



# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

COOS BAY DISTRICT OFFICE

1300 AIRPORT LANE, NORTH BEND, OR 97459

Web Address: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay> E-mail: [OR\\_CoosBay\\_Mail@blm.gov](mailto:OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov)

Telephone: (541) 756-0100 Toll Free: (888) 809-0839 Fax: (541) 751-4303



### **In Reply Refer To:**

1792/6711 (ORC040)

DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2010-0005-EA

***May 13, 2010***

Dear Concerned Citizen:

The Coos Bay BLM has prepared a Scoping Document for the Cherry Vaughn Environmental Assessment. The Scoping document and associated maps are now posted on the District Internet site: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay/index.php>.

The BLM proposes to conduct forest treatments on approximately 2000 acres of 30-70 year old timber stands. All of the treatments would occur within the Late-Successional Reserve and the Riparian Reserve land use allocations.

You are invited to submit written comments on any issues or concerns that you may have regarding this proposal by June 11, 2010. Comments which are helpful to the analysis process are those which identify new scientific or technical information, determine the scope of issues to be addressed, and express site-specific concerns related to the proposed action. Opinions agreeing or disagreeing with current laws and policies are not helpful in refining the proposed action.

Please direct requests for hard copies, questions, or comments to Coos Bay District BLM, 1300 Airport Lane, North Bend, OR 97459-2000, ATTN: Aimee Hoefs; call 541-756-0100; FAX 541-751-4303, or email to [OR\\_CoosBay\\_Mail@blm.gov](mailto:OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov), ATTN: Aimee Hoefs.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Kathy Westenskow*

Kathy Westenskow  
Myrtlewood Field Manager



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### **In Reply Refer To:**

1792/6711 (ORC040)

DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2010-0005-EA

Cherry Vaughn Environmental Assessment

## **Scoping Document**

*May 11, 2010*

Dear Citizen,

The following information and the enclosed maps briefly describe a Proposed Action for the development of the Cherry Vaughn Environmental Assessment (EA No: DOI-BLM-OR-C040-2010-0005-EA).

The USDI, Bureau of Land Management, Coos Bay District Office is preparing an Environmental Assessment for multiple timber sales and possible non-commercial restoration activities that would occur primarily within the Middle Creek 6<sup>th</sup>-field sub-watershed. The Proposed Action would treat approximately 2000 acres of 30-70 year-old forest stands through density management and hardwood conversion. Other restorative actions such as non-commercial thinning of stands and wildlife habitat tree creation may also be proposed.

Forest treatments would occur within the Late-Successional Reserve (LSR) Land Use Allocation (LUA) and the Riparian Reserve LUA as defined in the 1995 Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan (1995 ROD/RMP). These LSR stands are part of what is designated as LSR #261 in the South Coast – Northern Klamath Late-Successional Reserve Assessment (LSRA) (USDA and USDI 1998). The Cherry Creek 7<sup>th</sup> field drainage is designated as a Tier 1 Key Watershed.

### **Project Summary**

Density management thinning and hardwood conversion would be designed to achieve results meeting the management objectives for these LUAs which include enhancing stand conditions to provide habitat for late-successional and old-growth dependant species. Late-successional Reserve (LSR) treatments would increase tree growth rates and encourage development of large diameter snags and down wood and other habitat characteristics associated with late-successional forests. Riparian Reserves (RR) would be treated to restore and maintain components of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives.

For hardwood conversions, the Interdisciplinary Team will use the recommendations of the LSRA and determine if each site would support conifers that would live long enough to become old-growth and will assess each stand on a stand by stand basis (LSRA p. 86).

Harvest and restoration activities would occur on approximately 2000 acres of LSR, of which roughly half of these acres will likely be identified later as RR. The timber sales are expected to

be sold in FY 2012 and 2013. As the timber harvest would occur within the LSR, none of the volume removed would contribute to the Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ) for the Myrtlewood Field Office.

While the locations and mileages are not currently known, the Cherry Vaughn proposed action would also likely include new road construction, road renovation and improvement, and road decommissioning to facilitate project activities.

Four of the proposed units are adjacent to occupied marbled murrelet habitat; the remaining units are adjacent to un-surveyed suitable marbled murrelet habitat.

This project may incorporate data and recommendations from the North Fork Coquille Watershed Analysis (USDI 2002), the East Fork Coquille Watershed Analysis (USDI 2000) and the South Coast – Northern Klamath Late-Successional Reserve Assessment (USDA and USDI 1998).

