

Sensitive and Endangered Birds

Bald Eagle. The bald eagle is listed as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act. Within the Greater Yellowstone Area bald eagle populations are divided into three ecologically distinct, but probably not genetically distinct, units:

- The **Snake Unit** comprises bald eagles nesting along the Snake River and its tributaries, from just above the mouth of Lewis River in Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming to just below the mouth of the Henry's Fork River in Idaho.
- The **Yellowstone Unit** encompasses high elevation nests on the Yellowstone Plateau. Most of these nests are within Yellowstone National Park.
- The **Continental Unit** includes eagles that nest in upper reaches of the Madison and Beaverhead drainages in Montana and in upper reaches of the Henry's Fork drainage in Idaho.

Chart 50 shows data for bald eagle. In addition, there are seven occupied nests on lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. Nesting habitat on private lands is also extremely important to the welfare of the bald eagle population. Nine occupied bald eagle nests are located on private lands.

The overall management objective for the bald eagle population is to achieve and maintain 62 breeding pairs, fledging an average of 53 young per year by 1990.

Additional information on bald eagles is contained in *A Bald Eagle Management Plan for the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem*. This document, prepared by the Greater Yellowstone Bald Eagle Working Team, was published in 1983 by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.



Large dead trees that provide a wide field of vision make ideal perch trees for bald eagle, Targhee National Forest.



Large old-growth trees are favored by bald eagle for nest sites, Grand Teton National Park.

The Greater Yellowstone Area

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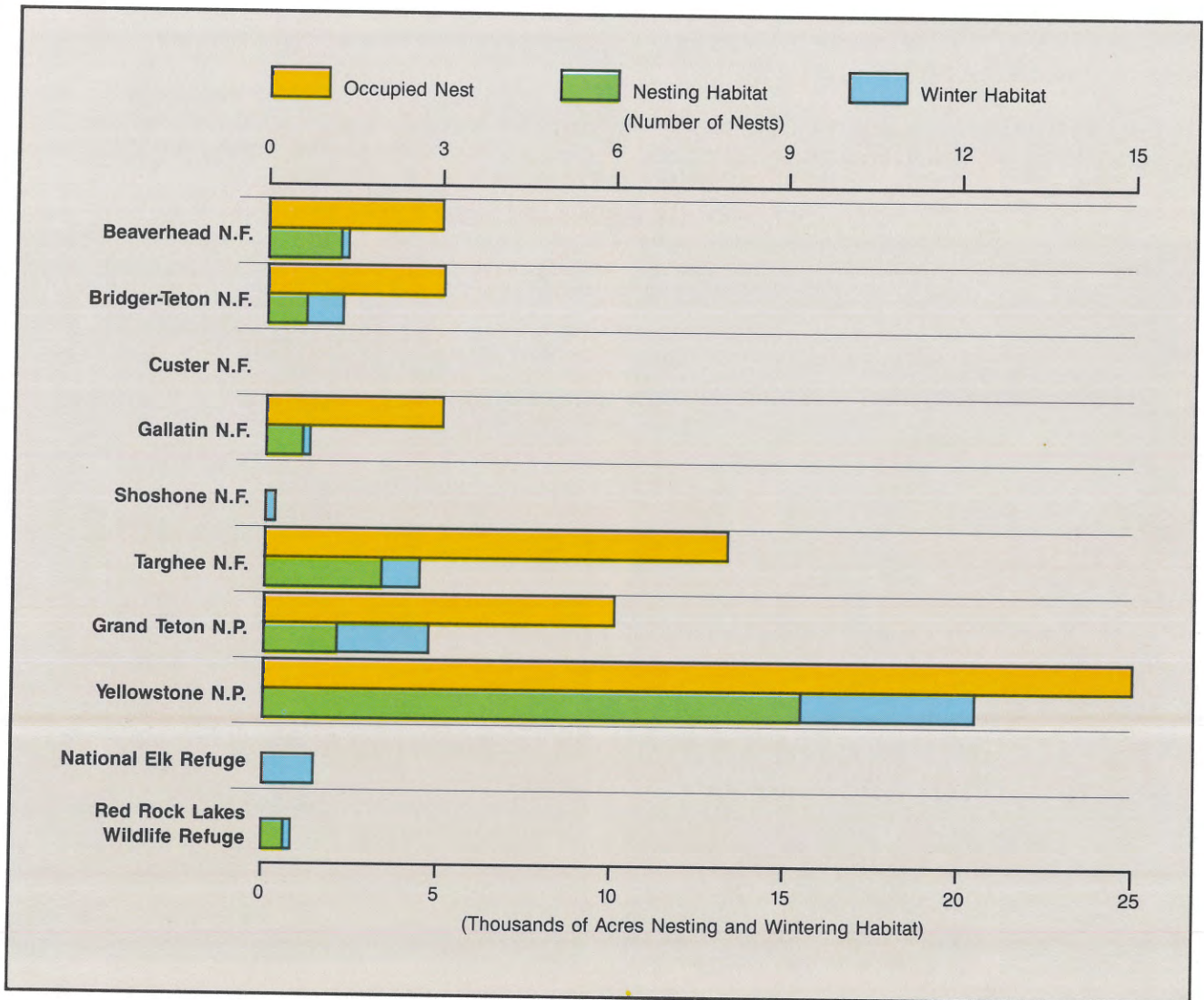


Chart 50. Bald eagle habitat and occupied nests.

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Peregrine Falcon. The peregrine falcon is listed as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act. Peregrines were essentially extirpated from the northern Rocky Mountain States (Idaho, Wyoming, and Montana) in the early 1960s. From 1975 to 1980, only one to two pairs were located in a given year in all three states, and most nesting attempts were unsuccessful. No breeding pairs were located during 1981, 1982, and 1983.

The Peregrine Fund Inc. (a private organization) recently has begun efforts to reestablish peregrines in the Northern

Rocky Mountain States. Reintroduction efforts were started in Wyoming in 1980, followed by Montana and Idaho in 1981 and 1982, respectively. Plans to establish a nesting population were developed from analysis of historical distribution, recent observations, and evaluation of potential habitat. Reintroduction efforts are being concentrated in the Greater Yellowstone Area.

This concentrated effort is intended to encourage interaction among potential pairs and to maximize the chances of establishing a viable breeding population in a



Young peregrine falcon ready for placement in hack box, Targhee National Forest.



Hack boxes are placed on high cliffs that provide a wide field of vision for young birds, Targhee National Forest.

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minimum of time. The tri-state peregrine falcon recovery zone is highly suited for a cooperative effort to reestablish a peregrine breeding population. The zone is one of the few areas where much habitat exists suitable for developing nesting populations. Historical records indicate that peregrines were often found in the area, and potentially suitable, but undocumented, nest sites are numerous.

From 1980 through 1985, 191 peregrine falcons were released by the Peregrine Fund in the tri-state area. Eighty-two percent, or 156 of these falcons, reached independence and can be considered as successfully introduced into the wild. As of 1985, three wild eyries have been located.

All produced young, and numerous single adults have been sighted. The recovery goal is for 30 nesting pairs to become established within the Greater Yellowstone Area.

Chart 51 summarizes the current status of the peregrine falcon.

Trumpeter Swan. Trumpeter swans are extinct throughout much of their historic range in the US; therefore, resident populations in the Greater Yellowstone Area are unique and very important. Red Rock Lakes Wildlife Refuge was established in 1935 to protect habitat of the trumpeter swan. In 1986, approximately 400 trumpeter swans resided year-round in the Greater Yellowstone Area.

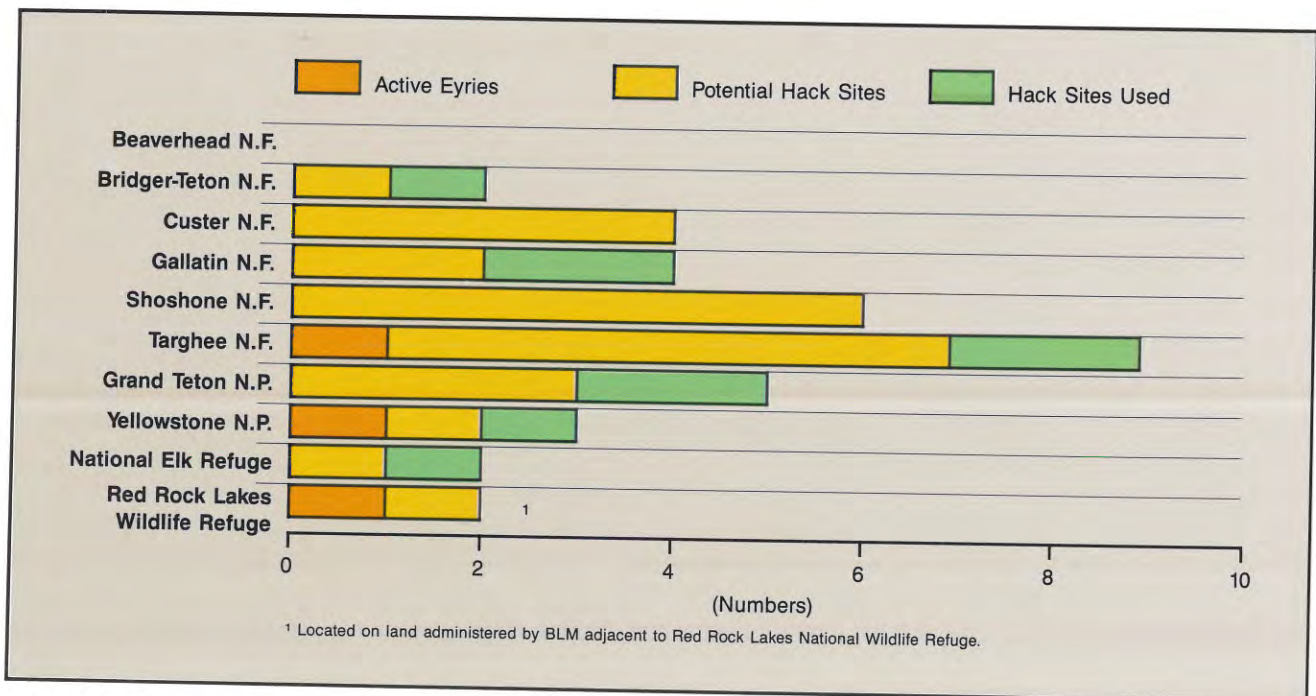


Chart 51. Peregrine falcon—active eyries, hack sites, and potential hack sites.

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During winter months, resident populations are joined by migrating swans from Canada. In 1986 approximately 1,200 migrants from Canada joined the 400 resident trumpeters, making a total winter population of 1,600.

Nesting and rearing habitat is located in the shallow eutrophic lakes and ponds or near the shore of larger lakes.

Winter habitat is slow moving, ice-free water. Winter habitat in the Greater Yellowstone Area is the lifeline for

the trumpeter populations in Canada and the lower 48 states.

Chart 52 and Map 46 show information on wintering, nesting, and rearing habitats. Acreages are not large, but the significance of the habitat in the Greater Yellowstone Area cannot be overemphasized.

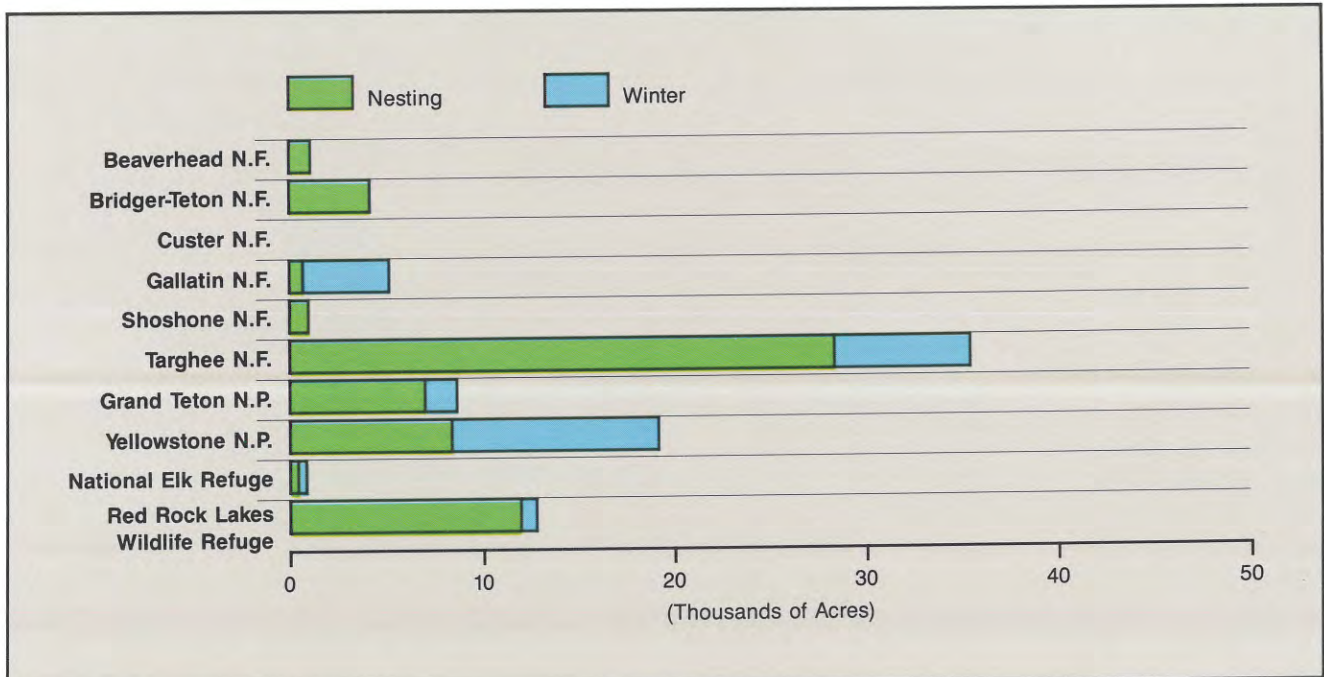


Chart 52. Trumpeter swan habitat.

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Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1935 to protect habitat of the trumpeter swan.

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Osprey. Osprey are considered a sensitive nesting raptor of great public interest. Osprey are found in the Greater Yellowstone Area during the spring and summer months, at which time they nest and raise young. They then leave the Greater Yellowstone Area and migrate south for the winter season. Nesting habitat generally consists of large, dead trees with broken tops, adjacent to rivers and lakes.

They will occasionally nest in live trees with broken tops. Their diet is primarily fish.

Chart 53 and Map 47 show the location of nesting habitat and occupied nests. In 1985 there were 129 occupied osprey nests, and populations appear to be stable or perhaps slightly increasing.

