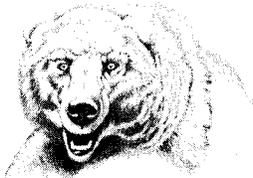


STATE OF MONTANA

E-7



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DEPARTMENT OF
FISH AND GAME

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ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
COUNCIL

Mr. Terry Carmody, Executive Director
Environmental Quality Council
Helena, MT 59601

Dear Terry:

Enclosed are two copies of our preliminary environmental review FG-N-107, Acquisition of Blackleaf Wildlife Area, Teton County. Little development is foreseen for this area in order to leave it in as natural a state as possible for use as a wildlife range.

We hope this document will satisfy the requirements of the Montana Environmental Policy Act. If you have any questions, please let us know.

Sincerely,

James A. Posewitz
James A. Posewitz, Administrator
Ecological Services Division

sd
Enc

cc: Teton County Commissioners
Department of State Lands
Department of Natural Resources (Conservation Districts)
Lewis and Clark National Forest
Bureau of Land Management (Butte District)
Mr. Henry Ostle

PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
(Draft)
FOR THE ACQUISITION OF
BLACKLEAF WILDLIFE AREA
TETON COUNTY, MONTANA

FG-N-107

Prepared by:

Montana Department of Fish and Game
Helena, Montana

March, 1979

SUMMARY

The proposed action is the acquisition of two ranch units, 5941 and 1632 acres, by the Montana Department of Fish and Game. The area is located in northwestern Teton County. The public owned area would be managed as a game range. Management would be oriented toward mule deer and elk, since the area is primarily winter and spring range for the two species. Little development is foreseen in order to leave the area in a natural state.

The most significant impact would be the probable loss of tax revenue by Teton County but it is estimated that much of this would be regenerated through increased public use of the area.

The most significant beneficial impact will be the preservation of a unique area of foothill winter range for wildlife and the public recreation that will result.

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT
BLACKLEAF LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT

I. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

The Department of Fish and Game proposes to acquire 7573 acres of foothill lands involving two ranch units 15 miles west of Bynum, Montana. The area to be purchased has an appraised value of \$1,120,000.00.

The proposed purchase of the so-called Blackleaf Wildlife Area would result in public ownership and if this occurs, then a management plan would be developed by the Department of Fish and Game. Management will be oriented towards creating the most ideal habitat conditions for wildlife, primarily wintering big game. The removal of livestock from the two ranches will enable vegetative communities to more nearly approach maximum vigor and production, thus creating a more beneficial environment for all wildlife species through increased cover and forage.

II. DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

Location

A. Physical Environment

The proposed acquisition lies in a foothill area east of the Continental Divide overlooked by the Lewis Range of the Rocky Mountains. Topography varies from flat sub-irrigated meadows and marshes to rolling hills to high timbered and rocky outcrops on the west boundary of the property. Several small ephemeral streams and tributaries dissect the topography from west to east. Elevations vary from 4300 to 6700 feet above sea level.

The tract lies in northwestern Teton County, 15 miles west of Bynum and 28 miles northwest of Choteau on U. S. Highway 89. Great Falls is roughly 85 miles southeast.

1. Land Ownership and Use

Ownership dates back into the early 1900's after the unreserved public lands were opened to settlement. The cement doorstep of a burned down homestead on the property has "1917" inscribed upon it. The railroad into Choteau was finished in 1914 and with it came numerous hardy souls willing to take a chance with farming and ranching in Montana.

A variety of land uses have occurred in the past; the primary use of the area was (and is) livestock ranching. Farming of small tracts has occurred in the immediate vicinity but activity was limited and of minor importance. Parts of the proposed acquisition are on the old Blackleaf Game and Bird Preserve, which was initiated in 1923 and abandoned in 1954. The area borders the Lewis and Clark National Forest on the east as well as some lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

The Ostle and Haynes ranches lie in townships 25 north, 8 west and 26 north, 8 west. The following is a description of the properties:

Ostle Ranch:

T25N, R8W

Sec. 3 : Lots 3 and 4

Sec. 4 : Lots 1 and 2

T26N, R8W

Sec. 20 : S $\frac{1}{2}$

Sec. 21 : A11

Sec. 22 : W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$

Sec. 26 : W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$

Sec. 27 : A11

Sec. 28 : A11

Sec. 29 : Lots 1,2,3 and 4

W $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$

Sec. 30 : E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$

Sec. 31 : NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$

Sec. 32 : N $\frac{1}{2}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$

Sec. 33 : A11

Sec. 34 : NE $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$

Total = 5,941.34 acres.

