

Louse Canyon Wilderness Inventory Unit Index of Documents  
**Rattlesnake Creek OR-036-017, 22 total pages**

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Page 3: Louse Canyon GMA – Oregon Natural Desert Association Proposed Wilderness Study Areas

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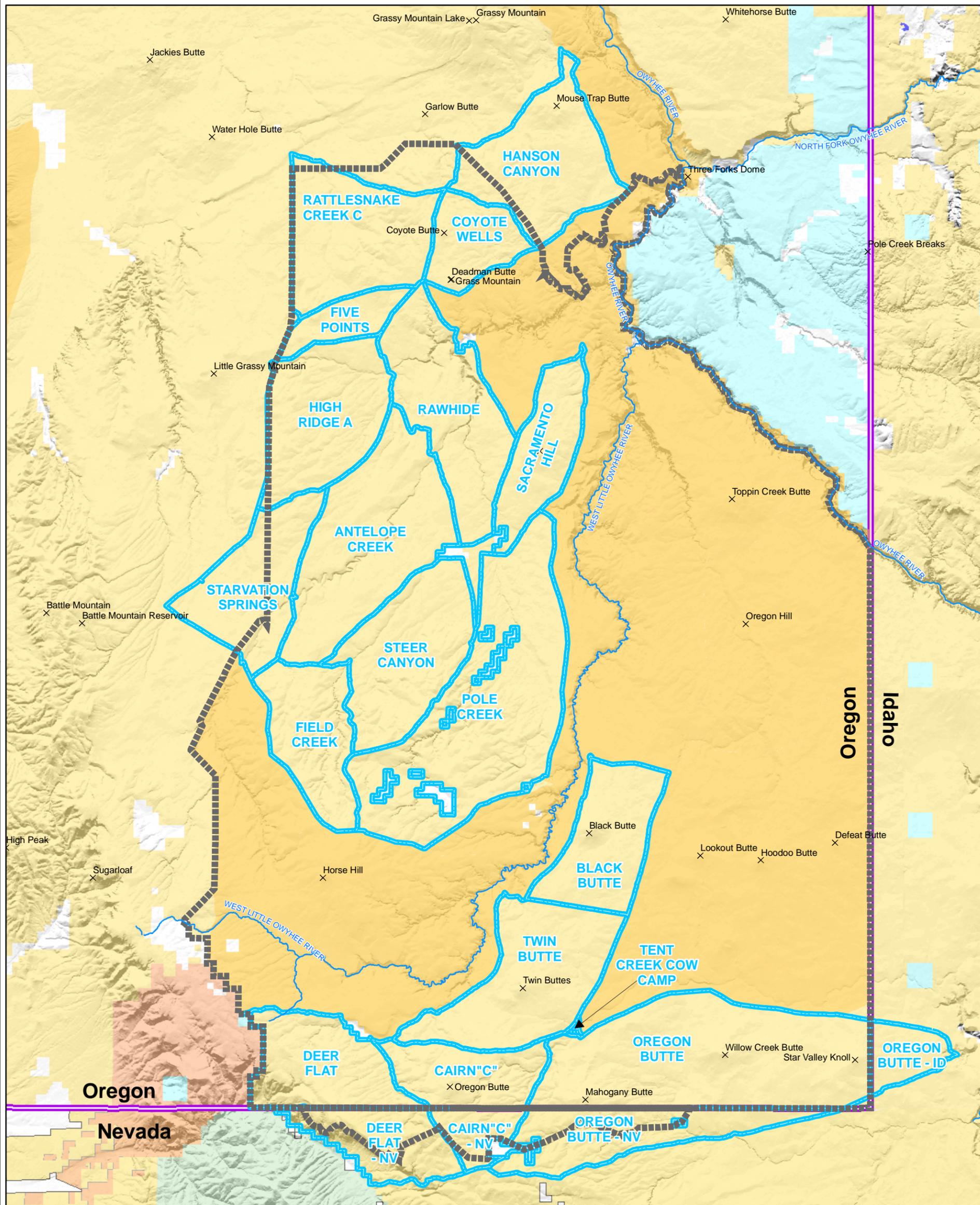
Page 11: Rattlesnake Creek Unit Wilderness Boundaries – Map

Page 12: Rattlesnake Creek Unit with Projects – Map

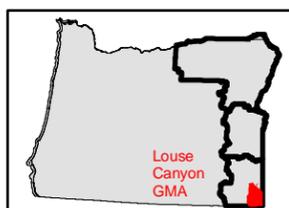
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# Louse Canyon GMA - BLM Wilderness Inventory Units



