

Yale Forest Forum: Tribal Forestry: Understanding Current Issues and Challenges

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Yakama Nation DNR
February 29, 2020



Yakama Reservation

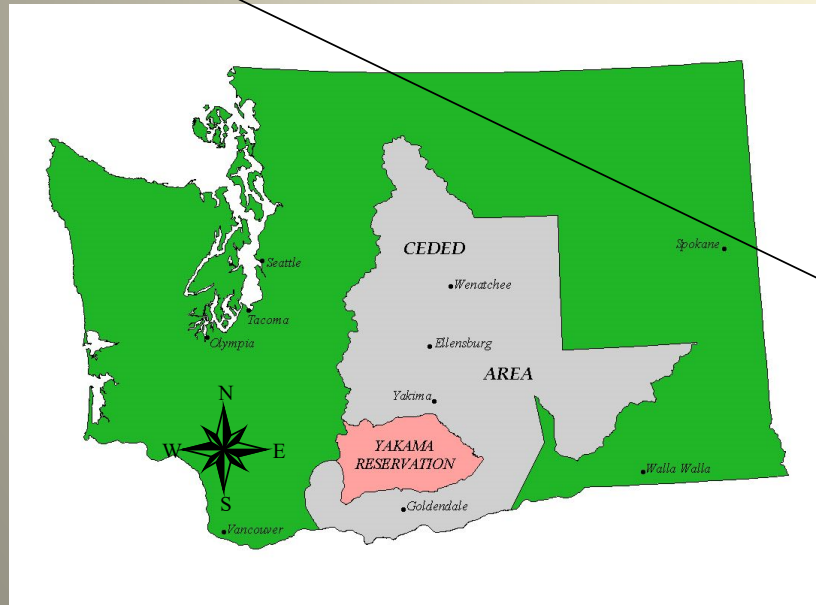
Treaty of 1855:

“...for the exclusive use and benefit of the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation.”

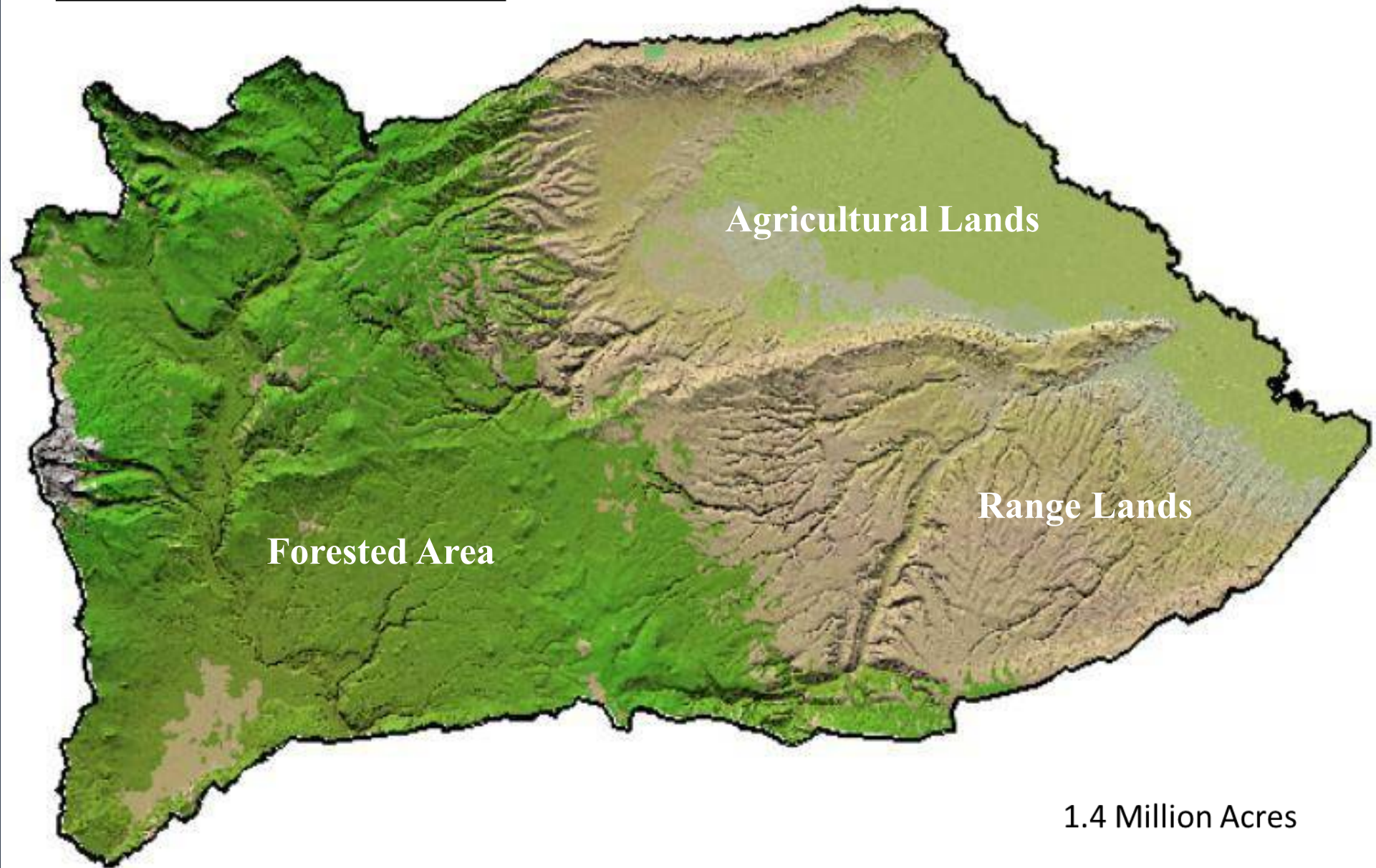


- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1) Palouse | 8) Sk' in-pah |
| 2) Piquouse | 9) Kah-miltpah |
| 3) Yakama | 10) Klickitat |
| 4) Wenatchapam | 11) Wish ham |
| 5) Klinquit | 12) See ap Cat |
| 6) Oche Chotes | 13) Li ay was |
| 7) Kow was say ee | 14) Shyiks |

Washington State



Yakama Reservation – Treaty of 1855



Management of the YN Forest Resource

YN Land & Natural Resources Policy Plan

- *Sets broad policy guidelines for the management of the timber resource.*

Yakama Nation Forest Management Plan

- *Provides the direction and guidance for forest land management activities.*

Forest Land Management Activities By:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs, Branch of Forestry
- YN Division of Natural Resources



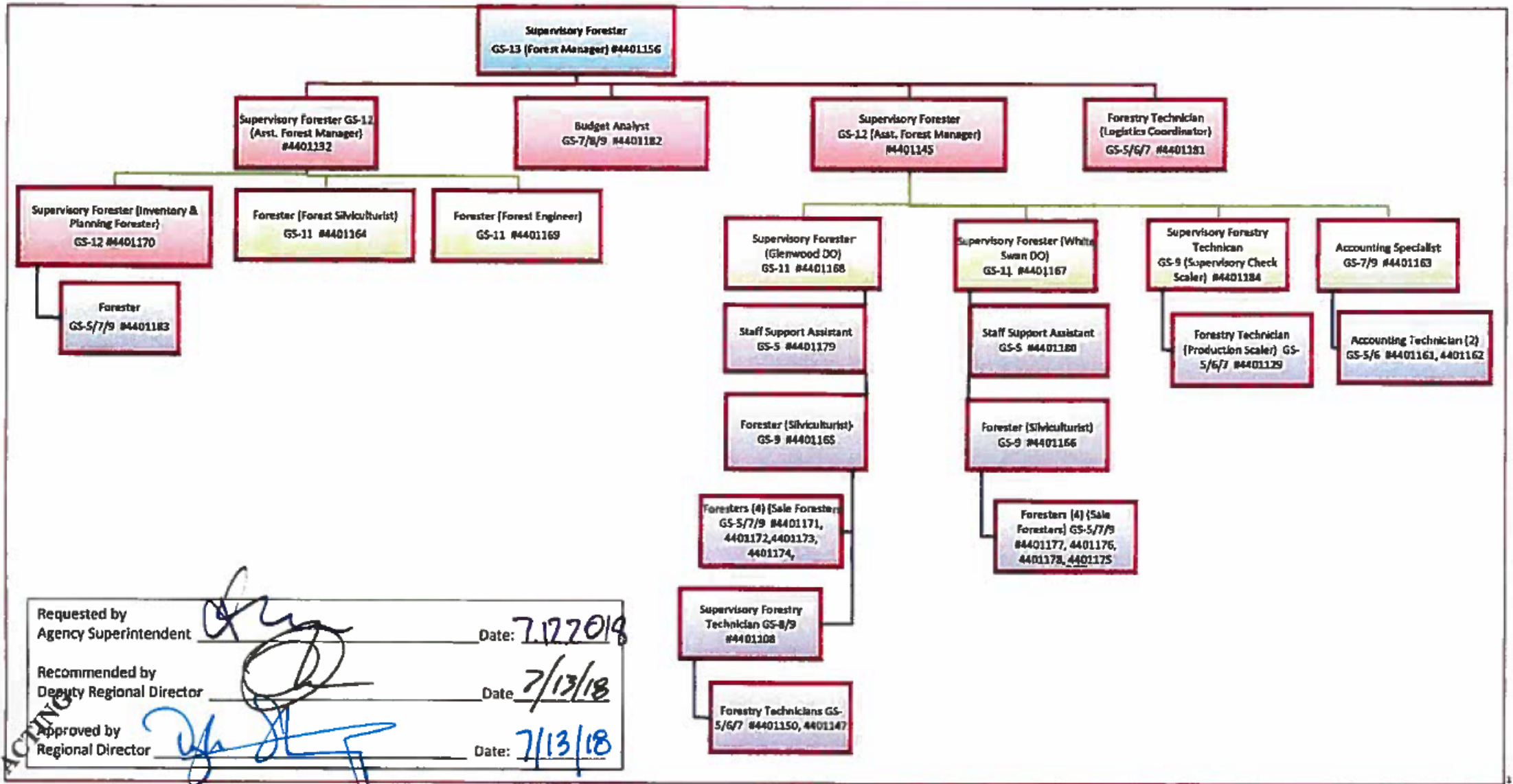
Yakama Forestry

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graph TD; A[Yakama Forestry] --> B[BIA Branch of Forestry]; A --> C[PL 93-638 Tribal Forestry];
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BIA
Branch of Forestry

