

STATE BOARD OF LAND COMMISSIONERS

December 20, 2022

Regular Agenda

Subject

Big Fork Cedar Timber Sale with clearcut harvest units exceeding 100 acres

Questions Presented

Shall the Land Board approve the Big Fork Cedar Timber Sale with a clearcut harvest unit exceeding 100 acres?

Background

At its December 15, 2015 meeting, the Land Board adopted a timber sale governance structure whereby the Idaho Department of Lands (Department) would only present individual proposed timber sales for Land Board approval that fall outside of established Land Board policies. Timber sales with clearcut harvest units exceeding 100 acres are one type of sale to be submitted for approval.

Discussion

The Pend Oreille Lake Supervisory Area has submitted a timber sale in the FY23 plan that has a clearcut harvest unit exceeding 100 acres in size. The sale area is within other Department ownership that has been previously managed (Attachments 1 and 2). The sale area is located 9 miles northwest of Sandpoint (Attachment 3).

The proposed clearcut harvest in this sale is 110 acres and is described in detail (Attachment 4). The preferred seral species are a minor component of the stand and are not expected to produce enough cones and seed for desired natural regeneration. The site will be planted with a mix of seral species that will optimize the sites potential. Adjacent stands have been successfully planted to adequate stocking to maximize return to the beneficiaries.

The sale has been prepared to meet or exceed the Forest Practices Act. The proposed clearcut harvest unit is silviculturally and economically justified and was approved by the Timber Management Bureau (Attachment 5). This sale, as proposed, meets the objectives of the Pend Oreille Lake Area Forest Asset Management Plan.

