

**ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT  
HABITAT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE  
HABITAT ENHANCEMENT AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL**

HPC Project Number:	
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**PROJECT INFORMATION**

<b>Project Title:</b>	Grassland Restoration, Washtub Priority Area, Williams RD		
<b>Game Management Unit:</b>	8	<b>Region:</b>	2
<b>Local Habitat Partnership Committee (LHPC):</b>	<b>Was the project presented to the LHPC?</b>		
Flagstaff-Williams	Discussed with Steve Clark. Has been formally presented to HPC Committee in past grant cycles		
<b>Project Location:</b> (Please provide <u>lat/long</u> in decimal degrees or meters of project area using datum WGS84 or NAD83. If project is larger than one point, please include them all. Provide an accompanying shapefile as an attachment for the project area).			
<p><b>LATITUDE/NORTHING:</b> 35.157</p> <p><b>LONGITUDE/EASTING:</b> 112.397</p> <p><b>MULTIPLE LOCATION COORDINATES:</b> Please separate coordinate pairs with names &amp; commas. (ex. Bob's Tank 34.365, -110.663. Clear Spring 34.55, -110.107, etc.): <b>The coordinates provided above are the centroid of the Washtub Treatment Block. The centroid is approximately 12 miles southwest of Williams, AZ. See Maps 1-3 below for specific locations.</b></p>			
<b>Project Type:</b>	Habitat Restoration		
<b>Water Project Action</b> (if applicable):			
<b>Habitat Restoration Action</b> (if applicable):	Grassland Restoration, Mechanical treatment of Encroaching Junipers		
<b>Other Project Type and Action</b> (if applicable):			
<b>Has this project been submitted in previous years?</b>	Yes		
<b>PROJECT SUMMARY</b>			
Describe the proposed action only. Please use plain English, what action are you proposing? (If applicable, please reference any completed compliance including EAC#).			
<b>Brief Project Summary:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use Agra-axe machines to thin primarily junipers, and other invading conifers to restore or maintain approximately 5,000-7,000 acres of grasslands in Unit 8 on the Williams Ranger District. The Washtub Priority Area was identified in the South Zone Grassland Restoration EA. Treatments would occur over a two year period starting in October 2019. Restoring these grasslands would improve habitat for elk, mule deer, and pronghorn antelope by leading to an increase in grasses and herbaceous plant species important to big game species. It would also benefit many non-game grassland species of conservation concern (e.g., golden eagles, ferruginous hawks, burrowing owls, Gunnison's prairie dogs, and various songbirds and small mammals).</li> </ul>			
<b>Primary Big Game Wildlife Species to Benefit:</b>	Elk 40%; Mule Deer 20%; Pronghorn Antelope 40%		
<b>Implementation Schedule</b> (Month/Day/Year)	<b>START DATE:</b> October 1, 2019	<b>COMPLETION DATE:</b> <b>September 30, 2020</b>	

## PROJECT FUNDING

<b>Project Funding</b>	<b>Itemized Use of Funds</b>
<p>*Qualifying Cost Share should be restricted to support (materials, compliance, and or labor) of the proposed action ONLY (same time and place). Please do not include previously purchased supplies or past completed work.</p>	<p>Please email separate quotes if HPC funds are to be used to purchase materials or contracted labor: <a href="mailto:HPC@azgfd.gov">HPC@azgfd.gov</a>.</p>
<p><u>HPC Funds Requested</u></p> <p><b>Amount:</b> \$100,000</p> <p><u>Cost Share or Matching Funds</u></p> <p><b>Amount: \$80,000 provided by USFS</b></p> <p><u>Percent Match</u> <b>80%</b></p> <p><u>Total Project Cost</u></p> <p><b>Amount: \$ 180,000</b></p>	<p>50,000 per yr over two years to fund primary agra-axe operator for 130 days per yr and seasonal operator for 60 days per yr. These funds would be used for on-the-ground implementation. Agra-axe machine work at mid to low tree densities averages \$32/per acre.</p> <p>\$40,000 per yr to fund Primary agra-axe operator and cover maintenance costs on the agra-axe.</p>

## ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

Please indicate the status of the Project's compliance. if you are unsure, please reference:

HPC Compliance Checklist (<https://www.azgfd.com/wildlife/hpc/forms/>).

