

Wilderness Inventory Unit Index of Documents
Blue Canyon Contiguous OR-034-113, 11 total pages

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

APPENDIX B – INVENTORY AREA EVALUATION

Evaluation of Current Conditions:

- 1) Document and review the existing BLM wilderness inventory findings on file, if available, regarding the presence or absence of individual wilderness characteristics, using Form 1, below.
- 2) Consider relevant information regarding current conditions available in the office to identify and describe any changes to the existing information (use interdisciplinary (ID) team knowledge, aerial photographs, field observations, maps, etc.), and document your findings on Form 2, below.

When Citizen Information has been submitted regarding wilderness characteristics, document the submitted materials including: date of Submission; Name of District(s) and Field Office(s) Affected; Type of material Submitted (e.g. narrative, map, photo). Evaluate any submitted citizen information regarding the validity of proposed boundaries of the unit(s), the existence of roads and other boundary features, the size of the unit(s), and the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics based on relevant information available in the office (prior BLM inventories, ID team knowledge, aerial photographs, field observations, maps, etc.)

Conduct field reviews as necessary to verify information and to ascertain current conditions. Reach conclusions on current conditions including boundaries, size of areas and presence or absence of wilderness characteristics. Fully explain the basis for each conclusion on form 2, including any critical differences between BLM and citizen information.

Document your findings regarding current conditions for each inventoried area. Describe how the present conditions are similar to, or have changed from, the conditions documented in the original wilderness inventory. Document your findings on Form 2 for each inventory area. Cite to or attach data considered, including photographs, maps, GIS layers, field trip notes, project files, *etc.*

Year: 2009 Unit Number/Name: OR-034-113 — Blue Canyon Contiguous

**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 (If yes, and if more than one unit is within the area, list the names of those units.):

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) 1978-1980 – BLM Wilderness Inventory Unit partially of 3-73 of OR-03-05-26 Blue Canyon (unpublished BLM document stored in case file)
- () April 1979 – *Wilderness -- Proposed Initial Inventory – Roadless Areas and Islands Which Clearly Do Not have Wilderness Characteristics, Oregon and Washington*

Wilderness Decision Documents

- (X) August 1979 – *Wilderness Review – Initial Inventory, Final Decision on Public Lands Obviously Lacking Wilderness Characteristics and Announcement of Public Lands to be Intensively Inventoried for Wilderness Characteristics, Oregon and Washington* (green document)
- () October 1979 – *Wilderness Review – Intensive Inventory - Oregon, Proposed Decision on the Intensive Wilderness Inventory of Selected Areas* (grey document)
- (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 document)
- (X) November 1980 - *Wilderness Inventory – Oregon and Washington, Final Intensive Inventory Decisions* (brown document)
- () November 1981 *Stateline Intensive Wilderness Inventory Final Decision, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, Utah* (tan document)

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

Partially of BLM 3-73 of OR-03-05-26 Blue Canyon

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

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

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

Vale District/Malheur Resource Area

2. BLM Inventory Findings on Record

(Existing inventory information regarding wilderness characteristics (if more than one BLM inventory unit is associated with the area, list each unit and answer each question individually for each inventory unit):

Inventory Source: See above.

Unit#/ Name	Size (historic acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
Partially 3- 73 Blue Canyon OR-03-05- 26	1,117 of 13,970*	*	*	*	*
TOTAL	1,117				

* -- In 1980, 12,700 acres of this 13,970 acre historic unit was designated the Blue Canyon WSA. Only a portion of this acreage is included in the present unit OR-034-113 (that is, what is now the 1,117 acre southeast parcel of OR-034-113). Thus, 4 of the 5 parcels (that is, all but the southeast parcel of 1,117 acres) which constitute the present OR-034-113 were not in these acreage figures and findings because they were non-BLM lands at the time of the late 1970's inventory.

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

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FORM 2 -- DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS

Unit Number/Name: OR-034-113 — Blue Canyon Contiguous

NOTE: The inventory finding of this OR-034-113 inventory unit results in two existing WSAs (Blue Canyon [OR-3-73] and Owyhee Breaks [OR-3-59]) becoming contiguous to each other.

Description of Current Conditions: [Include land ownership, location, topography, vegetation features and summary of major human uses/activities.]

1. Is the unit of sufficient size?

Yes X No

Description: Refer to this unit's associated Map 1 for its location. The unit consists of 5 separate parcels of BLM-administered public land, each contiguous with the Blue Canyon WSA (OR-3-73), and, additionally, one of them (the 1,936 acre southwest parcel) also contiguous with the Owyhee Breaks WSA (OR-3-59); thus, each parcel meets size criteria. The sum total of the 5 parcels is 3,786 acres.

