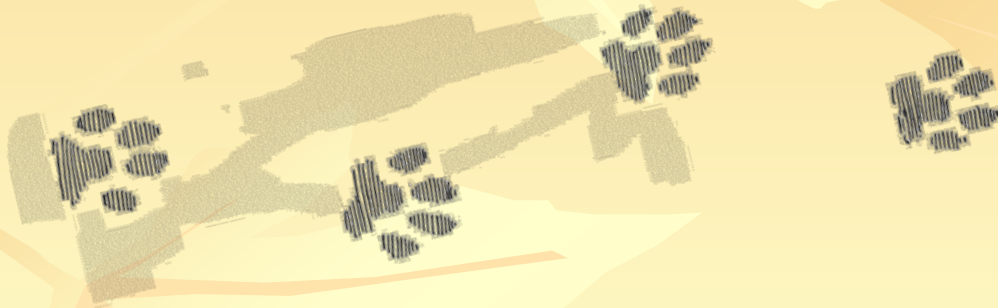


# Canada Lynx Habitat Regulatory Environment



Scott Jackson

National Carnivore Program Leader  
US Forest Service

Milo Burcham

# Pre-Listing

- Sensitive species status within Forest Service
- Evaluated in Biological Evaluation
  - Did FS actions contribute to a trend toward listing
    - not much data or direction available
- 1991 – 1998 several petitions filed requesting FWS to list lynx as endangered. Lawsuit finally resulted in a settlement agreement between FWS and Plaintiffs to propose listing of lynx.



# Steering Committee

- 1998
- USFS, BLM, USFWS, NPS
- Provided guidance to science and biology teams that were established to address lynx conservation issues on federal lands.
- Directed the compilation of three documents considered essential for understanding lynx ecology and appropriate conservation measures on federal land...

# Ecology and Conservation of Lynx in the United States



- “Science Report”
- Science Team
- Completed 1999
- Published 2000

# Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy



- LCAS
- 2000
- Interagency  
Lynx Biology  
Team

# Biological Assessment 1999

## Biological Assessment of the Effects of National Forest Land and Resource Management Plans and Bureau of Land Management Land Use Plans on Canada Lynx

J. Randal Hickenbottom (Initial Team Leader), USDA Forest Service, Pike-San Isabel National Forest, 19316 Goddard Ranch Ct., Morrison, CO 80465  
Bob Summerfield (Final Team Leader), USDA Forest Service, Kootenai National Forest, 1101 U.S. Hwy. 2 W., Libby, MT 59923  
Jeff Aardahl, USDI Bureau of Land Management, 1630 L Street NW, Room 204, Washington, DC 20036  
George Halekar, USDA Forest Service, Okanogan National Forest, 1 West Wineman, Tonasket, WA 98855  
Mark Hilliard, USDI Bureau of Land Management, 1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise, ID 83709  
Lynn Jackson, USDA Forest Service, Chippewa National Forest, Rt 3 Box 244, Cass Lake, MN 56633  
David Prevedel, USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Region, Federal Bldg., 324 25th Street, Ogden, UT 84401  
John Rupe, USDA Forest Service, Black Hills National Forest, RR2, Box 200, Custer, SD 57730

