

Conservation Strategy Background and Overview



Presentation to the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee

Fall 2022

Overview

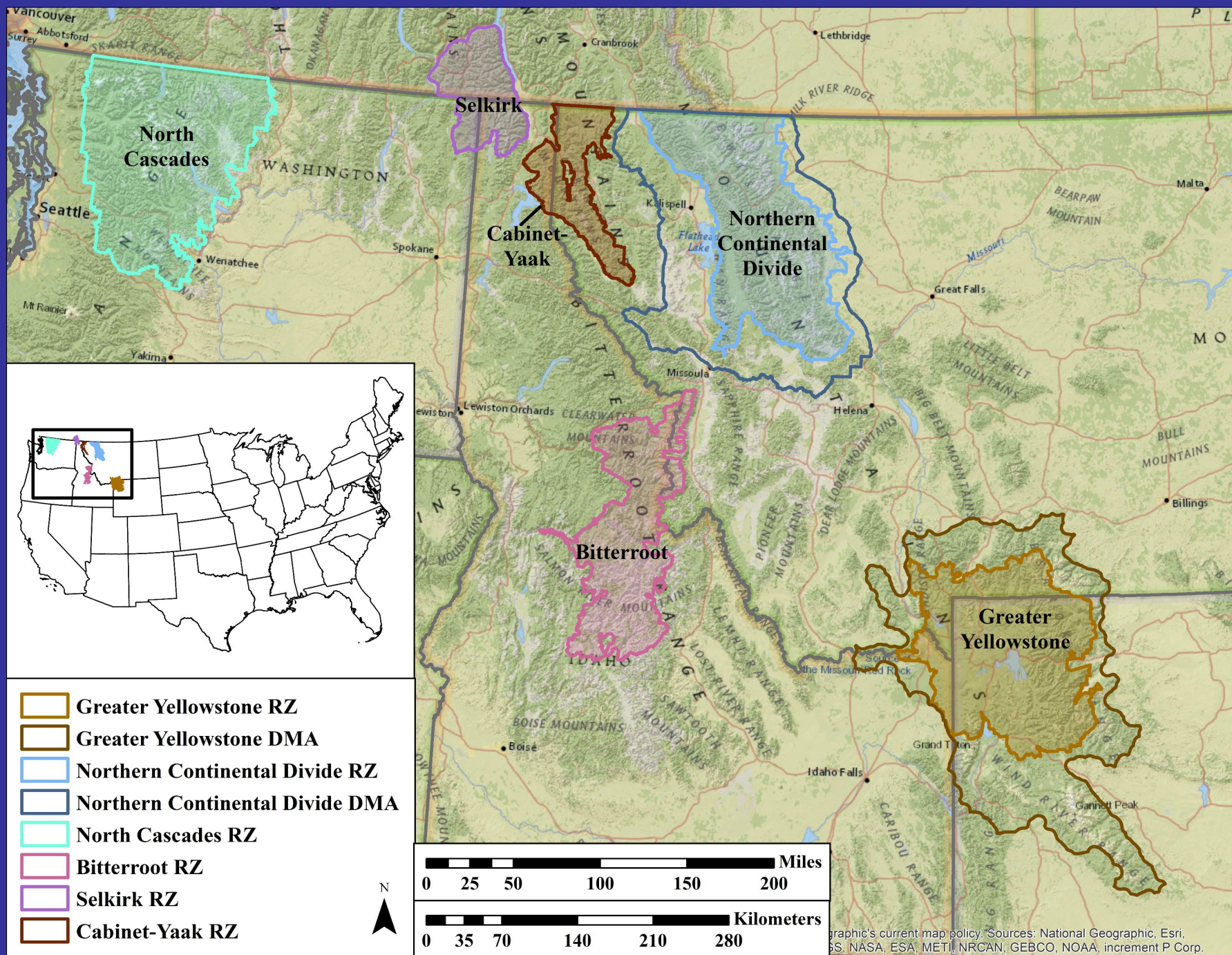
- Purpose
- Process
- Contents
- Implementation



Purpose: Recovery Plan

The 1993 Recovery Plan outlines 2 requirements for delisting:

- 1) Attainment of population demographic parameters
- 2) Development of a Conservation Strategy that will ensure that adequate regulatory mechanisms will continue to be present after delisting

