

Year: 2018

Inventory Unit Number/Name: OR-015-008/ Wardell Well

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 – Proposed Initial Inventory: Roadless Areas and Islands Which Clearly Do Not Have Wilderness Characteristics; USDI BLM - Oregon and Washington, April 1979.

b) **Inventory Unit Number(s)/ Name(s):** 1-8/ Wardell Well

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:

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
1-8	6,700	N	NA	NA	NA
1-8*	9,823	N	NA	NA	NA

* 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:

In 1979, Historic Unit 1-8 contained approximately 6,700 acres of public land located 12 miles northeast of Christmas Lake. Boundaries were roads, with private lands on the south. The unit consisted of south-sloping flats, with big sagebrush and scattered juniper. A 500-KV power line on the west visually dominated most of the unit. Due to roads and private lands around the unit, outstanding opportunities for solitude or unconfined recreation were not present.

FORM 2

DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS

Unit Number/Name: OR-015-008/ Wardell Well

(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 62,328-acre Moonlight Butte proposed Wilderness Study Area (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. 156 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 several of the routes ONDA identified as "ways" are boundary roads. Moonlight Butte proposed WSA is not one large roadless unit, but is comprised of several smaller inventory units, which must be evaluated individually.

The BLM determined that the inventory unit is bounded by BLM Road 6141-C0 on the north; 6141-00 on the east; private lands to the south; a Bonneville Power Administration power line and private lands to the west. Due to changes in boundary

determinations (roads and right-of-way buffer corrections) approximately 311 acres were added to this unit.

Thus, based on these boundary and road determinations, the BLM found the Wardell Well inventory unit to exceed the minimum size criteria at approximately 10,134 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 14 miles northeast of Christmas Valley, Oregon. The unit is approximately 5 miles long by 4 miles wide. Topographically, the unit is comprised of gently rolling uplands and minor ridges. The unit ranges in elevation from 4,305 ft. to 4,650 ft. in the northeast. Vegetatively, less than 600 acres of the unit is covered in moderate to high-density western juniper stands, with old-growth characteristics. The remaining vegetation is scattered juniper, sagebrush, rabbit brush, and grass.

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

In 1979, Historic Unit 1-8 was found to be unnatural due to the presence of a 500-KV power line on the west that visually dominated most of the unit.

ONDA's 2005 inventory concluded that their Moonlight Butte Proposed WSA appears in a natural condition, primarily affected by the forces of nature. ONDA noted that existing water developments were not noticed in the field and due to their proposal being contiguous with other units, any existing developments would not be substantially noticeable to the overall area. Power lines running adjacent to the area would be noticeable from close distance, but the rolling topography and stands of juniper trees would make these un-noticeable (p. 153-154 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 unit currently contains the following man-made developments/disturbances: 699 acres of chemical treatments and seeding, 453 acres of wildfire, 11.75 miles of fence lines, 10.75 miles of motorized routes, 2 waterholes, and 1 reservoir.

Presently, almost 4 decades after the original inventory, these developments are weathered and grown over with herbaceous grasses, sagebrush, and juniper. 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 been invaded by rabbit/sagebrush 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 X N/A _____

In 1979, Historic Unit 1-8 was found to lack outstanding opportunities for solitude due to roads and private lands around the unit.

In 2005, ONDA's inventory identified the larger 62,328-acre Moonlight Butte 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. These contiguous units form an area much larger with a more diverse landscape than any of the units by themselves. Juniper trees and the rolling topography throughout the area provide screening from other visitors and offer hikers and horseback riders a sense of outstanding solitude. Furthermore, ONDA noted that the sagebrush lands, although they don't offer vegetative screening, certainly offer one a sense of isolation and solitude (p. 154 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.

The BLM acknowledges that there are limited opportunities for solitude within the Wardell Well inventory unit. However, these opportunities are less than outstanding as the area's characteristic landscape largely lacks vegetative screening and existing topographic screening (rolling hills with minor ridges) 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 Wardell Well 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 _____

In 1979, Historic Unit 1-8 was found to lack outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation due to roads and private lands around the unit.

In 2005, ONDA's inventory identified the larger 62,328-acre Moonlight Butte Proposed WSA as having outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation based on sheer size as their proposal is contiguous with other inventory units and therefore no longer stands alone. These contiguous units form an area much larger with a more diverse landscape than any of the units by themselves. One could easily find outstanding opportunities for wildlife viewing, camping, and hunting at any of the ephemeral lakes. Juniper trees and the rolling topography throughout the area offer hikers and horseback riders a sense of outstanding recreation (p. 154 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.