PL 93-638
Tribal Forestry

Yakama BIA Position Title (Organization Title) Organization Chart 7-11-2018



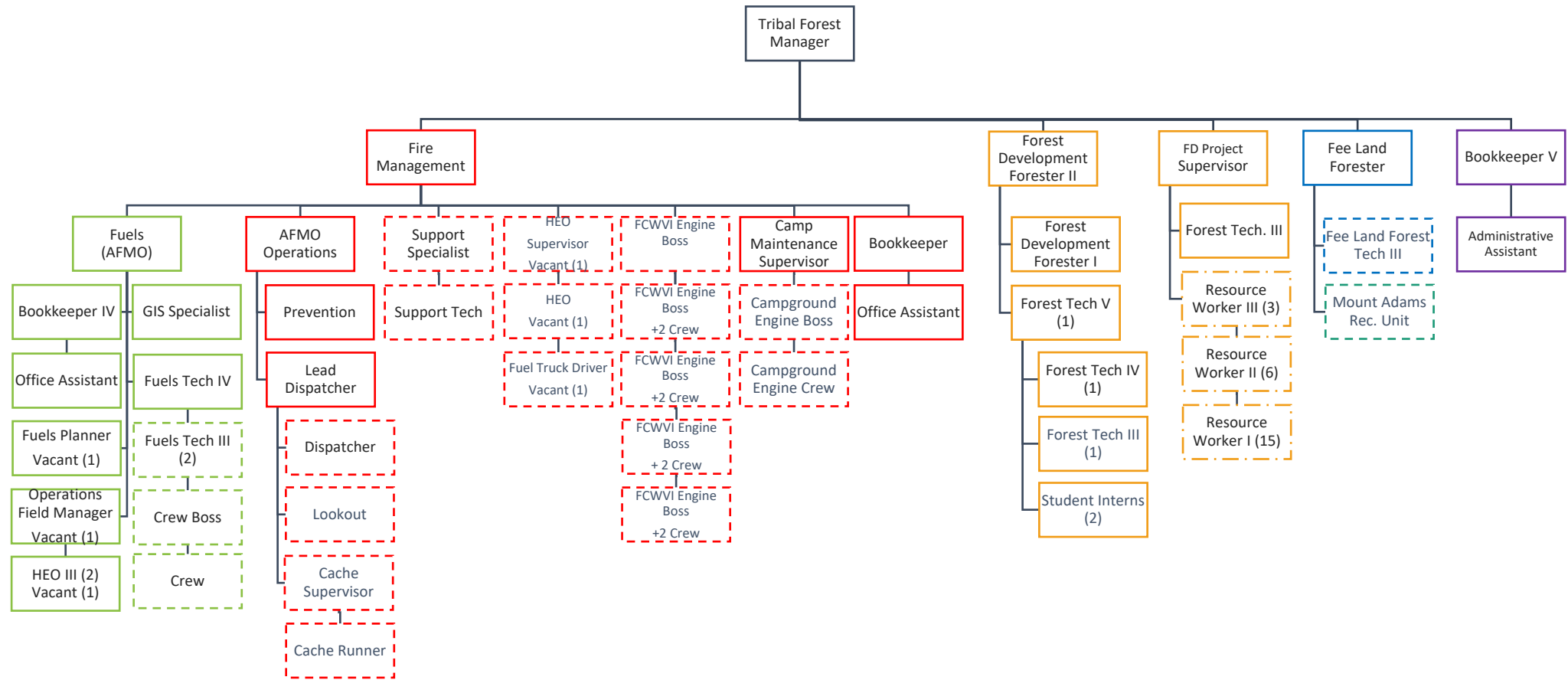
Requested by _____ Date: 7/12/18
 Agency Superintendent *[Signature]*

Recommended by _____ Date: 7/13/18
 Deputy Regional Director *[Signature]*

Approved by _____ Date: 7/13/18
 Regional Director *[Signature]*

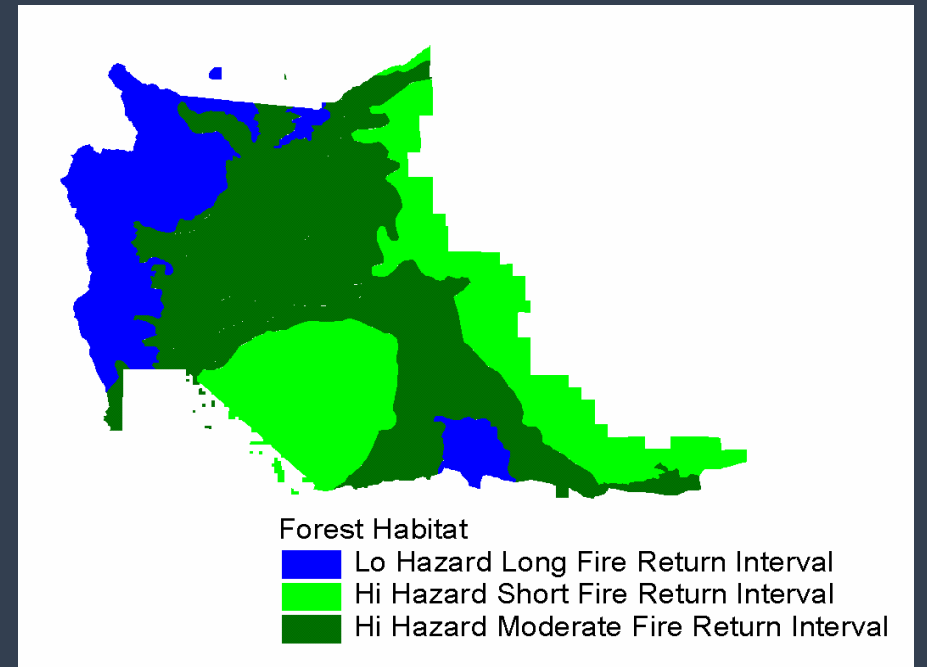
ACTING

YN TRIBAL FORESTRY



Forest Management History on the Yakama Reservation

- Prior to the Treaty of 1855
 - Land Managed by Natives primarily through fire
- 1880's – 1930's: Grazing of sheep by non-Indians
 - Cattle grazing from 1950's to present
- 1900's +: Fire Suppression
 - 1940's + aggressive fire suppression
- 1940's: start of first timber sales



Brief History of Forest Management

- 1870 Lumber harvest for establishment
- 1925 First Commercial Timber Harvest
- 1942 First Timber Management Plan
- 1970 90% income for the tribe was from timber
- 1998 Small Diameter Mill
- 2002 Large Diameter Mill
- 2005 Recent Forest Management Plan developed & passed
- 2012 Sustainable Forestry Initiative certification

Timber Sales on the Yakama Reservation

1940's: 18 mmbf

1950's: 560 mmbf

1960's: 1,170 mmbf

1970's: 1,460 mmbf

1980's: 1,070 mmbf

1990's: 1,220 mmbf

2000 – 2006: 1,070 mmbf



Volume Harvested per Decade



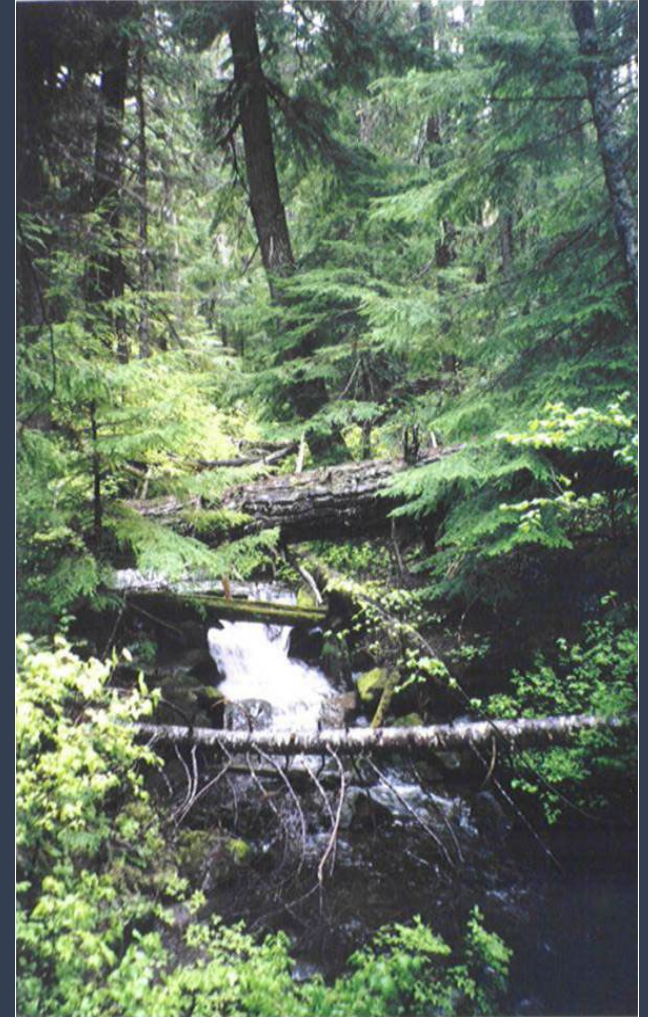
YAKAMA NATION FORESTRY

- Our timber resources are essential to our cultural, social and economic needs.
- The Yakama Nation has one of the largest volume forestlands within the BIA at more than 650,000 acres containing an estimated 8 billion board feet of timber.



