



Mesic Protection and Restoration: A local prioritization process

BAKER SAGE-GROUSE LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

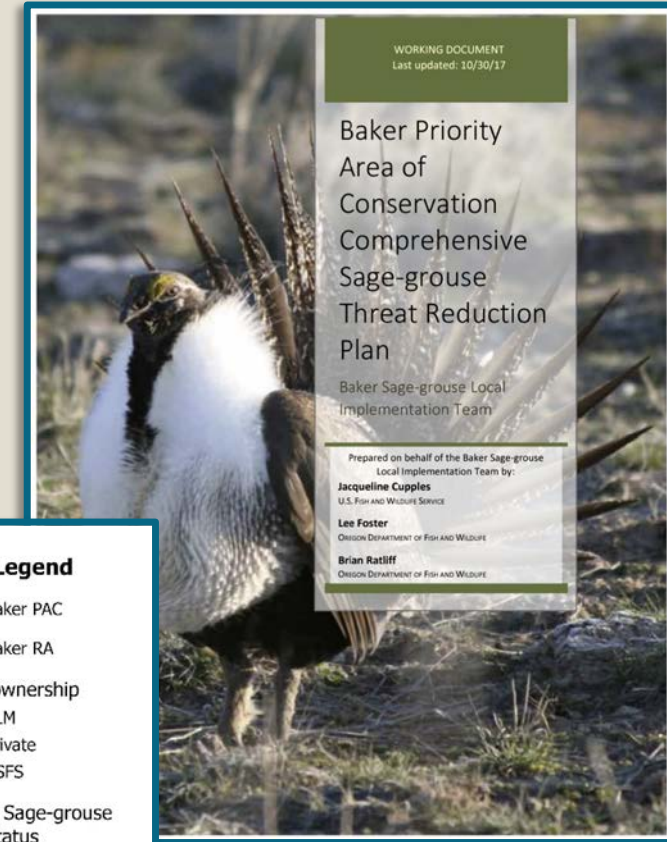
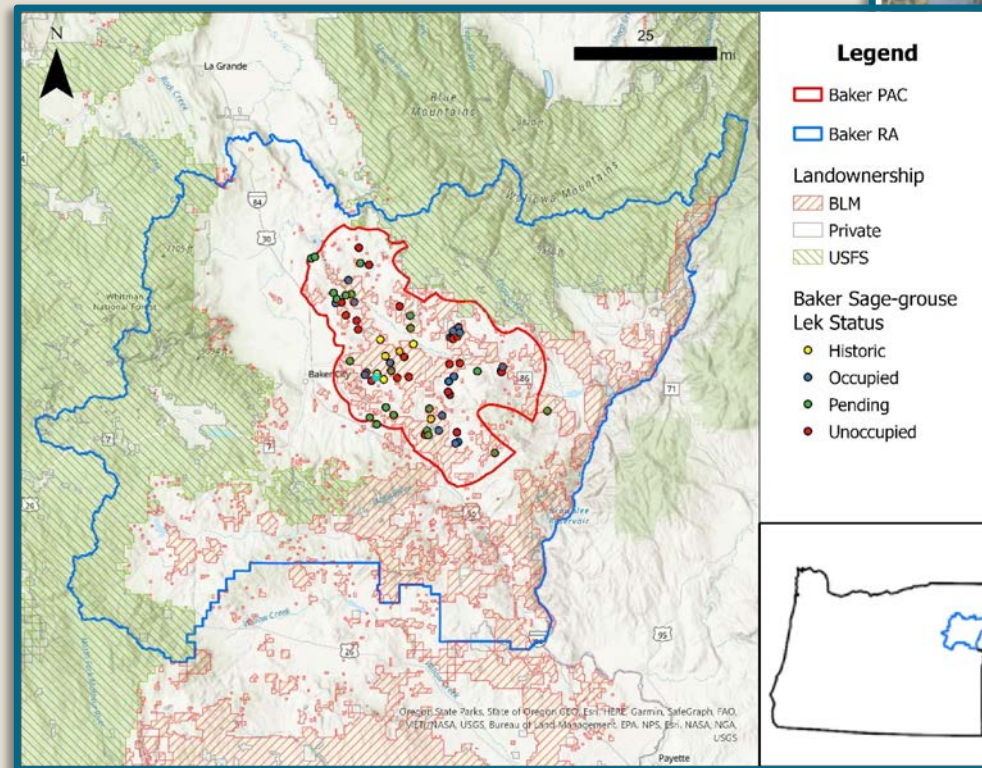
MORGAN SOLOMON, LIT COORDINATOR

Mesic habitat importance



Baker Threat Reduction Plan

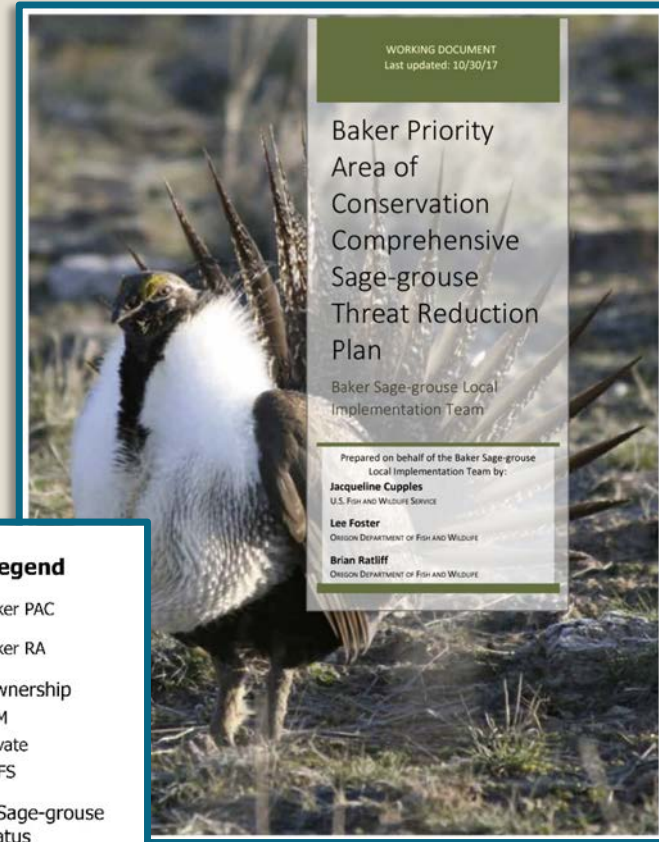
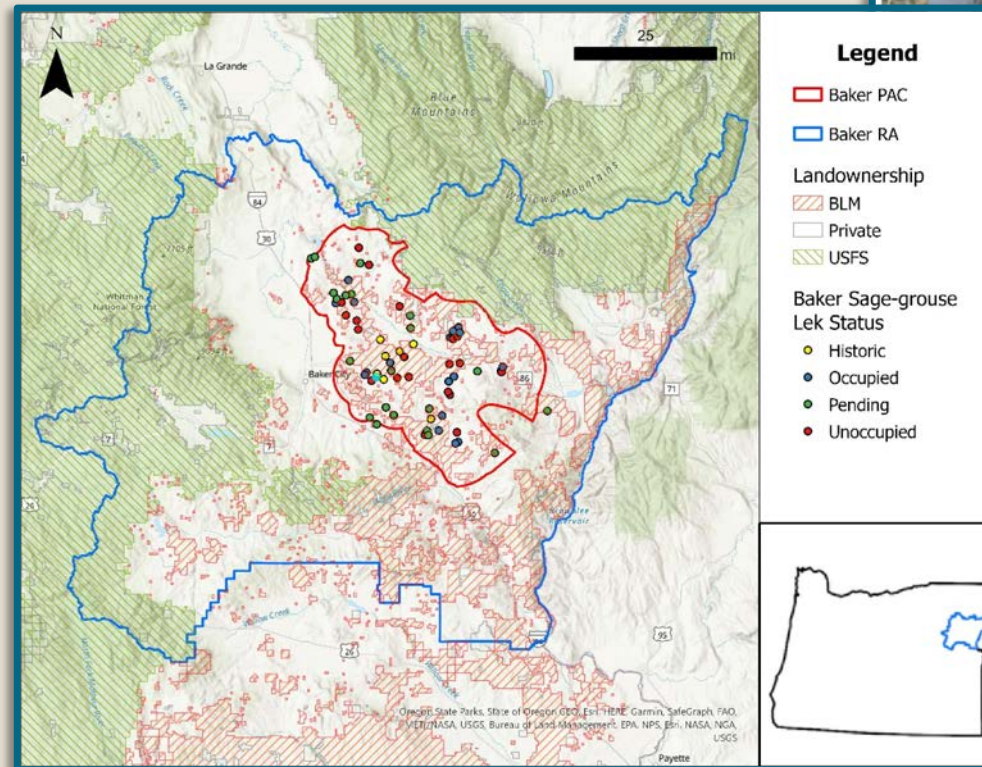
- ❖ Developed in 2017
- ❖ Outline the threats, past/ongoing restoration work, and conservation needs for the Baker Priority Area of Conservation (PAC).



Baker Threat Reduction Plan

Conservation Need:

“6. Gain a better understanding of the mesic habitat quantity and quality as it relates to the late brood-rearing habitat needs of sage-grouse in order to guide mesic restoration or enhancement projects.”



