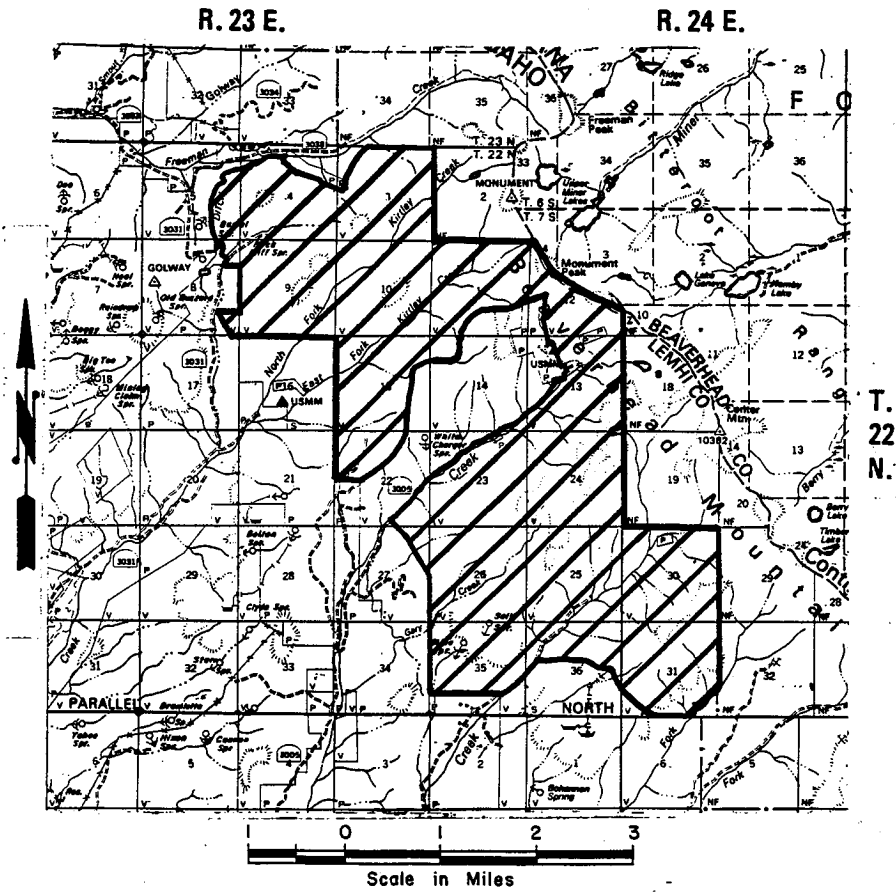




SALMON DISTRICT
UNITS NOT IDENTIFIED AS
WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

41-3
GEERTSON 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 10,720 acres of BLM land with a 640-acre State land, and a 80-acre private land inholding. It is located northeast of Salmon. The unit has an irregular configuration due to land ownership patterns and designated roads. Boundaries include U. S. Forest Service lands to the north and east. The interior portion of the unit contains four major drainages with very steep relief. Elevation ranges from 5,800 feet in the foothills to 9,452 feet. The majority of landscape is covered by Douglas fir and sub-alpine timber species, with occasional outcroppings of sagebrush-grass species, and willow and aspen in the riparian zone. Some steep slopes are covered only by coarse talus.

NATURALNESS:

This unit has retained natural characteristics in spite of a few minor man-made intrusions. There are six spring developments scattered along the eastern edge of the unit. None of these low-impact intrusions are very far into the unit. Approximately five miles of ways extend for a short distance into the unit. The Geertson Creek Road and a road immediately to the north extend some distance into the unit causing a very irregular unit configuration.

