

# DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION



GREG GIANFORTE, GOVERNOR

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## STATE OF MONTANA

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### **Initial Proposal Upper Grasshopper Valley Timber Permit & Fuels Reduction Project February 20, 2025**

The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), Dillon Unit is proposing a timber harvest and fuels reduction project on the following state-owned parcels:

#### **Sections 04, 09, and 16 Township 5 South, Range 12 West**

The Grasshopper Valley project is located approximately 1 mile east of Polaris, Montana. The three tracts contribute to wildfire risk in the Upper Grasshopper Valley due to increased mortality from insect & disease outbreaks, as well as conifer encroachment in rangelands. Beaverhead County's draft Community Wildfire Preparedness Plan (CWPP) and the DNRC designate this area as a high wildfire-risk area. The project aims to reduce wildfire risk, protect community infrastructure, restore resilient landscapes, and enhance public awareness and firefighter safety.

The primary objectives of the proposed project are to:

- Contribute to the annual targets of timber harvest volumes of DNRC and the Central Land Office required by state law (77-5-221 through 223, MCA).
- Reduce wildlife risk through fuels reduction treatments in areas where increased tree mortality from insect & disease outbreaks occurred, as well as conifer encroachment in rangelands.
- Capture the diminishing value of dying and dead timber.
- Generate revenue for the Common Schools Trust.

The proposed project would remove an estimated 300 thousand board feet (MBF) from approximately 582 acres. Silvicultural prescriptions may include a combination of primarily seed tree, thinning from above, and overstory removal harvest prescriptions, where appropriate, depending on stand species composition. Timber harvest methods will primarily involve ground-based methods. Fuels reduction would occur on 482 acres of the projects area and may include lop & scatter, cut & pile treatments, or mechanical treatments, where appropriate, depending on species density. Timber harvesting could begin as early as the fall of 2025, followed by fuel reduction activities, which may extend for up to five years.

Access to the project area will primarily be via a temporary road use permit on existing Forest Service roads that pass through private and state lands – approximately 0.75 miles of private land and approximately 1.60 miles of state land. No new permanent roads would be built. 5 miles of temporary roads may be built to access the 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 DNRC – Dillon Unit invites written comments and suggestions concerning this proposal on State Trust Lands from interested parties. For further information on this proposed project, you may contact the Montana Forest Action Plan Forester, Michaela Kalinowski at [michaela.kalinowski@mt.gov](mailto:michaela.kalinowski@mt.gov). We will be accepting comments until March 20, 2025, at 5 pm. Please respond to:

Montana DNRC  
Attn: **Michaela Kalinowski**  
**840 N. Montana Street**  
**Dillon, MT 59725**  
[michaela.kalinowski@mt.gov](mailto:michaela.kalinowski@mt.gov)  
**406-925-7076**

Sincerely,



Michaela Kalinowski  
MT Forest Action Plan Forester  
Forestry & Trust Lands Division

