

**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
AND CONSERVATION**

Northwestern Land Office - Stillwater Unit

STEVE BULLOCK, GOVERNOR



STATE OF MONTANA

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**Initial Proposal
NEW ACQUISITION PRE-COMMERCIAL THINNING PROJECT
October 6, 2020**

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), Stillwater Unit is proposing pre-commercial thinning on the following State-owned parcels:

**Sections 25, 26, 27, 34, 35 and 36 Township 33N, Range 23W and
Section 1 - 4, 9 - 16, 22 - 24 Township 32N, Range 23W**

The New Acquisition Pre-Commercial Thinning Project is located approximately 2 miles east of the town of Olney, Montana in the Stillwater State Forest.

The purpose of the thinning is to reduce stand density to increase the growth, vigor, and health of the remaining trees. Healthy vigorous trees would be more resistant to insect outbreaks, mortality from wildfire, and competition-induced mortality. The proposed activity would enhance the stands growth potential to assure DNRC continues to reach their annual sustainable yield of sawlogs yield as mandated by state statute 77-5-222 based on the above-mentioned benefits.

The proposed pre-commercial thinning project area encompass 13,405 acres, of which approximately 1,000 acres would be identified for treatment over the next 5 – 6 years. The proposed pre-commercial thinning units are composed predominately of over-stocked, shade-tolerant species such as subalpine fir, grand fir and Engelmann spruce, with mixed stocking of lodgepole pine, western white pine, western larch, and Douglas-fir. Stand stocking levels range in densities of approximately 800 to 5,000 trees per acre. The thinning treatment would reduce the density to approximately 222 to 350 trees per acre (11 to 14 feet average spacing) with species preference targeting the desired future condition of the stand. Thinning units would be prioritized by several factors including site productivity, location, and as funding becomes available.

Mechanical mastication of slash may be utilized to achieve pre-commercial thinning specifications.

Slash produced through treatment would be cut down to within 18 inches of the ground throughout the units. Additionally, treatment of the slash produced from the project will meet State laws for hazard reduction standards.

No new roads would be constructed during this proposed project.

The DNRC is in the scoping phase of the project environmental assessment so all volumes, acreages and road distances are preliminary estimates. In preparation for this project, specialists such as wildlife biologists, hydrologists, soil scientists, and archeologists will be consulted.

The Montana DNRC invites written comments and suggestions concerning this proposal. Please respond by November 6, 2020 to:

Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

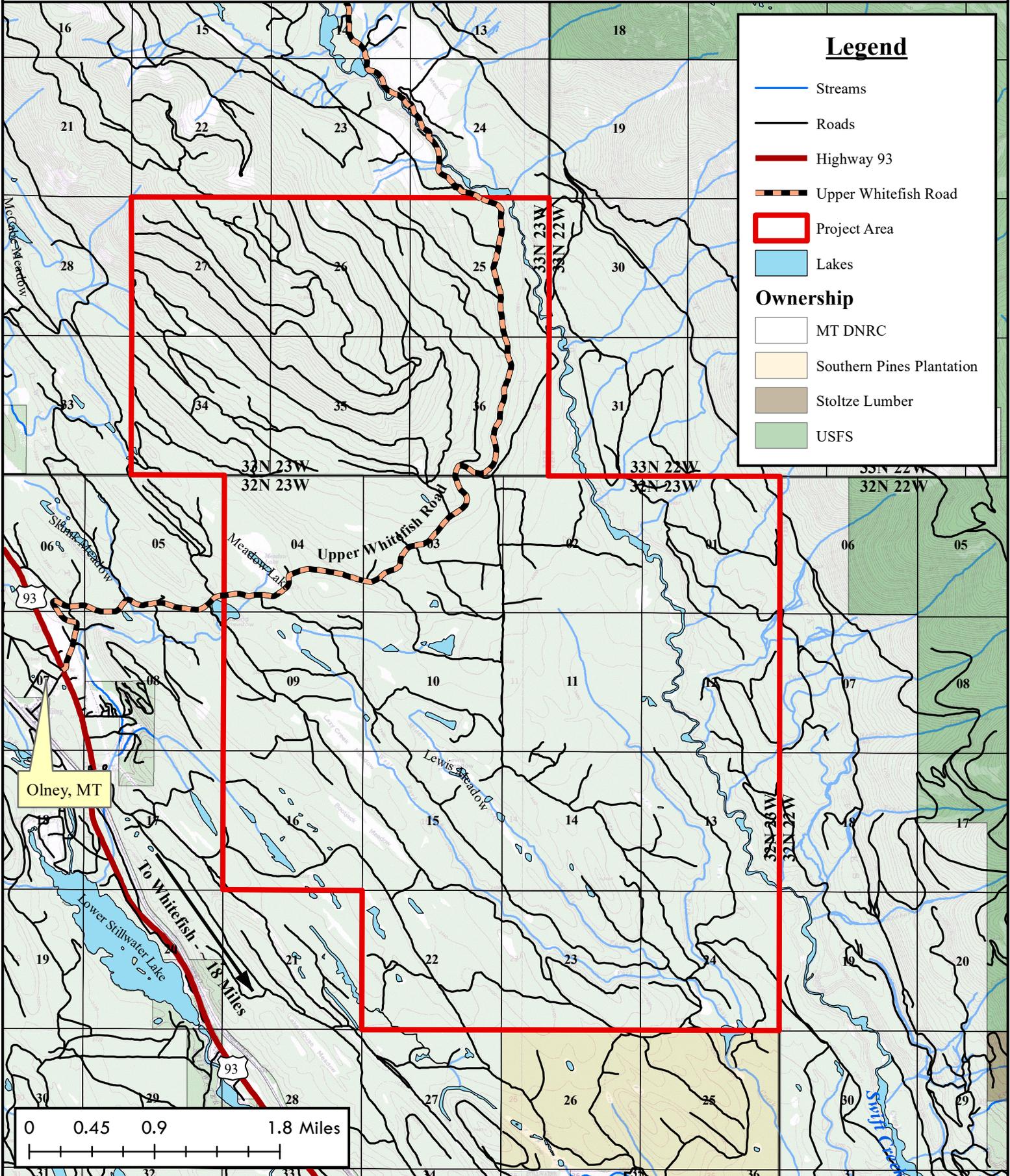
Attn: Jeremy Akin
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New Acquisition PCT Project Area Map

