

JEWETT GAP (WUI # 80)
COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN
A Supplement to the
CATRON COUNTY
COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN



A Continuing Effort
by and for the Citizens of Catron County, New Mexico

Ed Wehrheim, Chairman, Catron County Commission
Don Weaver, Coordinator, Catron County CWPP Core Group
in partnership with the New Mexico State Forestry Dept. and Catron County Rural Fire Departments

Assisted by the San Francisco Soil & Water Conservation District, the U.S. Forest Service, the US Bureau of Land Management, Southwest Center for Resource Analysis at Western New Mexico University, University of New Mexico, and Northern Arizona University School of Forestry.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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SIGNATURES

DECLARATION OF AGREEMENT AND CONCURRENCE

The following partners in the development of this Community Wildfire Protection Plan have reviewed and do mutually agree or concur with its contents:

Ed Wehrheim, Chairman, Catron County Commission	Date
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Doug Boykin, Forester, NM EMNRD, Forestry Division (NM State Forestry)	Date
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Zina Day-McGuire, Catron County Wildfire Prevention Coordinator and Fire Chief, Wild Horse Volunteer Fire Department	Date
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Jim Campbell, Fire Chief, Quemado Lake Fire Department	Date
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Concurrence

Janice Stevenson, District Ranger, Quemado	Date
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Jewett Gap Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is a supplement to the Catron County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The County CWPP completed in October, 2005 assesses the wildfire threat and hazardous fuels treatment priorities on a landscape scale. The Jewett Gap CWPP uses the data and findings of the County CWPP to assess the wildfire threat and treatment priorities specific to the Jewett Gap Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) (#80). Mitigation which will reduce the threat of wildfire damage to property, life and the land are proposed. Project scale data from the County CWPP and other sources is presented to aid in planning and design of the proposed projects.

INTRODUCTION

Overview:

The Jewett Gap WUI #80 is located primarily in the mostly high elevation area around the mountain pass known as Jewett Gap. Gila National Forest and private land is included within the boundaries. There are 49 E911 address sites recorded for this WUI which includes mostly private homes and miscellaneous out-buildings. There are many steep slopes and generally very high fuel loads. These characteristics are the reason the Jewett Gap WUI area rated first in treatment priority in the County CWPP.

The County CWPP contains a thorough presentation of how determinations of values at risk, risk of occurrence and fire threat were used to locate the areas and values most at risk from catastrophic wildfire in the County and to prioritize treatment needs. Please refer to the County CWPP for more information. It is not the intent of this plan to duplicate the County CWPP. The general outline of the County CWPP is followed in this CWPP.

Goals And Objectives

As a supplement to the County CWPP, the main objective of the Jewett Gap CWPP is to propose work needed to reduce and mitigate fire threat. To accomplish this objective this supplement continues the collaboration started in the County CWPP, coordinating the needed work with past efforts, the various land owners and other interest.

Future Desired Condition and Relevant Fire Authorities

The desired condition for WUI areas as stated in the County CWPP will be difficult to obtain on some portions of this WUI: "The desired condition for WUI areas is a fire safe environment around protected improvements that will provide "defensible space" for firefighters in the event of a wildfire in the surrounding area". The combination of high fuel loading, high elevation forests, steep slopes and environment concerns such as the Mexican spotted owl complicate matters considerably. Although it may not be possible to obtain the level of protection and degree of defensible space desired by many concerned parties, this plan seeks to propose the mitigation that will do the best that can be done under the circumstances.

Relevant Authorities

No supplement to the County CWPP necessary.

Planning Area Boundaries

No modifications were made in the WUI boundary as established in the County CWPP.

PLANNING PROCESS

History

Except for the steeper areas, ponderosa pine areas on the National Forest in and surrounding the Jewett Gap WUI have been commercially harvested several times. There have been numerous non-commercial treatments also such as pre-commercial thinning and prescribed burns. Some fuels reduction has been accomplished on and around private land mostly located in the Jewett Gap area along State Highway 32.

Collaboration

Besides the meetings held around the County and one meeting at Quemado Lakes Fire Dept. for the County Wildfire Protection Plan, the Quemado Ranger District of the Gila National Forest has had extensive contact with the private land owners concerning treatment needs and proposed projects. Several meetings have been conducted with Quemado Ranger District personnel to coordinate the writing of this plan. Comments from all these meetings and contacts were incorporated in a rough draft. Comments on the rough draft were incorporated in a draft which was sent out for a last review by the involved agencies before the final was signed.

Methodology

Most of the data used for this CWPP is from the County CWPP and was scaled to fit this WUI. Although the County CWPP was a landscape scale analysis, much of the data originated at a scale that fits the purpose of this CWPP (30x30 meter satellite imagery for example). In addition collaborative input from the various cooperators and interested parties was obtained through group meetings and individual contacts.

Public Involvement

In addition to the public involvement for the County CWPP, a meeting for Jewett Gap residents on 9/5/05 was held by Forest Service representatives. There have been several meetings and contacts with the land owners upon the occasion of fuels work being done by fire crews or during forest fire activity in the general area.

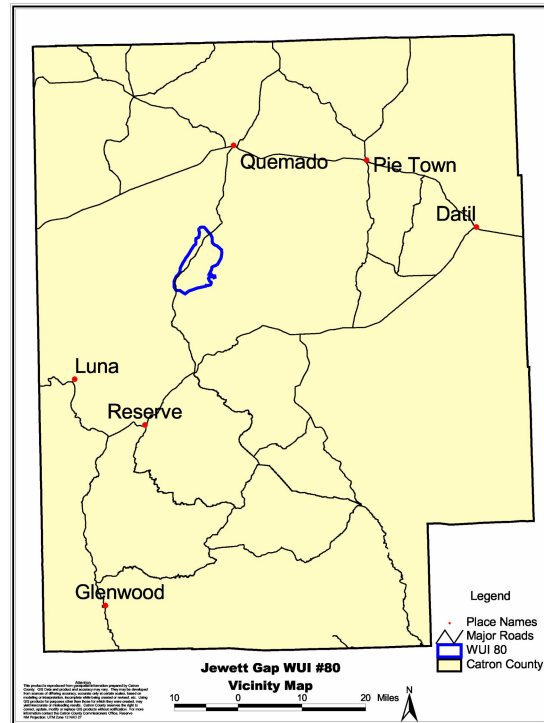
COMMUNITY PROFILE

WUI Description

The Jewett Gap WUI area is about 25 miles south of Quemado and about 30 miles northeast of Reserve. Access to the area is over paved State Highway 32. Most of the land is National Forest with private land scattered throughout in the Valleys and flat mesas. Only Quemado Ranger district on the Gila NF is involved.

Elevation within the WUI ranges from 7440 to 9240 ft. so the area extends from pinyon/juniper, through ponderosa pine and up to mixed conifer types. The mixed conifers include some ponderosa pine but are mostly Douglas fir, white fir and Engleman spruce along with some Colorado blue spruce, southwestern white pine and quaking aspen. As can be seen in the table below 52% of the area is in a "closed" canopy condition. The data summary in this table is slightly different from the County CWPP because a slightly different land ownership map was used for this plan. The Gila NF ownership map is different in some cases from the

ownership map used in the County CWPP and is believed to be more accurate. See maps for Forest Type, Structural Stage and Regap Cover Types.



Jewett Gap WUI (#80) (revised from County Plan)
Machine Accessibility by Ownership, Cover Type and Density

Machine Accessible	Owner	Acres by Cover Type and Density						Grass/ Shrub Other	Total
		Ponderosa Pine Open	Ponderosa Pine Closed	Mixed Conifer Open	Mixed Conifer Closed	Pinyon Juniper Open	Pinyon Juniper Closed		
no	FS	0	1,737	19	875	30	2	27	2,690
no	PVT	33	54	0	2	16	4	0	109
yes	FS	8327	8908	24	1258	1115	269	1098	20,997
yes	PVT	755	487	0	1	572	138	605	2,558
	Totals	9,115	11,186	43	2,137	1,733	412	1,730	26,355

Closed Density Summary

Machine Accessible	Closed
no	2,674
yes	11,061
Total	13,735

Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) within the WUI boundary is 58% class 2 & 3. This gives some indication of the general "unnaturally" dense existing condition of the vegetation. More information on FRCC can be found in the County CWPP. Briefly, fire regime condition class is a classification of the amount of departure from the natural regime. The three classes for FRCC are:

1. Low, class 1, <=33% departure
2. Moderate, class 2, >33% to 66% departure
3. High, class 3, >66% departure

FRCC mapping of the abundance classes shows that (50%) of the Jewett Gap WUI area is rated high. The remainder is about equally split between rare and similar with only a small portion in moderate. Abundance class is a slightly different view of FRCC and is the amount of a vegetation-fuel class compared to the reference condition amount, classified into rare, similar, moderate and high. The management implications are recruit for rare, maintain for similar and reduce for moderate and high.

1. Rare, < -25% difference
2. Similar, > -25% and < +25% difference
3. Moderate, >= +25% and <= +75% difference
4. High, > +75% difference

FRCC mapping of the risk classes shows that most (50%) of the Jewett Gap WUI area is rated high. The remainder is about equally split between low and moderate. The risk of a vegetative condition not being sustainable is shown by risk class which is an index based on the difference of vegetation-fuel class amount from the reference amount.

Classified into low, moderate and high, it indicates the level of key ecosystem component risk of sustainability from unplanned disturbances, such as wildfire.