BALANCING FOREST MANAGEMENT GOALS

- Forest health
- Forest ecosystems
- Revenue and employment
- Threatened and endangered species
- Big-game habitat
- Water quality
- Cultural resource protection
- Riparian / meadow protection

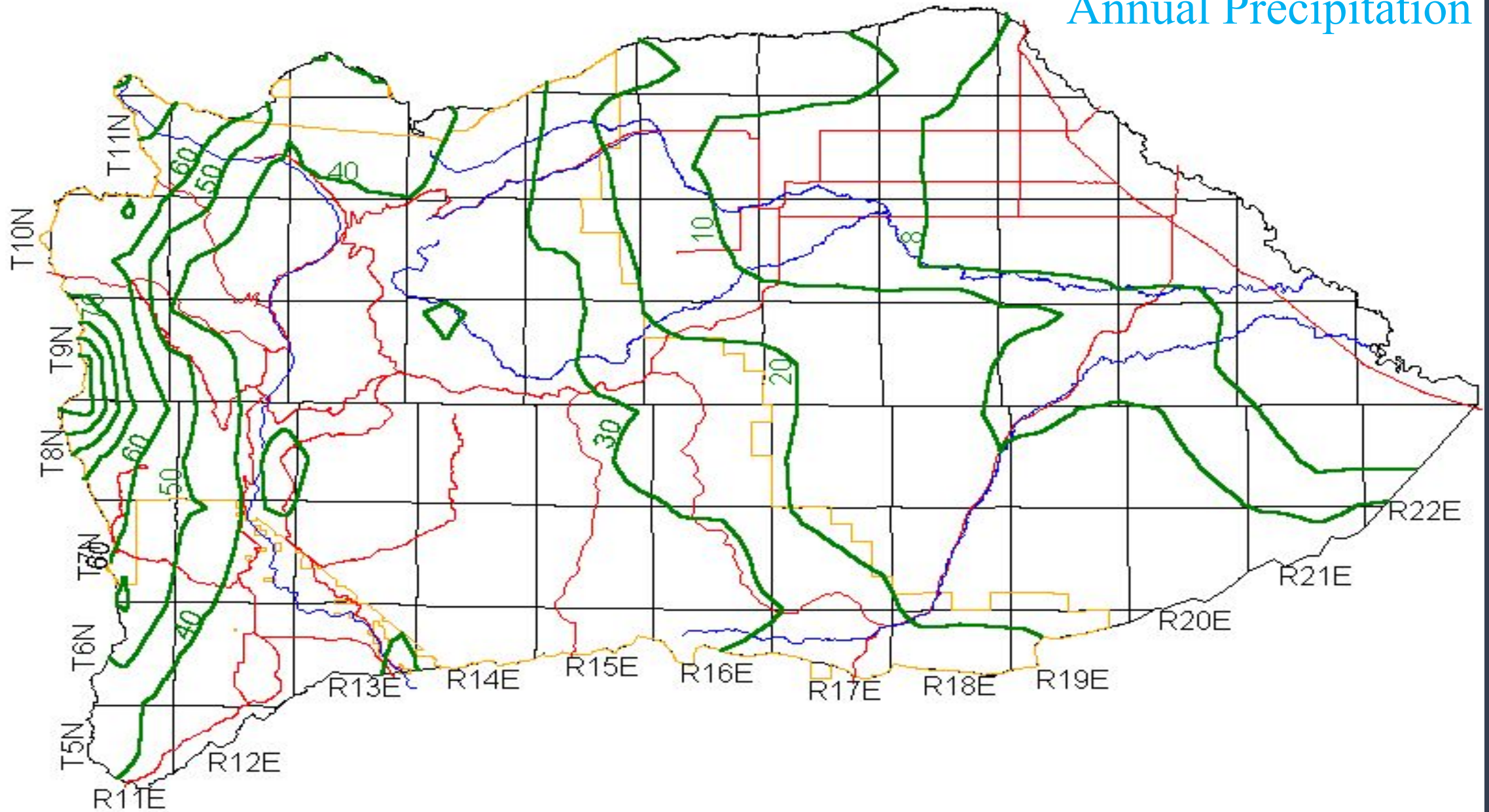


YAKAMA NATION – FORESTRY APPROACH

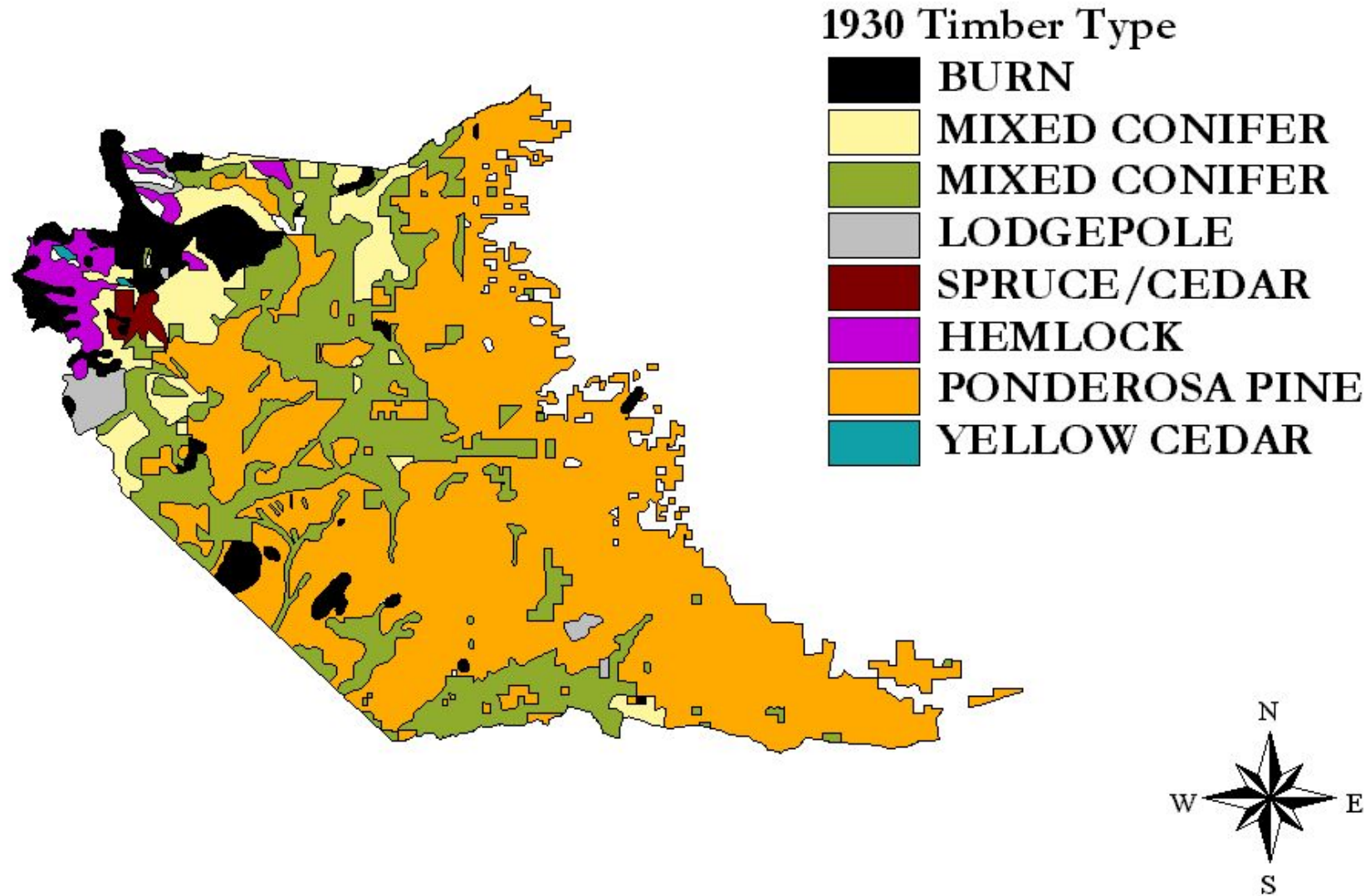
Reduce the risk of catastrophic forest losses from wildfire, insects and diseases by improving forest health so as to meet the cultural and economic needs of the Yakama People. (*Yakama Nation Forest Management Plan, September 2005*)



