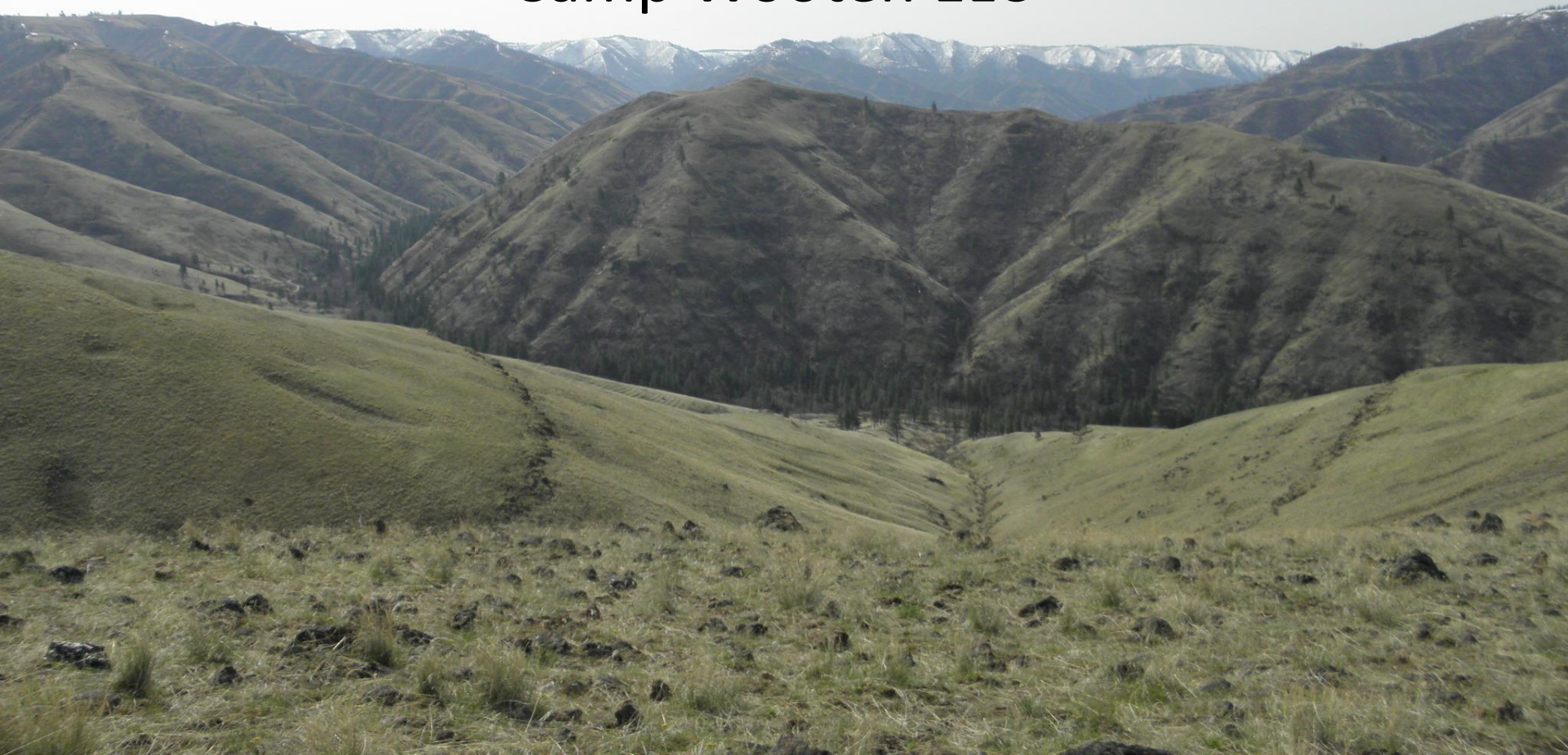


2024 WAAC Meeting

March 21, 2024

Camp Wooten ELC



Meeting Ground Rules

Everyone in the group is valuable and is treated with respect

One person's concern is the group's concern

Confine discussion to the meeting topic

Listen to understand

Do not interrupt

No personal attacks

WT
Wooten
Wildlife
Area Staff

Kari Dingman

- Wildlife Area Manager

Max Tritt

- Natural Resources Tech 2

Tom Jensen

- Natural Resources Tech 2

Management Plan Updates

Blue Mountains Wildlife Area Complex Management Plan

- Completed and posted on WDFW website summer 2019

Biennial Updates

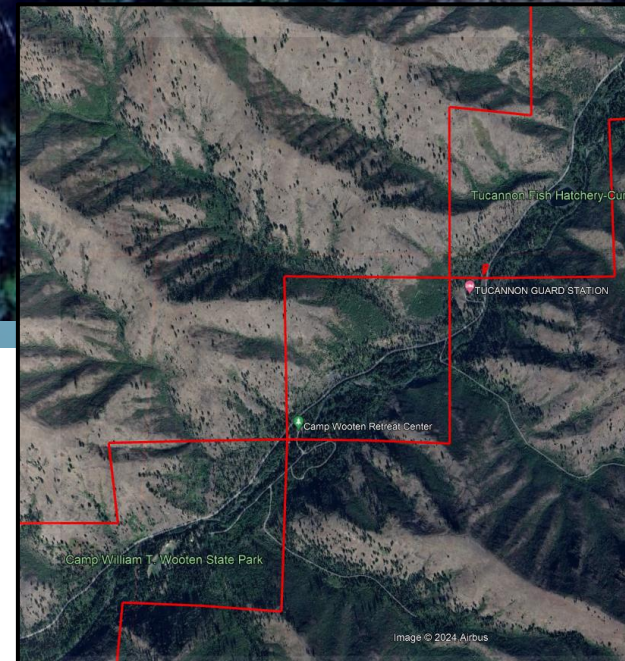
- 2021-22 update mailed to WAAC members

Questions on updates?

