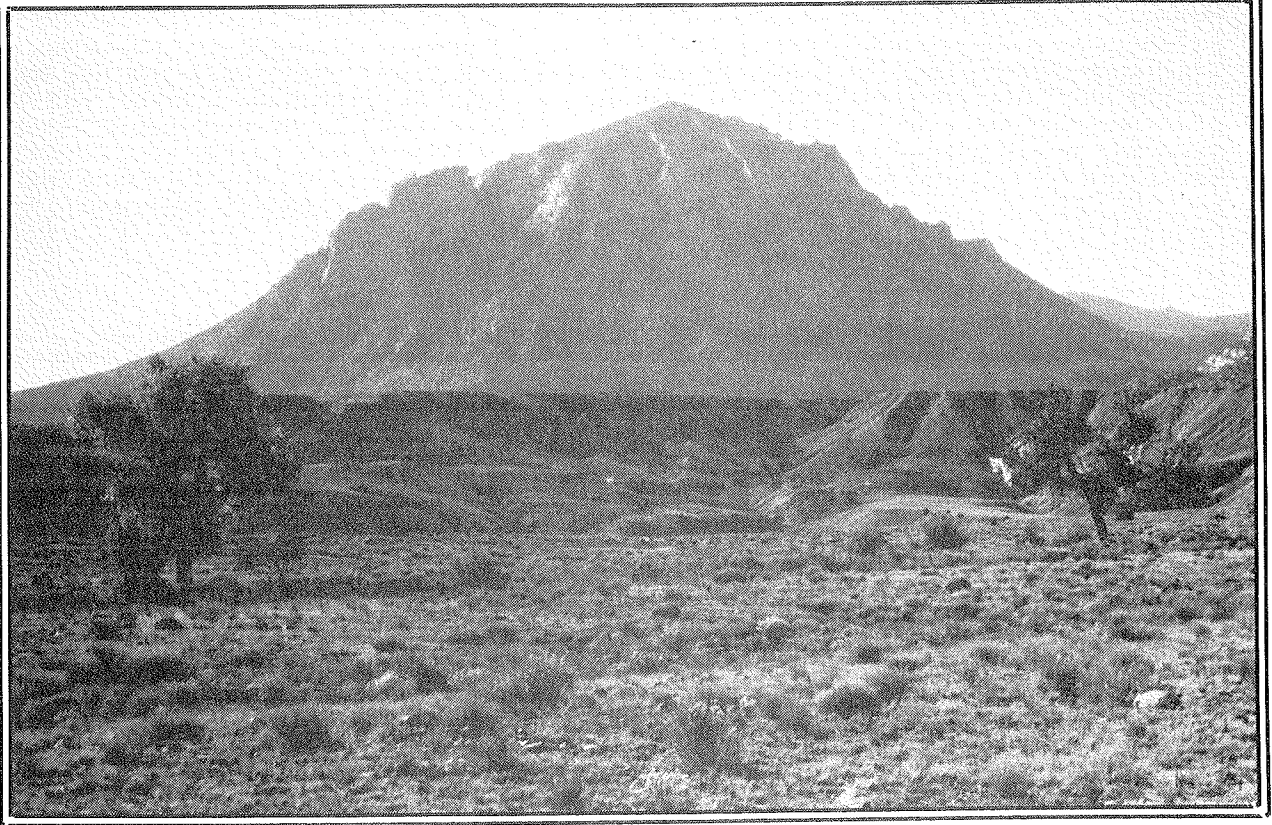


Bull Mountain  
WSA



# BULL MOUNTAIN WSA

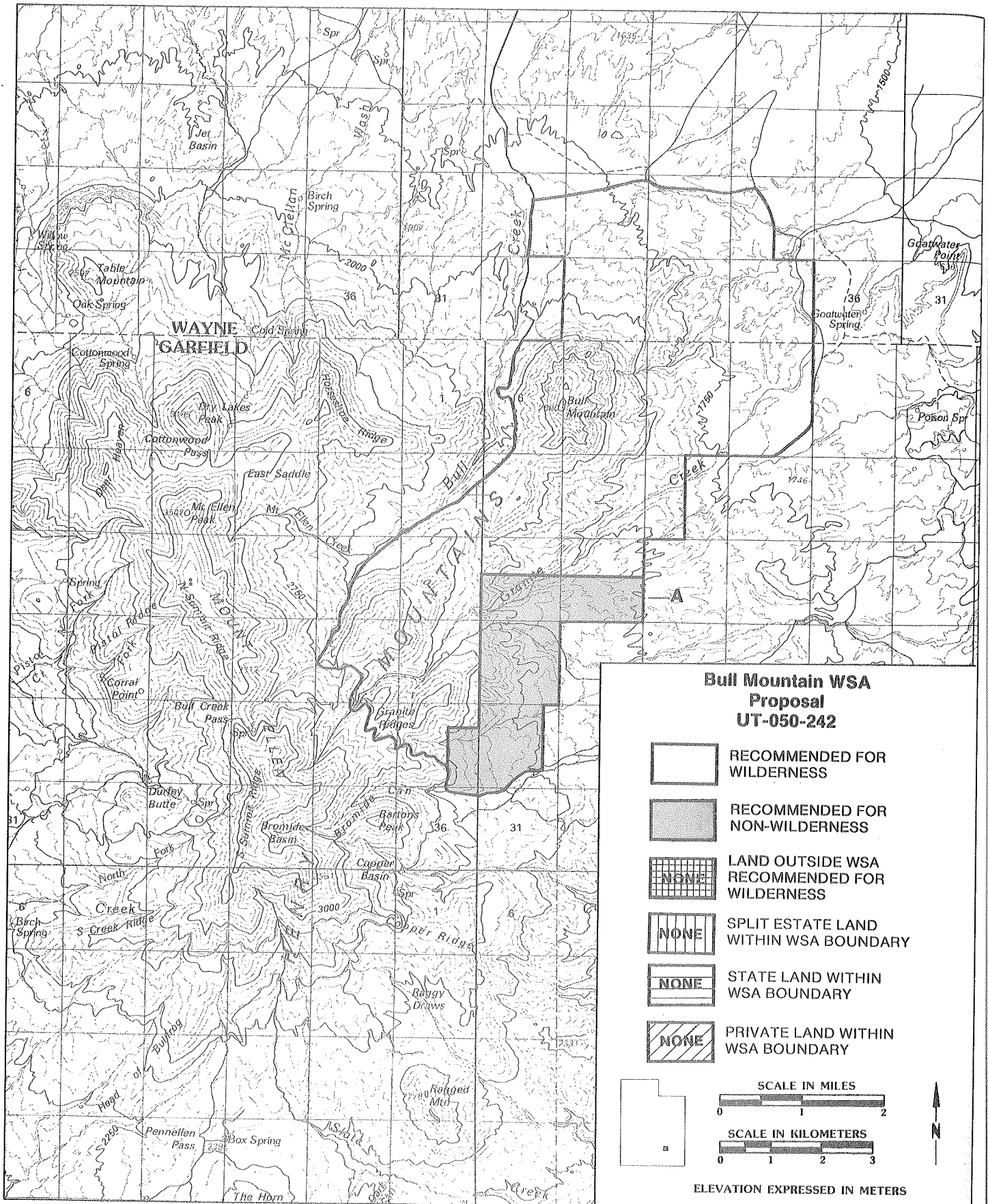
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

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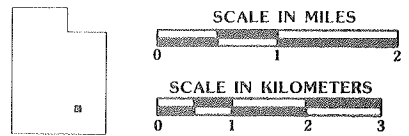
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## Bull Mountain WSA Proposal UT-050-242

-  RECOMMENDED FOR WILDERNESS
-  RECOMMENDED FOR NON-WILDERNESS
-  LAND OUTSIDE WSA RECOMMENDED FOR WILDERNESS
-  NONE SPLIT ESTATE LAND WITHIN WSA BOUNDARY
-  NONE STATE LAND WITHIN WSA BOUNDARY
-  NONE PRIVATE LAND WITHIN WSA BOUNDARY



ELEVATION EXPRESSED IN METERS

**BULL MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS STUDY AREA**

**1. THE STUDY AREA: 13,620 acres**

The Bull Mountain Wilderness Study Area (WSA) (UT-050-242) is in eastern Garfield and Wayne Counties, about 13 miles south of Hanksville, Utah. The study area extends 8 miles from north to south and 4 miles from east to west. The western boundary of the WSA is along a dirt road which also defines the eastern edge of the Mt. Ellen-Blue Hills WSA (UT-050-238). The northern and southern boundaries of the WSA are also along roads and ways, and the eastern boundary of the WSA is along the boundaries of State and private lands (see Map). The WSA contains 13,620 acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Non-Federal lands are not included in the WSA (see Table 1). The area recommended for wilderness designation is the northern portion of the WSA, which includes Bull Mountain.