SOLITUDE:

The vertical relief and variable terrain with deep canyons and numerous small drainages contribute to the ability of the area to afford opportunities for experiencing remoteness. Further enhancing these opportunities is the predominance of Douglas fir and sub-alpine species that would provide screening from others. However, the relatively small size and extremely irregular configuration of the unit render the opportunities less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The interesting topographical and vegetative features of this unit could provide a challenging primitive experience for a visitor. Opportunities exist for hiking, backpacking, spelunking, horseback riding, photography, and sightseeing for botanical, zoological, or geological features. However, the relatively small size and extremely irregular configuration render the opportunities less than outstanding.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that favored study area status indicated:

- Unit is adjacent to the proposed Big Hole Wilderness in Montana.
- Unit contains mountain goat habitat; proximity to wolf habitat.
- Good hunting area; scenic areas.
- Area has spectacular vistas, excellent opportunities for hunting, backpacking, nature observation, and other activities.
- Unit provides outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

Comments opposing study area status stated a lack of naturalness and lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Supplemental field checks were completed after receipt of public comment. The unit does adjoin the Big Hole RARE II area for a distance of one mile. The Idaho side of this border is a narrow corridor bordered on the west side by two roads and mining areas.

While the area is unquestionably scenic it is bordered and divided by constructed roads which severely constrain the ability to achieve outstanding solitude or primitive recreation.

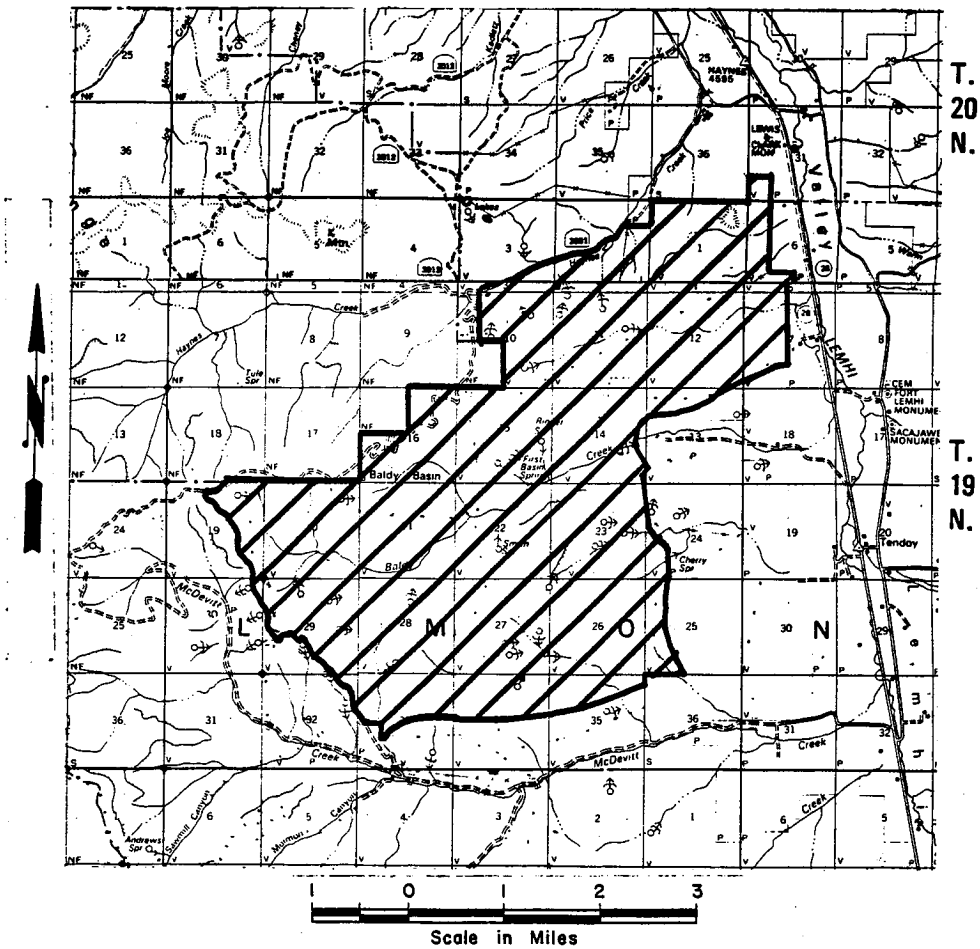
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DECISION:



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.

