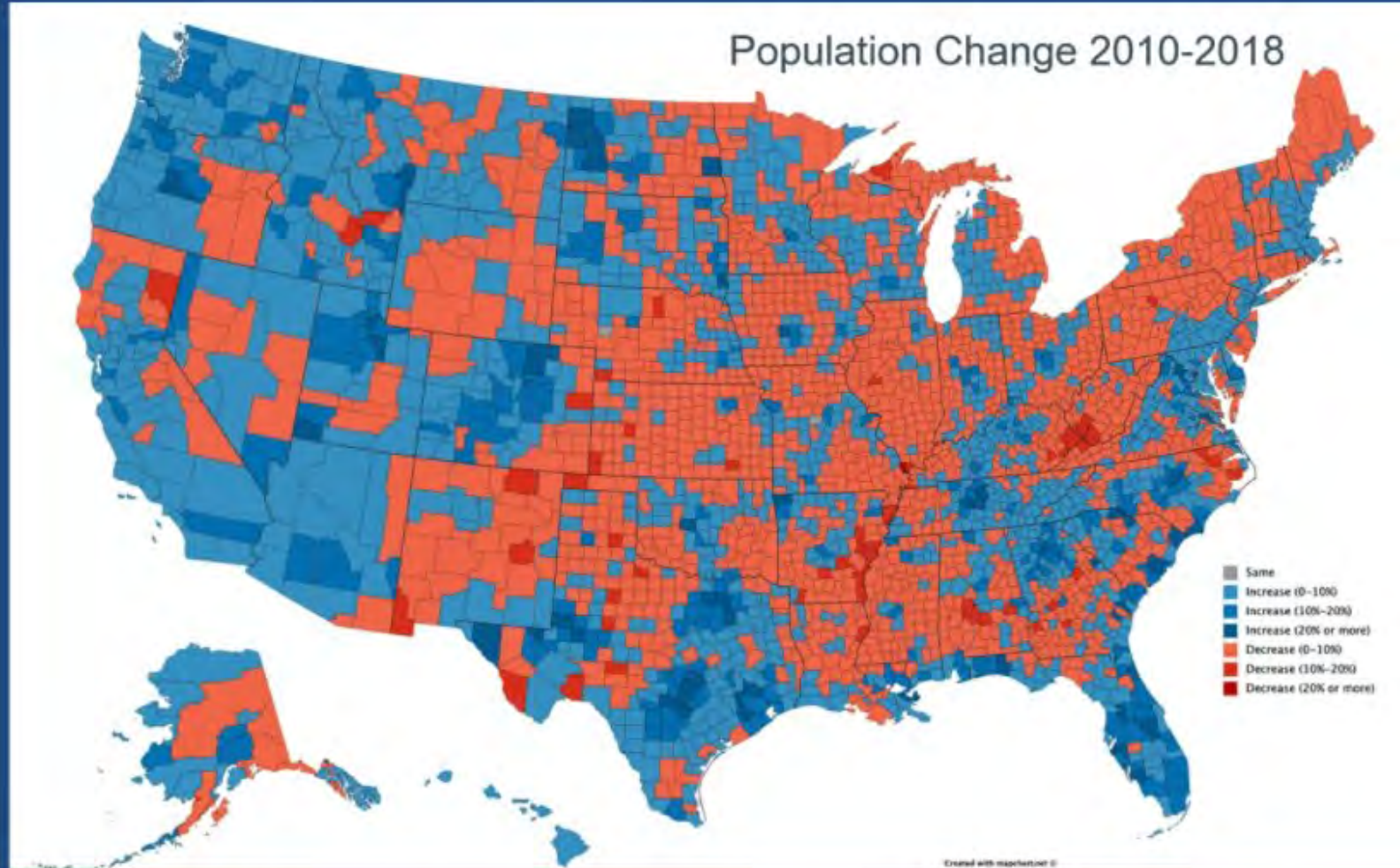




