



Hart Bench Ranch  
DARBY, MONTANA





## Hart Bench Ranch

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**\$7,450,000 | 155± ACRES**

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Land... that's where it all begins. Whether it is ranch land or family retreats, working cattle ranches, plantations, farms, estancias, timber or recreational ranches for sale, it all starts with the land.

Since 1946, Hall and Hall has specialized in serving the owners and prospective owners of quality rural real estate by providing mortgage loans, appraisals, land management, auction and brokerage services within a unique, integrated partnership structure.

Our business began by cultivating long-term relationships built upon personal service and expert counsel. We have continued to grow today by being client-focused and results-oriented—because while it all starts with the land, we know it ends with you.

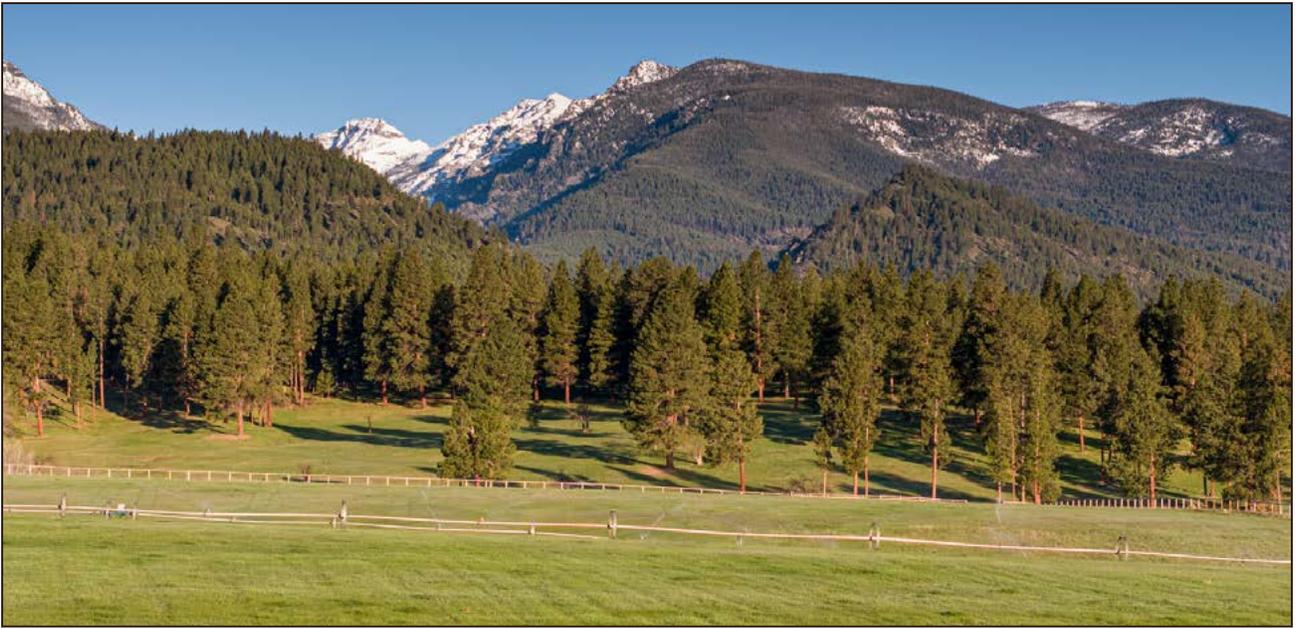
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MISSOULA, MONTANA	CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA

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**SALES | AUCTIONS | FINANCE | APPRAISALS | MANAGEMENT**



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## Executive Summary

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*Efficient and compact in a setting that rivals some of the best in the West, Hart Bench Ranch sets a new bar for what a small scale agricultural operation can be. Situated on an eponymous bench in the shadows of the Bitterroot Mountains' most scenic peaks lies a near-perfect assemblage of irrigated meadows, riparian-influenced gullies, and a complete set of operational and residential improvements.*

