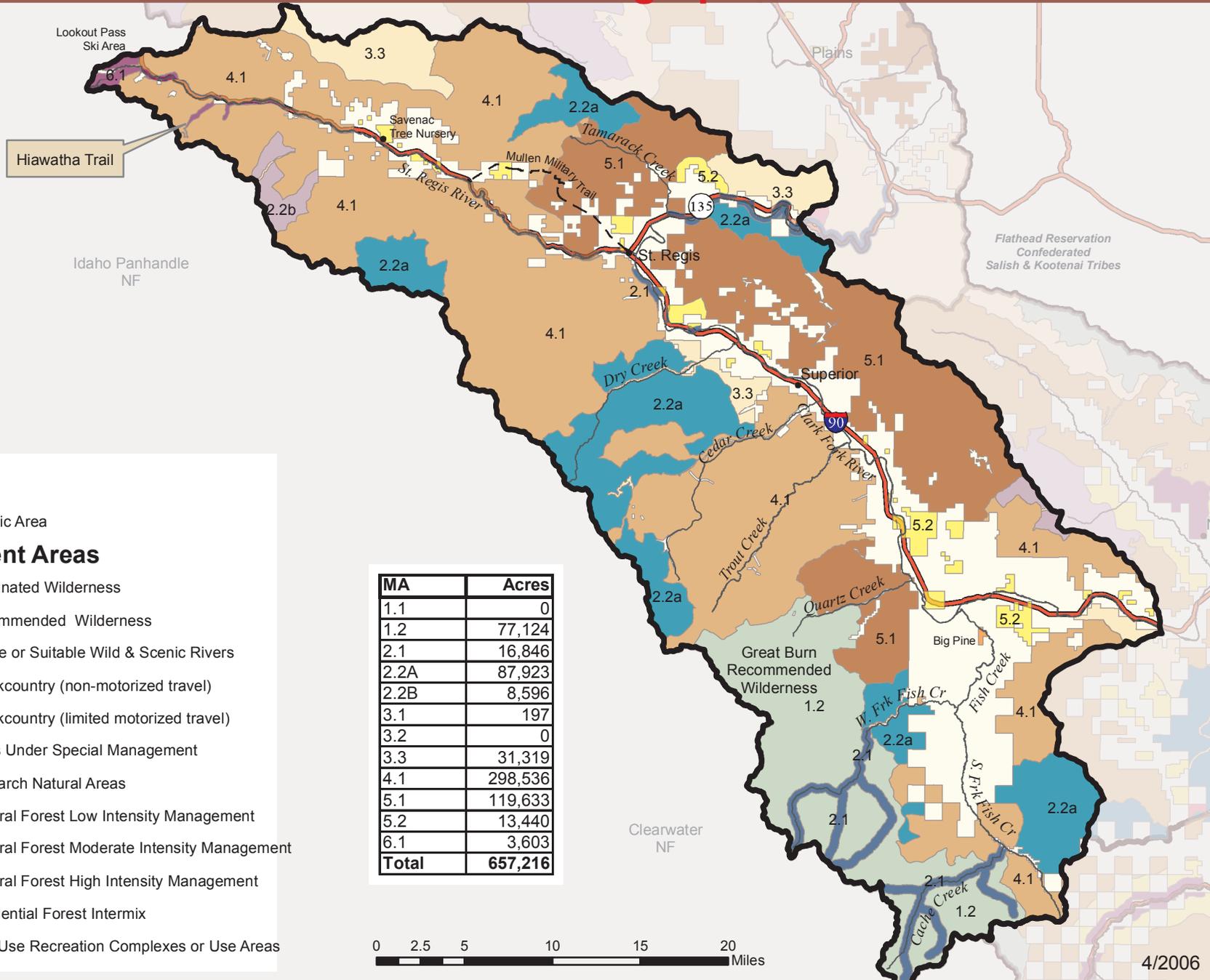
**Access and Travel Management**

- Motorized routes in the Mount Headley bear management unit (#22) would meet the motorized access management direction of the “Biological Opinion for the Kootenai, Idaho Panhandle, and Lolo National Forests Land and Resource Management Plans Amendment for Motorized Access Management within the Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Grizzly Bear Recovery Zones.”
- Three routes that pass through MA 2.2b that are currently closed to motorized use would be evaluated for a change to limited motorized use. These routes are:
  - Road 7649, from Driveway Peak to Emma Peak.
  - Trail 701, from Glidden Creek to Glidden Pass.
  - Trail 340, from McGinnis Ditch to Baldy Lake.
- The Cooper Gulch Road 7623 would continue to provide motorized access through the Evans Gulch/Cooper Gulch MA 2.2b area.
- The CC Divide Trail 404 would remain available for motorized use in the Cherry Creek MA 2.2b area.



