

17-1b EAST FORK BRUNEAU RIVER

The April, 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 10,178 acres of BLM land roughly in a square four miles on a side. It is located south of the Clover-Three Creek Road near Clover Crossing, 30 miles southeast of Bruneau. The unit is a flat plateau cut by the East Fork Bruneau River. About six river miles are included in the unit. The canyon is relatively broad and open, with talus slopes, a few areas of rimrock, and little stream gradient. Northern desert shrub species dominate, with some riparian shrub species in the stream bottom.

NATURALNESS:

A substantial way extends from the south to the canyon rim in the central portion of the unit. A short fence line extends to the rim in the southeast corner. While the way is relatively substantial, the major portion of the unit appears natural in character.

SOLITUDE:

Northern desert shrubs dominate most of the unit and consequently overall vegetative screening is poor. Riparian growth in the canyon provides a moderate amount of screening. The canyon, relatively broad, open and shallow, provides only moderate topographic screening. There is little topographic relief in the unit outside the canyon. Overall topographic screening is considered poor to moderate. The small size of the unit, in combination with poor to moderate vegetative and topographic screening, renders the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, camping, hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography. However, the portion of the East Fork Bruneau River within the unit is not considered an outstanding recreation attraction. The unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding. Challenge associated with primitive recreation in the area is not considered significant.

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PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported the proposed decision to drop the unit agreed that the unit did not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation, but also felt the unit was not natural. Comments opposed to dropping the unit stated that the BLM had improperly evaluated the opportunity for solitude by depending too heavily upon the influence of topographic and vegetative screening.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

The conclusion remains that the unit is natural because the imprints of man are so widely scattered that they are not substantially noticeable in the unit as a whole.

Solitude:

The BLM does not rely solely upon topographic and vegetative screening to evaluate solitude. Decisions are made by evaluating the relationship of topographic and vegetative screening to the overall size of a unit.

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation does limit the opportunity to achieve solitude (to avoid the sights and sounds of others in a unit as well as external influences) unless the area involved is relatively large. Low vegetation on flat to relatively flat terrain can provide excellent screening if given a sufficiently large enough area to allow other visitors or external influences (such as vehicle traffic on boundary roads) to blend or disappear into the landscape. Low vegetation on flat terrain does give a sense of remoteness or vastness to an area, adding to the solitude experience.

The determining factor as to whether a solitude experience can be considered outstanding is the opportunity of visitors to escape the sights and sounds of others in a unit of a given size as well as vehicle traffic along boundary roads or other external influences. If a unit is not large enough to allow a realistic amount of visitors to disperse and achieve the blending affect of flat, open, sagebrush areas, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding. Unit 17-1b is not considered large enough to provide sufficient dispersion and landscape blending of a realistic amount of visitor use. Therefore, opportunities for solitude are not considered outstanding.