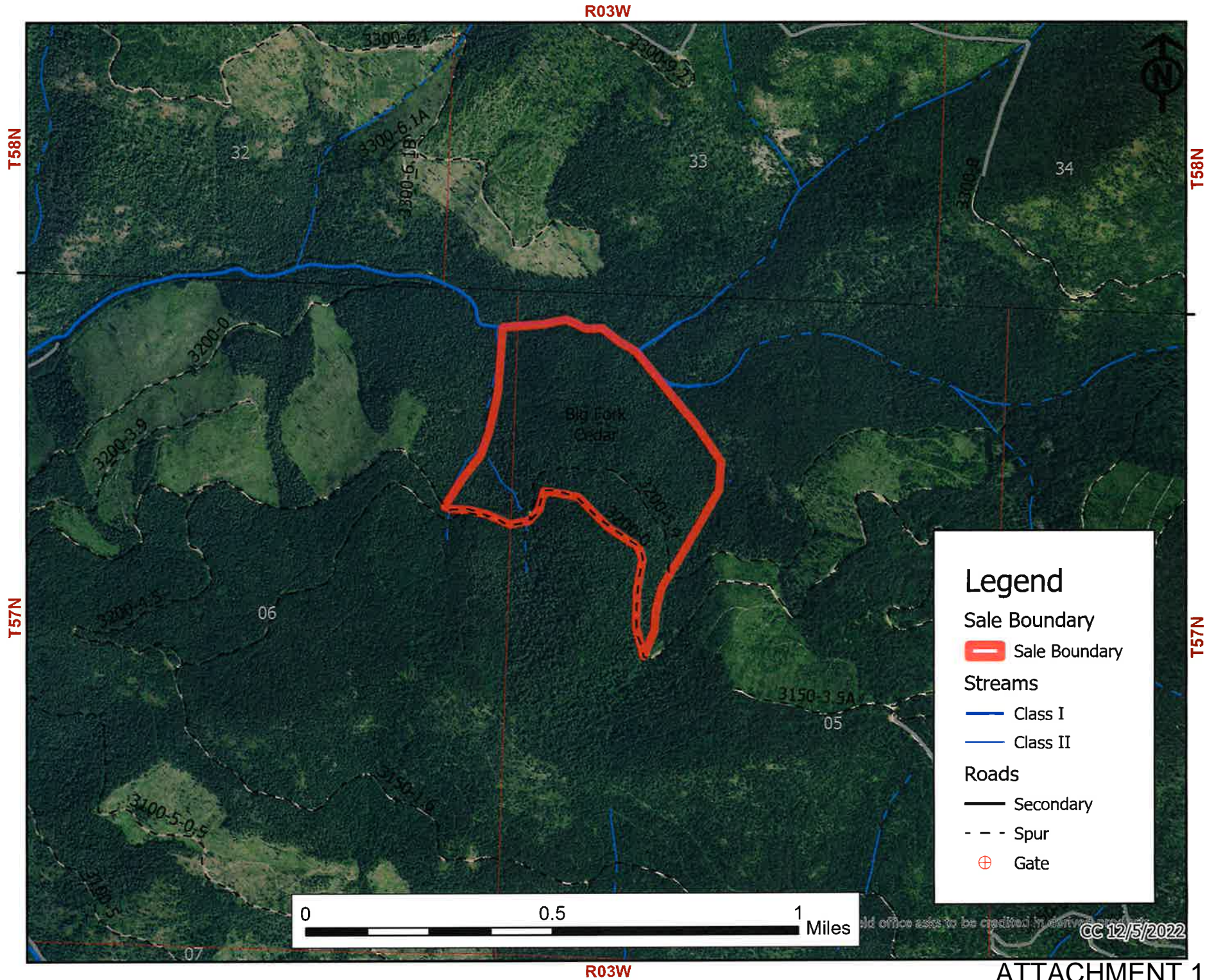
Recommendation

