



# MONTANA'S BIG ELK DIVIDE

COLLABORATIVE FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION PROJECT PROPOSAL

HELENA AND TOWNSEND RANGER DISTRICTS  
HELENA-LEWIS & CLARK NATIONAL FOREST



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## CFLRP Tier 2 Proposal for Montana's Big Elk Divide (MBED) Initiative

### Proposal Overview

#### Project Map

The Montana's Big Elk Divide Initiative Mapbook is a compilation of eight maps that demonstrate the ecological, economic, and social conditions of the Montana's Big Elk Divide landscape. Below is a brief description of each map within Attachment A: Mapbook.

*Map 1: Project Overview* – This map shows the project boundary, land ownership, local communities, and landscape management highlights.

*Map 2: Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)* – This map shows the MBED's communities in relation to the area's WUI risk.

*Map 3: National Wildfire Hazard Potential* – This map depicts the relative potential for wildfire that will be difficult for suppression resources to contain. Map includes significant wildfires (fires greater than 100 acres and/or required significant suppression resources to contain) from 1988 to present.

*Map 4: Fire Risk or Benefit* – This map displays data from the regional quantitative wildfire risk assessment. Values displayed are based on the net loss or benefit to the assets and resources within the landscape. This net value is grouped into categories: low or moderate benefit, and low, moderate, or high loss.

*Map 5: Insect and Disease Hazards* – This map shows the effect of insect and disease on tree mortality in the MBED landscape.

*Map 6: Watershed Condition* – This map shows the Watershed Condition Framework rankings of MBED watersheds (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA] Forest Service 2011), the Clean Water Act water quality and Total Maximum Daily Load status of MBED streams (Montana [MT] Department of Environmental Quality [DEQ] 2018), and municipal watersheds in the MBED.

*Map 7: Vegetation and Fuels Projects* – Helena and Townsend Ranger Districts have 15 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)-complete projects and seven National Forest Management Act (NFMA)/NEPA-pending projects within MBED.

*Map 8: Local Forest Product Infrastructure* – This map provides the locations of the local mills in the area of the project.

### Landscape Boundary

Montana's Big Elk Divide Initiative (hereafter referred to as MBED) encompasses 1,225,435 acres in central Montana and proposes a comprehensive restoration approach to the discontinuous mountain ranges of this landscape. The Helena and Townsend Ranger Districts of the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest (HLF) have combined efforts at a landscape scale to undertake and complete restoration work to meet the needs of the surrounding communities and the subsequent demands on MBED ecosystems. Geographically, MBED includes the Continental Divide landscape, the Big Belt Mountains, and the Elkhorn Mountains and spans five counties: Powell, Lewis and Clark, Jefferson, Broadwater and Meagher, along with the capital city of Helena

and numerous towns and smaller communities. Situated within the Upper Missouri River and the Upper Clark Fork basins, MBED also includes special management areas such as the Gates of the Mountains Wilderness Area, the Elkhorn Wildlife Management Unit, the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, and the South Helena Recreation Area (Map 1).

Approximately 60% of MBED is classified as WUI, as defined by local and regional [Community Wildfire Protection Plans](#) (CWPP) (Map 2). The potential for severe wildfire (Maps 3 and 4), particularly in the WUI and municipal watersheds, is the most significant disturbance threat on this landscape. Approximately 52% of the National Forest System lands (NFS) landscape is classified at-risk (net loss) from a potential severe wildfire (Map 4). Severe wildfires on this landscape could have significant social, economic, and ecological consequences to communities, watersheds, and habitat. This risk is exacerbated by widespread tree mortality brought about by insects and disease (Map 5). On this landscape, approximately 56% of the NFS lands have been affected by epidemic levels of insects and disease mortality. There are important implications of insect induced tree mortality on firefighter safety and suppression tactics, including, safety zone size, escape route designation and escape time, and overall suppression strategy that have consequences for wildland fire personnel. Focusing treatments in areas affected by insect and disease will effectively mitigate these safety concerns. Additionally, outside of a wildfire scenario, these conditions affect public safety; specifically, the Helena Ranger District has experienced public fatalities related to tree strikes.

Approximately 38% of the NFS landscape is classified moderate to high benefit from wildfire (Map 4), with the majority of these areas being classified lands (e.g., wilderness, proposed wilderness, or inventoried roadless areas). Current and proposed projects (Map 7) within the MBED have been prioritized utilizing regional quantitative wildfire risk and hazard assessments (Maps 3 and 4). This strategic project placement includes treatments adjacent to these classified lands, which will allow opportunities over time for natural fire occurrence and provide fuel conditions that benefit fire management operations. This strategy aligns with the current and proposed Forest Plan's fire management desired conditions: 1) allowing fire to function in its natural ecological role across the landscape, and 2) providing conditions for low severity surface fire within WUI and minimize risk to high value resources.

In addition to these forest health effects, the majority of watersheds in MBED are functioning at risk or impaired due to impacts to water quality and riparian and aquatic habitat from multiple sources, including historic mining, grazing, and roads (Map 6).

To reach our restoration objectives under MBED, the Helena and Townsend Ranger Districts (HelTown) which makes up 52% of MBED will actively treat approximately 395,000 acres (Table 1) across more than 640,000 acres of National Forest System lands over the next 10 years (Map 7). Core treatments include: timber harvest, prescribed fire, noxious weeds treatments, road closures and rehabilitation, stream and wetland restoration, and fisheries and wildlife habitat improvements. The timber (commercial harvest) and fuels treatments (prescribed fire, chipping, mastication, slashing, and mechanical piling) are designed to modify vegetation across a larger landscape to minimize the threat of severe wildfires near or in WUI, while helping to support our local forest products infrastructure (Map 8). Watershed restoration treatments are designed to

move MBED watersheds toward a properly functioning condition, mitigate sediment delivery to streams, reduce water quality impairments, and maintain/improve riparian and aquatic habitat.

Coordinated landscape restoration has been ongoing over the last several decades on the Helena and Townsend Ranger Districts. In 2016, the Helena Ranger District was successful in receiving the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership funding to increase restoration within its surrounding communities, specifically around the Helena area—known as Capital 360—with strong collaborative involvement. Capital 360 is a focal area bringing agencies, organizations, stakeholders, and citizens together under a singular mission: to work together to effectively implement the tenets of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy across public and private lands in the Capital 360 area. The Capital 360 group identifies and coordinates areas of work, supports planning, assists in public outreach and leverages funds to treat hazardous fuels on all lands no matter jurisdiction (private, state, city, county and federal). The successes achieved under the Joint Chiefs' restoration projects have resulted in a strong foundation of partnership and collaboration with our partners, stakeholders, and communities from which we will launch MBED's Strategy.

To augment the work in the Capital 360 focal area, MBED's program of work will be collaboratively designed by the Big Elk Divide Restoration Committee (BEDRC) and USFS, along with over 25 other contributing partners and user groups, to reach an even larger landscape. The MBED looks at building on the successful fuels treatment strategy resulting from the Joint Chief's Capital 360 effort and accelerating implementation on National Forest System lands across this landscape over the next 10 years (FY2021–FY2031). Additionally, the Forest will coordinate its efforts, as is feasible, with the shared stewardship, Forest in Focus, and other applicable initiatives and collaborative tools that the Montana Forest Action Advisory Council—a group designated by the Montana Governor and co-chaired by the State Forester and Northern Region Regional Forester—incorporates into its Forest Action Plan that will be finalized this year.

*Table 1. Acres of Ownership and Estimated Acres of Treatment*

<b>Land owner or manager</b>	<b>Total acreage within proposed landscape under this ownership</b>	<b>Estimated total area to be treated in acres</b>
US Forest Service	639,034	394,451
Bureau of Land Management	98,600	13,100
Private	432,800	19,000
Local Government (Counties & Cities)	3,349	2,000
Other Federal Lands (BOR & DOD)	10,200	7,300
State of Montana	41,452	4,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>1,225,435</b>	<b>439,851</b>

Economic, Social, and Ecological Context

The current economic, social, and ecological landscape is defined according to local community demands and needs. As previously stated, MBED comprises five counties each of which has its

own expectations of the landscape. Some of these expectations are common to all counties while others are uniquely tied to local Forest constituents.

Economically and socially, timber and agriculture are the primary Forest products utilized by all five counties although there are local differences in the contributions of these Forest products to the respective county. MBED provides wood products for local mills, particularly in Broadwater, Powell, and Jefferson counties with timber jobs accounting for 25% of private employment in Powell County and 18% in Broadwater County. Agriculture-based employment, including livestock operations, comprises 18% in Meagher County, 13% in Broadwater County, and 11% in Powell County. Cattle are grazed across 66 allotments in MBED. Additionally, travel and tourism employment are above the national average in every county, ranging from 18% in Lewis and Clark County to as high as 39% in Meagher County.

Beyond employment, the abundance of outdoor recreational opportunities generates revenue that buoys local communities. According to National Visitor Use Monitoring (NVUM), more than 500,000 activities take place annually across MBED, over a third of which are related to hunting. The economic value of this activity has been calculated at roughly \$20 million (this reflects what people would be willing to pay and not actual income). Additionally, in 2018 fishing opportunities in and around MBED generated approximately \$52 million in state revenue (Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks).

As a result of HelTown's long-standing collaboration efforts, there is strong support within MBED communities for a landscape restoration strategy. A majority of the people who live or recreate in MBED agree that healthy forests are important to their overall quality of life and support active forest management. In the *Local Public Priorities and Preferences for Public Land Management in the Northern Region* survey, data show the following support and expectations of federal land managers, specifically within MBED:

- More than 50% support thinning forests and using prescribed fire near communities;
- 73% say recreation opportunities on public federal lands are important for tourism;
- 78% say it's important to provide timber for the timber industry;
- 84% say wildlife habitat is an important management consideration; and
- 93% say water quality is an important management consideration.

Ecologically, the current vegetation within MBED ranges from low elevation Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine, limber pine, and grass and shrublands to high elevation Engelmann spruce, subalpine fir, and whitebark pine. According to the *United States National Vegetation Classification*, the MBED occurs primarily within the Central Rocky Mountain Dry Lower Montane-Foothill Forest Group of the Rocky Mountain Forest & Woodland Division. Most of the vegetation communities in this group are fire-dependent and are characterized by frequent low intensity surface fires to moderate and high-severity fires depending on the respective vegetation community. Because of fire suppression, forests within MBED have become denser and more susceptible to insects and diseases as evidenced by extensive recent outbreaks of mountain pine beetle and spruce budworm (Map 5).

MBED is identified as a high priority for ecological restoration treatments in a variety of community and regional wildfire and population protection plans and other assessments.

According to the National Wildfire Hazard Potential map (Map 3), developed to inform evaluations of wildfire risk, the portion of MBED in and around population centers falls within the high to very high wildfire hazard potential.

Communities in and around the MBED are experiencing rapid population growth, sustained by an economy that relies heavily on federal lands. Population growth in the WUI poses challenges including the rising cost of protecting homes from wildfires, increased danger to wildland firefighters (City of Helena Resolution No. 3013-101), and the use of funds that might otherwise be used for restoration, recreation, and other activities. The population has increased by 88% in MBED counties since 1970, compared with 59% growth nationally (Headwaters Economics).

Recently, Forest Service staff engaged with local wildfire risk subject matter experts to conduct a wildfire hazard and risk assessment that includes MBED. These data, reflected in the *Lewis & Clark County Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire* (CPAW) and *Tri-County FireSafe Working Group's Regional CWPP*, highlight that counties can continue to anticipate population growth in wildfire-prone areas, particularly in the Helena Valley. As noted in both the recently updated Tri-County Regional CWPP and the county's *Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan*, climate change in the Northern Rockies is predicted to result in increased annual temperatures and longer summers. These changes will extend periods of drought, increase insect attacks, reduce fuel moisture content, and exacerbate fire behavior activity.

Watersheds within MBED are in critical need of restoration (Map 6). Roughly 1.2 million acres of the MBED were assessed under the *2011 Watershed Condition Framework*, nearly two-thirds of which ranked as functioning at risk, one-third as impaired, and only 3 percent as properly functioning. Under the Clean Water Act, the Montana DEQ has assessed 445 miles of stream within the MBED, of which 417 miles were found to have water quality impairments. On NFS lands, water quality is impacted primarily by mining, grazing, and road and trail development. Past severe wildfires in the MBED have resulted in debris flows and post-fire flooding that have seriously damaged infrastructure and delivered sediment to downstream waters. Loss of beaver habitat and degraded riparian condition have further reduced the ability of stream systems to absorb and attenuate post-fire flooding, increasing the risk of downstream damage in the case of severe wildfires.

Moreover, MBED encompasses municipal watersheds for the State capital, Helena, and neighboring East Helena, as well as source-water areas for the city of Townsend and numerous other small local communities. Hydropower facilities along the Missouri River such as Hauser, Holter, and Canyon Ferry dams also rely on water supplied by the MBED headwater tributaries, as do downstream irrigators throughout the Missouri and Upper Clark Fork basins.

MBED is important to fish and wildlife providing a variety of habitats for big game and sensitive species (flamulated owls, Townsend's big-eared bats, bald eagles, westslope cutthroat trout, among others). Threatened species—grizzly bears, lynx and their critical habitat, and bull trout—also occur within MBED. Bull trout are part of the Columbia Headwaters Recovery Unit and found in very low numbers within the Little Blackfoot drainage and are at high risk of extirpation. The Helena Ranger District continues to work with partner groups to prioritize and seek funding for bull trout related restoration projects. The MBED is also located in its entirety in Zone 2 identified in the *Record of Decision for the Forest Plan Amendments to Incorporate Habitat Management*

*Direction for the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem Grizzly Bear Population* as an area important for genetic connectivity between the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystems.