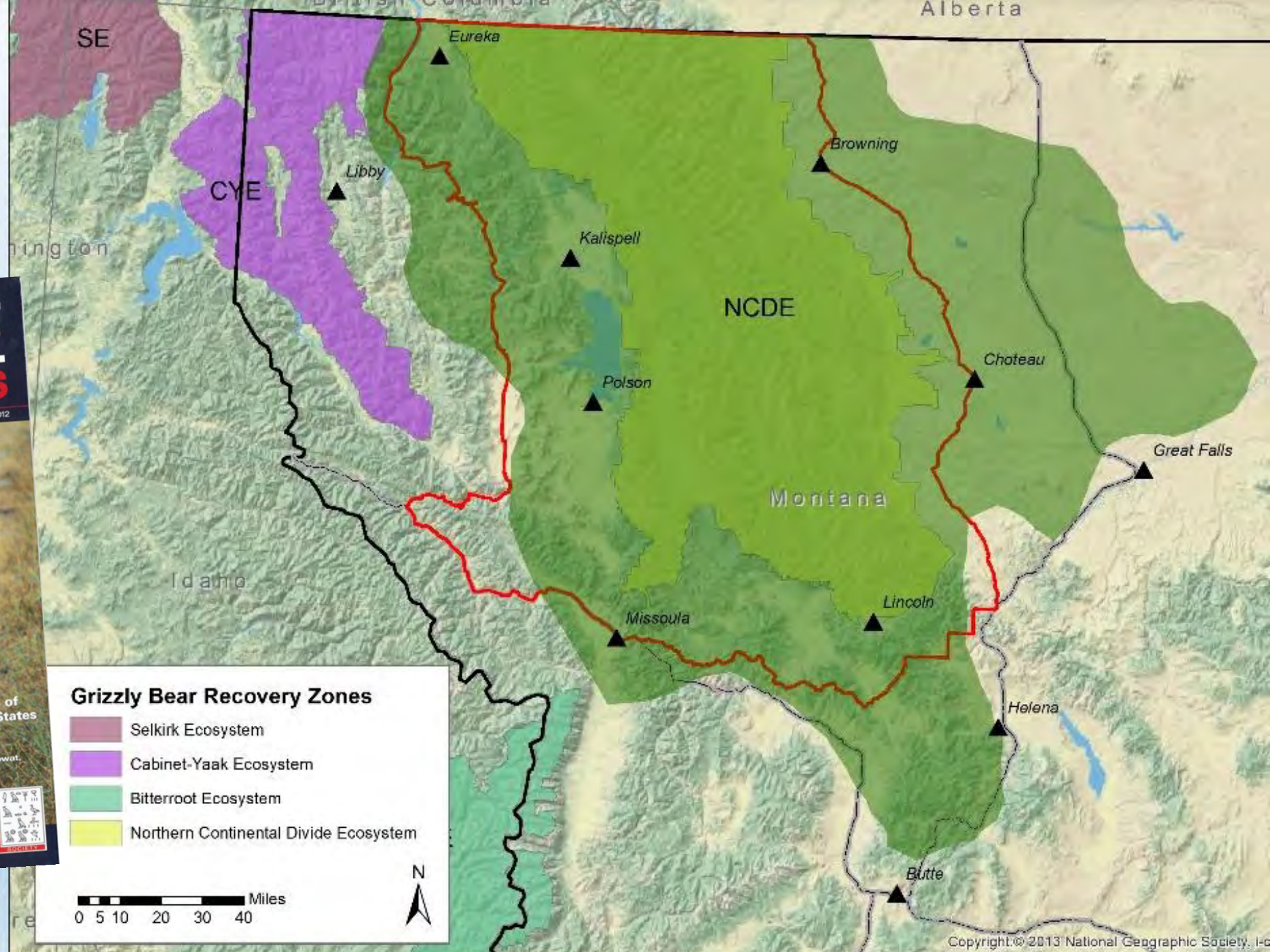
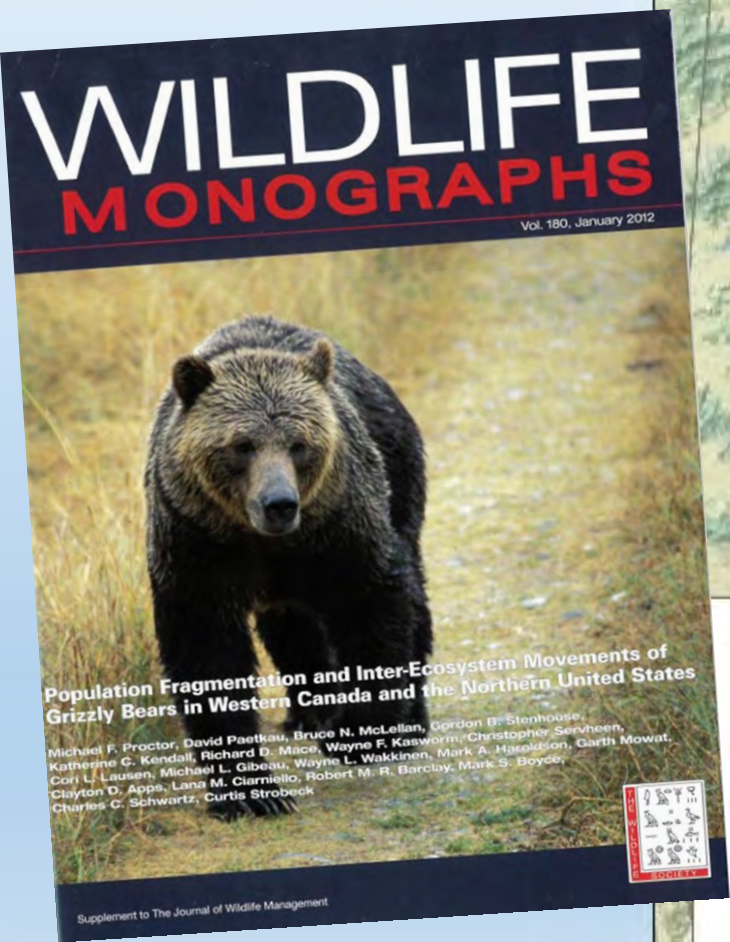
Public-Private Land Conservation in Northwest Montana

