



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

COOS BAY DISTRICT OFFICE

1300 AIRPORT LANE, NORTH BEND, OR 97459

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



In Reply Refer To:

5400/1792 (OR-120)

EA OR128-08-03

SCOPING DOCUMENT

Dear Citizen:

This information and the enclosed maps generally describe the Proposed Action for the development of the Edson Regen Environmental Assessment (EA) OR128-08-03.

We are in the scoping phase for this environmental assessment. The principal purpose of scoping is the early identification of site-specific resource concerns, the identification of unique or sensitive features in the project planning area and the identification and articulation of issues and concerns specific to the project area that should be considered during the project analysis.

Project Summary

The proposed action includes the management of approximately 1,400 acres of timber through regeneration harvests within the Timber Management Area land use allocation. Commercial thinning treatments are proposed on approximately 200 acres of the Riparian Management Area land use allocation adjacent to regeneration harvests where appropriate. These land use allocations are defined in the 2008 Coos Bay District Record of Decision/Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP). Stands proposed for treatment are less than 160 years of age. The harvested areas would be prepared for replanting by removing most of the residual logging slash through broadcast burning or piling and burning.

The timber sales are expected to be sold in Fiscal Years 2010-2012. The proposed action would contribute approximately 40 MMbf to the decadal Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ) for the Myrtlewood Field Office.

Approximately 10 miles of new roads would be needed to harvest the identified areas. The existing road infrastructure would be renovated or improved to meet BLM transportation needs over approximately 95 miles of haul routes on BLM and private lands.

Some of the proposed treatment units contain or are adjacent to unsurveyed suitable Marbled Murrelet habitat. Surveys to determine occupancy of these areas began in May 2008.

This project would incorporate data and recommendations from the Watershed Analysis of the Sixes and New River Area (USDI 2008), the Edson Thin EA (OR128-07-02), the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Revision of the Resource Management Plans of the Western Oregon Bureau of Land Management (USDI 2008) and its supporting documents, and the revised Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan (USDI 2008b).

Location

The Edson Regen project is located about 7-15 miles east of Langlois, Oregon, within the New River Frontal and Sixes River Analytical (5th field) Watersheds. The New River Frontal is 99,375 acres and the BLM manages 4% (4,354 acres) of the watershed. The Sixes River watershed is 85,833 acres, the BLM manages 2% (2,107 acres) and the U.S. Forest Service manages 25% (21,692 acres) of the watershed. The remainder of both watersheds is privately owned.

The proposed harvest activities are located in T. 30 S., R. 13 and 14 W.; T. 31 S., R. 12, 13, and 14 W.; and T. 32 S., R. 15 W., Willamette Meridian.

All but one of the proposed units are located behind locked gates controlled by private entities. The United States has acquired access from the landowners(s) through reciprocal right-of-way agreements subject to the O&C Right-of-Way Regulations (43 CFR 2812).

Under these regulations, the United States obtains rights over private roads and lands to reach public lands for the purposes of management and/or removal of forest products. These rights apply to roads owned or controlled by the permittee and roads constructed by the United States on permittee lands. These rights are available for use by the United States and its licensees and exclude access for the general public. However, as necessary, the Coos Bay district office could arrange for BLM-escorted tours on an as-needed basis to ensure the safety and conduct of visitors and provide an opportunity for public comment and participation (BLM Instruction Memorandum No. OR-96-057, dated March 11, 1996).

Need for the Project

The Coos Bay District Revised Resource Management Plan responds to the “need to provide permanent forest production in conformity with the principles of sustained yield, consistent with Oregon California Railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant Land Act (O&C Act)” (ROD p 6). This revised Plan notes the need to refocus the goal for management of the BLM-administered lands to the statutory mandates specifically applicable to these lands as directed by a settlement agreement (AFRC v. Clarke, Civil No. 94-1031-TPJ [D.D.C.]) and capitalizes on an opportunity to coordinate the BLM’s management plans with new recovery plans and re-designations of critical habitat.

The Edson Regen project will be designed to meet the management direction of this plan, which is to comply with all applicable laws, which include the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

Purpose (Objectives) of the Project

A reasonable action alternative must meet the objectives provided in the 2008 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:

1. Manage forests to achieve continuous timber production that could be sustained through a balance of growth and harvest (p 36):
 - a. Offer annual timber sale volume for sale that does not vary more than ten percent from the declared annual productive capacity (allowable sale quantity) (p 37).
 - b. Offer timber for sale from regeneration harvest units (p 37).
 - c. Implement regeneration harvests to remove volume and replace slower-growing stands with young, rapidly growing stands. Generally schedule regeneration harvests for stands to maximize potential growth and yields (p 37).
 - d. Remove all merchantable material from regeneration harvest units. Retain noncommercial trees, snags, and coarse woody debris except for safety or operational reasons, including but not limited to: hazard tree and log removal, creation of yarding corridors, and road construction. Noncommercial trees, snags, and coarse woody debris may also be removed as part of biomass recovery (p 37).
 - e. Offer timber for sale from commercial thinning harvest units (p 37).
2. Provide for riparian and aquatic conditions that supply stream channels with shade, sediment filtering, leaf litter and large wood, and streambank stability (p. 34):
 - a. Apply thinning and other silvicultural treatments to speed the development of large trees to provide an eventual source of large woody debris to stream channels and to reduce the potential for uncharacteristic wildfire (p. 34).

Public Comments

You are invited to submit written comments on any issues or concerns you may have regarding this project by March 2, 2009. 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 above address 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 personal identifying information – may be made publicly 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 be able to do so. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

The EA Interdisciplinary Team will use your comments, along with their own professional expertise, to further develop a Proposed Action, alternative actions, and design features. The Proposed Action and alternatives will then be analyzed and the results documented in an EA as required by the National Environmental Policy Act. If the EA results in a FONSI (Finding of No Significant Impact), this document is anticipated to be available for review in October 2009. A copy of the EA will be sent to those that request it. It will also be posted on the District's web site: <http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/coosbay/plans/index.php>.