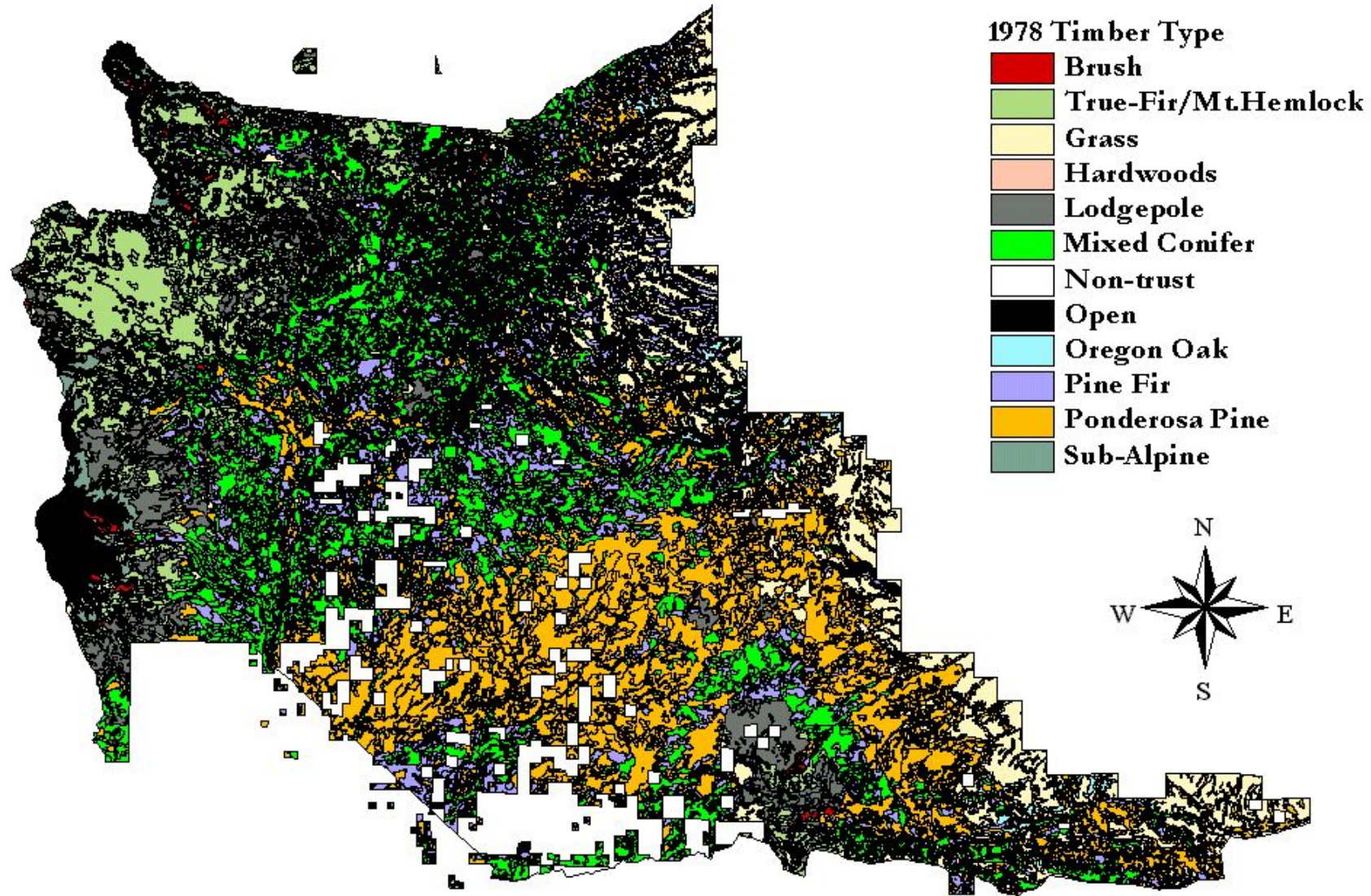
Annual Precipitation



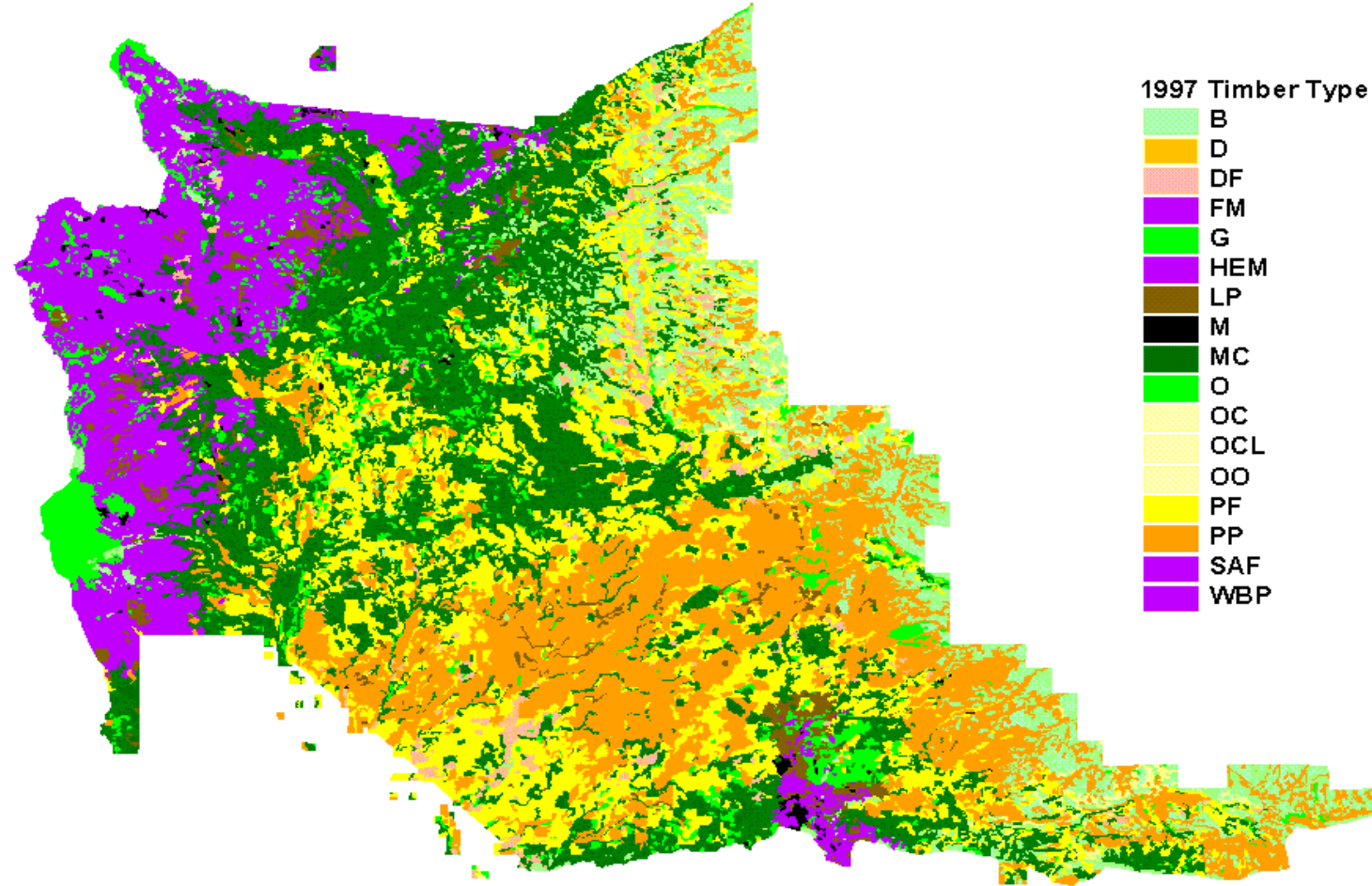
1930 Timber Type

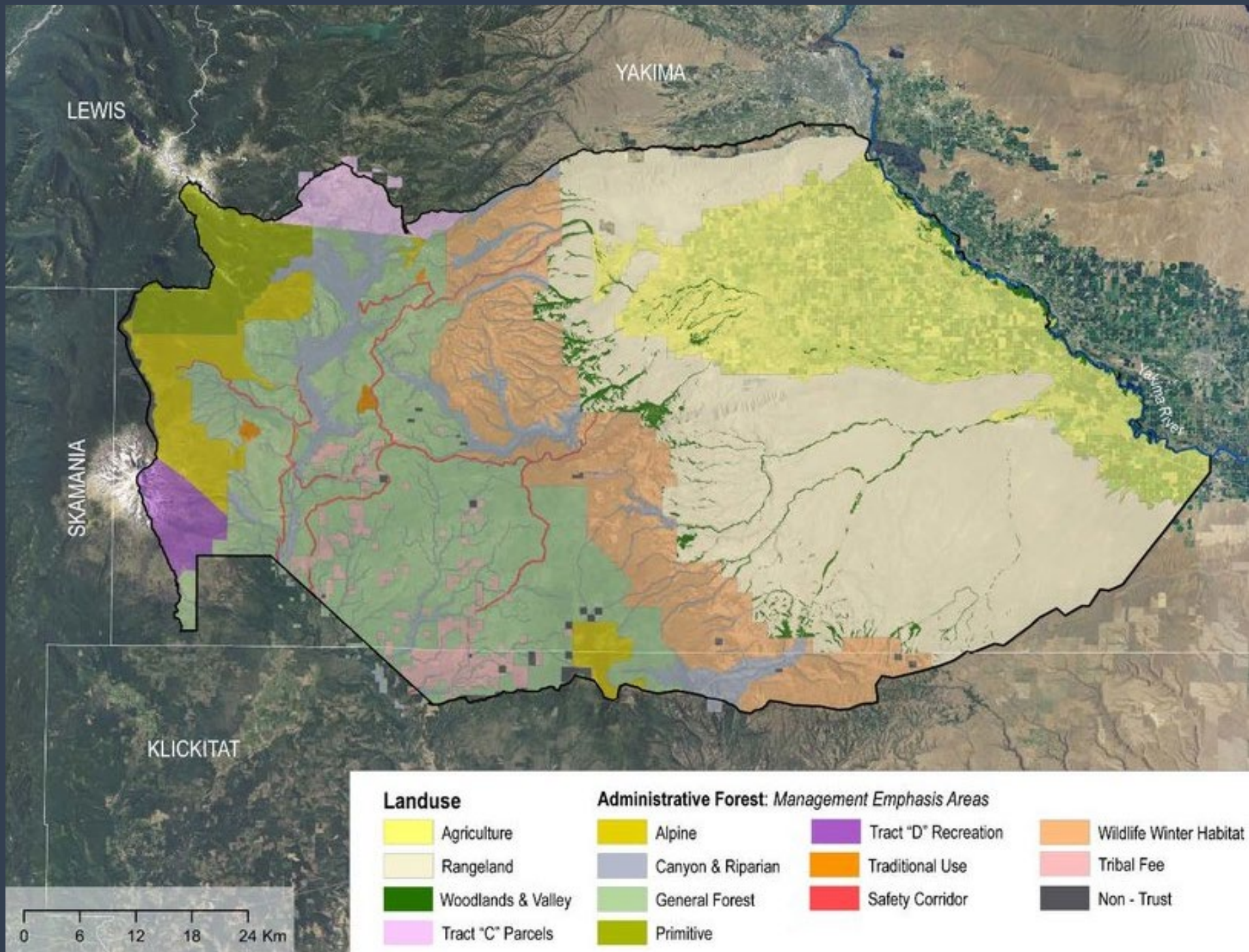


1978 Timber Type



Yakama Reservation Timber Type - 1997





Historic Conditions



- Timber/Vegetation Types
- Fire Regimes/Fuel Types



GPNF Heritage Collection

Long-term Strategy:
Promote the development of a more
resilient and sustainable forest