Prioritization Process

Develop
geospatial
representation of
mesic resources



Ground truth/field
surveys



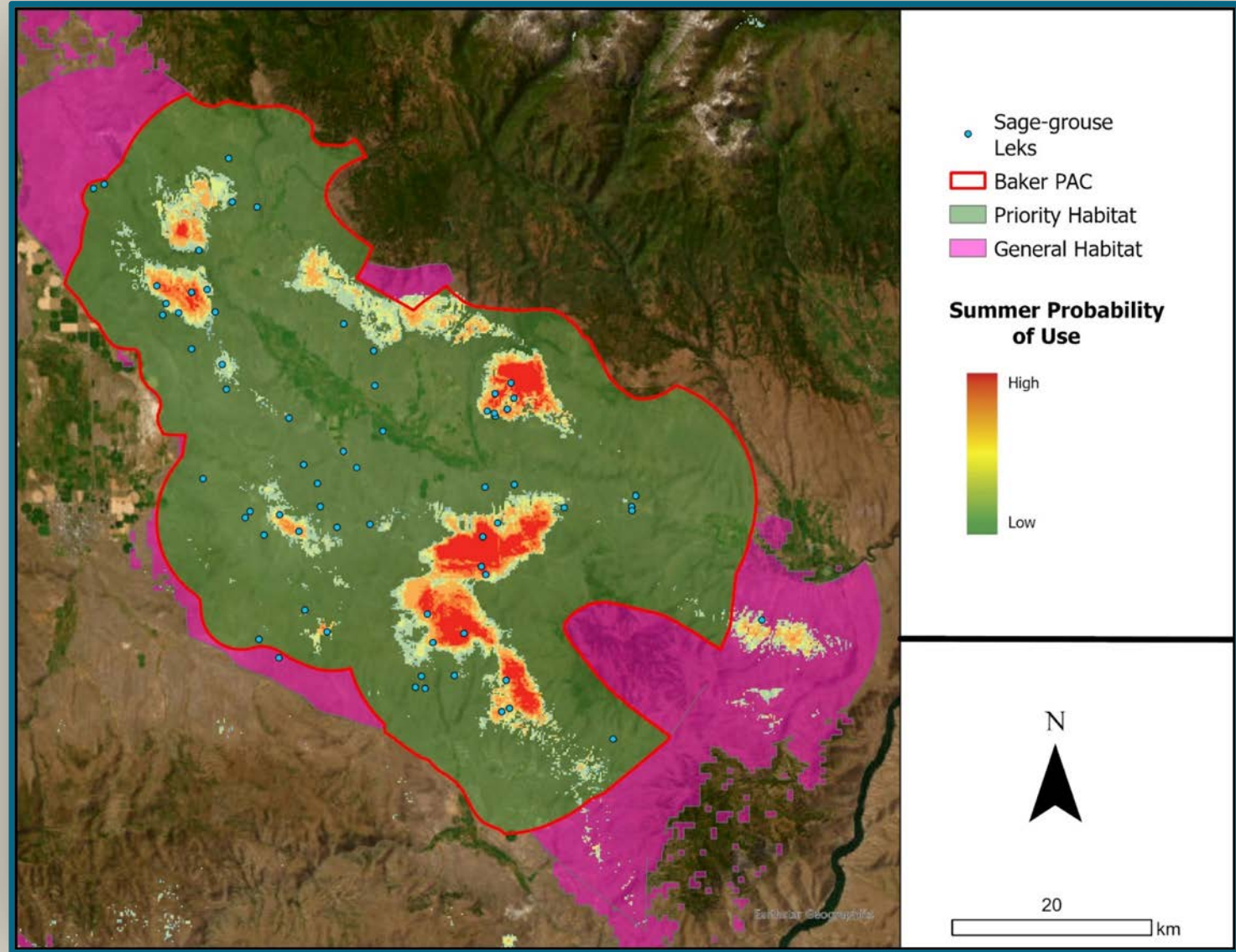
Stratify/identify
mesic
conservation
projects



Develop
prioritization
process for
implementation

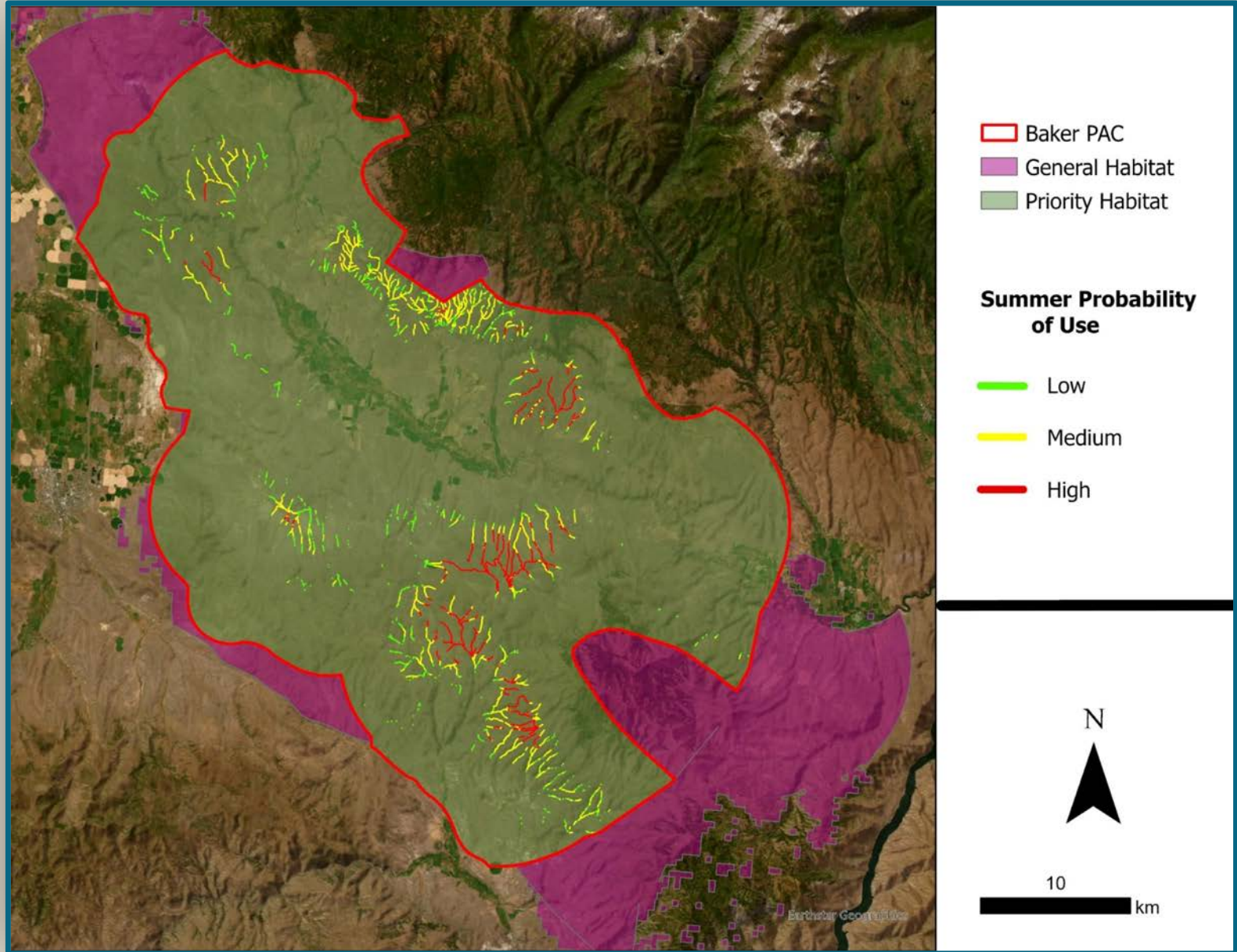
Mapping Efforts

- ❖ Partnered with Institute of Natural Resources to develop summer sage grouse habitat and mesic maps



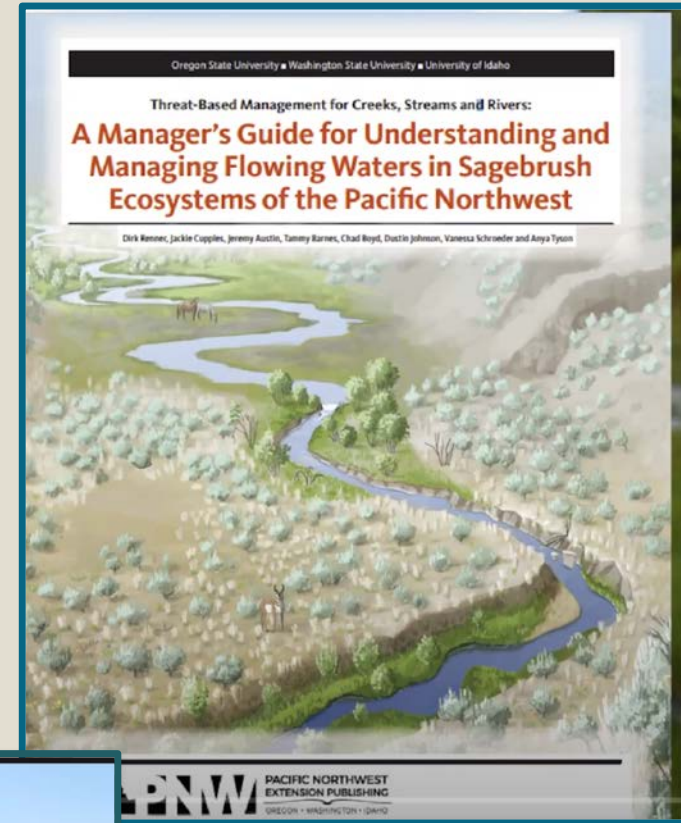
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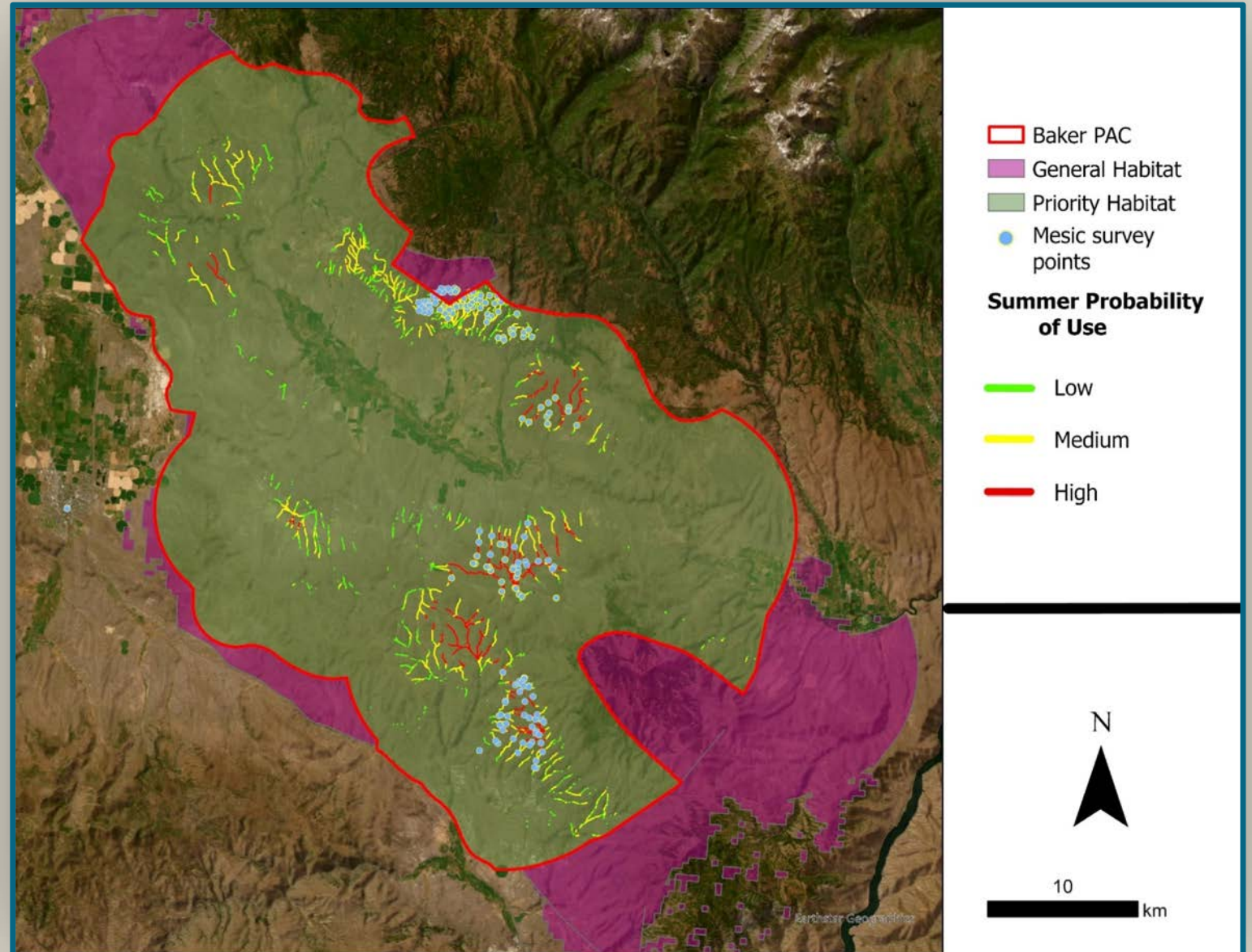
Field Surveys

