CHAPTER 5

SCORP REGIONAL PROFILES

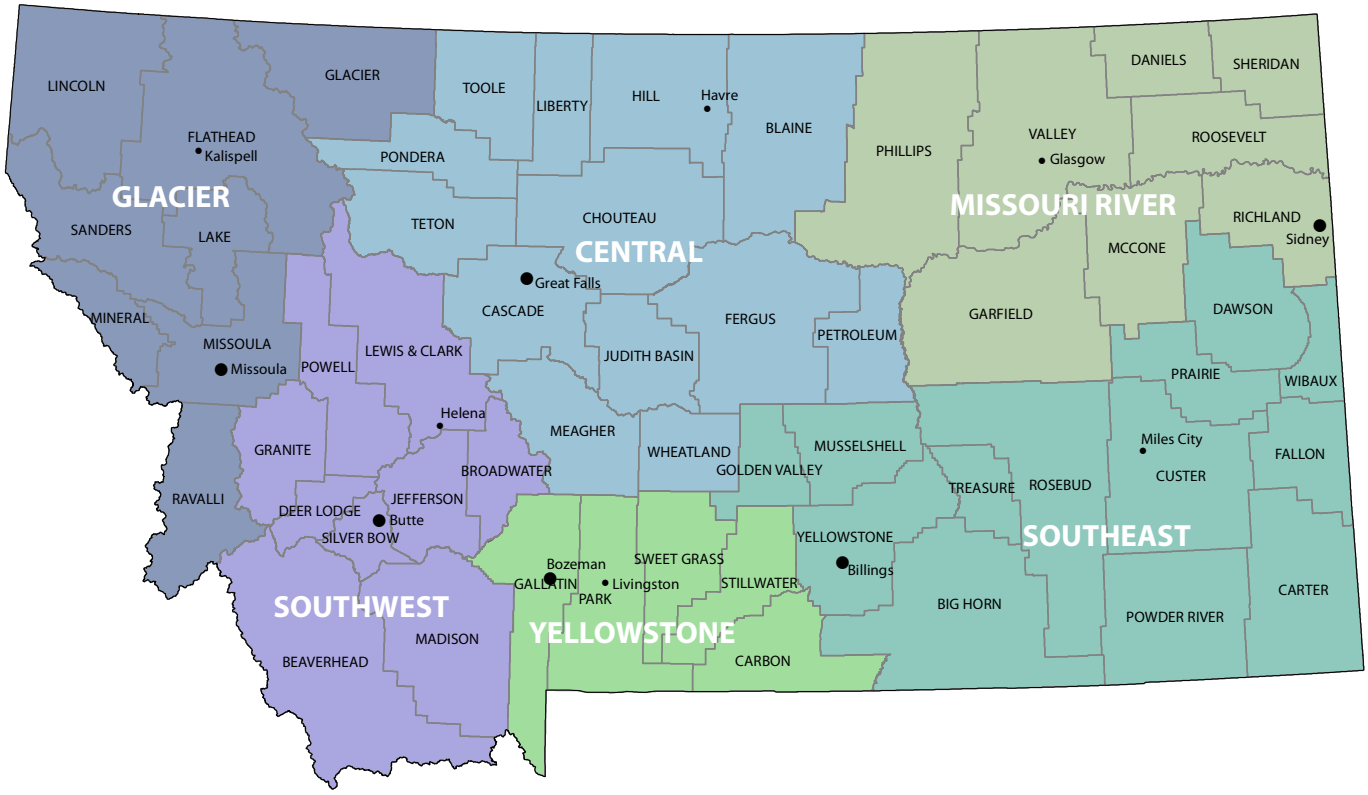
Montana's recreation landscape and preferences vary geographically. To provide a more detailed discussion on recreation supply, demand, and usage patterns, six SCORP regions were used for analysis based on Montana's tourism regions. Each of the six SCORP regions are unique and contain recreation assets that positively influence the quality of life of local residents and visitors alike. Understanding some of the regional characteristics and local recreation infrastructure illustrates the distinctive qualities of the state and fosters more targeted planning. Examining this information helps recreation managers better serve local residents and their visitors.

The six SCORP regions are based on the formal tourism regions established by state law and a Governor's executive order. Recreation and tourism are inextricably linked in Montana, as the wide and varied landscape lends itself to unique outdoor experiences that both visitors and residents alike seek out to enjoy. Recreation also contributes significant economic benefits at both the local and state level, and the regions help frame this by highlighting and promoting their unique recreation experiences.

Within this section is a comparison of the six SCORP regions followed by more detailed descriptions of each region which include:

- A map depicting significant recreation attractions, major cities and towns, counties, transportation corridors, land management, and topographic and hydrologic features
- A brief summary of recreation opportunities
- Population trends and major communities
- Estimates of travel and tourism economic impacts

MAP 15. SCORP REGIONS AND ASSOCIATED COUNTIES



REGIONAL POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Recreational use is heavily influenced by population and demographic trends, which vary greatly from county to county and across regions. Understanding current population distribution and density helps convey the character of the region while anticipating future growth will help estimate the increasing demand for facilities and services.

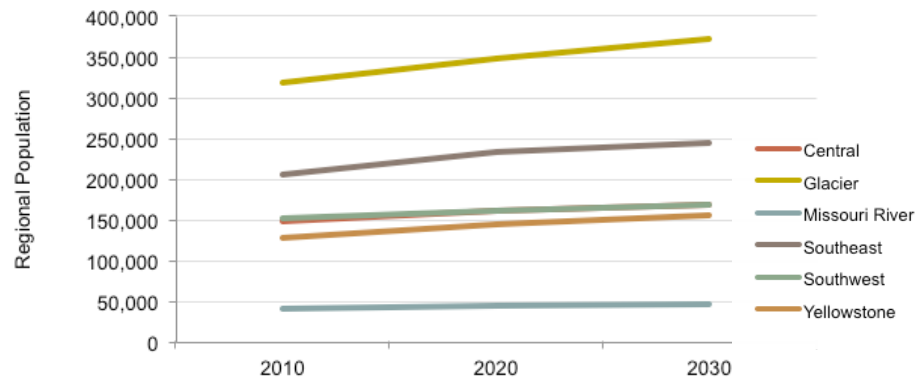
Glacier Country is the most populated region in the state, with nearly 318,000 residents (Table 11). The region includes cities Missoula and Kalispell, as well as the Flathead Valley, one of the fastest growing areas in the state. While Billings is the largest city in Montana, the Southeast Region is generally less populated as a whole and contains many rural communities and smaller towns. Missouri River Country is the least populated region with just under 40,000 residents. Glacier Country, as well Yellowstone Country, also had a higher population density than the state (6.83 people per square miles), with 14.0 people per square miles and 11.5 people per square miles respectively.

Between 2000 and 2010, Montana's population increased 9.7%. Glacier and Yellowstone Countries grew at a higher rate than the state, with Glacier increasing 13.9% and Yellowstone increasing 22%. The Southeast and Southwest regions increased at a similar rate, while Central Montana and Missouri River Country decreased in population.

TBL 11. SCORP REGIONAL POPULATIONS

REGION	2010 POPULATION	% CHANGE 2000-2010	POPULATION DENSITY (PEOPLE/SQ MI)	MEDIAN AGE	LARGEST CITY (2010 POPULATION)
CENTRAL	147,827	-0.9%	4.5	43.5	GREAT FALLS (58,505)
GLACIER	317,907	13.9%	14.0	41.1	MISSOULA (66,788)
MISSOURI RIVER	39,868	-4.9%	1.6	44.8	SIDNEY (5,191)
SOUTHEAST	204,864	9.6%	6.1	43.5	BILLINGS (104,170)
SOUTHWEST	150,954	7.6%	7.2	43.5	BUTTE (33,525)
YELLOWSTONE	127,995	22.0%	11.5	42.1	BOZEMAN (37,280)

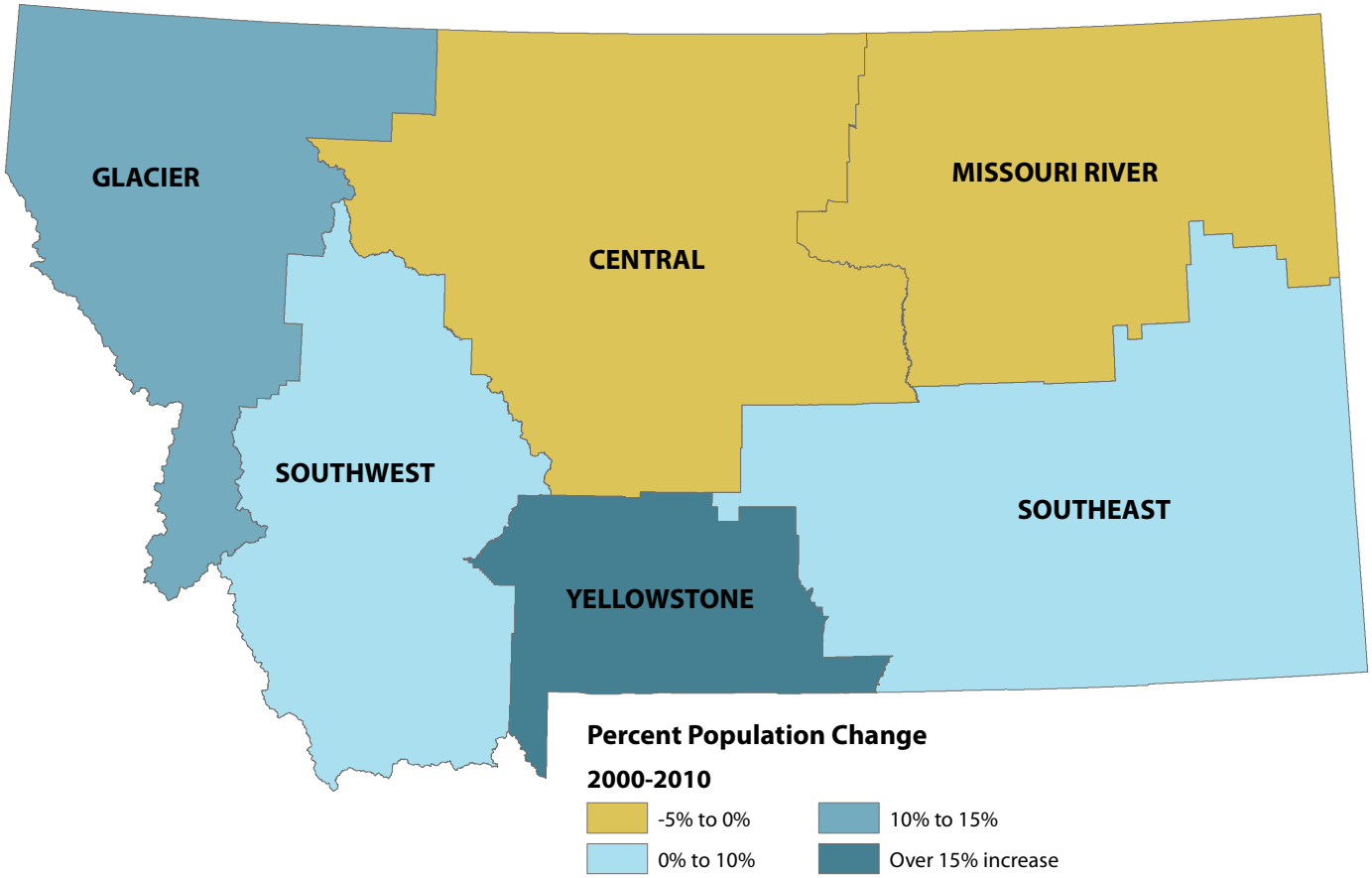
FIG 41. PROJECTED POPULATION CHANGE BY SCORP REGION



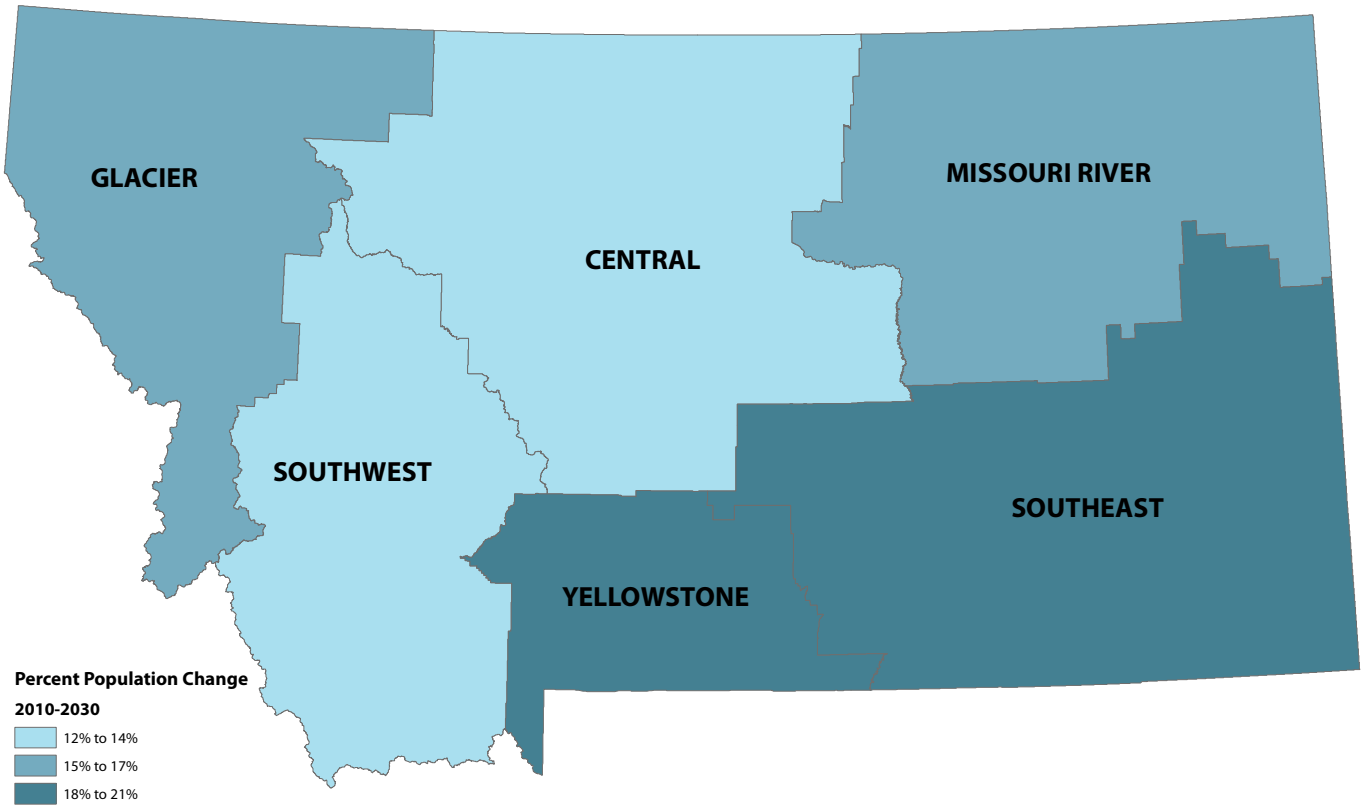
When looking at age demographics on a regional scale, the median ages are higher than the state median age of 39 years, although the differences between the regions are only a few years. Glacier and Yellowstone Counties had the lowest median age of all the regions, but still higher than the state at 41.1 years and 42.1 years respectively. Missouri River Country had the highest median age of all the regions at 44.8 years.