Another landscape level critical need is the treatment of invasive species, on all land jurisdictions. Invasive species have been inventoried on 9% of NFS lands in the MBED with concentrations along travel routes (roads/trails), historic areas of disturbance (mining, timber harvest, grazing allotments, fuel reduction and wildfire). Currently, HelTown maintains several agreements with counties, recreational, and community working groups to assist in identifying, treating, and monitoring invasive species populations. It is through these integrated partnerships that we are able to collaboratively prioritize treatment areas and designated routes.

Increasingly, big game migrate to private (mostly ranch) land during the hunting season resulting in livestock/big game conflicts. The ability to sustain huntable big game populations is based largely on the ability of the Forest to manage habitat in order to retain big game on the Forest. In fact, one of the citizen's groups in the Elkhorns, the Elkhorn Working Group, was formed in response to livestock/elk conflicts. Without adequate resources and funding to restore wildlife habitats, these conflicts with private landowners will likely continue.

### Landscape Strategy and Proposed Treatments

#### Desired Conditions and Strategy

The MBED initiative is focused on reestablishing the composition, structure, pattern, and ecological processes necessary to facilitate terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem landscape sustainability.

Ecologically, we plan to: (1) reduce the probability of high severity wildfire to improve and sustain watershed health, improve wildlife and fish habitat including rare habitats (whitebark pine, aspen, riparian areas, streams, and wetlands), and conserve biodiversity; (2) re-establish natural fire regimes through reintroduction of prescribed fire to restore forest structure and function so that forests are more resilient to natural and anthropogenic disturbances; (3) manage forested ecosystems to reduce insect and disease to endemic levels; (4) enhance native plant communities by reducing invasive species; and (5) improve water quality and aquatic habitat by restoring streams, floodplains, and wetlands, addressing pollutant sources such as abandoned mine waste and road and trail erosion, and removing barriers to aquatic organism passage.

Our strategic application of timber harvest, fuels treatments, and invasive species treatments across this landscape over the next ten years will further its resiliency and restore forest conditions that will allow fire to play a natural and beneficial role in sustaining ecosystem resiliency. This will incorporate actions designed to move the landscape toward the vegetation desired conditions developed for the revised forest plan and align with recent decisions, which will provide for the ecological sustainability of the HLF. These desired conditions address key ecosystem characteristics of composition, structure, and function which are based on detailed natural range of variation modeling and the best available science that is incorporated into all projects as well as incorporated into the Forest's ongoing forest plan revision process.

In dry forest types, our treatment design for upcoming NEPA projects will contribute to stand-level resilience of old growth by approximating stand conditions that would have arisen had

frequent low-severity fire been allowed to occur, such as maintaining somewhat open densities, promoting the survival and re-establishment of shade intolerant tree species, and limiting the extent of ladder fuels. In addition, re-introducing fire will not only maintain these conditions but contribute to other important old growth stand components such as snags. At the MBED scale, the restoration of vegetation composition, structure, and function will allow for the maintenance and/or development of a mosaic of old growth consistent with the natural processes that influence old growth development and condition for all forest types.

This strategy and associated restoration goals will be consistent with the natural range of variation for this area as well as conditions that are likely resilient into the future, based on the analysis and development of desired conditions recently conducted as part of forest plan revision under the 2012 planning rule. These broad scale desired conditions were developed with consideration for the best available science regarding the expected influences of climate change, using information such as that presented by the Northern Region Adaptation Partnership. Actions that contribute to desired conditions will include but are not limited to improving resilience to disturbances (wildfire and insect and disease), promoting the growth and retention of large trees, creating a diverse age structure and promoting shade intolerant species.

Ongoing and planned restoration work augments the work that has been collaboratively designed by BEDRC and USFS, along with over 25 other contributing partners and user groups in the Capital 360 Focus Area, that will ultimately reach an even larger landscape. MBED looks at building on the successful fuels' treatment strategy from Joint Chiefs' 360 projects and accelerating implementation across this landscape over the next 10 years (FY2021–FY2031). These activities on NFS land will continue to focus on restoring ecosystems that support natural fire regimes, clean water, healthy soils, and native plants and animals; promote conditions that mitigate wildfire risk in the WUI communities; support sustainable forest industries; and strengthen local economies and compliment work occurring on other land jurisdictions. Other treatments include invasive species treatments, range improvements (fencing, water developments), road and trail stabilization, road decommissioning, and conifer removal in grasslands, shrublands, aspen, and wetlands.

Watershed restoration work in the MBED is guided by three Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) documents and the associated Watershed Restoration Plans (WRPs) that have been approved by the Montana DEQ and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), covering the Little Blackfoot, Lake Helena, and Deep Creek watersheds. The USFS has also identified three priority watersheds under the Watershed Condition Framework in the MBED: Telegraph, Upper Tenmile and Cabin Gulch. Watershed Restoration Action Plans will guide the planned restoration work in these drainages, and the MBED initiative will support implementation of projects identified in these documents. As work in these priority watersheds nears completion, the MBED initiative will enable the HLF to shift focus to other watersheds in need of restoration, which will be prioritized using the WCF and in support of westslope cutthroat and bull trout management goals.

West of the Continental Divide, the MBED area within the Upper Clark Fork Basin is home to populations of threatened bull trout. Restoration goals are guided by the United States Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) *Columbia Headwaters Recovery Unit Implementation Plan for Bull Trout*: prioritize resident bull trout for conservation, strengthen

connectivity, focus on mine reclamation activities within the Little Blackfoot drainage, incorporate survey data into core area threats assessment, and improve knowledge of bull trout distribution and nonnative fish expansion. The MBED initiative implements restoration goals of the FWS, EPA, the state of Montana, and *Region One's Endangered Species Act (ESA) Action Plan* (and hence is responsive to bull trout conservation per Section 7(a)(1) of the ESA) as follows: the remaining fish barriers in the Little Blackfoot watershed will be addressed in order to improve habitat connectivity for bull trout; priority work will focus on transitioning water-quality impaired streams towards supporting beneficial uses and properly functioning condition; and discharging mine adits and mine wastes will be addressed as well. Specifically, the initiative will result in the completion of up to 80 miles of road decommissioning/storage west of the Continental Divide, up to four miles of stream restoration, 17 aquatic organism passage improvements, and placer and hard rock mine reclamation.

Currently westslope cutthroat trout occupy only 8%-20% of their historic range and face similar environmental threats as bull trout. Populations are especially imperiled east of the Divide in the Upper Missouri River basin due to chronic dewatering, competition with non-native trout and poor grazing practices. Several core populations have been identified within the project area and are important for future WCT conservation efforts across the entire Upper Missouri River basin. East of the Continental Divide, aquatic habitat restoration will be guided by westslope cutthroat trout management goals in partnership with Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks (*MOU and Conservation Agreement for Westslope Cutthroat Trout and Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout in Montana, 2007*).

The MBED is located in its entirety in Zone 2 identified in the *Record of Decision for the Forest Plan Amendments to Incorporate Habitat Management Direction for the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem Grizzly Bear Population* as an area important for genetic connectivity between the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystems. Specifically, the amendment includes a desired condition aimed at reducing barriers to genetic connectivity and risks of bear mortality: "On the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest, within zone 1 and the portion of zone 2 west of Interstate 15, NFS lands adjacent to highways are consolidated and other efforts to reduce barriers to genetic connectivity of grizzly bear populations are supported."

Research has demonstrated that the presence of roads and associated human activities negatively impact grizzly bears by displacing them from important habitats and lowering their survival rates. All of the proposed road decommissioning/storage, 202 miles, is west of I-15 and will serve to facilitate genetic connectivity and reduce risks of bear mortality.

The MBED is also located within lynx occupied and critical habitat. Vegetation treatments on up to 5,000 acres, designed to accelerate restoration of beetle-killed stands, will also accelerate the development of lynx habitat.

The development of a comprehensive weed management strategy for MBED is another major restoration goal. This will consist of mapping and treating noxious weed populations where they are known to occur and when they are newly discovered. Treatments for controlling noxious weed populations will be designed and prioritized with an emphasis on weed management prior to, during, and after soil disturbing activities. Targeted treatments will focus on reducing known

populations of noxious weeds occurring along roadways and within/adjacent to proposed treatment units.

Locally, this strategy will facilitate accomplishment of priority timber and fuels targets for the Forest. It supports our current and outyear Forest program of work by accelerating the pace of implementation and by leveraging agency funding for additional priority work (Map 7).

### Wildfire Risk Reduction

This area is identified as a high priority for fuels treatments based on the three goals from the [National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy](#) and National, Regional, and multiple local wildfire risk assessments. Areas of treatment have been identified utilizing wildfire hazard potential data that depict the relative potential for a wildfire that would be difficult for suppression resources to contain. Landscape prioritization and treatment feasibility for ongoing projects has been done in consultation with the Rocky Mountain Research Station and Fire Science Lab including onsite field trips with Dr. Mark Finney, Dr. Matt Jolly and researchers Matt Thompson and Jessica Haas. Current and planned projects have been identified in Regional and Local CWPPs, and population protection plans as priority areas for treatment.

Our long-term landscape strategy is focused on reestablishing composition, structure, pattern, and ecological processes necessary to facilitate terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem sustainability. Treatment units under planned and existing projects are strategically located and designed to modify fire behavior and complement wildfire response strategies and tactics. Treatments focus on reducing ladder fuels, hazardous fuel loading levels, and high-density stands. Core treatments include commercial timber harvest and fuels treatments (prescribed fire, chipping, mastication, slashing, and piling) with an emphasis in the WUI, and noxious weed treatments (chemical and biological). All vegetative treatments within the MBED have been analyzed for prescribed fire, which will be utilized to mitigate surface fuels on the landscape.

Additionally, this proposal will include maintenance prescribed burning in areas that meet desired conditions from past treatments and/or wildfires to sustain a low severity fire regime. Project level data modeling and post-implementation monitoring have shown that changing vegetation structure, reducing biomass, and applying prescribed burning will reduce fireline intensity (rate of spread and heat per unit area) within and adjacent to treatment units. Strategically locating treatments on the landscape will enable us to develop modified suppression tactics and strategies that will allow for fire to play a more natural role across the landscape and provide more opportunities to utilize wildfire to meet land and resource management objectives. Having areas where fuel loading has been reduced to modify fire behavior will result in less exposure to fire fighters and minimize the number of resources needed to accomplish similar outcomes. Treatments will aid in wildfire and response strategies, allowing decisions to be made more quickly and efficiently. These treatments will minimize the effort to prepare fireline for control, effectively reducing the number of resources needed in a time compressed situation.

Implementation of these projects, in collaboration with partner agencies and landowners, involves improving and maintaining fire-adapted ecosystems. Treatments will result in more resiliency to the effects of climate change and other stressors.

Through supplemental funding sources (Joint Chiefs', Partnership Grants, Regional and National Supplemental Hazardous Fuels Funding) over the last decade, the HelTown Fire Zone has increased its portion of the Forest's target by 20% to accomplish 44% of the Forest target. Examples of recently accomplished work include hazardous fuels treatment in the Little Blackfoot watershed. By securing CFLRP funds, the zone will be able to maintain this increased pace and scale over the next decade. Capacity will continue to be met through existing partnership agreements with Montana Department of Natural Resources (DNRC), Tri-County FireSafe Working Group, and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). These strong working relationships with cooperators have expanded prescribed fire opportunities throughout the year. Furthermore, Forest and Regional indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contracts will be utilized for additional project implementation support, including prescribed fire. Over the past decade, the HelTown fire zone has built an organization that can provide immediate implementation of the 75,000 acres of fuels treatments and long-term sustainability throughout the life of the proposal. Funds from this proposal will be used to extend tours of permanent seasonal employees and maintain the increased agency capacity through coordination within eastside Forests of Region One.

Tri-County FireSafe Working Group and USDA Natural Recourse and Conservation (NRCS) have a long history of completing private land fuels treatment projects across the landscape. The HLF will continue working collaboratively with partners to implement projects on Federal land that complements treatments on neighboring lands.

The public is very knowledgeable regarding the potential impacts on their community as a result of a wildfire. Several public lectures have been held in Helena and the surrounding communities designed to continue to provide the broad spectrum of topics associated with living in a wildland urban interface. We will continue to provide opportunities to engage the public in local tours, public meetings, and site visits and to share the collective vision of the benefit of fuels reduction treatments regardless of ownership. Regional and local hazard and risk maps will also serve as a useful public engagement tool to help residents learn about wildfire and take personal action.

### Benefits to Local Communities

MBED's social priorities are to: (1) protect our citizens, firefighters, infrastructure (e.g. water supply, utility resources, evacuation routes and communications facilities) and natural environment through wildfire mitigation measures; (2) accelerate the pace of treatment on the Forest which will strengthen fuel reduction treatments occurring on adjacent ownerships particularly on private land; (3) increase the community's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from wildfire; and (4) integrate and coordinate resource management across all administrative boundaries.

MBED's economic priority is to maintain and generate jobs and income for local communities by: (1) providing a steady stream of wood products to maintain timber industry infrastructure and to facilitate development of new manufacturing/processing biomass facilities; (2) restoring habitat to provide and improve fishing and hunting opportunities; (3) protecting infrastructure (e.g. municipal watersheds, roads, campgrounds, electronic sites)

to minimize impacts of local wildfires to communities and businesses; and (4) enhancing recreational opportunities to diversify small rural communities.

