

# Crossing Paths

## Project Importance

Crossing Paths is a crucial initiative aimed at promoting wildlife movement and ecological health in the Mission Valley region of western Montana. The project seeks to create safe passage for wildlife through the fragmented landscape by constructing a roadway overpass over a closed-system wildlife corridor. This will enable animals to move more freely across the valley, promoting genetic diversity and maintaining healthy ecosystems. The project will also benefit recreation opportunities in the area and improve water quality in the Mission Stream and downstream watersheds. The proposed corridor is an important effort to support biodiversity, protect natural resources, and promote human well-being in the region.

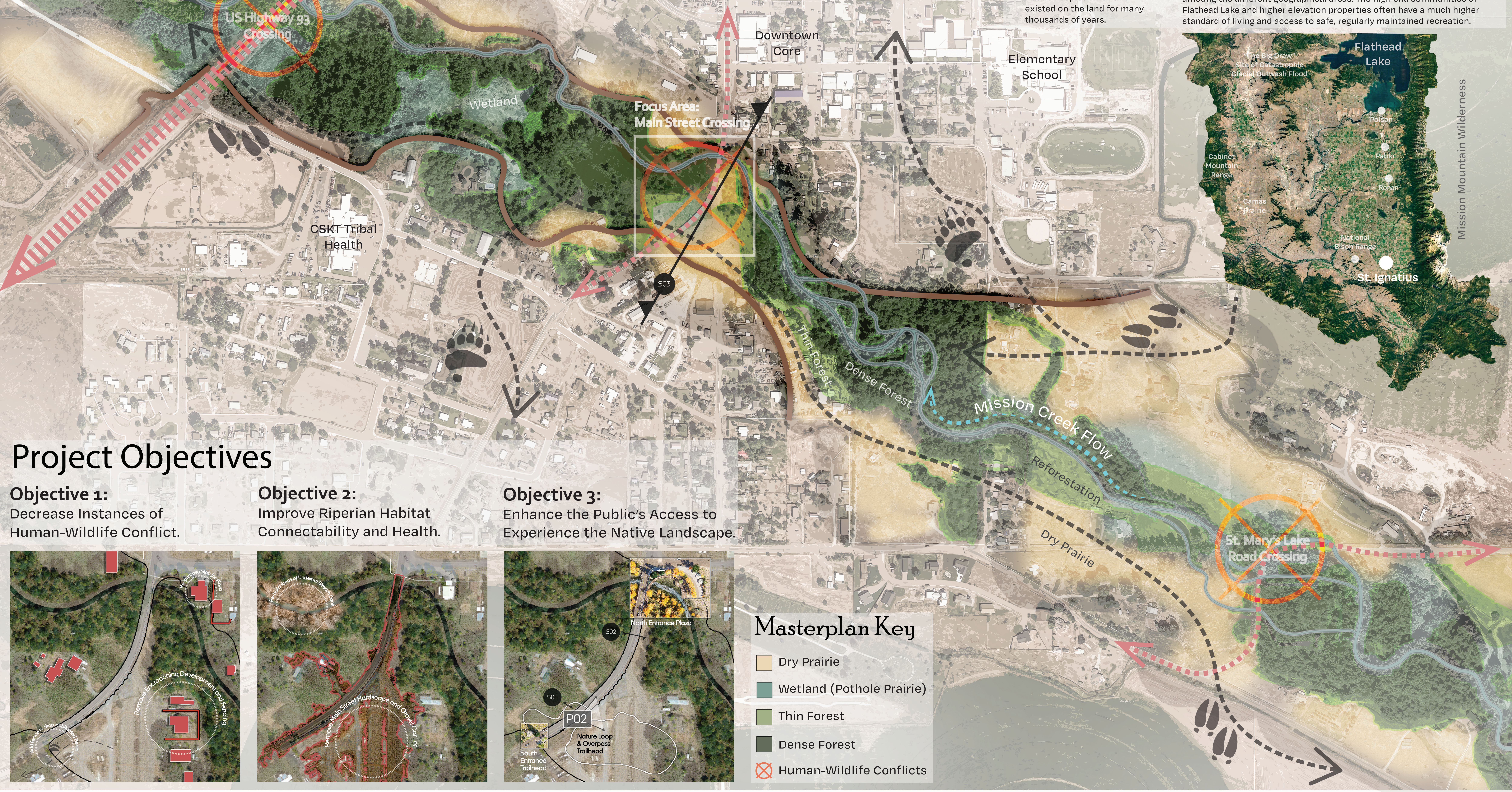
Being a reservation, there is a high rate of wealth inequality that exists among the different geographical areas. The high end communities of Flathead Lake and higher elevation properties often have a much higher standard of living and access to safe, regularly maintained recreation.



Established in 1855 by the Hellgate Treaty, it is the ancestral home of the Salish, Kootenai, and Pend Oreille Native Peoples who have existed on the land for many thousands of years.



