WILDERNESS INVENTORY MAINTENANCE
IN BLM OREGON/WASHINGTON
(Source: Oregon State Office Internal Guidance as of July 2007)

Year: **2009** Inventory Unit Number/Name: **2-16A, Cottonwood Cr.**

FORM 1: DOCUMENTATION OF BLM WILDERNESS INVENTORY FINDINGS ON RECORD:

1. Is there existing BLM wilderness inventory information on all or part of this area?

No _____ **Yes** ___X___ (if more than one unit is within the area, list the names/numbers of those units.):

a) Inventory Source: Wilderness Review Intensive Inventory (March, 1980), Pages 32-33.

b) Inventory Unit Name(s)/Number(s): Cottonwood Cr., 2-16A

c) Map Name(s)/Number(s): March, 1980; Final Decision on 30 Selected Inventory Units.

d) BLM District(s)/Field Office(s): Burns District – Three Rivers Resource Area and Vale District-Malheur Resource Area.

2. BLM Inventory Findings on Record:

Inventory Source: **Wilderness Review-Intensive Inventory, March, 1980, Pages 32-33.**

Unit#/ Name	Size (historic acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
2-16A, Cottonwood Cr.	6,410	N	N	N	N

FORM 2 - DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS

Unit Number/Name: **2-16A, Cottonwood Cr.**

(1) Is the unit of sufficient size?

Current Unit Acres: **7,750** Yes **X** No _____

Citizen Information Received: No citizen information for this unit was received.

ID-team Meetings: An ID-team consisting of BLM staff from the Burns District met on January 29, 2009, to evaluate this unit. The ID-team was provided with BLM's current and past maps and past photographs and other inventory descriptions. The ID-team consisted of wilderness, range and planning staff. Wildlife, archaeology, geology and forestry staff was also consulted. Additionally, with the northeast portion of the unit being within Vale BLM District, inter-district coordination was conducted as needed.

BLM's Boundary Road Determination Process: BLM completed a route analysis for the boundary roads identified for the unit. District staff were contacted prior to the ID-team meeting and provided information about current uses of routes by mining personnel, BLM personnel, grazing permittees, and other publics.

Some of the interior routes not identified as boundary roads may have been mechanically improved or maintained at some point and may be maintained in the future as needed. Most are in a useable condition, but supporting information about regular use was not identified in the ID-team meeting. Therefore, these routes were not recognized as boundary roads.

Boundary changes since 1979: The northern boundary has changed as the small subunit, 16-D, is part of the unit. The western boundary has also changed as subunits 16-B, 16-C and 16-E are also part of the present unit. The route which separated subunit B and C from the larger subunit A is now used as a stock trail. The route which separated subunit E from subunit A, and was the eastern boundary of a large seeding, is no longer a maintained road.

One interior route change is the addition of a bladed road accessing a private land parcel from the unit's west boundary (CNTY Rd 304; Otis Valley-Squaw Creek Rd.). This cherry-stem route continues through the private land, northward to a livestock reservoir on BLM land.

Current Unit Boundaries: (See BLM Unit Character Map): Routes forming boundaries have been mechanically maintained, improved in the past and will continue to be maintained as needed to allow vehicle passage for public land users. Boundaries of the unit are:

N. boundary: Private land
No Photos
E. boundary: CNTY Rd 301 (Cottonwood Reservoir Road)
ONDA Photos: HJ42-44;
BLM Photos: None
S. boundary: Private land
No Photos
W. boundary: CNTY Rd 304 (Otis Valley-Squaw Cr. Road)
No Photos

Interior Boundary Road: The cherry-stem route described under **Boundary changes since 1979** will continue to be used to access private property and a livestock reservoir on BLM land. This reservoir has been constructed since the original inventory was completed.

(2) Is the unit in a natural condition?

Yes __X__ No _____ N/A_____

1979 Unit Description: The unit is located six miles north of the small rural community of Drewsey. The 1979 Inventory Report noted the unit consisted of rolling hills with a general sloping of the area to the east. Vegetation is ponderosa pine and juniper in the north and scattered juniper, big and low sage and grass in the remainder of the unit. Squaw Creek, a main drainage, flows southeast into Cottonwood Creek. Cottonwood Reservoir, on the eastern boundary, covers 85 surface acres when full.

Two livestock reservoirs were located within one-quarter mile of the boundary, three ways were in the central portion, and a road material site was on a hill near the west boundary road. There were two and one-quarter miles of fences. Cottonwood Reservoir was the most substantial intrusion with an earthen dam and spillway. It is one mile long and one-quarter mile wide with a large expanse of exposed, bare shoreline when water is drained during the summer for irrigation of ranch hay fields. The imprints of man were substantially noticeable and the unit was found to not have naturalness.