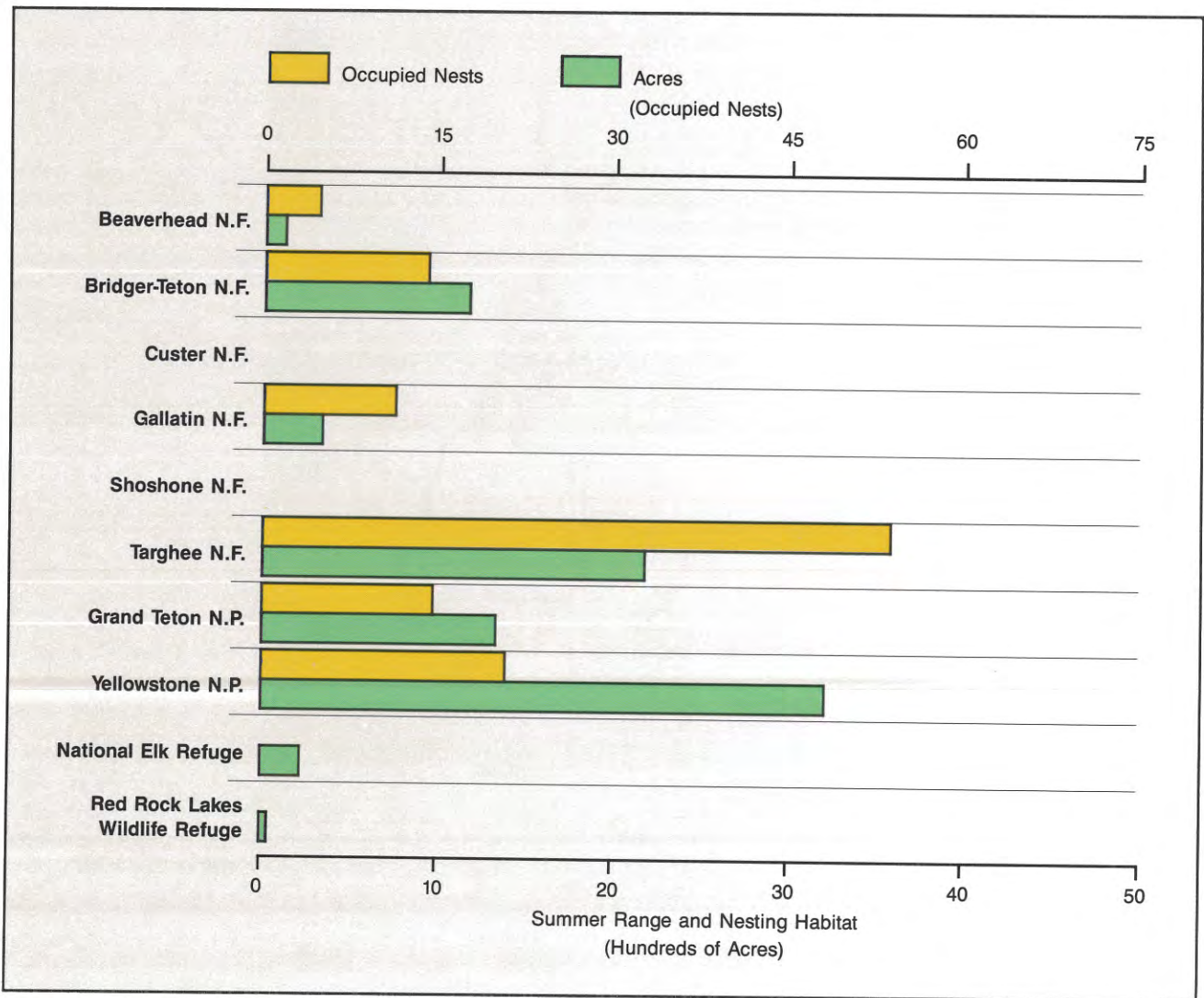
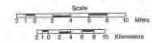


Chart 53. Osprey habitat and occupied nests.

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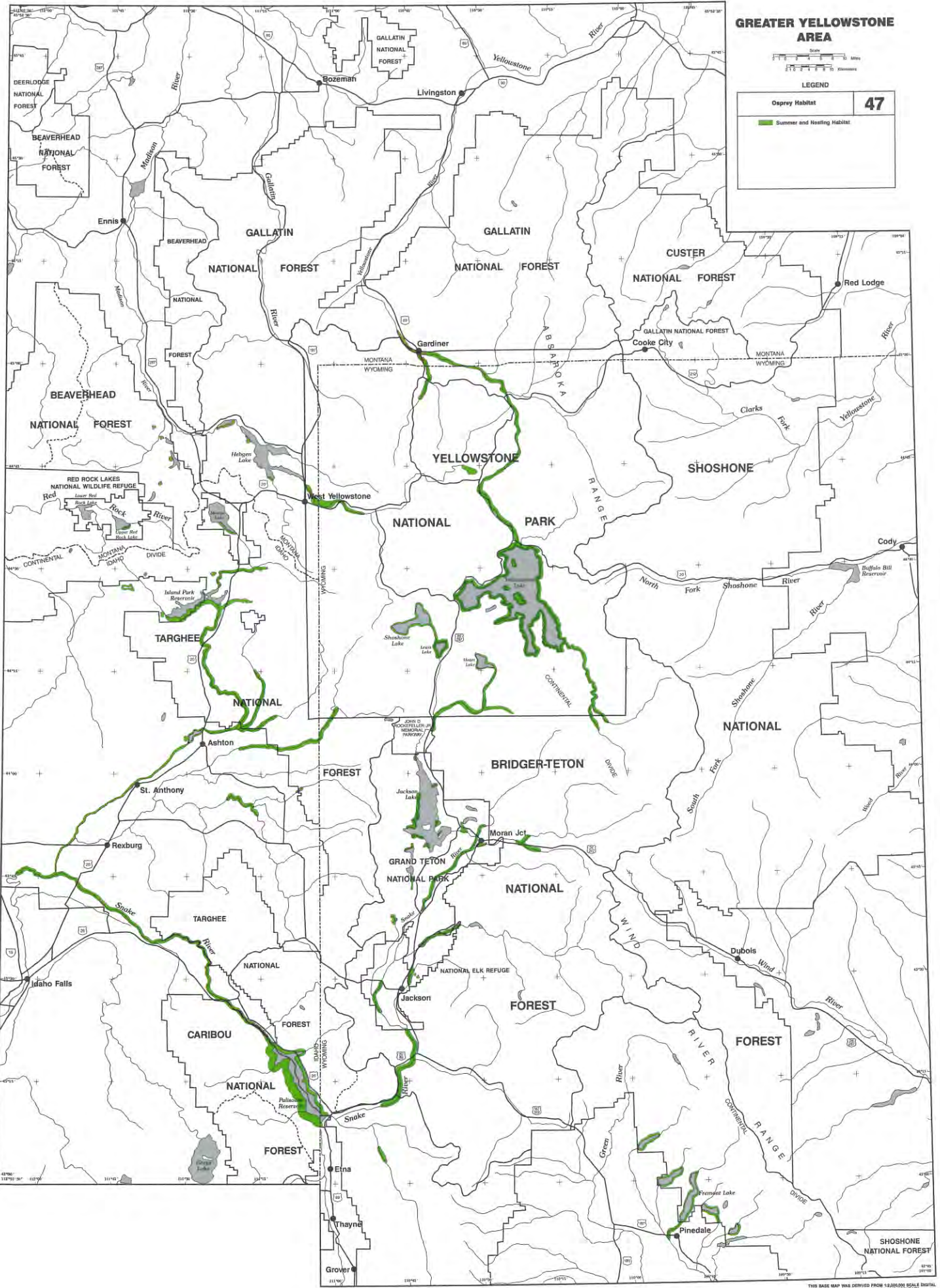
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LEGEND

Osprey Habitat	47
Summer and Nesting Habitat	



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Fisheries

Current Forest and Park Service policies emphasize management for native fish in streams where good populations can still be found. Increased effort has been expended on restoring native fishes to their historic waters. For instance, there is concern for maintaining genetically pure stocks of cutthroat trout where they still exist. Preserving the quality of fisheries is a high priority.

Fishery Resource Classification. The classification of fishery resource is based on a combination of habitat quality and public interest and concern for the fish species that inhabit the lake or stream.

Habitat Quality includes such factors as temperature, instream flow, substrate composition, availability of instream cover, food abundance, and quality of riparian habitat. Streams are rated high, intermediate, or low.

Fish species are then separated into three groups:

- **High concern**—endangered, threatened, and special concern species, plus wild native game fish species such as cutthroat trout.
- **Intermediate concern**—all other game fish.
- **Low concern**—exotic nongame species.

By combining habitat quality and the species of fish present, streams and lakes are placed in one of the following classes:

Class I. Outstanding fishery—High habitat quality and fish species with high public interest or concern.

Class II. Substantial fishery—Intermediate habitat quality and fish species with intermediate public interest or concern.

Class III. Moderate fishery—Intermediate to low habitat quality and fish species with intermediate public interest and concern.

Class IV. Limited fishery—Low habitat quality and fish species with low public interest and concern.

Undetermined. Streams with no data available for classification.

In the Greater Yellowstone Area, 16 percent of the streams and rivers are rated Class I, 23 percent Class II, 38 percent Class III, 19 percent Class IV, and 4 percent undetermined. All lakes are rated either Class I or II.

Chart 54 shows the miles of streams in each class. Map 48 shows locations.

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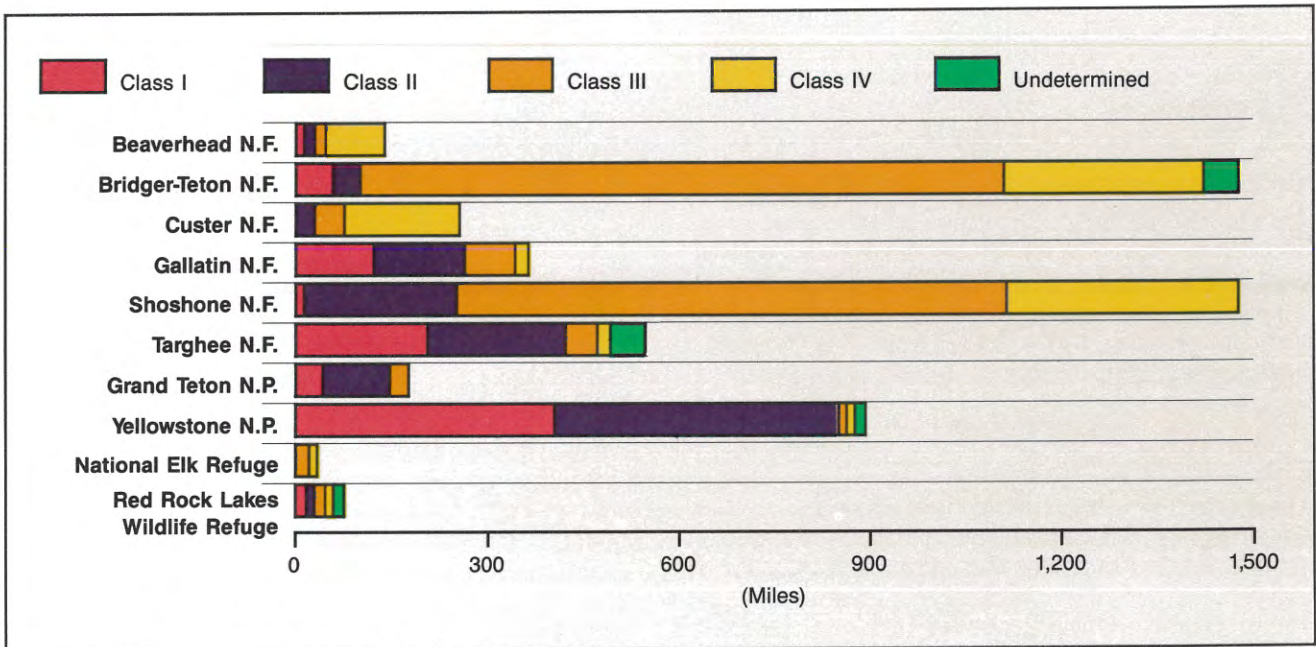


Chart 54. Fishery resource classification.

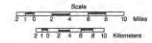


The Snake River, Grand Teton National Park, is a Class I stream for trout.

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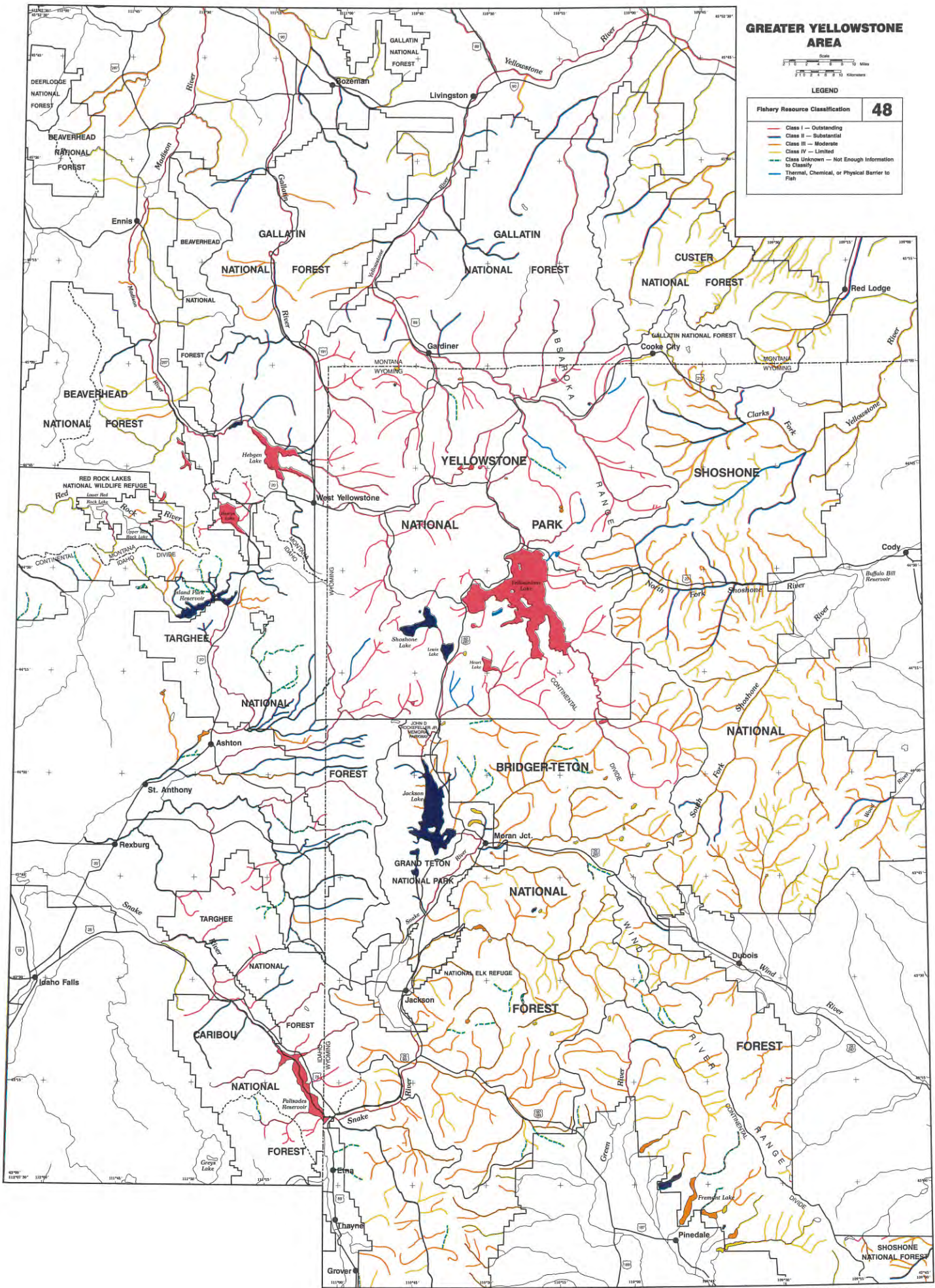
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Fishery Resource Classification	48
Class I - Outstanding	(Red line)
Class II - Substantial	(Orange line)
Class III - Moderate	(Yellow line)
Class IV - Limited	(Light green line)
Class Unknown - Not Enough Information to Classify	(Blue line)
Thermal, Chemical, or Physical Barrier to Fish	(Blue dashed line)