1. High, < -75% or > +75% difference
2. Moderate, -25% to -75% or +25% to +75% difference
3. Low, -25% to +25% difference

**Jewett Gap WUI #80
Fire Regime Condition Class Mapping Summary**

	Class	Acres	% of Total	Total Check
FRCC	0(null)	96	0	26,352
	1	10,842	41	
	2	13,285	50	
	3	2,129	8	
			100	
Risk	Null	96	0	26,352
	Low	7,111	27	
	Moderate	5,879	22	
	High	13,266	50	
			100	
Abundanc	Null	96	0	26,352
	Rare	5,511	21	
	Similar	7,111	27	
	Moderate	413	2	
	High	13,220	50	
			100	

In the County CWPP, slope steepness was mapped in 4 classes. The area of each slope class in this WUI is as shown in the following table. Also see map Slope % Classes.

**Jewett Gap WUI
Slope Classes**

Slope%	Acres
0-10	10481
11-20	6152
21-35	6298
35+	3420

Fire threat was modeled and mapped in the County CWPP to rate the fire threat within each WUI area as compared to the fire threat in other WUI areas. The Jewett Gap WUI is mostly in the top 1/3 of the rating for fire threat. See map for Fire Threat.

Past occurrence of lightning and man-caused fires was mapped and considered in determining treatment priorities in the County CWPP. Nearly all of this WUI is in high and moderate lightning occurrence and mostly all in high with some low and moderate man-caused occurrence. See Map 6, "Risk of Human and Lightning Caused Wildfire" in the County CWPP.

Treatment priority was modeled and mapped in the County CWPP to rate the fire threat within each WUI area as compared to the treatment priorities in other WUI areas and also to show a weighted average of the fire threat ratings for each WUI. The weighted average fire threat places the Jewett Gap WUI as first in need for treatment out of 196 WUI areas in the County. On a County-wide basis, the Jewett Gap WUI is mostly in the top 1/3 priority for treatment. See map Treatment Priorities. There are other

considerations on determining treatment priorities not considered at the County CWPP landscape scale.

One of these considerations is proximity to endangered structures. There is a need for some balance between treatment priorities as determined in the County CWPP and other concerns about priority such as proximity. In determining the priority of proposed projects in this plan, the priority generally decreases with increased distance from the value at risk.

There may be several Threatened and Endangered species in this WUI, however the Mexican spotted owl was the only one identified in the County CWPP. Threatened and Endangered species was considered as part of the other values at risk in the modeling of treatment priorities. The NEPA process will have to deal with the restrictions, guidelines and protection of those species. It is not within the scope of this plan to resolve the conflict between the actions needed to return the vegetation to a more natural condition and the restrictions meant to protect species by preserving the existing condition.

Recreational use is an important human use of this area and is an important contributor to the economy of the County. A small USFS campground with minimal development is located near Armijo Spring. The nearness of the Quemado Lake Recreation area contributes to the importance of this WUI for recreation. Recreational use was rated for the County in the County CWPP. See map Recreational Use for the ratings in this area as compared to the remainder of the County.

As per survey plats filed in the County Clerk office there are 45 lots in 4 subdivisions: Agua Fria Acres and Ranches, Sombra del Gallo, and Castle Rock Park. There are presently 49 County E911 addresses recorded for these 4 subdivisions and other developments in the WUI. Safe evacuation in the event of a fast moving wildfire burning under high or extreme fire danger is a potential problem under the present conditions, especially for the areas off the main highway. The worst potential evacuation problem is at the private land at Costilla Spring. There are at least two evacuation routes provided by main access roads for each of the areas of development. Fortunately there are numerous safety zones available in open grass areas. See appendix table "Community Subdivision Ratings of Various Attributes by Fire Dept."

The nearest fire protection services are at Quemado Lake at a distance of 6+ miles so the protection for structural fire is very minimal. The homes in this WUI are scattered over a large area and most of the homes are summer homes or hunting camps. It is not very likely that there would be enough support for a new fire dept. The Quemado Lakes Fire Dept. has made some contact with residents in an effort to build interest but without any success to date. The most likely possibility would be a seasonal substation sponsored by the Quemado Lakes Fire Dept. Quemado Lakes Fire Dept. has made several improvements in equipment and facilities and has plans for more improvements in water supply, etc. but again the distance is a limiting factor. Quemado Ranger District is responsible for fire protection on the National Forest for this area. Pre-positioning of Fire Dept. and FS fire fighting resources during critical periods would be one solution for quicker response to wildland and/or structure fire. Structure vulnerability surveys have

been completed for some of the area. See appendix table “Community Subdivision Ratings of Various Attributes by Fire Dept.”. (The property at Costilla Springs is not in this Table) Also see appendix table “Fire Dept. Inventory”

Only a small amount of this WUI may be within a HUC 6 watershed with 2 or more State 303d listed water bodies. A large portion of the soils in the WUI are very erosive. A large high tree mortality burn would be a watershed disaster.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Recap Of Objectives

The objectives of the Catron County Community Wildfire Protection Plan were:

- Create a county-wide, landscape level plan
- Locate the highest areas at risk from catastrophic wildfire in the County
- Prioritize these areas based on the values of the citizens of the County
- Suggest mitigation actions for the protection of life, property, critical infrastructure and wildlands in the County, based on
 - Optimum treatment efficiency
 - Lowest treatment cost
 - Highest benefit to local economy
- Follow-through to on-the-ground level by developing local Wildfire Protection Plans for implementation of objectives of this County-wide Plan

The objective of the Jewett Gap Community Wildfire Protection Plan is to propose work needed to reduce and mitigate fire threat.

Implementation/Mitigation

Several mitigations are proposed to reduce and mitigate fire threat within the Jewett Gap WUI and are summarized in the following 2 tables. Mitigation needs are listed by priority in the first table and are as shown on Map 14: Proposed Mitigation Priorities in Appendix Volume 3. Proposed mitigation projects are listed in the second table.

Mitigation Needs by Priority for the Jewitt Gap WUI (# 80)

Last update: 3/27/07 DRW

MITIGATION PRIORITIES

No.	Mitigation Name	Owner	Description of Needs
Fuel Hazard Reduction			
1	East Basin	NF	thin, pile/burn, chip, prescribed burn, commercial harvest
2	Carrejo	PVT	thin, pile/burn, chip
3	West Basin	NF	thin, pile/burn, chip, prescribed burn, commercial harvest, fuelwood area
4	Costilla Spr	PVT	thin, pile/burn, chip
5	Gallo Basin	PVT	thin, pile/burn, chip, prescribed burn, commercial harvest
6	Gap	PVT	thin, pile/burn, chip, prescribed burn, commercial harvest
7	Trough Spr	NF	thin, pile/burn, chip, prescribed burn, commercial harvest
8	Agua Fria	NF	thin, pile/burn, chip, prescribed burn, commercial harvest
9	Armijo Spr	NF	thin, pile/burn, chip
10	FR 93	NF	thin, pile/burn, chip, prescribed burn, commercial harvest
11	Chavez Lake	PVT	thin, pile/burn, chip, prescribed burn, (commercial harvest?)
12	Harris Canyon	PVT	thin, pile/burn, chip
13	Demetrio	NF	thin, pile/burn, chip, prescribed burn, commercial harvest, fuelwood area
14	Creek	NF	thin, pile/burn, chip, prescribed burn, commercial harvest, fuelwood area
15	North	NF	thin, pile/burn, chip
Fire Suppression/Prevention			
1	Water Supply		water source development
2	Quemado Lake Substation		

		Fire Suppression/ Prevention Projects	Acres	Year Completed
all	fire dept. options	assess options for better VFD protection of WUI, new dept, or new substation, or etc. (Quemado Lakes and County coord.)	NA	
all	Water supply	assess options for better water supplies for interface, (VFD and County coord)	NA	
all	Public Education	contacts with landowners about firewise, assistance available, etc. best time to cut trees, clarify fire access on private land, reinstate severity patrol funding, slash disposal methods (County and State coord)	NA	
all	Evacuation Plans	address 1 way access problems, plan for evac of animals, (County and State Coord)	NA	
all	Slash Disposal	need more slash disposal pits, (County, USFS coord)	NA	

The above priorities are subject to change for numerous reasons such as funding limitations, kind of funding, fire use and wildfire. The above table will be updated as needed to reflect current priorities and proposals. Also most of the proposed mitigation will likely be implemented in stages, i.e. all the South Aspect acres may not be treated in one project but in a series of projects called South Aspect 1, South Aspect 2 etc. Also the proposed mitigation may be combined to form a project or projects or combined with project areas outside the WUI.

Funding for the above proposed mitigation will be coordinated between the Forest Service, County and State Forestry.

**JEWETT GAP
COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN**

APPENDIX VOLUME 2

Data

**Supplement to the
CATRON COUNTY
COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN**

Table: Vegetation Types

Jewett Gap WUI

Crosswalk with CWPP Vegetation Typing

Reference Condition Composition per Cover Type

Cover Type Values						Percent Composition				Acres
Regap class	CWPP class	PNVG	Cover Type	0-24 Value	Base 3 Value	PNV/GIS Code	Early	Open	Closed	
22	MC	MCAN	S023	18	2.2500	340	10	80	10	66
26	MC	SPFI7	S028	19	2.3750	360	25	30	45	11
28	MC	SPFI7	S030	16	2.0000	360	25	30	45	99
30	MC	MCAN	S032	22	2.7500	340	10	80	10	711
32	MC	MCAN	S034	21	2.6250	340	10	80	10	1293
Mixed Conifer Totals and Weighted Average=							10.76	77.48	11.76	2,179
36	PJ	PLME2	S039	13	1.6250	322	2	67	31	2098
41	PJ	PPIN7*	S046	11	1.3750	120	20	10	70	7
64	PJ	PLME2	S075	9	1.1250	322	2	67	31	40
Pinyon/Juniper Totals and Weighted Average=							2.06	66.82	31.12	2,145
34	PP	PPIN7	S036	23	2.8750	330	15	80	5	20,301
Ponderosa Pine Totals and Weighted Average=							15.00	80.00	5.00	20,301
48	G/S	PLME2	S054	6	0.7500	322				77
67	G/S	PLME2	S079	5	0.6250	322				1,173
71	G/S	MGRA1	S085	2	0.25	220				2
76	G/S	PLME2	S090	3	0.3750	322				383
119	G/S	WEED	D06	1	0.1250	801				1
5	Other	ROCK	S006	0	0.0000	902				94
Rock Total and Weighted Average=										1,730

26,356

*listed under PPIN7 in one NF crosswalk and under CHAP5 in another. Type is definitely more a PJ woodland type than a Ponderosa Pine type.

