Condon Mountain and Crazy Horse Fire Areas Overlaid on Google Earth Satellite Images

Before and After Comparisons Showing Logging Does Not Deter Wildfire

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A primary goal of the Flathead National Forest's proposed Mid-Swan Landscape Restoration and Wildland Urban Interface Project [1] is to intentionally fragment forests, including mature forests essential to survival of threatened lynx, through logging and other means in order to save these forests from fragmentation due to the spread of wildfire.

I looked at two wildfires that have occurred in the Mid-Swan project area to see if the spread of those fires appeared to be significantly stemmed by previous logging and other human fragmentation of forest habitat. Using before and after Google Earth satellite images and a Flathead National Forest fire history map layer [2], I found that these fires readily burned through previously logged areas and crossed logging roads to continue their spread into unlogged forest areas.

Ridgelines, north-facing slopes and riparian areas appeared to be generally more consistent at deterring the spread of these fires than did logging and road-building. My conclusions are drawn from the attached six images, listed by page number:

1. Google Earth 2011 image of the area that would host the 2012 Condon Mountain Fire.
2. The above with the 2012 Condon Mountain Fire perimeter overlay.
3. Google Earth 2013 post-fire image of the 2012 Condon Mountain Fire area.

4. Google Earth June 2003 image of the area that would host the 2003 Crazy Horse Fire.
5. The above with the 2003 Crazy Horse Fire perimeter overlay.
6. Google Earth 2005 post-fire image of the 2003 Crazy Horse Fire area.

Sources

1. https://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/flathead/landmanagement/projects/?cid=fseprd787388&width=full

2. Flathead National Forest's "Fire History" map layer is archived at:
www.swanview.org/other-files/Fire_History_1980-2013.kml.zip

Condon Mountain Fire Area
On a 11/20/2011 satellite image.
Google Earth
Image USDA Farm Service Agency
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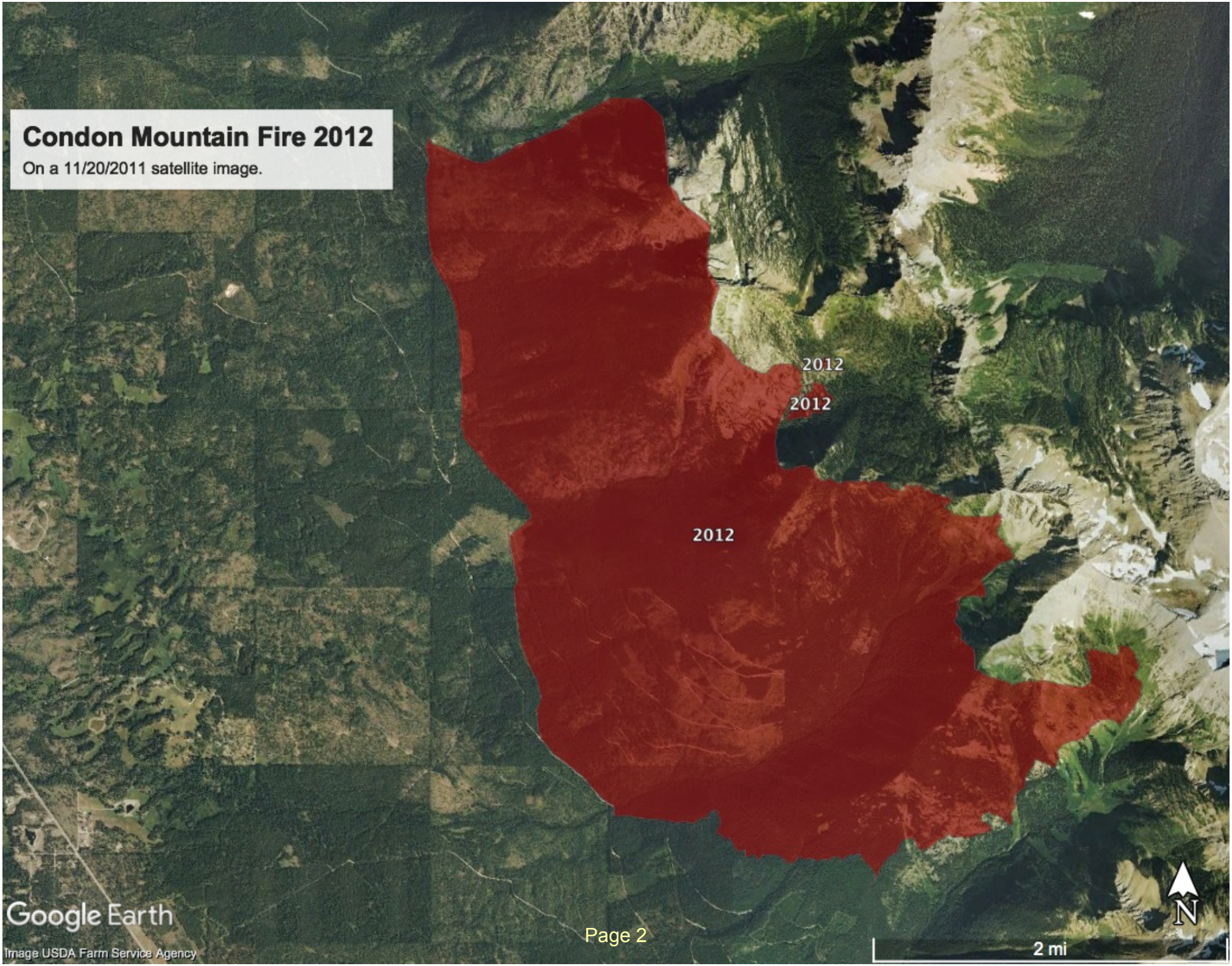
2 mi


