

Year: 2018

Inventory Unit Number/Name: OR-015-038A/ Cox Butte*

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 Inventory – Final Intensive Inventory Decisions; USDI BLM - Oregon and Washington, November 1980.

b) **Inventory Unit Number(s)/Name(s):** 1-38/ Cox Butte

c) **Map Name(s)/Number(s):** Intensive Wilderness Inventory - Final Decisions; USDI BLM - Oregon, November 1980.

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

*Note: Unit name was changed to better reflect values and features found within the unit, and to reduce confusion of similarly named inventory units.

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
1-37	41,200	N	N	N	N/A
1-37*	17,835	Y	N	N	NA

* The inventory of this unit was updated in 2013. However, due to a State Office-sponsored Wilderness Inventory Consistency Evaluation and subsequent guidance, the 2013 inventory analysis and findings are being replaced by this current 2018 inventory review. Documentation of the 2013 inventory can be found in the wilderness inventory project record.

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

In 1980, the unit was described as low rolling contours dropping in elevation to Dry Valley on the east. The unit contained some minor draws, which opened to the east. The northern end of the unit climbed in elevation toward Little Juniper Mountain and the highest point in the unit was Cox Butte. The unit had sagebrush cover and a large grass seeding with scattered juniper trees near the northern border. The unit was found to contain 25 water developments (which ranged in from small reservoirs to large lakebed pits), 29 miles of “ways,” and Cox Grove drill seeding (1800 acres). The general flatness of the terrain left one exposed to all the developments listed above, and the area did not retain a natural appearance. The unit did not meet the naturalness criteria because the developments were scattered through the unit to the extent that they were found to be unavoidable. Opportunities for solitude were described as limited to the northern part of the unit where the terrain is more broken and vegetated. This unit was described as having high potential for primitive recreation opportunities. Hunting and wildlife observation was thought to be good due to the abundance of birds, deer, and antelope. Although the area could be hiked and provide some areas of interest for the recreationist, the disturbances were found to prevent the experience from having primitive or wilderness qualities.

FORM 2

**DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY
CONDITIONS**

Unit Number/Name: OR-015-038A/ Cox Butte

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

From 2008 to 2016, the BLM conducted a field inventory of the area to update its road and wilderness inventory and to gather additional information. This fieldwork included photo documentation of the boundary and interior routes and a re-evaluation of wilderness characteristics for this area. Using both citizen provided and BLM photos, field logs, and staff field knowledge, the BLM completed route analysis and made boundary determinations within the area in 2017.

The BLM determined that the inventory unit is bounded by BLM Roads 6130-00 (Little Juniper) and 6120-00 (Cox Canyon) on the west; BLM Road 6120-B0 (West Dry Valley) on the south; and BLM Road 6110-00 (Dry Valley) on the east. Based on these boundary determinations, historic unit 1-38 was divided into 4 smaller inventory units. This evaluation focuses on the northern portion of historic unit 1-38.

Thus, based on these boundary and road determinations, the BLM found the Cox Butte inventory unit to exceed the minimum size criteria at approximately 17,835 acres of BLM-administered lands.

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:

Inventory Unit OR-015-038A is approximately 7 miles long by 5 miles wide and is located eight miles south of Wagonfire, Oregon. The current unit is smaller than historic unit 1-38. As a result, over 23,000 acres of flat, low rolling, terrain and numerous man-made developments were removed from the unit. The unit retained its most topographically diverse areas (Cox Butte, Smoke Out Canyon, Cox Canyon, and one of the southernmost buttes of the Horsehead Mountains), as well as areas with western junipers along the northern boundary. A wildfire burned about 20% of the unit in 1984. Sagebrush, rabbit brush, and grass still dominate the majority of the unit.

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

The 1980 inventory evaluated a much larger historic inventory unit (1-38) and found that it was unnatural in character due to 25 water developments, 29 miles of “ways,” and Cox Grove drill seeding (1800 acres). The current inventory unit has been reduced in size due to the identification of additional boundary roads that now break up the original inventory unit into smaller subunits that must be evaluated separately.

The BLM found the following man-made developments/disturbances within the unit: 910 acres of seedings, 825 acres of wildfire, 7 miles of motorized routes, 0.5 miles of reclaiming routes, 5 miles of fence lines, 7 reservoirs, 5 waterholes, 2 wells, and 1 abandoned mining area.

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 (1/4th mile or less) and are thus substantially unnoticeable from further distances. The topography and vegetation in the northern half of the unit plays a large role in screening disturbances and man-made developments. In addition, the majority of disturbances are located near the perimeter of the unit and, as such, have a small area of influence. Areas that were seeded or allowed to revegetate naturally, have been invaded by rabbit bush, sagebrush, and grasses and have returned to a natural, post fire, appearing condition.

Based on a review of all the available information including photos, staff knowledge, and field review, the BLM concluded that the unit appears in a natural condition where the imprints 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 No N/A

The 1980 inventory evaluated a much larger historic inventory unit (1-38) and determined that pockets of solitude existed in the northern portion of the historic unit where the terrain was more broken. The current inventory unit has been reduced in size due to the identification of additional boundary roads that now break up the original inventory unit into smaller subunits that must be evaluated separately.