Haynes Ranch:

T26N, R8W

- Sec. 14 : S $\frac{1}{2}$ S $\frac{1}{2}$
Sec. 15 : S $\frac{1}{2}$
Sec. 16 : Lots 3, 6 and 7
Sec. 17 : Lots 3 and 4
 W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$
Sec. 20 : Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
 SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$
Sec. 22 : E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$
Sec. 23 : N $\frac{1}{2}$

Total = 1,631.97 acres.

2. Geology

The generalized geology of the area is mostly Paleozoic and Mesozoic sedimentary rocks. There are three basic types of overlying material in this area:

- (1.) Terrace deposits which are primarily gravel, sand and silt of terrace remnants.
- (2.) Alluvium deposits comprised of silt, sand and gravels.
- (3.) Glacial drift which is morainal and outwash plain deposits of mountain glaciers, alluvium, boulders, pebbles and sand.

The two major parent material sources, which are exposed in rocky outcrops or eroded buttes, are:

- (1.) The Two Medicine formation reveals greenish, gray clay with modular limestone and cross-bedded sandstone. (Mostly at lower elevations.)
- (2.) The Kootenai formation is made up of mainly sandstones, shales and mudstones, (Mostly higher elevations.)

3. Soils

Soils in the area are generally of three major types: Gravel silt loams, silty clay loams and glacial till.

4. Climate

Mean annual precipitation for areas lying along the east edge of the Continental Divide varies from 14-20" annually. Extreme variability of precipitation from year to year may be a major limiting factor in forage production. The mean annual temperature is 42⁰F with extremes as low as -50⁰F and as high as +100⁰F. More than 65% of the annual precipitation occurs from May - September.

Chinook winds are common in the area and indirectly provide a good deal of available moisture to low areas by drifting large quantities of snow, which eventually freezes. The runoff from these snowbanks lasts into June during some years. Fall and winter are particularly windy periods, southwest winds over 70 miles per hour are not uncommon.

There are roughly 50-70 frost free days annually, which makes a relatively short growing season. Killing frosts are common in June and August, but have occurred in every month of the year.

5. Water Resources

Several small ditches carry water to flood irrigated hay meadows from tributaries of Blackleaf and Muddy Creeks. Antelope Lake (or Ostle Reservoir) is a 47 acre impoundment used for irrigation by Ostles and a neighbor. Water supplies for irrigation depend largely on spring runoff periods and flows are sharply reduced after major portions of snowpack have melted in adjacent mountains and foothills.

Several year-round springs supply a good source of water for livestock and wildlife. Locations of the better flowing springs are mostly in the foothills rather than on lower elevation valleys and gravel terraces.

6. Vegetation

Four major plant communities exist in the Blackleaf Area:

- a. Douglas fir, spruce and lodgepole communities make up much of the higher elevation terrain.
- b. Limber pine, rough fescue and bluebunch wheatgrass associations are found on morainal hills and benches (foothills).
- c. Western wheat, bluebunch wheat, rough fescue and Idaho fescue communities are found on a variety of sites ranging from open foothills to flat terraces at lower elevations.
- d. Open moist meadows and marshes are found at lower elevations. The vegetation includes willow, aspen, cottonwood, bluegrasses, red top, timothy, bromes, sedges and rushes. The meadows occupy the perimeter of the marshes.

7. Fish and wildlife

a. Fish

Most of the smaller drainages in the area are ephemeral and do not contain game fish populations to the extent that they would attract fishermen. Larger creeks such as the North and South Forks of Dupuyer Creek, Scoffin Creek and Sheep Creek, which lie north of the proposed acquisition, contain cutthroat trout, brook trout and rainbow trout. Marsh areas and beaver dams on the Ostle property are known to contain a few brook trout and cutthroat trout.

Conductivity in these streams is relatively low (100-170 ppm), which results in small insect populations. Recent floods, 1964 and 1975, have caused much erosion and removal of streambank habitat along the foothill zone.

b. Wildlife

The acquisition of the Blackleaf Wildlife Area enables the Department of Fish and Game to manage an existing elk and mule deer wintering area and

to help neighboring landowners keep wintering herds from damaging haystacks. The elimination of livestock from these two units will undoubtedly result in more available forage and cover for these species.

Big game species found on or adjacent to the property include:

- Elk
- Mule Deer
- White-tailed Deer
- Black Bear
- Grizzly Bear
- Mountain Lion
- Mountain Goat
- Bighorn Sheep

Game birds include:

- Blue Grouse
- Ruffed Grouse
- Spruce Grouse
- Sharp-tailed Grouse

Furbearers include:

- *Bobcat
- *Lynx
- Coyote
- Badger
- *Mink
- *Muskrat
- *Beaver

Smaller varieties of mammals and birds abound in the marsh and productive meadow areas as well as in the heavy cover of the limber pine and bunchgrass communities.