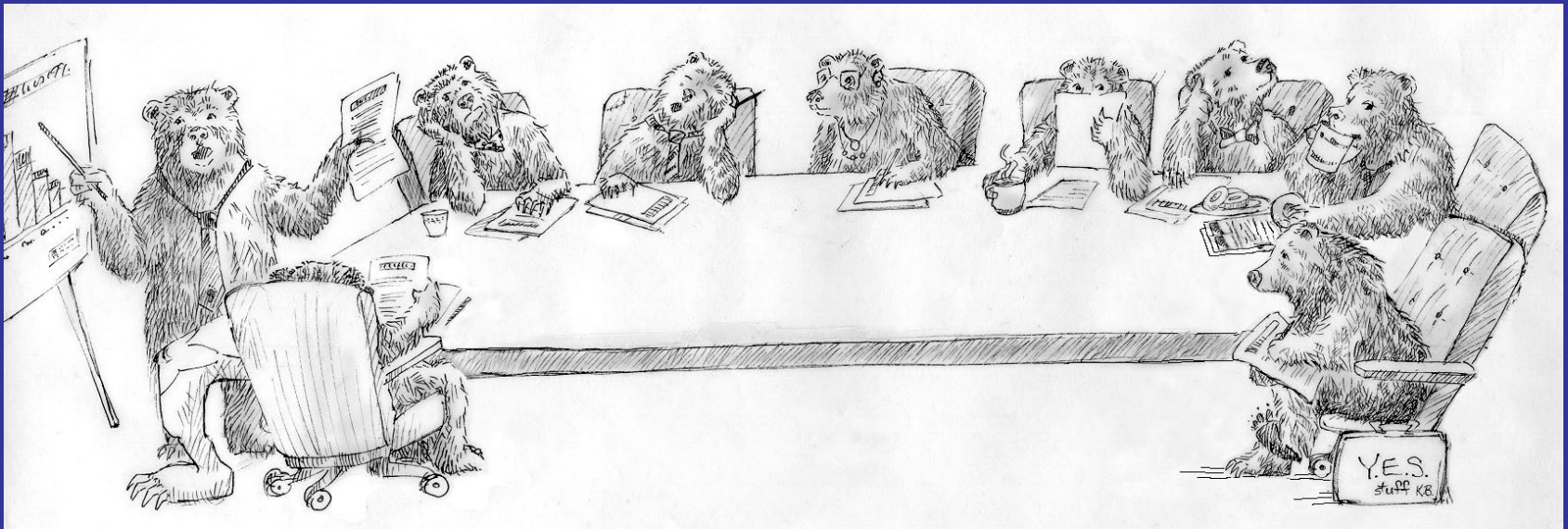


Purpose: Status Assessment

- Five Factor Review required for any consideration of status review (ESA Section 4(a)(1))
 - Adequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms
- Post-Delisting Management Plan must be in place prior to delisting to guide and direct management so that grizzly bear remain recovered. The CS serves as this plan.

Process: Development and Review

- Interagency Grizzly Bear Technical Team drafts CS
- Agencies review and approve draft CS
- Draft released for public review and comment



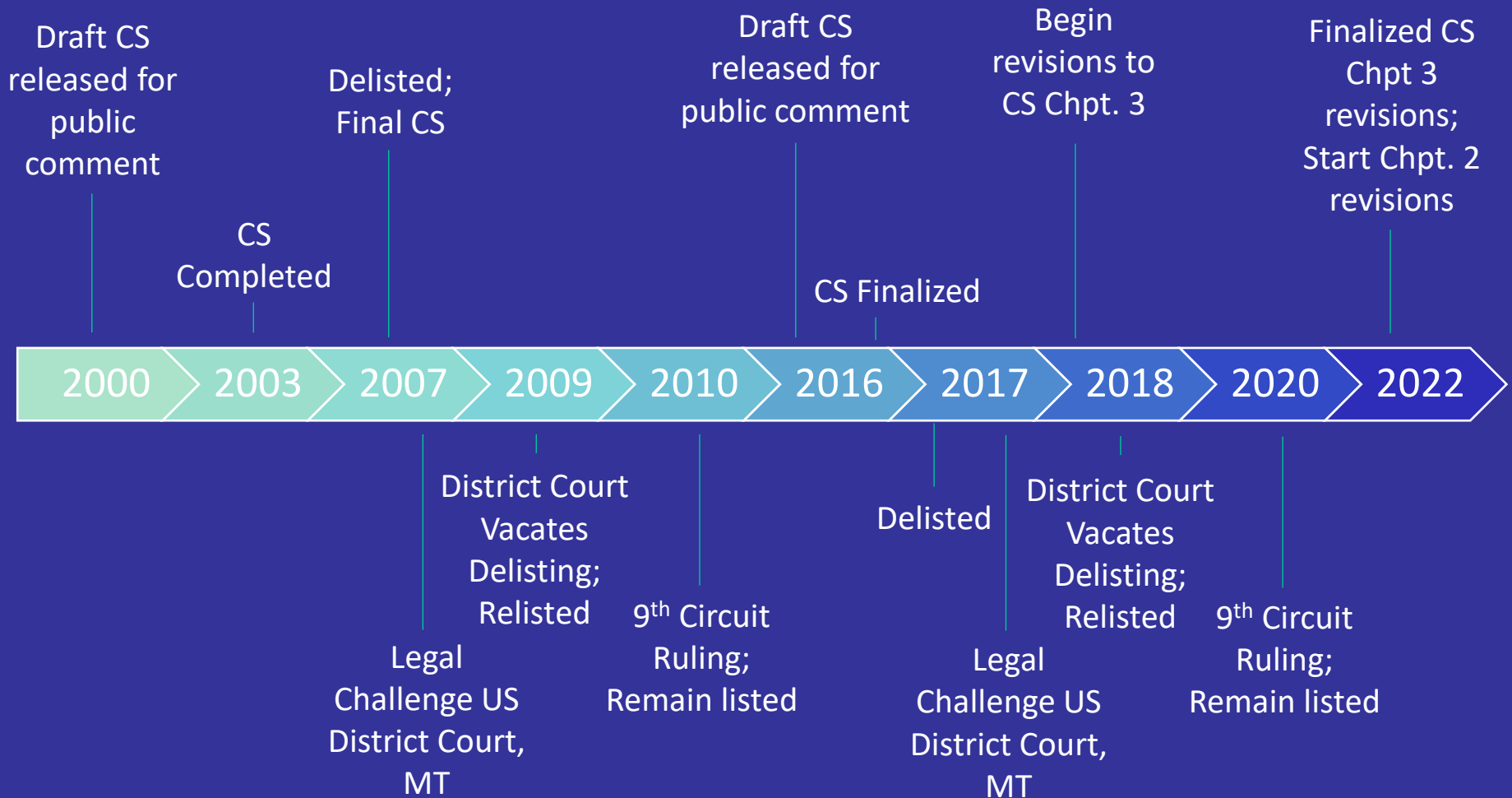
Process: Public Comment and Final Review