Based on those goals, the most relevant key metrics are:

Enhance community sustainability:

- Maintain or increase the number and/or type of training opportunities for youth
- Maintain or increase the number and/or size of contracts offered each year to do restoration work
- Maintain or increase the percentage of contracts awarded that go to local contractors
- Maintain or increase number of youth, minority group representatives, or people from low-income communities hired to work on the project and the type of work they are conducting
- Maintain or increase acceptance of frequent, low intensity wildfire or prescribed fire

Improve or maintain quality of life:

- Maintain or increase acres protected from fire through creation of defensible space, fuel breaks, and other fuels reduction projects
- Maintain or increase fuels reduction acres in relation to areas considered to be at highest risk from wildfire

Improve capacity for collaboration:

- Maintain or increase extent to which different perspectives are represented
- Maintain or increase the quality and timeliness of communication among all project partners
- Maintain or increase the partner contributions (in kind time and funding) committed to shared project goals

Utilization of Forest Restoration Byproducts

This proposal will generate opportunities for forestry related employment and outputs, fuels activities and related timber sales support jobs, industry infrastructure, and community economic benefits as well as foster and sustain healthy landscapes within the surrounding communities. As demonstrated in Attachment C, this proposal is designed to provide approximately 386,400 CCF (100 cubic feet) across 23,350 acres of NFS Lands.

MBED is within a 120-mile radius of the following local Montana processing facilities: RY Timber, Inc. in Townsend/Livingston; Sun Mountain Lumber, Inc. in Deer Lodge; Pyramid Mountain Lumber, Inc. in Seeley Lake; and Marks Lumber and Marks-Miller Post & Pole in Clancy (Map 8). Willis Enterprises' wood chipping yard in Bonner, Montana accepts small diameter and non-sawlog material for pulp and paper markets. The continued operation of these facilities is integral to an infrastructure that is needed to carry out treatments. These wood processing businesses, within this working circle, employ approximately 400 people in manufacturing and 250 people in logging, trucking and other forestry related jobs, annually. Many of the existing utilization facilities are currently operating below full capacity and will welcome the opportunity to utilize an increase in by-products from this proposal and increase their facilities outputs. In addition, established contractors have indicated their readiness to add capacity to their current workforce to implement service contracts. We are encouraged that many of these mills are investing in mill upgrades and diversifying their product

lines. This demonstrates the strength of their businesses, their confidence in future wood markets, and their commitment to their communities and employees.

This proposal places a high priority on utilization of forest products from both fuels reduction and restoration treatments to benefit local communities. Material generated over the next 10 years from this landscape will primarily be used by existing manufacturing facilities. Initially, the uses of wood products removed via restoration treatments within our working circle include production of dimensional lumber, boards, studs, specialty lumber, post and poles, pulp, firewood, particle board products, engineered wood fiber and animal bedding.

A long-term, consistent supply of forest products is vital to maintaining the established processing infrastructure across MBED. At the same time, increasing mechanical opportunities to treat small diameter material could result in new products and markets to be explored. Industry has indicated there will be opportunity to investigate and maximize utilization of small diameter trees if there can be assurance of supply. Woody material will also be used for habitat and watershed restoration (e.g. slash, biochar, stream wood placement).

Mountain pine beetle activity is prevalent across this landscape (Map 5) and its associated mortality is resulting in poor timber quality and low market value. Currently, the mix of this non-merchantable dead material with green saw timber is reducing overall revenue. Within the next 5 years, this dead material will be on the ground and have little to no sawlog value. Required removal of this dead material will result in increased logging costs due to transportation costs, lower production in the woods, and limited marketability. Without revenue from sawlog value or agency funding to support removal of non sawlog material, projects could see an increase in this material being left on the ground. Despite the initial higher cost of this biomass removal, recent projects have determined that this initial funding investment is a high priority and actually reduces the outyear costs associated with additional fuel reduction treatments such as chipping or piling/burning.

Stewardship Contracting and Good Neighbor Authority will be utilized for timber harvest and associated biomass removal treatments, where feasible. Revenue and goods for services work items generated from the sale of timber will be used to achieve additional restoration projects within MBED.

### Collaboration

The Big Elk Divide Restoration Committee (BEDRC) represents a broad spectrum of ecological, social, economic and geographic "zones of interests" spanning a diverse geographic landscape bounded by the Big Belt, Elkhorn, and Continental Divide mountains around Helena, MT. The collaborative was originally established in 2011 as the Elkhorn Restoration Committee (ERC) to address local concerns about the lack of forest management actions within the unique Elkhorns Cooperative Management Area (ECMA), devastated by mountain pine beetle and subsequent threat of stand replacing fires. The Elkhorn Mountain range is a nationally recognized wildlife management area as a trophy elk hunting unit, is a heavily used recreational area, and it supports local ranchers and businesses. ERC applied the [Restoration Principles](#) first articulated by the Montana Forest Restoration Committee in 2007, to influence timely decision making, serve as an information resource and knowledge base about restoration, identify and seek solutions to

potential project design and implementation issues, and advise management agencies regarding the potential effects of proposed restoration actions across ecological and community landscapes. Due to expanded stakeholder interests, established successes, and new opportunities, the collaborative decided to expand across this broader landscape.

BEDRC has analyzed and authored a landscape-scale restoration assessment, *Restoration of Ecosystems in the Elkhorns*, which has resulted in several successful projects including: Iron Mask Vegetation Management (BLM); Johnny Crow Habitat Enhancement Vegetation (USFS); and Range Health & Conifer Encroachment (NRCS). In the process, BEDRC has been an intervenor in a BLM decision appeal, an Amicus signatory in two Forest Service lawsuits and filed many comments to public documents and letters of support to projects. Additionally, BEDRC brought innovation to the Forest Plan Revision through a "Geographic Area" concept, which was adopted by the HLF. After consulting with their network of organizations and interests, BEDRC has found common ground on issues to provide cohesive, complementary input to the Forest Plan Revision and similar efforts.

BEDRC is guided by its [Base Documents](#): Charter (established 6/15/2011), Mission Statement, Consensus Agreement, Code of Conduct, Statement of Interest for Membership, and Restoration Principles; and is comprised of members who represent and have expertise in wildlife, fisheries, wilderness, industry, grazing, ranching, business, recreation, local and regional government, watershed, motorized recreation, fire ecology and other local interests (Attachment D). Meeting monthly for more than eight years, BEDRC has committed to working with the HLF to help identify, design, evaluate, prioritize and implement projects, identify additional funding opportunities, engage with new partners, be a voice in and for the communities, and assist with monitoring. New members have been and are welcomed. The monthly meeting agenda has a standing agenda topic for new member discussions. BEDRC's Inform, Involve and Educate (I, I & E) Outreach Program (2014) outlines general public and targeted outreach efforts over time that will also reach potential new members. BEDRC utilizes its strong member involvement in many other organizations, groups and associations along with local community businesses and interests to help recognize active, involved people that would bring their "zone of interests" to BEDRC and help strengthen its collaborative strength. BEDRC desires to bring new perspectives, experiences and expertise and the only barriers to participation are their time and willingness to commit to involvement through a consensus approach. This requires buy-in from all members and ensures constructive dialogue on areas of disagreement. Covering a broader landscape presents challenges but through varying committee meeting times and locations, stakeholders can provide input on discrete projects, landscape ranges and specific issues.

BEDRC appreciates the HLF's invitation to work side by side on this CFLRP application from the beginning of the process. BEDRC will continue to be an active partner to help identify, design and prioritize projects from planning and implementation to monitoring and evaluation that informs an adaptive approach to future management decisions. This includes engagement and outreach to other partners for funding, volunteer labor, and other salient contributions that ensures broad stakeholder buy-in for legitimate decisions and sustainable outcomes. BEDRC embraces its role to ensure meaningful collaboration that promotes ecologically sustainable and resilient forests, habitats, communities and businesses.

The HLF has a proven track record of collaboration in the context of large landscape restoration, particularly with regard to threatened and endangered species. For example, as part of the Southwest Crown of the Continent (previous CFLRP project) the HLF leveraged funds through partnerships with Big Blackfoot Trout Unlimited Chapter, USFWS, and Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, among others to improve bull trout habitat. Projects included upgrading undersized culverts and improving aquatic organism passage and habitat connectivity on 12 different streams within the upper Blackfoot watershed. In addition to the Copper Creek Road reroute, approximately 65 miles of roads have been actively decommissioned to lessen sediment impacts to impaired streams. The Big Blackfoot Trout Unlimited Chapter has been integral in helping a neighboring Ranger District implement several large restoration projects such as Poorman Creek. This project removed 22,000 cubic yards of placer tailings, restoring the natural stream channel and improving spawning and rearing habitat for both bull trout and native westslope cutthroat.

### Multi-party Monitoring

Monitoring will be used in an adaptive management framework to ensure that proposed restoration treatments meet ecological, social, and economic objectives described in this proposal. The Forest will work with and rely on BEDRC's collaborative platform to establish a multiparty monitoring team to (1) build a communication framework and common foundation; (2) develop a monitoring plan that articulates monitoring goals, indicators to measure change, data collection methods and storage, and how/when data will be collected; (3) analyze results and schedule multiparty team meetings to discuss and interpret results; (4) guarantee process transparency; and (5) ensure fiscal responsibility such that monitoring expenditures do not exceed 10% of CFLRP allocation.

The multiparty monitoring team will comprise BEDRC's diverse group of members whose respective networks will add additional stakeholder and community capacity. Federal, Tribal, State, County, and municipal governments will be represented. The monitoring team will also include a youth component via the Youth Forest Monitoring Program, a well-established program in place for over two decades whose goal is to connect young people with their local forest lands and forest professionals. A citizen science component will be incorporated into monitoring efforts in order to engage local residents in forest restoration. We will build off of existing relationships with our state universities and Carroll College and our state management agencies to assist with monitoring to ensure scientific reliability and validity. Non-Forest Service partners will have lead roles in conjunction with a MBED Coordinator and respective line officers in implementing monitoring across multiple jurisdictional boundaries. Monitoring elements will be aligned with team capabilities.

The monitoring plan will be based upon established and state of the art approaches to restoration monitoring. The multiparty monitoring team will measure the extent and rate of which restoration treatments are achieving our goals of (1) reducing the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire and restoring natural fire regimes; (2) reducing invasive species; (3) improving fish and wildlife habitat including old growth and habitat for threatened and endangered species; (4) restoring water quality and watershed function; (5) mitigating climate change impacts; (6) utilizing wood by products; and (7) contributing to economic well-being of local communities. Multiple

attributes will be monitored within each category, and the measurement of indicators will take advantage of existing, ongoing monitoring programs and protocols by state agencies, the Forest Service, and other science-based organizations to gain maximum efficiencies and provide unbiased evaluations of forest restoration treatments.

Monitoring results will be used to modify treatment prescriptions as needed. Current and future projects are designed to facilitate adaptive management if monitoring indicates a need for change. Success will be measured according to the change in conditions and trends for each established monitoring element.

Readiness to Implement Strategy

Collectively HelTown has a proven record for exceeding its assigned annual targets. Over the past 15 years, HelTown has contributed about 44% of the Forest's fuels target, treating more than 73,370 acres. Similarly, over the past eight years nearly 307,188 CCFs, which is about 79% of the Forest's accomplishment, has been provided from HelTown projects.

NEPA analyses and decisions are completed that cover the first six years of commercial harvest and mechanical fuels treatments activities. This funding will allow the Forest to channel more dollars to implementation thereby freeing up other appropriated money to prioritize and complete out-year NEPA planning and work on other Districts. Out-year NEPA will focus on priority areas within MBED and will assist in meeting year six through ten commercial harvest and mechanical fuels targets (Map 7).

NEPA-completed (approximately 72,000 acres) and NFMA/NEPA-pending (approximately 78,000 acres) projects within the MBED include are listed Tables 2 and 3 (see also Map 7).

*Table 2. MBED NEPA Completed Projects*

<b>Vegetation Restoration Projects</b>	<b>Non-Vegetation Projects</b>
Tenmile-South Helena	Divide Travel Plan
Bull Sweats	Beaver Creek Watershed/Riparian Enhancement
Telegraph	Forest-wide Invasive & Noxious Weeds Treatments
Cabin Gulch	Road & Trail Maintenance
Deep Creek	Recreation Site Maintenance
Jimtown	
Beaver Soup	
Elkhorns 88	
Wagner/Atlanta	
Johnny Crow	
Clancy Unionville	
Priest Pass	
Forest-wide Roadside Hazard	

Table 3. MBED NEPA/NFMA Pending Projects

<b>Vegetation Restoration Projects</b>	<b>Non-Vegetation Projects</b>
Middleman	Special CERCLA projects
Boulder <i>Baldy</i>	Administrative site actions
Larabee Hat	
Prickley Horse	
North Elkhorns	
Dry Grassy	

Past and ongoing restoration treatments conducted in this area by HelTown and our partners will complement MBED’s strategy and demonstrate a high potential for continued success.

The projects listed above, along with other restoration activities not listed here, will result in approximately 150,000 acres of timber and fuels treatments available for implementation across MBED. These decision acres available for implementation will insure fuels and timber target accomplishments listed in Attachments B and C.

Likewise, partner organizations and other land management agencies have approximately 45,000 acres of fuels mitigation, private land buffers, invasive species treatments, and other treatments planned in areas that complement our prioritized restoration treatments.

#### Unit Capacity and Project Funding

Internally as a Forest, increases in planning and implementation capacity have been achieved and maintained through: use of streamlined administration of grants and agreements; use of flexible contracting mechanisms (e.g., IDIQ); preservation of existing and fostering of new partnerships and cooperative agreements (e.g., City of Helena, Tri-County, DNRC, Trout Unlimited, MT DEQ); increased efficiencies gained by blurring jurisdictional boundaries where appropriate and feasible; and utilization of workforce multipliers such as the Montana Conservation Corps, Youth Conservation Corp, and volunteer/user groups including but not limited to Youth Forest Monitoring Program students, High Divide Trail Group and Montana Trail Vehicle Riders Association.