Elk and mule deer migrate to the exposed grassy foothills and limber pine areas in late fall and leave in late spring for higher elevation summer ranges. A few mule deer remain as a resident population and an occasional elk is seen during the summer months. The elk herd, numbering about 200 head, ranges from the Ostle property north to the Forks of Dupuyer Creek (about a 6 mile stretch of mountain front) depending upon weather conditions and human disturbances. The wintering mule deer (approximately 350)

*Classified as furbearers in Montana. Coyote and badger are nongame wildlife under Fish and Game law.

remain on the Ostle-Haynes units most of the winter and spring and appear to be much more site specific than the elk.

The whitetail population on the property is found mostly in the marsh - meadow communities. A conservative estimate would be 50-100 animals, although several large groups of wintering whitetail have been observed further north on Dupuyer Creek.

The bear population in this area is apparently highly mobile. According to researchers for the Border Grizzly Project, at least six grizzlies used the swamp on Ostle's property during 1978. These were not all resident bears, however. One bear was removed in May, 1978 after killing several of Ostle's small band of sheep.

Black bears frequently use the same areas as the grizzlies. The timbered areas provide convenient corridors to lower elevation swamps and aspen margins.

Sightings and sign of the gray wolf have occurred in the immediate area over the past five years according to the 1978 report of the Wolf Ecology Project. A population estimate for wolves in the Sun River - Birch Creek mountain front area may be from 0-6 animals.

Bighorn sheep are frequently seen in higher elevation ranges adjacent to the unit on National Forest lands. A small population of sheep (40-60) exist on the northwest edge of the tentative project boundary (five miles north of Ostle-Haynes units) as the result of a transplant from the Sun River herd in March, 1976. Rams, ewes and lambs from this transplant have been observed in BLM lands bordering the Ostle ranch.

A population of goats exists on National Forest lands adjacent to the proposed acquisition. Currently a graduate study is underway to determine population density, dispersion, production and food habits. Thirty-five

animals have been seen on an old salt lick in the Blackleaf Canyon, two miles northwest of the project.

B. Human Environment

1. Teton County

Teton County has an area of 2,294 square miles and 1,468,160 acres. Cropland equals 52% of that total, range land 45% and forest, water and urban areas 3%. Agriculture is the number one industry, primarily due to production of livestock hay and grain.

a. Subdivision Activities

Subdivision activities in Teton County have increased over the past decade. The largest of these is a 320 acre tract along the Teton River in the foothills. This area has a half dozen dwellings, only one of which is a year-round residence. This parcel lies four miles south along the mountain front from the Ostle-Haynes unit.

Other subdivisions are scattered and none of the size of the above mentioned Arrowleaf Development. Most are restricted to suburban tracts near Choteau.

b. Utility and Transportation

Two major railroads serve Teton County and three major Federal highways crisscross the area serving the Choteau-Bynum communities (U. S. 89, 221 and 287). Choteau has a small airport and there is a bus line running between Great Falls and Glacier Park. A graveled County road running westerly out of Bynum leads through the Ostle-Haynes units to the Teton River County road. Parts of the road are not maintained on an annual basis, however.

c. Population

The County population (6,116 in 1970, down 16% from 1960) is largely rural and very strongly oriented toward agriculture. Choteau is the County

Seat with a population of 1,586. Bynum is an unincorporated town lying 15 miles east of the proposed acquisition.

2. Land Use

There are four major divisions of land use in the area:

- (1.) Irrigated hay land and pasture land used for production of grain and hay using sub-surface, flood or sprinkler irrigation.
- (2.) Non-irrigated upland indicates those areas of cultivated agricultural land not using irrigation.
- (3.) Range land areas are those native and introduced grassland areas of less than 15% tree cover. This includes areas supporting both livestock and wildlife.
- (4.) Forest cover areas of coniferous and deciduous trees displaying a canopy cover of 15% or more. This category includes forested areas unsuitable for commercial harvest.

The majority of the lands along the mountain front are either forest cover areas or range land. This type of vegetation and topography dictates one major resource use, livestock ranching.

3. Economics

The most recent official income figures for Teton County put the average income at \$8,213 for a family of four. There are 975 farms and ranches in the County at an average size of 1,430 acres. Average gross farm income is approximately \$25,000.

Employment is quite stable in the County. The agriculture industry provides jobs for 40% of the work force, 20% finance, 18% trade, 5% transportation and utilities, 5% construction, 4% government, 3% manufacturing and 5% miscellaneous.