# Lolo National Forest Middle Clark Fork Geographic Area

**Figure 7**



### Legend

Geographic Area

### Management Areas

- 1.1 Designated Wilderness
- 1.2 Recommended Wilderness
- 2.1 Eligible or Suitable Wild & Scenic Rivers
- 2.2a Backcountry (non-motorized travel)
- 2.2b Backcountry (limited motorized travel)
- 3.1 Areas Under Special Management
- 3.2 Research Natural Areas
- 3.3 General Forest Low Intensity Management
- 4.1 General Forest Moderate Intensity Management
- 5.1 General Forest High Intensity Management
- 5.2 Residential Forest Intermix
- 6.1 High Use Recreation Complexes or Use Areas

MA	Acres
1.1	0
1.2	77,124
2.1	16,846
2.2A	87,923
2.2B	8,596
3.1	197
3.2	0
3.3	31,319
4.1	298,536
5.1	119,633
5.2	13,440
6.1	3,603
<b>Total</b>	<b>657,216</b>



## Middle Clark Fork Geographic Area

### Unique Characteristics

- The Clark Fork River and the Alberton Gorge are prominent features.
- Great Burn recommended wilderness.
- Approximately 40 alpine lakes in scenic glacial cirque basins, many with catch'able populations of trout.
- Includes 28 major streams and tributaries designated as critical habitat for bull trout, including Big Creek, Cache Creek, Cedar Creek, Dry Creek, Fish Creek, Little Joe Creek, Trout Creek, Twelvemile Creek, and the St. Regis River.
- The Montana State record ponderosa pine is found near the mouth of Fish Creek
- Includes the regionally recognized Route of the Hiawatha Trail.
- Lookout Pass Ski Area.
- Highway 135 between St. Regis and Paradise is a National Scenic Byway.
- Includes intact sections of the historic Mullan Military Road, which is a National Historic Engineering Landmark designated by the American Society of Civil Engineers.
- The historic Savenac Tree Nursery and Visitor Center.

### General Overview

Most of the area has been managed with a timber emphasis for many decades. Placer mining operations were common in valley bottoms earlier in the twentieth century. The area has a fairly well-developed road system, contains a number of inventoried roadless areas that offer non-motorized recreation opportunities and quality habitat for fish and wildlife.

Approximately 29 percent of this geographic area is within recommended wilderness or other primitive settings. About 71 percent offers opportunities for higher intensities of resource management activities.

Cache Creek and its tributaries, the west fork of Fish Creek and its tributaries, and the Slowey and Cutoff reaches of the Clark Fork River have been found eligible and suitable for Wild and Scenic River designation<sup>1</sup>.

## Desired Condition

### Watershed and Aquatic Ecosystems

- Aquatic habitat and water quality in this geographic area would be sufficient to support healthy bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout communities. Fish Creek, Trout Creek, Cedar Creek, and the St. Regis River and their tributaries would serve as strongholds and recruitment sources to the middle Clark Fork River.

### Wildlife and Plant Species Diversity

- Big game habitat would be sufficient to maintain healthy populations that provide hunting opportunities and are compatible with other land uses.
- Winter range, such as Packer Creek and Burdette Creek, would receive special emphasis for big game habitat improvement.
- Mt. Bushnell and other important elk habitat identified through coordination with Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, and other partners would maintain or be restored to high quality elk habitat.

### Recreation

- Maintain the high scenic values around all high alpine lakes.
- The groomed snowmobile trail system would be maintained from Lookout Pass to DeBorgia.
- In the Fish Creek drainage, recreation management would emphasize dispersed, non-developed recreation use. Minimal new recreational development would be promoted.
- Parking and sanitation facilities which accommodate users in all seasons would exist in the Lookout Pass Area.
- The Great Burn Area would have little commercial use. Commercial outfitter guide permits would be limited to the current levels (2005) with no new opportunities for commercial use offered without conducting a capacity analysis.

<sup>1</sup> Information on the outstandingly remarkable values (ORV), for which the river was found eligible and its potential classification, is in the Plan Set of Documents.

**Backcountry Areas**

- These are generally managed to provide for non-motorized recreation opportunities near the primitive end of the recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS). The exceptions:
  - MA 2.2b on the Ninemile Divide would allow motorized use of forest road #454 to Stark Mountain.
  - MA 2.2b at the head of Gilt Edge and West Fork Big Creek would be opened to motorized use of the Storm Peak trail only.

**Lands**

- Checkerboard ownership along Fish Creek would be consolidated into public lands.