When considering population projections by region, all regions will increase in population from 2010 to 2030, although at varying rates of growth (Figure 40). Glacier Country will continue to be the largest region related to population; however the Yellowstone Country is projected to grow at a higher rate from 2010 to 2030 at 21.3%. Still, Glacier will gain the most new residents at 54,200 people. The Southwest region is projected to grow at the slowest rate for both 2010 to 2020 and 2010 to 2030.

MAP 16. PRECENT POPULATION CHANGE BY SCORP REGIONS, 2000 TO 2010



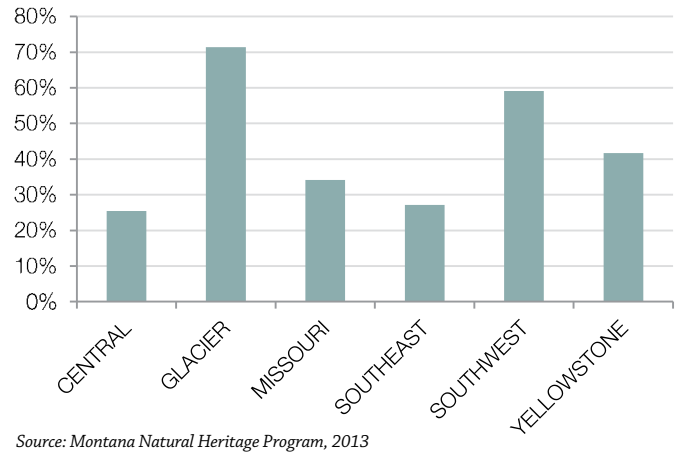
MAP 17. PROJECTED POPULATION CHANGE, 2010 TO 2030.



PUBLIC LAND BY REGION

Montana is nearly 40% public land and 60% private land. Federal agencies manage nearly 30% of the land base, while state, city, county, and Tribal agencies manage the remaining 11%. Distribution of public lands varies greatly by region. Glacier Country has the highest percentage of public lands at 71%, or 8.8 million acres; more than half of the public land in the Glacier region is federal land. Southwest Montana also has a high percentage of public land at 59% or 7.9 million acres; similarly, more than half of the public land in the region is also federal land. Southwest Montana also has the highest percentage of state land of any region, although at 8% it still constitutes a small percentage of the overall land base in the region. Conversely, only a quarter of the land base in Central Montana and Southeast Montana is public land. Glacier Country also has the highest percentage of Tribal land at 10%, while the Southwest and Yellowstone regions do not have Tribal lands present.

FIG 42. PUBLIC LANDS BY REGION



Source: Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2013

TBL 12. PUBLIC LAND OWNERSHIP BY REGION

REGION	TOTAL ACRES	PUBLIC LAND ACRES	PERCENT OF TOTAL LAND	% FEDERAL	% STATE	% TRIBAL
CENTRAL	21,059,787	4,628,844	25%	15%	7%	3%
GLACIER	14,497,528	8,825,069	71%	57%	4%	10%
MISSOURI RIVER	16,260,835	4,591,960	34%	22%	6%	6%
SOUTHEAST	21,631,743	4,018,203	27%	13%	6%	9%
SOUTHWEST	13,501,818	7,920,541	59%	51%	8%	-
YELLOWSTONE	7,152,875	2,976,949	42%	38%	3%	-

Source: Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2013

When comparing the federal and state land ownership by region, Glacier Country has the most Forest Service acreage at over 7.1 million acres, followed by Yellowstone with over 5.5 million acres (Table 13). Missouri River Country has no Forest Service presence, but does have the most Bureau of Land Management acreage at 2.8 million acres, followed by Southeast Montana with also over 2 million acres. The majority of National Park Service acreage comes from Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks, which are the namesake for their respective regions, with Glacier Country having the most Park Service land. The US Fish and Wildlife Service manages almost 700,000 acres in the Missouri River Country as part of the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge, which also has large acreage in Central Montana. The Bureau of Reclamation has the smallest presence in Montana with only 125,000 acres spread across the state, with a majority of that in Yellowstone Country.

For state land, Southwest Montana has the most acreage of FWP land, while Southeast Montana has the most acreage of Montana State Parks land specifically. Southeast Montana also has the most State Trust Land managed by DNRC, followed by Central Montana and Missouri River Country—all over 1 million acres present.

TBL 13. FEDERAL AND STATE ACREAGE BY REGION

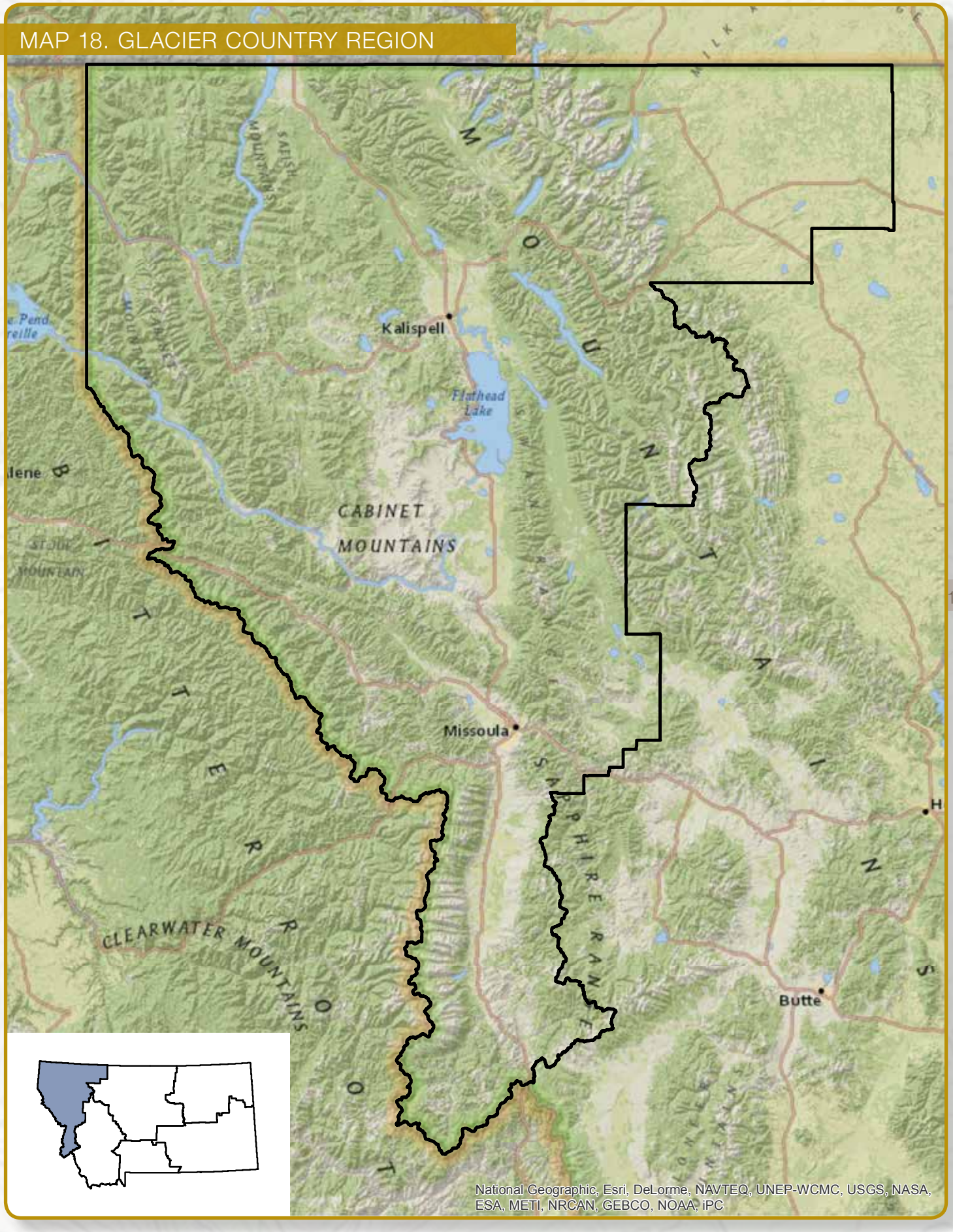
AGENCY	CENTRAL	GLACIER	MISSOURI RIVER	SOUTHEAST	SOUTHWEST	YELLOWSTONE
BLM	1,367,855	21,713	**2,842,819**	2,189,461	1,327,915	255,883
BOR	79,326	0	30,614	2,155	12,949	**125,044**
NPS	200	**997,729**	9	2,653	1,996	186,199
USFS	1,482,184	**7,188,506**	0	549,035	5,538,012	2,290,288
USFWS	126,018	39,088	**689,061**	12,990	50,793	125,044
OTHER FEDERAL LAND	4,797	1,057	2,563	**55,227**	18,333	80
MONTANA FWP (ALL)	60,591	99,881	4,785	21,879	**197,073**	21,608
MONTANA STATE PARKS*	10,690	9,262	790	16,197	8,337	1,630
STATE TRUST LAND	**1,507,873**	477,077	1,022,109	1,184,803	773,470	217,107

Source: Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2013

GLACIER COUNTRY

Glacier Country is located in Montana's northwestern corner sharing an international border with Canada, and includes eight counties encompassing 14.5 million acres or 22,000 square miles. Referred to as the Crown of the Continent, this region offers unique natural history and geological features such as Glacier National Park; the remains of Glacial Lake Missoula and Ice Age Floods; numerous lakes and rivers including Flathead Lake, the largest natural freshwater lake west of the Mississippi in the contiguous US; abundant wildlife and birding; and destinations including the National Bison Range, spectacular mountain ranges, wilderness areas, as well as national forests and state parks. There are also many historic sites, numerous points on the Lewis and Clark trail, and two Native American Indian Nations, the Blackfeet Nation and Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

MAP 18. GLACIER COUNTRY REGION

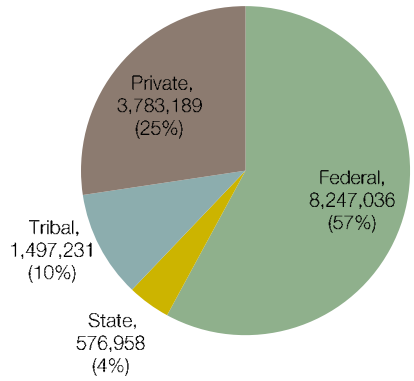


TBL 14. GLACIER COUNTRY PROJECTED POPULATIONS BY COUNTY, 2010 TO 2030

COUNTY	2010	2020	2030	% CHANGE 2010 - 2030
FLATHEAD	90,871	102,929	112,770	24%
GLACIER	13,467	14,063	13,752	2%
LAKE	28,775	29,232	29,101	1%
LINCOLN	19,668	20,886	21,648	10%
MINERAL	4,223	4,325	4,316	2%
MISSOULA	109,443	123,553	134,085	23%
RAVALLI	40,343	42,450	44,691	11%
SANDERS	11,397	11,776	12,019	5%
REGIONAL TOTAL	318,187	349,214	372,382	17%

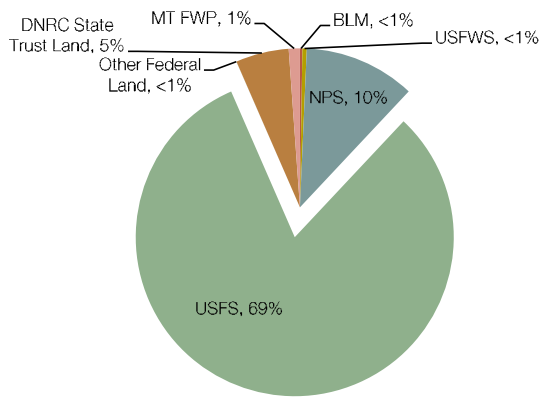
Source: Montana Census and Economic Information Center, 2013

FIG 43. LAND OWNERSHIP IN GLACIER COUNTRY (IN ACRES)



Source: Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2013.

FIG 44. PUBLIC LAND OWNERSHIP IN GLACIER COUNTRY



Source: Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2013.

POPULATION

The most populated region in Montana, Glacier Country contains over 318,000 people, accounting for nearly a third of the state's total population. Population density in this region is also the highest in the state with 14.0 people per square mile. By 2020, the population is projected to gain another 30,000 people, and by 2030 the population is projected to reach almost 375,000 people, an increase of 17% from 2010. This will certainly influence the already increasing demand for outdoor recreation amenities and services from both residents and visitors. (Table 14)

The City of Missoula is the most populated city in the region with over 68,000 people and over 110,000 people total in the metropolitan area. Kalispell and the Flathead Valley along the I-93 corridor are also the fastest growing areas in the state, as Kalispell grew 40% since 2000, the largest percent growth of any Montana city. Higher educational institutions include the University of Montana in Missoula, Flathead Valley Community College, Salish and Kootenai College, and Blackfeet Community College.

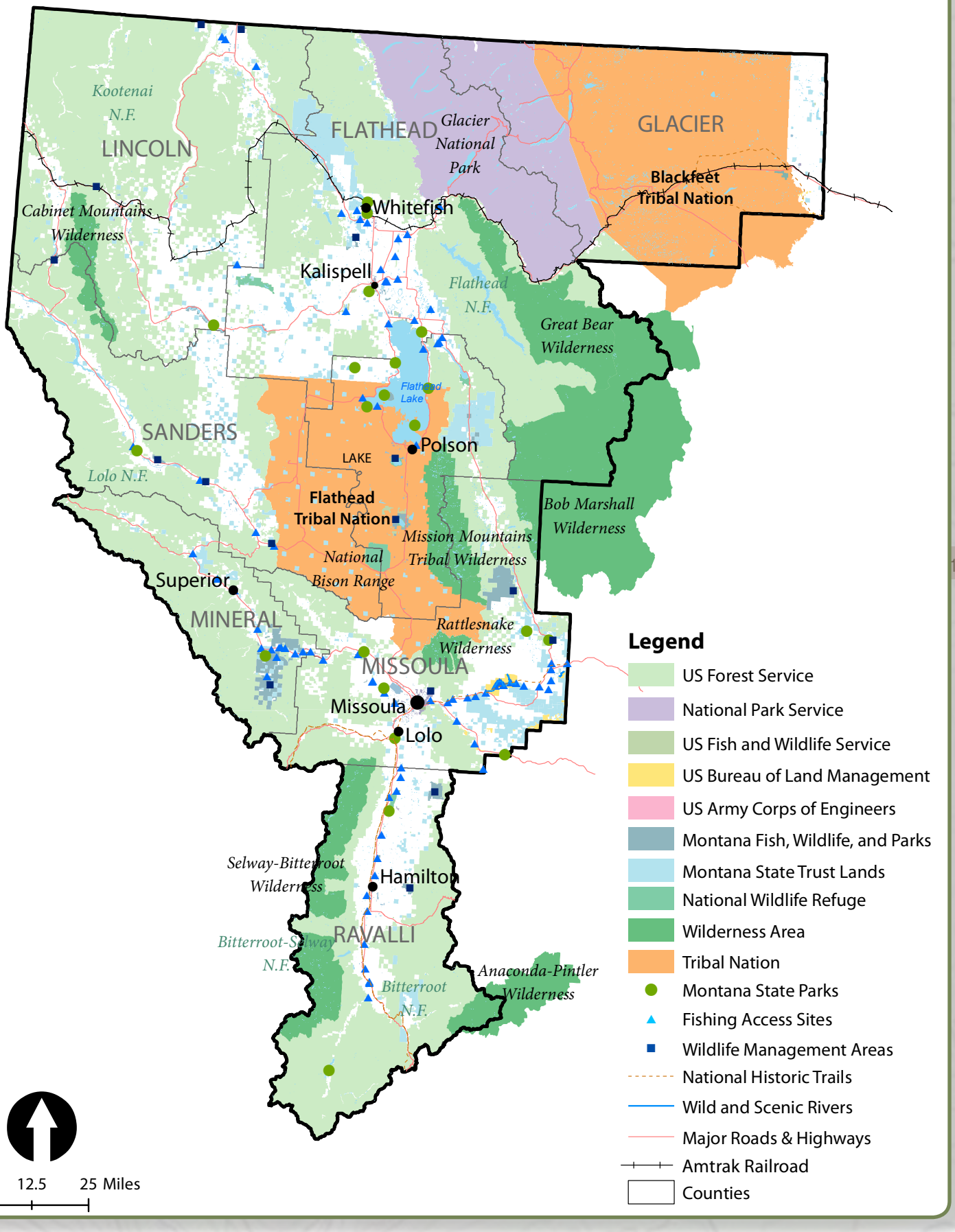
PUBLIC LANDS AND RECREATION RESOURCES

Federal, state, Tribal, and local government agencies all manage recreation resources in Glacier Country. The region offers a full range of outdoor activities from extreme to passive including, but not limited to: boat trips, camping, cycling, hiking, horseback riding, fishing, golfing, motor cross, mountain biking, other water sports, rafting, skiing, and snowmobiling.

