

Louse Canyon Wilderness Inventory Unit Index of Documents
Pole Creek OR-036-007, 12 total pages

Page 1: Index Cover Sheet

Page 2: Louse Canyon GMA – BLM Wilderness Inventory Units – Map

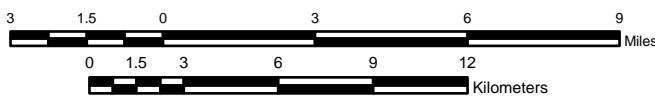
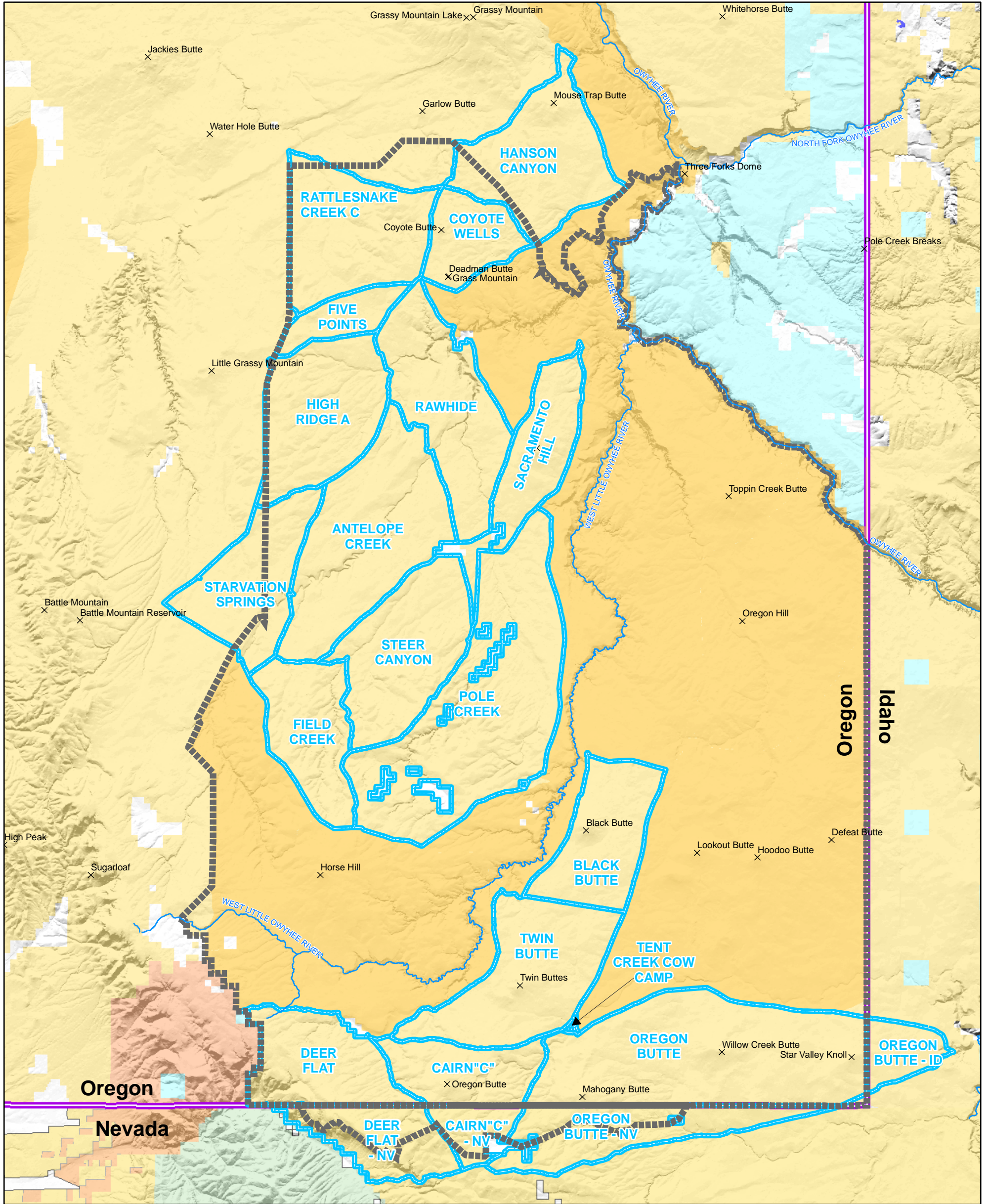
Page 3: Louse Canyon GMA – Oregon Natural Desert Association Proposed Wilderness Study Areas