Photo by Harold Weaver, 1961



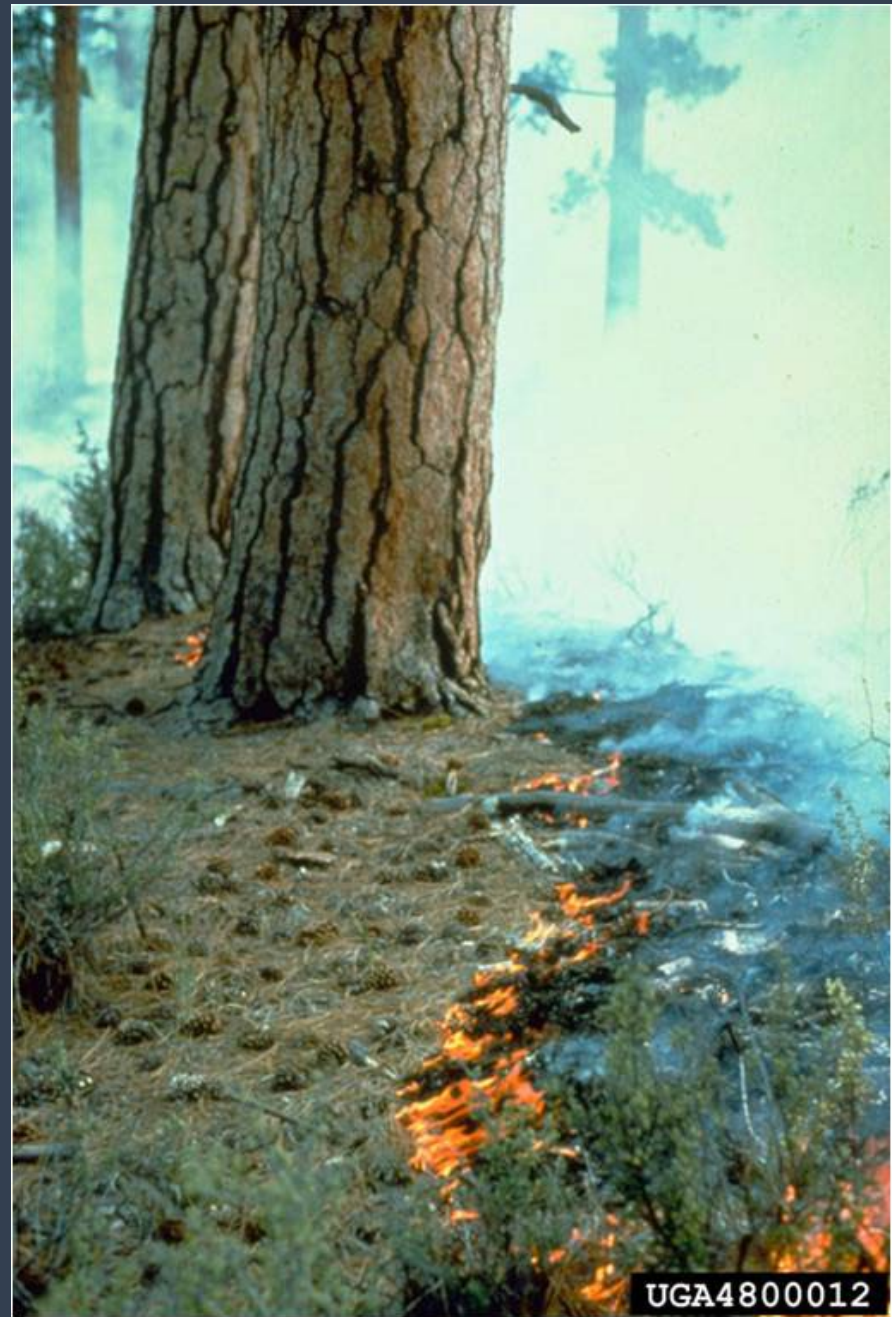


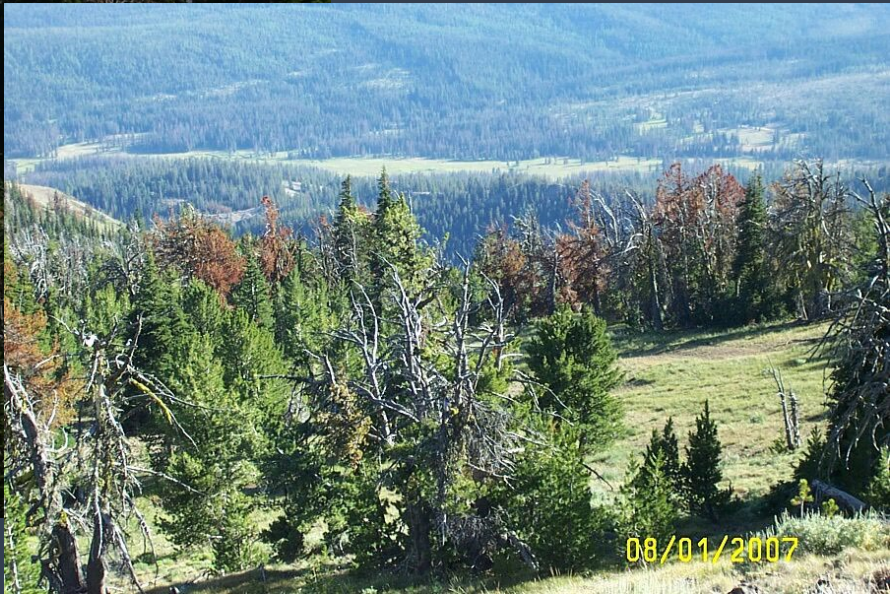
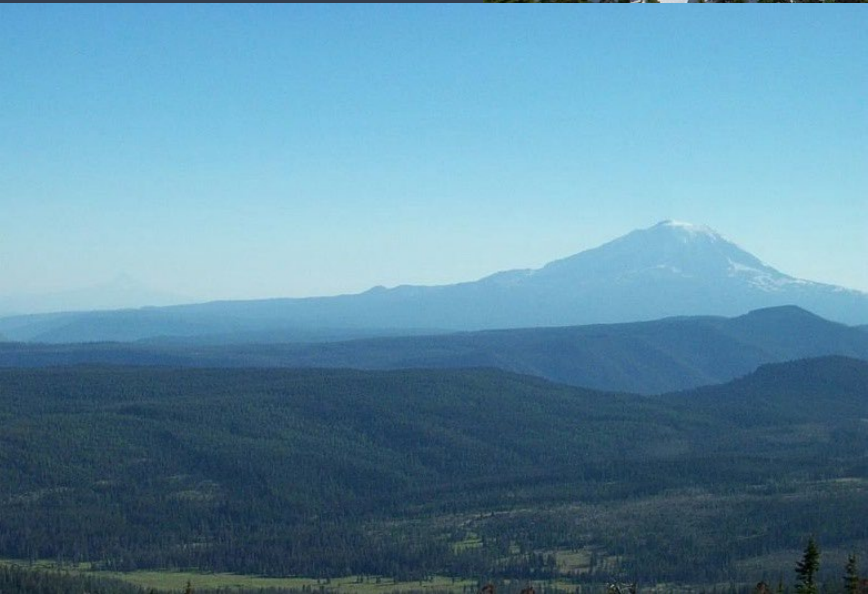




REVENUE & EMPLOYMENT







Challenges

Issues

- Forest Health & Climate Resilience

Impacts

- 1990s Spruce Budworm
- 2000s Western Pine Beetle
- Catastrophic Fires
- Forest Plan – Future Management

YAKAMA FOREST HEALTH



- *Large insect and disease complex*
- *Fifteen year western spruce budworm outbreak*
- *150,000 acres annual defoliation*
- *Bark beetle population buildups*
- *An estimated billion board feet of mortality*
- *Two tribal declarations of emergency, 1997, 2000*
- *Increasing risk of catastrophic fire*