The above table summarizes information about the regap cover types, relative fire threat and structural stage reference conditions. The column CWPP class shows the grouping of the regap classes into the groups: Ponderosa pine, Mixed Conifer, Pinyon/Juniper, Grass/Shrub and Other. Potential natural vegetation group (PNVG), Cover Type and GIS Code are designators used in various reference information. The 0-24 Value is a relative fire threat value assigned in the County CWPP analysis, i.e. the higher the value the higher the fire threat. The Base 3 Value is the 0-24 Value divided by 8. The reference condition is shown in the Percent Composition columns. Weighted average percent compositions are shown for each Cover Type group (except for the Other group). The weighted average is useful since there is most often an intermingled mix of regap classes.

The “reference” condition is just that. It is one of the sources of reference information about the condition necessary for reduction of fire threat and sustainable ecological health.

Table : Community Ratings of Various Attributes by Fire Dept. (nearest Fire Dept)

			Rate for Community/Subdivisions Only						Rate Both	Rate for Fire Dept. Only		
Data Entry Units= (See Attribute Definitions)			Protection Need None Low Mod High	0-10	0-10	0-10	Sum	miles to nearest	Yes/No	1-10	year	gallons
Fire Dept.	Community or Subdivision	WUI ID	Evac. Routes Safety Zones	Vulnerability				Fire Station Distance	Evac. Plan/ Struct. Eval.	Applicable ISO rating	Vehicle Avg. Age	Water on Wheels
				R	C	D	Sum					
Quemado Lake	Agua Fria Acres	2s17w27	Mod	3	10	10	23	6.0	Y/Y	10		
Quemado Lake	Agua Fria Ranches	2s17w27	Mod	3	10	10	23	10.2	Y/Y	10		
Quemado Lake	Armijo Spring	2s17w27	High	1	9	4	14	8.0	Y/Y	10		
Quemado Lake	Harris Creek	2s17w27	High	5	10	8	23	8.7	Y/Y	10		
Quemado Lake	Jewett Gap	2s17w27	High	2	8	5	15	11.3	Y/Y	10		
Quemado Lake	Castle Rock Park	2s17w27	Mod	2	4	4	10	6.5	N/N	10		
Quemado Lake	Pueblo Largo East	2s16w4	Mod	5	10	10	25	0.3	N/N	9		
Quemado Lake	Pueblo Largo West	2s16w4	Mod	5	10	5	20	0.3	N/N	9		
Quemado Lake	Quemado Lake Estates	2s16w4	Mod	3	8	7	18	0.5	N/N	9		
Quemado Lake	Sombra Del Gallo	2s17w27	High	3	8	1	12	10.1	N/N	10		
Quemado Lake										9	1974	2300

Table: Quemado Lake Volunteer Fire Department Equipment Inventory

Year	Make/Model	Type	Tank	FGPM	Purpose	Drive	Feet of Hose Carried									Porta Tank
							Reel	1"	1.5+"	2.5"	3"	4"	5"	Hard Suction	Soft Suction	
1982	GMC	Pumper	750	750	Structural	4x2	400		450	1200				30		2100
1976	GMC	Tender	1200		Structural	4x2										2000
1986	IH	QAttack	300	50	Wildland	4x2	150	1150	1000					20		

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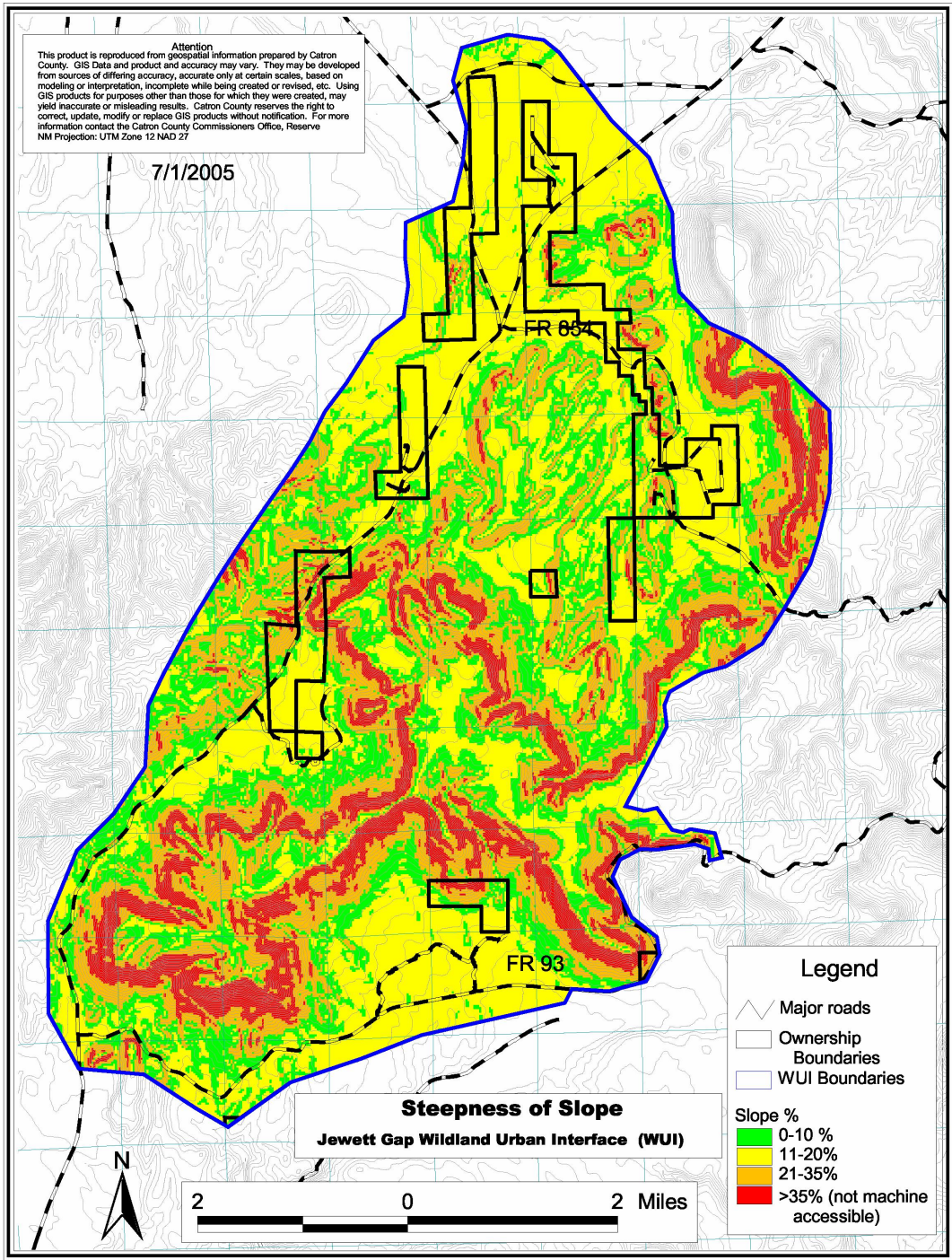
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**JEWETT GAP
COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN**

