ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

for the

2004 CULVERT REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Thompson Creek (1)
Bear Creek (1)
Quedo Creek (1)
Draper Creek (1)
McMullin Creek (2)

EA# OR-117-04-09

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
MEDFORD DISTRICT
GRANTS PASS RESOURCE AREA

June 2004

Dear Reader:

We appreciate your interest in the BLM's public land management activities. We also appreciate your taking the time to review this environmental assessment (EA). If you would like to provide us with written comments regarding this project or EA, please send them to Abbie Jossie, Field Manager, Grants Pass Resource Area at 3040 Biddle Road, Medford, OR 97504 or email them to *or110mb@or.blm.gov*.

If you would like to comment confidentially, please be aware that comments, including names and addresses of respondents, will be available for public review or may be held in a file available for public inspection and review unless you request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this clearly at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or officials of organizations or businesses will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

I look forward to your continued interest in the management of our public lands.

Abbie Jossie
Field Manager
Grants Pass Resource Area

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
MEDFORD DISTRICT

EA COVER SHEET

RESOURCE AREA: Grants Pass FY & EA #: OR-117-04-09

ACTION/TITLE: 2004 Culvert Replacement Project

LOCATION: Grants Pass Resource Area, Josephine County, Oregon

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1.0 Purpose of and Need for Action

1.1 Introduction

This environmental assessment (EA) will assist in the decision-making process by assessing the environmental and human effects resulting from implementing the proposed project or alternatives. The EA will also assist in determining if an environmental impact statement (EIS) needs to be prepared or if a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) is appropriate.

This EA tiers to the following documents:

1. *Final EIS and Record of Decision for the Medford District Resource Management Plan* (RMP) (June 1995);
2. *Final Supplemental EIS on Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (February 1994);
3. *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* and its attachment A entitled *Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (NFP) (April 1994);
4. *Final Supplemental EIS* and *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (March 2000 and January 2001);
5. *Record of Decision Amending Resource Management Plans for Seven Bureau of Land Management Districts and Land and Resource Management Plans for Nineteen National Forests within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* and its *Final Supplemental EIS for the Clarification of Language in the 1994 Record of Decision for the Northwest Forest Plan* amending wording about the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (March 2004);
6. *Record of Decision* and the *Final Supplemental EIS to Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines* (March 2004);
7. *Record of Decision (May 2004) and Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Management of Port-Orford-Cedar in Southwest Oregon* (January 2004).

1.2 Purpose of and Need for the Proposal

Many culverts designed and installed in the past did not adequately consider fish migration; they often impeded migration of salmon and trout. Historically BLM culvert design standards were targeted to accommodate water levels of a 50-year flood. The Medford District RMP (p. 87) directs upgrading existing road culverts that pose a substantial risk to riparian conditions. These culverts must accommodate at least a 100-year flood and provide and maintain fish passage at all road crossings of existing and potential fish bearing streams (NFP p. C-33).

Two culverts on McMullin Creek have reached the end of their service life and have significant signs of deterioration. These culverts could fail and present a risk to health and safety. One culvert on Quedo Creek failed in the winter of 2002 and was replaced by two temporary culverts that are undersized and could wash out again.

Unimpaired fish passage is needed for salmonids to complete life history requirements. Adult salmon need upstream passage to reach spawning areas. In watersheds where summer stream

temperatures are elevated above optimal levels for salmonids, it is especially important for juvenile salmonids to have unimpaired access to small tributaries that provide refuge from warmer mainstem waters. During high flows, juveniles need access to tributaries and upstream mainstem reaches to seek slower moving water.

Three stream crossing culverts in Draper Creek, Thompson Creek and Bear Creek have outlet drops that substantially inhibit fish passage.

The purpose of the proposed action is to bring these six culverts up to current design standards which will provide unimpeded fish passage and meet the 100 year flood design criteria. These six sites were selected based on a 2002-2003 culvert inventory that considered available upstream but impeded fish habitat and culvert condition. They were identified as highest priority for replacement in the Deer Creek and Lower Applegate watersheds.

1.3 Project Location

Project area maps are in Appendix A. The proposal includes the following areas:

Thompson Creek	T38S, R7W, Section 34
Bear Creek	T37S, R7W, Section 5
Quedo Creek	T38S, R8W, Section 13
Draper Creek	T37S, R7W, Section 31
McMullin Creek (2)	T38S, R7W, Section 31

2.0 Proposed Action and Alternatives

2.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The no action alternative is defined as not implementing the proposed action. The no action alternative also serves as a baseline for evaluating the environmental effects of the action alternative. Inclusion of this alternative is done without regard to whether or not it is consistent with the Medford District RMP.