*With views of Trapper Peak and the most impressive prominences in the southern Bitterroot Range, the 2,895± square foot main home sits to the south of the Ranch's improvement cluster. Constructed in 2001, the log home imbues turn-of-the-century charm, reminiscent of some of the West's most adventurous eras. A guest home, two-car garage, two large shops, a greenhouse, and a Western-style saloon complement the residential components.*

*Supporting the agricultural operation, the ranch boasts a new, 9,288± square-foot hay barn with equipment storage and a five-stall horse barn with wash station, tack, and vet room. With 56± acres under irrigation, the ranch provides sufficient feed for livestock. Nearly five miles of new split rail fencing tie it together, creating several pastures, paddocks, and perimeter enclosure.*

*Recreationally, the ranch is home to deer and elk and fishing is available in the pond. Two stems of the Bitterroot River flow nearby, creating the main channel just north of the ranch. There are multiple access points locally into the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, one of the largest roadless areas in the lower 48, providing a vast array of recreational opportunities.*

*Darby, just ten minutes north, is a charming Western town offering staples and dining with Hamilton and its more robust population center and FBO, roughly 30 minutes north. Missoula, Montana's second-largest metro area, is roughly one hour and thirty minutes to the north.*

*Hart Bench Ranch provides a rare opportunity to own a complete yet manageable operation in a true Western setting.*



## Location

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Hart Bench Ranch is located five miles south of the quaint western community of Darby, which offers some lodging, groceries, and basic services. Hamilton, a community of roughly 5,000 and the county seat for Ravalli County, is 25 minutes to the north. Hamilton offers a more robust set of services including a jet capable airport with FBO, hospital, lodging, and fine dining. For those traveling commercial, Missoula's remodeled airport is one and one half hours to the north. Missoula is a full-service metropolitan area with two regional hospitals, the University of Montana, shopping, and extensive lodging options.





## Locale

The Bitterroot Valley is arguably the most beautiful valley in Montana, if not the Northern Rockies. When combined with its immediate accessibility to modern goods and services, it is hard to find a more desirable setting. The towering, jagged peaks of the Bitterroot Mountain Range descend to the western edge of the valley, while the eastern edge of the valley is graced with the gentler horizon of the Sapphire Range. The Bitterroot Range is also the eastern edge of the largest wilderness complex in the lower 48 states. The Selway, Frank Church, and River of No Return Wilderness Areas total nearly three million acres of wild and scenic terrain serviced by an extensive network of trails that originate along the valley's western flank. The Bitterroot Valley is one of the more populous valleys in Montana and therefore offers an array of services that are often lacking in more remote locations. The valley is dotted with pastoral Montana towns. Finally, the literal and figurative heart of the valley is the Bitterroot River itself. Running over 75 miles in a northerly direction to its confluence with the Clark Fork River in Missoula, it provides legendary dry fly fishing from March through October, an unusually long season that owes its existence to the Bitterroot's mild climate.



### General Description

Hart Bench Ranch is situated on an elevated moraine in the foothills of the Bitterroot Mountain Range. From the paved county road, the driveway ascends gradually until the famed Trapper Peak comes into view as the primary backdrop behind the exceptionally manicured residential and operational cluster. Continuing west through the headquarters and along the verdant irrigated meadows the road follows a small creek to a pond, which provides both stock water and cool respite for local wildlife. The northwest corner of the property is parked out ponderosa savanna with the balance in irrigated ground and improved pasture. Views of both the Sapphire Range and jagged, snow-capped Bitterroot Mountains are ubiquitous from nearly every location.





## Acreage

Deeded acreage totaling 155± acres, with 56± acres irrigated by wheel line and some handline.