Please direct your responses or questions to Aimee E.B. Hoefs, Myrtlewood Field Office, 1300 Airport Lane, North Bend, OR 97459, call (541) 756-0100, FAX: (541) 756-9303.
OR_CoosBay_Mail@blm.gov

Respectfully,

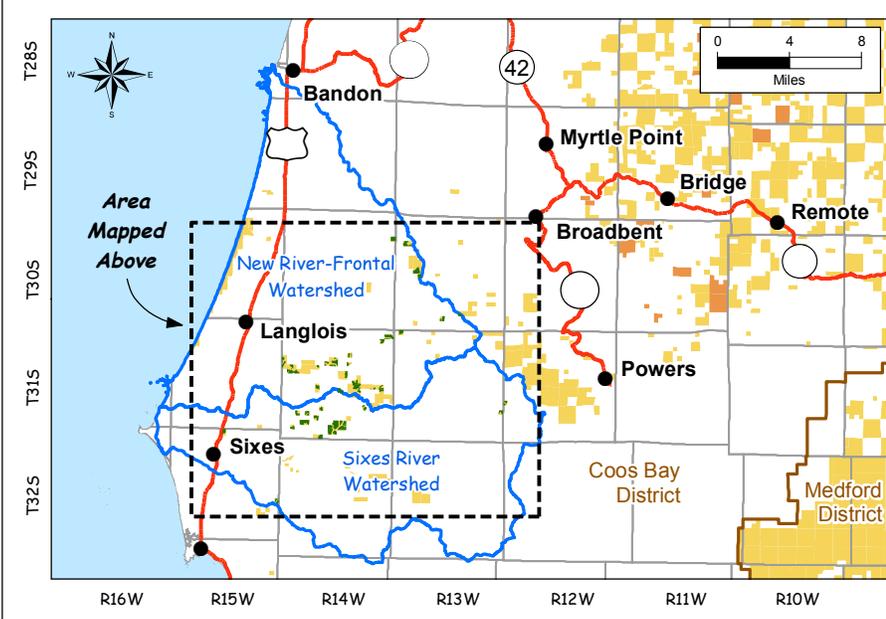
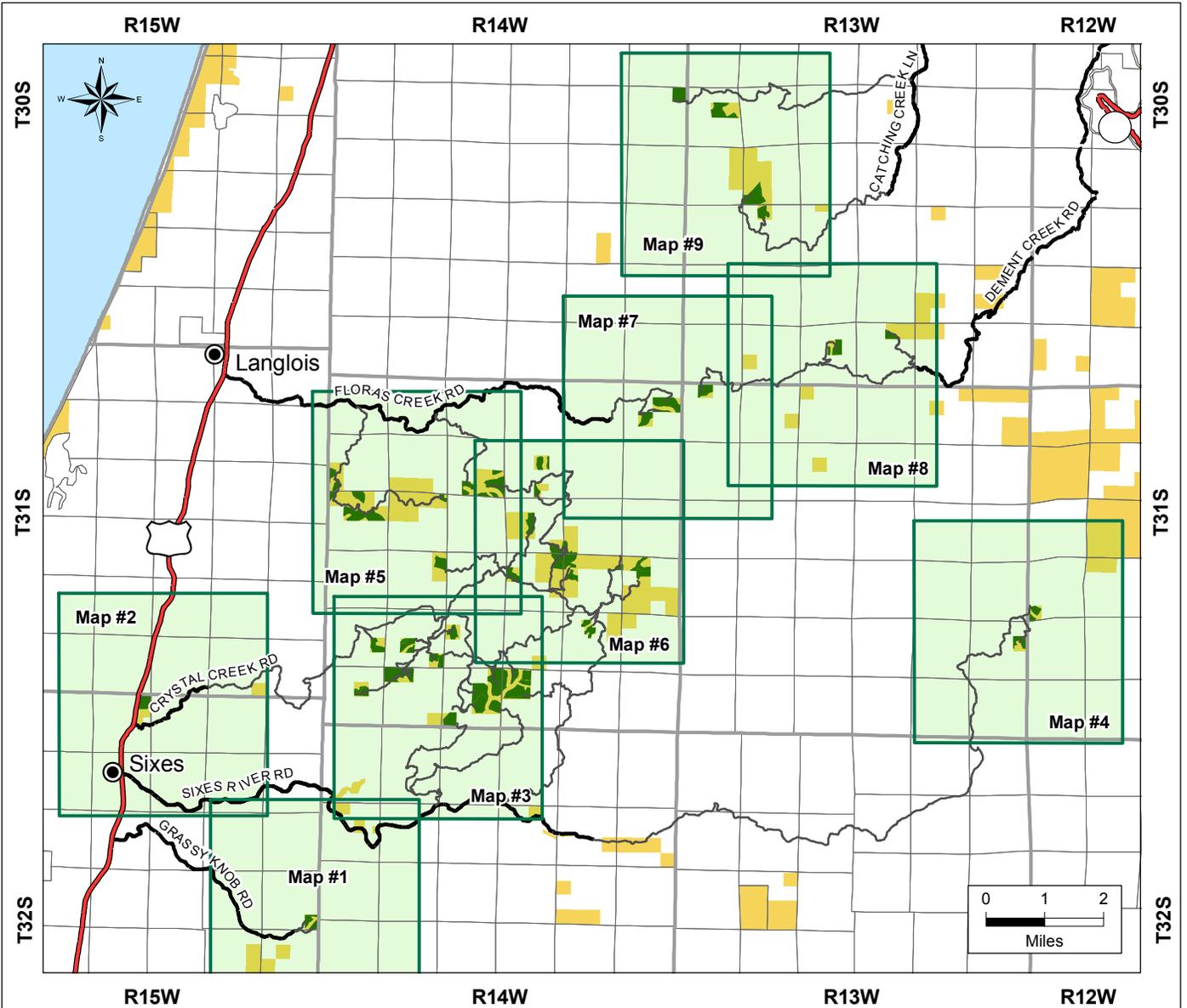
/s/ Paul T. Flanagan

