

UPPER ROCK CREEK LANDSCAPE

The Upper Rock Creek landscape is characterized by high rocky peaks on the south and more rounded and forested yet steep mountain summits along its western edge. Vegetation in Upper Rock Creek varies from open grasslands in the lower elevations to whitebark pine and subalpine larch at the timberline. Ponderosa pine is a minor component but is unique on this Forest and provides habitat for flammulated owls.

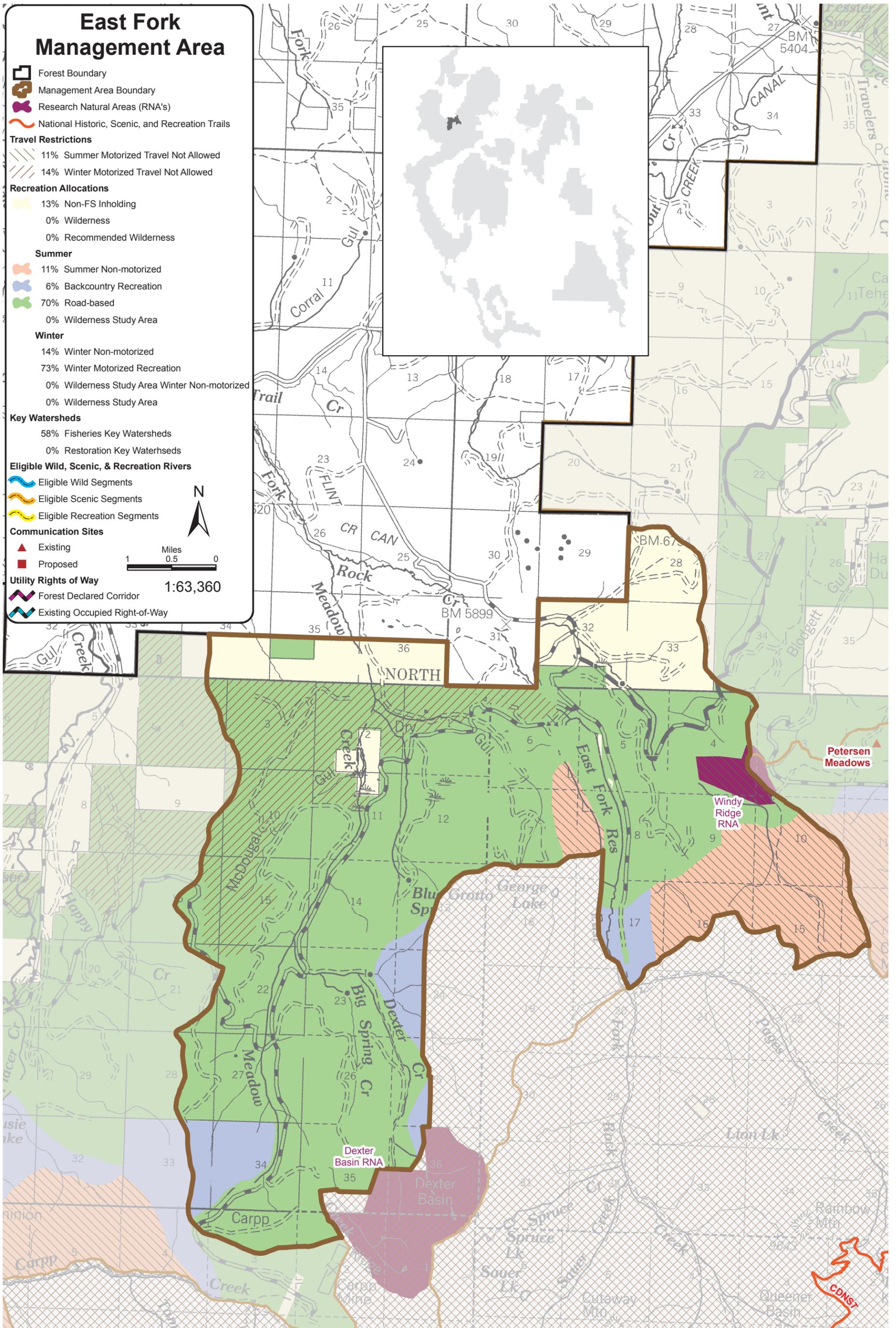
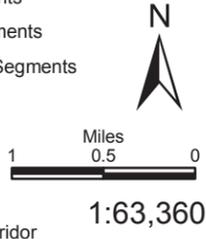
Lodgepole pine dominates, and most of the lodgepole community type consists of large blocks of mature forest. Douglas-fir grows on the sunnier south and west facing slopes, and subalpine fir and Engelmann spruce grow along stream bottoms and shadier north and east aspects. The landscape provides secure habitat for wide ranging wildlife species between the Sapphire Mountains to the south and Garnet Range to the north. Bighorn sheep, mountain goats, elk, moose and many other wildlife species live here. Rock Creek supports relatively strong populations of native trout, notably bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout. Rock Creek and all major tributary streams are designated important habitat for bull trout, and figures prominently in the recovery plan for this species listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Most of the area along Rock Creek itself is under the jurisdiction of the Lolo National Forest but the upper forks draining into Rock Creek are administered by the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest. Nearly one third of National Forest System lands in upper Rock Creek are a part of the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness or the Sapphire Wilderness Study Area. Rock Creek is a national class one trout stream, and segments are managed as eligible for National Recreational River designation on both the Beaverhead-Deerlodge and Lolo National Forests.

Many people place recreation and aesthetics as the highest value of this landscape. Rock Creek is a destination for a wide range of recreational pursuits. There are numerous developed and dispersed camping sites and trailheads. The quality of the fishing experience draws anglers from around the world, and many from Missoula. Big game hunting, camping, hiking, horseback riding, pleasure driving, and snowmobiling draw visitors to Rock Creek. The landscape serves as both provider and refuge for the surrounding communities in Granite, Deer Lodge, Missoula and Ravalli counties.

East Fork Management Area

-  Forest Boundary
-  Management Area Boundary
-  Research Natural Areas (RNA's)
-  National Historic, Scenic, and Recreation Trails
- Travel Restrictions**
-  11% Summer Motorized Travel Not Allowed
-  14% Winter Motorized Travel Not Allowed
- Recreation Allocations**
-  13% Non-FS Inholding
-  0% Wilderness
-  0% Recommended Wilderness
- Summer**
-  11% Summer Non-motorized
-  6% Backcountry Recreation
-  70% Road-based
-  0% Wilderness Study Area
- Winter**
-  14% Winter Non-motorized
-  73% Winter Motorized Recreation
-  0% Wilderness Study Area Winter Non-motorized
-  0% Wilderness Study Area
- Key Watersheds**
-  58% Fisheries Key Watersheds
-  0% Restoration Key Watersheds
- Eligible Wild, Scenic, & Recreation Rivers**
-  Eligible Wild Segments
-  Eligible Scenic Segments
-  Eligible Recreation Segments
- Communication Sites**
-  Existing
-  Proposed
- Utility Rights of Way**
-  Forest Declared Corridor
-  Existing Occupied Right-of-Way



East Fork Management Area

This area is managed for native fish conservation, recreation, and livestock grazing.