- ❖ Ground-truthed summer habitat maps
- ❖ First draft of **Threat-based Management Guide for Creeks, Streams, and Rivers**

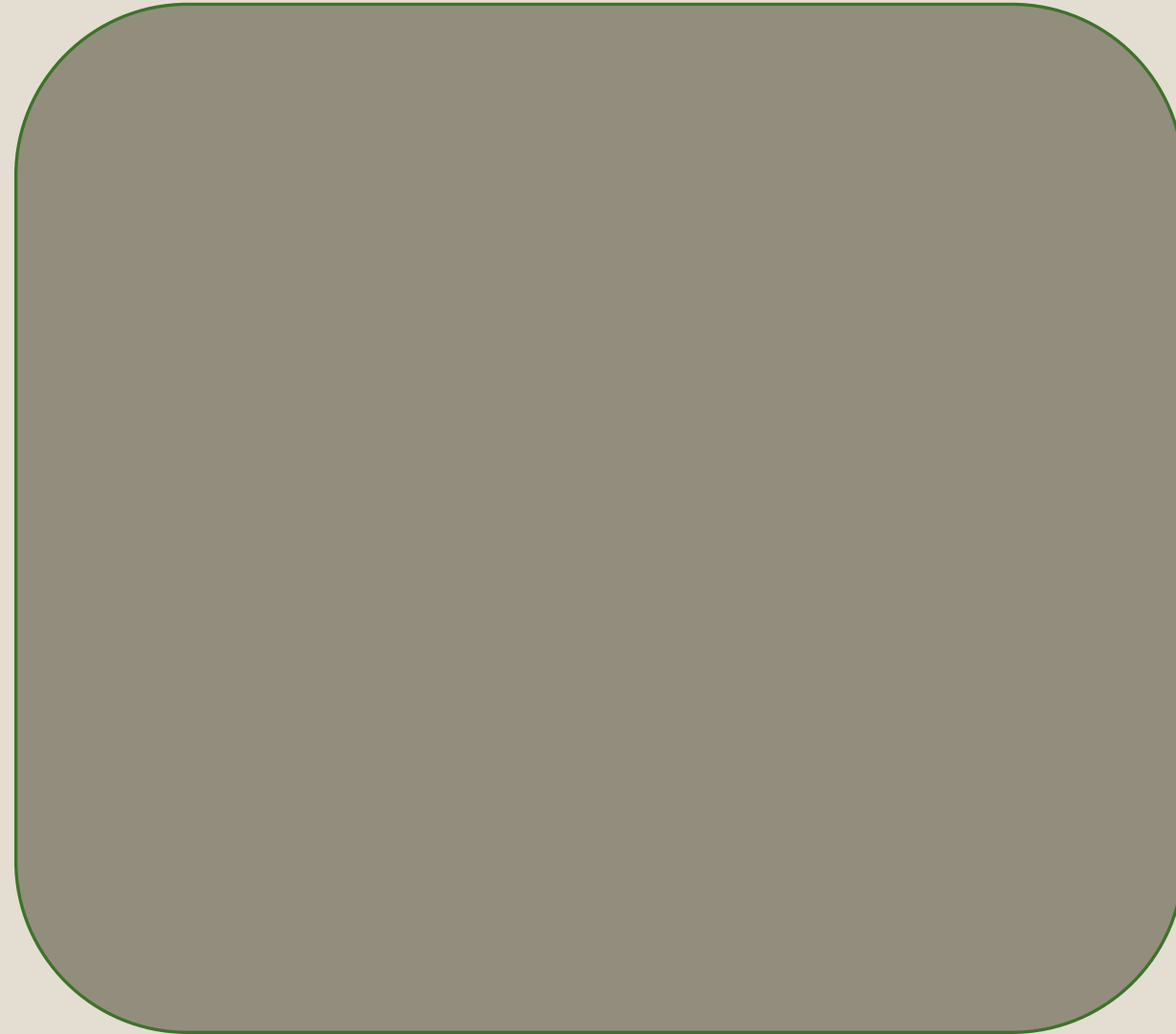
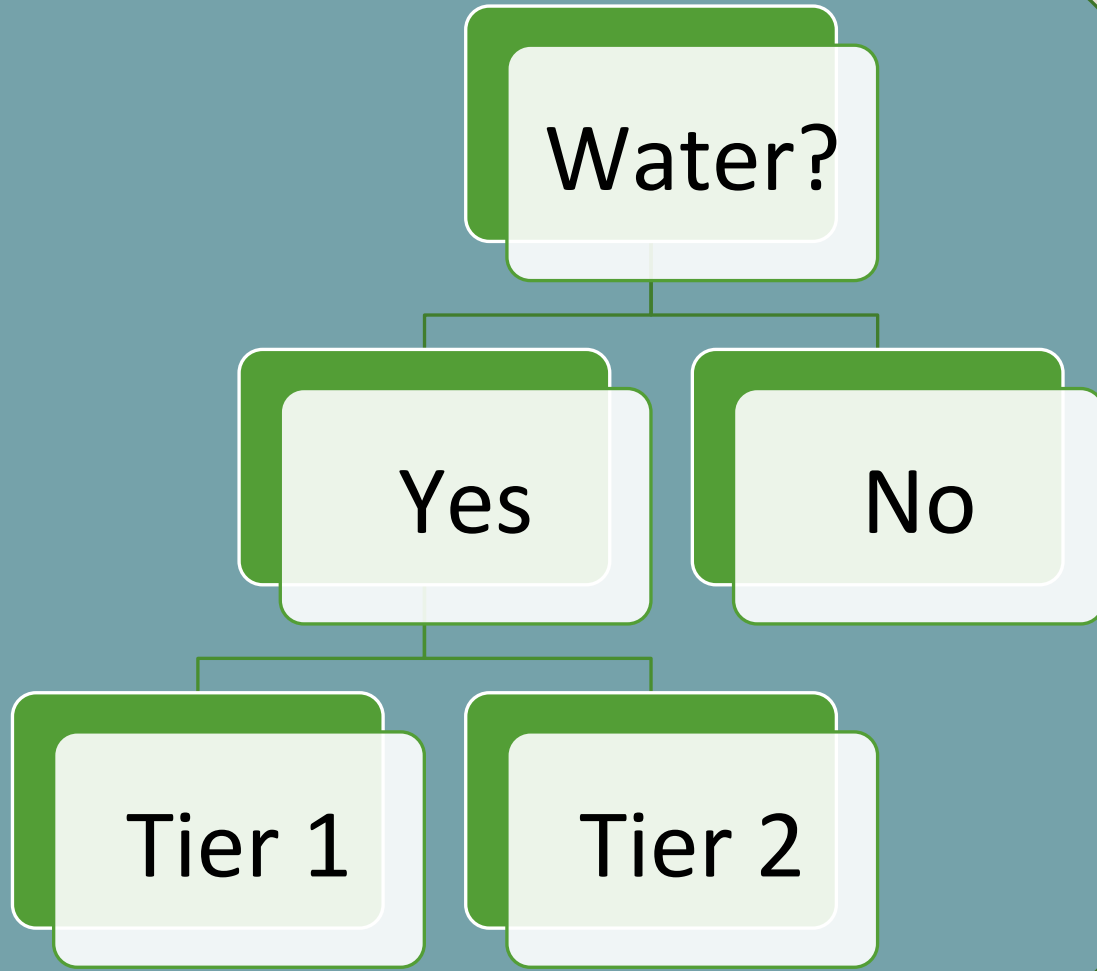


