





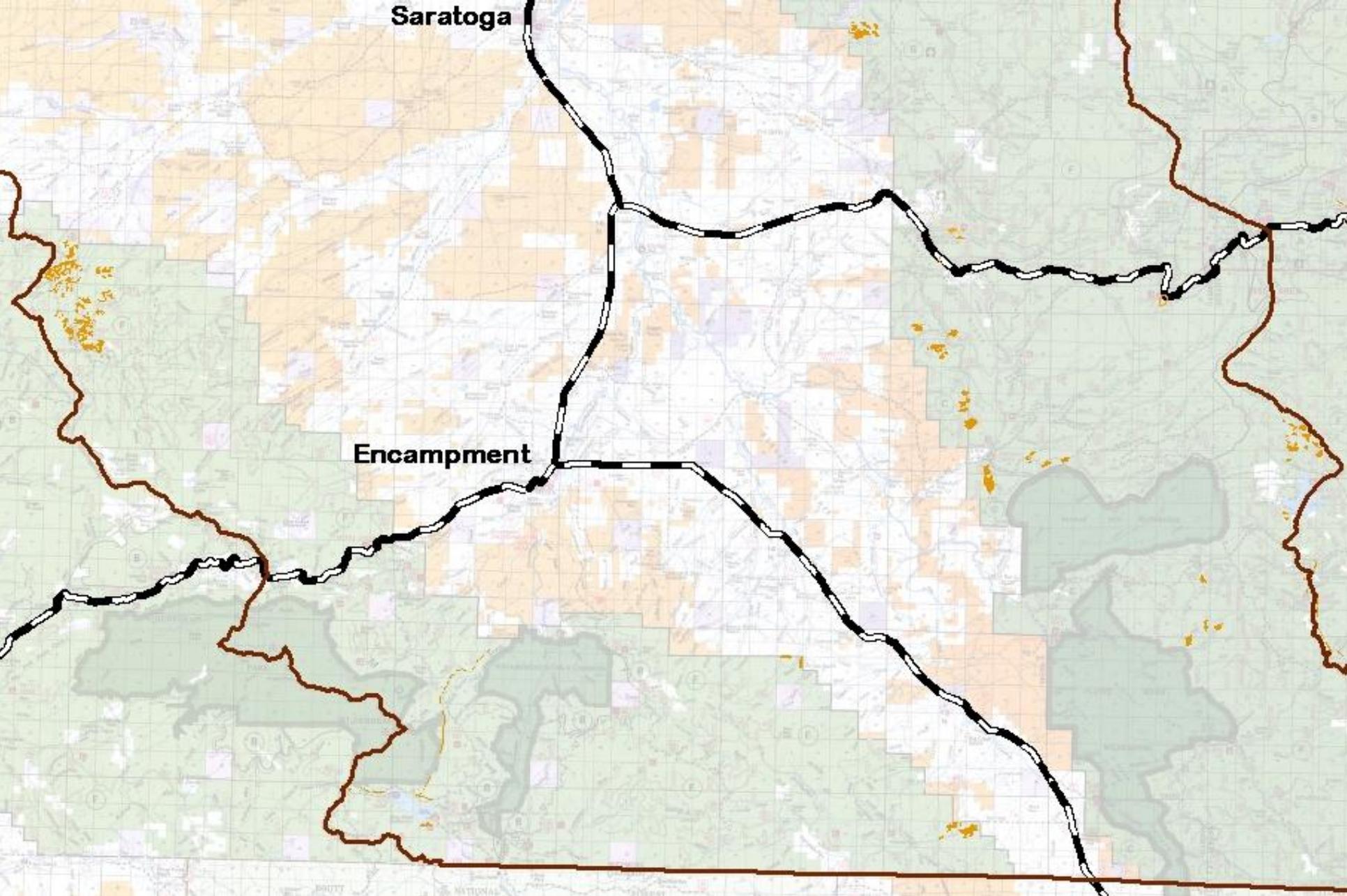
Let's move from the mule deer shrubland winter ranges to the transition and summer range in timber stands on the Forest