### Executive Summary

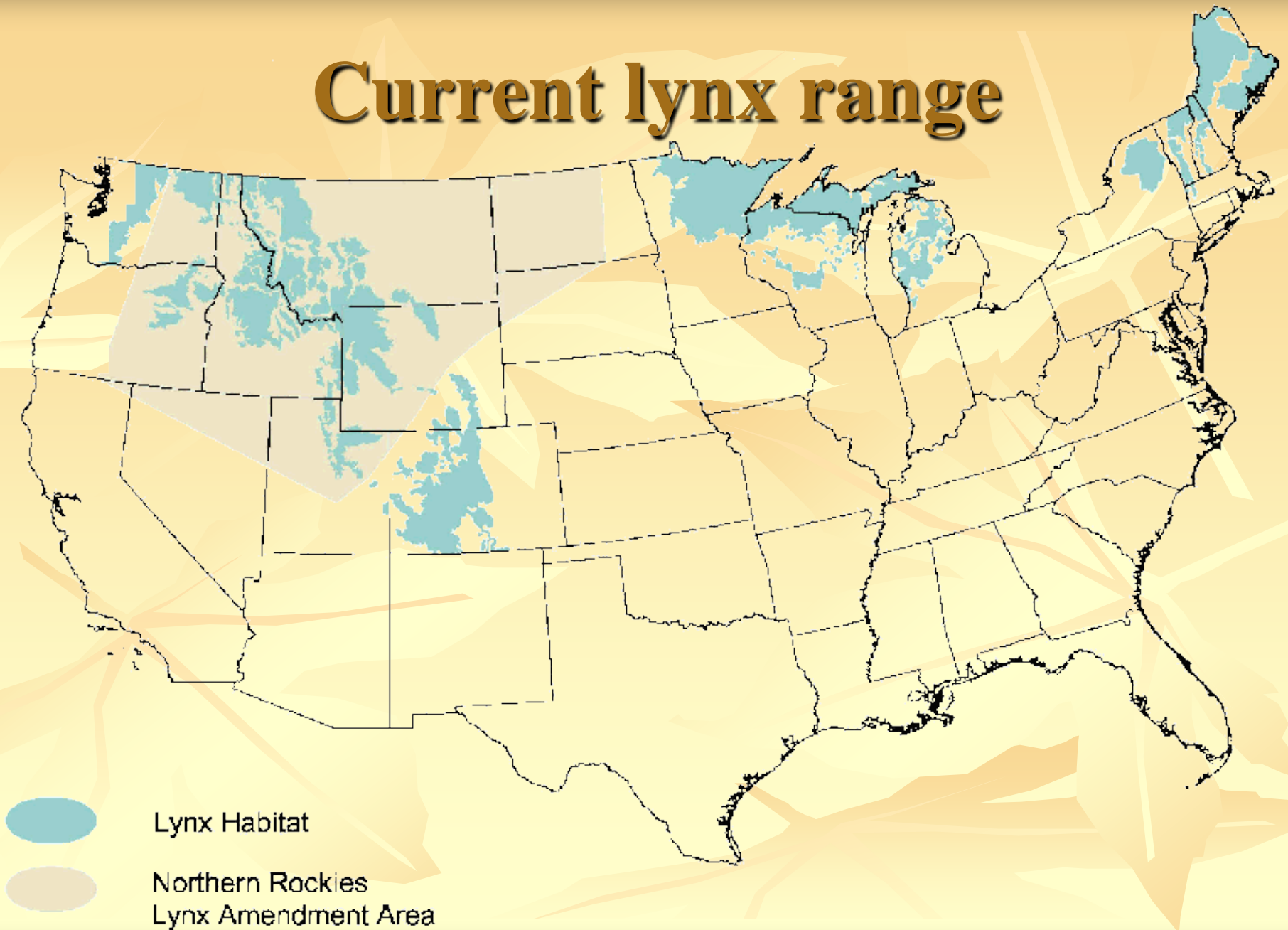
The Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*) is proposed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for listing as a threatened species under provisions of the Endangered Species Act (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1998a). Informal conferencing among FWS and USDA Forest Service (FS) and USDI Bureau of Land Management (BLM) began in the fall of 1998 under the direction of an interagency Lynx Steering Committee. As a part of this effort, a Science Report (Ruggiero et al. in press 1999a) and a draft Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy (Ruediger et al. in press 1999) have been prepared. Using these documents and other currently available scientific and commercial information, this Biological Assessment (BA)

identifies the potential effects resulting from 57 FS Land and Resource Management Plans and 56 BLM Land Use Plans (collectively referred to as Plans) within the 16 state area where lynx are proposed for listing. Five geographic areas were considered: Cascade Mountains, Northern Rocky Mountains, Southern Rocky Mountains, Great Lakes and the Northeast. The Plans are assessed as written and amended, but not including any subsequent policy direction which has not been officially incorporated into the Plans.