### **Location**

The project area is mainly within the Middle Creek 6<sup>th</sup>-field sub-watershed, with some units located in the Yankee Run, Brummit Creek and Brewster Canyon 6<sup>th</sup>-field sub-watersheds. The proposed harvest and restoration activities are located in T. 27 S., R. 10 W., Sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 29; and T. 28 S., R. 10 W., Sections 3 and 4.

### **Need for the Project**

Within the analysis area, the LSR and RR timber stands are characterized by uniform structure, heavy stocking, slowing growth rates and low growth vigor. Research indicates that stands that develop at high densities are susceptible to diameter growth stagnation and instability. Without treatment at the appropriate time, these dense stands rapidly decline in growth and vigor. This results in a stagnant stand that becomes more susceptible to wind, disease, insects and fire disturbances. Also, this delays attainment of complex habitat components associated with late-successional forest stands.

The LSRA considers LSR #261 to have the highest priority for management actions because it is a key link in the LSR network and its ownership pattern provides greater opportunities to either increase or develop large contiguous stands of interior late-successional habitat. Additionally, this LSR is one of the largest LSRs in the network, and development of large contiguous stands of late-successional habitat will have greater value.

### **Project Objectives**

Action alternatives must meet the objectives provided in the ROD/RMP for projects to be implemented within the planning area. The ROD/RMP and applicable statutes specify the following objectives to be accomplished in managing the lands in the project area:

Manage Late-Successional Reserves to enhance conditions of stands that serve as habitat for late-successional and old-growth forest-related species (p. 18) by:

- Conducting thinning operations in forest stands up to 80 years of age. This will be accomplished by precommercial and/or commercial thinning of stands regardless of origin (e.g. planted after logging or naturally regenerated after fire or blowdown) (p. 19).

- Plan and implement silvicultural treatments inside Late-Successional Reserves to be beneficial to the creation of late-successional habitat (p. 19).

Manage riparian resources to meet the Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives designed to maintain and restore the ecological health of aquatic ecosystems on public lands (p. 6) by:

- Applying silvicultural practices for Riparian Reserves to control stocking, re-establish and manage stands and acquire desired vegetation characteristics (p. 13).

Enhance and maintain biological diversity and ecosystem health to contribute to healthy wildlife populations (p. 27) by:

- Designing projects to improve conditions for wildlife if they provide late-successional habitat benefits or if their effect on late-successional associated species is negligible (p. 27).

You are invited to submit written comments on any issues or concerns that you may have regarding this project by June 11, 2010. Comments which are helpful to the analysis process are those which identify new scientific or technical information, determine the scope of issues to be addressed, and express site-specific concerns related to the proposed action. Opinions agreeing or disagreeing with current laws and policies are not helpful in refining the proposed action.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the address listed below during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays, and may be published as part of the EA document or other related documents. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your identifying information – may be publically available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will do so.