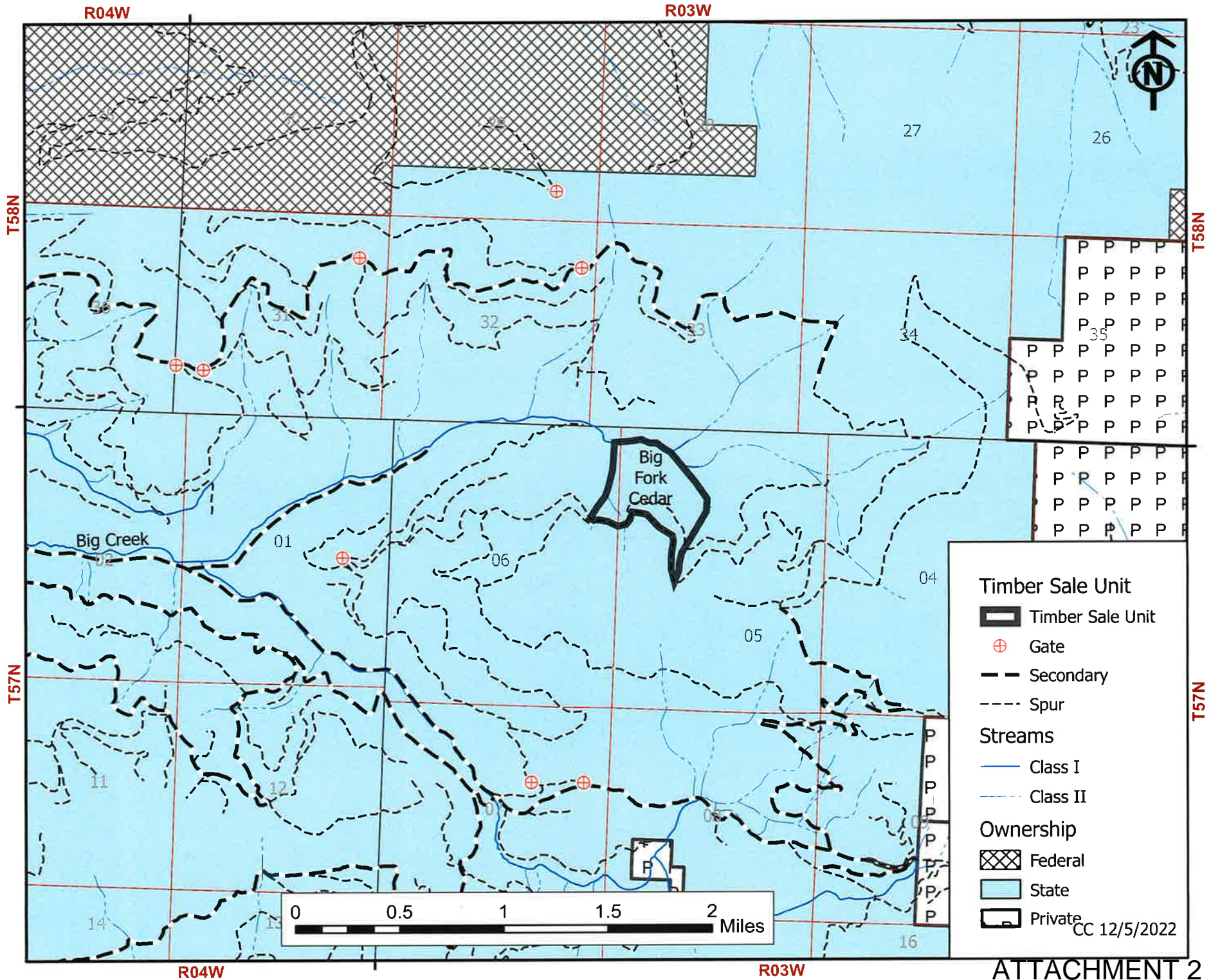
Approve the Big Fork Cedar Timber Sale.