- W.T. Wooten specific updates



WDFW-USFS Boundary Line Issue & Solution



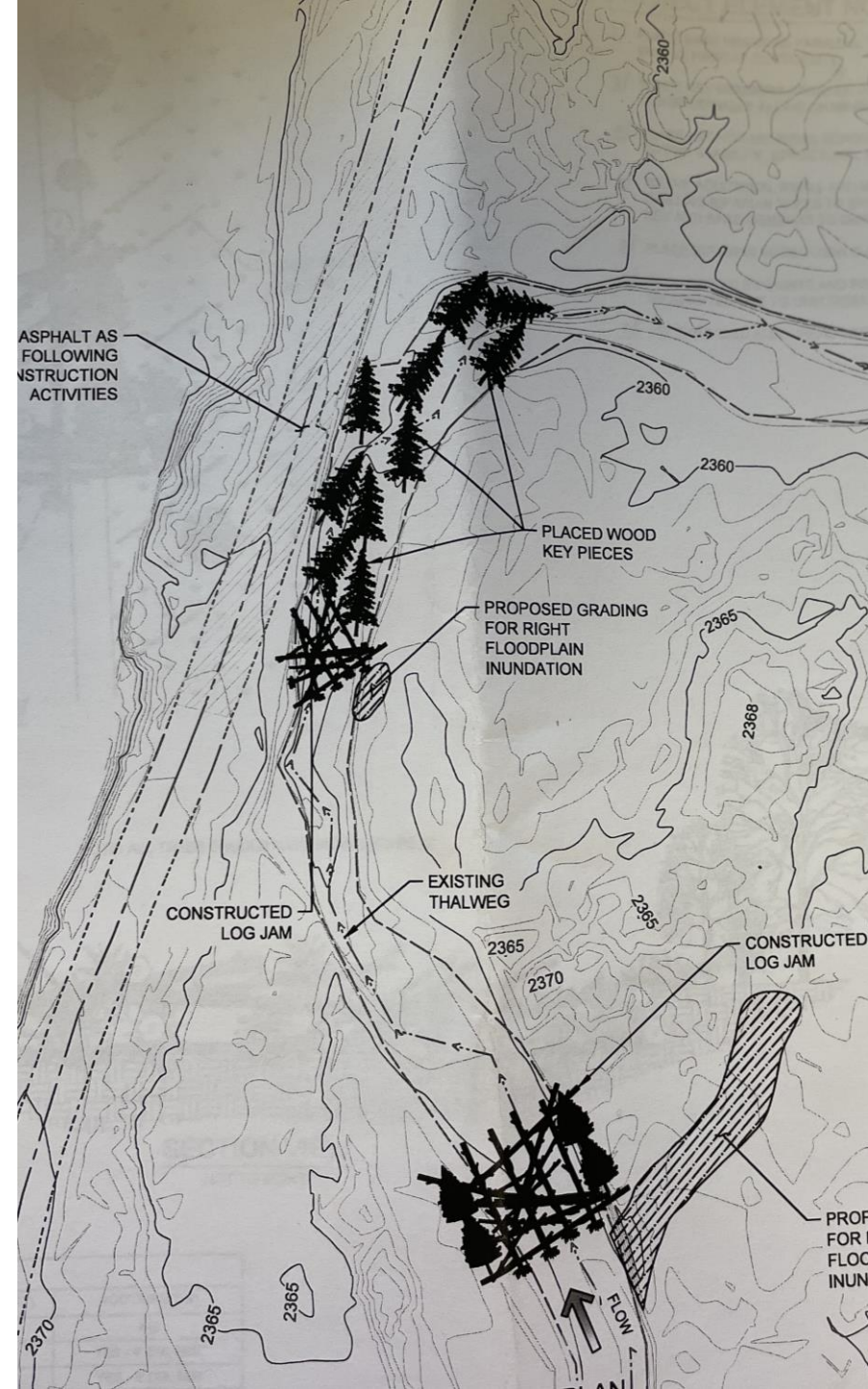


2020 Flood Damage Update

- Campground 9 cleared and reopened in 2023
- Unfinished WDFW repair work:
 - Deer Lake
 - Russell Unit river ford
 - Headquarters irrigation
- USFS
 - Still working on Tucannon Road repairs
 - Panjab footbridge still out

USFS Projects

- Little Tucannon Bridge
 - Longer span with more room underneath
- Road near Watson Lake Parking Area
 - Large wood structures for road protection