- Summary of public comments
- Response to public comments
- Revised draft submitted to the Ecosystem Subcommittee for comment

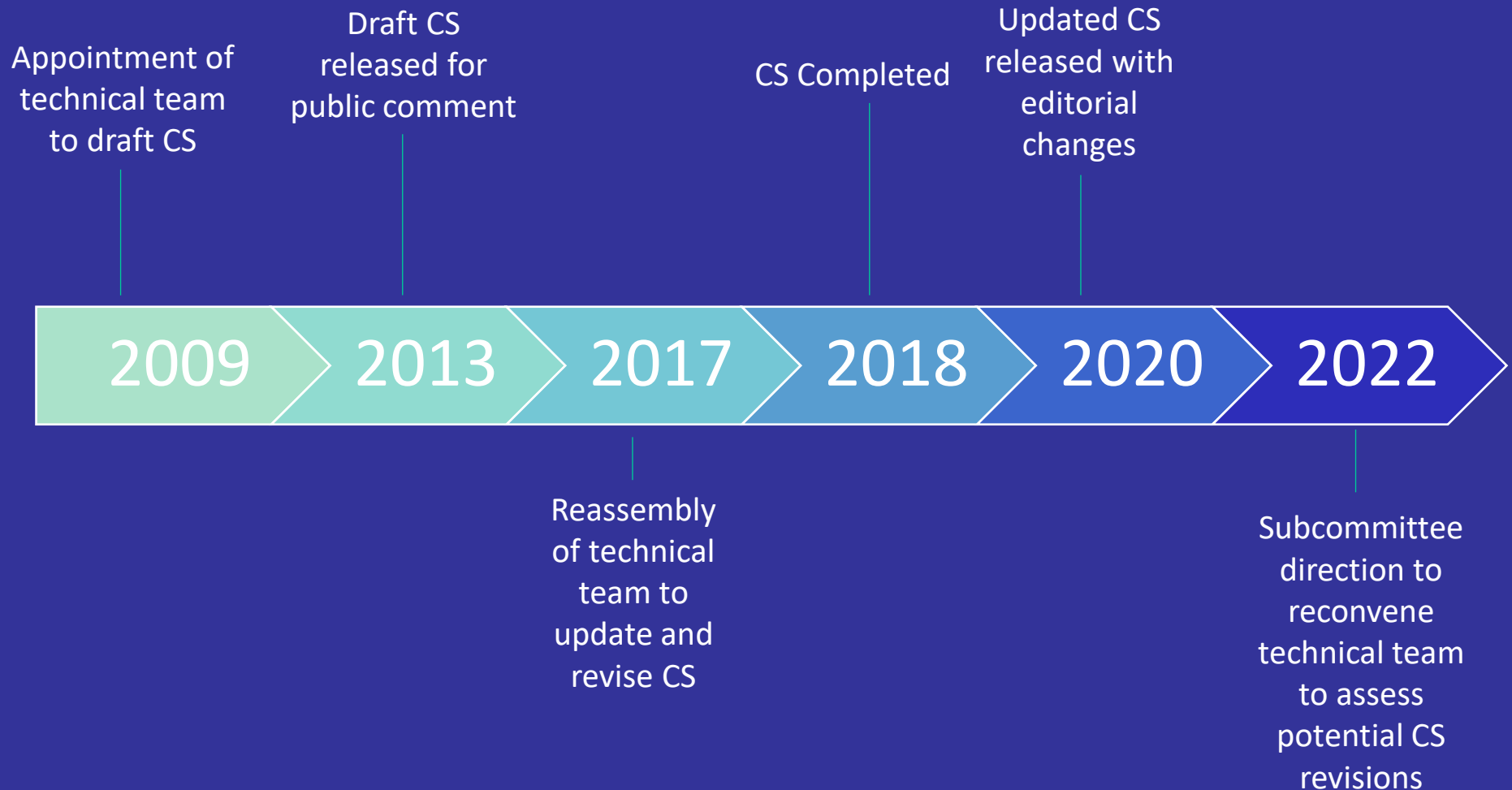
Process: Approval and Signing

- Ecosystem Subcommittee approves document for consideration by the IGBC
- IGBC provides comment and approves document
- IGBC agencies sign the Memorandum of Understanding to implement the CS