Additionally, other tools, initiatives, and authorities such as Shared Stewardship and the Good Neighbor Authority, will be considered wherever appropriate and feasible. All restoration projects are aligned with the current 1986 Forest Plan; new projects will be designed according to the revised Forest Plan.

The Forest is committed to providing adequate cash and in-kind matches to ensure success of this restoration effort (Tables 4 and 5).

Table 4. Estimated CFLRP funding request for Year 1

<b>Category</b>	<b>Estimated Amount</b>
Estimated CFLRP (“CFLN”) funding request	\$4,000,000
Estimated other Forest Service funding needed	\$3,039,543
Estimated partner contributions expected	\$575,000
Estimated goods for services	\$290,000
<b>TOTAL FUNDING ESTIMATE FOR YEAR 1</b>	<b>\$7,904,543</b>

Table 5. Total CFLRP estimated funding request (10 years)

<b>Category</b>	<b>Estimated Amount</b>
Estimated CFLRP (“CFLN”) funding request	\$40,000,000
Estimated Forest Service funding needed	\$29,499,286
Estimated partner contributions expected	\$3,154,500
Estimated goods for services	\$7,958,000
<b>TOTAL FUNDING ESTIMATE FOR TEN YEARS</b>	<b>\$80,611,786</b>

Also, a permanent full-time MBED Coordinator will be hired for the duration of this program to lead continued collaborative efforts with BEDRC, which includes planning, prioritizing, implementing, monitoring, and reporting accomplishments.

#### Attachments

The following Attachments are enclosed in the Montana’s Big Elk Divide CFLRP Proposal packet.

Attachment A: Mapbook

Attachment B: Planned Treatments

Attachment C: Utilization of Forest Restoration Byproducts

Attachment D: Collaborative Membership

Attachment E: Collaborative’s Letter of Commitment

Attachment F: Project Funding

Attachment G: Forest Supervisor’s Letter of Commitment



*Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest*  
*Helena and Townsend Ranger District*  
*CFLRP Tier 2 Proposal for Montana's Big Elk Divide Initiative*  
*Map book index*



[Click text to navigate to map \(Adobe viewer only\)](#)

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4. Fire Risk or Benefit
5. Insect and Disease Hazards
6. Watershed Condition
7. Vegetation and Fuels Projects
8. Local Forest Product Infrastructure

Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest

2880 Skyway Drive

Helena, Montana 59602

406-449-5201

Helena District Ranger 406-581-4510

Townsend District Ranger 406-266-3425

GIS Data 406-495-3762

Jeffrey.erwin@usda.gov



# Montana's Big Elk Divide Initiative

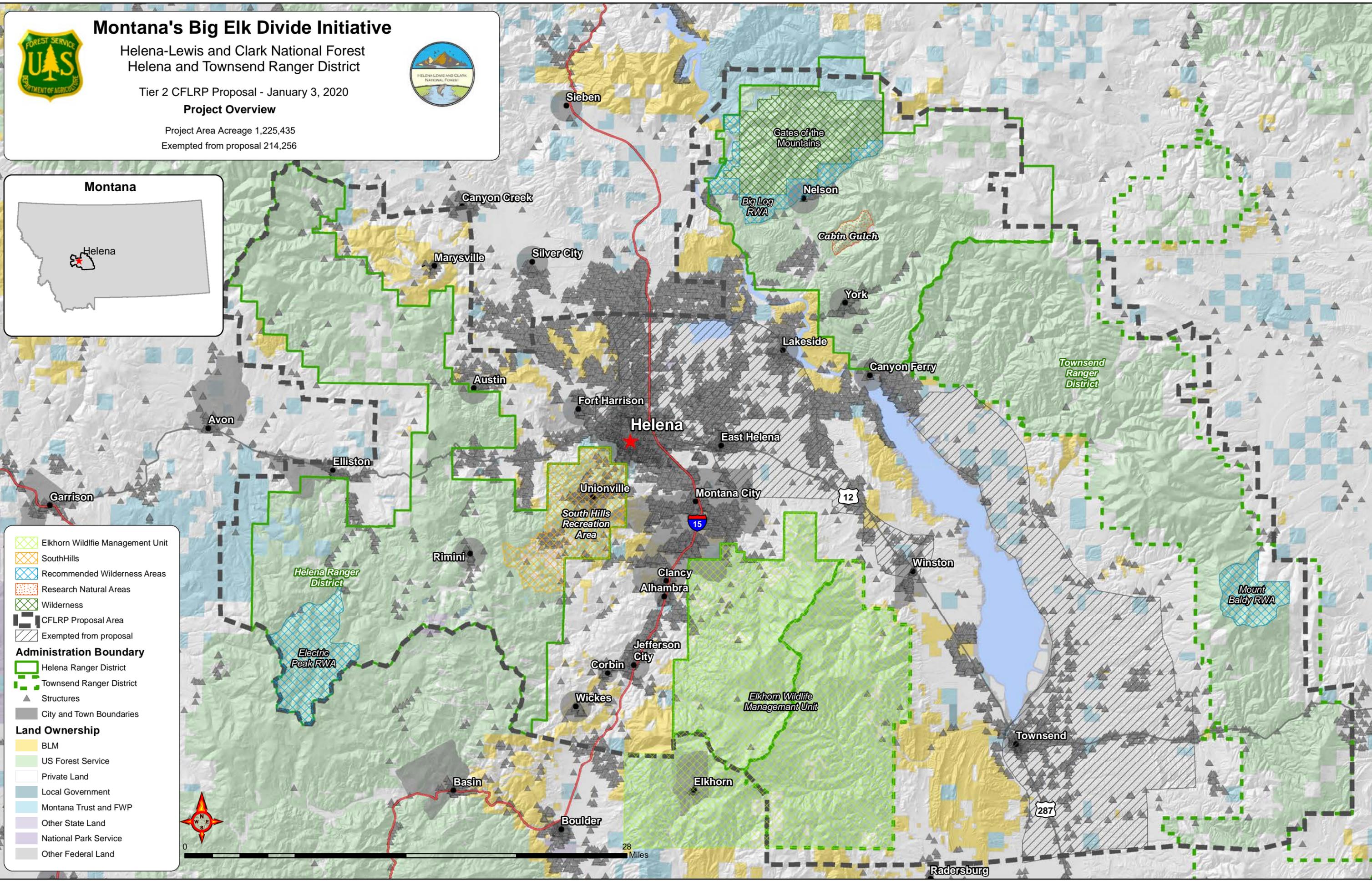
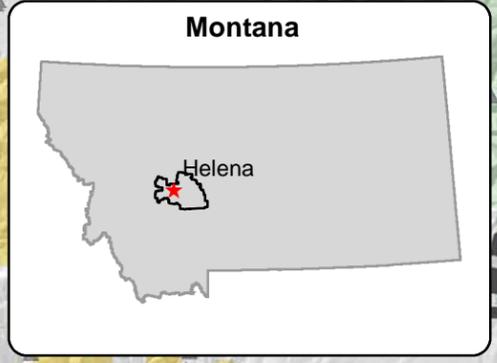
Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest  
Helena and Townsend Ranger District



Tier 2 CFLRP Proposal - January 3, 2020

## Project Overview

Project Area Acreage 1,225,435  
Exempted from proposal 214,256



**Legend**

- Elkhorn Wildlife Management Unit
- South Hills
- Recommended Wilderness Areas
- Research Natural Areas
- Wilderness
- CFLRP Proposal Area
- Exempted from proposal

**Administration Boundary**

- Helena Ranger District
- Townsend Ranger District
- Structures
- City and Town Boundaries

**Land Ownership**

- BLM
- US Forest Service
- Private Land
- Local Government
- Montana Trust and FWP
- Other State Land
- National Park Service
- Other Federal Land



0 28 Miles



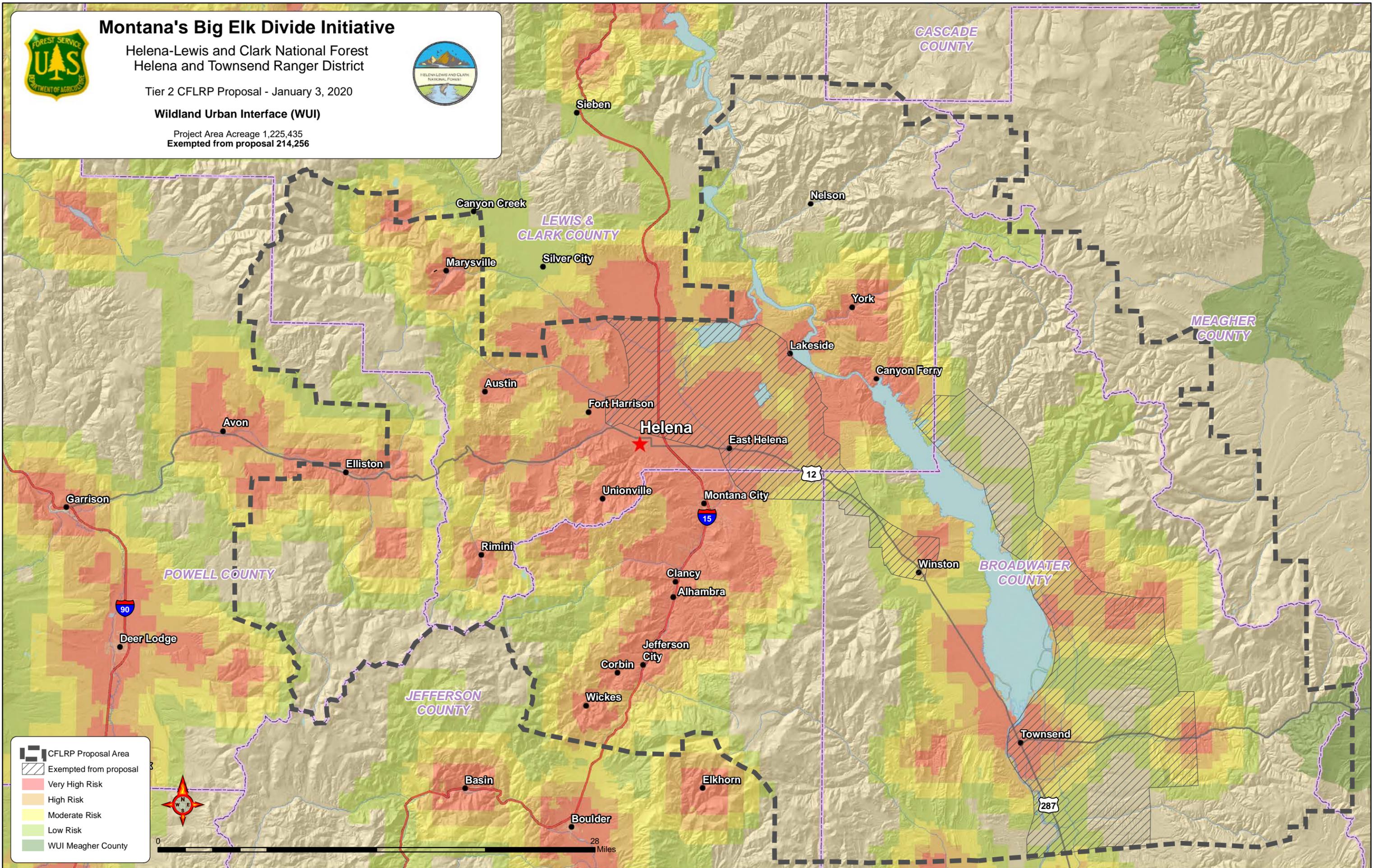
# Montana's Big Elk Divide Initiative

Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest  
Helena and Townsend Ranger District

Tier 2 CFLRP Proposal - January 3, 2020

## Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)

Project Area Acreage 1,225,435  
Exempted from proposal 214,256



- CFLRP Proposal Area
- Exempted from proposal
- Very High Risk
- High Risk
- Moderate Risk
- Low Risk
- WUI Meagher County