Floodplain Management Plan

Submitted for Capitol Projects for 2023-25



Asked for \$3.4M

Governor's budget = \$1M, Senate budget = \$0, House budget = \$0



Final Budget = \$0

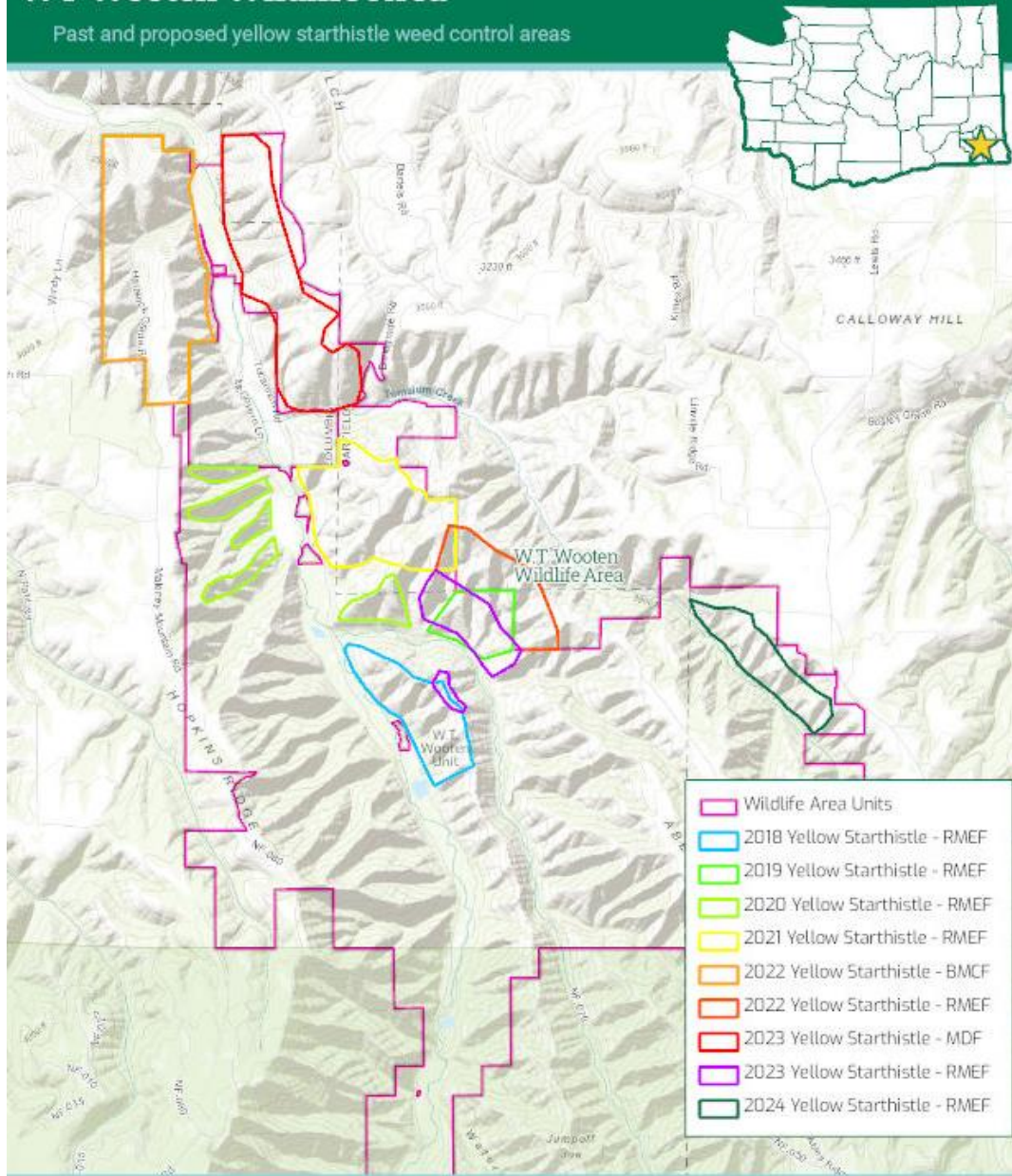
Floodplain Management Plan

- PA 5-15 Assessment
 - Co-Managers
 - WDFW, CTUIR, and Nez Perce Tribe
 - From Camp Wooten to Russell Unit
 - Assessment and conceptual design
 - Look at options for rehabbing or improving all lakes
 - Look at campgrounds, roads, powerline burial, and all infrastructure located in floodplain
 - Timeline:
 - Project Start Date September 1, 2023
 - Project End Date December 31, 2024

WT Wooten Wildlife Area

WT Wooten Wildlife Area

Past and proposed yellow starthistle weed control areas



Noxious Weed Control Grants

- 2023 Grants
 - Rocky Mtn Elk Foundation grant
 - \$15,000 to spray 360 acres
 - Mule Deer Foundation grant
 - \$8,000 to spray 225 acres
- 2024 Grants
 - \$15,000 requested from RMEF
 - 300 acres

Swegle Unit Restoration Project

- RCO State Land Restoration Grant = \$242,900
 - Restore .32 miles of West Little Walla Walla River & 30 acres of upland



Large Wood Projects

- Rainbow Lake Inlet to Hatchery Bridge
 - Phase 1 completed 2022, Phase 2 completed 2023
 - Engineered log jams
 - BPA funded for habitat restoration for spring Chinook and steelhead
- Cummings Creek- Phase 1 (Nez Perce Tribe)
 - Treat 1 mile upstream from mouth of Cummings Creek
 - Post Assist Log structures (PALS)
 - Salmon Recovery Board funded
 - Construction planned Summer 2023

Educational Hides & Skulls

- 2022 – Redband Cellars (Dayton, WA)
 - \$1,000 to Touchet Valley Taxidermy & Tanning
 - Paid for porcupine hide, fox hide, badger hide, and bear hide & skull
- Warren Community Action Fund
 - Blue Mountain Community Foundation
 - Asked for \$1,500 for more hides & skulls
 - Did not receive any funding
- Hides and skulls used for educational talks at Camp Wooten ELC, The Club, school groups, 4-H groups, civic groups, etc
 - Also used in Fair Booth

Budget Reconciliation Funds

Purchased:

- New well (2021)
- New siding on Wooten Headquarters (2022)
- Garage door opener (2023)
- 2006 International 7400 SBA Dump Truck (2023)
- 2023 MAXXD LDX Equipment Trailer (2023)
- Security Cameras (2023)

Requests:

- Mini-excavator with bucket and brush-cutter head
- Pole building construction

Capital Budget Project Requests

- Replace outhouses built by CAMP
 - Exteriors beginning to deteriorate and crumble
 - Replace with ADA-accessible CXTs
 - 12 total at lakes and campgrounds



Bighorn Sheep Update

- Currently have 13 sheep in the herd
 - 2 lambs surviving from last year (out of 4 documented)
- Herd still on private land north of the wildlife area
- WDFW has no plans to supplement the herd with new animals
 - Will continue to try to ground dart and collar the sheep as opportunities present themselves



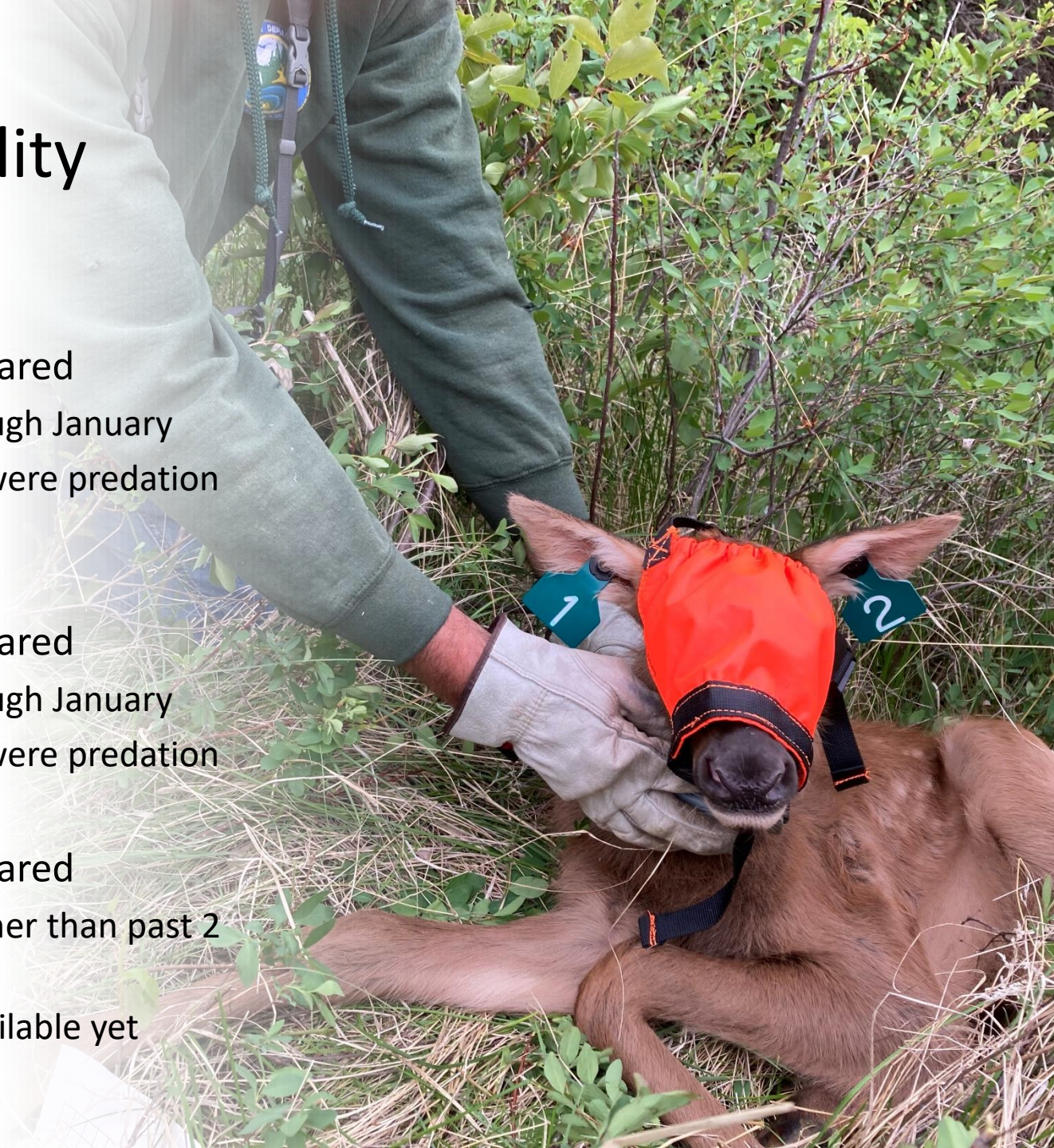
Wolf Update

- Columbia Pack
 - 1 working collar, 1 non-working
- Tucannon Pack
 - 0 working collars
- Touchet Pack
 - 1 working collar but dispersed
- 139 Group
 - 1 working collar but wolf died
- Butte Creek Pack
 - 0 working collars
- Grouse Flats Pack
 - 2 working collars
- Pack counts done January-March due to packs being more cohesive and numbers being at their lowest of the year due to sub-adults dispersing and pups not surviving winter