If you have questions regarding the requirement of an EAC, contact AGFD's Project Evaluation Program:

(<https://www.azgfd.com/wildlife/planning/projevalprogram/>).

\*\*\*Please email supporting compliance documents to [HPC@azgfd.gov](mailto:HPC@azgfd.gov) \*\*\*

<b>AGFD EA Checklist Completed:</b>	N/A	<b>Completion Date:</b>	
<b>NEPA Completed:</b>	Yes	<b>Completion Date:</b>	2017
<b>State Historic Preservation Office/ Archaeological Clearance:</b>	Yes	<b>Completion Date:</b>	1980-2018

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### Applicant

The project applicant is the responsible party for seeing the work through to completion.

**APPLICANT NAME:** Roger Joos

**PHONE:** 928-635-5622

**ORGANIZATION:** Williams Ranger District, Kaibab National Forest

**EMAIL:** rejoos@fs.fed.us

**ADDRESS:** 742 S. Clover Rd. Williams, AZ 86046

### AGFD Project Proponent

The Project Proponent is responsible for compliance, implementation, and annual/final reporting requirements.

**AGFD CONTACT NAME:** Will Lemon

**PHONE:** 928-864-7879

### Cooperators

**COOPERATOR NAME(S), ORGANIZATION, ROLE IN PROJECT:**

AZGFD, Coordination with priority treatment areas

Ranchers with allotments in this area fully support this effort.

## PROJECT NEED AND DESCRIPTION

Please use direct language: why is this project important? What problem will be solved? How will you implement it, and how will the habitat be enhanced? Please include # of acres, methods, roles, and any phases. Please be specific and thorough.

**NEED STATEMENT – PROBLEM ANALYSIS:** Historic overgrazing and fire exclusion have allowed junipers to encroach upon hundreds of thousands of acres of historically open lands on the Kaibab National Forest. Grasslands in the Washtub area serve as year round and critical winter habitat for elk, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, and wild turkey (in pine stringers). Golden eagles, burrowing owls, ferruginous hawks, Gunnison’s prairie dogs, and other grassland wildlife of conservation concern also use these areas. Under the South Zone Grassland Restoration Project, which covers 550,000 acres on the Williams and Tusayan Ranger Districts, fire will be the primary management tool for maintaining grasslands. However, junipers have invaded to the point where mechanical treatment to thin trees is necessary in most areas before fire can be effectively used for grassland maintenance.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND STRATEGIES:** The Williams Ranger District proposes to use Agra-axe machines to thin junipers and other conifers that are encroaching upon important grasslands. Agra-axe operators would crush cut trees where necessary to improve visibility for pronghorn. Pre-settlement trees would be retained. After mechanical treatment, fire (prescribed and managed wildfire) would be used to maintain these grasslands (Note this grant would not fund wildland fire management). Fuelwood collectors would be allowed to collect project generated slash within the project area.

Since 2006, the Williams Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest has restored or maintained over 25,000 acres of grassland habitat by thinning encroaching conifers through the use of Agra-axe machines and fire. In this proposal, we seek funding to continue grassland conservation to benefit numerous game species and non-game species that rely on grasslands in part or all of their life cycle.

Currently, Agra-axe operators are working in the Washtub Priority area. Since the beginning of the current HPC grant span (October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019) approximately 2,500 acres have been treated in that project area. Additionally, the operator has treated approximately 700 acres in the Hardy Hill Grassland area in GMU 7 and 200 acres in GMU 10 near Double A Knoll.

With this funding, we propose treating an additional 5,000-7,000 acres between October 2019 and September, 2020 (FY 20-21). Treatments would continue in the Wash Tub Priority area of the South Zone Grassland Restoration project on the west side of GMU 8. All of these areas serve as year round and important wintering habitat for pronghorn antelope, mule deer, and elk, as well as an important migration corridor for pronghorn antelope. In addition to restoring grasslands in this area habitat connectivity for pronghorn would be restored to facilitate their migration to the southern parts of GMU 8 (Wagon Tire and Drake areas).