Pages 4-10: H-6300-1-Wilderness Inventory Maintenance in BLM Oregon/Washington Appendix B – Inventory Area Evaluation

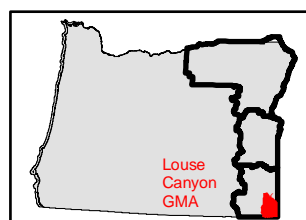
Page 11: Pole Creek Unit Wilderness Boundaries – Map

Page 12: Pole Creek Unit with Projects – Map

Louse Canyon GMA - BLM Wilderness Inventory Units



1:240,000



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VALE DISTRICT

Louse Canyon
Geographic Management Area
Wilderness Inventory Maintenance

October 26, 2007

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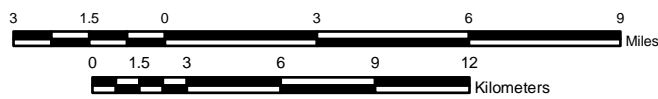
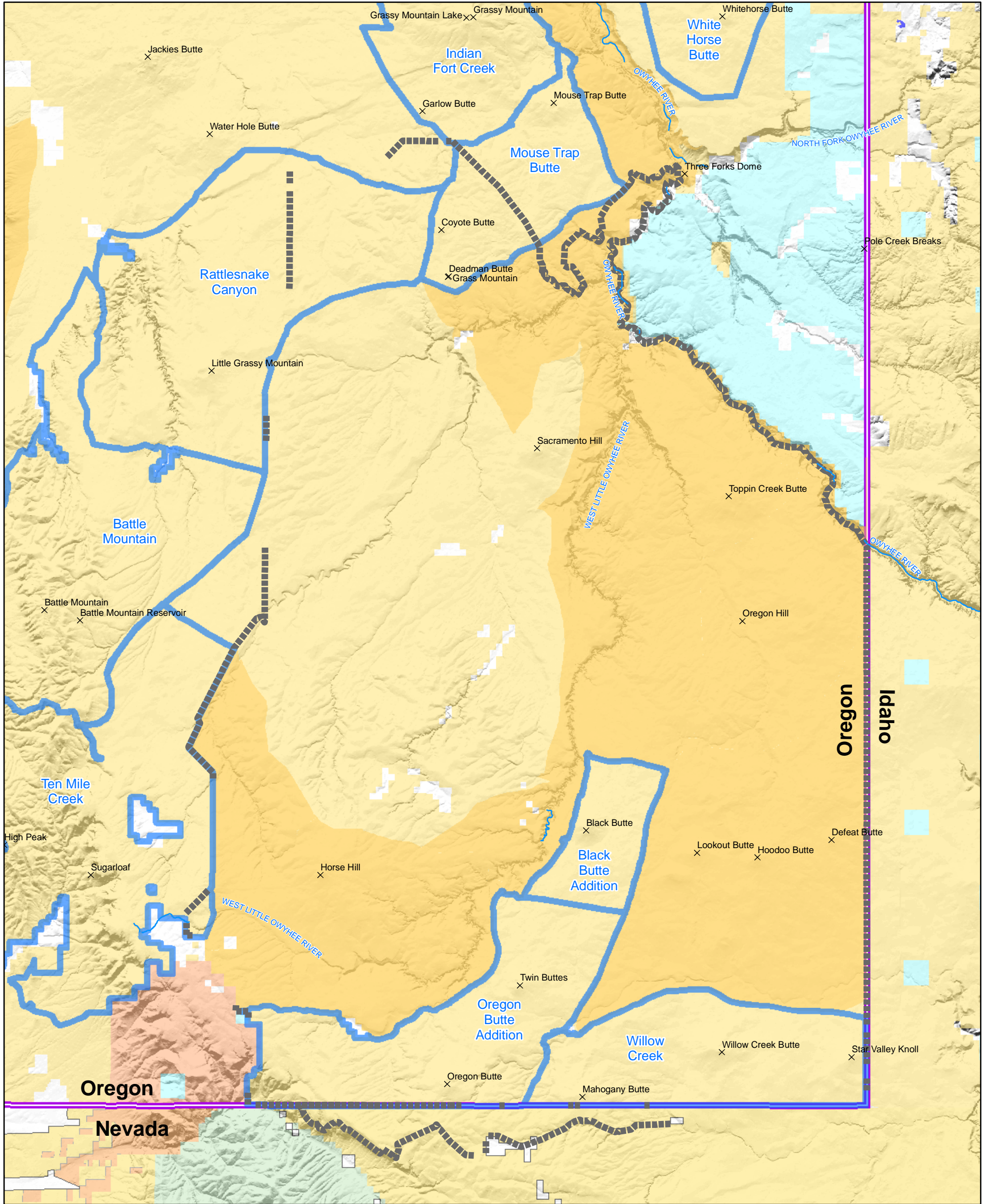
Legend