The BA makes a determination of effect based on the not likely/likely to adversely affect standard of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), which will serve as the basis for both

- 57 NFs
- 56 BLM units
- Five Geographic Areas
  - Cascades
  - N. Rockies
  - S. Rockies
  - Great Lakes
  - Northeast

# Current lynx range



*Lynx habitat is subject to change as information is updated.*

# Final Rule Listing Lynx as Threatened

## *Conclusion:*

Primary threat to lynx in the contiguous United States was the lack of adequate regulatory mechanisms in LRMPs





# Conservation Agreements

USFS Agreement #00-MU-11015600-013

**CANADA LYNX  
CONSERVATION AGREEMENT**

**U.S. FOREST SERVICE  
AND  
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE**

**February 7, 2000**

- Agreements between USFWS and USFS and BLM
- First signed in 2000.

# Lynx Geographic Areas



# Northern Rockies Lynx Management Direction



USDA  
Forest  
Service

National Forests in  
Montana, and parts of  
Idaho, Wyoming, and  
Utah

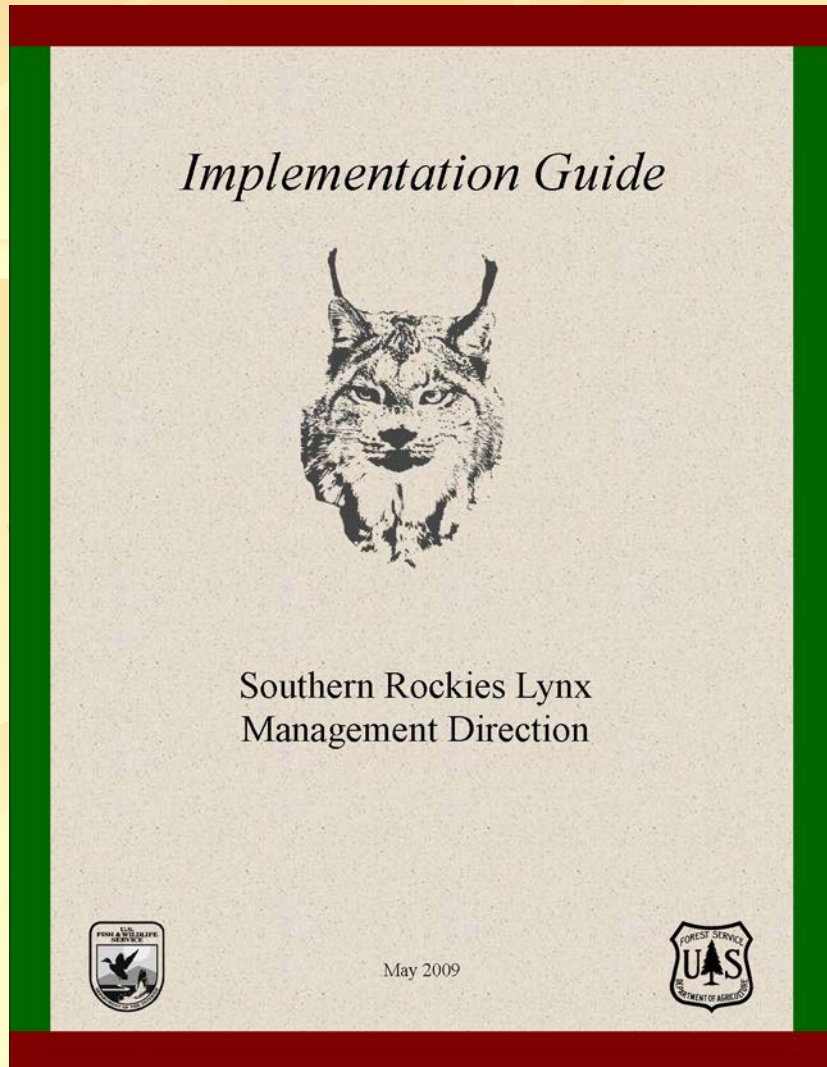
March 2007

## Northern Rockies Lynx Management Direction Record of Decision



- 2007
- Amended 18 National Forests in ID, MT, WY, UT
- >18 million acres of lynx habitat across >38 million acres of NF

# Southern Rockies Lynx Management Direction



- 2008
- Amended 8 Forest Plans in CO
- Covered 7.5 million acres of lynx habitat within 15 million acres of NF.

# Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy



- Identified 17 risk factors affecting:
  - productivity
  - mortality
  - movements
  - other large scale factors

# Canada Lynx Habitat



- Mesic coniferous forests
- Dry, deep snow conditions
- Prey base of SSH
- Dense horizontal cover protruding above snow in mid-winter
- Dense horizontal cover during non-snow periods



# Some Challenges

- Effects of vegetation mgmt activities on winter snowshoe hare habitat in multistory forests
- Effects of limiting pre-commercial thinning
- Effects of limiting growth of groomed or designated winter over-the-snow routes
- Effects of vegetation mgmt standards on wildland fire risk to communities

# Vegetation Management

- Objectives: Provide a mosaic to support snowshoe hares; focus management to improve habitat.
- Standards:
  - If >30% of lynx habitat is in stand initiation stage, no additional habitat may be regenerated; no more than 15% regenerated in a 10-yr period.
  - Pre-commercial thinning that reduces snowshoe hare habitat is not allowed.  
(exceptions for defensible space, research, aspen restoration)
  - Retain understory cover in multistoried stands



# Recovery Outline

## RECOVERY OUTLINE Contiguous United States Distinct Population Segment of the Canada Lynx

**Common Name:** Canada lynx  
**Scientific Name:** *Lynx canadensis*

**Listing Status:** Threatened  
**Date Listed:** March 24, 2000

**Lead Region:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6.  
Cooperating regions are Regions 1, 3, and 5.

**Lead Field Office:** Montana Field Office  
100 N. Park Avenue, Suite 320  
Helena, Montana 59601  
Telephone: 406-449-5225