Timeline: GYE



Timeline: NCDE



Contents: Conservation Strategy

Chapters

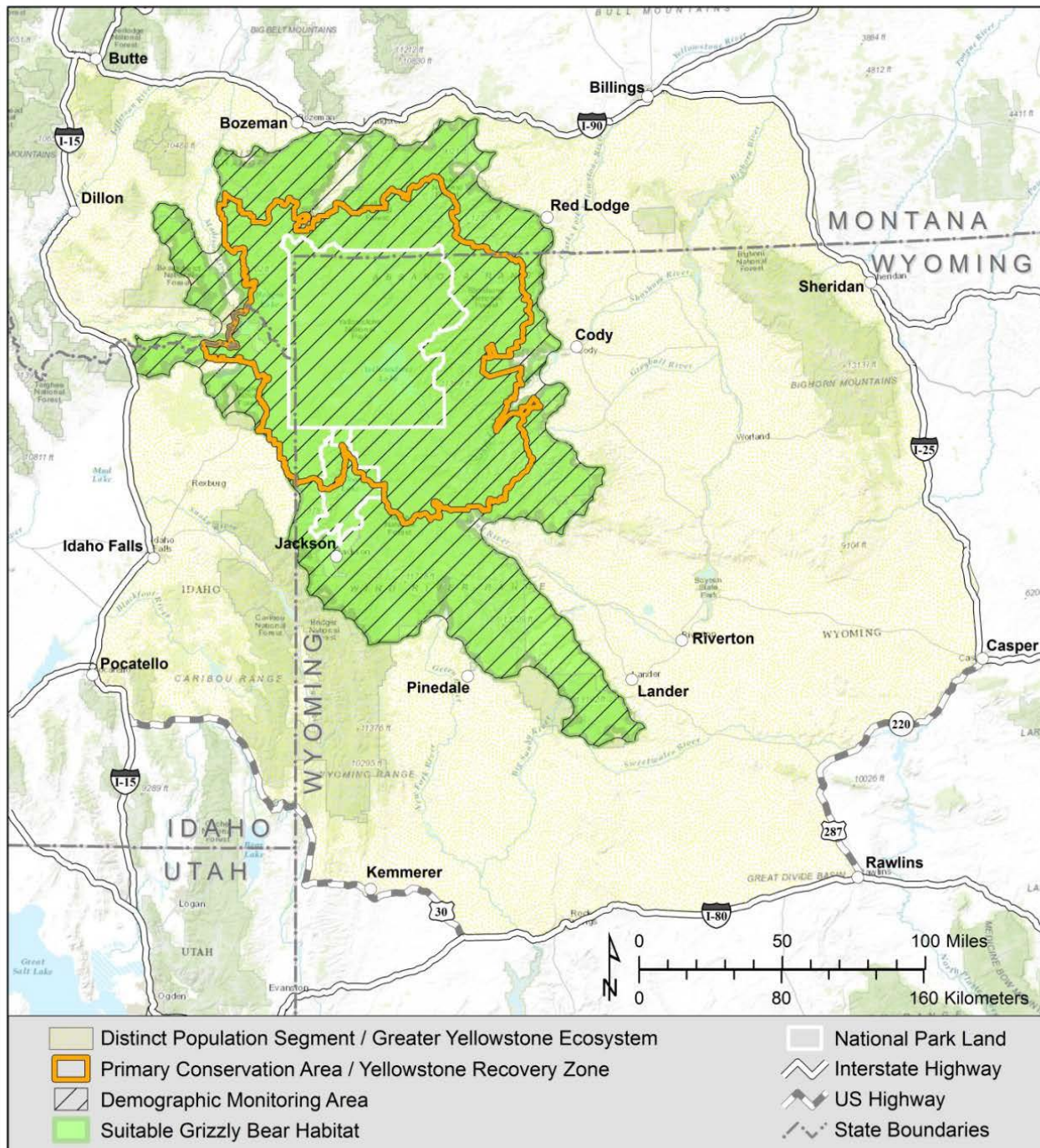
- Executive Summary
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Introduction and Background
- Population/Demographic Objectives and Monitoring
- Habitat Objectives and Monitoring
- Conflict Prevention and Management
- Information and Education
- Implementation and Evaluation
- Existing Laws, Regulations, and Agreements
- Appendices

Contents: Overview

- Outlines legal authorities, policies, management programs, and the continued commitment of management agencies to maintain a high standard of management after delisting
- Reviews current status
- Includes best available science

Vision Statement: GYE

The PCA (recovery zone) will be a secure area for grizzly bears, with population and habitat conditions maintained to ensure a recovered population is maintained for the foreseeable future and to allow bears to continue to expand outside the PCA.