- 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

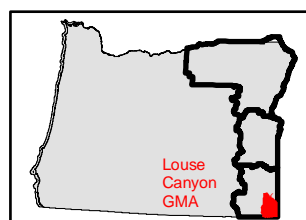
Louse Canyon GMA - Oregon Natural Desert Association Proposed Wilderness Study Areas



1:240,000

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

- Land Status**
- Bureau of Land Management
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**H-6300-1-WILDERNESS INVENTORY MAINTENANCE
IN BLM OREGON/WASHINGTON**

APPENDIX B – INVENTORY AREA EVALUATION

Year: 2007

Inventory Unit Name/Number: Pole Creek OR-036-007

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-03-13-01* (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-03-13-01 (1978); Pole Creek 3-171 (November 1980 - *Wilderness Inventory –Oregon and Washington, Final Intensive Inventory Decisions* [brown book]).

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

- Final Decision – Initial Wilderness Inventory Map August 1979
- Proposed Decision Intensive Wilderness Inventory of Selected Areas Map October 1979
- Intensive Wilderness Inventory Map March 1980
- 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:

Unit#/Name	Size (acres)	Natural Condition	Outstanding Solitude	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation	Supplemental Values
Pole Creek 3-171	25,000	Y	N	N	N
Total acres >>	25,000				

FORM 2

DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS:

Inventory Unit Name/Number: Pole Creek OR-036-007

For this exercise BLM refers to the area as 2007 Pole Creek OR-036-007.

1) Is the unit of sufficient size?

Yes X No

The unit is comprised of 34,196 acres, meeting the size criteria. A portion of the new unit contains private land and public land that was not extensively inventoried in 1978. The original boundary of unit 3-171 entered into private land along a motorized primitive trail and exited through Chipmunk Basin. For this reason the boundary was moved south to BLM road 6350-0-00 which added approximately 6,500 acres to the unit.

Description:

The unit is bounded by BLM roads 6355-0-00 and 6355-1-00 on the west, BLM roads 6356-0-00 and 6356-1-00 on the east, BLM road 6350-0-00 on the south, and BLM 6356-0-A0 on the north. Periodic maintenance of the 37.1 miles of boundary roads has occurred in the recent past (no confirmed dates available) and they are used regularly by ranchers (as observed by current BLM staff) and by the BLM for livestock management. Refer to map 2007_Pole_Creek_OR_036_007.pdf for the unit boundary.

2) Is the unit in a natural condition?

Yes No X

Description:

Human imprints within the unit include four earthen reservoirs, 31.85 miles of motorized primitive trails, a 3000-acre crested wheatgrass seeding, one cow camp at Rawhide Springs, 17.6 miles of fenceline, one unmaintained airstrip, numerous private inholdings, and 23.7 miles of pipelines for livestock watering. The unit is divided by a fenceline running from east to west. In addition during 2006 one mile of pipeline and 2.5 miles of fenceline were constructed within the unit. The inventory team disagreed with the November 1980 final inventory decision and concludes that overall, the unit appears to be primarily affected by the influences of man because of the amount and kind of human intrusions within the unit. Refer to map 2007_Pole_Creek_OR_036_007A.pdf for human imprints.

3) Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes No X

Description:

Unit OR-036-007 is approximately 13 miles in length and 8 miles in width near the south-central portion of the unit then tapers to about 3 miles wide near the northern boundary. The majority of the unit consists of a flat to rolling open sagebrush plateau that slopes to the north following the Pole Creek and Cavieta Creek drainages. The only variations in topographic relief within the unit are the drainage depressions and a series of low-elevation rolling hills in the south half. The main channel of Pole Creek within the unit contains many small areas of perennial water that are fed by

