

APPENDIX B  
NARRATIVE SUMMARIES

BOISE DISTRICT

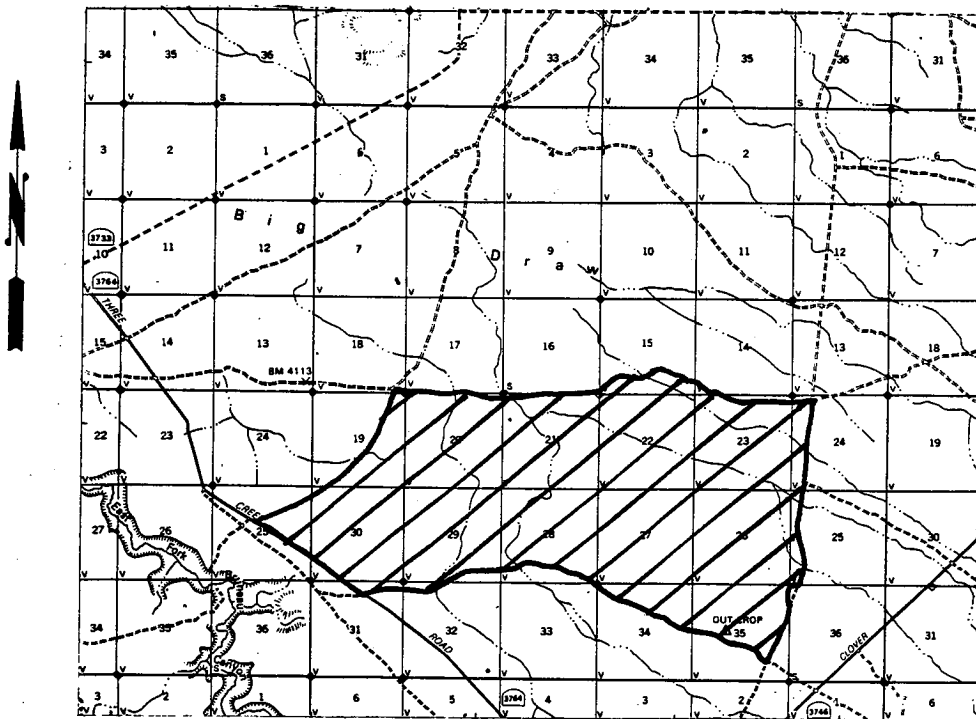
UNITS NOT IDENTIFIED AS

WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

11-17



OUTCROP

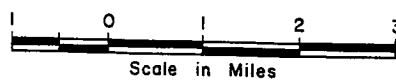
R. 9 E.



T. 10 S.

LEGEND

-  WILDERNESS STUDY AREA
-  AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS



## 11-17 OUTCROP

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

### SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 6,420 acres of BLM land and is rectangular, two by six miles. It is located 33 miles southeast of Bruneau, east of Clover-Three Creek Road. The unit is essentially a flat plateau, with the highest point, Outcrop, in the extreme southeast, only 200 feet higher than the remainder of the unit. Vegetation is predominately northern desert shrub and grass species.

### NATURALNESS:

Two ways, one each in the northeast and east portions of the unit, and a seeding project along the northern boundary are the only imprints of man. These imprints are judged not to be substantial due to their peripheral location and to the flat terrain, which renders the intrusions unnoticeable except at very close distances.

### SOLITUDE:

Vegetative screening is poor due to the dominance of northern desert plant species. Topographic screening is poor due to the flat terrain. A few shallow ravines provide only localized, minimal screening. The off-unit presence of two heavily traveled, graded roads that are visible from most of the unit is considered substantial. The small size, lack of adequate topographic and vegetative screening, and presence of significant external influences render the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

### PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, hunting, wildlife observation and photography. 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.

\* \* \*

### PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments specifically addressed to Unit 11-17 agreed with the proposed decision that the unit should be dropped from further wilderness consideration, stating the unit lacks outstanding solitude and primitive recreation opportunities as well as naturalness.

### COMMENT EVALUATION:

#### Naturalness:

Contrary to public comment, the unit is natural in character because imprints of man are very few and widely scattered. Because of the flat topography and dispersity of imprints, contacts with imprints of man are infrequent and brief.

