



Attn: Pitkin County, Board of County Commissioners, c/o George Newman, Chair

**CC: Congressman-elect Scott Tipton (CO 3rd District)
RFMBA membership
White River Wilderness Coalition**

Date: November 8, 2010

RE: RFMBA's "HG 3.0" Wilderness Proposal

Before Pitkin County Commissioners vote on whether to support a resolution endorsing the Pitkin County portion of the Hidden Gems Wilderness Proposal in its current "2.0" form, we would like to submit the following for your consideration.

The Roaring Fork Mountain Bike Association and its members are passionate about the outdoors. We believe in managing public lands as a public trust and a priceless national treasure. We cherish the places where we can still take epic forays into the backcountry. We love our trails and are among the first to volunteer to build and repair them. We share a concern with other trail users that the pressures of growth and industry threaten the qualities that make our favorite areas special. Mountain bikers want to see the forests and mountains where we ride protected in their natural state, with clean air and clean water, so we welcome opportunities to join with others to protect America's shared public lands to ensure current and future generations can enjoy high-quality outdoor experiences away from development, noise and pollution. For these reasons, mountain bikers understand the values of supporting existing Wilderness, and the urge to preserve and protect additional lands through Wilderness legislation.

As you may know, RFMBA has participated in detailed discussions with Hidden Gems Wilderness Proposal proponents. Our negotiations for Pitkin County proposal areas have reached a point where we must agree to disagree. In truth, these disagreements are in regards to a fraction of the areas being proposed in the current "HG 2.0" proposal. The proposal areas in question include those that are closest to Aspen and Carbondale, and the area known as Hay Park, at the base of Mt. Sopris. These areas are top priorities within RFMBA's mission to create and sustain the best possible mountain bike trail system in the Roaring Fork valley.

As we continue development of a valley wide trails master plan, we realize that we must address the desire and need for Wilderness protection for some of our most treasured public lands. With this in mind, we would like to offer a counterproposal that we are calling "HG 3.0". This proposal has been crafted with several goals in mind. First, we aim to protect the same amount of acreage as, if not more than, HG 2.0 is proposing to protect. Second, we believe that the boundaries we are proposing have the potential to garner wide community support and begin healing the contentious atmosphere that the often controversial HG proposal has caused over the past several years. Third, we believe that regardless of recent election outcomes, a bill proposing additional Wilderness lands in Pitkin County will one day

RFMBA is a 501(c)(3) public charity.

Our mission is to create and sustain the best possible mountain bike trail system and experience in the Roaring Fork Valley.

RFMBA - PO Box 4424, Basalt, CO 81621- www.rfmba.org

make its way through Congress and become law. When the political winds allow for such a bill to be successful, we hope that it is supported by as many members of the community as possible.

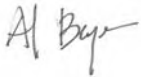
As shown on the attached maps, **HG 3.0** is achieved by revising the boundaries for several proposal areas, while also re-introducing a proposal area that was removed from the original Hidden Gems proposal. The Sloan Peak proposal area was removed in part due to the existence of the classic Arbaney-Kittle Trail. The re-introduced proposal area uses the Arbaney-Kittle Trail as its southern boundary, roughly following the ridge system that separates the Roaring Fork and Frying Pan valleys. The proposed Wilderness would stretch from the outskirts of Basalt to the lands south of Ruedi Reservoir, offering an impressive roadless area starting along the length of the lower Frying Pan River at 7,000' and rising to the ridge at 10,000'. A mechanized corridor is proposed to allow continued use of the Rocky Fork Trail by mountain bikes. This type of mechanized corridor is currently proposed in the Hay Park section of HG 2.0.

There are areas that remain within the **HG 3.0** proposal that RFMBA would prefer to see open to continued mechanized use. However, we understand the value of compromise, so we have taken only our topmost priorities into account in crafting this counterproposal. For some, support of a Wilderness proposal comes down to the specific boundaries and the exacting details. For others, support of a Wilderness proposal is all about a gut instinct that just feels right, or perhaps a philosophical point of view. For those who have that philosophical point of view, but are also interested in the greatest potential for community support, we offer **HG 3.0** for your consideration. Same acreage as HG 2.0, yet less contentious for our local community. Please see the overview and detail maps, attached.