## Landscape Planning for Human & Wildlife Balance

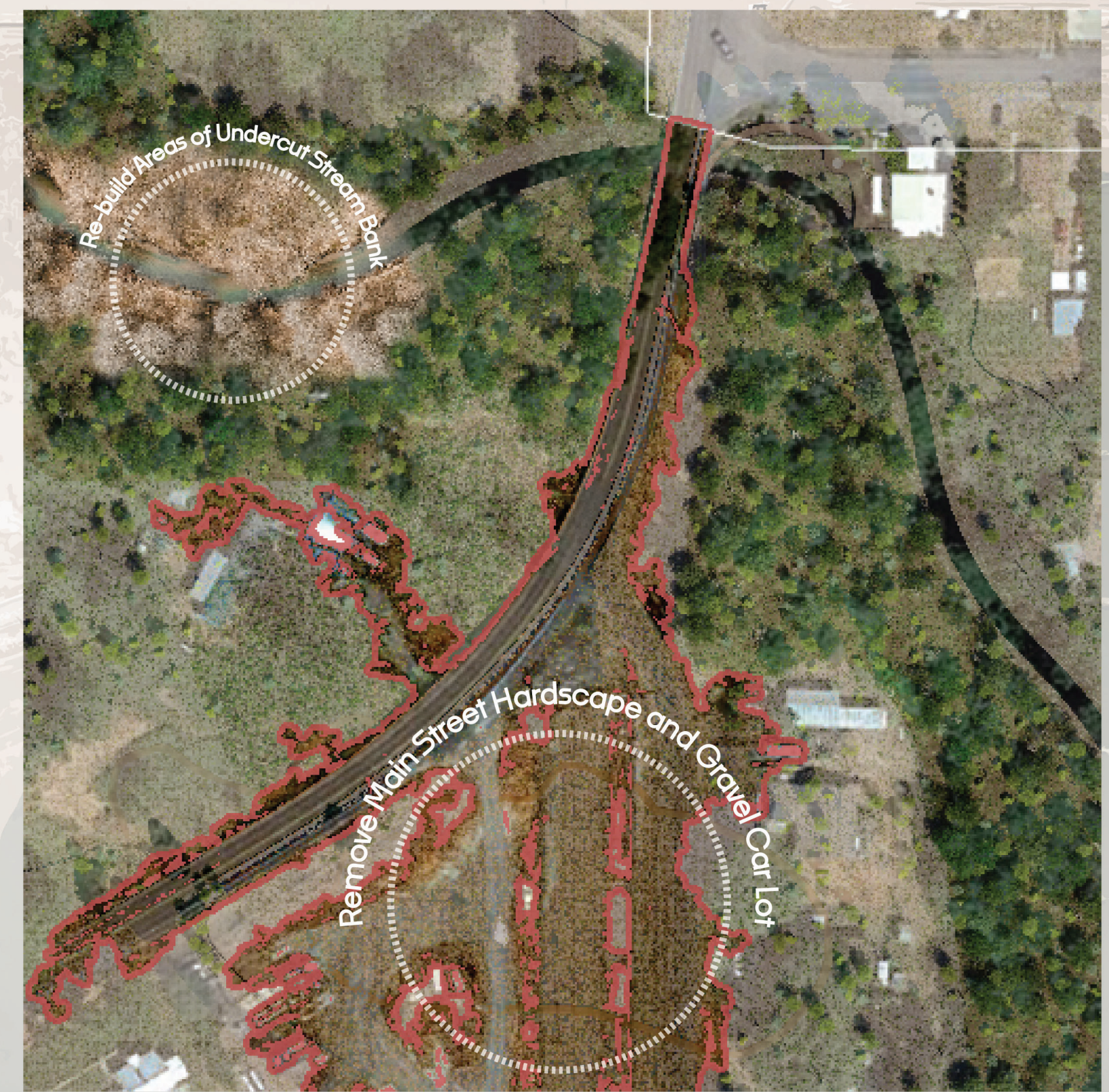
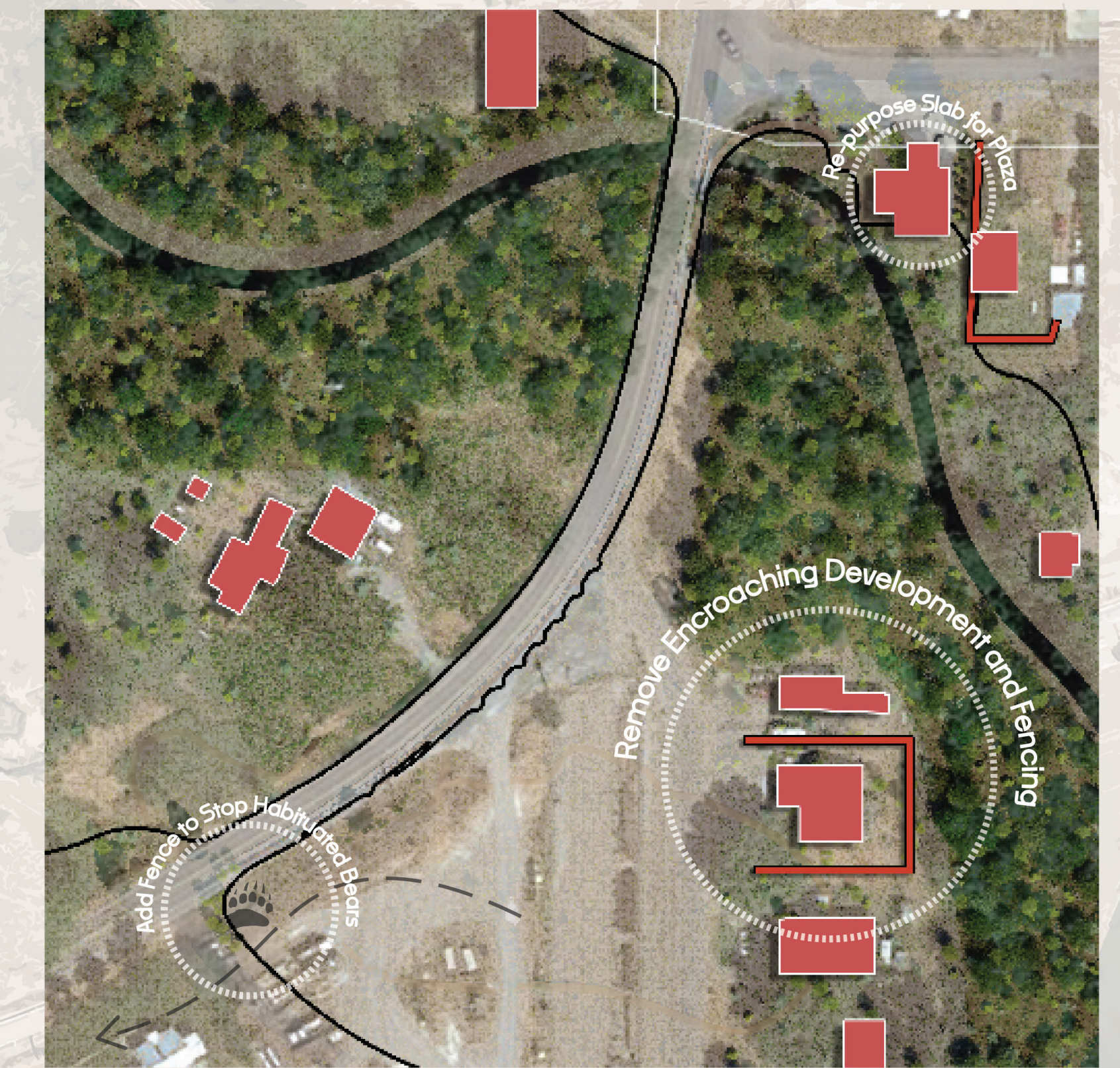