Approximately 62% of land in Glacier Country is federal and state land, while a quarter is private and 10% Tribal land (Figure 42). In total, Glacier Country has over 10 million acres of public land. Of the public land, 79% is federal land with the Forest Service managing 69% of the public land in the region, and the state managing 6% of the public land (Figure 43). The region has five national forests spanning more than 7.1 million acres, six national wildlife refuges, Glacier National Park, 21 states parks (the most of any region), seven wilderness areas, 16 wildlife management areas, and 92 fishing access sites. There is over 6,000 miles of trails in the region, including over 700 miles in Glacier National Park alone. Overall, Glacier Country residents enjoy 31.4 acres of public land per person.

There are also a number of city and county recreation agencies in the Glacier region that provide close-to-home opportunities for residents and visitors. There are 71 communities throughout the region, including the larger cities of Missoula, Kalispell, Whitefish, and Hamilton. At least 11 city and county municipalities have a parks and recreation department and actively manage parks and open space.

MAP 19. GLACIER COUNTRY RECREATION



RECREATION AND TOURISM

In 2012, over 3.5 million nonresident visitors spent at least one night in Glacier Country. According to the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, nonresident visitors had over $714.4 million in expenditures related to their trip. This directly supported $471.9 million of economic activity in the region, created 6,580 jobs, generated $141.3 million in employee compensation, and supported an additional $304.8 million of indirect economic activity. The total contribution of nonresident spending to the Glacier Country regional economy was $776.7 million, with $61.5 million generated in state and local taxes. In Flathead County specifically, total non-resident spending was over $290.4 million, which directly supported $195.1 million of economic activity. Non-resident spending in Missoula County was $258.8 million, which directly supported $166.7 million of economic activity.

In the Glacier region, 76% of non-resident visitors participated in scenic driving. The rest of the top five activities include: day hiking (50%), nature photography (48%), wildlife watching (45%), and car/RV camping (37%).

TOP FACILITY/AREA USES

- WALKING/JOGGING/BICYCLING PATHS
- HIKING TRAILS
- PICNIC AREAS
- CAMPGROUND WITHOUT HOOK-UPS
- SCENIC BYWAYS

TOP FACILITY/AREA NEEDS

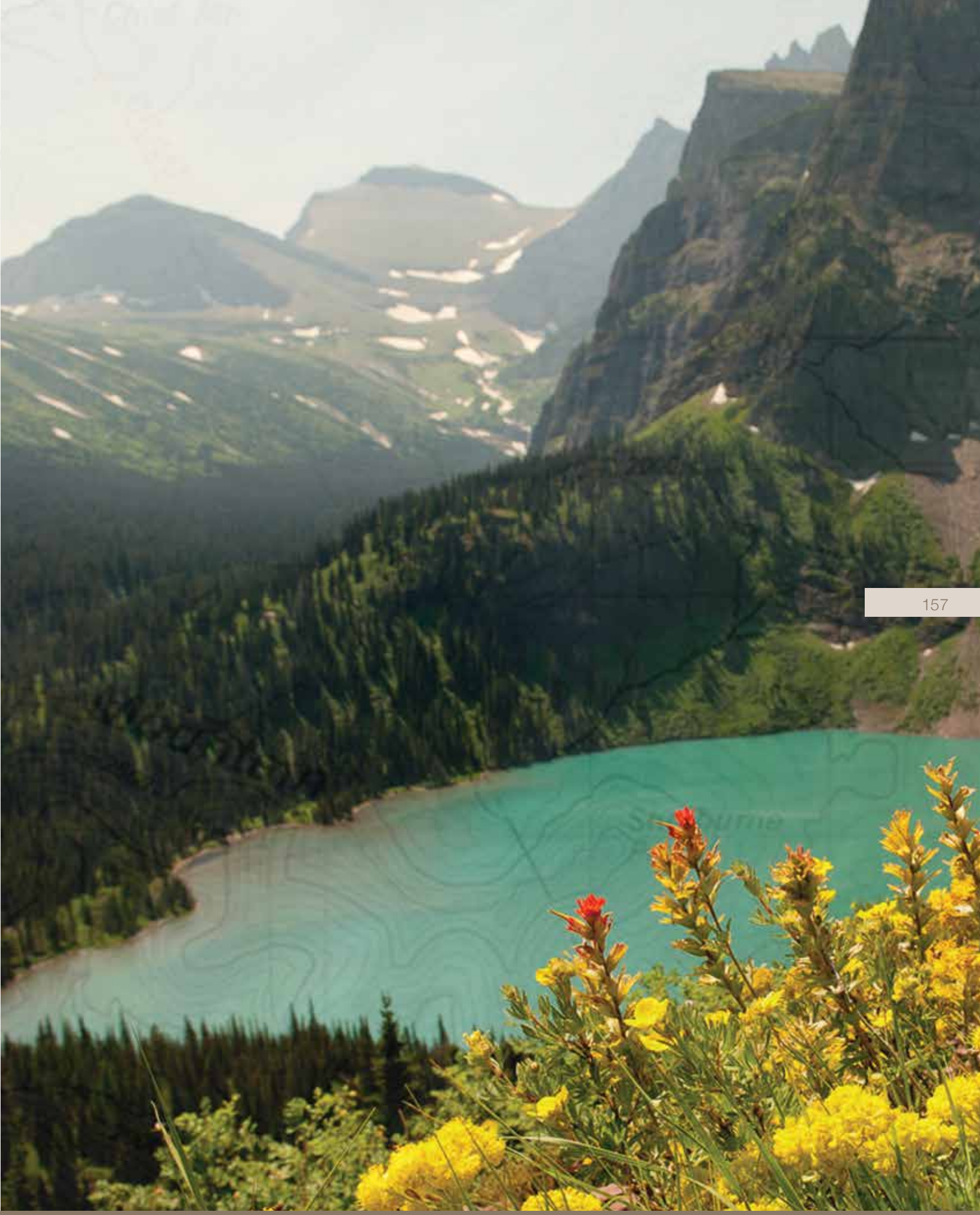
- BICYCLE LANES
- RIFLE/HANDGUN RANGES
- OFF-ROAD ATV TRAILS

HIGH RESPONSE FOR NEED TO INCREASE

- WALKING/JOGGING/BICYCLING PATHS
- NATURAL OR WILD AREAS
- WILDLIFE VIEWING AREAS
- PICNIC AREAS
- CAMPGROUNDS WITHOUT HOOK-UPS

For Montana resident travel, Glacier Country was also one of the most popular destinations for outdoor recreation in 2012. Non-motorized boating is most popular in Glacier Country, followed by beach activities, golfing, motorized boating, and birding. Other popular activities include wildlife watching, scenic driving, and camping.

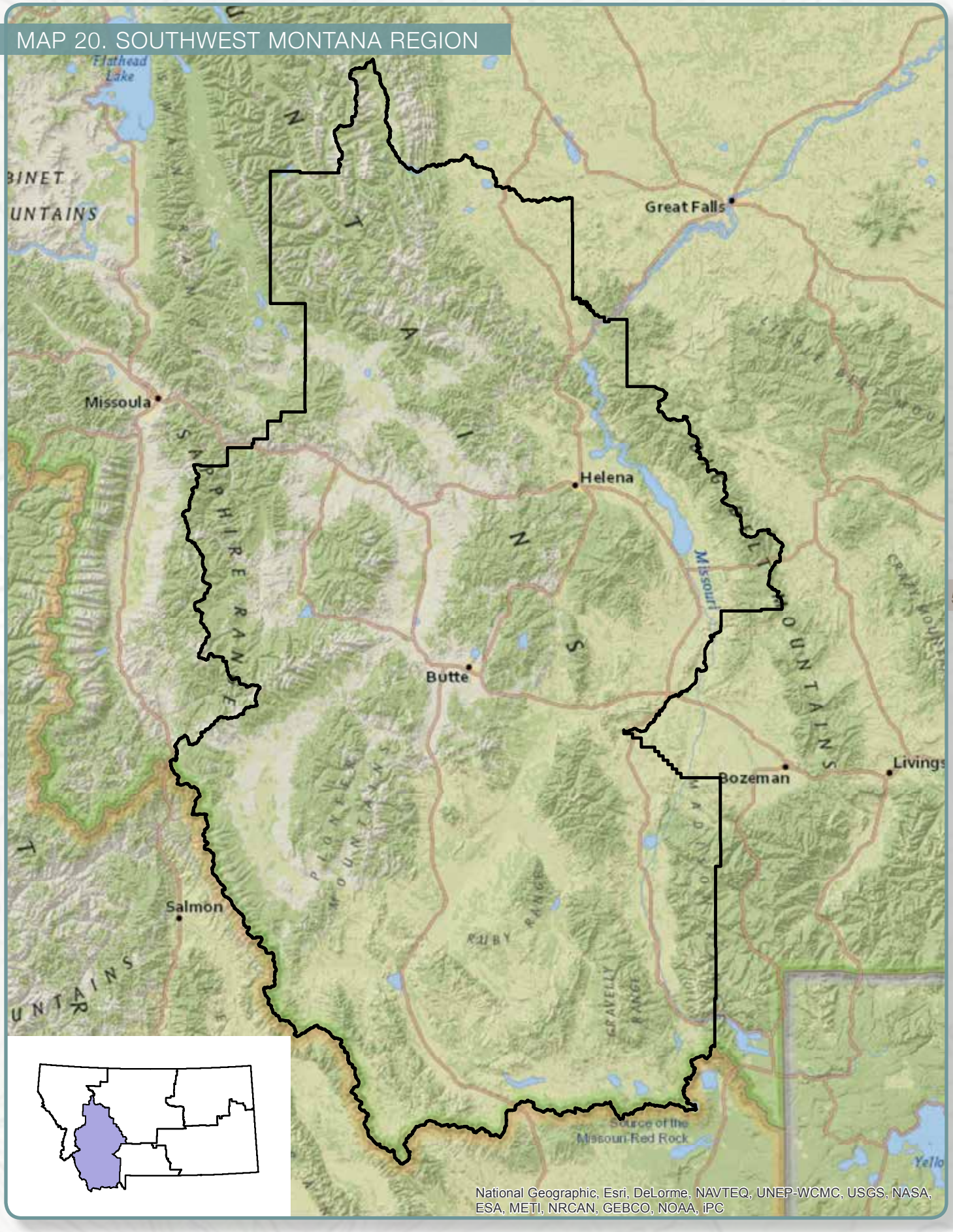
Recreation needs for the region were also identified in the 2012 Public Recreational Use Survey by ITRR. The results are presented by top uses, top needs, and those activities that had more people saying there was a need to increase than those who felt the facility/area was adequate. About 77% of respondents used walking/jogging/biking paths and hiking trails in Glacier Country in the last year. When asked to rate their use of public lands and areas in Glacier Country on a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5 being the most often), recreationists in Glacier Country most often use rivers and streams (mean 3.53), national forests (3.46), natural lakes (3.39), National Park land (3.12), and State Parks (3.12). The top facility/area need and the highest responses for increase among respondents is both bicycle lanes and walking/jogging/bicycling paths.



SOUTHWEST MONTANA

Southwest Montana includes nine counties encompassing 13.5 million acres or 21,000 square miles. This region offers rich experiences in unique cultural and historical opportunities, including gold mining legacies, ghost towns, historic sites and museums, and numerous Lewis and Clark sites; abundant wildlife habitat and some of the most top-rated fishing streams like the Blackfoot, Madison, and Missouri rivers; genuine western heritage with rodeos, cattle drives, pow-wows, and working ranch experiences; and destinations including the Bob Marshall and Scapegoat Wilderness Areas, Canyon Ferry Lake, and the Helena, Lewis & Clark, and Beaverhead-Deer Lodge National Forests, as well as numerous state parks and heritage sites.

MAP 20. SOUTHWEST MONTANA REGION

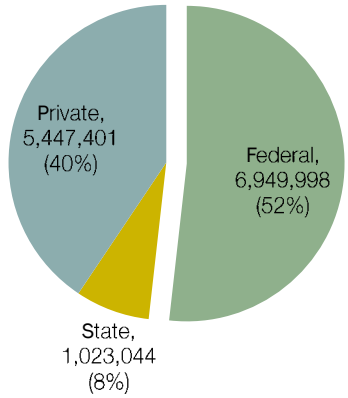


TBL 15. SOUTHWEST MONTANA PROJECTED POPULATIONS BY COUNTY, 2010 TO 2030

COUNTY	2010	2020	2030	% CHANGE 2010 - 2030
BEAVERHEAD	9,246	9,751	10,048	8%
BROADWATER	5,612	5,611	5,626	0%
DEER LODGE	9,298	9,614	10,500	13%
GRANITE	3,079	3,217	3,217	4%
JEFFERSON	11,406	12,263	13,089	15%
LEWIS & CLARK	63,395	70,208	74,495	17%
MADISON	7,691	8,601	8,859	15%
POWELL	7,027	7,247	7,355	5%
SILVER BOW	34,200	35,014	35,487	4%
REGIONAL TOTAL	151,253	161,526	168,676	12%

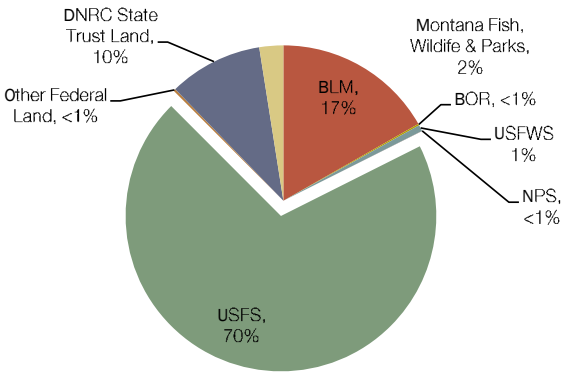
Source: Montana Census and Economic Information Center, 2013

FIG 45. LAND OWNERSHIP IN SOUTHWEST MONTANA (IN ACRES)



Source: Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2013.

FIG 46. PUBLIC LAND OWNERSHIP IN SOUTHWEST MONTANA



Source: Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2013.

POPULATION

Southwest Montana contains over 150,000 people, and is the second most densely populated region in the state at 10.9 people per square mile. By 2020, the population is projected to gain another 10,000 people, and by 2030 the population is projected to reach almost 170,000 people, an increase of 12% from 2010 (Table 15). Although this is an increase, the region is expected to grow at a slower rate than the other regions in Montana, and will drop from the third to the fourth most populated region by 2030. The population gain will be the lowest out of all regions from 2010 to 2020 and 2010 to 2030. Still, an increase in demand for outdoor recreation amenities and services can be expected as the general Montana population increases and more and more visitors come to the state.