Sincerely,

Roaring Fork Mountain Bike Association

Al Beyer, Board President



Charlie Eckart, Board Vice President



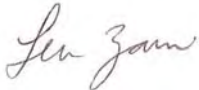
Kirk Hinderberger, Board Treasurer



Mike Pritchard, Board Secretary



Len Zanni, Board Member



Attachments:

- 1. RFMBA's HG 3.0 Overview Map, Smuggler / Hunter Creek Map, North Thompson Creek Map, Hay Park Map, and Hayes Creek Map.**

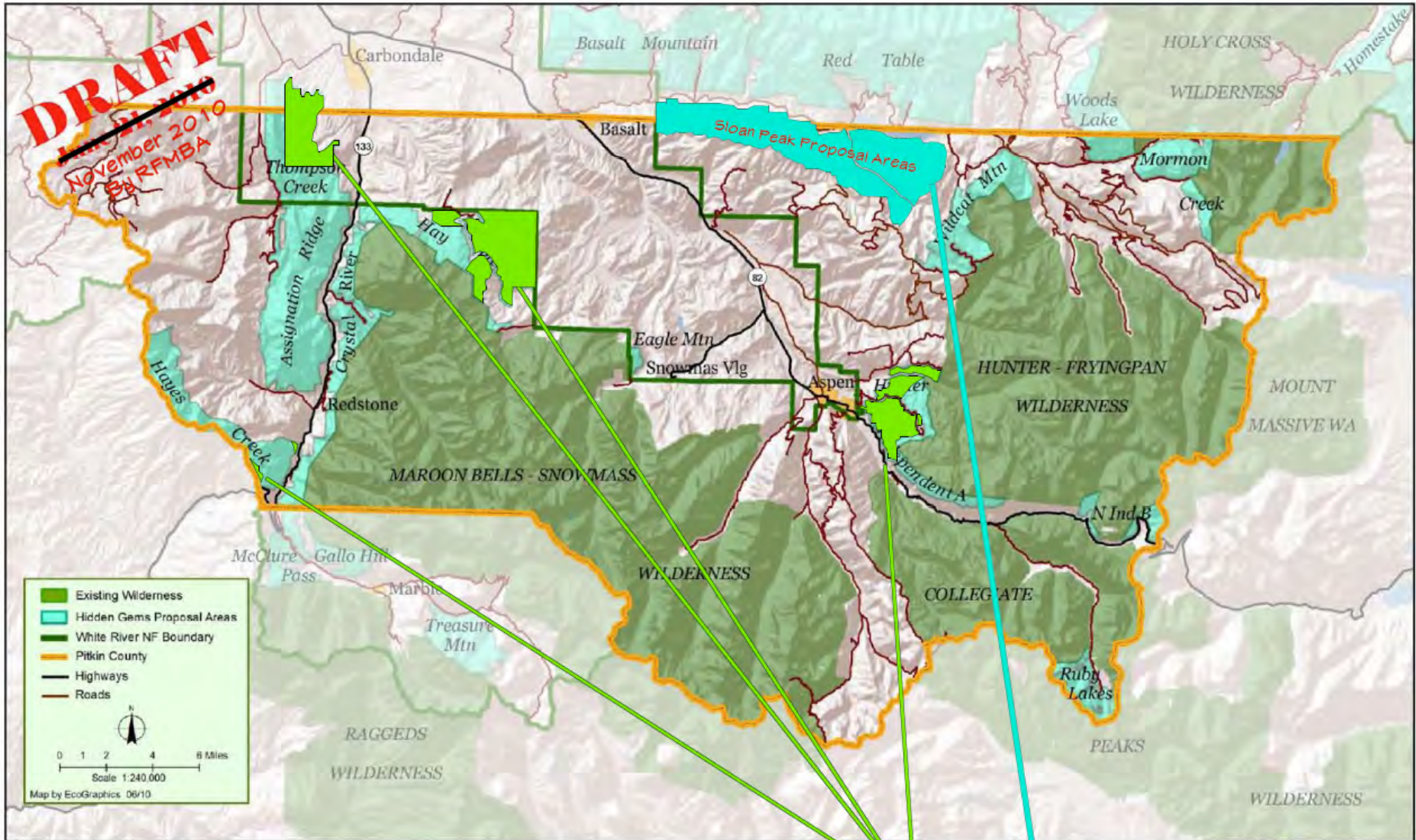
RFMBA is a 501(c)(3) public charity.

