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

Year: **2008** Inventory Unit Number/Name: **Curtis Creek**

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: Memorandum: Pacific Power & Light 500Kv Transmission Line Roadless Areas Review, Dec., 1977 and Wilderness Proposed Initial Inventory, April, 1979.

b) Inventory Unit Name(s)/Number(s): Buchanan, 2-5

c) Map Name(s)/Number(s): Proposed Initial Inventory Map, April, 1979.

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

2. BLM Inventory Findings on Record:

Inventory Source: **Wilderness Inventory – OR/WA Proposed Initial Inventory Decisions (April, 1979).**

Unit#/ Name	Size (historic acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
Buchanan, 2-5*	**NA**	**NA**	**NA**	**NA**	**NA**

*Previously inventoried BLM Roadless Area found to not have wilderness characteristics.

FORM 2 - DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS

Unit Number/Name: **Curtis Creek**

(1) Is the unit of sufficient size?

Current Unit Acres: **8,103** Yes **X** No ___

Description of the Current Conditions:

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

Interdisciplinary (ID) Team Meeting: An ID-team consisting of BLM staff from the Burns District met on August 27, 2008 to evaluate this unit. The ID-team was provided with current maps, past and current photographs and description of the area. The team consisted of wilderness, recreation, range and fisheries staff. Forestry, wildlife and archaeology staff were also consulted.

Boundary changes since 1977: The boundary of Curtis Creek has changed considerably with the construction of the Pacific Power and Light (PP & L) 500Kv Transmission Line across the northern portion of the roadless area and exchanged State lands (one section plus approximately 160 acres of another) on the southern boundary of the unit. The current unit is smaller than the original roadless area unit in 1977.

Current Unit Boundaries (See BLM's Unit Character Map): A field check was made and a route analysis was completed for the Stinkingwater Access Road. It is a main route in the southern area of the Stinkingwater Mountains and part of the BLM Facility Asset Management System. This boundary road have been mechanically maintained, improved in the past and will continue to be maintained as needed to allow vehicle passage for public land users. The other unit boundaries are private lands and the PP&L 500 Kv Transmission Line. This unit was not evaluated by ONDA for wilderness values.

N. boundary: Private land and PP & L 500 Kv Transmission Line
E. boundary: Stinkingwater Access Road (6276-0-OO); no photo points
S. boundary: Private land
W. boundary: Private land

(2) Is the unit in a natural condition?

Yes **X** No ____ N/A____

1977 Unit Description: The unit is located a one-fourth mile southeast of the small rural community of Buchanan, south of U. S. Highway 20 and west of the Stinkingwater Access Road. The generally rectangular area is mostly surrounded by private lands which form a very irregular boundary. Vegetation is sagebrush and juniper covering the rolling,

upland country west of the Stinkingwater Mountains Range dissected by shallow to moderately deep drainages with some rimrock. The report indicated several ways and livestock watering ponds as internal intrusions and U. S. Highway 20, Buchanan townsite and Harney Valley as outside intrusions. Evidence of man's activities was minimal, outstanding opportunities for solitude were not present, nor did the unit offer outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation. The area contained no known ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical values.

Current Condition Description (See Unit Character Map): The unit is located approximately three-fourths mile southeast of the rural community of Buchanan with its gas station/small trading post/museum and several homes. The 1977 boundary descriptions are generally the same except for the northern boundary which is now established as the Pacific Power and Light (PP&L) 500 Kv Transmission Line and its access/maintenance road and some private lands.

Topography is open, grass and sagebrush-covered flats and foothills with scattered juniper, dropping in elevation to the south and west. Many of the surrounding hilltops are rimrocked. Curtis Creek, a perennial stream, located in the central portion of the unit and many other intermittent, shallow drainages cut through the unit in a southerly direction. Curtis Creek has carved a moderately deep rock canyon through the upper, northern section of the unit. Several springs located on the hillsides below the canyon rim in the upper end of the canyon supply water for the creek. Medusahead, an exotic, invasive annual grass from the Mediterranean, covers many places in the open areas and has become a major range management problem in current times.

Three allotments, The Mountain, and the East and West Vickers Fenced Federal Range are within the unit and allotment boundary fences and livestock watering sources have been developed. A small herd of wild horses (less than 20) roam the area.

A summary of developments and vegetative treatments are:

Fences: 18.5 miles
Reservoirs: 4
Springs: 2
Waterhole: 1
Juniper cutting areas: 29 acres
Non-boundary roads: 14.8 miles

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

Yes ____ No _X_ N/A____

1977 Unit Description: Opportunities for solitude were not present.

Current Condition Description: The central portion of the unit would provide some opportunities for solitude. The several small forks of Curtis Creek Canyon provide screening from the sights and sounds of human activities, but outstanding opportunities for solitude are not available. The large Harney Valley, which contains many homes, farms and ranches, and has most of the population of Harney County, can be seen to the south and west from the open flats and shallow valleys of the unit. Human activities, inside and outside the unit can easily be seen and often heard.

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

Yes ___ No _X_ N/A___

1977 Unit Description: The inventory indicated recreational opportunities were fair for deer and antelope hunting. Rockhounding opportunities for petrified and agatized wood were also present.

Current Condition Description: The ID-team confirmed the unconfined recreation opportunities previously indentified still exist. The team also noted some elk hunting, horseback riding, hiking, backpacking and wild horse viewing opportunities are available. Most use occurring at this time is usually incidental with hunting trips. None of the opportunities are outstanding.