The combined city-county of Butte-Silver Bow is the most populated city in the region with 33,000 people. Helena, the capital of Montana, has just under 30,000 residents. Butte decreased by 1% in population from 2000, while Helena increased by 9%. Other minor cities include the Anaconda, Deer Lodge, and Dillon. Lewis & Clark County, which includes Helena, is projected to grow the most over the next 20 years, with an increase of 17%, followed by Madison and Jefferson counties at 15%. Higher education institutions include University of Montana Western, Helena College, Montana Tech, and Carroll College, one of the few private colleges in the state.

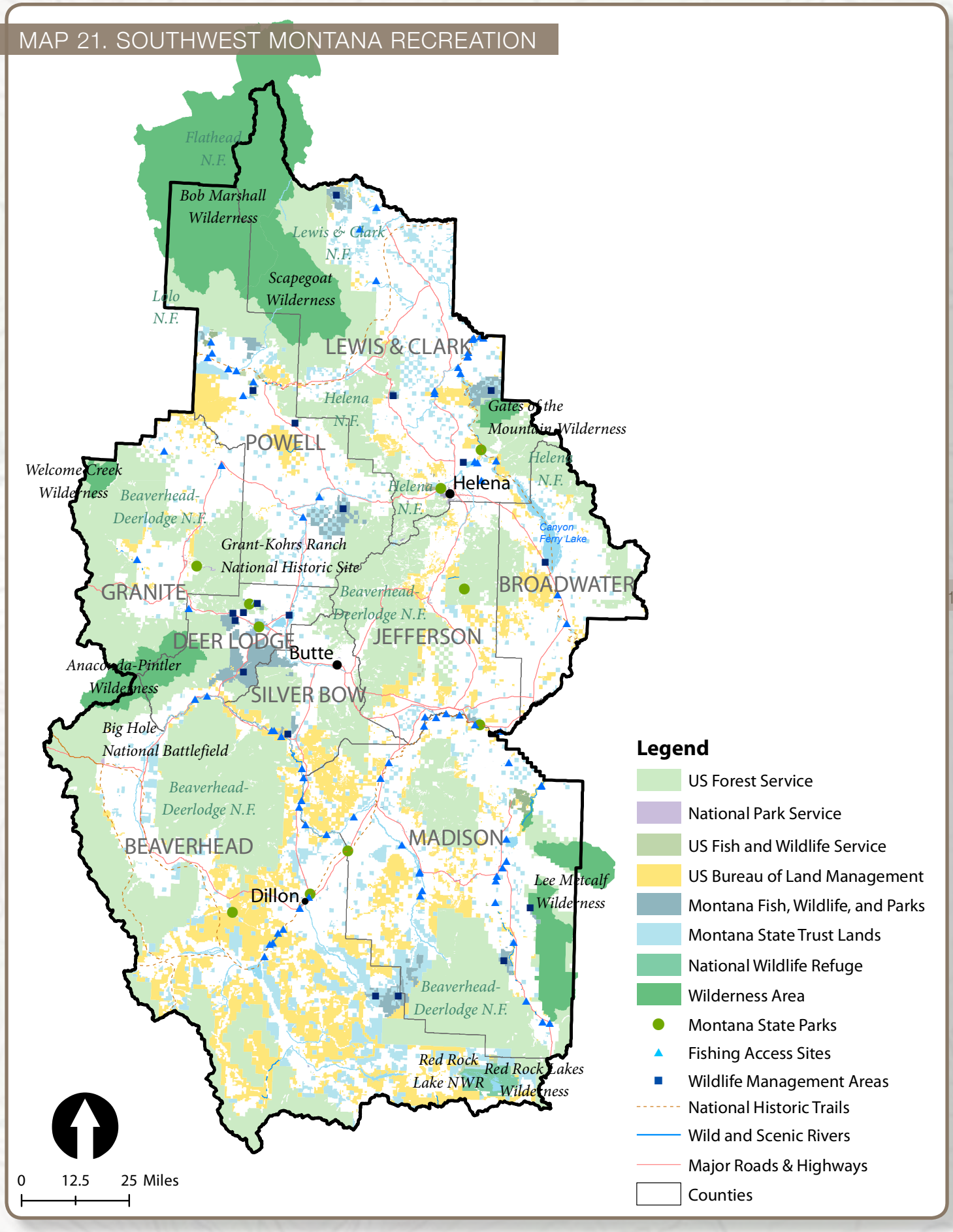
PUBLIC LANDS AND RECREATION RESOURCES

Federal, state, and local government agencies all manage recreation resources in Southwest Montana. The region offers an abundance of outdoor recreational activities, including but not limited to: wildlife watching/birding, photography, fishing, hunting, hiking, horseback riding, biking, golfing, rafting, rock hounding, and snow sports.

Approximately 59% of land in Southwest Montana is federal and state land, while 40% is private land; there is no Tribal land in the region (Figure 44). In total, Southwest Montana has approximately 8 million acres of public land. Of the public land, 87% is federal land with the Forest Service managing nearly 70% of the public land in the region, while about 13% is state land, mostly in the form of DNRC State Trust Land (Figure 45). Bureau of Land Management manages 17% of the public land. The region has three national forests spanning more than 5.5 million acres, 10 states parks, seven wilderness areas, 19 wildlife management areas, 79 fishing access sites, and Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. There is over 6,200 miles of trails in the region. Overall, Southwest Montana residents enjoy 52.7 acres of public land per person.

There are also a number of local recreation agencies in the Glacier region that provide close-to-home opportunities for residents and visitors. There are 77 communities throughout the region, including the larger cities of Butte and Helena. Four local city and county municipalities have a parks and recreation department and actively manage parks and open space: City of Helena, Lewis & Clark County, City and County of Butte-Silver Bow, and Anaconda-Deer Lodge County.

MAP 21. SOUTHWEST MONTANA RECREATION



RECREATION AND TOURISM

In 2012, over 1.9 million nonresident visitors spent at least one night in Southwest Montana, about 18% of all non-resident visitors. According to the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, nonresident visitors had over $394 million in expenditures related to their trip. This directly supported $231.8 million of economic activity in the region, created 3,070 jobs, generated $67.0 million in employee compensation, and supported an additional $116.1 million of indirect economic activity. The total contribution of nonresident spending to the Glacier Country regional economy was $347.9 million, with $28.1 million generated in state and local taxes. In Lewis & Clark County specifically, total non-resident spending was $90.6 million, which directly supported $59.8 million of economic activity.

In Southwest Montana, 70% of non-resident visitors participated in scenic driving. The rest of the top five activities include: wildlife watching (40%), nature photography (38%), day hiking (36%), and car/RV camping (33%).

For Montana resident travel, the following is a table of the top 10 activities by resident travelers for Southwest Montana. Mountain biking and rock hounding were the top activities. Southwest Montana was most popular for hunting, with Beaverhead County the top county to spend nights in (9%). The region was also most popular for off-road ATV activities and rock hounding. The region was also tied with Glacier Country for most popular region for mountain biking at 32%. Other popular activities for Southwest Montana include backpacking and downhill skiing.

Recreation needs for the region were also identified in the 2012 Public Recreational Use Survey by ITRR. The results are presented by top uses, top needs, and those activities that had more people saying there was a need to increase than those who felt the facility/area was adequate. About 72% of respondents used scenic byways in Southwest Montana in the last year. When asked to rate their use of public lands and areas in the region on a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5 being the most use), recreationists in the Southwest most often use national forests (mean 3.64), rivers and streams (3.57), BLM lands (3.21), State Park (3.11), and National Park lands (2.99). The top facility/area need in the region is off-road ATV trails, and the highest response for increase is walking/jogging/biking paths.

TOP FACILITY/AREA USES

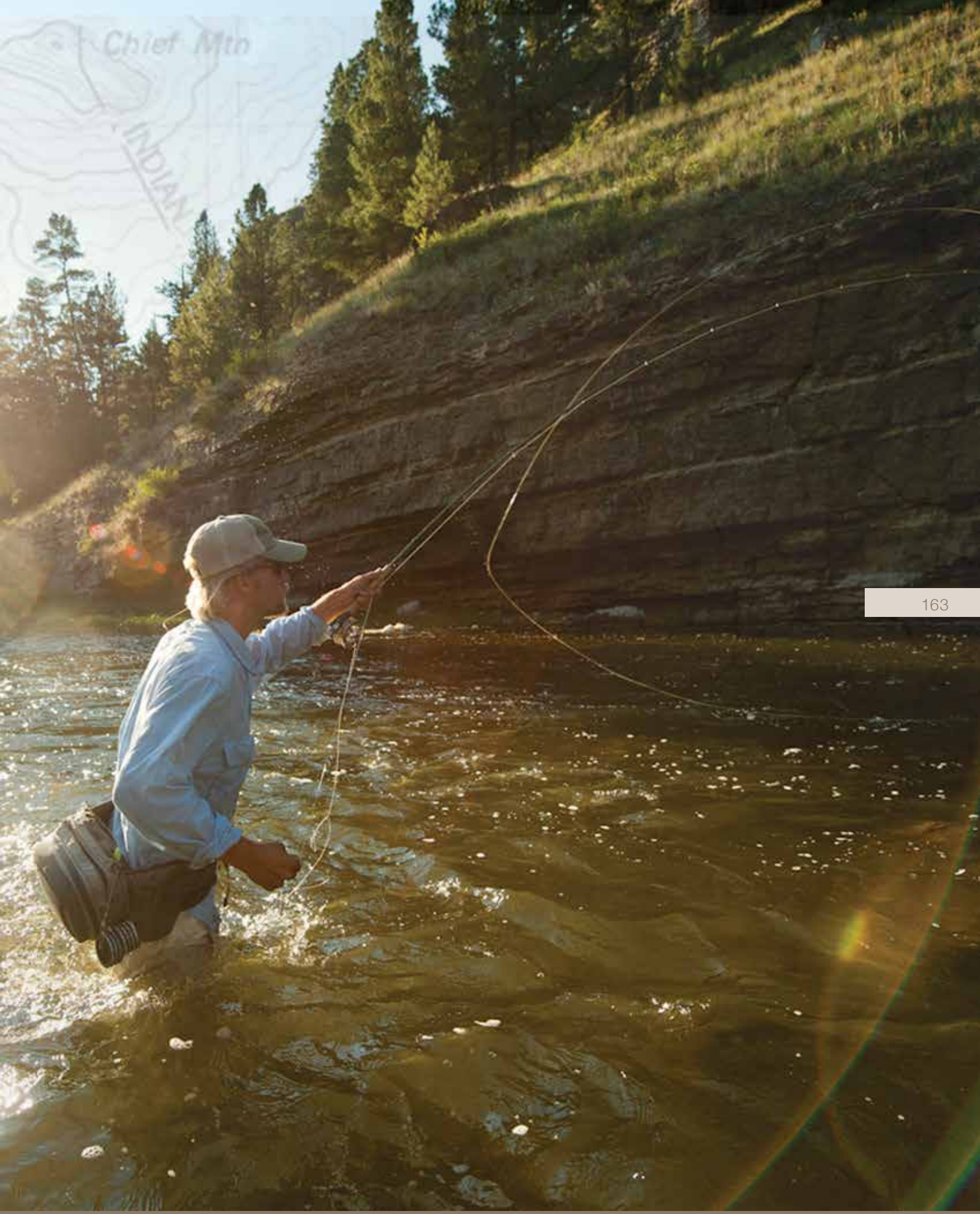
- SCENIC BYWAYS
- WALKING/JOGGING/BIKING PATHS
- NATURAL OR WILD AREAS
- HERITAGE/HISTORIC AREAS OR SITES
- WILDLIFE VIEWING AREAS

TOP FACILITY/AREA NEEDS

- OFF-ROAD ATV TRAILS
- NATURAL OR WILD AREAS
- HIKING TRAILS
- SCENIC BYWAYS
- WILDLIFE VIEWING AREAS

HIGH RESPONSE FOR NEED TO INCREASE

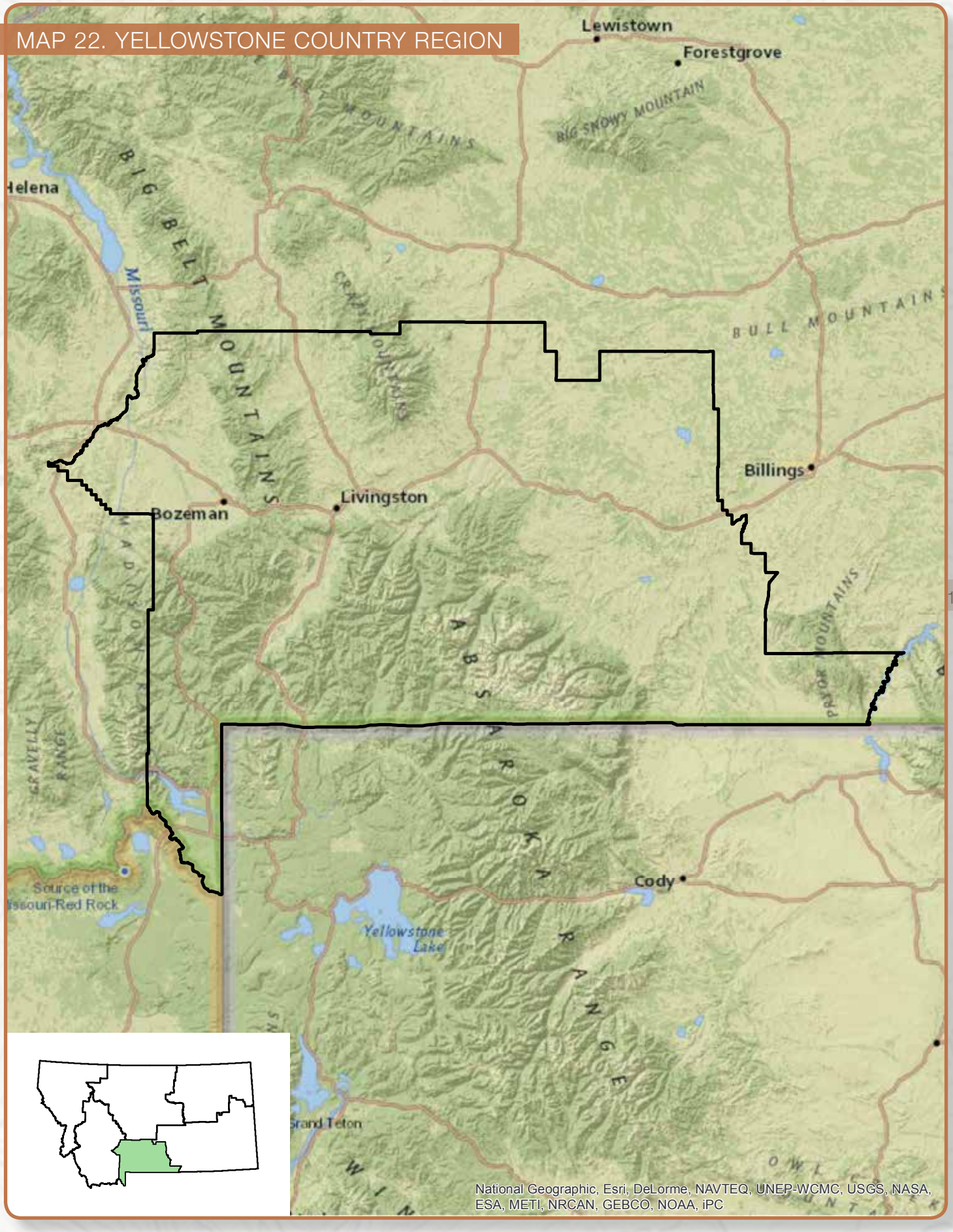
- WALKING/JOGGING/BIKING PATHS
- PICNIC AREAS


Chief Mtn
INDIAN

YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY

Yellowstone Country includes five counties encompassing 7.1 million acres or 11,000 square miles, making it the smallest of the SCORP regions. Yellowstone National Park – the world's first national park - along with grizzly bears, wolves and bison are defining elements of the region. While most of the park is in Wyoming, the main park entrance points of Gardiner, West Yellowstone, and Cooke City are in Montana. Yellowstone Country has amazing scenic beauty and abundant wildlife that makes it a summer destination for hiking, backpacking, mountain biking, and water activities, as well as a winter wonderland with bountiful snow that offers a prime playground for downhill and cross-country skiers, as well as snowmobilers and dogsledders. Major mountain ranges include the Bridger, Beartooth, and Absaroka mountains as well as the vacation hotbeds of the Gallatin and Paradise valleys. Aside from Yellowstone National Park, destinations include the Yellowstone River, the Beartooth All-American Highway, Big Sky, Bridger Bowl and Red Lodge Mountain ski areas, West Yellowstone snowmobile area, and a rich culture and history of exploration and activity.