Lush grasses and forbs are an important component of the summer diet



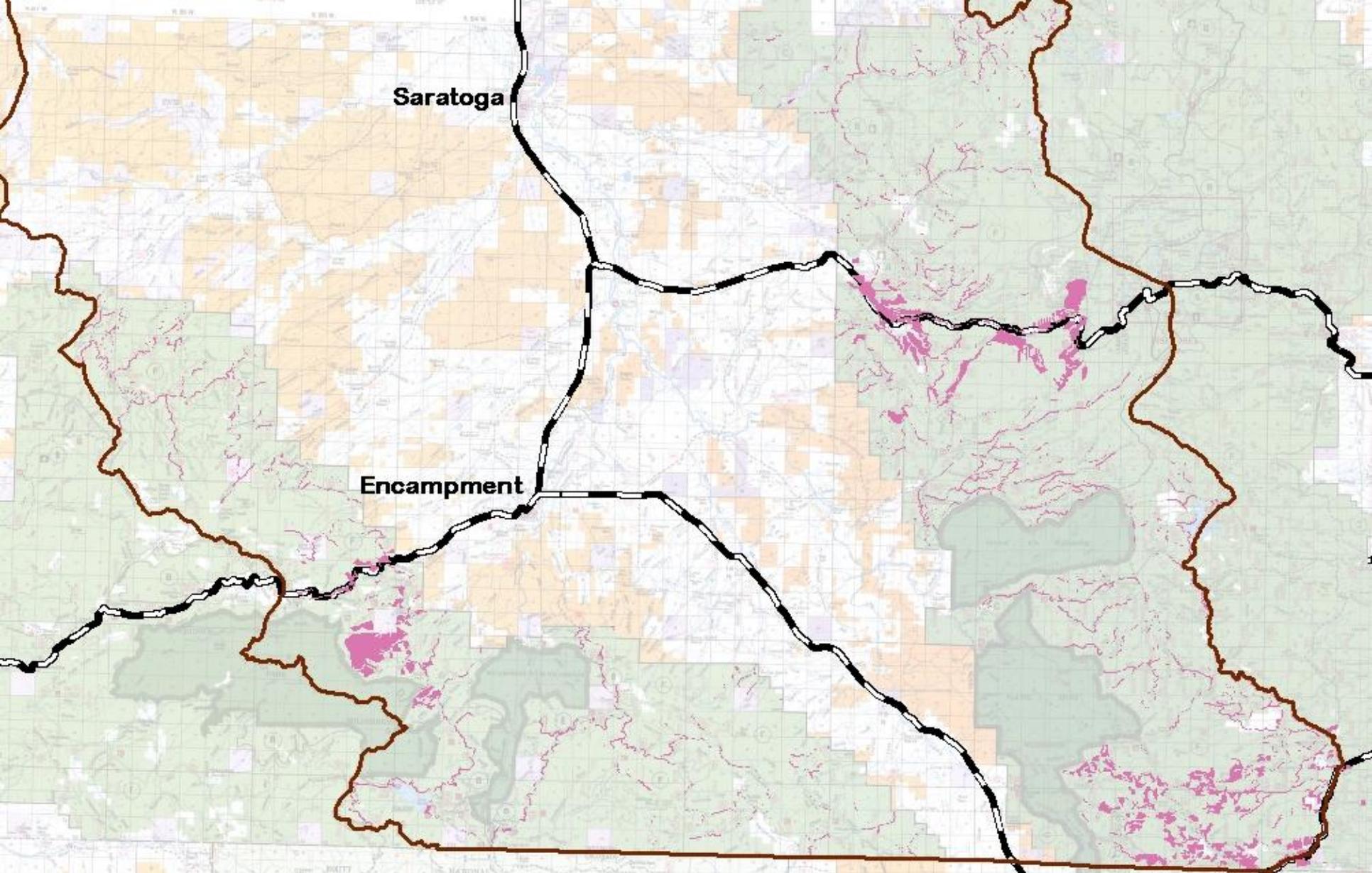
Vegetation management in timber can provide some of those components for summer mule deer diets.