**LAND OWNERSHIP AT THE PROJECT SITE(S):** All public land (Kaibab National Forest).

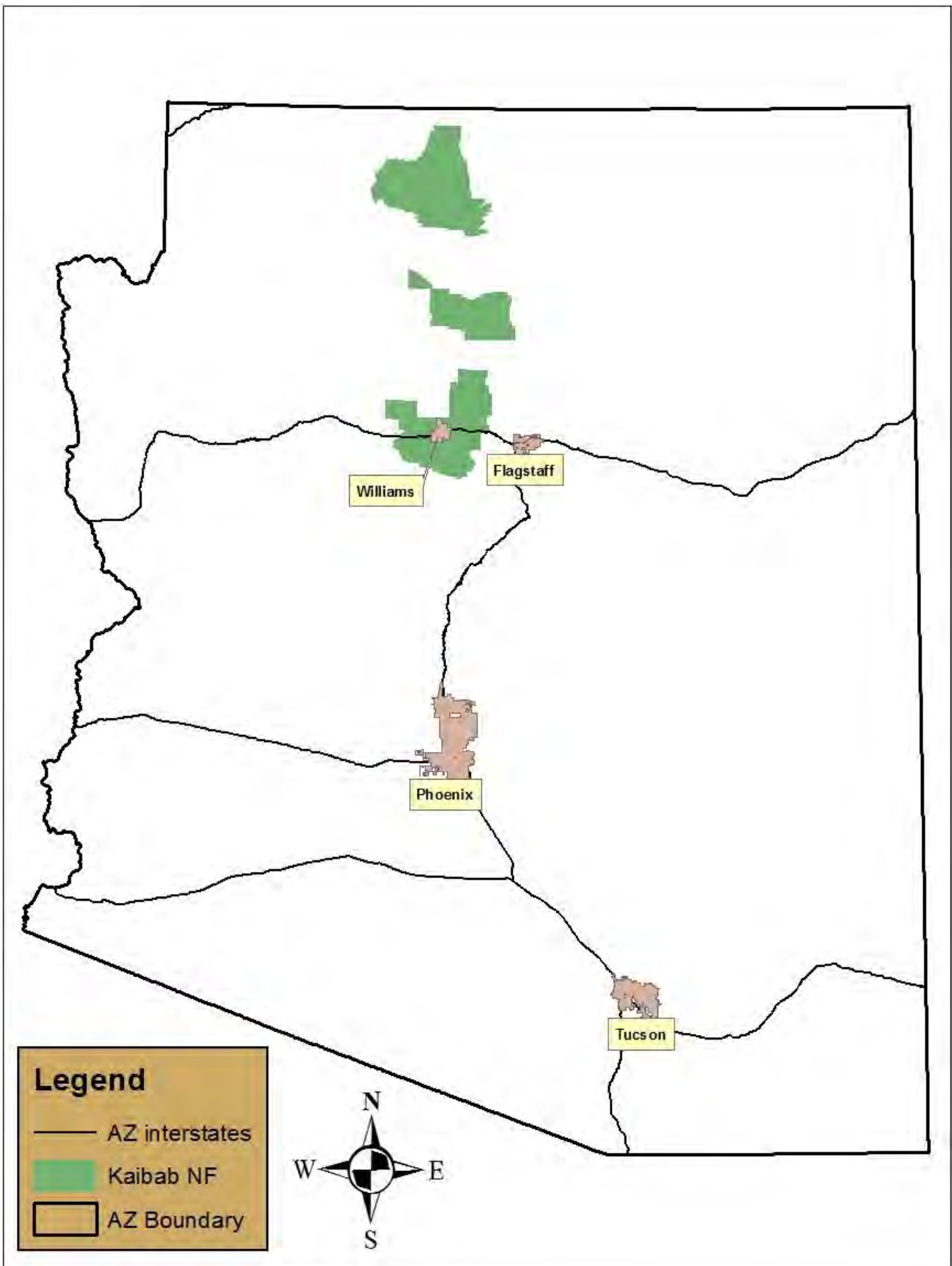
**PROJECT MONITORING PLAN:** On-the-ground monitoring and inspection (functional connectivity for pronghorn, relative cover and composition of grasslands,) will be conducted as indicated in the Kaibab National Forest Land Management Plan by South Zone personnel of the Kaibab National Forest. AZGFD Wildlife Managers will also conduct annual species surveys.