The importance of private lands for conservation



Jodi Brandt, Human-Environment Systems, Boise State University

Occupied range
 NCDE
 2018



Weyerhaeuser announces Montana land sale finalized

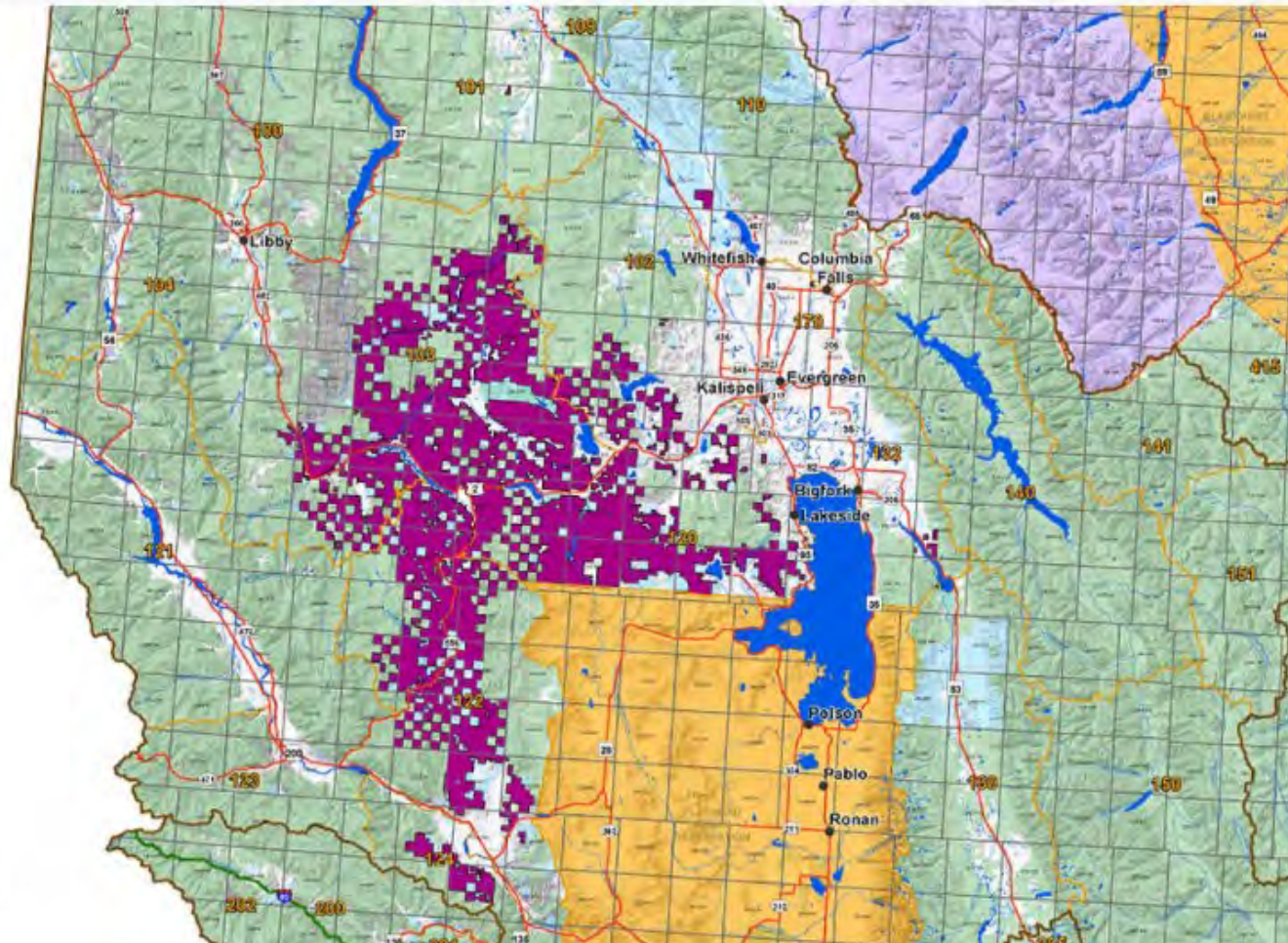
**Winter 2019-
Spring 2020:**

**New large
landowner in
northwest
Montana**

**~630,000
acres of
timberland
purchased**



- Weyerhaeuser Company
- FWP Region
- Deer/Elk Hunting District & Boundary
- BLM
- National Park Service
- Other Federal Lands
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Forest Service
- MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks
- State Trust Lands
- Other State Lands
- Other Timber Lands
- Indian Reservation



Date: 7/18/2019
FWP Region 1

LAND PARTNERS YOU CAN TRUST



Road
31210

gro
closing q

ation
towards

“We see this as a generational asset. It is our intent to manage these lands as working forests going forward.”

-Green Diamond President Douglas Reed

Reed further explained that Green Diamond has a long history of managing forests to maintain and improve productivity while protecting shared values including recreation, clean water, wildlife and carbon.

Green Diamond buys old Plum Creek timberland

November 2, 2020

Article from the Missoulian

By Rob Chaney, Natural Resources & Environment Reporter



The Thompson-Fisher Conservation Easement between Kalispell and Thompson Falls will soon be under new ownership as Southern Pine Plantations sells 291,000 acres to Green Diamond Resource Co.

Photo by Rob Chaney

Seattle-based Green Diamond Resource Co. has bought 291,000 acres of timberland in



Alan Wood

Conservation Easements

What is a conservation easement?

- A voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency that limits certain uses of the land in order to protect its specific conservation values.

What are the objectives of conservation easements FWP holds?

- Protect vital fish and wildlife habitat
- Demonstrate compatibility between sustainable agricultural practices and effective wildlife habitat
- Retain working lands
- Maintain open space and managed public recreational access

