

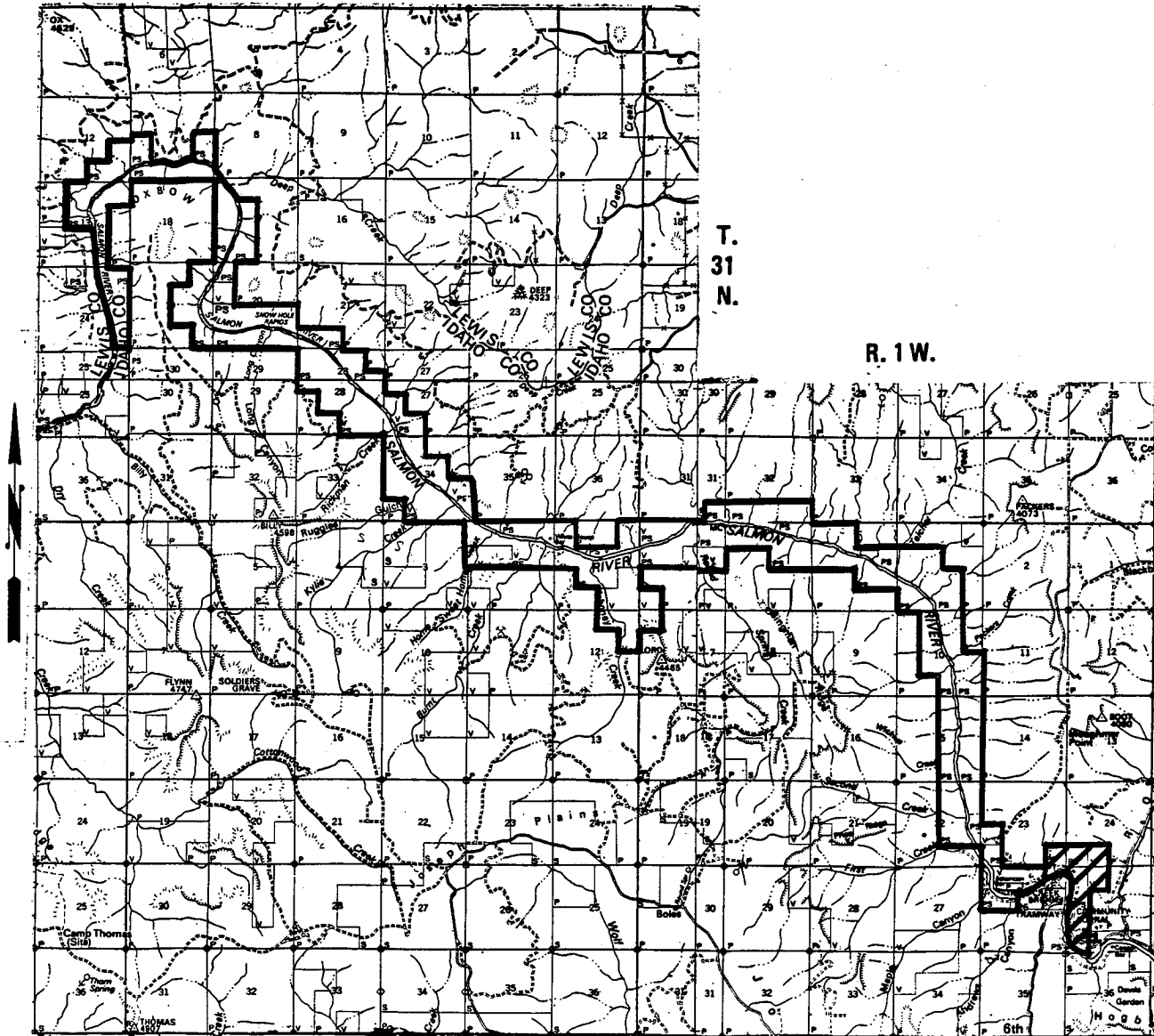
62-1  
SNOWHOLE RAPIDS

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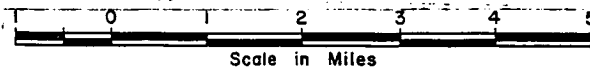
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LEGEND

-  WILDERNESS STUDY AREA
-  AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS



## 62-1 SNOWHOLE RAPIDS

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

### SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Private land forms the border around the majority of the unit. The unit is approximately 20 miles in length but averages only 1/2 mile in width. Within this configuration is the Salmon River and its steep canyon walls. The majority of the unit is confined to these walls. Only at Mahoney Creek, approximately midway through the area, does the unit extend any appreciable distance from the river. The canyon walls within the unit are steep and highly broken in their appearance by erosional forces. Numerous perennial and intermittent drainages exist which further serve to break up and diversify the terrain.

