



Morning Star Trails Plan

.....
Snohomish County
Washington
.....

September 2018



WASHINGTON STATE DEPT OF
**NATURAL
RESOURCES**

HILARY S. FRANZ
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS

Acknowledgments

The Morning Star Trails Plan is intended to guide DNR in safe and sustainable management of recreation and public access throughout the Morning Star Natural Resources Conservation Area for the next 10 to 15 years. The production of this plan was due to the commitment and involvement of many dedicated staff and volunteers during a one-year planning process. The following persons contributed to this effort:

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Cover photo: Bald Mountain

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Snohomish County
Washington

September 2018

Prepared by
Washington State Department
of Natural Resources



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September 2018

Greetings:

The Morning Star Natural Resources Conservation Area (NRCA) is one of Washington state's most scenic landscapes. Included within this 37,842-acre conservation area are rugged peaks, remote backcountry, and protected habitat for threatened/endangered wildlife and rare plant communities. Conservation and low-impact recreation are the primary objectives for the NRCA, which also includes approximately 25 miles of hiking trails and numerous primitive backcountry campsites in a variety of settings.

Planning for safe and sustainable recreation in the NRCA is imperative to help ensure we meet our commitment to conservation in Morning Star, for current and future generations. This Trails Plan will help guide recreation management in the NRCA for the next decade, and will help ensure safe, sustainable public enjoyment of this important conservation landscape.

I want to thank all of the stakeholders who participated in this trails planning process. It is my hope this Trails Plan will help ensure quality recreation experiences in Morning Star and contribute to conservation in perpetuity of the scenic beauty, natural features, and important habitats the site was created to protect.

Sincerely,

Hilary S. Franz
Commissioner of Public Lands
Washington State Department of
Natural Resources

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Introduction



Introduction

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) engages the public, other agencies, neighbors, and stakeholders when developing plans for DNR-managed landscapes. The Morning Star Trails Plan is the result of a public planning process intended to identify priorities and provide recreation management guidance to DNR staff. The Trails Plan will guide DNR decision-making for the next 10-15 years, as we seek an appropriate balance of conservation and public use.

Agency Mission

Morning Star Natural Resources Conservation Area (NRCA) is part of the state heritage of public lands. DNR is responsible for oversight of 5.6 million acres of forest, range, aquatic, agricultural, conservation, and commercial lands on behalf of the people of Washington.

DNR fights wildfires on public and private forest lands and helps communities with fire prevention; administers the Natural Areas Program, which protects native species and habitats; administers state forest practices rules; supports urban forestry through education and outreach; provides geological services; regulates surface mine reclamation; and provides opportunities for outdoor recreation in both front country and back country settings.

DNR is organized into six geographic regions. Each region is in charge of the day-to-day operations involved in protecting and managing department lands within its geographic area. Morning Star is located in the Northwest Region.



Top: Boulder Lake through the trees; Bottom: Foggy Lake and DelCampo peak in the background.

Trust Lands

DNR manages 3 million acres of state trust lands that generate revenue to help support public schools, state institutions, and county services. The lands also provide fish and wildlife habitat, clean and abundant water, and public access. In conjunction with its responsibilities as trust lands manager, DNR provides a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities to the public throughout the state. The Multiple Use Act (RCW 79.10) ensures that recreation and public access opportunities are allowed on forested state trust lands where such uses are compatible with trust objectives.

Natural Areas Program

The Natural Areas Program conserves more than 162,000 acres of Natural Area Preserves (NAPs) and Natural Resources Conservation Areas (NRCAs) throughout Washington, including approximately 39,000 NAP acres and 123,000 NRCA acres.

The Washington State Natural Areas Preserve Act of 1972 (RCW 79.70) established Natural Area Preserves to protect the highest quality examples of native ecosystems and rare plant and animal species, as well as other natural features of state, regional, or national significance. DNR currently manages 56 NAPs statewide to help maintain Washington's native biological diversity and provide opportunities for education and scientific research. Some NAPs offer environmental education access or facilities and, where feasible in buffer areas, developed recreational access.

In 1987, the Washington State legislature passed the Natural Resources Conservation Areas Act (RCW 79.71) to create another category of state land designation for conservation. NRCAs protect natural and cultural resources such as high quality native plant communities, habitat for sensitive, threatened and endangered species, natural ecosystems, archeological and culturally significant sites, and exceptionally scenic landscapes.

NRCAs provide for low-impact public use so long as such use does not adversely affect a site's resource qualities. Low-impact public uses generally include hiking, primitive camping, picnicking, bird-watching, environmental education, nature study, photography, scientific research, and other uses consistent with the conservation purposes for which the site was established. DNR manages 37 NRCAs across the state, ranging in size from less than 100 acres to 37,842 acres at Morning Star NRCA.

The state of Washington Natural Resources Conservation Area Statewide Management Plan was written with the assistance of a citizen advisory committee and finalized in 1992 in order to help DNR implement the NRCA statute. The plan governs all NRCAs not covered by site-specific management plans and provides policy direction for site-specific planning. Morning Star NRCA is managed under the statewide plan.

Chapter I

Planning Area



Planning Area

Located in Snohomish County in the North Cascades, the 37,842-acre Morning Star Natural Resources Conservation Area's primary purposes include protection of rare species and their habitats, and forest ecosystem function. The mountainous terrain of the NRCA encloses much of the Spada Lake watershed, capturing warm moist air as it moves inland from Puget Sound to create one of the wettest areas in the North Cascade Mountains.

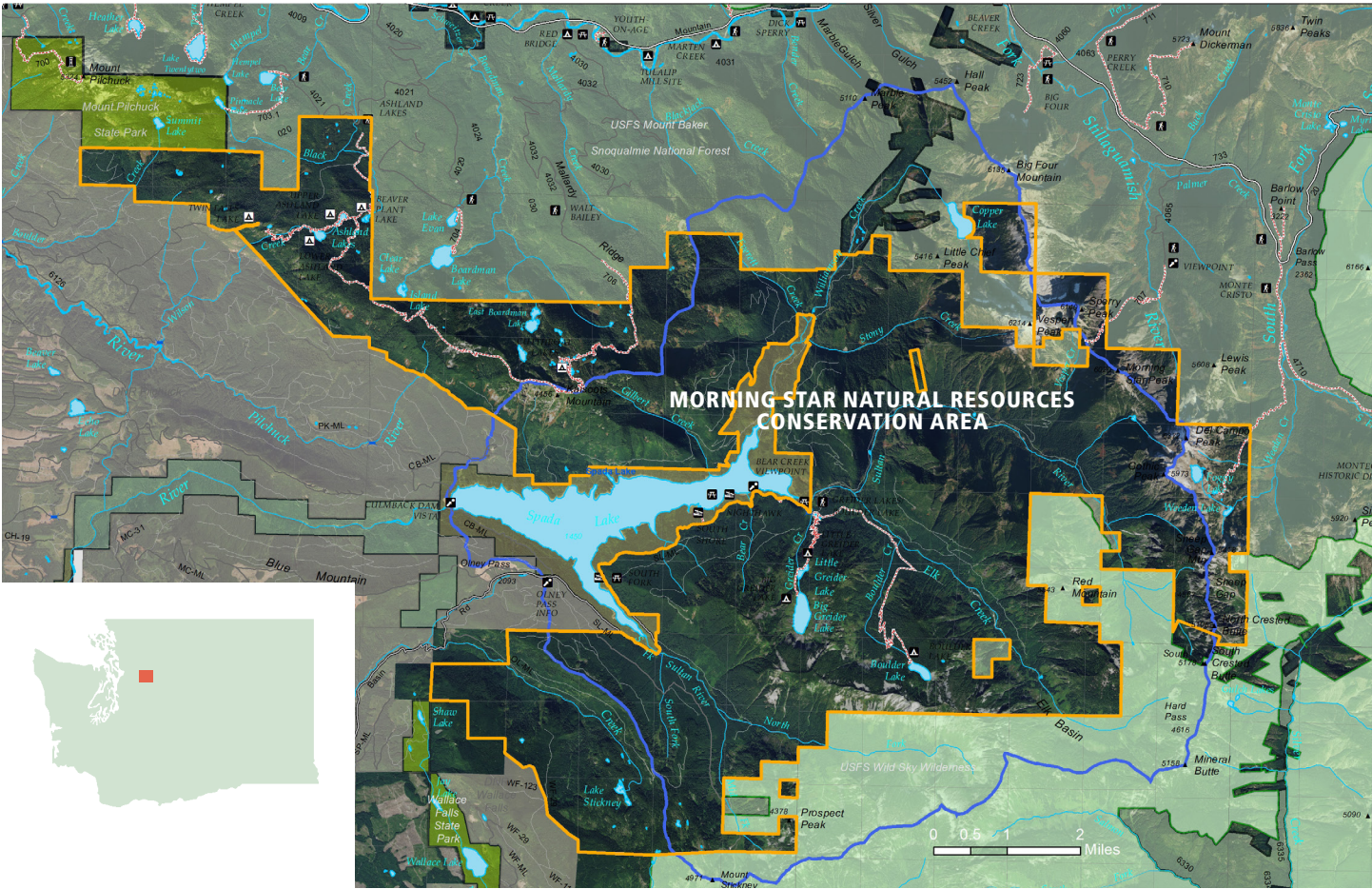
Among the many conservation features in this mid-elevation, subalpine and alpine landscape are: old growth forest ecosystems, wetlands and bogs, one state-threatened plant species, five state-sensitive plant species, and habitat for marbled murrelet, northern spotted owl, Pacific fisher, and bull trout. The landscape is also large enough to provide habitat for threatened and endangered wide-ranging wildlife such as grizzly bear and gray wolf. And as an NRCA, Morning Star is available for low-impact recreation use, so long as such use does not adversely impact the site's resource values. This Trails Plan was born out of a need to find ways to continue to protect the conservation function of the landscape while accommodating public access.

Context

Morning Star is surrounded and influenced by varied regional land uses including municipalities, rural communities, and forested and agricultural lands. Snohomish County is the third most populous county in Washington state with a US Census 2016 estimate of 787,620 residents. The county population is second only to King County in numeric population gains (Snohomish County Tomorrow 2016 Growth Monitoring Report) and is expected to reach 995,000 by 2035 creating an ever-increasing demand for recreation.

The Morning Star NRCA is adjoined by local, state, and federal public lands. The Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, Wild Sky Wilderness Area and DNR-managed trust lands are the largest neighboring land uses, all of which combine to create a forested buffer around the conservation area. Other neighbors include Wallace Falls and Mount Pilchuck State Parks, and Snohomish County PUD which owns the central feature of the watershed, Spada Lake.

Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest lands to the north, managed by the USFS out of the Ranger Station in Darrington, includes numerous popular campgrounds and trails. Access is possible from Granite Falls or Darrington via the Mountain Loop Highway which runs alongside the South Fork of the Stillaguamish River. At least three trail systems that make their way into Morning Star originate in the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.



The Wild Sky Wilderness to the southeast is the latest addition to a complex of 2.6 million acres of wilderness that straddles the Cascade Mountains from Canada to Snoqualmie Pass. Created in 2008, Wild Sky totals 106,577 acres within the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, and adjoins the Henry M. Jackson Wilderness to the north and east.

Wallace Falls State Park to the southwest is a 1,380 acre park with shoreline on the Wallace River, Wallace Lake, Jay Lake and Shaw Lake. The Park features a variety of uses including hiking, white water kayaking, swimming, mountain biking and camping. A major attraction is the park's namesake, Wallace Falls, a 265-foot waterfall along one of the hiking trails.

Within Morning Star, the Spada Lake Reservoir is a source of drinking water for the City of Everett, and power supplied by Snohomish County PUD. One trailhead to Morning Star destinations is located on PUD ownership. With the majority of the watershed located within the Morning Star NRCA, protection of the forest as a source of clean water is a critical purpose and function of the NRCA.

Mount Pilchuck State Park to the northwest is a 1,893-acre day use park that features mountainous alpine terrain and scenic attractions. The main attraction is a trail to the summit of Mount Pilchuck, where there is an historic fire lookout. The 3-mile trail begins at 3,100 feet above sea level and climbs to 5,234 feet at the summit. Access to the Park is via the Mountain Loop Highway from Granite Falls.

DNR-managed trust lands to the southwest generate revenue for the Common School Trust, State Forest Trust and other beneficiaries.

There is one private property inholding within the boundaries of the NRCA, one private ownership adjacent on the north and one private ownership adjacent in the southeast. All of these ownerships have their origins in mining claims. None is known to be currently active. None has access through the NRCA.

Existing Facilities

With a range of elevations and a variety of public land ownerships, the larger landscape that includes Morning Star provides a number of very popular recreation destinations. People come from across Washington and beyond to recreate in the area and enjoy a wide range of outdoor activities. DNR-managed lands provide opportunities for both developed and dispersed recreation including hiking, backpacking, backcountry camping, fishing, hunting, climbing and more.

“Developed recreation” means a use that occurs at a designated site or location built or improved for recreation on DNR-managed land. Such improvements include but are not limited to trailheads, vistas, parking areas, picnic areas, campsites and designated trails. For the purposes of this plan, “trailheads” provide access to a developed trail system. In some cases, trailheads include restrooms, while in others they do not. As noted above, some trailheads are located on other ownerships, including the US Forest Service and Snohomish County PUD.



Bottom: New bridge on Ashland Lakes Trail (installed 2015); Top: Sheep Gap Mountain

Dispersed recreation on DNR-managed land occurs outside of developed recreation facilities and includes activities such as fishing, hunting, nature observation, rock climbing, geocaching, birding, and mushroom and berry picking. Most such activity occurs outside of DNR-managed conservation areas. Exceptions include hunting and fishing in designated stocked lakes, both of which are provided in Morning Star.

CURRENT DEVELOPED RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PLANNING AREA INCLUDE:

- Three trailheads
- Approximately 26 miles of designated trails
- Eight backcountry camping areas

Two designated trails and associated campsites in Morning Star are currently closed due to failing infrastructure, impacts to resources or both. Disposition of these, and all trails, will depend upon the management direction outlined in this plan and future funding.

There are also several trails in use by the public that were not developed by DNR as part of the designated trail network. Most of these undesigned trails were built by users venturing into the back country over the course of many years (decades). Some date to historic activities like mining. In some cases, these trails are not sited in sustainable locations and are contributing to resource damage. DNR is aware of at least four such trails. Given the size of the NRCA, its limited access points, and the historic uses that occurred there, there are likely some trails not known to the agency. At least two undesigned trails currently have some of the highest use in the NRCA; both originate on Forest Service ownership. All trails in the NRCA, designed and undesigned, will need to be evaluated and potentially relocated and modified (or eliminated), depending on their sustainability and their fit with the management direction outlined in this plan.



Chapter II

Planning Process

Planning Process



Spada Lake

Overview

As described above, Morning Star NRCA is a large landscape that spans a range of elevations, and includes public use opportunities in a variety of settings, from mid elevation forest to subalpine parklands to alpine peaks. Trails and campsites in Morning Star are all backcountry in nature. Funding (staffing) and project investment have varied over the decades since the lands were transferred into NRCA status. The state budget impacts of the Great Recession reduced funds available for both the DNR Recreation Program and Natural Areas Program, limiting management capacity at Morning Star. With reduced maintenance and operations activities, the backlog of capital facility improvement projects also increased. Concurrently, site use has increased in recent years, including in some areas that are not designated and which lack management funds for DNR staff. Together, the increased use and lack of site investment have contributed to deterioration in infrastructure, negative impacts on user experience, and impact to natural resources.

Funding/Scope

With a backlog of site maintenance and facility renovation, DNR sought a collaboration with users and other stakeholders to apply for a grant to create this Trails Plan. The conservation-first imperative for Natural Resources Conservation Areas combines with the current resource impacts from public use and outdated facilities to create the dual scope for this trails planning process: public access improvements within a conservation landscape. The Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office awarded a Non-Highway and Off-Road (NOVA) planning grant for \$98,700 to conduct site analysis and trails planning in the NRCA, with the assistance of a trails committee composed of stakeholders to help assess and prioritize future work, over the next 10-15 years.

Data Collection

The planning effort included collection of information about existing conditions in the NRCA. DNR staff spent several weeks in the summer/fall of 2016 hiking trails and visiting camping areas for the purpose of collecting such data to inform the planning process. That work includes geo-referenced photos, GPS data and notes describing issues that range from relatively minor drainage issues to more significant issues such as failed infrastructure and public safety concerns. The field data was used to create a set of “known issues” maps covering the various landscapes in which trails and campsites are located. Those maps helped outline the extent and nature of the issues, and informed committee work that followed.



Twin Falls Lake

Public Outreach

In late 2016, DNR conducted broad public outreach to advertise the upcoming planning effort, including emails to many members of the public, site neighbors, other agencies and tribes, as well as broader outreach via newspapers and the DNR website. The department held a public meeting in December 2016 in Lake Stevens to provide information about the planning process and to solicit applications for membership on a trails committee to participate in creating this trails plan. To supplement the December meeting, DNR conducted an online survey asking respondents questions ranging from what activities they enjoy in Morning Star to what issues they think require attention. Approximately 148 people participated in the survey.

Trails Committee

DNR received 10 applications to be on the Trails Committee, all of whom were invited to join. In addition, the Committee included DNR's volunteer site steward for Morning Star, and representatives from the US Forest Service, the Washington Department of Wildlife, Snohomish County PUD, the City of Everett and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The Committee was thus comprised of 11 members of the public who represent various site users and interest groups (including our DNR volunteer site steward) and five other-agency representatives.

The Trails Committee met eight times for monthly evening meetings beginning in February 2017, and culminating in April 2018. The July and August meetings were field trips to two different landscapes within the NRCA. Throughout the process, Committee work focused on review of known information about existing conditions in Morning Star, and on information collected from the public as well as Committee members' related recreational uses in the NRCA, any issues identified as needing attention, and how best to synthesize the information into a Trails Plan that would guide work for a decade or more. Analysis was conducted in the context of mitigating existing, ongoing impacts to resources related to past and current public use in the NRCA.

The Committee process culminated in a prioritized list of recommendations to guide trail and facility management in the NRCA over the next five to seven state budget biennia. Recommendations include a few specific projects identified during the planning process, and also several more general priorities to help inform decision makers about future projects. Specifics related to goals, objectives, priorities and projects are described in more detail in Chapter 3.

Chapter III

Trails Plan Goals and Objectives



Trails Plan Goals and Objectives

Planning Process

The trails planning process included several information-gathering steps in preparation for producing a final plan:

STEP 1: Field Inventory | Appendix A

STEP 2: Resource Mapping | Appendix B

STEP 3: Public Involvement | Appendix C

Following the information-gathering phase of the trails planning process the Committee and DNR set priorities and created an action plan for future work in the landscape:

STEP 4: Determine Goals and Objectives

STEP 5: Create an implementation schedule | Appendix D

Determining Goals and Objectives

Input from the public and the Trails Committee was compiled into lists sorted by type of work/comment/issue. The planning committee ranked the categories as follows:

- 1. Conservation/Restoration**
- 2. Maintenance**
- 3. Interpretation/Education**
- 4. Re-establish Access**
- 5. Access Control**
- 6. Increase Access**
- 7. New Development**



Top: Gothic Basin Trail sign;
Bottom: Ashland Lakes bridge installation (2015).

Each category contains comments gathered throughout the planning process. Committee members evaluated and ranked comments within each category. The lists below show the Committee's ranking, including some duplication between categories.

1. CONSERVATION/RESTORATION

- Appropriate human waste disposal
- Leave large areas without roads or trails
- Garbage
- Alpine conservation
- Re-route Walt Bailey Trail if better location possible
- Designate campsites/limit camping to designated
- Discourage camping in alpine, redirect to lower areas
- Wildlife
- Prevent target shooting
- Pristine environment/resource protection
- Implement "Leave No Trace"
- Relocate trails away from sensitive areas/soils
- Wildness
- Delete unused campsites
- Limit new trail development
- Establish camping areas where use is high to contain impacts
- Pit toilets to minimize helicopter, avoid portables
- Close/rehabilitate social trails
- New trails only in NRCA expansion areas, not in existing areas
- No new trails

Committee Comments about this category:

- A dilemma in the prioritization exercise was that trails references should have all been in the maintenance category
- Maintenance category could include several types of maintenance, i.e. Boulder Lake and Twin Falls; reopen existing, rebuild historical, and create new (if realignment of existing).

2. MAINTENANCE

- Improved trail maintenance
- Maintain trails
- Repair trails
- Repair campsites
- Remove infrastructure to cut costs
- Maintain campsites
- Road maintenance/improvements
- Parking
- Work with USFS to maintain roads accessing DNR trailheads
- Mark trails for summer and winter use

3. INTERPRETATION/EDUCATION

- Use social media to educate "Leave No Trace"; sanitation; management philosophy. Less expensive than signage
- Educate public about sensitivity and susceptibility of over-use
- Signage about resident wildlife/ecosystems; sanitation
- Enforcement
- More DNR presence

4. RE-ESTABLISH ACCESS

- Reopen Boulder Lake Trail
- Improve/restore Bald Mountain Trail end to end
- Reopen Twin Falls Lake Trail
- Reopen trails that are currently closed
- Reestablish western access from Spada lake to Sperry/Vesper
- Restore access to Upper Sultan River Basin, Elk Creek, Williamson Creek, and Trail to Copper Lake
- Rebuild trail over Marble Pass
- Reconnect Spada area with Bald Mountain (roads-to-trails)
- Re-open historic trails to/from Spada

Committee Comments about this category:

- The Re-establish Access category includes some actions outside the scope of the NRCA Statewide Management Plan.
- Some trails in this category are still being used (e.g. Boulder Lake)
- Re-establishing access to Twin Falls should not be a priority.
- Recreation is third on the list of priorities in the Statewide Plan. The plan balances conservation and accommodation of use.
- Reopening historic trails is different than reopening Twin Falls trail.
- Reopening closed trails could help to disperse use; but then dispersed use could become an issue.
- Marble Pass access came up from Silverton.



**Committee
Comments about
this category:**

- Can't sell permits at parking area(s) because of recreation immunity statute.
- Permit system has helped in Enchantments with overuse related to camping, but there is no permit required for day use, and now day use has exploded.
- Day runners are a problem in Enchantments; Issaquah Alps doesn't allow runners for same reason.

5. ACCESS CONTROL

- Overuse at Gothic Basin
- Permit system—especially for sensitive/pristine areas such as Gothic, Cutthroat, Vesper/Sperry and Greider
- Limit over use; limit use to level that protects rather than responds to increased demand. Establish and enforce carrying capacity

6. INCREASE ACCESS

- Access to existing rock climbing areas
- Loop trails
- Static Peak
- Fishing opportunities
- Paddling (lakes and rivers)
- Remote places
- Fishing—wild
- Hunting
- Copper Lake
- Winter use
- New trail access
- Add new trails in NRCA expansion areas

**Committee
Comments about
this category:**

- The New Development category includes some actions outside the scope of the NRCA Statewide Management Plan.
- Trails are not a priority in the NRCA Statewide Management Plan.

7. NEW DEVELOPMENT

- Pit toilet at Gothic Basin
- Family friendly hikes
- Composting pit toilets
- ADA access
- Trail to Static Peak
- Camping along south side of Spada Lake
- Roads to Trails Access to Views
- Pit toilet west bench Vesper lake
- Yurts
- New trails to alpine areas
- Connection between Mount Pilchuck/Ashland
- Trail to Copper Lake
- Cross country ski/snow parks
- Trail system interconnections
- Create more trails
- Establish routes up Vesper, Gothic, Del Campo
- Trailhead/trail to Static Peak (create sanctioned)



Implementation

A commitment made in the Recreation and Conservation Office (NOVA category) grant for this planning process was completion of design and permitting for at least one facility project (aka the "capstone project"). In order to identify the capstone project, the committee applied the priority rankings outlined above to identify potential projects that would fit within the constraints of the grant funding and timeline. The following potential capstone projects were identified:

- Pit toilets that do not require helicopter operations to install or maintain
- Toilets at the trailheads
- Institute a permit system to control level of use
- Greider first two miles: water crossing structures and water bar/drain dip regrading
- Gothic Basin: Impact studies and information collecting to establish a carrying capacity
- Trailhead signage about pit toilets and pack it in/pack it out
- Work cooperatively with the USFS on Gothic Trail.
- Bridge over Bear Creek on the Greider Lakes Trail
- Ashland boardwalk repair and campsite relocations
- Ashland Lakes Trail—Design/Site Plan for whole trail system
- Greider Lakes Trail—Design/Site Plan for whole trail system
- Move campsites away from waterfront locations
- Close Gothic Basin to overnight camping
- Gothic Basin—Design/Site Plan for whole trail system
- Gothic Basin pit toilets, signage, designated campsites
- Backcountry pit toilets on all trail systems

Some potential capstone projects were not feasible because implementation exceeded the grant timeline, or because they did not meet criteria required to qualify as a development project. By process of elimination, the following capstone project candidates were selected:

A. BOULDER-GREIDER TRAIL SYSTEM

Complete design and permitting for trail improvement work, including water crossing installations on the first 2 miles of trail. The Boulder-Greider Mainline Trail, which accesses the Greider Lakes and Boulder Lake trails, consists of abandoned road. This segment of trail includes numerous stream crossings and water bars that detract from user experience and contribute to water quality issues. This work would focus on stream crossings and regrading at water bars to make the trail friendlier for hiking.

B. GOTHIC BASIN

Complete Site Plan to include sanitation, restoration of impacts associated with braided trails and indiscriminate camping, signage to direct use and educate users, and consideration of methods by which to control/limit use based on carrying capacity. Unmanaged use at Gothic Basin was clearly the issue of greatest concern that came from the planning process. This work would be done to bring Gothic Basin into the portfolio of designated (managed) recreation sites in the NRCA.

C. PIT TOILETS THROUGHOUT MORNING STAR NRCA

This would require a determination of where pit toilets would be acceptable, what style to employ, and whether permits are required. Pit toilets would not be an option in the Spada Lake watershed, where water quality is of paramount concern.

All work identified in the three potential capstone projects was identified as high in priority. While work at Gothic Basin was identified as among the most important to commence, it is not the most amenable to constraints associated with the grant timeline. Site planning requires more time than remains on the grant, and most of the work would require additional funding to commence.

Sanitation also ranks very high in terms of priority work throughout the NRCA, and the work itself would fit the criteria for the capstone project. Additional planning is needed to ensure sustainable toilet design that is consistent with conservation objectives, which may not be completed before the grant expires.



Top: Big Greider Lake;
Bottom: Gothic Basin
subalpine habitat.

Work on the Boulder-Greider Trail system is a good capstone project match for the current grant (design/permitting for water crossing structures along the trail), and can be accomplished during the grant period. Sufficient funds also exist to bring Gothic Basin into the portfolio of managed recreation sites, among the highest priorities identified in this planning process. Work at Gothic Basin during time remaining on the grant will include ecological assessment for purpose of identifying where, and at what level, public use should occur at the site; and at least one toilet will be installed to address sanitation.

Implementation Schedule

DNR formulated an implementation schedule to guide work on various future projects through the 2025-2027 state biennium. (Appendix D). This schedule is broken out by landscape (i.e. trail system) according to priorities established in the planning process and outlined in the Goals and Objectives section above. The various trail systems include those that are currently in the portfolio of managed sites, plus, in a few cases, trails with current use that are unmanaged.

THE VARIOUS LANDSCAPES/TRAIL SYSTEMS INCLUDED IN THIS TRAILS PLAN ARE:

- 1. Gothic Basin**
- 2. Boulder-Greider**
- 3. Ashland Lakes**
- 4. Bald Mountain Ridge**
- 5. Cutthroat Lakes**
- 6. Vesper/Sperry/Sunrise Mine**
- 7. Static Peak**

Work in specific locations (trail segments, camping areas, etc.) will also be identified, scoped and conducted consistent with priorities identified in the planning process and outlined in the Goals and Objectives section above. As work progresses, the goal will be to accomplish most or all work identified in the planning process, on a priority basis, consistent with conservation goals established by applicable law, rule or policy. As with any long term plan, adjustments will occur over time resulting from changes in funding and staffing, or as a result of events or circumstances impossible to anticipate at the time of plan writing.

Initial Projects

In addition to the capstone project, work will commence during the 2017-2019 state biennium on the following projects, for which funding was sought in anticipation of this trails plan:

Project	Funding Source	Description
Morning Star Trail and Campground Renovation	WWRP Grant #16-1541, Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program "state lands development" category	Renovation of one mile of existing trail, six backcountry campsites, and new construction of three pedestrian bridges on the Cutthroat Lakes Trail
Morning Star Trail Improvements	State Capital Budget Funding	Trail improvements along the Boulder-Greider mainline trail; procurement of 1 bridge for later installation along the Boulder-Greider mainline trail; procurement and installation of sustainable toilet(s) at the Boulder Lake Camping area
Morning Star Backcountry Toilets	State Capital Budget Funding	Procurement of 3 sustainable backcountry toilets for installation in subsequent funding cycle



The rugged Cascades from near Gothic Peak.

Collaborative Management

This planning effort would not have been possible without public input and commitment from those on the Trails committee. In order to ensure success in the implementation phase of this effort, and into the longer term, partnerships with public agencies, user groups and citizen volunteers will be an important element of DNR's ongoing management in the NRCA. It will be critical to nurture and build upon the positive working relationships that predate this Plan and those that developed during the course of this planning effort.

Objective A

MAINTAIN EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS AND ENCOURAGE NEW VOLUNTEER PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Strategies

1. Establish an on-going Morning Star committee in order to maintain a broad spectrum of user and stakeholder representation in decision making related to recreation management.
2. Encourage users to volunteer on an ongoing basis to help foster long-term relationships between users and DNR, and user connections to the NRCA.
3. Form partnerships with citizen volunteers who can maintain trails and provide an overall increased presence on the landscape.
4. Continue to partner with volunteer groups for specific on-the-ground development, restoration and renovation projects.

Objective B

INCREASE PARTNERING OPPORTUNITIES WITH NEIGHBORING LANDOWNERS AND OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES

Strategies

1. Work collaboratively with the United States Forest Service to manage trails that originate on Forest Service property. Seek opportunities to partner on specific projects in order to improve service to users.
2. Work collaboratively with the Snohomish County PUD and the City of Everett to protect water quality in the Spada Lake watershed. Seek opportunities to work cooperatively on specific projects.
3. Increase partnership opportunities for all ages.
4. Increase partnerships with local non-profits, community organizations, recreation organizations and local businesses.
5. Increase outreach to new potential volunteer populations using technology and new media such as social media and participatory GIS.

