

Habitat Management Plan for Wildlife Management Areas (WMA's) in South Sanpete County and Willow Creek in North Sevier County

This habitat management plan (HMP) contains the following sections: background information (purpose of Division ownership, public recreation opportunities, etc.), property information (property descriptions, encumbrances, etc.), property inventory (capital improvements, existing habitats, etc.), management goals and objectives, strategies for property management, and strategies for habitat management. The appendices contain location maps of individual WMA's, and the access plan which explains public access opportunities. This HMP provides management direction to Utah Division of Wildlife Resources personnel for the WMA's contained herein. Listed below is a short summary of the contents of the HMP.

Primary purpose of WMA: To preserve and protect big game winter range and wintering animals, and reduce crop depredation by deer and elk on surrounding private property.

Wildlife species: The primary species benefitting are mule deer and elk. Numerous other species also benefit from the WMA's including: black bear and mountain lion, furbearers (bobcat, etc.), upland game (chukar, mourning dove, cottontail, etc.), raptors (bald eagle, etc.), neotropical migratory birds and small mammals.

Habitat conditions/problems: This habitat management plan contains several WMA's which are experiencing pinyon/juniper re-establishment in previously chained areas. Areas with increasing pinyon-juniper cover will be evaluated for thinning. Increasing canopy cover of trees is causing a decline in production and vigor of understory herbaceous plants and shrubs. Thinning activities will take into account the importance of pinyon and juniper as thermal cover for big game, and thinning projects will be planned to ensure adequate pinyon-juniper cover is left on site to provide this important habitat requirement. Most chaining areas are also deficient in preferred browse forage for wintering wildlife and more shrubs need to be established. Noxious weed problems include infestations of musk thistle and whitetop on several units in addition to the recent invasion of squarrose knapweed and Dyer's woad.

Many of the WMA's are experiencing problems with unauthorized motorized vehicle use primarily in the creation of roads and trails. Efforts will be made to close and rehabilitate all unauthorized roads and trails. Habitat damage is occurring from winter use of motorized vehicles and the dumping of garbage, particularly on those units close to residential areas such as Black Hill. When needed, seasonal vehicle closures (December 1 – April 15) will be implemented to protect wintering big game and critical habitats.

Grazing is used as a management tool on many of the WMA's to reduce fire danger and release browse species for wintering big game. The grazing system typically used is a high intensity, short duration rest rotation system during spring and early summer.

Access plan: Seasonal closures will be implemented as needed to protect big game winter range and wintering animals. Motorized vehicle traffic will be confined to existing roads and trails. Roads will be maintained as needed to maintain public access. Unauthorized user created roads and trails will be closed and rehabilitated.

Maintenance activities: Annual fence inspection, repairs, replacement; gates, locks, road grading as needed; road closures; boundary signs; entry signs; special fences; trespass; surveys.

Habitat improvement: Pinyon-juniper chaining areas will be preserved. When necessary, trees will be removed by hand cutting, chaining, or prescribed fire, to maintain critical winter range for mule deer and elk. Shrub transplanting and/or seeding will take place if necessary to enhance available browse forage. Abandoned agriculture fields will be rehabilitated and seeded. Perimeter and interior fences will be maintained and improved to accomplish the grazing management plan. Water developments and troughs will be maintained to provide water for wildlife and permitted livestock.

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Habitat Management Plan for Wildlife Management Areas (WMA's) in South Sanpete County and Willow Creek in North Sevier County

I. Background Information

Purpose of Division Ownership

The WMA's covered under this HMP were acquired primarily to protect, preserve, and enhance critical big game winter range, and to reduce crop degradation by mule deer and elk on surrounding private property. These WMA's also provides habitat for a variety of other wildlife species, and provide recreational and access opportunities for the public including hunting, hiking, camping, and OHV use.

Historic Uses

Prior to Division ownership, these WMA's were primarily used for livestock grazing and some limited farming operations. Initially, sheep operations were the dominant activity with cattle grazing being of secondary importance. A few small alfalfa fields existed on the Twelve-Mile WMA prior to Division ownership. Since being taken out of agriculture, these areas have become degraded and dominated by weeds, and are slated for rehabilitation.

Quarries on the White Hill and Black Hill WMA's have provided for a limited amount of rock mining both prior to and during Division ownership. They were in operation sometime during the 19th century, and provided building materials for many of the local historic buildings. Although the quarries are not active at the present time, the Division still receives requests by local residents to take small quantities of rock from the old quarries for personal use. Operation of the quarries is under jurisdiction of the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining (DOG M). Several sand and gravel operations can be found adjacent to many of the WMA's. These operations are not under state supervision (DOG M).

Public Recreation Opportunities

All activities occurring on Division lands are managed under the direction of Rule R657-28, Use of Division Lands. This rule discusses approved uses, prohibited activities, and the process for applying and receiving the various permits required to use Division lands. The Division will work with WMA visitors to ensure that all activities are in compliance with this rule.

The WMA's under this HMP are popular for big game and upland game hunting as well as hunting and trapping for mountain lions and furbearer species. Non-consumptive uses include hiking, horseback riding, and wildlife viewing.

Camping

Camping is permitted on all WMA's, and unless posted otherwise, is limited to 14 days as noted in Rule R657-28-4(1)l. The Division reserves the right to change the length of camping stays if this action is needed to reach the goals and objectives of the habitat management plan. If the Division determines this is needed, changes in camping regulations will be posted on the WMA(s) where the change is implemented.

Campfires

Open fires will be allowed, but this activity is subject to state and federal policies and guidelines including closures during high-risk fire seasons. On some WMA's, primarily Black Hill, open fires are becoming a problem as WMA visitors are bringing furniture, automobiles, and yard waste, etc. onto WMA's and starting bonfires. The building of bonfires is prohibited on all WMA's. Non-combustible materials cannot be used in the building of fires and must be removed. The Division reserves the right to ban open fires on any or all WMA's if needed to protect valuable wildlife habitat on the WMA and adjacent private and municipal lands. The Division may also restrict open fires to designated areas if the use of open fires becomes a management problem.

OHV Use

OHV use is permitted, but is restricted to authorized roads and trails (see Appendix B, Access Management Plan). Many of the WMA's have been heavily impacted by motorized recreation resulting in the creation of numerous unauthorized roads/trails. Region personnel annually work to close and rehabilitate unauthorized roads/trails in an attempt to preserve and protect wildlife habitat. These efforts will not be successful unless WMA visitors adhere to the Division's OHV and motorized vehicle rules by staying on existing roads and trails.

Public Access

As needed, seasonal road closures are implemented that prohibit motorized vehicle access from December 1 – April 15. Seasonal closures are used to protect wildlife from disturbance during critical winter months, and to preserve habitats from being negatively impacted during wet winter and early spring periods. Areas that are not subject to seasonal vehicle closures include county roads and other public routes where rights-of-way have been established for various reasons including access to private lands within the WMA's. Additional information on public access and motorized vehicle use on the WMA's can be found in the access management plan which is included as Appendix B.

Key Wildlife Species

As previously described, the WMA's contained in this HMP were originally purchased for big game habitat values, primarily for mule deer. As such, mule deer and elk are the primary beneficiaries, especially during winter months when they come down from high elevation summer ranges on the Wasatch Plateau to winter in the Sanpete Valley.

The WMA's are also home to numerous other species at some time during the year including black bear and mountain lion, furbearers (bobcat), upland game (chukar, mourning dove, cottontail, etc.), raptors (bald eagle, etc.), neotropical migratory birds and small mammals.

Grazing

Grazing is used as a management tool to enhance wildlife habitat, primarily big game winter range. Grazing can help the Division achieve wildlife habitat goals by reducing fire danger and releasing browse species to provide winter forage for big game. The 'Livestock Grazing Plan' is

included on page 20 of this HMP and outlines specific grazing activities and a complete grazing schedule for all WMA's.

II. Property Information

Property Descriptions

This habitat management plan (HMP) contains 10 wildlife management areas (WMA's) totaling approximately 26,227 acres. The WMA's are: White Hill, Black Hill, Bald Mountain, Manti Face, Maple Canyon, Six-Mile, Nine-Mile, North Hollow, Twelve-Mile, and Willow Creek. A short description of each WMA is listed below. All of the WMA's contained within this plan, with the exception of Maple Canyon, are found along the west slope of the Wasatch Plateau in Sanpete and Sevier Counties. The Maple Canyon WMA lies along the southeastern portion of the San Pitch Mountains on the west side of the Sanpete Valley. These WMA's are fee title lands owned by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR), acquired in cooperation with the US. Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Aid Division. UDWR also holds 1,016 acres in the Sterling and Sorensen conservation easements which are adjacent to the Nine-Mile and North Hollow WMA's respectively. UDWR also leases 448 acres from the State Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA) for grazing purposes adjacent to the Black Hill WMA. Copies of deeds and exchange agreements can be found in either UDWR's Salt Lake Office, 1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City, UT, 84114, or in the Central Region Office at 1115 North Main Street, Springville, UT, 84663.

White Hill WMA

This WMA is located approximately 4 miles northeast of Ephraim. It consists of 1,161 acres found in Township 16S, Range 3E, sections 1, 2, 11-13; and Township 16S, Range 4E, sections 7 and 17. This unit was acquired from a livestock company in 1984. All water rights owned by the grantor and appurtenant to the 1,161 acres were transferred to UDWR. However, water rights numbers were not specified in the warranty deed.

Black Hill WMA

This WMA consists of 1,668 acres and is located south of White Hill and just east of Ephraim. The WMA lies within Township 16S, Range 3E, sections 25-27 and 34-36; and Township 17S, Range 3E, sections 1 and 3. It was acquired from a livestock company and three private landowners from 1980-1984, and a 25-acre parcel was received in a land trade with Ephraim City in 1999. UDWR also acquired the water rights held by the grantor appurtenant to 1,610 acres. However, only Water Right #65-455 for 0.107 cfs is specified on 470 acres. No water right numbers were specified for the remaining acres. UDWR also holds a 10-year term grazing lease on 448 acres of SITLA lands adjacent to the northeast part of the unit, which will need to be renewed in 2012.

Bald Mountain WMA

This WMA consists of 2,571 acres southeast of Ephraim. It lies within Township 17S, Range 3E, sections 13-15 and 22-24. It was acquired from three private landowners between 1968-1977. A 22' wide right-of-way, which provides access to the NW part of the management area,

was also acquired with the purchase of the largest parcel. UDWR acquired the water rights held by the grantors and appurtenant to 2,494 acres, except for an unnamed spring located in the SE1/4 NW1/4 of Section 14 in T17S and R3E, SLB&M. No water rights numbers were specified in the warranty deeds for the properties. There is a significant spring located in section 24.

Manti Face WMA

This WMA is located northeast of Manti and consists of 2,531 acres. It lies within Township 17S, Range 3E, sections 27-28 and 33-34; and Township 18S, Range 3E, sections 4-5 and 7-9. It was acquired from one corporation and four private landowners between 1968-1985. UDWR also acquired the water rights held by the grantors and appurtenant to approximately 270 acres. Water Right #40639 (65-1697) is associated with the 25.6 acres acquired in Section 5. No other water right numbers were specified in the warranty deeds for the remaining acreage.

Maple Canyon WMA

This WMA is located west of Manti and consists of 1,160 acres. It lies within Township 17S, Range 2 East, and includes parts of sections 19, 29, 30, 31, and 32. It was acquired from two private landowners in 1968. The warranty deeds indicate that water rights that might be appurtenant to the lands were also transferred to UDWR with the acquisition of the land. However, there were no water right certificate numbers associated with the land. A grazing permit on adjacent BLM lands was also acquired from one of the landowners. This permit is for 10 cattle from July 1 through September 30 annually (30 AUM's). A spring in Dodge Canyon is located in T18S, R2E, section 5. Water rights to this spring belong to the Keeler Family Trust in Manti, Utah (Water Right #65-2451).

Six-Mile WMA

This WMA is located south and east of Manti and consists of 2,819 acres, and is bordered on the southwest by Palisade Lake State Park. Two of the golf course fairways actually lie on the WMA. It lies within Township 18S, Range 3E, section 18; and Township 18S, Range 2E, sections 13, 24-26, and 35-36. It was acquired from nine private landowners, two BLM transfers, and one corporate land trade between 1957-1986. Although the grantor of one of the parcels within section 13 retained the water rights to Crystal Spring, the deed indicated that water would be provided for wildlife if the spring were developed. However, no number was specified for this water right. The acquisition documents did not mention anything about water rights appurtenant to the lands purchased for any other acreages within the WMA.

Nine-Mile WMA

This WMA is located southeast of Sterling and consists of 2,503 acres. It lies within Township 19S, Range 2E, sections 2-4 and 9-11. It was acquired from seven private landowners and the Division of State Lands between 1943-1984. Water rights were acquired appurtenant to only 240 acres in Section 3. The 143-acre Sterling conservation easement is immediately adjacent to the WMA and is further described below.

North Hollow WMA

This WMA consists of 1,530 acres northeast of Mayfield and north of Twelve-Mile Canyon. It lies within Township 19S, Range 2E, sections 22, 26-28, and 33-34. It was acquired from three private landowners between 1942-1982. Water rights were acquired appurtenant to 404 acres in Sections 26, 27 and 34, but water rights numbers were not specified. A public access easement was acquired to the existing road in sections 33 and 34. The 873-acre Sorensen conservation easement borders this WMA on the east and is further described below.

Twelve-Mile WMA

This WMA is south of Mayfield and consists of 9,027 acres. The southern most portion lies in Sevier County. This WMA is within Township 19S, Range 2E, sections 33-34; Township 20S, Range 2E, sections 2-5, 8-11, 15-17, 21-23, 26-28, and 33-35. It was acquired from 13 private landowners, a livestock company, and two BLM transfers between 1942-1997. There are approximately 640 acres of private in-holdings that fall within the WMA. Water rights were acquired appurtenant to a total of 1,926 acres in 10 different sections, but the water right numbers were not specified. Water rights were also acquired by UDWR for Olsen and Order Canyons (#63-4193). UDWR disposed of 27 acres of land and 80% of the water rights to Mayfield Town, with the understanding that the remaining 20% of the water right would be used on the property for irrigation and wildlife and stock watering. The Division is working with Mayfield City to exercise this water right which includes a pipeline and trough on the north end of the WMA, and filling the old irrigation pond for livestock watering during the grazing season.

Willow Creek WMA

This is the southernmost WMA in this HMP and is located approximately 6.5 miles south of Mayfield, and just south and east of Willow Creek Reservoir approximately 1 mile south of the Sanpete/Sevier County line. It consists of 1,237 acres that lie within Township 21S, Range 1E, sections 1 and 12; Township 20S, Range 2E, section 31; and Township 21S, Range 2E, section 6. The WMA was acquired from private landowners in 1983. All water rights owned by the grantor and appurtenant to the 1237 acres were transferred to UDWR. However, water rights numbers were not specified in the warranty deed.

Sterling Conservation Easement

The Sterling conservation easement was acquired by Sportsmen for Habitat, Inc. of North Weber, Utah, and transferred to UDWR in January of 2004. This easement consists of 143 acres and is just north of and adjacent to the Nine-Mile WMA. The easement lies within Township 19S, Range 2E, section 2. A complete description of the easement including property location and description, historic and current uses, and easement stipulations can be found in the deed of conservation easement and baseline inventory filed in the Salt Lake and Central Region offices of UDWR.

Sorensen Conservation Easement

The Sorensen conservation easement was acquired in 1996 from Lee and Karen Sorensen of Mayfield. This easement consists of 873 acres and is adjacent to the North Hollow WMA. The

easement lies within Township 19S, Range 2E, sections 26 and 34-35. A complete description of the easement including property location and description, historic and current uses, and easement stipulations can be found in the deed of conservation easement and baseline inventory filed in the Salt Lake and Central Region offices of UDWR.

Land Acquisition History

The 10 WMA's included in this HMP were acquired from numerous individuals and private entities between 1942 and 1999. Some lands were also acquired from other state and federal agencies. Small acreages have also been acquired from local governments through land exchanges deemed beneficial to both parties. The majority of the acquisitions have involved federal grants through the Federal Aid to Wildlife Restoration Program, often referred to as the Pittman-Robertson or P-R Act, which authorizes federal participation in cooperative wildlife restoration projects with state wildlife agencies. This program is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Federal Aid Division which the Division partnered with to acquire these WMA's. The following wildlife restoration projects were developed for acquisition and preservation of wildlife habitats which resulted in the creation of the WMA's contained in this HMP. These are:

- Project W-11-L (1941) Twelve-Mile Canyon Deer Winter Range
- Project W-24-L (1943) Ephraim Game Winter Range
- Project W-87-L (1957, 1968) Manti Canyon Deer Winter Range (Ephraim BGWR)
- Project W-130-L (1976) Fairview-Mt. Pleasant Big Game Winter Range.
- Project W-137-L (1983) Salina Big Game Winter Range

Because federal funds were used in the acquisition of these properties, the Division is required to comply with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidelines when considering actions that could affect the environment. The USFWS is the responsible party for issuing the record of decision with regards to proposed actions on these WMA's.