Our mission is to create and sustain the best possible mountain bike trail system and experience in the Roaring Fork Valley.

RFMBA - PO Box 4424, Basalt, CO 81621- www.rfmba.org

3.0

HIDDEN GEMS WILDERNESS PROPOSAL IN PITKIN COUNTY



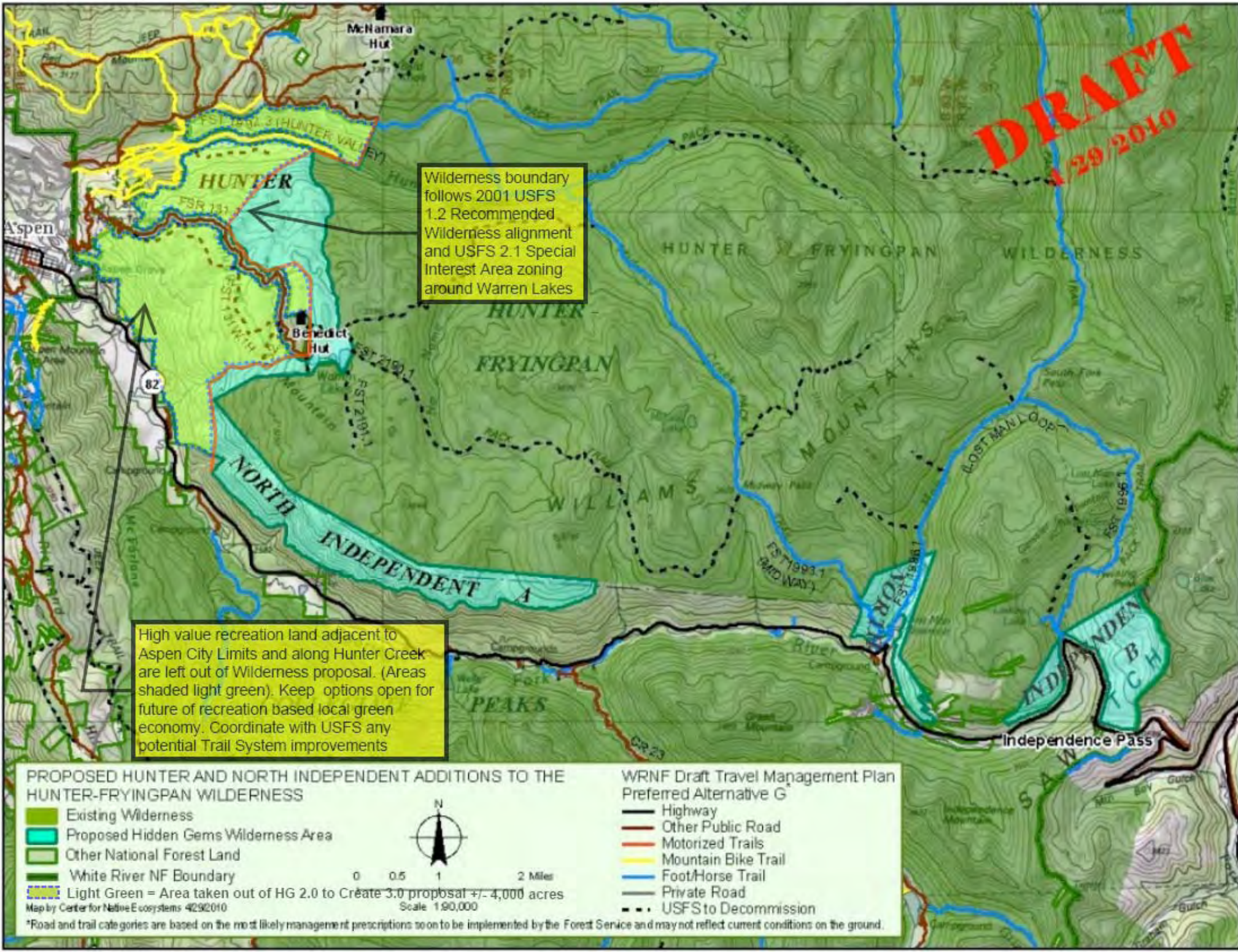
Conceptual Map Based on existing HG 2.0, rendered by RFMBA