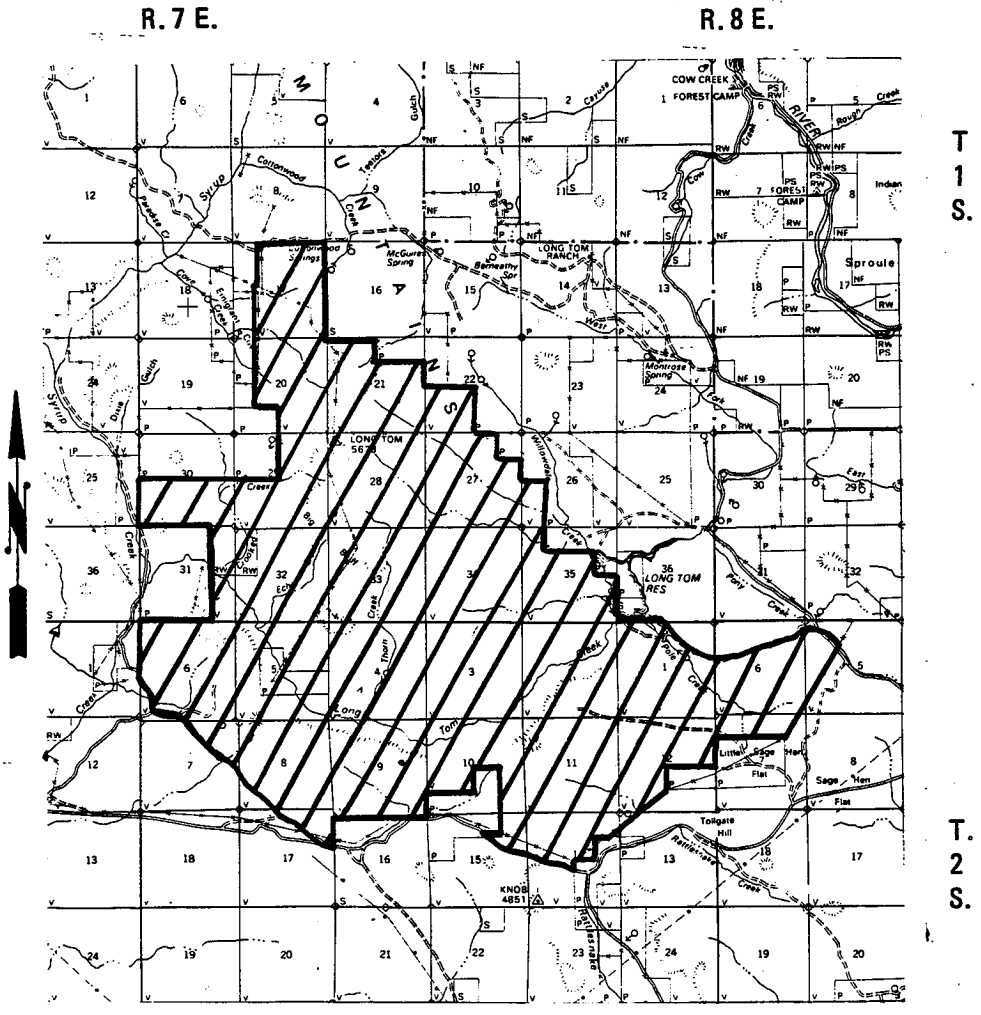
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### DECISION:



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.

14-19

LONG TOM CREEK



LEGEND

-  WILDERNESS STUDY AREA
-  AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

## 14-19 LONG TOM CREEK

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

### SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 13,226 acres of BLM land in an irregular, triangular configuration seven miles long and 1-6 miles wide, with one private inholding. It is located 12 miles north of Mountain Home. The unit lies on a series of parallel ridges and valleys generally running in a northwest to southeast direction. The major topographic feature is Long Tom Creek in the southern portion. Vegetation in most of the unit is desert shrubs and grasses with a riparian zone along Long Tom Creek being a mixture of trees, brush and grasses.