The no action alternative is not static. Implicit in it is a continuation of current environmental conditions and trends including vegetative succession, habitat changes, and road densities.

2.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Action

The proposed action is to replace the six culverts listed in Table 1. Culvert replacement would include removal of the existing culvert and the installation of an open bottomed (natural stream bed) culvert or bridge.

The Quedo Creek culvert would be replaced by a pre-engineered bridge approximately 40' long. Bridge abutments are constructed outside the stream channel, so the need for dewatering would be less likely. The other sites would be replaced with open bottomed culverts.

Sites for culvert footings would be excavated on each side of the creek and pre-cast or cast-in-place concrete footings would be installed. Sites would be dewatered except under the following conditions: 1) stream channels are seasonally dry at the time of construction; and 2) footings can be placed before removing the old culvert. Dewatering may consist of removing fish and salamanders prior to stream rerouting, installing stream bypass conduit and sediment and erosion control devices, and trenching for sump-pumping.

Excavators would be used to remove culverts, excavate footings, fill scour pools, shape deposition wedges, and excavate and place fill material over the new culvert. Heavy equipment would be restricted to staying outside of the channel to the greatest extent possible. Instream equipment use would be limited to when the channel is either naturally dry or dewatered. In-channel work when water is flowing would be in accordance with Oregon Division of State Lands and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Removal-Fill Permit requirements. Activities would strive to maintain preconstruction downstream flow conditions.

Vegetation growing in fill material surrounding the existing culverts and at the toe of the fill where new footings would be located would be removed.

To avoid bank scour at culvert inlets and outlets, banks may be armored with rocks. The largest rocks would be at the toe, and smallest, at the top of the slope. In addition, toe slope rocks would also be graded with the largest rocks being placed nearest the culvert.

Construction would occur between June 15 and September 15. During construction, road closures are anticipated. When the road is not closed, traffic delays would be approximately one hour. Full road closures are anticipated as follows:

- Bear Creek site – Road closure would be limited no more than 5 days during the

anticipated 30 day project work period. During the road closure, a temporary, 36" wide foot bridge would be placed upstream for foot access. Residents who live beyond the Bear Creek site would have to park vehicles above / below the work site at existing turnaround areas. Traffic could reroute via the Limpy Creek road and other Forest Service roads

Thompson Creek traffic would be rerouted over the Forest Creek road which would be improved for low clearance vehicles by placing 4" depth by 12' width of crushed aggregate over a 0.4 mile segment and removing roadside brush.

Residents who live beyond Quedo Creek would have to park vehicles above and below the work site at existing turnaround areas. Residents would then utilize foot bridges to access their homes. There is an existing foot bridge approximately 50' downstream of the Quedo Creek site.

McMullin Creek and Draper Creek roads would be closed to all traffic during culvert replacement. There are no identified reroutes.

Table 1: Proposed Road Culvert Replacements

Culvert Site (5th Field Watershed)	BLM Road # (Milepost)	Location	Current Stream Crossing Condition	Current Fish Passage Condition	Proposed Action
Thompson Creek (Deer Creek)	38-7-27 (1.2)	38S-7W Sec 34 SW ¼	Undersized culvert for 100 yr flood.	2.5' drop to pool. Possible velocity barrier. Culvert blocks juvenile salmonids and adult cutthroat and impedes adult steelhead and coho	Replace 5.8x5.8x56' culvert with open/natural bottom pipe arch to meet 100 year flood event estimated at 423 cfs. Improve Forest Creek Road for detour route.
Bear Creek (Lower Applegate)	Waters Creek Road (1.4)	37S-7W Sec 5 SW ¼	Undersized culvert.	4' drop to pool. Inadequate pool depth below culvert. Possible velocity barrier. Culvert blocks juvenile salmonids and adult cutthroat and impedes adult steelhead and coho	Replace 10x8x50' culvert with open/natural bottom pipe arch to meet 100 year flood event estimated at 275 cfs.
Draper Creek (Deer Creek)	37-7-31 (0.01)	37S-7W Sec 31 SW ¼	Undersized culvert.	1.5' drop to pool. Possible velocity barrier. Culvert blocks juvenile salmonids and adult cutthroat trout and impedes adult steelhead and coho	Replace 6.0x8.5x59' culvert with open/natural bottom pipe arch to meet 100 year flood event estimated at 765 cfs.
McMullin Creek -1 (Deer Creek)	38-7-31 (2)	39S-7W Sec 5 SE ¼	Culverts are undersized and deteriorated, rusted and bent. Upstream of Lake Selmac.	2' drop to pool The culvert impedes resident fish. (No anadromous fish)	Replace 4x30' culvert with open bottom arch structure to meet 100 year flood event estimated at 178 cfs.
McMullin Creek -2 (Deer Creek)	38-7-31 (2.1)			The culvert impede resident fish passage. (No anadromous fish)	Replace 4x30' culvert with open bottom arch structure to meet 100 year flood event estimated at 225 cfs.
Quedo (Deer Creek)	38-8-13 (0.1)	38S-8W Sec 13 SE ¼	This culvert upstream from Lake Selmac, washed out in 2002 and was replaced with two temporary culverts.	These culverts impede resident fish. The stream does not contain anadromous fish1.5' drop to pool.	Replace two 48" diameter culverts with open/natural bottom pipe arch or bridge to meet 100 year flood event estimated at 603 cfs.