The vegetation within the unit is uniform. Grasses dominate the landscape where adequate soil is present, however, scattered locations throughout the unit do support trees, shrubs and herbaceous species. Most of these locations are along the drainages that flow into the Salmon River. The most extensively vegetated area is found in the Mahoney Creek drainage.

### NATURALNESS:

Evidence of man's activity is present in several locations within the unit. Most of these intrusions are of low impact and do not significantly detract from the area's natural character. An area of approximately 238 acres at the extreme eastern end of the unit has been deleted due to a significant impact upon naturalness. At this location a group of buildings and community corrals are found. These structures are visible throughout the entire 238 acres and provide conclusive evidence that this area has been substantially affected by man. In addition, two roads, a way, and a bridge over the Salmon River are located just outside of the unit. These features further emphasize the man-made intrusions. White House Bar is another site containing evidence of man's presence. Here several old structures are found along both sides of the river and a way along the south bank. None of these features offer any significant impact upon naturalness. Due to the nature of the topography and the screening it offers, these intrusions would be visible only within the immediate vicinity of White House Bar. These old structures may be of historical value.

### SOLITUDE:

An outstanding opportunity for solitude is available within the unit, this opportunity is largely a result of the extremely broken terrain. Natural forces have created a highly eroded rock landscape, which offers innumerable occasions for users to seclude themselves from one another. In most locations, vegetation cannot supply effective screening due to its generally low profile. The amount of screening available from topography in most instances offsets the inherent limitation of vegetation. The average width of 1/2 mile confines users to a narrow corridor which increases the chances of encountering others. This limitation is offset by the amount of screening available from topography and the 20 mile length of the unit.

### PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation that is present within the unit revolves around use of the river. An outstanding opportunity is available for river floating in a natural and remote setting. Numerous sand beaches offer excellent campsites for both day and overnight use. Opportunities also exist for fishing, hiking, and rock climbing. The steep and rugged nature of the terrain provides for a challenging experience. This terrain can also restrict other uses with its rugged character. Within the canyon walls, outstanding opportunities exist only for those activities which would benefit from this challenge. The narrow configuration of the unit serves to confine movement to this seemingly restrictive corridor. However, the steep and rugged nature of the terrain within this corridor creates a feeling of vastness greater than distances indicate. This factor lessens the perception of confinement upon movement.

### SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The area that the unit encompasses has been identified as an important spawning and rearing site for anadromous fish, and an important location for the cross-fostering of peregrine falcons. The Salmon River Canyon has been identified as containing important cultural resources. Evidence of man's periodic occupations of the area is prevalent, with sites having been identified as National Register quality.

\* \* \*

**PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:**

Comments were received that agreed with the proposed decision to identify a study area, but no new supporting data was provided.

Comments that disagreed with the proposed decision offered the following points:

- Outside influences affect the naturalness, solitude, and primitive recreation.
- Irregular land pattern affects the unit.
- Primitive recreation opportunities are lessened by the inaccessible nature of the unit.
- Livestock grazing places the unit in an unnatural state.

**COMMENT EVALUATION:**

**Naturalness:**

Field examinations did not result in finding any livestock support activities or structures that would detract from the unit's natural state.

**Solitude-Recreation:**

Comments cited outside influences (such as roads, power boats on the river, and airplanes), affecting wilderness characteristics. Impacts which lie outside of the narrow canyon would be a study phase consideration, and not considered during the inventory. Intermittent use of jetboats on the river is not considered contrary to wilderness values.

Comments stated that the opportunity for solitude was interrupted by the narrow configuration of the unit. While the area is narrow and serves to confine users to this corridor, the length of the unit at least partially offsets this limitation. The extreme rugged and steep nature of the terrain provides a psychological feeling of vastness greater than actual acreage figures, or dimensions, would indicate. The manageability of this unit in relation to its configuration will be considered during the study phase.

\* \* \*

**DECISION:**

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 5,068 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

## 62-10 MARSHALL MOUNTAIN

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

### SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

This unit was called Gospel Hump in the August, 1979 report. The unit contains 7,490 acres of BLM land. Most of the unit is bordered by the Payette National Forest on the north and east. There are several patented mining claims adjacent to the area. The north boundary of the unit is adjacent to the proposed River of No Return Wilderness (now before Congress). The topography of the area is very mountainous, frequently broken by perennial and intermittent streams. The land is heavily forested, broken by occasional talus slopes. These natural features combine to create spectacular scenic qualities.

### NATURALNESS:

The Marshall Mountain Mining District, of which the unit is part, was not included in the National Forest boundary because of the pressure from mineral interests to leave the area open to mining. There has been extensive prospecting in the area, much of it occurring 30-50 years ago. However, most prospecting has involved small test holes or other activities that left very little impact on naturalness. The use of minimum impact prospecting techniques and the effects of time have combined to erase significant impacts of naturalness over most of the area. In addition, the heavy forest cover has screened impacts that might be seen from a distance. The unit has retained a strong natural character in all but a few areas.