January 23, 2009

Paul T. Flanagan
Myrtlewood Field Manager

Date

Enclosures



Map Feature

- Highway
- Primary Haul Road
- County Road
- Potential Harvest Boundary
- BLM Administered Land
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Private / Other Ownership
- Map extents for maps 1-9

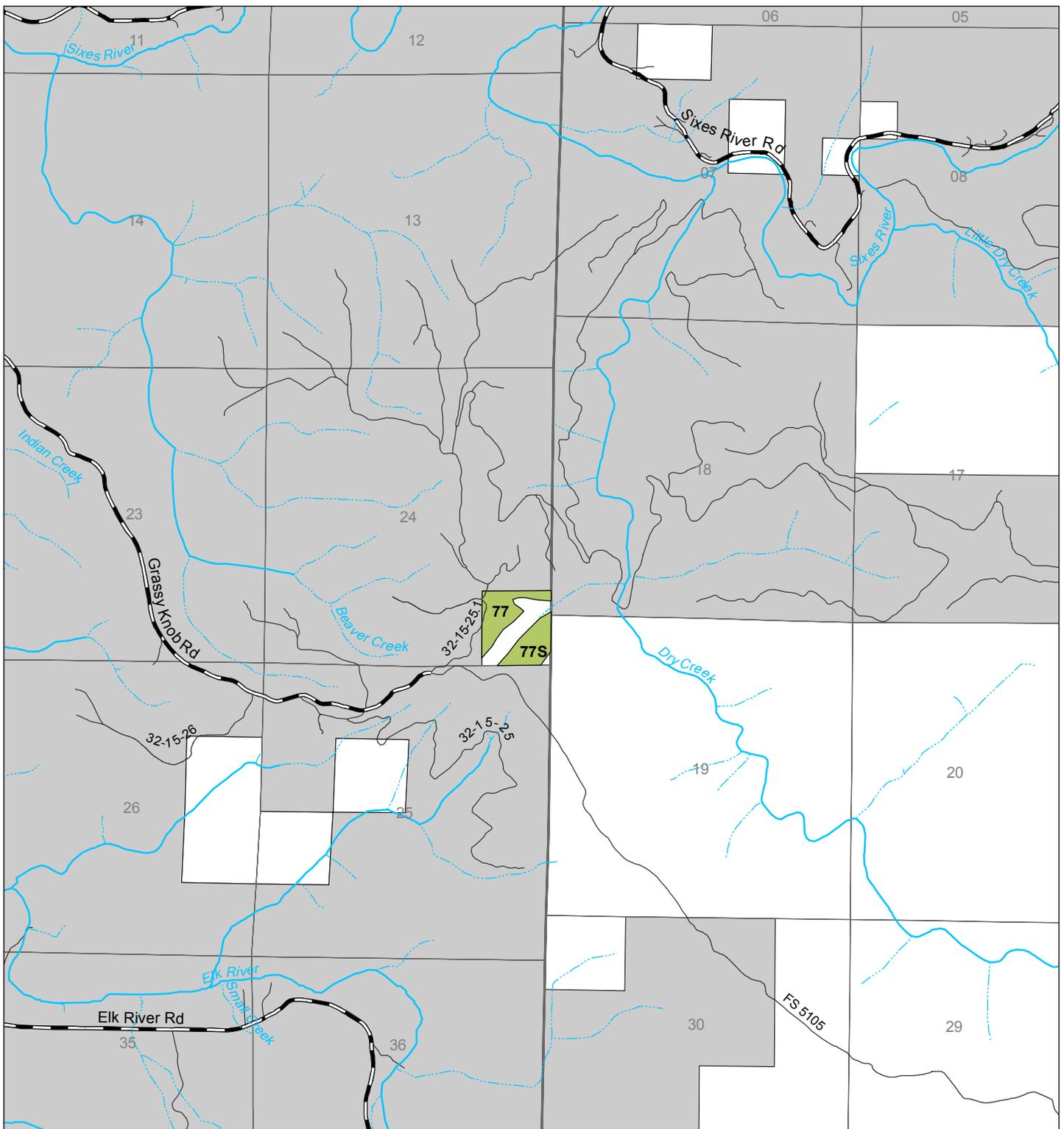
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Myrtlewood Resource Area
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Map Features (Not all map features necessarily occur in the area mapped above.)