Field Surveys

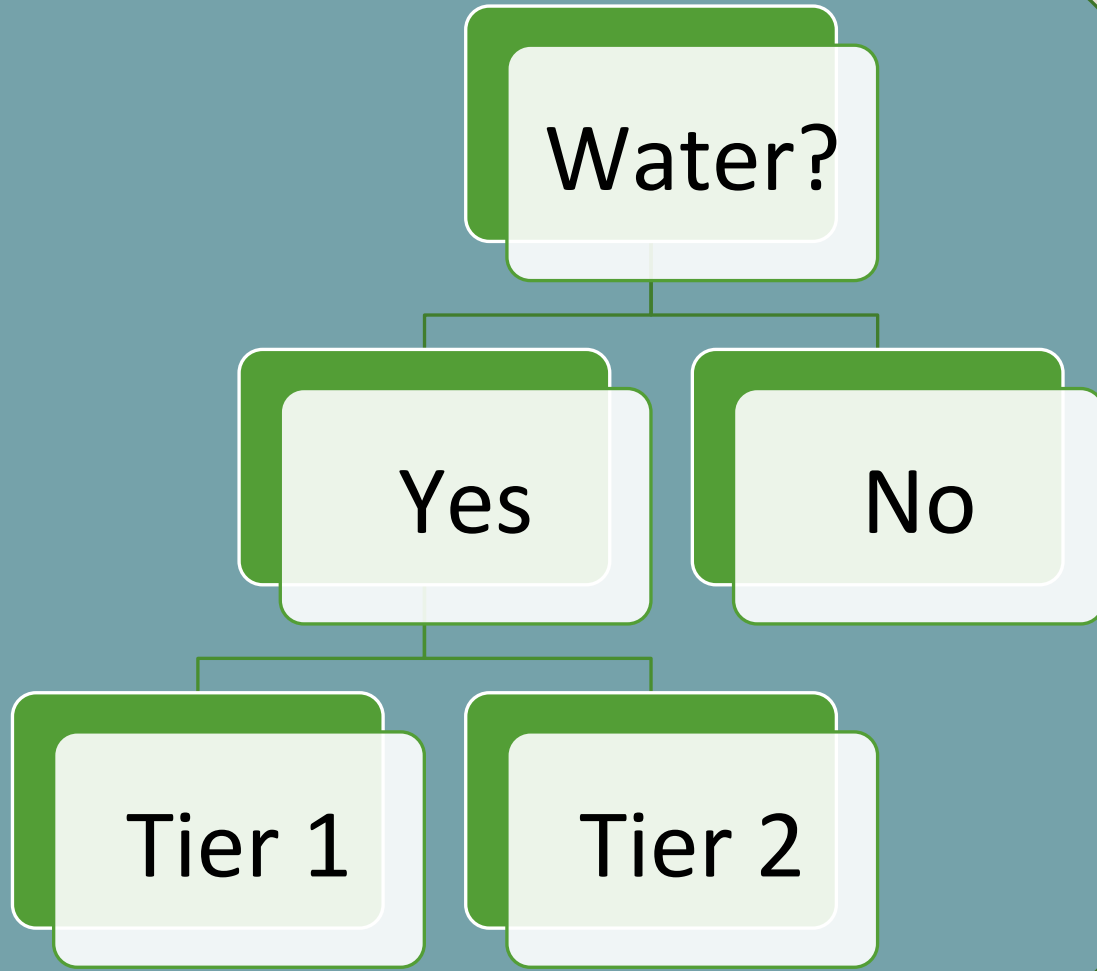
- ❖ ~180 random point locations surveyed across private and BLM land



Stratifying Conservation Actions



Stratifying Conservation Actions



Tier 1

Protection
Projects
(Low Investment)

Tier 2

Restoration
Projects
(High Investment)

Stratifying Conservation Actions

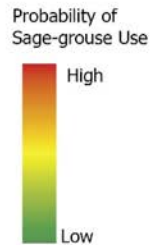
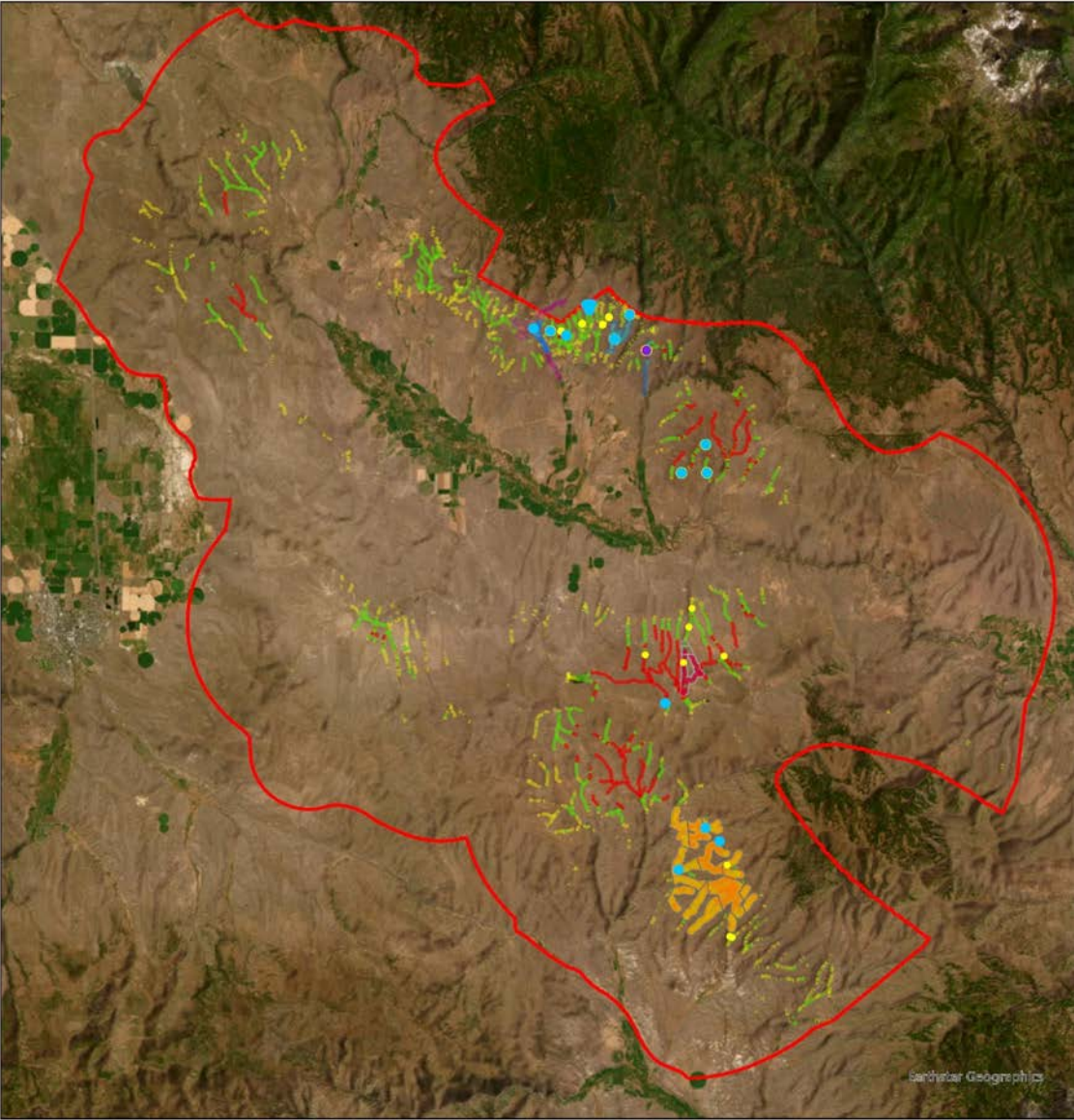
Tier 1

- ❖ Juniper removal
- ❖ Weed Treatments
- ❖ Trough Replacements/Maintenance
- ❖ Wildlife Ramp/Float Valve Installation
- ❖ Grazing Management: Infrastructure exists

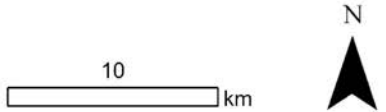
Tier 2

- ❖ Addressing head cuts and incision
- ❖ Large scale-weed treatments
- ❖ Vegetation Plantings
- ❖ Water development projects
- ❖ Grazing Management: Infrastructure required

Stratifying Conservation Actions



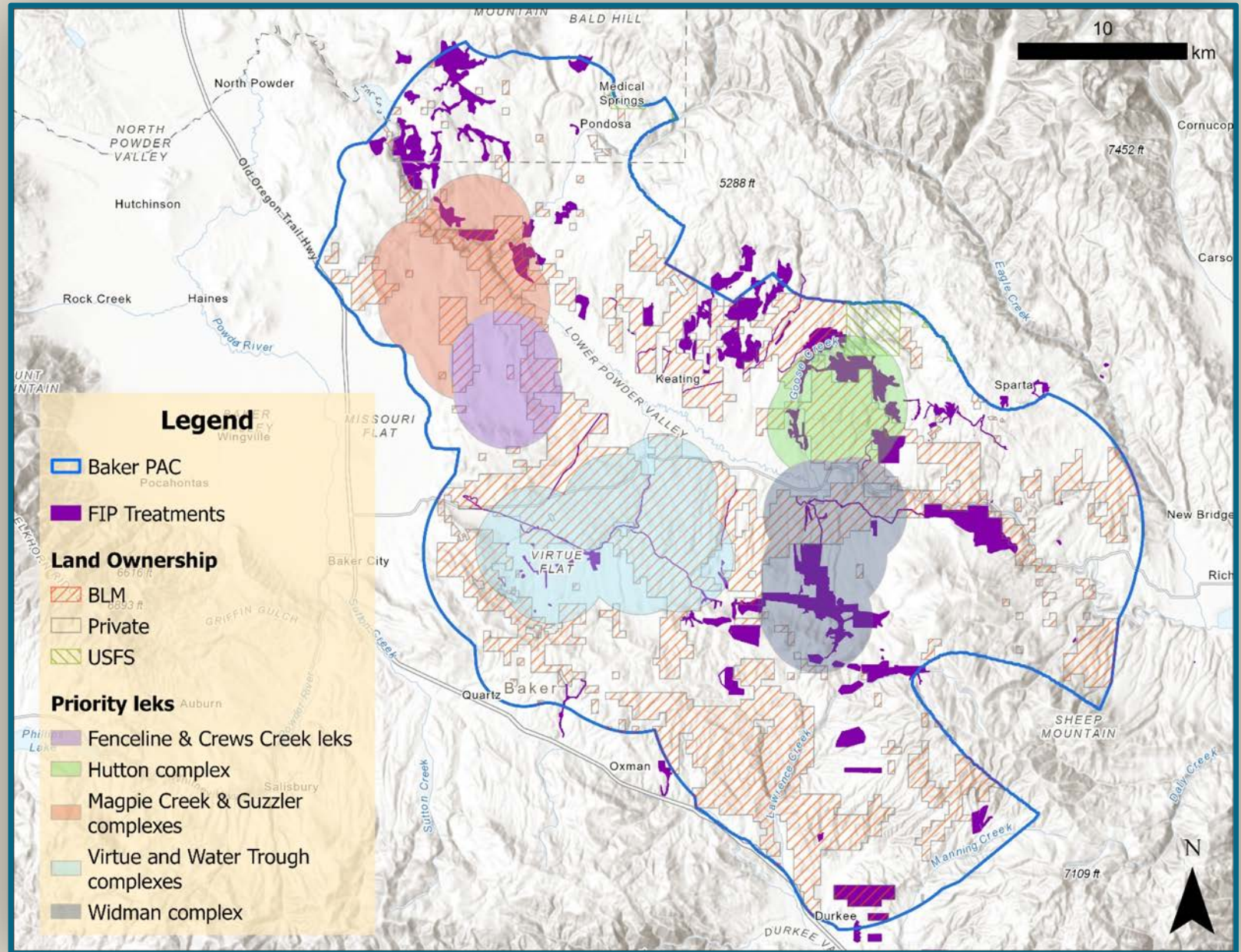
- Private - Springs in Need of Fencing
- BLM - Springs in Need of Fencing
- Private - Invasives/Fencing
- BLM - Invasives
- Private - Juniper Removal
- Potential Tier 2 Project Sites



