

Wilderness Inventory Unit Index of Documents  
**Lower Owyhee Canyon Contiguous OR-034-115, 12 total pages**

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**Prepared by:**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
**Bureau of Land Management**  
**Vale District Office**  
**100 Oregon Street**  
**Vale, Oregon 97918**



## **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-034-115 — Lower Owyhee 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 units partially of 3-58 (no name given) of OR-03-04-18; partially of 3-126 (no name given) of OR-03-09-07 (unpublished BLM documents in case file).

**(NOTE: See footnotes following the table, below.)**

- ( ) 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). ).  
**NOTE: both of these units — in March, 1980 -- were included into 3-110 Lower Owyhee Canyon WSA.**
- (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 3-58 (no name given) of OR-03-04-18; partially of BLM 3-126 (no name given) of OR-03-09-07

**(NOTE: See footnotes following the table, below.)**

**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.

<b>Unit#/ Name</b>	<b>Size (historic acres)</b>	<b>Natural Condition? Y/N</b>	<b>Outstanding Solitude? Y/N</b>	<b>Outstanding Primitive &amp; Unconfined Recreation? Y/N</b>	<b>Supplemental Values? Y/N</b>
Partially of 3-58 of OR-03-04-18 (no name given)*	7,920*	**	**	**	**
Partially of 3-126 of OR-03-09-07 (no name given)*	6,920*	**	**	**	**
<b>TOTAL</b>	14,840				

\* -- In March 1980, both of these units were included in 3-110 Lower Owyhee Canyon WSA. However, none of this acreage included the present WC inventory maintenance unit OR-034-115; five of the six parcels that constitute the present OR-034-115 were non-BLM lands at the time of the late 1970's wilderness inventory.

\*\* -- These criteria were not addressed during the inventory of these units, noting that 5 of the 6 parcels of the present OR-034-115 unit were non-BLM land parcels during the late 1970's wilderness characteristics inventory.

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

### **APPENDIX B – INVENTORY AREA EVALUATION**

#### **Evaluation of Current Conditions:**

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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.*

## **FORM 2 -- DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS**

**Unit Number/Name: OR-034-115 — Lower Owyhee Canyon Contiguous**

**NOTE: The inventory finding of this OR-034-115 inventory unit results in three existing WSAs becoming contiguous to each other: Cedar Mountain (OR-3-47), Owyhee Breaks (OR-3-59), and Lower Owyhee Canyon (OR-3-110).**

**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 1A for its location. The unit consists of 5 separate parcels of BLM-administered public land, each contiguous with the Lower Owyhee Canyon WSA (OR-3-110), and, additionally, one of them (the central parcel on the Owyhee National Wild and Scenic River) is also contiguous with the Owyhee Breaks WSA (OR-3-59) while another – the north parcel -- is also contiguous to Cedar Mountain WSA(OR-3-47). Thus, each parcel meets size criteria. Four of the 5 parcels were private land tracts at the time of BLM's late 1970's wilderness characteristics inventory, but have since been acquired by BLM.

The sum total of the 5 parcels is 588 acres: north parcel, 90 acres; central parcel, 159 acres; southwest parcel, 210 acres; southeast parcel, 80 acres; and south parcel, 19 acres.

The north parcel has always been BLM public land but was not included in the 1980 designated Lower Owyhee Canyon WSA or Cedar Mountain WSA. Presently, boundary features of the north parcel are private land on its east side, and two vehicle routes – one on its west side (identified as County 3627) and another route on its north side. The west side route has changed route type status since the BLM's late 1970's wilderness characteristics (WC) inventory. At the time of that WC inventory, the route was determined by BLM to be a road, but it has changed to a motorized primitive trail (MPT) status since there has been no mechanical maintenance on the route and with BLM not intending to mechanically maintain it. This change in route status has resulted in the Cedar Mountain WSA to be contiguous with the Lower Owyhee Canyon WSA at this location.

The other four parcels of this OR-034-115 inventory unit have been acquired by BLM since the late 1970's BLM wilderness characteristics inventory. Bounds for each include legal descriptive, and with each surrounded by BLM WSA public lands. Legal descriptive is not a qualifying boundary feature for this wilderness characteristics maintenance inventory, thus the four parcels are contiguous with at least one adjacent WSA.