**Access and Travel Management**

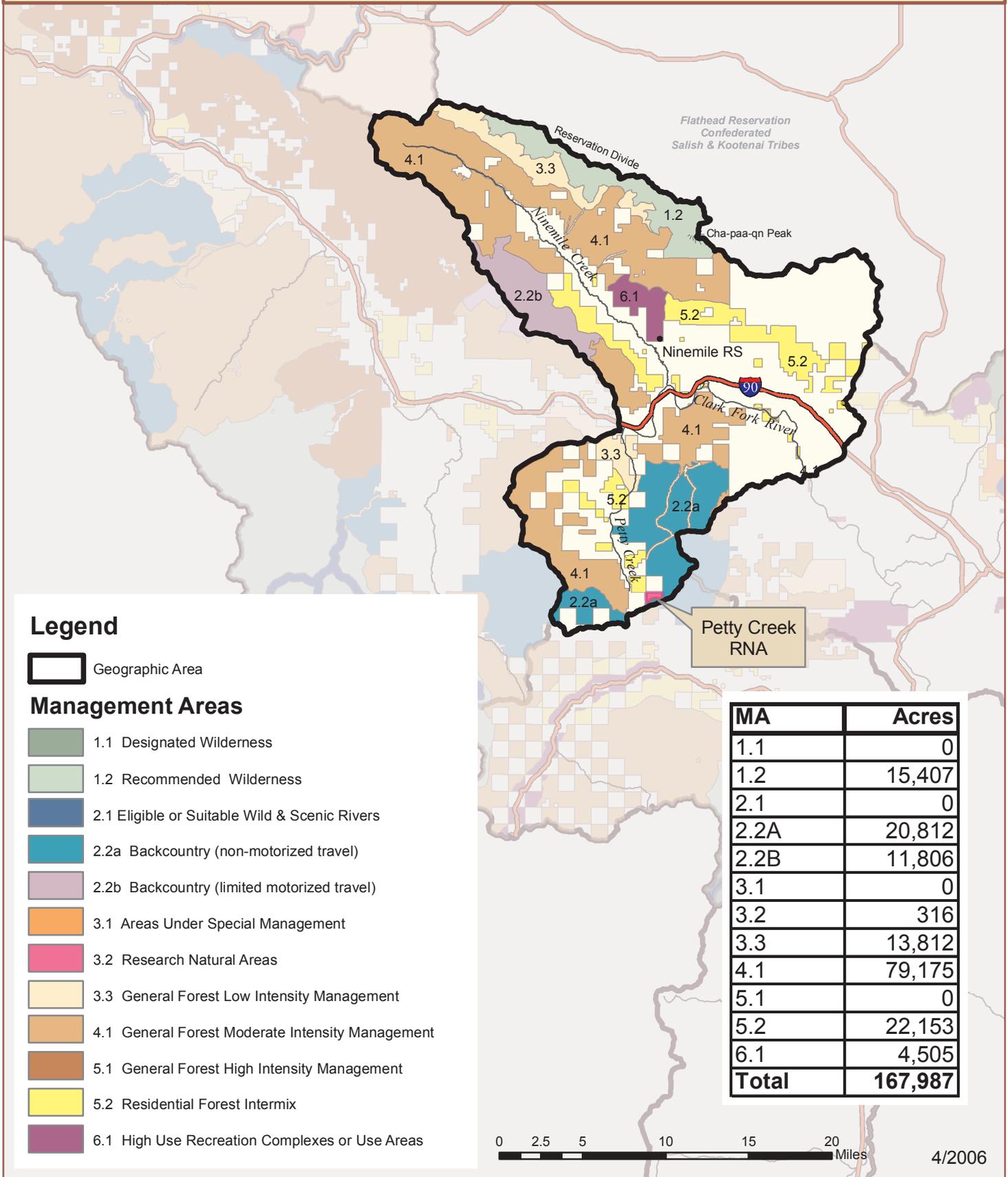
- The Schley Mountain corridor would be closed to snowmobile use if the Clearwater National Forest Plan adopts non-motorized use for their portion of the proposed Great Burn Wilderness.
- The Schley Mountain trailheads would be consolidated into one trailhead facility and the additional three miles of FDR 7734 closed seasonally to motorized use.



# Lolo National Forest

Figure 8

## Ninemile / Petty Creek Geographic Area



### Legend

Geographic Area

### Management Areas

- 1.1 Designated Wilderness
- 1.2 Recommended Wilderness
- 2.1 Eligible or Suitable Wild & Scenic Rivers
- 2.2a Backcountry (non-motorized travel)
- 2.2b Backcountry (limited motorized travel)
- 3.1 Areas Under Special Management
- 3.2 Research Natural Areas
- 3.3 General Forest Low Intensity Management
- 4.1 General Forest Moderate Intensity Management
- 5.1 General Forest High Intensity Management
- 5.2 Residential Forest Intermix
- 6.1 High Use Recreation Complexes or Use Areas

MA	Acres
1.1	0
1.2	15,407
2.1	0
2.2A	20,812
2.2B	11,806
3.1	0
3.2	316
3.3	13,812
4.1	79,175
5.1	0
5.2	22,153
6.1	4,505
<b>Total</b>	<b>167,987</b>

0 2.5 5 10 15 20 Miles

## Ninemile/Petty Creek Geographic Area

### Unique Characteristics

- The Ninemile Ranger Station and Remount Depot National Historic Site.
- Historic features including: CCC Camp, mining district, and the Ninemile Ranger Station.
- Cha-paa-qn Peak is a prominent area landmark and popular day hike.
- Mountain bike trails connect historic sites associated with the CCC Camp, Mule Pasture, Grand Menard picnic site, and the Ninemile Remount Depot.
- Populations of bighorn sheep around Petty Mountain and wolves the Ninemile area.
- Bull trout critical habitat is designated in Petty Creek.

### General Overview

The Interstate 90 (I-90) corridor, which roughly parallels the Clark Fork River, bisects this geographic area. The communities of Alberton, Ninemile, Huson, and Frenchtown are located within the geographic area.

About 29 percent of the geographic area is within designated wilderness, recommended wilderness or other primitive settings. Approximately 71 percent offers opportunities for higher intensities of resource management activities.

Both the Ninemile and Petty Creek watersheds are important producers of native fish including bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout. Abandoned mine sites in the mid to upper Ninemile drainage are contributing to watershed disturbances.