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

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.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Number/Name: OR-015-008/ Wardell Well

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? Yes X No NA
- 4. Does the area have supplemental values? Yes No X NA

Conclusion (Check One):

 The area- or a portion of the area- has wilderness character:
(items 1, 2 and 3 must be checked "yes").

 X 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

11/1/2018
Date


Jami Ludwig: Assistant Field Manager

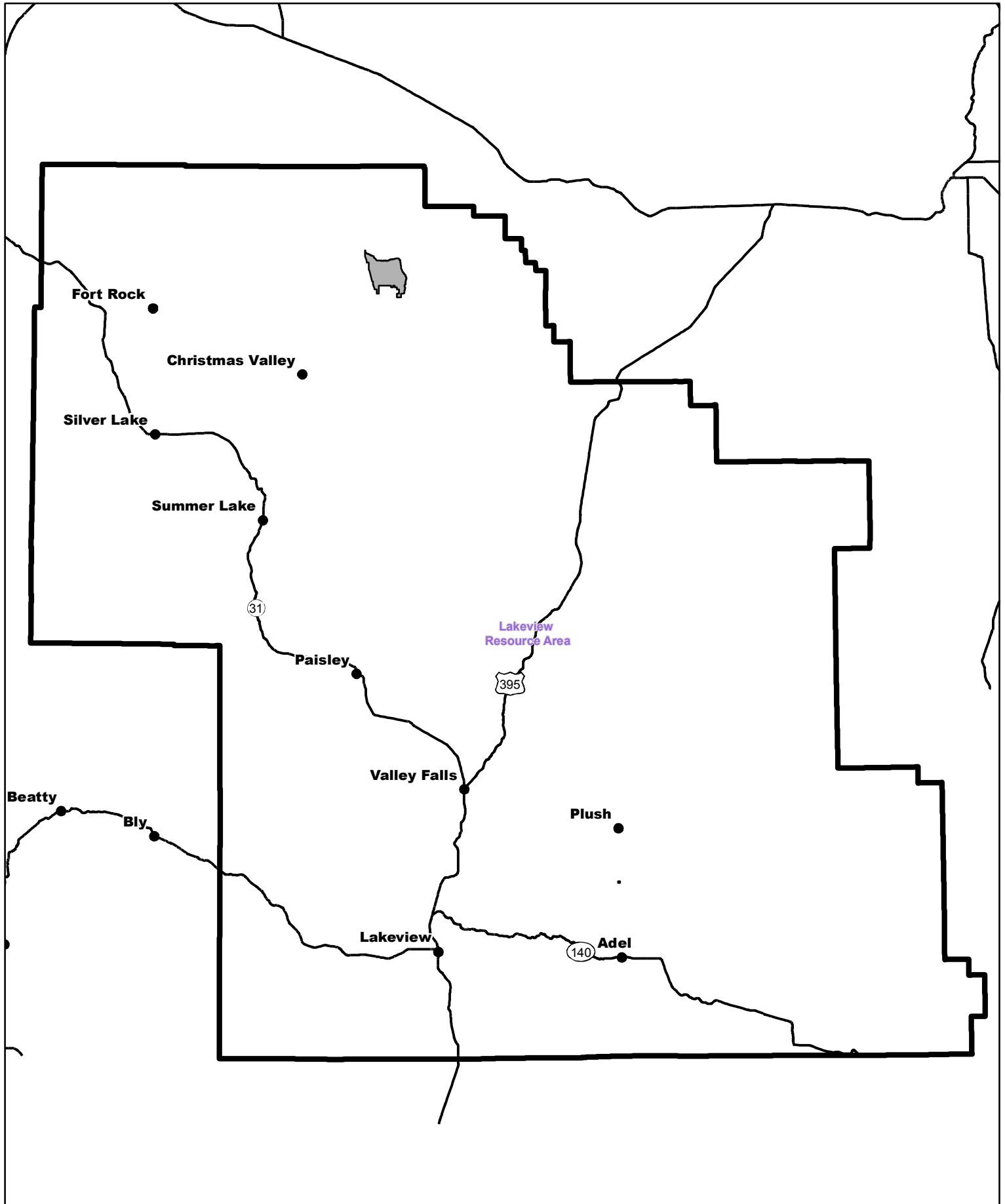
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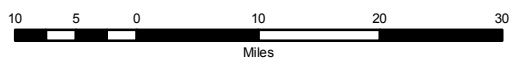