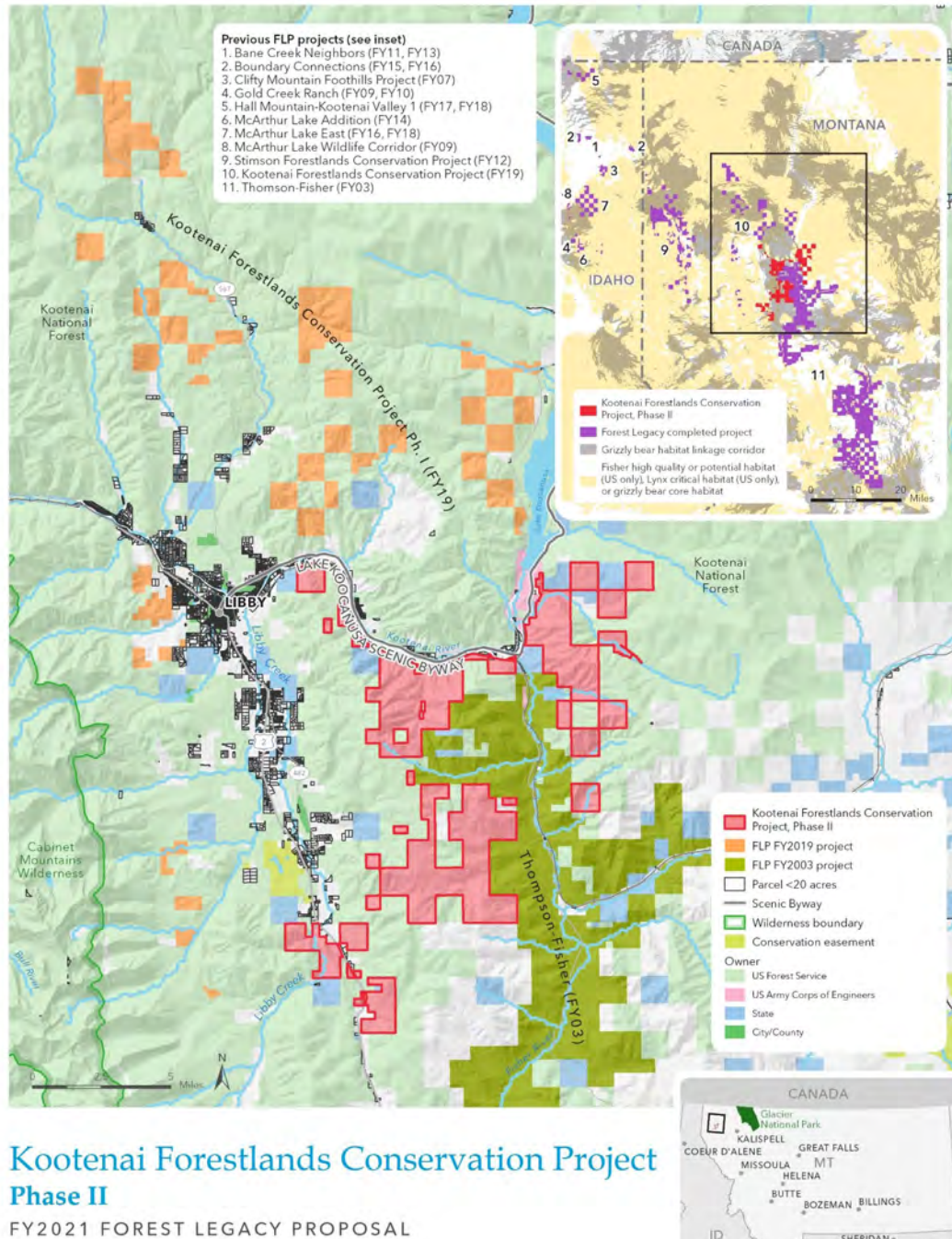
What happens after a conservation easement is in place?

- Land stays in private ownership and management; if the land is sold, the easement remains intact
- Forest and/or agricultural production of the property continues under a sustainable management plan, which helps achieve the conservation goals for the land
- Landowner pay same property taxes

Funding Sources

- **Forest Service Forest Legacy Program**
 - Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
 - LWCF dollars are derived from federal offshore oil and gas leasing and are not taxpayer dollars.
- **Habitat Montana Program**
 - FWP has been involved with conserving key wildlife habitats since 1940
 - 1987 Montana Legislature saw the introduction of HB 526 to create the program, which would be funded with hunting license fees
 - Approximately 92% of revenue comes from nonresident hunting licenses
- **Private funding**