0 28 Miles



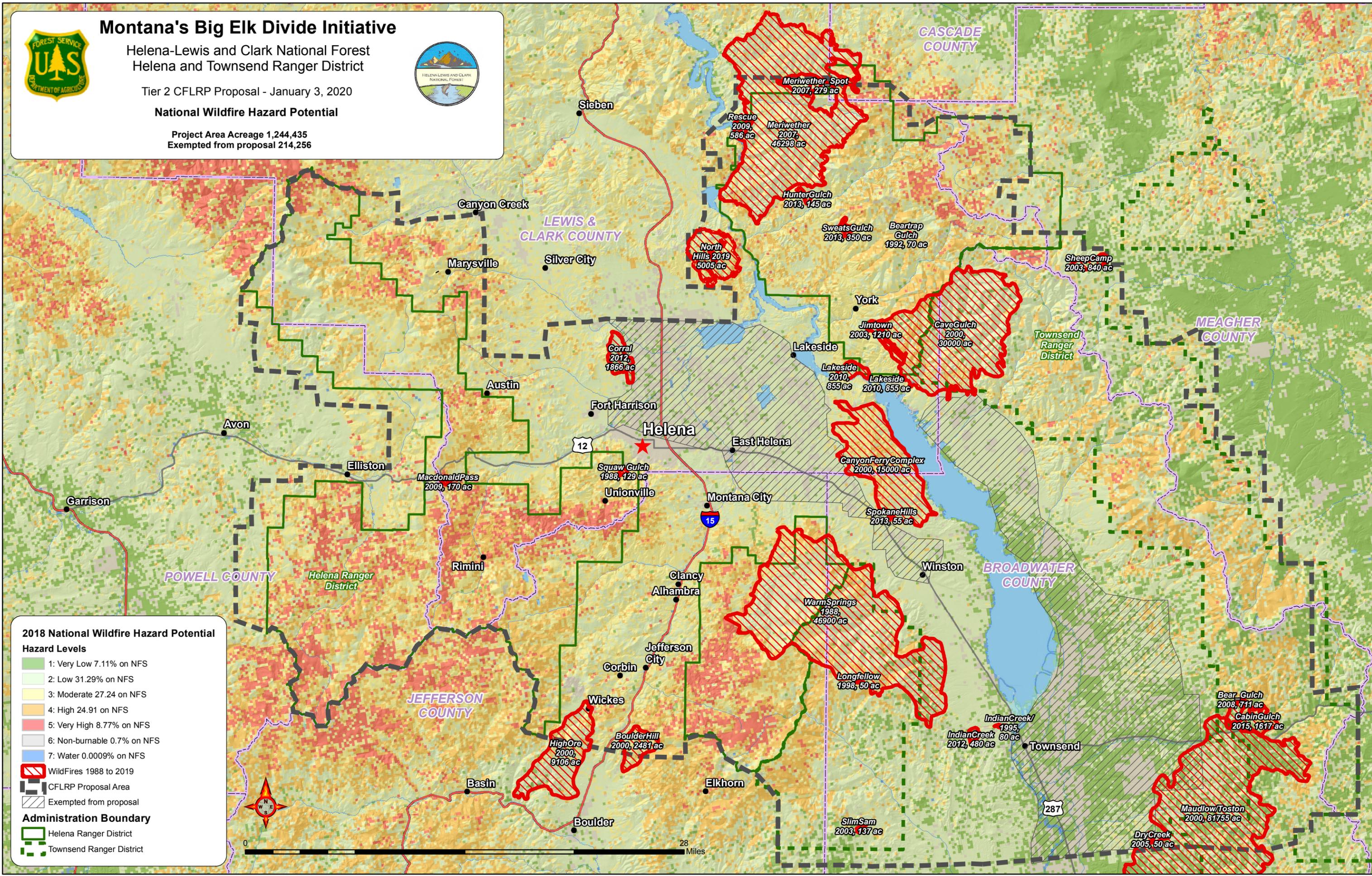
# Montana's Big Elk Divide Initiative

Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest  
Helena and Townsend Ranger District

Tier 2 CFLRP Proposal - January 3, 2020

## National Wildfire Hazard Potential

Project Area Acreage 1,244,435  
Exempted from proposal 214,256



**2018 National Wildfire Hazard Potential**

**Hazard Levels**

- 1: Very Low 7.11% on NFS
- 2: Low 31.29% on NFS
- 3: Moderate 27.24 on NFS
- 4: High 24.91 on NFS
- 5: Very High 8.77% on NFS
- 6: Non-burnable 0.7% on NFS
- 7: Water 0.0009% on NFS

- WildFires 1988 to 2019
- CFLRP Proposal Area
- Exempted from proposal

**Administration Boundary**

- Helena Ranger District
- Townsend Ranger District



28 Miles



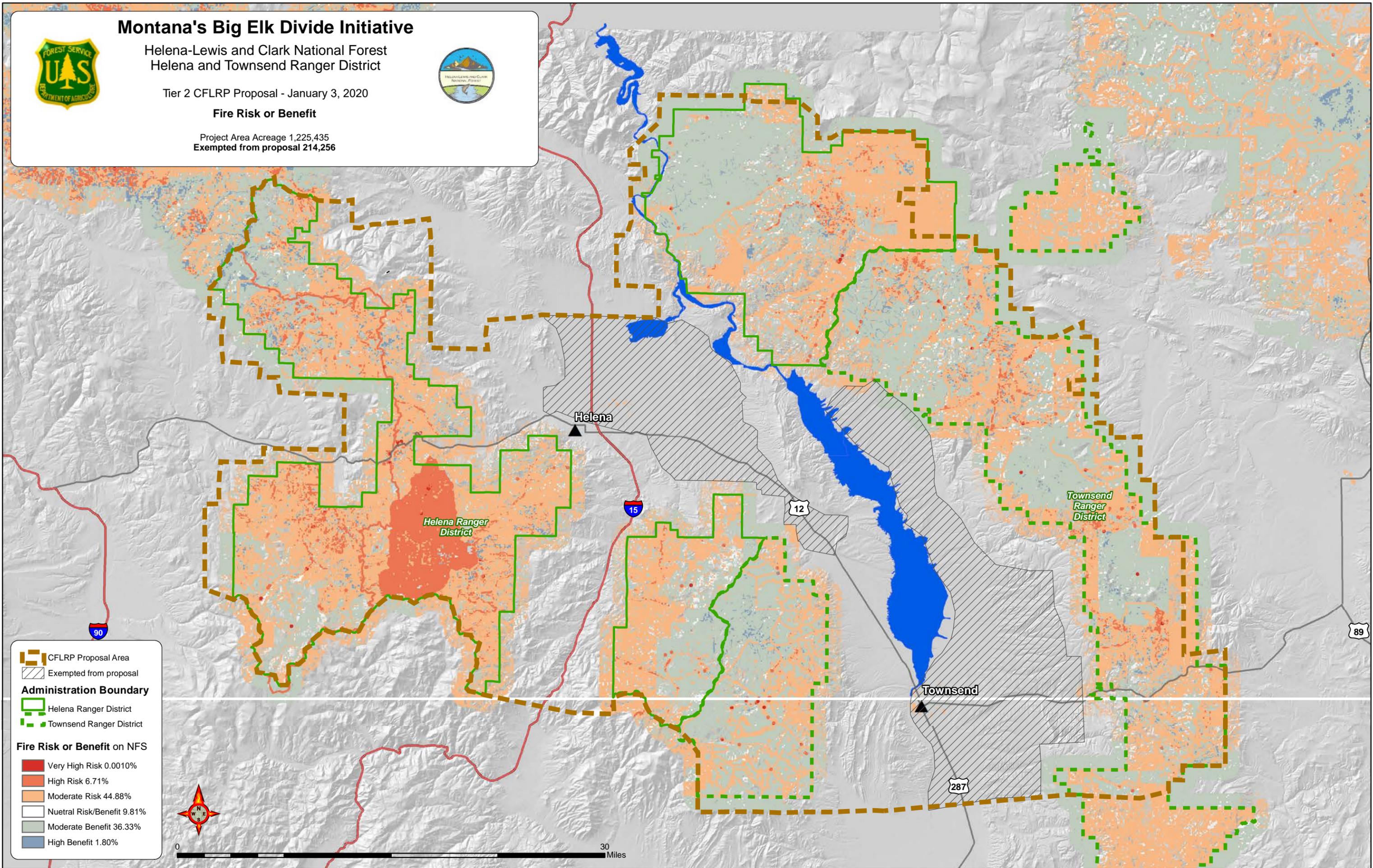
# Montana's Big Elk Divide Initiative

Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest  
Helena and Townsend Ranger District

Tier 2 CFLRP Proposal - January 3, 2020

**Fire Risk or Benefit**

Project Area Acreage 1,225,435  
Exempted from proposal 214,256



**CFLRP Proposal Area**  
 CFLRP Proposal Area

**Exempted from proposal**  
 Exempted from proposal

**Administration Boundary**

- Helena Ranger District
- Townsend Ranger District

**Fire Risk or Benefit on NFS**

- Very High Risk 0.0010%
- High Risk 6.71%
- Moderate Risk 44.88%
- Neutral Risk/Benefit 9.81%
- Moderate Benefit 36.33%
- High Benefit 1.80%



# Montana's Big Elk Divide Initiative

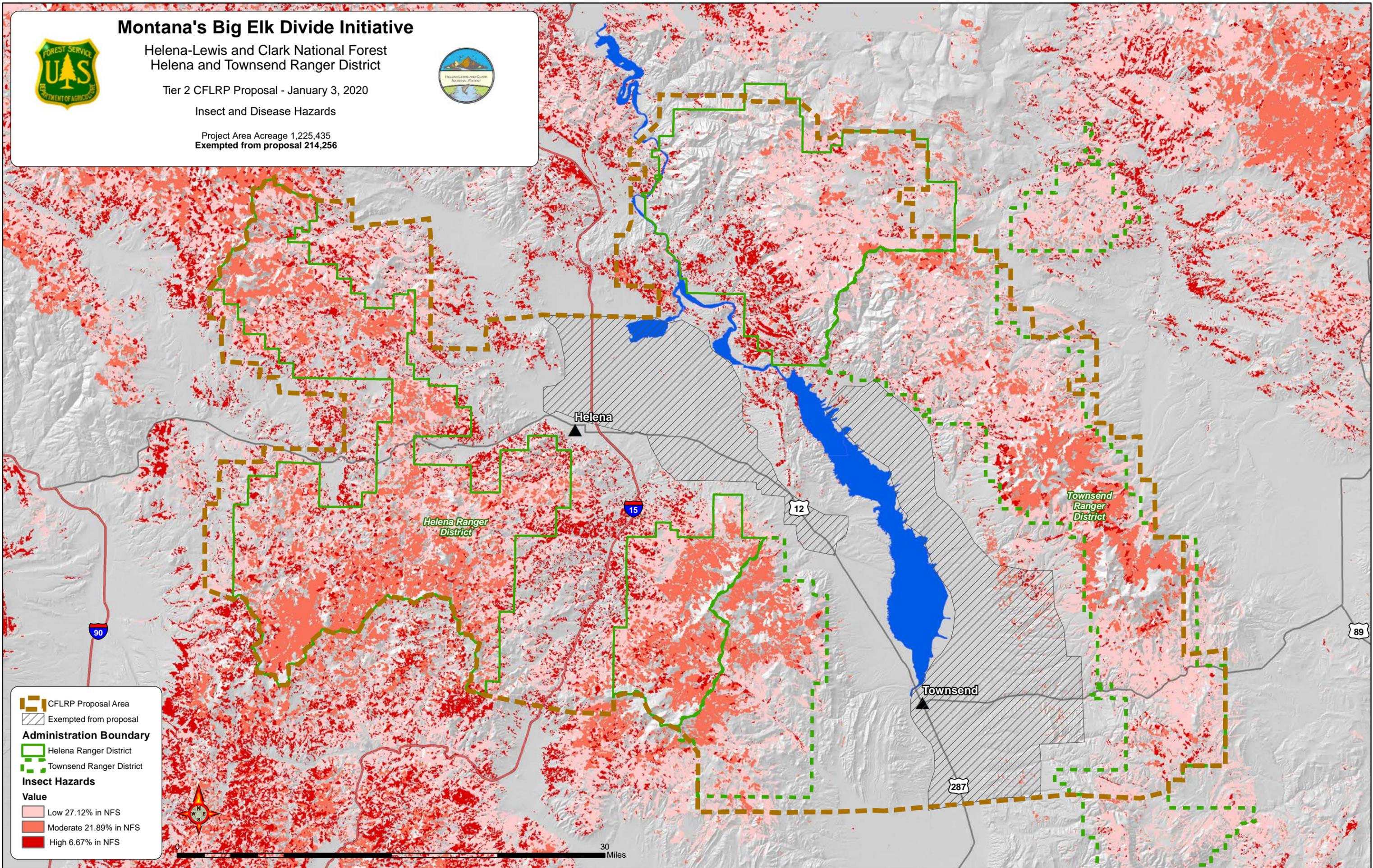
Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest  
Helena and Townsend Ranger District



Tier 2 CFLRP Proposal - January 3, 2020

Insect and Disease Hazards

Project Area Acreage 1,225,435  
Exempted from proposal 214,256



CFLRP Proposal Area

Exempted from proposal

**Administration Boundary**

Helena Ranger District

Townsend Ranger District

**Insect Hazards**

**Value**

Low 27.12% in NFS

Moderate 21.89% in NFS

High 6.67% in NFS



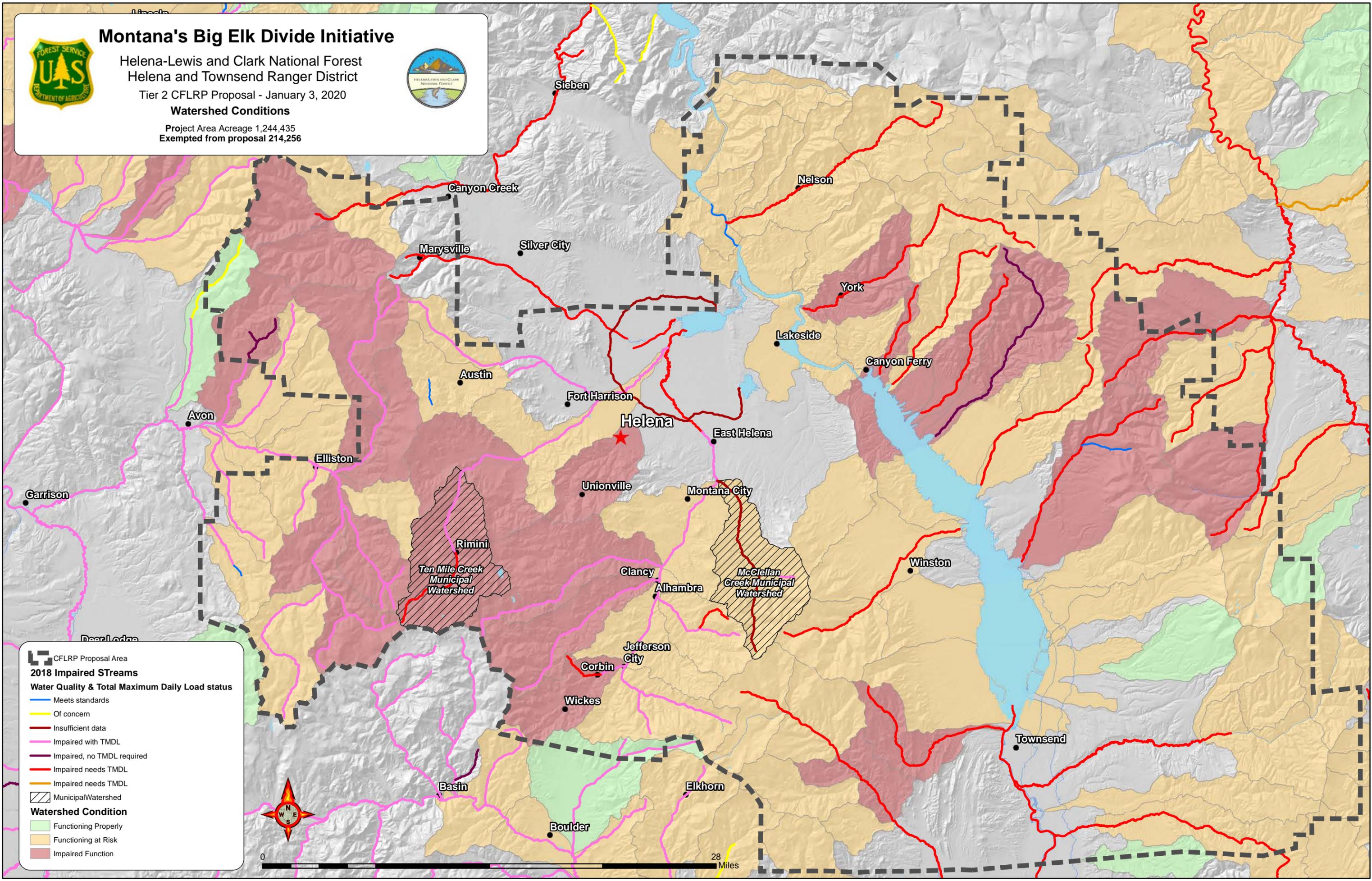
# Montana's Big Elk Divide Initiative

Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest  
Helena and Townsend Ranger District