## Improvements

The ranch is heavily but thoughtfully improved with both residential and operational improvements. Situated in a picturesque setting, this property offers a thoughtfully designed and meticulously maintained collection of structures tailored for comfortable living, entertaining, and ranch operations. The main house is a 2,895± square foot log home featuring four bedrooms and three bathrooms. It boasts a great room with vaulted ceilings, an open concept kitchen outfitted with high-end appliances, and a walkout basement. Comfort is prioritized with propane forced air, wood heat, air conditioning, spa, fire pit, and a wrap-around deck.







The guest house provides an additional 2,225± square feet of living space with three bedrooms and two bathrooms. It includes a main-level laundry room, open kitchen with luxury appliances, and a cozy loft with a full bathroom. A finished basement features a sleeping area and a workout room. Both front and rear porches offer covered sitting areas. Heating and cooling are efficiently managed by propane forced air, a propane fireplace, and air conditioning.





A detached two-bay garage includes 944± square feet of ground-level storage and an upper-level one-bedroom apartment complete with a full kitchen, bathroom, wood stove, and central HVAC. Nearby, the enclosed equipment storage area spans 2,376± square feet across three bays, including shelving and oversized roll-up doors (one with an automatic opener).



The 3,808± square foot shop/saloon provides both a workspace and event headquarters. It includes a pull-through shop with large roll-up doors, a wood stove, radiant floor heating, ample tool storage, a spray room with dual exhaust fans, a full kitchen, and bathroom. An adjoining western-themed saloon with a custom bar, saddle barstools, and outdoor seating creates an inviting venue for gatherings.







The horse barn is 3,360± square feet with a concrete floor, five stalls with exterior corrals and Drinking Posts®, a heated washroom with dog wash and bathroom, a tack and vet/grain room, and an attached round pen leading to fenced pastures. It also features pull-through automatic roll-up doors and a dedicated chicken coop and run.







For agricultural needs, the 9,632± square foot hay barn offers ample storage for hay, equipment, and fuel tanks. For cattle handling, hydraulic squeeze chute, tub, and dedicated calving stalls are located for convenience and efficiency. For the home gardener the ranch comes with a 30'x50' tunnel-style greenhouse complete with automated watering, heat, thermostatic venting systems, raised beds, a water hydrant, and a fenced garden area designed to resist elk intrusion.





Rounding out this remarkable estate is a 120'x200' outdoor riding arena, perfect for equestrian training or events, making this property an exceptional blend of rustic elegance, practicality, and recreation.

## Climate

Darby, Montana, experiences an arid continental climate characterized by cold winters, mild summers, and year-round precipitation. Average annual temperatures range from lows of 10 to 20 degrees in December to highs of 80 to 85 degrees in July. The town receives approximately 15 inches of precipitation annually, with June being the wettest month at two inches. Snowfall averages 49 inches per year, with December typically being the snowiest month.



Summers are generally warm and dry, with July and August averaging highs around 84 degrees and lows in the upper 40s. Winters are cold, with January lows averaging 20 degrees and highs around 35 degrees. Humidity levels are relatively low throughout the year, contributing to the area's dry climate.



Darby experiences approximately 157 sunny days annually and about 109 days with measurable precipitation. The growing season is relatively short, with the average last frost occurring between June 1 and June 10 and the first frost between September 11 and September 20. The region falls within USDA Plant Hardiness Zone 5b, indicating average minimum temperatures between -15 degrees and -10 degrees.



Overall, Darby's climate offers distinct seasonal variations, with warm, dry summers and cold, snowy winters, making it suitable for those who appreciate a full range of seasonal weather patterns.