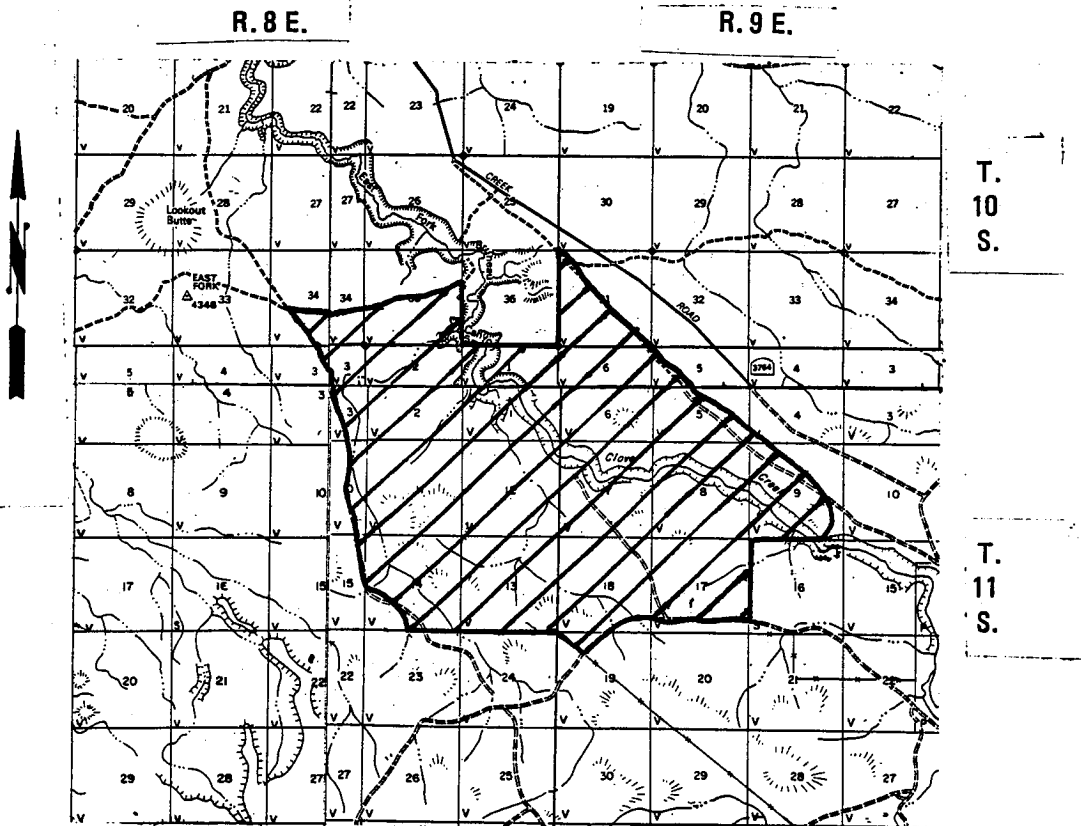
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DECISION:



No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

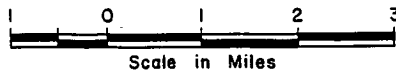
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EAST FORK BRUNEAU RIVER



