# Bridger Wilderness A GUIDE TO THE FISHING LAKES



#### **The Bridger Wilderness**

The Bridger Wilderness, within the Wind River Mountain Range, was designated as one of the first Primitive areas in the country in 1931. The pristine condition of the land was secured under the Wilderness Act of 1964, with 392,169 acres designated as wilderness. In 1984, the Bridger Wilderness was expanded to its current size of 428,169 acres. The area lies on the west side of the Wind River Mountain Range and includes over 2,000 glacial carved lakes, ponds, and potholes. Over 500 of the lakes in the range are known to support fish and about 240 have been identified in this brochure. These lakes range in size from well over 400 acres to tiny tarns. Lakes are connected with over 550 miles of streams that meander through meadows and plummet through canyons and tallus slopes, before exiting the wilderness boundary. With over 600 miles of trails connecting the northern and southern ends of this wilderness, the area offers a diverse trout fishery, with the opportunity to catch cutthroat, rainbow, brook, brown, golden and lake trout.



This wilderness is administered by the Pinedale Ranger District on the Bridger-Teton National Forest within Sublette County and a small portion of the Southern Winds lies in Fremont County. Regulations in the Bridger Wilderness include the following:

- 1. Individual groups are limited to 15 people.
- 2. Pack and saddle stock permitted in each group is limited to 25 animals.
- 3. The maximum length of stay by any individual or group is 16 days at one site. After 16 days the visitor must move a radius of 5 miles and may not return to the same site for 7 days.
- 4. Campsites must be located at least 200 feet away from a lake or forest system trail and 100 free from streams or springs.
- 5. Organized groups (scouts, church groups, clubs, etc) must have a permit. Permits are available at the Pinedale Ranger District Office PO Box 220, Pinedale, WY.
- 6. Pack and saddle stock will be tied so as not to cause any damage to any tree, vegetation, or soil.
- 7. Overnight campers with pack or saddle stock must have a visitor permit. Free permits are available at the Pinedale Ranger District Office, PO Box 220, Pinedale, WY.

- 8. No free trailing of pack or saddle stock on Forest service trails.
- 9. Non-burnable garbage will be packed out and no garbage will be buried.
- 10. Shortcutting trail switchbacks are not allowed.
- 11. Bulk hay or straw is not permitted.
- 12. Temporary camp structures such as hitching racks, tent frames or temporary tables will not be nailed or permanently attached to trees and must be dismantled after the use period.
- 13. Building, maintaining, attending or using an open fire above timberline is prohibited.
- 14. Possessing or using motorized equipment is prohibited.
- 15. Possessing or using a hang glider or bicycle is prohibited.
- 16. Possessing or using a wagon, cart or other vehicle, including "game carts", is prohibited.
- 17. Landing an aircraft or dropping or picking up any materials, supplies or person by means of aircraft including helicopter is prohibited.
- 18. The use of salt for attracting wildlife is prohibited.

Leave No Trace principles are in place to protect the resource for future generations. They are designed to educate recreationists about how their decisions on the landscape will impact others ability to enjoy the natural environment, whether you are hiking, horse packing or riding, camping, backpacking, hunting or fishing. Though these principles may not always seem relevant to you, they are when recreating in areas where thousands of people are impacting the land. The Leave No Trace is an educational and ethical program which provides recreationists and outdoor enthusiasts techniques to prevent or minimize destruction to the land. Everyone should practice minimum impact skills and ethics. The seven standard Leave No Trace principles are listed below and for more information visit the Leave No Trace, Inc. website.

- 1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
- 2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- 3. Dispose of Waste Properly
- 4. Leave What You Find
- 5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
- 6. Respect Wildlife
- 7. Be considerate of Other Visitors





"While here on earth, I shall endeavor with all my ability and steadfast efforts to preserve and add to our wilderness so all who follow in my footsteps might have the same opportunity to use and enjoy it as I have.

Remember, the way of a wilderness is love and kindness toward all forms of life".

Finnis Mitchell

## Fishing in Bear Country

#### Preventing Conflicts & Avoiding Confrontations with Bears in Wyoming





All anglers in Wyoming should be alert to the fact that they are fishing in bear country, and in some instances, grizzly bear country.

If you will be fishing in the mountains of western Wyoming, you need to take precautions to minimize the possibility of a confrontation with a black or grizzly bear. Grizzly bears are most likely to be found in the Beartooth, Absaroka, Owl Creek, northern Wind River, Gros Ventre, and Teton Mountains.

#### Bear Identification

The black bear and the grizzly bear are often in the same areas. Neither color nor size should be used for identification.

#### **Grizzly Bears**

- Prominent shoulder hump
- Dished face profile
- Short, rounded ears
- Long claws

#### **Black Bears**

- Lacks shoulder hump
- Straight face profile
- Tall, pointed ears
- Shorter, more curved claws

#### BEARS DON'T LIKE SURPRISES

If you are going to travel in bear country, always "Be Bear Aware." Most bear confrontations can be avoided if you let the bear know you are there.

Grizzly bears are often found foraging in mountain meadows and on rocky slopes above timberline in summer and early fall. Watch for bears in white bark pine tree stands near timberline in late fall. Be careful about hunting or traveling in dense "dark" timber, including willow patches, where bears often make their day beds. Bears disturbed in their day bed may charge you in confusion.

#### Bear Sign

Learn to recognize bear tracks and scat. Grizzly and black bear tracks (front paws only) can be distinguished by drawing a straight line from the bottom of the largest outer toe across the top of the pad, then out beyond the opposite outer toe. If the opposite outer toe lies above or mostly above this line, the track is that of a grizzly.

Bear scats vary in color and size, and should not be used to identify black bears from grizzly bears. Instead, they should be recognized as bear scats and examined to determine what the bear has been eating. Then try to avoid areas where bears may be feeding.

#### Avoiding or Minimizing Bear Encounters

If you spot a bear before it sees you when traveling or fishing, walk quickly and quietly away. If the bear sees you but seems disinterested, do the same. If the bear becomes interested and begins to approach, observe the bear's head and body movements. Back up slowly, avoid eye contact, and speak in a soft monotone. If the bear stands upright, it is trying to get a better look and smell. Standing upright is not an aggressive display. Never get between a female bear and her cubs;

mother bears are extremely protective of their young.