### Desired Conditions

#### Watersheds and Aquatic Resources

- Aquatic habitat and water quality in this geographic area would be sufficient to support healthy bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout communities. Ninemile Creek, Petty Creek, Albert Creek and their tributaries would serve as strongholds and recruitment sources to the middle Clark Fork River.

**Wildlife and Plant Species Diversity**

- This geographic area would continue to be a stronghold for the Ninemile wolf pack. There would be sufficient habitat and habitat security for recovery of wolves in the area.
- Wildlife habitat connectivity for a wide range of species would be a focus in the vicinity of the Ninemile I-90 exit and in Petty Creek.

**Minerals and Geology**

- Abandoned mine sites in the mid to upper Ninemile watershed would be rehabilitated or restored.

**Recreation**

- Day use, non-developed, dispersed recreational opportunities would be the primary focus.

**Recommended Wilderness**

- To complement the land use designation proposed by the Confederated Salish-Kootenai on their Tribal lands, the Reservation Divide IRA would be managed for primitive non-motorized recreation opportunities and to retain wilderness characteristics for potential wilderness designation.

**Backcountry Areas**

- These are generally managed to provide for non-motorized recreation opportunities near the primitive end of the recreation opportunity spectrum.
- The Petty Mountain Inventoried Roadless Area (Management Area 2.2a) is currently identified for non-motorized use. Trails 8, 718, 719, and 720 would be evaluated and possibly designated as a motorized travel route for OHV recreational use.

**Lands**

- Land adjustment would focus on the consolidation of ownership patterns, retention or acquisition of critical wildlife winter range, and improvement of habitat connectivity.

**Access and Travel Management**

- Road densities in both the Ninemile and Petty Creek watersheds would be reduced from current levels.

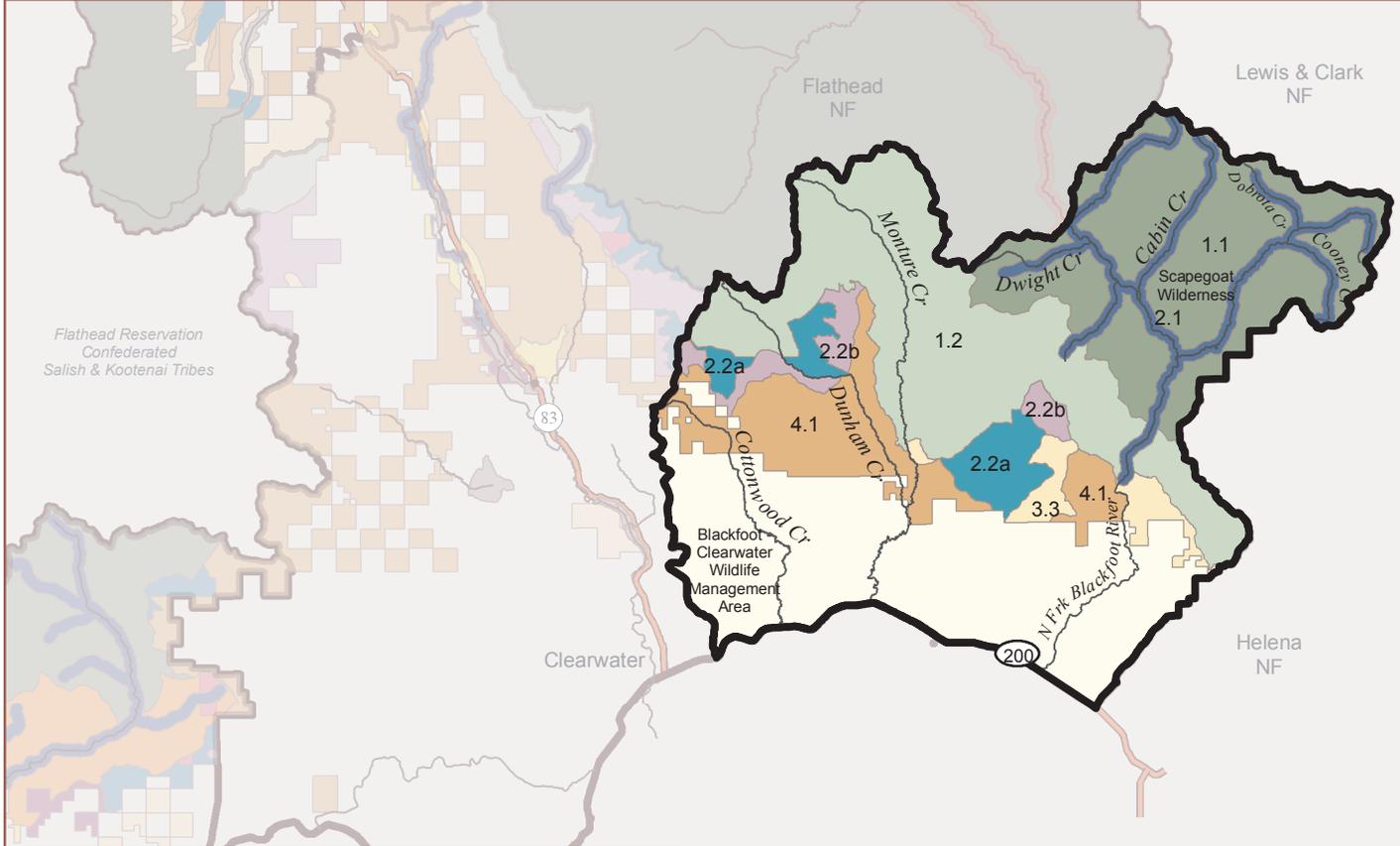
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# Lolo National Forest