4. Recreational Opportunities

"Fish and game animals are valuable resources in Teton County. Because of the proximity to the mountains, the emphasis on recreational wildlife should be an asset of increasing importance to the people of the County . . ."
(Teton Committee for Rural Development)

Teton County and the Blackleaf Area have some excellent recreational opportunities. The proximity and easy access to the mountain front provide hunting, fishing, hiking and backpacking, photography, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing and down-hill skiing. Several picnic and camping areas have been developed within the Lewis and Clark National Forest. Teton Pass Ski Area, 35 miles west of Choteau, provides winter time activity for numerous individuals locally.

Several reservoirs and lakes are well stocked with northern pike, walleye, lake trout and several other species. Ice fishing is a popular pastime in the winter. Boating and related activities tend to make the more accessible lakes crowded during the summer months.

Several outfitters operate in the Sun River-Teton River area and provide a "wilderness experience" for hundreds of people each summer and fall.

5. Historical and Archaeological

Several history texts refer to the "Old North Trail" running along the eastern slope of the Continental Divide as a migration and trade route for early day native Americans. This trail has been marked in areas along the Teton River and northward to Birch Creek. Travois ruts are visible yet on the Ostle and Haynes units and are probably one of the most outstanding archaeological remains in the area. Graves dot the trail in numerous areas and the U. S. Forest Service maps indicate an Indian cemetery just south of Antelope Butte on the Ostle ranch. The Teton River, three miles south, has

several "jump sites" or pishkuns where artifacts are easily found without digging. Local collectors often display arrowheads, hammers, awls, knives and scrapers that have been found along the foothill area. Tepee rings are evident in several locations along streams.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED ACTION

A. Physical Environment

No real impact on the physical environment is foreseen. Elimination of livestock grazing should improve the aesthetics of the area through increased vegetative cover. Littering and fire hazards may increase due to increased public use of the property.

1. Geology

No environmental impact will result from the proposed action. Development will be limited to basic facilities.

2. Soils

Increased public use of roads and trails may cause minor areas of erosion or soil compaction, however, proper design of trails and parking facilities should minimize this problem. Elimination of livestock use in the area will result in recovery of overgrazed areas and allow healing of eroded ditches and road cuts near the ranch buildings.

3. Surface and Ground Water

No effect is expected from the proposed action. Eroded areas should heal properly along water courses due to lack of trampling and foraging by livestock.

4. Vegetation

Range conditions should improve due to removal of livestock. Overgrazing has occurred on parts of both ranches and vegetation, including browse plants, should recover rapidly under management.

5. Fish

Streambanks may heal at a rapid rate and cause less erosion and hence less siltation. The overall affect on the fish population will probably be minimal.

6. Wildlife*

Benefits to wildlife species, especially wintering big game, should include increased available forage and cover. It is apparent that forage and cover competition among wildlife species and livestock has occurred in the past. Development of a management plan should ensure healthy and productive wildlife populations. Nongame wildlife would be benefited by management of this area in a more natural state.

B. Human Environment

1. Teton County

Purchase of the Ostle-Haynes units will affect a change in land use patterns from livestock grazing to a managed game range. The acquisition will not substantially change land use patterns county-wide, however. Public ownership will guarantee access to the National Forest lands that might be denied through other ownership. Long-range benefits will be derived through range and wildlife research and applied management of huntable game populations.

a. Subdivision Activities

The purchase of the Blackleaf Wildlife Area would eliminate the possibilities of subdivision on public owned lands.

b. Transportation System

Some one-lane roads and parking facilities may need to be built, but these will be limited and overall effects will be confined to actual maintenance and/or construction. Reseeding may be necessary if vegetative cover is disturbed.

*The impact of the proposed action on threatened grizzly bear and endangered Rocky Mountain wolf is discussed in a separate appended report.

2. Population and Income

A resident game range manager will not be necessary. Present Department personnel will be able to handle the management of the area.

3. Area Economics

The lands owned by Ostle and Haynes were taxed \$2,570.00 in 1978, excluding personal property, taxes on cattle and machinery probably amount to \$400.00 for both units. Property administered by the Department of Fish and Game are subject to payments "in lieu of taxes" and these monies would balance the revenue lost in real estate taxes. Personal property taxes would account for lost revenue to the County. However, dollars generated by management and maintenance activities on the area, as well as increased access by sportsmen should offset this loss.