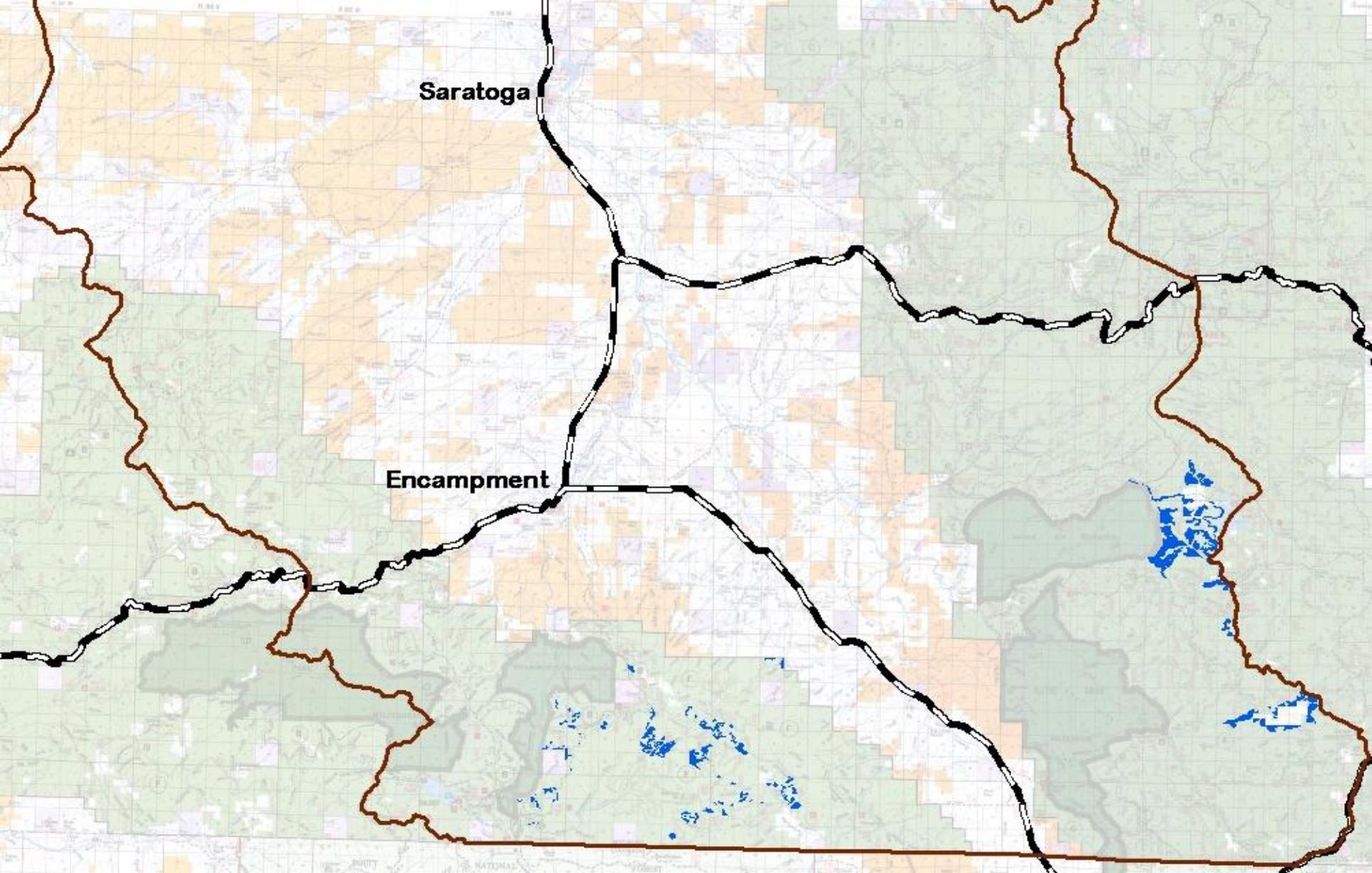
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Encampment

Timber management projects completed since 2000 in transition and summer range (\pm 3500 acres)



On-going timber management projects (+25,000 acres). These include + 13,000 acres of hazardous dead and dying trees that will be removed along open roads for many years in the future.



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Future timber management projects for which analysis has been/is almost completed (± 5300 acres). Treatment will occur within the next few years.



Mature lodgepole stands can have a naturally sparse understory, providing limited summer forage for mule deer.



07/25/2012

Some beetle-killed stands, especially near riparian areas, can provide grass/forbs for summer diets. This stand is immediately adjacent to East Fork Encampment River.



Many mature lodgepole stands contain this sparse understory of huckleberry. Huckleberry provides leaves and berries for blue grouse but not much forage for mule deer.



Vegetation management can be used as a tool to promote summer diets of mule deer.



Timber harvested in 1998, photo from June 2010. Grass and forb green-up for early summer diet. Aspen stems resprouting in the background.



8.10.2007

Different location in same harvest unit in August. Note amount of grass and forb production.



Same harvest unit, different location. Note amount of aspen resprouting. Aspen sites typically have more understory production.