Encumbrances

UDWR generally obtained only the surface rights to the lands they acquired. The oil, gas, mineral, (sometimes coal) and geothermal rights appurtenant to the lands were generally retained by the sellers or grantors of those respective lands, including the State Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA). The sellers or grantors generally also retain the right to lease the rights of egress and ingress for the exploration, development and removal of those minerals. However, the seller or lessee shall compensate UDWR for interference with or damages to UDWR's surface lands that have resulted from activities related to mineral exploration or removal. In 2004-05, SITLA permitted oil and gas leases on portions of seven of the ten WMA's included in this HMP. Without going to the Sanpete County Records Office and searching each parcel number that comprises the UDWR lands, there is no easy way of determining whether oil and gas leases have been issued by the private sector. Interest in oil and gas rights has increased tremendously during recent years due to the high yield of petroleum products from a well near Sigurd, Utah, just a few miles south of these WMA's.

Several county roads pass through these WMA's, and unless an agreement is reached for seasonal closure with Sanpete and/or Sevier County, all county roads remain open for public use

year-round.

Several historic livestock trailing areas exist on WMA's in Sanpete and Sevier counties. These are important for moving livestock from private lands on the valley floor to summer allotments on National Forest lands. The Division recognizes these historic livestock trails and their use by livestock producers for trailing purposes.

In addition to mineral rights and county roads, some of the WMA's had additional easements associated with the property at the time of acquisition. The Division has also granted utility easements and rights-of-way (ROW) on some WMA's since acquisition. As previously stated, all activities occurring on Division lands are managed under the direction of Rule R657-28, Use of Division Lands. This rule discusses approved uses, prohibited activities, and the process for applying and receiving the various permits required to use Division lands. The following is a list of encumbrances for each of the ten WMA's contained in this HMP.

White Hill WMA:

- Previous owners reserved all mineral, geothermal, oil and gas rights and the ingress/egress for using those rights.
- Easement to Chester Irrigation Company for ditches & canals (Sec. 12).
- Small mining operation at one quarry (Sec. 12)—inactive since 1999.

Black Hill WMA:

- The previous owners reserved all mineral, geothermal, oil and gas rights (but not including sand and gravel) on the property and the ingress/egress for using those rights.
- Small mining operations in several quarries (Sections 26 and 35)—inactive since 1976.

Bald Mountain WMA:

- Previous owners reserved all mineral, geothermal, oil and gas rights and the ingress/egress for using those rights.
- Easement for Utah Power & Light (Sec. 15).
- Easement for Ephraim City waterline (Sec. 14).

Manti Face WMA:

- The previous owners reserved all mineral, geothermal, oil and gas rights (but not including sand and gravel) on the property and the ingress/egress for using those rights.
- Grantor reserved the privilege of moving livestock across the 1,680 acres deeded to UDWR to adjacent lands.

Maple Canyon WMA:

- The previous owners reserved all mineral, oil, coal, and gas rights (but not including sand and gravel) on the property and the ingress/egress for using those rights.

Six-Mile WMA:

- The previous owners reserved all mineral, geothermal, oil and gas rights (but not including sand and gravel) on the property and the ingress/egress for using those rights.
- The ROW for ditches and canals existing on property (Sec. 24, 25, 26, & 35).

- The ROW and easement for a 24” penstock, hydropower plant, and transmission lines associated with FERC Project No. 6764 that expires in 2021 (Sec. 24, 25 and 36).
- Easement with Manti Irrigation Co. for ditches & canals (Sec. 13 & 18).

Nine-Mile WMA:

- The previous owners reserved all mineral, geothermal, oil and gas rights (but not including sand and gravel) on the property and the ingress/egress for using those rights.
- The Cove Creek Coal Co. holds an interest to coal in Section 2.
- Sterling Town has an easement for a culinary water line through Section 2.
- Utah Power & Light easement for a buried powerline through portions of Sec. 4 and 33; expires in 2022.
- One grantor holds the right to trail livestock through 103 acres in Section 2.
- Easement or ROW for highways, ditches, tunnels, phone & transmission lines (Sec. 11).

North Hollow WMA:

- The previous owners reserved all mineral, geothermal, oil and gas rights (but not including sand and gravel) on the property and the ingress/egress for using those rights.
- Waterline easement (865 feet long and 50 feet wide) to Mayfield Town (Sec. 33).

Twelve-Mile WMA:

- The previous owners reserved all mineral, geothermal, oil and gas rights (but not including sand and gravel) on the property and the ingress/egress for using those rights.
- Waterline easement to Mayfield Town (Sec. 2-3, 10-11, and 33) from Olsen and Order Canyons.
- Storage and irrigation water for Pole Canyon water rights (Sec. 15 and 22).
- Ditches and canals reserved to M.C. Jensen (Sec. 3).
- 30 foot wide ROW to C.S. Wiss (Sec. 3).
- ROW for ditches and canals constructed by authority of the USA (Sec. 21, 22, 26, 28, 33, 35).
- UP & L utility easement (Sec. 21 and 22).
- Pipeline easement to LDS Church and Gerald Willden (Sec. 21, 22, 27 and 28).

Willow Creek WMA:

- The previous owners reserved all mineral, geothermal, oil and gas rights (but not including sand and gravel) on the property and the ingress/egress for using those rights.

Conservation Partners Involved in Acquisition

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, through its federal aid program, has been a major partner in acquiring the WMA’s described in this HMP. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has granted land to the Division for big game management on some of the WMA’s as well. Sportsmen’s organizations and the Division’s Habitat Council have played a key role in providing funds to acquire conservation easements on adjacent private lands and deeding these easements to the Division to manage in conjunction with adjacent WMA’s.

III. Property Inventory

Existing Capital Improvements

Most of the existing improvements on these WMA's are roads and fences. Roads and fences are maintained on an annual basis or as needed.

A water system consisting of ~2 miles of pipeline and several troughs exists on the Twelve-Mile WMA. A portion of this pipeline was rebuilt by dedicated hunters in 2005. The Division uses dedicated hunters and/or livestock permittees who have a permit to graze the WMA to conduct needed maintenance on the water line and troughs as needed.

The Black Hill WMA has a single water trough that is tied to an existing pipeline that crosses the management area. The trough was placed as part of an agreement with a local landowner who has the water rights to the pipeline. The agreement allows for water to be taken from the line and placed in the trough for livestock and wildlife watering.

Cultural Resources

The Division's archaeologist conducted a CURES database search and identified several cultural resource inventories that have been completed. These include:

- 1982 - Black Hill WMA by Madsen Archaeological
- 1983 - Manti Face WMA by the Division of State History
- 1991 - Six-Mile WMA by the Nielsen Consulting Group.

Numerous historic and pre-historic sites have been identified. Caution should be used before any ground disturbing activities are planned or approved within any of the WMA's to ensure that cultural resources are adequately identified and avoidance measures are taken.

Sensitive Species

A search of the Division's Natural Heritage database resulted in the following sensitive species information.

Birds

The Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), a federally threatened species, has been observed at locations in close proximity to several WMA's in this HMP. Bald eagles are present in the Sanpete Valley and likely use the WMA's during winter months.

Important Fish and Wildlife Habitats

Critical big game winter ranges on the east benches of the Sanpete Valley are the most important wildlife habitats existing on these WMA's. As residential and recreational development, oil and gas development, and loss of open space continues to increase in the Sanpete Valley, these WMA's will become increasingly important for wintering big game herds in the Sanpete Valley. The upper elevations also provide important transition habitat for big game traveling between

summer and winter ranges. Mammalian carnivores, primarily mountain lion, also frequent the WMA's in winter months as they follow annual winter migrations of big game herds to the benches above the Sanpete Valley. The vegetation zones occupied by sagebrush and mountain browse provide important breeding and nesting habitats for neotropical migratory birds.

Many lands adjacent to the WMA's are private agriculture tracts, and as a result, big game depredation issues with private landowners are common. It is extremely important that the WMA's are maintained and protected to assist the Division in minimizing big game depredation on private lands.

General Condition of Habitats

Habitat Types

Much of the WMA's are located primarily within historic sagebrush-steppe and pinyon-juniper zones. Large portions of some of the WMA's have been mechanically treated due to the expansion of pinyon-juniper woodlands into the sagebrush type. Throughout the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's, 2-way anchor chaining followed by seeding was employed by the Division to enhance and restore habitat for wildlife species.

Prior to the implementation of chaining projects, pinyon and juniper trees had encroached into historic sagebrush habitats. The result was the suppression of understory shrubs, grasses, and forbs and unstable and eroding watersheds. The area also has a history of heavy domestic livestock use. Anchor chaining and seeding projects helped stabilize these watersheds and provided forage for deer, elk, and domestic livestock. Most of the areas that were chained and seeded are dominated by perennial grasses and are currently lacking in browse forage, but range and watershed conditions are generally fair to good.

On the upper portions of the Bald Mountain, Six-Mile, North Hollow and Twelve-Mile WMA's, the mountain brush and oak zones are prominent. These areas provide important transitional ranges for big game, including deer fawning and elk calving areas.

Range and Watershed Conditions

The Division's range trend program monitors habitat conditions statewide by sampling permanently placed vegetation transects that have been established in key areas. Transects are read on a 5-year rotational schedule based upon the Division's five administrative regions. Ten of these transects are found within WMA's contained in this HMP. The following list contains each study by name and number as well as the WMA where it is found:

- Manti Face Chaining - #16C-1, Manti Face WMA
- Willow Creek - #16C-2, Bald Mountain WMA
- North Manti Face - #16C-3, Manti Face WMA
- Bald Mountain - #16C-4, Bald Mountain WMA
- Cane Valley - #16C-5, Black Hill WMA
- Black Hill - #16C-6, Black Hill WMA
- Mayfield Mountain Face - #16C-7, Twelve-Mile WMA

- Pole Canyon Oak - #16C-9, Twelve-Mile WMA
- Above South Hollow - #16C-11, Twelve-Mile WMA
- Manti Dump - #16C-12, Six-Mile WMA

These studies sample the following vegetation types: 7 pinyon-juniper chainings, 2 mountain brush sites, and 1 mountain big sagebrush site. These studies were established in 1989, and re-read in 1997, 2002, and 2007. They are scheduled to be re-sampled every 5 years. Statewide range trend data and digital photographs for specific sites can be found at the following web address: <http://wildlife.utah.gov/range/>.

In general terms, range trend data show most sites are dominated by perennial grasses, with forbs and preferred browse being limited. Preferred browse species are primarily represented by big sagebrush, black sagebrush, bitterbrush, and mountain mahogany. Due to higher precipitation, mid-elevation sites contain more browse, but they also have a higher occurrence of pinyon-juniper trees reinvading back into previously chained areas. Limited preferred browse and the reinvansion of pinyon and juniper into old chainings are two issues that could become limiting factors to providing adequate critical big game winter range. Strategies to address these issues are discussed in the habitat improvement section of this HMP.

The WMA's described in this HMP fall within the boundaries of the San Pitch River watershed. Personnel from the Division's Central Region office participate in the watershed planning process with their involvement on the San Pitch Watershed Stewardship Group.

Habitat Limitations

The lack of browse forage on some of the WMA's is the major habitat limitation. Adequate winter browse forage for big game herds, especially mule deer, is needed in order for the WMA's to achieve management goals. Although browse species were seeded as part of most chaining and seeding treatments, perennial grasses have largely become the dominant vegetative component on many of the WMA's. The re-invasion and/or release of pinyon and juniper into previously chained areas is also common.

Most of the water rights were retained by the grantors when the Division acquired these lands. Acquiring shares or rights to water will be difficult in the future. In some cases, lack of water does limit the ability of the Division to adequately graze livestock on these WMA's. However, because the primary purpose of the WMA is to provide big game winter range, water is not as limiting to wildlife as in some other areas, especially at higher elevations.

A more detailed discussion of these limitations and their associated solutions can be found in the habitat improvement section of this HMP.

Human Use-Related Problems

Most of the Division parcels contained in this HMP lie in close proximity to municipalities within Sanpete County and/or are adjacent to National Forest lands. Furthermore, all of the WMA's with the exception of Maple Canyon are located along the US 89 corridor, a heavily traveled State Highway leading through the heart of Sanpete County. As a result, these Division parcels experience heavy visitation from a variety of users, some of which detracts from the

purpose and management goals of these lands. Unauthorized activities do occur on the WMA's, and often create conflicts between users, and place a heavy maintenance burden on the Division. While public recreation is encouraged, use of these lands by the public must be conducive to the purpose for which these parcels were acquired, and should not become barriers to the Division being able to reach the management goals and strategies presented in this HMP.

Motorized Vehicles

A major issue facing the Division on the WMA's in Sanpete County is motorized vehicle use, especially from OHV's. While an approved activity, OHV and motorcycle use of the WMA needs to be more closely managed. Unmanaged motorized vehicle traffic, especially during winter and spring months, can and has resulted in degradation of access roads and critical habitats, and fragmentation of crucial big game winter ranges. The creation of unauthorized roads and trails is an on-going problem that is difficult to control. As of 2008, the Division estimates that over 100 miles of unauthorized roads/trails have been created on the WMA's presented in this plan. The Division will work with Sanpete County, local municipalities, law enforcement agencies, private landowners, OHV groups, and other state and federal land management agencies to manage OHV activity in a responsible manner that maintains public access to the WMA's, while helping the Division to achieve its management objectives.

Littering

Littering and trash dumping is a frequent occurrence on these lands, especially on the Black Hills WMA located east of Ephraim. WMA visitors are bringing furniture, appliances, automobiles, and yard waste onto WMA's, dumping them and leaving them. Littering and dumping of all forms of trash, including yard waste, is prohibited on all WMA's. The prohibition of littering will be enforced. The Division will work to adequately sign the WMA to inform the public that littering and dumping of garbage is prohibited, and to encourage better stewardship of these important areas for wildlife.

Camping

Long-term camping on a few areas has been a recurring problem. As previously stated, camping is limited to 14 consecutive days unless otherwise posted and/or a special use permit has been obtained from the Division authorizing a different term.

Adjacent Land Uses and Potential Impacts

Most of the lands adjacent to these WMA's are privately held agricultural lands, county/municipal lands, National Forest lands within the Manti-LaSal National Forest, or public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Richfield Field Office. Crop depredation by big game on adjacent private agricultural lands is an on-going problem that the Division's faces. Livestock grazing occurs on many of the adjacent private lands often resulting in trespass onto Division lands. Adjacent private lands are receiving increasing market-driven pressures to convert to housing subdivisions which has resulted in the loss of important big game ranges. Commercial rock quarries and gravel pits adjacent to several WMA's are common. WMA's that share a boundary with a quarry or pit will need to be monitored closely to ensure encroachment onto Division lands is avoided.

The Division will pursue exchanges and conservation easements with private landowners, municipalities, counties, and other state and federal agencies that block up land, improve public access, and preserve critical wildlife habitats. This would include lands adjacent to or within existing WMA's, as well as parcels throughout the county outside of existing WMA's that would meet the same objectives. High priority parcels would include SITLA lands adjacent to or within the White Hill, Black Hill, Nine-Mile and North Hollow WMA's.

Zoning and Land Use Ordinances

Sanpete County has the following zoning classifications:

- PF: Public Facilities
- BC: Business/Commercial
- A: Agricultural; 5-acre minimum lot size per single dwelling
- RA-1: Residential Agricultural (1/2 mile beyond corporate limits); 1/2-acre minimum lot size per single dwelling
- RA-2: Residential Agricultural (1 mile beyond corporate limits); 1-acre minimum lot size per single dwelling
- SL: Sensitive Lands; 40-acre minimum lot size per single dwelling

The majority of the WMA's are zoned as sensitive lands as are all of the National Forest lands that border the WMA's on the east. The westernmost portions of the Manti Face and Bald Mountain WMA's are zoned as A or RA-2 due to their close proximity to the towns of Ephraim and Manti. The Nine-Mile WMA is zoned completely as A or RA-2 due to its close proximity to the town of Sterling. A portion of the Nine-Mile WMA falls within the "culinary water protection zone" for the town of Sterling. Management activities for wildlife will still maintain the desired groundwater protection. The North Hollow WMA has 2 small parcels on the west boundary that are zoned as RA-1 or RA-2 due to their close proximity to the town of Mayfield. The majority of the lands adjacent to the WMA are privately owned and zoned as agricultural.

The proposed management of these WMA's does not conflict with the zoning ordinances established by Sanpete County. However, because the WMA provides a large portion of the critical big game winter range available within Sanpete County, some conflict does arise as deer and elk move into private agricultural fields, haystacks, and municipal boundaries during winter months.

IV. Management Goals and Objectives

The management of these WMA's will take into account the goals, objectives, and strategies of other Division planning efforts. These other plans are briefly discussed below.

UDWR Strategic Plan

The management of UDWR lands as outlined in this HMP has relevance to the following goals and objectives outlined in the Division's most current strategic plan:

Resource Goal: Expand wildlife populations and conserve sensitive species by protecting and

improving wildlife habitat.

- Objective R1: Protect existing wildlife habitat and improve 500,000 acres of critical habitats and watersheds throughout the state by 2010.
- Objective R2: Increase fish and game populations to meet management plan objectives and expand quality fishing and hunting opportunities.
- Objective R3: Conserve sensitive species to prevent them from being listed as threatened or endangered.