(5) Does the unit have supplemental values?

Yes ___ No ___ N/A_X_

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Name and Number: **Curtis Creek**

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? ___ Yes ___No _X_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

Unit Name and Number: **Curtis Creek**

Team Members:

Jon Reponen, Forestry Specialist – Burns District — Date: 2/2/2010

Nick Miller, Wildlife Biologist – Burns District — Date: 2/2/2010

Lindsay Davies, Fisheries Biologist – Burns District — Date: 2/2/2010

Rob Sharp, Range Specialist-Burns District — Date: 2-2-2010

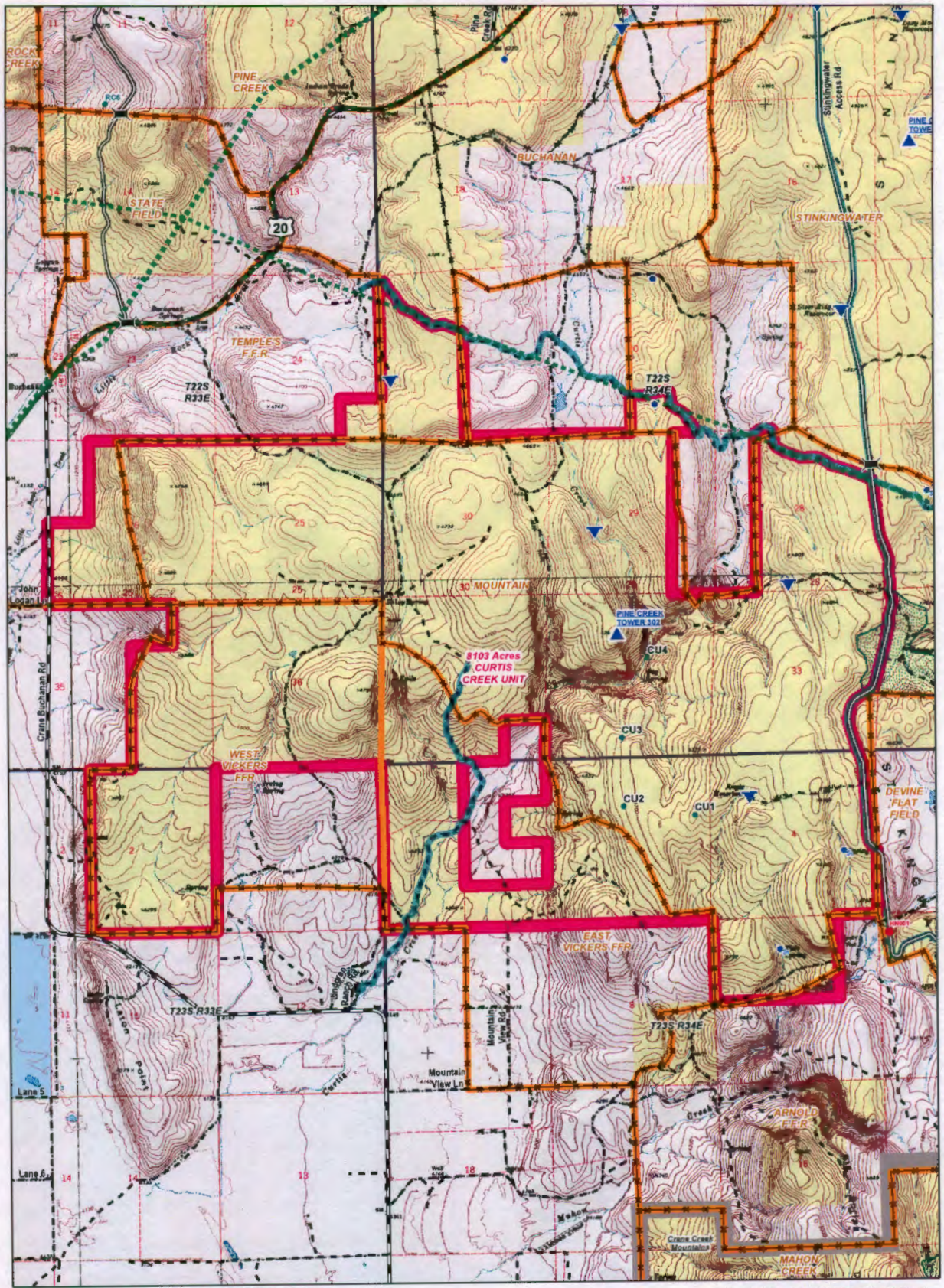
Bill Andersen, Lead Range Specialist – Burns District — Date: 2-3-2010

Dave Vickstrom, Wilderness Specialist – Burns District — Date: 2-2-2010

Approved by:

Rick Roy, Three Rivers Field Manager – Burns District — Date: 4-12-10

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



CURTIS CREEK UNIT CHARACTER MAP

- CURTIS CREEK WIM Unit
- ONDA Proposed WSA
- ONDA Photo Points
- CATTLE GUARD
- RESERVOIR
- SPRING DEVELOPMENT
- WATERHOLE
- BLM Photo Points
- Proposed Met Tower
- FENCE
- Unit Boundary Roads
- Powerline
- Cut Units
- Allotment
- Paved Road
- Non-Paved Improved Road
- Primitive or Unknown Road Surface
- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- Private

USGS 24K Topo

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

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CURTISCREEKUnitCharacter.mxd
September 12, 2008 for Dave Vickstrom
see also .pdf file

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