

STATE BOARD OF LAND COMMISSIONERS

September 16, 2025

Regular Agenda

Subject

Update to Fiscal Year 2026 Timber Sales with clearcut harvest units exceeding 100 acres.

Questions Presented

Shall the Land Board approve the Bald Larch, Found It 40, Builda Burma, and Divided Cedar Timber Sales with clearcut harvest units exceeding 100 acres?

Background

At its December 15, 2014, meeting, the Land Board adopted a timber sale governance structure whereby the 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 Fiscal Year 2026 Timber Sales Plan (FY26 Sales Plan) originally featured ten timber sales requiring Land Board approval. To streamline the approval process and improve planning efficiency for the upcoming fiscal year, the Department has tried to present all sales requiring approval alongside the FY26 Sales Plan whenever possible. However, refinements to the FY26 Sales Plan have been made resulting in the addition of four clearcuts that exceed 100 acres that require Land Board approval. The table in Attachment 1 outlines the supervisory area, sale name, acreage, general location of each sale unit, and the primary rationale for selecting the clearcut prescription. Attachments 2-5 include detailed maps, clearcut justifications, and Timber Management Bureau review documents for each sale.

Clearcutting, rather than relying on natural regeneration, offers several advantages on most sites. It promotes optimal forest regeneration, improves stocking, and accelerates growth. By reducing competition through site preparation and planting seedlings, clearcutting establishes vigorous, uniform stands that maximize timber yields. In areas with high logging costs, it is the most cost-effective approach, allowing for a single, efficient harvest that minimizes equipment mobilization, road maintenance, and administrative expenses associated with multiple harvests under shelterwood or seed tree methods. Additionally, clearcuts eliminate the need to protect residual trees, which can be particularly challenging and costly in difficult terrain or high-wind areas where retained trees are prone to damage or blowdown.

All proposed clearcuts comply with the Idaho Forest Practices Act and have undergone thorough review to ensure they are both silviculturally and economically justified. Each clearcut has been evaluated and approved by the Timber Management Bureau, confirming that the prescription aligns with sustainable forest management practices, promotes healthy regeneration, and provides the greatest long term economic return to the beneficiaries.

Recommendation

Approve the Bald Larch, Found It 40, Builda Burma, and Divided Cedar Timber Sales.