springs and subsurface flow. Headwater and tributary drainages to Pole and Cavieta Creeks flow through broad open sagebrush flats and have a uniform, gentle gradient that provides little opportunity for solitude. Approximately 1/3 of Pole Creek flows through private land in the unit. As the channel flows northward Pole Creek is rimmed by 60-120 foot canyon walls, in the central portion of the unit. Topographic relief within the unit consists of elevations ranging from about 5,060 feet mean sea level (msl) along the northern boundary where Pole Creek exits from the unit, and rises to the south to about 6,200 feet (msl) near the southern boundary. Elevation changes in the northern half of the unit traversing from north to south are gradual and average about 40-60 feet per mile. The southern half of the unit is moderately steeper and elevation differences average about 100-120 feet per mile. Other than the isolated canyon of Pole Creek in the central portion, the unit consists of broad expanses of low and big sagebrush and sparse pockets of willows scattered throughout the Pole Creek drainage that provide limited vegetative screening with little opportunity for solitude. Because of the existing 31.85-mile network of motorized primitive trails, the quantity and miles of fences, pipelines and troughs associated with rangeland projects, the acreage of private inholdings, and the absence of vegetative or topographic screening, BLM unit OR-036-007 does not provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.

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

Yes No

Description:

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation are available in the unit. However, opportunities for activities such as hiking, backpacking, hunting, wildlife viewing, horseback riding, and photography are not outstanding because the unit lacks scenic quality, diversity of landforms, and challenging terrain. Pole Creek, its associated drainages, and low, rolling hills in the southern half of the unit, are the only topographic features that alter the flatness of the terrain. The present inventory agrees with the 1978 inventory that determined the unit lacks exceptional scenery and a diversity of landforms that would result in a strong attraction to the unit for any type of primitive recreation activity. Backpacking across the unit could be a monotonous experience with no change in hiking conditions or scenery except for the Pole Creek drainage. There are no unique photographic opportunities in the unit because of the vast acres of homogeneous topography and vegetation, which lack significant points of interest or attractive sites. Despite the unit's size, the lack of scenic quality and lack of diversity of landforms render the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation less than outstanding. Although wildlife viewing opportunities have been identified as a recreational value within this unit, they are not considered to be outstanding by the inventory team.

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 for a large area and over 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: Pole Creek OR-036-007

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.

(X) The area does not have wilderness character.


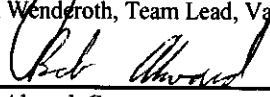
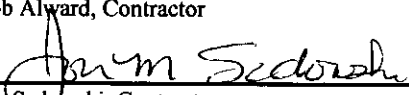
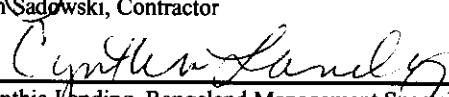
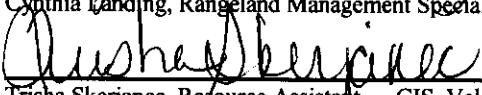
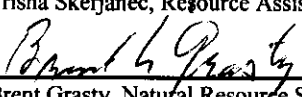
The ID team has reviewed the findings summarized in the original Statewide Wilderness Inventory as well as in the published decision documents and maps identified on Form 1. Current conditions relative to the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics have been considered including citizen wilderness proposals (no citizen proposal covering this unit). Based on all the best available information and staff field visits to the area since 2000, the ID team has found no compelling reasons to change existing BLM decisions about wilderness characteristics. While BLM finds that the naturalness of the area is primarily affected by the influences of man, there are supplemental values present, and the opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation are limited for reasons already described.

Sources of Reference for Evaluation:

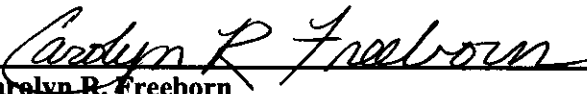
- All BLM documents listed in Form 1; existing BLM wilderness inventory information.
- Wilderness Inventory Recommendations: Vale District, Submitted by Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA), February 6, 2004.
- Current geographic information system (GIS) data on existing projects, vehicle routes/roads, 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:

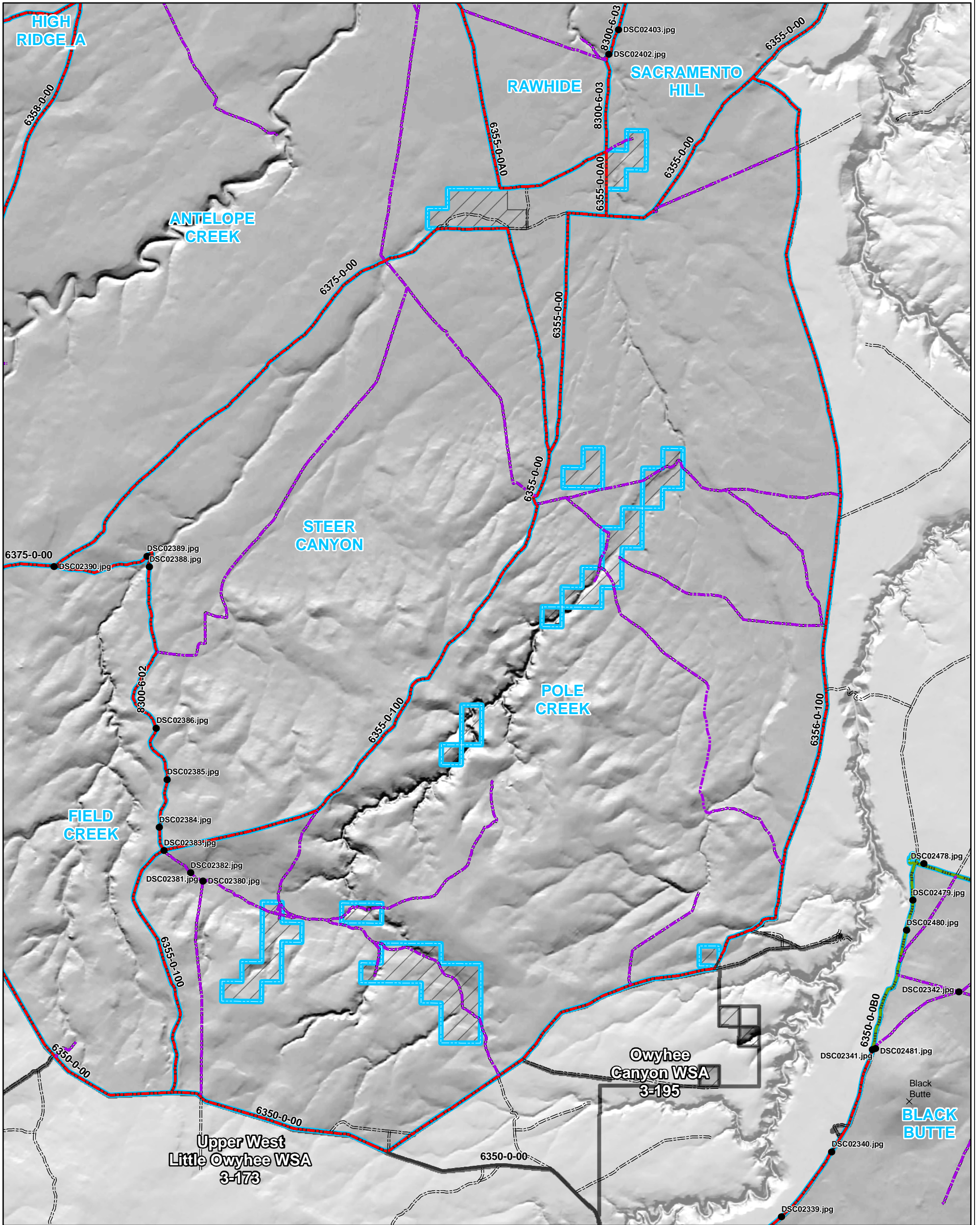
	<u>10/26/07</u>
Jack Wenderoth, Team Lead, Vale District	Date
	<u>10/26/07</u>
Bob Alward, Contractor	Date
	<u>10/26/07</u>
Jon Sadowski, Contractor	Date
	<u>10/26/07</u>
Cynthia Landj, Rangeland Management Specialist, Vale District	Date
	<u>10/26/07</u>
Trisha Skerjanec, Resource Assistant — GIS, Vale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

Concurrence:

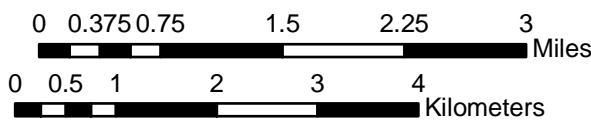
	<u>10/26/07</u>
Carolyn R. Freeborn	Date
Field Manager, Jordan R. A.	

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.