Condon Mountain Fire 2012
On a 11/20/2011 satellite image.
2012
2012
2012
Google Earth
Image USDA Farm Service Agency
N
2 mi

Condon Mountain Fire Area 2013
On a 7/25/2013 satellite image.
Google Earth
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Crazy Horse Fire Area 2003
On a 6/30/2003 satellite image.
Google Earth
N
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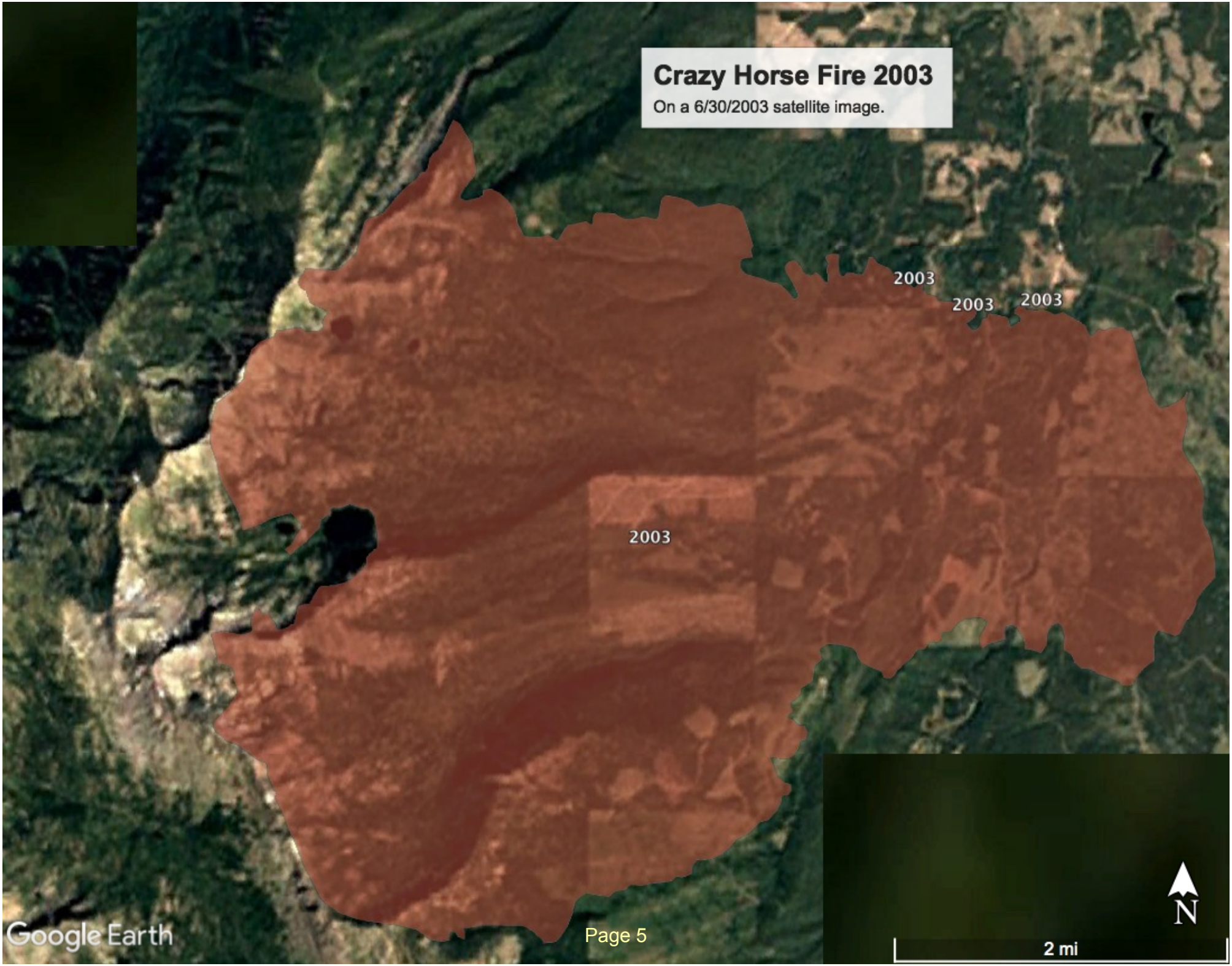