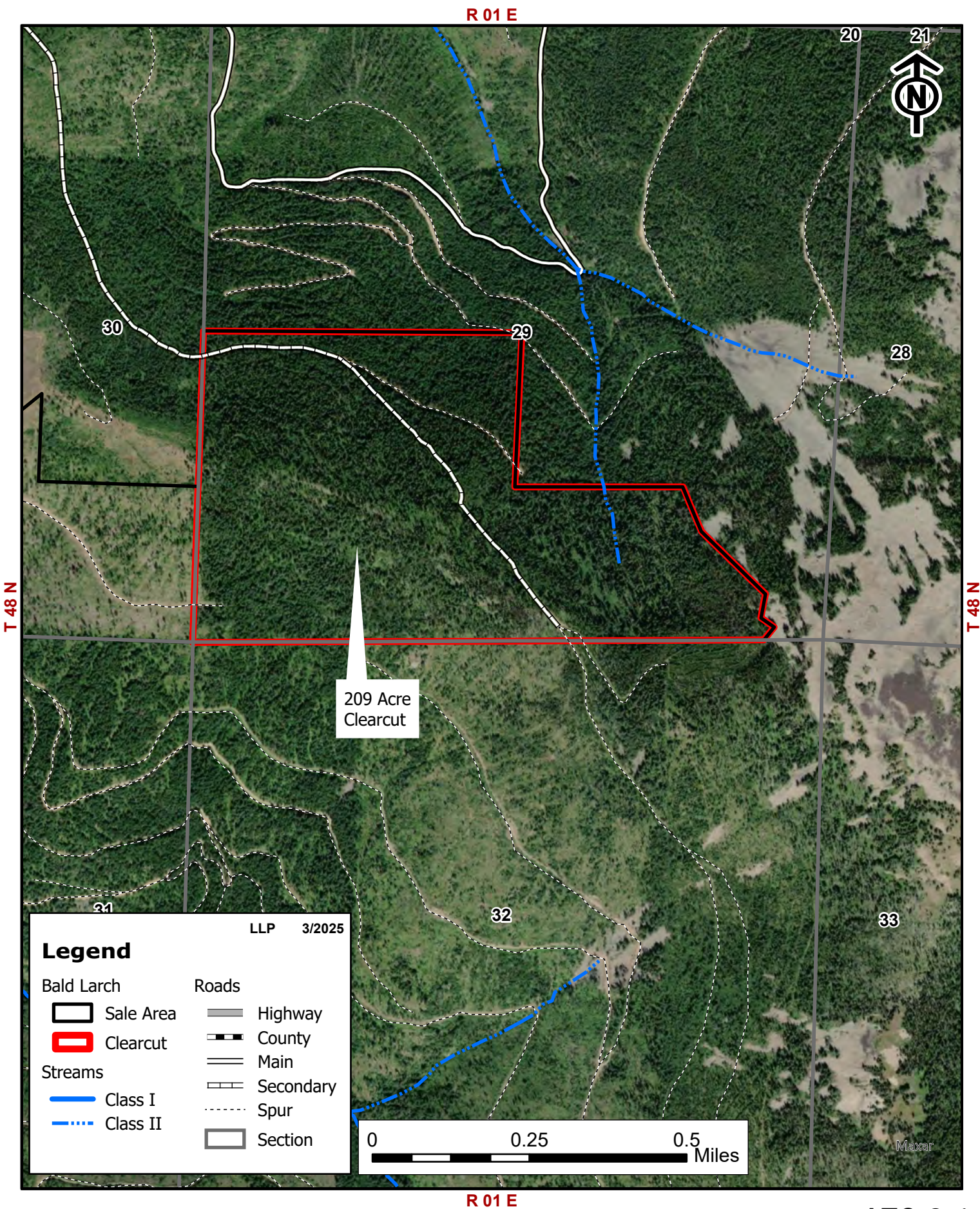
Board Action

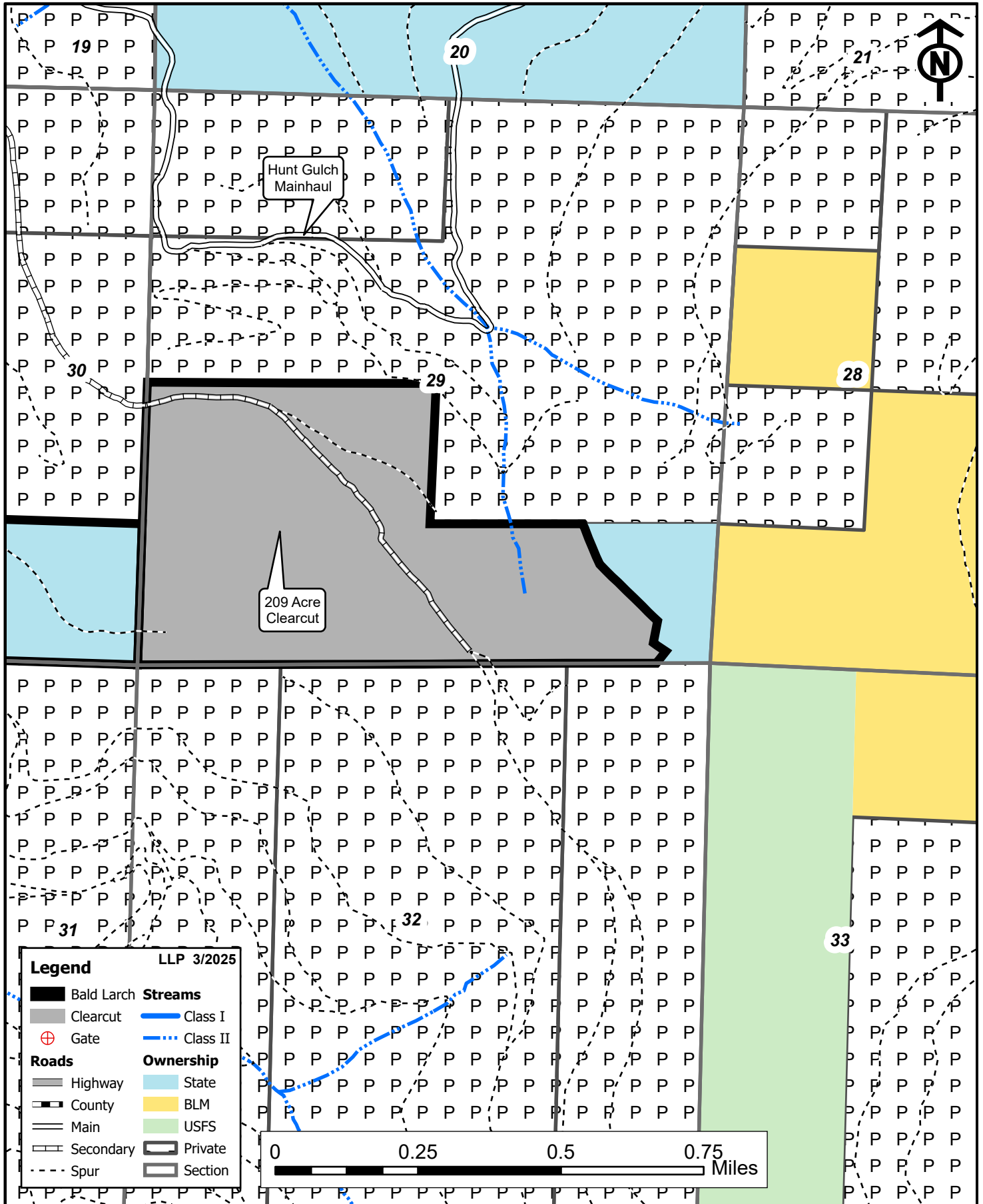
Attachments

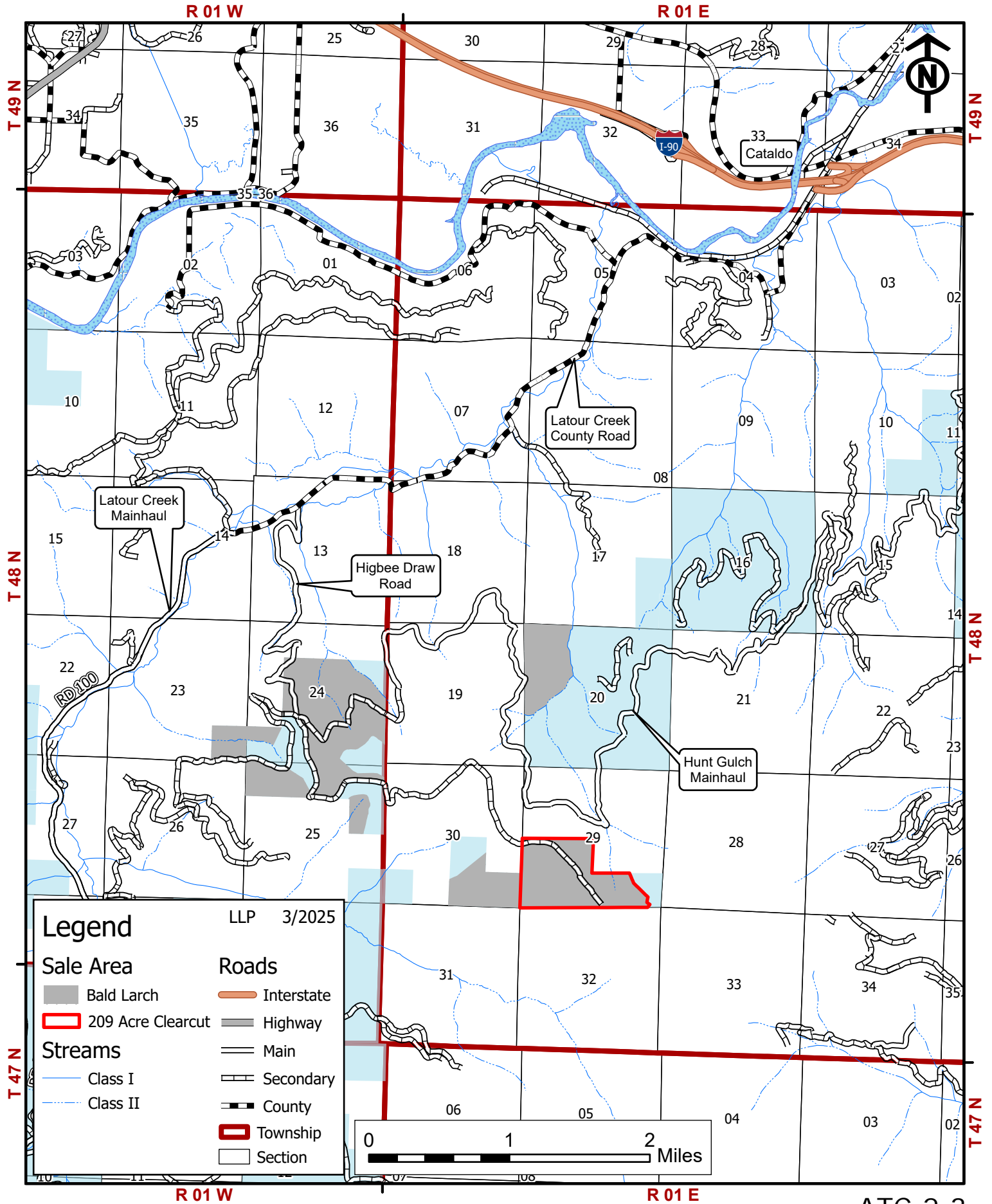
1. Clearcut Sales Summary
2. Bald Larch Details
3. Found It 40 Details
4. Builda Burma Details
5. Divided Cedar Details

Fiscal Year 2026 Timber Sale Clearcuts Update

Supervisory Area	Timber Sale Name	Acres	Location (Air Miles)	Primary Justification
Mica	Bald Larch	209	4 Southwest Cataldo, ID	Increased Regeneration Success, Disease, High Logging Costs
St. Joe	Found It 40	215	16 East Clarkia, ID	Increased Regeneration Success
St. Joe	Builda Burma	153	12 Northeast Elk River, ID	Increased Regeneration Success, High Logging Costs
St. Joe	Divided Cedar	141	16 Southeast Clarkia, ID	Increased Regeneration Success, High Logging Costs







Bald Larch Clearcut Justification

1. Treatment Description:

- a) This stand is primarily composed of overmature Douglas-fir and grand fir. Englemann spruce, subalpine fir, western larch, western hemlock, western redcedar, lodgepole pine and ponderosa pine comprise minor components of the stand. This stand will be clearcut and planted following harvest.

