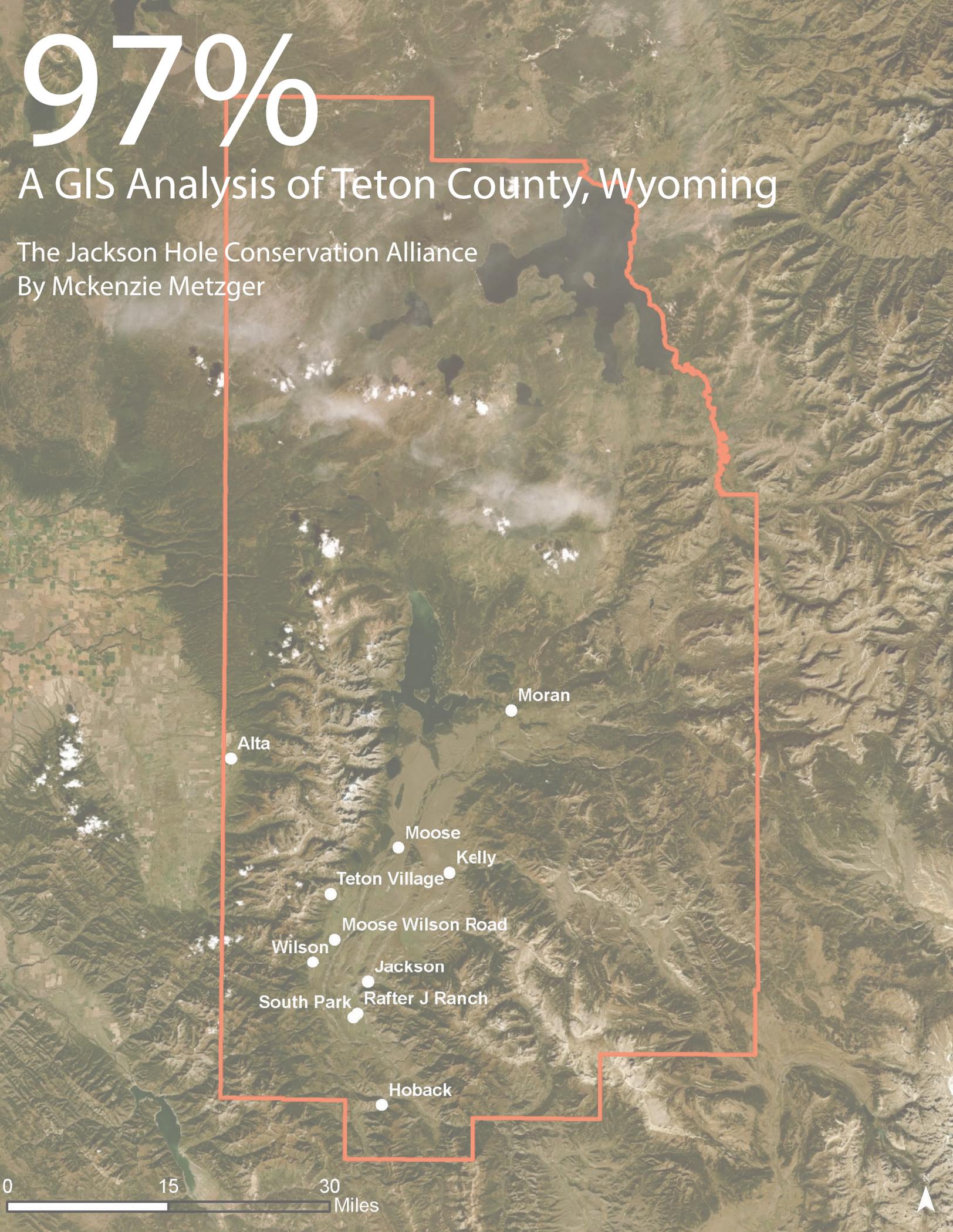


97%

A GIS Analysis of Teton County, Wyoming

The Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance
By Mckenzie Metzger



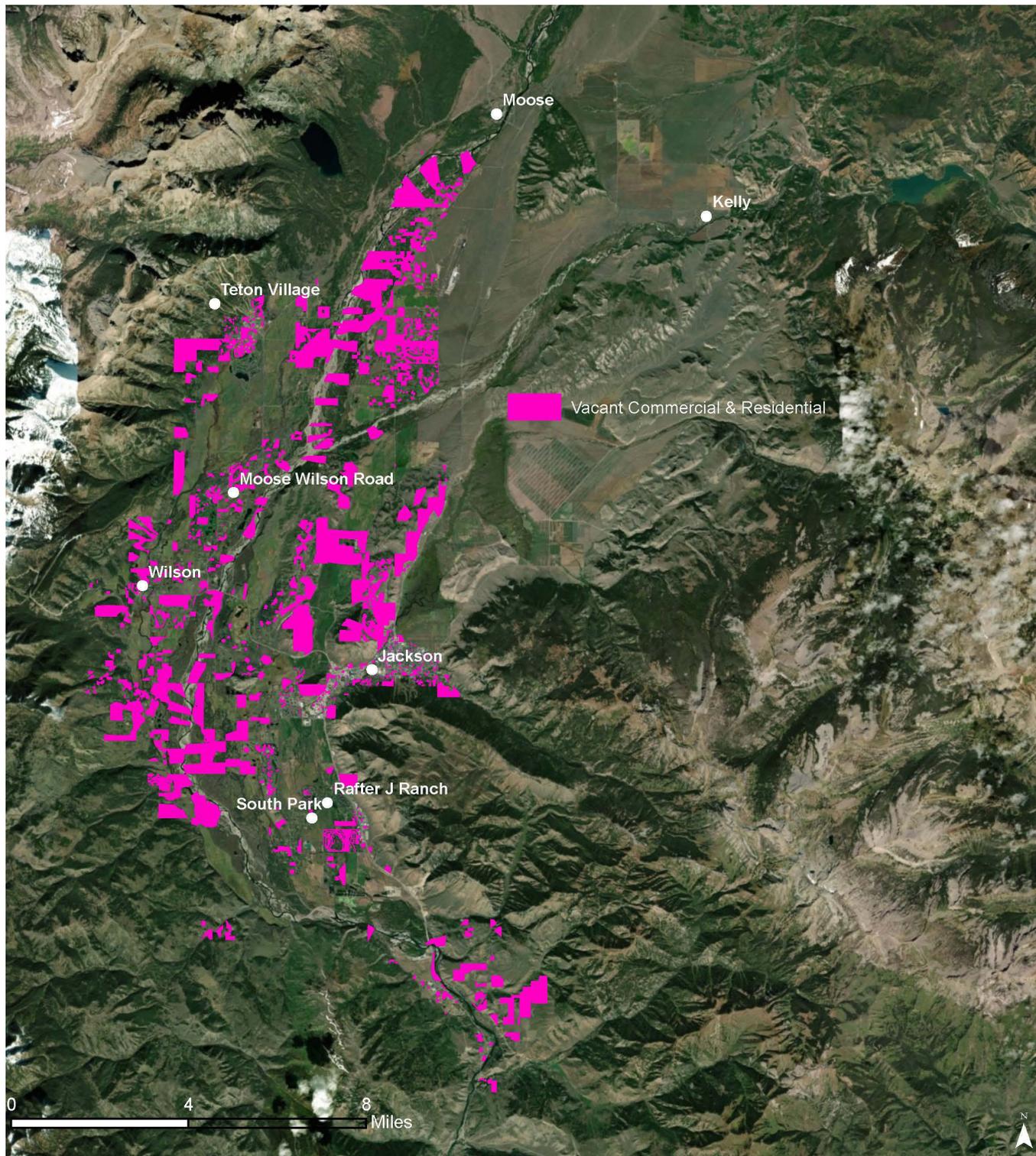
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public land is widely understood to comprise 97% of Teton County, Wyoming (County) and many community members believe the remaining 3% of private land should be developed for residential and commercial use; however, the public and private proportions are oversimplified statistics that confuse the geography of the valley of Jackson (Jackson Hole) and the County. Historic land fragmentation patterns and the natural terrain in the region resulted in vast amounts of protected open space owned and managed by government agencies. The extensive public land ownership attracted residents to the region and created development pressure on the scarce amount of developable land. This development pressure is not unique to Jackson Hole; other rural and mountain communities face similar challenges managing development and growth while preserving open space. The goal of the 97% project was to conduct a GIS analysis to determine where development can realistically occur in the County.

The analysis was split into 4 phases; the first 3 phases calculated and mapped public and private land ownership, land use, and terrain. Geospatial data from the County, state, and federal government agencies was downloaded and analyzed in ESRI ArcMap and Microsoft Excel software programs. The results from phases 1-3 informed phase 4 which determined the boundary of Jackson Hole and identified where residential and commercial development is most feasible.

The results revealed that historic land fragmentation patterns and natural terrain constrained development in Jackson Hole and development is not feasible outside of the valley because the surrounding land is publicly owned. Although there are vacant residential and commercial parcels in Jackson Hole, the amount of developable land is far less than 3% and are in a sprawled development pattern (Figure 1). The data and maps generated from this analysis can be used as tools to help community members understand the geography of the County so they make the most informed decisions on how to plan for growth and development while protecting open space and natural habitats.

Figure 1. Jackson Hole Vacant Commercial and Residential Parcels



Source: ESRI Basemap World Imagery, Teton County Map Server. Author: Mckenzie Metzger