## General Operations

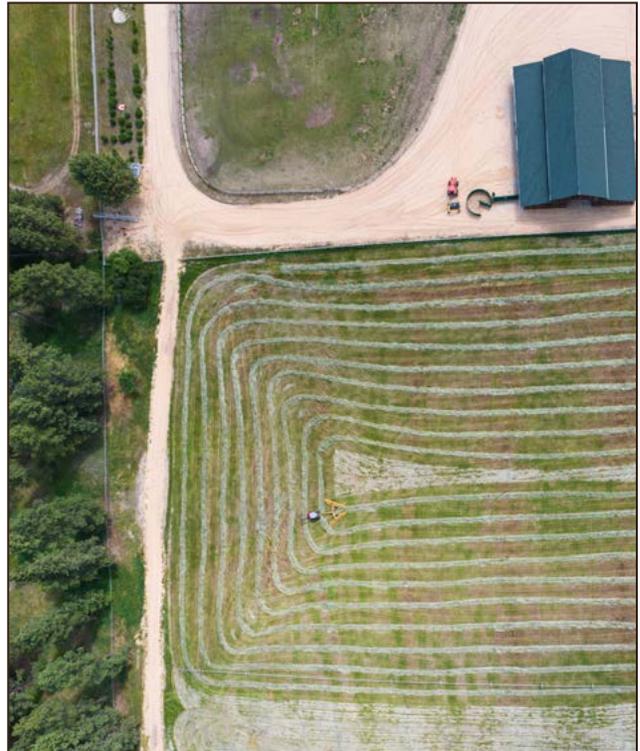
Hart Bench Ranch offers all of the quality amenities one could want for a small-scale cattle, hay and/or equine operation.

The ranch produces and is able to store roughly 95 tons of grass hay per year split between large (750 pound) and small (50 pound) bales providing feed for 38 cows, nine horses, and 38 sheep. With proper grazing management, this is sufficiently balanced to negate the need to purchase additional feed in the winter. The ranch is perimeter and cross-fenced with miles of new split rail fencing allowing for rotational grazing throughout the season. Current management is primarily a cow-calf, calving in March and shipping in the fall.

In addition to cattle, the ranch offers significant equine amenities in the new five-stall horse barn. Each stall has a frost free Drinking Post® and access to adjacent pasture.

The ranch is well watered for stock direct from source or from waterers conveniently located around the operational improvements.







## Wildlife Resources

The ranch is known to attract significant elk and deer to its verdant meadows and abundant water. In addition to game animals, many birds and non-game species call Hart Bench's open meadows and forested hideaways home.





## Water Resources

The ranch has significant domestic, irrigation, and stock water rights from multiple sources including springs, surface water, and wells. A full inventory of water rights is available upon request.

All hay fields are irrigated via gravity by wheel and hand line so little pumping costs are incurred. Sprinkling for the lawns and flower beds around the improvement cluster is also gravity fed with a local booster pump to provide additional pressure.

A pond on the property provides both stock water and riparian ambiance, while a small creek meanders through the northwestern corner of the property.



## Recreational Considerations

The southern Bitterroot Valley offers a wealth of outdoor recreational opportunities year-round.



### **Lake Como and Painted Rocks Reservoir**

Located just north of Darby, Lake Como is a scenic reservoir surrounded by the Bitterroot National Forest. Visitors can enjoy swimming, boating, kayaking, and fishing. The eight-mile Lake Como Loop Trail offers hiking and mountain biking with views of waterfalls and mountain scenery. Campgrounds can accommodate tents, RVs, and horse trailers, providing amenities like water, toilets, and picnic areas.

Approximately 24 miles south of Darby, Painted Rocks Reservoir, in the West Fork Valley of the Bitterroot Mountains, offers a tranquil setting for boating, fishing, swimming, and camping. The reservoir is named for the colorful lichens adorning the granite and rhyolite cliffs. Anglers can fish for trout and other game species. The park features 25 campsites, a boat ramp, and dock, all set within a remote coniferous forest.

### **Hunting and Fishing**

The Bitterroot Valley is renowned for its hunting and fishing. Anglers can fish in the Bitterroot River and nearby alpine lakes which dot the public ground. Hunters pursue elk, deer, and upland birds in the surrounding forests and public lands. The ranch is situated in Hunting District 240, with over the counter tags and special permit drawings available.