Another harvest unit ± 15 years older than previous photos. Sites with favorable soils and moisture can develop and maintain productive understory for several decades.



Many aspen stands on the Forest and across the west are > 100 years old. Conifers begin to dominate these stands.



Aspen stands with few conifers usually have a very productive understory.



Aspen stands with a large conifer component usually have lower understory plant cover.



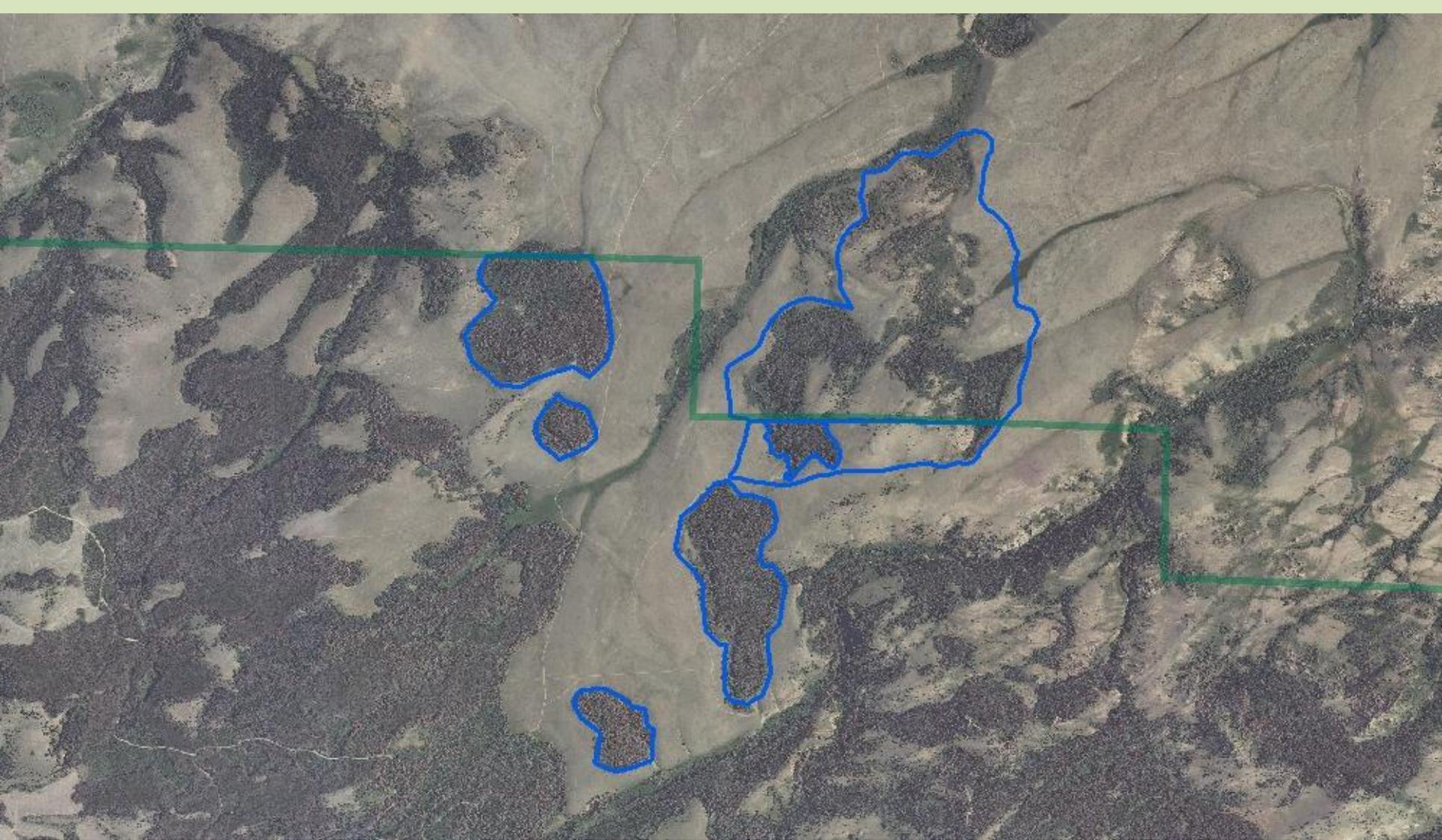
To promote aspen regeneration and understory plant production, conifers can be cut from the stand. Where conifers dominate the stand, all trees can be felled to promote aspen regeneration.



