



File Code: 1950

Date: SEP 18 2009

Dear Interested Citizen,

The Mt. Hood National Forest is now preparing an environmental assessment (EA) to improve hydrologic function and reduce adverse impacts to aquatic habitat by proposing to decommission approximately 42 miles of unneeded roads on the Zigzag Ranger District. Road decommissioning efforts would occur in the following subwatersheds: Zigzag Canyon, Headwaters Sandy River, Tanner Creek, Wildcat Creek, Cedar Creek, North Fork Eagle Creek, and Gordon Creek (see enclosed maps). Of the 42 miles of roads being proposed for decommissioning, twelve miles would not be decommissioned until vegetation management activities have occurred (in about five to ten years). Also, one road in the North Fork Eagle Creek watershed, which is about 0.2 miles long, is being proposed to be closed to public access with an entrance barrier device.

The purpose for this proposal is as follows:

- Reduce impacts to water quality and aquatic habitats associated with unneeded roads.
- Reduce road density to improve terrestrial habitat utilization.
- Reduce the spread of non-native invasive plants associated with unneeded roads.
- Reduce road maintenance costs.

There is a need for action because:

- There are miles of unneeded roads on the Forest that have not been maintained or repaired. Many roads are no longer driveable due to brush encroachment. Routine inspection of culverts and ditches on these roads is not always possible because of lack of access, personnel, and funding. If roads are not maintained or decommissioned in the near future, there is an increased risk for surface erosion, gullying, and landslides. Such potential risks may result in increased sediment delivery to streams and reservoirs, thereby affecting water quality and aquatic habitat.
- High open road densities are associated with habitat fragmentation and wildlife harassment. Decommissioning roads could allow for wildlife species to utilize more contiguous habitats and promote healthier wildlife populations.
- Roads serve as potential conduits for non-native invasive plants. Managing the spread of invasive species is important for maintaining healthy native ecosystems. If unneeded roads are not decommissioned, there is the continued threat for invasive plants to spread and displace native plants.
- Forest Service budgets for road maintenance have not kept pace with what it costs to maintain all roads so they function properly. With this trend of declining budgets expected to continue, the Forest's backlog of roads needing maintenance could impact hydrologic function.







Proposed Action - Road Decommissioning

Gordon Creek Subwatershed





Mt. Hood National Forest

Zigzag Ranger District





Proposed Action

-  Close with Gate
-  Decommission
-  Decommission with Delay (5-10 yrs.)
-  Existing Roads