Prioritizing Action Areas

Criteria

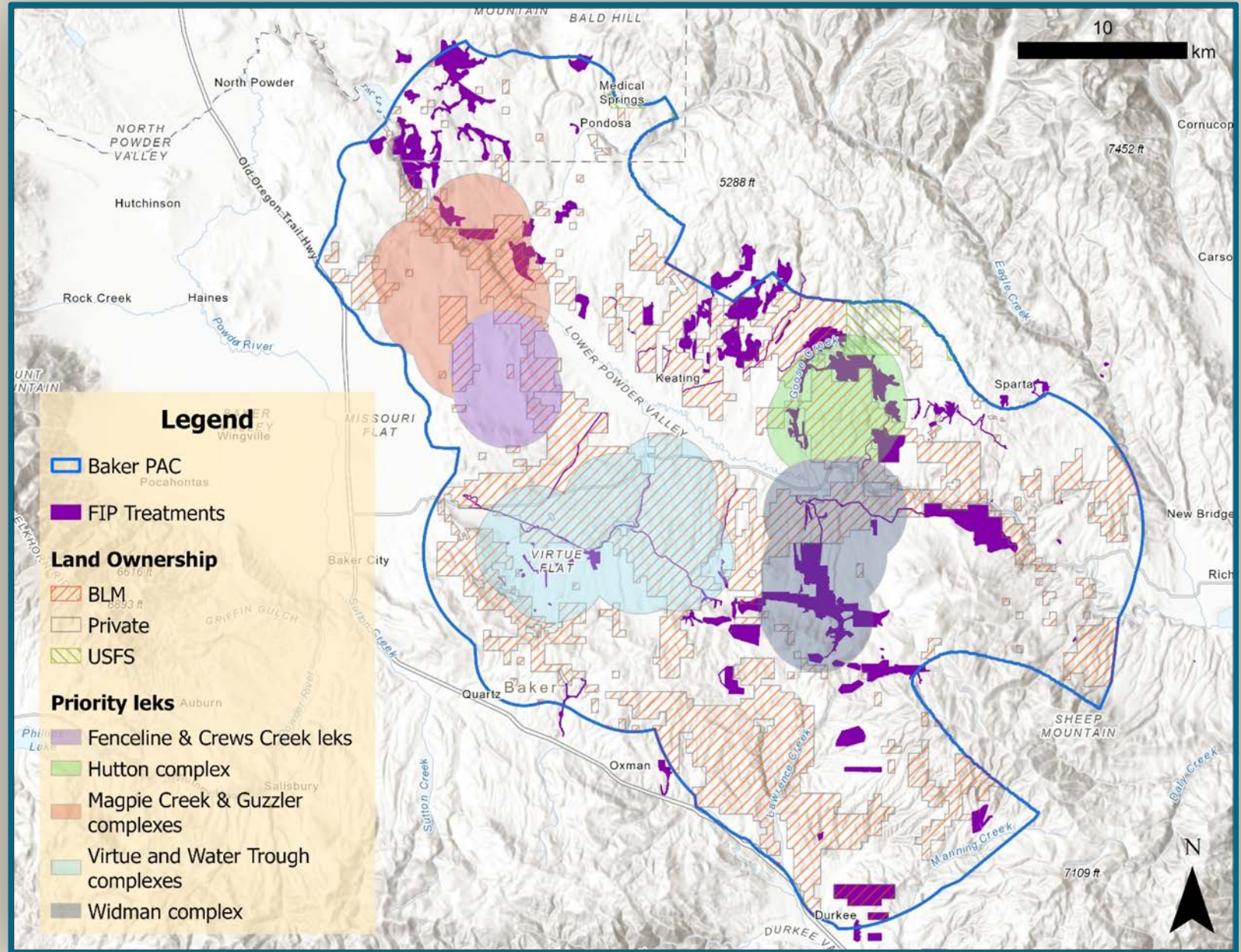
- ❖ Proximity to core habitat
- ❖ Proximity to ongoing restoration work
- ❖ Partner involvement
- ❖ Landowner participation
- ❖ Funding opportunities & Match funds



Prioritizing Action Areas

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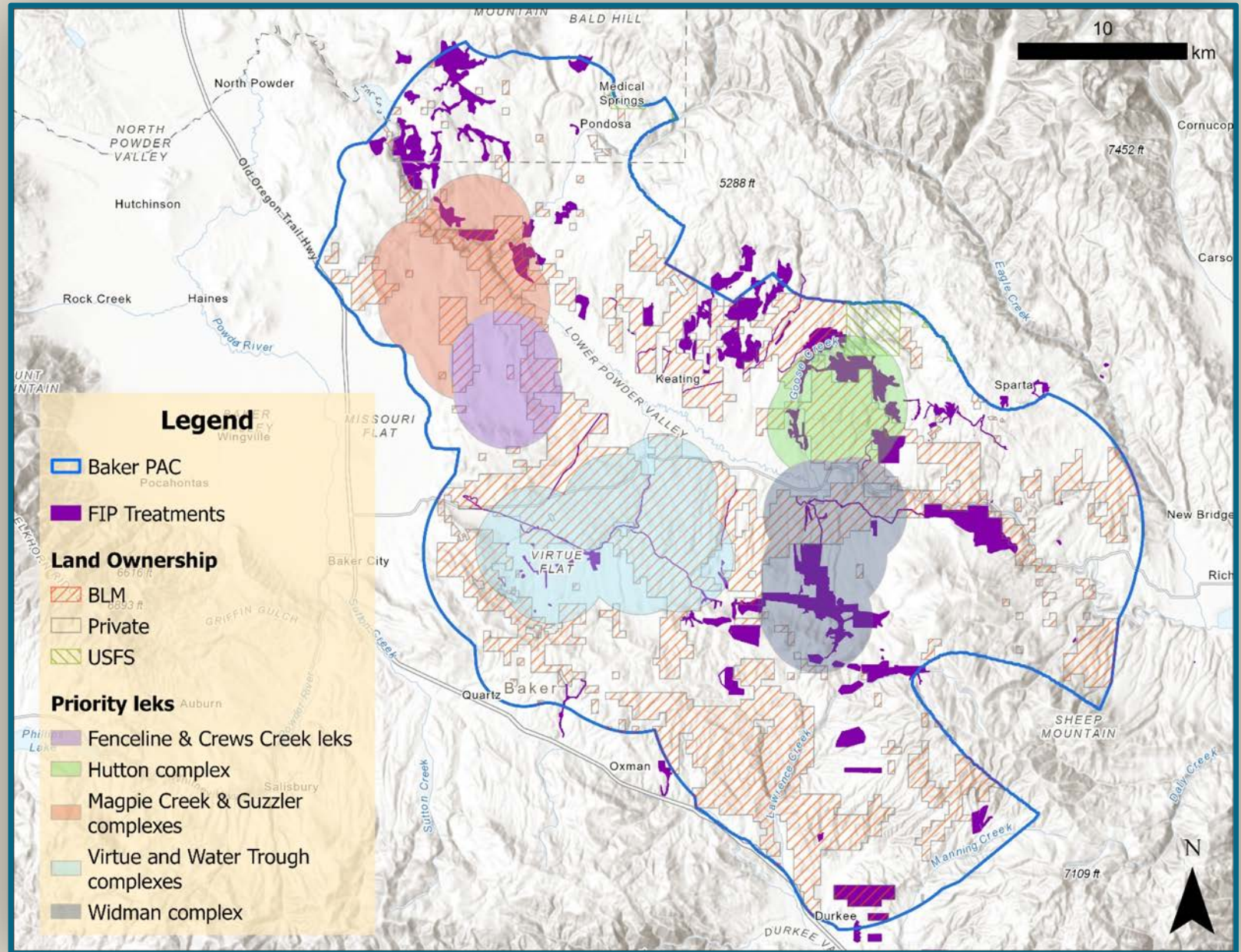
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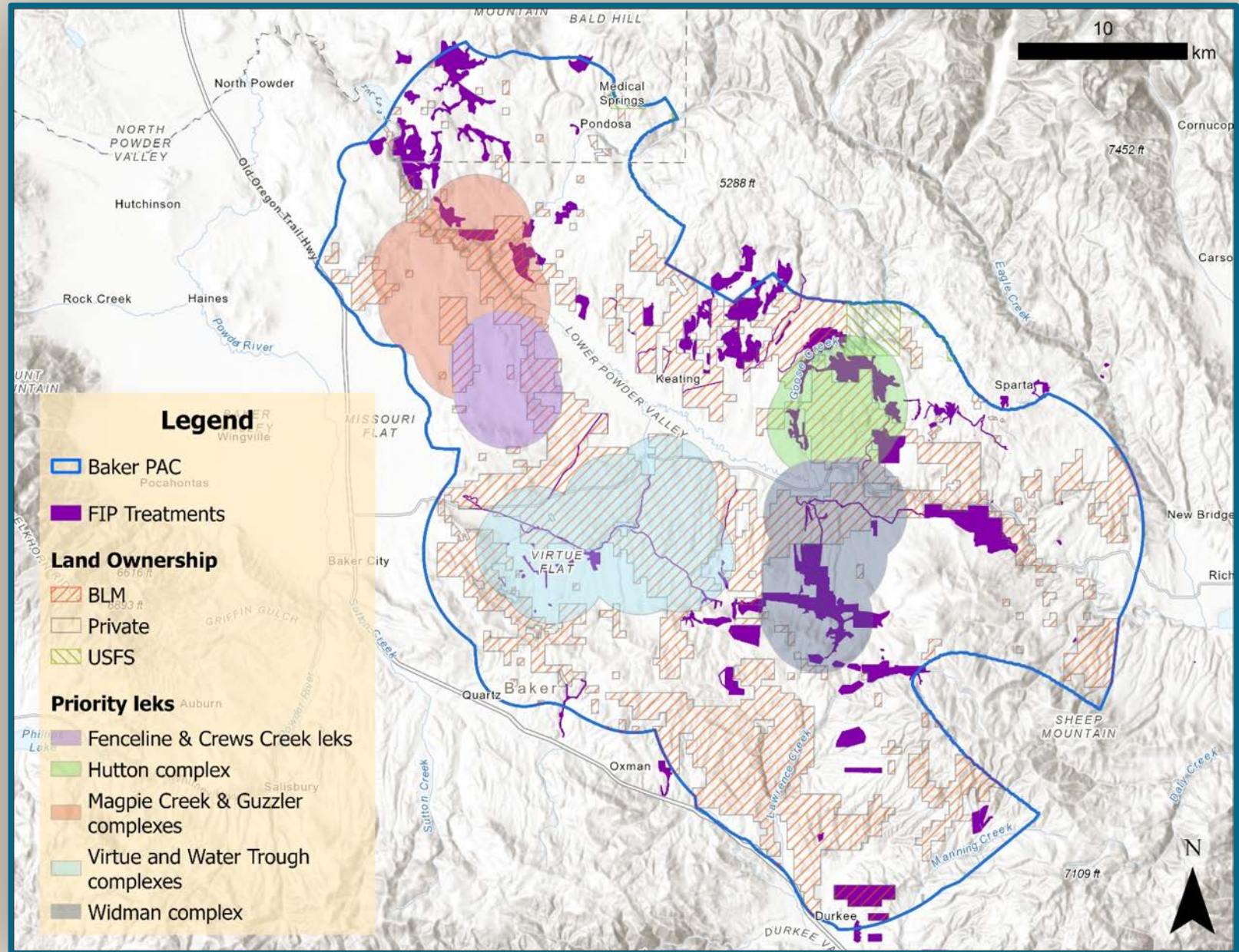
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Prioritizing Action Areas