2.2.2 Project Design Features

Project Design Features (PDFs) help reduce anticipated adverse environmental impacts due to implementation of the proposal. The following PDFs would be incorporated at each site.

2.2.2.1 Soil and Water

To provide future shade, erosion control, and bank stability, project sites would be planted with suitable native woody vegetation (conifers, deciduous trees and shrubs).

2.2.2.2 Noxious Weeds

Excess excavated material would be removed from the sites by the contractor and disposed of in accordance with state and federal regulations with authorized officer approval. If excess material from the Quedo Creek, Thompson Creek, or McMullin Creek sites is placed on federal land, a BLM botanist would monitor the waste area for two years for weed infestations.

Construction equipment would be pressure washed prior to entering BLM lands.

2.2.2.3 Fisheries

These PDFs are based on the terms and conditions and reasonable and prudent measures identified in the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) August 8, 2001 programmatic biological opinion:

- A fisheries biologist would participate in the design and supervision of the instream work.

- Instream work would occur between June 15 and September 15 unless a waiver is granted by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife due to dry conditions. The instream work window for the Bear Creek culvert would be July 1 through September 15.

- All disturbed areas would be rehabilitated and stabilized by mulching, seeding or planting native species including conifers, deciduous trees and shrubs and native grasses.

- Access into and through the riparian areas would be restricted to the existing road prism where possible. Access other than this would be minimized and subject to approval by the fisheries biologist prior to access development or use.

- Heavy equipment would be clean and free of leaks before any use adjacent to or within stream channels.

- Spill containment materials would be kept on site at all times.

- Equipment refueling would not occur within 150’ of streams.

- Heavy equipment would be kept out of the stream channel to the greatest extent possible. The new culverts would be in place before heavy equipment moves beyond the stream

(e.g., the excavator would reach across the stream as needed).

In addition, the following PDFs would also be implemented:

- Sediment influx into the stream would be minimized through sediment control measures such as: flow bypass around the work site, sediment traps, work site dewatering by pumping water through overland vegetation or use of appropriate filters/filter fabric.

- To minimize fish mortality in the work area, fish would be netted and removed from isolated pools at the work site prior to and during work site dewatering.

- Rocks, boulders and smaller material would be placed inside the bottomless culvert to simulate the natural stream bottom found upstream and downstream of the new culvert.

- Filter cloth would be used during culvert removal, placement of rip rap, and below sediment traps. Where sediment ponds are used, sediment and turbid water would be pumped from the settling pond to a vegetated site outside of the channel.

2.2.2.4 Public Notification and Fire Suppression

Oregon Department of Forestry, Josephine County officials, and local landowners would be notified prior to road closures. All roads would be signed and notices placed in newspapers at least two weeks prior to closure.

3.0 Environmental Consequences

Only substantive site specific environmental changes that would result from implementing the proposed action are discussed in this chapter. If an ecological component is not discussed, it should be assumed that the resource specialists have considered effects to that component and found the proposed action would have minimal or no effects. Similarly, unless addressed specifically, the following were found not to be affected by the proposed action: air quality; areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC); cultural or historical resources; Native American religious sites; prime or unique farmlands; flood plains; wild and scenic rivers; and wilderness.

3.1 Soil and Water

3.1.1 Affected Environment

The sites are located in the 5th field watersheds of Deer Creek and Lower Applegate River. Average annual precipitation (rainfall) ranges from 60-70". Most streams are, or flow into, a 303(d) listed stream that is water quality limited due high summer temperatures (seven day average maximum temperatures are above 64˚F). The one exception is Quedo Creek which flows into the unlisted Lake Selmac. At the culvert site, Quedo Creek is actually part of Lake Selmac in that it receives water backed up from the reservoir. Quedo Creek is also channelized, similar to a ditch.