Hydrography

-  Key Subwatersheds
-  Lakes, Ponds, Wetlands
-  Creeks
-  Rivers

Land Ownership

-  Forest Service
-  BLM
-  State
-  Local Govt.
-  Non-Federal

Other Boundaries

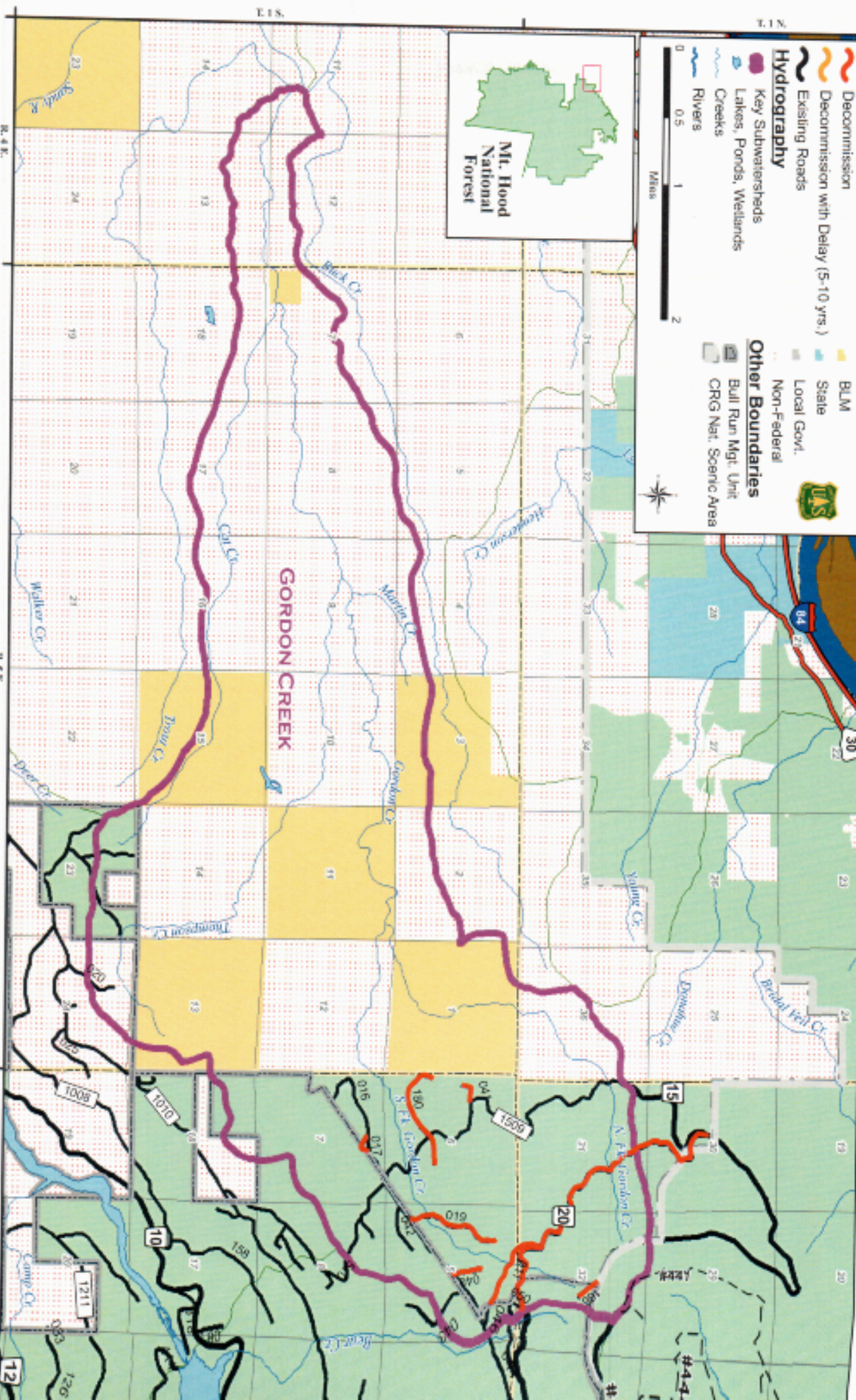
-  Bull Run Mgt. Unit
-  CRG Nat. Scenic Area



Mt. Hood
National
Forest

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Proposed Action - Road Decommissioning **Headwaters Sandy River Subwatershed** **Mt. Hood National Forest** **Zigzag Ranger District**

Recreation Sites

- Campground
- Horse Camp
- Picnic Area
- Treadhead

Proposed Action

- Close with Gate
- Decommission
- Decommission with Delay (5-10 yrs.)
- Existing Roads

