

Ashton-Flagg Ranch Road Corridor Study

# Phase 1 – Existing Conditions Assessment



Prepared for:  
**United States Forest Service**  
**Caribou-Targhee National Forest**

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**Western Federal Lands Highway Division**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2022, the United States Forest Service (USFS) requested assistance from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to conduct a multi-phase corridor study for Ashton-Flagg Ranch Road (AFRR). The condition of AFRR has been relatively stable for the past twenty years, despite ongoing deferred maintenance. ***However, increased visitation and changes in travel patterns for multiple uses both within the National Forest boundary and across the regional road network necessitate a closer look at the AFRR corridor.***

The purposes of the Phase 1 Ashton Flagg Ranch Road Corridor Study are to:

1. Evaluate the existing maintenance levels, conditions, and vulnerabilities of the roadway; and
2. Determine the next steps for the USFS to address immediate needs and potentially advance a collaborative, multi-agency planning effort for the corridor.

The information contained in this report provides a snapshot of visitor use, opportunity, and transportation planning considerations that could be further developed as part of a future AFRR Corridor Master Plan.

### Need for the Study

The Caribou-Targhee National Forest (CTNF) adjacent to Yellowstone National Park and Grand Teton National Park has experienced significant increases in visitor use over the past decade. The USFS anticipates continued demand for access across the CTNF, as well as interest in alternative connections to National Park destinations to the north in Montana and to the east in Wyoming. Due to the area's mountainous topography and abundance of protected public lands, few east-west roadways exist over the Teton range and into Yellowstone National Park.

Ashton-Flagg Ranch Road (also known as Forest Road 261) is one of those rare east-west travel options. The USFS operates and maintains the seasonally-open AFRR, shown in Figure 1, which connects county roads in Fremont County, Idaho to Grassy Lake Road in Wyoming.

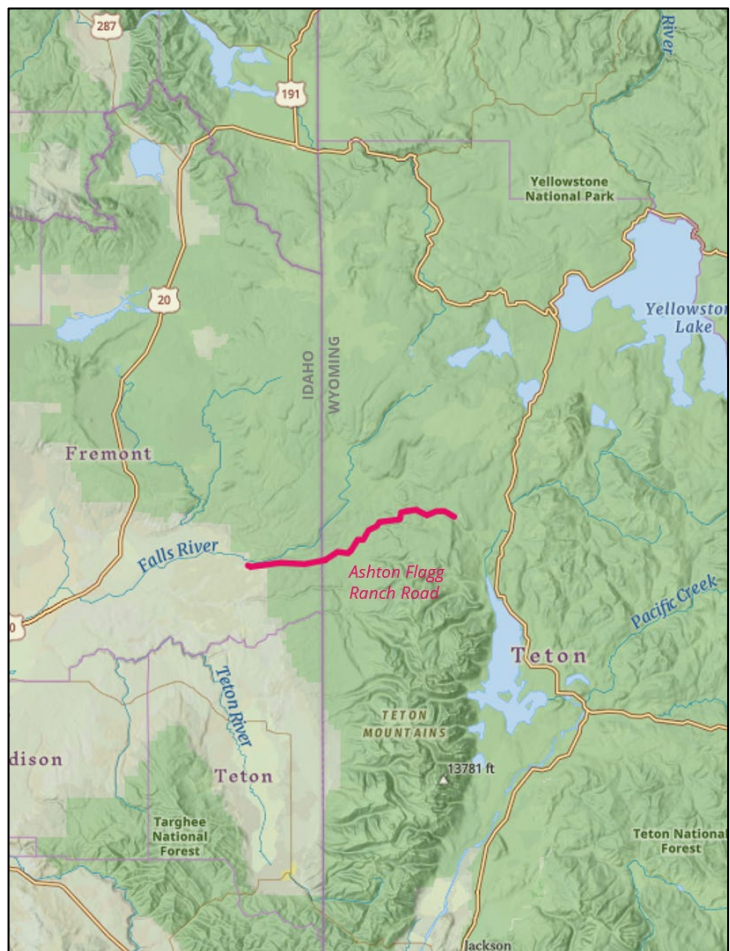


Figure 1: Ashton-Flagg Ranch Road Location

## Emphasizing Maintenance Goals

Currently, the 24.5-mile corridor operates as a low-volume, unimproved Forest road and offers travelers a unique backcountry experience through the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. The USFS does not intend to change the existing traveler experience and function of the roadway. Instead, there is interest in achieving the passenger car maintenance level that has been assigned to AFRR. The *USFS Forest Service Road System Operations and Maintenance Handbook (FSH 7709.59)* specifies maintenance levels for the agency's road network to define the level of serviced provided by, and maintenance required for, a specific road. Road maintenance levels must be consistent with road management objectives and maintenance criteria. While AFRR is classified by the USFS at a maintenance level 3, meaning the roadway should be maintained for passage by standard passenger cars during the normal season of use, portions of the roadway function closer to a maintenance level 2 (maintained for high-clearance vehicles).

## Existing Conditions Summary

The study area for this existing conditions report encompasses the entirety of AFRR within the CTNF boundary, beginning at mile post (MP) 0.0 to the east and ending at MP 24.5, where the National Forest ends and the National Park Service administered JD Rockefeller Parkway begins. This Phase 1 report describes existing conditions of the roadway using available data sources, including regional traffic volumes, visitation trends, roadway objects, user characteristics, and environmental resources. This section of the report also includes an overview of field observations and roadway deficiencies that were documented during a project site visit that took place in July 2022.

## Next Steps and Future Corridor Planning

The USFS intends to proactively plan for the future of AFRR alongside local, state, and other Federal partners. ***At a minimum, the Forest Service has indicated the CTNF will address deferred maintenance on AFRR and advance upgrades to address anticipated future use and multimodal travel along the corridor, with a focus on meeting the stated maintenance standard.*** With a greater understanding of current conditions and maintenance objectives, the USFS can begin to address some of the high-level needs identified in this study through various highway funding opportunities that may include, but are not limited to, the Forest Service Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), FHWA Federal Land Access Program (FLAP), or the Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP) Program.

If major improvements or a significant inter-state transportation project were to be considered, a comprehensive multi-agency Corridor Master Plan could be initiated to further:

- Define the desired future conditions and vision for AFRR
- Engage key stakeholders and partners during the planning process
- Clearly articulate transportation demands, user expectation, and public needs
- Identify alternatives and refine specific projects that address those long-term needs.

## INTRODUCTION

### Study Area Background

The Caribou-Targhee National Forest (CTNF) adjacent to Yellowstone National Park has experienced significant increases in visitor use over the past decade. The United States Forest Service (USFS) anticipates continued demand for access across the CTNF, including increased demand on all transportation connections to Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks to the north in Montana and to the east in Wyoming. The USFS operates and maintains the seasonally-open Ashton-Flagg Ranch Road (Forest Road 261), shown in Figure 2, which connects county roads in Fremont County, Idaho to Grassy Lake Road and Grand Teton National Park, in Wyoming. The condition of this low-volume road has been stable for the past few decades. However, increased visitation and changes in travel patterns for multiple-uses across the Greater Yellowstone area necessitate a closer look at the AFRR corridor.

The purpose of this Phase 1 Ashton Flagg Ranch Road Corridor Study is to evaluate the existing conditions and vulnerabilities of the roadway and determine the next steps for the USFS to address immediate needs and potentially advance a collaborative multi-agency planning effort for the corridor. The study area for this existing conditions report encompasses the entirety of AFRR within the CTNF boundary, beginning at mile post (MP) 0.0 on the west end of the CTNF and ending at MP 24.5, where the National Forest ends and the National Park land begins. The information contained in this report provides a snapshot of visitor use, opportunity, and transportation planning considerations that could be further developed as part of a future AFRR Corridor Master Plan. Start and end points of a future AFRR Corridor Master Plan would be determined by the stakeholders in that planning effort.

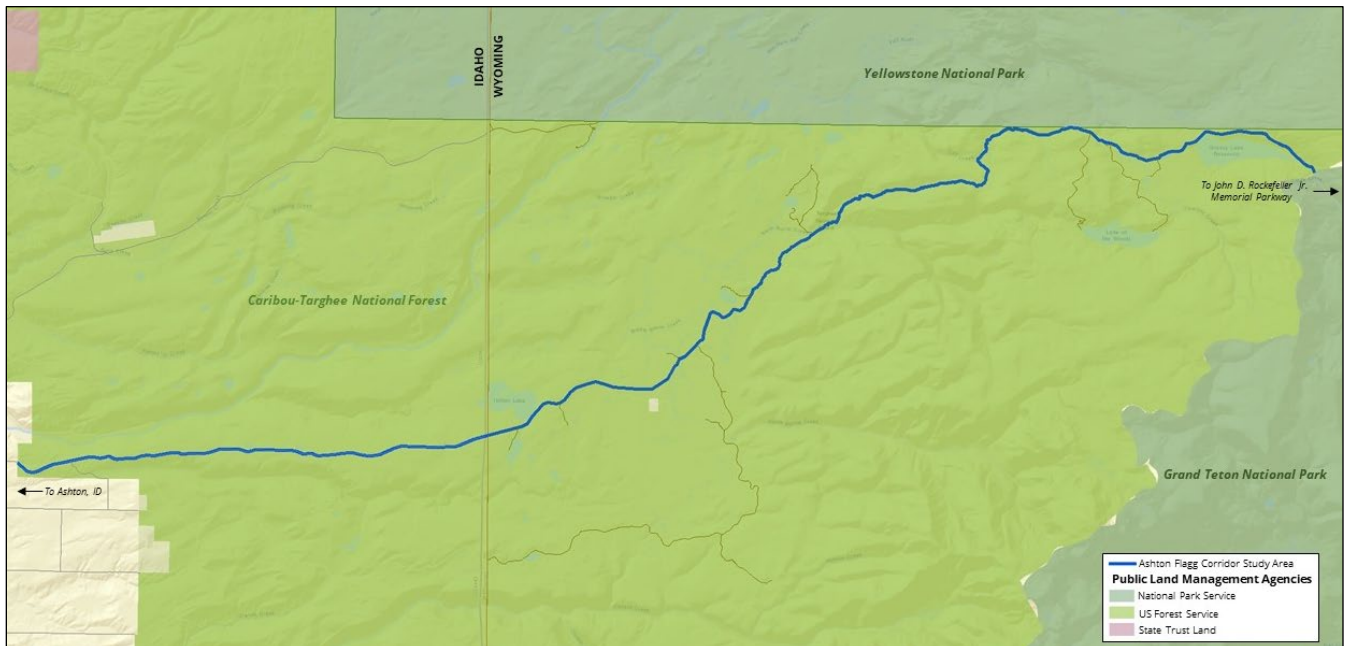


Figure 2: Ashton Flagg Ranch Road Corridor Study Area

## Corridor Study Area Context

### Relation to Regional Transportation Network

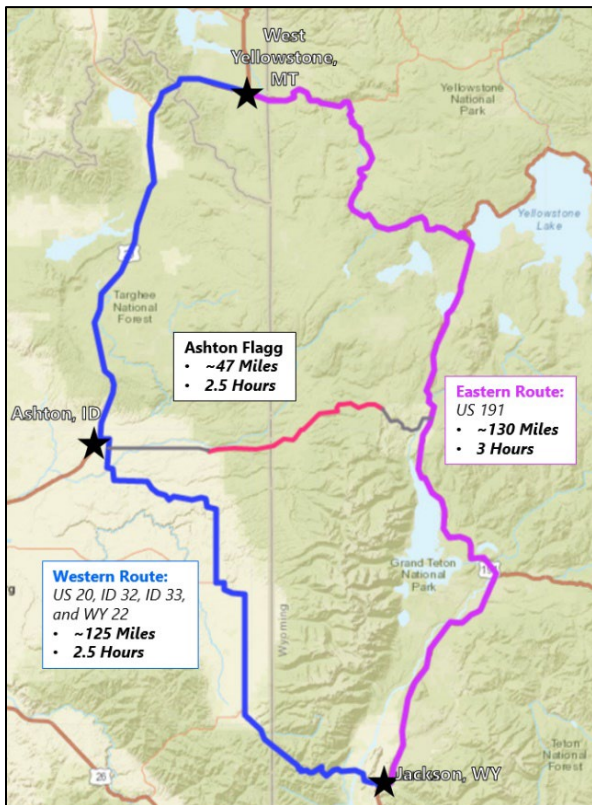


Figure 3: Regional Road Network

Ashton-Flagg Ranch Road has been an east-west highway corridor throughout the past century, with early use as a mail and wagon freight route between Idaho towns and homesteads in Wyoming. Over time as other routes were improved to Yellowstone National Park and Jackson, Wyoming, with the higher volume state highways paved and improved through the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the AFRR corridor remained less developed and unpaved. The eastern segment of the corridor, referenced but not analyzed in this report, was transferred with the congressional designation of the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway in 1972, from USFS to NPS jurisdiction.<sup>1</sup> This segment, now called Grassy Lake Road, is owned and maintained by the NPS.

With proximity of the two National Parks and adjacent National Forests, many visitors to the Greater Yellowstone area travel by personal vehicle. The regional road network between West Yellowstone, Montana and Jackson, Wyoming creates a popular driving loop that connects the gateway towns to various

public lands across three states (shown in Figure 3). Travelers have the option to take the eastern route on US 191, which is approximately 130 miles and traverses Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. Similarly, the 125-mile western route parallels the Wyoming/Idaho state border and US 20 cuts through the Caribou-Targhee National Forest in Idaho. This portion of the loop, on ID 32 and ID 33, follows the Teton Valley before crossing the state line into Wyoming and over the Teton Mountain range via the Teton Pass. Without stops or traffic, this loop takes approximately 6 hours to complete. AFRR is the only roadway that provides an alternative east-west roadway connection within this regional loop, a potential short-cut of 80 miles and bypass from congestion that builds in the traditional gateway towns throughout the peak summer tourist season.

<sup>1</sup> National Park Service History eLibrary: <http://npshistory.com/publications/jodr/index.htm>

### Regional Visitation Trends

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Americans were flocking to public lands in record-breaking numbers. The two counties that AFRR traverses (Fremont County, ID and Teton County, WY) contain nationally significant public lands, including two National Parks, three National Forests, and a National Wildlife Refuge, all of which are experiencing increased and changing visitation. Located just east of AFRR, Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks have experienced a steady uptick in visitation, shown in Table 1, with both parks setting monthly visitation records during Summer 2021.

