

Year: 2020

Inventory Unit Number/Name: OR-015-102/ Binkie Lake

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 _____ (go to Form 2) Yes X (if more than one unit is within the area, list the names/numbers of those units.)

a) **Inventory Source:** Wilderness Inventory: Oregon and Washington Final Intensive Inventory Decisions, November 1980

b) (Historic) **Inventory Unit Number(s)/Name(s):** 1-102/ Binkie Lake

c) **Map Name(s)/Number(s):** U.S. Department of the Interior: Bureau of Land Management Oregon: Intensive Wilderness Inventory Final Decisions November, 1980

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/acreage and answer each question individually for each inventory unit):

Unit#/ Name	Size (historic acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
1-102	13,440	N	N	N	N/A
1-102*	14,211	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 2017 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):

The unit was bounded on the east by the BPA power line and by BLM roads to the south and west. The physical characteristics of the unit were described as sagebrush covered flat which sloped slightly to the east. Several shallow ephemeral lakes were present, these provided the only topographic relief within the unit. The unit contained 4 short, obvious,

ways to water developments and 14 water developments. Overall, the unit was found not to be in natural condition due to the cumulative effects of the powerline and the large number of obvious imprints of the works of man. The unit did not offer an outstanding opportunity for either solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation.

FORM 2

DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS

a. Unit Number/Name: OR-015-102/ Binkie Lake

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

In 2005, the BLM received a citizen proposal from the Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA) for the 20,213-acre Abert Rim Proposed Wilderness Study Area (WSA) Addition. ONDA included in their information a narrative report, maps, photos, photo and route logs, and GIS data with their route and photo point data. All of these materials were considered during the BLM's wilderness inventory process for this area. The photos submitted by ONDA were taken in June of 2004. They identified the area as having no interior routes that meet the BLM wilderness inventory definition of a road. In 2018, the BLM received an additional citizen inventory from the Fitzgerald ranch. All these materials were considered during the BLM's wilderness inventory process for this area.

In the summer of 2008, 2009, 2010, 2016, and 2019 the BLM conducted a field inventory of the area to update its road and wilderness inventory 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 and 2018. In 2019, the BLM field verified the citizen inventory information submitted in 2018.

The BLM determined that BLM Road 6125-00 has a valid right-of-way and meets the wilderness inventory definition of a boundary road and together with the 500-KV BPA powerline right-of-way form the eastern boundary of the unit. However, portions of route 6125-A0 (along Mule Draw) and interim numbered route 6125-AL (along Rabbit Creek) were found to not currently meet the inventory definition of a boundary road. As a result, the Binkie Lake unit was found to be contiguous with Abert Rim WSA (25,067 acres) to the west and has expanded to the south to include Abert Rim East (5,038 acres). The Abert Rim East portion of the unit is bounded on the east by a 500-KV BPA powerline right-of-way and on the south and west by the southern continuation of routes 6125-A0 and 6125-00, both of which the BLM determined to meet the inventory definition of a road in these sections. In addition, two "cherry stem" routes were also identified during

the 2019 inventory. Routes 6125-K and 6125-N were found to meet the wilderness inventory definition of a road.

Due to changes in boundary and road determinations, the BLM found the Binkie Lake unit to be one large entity comprised of both the Binkie Lake and Abert Rim East units. Thus, the BLM found the combined unit was not only contiguous with the Abert Rim WSA, but clearly exceeded the minimum size criteria on its own at approximately 19,837 acres.

Additional background on the process that 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:

The Binkie Lake unit is located just east of the Abert Rim WSA, 13 miles northeast of Valley Falls, Oregon. The unit is approximately 12 miles long and tapers from less than a mile wide at its southern and northern tips to roughly 3.5 miles wide in the central portion. The unit also does not contain any private or other jurisdiction inholdings.

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

ONDA's 2005 inventory concluded that their proposed 20,213-acre Abert Rim Addition was generally natural and affected primarily by the forces of nature. The Fitzgerald Ranch noted that several of the manmade structures in the area were visible from long distances. The BLM reviewed all the information submitted.