## Project Objectives

**Objective 1:**  
Decrease Instances of Human-Wildlife Conflict.

**Objective 2:**  
Improve Riparian Habitat Connectivity and Health.

**Objective 3:**  
Enhance the Public's Access to Experience the Native Landscape.



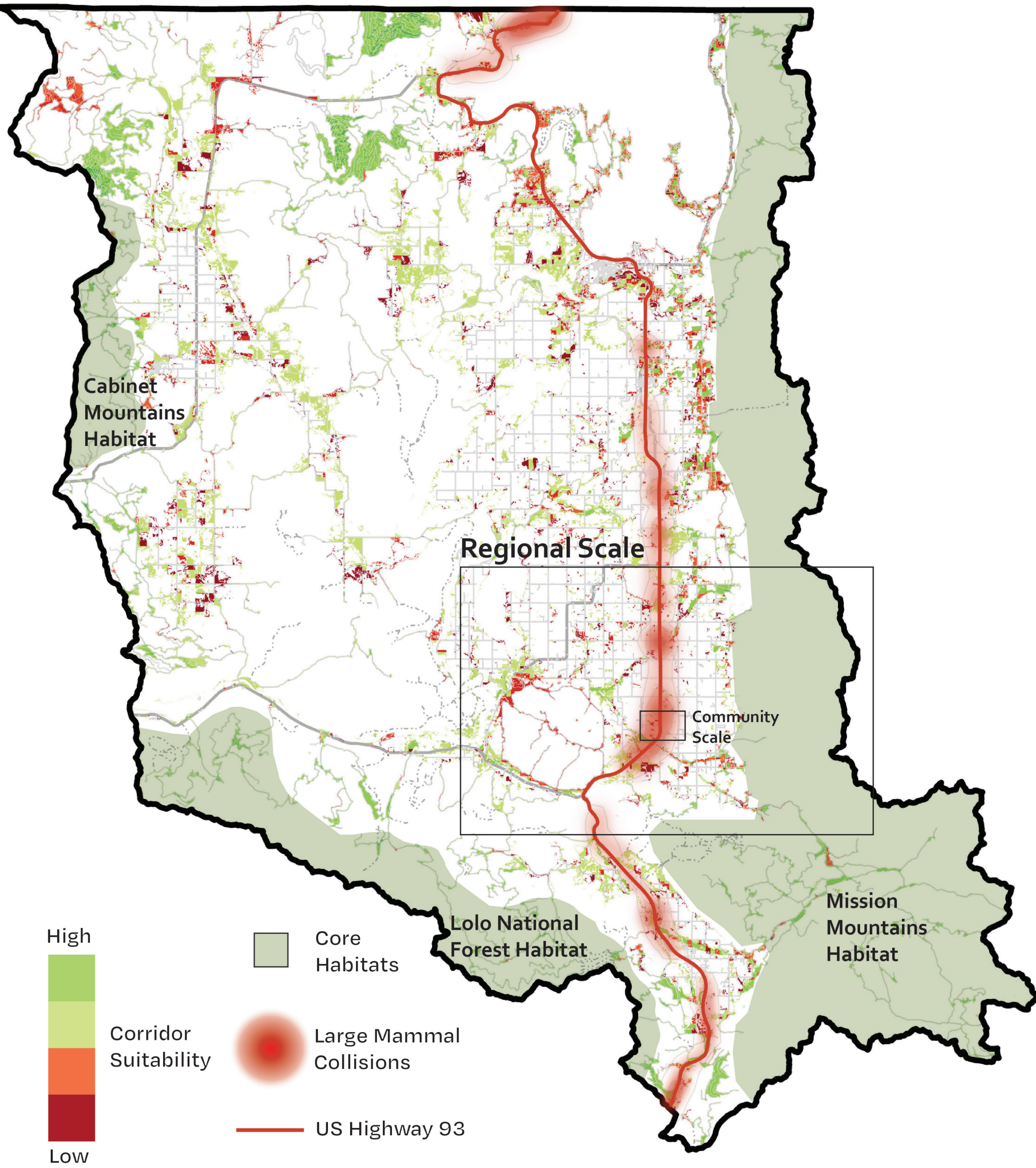
## Masterplan Key

- Dry Prairie
- Wetland (Pothole Prairie)
- Thin Forest
- Dense Forest
- Human-Wildlife Conflicts