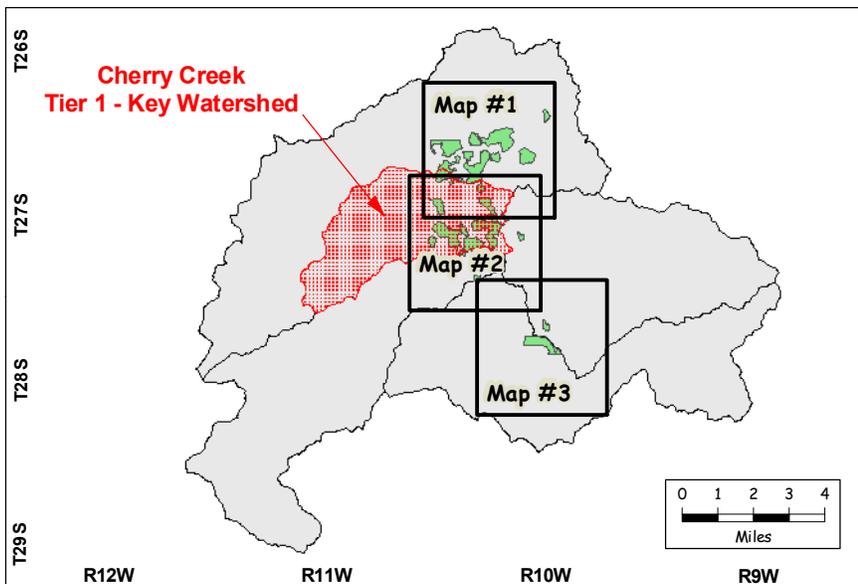
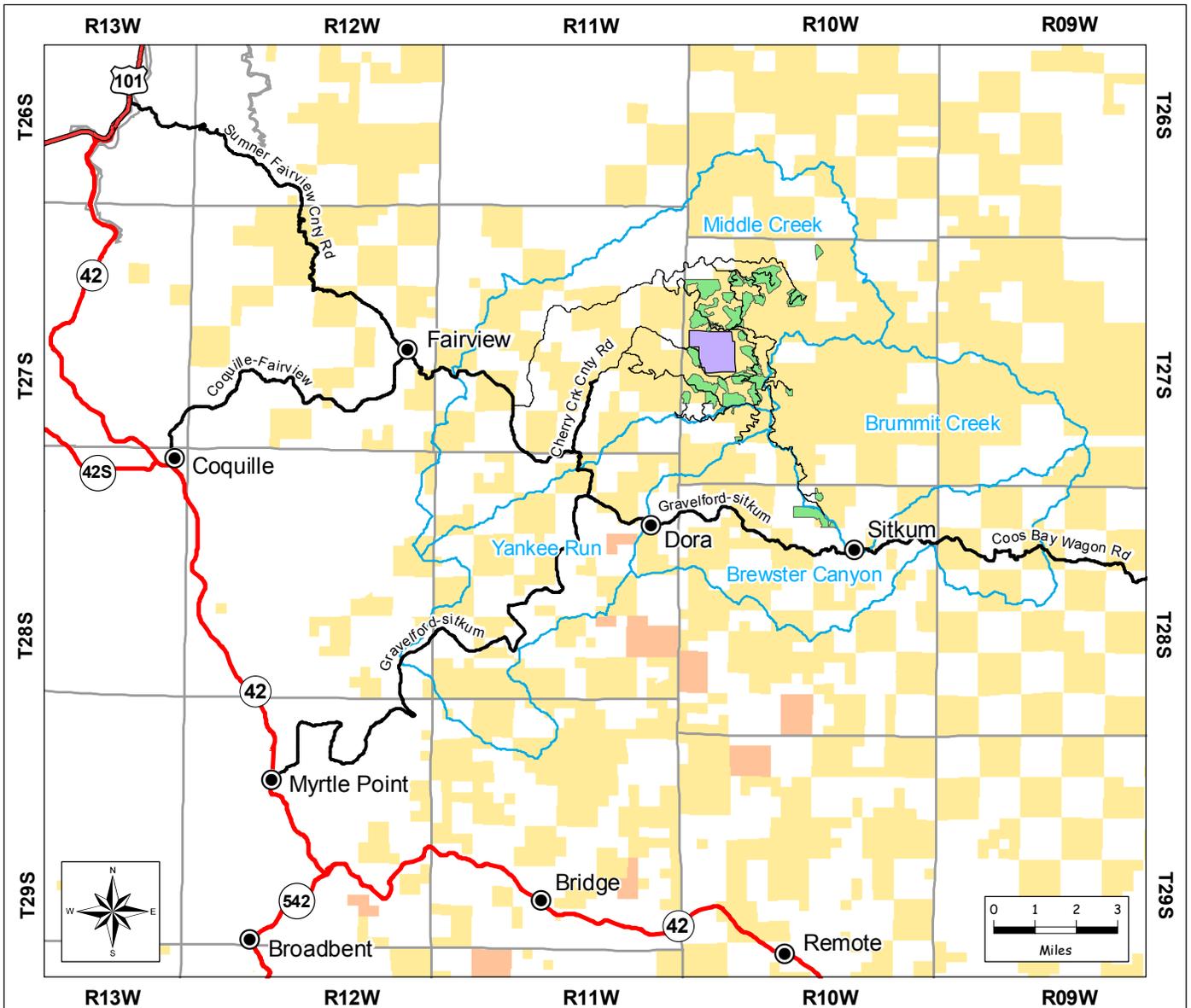
Please direct your responses or questions to Aimee Hoefs, Myrtlewood Field Office, 1300 Airport Lane, North Bend, OR 97459, Call (541) 751-0100, FAX (541) 751-4303, or e-mail [OR\\_CoosBay\\_Mail@blm.gov](mailto:OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov), Attn: Aimee Hoefs.