- b) Clearcut Justification:

This clearcut will help achieve Desired Future Conditions outlined in the Mica Supervisory Area's Forest Asset Management Plan. This Clearcut Unit (209 acres) is silviculturally and economically justified and complies with the Idaho Forest Practices Act. A clearcut prescription will be used to harvest the existing stand and re-establish seral and intermediate species on the site. Natural regeneration will not accomplish this for the following reasons:

- 1) This stand is dominated by climax species including Douglas-fir and grand fir, with a significant component of subalpine fir and Englemann spruce. The average stand age of dominant trees are over 100 years old. Due to the age and phenotypic characteristics of the seral species on site, these trees are not expected to produce the seed necessary to fully regenerate these stands.
- 2) This clearcut unit is a remote and isolated parcel located at the end of a road system. The slope and terrain will require cable yarding systems which results in an increased logging cost. The haul route is over 12 miles to Interstate 90. The unit's high elevation creates access constraints due to snowpack.
- 3) The heavy brush and bear grass component already established in the understory limits the potential for natural regeneration. Schweinitzii (*Phaeolus schweinitzii*) and Armillaria (*Armillaria ostoyae*) root disease are present, reducing the number of available seed trees. Insects are also present within the stand at moderate levels.
- 4) Clearcutting will minimize the number of entries into the area, reduce harvest costs and maximize revenue to the Endowments, reduce disturbance and erosion, minimize the spread of disease, and expedite regeneration through planting.

- c) Forest Improvement Activity:

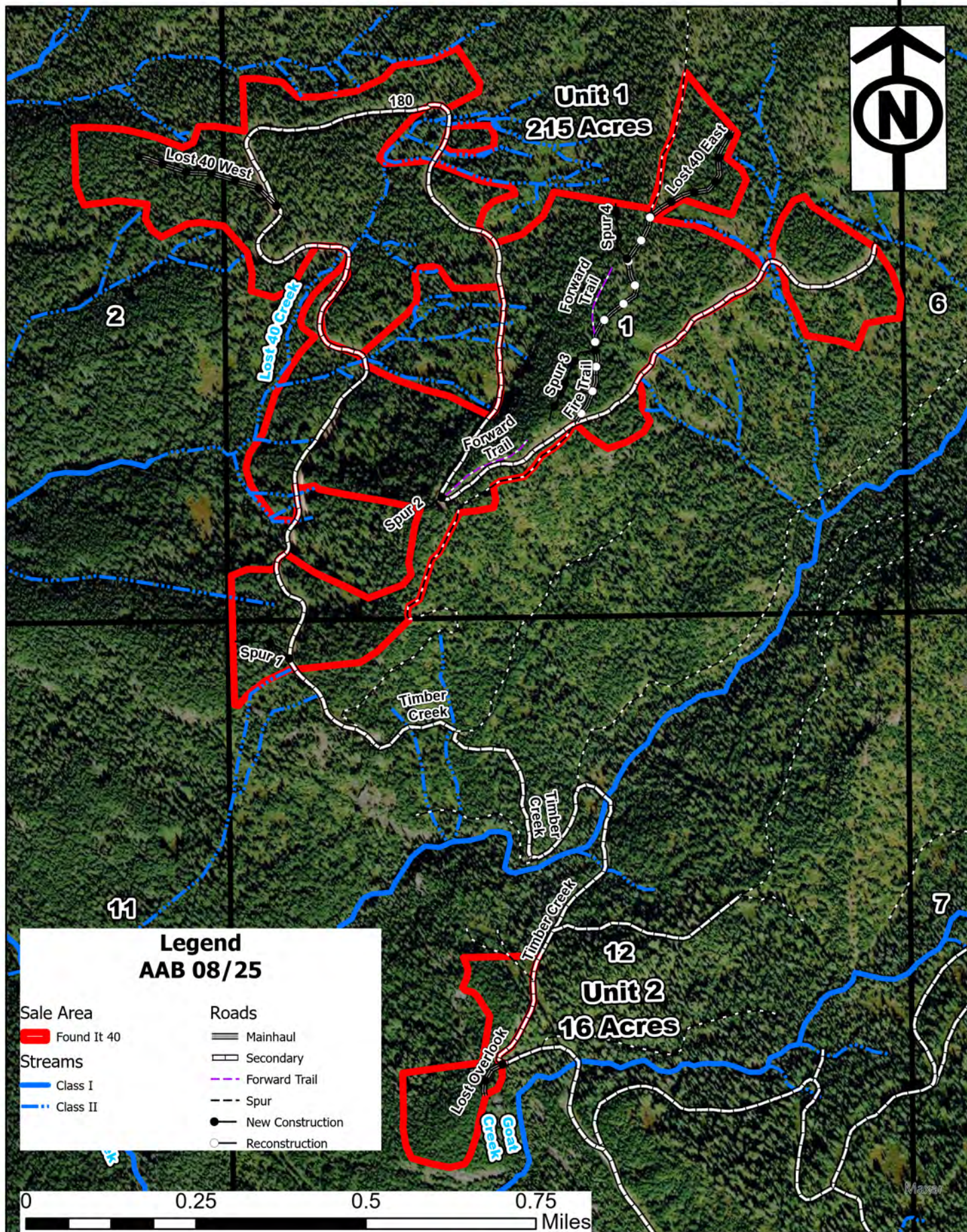
This clearcut unit will receive a site prep herbicide application and will be planted with a mix of high elevation western larch, western white pine, Douglas-fir and Englemann spruce determined by the aspects present within the clearcut unit. 1 and 5-year stocking surveys will be conducted following planting to determine survival rates and evaluate the need for follow-up herbicide treatments.