Constituency Goal: Achieve broad-based support for Division programs and budgets by demonstrating the value of wildlife to all citizens of Utah.

- Objective C2: Improve coordination with organizations, public officials, private landowners, industry, and government agencies to obtain support for Division programs.

These goals and objectives will be achieved through a variety of measures specified in the property and habitat management sections of this plan and include development and maintenance activities, habitat improvements, access management, fire management, and livestock grazing. Current and future partnerships and cooperative efforts will also aid the Division in addressing and reaching these goals and objectives. Examples of these are the Sanpitch Coordinated Weed Management Area (CWMA) and the Sanpitch Watershed Stewardship Group.

Wildlife Action Plan

The most recent Wildlife Action Plan (WAP), also known as the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS), was submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and approved in 2005. This plan is effective until 2015 and will be revised as needed. The WAP provides a framework for the planning, cooperation, coordination, and implementation of conservation activities throughout the state. The WAP is composed of the following major elements:

- Approach for including the public, partners, and stakeholders; addresses the mission and authority of partners
- Outlines the effort to coordinate the WAP with other plans
- Identifies species in greatest need of conservation and provides information about the abundance, distribution, and threats to these species
- Identifies priority habitats and discusses the problems, threats, and conservation needs for these habitats
- Discusses plans for monitoring and determining conservation success.

Wildlife Species Management Plans

The WMA's covered under this plan, lie within the boundaries of wildlife management unit 16, Central Mountains. Mule deer and elk management plans were completed for this unit in 2006 and 2008 respectively. The management of the WMA will address the limiting factors and habitat needs identified in those plans and seek to implement habitat management strategies that are needed to reach population objectives. Revisions to these plans are typically done every 5 years, and will be incorporated into the management of the WMA's as needed.

V. Strategies for Property Management

Development Activities

The Division will maintain existing capital improvements on all WMA's. Most of the WMA's have established boundaries and fences, and are maintained regularly. Surveys will be completed where boundary disputes occur, and fences will be constructed to establish legal boundaries. Where fences are in disrepair, replacement fences will be constructed.

All of the WMA's contained in this plan are in need of better signing. In 2008, the Division constructed new boundary signs to be placed on all WMA's throughout the state. UDWR personnel have begun to place the new signs on lands within Sanpete County and will continue this effort until completion. Additional signage identifying seasonal road closures, rehabilitation areas, etc. will be placed as needed. The Division has also recently begun to replace all the large entrance signs onto the WMA's. This process was started in 2009 and will be completed in 2010.

Perennial water sources are limited. Water development projects that encourage year round use of these WMA's by big game should be discouraged as these could negatively impact critical winter ranges. Water development projects that would improve the Division's capacity to adequately administer a grazing program on the WMA's should be pursued. Unauthorized roads and trails will be closed and rehabilitated. Authorized roads will be signed and maintained to ensure access and safety to the public.

Annual Maintenance Activities

Assessments by Division personnel will be made annually, and a maintenance budget will be requested for the following types of activities:

- Boundary and interior fences - will be maintained annually or as needed to ensure property boundaries and grazing pastures are maintained. Division personnel, livestock permittees, and dedicated hunters will be the primary means of maintaining fences.
- Access roads - will be monitored annually and maintenance will be conducted as needed to keep them passable and in safe condition for the public. Roads and other rights-of-way that are administered by other parties (e.g. county, private, municipalities) will be maintained by those parties. Coordinate with local entities to resolve access issues.
- Signage - existing signs will be inspected and replaced as needed. New signs will be placed as needed.
- Noxious weeds - a seasonal weed crew will be hired to inventory and spray noxious weeds. The Division will continue to participate on the San Pitch Coordinated Weed Management Area (CWMA) to plan and coordinate noxious weed activities on the WMA's and surrounding lands.
- Trespass - monitor for motorized vehicle and livestock trespass, make recommendations, and secure funding to solve trespass problems. Coordinate with local entities, including law enforcement, to resolve trespass issues.

VI. Strategies for Habitat Management

Unit Management Plans for Wildlife Species

Strategies for habitat management will be consistent with those outlined in the mule deer and elk management plans previously mentioned which include:

- Continue to improve and restore critical habitats according to the statewide Watershed Initiative being coordinated through the Utah Partner's for Conservation and Development (UPCD). Cooperate with federal land management agencies and private landowners in carrying out habitat improvements such as reseedings, controlled burns, water developments, etc. on public and private lands.
- Pursue land trades and conservation easements that block up land, improve public access, and preserve critical wildlife habitats adjacent to the WMA's.
- Work cooperatively with the Forest Service, BLM and local governments to prepare access management plans that enhance wildlife habitats, range conditions and escape opportunities for elk. Such plans may emphasize a mix of permanent and seasonal road closures and vehicle type restrictions.
- Continue to monitor the permanent range condition and trend studies located on the WMA's.

Habitat Improvement Plan

Specific, detailed habitat improvement plans are beyond the scope of this HMP. However, when needed, and as determined by Division personnel, habitat improvement plans will be submitted to the Division's Habitat Council and other potential partners for funding. Habitat improvement project plans will include specific recommendations including treatment methods, seed mixes, and a total acreage targeted for treatment.

Maintain Previous Restoration Projects

Generally speaking, the best opportunities for habitat improvement on these WMA's will focus on pinyon-juniper habitats that have been previously chained and seeded. Many of these areas are in need of maintenance as small pinyon-juniper whips are reinvading back into the chained areas. Areas with increasing pinyon-juniper cover will be evaluated for thinning. Thinning activities will take into account the importance of pinyon and juniper as thermal cover for big game, and thinning projects will be planned to ensure adequate pinyon-juniper cover is left on site to provide this important habitat requirement. Areas that show heavy reinvansion of pinyon-juniper whips will be re-treated using a variety of methods which could include but will not be limited to prescribed fire, chaining, roller chopping, lop and scatter (hand thinning), and herbicides. Examples of this include several lop and scatter projects that were completed on the WMA in 2007-09. More than 3,000 acres of small pinyon-juniper trees were lop and scattered in previously chained areas on the Black Hill, Six Mile, and Twelve Mile WMA's. In addition, ~540 acres of chaining and seeding was completed on the Twelve Mile WMA in 2008 to improve thick, unproductive pinyon-juniper woodlands. Projects such as these will maintain previous habitat improvement investments and provide the required habitat for wintering big game.

Improve Browse Communities

In order for these WMA's to reach their potential as critical big game winter range, browse communities need to be enhanced and improved. The Division will employ a variety of methods to achieve this including prescribed grazing, prescribed burning, reseeding and seedling transplants, and mechanical treatments. Priority areas will include sagebrush-steppe and mountain browse communities.

Livestock Grazing as a Management Tool

Grazing will be utilized as a habitat management tool to achieve desired vegetation goals. High intensity, short duration grazing systems during spring and early summer months will be used to improve browse communities for wintering big game.

Water Developments

Water developments should only be pursued if they help reach the management objectives of the WMA's. Water developments that would result in big game becoming year round residents on these crucial winter ranges should be discouraged. Water development projects that would assist in meeting the goals and objectives of the grazing management plan should be pursued. The Division retained 20% of the water right in Olsen and Order Canyons for the purpose of providing water for irrigation, wildlife and livestock. That agreement with Mayfield Town should be pursued to acquire and develop this right.

Access Management Plan

The access management plan is included as Appendix B.

Fire Management Plan

All activities dealing with wild and prescribed fire will be coordinated with the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands (DFFSL) according to guidelines established in the Memorandum of Understanding (2005) between DWR and DFFSL. Fire management provisions include:

- When prescribed fire is needed as a habitat management tool, DWR will provide all applicable information to DFFSL to ensure burn plans are complete and submitted by deadlines.
- Wildfires will be aggressively battled due to the close proximity of numerous municipalities, and to protect the browse communities on crucial winter ranges.
- As needed, green strips will be seeded to reduce the threat and spread of wildfire.
- Open fires are allowed, but cannot be unattended, and adequate provisions must be taken to prevent the spread of fire (R657-28). State, federal, or local fire restrictions will apply to all WMA's when deemed necessary by fire officials and UDWR.
- The use of fireworks and explosives are prohibited on WMA's (R657-28).

Wood Products

Wood products are managed according to Administrative Rule R657-28, Use of Division Lands. Timber resources are limited on these WMA's as pinyon and juniper are the most abundant woody species. Christmas trees, fence posts, and firewood are the main wood products these WMA's provide. All of these activities require a permit from the Division.

Livestock Grazing Plan

Livestock grazing is managed according to Administrative Rule R657-28, Use of Division Lands. Livestock grazing is used as a management tool to reduce fire danger and release browse species for wintering big game. WMA's will be evaluated by regional personnel and grazed when habitat conditions indicate the need for herbaceous fuel reduction and/or when shrubs show suppression by perennial grasses. WMA's are typically grazed on a 3-year rotational basis, 2 years grazing followed by 1 year of rest. Stocking rates and season of use will be adjusted as needed to obtain desired habitat conditions. Grazing will typically be administered through a high intensity/short duration strategy with a grazing season from mid-May through June. Regional personnel will evaluate each WMA annually to determine which, if any, will benefit from grazing and where grazing will be employed the following year. The table below contains historic stocking rates and season of use.

WMA Grazing Summary

<u>Area</u>	<u>AUM's</u>	<u>Grazing Period</u>
Twelve-Mile (Manti Face, South Hollow)	100	5/15 to 6/30
North Hollow	50	5/22 to 6/16
Six-Mile	100	5/15 to 6/30
Black Hill	100	5/15 to 6/30
Bald Mountain	75	5/15 to 6/30, potential grassbank
White Hill	50	5/15 to 6/15, potential grassbank
Nine-Mile	0	not typically grazed
Manti Face	0	not typically grazed
Willow Creek	0	not typically grazed, potential grassbank
Maple Canyon	200	5/15 to 6/30

Division personnel reserve the right to make changes to stocking rates, season of use, and the grazing schedule as needed. The Division also reserves the right to prescribe graze any WMA if needed to reach habitat objectives. Prescribed grazing may result in permits being issued to a grazer outside of the competitive bid process in order to find willing parties that are able to follow a prescribed grazing plan.

Livestock Trespass

At times, trespass livestock are found on WMA's due to poor boundary fences and/or gates being left open by WMA visitors. Occurrences of trespass livestock will be handled by Division personnel according to the guidelines outlined in the Division's Land Use, R657-28-10.

VII. Summary Statement of Proposed Uses

The primary goals and objectives of the WMA's presented in this HMP are to preserve, enhance and protect big game winter range and wintering wildlife, and reduce deer and elk depredation on surrounding private lands. The Division will allow for and provide wildlife-related recreational activities that are consistent with the goals and purposes for which these WMA's were acquired.

VIII. Monitoring and Evaluation

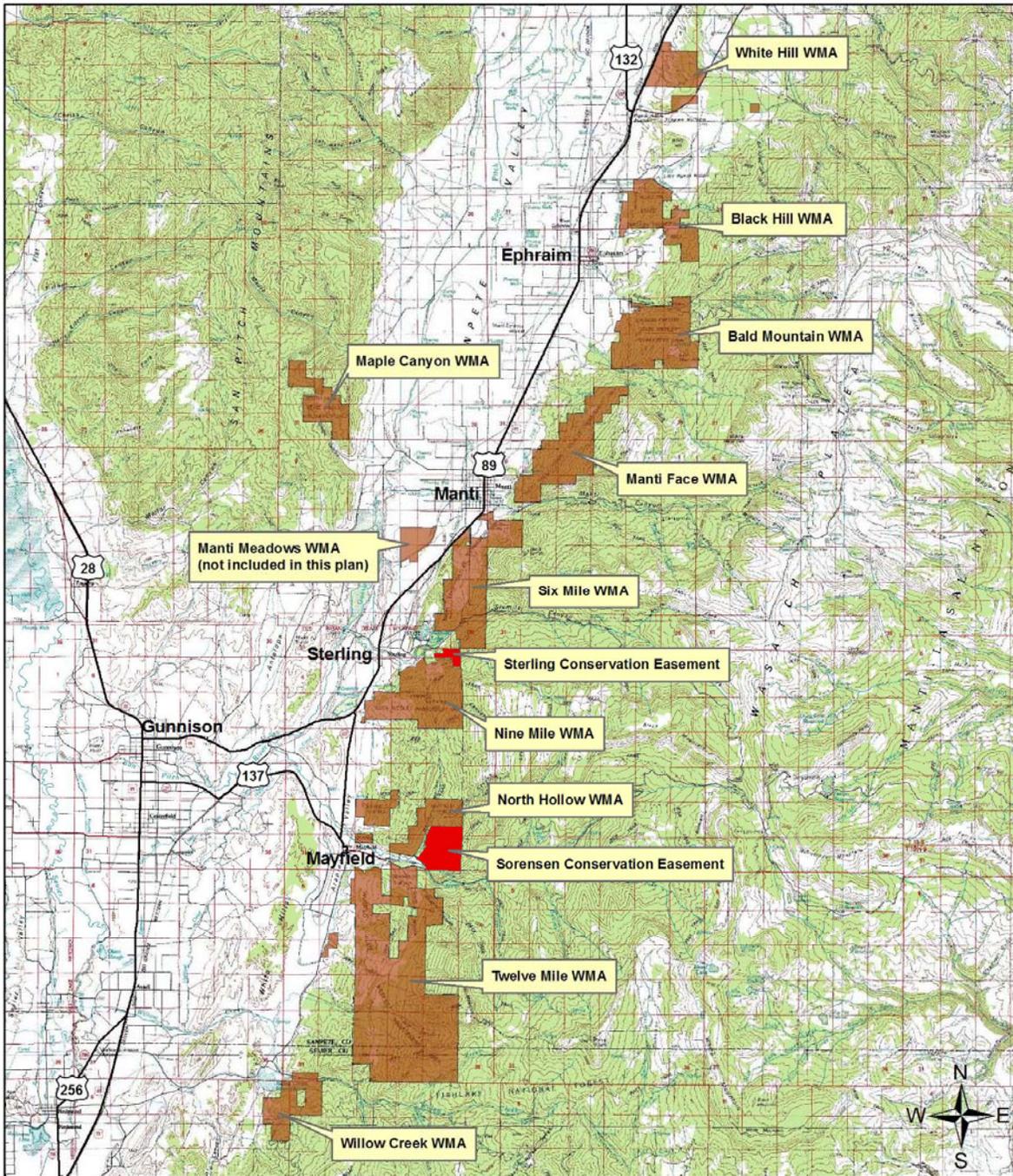
Regional habitat section personnel, the area wildlife biologist, and the district conservation officer will be responsible for monitoring overall effectiveness of the program. Appropriate sections will provide expertise as required. The Lead and Assistant Habitat Maintenance Specialists will monitor the needs and effectiveness of physical facilities and improvements. Range Trend program personnel will continue to read the existing trend study's on a 5-year rotation, and will add additional monitoring sites as needed. The regional habitat section will amend this habitat management plan as needed.

IX. Appendices

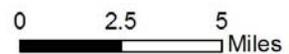
- Appendix A - Maps
 - A1 - General Location.
 - A2 - Land Ownership.
 - A3 - White Hill WMA.
 - A4 - Black Hill WMA.
 - A5 - Bald Mountain WMA.
 - A6 - Manti Face WMA.
 - A7 - Maple Canyon WMA.
 - A8 - Six Mile WMA.
 - A9 - Nine Mile WMA and Sterling Conservation Easement.
 - A10 - North Hollow WMA and Sorensen Conservation Easement.
 - A11 - Twelve Mile WMA.
 - A12 - Willow Creek WMA.
- Appendix B - Access Management Plan and Access Maps by WMA
 - B1 – White Hill WMA Access Map.
 - B2 – Black Hill WMA Access Map.
 - B3 – Bald Mountain WMA Access Map.
 - B4 – Manti Face WMA Access Map.
 - B5 – Maple Canyon WMA Access Map.
 - B6 – Six-Mile WMA Access Map.
 - B7 – Nine-Mile WMA and Sterling Conservation Easement Access Map.
 - B8 – North Hollow WMA and Sorensen Conservation Easement Access Map.
 - B9 – Twelve-Mile WMA Access Map.
 - B10 – Willow Creek WMA Access Map.