## North Fork Blackfoot Geographic Area

**Figure 9**



### Legend

Geographic Area

### Management Areas

- 1.1 Designated Wilderness
- 1.2 Recommended Wilderness
- 2.1 Eligible or Suitable Wild & Scenic Rivers
- 2.2a Backcountry (non-motorized travel)
- 2.2b Backcountry (limited motorized travel)
- 3.1 Areas Under Special Management
- 3.2 Research Natural Areas
- 3.3 General Forest Low Intensity Management
- 4.1 General Forest Moderate Intensity Management
- 5.1 General Forest High Intensity Management
- 5.2 Residential Forest Intermix
- 6.1 High Use Recreation Complexes or Use Areas

MA	Acres
1.1	57,855
1.2	70,119
2.1	19,146
2.2A	11,414
2.2B	7,566
3.1	0
3.2	0
3.3	7,239
4.1	28,668
5.1	0
5.2	0
6.1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>202,007</b>



## North Fork Blackfoot Geographic Area

### Unique Characteristics

- The Scapegoat Wilderness which is part of the larger Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex.
- Part of the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem, has outstanding habitats for native fish and wildlife species such as grizzly bears, Canada lynx, and bull trout.
- Over 300 miles of trail attract backcountry hikers and horsemen to remarkable scenery, hunting, fishing, and climbing opportunities.
- Bull trout critical habitat is designated in Cottonwood Creek, Dunham Creek, Monture Creek, and the North Fork Blackfoot River.

### General Overview

Most of the North Fork Blackfoot geographic area is in the Scapegoat Wilderness or adjoining inventoried roadless area recommended for wilderness designation. These areas are buffered by largely undeveloped lands to the south. Neighboring communities are rural in character. Local communities and organizations have worked together to protect and expand the wildland qualities in this geographic area through acquisition of land and conservation easements.

Approximately 82 percent is within designated wilderness, recommended wilderness or other primitive settings. About 18 percent of the area offers opportunities for higher intensities of resource management activities.

Includes recommendation of 69,615 additional wilderness acres to the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex in the Monture area.

The North Fork Blackfoot Geographic Area provides excellent backcountry recreation opportunities in the Scapegoat Wilderness and the surrounding primitive and semi-primitive settings.

The North Fork Blackfoot River including Canyon Creek, Dwight Creek, Cabin Creek, Cooney Creek, and Dobrota Creek have been found eligible and suitable for Wild and Scenic River designation<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Information on the outstandingly remarkable values (ORV), for which the river was found eligible and its potential classification, is in the Plan Set of Documents.

## Desired Condition

### Watersheds and Aquatic Habitat

- Aquatic habitat and water quality in this geographic area would be sufficient to support healthy bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout communities. Cottonwood Creek, Dunham Creek, Monture Creek, the North Fork Blackfoot River and their tributaries would serve as strongholds and recruitment sources to the Blackfoot River.

### Wildlife and Plant Species Diversity

- This area would continue to serve as a functioning wildlife connection between the Bob Marshall Complex and wildlands to the south of Highway 200.