R 04 E

R 05 E

T 42 N

T 42 N



R 04 E

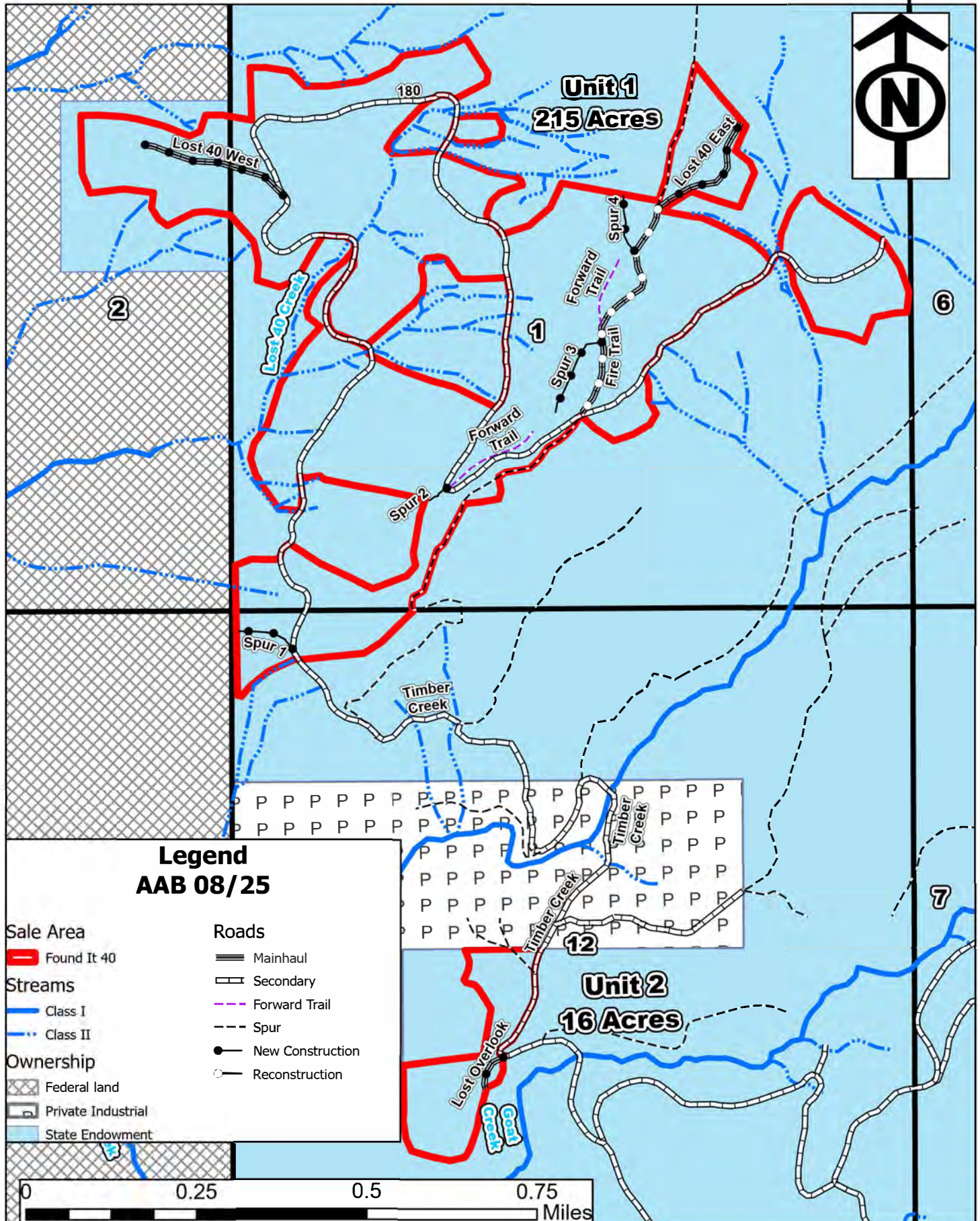
R 05 E

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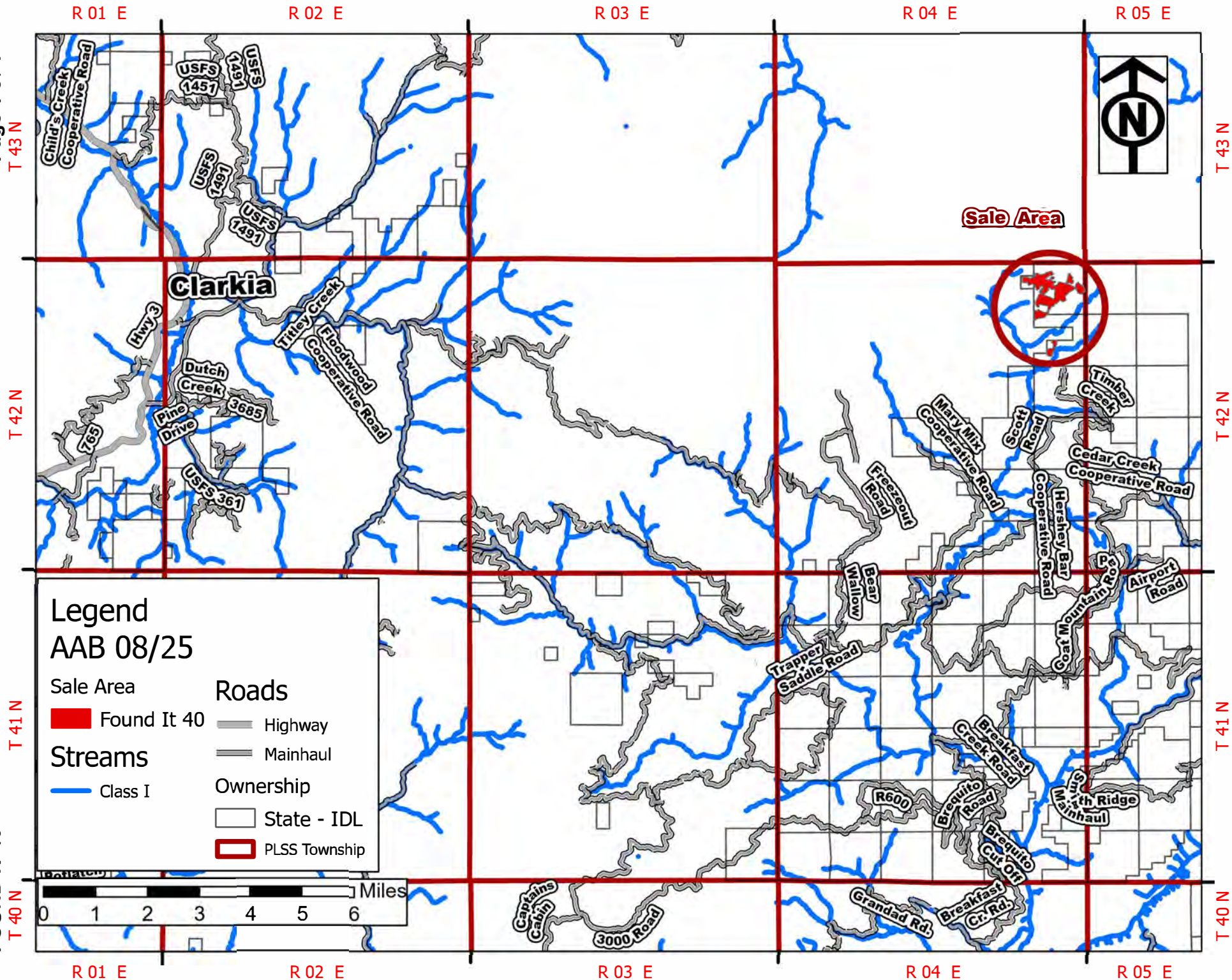
T 42 N

T 42 N



R 04 E

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Found It 40 Clearcut Justification

1. Treatment Description:

- a) Stands associated with the Found It 40 timber sale are composed of mature grand fir and Englemann spruce with lesser components of Douglas-fir, western larch, western white pine, subalpine fir, mountain hemlock, western red cedar, and lodgepole pine. These stands will be clearcut and planted following harvest.