Respectfully,

*/s/ Kathy Westenskow*

Kathy Westenskow  
Myrtlewood Field Manager

Enclosures: Vicinity Map  
Scoping Maps (3)



**Map Features**

- County Road
- Access Roads
- Subwatershed Boundaries
- Unit Boundary
- Cherry Creek Res. Nat. Area
- BLM Administered Land
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Private / Other Ownership

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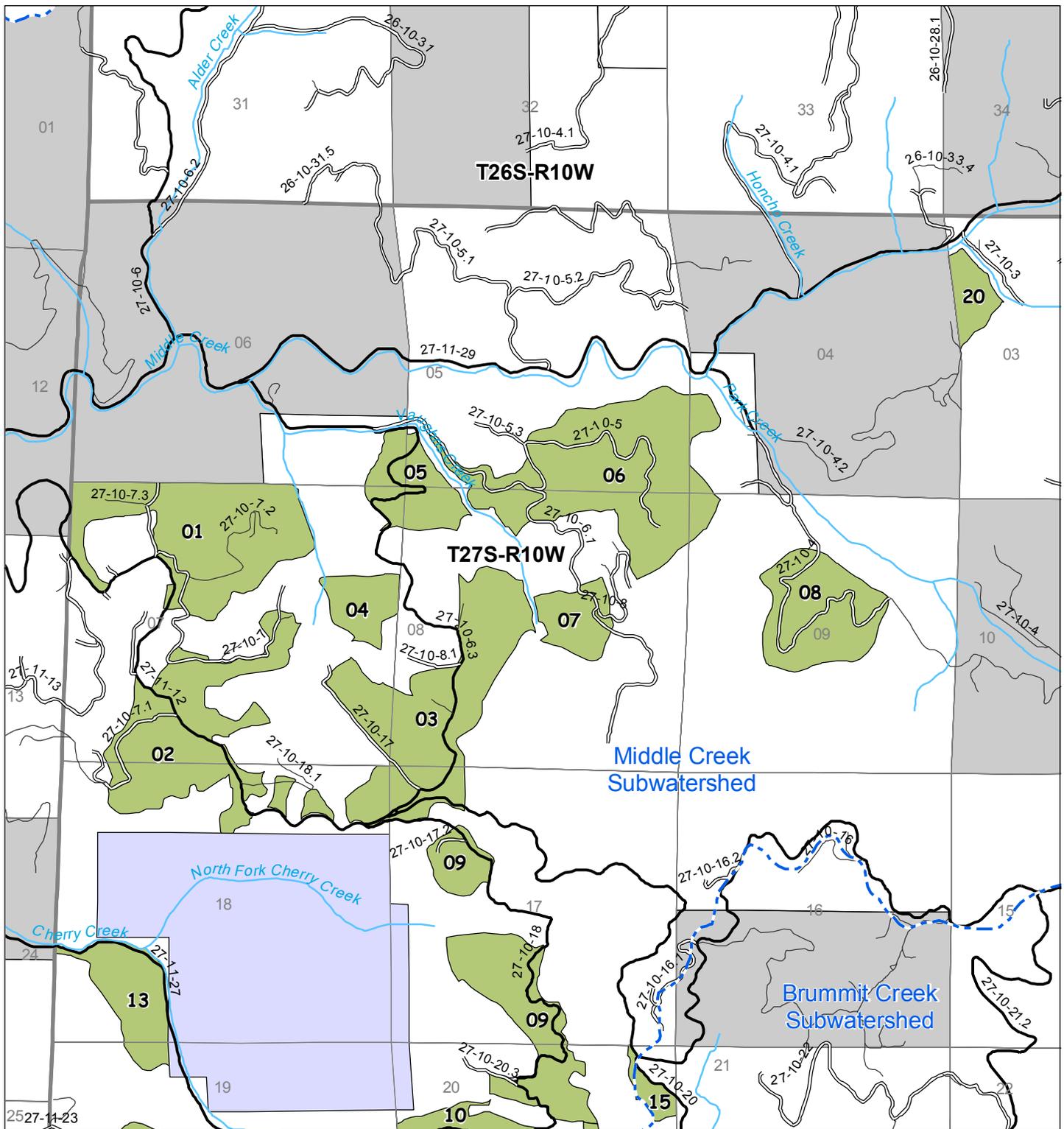


Coos Bay District Office  
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**Map Features** (Not all map features necessarily occur in the area mapped above.)