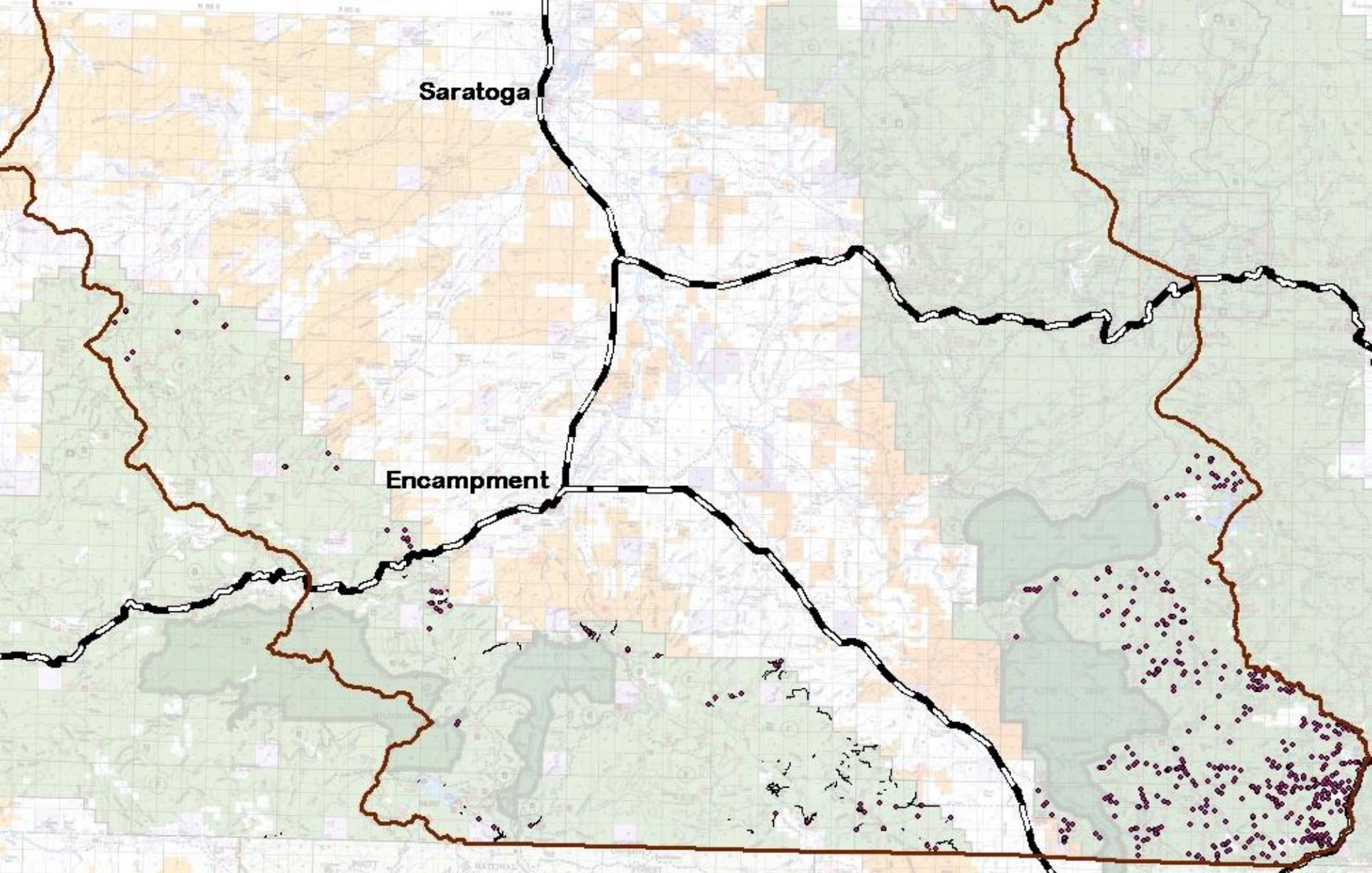
Prescribed fire can be used as a tool to promote regeneration of aspen stands.



Desired response from aspen treatment is a flush of aspen resprouting and an abundance of grass and forb production.



Example: Forest Service and BLM are developing a project to burn conifer dominated aspen stands on transition range near Methodist Creek (± 1700 acres). Note the limited amount of pale green aspen at the edges of conifer dominated stands.