### NATURALNESS:

The southwest portion of the unit has one short dead-end road and two light ways. The low-standard road degenerates into a cow trail that leads to a private inholding. Lower elevations along the southwest periphery have been plowed and seeded for fire rehabilitation. The south-central periphery has one light way.

A way runs east-west into the core of the unit from Long Tom Reservoir on the eastern boundary. Two low-standard roads also penetrate well into the unit from the eastern boundary to reservoir developments. The western and northern portions have concentrations of fence lines which have been bladed or have ways paralleling them. Other intrusions in this area include a substantial way and developed spring. The intrusions in the western and northernmost portions of the unit are concentrated enough to impair the natural character of 4,900 acres. The remaining 8,326 acres appear to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprints of man substantially unnoticeable.

### SOLITUDE:

The dominance of low shrub and grass vegetation throughout much of the unit offers minimal vegetative screening. Vegetative screening in the riparian zone of Long Tom Creek is considered good to excellent. The moderately rolling terrain in the easternmost portion of the unit and the area north of Long Tom Canyon offers a fair amount of topographic screening. Long Tom Creek and associated draws and ridges offer only fair to good topographic screening because of the relatively straight, open character of the canyon. Though there are areas within the canyon which offer small pockets of solitude, the small size of the natural area in combination with generally minimal vegetative screening and only moderate topographic screening, render the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

### PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreational opportunities in the unit are primarily associated with Long Tom Creek, and include camping, backpacking, hiking, sightseeing, nature photography, horseback riding, fishing and hunting. The small size of the natural portion of the unit, and the lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions render the recreational opportunities less than outstanding. The recreational opportunities are considered to offer moderate physical and mental challenge.

\* \* \*

### PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments specifically addressed to Unit 14-19 agreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit from further wilderness consideration because 1) the naturalness of the unit was impaired by substantially noticeable roads and fences, 2) the unit lacked outstanding opportunities for solitude because little vegetative screening, and 3) there is no challenge to recreational opportunities.

### COMMENT EVALUATION:

#### Naturalness:

As stated in the proposed decision, portions of the unit are not natural because of substantially noticeable imprints of man. However, there are over 8,300 acres in the unit which are free of significant imprints of man.

**Solitude:**

Public comment agreed with the proposed decision that the unit lacked outstanding opportunities for solitude because of little vegetative screening. However, it should be noted that the lack of outstanding solitude was attributed to a combination of minimal vegetative screening, moderate topographic screening, topographic layout and relatively small size of the natural portion of the unit, and not just vegetative screening alone.

**Primitive Recreation:**

As stated in the proposed decision, physical challenge in the unit was considered moderate. However, the presence of physical challenge is not the determining factor in whether opportunities for primitive recreation are outstanding. The evaluation of recreational opportunities is based upon the relationship between unit's size, configuration and availability of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions. As stated in the proposed decision, opportunities for primitive recreation in the unit are not considered outstanding because of the small size of the natural area and the lack of exceptional or unusual natural features or recreation attractions.