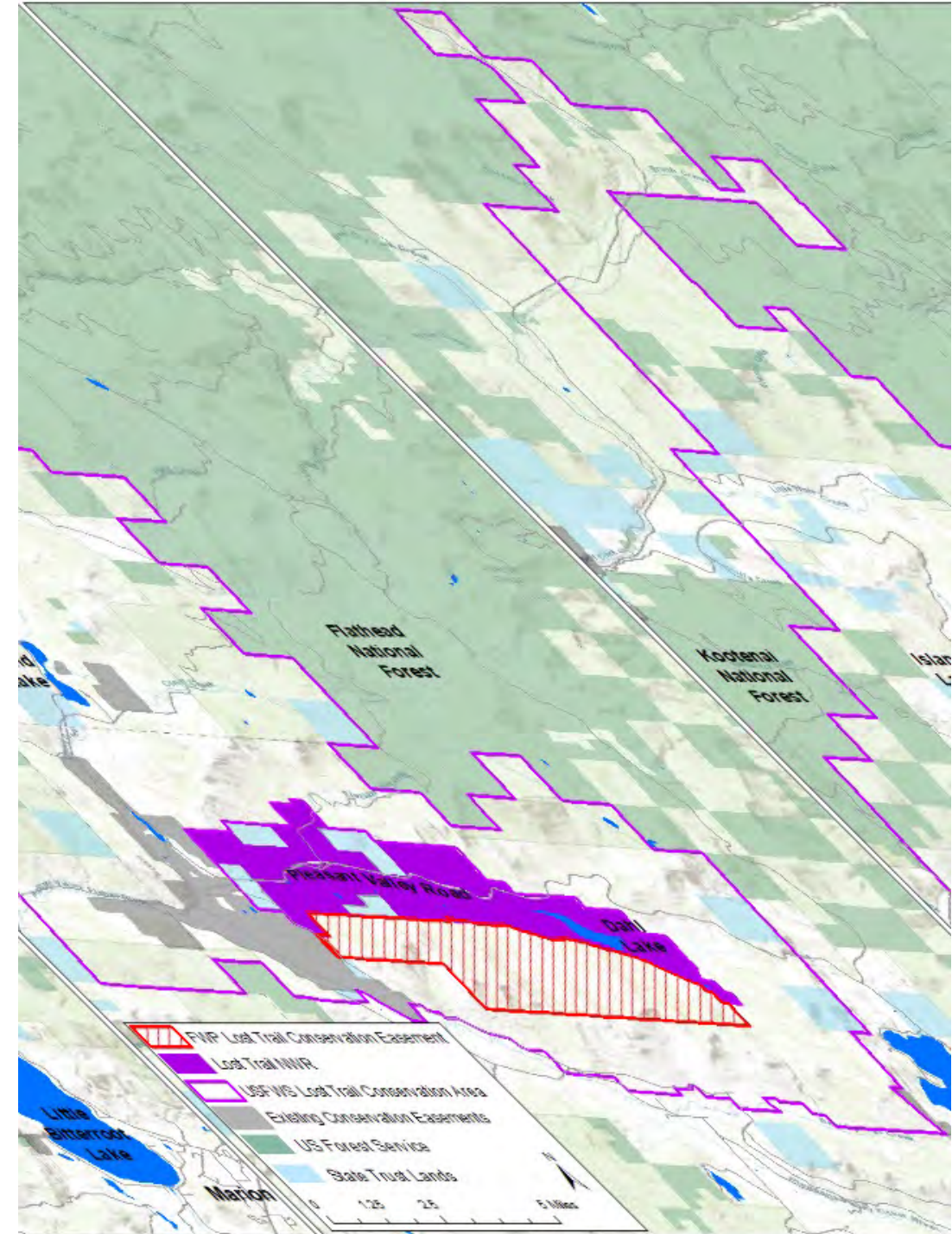
Kootenai Forestlands Conservation Easement, P. 2 (Lincoln County)