- b) Clearcut Justification:

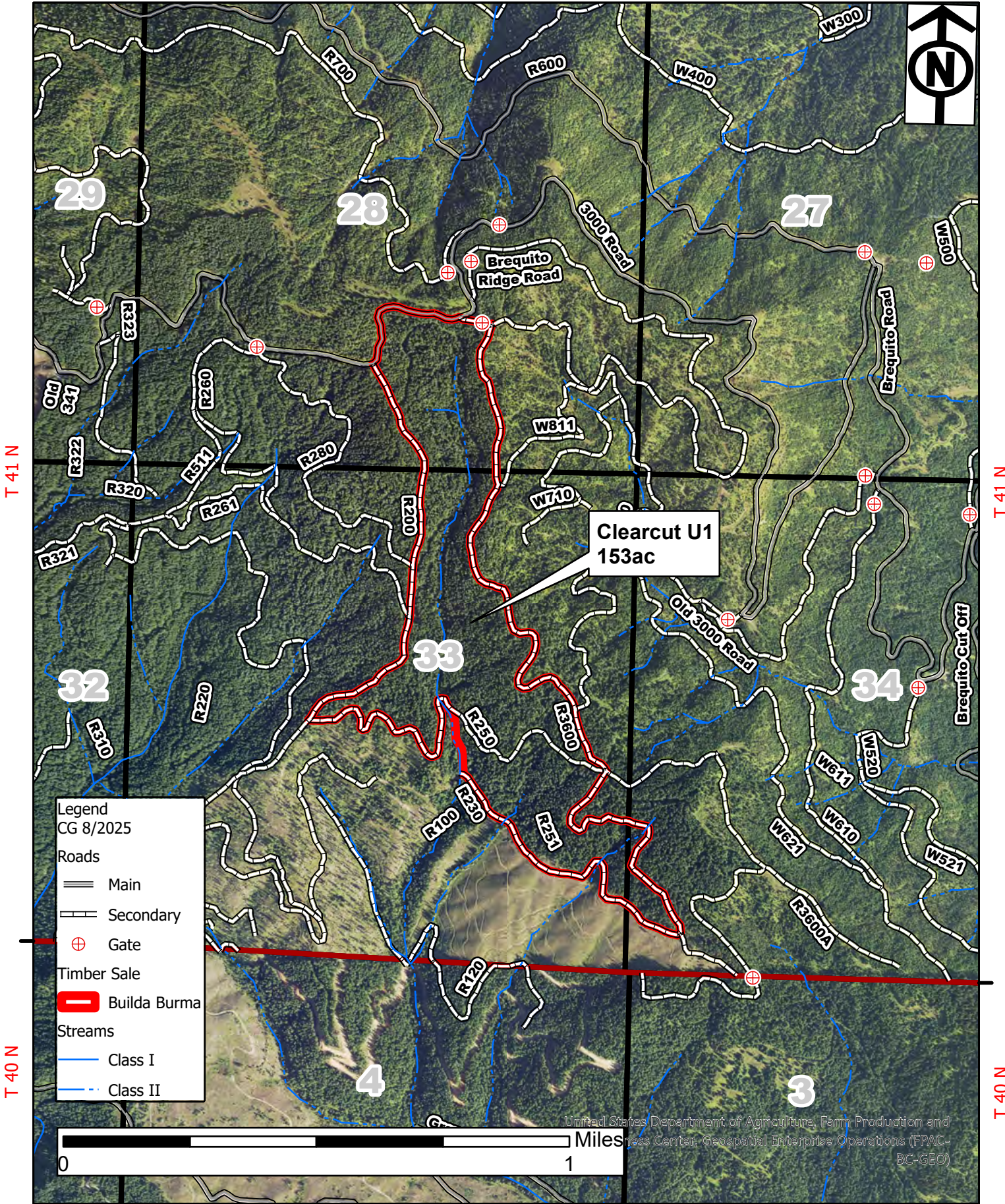
Clearcuts help to achieve Desired Future Conditions outlined in the St. Joe Supervisory Area's Forest Asset Management Plan. Clearcutting Unit 1 (215 acres) is silviculturally and economically justified and complies with the Idaho Forest Practices Act. A clearcut prescription will be used to harvest existing stands and re-establish site specific species on the site. This prescription will be used for the following reasons:

- 1) This stand is dominated by climax species. The age of dominant trees ranges from 70-100 years. Due to the age and phenotypic characteristics of the seral species on site, these trees are not expected to produce the seed necessary to fully regenerate the stand.
- 2) The average elevation for this stand is 4,840' with a maximum of 5,280'. Relying on natural regeneration would be infeasible to restock the site within an economical timeframe due to the shorter growing seasons and harsh climatic conditions. Re-establishing the stand with planted nursery stock will establish a higher relative stocking of the site and shorten the harvest rotation.
- 3) Heavy brush along with mixed bracken fern and cone flower glades within the stand further reduce the likelihood of naturally regenerating the site.
- 4) Clearcutting will minimize the number of entries into the area, reduce disturbance and erosion, and expedite regeneration by planting site specific trees.

- c) Forest Improvement Activity:

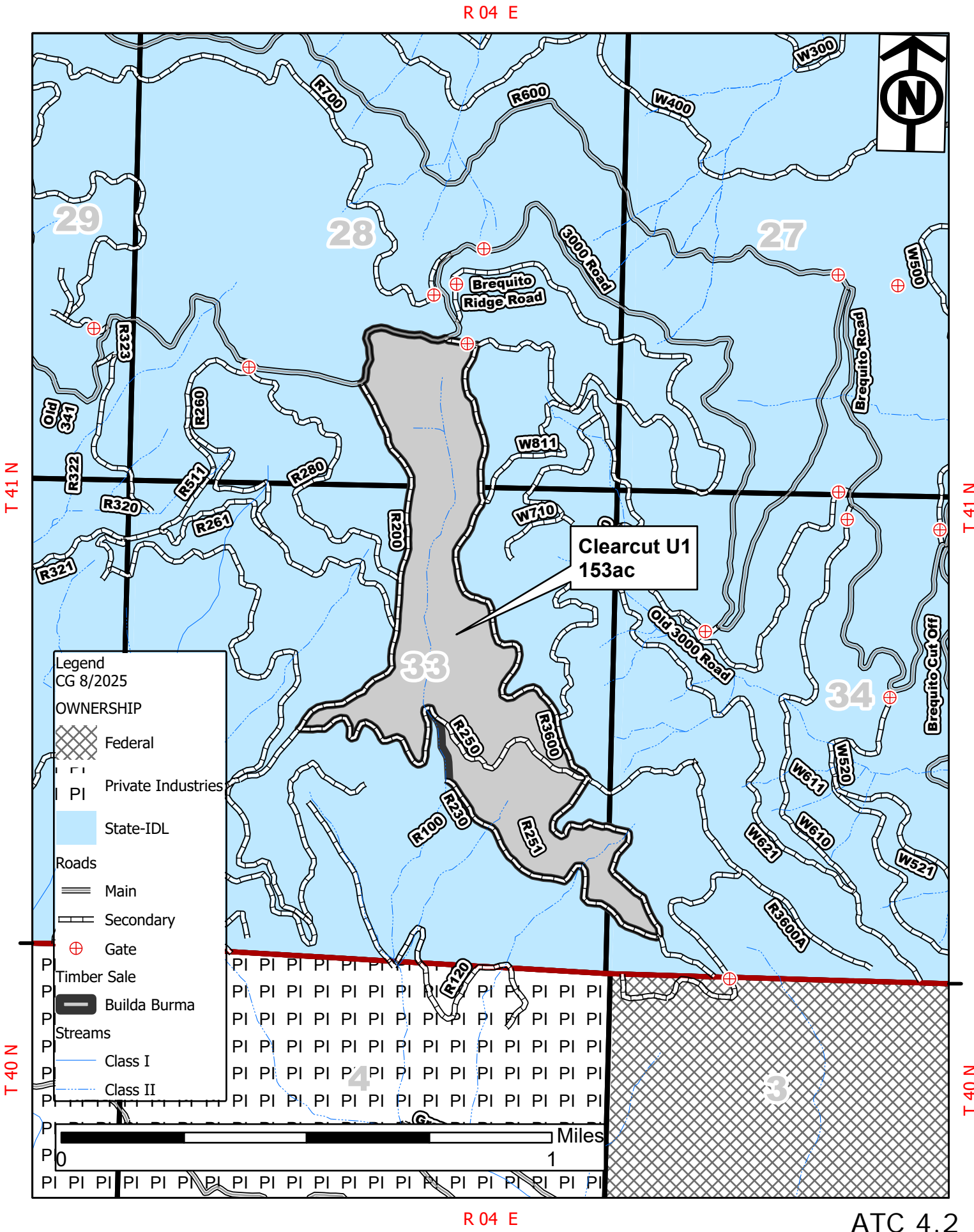
This clearcut unit will require a waving wand herbicide application to minimize vegetative competition prior to planting. Once sprayed, the unit will be planted with a mix of Douglas-fir, western larch, and Englemann spruce at approximately 436 trees per acre.

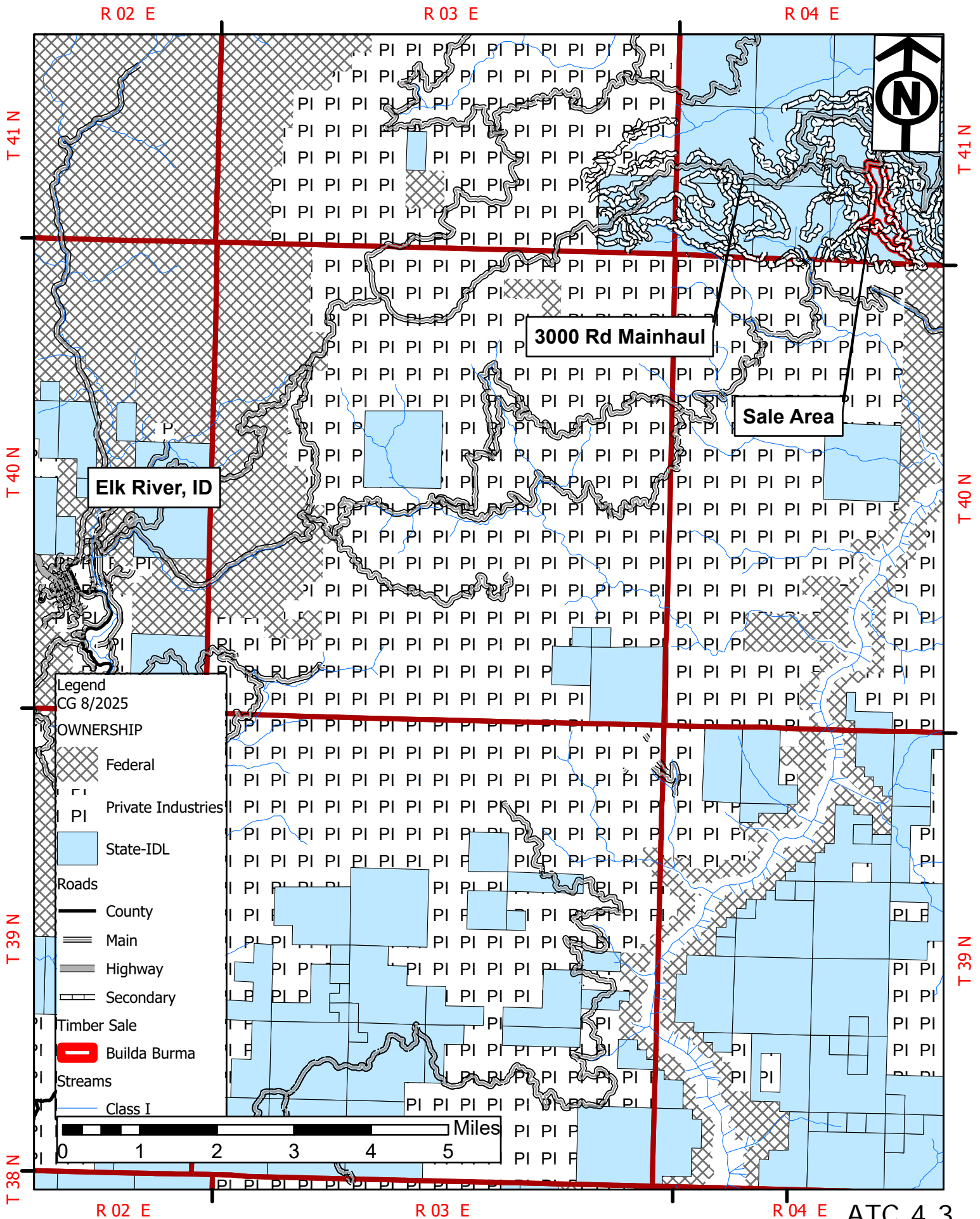
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R 04 E

ATC 4.1





Builda Burma Clearcut Justification

1. Treatment Description:

- a) The stand is composed of primarily grand fir second growth timber with lesser components of Douglas-fir and western red cedar. The stand will be clearcut and planted following harvest.

b) Clearcut Justification:

Clearcuts will help achieve Desired Future Conditions outlined in the St. Joe Supervisory Area's Forest Asset Management Plan. Clearcutting U1 (153 acres) is silviculturally and economically justified and complies with the Idaho Forest Practices Act. This prescription will be used for the following reasons:

- 1) This stand is dominated by climax species. The age of dominant trees is approximately 66 years. There is a heavy brush component in the understory that will be released if the stand was treated with a selective harvest. Herbicide site preparation and re-establishing the stand with planted nursery stock will create higher relative stocking of the site and shorten the next rotation.
- 2) Clearcutting will minimize the number of entries into the area, reduce disturbance and erosion and expedite regeneration establishment. Fewer entries to the sale area also reduces equipment mobilization costs and simplifies reforestation logistics.
- 3) The Floodwood State Forest has a short logging season due to its remote location. Sales with fewer units and clearcut prescriptions have a higher likelihood of being harvested in a single season due to increased logging production over selective harvest prescriptions. Sales that are less complicated and smaller could be more competitive at the bidding table.

