

Year: 2020

Inventory Unit Number/Name: OR-015-124/ Fisher Canyon*

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):** 1-124/ Fish Canyon South; 1-27/ Wool Lake

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.

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 (acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
1-124	8,160	Y	N	N	None
1-124*	11,772	N	N/A	N/A	N/A
1-127	5,360	N	N	N	N

* 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 2020 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 1980, Unit 1-124 was described as having topography typical of the northern basin and range province. There was a fault block through the middle of the unit with a steep

escarpment on the eastern side. Below the escarpment, there was a narrow basin. The western side dipped gently into the southwest. The southern tip of the unit is big sage. Juniper stands were found on the eastern portion of the unit. There were 4 miles of "ways" and 5 small lakebed pits which did not have significant impacts on the unit. The lakebed pits were substantially noticeable in one section on the south of the unit. The remaining portion of the unit appeared in a generally natural condition. The unit did not have an outstanding opportunity solitude because of the limited amount of topographic and vegetative screening and the narrow shape of the unit. One would have found it very difficult to be isolated from the sights and sounds of others in the unit. The unit offered potential for hiking, hunting, and wildlife observation. However, the size and shape of the unit limited these opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. There were no known supplemental values.

In 1980, Unit 1-127 was described as broken rims and low angle slopes on the west that and broke into a high flat plain to the east. The unit contained 4 ephemeral lakes, the largest of which was Wool Lake. The lakes were all shallow depressions. Cover on the unit was essentially sagebrush with junipers scattered along rims. There were 4 "ways" into the unit and 5 substantial reservoirs developments. Because of the small size of the unit, these man-made features were found to strongly impact the area. The unit did not appear relatively free of the works of man nor primarily affected by the forces of nature. The unit was very small and its vegetation and topography provided little screening. A visitor would have had difficulty avoiding the sights and sounds of others in the unit. The unit did offer considerable opportunity for antelope hunting; however, this was not considered a primitive and unconfined recreation activity as normally practiced in the region. The unit was found to be a scenic area, but the limitations of size and topography were thought to restrict opportunities for hiking or backpacking. The unit did not offer outstanding opportunities for recreation. The unit was reported to contain archeological values, but documentation for the area had not been completed at that time.

FORM 2

DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS

Unit Number/Name: OR-015-124/ Fisher Canyon

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

In 2005, the BLM received a citizen proposal from the Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA) for the 424,570-acre Hart Mountain Proposed Wilderness Study Area (WSA). ONDA included in their information a narrative report, maps, photos, photo and route logs, and GIS data. The photos submitted by ONDA were taken in 2004. They identified this large area as having no interior routes, which met the BLM wilderness inventory definition of a road (see Map, p. 96 of ONDA 2005). In 2018, the BLM received an additional citizen inventory from the O'Keeffe ranch. All these materials were considered during the BLM's wilderness inventory process for this area.

Between 2008 and 2019, 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 the citizen submitted inventories mentioned above. This fieldwork included photo documentation of the boundary and interior routes and a re-evaluation of wilderness characteristics for this area. Using the submitted citizen inventories mentioned above and BLM photos, field logs, and staff field knowledge, the BLM completed route analysis within the area in 2017 and revised this information in 2019 based on new citizen submitted information submitted.

The BLM determined that several of the routes ONDA identified as “ways” are boundary roads. Hart Mountain proposed WSA is not one large roadless unit, but is comprised of several smaller inventory units, which must be evaluated individually. Based on a review of the most recent citizen inventory submitted, the BLM revised portions of routes 6152-00, 6152-B0, and 6152-BB.

The BLM determined that the inventory unit is bounded by BLM Roads 6152-00, 6132-00, private, and state lands to the west; 6152-00, BLM interim numbered road 6162-E0, and private lands to the south; 6162-00 to the east; 6152-00, 6152-B0, 6152-BB, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) lands to the north. Additionally, due to changes in boundary and road determinations, 5,841 acres (historic inventory unit 1-127) was added to the northern portion of the area, while an 81-acre private inholding was removed from the inventory unit.