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Planned Management

Wildlife and fish habitat improvement projects are designed to increase the amount of usable habitat and to improve the quality of existing habitat. Some of the projects planned are these:

- Prescribed burning in aspen and sagebrush areas to create young palatable forage plants
- Planting forage or cover species of plants
- Developing or creating water sources to improve distribution of wildlife
- Limiting or controlling human access on roads to increase security
- Providing nesting structures for waterfowl and raptors to improve reproduction rate
- Removing dead trees or other obstructions from streams to improve fish passage
- Planting willows on stream banks to create shade and water temperature more favorable for fish
- Placing log or rock structures in streams to create pools for fish



A variety of wildlife and fish habitat improvement projects are undertaken in National Forests such as burning or cutting aspen, to encourage sprouting of young shoots that are accessible and palatable for big game animals; tree pruning to create nest sites for bald eagles; and removing dead lodgepole from streams to improve fish passage, Targhee National Forest.

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Charts 55 through 57 show some wildlife and fish habitat improvement projects that are planned.

Direct habitat improvement (vegetative manipulation) is generally not undertaken in National Forest wilderness areas or within Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. However, in these areas people management actions, which positively affect wildlife habitat, occur.

Examples of people management are these:

- Human use restrictions in areas to avoid grizzly bears
- Placement of bear-proof storage facilities to reduce grizzly/human problems
- Careful planning of roads and trails to stay away from important habitat areas

Management of wildlife and fish in Parks and Forests is directly connected:

- Some elk and other big game animals that spend the summer in National Parks migrate to or through National Forests where they are hunted.
- As populations of some species of wildlife in National Parks increase under natural conditions, they may expand their range to National Forests, where they can potentially conflict with other established resource uses.
- Some species of wildlife that have been introduced on National Forests may expand their range to National Parks where permanent populations are undesirable.
- Some species of wildlife, including black bear and coyote, are protected in National Parks, but under certain conditions are hunted as predators on National Forests.

Big Game Populations, Harvest, and Hunting Opportunities

Management plans for seven of the eight big game species in the Greater Yellowstone Area show either stable or increasing populations. Only bison populations show a



Management actions also benefit wildlife. This demonstration of proper camping techniques in grizzly bear habitat is designed to reduce human/grizzly confrontations.

slight decrease, due to the management objective of reducing the number of bison wintering on the National Elk Refuge.

Harvest of big game animals is planned to be stable or to increase slightly for seven of the eight species. Mule deer harvest is planned to increase substantially.

The number of hunter days expended for each species generally follows the same trend as the population and harvest figures. With few exceptions, hunting is allowed throughout National Forests and the Red Rock Lakes Wildlife Refuge. There is no hunting of animals in Yellowstone National Park. Grand Teton National Park and the National Elk Refuge have special provisions for hunting of elk only. Hunting on National Forests is governed by laws and regulations established by state fish and game agencies.

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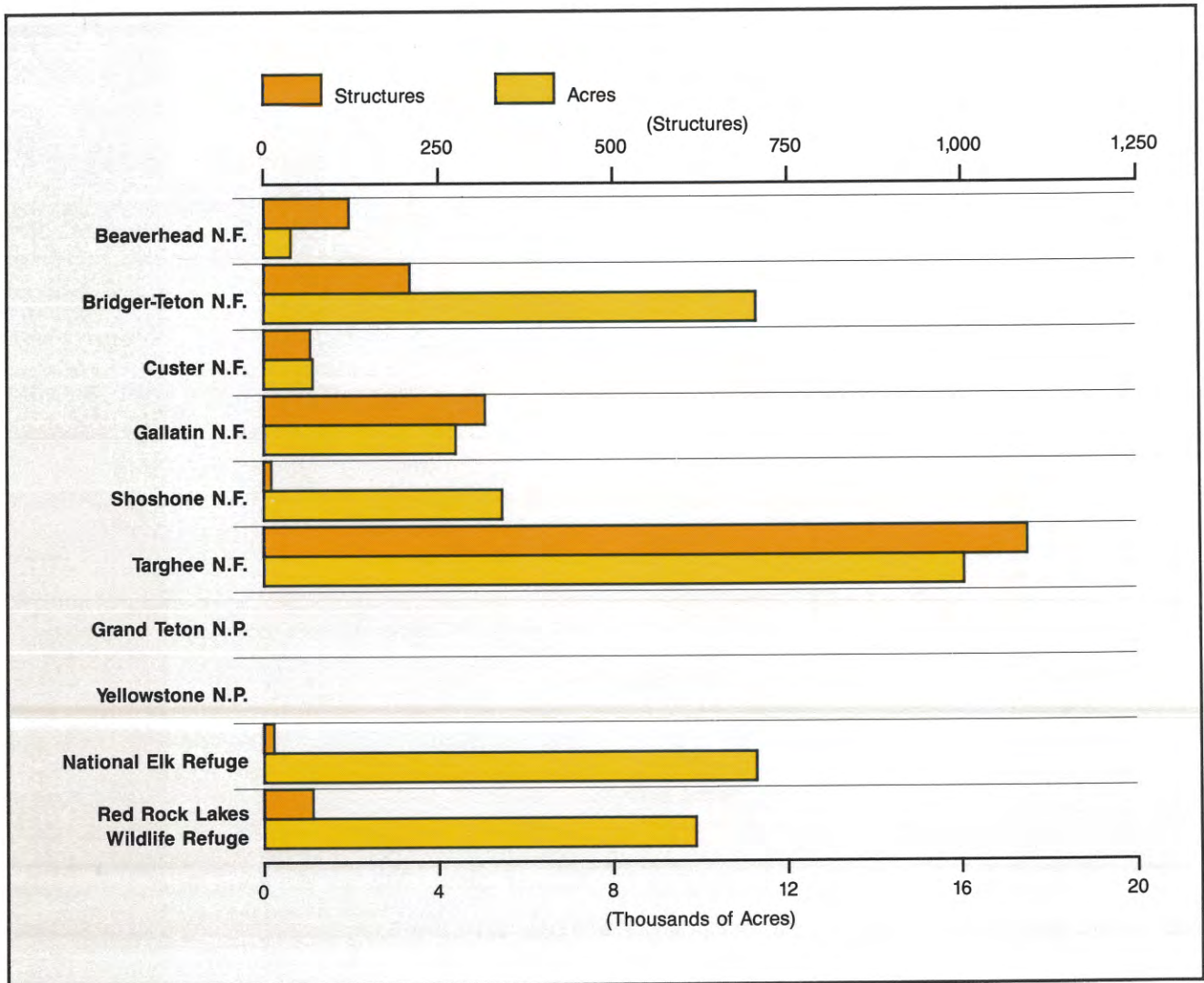


Chart 55. Wildlife habitat improvement.

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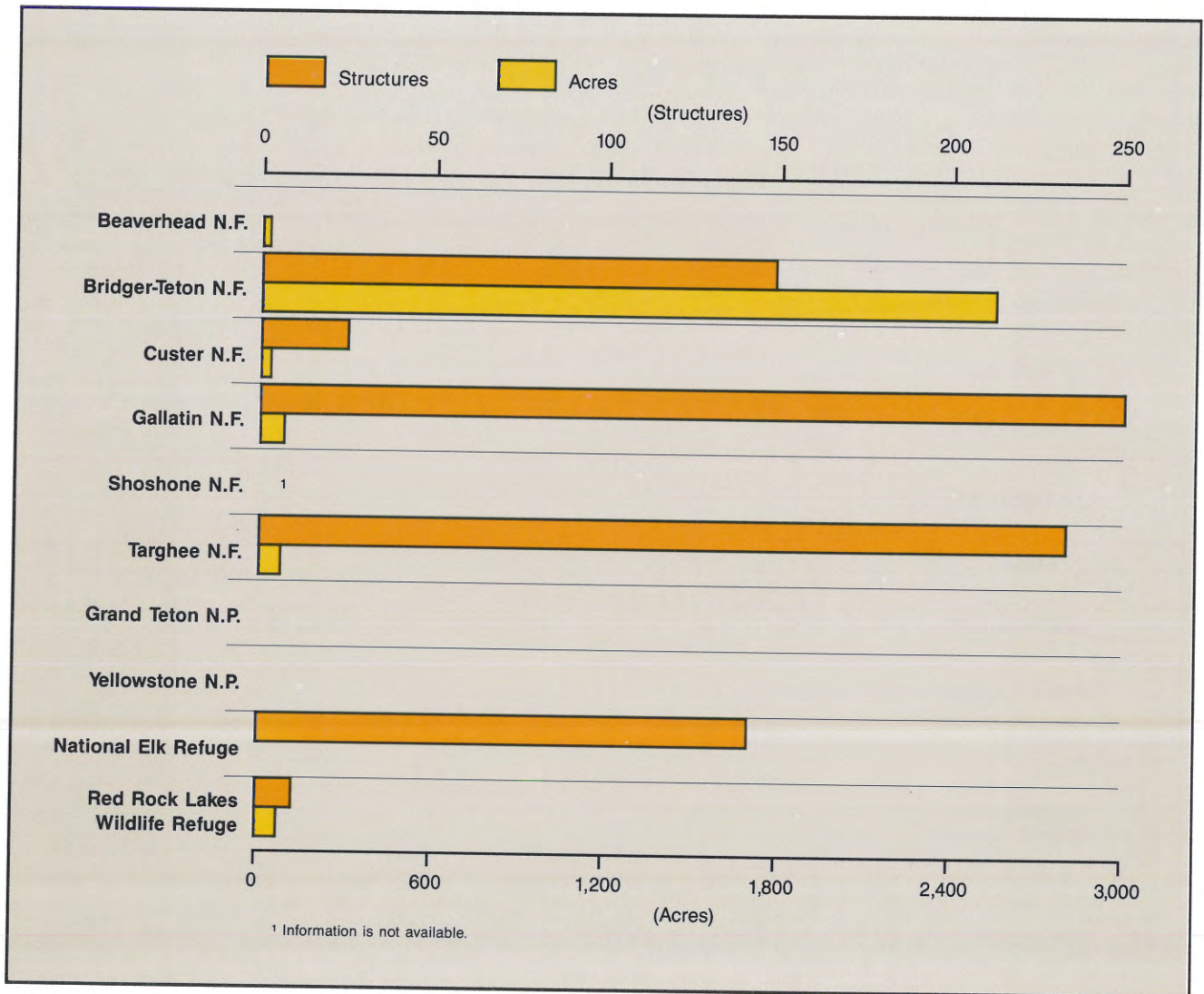


Chart 56. Fish habitat improvement.

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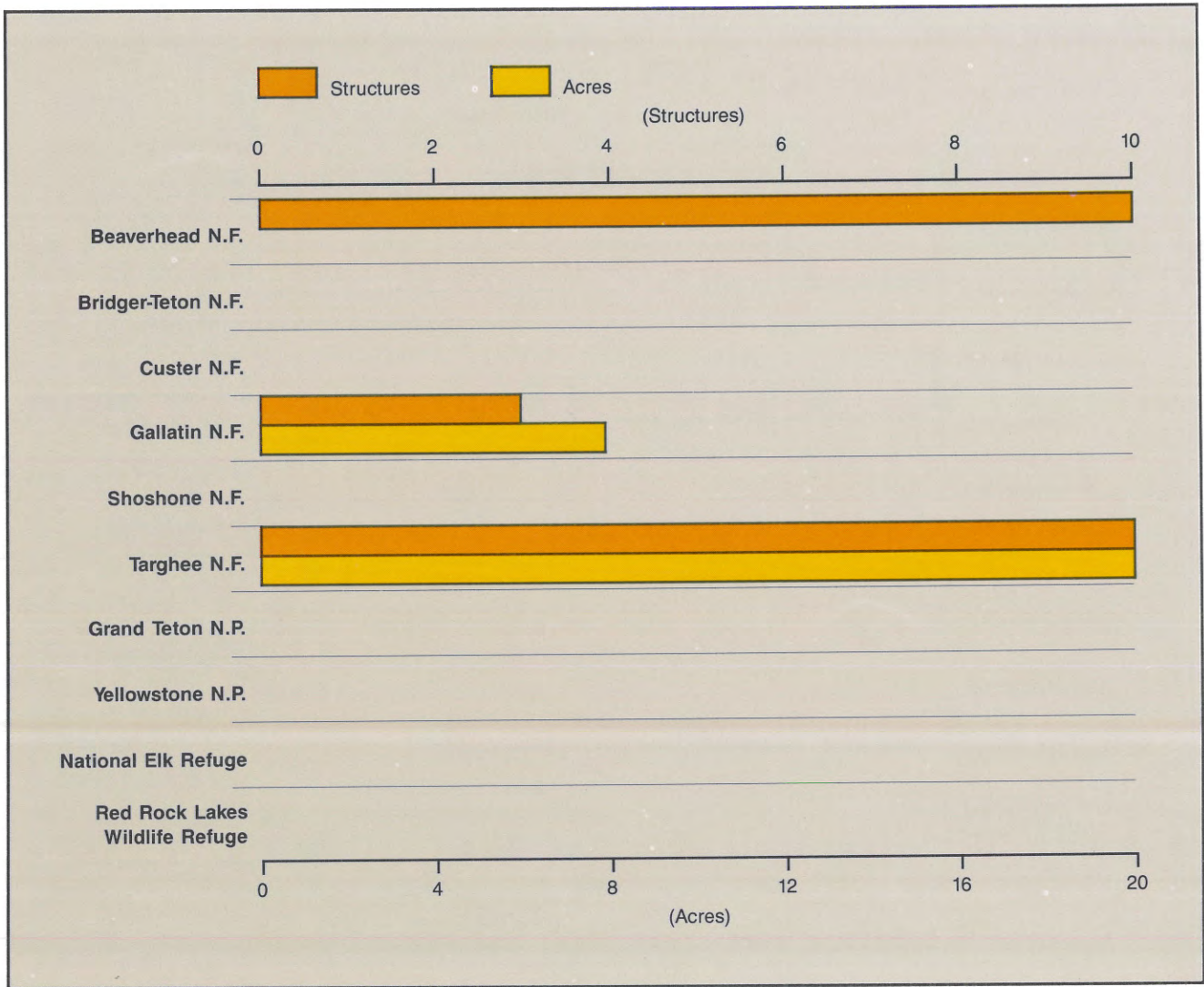


Chart 57. Bald eagle habitat improvement.

