



**ASHLEY NATIONAL FOREST
FOREST PLAN REVISION – WILDERNESS EVALUATION PROCESS
DRAFT INVENTORY**

The Ashley National Forest has prepared a draft Inventory of areas for further evaluation that may be suitable for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. Developing an inventory is the first part of the 4 step process of wilderness evaluation.

The inventory has been developed through following the Region 4 Wilderness Evaluation Process, which was developed under the guidance of the Chapter 70 criteria. This first step in the process is intended to be broad and inclusive, where more detailed review regarding wilderness character will occur later in the process. During the inventory phase, the following criteria will be considered:

- **Geographic Size**
- **Improvements**
- **Roads**

An interactive map of the draft inventory is available for viewing and public comment by viewing the Ashley National Forest website at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/ashley> and by clicking on “*Potential for Wilderness Evaluation Web Application*”.

In addition, a series of maps is included here for visual explanation of the draft inventory process. The maps begin by looking at the entire area of the Ashley National Forest, and then excluding items that are outlined in Chapter 70 and the USDA Forest Service Region 4 Wilderness Evaluation Process.

The maps depict each of the criteria considered for exclusion from the draft potential wilderness inventory in a separate manner. --*i.e. each criteria as part of the excluded areas (roads, improvements, etc.) are shown on a separate map.*

We welcome your comments as we proceed through this step in the process.

The next step will be to consider the comments provided through public participation and develop a final inventory that will be utilized as we enter into the evaluation stage.

FOUR STEP PROCESS OF WILDERNESS EVALUATION

The wilderness evaluation process has a sequence of 4 steps which includes a broad and inclusive inventory and evaluation of lands that may be suitable for further wilderness consideration based on a set of criteria. Based on the evaluation of lands identified in the inventory and through public participation, certain areas, or portions of areas, in the inventory are analyzed through a range of alternatives in the Forest Plan Environmental Impact Statement. Finally, a decision is issued, as part of the Forest Plan Revision decision, whether or not to make a preliminary administrative recommendation to add any units of land into the NWPS. During each step of this process, public participation is a key component and will result in a process and decision that is transparent and inclusive. After the Forest Plan Revision decision is made, the preliminary administrative recommendation will then receive further review and possible modification by the Chief of the Forest Service, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the President of the United States.

Only Congress can designate wilderness.

THE FOUR STEPS:

- **INVENTORY**
- **EVALUATION**
- **ANALYSIS**
- **RECOMMENDATION**

INVENTORY PROCESS - The first step in the wilderness planning process is to determine what lands to consider for wilderness recommendation based on improvements (man-made features on the landscape), roads, and a size criteria. The inventory stage is intended to be comprehensive and broad.

It is important to note that lands included in the inventory provide a starting point for further evaluation, and their inclusion is not a designation that conveys or requires a particular kind of present or future management.

The directives used to develop this criteria are found in Chapter 70 of Forest Service Handbook 1909.12 ("Chapter 70). During the inventory phase, we will develop and share maps that depict lands that may be included in the inventory for further evaluation and analysis.



Summary of Items Outlined in Chapter 70 for Exclusion in the Inventory of Areas that may be Suitable for Inclusion in the Natural Wilderness Preservation System.

IMPROVEMENTS

Chapter 70 lists several improvements that may or may not eliminate an area from further consideration for the Inventory phase. Most are based on the degree to which they are or are not substantially noticeable in the area as a whole. For the Inventory phase, in Region 4, substantially noticeable represents a significant degree of change lasting 20 years or more, to the existing character of the landscape as a result of the improvement. This is measured by applying visual resource management objectives through describing the line, color, texture, form, and pattern of both the improvement and the landscape within which it is located. Each improvement Identified as part of the inventory will be included in the draft data set, with a worksheet describing the rationale on why the feature is/or is not substantially noticeable in the area as a whole.

EXCLUDE AREAS FROM THE INVENTORY WHEN:

Management actions or public use have left a substantially noticeable change to the landscape such that wilderness characteristics have been impaired. This includes excluding developed recreation sites, power lines, pipelines and other permanently installed linear structures that have rights-of-way.

INCLUDE AREAS FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS THAT MAY CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING IMPROVEMENTS:

Include improvements such as airstrips and helispots, historical structures, outfitter and guide camps, and permanently installed structures such as cell towers as long as the maintenance and access needs are minimal and these improvements are not substantially noticeable in the area as a whole.

SIZE

After applying the improvement criteria, the area will be further reviewed to meet the size criteria. Areas that meet the size criteria will be included for further consideration. Those that do not meet the size criteria will be eliminated from further review.