The recreation setting is mostly roaded with some semi-primitive areas bordering the Anaconda Pintler Recommended Wilderness. The area provides a transition between the development around Georgetown Lake and primitive areas in the Anaconda Pintler Wilderness. East Fork Campground and East Fork Reservoir are popular recreation destinations for those seeking a less crowded experience. Dispersed camping and big game hunting are also popular activities. The area is popular with snowmobilers and provides groomed trails. The east side of the drainage is closed to motorized use in winter to protect big game winter range.

Other land uses include livestock grazing and water storage for irrigation at East Fork Reservoir. Vegetation may be managed for watershed restoration or a number of other resource objectives like livestock forage production.

Meadow Creek is a fisheries key watershed managed to conserve native fish populations.

Visitors may encounter

Vegetation changes from timber harvest or fire

Motor vehicles on roads and trails in summer, fall, and winter

Campers and visitors at trailheads for the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness

Livestock

Objectives in addition to Forestwide Objectives

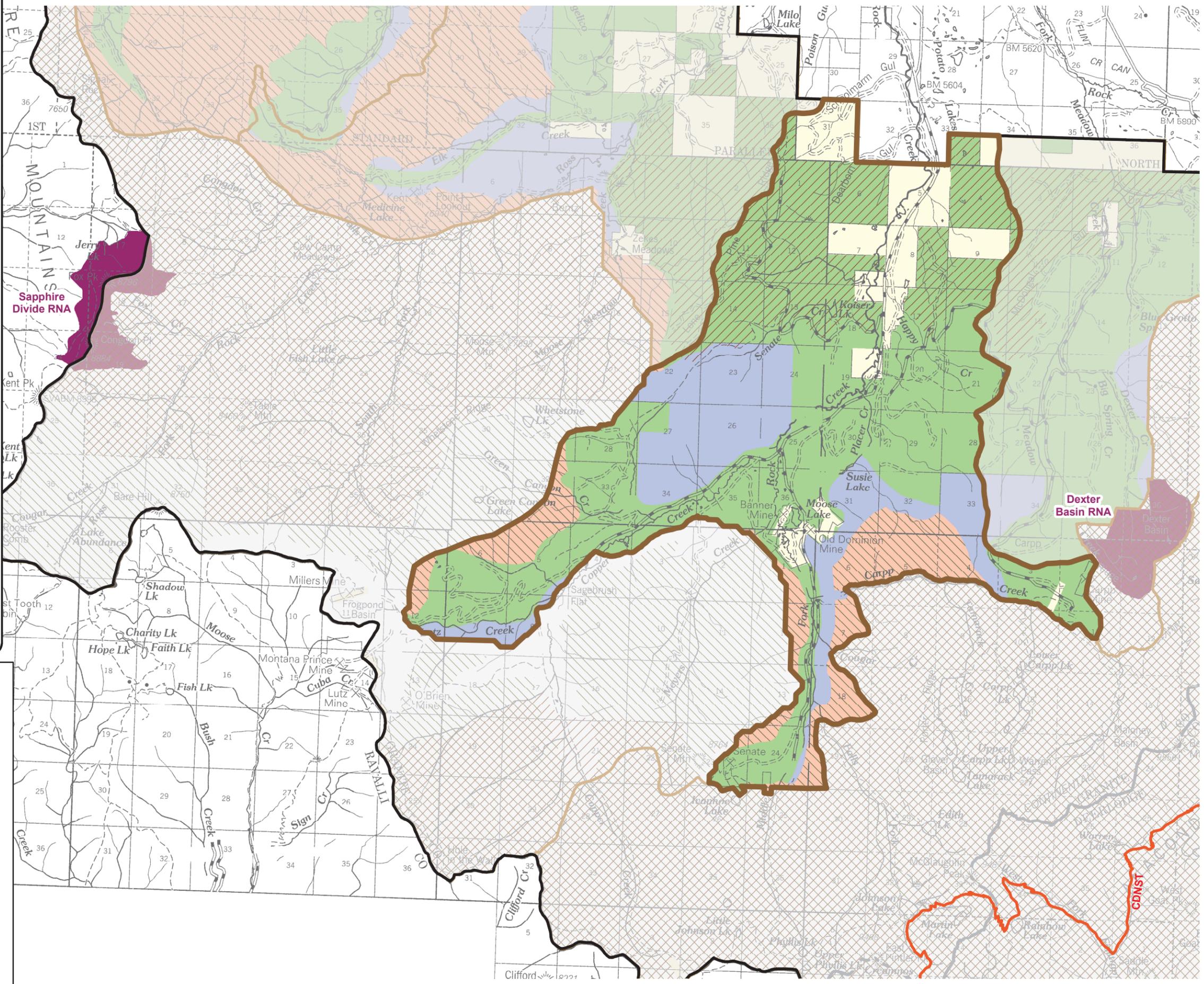
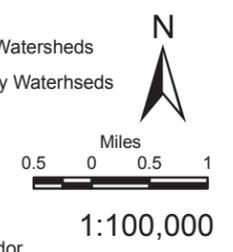
None

Standards in addition to Forestwide Standards

None

Middle Fork Management Area

-  Forest Boundary
-  Management Area Boundary
-  Research Natural Areas (RNA's)
-  National Historic, Scenic, and Recreation Trails
- Eligible Wild, Scenic, & Recreation Rivers**
 -  Eligible Wild Segments
 -  Eligible Scenic Segments
 -  Eligible Recreation Segments
- Travel Restrictions**
 -  12% Summer Motorized Travel Not Allowed
 -  20% Winter Motorized Travel Not Allowed
- Recreation Allocations**
 -  11% Inholding
 -  0% Wilderness
 -  0% Recommended Wilderness
 - Summer**
 -  12% Summer Non-motorized
 -  18% Backcountry Recreation
 -  59% Road-based
 -  0% Wilderness Study Area
 - Winter**
 -  20% Winter Non-motorized
 -  69% Winter Motorized Recreation
 -  0% Wilderness Study Area Winter Non-motorized
 -  0% Wilderness Study Area
- Key Watersheds**
 -  100% Fisheries Key Watersheds
 -  0% Restoration Key Watersheds
- Communication Sites**
 -  Existing
 -  Proposed
- Utility Rights of Way**
 -  Forest Declared Corridor
 -  Existing Occupied Right-of-Way



Middle Fork Management Area

This area is managed for native fish conservation and recreation.

The recreation setting ranges from roaded at lower elevations, to semi-primitive non-motorized at higher elevations against the Wilderness and Wilderness Study Area, and includes altered to natural appearing scenery consistent with the settings. The area is popular for fishing, hunting, and both motorized and non-motorized recreation. It contains the Copper Creek Campground and Wilderness trailheads. Frog Pond Basin is a destination for snowmobiling.