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Charts 58 through 73 show existing and planned populations, annual harvests, and the annual number of hunter days for each of the eight species of big game. All numbers are summer/fall populations prior to hunting seasons, except for the numbers from the National Elk Refuge, which are winter populations.

Black Bear Population, Harvest, and Hunting Opportunities

Black bears have traditionally received a lot of public attention in the Greater Yellowstone Area. Idaho,

Montana, and Wyoming have established black bear hunting seasons on National Forests. Black bears are not hunted in either of the National Parks. Even though hunting seasons have been established for black bears on National Forests, they can be legally taken whenever they are causing damage to private property (such as preying on livestock or beehives).

Charts 74 and 75 show population and harvest estimates for black bears. Management objectives indicate generally stable populations and harvests.



Black bear have long been associated with the Greater Yellowstone Area—particularly Yellowstone National Park.

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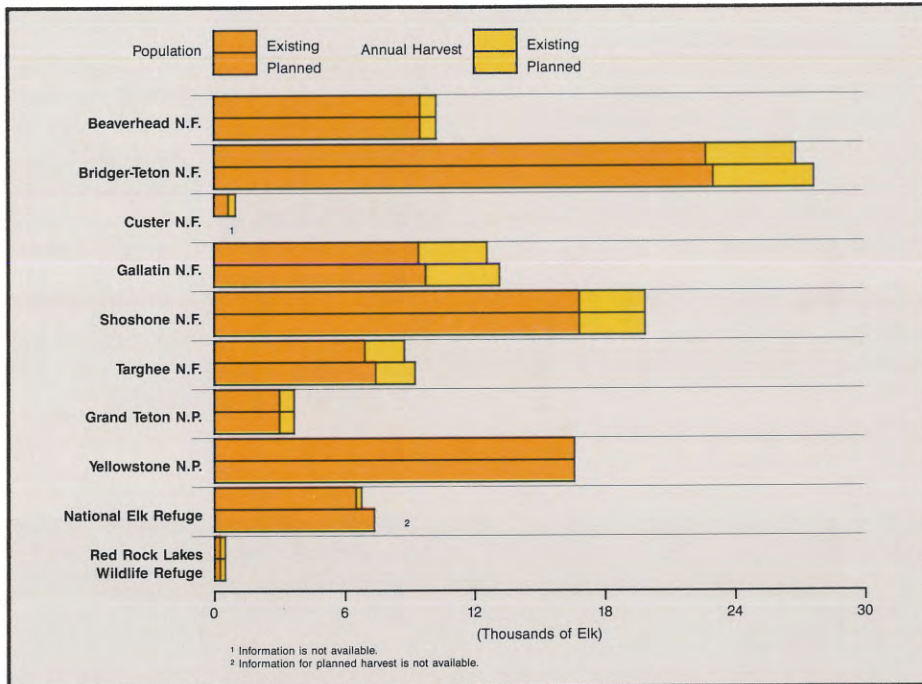


Chart 58. Elk populations and harvest.

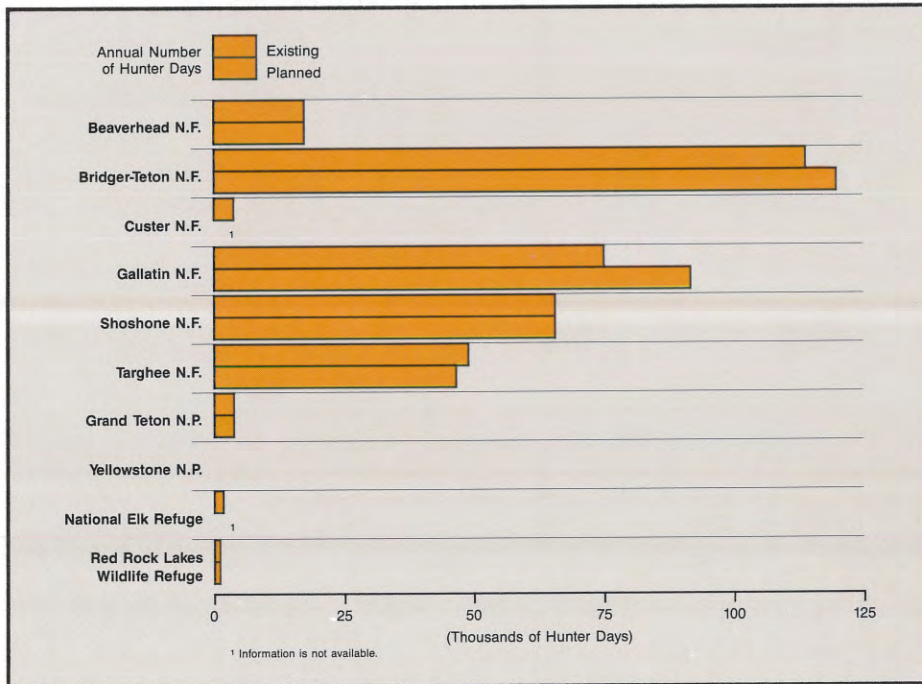


Chart 59. Opportunities for hunting elk.

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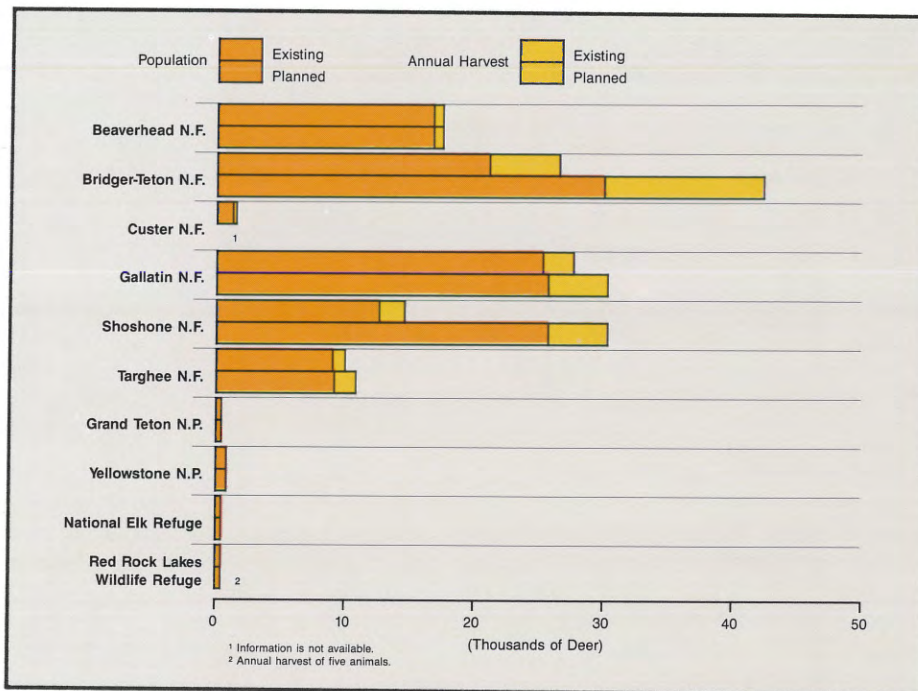


Chart 60. Mule deer populations and harvest.

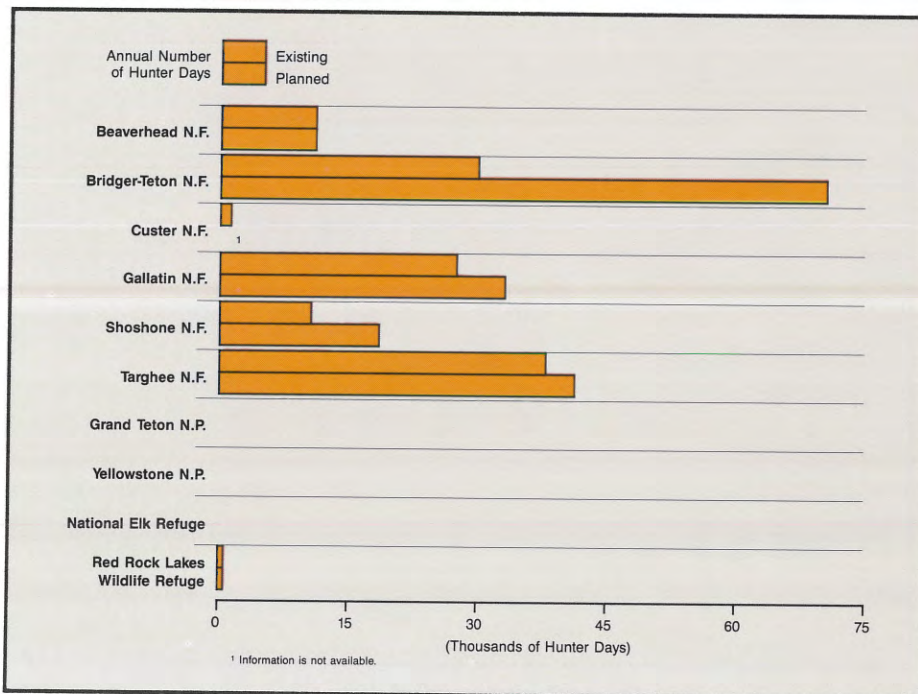


Chart 61. Opportunities for hunting mule deer.

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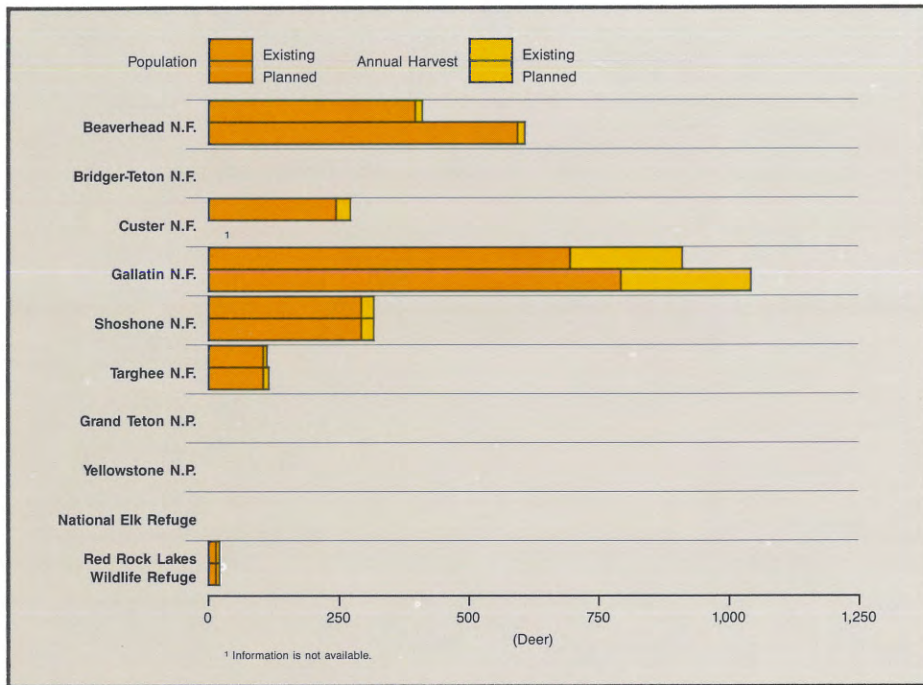


Chart 62. White-tailed deer populations and harvest.

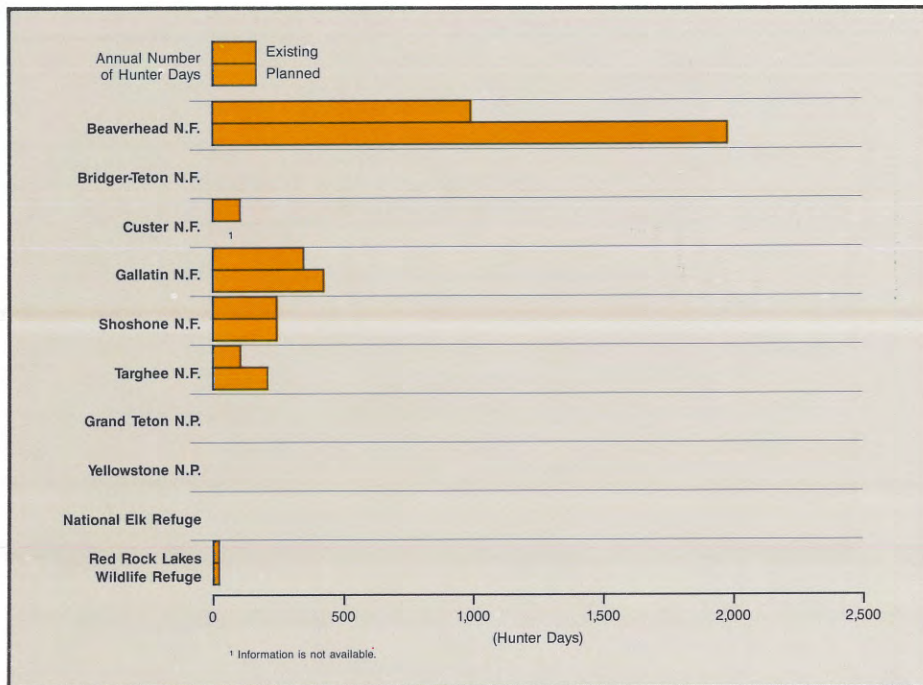


Chart 63. Opportunities for hunting white-tailed deer.