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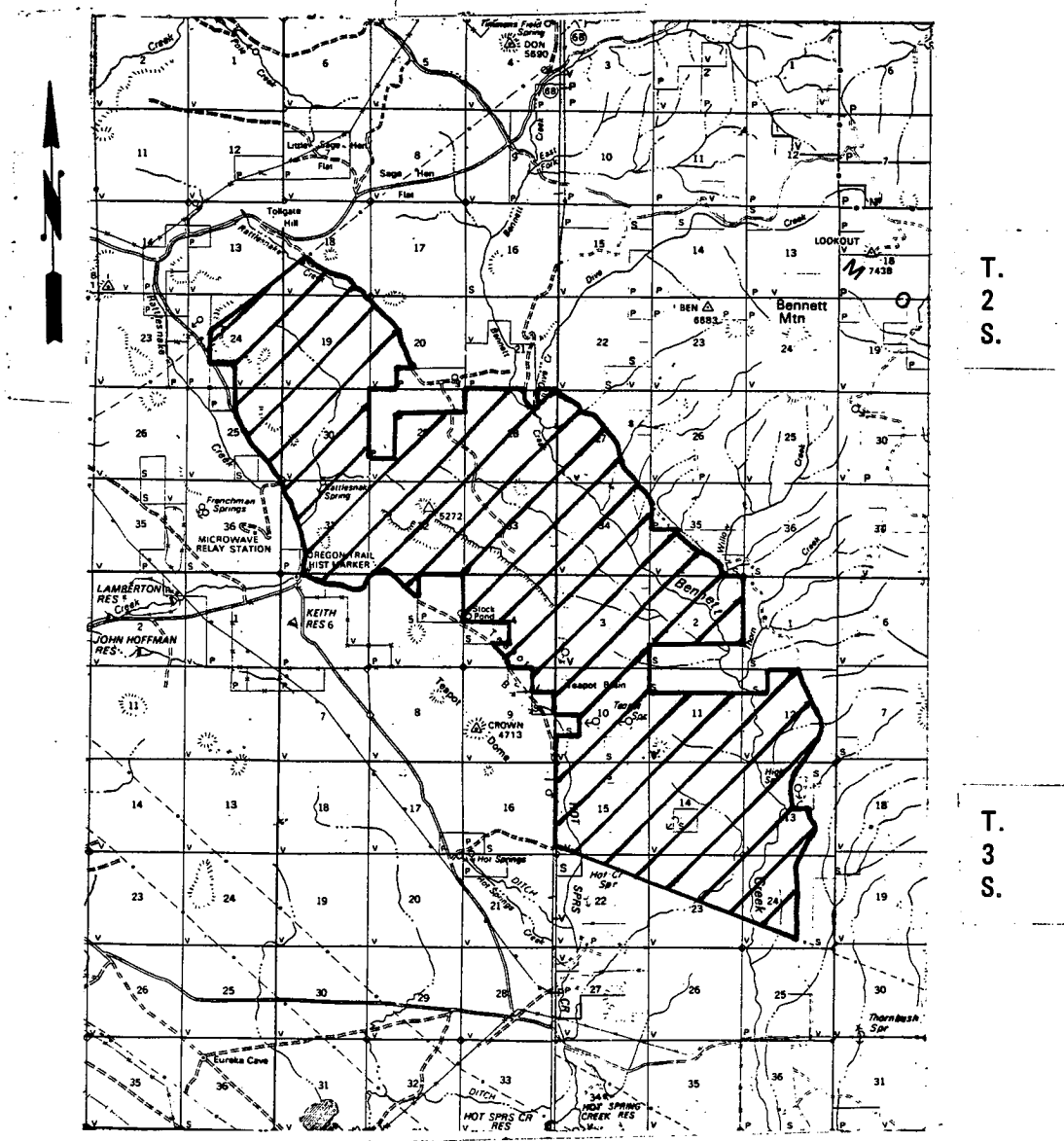
**DECISION:**

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.

14-21

BENNETT CREEK



R. 8 E.

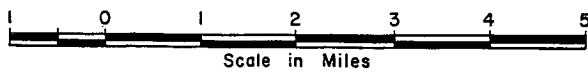


T.  
2  
S.

T.  
3  
S.

LEGEND

-  WILDERNESS STUDY AREA
-  AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS



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

#### SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 11,162 acres of BLM land, in an irregular shape nine miles long and 3/4 mile to 2 1/2 miles wide, with two small state inholdings. It is located ten miles northeast of Mountain Home. The unit lies on a moderately eroded bench, cut by the steep-walled canyon of Bennett Creek along its eastern periphery. The bench breaks away sharply into a broad basin in the western periphery of the unit. Northern desert shrubs and grasses predominate with brush, willows and grasses in the canyon bottom of Bennett Creek.

#### NATURALNESS:

Intrusions are limited to a bladed fire line in the northwest corner of the unit, a north-south way penetrating to the core of the unit from the northeast boundary, and a light way penetrating the unit for 1/2 mile to a spring development from a southern boundary. None of the intrusions are substantially noticeable except at close distances. It would be difficult to walk the length of the unit without encountering the northern way. As a whole the unit appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature.