Moose Lake is an exception to the setting where historic mining resulted in private in-holdings with a number of cabins occupied seasonally and year round. Recreation residences are authorized on Forest Service lands in the same area.

The entire management area is important for habitat for bull trout and managed as a key fisheries watershed. Vegetation may be managed a variety of resource objectives.

Visitors may encounter

Vegetation changes from timber harvest or fire

Campers dispersed along roads near Middle Fork and Copper creeks.

Motor vehicles on roads and trails in summer, fall, and winter

Developed trailheads for access to higher elevations

Livestock

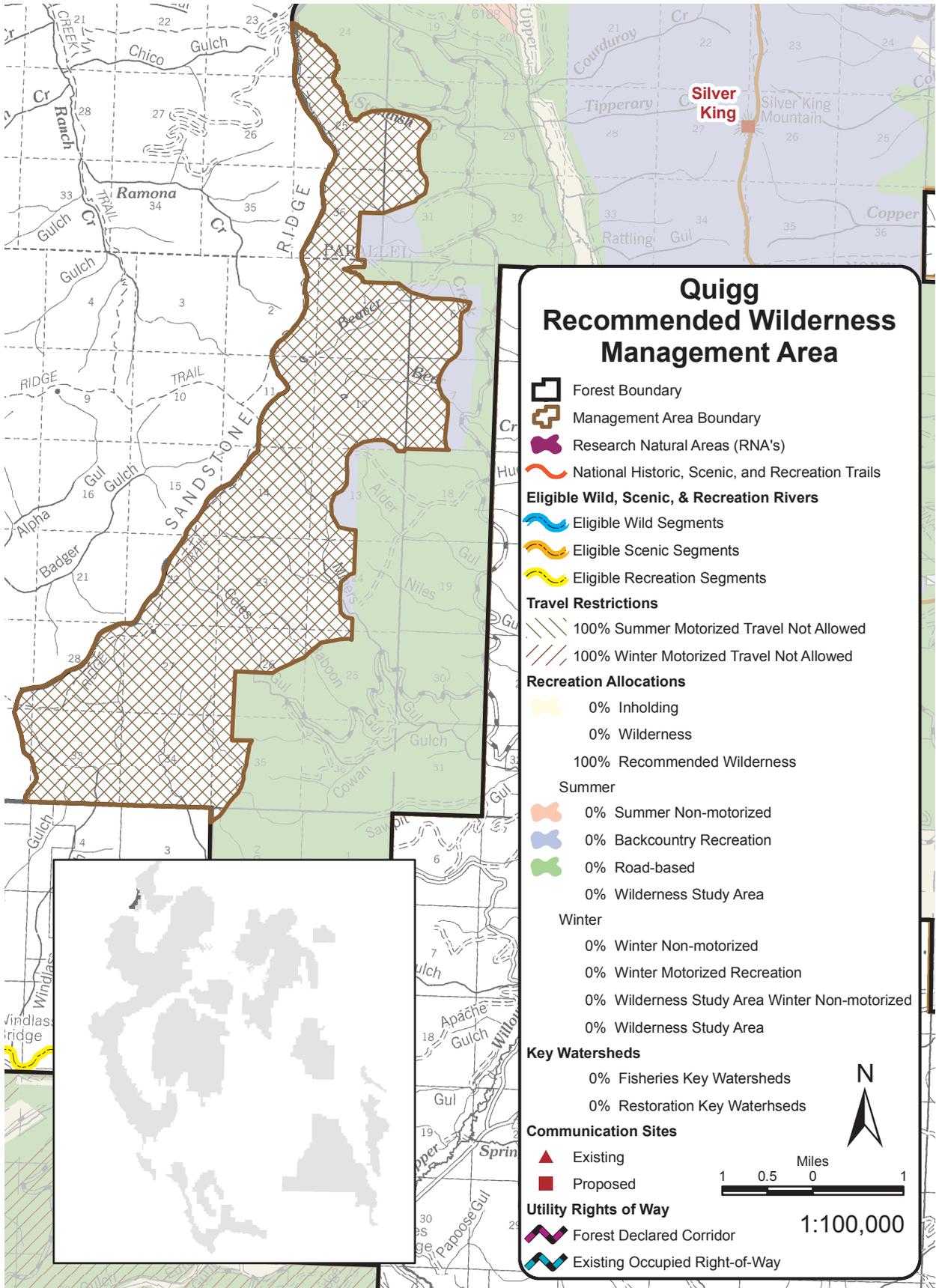
Objectives in addition to Forestwide Objectives

Manage, harden and designate dispersed camping sites to concentrate campers and reduce impact to soils and aquatic resources

Restore vigor in riparian willow communities where willow is declining

Standards in addition to Forestwide Standards

None



Quigg Recommended Wilderness Management Area

This area is managed to protect wilderness characteristics and to provide recreation with high levels of challenge and solitude.

The recreation setting is semi-primitive non-motorized and natural appearing. The area provides opportunities for challenging primitive recreation, all non-motorized. The Quigg area is managed in conjunction with an adjacent roadless area on the Lolo National Forest. Visitors access the area from the Rock Creek road through the Lolo NF.

Vegetation is managed primarily through prescribed and natural fire. Other ecosystem components are regulated primarily by natural processes and events. Wildlife security is important along the top of this mountain range and benefits from motorized prohibitions in this area.