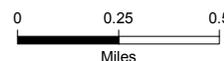
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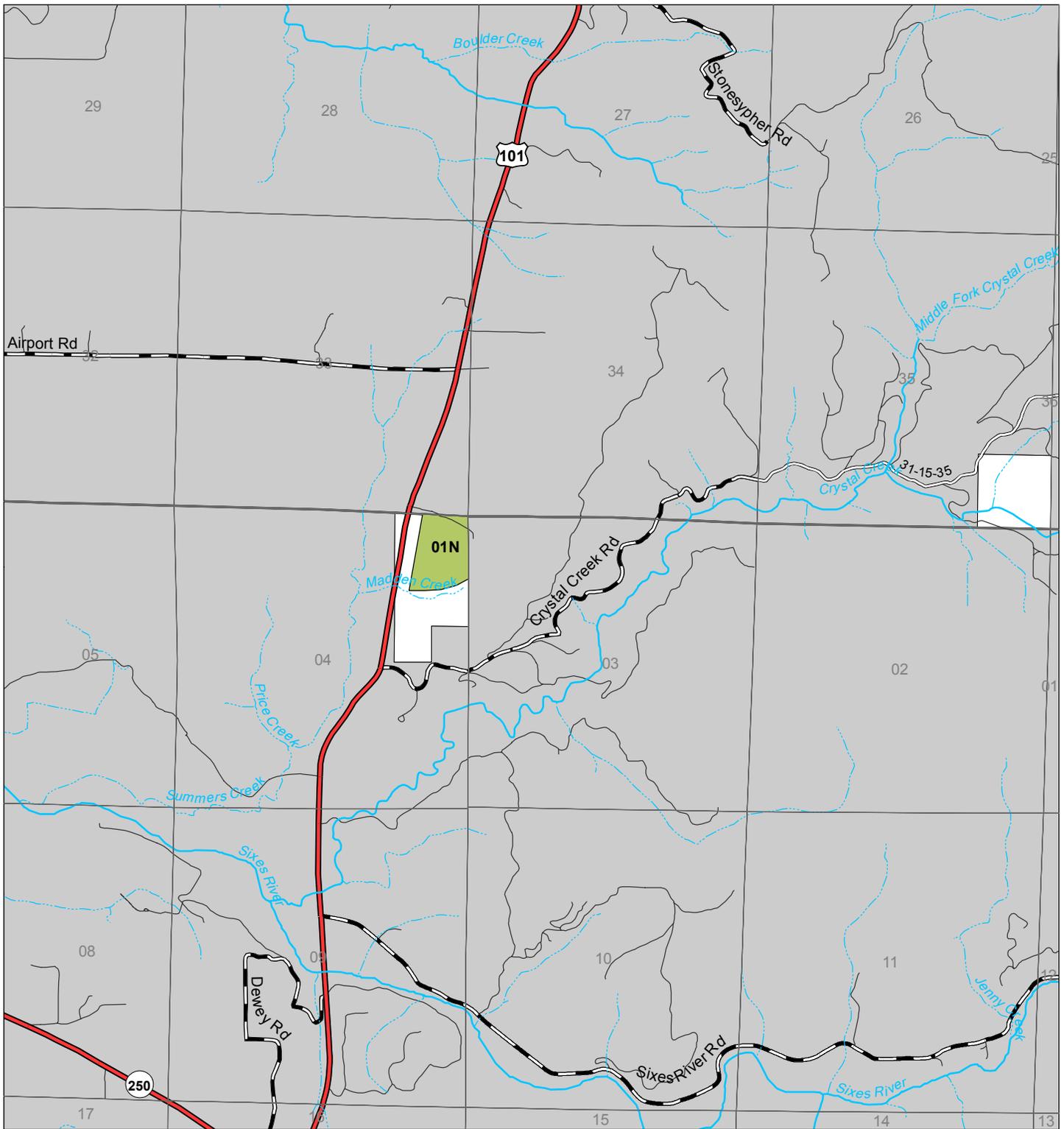
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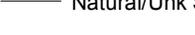
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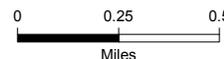