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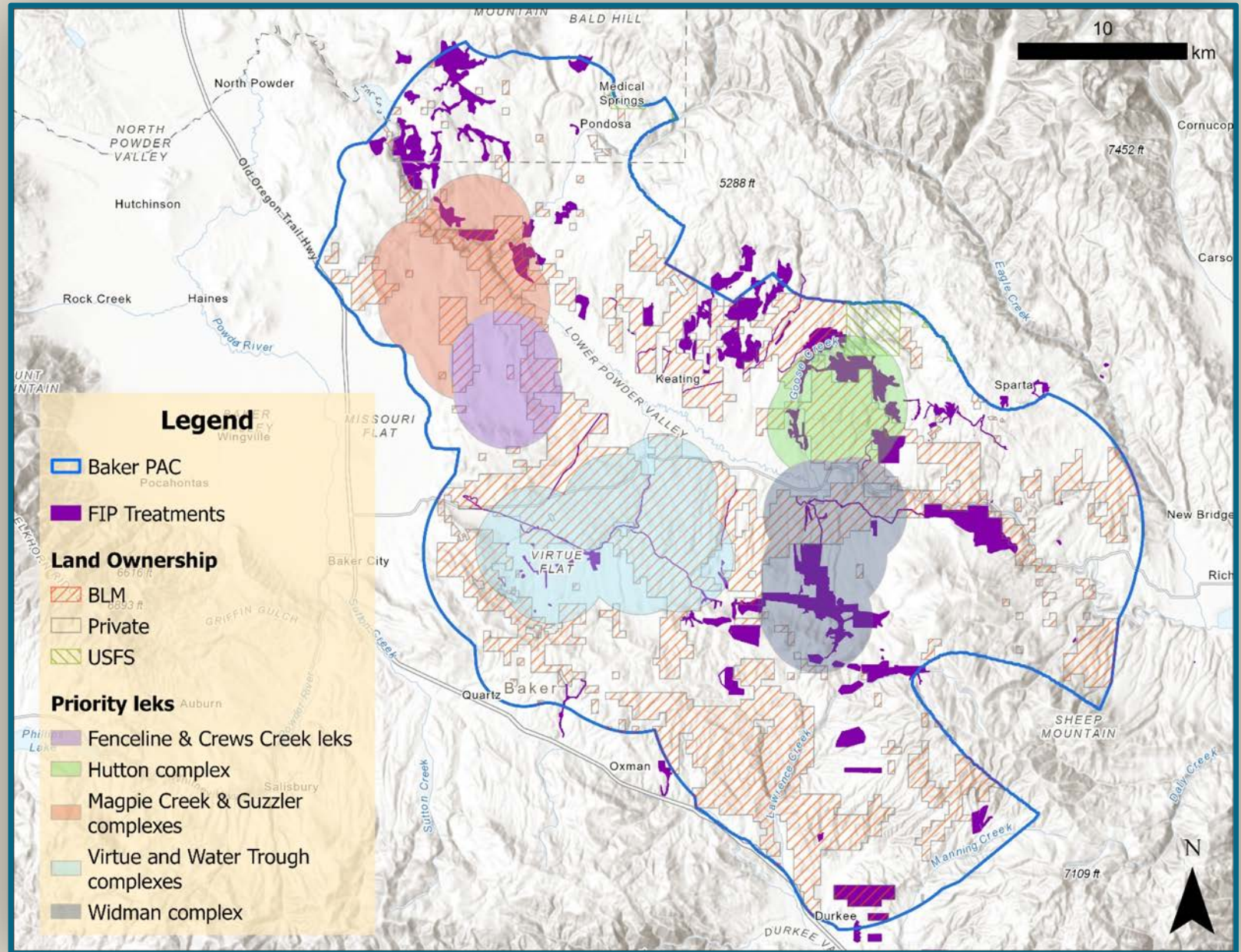
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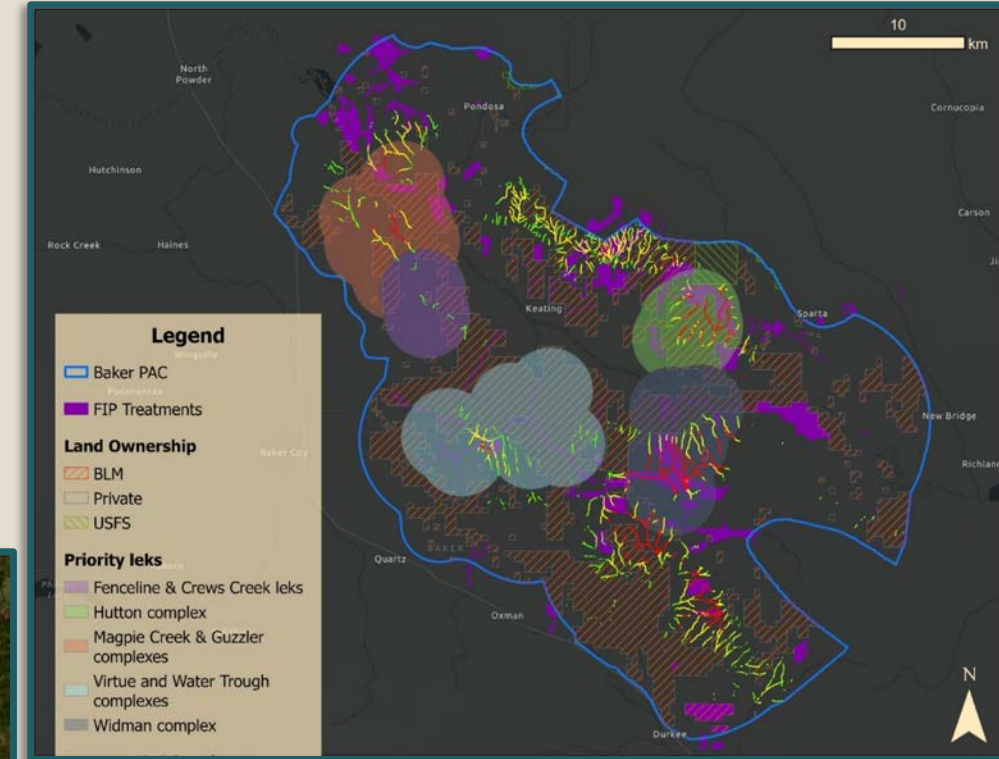
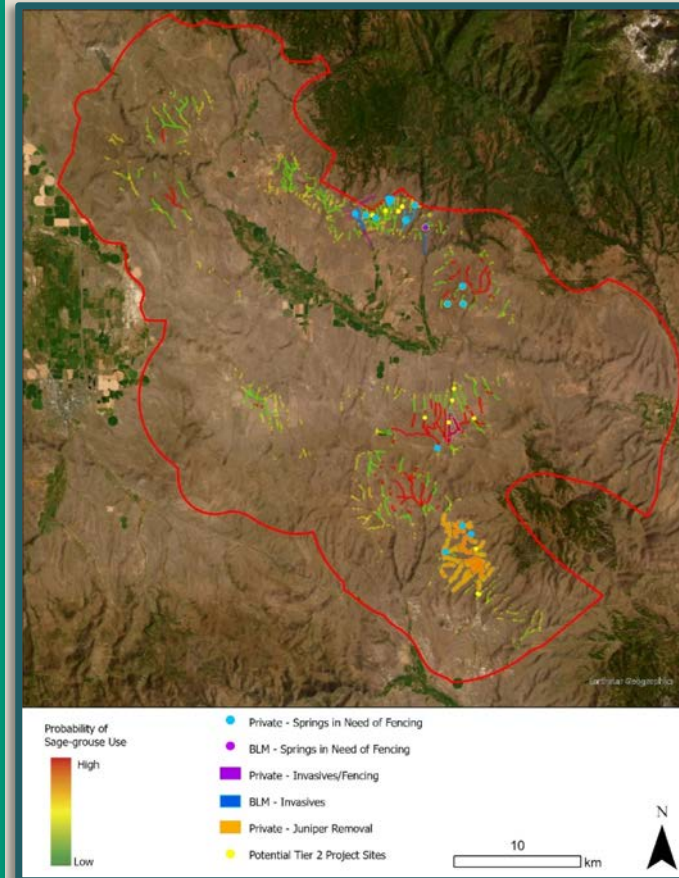
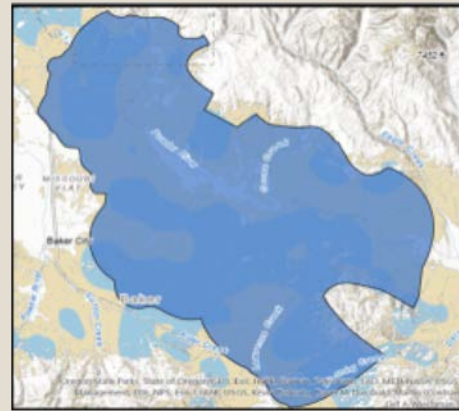
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- ❖ Landowner participation
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Prioritizing Action Areas