Visitors may encounter

Quiet natural landscapes

Native vegetation changes from fire and other natural events



Objectives in addition to Forestwide Objectives

None

Standards in addition to Forestwide Standards

The Minimum Scenic Integrity Objective – Very High

Management changes if released from wilderness designation

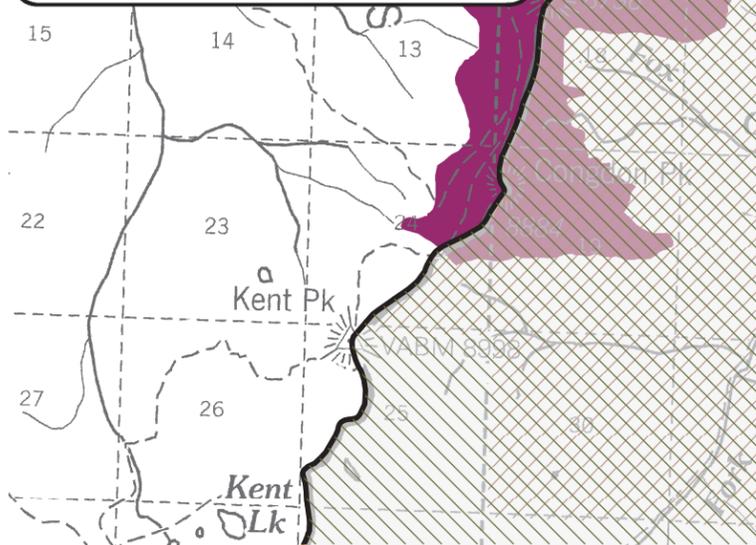
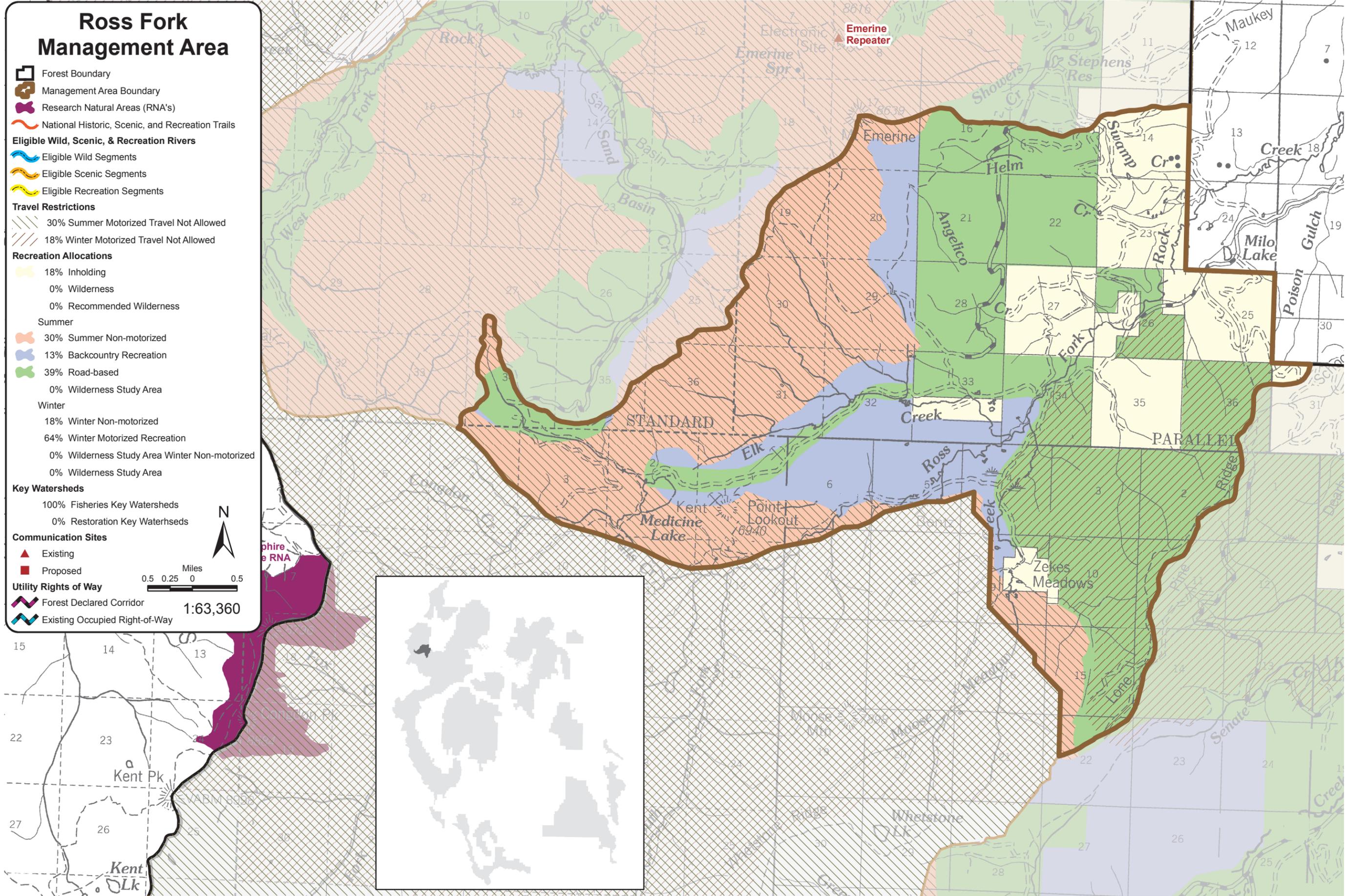
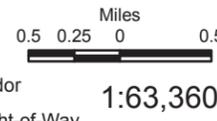
Semi-primitive non-motorized summer and winter

Minimum Scenic Integrity Objective - High

Mountain bikes are allowed

Ross Fork Management Area

-  Forest Boundary
-  Management Area Boundary
-  Research Natural Areas (RNA's)
-  National Historic, Scenic, and Recreation Trails
- Eligible Wild, Scenic, & Recreation Rivers**
-  Eligible Wild Segments
-  Eligible Scenic Segments
-  Eligible Recreation Segments
- Travel Restrictions**
-  30% Summer Motorized Travel Not Allowed
-  18% Winter Motorized Travel Not Allowed
- Recreation Allocations**
-  18% Inholding
-  0% Wilderness
-  0% Recommended Wilderness
- Summer**
-  30% Summer Non-motorized
-  13% Backcountry Recreation
-  39% Road-based
-  0% Wilderness Study Area
- Winter**
-  18% Winter Non-motorized
-  64% Winter Motorized Recreation
-  0% Wilderness Study Area Winter Non-motorized
-  0% Wilderness Study Area
- Key Watersheds**
-  100% Fisheries Key Watersheds
-  0% Restoration Key Watersheds
- Communication Sites**
-  Existing
-  Proposed
- Utility Rights of Way**
-  Forest Declared Corridor
-  Existing Occupied Right-of-Way



Ross Fork Management Area

This area is managed for native fish conservation, dispersed recreation, and secure winter wildlife habitat.

Recreation takes place in a mix of semi-primitive and roaded settings. Low standard roads off the primary access are located in minimally roaded lands between the non-motorized area and private lands. Non-motorized trails connect to the Wilderness Study Area. This area is popular for big game hunting. Medicine Lake is a popular recreation destination in both summer and winter. Roads and trails provide access to snowmobile play areas.

A winter closure protects big game winter range.

The entire management area is important for habitat for bull trout and managed as a fisheries key watershed. Vegetation may be managed a variety of resource objectives.