Three of the five parcels have transferred to BLM jurisdiction since the agency's late 1970's wilderness characteristics (WC) inventory. One of these three acquired parcels -- the 40 acres in section 9 -- was previously a private inholding of the Blue Canyon WSA. The other two land acquisitions were the 649 private acres of section 33, and the combined Birch Creek Ranch and Morrison (Pentacle) Ranch private lands plus revoked Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) parcels along the Owyhee National Wild and Scenic River (sum total of 1,936 acres in this southwest parcel). This southwest parcel along the river has boundaries which results in it being contiguous with both the Blue Canyon and Owyhee Breaks WSAs; other boundaries for this southwest parcel of OR-034-113 are cherry-stem roads (2.1 miles), structures, support facilities and other improvements associated with the combination of the two ranch sites, a BLM campground and a BLM river boat access site.

The northern-most parcel -- 44 acres in section 16 of T.26S, R.45E. -- is a BLM parcel that was not included in the 1980 BLM-designated Blue Canyon WSA; its north boundary is the same road which is a boundary for the WSA and which provides access to a State parcel on the Owyhee River. This parcel's west boundary is the State parcel. The 1,117 acre parcel abutting the southeast sector of the WSA has always been public land, separated from the Blue Canyon WSA by a rangeland fence. A fence is not a qualifying boundary feature for this WC inventory maintenance. The remaining boundary feature of this parcel is the same road traversing public land which is a boundary elsewhere for the WSA.

2. Is the unit in a natural condition?Yes X No _____ N/A _____

Description: The five parcels vary widely in topographic relief, with the most pronounced associated with the southwest parcel (along the Owyhee River) which includes vertical cliffs exceeding 400 feet high of solidified volcanic ash. This parcel (and the 649 acre parcel) also possesses very steep to vertical terrain affiliated with the Owyhee Ridge complex -- near the parcel's boundary with the adjacent south agricultural field. The 1,117 acre southeast parcel is nearly flat, being of plateau features abutting the edge of the rugged topographic breaks of the Owyhee River canyon. The remaining 2 parcels -- of 40 and 44 acres -- possess moderate to steep terrain associated with the Owyhee Breaks features of the contiguous Owyhee Breaks WSA. Vegetation in all of the parcels is predominately sage brush with both native and non-native grass species. Additionally, the parcel along the river has river edge woody species (a mix of trees, willow, and other shrub species).

Refer to this unit's associated Map 1A and Map 1B for human developments within the parcels of the unit. There are no developments in the 40 acre parcel. The 649 acre parcel has one mile of rangeland fence dissecting it. The northern-most 44 acre parcel has a 0.3 mile motorized primitive trail (MPT) traversing it; this route provides access to BOR-administered federal land located further south, and is designated by BOR on BOR-administered lands as part of its motorized vehicle transportation network in that agency's 1994 *Owyhee Reservoir Resource Management Plan*. The 1,117 acre southeast parcel has a 0.3 mile MPT and one earthen reservoir. Also, this parcel's north boundary fence was previously [late 1970's] identified by BLM as a boundary feature of the Blue Canyon WSA. The southwest 1,936 acre parcel along the river has 0.8 mile of 2 MPTs. Also within this southwest parcel, there exists: (1) visual evidence (due to ongoing motorized vehicle use) of a motorized vehicle route on the west side of the river which BLM officially closed as an element of its September 1993 *Main, West Little and North Fork Owyhee National Wild and Scenic Rivers Management Plan and Environmental Assessment*; and (2) visual evidence of a vehicle route no longer accessible (on the east side of the river, just north of the cultivated field of the Morrison Ranch site). Thus, there is a sum total of 5.0 miles of these visually apparent motorized vehicle route remnants in this southwest parcel.

All five parcels appear -- individually and collectively -- to be affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of humans substantially unnoticeable to the average visitor. Furthermore, these natural appearing parcels are an extension of the already existing natural condition of their contiguous WSAs.

3. Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for solitude?Yes X No _____ N/A _____

Description: Being contiguous with one or both WSAs, the outstanding opportunities for solitude affiliated with both WSAs extends into the five parcels. However, the outstanding opportunities for solitude within the 1,936 acre southwest parcel (located along the river) are present only where the immediate audible and visual impacts of the developments and activities associated with the ranches' developments, campground and boat access site are out of range for visitors of this parcel of this inventory unit.