Vision Statement: GYE

Fundamental Goals Outside of the PCA:

- Allow bears to expand into biologically suitable and socially acceptable areas
- Maintain existing resource management and recreational uses
- Consider bear needs along with other uses

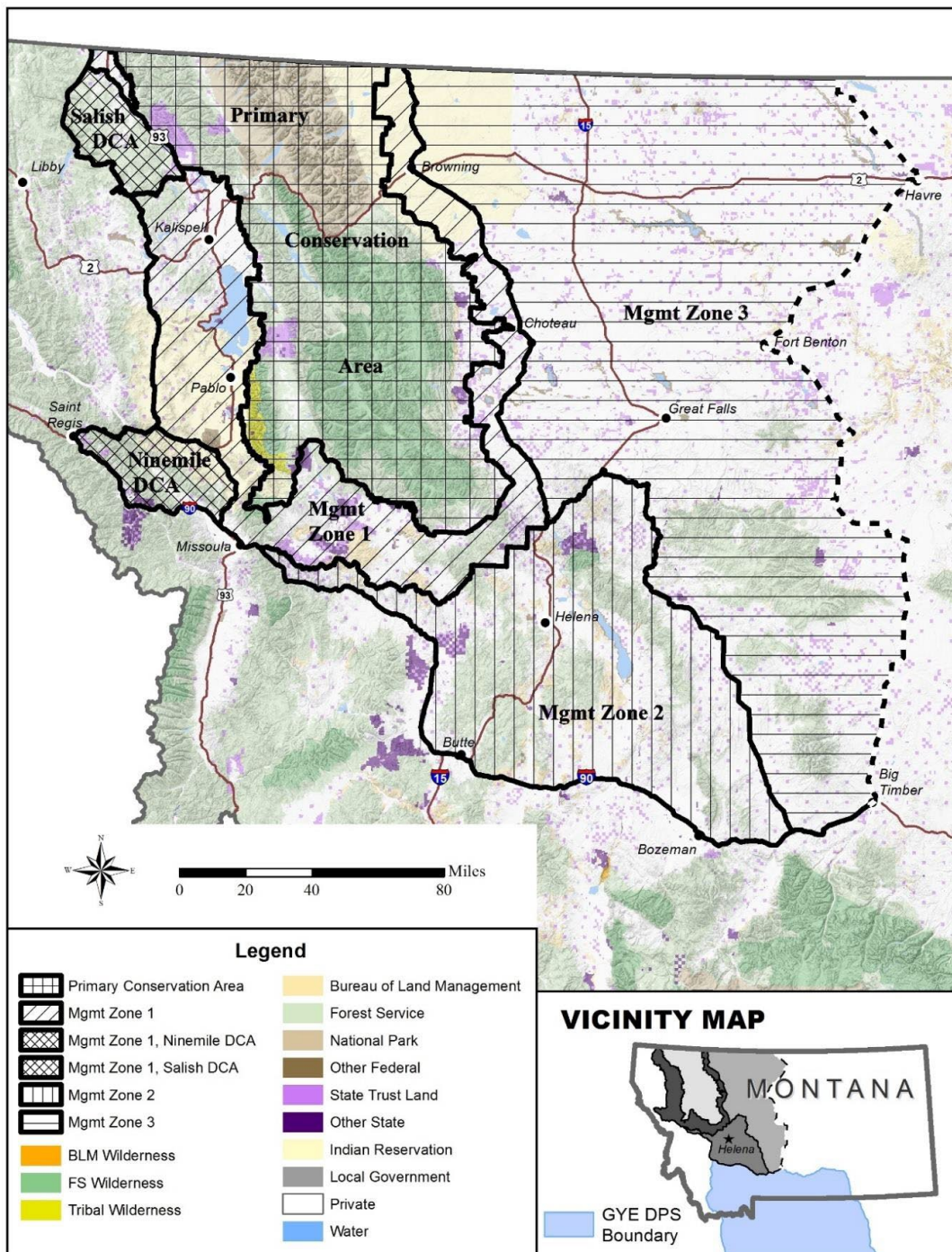
Vision Statement: GYE

Fundamental Goals Outside of the PCA:

- Manage the GYE within the Demographic Monitoring Area (DMA) to ensure a recovered population and in accordance with Recovery Criteria.
- Expand public information and education efforts.
- Provide responsive management to address grizzly bear conflicts.
- Manage grizzly bears as a game animal; including allowing regulated hunting when and where appropriate.

Vision Statement: NCDE

Maintain a recovered, genetically diverse grizzly bear population throughout the DMA while maintaining demographic and genetic connections with Canadian populations and providing the opportunity for demographic and/or genetic connectivity with other ecosystems (Cabinet-Yaak, Bitterroot, Greater Yellowstone).