The BLM found the following man-made developments/disturbances within the Binkie Lake unit: 15 waterholes, 6 reservoirs, 3.75 miles of pasture division fence, 18 miles of internal primitive motorized routes, 3.5 miles of reclaiming routes, 6,513 acres of wildfire, and 5,535 acres of aerial weed application for treatment of medusahead and north Africa grass invasives. These man-made developments are located primarily in the north three-quarters or on the peripheral of the unit. During the original inventory, most of these developments were relatively new and substantially noticeable. Now, four plus decades later, these developments are largely weathered and grown over with herbaceous grasses, sagebrush, and western juniper. As a result, these developments fade into the background of the unit and area substantially unnoticeable within close distances (up to a 1/4th of mile or less) and less noticeable from farther distances.

Based on a review of all the available information, including (BLM and citizen provided) photos, staff knowledge, and field review, the BLM concluded that the overall natural character within the area has improved since the original inventory. In addition, the 5,038 acres added to the southern end of the unit, with few developments, relative to its size, further benefits the overall natural condition of the area. Lastly, the unit was found to be contiguous with Abert Rim WSA and must be analyzed in the context of these now

shared wilderness values. As such, after considering values offered by both areas, the BLM determined that the Binkie Lake unit and the WSA contribute mutually additive effects to the natural condition of both units. Thus, the area was found to be in a natural condition primarily affected by the forces of nature, where the works of man are substantially unnoticeable.

(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 X No N/A

ONDA's 2005 inventory concluded that their proposed 20,213-acre Abert Rim Addition was contiguous with the Abert Rim WSA and the "unknown unit to the south." Therefore, because Abert Rim WSA has already been found to provide outstanding opportunities for solitude, new additions to the unit would increase the size, shape, and diversity of topography. Thus, ONDA concluded that outstanding opportunities for solitude would be enhanced.

In 1991, the Abert Rim WSA to the west was found to have outstanding opportunities for solitude especially in the southern half of the unit, due to topography of the rim and vegetative screening that isolate the visitor (Wilderness Study Report, 1991; p. 64).

Topographically, the unit has not changed since the original inventory. The northern three quarters of the unit can still be described as a large sagebrush covered flat, sloping to the east with ephemeral lakebeds creating topographic relief. However, the southern portion now includes a two-mile-long stretch of both the north and south banks of Rabbit Creek, several miles of drainages (ranging from 100-250 feet deep, and the foothills of the Coyotes Hills (6,300 feet).

Vegetatively, dense western juniper stands along Rabbit Creek and a few stands on buttes in the southern quarter of the area have increased in height, width, density, and distribution since the original inventory in 1980 and are contributing to outstanding solitude.

For the reasons specified above and based on a review of all the available information including (BLM and citizen provided) photos, staff knowledge, and field review, the BLM concluded that the Binkie Lake unit, on its own merits, possesses sufficient combination of topographic and vegetative screening that one would be able to avoid the presence of others and experience outstanding solitude. Due to the unit now being larger and contiguous with Abert Rim WSA, both units are further enhanced as a whole and contribute mutually additive effects to outstanding opportunities for solitude.

(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 X No N/A

ONDA's 2005 inventory concluded that their proposed 20,213-acre Abert Rim Addition was contiguous with the Abert Rim WSA and the "unknown unit to the south." Therefore, because Abert Rim WSA has already been found to provide outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, new additions to the unit would increase the size, shape, and diversity of topography. Thus, characteristics of the unit would allow users to pursue outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined forms of recreation.

In 1991, the Abert Rim WSA was found to have outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation due to the area's variety of plants, geological features, topography, wildlife, and exhilarating views combined with wooded areas and springs offering outstanding opportunities for hiking, backpacking, hunting, camping, sightseeing, photography, wildlife viewing, and horseback riding (Wilderness Study Report, 1991; p. 44).

The BLM determined that opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation activities within the Binkie Lake unit are outstanding. The combined diversity of hiking, backpacking, hunting, camping, sightseeing, photography, wildlife viewing, and horseback riding are exceptional. Primitive recreation along Rabbit Creek and its upper drainages stand out as a unique opportunity.

For the reasons specified above and based on a review of all the available information including (BLM and citizen provided) photos, staff knowledge, and field review, the BLM concluded that outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation do exist within the unit on its own merits. These opportunities are further enhanced by the additive effect of outstanding primitive recreation opportunities present within the contiguous Abert Rim WSA to the west.