If the bear charges, stand your ground and avoid direct eye contact. Bears often bluff charge by running with their head and ears up and with a stiff legged gait. Aggressive bears will run with their head down and ears back. Should you find yourself being charged by what appears to be an aggressive bear your options are limited. Running from a bear is never an option!

#### **OPTIONS**

Playing dead should only be done if you are sure you are going to be touched by the bear. In this instance, drop to the ground and lie flat on your belly, interlocking your fingers to cover your neck and head. Be sure to stay in this position until you are sure the bear is gone. If you are wearing a pack, leave it on.

Using a bear deterrent such as bear spray may be the most effective option. Bear spray must be worn on your body in a place where it is immediately accessible. To use bear spray, direct the expanding cloud toward the front of the bear. Once the bear's attention is directed away from you, leave the area.

Firearms have been used effectively in aggressive encounters, but are only recommended if no other options exist. Wounding a bear may increase the seriousness of the situation.

#### AT THE CAMP

Keep a clean camp. Most forests in northwest Wyoming have mandatory food storage orders specifying that all foods must be kept unavailable to bears. Store food garbage and other attractants in bear resistant containers, a vehicle, hard sided camper, or at least 10 feet above the ground and 4 feet from the trunk. Attractants include horse and pet feed, human food, garbage, and toiletries.

Sleep a good distance from your cooking area and food storage site. Keep sleeping bags and personal gear clean and free of food odors. Don't sleep with the clothes you wore while cooking.







Conserving Wildlife - Serving People

#### **HOW TO USE BROCHURE**

This brochure lists lakes in numerical order by stream drainages, starting in the northwest corner of the Bridger Wilderness Area and progressing southeasterly. For example, Green River-Roaring Fork, Green River-Big Twin Creek, Upper New Fork River, etc.

Following the numerical code is the common name of the lake, elevation, surface acres and game fish present. (See sample info table below along with fish species identification key)

CODE	LAKE NAME	ELEVATION (ft.)	SURFACE ACRES	SPECIES
100	Big Sheep Mtn.	10,007	6	СТ
101	Jim Creek Lake	9,961	4	BK
102	S. Jim Creek Lake	10,155	4	RB

RB - Rainbow	BR - Brown
CT - Cutthroat	LT - Lake Trout
BK - Brook	GD - Golden
GR - Grayling	



#### FISHING REGULATIONS

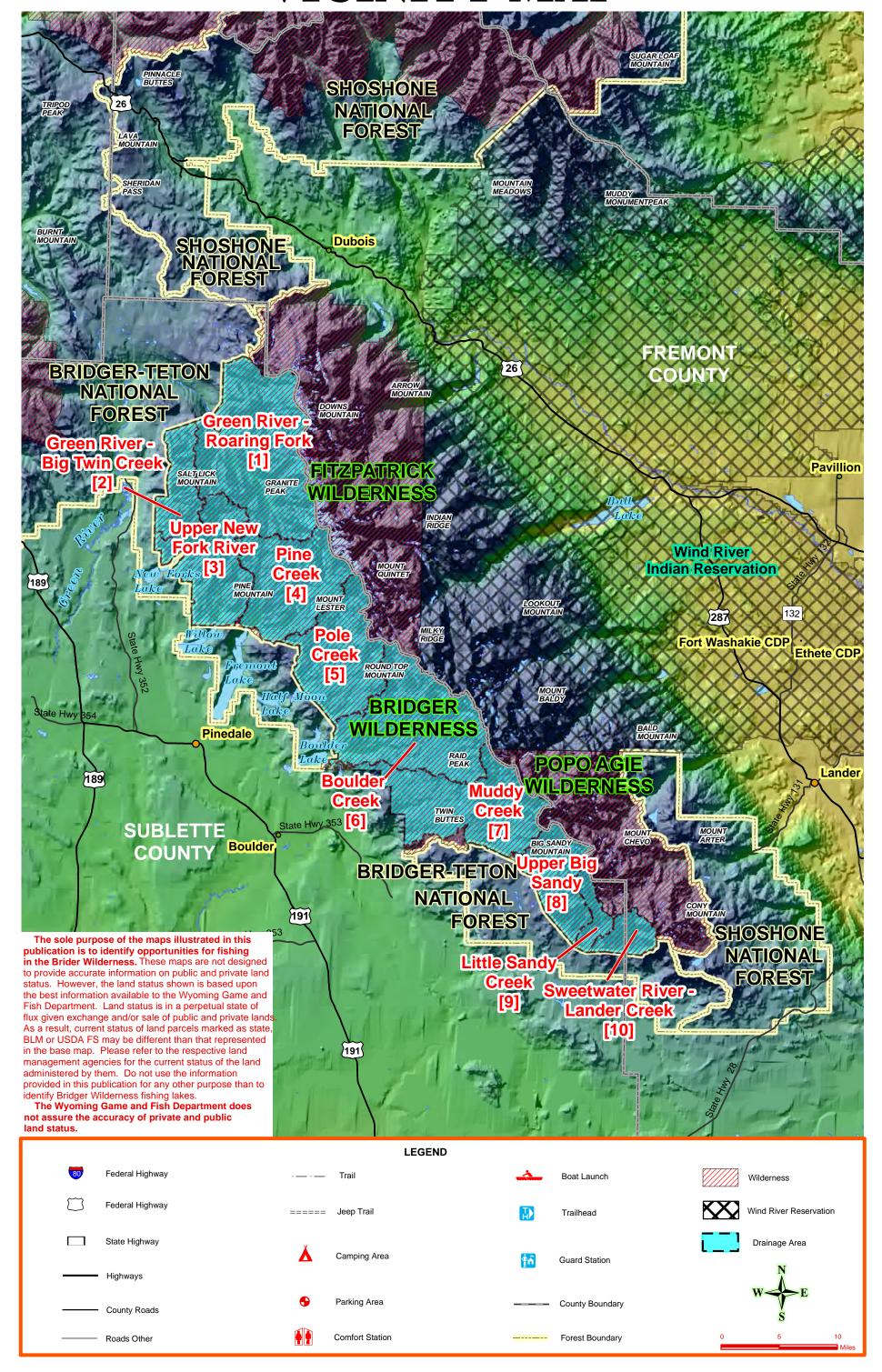
Fishermen are required to possess a valid Wyoming fishing license prior to fishing the Bridger Wilderness. They should be familiar with current fishing regulations, as they are subject to change.