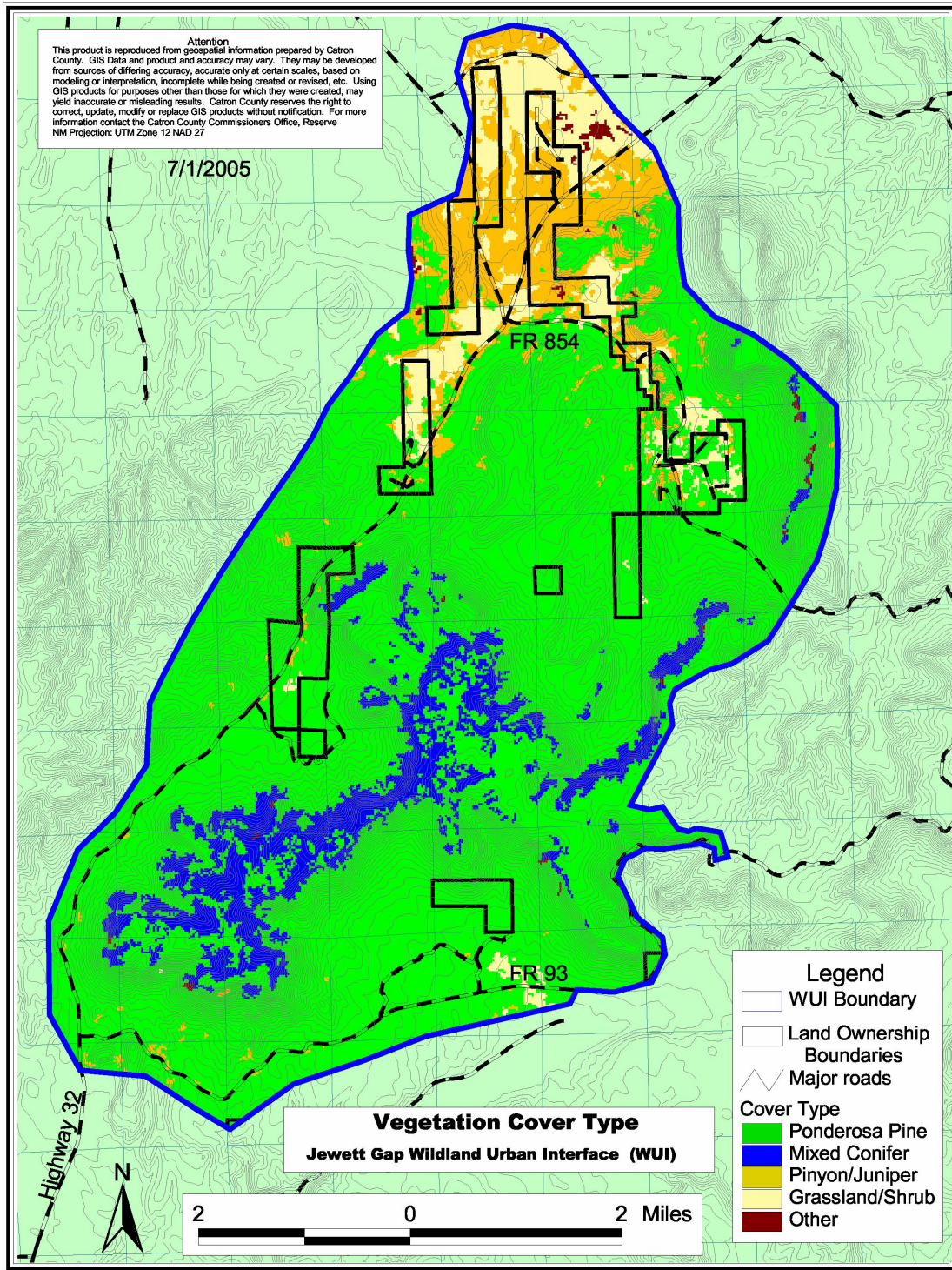
APPENDIX VOLUME 3

Maps

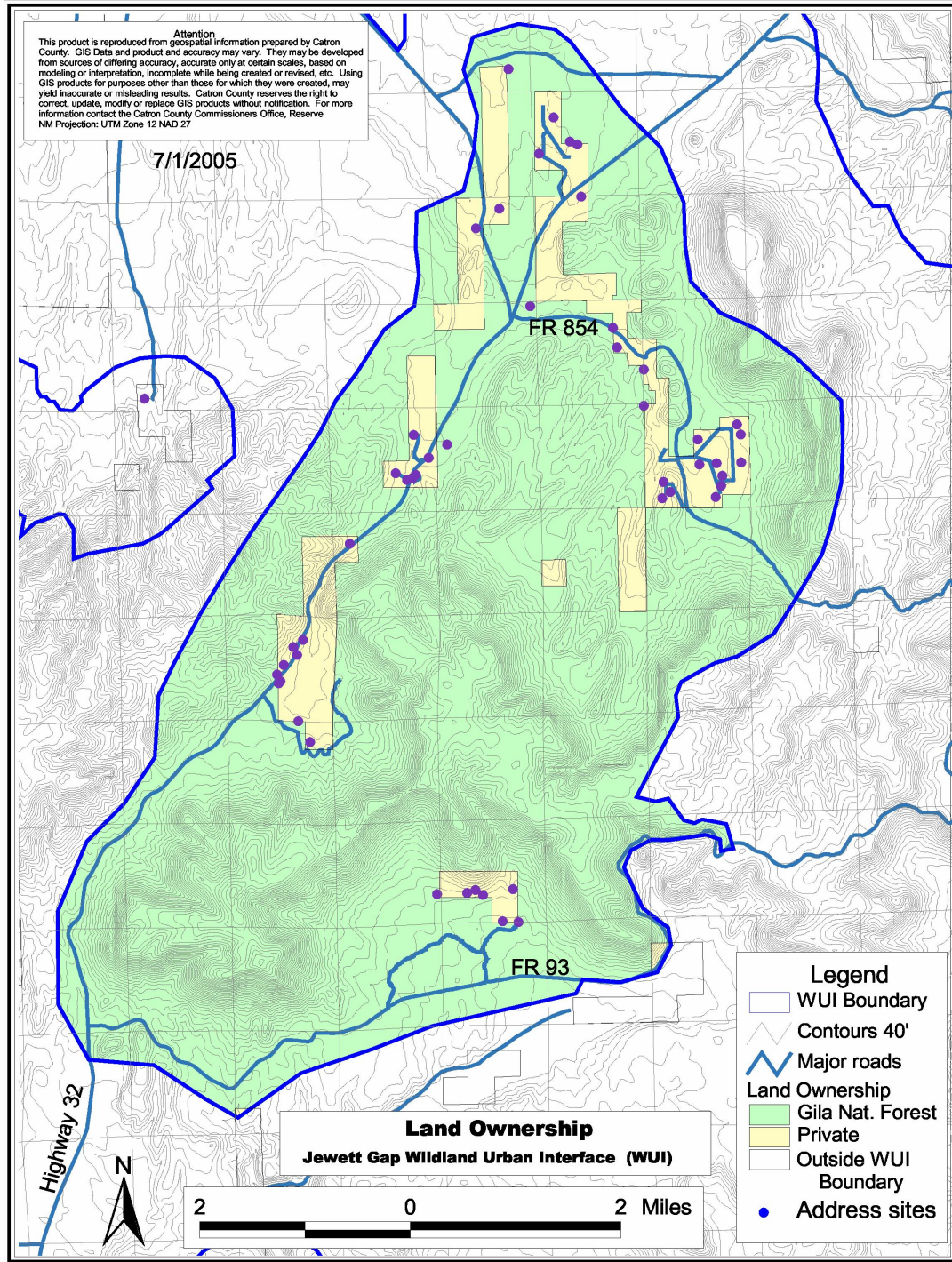
**Supplement to the
CATRON COUNTY
COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN**