Appendix A – Maps

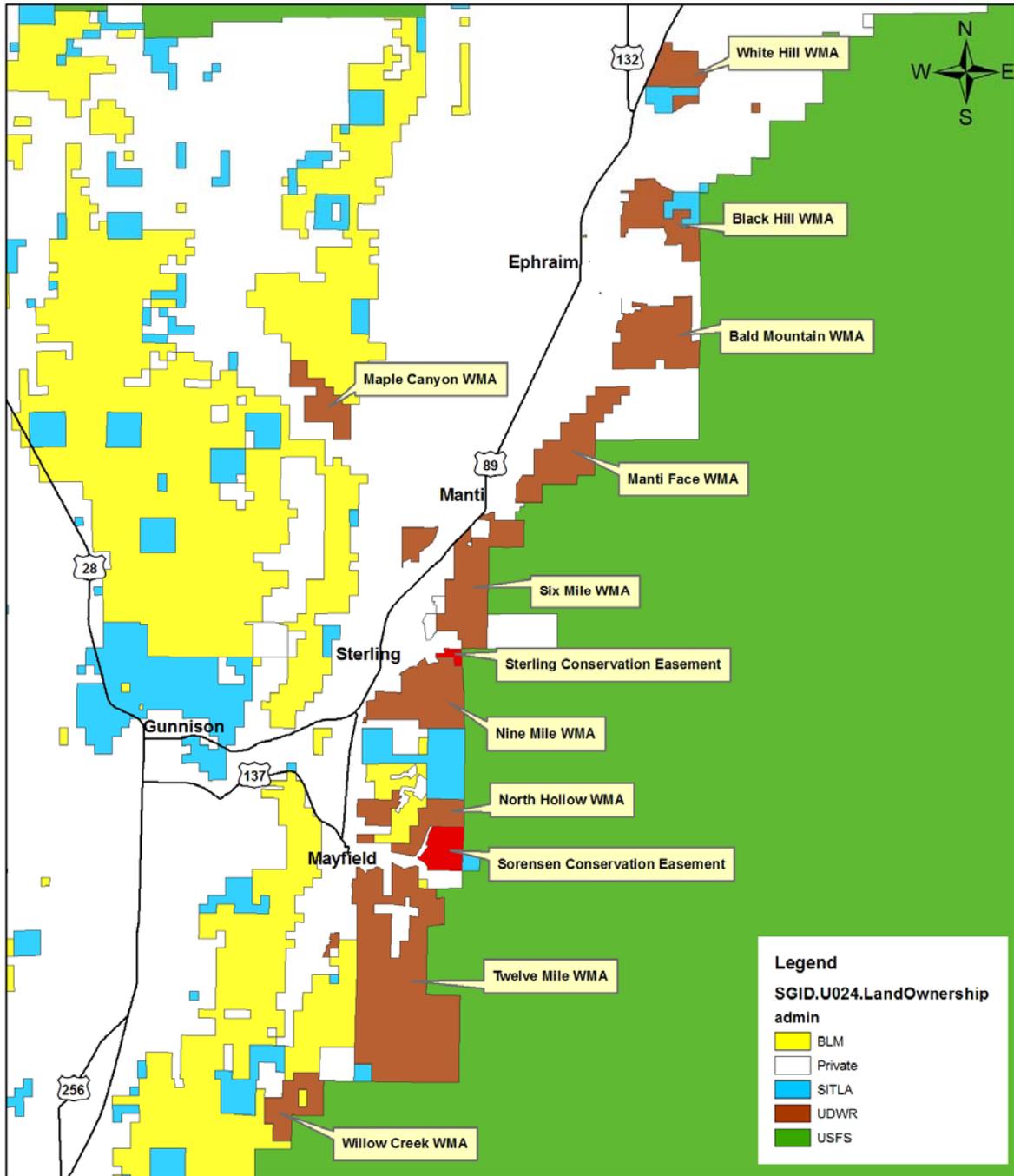
Map A1 - General Location



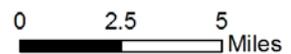
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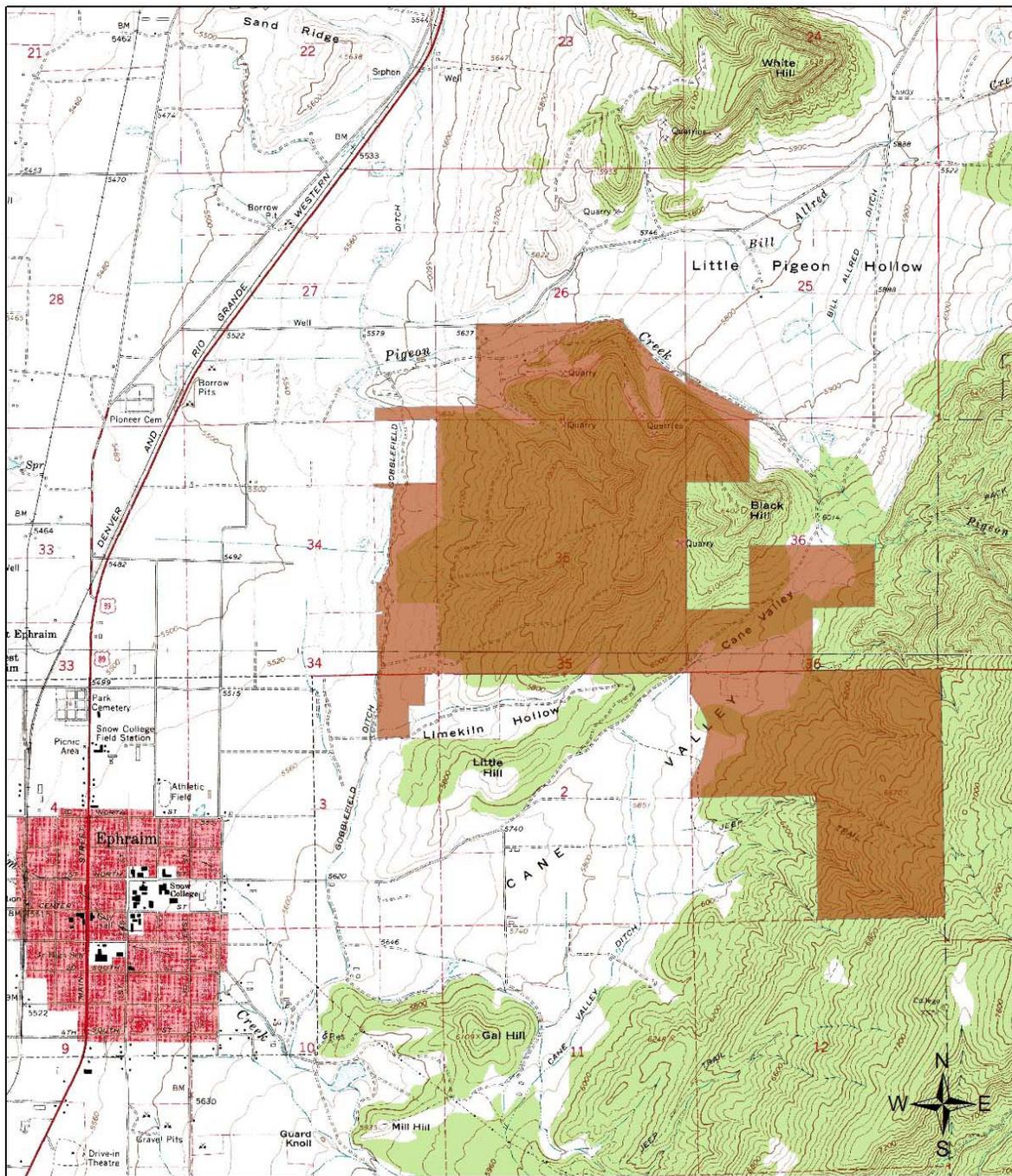
Map A2 - Land Ownership



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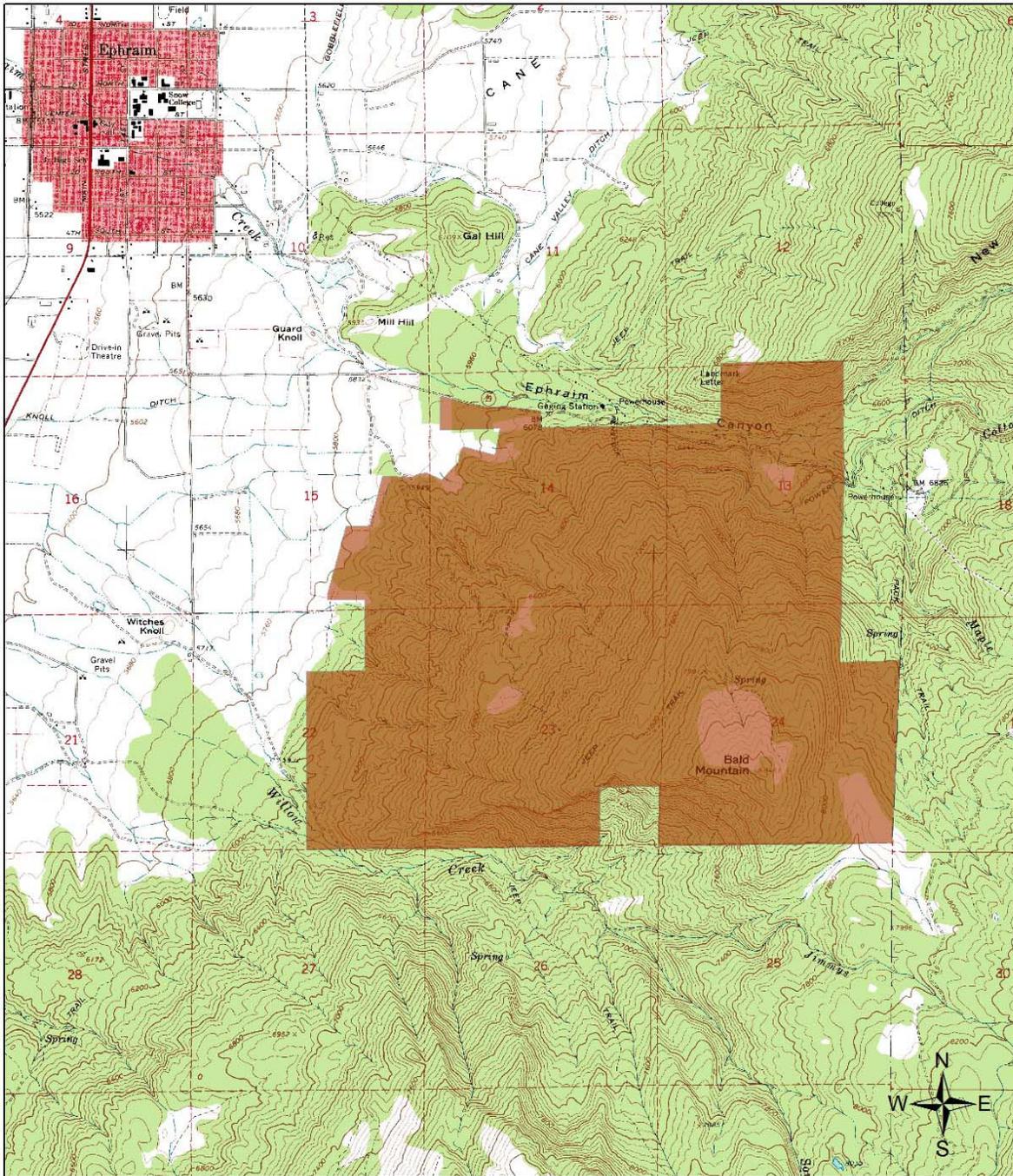
Map A4 - Black Hill WMA



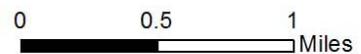
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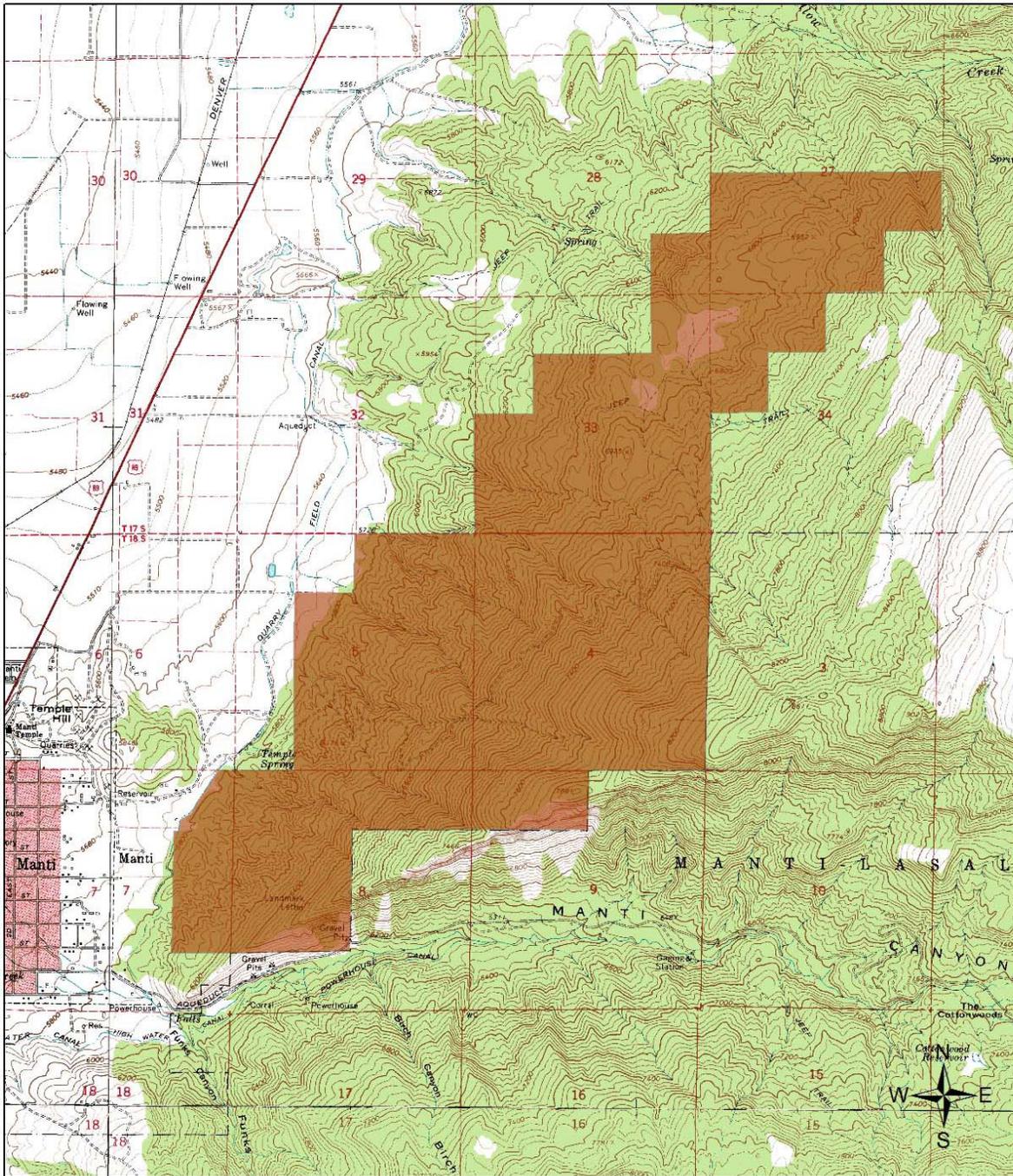
Map A5 - Bald Mountain WMA



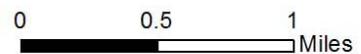
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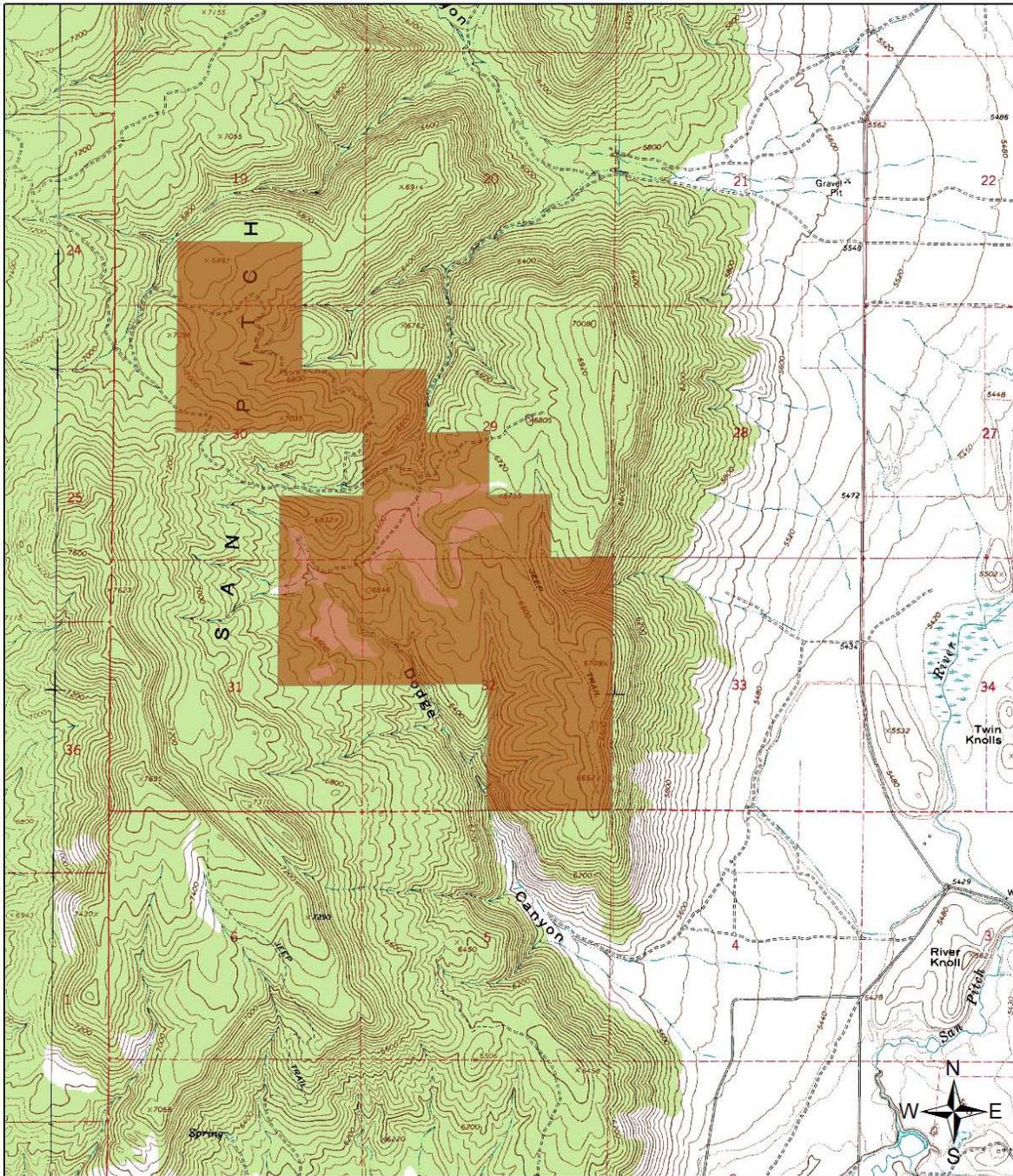
Map A6 - Manti Face WMA