The south and central parcels each have a road as a boundary feature, as well. A road (BLM 7305-00) serves as the south boundary of the south parcel. At the time of WSA designation, the central parcel on the river (as private land) was a boundary feature in combination with two separate roads entering the parcel on its east side (and on opposite sides of the river without the two roads connected to each other because the river flows between the roads and with no feasible physical river crossing for vehicles). With BLM's purchase of this parcel, the two WSAs are now contiguous to each other due to the free-flowing, natural river and some adjunct roadless higher dry land between the two roads on either side of the river. Respectively, this circumstance results in the two separate roads that approach the BLM-acquired west central parcel to now be two separate cherry-stem roads.

The boundary roads of OR-034-115 (as affiliated with both the south and central parcels presently receive mechanical maintenance when needed to keep them passable on a relatively regular and seasonally continuous basis.

**NOTE:** The north parcel is associated with Cedar Mountain WSA of which its entirety BLM has identified as not being suitable and/or manageable for designation as Wilderness by Congress. However, matters of suitability and manageability are not factors of consideration for wilderness characteristics inventory.

## 2. Is the unit in a natural condition?

Yes   X        No   X        N/A       

**Description:** All but the central parcel are of upland vegetation -- sage brush and predominately native grass species. The central parcel has some additional woody species associated with the riparian setting of the river's edge. Elevations range from about 2,850 feet (in the central parcel on the river) to just over 4,400 feet in both the north and south parcels.

Refer to this unit's associated Map 1A and Map 1B for human developments within the 5 parcels of the unit. There are no developments in the parcels except for within the north and the central parcels. The north parcel has a 1.4 mile motorized primitive trail (MPT). In the central parcel, developments south of the river (see Map 1B) include a site consisting of a standing but deteriorating house and associated cinderblock-walled outbuilding, an older, partially earth-enclosed food cellar, a deteriorated ditch line, and an adjacent wire-fenced corral. Also, an affiliated network of 1.1 miles of 5 MPTs located within this same south portion of this central parcel branch from the cherry-stem road which terminates at the site of structures described above. In conclusion, the extent, types and proximity to each other of these developments in the south portion of this central parcel results in that portion of the parcel appearing to be affected primarily by the work of humans, thus, is not in a natural condition as viewed by the average visitor. Located in the same south portion of this central parcel is barely visible remnant evidence of some abandoned vehicle routes. On the western portion of this central parcel on the opposite (west) side of the river is a dated "emergency" earthen landing airstrip which to date is identified as such on aeronautical maps for pilots, and which is used for other than emergency purposes periodically by the public (e.g., chukar hunters). This dated airstrip

is near the terminal end of the boundary road which used to separate Owyhee Breaks and Lower Owyhee Canyon WSAs from each other (prior to this central parcel being acquired by BLM). In the central parcel's northeast corner (and across – east of the river) is about 100 feet of a MPT. Respectively, overall, the portion of this central parcel -- excluding its area located south of the river -- appears to be in a substantially natural condition to the average visitor when considered in combination with the high state of natural condition of the contiguous surrounding WSA.

The other four parcels of this inventory unit are in a natural condition as viewed by the average visitor when considered in combination with the high state of natural condition of the contiguous surrounding WSA(s).

In summary, except for the portion of the central parcel located south of the river, all five parcels of this OR-034-115 inventory unit -- when considered in combination with the high state of natural condition of the contiguous surrounding WSA(s) – appear, individually and collectively, to be affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of humans substantially unnoticeable to the average visitor. These natural appearing locations are an extension of the already existing natural condition of the contiguous WSAs.

### 3. Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes   X              No                       N/A           

**Description:** Due to being contiguous with a WSA, the 5 parcels are a slight extension of a much larger area (a WSA) which BLM has determined possesses outstanding opportunities for solitude. That said the close proximity of all parcels (except the southwest parcel) to a boundary road of affiliated WSAs results in a lessened quality of a visitor's sense of being isolated when within the parcel. The orientation of the 240-acre southwest parcel, being (A) extensively surrounded by public lands of a WSA, (B) distant from a boundary road or any other human developments, and (C) possessing sufficient topographic relief within some of the parcel to screen visitors from each other, allows a visitor to experience the same outstanding opportunities for solitude as is present in the adjacent surrounding WSA (Lower Owyhee Canyon). The other 4 parcels slightly increase the overall area with abutting WSAs where existing outstanding opportunities for solitude, as a result, are nominally enhanced by including each of the 4 parcels.