HG 2.0 areas removed from proposal (Total = +/- 15,000 acres)

HG 3.0 areas reintroduced to Wilderness proposal (Total = +/- 15,000 Acres)

DRAFT
1/29/2010



Wilderness boundary follows 2001 USFS 1.2 Recommended Wilderness alignment and USFS 2.1 Special Interest Area zoning around Warren Lakes

High value recreation land adjacent to Aspen City Limits and along Hunter Creek are left out of Wilderness proposal. (Areas shaded light green). Keep options open for future of recreation based local green economy. Coordinate with USFS any potential Trail System improvements

PROPOSED HUNTER AND NORTH INDEPENDENT ADDITIONS TO THE HUNTER-FRYINGPAN WILDERNESS

- Existing Wilderness
- Proposed Hidden Gems Wilderness Area
- Other National Forest Land
- White River NF Boundary
- Light Green = Area taken out of HG 2.0 to Create 3.0 proposal +/- 4,000 acres



WRNF Draft Travel Management Plan Preferred Alternative G

- Highway
- Other Public Road
- Motorized Trails
- Mountain Bike Trail
- Foot/Horse Trail
- Private Road
- USFS to Decommission

*Road and trail categories are based on the most likely management prescriptions soon to be implemented by the Forest Service and may not reflect current conditions on the ground.

Map by Center for Native Ecosystems 4/29/2010

Request easement corridor for trail connecting Borderline Trail (Lower 1957W from Dinkle Road) to FSR313. Objective is to connect Hay Park to Crystal River corridor.

Concept trail; connects Dinkle Trail Head to West Sopris Creek Rd via BLM corridor

This exclusion corridor for benefit of adjacent land owner could be eliminated. What is the purpose?

Concept trail to connect existing Borderline Trail to Hay Park. This trail would replace the lost trail 1957W.3D aka "ABC Trail" and would eliminate the existing steep climb and reduce user conflicts on FST 1957

This scheme gives up ABC trail (N1957W3.D) in order to increase size of wilderness area

existing MTB trail "C-section" not well used or maintained. used historically but needs some TLC

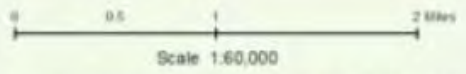
Boundary adjustment here preserves existing "FenceLine" MTB loop. Well maintained and popular