# State Trust Land Vicinity Map Dillon Unit

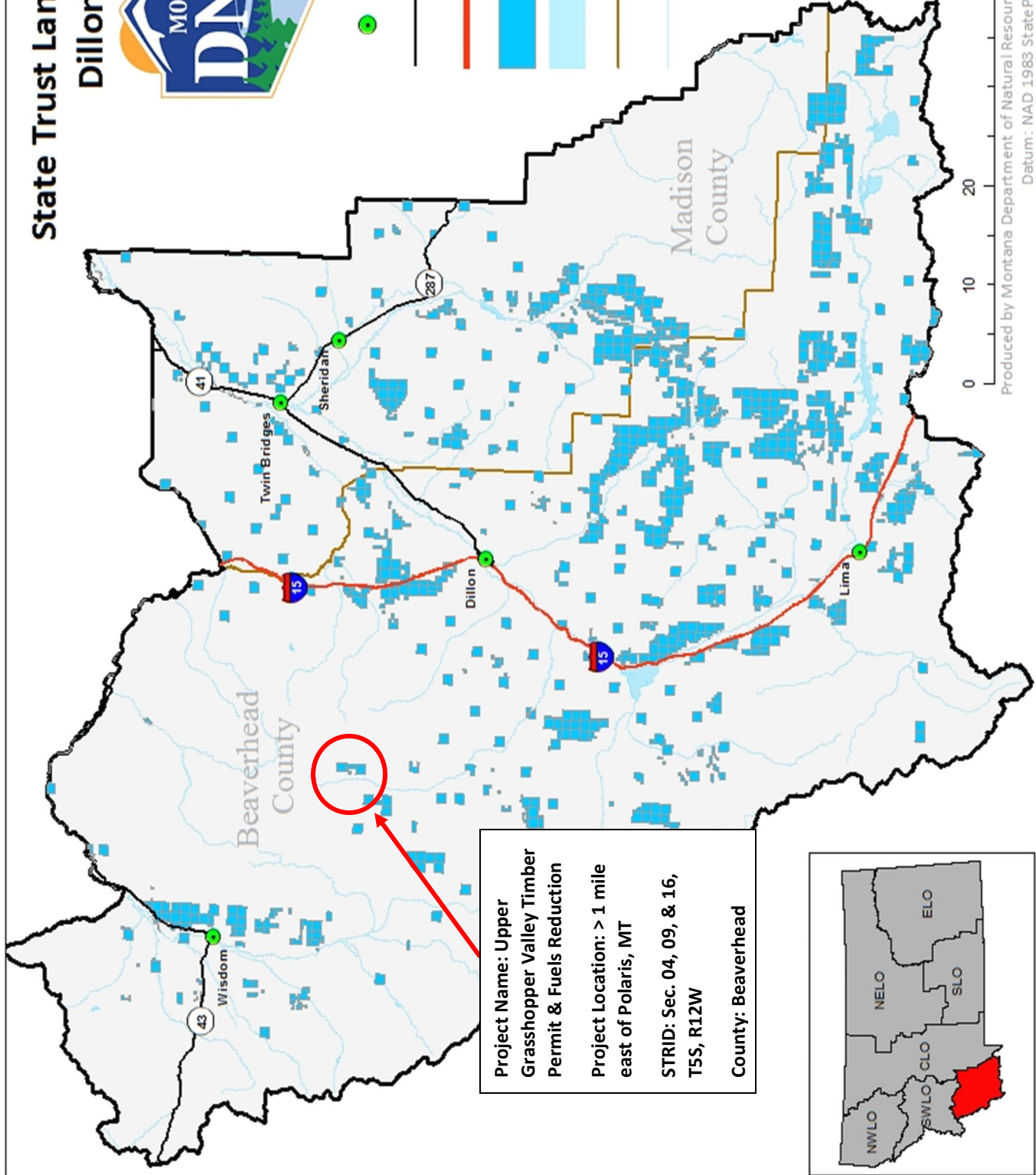


- Towns
- Major Roads
- Interstate
- State Trust Land
- Water Bodies
- County Lines
- Rivers

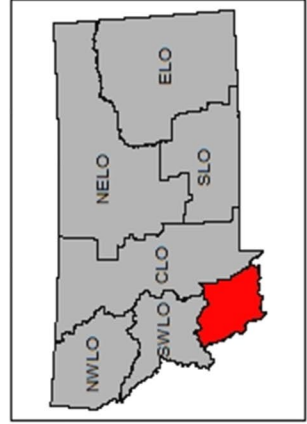


0 10 20 30 40 Miles

Produced by Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation 11/1/2019  
Datum: NAD 1983 StatePlane



**Project Name:** Upper  
Grasshopper Valley Timber  
Permit & Fuels Reduction  
  
**Project Location:** > 1 mile  
east of Polaris, MT  
  
**STRID:** Sec. 04, 09, & 16,  
T5S, R12W  
  
**County:** Beaverhead





# Grasshopper Valley Timber Permit & Fuels Reduction



Initial Proposal