Soils vary considerably. Each site has different soil except the two McMullin Creek sites which are both mapped as Josephine gravelly loam (48F). Other soils are Ruch gravelly silt loam (67C) at the Bear Creek site, Foehlin gravelly loam (38A) at the Draper Creek site, Takilma cobbly loam (73) at the Quedo Creek site, and Abegg gravelly loam (1D) at the Thompson Creek tributary site. For more information about these soils, see the Soil Survey of Josephine County Oregon, USDA Soil Conservation Service. These soils are generally on gentle to steep terrain except for Foehlin and Takilma which are on or near level terraces or alluvial fans.

3.1.2 Environmental Consequences

3.1.2.1 Alternative 1: No Action

At all six sites, the stream sediment regime and bedload carrying capacity would remain altered (from a natural, no road crossing situation) by the existing culverts. This is because each culvert's slope and elevation do not match the natural stream grade. If high flows exceed the culverts' capacities, the excess flow finds new routes, eroding soils and picking up much more sediment than would naturally occur in these systems and potentially leading to culvert and road crossing failure further increasing potential sedimentation.

3.1.2.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Action

At all six sites, high stream flows, sediment regime, and bedload carrying capacity would be returned to a more stabilized condition (over the short and long terms) due to increased flow capacity and a more natural stream bed.

Small amounts of fine sediment downstream from the work sites may escape the filter fabric

sediment traps. However, this would occur only during construction and would likely be an unmeasurable localized effect.

Vegetation removed during project implementation would slightly reduce stream shade resulting in an inconsequential, short term, localized water temperature increase. However, sites would be replanted with appropriate native species to speed the development of stream shading vegetation.

3.2 Botany and Vegetation

3.2.1 Affected Environment

The project areas were surveyed for all special status vascular plants, non-vascular plants and noxious weeds during spring 2004. No special status species, including federally listed endangered plant species, were detected during surveys.

The vegetation at the project areas includes riparian tree and shrub species with native and non-native herbs, grasses and forbs providing ground cover. Armenian (Himalayan) blackberry, (*Rubus discolor*) occurs at three of the sites: Thompson, Quedo and McMullen creeks. Bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare)* and cut-leaved blackberry (*Rubus laciniatus)* occur at the Quedo site.

There are no Port-Orford-Cedar in or near the project area and the 5th field watershed(s) are not listed as a non-infested watershed in the standards and guidelines outlined in the May 2004, Medford District BLM Record of Decision (ROD) and Land and Resource Management Plan Amendment for Management of Port-Orford-Cedar in Southwest Oregon (USDA-USDI 2004). Based on the ROD's risk key analysis, no special POC management practices are required

3.2.2 Environmental Consequences

3.2.2.1 Alternative 1: No Action

Riparian vegetation would continue essentially as is. Non-native species that currently inhabit portions of the road prism would continue but would be unlikely to expand. Noxious weeds present would likely expand.

3.2.2.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Action

No special status vascular or non-vascular plant species were located during surveys and, therefore, there would be no effects.

Non-native species, including noxious weeds are likely to expand into areas disturbed during construction. Weed control, active replanting and mulching of the site with native species should ameliorate this effect. Noxious weeds would be treated according to the Medford District Integrated Weed Management Plan (PA-OR110-98-14).

3.3 Fisheries

3.3.1 Affected Environment

Table 2, below, shows species present at each location in the project area.

3.3.2 Environmental Consequences

3.3.2.1 Alternative 1: No Action

Impediment to adult and juvenile fish would continue at all project sites. Hindered access to spawning and rearing habitat contributes to suppressed anadromous and resident fish production and survival. The undersized and deteriorated culverts have the potential to wash out resulting in sediment to be deposition downstream, potentially degrading fish habitat.

3.3.2.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Action

The risk of a culvert failure and wash out would be greatly reduced. Available fish habitat would increase thereby improving fish production and survival. Table 2 summarizes the potential expansion of stream habitat areas that would become accessible to salmonids in all life stages.

Table 2. Fish Species and Habitat Benefits for Juveniles and Adults

Culvert Site (5th Field Watershed)	Coho	Upstream Habitat Area (miles)	Steelhead	Upstream Habitat Area (miles)	Cutthroat	Upstream Habitat Area (miles)
Thompson Creek (Deer Creek)	Present	0.25	Present	0.25	Present	0.75
Bear Creek (Lower Applegate)	Present (including chinook)	0.3	Present	0.8	Present	1.0
Draper Creek (Deer Creek)	Present	2.4	Present	2.4	Present	2.8
Quedo (Deer Creek)	Not Present	0	Not Present	0	Present	0.25
McMullin Creek #1 (Deer Creek)	Not Present	0	Not Present	0	Present	0.13
McMullin Creek #2 (Deer Creek)	Not Present	0	Not Present	0	Present	0.13

Spawning fish would have unimpaired passage to habitat upstream from the culverts. Juvenile anadromous fish and resident salmonids would have unimpaired access to migrate up and downstream seeking cold water refuge during summer months. Salmonid production and survival should improve in these drainages. When linked with other riparian habitat restorations in the watersheds, these projects can have a multiplied long term beneficial effect.