US Forest Service has decommissioned more than 500 routes (± 100 miles) within the Platte Valley mule deer herd unit since 2005.



Forest Service dozer decommissioning a user-created route in transition range.

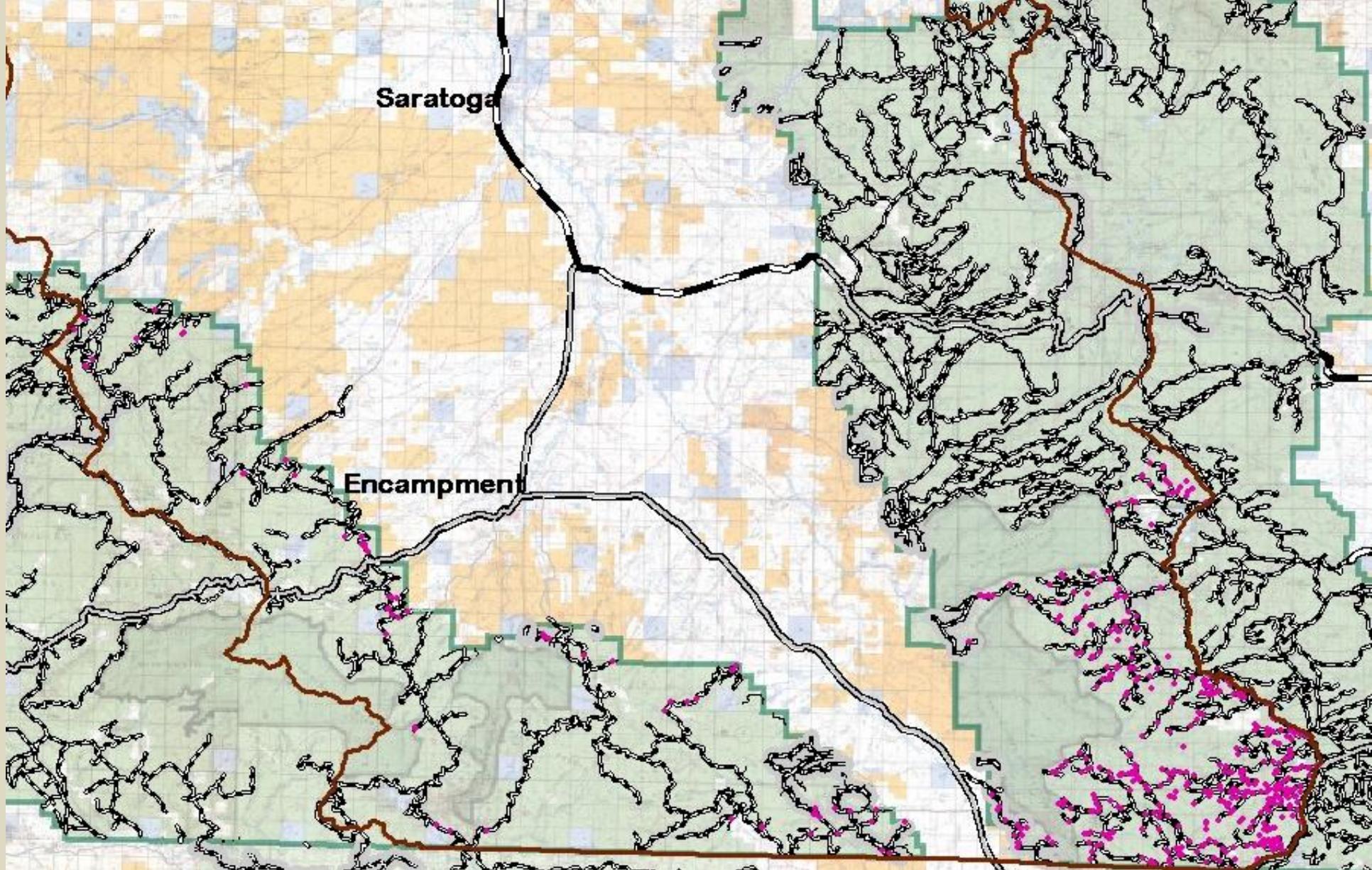


Route decommissioned in 2006 on transition range near Sixmile.



Grasses, forbs, and sagebrush re-established by 2011 on the same route.





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All open roads on the Forest overlaid with decommissioned routes.



07/24/2012



07/24/2012