

Determinations of Water Budget Neutrality – Yellow Area Consultations with Water Transfer Working Group (WTWG)

The Department of Ecology is receiving a number of requests for determinations of water budget neutrality for new groundwater appropriations that will be offset through use of trust water rights conveyed to the state by Suncadia. Four of these proposals were submitted to the WTWG at the March 2010 meeting. The proposals were split into two groups, green and yellow, based on the suitability of the Suncadia trust water rights to mitigate for the impacts associated with new groundwater appropriations. The suitability map has been presented to WTWG on two occasions and can be viewed at the following website:

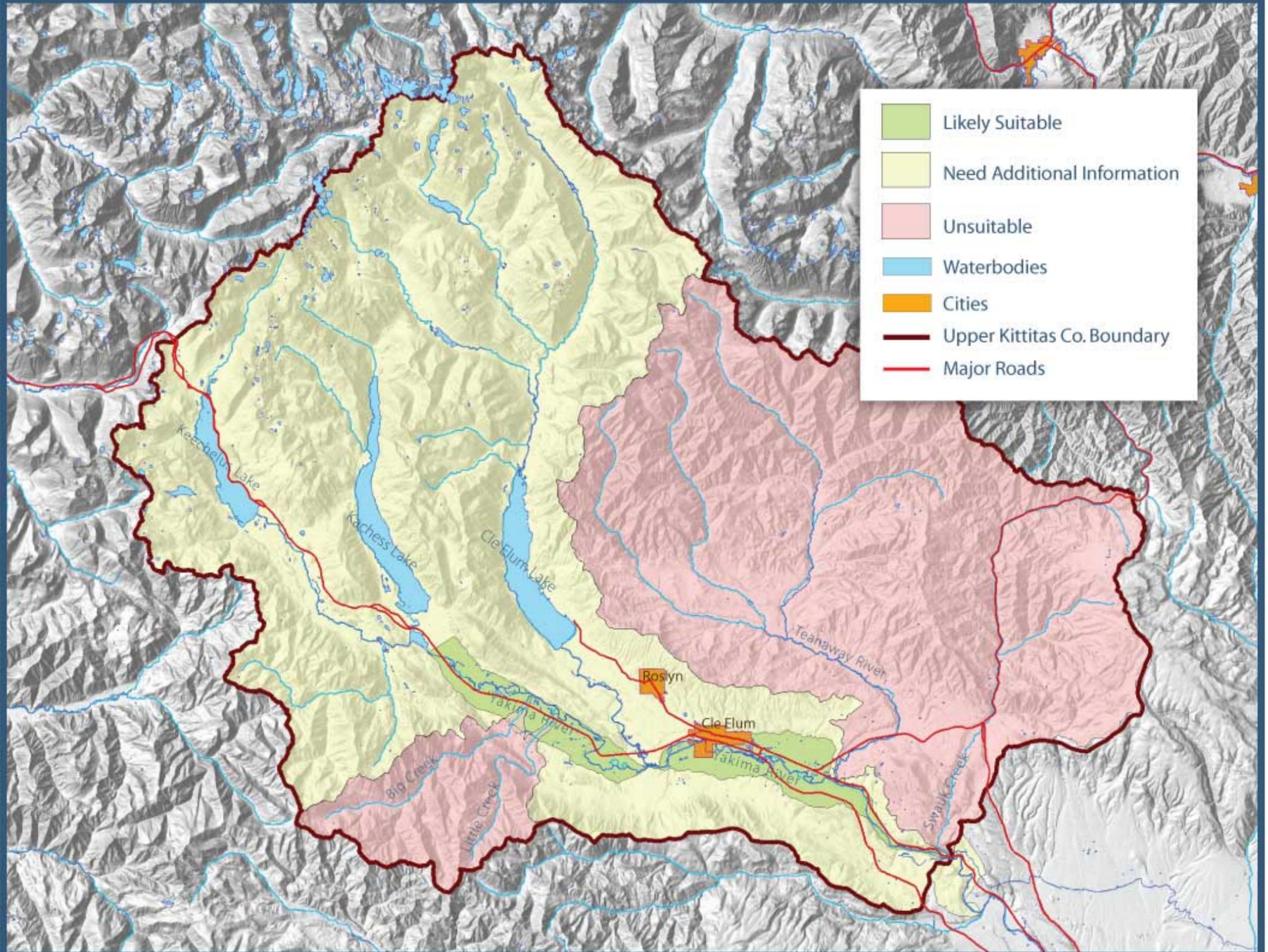
http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/cwp/images/cro/kitt_map_lg.jpg. The WTWG gave a “thumbs up” to projects in the green areas, but expressed a desire to see the yellow area projects again with more detailed information.

