

Wilderness Inventory Unit Index of Documents
Steamboat Ridge OR-034-058, 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-034-058 -- Steamboat Ridge

**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 – Partially of BLM Wilderness Inventory Unit 3-77 Honeycombs of OR-03-05-31 (unpublished BLM document in case files)
- () 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)

BLM Wilderness Inventory Unit 3-77Honeycombs of OR-03-05-31

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
*3-77A Honeycombs of OR-03-05-31	43,700	Y	Y	Y	Y
TOTAL	43,700				

* -- Only a part of this unit represents what is presently OR-034-058.

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FORM 2 -- DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS

Unit Number/Name – OR-034-058 — Steamboat Ridge

NOTE: In February, 2004, the Vale District received from Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA) its evaluation of wilderness characteristics for what ONDA names its 3,943 acre “Steamboat Ridge proposed WSA Addition”. For reference, a hard copy of ONDA’s proposal is retained in this unit’s file. Information provided by ONDA’s proposal was considered and incorporated as appropriate for this BLM Wilderness Characteristics Inventory maintenance. Unit OR-034-058 is the same delineated area as ONDA’s proposal.

For BLM unit OR-034-058, BLM has the same findings as ONDA regarding inventory unit boundary features. BLM concludes that currently the route along the south approximate half of the west boundary of the inventory unit is a motorized primitive trail (MPT, or what ONDA terms a vehicular “way). BLM identified this route as a road in its late 1970’s wilderness characteristics inventory. However, since that time it has changed route status to a MPT because the route is not needed to support BLM administration of public lands, and BLM presently does not intent to mechanically maintain the route for relatively regular and continuous use. That said, it is noted that in 2000 BLM did blade the route in support of wildfire suppression activities, but not for the purpose or intent to keep the route mechanically maintained for relatively regular and continuous use over time.

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 inventory unit’s associated Map 1 for its location. The inventory unit is 3,947 acres. Along the entire length of its west boundary, unit abuts the Honeycombs WSA, and is contiguous with the 39,000 acre WSA (see “Note”, above). Thus, the unit meets size criteria. Associated with this MPT is its short segment at the extreme north end of this inventory unit that is also used for vehicle access to the Shadscale Flat area of the Honeycombs WSA. This short segment of route (in sections 20 and into 29 to the 4-way junction with the route going into Craig’s Gulch and to Shadscale Flat) has changed from a road (cherry-stemmed) during the BLM 1970’s wilderness characteristics (WC) inventory to a MPT. In 1980, BLM’s approved Wilderness recommendation included that this cherry-stem route (then determined to be a cherry-stem road) going to Shadscale Flat area (starting where it junctions with the 7306-00 road) be closed as part of the congressional act to designate the Honeycombs area as Wilderness. Presently, the route type change to a MPT is because -- since the late 1970’s WC inventory -- this route has not been mechanically maintained (in keeping with the agency’s Wilderness recommendation), and BLM does not foresee approving mechanical maintenance before Congress makes a decision regarding BLM’s Wilderness

recommendation. The rest of the OR-034-058 unit's boundary consists of BLM roads 7306-0-00 and 7301-0-00 (Leslie Gulch Road). The road segment has received mechanical maintenance since 2000, and will continue to receive such maintenance as needed to provide for relatively regular and seasonally continuous use.

NOTE: This inventory unit is contiguous with a portion of the Honeycombs WSA which BLM determined in 1991 to not be 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 N/A

Description: The unit includes the northern extent of Steamboat Ridge and its associated steep slopes and rim rock of Craig's Gulch to the west and slope drainage toward the upper reaches of a branch of Long Gulch and Bannock Gulch to the east. Elevations range from about 3,850 to 5,030 feet. Vegetation is predominately native and non-native grasses and sagebrush. The northern approximate third of the unit is within the Three Fingers Wild Horse Herd Management Area.

Refer to the unit's associated Map 1 and Map 2 for human imprints within the unit. There is 2.8 miles of rangeland fence, 8.5 miles of 5 MPTs, 3 old (not mined for over 30 years) abandoned mechanically dug picture jasper sites within Craig Gulch, and a deteriorating historic rock-walled wild horse trap site (at the MPT's terminus in section 28). There remains no visual contrast to the average visitor of 2002-2003 planted and disc-drilled shrubs or of 2002 disc-drilled native grass seedings on the lower eastern slopes of Steamboat Ridge.