Thus, based on these boundary and road determinations, the BLM found the Fisher Canyon inventory unit was found to exceed the minimum size criteria at approximately 16,490 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:

The unit is located approximately 10 miles northeast of the town of Adel, Oregon. The inventory unit is approximately 8 miles long by 4 miles wide, with a 81-acre private inholding. Topographically, the unit is dominated by Fisher Canyon (600-1,200 ft. deep), a highly eroded, multi-armed, feature running over 9 miles from the northwest corner to the southwest corner of the unit. Fisher Canyon also contains two lakebeds (Robinson Lake and Mud Lake Reservoir). The northeastern third of the unit is comprised of a rolling plateau with minor to moderate (450 ft. tall) rims, 4 lakebed depressions (including Mary Lake and Wool Lake), and the upper reaches of Riffle Canyon. The western quarter of the unit is comprised of the Fish Creek drainage (500-900 ft. deep), running 3 miles beneath a steep, razor back ridge with several peaks (5,174, 5,152, 5,243, ft.) and points (5,396, 5,414, 5,382 ft.). The southwestern third of the unit is characterized by a large fault block, with and a gradual sloping western aspect, ranging from 4900 ft. to 5900 ft. Vegetative, the inventory

unit is comprised of sagebrush, grasses, and western juniper. While juniper can be found scattered across the entire unit, there are several dense stands in the Fisher Canyon area (approximately 2,500 acres). A wildfire (1984) and a prescribed burn (1995) burned 3,551 acres in the central-eastern portion of the unit. Additionally, 1,569 acres along the eastern boundary of the unit is within the High Lakes Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), which was established in 2003 to protect unique cultural values.

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

In 1980, the original inventory for unit 1-124 noted as having 4 miles of “ways” and 5 small lakebed pits which did not have significant impacts on the unit. The lakebed pits were substantially noticeable in one section on the south of the unit. The remaining portion of the unit appeared in a generally natural condition. The original inventory for unit 1-127 noted as having 4 “ways” into the unit and 5 substantial reservoirs developments. Because of the small size of the unit, these man-made features were found to strongly impact the area. The unit did not appear relatively free of the works of man nor primarily affected by the forces of nature. However, the current inventory unit is much larger; being formed by original inventory unit 1-124 and 1-127, and now must be evaluated by its own merits for naturalness.

ONDA’s 2005 inventory concluded that their Hart Mountain Proposed Wilderness Study Area appears in a natural condition, primarily affected by the forces of nature. “Many of the manmade developments [are]...deteriorated making them appear more natural in the landscape, they do not have a cumulative impact to the area (p. 92-93 of ONDA 2005).” However, as noted above, the BLM found that this proposed WSA is not one large roadless unit, but is comprised of several smaller inventory units, within which the natural character must be evaluated individually.

The O’Keeffe Ranch noted that several routes in the area had been maintained and that several of the manmade structures in the area were visible from long distances. The BLM reviewed the routes within this unit and made changes to portions of 5 different routes.

The unit currently contains the following man-made developments/disturbances: 2,595 acres of prescribed burns, 988 acres of chemical treatments, 976 acres of seeding, 956 acres of wildfire, 24 miles of motorized routes, 2.5 miles of reclaiming routes, 1.5 miles of cat lines, 9 miles fence lines, 25 waterholes, 10 reservoirs, and 2 dams.

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 of the area also plays a large role in screening disturbances and man-made developments. In addition, most disturbances are located near the perimeter of the unit and, as such, have a small area of influence. Additionally, 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

In 1980, unit 1-124 was not found to possess outstanding opportunity solitude because of the limited amount of topographic and vegetative screening and the narrow shape of the unit. The inventory concluded that one would have found it very difficult to be isolated from the sights and sounds of others in the unit. Unit 1-127 was determined to lack outstanding opportunity solitude due to limited topography and vegetation for screening. As such, the inventory concluded that a visitor would have difficulty avoiding the sights and sounds of others in the unit. However, the current inventory unit is much larger, being formed by historic unit 1-124 and 1-127, and now must be evaluated on its own merits for solitude.