Visitors may encounter

Vegetation changes from timber harvest or fire

Motor vehicles on roads and some trails in summer, fall, and winter

Livestock

Objectives in addition to Forestwide Objectives

Maintain opportunities for primitive 4-wheel driving routes

Restore vigor in riparian willow communities where willows are declining

Standards in addition to Forestwide Standards

None

Sapphires Wilderness Study Area Management Area

-  Forest Boundary
-  Management Area Boundary
-  Non-FS Inholding
-  Research Natural Areas (RNA's)
-  National Historic, Scenic, and Recreation Trails

Eligible Wild, Scenic, & Recreation Rivers

-  Eligible Wild Segments
-  Eligible Scenic Segments
-  Eligible Recreation Segments

Travel Restrictions

-  91% Summer Motorized Travel Not Allowed
-  78% Winter Motorized Travel Not Allowed

Recreation Allocations

- 0% Inholding
- 0% Wilderness
- 0% Recommended Wilderness

Summer

-  0% Summer Non-motorized
-  0% Backcountry Recreation
-  0% Road-based

100% Wilderness Study Area

Winter

- 0% Winter Non-motorized
- 0% Winter Motorized Recreation
- 78% Wilderness Study Area Winter Non-motorized
- 22% Wilderness Study Area

Key Watersheds

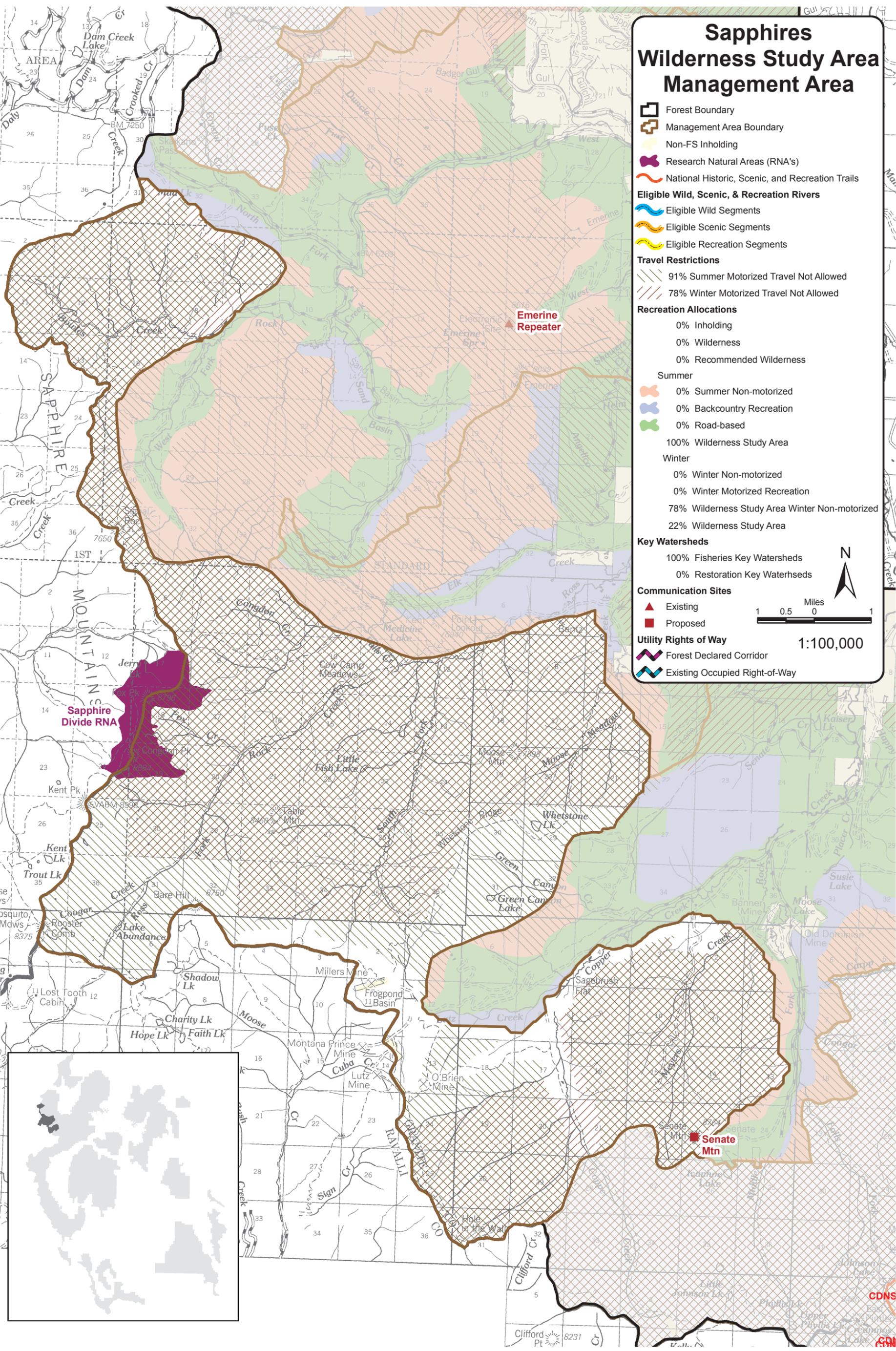
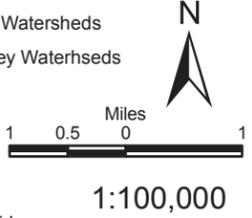
- 100% Fisheries Key Watersheds
- 0% Restoration Key Watersheds

Communication Sites

-  Existing
-  Proposed

Utility Rights of Way

-  Forest Declared Corridor
-  Existing Occupied Right-of-Way



Sapphire Mountains Wilderness Study Area Management Area

This area is managed to protect Wilderness character, and to provide dispersed recreation and other activities consistent with the designation.

This Wilderness Study Area was designated in 1977 (P.L.95-150), to study the potential for inclusion into the National Wilderness Preservation System. It is part of both the Beaverhead-Deerlodge and Bitterroot national forest. Wilderness characteristics were assessed in the 2006 Wilderness Study Area Characteristic Study assessment housed at the Forest Supervisor's Office.

The recreation setting is semi-primitive with predominantly natural appearing scenery. Summer non-motorized trails and a few miles of motorized trails are provided including portions of Trail #313. The semi-primitive motorized setting is based on motorized use existence prior to 1977. Big game hunting and snowmobiling, particularly around Frog Pond Basin, are popular

The entire management area is a fish key watershed important for bull trout habitat. Vegetation is managed through prescribed and natural fire. Other ecosystem components are regulated by natural processes and events.

Visitors may encounter

Vegetation changes from fire and other natural events

Motorized use on specific trails in summer and fall

Snowmobilers

Livestock

Objectives in addition to Forestwide Objectives

Develop an historic preservation plan for the traditional cultural property to ensure protection and consistent management with the Bitterroot National Forest

Standards in addition to Forestwide Standards

Trail #313: Motorized use will conform to Bitterroot National Forest direction from Frog Pond Basin to the north and west

Trail #313: Motorized use is permitted from Frog Pond Basin to O'Brien Mine.

Trail #313: Motorized use is prohibited from O'Brien Mine south.