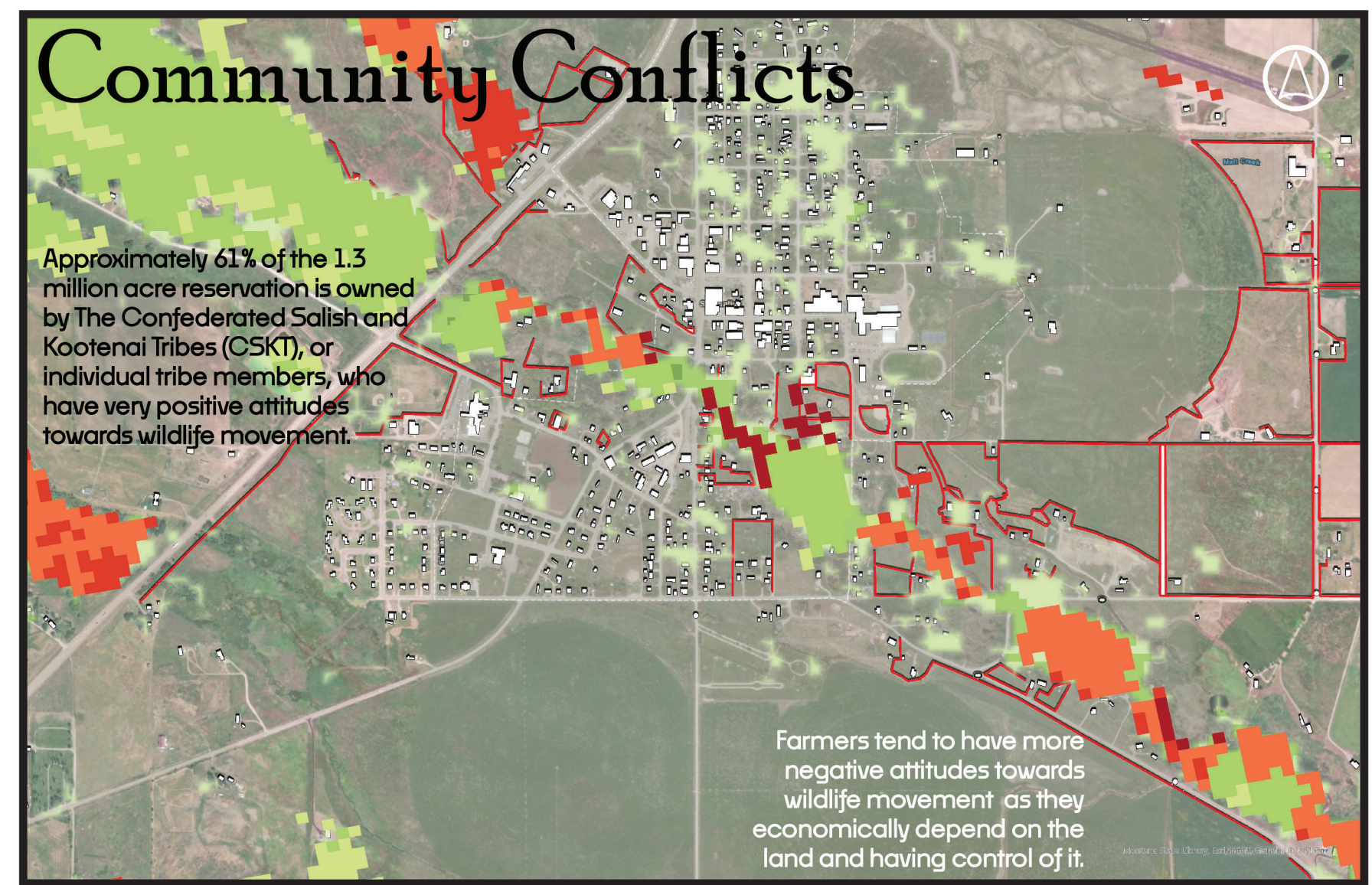
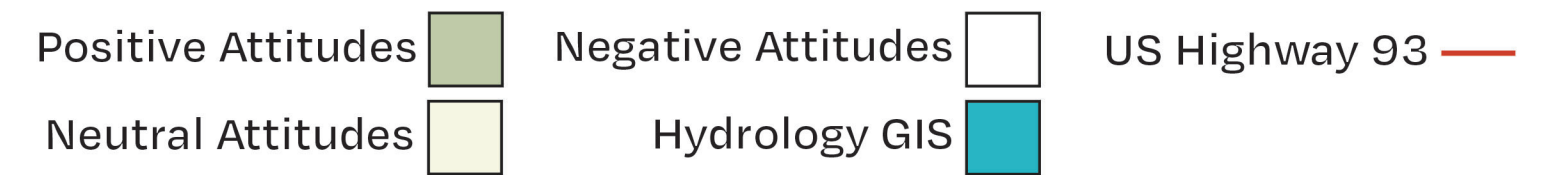
