

The Value of Large Landscape Collaborations—The High Divide

**Engaging in broad partnerships to conserve
cultural, natural & community values**

Michael B. Whitfield – Heart of the Rockies Initiative – Driggs, ID

TODAY'S OUTLINE

- 1 What is the Heart of the Rockies Initiative
- 2 The High Divide Region—Context
- 3 Building Collaboration
- 4 Creating a Vision

HEART OF THE ROCKIES INITIATIVE

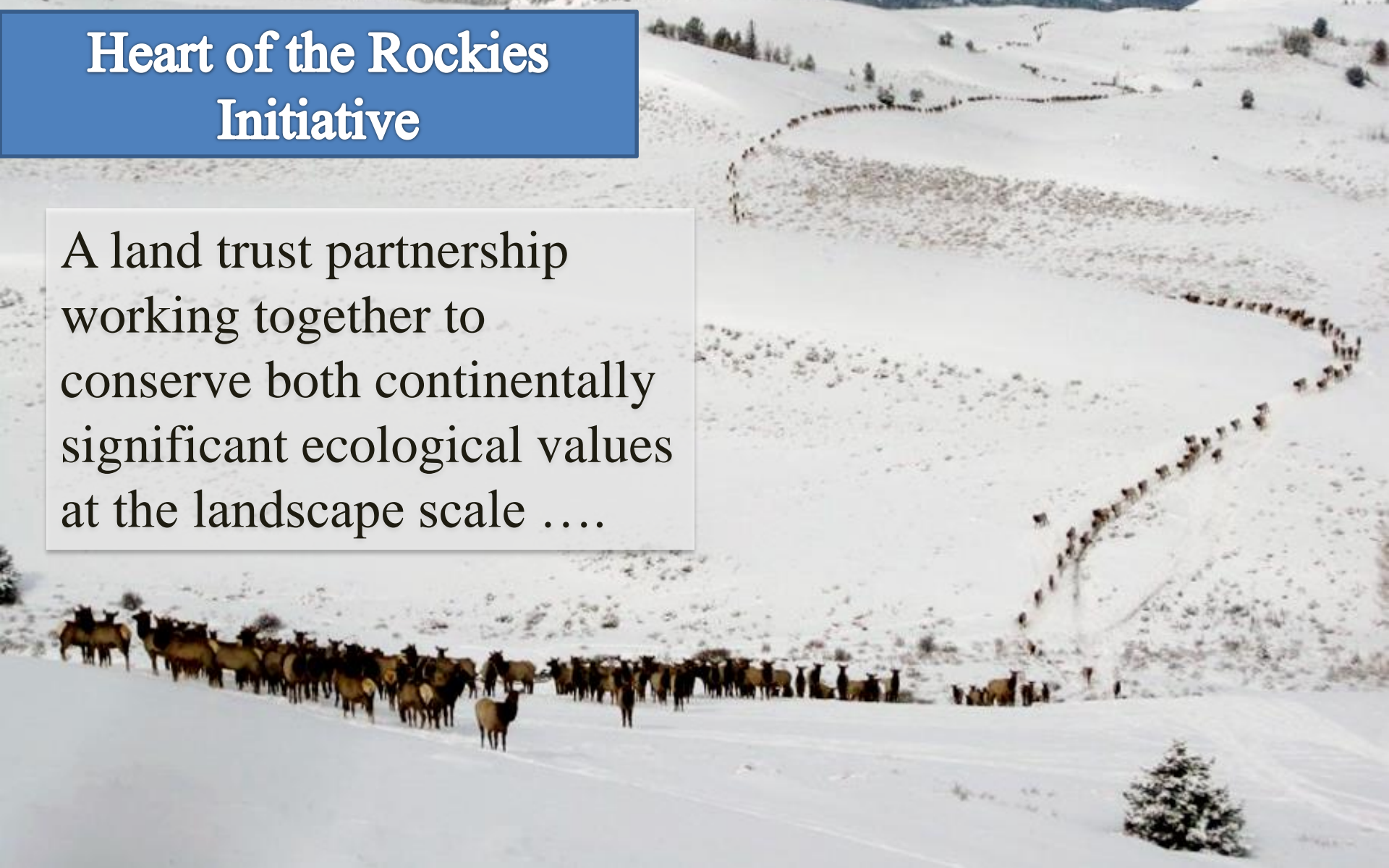
a land trust partnership

Working together to conserve clean water, iconic
Western landscapes and the communities that depend
upon them.



Heart of the Rockies Initiative

A land trust partnership
working together to
conserve both continentally
significant ecological values
at the landscape scale





...and community
values prized locally.