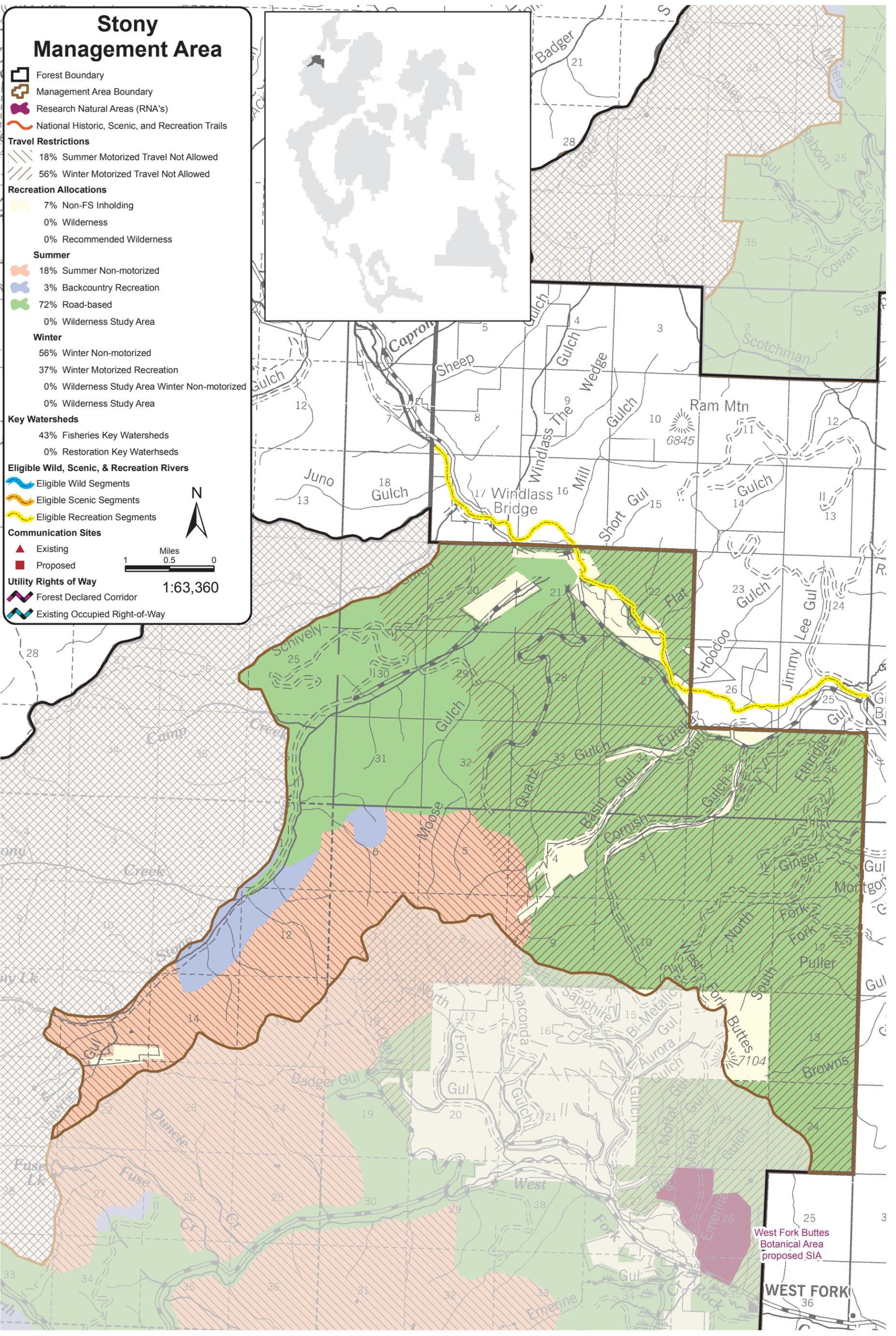
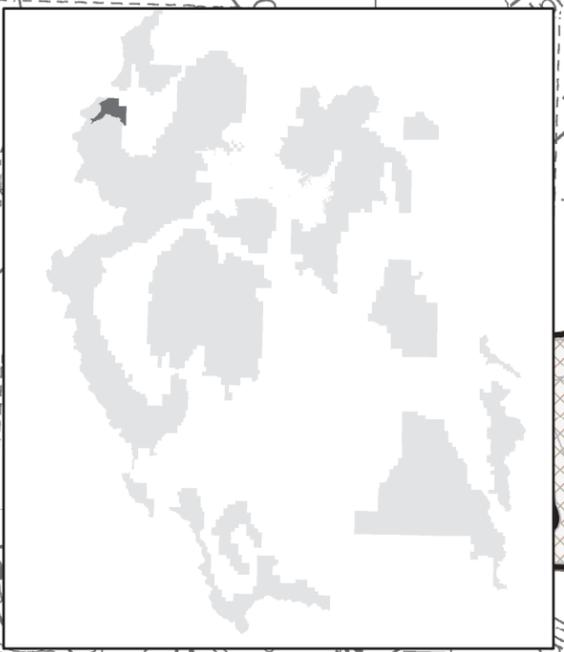
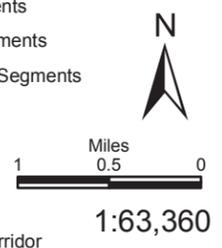
Manage according to the Montana Wilderness Study Act, P.L.95-150

Timber harvest is prohibited

The Minimum Scenic Integrity Objective - High

Stony Management Area

-  Forest Boundary
-  Management Area Boundary
-  Research Natural Areas (RNA's)
-  National Historic, Scenic, and Recreation Trails
- Travel Restrictions**
-  18% Summer Motorized Travel Not Allowed
-  56% Winter Motorized Travel Not Allowed
- Recreation Allocations**
-  7% Non-FS Inholding
-  0% Wilderness
-  0% Recommended Wilderness
- Summer**
-  18% Summer Non-motorized
-  3% Backcountry Recreation
-  72% Road-based
-  0% Wilderness Study Area
- Winter**
-  56% Winter Non-motorized
-  37% Winter Motorized Recreation
-  0% Wilderness Study Area Winter Non-motorized
-  0% Wilderness Study Area
- Key Watersheds**
-  43% Fisheries Key Watersheds
-  0% Restoration Key Watersheds
- Eligible Wild, Scenic, & Recreation Rivers**
-  Eligible Wild Segments
-  Eligible Scenic Segments
-  Eligible Recreation Segments
- Communication Sites**
-  Existing
-  Proposed
- Utility Rights of Way**
-  Forest Declared Corridor
-  Existing Occupied Right-of-Way



West Fork Buttes Botanical Area proposed SIA

WEST FORK

Stony Management Area

This area is managed for native fish conservation, recreation, and secure winter wildlife habitat.

The recreation setting ranges from roaded to semi-primitive non-motorized. Rock Creek runs through part of this Management Area. Vestiges of historic mining can be seen throughout the area. Bighorn sheep can be viewed from the Rock Creek Road. Stony Creek Campground provides developed camping opportunities along the Forest boundary. The east half of the area provides road based recreation. The south and west portions lie adjacent to the Stony Recommended Wilderness and provide access to non-motorized trail opportunities.

Winter range for big game, including bighorn sheep, is protected through winter travel closures. Vegetation may be managed for a variety of resource objectives.

Stony Creek is a fisheries key watershed managed to conserve native fish populations.