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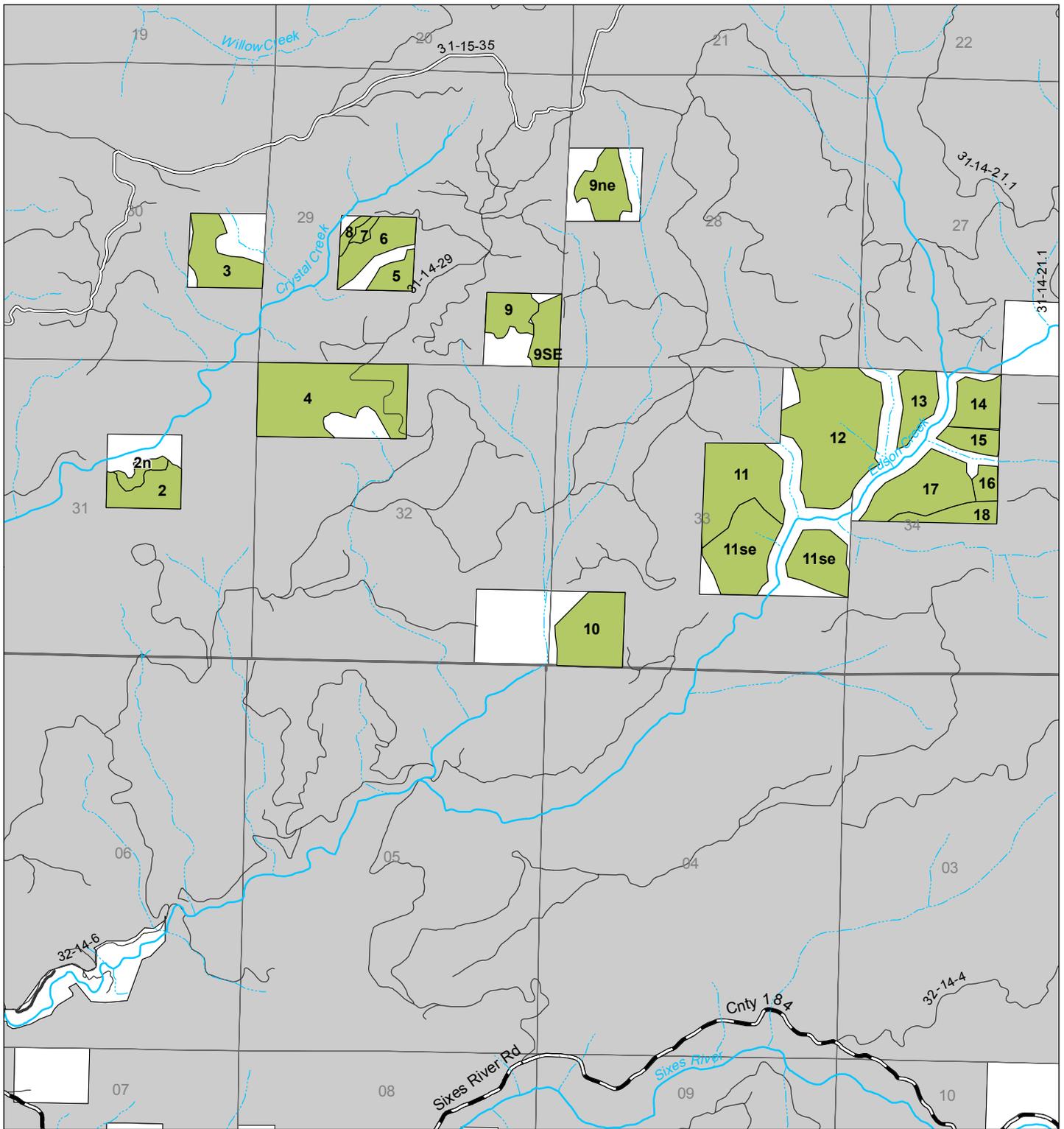
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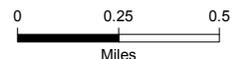
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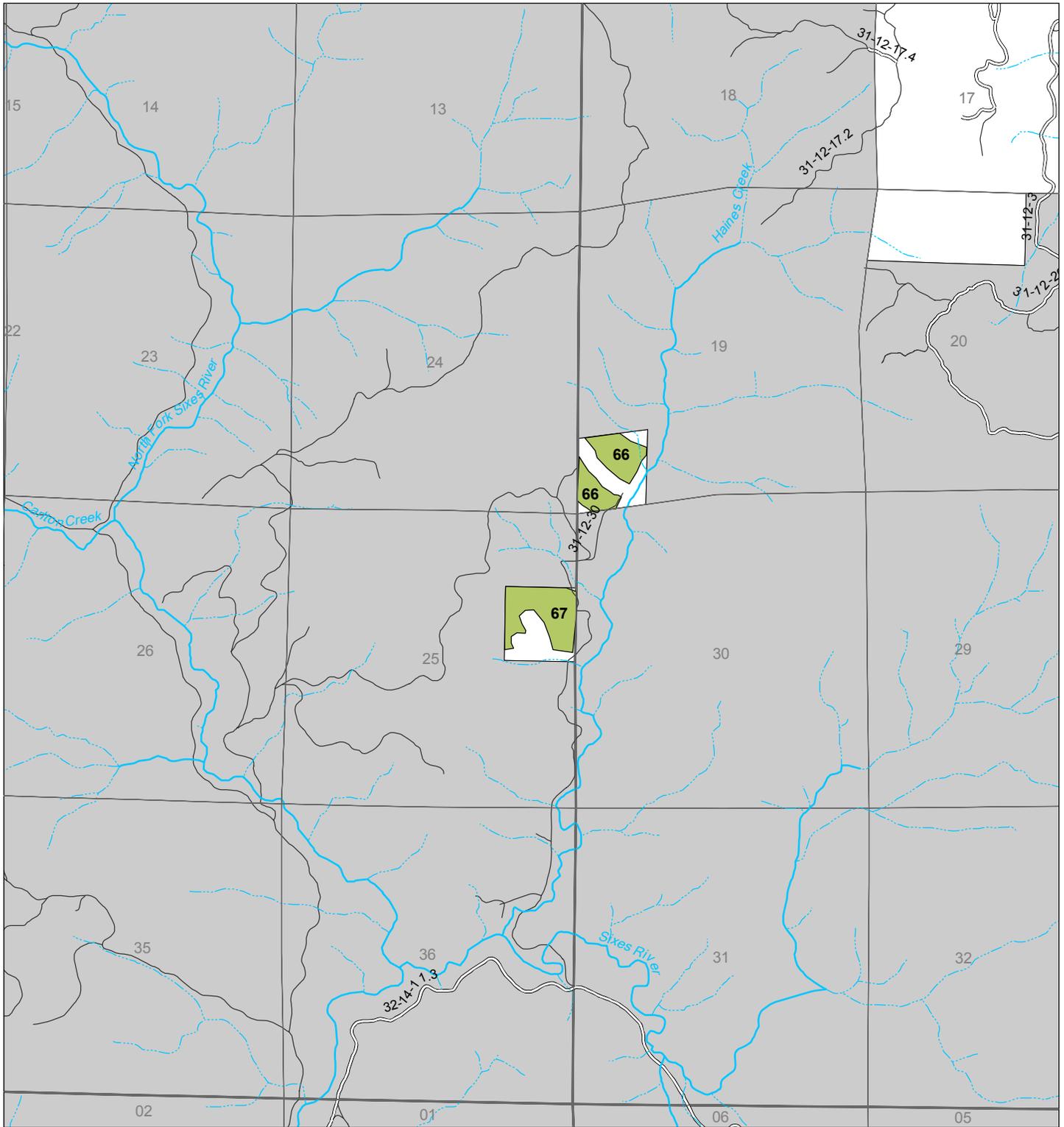