### Access and Travel Management

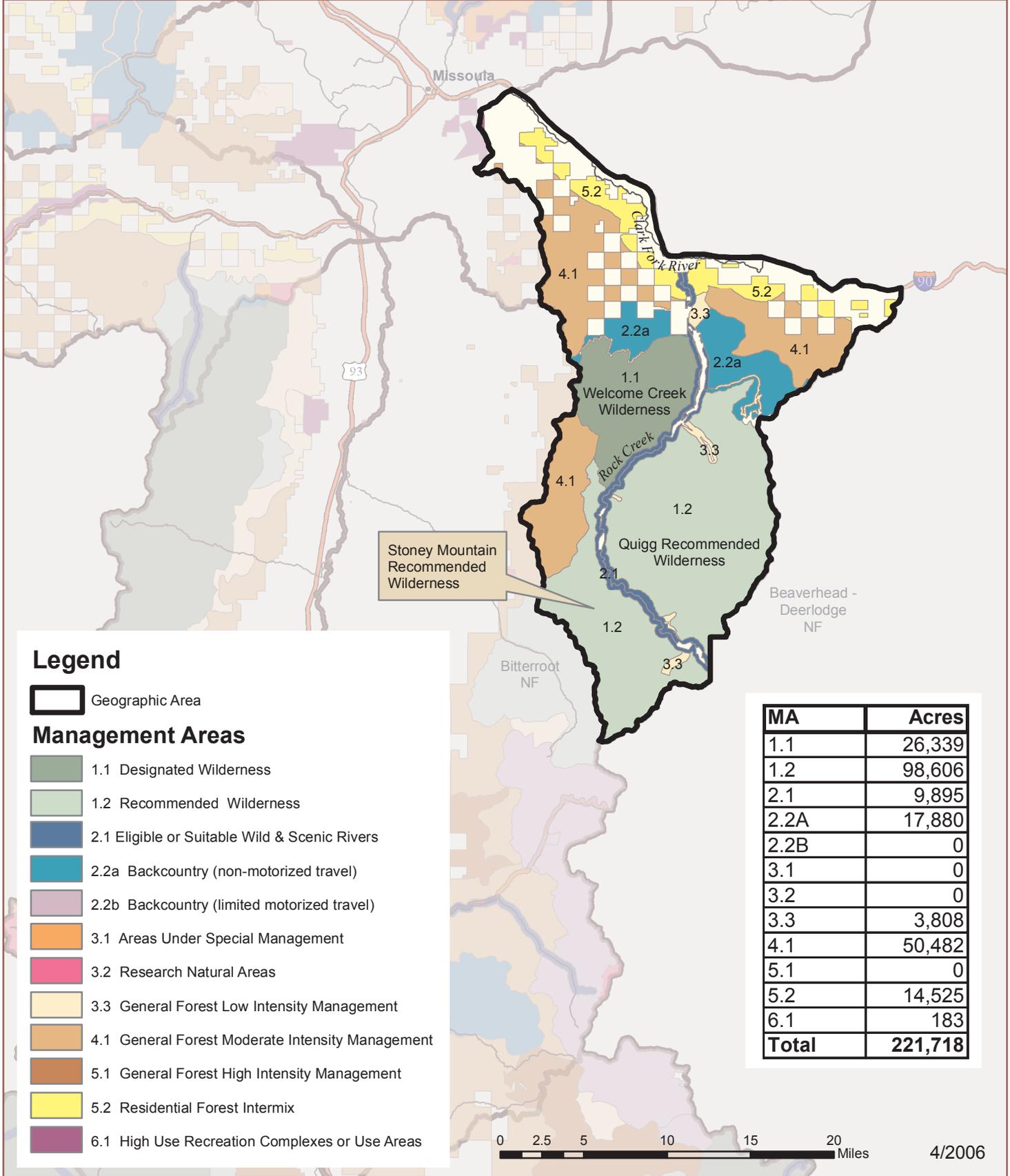
- Limited open roads would be available during summer and early fall.
- Snowmobiling opportunities would continue where these currently exist, and more opportunities would be offered.
- Motorized routes within the grizzly bear recovery area portion of this geographic area would meet up-to-date open and total motorized route density requirements.

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# Lolo National Forest Rock Creek Geographic Area

**Figure 10**



### Legend

Geographic Area

### Management Areas

- 1.1 Designated Wilderness
- 1.2 Recommended Wilderness
- 2.1 Eligible or Suitable Wild & Scenic Rivers
- 2.2a Backcountry (non-motorized travel)
- 2.2b Backcountry (limited motorized travel)
- 3.1 Areas Under Special Management
- 3.2 Research Natural Areas
- 3.3 General Forest Low Intensity Management
- 4.1 General Forest Moderate Intensity Management
- 5.1 General Forest High Intensity Management
- 5.2 Residential Forest Intermix
- 6.1 High Use Recreation Complexes or Use Areas

MA	Acres
1.1	26,339
1.2	98,606
2.1	9,895
2.2A	17,880
2.2B	0
3.1	0
3.2	0
3.3	3,808
4.1	50,482
5.1	0
5.2	14,525
6.1	183
<b>Total</b>	<b>221,718</b>

0 2.5 5 10 15 20 Miles

## Rock Creek Geographic Area

### Unique Characteristics

- Welcome Creek Wilderness.
- Stony Mountain and Quigg recommended wilderness areas.
- Several historic cabins in the Rock Creek drainage.
- Bunch grass big game winter range found on only three percent of the Lolo National Forest.
- Rock Creek is a blue ribbon trout stream designated by the State of Montana.
- Supports a trophy bighorn sheep herd.
- Bull trout critical habitat is designated in Brewster Creek, Gilbert Creek, Harvey Creek, Ranch Creek, Wahlquist Creek, and Rock Creek.

### General Overview

Most of the Rock Creek geographic area managed by the Lolo National Forest is designated wilderness, recommended wilderness or other lands of more primitive character. The area along the Clark Fork valley and the upper slopes of the Sapphire Divide has been managed for forest products and is in a checkerboard ownership pattern. Much of the private land in these sections is owned by Plum Creek Timber Company. The middle and upper reaches of Rock Creek are composed of private lands and National Forest System lands administered by the Beaverhead–Deerlodge National Forest. Rock Creek Road (#102) is the main access road.

Approximately 69 percent is within designated wilderness, recommended wilderness or other primitive settings. About 32 percent of the area offers opportunities for higher intensities of resource management activities.

Rock Creek has been found eligible for possible inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River System<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Information on the outstandingly remarkable values (ORV), for which the river was found eligible and its potential classification, is in the Plan Set of Documents.

## Desired Conditions

### Watershed and Aquatic Habitat

- Aquatic habitat and water quality in this geographic area would be sufficient to support healthy bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout communities. Rock Creek and Harvey Creek and their tributaries would serve as strongholds and recruitment sources to the upper Clark Fork River.