#### SOLITUDE:

The dominance of shrubs and grasses over much of the unit offers minimal vegetative screening. Vegetative screening offered by riparian vegetation in the bottom of Bennett Creek Canyon is considered fair to good. The moderately to deeply dissected terrain of the bench region and Bennett Creek canyon offer fair to good topographic screening. However the broad, open, gentle slopes of the western basin region offer minimal topographic screening. Though isolated areas of solitude are available because of topographic screening, the unit's small size and narrow, irregular configuration combined with minimal vegetative screening and generally moderate topographic screening render the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

#### PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities within the unit are camping, backpacking, hiking, nature photography, horseback riding and hunting. The unit's small size and poor configuration, and the lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions, render the recreational opportunities less than outstanding. There is a moderate amount of mental and physical challenge associated with the recreational opportunities.

\* \* \*

#### PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed Unit 14-21 agreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit from further wilderness consideration because the area 1) lacks outstanding opportunities for solitude because of minimal or limited topographic and vegetative screening and 2) lacks outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation because of the unit's small size, poor configuration and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features or recreational attractions, and 3) contains imprints of man.

#### COMMENT EVALUATION:

##### Naturalness:

Contrary to public comment, the unit appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the limited imprints of man substantially noticeable only at short distances.

##### Solitude:

Public comment agreed with the proposed decision that the unit lacks outstanding opportunities for solitude because of minimal or limited vegetative and topographic screening. However, it should be noted that the lack of outstanding solitude is based on the small size of the unit in relation to minimal screening and not just because of minimal screening.

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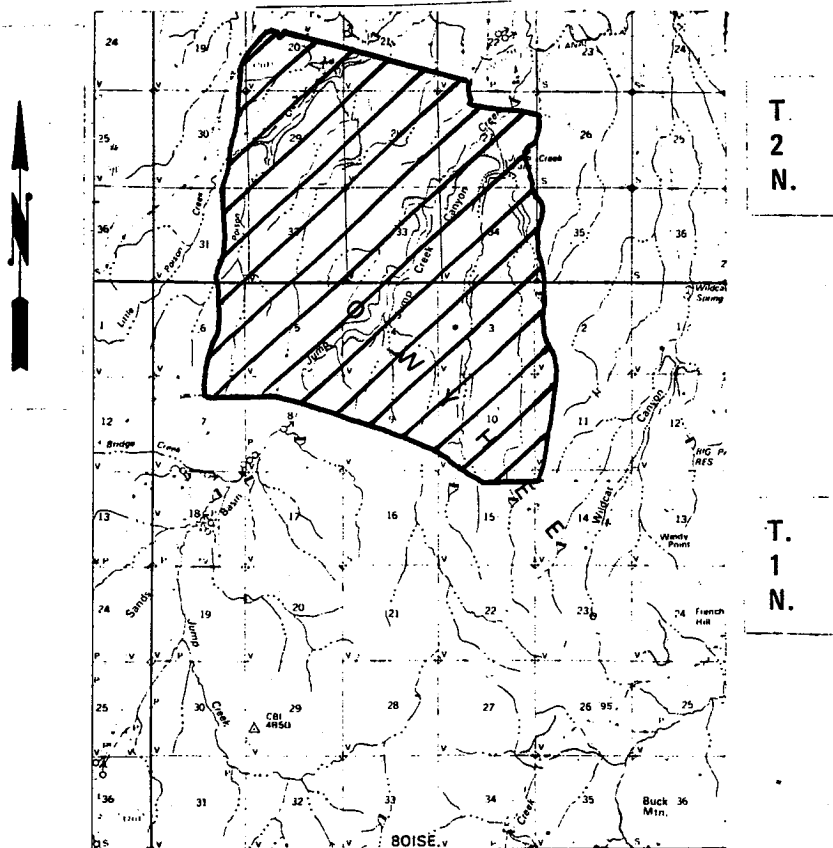
#### DECISION:

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.



16-2

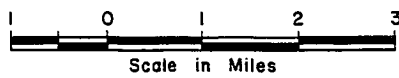
JUMP CREEK

R. 5 W.



LEGEND

-  WILDERNESS STUDY AREA
-  AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS



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

This unit was identified as a Wilderness Study Area on August 10, 1979 based on the results of the accelerated wilderness inventory conducted for the Agricultural Environmental Statement. Re-evaluation of this unit is necessary in order to assure consistency in the application of wilderness review criteria between the earlier and more recent decisions. Obvious inconsistencies currently exist, particularly with regard to the manner in which naturalness, external influences, configuration, and outstanding opportunities were assessed in the earlier inventory.

#### SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 8,301 acres of BLM land, in a somewhat square shape 3-4 miles on a side. It is located approximately ten miles southwest of Marsing. The dominant natural features are the canyons and watercourses of Jump Creek and Poison Creek. A significant portion of the unit lies on the surrounding open lava plain.

#### NATURALNESS:

In the original decision it was recognized that imprints of man were present, but the natural features were judged visually dominant over these imprints. However, this small unit contains about fourteen miles of ways and fire lines and five stock ponds. Reevaluation shows that these are distributed over the entire plateau portion of the unit, and topographic and vegetative screening is insufficient to shield them from view in the major portion of the plateau. The potential for frequent contact with these imprints is judged to be high. Cumulatively these imprints are reconsidered to be substantially noticeable. The canyon areas remain substantially natural in character, but they do not constitute 5,000 natural acres of public land.

#### SOLITUDE:

The broken topography associated with the canyons, the meandering course of the streams and significant riparian vegetation are still judged to offer excellent screening in the portion of the unit within the canyons. However, the small natural area and the narrow corridor of travel possible in this portion of the unit render the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

#### PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

As stated in the original intensive inventory narrative, recreation opportunities in the unit are associated primarily with the canyon areas. Despite the diversity and scenic quality of recreation attractions in the unit, its small natural area and narrow, confining corridor of travel render the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation less than outstanding.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The canyons, watercourses and associated ecosystems are of scenic, educational and scientific value.

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#### PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that opposed the proposed decision to drop the unit gave the following specific reasons:

- All or most of the unit is natural; the boundaries could be modified to omit objectionable human caused impacts.
- The unit offers outstanding opportunities for solitude and the canyon and plateau offer outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.
- There are outstanding scenic values on the plateau and in the canyon.
- The close proximity to major population centers enhances the outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.
- Portions of unit should be made a wilderness study area even if less than 5,000 acres.

Comments in support of the proposed decision to drop the unit gave the following reasons:

- The unit is not natural because of 14 miles of ways or bladed fire lines and five stock ponds in a small area; the canyon is the only natural area.
- There are significant external influences from agricultural development immediately north of the unit.
- There is a road to stock ponds in the western portion of the unit.
- There are no outstanding opportunities for solitude on the plateau because of minimal vegetative screening and no topographic relief.
- There are no outstanding opportunities for solitude in the canyon because of frequent use by local teenager groups.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Size:

Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act permits the consideration of an area under 5,000 acres in size as wilderness provided it is "of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; . . ." The BLM wilderness inventory policy permits the consideration of areas under 5,000 acres provided that they can be managed in an unimpaired condition and there is strong public support for wilderness in the area. Public comments in the past have clearly shown that there is not strong public support for wilderness in this unit. Furthermore, current levels of use and abuse clearly indicate that this small area cannot realistically be managed in an unimpaired condition.

Naturalness:

As stated in the proposed decision, the naturalness of the plateau areas of the unit is seriously impaired by the frequency and severity of heavily bladed fire lines, ways, roads and stock ponds. Contact with these imprints would occur at intervals of 1/3 to 1 mile while crossing any portion of the plateau other than immediately along the rimrock of Jump Creek Canyon. An area of about 2,000 acres (3 1/2 miles long) within and about the rimrock of Jump Creek Canyon can be considered natural. However, the naturalness of some portions of the canyon in the vicinity of Jump Creek Falls has suffered seriously from past abuse and overuse.

Solitude:

The natural area of the unit is dominated by the narrow, meandering canyon of Jump Creek which runs for about 3 1/2 miles. Vegetation is dense within the riparian zone of the canyon and supplies excellent vegetative screening. However, the canyon creates a definite corridor effect which cannot be offset by the length of canyon. Therefore, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding.

Primitive Recreation:

There is little argument that Jump Creek Canyon provides a scenic area within which a limited outdoor experience can be enjoyed. However, the small, short, and narrow natural canyon area cannot be defined as having outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

\* \* \*

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 a natural area of sufficient size, and to the lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.