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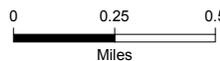
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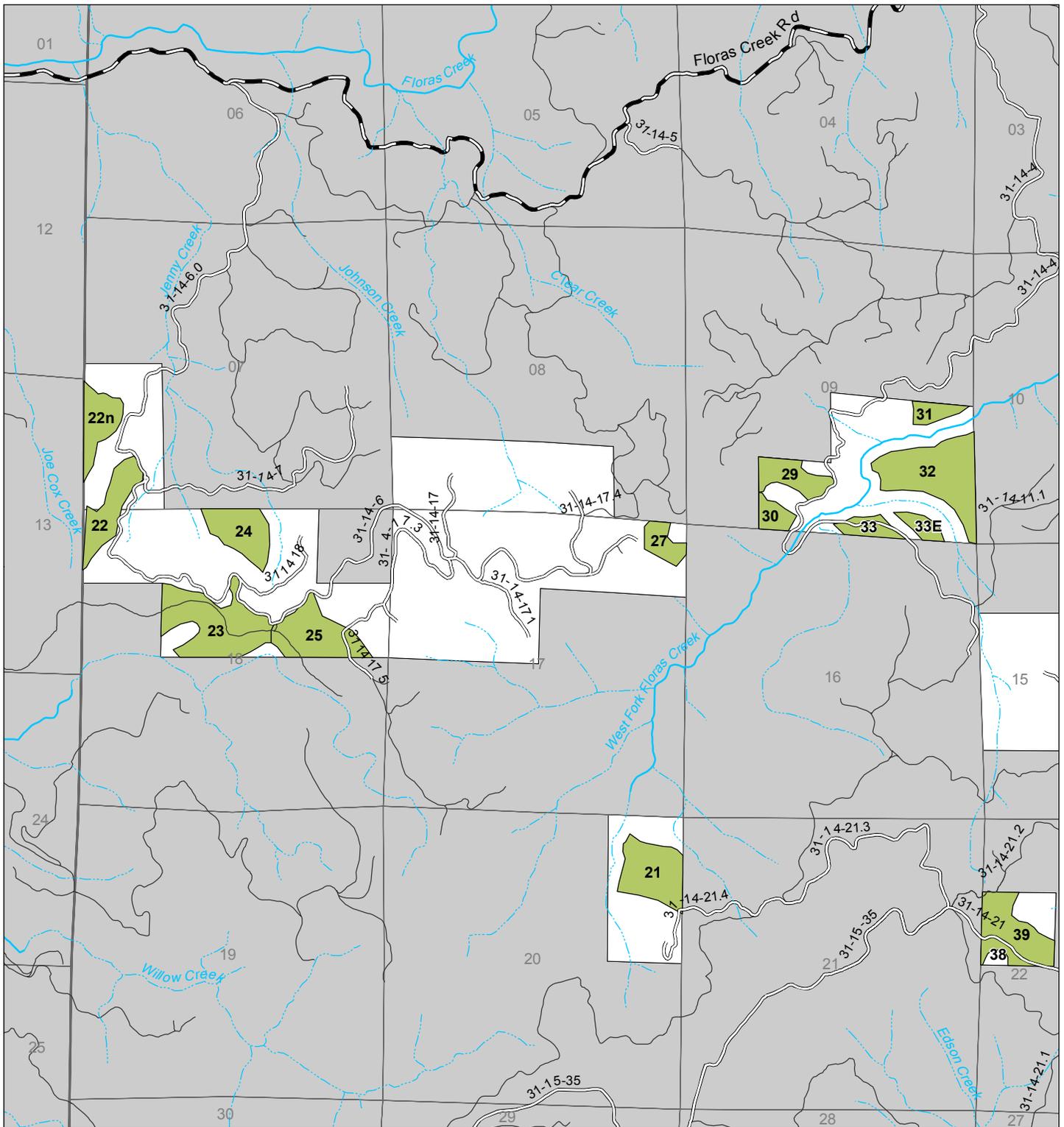
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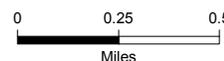
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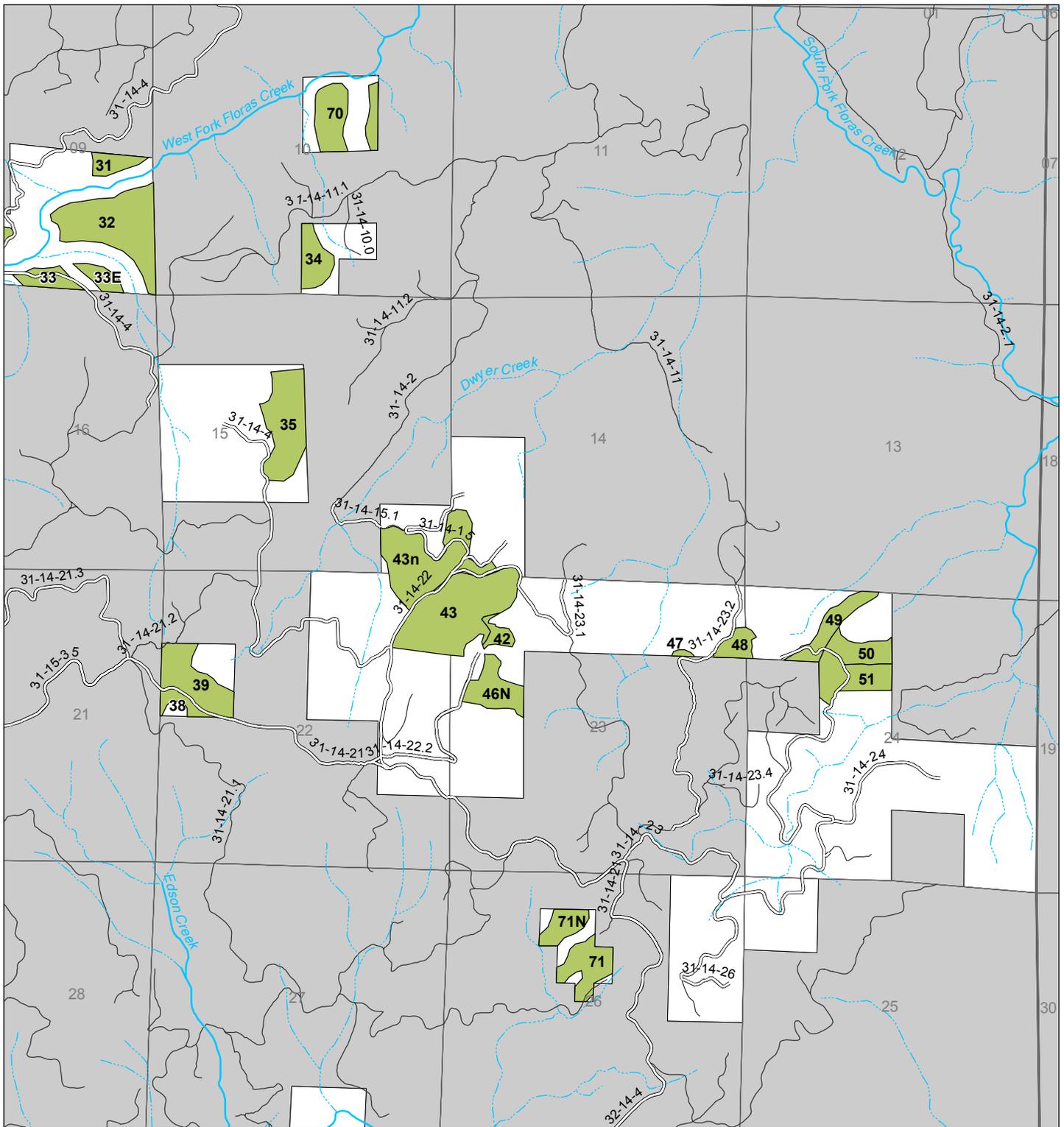