Year	Grand Teton National Park	Yellowstone National Park
2012	2,705,256	3,447,729
2013	2,688,794	3,188,030
2014	2,791,392	3,513,484
2015	3,149,921	4,097,710
2016	3,270,076	4,257,177
2017	3,317,000	4,116,524
2018	3,491,151	4,115,000
2019	3,405,614	4,020,288
2020	3,289,638	3,806,306
2021	3,885,230	4,860,242

Table 1: Grand Teton National Park and Yellowstone National Park Annual Visitation

Annual visitation data is not available for the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. Rather, the USFS collects visitation data every five years through the National Visitor Use Monitoring Program. Shown in Table 2, visitation to the CTNF has increased since 2005. Summer visitation to Mesa Falls exceeded 280,000 day users between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

2005	2010	2015	2020
1,557,000	2,065,000	1,468,000	2,403,000

Table 2: Caribou-Targhee National Forest 5-Year Visitation



View of the Teton Range from the USFS CTNF Teton Basin Ranger District in Driggs, ID (Photo Credit: USFS)



Upper Mesa Falls (Photo Credit: USFS)



### Socioeconomic Overview

AFRR links Fremont County, ID to Teton County, WY, serving two counties with a combined population of approximately 37,167 in 2021. From 2001 to 2021, the combined population for these counties increased from 30,544 residents to 37,167 (a 21.6% increase). Teton County, WY experienced significantly greater population growth in that timeframe (26.3% increase), compared to Fremont County, ID's 14.3% increase, shown in Figure 5.

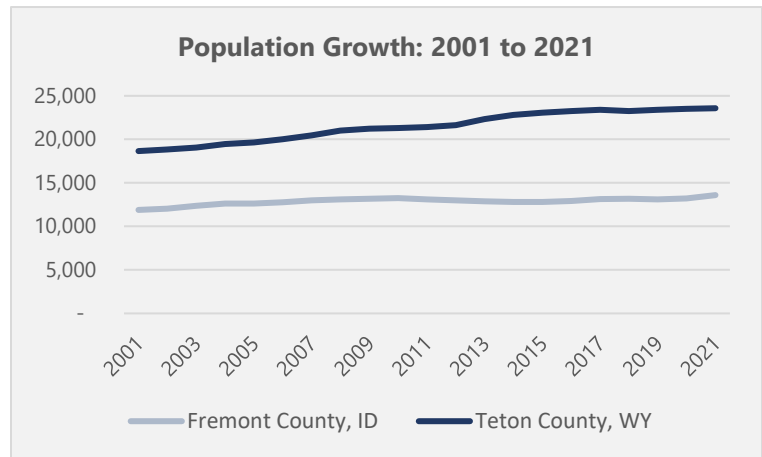


Figure 4: Population Growth - 2001 to 2021 (Source: US Census)

In addition to population growth, the region has experienced increases in employment growth since the early 2000s. According to the most recently available data from the U.S. Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Program, the total number of jobs in Fremont County, ID and Teton County, WY grew over 39% between 2003 and 2019. While the number of jobs on the Idaho side of AFRR increased by 31.8%, job creation on the Wyoming side is driving economic growth. In that same timeframe, Teton County, WY added over 5,800 new jobs (approximately 2,300 of which were in the Accommodation and Food Services sector). Table 3 provides a summary of job change over time in the two counties.

	Fremont County, ID	Teton County, WY	Two-County
	Jobs	Jobs	Total
2003	2,171	14,274	16,445
2007	2,305	15,756	18,061
2011	2,567	14,985	17,552
2015	2,590	17,344	19,934
2019	2,862	20,086	22,948
<b>Change from 2003-2019</b>	<b>+691</b> (31.8%)	<b>+5,812</b> (40.7%)	<b>+6,503</b> (39.5%)

Table 3: Job Growth - 2003 to 2019 (Source: Census LEHD)

## ***Related Plans and Studies***

Various long range transportation plans, comprehensive plans, and related studies have been completed in recent years to define the current conditions, future vision, and transportation needs of the greater Yellowstone region. The following plans and studies were reviewed as part of the Phase 1 AFRR Corridor Study.

### **Targhee National Forest Open Road and Open Motorized Trail Travel Plan Record of Decision (1999)**

The purpose and need of the Targhee National Forest Open Road and Open Motorized Trail Travel Plan (Travel Plan) is to offer a balanced range of motorized road and trail related recreation opportunities in the forest that is consistent with the management prescriptions adopted in the Revised Forest Plan. These prescriptions include standards for the miles of open roads and motorized trails allowed per square mile. The Travel Plan identifies which roads and trails will remain open to meet these road and trail density standards. In the Record of Decision, the Targhee National Forest provides for 1,577 miles of open motorized roads, 25 miles of seasonally restricted roads and 540 miles of open motorized trails. AFRR represents 24.5 miles of open motorized roads.

### **Yellowstone National Park Transportation and Vehicle Mobility Study (2017)**

The purpose of this study was to collect and analyze data related to traffic and parking conditions at Yellowstone National Park in order to provide a foundation for future visitor use management and transportation planning. The study assessed traffic volumes, visitor trip patterns, parking utilization, and lodging in gateway communities. While the study largely focused on data collection and field observations, a few high-priority recommendations were included to respond to visitor and congestion management pressures. Specifically, the project team recommended a Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem Regional Visitation and Transportation Study to better understand how visitors travel to and from the park and how those travel patterns may affect the greater Yellowstone ecosystem. At the time of this report, this recommendation has not yet been implemented.

### **Fremont County Transportation Plan (2006)**

The *Fremont County Transportation Plan* identifies 20-year transportation issues throughout the county and prioritizes system projects that will improve access and safety for residents, businesses, and the traveling public. The final plan lists project priorities, guiding goals, objectives, and policies for everyday evaluation of transportation issues.

### **Teton County Integrated Transportation Plan (2020 Technical Update)**

The “plan scenario” that the *Teton County Integrated Transportation Plan* sets forth as the direction for future transportation improvements focuses on increasing multimodal accessibility (via increased transit service and more bicycle and pedestrian trips) and decreasing motor vehicle traffic volumes. While this plan centers on Jackson, WY and surrounding Teton County, the transportation demand management strategies identified will have impacts to the regional network once implemented.

## MAINTENANCE AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

The USFS Road Maintenance Management System provides a systematic process for field units to effectively and efficiently manage their road maintenance programs. The following sections provide more background on USFS road maintenance levels and management objectives.

### Forest Service Road Maintenance Levels

From the *USFS Forest Service Road System Operations and Maintenance Handbook (FSH 7709.59)*, the road maintenance levels are described as follows:

1. **Level 1: Closed to vehicular traffic but may be available and suitable for nonmotorized uses.** These are roads that have been placed in storage between intermittent uses. The period of storage must exceed 1 year. Basic custodial maintenance is performed to prevent damage to adjacent resources and to perpetuate the road for future resource management needs. Emphasis is normally given to maintaining drainage facilities and runoff patterns. Planned road deterioration may occur at this level. Appropriate traffic management strategies are "prohibit" and "eliminate" all traffic. These roads are not shown on motor vehicle use maps.
2. **Level 2: Assigned to roads open for use by high clearance vehicles.** Passenger car traffic, user comfort, and user convenience are not considerations. Warning signs and traffic control devices are not provided with the exception that some signing, such as W-18-1 "No Traffic Signs," may be posted at intersections. Motorists should have no expectations of being alerted to potential hazards while driving these roads. Traffic is normally minor, usually consisting of one or a combination of administrative, permitted, dispersed recreation, or other specialized uses.
3. **Level 3: Assigned to roads open and maintained for travel by a prudent driver in a standard passenger car.** User comfort and convenience are not considered priorities. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) is applicable. Warning signs and traffic control devices are provided to alert motorists of situations that may violate expectations. Roads in this maintenance level are typically low speed with single lanes and turnouts.
4. **Level 4: Assigned to roads that provide a moderate degree of user comfort and convenience at moderate travel speeds.** Most roads are double lane and aggregate surfaced. However, some roads may be single lane. Some roads may be paved and/or dust abated. Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices is applicable. The most appropriate traffic management strategy is "encourage." However, the "prohibit" strategy may apply to specific classes of vehicles or users at certain times.
5. **Level 5: Assigned to roads that provide a high degree of user comfort and convenience.** These roads are normally double lane, paved facilities. Some may be aggregate surfaced and dust abated. Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices is applicable. The appropriate traffic management strategy is "encourage."

While AFRR is classified by the USFS at a maintenance level 3, meaning the roadway should be maintained for passage by standard passenger cars during the normal season of use, portions of the roadway function closer to a maintenance level 2 (maintained for high-clearance vehicles).

### ***Road Management Objectives for AFRR***

The Road Management Objectives Report includes general management information for AFRR. From MP 0 to MP 11.1, the following maintenance levels are prescribed:

- Maintain travelway to provide for a moderate degree of user comfort and convenience and for protection of investment and resource values;
- Replace surfacing to the depth required for blade maintenance;
- Patch pavement potholes and perform routine pavement maintenance to protect the investment;
- Maintain existing shoulders commensurate with the travelway;
- Keep drainage facilities functional to prevent unacceptable resource damage;
- Brush as necessary to maintain sight distance and traffic clearance;
- Remove hazard trees; and
- Install and maintain regulatory, warning, and guide signs according to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

From MP 11.2 to MP 24.6, the following maintenance levels are prescribed:

- Maintain once or more per year to allow for safe passage of standard passenger cars;
- Brush as necessary to maintain sight distance and traffic clearance;
- Remove hazard trees; and
- Install and maintain regulatory, warning, and guide signs according to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

CTNF is unique in that it retains a crew of 5 to 6 employees to make improvements on USFS-owned roads and bridges. However, with over 1,500 miles of road within the CTNF, this small road crew is not able to address all maintenance needs on a consistent basis. Gravel source material for AFRR is located outside of the Forest.

### ***Design Criteria***

The *AASHTO Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets* and the *AASHTO Guidelines for Geometric Design of Low-Volume Roads* specify general design principles and controls that determine the overall operational characteristics of a roadway. Of critical importance to determining design standards is the design speed. AASHTO's manuals provide guidance for design speed based on facility and operating characteristics; however, some judgment is necessary. A facility's design speed and its operating speed may differ. The design speed is a selected speed used to determine the various geometric design features of the roadway. The operating speed is the highest overall speed at which a driver may travel on a given section of roadway under favorable weather conditions and prevailing traffic conditions without at any time exceeding the safe speed as determined by the design speed.

Table 7 lists current design speeds for AFRR as a local roads in Rural Areas, according to AASHTO design criteria. The highway design criteria depend on terrain, area context, and daily traffic volumes. Based on definitions included in AASHTO's guidance, AFRR appears to be of rural context under rolling terrain, with projected traffic volumes between 250 to 400 vehicles per day. This correlates to a design speed of 30 miles per hour.

Suggested maximum grades for local roads in rural areas are included in Table 8 as a function of type of terrain and design speed. For AFRR, the recommended maximum grade is 10%. However, AASHTO notes that "short lengths of grade in rural areas, such as grades less than 500 ft in length, one-way downgrades, and grades on low-volume roads (AADT less than 2,000 vehicles/day) may be up to 2 percent steeper than the grades shown in the table".

Type of Terrain	U.S. Customary				
	Design Speed (mph) for Specified Design Volume (veh/day)				
	under 50	50 to 250	250 to 400	400 to 2,000	2,000 and over
Level	30	30	40	50	50
Rolling	20	30	30	40	40
Mountainous	20	20	20	30	30

Table 5: Minimum Design Speeds for Local Roads in Rural Areas  
AASHTO Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets

Type of Terrain	U.S. Customary									
	Maximum Grade (%) for Specified Design Speed (mph)									
	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
Level	9	8	7	7	7	7	7	6	6	5
Rolling	12	11	11	10	10	10	9	8	7	6
Mountainous	17	16	15	14	14	13	12	10	10	—

Table 4: Maximum Grades for Local Roads in Rural Areas  
AASHTO Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section describes the existing roadway conditions, traffic patterns, crash trends, and user characteristics within the study corridor. It also includes an overview of field observations that were documented during a project site visit that took place in July 2022.

### Physical Features and Characteristics

#### Topography and Setting

This backcountry roadway begins in the farmlands surrounding Ashton, ID and ends at Flagg Ranch along the Grassy Lake Road. The portion of AFRR within Wyoming is flanked by Designated Wilderness, including the Winegar Hole Wilderness to the north and the Jedediah Smith Wilderness to the south. Most of the route cuts through dense forest and passes by the Grassy Lake Reservoir and Indian Lake. The US Bureau of Reclamation built AFRR in 1911 to haul materials from the rail station in Ashton, ID to the construction site of the Jackson Lake Dam on the Snake River near Moran, WY. Most of the land surrounding AFRR is managed by the USFS, but there is a private inholding owned by Brigham Young University located around MP 11. The Boy Scouts of America operate Camp Loll farther east at MP 20.

#### Roadway Characteristics

AFRR is a two-lane rural roadway that provides an east-west connection across the northern end of the Teton Range between US20 in Idaho and US191 in Wyoming. The western portion of the road is owned and maintained by Fremont County, Idaho. Within the Caribou Targhee National Forest boundary, the road is owned and maintained by the US Forest Service. After 24.5 miles, Ashton Flagg Ranch Road connects into the Grassy Lake Road, which is managed by the National Park Service. This study focuses on AFRR within the Forest Service boundaries and, for the purpose of this existing conditions assessment, is organized into three segments. These segments, shown in Figure 6, are characterized by similar conditions and are described in the following sections.



Figure 5: AFRR Segment Overview

## AFRR Segment 1: MP 0 to MP 11.1

The general management direction for this segment of AFRR, which is defined in the USFS Road Management Objectives Report, is to *"provide a moderate degree of user comfort and convenience at moderate travel speeds for a standard passenger car. Usually a collector road. Used for recreation, hunting, administrative use, personal use, wood products hauling, timber harvest, and fire protection."*



Figure 6: Example of Preferred Maintenance Level 3 Design Standard at AFRR MP 2

The Fremont County boundary line is at MP 7.7 and the County maintains the portion of road within their county by blading twice a year and occasionally brushing. The roadway width ranges from 22' to 24' and the road geometry is straight with gentle horizontal curvature and fairly flat, with an average 1% grade across this segment (shown in Figure 8). There is a short vertical climb near MP 8.7 east of Indian Lake. The gravel is consistent and minimal potholing. According to the CNTF engineering staff, this segment of AFRR demonstrates the preferred design standard for a maintenance level 3 road (see Figure 7).