The Bull Mountain WSA is in the Henry Mountains, well known since the late 1870s for classical studies in American geology. Like other peaks in the range, Bull Mountain is an igneous intrusion flanked by sedimentary rocks deformed by the emplacement of the igneous material. Subsequent erosion exposed the structure, leaving a dome-shaped mountain rising nearly 3,000 feet above the surrounding plains and benches to an elevation of 9,187 feet.

**TABLE 1  
LAND STATUS AND ACREAGE SUMMARY IN THE STUDY AREA**

<b>WITHIN THE WSA</b>	<b>ACRES</b>
BLM (surface and subsurface)	13,620
Split-Estate (BLM surface only)	0
In-holdings (State, Private)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,620</b>
<b>WITHIN THE RECOMMENDED WILDERNESS BOUNDARY</b>	
BLM (within the WSA)	11,800
BLM (outside the WSA)	0
Split-Estate (within the WSA)	0
Split-Estate (outside the WSA)	0
<b>Total BLM land recommended for wilderness</b>	<b>11,800</b>
In-holdings (State, private)	0
<b>WITHIN THE AREA NOT RECOMMENDED FOR WILDERNESS</b>	
BLM	1,820
Split-Estate	0
<b>Total BLM land not recommended for wilderness</b>	<b>1,820</b>
In-holdings (State, Private)	0

Source: BLM File Data

## BULL MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

Shallow canyons radiate from the apex of the mountain, but there are no perennial streams in the WSA. Vegetation consists of shrubs and grasses in the lower portions of the area and pinyon-juniper woodland in the higher elevations with scattered stands of aspen, fir, and pine.

The WSA was studied under Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and was included in the Utah BLM Statewide Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) finalized in November 1990. Three alternatives were analyzed in the EIS: a partial wilderness where 11,800 acres would be designated as wilderness and the remaining 1,820 acres would be released for uses other than wilderness, which is the recommendation in this report; a no wilderness (no action) alternative; and an all wilderness alternative.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE:

- 11,800 acres  
(recommended for wilderness)
- 1,820 acres  
(not recommended for wilderness)

The recommendation for this WSA is to designate 11,800 acres as wilderness and to release the remaining 1,820 acres for uses other than wilderness (see Map). Designation of the entire area as wilderness is considered to be the environmentally preferable alternative as it would result in the least change from the natural environment over the long term. The alternative selected, however, would be implemented in a manner which would utilize all practical means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental impacts.

All of the recommended portion of the WSA is natural and has outstanding opportunities for solitude and about 79 percent of the area has outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation. The granite-cliffed dome of Bull Mountain is the northeast buttress of the Henry Mountains and a landmark for visitors to the surrounding canyons and deserts. The mountain's golden cliffs and high ridges dominate the western half of the unit, while low-lying badlands and rims characterize the eastern half. It is the headwaters for Granite Creek and Beaver Creeks and provides

crucial summer range for roaming deer and bison. There are natural stands of ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, aspen, subalpine fir, and the unique bristlecone pine. Scenic values are exceptional including the barren cliffs and badlands that cover large areas and provide so much diversity throughout the WSA.

The 1,820 acre portion of the WSA that is not recommended includes a 550 acre chaining and seeding, 1 mile of way, 1 mile of pipeline, and a 0.50 mile of fence. Wilderness values in this portion of the WSA are of a lower quality than in areas where outstanding opportunities for solitude and/or primitive recreation exist and where there are fewer intrusions.

### 3. CRITERIA CONSIDERED IN DEVELOPING THE WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATION

#### Wilderness Characteristics

##### A. Naturalness

Naturalness is defined as an attribute in which the evidence of man is substantially unnoticeable to the average visitor and where minor imprints of man exhibit no cumulative impact that is substantially noticeable. Most of the WSA is in a natural condition; 13,060 acres within the WSA meet the naturalness standard set by the Wilderness Act and 560 acres do not meet the standards. Imprints of man include 3 miles of way, one spring, 1.25 miles of pipeline, 0.5 mile of fence, and 550 acres of pinyon-juniper chaining and seeding. All of the pinyon-juniper chaining, 1 mile of way, 1 mile of pipeline, and the 0.50 mile of fence are in that portion of the unit which was inadvertently included within the WSA boundary in BLM's 1980 Wilderness Inventory Decision.