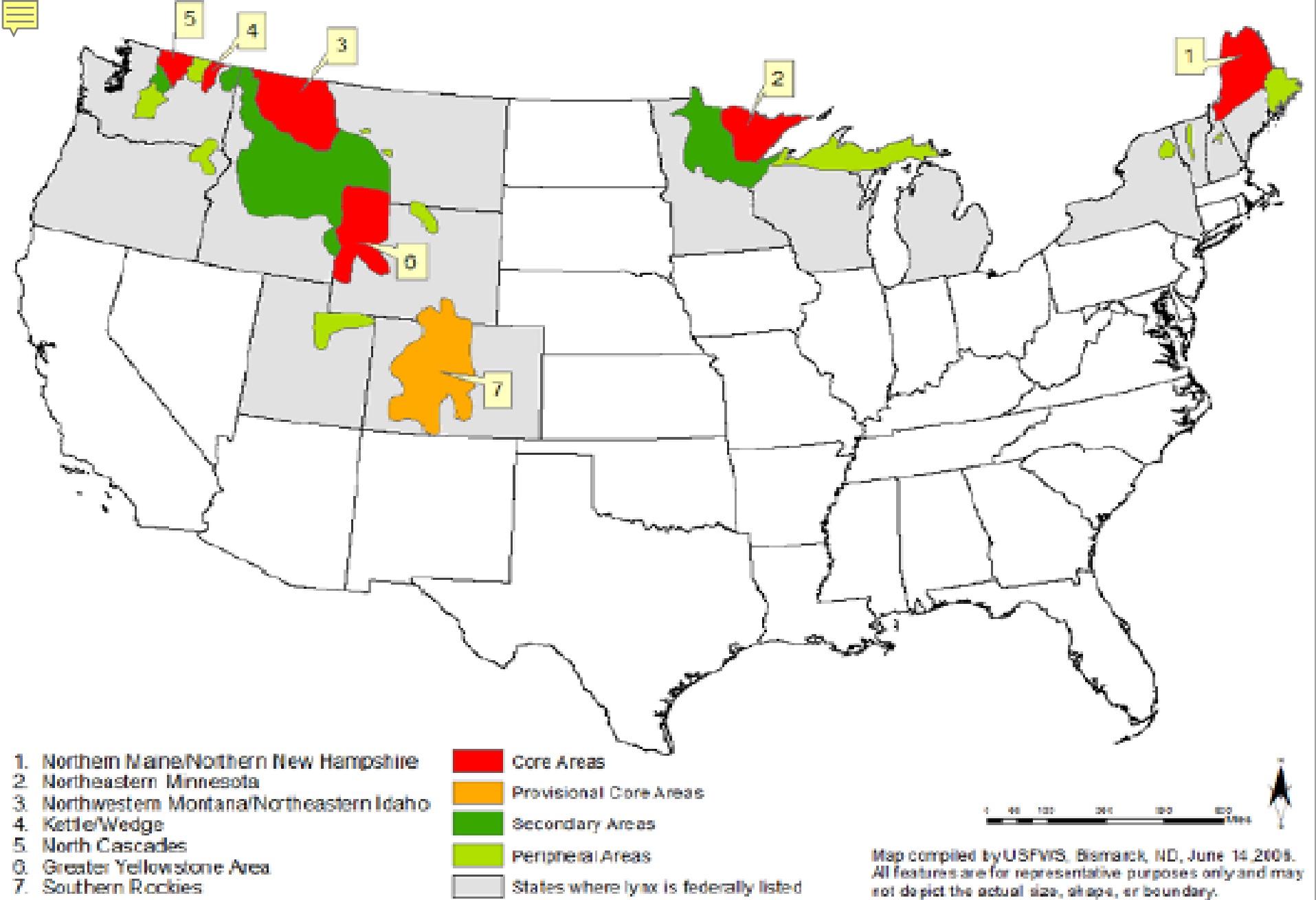
**Lead Biologist:** Lori Nordstrom, Montana Field Office  
Telephone 406-449-5225, ext. 208; lori\_nordstrom@fws.gov



**Purpose of the Recovery Outline:** This document serves as an interim strategy to guide recovery efforts and inform the critical habitat designation process for the contiguous United States population of the Canada lynx until a draft recovery plan has been completed. Recovery outlines are intended primarily for internal U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) use; formal public participation will be invited upon release of the draft recovery plan. We will consider any new information or comments that members of the public may wish to offer regarding this outline during the recovery planning process. For more information on Federal recovery efforts for the contiguous United States population of the Canada lynx, or to provide additional comments, interested parties may contact the lead biologist for this species, Lori Nordstrom, at the above address, telephone, or e-mail.

