

**File Code:** 1950

**Date:** April 3, 2024

The Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest is seeking feedback on the proposed Temporary Winter Shelters developed recreation project. The following information is provided to allow you an opportunity to review and comment on the proposed actions.

## **Purpose of and Need for Action**

The purpose of this project is to provide temporary winter shelters for the recreating public (both commercially guided and unguided). Three of the shelters would provide reservable overnighting facilities operated by three private commercial entities. One of the shelters would provide a free warming shelter day-use for the general public. All of these shelters would provide safe locations for the recreating public during the winter season.

## **Proposed Action**

This project consists of four temporary winter shelter sites that have been identified by the proponents (see Figure 1). Temporary winter shelter use at the sites would involve little to no ground disturbance. During winter operations, there would be no changes to the current parking situation or access to the proposed areas by the general public. Access to the proposed shelters for overnighting or day use will generally occur over snow and will remain consistent with current over-snow motorized and non-motorized access as per the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). The Forest Plan land use allocations are provided for context on the maps of the proposed shelter locations referred to below.

### The proponents and shelter site descriptions are as follows:

Aspire Adventure Running proposes to use a portion of the Heliotrope Trailhead parking lot at the end of FS Road 39 (see Figure 2). Installation would include the construction of a 30' X 14' wood deck on top of temporary concrete footings with 4' X 4' posts. This would serve as the foundation for a fabric shelter. The shelter and foundation would be erected and removed each fall and spring as conditions allow. The applicant proposes to use the CXT toilets at the trailhead for human waste and would pay for pumping the toilets at the end of the season. The season of operation (dependent on snow) would be December 1 to May 1.

Round House Touring proposes to use a portion of the Anderson Watson Trailhead parking lot at the end of FS Road 1107 (see Figure 3). Installation would include the construction of a 24' x 24' wood deck that would sit on a foundation of temporary concrete footings with 4'x4' posts. This would serve as the foundation for a fabric shelter. The shelter and foundation would be erected and removed each fall and spring as conditions allow. The applicant proposes to use the CXT toilets at the trailhead for human waste and would pay for pumping the toilets at the end of the season. The season of operation (dependent on snow) would be November 1 to April 30.



Baker Mountain Guides proposes to use a site on Forest Service land in the vicinity of the Twin Sisters Mountains (see Figure 4). The site would be accessed via neighboring private property. Installation would include the construction of a 30' x 40' wood deck on top of cement footings with metal rods drilled into the ground. This would serve as the foundation for a fabric shelter that would be erected and taken down each fall and spring as conditions allow. The foundation would remain in place. The applicant would erect its own portable outhouse and remove human waste after each visit. The season of operation (dependent on snow) would be January 1 to April 15.

Whatcom County Snowmobile Club proposes to use a site located off FS Road 3160 at a gravel pullout on the side of the road (see Figure 5). Installation would include towing a wood-framed structure built on top of a towable trailer. The shelter would be approximately 8' X 14' in size, and it would be towed in and out of the site each fall and spring as road conditions allow. The applicant would erect its own portable outhouse and remove human waste as needed throughout the season.

The areas proposed for these temporary winter shelters would offer safe and comfortable outdoor winter experiences for people who desire winter recreation. These locations offer alpine views without being inside Wilderness boundaries. Also, these shelters will offer safe locations for the recreating public during extreme weather events.

## **Proposed Locations**

Aspire Adventure Running

Township: 38N. Range: 7E., Section: 9 NE ¼

UTM: 10U 0581051E 5405998N Elevation: 3693 feet

Baker Mountain Guides

Township: 37N. Range: 6E., Section: 3 SE ¼

UTM: 10U 572344E 5396933N Elevation: 4200 feet

Round House Touring

Township: 37N. Range: 9E., Section: 22 SE ¼

UTM: 10U 0602260E 5392459N Elevation: 4340 feet

Whatcom County Snowmobile Club

Township: 40N. Range: 7E., Section 14 SE ¼

48° 57.4016' N, 121° 51.3788' W

## **Public Meeting**

A public meeting concerning this proposal will be held on April 17, 2024, at the Forest Service Office in Sedro Woolley, WA, located at 810 State Route 20. The meeting will run from 4 pm to 6 pm. It will begin with a presentation of the proposed action followed by time for discussion and addressing questions. Written comments will be accepted at the meeting as well.