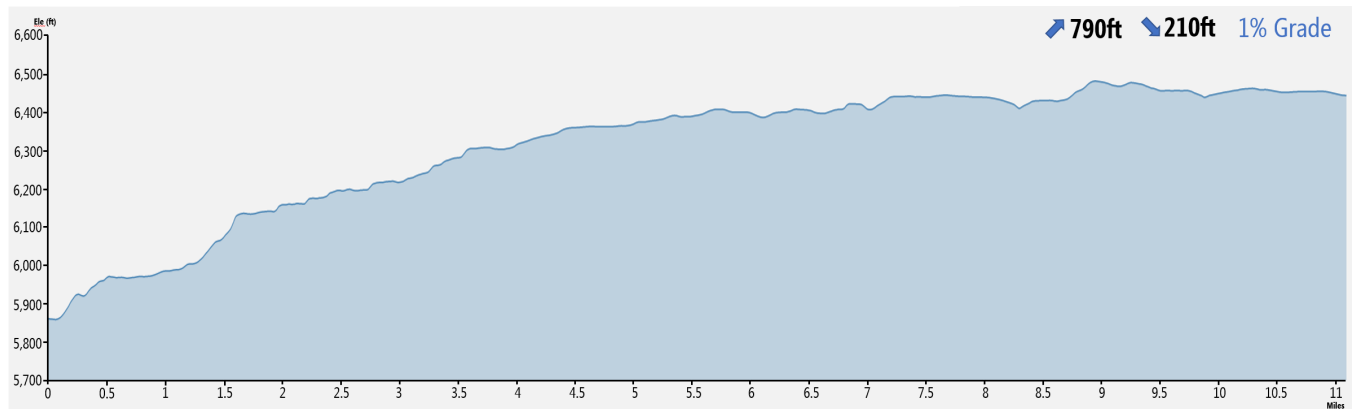


Figure 7: AFRR Segment 1 - MP 0 to MP 11.1 Elevation Profile

This segment of AFRR is characterized by the following road features:

- 7 intersections
- 4 turnouts
- 2 bridges
- 26 culverts
- 19 signs

Figure 9 below, and Table 4 on the following page, summarize road features between MP 0 and MP 11.1.

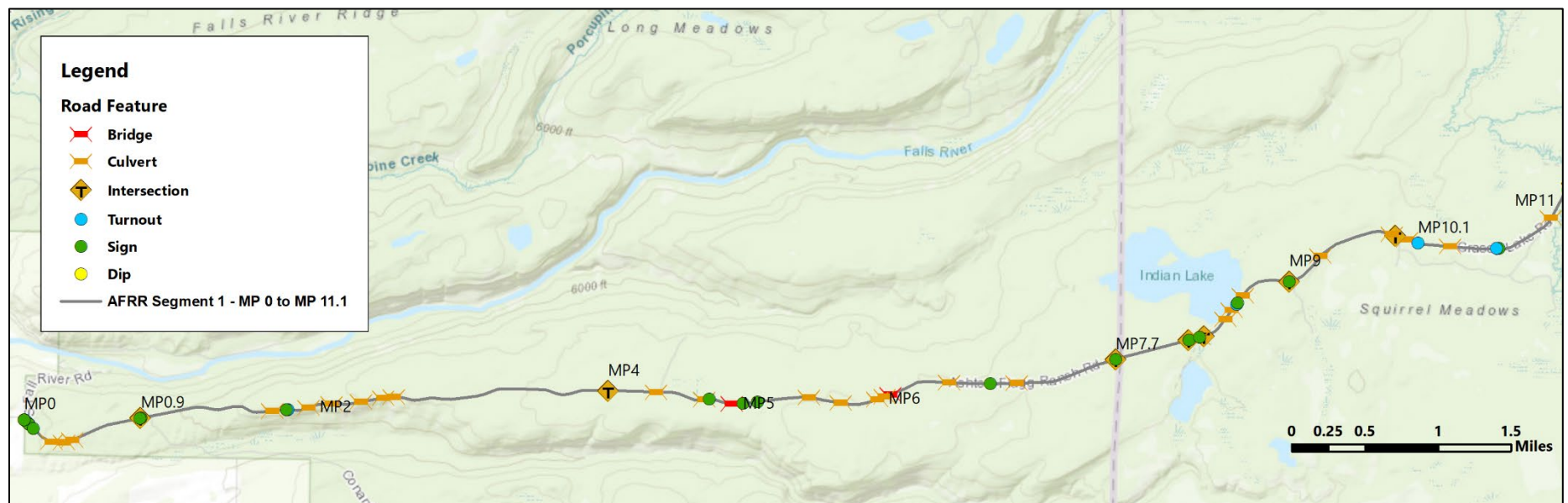


Figure 8: Road Features on AFRR Segment 1 - MP 0 to MP 11.1



MP	Feature Type	Description	MP	Feature Type	Description
0	Sign	Boundary (redwood)	6.005	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
0	Sign	Boundary (redwood)	6.06	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
0.022	Sign	Warning (aluminum)	6.1	Bridge	
0.046	Sign	Regulatory (aluminum)	6.524	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
0.046	Sign	Warning (aluminum)	6.802	Sign	Route Marker (aluminum)
0.089	Sign	Route Marker (aluminum)	6.983	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
0.244	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	7.687	Sign	Visitor Information (hdo plywood)
0.332	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	7.688	Intersection	
0.392	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	8.202	Intersection	
0.879	Sign	Route Marker (aluminum)	8.206	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)
0.883	Intersection		8.282	Culvert	Elliptical Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 48x72
0.888	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)	8.282	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)
1.808	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	8.313	Intersection	
1.906	Sign	Visitor Information (hdo plywood)	8.506	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
1.913	Turnout		8.581	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
2.059	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	8.631	Turnout	
2.22	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	8.645	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)
2.425	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	8.705	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
2.577	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	9.061	Intersection	
2.652	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	9.061	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)
4.138	Intersection		9.345	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
4.466	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	9.876	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
4.805	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel)	9.901	Intersection	
4.84	Sign	Route Marker (aluminum)	9.988	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
5	Bridge		10.065	Turnout	
5.076	Sign	Guide (metal)	10.286	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
5.175	Sign	Route Marker (aluminum)	10.603	Turnout	
5.528	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	10.619	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)
5.751	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	11.045	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34

Table 6: Road Features on AFRR Segment 1 - MP 0 to MP 11.1

## AFRR Segment 2: MP 11.1 to MP 19.2

The general management direction for this segment is to *"provide a safe travelway for standard passenger cars driven by a prudent driver. User comfort and convenience are low priorities. Potholing and washboarding may occur. Used for recreation, hunting, administrative use, personal use, wood products hauling, timber harvest, and fire protection"*.



Figure 9: Inconsistent native surface conditions at MP 21.7

Beginning at MP 11.1, where AFRR crosses South Boone Creek, the roadway width reduces significantly. This 8-mile segment is characterized by roadway widths that range from 11' to 18' and the road geometry includes more horizontal and vertical curvature. The gravel becomes more inconsistent (see Figure 8) and potholing is more prevalent. Around MP 13, the road becomes narrower and there are sharper horizontal curves, as well as evidence of drainage concerns. Between MP 14.6 and MP 16.4 there are very steep climbs (depicted in Figure 9), sharp horizontal curves and large rocks in the roadway. It is in this segment of AFRR where high clearance vehicles are recommended.

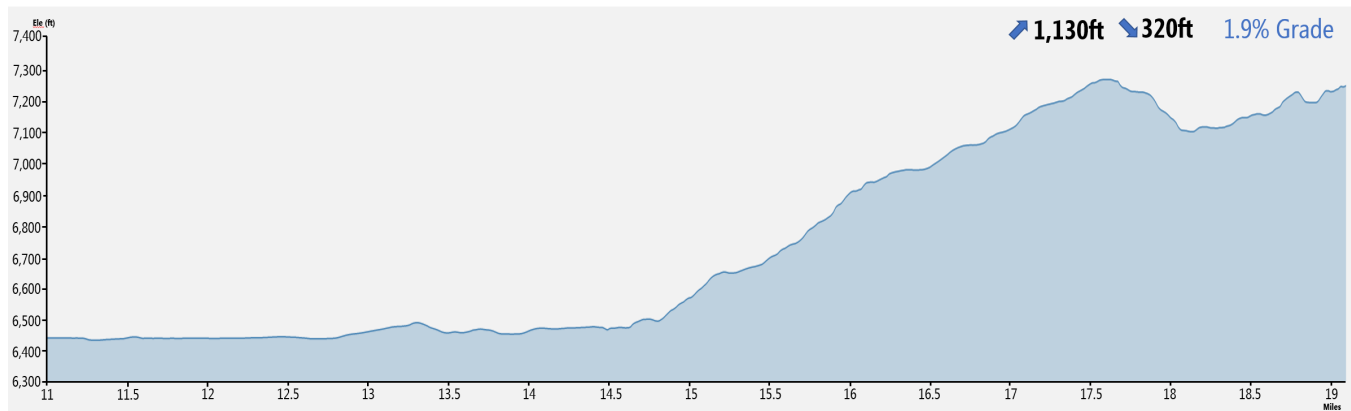


Figure 10: AFRR Segment 2 - MP 11.1 to MP 19.2 Elevation Profile

This segment of AFRR is characterized by the following road features:

- 9 intersections
- 1 turnout
- 1 bridge
- 23 culverts
- 15 signs

Figure 12 and Table 5 on the following pages describe the road features between MP 11.1 and MP 19.2.

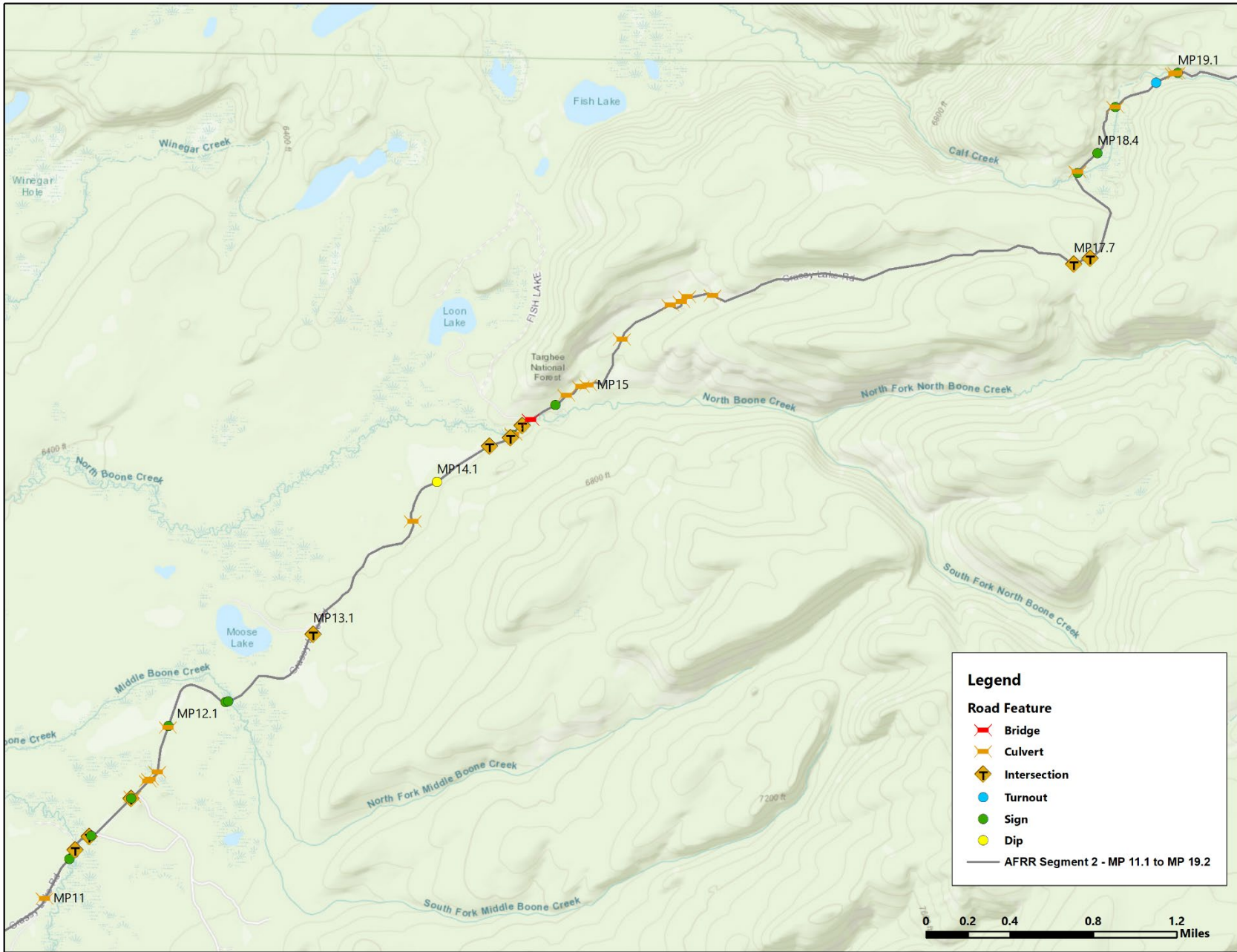


Figure 11: Road Features on AFRR Segment 2 – MP11.10 to MP 19.2

MP	Feature Type	Description	MP	Feature Type	Description
11.271	Sign	Warning (aluminum)	14.652	Intersection	
11.307	Sign	Warning (aluminum)	14.653	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)
11.324	Intersection		14.7	Bridge	
11.332	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)	14.84	Sign	Route Marker (aluminum)
11.429	Intersection		14.91	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 36x40
11.437	Sign	Warning (aluminum)	14.997	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
11.701	Intersection		15.035	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
11.702	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)	15.349	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 36x40
11.702	Sign	Route Marker (aluminum)	15.646	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 36x40
11.711	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	15.719	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 36x40
11.816	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 36x40	15.765	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
11.83	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 36x40	15.893	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
11.88	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	17.709	Intersection	
12.1	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	17.795	Intersection	
12.108	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)	18.307	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)
12.538	Sign	Route Marker (aluminum)	18.312	Culvert	Pipe-Arch (corrugated steel)
12.552	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)	18.312	Culvert	Pipe-Arch (corrugated steel)
13.129	Intersection		18.312	Culvert	Installation
13.903	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	18.443	Sign	Route Marker (aluminum)
14.155	Drainage	Str/Crossing - Dip	18.711	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 36x40
14.461	Intersection		18.711	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)
14.57	Intersection		18.946	Turnout	
14.588	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)	19.043	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
14.592	Culvert	Arch (structural steel plate)	19.057	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 36x40
14.592	Culvert	Arch (structural steel plate)	19.062	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)
14.592	Culvert	Installation			

Table 7: Road Features on AFRR Segment 2 - MP 11.1 to MP 19.2

### AFRR Segment 3: MP 19.2 to MP 24.6

The roadway width on the final segment of AFRR widens out to 22' to 26' and there is less horizontal and vertical curvature than Segment 2. The Grassy Lake Reservoir dam spillway is located near MP 21 (Figure 13) and there is a steep vertical climb to the east between MP 22.2 and MP 22.8 (Figure 12).