### **Lost Trail Powder Mountain**

Approximately 45 minutes south of Darby, Lost Trail Powder Mountain offers skiing and snowboarding on over 60 trails across 900 acres. With an average annual snowfall of 300 inches, the resort caters to all skill levels with terrain parks and a vertical drop of 1,800 feet. Operating Thursday through Sunday and holidays, it is a family-friendly destination for winter sports enthusiasts.

Whether it is summer adventures at Lake Como, hunting and fishing in the valley, or winter fun at Lost Trail Powder Mountain, Darby provides a diverse array of recreational activities for outdoor enthusiasts.

## Mineral Rights

Sellers will convey 100 percent of the mineral rights they own, if any. Buyers and their agents concerned with the subsurface estate are encouraged to research further.



## Taxes

The annual estimated taxes are \$11,050.



## Additional Information

### Personal Property

Hart Bench Ranch can be purchased turnkey with equipment and home furnishings.

### Conservation

The ranch is unencumbered by a conservation easement. Due to development pressure and diminishing agricultural soils in the Bitterroot Valley, it would be an ideal candidate for preservation.



## Broker's Comments

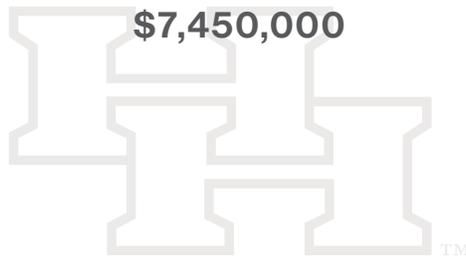
Productive, scenic, and perfectly appointed, Hart Bench Ranch offers the perfect setting and all the amenities to realize the Montana dream.



Click on map above for link to Land id™ map of property.

## Price

**\$7,450,000**



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# Additional Services Offered by Hall and Hall

- 1. MANAGEMENT SERVICES** – Hall and Hall's Management Division has a very clear mission—to represent the owner and to ensure that his or her experience is a positive one. Services are customized to suit the owner's needs. They often begin with the recruiting and hiring of a suitable ranch manager or caretaker and are followed by the development of a management or operating plan along with appropriate budgets. Ongoing services include bill paying, ranch oversight, and consulting services as needed. Even the most sophisticated and experienced ranch owners appreciate the value of a management firm representing them and providing advice on local area practices and costs. [Jerome Chvilicek](#), [Dan Bergstrom](#) at (406) 656-7500, or [Jim Fryer](#) at (406) 587-3090 are available to describe and discuss these services in detail and welcome your call.
- 2. RESOURCE ENHANCEMENT SERVICES** – Increasingly the value of a ranch is measured by the quality of each and every one of its resources. Coincidentally, the enhancement of a ranch's resources also increases the pleasure that one derives from the ownership of a ranch. Our management services have included the assessment of everything from wildlife habitat to bird habitat to water resources and fisheries and the subsequent oversight of the process involved with the enhancement of these resources. [Jerome Chvilicek](#), [Dan Bergstrom](#) at (406) 656-7500, or [Jim Fryer](#) at (406) 587-3090 are available to describe and discuss these services in detail and welcome your call.
- 3. AUCTIONS** - Hall and Hall Auctions offer “Another Solution” to create liquidity for the owners of Investment-Quality Rural Real Estate. Our auction team has experience in marketing farmland, ranchland, timberland and recreational properties throughout the nation. Extreme attention to detail and complete transparency coupled with Hall and Hall's “Rolodex” of more than 40,000 targeted owners and buyers of rural real estate help assure that there are multiple bidders at each auction. In addition, the unique Hall and Hall partnership model creates a teamwork approach that helps to assure that we realize true market value on auction day. For more information on our auction services contact [Scott Shuman](#) at (800) 829-8747.
- 4. APPRAISALS** - Staying abreast of ancillary market influences in ever-changing economic conditions requires a broad professional network to tap into. Finding an appraiser who not only understands the numbers but also the differences in value from one area to another is a critical part of making an informed decision. The appraisal team at Hall and Hall, formed entirely of Accredited Members of the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers (ASFMRA), has that critical network of brokers and lending professionals. This professional network coupled with diverse experience across multiple regions and market segments allows our appraisal team to deliver a quality product in a reasonable timeframe. [Chad Dugger](#) at (806) 698-6882 is available to describe and discuss these services in detail and welcomes your call.
- 5. SPECIALIZED LENDING** - Since 1946 Hall and Hall has created a legacy by efficiently providing capital to landowners. In addition to traditional farm and ranch loans, we specialize in understanding the unique aspects of placing loans on ranches where value may be influenced by recreational features, location and improvements and repayment may come from outside sources. Our extensive experience and efficient processing allows us to quickly tell you whether we can provide the required financing.