##### B. Solitude

The quality of the opportunities for finding solitude are outstanding throughout the WSA.

Opportunities for recreationists to find solitude (i.e., a secluded spot away from others) within the WSA are influenced by size, topography, vegetation, and the absence of distracting sights and sounds. The WSA is large enough, at

## BULL MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

13,620 acres, to provide opportunities for solitude. The study area consists of steep slopes along Wickiup Ridge leading to Bull Mountain, which tend to concentrate visitor use into travel routes. Several small canyons are found on the eastern side of the WSA. The pinyon-juniper vegetation significantly screens recreationists from each other. No outside sights and sounds occur that would have a significant adverse effect on one's ability to find solitude in the WSA. On Bull Mountain, views of the Henry Mountains and the surrounding deserts also enhance the feeling of solitude.

### C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The entire 13,620-acre WSA was determined, on the basis of quality and diversity, to have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation were evaluated by considering miles of potential hiking routes in relation to the WSA's size, the various recreational opportunities present, and an evaluation of the quality of these opportunities.

### D. Special Features

The summit of Bull Mountain provides excellent opportunities for geologic study. Excellent views of the desert canyon country and the other peaks in the Henry Mountains are visible from the summit.

Portions of the WSA are range for the Henry Mountain bison herd. Cougar, which is a wildlife species associated with wilderness, inhabit the WSA. Peregrine falcon, listed as an endangered species and seven other animal species that are considered sensitive, may inhabit or use the WSA.

A small population of bristlecone pine are found with mixed conifers in the southwestern portion of the WSA. One plant species (*Sclerocactus wrightiae*), which is listed as endangered, and three plant species that are considered sensitive may occur in the WSA.

Refer to Appendix 4 and the Affected Environment, Vegetation and Wildlife

Including Special Status Species sections of the Utah BLM Statewide Wilderness Final EIS for additional information.

Approximately 79 percent (10,790 acres) of the WSA is rated outstanding for scenic quality.

### Diversity in the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS)

#### A. Expanding the Diversity of Natural Systems and Features as Represented by Ecosystems

Wilderness designation of this WSA would add a combination of potential natural vegetation (PNV) ecosystems not presently represented in the NWPS.

PNV is the vegetative type that would eventually become climax vegetation if not altered by human interference, and is not necessarily the vegetation that is currently present in an area.

The WSA is in the Colorado Plateau Province/Ecoregion. The PNV in the WSA is Arizona pine forest (2,120 acres) and juniper-pinyon woodland (11,500 acres). The PNV in the WSA is represented in the NWPS nationally and in Utah and in BLM study areas both in and outside of Utah. Arizona pine forest PNV is not represented in the NWPS in Utah. This information is summarized in Table 2 from data compiled in December 1989.

#### B. Assessing the Opportunities for Solitude or Primitive Recreation within a Days Driving Time (5 Hours) of Major Population Centers

The WSA is within a 5-hour drive of the Salt Lake City-Ogden, Utah and Provo-Orem, Utah standard metropolitan statistical areas. Table 3 summarizes the number and acreage of designated wilderness and other BLM study areas within a 5-hour drive of these population centers.

#### C. Balancing the Geographic Distribution of Wilderness Areas

The Bull Mountain WSA would not contribute significantly to balancing the geographic distribution of wilderness areas within the NWPS.

**BULL MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS STUDY AREA**

**TABLE 2  
ECOSYSTEM REPRESENTATION**

BAILEY-KUCHLER CLASSIFICATION (PNV) NATIONWIDE (COLORADO PLATEAU PROVINCE)	NWPS AREAS		OTHER BLM STUDIES	
	AREAS	ACRES	AREAS	ACRES
Arizona Pine Forest	3	26,300	8	17,790
Juniper-Pinyon Woodland	11	1,401,745	84	2,132,505
UTAH (COLORADO PLATEAU PROVINCE)				
Arizona Pine Forest	0	0	8	17,790
Juniper-Pinyon Woodland	1	26,000	53	1,694,698

Source: BLM File Data.

**TABLE 3  
WILDERNESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS OF MAJOR POPULATION CENTERS**

POPULATION CENTERS	NWPS AREAS		OTHER BLM STUDIES	
	AREAS	ACRES	AREAS	ACRES
Salt Lake City-Ogden, Utah	11	1,099,962	78	2,246,055
Provo-Orem, Utah	11	721,793	90	2,773,248

Source: BLM File Data.