Figure 13: AFRR at Grassy Lake Reservoir (MP 22.5)

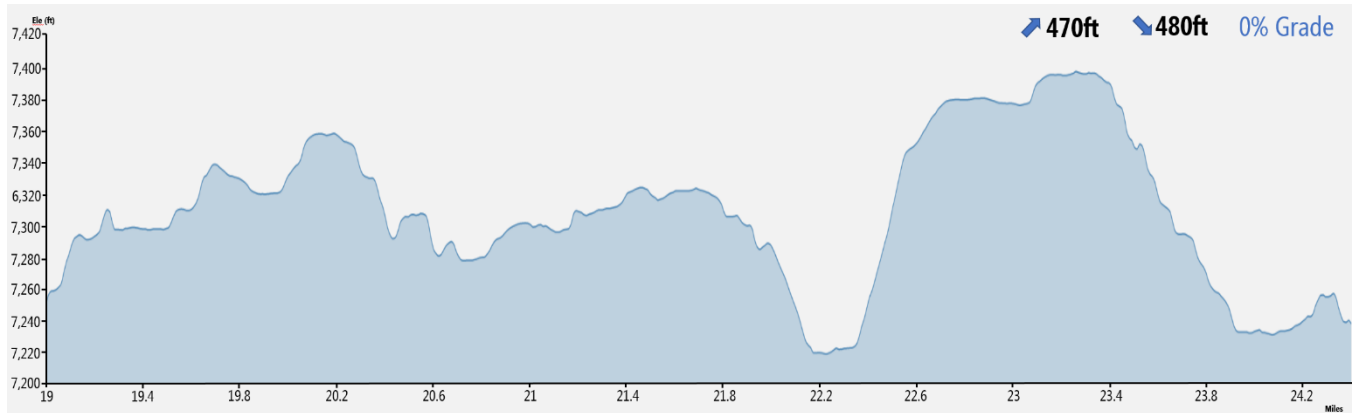


Figure 12: AFRR Segment 3 - MP 19.2 to MP 24.6 Elevation Profile

This segment has the same general management objective as Segment 2.

This segment of AFRR is characterized by the following road features:

- 17 intersections
- 3 turnouts
- 11 culverts
- 12 signs

Figure 14 below, and Table 6 on the following page, describe the road features between MP 19.2 and MP 24.6.

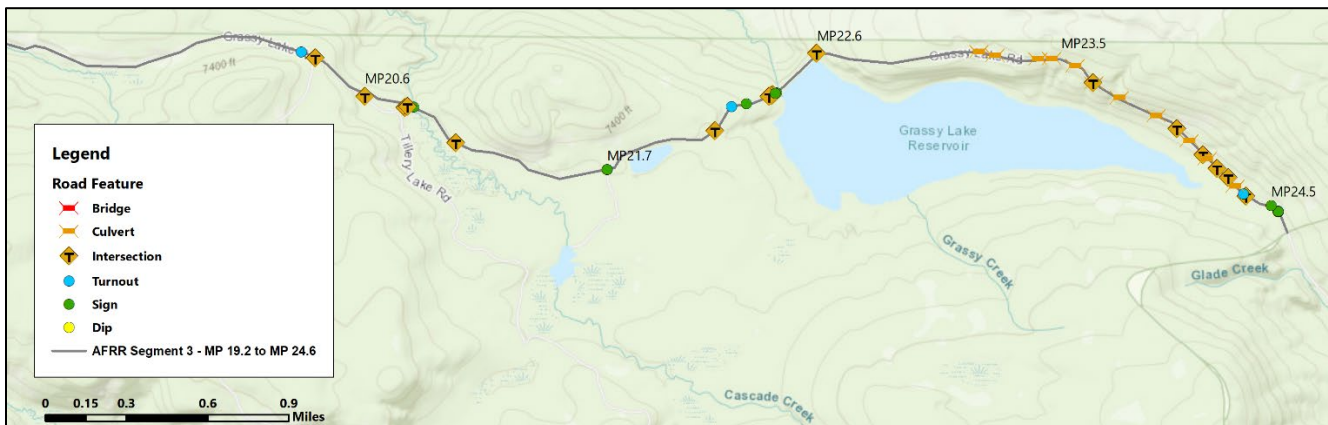


Figure 14: Road Features on AFRR Segment 2 – MP 19.2 to MP 24.6

MP	Feature Type	Description	MP	Feature Type	Description
20.39	Turnout		23.462	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
20.447	Intersection		23.512	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
20.449	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)	23.604	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
20.686	Intersection		23.696	Intersection	
20.86	Intersection		23.7	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
20.87	Intersection		23.809	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 36x40
20.893	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)	23.96	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
21.104	Intersection		24.051	Intersection	
21.696	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)	24.116	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
21.696	Sign	Route Marker (aluminum)	24.187	Intersection	
22.139	Intersection		24.209	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
22.247	Turnout		24.26	Intersection	
22.304	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)	24.314	Intersection	
22.392	Intersection		24.355	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34
22.4	Intersection		24.397	Turnout	
22.407	Intersection		24.409	Intersection	
22.417	Sign	Guide (hdo plywood)	24.51	Sign	Route Marker (aluminum)
22.422	Sign	Warning (aluminum)	24.541	Sign	Regulatory (aluminum)
22.632	Intersection		24.543	Sign	Route Marker (aluminum)
22.632	Intersection		24.545	Sign	Boundary (redwood)
23.24	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34	24.545	Sign	Boundary (redwood)
23.301	Culvert	Round Pipe (cmp - galvanized steel) 18x34			

Table 8: Road Features on AFRR Segment 2 - MP 19.2 to MP 24.6

## User Characteristics

### *Visitation and User Types*

The USFS collects descriptive information about recreational visits to National Forests and Grasslands through its National Visitor Use Monitoring Program (NVUMP). In addition to producing estimates on visitation, the NVUMP also provides useful statistics on activity participation, demographics, visit duration, measures of satisfaction, and trip spending connected to the visit. The most recent Visitor Use Report for the CTNF was prepared using data collected in Federal Fiscal Year 2020. For this year, the NVUMP estimates that approximately 2,230,000 people visited the CTNF. This information is aggregated to the National Forest level and isn't available at a smaller unit level (e.g., by Ranger District).

The top three visitor activities within the CTNF, according to the FY2020 NVUMP data, are hiking/walking, developed camping, and downhill skiing. While there are various developed sites within the CTNF that attract many visitors, AFRR has no developed recreation sites. The study area is still a destination for many users seeking a more remote, backcountry experience.

These uses include:

- Hiking and Backpacking – there are multiple trailheads located along AFRR that provide hiking access from CTNF into Yellowstone National Park
- Dispersed Camping – there are no developed campsites along AFRR; however, the CTNF allows dispersed camping within 300' of the road.
- Camp Loll Boy Scout Camp – this site experiences consistent use, with visitors traveling from both Idaho and Wyoming
- Gravel Biking, including E-Biking – there are a few organized bicycling events that take place on AFRR every year
- Wagon Trail Tours – A local business has provided wagon rides along AFRR for over 70 years. The tour begins just west of the ID/WY state line and travels to Grassy Lake
- Snowmobiling – AFRR is a popular snowmobile route and Fremont County, ID grooms the road from the western CTNF boundary out to Grassy Lake



Figure 15: Summer Uses along AFRR. From Left to Right: Wagon Trail Tours, Bicycle Tours, and Camp Loll Boy Scout Camp

## Traffic Conditions

The CTNF does not collect regular traffic counts for AFRR. Forest Service staff estimate that approximately 400 vehicles travel on the corridor during the peak summer season when the road is open to thru-traffic. The corridor is a low-volume road, but the Forest Service has observed slightly higher use and traffic in recent years. AFRR also experiences higher use during the summer season.

The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) and Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) collect annual traffic counts for roadways on their respective systems. In both states, average annual daily traffic volumes (AADT) on the state-owned road network have steadily increased over the past decade. US 20, the north-south route that connects West Yellowstone, MT to Ashton, ID, had an AADT of approximately 3,450 in 2012. By 2021, this number had grown to approximately 6,100 (representing a roughly 75% increase in AADT). Other road segments near AFRR experienced similar growth. AADT on E 1200 Road, the local road that connects US 20 to AFRR, grew from 100 vehicles in 2012 to 490 vehicles in 2021.

In Wyoming, AADT on US 101 between West Yellowstone, MT and the south Yellowstone National Park entrance grew from 510 to 6,590 vehicles per day. Traffic volumes south of Yellowstone along US 101 also grew, but at a lesser rate. Figure 17 depicts the 10-year change in AADT in eastern Idaho and western Wyoming.

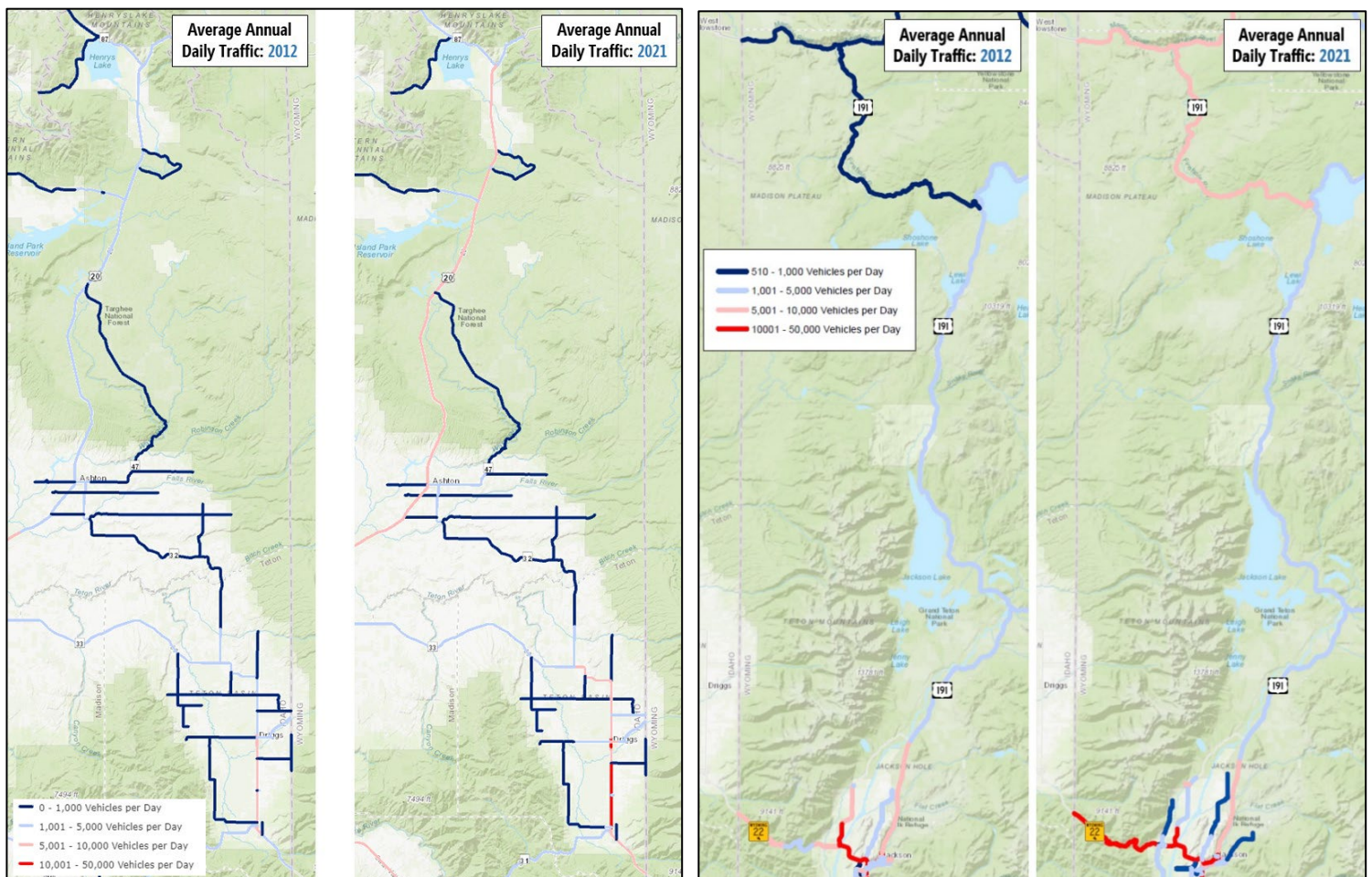


Figure 16: AADT Change in Eastern Idaho & Western Wyoming - 2012 to 2021



### **Safety Conditions**

For AFRR, the Forest Service does not have any reported crashes for the corridor nor any anecdotal summaries of crashes along the corridor. Road material and traction can be a concern, especially in wet or snow conditions. Sight distance can be limited due to vegetation, curvature and cut slopes. There are not many wider areas or turnouts for people to pull off and the narrow roadway makes it difficult to pass if needed (see Figure 18).

### **Environmental Setting**

#### **Water Resources**

The study area corridor lies within the Boone Creek, Calf Creek-Fall River, Squirrel Creek, and Tule Lake-Fall River watersheds. There are many smaller stream crossings across the 24.5 mile roadway. The road corridor passes by numerous lakes, ponds and reservoirs, including: Indian Lake, Bergman Reservoir, Moose Lake, Loon Lake, Fish Lake, Lake of the Woods, and Grassy Lake

Wetlands receive substantial protection through federal, state, and local policies and statutes. Among these are the Clean Water Act and the Forest Service Aquatic Conservation Strategy. At the state level, projects that require federal licenses or permits and that may involve the discharge of dredge or fill material into wetlands are subject to a water quality certification. All of these review and permitting processes typically result in the implementation of measures designed to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse effects on wetlands.

National Wetlands Inventory mapping data from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) indicates that wetlands are present throughout the study area (see Appendix A). National Wetlands Inventory maps are prepared from the analysis of high-altitude imagery and are not sufficiently accurate or detailed for project-level wetland determination and/or delineation. Detailed on-the-ground inspection of any particular site may result in revision of the wetland boundaries or classification established through image analysis, as well as the identification of previously unmapped wetlands.

#### **Floodplains**

Presidential Executive Order 11988, dated May 24, 1977, directs federal agencies to avoid to the extent possible adverse impacts associated with floodplains and to avoid direct or indirect support of development in the floodplain.

Several segments of the Ashton Flagg Ranch Road cross or lie within mapped 100-year floodplains. Any improvements that place fill within the regulatory floodplain will require permits from agencies with permitting authority; the specific agencies and permits would depend on the location and nature of the specific project.



*Figure 17: Passing Vehicles on AFRR, July 2022*

## Fish and Wildlife

The study area provides breeding, resting, foraging, and migratory habitat for many species of fish and wildlife. This section provides general descriptions of fish and wildlife species and habitat in the study area, along with regulatory provisions that are not directed at individual species.