4. Recreational Opportunities

Recreational opportunities will be enhanced if the Department purchases the Ostle-Haynes ranches. Sportsmen will have access not only to the proposed acquisition but also the National Forest lands to the west. Other forms of recreation such as hiking, picnicing, photography, cross-country skiing and camping will increase for the following reasons:

- a. Less visual impact due to pressure of livestock.
- b. A more aesthetically pleasing landscape due to uniform vegetative cover and lack of overgrazing in fence corners, etc.
- c. The opportunity for the public to observe game animals in a non-competitive situation.
- d. Access to desirable recreational sites.

5. Historical and Archaeological

No significant impact is foreseen although marking of these sites may well produce an increase in sightseers with increased chances of littering and damage to graves and markers.

IV. MITIGATING MEASURES IN PROPOSED ACTION

A. The Department of Fish and Game will pay Teton County monies in lieu of taxes which will help mitigate loss of taxes incurred by the County.

B. Wildlife populations will be managed within the limits of the available habitat and in the best interest of the general public.

C. Any facilities or structures to be built will be done with a minimum of disturbances and will be timed so that such impacts will have the least effect.

D. Monies spent within the County by sportsmen and the outdoor public in general should increase due to increased recreation activities on the area.

E. Potential adverse impacts such as littering, off-road vehicle use, game harrassment and soil disturbance will be dealt with by development of a public awareness and enforcement program.

V. ADVERSE EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

A. Some damage to soil and vegetaion is likely to occur due to increased public use.

B. There will be a loss of personal property tax revenue to the County.

C. Increased vegetative cover may create a fire hazard that previously did not exist.

VI. SHORT-TERM USES VERSUS LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

The present use of the proposed acquisition is cattle ranching and limited public access to private and National Forest lands. Purchase of the area by the Department of Fish and Game would insure public access to these areas. Wildlife and vegetation would assume a more natural environmental balance and management of big game species would be kept within limits of the existing habitat. Probably the primary benefit to future generations is

the overall preservation of a unique natural wildlife area and the knowledge that the area will not be subdivided.

Some tax monies will be lost to Teton County, but indirect revenue from increased public use of the area should help offset these losses.

VII. IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

The purchase of these lands commits the area to public ownership and outdoor recreation use. The commitment of State and Federal funds to acquire the property is irreversible and irretrievable, and the State will have the responsibility of operation and maintenance.

VIII. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

A. No Action

If the Department does not purchase the property there are several options for the present landowners. Sale for subdivision, sale to another individual engaged in agriculture, sale to a corporation of individuals interested in a private hunting area may occur or remain as is.

Subdivision, ranching and private hunting clubs tend to restrict the stability of the wildlife resource if present trends are applicable. Subdivision will result in a loss of critical winter habitat for several wildlife species as well as reduced access to other favorable hunting areas. If ownership remains as it is now, access may still be reduced or terminated at the whim of the landowners.

B. Acquire Less Land

Smaller portions of these tracts would decrease the amount of access available to the public as well as less available livestock-free wildlife habitat. Ownership of a "block" is important and desirable in terms of fence maintenance and design. The proposed acquisition will result in a

minimum of trespass problems from neighboring livestock and less land purchased will accent these problems.

C. Acquire More Land

The purchase of additional land would increase the amount of recreation area available to the public and provide additional habitat for wildlife. Purchase of areas along the east front that are critical wintering areas would be desirable from a public benefit standpoint as well as benefiting the habitat structure and composition of ecologically important areas.

State Montana

Project _____

Blackleaf Land Acquisition Project

Endangered and Threatened Species Statement

- 1.a. The grizzly bear is a threatened species occurring in the proposed project area.
- b. Rocky Mountain wolf is an endangered species which may occur adjacent to the acquisition area.

There are no designated critical habitats in the area.

2. See attached map
3. The objective is to acquire land for wildlife habitat in the project area.
4. This action will change landownership and its management from private to State. The action itself will not affect these species. Management of the area under Federal Aid project W-124-D may impact the species and such impacts will be discussed in the AFA of the development project.

ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES REPORT

LOCATION AND PHYSIOGRAPHY OF PROPOSED ACQUISITION

The Department of Fish and Game proposes to acquire 7,573 acres of foothill lands involving two ranch units, 15 miles west of Bynum, Montana. The project lies in a foothill area east of the Continental Divide, overlooked by the Rocky Mountains. The tract lies in northwestern Teton County roughly 85 miles northwest of Great Falls. Topography varies from flat, sub-irrigated meadows and marshes to rolling hills to high timbered and rocky outcrops. Several small ephemeral streams and their tributaries dissect the area from west to east. Elevations vary from 4,300 to 6,700 feet above sea level.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTION

The proposed purchase would result in public ownership and if this occurs, then a management plan would be developed. Management will be oriented towards creating the most ideal habitat conditions for wildlife, primarily wintering big game. The removal of livestock from the area will enable vegetative communities to more nearly approach maximum vigor and production, thus creating a more favorable environment for all wildlife species through increased cover and forage.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

Researchers for the Border Grizzly Project claim that at least six bears used the proposed acquisition in 1978 (see map). One female grizzly

is known to live year round in the aspen-marsh habitat north of Antelope Butte. Four bears with radio transmitters have used the area frequently.