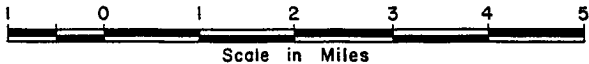
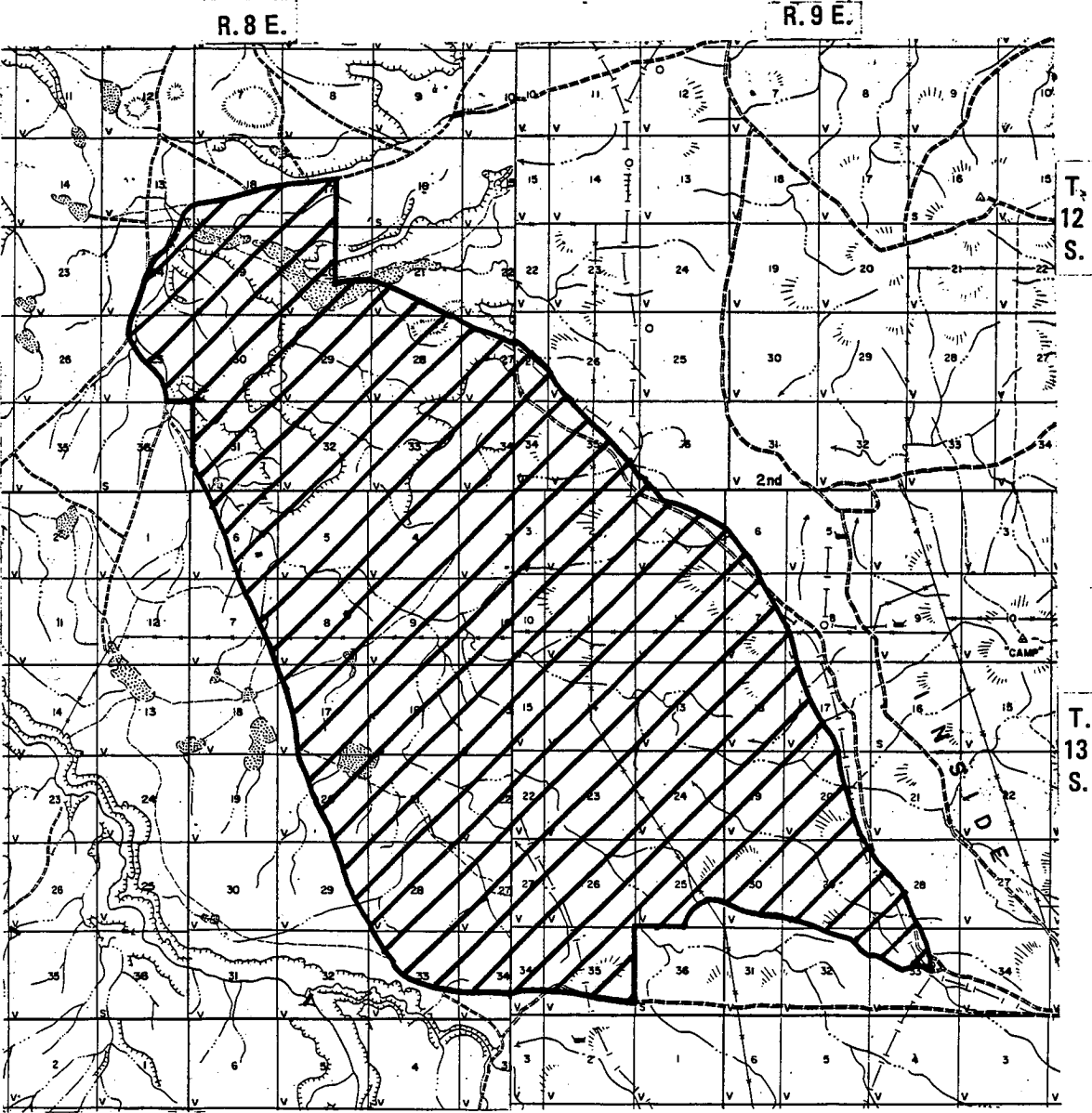
LEGEND

-  WILDERNESS STUDY AREA
-  AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS





17-6

DRY LAKES



LEGEND

-  WILDERNESS STUDY AREA
-  AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

17-6 DRY LAKES

The April, 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 26,208 acres of BLM land with one state inholding. The unit is irregularly rectangular, five by seven miles, and is located west of the Clover-Three Creek Road 42 miles southeast of Bruneau. A relatively level to rolling plateau, lightly dissected and draining northwest, dominates the major portion of the unit. The northern portion contains a series of meandering rims. Northern desert plant species predominate. The northeast portion contains a recent, regenerated burn.

NATURALNESS:

Three substantial fence lines, two heavily bladed, cut across the unit. Three water developments are located on the periphery. The two bladed fence lines are noticeable at variable distances, due to the gently rolling terrain and poor vegetative screening. While the fence lines do provide evidence of man, the unit as a whole retains its natural character since they affect only narrow corridors in portions of the area.

SOLITUDE:

Vegetative screening is poor due to dominance of northern desert plant species. Relief is minimal throughout the unit except in the northern portion, where moderate relief exists along a series of small rims. Topographic screening on the whole is poor to moderate. While visitors may reasonably expect to find pockets of solitude due to the unit's size, opportunities are not considered outstanding due to lack of relief and minimal vegetative screening. The bladed fence lines crossing the unit further restrict the opportunities for solitude by limiting the potential for experiencing vast, unobstructed open spaces.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, hunting and photography. However, the unit's relatively uniform character and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding. Challenge associated with primitive recreation in the area is not considered significant.