1:240,000



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT



VALE DISTRICT

Louse Canyon  
Geographic Management Area  
Wilderness Inventory Maintenance

October 26, 2007

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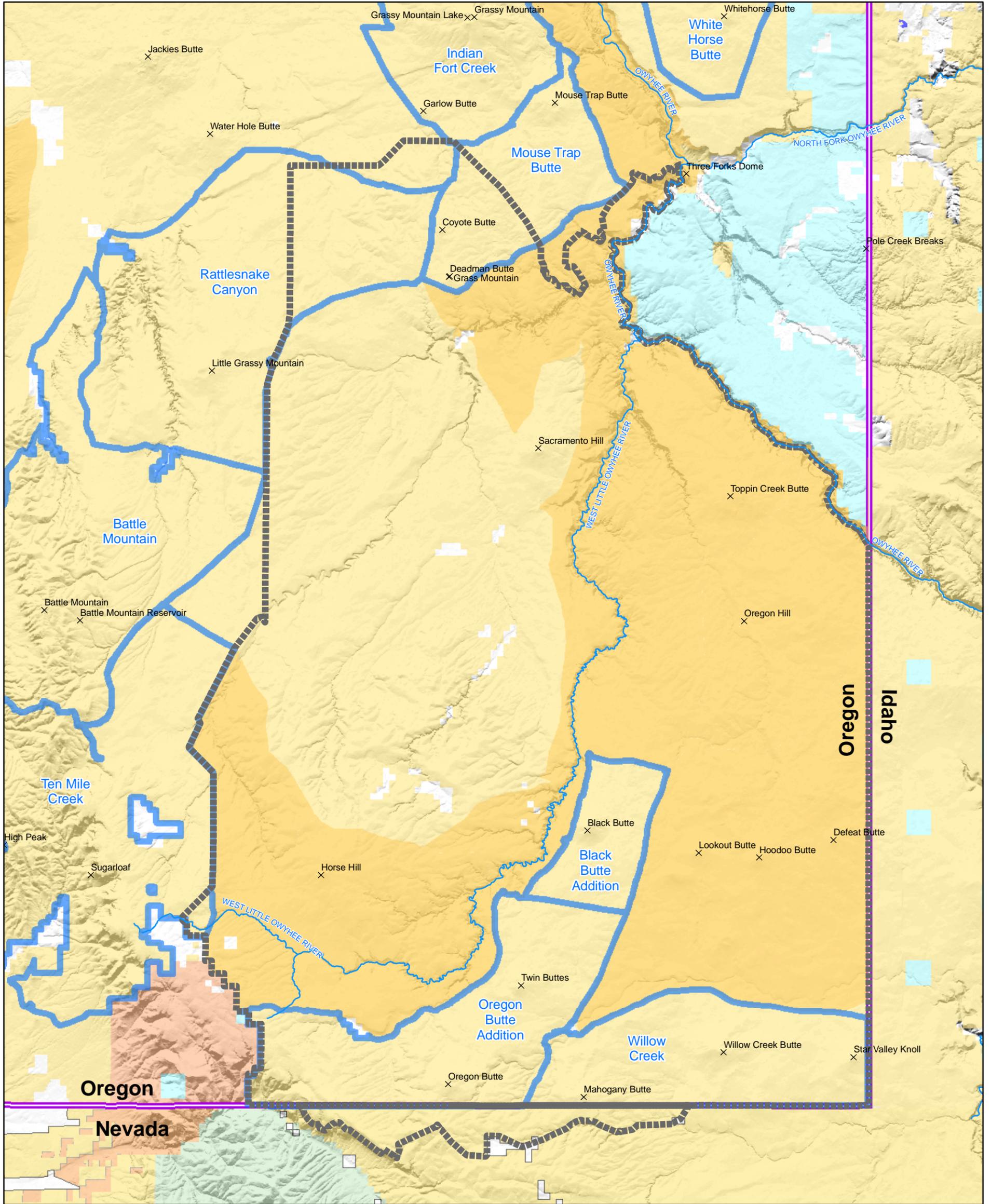
**Legend**

- Louse Canyon GMA Boundary
- Resource Area Boundary
- Wilderness Inventory Unit
- Wilderness Study Areas

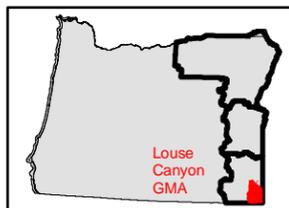
**Land Status**

- Bureau of Land Management
- Forest Service
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Other Federal Lands
- Private
- State

# Louse Canyon GMA - Oregon Natural Desert Association Proposed Wilderness Study Areas



1:240,000



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT



VALE DISTRICT

Louse Canyon  
Geographic Management Area  
Wilderness Inventory Maintenance

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**Legend**

- Louse Canyon GMA Boundary
- Resource Area Boundary
- ONDA Units
- Wilderness Study Areas

- Land Status**
- Bureau of Land Management
  - Forest Service
  - Bureau of Indian Affairs
  - Other Federal Lands
  - Private
  - State

**H-6300-1-WILDERNESS INVENTORY MAINTENANCE  
IN BLM OREGON/WASHINGTON**

**APPENDIX B – INVENTORY AREA EVALUATION**

**Year: 2007**

**Inventory Unit Name/Number: Rattlesnake Creek C OR-036-017**

**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?**  
Yes  X  No

**A.) Inventory Source(s)**

(X) Denotes all applicable BLM inventory files, printed maps, or published BLM Decision documents with information pertaining to this unit.