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

Yes   X              No                       N/A           

**Description:** The parcels provide a continuum of certain outstanding opportunities of primitive and unconfined recreation which exist within their associated contiguous WSAs. These activities include hiking, backpacking and camping in the rugged, scenic landscape of the overall settings of the parcels. Additionally, the central parcel on the Owyhee National Wild and Scenic River provides outstanding opportunities for white water floating in conjunction with the river through the adjoining 2 WSAs.



**5. Does the unit have supplemental values?**Yes   X        No                 N/A           

**Description:** All but the north parcel are within a much larger bighorn sheep habitat utilization area. The animal is a BLM special status species in Oregon. The Owyhee River corridor is part of the winter range for Northern bald eagles. The species was delisted in June 2007 from under the federal Endangered Species Act; however, per current (since 12/12/2008) BLM management direction, BLM identifies delisted species to be conserved as BLM sensitive species for 5 years following delisting by the federal Fish and Wildlife Service.

**Summary of Findings and Conclusion**

**Unit Name and Number: OR-034-115 — Lower Owyhee Canyon Contiguous**

**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  X  No
- 3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation?  X  Yes   No   NA
- 4. Does the area have supplemental values?  X  Yes   No   NA

**Conclusion -- check one:**

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

The area does not have wilderness character.

**Prepared by:**  Robert Alward   
Robert Alward, Wilderness Planner contractor

**Team Members:**

<u> Steve Christensen </u>	<u> 2-25-2010 </u>
Steve Christensen, Rangeland Management Specialist	Date
<u> Shaney Rockefeller </u>	<u> 3/10/10 </u>
Shaney Rockefeller, Soil Scientist	Date
<u> Gillian Wigglesworth </u>	<u> 3/3/10 </u>
Gillian Wigglesworth, Botanist	Date
<u> Michelle Caviness </u>	<u> 2/28/10 </u>
Michelle Caviness, Wildlife Biologist	Date
<u> Eian Ray </u>	<u> 02/09/10 </u>
Eian Ray, GIS Specialist, contractor	Date
<u> Brent Grasty </u>	<u> 2/9/10 </u>
Brent Grasty, GIS Coordinator	Date

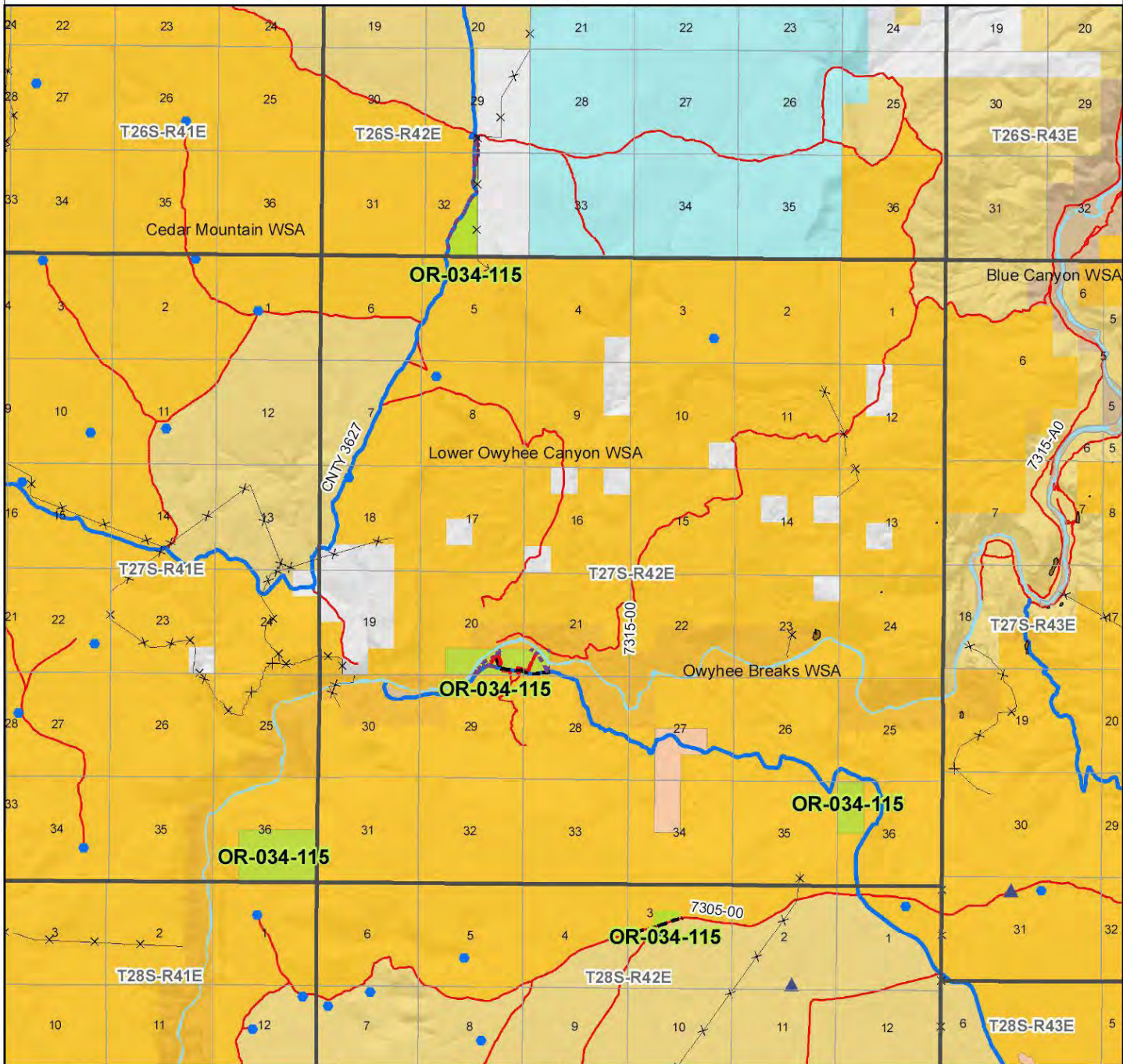
**Approved by:**  Pat Ryan   
Pat Ryan, Malheur Resource Area Field Manager