Visitors may encounter

Vegetation changes from timber harvest or fire

Motor vehicles on roads and trails in summer and fall

Campers dispersed along roads and in campgrounds

Historic mining remnants and current mining activity or reclamation

Livestock

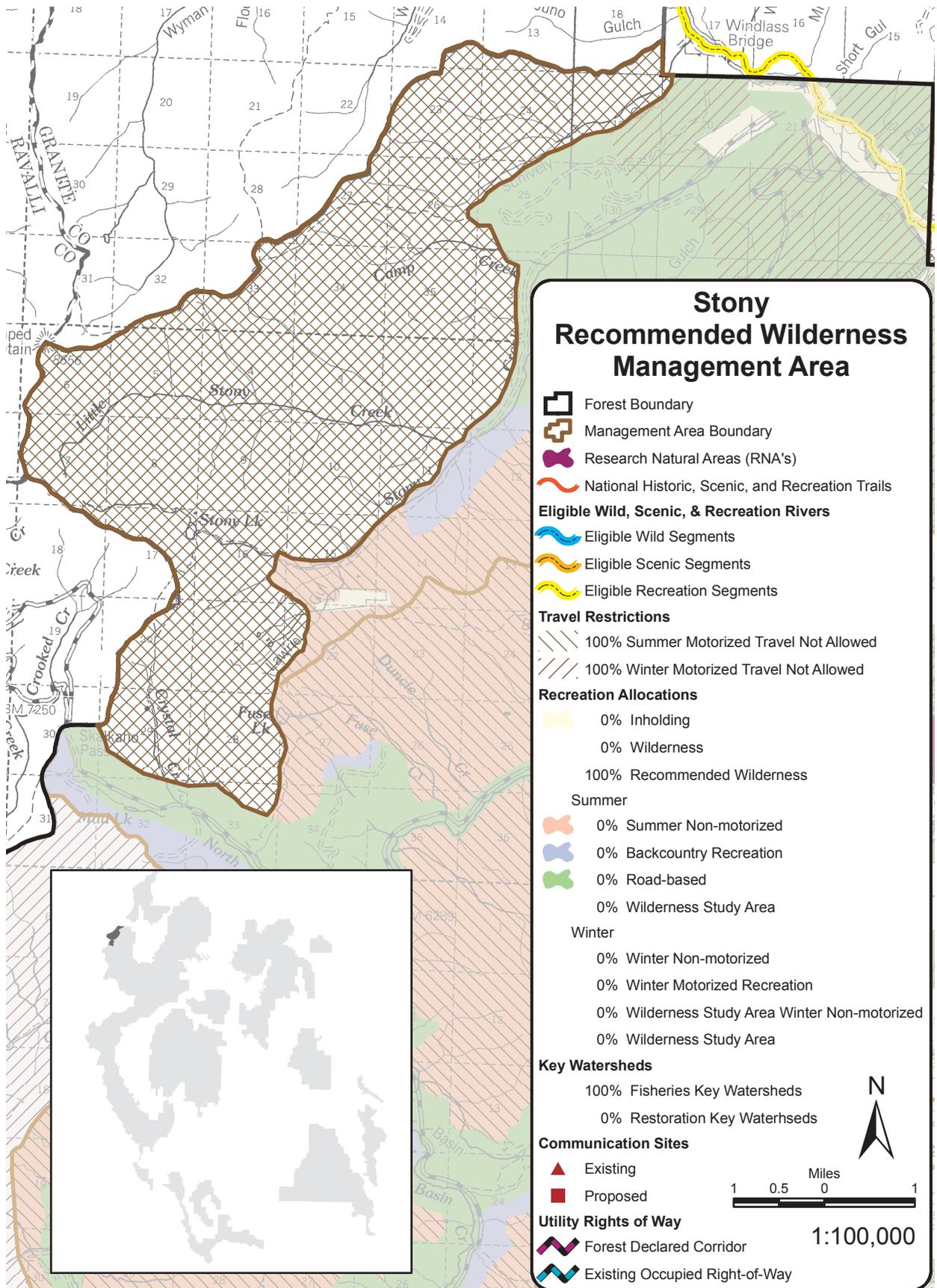
Objectives in addition to Forestwide Objectives

Harden, close, or improve dispersed and developed recreation sites to reduce impact to soils and aquatic resources

Control weeds in bunchgrass communities to protect areas value as forage for bighorn sheep and big game

Standards in addition to Forestwide Standards

None



Stony Recommended Wilderness Management Area

This area is managed to protect wilderness characteristics and to provide yearlong recreation with high levels of challenge and solitude.

This area is contiguous with roadless areas on the Lolo and Bitterroot National Forest and the Skalkaho Game Preserve. The recreation setting is semi-primitive and natural appearing. Hunting is the most common activity in the area. Visitors travel by foot or on horseback. Access is available from Rock Creek road and the Skalkaho highway.

Vegetation is managed primarily through prescribed or natural fire. Other ecosystem components are regulated by natural processes and events.

Visitors may encounter

Native vegetation changes from fire and other natural events

Wildlife including forest carnivores

Livestock

Objectives in addition to Forestwide Objectives

None

Standards in addition to Forestwide Standards

Minimum Scenic Integrity Objective – Very High

Management changes if released from wilderness designation

Semi-primitive non-motorized summer and winter

Minimum Scenic Integrity Objective - High

Mountain bikes are allowed

Upper Willow Management Area

This area is managed for dispersed recreation and other resource uses.

Recreation takes place in settings ranging from mostly roaded on the south end to semi-primitive non-motorized on the north end. The most common recreational activities are big game hunting and dispersed camping. A county road lies on the east side of Upper Willow Creek and an administratively closed Forest Service road runs along the creek on the west side. Historic mining and homesteading in the valley bottoms and some upland areas have resulted in private lands surrounded by Forest lands. One recreation residence lot is authorized in this area.

Vegetation may be managed for a number of resource objectives, including livestock forage production. Some areas remain non-motorized to provide secure areas in summer and fall for wildlife movement.

