

Year: 2018 Inventory Unit Number/Name: OR-015-29A/ South Plateau 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:

- a. BLM Wilderness Inventory files for Pacific Power and Light Company (PP&L) Transmission Line: PP&L Roadless Area Inventory Files (1977).

b) Inventory Unit Number(s)/ Name(s): 1-29 and PP&L #OR-010-01-06/ South Plateau

c) Map Name(s)/Number(s):

- a. Proposed Initial Inventory: Roadless Areas and Islands Which Do Not Have Wilderness Characteristics; USDI BLM - Oregon, April 1979.
- b. 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
1-29	12,800	Y	N	N	N
1-29A*	8,416	Y	N	N	N/A

* The inventory of this unit was updated in 2009. However, due to a State Office-sponsored Wilderness Inventory Consistency Evaluation and subsequent guidance, the 2009 inventory analysis and findings are being replaced by this current 2018 inventory review. Documentation of the 2009 inventory can be found in the wilderness inventory project record.

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

Historic Unit 1-29 was described as a nearly flat plateau with rolling ridges on the west and a few low rims breaking off to the south. Vegetation consisted of desert shrubs. External intrusions were noted as small scale well development and a gravel county road along the southern boundary. Overall, the area was determined to be pristine or nearly so with minimal evidence of man's activity. Outstanding opportunities for solitude were not found to be present within the unit. Recreation was noted as possible low quality antelope hunting along with hiking, horseback riding; but overall not outstanding. Supplemental value were not present.

FORM 2

DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS

Unit Number/Name: OR-015-29A/ South Plateau West

(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 37,873-acre Sand Dunes proposed Wilderness Study Area (WSA). ONDA concluded that their Sand Dunes proposal is also contiguous with the existing Sand Dunes WSA. ONDA included in their information a narrative report, maps, photos, photo and route logs, and GIS data. All of these materials were considered during the BLM's wilderness inventory update for this area. 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 (p. 186 of ONDA 2005).

Between 2008 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 a few of the routes ONDA identified as "ways" are boundary roads and a few of the routes ONDA identified as boundary roads are

“ways.” The Sand Dunes proposed WSA is not one large roadless unit, but is comprised of two inventory units, which must be evaluated individually.

The BLM determined that the inventory unit is bounded by BLM Road 6111-00 and private lands on the north; 6121-00 on the east; and a right-of-way for County Road 5-14 to the southwest. Due to changes in boundary determinations (right-of-way buffer correction and mapping updates) approximately 32 acres were removed from this unit.

Thus, based on these boundary and road determinations, the BLM found the South Plateau West inventory unit to exceed the minimum size criteria at approximately 8,384 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:

This unit is located approximately 19 miles east of Christmas Valley, Oregon. It is approximately 6 miles long by 4.5 miles wide. Topographically, the majority of the unit is a flat to rolling plateau with a 3 mile long rim (100 ft. high) along the western boundary and a minor butte/rim (75 ft. high) near the eastern edge. Overall, the unit ranges in elevation from 4,400 to 4,730 feet. Vegetatively, the unit consists of scattered juniper, sagebrush, rabbit brush, and grass.

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

Historic Unit 1-29 was noted to have an external small scale well development and a gravel county road along the southern boundary. Overall, the area was determined to be pristine or nearly so with minimal evidence of man’s activity.

In 2005, ONDA found the much larger 37,873-acre Sand Dunes proposed WSA to be in a natural condition, primarily affected by the forces of nature. ONDA noted that the unit is part of a continuous area with an existing WSA and as such, the area should be analyzed as a whole. ONDA acknowledged that there are a few manmade developments found within the area; though they are so small that they would not have a cumulative effect on the area (p. 183-184 of ONDA 2005). However, as noted above, the BLM found that this proposed WSA is not one large roadless unit, but is comprised of two smaller inventory units, within which the natural character of the unit must be evaluated individually.

The unit currently contains the following man-made developments/disturbances: 808 acres of wildfire, 455 acres of seeding, 45 acres of mow strips (fuel breaks), 8 acres

of a rehabbed mineral pit, 5.75 miles of rehabbed cat lines, 3.5 miles of motorized routes, 2.5 miles of reclaiming routes, and 1 waterhole.

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. Furthermore, many of the disturbances are located near the perimeter of the unit and, as such, have a small area of influence. Areas that were allowed to revegetate naturally after fire 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 X N/A _____

Historic Unit 1-29 was found to lack outstanding opportunities for solitude.

In 2005, ONDA's inventory identified the larger 37,873-acre Sand Dunes 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. When looking at their proposed addition as a whole, ONDA asserts one can easily find outstanding opportunities for solitude. Furthermore, ONDA found the unit to also be contiguous with the existing Sand Dunes WSA; and because the Sand Dunes WSA already has outstanding opportunities for solitude, these values will be further enhanced by the outstanding opportunities present within the Sand Dunes WSA proposed Addition (p. 184 of ONDA 2005). However, as noted above, the BLM found that this proposed WSA is not one large roadless unit, but is comprised of two smaller inventory units, within which the natural character of the unit must be evaluated individually.