J. Todd Forbes
Field Manager


11/2/18
Date

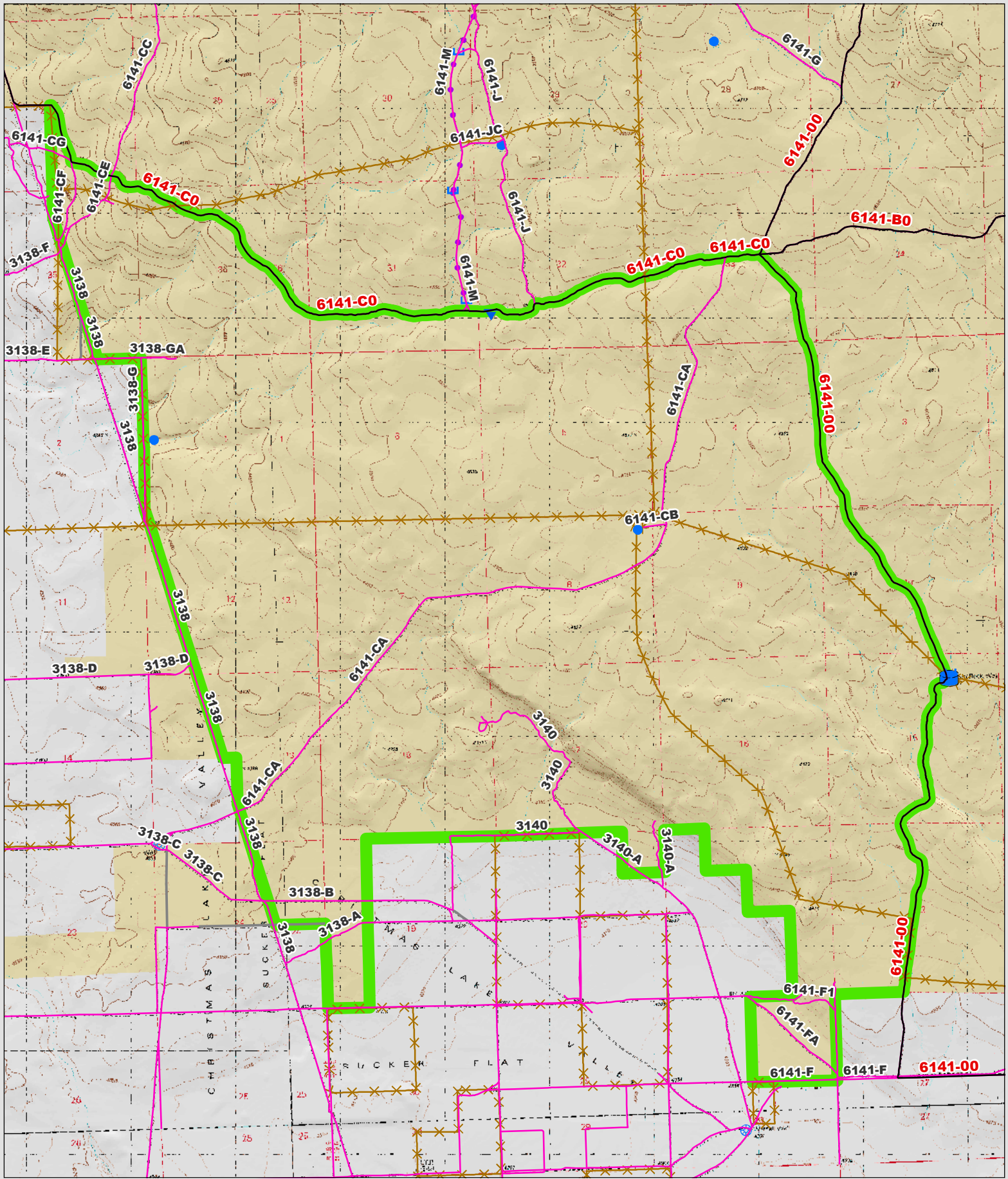
This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under 43 CFR parts either 4 or 1610.5-2.



 Wilderness Character Inventory Unit



 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 Tank
- Waterhole
- Well - Water

0.9 0.45 0 0.9 Miles

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