Education and Enforcement

Education and enforcement efforts are essential to meet DNR's conservation responsibilities, and to provide safe, quality recreational opportunities to the public.

Objective A

PROMOTE A MORE ACTIVE EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT PRESENCE

Strategies

1. Employ an integrated enforcement strategy that establishes a routine presence through DNR Law Enforcement, Recreation Wardens, and DNR recreation staff.
2. Coordinate with law enforcement for Snohomish County, U.S. Forest Service, WA State Parks, WA State Fish and Wildlife, and local municipalities, where appropriate.
3. Develop tools and partnerships to increase security on trails and at trailheads to protect property and resources.
4. Pursue partnerships to use electronic media such as cell phones and the Internet to support on-site reporting by recreational users, volunteers, staff and crews.
5. Install signage with contact information for reporting illegal behavior.

Objective B

INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE AREA THROUGH ENHANCED SIGNAGE, MAPS AND ON-LINE INFORMATION

Strategies

1. Provide consistent signage that educates the public about allowed uses, existing regulations, fire danger, adjoining watershed lands, and other applicable rules.
2. Provide signage and outreach in areas where mixed land ownership occurs to reduce potential of trespass.
3. Clearly communicate information related to trail closures through DNR's websites, social media, signage, and outreach; explain the reasons for enforcement and management activities when practical.
4. Maintain up-to-date web-based resources to include maps of the area, recreation rules and recreation access information.

Objective C

DISCOURAGE THE CREATION OF NEW UNAUTHORIZED TRAILS, INCLUDING TRAILS ORIGINATING FROM OTHER ADJACENT OWNERSHIPS

Strategies

- 1.** Pursue partnerships to encourage reporting and create an inventory of unauthorized trails.
- 2.** Pursue partnerships, and use signage and other media to educate the public about the resource damage that is caused by unauthorized trails.
- 3.** Encourage participation in restoration efforts by individual volunteers and user groups.
- 4.** Pursue partnerships with web-based information providers to remove undesignated trails and facilities, and redirect website viewers to nearby designated facilities.





Top: Bald Mountain; Bottom:
Little Greider Lake.

Adaptive Management

Adaptive management provides for ongoing modifications of management practices in order to respond to new information, changes in circumstances on the ground, changes in laws, and new scientific developments.

Objective A

EMPLOY ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES TO IMPLEMENT THIS TRAILS PLAN, ADJUSTING RECREATION MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN ORDER TO RESPOND TO CHANGING LAWS, INFORMATION, AND CIRCUMSTANCES ON THE GROUND

Strategies

1. Evaluate site-specific conditions when implementing projects on the ground.
2. Respond and adapt to new or changing information and variable site conditions.
3. Consider proposals submitted to the agency by others (public and private) that are consistent with achieving the Trails Plan concepts, goals, and objectives and are compatible with agency requirements.

Sustainable Funding

Sustainable funding is essential to meeting DNR's goal of providing safe, quality recreation opportunities for the public. It supports facility and trail maintenance needs, facility and trail development and improvements, and enforcement efforts.

Objective A

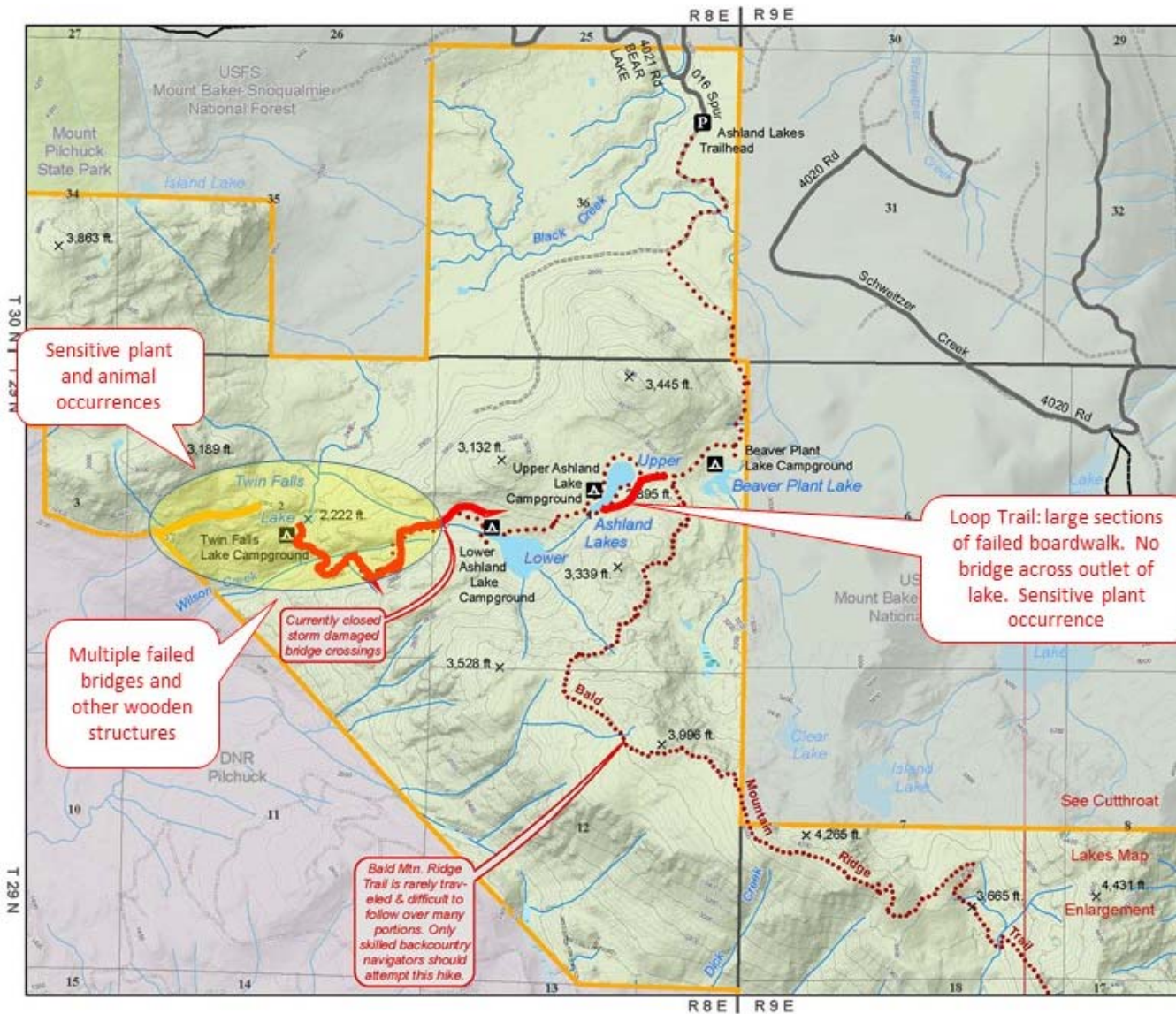
PURSUE SUSTAINABLE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES THAT ALLOW FOR THE EDUCATION, ENFORCEMENT AND THE ONGOING MAINTENANCE OF FACILITIES AND TRAILS AND FOR CAPITAL PROJECTS WHICH INCLUDES NEW CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION

Strategies

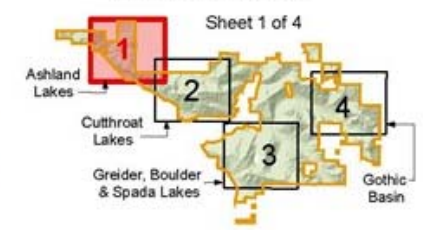
1. Determine the baseline funding that is needed for maintenance operations, environmental restoration, controlling noxious weeds, education, and enforcement and establish a sustainable funding source beyond grants.
2. Continue to apply for grant funding for maintenance, development, enforcement and facility construction projects.
3. Work to increase public understanding regarding the costs associated with maintaining and operating trails and facilities.
4. Encourage public participation by incorporating volunteer work into funding strategies.
5. Identify and consider alternative funding sources for accomplishing plan objectives.

Appendix A

Field Inventory



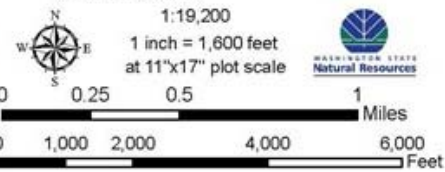
MORNING STAR NRCA Ashland Lakes



- DNR Hiking Trails (not complete)
- DNR Morning Star NRCA Project Boundary
- Open Freshwater
- Wet Area

- Streams
- 40ft Contours & 200ft Index Contours
- x Elevations derived from the 2 meter LiDAR
- DNR Other Roads (abandoned, orphaned, closed)
- USFS DNR adjacent Ownership
- WA State Parks
- Shaded Relief LiDAR 2 meter

Extreme care was used during the compilation of this map to insure accuracy. However, due to changes in ownership and the need to rely on outside information, the Department of Natural Resources cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions. Therefore, there are no warranties which accompany this material.



Sensitive plant and animal occurrences

Multiple failed bridges and other wooden structures

Currently closed storm damaged bridge crossings

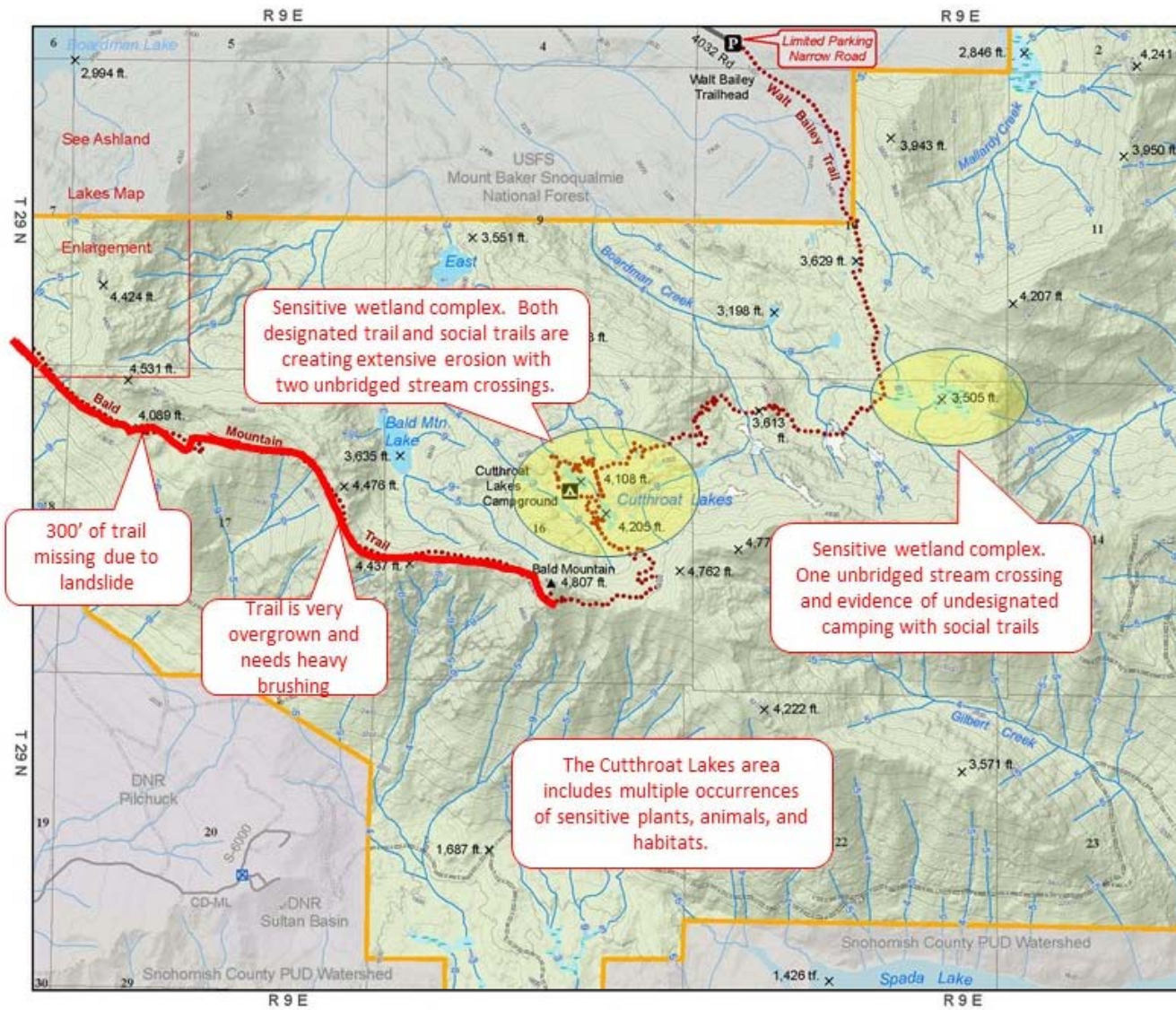
Loop Trail: large sections of failed boardwalk. No bridge across outlet of lake. Sensitive plant occurrence

Bald Mtn. Ridge Trail is rarely traveled & difficult to follow over many portions. Only skilled backcountry navigators should attempt this hike.

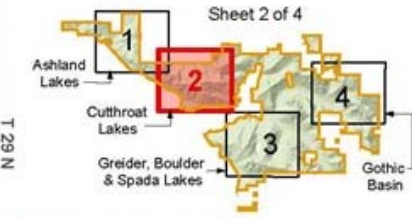


Known Issues





MORNING STAR NRCA Cutthroat Lakes



- DNR Hiking Trails (not complete)
- DNR Morning Star NRCA Project Boundary
- Open Freshwater
- Wet Area
- Glacier / Snowfield
- Streams with State Lands water typing #
- 40ft Contours & 200ft Index Contours
- x Elevations derived from the 2 meter LIDar
- DNR Other Roads (abandoned, orphaned, closed)
- USFS DNR adjacent Ownership
- Shaded Relief LIDar 2 meter

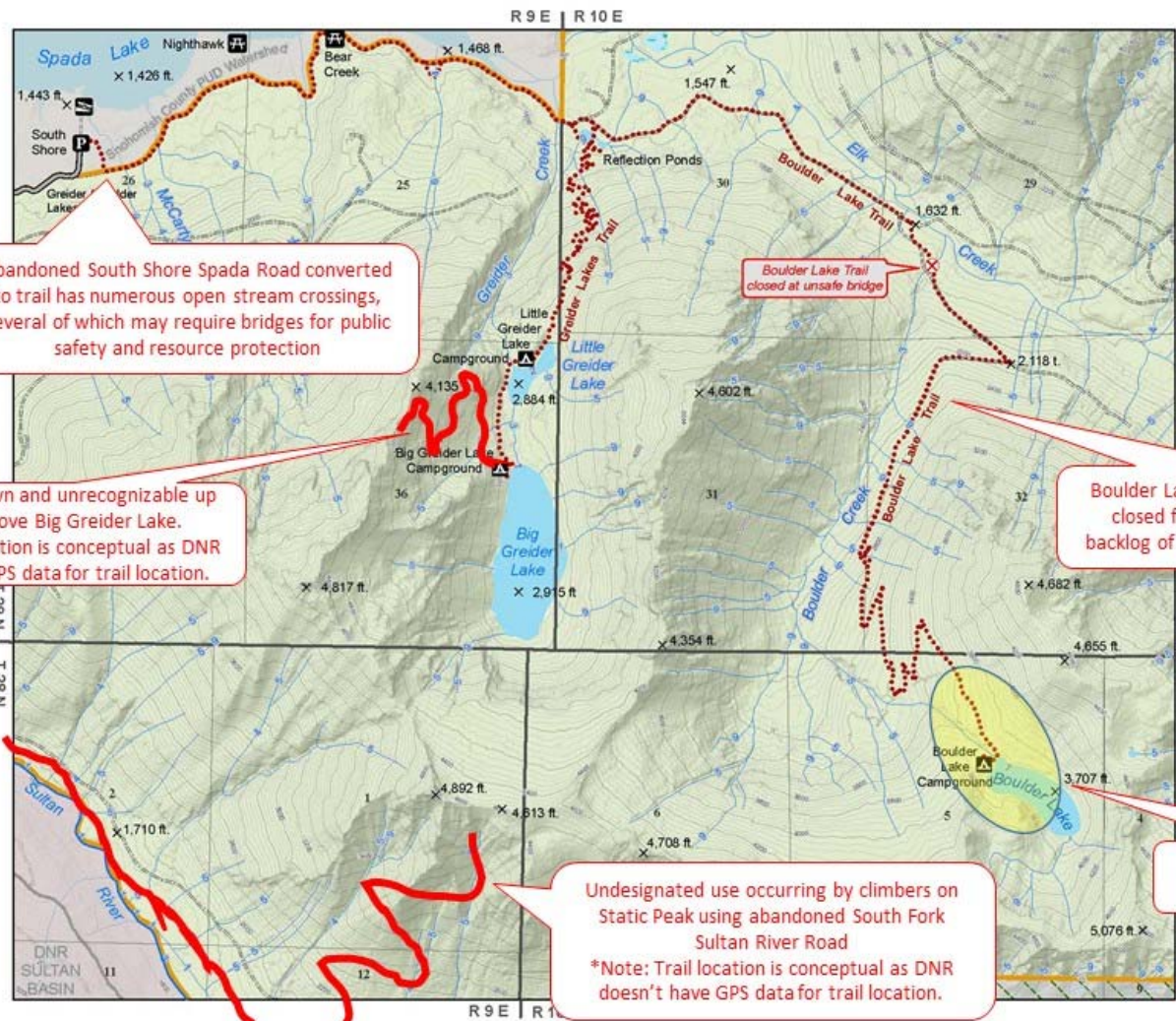
Extreme care was used during the compilation of this map to insure accuracy. However, due to changes in ownership and the need to rely on outside information, the Department of Natural Resources cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions. Therefore, there are no warranties which accompany this material.

1:19,200
1 inch = 1,600 feet
at 11"x17" plot scale

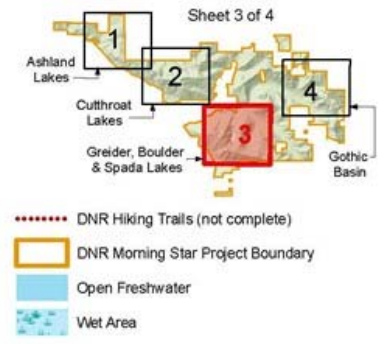


Known Issues



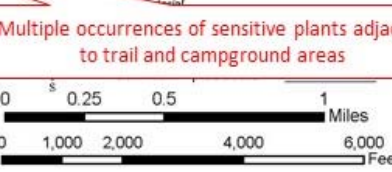


MORNING STAR NRCA
Greider, Boulder & Spada Lakes



- DNR Hiking Trails (not complete)
- ▭ DNR Morning Star Project Boundary
- Open Freshwater
- Wet Area
- ▬ Streams with State Lands water typing #
- ▭ 40ft Contours & 200ft Index Contours
- × Elevations derived from the 2 meter LiDar
- DNR Other Roads (abandoned, orphaned, closed)
- DNR adjacent Ownership
- Shaded Relief LiDar 2 meter

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Abandoned South Shore Spada Road converted to trail has numerous open stream crossings, several of which may require bridges for public safety and resource protection

Trail is overgrown and unrecognizable up the ridge above Big Greider Lake.
 *Note: Trail location is conceptual as DNR doesn't have GPS data for trail location.

Boulder Lake Trail closed at unsafe bridge

Boulder Lake Trail and Campground have been closed for nearly a decade and will have a backlog of work if trail/bridge access is restored

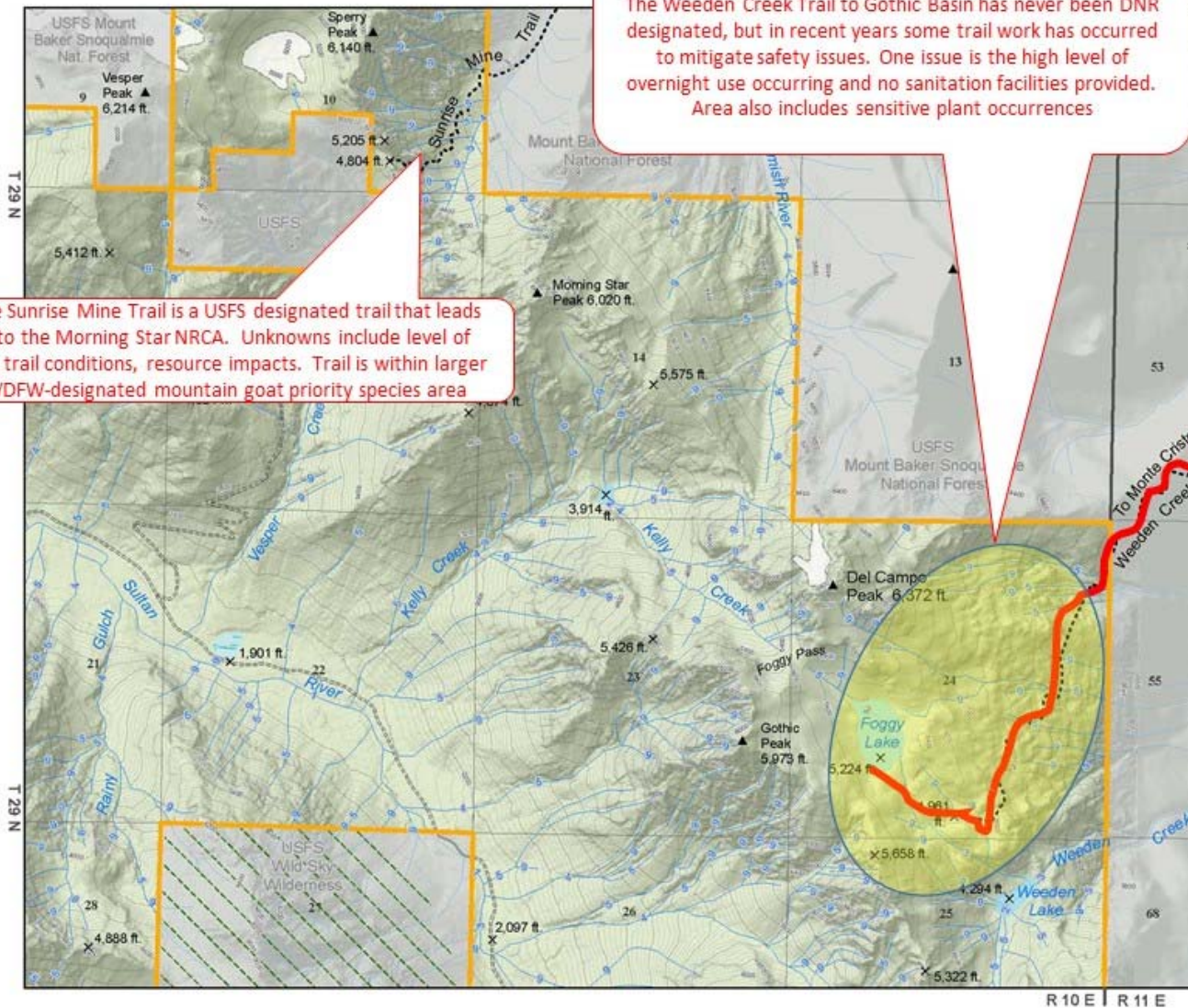
Undesignated use occurring by climbers on Static Peak using abandoned South Fork Sultan River Road
 *Note: Trail location is conceptual as DNR doesn't have GPS data for trail location.

Multiple occurrences of sensitive plants adjacent to trail and campground areas



Known Issues



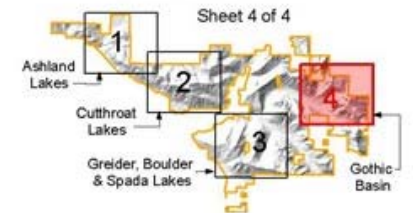


The Weeden Creek Trail to Gothic Basin has never been DNR designated, but in recent years some trail work has occurred to mitigate safety issues. One issue is the high level of overnight use occurring and no sanitation facilities provided. Area also includes sensitive plant occurrences

The Sunrise Mine Trail is a USFS designated trail that leads into the Morning Star NRCA. Unknowns include level of use, trail conditions, resource impacts. Trail is within larger WDFW-designated mountain goat priority species area

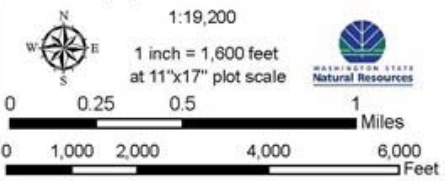
MORNING STAR NRCA

Gothic Basin



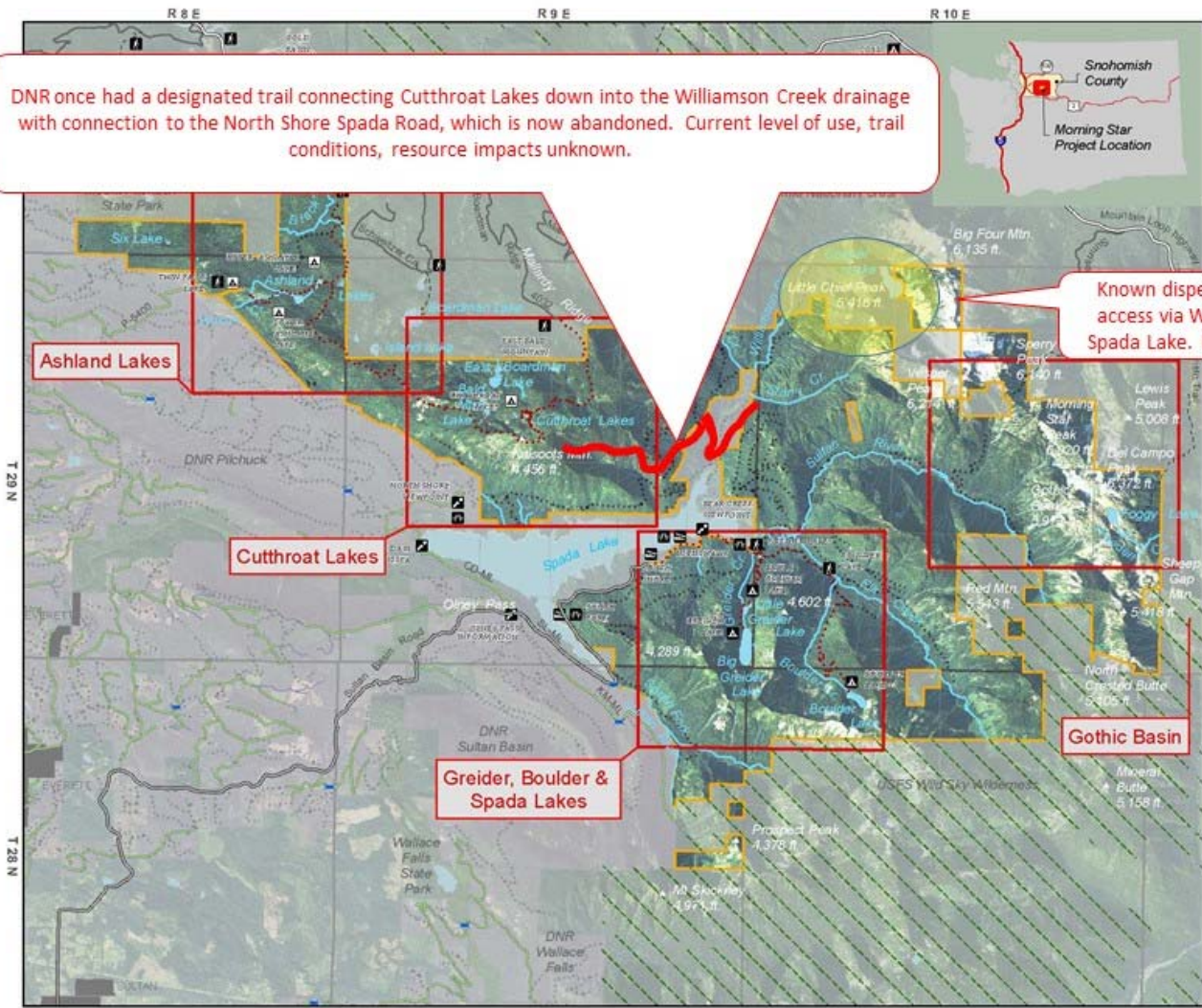
- USFS Trails
- ▭ DNR Moring Star Project Boundary
- ▭ Open Freshwater
- ▭ Glacier / Snowfield
- ▭ Wet Area
- ~ Streams with State Lands water typing #
- x Elevations derived from the 2 meter LiDar
- DNR Other Roads (abandoned, orphaned, closed)
- ▭ 40ft Contours & 200ft Index Contours
- ▭ USFS Wild Sky Wilderness (NWPS)
- ▭ Shaded Relief LiDar 2 meter

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Known Issues



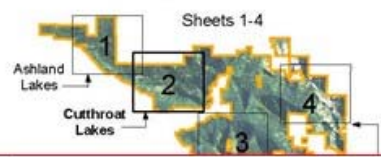


DNR once had a designated trail connecting Cutthroat Lakes down into the Williamson Creek drainage with connection to the North Shore Spada Road, which is now abandoned. Current level of use, trail conditions, resource impacts unknown.