Short-term Strategy:
Recover value of dead and dying trees





Yakama Nation Forest – Fire Risk

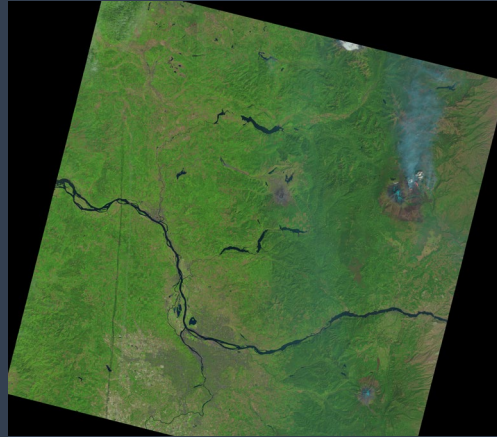
2013 – Mile Marker 28 Fire

- 20,000 Acres

2015 – Cougar Creek Fire

- 40,000 acres

10% of Forest Lost in Fires



Mile Marker 28 Fire - July 24, 2013



Cougar Creek Fire

- August 10, 2015 - started in the vicinity of Bench Lake







Yakama Agency BIA Forestry

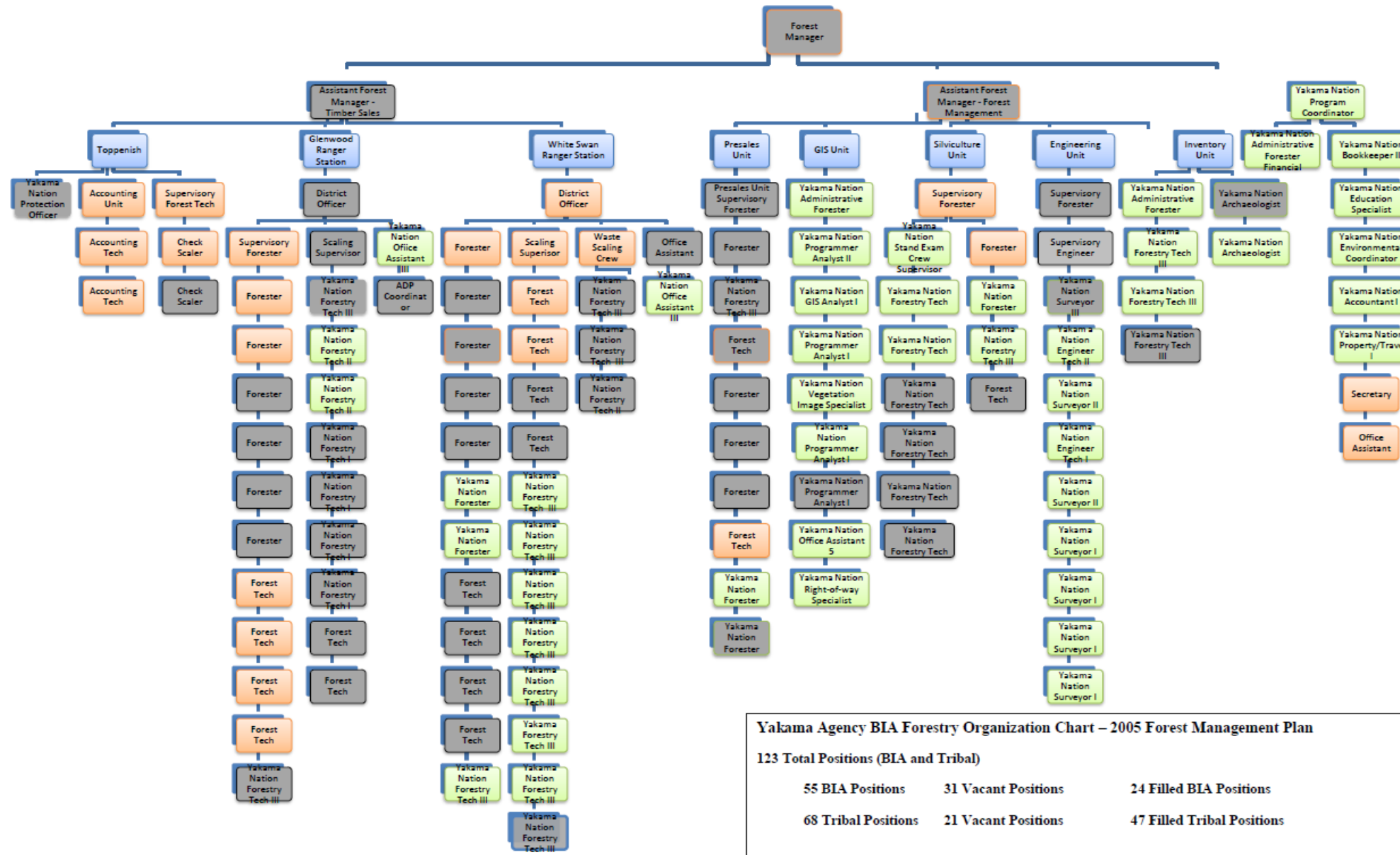
Staffing

- Critical Vacant BIA Branch of Forestry

Total Harvest Volume

- FY 2023 Less than 25 Million Board Feet Trust Timber Harvested





Challenges

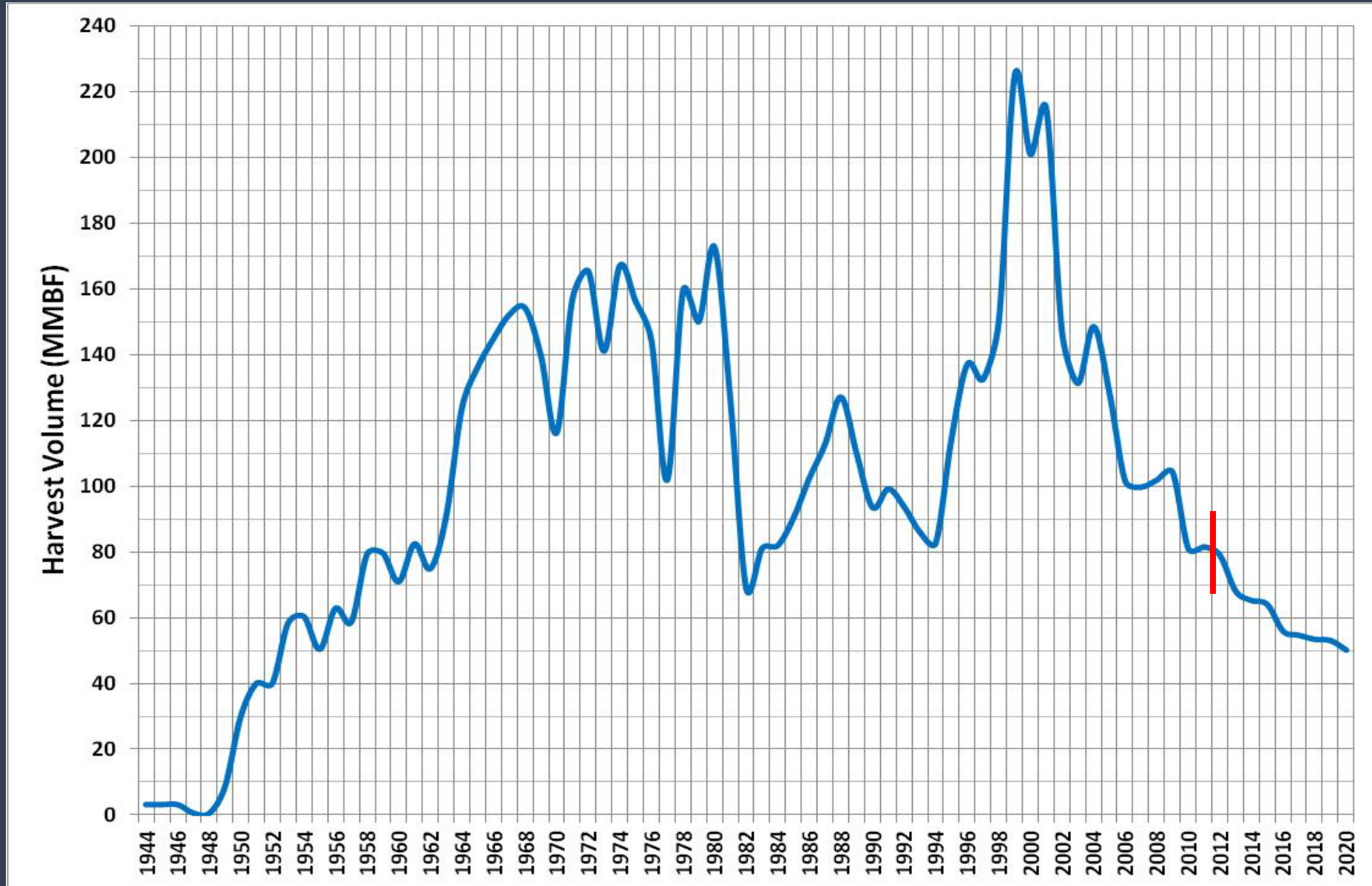
Issues

- Staffing levels at Yakama Agency are having a enormous impact on BIA Ability to meet its Trust Responsibility for Timber Sale and Forest Management on Yakama Reservation.

Impacts

- Trust Revenue down, helps run tribal government
- Long-term Viability of Yakama Forest Products
 - Uncertain due to lack of Wood Supply
- Issue continues to be identified in IFMAT IV
- Legally addressing

Annual Timber Harvest



Challenges

Issues

- Forest Infrastructure

Impacts

- Mill Updates - Modernize
- Aging Workforce
 - Loggers & Heavy Equipment
 - Cost for younger folks makes challenging
- Steep Slopes – Yarder, Tether, or other Alternate Harvest
- Pulp Market Change – Residual Chip Market

Path Forward

Forest Management Plan

- Update Inventory – Single Tree Inventory Using LIDAR
- Develop Management Direction
- Develop Harvest Schedule

Address Vacancies

- Tribe looking at 638 Contract
- Reorganize & Modernize Forestry Program
- Working with partners/colleges to develop new work force
- Funding

Forest Management

- Update and Draft New Plan
- 2005 YN Forest Management Plan
- Evaluate
 - Annual Allowable Cut
 - Harvest Schedule
 - Forest Health
 - Climate Change Resilience
 - ESA Impacts
 - Resource Balances



Finding Path Forward

Policy:

- Yakama Forestry Organization
- Harvest Schedule
- Forest Health
- Managing Steep Slopes
- Fuels Treatments – Using Rx Burning
- ESA
- Maintaining Workforce & Infrastructure
- Off-Reservation TFPA Projects
- Carbon Sequestration

Shared Stewardship



The Treaty of 1855



- 13 million acres ceded
- 1.4 million acres reserved
“...for the exclusive use and benefit of the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation.”
- Right to hunt, fish, gather is protected throughout Ceded and Usual and Accustomed use areas
- Yakama Nation has fiercely defended its treaty rights and it will continue to do so



Forestry

- *Tribal Forest Protection Act*
- 638 Contract Authority
- Stewardship Contracting
- Cooperative Agreements



The Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA)

- Authorized in 2004
- Tribes to propose projects on federal lands that are bordering or adjacent to tribal trust lands or resources, in order to address hazardous conditions that pose threats to tribal rights, lands, and resources from catastrophic wildfire, insects and disease or other threats.
- The TFPA offers a means of helping the United States fulfill its trust responsibilities to the tribes while promoting the restoration of healthy forest ecosystems on the landscape.

638 Contract TFPA Projects

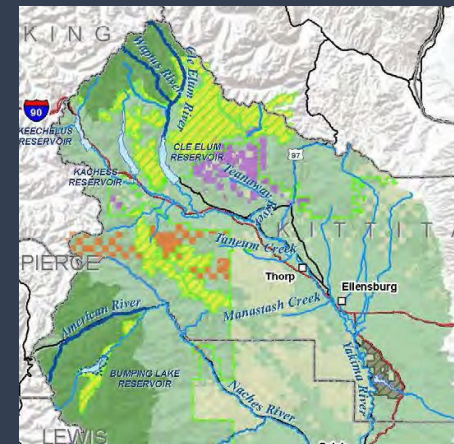
- Authorized in 2018 Farm Bill
- Gave the Forest Service Authority to enter into an arrangement with Tribal partners under the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act PL 93-638
- Must be a TFPA Proposal





Collaborations

- Tapash Forest Collaborative
- Northcentral Forest Health Collaborative
- South Gifford Pinchot Collaborative
- Teanaway Community Forest