Where we work

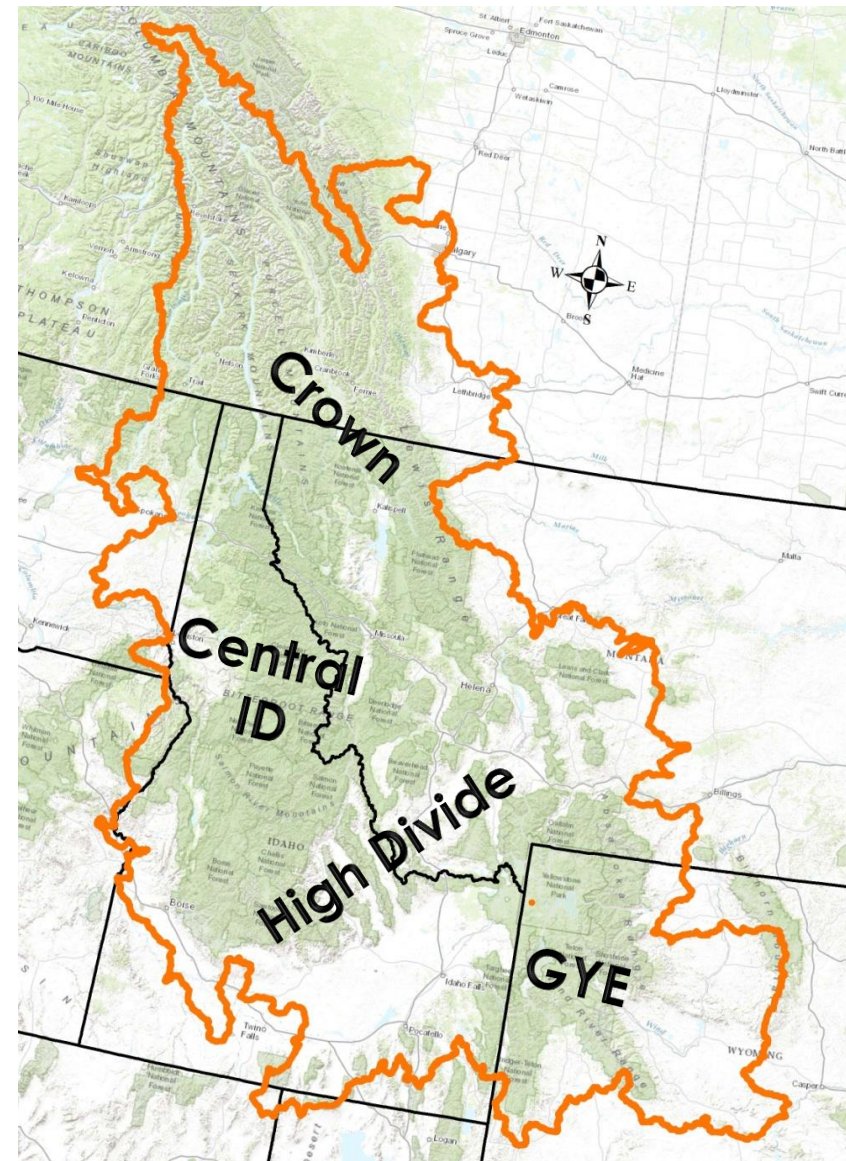
LANDSCAPES

Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem

High Divide

Crown of the Continent/Idaho
Panhandle

Central Idaho



Heart of the Rockies Initiative

MEMBERS

Bitter Root Land Trust – Hamilton, MT

Five Valleys Land Trust – Missoula, MT

Flathead Land Trust – Kalispell, MT

Gallatin Valley Land Trust – Bozeman, MT

Green River Valley Land Trust – Pinedale, WY

Inland Northwest Land Trust – Spokane, WA

Lemhi Regional Land Trust – Salmon, ID

Jackson Hole Land Trust – Jackson, WY

Kaniksu Land Trust – Sandpoint, ID

Palouse Land Trust – Moscow, ID

Prickly Pear Land Trust – Helena, MT

Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust – Pocatello, ID

Teton Regional Land Trust – Driggs, ID

Vital Ground Foundation – Missoula, MT

Wood River Land Trust – Hailey, ID

Wyoming Stock Growers Ag Land Trust –
Cheyenne, WY

Nature Conservancy of Canada

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

The Nature Conservancy – Idaho

The Nature Conservancy – Montana

The Nature Conservancy – Wyoming

The Conservation Fund

Trust for Public Land

Heart of the Rockies Initiative

GOALS Deliver SCIENCE to Inform Conservation Planning
Increase partner organizational CAPACITY
Increase FUNDING to the region
Tell the STORY on a bigger stage

Our Maxims:

- **Conservation Action is Local and Voluntary**
- **Collaboration at scale allows for Landscape Impact**

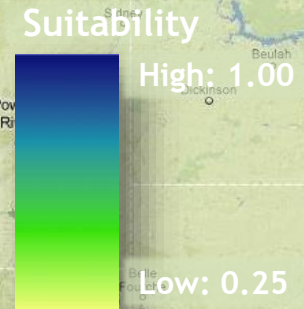


Lasting outcomes require a Landscape Vision

Wildlife
Conservation
Society

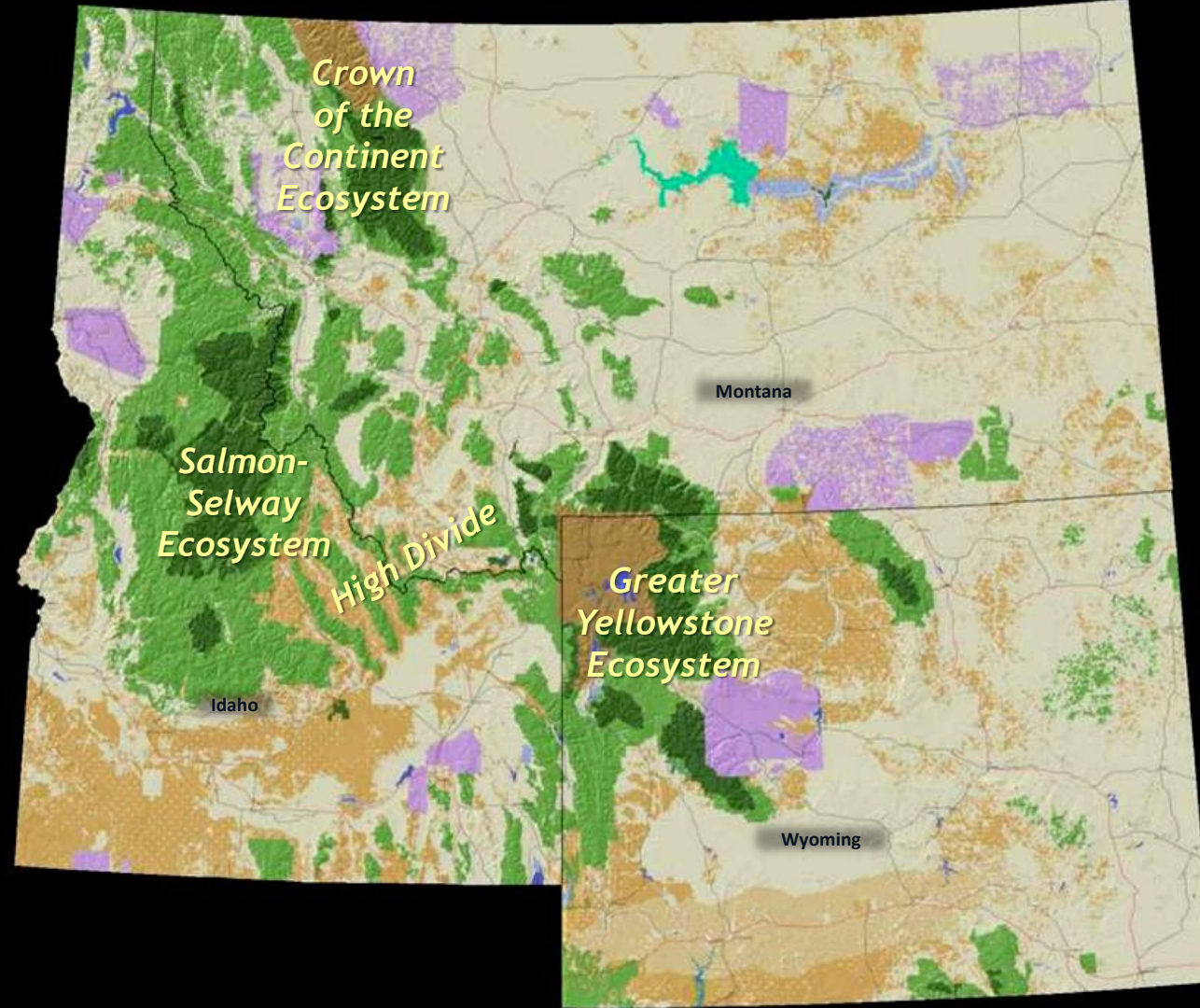
Predicted wolverine Habitat in the Rocky Mountain States