As of January, 1987, the NWPS included 93 areas comprising 5,475,207 acres in Utah, Arizona, and Colorado. There are two designated wilderness areas within 100 miles of the WSA. To the southeast is the 45,000-acre Dark Canyon Wilderness (U.S. Forest Service [FS]) and to the southwest is the 25,751-acre Box-Death Hollow Wilderness (FS). In southeastern Utah, however, there are all or part of two designated wilderness areas totaling 83,630 acres. If designated, a Bull Mountain Wilderness would supplement wilderness areas in this region.

Manageability (The area must be capable of being effectively managed to preserve its wilderness character.)

The portion of the WSA that is recommended for wilderness designation can be managed as wilderness to preserve values now present in the area. Resource and land conflicts are not now a problem in the WSA and are not anticipated to be

in the future. There are presently no oil and gas leases in the WSA and no known deposits of any leasable minerals and there are no active drilling, mining, or exploration activities for any leasable minerals. All of the 39 mining claims in the WSA are in the area recommended for wilderness, but the potential for development is low because there are no known deposits of locatable minerals in the WSA.

There are no State-owned sections included in the WSA. Livestock grazing could continue as at present, requiring little or no change in management.

The area not recommended as wilderness would not be managed as wilderness. However, maintenance and use of 1 mile of way, 1 mile of pipeline, a 0.50 mile of fence, and 550 acres of pinyon-jumper chaining and seeding would create manageability problems.

## BULL MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

### Energy and Mineral Resource Values

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the U.S. Bureau of Mines (USBM) prepared a mineral assessment report for the Bull Mountain WSA (USGS Bulletin 1751-B, Russell F. Dubiel, et al., 1988). The report indicates that there are no identified mineral resources in the WSA. The northern part of the area has a high potential for undiscovered gypsum resources, and the entire WSA has a low resource potential for undiscovered copper, lead, zinc, molybdenum, silver, gold, uranium and vanadium, coal, oil and gas, and geothermal resources.

### Impacts on Resources

The comparative impact table (Table 4) summarizes the effects on pertinent resources for alternatives considered including designation or nondesignation of the area as wilderness.

### Local Social and Economic Considerations

Social and economic factors were not considered to be significant issues in the EIS.

### Summary of WSA-Specific Comments

Public involvement has occurred throughout the wilderness review process. Comments received during the early stages of the EIS preparation were used to develop significant study issues and alternatives for the ultimate management of the WSA.

During formal public review of the Draft EIS, a total of 42 inputs specifically addressing this WSA were received from 96 commenters, including oral statements received at 17 public hearings on the EIS. Each letter or oral testimony was considered to be one input. Duplicate letters or oral statement by the same commenter were not counted as additional inputs or signatures. Each individual was credited with one signature or testimony regardless of the number of inputs.

In general, 28 commenters supported wilderness designation for part or all of the WSA, while 62 commenters were opposed. Six commenters addressed the relative merits of the EIS, but took no

formal position on wilderness designation.

Those favoring wilderness commented on the wilderness values in the WSA and noted that designation would complement the adjacent Mt. Ellen-Blue Hills WSA. The majority of those commenting in favor of wilderness were from other states. Of particular concern was the need to protect wildlife and wildlife habitat.

Those opposing wilderness were concerned that wilderness would preclude mineral exploration and development and restrict public access, stated that designation is unnecessary to protect the area, and that wilderness would be incompatible with multiple use. Most of those opposing wilderness designation were from rural Utah.

Two Federal agencies, The National Park Service (NPS) and the USBM, commented on the Draft EIS for this WSA. The Federal agencies did not take a position regarding designation or nondesignation of the WSA. The NPS stated that the wildlife improvements such as chainings and re-seedings can be done with fire, which is a natural component of the wilds. The USBM noted that the BLM's Final EIS should include the findings of the USGS and USBM minerals investigations and those findings would be available in November 1988. These findings have been incorporated into the Final EIS and study report. USBM also stated that BLM underrated the petroleum potential of the WSA.

No comment letters were received on the Final EIS.

There are no State in-holdings in the WSA. In commenting on the Draft EIS, the State of Utah expressed general opposition to wilderness designation but did not take a definite position regarding wilderness designation of the WSA. Specific State comments on the Draft EIS dealt with inadequacies of the geology discussion, i.e., details necessary to assess economic potential for this WSA. The State ranks the WSA as having low wilderness quality and low conflicts in relation to other WSAs in the region. The State commented that BLM's proposed 11,800-acre wilderness alternative would

## BULL MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

not result in major conflicts except to wildlife. There would be conflicts with wildlife because 330 acres of vegetation manipulations for bison and mule deer would not be allowed with BLM's proposed action.