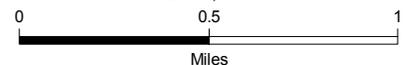
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|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Fishbearing Stream       | Subwatershed Boundary       |
| Highway                  | Potential Unit Boundaries   |
| County Road              | Cherry Creek Res. Nat. Area |
| Paved Road               | BLM Administered Land       |
| Gravel Road              | Coquille Forest             |
| Natural/Unk Surface Road | Private / Other Ownership   |



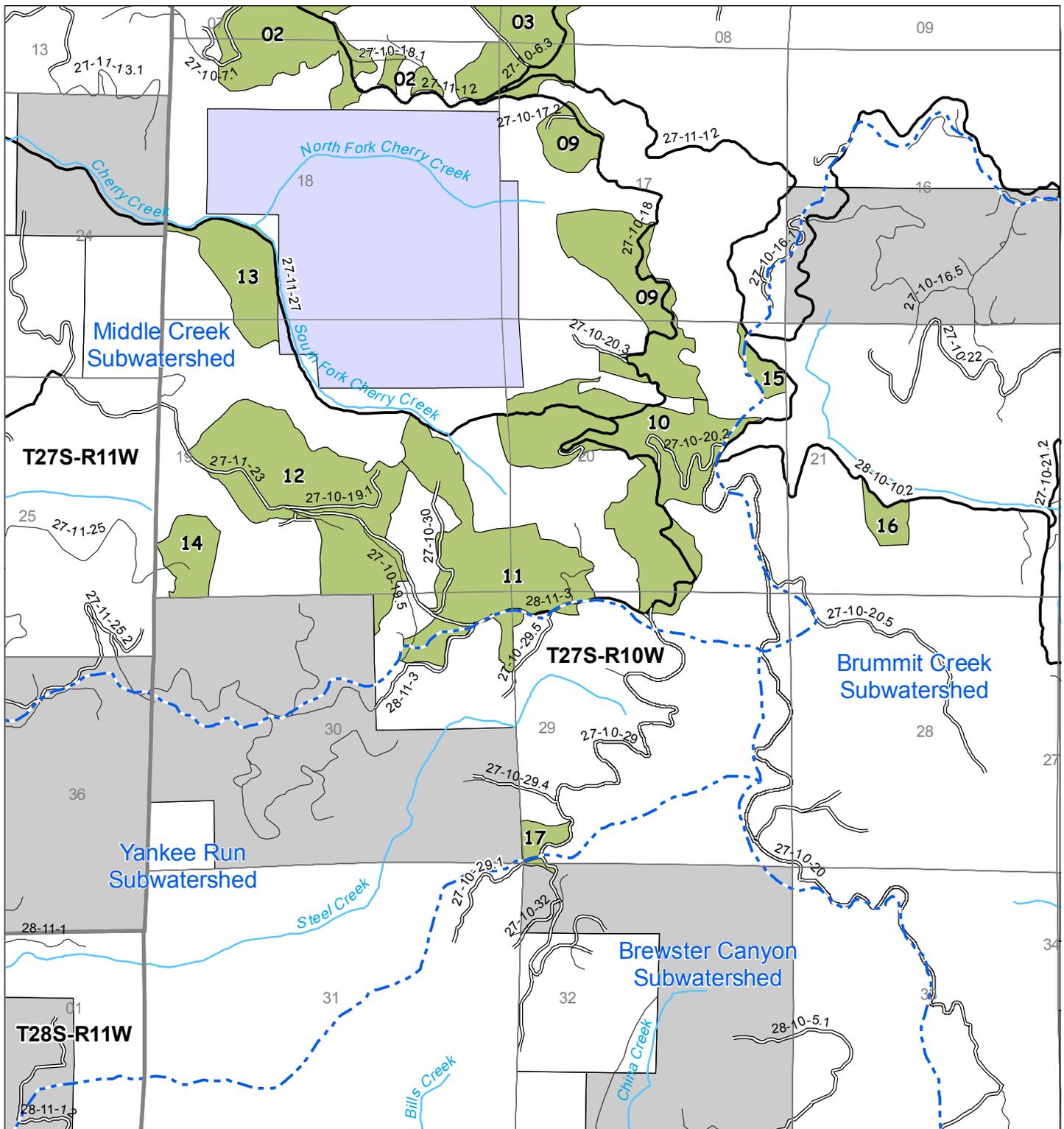
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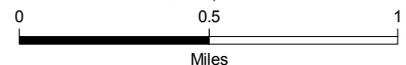
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