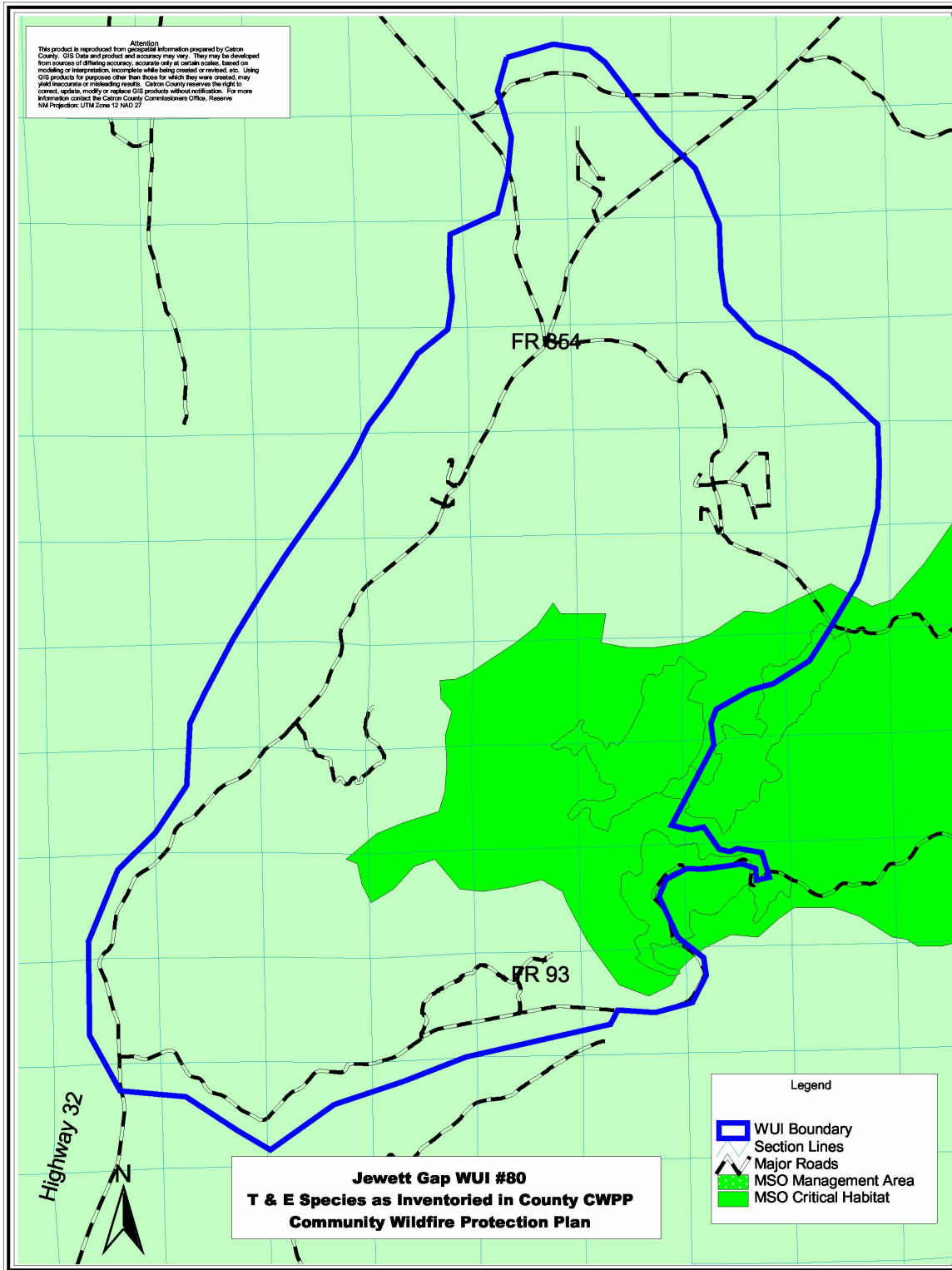
Map 1: Steepness of Slopes



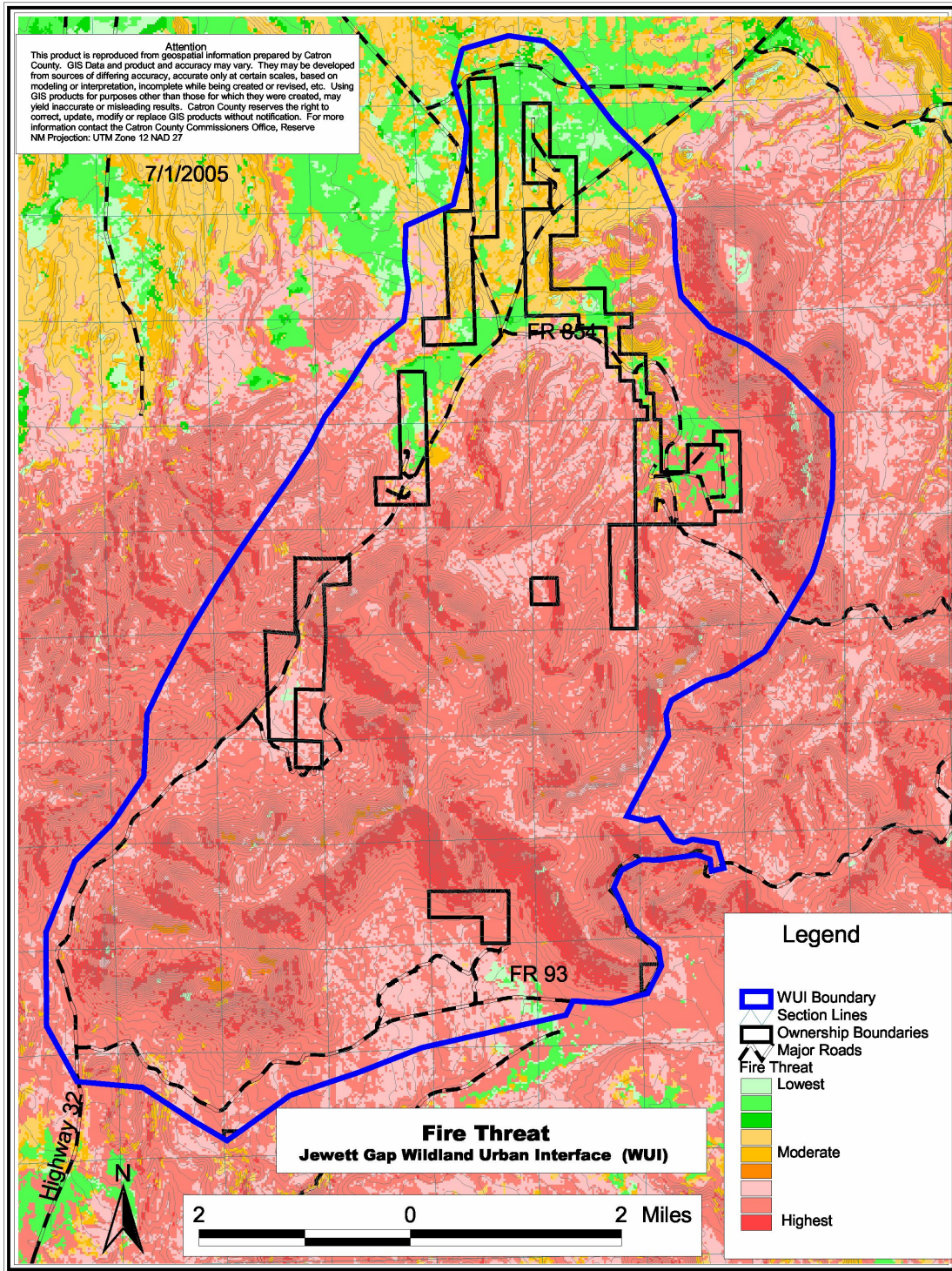
Map 2: Vegetative Type Groups



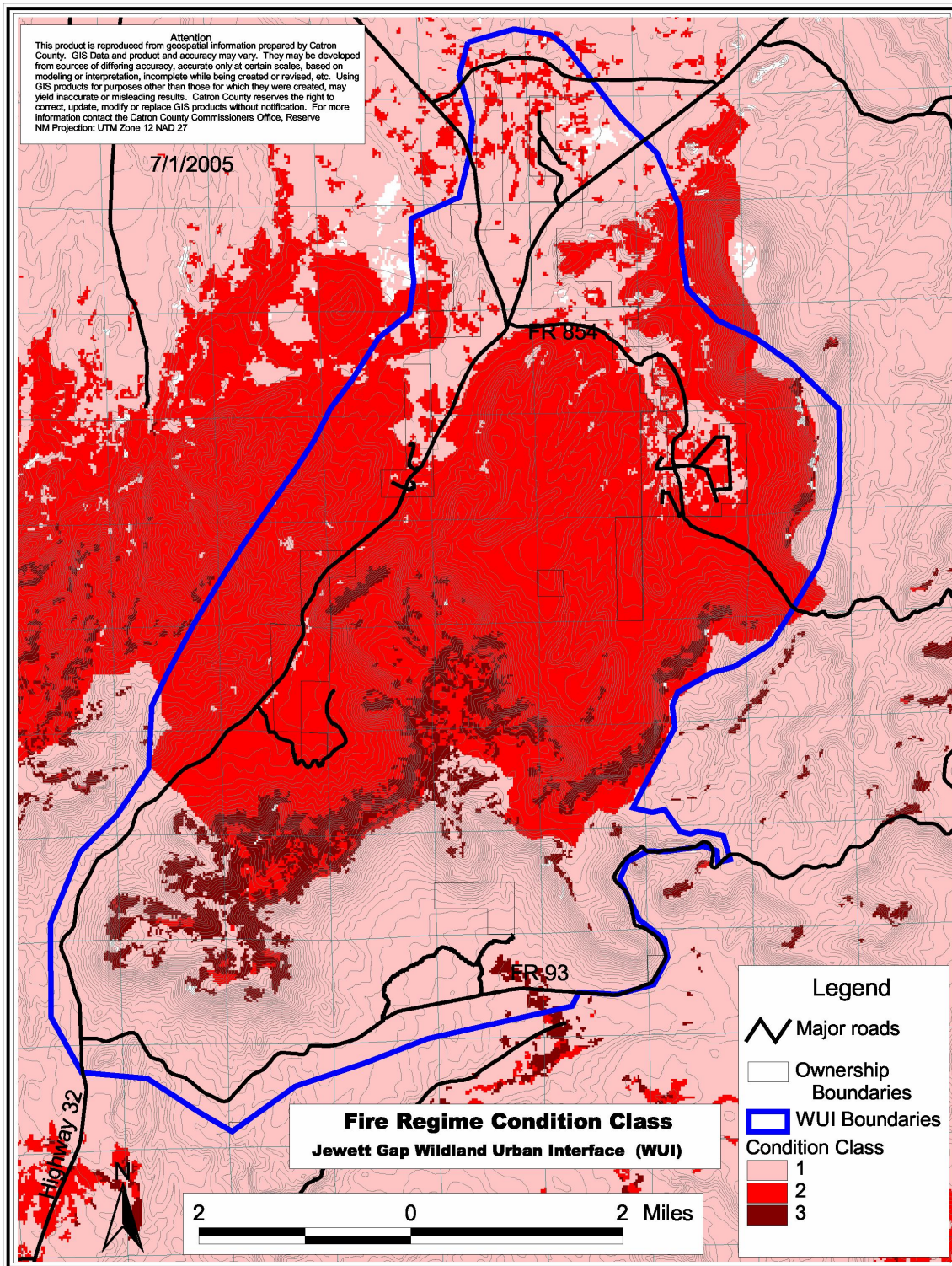
Map 3: Land Ownership



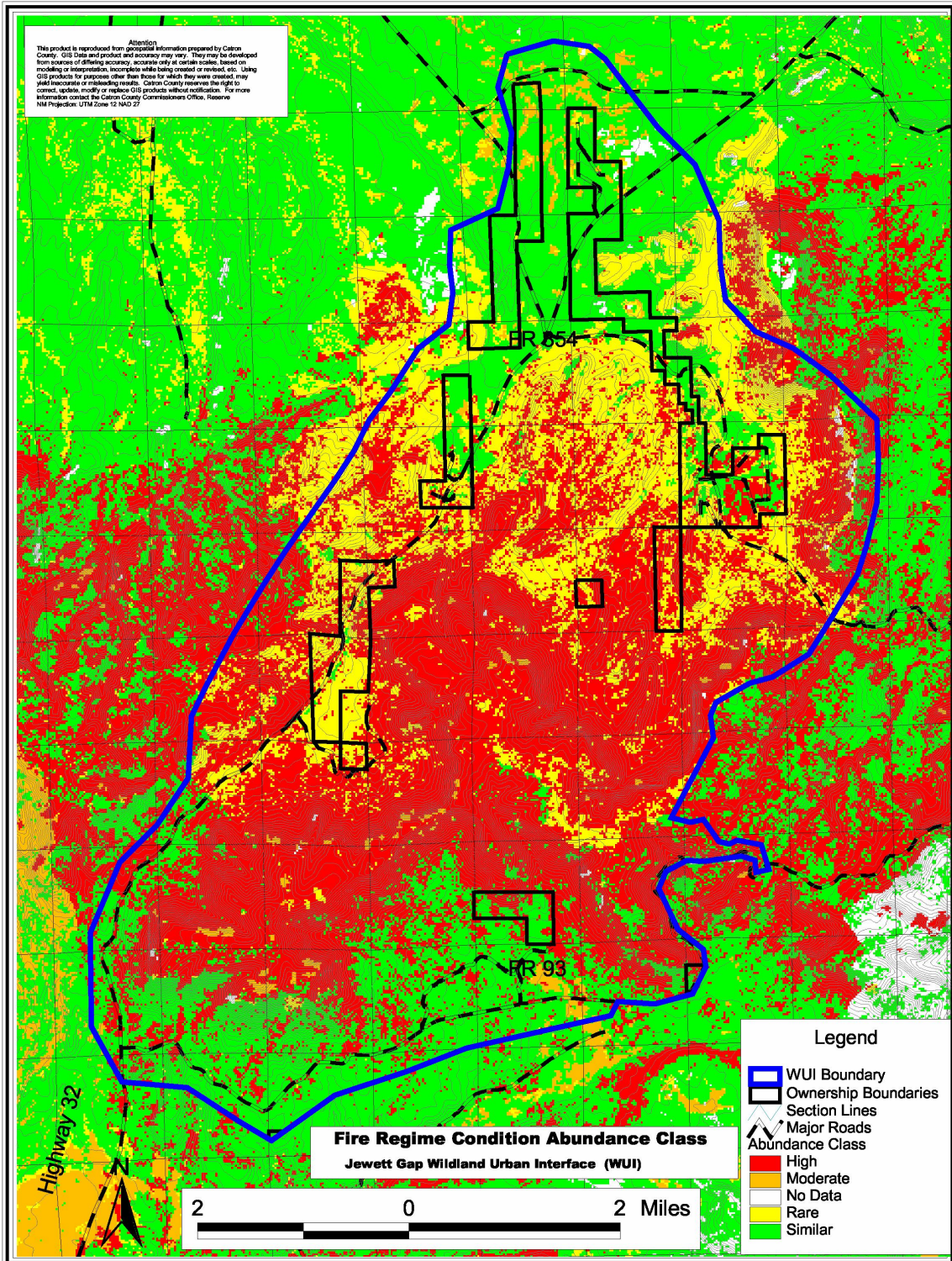
Map 4: Threatened and Endangered Species