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

Yes X No N/A

Description: The outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation present in the Blue Canyon WSA are extended to within this WC unit's contiguous parcels (as well as in the Owyhee Breaks WSA as associated with the southwest 1,936 acre parcel of OR-034-113 located along the Owyhee River). The outstanding opportunities for hiking, sightseeing and photography of natural features within the Blue Canyon WSA extends into all five contiguous parcels of OR-034-113 because the parcels are an extension of the same natural attributes found in the WSA which provides for these primitive and unconfined recreation activities. As within the Blue Canyon WSA, the other primary primitive recreation activities available within the 5 parcels include hunting (primarily for deer, antelope, chukar, and the highly prized bighorn sheep), rockhounding, camping, backpacking, and bird watching. Additionally, within the southwest parcel of OR-034-113 -- as affiliated with the contiguous Owyhee Breaks WSA -- the outstanding opportunities for certain primitive and unconfined recreation within that WSA also extend into the parcel. These activities are day hiking and whitewater floating of the Owyhee National Wild and Scenic River. The float boating provides for other outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation, including wildlife viewing, photography, and general sightseeing. Where sight and/or sound of the developments and activities associated with the ranches and BLM campground occurs, the quality of these experiences is lessened.

5. Does the unit have supplemental values?

Yes X No N/A

Description: Outstanding high scenic qualities and the geologic features of the Owyhee Breaks terrain are more so apparent in the southwest 1,936 acre parcel and the 649 acre parcel of this inventory unit. Bighorn sheep, a BLM special status animal species, are associated with all five parcels (all 5 parcels are within a much larger BLM identified habitat area of the species). BLM has documented 4 sites of Ertter's ragwort within the southwest parcel. The plant is a BLM special status species. The northern bald eagle uses portions of the Owyhee River canyon corridor for winter range. BLM has documented one lek of sage grouse, located in the 1,117 acre southeast parcel. Both bird species are presently BLM special status animal species.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Name and Number: OR-034-113 — Blue Canyon Contiguous

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. All five parcels possess wilderness character.

The area does not have wilderness character.

Prepared by: Robert Alward
Robert Alward, Wilderness Planner contractor

Team Members:

Mitch Thomas 2/4/10
Mitch Thomas, Rangeland Management Specialist Date

Steve Christensen 3-1-2010
Steve Christensen, Rangeland Management Specialist Date

Gillian Wigglesworth 2/5/10
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Shaney Rockefeller 3/10/10
Shaney Rockefeller, Soil Scientist Date

Michelle Caviness 3/1/10
Michelle Caviness, Wildlife Biologist Date

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Eian Ray, GIS Specialist, contractor Date