### Vegetation Composition, Size Class, and Structure

- Substantial open grasslands and healthy range conditions would have low fuel levels, absence of weeds and Douglas-fir encroachment, and would be resilient to fire.

### Wildlife and Plant Species Diversity

- Substantial open grasslands would continue to serve as important big game winter and summer range. Open areas and healthy range conditions support important bighorn sheep habitat areas.

### Heritage Resources

- The historic integrity of the Upper Rock Creek area would be maintained and enhanced. Archeological sites would be monitored and protected. The historic structures: Rock Creek Cabin, Hogback Homestead, and the Morgan Case Homestead would be maintained.

### Recreation

- Recreational qualities and facilities along the Rock Creek corridor, including developed campgrounds, picnic areas, interpretive sites, dispersed camping sites, and historic cabins would reflect the rustic and historic character of the area.
- The Rock Creek Road corridor would have scenic viewpoints that feature the natural beauty of the landscape.

### Designated Wilderness

- The wilderness character of the Welcome Creek Wilderness would be maintained.

### Wild and Scenic Rivers

- A suitability study for Rock Creek would be completed in conjunction with the Beaverhead-Deerlodge Forest.

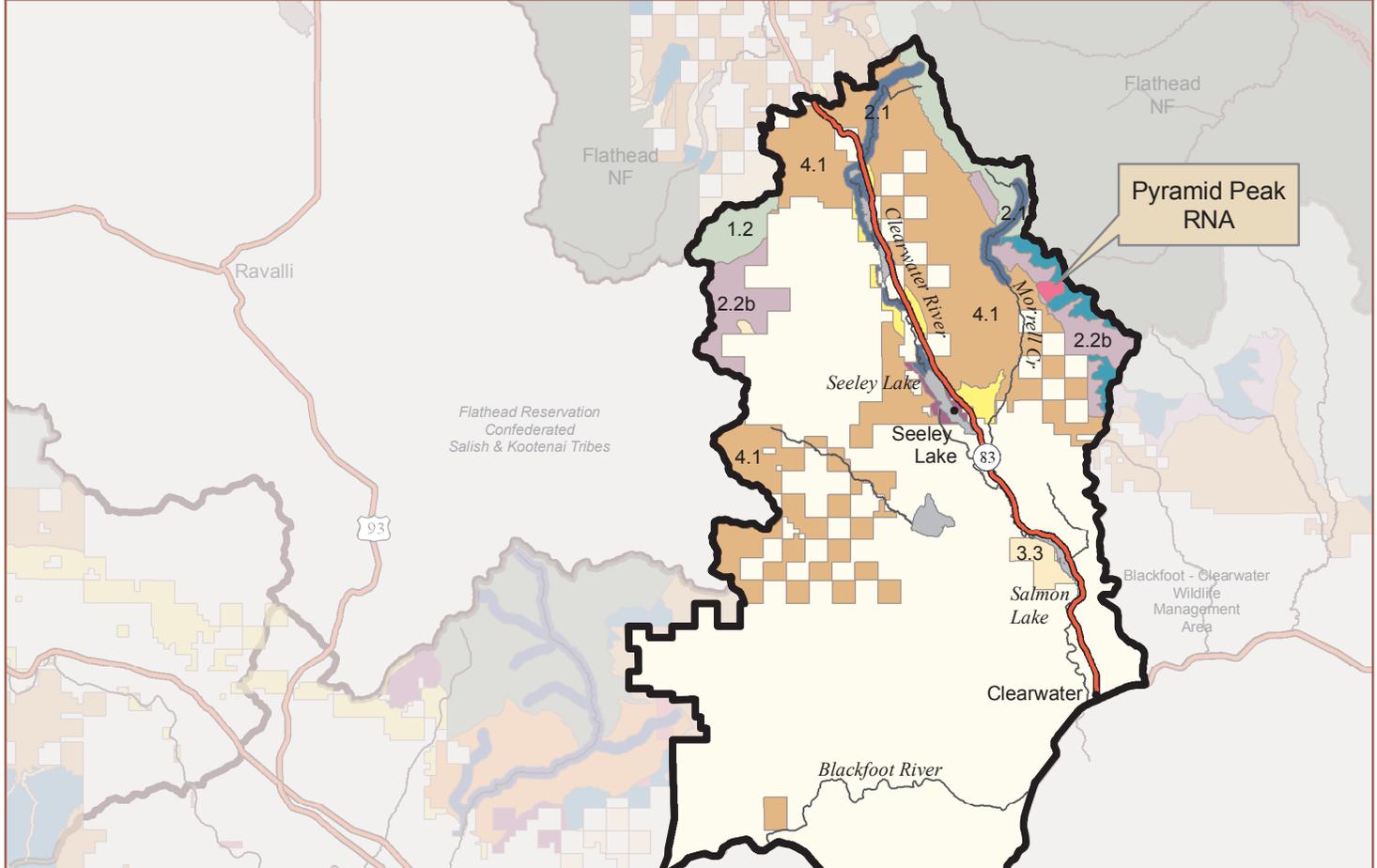
**Access and Travel Management**

- The existing Rock Creek Road (#102) would be the primary public access route. The Lolo National Forest would continue to provide public access to specific areas of the creek via the Rock Creek Road. Portions of the road would remain under customary jurisdiction of Granite and Missoula counties. Road management activities and authorized uses would be designed to maintain the beauty of the landscape and the creek.
- The Bitterroot Rock Creek Divide Trail 313 would be:
  - Closed to motorized use from Dome Shaped Mountain north to Sawmill Saddle.
  - Open to motorized use from Sawmill Saddle north to Cinnabar Saddle.
  - Closed to wheeled motorized use from north of Cinnabar Saddle to Eightmile Saddle.