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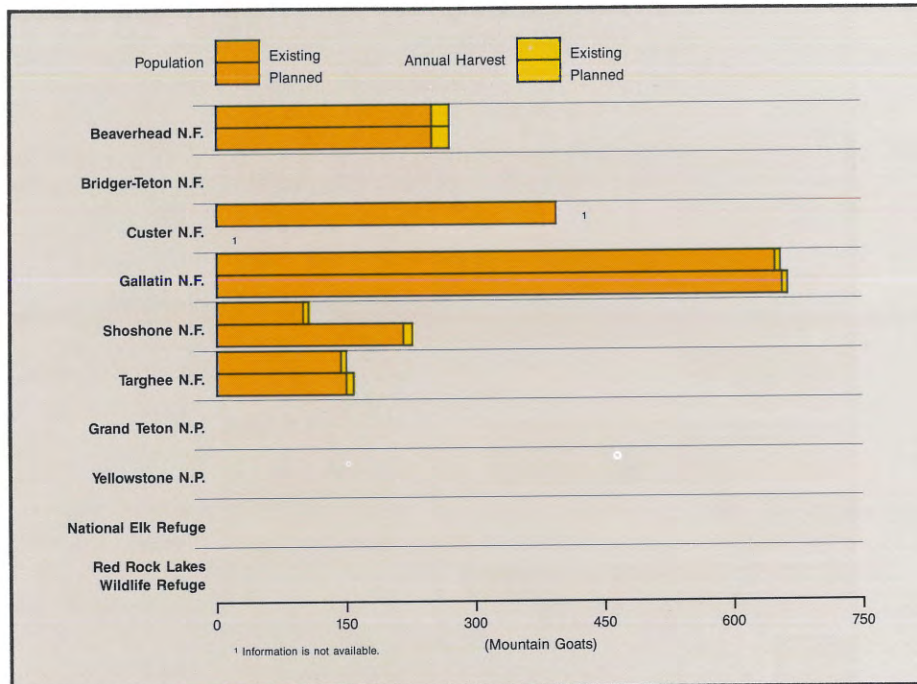


Chart 64. Mountain goat populations and harvest.

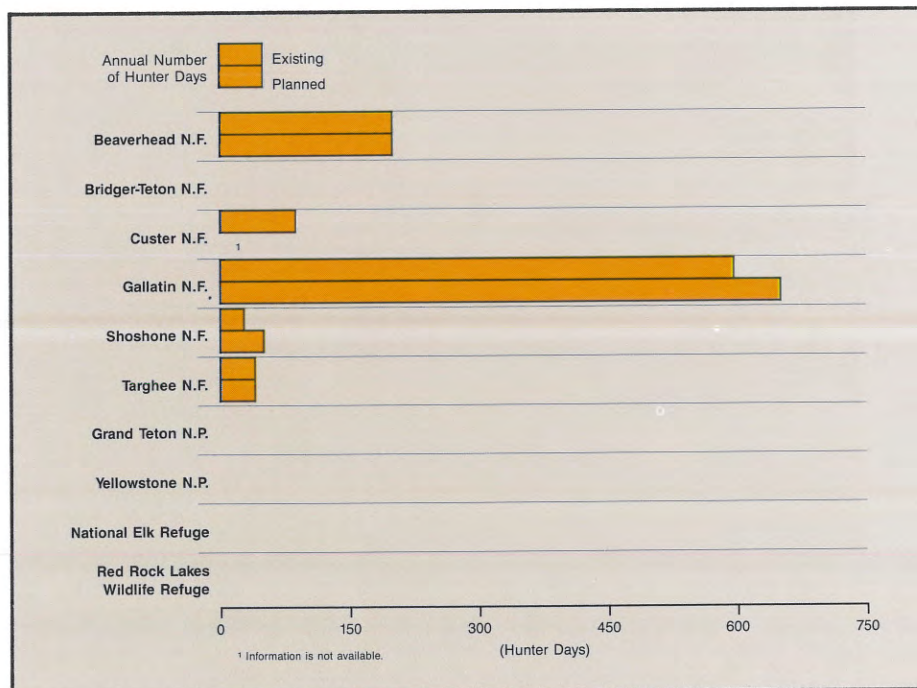


Chart 65. Opportunities for hunting mountain goat.

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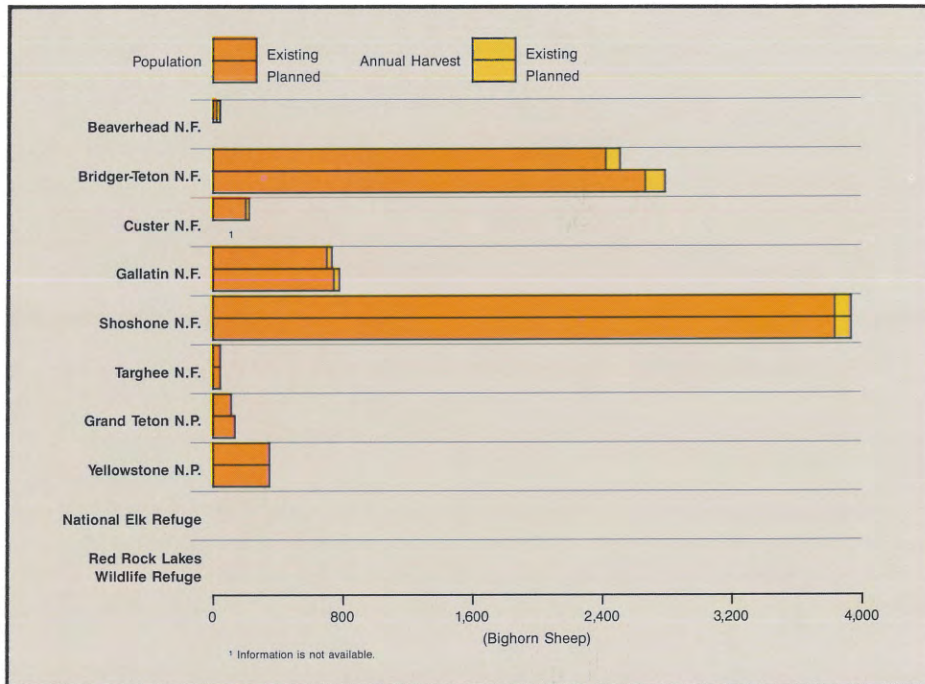


Chart 66. Bighorn sheep populations and harvest.

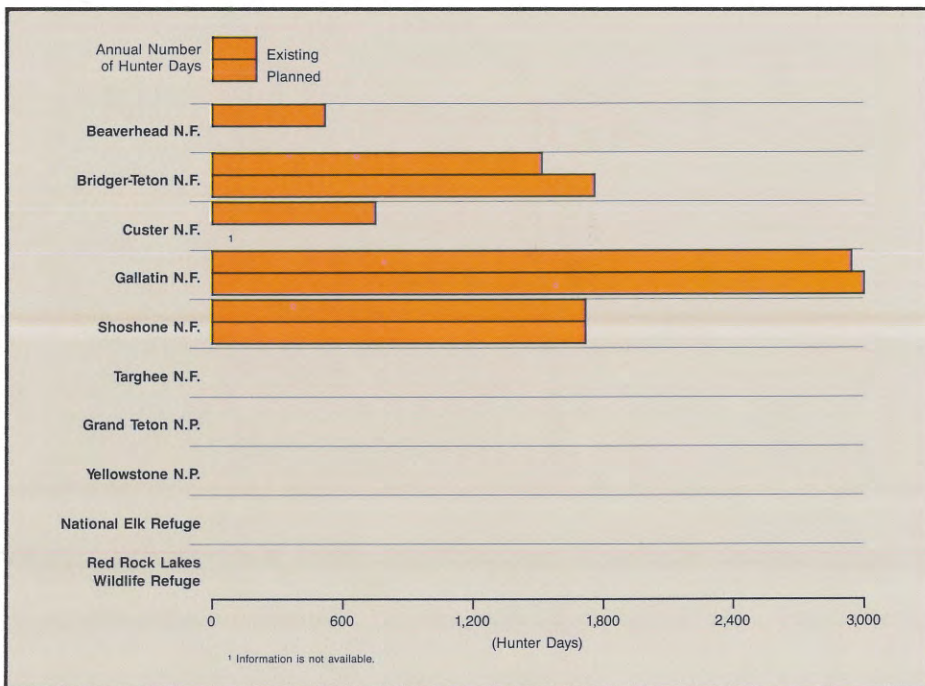


Chart 67. Opportunities for hunting bighorn sheep.

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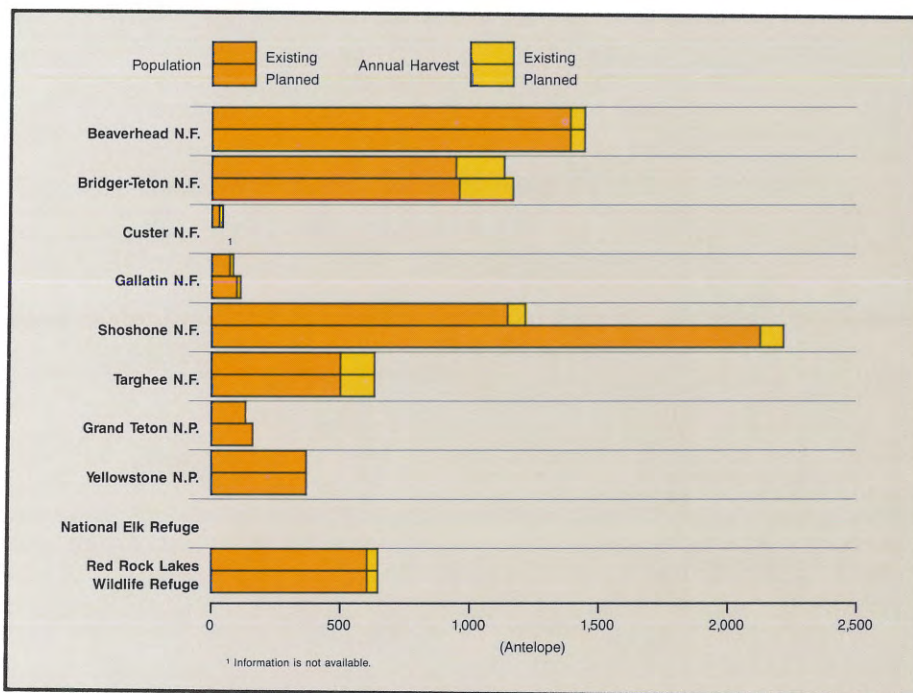


Chart 68. Antelope populations and harvest.

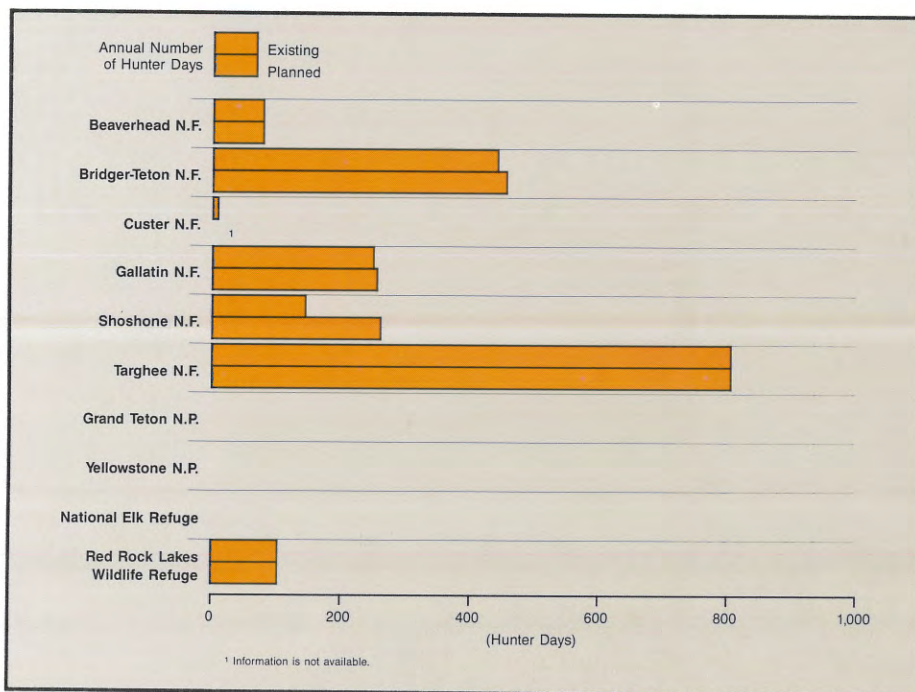


Chart 69. Opportunities for hunting antelope.

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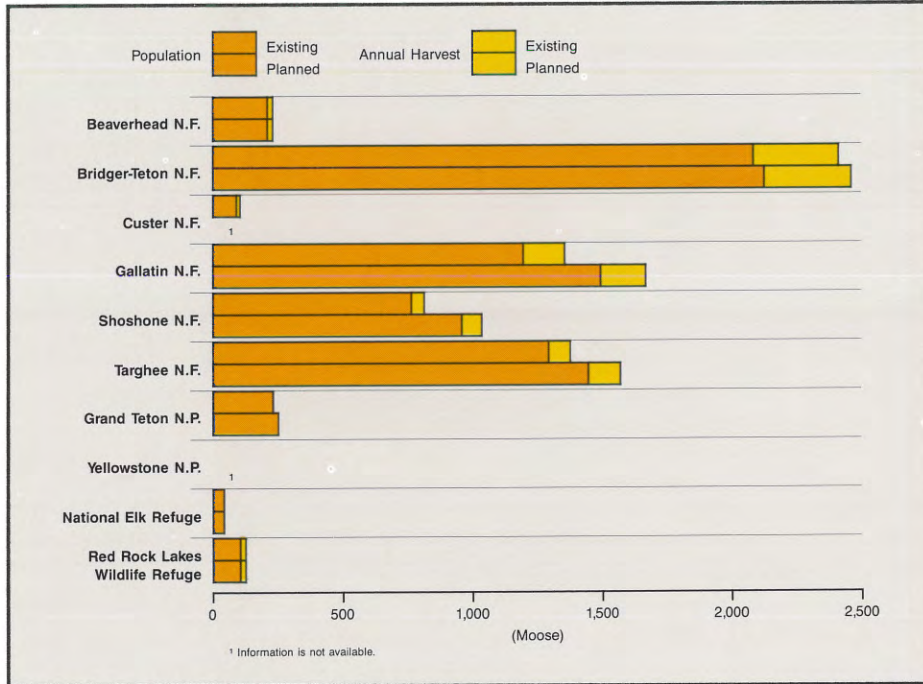


Chart 70. Moose populations and harvest.