Elk Calf Mortality Study

- 2021 – 125 calves collared
 - 13.6% survival through January
 - 78% of mortalities were predation
 - 57.6% cougar
- 2022 – 102 calves collared
 - 47.5% survival through January
 - 77% of mortalities were predation
- 2023 – 115 calves collared
 - Survival to date higher than past 2 years
 - Final results not available yet



Elk Calf Mortality Study

- Survival tracked for 1 year
- 11 calves marked in 2022 harvested as spikes in 2023
 - 9 no longer had collars but still had ear tags
 - 2 had working collars
- Shed-collar rate same in 2023 as in 2022
 - Sample sizes were greater than 100 animals in anticipation of collars falling off or not working



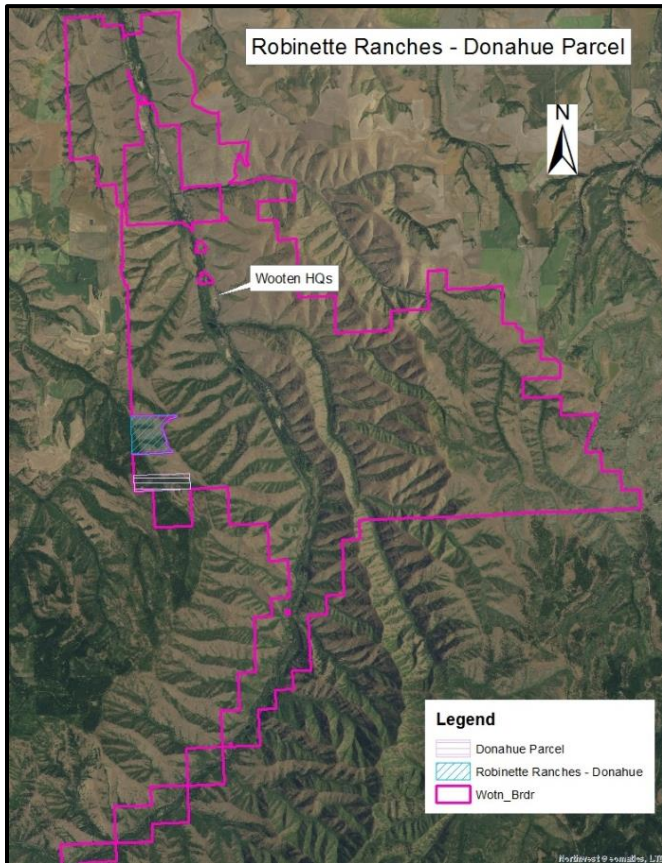


Walla Walla Property Update

- Continue weed control and litter cleanup
- McDonald Road Unit
 - Renewed ag lease

Maloney Mountain Property

- 145.82 acres
- Landowner contacted WDFW regarding purchase
- RCO Grant
 - Was funded through RCO but funding was pulled at the last minute



WAAC Communication

- Spring meeting
- Fall newsletter

- Wooten WAAC page on the WDFW website
 - Meeting notes and handouts





Questions??