MORNING STAR NRCA

PROJECT AREA

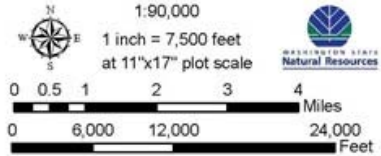
Map Enlargement Sheets



Known dispersed use occurring into Copper Lake (located on USFS) access via Williamson Creek. Access believed to be via boat across Spada Lake. Level of use, trail conditions, resource impacts unknown

- DNR Morning Star NRCA Project Boundary
- Hiking Trails (not complete)
- DNR-managed Trust Lands
- USFS
- USFS Roads
- USFS Trails
- Monte Cristo Trail (old road)
- National Wilderness Preservation System
- WA State Parks
- DNR Active Roads (management access)
- DNR Other Roads (abandoned, decommissioned, orphaned, closed)
- County or PUD Access Roads
- Mountain Loop Highway
- Lakes
- Rivers

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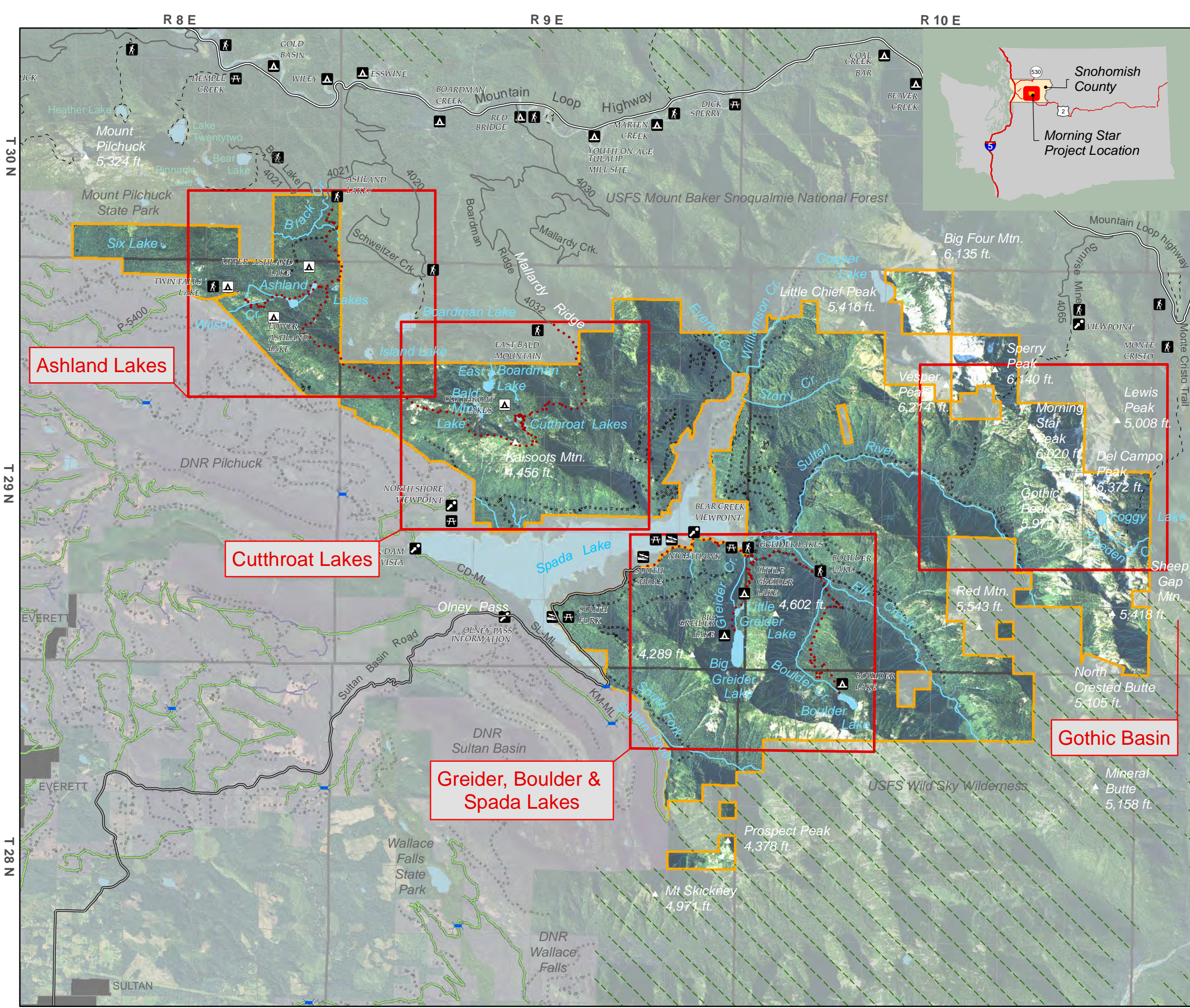


Known Issues



Appendix B

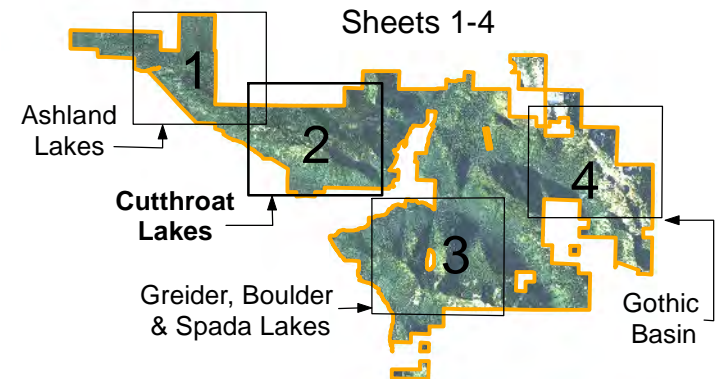
Resource Mapping



MORNING STAR NRCA

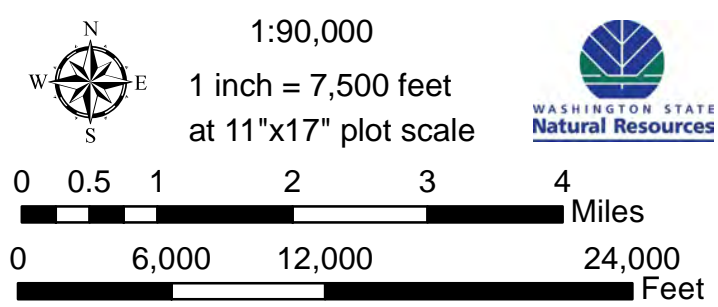
PROJECT AREA

Map Enlargement Sheets



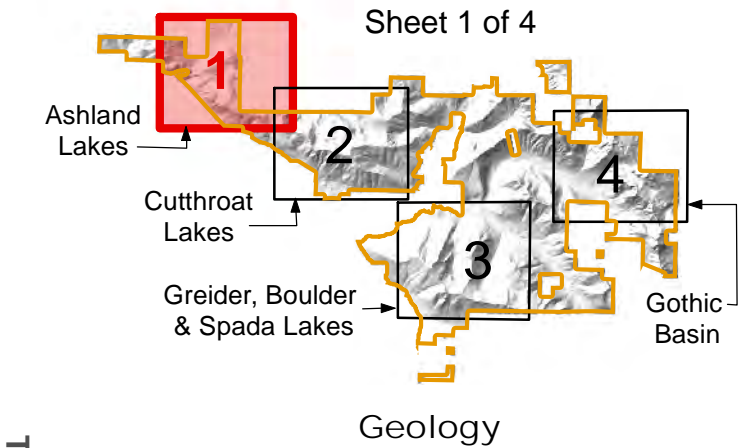
- DNR Morning Star NRCA Project Boundary
- Hiking Trails (not complete)
- DNR-managed Trust Lands
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- USFS Roads
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MORNING STAR NRCA

Ashland Lakes



LRIM (Draft) Probability of Slope Instability

- 0
- 1 (Slaughter model)

Forest Practices Landslide Inventory

- Definite Certainty
- Probable Certainty
- Questionable Certainty

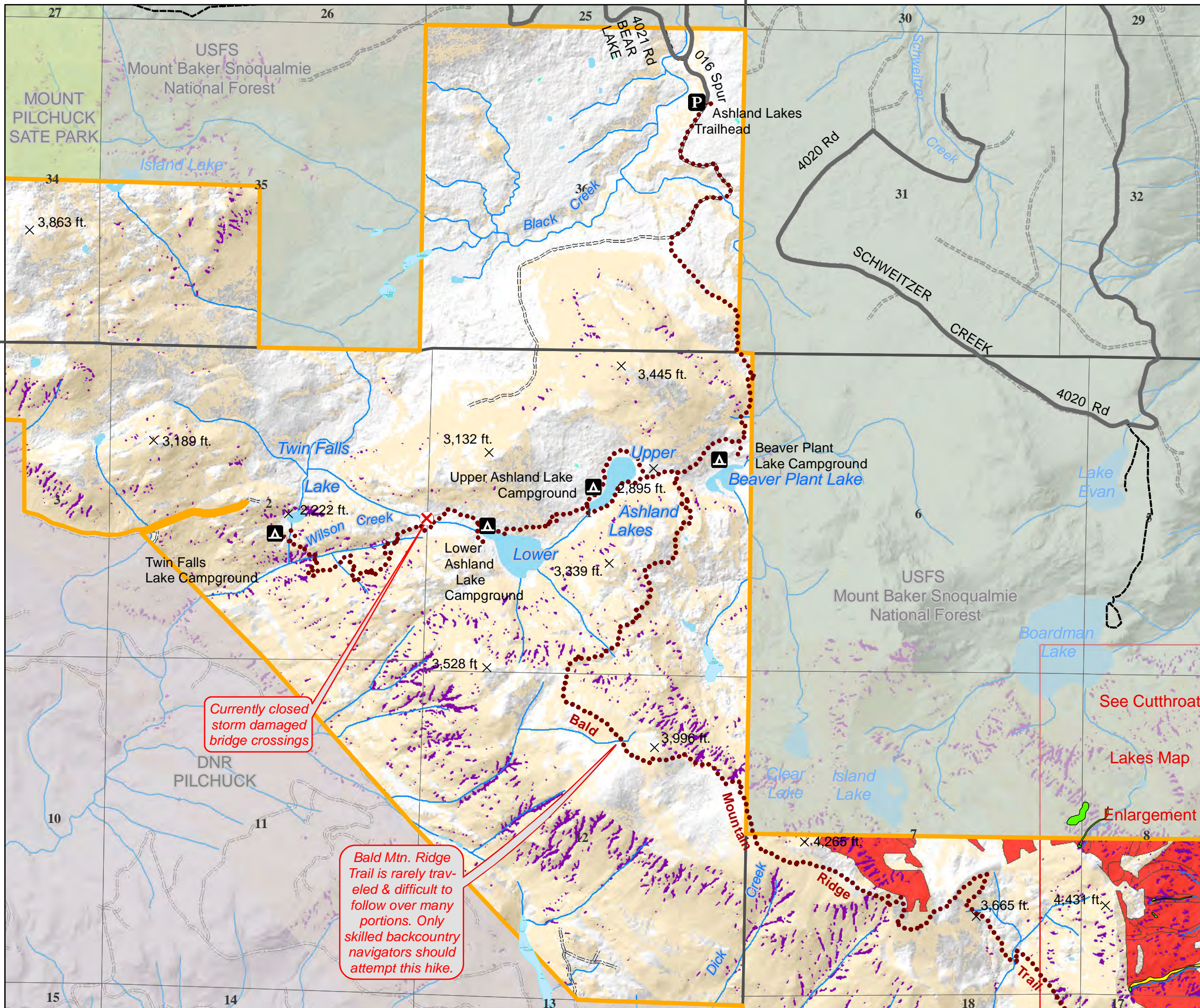
Forest Practices - Landslide Hazard Zones

Interpreted Instability

- High instability potential
- Very high instability potential

Snohomish County CAR Slopes

- Slopes 33% or greater

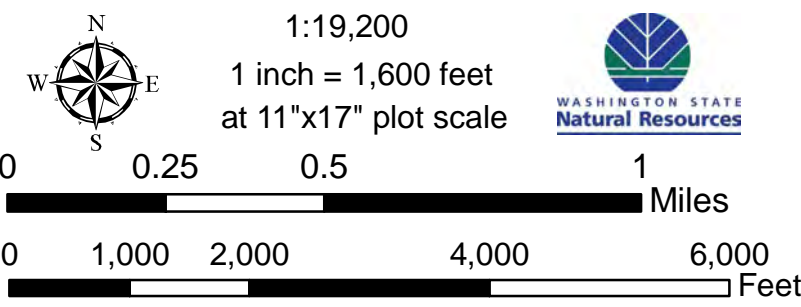


Currently closed storm damaged bridge crossings

Bald Mtn. Ridge Trail is rarely traveled & difficult to follow over many portions. Only skilled backcountry navigators should attempt this hike.

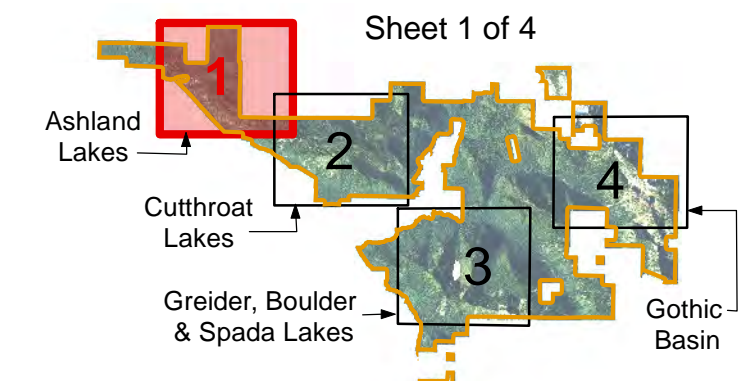
See Cutthroat Lakes Map
Enlargement

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MORNING STAR NRCA

Ashland Lakes



Riparian, Wetlands & Fish Distribution

County standards and requirements for buffers 30.62A.320 low intensity land use were used as guidelines. Site specific analysis is required.

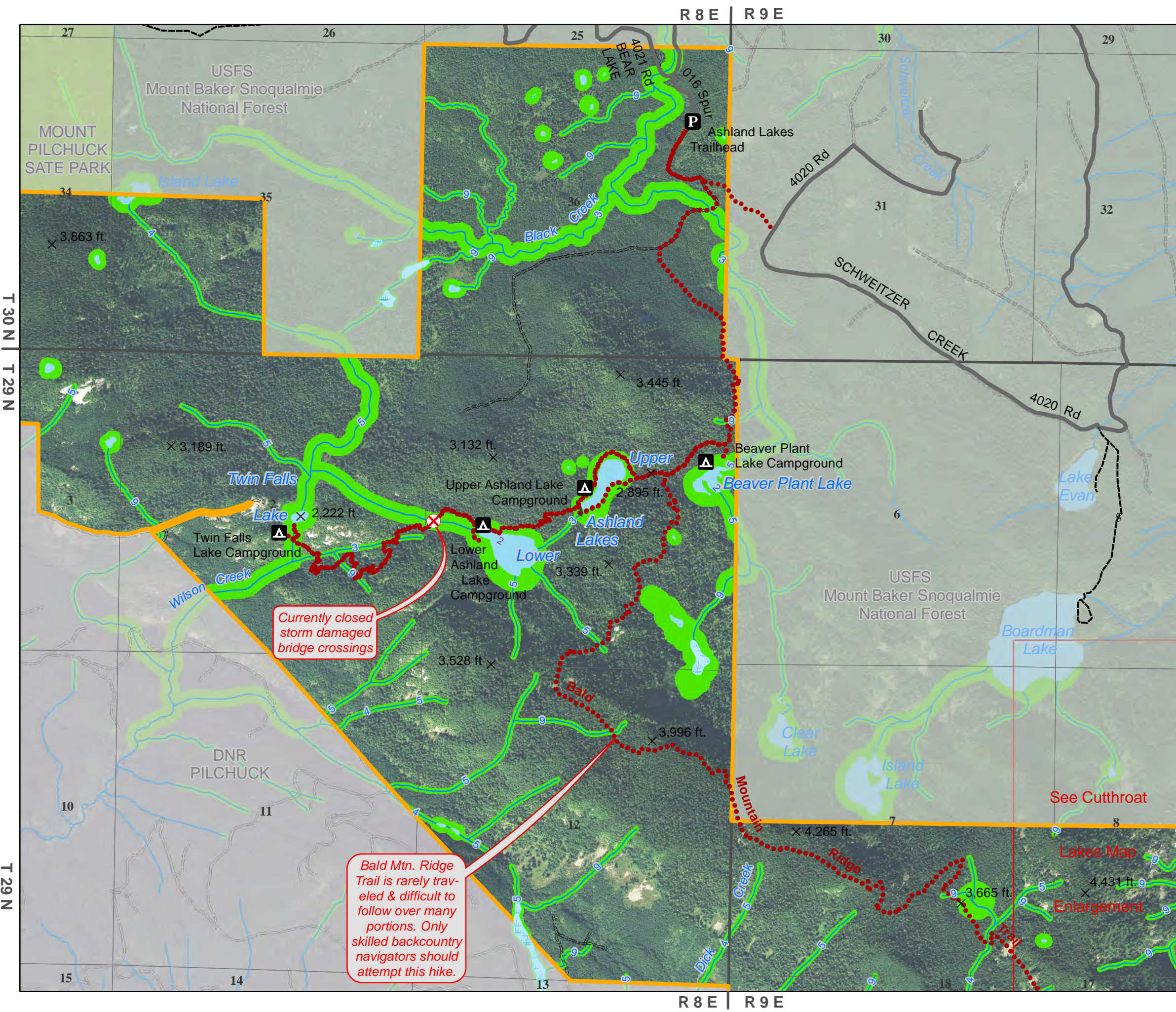
- Forest Practices Streams, Water Bodies & Snohomish County: Type S 150ft Buffer; Type F 150ft Buffer; Type Np 50ft Buffer, Type Ns 50ft Buffer, Type U & X 50 ft Buffer
- WA DNR NHP High Quality Wetlands and Bogs 125ft Buffer*
- USFWS National Wetland Inventory 100ft Buffer
- J.G. Orthophoto Interpretation NAIP 2013 100ft Buffer
- WDFW Fish Distribution * Map shows DNR generalized buffers > 125'

- DNR Hiking Trails (not complete)
- DNR Morning Star NRCA Project Boundary
- Open Freshwater Wet Area
- Streams with State Lands water typing #
- Elevations derived from the 2 meter LiDAR
- DNR Other Roads (abandoned, orphaned, closed)
- USFS DNR adjacent Ownership
- WA State Parks
- 2013 Orthophoto NAIP 3 ft. pixel

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1:19,200
1 inch = 1,600 feet
at 11"x17" plot scale

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles
0 1,000 2,000 4,000 6,000 Feet



Currently closed storm damaged bridge crossings

Bald Mtn. Ridge Trail is rarely traveled & difficult to follow over many portions. Only skilled backcountry navigators should attempt this hike.

See Cutthroat

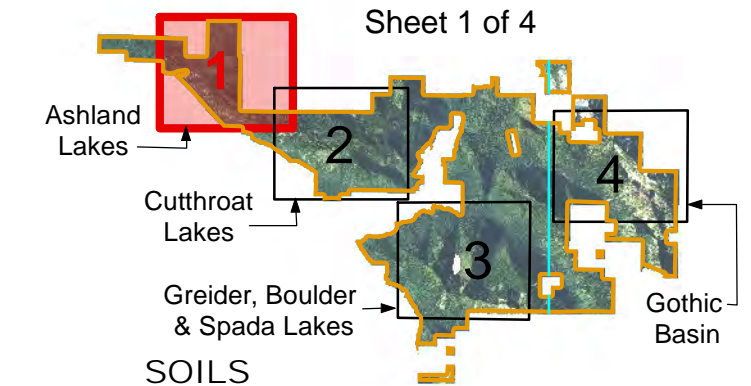
Lakes Map

Enlargement

MORNING STAR NRCA

Ashland Lakes

Sheet 1 of 4



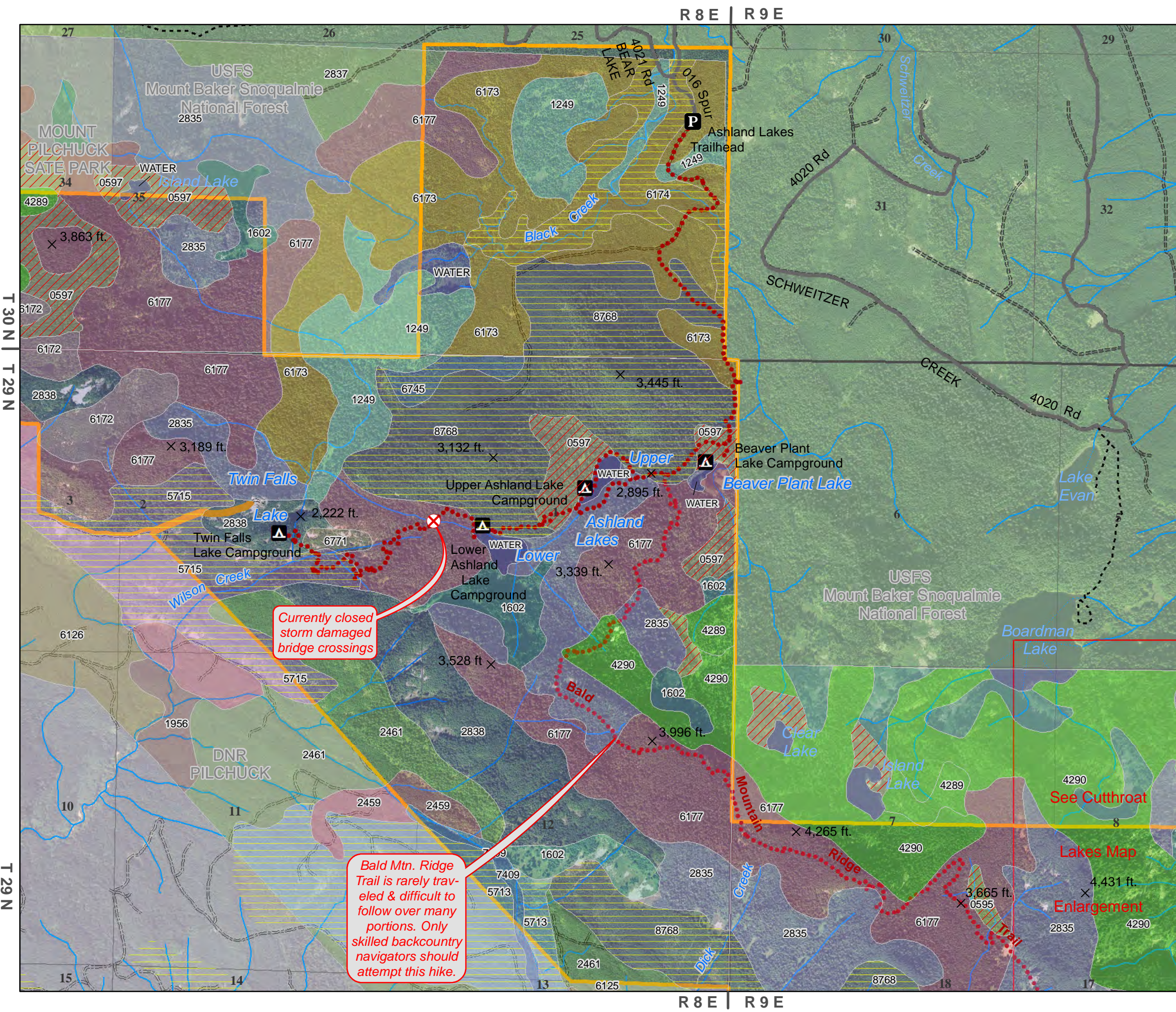
SOILS

- DNR Ropa Soils (ROPA.SOILS_SV) clipped to within half mile radius of project. No NRCS soils data exist for this area
 - Soil colors randomly applied with Soil Symbol ID (SOIL_SYM_ID) labeled.
 - Soils High Erosion Potential
 - Soils Hydric Yes and Very Poorly Drained
- See appendix for soil look-up table for more information.

Soil Map ID # and Soil Title Name
SOIL_SYM_ID SOIL_TITL_NM
595 BOROHEMISTS
597 BOROHEMISTS-HARTNIT-COMPLEX
1249 CRYAQUODS
1602 DAGGER
2459 GETCHELL-OSO-COMPLEX
2461 GETCHELL-OSO-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
2835 HARTNIT-DAGGER-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
2835 HARTNIT-DAGGER-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
2837 HARTNIT-POTCHUB-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
2838 HARTNIT-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
4289 LITHIC CRYOFOLISTS-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
5713 OSO-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
5715 OSO-GETCHELL-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
6125 PILMORE
6172 POTCHUB
6173 POTCHUB VARIANT
6174 POTCHUB VARIANT
6177 POTCHUB-HARTNIT-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
6745 ROBER-ELWELL-COMPLEX
6771 ROCK OUTCROP
7409 SKYKOMSH
8768 VERLOT-NAGROM-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
WATER WATER

1:19,200
1 inch = 1,600 feet
at 11"x17" plot scale

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles
0 1,000 2,000 4,000 6,000 Feet



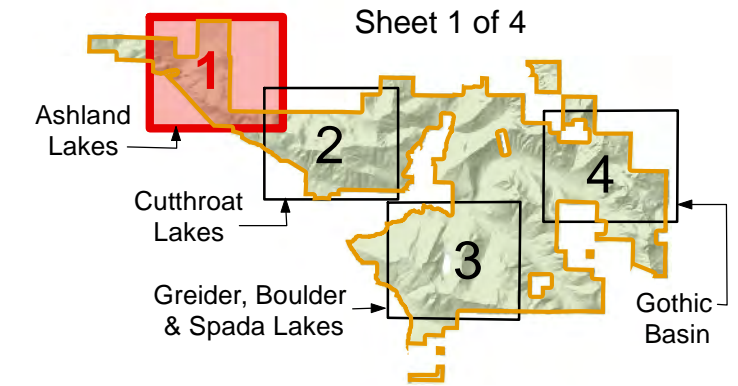
Currently closed storm damaged bridge crossings

Bald Mtn. Ridge Trail is rarely traveled & difficult to follow over many portions. Only skilled backcountry navigators should attempt this hike.

MORNING STAR NRCA

Ashland Lakes

Sheet 1 of 4



- DNR Hiking Trails (not complete)
- DNR Morning Star NRCA Project Boundary
- Open Freshwater
- Wet Area

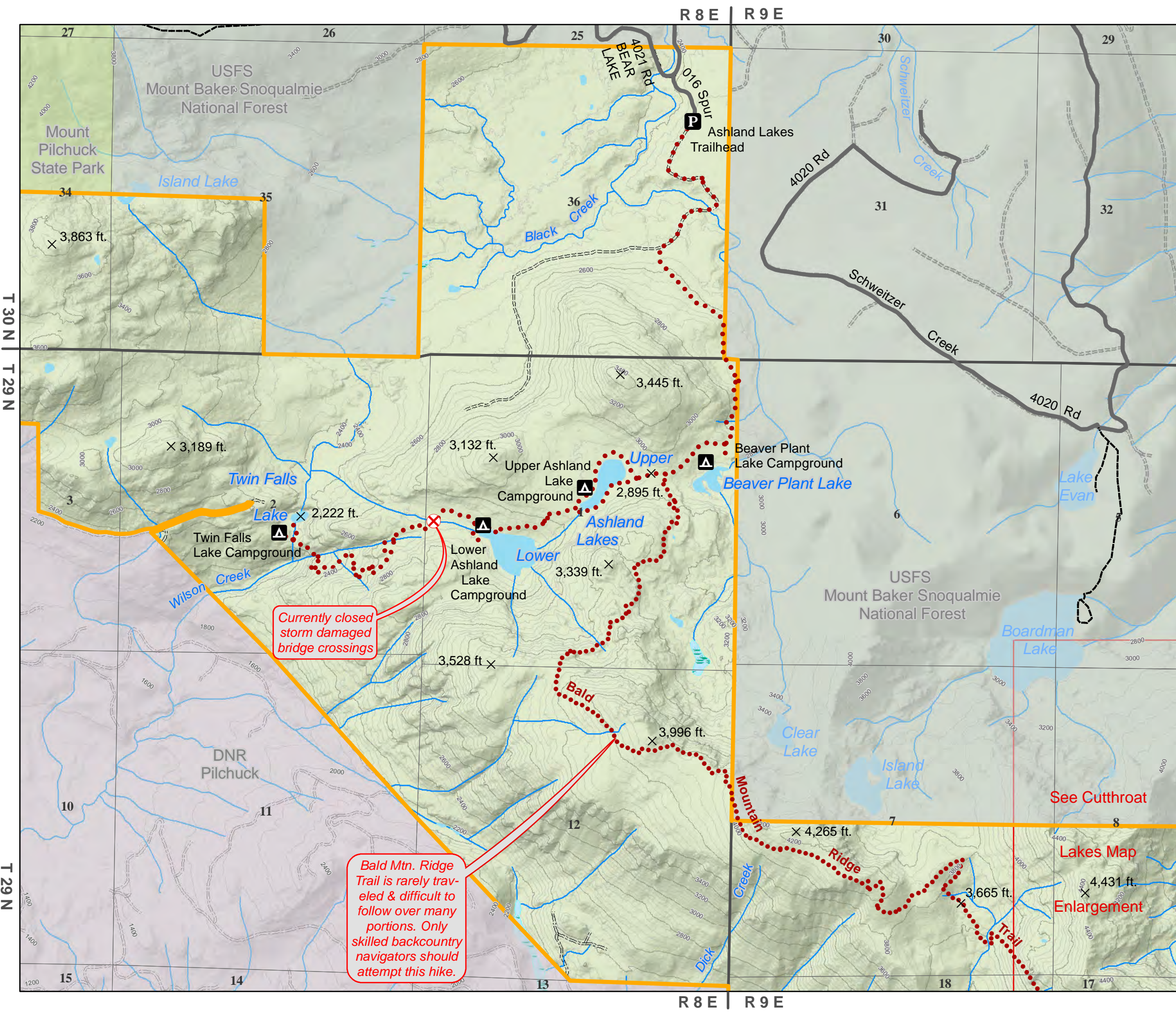
- Streams
- 40ft Contours & 200ft Index Contours
- x Elevations derived from the 2 meter LiDar
- DNR Other Roads (abandoned, orphaned, closed)
- USFS
- DNR adjacent Ownership
- WA State Parks
- Shaded Relief LiDar 2 meter

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0 1,000 2,000 4,000 6,000 Feet



Currently closed storm damaged bridge crossings

Bald Mtn. Ridge Trail is rarely traveled & difficult to follow over many portions. Only skilled backcountry navigators should attempt this hike.