Include areas in the inventory that are:

- a. 5000 acres or greater
- b. Less than 5000 acres, greater than 50 acres and through Forest staff and public review is determined to be of sufficient enough size that it is practicable to include in the inventory. Examples are areas such as self-contained islands or canyons, or large enough to be effectively managed as a separate unit of the NWPS.
- c. Less than 5000 acres, and adjacent to existing designated Wilderness, primitive areas, and recommended wilderness on both NFS lands and adjacent lands of other Federal ownership.

ROADS

Chapter 70 provides direction on what type of roads will eliminate an area from being included in the Inventory. The Forest Service defines and manages roads based on a classification system that

utilizes the level of maintenance required for each road segment. The Level 1 through 5 classification definitions can be found in section 70.5 of Chapter 70 and in the Forest Service directives for road maintenance Forest Service Handbook 7709.59, Chapter 60).

Areas that meet the improvements and size criteria will be further analyzed based on the presence or absence of the 5 different maintenance level roads. Any area that contains roads with a maintenance level of 3 to 5 are automatically excluded from further analysis because these roads require a high level of maintenance, are generally frequently traveled, and do not contribute to an area's suitability for further consideration of inclusion into the National Wilderness Preservation System. Level 2 roads are generally excluded from further analysis with several exceptions that are clearly defined in Chapter 70, whereas areas with Level 1 roads are included for further analysis.

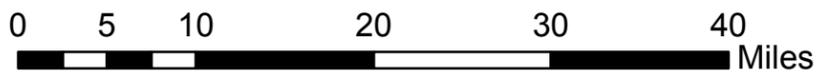
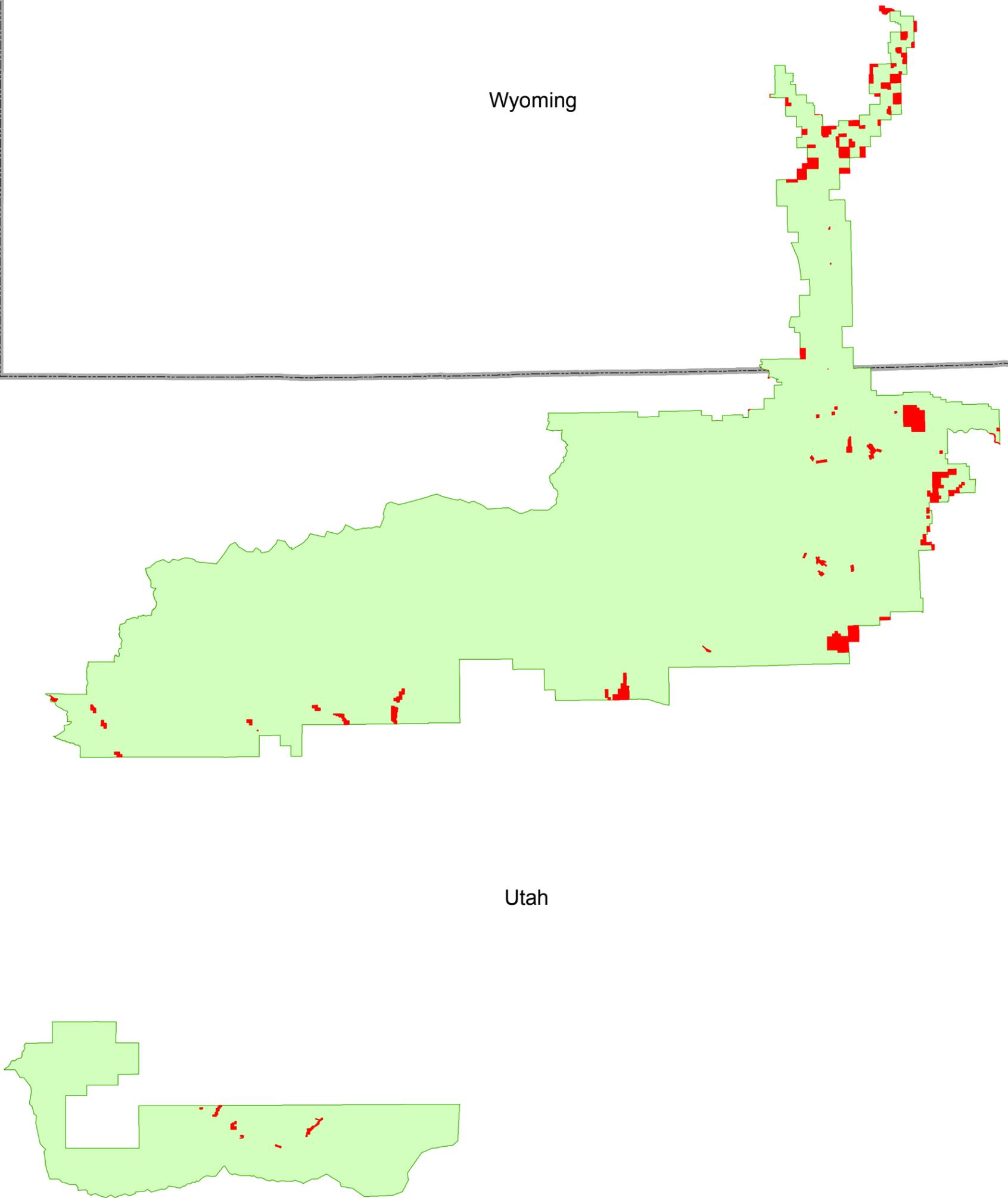
LEVEL 2 ROADS ARE GENERALLY EXCLUDED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS EXCEPT WHEN:

Roads have been identified through a travel plan decision or other project-related NEPA decision to be reclassified as a Maintenance Level 1 road or have been identified for decommissioning. Also included is any other on-the-ground knowledge of a particular route that is brought forward by Forest staff or through public review and comment that would preclude the area from further consideration.

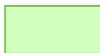
Ashley NF -- Wilderness Assessment

Wyoming

Utah



Legend

-  Non Forest Service
-  Initial Assessment Area

Date: 8/20/2016

Remove Existing Wilderness

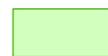
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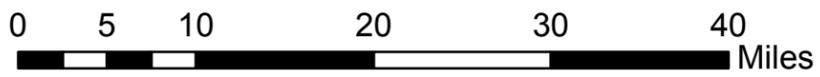


High Uintas



Remaining Assessment Area

Date: 8/20/2016

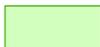


Remove Road Corridors

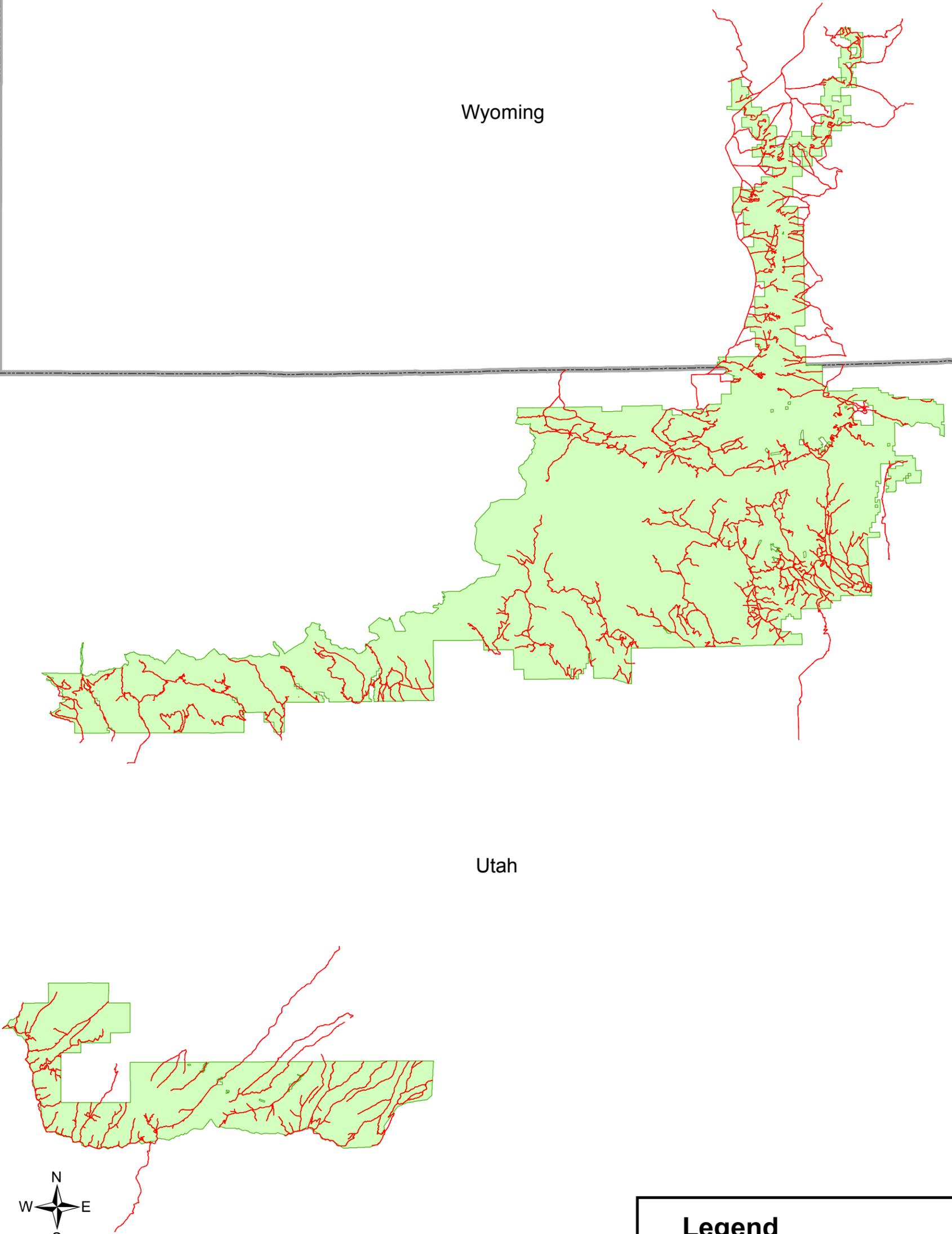
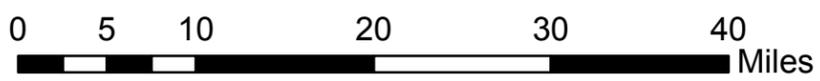
Wyoming