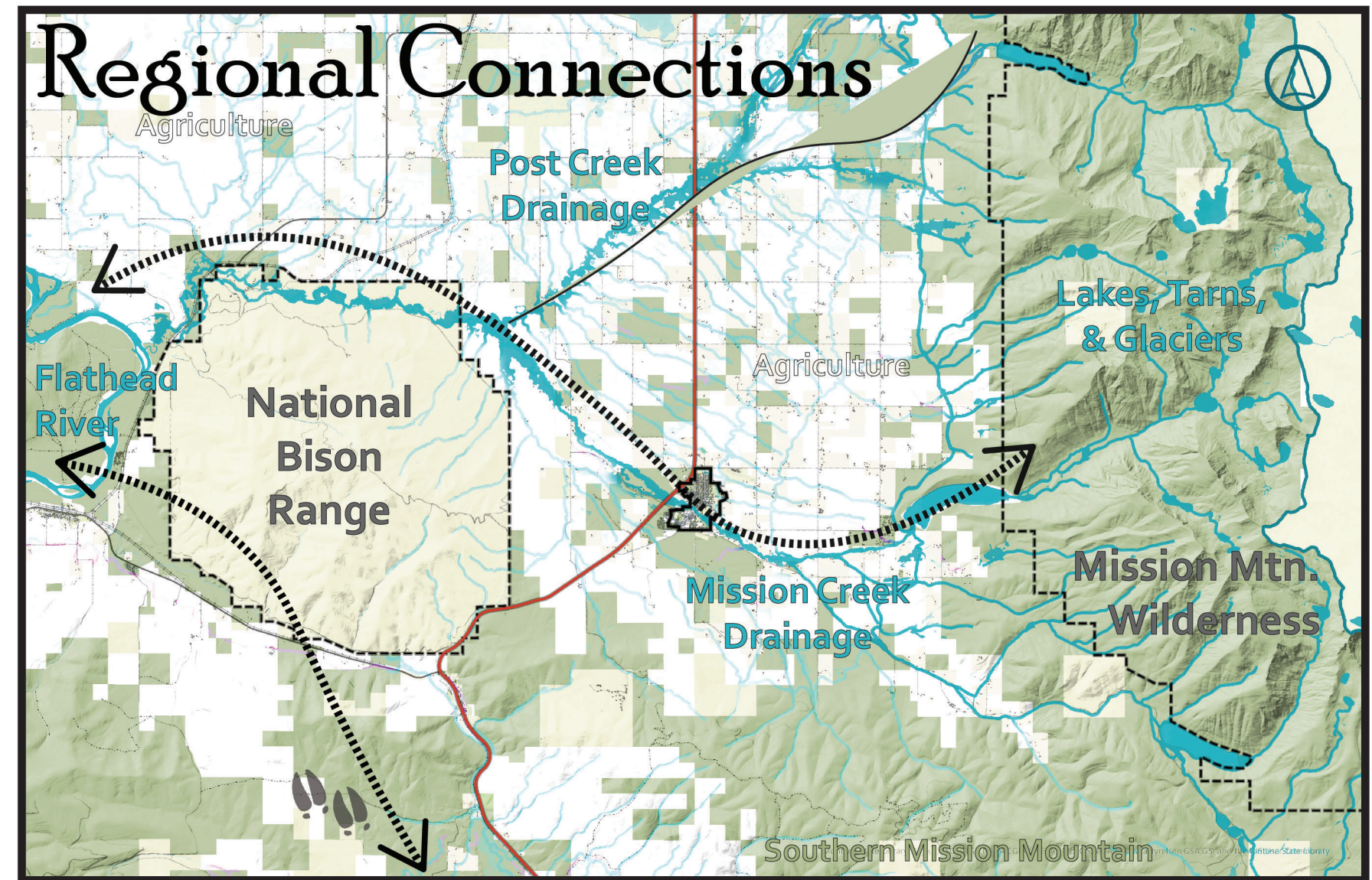
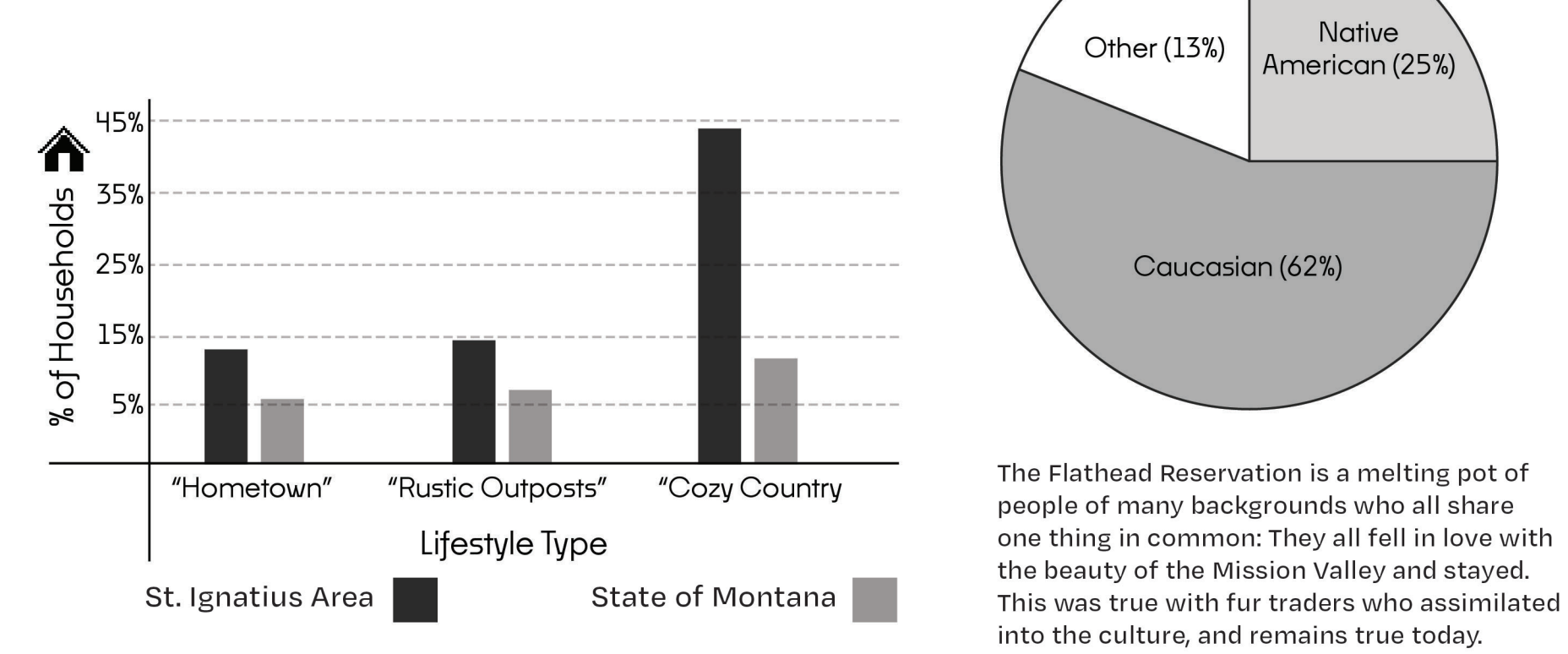
# A Fragmented Valley