See Cutthroat

Lakes Map

Enlargement

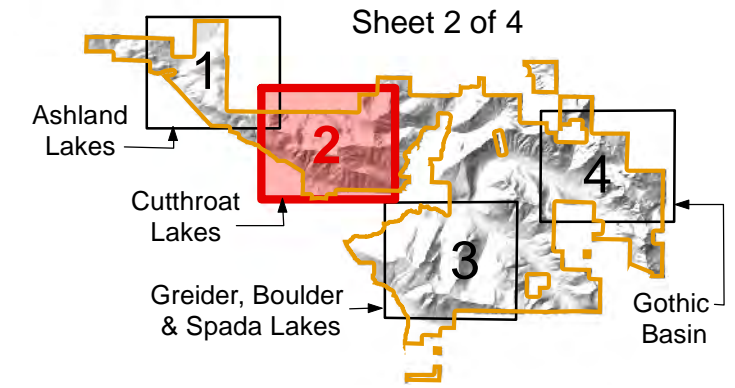
R 9 E

R 9 E

MORNING STAR NRCA

Cutthroat Lakes

Sheet 2 of 4



Geology

LRIM (Draft) Probability of Slope Instability

- 0
- 1 (Slaughter model)

Forest Practices Landslide Inventory

- Definite Certainty
- Probable Certainty
- Questionable Certainty

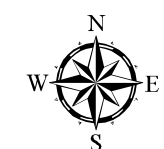
Forest Practices - Landslide Hazard Zones

- Interpreted Instability
- High instability potential
- Very high instability potential

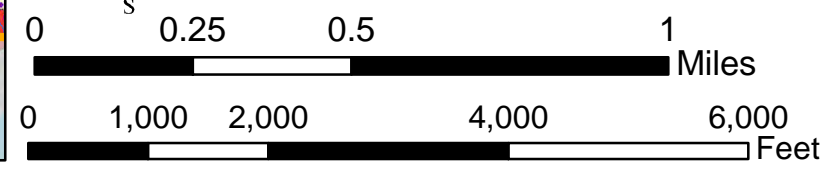
Snohomish County CAR Slopes

- Slopes 33% or greater

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1:19,200
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at 11"x17" plot scale



T 29 N

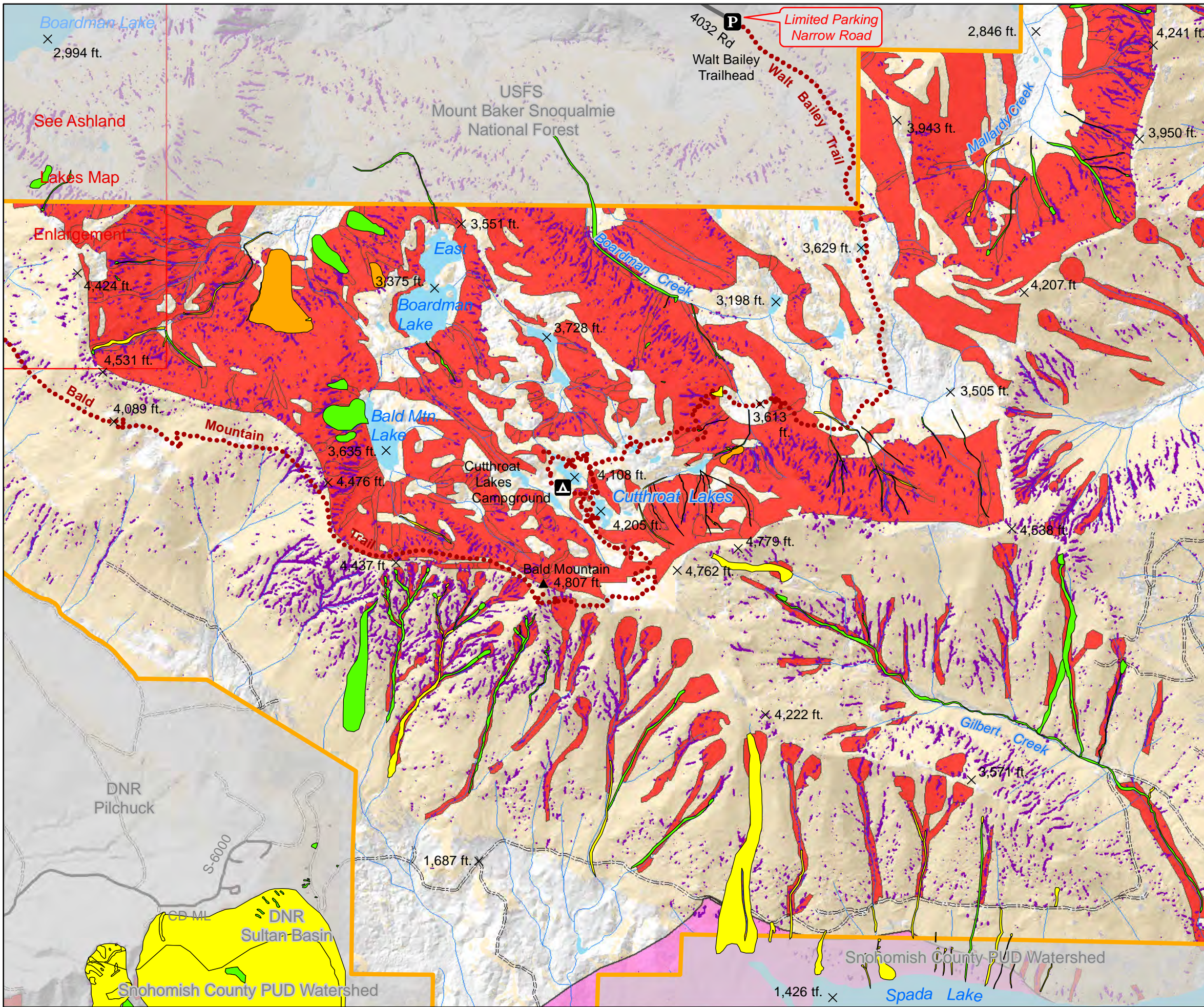
T 29 N

T 29 N

T 29 N

R 9 E

R 9 E



Limited Parking
Narrow Road

Walt Bailey
Trailhead

See Ashland

Lakes Map

Enlargement

Bald Mountain

DNR
Pilchuck

DNR
Sultan-Basin

Snohomish County PUD Watershed

USFS
Mount Baker Snoqualmie
National Forest

Cutthroat
Lakes
Campground

Bald Mountain
4,807 ft

Snohomish County PUD Watershed

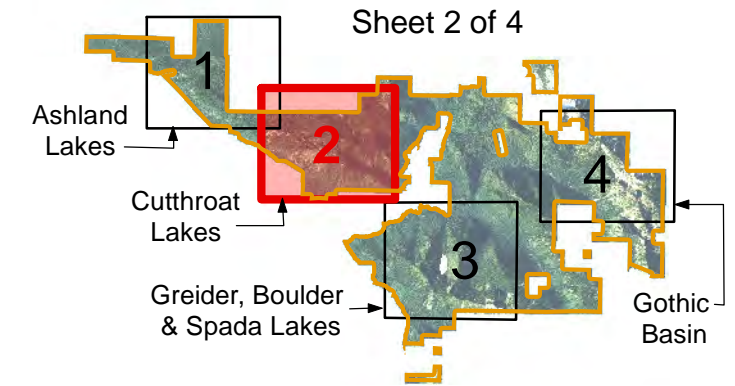
R 9 E

R 9 E

MORNING STAR NRCA

Cutthroat Lakes

Sheet 2 of 4



Riparian, Wetlands & Fish Distribution

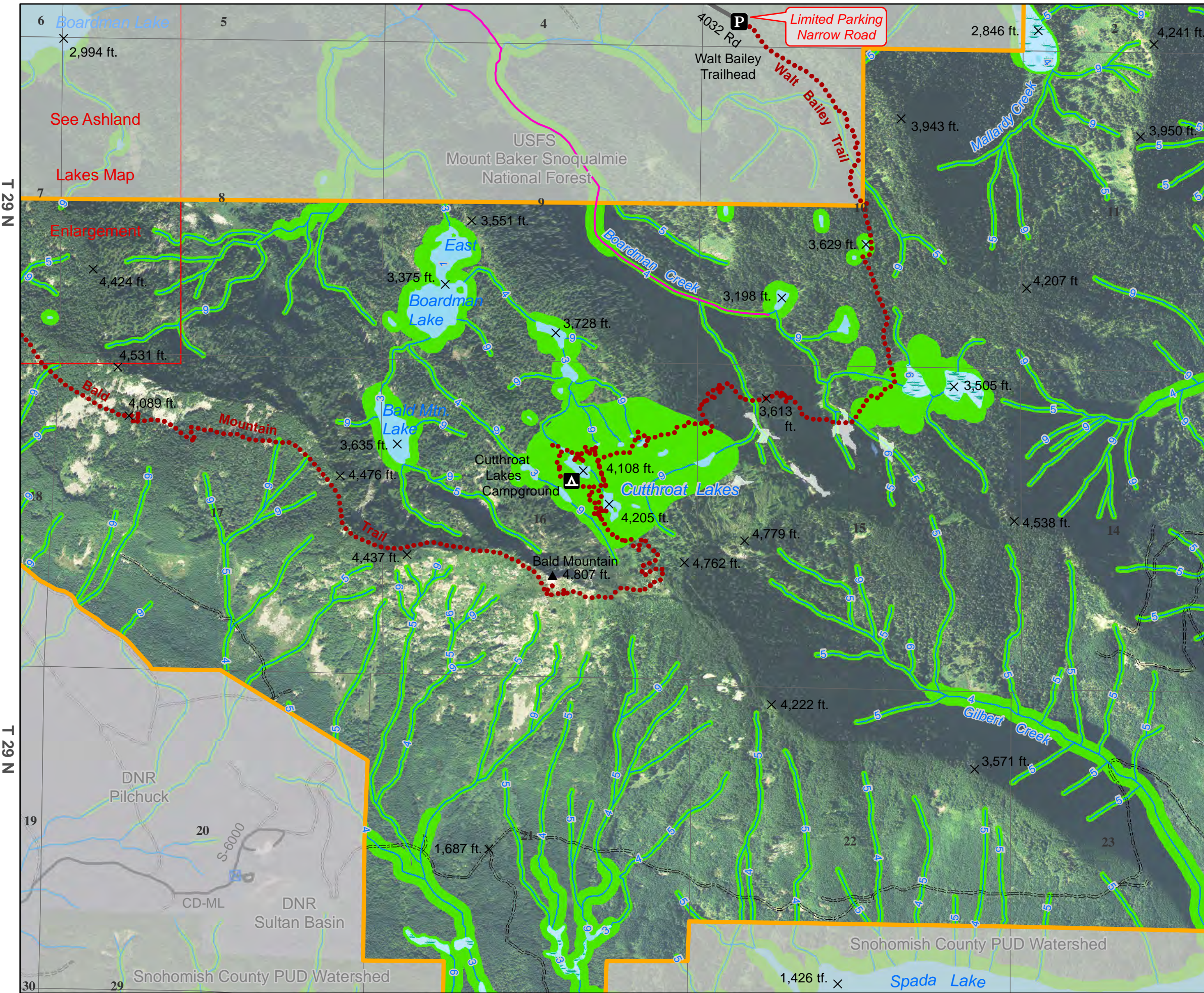
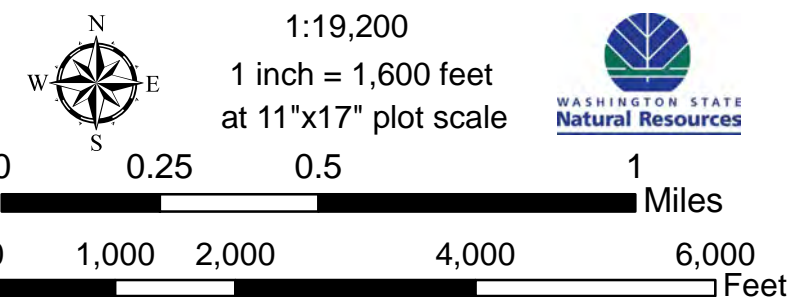
County standards and requirements for buffers 30.62A.320 low intensity land use were used as guidelines. Site specific analysis is required.

- Forest Practices Streams, Water Bodies & Snohomish County: Type S 150ft Buffer; Type F 150ft Buffer; Type Np 50ft Buffer, Type Ns 50ft Buffer, Type U & X 50 ft Buffer
- WA DNR NHP High Quality Wetlands and Bogs 125ft Buffer*
- USFWS National Wetland Inventory 100ft Buffer
- J.G. Orthophoto Interpretation NAIP 2013 100ft Buffer
- WDFW Fish Distribution

* Map shows DNR generalized buffers > 125'

- DNR Hiking Trails (not complete)
- DNR Morning Star NRCA Project Boundary
- Open Freshwater Wet Area
- Glacier / Snowfield
- Streams with State Lands water typing #
- Elevations derived from the 2 meter LiDar
- DNR Other Roads (abandoned, orphaned, closed)
- USFS DNR adjacent Ownership
- 2013 Orthophoto NAIP 3 ft. pixel

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T 29 N

T 29 N

T 29 N

T 29 N

R 9 E

R 9 E

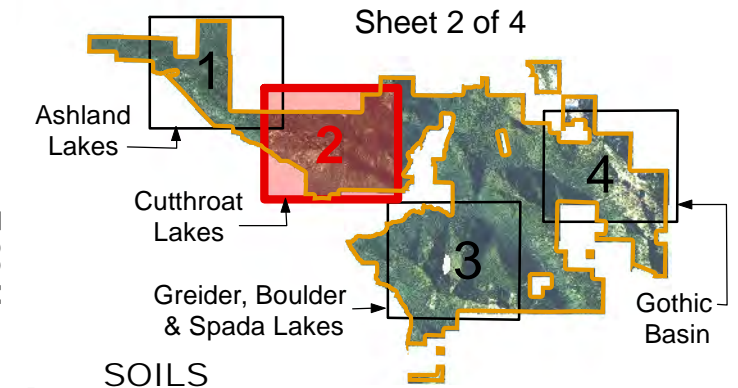
R 9 E

R 9 E

MORNING STAR NRCA

Cutthroat Lakes

Sheet 2 of 4

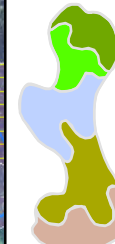


SOILS

DNR Ropa Soils (ROPA.SOILS_SV) clipped to within half mile radius of project. No NRCS soils data exist for this area

Soil colors randomly applied with Soil Symbol ID (SOIL_SYM_ID) labeled.

See appendix for soil look-up table for more information.

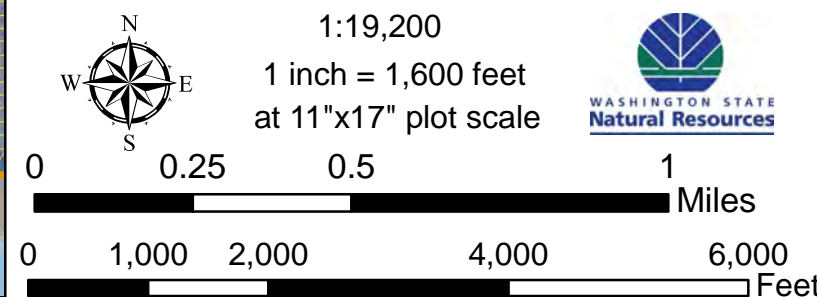
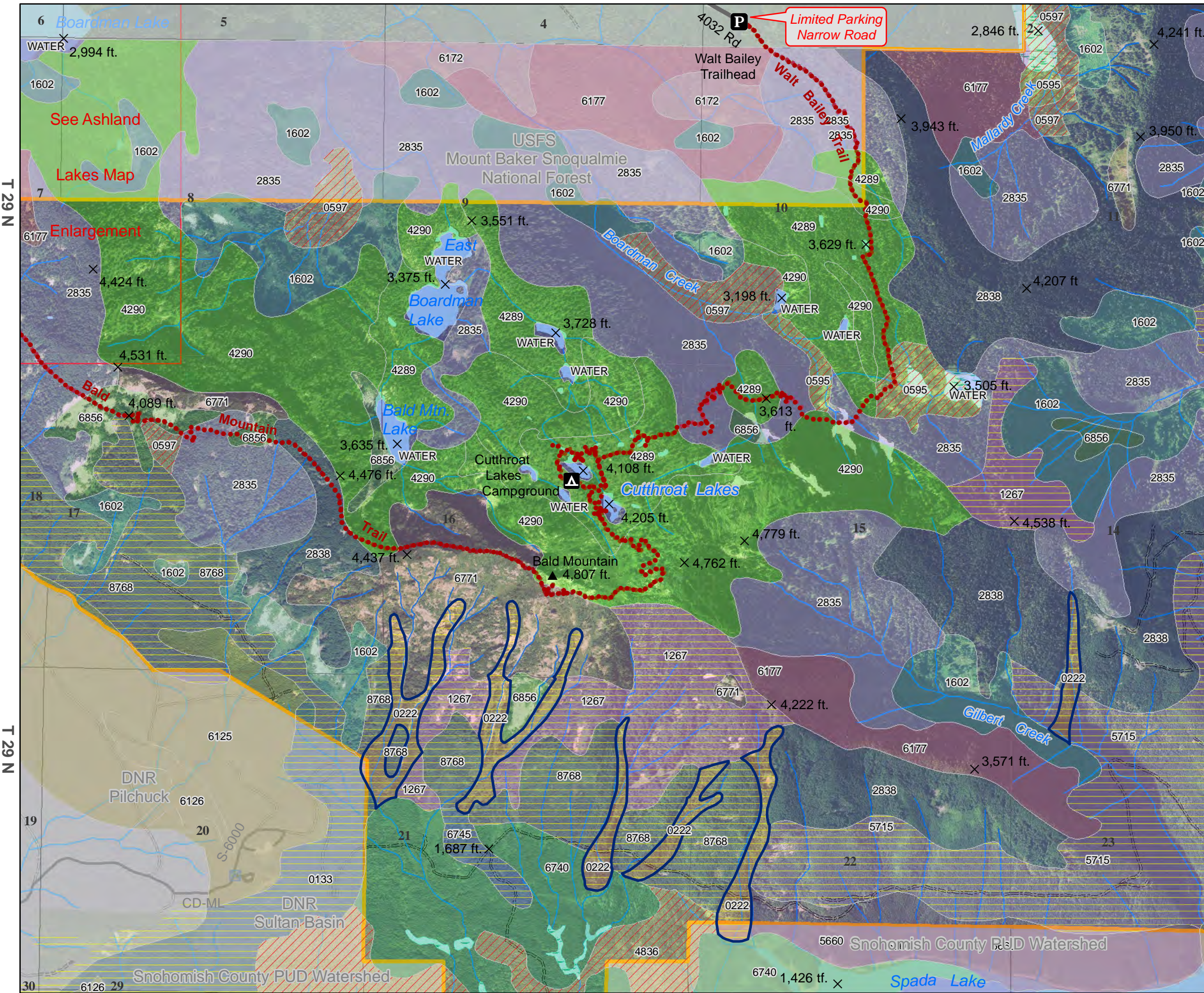


Soils High Erosion Potential

Soils Hydric Yes and Very Poorly Drained

Soil Name Avalanche Chute

SOIL_SYM_ID	SOIL_TITL_NM
133	ANDIC XEROCHREPTS
222	AVALANCHE CHUTE
595	BOROHEMSTS
597	BOROHEMSTS-HARTNIT-COMPLEX
1267	CRYORTENTS-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
1602	DAGGER
1956	ELWELL-OLMOUNT-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
2835	HARTNIT-DAGGER-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
2838	HARTNIT-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
4289	LITHIC CRYOFOLISTS-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
4290	LITHIC CRYOFOLISTS-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
4836	MJKILTEO
5660	OLMOUNT-ELWELL-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
5715	OSO-GETCHELL-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
5715	OSO-GETCHELL-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
6125	PILMORE
6177	POTCHUB-HARTNIT-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
6740	ROBER
6745	ROBER-ELWELL-COMPLEX
6771	ROCK OUTCROP
6856	RUBBLE LAND
8768	VERLOT-NAGROM-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
WATER	WATER



T 29 N

T 29 N

T 29 N

T 29 N

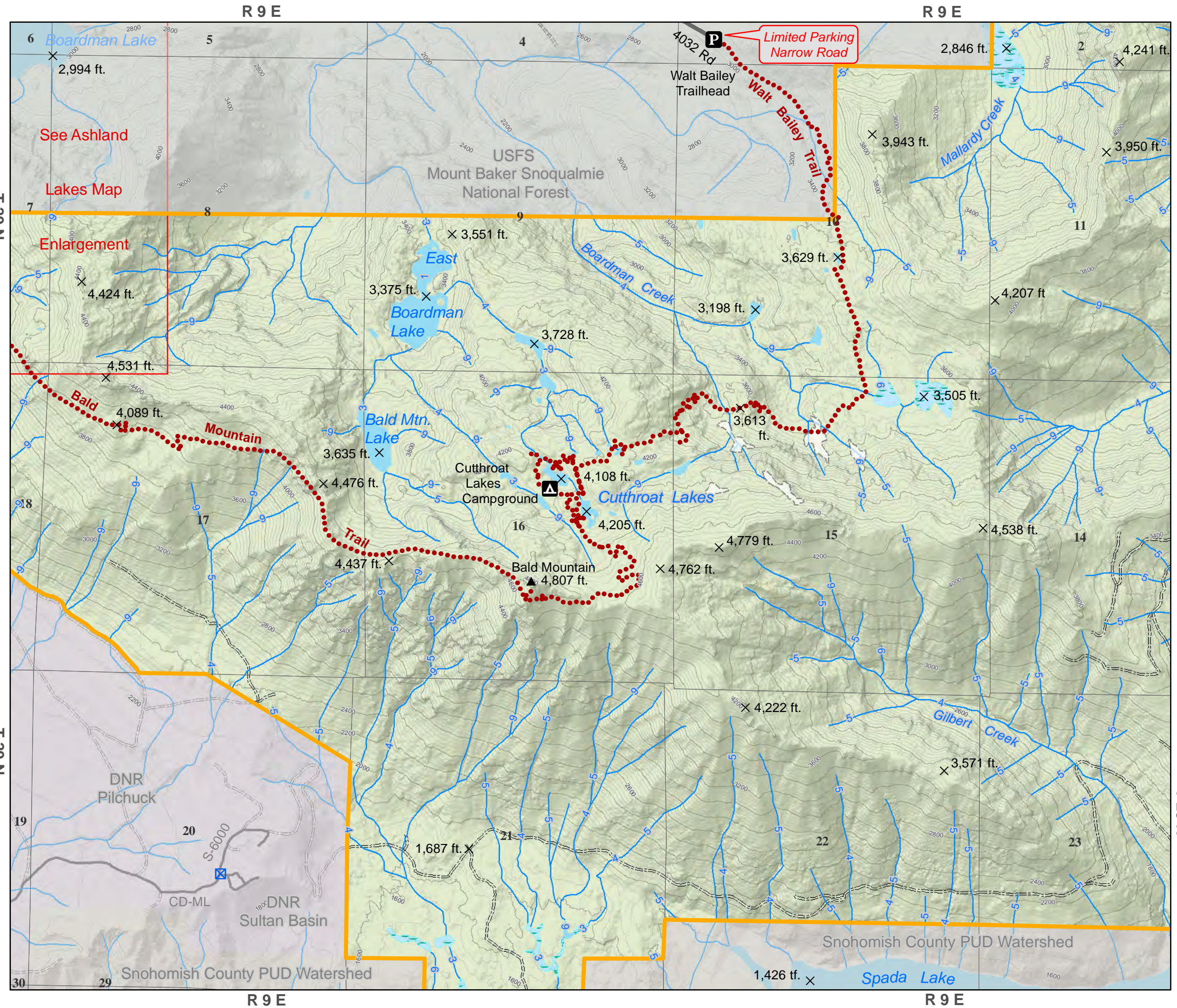
R 9 E

R 9 E



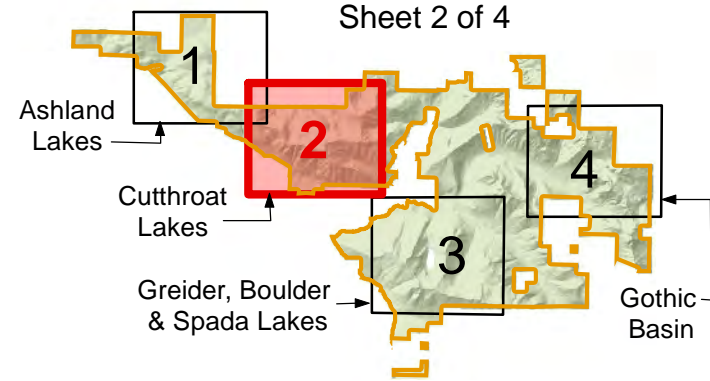
30

0 1,000 2,000 4,000 6,000 Feet



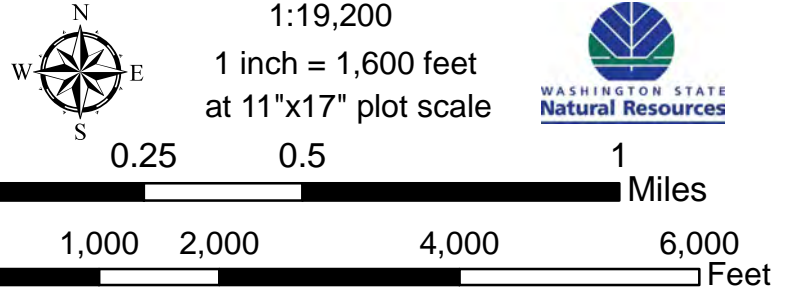
MORNING STAR NRCA

Cutthroat Lakes



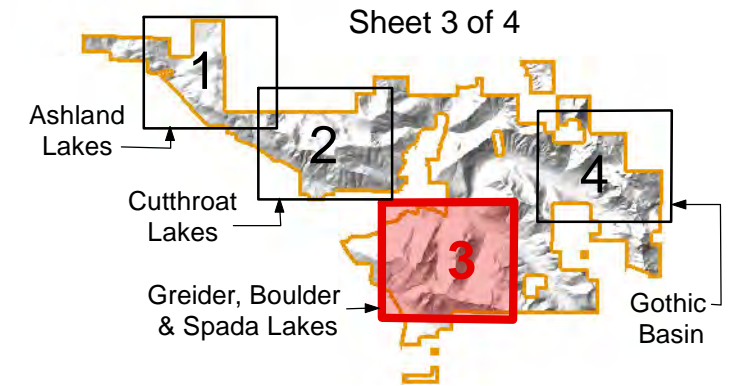
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- ~ Streams with State Lands water typing #
- 40ft Contours & 200ft Index Contours
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- USFS DNR adjacent Ownership
- Shaded Relief LiDar 2 meter

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MORNING STAR NRCA

Greider, Boulder & Spada Lakes



Geology

LRIM (Draft) Probability of Slope Instability

- 0
- 1 (Slaughter model)

Forest Practices Landslide Inventory

- Definite Certainty
- Probable Certainty
- Questionable Certainty

Forest Practices - Landslide Hazard Zones

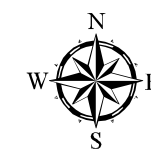
Interpreted Instability

- High instability potential
- Very high instability potential

Snohomish County CAR Slopes

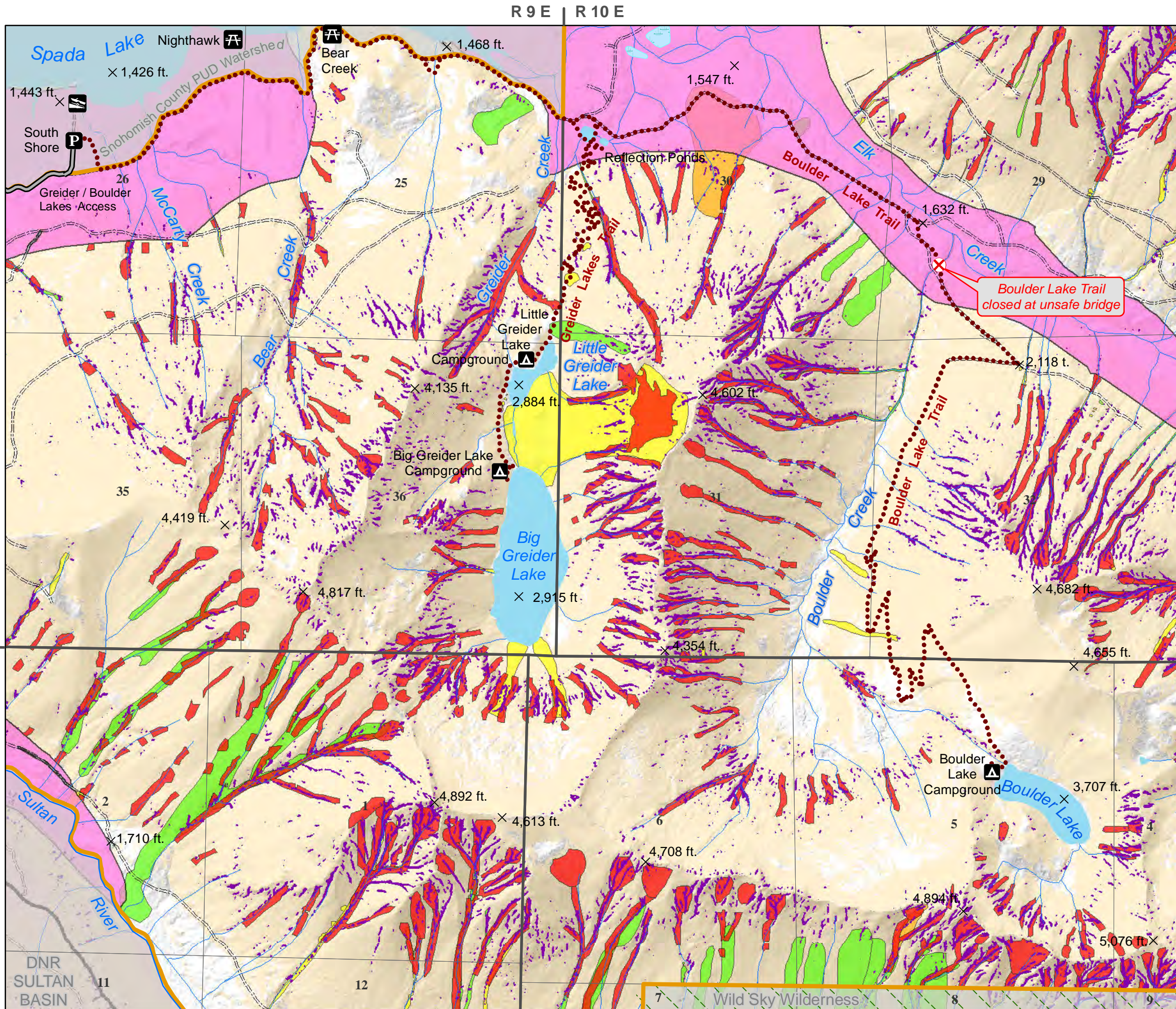
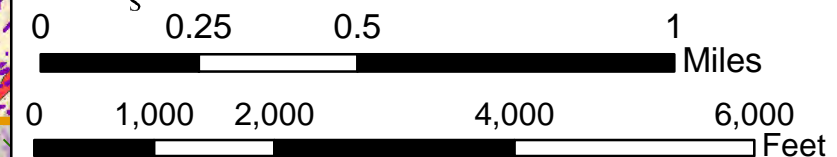
- Slopes 33% or greater

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1:19,200

1 inch = 1,600 feet
at 11"x17" plot scale



R 9 E | R 10 E

T 29 N
T 28 N

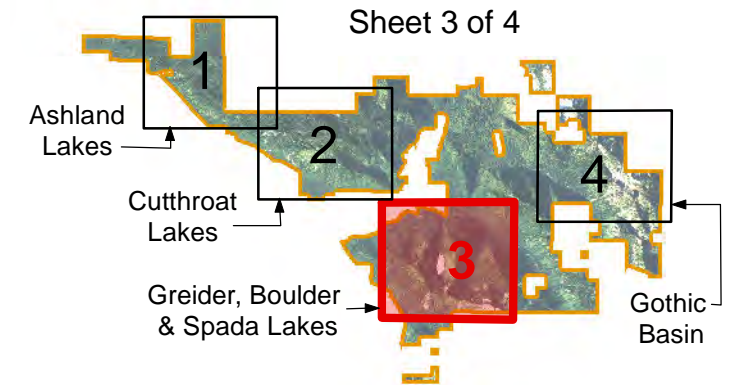
T 29 N
T 28 N

DNR
SULTAN
BASIN

Wild Sky Wilderness

MORNING STAR NRCA

Greider, Boulder & Spada Lakes



Riparian, Wetlands & Fish Distribution

County standards and requirements for buffers 30.62A.320 low intensity land use were used as guidelines. Site specific analysis is required.