Brent Grasty 2/9/10
Brent Grasty, GIS Coordinator Date

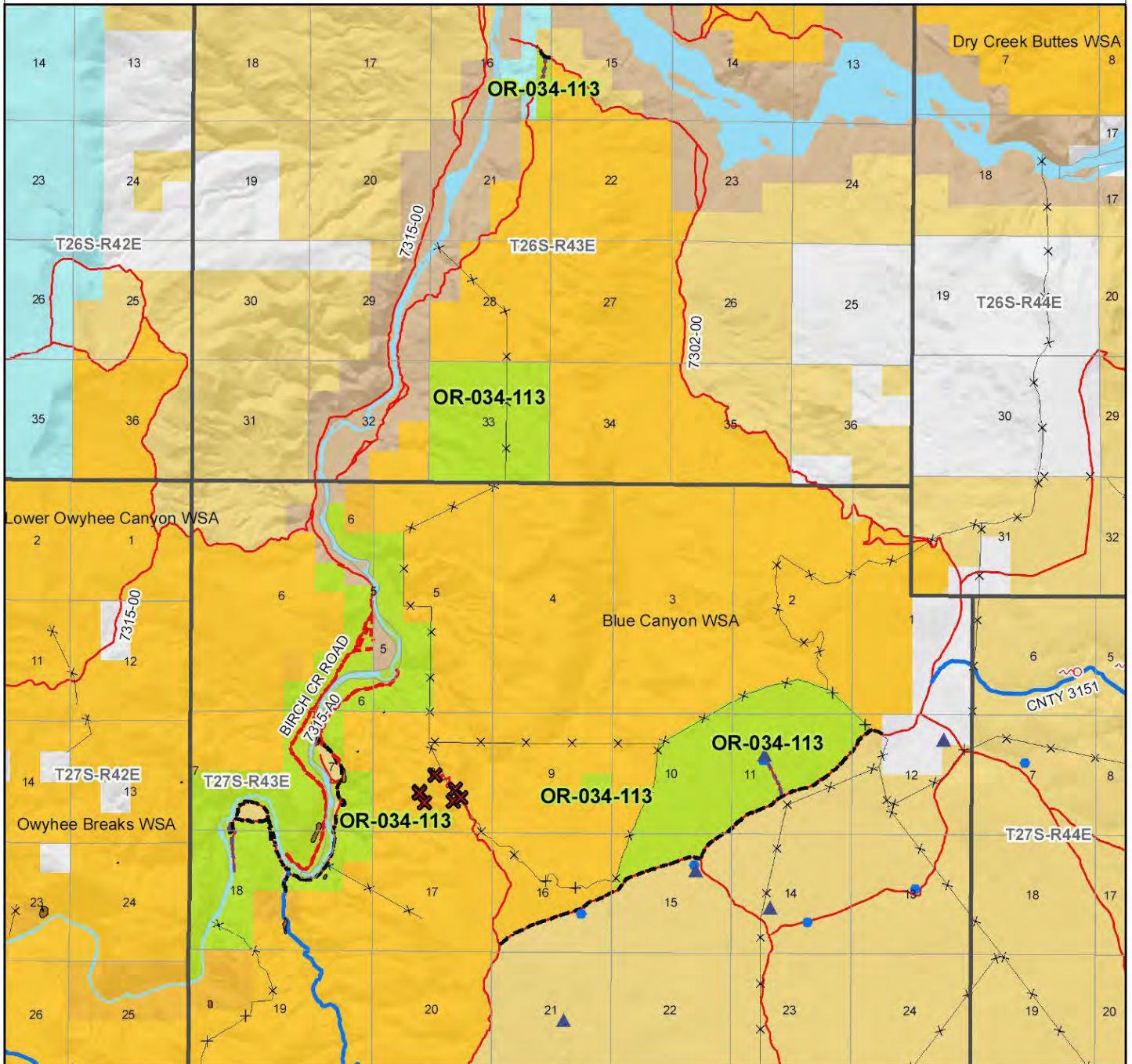
Approved by:

Pat Ryan 7/1/10
Pat Ryan, Malheur Resource Area Field Manager 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.

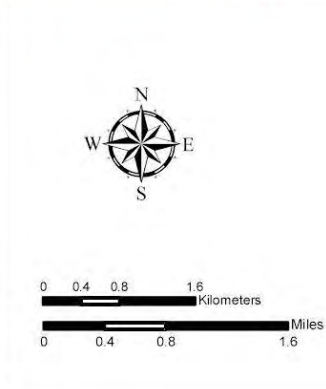
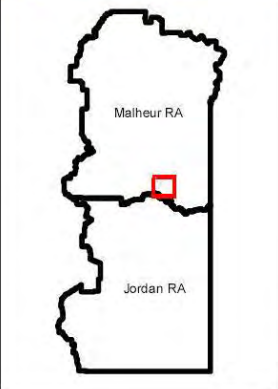
Wilderness Characteristics - Overview

Blue Canyon Contiguous - OR-034-113 - Map 1A



Legend

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed Spring Wildlife Guzzler Earthen Reservoir Pipeline Trough Fence Storage Tank Surface Mining Disturbance Sage Grouse Lek Special Status Plant BLM Wild Char Inventory Unit Wilderness Study Area Mineral Material Site Road/Utility Right-of-Way Major Water Body 	<p>Route Types - BLM Determination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boundary Road Motorized Primitive Trail (MPT) Discontinued Use <p>Routes - Outside Wild Char Unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> County Major Highway BLM Numbered & Other Routes <p>Land Ownership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bureau of Land Management State Private Other Federal Land
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VALE DISTRICT
December 14, 2009