**Wilderness Inventories**

- (X) 1978 - *BLM Wilderness Inventory Units OR-03-13-15* (unpublished BLM documents stored in 6-way case files).
- (X) April 1979 - *Proposed Initial Inventory – Roadless Areas and Islands Which Do Not Have Wilderness Characteristics* (yellow book).

**Wilderness Decision Documents**

- (X) August 1979 - *Wilderness Review – Initial Inventory: Final Decision on Public Lands Obviously Lacking Wilderness Characteristics, Oregon and Washington* (green book).
- ( ) October 1979 - *Wilderness Review – Intensive Inventory: Oregon, Proposed Decision on the Intensive Wilderness Inventory of Selected Areas* (grey book).
- (X) March 1980 - *Wilderness Review – Intensive Inventory: Final Decisions on 30 Selected Units in Southeast Oregon and Proposed Decisions on Other Intensively Inventoried Units in Oregon and Washington* (orange book).
- (X) November 1980 - *Wilderness Inventory – Oregon and Washington, Final Intensive Inventory Decisions* (brown book).
- ( ) November 1981 - *Stateline Intensive Wilderness Inventory Final Decision, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, Utah* (tan pamphlet).

**B.) Inventory Unit Name(s)/Number(s)**

- BLM unpublished file OR-03-13-15 (1978); Rattlesnake Creek 3-201 (*August 1979 Wilderness Review – Initial Inventory: Final Decisions on Public Lands Obviously Lacking Characteristics, Oregon and Washington* [green book]); Third Rattlesnake Creek 3-178 (*March 1980 – Wilderness Review - Intensive Inventory: Final Decision for 30 Selected Units*)

*in Southeast Oregon and Proposed Decisions on Other Intensively Inventoried Units in Oregon and Washington [orange book]).*

**C.) Map Name(s)/Number(s)**

- **(X)** Final Decision – Initial Wilderness Inventory Map August 1979
- **( )** Proposed Decision Intensive Wilderness Inventory of Selected Areas Map October 1979
- **(X)** Intensive Wilderness Inventory Map March 1980
- **(X)** Intensive Wilderness Inventory, Final Decisions Map November 1980
- **( )** November 1981 *Stateline Intensive Wilderness Inventory Final Decision, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, Utah* (tan pamphlet)

**D.) BLM District(s)/Field Office(s)**

- Vale District/Jordan Resource Area

**2) BLM Inventory Findings on Record:**

<b>Unit#/Name</b>	<b>Size (acres)</b>	<b>Natural Condition</b>	<b>Outstanding Solitude</b>	<b>Outstanding Primitive &amp; Unconfined Recreation</b>	<b>Supplemental Values</b>
Rattlesnake Creek 3-178 (3-200, 3-201)	58,400	N	N	N	N
Total acres>>	58,400				

**FORM 2**

**DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS:**

**Inventory Unit Name/Number: Rattlesnake Creek C OR-036-017**

For this exercise BLM refers to the unit as 2007 Rattlesnake Creek C OR-036-017. A citizen wilderness proposal provided by Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA) received February 2004 identified BLM unit OR-036-017 as a portion of their proposal known as the "Rattlesnake Canyon proposed WSA." ONDA stated that the citizen proposal presents new information that documents wilderness criteria and therefore qualifies the area for interim protection as a Wilderness Study Area.

The original 1980 Rattlesnake Creek 3-178 inventory unit, covering 58,400 acres, is an area that extends into two current BLM geographic management areas identified in the Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan. To meet litigation requirements covering the Louse Canyon Geographic Management Area (LCGMA), BLM limited its inventory and analysis of wilderness characteristics to that part of the inventory unit within the confines of the LCGMA boundary. BLM will defer finalization of its preliminary findings and conclusions of wilderness characteristics for BLM unit OR-0360-017 until completion of the portion of the inventory within the Rattlesnake Geographic Management Area (RGMA).

**1) Is the unit of sufficient size?**

Yes X No    

Unit OR-036-017 is comprised of 16,862 acres, meeting the size criteria. The 16,862 total acres that comprise the OR-036-017 unit listed in Form 2 are different from the 58,400 total acres listed in Form 1. Acreage for unit OR-036-017 in Form 2 is calculated from BLM GIS information for only the portion of the original 1980 Rattlesnake Creek 3-178 BLM inventory unit contained within the boundaries of the LCGMA. The citizen wilderness proposal identified 65,951 acres in their Rattlesnake Canyon proposed WSA. The acreage difference between the original 1980 Rattlesnake Creek 3-178 BLM inventory unit and the citizen's proposal will remain until BLM completes delineation and inventory of the Rattlesnake Creek unit within the RGMA.

