

## WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS REVIEW

Date of Submission: N/A

Date(s) of Field Office Review: 02/06/2007

Submitter: N/A

Name of Area to be Reviewed: Grand Gulch (A-B)

BLM Field Office(s) Affected: Monticello

### EVALUATION

1.) Was new information submitted by a member of the public for this area?

YES \_\_\_\_\_. NO  X .

2.) If new information was submitted, describe the submission. For example, did the submission include a map that identifies the specific boundaries of the area(s) in question; a narrative that describes the wilderness characteristics of the area and documents how that information differs from the information gathered and reviewed in prior BLM inventories; photographic documentation; etc?

*The area reviewed was derived from a GIS Data Layer provided by the Utah Wilderness Coalition (UWC). Additional Materials such as maps, photographs, or narratives were not included.*

3. As a result of interdisciplinary review of relevant information (which may include aerial photographs, state and county road information, road maintenance agreements, documentation from prior BLM inventories, field observations, maps, master title plats, evidence presented as new information by a proponent, etc.), do you conclude:

\_\_\_\_\_ a) the decision reached in previous BLM inventories, that the area lacks wilderness characteristics, is still valid.

(or)

X  b) some or all of the area has wilderness characteristics as shown on the attached map.

4. Describe your findings regarding specific wilderness characteristics and provide detailed rationale.

**Size:**

*The Grand Gulch area proposed by the UWC for wilderness consideration totals approximately 8,128 acres. Therefore, the overall area as proposed does meet the size requirements for wilderness management. However, the presence of a substantial vehicle route (Emigrant Trail) bisects part of the unit, and thus it has been determined that the area should be divided into two sections and analyzed separately.*

*Unit A (7,485 Acres) meets the size requirement for wilderness management. Unit B (643 Acres) does not meet the 5,000 acre size requirement, but because Unit B is contiguous to the Grand Gulch Wilderness Study Area (WSA), it will be analyzed in this review for Wilderness Character.*

**Appearance of Naturalness:**

*The ID team reviewed the areas within Units A-B using GIS data layers, which included recent aerial photography (August 2006), San Juan County Road Data, oil-wells GIS Layer, range allotment files, and Reasonable Foreseeable Development (RFD) Data. The ID Team undertook a detailed review of high resolution aerial photos from 2006 to both verify information from the GIS review, as well as to look for additional impacts not incorporated in GIS. These impacts could include such things as seismic exploration lines not included in the county road inventory and other disturbances from past minerals activities. These areas were reviewed for wilderness character in 1979, but were not carried forward in the Initial Wilderness Proposals. ID Team members have visited Units A-B over several years while administering their respective resources, and have noted that, other than minimal access roads, the areas do not contain substantially noticeable human impacts and contain no other known landscape scale surface disturbances, such as significant recreation development, etc. The Reasonable Foreseeable Development (RFD) Scenario indicates minimal oil and gas activity in the areas. Law enforcement patrol logs indicate limited Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) activity in the areas. Therefore, with minimal human impacts in each of the areas, Units A-B appear to be affected primarily by the forces of nature and are natural in character.*

**Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude or Primitive and Unconfined Recreation:**

*Because of the minimal evidence of human disturbances in Units A-B, opportunities for solitude can be found throughout each of the areas. In addition, outstanding opportunities for solitude can also be found in the contiguous Grand Gulch WSA. Opportunities for primitive recreation uses such as hiking and photography are available.*

**Supplemental Values**

*The area also contains cultural resources, which are considered to be significant supplemental values. A segment of the Emigrant Trail passes through the area.*

5. Document all information considered during the interdisciplinary team review (e.g. aerial photographs, state and county road information, road maintenance agreements, documentation from prior BLM inventories, field observations, maps, master title plats, evidence presented as new information by a proponent, etc.)

*Utah Wilderness Coalition (UWC) GIS Data Layer Proposal (2005)*

*Lake Canyon Allotment Files*

*Master Title Plats*

*Law Enforcement Patrol Logs: Cedar Mesa Sector*

*GIS Aerial Photography (NAIP 2006: San Juan County north and south)*

*GIS Oil and Gas Data (og-wells)*

*Reasonable Foreseeable Development Scenario for Oil and Gas (2005)*

*Mineral Potential Report (2005)*

*BLM 1999 Utah Wilderness Inventory Revision (May 2003)*

*San Juan Resource Area Management Plan (1991)*

*Analysis of the Management Situation (2005)*

**Attachments:**

- *Map of Grand Gulch Units A-B*

6. List the members of the interdisciplinary team and resource specialties represented.

<b>NAME</b>	<b>RESOURCE (S) REPRESENTED</b>
Gary Torres	Planner, NEPA Coordinator
Brad Colin	Recreation, OHV, Wilderness
Jed Carling	Range
Maxine Deeter	Lands, VRM
Marie Tuxhorn	Law Enforcement
Doug Paul	Fire, Fuels
Nick Sandberg	Range, Assistant Field Manager
Sandra Meyers	Field Manager
Brian Quigley	Recreation
Tammy Wallace	Wildlife
Nancy Shearin	Cultural, Paleontology
Jeff Brown	Oil and Gas, Hazardous Materials
Ted McDougall	Minerals
Paul Curtis	Range, Riparian, Soils, Vegetation
Dave Mermejo	BLM Utah State Office
Paul Leatherbury	GIS

Field Office Manager \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_.

This determination is part of an interim step in BLM's internal decision-making process and does not constitute a decision that can be appealed.