# Lolo National Forest Seeley Geographic Area

Figure 11



Pyramid Peak  
RNA

## Legend

Geographic Area

### Management Areas

- 1.1 Designated Wilderness
- 1.2 Recommended Wilderness
- 2.1 Eligible or Suitable Wild & Scenic Rivers
- 2.2a Backcountry (non-motorized travel)
- 2.2b Backcountry (limited motorized travel)
- 3.1 Areas Under Special Management
- 3.2 Research Natural Areas
- 3.3 General Forest Low Intensity Management
- 4.1 General Forest Moderate Intensity Management
- 5.1 General Forest High Intensity Management
- 5.2 Residential Forest Intermix
- 6.1 High Use Recreation Complexes or Use Areas

MA	Acres
1.1	0
1.2	10,938
2.1	6,651
2.2A	4,010
2.2B	13,067
3.1	0
3.2	489
3.3	2,470
4.1	68,143
5.1	0
5.2	3,170
6.1	925
<b>Total</b>	<b>109,864</b>



## Seeley Lake Geographic Area

### Unique Characteristics

- The Clearwater River links a series of lakes: Seeley Lake, Salmon Lake, and the Chain of Lakes (Lake Inez, Lake Alva, Rainy Lake, and Summit Lake).
- The area contains over 400 miles of winter trails for snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and dog sled racing.
- The national co-champion western larch tree is located in the Girard Grove near Seeley Lake.
- The Blackfoot-Clearwater Game Range.
- The Clearwater Canoe Trail offers wildlife viewing and recreational opportunities.
- Pyramid Peak Research Natural Area.
- Bull trout critical habitat is designated in Belmont Creek, Clearwater Lake, West Fork Clearwater River, Clearwater River, Lake Alva, Lake Inez, Morrell Creek, Owl Creek, Placid Creek, Placid Lake, Rainy Lake, Salmon Lake, and Seeley Lake.

### General Overview

Winter and summer recreation is very popular and an important factor to the local economy. Adjacent lands are in a variety of other ownerships including industrial forest lands some of which are in checkerboard ownership, state lands, and other private lands. This area is generally rural with the town of Seeley Lake being the largest community.

Approximately 32 percent is within designated wilderness, recommended wilderness or other primitive settings. About 68 percent of the area offers opportunities for higher intensities of resource management activities.

This geographic area contains recommended wilderness additions to the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex in the West Fork Clearwater drainage (4,500 acres), Swan Face (3,929 acres), and Grizzly Basin (3,664 acres).

The Seeley Lake Geographic Area is a year-round destination. The natural settings and seasonal change provide for high quality recreation opportunities from summer water-based activities like boating and fishing to winter snow play for snowmobiling and cross-country skiing.

The area is a stronghold for rare species such as grizzly bear, Canada lynx, loons, and bull trout. It has an adfluvial fish population that migrates upstream from Salmon Lake, Seeley Lake, Lake Inez, and Lake Alva. Its location is an important connectivity zone for many species of wide-ranging wildlife including grizzly bear and Canada lynx.

The Clearwater River and Morrell Creek have been found eligible and suitable for Wild and Scenic River designation<sup>1</sup>.

## Desired Condition

### Watershed and Aquatic Habitat

- Aquatic habitat and water quality in this geographic area would be sufficient to support healthy bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout communities. The Clearwater River, Chain of Lakes, and their tributaries would serve as strongholds and recruitment sources to the Blackfoot River and the Clearwater River and lake system would support healthy populations of adfluvial bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout.

### Wildlife and Plant Species Diversity

- Big game habitat would be sufficient to maintain healthy populations compatible with other land uses and that provide hunting opportunities.
- The Blackfoot-Clearwater Game Range would maintain high quality elk habitat.
- There would be effective wildlife habitat connectivity to benefit movement of wide-ranging species.
- Quality habitat conditions for grizzly bear and lynx would be maintained.

### Recreation

- The Clearwater Canoe Trail would continue to feature wildlife viewing opportunities along with other compatible recreation activities.

<sup>1</sup> Information on the outstandingly remarkable values (ORV), for which the river was found eligible and its potential classification, is in the Plan Set of Documents.

- The Chain of Lakes area would continue to be the primary area of developed recreation with campgrounds, recreation residences, and resorts.

**Access and Travel Management**

- Connector trails would provide access from the community of Seeley Lake to the Lolo National Forest.
- Winter motorized use would continue to be emphasized in this area.
- Motorized routes within the grizzly bear recovery area portion of this geographic area would meet up-to-date open and total motorized route density requirements.