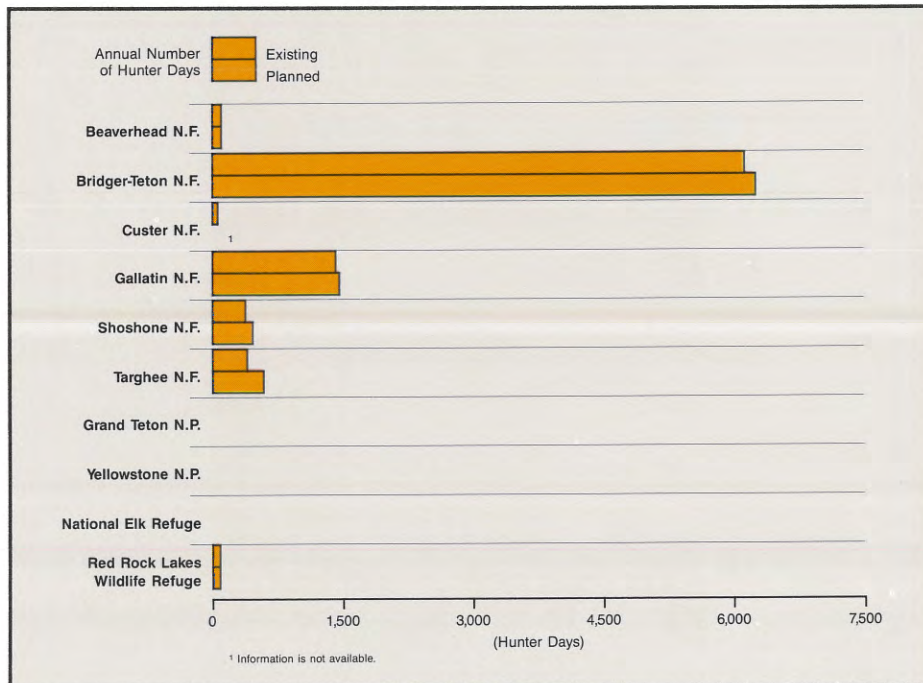


Chart 71. Opportunities for hunting moose.

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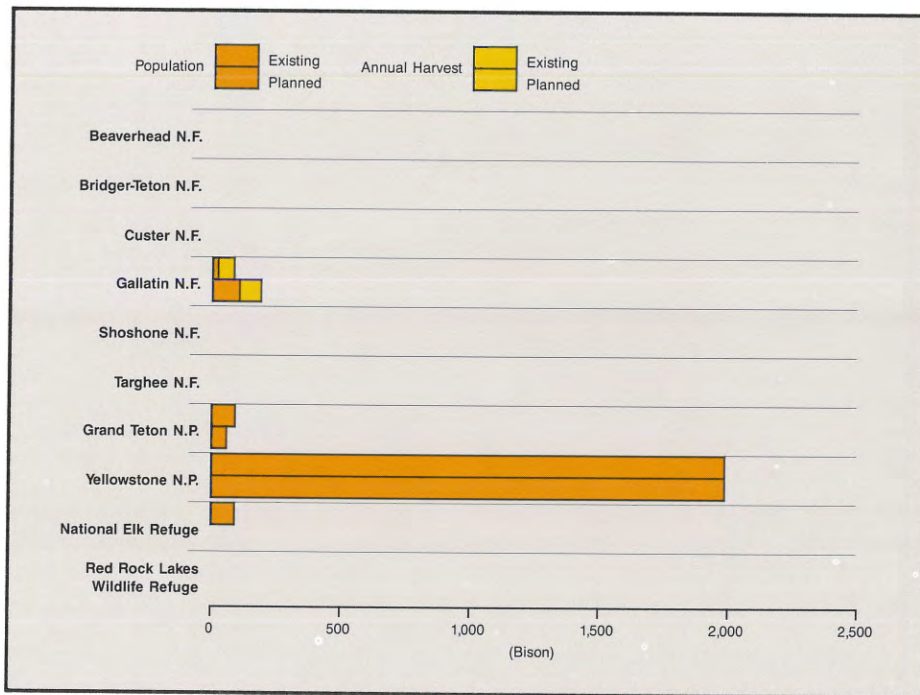


Chart 72. Bison populations and harvest.

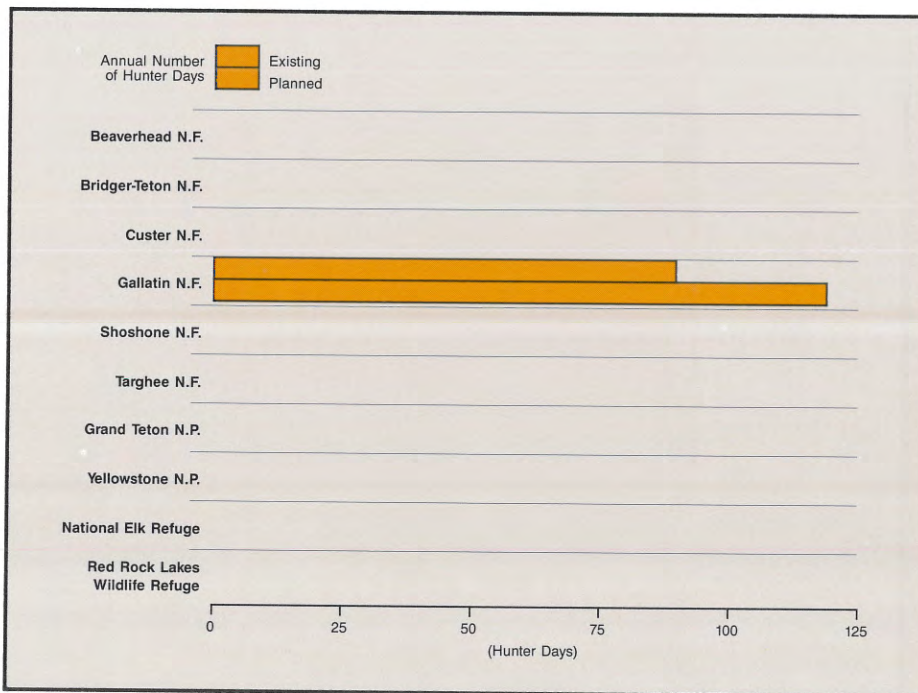


Chart 73. Opportunities for hunting bison.

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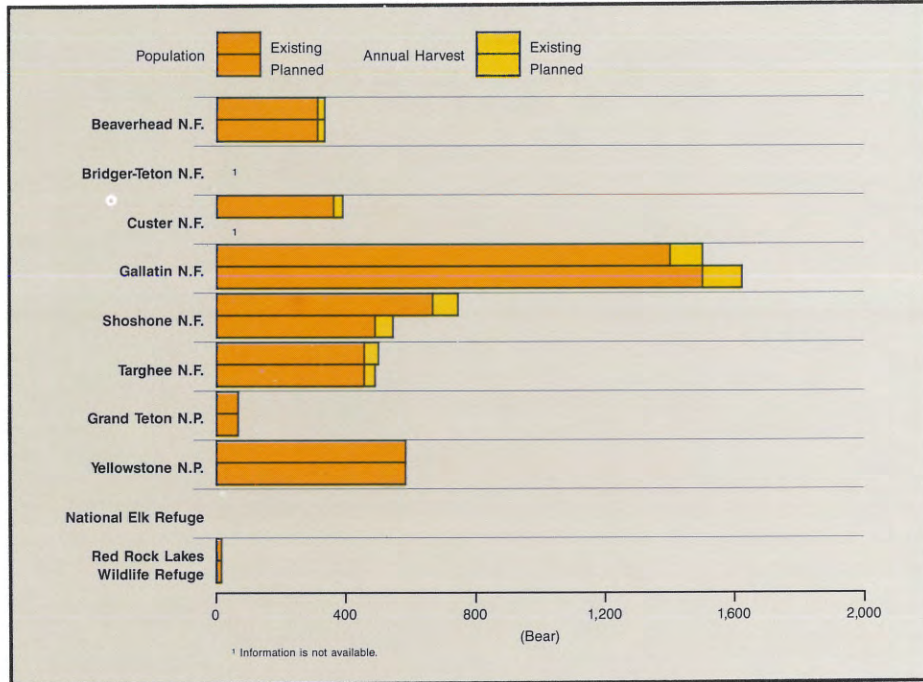


Chart 74. Black bear populations and harvest.

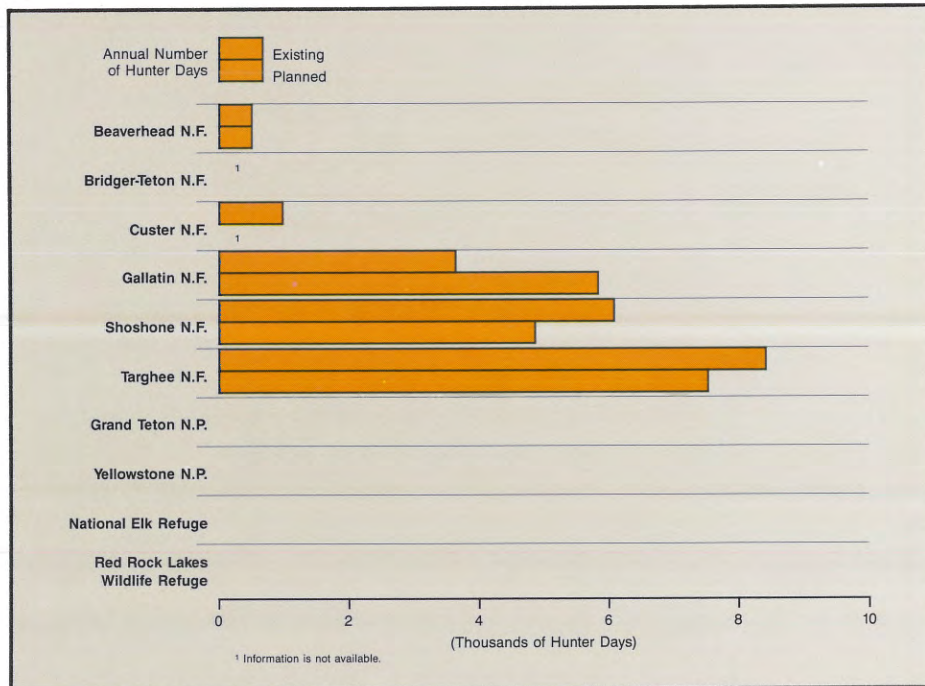


Chart 75. Opportunities for hunting black bear.

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Native and Exotic Game Fish

Native fish in the Greater Yellowstone Area are mountain whitefish, Montana grayling, subspecies of cutthroat trout, and ling (burbot). Native cutthroat trout include four subspecies: westslope cutthroat trout, fine spot cutthroat (also known as Snake River cutthroat), Yellowstone cutthroat (also known as large spot or Henry's Lake cutthroat) and Colorado River cutthroat. In addition, at least four races or strains of Yellowstone cutthroat trout have been identified in Yellowstone National Park, and many other genetically unique populations likely exist.

At least seven species of exotic game fish have been introduced into the Greater Yellowstone Area: lake trout, brown trout, rainbow trout, golden trout, brook trout, kokanee, and coho.



Native game fish such as Yellowstone cutthroat (top) and exotic species such as brook trout (bottom) are often found in the same waters, making it difficult to preserve genetically pure strains of native fish.

Some fisheries in National Parks are managed to emphasize native species under catch and release regulations. Downstream on National Forests, the state fish and game agencies may manage to emphasize exotic species and supplement the fishery with a planting program.

Some species of fish that have been introduced on National Forests may expand their range to National Parks where permanent populations are undesirable.

Opportunity for Sport Fishing

Sport fishing days are an indication of the level of public use of fishery resource. Yellowstone Park leads with 275,000 fishing days per year (see Chart 76) with projections of up to 400,000 by 1995.



Sport fishing in the Greater Yellowstone Area will increase substantially, Targhee National Forest.

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Coordination Opportunities

Given the mobility of most wildlife and fish and the different purposes and legal mandates of National Forests and Parks, managers have these coordination opportunities:

- Provide habitat for a variety of wildlife and fish.
- Ensure the objectives for management of wildlife and fish and their habitat are compatible with units and agencies that manage the same populations, but during different seasons.
- Ensure potential conflicts with management of wildlife, fish and their habitat, and other resources and activities are at acceptable levels.
- Ensure that management direction for grizzly bear and other threatened or endangered species is consistent with existing guidelines and is uniformly applied on each unit.
- Develop monitoring strategies, priorities, and techniques that can provide meaningful information to Parks and Forests.