The vegetation in the study area provides habitat for a diverse array of wildlife species. The low level of human development in the study area also enhances the quality of habitat for many wildlife species. Streams and other waterbodies in the study area provide habitat for many species of fish.

The *National Forest Management Act of 1976* specifies that projects, activities, permits, contracts, and uses of NFS lands must provide for the diversity of plant and animal communities based on the suitability and capability of the specific land area. *Department of Agriculture Regulation 9500-4* directs the Forest Service to manage habitats for all existing native and desired non-native species of fish and wildlife to maintain viable populations of these species.

### Threatened and Endangered Species

Section 7(a)(2) of the *Endangered Species Act of 1973*, as amended, requires federal agencies to review actions they authorize, fund, or carry out, and to ensure such actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of federally listed species, or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat. Several species of wildlife that are known or expected to use habitats in the study area are listed or proposed for listing under the ESA (Table 8). Any improvements would need to undergo review for compliance with the provisions of the ESA. The listing status of species and critical habitat can change over time; therefore, an up-to-date list of potentially affected species and critical habitats should be reviewed for each project. Species listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA are listed below:

Species	Listing Status	Critical Habitat Status
<b>Canada Lynx (<i>lynx canadensis</i>)</b>	Threatened	There are no critical habitats at this location
<b>Grizzly Bear (<i>ursus arctos horribilis</i>)</b>	Threatened	There are no critical habitats at this location
<b>North American Wolverine (<i>gulo gulo luscus</i>)</b>	Proposed Threatened	There are no critical habitats at this location
<b>Yellow-billed Cuckoo (<i>coccyzus americanus</i>)</b>	Threatened	There are no critical habitats at this location
<b>Monarch Butterfly (<i>Danaus plexippus</i>)</b>	Candidate	No critical habitat has been designated for this species

For more information, see the US Fish and Wildlife Service IPaC report included as Appendix B.

In addition to meeting requirements relating to ESA-listed species and designated critical habitat, any projects would need to comply with Forest Service management policies and projects on NFS lands in the study area must also comply with the standards and guidelines for the management of certain rare or uncommon species, called survey and manage species. These standards and guidelines specify the protection of sites known to support these species, as well as requiring pre-disturbance surveys for some species.

Forest Service policy (Forest Service Manual 2670.3) requires the protection of habitat for USFWS

species of concern, Forest Service sensitive species, and management indicator species from adverse modification or destruction, as well as the protection of individual animals from harm or harassment as appropriate.

The entire study area is within grizzly bear management unit.

EO 13186, dated January 17, 2001, directs federal agencies to avoid or minimize negative impacts of their actions on migratory birds, and to take active steps to protect birds and their habitat. In response to this order, the Forest Service has implemented management guidelines specifying that migratory birds must be addressed in NEPA reviews of actions with the potential to affect migratory birds. The Forest Service must evaluate the effects of agency actions on migratory birds, focusing first on species of management concern along with their priority habitats and key risk factors.

### Vegetation

Native vegetation for the study area is typical for the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem. Data from the 2016 National Land Cover Database indicate that coniferous forest, shrub, and wetlands are the predominant land cover type adjacent to AFRR (Figure 19).



Figure 18: AFRR Landcover (Source: 2016 NLCD)

Two species listed or proposed listed under the ESA are potentially found in the study area:

Species	Listing Status	Critical Habitat Status
<b>Ute Ladies'-tresses (<i>spiranthes diluvialis</i>)</b>	Threatened	No critical habitat has been designated for this species
<b>Whitebark Pine (<i>pinus albicaulis</i>)</b>	Proposed Threatened	No critical habitat has been designated for this species

### Cultural and Historic Resources

The National Historic Preservation Act (16 USC 470) is the primary federal law governing the preservation of cultural and historic resources in the United States. This Act established a national preservation program and the basic structure for encouraging the identification and protection of cultural and historic resources of national, state, tribal, and local significance. A key element of the preservation program is the NRHP, which is the federal list of historic, archaeological, and other cultural

resources deemed worthy of preservation. In the study area, the National Register is administered by the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Wyoming SHPO. Resources listed, or determined eligible for listing, are considered historic properties. Section 106 of the *National Historic Preservation Act* requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their undertakings (including funding, licensing, or permitting the undertakings of other entities) on historic properties and stipulates that affected American Indian tribes must be consulted. The implementing regulations of Section 106 also require agencies to seek ways of avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating any adverse effects on historic properties. Such properties are also generally afforded protection under Section 4(f) of the *U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966*.

To comply with these regulations and with NEPA, agencies must consider the effects of proposed projects on previously identified resources as well as resources not yet identified. In addition, in accordance with the Archaeological Sites and Resources Act (RCW 27.53) and the Indian Graves and Records Act (RCW 27.44), a permit must be obtained from SHPO before any excavation that will alter, dig into, deface, or remove archaeological resources; including American Indian graves, cairns, or glyptic records. The State Historic Preservation Officer reviews and comments on archaeological surveys performed on site and makes determinations regarding eligibility and effect.

In addition, U.S. Government agencies have a permanent legal obligation to exercise statutory and other legal authorities to protect tribal land, assets, resources, and treaty rights, as well as a duty to carry out the mandates of federal law with respect to American Indian and Alaska Native tribes. The study area is within the usual and accustomed lands of several American Indian tribes, including the Shoshone-Bannock and Nez Perce tribes.

### ***Wilderness Areas***

Federally designated wilderness areas receive the government's highest level of land protection and is included as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. The Wilderness Act of 1964 states *"In order to assure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition, it is hereby declared to be the policy of the Congress to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness."*

The CTNF is home to two small but significant wilderness areas, shown in Figure 20. The 123,451-acre Jedediah Smith Wilderness was designated in 1984 due to its unique karst limestone geology. The much smaller Winegar Hole Wilderness (10,721 acres) was also designated in 1984 and set aside to provide high quality habitat for grizzly bears. Every year from March 15<sup>th</sup> to July 1<sup>st</sup>, the National Park Service closes AFRR at the National Park/US Forest Service boundary to reduce user conflicts with grizzly bears.

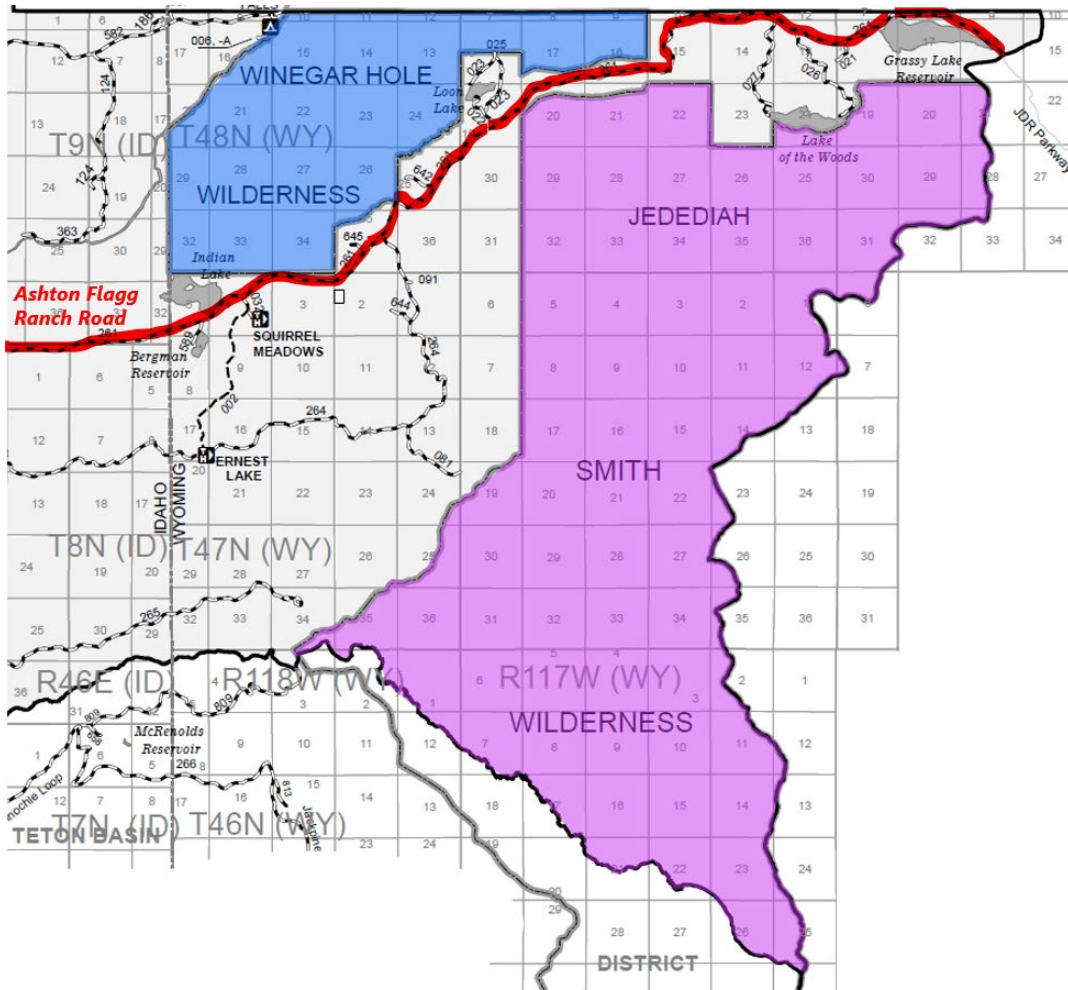


Figure 19: CTNF Motor Vehicle Use Map - Wilderness Areas

## Summer 2022 Site Visit Field Observations

In July 2022, a project team consisting of engineers and planners from the USFS and FHWA met in Ashton, ID to tour the AFRR study area corridor. The site visit goals were to:

- Observe summer visitation and user behaviors;
- Document at a high level the existing conditions and potential risk areas/challenges for improving the roadway; and
- Understand issues of importance to the CTNF in planning for and managing the corridor;

During the corridor tour, FHWA collected field data on asset conditions and observed issues/vulnerabilities (e.g., limited sight distance, potholing, drainage, etc.) that may impact future road design, maintenance, and repair work. The following sections describe some of these deficiencies.

### **Drainage/Erosion**

Improper drainage on a roadway can lead to erosion issues. Across AFRR, there was evidence of heavy water runoff and ponding in and along the road, especially between MP 12.5 and MP 19.5 (see Figure 21). Low spots and evidence of water damage/heavy runoff were documented and mapped during the site visit and are presented in Figure 22. There are many 18" cross-drains located throughout the corridor. Additionally, AFRR has many small culverts and 3 bridges in place to divert water away from the roadway.



Figure 20: Evidence of water runoff chutes at MP 17.0 during July 2022 Site Visit

### **Geotechnical**

On the eastern portion of AFRR, there are significant cut sections and bedrock that may be constraints to modifying the roadway. The most challenging section of AFRR to travel across is between MP 14.7 and 16.5, due to horizontal and vertical curvatures and the existing bedrock. During the site visit, Forest Service staff noted that their road crew has occasionally used a mobile rock crusher to mill down this section of AFRR.



Figure 21: Observed Deficiencies on AFRR Between MP 12.8 and MP 24.5

### Data Gaps

This report was prepared using available data sources. To develop a more robust understanding of conditions, use, and risks on AFRR, the USFS should consider addressing the following data gaps:

- Regional origin-destination data
- Alignment (vertical and horizontal) data to analyze curves
- Culvert assessments
- Safety risk factors
- Annual visitation
- Environmental scan

## CONCLUSION

This Phase 1 Corridor Study evaluated the Ashton-Flagg Ranch Road to gain a better understanding of existing conditions, constraints, and opportunities for future maintenance and safety improvements needed to bring Forest Service Road #261 up to objective maintenance and service levels. Currently, the 24.5-mile road within the larger 47 mile corridor functions as a low-volume Forest connector for high clearance and standard passenger vehicles, offering a typical gravel and dirt road experience through the more remote quarter of the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. Traffic conditions on the larger regional highway system and visitation to public lands in eastern Idaho and western Wyoming suggest continued growth and increased summer seasonal demand throughout the AFRR corridor. With limited east-west connections over the Teton mountains to Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, the AFRR's location and current use as an alternate public land access route necessitates a closer study of options and consideration within long-term transportation plans.

### Next Steps

This report provides a summary of current conditions and has identified high-level needs that may be addressed through various highway funding opportunities that may include, but are not limited to, the Forest Service Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), FHWA Federal Land Access Program (FLAP), or the Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP) Program. If major improvements or a significant inter-state transportation project were to be considered, a comprehensive multi-agency Corridor Master Plan could be initiated to further:

- Define the desired future conditions and vision for AFRR
- Engage key stakeholders and partners during the planning process
- Clearly articulate transportation demands, user expectation, and public needs
- Identify alternatives and refine specific projects that address those long-term needs.

### *Partners and Stakeholders*

Future AFRR corridor planning, if initiated by the USFS and partner agencies, would include coordination and engagement with interested community partners and key stakeholders. Table 9 on the following page includes an initial list of entities that the USFS should consider engaging with during the next phase of corridor planning. This initial list is illustrative and may grow to include additional interested parties. These stakeholders are divided into three groups: public agencies, tribes, and other critical stakeholders. In Phase 2, it will be important for the USFS to develop an outreach strategy that is tailored to specific audiences, depending on their level of knowledge, level of interest, and awareness of both the planning process and the role of transportation.

