

## 111-12 SHEEP TRAIL

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

### SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 19,702 acres of BLM land with one state inholding. The unit is six miles long and five miles wide, and is located 33 miles southwest of Bruneau, and 30 miles northwest of Grasmere. The unit consists of a flat to rolling plateau dissected by several shallow drainages. Rock Creek drains north to south through the central portion of the unit. Ridges support broken stands of mountain mahogany, while the major portion of the unit is dominated by northern desert shrub species.

### NATURALNESS:

Imprints of man include an extensive system of light to substantial ways in the north and northwest portions of the unit; two light ways and a bladed cat trail in the south; 13 water developments, ten in the western portion with a major concentration of seven stock ponds in the west central portion. The eastern portion of the unit is essentially free of substantial developments. In the western 8,000 acres of the unit, containing thirteen miles of ways and ten stock ponds, human imprints are extremely noticeable. An area of approximately 11,000 acres in the eastern portion of the unit appears to retain its natural character.

### SOLITUDE:

The desert shrubs dominant in the unit offer poor vegetative screening. Mountain mahogany stands are too sparse and scattered to provide effective screening. Topographic screening is also poor due to the flat to gently rolling terrain. The relatively small size of the portion of the unit that retains its natural character, together with poor overall screening renders the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

### PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, hunting, wildlife observation and photography. However, the lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions renders the recreation opportunities less than outstanding. Challenge associated with primitive recreation in the area is not considered significant.

### SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains ecological values, including antelope range and fawning habitat.

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### PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed unit 111-12 agreed with the proposed decision that the unit should not be identified as a study area. Specific reasons given for supporting the decision were that the western half of the unit was not natural because of numerous stock ponds, roads and ways, and the unit did not have outstanding opportunities for solitude because of a lack of sufficient topographic and vegetative screening.

### COMMENT EVALUATION:

#### Naturalness:

As stated in the proposed decision, the western portion of the unit is not natural because of the concentration of imprints of man.

#### Solitude:

Throughout the inventory, BLM has relied upon the relationship of unit size as it is affected by the presence of topography and vegetation to determine the opportunities for solitude. It is generally recognized that low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area involved is sufficiently large. Low vegetation over sufficient distance can provide a blending effect where other visitors or external influences (such as vehicles traveling on boundary roads) can disappear into the landscape.

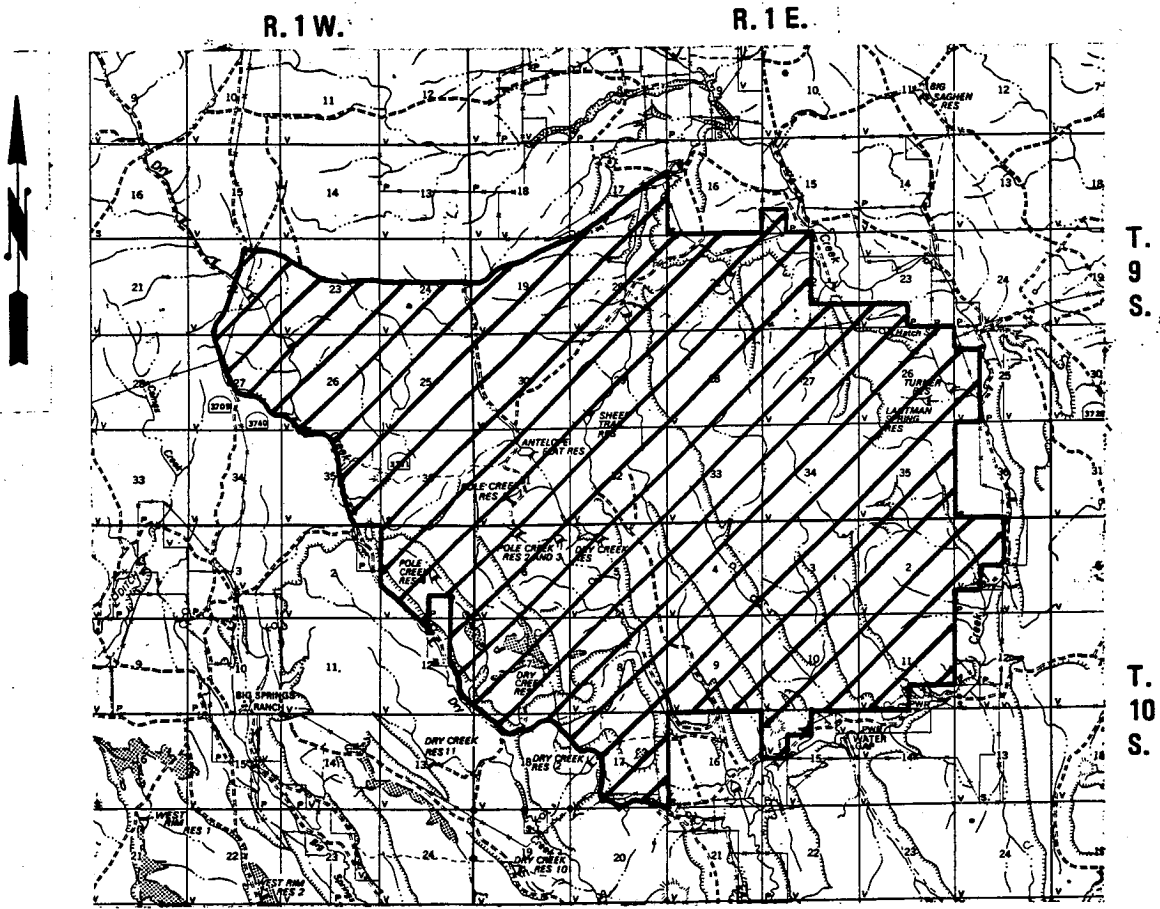
The major factor in determining whether the opportunity for solitude in any given unit can be considered outstanding is whether the unit is sufficiently large enough to allow the blending of a realistic amount of visitor use into the landscape. In this area of the district, vegetation is typified as being extremely short and extremely sparse. This vegetative cover requires significantly more distance than is available in the natural portion of the unit to provide adequate blending of a realistic amount of visitors or external influences. Therefore, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding.