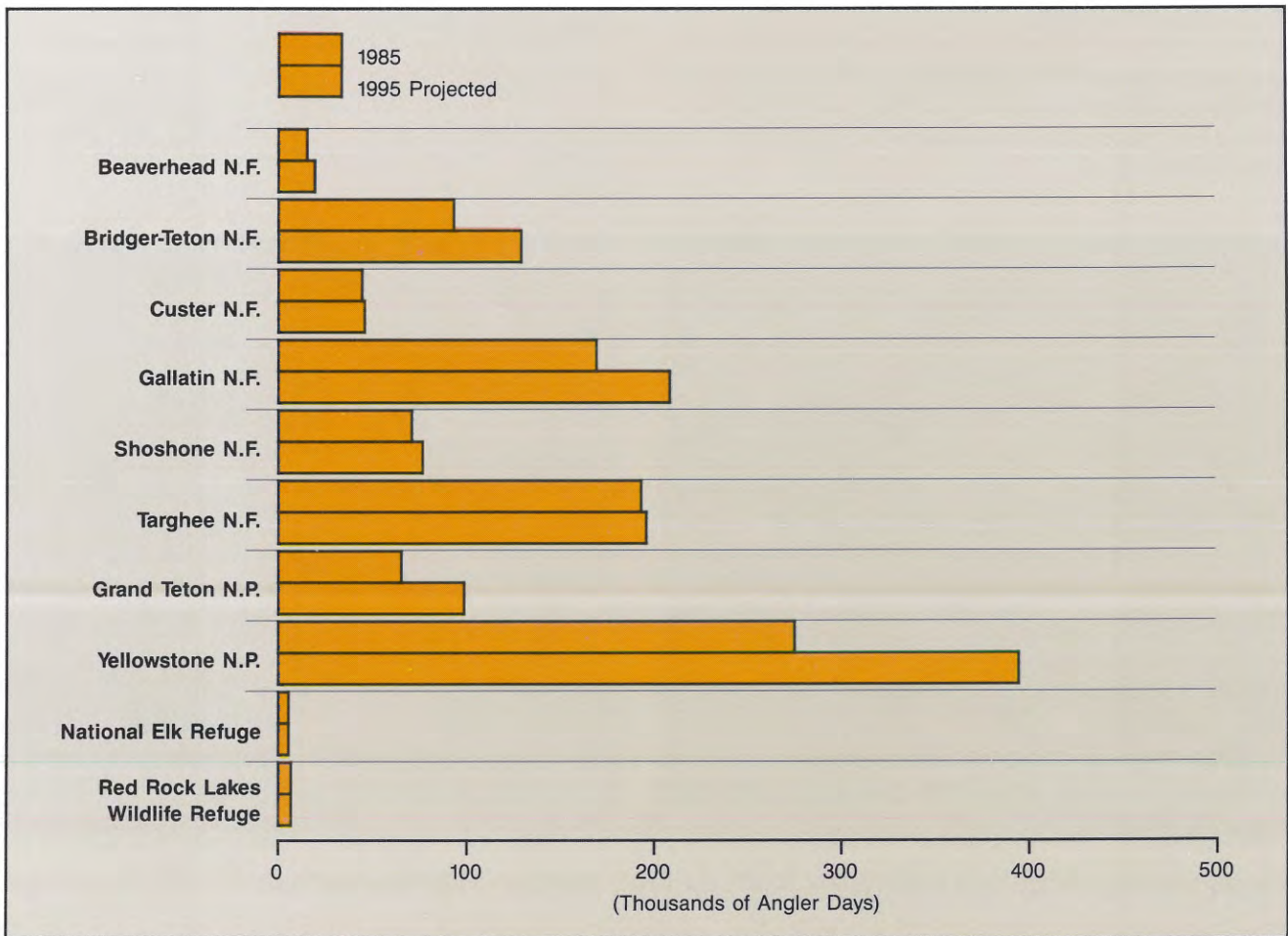


Chart 76. Opportunities for sport fishing.

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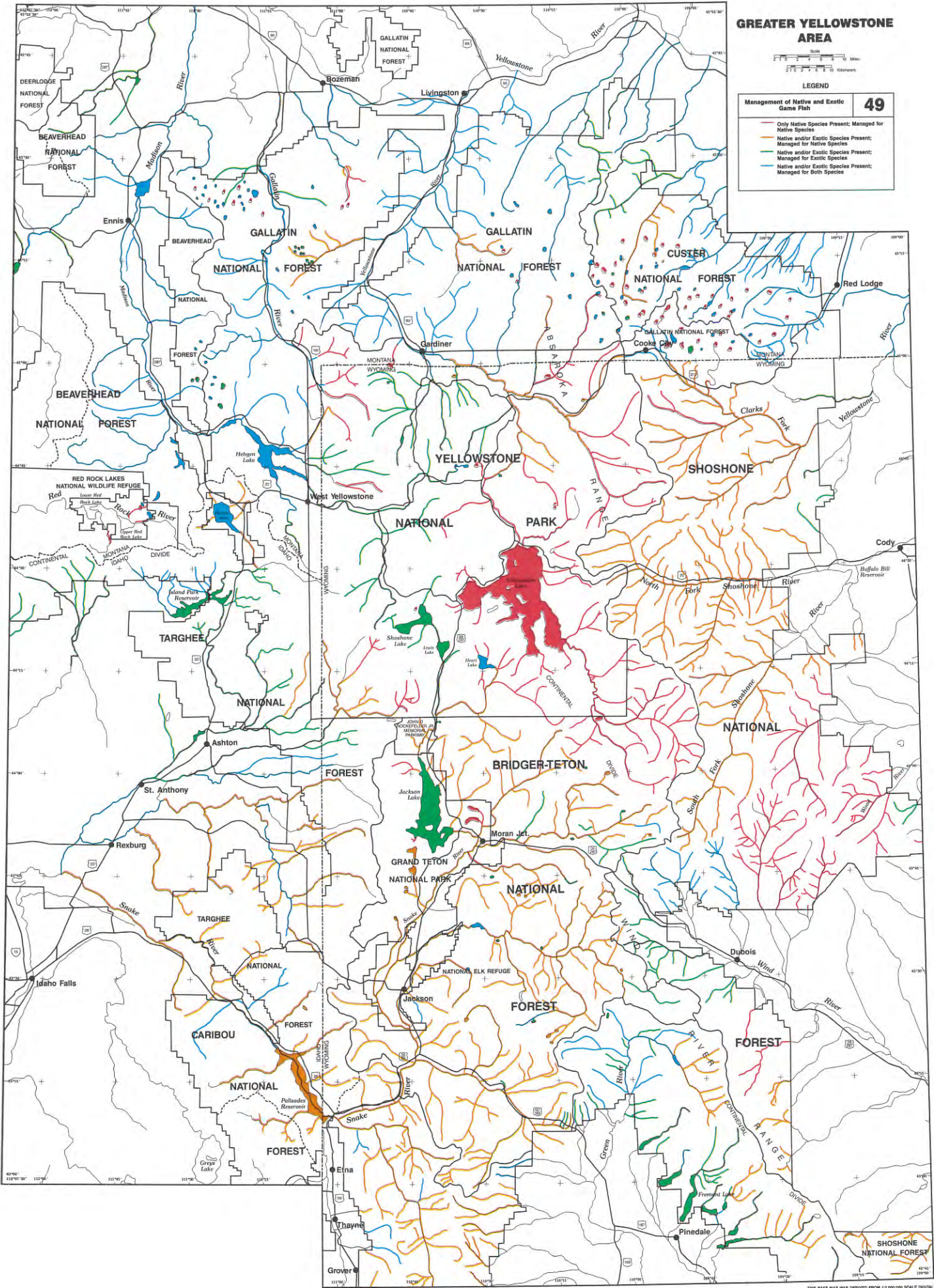
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Management of Native and Exotic Game Fish	49
Only Native Species Present; Managed for Native Species	(Red line)
Native and/or Exotic Species Present; Managed for Native Species	(Orange line)
Native and/or Exotic Species Present; Managed for Exotic Species	(Green line)
Native and/or Exotic Species Present; Managed for Both Species	(Blue line)



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Air Resource

National Forests and Parks within the Greater Yellowstone Area are Class I or Class II airsheds. Class I areas receive special visibility protection. Class II areas are allowed to have limited amounts of sulfur dioxide and particulate matter concentrations. Air quality standards for National Forests and Parks are set by Congress. National Parks are designated Class I airsheds. Some National Forest wilderness areas are Class I airsheds. The remaining National Forest lands are designated Class II.

South Absaroka Wilderness areas. All other National Forest lands are Class II airsheds. Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks are Class I airsheds.

Map 50 shows the location of Class I and II airsheds. Chart 77 shows acres in each category.

Planned Management

Management of air resource is minimal. Generally, air quality is not a problem within the Greater Yellowstone Area. Except for wildfire and prescribed fire activities, activities that would reduce air quality are not located within the Forests or Parks. Dust on unpaved Forest roads may be a local problem at times, as could auto exhaust in areas of vehicle concentration in Parks.

Existing Situation

The Clean Air Act designated wilderness areas that were in existence as of August 7, 1977, and over 5,000 acres in size as Class I airsheds. All other National Forest lands, including future additions to the wilderness system, were designated Class II. Thus, National Forest Class I airsheds are the Bridger, Teton, Washekie, and North and

Coordination Opportunities

The coordination opportunity is to ensure that activities on the Forests or Parks do not reduce air quality below acceptable standards, either on the originating or affected unit.

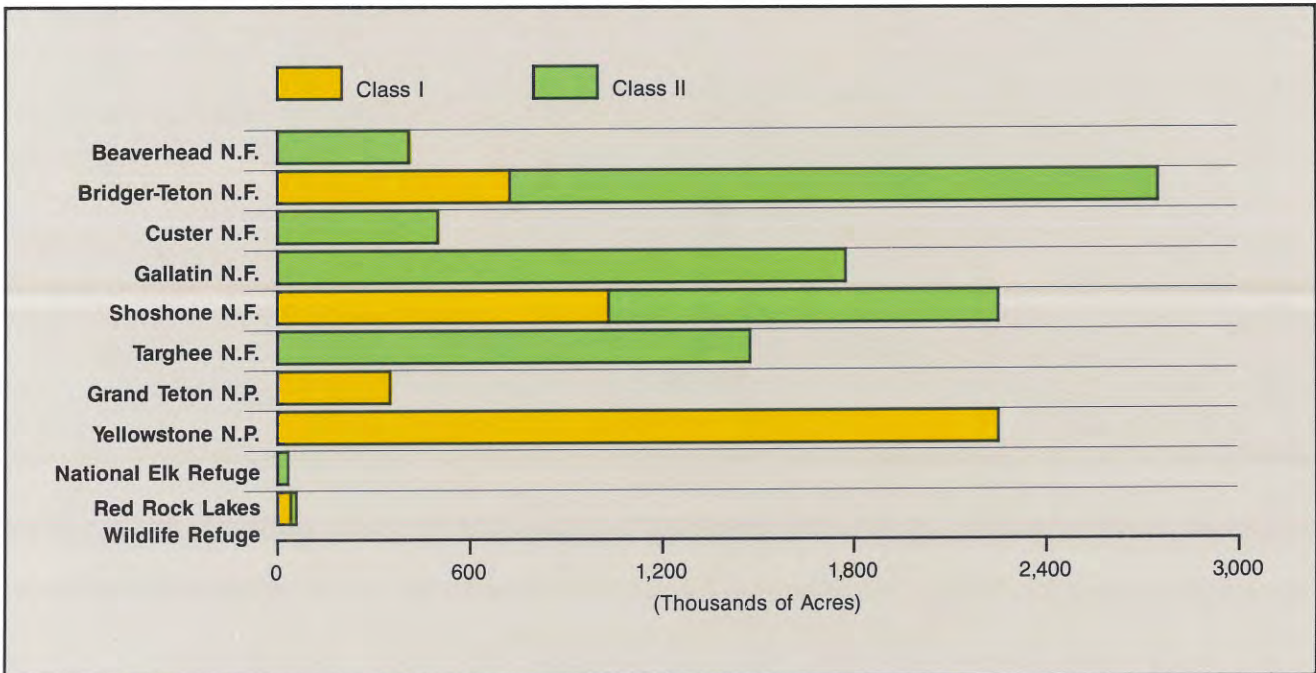


Chart 77. Air resource management.

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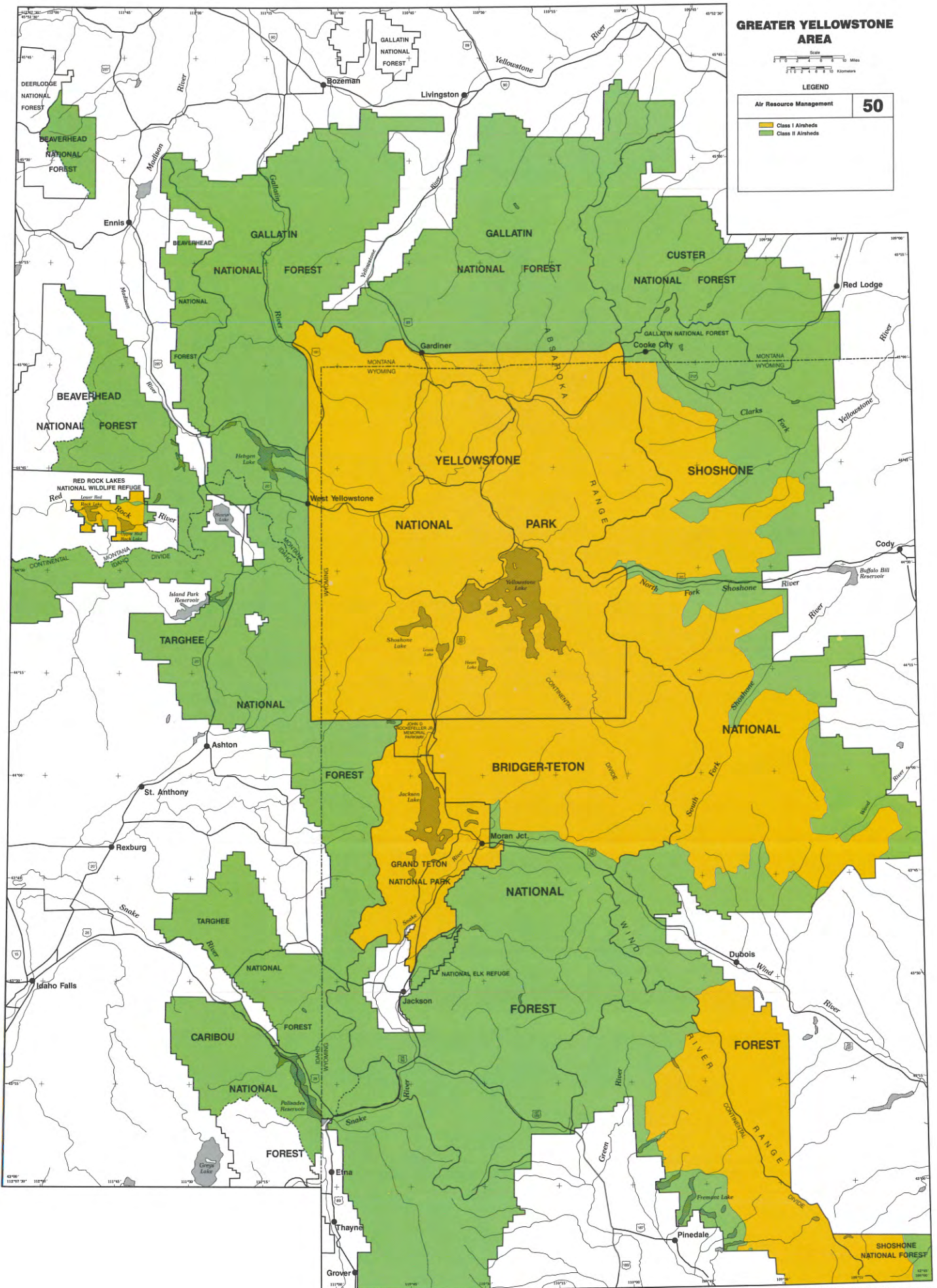
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Air Resource Management	50
 Class I Airsheds	
 Class II Airsheds	



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Visual Resources

Visual quality is an important resource in the Greater Yellowstone Area. Forests and Parks have programs to manage visual resources. These programs may be as simple as preserving areas with high visual quality or a more complex program of blending developments and other activities with the surrounding landscape.