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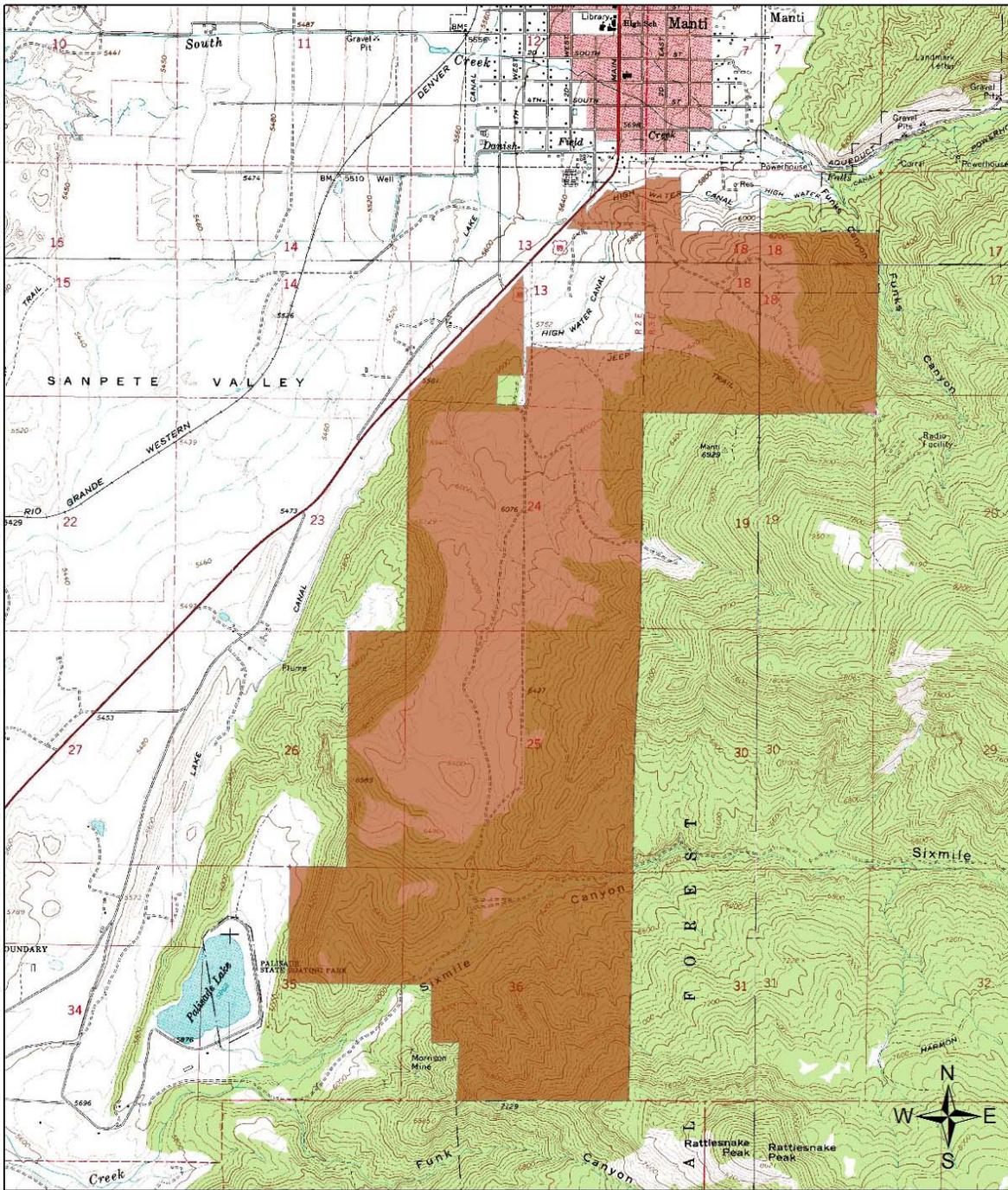
Map A7 - Maple Canyon WMA



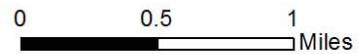
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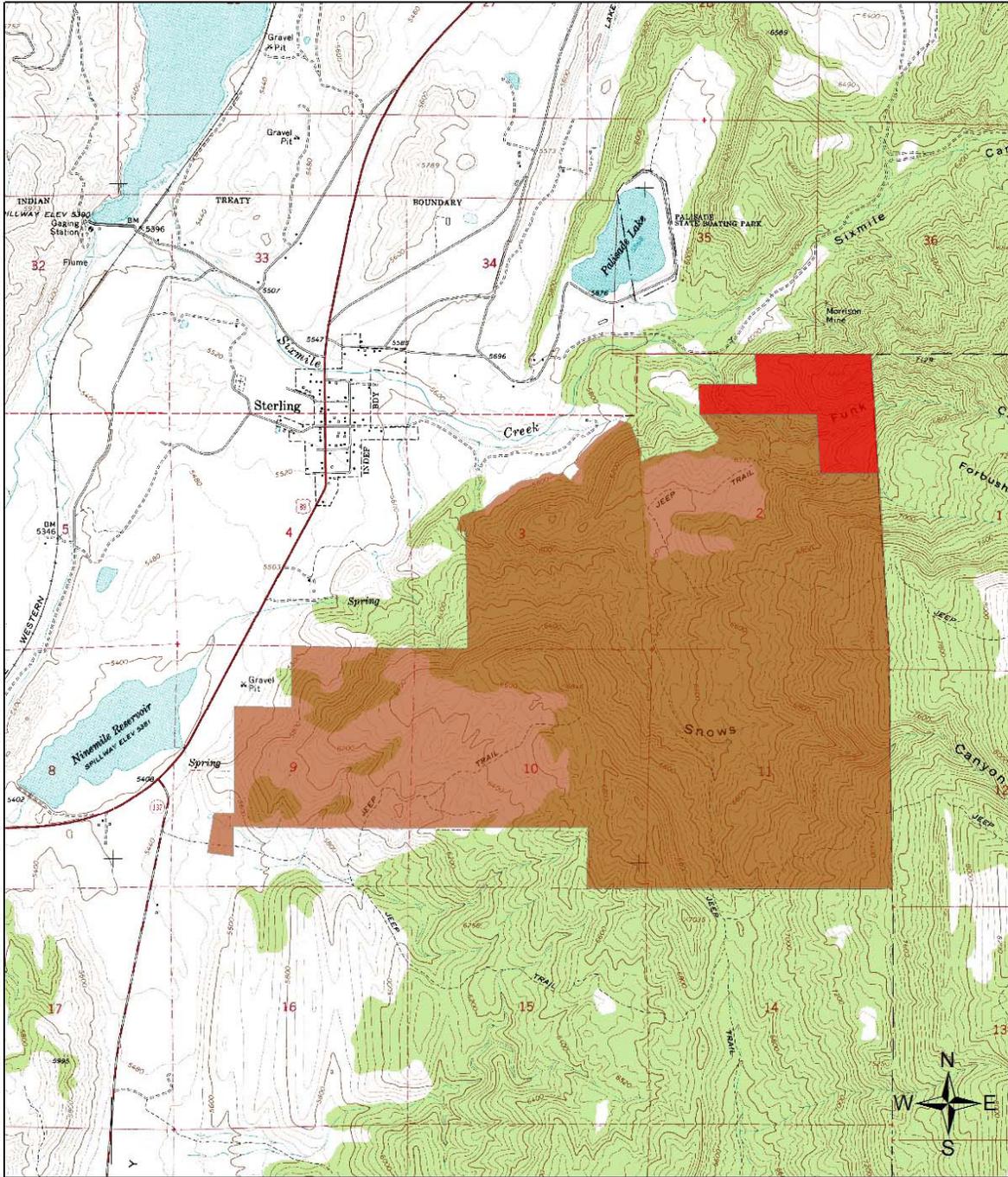
Map A8 - Six Mile WMA



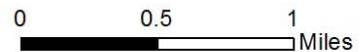
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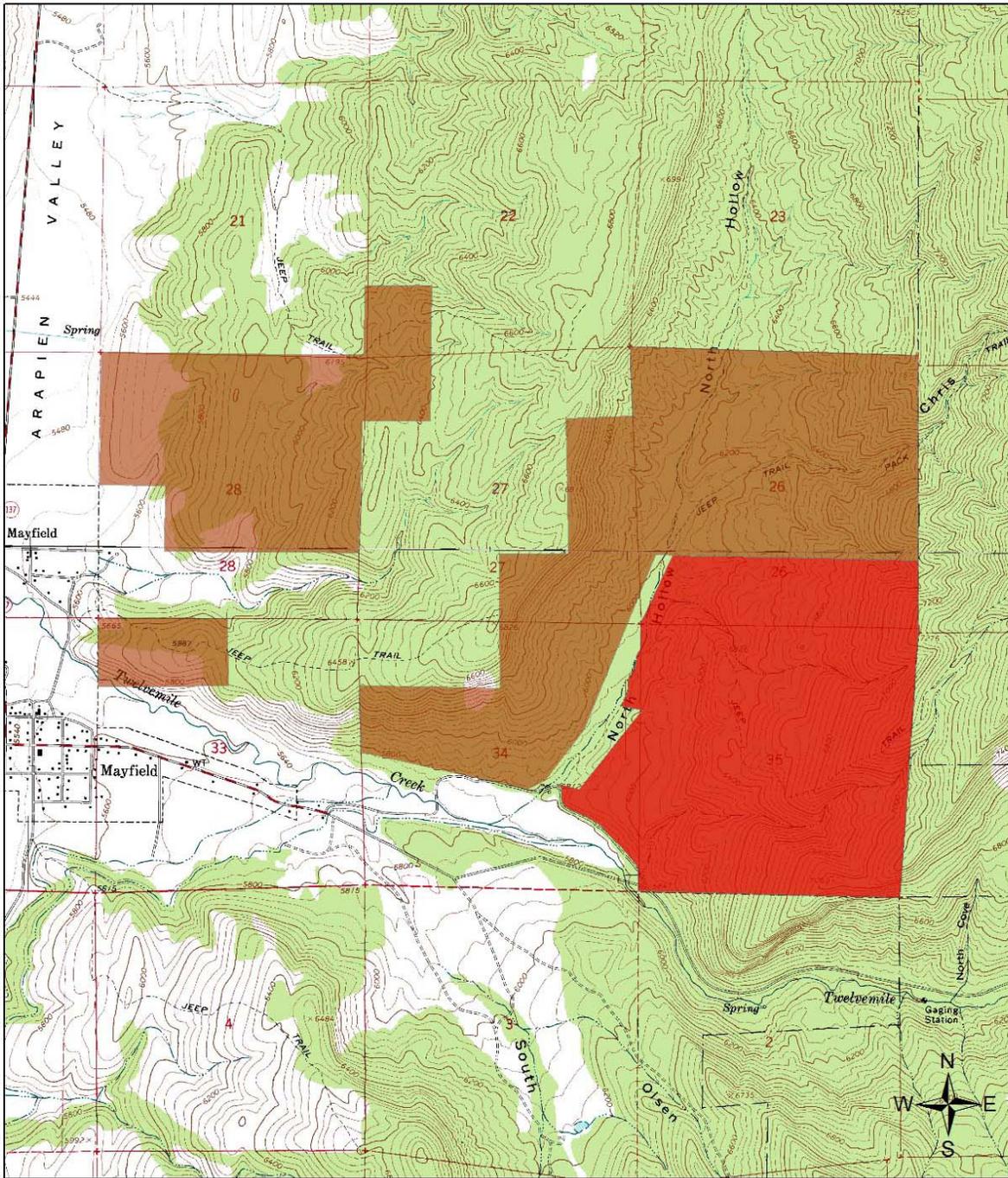
Map A9 - Nine Mile WMA and Sterling Conservation Easement



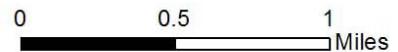
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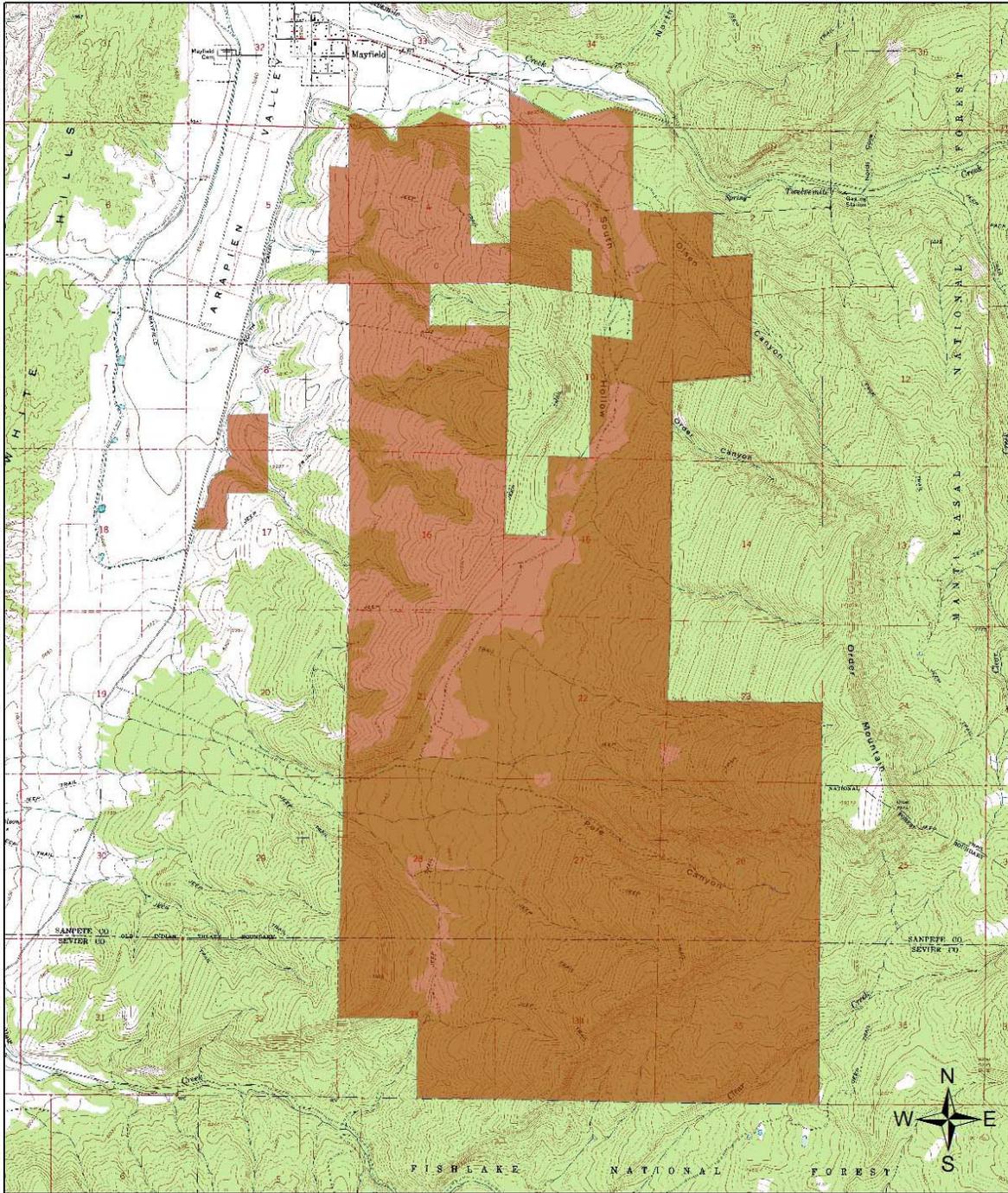
Map A10 - North Hollow WMA and Sorensen Conservation Easement