Visitors may encounter

Vegetation changes from timber harvest or fire

Motor vehicles on roads and trails in summer, fall, and winter

Dispersed campsites along roads

Historic mining remnants and current mining activity or reclamation

Livestock

Objectives in addition to Forestwide Objectives

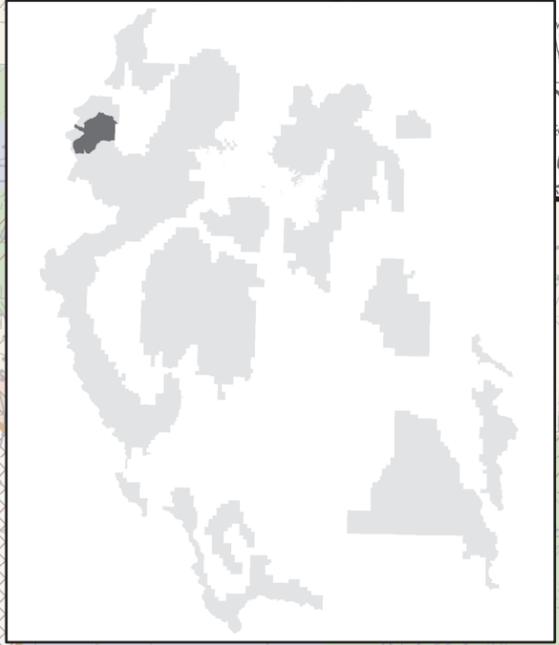
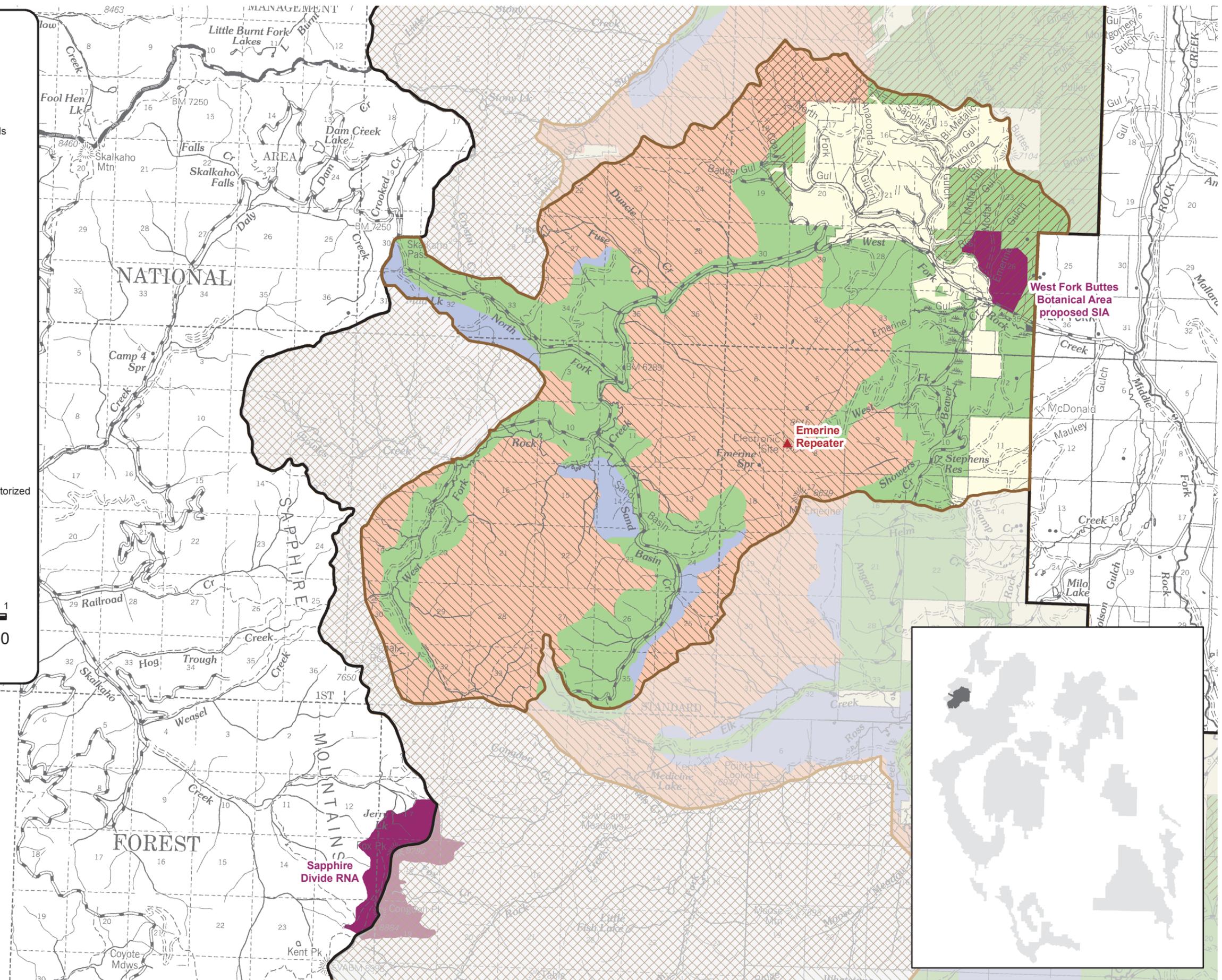
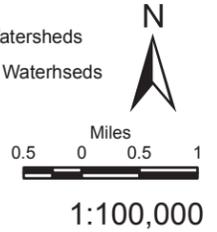
None

Standards in addition to Forestwide Standards

None

West Fork Rock Creek Management Area

-  Forest Boundary
-  Management Area Boundary
-  Research Natural Areas (RNA's)
-  National Historic, Scenic, and Recreation Trails
- Eligible Wild, Scenic, & Recreation Rivers**
 -  Eligible Wild Segments
 -  Eligible Scenic Segments
 -  Eligible Recreation Segments
- Travel Restrictions**
 -  49% Summer Motorized Travel Not Allowed
 -  7% Winter Motorized Travel Not Allowed
- Recreation Allocations**
 -  12% Inholding
 -  0% Wilderness
 -  0% Recommended Wilderness
 - Summer**
 -  49% Summer Non-motorized
 -  3% Backcountry Recreation
 -  36% Road-based
 -  0% Wilderness Study Area
 - Winter**
 -  7% Winter Non-motorized
 -  81% Winter Motorized Recreation
 -  0% Wilderness Study Area Winter Non-motorized
 -  0% Wilderness Study Area
- Key Watersheds**
 -  100% Fisheries Key Watersheds
 -  0% Restoration Key Watersheds
- Communication Sites**
 -  Existing
 -  Proposed
- Utility Rights of Way**
 -  Forest Declared Corridor
 -  Existing Occupied Right-of-Way



West Fork Rock Creek Management Area

This area is managed for native fish conservation, dispersed recreation, and secure winter wildlife habitat.

The recreation setting is roaded through the Skalkaho Highway corridor and on low elevation forested slopes. Much of the remaining area is semi-primitive non-motorized. The Skalkaho Highway, Montana Highway 38, is a popular summer road and winter snowmobile trail. Sand Basin and Burnt Fork on the Bitterroot National Forest are popular snowmobile play areas. Crystal Creek Campground and Mud Lake Fishing Access provide developed recreation opportunities.

The entire management area is important for habitat for bull trout and managed as a fisheries key watershed. Vegetation may be managed a variety of resource objectives.

Visitors may encounter

Vegetation changes from timber harvest or fire

Motor vehicles on roads and trails in summer, fall, and winter

Dispersed camping is popular along Sand Basin Creek and the West Fork of Rock Creek.

Livestock

Objectives in addition to Forestwide Objectives

Restore vigor in riparian willow communities where willows are declining

Standards in addition to Forestwide Standards

None

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest
Management Areas