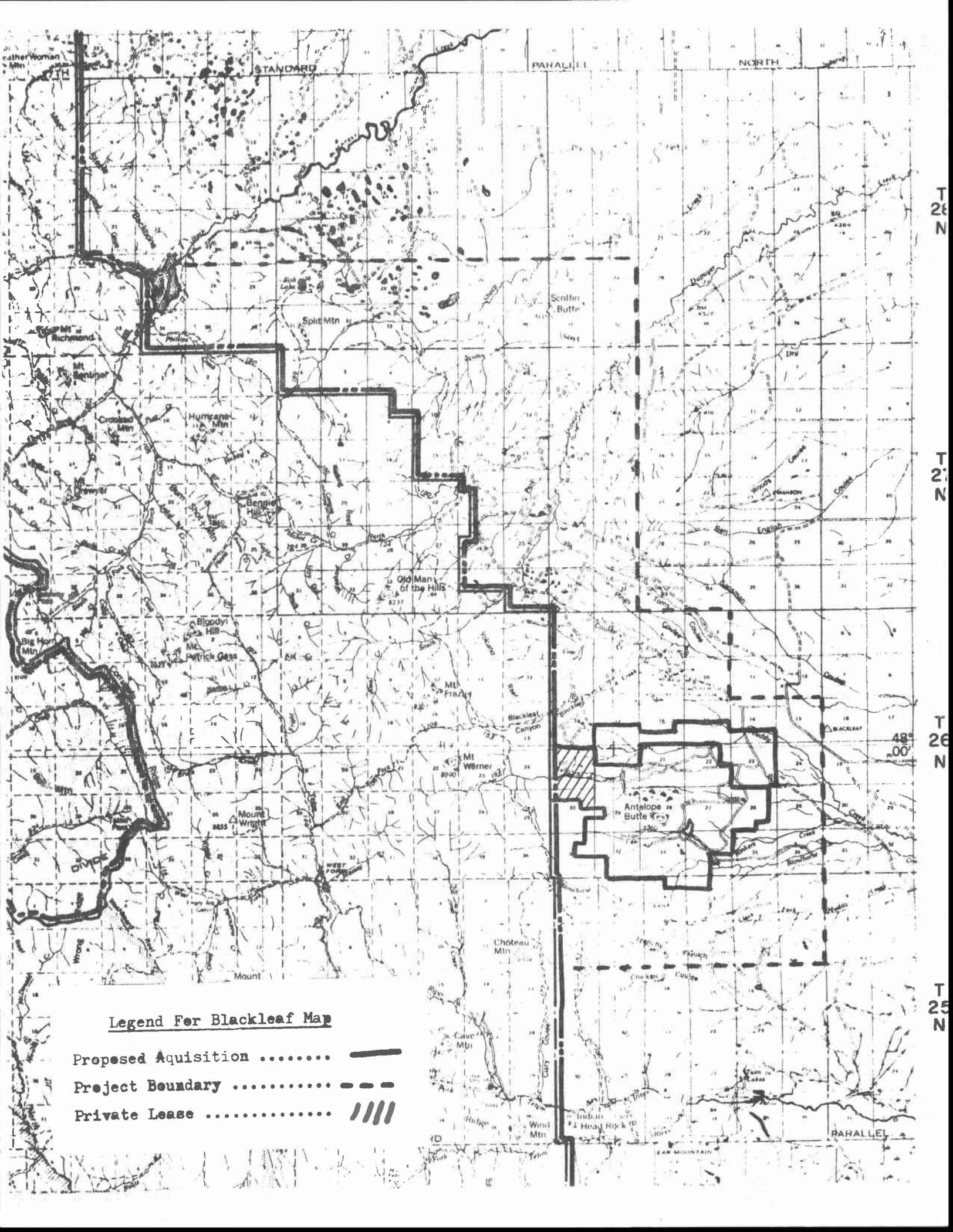
Areas of bear concentration are not suitable or desirable for development, so little or no impact on the habitat of the grizzly is anticipated.

In a recent report by the Wolf Ecology Project, several track or individual sightings of wolves were listed on the East Front area during the past five years. No locations have been plotted on the proposed acquisition (see map).