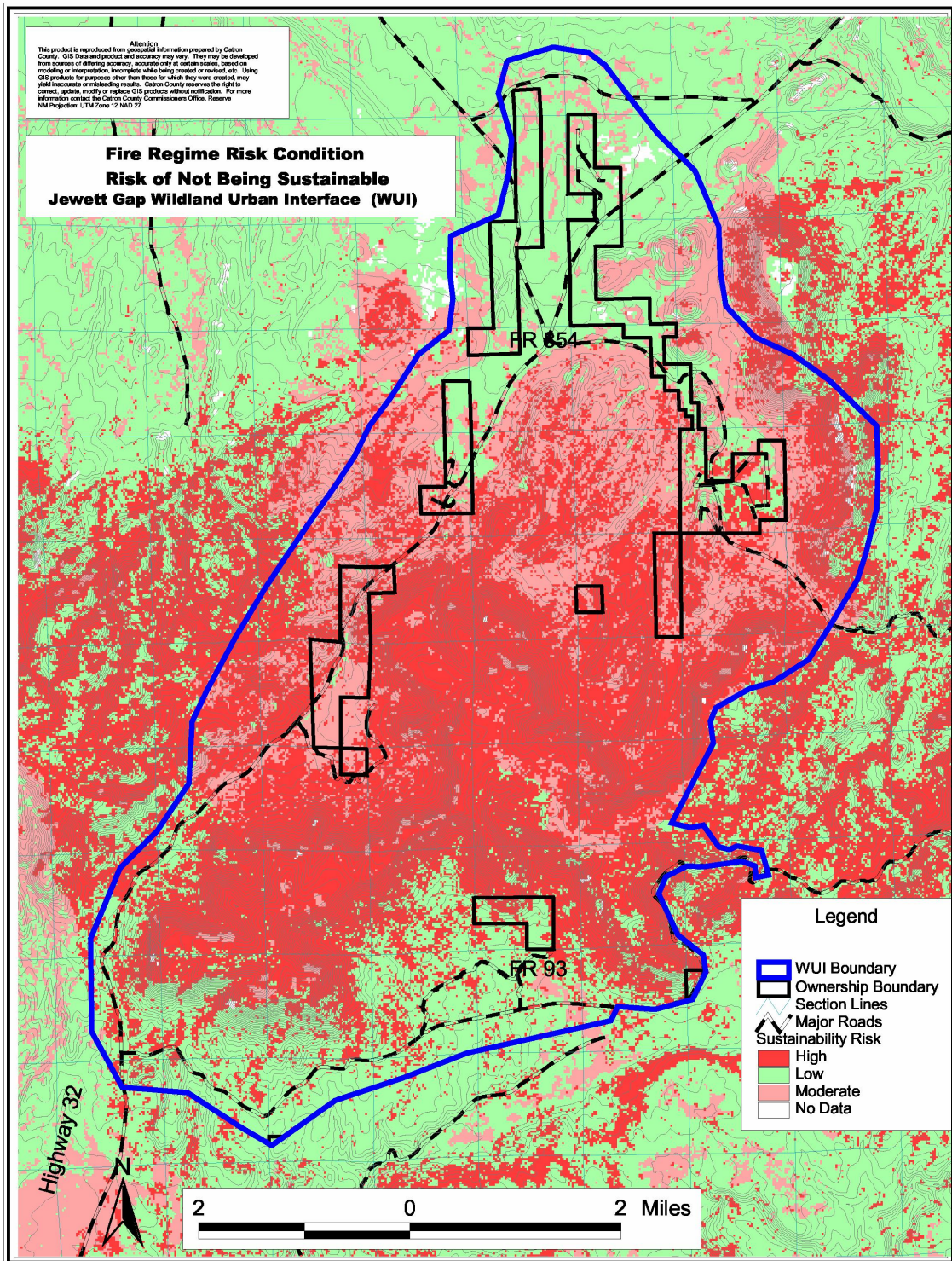
Map 5: FireThreat



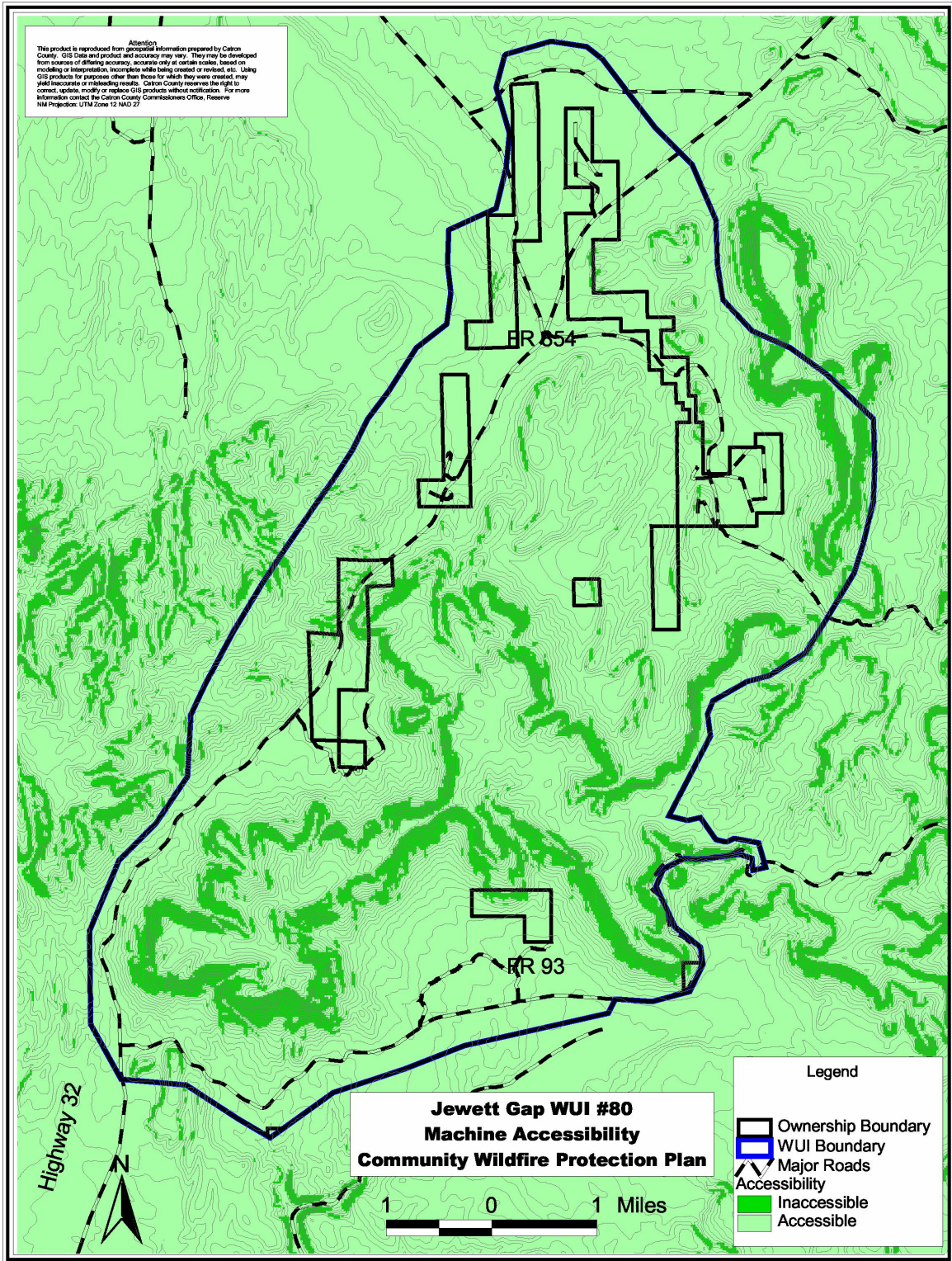
Map 6: Fire Regime Condition Class