Brock, B.L., R.M. Inman, K.H. Inman, A.J. McCue, M.L. Packila, and B. Giddings. 2007. Broadscale wolverine habitat in the conterminous Rocky Mountain states, Chapter 2 in Greater Yellowstone Wolverine Study, Cumulative Report, May 2007. Wildlife Conservation Society, North America Program, General Rugby Glasgow Technical Report, Bozeman, Montana



Interconnecting island mountain
range habitats across intervening
lower elevation lands





Distribution of public ownership in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming.

-  Inventoried Roadless Areas
-  Forest Service
-  Wilderness
-  National Park Service
-  Bureau of Land Management
-  U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
-  Tribal Lands
-  Upper Missouri Breaks National Monument

WHY PRIVATE LANDS?

A wide-angle landscape photograph showing a river winding through a lush green valley. In the foreground, there are rocky banks with green shrubs. The river flows towards a range of mountains in the distance. The sky is filled with large, dramatic clouds, with some blue visible. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

Private lands are the foundation of strong, rural communities and are among the region's most ecologically productive places.

Courtesy Rowan Nyman, fishonphoto.com

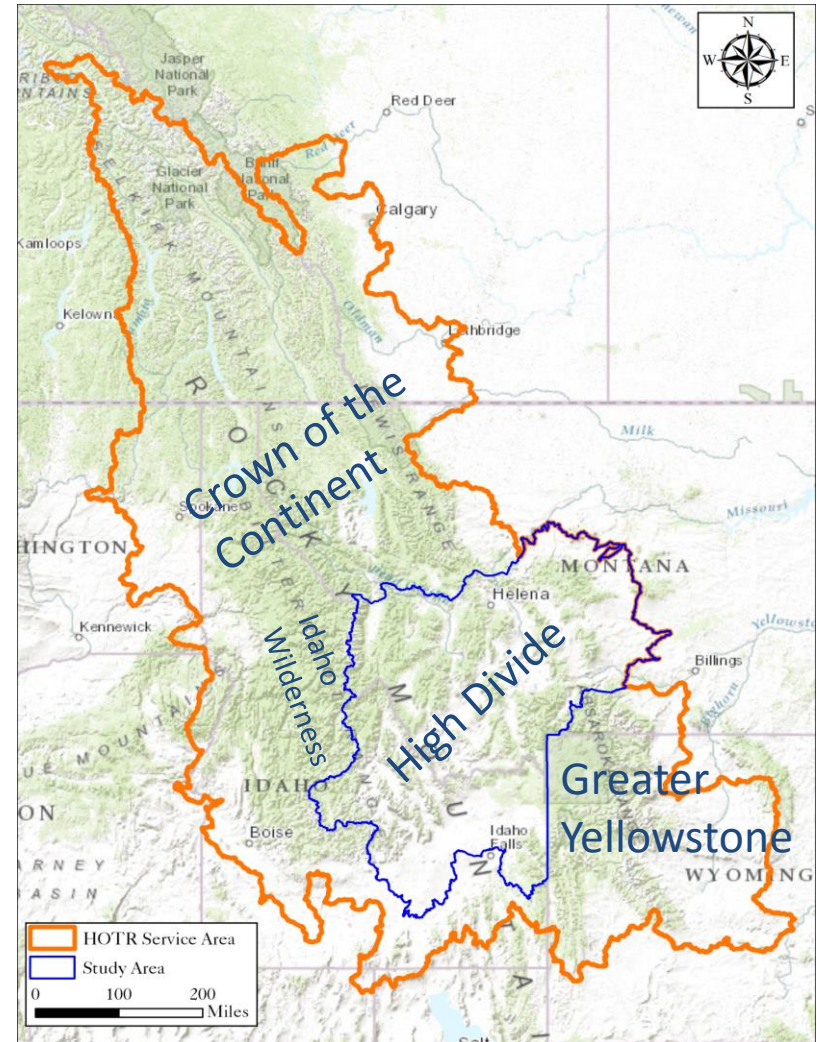
THE HIGH DIVIDE REGION



Pioneer Mountains. Courtesy of The Nature Conservancy of Idaho

High Divide Planning Area

To capture “connectivity” the HD Planning Area includes edges of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and the Crown of the Continent—the High Divide’s nearest neighbors.