NCDE Management Zones

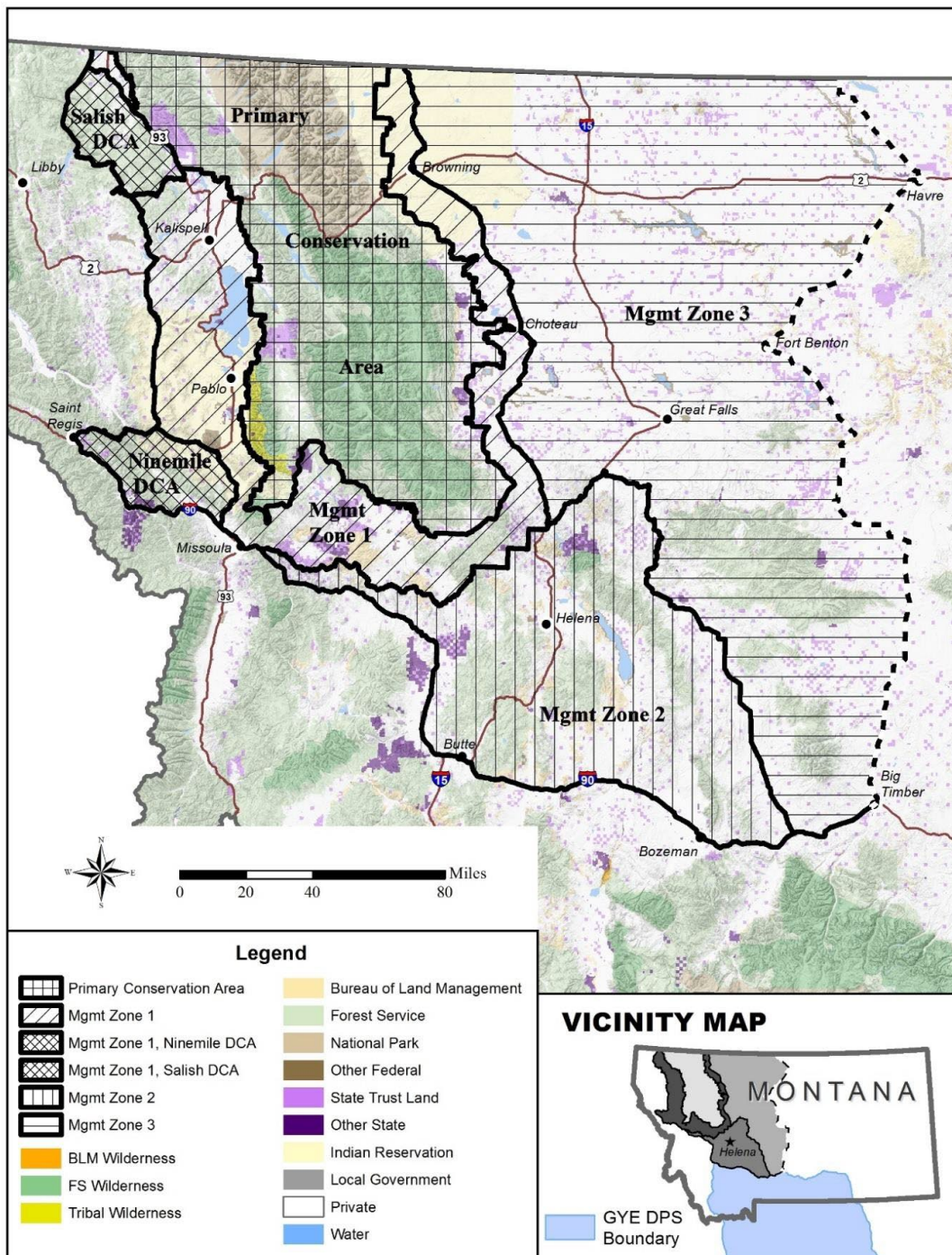
PCA (Recovery Zone)

- Most conservative habitat protections
- Maintenance of habitat conditions compatible with the increasing population from 2004-2011.