Utah

Legend

-  Road Corridors
-  Remaining Assessment Area

Date: 8/20/2016

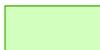


Remove Other Surface Rights

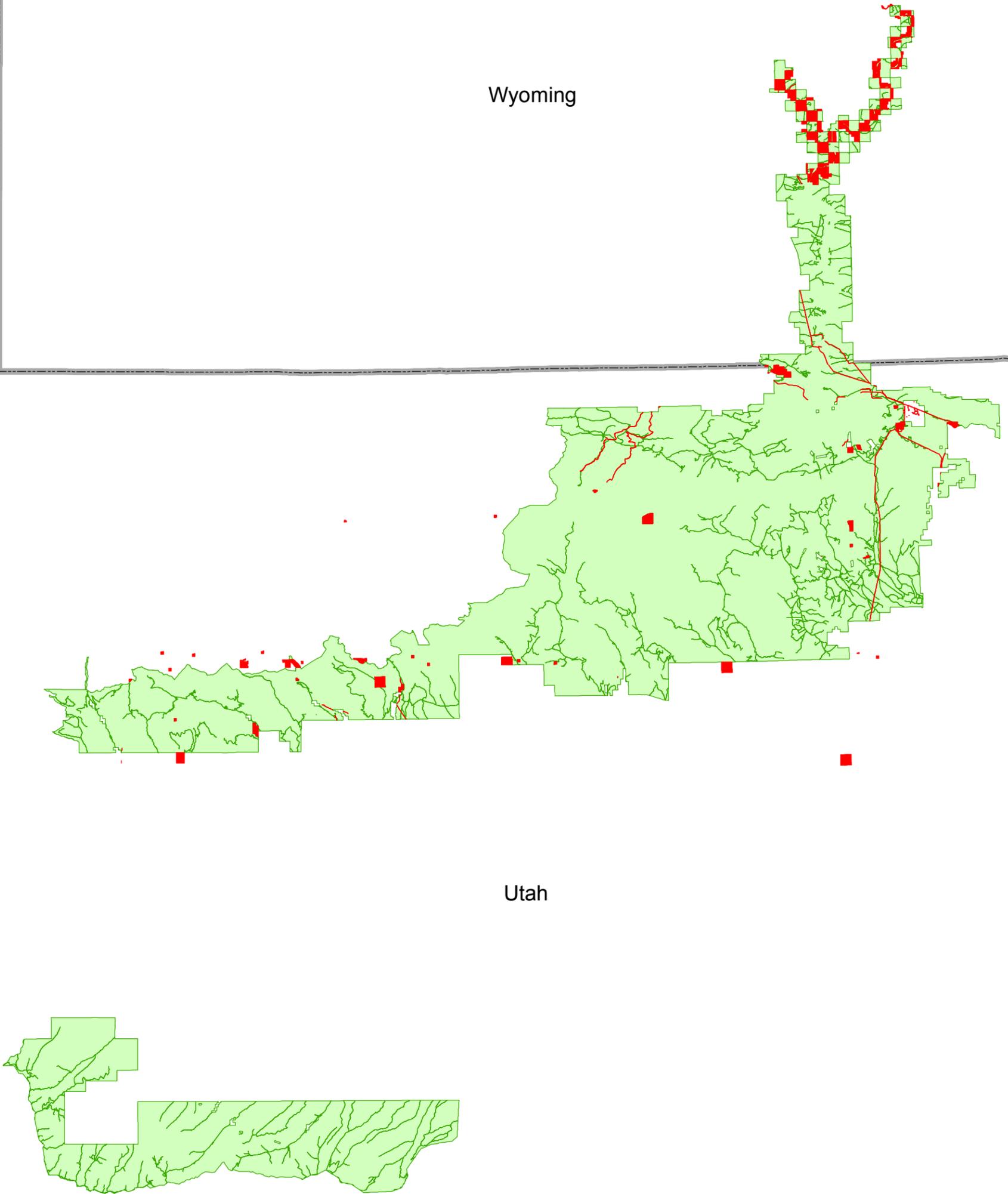