During the late 1970's, BLM purposely excluded a portion of Craig's Gulch from the Honeycombs WSA due to the visually apparent cut and fill associated with the motorized vehicle loop route that was mechanically constructed in support of picture jasper exploration and extraction activities that were done prior to BLM conducting its late 1970's wilderness characteristics inventory. BLM recommends that most of the Honeycombs WSA be congressionally designated as Wilderness. However, BLM's Wilderness recommendation excludes, in part, that portion of the WSA that is the west slopes of Craig Gulch watershed due to not being able to manage the area as Wilderness because of the influence of mining that has occurred within the Gulch's watershed. Since BLM's late 1970's wilderness characteristics inventory, there has been no private party interest in hard rock mining activities associated with Craig's Gulch or elsewhere within OR-034-058. It is this northwest sector of the unit where the most noticeable surface disturbances have occurred within the unit. However, overall, the limited extent of human prints and the general nature of most of the human imprints does result in the unit appearing to be affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of humans being substantially unnoticeable to the average visitor (the exception is the area of remnant scarring associated with picture jasper mining activities within Craig Gulch).

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

Description: With the unit being contiguous with Honeycombs WSA, the expansive acreage and natural features providing outstanding opportunities for solitude in the WSA is further extended into this OR-034-058 unit. Too, many of the features of the unit, itself (the sharply elevated ridge with its rim rock and the unit's 3 associated canyon drainages), possess sufficient topographic relief, elevation change and diversity of terrain types such that opportunities for solitude are available. What makes the opportunities outstanding within the unit is due to combining the unit with the WSA with its outstanding opportunities for solitude.

4. Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?Yes X No N/A

Description: Some of the outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation identified with the contiguous Honeycombs extend into this inventory unit. Some of the opportunities within the unit enhance the outstanding opportunities already available within the WSA. This mutual benefit of opportunities within the combined area of the WSA and this unit include but are not limited to excellent hunting opportunities for chukar; hunting of bighorn sheep as a highly prized trophy game species in Oregon; day hiking; and scenic, geologic, historic (horse trap) and wildlife (e.g., bighorn sheep) photography.

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

Description: Within the unit, itself, bighorn sheep, a BLM special status animal species in Oregon, has been observed (although not as prevalent in presence as within certain areas of the neighboring Honeycombs WSA). A site each of Owyhee clover and barren milkvetch – BLM special status plant species -- are within the unit.

ONDA states that its Steamboat Ridge WSA Addition “may also provide habitat for Woodhouse’s Toad, Mojave Black-collared Lizard, Desert Horned Lizard, Ferruginous Hawk, Pygmy Rabbit, and White-tailed Antelope Squirrel, which ONDA’s February 2004 submission to the Vale District declares are listed as “sensitive species” by the State of Oregon. As of 2009, the Woodhouse’s Toad, Mohave Black-collard Lizard, Desert Horned Lizard, and the White-tailed Antelope Squirrel were not considered sensitive by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, BLM, or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. BLM acknowledges that habitat requirements may exist for Woodhouse’s Toad, Mojave Black-collared Lizard, Desert Horned Lizard, Ferruginous Hawk, and Pygmy Rabbit; however; neither ONDA nor any other entity has provided BLM official documentation confirming the presence of these species within this inventory unit.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Name and Number: OR-034-058 — Steamboat Ridge

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 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.

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Robert Alward, Wilderness Planner, contractor

Team Members:

<u> Mitch Thomas </u>	<u> 2/4/10 </u>
Mitch Thomas, Rangeland Management Specialist	Date
<u> Gillian Wigglesworth </u>	<u> 2/5/10 </u>
Gillian Wigglesworth, Botanist	Date
<u> Shoney Rockefeller </u>	<u> 3/10/10 </u>
Shoney Rockefeller, Soil Scientist	Date
<u> Dave Draheim </u>	<u> 2/10/10 </u>
Dave Draheim, Outdoor Recreation Planner	Date
<u> Michelle Caviness </u>	<u> 2/25/10 </u>
Michelle Caviness, Wildlife Biologist	Date
<u> Jon Westfall </u>	<u> 02/08/2010 </u>
Jon Westfall, Geologist	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