Existing Situation

Forests and Parks within the Greater Yellowstone Area provide a variety of visual experiences, ranging from high mountain peaks to sagebrush and grass foothills.

Both Forests and Parks have programs to manage visual resources. Programs are geared to preserving visual quality of areas that are important from a visual standpoint and to blend development and management activities into the existing landscape, to the extent possible.

Planned Management

Units other than National Forests do not use the same system for classifying lands according to visual quality or for setting visual quality standards. However, to facilitate comparison, they have, so far as possible, aligned theirs with the Forest Service system.

Standards or visual quality objectives for management of the visual resource are described below. Except for preservation, each standard describes a different degree of acceptable alteration of the natural landscape based upon the importance of aesthetics.

Preservation. Allows ecological changes only. Management activities, except for very low visual impact recreation facilities, are prohibited. Approximately 61 percent of the total area is managed as preservation. Scenic quality is generally extremely high.

Retention. Provides for management activities that are not visually evident. Approximately 10 percent of the area is to be managed in the retention category. Visual quality is high and the visitor is very sensitive to the setting or area being viewed.

Partial Retention. Management activities remain visually subordinate to the characteristic landscape. About 18 percent of the area is to be managed under this objective. Landscape elements are fairly common and are not outstanding in quality. Visitors' sensitivity or concern is not as high.

Modification/Maximum Modification. Management activities may visually dominate the original characteristic landscape but must appear as natural. About 11 percent of the area is managed under these objectives. Visual quality is minimal or fairly monotonous and visitor sensitivity to the area is very low. Map 51 shows where each objective will be applied. Chart 78 shows acres in each category.

Coordination Opportunities

The coordination opportunity is to ensure that the landscape pattern for each unit within the Greater Yellowstone Area complements the goals of other units and that the whole is an attractive scenic mosaic.

Section 3

Resources and their Management



An example of an area being managed for "retention" of visual quality, Custer National Forest.



Clearcuts in an area managed for "modification" on the Targhee National Forest visually dominate the landscape's original characteristics but are shaped to appear as natural openings.

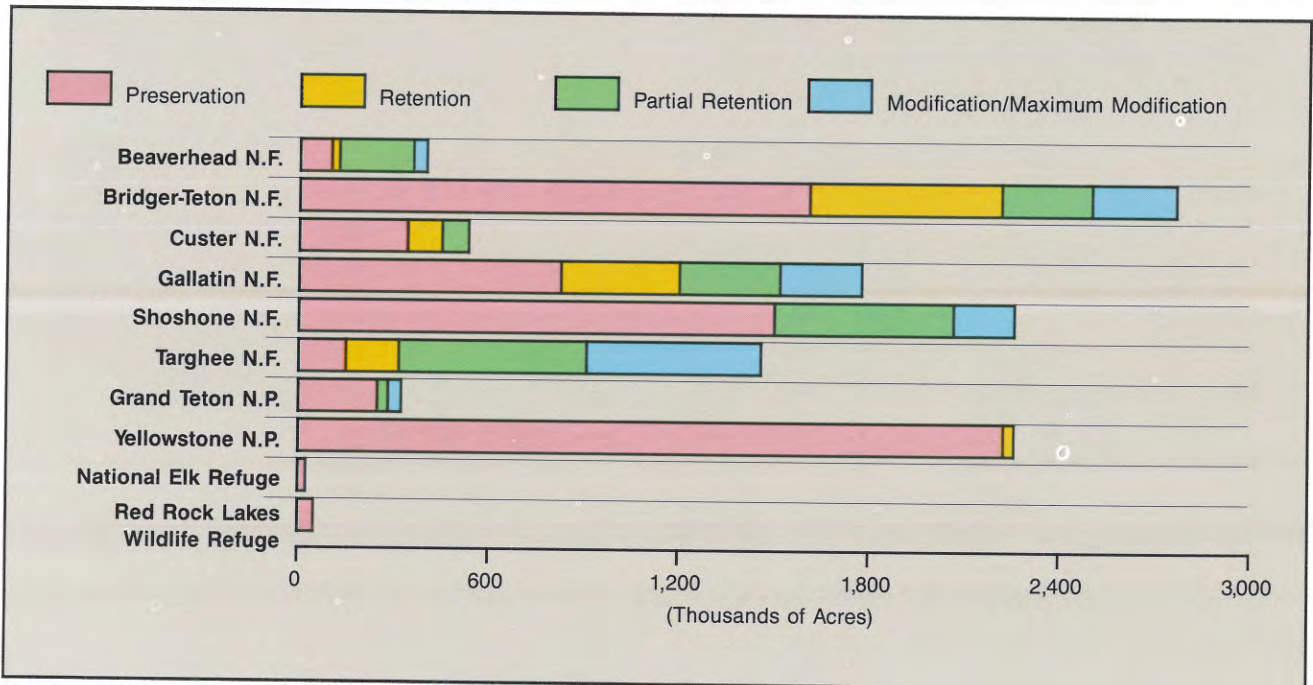


Chart 78. Planned visual resource management.

The Greater Yellowstone Area

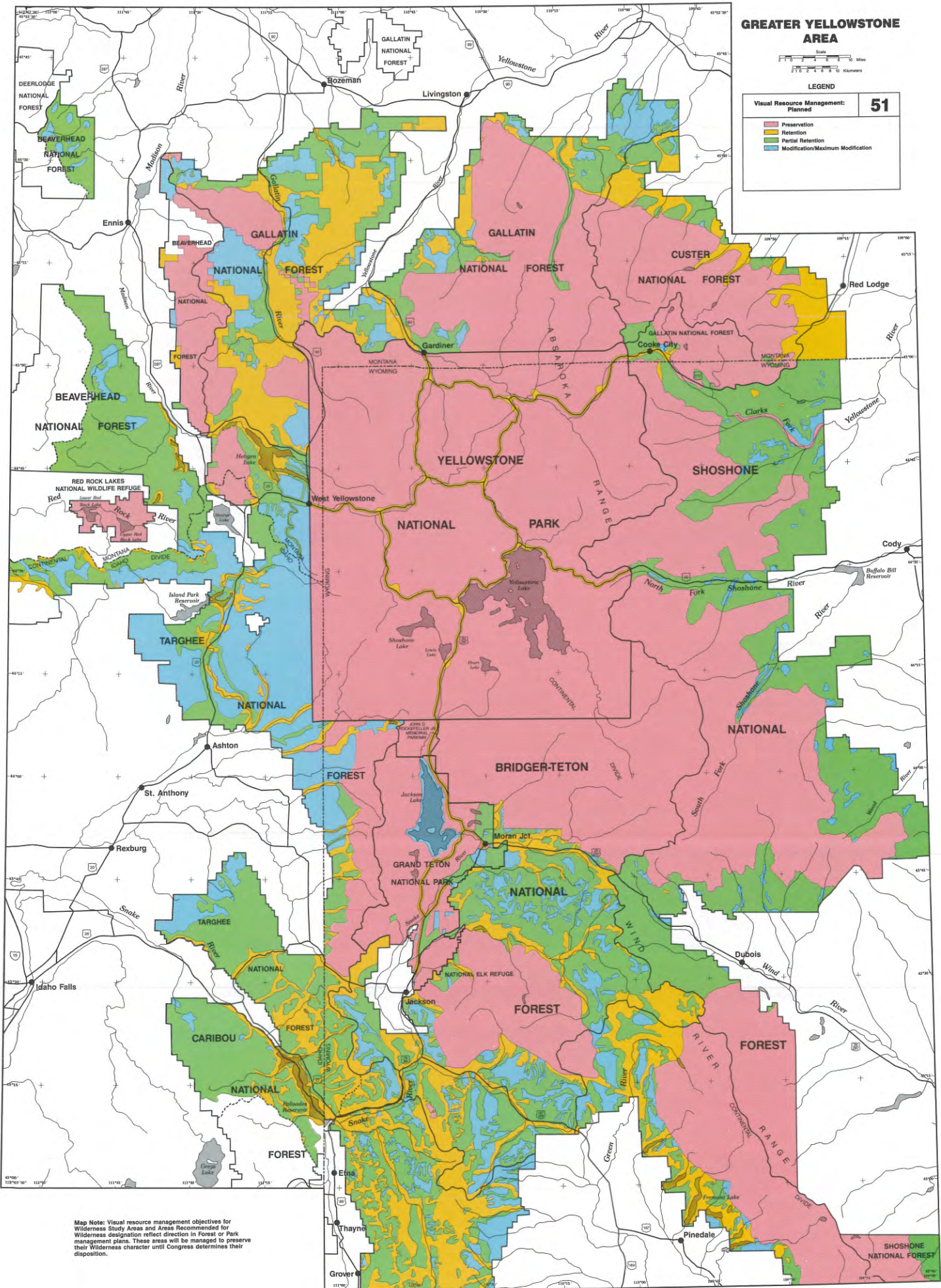
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GREATER YELLOWSTONE AREA



LEGEND

Visual Resource Management: Planned	51
 Preservation	
 Retention	
 Partial Retention	
 Modification/Maximum Modification	



Map Note: Visual resource management objectives for Wilderness Study Areas and Areas Recommended for Wilderness designation reflect direction in Forest or Park management plans. These areas will be managed to preserve their Wilderness character until Congress determines their disposition.

Section 4 Applying the Aggregation

Park and Forest Accomplishments

The information compiled in this *Aggregation* represents an unprecedented attempt to look at an area as large and complex as the Greater Yellowstone Area. Therefore, the Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee has appointed a task force to evaluate the results of this information gathering.

The task force has carefully reviewed the maps and other data contained in the *Aggregation*. The purpose of the review has been to identify areas where management is coordinated and working well and, also, to identify areas where coordination can be improved.

Positive Accomplishments

The task force has identified several outstanding examples where present management is working well or where coordination is evident:

- Nearly 8.3 million acres of the Greater Yellowstone Area are designated wilderness, recommended for wilderness or wilderness study, or will be managed as undeveloped.
- Areas related to sensitive thermal features are withdrawn or otherwise unavailable for oil and gas or geothermal leasing.
- Old growth trees cover 6.5 million acres in the Greater Yellowstone Area. This acreage will change only slightly—less than 2 percent—during the next 10 to 15 years.

- Habitat important for grizzly bear has been uniformly mapped and computerized, and management direction for these areas is being coordinated in accordance with the *Interagency Grizzly Bear Guidelines*.
- Habitat important for the bald eagle, trumpeter swan, and peregrine falcon is identified, and programs are under way to improve habitat and increase populations of these birds.
- Management directions for activities such as timber harvest, road construction, livestock grazing, and mineral leasing are sensitive to other resources such as soil, water, wildlife, and fish.
- Extensive areas of insect-killed forest have been reforested, creating a mosaic of young pines, aspen, and other vegetation.
- Wildlife populations are at very high levels, with many still increasing; range conditions are mostly favorable and are continuing to improve.
- Human-caused grizzly mortality has been significantly reduced, and sightings of grizzly sows with cubs are the highest on record.

The Future

What does the future hold for the Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee and the Great Yellowstone Area?

Management of the Greater Yellowstone Area must continue to balance human needs and uses with the special values of Yellowstone.

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Section 4

Applying the Aggregation

The *Aggregation* has been helpful in identifying areas that have been coordinated successfully already and those that need to be addressed in the future. There is, essentially, a two-stage follow-up.

In the first stage, or in the short-term, the task will be to acquire, correct, or standardize data for the following resources:

- Geothermal and groundwater aquifer recharge areas
- Nongame species including fish
- Local roads
- Condition and trend of big game seasonal range

Before a need for change can be identified, a standard level or intensity of mapping must be achieved for the following:

- Riparian areas
- Vegetation
- Local roads
- Elk and moose seasonal range

Areas in which improved coordination can soon be started are:

- The spread of noxious weeds
- Standard stipulations for mineral leasing
- Use of motorized vehicles on and off the highways
- Management of native and exotic fish

Resolution of many of the issues probably will not require adjustments to current or future management plans—for instance, the questions related to data and mapping can be resolved without adjusting plans. Some issues will require further discussion and subsequent adjustment to existing plans, or changes between draft and final to those plans in progress, particularly if a change in management direction is called for.

The second stage, necessarily, will follow the completion of the remaining Forest Plans in the Greater Yellowstone

Area. This will probably occur about the end of 1988, and by that time the Forests and Parks will have resolved many of the needs identified here.

The Coordinating Committee would oversee an interagency and interregional review and analysis of the remaining issues and new issues that may result from public review of the aggregation document. The review and analysis will likely lead to an amendment of the three Forest Service Regional Guides and appropriate modifications of some National Park Systems planning documents.

The Regional Guide amendments would address any remaining unresolved issues from Stage I, new issues, and the following Management Direction inconsistencies:

- Cases where use and display of management area direction/prescriptions in land management plans are not consistent among units
- Cases of inconsistent management for lands with similar characteristics, but on different units
- Inconsistencies that are not readily explained or do not result from fundamental difference in mission

The amendment would be developed using 36 CFR 219.8 direction on regional planning procedure including the NEPA process, and if significant, would be approved by the Chief of the Forest Service. The amendment would include coordinated management direction, comparable standards and guidelines for National Forests in the Greater Yellowstone Area, consistent approach to displaying management area direction (prescriptions) in the Greater Yellowstone Area, and policy statements on coordination activities between the Park Service and the Forest Service.

The Regional Guide amending effort would probably begin in late 1988, subject to completion of the final forest plans in the Greater Yellowstone Area. Development of the amendments would take 18 to 24 months, using an interdisciplinary (ID) planning team.

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The ID team would report to the GYCC at predetermined steps in the amending process. The ID team would take advantage of data and information already available, e.g., existing forest plans, regional guides, park plans and their companion planning records, plan aggregation documents, maps and records, previous interregional planning information (Rocky Mountain Area Planning Guide, 1978), and other information like the *Grizzly Bear Guidelines*.

Each National Forest and National Park would be expected to review their plans for consistency with any new direction. The National Forests would incorporate the direction, as necessary, into their Forest Plans through amendments. The National Parks would incorporate the new direction into the Park Plans through a minor amendment process.

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