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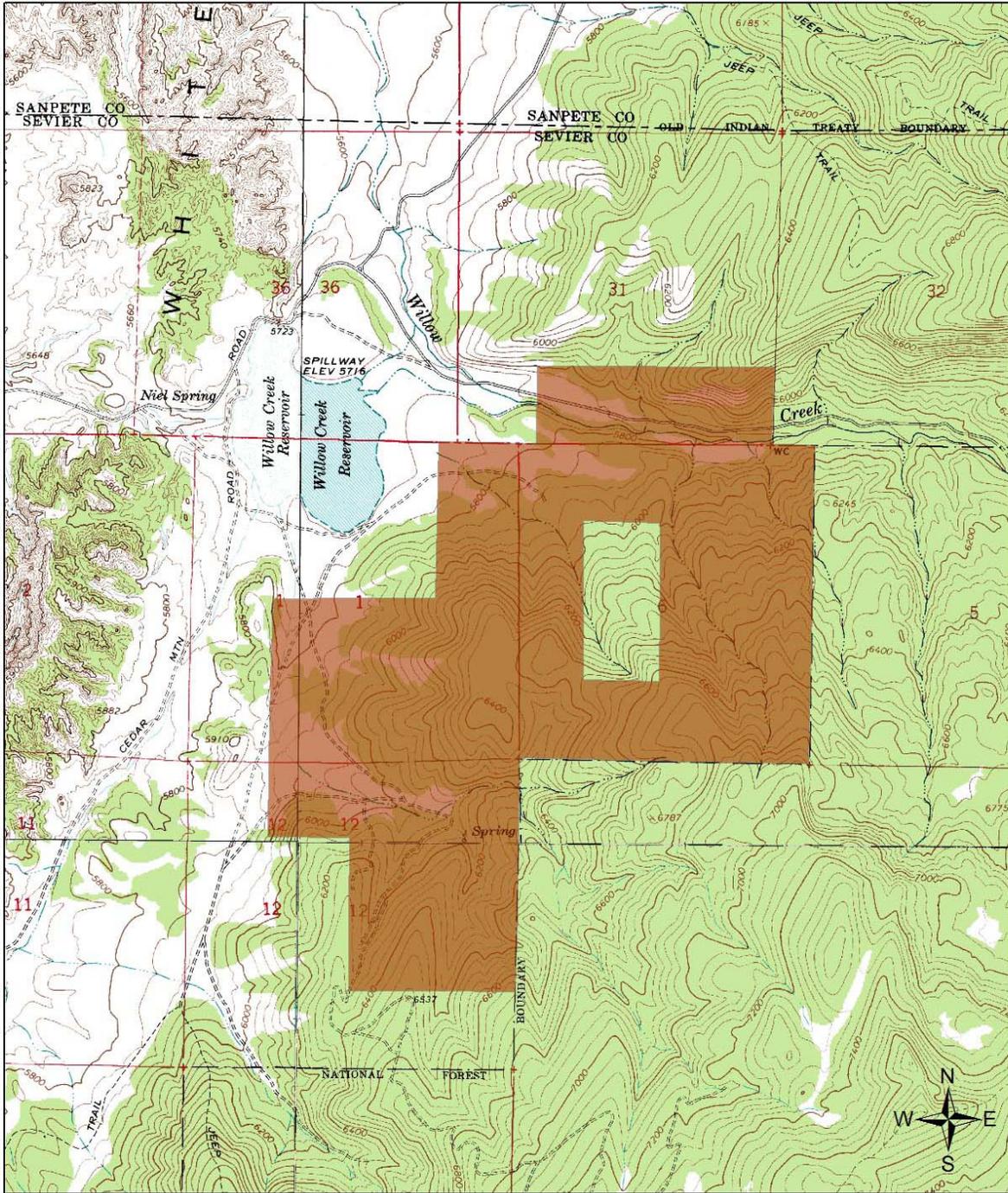
Map A11 - Twelve Mile WMA



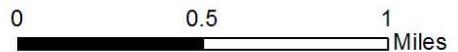
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0 0.5 1 Miles

Map A12 - Willow Creek WMA



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Appendix B – Access Management Plan

Access Management Plan for South Sanpete County WMA's and Willow Creek WMA in Sevier County

Purpose

To ensure that public access and use of Wildlife Management Areas (WMA's) is done in a manner that assists the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (Division) in achieving the goals and objectives outlined in the habitat management plan.

Background

All of the WMA's contained in this plan were acquired to preserve and protect big game winter range and wintering animals. WMA's provides some of the most crucial winter habitat for big game in Sanpete County, especially on the east side of the valley. In addition to providing crucial habitat for wintering big game, these WMA's are popular recreation areas for local residents in Sanpete County and sportsmen statewide. The access management plan will allow for public access and use of the WMA while ensuring that wildlife and habitat management objectives are reached.

Road Designation

Roads are typically categorized as one of three types: Open year round, seasonally closed, or permanently closed.

Open Roads

These are roads that are left open year round due to agreements and/or established rights-of-way with counties, other agencies, and private landowners with inholdings to a Division property. Roads that do not occur within crucial habitat and/or do not result in habitat damage may also be left open year round.

Seasonally Closed Roads

These are roads that are closed for a portion of the year and are not on established rights-of-way or under an agreement with another entity to be left open year round. Roads that fall within this category are closed from December 1 – April 15. The purpose of seasonally closed roads is to limit disturbance to wintering wildlife, protect sensitive and crucial habitats, and to prevent excessive road damage during wet winter and spring months.

Permanently Closed Roads

These are roads that serve no purpose to managing wildlife, and that fragment and damage crucial habitats. User created roads and trails not authorized by the Division also fit into this category. These roads will be closed using signs, berms, fencing, or other means. Where needed, roads may be ripped and seeded. Others will be closed and allowed to return to their natural state.

Trail Systems

Many of the WMA's in Sanpete County contain an extensive network of informal trails that have been created by motorized vehicles, primarily OHV's and motorcycles. Some of these have been created in areas previously undisturbed, while others are extensions and/or additions to jeep and pack trails. Many of these user created roads and trails are sources of erosion and overland water flow and others fragment and degrade important wildlife habitat. The Division will inventory all roads and trails on the WMA's, and those which are found to detract from the management goals and objectives of the habitat management plan will be permanently closed in a similar manner as described above for roads. All single track trails occurring on WMA's are closed to all vehicles, motorized and non-motorized, unless posted as open.

As needed, seasonal and/or permanent road and trail closures are done under the authority of Administrative Rule R657-28, Use of Division Lands.

Access to the WMA's

General Access Provisions

Motorized access is restricted to authorized, existing roads and trails. All authorized roads and trails, including their designation, are shown on the WMA access maps at the end of this plan with the exception of single tracks. Roads and trails not shown on WMA access maps are considered unauthorized. Single tracks will be reviewed on an as needed basis by the Division and only those posted as open will be considered authorized. The Division reserves the right to close all unauthorized roads and trails. In addition, the Division reserves the right to change road and trail designations to all forms of access, both motorized and non-motorized, if deemed incompatible with the goals and objectives of the habitat management plan. If changes to road designations are needed, the Division will contact the county to address the change(s) and to seek approval. Authorized travel routes will be signed as open making public access routes easy to distinguish.

Motorized vehicles, including OHV's, are restricted to existing and designated roads (Utah Code Section 41-22-10.1) and this policy will be enforced. Harassment of wildlife or damage to the environment, including abuse of lands, watershed, or impairment of plant or animal life while operating an OHV is illegal (Utah Code Section 41-22-13), and this policy will be enforced. The creation of new roads or trails by unauthorized motorized and non-motorized traffic is prohibited. Specific access information for each WMA is described below.

Specific WMA Access Provisions

White Hill WMA: State Highway 89, which forms approximately 1.25 miles of the west boundary, and the county road between Pigeon Hollow Junction and Spring City, which forms approximately 1.75 miles of the south and east boundary, are both open year round. All other roads and trails within the WMA are seasonally closed (See Map B1).

Black Hill WMA: Two county roads lie in close proximity to this WMA, the Cane Valley and Little Pigeon Hollow roads. The road that connects them will be left open year round to allow connection between Cane Valley and Little Pigeon Hollow. The Division will work with

Sanpete County to gravel the Cane Valley/Little Pigeon Hollow Road to assist in maintaining the year round access. The Division strongly cautions against travel on this road during wet weather. All other roads and trails within the WMA are seasonally closed. The road leading to Pigeon Creek east of Cane Valley provides access to USFS ATV trail 220 (See Map B2).

Bald Mountain WMA: A 1.5 mile section of the county road through Ephraim Canyon transects the northern boundary and is open year round. This road is maintained by Sanpete County up to the US Forest Service boundary. All other roads and trails within the WMA are seasonally closed (See Map B3).

Manti Face WMA: All roads and trails within the WMA are seasonally closed. This WMA provides access to USFS Road 097 from the west (See Map B4).

Maple Canyon WMA: The county road that runs between Maple and Dodge Canyons is open year round to provide access to private lands west of the WMA. All other roads and trails within the WMA are seasonally closed (See Map B5).

Six Mile WMA: The county road going to the old Manti Dump and continuing to Six Mile Canyon runs through the middle of the WMA. This road is open year round. This road breaks off of Highway 89 just south of Manti, and runs for approximately 2.5 miles directly north-south through the middle of Sections 13, 24, and 25 where it connects with the Six Mile Canyon Road. The Six Mile Canyon Road runs through the south end of this WMA and is also open year round. All other roads and trails within this WMA are seasonally closed. This WMA also provides access to USFS Roads 047, 133, and 188 (See Map B6).

Nine Mile WMA and Sterling Conservation Easement: All roads and trails within the WMA are seasonally closed. In 2006, a cooperative agreement between the DWR, State Division of Parks and Recreation, and Sterling Town established the Snow Canyon OHV trail. This trail was created to provide OHV users safe access to Six Mile Canyon and trail systems on National Forest lands east of Sterling without having to use Highway 89 and/or the Six Mile Canyon Road (Palisade Road). The Snow Canyon OHV trail is also seasonally closed to motorized vehicles. This WMA provides access to USFS Roads 118, 236, and 1126 and to USFS ATV trail 120 (See Map B7).

North Hollow WMA and Sorensen Conservation Easement: All roads and trails within the WMA are seasonally closed. Access to this WMA is via the county road up Twelve Mile Canyon. This WMA provides access to USFS Roads 128 and 1130 (See Map B8).

Twelve Mile WMA: The county road up Twelve Mile Canyon is open year round and makes up approximately 0.75 miles of the north boundary. The South Hollow road connecting Twelve Mile Canyon to Pole Canyon is open year round to maintain access for private land holdings within the WMA. All other roads and trails within the WMA are seasonally closed. This WMA provides access to USFS Roads 209, 254 and 255, and to USFS ATV trails 127 and 426 (See Map B9).

Willow Creek WMA: The county road through Willow Creek is open year round and forms approximately 0.75 miles of the north boundary. All other roads and trails within the WMA are seasonally closed (See Map B10).

Enforcement of Access Management Plan

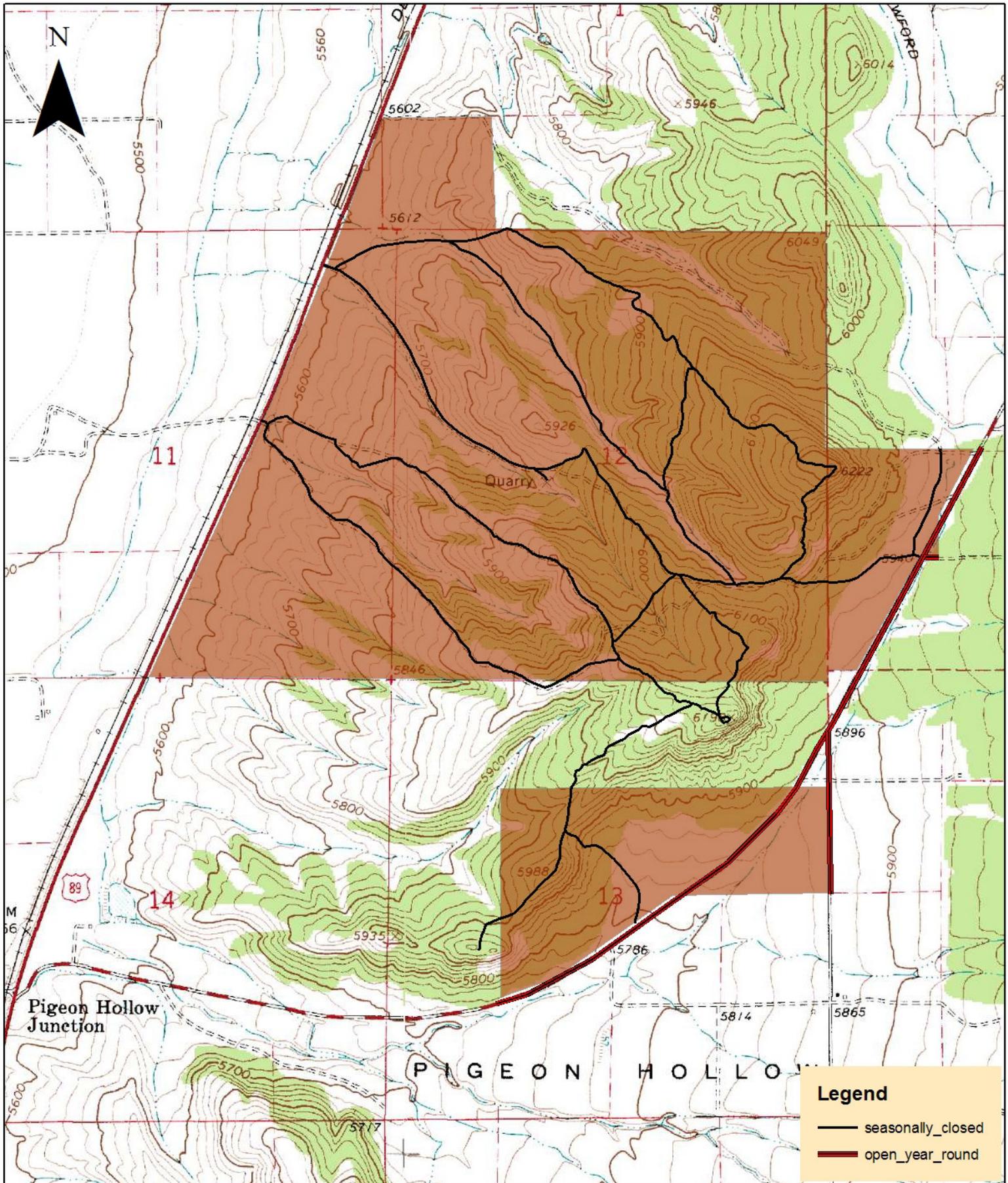
Enforcement of the access management plan will be carried out by Division personnel. Due to the high amount of public use on these WMA's, the Division will work closely with the county Sheriff's Office and other local law enforcement agencies to keep motorized vehicle travel on authorized travel routes.

Informing the Public

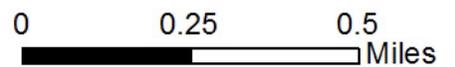
Division personnel will inform the public of the access plan by adequately signing access points, roads and trails, parking areas, and fencelines. In addition, media coverage may be used to disseminate information regarding the access plan and how it relates to the overall goals and objectives of the WMA's contained in this plan. Seasonal closures or other issues relating to access will also be included in hunting proclamations that are published annually by the Division.

The Division will work with local municipalities, the county, and other state and Federal agencies to coordinate access and travel plans that are consistent with other planning efforts as long as these plans are consistent with the goals and objectives presented in the habitat management plan. The access management plan will be reviewed and changes made as needed.