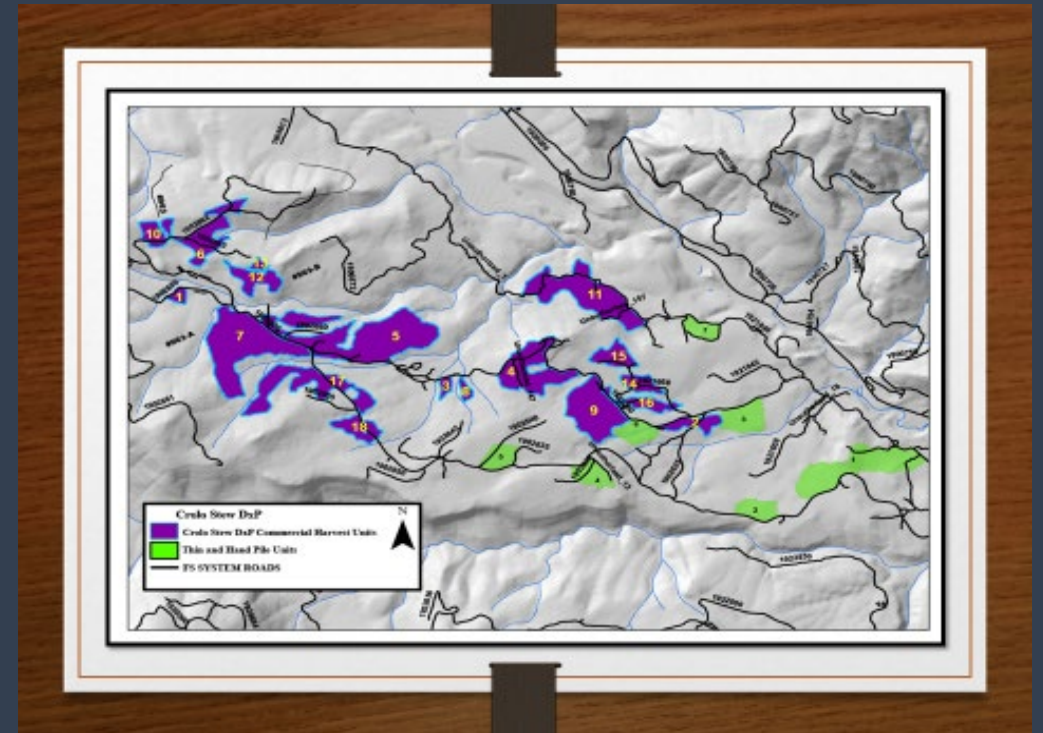
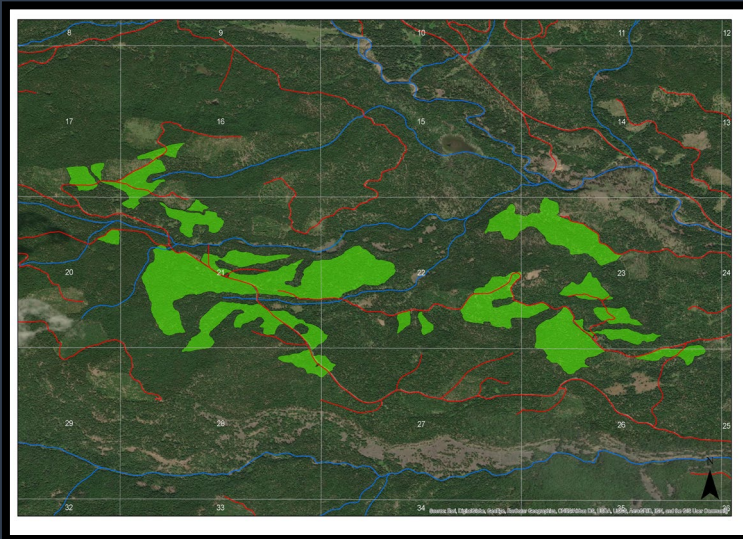
Dry Timber Sale TFPA - Tapash

- In 2016, under the TPFA, the Yakama Nation and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest entered a stewardship agreement
- Restore 548 acres



TFPA CroLo Steward Contract

- Second TFPA
- Restore 581 acres
- Yakama Forest Project also awarded another Stewardship Contract call Win Timber Sale





CroLo Stewardship Project

Collaborative Treatments

- Before and after pictures where DxD was implemented
 - All diameter silviculture prescription



Finn before photo taken by USFS



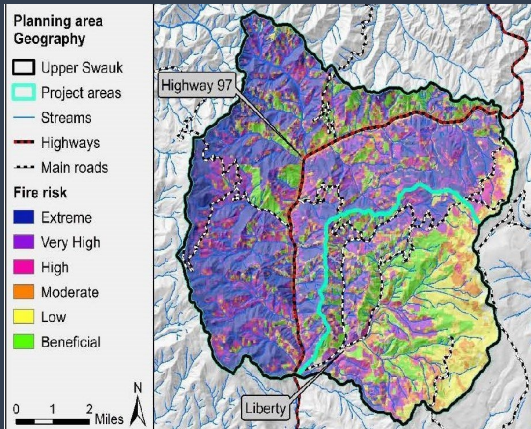
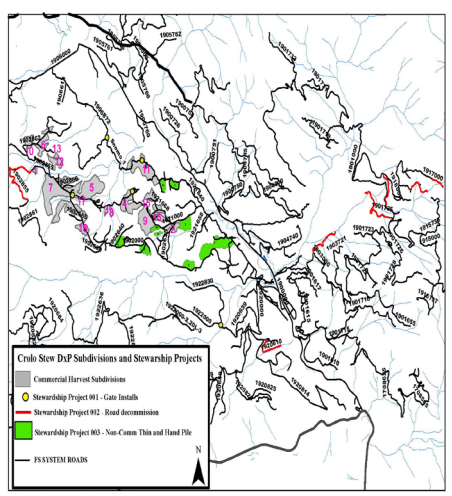
Finn after photo taken by USFS

TFPA

- Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA)
 - Stewardship – Restoration Projects
 - **CroLo – 10 Million Board Feet to YFP (2020 to 2021)**
 - **Thin, lop, and Pile – Forest D. Crew (2021-2023)**
 - **Uplands Stew – 17 MBF (2023)**
 - **Upper Swauk Restoration Project (2024)**



CroLo After Thinning

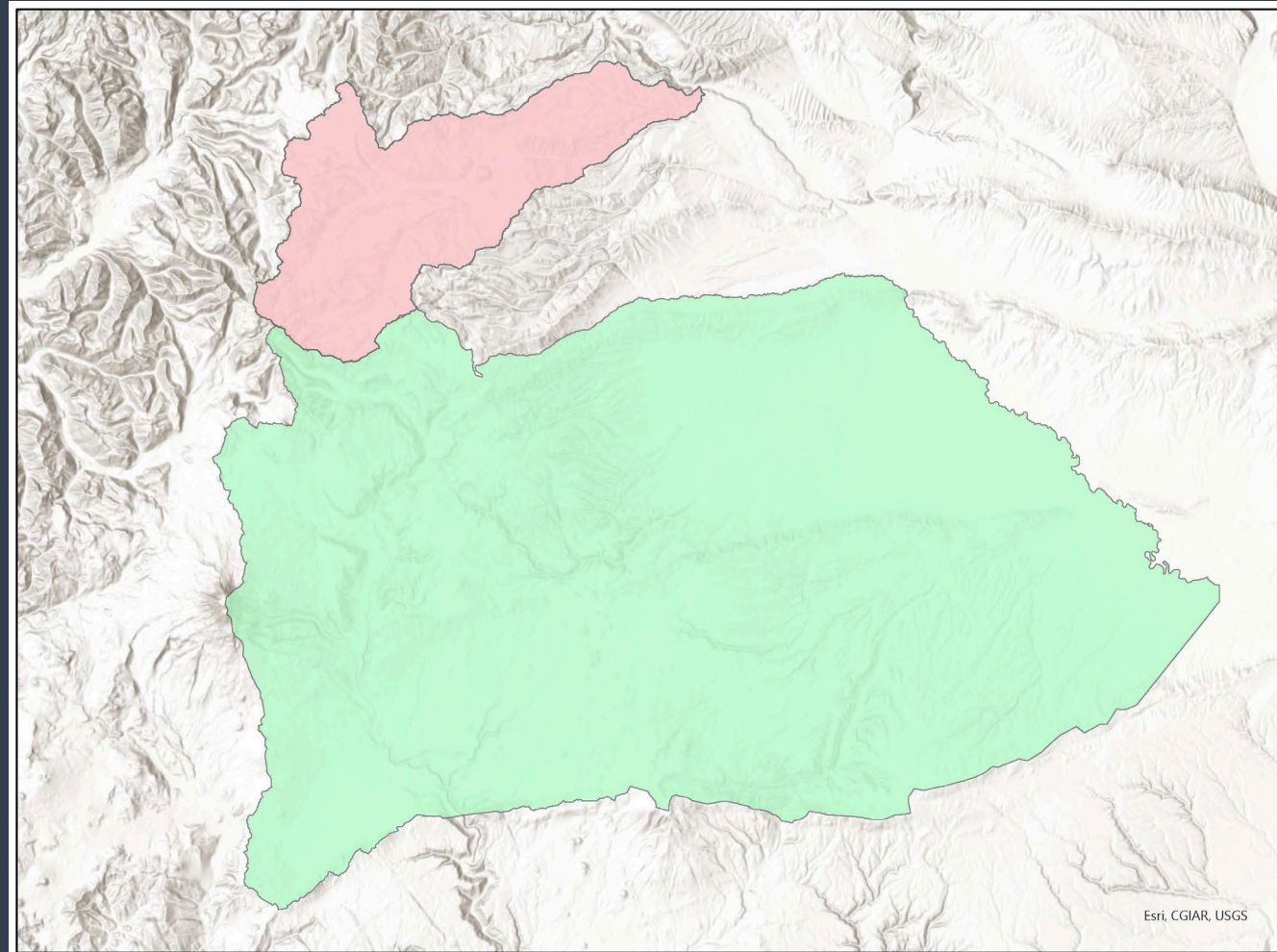


CroLo Before Thinning and Piling

A to Z
Yakama Nation leading
NEPA work on
Vegetation
Management
Restoration Project on
USFS lands in
~189,000-acre
Ahtanum –Tieton
Watershed