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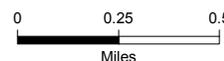
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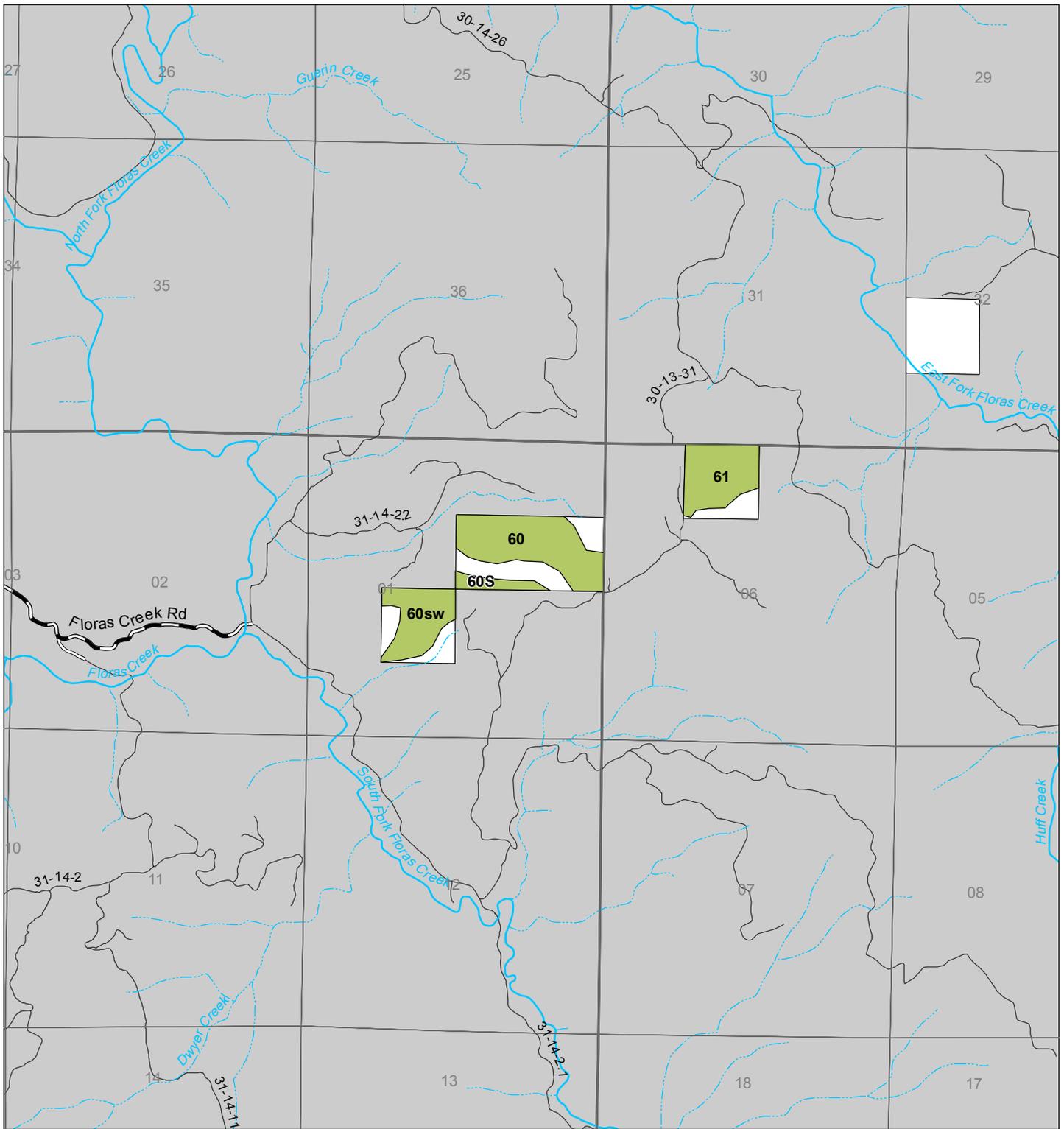
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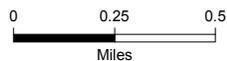