MAP 22. YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY REGION



POPULATION

TBL 16. YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY PROJECTED POPULATIONS BY COUNTY, 2010 TO 2030

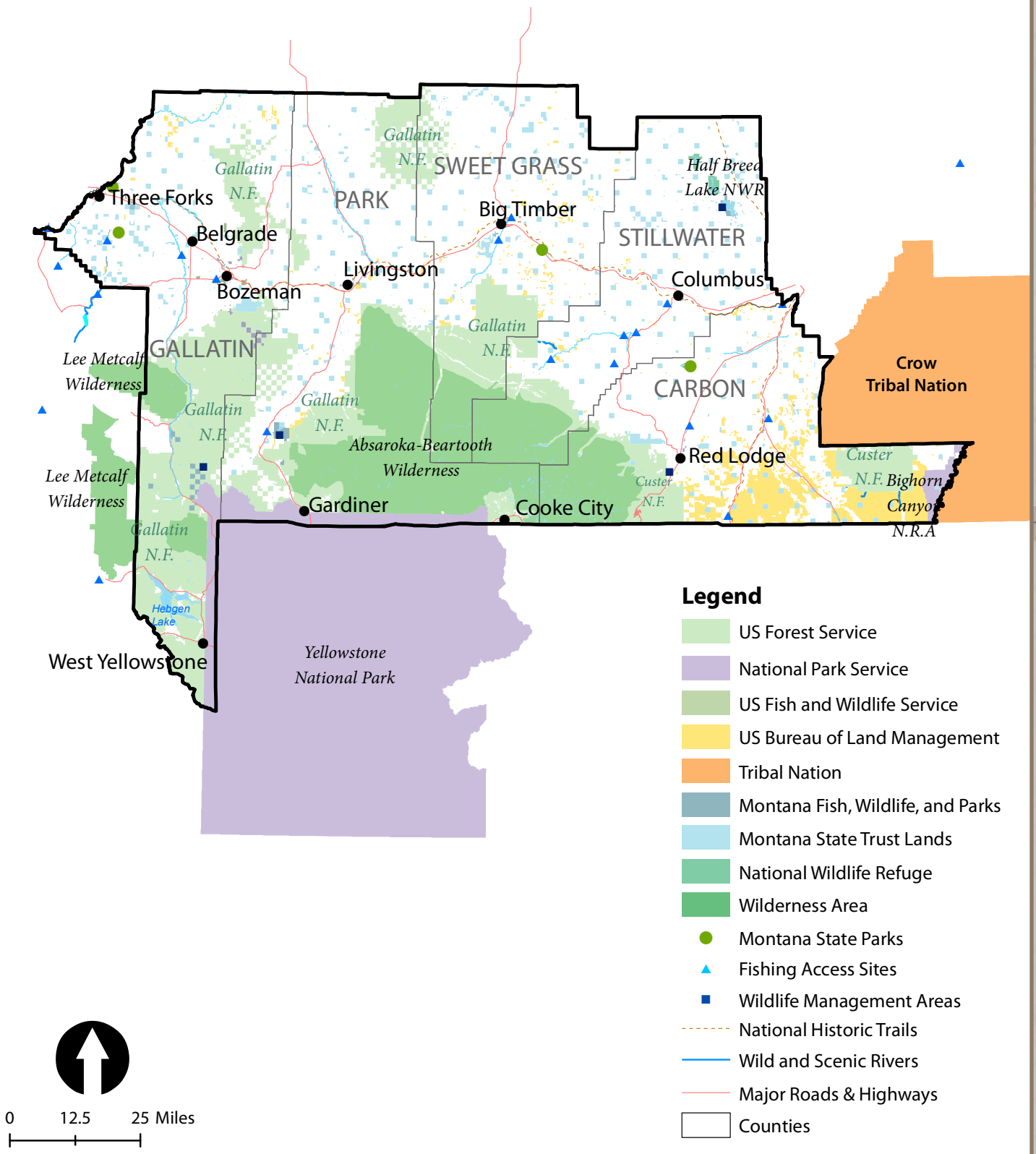
COUNTY	2010	2020	2030	% CHANGE 2010 - 2030
CARBON	10,079	9,443	9,348	-7%
GALLATIN	89,616	105,568	116,627	30%
PARK	15,587	15,760	15,939	2%
STILLWATER	9,110	9,751	9,060	-1%
SWEET GRASS	3,622	4,241	4,323	19%
REGIONAL TOTAL	128,014	144,763	155,297	21%

Source: Montana Census and Economic Information Center, 2013

Yellowstone Country contains over 128,000 people, and is the second least populated region in the state. The region has 10.4 people per square mile. By 2020, the population is projected to gain another 17,000 people, and by 2030 the population is projected to reach almost 155,000 people, an increase of 21% from 2010 and the highest population percentage change of all the regions (Table 16). However, it will still be the second least populated region. Gallatin County, which includes Bozeman, is projected to grow 30% from 2010 to 2030, and Sweet Grass County is projected to grow by 19%. Other counties will only increase slightly or will decrease in population, however the region as a whole is expected to increase by 21% by 2030. Looking out towards 2060, the Yellowstone region is projected to increase by 42% to over 180,000 residents. This tremendous growth will most certainly create more demand for outdoor recreation amenities and services from new residents and growing numbers of tourists.

Bozeman is the largest city in the region with over 37,000 people, and the fourth largest city in the state. The Bozeman micropolitian area has over 92,000 residents, which is the largest micropolitian in Montana and the third largest of all Montana's statistical areas. From 2000 to 2010, Bozeman's population grew by 36%, making it the second fastest growing city after Kalispell. Other minor cities include Livingston, Belgrade, Big Timber, Red Lodge, and Three Forks. Belgrade, located just 10 miles west of Bozeman, also had a large increase in population from 2000 to 2010 at 29%. Belgrade is home of the Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport, the main terminus for flights into the Yellowstone area and southwestern Montana. Higher education institutions include Montana State University and the Gallatin College, both in Bozeman.

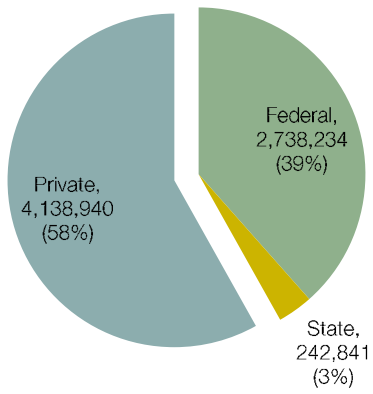
MAP 23. YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY RECREATION



PUBLIC LANDS AND RECREATION RESOURCES

Federal, state, and local government agencies all manage recreation resources Yellowstone Country. The region offers an abundance of outdoor recreational activities, including but not limited to: scenic driving, ATVing, hiking, climbing, mountain biking, horseback riding, RVing, camping, golfing, fly-fishing, wildlife watching/birding, ice climbing, Nordic and alpine skiing, snowmobiling, hunting, whitewater rafting and other water sports.

FIG 47. LAND OWNERSHIP IN YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY (IN ACRES)

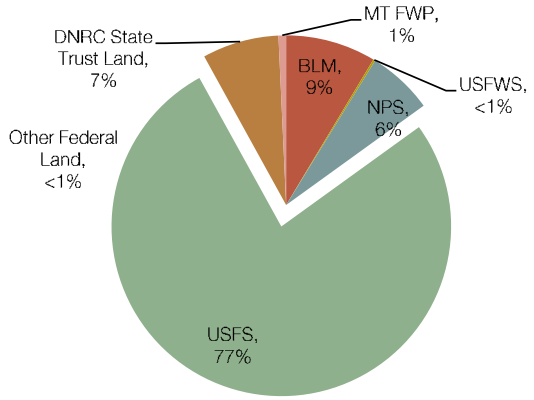


Source: Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2013.

Approximately 42% of land in Yellowstone Country is federal and state land, while majority of the region is private land at 58%; there is no Tribal land in the region, although the Crow Tribal Nation borders the region to the east (Figure 46). In total, Southwest Montana has approximately 3 million acres of public land. Of the public land, 91% is federal land with the Forest Service managing nearly 77% of the public land in the region, while about 8% is state land (Figure 47). The Bureau of Land Management manages 9% of the public land and DNRC manages another 7%, while the National Park Service manages 6% of the public land in the region. The region has two national forests spanning 2.3 million acres, four states parks, the Lee Metcalf and Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Areas, four wildlife management areas, 67 fishing access sites, and two National Wildlife Refuges. There is over 2,400 miles of trails in the region. Overall, Southwest Montana residents enjoy 23.4 acres of public land per person.

There are also a number of local recreation agencies in the Yellowstone region that provide close-to-home, frontcountry opportunities for residents and visitors. There are 54 communities throughout the region, including the larger cities Bozeman, Belgrade, and Livingston. At least six local city and county municipalities have a parks and recreation department and actively manage parks and open space, including Bozeman, Belgrade, Livingston, and West Yellowstone, as well as Gallatin and Park Counties.

FIG 48. PUBLIC LAND OWNERSHIP IN YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY



Source: Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2013.

RECREATION AND TOURISM

In 2012, over 3.8 million nonresident visitors spent at least one night in Yellowstone Country, about 35.6% of all non-residents visitors and the most of any region. According to the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, nonresident visitors had over $919.4 million in expenditures related to their trip. This directly supported $627.4 million of economic activity in the region, created 8,400 jobs, generated $202 million in employee compensation, and supported an additional $360.8 million of indirect economic activity. The total contribution of nonresident spending to the Yellowstone Country regional economy was $988.2 million, with $78.7 million generated in state and local taxes. In Gallatin County specifically, total non-resident spending was over $558.8 million, which directly supported $335.3 million of economic activity. In Park County, non-resident spending was $202.1 million, which directly supported $118.2 million of economic activity in the region.

In Yellowstone Country, 72% of non-resident visitors participated in scenic driving. The rest of the top five outdoor recreation activities include: wildlife watching (52%), nature photography (52%), day hiking (45%), and visiting other historical sites (31%).

For Montana resident travel, the following is a table of the top 10 activities by resident travelers for Yellowstone Country. Rock climbing and downhill skiing were the top activities. Among the regions, Yellowstone was most popular for road biking, with Park County the top county to spend nights in (16%). The region was also the most popular for rock climbing, downhill skiing, and snowshoeing. The region was also tied with Glacier Country for most popular region for cross country skiing at 32%. Other popular activities include nature photography and snowmobiling.

Recreation needs for the region were also identified in the 2012 Public Recreational Use Survey by ITRR. The results are presented by top uses, top needs, and those activities that had more people saying there was a need to increase than those who felt the facility/area was adequate. About 84% of respondents used hiking trails in Yellowstone Country in the last year, followed by walking/jogging/biking paths (81%). When asked to rate their use of public lands and areas in the region on a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5 being the most use), recreationists in Yellowstone most often use national forests (mean 3.61), rivers and streams (3.38), National Park land (3.35), natural lakes (3.14), State Park (3.05). The top facility/area need in the region is bike lanes, and the highest response for increase is walking/jogging/biking paths. Rifle/handgun ranges, sledding/tubing areas, and dog parks also ranked high for need.

TOP FACILITY/AREA USES

- HIKING TRAILS
- WALKING/JOGGING/BIKING PATHS
- CAMPGROUNDS WITHOUT HOOKUPS
- NATURAL OR WILD AREAS
- PICNIC AREAS

TOP FACILITY/AREA NEEDS

- BIKE LANES
- RIFLE/HANDGUN RANGES
- INTERPRETIVE TRAILS
- SLEDDING/TUBING AREAS
- DOG PARKS
- OPEN SPACE AREAS

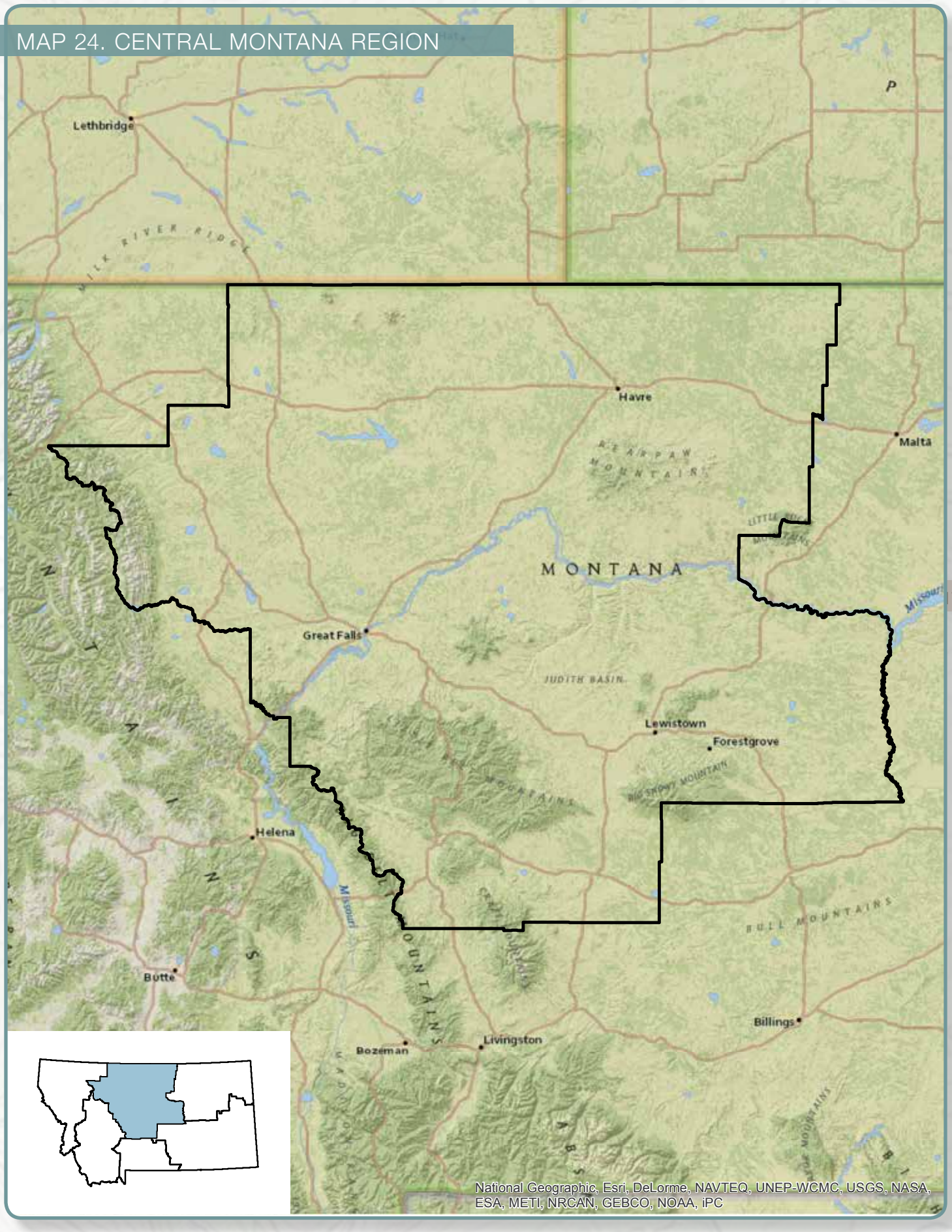
HIGH RESPONSE FOR NEED TO INCREASE

- WALKING/JOGGING/BIKING PATHS
- NATURAL OR WILD AREAS
- CAMPGROUND WITH HOOKUPS

CENTRAL MONTANA

Central Montana includes 13 counties encompassing 21 million acres or 33,000 square miles, making it the second largest SCORP region. The Central region is known for its wide-open spaces where the Rocky Mountains meet the plains, and where recreational and cultural opportunities are abound with rich Native American history and a rugged Western, pioneer past. The region is bordered on the west with Glacier National Park and the striking and craggy Rocky Mountain Front, which is also known as the "Backbone of the World." Whether residents and visitors paddle a canoe down the wild and scenic, history-steeped Missouri River, camp along its White Cliffs or watch the magical spring migration of snow geese flocking to the waters of Freezout Lake, this region is full of stunning diversions. Grizzly bears frequent the rolling plains, and elk and walleye are abundant throughout the region, making it a top hunting and angling destination. The region is also home for three Tribal Nations: the Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation, Fort Belknap Reservation's Assiniboine and Gros Ventre Tribes, and the Blackfeet Nation.