Any sediment delivery to streams associated with the proposed action, including the PDFs, would be highly localized, unmeasurable, and of short duration. There would be no adverse impacts at the $5^{th,}$ 6^{th} or 7^{th} field watershed scales. This localized, short term sediment increase is not expected to affect salmonid survival or production.

The removal of vegetation would cause a short term reduction of habitat quality adjacent to the culverts due to a reduction of cover. However, planting native shade species would likely mitigate this loss in 8-10 years. Water temperature is not likely to increase due to the short distances affected.

The long term beneficial effects would be increased salmonid survival and production. No long term or cumulative adverse effects (direct or indirect) are anticipated at either the project level

(7^{th} field scale) or the watershed level (5^{th} field scale).

The proposed culvert replacement work is consistent with and would promote Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) objectives 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 9 in the following ways (RMP p. 22):

- Fish passage to areas critical for fulfilling anadromous fisheries life history requirements (especially upstream spawning grounds) would be improved.

- Bottomless culverts would reestablish a natural gradient to the streambed.

- Areas of colder water would be accessible to juvenile salmonids during summer months.

- Culverts that currently retard sediment transport would be replaced, facilitating the development of a more natural sediment regime by allowing water and sediment to move through the system more readily.

- Bottomless culverts would restore flows across a natural streambed and retain patterns of nutrient and woody material movement through the system.

- Coho salmon, steelhead and cutthroat trout upstream habitat use would increase. In addition, chinook may spawn upstream of the Bear Creek culvert.

3.4 Wildlife

3.4.1 Affected Environment

Habitat for two species of amphibians listed by the state of Oregon as "sensitive" is located in the streams at the culvert replacement sites. Surveys in Deer Creek did not locate either of these two species. (Thompson, McMullin and Quedo Creeks drain into Deer Creek.) However, it is likely that habitat occurs for these species in the streams associated with the culvert replacement sites. These species, the foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylii)* and the tailed frog (*Ascaphus truei)* are adversely affected by high water temperatures and excessive sedimentation. They require clean, silt free, gravelly substrate. Pacific giant salamanders (*Dicamptodon tenebrosus*) are also likely to occur in some or all of the streams where the culverts are proposed for replacement.

There are no known species listed under the Endangered Species Act at any of the culvert sites.

3.4.2 Environmental Effects

3.4.2.1 Alternative 1: No Action

The downstream riparian areas would continue to be at risk for degradation during a 100-year flood event. It is impossible to gauge if and when such an event would take place and the actual effects. However, it is likely that during such a flood the culverts and road systems could be overwhelmed, leading to failure of the system and a potential input of considerable quantities of material into local streams. If this occurred, there would be a loss of habitat and individuals. This effect could extend downstream for as much as a ¼ mile as the sediment filled interstitial spaces, temporarily degrading habitat and killing individuals.

3.4.2.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Action

Installing new culverts may have an adverse short term impact on the habitat for the two state listed frog species. However, the PDFs that minimize sedimentation (e.g., filter fabric, seasonal restrictions) would minimize these impacts. A long term benefit is restoration of the stream connection which allows species to easily move through the system where it is now impeded by the existing culverts. Research has shown that amphibians utilize the substrate in open bottomed culverts such as those that would be constructed in this project (Jina P. Sagar, personal communication). This substrate allows movement and dispersal of amphibians through these culverts.

Cumulatively, continued replacement of culverts with updated "fish and amphibian friendly" designs would aid in widespread dispersal and improved conditions for amphibians and other riparian species.

3.5 Recreation, Cultural Resources and Visual Resources

3.5.1 Affected Environment

The project area roads are used for local access by landowners and forest users. The project sites are in Visual Resource Management (VRM) Classes 3 and 4. There are no known cultural sites in the project area. The Forest Service's Waters Creek Trail is above the Bear Creek culvert location. The areas near the other culverts are used for dispersed recreation such as hunting and horseback riding. The Quedo Creek road and upper McMullin Creek road are sometimes used for organized equestrian events and adventure race routes.

3.5.2 Environmental Consequences

3.5.2.1 No Action Alternative

Access levels would remain the same. Reduced access to a wide variety of dispersed recreation opportunities as well as access to private land or residences could occur if a high water event washed out the existing undersized culverts. The visual landscape would remain unchanged.