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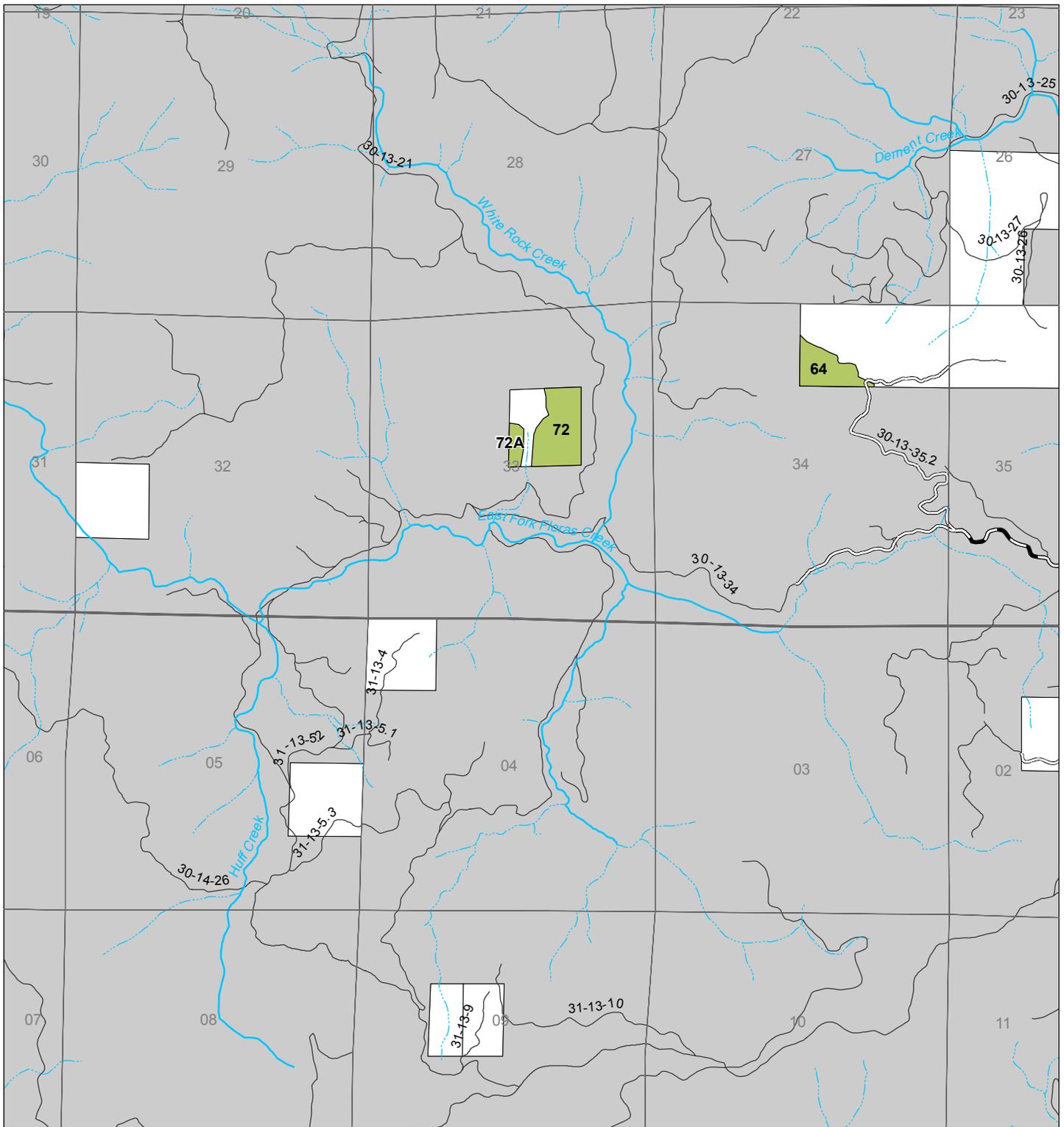
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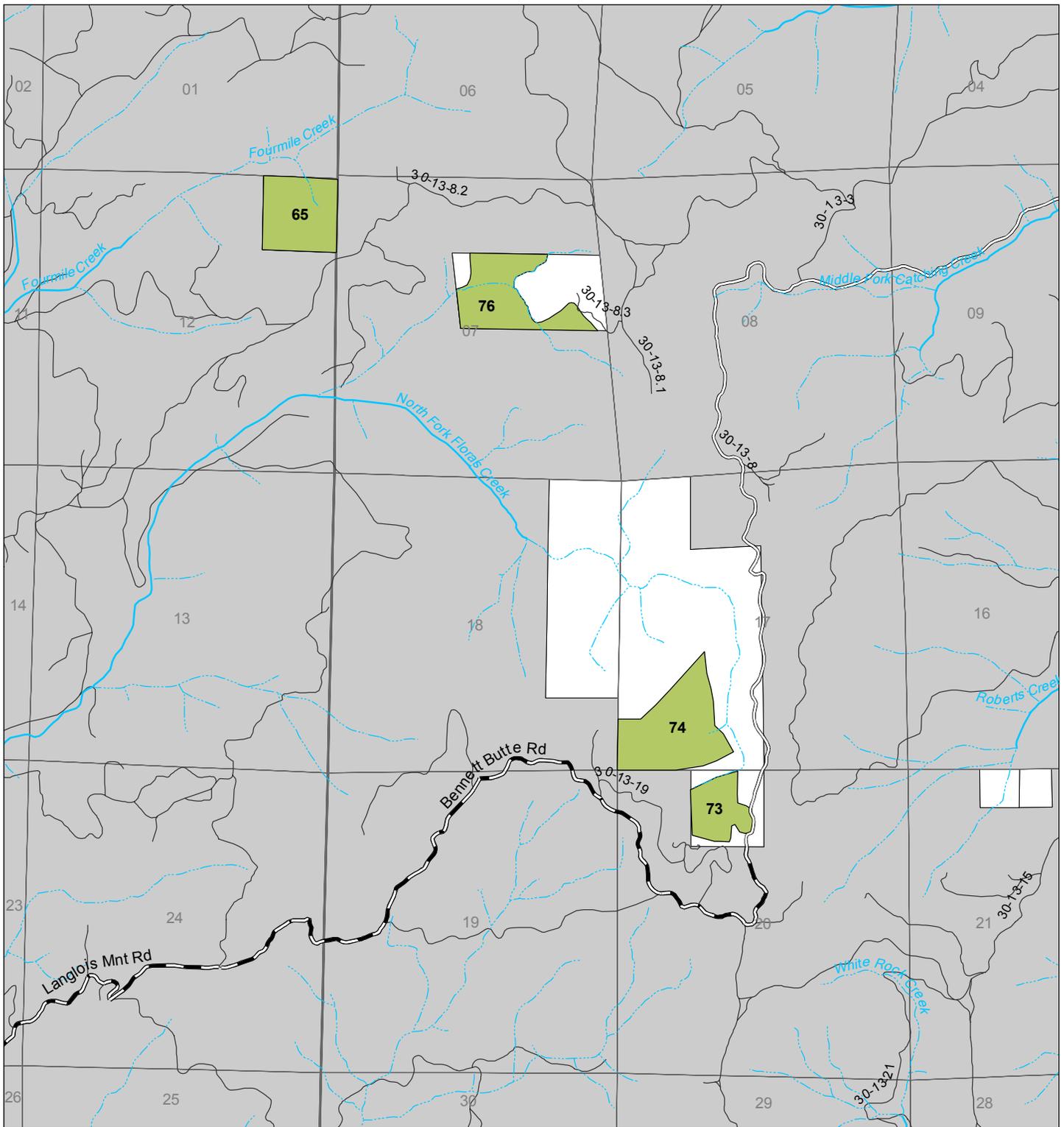
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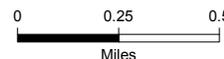
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