The BLM acknowledges that there are limited opportunities for solitude within the South Plateau West inventory unit. However, these opportunities are less than outstanding as the area's characteristic landscape largely lacks vegetative screening and existing topographic screening (flat to rolling plateau with a few minor rims/buttes) is insufficient to effectively allow those recreating in the area to avoid the sights and sounds of others.

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 South Plateau West inventory unit does not possess 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 X N/A _____

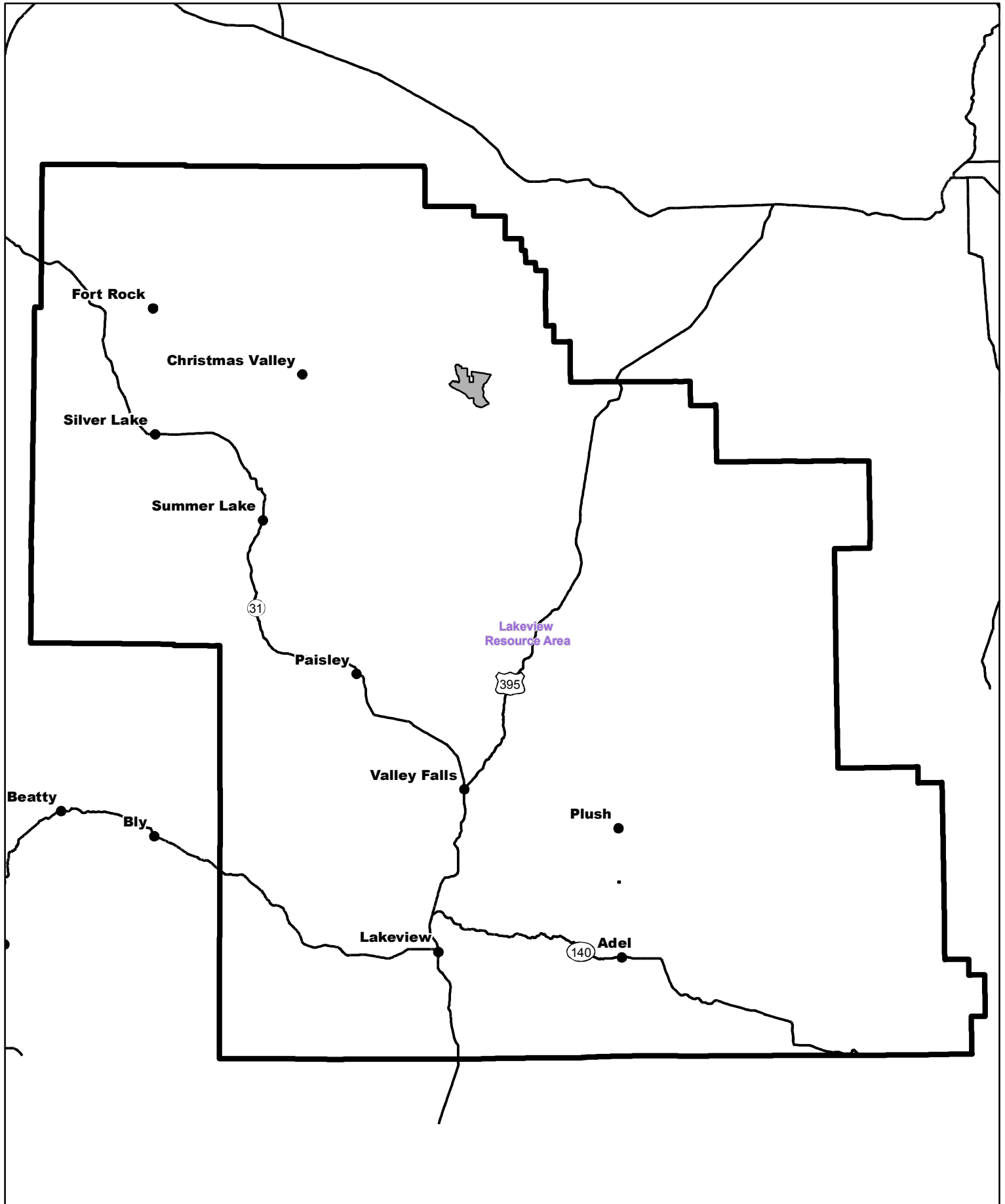
Historic Unit 1-29 was noted as having potential for low quality antelope hunting along with hiking, and horseback riding; though overall the unit was found to be less than outstanding.


In 2005, ONDA's inventory identified the larger 37,873-acre Sand Dunes proposed WSA as having outstanding opportunities for recreation based on sheer size as their proposal is contiguous with other inventory units and therefore no longer stands alone. When looking at their proposed addition as a whole, ONDA asserts one can easily find outstanding opportunities for recreation including hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, photography, wildlife viewing, and hunting. Furthermore, ONDA found the unit to also be contiguous with the existing Sand Dunes WSA; and because the Sand Dunes WSA already has outstanding opportunities for recreation, these values will be further enhanced by the outstanding opportunities present within the Sand Dunes WSA proposed Addition (p. 184 of ONDA 2005). However, as noted above, the BLM found that this proposed WSA is not one large roadless unit, but is comprised of two smaller inventory units, within which the natural character of the unit must be evaluated individually.