3.5.2.2 Alternative 2: Proposed Action

Local and residential access: Some inconvenience to local residents, land owners and recreation users may occur due to temporary road closures and reroutes during project implementation. There are no residences above the Draper and McMullin Creek sites; therefore, only casual road use would be impacted. Three residences (above the Bear and Quedo creek sites) would have short term reduced access during project implementation and would require a walk of approximately 500' to traverse the project site. Access to the Thompson Creek area is available through other routes although it would approximately double the drive from one mile to two miles during construction. In the long term, local and residential access would be improved due to the reduced risk of culvert washout during high water events.

Recreation access: Recreation access to the Waters Creek Trail system would be closed for up to five days during the high use summer season. Long term recreation access would be improved due to the reduced risk of culvert washout during high water events.

VRM: The Bear, Draper, Quedo and Thompson creeks culverts are in a VRM Class 3 area. The proposed action would be consistent with the objectives for VRM Class 3 lands due to the low visual impact of the proposal and its location along existing roads. VRM Class 3 objectives are to manage for moderate levels of change to the characteristic landscape. Activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. The McMullin Creek culvert is in VRM Class 4. The proposed action would be consistent with the objectives for VRM Class 4 due to the low visual impacts of the proposal and its location along an existing road. Objectives for VRM Class 4 lands are to manage for moderate levels of change to the characteristic landscape. Activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer attention.

4.0 Agencies and Persons Consulted

4.1 Public Involvement

Discussions regarding this project were conducted with the Josephine County Public Works, Josephine County Department of Forestry and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. As noted below, a public comment period will be held upon completion of the EA.

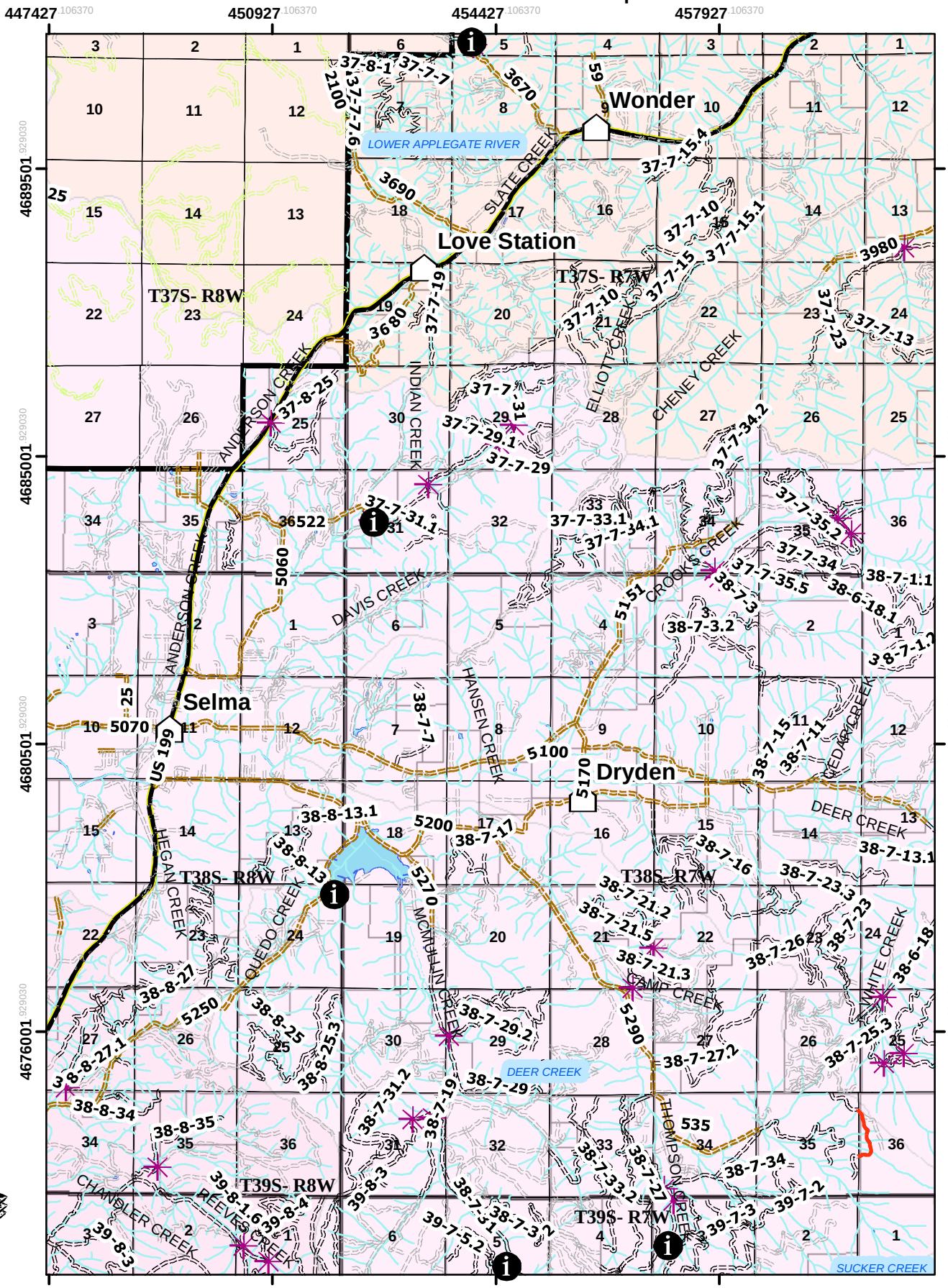
4.2 Availability of Document and Comment Procedures

