

Year: 2020

Inventory Unit Number/Name: OR-015-108F/ Rabbit Hills

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 & Washington: Final Intensive Inventory Decisions, November 1980.

b) (Historic) **Inventory Unit Number(s)/Unit Name(s):** 1-108F / Rabbit Hills

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
1-108F	11,840	Y	N	N	Y
1-108F*	7,367	N	N/A	N/A	N/A
1-108G*	6,207	Y	N	N	N/A

* The inventory of these units 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): In 1980, unit 1-108F (Rabbit Hills) was described as including the Rabbit Hills and some of the Rabbit Basin. The Rabbit Hills rose 900 feet from the surrounding sagebrush covered flat. Rabbit Basin was described as a flat vegetated dry lakebed. There are some erosion features in the north and gentle slopes in the south. The area contained 3 miles of

primitive routes, 2 miles of pasture division fence, and a few stock tanks. These man-made features were noted as substantially unnoticeable and the majority of the acreage within the unit appeared to be in natural condition. The unit did not offer outstanding opportunities due to the configuration between the low angles of the slopes in the unit, in combination with low vegetative cover, left one exposed to the presence of other persons within the unit. Although hiking, rock hounding and photography were available within the unit, these primitive recreation opportunities were not found to be outstanding.

FORM 2

DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS

a. **Unit Number/Name:** OR-015-108F/ Rabbit Hills

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

In 2018, the BLM received a citizen inventory from the Fitzgerald Partners. All these materials were considered during the BLM's wilderness inventory process for this area.

Between 2008 and 2019, the BLM staff conducted a field inventory of the area to update its road and wilderness inventory for this area. This fieldwork included photo documentation of the boundary and interior routes. Using BLM photos, field logs, and staff field knowledge, the BLM completed route analyses of the routes within the area in 2017 and revised this information in 2019 based on new citizen submitted information submitted.

The BLM determined that the former unit 1-108F was currently bounded by County road 3-10 (Hogback) and 3-11 (Flagstaff) right-of-ways, along with BLM routes 6155-00 (Warner Valley) and 6155-B0 (South Rabbit Basin). All of these routes were found to meet the wilderness inventory definition of a boundary road. Additionally, the boundary of this unit was changed to remove approximately 28 acres of disturbance (see natural condition discussion). As a result, the remainder of unit 1-108F contains approximately 13,547 acres of BLM administered lands. BLM also reviewed the Fitzgerald Partners submission, but did not make any route changes based on this information.

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 about 14 miles north of Plush, Oregon. The unit is approximately 6.5 miles long and 5 miles wide. The topography has not changed since the original inventory; however the vegetation has changed from primarily mid-height shrubs to low grasses as a result of wildfire and seeding with crested wheatgrass in the mid-1980's.

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

In 1980, the unit was described as containing 3 miles of primitive routes, 2 miles of pasture division fence, and a few stock tanks. Overall, these man-made features were noted as substantially unnoticeable, thus the majority of the unit appeared to be in a natural condition.

The Fitzgerald Partners noted that several of the manmade structures in the area were visible from long distances. The BLM reviewed all the information submitted but did not make any changes to this unit.

The unit currently contains the following man-made developments/disturbances: 15.7 miles of pasture division fence, 8 miles of primitive motorized routes, 3 miles of reclaiming routes, 1 waterhole, 10,634 acres of wildfire, and 6,546 acres of non-native seeding scattered throughout the unit. While, most of these developments existed on the ground in 1980, most were not mapped nor identified during the inventory in 1980 by BLM. In addition, during the original inventory, most of these developments were relatively new and the visual impacts were fresh and substantially noticeable. Now, almost 4 decades later, 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. For example, drill rows from seedings implemented in the mid-1980s are no longer visible. Lastly, approximately 28 acres have been removed from the inventory unit including two right-of-ways along County Road 3-10 and 3-11, as well as a mineral pit and a pipeline/pump house found to be substantially noticeable.

Based on a review of all the available information including photos, staff knowledge, and field review, the BLM concluded that the natural condition of the unit has improved since the original inventory. Rabbit Hills unit appears in natural condition where the imprint of man is substantially unnoticeable. Thus, the unit overall was found to be primarily affected by the forces of nature.

(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 original 1980 inventory did not find outstanding opportunities of solitude in the unit; sighting low angle of slopes in combination with low vegetative cover would leave one exposed to the presence of other persons.

While the BLM agrees with the assessment of low vegetative cover, the team determined claims of low angle slopes to be in error. The Rabbit Hills are a very prominent topographic feature in the area with multiple peaks (ranging in elevation from 4,600-5,689 feet), tight valleys, and numerous drainages. Thus, the Rabbit Hills provide

excellent topographic screening across the unit such that one would be able to avoid the presence of others and experience 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 outstanding opportunities for solitude do exist within a majority of the unit.

