4-O Ranch Forest Restoration Project Approval Request

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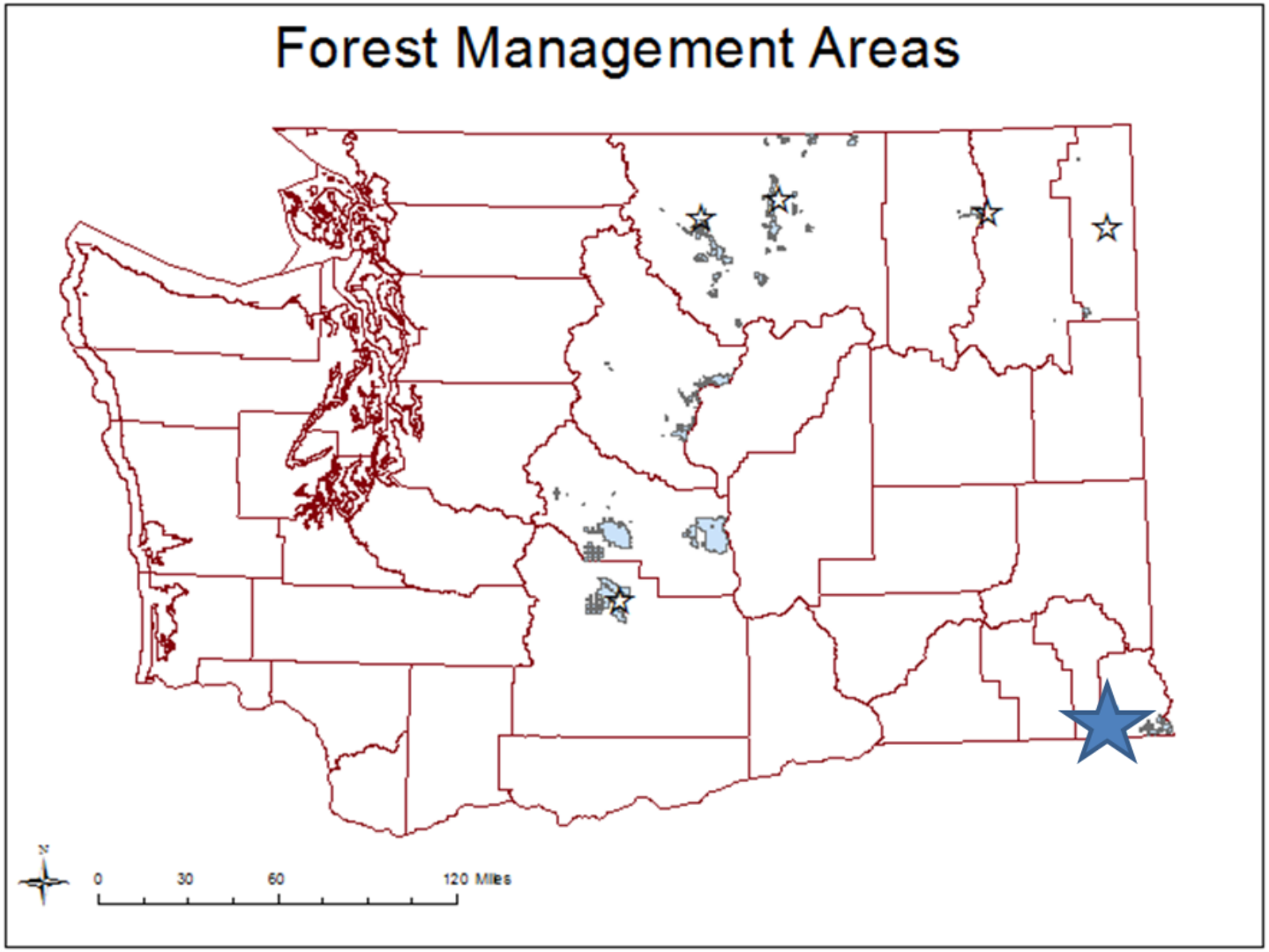
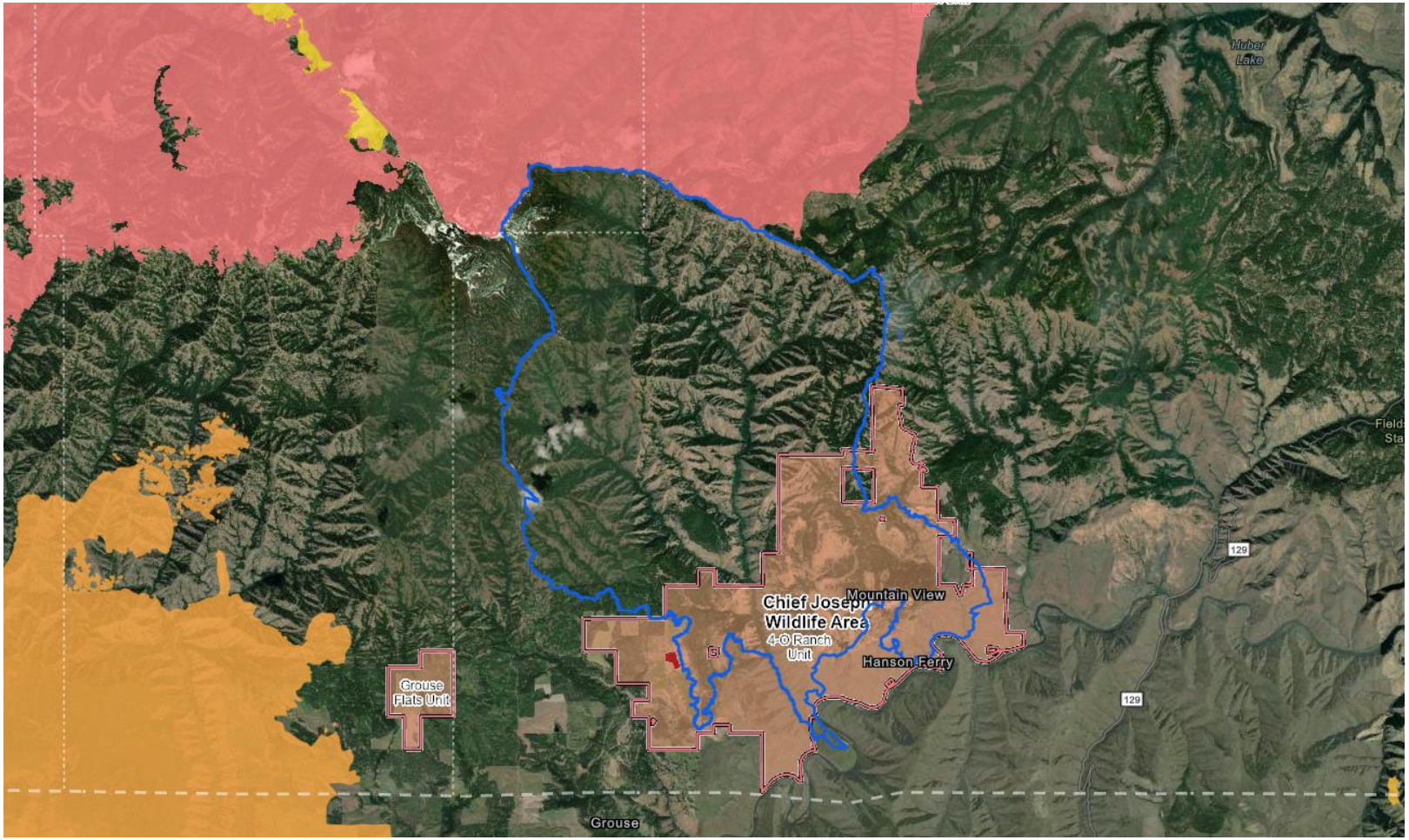
4-O Ranch Project Location