Copies of the EA will be available for public review in the BLM Medford District Office as well as on the Medford District's web site (*www.or.blm.gov/Medford*) under planning documents / environmental assessments. A notice of the EA's availability will be sent to neighbors and known interested parties. A formal 15 day public comment period will be held following an announcement in the Grants Pass Daily Courier.

Written comments should be addressed to Abbie Jossie, Field Manager, Grants Pass Resource Area, at 3040 Biddle Road, Medford, OR 97504. Emailed comments may be sent to *or110mb@or.blm.gov*.

Appendix A. Maps

2004 Culvert Replacement Project
General Location Map



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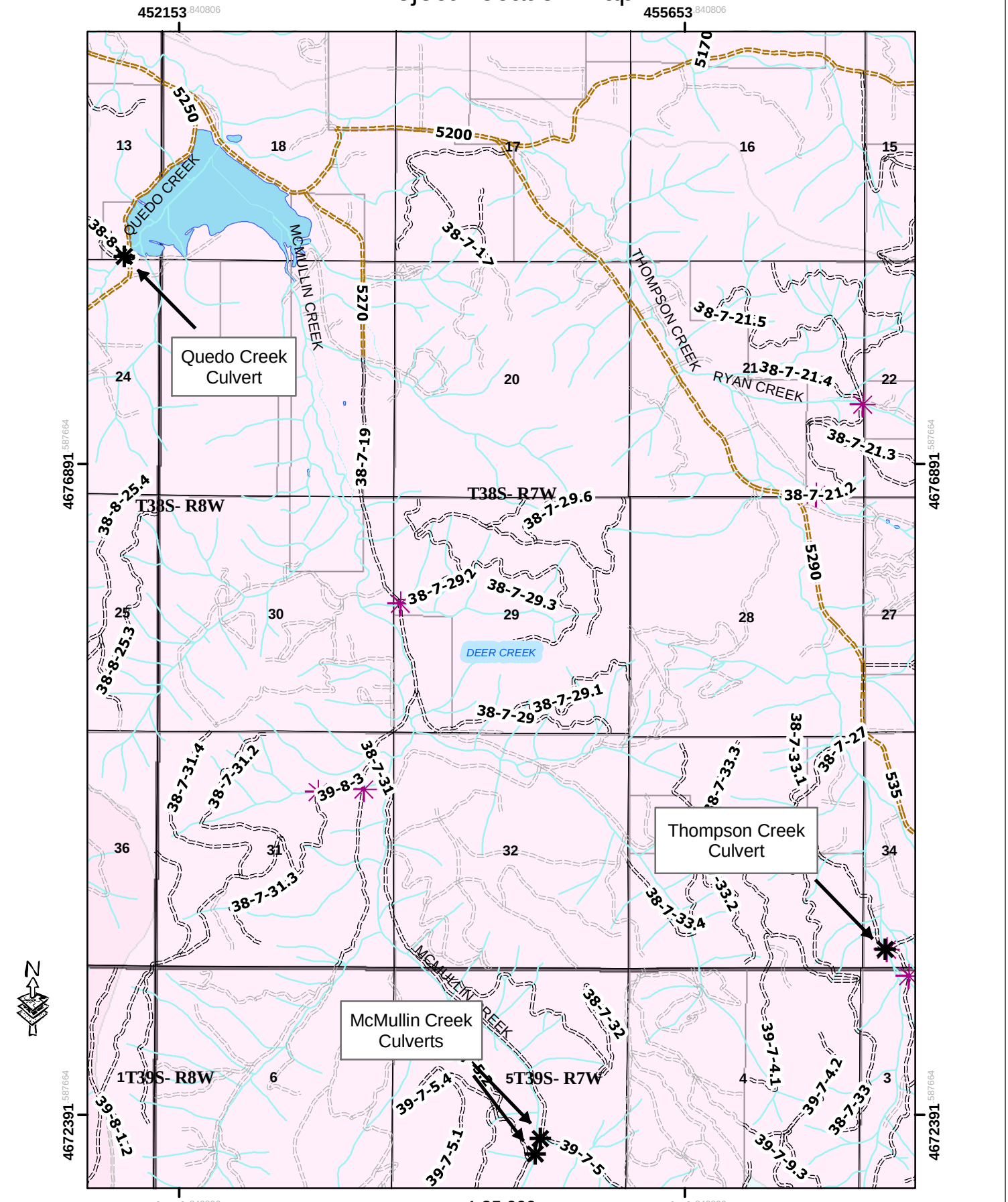
2004 Culvert Replacement
Project Location Map