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

In 1991, the Abert Rim WSA was found to have numerous supplemental values including: one of the largest continuous fault scraps in North America, archaeological district on the National Register of Historic Sites and Places, the northernmost group of isolated ponderosa pines in the Warner Mountains, California bighorn sheep, nesting area for various raptors, deer winter range, and for educational and scientific purposes by geology and archaeology students.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Number and Name: OR-015-102/ Binkie Lake

Summary Results of Analysis:

1. Does the area meet 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 (items 1, 2 and 3 are checked "yes").

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

Prepared by (Names and Titles):


Shane Garside: Outdoor Recreation Planner

1/23/20
Date

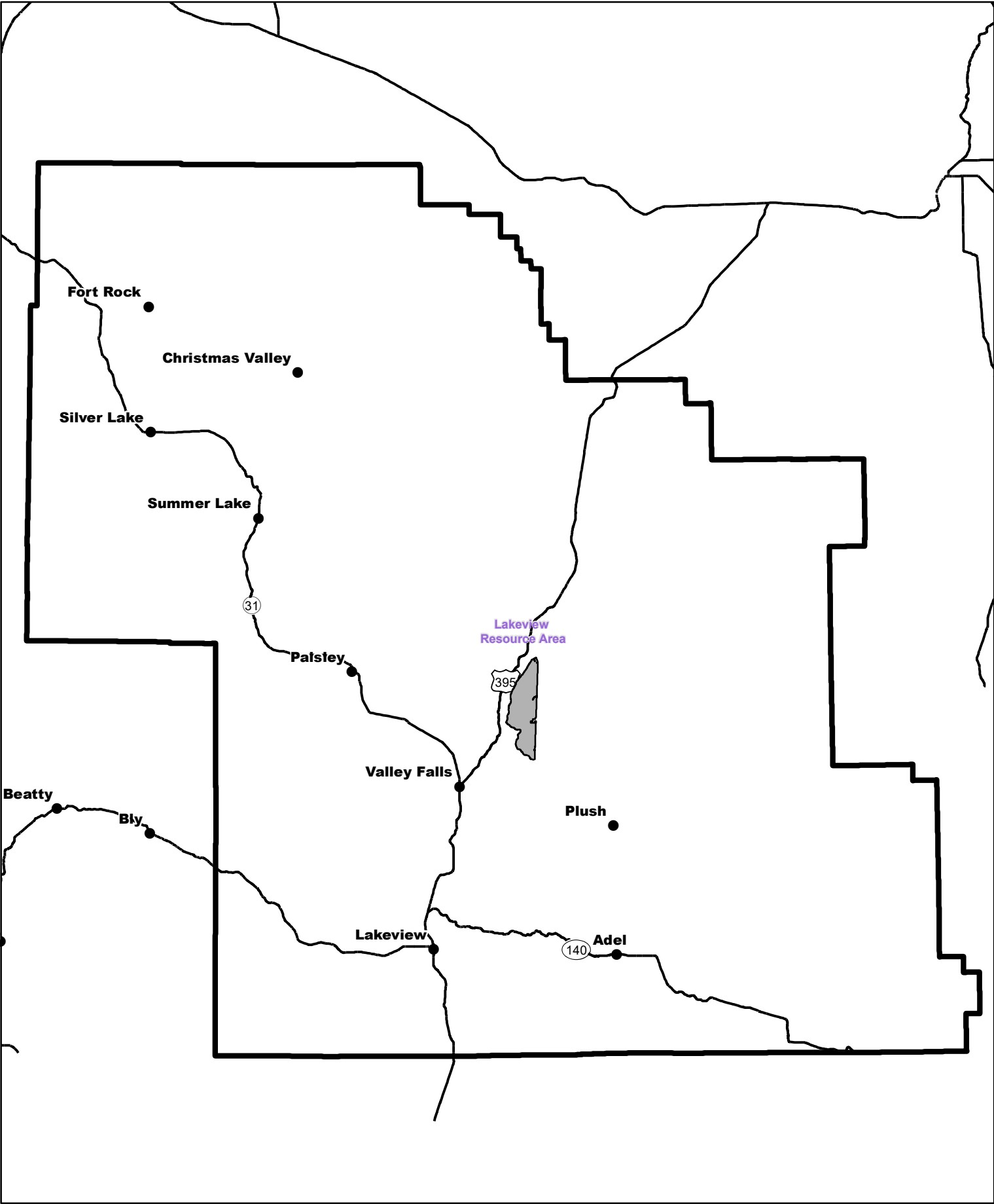
Approved by:


Jami Ludwig
Field Manager

Date

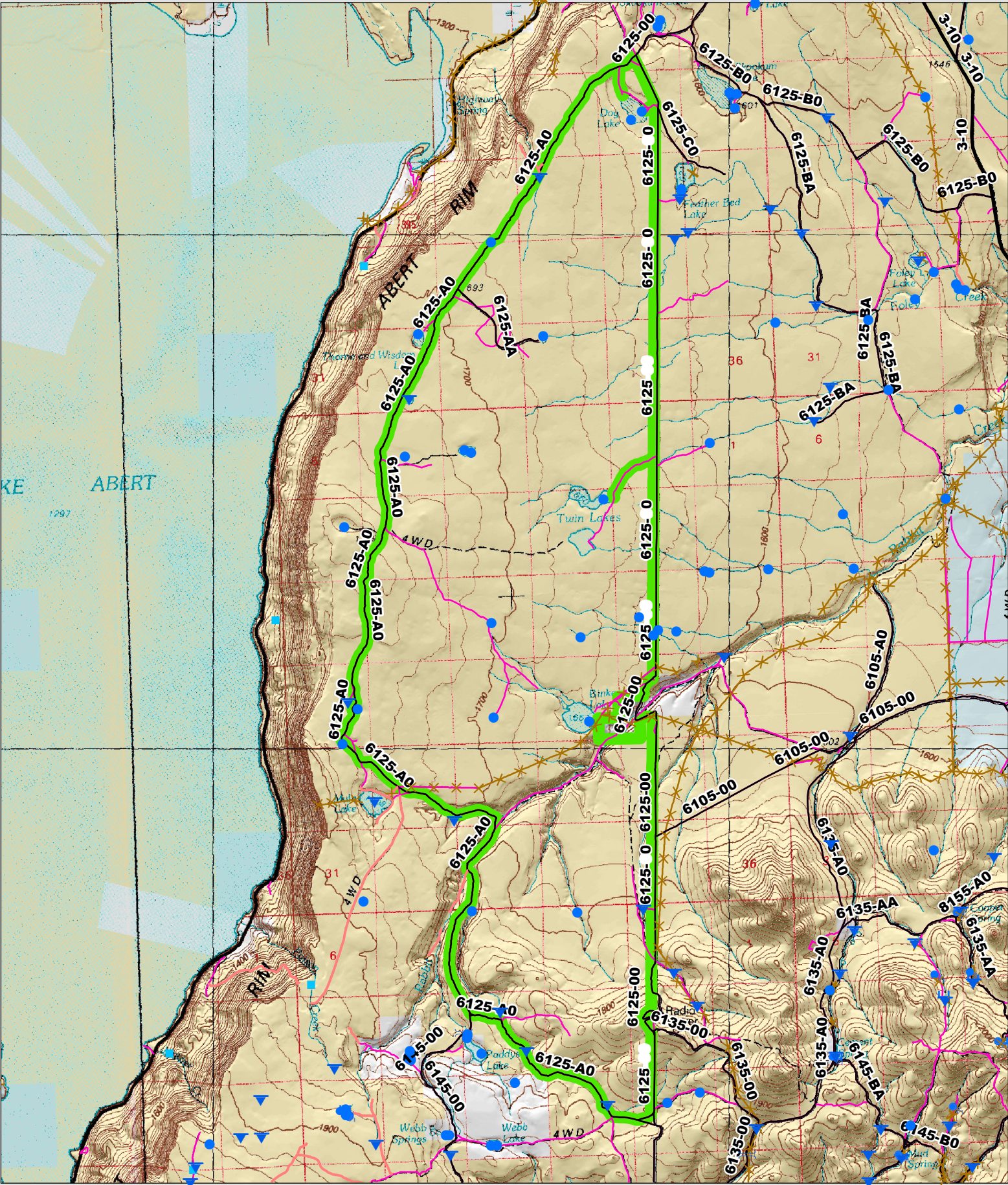
10/14/2020

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 Character Inventory Unit:

Binkie Lake



Wilderness Character Inventory Unit

Ownership

Bureau of Land Management

U.S. Forest Service

State

Private/Unknown

Motorized Routes

Highways

Reclaiming Routes

Interim Routes

Closed Routes

Ditch

Water Pipeline

Guzzler

Fences

Water Developments

Dam

Reservoir

Spring Development

Trough

Water Diversion

Water Tank

Waterhole

Well - Water

2

1

0

2 Miles

N

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