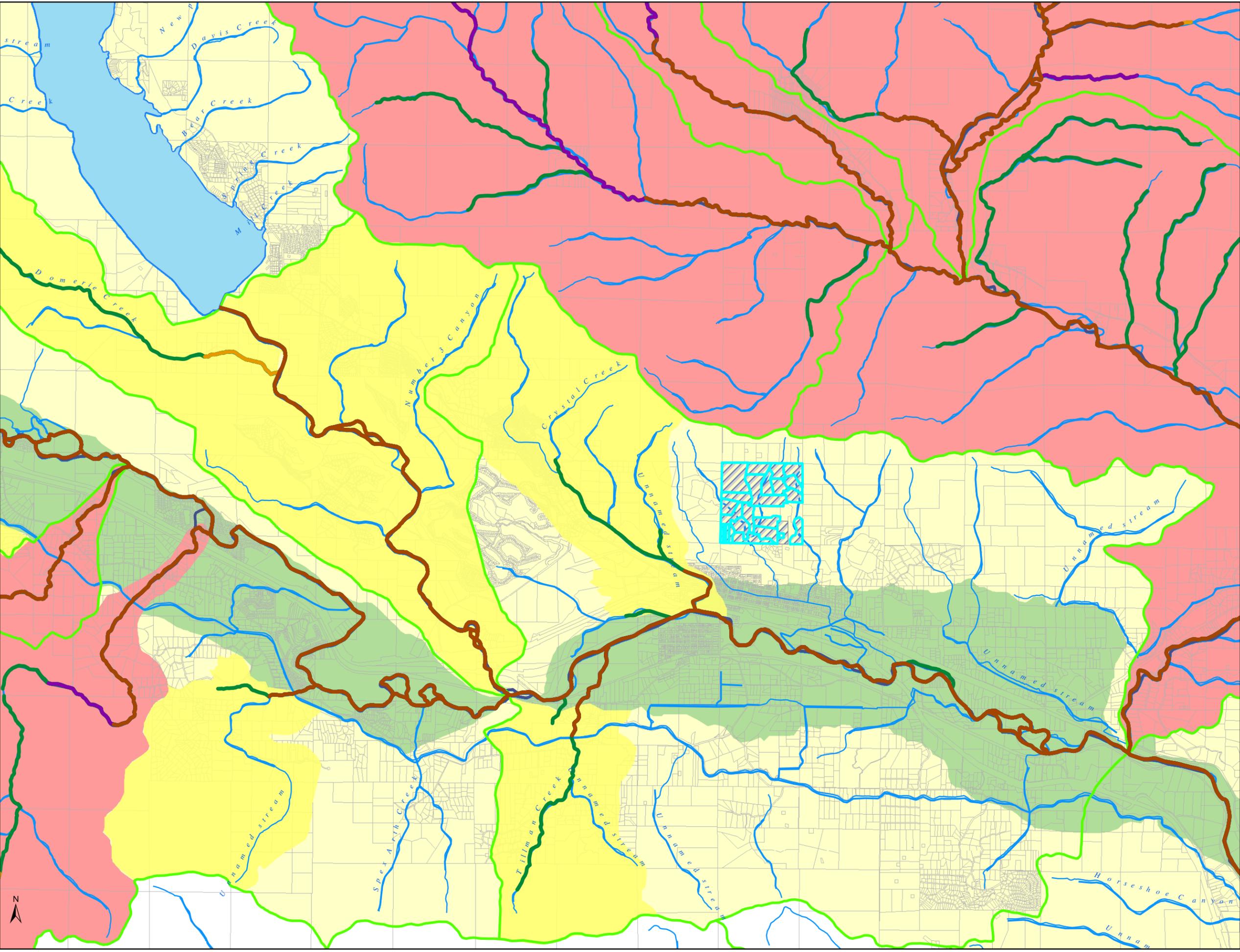
Ecology will likely be receiving a large number of requests for determinations of water budget neutrality. Joe Mentor reported at the March 2010 meeting that he had received 550 requests to purchase an interest in the Suncadia trust water rights. Assuming that many of these will be in the yellow area (our current ratio is approximately 3:1 for yellow:green requests), this could place a strain on the agenda of future WTWG meetings. I’d like to offer an alternative for your consideration.

As Ecology works on requests in the yellow areas we will be collecting information on which to base our decisions. One piece of information we have looked at is Priority Habitats and Species maps developed by WDFW that indicate the presence or absence of ESA listed fish species as well as non-listed fish species. The maps indicate that there are some areas in upper Kittitas County that contain no listed or priority species. If the information is confirmed by the fish experts on WTWG and if the impact to TWSA can be mitigated through use of the Suncadia trust water rights, is there a need to bring each one of these projects to WTWG? Or are there areas, such as the green area, that WTWG can give a conditional “thumbs up” to, obviating the need to bring projects in these areas back to WTWG?