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**DECISION:**

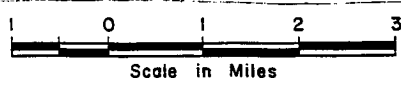
No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness in the western portion, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

111-12  
SHEEP TRAIL

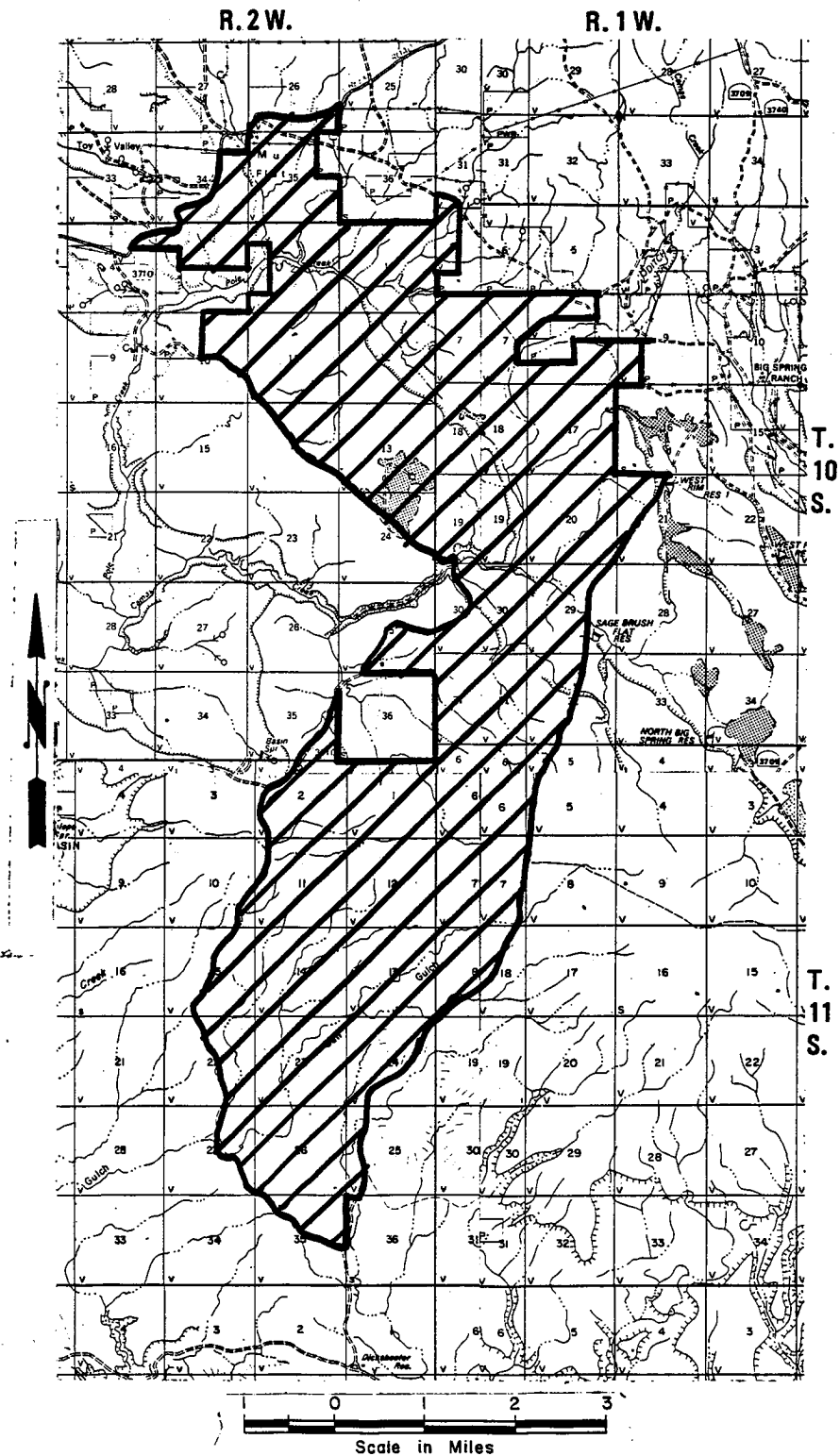


LEGEND



-  WILDERNESS STUDY AREA
-  AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS



111-19a  
CAMAS CREEK



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 19,347 acres of BLM land. It is extremely long and narrow, approximately 12 miles by 1 1/2 - 3 miles, and is located 33 miles northwest of Grasmere. The northern part of the unit is a level, moderately dissected tableland drained by Camas Creek, which flows through the unit for four miles, and Pole Creek, which flows through the extreme north of the unit for two miles. The southern portion of the unit is a moderate southwest slope from a broad, open spur ridge of Big Springs Butte, which occupies the central portion. The slope is moderately dissected by shallow drainages and small basins, draining southwest via Bull Gulch. Some scattered juniper occur in the north, while northern desert plant species dominate the major portion of the unit.

**NATURALNESS:**

Two short ways enter the unit in the northern portion. Three water developments are scattered along the western periphery, and a fence extends halfway across the unit in the southern portion of the unit. These imprints, scattered about the periphery of the unit, do not impair the unit's natural characteristics.

**SOLITUDE:**

Vegetative screening is minimal due to dominance of northern desert shrub species. Topographic screening is poor in most of the unit; only in the northern portion, within the shallow upper drainages of Pole and Camas Creeks, and in the extreme south, in the area of the moderately dissected southwest slope, is topographic screening even fair. Despite its large size, the unit's long, narrow configuration and poor topographic and vegetative screening render the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

**PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:**

Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, camping, hunting, wildlife observation and photography. However, the broad plateau and shallow drainages do not provide primitive recreation attractions that are considered outstanding. Challenge associated with the primitive recreation is not considered significant.

**SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:**

The unit contains significant cultural resource values and ecological values, including antelope fawning habitat.

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**PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:**

Comments that specifically addressed unit 111-19a agreed with the proposed decision that the unit should not be identified as a Study Area. Specific reasons given were that the area did not have outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation because of a lack of vegetative screening and topography, and that the unit contained imprints of man.

**COMMENT EVALUATION:**

**Naturalness:**

Contrary to public comment, the unit still retains a natural appearance, as the imprints of man are scattered around the periphery of the unit.

**Solitude:**

Throughout the inventory, BLM has relied upon the relationship of unit size as it is affected by the presence of topography and vegetation to determine the opportunities for solitude. It is generally recognized that low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area involved is sufficiently large. Low vegetation over sufficient distance can provide a blending effect where other visitors or external influences (such as vehicles traveling on boundary roads) can disappear into the landscape.