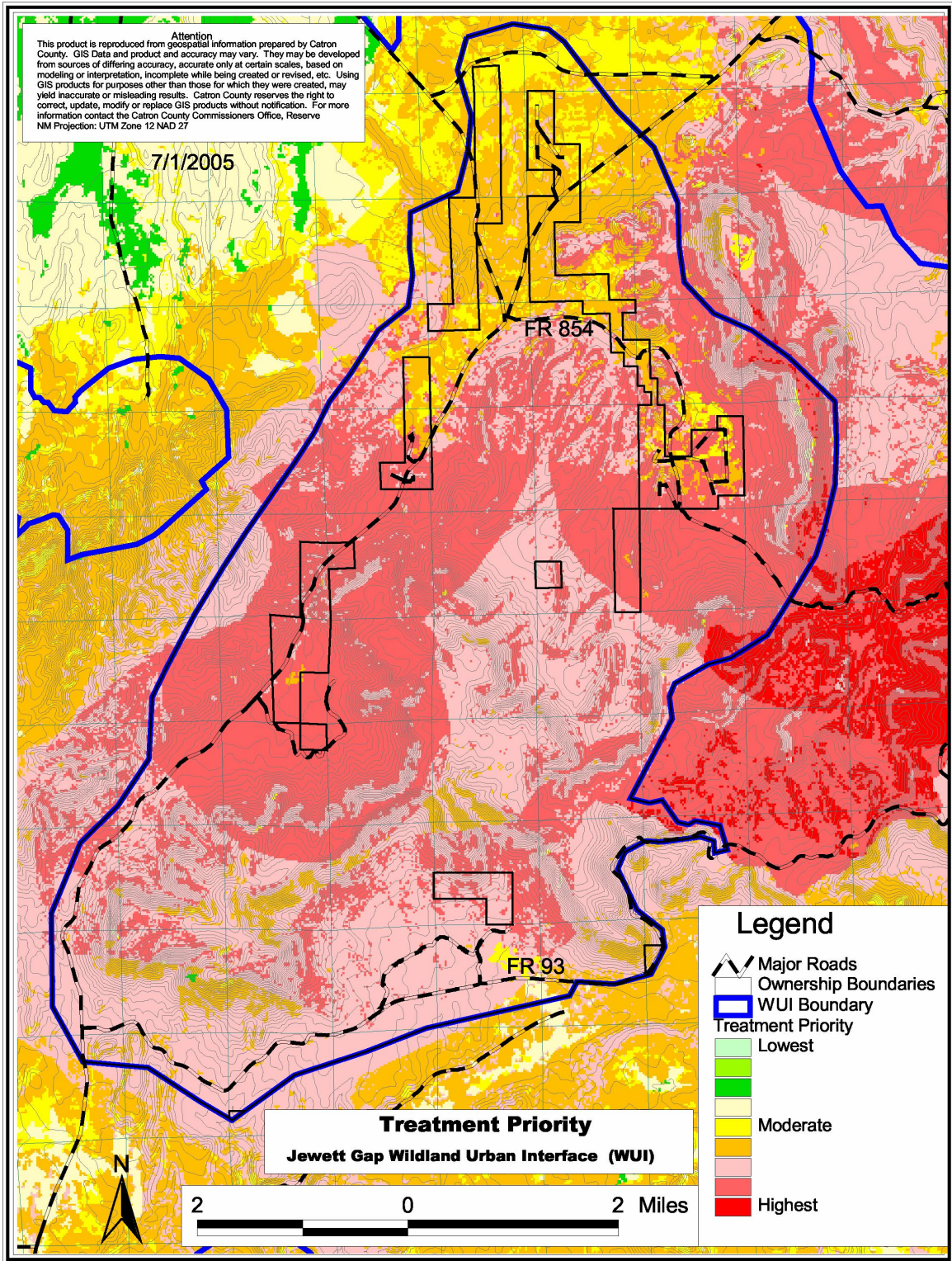
Map 7: FRCC Abundance Class



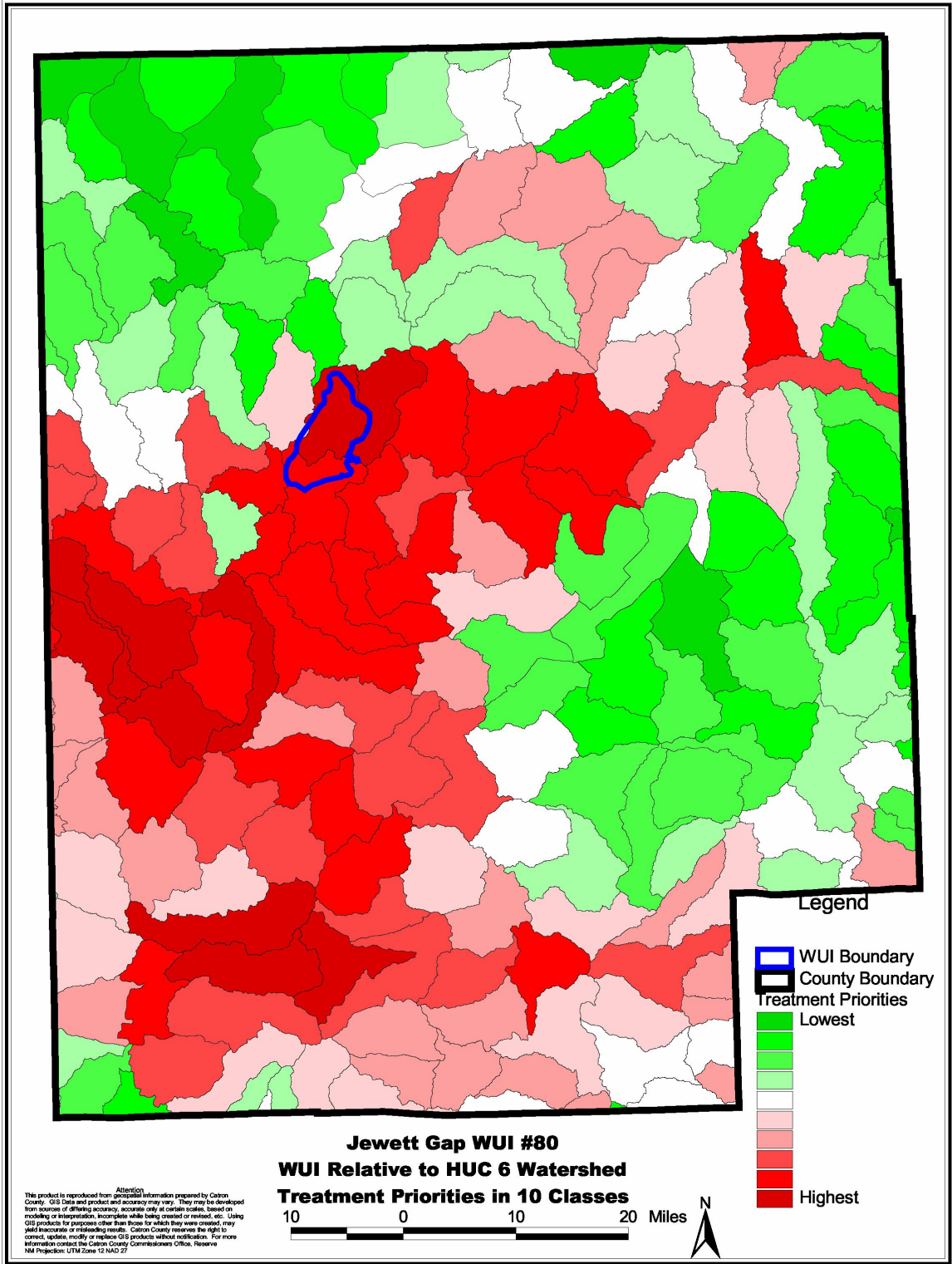
Map 8: FRCC Risk of Vegetative Condition Not Being Sustainable