Licenses and regulations may be obtained from Cheyenne Headquarters, Regional Offices, any license-selling agent throughout the state, or online at: wgfd.wyo.gov. For further information concerning regulations or licenses contact:

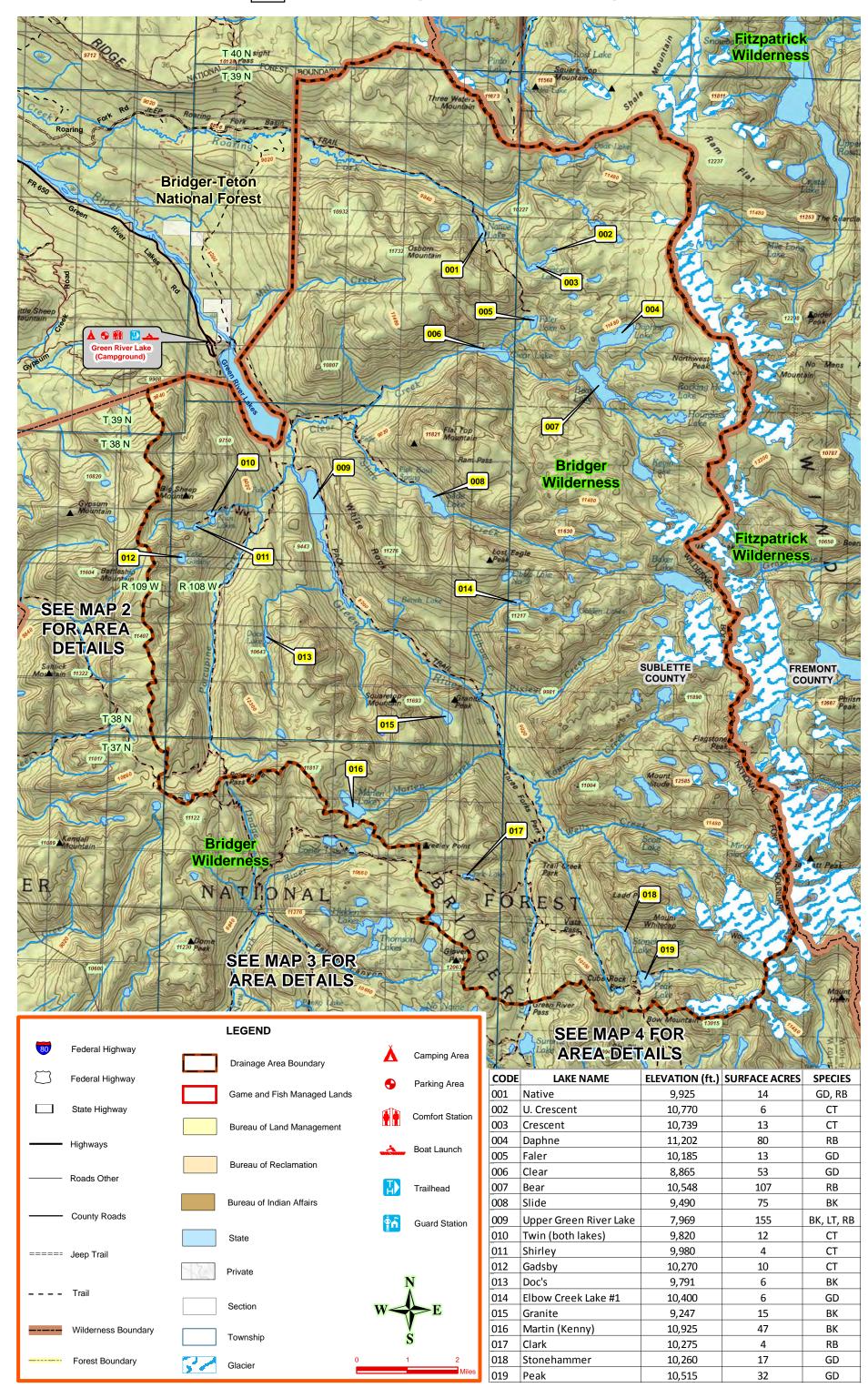