The Mission Valley is a region located in western Montana, on the Flathead Reservation. Historically, it was home to a variety of wildlife species, including elk, bison, and grizzly bears, among others. However, years of property re-allotment, land dividing, and agriculture have created a fragmented landscape that poses significant challenges for wildlife movement and migration.

Wildlife corridors are essential for maintaining healthy ecosystems and promoting biodiversity. When wildlife can move around freely, they can access new food sources, find mates, and establish new territories. However, fragmented habitats can lead to isolation, genetic inbreeding, and decreased survival rates, which can ultimately threaten the long-term survival of species. Therefore, it is crucial to establish wildlife corridors that allow animals to move around the Mission Valley and other fragmented landscapes, connecting habitats and promoting genetic diversity.



# Community Profile



# Historical Signage

"The streams, rivers, and lakes of the Mission Valley were used as meeting places for trade among Native Americans for thousands of years. This practice continued into the settlement of the Valley. Fort Connah, a fur trade settlement of the Hudson Bay Company, became the first white settlement in the Mission Valley. Setup along Post Creek, it became the hub for the exchange of ideas, culture, and goods in the valley. Fort Connah's success was a catalyst for inter-cultural marriages that many residents of the Mission Valley can trace their heritage to today!"



# Flexible Community Spaces



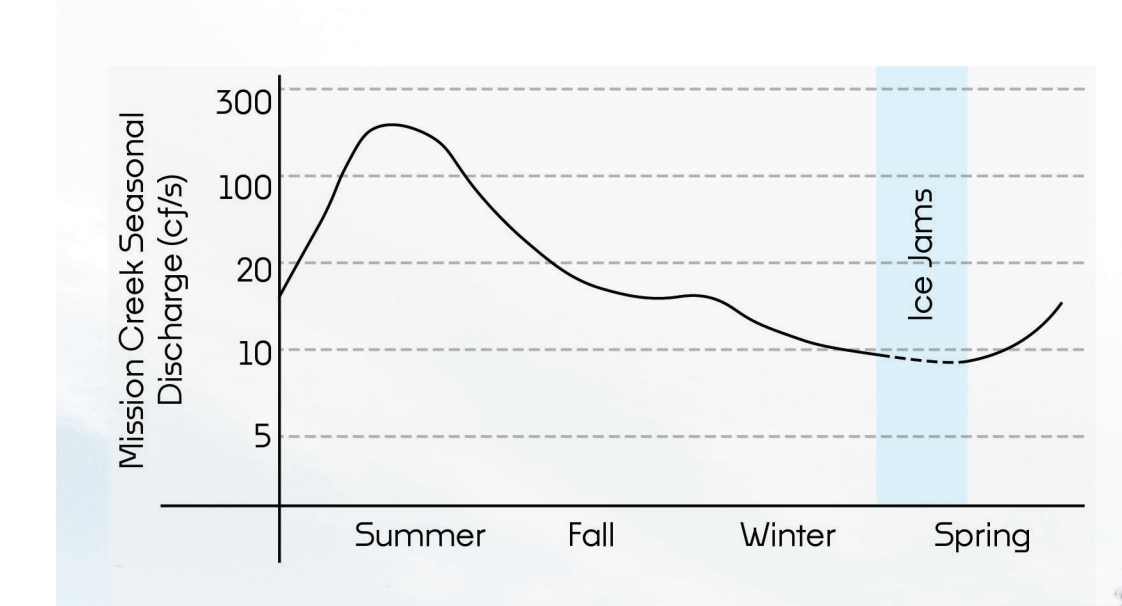


### Site Plan Key

North Entrance Plaza		South Entrance		
A	Parallel Parking	I	Trailhead Gate	
B	Cedar Grove + Constructed Wetland	J	Boulder Retaining Wall (2-6' H)	
C	Teepee Inspired Canopy Tents	K	ADA Ramp	
D	Natural Wood Stairs	L	Start of 5' Sidewalk (typ.)	
E	Informal Corridor Entrance	M	Start of 8' Cantelever Path	
F	Communal Firepits	N	Aspen Grove (Populus tremula)	
G	Small Group Log Seating			
H	Mixed Evergreen Buffer			
			P00	Perspective Callouts