Included with this submittal are figures showing an area north of the Yakima River around Cle Elum that are mapped as have no listed or priority species present.

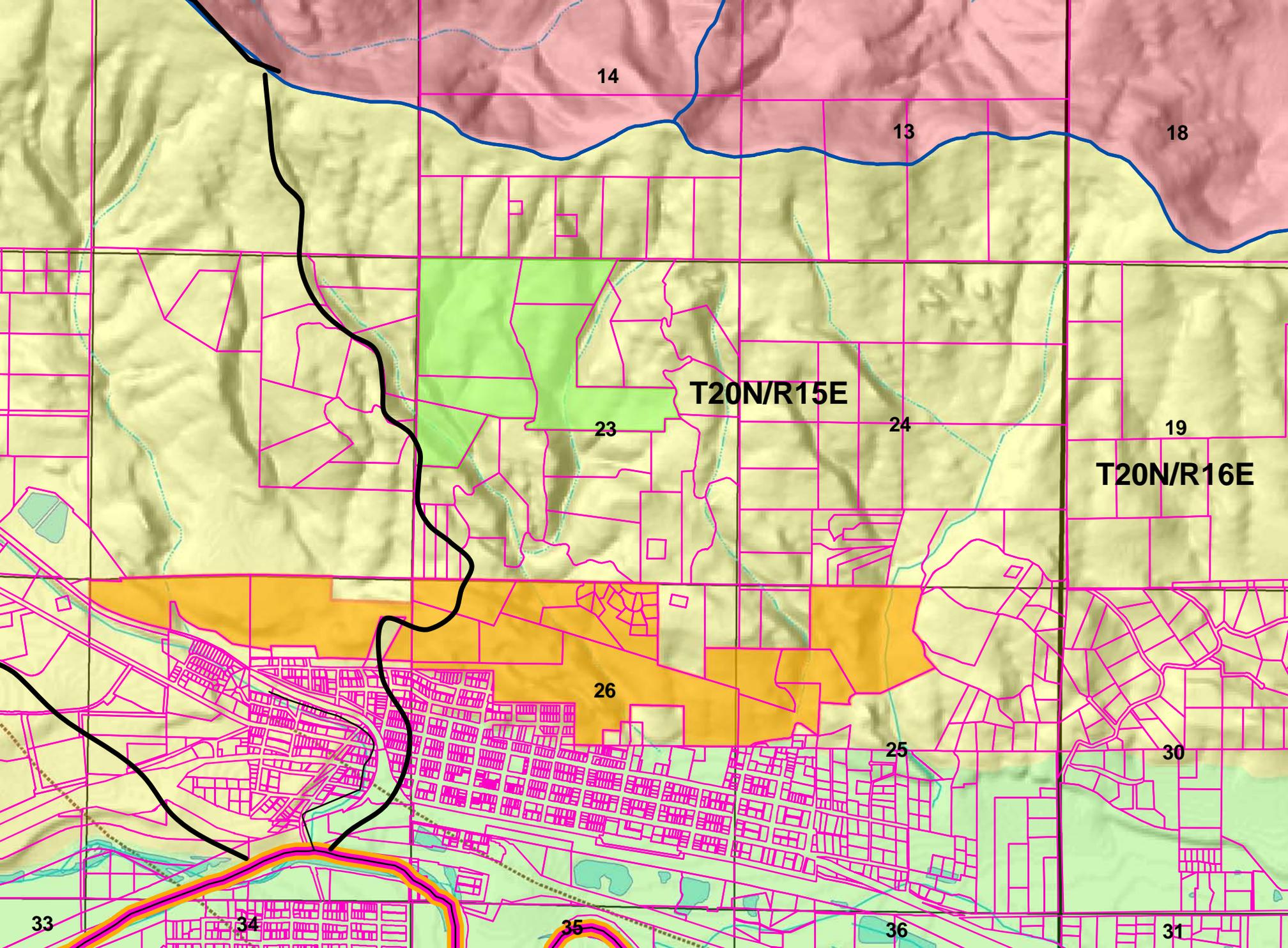
Mitigation Suitability of the Suncadia (Lamb and Anderson) Trust Water Rights





Legend

- fishdist_sv - Spring Chinook
 - fishdist_sv - Summer Steelhead
 - fishdist_sv - Bull Trout
 - fishdist_sv
 - HU_BOUNDARY_WBD_WA_ARC
 - Fish_AllSpeciesCombined
 - Hydrort_MSHV1
 - wa_rivers_arc
 - PSH_Fish_Present_Subbasin
 - tax_parcel
- suitability**
- <all other values>
 - Likely Suitable
 - Need Additional Information
 - Unsuitable
- suit_stat**
- county



14

13

18

T20N/R15E

23

24

19

T20N/R16E

26

25

30

33

34

35

36

31