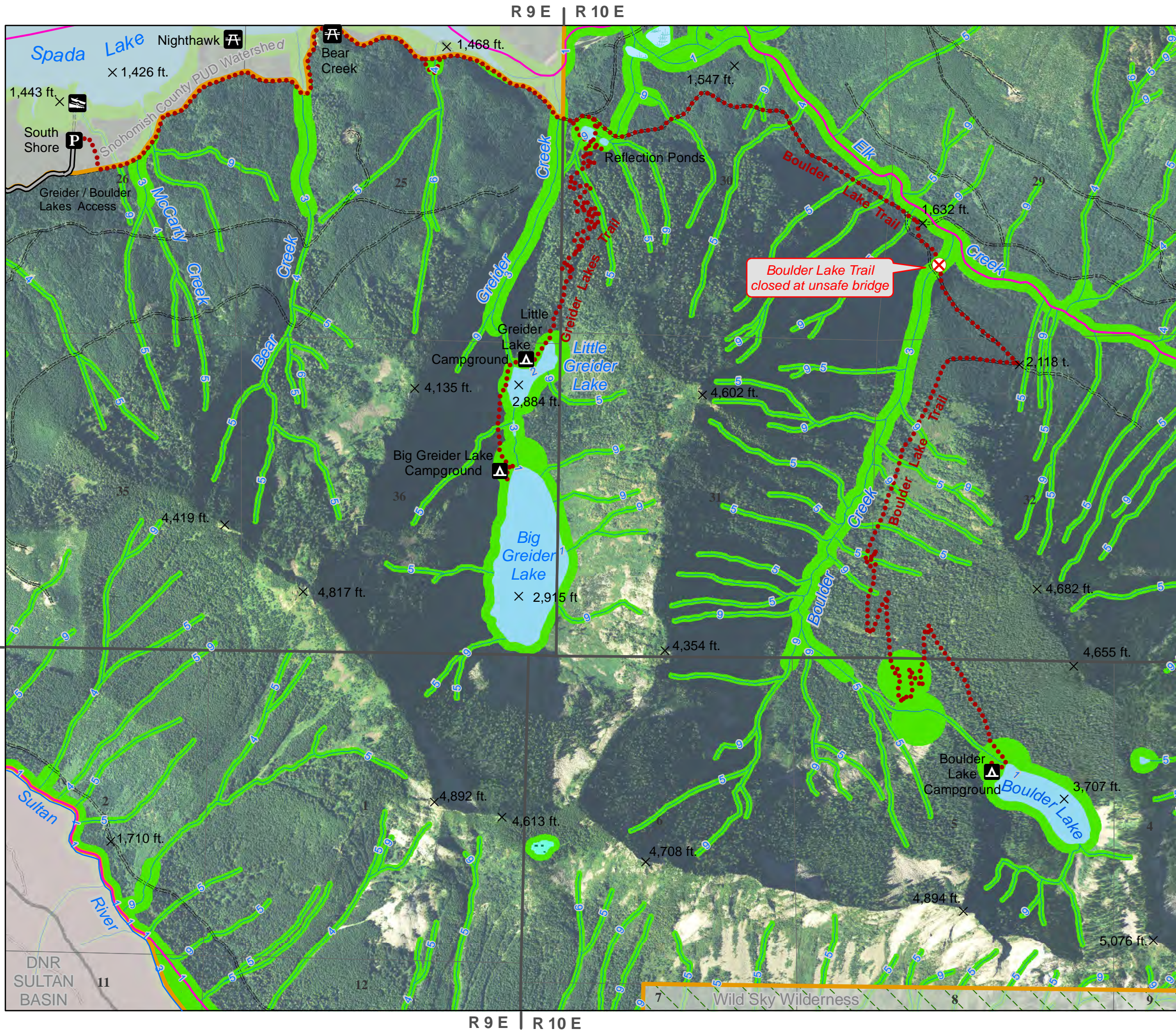
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- * Map shows DNR generalized buffers > 125'

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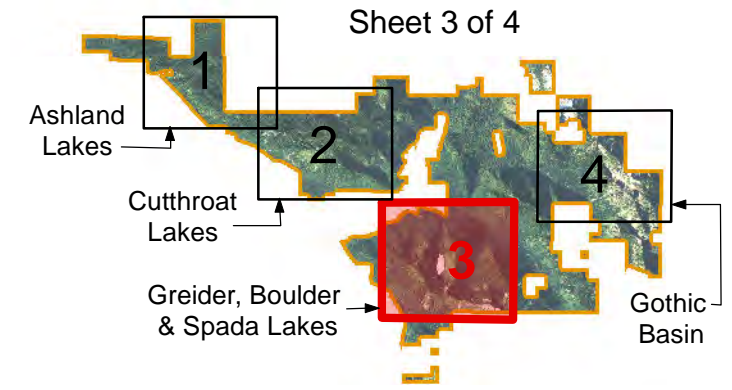
1:19,200
1 inch = 1,600 feet
at 11"x17" plot scale

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles
0 1,000 2,000 4,000 6,000 Feet



MORNING STAR NRCA

Greider, Boulder & Spada Lakes



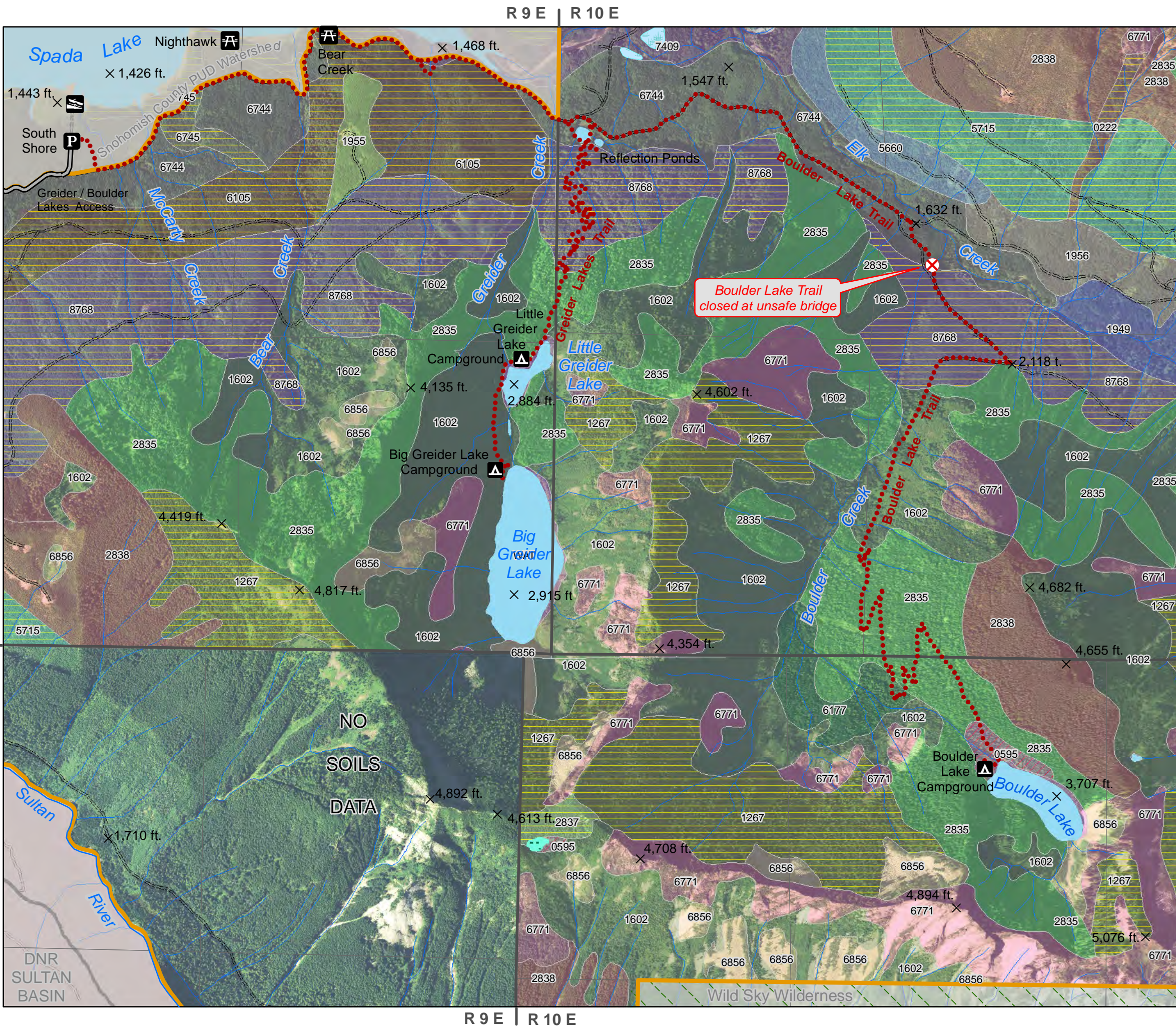
SOILS

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- See appendix for soil look-up table for more information.
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1955	ELWELL-OLOMOUNT-COMPLEX	
1956	ELWELL-OLOMOUNT-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX	
2835	HARTNIT-DAGGER-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX	
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2838	HARTNIT-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX	
5660	OLOMOUNT-ELWELL-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX	
5715	OSO-GETCHELL-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX	
6105	PHILIPPA-MELAKWA-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX	
6177	POTCHUB-HARTNIT-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX	
6745	ROBER-ELWELL-COMPLEX	
6771	ROCK OUTCROP	
6856	RUBBLE LAND	
7409	SKYKOMSH	
8768	VERLOT-NAGROM-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX	

1:19,200
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0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles
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R 9 E | R 10 E

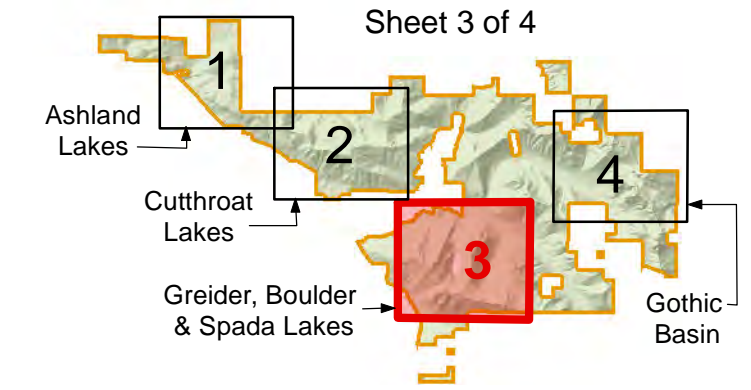
R 9 E | R 10 E

T 29 N | T 28 N

T 29 N | T 28 N

MORNING STAR NRCA

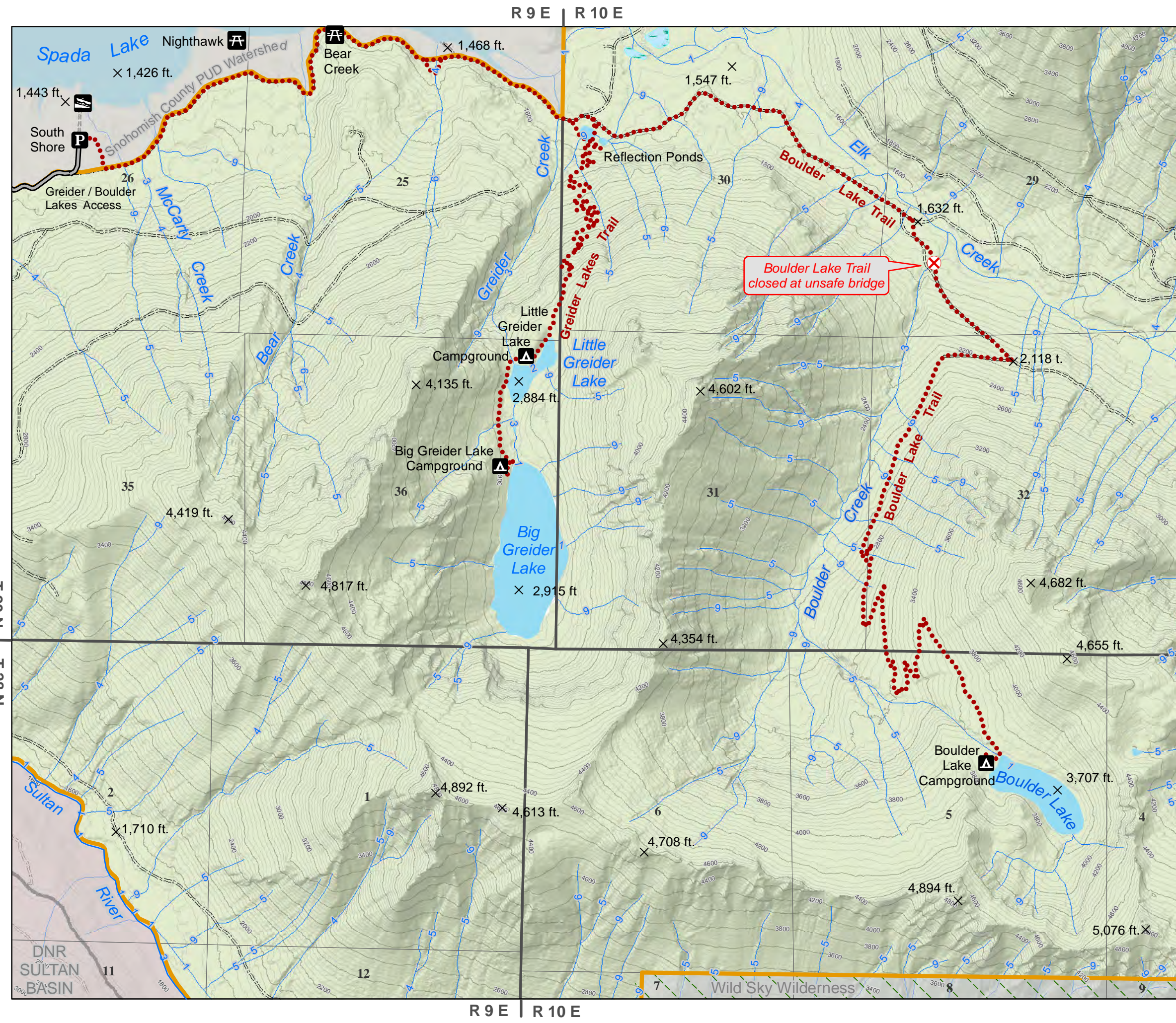
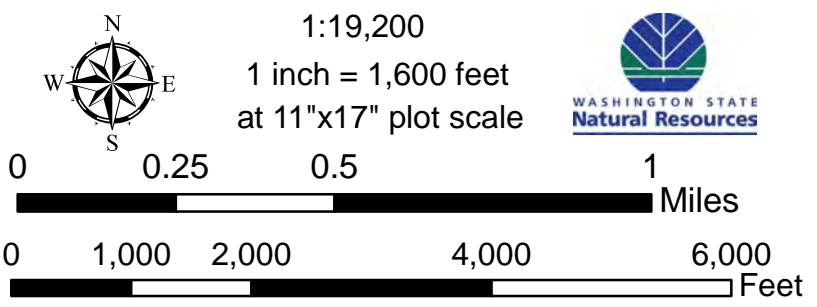
Greider, Boulder & Spada Lakes



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T 29 N
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R 9 E | R 10 E

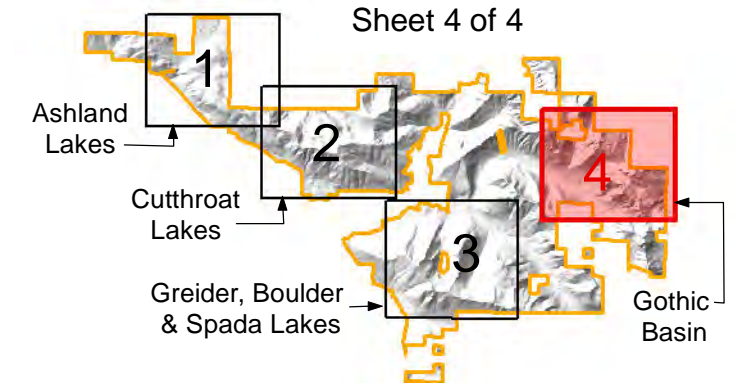
DNR SULTAN BASIN 11

Wild Sky Wilderness

MORNING STAR NRCA

Gothic Basin

Sheet 4 of 4



Geology

LRIM (Draft) Probability of Slope Instability

0

1 (Slaughter model)

Forest Practices Landslide Inventory

Definite Certainty

Probable Certainty

Questionable Certainty

Forest Practices - Landslide Hazard Zones

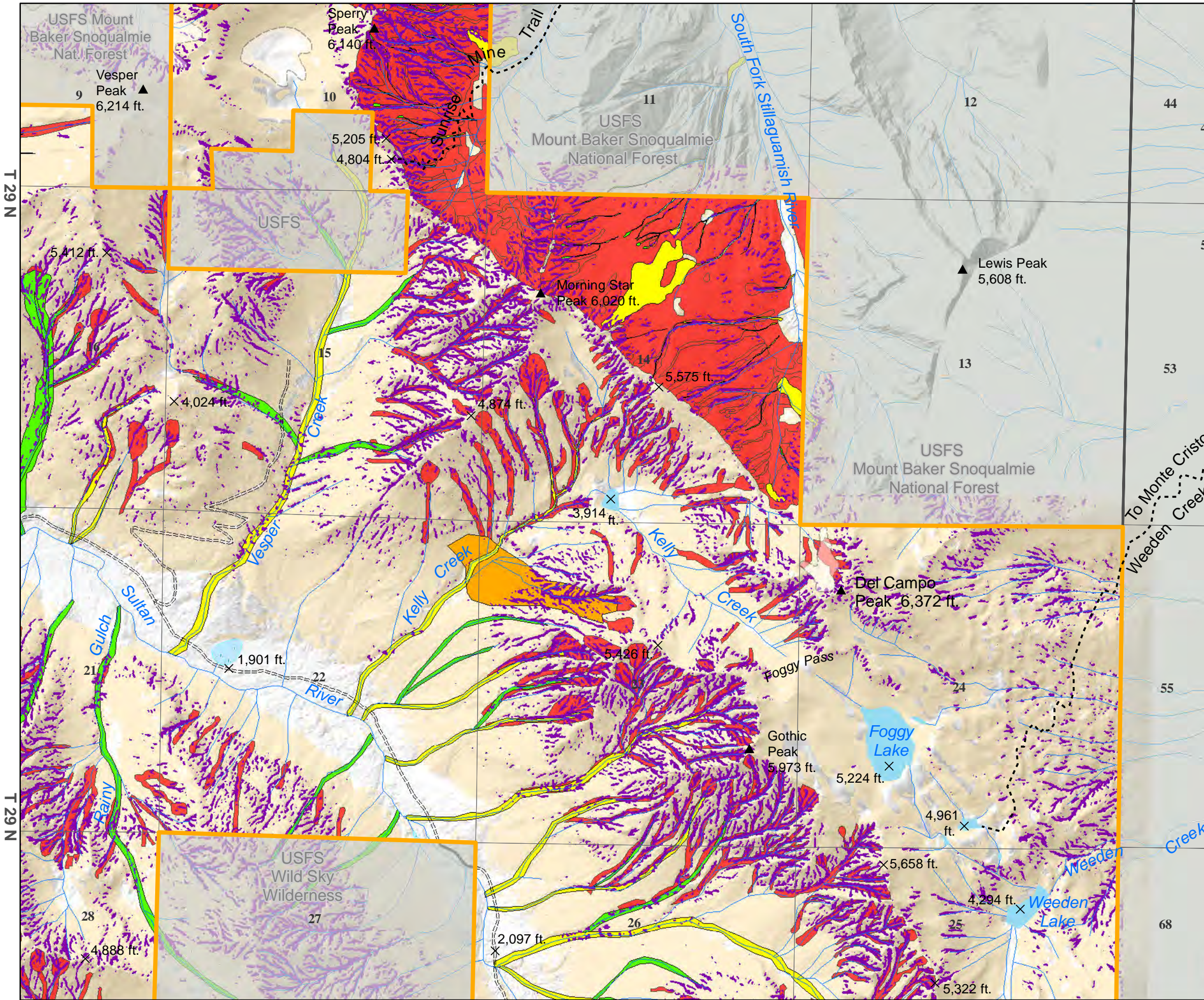
Interpreted Instability

High instability potential

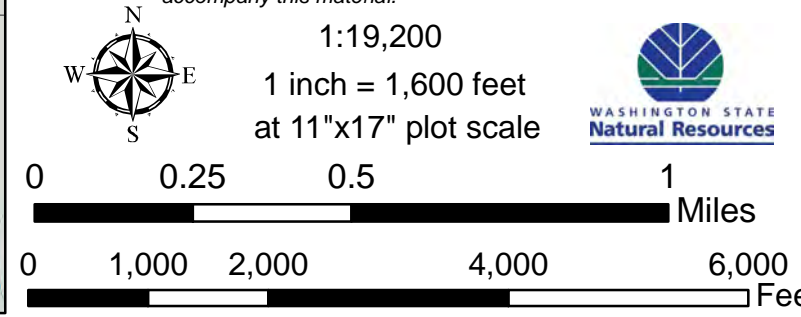
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Snohomish County CAR Slopes

Slopes 33% or greater



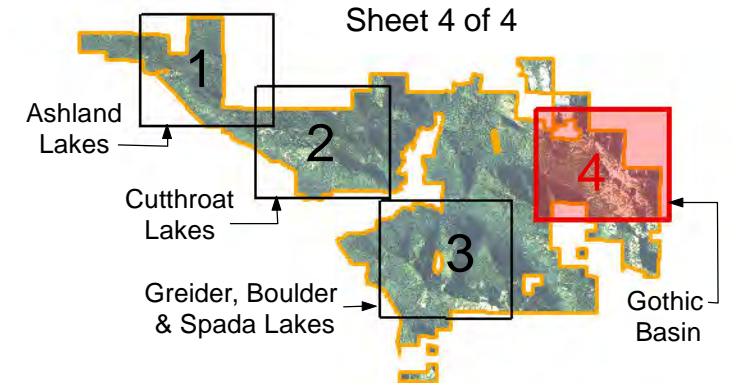
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MORNING STAR NRCA

Gothic Basin

Sheet 4 of 4



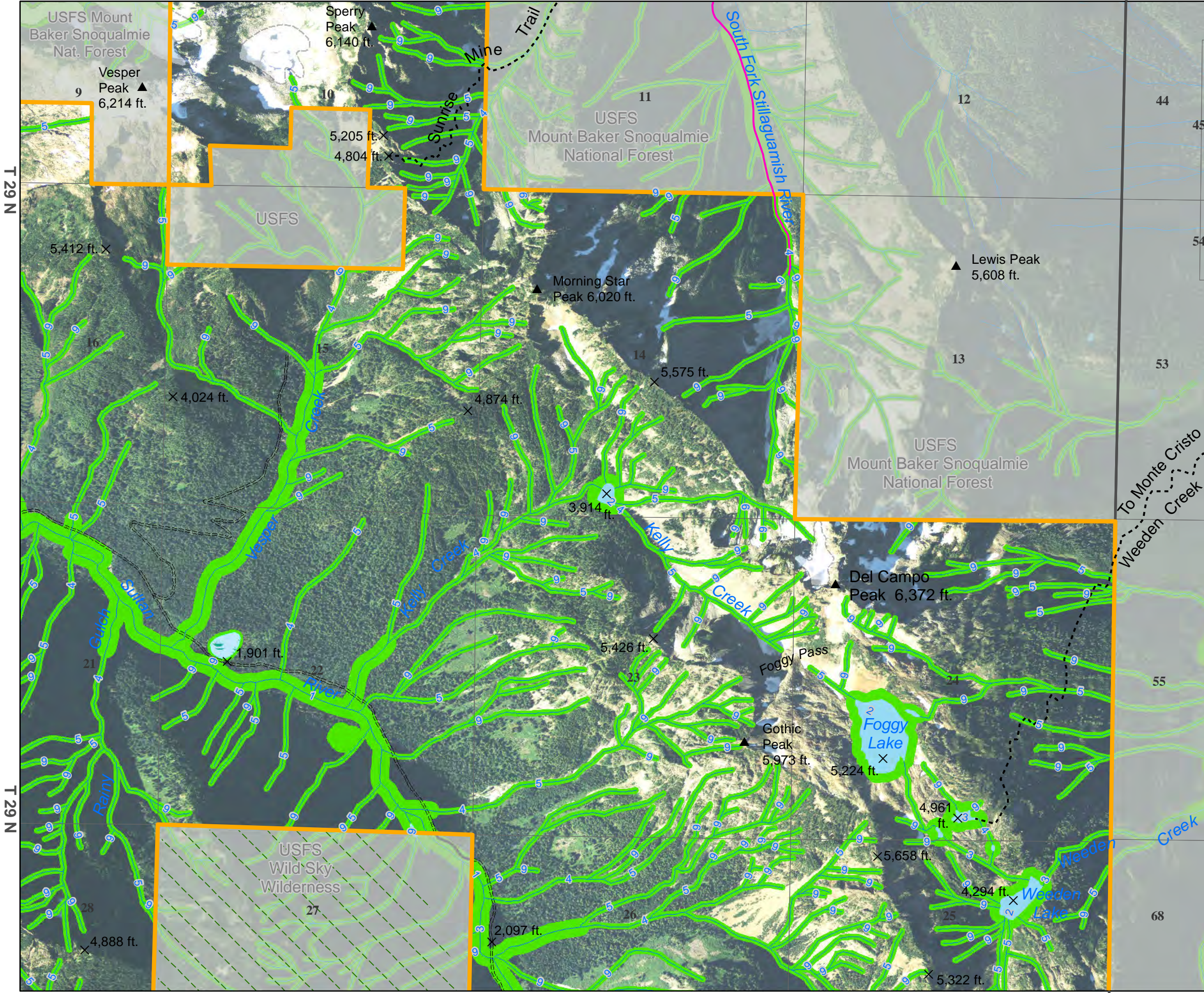
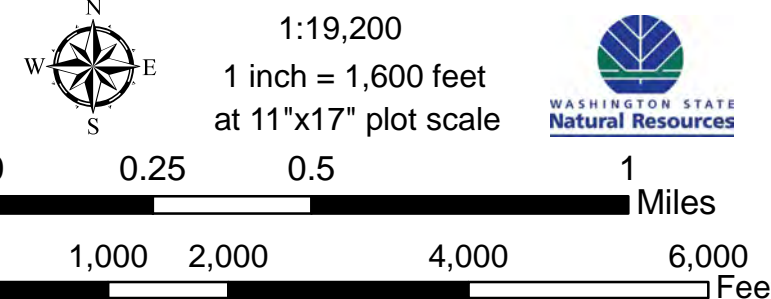
Riparian, Wetlands & Fish Distribution

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- Glacier / Snowfield
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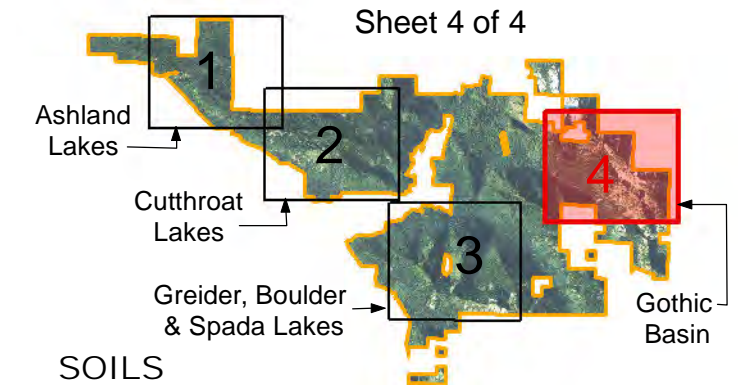
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MORNING STAR NRCA