**Description:**

The boundaries of unit OR-036-017 are identified as BLM road 6376-0-00 on the west, BLM road 6357-0-00 on the south, BLM road 6357-0-00 on the east, and BLM road 6376-0-A0 on the north. Refer to map 2007\_Rattlesnake\_Creek\_C\_OR\_036\_017.pdf for the unit boundary. After further field investigations BLM determined that BLM road 6376-0-00 is a motorized primitive trail (refer to BLM road 6376-0-00 analysis form). This conclusion is consistent with the November 1980 - *Wilderness Inventory – Oregon and Washington, Final Intensive Inventory Decisions*. Because BLM road 6376-0-00 is a motorized primitive trail, unit OR-036-017 will be combined with additional acreage to the west in the RGMA when wilderness characteristics are inventoried for that GMA.

**2) Is the unit in a natural condition?**

Yes     No    

**Description:**

Human imprints within the Rattlesnake C OR-036-017 unit include six earthen reservoirs, 22.3 miles of boundary road, 17.7 miles of motorized primitive trails, and 5.65 miles of fenceline. The fence, reservoirs, and motorized primitive trails are substantially unnoticeable because of

vegetative screening provided by sagebrush on the relatively flat terrain. Periodic maintenance of the boundary roads has occurred in the past (no confirmed dates available) and they are used regularly by ranchers (as observed by current BLM staff) and by BLM employees for livestock management. Overall, the area appears to be primarily affected by the forces of nature with the imprint of human activity substantially unnoticeable. Refer to map 2007\_Rattlesnake\_Creek\_C\_OR\_036\_017A.pdf for human imprints.

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

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**Description:**

BLM has determined that the existing network of motorized vehicular trails, the lack of significant variation in the terrain, and the lack of vegetative screening make it difficult for a user to avoid others in unit OR-036-017. BLM will defer making a final determination on outstanding opportunities for solitude in unit OR-036-017 until the entire area of the original inventory unit 3-178 described in 1980 is inventoried for wilderness characteristics.

A citizen's wilderness proposal (ONDA, February 2004) includes this OR-036-017 unit as a contiguous area with other BLM-identified inventory units from the original 1980 inventory decision, for their proposed wilderness area. That proposal's larger size, configuration, and diversity of natural features led ONDA to conclude that the area has outstanding opportunities for solitude.

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

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**Description:**

BLM has determined that unit OR-036-017 offers limited opportunities for hiking, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding, rock climbing, photography, and sightseeing. BLM will defer making a final determination on outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation in unit OR-036-017 until the entire area of the original inventory unit 3-178 described in 1980 is inventoried for wilderness characteristics.

**5) Does the unit have supplemental values?**

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**Description:**

With some minor exceptions, the ecological integrity of rangeland in this unit has been largely unaffected by the combined impacts of wildfire and invasive, non-native plants such as cheatgrass. This means the area possesses wildlife habitat supplemental values for sagebrush-dependent species of BLM management importance including pygmy rabbit, sagebrush vole, greater sage-grouse, Brewer's sparrow, black-throated sparrow, sage sparrow, loggerhead shrike, and sage thrasher. Observed rangeland conditions within this unit can be expected to contribute towards the existence of healthy sagebrush-dependent wildlife populations over a large area and in the long term because: (1) native plant functional and structural groups are well represented within the unit, and (2) wildlife forage, cover, and structure is available for use by species of management importance.

In contrast to conditions described above, rangeland at similar elevations and in similar ecological sites within Malheur County, Oregon has been highly disturbed due to the combined effects of improper historical grazing use, loss of biological crust integrity, invasive plant establishment,

and catastrophic wildfire impacts over the last few decades. Cheatgrass presence is known to accelerate and aggravate wildfire spread because it is a highly flammable fine fuel, and wildfire often reduces or completely eliminates critical shrub-based forage, cover, and habitat structure values for many species of wildlife. Literally millions of acres of Wyoming big sagebrush habitat types, similar to those within this unit, have been burned over the last few decades and recovery of these losses will take multiple decades if not centuries to occur.

Finally, the land considered within this unit is also recognized as part of the Owyhee Uplands Physiographic Province, a region incorporating rangeland in Oregon, Idaho, and Nevada which supports some of the largest contiguous blocks of intact sagebrush steppe remaining west of the Continental Divide.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION:

**Inventory Unit Name/Number:** Rattlesnake Creek C OR-036-017

### Summary

#### Results of Analysis:

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

### Conclusion

#### Check One:

The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness character.

The area does not have wilderness character.

The ID team has reviewed the findings summarized in the original Statewide Wilderness Inventory as well as in the published decision documents and maps identified on Form 1. Current conditions relative to the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics have been considered including citizen wilderness proposals. BLM will defer making a final determination on natural conditions, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation and supplemental values in unit OR-036-017 until the entire area of the original inventory unit 3-178 described in 1980 is inventoried for wilderness characteristics.