**42-6
BALDY BASIN**

R. 23 E.



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 10,720 acres of BLM land and is located northwest of Tendoy. General boundaries are the Haynes and McDevitt Creek Roads, and private lands to the east. The unit's topography slopes eastward to the Lemhi River and is drained by Haynes Creek, Baldy Creek, and McDevitt Creek. Elevation varies from 4,800 to 8,250 feet. Vegetation is a mixture of sagebrush-grass and timber.

NATURALNESS:

The unit contains about 30 spring developments, three miles of buried pipeline and 20 miles of fencing. Access to the Larkspur Pipeline is by an obvious constructed road and access to other developments by lower grade jeep trails. Most of the developments are small and largely unnoticeable.

SOLITUDE:

The unit lacks an outstanding opportunity for solitude due to a lack of topographic relief, vegetative screening and sufficient size to avoid the sights and sounds of man due to surrounding roads and highly developed private ranches.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The narrow configuration of the unit, the bordering roads, developed private lands, and numerous fences in and around the unit severely restrict the opportunity for outstanding primitive and unconfined recreation.

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PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments favoring study area status indicated that the area is predominantly in a natural state, and contains significant topographic variation. The comments expressed disagreement with the BLM evaluation that lack of vegetative screening and bordering roads and ranches should exclude the area as a study area.

Comments opposing study area status stated a lack of naturalness, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Whether for or against study area status, the comments merely agreed or disagreed with the findings, with no new information provided.

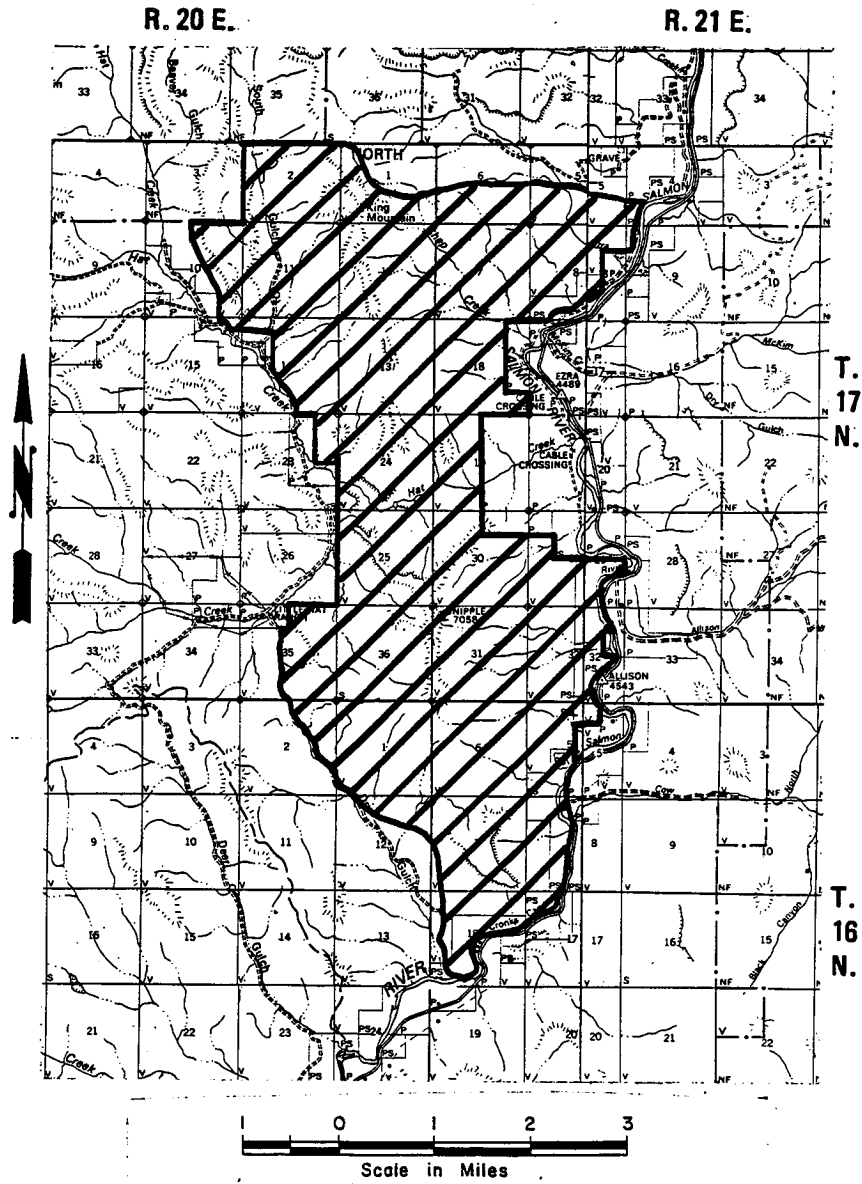
Additional field checks confirmed that while the unit outwardly exhibits a natural aspect, the influence of numerous range developments and the access roads/trails to them, the narrow configuration of the unit, restricted size, bordering roads, and highly developed ranches render the opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation less than 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.