Light Green = Area taken out of HG 2.0 to Create 3.0 proposal

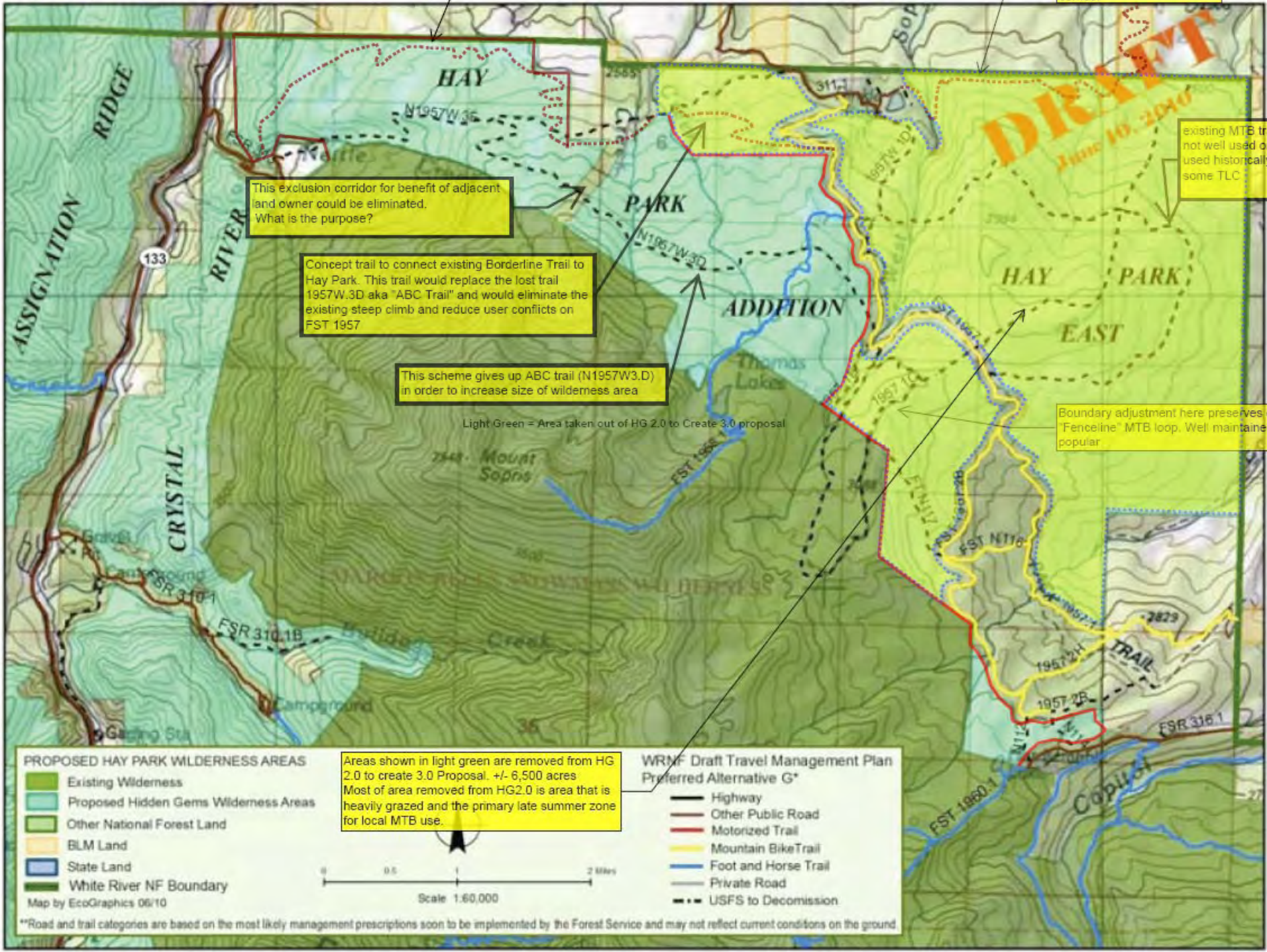
- PROPOSED HAY PARK WILDERNESS AREAS**
- Existing Wilderness
 - Proposed Hidden Gems Wilderness Areas
 - Other National Forest Land
 - BLM Land
 - State Land
 - White River NF Boundary
- Map by EcoGraphics 06/10