Tier 2 CFLRP Proposal - January 3, 2020

## Watershed Conditions

Project Area Acreage 1,244,435  
Exempted from proposal 214,256



CFLRP Proposal Area

**2018 Impaired SStreams**  
Water Quality & Total Maximum Daily Load status

- Meets standards
- Of concern
- Insufficient data
- Impaired with TMDL
- Impaired, no TMDL required
- Impaired needs TMDL
- Impaired needs TMDL
- Municipal Watershed

**Watershed Condition**

- Functioning Properly
- Functioning at Risk
- Impaired Function



# Montana's Big Elk Divide Initiative

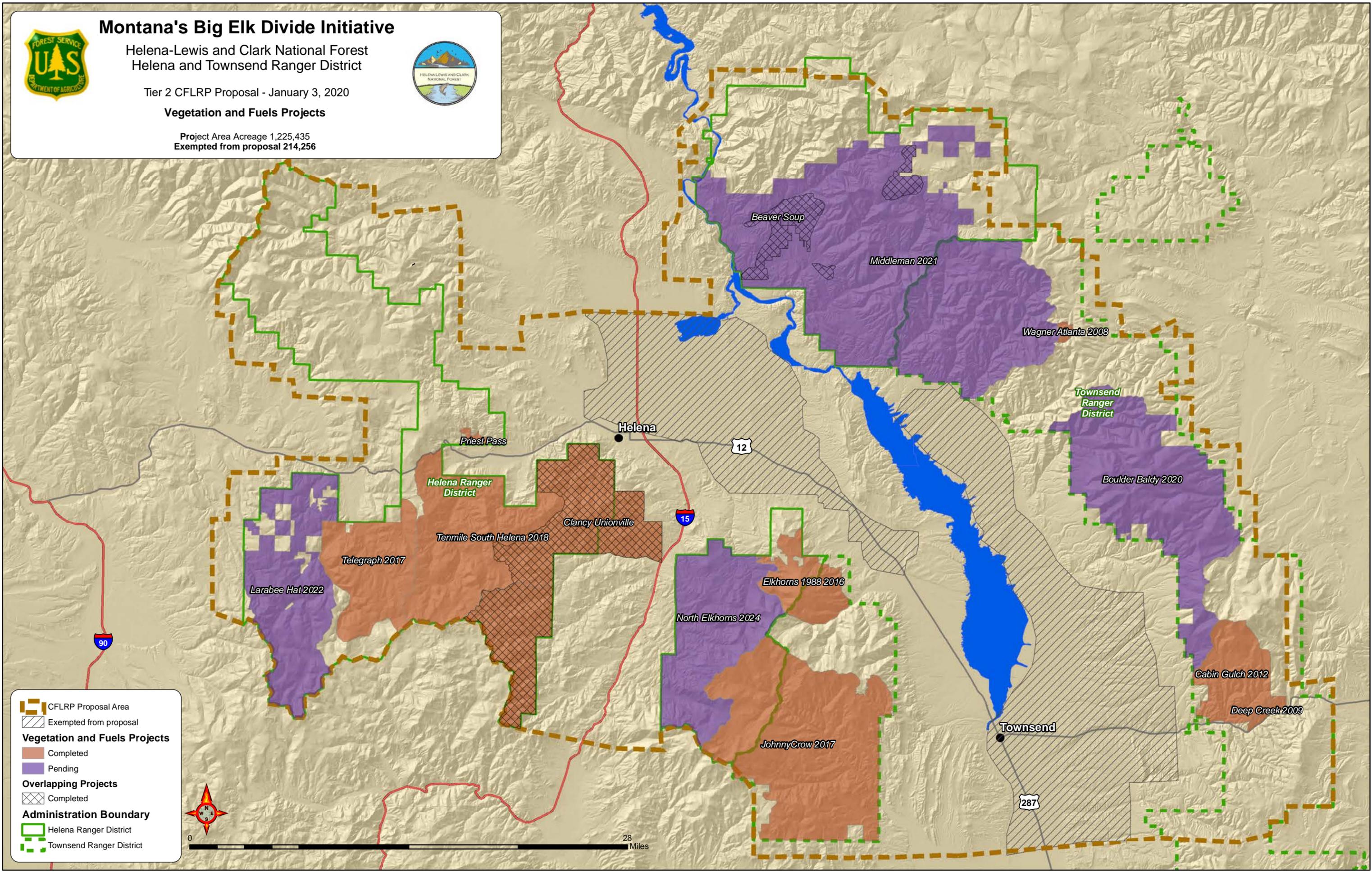
Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest  
Helena and Townsend Ranger District



Tier 2 CFLRP Proposal - January 3, 2020

## Vegetation and Fuels Projects

Project Area Acreage 1,225,435  
Exempted from proposal 214,256



- CFLRP Proposal Area
- Exempted from proposal
- Vegetation and Fuels Projects**
- Completed
- Pending
- Overlapping Projects**
- Completed
- Administration Boundary**
- Helena Ranger District
- Townsend Ranger District



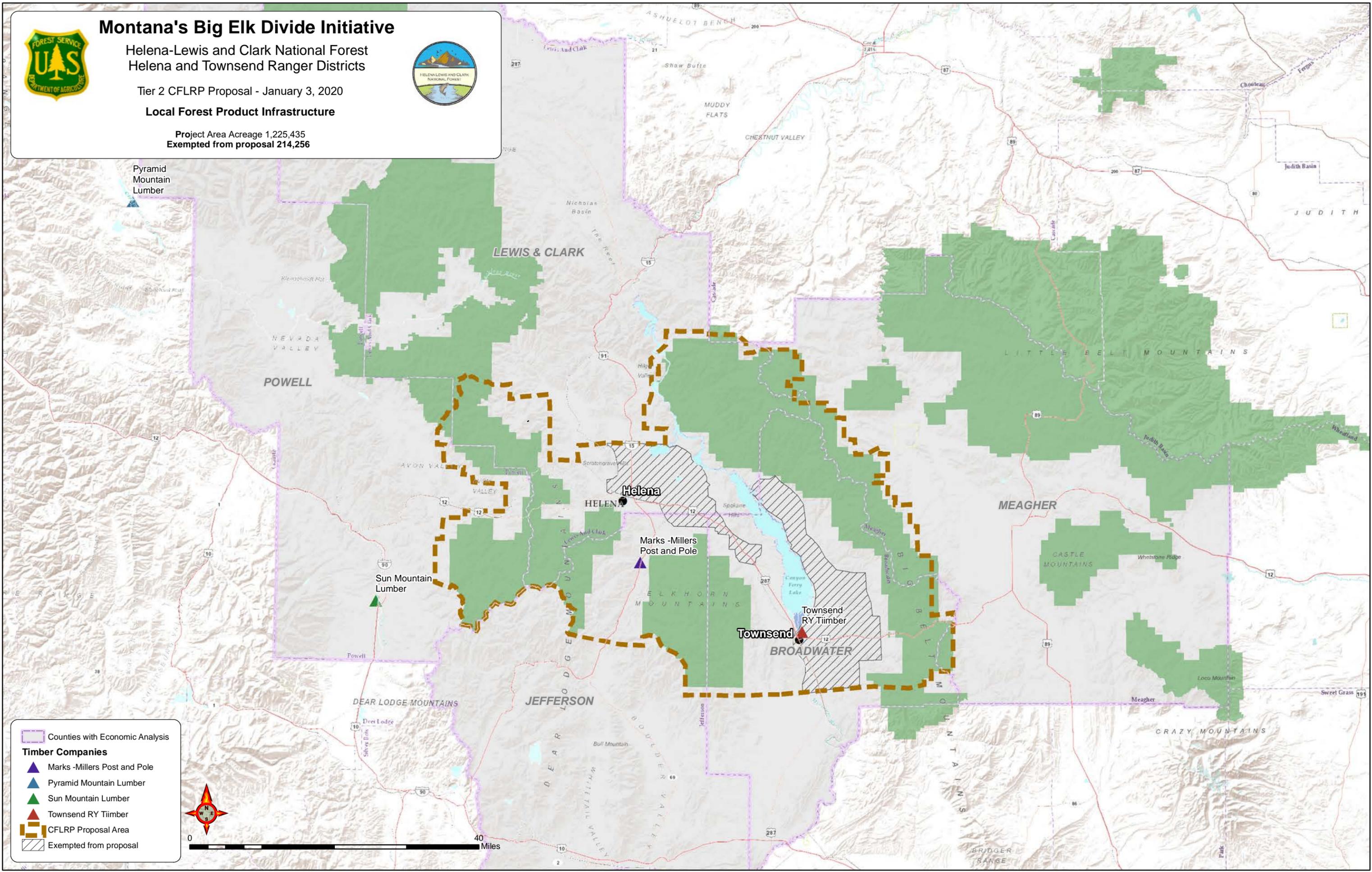
# Montana's Big Elk Divide Initiative

Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest  
Helena and Townsend Ranger Districts

Tier 2 CFLRP Proposal - January 3, 2020

## Local Forest Product Infrastructure

Project Area Acreage 1,225,435  
Exempted from proposal 214,256



Counties with Economic Analysis

**Timber Companies**

- Marks -Millers Post and Pole
- Pyramid Mountain Lumber
- Sun Mountain Lumber
- Townsend RY Timber
- CFLRP Proposal Area
- Exempted from proposal



CFLRP proposals are **not** expected to include ALL of the core treatment types below in their strategy - highlight those treatments that are core to your stated treatment objectives. Note that there are options to use "other" in this table.

Estimated treatments should include **all** planned treatments in the proposed CFLR landscape, regardless of landownership type. Provide an estimate of the % you expect to occur on NFS lands in column J, and list the other landownership types where you expect treatments to occur, if applicable, in column K.