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PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported the proposed decision to drop the unit agreed that the unit did not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation, but also felt the unit was not natural. Specific reasons given for considering the unit unnatural were the presence of reseedings, fences and water improvements as well as external influences of boundary roads. Comments opposed to dropping the unit felt that the BLM had improperly evaluated the opportunity for solitude by depending too heavily upon the influence of topographic and vegetative screening.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

The conclusion remains that the unit is natural because the imprints of man are so widely scattered that they are not substantially noticeable in the unit as a whole. It is recognized that localized impacts from bladed fence lines are severe in some locations because of rolling terrain and minimal vegetative cover for screening soil disturbances.

Solitude:

The BLM does not rely solely upon topographic and vegetative screening to evaluate solitude. Decisions are made by evaluating the relationship of topographic and vegetative screening to the overall size of a unit.

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation does limit the opportunity to achieve solitude (to avoid the sights and sounds of others in a unit as well as external influences) unless the area involved is relatively large. Low vegetation on flat to relatively flat terrain can provide excellent screening if given a sufficiently large enough area to allow other visitors or external influences (such as vehicle traffic on boundary roads) to blend or disappear into the landscape. Low vegetation on flat terrain does give a sense of remoteness or vastness to an area, adding to the solitude experience.

The determining factor as to whether this solitude experience can be considered outstanding is the opportunity of visitors to escape the sights and sounds of others in a unit of a given size as well as vehicle traffic along boundary roads or other external influences. If a unit is not large enough to allow a realistic amount of visitors to disperse and achieve the blending effect of flat, open, sagebrush areas, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding. Unit 17-6 is not considered large enough to provide sufficient dispersion and landscape blending of a realistic amount of visitor use. In addition, the opportunity to experience vast, unobstructed open space is greatly diminished by bladed fence line systems cutting the unit into three parcels. Therefore, opportunities for solitude are not considered outstanding.

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DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

17-7 CLOVER CROSSING

The April, 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 6,314 acres of BLM land. The unit is irregular in shape, 1 1/4 - 3 miles wide and three miles long. It is located 40 miles southeast of Bruneau, along the east side of the Clover-Three Creek Road, south of Clover Crossing. The unit consists of a level plateau cut by the canyon of the East Fork of the Bruneau River. About five river miles are contained in the unit. The canyon is relatively broad and open, with talus slopes, a few areas of rimrock and little stream gradient. The eastern half of the unit is dominated by northern desert shrubs, while the western half is occupied by seeded grasses from a fire rehabilitation project.

NATURALNESS:

Three light ways, a water development and a fence are concentrated in the southern portion of the unit. A bladed fire line parallels the northeastern boundary road for a short distance. Most of the unit appears to have been affected primarily by natural processes. Only in the extreme south are human imprints considered substantially noticeable because of their concentration.

SOLITUDE:

Northern desert shrubs dominate most of the unit; consequently overall vegetative screening is poor. Riparian growth in the canyon provides a moderate amount of screening. The canyon, relatively broad, open and shallow, provides only moderate topographic screening. There is little relief outside the canyon. Overall topographic screening is considered poor to moderate. The small size of the unit, in combination with poor to moderate vegetative and topographic screening, renders the opportunity for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, camping, hunting, wildlife observation and photography. However, the portion of the East Fork Bruneau River within the unit is not considered a significant recreation attraction. The unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding. Challenge associated with primitive recreation in the area is not considered significant.

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PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed Unit 17-7 and supported the proposed decision to drop the unit agreed that the unit did not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation, but also felt the unit was not natural. A comment opposed to dropping the unit felt that the BLM had improperly evaluated the opportunity for solitude by depending too heavily upon the influence of topographic and vegetative screening.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

The conclusion remains that the unit is natural because the imprints of man are so widely scattered that they are not substantially noticeable in the unit as a whole.

Solitude:

The BLM does not rely solely upon topographic and vegetative screening to evaluate solitude. Decisions are made by evaluating the relationship of topographic and vegetative screening to the overall size of a unit.