## How to Comment

Along with the public meeting, comments received within 30 days of the date of this letter (**before midnight, May 2nd**) will be considered in the analysis of this proposed project. Instructions for submitting comments are as follows.

### Project Website (preferred):

In addition to this scoping letter and the public meeting, project information will be shared on the Temporary Winter Shelter project page at

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/mbs/landmanagement/projects/?cid=fseprd1170564>. Scoping comments can be submitted electronically through a form at

<https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?project=65559>. Electronic comments must be in one of the following formats: email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc).

### You May Also Submit Written Comments Via the US Mail or Drop Them Off at:

Louis "Ted" Neff

Mt. Baker District Ranger

Mt. Baker Ranger District

810 State Route 20

Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284-1263

Office Business Hours: 8:00 am – 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday

Please include "Temporary Winter Shelters" as the subject for your written comments.

Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this proposal and will be available for public inspection (40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Section 21). Comments received within 30 days of the date of this letter will be considered in the analysis of this proposed project.

Thank you for your interest in the management of the Mt. Baker Ranger District, Mt Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

Sincerely,

Louis "Ted" Neff

Mt. Baker District Ranger

Figure 1 – Distribution of the proposed sites

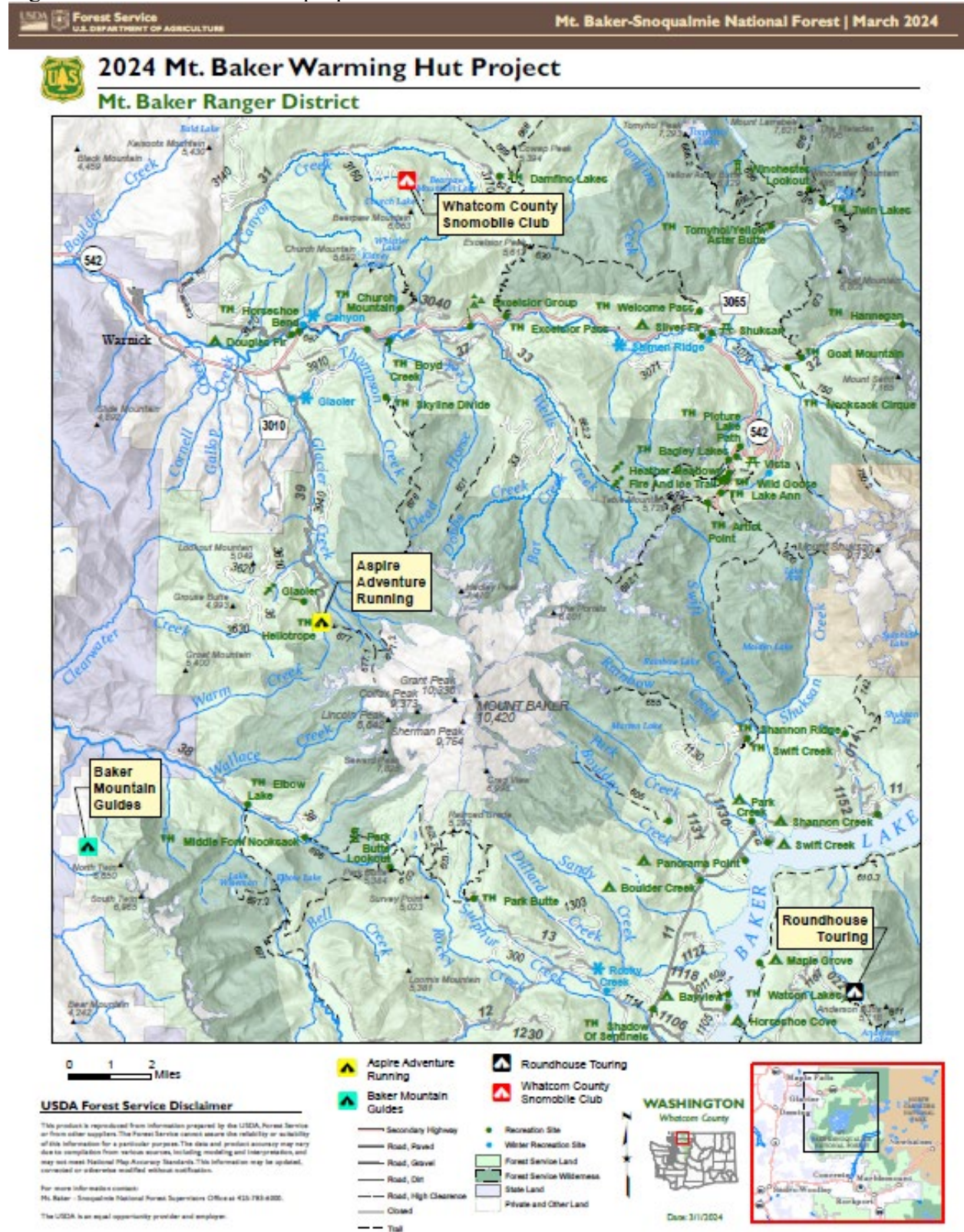




Figure 2 – Location of the site proposed by Aspire Adventure Running

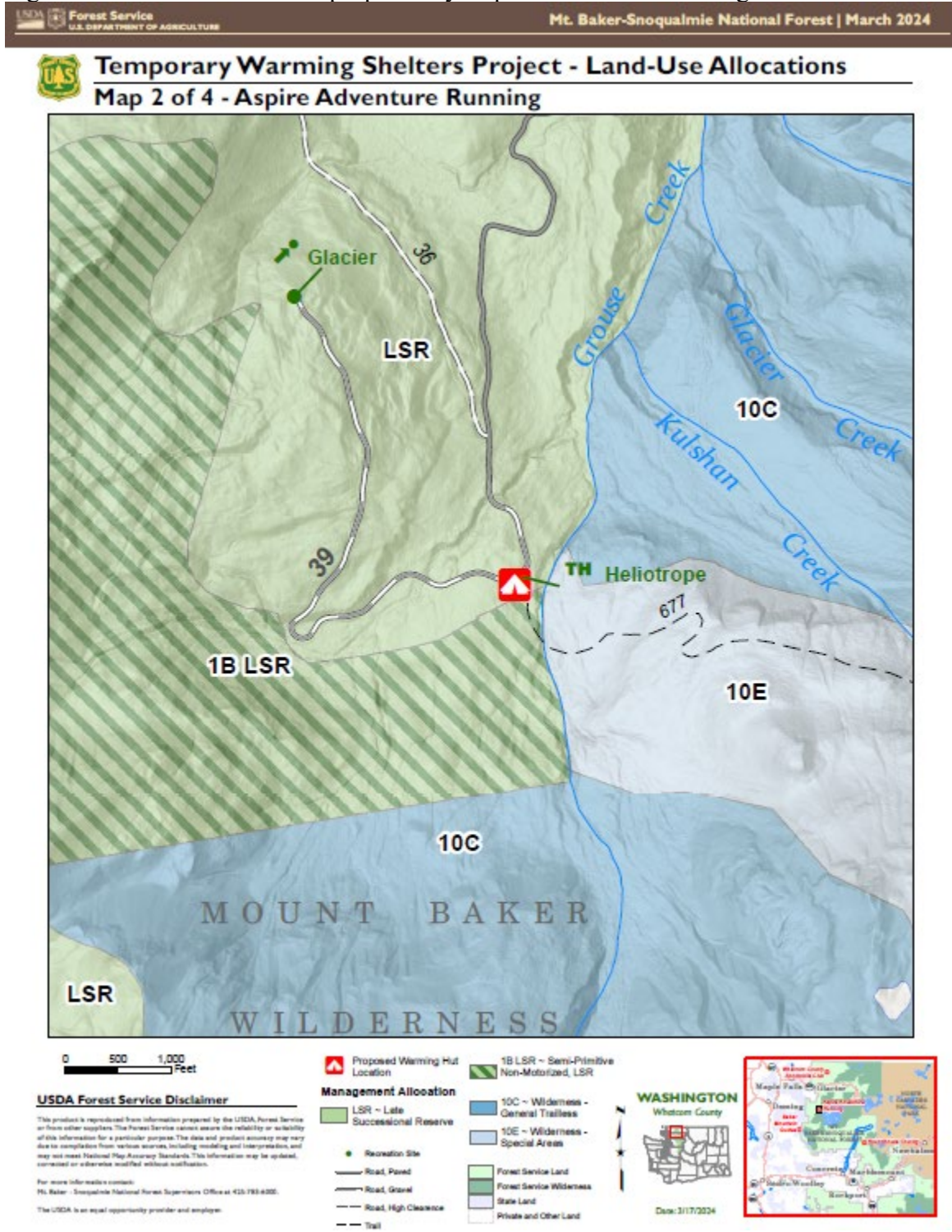


Figure 3 – Location of the site proposed by Roundhouse Touring

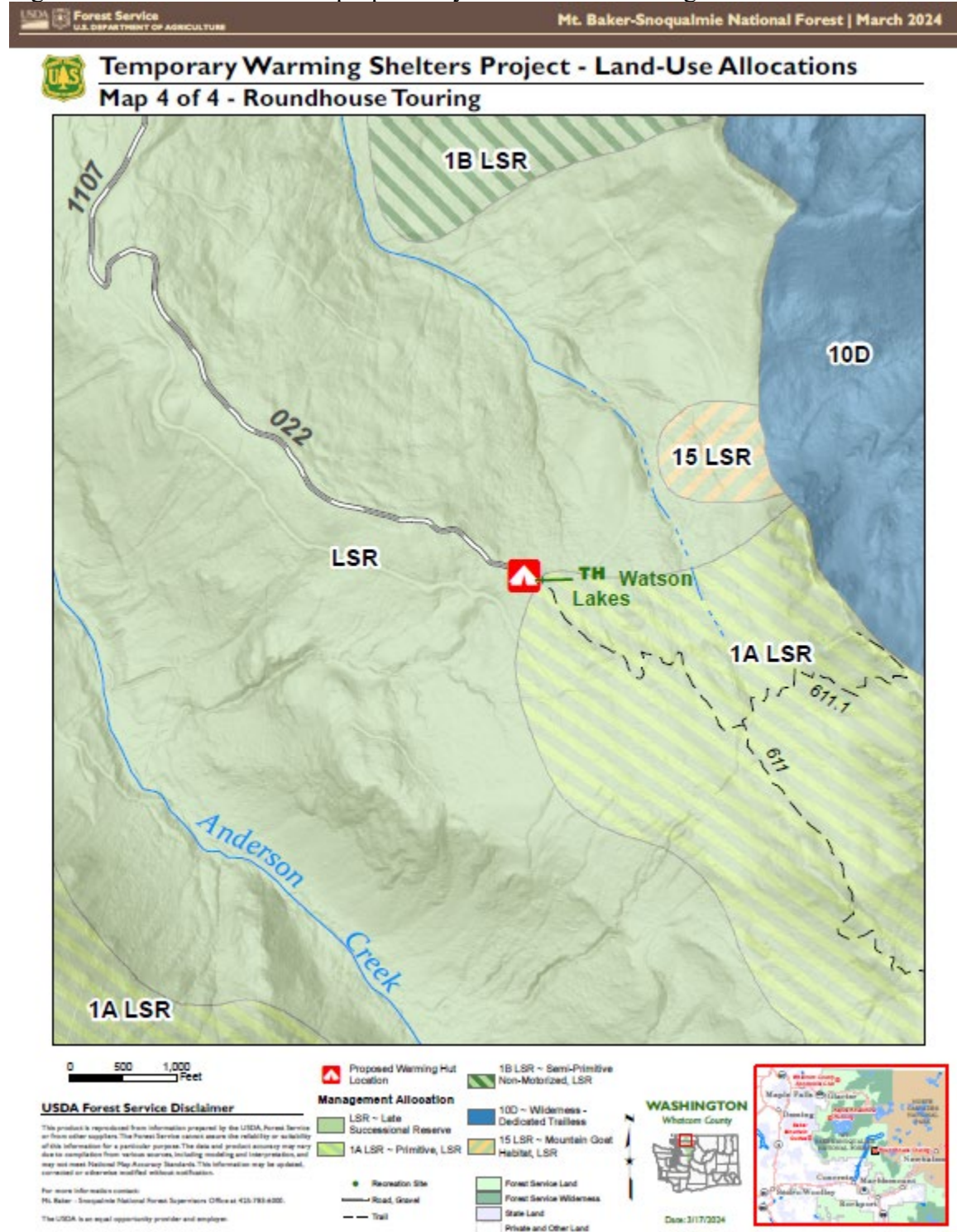




Figure 4 - Location of the site proposed by Baker Mountain Guides

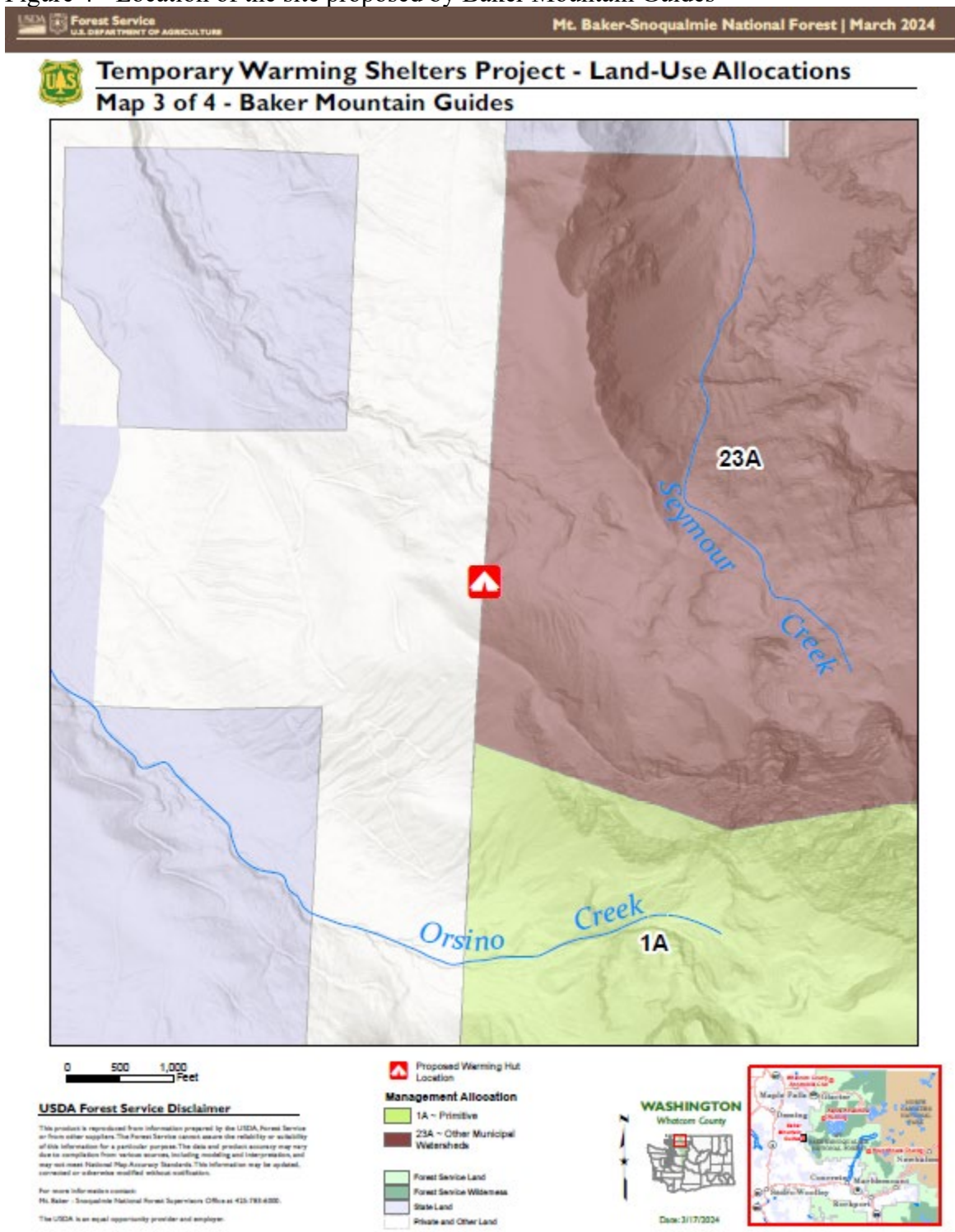


Figure 5 - Location of the site proposed by Whatcom County Snowmobile Club