The major factor in determining whether the opportunity for solitude in any given unit can be considered outstanding is whether the unit is sufficiently large enough to allow the blending of a realistic amount of visitor use into the landscape. In this area, vegetation is extremely short and extremely sparse. This vegetative cover requires significantly more distance than is available in this unit to provide adequate blending of a realistic amount of visitors or external influences. Therefore, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding.

**Primitive Recreation:**

Though public comment agreed with the proposed decision that opportunities for primitive recreation are not outstanding, it does not accurately reflect the rationale for the decision. Opportunities for primitive recreation are not dependent upon the availability of topographic and vegetative screening. Opportunities for primitive recreation are dependent upon a unit's size and topographic and/or vegetative diversity or uniqueness to provide for exceptional, unusual or diverse recreation experiences. Flat open country such as in this unit does little to provide for recreation experiences other than the obtainment of a sense of monotony. The achievement of a sense of monotony cannot be considered the fulfillment of an outstanding recreational opportunity.

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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.

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

**SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:**

The unit contains 33,150 acres of BLM land, and has one state and one private inholding. The unit is 12 miles long and varies from two miles wide in the north to six miles in the south. It is located 33 miles west of Grasmere. The northern portion of the unit is a moderately dissected tableland and small basin draining northwest into Camas Creek. The central and eastern portions are dominated by Big Springs Butte, a long, prominent ridge that drops sharply on the north and east. The southern half is the southwestern slope of the Butte, moderately dissected by small draws and characterized generally by small basins with relatively steep intervening slopes, becoming steeper in the southern part of the unit. Drainage is into upper Dickshooter Creek, located in the extreme south of the unit. Northern desert shrubs and grasses predominate.

**NATURALNESS:**

A way crosses the extreme northern portion of the unit. Two ways in the southern portion and 12 water developments, concentrated in the southern portion and around the periphery, constitute the other human imprints. Due to their small number and dispersion, man's imprints are considered to be substantially unnoticeable.

**SOLITUDE:**

Screening is minimal in the unit due to the lack of topographic relief and dominance of desert shrub vegetation. While the unit is quite large, relief is minimal except in an area of about 7,000 acres in the southern portion. The opportunities for solitude are diminished by the dead-end road extending five miles inside the body of the unit. While moderately good opportunities for solitude exist in the unit due to its size and presence of gentle relief in the southern portion, the overall lack of screening and the configuration problem in the southeast portion render these opportunities less than outstanding.

**PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:**

Primitive recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, hunting, wildlife observation and photography. However, the lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions renders the opportunities less than outstanding. Challenge associated with primitive recreation in the area is not considered significant.

**SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:**

The unit includes antelope range and important sage grouse habitat.

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**PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:**

Comments that specifically addressed Unit 111-19b agreed with the proposed decision that the unit should not be identified as a Study Area. Specific reasons given were that the area did not have outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation because of a lack of topographic relief and vegetation, and that the unit contained imprints of man.

**COMMENT EVALUATION:**

**Naturalness:**

Contrary to public comment, the unit retains its natural appearance, as the imprints of man are small in number and widely dispersed.

**Solitude:**

Throughout the inventory, BLM has relied upon the relationship of unit size as it is affected by the presence of topography and vegetation to determine the opportunities for solitude. It is generally recognized that low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area involved is sufficiently large. Low vegetation over sufficient distance can provide a blending effect where other visitors or external influences (such as vehicles traveling on boundary roads) can disappear into the landscape.

The major factor in determining whether the opportunity for solitude in any given unit can be considered outstanding is whether the unit is sufficiently large enough to allow the blending of a realistic amount of visitor use into the landscape. In this area, vegetation is extremely short and extremely sparse. This vegetative cover requires significantly more distance than is available in this unit to provide adequate blending of a realistic amount of visitors or external influences. Therefore, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding.

**Primitive Recreation:**

Though public comment agreed with the proposed decision that opportunities for primitive recreation are not outstanding, it does not accurately reflect the rationale for the decision. Opportunities for primitive recreation are not dependent upon the availability of topographic and vegetative screening. Opportunities for primitive recreation are dependent upon a unit's size and topographic and/or vegetative diversity or uniqueness to provide for exceptional, unusual or diverse recreation experiences. Flat open country such as in this unit does little to provide for recreation experiences other than the obtainment of a sense of monotony. The achievement of a sense of monotony cannot be considered the fulfillment of an outstanding recreational opportunity.