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation does limit the opportunity to achieve solitude (to avoid the sights and sounds of others in a unit as well as external influences) unless the area involved is relatively large. Low vegetation on flat to relatively flat terrain can provide excellent screening if given a sufficiently large enough area to allow other visitors or external influences (such as vehicle traffic on boundary roads) to blend or disappear into the landscape. Low vegetation on flat terrain does give a sense of remoteness or vastness to an area, adding to the solitude experience.

The determining factor as to whether a solitude experience can be considered outstanding is the opportunity of visitors to escape the sights and sounds of others in a unit of a given size as well as vehicle traffic along boundary roads or other external influences. If a unit is not large enough to allow a realistic amount of visitors to disperse and achieve the blending effect of flat, open, sagebrush areas, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding. Unit 17-7 is not considered large enough nor of good enough configuration to provide sufficient dispersion and landscape blending of a realistic amount of visitor use as well as blending of external influences, particularly considering that the unit is generally bowl-shaped toward its center allowing a greater field of vision across the unit. Traffic along the Three Creek-Clover Crossing Road is readily visible from most of the plateau area of the unit. This road is frequently traveled, therefore, opportunities for solitude are not considered outstanding.

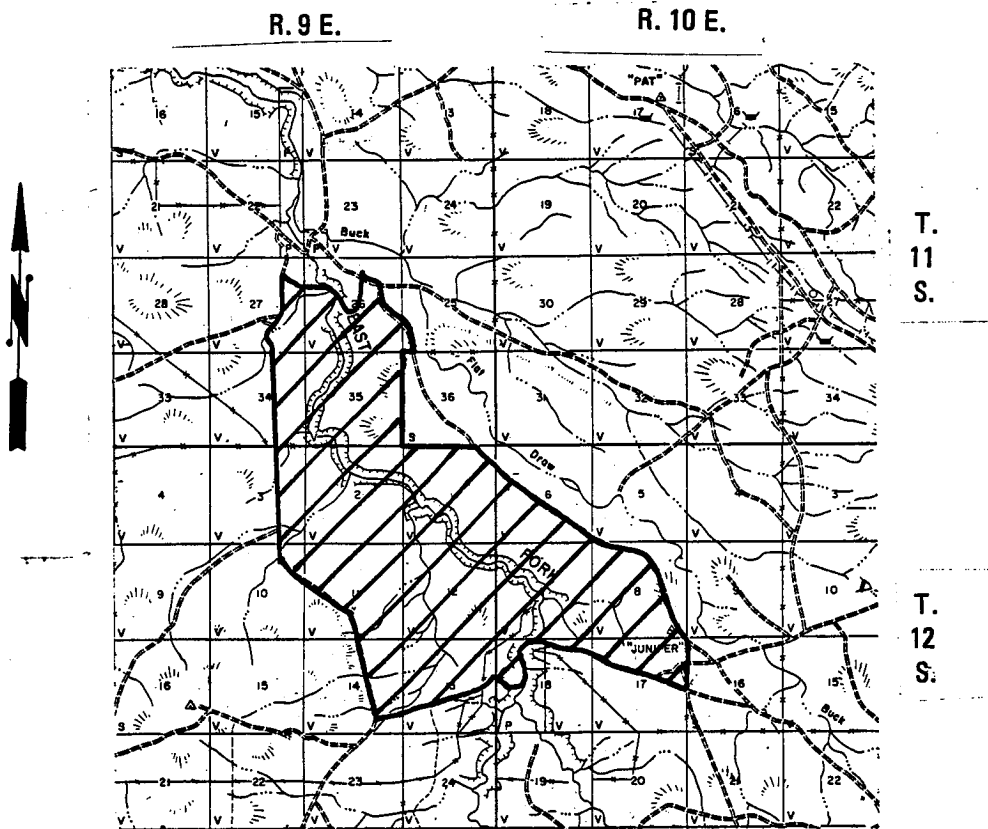
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DECISION:



No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

17-7

CLOVER CROSSING



LEGEND

-  WILDERNESS STUDY AREA
-  AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