44-2
KING MOUNTAIN



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 12,602 acres of BLM land with a 640-acre State land inholding. It is located north of Ellis, and is in a long narrow shape, bounded by Dry Gulch Road, Hat Creek Road, King Mountain Road, and Highway 93. Topography of the unit is characterized by a dominant north-south ridge cut deeply by Hat Creek in the middle. Vegetation is primarily sagebrush-grass, with numerous rock outcroppings.

NATURALNESS:

Existing intrusions within the unit are not visually evident or prominent in the landscape. Bordering areas are highly developed cattle ranches. The unit retains a natural appearance.

SOLITUDE:

The narrow single ridge configuration makes it extremely difficult to avoid the sights and sounds of man both within and outside the unit. Therefore, solitude opportunities are considered less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The size and configuration of the unit severely confine the potential to provide an outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Cronks Canyon and the confluence of Big and Little Hat Creek possess both geologic and scenic values due to steep deeply cut canyon walls and narrow stream bottoms.

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PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments favoring study area status considered this unit as part of a cluster of four areas adjacent to the Salmon River. It was stated that the area met the naturalness criteria, and provided outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation. Lack of vegetative screening and visibility of roads and ranches outside the unit should not be valid criteria for dropping the unit.

Comments opposing study area status agreed that the unit lacked outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and stated a lack of naturalness.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Although the determination of outstanding opportunities is certainly a subjective judgment, supplemental field checks confirmed that due to the size, shape, lack of screening, and difficulty in avoiding the imprints of man, the unit does not contain outstanding opportunities.

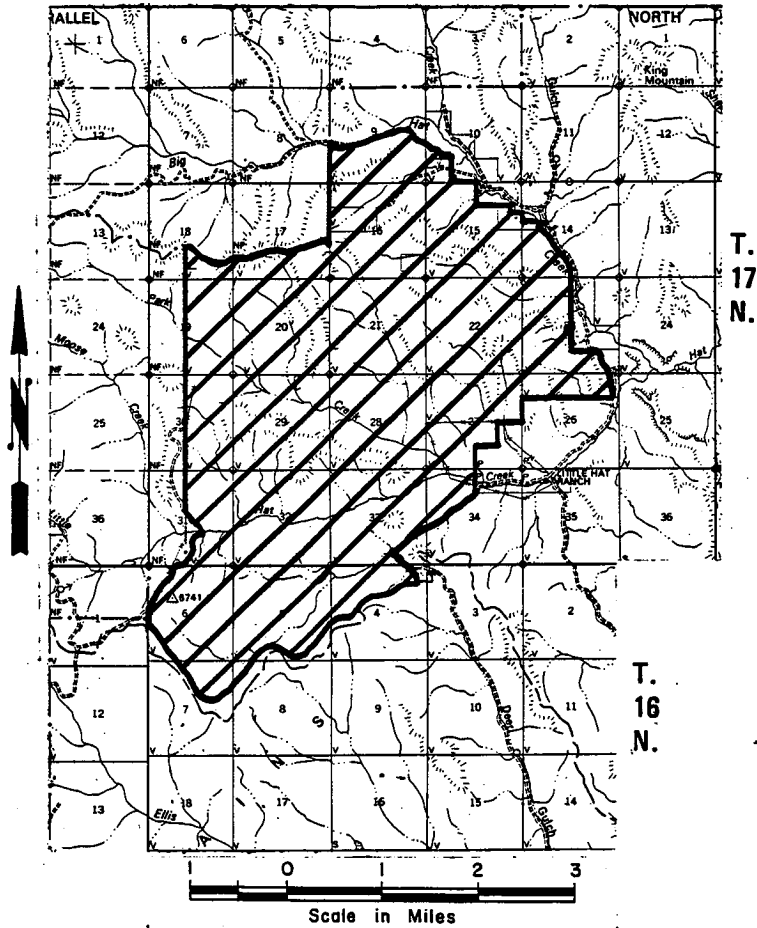
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DECISION:



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.

44-3
HAT CREEK

R. 20 E.



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 9,707 acres of BLM land with a 520-acre State land inholding. This BLM acreage figure differs from the 10,227 acres shown in the August 1979 report due to the inadvertent inclusion of the State acreage in the August report. The unit is located northwest of Ellis. Topography and vegetation are characterized by sagebrush-grass covered rolling hills drained by Little and Big Hat Creeks. Slopes are relatively gentle and east-facing.

NATURALNESS:

The unit contains 15 spring developments, two miles of fence line and several miles of jeep trails. These developments are subordinate to the overall landscape, with the unit retaining its natural appearance.

SOLITUDE:

The open slopes and lack of vegetative screening combined with the presence of surrounding roads and ranches on Hat Creek do not provide opportunities for solitude that are considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit is contained by surrounding roads and developed lands and is of a size which does not offer opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation that are considered outstanding.

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PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments favoring study area status considered this unit as part of a cluster of four areas adjacent to the Salmon River. It was stated that the area met the naturalness criteria, and provided outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation. Lack of vegetative screening and visibility of roads and ranches outside the unit should not be valid criteria for dropping the unit.

Comments opposing study area status agreed that the unit lacked outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and stated a lack of naturalness.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Although the determination of outstanding opportunities is certainly a subjective judgment, supplemental field checks confirmed that due to the size, shape, lack of screening, and difficulty in avoiding the imprints of man, the unit does not contain outstanding opportunities.