Crazy Horse Fire 2003
On a 6/30/2003 satellite image.
2003
2003
2003
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Google Earth
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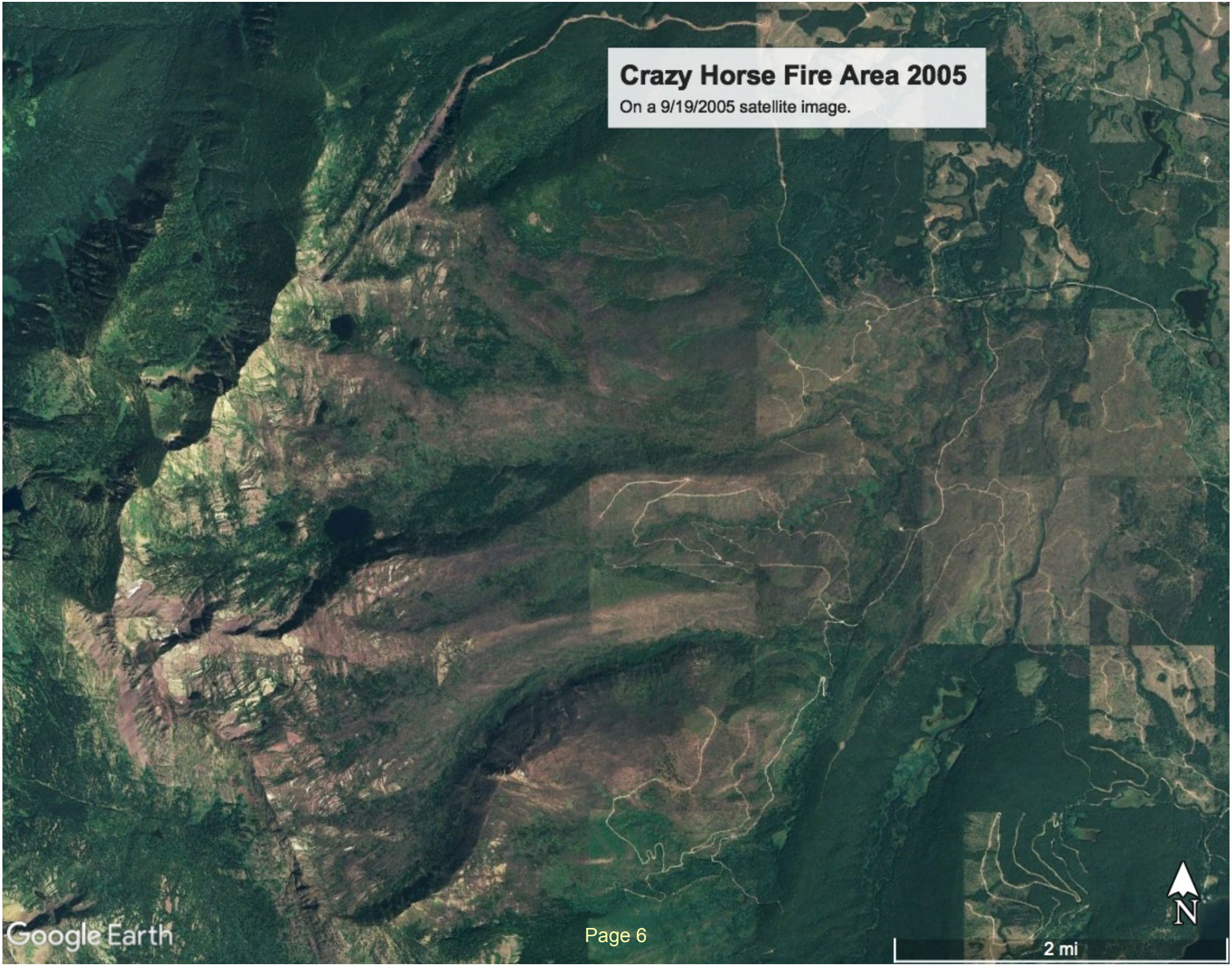
Crazy Horse Fire Area 2005
On a 9/19/2005 satellite image.
Google Earth
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