Gothic Basin

Sheet 4 of 4




SOILS

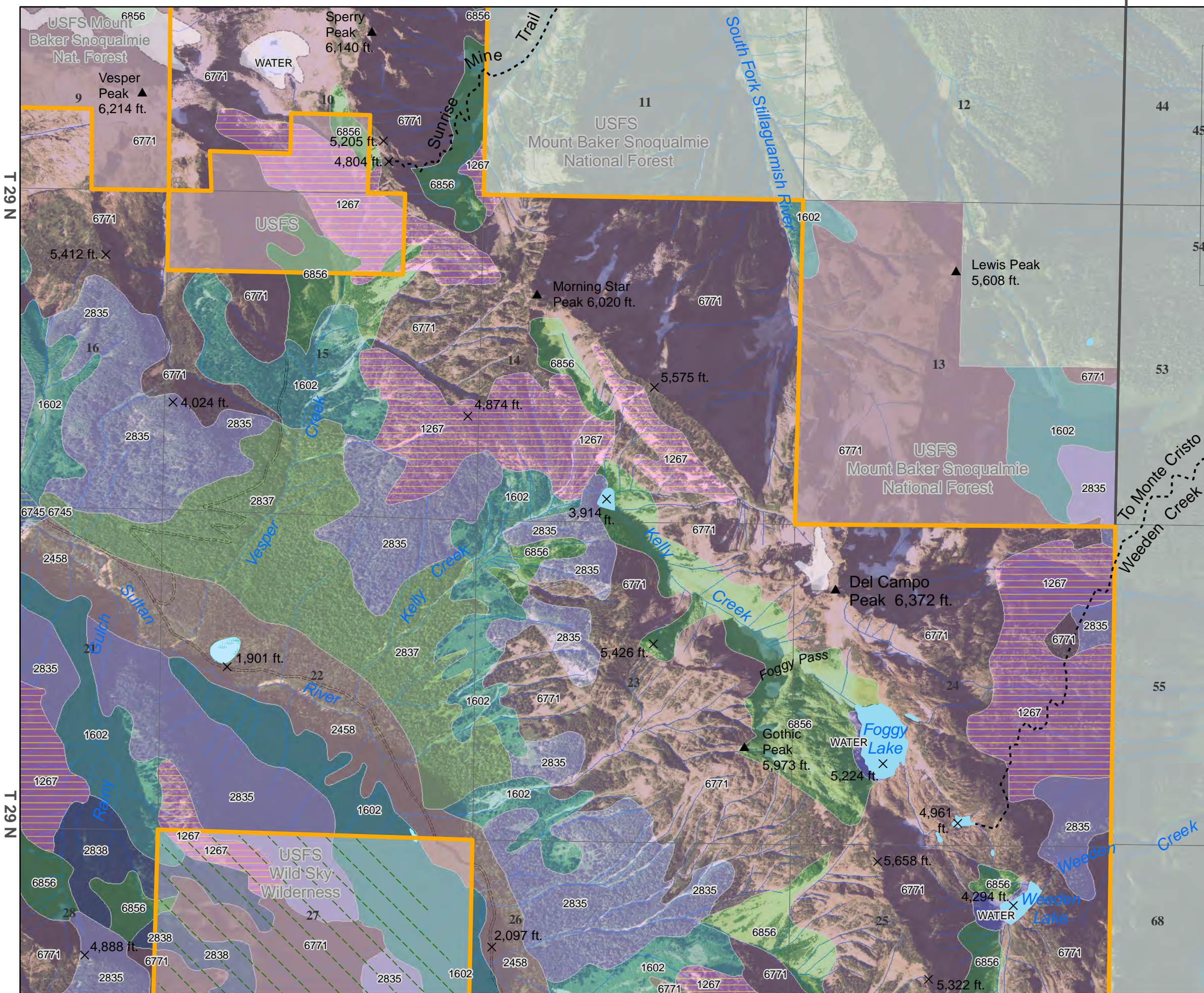
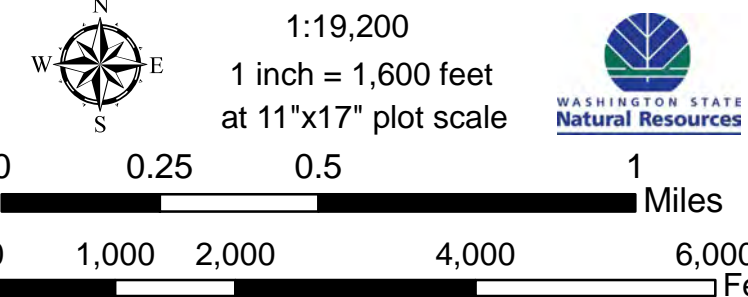
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-  See appendix for soil look-up table for more information.
-  Soils High Erosion Potential

Soil Map ID # and Soil Title Name	
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1267	CRYORTHENTS-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
1602	DAGGER
2458	GETCHELL-DAGGER-COMPLEX
2835	HARTNIT-DAGGER-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
2837	HARTNIT-POTCHUB-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
2838	HARTNIT-ROCK OUTCROP-COMPLEX
6745	ROBER-ELWELL-COMPLEX
6771	ROCK OUTCROP
6856	RUBBLE LAND
WATER	WATER

----- USFS Trails

 DNR Morning Star Project Boundary

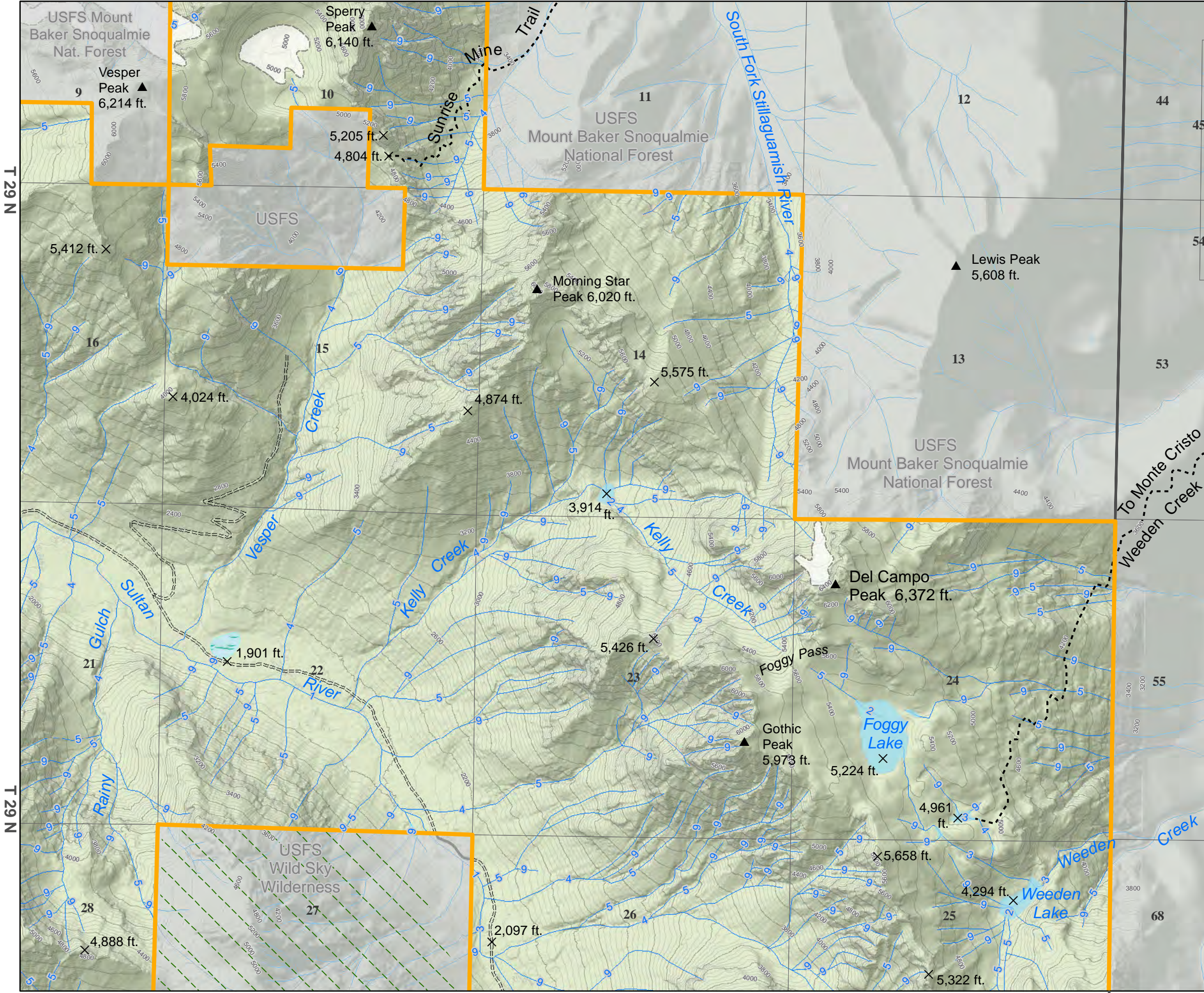
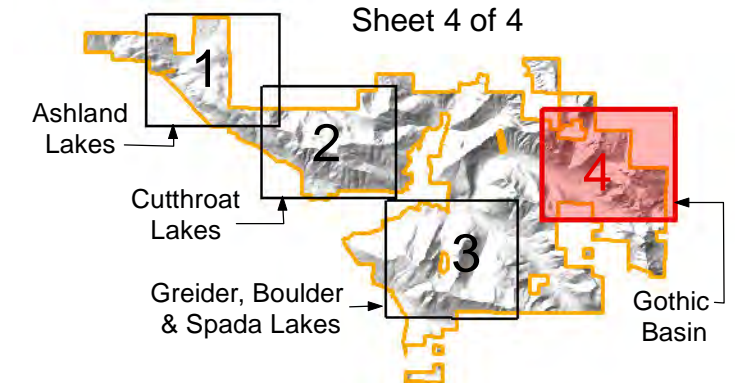
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MORNING STAR NRCA

Gothic Basin

Sheet 4 of 4



----- USFS Trails

DNR Morning Star Project Boundary

Open Freshwater

Glacier / Snowfield

Wet Area

Streams with State Lands water typing #

Elevations derived from the 2 meter LiDar

DNR Other Roads (abandoned, orphaned, closed)

40ft Contours & 200ft Index Contours

USFS Wild Sky Wilderness (NWPS)

Shaded Relief LiDar 2 meter

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1:19,200

1 inch = 1,600 feet at 11"x17" plot scale

WASHINGTON STATE Natural Resources

Appendix C

Public Involvement



SHARE YOUR INPUT

Morning Star Trails Planning

THURSDAY, DEC. 15
6:30-8 P.M.

OPEN HOUSE AND
6:30 P.M. PRESENTATION

Cavelero Mid High School Cafeteria
8220 24th Street Southeast
Lake Stevens, WA 98258

CONTACT US

David Way
Natural Areas Recreation Manager
David.Way@dnr.wa.gov
360-856-3500

LEARN MORE

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is creating a trails plan that will guide trail development and management in the Morning Star conservation area for the next 10 to 15 years. Join DNR staff to share what you envision.

dnr.wa.gov/MorningStarTrails



Morning Star Trails Planning



Trails Planning for Morning Star Conservation Area

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is beginning a trails planning process for the Morning Star Natural Resources Conservation Area (NRCA). In collaboration with local governments, recreational users and other interested parties, DNR will create a sustainable trails plan for low-impact recreational opportunities and facilities in the conservation area.



The existing trail network within Morning Star will be evaluated with respect for traditional and cultural use, renovation and/or potential expansion, and desired hiking, backcountry camping, scenic vistas and viewpoints. These will be prioritized for future project development. Emphasis will focus on the restoration of current impacts to environmentally sensitive areas and redevelopment of existing popular trails.

Morning Star Conservation Area

The 36,037-acre mountainous conservation area protects outstanding examples of native plant communities and other ecological features, such as subalpine meadows, wetlands, and lakes. Six plant species rare to Washington state occur within these habitats. The site is also large enough to provide important habitat for threatened and endangered wide-ranging wildlife such as Pacific fisher, grizzly bear, and gray wolf. The conservation area protects the middle and high elevations around the Spada Lake basin, which captures warm moist air as it moves inland from Puget Sound and the Pacific Ocean to create one of the wettest areas in the North Cascade Mountains. High precipitation and cool temperatures cause subalpine plant communities to occur at unusually low elevations in this region.



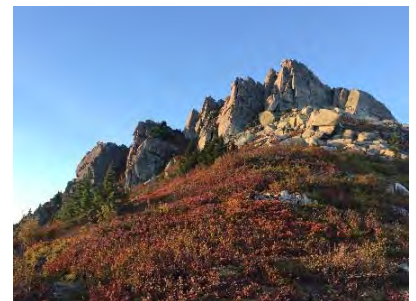
Among the many conservation features in this mid-elevation and subalpine forest landscape are: forest plant assemblages, wetland and bog systems, one state-threatened plant species, five state-sensitive plant species, and habitat for marbled murrelet, northern spotted owl, Pacific fisher, and bull trout.

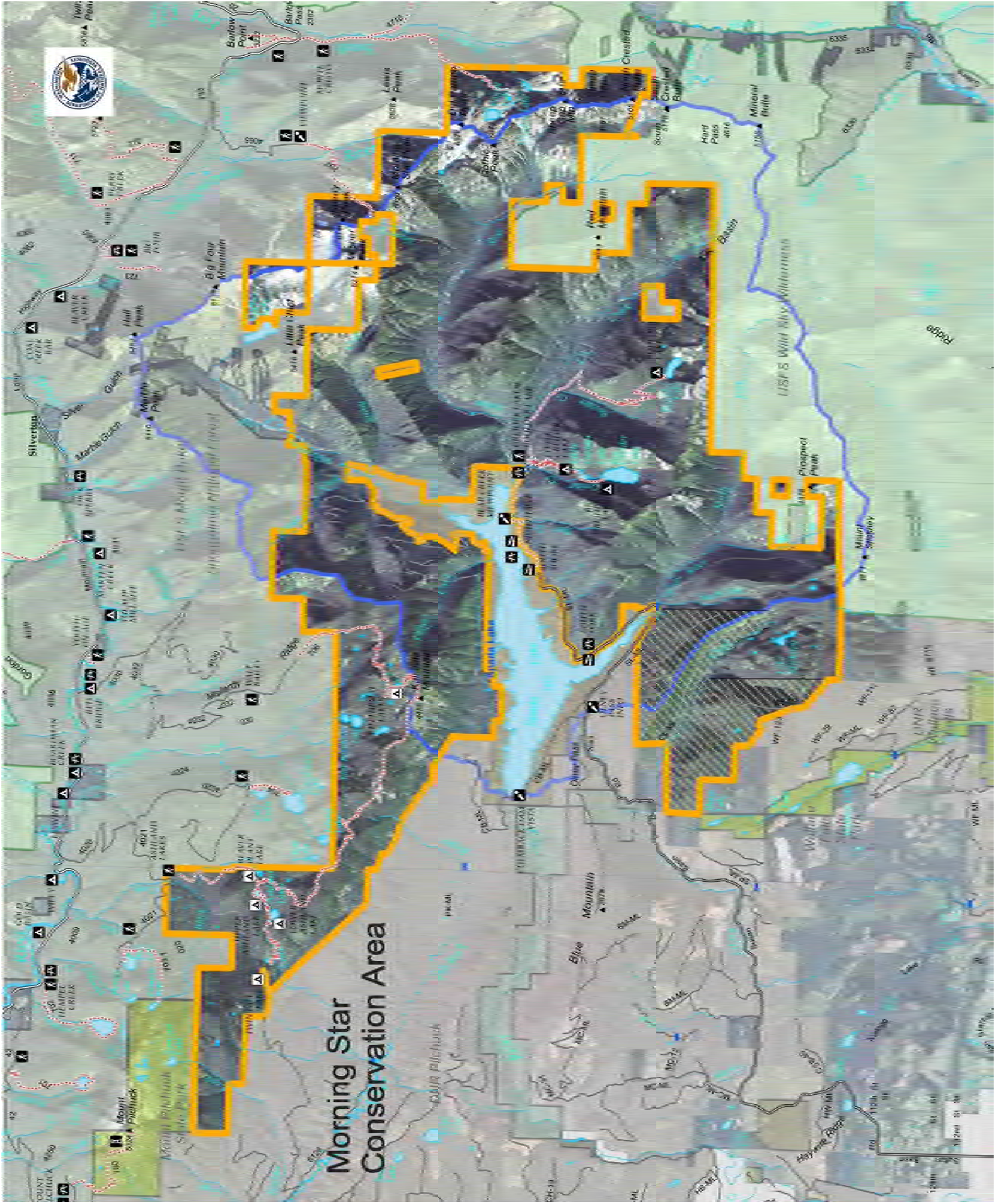
Public Planning Process

DNR will form a public trail planning committee that will work with DNR to develop priorities for the trails plan. Committee meetings are expected to occur periodically for about a year starting early in 2017 and a trails plan should be finalized in 2018.

Get Involved

To learn more and to be added to our email contact list, please contact David Way 360-333-5741 or david.way@dnr.wa.gov.





Morning Star Conservation Area



Morning Star Trails Planning



Morning Star Trails Planning

Public Meeting #1

December 15, 2016

Station 1: Public Sign-In

Station 2: Current Recreation Opportunities

Station 3: What are your favorite recreation sites and why?

1. Access to Morning Star Peak needed, and bridge on Hedley Creek
2. Boulder Lake - reopen trail parking area
3. Greider - better trail but no camping
4. Road abandon to Greider/Boulder and trailhead
5. Access to Williamson Creek trail
6. Convert old Bear Creek Road to trail to access north side of Greider Peak
7. Walt Bailey trail (USFS) trailhead, parking and road maintenance
8. Bald Mountain, Walt Bailey, Cutthroat Lakes wilderness toilets
9. Trail from Olney Pass to Mount Stickney area
10. Gothic Basin trail needs maintenance (Weeden Creek trail)
11. Lake Stickney (Olney Pass to)
12. Ashland Lakes interpretive trail - 2000 year old forest.
13. North Fork Sultan River - create trail
14. Vesper Peak
15. Maintenance of Hedley Pass trail
16. Trail to Kromona Mine, mine to market conversion
17. Static Peak
18. Pit toilets for Vesper
19. Pit toilets for Vesper @ Foggy Lake
20. Bald Mountain to Boardman Lake fisherman's trail
21. Pit toilets @ Gothic Basin, Del Campo Peak (climbers)
22. Private land shooting, access to Lake Stickney



Morning Star Trails Planning



23. Boulder Lake
24. Bald Mountain Trail from Ashland Lakes
25. Twin Falls Lake

Station 4: What are important issues and concerns to address?

1. Roads need to be in good enough shape to serve trailheads
2. Worry about wildlife with all increasing human use
3. Human use impacts in/around Cutthroat Lakes
4. Look at infrastructure as indicator of appropriate level of use (size of parking lot)
5. Need to control level of use. Reservations/permits etc.
6. Pinnacle Lake USFS trail a mess
7. Kromona Mine Road. Road to Trail conversion
8. Gothic Basin

Optional Written Comment Form:

What types of recreational activities do you enjoy in the Morning Star Conservation Area?

Wildlife viewing, backpacking, day hiking

What are your highest priorities for trails in the Morning Star Conservation Area?

I haven't spent much time in this area. I'm mostly up in the North Cascades area. But any improvements in to more hiking trails and natural habitat preservation is great in my opinion. I'm looking to expand the areas that I hike and I am interested in learning more about the area.

Email Comment Received:

As far as my thoughts on the Morning Star, I of course am centric to the Static Point area primarily, and would like to see a parking area restored a ways down the now decommissioned road, and some tread/brushing work on what is now the "trail" if at all possible. This would at a minimum reduce the conflict with the Jackson Hydro folks, and go a long ways towards lessening the chances of rolling an ankle on the steep sidehills resulting from previous road decommissioning efforts. I'm also very interested to participate in other areas of the MS, particularly if camping/backcountry access is restored/enhanced.



Morning Star Trails Planning



Morning Star Trail Planning Committee

Meeting #1 Summary

February 16th, 2017 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Meeting Purpose: To introduce Planning Committee Members and DNR supporting staff; outline DNR's recreation planning process and this Committee's roles in support of creating a Morning Star Trail Plan.

DNR Staff Introductions:

- **David Way** – Northwest Region's Natural Areas Recreation Manager and is the Morning Star Trail Planning Project Manager
- **Paul McFarland** – Northwest Region's Natural Areas Manager
- **Barbara Simpson** – DNR Parks Planner and Landscape Architect

Committee Introductions and Attendance:

As part of the Committee member introductions, they were asked to share with the group what their interest in the Morning Star area is and where they live in the Northwest. The DNR identified where everyone lives on a map of the Northwest. This map was used for scheduling of future meeting locations later in the meeting.

Frances Chiem – Representing Washington Trails Association (WTA)

Ken Masel – Representing Washington Trail Blazers

Rad Roberts – Representing American Alpine Club, WA Climbers Coalition, Cascade Climbers

Chris Hagen – Is the YMCA BOLD and GOLD Program Director

Marc Bardsley – Representing North Cascades Conservation Council

Thom Peters – Representing Alpine Lakes Protection Society

Holly Zox – Morning Star Volunteer Site Steward

Matt Speten – Morning Star Volunteer Recreation Steward

Matt Jensen – UWild Adventures Program Director

Gary Paul – US Forest Service Wilderness and Trails Coordinator

Ruth Milner – Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Mike Town – Representing Friends of Wildsky

Keith Brinkley – Filling in for Mike Schutt and works for the Snohomish County PUD

Julie Sklare – Absent (City of Everett)

Mike Schutt – Absent (Snohomish County PUD)

Kathy Johnson – Absent (Pilchuck Audubon Association)



Morning Star Trails Planning



Public in attendance:

Phil Roberts – USGS Soils Geologist

Mary Kay Els – Back Country Horsemen, Trail Dusters Chapter

Doug B - Back Country Horsemen, Trail Dusters Chapter

Natural Areas and Morning Star Overview: Paul McFarland presented an overview of the Natural Area Program and talked specifically about the Morning Star Conservation Area's background. He covered the several key components of the DNR's Natural Areas Program including: Natural Resources Conservation Area (NRCA) Act, Statewide NRCA Management Plan, Guiding Program Policy, Low Impact Public Use and other People-Oriented Uses, Outdoor Environmental Education, Stewardship Activities, Conditional and Excluded Uses.

In general, the presentation highlighted the framework within which management decisions are made in the NRCA, with emphasis on the primary mission of all such decisions, that being the conservation mission for which the area was created.

As part of the background discussion, McFarland also clarified the distinction between Management Planning, as defined in the NRCA Act, and this RCO-funded trails planning process, which is limited in scope, and does not provide for consideration of uses/activities not already approved/occurring in the NRCA.

Question and Answer:

- *Does non-motorized vehicles (a conditional or excluded use) include bicycles?*
DNR Response: Yes, bicycles are non-motorized vehicles.
- *Who owns the partial section of land in the southern portion of the NRCA? If it's the US Forest Service, could DNR acquire or transfer lands to acquire?*
DNR Response: The inholding in S4-T28N-R10E is USFS-owned. There are methods by which we could acquire or transfer into such property, but they tend to be complicated transactions, and difficult to consummate due to statutory framework.

Trails Planning: David Way presented overview information about the planning project. The project is grant-funded and has two main elements. The Committee process is one element and recommendations from the group will be used to write the Trail Plan. The other element of the project is that design and permitting will be done for at least one priority project that is identified as part of the committee process. When the DNR has a



Morning Star Trails Planning



Trail Plan for the Morning Star, it is likely that the Morning Star will qualify better and be more competitive on receiving grants to do work in the area.

Way shared some obvious examples of where and why we are doing a planning effort. Examples included identified areas on the Known Issues Map that DNR created for the December 15th Public Meeting.

Some goals and objectives for the committee's planning were shared with the group. Way wanted to stress the importance of thinking about where trails and facilities should be located as opposed to where they have been located on the landscape in the past.

Questions and Comments:

- *Is there a trail plan in place already?*
DNR Response: There isn't a trail plan specific to the Morning Star area. The Region uses a document called the Northwest Region Recreation Inventory and Assessment (RIA) as the guiding document to support our recreation management. The current RIA doesn't even recognize the Sunrise Mine Trail, the Gothic Basin Trail, or others that the public actively uses.
- *Is there past usage data for each trail?*
DNR Response: Not really. The DNR does receive information from the Watershed Patrol for those who register at Olney Pass and enter the Spada Lake area. However, data is somewhat questionable, as it is apparent that many visitors check multiple destinations and don't understand the distance required to hike to DNR's Greider and Boulder Lakes. The DNR periodically monitors trip reports on WTA's website to gauge trail conditions and usage too.
- *DNR should tap into other agency information from the shared trailheads to determine levels of usage*
- *Can you put up a database of the trails including name of trail, elevation gain, usage such as high, low, medium; quality of maintenance or issues?*
DNR Response: Much of that type of information will be presented through this planning effort.
- *Request for copies of the Statewide Management Plan for the binders*
DNR Response: DNR will provide.

Planning Process Guidelines: David Way shared the Draft Planning Guidelines. These guidelines identified the Trail Planning Vision, the Trail Planning Mission, and the Planning Committee Commitments. Committee members were asked for feedback on the draft guidelines. Committee members were also asked to think about the guidelines



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and come prepared to the next committee meeting with any proposed edits to the document.

Project Schedule: Barbara Simpson reviewed the project schedule with the group. She showed how the two elements of the project (planning process and the design for the priority project) will need to overlap to complete everything within the funding window of the grant.

Early stakeholder outreach occurred in the fall and included tribes, agency partners, organizations, etc. The public outreach open house was held in December, and the committee was formed in February.

Eight meetings are planned for the process with a potential field visit(s) in June.

Committee Member Presentations and Future Meetings: DNR would like to give each committee member the opportunity to present whatever they think is relevant information in one of the upcoming committee meetings. The Snohomish County PUD and City of Everett will be presenting information about the Spada Lake Watershed at the March meeting. A schedule was passed around the room in case any committee members would like to sign up now. Otherwise, DNR asks committee members think about it and sign up at the next meeting if they'd like to present to the group.

DNR also discussed scheduling of future meetings with the committee. The map showing where committee members lived was used to identify centralized locations to hold the meetings. The committee felt the Everett area works well for most everyone, but parking is difficult at the County building. DNR will try to seek other facilities in the Everett and/or Mill Creek areas to hold meetings.

The committee discussed general timing and dates for future meetings. The group felt the third week in each month would work pretty well. Some members can't make Wednesday or Thursday evenings, so the group decided that we should try to schedule future meetings on the third Tuesday of each month.

Questions and Comments:

- *Do we want to open up currently unmarked parts of the NRCA to new trails?*
DNR Response: This is a question that this planning process will try to answer.



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- *Request for more information about the newly expanded area of the NRCA in the south. Where are the roads? What is the local knowledge of the area? Can you add this area to the enlarged maps*

DNR Response: We are pretty sure there is use occurring in areas recently added to the NRCA. We definitely want to bring such use on the books, like we are for Gothic Basin, Sunrise Mine trails, Static Peak, etc., so we can add it to inventory, include in this effort, and plan for in future management activity. New trails (i.e. new trail systems we might plan to build) are something we want to hear about and “bookmark” for future. DNR is still working at formatting the maps to cover the entire area. DNR will provide maps covering this area in the future.

- *Is there a cost share agreement with the USFS?*
- *Does DNR cooperate with USFS on maintenance*

DNR Response: Yes, USFS and DNR coordinate shared projects and tasks. For example, sometimes DNR resources stay at the USFS Verlot bunkhouse. The agencies are working together to implement improvements on the trail to Gothic Basin. DNR’s crews have done trail brushing and sign installation on USFS property on the Walt Bailey Trail, because of the property vicinity and access.

- *The USFS has draft South Fork Stillaguamish Vegetation Management Plan that calls for improvements to Walt Bailey and Sunrise Mine Trailheads. USFS will share these plans with the committee.*
- *Is there a plan for vegetation management to enhance trails?*

USFS Response: Yes, but mostly only impacts the trailheads. Examples: It would move the Walt Bailey Trailhead back about ½ mile where a new trail could be constructed to tie into the existing trail on Mallardy Ridge up to Cutthroat Lakes; a pre-commercial thinning is planned near the Sunrise Mine Trailhead, so the trailhead would move back towards the Mountain Loop Highway instead of rebuilding the washed-out sections of road.

Additional homework: Committe asked to review the December public open house results, and the online survey results in preparation for next meeting.

Next Meeting is March 21, 2017, 6:00pm to 8:30pm



**Morning Star Trail Planning Committee
Meeting #2 Notes
March 21, 2017
6:00 to 8:00 PM**

Meeting Purpose: To issue sort public input received to-date and broaden perspectives regarding the larger community concerns.

DNR Staff in attendance:

- David Way – Northwest Region’s Natural Areas Recreation Manager, and Morning Star Trail Planning Project Manager
- Jason McMillen – Natural Areas Recreation Maintenance Steward
- Barbara Simpson – DNR Parks Planner, Landscape Architect

Committee in attendance:

Frances Chiem – Representing Washington Trails Association (WTA).
Ken Masel – Representing Washington Trail Blazers.
Rad Roberts – Member of American Alpine Club, WA Climbers Coalition, Cascade Climbers
Chris Hagen – Is the YMCA BOLD and GOLD Program Director.
Marc Bardsley – Representing North Cascades Conservation Council
Thom Peters – Alpine Lakes Protection Society
Holly Zox – Morning Star Volunteer Site Steward
Matt Speten – Morning Star Volunteer Recreation Steward
Matt Jensen – UWild Adventures Program
Gary Paull – US Forest Service Wilderness and Trails
Mike Schutt – Snohomish County PUD
Ruth Milner – Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Julie Sklare – City of Everett
Mike Town – Sierra Club and Friends of Wildsky
Kathy Johnson – Pilchuck Audubon Association
Phil Roberts - USGS Soils Survey

Welcome: David announced transition to Wildfire position. David introduced Jason to the Natural Areas Program at Northwest Region. Paul McFarland will take over project management of Morning Star Trails Planning process.

Confirmation of Planning Process Guidelines and revised schedule: David asked for questions, changes, issues or concerns and receiving none guidelines upheld. New committee schedule was handed out with dates and goals added to each meeting. Field visits are moved to July. The schedule is posted to the webpage.



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Committee member future presentations: The committee was asked if individual members would like to bring a short presentation to the meetings. A sign-up sheet was circulated for presentation dates.

December 15, 2016 Public Meeting Feedback: Barbara went over the summary from the Public Meeting. The most mentions were of Boulder Lake Trail, Grieder Lake Trail, Vesper, Bald Mountain Trail, and Olney pass trail. Committee was asked to keep in mind public feedback going forward as representatives of the larger community for Morning Star planning.

Committee member presentation: Mike Schutt, Snohomish County PUD and Julie Sklare, City of Everett Watershed presented overviews of Spada Lake reservoir recreation facilities (two non-motorized boat launches, rules, visitors and issues and concerns associated with the City of Everett watershed. 9300-9500 trail visitors/year register at Olney Pass. Low percentage of boating activities on Spada Lake; 50% of visitors use the area accessed off of Culmback Dam Rd; Sultan River canyon trail is very popular with kayakers; 50% of visitors visit South Shore Rd and associated sites; 2400 people registered for Greider Lakes alone; Vandalism is a problem at recreation sites. Note re visitation: It is known that a percentage of visitors fail to register, the effect of which is undercount of actual visitation. There is also recognition that registration is likely overcounting use in some cases, as each activity/location checked on the form by registrants is counted as a visit (if one visitor checks multiple boxes, each check counts as a visit). PUD and City of Everett are working on this. The presentation is posted to the webpage.

Question – Discover pass requirement at Boulder Grieder Trailhead?

Answer: No. You do need to register at Olney Pass if you plan on overnighing at Grieder Lakes.

Question - Do you have good compliance at the registration kiosk?

Answer: Compliance is not as good as it should be.

Question - How much boating occurs?

Answer. Moderate use.

Question - Is the north shore road a mine to market road?

Answer: No it is not a mine to market road

Question - Can you use your boat to access the north side of the lake?

Answer: No. It is against the law.

Question - Will the DNR reopen the road to the old Grieder Trailhead?

Answer: Not at this time.

Question - Why isn't the Spada Lake watershed closed?

Answer: Because the dam's FERC license requires recreational opportunities for the public.