#### Sources of Reference for Evaluation:

- All BLM documents listed in Form 1; existing BLM wilderness inventory information.
- Wilderness Inventory Recommendations: Vale District, Submitted by Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA), February 6, 2004.
- Current geographic information system (GIS) data on existing projects, vehicle routes/roads, land ownership, etc.
- BLM Job Documentation Record (JDR) files.
- National Agriculture Imagery Project digital images (2005).
- Official BLM Transportation Plan Map.
- BLM staff has obtained first-hand field knowledge about this unit's plant communities, road conditions, and other attributes as a result of rangeland health investigations conducted between July and October of the year 2000. BLM gathered quantitative rangeland data from trend plots in support of the assessment and evaluation process for Louse Canyon Geographic Management Area, but most other data collected for rangeland health evaluation purposes were either estimated or qualitative in nature. BLM staff has also visited this and adjoining units annually and on multiple occasions after 2000 in the process of establishing and reading riparian monitoring locations, performing layout and design work for rangeland development projects, conducting rangeland supervision duties, collecting livestock utilization data, and

documenting current road conditions. Field observations were made during Rangeland Standards and Guides assessment work in 2000.

**Wilderness Characteristics Interdisciplinary Team:**

<u>Jack Wenderoth</u>	<u>10/26/07</u>
Jack Wenderoth, Team Lead, Vale District	Date
<u>Bob Alward</u>	<u>10/24/07</u>
Bob Alward, Contractor	Date
<u>Jon M Sedowick</u>	<u>10/26/07</u>
Jon Sedowick, Contractor	Date
<u>Cynthia Landing</u>	<u>10-26-07</u>
Cynthia Landing, Rangeland Management Specialist, Vale District	Date
<u>Trisha Skerjanec</u>	<u>10/26/07</u>
Trisha Skerjanec, Resource Assistant — GIS, Vale District	Date
<u>Brent Grasty</u>	<u>10/24/07</u>
Brent Grasty, Natural Resource Specialist — GIS, Vale District	Date

**Concurrence:**

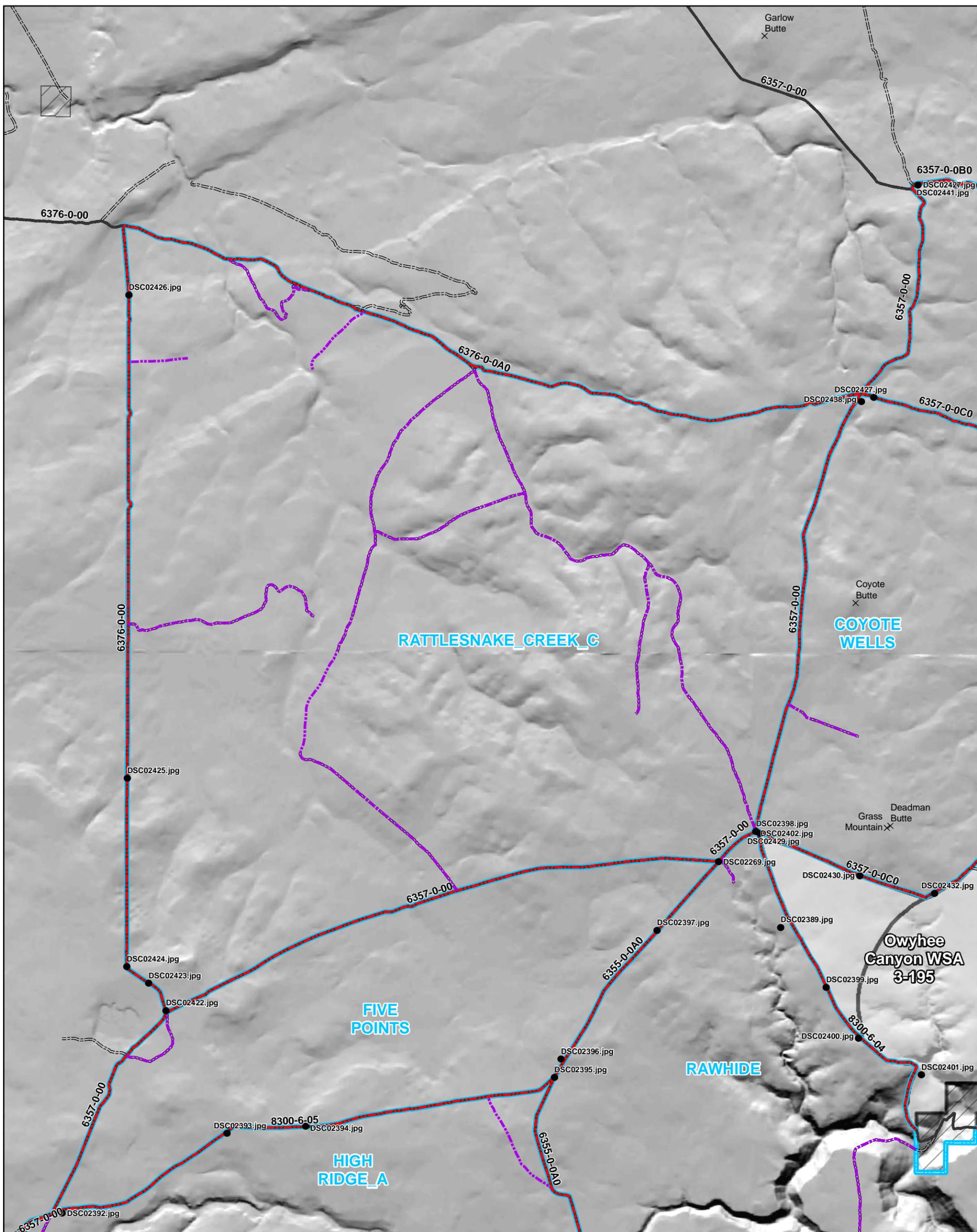
<u>Carolyn R Freeborn</u>	<u>10/26/07</u>
Carolyn R. Freeborn	Date
Field Manager, Jordan R. A.	