Core Restoration Treatment Types	Please briefly fill in additional background information for the prompts below	Year 1* (2021)	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Years 5-10	TOTAL	Key treatment objectives	Estimated % accomplished on NFS lands (across all ten years)	Other landownership types (other federal, tribal, state, private, etc.) where treatments will occur
Hazardous Fuels Reduction (acres)		6,253	7,103	7,203	8,446	46,933	75,938	Vegetative manipulation through fire or mechanical means that changes the quantity or arrangement of living or dead biomass reducing the intensity, severity, or effects of wildland fire.	90%	Other federal (BLM, BOR, DOD); private; City of Helena open lands; all five counties; State of Montana
Mechanical Thinning (acres)		500	500	500	-	10,250	11,750	Mechanical thinning, mastication, and piling		
Prescribed Fire (acres)		2,450	2,700	2,600	3,843	25,865	37,458	Broadcast, mixed severity, and pile burning		
Other (acres)		2,400	3,000	3,200	3,700	5,400	17,700	Lop and scatter, hand piling		
Wildfire Risk Mitigation Outcomes - Acres treated to mitigate wildfire risk		6,253	7,103	7,203	8,446	46,933	75,938	Combination of objectives and treatments listed above	90%	Other federal (BLM, BOR, DOD); private; City of Helena open lands; all five counties; State of Montana
Wildfire Risk Mitigation Outcomes - WUI acres	Tri-County Fire Safe Regional CWPP Powell County CWPP Meagher County CWPP	5,253	6,103	6,203	7,196	39,433	64,188	Combination of objectives and treatments listed above	85%	Other federal (BLM, BOR, DOD); private; City of Helena open lands; all five counties; State of Montana
Invasive Species Management (acres)		2,894	2,894	2,894	2,894	15,564	27,140	Mitigate or remove non-native plant species on priority acres using a suite of already planned and analyzed chemical, biological and mechanical methods.	56%	Other federal (BLM, BOR, DOD); private; City of Helena open lands; all five counties in right of ways; State of Montana lands;
Native Pest Management (acres)		100	200	200	200	1,200	1,900	Place pheromones at developed and some dispersed recreation sites to interrupt the breeding cycles and discourage mountain pine beetle and/or spruce budworm.	100%	
Road Decommissioning (miles)		-	36	31	-	135	202	Use a variety of closure methods such as full ripping and entrance obliations to reduce chronic sediment delivery, restore hillslope hydrology, and reduce impacts to aquatic, riparian, and terrestrial ecosystems of roads.	100%	
Road Maintenance and Improvement (miles)		92	92	92	92	613	981	Perform road maintenance (consistent with the road maintenance objective) tasks like grading and drainage improvements to preserve the road in its originally constructed condition; protect adjacent resources and user safety, and; provide efficient, convenient travel along the route.	70%	All five counties
Road Reconstruction (miles)		-	-	-	-	-	-			
Trail Reconstruction (miles)		340	323	311	310	1,840	3,124	Maintained and/or improve system trails to standard, including deferred maintenance projects such as fall line repair, drainage improvements, heavy brushing, signage, and rerouting.	100%	Other federal (BLM); City of Helena
Wildlife Habitat Restoration (acres)		11,370	41,062	37,085	13,556	180,877	283,950	Use prescribed fire, seeding, mechanical treatments, wet meadow restoration, wetland restoration, native species reintroduction, fencing, road closures (decommissioning), trailhead and campsite rehabilitations, invasive species management to improve and restore habitat.	93%	Other federal (BLM, BOR, DOD); private; City of Helena open lands; all five counties in right of ways; State of Montana lands;
Crossing Improvements (number)		3	4	3	3	18	31	Design and implement culvert or other drainage features at road crossings to improve aquatic organism passage and hydrologic function.	100%	
In-Stream Fisheries Improvement (miles)		2	-	-	-	12	14	Use a combination of streambank rehabilitations, stream structures, and vegetation manipulations in streams to enhance fish or aquatic species habitat.	100%	
Soil and Watershed resources enhanced or maintained (acres)							-	These acres are captured within other core restoration treatment types	95%	Other federal (BLM); City of Helena open lands; State of Montana lands
Priority watersheds moved to improved condition class (number)		-	-	-	-	2	2		100%	
Stand Improvement (acres)		100	300	350	400	2,500	3,650	Precommercial thinning; whitebark pine daylighting	100%	
Reforestation and revegetation (acres)		300	4,000	4,200	3,000	8,000	19,500	Planting, seeding, site preparation for natural regeneration, and certification of natural regeneration without site preparation.	100%	
Treatments Through Timber Sales (acres)**	Average across 11 project areas is 90% ground based, 10 % steep-slope (cable and tether logging)	1,230	5,730	5,330	4,730	15,680	32,700	Use timber sales to achieve healthier forest conditions.	71%	State of Montana, other Federal Lands (BLM) private lands
Rangeland Vegetation Improvement (acres)		517	517	517	517	3,102	5,170	Use fencing, prescribed fire, water developments, invasive species management and mechanical manipulations to improve rangeland vegetation condition and move the vegetative community toward desired ecological condition.	30%	Other federal (BLM); State of Montana lands
Abandoned Mine Reclamation/Remediation		-	6	-	6	13	25	Design and implement mine reclamation and remediations to restore land that has been mined to a natural or economically usable state.	100%	

Core Restoration Treatment Types	Please briefly fill in additional background information for the prompts below	Year 1* (2021)	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Years 5-10	TOTAL	Key treatment objectives	Estimated % accomplished on NFS lands (across all ten years)	Other landownership types (other federal, tribal, state, private, etc.) where treatments will occur
Trailhead Improvements/Campsites Rehabilitated (number)		20	23	11	6	18	78	Improve or reconstruct trailheads, developed and dispersed campsites to reduce chronic sediment delivery and reduce impacts to aquatic and riparian ecosystems	75%	Other federal (BLM, BOR); City of Helena open lands; State of Montana

\*Assume funding requested for Year 1 will be allocated for FY2021

\*\*Note that timber volume produced from the treatment is estimated in a separate worksheet - Attachment C.

Fiscal Year	Estimate of acres treated annually that will generate restoration byproducts	Total projected annual harvested volume (ccf)	Expected percentage commercially utilized*
2021	300	3,000	100
2022	4,800	72,000	100
2023	4,400	70,200	100
2024	3,800	51,200	100
2025	400	4,000	100
2026	3,000	60,000	100
2027	3,000	60,000	100
2028	200	2,000	100
2029	500	5,000	100
2030	2,250	45,000	100
	700	14,000	100

Montana's Big Elk Divide Initiative Work Item	Total Quantity	Unit	Price/Unit	Total Est	Fiscal Year	Program	Target Accomplishment	Unit of measure	Project	Timber Harvest, i.e. Treatments Through Timber Sales (acres)	Acres of forest lands treated using timber sales and to achieve healthier condition. (TMBR-SALES-TRT-AC, TMBR-TRT)	Articulate % ground based, steep-slope (cable and tether logging) and helicopter
Timber sale preparation annually	1	prj	\$ 220,000	\$ 220,000	21	tm	3,000	Volume timber sold (CCF)	multiple	300	300	100% tractor
Timber sale preparation annually (middleman)	1	prj	\$ 220,000	\$ 220,000	22	tm	72000	Volume timber sold (CCF)	Middleman	4,800	4,800	80% tractor 20% skyline
Timber sale preparation annually (boulder baldy and middleman)	1	prj	\$ 220,000	\$ 220,000	23	tm	70200	Volume timber sold (CCF)	multiple	4,400	4,400	75% tractor 25% skyline
Timber sale preparation annually (boulder baldy)	1	prj	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	24	tm	51200	Volume timber sold (CCF)	Boulder Baldy	3,800	3,800	90% tractor 10% skyline
Timber sale preparation annually	1	prj	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	25	tm	4000	Volume timber sold (CCF)	multiple	400	400	100% tractor
Timber sale preparation annually (larabee hat)	1	prj	\$ 220,000	\$ 220,000	26	tm	60000	Volume timber sold (CCF)	Larabee Hat	3,000	3,000	80% tractor 20% skyline
Timber sale preparation annually (larabee hat)	1	prj	\$ 220,000	\$ 220,000	27	tm	60000	Volume timber sold (CCF)	Larabee Hat	3,000	3,000	80% tractor 20% skyline
Timber sale preparation annually	1	prj	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	28	tm	2000	Volume timber sold (CCF)	multiple	200	200	100% tractor
Timber sale preparation annually	1	prj	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	29	tm	5000	Volume timber sold (CCF)	multiple	500	500	100% tractor
Timber sale preparation annually (mullan)	1	prj	\$ 180,000	\$ 180,000	30	tm	45000	Volume timber sold (CCF)	multiple	2,250	2,250	90% tractor 10% skyline

Timber sale preparation annually (ophir)	1	prj	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	30	tm	14000	Volume timber sold (CCF)	multiple	700	700	100% tractor
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**CFRLP Proposal Attachment C: Utilization of Forest Restoration Byproducts**

\*Note that acres treated includes all acres treated within the CFLRP boundary. However, the projected annual harvested volume is only for NFS lands.

Fiscal Year	Estimate of acres treated annually that will generate restoration byproducts	Total projected annual harvested volume (ccf) from NFS lands	Expected percentage commercially utilized* from NFS lands
2021	1,230	3,000	100
2022	5,730	72,000	100
2023	5,330	70,200	100
2024	4,730	51,200	100
2025	1,330	4,000	100
2026	3,930	60,000	100
2027	3,930	60,000	100
2028	1,130	2,000	100
2029	1,430	5,000	100
2030	3,180	45,000	100
2031	750	14,000	100
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>32,700</b>	<b>386,400</b>	

*Estimated % of TOTAL acres accomplished on NFS lands: 71%*  
*Estimated % of TOTAL acres accomplished on other landownerships within the CFLRP boundary: 29%*

\*Commercially utilized refers to the volume you expect to sell across all product classes (sawtimber, biomass, firewood, etc.)

**Forest Service staff representative(s)**

**working with collaborative:** (Please **Denise Pengeroth**, Wildlife Biologist/Program Manager; **Kathy Bushnell**, Helena District Ranger; **Mike Welker**, Townsend District Ranger provide list of key staff):

Collaborative Member/Partner Name	Organization Affiliation (if applicable)	Was this person involved in proposal development?	Primary Issue Category	Second Issue Category	Third Issue Category	If "other," briefly describe
Al Christophersen, Co-chairman		Yes	Fire Ecology	Recreation (motorized)	Watershed	
Steve Marks, Co-chairman	Marks Lumber	Yes	Forest Products	Community Development	Youth	
Doug Abelin		Yes	Recreation (motorized)	Watershed	Tourism	
Lois Olsen		Yes	Fire Ecology	Environmental	Research	
Eric Trum		Yes	Watershed	Environmental	Recreation (non-motorized)	
Pat McKelvey	Tri-County FireSafe WG	Yes	County	Other	Other	Forest Health; Wildfire Risk Reduction; WUI issues
Joseph Cohenour		Yes	Wildlife	Recreation (non-motorized)	Watershed	
Dennis Milburn		Yes	Recreation (non-motorized)	Fire Management	Environmental	
Tom Williams		Yes	Other	Fire Management	Environmental	Rangeland: Ranch/Cattle/Water
Mark Meloy	Elkhorn Working Group	Yes	Wilderness	Wildlife	Recreation (non-motorized)	
Kerry White		Yes	Recreation	Tourism	State	
Jim Cancroft		Yes	Other	Wildlife	Other	Forest Management; Restoring Native Habitats
Mike Bishop (pending vote)		Yes	Environmental	Watershed	Fire Ecology	

**Letter of Commitment**  
**Big Elk Divide Restoration Committee**  
**January 2, 2020**

WE, the listed members of the Big Elk Divide Restoration Committee (BEDRC) are fully committed to the long-term success of the Montana Big Elk Divide Initiative CFLRP project. WE have been fully engaged in the discussions to embark upon this effort with the Helena-Lewis and Clark Forest, partners and other state and federal agencies even before the request for proposals was formally announced. WE have been at the table with full disclosures of our intent to participate in the development, design, and writing of this proposal. WE have in the past and will continue to provide vision, expertise, experience and sage advice for design, development, comments, prioritization, implementation, monitoring, and partnership development to fully and successfully complete projects under this proposal.

WE believe our experience as a collaborative over the past nine years has provided us, and our partners, with the tools and knowledge to continue the successes we have achieved so far. Our efforts in designing, describing and analyzing of projects resulted in very detailed comments or our own landscape planning documents. WE have filed as appeal intervenors and as Amicus filers along with drafting comments for those efforts, gathered partner support to help fund implementation work, which has resulted in sound ecological treatments across Forest Service, BLM, and private land treatments through NRCS programs. WE reserve the right to comment negatively, and/or actively oppose, proposed projects that we feel do not adequately adhere to our Restoration Principles.

BEDRC members are on the committee because of their “zone of interest” and experience. While every BEDRC member is a member of several other organizations, we are not representatives of any of those organizations or groups within BEDRC. We feel this allows everyone to be unshackled to listen, discuss, debate, and come to consensus because we do not have to go out to get approvals to make this collaborative move ahead.

BEDRC has successfully utilized members to lead various subcommittees that take on specific issues and bring them to the full committee for review and approval of action. Our [Base Documents](#) (Mission, Charter, Consensus Agreement, Code of Conduct, Restoration Principles, Statement of Interest for Membership) all have been, and will continue to be, critical to provide the ability to organize, operate, and be successful throughout this project.

WE have been deeply engaged in the development of this proposal, will continue to be engaged and committed to the successful implementation of this Initiative.

Please accept this letter of commitment as a collective agreement from each member of the Big Elk Divide Restoration Committee, as demonstrated by the electronic signatures provided by each member below.

/s/ Al Christophersen, Member BEDRC, Co-chair  
/s/ Steve Marks, Member BEDRC, Co-chair  
/s/ Doug Abelin, Member BEDRC  
/s/ Lois Olsen, Member BEDRC  
/s/ Eric Trum, Member BEDRC  
/s/ Pat McKelvey, Member BEDRC  
/s/ Joseph Cohenour, Member BEDRC  
/s/ Dennis Milburn, Member BEDRC  
/s/ Tom Williams, Member BEDRC  
/s/ Mark Meloy, Member BEDRC  
/s/ Kerry White, Member BEDRC

/s/ Jim Cancroft, Member BEDRC  
/s/ Mike Bishop, Member BEDRC  
*Agency Technical Expert/Liaison to BEDRC:*  
*Laura Obert, County Commissioners Liaison*  
*Corey Meier, BLM Agency Advisor*  
*Justin Meisner, NRCS Agency Advisor*  
*John Huston, MT DNRC Agency Advisor*  
*Denise Pengeroth, FS Agency Advisor*  
*Kathy Bushnell, FS Agency Advisor*  
*Mike Welker, FS Agency Advisor*  
*Adam Grove, MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks*

**Letter of Commitment – Point of Contact (POC)**  
Montana Big Elk Divide – CFLRP New Proposal

**Al Christophersen**

*Co-Chair of Big Elk Divide Restoration Committee*

**Email:** [elktracks71@gmail.com](mailto:elktracks71@gmail.com)



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**Broadwater County Commissioners**

Laura Obert ~ Mike Delger ~ Darrel Folkvord

515 Broadway ▪ Townsend Montana 59644 ▪ [commissioners@co.broadwater.mt.us](mailto:commissioners@co.broadwater.mt.us)

December 23, 2019

Mr. William Avey  
Supervisor, Helena – Lewis and Clark Forest  
2880 Airport Road  
Helena Montana 59601

RE: Support for the Montana Big Elk Divide Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project

Dear Supervisor Bill Avey,

The Broadwater County Board of County Commissioners support and endorse the Helena – Lewis and Clark Forest and the Big Elk Divide Restoration Committee's partnership efforts to propose the Montana Big Elk Divide Project. We encourage your selection of this project for funding for the duration of the project.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Mike Delger, Chair  
Broadwater County Board of County Commissioners

Laura Obert

Darrel Folkvord

Laura Obert  
Commissioner, District 1  
[lobert@co.broadwater.mt.us](mailto:lobert@co.broadwater.mt.us)  
406.980.2050

Mike Delger  
Commissioner, District 2  
[mikedelger@co.broadwater.mt.us](mailto:mikedelger@co.broadwater.mt.us)  
406.521.0834

Darrel Folkvord  
Commissioner, District 3  
[dfolkvord@co.broadwater.mt.us](mailto:dfolkvord@co.broadwater.mt.us)  
406.980.1213



## **Jefferson County Commission**

*118 W. Centennial*

*Post Office Box H*

*Boulder, Montana 59632-0249*

*(406) 225-4025 Voice / (406) 225-4148 Fax*

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*Leonard Wortman, Chair Bob Mullen, Commissioner Cory Kirsch, Commissioner*

December 31, 2019

To Whom it May Concern:

On behalf of the County Commission and the residents of Jefferson County, I would like to offer our full support for the CFLRP Project submitted by the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest (HLC). We believe strongly in the collaborative process and are happy that this process was done in this manner with the Big Elk Divide Restoration Committee (BEDRC).