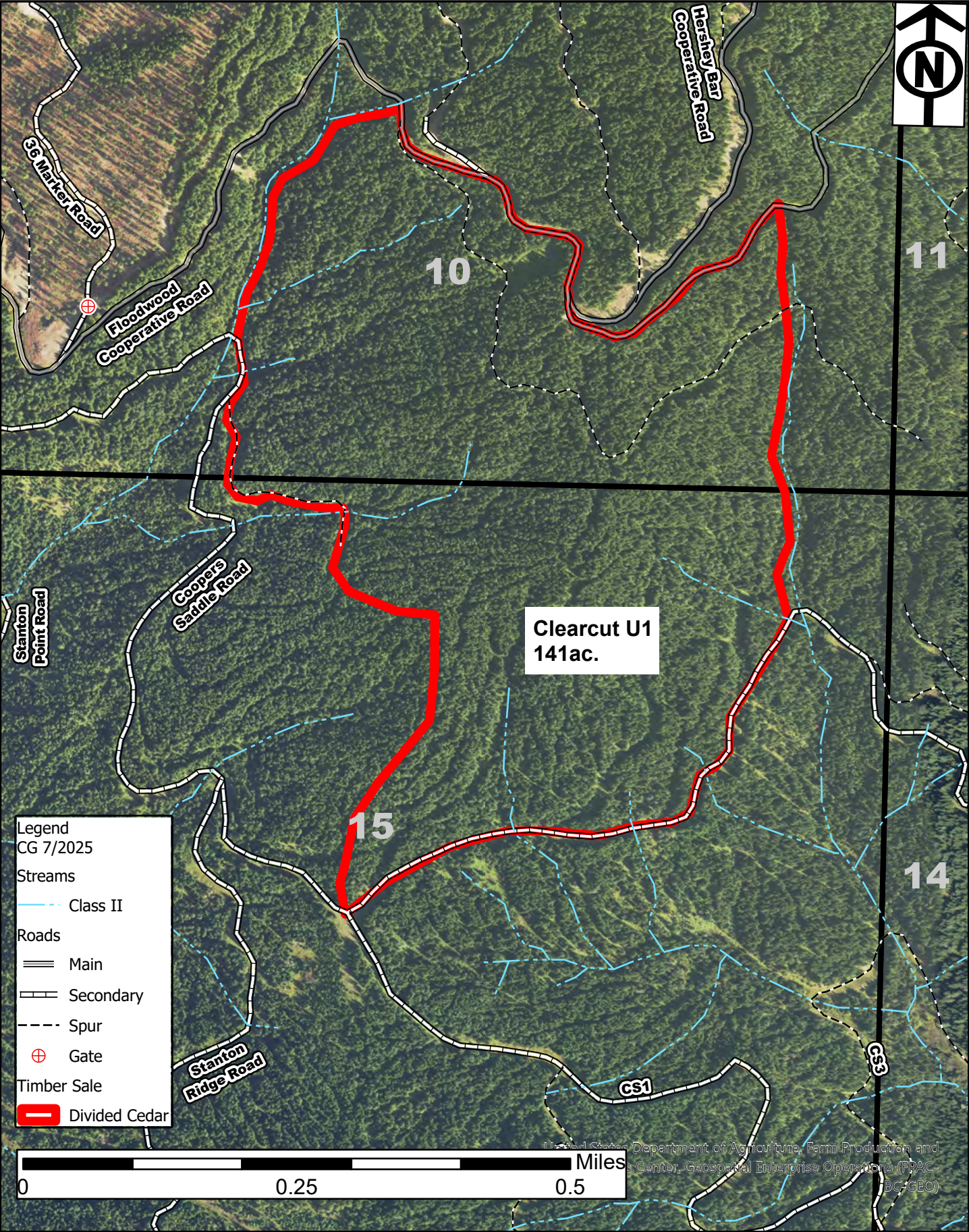
c) Forest Improvement Activity:

The unit will require an herbicide application prior to planting. Once sprayed the unit will be planted with a mix of primarily Douglas-fir with smaller components of western larch and western white pine at approximately 436 total trees per acre.