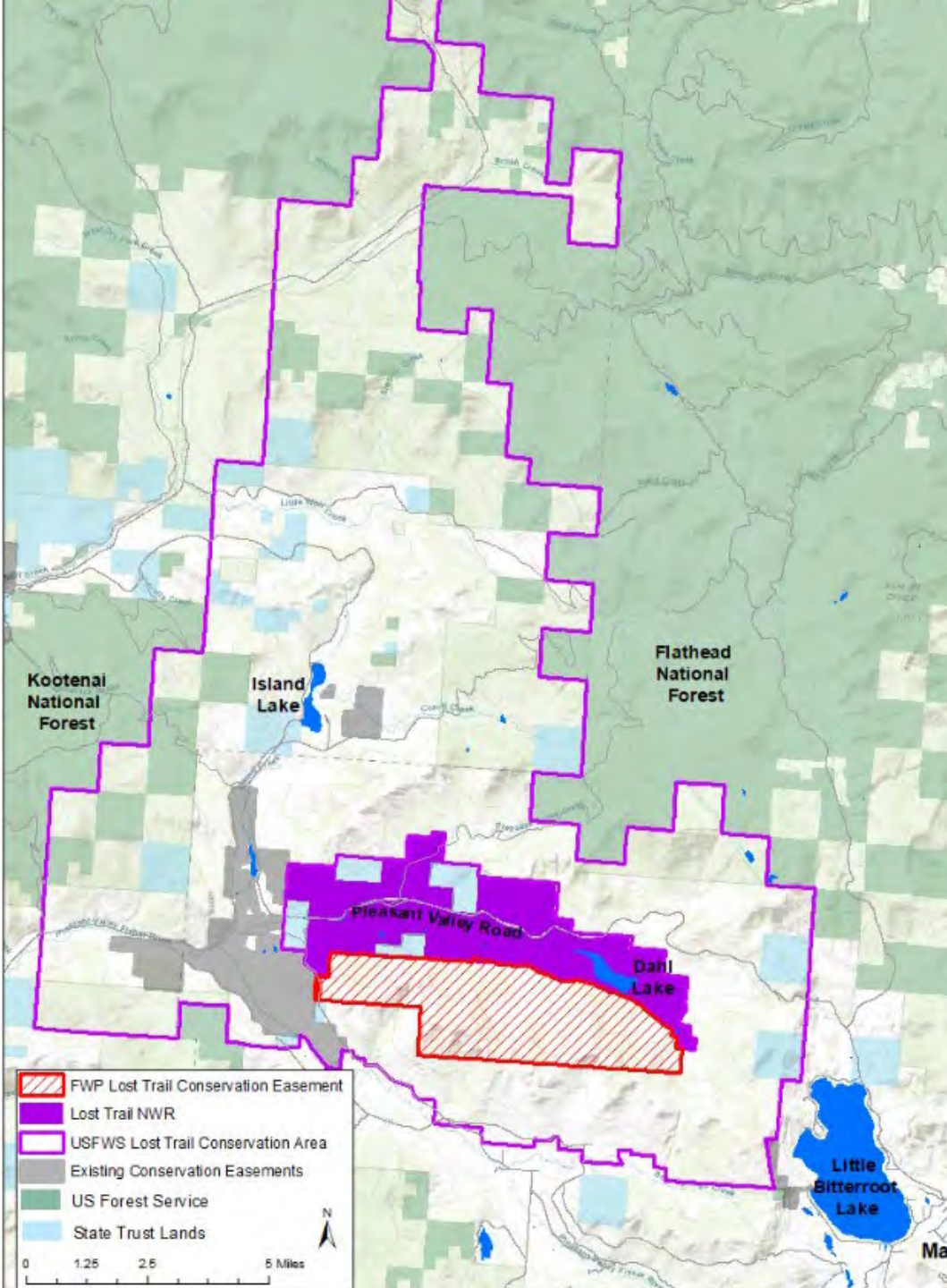
- FWP working with The Trust for Public Land and Stimson Lumber Company to acquire a conservation easement on **27,279 acres** from the Salish Mountains through the Mitchell Creek-Kootenai River and Lower Fisher River drainages along the Highway 37 corridor, and to the eastern edge of the Cabinet Mountains Wilderness Area.
- The 30-day comment period began Oct. 30 and comments are due by Nov. 29 -> fwp.mt.gov/news/publicNotices/
- Comments received from this preliminary evaluation will help FWP determine public interest, identify potential issues that would require further analysis, and could provide insight for refining the proposal or developing and analyzing additional alternatives.

FWP's Lost Trail Conservation Easement

- FWP is proposing to purchase a conservation easement to protect 7,256 acres of timberland near Marion west of Kalispell.
- Land shares nearly 7 miles of border with the 7,876-acre U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge and 4,093 acres of Wetland Reserve Program easements held by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- Part of the ~630,000 acres purchased by SPP Montana, LLC from Weyerhaeuser in December 2019.
- Decision notice signed Nov. 19. Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission to review at Dec. 10 meeting.



FWS Lost Trail Conservation Area



- Surrounds Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge and FWP Conservation Easement project area.
- This potential project involves ~100,000 acres of private land, including ~70,000 acres owned by SPP Montana, that would be targeted for conservation easements with willing landowners.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would hold these easements.
- Public input collected in summer-fall 2020.





The Montana Great Outdoors Project

- This potential project would involve TPL working with SPP to acquire a conservation easement on ~130,000 acres.
- FWP would hold this easement.
- This potential project is still early in development. Any FWP easement acquisitions would be open for public comment at a later date and subject to Commission endorsement.