*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.*

RATTLESNAKE\_CREEK\_C

OR-036-017

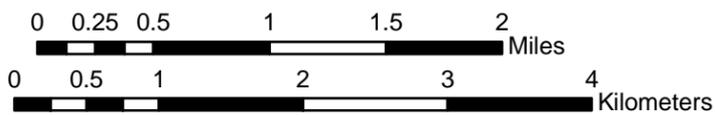
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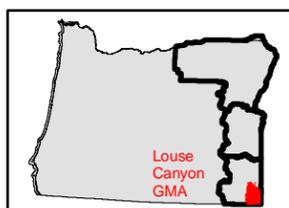
- Legend**
- DSC022291.jpg Photo Points
  - - - Boundary Road
  - - - WSA Shared Bnd
  - - - Primitive Route
  - ▭ Wilderness Inventory Unit

- Land Status**
- ▭ Private
  - ▭ Bureau of Land Management
  - ▭ Wilderness Study Area

6354-0-00 B.L.M Route



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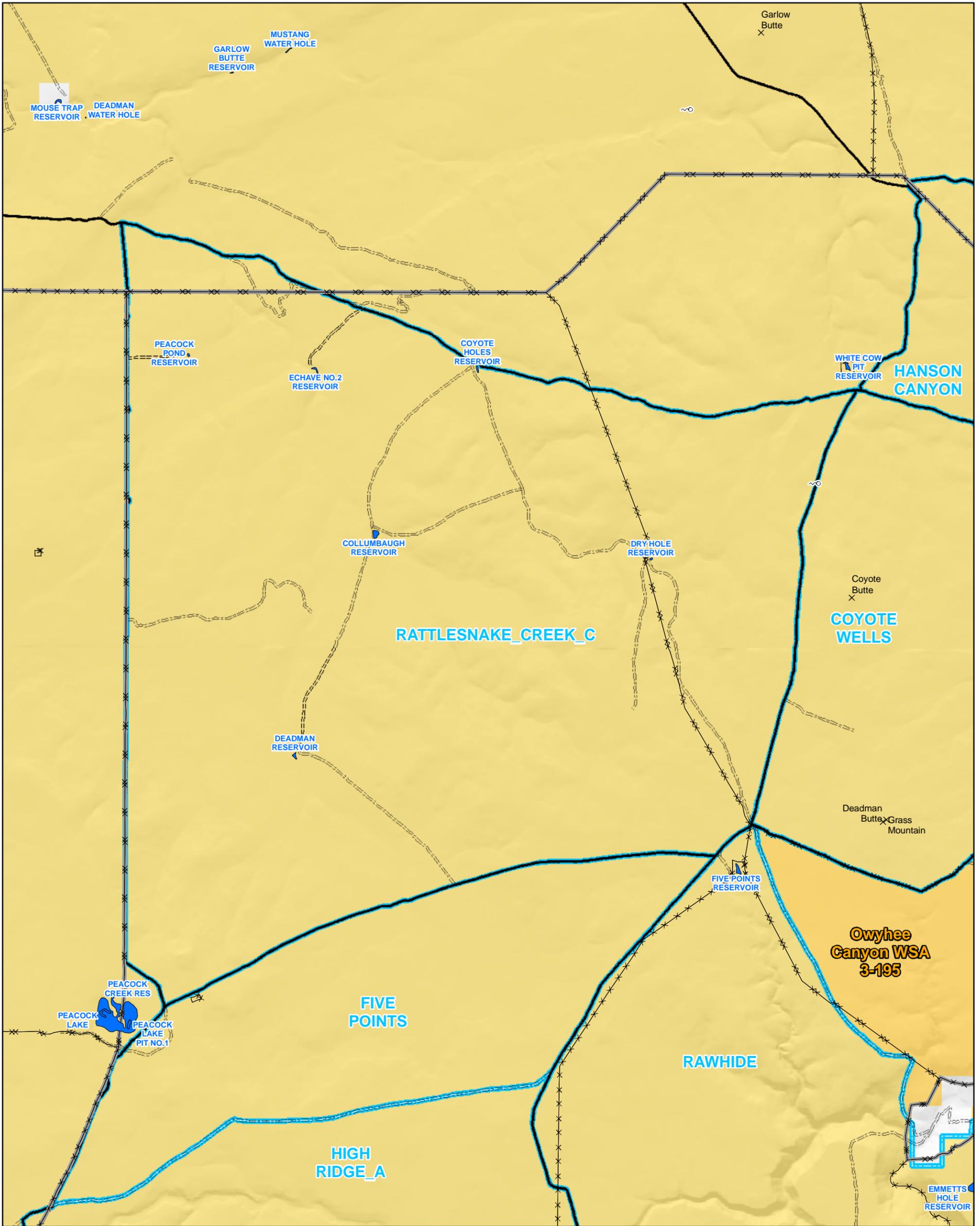
VALE DISTRICT