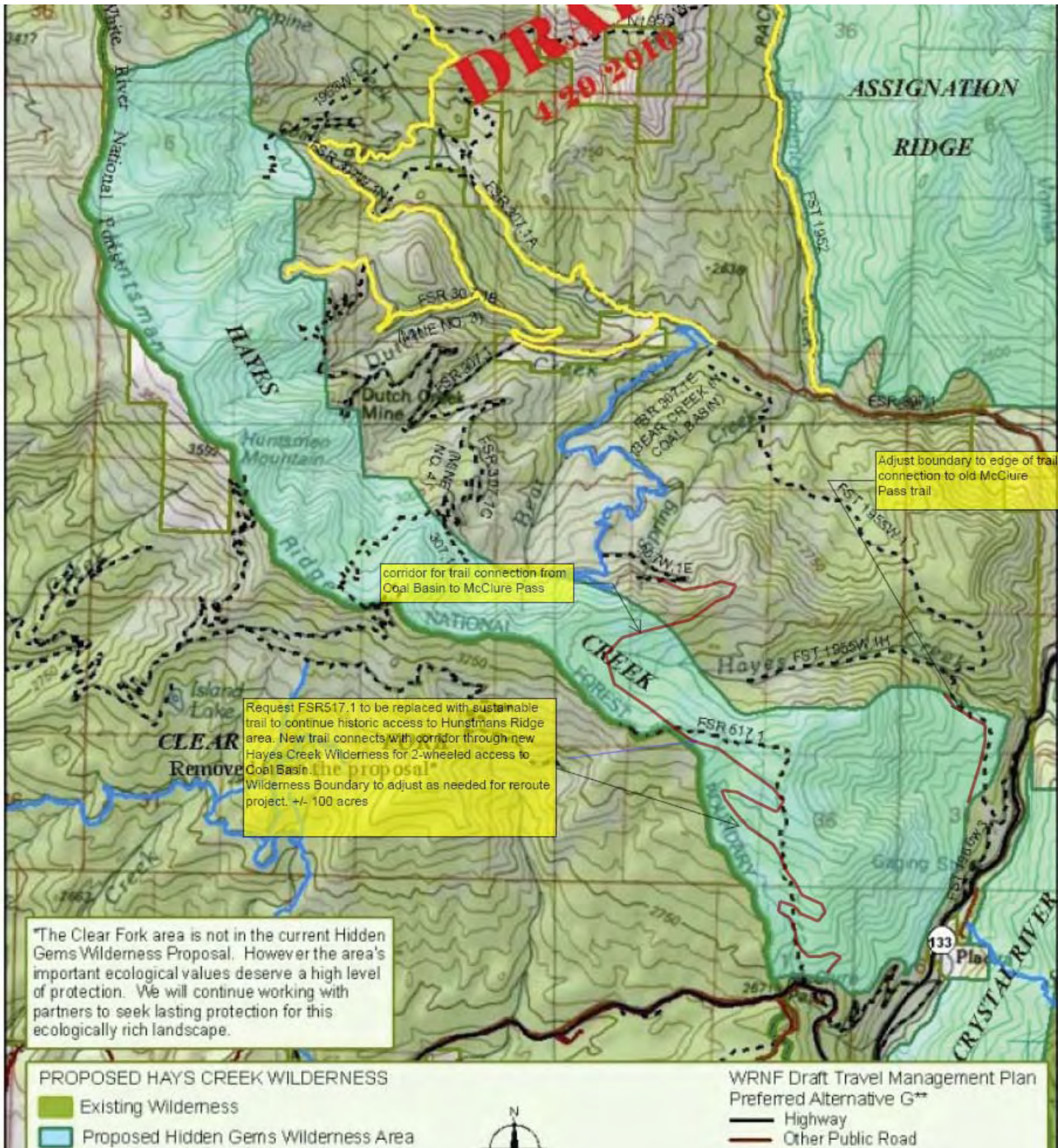
Areas shown in light green are removed from HG 2.0 to create 3.0 Proposal. +/- 6,500 acres
Most of area removed from HG2.0 is area that is heavily grazed and the primary late summer zone for local MTB use.

- WRNF Draft Travel Management Plan Preferred Alternative G***
- Highway
 - Other Public Road
 - Motorized Trail
 - Mountain Bike Trail
 - Foot and Horse Trail
 - Private Road
 - USFS to Decommission



**Road and trail categories are based on the most likely management prescriptions soon to be implemented by the Forest Service and may not reflect current conditions on the ground





DRAFT
1-29-2010

Adjust boundary to edge of trail connection to old McClure Pass trail

corridor for trail connection from Coal Basin to McClure Pass

Request FSR517.1 to be replaced with sustainable trail to continue historic access to Hunstman's Ridge area. New trail connects with corridor through new Hayes Creek Wilderness for 2-wheeled access to Coal Basin. **the proposal** Wilderness Boundary to adjust as needed for reroute project. +/- 100 acres

*The Clear Fork area is not in the current Hidden Gems Wilderness Proposal. However the area's important ecological values deserve a high level of protection. We will continue working with partners to seek lasting protection for this ecologically rich landscape.

PROPOSED HAYS CREEK WILDERNESS
 Existing Wilderness
 Proposed Hidden Gems Wilderness Area

WRNF Draft Travel Management Plan Preferred Alternative G**
 Highway
 Other Public Road