**Wyoming Game & Fish Department** 

Pinedale Regional Office 432 East Mill Street Pinedale, WY 82941 (307) 367-4353

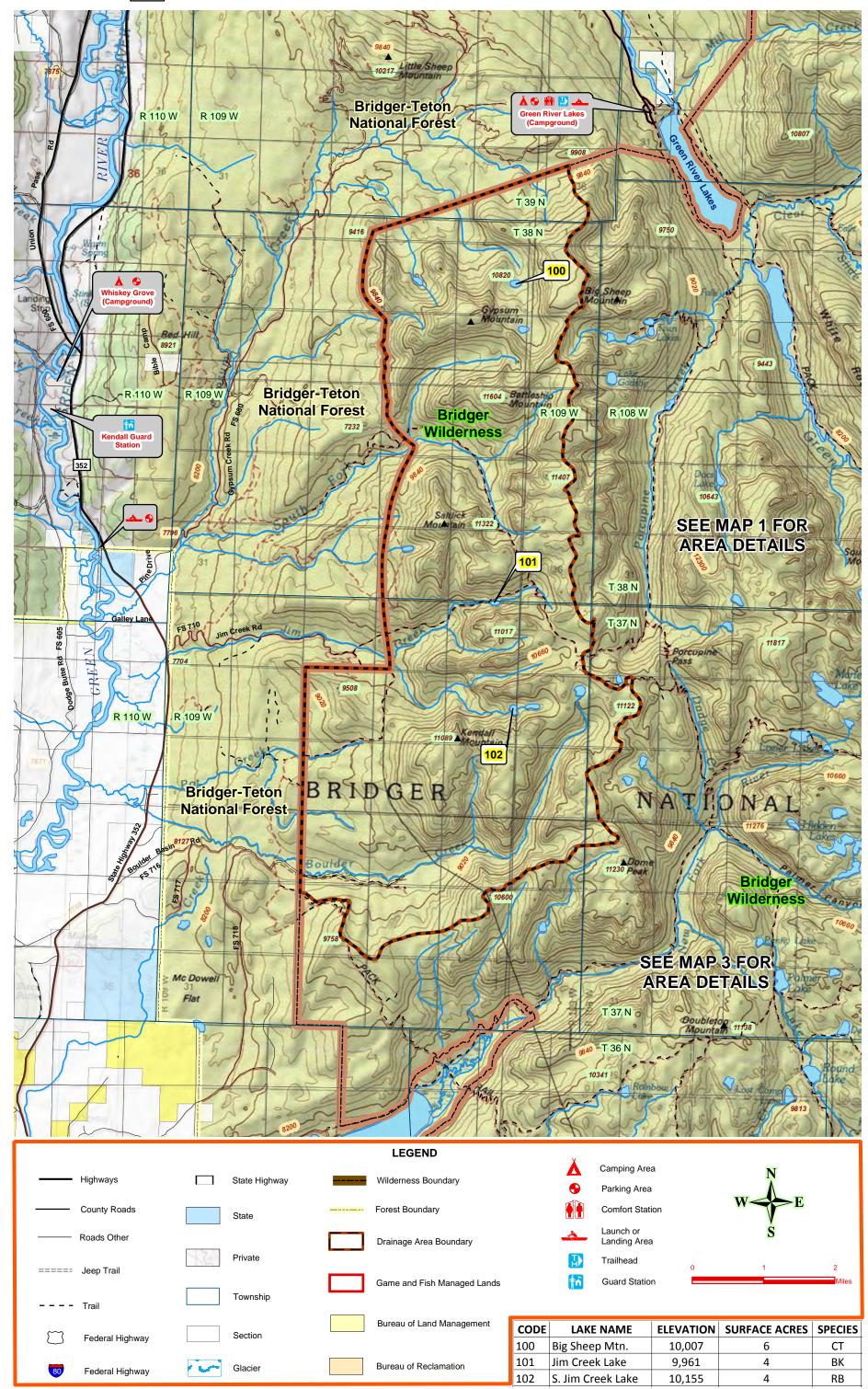
### VICINITY MAP



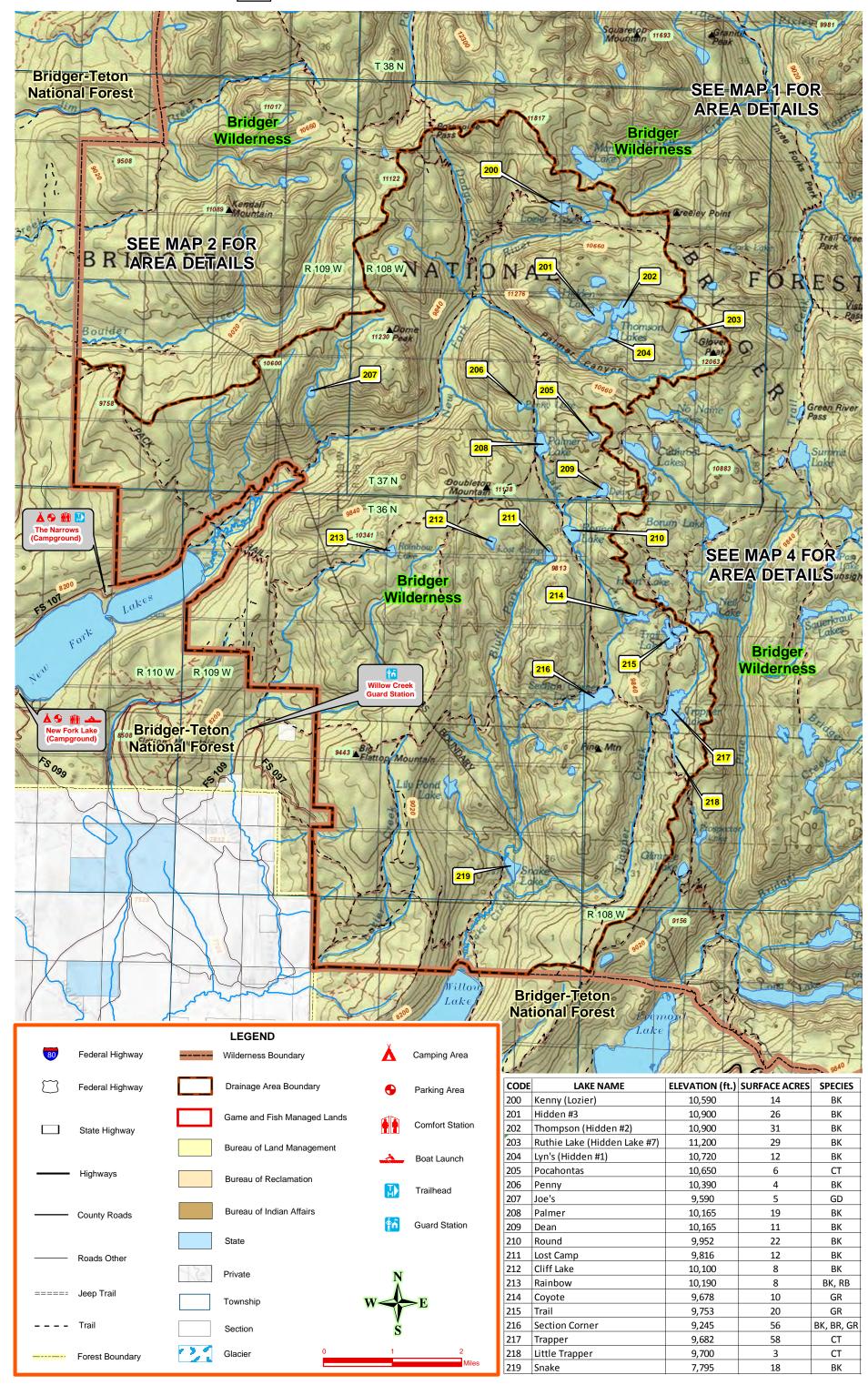
### 1 Roaring Fork Drainage



### **Green River - Big