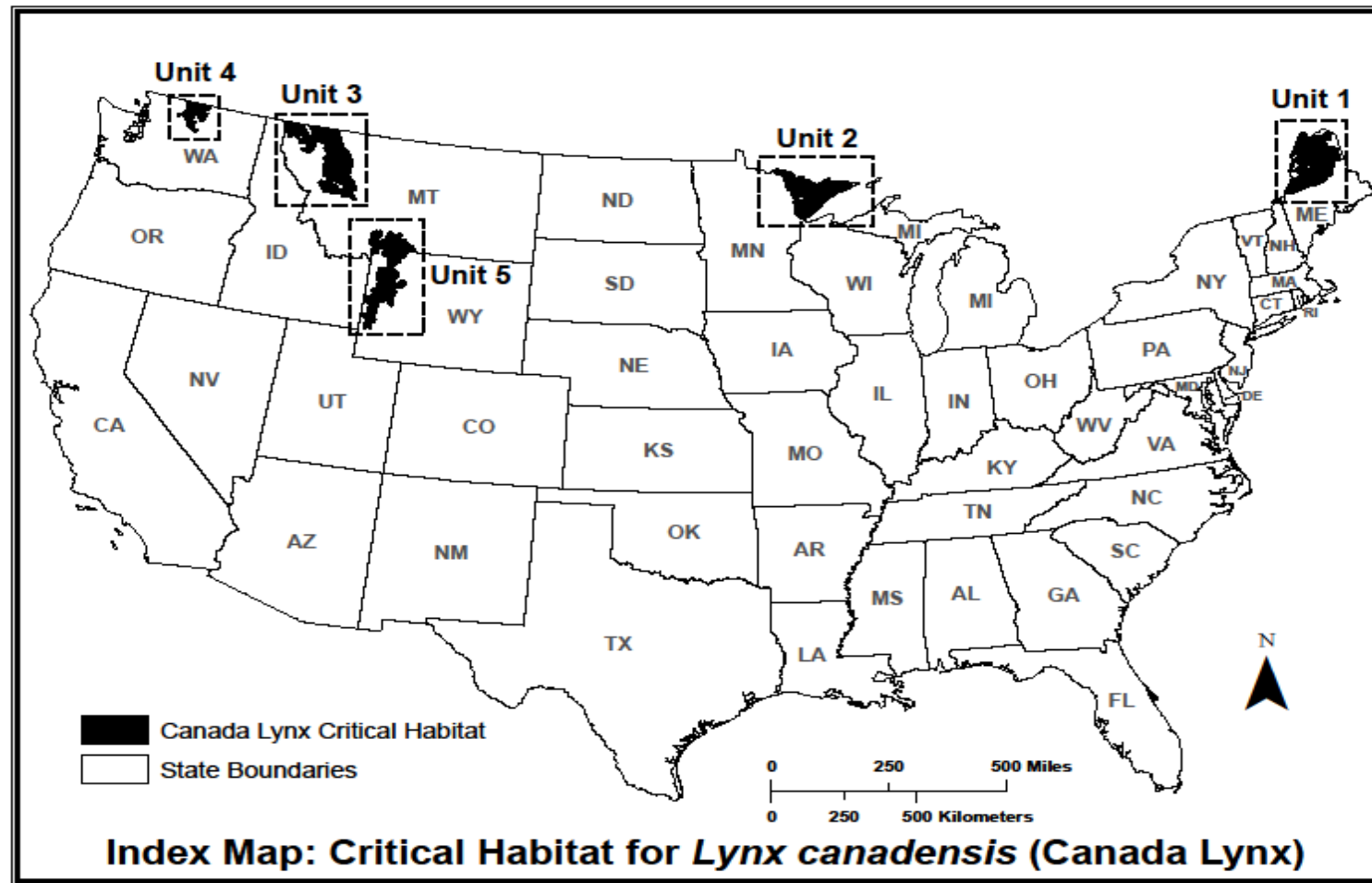
**Scope of Recovery and Available Information:** The scope of this recovery effort is the contiguous United States distinct population segment of the Canada lynx (U.S. Department of the Interior [USDI] 2000, 2003). This outline provides a general overview of the available information on the contiguous United States lynx distinct population segment, and provides preliminary recovery objectives and actions based on our understanding of current and historical lynx occurrence and lynx population dynamics in the contiguous United States. Because of the gaps in our knowledge of this species, for this recovery outline we made some assumptions regarding lynx population dynamics and the relative importance of different geographic areas to the persistence of lynx in the contiguous United States. We recognize the uncertainties of this information and identified the assumptions we made.

- USFWS
- Sept. 2005
- Interim guidance for consultation and recovery until formal recovery plan approved.
- Lynx habitat stratified into core, secondary and peripheral areas.