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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.

111-19b  
BULL GULCH

R. 2 W.

R. 1 W.

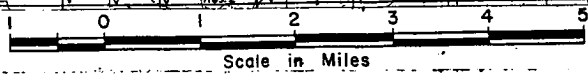
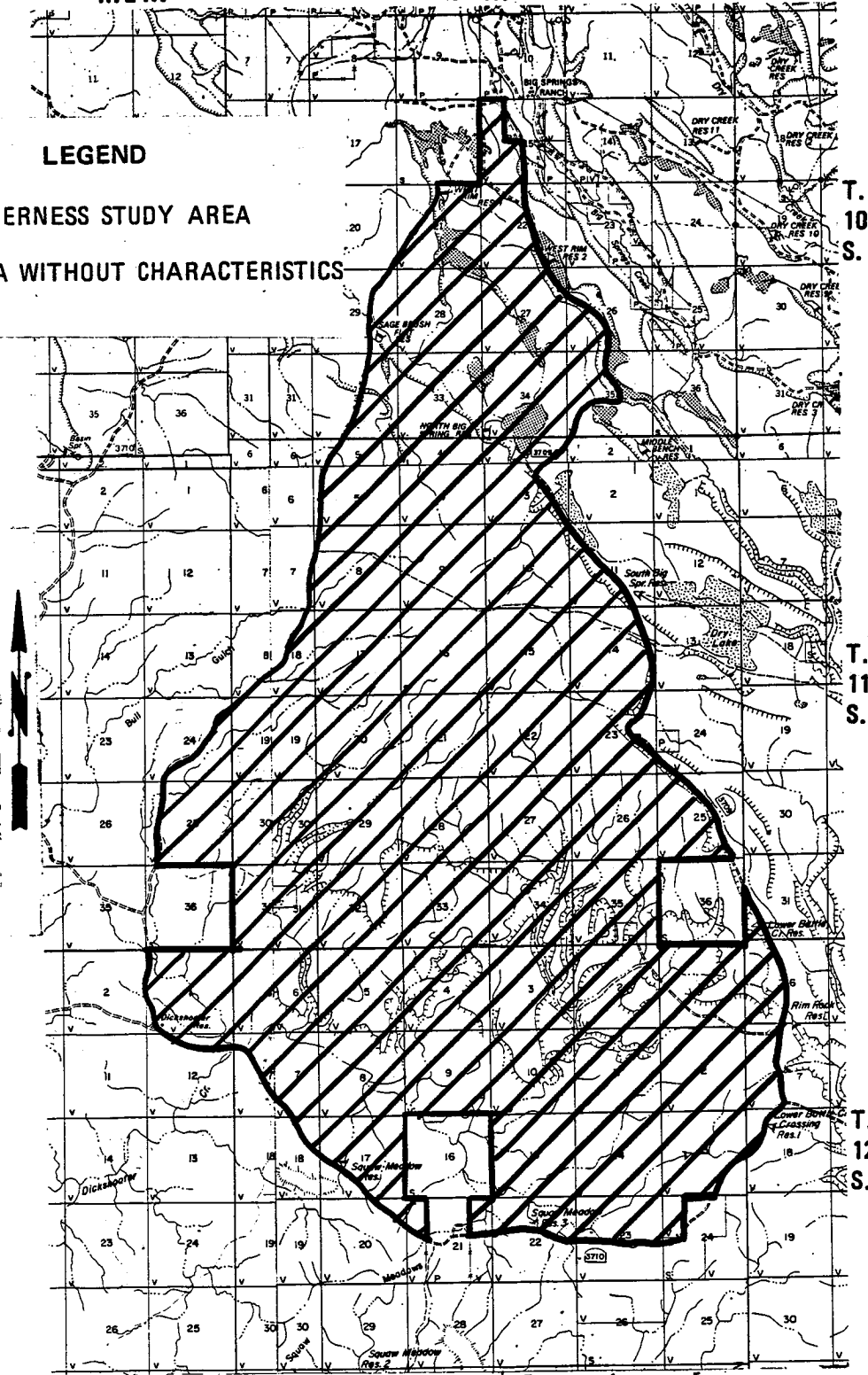
LEGEND



WILDERNESS STUDY AREA



AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS



Scale in Miles