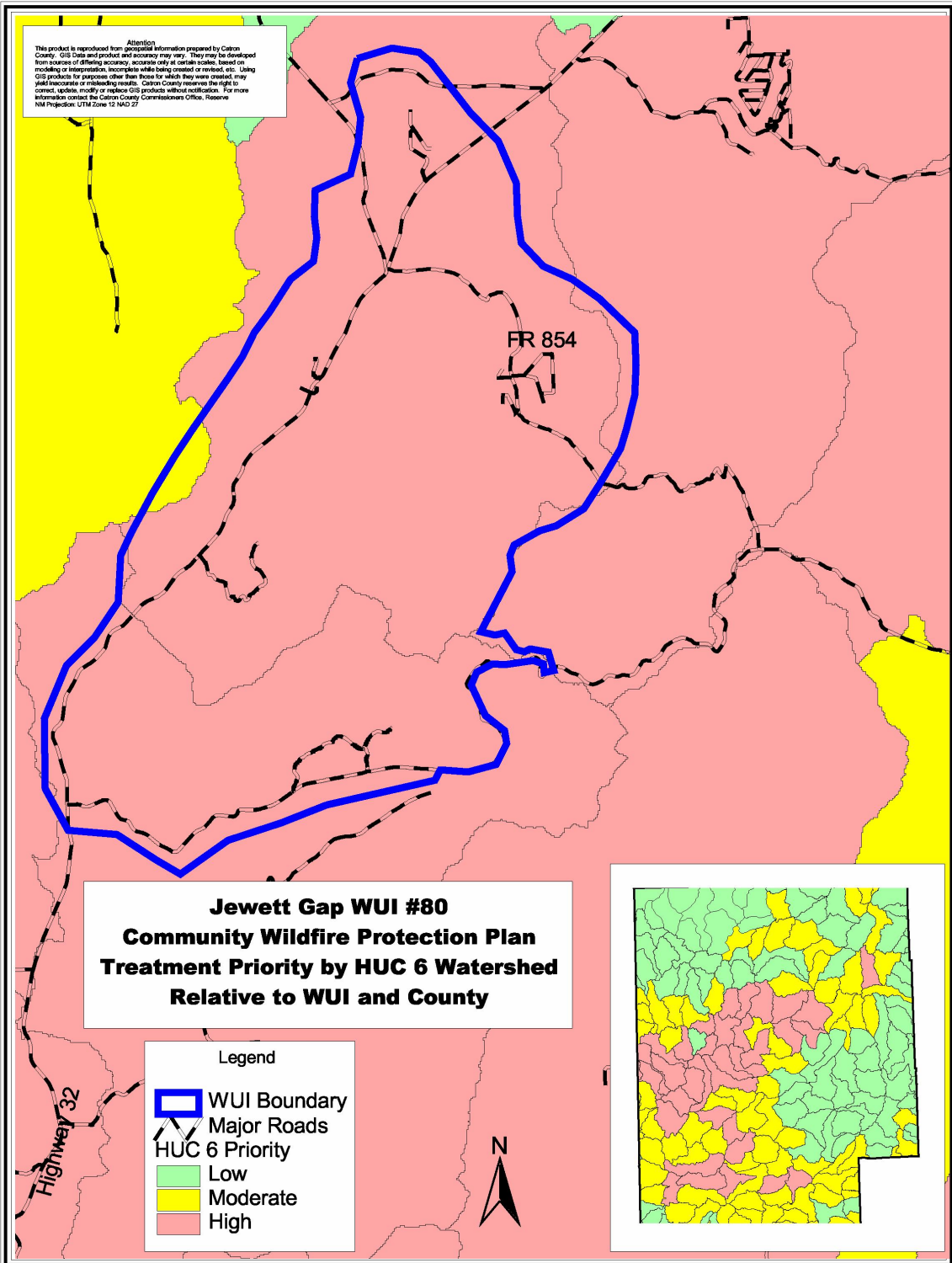
Map 9: Machine Accessible Areas



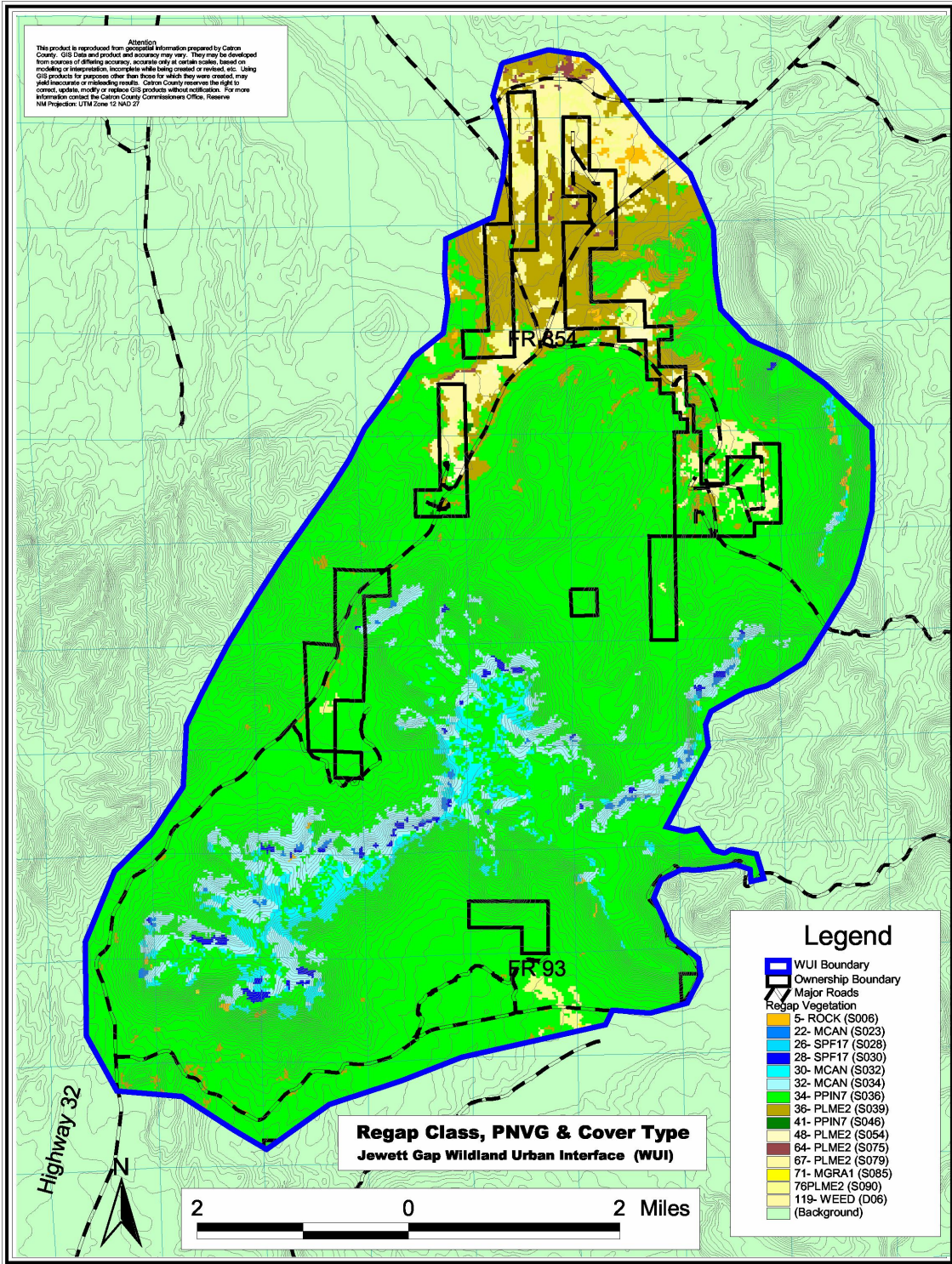
Map 10: Final Treatment Priorities



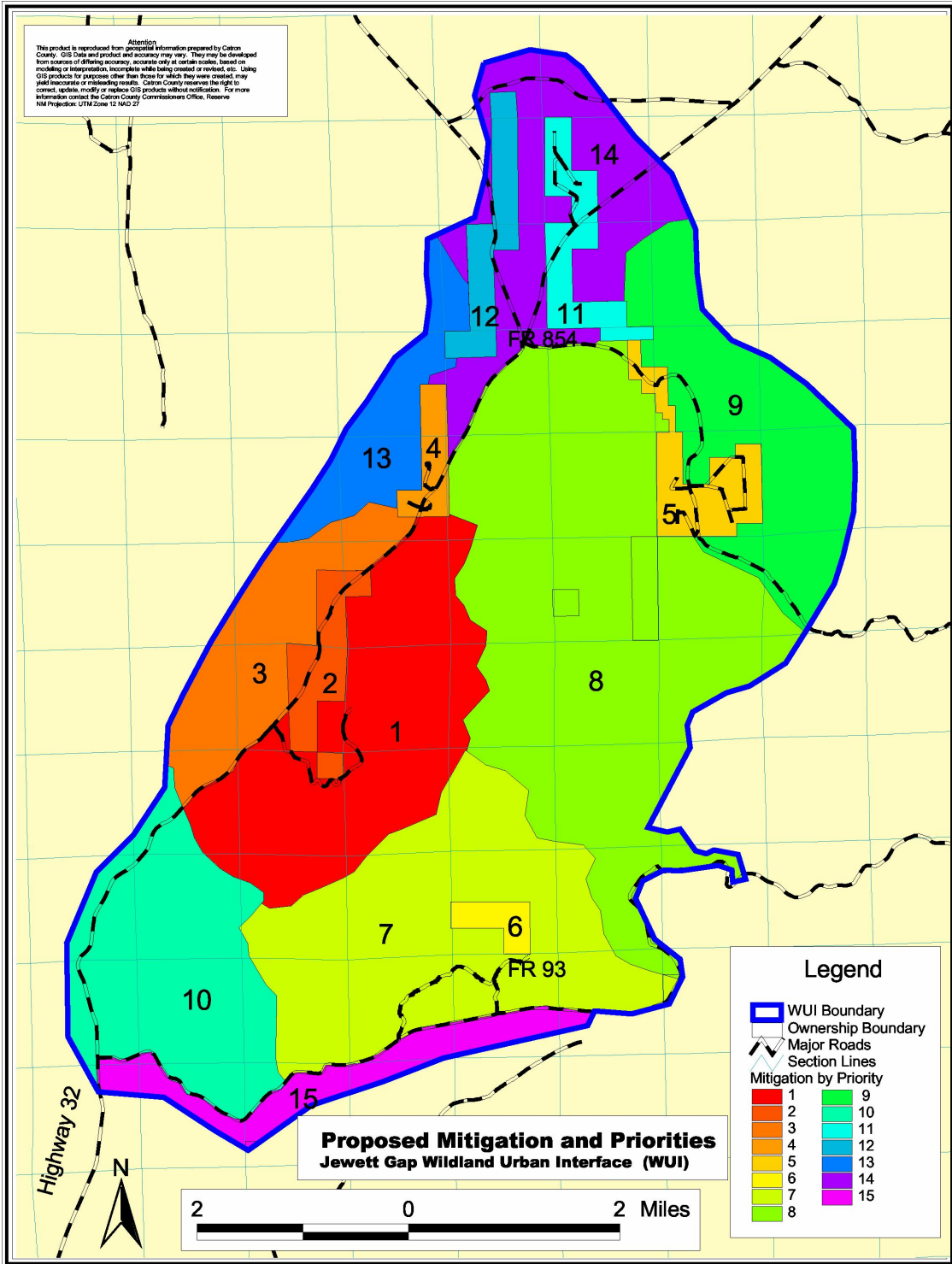
Map 11: WUI Relative to HUC 6 Watersheds



Map 12: Treatment Priority by HUC 6 Watershed



Map 13: Regap Vegetation Types



Map 14: Proposed Mitigation Priorities