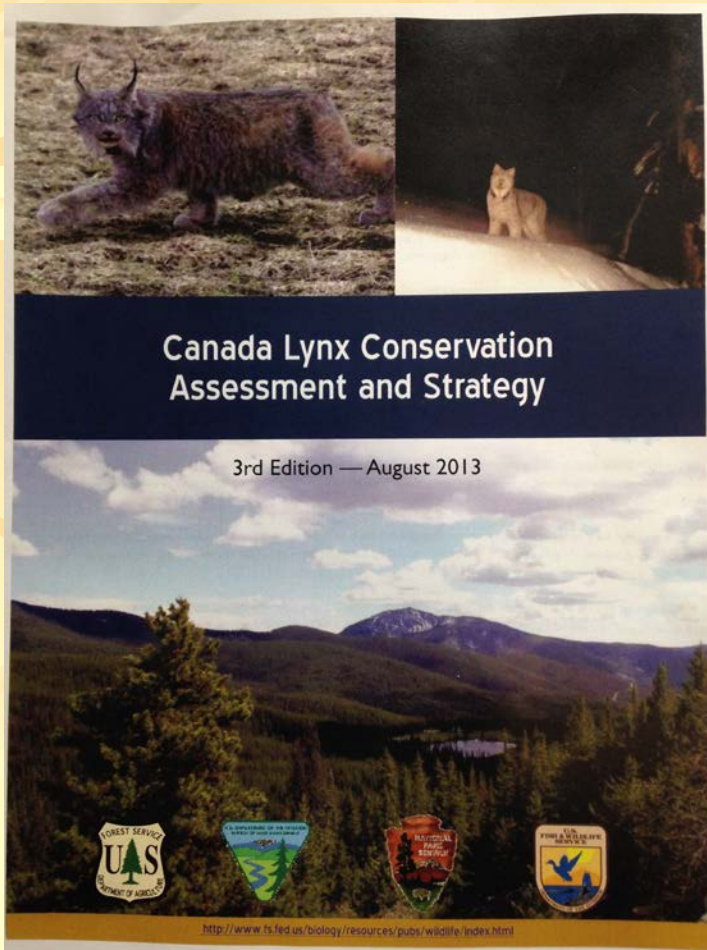


**Figure 3.1.** Areas identified as core, secondary, and peripheral as depicted in the Canada Lynx Recovery Outline across the states where the lynx is listed (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2005).

# Critical Habitat

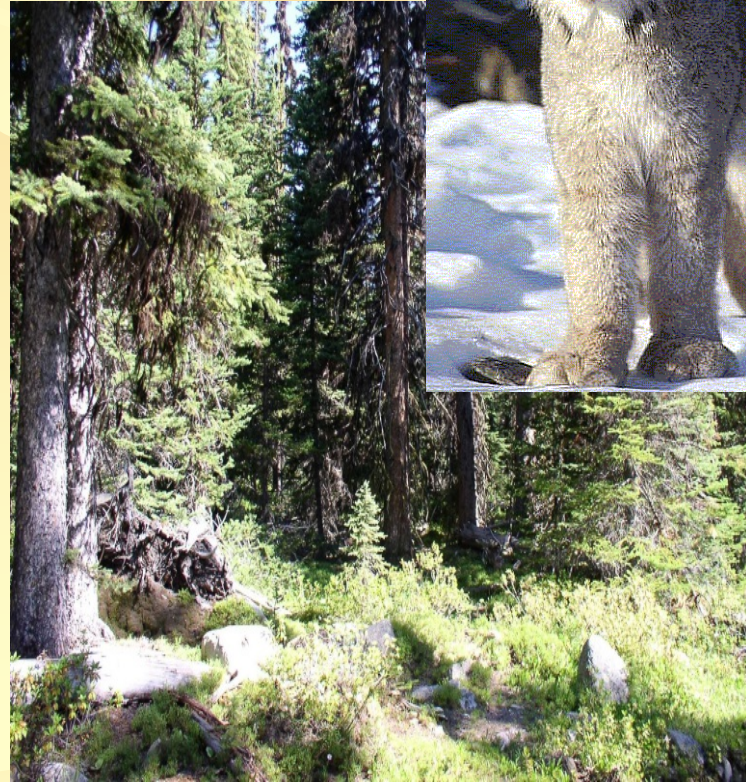


# LCAS 2013



- New science
- Core Area emphasis
- Anthropogenic Influences
  - Two tiers
- Conservation Measures

# Current Regulatory Environment



# Future challenges?



# Questions?