IMPACTS OF ACTIVITY

Purchase of the land known as the Blackleaf Wildlife Area will have little impact on the grizzly and wolf. Land that changes from private to public ownership can expect increased access and use by the outdoor public. However, management plans call for one or two parking facilities along the county road which runs the length of the property from north to south. No public access other than by walking or riding horseback will be allowed beyond designated parking areas. Currently, vehicular access (including snowmobile use) is allowed throughout most of the area with no apparent conflicts. Primary activities in the area will include hunting, hiking, picnicing, cross-country skiing, photography and some fishing.

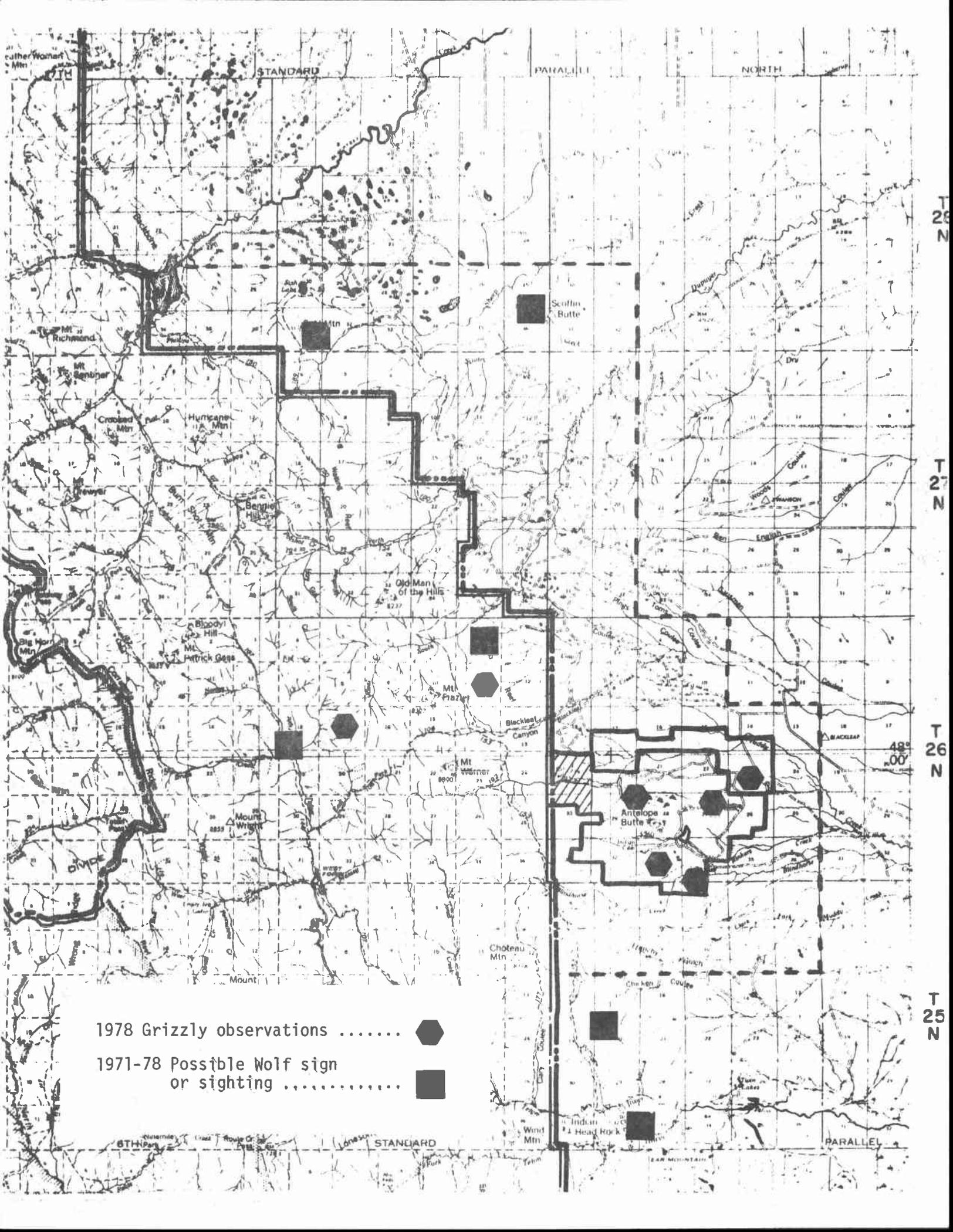
Actual disturbance to the species listed above by possible increased public use of the area will probably be minimal due to the restrictions and regulations during the hunting season and other critical periods (winter or spring).