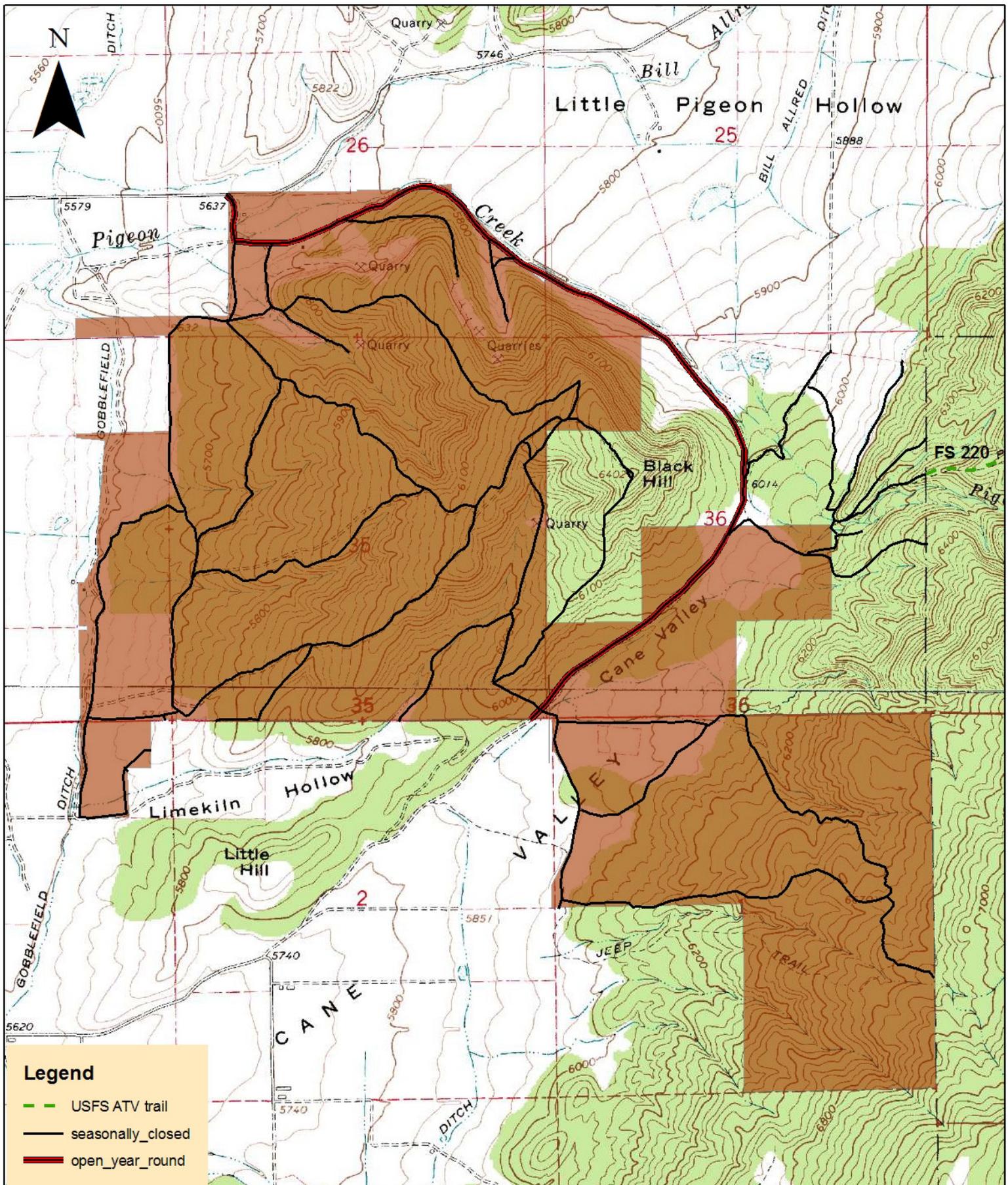
Map B1 - White Hill WMA Access Map



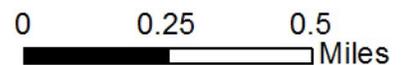
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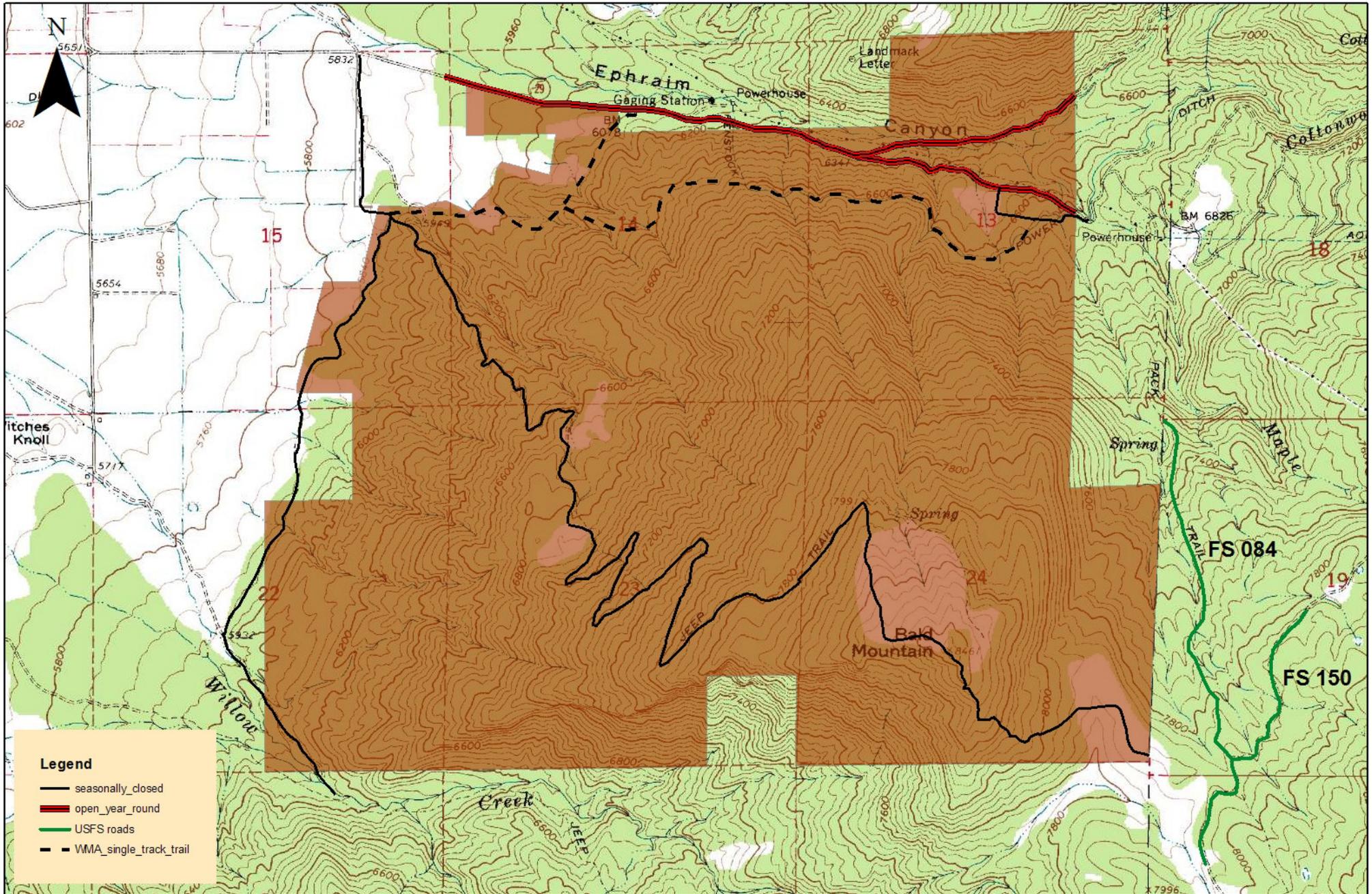
Map B2 - Black Hill WMA Access Map



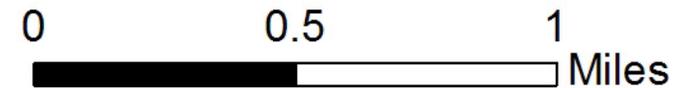
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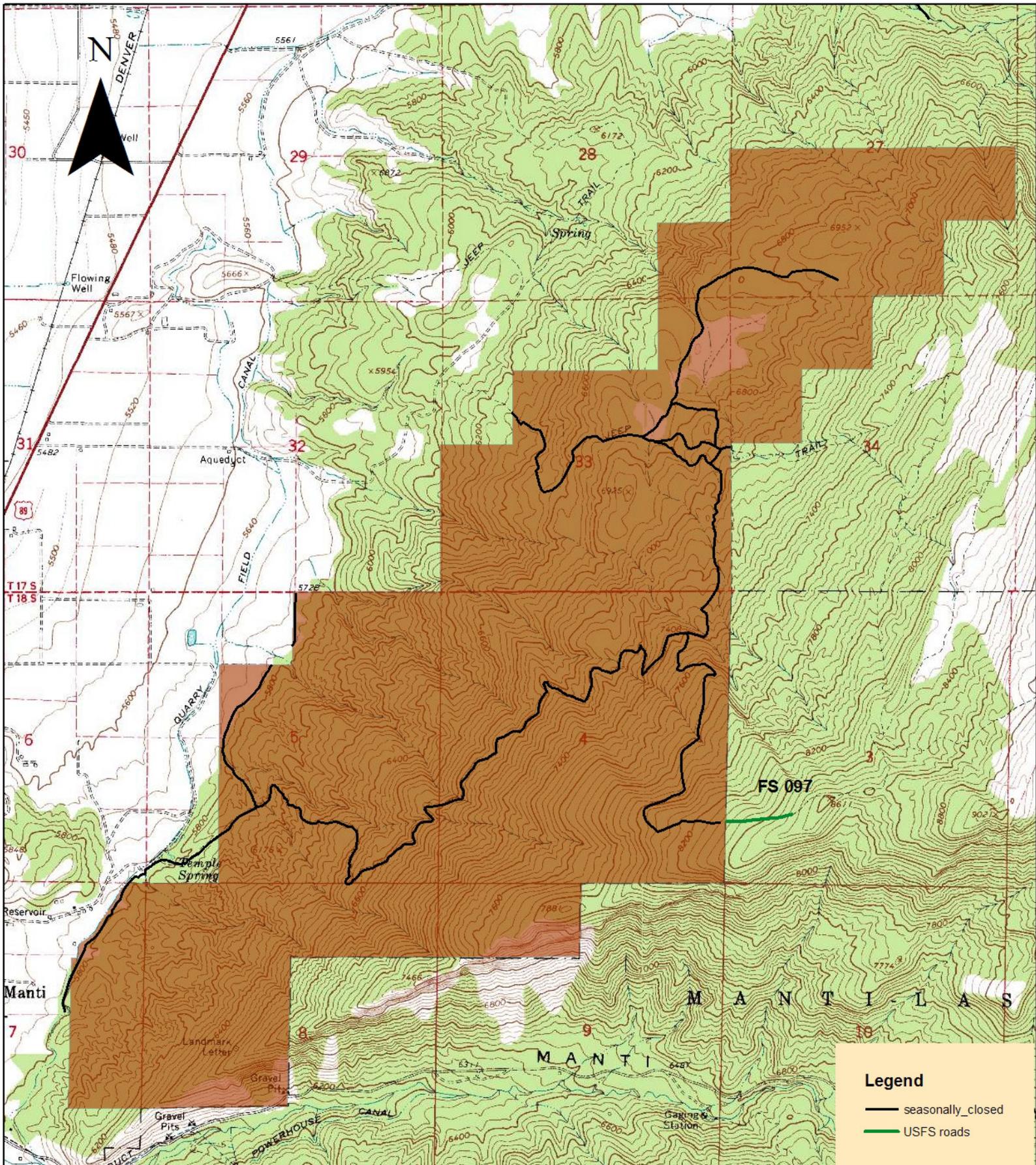
B3 - Bald Mountain WMA Access Map



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B4 - Manti Face WMA Access Map

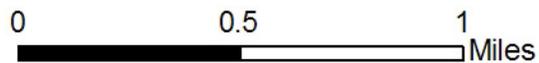


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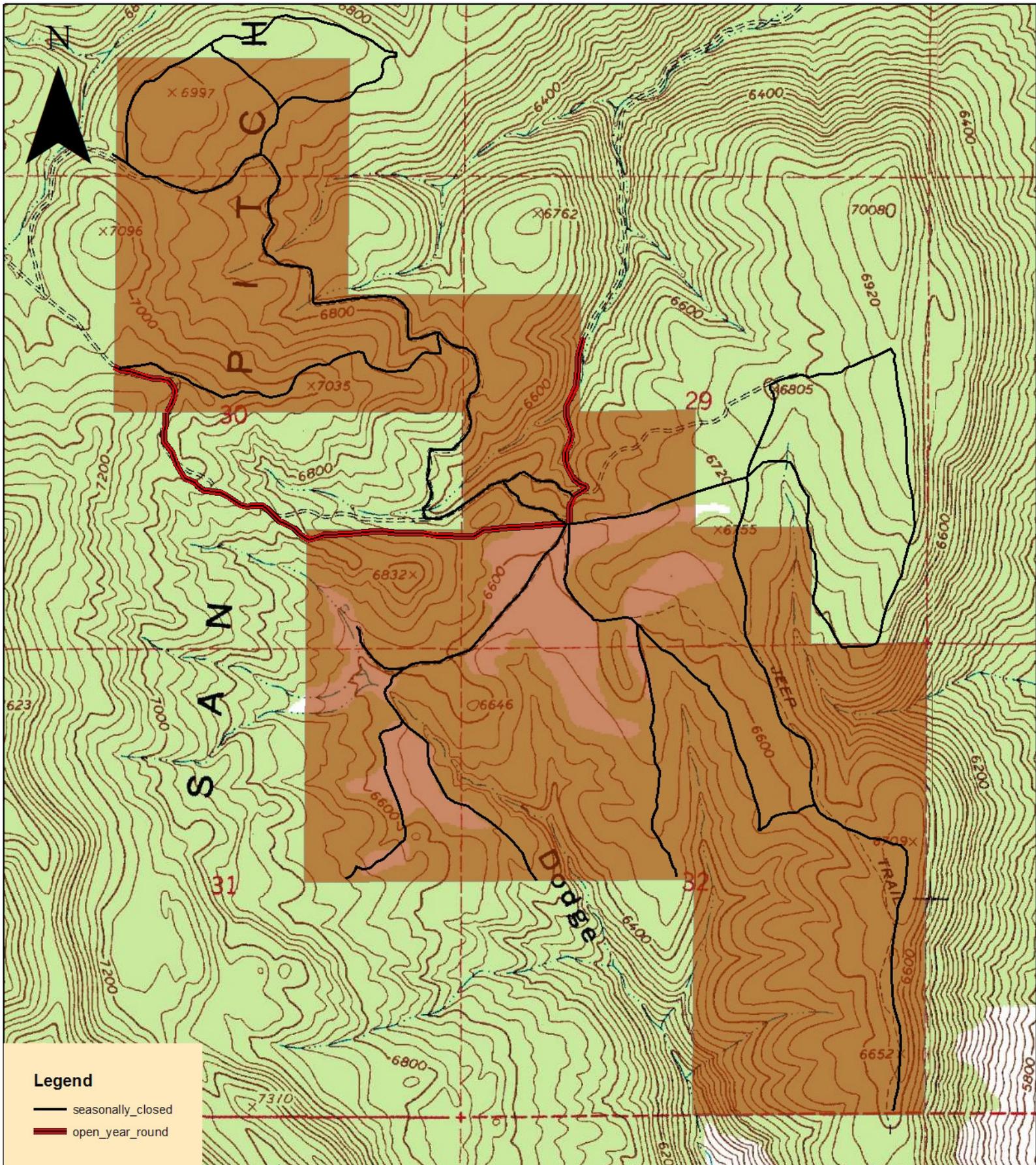
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- USFS roads



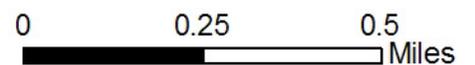
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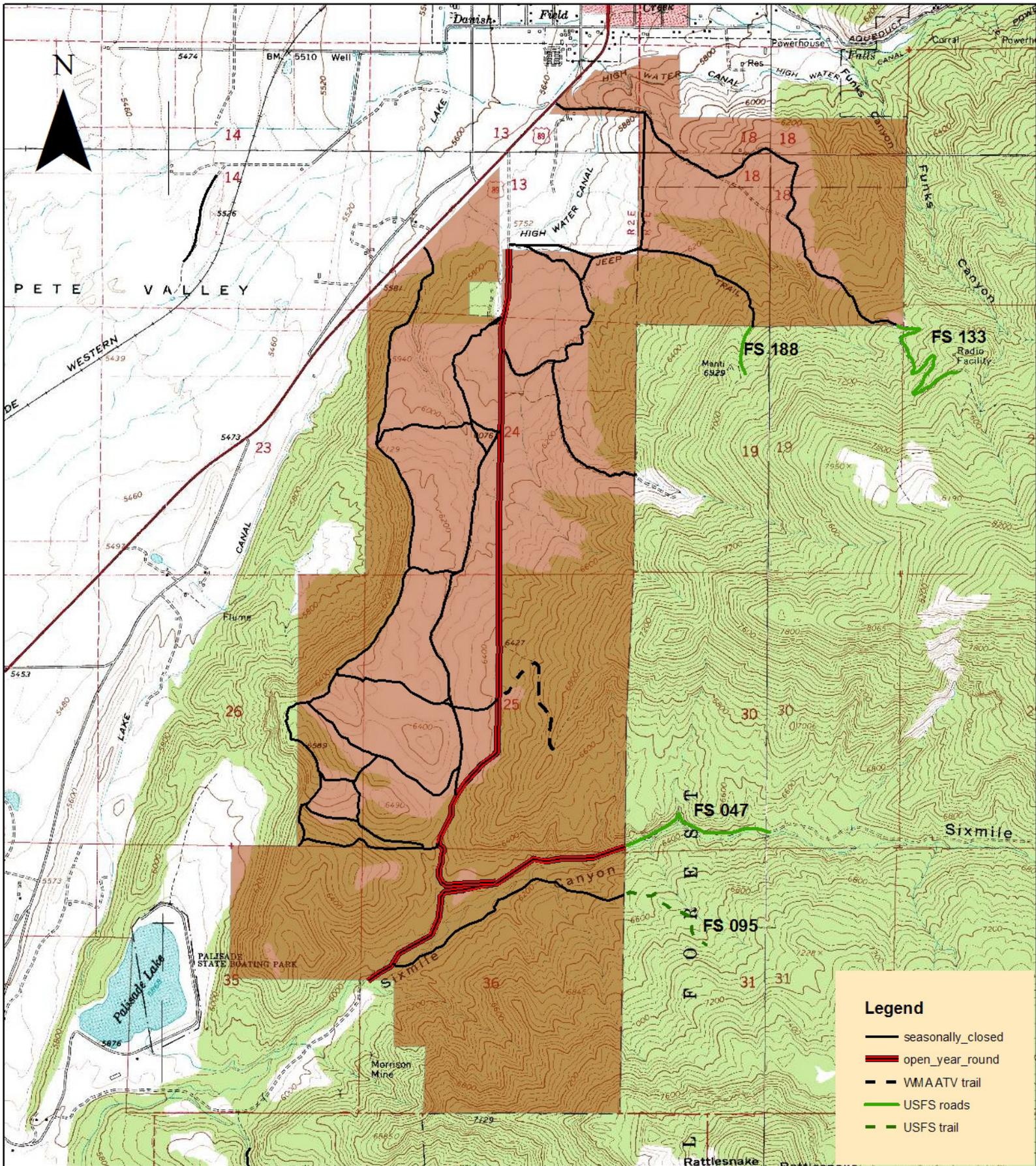
B5 - Maple Canyon WMA Access Map