In 2005, ONDA's inventory identified the larger 424,570-acre Hart Mountain Proposed WSA as having outstanding opportunities for solitude based on sheer size as their proposal is contiguous with other inventory units and therefore no longer stands alone. As such, the sights and sounds of others could easily be avoided. ONDA noted that there are still flat and exposed slopes, but they do not dominate the entirety of the proposed WSA and one could easily find areas that have topographic screening. However, the BLM did not find this proposal to be one large roadless area, but is comprised of a number of smaller inventory units that must be evaluated individually.

Considering portions of the two former inventory areas are now adjoined to form a 16,490 acre unit, the BLM determined that there are several outstanding opportunities for solitude across the area due to vegetative and topographic screening, in combination with the unit's size. Topographically, the unit is dominated by Fisher Canyon (600-1,200 ft. deep), a highly eroded, multi-armed, feature running over 9 miles from the northwest corner to the southwest corner of the unit. Fisher Canyon also contains two lakebeds (Robinson Lake and Mud Lake Reservoir). The northeastern third of the unit is comprised of a rolling plateau with minor to moderate (450 ft. tall) rims, 4 lakebed depressions (including Mary Lake and Wool Lake), and the upper reaches of Riffle Canyon. The western quarter of the unit is comprised of the Fish Creek drainage (500-900 ft. deep), running 3 miles beneath a steep, razor back ridge with several peaks (5,174, 5,152, 5,243, ft.) and points (5,396, 5,414, 5,382 ft.). The southwestern third of the unit is characterized by a large fault block, with and a gradual sloping western aspect, ranging from 4900 ft. to 5900 ft. Western juniper stands have greatly expanded in acreage (2,500), height, width, and density. Sufficient pockets of juniper for screening purposes can now be found within the Fish Creek drainage, in the central portion of the unit. Due to the above-described compartmentalized topography and vegetative conditions within the unit, one would easily be able to avoid the sights and sounds of others within the unit.

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 Fisher Canyon inventory unit possesses 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 No N/A

In 1980, unit 1-124 was determined to offer potential for hiking, hunting, and wildlife observation. However, the size and shape of the unit limited these opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Unit 1-127 was found to possess considerable opportunity for antelope hunting; however, this was not considered a primitive and unconfined recreation activity as normally practiced in the region. The unit was found to be a scenic area, but the limitations of size and topography were thought to restrict opportunities for hiking or backpacking. The unit did not offer outstanding opportunities for recreation. However, the current inventory unit is much larger, being formed by historic inventory units 1-124 and 1-127, and now must be evaluated by its own merits for primitive and unconfined recreation.

In 2005, ONDA's inventory identified the larger 424,570-acre Hart Mountain Proposed WSA as having outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation based on sheer size as their proposal is contiguous with other inventory units and therefore no longer stands alone. ONDA considered potential opportunities for hunting, hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, wildlife observation, and photography as outstanding (p. 93 of ONDA 2005). However, the BLM did not find this proposal to be one large roadless area, but is comprised of a number of smaller inventory units that must be evaluated individually.

Considering portions of the two former inventory areas are now adjoined to form a 16,490 acre unit, the BLM determined that there are now abundant opportunities for all activities listed above in combination with the diversity of camping, exploration, sightseeing, and stargazing are exceptional. The BLM determined that opportunities for hiking up Fisher Canyon and/or its rims represent unique opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

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

The BLM found the unit to possess archaeological and geological values as well as the presence golden eagles, pigmy rabbit, pronghorn antelope, mule deer, California bighorn sheep, various bat species, and sage-grouse habitat.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Number and Name: OR-015-124/ Fisher Canyon

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):