Goals for engaging with public, tribal, and other critical stakeholders include:

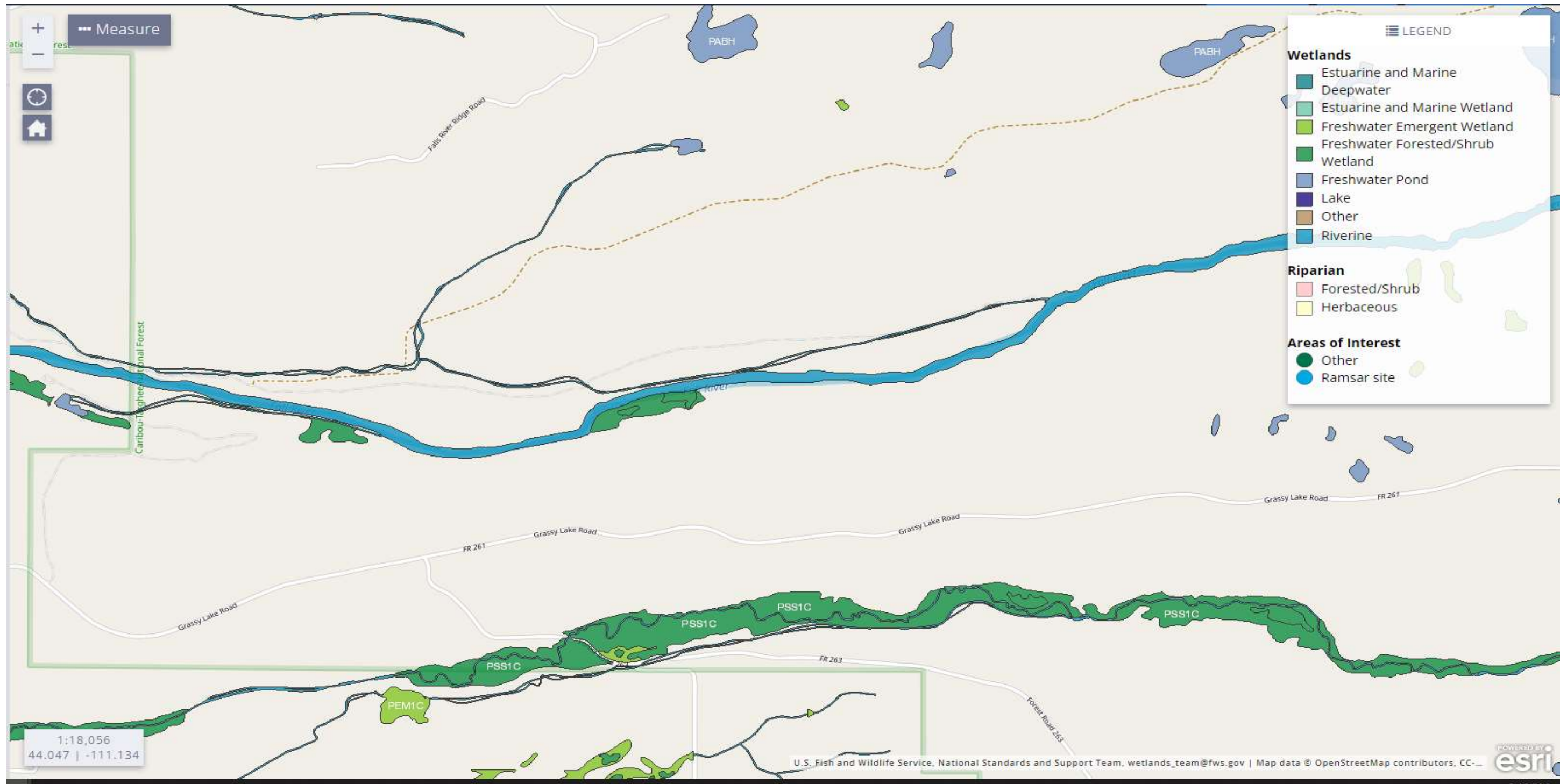
- Establishing open lines of communication
- Soliciting input early and often from those who are interested in informing the development and implementation of corridor management and improvement decisions
- Providing opportunities for all interested parties to express concerns, priorities, and ideas
- Strengthening existing partnerships and forging new ones
- Reaching potential users that may be impacted by study recommendations



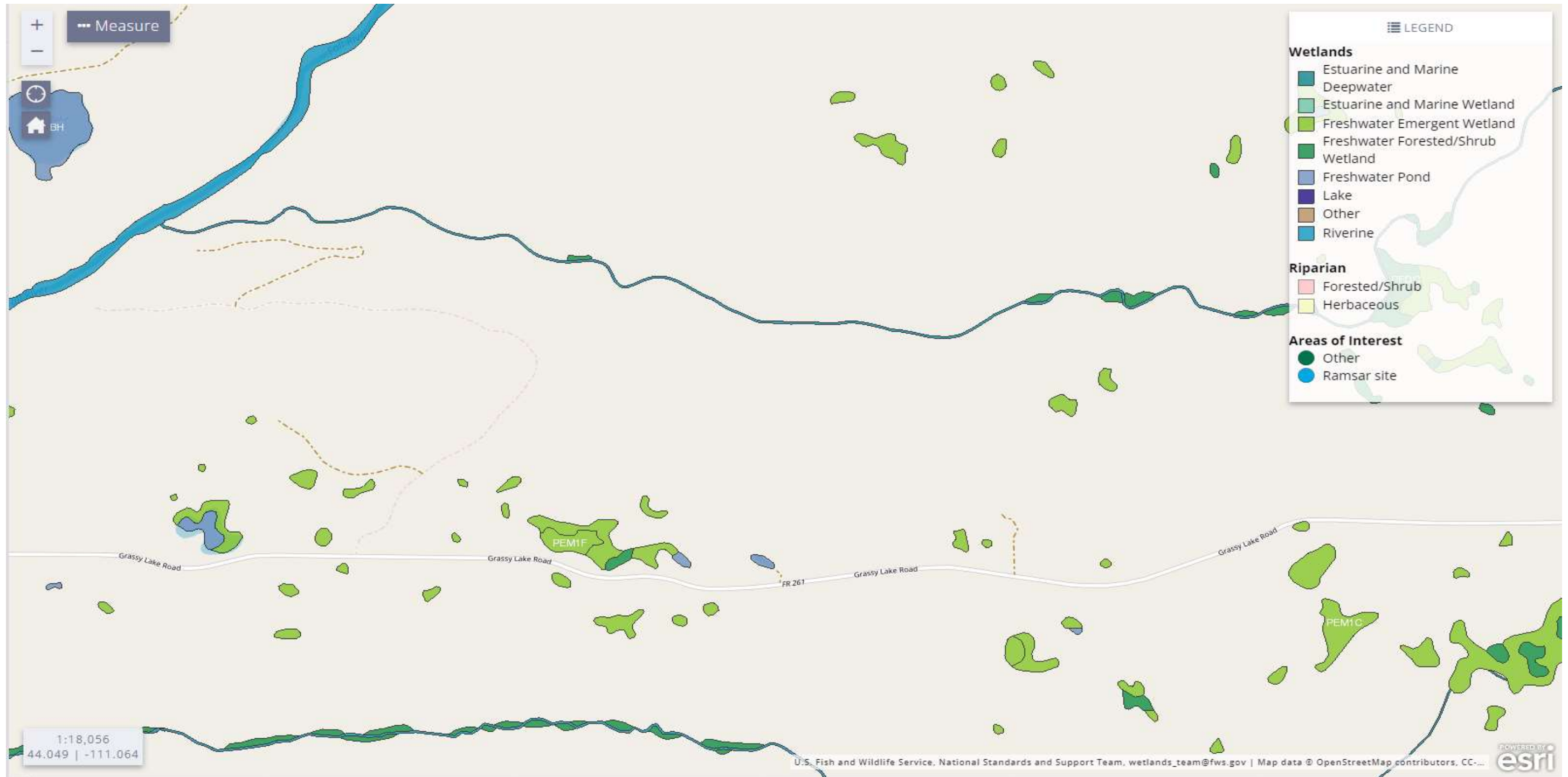
<b>Organizations</b>	
<b>Public Agencies</b>	<p><b>Federal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bureau of Reclamation, USDOl</li> <li>• Federal Highway Administration, USDOT</li> <li>• National Park Service (GTNP/YNP),USDOl</li> </ul> <p><b>State</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Idaho Transportation Department</li> <li>• Wyoming Department of Transportation</li> </ul> <p><b>Local</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ashton, ID</li> <li>• Fremont County, ID</li> <li>• Teton County, WY</li> </ul>
<b>Tribes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shoshone-Bannock Tribes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ And others</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Other Critical Stakeholders</b>	<p><b>Private</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flagg Ranch Businesses</li> <li>• Teton Wagon Train &amp; Horse Adventure</li> <li>• Brigham Young University</li> </ul> <p><b>Non-Profit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boy Scouts of America – Camp Loll</li> <li>• Greater Yellowstone Coalition</li> </ul> <p><b>Other</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Public</li> </ul>