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- ❖ Funding opportunities & Match funds



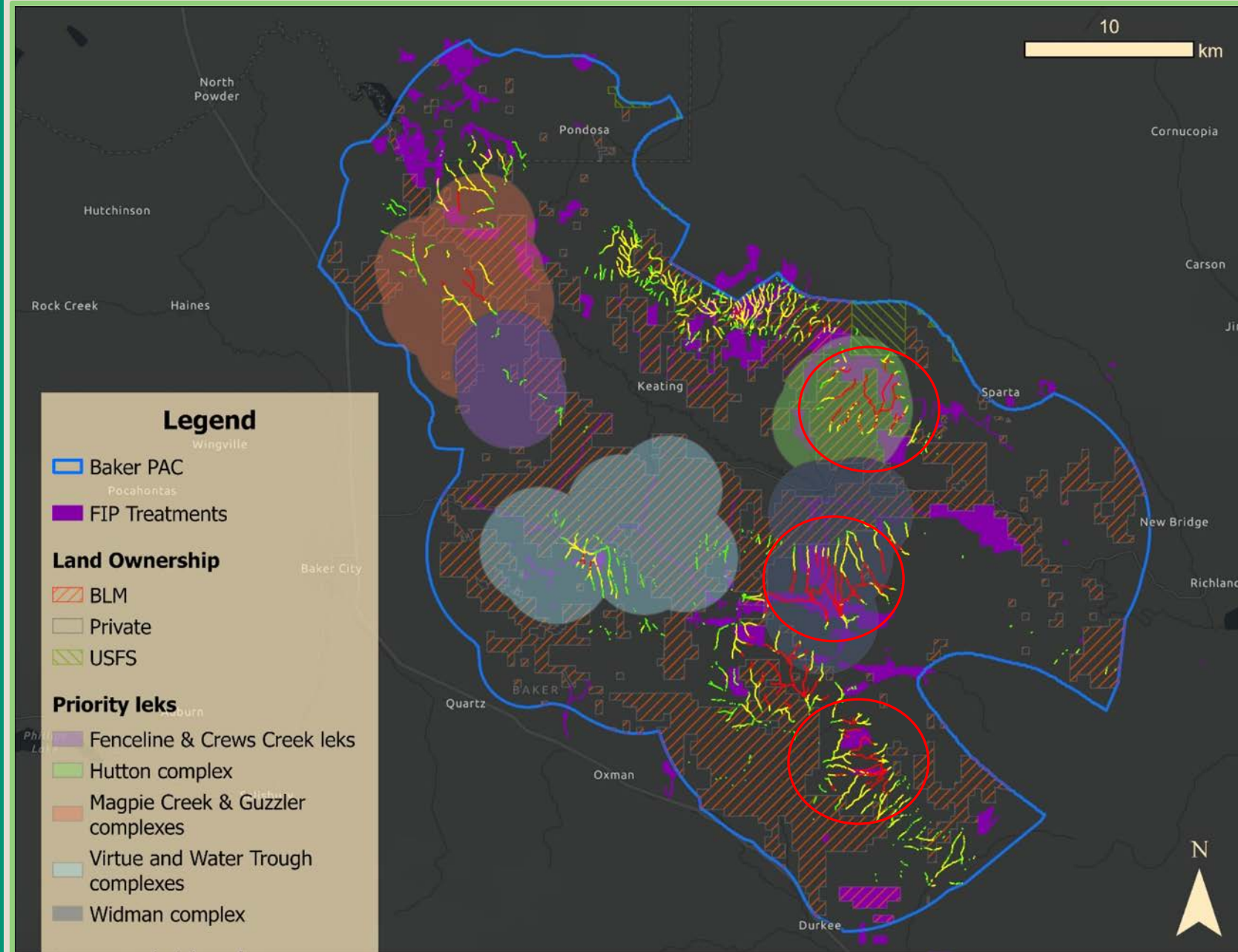
Other considerations:

- ❖ Sagebrush Conservation Design Map
- ❖ Resistance/Resilience layers
- ❖ Summer sage-grouse GPS locations

Prioritizing Conservation Actions

3 Action Areas Identified

1. Goose Creek
2. Love Reservoir
3. Lawrence/Sardine



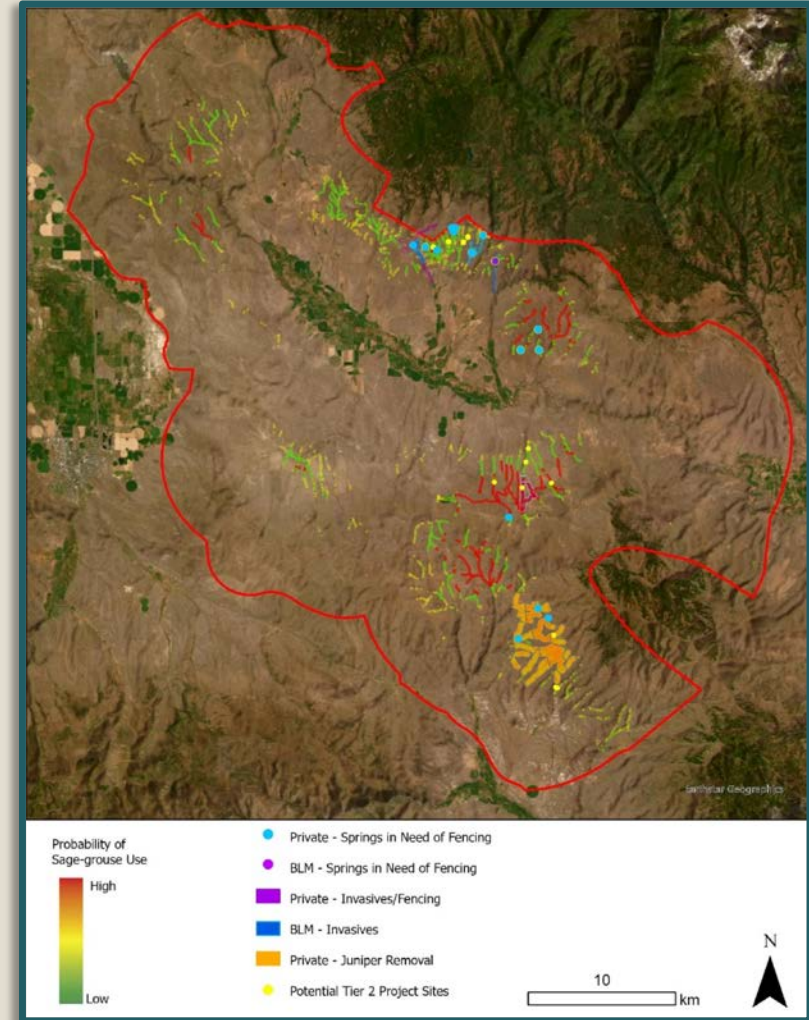
Next steps: Tier 1 Project Implementation

- ❖ Applied/applying for FIP and USFWS funds
- ❖ Developed budget for all Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects identified ☐ Pie-in-the-sky funding request
- ❖ Initially prioritized conservation actions that have the HIGHEST cost-benefit ratio (e.g., juniper removal)
- ❖ Implementation slotted for spring/fall of 2024