Hydrography

- Key Subwatersheds
- Lakes, Ponds, Wetlands
- Creeks
- Rivers



Land Ownership

- Forest Service
- BLM
- State
- Local Govt.
- Non-Federal

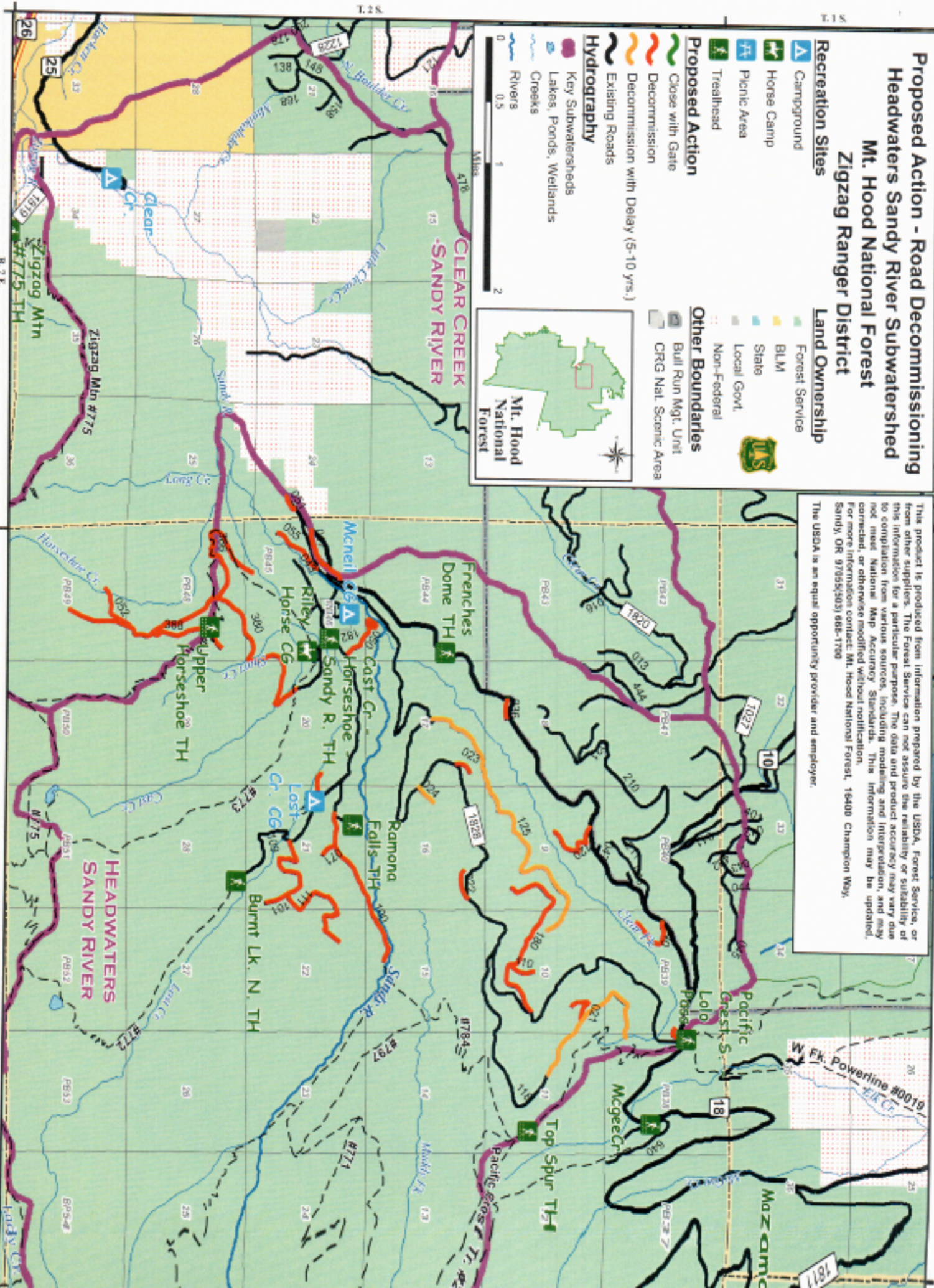
Other Boundaries

- Bull Run Mgt. Unit
- CRG Nat. Scenic Area

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Proposed Action - Road Decommissioning **Wildcat Cr. Sandy River Subwatershed** **Cedar Cr. Sandy River Subwatershed** **North Fork Eagle Cr. Subwatershed** **Mt. Hood National Forest** **Zigzag Ranger District**

Recreation Sites



Treasure

Land Ownership



Forest Service

Proposed Action

Close with Gate

Decommission

Decommission with Delay (5-10 yrs.)

Existing Roads

Hydrography

Key Subwatersheds

Lakes, Ponds, Wetlands

Creeks

Rivers



BLM



State



Local Govt.