*Table 10: Initial List of Community Partners and Key Stakeholders*

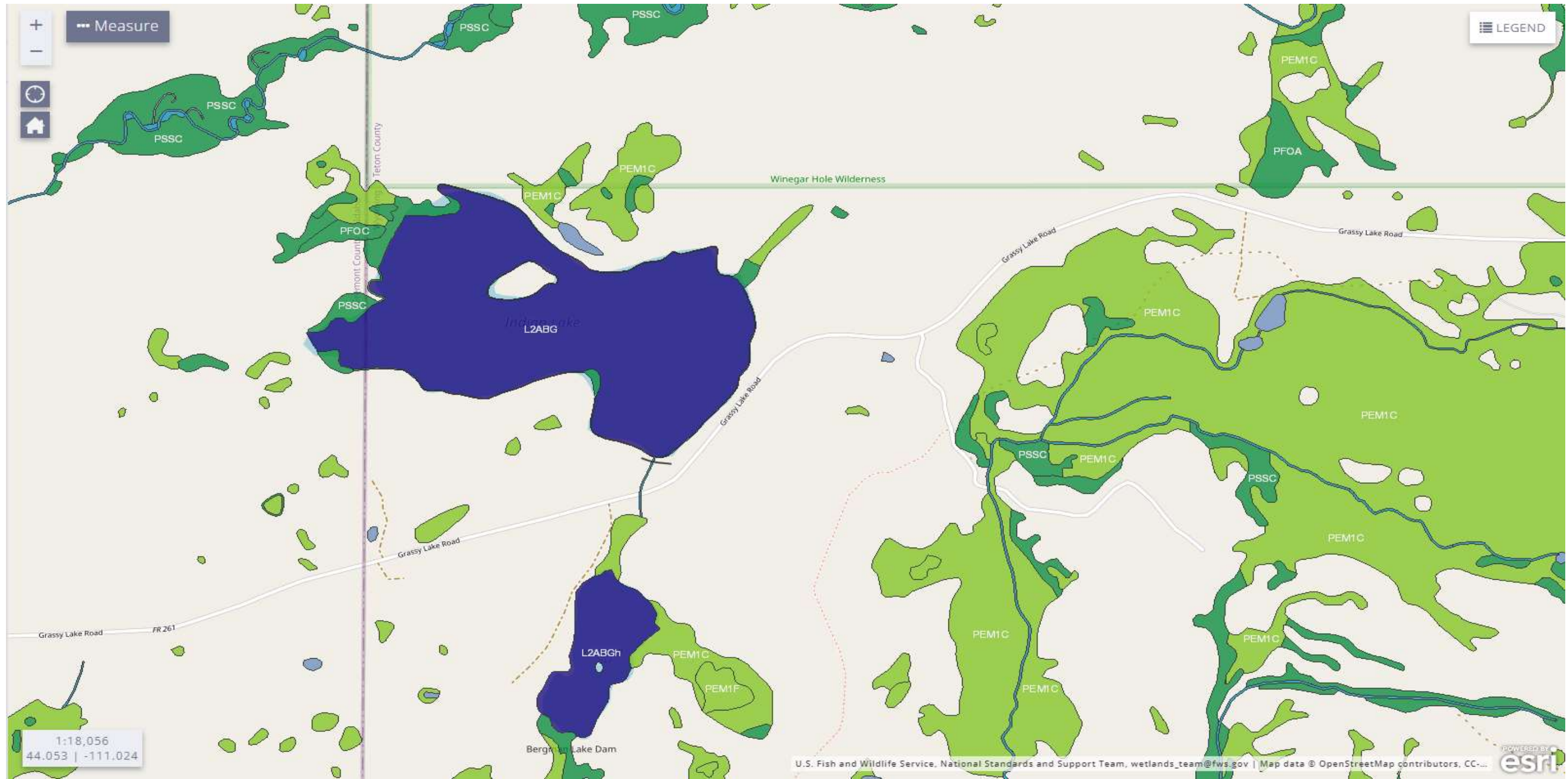




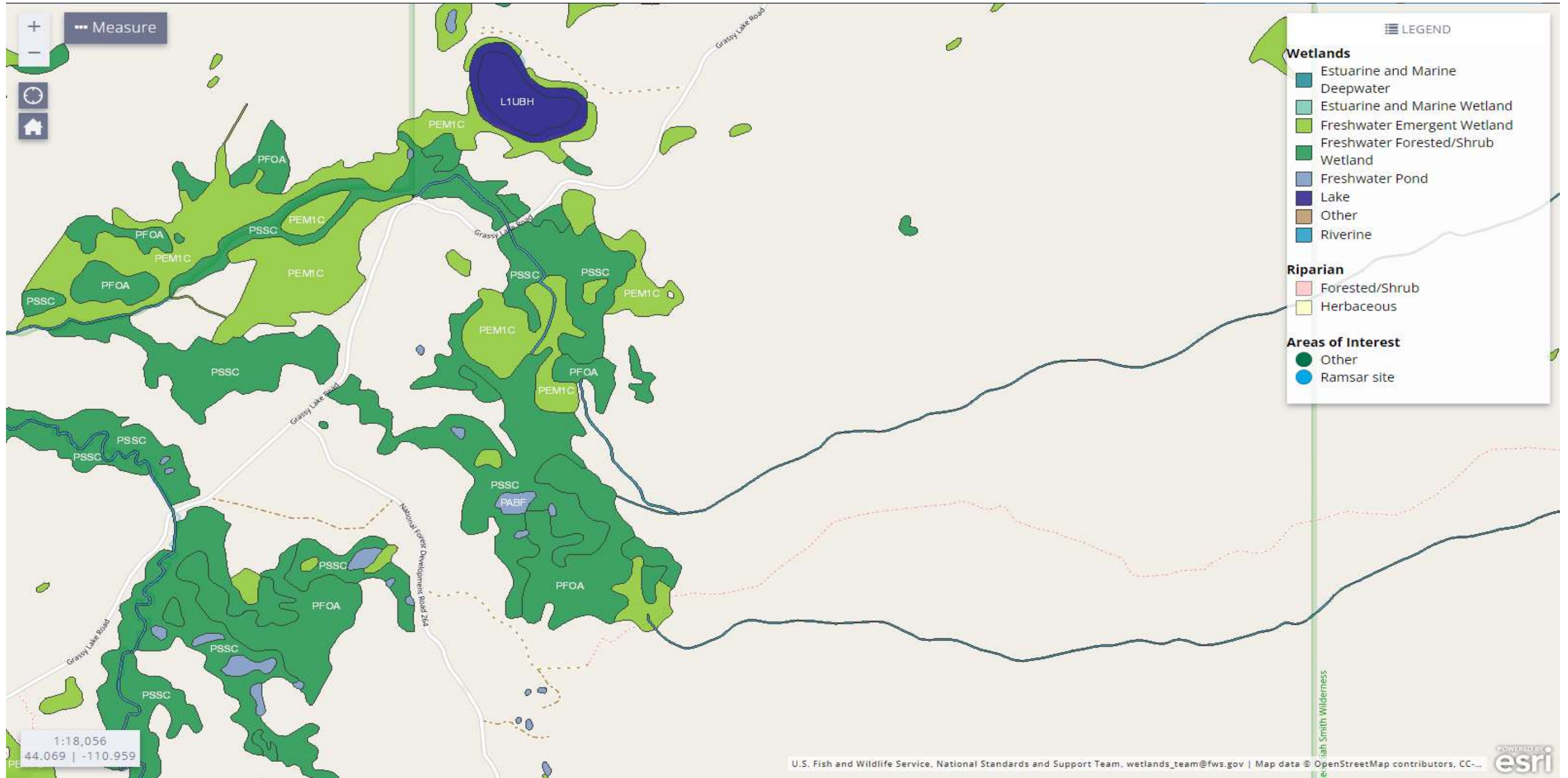
AFRR Segment 1 of 7



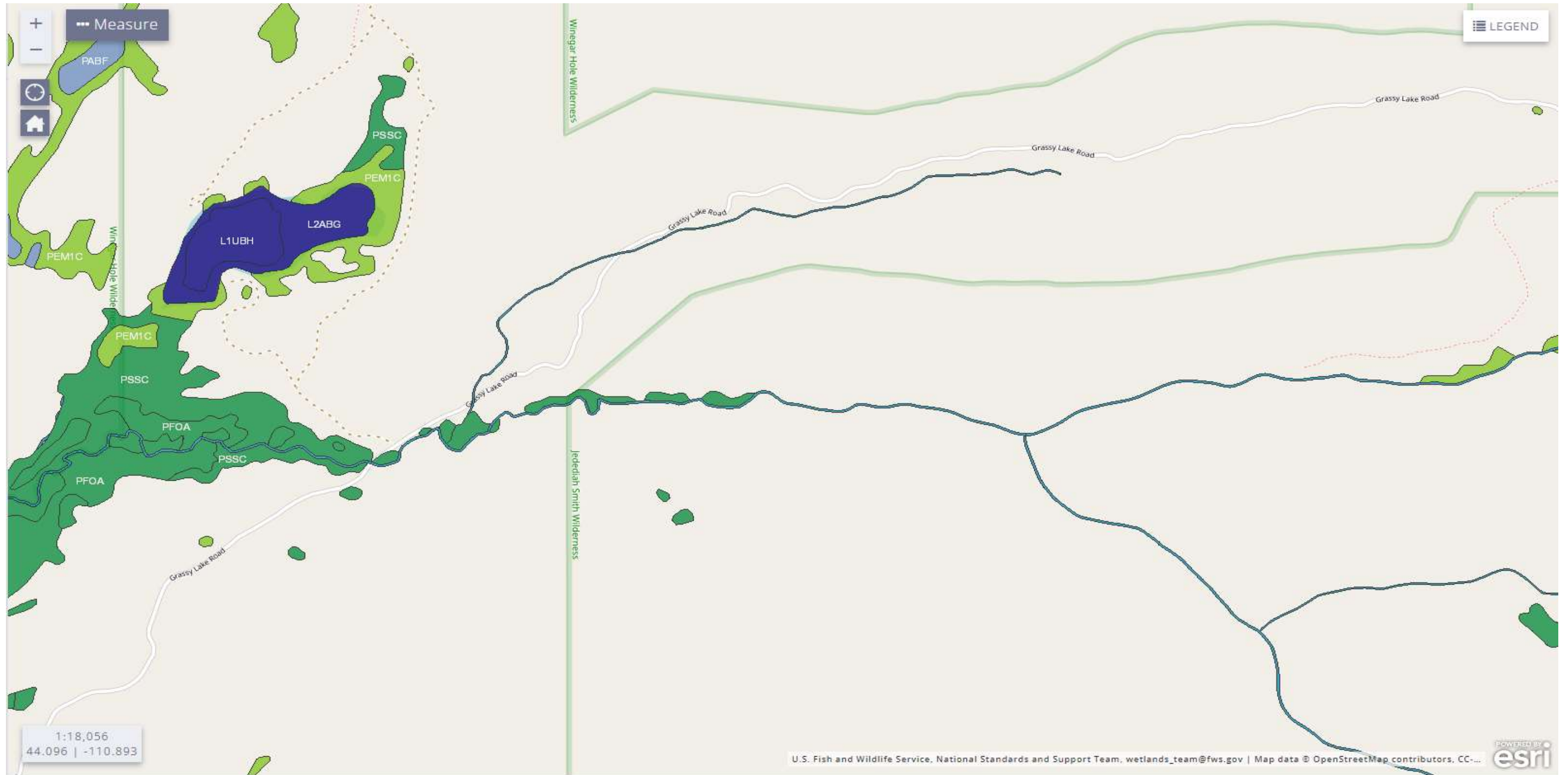
AFRR Segment 2 of 7



AFRR Segment 3 of 7



AFRR Segment 4 of 7



AFRR Segment 5 of 7







AFRR Segment 7 of 7



# IPaC resource list

This report is an automatically generated list of species and other resources such as critical habitat (collectively referred to as *trust resources*) under the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) jurisdiction that are known or expected to be on or near the project area referenced below. The list may also include trust resources that occur outside of the project area, but that could potentially be directly or indirectly affected by activities in the project area. However, determining the likelihood and extent of effects a project may have on trust resources typically requires gathering additional site-specific (e.g., vegetation/species surveys) and project-specific (e.g., magnitude and timing of proposed activities) information.

Below is a summary of the project information you provided and contact information for the USFWS office(s) with jurisdiction in the defined project area. Please read the introduction to each section that follows (Endangered Species, Migratory Birds, USFWS Facilities, and NWI Wetlands) for additional information applicable to the trust resources addressed in that section.

## Location

Idaho and Wyoming



## Local offices

Wyoming Ecological Services Field Office

☎ (307) 772-2374

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NOT FOR CONSULTATION

# Endangered species

**This resource list is for informational purposes only and does not constitute an analysis of project level impacts.**

The primary information used to generate this list is the known or expected range of each species. Additional areas of influence (AOI) for species are also considered. An AOI includes areas outside of the species range if the species could be indirectly affected by activities in that area (e.g., placing a dam upstream of a fish population even if that fish does not occur at the dam site, may indirectly impact the species by reducing or eliminating water flow downstream). Because species can move, and site conditions can change, the species on this list are not guaranteed to be found on or near the project area. To fully determine any potential effects to species, additional site-specific and project-specific information is often required.

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act **requires** Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of such proposed action" for any project that is conducted, permitted, funded, or licensed by any Federal agency. A letter from the local office and a species list which fulfills this requirement can **only** be obtained by requesting an official species list from either the Regulatory Review section in IPaC (see directions below) or from the local field office directly.

For project evaluations that require USFWS concurrence/review, please return to the IPaC website and request an official species list by doing the following:

1. Draw the project location and click CONTINUE.
2. Click DEFINE PROJECT.
3. Log in (if directed to do so).
4. Provide a name and description for your project.
5. Click REQUEST SPECIES LIST.

Listed species<sup>1</sup> and their critical habitats are managed by the [Ecological Services Program](#) of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the fisheries division of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA Fisheries<sup>2</sup>).

Species and critical habitats under the sole responsibility of NOAA Fisheries are **not** shown on this list. Please contact [NOAA Fisheries](#) for [species under their jurisdiction](#).

1. Species listed under the [Endangered Species Act](#) are threatened or endangered; IPaC also shows species that are candidates, or proposed, for listing. See the [listing status page](#) for more information. IPaC only shows species that are regulated by USFWS (see FAQ).
2. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

The following species are potentially affected by activities in this location:

## Mammals

NAME	STATUS
<p>Canada Lynx <i>Lynx canadensis</i></p> <p>There is <b>final</b> critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat.</p> <p><a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3652">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3652</a></p>	Threatened
<p>Grizzly Bear <i>Ursus arctos horribilis</i></p> <p>There is <b>proposed</b> critical habitat for this species.</p> <p><a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7642">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7642</a></p>	Threatened
<p>North American Wolverine <i>Gulo gulo luscus</i></p> <p>Wherever found</p> <p>No critical habitat has been designated for this species.</p> <p><a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5123">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5123</a></p>	Proposed Threatened

## Birds

NAME	STATUS
<p>Yellow-billed Cuckoo <i>Coccyzus americanus</i></p> <p>There is <b>final</b> critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat.</p> <p><a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3911">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3911</a></p>	Threatened

## Insects

NAME	STATUS
<p>Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i></p> <p>Wherever found</p> <p>No critical habitat has been designated for this species.</p> <p><a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743</a></p>	Candidate

## Flowering Plants

NAME	STATUS
<p>Ute Ladies'-tresses <i>Spiranthes diluvialis</i></p> <p>Wherever found</p> <p>No critical habitat has been designated for this species.</p> <p><a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/2159">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/2159</a></p>	Threatened

## Conifers and Cycads

NAME	STATUS
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Wherever found

No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

<https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1748>

## Critical habitats

Potential effects to critical habitat(s) in this location must be analyzed along with the endangered species themselves.

There are no critical habitats at this location.

## Migratory birds

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act<sup>1</sup> and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act<sup>2</sup>.

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described [below](#).

1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.

Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Birds of Conservation Concern <https://www.fws.gov/program/migratory-birds/species>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>

The birds listed below are birds of particular concern either because they occur on the [USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern](#) (BCC) list or warrant special attention in your project location. To learn more about the levels of concern for birds on your list and how this list is generated, see the FAQ [below](#). This is not a list of every bird you may find in this location, nor a guarantee that every bird on this list will be found in your project area. To see exact locations of where birders and the general public have sighted birds in and around your project area, visit the [E-bird data mapping tool](#) (Tip: enter your location, desired date range and a species on your list). For projects that occur off the Atlantic Coast, additional maps and models detailing the relative occurrence and abundance of bird species on your list are available. Links to additional information about Atlantic Coast birds, and other important information about your migratory bird list, including how to properly interpret and use your migratory bird report, can be found [below](#).

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, click on the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY at the top of your list to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
<b>Bald Eagle</b> <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities.	Breeds Jan 1 to Aug 31
<b>California Gull</b> <i>Larus californicus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.	Breeds Mar 1 to Jul 31
<b>Cassin's Finch</b> <i>Carpodacus cassinii</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9462">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9462</a>	Breeds May 15 to Jul 15
<b>Evening Grosbeak</b> <i>Coccothraustes vespertinus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.	Breeds May 15 to Aug 10
<b>Golden Eagle</b> <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities. <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1680">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1680</a>	Breeds Jan 1 to Aug 31
<b>Olive-sided Flycatcher</b> <i>Contopus cooperi</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3914">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3914</a>	Breeds May 20 to Aug 31
<b>Rufous Hummingbird</b> <i>selasphorus rufus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8002">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8002</a>	Breeds Apr 15 to Jul 15

## Probability of Presence Summary

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read and understand the FAQ "Proper



Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

### Probability of Presence (■)

Each green bar represents the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during a particular week of the year. (A year is represented as 12 4-week months.) A taller bar indicates a higher probability of species presence. The survey effort (see below) can be used to establish a level of confidence in the presence score. One can have higher confidence in the presence score if the corresponding survey effort is also high.

How is the probability of presence score calculated? The calculation is done in three steps:

1. The probability of presence for each week is calculated as the number of survey events in the week where the species was detected divided by the total number of survey events for that week. For example, if in week 12 there were 20 survey events and the Spotted Towhee was found in 5 of them, the probability of presence of the Spotted Towhee in week 12 is 0.25.
2. To properly present the pattern of presence across the year, the relative probability of presence is calculated. This is the probability of presence divided by the maximum probability of presence across all weeks. For example, imagine the probability of presence in week 20 for the Spotted Towhee is 0.05, and that the probability of presence at week 12 (0.25) is the maximum of any week of the year. The relative probability of presence on week 12 is  $0.25/0.25 = 1$ ; at week 20 it is  $0.05/0.25 = 0.2$ .
3. The relative probability of presence calculated in the previous step undergoes a statistical conversion so that all possible values fall between 0 and 10, inclusive. This is the probability of presence score.

To see a bar's probability of presence score, simply hover your mouse cursor over the bar.

### Breeding Season (■)

Yellow bars denote a very liberal estimate of the time-frame inside which the bird breeds across its entire range. If there are no yellow bars shown for a bird, it does not breed in your project area.

### Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines superimposed on probability of presence bars indicate the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps. The number of surveys is expressed as a range, for example, 33 to 64 surveys.

To see a bar's survey effort range, simply hover your mouse cursor over the bar.

### No Data (—)

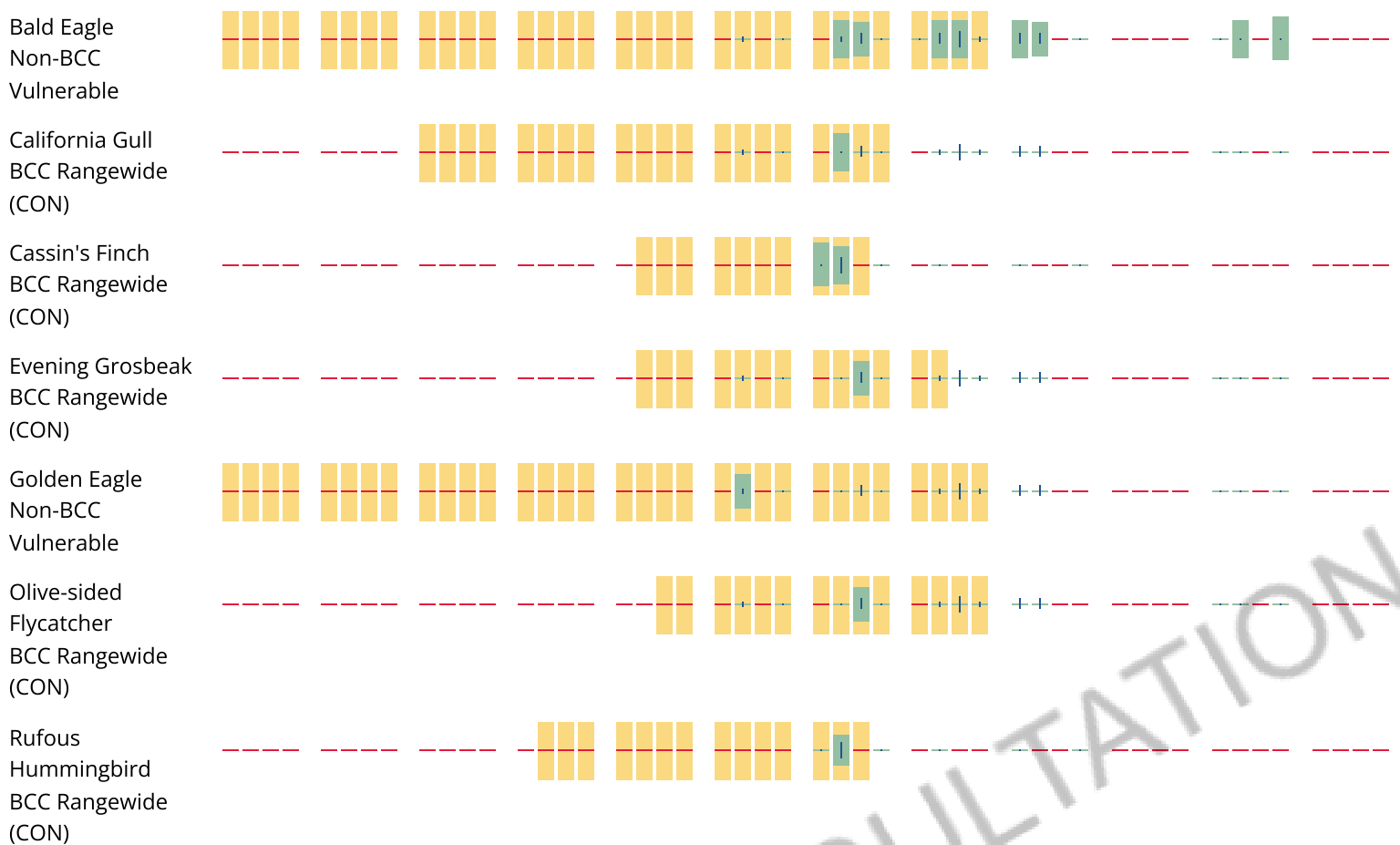
A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.