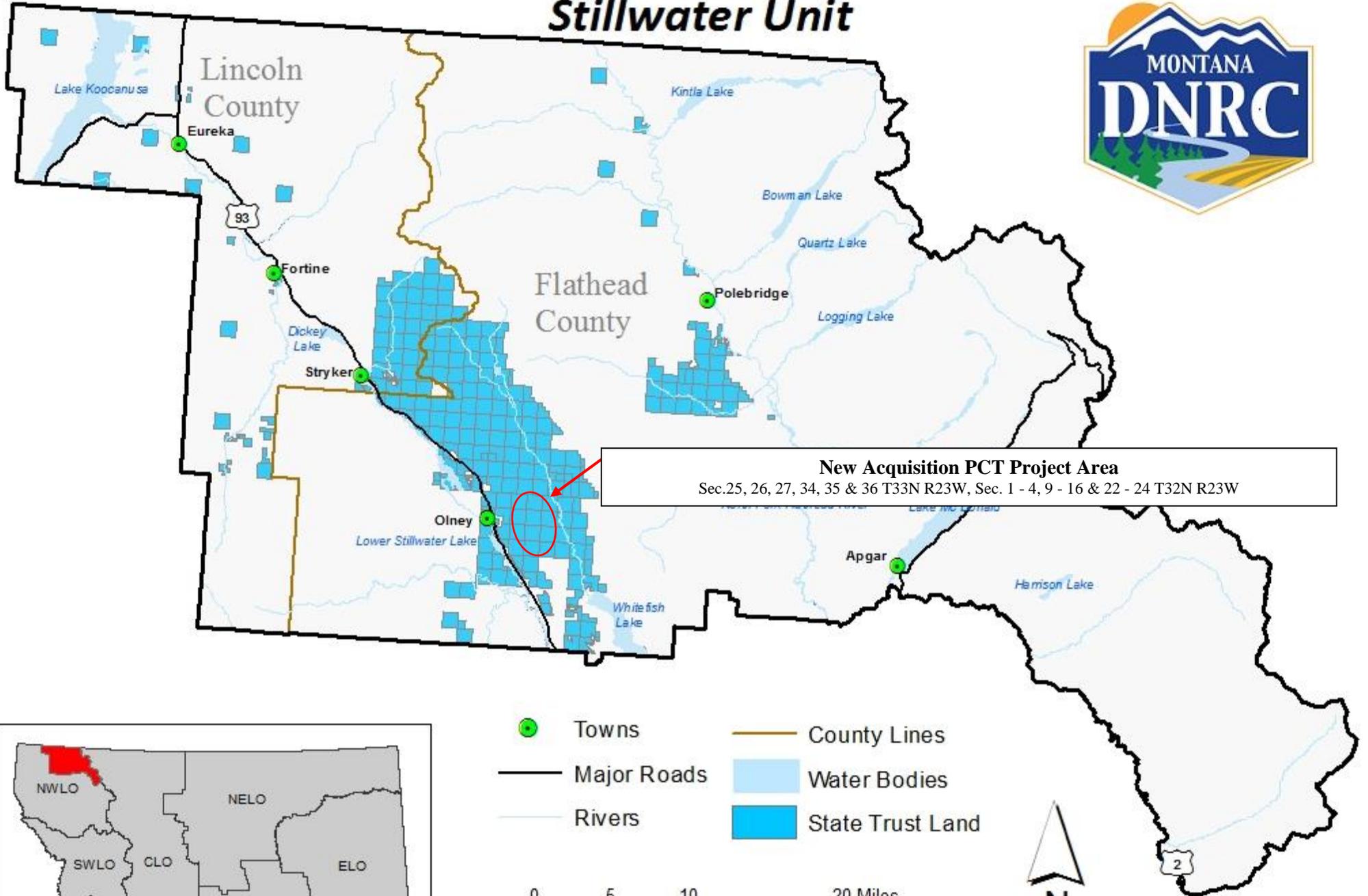
Stillwater State Forest
T33N R23W S 25, 26, 27, 34, 35 & 36
and T32N R23W S 1 - 4, 9 - 16, & 22 - 24

August 31, 2020
J. Akin

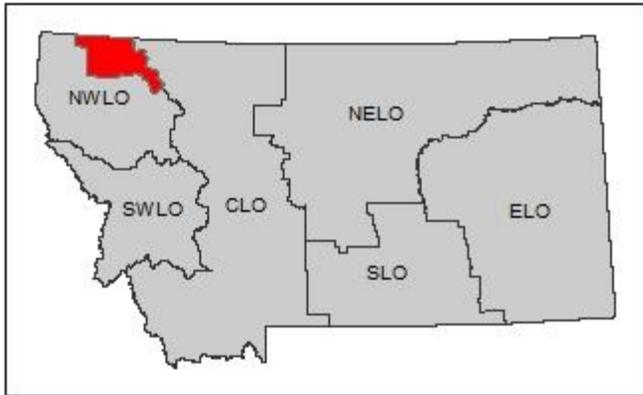


NEW ACQUISITION PCT VICINITY MAP

Stillwater Unit



New Acquisition PCT Project Area
 Sec.25, 26, 27, 34, 35 & 36 T33N R23W, Sec. 1 - 4, 9 - 16 & 22 - 24 T32N R23W



- Towns
- County Lines
- Major Roads
- Water Bodies
- Rivers
- State Trust Land