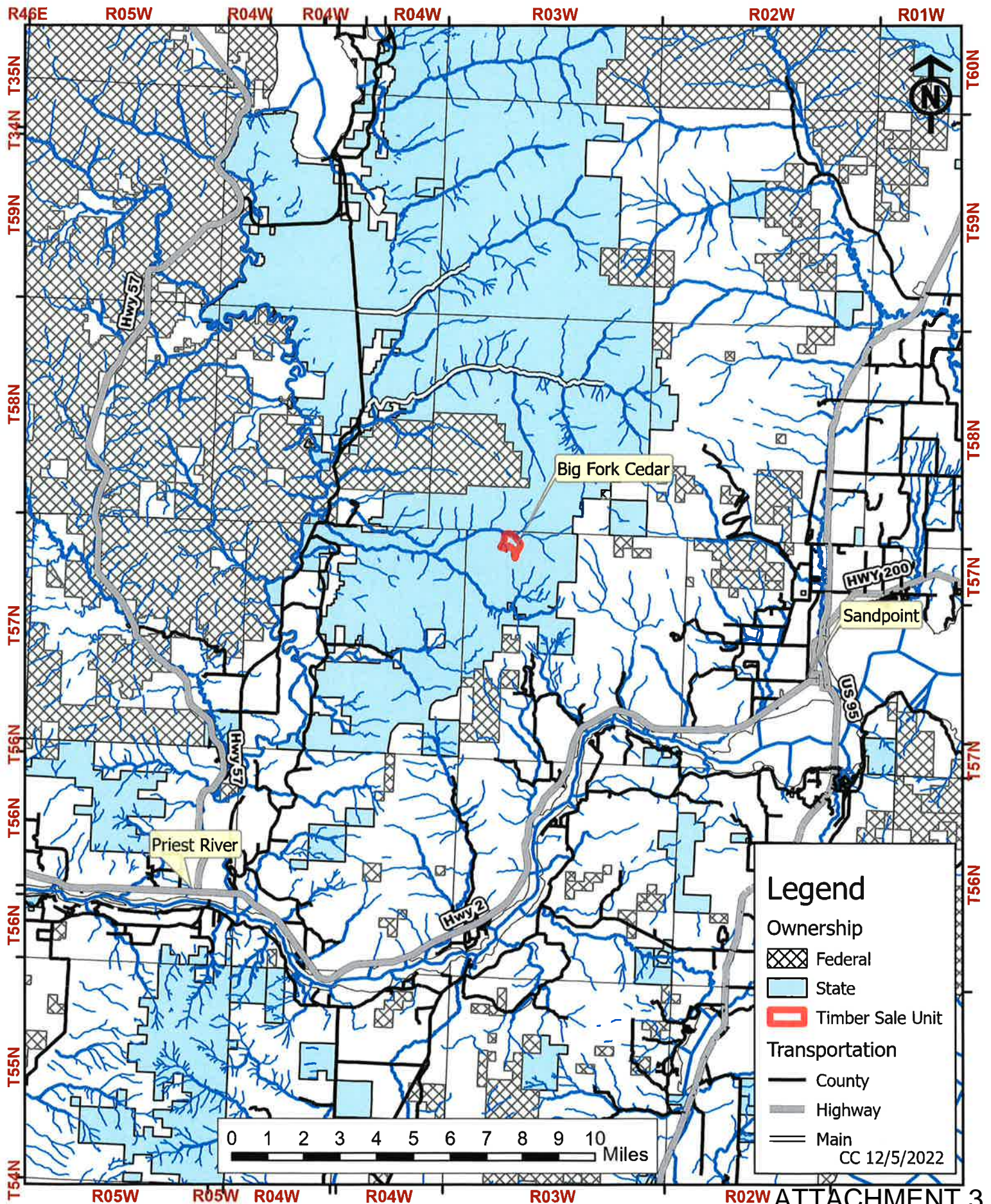
Board Action

Attachments

1. Ortho Map
2. Ownership Map
3. Vicinity Map
4. Clearcut Justification
5. Bureau Approval Memo







Big Fork Cedar Clearcut Justification

1. Treatment Description:

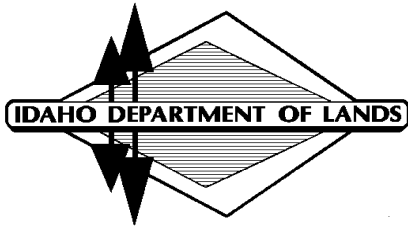
(a) The stand is comprised of mature grand fir, western hemlock and western redcedar with some western larch, Douglas-fir and Engelmann spruce. This stand will be clearcut and planted following harvest.

(b) Clearcut Justification:

Clearcuts will help achieve Desired Future Conditions outlined in the Pend Oreille Lake Supervisory Area's Forest Asset Management Plan. Clearcut Unit 1 (110 acres) is silviculturally and economically justified and complies with the Idaho Forest Practices Act. A Clearcut prescription will be used to harvest existing stand and re-establish seral and intermediate species on the site. This prescription will be used for the following reasons:

1. The presence of seral species, such as Douglas-fir and western larch are of poor quality to leave as a seed source. Overstory trees are already succumbing to the effects of red ring rot. No established understory exists due to the closed canopy nature of the stand. Seed from these overstory trees will not maximize the sites potential for timber production.
2. The age of the dominants range from 90 to >200+ years old, with an average age of 125 years old. Much of the stand is in a high level of defect and damage.
3. Endemic levels of Indian paint fungus are present in much of the grand fir and western hemlock.
4. Clearcutting will minimize the number of entries into the area, reduce disturbance and erosion, minimize the spread of disease, and expedite regeneration by planting genetically superior western larch and white pine.

(c) Forest Improvement Activity: The unit will be assessed for site preparation before being planted with western larch and white pine to supplement the anticipated natural regeneration which is expected to be mostly grand fir and western hemlock. Western larch and western white pine are frost and root rot resistant. Root rots significantly affect many other tree species in this forest type. Conditions and planting needs will be closely monitored after harvest. The plantations adjacent to the proposed clearcut unit are currently very successful.



FOREST MANAGEMENT BUREAU
3284 W Industrial Loop
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815
208-769-1525/FAX 208-769-1524

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chad Ramsay, Lands Resource Supervisor

FROM: Jeremy Shawver, Lands Section Manager Timber Sales & Contract Admin

DATE: November 21, 2022

SUBJECT: Big Fork Cedar (CR-20-0405) Timber Sale

On November 7th, 2022, Jeremy Shawver, Kyle Seigley, and Spencer Hanson, Timber Bureau representatives, visited the Big Fork Cedar (CR-20-0405) Timber Sale on the Pend Oreille Area for a field review. This occurred prior to harvest to discuss the proposed silvicultural prescription of a clearcut unit over 100 acres. Attendance also included Chad Ramsey from Operations.

The Big Creek Cedar TS resides in sections 5 and 6 of T 57 N R 03 W. Public school endowment owns both sections.