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B6 - Six Mile WMA Access Map

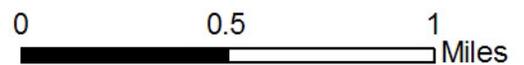


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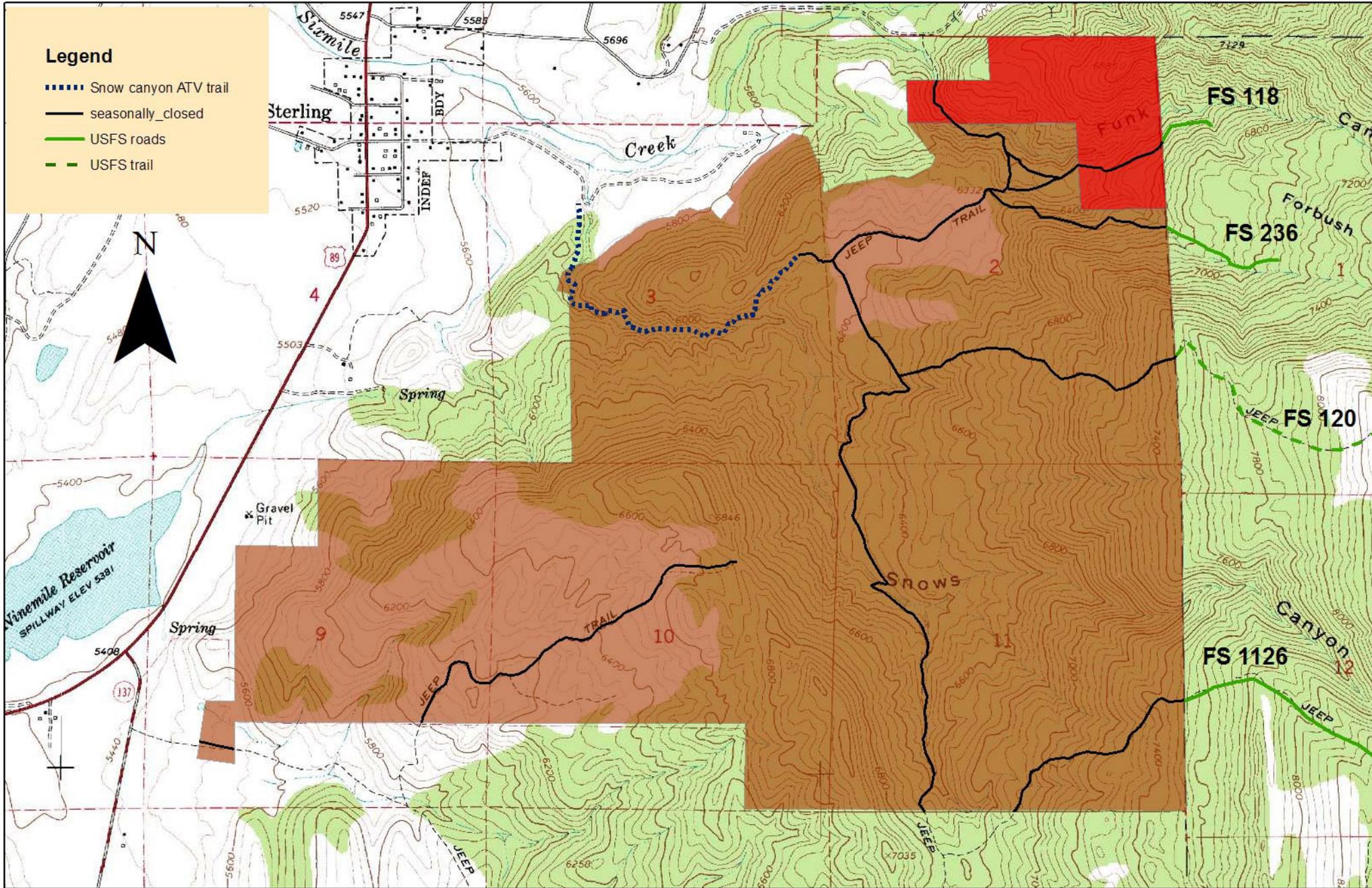
- seasonally_closed
- open_year_round
- WMAATV trail
- USFS roads
- USFS trail



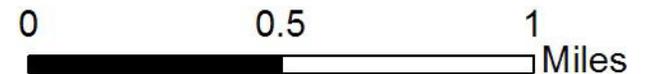
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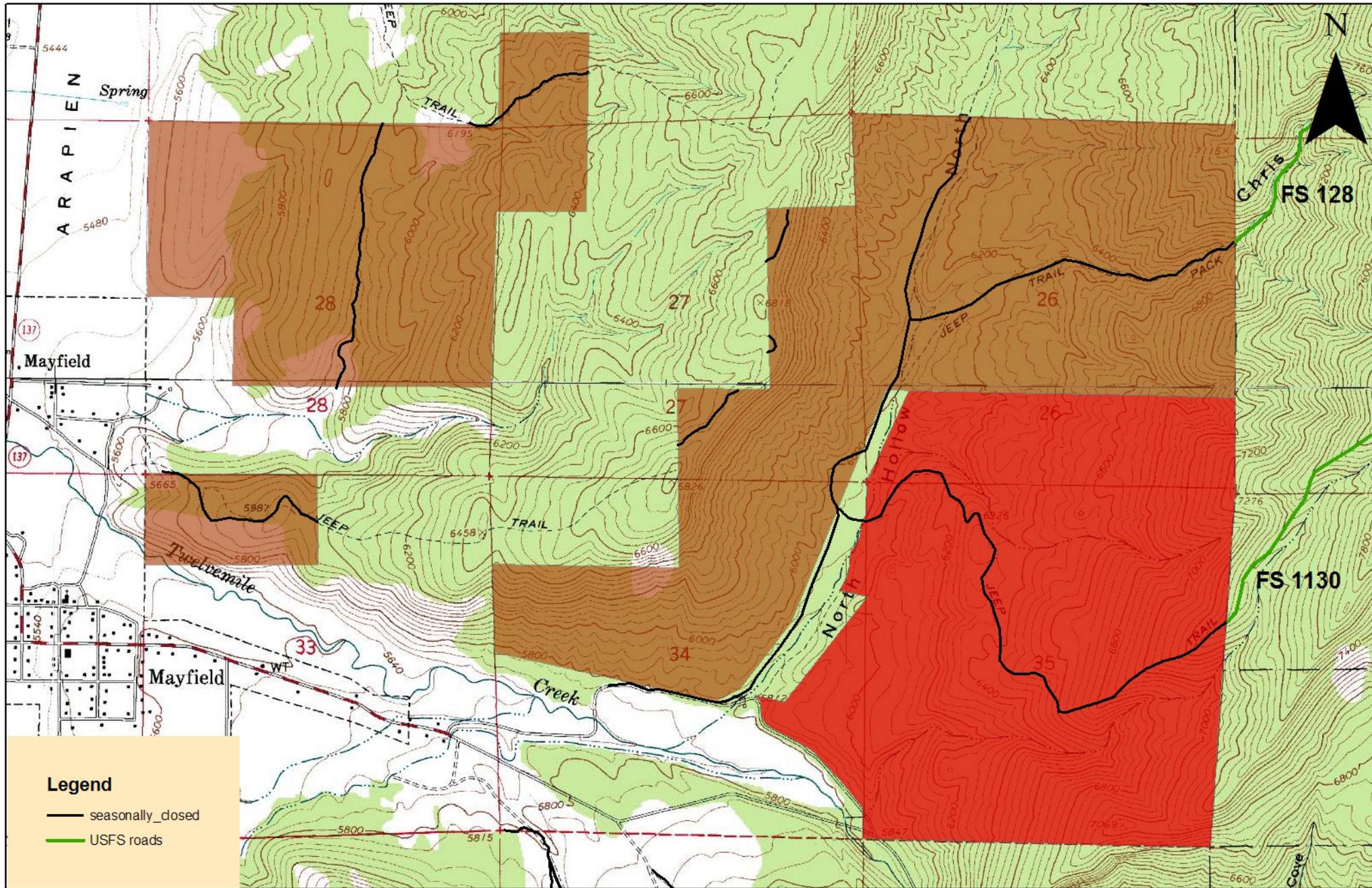
B7 - Nine Mile WMA and Sterling Conservation Easement Access Map



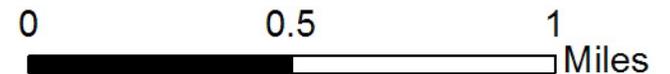
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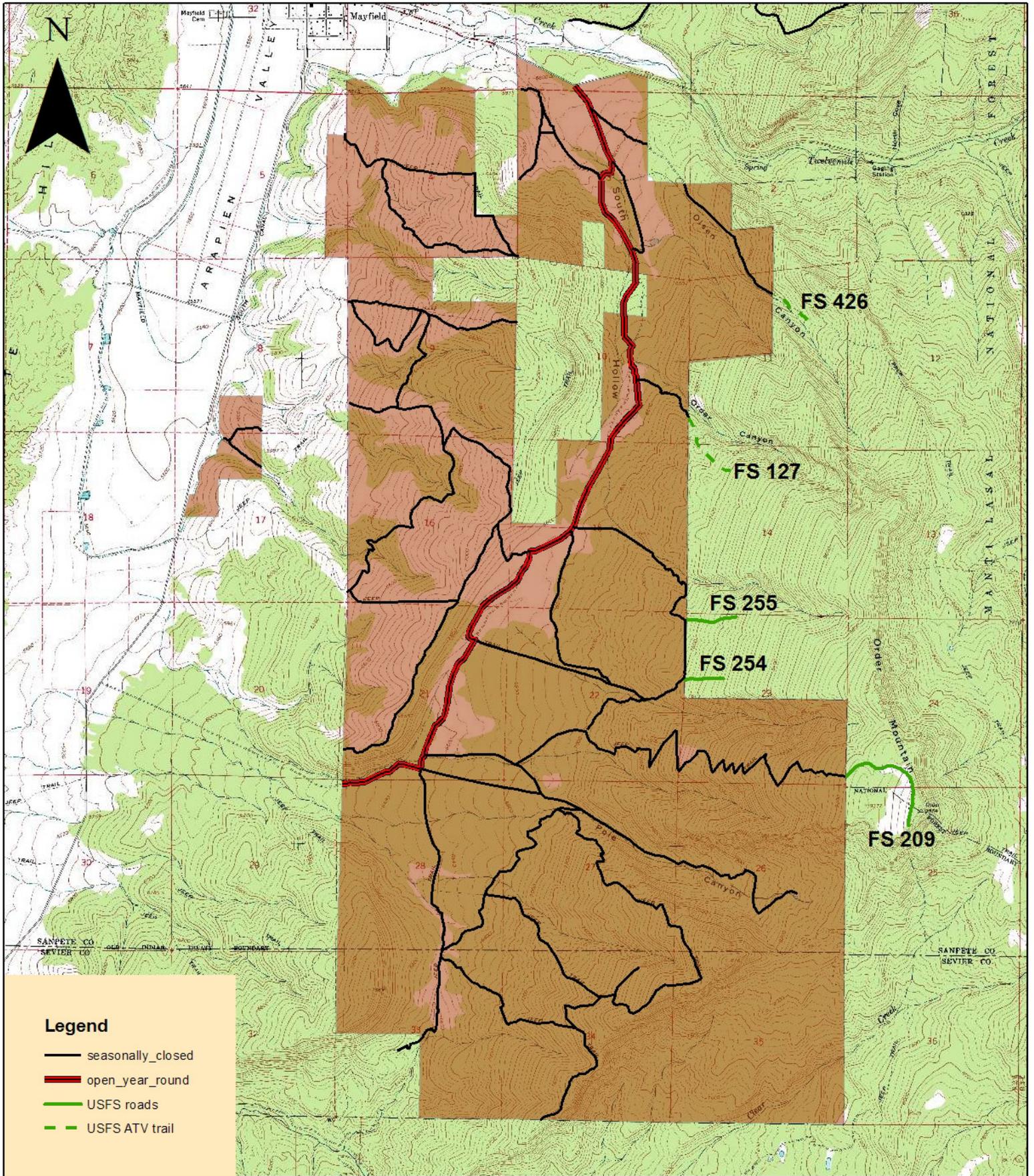
B8 - North Hollow WMA and Sorensen Conservation Easement Access Map



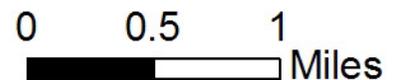
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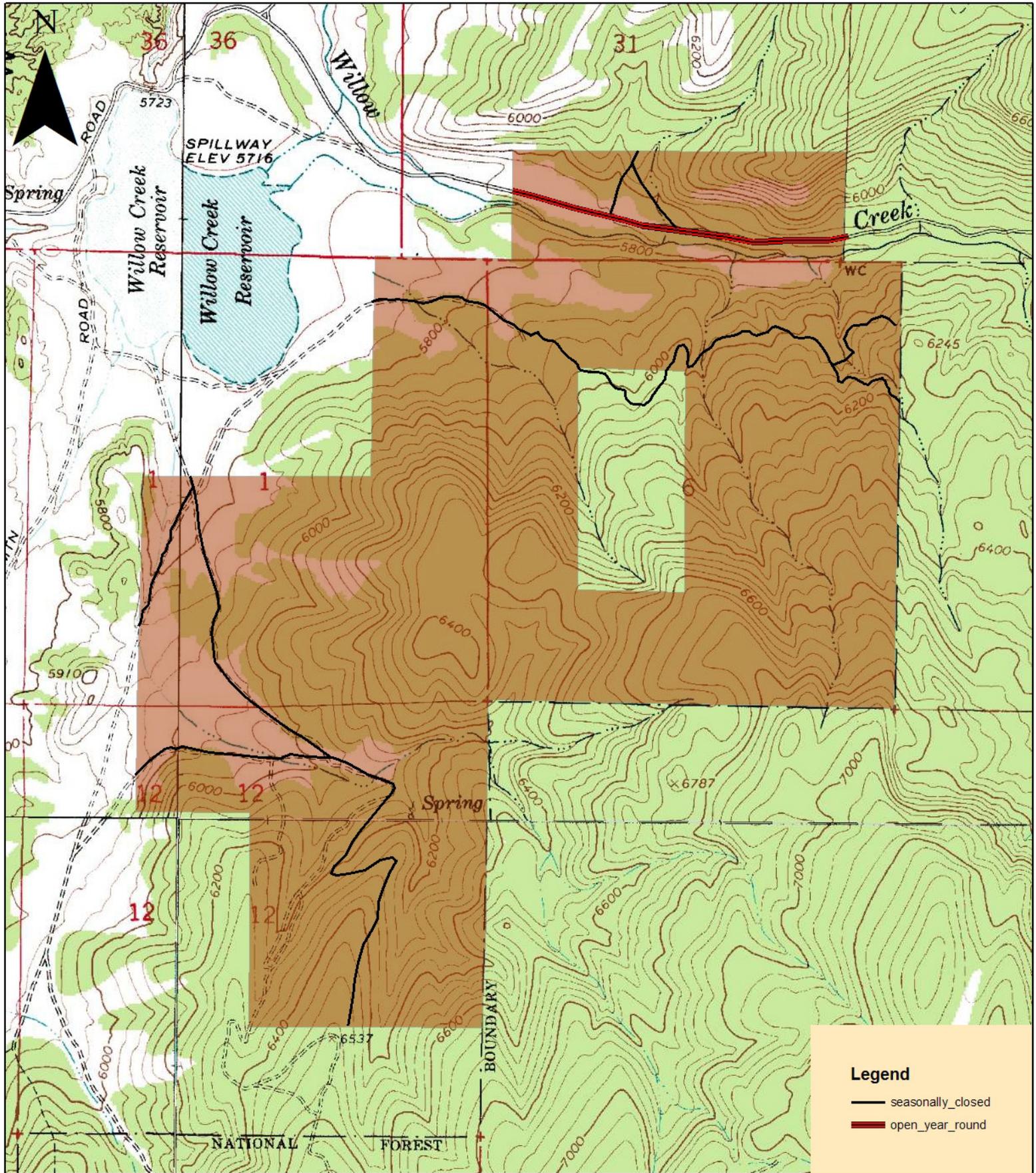
B9 - Twelve Mile WMA Access Map



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B10 - Willow Creek WMA Access Map



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