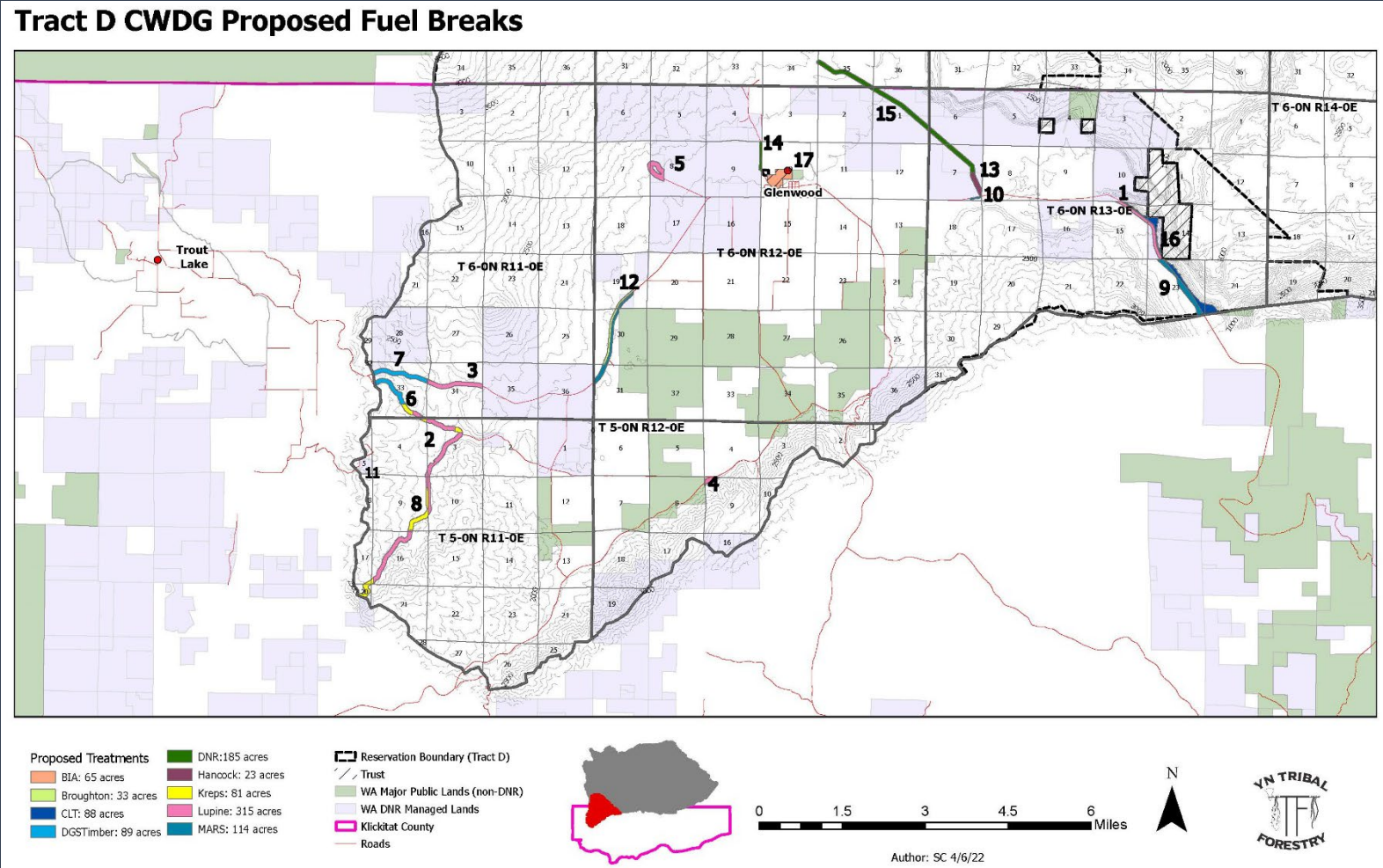
~23,000 Proposed
Fuels/Non-commercial
Treatment

~17,00 Proposed
commercial treatment



South Fork Tieton

Hazardous Fuels Reduction Treatments across 993 acres in Tract D across multiple ownerships
2023-2028



Community Wildfire Defense Grant

Aquatic Restoration

Wood Fiesta Helicopter Aquatic Restoration

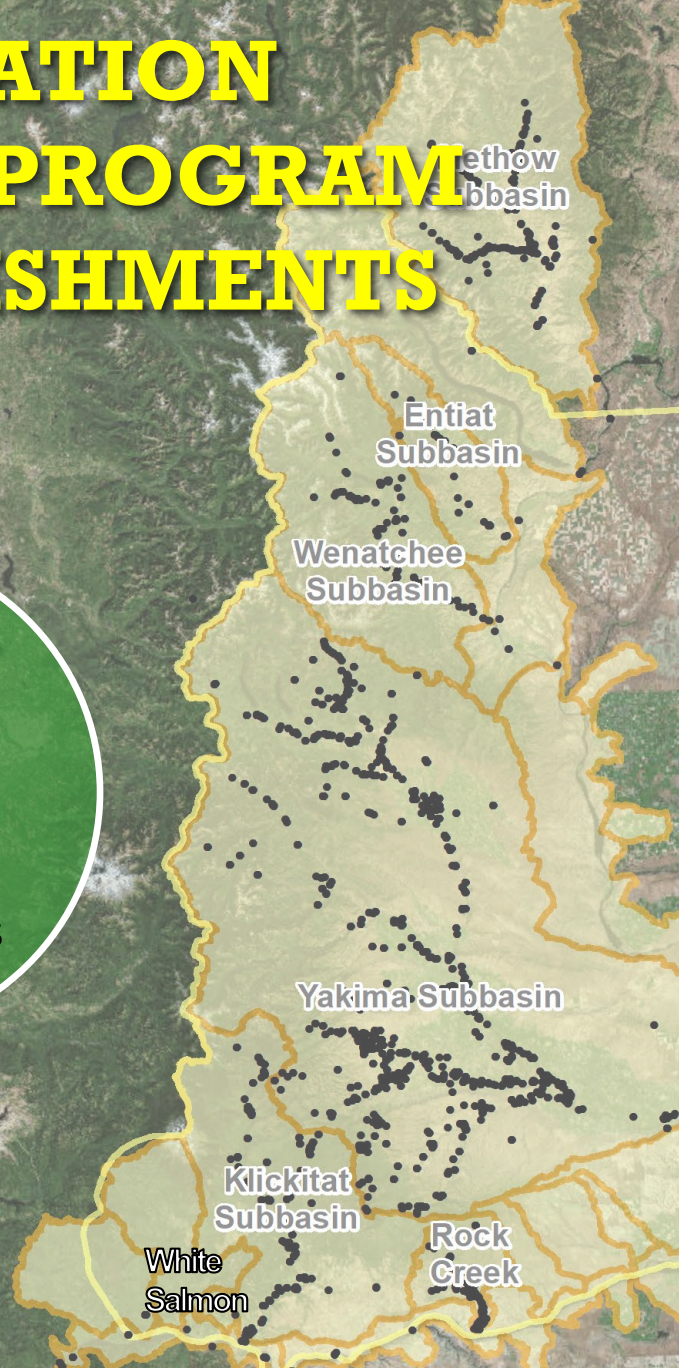
Multi-watershed collaborative effort

- Enhancing aquatic habitat in remote watersheds that have been greatly altered by past management practices.
- Large wood were placed in stream and on the floodplain
- Seven Yakima River tributaries using a helicopter to improve habitat for native fish species.



YAKAMA NATION FISHERIES PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

11
Subbasins
1,579
Work Locations



Habitat Restoration 2008-2019



206,178 Acres
Habitat improved or
protected



436 Miles
Habitat made
accessible to fish



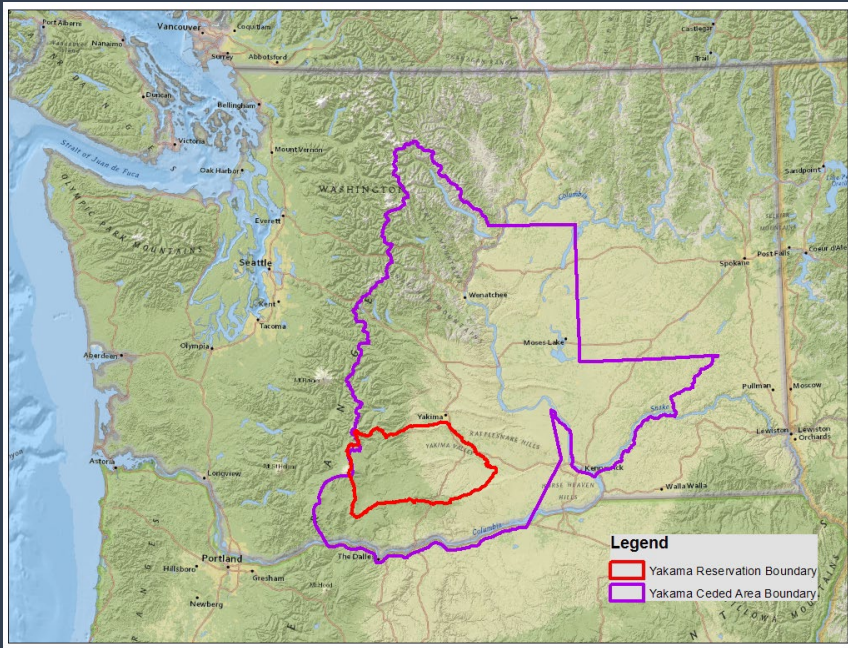
1,395 Miles
Stream and riparian
habitat improved, treated,
or protected



47,000 People
Educated and
informed

HONOR. PROTECT. RESTORE.





Habitat Restoration



Yakama Nation Climate Plan



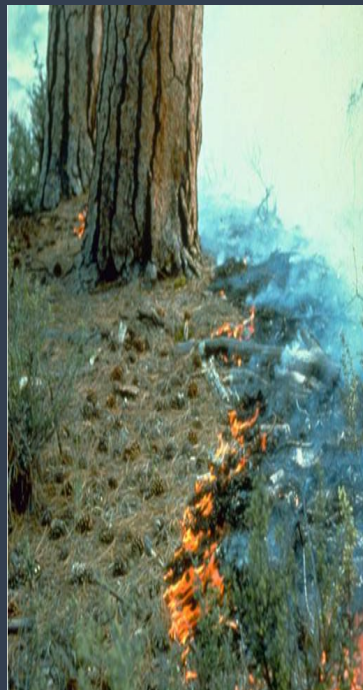
Climate Adaptation Plan
for the Territories of
the Yakama Nation

APRIL 2016



Striving for

This



Not This



Yakama Nation Opportunities

- Forest Stewardship Contracting - 638 Contract
- Additional Work with WDFW, WA DNR, and TNC
- Long-term Resource Supply for YFP
- Expand Aquatic Restoration – Salmon Recovery
- Protecting Important Yakama Nation Resources within Ceded Area
- Co-management of Natural Resources