**PROJECT MAINTENANCE:** After mechanical thinning with agra-axe, prescribed fire (and when the opportunity arises, wildfire) will be used by FS staff to maintain grasslands on a 10-25 year fire return interval.

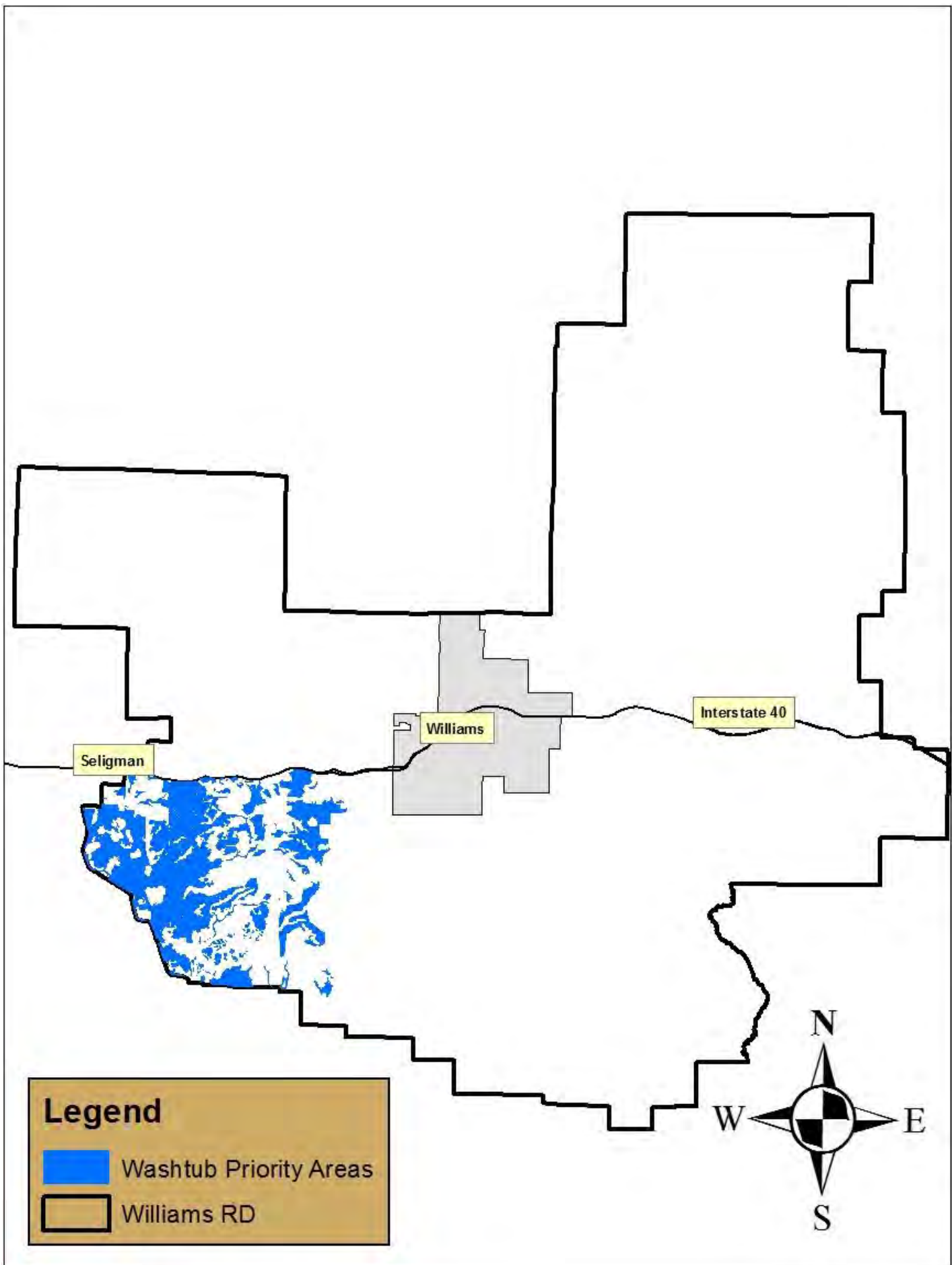
**PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT TO BE FILED BY:** Roger Joos

#### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS LIST:**

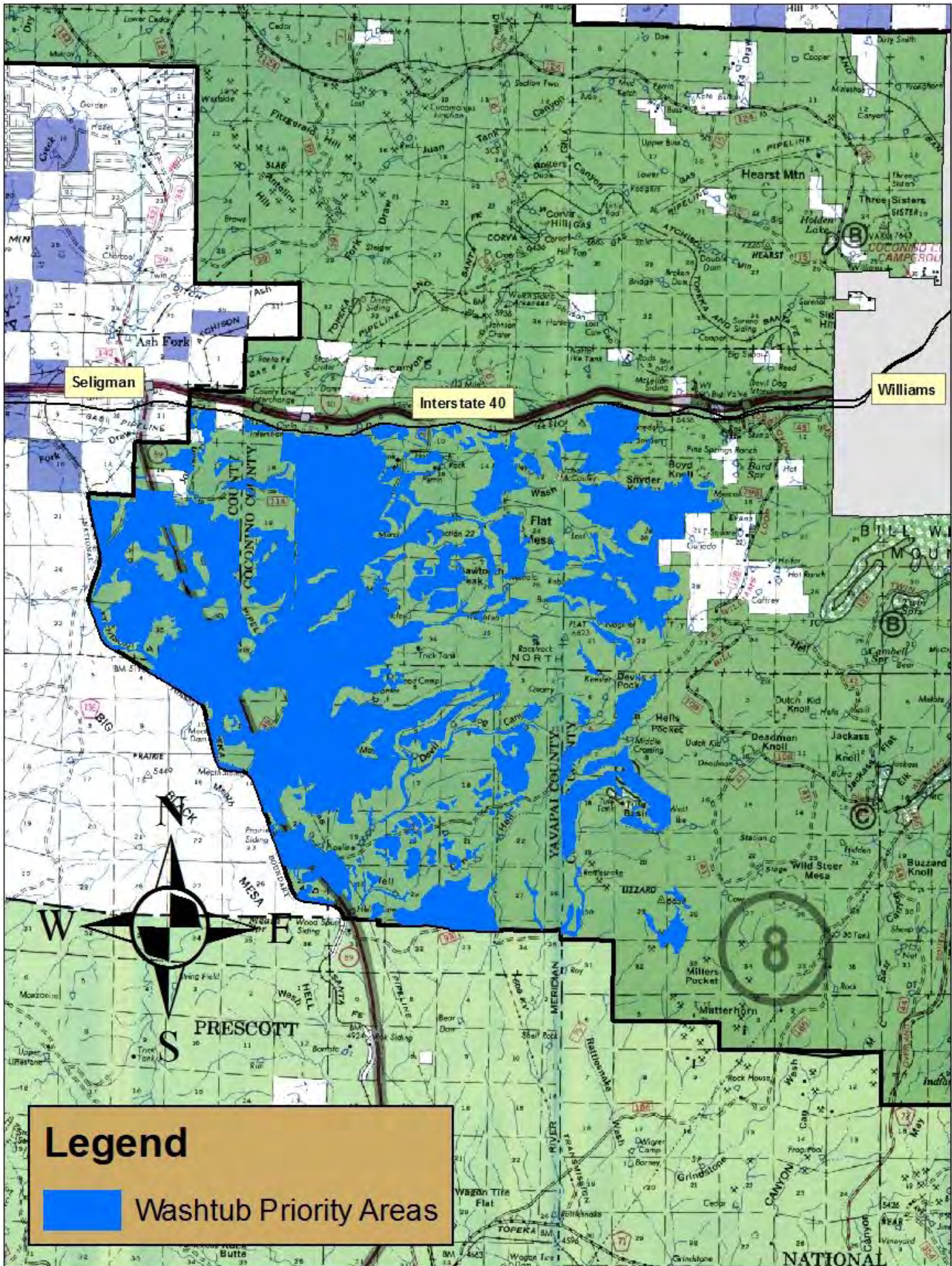
**Have supporting documents been submitted?** N/A



Map 1. Location of Williams Ranger District and greater Kaibab National Forest in relation to prominent landmarks of Arizona.



Map 2. Washtub Priority Treatment Areas on the west side of GMU 8 on the Williams Ranger District.



Map 3.