Most of the Unit Burned in the 24,091-acre Cougar Creek Wildfire (perimeter in blue)



Frequent low-intensity fire maintains dry forests.

A single, uncharacteristically-intense fire doesn't restore a degraded dry forest. It often converts a live biomass problem into a dead biomass problem.

What should we do if a severe fire wildfire burns a dry forest before we can restore it?

Academia:
Do what you would have done had the fire not occurred.
- Restore natural biomass levels
- Leave foundation for forest to return

Don't take all of the big trees (alive or dead) if you want the forest to come back.

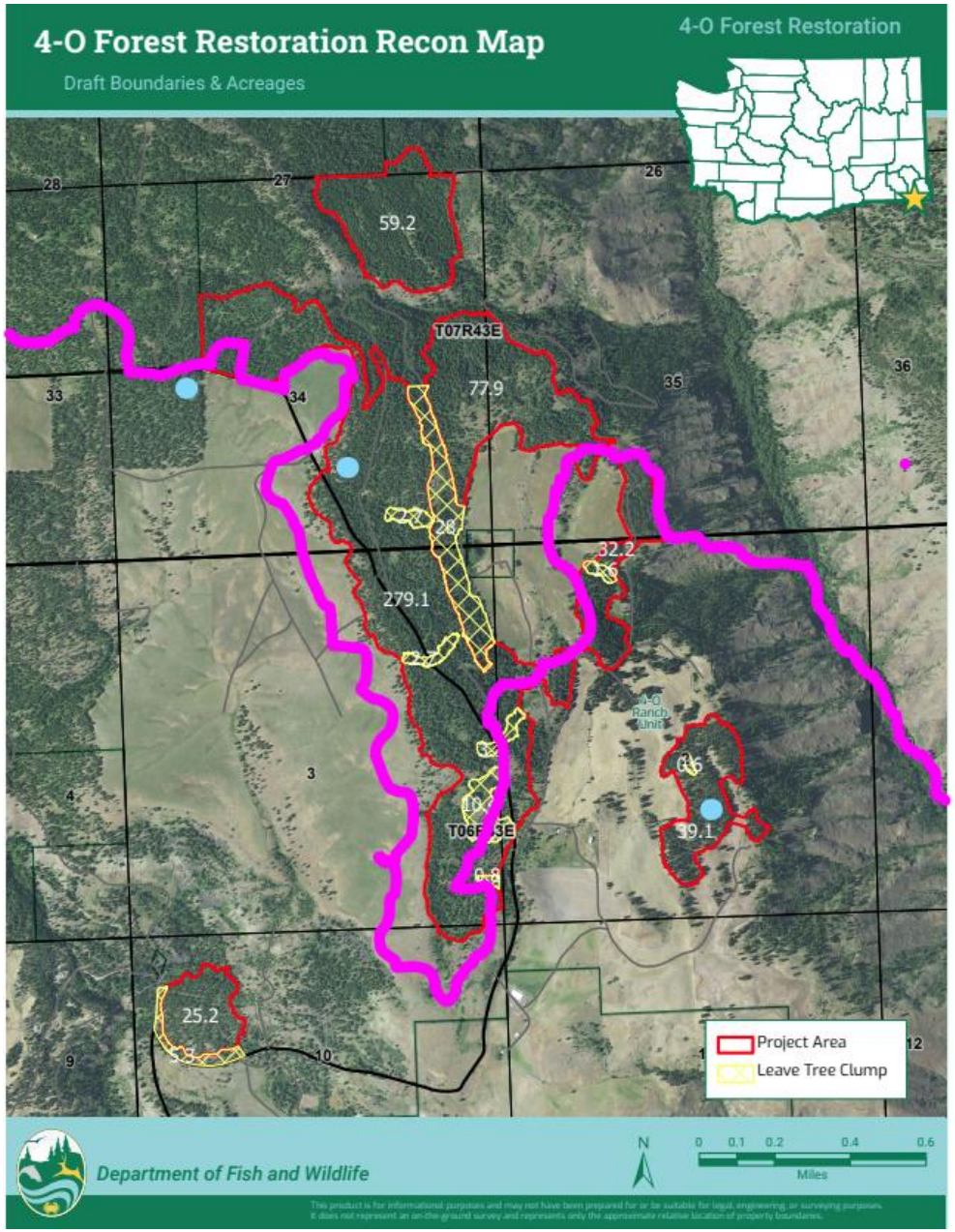
Why I don't refer to WDFW post-fire projects as "salvage" projects.

Cambridge definition of salvage: to save goods from being damaged or destroyed, especially from a ship that has been sunk or been damaged…. gold coins salvaged from a shipwreck."

"Salvage logging" definition: removing trees that have been damaged…to recover economic value…

Our goal is to restore forests…. not make money

Project map made in May. Everything above the pink line burned in July.



Project Area Current Conditions

High Intensely Burn

Moderate Intensely Burn

Not Yet Burned

Desired Conditions

4-O Ranch Project Details

- Restore 450 acres of dry Ponderosa pine/Douglas fir forests.
- Estimated volume: 1.5 million board feet
  - Approximately 1/2 truck load per acre
- Recent wildfire impacts
  - 180 acres experienced high intensity fire
  - 140 acres experienced low intensity fire
  - 130 acres didn't burn.
- Leave trees
  - Average 20-30 of the best trees/acre
  - Retain some large dense patches where still available
  - Retain snags in burned areas as valuable wildlife habitat
- Timing: Start in October of 2024
- Burn slash piles in fall of 2025
- Replant trees in severely burned areas.
  - Seed collected on-site years ago as a contingency.

Speed is of the Essence

Window when wood can pay for restoration is small.

- Pulp wood loses all value immediately (can't have charcoal in paper)
- Bark beetles infect pine trees with fungus (blue stain) that can reduce wood value in months.
- Trees lose value when dry and crack (following summer)

Need to mitigate hazard tree risks along roads.

Recent, Similar Post-Fire Projects

- Burch Mountain: 2/3 of project burned in 2021
- Clemans Mountain: 1/3 of project burned in 2020
- Scatter Creek: 2/3 of project burned in 2017

Burch Mountain. Thinned after fire.

Clemens Mountain (2020) Untreated

Clemens Mountain (2020) Treated

Scatter Creek Post-Fire Oak woodland restoration (2018)

Scatter Creek Post-Fire Prairie Restoration (2018)

We are seeking commission approval for this project.

Any Questions First?