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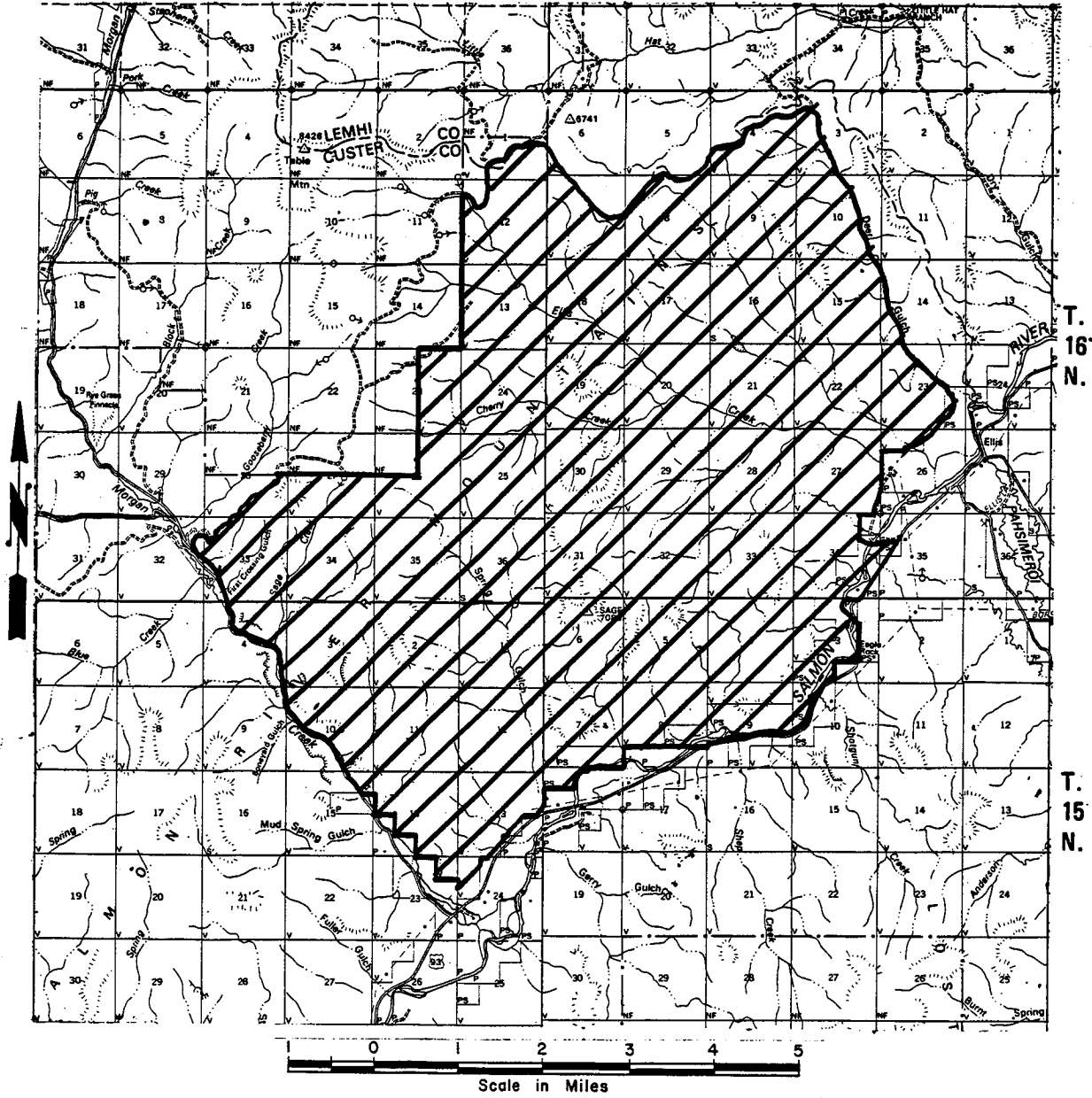
DECISION:

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.



44-4
ELLIS CREEK

R. 19 E.

R. 20 E.



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 28,040 total acres, including 1,280 acres of State lands involved in the Donkey Hills exchange. This BLM acreage figure differs from the 28,790 acres shown in the August 1979 report due to a more accurate calculation of acreage. The August report failed to mention that State acres were included in the total. The unit is located west of Ellis. Topography and vegetation are characterized by sagebrush-grass rolling hills drained to the southeast by Morgan Creek, Spring Gulch, Cherry Creek, Ellis Creek, and Deer Gulch. Slopes are generally steep along the Salmon River and flatten out as distance from the river increases.

NATURALNESS:

The unit contains numerous spring developments, fences, and pipelines. Two constructed roads intrude into the unit and numerous jeep trails provide access to range developments. These developments are visually subordinate due to the large size of the unit.

SOLITUDE:

An outstanding opportunity for solitude does not exist due to the proximity of surrounding ranches and roads; and range developments and a lack of vegetative screening within the unit.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation exist but are not outstanding due to the constraints of surrounding and interior roads and other imprints of man.

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PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments favoring study area status considered this unit as part of a cluster of four areas adjacent to the Salmon River. It was stated that the area met the naturalness criteria, and provided outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation. Lack of vegetative screening and visibility of roads and ranches outside the unit should not be valid criteria for dropping the unit.

Comments opposing study area status agreed that the unit lacked outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and stated a lack of naturalness.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Although the determination of outstanding opportunities is certainly a subjective judgment, supplemental field checks confirmed that due to the size, shape, lack of screening, and difficulty in avoiding the imprints of man, the unit does not contain outstanding opportunities.

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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.