Twin Creek Drainage**



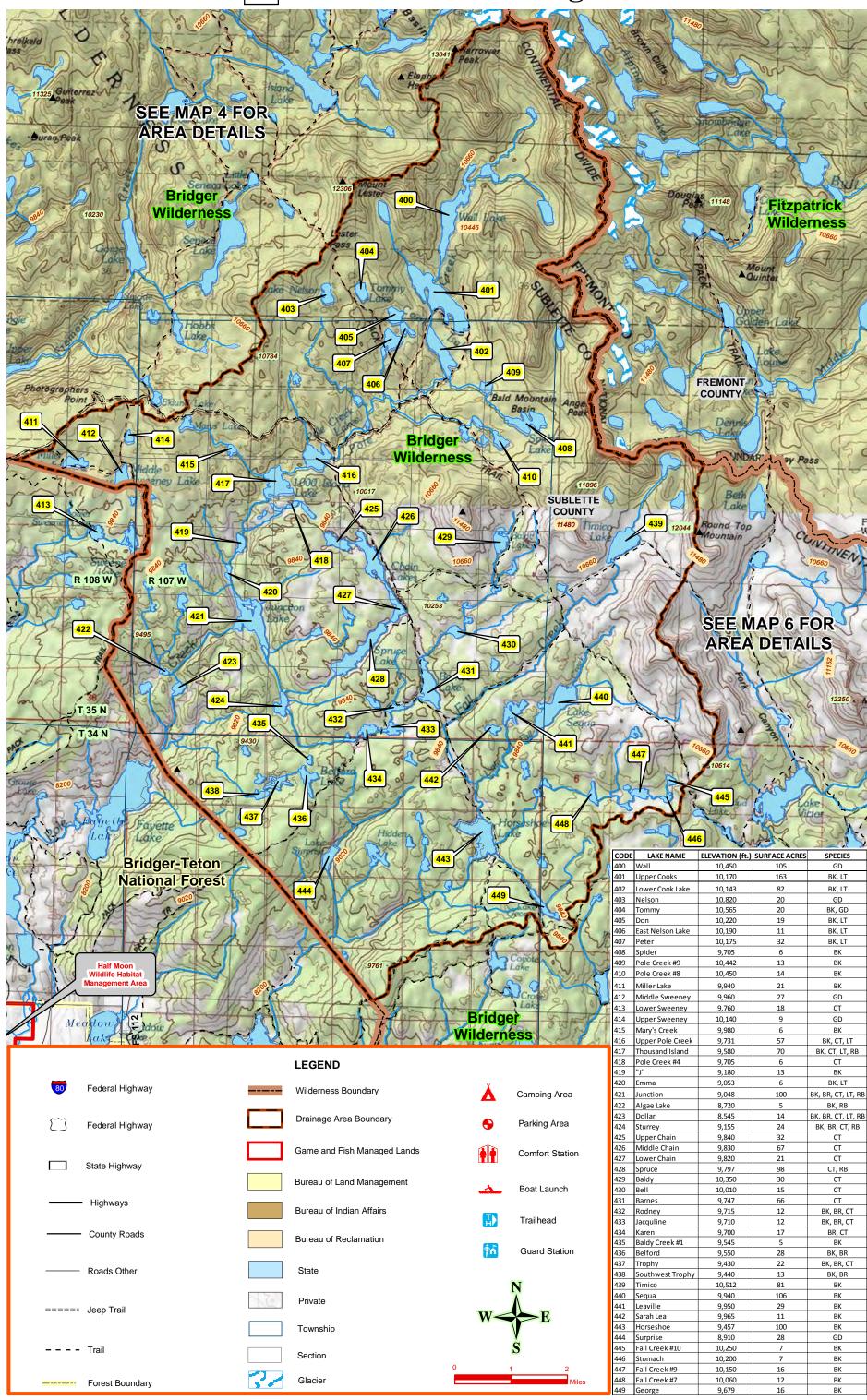
### 3 New Fork River Drainage



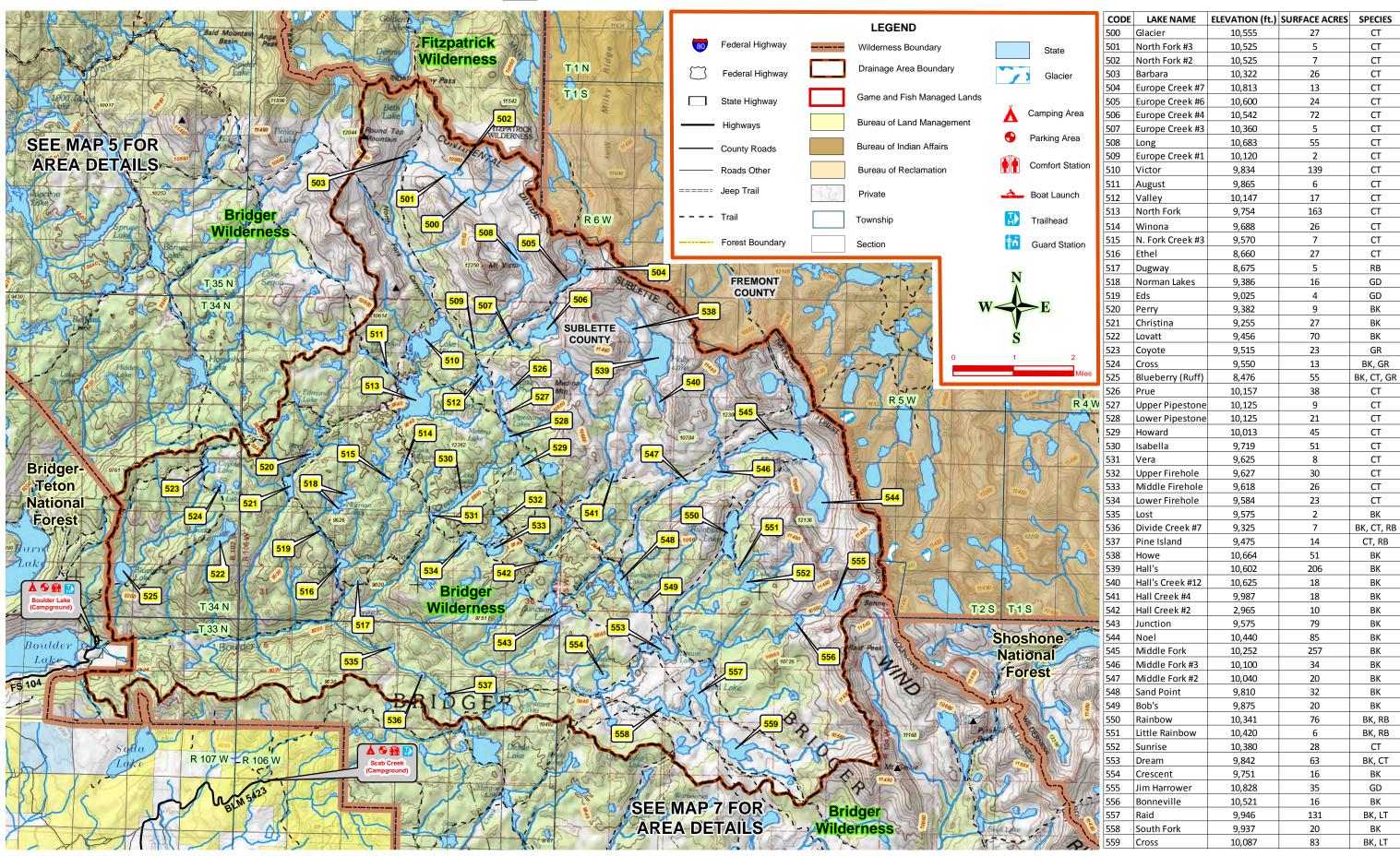
### 4 Pine Creek Drainage



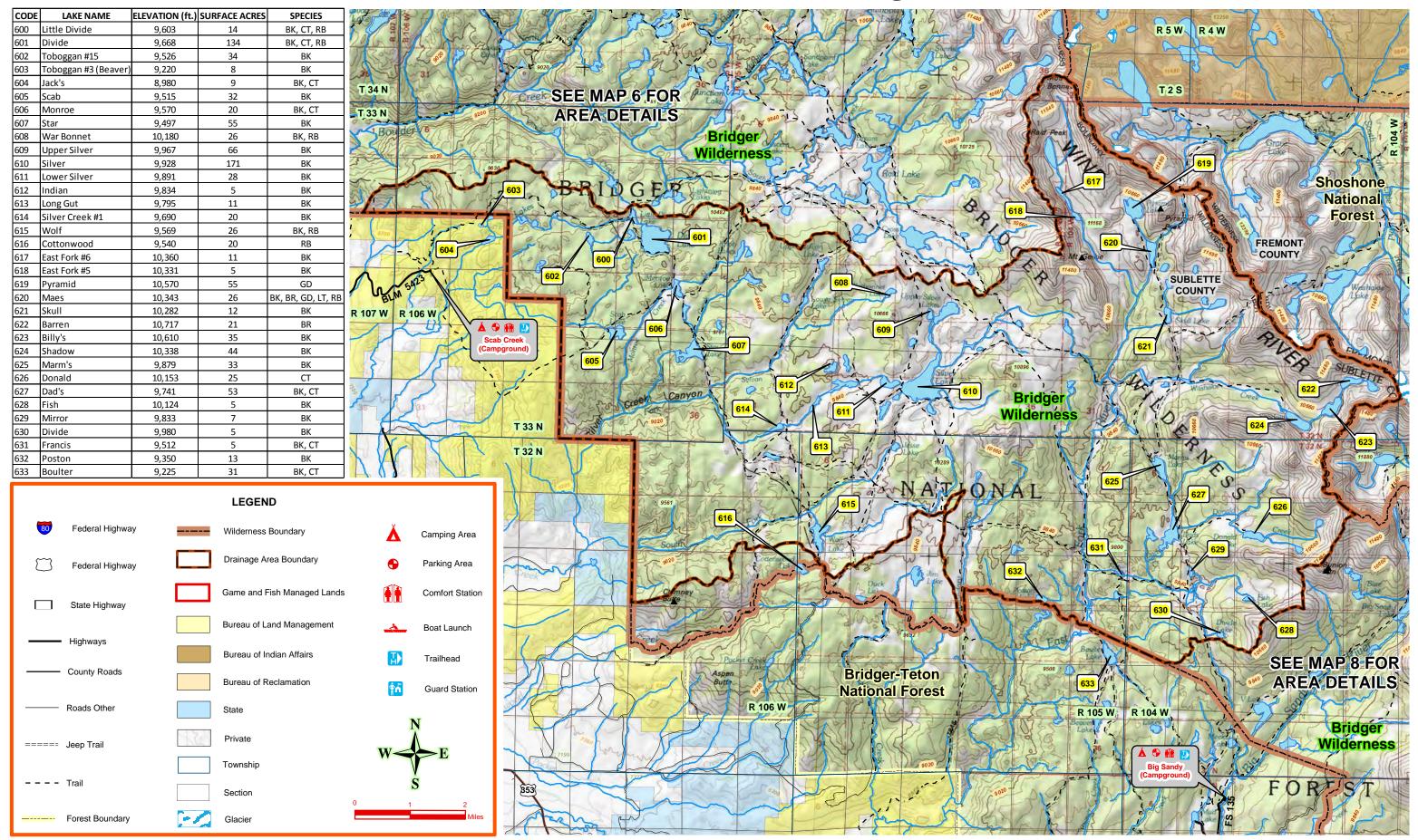
### 5 Pole Creek Drainage



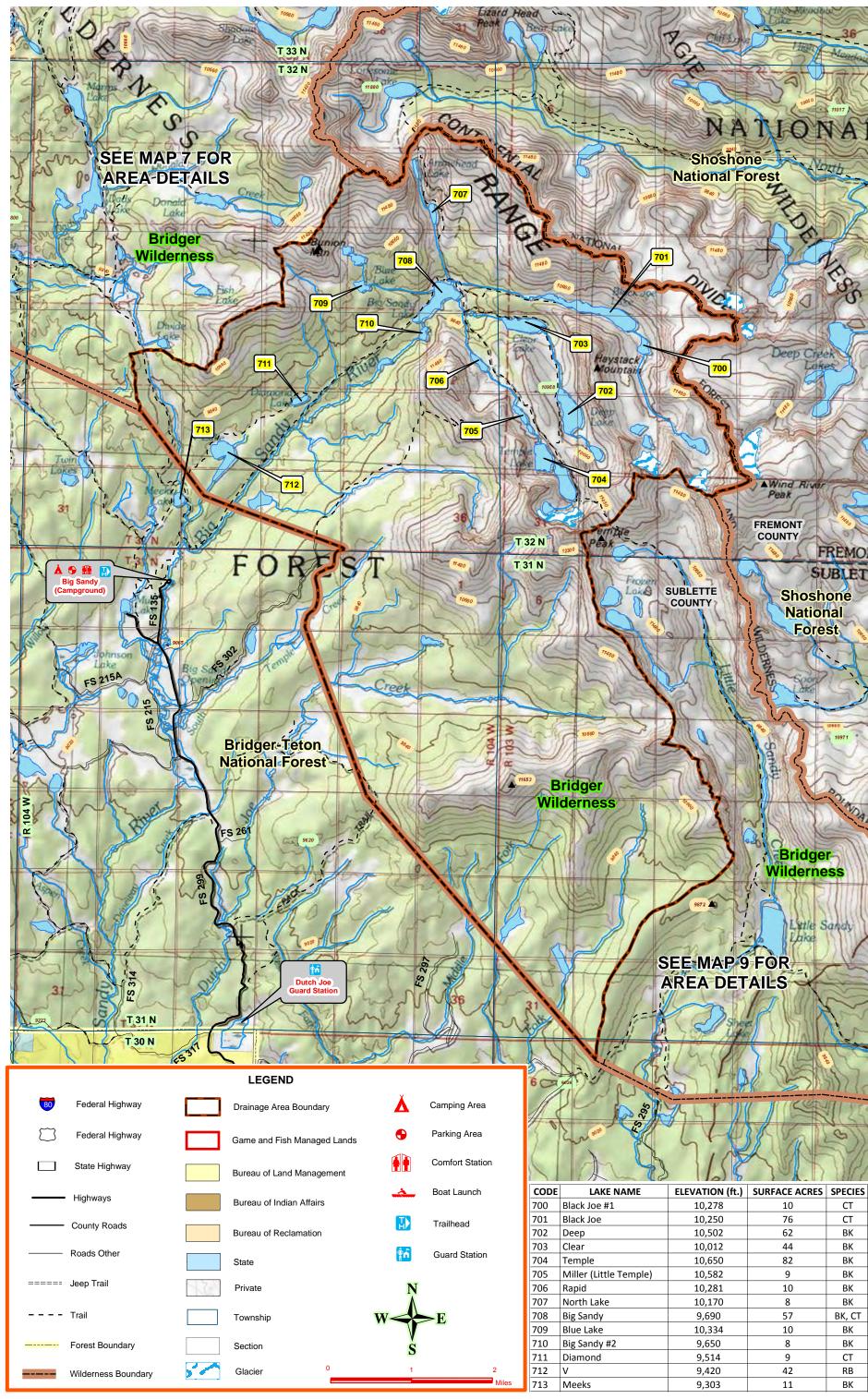