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## Understanding Whom Real Estate Agents Represent

Montana law requires that BUYER's and SELLER's be advised about the different types of agency relationships available to them (MCA § 37-51-102 & 37-51-321). A real estate agent is qualified to advise only on real estate matters. As the client or as the customer, please be advised that you have the option of hiring outside professional services on your own behalf (legal and tax counsel, home or building inspectors, accountant, environmental inspectors, range management or agricultural advisors, etc.) at any time during the course of a transaction to obtain additional information to make an informed decision. Each and every agent has obligations to each other party to a transaction no matter whom the agent represents. The various relationships are as follows:

**SELLER's Agent:** exclusively represents the SELLER (or landlord). This agency relationship is created when a listing is signed by a SELLER/owner and a real estate licensee. The SELLER's agent represents the SELLER only, and works toward securing an offer in the best interest of the SELLER. The SELLER agent still has obligations to the BUYER as enumerated herein.

**BUYER's Agent:** exclusively represents the BUYER (or tenant). This agency relationship is created when a BUYER signs a written BUYER-broker agreement with a real estate licensee. The BUYER agent represents the BUYER only, and works towards securing a transaction under the terms and conditions established by the BUYER and in the best interest of the BUYER. The BUYER agent has obligations to the SELLER as enumerated herein.

**Dual Agent:** does not represent the interests of either the BUYER or SELLER exclusively. This agency relationship is created when an agent is the SELLER's agent (or subagent) and enters into a BUYER-broker agreement with the BUYER. This relationship must receive full informed consent by all parties before a "dual-agency" relationship can exist. The "dual agent" does not work exclusively for the SELLER or the BUYER but works for both parties in securing a conclusion to the transaction. If you want an agent to represent you exclusively, do not sign the "Dual Agency" Disclosure and Consent" form.

**Statutory Broker:** is a licensee who assists one or more of the parties in a transaction, but does not represent any party as an agent. A licensee is presumed to be acting as a "statutory broker" unless they have entered into a listing agreement with the SELLER, a BUYER-broker agreement with the BUYER, or a dual agency agreement with all parties.

**In-House SELLER Agent Designate:** is a licensee designated by the broker- owner/manager (of the real estate brokerage) to be the exclusive agent for the SELLER for a specific transaction in which the brokerage has the property listed and the BUYER is working directly through the same brokerage also. This agent may not act on behalf of any other member of the transaction and works for the benefit of the SELLER, but still is obligated to the BUYER as any SELLER's agent would be.

**In-House BUYER Agent Designate:** is a licensee designated by the broker- owner/manager (of the real estate brokerage) to be the exclusive agent for the BUYER for a specific transaction in which the brokerage has the property listed and the BUYER is working directly through the same brokerage also. This agent may not act on behalf of any other member of the transaction and works for the benefit of the BUYER, but still obligated to the SELLER as any BUYER's agent would be.

**Subagent:** is an agent of the licensee already acting as an agent for either the SELLER or BUYER. A "SELLER agent" can offer "subagency" to an agent to act on his behalf to show the property and solicit offers from BUYER's. A "BUYER agent" can offer "subagency" to an agent to act on his behalf to locate and secure certain property meeting the BUYER's criteria.