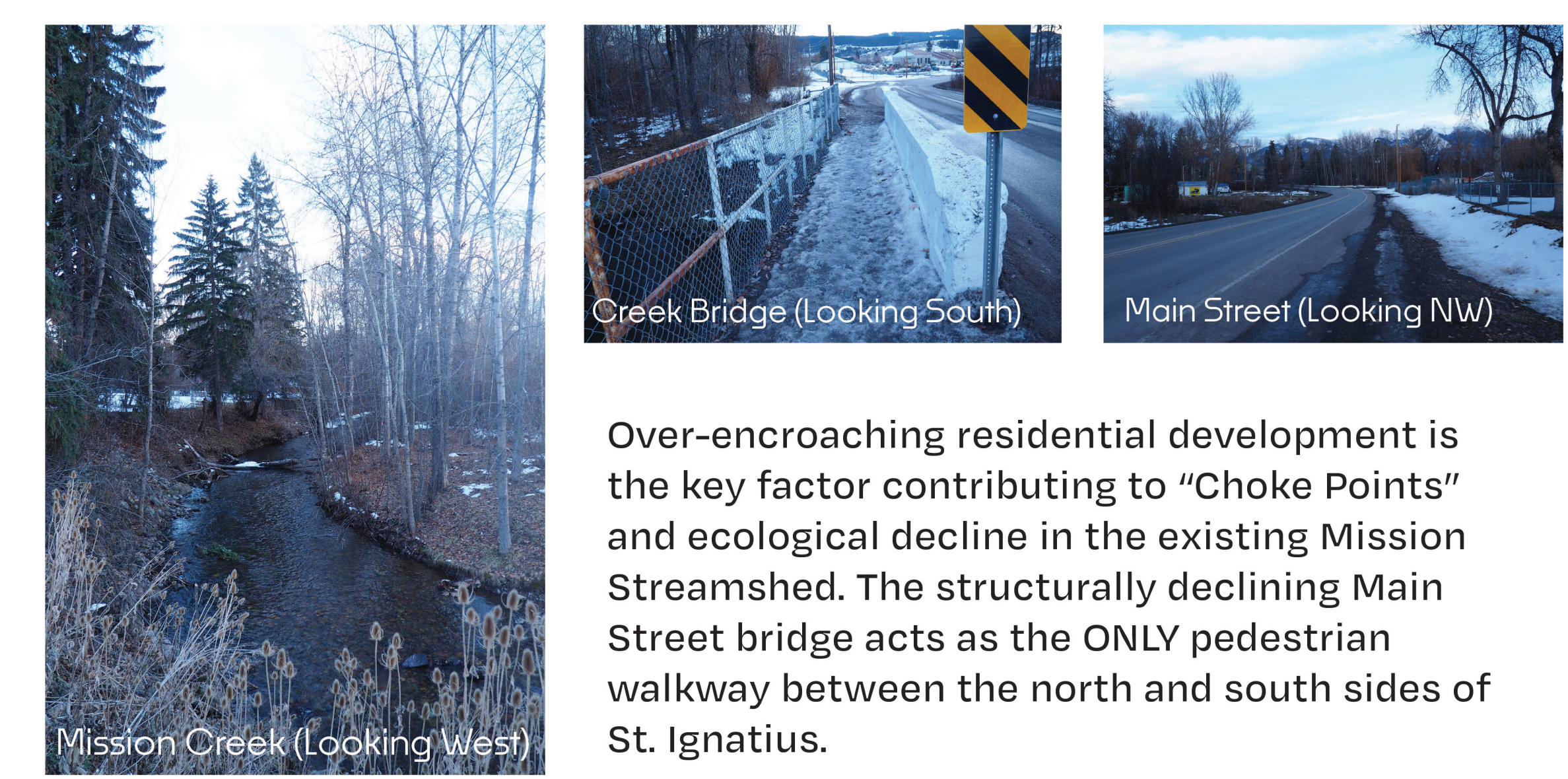


## Terraced Stormwater Treatment [S01]



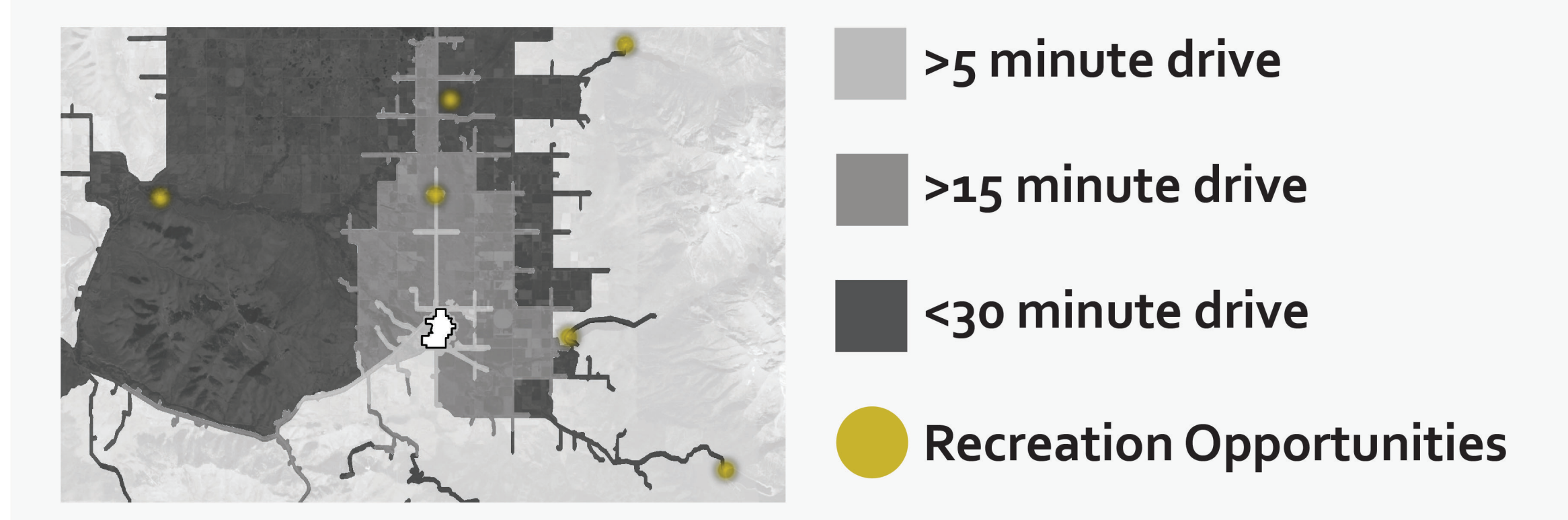
## Project Site Analysis

The site analysis for this project involved examining local recreation opportunities in the St. Ignatius area and identifying public attitudes and beliefs towards wildlife movement in the area. This information was used to inform the design of the wildlife corridor and ensure that it was both effective in preserving the ecosystem and well-received by the community. It was found that St. Ignatius lacks well-maintained opportunities to experience the landscape. Most residents drive over 30 minutes to larger cities (Polson & Missoula) or 2+ hours to Glacier National Park to experience Montana's beauty. It was also found that property owners are generally supportive of wildlife movement interventions. Overall, farmers and ranchers have negative opinions of wildlife movement due to their financial dependence on the land.