Non-Federal



Bull Run Mgt. Unit



CRG Nat. Scenic Area

Other Boundaries

Bull Run Mgt. Unit

CRG Nat. Scenic Area

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NORTH FORK EAGLE CREEK

CEDAR CREEK - SANDY RIVER

WILDCAT CREEK - SANDY RIVER



Mt. Hood National Forest

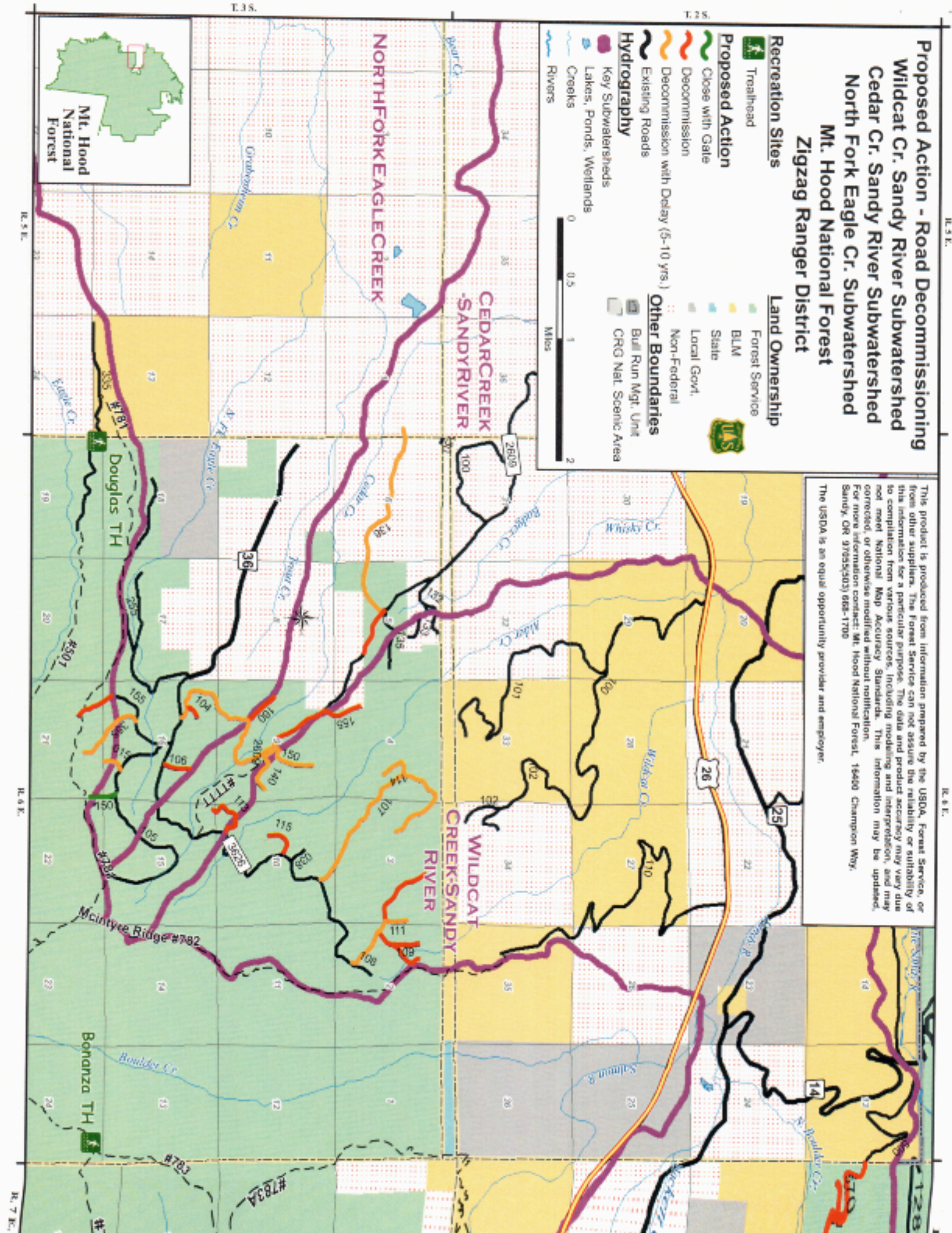
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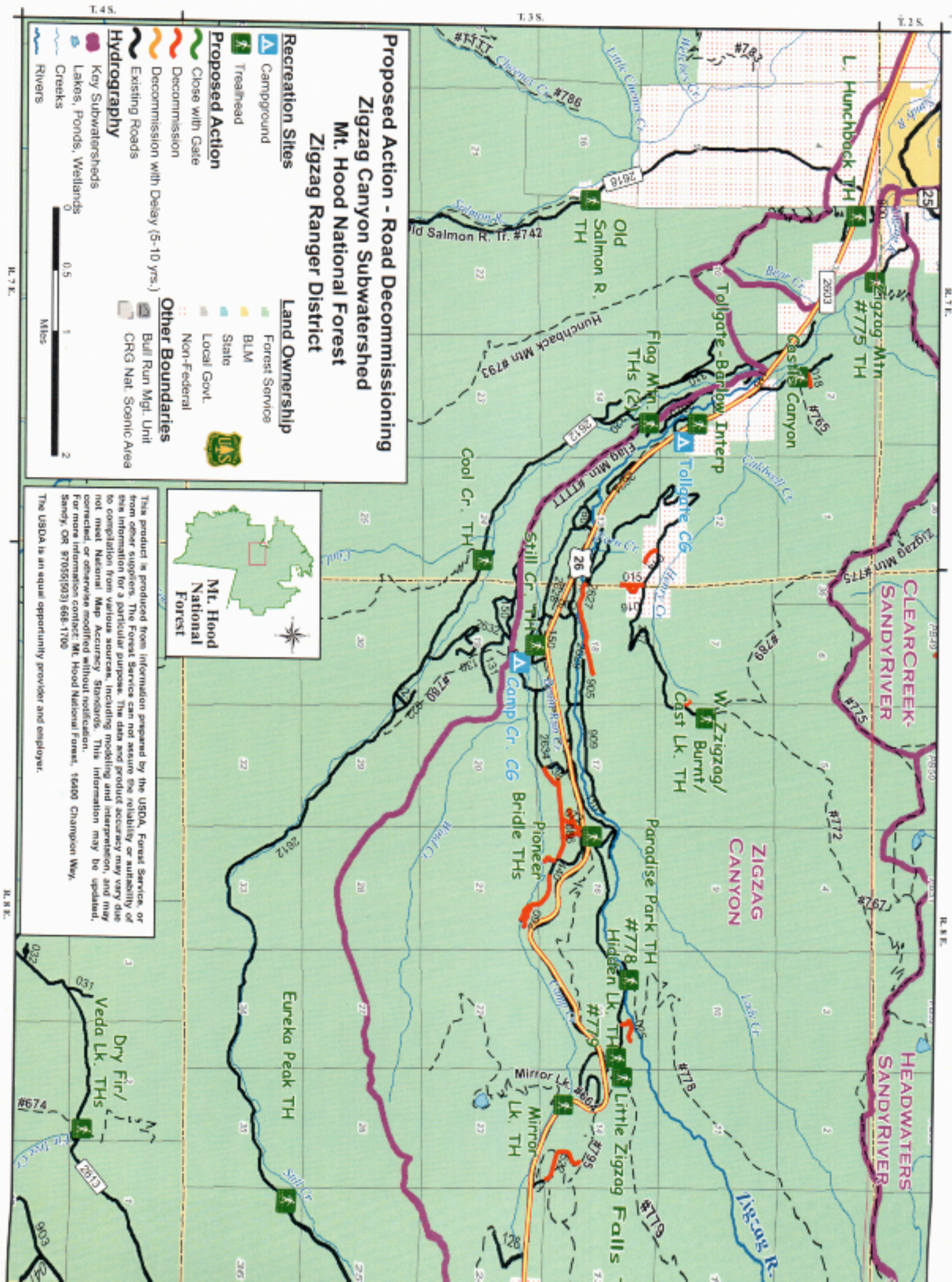
Bonanza TH