Current Condition Description: The current unit contains more land area, as it combines a number of the 1979 original, smaller subunits, to create a much larger unit. However, it is long and narrow, being about two and one-half miles wide at its widest point and seven miles long. The well-graded county road (Cottonwood Reservoir Road) which is the unit's eastern boundary greatly influences the naturalness of the area as does the Otis Valley-Squaw Creek Road, a regularly-used route and the unit's western boundary. This road provides access to the Malheur National Forest from the rural, agricultural Drewsey Valley. The material site opened to get rock for surfacing the road, is still obvious, although, it's not been utilized for quite some time. (Note: material site is not depicted on this inventory unit's associated map "Wilderness Inventory Maintenance-Otis Mtn. Fuels EA".)

The primary human uses are associated with livestock grazing. The unit is within two grazing allotments, the southeast area in Cottonwood Creek Allotment and the northern portion in Otis Mountain Allotment. A pasture fence about five miles long divides the unit from N-S with E-W fences division fences in both the northern and southern sections of the unit.

There are four livestock reservoirs, a large established seeding in the southwest corner, a string of juniper cuts/aspen protection sites in the northwest corner and a 160-acre parcel of private land in the unit's south-central area.

Cottonwood Reservoir is located on the east unit boundary. The dam and spillway are obvious to the casual observer when viewed from the CNTY 301 Road (Cottonwood Reservoir Road) near the reservoir. This water development is not obvious from greater distances, as it is confined within a drainage with rims and hills rising above the reservoir. It can be easily seen from nearby high elevations. The ID-team found that the imprint of humans is not substantially noticeable and that the unit is natural. The unit currently has the following developments: **(See Unit Character Map)**:

Reservoirs: 4
Fences: 21 miles
Cattleguards: 1
Non-Boundary routes: 12 miles
Thinnings (Ponderosa Pine; pre-commercial): 349 acres

(3) Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes _____ No __X__ N/A_____

1979 Unit Description: The subunit is two miles wide or less. The ponderosa pine and juniper provided good screening in the north, but the low vegetation in the remaining three-quarters of the area did not. The report indicated the unit was only one-half mile wide where the tree screening was located. Overall, the unit does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude due to narrowness and the limited topographic and vegetative screening.

Current Condition Description: The original description is still accurate. The unit continues to be long and narrow (two to two and one-half miles wide) even with additional acreage. About three-quarters of the east-sloping area would not offer opportunities for solitude with its open, far-viewing landscape. The sights and sounds of people and their activities can be seen and heard from many locations.

(4) Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?

Yes _____ No __X__ N/A_____

1979 Unit Description: The subunit offered opportunities for hiking, backpacking, fishing and horseback riding, but none were outstanding.
Current Condition Description: The ID-team found that the recreation opportunities originally identified are likely still present. People fish in Cottonwood Reservoir in the spring and early summer. This impoundment was built for irrigation and most of the water is drained when alfalfa fields, hay fields and pastures are watered throughout the summer. The water quality for fisheries is poor due to extreme water fluctuation, lack of vegetation and a rocky reservoir bottom. The diversity and quality of primitive and unconfined recreation are not unlike those which can be found on public lands in the much of eastern Oregon in the Northern Great Basin region. They are not unique and do not present characteristics either individually or collectively that would result in their being outstanding.

(5) Does the unit have supplemental values?

Yes __X__ No _____ N/A _____

1979 Unit Description: None known.

Current Condition Description: Greater Sage Grouse have been seen along the western boundary of this unit and a lek is located in the southwest corner. This area is also deer and elk winter range.

Redband Trout can be found in Cottonwood Creek on BLM land just above Cottonwood Reservoir and in a long section of creek on private land between the Cottonwood Creek and Rocky Basin Units. Although not a Federal Special Status Species, it is a BLM Special Status Species in the Northern Great Basin Region.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Name and Number: **Cottonwood Cr., 2-16**

Summary Results of Analysis:

1. Does the area meet any of the size requirements? __X__ Yes ____ No
2. Does the area appear to be natural? __X__ Yes ____ No
3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation? ____ Yes __X__ No ____ NA
4. Does the area have supplemental values? __X__ Yes ____ No ____ NA

Conclusion (Check One):

_____ The area-or a portion of the area-has wilderness character.

__X__ The area does not have wilderness character.

Prepared by: David E. Vickstrom, Wilderness Specialist

Wilderness Characteristics Inventory; 2-16A, Cottonwood Creek

Team Members:

Willie Street, Range Specialist, Burns District — 1-20-2010 Date

Bill Andersen, Range Specialist, Burns District — 1-20-10 Date

Bill Lutjens, Management Specialist, Vale District — 2/8/10 Date

Shaney Rockefeller, Soil Scientist, Vale District — 2/18/10 Date

Eric Haakenson, Wilderness Specialist, Burns District — 01/20/10 Date

Dave Vickstrom, Wilderness Specialist, Burns District — 1-20-2010 Date

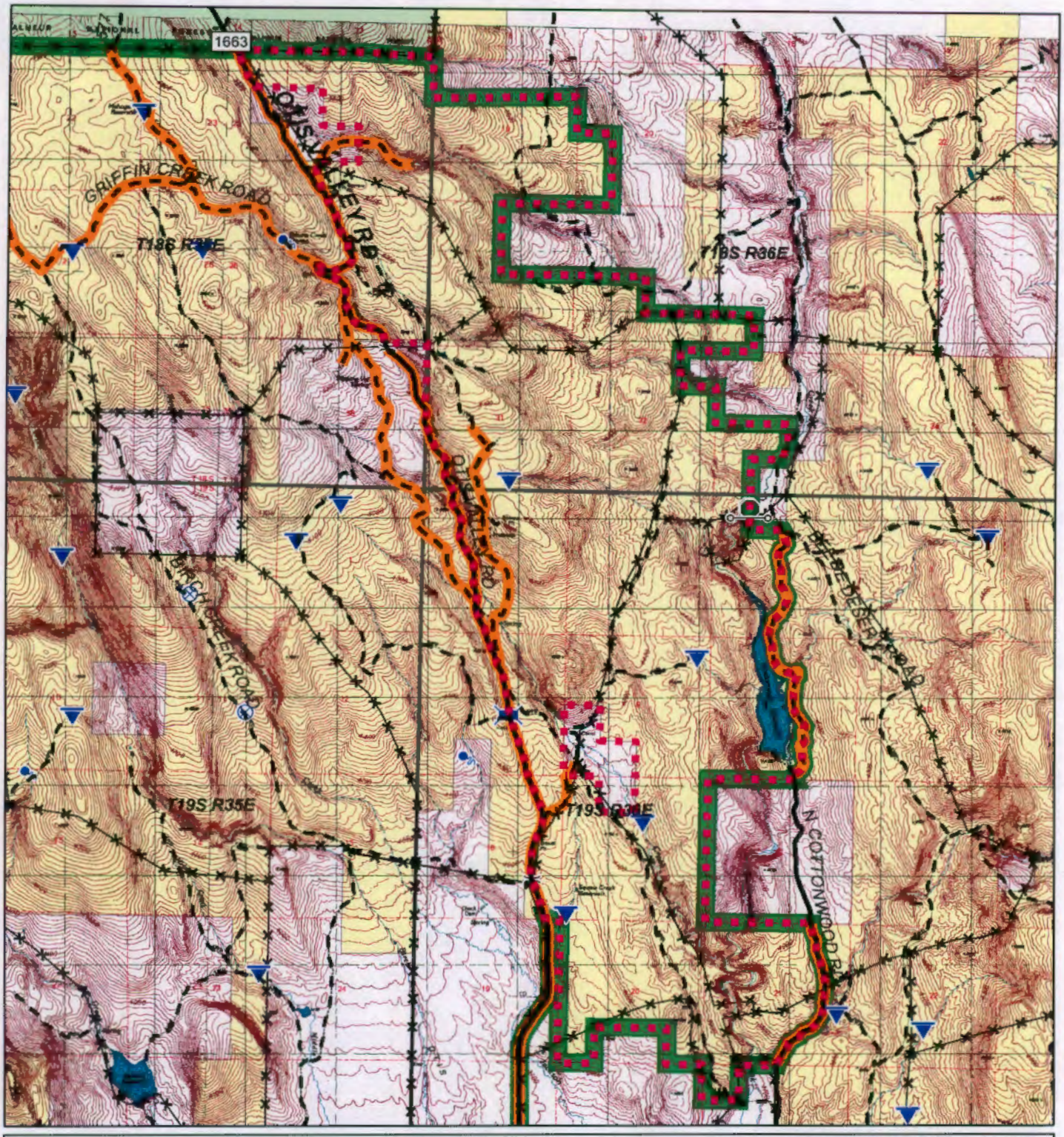
Robert Alward, Consultant-Wilderness, Vale District — 2/5/2010 Date

Approved by:

Rick Roy, Field Manager, Three Rivers Resource Area, Burns District — 1/25/10 Date

Pat Ryan, Field Manager, Malheur Resource Area, Vale District — 3/8/2010 Date

This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR parts 4 or 1610.5-2.02



COTTONWOOD UNIT 7,750 acres
Otis WIM Boundary
Otis WIM Bladed Roads
Non-Paved Improved Road
Primitive/Unknown Rd Condition
RESERVOIR
SPRING
WATERHOLE
GATE

FENCE
BLM
Wilderness Study Area
U.S. Forest Service Land
Private Land
CATTLE GRD
CRIB
DUGOUT

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US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
Burns District, Oregon
Three Rivers Resource Area

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