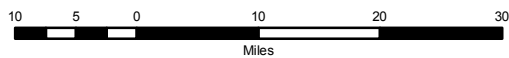
The BLM finds the unit offers limited opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, backpacking, camping, wildlife observation, exploration, scenery, photography, stargazing, trapping, and hunting. However, the BLM determined that the unit does not possess outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation through either the diversity of recreational activities possible in the area or by the outstanding quality of one opportunity relative to opportunities found within the Lakeview Resource Area.


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

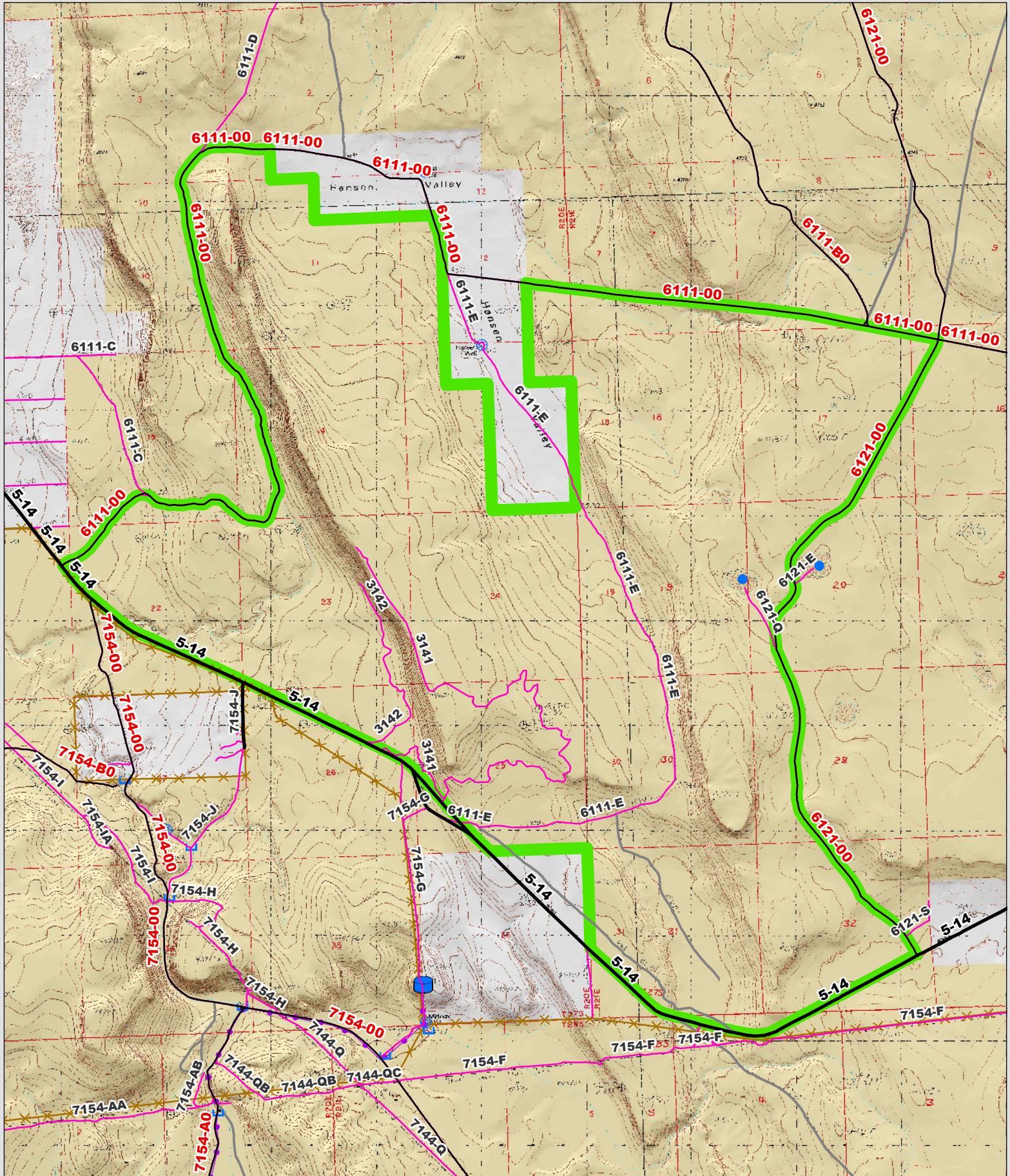
Supplemental values were not evaluated as the unit was determined to lack both outstanding opportunities for solitude and or primitive and unconfined recreation, and therefore does not meet the minimum wilderness criteria.



 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.



Wilderness Character Inventory Unit

Ownership

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

Roads/Trails

- Motorized Routes
- Highways
- Reclaiming Routes
- Interim Routes

Pipelines and Ditches

- Ditch
- Water Pipeline
- Guzzler
- Fences

Water Developments

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

Water Developments

- Water Tank
- Waterhole
- Well - Water

0.9 0.45 0 0.9 Miles

W N E S

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