### Survey Timeframe

Surveys from only the last 10 years are used in order to ensure delivery of currently relevant information. The exception to this is areas off the Atlantic coast, where bird returns are based on all years of available data, since data in these areas is currently much more sparse.

■ probability of presence ■ breeding season | survey effort — no data

SPECIES JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



**Tell me more about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds.**

[Nationwide Conservation Measures](#) describes measures that can help avoid and minimize impacts to all birds at any location year round. Implementation of these measures is particularly important when birds are most likely to occur in the project area. When birds may be breeding in the area, identifying the locations of any active nests and avoiding their destruction is a very helpful impact minimization measure. To see when birds are most likely to occur and be breeding in your project area, view the Probability of Presence Summary. [Additional measures](#) or [permits](#) may be advisable depending on the type of activity you are conducting and the type of infrastructure or bird species present on your project site.

**What does IPaC use to generate the list of migratory birds that potentially occur in my specified location?**

The Migratory Bird Resource List is comprised of USFWS [Birds of Conservation Concern \(BCC\)](#) and other species that may warrant special attention in your project location.

The migratory bird list generated for your project is derived from data provided by the [Avian Knowledge Network \(AKN\)](#). The AKN data is based on a growing collection of [survey, banding, and citizen science datasets](#) and is queried and filtered to return a list of those birds reported as occurring in the 10km grid cell(s) which your project intersects, and that have been identified as warranting special attention because they are a BCC species in that area, an eagle ([Eagle Act](#) requirements may apply), or a species that has a particular vulnerability to offshore activities or development.

Again, the Migratory Bird Resource list includes only a subset of birds that may occur in your project area. It is not representative of all birds that may occur in your project area. To get a list of all birds potentially present in your project area, please visit the [Rapid Avian Information Locator \(RAIL\) Tool](#).

**What does IPaC use to generate the probability of presence graphs for the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location?**

The probability of presence graphs associated with your migratory bird list are based on data provided by the [Avian Knowledge Network \(AKN\)](#). This data is derived from a growing collection of [survey, banding, and citizen science datasets](#).

Probability of presence data is continuously being updated as new and better information becomes available. To learn more about how the probability of presence graphs are produced and how to interpret them, go the Probability of Presence Summary and then click on the "Tell me about these graphs" link.

### How do I know if a bird is breeding, wintering or migrating in my area?

To see what part of a particular bird's range your project area falls within (i.e. breeding, wintering, migrating or year-round), you may query your location using the [RAIL Tool](#) and look at the range maps provided for birds in your area at the bottom of the profiles provided for each bird in your results. If a bird on your migratory bird species list has a breeding season associated with it, if that bird does occur in your project area, there may be nests present at some point within the timeframe specified. If "Breeds elsewhere" is indicated, then the bird likely does not breed in your project area.

### What are the levels of concern for migratory birds?

Migratory birds delivered through IPaC fall into the following distinct categories of concern:

1. "BCC Rangewide" birds are [Birds of Conservation Concern](#) (BCC) that are of concern throughout their range anywhere within the USA (including Hawaii, the Pacific Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands);
2. "BCC - BCR" birds are BCCs that are of concern only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA; and
3. "Non-BCC - Vulnerable" birds are not BCC species in your project area, but appear on your list either because of the [Eagle Act](#) requirements (for eagles) or (for non-eagles) potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities (e.g. offshore energy development or longline fishing).

Although it is important to try to avoid and minimize impacts to all birds, efforts should be made, in particular, to avoid and minimize impacts to the birds on this list, especially eagles and BCC species of rangewide concern. For more information on conservation measures you can implement to help avoid and minimize migratory bird impacts and requirements for eagles, please see the FAQs for these topics.

### Details about birds that are potentially affected by offshore projects

For additional details about the relative occurrence and abundance of both individual bird species and groups of bird species within your project area off the Atlantic Coast, please visit the [Northeast Ocean Data Portal](#). The Portal also offers data and information about other taxa besides birds that may be helpful to you in your project review. Alternately, you may download the bird model results files underlying the portal maps through the [NOAA NCCOS Integrative Statistical Modeling and Predictive Mapping of Marine Bird Distributions and Abundance on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf](#) project webpage.

Bird tracking data can also provide additional details about occurrence and habitat use throughout the year, including migration. Models relying on survey data may not include this information. For additional information on marine bird tracking data, see the [Diving Bird Study](#) and the [nanotag studies](#) or contact [Caleb Spiegel](#) or [Pam Loring](#).

### What if I have eagles on my list?

If your project has the potential to disturb or kill eagles, you may need to [obtain a permit](#) to avoid violating the Eagle Act should such impacts occur.

### Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report

The migratory bird list generated is not a list of all birds in your project area, only a subset of birds of priority concern. To learn more about how your list is generated, and see options for identifying what other birds may be in your project area, please see the FAQ "What does IPaC use to generate the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location". Please be aware this report provides the "probability of presence" of birds within the 10 km grid cell(s) that overlap your project; not your exact project footprint. On the graphs provided, please also look carefully at the survey effort (indicated by the black vertical bar) and for the existence of the "no data" indicator (a red horizontal bar). A high survey effort is the key component. If the survey effort is high, then the probability of presence score can be viewed as more dependable. In contrast, a low survey effort bar or no data bar means a lack of data and, therefore, a lack of certainty about presence of the species. This list is not perfect; it is simply a starting point for identifying what birds of concern have the potential to be in your project area, when they might be there, and if they might be breeding (which means nests might be present). The list helps you know what to look for to confirm presence, and helps guide you in knowing when to implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize potential impacts from your project activities, should presence be confirmed. To learn more about conservation measures, visit the FAQ "Tell me about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds" at the bottom of your migratory bird trust resources page.

## Coastal Barrier Resources System

Projects within the [John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System](#) (CBRS) may be subject to the restrictions on Federal expenditures and financial assistance and the consultation requirements of the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA) (16 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.). For more information, please contact the local [Ecological Services Field Office](#) or visit the [CBRA Consultations website](#). The CBRA website provides tools such as a flow chart to help determine whether consultation is required and a template to facilitate the consultation process.

There are no known coastal barriers at this location.

### Data limitations

The CBRS boundaries used in IPaC are representations of the controlling boundaries, which are depicted on the [official CBRS maps](#). The boundaries depicted in this layer are not to be considered authoritative for in/out determinations close to a CBRS boundary (i.e., within the "CBRS Buffer Zone" that appears as a hatched area on either side of the boundary). For projects that are very close to a CBRS boundary but do not clearly intersect a unit, you may contact the Service for an official determination by following the instructions here: <https://www.fws.gov/service/coastal-barrier-resources-system-property-documentation>

### Data exclusions

CBRS units extend seaward out to either the 20- or 30-foot bathymetric contour (depending on the location of the unit). The true seaward extent of the units is not shown in the CBRS data, therefore projects in the offshore areas of units (e.g., dredging, breakwaters, offshore wind energy or oil and gas projects) may be subject to CBRA even if they do not intersect the CBRS data. For additional information, please contact [CBRA@fws.gov](mailto:CBRA@fws.gov).

## Facilities

# National Wildlife Refuge lands

Any activity proposed on lands managed by the [National Wildlife Refuge](#) system must undergo a 'Compatibility Determination' conducted by the Refuge. Please contact the individual Refuges to discuss any questions or concerns.

There are no refuge lands at this location.

## Fish hatcheries

There are no fish hatcheries at this location.

## Wetlands in the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI)

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

Wetland information is not available at this time

This can happen when the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) map service is unavailable, or for very large projects that intersect many wetland areas. Try again, or visit the [NWI map](#) to view wetlands at this location.

### Data limitations

The Service's objective of mapping wetlands and deepwater habitats is to produce reconnaissance level information on the location, type and size of these resources. The maps are prepared from the analysis of high altitude imagery. Wetlands are identified based on vegetation, visible hydrology and geography. A margin of error is inherent in the use of imagery; thus, detailed on-the-ground inspection of any particular site may result in revision of the wetland boundaries or classification established through image analysis.

The accuracy of image interpretation depends on the quality of the imagery, the experience of the image analysts, the amount and quality of the collateral data and the amount of ground truth verification work conducted. Metadata should be consulted to determine the date of the source imagery used and any mapping problems.

Wetlands or other mapped features may have changed since the date of the imagery or field work. There may be occasional differences in polygon boundaries or classifications between the information depicted on the map and the actual conditions on site.

### Data exclusions

Certain wetland habitats are excluded from the National mapping program because of the limitations of aerial imagery as the primary data source used to detect wetlands. These habitats include seagrasses or submerged aquatic vegetation that are found in the intertidal and subtidal zones of estuaries and nearshore coastal waters. Some deepwater reef communities (coral or tubercid worm reefs) have also been excluded from the inventory. These habitats, because of their depth, go undetected by aerial imagery.

#### **Data precautions**

Federal, state, and local regulatory agencies with jurisdiction over wetlands may define and describe wetlands in a different manner than that used in this inventory. There is no attempt, in either the design or products of this inventory, to define the limits of proprietary jurisdiction of any Federal, state, or local government or to establish the geographical scope of the regulatory programs of government agencies. Persons intending to engage in activities involving modifications within or adjacent to wetland areas should seek the advice of appropriate Federal, state, or local agencies concerning specified agency regulatory programs and proprietary jurisdictions that may affect such activities.

NOT FOR CONSULTATION

## APPENDIX C - INITIAL SCOPING FOR FUTURE CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN

The AFRR Phase 1 Existing Conditions Assessment report provides a summary of current conditions and has identified high-level needs that may be addressed via Forest Service Capital Improvement Project (CIP), FHWA Federal Land Access Program (FLAP), or Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP) Program.

### Potential Future Planning Work Summary

If major improvements or a significant inter-state transportation project on highway segments beyond Forest Service Road 261 are considered, a comprehensive multi-agency Corridor Master Plan could:

- Define the desired future conditions and vision for AFRR corridor from US20 to US191
- Engage key stakeholders and partners during the planning process
- Clearly articulate transportation demands, user expectations, and public needs
- Identify alternatives and refine specific projects that address those long-term needs.

The Corridor Master Plan will develop a comprehensive planning document that examines the current and future conditions of AFRR. A master planning process will be useful in this context, as the future needs of AFRR can be anticipated but have not been defined formally:

- Define a long-term, coordinated vision and related goals for AFRR;
- Further investigate risk areas and deficiencies affecting the study area;
- Identify transportation needs and constraints; and
- Develop a comprehensive suite of capital projects and policy recommendations that address the needs identified.

### High-Level Corridor Master Plan Scope

#### *Task 1 – Project Management and Coordination*

A project work plan will be developed early in the Corridor Master Plan effort, which will outline the key project goals, procedures to guide the process including a public and stakeholder engagement strategy, and a detailed work schedule to maintain momentum and accountability throughout project delivery.

Key activities for Task 1 may include:

- Establishing a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) and host PAC meetings on a regular schedule
- Creating a Public/Stakeholder Outreach Strategy and Communication Plan

#### *Task 2 – Community Visioning, Goal Setting, and Public/Stakeholder Outreach*

Community visioning and goal setting offer residents, businesses, and other public agencies an opportunity to express their ideas about the future of the corridor and identify benchmarks to work towards. To effectively engage stakeholders, a comprehensive and strategic public engagement approach must be developed. Key activities for may include:

- Developing a project contact list of interested parties
- Developing news releases and newsletters to inform stakeholders of project updates
- Conducting stakeholder interviews and focus groups
- Hosting public meetings, open houses, and/or workshops

### ***Task 3 – Address Data Gaps to Inform Needs Identification***

There are still data gaps that remain, documented in prior sections of this report, and should be addressed in any future planning analyses. Options to close data gaps include:

- Utilizing safety analysis tools to perform a risk assessment of safety performance for alignment improvement options.
- Collecting corridor-specific data, including traffic counts and roadway geometry
- Evaluating road, bridge, and culvert condition
- Environmental

### ***Task 4 – Corridor Needs Identification and Alternatives Development***

Using stakeholder and public input received, the USFS can begin to identify specific corridor transportation needs along AFRR and identify a range of system alternatives for consideration. Specific transportation improvement alternatives for AFRR will be explored during this Task and may include, but are not limited to, wayfinding signage upgrades, safety and operational improvements, context-sensitive design enhancements, bicycle facilities, etc. The final list of alternatives to be considered should include a range of options, from simple to complex, implementable by the partnering transportation agencies.

### ***Task 5 – Final AFRR Corridor Master Plan***

The Final AFRR Corridor Master Plan Report will compile the data, analysis, findings and recommendations from the previous tasks into a comprehensive roadmap that will assist the USFS and its partners in prioritizing future transportation improvements for the corridor. The report will summarize the planning process, including stakeholder and public involvement, data collection, needs identification, and transportation alternatives development. The final deliverable will include recommendations for implementing specific transportation solutions in response to the needs that were identified and the future vision that has been set forth by the USFS and other Federal, state, and local cooperators. The final report may include an implementation strategy that outlines the sequencing and phasing of capital and operational improvements that address:

- Planning-level project cost estimates
- Prioritization of projects and initiative
- Phasing of improvements
- Identification of cooperating partners and risk areas
- Narrative text to clarify how projects will be advanced