HEALTHY WILDLIFE POPULATIONS

whose long-term existence depends on ecological linkage between protected core areas



Courtesy Rowan Nyman, fishonphoto.com

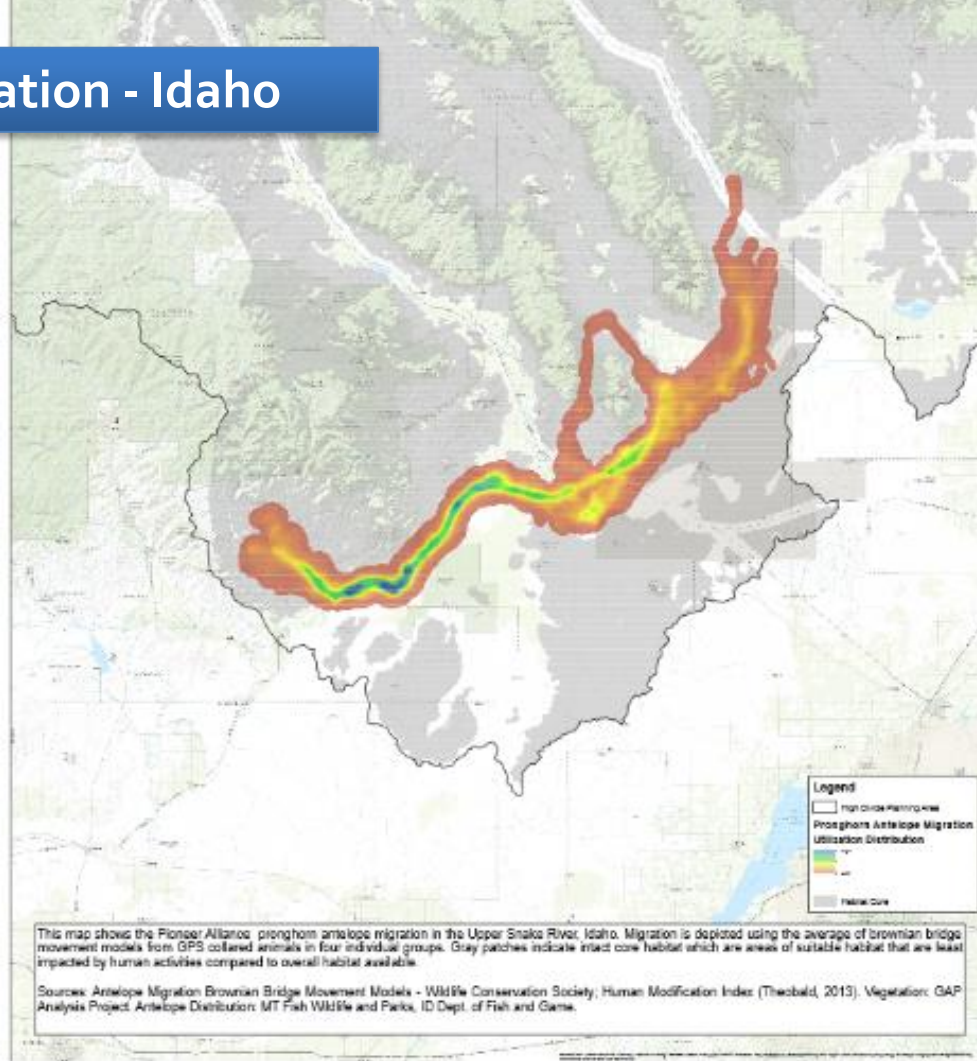


Courtesy Jeff Burrell, WCS

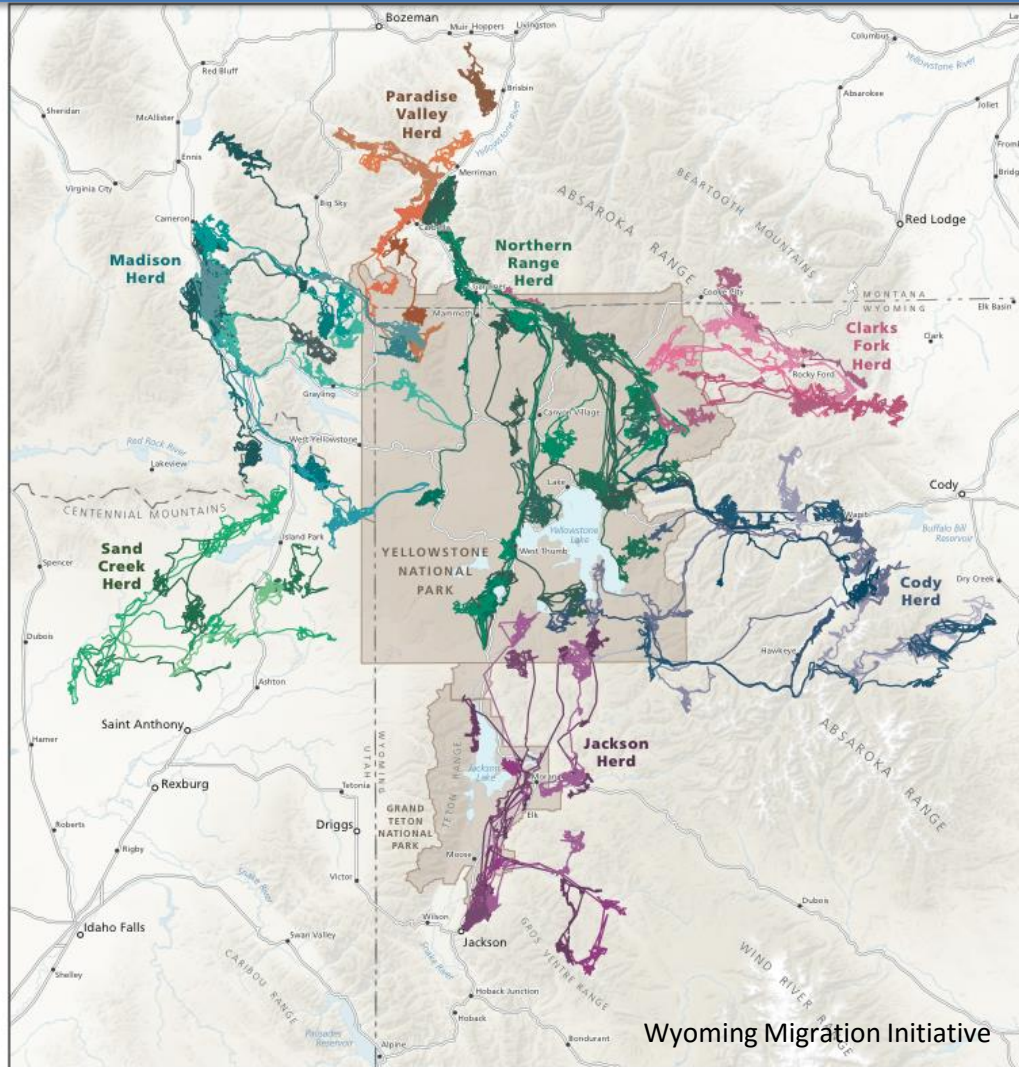
Pronghorn Migration



Pronghorn Migration - Idaho



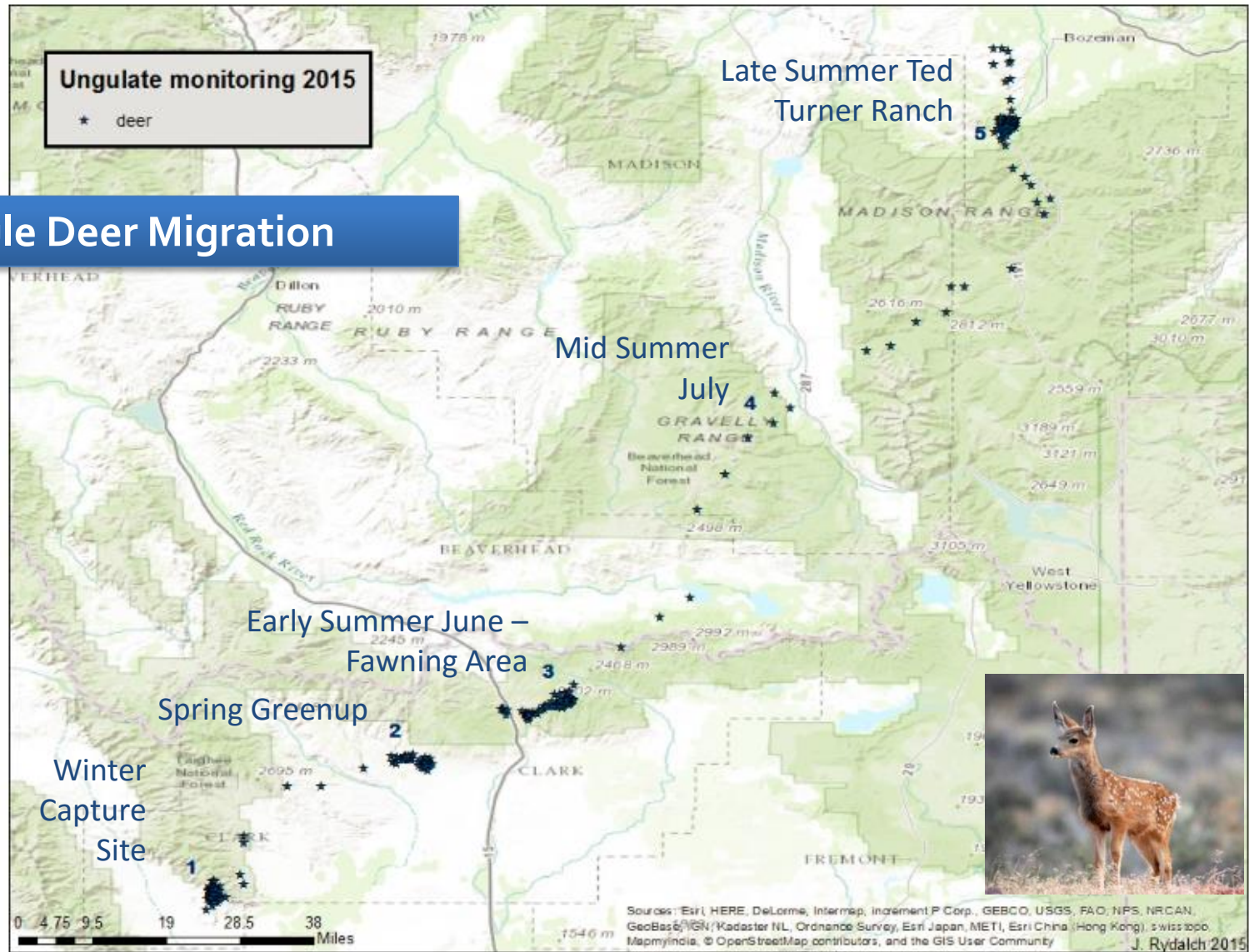
Elk Migration – Greater Yellowstone



Ungulate monitoring 2015

★ deer

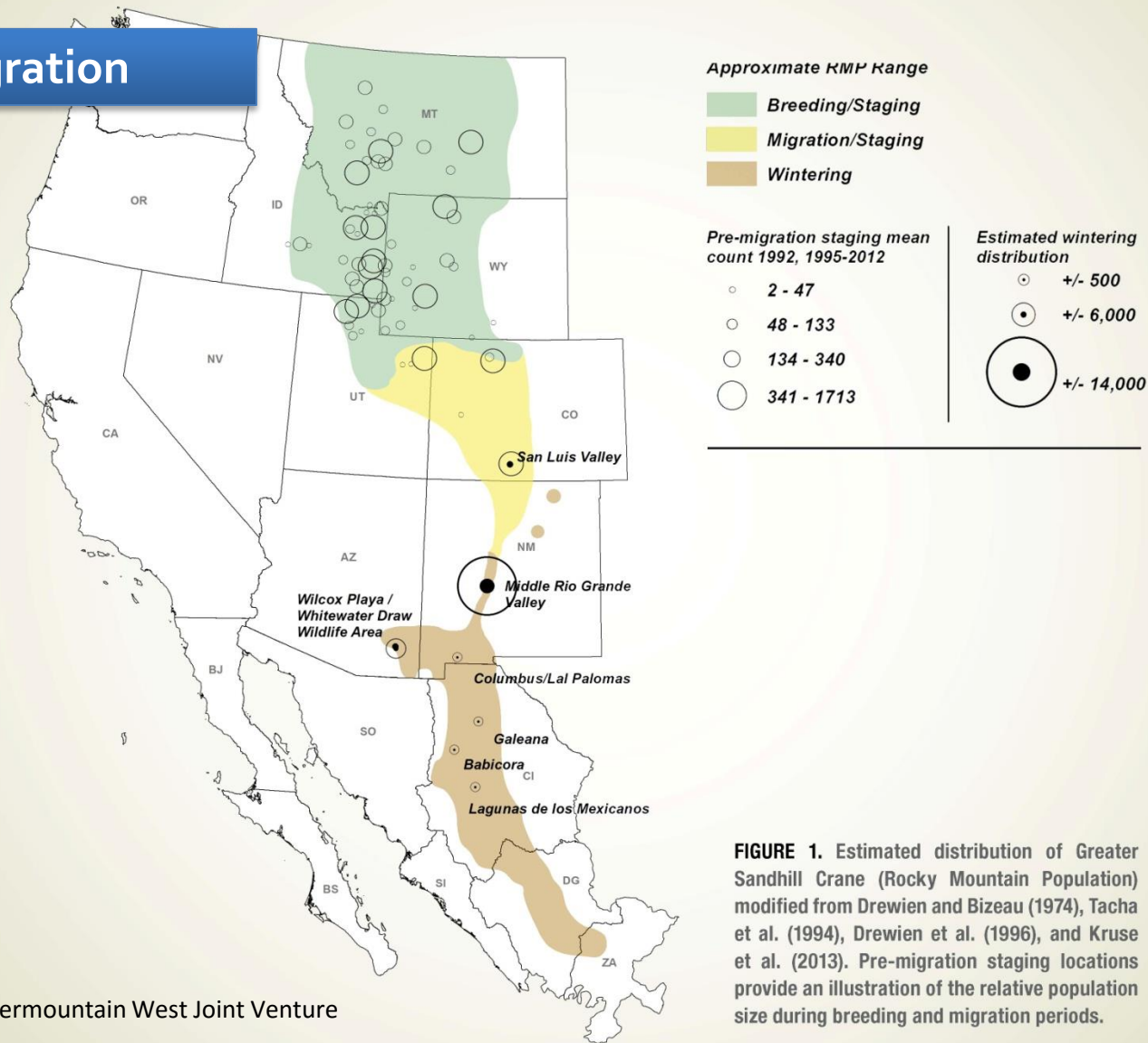
Mule Deer Migration



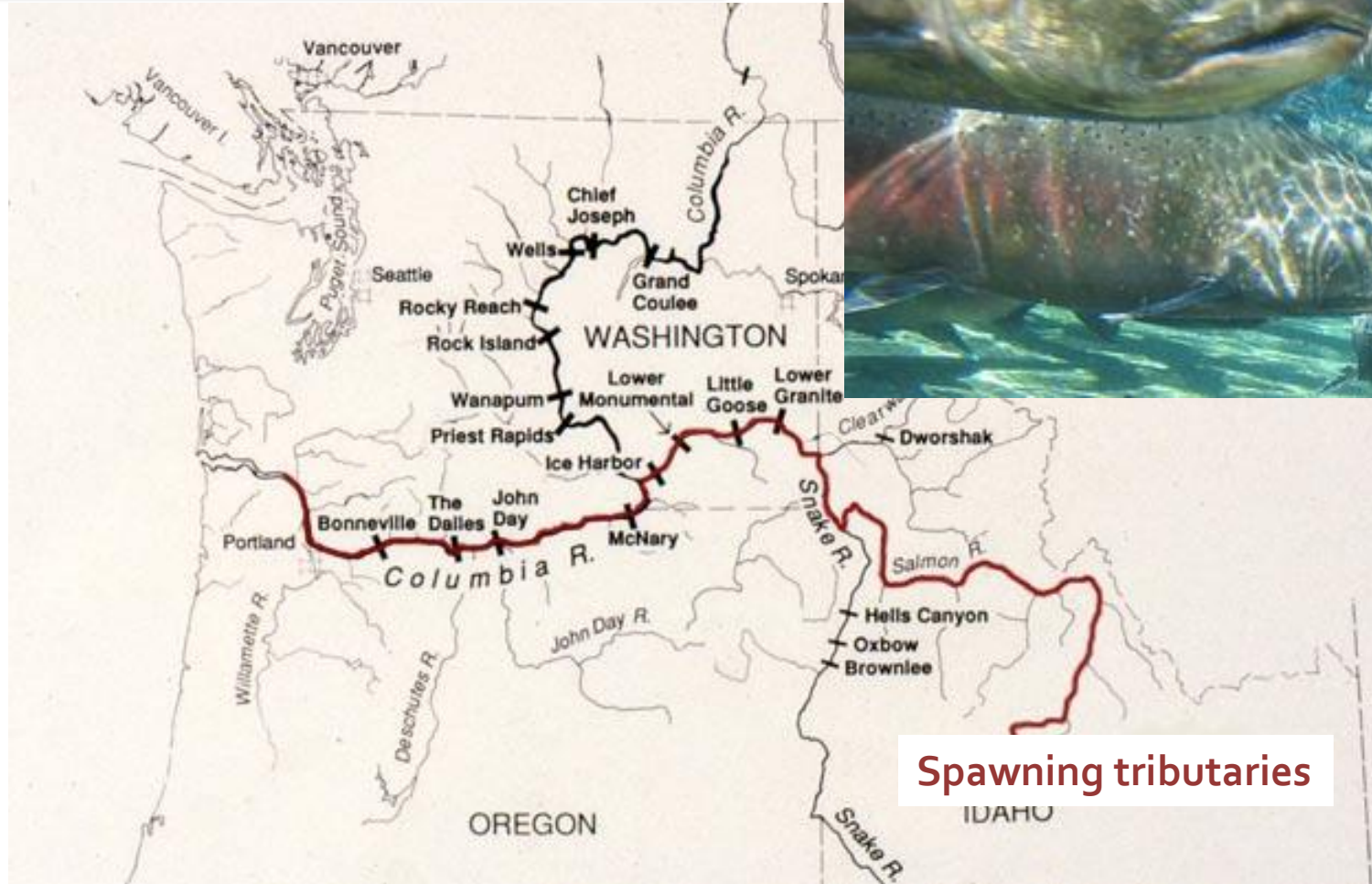
Sandhill Crane Migration



Intermountain West Joint Venture



Salmon Migration



Spawning tributaries

LANDSCAPE FEATURES

CULTURAL LEGACY

of Tribal lands, trails and traditional uses



WORKING LANDS

that are central to the region's economy and communities



LANDSCAPE FEATURES

RECREATION

nationally important dispersed recreation land
& waterways



Courtesy Terry R Thomas, IDF&G



Courtesy Gallatin Valley
Land Trust



Courtesy RMEF



Courtesy BLM

SOCIAL, POLITICAL CONTEXT

- Rural, small populations
- All-lands approach to agriculture
- High percentage of public lands
- Strong economic and recreational connections to public lands