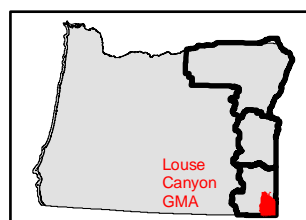
**POLE CREEK
OR-036-007
ACRES: 34196**



- 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



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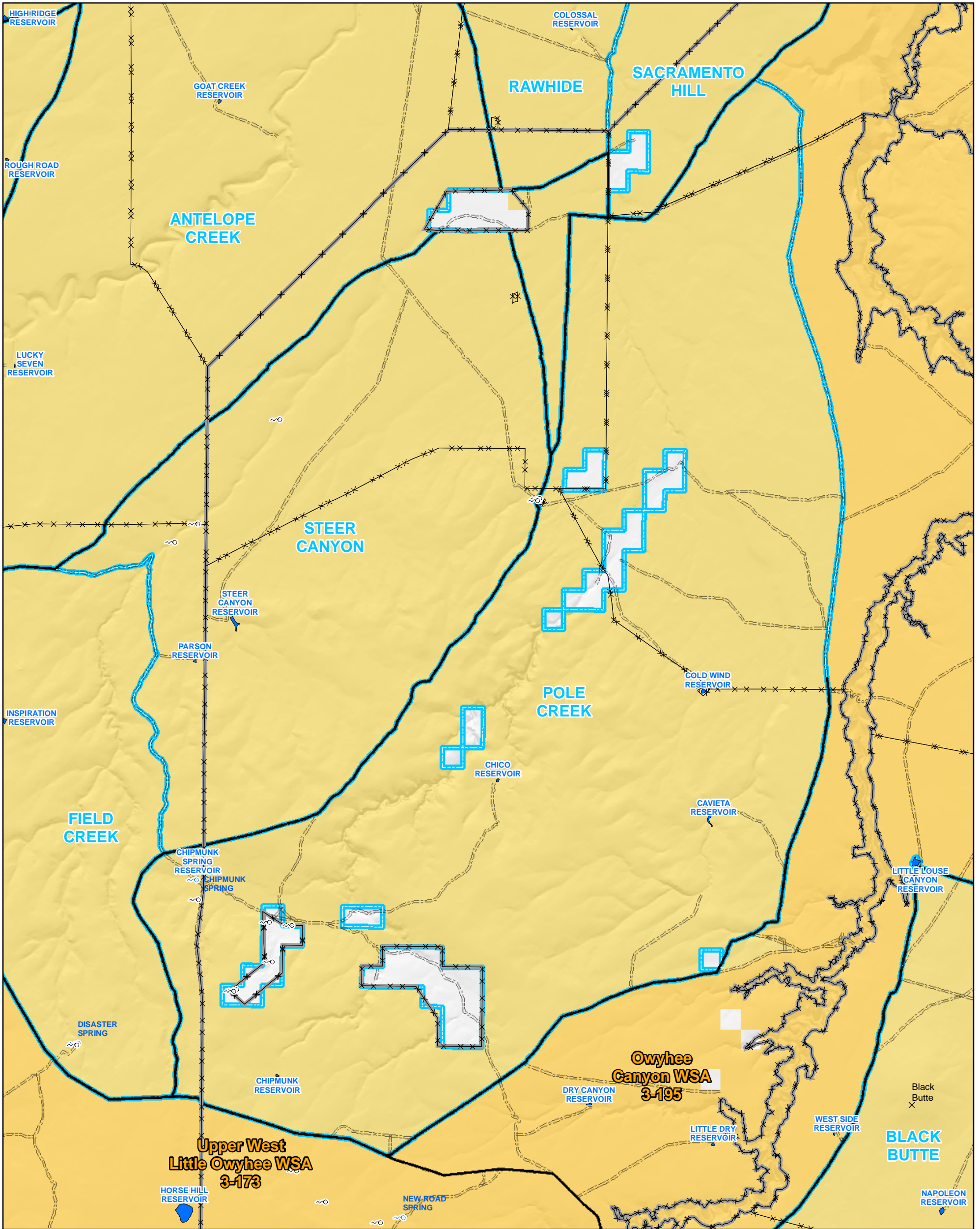
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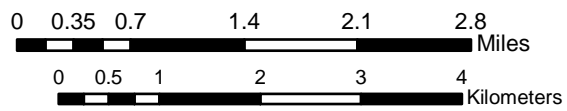
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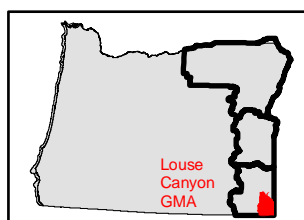


- Legend**
- Wilderness Inventory Unit
 - Wilderness Study Areas
 - BLM Inventory Routes
 - Other Routes
 - Allotments
 - Pasture Boundaries
 - BLM Reservoirs
 - BLM Developed Springs
 - Other Springs

- Land Status**
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