7/11/10   
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.*

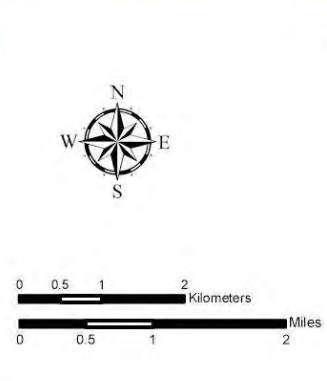
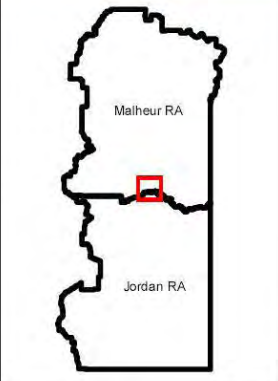
# Wilderness Characteristics - Overview

## Lower Owyhee Canyon Contiguous - OR-034-115 - Map 1A



### Legend

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Developed Spring</li> <li> Wildlife Guzzler</li> <li> Earthen Reservoir</li> <li> Pipeline</li> <li> Trough</li> <li> Fence</li> <li> Storage Tank</li> <li> Surface Mining Disturbance</li> <li> Sage Grouse Lek</li> <li> Special Status Plant</li> <li> BLM Wild Char Inventory Unit</li> <li> Wilderness Study Area</li> <li> Mineral Material Site</li> <li> Road/Utility Right-of-Way</li> <li> Major Water Body</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Route Types - BLM Determination</b></li> <li> Boundary Road</li> <li> Motorized Primitive Trail (MPT)</li> <li> Discontinued Use</li> <li><b>Routes - Outside Wild Char Unit</b></li> <li> County</li> <li> Major Highway</li> <li> BLM Numbered &amp; Other Routes</li> <li><b>Land Ownership</b></li> <li> Bureau of Land Management</li> <li> State</li> <li> Private</li> <li> Other Federal Land</li> <li> Non-WSA, BLM Recommended Wilderness - 1991</li> </ul> |
|---|---|



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**  
**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**  
  