The group parked near the confluence of the North Fork Big Creek and Big Creek. The group proceeded by foot on the 2-mile, snowy hike to the timber sale unit (Image 1). Once arriving at the unit (110 acres), the group began their ascent across the proposed harvest area. Relic stumps and jammer roads indicate some level of selective harvesting had taken place during the first half of the 20th century (Image 2). Past harvesting has rendered the stand to its current state with high defect timber of late seral species such as western hemlock, grand fir, and western redcedar. There was a sparse component of early seral species, western larch and Douglas-fir. The desired seral species of good quality were even more scarce (Image 3). The group discussed the presence of Indian paint fungus in the grand fir and western hemlock (Image 4). With the average age being well over 100 years old, there were trees with a high level of defect and damage.

As the group continued through the unit, discussions of harvesting systems and reforestation plans were discussed. The unit's primary access is only available from a road above where the group started their hike. This would require the unit to be harvested with cable systems with long line capabilities. The artificial reforestation in

the adjacent management areas has been highly successful along with natural regeneration occurring. The area plans to plant the area with western larch and western white pine. Both species are resistant to root disease. With the anticipation of natural regeneration, the area plans to plant at a wider spacing than normal. Planting will help establish the desired seral species supplementing the anticipated natural regeneration, grand fir and western hemlock, that are more susceptible to root disease. After the group finished their hike around the unit, they began their journey back to the vehicle.

The Timber Management Bureau recommends that the area proceeds with Big Creek Cedar timber sale clearcut unit. A clearcut is the most economically and silviculturally justified treatment for the stand. As the unit is cable ground, a second entry to harvest a very light seed tree is not an economical option. The site is very productive, and the area will benefit from planting a smattering of desired seral species to supplement the anticipated natural regeneration. The Bureau supports this activity considering maximizing revenue to the Public School Endowment.



Image 1 – Snowy hike



Image 2 – Relic stump from past management

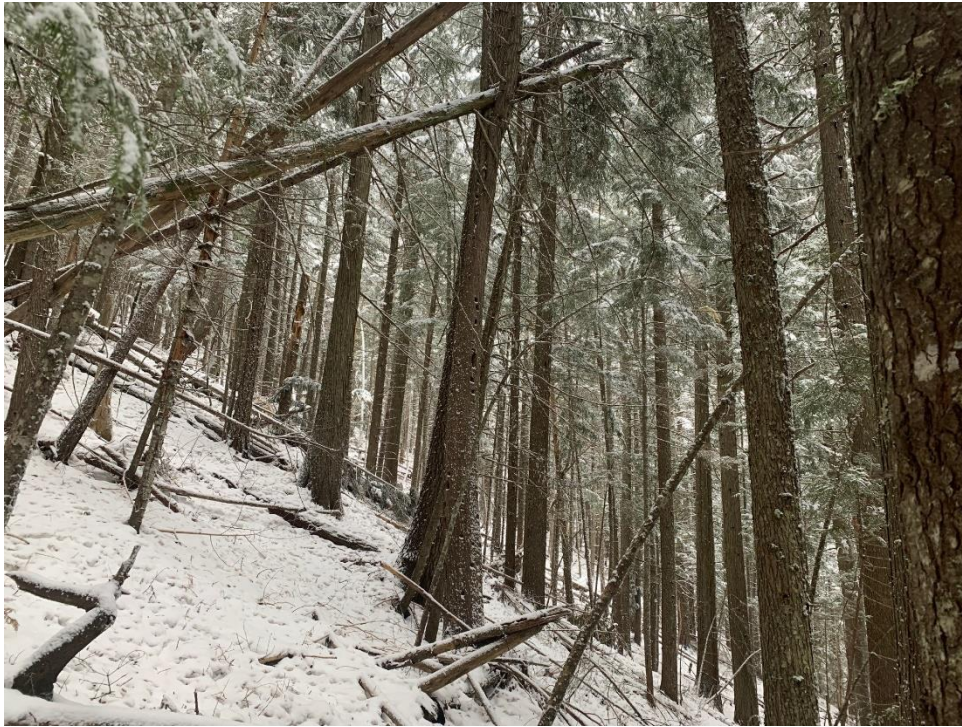


Image 3 – Stand composition



Image 4 – Root rot pocket