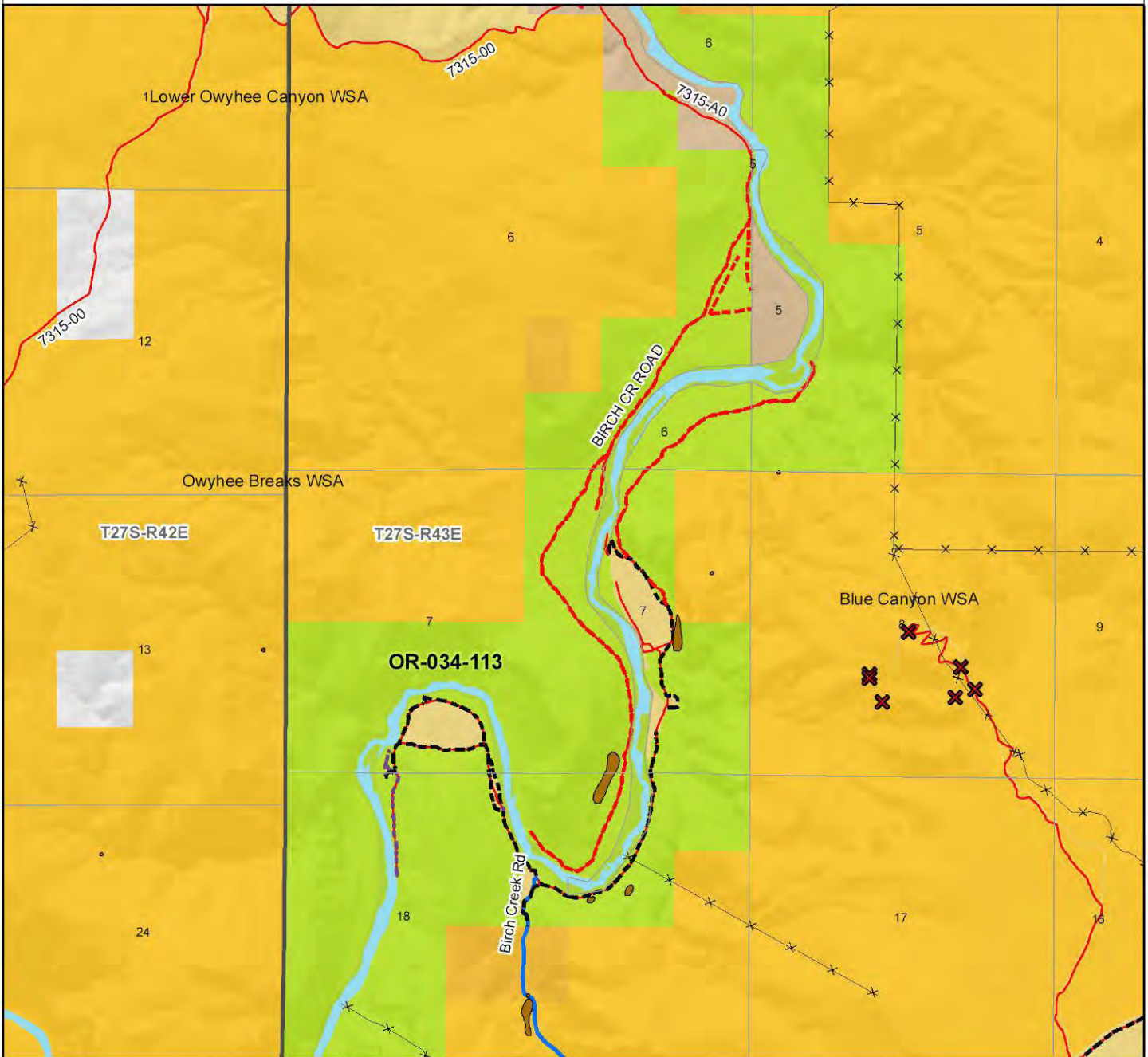
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Wilderness Characteristics - Overview

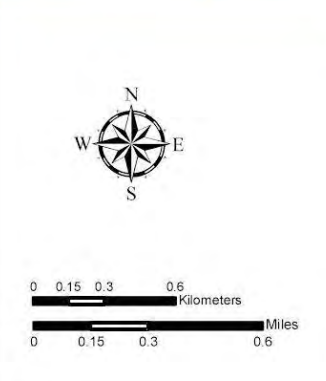
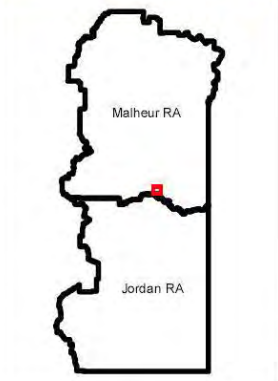
Blue Canyon Contiguous - OR-034-113 - Map 1B

South West Parcel



Legend

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed Spring Wildlife Guzzler Earthen Reservoir Pipeline Trough Fence Storage Tank Surface Mining Disturbance Sage Grouse Lek Special Status Plant BLM Wild Char Inventory Unit Wilderness Study Area Mineral Material Site Road/Utility Right-of-Way Major Water Body | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route Types - BLM Determination Boundary Road Motorized Primitive Trail (MPT) Discontinued Use Routes - Outside Wild Char Unit County Major Highway BLM Numbered & Other Routes Land Ownership Bureau of Land Management State Private Other Federal Land |
|---|--|



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