Next steps: Tier 2 Project Development

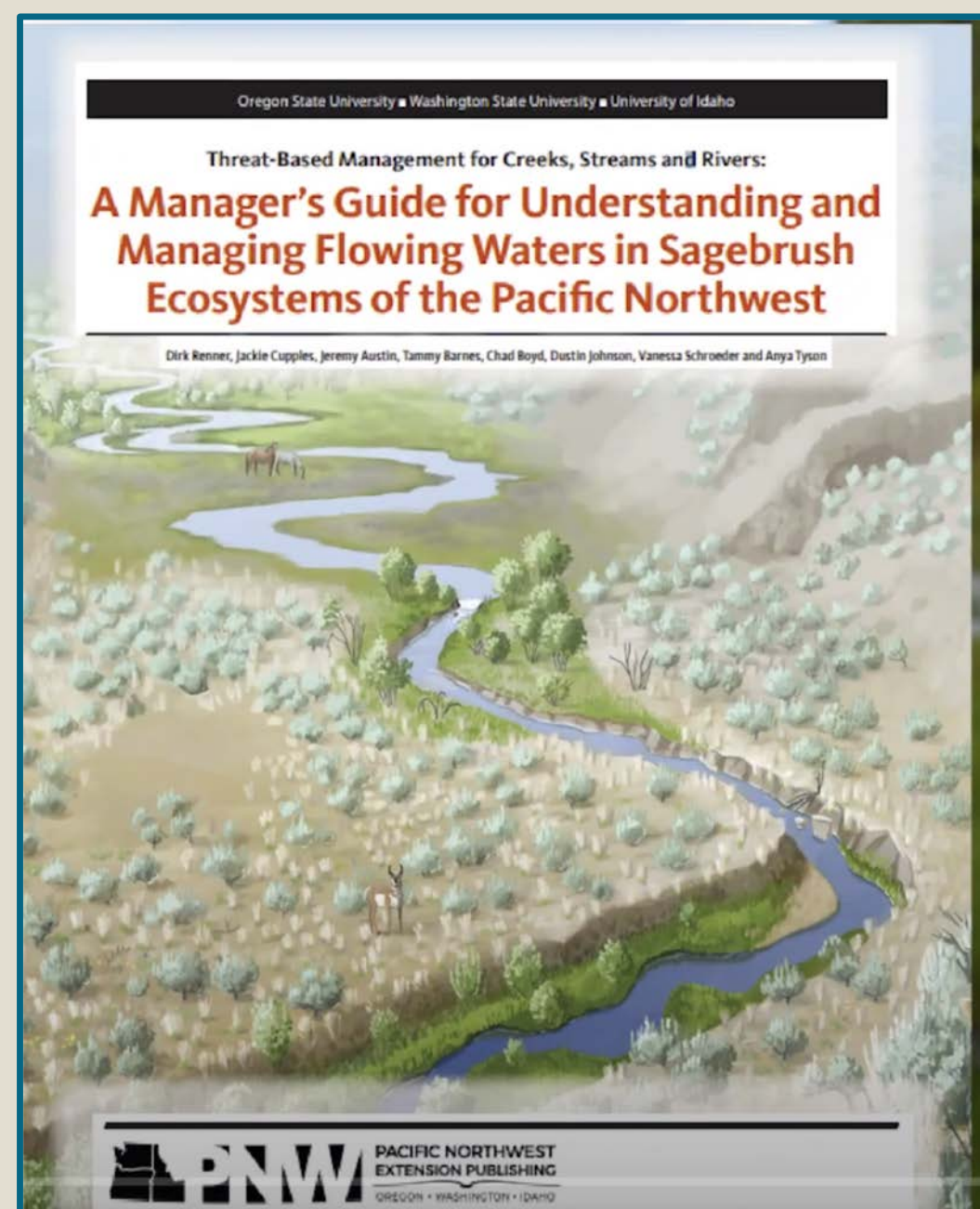
- ❖ TA written into upcoming Tier 1 project applications
- ❖ Solicit experts for project development
- ❖ Tier 2 projects to be funded and implemented 2024/2025





Thank you!!

Next steps: Monitoring



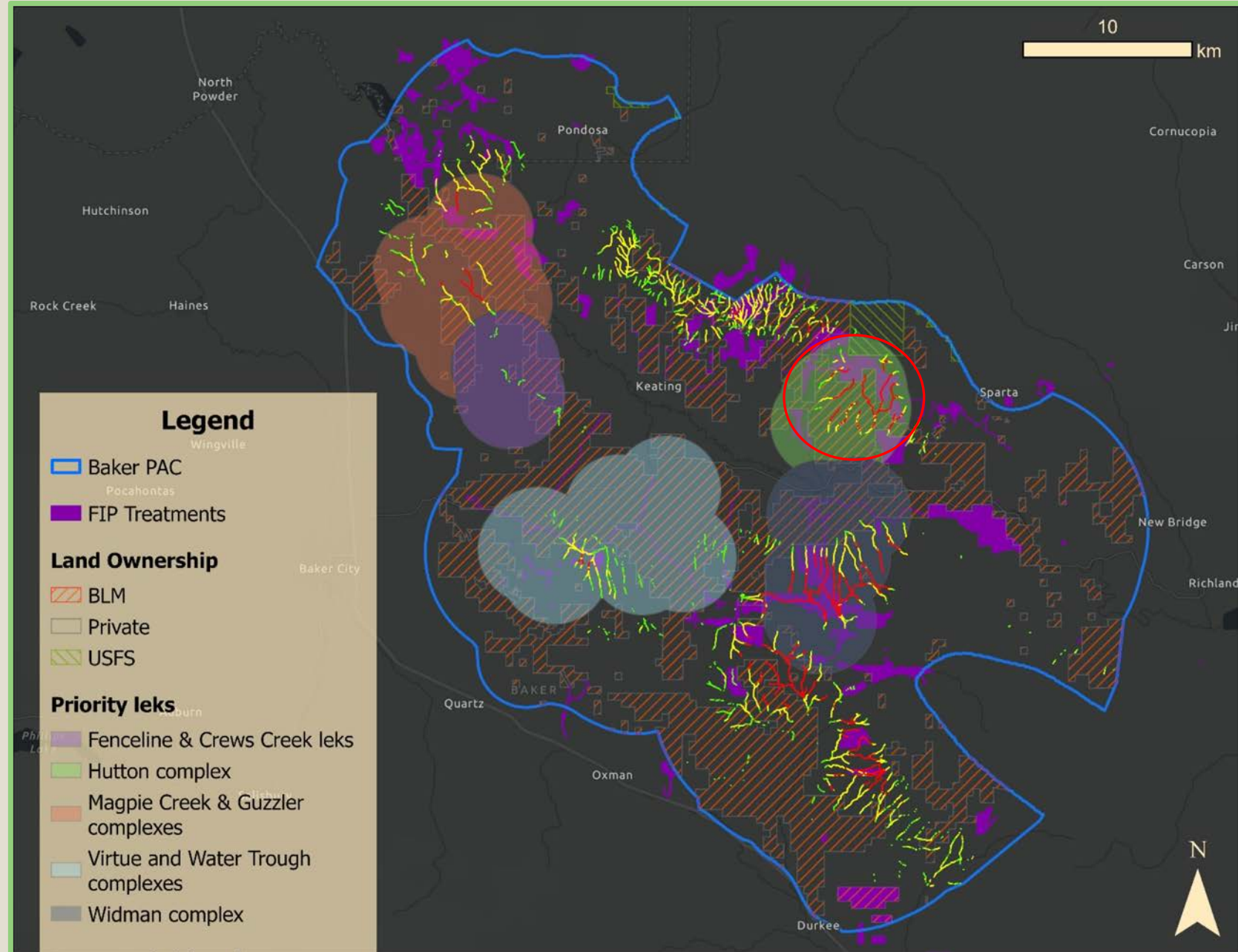
Action Area 1:

Goose Creek

- ❖ Identified both Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects.
- ❖ Primarily BLM land

Conservation Actions:

- ❖ Weed Treatments
- ❖ Grazing Management



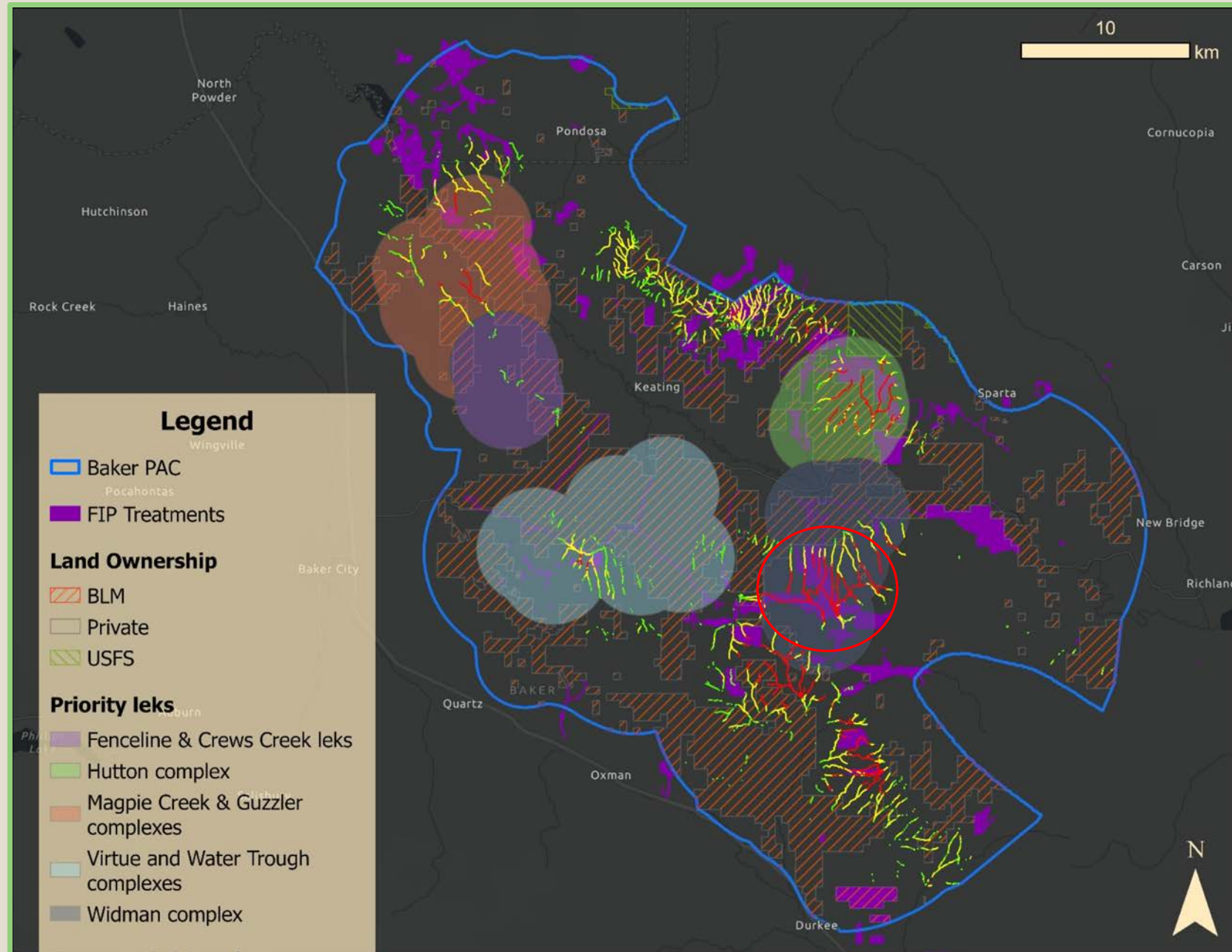
Action Area 2:

Love Reservoir

- ❖ Identified both Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects.

Conservation Actions:

- ❖ Weed Treatments
- ❖ Grazing Management
- ❖ Protecting high-use sites



Action Area 3:

Lawrence/Sardine

- ❖ Identified both Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects.

Conservation Actions:

- ❖ Juniper removal
- ❖ Grazing management