McIntyre Ridge #782

#783A

#786

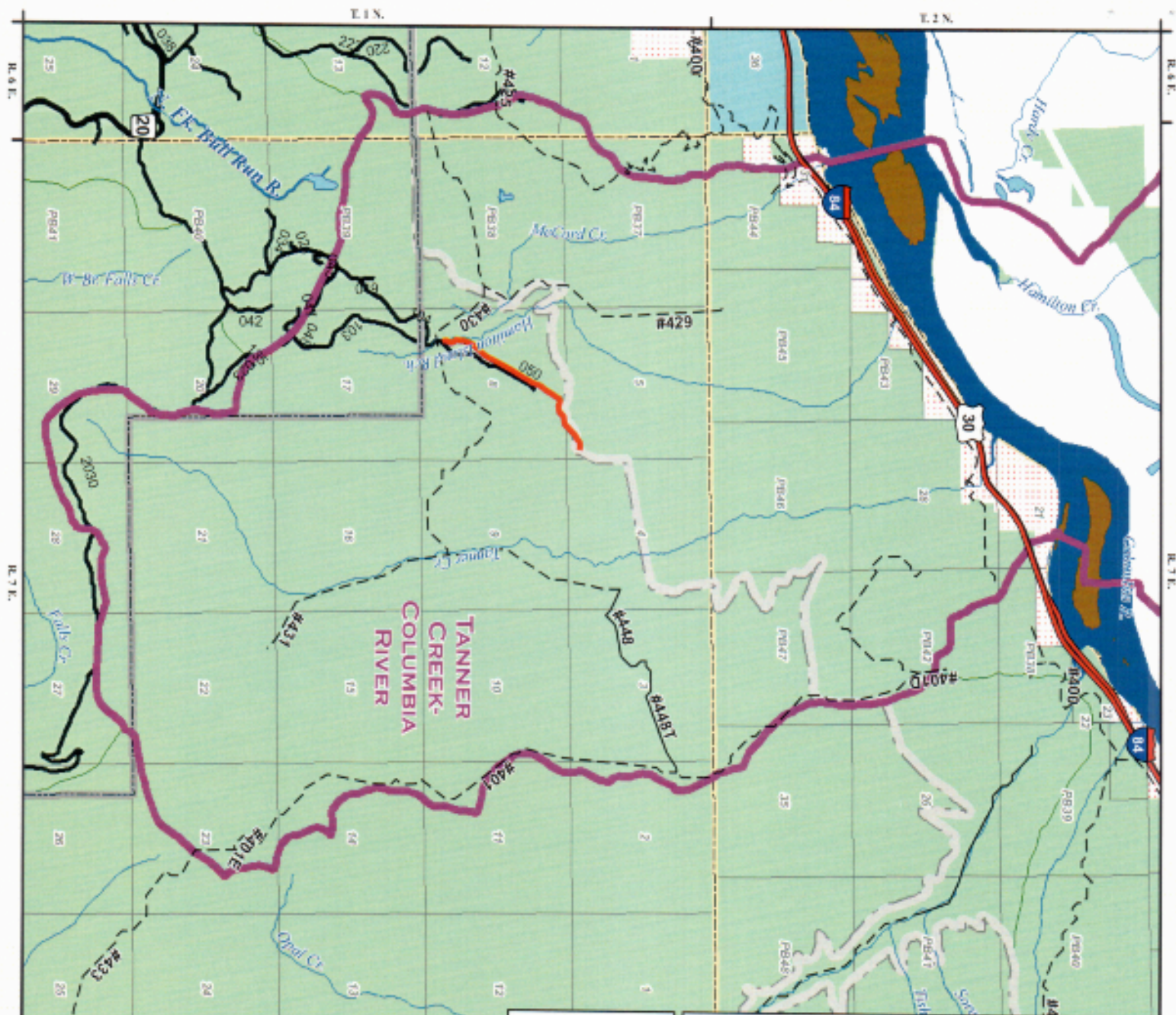




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Proposed Action - Road Decommissioning **Tanner Cr./Columbia River Subwatershed** **Mt. Hood National Forest** **Zigzag Ranger District**

Recreation Sites

Land Ownership

Primary Proposed Action

Hydrography

Other Boundaries

- Treelined
- Close with Gate
- Decommission
- Decommission with Delay (5-10 yrs.)
- Existing Roads
- Key Subwatersheds
- Lakes, Ponds, Wetlands
- Creeks
- Rivers
- Forest Service
- BLM
- State
- Local Govt
- Non-Federal
- Bull Run Mgt. Unit
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