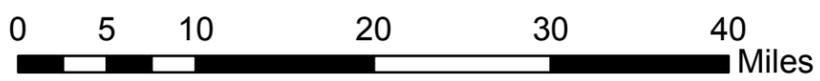
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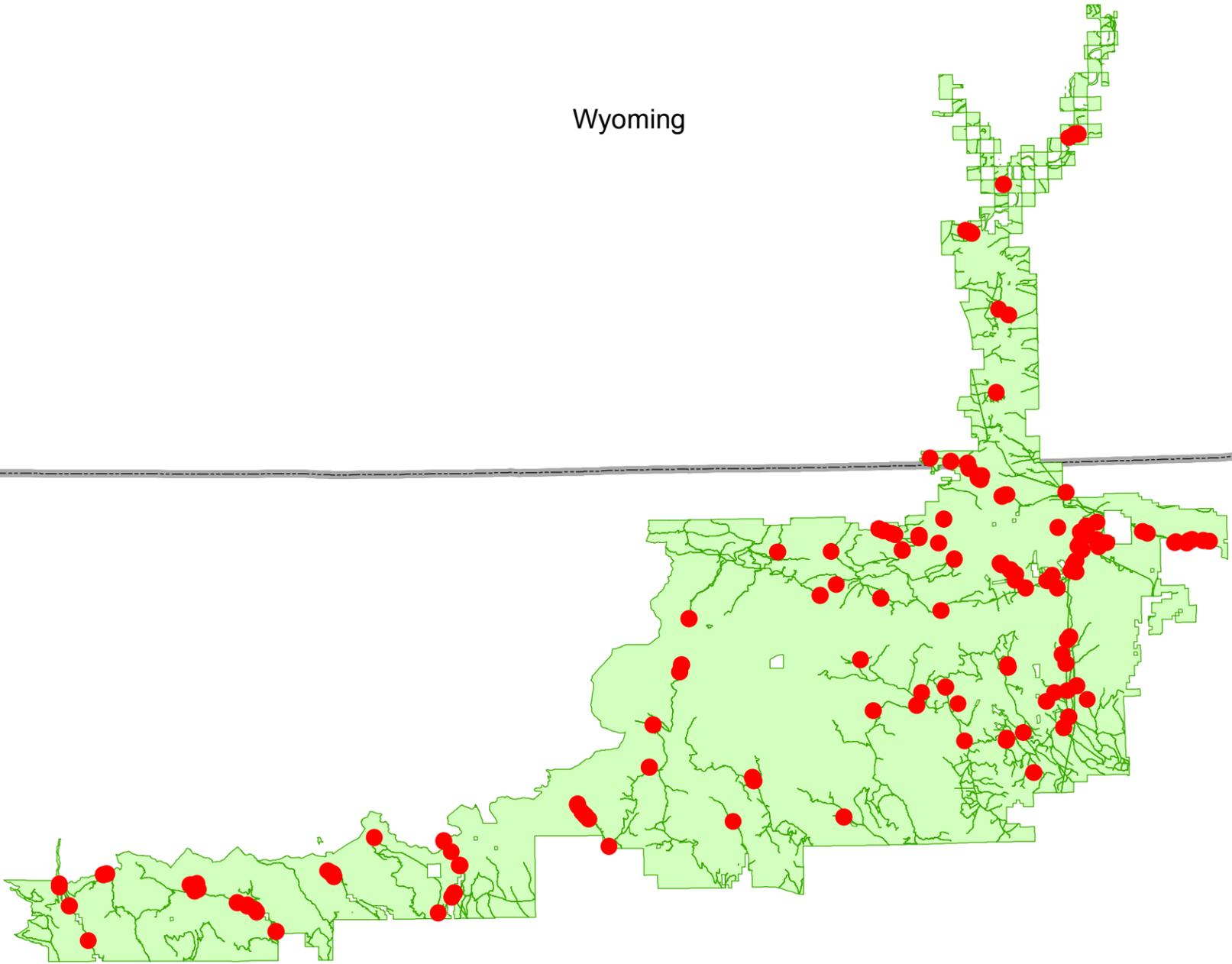
-  Other Surface Right
-  Remaining Assessment Area