(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 original 1980 inventory did not find outstanding opportunities primitive and unconfined recreation in the unit; sighting its lack of scenic value and unique character, while noting the area's potential for rock hounding, hiking, and photography.

The BLM now finds these claims to be in error. All activities listed above in combination with the diversity of backpacking, hunting, camping, sightseeing, wildlife viewing, and horseback riding are exceptional. Additionally, the previous inventory contradicted itself by claiming there was a potential for photography, but that scenic values were lacking. The BLM determined that opportunities for hiking from peak to peak within the unit in combination with outstanding views (both within and outward) from the unit stand out as a unique opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation.

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 Rabbit Hills unit.

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

The BLM concluded that rock hounding and archaeological supplemental values sited in the 1980 inventory are still present along with golden eagle nesting and general sage-rouse habitat.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Name and Number: OR-015-108F/ Rabbit Hills

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 (Member Names and Titles):


Shane Garside: Outdoor Recreation Planner

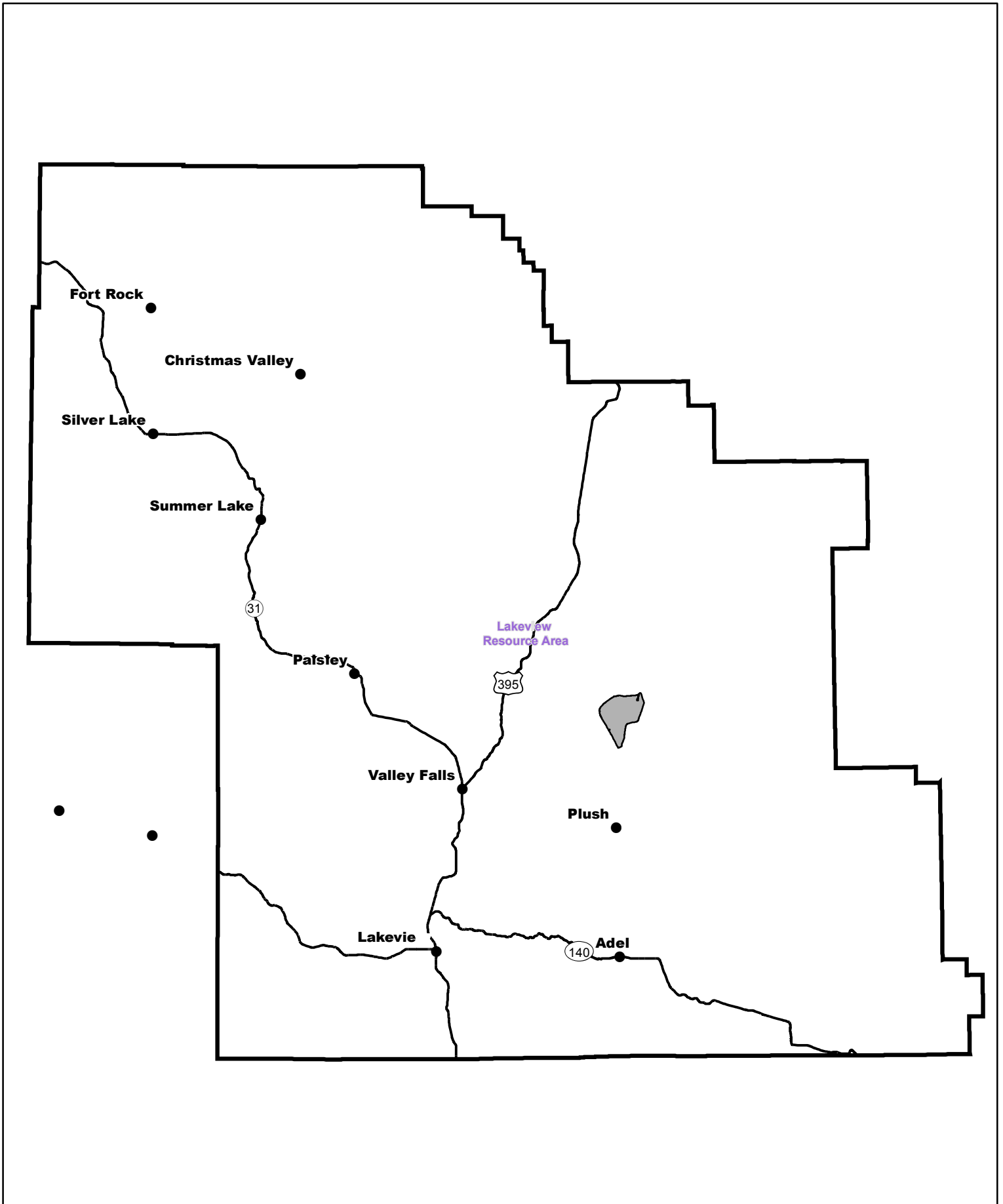
9/22/20
Date


Approved by:

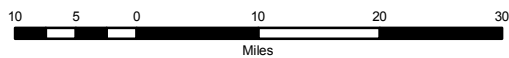

Jami Ludwig
Field Manager


10/14/2020
Date

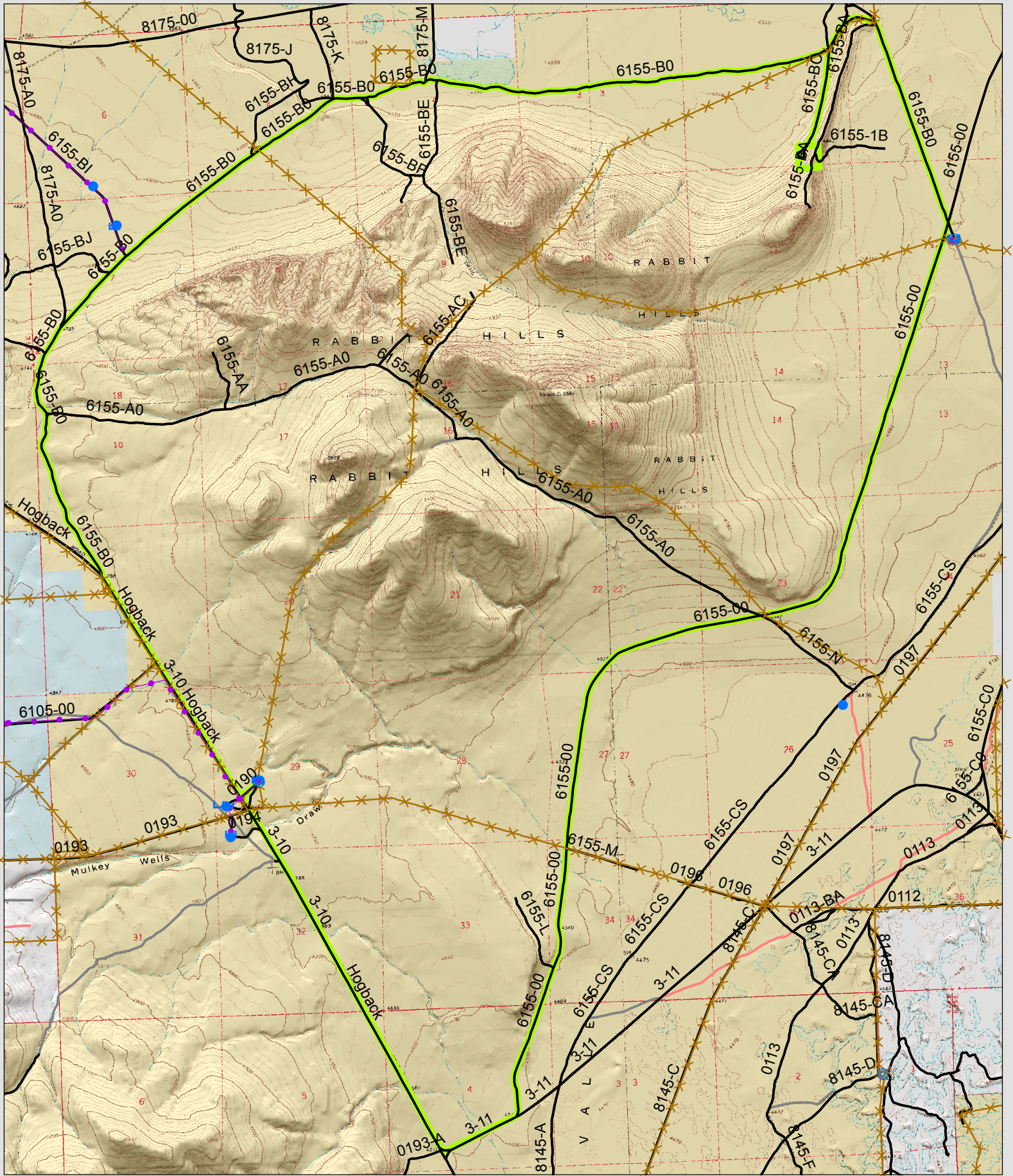
This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR parts 4 or 1610.5-2.



 Wilderness 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 National Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated without notification.



<p>Wilderness Character Inventory Unit</p> <p>Ownership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bureau of Land Management U.S. Forest Service State Private/Unknown 	<p>Roads/Trails</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motorized Routes Closed Routes Reclaiming Routes Motorized and Non-Motorized Trails 	<p>Pipelines and Ditches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ditch Water Pipeline Guzzler Fences 	<p>Water Developments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dam Reservoir Spring Development Trough Water Diversion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Tank Waterhole Well - Water 	<p>1 0.5 0 Miles</p> <p>N W E S</p>	<p>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 National Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated without notification.</p>
--	---	--	--	--	---	--