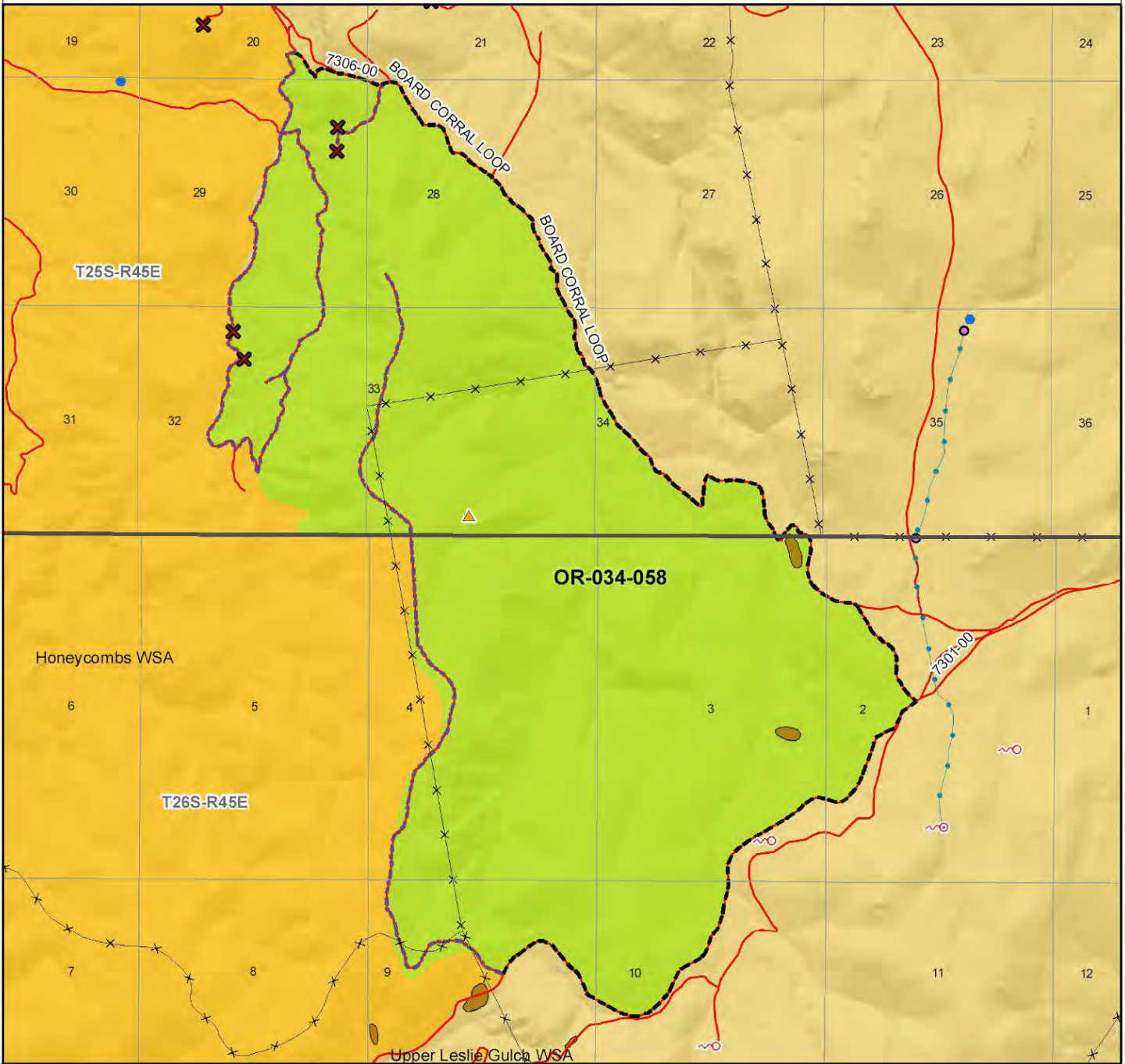
Approved by:

Pat Ryan 7/11/10
Pat Ryan, Malheur Resource Area Field Manager Date

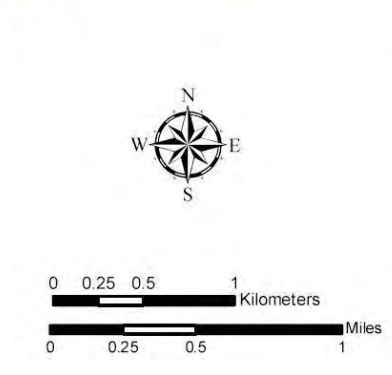
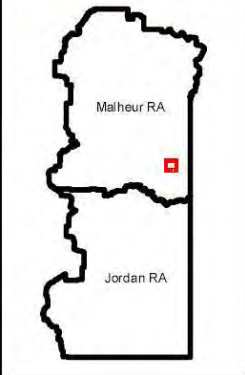
This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR parts 4 or 1610.5-2.


Wilderness Characteristics - Overview

Steamboat Ridge - OR-034-058 - Map 1 of 2



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
	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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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

VALE DISTRICT
 December 17, 2009
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