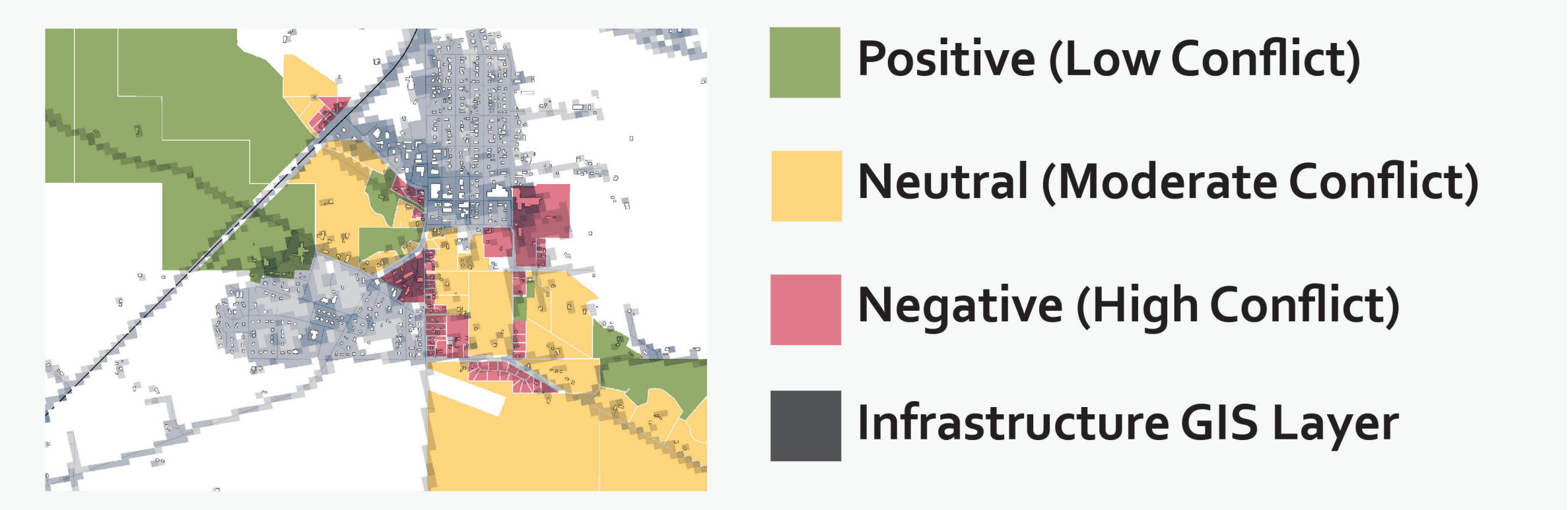


Over-encroaching residential development is the key factor contributing to "Choke Points" and ecological decline in the existing Mission Streamshed. The structurally declining Main Street bridge acts as the ONLY pedestrian walkway between the north and south sides of St. Ignatius.

## Local Recreation Opportunities



## Public Attitude & Beliefs





# Key Wildlife Corridor Species

<b>Habituated Grizzly &amp; Black Bears</b> 	<b>Deer and Moose (Undulates)</b> 	<b>Coyote &amp; Wolf</b> 	<b>Cougar &amp; Bobcat</b> 	<b>Bull Trout (Threatened)</b> 
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**Highest Level: Community Gathering Plaza**  
**Middle Level: Small Group Programming**  
**Lowest Level: Cantilevered Observation Deck**

# Wildlife Monitored Trail

Cutting edge wildlife movement monitoring and pattern recognition is an invaluable tool that the city of St. Ignatius could take advantage of to create a safer trail experience for both Humans and Wildlife. Additionally, in-town opportunities for trail recreation would allow a wider range of users to feel comfortable in nature, something that trails in the Mission Mountain Wilderness do not necessarily offer. Wildlife monitoring sensors and light warning systems are dispersed along the trail around corners, in dense forested areas, and under the overpass to give a heads up to users of wildlife in the area. The best protection against dangerous wildlife such as the Grizzly Bear is both parties making themselves known to each other.

**Aerial**

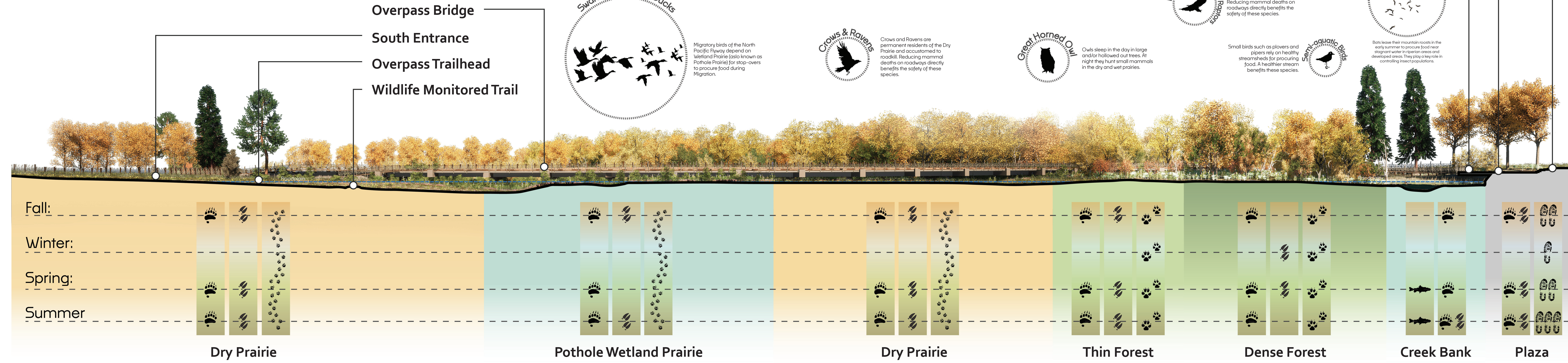
McDonald Peak (17 Miles, 9,200 ft)  
 Mount Kakashe (10 Miles, 8,833 ft)  
 Mountaineer Peak (17 Miles, 7,700 ft)  
 St. Mary's Peaks  
 Mission Falls (6.5 Miles, 4,600 ft)  
 Mission Reservoir (3 Miles, 5,546 ft)

Corridor Continuation Trail Spur

Main Street North to Downtown Core

Main Street South to Tribal Center and Hospital

Valley Floor at Trailheads (3,900 ft)



# Wildlife Corridor Section [S03]

Scale: 1/16" = 1'0"

# [S04] Scale: 1/2" = 1'0"