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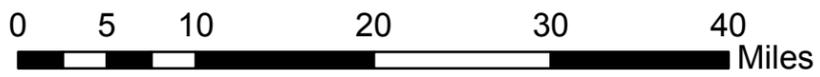
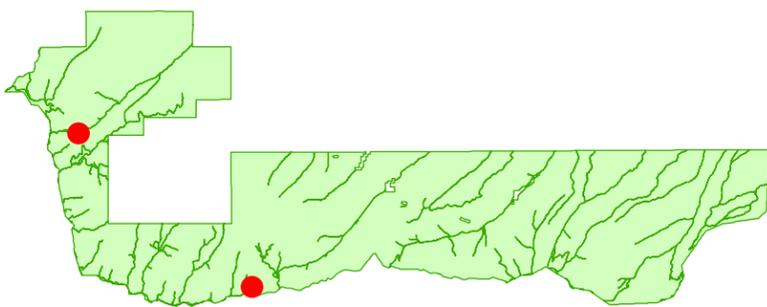


Remove Developed Recreation Sites

Wyoming



Utah



Legend

- Developed Recreation Site
- Remaining Assessment Area

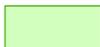
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Remove Right of Way

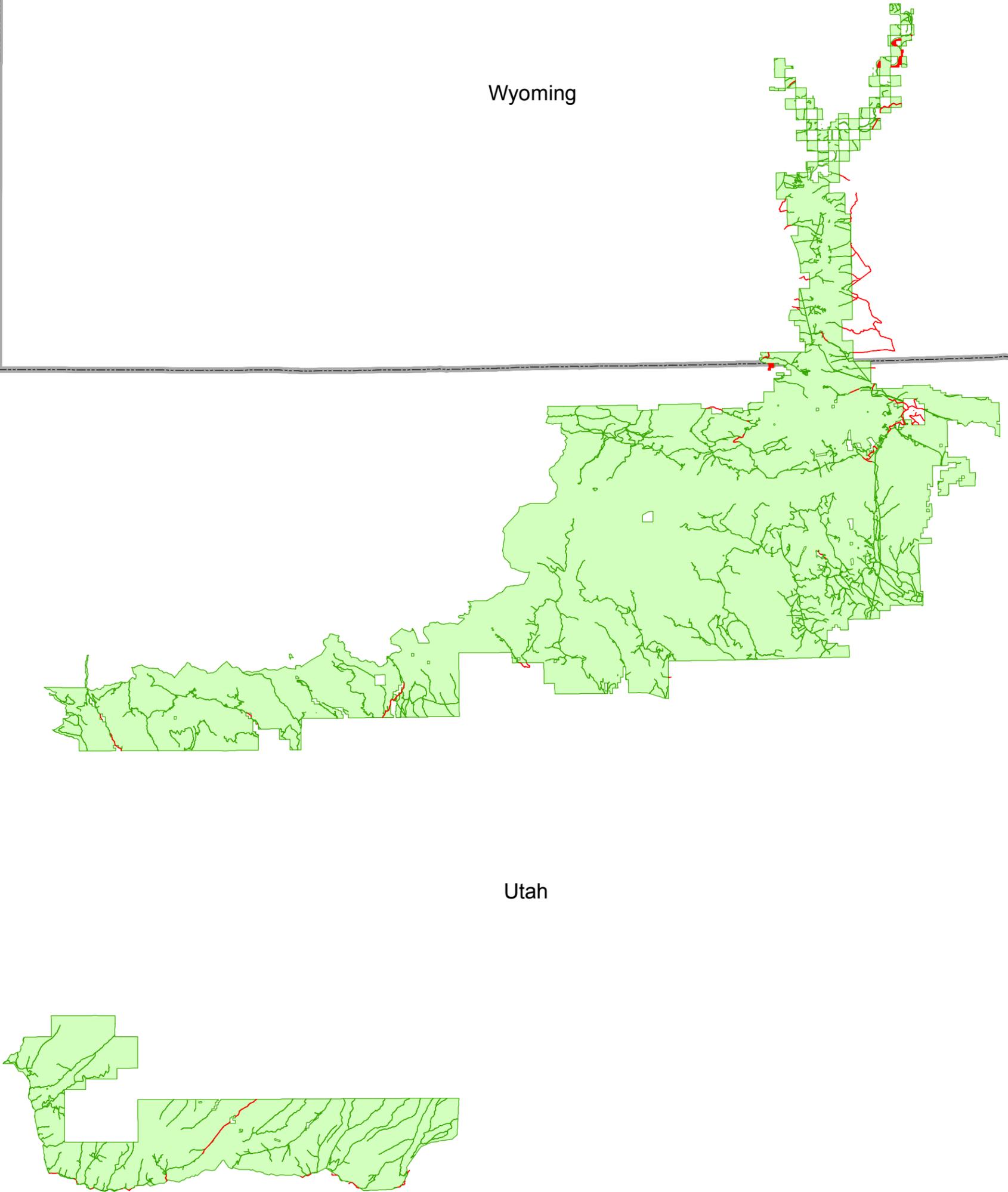
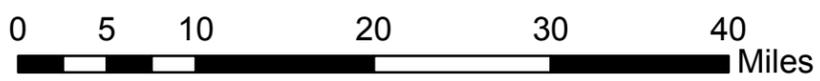
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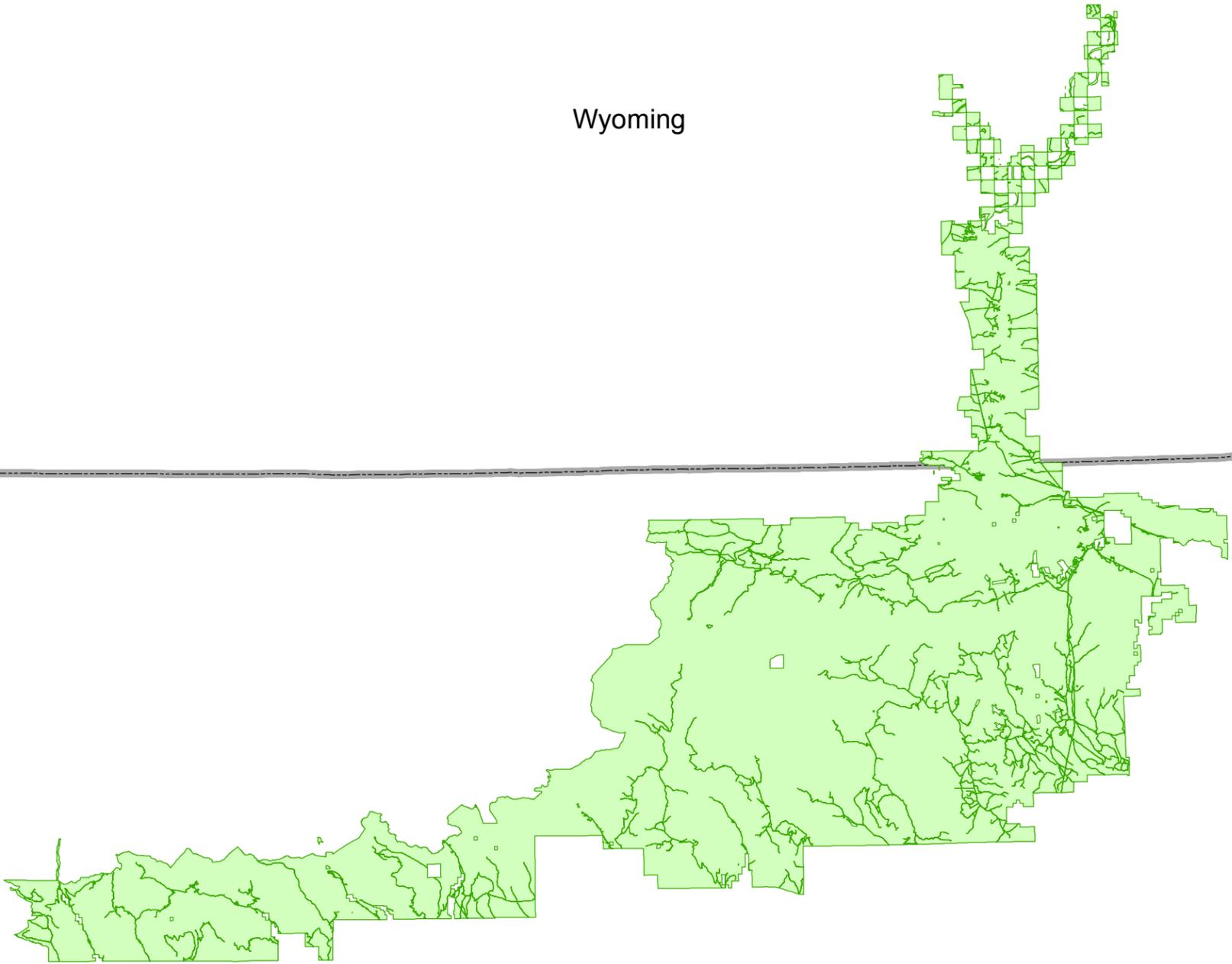
-  Right of Way
-  Remaining Assessment Area

Date: 8/20/2016

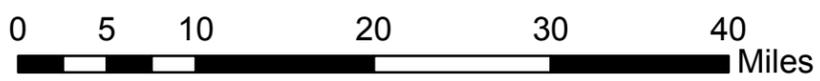
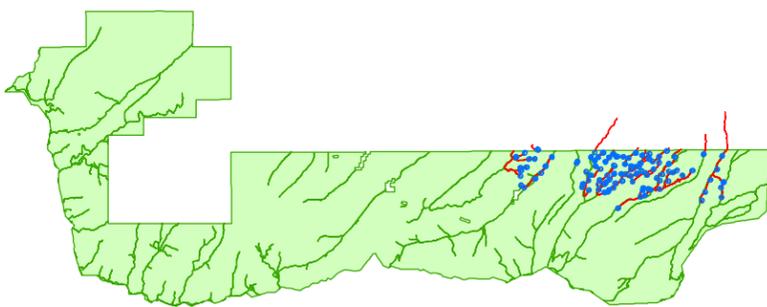


