

Year: 2018

Inventory Unit Number/Name: OR-015-069A/ Alkali Lake West

**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?**

No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes  X  (if more than one unit is within the area, list the names/numbers of those units):

a) **Inventory Source:** Wilderness – Proposed Initial Inventory: Roadless Areas and Islands Which Clearly Do Not Have Wilderness Characteristics; USDI BLM - Oregon and Washington, April 1979.

b) **Inventory Unit Number(s)/Name(s):** 1-69

c) **Map Name(s)/Number(s):** Final Decision - Initial Wilderness Inventory: Public Lands and Islands Which Do Not Have Wilderness Characteristics and Units To Be Intensively Inventoried; USDI BLM - Oregon, August 1979.

d) **BLM District(s)/Field Office(s):** Lakeview District, Lakeview 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):

Unit #	Size (historic acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
1-69	13,400	N	N	N	N/A
1-69A*	11,795	N	N/A	N/A	N/A

\*The inventory of this unit was updated in 2012. However, due to a State Office-sponsored Wilderness Inventory Consistency Evaluation and subsequent guidance, the 2012 inventory analysis and findings are being replaced by this current 2018 inventory review. Documentation of the 2012 inventory can be found in the wilderness inventory project record.

*Summarize any known primary reasons for prior inventory findings listed in this table:*

In 1979, Unit 1-69 was described as primarily a flat, dry lakebed with sagebrush cover. The unit was affected by intrusions associated with about 6,000 acres of adjacent private lands and a chemical waste dump. The inventory also noted the natural character of the unit was impacted by vehicle traffic from Highway 395 to the east. Opportunities for solitude and primitive, unconfined recreation were minimal due to impacts associated with the highway.

**FORM 2**

**DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY  
CONDITIONS**

**Unit Number/Name:** OR-015-069A/ Alkali Lake West

**(1) Is the unit of sufficient size?** Yes  No

Between 2007 and 2016, BLM staff conducted field inventory in the area as part of a process to update its road and wilderness inventories and to gather additional information to supplement ONDA's wilderness information. This fieldwork included photo documentation of the boundary and interior routes and a re-evaluation of wilderness characteristics for this area. Using both ONDA and BLM photos, field logs, and staff field knowledge, the BLM completed route analysis within the area in 2017.

The BLM determined that the inventory unit is bounded by BLM Roads 6184-00 to the south; 6164-00 and BLM interim numbered roads 6164-L0 and 6170-D0 to the west; a portion of 6170-00, BLM interim numbered road 6184-X0, 6184-XA, a residential power line right-of-way, and private lands to the east. Due to changes in boundary determinations (road and power line right-of-ways buffer corrections) approximately 42 acres were removed from the unit.

Thus, based on these boundary and road determinations, the BLM found the Alkali Lake West inventory unit to exceed the minimum size criteria at approximately 11,430 acres of BLM-administered lands.

Additional background on the process the BLM followed during this evaluation is contained in the document, *Wilderness Inventory Maintenance Process for the Lakeview Resource Area, BLM* and in the *Route Analysis Forms*. Both documents can be found in the wilderness inventory file.

**DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS:**

This unit is located approximately 3 miles west of Alkali Lake, Oregon. It is approximately 6 miles long by 4 miles wide. Topographically, the majority of the unit is the flat lakebed of Alkali Valley with vegetated sand dunes (5-10 ft. high) along the western third of the unit. The unit also contains one lakebed depression (5-10 ft. deep) in the southwest corner.

Overall, the unit ranges in elevation from 4,266 to 4,464 feet. Vegetatively, the unit is composed primarily of sagebrush.

**(2) Is the unit in a natural condition?** Yes \_\_\_ No X N/A \_\_\_

In 1979, the natural condition of historic Unit 1-69 was negatively impacted by vehicle traffic from Highway 395 to the east, intrusions associated with about 6,000 acres of adjacent private lands, and a chemical waste dump.

The unit currently contains the following man-made developments/disturbances: 276 acres of wildfire, 276 acres of seeding, 104 acres of chemical treatments, 12.75 miles of motorized routes, 0.5 miles of reclaiming routes, 3.5 miles of cat lines, 11 miles of fence, and a well.

In addition, the Alkali Lake chemical waste dump lies immediately adjacent to the southeast boundary of the unit on private lands. A subsurface chemical plume has been found to be moving to the northwest onto BLM lands from the dumpsite. During particularly wet seasons, the rising water table may bring contaminants to the surface.

Presently, almost 4 decades after the original inventory, these developments are weathered and grown over with herbaceous grasses and sagebrush. As a result, developments now fade into the background of the unit and are largely only noticeable at a close distance (1/4<sup>th</sup> mile or less) and are thus substantially unnoticeable from further distances. Furthermore, many of the disturbances are located near the perimeter of the unit and, as such, have a small area of influence. Areas burned in wildfires have revegetated.

Based on a review of all the available information including photos, staff knowledge, and field review, the BLM concluded that the unit remains in an unnatural condition primarily due to possible exposure and related health concerns of the chemical plume advancing deeper into the unit.

**(3) Does the unit** (or the remainder of the unit if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) **have outstanding opportunities for solitude?** Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ N/A X

Opportunities for solitude were not evaluated because the unit failed to meet the naturalness criteria.

**(4) Does the unit** (or the remainder of the unit if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) **have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?** Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ N/A X

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation were not evaluated because the unit failed to meet the naturalness criteria.

**(5) Does the unit have supplemental values?** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ N/A  X

Supplemental values were not evaluated because the unit failed to meet the naturalness criteria.

**Summary of Findings and Conclusion**

Unit Name and Number: OR-015-069A/Alkali Lake West

**Summary Results of Analysis:**

- 1. Does the area meet the size requirements?       X  Yes \_\_\_ No
- 2. Does the area appear to be natural?              \_\_\_ Yes  X  No
- 3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation?      \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No  X  N/A
- 4. Does the area have supplemental values?      \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No  X  N/A

**Conclusion (Check One):**

\_\_\_ The area- or a portion of the area- has wilderness character:  
*(items 1, 2 and 3 must be checked "yes")*.

X  The area does not have wilderness character: *(any of items 1, 2 and 3 are checked "no")*.

**Prepared by (Member Names and Titles):**

  
Chris Bishop: Outdoor Recreation Planner

11/1/2018  
Date

  
Jami Ludwig: Assistant Field Manager

11/1/18  
Date

**Approved by:**

  
**J. Todd Forbes**  
Field Manager

11/1/18  
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 43 CFR parts either 4 or 1610.5-2.*