Shane Garside: Outdoor Recreation Planner

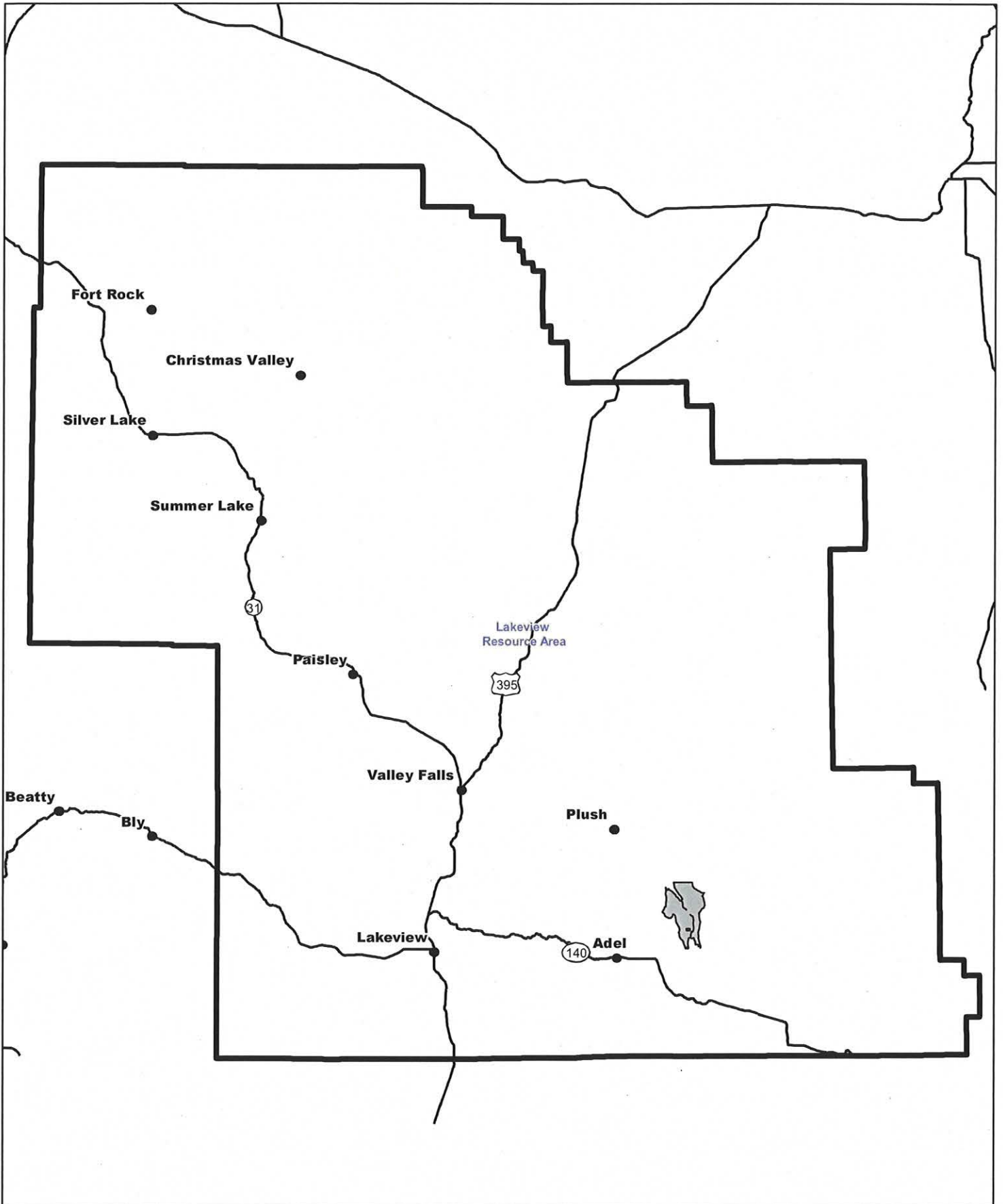
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Date


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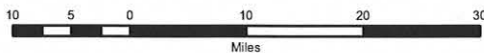