Legend For Blackleaf Map

- Proposed Aquisition ———
- Project Boundary - - - -
- Private Lease // // //

T 26 N
T 25 N
T 26 N
T 25 N



T 28 N

T 27 N

T 26 N

T 25 N

PARALLEL

NORTH

STANDARD

48° 00'

STANDARD

PARALLEL

6TH PARALLEL

LEARN MOUNTAIN

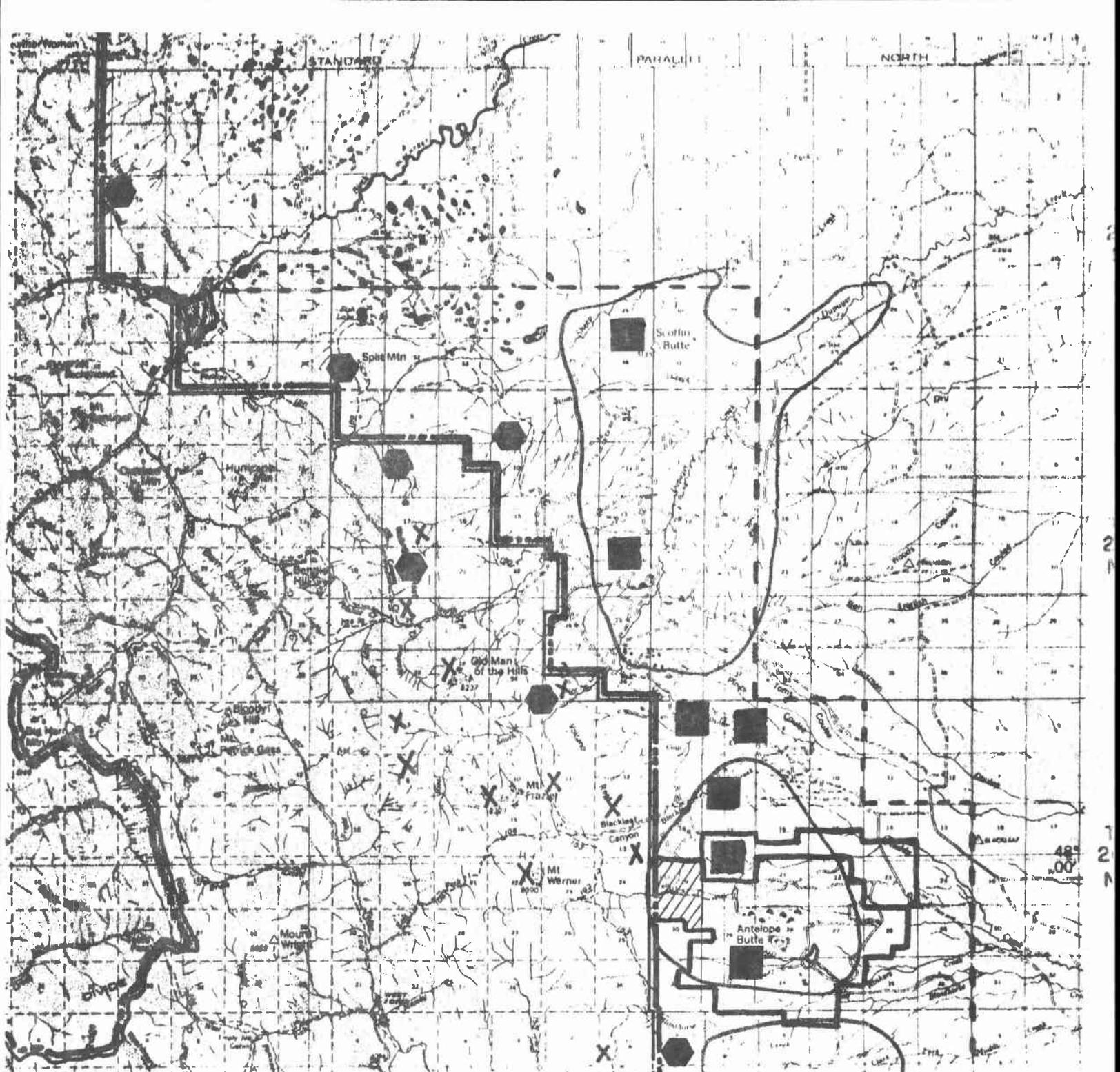
Wind Mtn

Indian Head Rock

Choteau Mtn

Choteau Coulee

Choteau



Legend For Blackleaf Map

- Project boundary - - - - -
- Aquisition boundary —————
- Private lease // // //
- Goat sightings X
- Sheep sightings ⬡
- Elk wintering areas ◼
- Mule deer wintering areas ○

2 N
1 2 N
T 2 N

48° 00'

PARALLEL