NCDE Management Zones

Zones 1 & 2

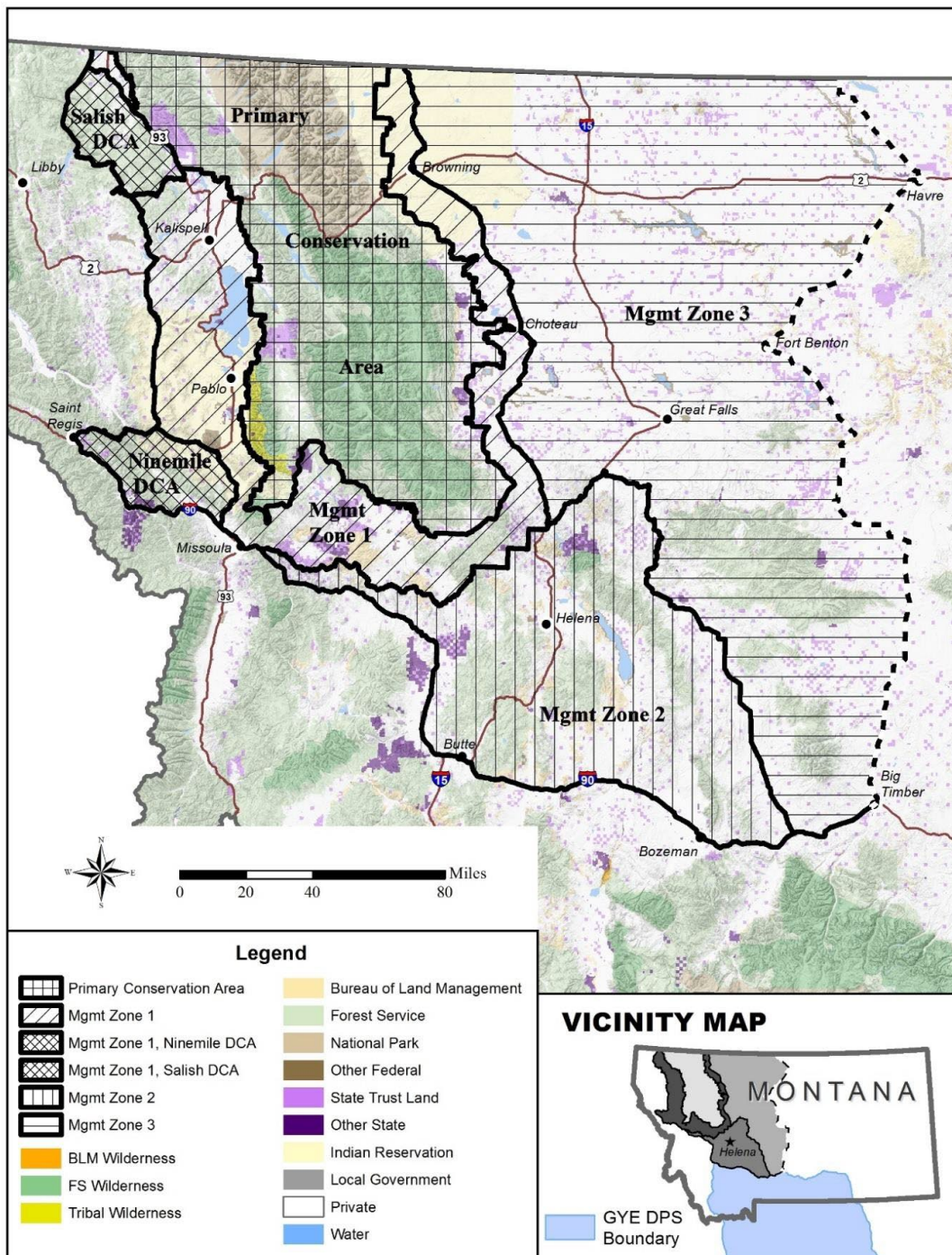
- Bears serve as a source population to other grizzly bear ecosystems
- Habitat and population protections vary by management objectives
- More protections in areas identified as Demographic Connectivity Areas (DCAs).



NCDE Management Zones

Zone 3

- No habitat linkage to other grizzly bear ecosystems
- Grizzly bear occupancy not actively discouraged
- Management via conflict response



Content: Demographic Objectives and Monitoring

- Specific to Demographic Monitoring Area (DMA)
- Population objective
 - GYE: Maintain population around 2002-2014 estimate
 - NCDE: Manage for a population with an estimated probability of at least 90% being above 800 individuals
- Distribution of females with young (as measured by Bear Management Units (BMUs))
- Mortality threshold to maintain population objective

Content: Additional Demographic Monitoring Objectives

- Population trend
- Genetic management of isolated populations
- Estimated distribution
- Monitoring reports



Content: Habitat Objectives and Monitoring Within the PCA

- Maintain baseline that was compatible with a stable to increasing population
 - Secure Habitat
 - Developed Sites
 - Livestock Allotments
- Measured and reported for each bear management subunit
- Monitoring reports