Three locations in the unit have had major impacts on naturalness and are deleted from the unit. One contains 14 acres and is deleted due to recently expanded mining activities on Bear Creek. Another area of 781 acres is deleted because the cumulative impacts of mining activities were judged to significantly impact the area's naturalness. The impacts include three mining camps, mine-associated machinery, tailing piles, and two access routes cut into the mountain that obviously are the result of man's activities in the area. Neither access route meets the road definition, but they are impacts on naturalness that would not be overlooked. Almost half of the deleted area overlooks the Kimberly, Golden Anchor, and Sherman Howe mines. While these mines lie outside the unit, they significantly impact naturalness when viewed from within the area. A third area of 171 acres is deleted in the southeastern corner of the unit because of the cumulative impact of mining activities on the area's naturalness. Mining impacts include the Tuttle mining operations, several mine shafts, tailing piles, buildings, and abandoned roads. There is a substantial imprint of man's work in the deleted area.

### SOLITUDE:

An outstanding opportunity for solitude is available within the unit. This opportunity is largely the result of the mountainous terrain and dense vegetative cover. The broken landscape offers many opportunities for visitors to isolate themselves from others. Dense forests that cover much of the area effectively screen visitors from each other. There are a few places that offer only limited opportunities for solitude, mainly along barren ridge tops in the southern portion of the unit.

### PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The outstanding opportunity for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation is centered around the unit's suitability for backcountry camping activities. Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, hunting and wildlife observation, scenic photography, and sightseeing for botanical and geological features. The diversity of significant recreation opportunities is considered outstanding. There is significant physical challenge associated with cross-country travel in the area due to its mountainous nature. The few trails that exist provide many camping sites which could separate visitors from each other.

### SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

When considered along with the adjacent proposed wilderness area, the unit offers truly spectacular scenic opportunities. Outstanding panoramic views were observed during the inventory. There may be historical values associated with the mining activity in the Marshall Mountain area.

\* \* \*

**PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:**

Comments were received that agreed with the proposed decision, but offered no new supporting data.

Comments that disagreed with the proposed decision cited the following reasons:

- The unit is not natural in appearance.
- Square Mountain road goes through the unit.
- The unit is too large to be wilderness.

**COMMENT EVALUATION:**

**Size:**

While a unit may be too small to receive study area designation, nothing in the guidelines sets maximum acreages.

**Roadless/Naturalness:**

Comments stated that widespread mining activity within the unit detracted from naturalness. Areas of concentrated mining have been deleted from the study area. Re-examination of the unit did not reveal any unnatural areas within the unit's current boundaries.

Comments did not identify the location of the Square Mountain road, and no Square Mountain is shown on any map. All roads which meet the road definition have been defined and either lie outside or form the border of the unit.

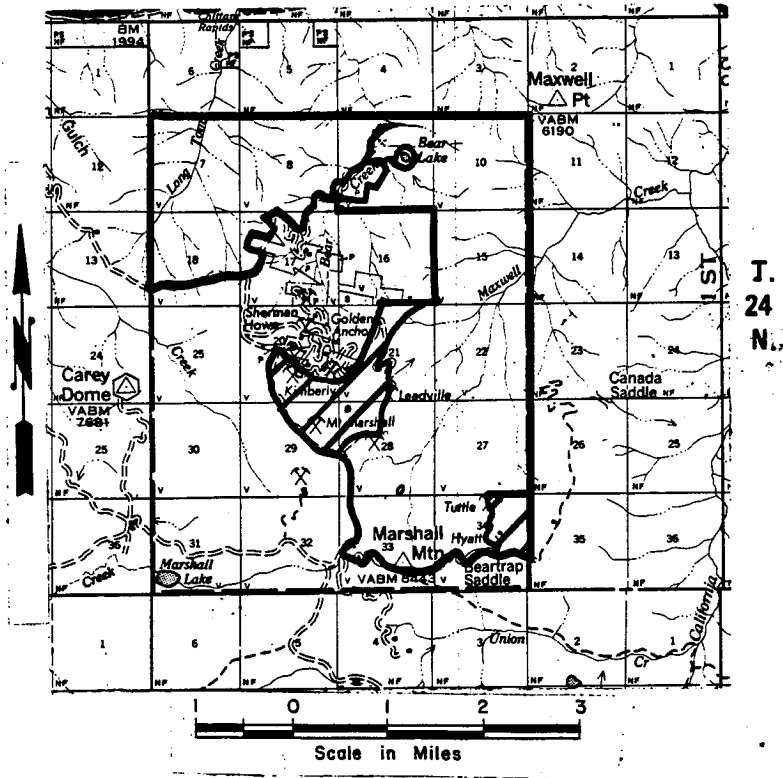
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**DECISION:**



No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 6,524 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

62-10  
MARSHALL MOUNTAIN

R. 5 E.



LEGEND

-  WILDERNESS STUDY AREA
-  AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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