The BLM determined that although the unit has reduced in size from the original inventory, the most topographically diverse areas (Cox Butte, Smoke Out Canyon, Cox Canyon, and one of the southernmost buttes of the Horsehead Mountains), are still included. Western juniper has expanded in height, width, density and distribution since 1980, with several stands of trees in the northern portion of area, sufficient to provide over 2,000 acres of vegetative screening.

Thus, 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 the Cox Butte inventory unit possesses outstanding opportunities for solitude where one could avoid the sights and sounds of others in the area.

(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

The 1980 inventory evaluated a much larger historic inventory unit (1-38) and found that it did not have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation even though it did contain an abundance of wildlife, possessed a high potential for hunting activities, and provided areas of interest for hiking. The current inventory unit has been reduced in size due to the identification of additional boundary roads that now break up the original inventory unit into smaller subunits that must be evaluated separately.

The BLM determined that although the unit has reduced in size from the original inventory, the remaining area possesses abundant opportunities for all activities listed above in combination with the diversity of camping, backpacking, horse-riding, trapping, sightseeing, exploration, and photography across the unit. The BLM noted that opportunities for hiking within the numerous deep, broken, canyons of Cox, Smoke, and a large unnamed canyon running the entire width of the unit, represent over 13 miles of unique opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

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

The BLM noted the presence of archeological values, as well as, potential raptor, antelope, mule deer, chucker, and sage grouse habitat.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Number and Name: OR-015-038A/ Cox Butte

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 must be checked "yes")*.
- 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

 6/4/18
Date


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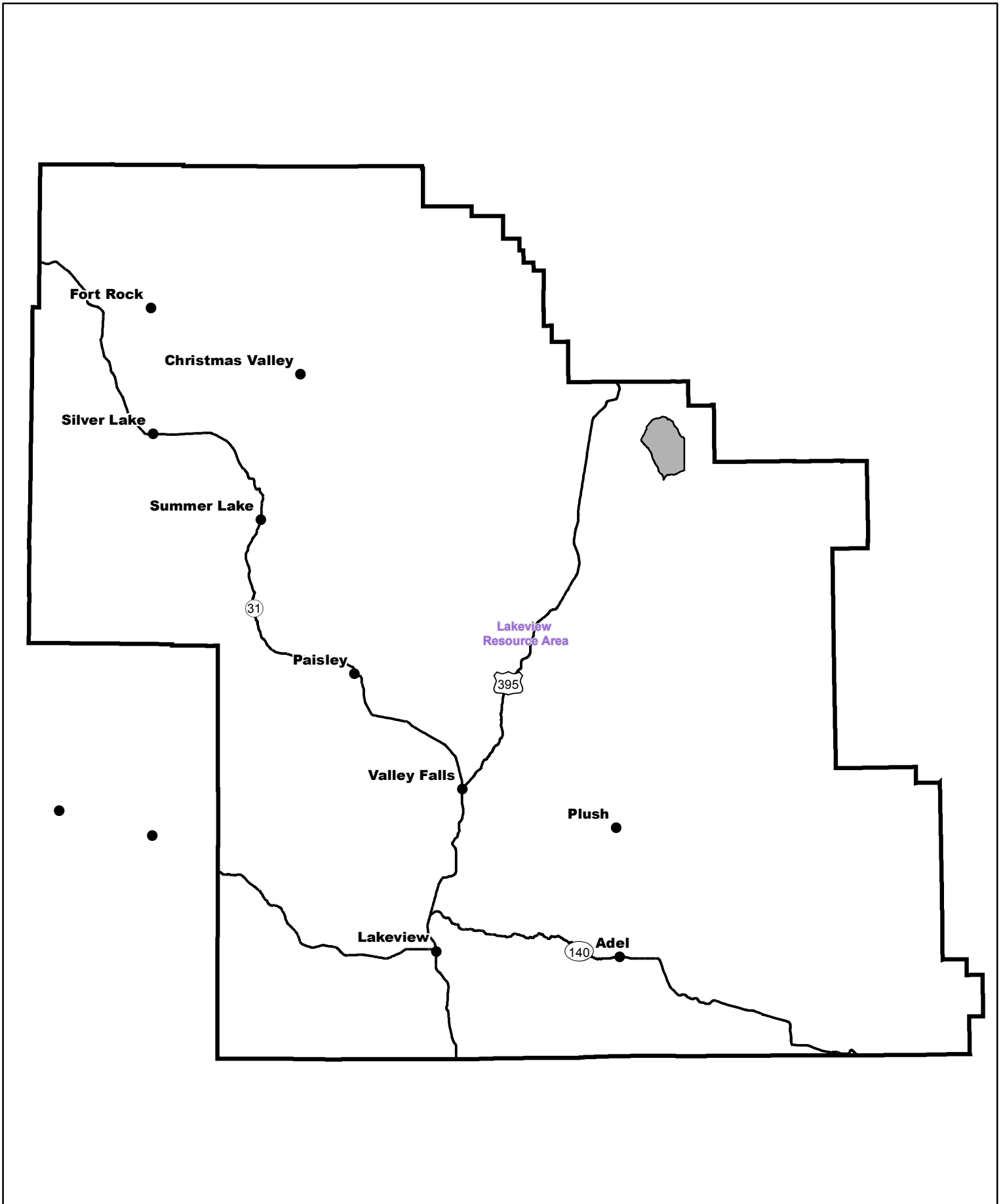
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Approved by:

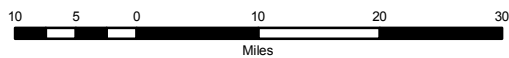

J. Todd Forbes
Field Manager


 6/4/18
Date

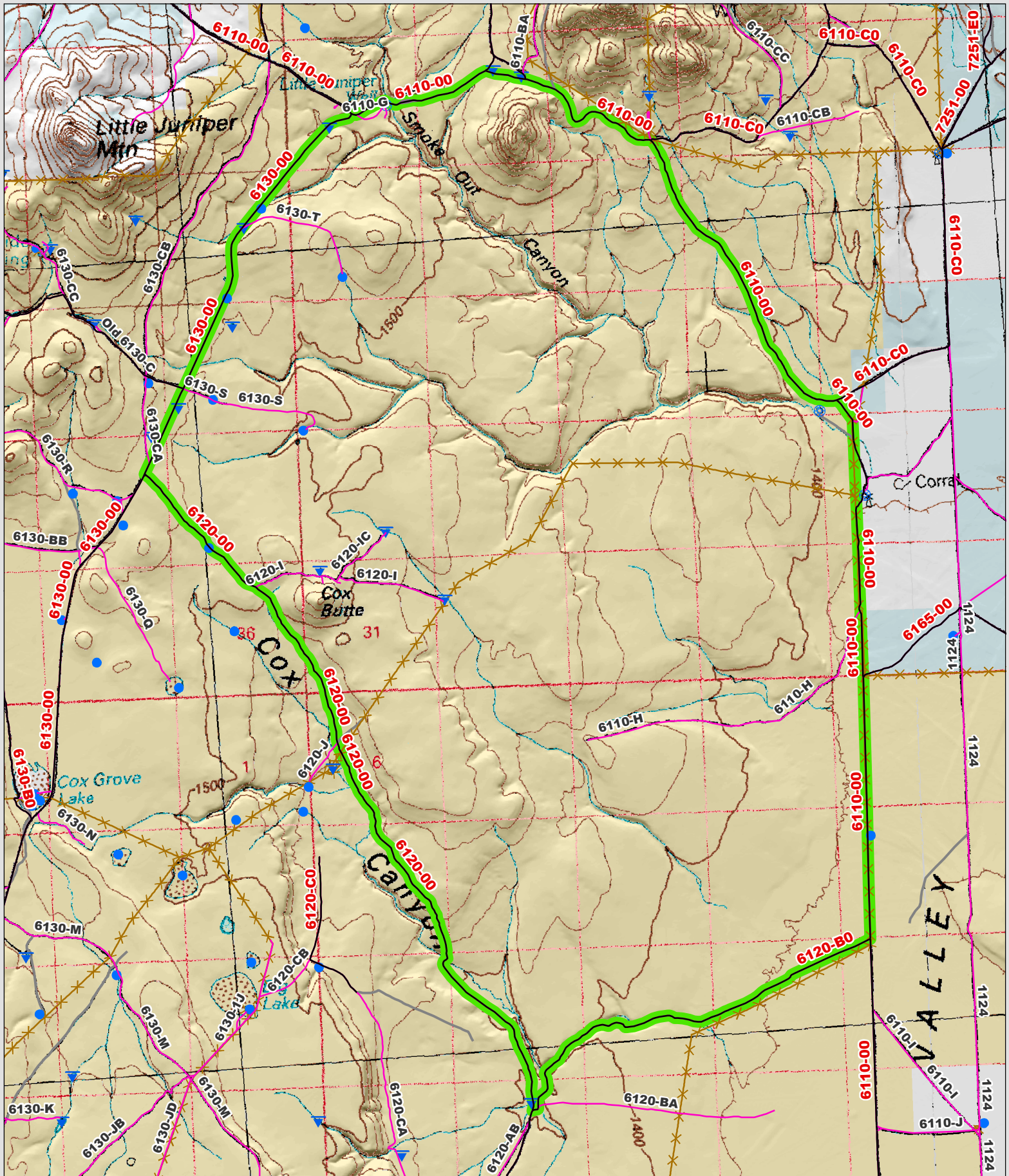
This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under 43 CFR parts either 4 or 1610.5-2.



 Wilderness Character Inventory Unit



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Wilderness Character Inventory Unit

Ownership

- Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Forest Service
- State
- Private/Unknown

Roads/Trails

- Motorized Routes
- Highways
- Reclaiming Routes
- Interim Routes

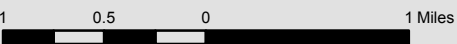
Pipelines and Ditches

- Ditch
- Water Pipeline
- Guzzer
- Fences

Water Developments

- Dam
- Reservoir
- Spring Development
- Trough
- Water Diversion

- Water Tank
- Waterhole
- Well - Water



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