MAP 24. CENTRAL MONTANA REGION



TBL 17. CENTRAL MONTANA PROJECTED POPULATIONS BY COUNTY, 2010 TO 2030

COUNTY	2010	2020	2030	% CHANGE 2010 - 2030
BLAINE	6,495	6,907	7,199	11%
CASCADE	81,509	90,176	96,502	18%
CHOUTEAU	5,813	5,708	5,433	-7%
FERGUS	11,594	11,319	11,386	-2%
HILL	16,161	18,272	18,955	17%
JUDITH BASIN	2,069	2,244	2,318	12%
LIBERTY	2,347	2,408	2,378	1%
MEAGHER	1,890	1,906	1,914	1%
PETROLEUM	488	675	795	63%
PONDERA	6,173	6,777	7,143	16%
TETON	6,088	6,313	6,361	4%
TOOLE	5,346	5,715	5,711	7%
WHEATLAND	2,162	2,625	2,799	29%
REGIONAL TOTAL	148,135	161,045	168,894	14%

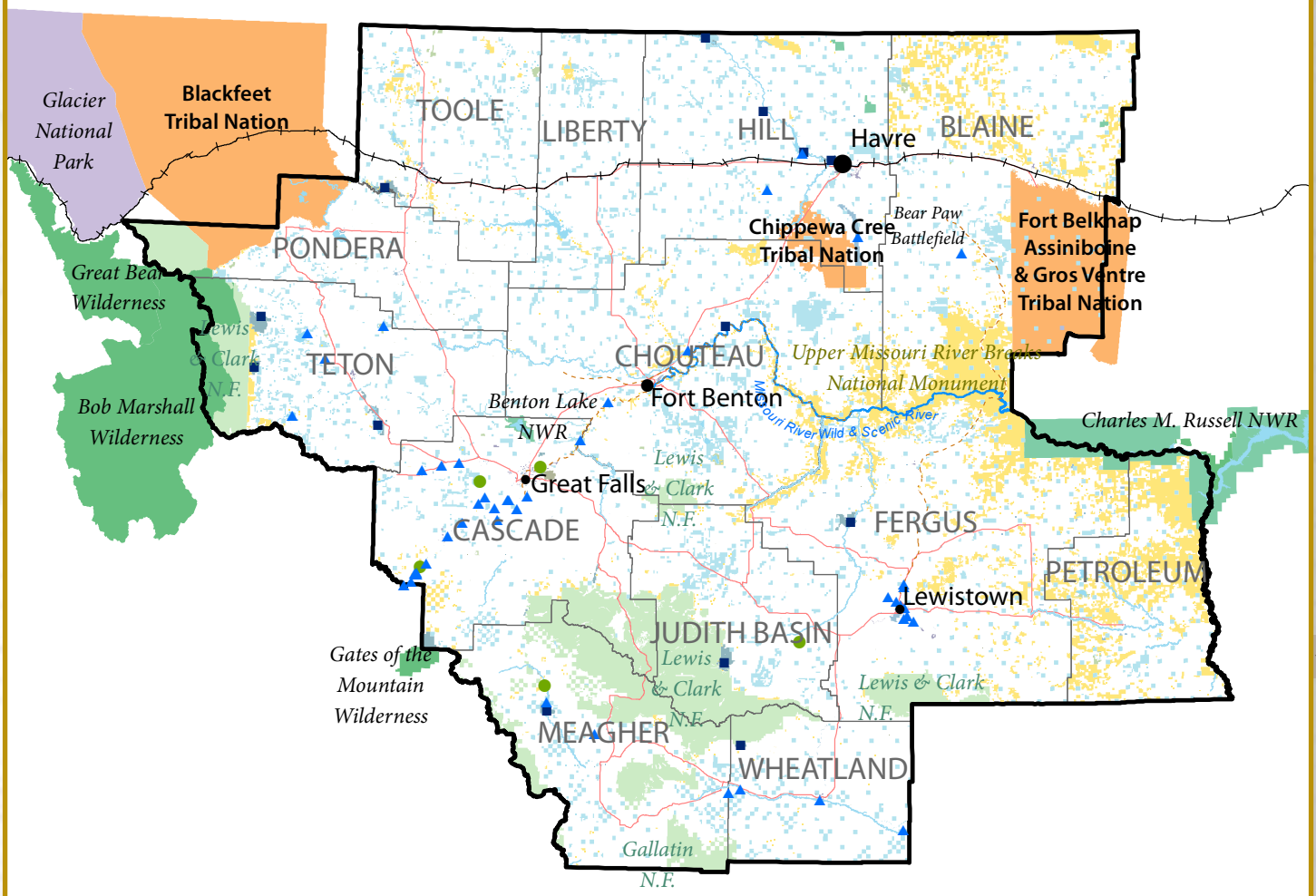
Source: Montana Census and Economic Information Center, 2013

POPULATION

Central Montana contains over 148,000 people as of the 2010 census, with 4.3 people per square mile, the second least dense SCORP region after Missouri River Country. By 2020, the population is projected to gain another 13,000 people, and by 2030 the population is projected to reach over 168,000 people, an increase of 14% from 2010 (Table 17). Cascade County, the most populated county, is projected to grow 18% from 2010 to 2030. Petroleum and Wheatland counties, while small in population, are projected to have the highest percent change in population at 38% and 29% growth respectively. Still, both counties are projected to have populations under 3,000.

Great Falls is the largest city in the region with 58,000 people, and the third largest in the state. The Great Falls metropolitan area has over 80,000 people. From 2000 to 2010, Great Falls grew by just 3% with a net gain of just 1,800 residents. Other minor cities include Havre, Lewistown, and Shelby. The region is home to the Malmstrom Air Force Base, and higher education institutions including the Great Falls College and the private University of Great Falls, Montana State University-Northern in Havre, and Tribal colleges Aaniiih Nakoda College and Stone Child College.

MAP 25. CENTRAL MONTANA RECREATION



Legend

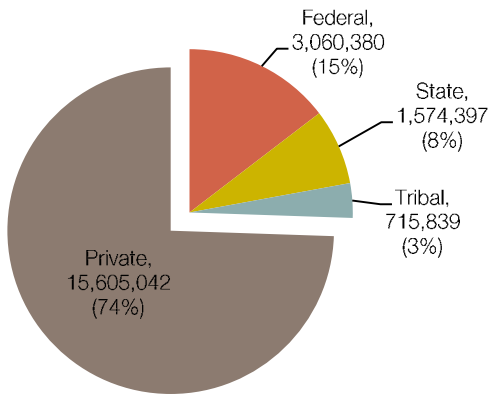
- US Forest Service
- National Park Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Bureau of Land Management
- Tribal Nation
- Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
- Montana State Trust Lands
- National Wildlife Refuge
- Wilderness Area
- Montana State Parks
- Fishing Access Sites
- Wildlife Management Areas
- National Historic Trails
- Wild and Scenic Rivers
- Major Roads & Highways
- High Line Railroad (Amtrak)
- Counties

0 12.5 25 Miles

PUBLIC LANDS AND RECREATION RESOURCES

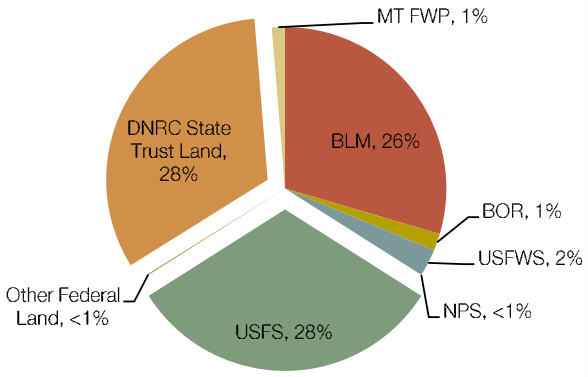
Federal, state, Tribal and local government agencies all manage recreation resources Central Montana. The region offers an abundance of recreational and cultural activities, including but not limited to: camping, fishing, golfing, ghost towns, hiking & backpacking, hunting, rafting and canoeing, and winter activities. Lewis & Clark history is rich in this region with many sites along the Missouri River; the Missouri River; natural resources like the freshwater spring-fed Giant Springs State Park and the Rocky Mountain Front with world class scenic views and watchable wildlife as well an abundance of dinosaur fossils which are also found throughout Central Montana; as well as cultural sites like the Bear Paw Battlefield, First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park, and Fort Assinniboine Historic Site.

FIG 49. LAND OWNERSHIP IN CENTRAL MONTANA (IN ACRES)



Source: Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2013.

FIG 50. PUBLIC LAND OWNERSHIP IN CENTRAL MONTANA



Source: Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2013.

Central Montana is majority private land. About 25% of the land is public land, with an additional 3% of the land managed by Tribes (Figure 48). In total, the Central region has 5.3 million acres of public land. Of this, 57% is federal land with the Forest Service managing nearly 28% of the public land in the region and the Bureau of Land Management managing 27% (Figure 49). About 29% of the public land is state land, with the majority managed through DNRC as State Trust Land. The region includes the majority of the Lewis & Clark National Forest spanning 1.4 million acres, five states parks, four wilderness Areas including the Bob Marshall Wilderness, six national wildlife refuges, 13 wildlife management areas, and 45 fishing access sites. There are over 1,600 miles of trails in the region. Overall, Central Montana residents enjoy 35.8 acres of public land per person.

There are also a number of local recreation agencies in the Central region that provide close-to-home, frontcountry opportunities for residents and visitors. There are 129 communities throughout the region, including the larger cities of Great Falls and Havre. At least six local city and county municipalities have a parks and recreation department and actively manage parks and open space, including Great Falls, Havre and Lewistown, as well as Cascade and Hill Counties.

RECREATION AND TOURISM

In 2012, over 1.1 million nonresident visitors spent at least one night in Central Montana, about 10.6% of all non-residents visitors. According to the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, nonresident visitors had over $344.4 million in expenditures related to their trip. This directly supported $246.5 million of economic activity in the region, created 2,930 jobs, generated $58.6 million in employee compensation, and supported an additional $120.4 million of indirect economic activity. The total contribution of nonresident spending to the Central Montana regional economy was $366.9 million, with $28.0 million generated in state and local taxes. In Cascade County specifically, total non-resident spending was $230.3 million, which directly supported $168.5 million of economic activity.

In Central Montana, 66% of non-resident visitors participated in scenic driving. The rest of the top five outdoor recreation activities include: nature photography (38%), wildlife watching (35%), car/RV camping (33%), and day hiking (30%).

For Montana resident travel, the following is a table of the top 10 activities by resident travelers for Central Montana. Rock hounding was the top activity, followed by ice fishing. Among the regions, Central Montana was most popular for ice fishing, with Meagher County the top county to spend nights in (13%). Also popular was off road ATV recreation, hunting, and horseback riding. In general, Central Montana had lower percentage of overnights for the activities than Glacier, Yellowstone, and Southwest Montana.

Recreation needs for the region were also identified in the 2012 Public Recreational Use Survey by ITRR. The results are presented by top uses, top needs, and those activities that had more people saying there was a need to increase than those who felt the facility/area was adequate. About 78% of respondents used walking/jogging/biking paths in Central Montana in the last year, followed by hiking trails (70%). When asked to rate their use of public lands and areas in the region on a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5 being the most use), recreationists in Central Montana most often use national forests (mean 3.38), rivers and streams (mean 3.32), city parks (3.11), National Park lands (3.11), and State Parks (3.05) and natural lakes (3.05). The top facility/area need in the region is bike lanes, and the highest response for increase is walking/jogging/biking paths. Rifle/handgun ranges and sledding/tubing areas also ranked high for need.