### Boulder Creek Drainage



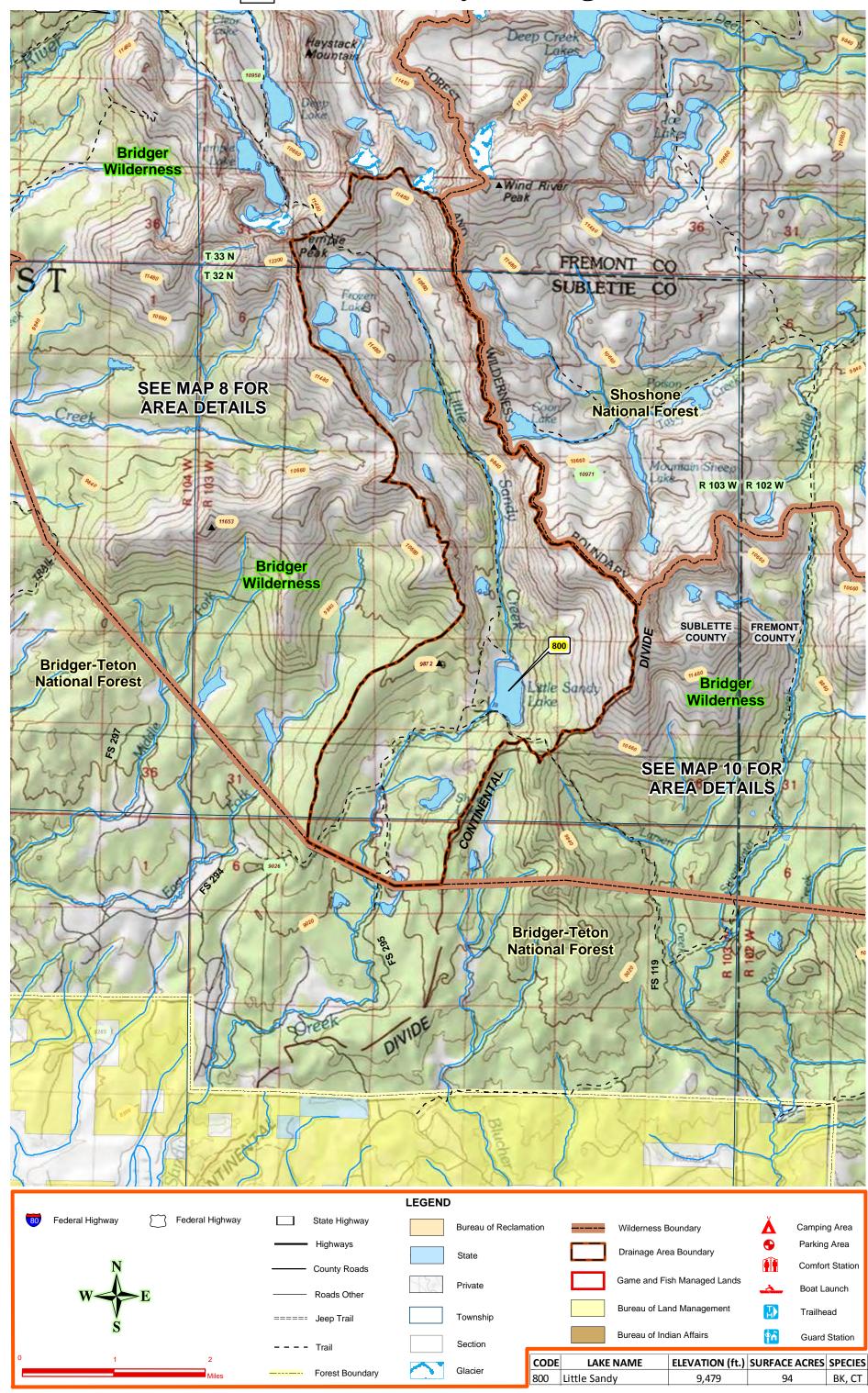
### East Fork River Drainage



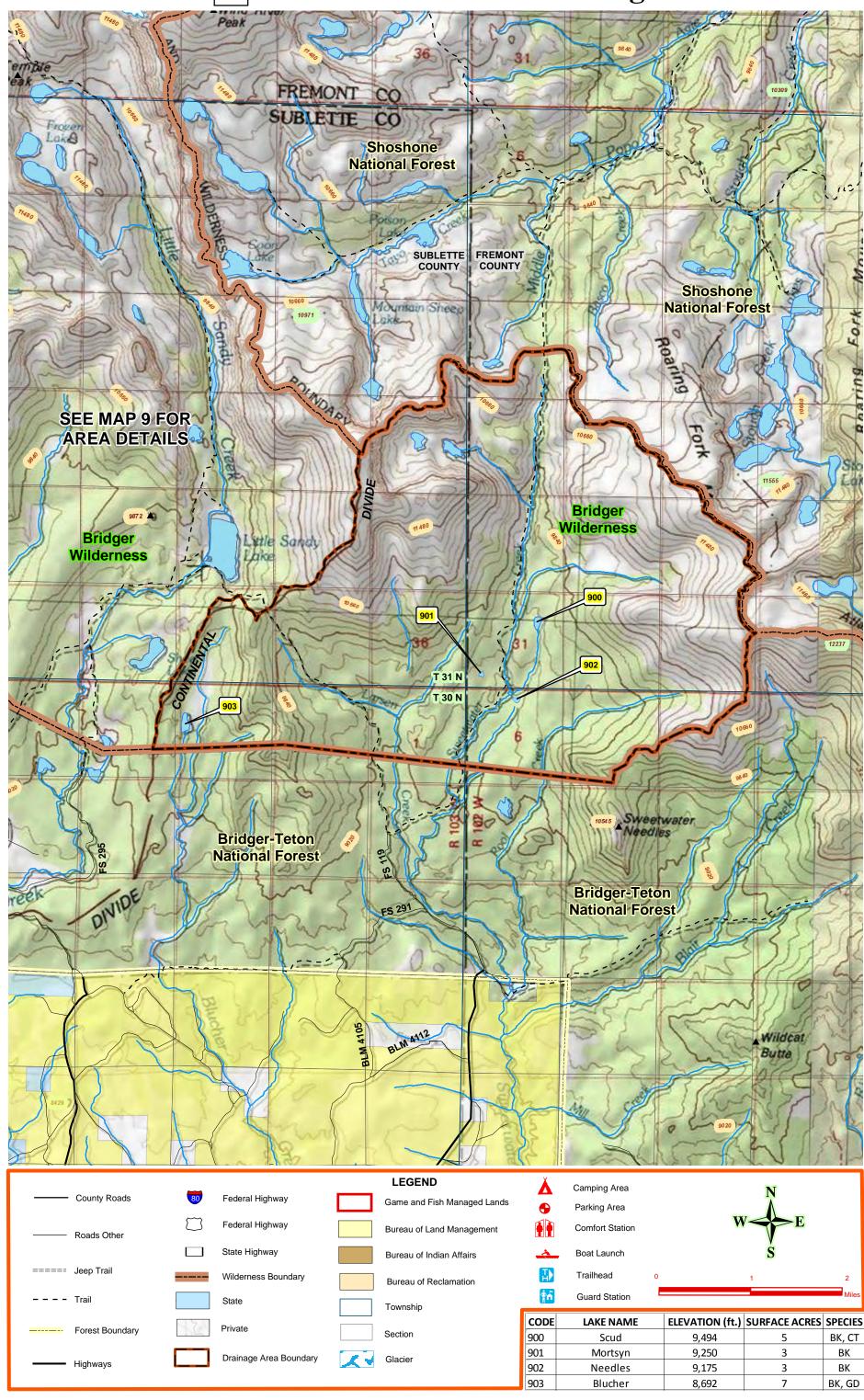
### 8 Upper Big Sandy Drainage



### 9 Little Sandy Drainage



### Sweetwater River Drainage





In certain areas of the Bridger Wilderness, land use regulation may be in effect for the protection of the Wilderness resource. Visitors using the Wilderness should contact the Pinedale Ranger District for the latest information on regulations, grazing, and other current conditions.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

USDA Forest Service Pindale Ranger District PO Box 220 29 East Fremont Lake Road Pinedale, WY 82941 (307) 367-4326 Wyoming Game & Fish Department
Pinedale Regional Office
432 East Mill Street
Pinedale, WY 82941
(307) 367-4353
wgfd.wyo.gov