[Deke Tidwell](#) of Hall and Hall is the exclusive agent of the Seller.

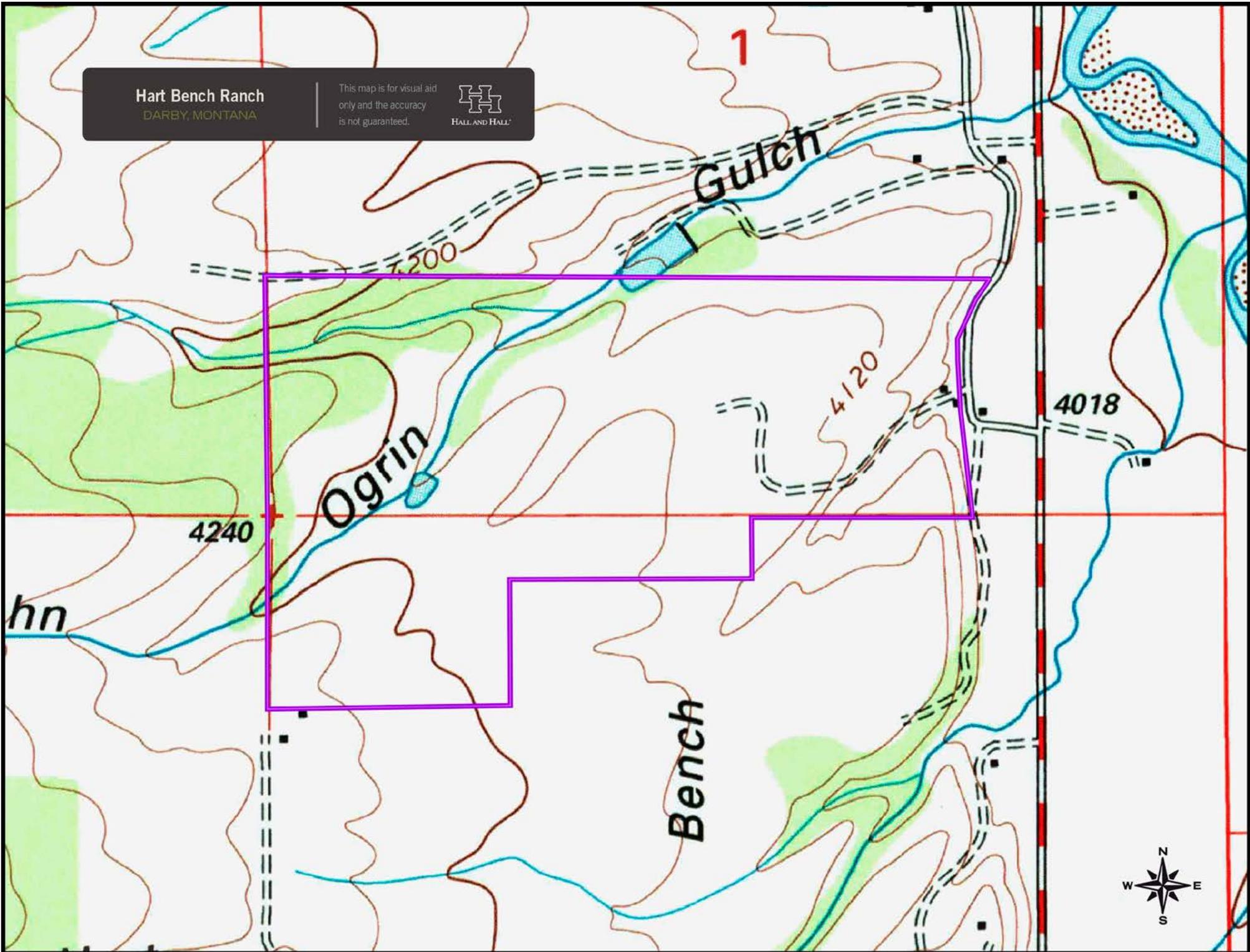
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