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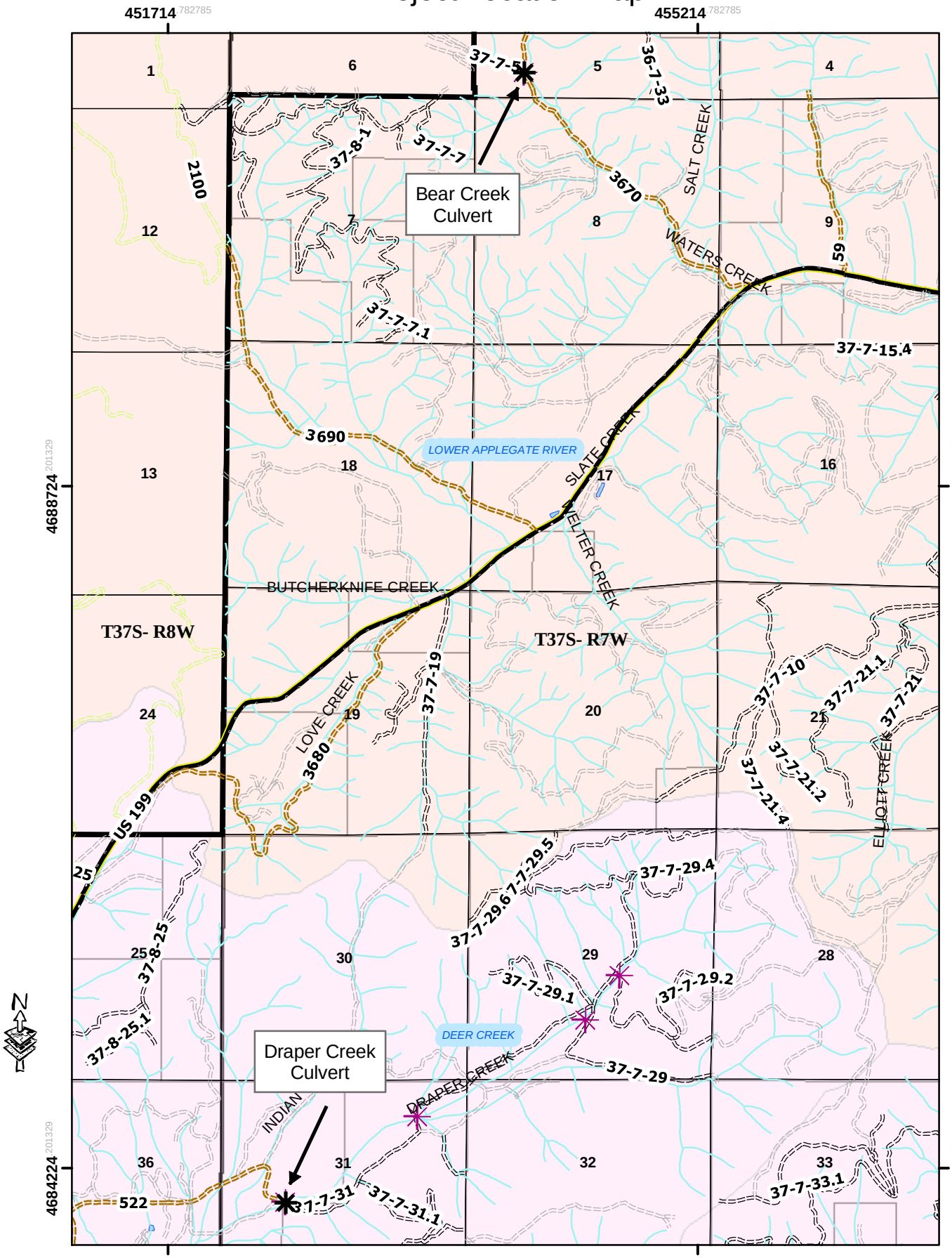

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