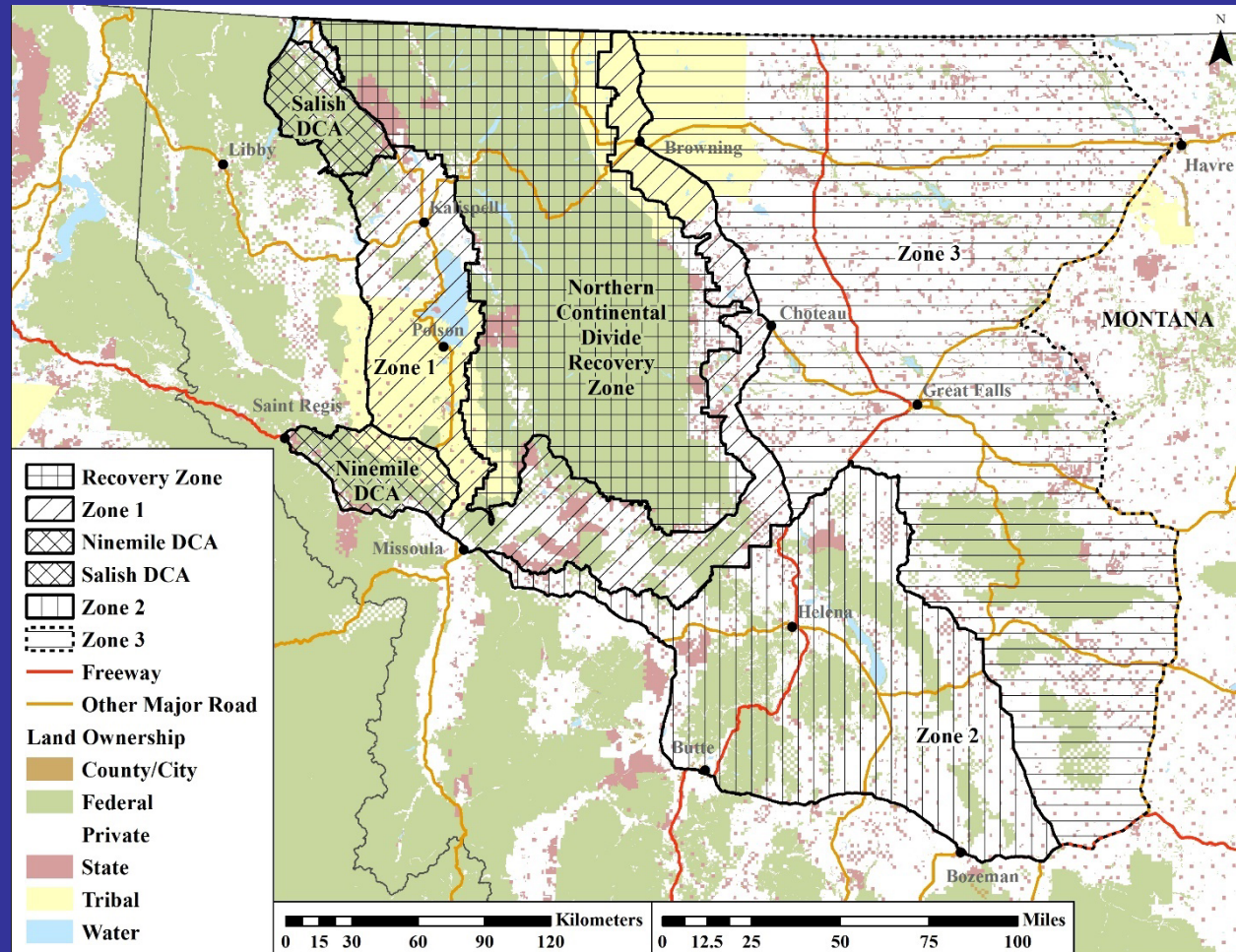
Content: Habitat Objectives and Monitoring Outside the GYE PCA



Existing land
protections through
designation as
Wilderness,
Wilderness Study
Area, or Inventoried
Roadless Area

Content: Habitat Objectives and Monitoring Outside the NCDE PCA

Zone 1: Maintain linear miles or density of motorized routes/roads consistent with continual occupancy and a stable to increasing population



Content: Habitat Objectives and Monitoring Outside the NCDE PCA

- Demographic Connectivity Areas (DCAs): Limit linear miles of motorized routes to facilitate continual occupancy connectivity to other ecosystems
- Zone 2: maintain existing habitat protections to facilitate genetic connectivity
- Zone 3: Habitat management not necessary because does not provide linkage to other grizzly bear ecosystems

Content: Additional Habitat Objectives and Monitoring

- GYE:
 - Monitor 4 high caloric food items (Cutthroat trout, ungulates, whitebark pine cone production, and army cutworm moth aggregation sites)
 - Habitat connectivity: transportation planning and food storage orders
- NCDE:
 - Body condition and stable isotope analysis as surrogates for habitat quality
 - Food storage orders

Content: Conflict Reduction and Management

- Minimize conflict
 - Sanitation efforts
 - Information, education and outreach programs
- Reflect individual state, federal, and tribal plans
- Annual conflict reporting



Content: Implementation

- Implementation after delisting is responsibility of the involved agencies
- Agencies sign the agreement, signifying their commitment to maintain the standard of management required to conserve and maintain a viable population
- After delisting, Coordinating Committee formed
- Coordinating Committee responsible for maintaining up-to-date Conservation Strategy to reflect current laws, regulations, plans, and commitments

Content: Evaluation

- Review at least every 5 years
- Revisions to the CS to incorporate the best available biological data and science
- Revisions subject to public review and comment
- Thresholds:
 - Biology and Monitoring Review
 - USFWS Status Review

Further Considerations

- Currently maintained CS ensures that adequate regulatory mechanisms will continue post-delisting
- Potential needs for revisions:
 - New state regulations
 - Court decisions
 - New information

**Thank you NCDE and GYE
technical team members**