- Mistrust of federal government and outside interests

BUILDING COLLABORATION

1. Community engagement
2. Working across boundaries
3. Developing shared goals

Community Engagement

Collaboration requires local community support

- Invite all stakeholders to the table
 - Learn their needs
 - Incorporate into goals
-
- Platform for Trust
 - Safe Place for Risk-takers
 - Results



High Divide Collaborative Partners

USDA Forest Service Regions 1 & 4
Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest
Gallatin National Forest
Caribou-Targhee National Forest
Salmon-Challis National Forest
Payette National Forest
Sawtooth National Forest—SNRA
USDI Bureau of Land Management – ID & MT
Idaho Falls District, Idaho Falls, ID
Upper Snake Field Office, Idaho Falls, ID
Salmon Field Office, Salmon, ID
Challis Field Office, Challis, ID
Shoshone Field Office, Shoshone, ID
Dillon Field Office, Dillon, MT
USDI Fish & Wildlife Service, Regions 1 & 6
Camas National Wildlife Refuge, Hamer, ID
Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, MT
Great Northern Landscape Cons. Coop.
USDI National Park Service
Columbia Cascades Support Office, Seattle, WA
Craters of the Moon National Mon., Arco, ID
Big Hole National Battlefield, Big Hole, MT
Yellowstone National Park
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Sage-Grouse Initiative, Bozeman, MT
Idaho Department of Fish & Game

Upper Snake Region, Idaho Falls, ID
Salmon Region, Salmon, ID
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks
FWP Region 3, Bozeman, MT
Wildlife Conservation Society
Future West
Craighead Institute
Center for Large Landscape Conservation
Northern Rockies Conservation Cooperative
Salmon Valley Stewardship
Central Idaho Rangelands Network
Heart of the Rockies Initiative
The Conservation Fund
Teton Regional Land Trust
Lemhi Regional Land Trust
The Nature Conservancy, Idaho & Montana
Wood River Land Trust
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Trust for Public Land
Western Rivers Conservancy
Henry's Fork Lodge
Idaho Adventures
Deborah Empey, Slash J Ranch
Flying-A-Ranch, Inc.
Kalsta Ranch Company
Lee Martinell Ranch Company

E Bar Cattle, Dillon
Turner Enterprises
- Flying D, Snowcrest, Red Rock Ranches
Central Idaho Rangeland Network
Madison Valley Ranchland Group
Dillon Sage Grouse Working Group
Henry's Fork Legacy Project
Pioneer Alliance
Salmon Valley Stewardship
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Skyline Sportsmen
Big Hole Watershed Group
Madison Valley Watershed Group
Big Hole River Foundation
Greater Yellowstone Coalition
Henry's Fork Foundation
Montana Audubon Society
Pheasants Forever
Pintler Audubon Society
Snake River Audubon
Brainerd Foundation
Wilburforce Foundation
Trout Unlimited
Yellowstone to Yukon Initiative

Landscape Collaboration

All Hands and All Lands

We work with partners to conserve and restore land and waters of importance for local communities and to protect ecological integrity at the landscape scale.

- 1 – Provide a platform of trust
- 2 – Provide science to support planning
- 3 – Build capacity to implement strategies
- 4 – Develop funds for on-the-ground projects
- 5 – Tell the story

HIGH DIVIDE CONSERVATION COLLABORATIVE

OUR SHARED VISION IS TO CONSERVE:

- Ecological linkage between protected core areas to conserve wide-ranging wildlife in response to climate change
- Working ranchlands central to communities, economy and way of life
- Nationally important dispersed recreation land and waterways where youth get into nature
- A cultural legacy of tribal lands, trails, and traditional uses



HIGH DIVIDE CONSERVATION COLLABORATIVE

OUR SHARED VISION IS TO CONSERVE....