TOP FACILITY/AREA USES

- WALKING/JOGGING/BIKING PATHS
- HIKING TRAILS
- PICNIC AREAS
- SCENIC BYWAYS
- CAMPGROUNDS WITHOUT HOOKUPS

TOP FACILITY/AREA NEEDS

- BIKE LANES
- SLEDDING/TUBING AREAS
- RIFLE/HANDGUN RANGES
- INTERPRETIVE TRAILS

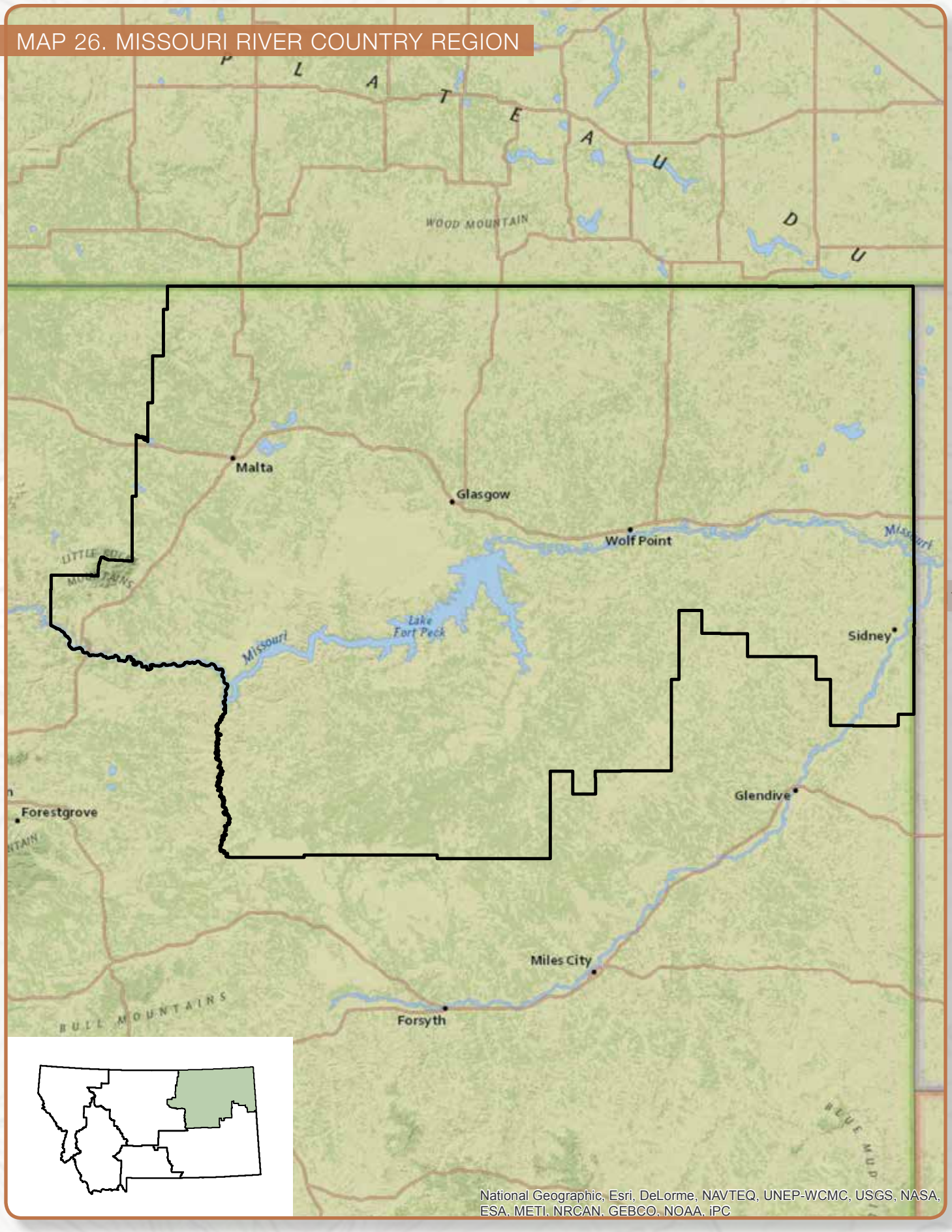
HIGH RESPONSE FOR NEED TO INCREASE

- WALKING/JOGGING/BIKING PATHS
- HIKING TRAILS
- HERITAGE/HISTORIC AREAS
- SCENIC BYWAYS

MISSOURI RIVER COUNTRY

Missouri River Country includes eight counties encompassing 16 million acres or 25,000 square miles. The region is named after the Missouri River, which flows eastward through the region before converging with the Yellowstone River in North Dakota. The unspoiled landscape offers unique outdoor experiences for sportsman, anglers, and those looking to get off the beaten path. Antelope, whitetail and mule deer, elk, turkey and other game keep the hunters busy while fisherman go casting for walleye, small-mouth bass, ling and chinook salmon. It's also a historic place where recreationists can follow the trail of Lewis & Clark and the Corps of Discovery and view world-class dinosaur fossils through a variety of geological formations, including the Hell Creek and Judith River formations highlighted in the region's badlands. The region is also home to the Fort Peck reservation, the largest reservation in the state and home to the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribal Nation. A small portion of the Assiniboine and Gros Ventre Tribes' Fort Belknap Reservation is on the region's western boundary.

MAP 26. MISSOURI RIVER COUNTRY REGION

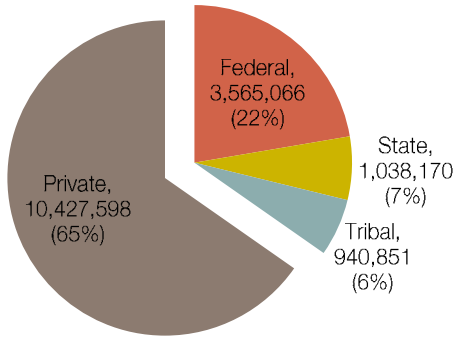


TBL 18. CENTRAL MONTANA PROJECTED POPULATIONS BY COUNTY, 2010 TO 2030

COUNTY	2010	2020	2030	% CHANGE 2010 - 2030
DANIELS	1,750	1,979	2,021	15%
GARFIELD	1,185	1,464	1,528	29%
MCCONE	1,738	1,955	2,005	15%
PHILLIPS	4,267	4,276	4,234	-1%
RICHLAND	9,753	12,294	13,357	37%
ROOSEVELT	10,458	11,232	11,335	8%
SHERIDAN	3,383	3,585	3,711	10%
VALLEY	7,376	8,074	8,178	11%
REGIONAL TOTAL	39,910	44,859	46,369	16%

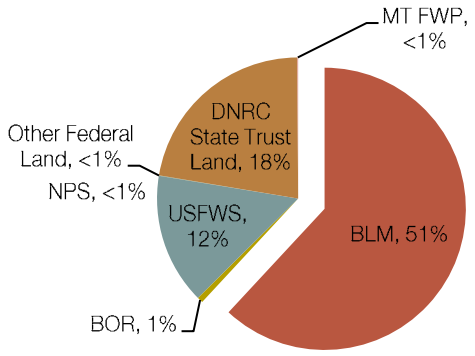
Source: Montana Census and Economic Information Center, 2013

FIG 51. LAND OWNERSHIP IN MISSOURI RIVER COUNTRY (IN ACRES)



Source: Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2013.

FIG 52. PUBLIC LAND OWNERSHIP IN MISSOURI RIVER COUNTRY



Source: Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2013.

POPULATION

The Missouri River region contains 40,000 people and 1.95 people per square mile, making it the least populated and least dense region of the state. By 2020, the population is projected to gain another 5,000 people, and by 2030 the population is projected to be 46,000, an increase of 16% from 2010 (Table 18). Roosevelt County, the most populated county in the region, is expected to increase by 8% over the next 20 years, while smaller counties Richland, Garfield, Daniels, and McCone are expected to increase between 15% to 37%. This is related to the increase in natural resource extraction from hydraulic fracking, and the influx of workers to the region.

Sidney is the largest city in the region with 5,200 people, followed by Glasgow and Wolf Point. From 2000 to 2010, Sidney increased by 9%, while a majority of the other cities decreased. Fort Peck Community College is the main higher education institution in the region.

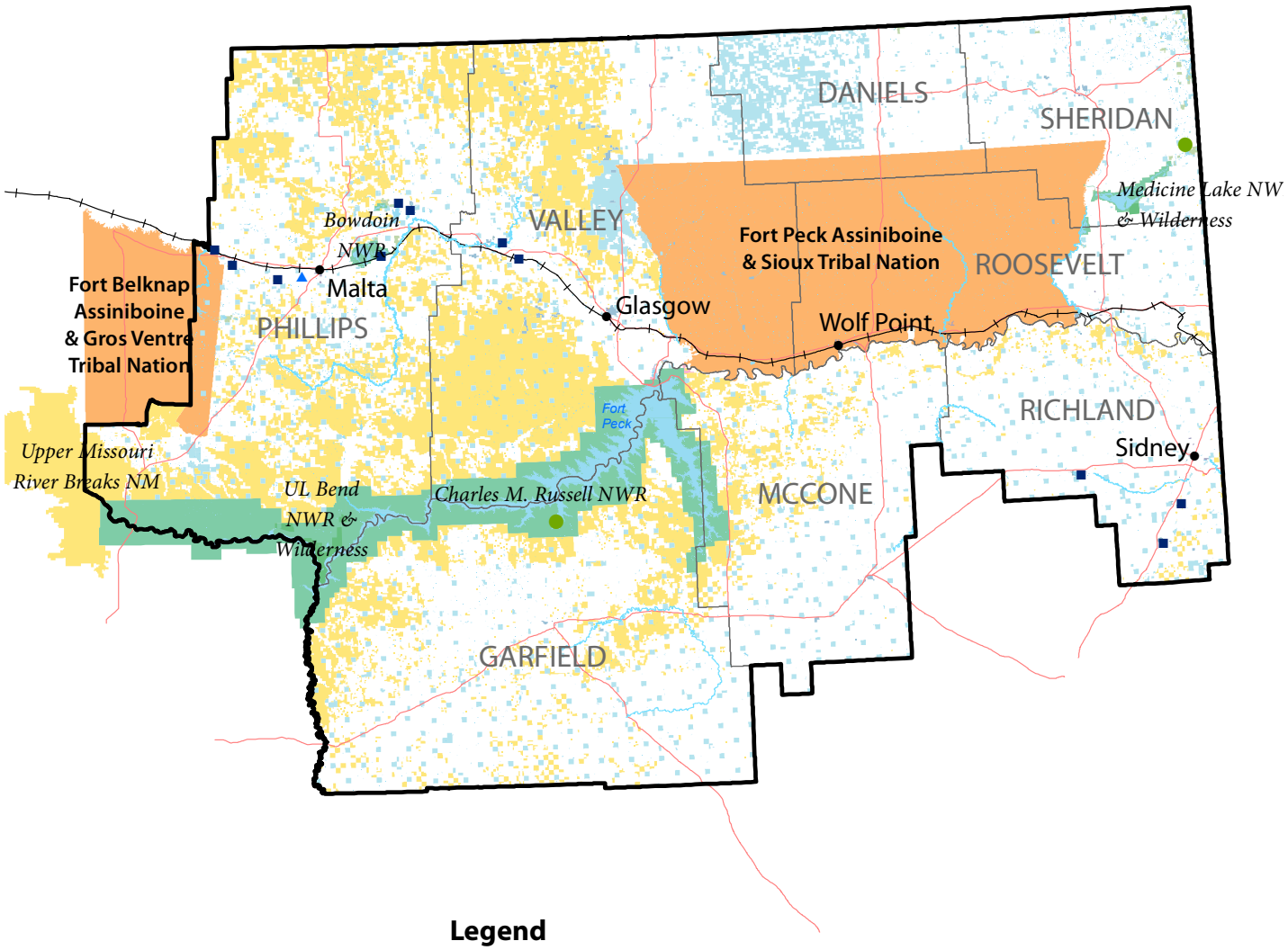
PUBLIC LANDS AND RECREATION RESOURCES

Federal, state, Tribal and local government agencies all manage recreation resources the Missouri River Country. The region offers an abundance of recreational and cultural activities, including but not limited to: hunting, fishing, boating, hiking, golfing, canoeing, bird watching, rock hounding, photography, and dinosaur digging. A number of natural and cultural sites include the Charles M. Russell, Bowdoin, and Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuges; the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument; the Montana Dinosaur Trail; Native American pow wows, Fort Peck Reservoir; the American Prairie Reserve; and Hell Creek and Brush Lake State Parks.

The Missouri River region is majority private land. About 34% of the land is public land, with an additional 6% of the land managed by Tribes (Figure 50). In total, the region has 5.5 million acres of public land. Of the public land, 64% is federal land with the BLM managing 51% of the public land in the region, while the USFWS managing the remainder (Figure 51). About 19% of the public land is state land, with the majority managed through DNRC as State Trust Land. The region includes the Upper Missouri River Breaks, five national wildlife refuges including the Charles M. Russell NWR which extends 125 miles along the Missouri River and covers 1.1 million acres, two states parks, two wilderness areas, 11 wildlife management areas, and 17 fishing access sites. There are over 300 miles of trails in the region, but no national forests. Overall, Missouri River Country residents enjoy 137.8 acres of public land per person—the largest in the state.

There are 71 communities throughout the region, including the larger cities of Sidney, Glasgow, and Wolf Point. As the region is very rural, there are no municipalities that have a parks and recreation department, however there are a few municipalities that manage parks and recreation facilities through a public works department.

MAP 27. MISSOURI RIVER COUNTRY RECREATION



Legend

- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Bureau of Land Management
- US Army Corps of Engineers (Fort Peck)
- Tribal Nation
- Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
- Montana State Trust Lands
- National Wildlife Refuge
- Wilderness Area
- Montana State Parks
- Fishing Access Sites
- Wildlife Management Areas
- National Historic Trails
- Wild and Scenic Rivers
- Major Roads & Highways
- High Line Railroad
- Counties

0 12.5 25 Miles

RECREATION AND TOURISM

In 2012, over 370,000 nonresident visitors spent at least one night in Missouri River Country, about 3.5% of all non-residents visitors and the least visited region for non-residents. According to the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, nonresident visitors had over $63.9 million in expenditures related to their trip. This directly supported $37.7 million of economic activity in the region, created 500 jobs, generated $9.9 million in employee compensation, and supported an additional $12.3 million of indirect economic activity. The total contribution of nonresident spending to the Missouri River Country regional economy was $50.0 million, with $5.0 million generated in state and local taxes.

In Missouri River Country, 77% of non-resident visitors participated in scenic driving. The rest of the top five outdoor recreation activities include: wildlife watching (49%), car/RV camping (48%), day hiking (43%), and nature photography (41%).

For Montana resident travel, the following is a table of the top 10 activities by resident travelers for Missouri River Country. Hunting was the top activity, followed by ice fishing. Among the regions, Missouri River Country was not the most popular for any activity, although Garfield County was one of the top five counties to spend nights in for hunting (4%). In general, Missouri River has lower visitation numbers than other regions, and as such, has lower participation rates for activities. Overall, activities around water and wildlife are popular in this region.

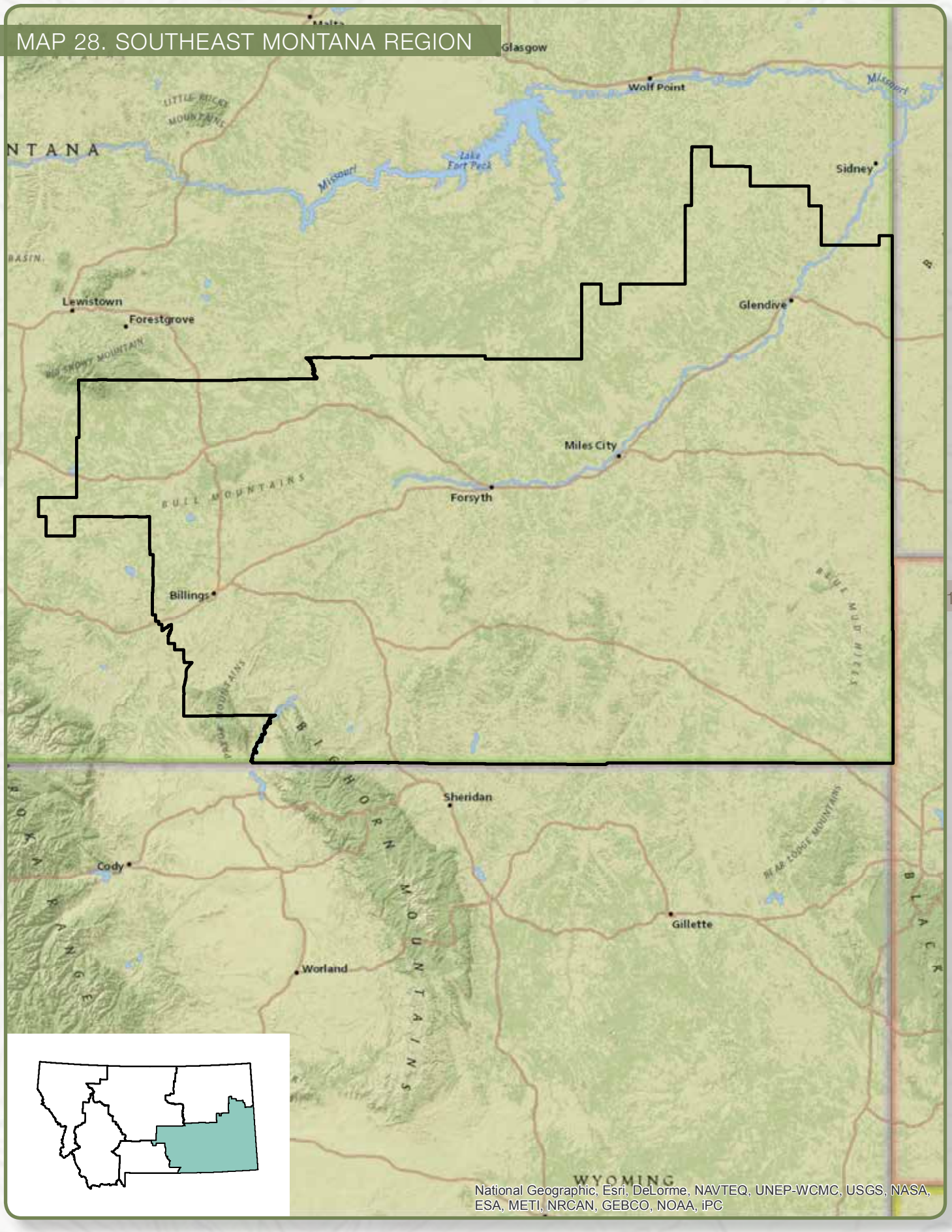
Recreation needs for the region were also identified in the 2012 Public Recreational Use Survey by ITRR. The results are presented by top uses, top needs, and those activities that had more people saying there was a need to increase than those who felt the facility/area was adequate. About 86% of respondents used walking/jogging/biking paths in the region in the last year, followed by hiking trails (70%). When asked to rate their use of public lands and areas in the region on a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5 being the most use), recreationists in this region most often use city/county open space (mean 3.07), rivers and streams (mean 3.01), State Parks (2.90), city parks (2.83), and national wildlife refuges (2.81). The top facility/area need in the region is interpretive trails, and the highest response for increase is walking/jogging/biking paths. Outdoor pools, sledding/tubing areas, playgrounds, and dog parks are also top needs. This suggests that community-oriented facilities are in great demand, perhaps speaking to the rural landscape, the low population, and the desire for people to connect over outdoor activities.