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Field Manager


 2/14/20
Date

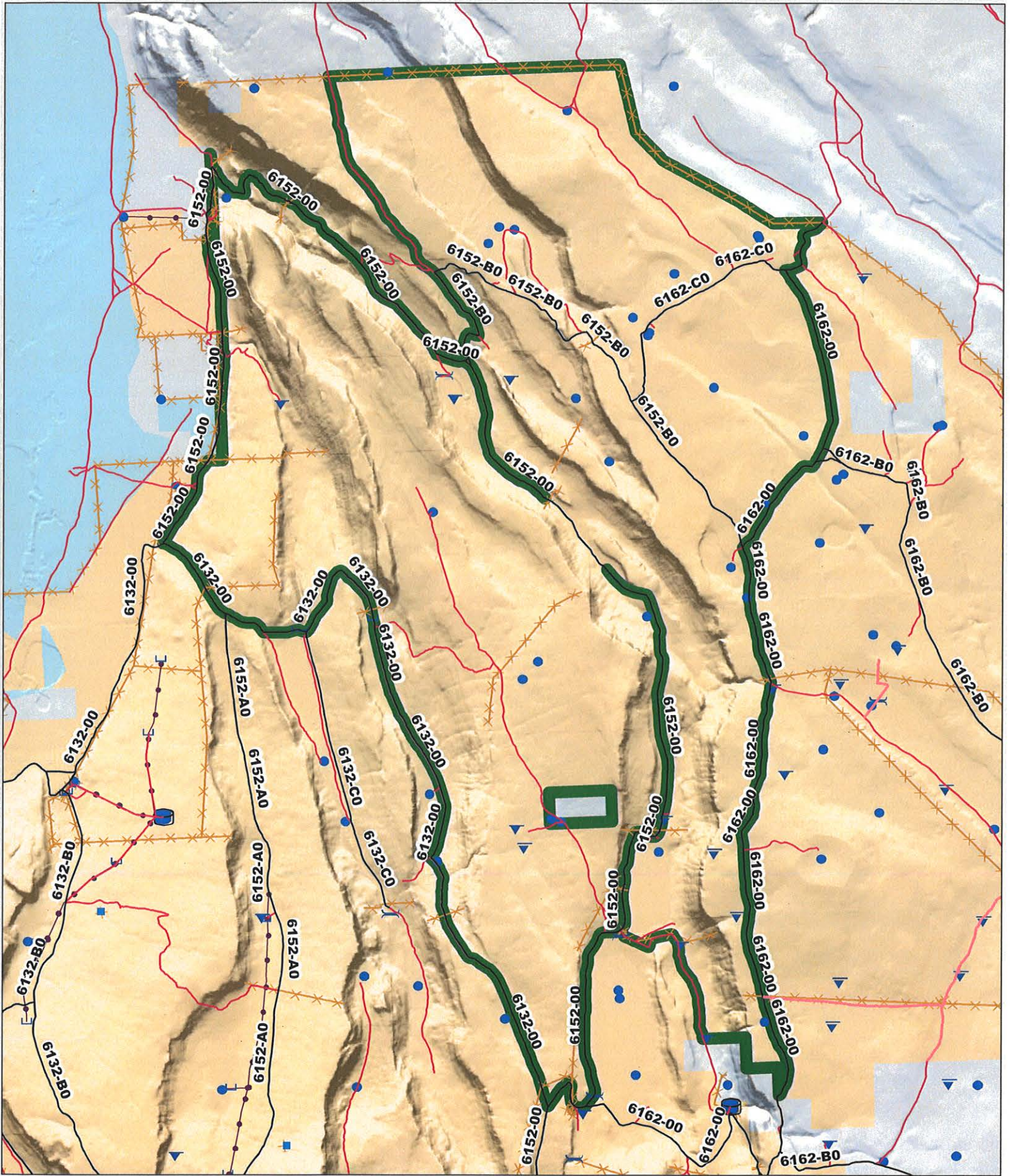
This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under 43 CFR parts either 4 or 1610.5-2.



 Wilderness Character Inventory Unit



 No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data were compiled from various sources. This information may not meet full-scale Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated without notification.



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
- Closed Routes

Pipelines and Ditches

- Ditch
- Water Pipeline
- Guzzler
- Fences

Water Developments

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

Water Tank

Waterhole

Well - Water

1 0.5 0 1 Miles



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