Online Survey Results Synthesis and Analysis: The committee divided into four groups to go over the public survey results. Each group took notes and reported back



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major/strong takeaways to the larger committee at the end of the analysis exercise. The group notes (sorted by survey question #) are as follows:

Group 1:

- #1 Backcountry camping popular
- #2 All trails have similar use levels, Gothic Basin has high use due to closure of Monte Cristo and social media
- #3 Most of public think trails and campsites are at least adequately maintained. Note that most trailheads are on USFS land
- #6 Garbage and human waste highest concern
- #7 People don't mind walking thru H2O
- #8 Yes! Interpretive signs

Group 2:

- #3 and 4 Maintenance is an issue - lack thereof
- # 5 and 7 Many trails need bridges
- #6 and 11 Garbage and human waste a big problem
- #9 People want maps and signs
- #10 People may be describing desire for an experience that may not be available in the Morning Star
- #12 Desire for a website
- #14 and 16 Most users from local area, 85% Snohomish and King counties

Group 3:

- #1 Three or four activity groups
- #2 Equal trail use
- #3 Low maintenance in the NRCA
- #4 No clear winner
- #7 12" water crossing? Armchair hikers responding
- #8 High level of "yes" response
- # 9 What is meant by trail mapping?
- #10 Consistent with idea that respondents are fit, backcountry hikers

Group 4:

- #1 Hiking and backcountry camping received highest votes, but is that representative of at large public or only those who attended meeting?
- #2 Except for Static, all trail systems received high degree of votes
- #3 Most trails are maintained adequately but not over done
- #4 Except Boulder, trails are adequately maintained
- #5 Equal importance for all
- #6 Waste/garbage management is high priority
- #7 Time of year/temperature, depth of water to cross relative to adult vs. child, flow speed
- #8 Information and enforcement signage important



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- #9 Information and enforcement signs and mapping combined at trailhead important
- #10 4-12 mile hikes covers majority of day and overnight camping
- #11 Need for toilets greatly out weighs all else
- #12 Quality info on website important, what specific info is provided, linked to other websites such as WTA and NW Hikers

Online Survey Written Responses Results: This exercise was moved to homework assignment due to time. Committee was asked to review the public written comments from the survey, and identify and sort the common categories or themes and bring back the main themes/concerns results to Meeting 3.

Additional homework: Committe asked to write down their own feedback on what is missing from the public feedback and identify missed themes, comments or categories. Committee was given copies of the Natural Areas Statewide Management Plan to read.

Next Meeting is April 18th, 2017, 6:00pm to 8:30pm



**Morning Star Trail Planning Committee
Meeting #3 Notes
April 18, 2017
6:00 to 8:45 PM**

Meeting Purpose: Analysis and sorting of public online survey written comment results and reporting of individual committee member concerns issues and priorities.

DNR Staff in attendance:

Paul McFarland - Northwest Region Conservation Program Manager, and Morning Star Trail Planning Project Manager

David Way – Northwest Region Wildfire Manager, and outgoing Morning Star Trail Planning Project Manager

Jason McMillen – Natural Areas Recreation Maintenance Steward

Barbara Simpson – DNR Parks Planner, Landscape Architect

Committee in attendance:

Ken Masel –Washington Trail Blazers

Rad Roberts – Member of American Alpine Club, WA Climbers Coalition, Cascade Climbers

Chris Hagen –YMCA BOLD and GOLD Program Director

Marc Bardsley –North Cascades Conservation Council

Thom Peters – Alpine Lakes Protection Society

Holly Zox – Morning Star Volunteer Site Steward

Matt Speten – Morning Star Volunteer Recreation Steward

Matt Jensen – UWild Adventures Program

Gary Paull – US Forest Service Wilderness and Trails

Ruth Milner – Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Julie Sklare –City of Everett Watershed

Kathy Johnson –Pilchuck Audubon Association

Phil Roberts - NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service

Mike Schutt –Snohomish County PUD (absent)

Mike Town –Sierra Club and Friends of Wildsky (absent)

Frances Chiem –Washington Trails Association (absent)

Welcome: Called for Meeting 1 and 2 Summaries approval. Meeting 2 summary change needed on reference to accuracy of registration form at Spada Lake - number compliance vs. data tracking error. There is a lack of compliance but also an error in the computing of the number of folks recreating. Everett watershed personnel are looking into correcting this data. Needs clarification with Mike and Julie.

Phil Roberts' information should read: NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service.



Public Survey Written Comments Analysis and Synthesis: The committee separated into four break out groups to process written comments received from the public in the survey, and group similar items and identify themes. Work was recorded on separate flip charts transcribed as follows:

Group 1: Feedback Themes

Increased Trail Access

- Loop Trails
- Copper Lake
- Boulder Lakes
- Static

Appropriate disposal of waste

- Human
- Garbage

Diminished Access

- No new trails
- Overusage - Gothic

"Other" Travel

- Mtn bikes, ADA
- Horses, dogs
- ATV's

Maintenance

- Trail
- Roads
- Parking

Interpretation

Fishing/hunting

Winter Use

Group 2:

New trail access (13)

Horse access (4)

Historic trails from Spada restored (9)

Loop trail (3)

Mark trails - summer and winter (2)

Dog friendly (1)

Pristine environment (resource protection) (15)

Fishing opportunities (5)

Hunting (1)

Limit overuse (7)

Remote places (5)

Re-establish and/or new roads (7)

Implement "leave no trace" (4)

Toilets (2)

Maintain trails (12)

Enforcement (1)

Mountain bikes (2)

Designated camp spots (4)

ORV ATV access (6)

Create views (1)

Snow parks (1)

ADA access (1)



Public Survey Written Comments Analysis and Synthesis: Continued

Group 3:

- Roads (14)
- New Trails (22)
- Trail Maintenance (19)
- Motorized (6)
- Rock Climbing (3)
- Disposal of Waste
- Conservation Alpine
- Hoof & Bullet
- Leave No Trace - toilets, sanitation
- User groups:
 - Hiking/Backpacking
 - Fishing
 - ORV

Group 4:

- New trails
- Horses?
- Repair Trails
- Road access - positive and negative
- Conservation
 - Wildness
 - Wildlife
 - Plej + life
- Motorized
 - More
 - Less
- Leave No Trace
- Shooting - Pro and con
- Paddling
 - Lakes
 - Rivers
- Fishing
 - Developed
 - Wild
- Sanitation
- Campsites
 - Repair
 - Maintain
 - Delete
- Mountain bikes
- ADA access
- Dogs
- Winter use - motorized?
- Permit system



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Landscape Maps: Maps were provided to all committee members. Maps are at 1" = 1600' scale and cover entire Morning Star Landscape. Committee were asked to think about July field trip possibilities and preferences and use map to identify area(s) of interest in the landscape to visit in July. A georeferenced .pdf of map will also be posted to webpage for use for field trips in July. Plan to discuss field trip options at next meeting.

Committee Member Trail Priorities Input: Each committee member was asked in Meeting 2 to provide written feedback and verbal summaries of their priorities and interest areas:

"We have gone through the comments gathered at the public open house and from the online survey. Have we missed any categories or themes? Are there comments that are missing? What are your personal experiences, knowledge and expertise regarding Morning Star? Report back on written summary of your and/or your interest group's issues, concerns and priorities for Morning Star trails."

Committee members each gave a verbal summary of their interest and background in the Morning Star. Written reports are attached.

Additional homework: Committee asked to identify field trip areas of interest and be prepared to discuss dates/time for field trips at next meeting.

Next Meeting (Meeting 4) is May 16, 2017, 6:00pm to 8:00pm



Morning Star Trails Planning



**Morning Star Trail Planning Committee
Meeting #4 Notes
May 16, 2017
6:00 to 8:45 PM**

Meeting Purpose: Understanding Morning Star's unique qualities: geology, soils, riparian areas, wildlife habitat and sensitive plant considerations in trails planning.

DNR Staff in attendance:

Paul McFarland - Northwest Region Conservation Program Manager, and Morning Star Trail Planning Project Manager

Jason McMillen – Natural Areas Recreation Maintenance Steward

Barbara Simpson – DNR Parks Planner, Landscape Architect

Curt Pavola – Natural Areas Program Manager

Committee in attendance:

Ken Masel –Washington Trail Blazers (Absent)

Rad Roberts – Member of American Alpine Club, WA Climbers Coalition, Cascade Climbers (Absent)

Chris Hagen –YMCA BOLD and GOLD Program Director (Absent)

Marc Bardsley –North Cascades Conservation Council

Thom Peters – Alpine Lakes Protection Society

Holly Zox – Morning Star Volunteer Site Steward

Matt Speten – Morning Star Volunteer Recreation Steward

Matt Jensen – UWild Adventures Program

Gary Paull – US Forest Service Wilderness and Trails

Ruth Milner – Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Julie Sklare –City of Everett Watershed

Kathy Johnson –Pilchuck Audubon Society

Phil Roberts - NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service

Mike Schutt –Snohomish County PUD

Mike Town –Sierra Club and Friends of Wildsky

Kim Brown –Washington Trails Association (Alternate for Andrea Imler)

Welcome: Welcome Kim Brown, Andrea Imler's alternate. WTA

Approval of Meeting 3: Unanimous approval

Physical Characteristics Presentations:



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Habitat Plants: Holly Zox - Sensitive and rare plant species in the Morning Star NRCA.

Sub Alpine area is 500' lower in Morning Star

Morning Star Sub Alpine and Alpine Areas have more in common with those In British Columbia and Alaska.

Rare Plants are found throughout the NRCA, near or adjacent to the trails in many locations

Twin Falls – No rare Plants (Black Lily) may or may not have been impacted by humans

Beaver Plant Lake – Black Lily was nearly eradicated from 2005 Beaver flooding, and has not recovered. The few remaining plants are located at far end of lake, where boardwalk was removed.

Bog Orchid – rarest plant in Snohomish Co. (present in Morning Star)

Cutthroat Lakes – No rare plants known at present, but there was a historic occurrence. Likely significant impact to rare plants associated with numerous social trails.

Bald mountain trail includes rare species. Copperbush, Black Lily, Choris's Bog Orchid

Boulder Lake – Boulder Lake includes sensitive wetlands, and may have a rare sphagnum. This area has the least use. As such, plant species are better-protected here. Includes Choris's Bog Orchid.

Grieder Lakes – Big Greider includes sensitive wetland with rare plants near the log jam at Upper Grieder. Includes Choris's Bog Orchid.

Vesper and Gothic Basin - Alpine plants that are rare, Alaska Harebell, Cooley's Buttercup.

Question: Are the sensitive and rare plant species known and mapped? Rare Care has mapped and surveyed rare plants in the area.

Natural Heritage has all the coordinates to the rare plant areas in the NRCA.

Question: Trees, the uniqueness of the forest at Ashland Lakes Jan Henderson, fire ecology three major fires 1300, 1500, and 1700's in western Washington; the Ashland Lakes area is one of the only areas in Western Washington that never burned during these fire events. (Possible interpretive signs for the Ashland Lake Areas speaking to the uniqueness of the area.)

Habitat Wildlife: Ruth Milner - Wildlife presentation.



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Hunting in Morning Star – (hunting is a conditional use, subject to site specific management planning process.) DNRs approach in Morning Star is to allow hunting in the NRCA, based on zoning concept: Given fact that hunting occurred for many years prior to establishment of the NRCA, and it being a very large landscape, hunting has not been prohibited in the NRCA. This could change as part of a management planning process.

Landowners have the right to deny access to hunting on their property within the Game Management Unit.

(Pets should be on leash) * *Unless in areas of hunting, bird hunting, and designated hunting area.* Statewide mgt plan reference to allowing dogs off leash in designated hunting areas is outdated and illustrates need for site-specific management plan. There is no longer hunting allowed with dogs for game animals in Washington.

WDFW administers rules that regulate hunting and trapping where they are allowed. It is a landowner decision whether or not to allow these activities on their property.

Question: Would posting of no hunting be appropriate? Response: restricting hunting would be outside the scope of this process, and would be subject to management planning process. DNR WACs related to public use already prohibit hunting/shooting along trails, or in close proximity to campgrounds and other recreation facilities.

Species designation program. Morning Star area has Mountain Goat habitat. Wildlife is harder to map and keep track of. Animals move in and out of Morning Star on a regular basis.

Pitman Robertson Act – funding for hunting from firearms and ammunition sales.

Congressional funding to the states – State Wildlife Action Plan non game funding. Grant funding that all 50 States compete for.

Question: Would animal sightings dictate what land DNR would reclassify to NRCA? No, natural areas designations are driven by habitat and features. But the thinking is that, with one (habitat) comes the other (wildlife).

Climate Change and Morning Star – the inter connectivity of the plants, insects and the animals. Morning Star, and its wildlife, are very susceptible to climate change, both within, but also across elevation ranges/habitat types, as species move around seasonally.

American Pika – This critter is very sensitive to climate change.

Bats – White Nose Syndrome a relatively new, and very disturbing phenomenon affecting a variety of bat species in Washington. Not well understood as yet.



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Grizzly Bear – Recovery Zone includes Morning Star.

Soils: Phil Roberts - <https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/osdname.aspx>

Soil Mapping – Morning Star has a variety of complex soil types in a range of elevations. Many factors affect soil forming, including parent material, topography, organisms (both plant and animal), climate and time.

Soil Mapping did occur in the 1980's, but the data is out of date and may not be accurate.

In Morning Star the land that used to be working trust land was mapped in the 1980's there could be data available from the timber sales archives from the area.

NRCS is embarking on a soil mapping project that, when completed, will provide valuable data to land managers for a variety of activities, including recreation facility planning. This work won't be complete in time to inform this process, but will help inform future, site-specific trails management efforts that come from work now being done by the committee.

Additional homework: DNR staff created a table of categorized landscape-level needs/wants gathered from the written public survey responses, and input provided by this committee. The assignment is to prioritize these needs/wants, within the scope of the trails planning process, consistent with the statewide management plan. Committee members were also asked to begin thinking about specific initiatives/projects that would help achieve the landscape-level needs/wants.

Next Meeting (Meeting 5) is June 20, 2017, 6:00pm to 8:00pm



**Morning Star Trail Planning Committee
Meeting #5 Notes
June 20, 2017
6:00 to 9:00 PM**

Meeting Purpose: Physical Characteristics of Morningstar - Geology and Riparian, USFS presentation on adjacent lands updates, prioritization of planning objectives and projects, first round.

DNR Staff in attendance:

Paul McFarland - Northwest Region Natural Areas Manager, and Morning Star Trail Planning Project Manager
Barbara Simpson – DNR Parks Planner, Landscape Architect
Curt Pavola – Natural Areas Program Manager

Committee in attendance:

Ken Masel –Washington Trail Blazers
Matt Perkins - American Alpine Club, WA Climbers Coalition, Cascade Climbers
Thom Peters – Alpine Lakes Protection Society
Holly Zox – Morning Star Volunteer Site Steward
Matt Speten – Morning Star Volunteer Recreation Steward
Matt Jensen – UWild Adventures Program
Gary Paull – US Forest Service Wilderness and Trails
Kathy Johnson –Pilchuck Audubon Society
Mike Schutt –Snohomish County PUD
Mike Town –Sierra Club and Friends of Wildsky
Kim Brown –Washington Trails Association

Public Guest in attendance:

Mary Kay Els - Back Country Horsemen

Approval of Meeting 4: Approved

Geology and Riparian Presentations: Postponed

Committee Member Presentations:

USFS Trails - Presented by Gary Paull, Wilderness and Trails Program Coordinator, USFS

For slides shown, see presentation document posted. Gary spoke about the Mount Baker Snoqualmie National Forest and gave an overview of the South Fork Stillaguamish Draft EA.



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Question: # trees/acre? Answer: In "prescription"

Question: Intent to open up forest? Answer: Yes so that trees grow larger, quicker.

Question: Once thinned reenter when? Answer: Area is designated Late Successional Reserve under the Northwest Forest Plan, which prohibits most logging in forests over 80 years of age, so probably won't log again.

The increase in use in Morning Star is also happening on USFS lands. 20,000 visitors/year at Heather Lake, more than at Lake Twenty Two. Heather Lake Trailhead: plan is to improve it to eliminate parking on the Pilchuck Road. Cut over of Heather Lake Trail is no longer in plan.

Comment: Still shows up in plan.

Response: Will check into. It is still in the plan. However, many comments received opposing cutting over the trail.

Ashland Lakes, Walt Bailey and Sunrise Mine roads would be affected by thinning project. There will be some reopened, some new, and some decommissioned roads. Roads to recreation sites will be retained.

Road 4021 plan is to upgrade road to passenger vehicle standards. The Sunrise Mine trailhead will be moved back a 1/2 mile and sized for about 75 cars. The new trailhead location has great views.

Walt Bailey trail was built by the CCC and Mountaineers. The trailhead will be moved .98 miles back and sized for about 30 cars with turnaround capability.

No budget exists for either project yet.

Road 4030 has a good viewpoint, level 2 closure.

The trail to Vesper Peak goes through varied ownership. Conversation in future about more unified ownership would be good.

Question: Where is landslide area: Answer: FS trail ends at Headlee Pass - dangerous section.

Question: What plans exist for maintenance? Should the trail be rerouted? Answer: There is nowhere to reroute.

View of Sperry from proposed trailhead.

Question: Regarding the plaque of the climber who died, what is the stand of FS? Answer: We don't do active removal.



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Question Old Bren Mac Mine - is the claim on Federal land? Reponse: The property is not an inholding within the NRCA. It appears to be on Federal land. Physical access may have been through area now within the NRCA. Further research would be required to answer questions about legal access.

Question: How does FS do Road to Trails conversion? DNR decommissions and leaves large holes where culverts are removed. Answer: USFS method will be similar to the lower Lake Serene trail. Or the Granite Lakes Trail in the Mt. Si NRCA.

Question: South Fork research natural areas. Answer: Administratively withdrawn. No timber harvest

Gothic Slide near Monte Cristo just reconnected with new route.

Question: What is status of old route? Answer: It has been gated. Old log crossing is still there. New access route built for Monte Cristo Mine remediation project is to high-clearance standard. Permitted to go through roadless area by Secretary of Agriculture for the purpose of the Monte Cristo project. Next year. Trailhead is accessible. Hordes of people. Gullies are avalanche prone.

Question: Are people still hiking on new route? Answer: No, a lot of up and down and not a good experience.

South Fork Stilly Revegetation EA is in a 30 day comment period. (Passed out copies of scoping letter)

Question: How many acres? Answer: 6000 acres potential logging acreage. Total acreage of area being evaluated about 65,000.

USFS Maps update: Darrington Ranger District map is done and available now. Mount Baker map is at the printers.

Trails Planning project and objectives prioritization-Between Categories*

- Conservation/Restoration 49 points
- Maintenance 47 points
- Interpretation/Education 44 points
- Re-establish Access 42 points
- Access Control 34 points (1 zero)
- Increase Access 23 points
- New Development 10 points (3 zeros)

Trails Planning project and objectives prioritization-Within Categories*

- Conservation/Restoration:
 - Appropriate human waste disposal 20 points
 - Leave large areas without roads or trails 6 points



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- Garbage 5 points
- Alpine conservation 4 points
- Re-route Walt Bailey Trail if better location possible 4 points
- Designate campsites/limit camping to designated 3 points
- Discourage camping in alpine, redirect to lower areas 3 points
- Wildlife 3 points
- Prevent target shooting 3 points
- Pristine environment/resource protection 2 points
- Implement "Leave No Trace" 2 points
- Relocate trails away from sensitive areas/soils 2 points
- Wildness 1 point
- Delete unused campsites 1 point
- Limit new trail development 1 point
- Establish campground where use is high to contain impacts 1 point
- Pit toilets to minimize helicopter, avoid portables
- Close/rehabilitate social trails
- New trails only in NRCS expansion areas, not in existing areas
- No new trails
- Maintenance:
 - Improved trail maintenance 19 points
 - Maintain trails 9 points
 - Repair trails 8 points
 - Repair campsites 6 points
 - Remove infrastructure to cut costs 4 points
 - Maintain campsites 3 points
 - Road maintenance/improvements 2 points
 - Parking 1 point
 - Work with USFS to maintain roads accessing DNR trailheads 1 point
 - Mark trails for summer and winter use
- Interpretation/Education:
 - Use social media to educate "Leave No Trace"; sanitation; management philosophy. Less expensive than signage 11 points
 - Educate public about sensitivity and susceptibility of over-use 11 points
 - Signage about resident wildlife/ecosystems; sanitation 11 points
 - Enforcement 10 points
 - More DNR presence 10 points
- Re-establish access:
 - Reopen Boulder Lake Trail 17 points
 - Improve/restore Bald Mountain Trail end to end 12 points
 - Reopen Twin Falls Lake Trail 11 points



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- Reopen trails that are currently closed 5 points
- Reestablish western access from Spada lake to Sperry/Vesper
- Restore access to Upper Sultan River Basin, Elk Creek, Williamson Creek, and Trail to Copper Lake
- Rebuild trail over Marble Pass
- Reconnect Spada area with Bald Mountain (roads-to-trails)
- Re-open historic trails to/from Spada
- Access Control:
 - Overuse at Gothic Basin 18 points
 - Permit system - especially for sensitive/pristine areas such as Gothic, Cutthroat, Vesper/Sperry and Greider 18 points
 - Limit over use; limit use to level that protects rather than responds to increased demand. Establish/stick to carrying capacity 14 points
- Increase Access:
 - Access to existing rock climbing areas 19 points
 - Loop trails 11 points
 - Static Peak 6 points
 - Fishing opportunities 6 points
 - Paddling (lakes and rivers) 3 points
 - Remote places 2 points
 - Fishing - wild 1 point
 - Hunting 1 point
 - Copper Lake 1 point
 - Winter use
 - New trail access
 - Add new trails in NRCA expansion areas
- New Development:
 - Pit toilet at Gothic Basin 17 points
 - Family friendly hikes 11 points
 - Composting pit toilets 6 points
 - ADA access 4 points
 - Trail to Static Peak 3 points
 - Camping along south side of Spada Lake 2 points
 - Roads to Trails Access to Views 2 points
 - Pit toilet west bench Vesper lake 2 points
 - Yurts 1 point
 - New trails to alpine areas
 - Connection between Mt. Pilchuck/Ashland
 - Trail to Copper Lake
 - Cross country ski/snow parks
 - Trail system interconnections
 - Create more trails
 - Establish routes up Vesper, Gothic, Del Campo



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- Trailhead/trail to Static Peak (sanctioned)

* The projects and objectives list includes comments from the public survey and public meeting, and committee input.

Prioritization process comments:

- The "New Development" and "Re-establish Access" categories go against the Natural Areas Statewide Management Plan.
- Some of the trails in the "Re-establish Access" categories are still being used.
- Re-establishing access to Twin Falls should be a "0".
- Trails are not priorities in the Natural Areas Statewide Management Plan.
- Recreation is third on the list of priorities in the Statewide Plan. The plan balances conservation and accommodation of use.
- A dilemma in the prioritization exercise was that trails references should have all been in the maintenance category.
- Reopening historic trails is different than reopening Twin Falls trail.
- Reopening trails could help to disperse use.
- Then dispersed use ends up being an issue.
- Maintenance category could include several types of maintenance ie. Boulder and Twin, reopen existing, rebuild historical, and create new (if trail realignment).
- Marble Pass came up from Silverton
- Permits - can't at parking area
- Enchantments - day use has exploded.
- Day runners problem
- Alps doesn't allow runners for same reason.

July Field Trips:

Question: How many committee members are interested in field trips? Show of hands -
Response: all. Decision to plan trips to: Ashland Lakes and Boulder/Greider Lakes (and maybe Cutthroat Lakes in August), with one trip on weekday and one trip on weekend. Ashland illustrates permit/regulatory issues ie campsites in wetlands. How can trail that meets standards be built, and what is the education potential? Decision to send out Doodle Polls to decide upon field trip dates.

Question: Is road closed at washout? Answer: Road is abandoned in Natural Area.

Next Meeting: August 15, 2017, 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Adjourn.



**Morning Star Trail Planning Committee
Meeting #6 Notes
August 15, 2017
6:00 to 8:30 PM**

Meeting Purpose: Complete Project and Objectives Prioritization; Review Plan Outline

DNR Staff in attendance:

Paul McFarland - Northwest Region Natural Areas Manager, and Morning Star Trail Planning Project Manager

Barbara Simpson – DNR Parks Planner, Landscape Architect

Curt Pavola – Natural Areas Program Manager

Jason McMillen – Recreation Maintenance Steward

Committee in attendance:

Ken Masel –Washington Trail Blazers

Matt Perkins - American Alpine Club, WA Climbers Coalition, Cascade Climbers

Thom Peters – Alpine Lakes Protection Society

Matt Speten – Morning Star Volunteer Recreation Steward

Marc Bardsley – North Cascades Conservation Council

Gary Paull – US Forest Service Wilderness and Trails

Kathy Johnson –Pilchuck Audubon Society

Mike Town –Sierra Club and Friends of Wildsky

Ruth Milner – WDFW

Chris Hagen – YMCA BOLD and GOLD Program Director

Julie Sklare – Everett Watershed

Public Guest in attendance:

Frank Fenimore

Approval of Meeting 5: Approved with one correction - page 3: The property is not within the NRCA. Clarity about legal access would require some research.

Committee Field Trips:

Ashland and Greider field trips informative. Work to do in both systems. Ashland system a good candidate for major campground/campsite and trail relocation. Work to do on Greider system as well, but not so much directly related to resource impacts.

Discussion

Collected worksheets and request for any remaining prioritized worksheets to be emailed to Paul.



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Question: Does state own mineral rights? Response: Yes, typically we do. The majority of mineral rights in NRCA's have been retained by previous owners. If the property in the NRCA was previously DNR-managed trust land, chances are good the trust retained mineral rights when the property was transferred into conservation status.

Most land within the NRCA came into conservation status after previous management as trust land, through the Trust Land Transfer program. Those portions that were in trust designations other than Common School Trust were first subject to inter-trust exchange to facilitate trust land transfer. In some cases those properties that were not originally Common School Trust land may have come into state ownership following seizure by Snohomish County for failure to pay taxes, as was the case with many thousands of acres of cut-over forest lands in Washington.

DNR retains mineral rights on the vast majority of land within the NRCA. There were a number of mining claims in the area now encompassed within the NRCA, or in areas adjacent to it. In general, mining and its associated activities include significant risk to resources. Proposals to conduct mining within the NRCA, where valid claims exist, would be evaluated for their potential to compromise the integrity, or ecological, geological, scenic, historic or archaeological values within the NRCA.

What about permit system as a project? Response: Our commitment in the grant relates to a "development" project. Establishing a permit system wouldn't meet that commitment, but it could be included as a committee recommendation in the plan.

How much funding is available for this project? Can a capstone project be the entire Gothic basin trail? Response: The RCO portion of funding for this grant is \$98,100. That money covers about 2.5 months of staff time for data collection and mapping, approximately 8 months of staff time for planning and design (being done in-house), and \$22,000 for work related to environmental review and securing permits. Work associated with the Gothic Basin trail could be the capstone project.

What is the end product of this process - does the committee make recommendations? Yes. One output of this process is the capstone project which is the development project commitment we made in the grant. The capstone project could be as expansive or specific as you the committee wants it to be. We are trying not to put sideboards on this process but open it up for all recommendations that are consistent with the statewide management plan. We are basically hoping that this meeting will be a brainstorming session leading to identification of several priority projects, one of which will be the capstone project. Another output of this process is a set of recommendations from the committee that will help prioritize our work, and guide our trails management efforts for the next ten to fifteen years.



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Is the worksheet categories list the background to select projects from? In looking at the list some items relate more to policy, some to maintenance and some are specific projects. Response: It would follow that projects/recommendations would come from, or be consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the category prioritization exercise. But, we also want to keep this project selection brainstorming session open beyond the boundaries of the worksheet, to ideas that may not have come up before.

One idea is to select one area such as Greider or Ashland to concentrate on, and stay away from addressing Gothic which is a much bigger issue. But use at Gothic Basin is entirely unmanaged at present, and there is critical need to address impacts associated with such use. A systemic plan for Gothic would be in the more complicated category of project, and may take more time than we have in this grant term to complete. But perhaps some initial effort at Gothic Basin such as sanitation facilities would fit as a capstone project.

What about an agency-wide effort to establish a permit system, which could be implemented for areas like Gothic Basin, where overuse has become a concern? Response: This would seem the appropriate route to establish a permit system, and would take time to evaluate and implement as part of agency policy development

Restoring areas damaged by overuse would make the most impact.

Suggest a separate plan for each trail system: Greider, Ashland and Gothic (i.e. a site plan for each system)

Question: What does the City think about pit toilets within the watershed? Response: Pit toilets are an open question in terms of whether they'd be acceptable in the watershed. It's also unclear as to whether the County would require permits for pit toilets, or whether they would be acceptable, even outside the watershed. This is a question we'd need to explore further before making a decision to implement.

How many toilets would a given site need? Level of use is definitely a consideration with pit toilets, in terms of numbers and longevity. Example: At Lake Serene when USFS eliminated camping and changed it to day use there was a noticeable reduction in need for pit toilets.

Where would pit toilets at Gothic be located? This would take some evaluation. Soils in the Basin itself are very shallow, and there is little cover with which to screen toilets.

How many toilets should be planned for a given area? Depends upon use - day use vs. overnight camping and # of users.



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Comment: For the capstone project I favor closing Gothic to camping - do we have an obligation to manage existing use? After all, at current level of use toilets may fill up and stop working then back to the original problem. What is our goal? We need to determine the carrying capacity of this landscape. What is our desired result regarding carrying capacity? Don't limit thinking about other solutions at Gothic such as closing camping and making it day use only, and a permit system.

The most heavily used trail is into the most fragile environment (Gothic Basin).

What about past coordination with the Forest Service? If there is coordination between agencies does that help with getting grants? Response: Yes, cooperative efforts between agencies counts in grant scoring, as does having a plan for an area, as opposed to proposals that are not part of a landscape level plan. There is also a momentum that can be achieved by success with this grant, which can help with future proposals.

How many projects can we select? Response: Committee is not limited in number of projects you may recommend, or in size or scope of any project. One thing to keep in mind is that depending on how ambitious the projects you recommend are, it may take multiple biennia to complete a given project. Generally, our model for capital projects is to do design and permitting in one biennium, and construction in the next. This is especially true in a landscape like Morning Star where the ability to work is seasonal, and we get one operating season per biennium as a function of how our fiscal years are structured. A simple project, like installation of a backcountry toilet or pre-engineered bridge can be done fairly quickly, maybe within a single biennium. More complicated projects, such as a site plan for relocation of trails and campsites in the Ashland Lakes system would take much longer, and may require construction in phases spanning more than one biennium, depending on cost/complexity.