Louse Canyon  
Geographic Management Area  
Wilderness Inventory Maintenance

October 26, 2007

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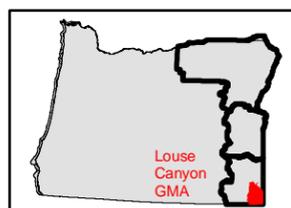
RATTLESNAKE\_CREEK\_C  
 OR-036-017  
 ACRES: 16862



- Legend**
- Wilderness Inventory Unit
  - Wilderness Study Areas
  - BLM Inventory Routes
  - Other Routes
  - Allotments
  - Pasture Boundaries
  - BLM Reservoirs
  - BLM Developed Springs
  - Other Springs
- Land Status**
- Bureau of Land Management
  - Forest Service
  - Bureau of Indian Affairs
  - Other Federal Lands
  - Private
  - State



1:50,000



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**H-6300-1-WILDERNESS INVENTORY MAINTENANCE  
IN BLM OREGON/WASHINGTON**

**APPENDIX C – ROAD<sup>1</sup> ANALYSIS**

**Wilderness Inventory Area Name and Number (Unit ID):** Rattlesnake Creek OR-036-017

**Route Name and/or Identifier:** BLM Motorized Primitive Trail, Bull Creek/6376-0-00;  
Rattlesnake Canyon proposed WSA RS-19

**I. LOCATION**

Refer to attached map: 2007\_Rattlesnake\_Creek\_OR\_036\_017.pdf and BLM corporate data (GIS)

List photo point references (if applicable): BLM, DSC02422-DSC02426; Rattlesnake Canyon Proposed WSA, AF038-AF040, K114-K116

**II. CURRENT PURPOSE OF ROUTE**

Describe: BLM route 6376-0-00 is utilized mainly by ranchers (as observed by current BLM staff) and by BLM staff for the administration of rangeland resources, livestock grazing, and the maintenance of livestock improvements (fences and reservoirs) in two allotments. The route is also used on a seasonal basis by hunters and recreation enthusiasts.

**III. ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY**

Is a road right-of-way associated with this route? Yes \_\_\_ No X Unknown \_\_\_

**IV. CONSTRUCTION**

Yes X No \_\_\_

Examples: Paved \_\_\_\_\_ Bladed X Graveled \_\_\_\_\_  
Roadside Berms \_\_\_\_\_ Cut/Fill \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe: BLM route 6376-0-00 was bladed by a road-grader to remove surface vegetative for construction of a pasture fence in the late 1960s to early 1970s. There is no evidence that this route has been bladed or maintained by mechanical means since construction of the fence.

**V. IMPROVEMENTS**

Yes \_\_\_ No X

Yes or No for each: By hand tools No By machine No

Examples: Culverts \_\_\_ Stream Crossings \_\_\_ Bridges \_\_\_ Drainage \_\_\_  
Barriers \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_

Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**VI. MAINTENANCE**

**A. Is there Evidence or Documentation of Maintenance using hand tools or machinery?**

Yes \_\_\_ No X

By hand tools \_\_\_ By machine \_\_\_\_\_

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**B. If the route is in good condition, but there is no evidence of maintenance, would mechanical maintenance with hand tools or machines be approved by BLM in the event this route became impassable?**

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: BLM road 6376-0-00 is in a condition where it is passable with a high clearance vehicle during most weather conditions. This route was constructed by blading and it receives some use as shown by the two tracks that are intermittently vegetated by brush reclaiming the road surface. The November 1980, *Wilderness Inventory – Oregon and Washington, Final Intensive Inventory Decisions* defined this route as a way. BLM finds no additional or new information to disagree with that 1980 decision and has determined that Route 6376-0-00 is a motorized primitive trail and does not qualify as a boundary for the Rattlesnake Creek OR-036-017 unit.

This route is used mainly for maintenance of a fenceline and access to two livestock grazing allotments, and is used occasionally as a short cut between BLM roads 6376-0-A0 and 6357-0-00 and is not a main access road. BLM would maintain this motorized primitive trail as needed to allow unrestricted passage. To reduce the potential for erosion and invasive plant and weed species BLM emphasizes minimal ground disturbance for road construction and maintenance following Best Management Practices (BMPs) as referenced within Appendix O, of the SEORMP. BMPs are designed to assist in

achieving land use objectives for maintaining or improving water quality, soil productivity, and the protection of watershed resources from ground disturbing activities. Therefore, BLM does not grade or maintain routes unless obstruction to vehicle passage is evident. To further reduce ground disturbance and to minimize disruption of natural drainage patterns, routes are kept to the minimal width necessary. Additional precautions are taken to reduce vegetation removal, by retention of vegetation on cut slopes unless it poses a safety hazard or restricts maintenance activities, and by conducting roadside brushing of vegetation in a way that prevents disturbance to plant root systems and that do not create visual intrusions.