The WSA is in eastern Garfield and Wayne Counties. The Wayne County Master Report does not address this area specifically, but generally recommends that ". . . open spaces be used for many purposes rather than strictly as wilderness areas." It also states ". . . Outstanding Natural Landmarks should be preserved as much as possible." The Wayne County Commission has endorsed the Consolidated Local Government Response to Wilderness that opposes wilderness designation of BLM lands in Utah. About 3,500 acres of the WSA are in Wayne County.

The Garfield County Master Plan covers the southern 10,120 acres of the WSA. Garfield County has proposed to the Utah Congressional Delegation that 111,053 acres of BLM lands in three WSAs and 31,600 acres in one FS unit be recommended for wilderness. The County plan recommends that the remaining lands within the County, including the Bull Mountain WSA, be retained for multiple uses. The Garfield County Commission also has endorsed the Consolidated Local Government Response to Wilderness which opposes wilderness designation of BLM lands in Utah.



# BULL MOUNTAIN WSA

Table 4  
Comparative Summary of Impacts by Alternative

Alternatives		
Issue Topic	Recommendation Partial Wilderness (11,800 Acres)	No Action/No Wilderness All Wilderness (13,620 Acres)
Impacts on Wilderness Values	Wilderness values would be preserved in the designated area involving approximately 87 percent of the WSA. No disturbance is anticipated in the foreseeable future that would affect wilderness values.	Wilderness values would not be protected by wilderness designation and loss would occur as intrusions increase. In the foreseeable future, naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be directly lost on up to 550 acres because of a chaining project and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be indirectly reduced in quality on up to 600 acres. Special features including geologic features and special status plant and animal species would not be significantly affected. The special features that would be affected are Class A scenery which would be reduced in quality on 600 acres and bison which would benefit from the vegetation treatment. Continued vehicular use of ways would be an occasional annoyance that would detract from opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation in the WSA.
Impacts on Soils	No surface disturbance is projected with this alternative. Therefore, impacts would be essentially the same as with the All Wilderness Alternative.	Wilderness designation would preserve wilderness values of naturalness; outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation; and special features including Class A scenery, bristlecone pine, geologic features, special status plant and animal species, and wildlife species associated with wilderness.  The soil resource could slightly benefit under the alternative because surface-disturbing activities would be precluded. The 550-acre chaining and seeding and associated short term increases in erosion would not occur.

# BULL MOUNTAIN WSA

Table 4 (Continued)  
Comparative Summary of Impacts by Alternative

Alternatives	
Issue Topic	No. Action/No. Wilderness
	<p>Recommendation Partial Wilderness (11,800 Acres)</p> <p>All Wilderness (13,620 Acres)</p>
Impacts on Vegetation	<p>Impacts on special status plant species would not be significant. The 600 acres of projected surface disturbance would affect about 10 percent of the pinyon-juniper woodland in the WSA. Therefore, impacts on vegetation types would not be significant.</p> <p>The vegetation types and special status plant species would be protected by this alternative.</p>
Impacts on Wildlife Habitat and Populations	<p>Impacts on habitat and populations of threatened, endangered, or special status animal species would not be significant because of required mitigation. Implementation of the wildlife and range-land projects would provide additional forage and ecotones for many species. Approximately 82 AUMs of additional forage would be provided for bison.</p> <p>Wildlife populations would be provided with solitude over the entire WSA but the opportunities to provide ecotones and an additional 82 AUMs of bison forage through chaining and seeding of 550 acres of pinyon-juniper woodland would be foregone.</p>
Impacts on Livestock Management	<p>Livestock management and grazing levels would not be affected by this alternative.</p> <p>Restrictions on vehicle use of 3 miles of ways would cause inconvenience to permittees and increase the costs and time to manage livestock on two allotments.</p>
Impacts on Visual Resources	<p>Visual resources in the WSA would be preserved.</p> <p>Approximately 5.6 percent (600 acres) of the Class A scenery in the WSA would be degraded and VRM Class II management objectives would not be met on the disturbed or surrounding areas.</p> <p>Wilderness designation would preserve the existing scenic values within the WSA.</p>