Chief Mtn
INDIAN
RESERVATION

SOUTHEAST MONTANA

Southeast Montana includes 13 counties encompassing 21.6 million acres or 33,750 square miles, the largest SCORP region in the state. The region is situated in the southeastern corner of the Montana, with North Dakota to the east and Wyoming to the south. It encompasses the wide open vistas like much of eastern Montana, with unique rimrock landscape and badlands throughout. It also has a number of island ranges jutting up from the plains, and is home to a large portion of the Yellowstone River's path through the state. The region is home to two tribes, the Crow and Northern Cheyenne, and has a strong presence of Native American history and present communities made famous by battles, as well as grand natural landscapes including the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area. Eastern Montana badlands are also found, including the Hell Creek formation that contains spectacular dinosaur fossils.

MAP 28. SOUTHEAST MONTANA REGION



POPULATION

Southeast Montana has 205,000 people and 5.83 people per square mile. The population base is mostly located in Billings, the largest city in the region and the state. By 2020, the region is projected to gain another 28,000 people, and by 2030 the population is projected to be 245,000, an increase of 19% from 2010 (Table 18). Yellowstone County, the largest county in the region and home to Billings, is projected to increase 22% from 2010 to 2030 to a total of 180,000 residents. However, the counties with the largest projected population growth are the smaller counties close to the North Dakota border, including Fallon, Custer, Musselshell, Carter, and Prairie counties—all of which are projected to grow by 25% or more, particularly Fallon County which has a projected growth of 49% from 2010 to 2030. This large growth is projected to be related to the increase in natural resource extraction from hydraulic fracking in the Bakken Formation, and the influx of workers migrating to the region.

Billings is the largest city in the region and in the state at 104,000 people, while the Billings Metropolitan Area has a population of 163,000 people. From 2000 to 2010, the city grew by 16%, an increase of over 14,000 new residents. Other large cities include Miles City, Laurel, Glendive, and Hardin. Over the same time period, Laurel increased by 7% and Glendive by 4%, while Miles City decreased by 1%. Higher education institutions include Montana State University-Billings, Dawson Community College, Miles Community College, the private Rocky Mountain College, and two Tribal colleges: Little Big Horn College and Chief Dull Knife College.

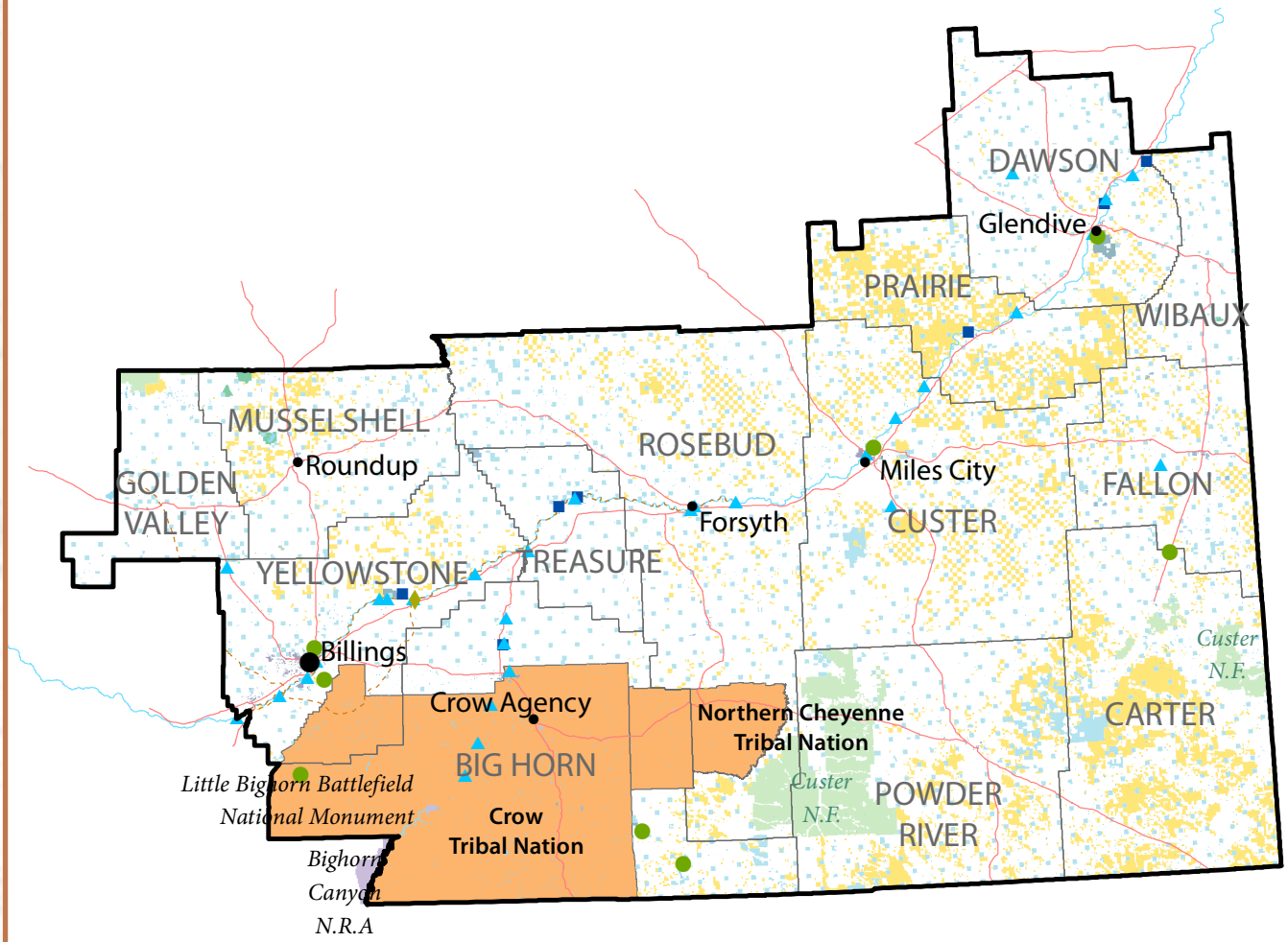
Southeast Montana has two Tribal Nations, the Crow and Northern Cheyenne. From 2000 to 2010, the Crow reservation decreased by 3% to a population of 6,700 residents, while the Northern Cheyenne increased by 8% to a population of 4,800 residents. Since 1990, both Tribes have seen population growth, particularly the Northern Cheyenne which has increased 23% from 1990 to 2010. The Crow reservation grew 5% during that same time period.

TBL 19. SOUTHESAST MONTANA PROJECTED POPULATIONS BY COUNTY, 2010 TO 2030

COUNTY	2010	2020	2030	% CHANGE 2010 - 2030
BIG HORN	12,925	12,780	11,925	-8%
CARTER	1,157	1,388	1,480	28%
CUSTER	11,710	14,119	15,244	30%
DAWSON	8,939	9,618	9,917	11%
FALLON	2,891	3,992	4,312	49%
GOLDEN VALLEY	886	757	804	-9%
MUSSELSHELL	4,550	5,585	5,825	28%
POWDER RIVER	1,737	1,846	1,882	8%
PRAIRIE	1,190	1,394	1,486	25%
ROSEBUD	9,264	9,399	9,413	2%
TREASURE	721	821	865	20%
WIBAUX	1,002	1,120	1,203	20%
YELLOWSTONE	148,450	170,586	180,520	22%
REGIONAL TOTAL	205,422	233,405	244,876	19%

Source: Montana Census and Economic Information Center, 2013

MAP 29. SOUTHEAST MONTANA RECREATION



Legend

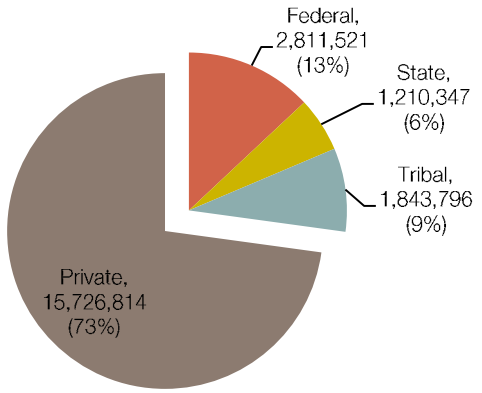
- US Forest Service
- National Park Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Bureau of Land Management
- Tribal Nation
- Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
- Montana State Trust Lands
- National Wildlife Refuge
- National Monument
- Montana State Parks
- Fishing Access Sites
- Wildlife Management Areas
- National Historic Trails
- Major Roads & Highways
- Counties

0 12.5 25 Miles

PUBLIC LANDS AND RECREATION RESOURCES

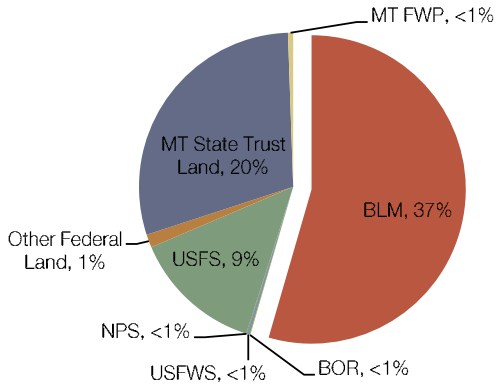
Federal, state, Tribal and local government agencies all manage recreation resources in Southeast Montana. The region offers an abundance of recreational and cultural activities, including but not limited to: hunting, fishing, boating, hiking, golfing, canoeing, bird watching, rock hounding, photography, and dinosaur digging. A number of natural and cultural sites include the Bighorn River and Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area, Custer National Forest, Makoshika State Park, Rosebud Battlefield State Park and Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, Pompeys Pillar National Monument, and dinosaur adventure in the Hell Creek formation. The Crow and Northern Cheyenne reservations also offer unique cultural activities, including pow wows, tours and historical sites, like Chief Plenty Coups State Park.

FIG 53. LAND OWNERSHIP IN SOUTHEAST MONTANA (IN ACRES)



Source: Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2013.

FIG 54. PUBLIC LAND OWNERSHIP IN SOUTHEAST MONTANA



Source: Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2013.

Southeast Montana is majority private land. About 27% of the land is public land, with an additional 9% of the land managed by Tribes (Figure 52). In total, the Southeast Montana region has 5.8 million acres of public land. Of the public land, 47% is federal land with the BLM managing 37% of the public land in the region, while the Forest Service manages 9% (Figure 53). About 21% of the public land is state land, with the majority managed through DNRC as State Trust Land. The region includes the Custer National Forest, two national wildlife refuges, eight states parks including Makoshika State Park, the largest state park in the state, seven wildlife management areas, and 33 fishing access sites. There are over 1,600 miles of trails in the region. Overall, Southeast Montana residents enjoy 28.2 acres of public land per person.

There are also a number of local recreation agencies in the Glacier region that provide close-to-home opportunities for residents and visitors. There are 95 communities throughout the region, including the larger cities of Billings, Miles City, Laurel, and Glendive. Five local city and county municipalities have a parks and recreation department and actively manage parks and open space including the Billings, Glendive, and Yellowstone County.

RECREATION AND TOURISM

In 2012, over 2.1 million nonresident visitors spent at least one night in Southeast Montana, about 19.9% of all non-residents visitors. According to the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, nonresident visitors had over $616.6 million in expenditures related to their trip. This directly supported $496.3 million of economic activity in the region, created 5,370 jobs, generated $128.4 million in employee compensation, and supported an additional $265.7 million of indirect economic activity. The total contribution of nonresident spending to the Southeast Montana was $762 million, with $54.3 million generated in state and local taxes. In Yellowstone County specifically, total non-resident spending was $445.1 million, which directly supported $349.1 million of economic activity. The total non-resident spending in Custer County was $74.8 million, which directly supported $40.3 million of economic activity in the region.

In Southeast Montana, 65% of non-resident visitors participated in scenic driving. The rest of the top five outdoor recreation activities include: nature photography (37%), wildlife watching (34%), visiting other historical sites (32%), and day hiking (31%).

For Montana resident travel, the following is a table of the top 10 activities by resident travelers for Southeast Montana. Golfing was the top activity for the region. Road biking, hunting, and horseback riding were also top activities. Among the regions, Southeast Montana was not the most popular for any activity, although Yellowstone County was one of the top five counties to spend nights in for golfing (16%), snowmobiling (16%), hunting (8%), and scenic driving (6%). Fallon County was also one of the top five counties for road biking (12%) and horseback riding (6%).

Recreation needs for the region were also identified in the 2012 Public Recreational Use Survey by ITRR. The results are presented by top uses, top needs, and those activities that had more people saying there was a need to increase than those who felt the facility/area was adequate. About 75% of respondents used walking/jogging/biking paths in the Southeast Montana region in the last year, followed by hiking trails (65%). When asked to rate their use of public lands and areas in the region on a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5 being the most use), recreationists in this region most often use city parks (mean 3.13), State Parks (3.09), national forests (3.05), rivers and streams (3.05), and National Park lands (2.97). The top facility/area need in the region is walking/jogging/biking paths, and the highest response for increase is hiking trails. Southeast Montana had the most needs, with outdoor pools, sledding/tubing areas, playgrounds, and rifle/handgun ranges also among the top needs. This suggests that community-oriented facilities are in great demand, perhaps speaking to the rural landscape, the low population, and the desire for people to connect over outdoor activities.

TOP FACILITY/AREA USES

- WALKING/JOGGING/BIKING PATHS
- HIKING TRAILS
- PICNIC AREAS
- CAMPGROUNDS WITHOUT HOOKUPS
- SCENIC BYWAYS

TOP FACILITY/AREA NEEDS

- WALKING/JOGGING/BIKING PATHS
- NATURAL OR WILD AREAS
- BIKE LANES
- SLEDDING/TUBING AREAS
- OFF-ROAD ATV TRAILS
- OUTDOOR POOLS
- PLAYGROUNDS
- RIFLE/HANDGUN RANGES

HIGH RESPONSE FOR NEED TO INCREASE

- HIKING TRAILS