## VII. REGULAR AND CONTINUOUS USE

Yes  No

BLM route 6376-0-00 has minimal annual use as evidence by the amount of brush in the road and by discontinuous bare ground where vehicle tire tracks are evident (BLM photographs DSC02422-DSC02426 and Rattlesnake Canyon Proposed WSA photographs, AF038-AF040, K114-K116). The route is used infrequently both by ranchers and by BLM for rangeland administration and project maintenance. The route is occasionally utilized by upland and big game hunters.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

To meet the definition of a road, items IV or V, *and* VI-A or B, *and* VII must be checked yes.

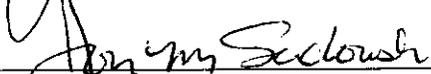
Road: Yes  No

BLM route 6376-0-00 meets only Sections IV and VI-B conditions on this form and does not meet the definition of a road, but would be approved by management to be maintained as needed if the road base became impassable. BLM has determined that this route was constructed with mechanical means and has since deteriorated and no longer takes on the characteristics associated with construction. BLM route 6376-0-00 has an appearance of not being maintained because of the amount of vegetation in the roadbed. Route 6376-0-00 is infrequently used because BLM road 6357-0-00, 5 to 6 miles to the east, is maintained and connects the same east-west roads that route 6376-0-00 connects and can be traveled upon at higher speed.

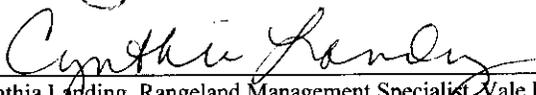
**Evaluator(s):**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jack Wenderoth, Team Lead, Vale District

Date 10-26/2007

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jon Sadowski, Contractor

Date 10-26-2007

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cynthia Landing, Rangeland Management Specialist, Vale District

Date 10-26-2007

<sup>1</sup> Note: The following definition of road is quoted from OSO Draft (4/19/07) H-6300-1, Wilderness Inventory Maintenance in BLM Oregon/Washington:

**road:** The BLM will continue to base the definition of what constitutes a “road” from the FLPMA’s legislative history. The language below is from the House of Representatives Committee Report 94-1163, page 17, dated May 15, 1976, on what became the FLPMA. It is the only statement regarding the definition of a road in the law or legislative history.

“The word ‘roadless’ refers to the absence of roads which have been improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use. A way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles does not constitute a road.”

The BLM previously adopted and will continue to use the following sub-definitions of certain words and phrases in the BLM road definition stated above:

a. **“Improved and maintained”** – Actions taken physically by people to keep the road open to vehicle traffic. “Improved” does not necessarily mean formal construction. “Maintained” does not necessarily mean annual maintenance.

b. **“Mechanical means”** – Use of hand or power machinery or tools.

c. **“Relatively regular and continuous use”** – Vehicular use that has occurred and will continue to occur on a relatively regular basis. Examples are: access roads for equipment to maintain a stock water tank or other established water sources; access roads to maintained recreation sites or facilities; or access roads to mining claims.

A road that was established or has been maintained solely by the passage of vehicles would not be considered a road, even if it is used on a relatively regular and continuous basis. Vehicle roads constructed by mechanical means but that are no longer being maintained by mechanical methods are not roads. Sole use of hands and feet to move rocks or dirt without the use of tools or machinery does not meet the definition of “mechanical means.” Roads need not be “maintained” on a regular basis but rather “maintained” when road conditions warrant actions to keep it in a usable condition. A dead-end (cherry-stem) road can form the boundary of an inventory area and does not by itself disqualify an area from being considered “roadless.”

**H-6300-1-WILDERNESS INVENTORY MAINTENANCE  
IN BLM OREGON/WASHINGTON**

**APPENDIX D – PHOTO LOG**

Photographer (s): Landing

Inventory Area Name and No.

Rattlesnake Creek C OR-036-017 Bull Canyon 6376-0-00

DATE	Frame #	Camera Direction	Description	GPS/UTM Location	Township	Range	Section
6/02/2007	DSC02422	NW	Start of road	461358 4700374	T35S	R43E	Sec 31
6/02/2007	DSC02423	N	Track	461095 4700770	T35S	R43E	Sec 30
6/02/2007	DSC02424	N	Visible	469831 4700946	T35S	R43E	Sec 18
6/02/2007	DSC02425	N	Visible	460831 4703541	T35S	R43E	Sec 7
6/02/2007	DSC02426	N	Gate	460831 4709962	T34S	R43E	Sec 21