**VALE DISTRICT**  
 December 28, 2009

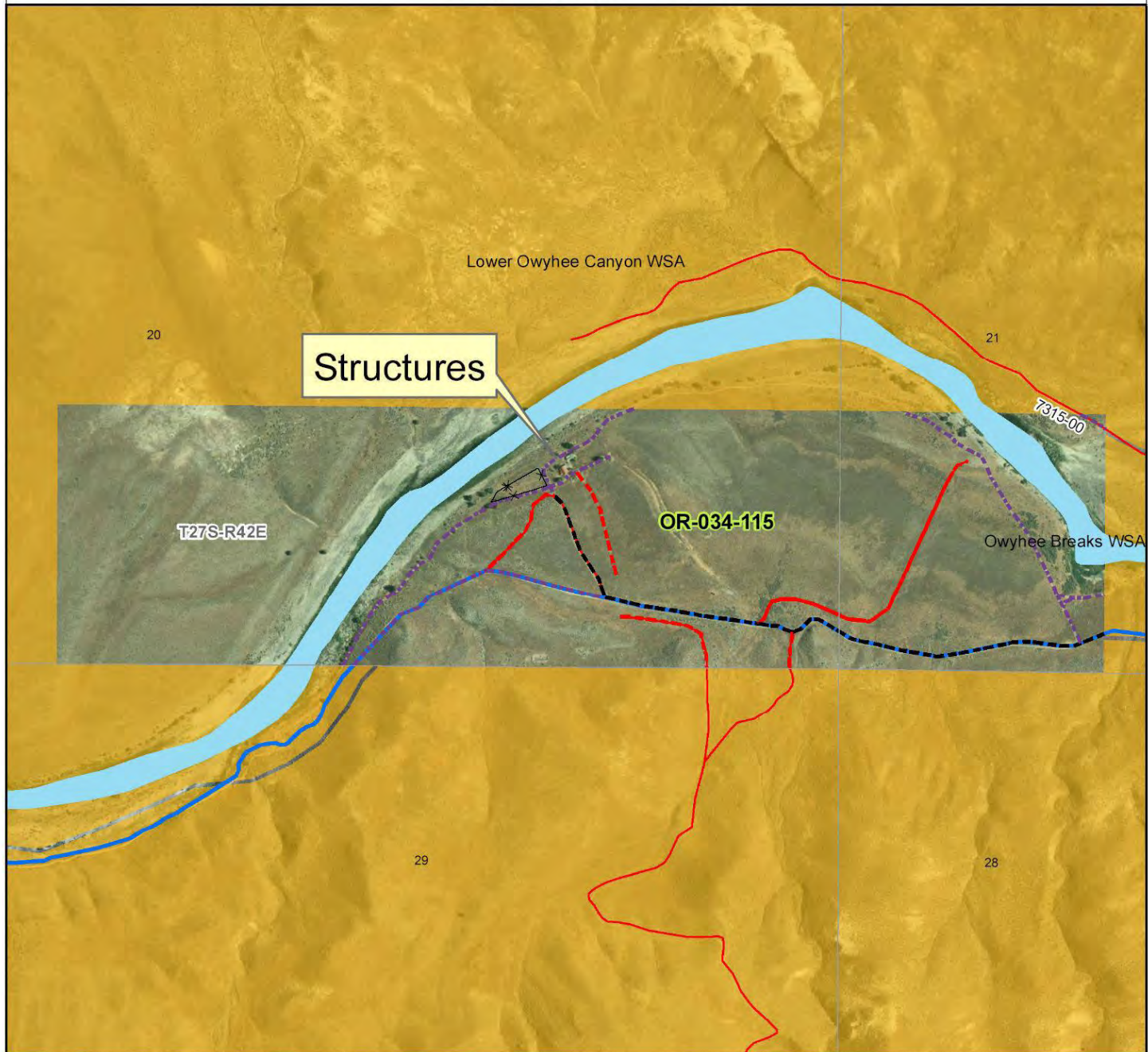
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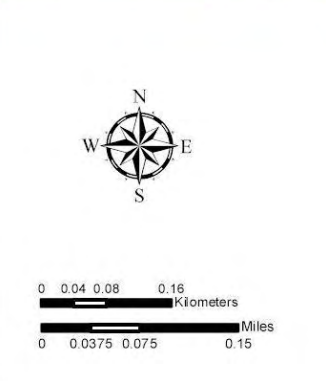
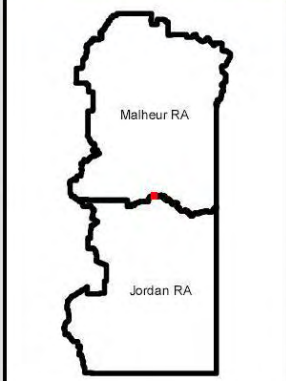
# Wilderness Characteristics - Overview

## Lower Owyhee Canyon Contiguous - OR-034-115 - Map 1B

### West Central Parcel



Legend	
	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
<b>Route Types - BLM Determination</b>	
	Boundary Road
	Motorized Primitive Trail (MPT)
	Discontinued Use
<b>Routes - Outside Wild Char Unit</b>	
	County
	Major Highway
	BLM Numbered & Other Routes



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**VALE DISTRICT**  
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