This CFLRP Project will allow so much, very needed work to be done on this landscape that has suffered from drought and years of insect infestations, that have left much of our forested land in deplorable and very dangerous condition. These conditions in our Urban/Wildland interface threaten human lives, not only from catastrophic wildfire, but also from falling dead trees. Many of these dead trees now fall over for no apparent reason and without warning.

So much desperately needed work can be done over the next ten years, it is essential to have this project approved. From mitigating potential wildfire to abandoned mine restoration to improved water quality, this project can be a huge benefit, not only to Jefferson County, but to the entire region.

Thank you so much for your support for this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leonard Wortman".

Leonard Wortman, Chair

COM/ha

cc: reading file



*Assisting collaboration in forest and grassland restoration, conservation, and resource utilization  
— for the benefit of all.*

December 14, 2019

RE: SUPPORT OF BIG ELK DIVIDE RESTORATION COMMITTEE (BEDRC)

Reviewing Official,

The Montana Forest Collaboration Network (MFCN) works to assist collaboratives across the State of Montana. MFCN provides support and services to local collaboratives while encouraging collaboratives' efforts to be diverse in their approach to natural resource issues; to include diversity in their make-up; to be autonomous and transparent in operation; and to be respectful with meaningful, civil dialogue.

The Big Elk Divide Restoration Committee (BEDRC), initially formed in 2011 as the Elkhorn Restoration Committee, has demonstrated its collaborative skills through projects such as the Big Elk Divide. More recently, the BEDRC has been very successful in its efforts working with the U.S. Forest Service, BLM, NRCS, DNRC, and private landowners.

Therefore, the MFCN supports the Big Elk Divide Restoration Committee's efforts in its proposal for a CFLRP project. MFCN looks forward to working with them and the Helena-Lewis & Clark National Forest's *Montana's Big Elk Divide Initiative*.

Sincerely,

MONTANA FOREST COLLABORATION NETWORK

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gordy Sanders".

Gordy Sanders, Chair  
406.239.3145





January 2, 2020

Mr. William Avey  
Supervisor, Helena – Lewis and Clark Forest  
2880 Airport Road  
Helena, Montana 59601

RE: Support for the Montana Big Elk Divide Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project

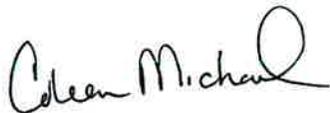
Dear Supervisor Bill Avey,

The Montana Logging Association supports and endorses the Helena – Lewis and Clark Forest and the Big Elk Divide Restoration Committee's partnership efforts to propose the Montana Big Elk Divide Project.

We encourage your selection of this project for funding for the duration of the project.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely



Coleen Michael  
Administrative Director  
Montana Logging Association



## Tri-County FireSafe Working Group

P.O. Box 934  
Helena, MT 59624-0934  
(406) 422-2418  
exdir@tcfswg.org

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Mr. William Avey, Supervisor  
Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest  
2880 Airport Road  
Helena Montana 59601

Re: Montana Big Elk Divide Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project

Tri-County FireSafe Working Group fully supports and endorses the efforts of the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest and the Big Elk Divide Restoration Committee in their efforts with respect to the Montana Big Elk Divide Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project. Over the last 35 years we have worked extensively with the Forest Service, other agencies, communities and private landowners in wildfire mitigation, education and outreach with respect to living with wildland fire in the three-county area of Jefferson, Broadwater, and Lewis and Clark. This project represents a significant step forward in our efforts to make our communities more fire safe by improving the health and resilience of the forests. The collaborative approach; bringing all interest parties to the table; has resulted in a project we consider to be well thought out and holistic.

We will continue to support your efforts and will assist in every way that we can to make this a successful project.

Sincerely,

Ray Prill  
Executive Director



# Custer Gallatin Working Group

Big Horn, Carbon, Gallatin, Madison, Park, Powder River, Rosebud, Sweet Grass & Stillwater Counties

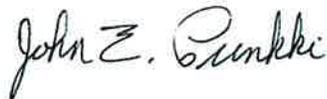
*Our Mission: To promote, recommend and advocate for programs and projects within the Custer-Gallatin National Forest that will provide for the public health, safety and general welfare of our communities under the sustainable multiple-use management concept to meet the diverse needs of our communities through a transparent, collaborative and mutually supportive process within a diverse and committed stakeholder group.*

December 20, 2019

Big Elk Divide Restoration Committee

On Behalf of the Custer Gallatin Working Group, a 9-county collaborative in South West Montana, we fully support your efforts to secure funding through the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program. Funding from this program to your collaborative will provide additional resources to the Forest Service to complete important projects in the Helena Lewis and Clark National Forest

Sincerely,



John E. Prinkki, Chair  
Custer Gallatin Working Group

## Membership

### County Commissioners

*Bill Bullock, Carbon Co.  
Jim Hart, Madison Co.  
Steve Caldwell, Park Co.  
Joe Skinner, Gallatin Co.  
Mark Crago, Stillwater Co.  
Sidney Fitzpatrick, Big Horn Co.  
Bill Wallace, Sweet Grass Co.  
Darold Zimmer, Powder River Co.*

### Industry Representatives

*Skiing -  
Jeff Schmidt  
Red Lodge Mountain*

*Minerals/Mining -  
Randy Weimer  
Stillwater Mining Corp.*

*Multiple Use -  
Kerry White  
Citizens for Balanced Use*

*Recreational & Economic Dev. -  
Candace Carr Strauss  
Big Sky Chamber*

*Agriculture/Ranching -  
Brent Sinnema  
Camp Creek Land and Cattle Co.*

*Timber -  
Jerry Furtney  
RY Timber Co.*

*Motorized Recreation -  
Mike Harris  
Montana Trail Vehicle Riders Assoc.*

*Quiet Recreation -  
Hillary Eisen  
Winter Wildlands Alliance  
Ian Jones  
SW Mont. Mtn. Biking Advocates*

*Fishing -  
John Bailey*

*Outfitters -  
Mike Colpo,  
Montana Outfitters & Guides Assn.*

*At Large -  
John Prinkki*

### Conservation NGOs

*Darcie Warden  
Greater Yellowstone Coalition*

*Barb Cestero  
The Wilderness Society*

*Jackie Walden  
Society for Range Management,  
Northern Great Plains Section*

*Colin Cooney  
Trout Unlimited*

Complete the table below and respond to the question at the bottom of the tab.

For 2010 Project extensions, fill in the annual funding request for the number of years requested for the extension (up to 10)

<b>Fiscal Year 1* (FY2021)</b>	<b>Funding Planned/Requested</b>
Partner fund contributions on NFS lands	\$400,000
Partner in-kind contributions on NFS lands	\$175,000
Goods for Services or Revenue from GNA to be applied within CFLRP landscape	\$290,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on NFS lands	\$3,039,543
<b>Total non-CFLRP funding for NFS lands</b>	<b>\$3,904,543</b>
CFLRP Funding Request	\$4,000,000
<b>Total CFLRP funding for NFS lands</b>	<b>\$4,000,000</b>
Partner fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$400,000
Partner in-kind contributions on non-NFS lands	\$50,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0
<b>Total non-CFLRP funding for non-NFS lands</b>	<b>\$450,000</b>

**\*Assume funding requested for Year 1 will be allocated in February 2020 at the earliest**

<b>Fiscal Year 2 (FY2022)</b>	<b>Funding Planned/Requested</b>
Partner fund contributions on NFS lands	\$104,500
Partner in-kind contributions on NFS lands	\$175,000
Goods for Services or Revenue from GNA to be applied within CFLRP landscape	\$1,440,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on NFS lands	\$2,676,292
<b>Total non-CFLRP funding for NFS lands</b>	<b>\$4,395,792</b>
CFLRP Funding Request	\$4,000,000
<b>Total CFLRP funding for NFS lands</b>	<b>\$4,000,000</b>
Partner fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$400,000
Partner in-kind contributions on non-NFS lands	\$50,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0
<b>Total non-CFLRP funding for non-NFS lands</b>	<b>\$450,000</b>

<b>Fiscal Year 3 (FY2023)</b>	<b>Funding Planned/Requested</b>
Partner fund contributions on NFS lands	\$100,000
Partner in-kind contributions on NFS lands	\$175,000
Goods for Services or Revenue from GNA to be applied within CFLRP landscape	\$1,404,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on NFS lands	\$2,304,453
<b>Total non-CFLRP funding for NFS lands</b>	<b>\$3,983,453</b>
CFLRP Funding Request	\$4,000,000
<b>Total CFLRP funding for NFS lands</b>	<b>\$4,000,000</b>
Partner fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$400,000
Partner in-kind contributions on non-NFS lands	\$50,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0

**Total non-CFLRP funding for non-NFS lands** \$450,000

<b>Fiscal Year 4 (FY2024)</b>	<b>Funding Planned/Requested</b>
Partner fund contributions on NFS lands	\$100,000
Partner in-kind contributions on NFS lands	\$175,000
Goods for Services or Revenue from GNA to be applied within CFLRP landscape	\$1,024,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on NFS lands	\$2,715,902
<b>Total non-CFLRP funding for NFS lands</b>	<u>\$4,014,902</u>
CFLRP Funding Request	<u>\$4,000,000</u>
<b>Total CFLRP funding for NFS lands</b>	<u>\$4,000,000</u>
Partner fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$400,000
Partner in-kind contributions on non-NFS lands	\$50,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0
<b>Total non-CFLRP funding for non-NFS lands</b>	<u>\$450,000</u>

<b>Fiscal Years 5-10 (FY2025 - FY2030)</b>	<b>Funding Planned/Requested</b>
Partner fund contributions on NFS lands	\$600,000
Partner in-kind contributions on NFS lands	\$1,050,000
Goods for Services or Revenue from GNA to be applied within CFLRP landscape	\$3,800,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on NFS lands	\$18,763,096
<b>Total non-CFLRP funding for NFS lands</b>	<u>\$24,213,096</u>
CFLRP Funding Request	<u>\$24,000,000</u>
<b>Total CFLRP funding for NFS lands</b>	<u>\$24,000,000</u>
Partner fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$2,400,000
Partner in-kind contributions on non-NFS lands	\$300,000
USFS Appropriated, Perm, and Trust fund contributions on non-NFS lands	\$0
<b>Total non-CFLRP funding for non-NFS lands</b>	<u>\$2,700,000</u>

Please provide an estimate of any funding needed for NEPA and environmental compliance in support of the CFLRP Project. You may copy/paste the response to the Tier 1 template and/or elaborate with additional details as needed. NOTE: CFLN can only be used for implementation and monitoring (not planning).

NEPA has already been planned and funded in the Forest’s current and outyear program of work. Additional resources will not be needed from the Regional Office beyond those services already provided (e.g. landscape prioritization).



**File Code:** 1580

**Date:** December 31, 2019

**Route To:**

**Subject:** Support for Montana's Big Elk Divide proposal

**To:** FACA Committee

As the Forest Supervisor of the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest, I am pleased to commit our full support for the Montana's Big Elk Divide (MBED) proposal. Together with Big Elk Divide Restoration Committee (BEDRC), we have developed a 10-year restoration strategy for more than 1.2 million acres across our Helena and Townsend Ranger Districts.

Restoration work through partnerships has occurred on the Helena and Townsend Ranger Districts for several decades. Over the past three years the Helena Ranger District received Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership funding to increase restoration within its surrounding communities, specifically in the Capital 360 focal area. Capital 360 brings together various agencies, organizations and citizens to effectively work together to implement the three tenets of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy across public and private lands. The restoration projects outlined in MBED will augment the work that has been, and is being, done by our cooperators, while expanding the restoration efforts to a larger landscape.

CFLRP funding will increase our capacity to collaboratively implement critical restoration projects on Forest Service lands through shared stewardship and other cooperative authorities. If MBED is selected, the Forest will hire a permanent full-time partnership coordinator to serve as the primary contact for MBED collaboration and planning. This will provide consistent coordination among the BEDRC and other partners, and increase workforce capacity for Forest staff to focus on implementation of the projects.

Upon completion of CFLRP funding and MBED implementation, the Forest will develop a scheduling plan to ensure maintenance of CFLRP restoration projects is included into its regular implementation program of work. Additionally, the Forest will absorb the partnership coordinator position into its regular workforce organization.

Overall, MBED would allow us to restore our landscape, which is dubbed the communities' "million acre backyard", and ensure a healthier and safer Forest for current and future generations. Thank you for considering our Montana's Big Elk Divide CFLRP proposal for funding.

**WILLIAM AVEY**  
Forest Supervisor



cc: Katherine Bushnell