Remove Energy Pads and Pipelines

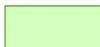
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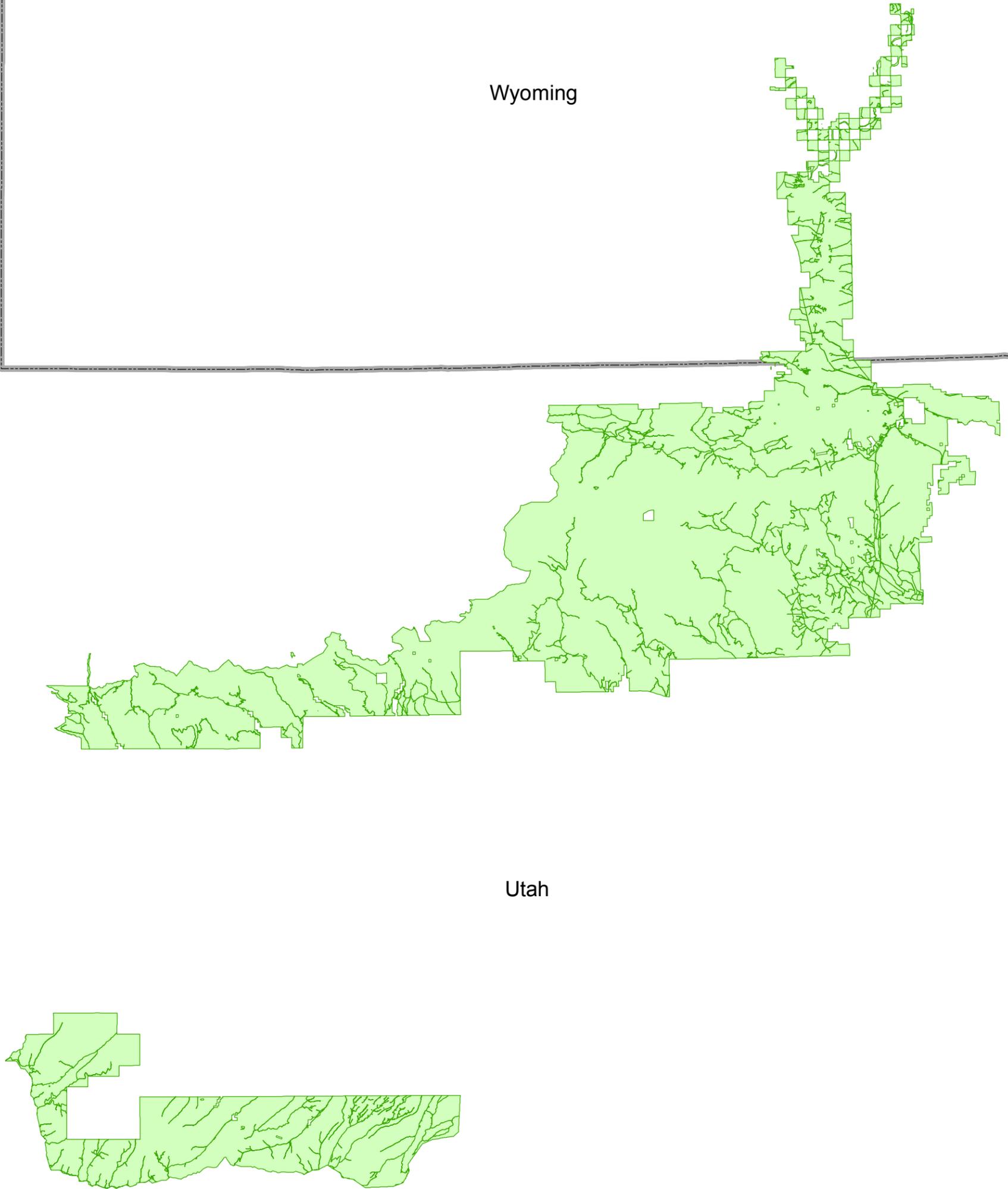
Legend

-  Pads
-  Pipelines
-  Remaining Assessment Area

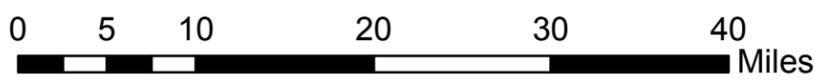
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Draft Wilderness Assessment Area

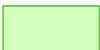
Wyoming



Utah



Legend

 Remaining Assessment Area

Date: 8/20/2016