Greider Lakes Trail - motion to make upgrading the trail along Spada Lake the capstone project. The size of the project seems to fit within the grant time frame and the tank traps make the trail less than ideal. Possibly include a bridge at the beaver pond too.

With this project idea it is important to the City and PUD that the trail continue to deter vehicle access, which was a big problem prior to road abandonment. Response: we could take measures to ensure against vehicle access.

If we choose Greider what do we do about Gothic? Response: If we don't pick Gothic as the capstone project, that doesn't mean we can't include work at Gothic as a priority in the Plan, and make progress on such work in parallel with the capstone project. For example, depending on permit requirements, we may be able to install pit toilets at Gothic Basin as early as next season. Again, we don't want the committee to feel constrained in terms of what projects to bring forward, or in how ambitious they are. We



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just want to be sure you understand the budget, staffing and operational constraints that will limit how quickly we can complete any given project.

We continue to work toward progress in Morning Star, even as this process unfolds. We have a ranked grant for work at Cutthroat Lakes system awaiting a capital budget. We won't know whether that work is funded until the legislature produces a capital budget.

Comment: Object to Greider as the capstone project because Gothic is much more in need of help especially needing pit toilets, design for restoration areas and campsites, signage and gathering data and study use levels.

Response: A holistic solution to Gothic will require more time than this current grant allows. – May be more realistic to choose a smaller project for this grant such as work at Greider as described above, or some discrete work at Gothic like toilets, and make the holistic solution for Gothic the top committee recommendation for work to follow.

Project Prioritization Exercise:

Brainstorming produced the following potential projects:

- Pit toilets that do not require helicopter operations to install or maintain
- Toilets at the trailheads
- Institute a permit system to control level of use
- Greider first 2 miles: water crossing structures and water bar/drain dip regrading
- Gothic Basin: Impact studies and information collecting to establish a carrying capacity
- Trailhead signage about pit toilets and pack it in/pack it out
- Work cooperatively with the USFS on Gothic Trail.
- Bridge over Bear Creek on the Grieder Lakes Trail
- Ashland boardwalk repair and campsite relocations
- Ashland Lakes Trail - Design/Site Plan for whole trail system
- Grieder Lakes Trail - Design/Site Plan for whole trail system
- Move campsites away from waterfront locations
- Close Gothic Basin to overnight camping
- Gothic Basin - Design/Site Plan for whole trail system
- Gothic Basin pit toilets, signage, designated campsites
- Backcountry pit toilets on all trail systems

Top 3 Projects:

Those in attendance suggested the following from which to select a capstone project:



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- A. Grieder Lakes Trail: (First 2 miles of trail is abandoned road.) Complete design and permitting for work on first 2 miles of trail. Focus on stream crossings and regrading drain dips to make the trail friendlier for hiking. May include completion of some work with current grant funding, depending on permitting process, but most, if not all of the water crossing installations would require future funding.
- B. Gothic Basin: Site Plan for: Sanitation, Restoration, Education, Signage, Pit Toilets, Campsite designation, and No-fee permit system to gather use information. A holistic solution to Gothic Basin will likely take more time than we have for this grant. If chosen as the capstone project, we would likely phase the work, and choose elements to work on now that would not likely be affected by a holistic site plan (e.g. toilet(s), signage).
- C. Pit Toilets throughout Morning Star NRCA. This would require a determination of where pit toilets would be acceptable, what style to employ, and whether permits are required. We could approach this as the capstone project, using funding available in the grant. We could also approach this on a parallel track, separate from the capstone project, in which case we'd be working within existing operational staffing and funding constraints (i.e. work on it as time and resources allow).

Final Project Decision:

Send email out to entire committee including those not here to solicit choice of capstone project from everyone. The project with the most votes will be the one we proceed with to fulfill our commitment under this grant. Projects not chosen could still be included in the Trails Plan, as Committee recommendations.



**Morning Star Trail Planning Committee
Meeting #7 Notes
October 17, 2017
6:00 to 8:30 PM**

Meeting Purpose: Trails Plan Chapter 3: Implementation schedule

DNR Staff in attendance:

Paul McFarland - Northwest Region Natural Areas Manager, and Morning Star Trail Planning Project Manager
Barbara Simpson – DNR Parks Planner, Landscape Architect
Curt Pavola – Natural Areas Program Manager

Committee in attendance:

Ken Masel –Washington Trail Blazers
Rad Roberts - American Alpine Club, WA Climbers Coalition, Cascade Climbers
Thom Peters – Alpine Lakes Protection Society
Matt Speten – Morning Star Volunteer Recreation Steward
Marc Bardsley – North Cascades Conservation Council
Kathy Johnson – Pilchuck Audubon Society
Ruth Milner – WDFW
Phil Roberts – USGS Soils Survey
Chris Hagen – YMCA BOLD and GOLD Program Director
Mike Schutt – Snohomish County PUD

Public Guest in attendance:

Mary Kay Els, BCH

Approval of Meeting 6 summary: Approved.

Thank you to committee

This meeting is the last planned meeting in the trails planning process. Thank you to the committee of citizen volunteers for their time and dedication to the planning process and to their participation in guiding the future of Morning Star.

We anticipate that we will reconvene the committee for a meeting to review the trails plan in draft form, sometime in early spring.

Gothic Basin

DNR: Question – how many of us have been to Gothic Basin? (all but two, some not for several years). Paul gave a powerpoint presentation of Gothic Basin describing pressing issues along the trail and up in the basin. The presentation included slides



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from Paul and David's 2015 visit and Gary's recent September 2017 visit. The trail starts out on USFS land from the Weden Creek trailhead. With exception of work done by WTA in two separate work parties in order to reduce public safety hazards, no DNR management has occurred on the Gothic Basin trail, which is entirely user built.

DNR: There are numerous safety and health concerns associated with the trail. A death occurred last year when a snow bridge over a creek collapsed and the hiker fell through. There is a significant network of braided trail throughout the Basin, much of which serves indiscriminate camping. Human and dog waste is common.

DNR: Gothic Basin was identified as the area most in need of attention by the Trails Planning Committee. We've fielded complaints by users related to the issues identified above. There were concerns expressed about Gothic Basin in the survey we did at the beginning of the Trails Planning process. There are known public safety hazards along the trail leading to Gothic Basin. By allowing public use in Gothic Basin absent considerations required in the NRCA Statewide Management Plan, we're out of compliance with our conservation-first mission in Morning Star. In light of this state of affairs, DNR staff present tonight propose a temporary, three year closure of Gothic Basin (and the Weden Creek trail) to conduct an assessment of whether public use is appropriate in Gothic Basin, and if so at what level and where. This would also allow time to seek funding for and begin implementation of restoration, and to seek funding and begin implementation of facilities development should public use be deemed appropriate. We believe this closure will allow us time for the kind of evaluation for public use required in the statewide management plan, and to "reset" in terms of public perceptions and expectations related to use in Gothic Basin. This proposed recommendation is our primary topic for discussion and feedback this evening.

Question: What is the practicality of excluding people? Response: We would need broad stakeholder support for the effort and it would be hard to keep everyone out. Like all of our rules in areas where our staff presence is low, we rely on the honor system for compliance.

Comment: I would support this action. A recent article on Gothic Basin in the Tribune's "Hike of the Month" is part of the problem. It results in too many people hiking in an area and overuse.

Comment: Outreach needed for success.

Comment: Put out real world pictures of what is occurring.

DNR response: Would have been nice to be on top of these problems years ago, but we are where we are, and must start somewhere.

Question: Weden Lake was overgrown miners trail – what about it?



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DNR Response: We don't know the current conditions since we have not inventoried that trail yet.

Comment: Need to educate users on Pack it in Pack it out and Leave No Trace. Educate groups like WTA.

Comment: Trash your trash and pick up your poop.

Comment: Thanks to DNR for thoughtful assessment and recognition that the resource is not being conserved. Climbers support and want pit toilets for the area. Look at Enchantments as model. Area was trampled and now the resources have come back. The key is enforcement. All it takes is one person to trash a place. Think about unintended consequences, closure of Gothic will pressure Sunrise Mine trail. I applaud you for taking on hard problems.

Comment: Minimize backlash by communicating closure idea. We know it will be a big challenge. Gear up to make the case for it.

Comment: Look for pinchpoints along the trail that can be blocked off ...ie cliffs, rivers.

Question: How many law enforcement officers does DNR have?

DNR Response: We have 6-7 DNR police officers statewide; 2 in the Northwest region, and 1 in this district stretched across several landscapes. We also have Education and Enforcement (E&E) wardens, who are grant-funded staff who have a limited commission and are able to issue citations. We've not historically applied for grants to fund E&E positions in the Natural Areas Program, but are looking at that for the next round of applications.

Comment: An E&E could be like a forest ranger. It goes a long way to have someone up there. Response: Having a formal Trails Plan that recommends having an E&E warden can help with obtaining grants.

Question: How long would closure be?

DNR Response: We're proposing a three year closure. The first year would allow time for assessment. We could also begin work to obtain funding for restoration, and even for development, should public use be deemed appropriate. Year two would be devoted to decision making related to whether, and if so where and at what level public use should be allowed, and for planning for restoration and development. Funding would come in time to begin implementation in year three, so that when Gothic Basin is reopened we'd be prepared with toilets, signs, and other improvements to help guide



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use and education users. (Implementation schedule handed out to committee and posted on wall for discussion).

Comment: I am pleasantly surprised – you guys listened to us. At first I was upset that we were not being heard. Tip of the hat to you.

Question: Is anyone against the idea of a temporary closure?

DNR response: We brought this to you tonight out of respect for the Committee process and all the work you've done. We definitely want to hear any concerns you have about this proposal.

Comment: There needs to be some work on this proposal. For example look at a permit system similar to the Enchantments. At first it solved the problem since camping required a permit. But now day use which is allowed without a permit, is becoming the overuse problem.

Comment: Concern about fee if implementation of permit system is decided.

Question: Is it appropriate to allow human use at all in this sensitive area?

Comment: In the Enchantments the latest push is to address day use by limiting it too – there is increasing support for limiting day use there.

Comment: Important to be ready with improvements if you proceed with closure. When the Discover Pass was implemented, there was an expectation that the public would “get something” for the fee they now pay, and some disappointment when they realized that was not the case.

DNR response: The Discover Pass was created by the legislature as a way to replace recreation funding the legislature had cut in an earlier biennium. It was not new funding to provide new services. The structure is State Parks gets 84% of Discover Pass revenue, and WDFW and DNR each get 8% of revenue. The Discover Pass is basically a parking pass. It does provide a steady stream of revenue, but also requires considerable staff time to ensure compliance (park rangers and other enforcement staff monitor vehicles and issue citations for non-compliance). It also provides no revenue to sites like Gothic Basin or Greider Lakes, the trailheads (parking lots) for which are on other ownership and thus not subject to the Discover Pass requirement.

Comment: USFS closed Silver Lake during its restoration.

Comment: During Monte Cristo closure the cabin was vandalized.



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Comment: I got my Christmas present (proposed temporary closure). I came here tonight prepared to continue to have to speak out for Gothic and was anticipating having to compromise again. This action is what I hoped for.

Comment: At some point we are going to have to bite the bullet on the permit issue. This is the beginning of need.

Response: DNR does not currently have a permit system on any of our sites or trails. Perhaps Gothic Basin is a place to consider permits.

Comment: Voluntary registration data from USFS is available for Weden Creek Trail.

Comment: Look at Middle Fork Snoqualmie example of DNR creating effective partnerships with Mountains to Sound Greenway, Washington Climbers Coalition, and Washington Trails Association. Think about leveraging partnerships and engaging the public in solutions. I support temporary closure to look at how to manage the area for the long term but do not support permanent closure.

Comment: In the current political climate there won't be more money if grants don't come through. It may become the norm to close landscapes. I was in Gothic Basin recently and I didn't think that it was that bad, not as bad as I expected it to be. I think the Enchantments are over-permitted. A lot of bedrock and shallow soils. Campsites in flood zones are the most sensitive issue. Gothic is rocky, fragile and the most popular hike in Morning Star. I'd be concerned that hikers hike in only to find it closed leading to a bad impression.

Comment: Permits like Enchantments are hard to get and exclusive, leads to better stewardship.

Comment: Permits even out use.

DNR response: If we close Gothic Basin, we'd close it at the trailhead, and advertise that to minimize potential for people going all the way out there to be turned around. As for funding: capital funding (including grants) has been pretty consistent the last several biennia. I don't think a lack of capital funding would suggest permanent closure.

Question: What is realistic funding?

DNR response: Funding varies by landscape and project, but over the last 3-4 biennia, NW Region Natural Areas has gotten in the neighborhood of \$300,000 to \$500,000 in capital each biennium, to pay for projects in several landscapes throughout the Region. A portion of that is generally allotted to work in Morning Star. Having a Trails Plan will also help with grant funding as well; existing plans boost grant scores because it



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demonstrates a thoughtful, considered approach to the work. Now that we have a Trails Plan that should help us in getting future grants.

Question: Who makes the decision on temporary closure and could you still do work if they say no?

DNR response: Region and Executive leadership will make the decision. We could still do work absent closure.

Question: If people are kept out how would you evaluate carrying capacity question?

DNR response: We would set an initial level based on best judgement. Usually we establish baseline first and then adaptive management measures. For example, I-90 is not built to capacity, it is built smaller, in-between.

Question: Is an Environmental Assessment possible?

Question: Can we reach out to UW or WSU for help in studying the scientific value?

After a break, committee discussion centered on the other elements of the 10 – 15 year implementation schedule. Went over schedule trail by trail. How to address resource impacts and when.

Question: What about Twin Falls?

DNR response: Currently closed. We aren't proposing to reopen. A lot of infrastructure including a new bridge would be needed to get there. The trail does not appear to be used much.

Comment: I can see reopening Twin Falls Trail for day use only.

DNR response: It's a slog down into the site from the Ashland Lakes trailhead. I'm told we used to access it from an old end-of-road landing off the Pilchuck Mainline, which was a shorter way in.

Question: How far in is the Pilchuck Road closure?

DNR response: I'm not sure where this old spur takes off, but the Pilchuck mainline is closed several miles downstream from there.

Comment: I agree with closure (of Twin Falls Trail).

Comment: Maybe you could allow an "at your own risk" type of access.



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DNR response: That's similar to our approach to the Bald Mountain Trail, which we show as suitable for experienced back country travelers only on our map.

Question: Would boardwalk be removed?

DNR response: We've already removed quite a bit of the old boardwalk, especially where it was failing.

Question: Is it safe to get in?

DNR response: It's doable. We've removed most of the failing infrastructure, and there are a couple of dicey segments where there used to be built structures along cliff bands. We see all the infrastructure as unsustainable, hard to maintain as safe. We looked for alternate routes but found nothing suitable. There's also Black Lily in the area, which is a rare plant.

Question: Can we make a note to reconsider? Leave primitive and unmaintained? Overnight is not good, dangerous off to left and campsites to right are wet.

DNR response: We'll make note of some interest in potential for reopening Twin Falls.

Question: Will installation of bridge(s) low in the Boulder-Greider trail preclude getting equipment further up the trail for other crossings?

DNR response: We've got a couple of bridge styles we like (e.g. the fiberglass bridge on the Ashland Lakes trail) that don't require heavy equipment for installation.

Comment: Concerning Gothic closure, we will run into same problem at Vesper. Use is increasing there too. Up to 200 people per day hiking in some days.

Comment: I agree, bump Vesper up the list in priority.

DNR response: The list of projects and timeline we're discussing tonight somewhat reflects the limits of our management capacity, and is definitely subject to change driven by such things as staffing, success in obtaining capital and grant funding, etc. It's hard to imagine there won't be changes as we move along, but we believe it's a fair representation of what we think we can accomplish in the next ten years if all goes well.

Question: What are the highest value, lowest effort items in the meantime?

Comment: I agree more heavy use in Vesper than Gothic by climbers. In 2015 use may have been as high as Gothic. Could ban overnight camping there. Vesper alpine area is smaller.



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Comment: Sperry has bad sanitation problem. Human waste. And it is in the watershed.

Comment: Vesper trail is in checkerboard with USFS, so need partnership with them. Where are good camp spots there?

Comment: Holly has mentioned Vesper as having much higher use.

Comment: Tie in with USFS closure of Sunrise Mine Trail for reconsideration. Part of USFS Vegetation Management Plan.

Question: About the large cedar down across the road into Cutthroat Lakes - when is it scheduled to be removed?

DNR response: Unknown. I'm sure it would be removed as part of the USFS Vegetation Management project they're planning in the area, but I don't know the timeline.

Comment: The USFS Vegetation Management project includes 3600 acres over ten years; not sure what first.

DNR question: It's my understanding that the type of climbing afforded by Static Peak is not as popular as that offered by Vesper and others. Is this a fair assessment?

Response: Yes, that's fair to say.

Question: Does your recommendation for three year closure of Gothic apply only to Gothic?

DNR response: Yes, only Gothic Basin.

DNR: Apart from recent engagement with WTA we have no active partnerships with other groups in Morning Star. Not because we don't recognize the need but because of lack of time to develop partnerships. WTA is an important stakeholder and we're hopeful of building on that relationship. It would be great if we could forge others as well.

Question: What about youth organizations?

DNR response: There are some great organizations out there. We have not spent time cultivating those.

Question: Can we expect follow up after tonight?



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DNR response: Yes, we will be in touch with you when we have a draft trails plan, and we may do some additional outreach related to decision-making in Gothic Basin.

Question: Do you have funding for Gothic now?

DNR response: The grant includes money for design/permitting on the capstone project (beaver dam and Bear Creek crossings on Boulder Greider trail). We also have enough funding to begin the assessment work at Gothic Basin. In this approach we'd need to seek funding for restoration and development work at Gothic Basin, which would come in the 2019-2021 Biennium if successful.

Comment: Regarding revenue, DNR get 25% management fee from logging, right?.

DNR response: Yes, DNR retains a percentage of trust lands revenue, which is used to manage those lands. That money pays for staff time to create and administer timber sales, for silviculture activities, etc. It's a "closed loop" revenue stream, and those funds cannot be used to fund recreation or conservation activities.

Comment: For E&E officers, uniform and radio makes a difference in terms of presence, similar to Forest Rangers.

DNR response: Friends of Woodard Bay is good example. Takes time to institute but extremely valuable assistance.

DNR: DNR needs more manpower in Natural Areas. We're currently operating at a level of funding that is about 35% lower than it was before we took a budget cut several years ago. We continue to work toward recovery in this area.

Comment: Place a sign that says "Registering will help to obtain funding for trails" at kiosk registration station. Level of use is an important metric in grant funding.

DNR response: I'd like to move to some kind of electronic registration (e.g. QR code with smart phone) that would eliminate the need to maintain registration by paper, which we're not staffed to keep up with.

Question: How do we advocate for getting a "Site Management Plan" for Morning Star?

DNR response: Some time ago the Legislature cut \$1.3m dollars in funding that allowed DNR to write management plans; as such we don't have the staff capacity to write site-specific management plans. Another important way the Committee can continue to help is in future letters of support to include with our grant requests, and showing support by coming to grant interviews. Ongoing support from users and other stakeholders is a very important element of grant funding.



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**Morning Star Trail Planning Committee
Meeting 8 Summary
April 25, 2018
6:00 to 8:30 PM**

Meeting Purpose: Review draft trails plan and implementation

DNR Staff in attendance:

Paul McFarland - Northwest Region Natural Areas Manager, and Morning Star Trail Planning Project Manager
Barbara Simpson - Parks Planner, Landscape Architect

Committee in attendance:

Ken Masel –Washington Trail Blazers
Rad Roberts - American Alpine Club, WA Climbers Coalition, Cascade Climbers
Matt Speten – Morning Star Volunteer Recreation Steward
Marc Bardsley – North Cascades Conservation Council
Kathy Johnson – Pilchuck Audubon Society
Ruth Milner – WDFW
Phil Roberts – USGS Soils Survey
Chris Hagen – YMCA BOLD and GOLD Program Director
Erica Keene – USFS
Gary Paull – ret. USFS

Guests in attendance:

Joe Sambotoro – Public Access Fund
Bridget Wisniewski – USFS

Approval of Meeting 7 summary: Approved with Holly's correction.

Draft plan presentation

The trails plan due date is October 31, 2018. There will be a SEPA review of the plan sometime in the summer and additional public review will be a part of the SEPA process.

Is Red Mountain in Morning Star?

Will send this presentation by email to the entire committee including those not here tonight.

It appears that permit system ranked as one possible outcome in the "Access Control" category. Is that correct?



Morning Star Trails Planning



Yes, permit system did rank as a potential action during the sorting/prioritization exercise done by the Committee. Bear in mind, we think of these prioritized categories not so much as a prescription of work that will necessarily happen, but rather as guides to decision making. For example, as we contemplate work in a given landscape, we might consider implementing a permit system if necessary to achieve the larger goal of conservation.

As you know from our earlier email update, we've decided against a closure at Gothic Basin. We came to the conclusion it's impractical to think we can enforce a closure, and also devote resources necessary to conduct assessment work at Gothic Basin, and all the other work related to Trails Plan implementation. Instead, we'll do the assessment work while the site remains open to use.

What is routine maintenance? Does DNR's maintenance start at the Morning Star boundary or lower in the USFS?

We don't have formal trail management agreements on Gothic or Vesper trails. Cooperative trail management will need to be part of implementation. We want and need to work together with our neighbors.

Is there a plan for trailhead data collection such as counters?

Not presently, apart from anecdotal information. This is another area we need to address. Gothic Basin would be a good site to start collecting reliable level-of-use information, as we're just now beginning to plan for developed facilities there, and level of use will be an important part of that process.

What about a memorandum of understanding between DNR and USFS so that both agencies can work on each other's land? Recommend taking a more holistic approach such as if DNR is going out with a work party they could plan to work on the entire Walt Bailey trail, not just the portion starting at the NRCA boundary.

For example in the Mount Pilchuck State Park there is a "floating easement" approach allowing the agencies to work on each other's trail segments.

Yes, we agree a more collaborative approach would increase efficiency. We need to develop a stronger working relationship to this end. We also need to be mindful of liability issues surrounding work on other ownerships, and whether cooperation can be informal, or needs to be formalized. We'll explore this topic with Forest Service staff as we move along on implementation.

Having a formal MOU document can address liability.



Morning Star Trails Planning



On the new Cutthroat Lakes grant, which mile will be worked on?

Trail work on the Cutthroat grant is focused up near the lakes.

On the subject of toilets: As you know, we've been researching several different styles for toilets in Morning Star. We've settled on the urine diversion composting style we discussed in earlier meetings. We've seen one that's installed at Baker Lake, and they're also in use at numerous National Parks and BC Parks. We believe them to be environmentally sensitive, sustainable, and relatively inexpensive to manage over time. We're still thinking about how to approach Gothic Basin. We may install temporary toilet(s) there to allow time to complete the assessment and site planning. The goal is to have some version of functional toilet installed there during the summer of 2018.

For composting toilet is the funding from the grant or capital funds?

We're proposing installation of toilets at five campgrounds in an upcoming grant application (WWRP 18-1614).

Where are we at with permitting toilets with Snohomish County and City of Everett watershed?

We have begun the permitting conversation with the County and will continue to work on that element in order to be ready for summer installations. We know the City does not favor pit toilets in the watershed, and will commit to not installing them in those locations.

Two WWRP grant applications are being submitted in May. One for bridges and one for toilets. As noted before, we've decided on the urine diverting composting style for toilets, both within the watershed, and also elsewhere in most locations.

For bridges we like a fiberglass style that can be installed by volunteers and WCC crews. Fiberglass is long lived, and this style of bridge is engineered so no single piece weighs more than 200 pounds, so can be handled absent need for heavy equipment. Some of you saw this style on the field trip to Ashland Lakes, where we recently installed one. We've got a head start on the Boulder Creek bridge, as much of the work on design/permitting is done. We intended to replace that bridge a few years ago, but postponed construction in part to allow for more comprehensive planning like this trails planning process before making the investment.

On Boulder-Greider Trail, City of Everett and PUD are concerned about motorcycles and ATV's being able to access the trail as a result of proposed improvements.

Yes, we can work design elements into bridges along that trail segment to help ensure against motorized use.



Morning Star Trails Planning



On Education and Enforcement both Walker Valley and Reiter have E&E wardens. Is there E&E funding available for non-motorized areas? I support funding E&E for Morning Star – especially Gothic and how do we help DNR to obtain it? Stakeholders need to be in on the early stages of the grant process so that we can help.

Yes, more presence for education and enforcement in Morning Star a definite need. We have not tried for E&E funding for non-motorized recreation areas, but will explore that possibility in the current grant application cycle.

The Forest Service hands out pack it in bags at Verlot. You can think of us as partners and we do a lot of E&E, handling a lot of questions about the hikes and conditions in the overall landscape from our ranger station. Let's chat and we can help to provide information about the user comments we are receiving. And we are happy to inform users about the upcoming assessment in Gothic that DNR is planning for example.

This process also illustrates the benefits to be gained from collaborating with groups such as this planning committee. There's a wealth of knowledge and skills available in the organizations represented on this committee that could enhance DNR's management efforts, including such things as trailhead surveys, rare plants surveys, restoration, trail repair etc., outreach to elected officials, etc.

Yes! That's a great transition to another topic we wanted to raise tonight. What would you all think about the idea of DNR starting a Morning Star advisory committee or some such body to help maintain an ongoing connection to and dialogue with stakeholders?

Yes, prefer Advisory Committee over drop-in involvement. Suggest putting out a memo to one or two people per organization who can represent larger support groups.

An Advisory Committee is a good way to keep organizations aware of ongoing needs for support.

I suggest DNR write an email suggesting a meeting to discuss feasibility and potential structure of the advisory committee idea.

An advisory committee could help DNR with the work load. This is a chance to get ahead of the curve.

Yes, there is interest. What can we accomplish for example at a June meeting? Send out a meeting schedule to form a committee. Need to start to seek funds for next year.

OK, good. I'm willing to commit to pursuing this to see if we can initiate an ongoing stakeholder group. I'll send an email soon to get the ball rolling.



Morning Star Trails Planning



Finally, as we mentioned before, DNR is submitting May 1 for two WWRP grants for Morning Star and would very much appreciate letters of support from you all. As you know, support for grant proposals is a significant element in grant ranking, and I'm sure it made a big difference in our getting the grant that's funding this effort.

The groups represented on this committee represent a large constituency in the conservation community, and we can definitely help with things like funding requests and other issues at the legislative level.

Paul will send out details of the two grants being sought to facilitate a quick turnaround for letters of support.

This is the last meeting we have scheduled for the Trails Committee. We just want to take an opportunity to thank you all for your passion about this special place, for giving your time and energy to the planning process, and for your insights and willingness to help ensure a bright future for Morning Star NRCA. We're off to a great start with this effort, and we at DNR look forward to working with you and your organizations into the future to help ensure great outcomes. Thank you!

Appendix D

Implementation Schedule

Appendix E

Species with Special Status

Species and Communities With Special Conservation Status

DNR Natural Area Name (or area within a Natural Area): Morning Star NRCA

Date: 7/27/2018

Site Designation: Natural Resources Conservation Area Natural Area Preserve Combination NAP/NRCA

Acronyms: DNR = Washington State Department of Natural Resources; WDFW = Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife; WNHP = Washington Natural Heritage Program; USFWS = US Fish and Wildlife Service; PHS = Priority Habitats and Species; SGCN = Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

Species, Community or Habitat Type	Occurrence	Status ¹	Source
Bull trout	Present	FT, SC, P1, SGCN, PS	WDFW/Streamnet
Marbled murrelet	Breeding	FT, SE, P2, SGCN, PS	WDFW
Pacific fisher	Present	FC, SE, SGCN, PS	WDFW
Northern spotted owl	Breeding	FT, SE, P1, SGCN, PS	WDFW
Western toad	Breeding	SC, P3, SGCN, PS	WDFW
Bald eagle	Present	FSC, SGCN	DNR-WNHP
Vaux's swift	Present	SC, PS	DNR-WNHP
Pileated woodpecker	Present	SC, PS	DNR-WNHP
Harlequin duck	Breeding	P3, PS	WDFW
Common loon	Present	SS, P3, SGCN, PS	DNR-WNHP
Mountain goat	Present	PS	WDFW
Coastal resident cutthroat	Present	PS	WDFW
Rainbow trout	Present	PS	WDFW
Choris' bog-orchid	Present	ST, P2	DNR-WNHP
Black lily	Present	ST, P3	DNR-WNHP
Cooley's buttercup	Present	ST, P3	DNR-WNHP
Few-flowered sedge	Present	SS, P3	DNR-WNHP
Alaska harebell	Present	SS, P3	DNR-WNHP
Pacific silver fir / devils club	Present	P*	DNR-WNHP
Pacific silver fir / swordfern	Present	P3	DNR-WNHP

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Species, Community or Habitat Type	Occurrence	Status ¹	Source
Pacific silver fir / salal	Present	P3	DNR-WNHP
Pacific silver fir / Alaska huckleberry	Present	P*	DNR-WNHP
Pacific silver fir / Alaska huckleberry - foamflower	Present	P3	DNR-WNHP
Pacific silver fir / Alaska huckleberry - salal	Present	P2	DNR-WNHP
Pacific silver fir / beargrass	Present	P3	DNR-WNHP
Sitka alder-vine maple	Present	P*	DNR-WNHP
Sitka valerian-showy sedge	Present	P3	DNR-WNHP
Mid-elevation freshwater wetland	Present	P3	DNR-WNHP
Mid-elevation sphagnum bog	Present	P3	DNR-WNHP
Sub-alpine freshwater wetland	Present	P*	DNR-WNHP
Western hemlock / Alaska huckleberry	Present	P*	DNR-WNHP
Mountain hemlock – Pacific silver fir / copperbush	Present	P2	DNR-WNHP
Mountain hemlock – Pacific silver fir / pink mountain heather - blueleaf huckleberry	Present	P*	DNR-WNHP
Mountain hemlock – Pacific silver fir / big huckleberry	Present	P3	DNR-WNHP
Mountain hemlock – Pacific silver fir /Alaska huckleberry	Present	P*	DNR-WNHP
Western cassiope – pink mountain heather	Present	P*	DNR-WNHP

¹ FE/FT/FC/FSC = Federally Endangered/Threatened/Candidate/Concern (USFWS); SE/ST/SC/SS = State Endangered/Threatened/Candidate/Sensitive (WNHP, WDFW); P1/2/3/* = Priority 1/2/3/* (WNHP); PS = Priority Species (WDFW); SGCN = Species of Greatest Conservation Need (WDFW).



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES
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