R 04 E

T 41 N

T 41 N



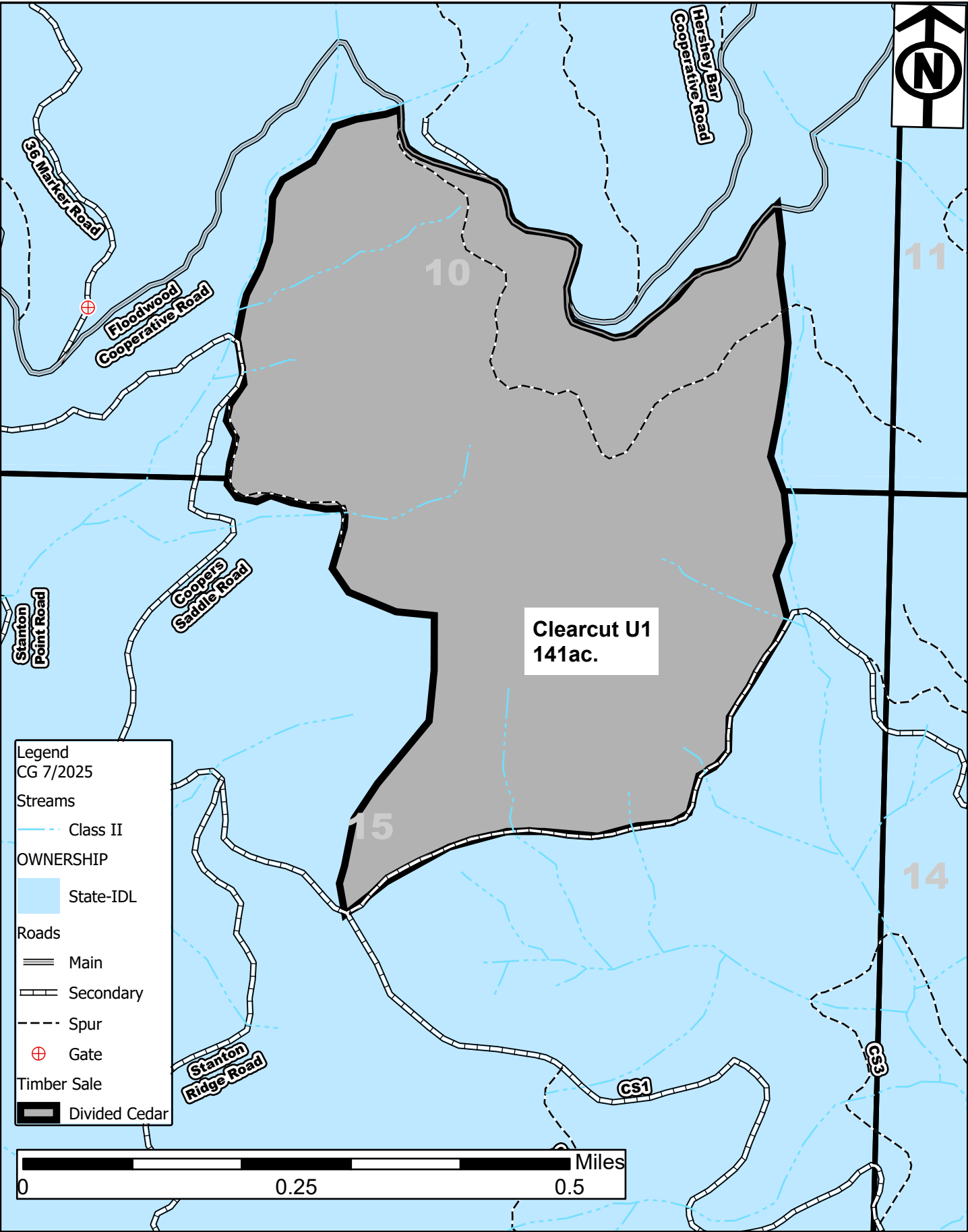
R 04 E

ATC 5.1

R 04 E

T 41 N

T 41 N



R 04 E

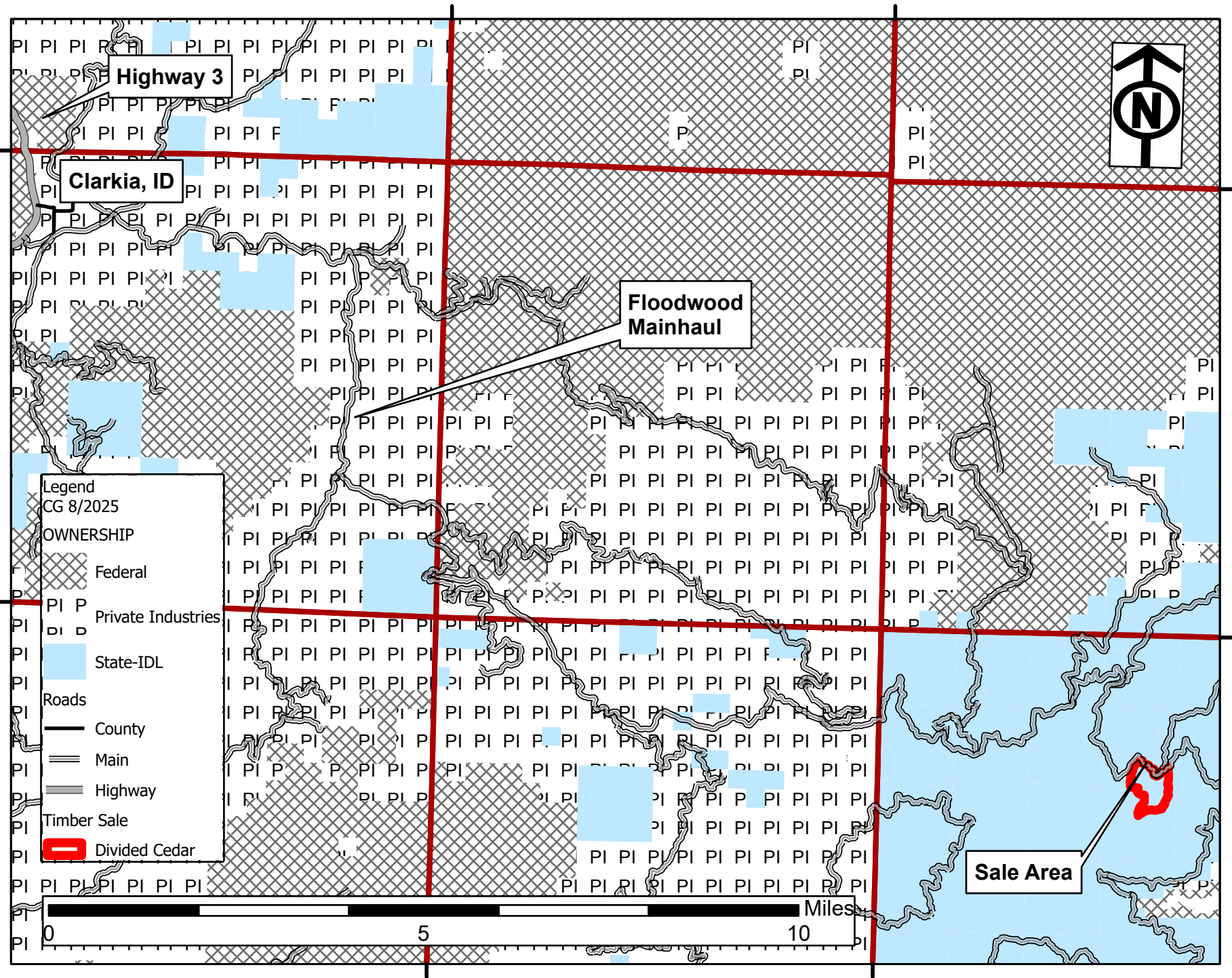
ATC 5.2

T 43 N

Exhibit C
Page 1 of 1

VICINITY MAP
E 20 R

CR300753
DIVIDED CEDAR
ATC 5.3



R 04 E

T 41 N

Divided Cedar Clearcut Justification

1. Treatment Description:

- a) The stand is composed of primarily grand fir second growth timber with lesser components of western redcedar and Douglas-fir. The stand will be clearcut and planted following harvest.

b) Clearcut Justification:

Clearcuts will help achieve Desired Future Conditions outlined in the St. Joe Supervisory Area's Forest Asset Management Plan. Clearcutting U1 (141 acres) is silviculturally and economically justified and complies with the Idaho Forest Practices Act. This prescription will be used for the following reasons:

- 1) This stand is dominated by climax species. The age of dominant trees ranges is approximately 60 years. Average merchantable height is 68 feet. Re-establishing the stand with planted nursery stock will create higher relative stocking of the site and shorten the next rotation.
- 2) Clearcutting will minimize the number of entries into the area, reduce disturbance and erosion and expedite regeneration establishment. Fewer entries to the sale area also reduces equipment mobilization costs and simplifies reforestation logistics.
- 3) The Floodwood State Forest has a short logging season due to its remote location. Sales with fewer units and clearcut prescriptions have a higher likelihood of being harvested in a single season due to increased logging production over selective harvest prescriptions. Sales that are less complicated and smaller could be more competitive at the bidding table.

c) Forest Improvement Activity:

The unit will require an herbicide application prior to planting. Once sprayed the unit will be planted with a mix of primarily Douglas-fir with smaller components of western larch and western white pine at approximately 436 total trees per acre.