- Restored headwaters for sensitive fish and human uses
- Sagebrush Ecosystems for their many ecological and cultural values
- Forested Ecosystems for their ecological, economic and cultural values
- Open land in the Wildland Urban Interface to protect life and property and reduce fire costs



High Divide Past Accomplishments

BUILDING FROM THE SUCCESS OF LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

Local initiatives have been successful in the Madison River Valley, Upper Henry's Fork/Sands, Centennial/Beaverhead/Big Hole, Upper Salmon/Lemhi, the Sawtooth NRA and the Pioneers Alliance.

- 754,323 acres protected; \$437.5 million invested in acquisitions
- Restoration: 152,560 acres, 775 river miles \$18.7 million
- Now securing past investments by filling in the gaps

Bringing more funding to the ground

Conservation capital are often the bottlenecks to achieve on-the-ground success.

- **Early success in bringing \$16 million in Land and Water Conservation Funding to the landscape, FY2016**
- **Promise of another \$14.5 million in Land and Water Conservation Funding to the landscape in FY2017**
- **And working to develop additional capacity and capital funding (public and private) through collaboration**

Collaborating across boundaries

High Divide celebrations
with Ethan Huffman, staff
for Congressman
Simpson, and Amy Taylor,
for Senator Risch

Salmon community partners telling the Great
Northern LCC about successful local collaboration.



ACHIEVEMENT OF DURABLE, MEANINGFUL OUTCOMES

LESSONS LEARNED

Work collaboratively, engage stakeholders early, and keep inviting more. Create a safe place for change and conservation.

Landscape scale across boundaries—all lands approach.

It's about resources and people – all hands working together

Need good science—need for data sharing/availability from state and federal organizations, academic researchers to make information accessible and usable and by conservation practitioners.

ACHIEVEMENT OF DURABLE, MEANINGFUL OUTCOMES

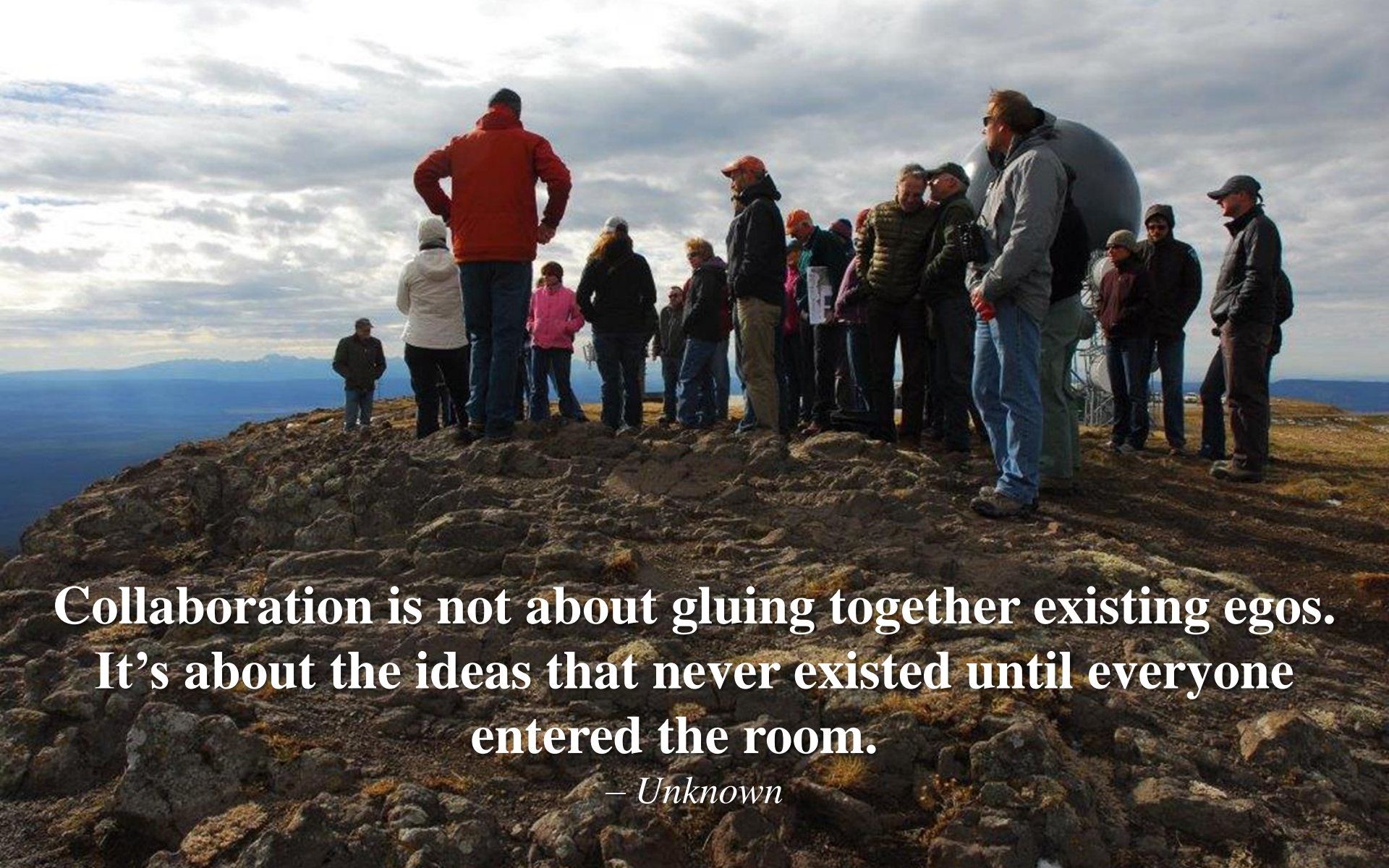
LESSONS LEARNED

Scale is vital. High resolution resource data are essential to efficient delivery of private land protection and restoration.

Benefit of using best available information to guide prioritization of land protection and restoration and create cost efficient, meaningful and durable ecological outcomes.

Results matter—stay the course—steward the collaborative

Celebrate Success



**Collaboration is not about gluing together existing egos.
It's about the ideas that never existed until everyone
entered the room.**

— Unknown



Thank you