

Year: 2015 Inventory Unit Number/Name: OR-054-007-A2/Waterhole Unit A2

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 (If yes, and if more than one area is within the area, list the unique identifiers for those areas):

a) Inventory Source: Wilderness Inventory: Oregon and Washington Final Intensive Inventory Decisions, November 1980 (p. 372-374) and Wilderness Review – Intensive, Final Decisions for 30 Selected Inventory Units and Proposed Decisions for Other Intensively Inventoried Units in Oregon and Washington , March 1980 (p. 75-77).

b) Inventory Unit Name(s)/Number(s): Peter Well (OR-5-57), Grassy Lake (OR-5-59), Mud Lake (OR-5-60), and Hayes Springs (OR-5-66).

c) Map Name(s)/Number(s): U.S. Department of the Interior: Bureau of Land Management Oregon: Intensive Wilderness Inventory – Final Decisions for 30 Selected Inventory Units and Proposed Decisions for Other Intensive Inventory Units (March 1980) and 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): Prineville District, Central Oregon Resource Area, and Lakeview District, Lakeview Resource Area, Oregon

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):

Inventory Source: Documents cited above and Prineville and Lakeview District Wilderness Inventory Unit case files.

Existing inventory information regarding wilderness characteristics:

Unit#/Name	Size (historic acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
Grassy Lake/ OR-5-59*	BLM: 24,337 Private: 40	Y	N	N	None
Peter Well/ OR-5-57	BLM: 10,966 Private: 80	Y	N	N	Unknown

*Note: During the Intensive Wilderness Inventory phase, Grassy Lake (OR-5-59), Mud Lake (OR-5-060), and Hayes Springs (OR-5-66) inventory units were combined and collectively renamed as Grassy Lake (OR-5-59) after BLM determined that several man-made features thought to be separating the units during the initial inventory study phase were, in fact, minor in scope and did not actually meet the definition of an inventory unit boundary.

Summary 5-57: The 1980 intensive inventory described historic unit 5-57 as having low, rolling hills. The central portion of the unit contained shallow-basin canyons and small hills with occasional outcroppings of Columbia River Basalt. The unit sloped gradually to the north; the northern portion contained little topographic relief. Vegetation included scattered juniper trees with Idaho fescue, big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, low sagebrush, and other vegetation.

The unit contained two power lines, two constructed cattle ponds, eleven miles of primitive ways and five miles of fence. Power lines crossed the western and northeastern portions of the unit and were substantially noticeable when viewed from the west of the power line and in the northwest corner of the unit. A primitive way and a constructed cattle pond were substantially noticeable on three acres on the west side of the unit. The remaining 10,048 acres were generally free of the works of man.

Although there was some topographic relief and vegetative screening in the unit, the size, shape, limited topographic relief, and insufficient vegetative screening did not provide outstanding opportunities for a visitor to avoid the sights and sounds of other people within the unit. This unit offered some opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation such as hiking, horseback riding, and hunting. However, these opportunities were not outstanding.

Summary 5-59: The 1980 intensive inventory described historic unit 5-59 as having relatively flat topography, sloping gradually to the south, north, and east. The predominant vegetation in the northern and central portions was stands of juniper trees, which were scattered in fairly uniform numbers in these regions. The topography was very flat in the extreme southeastern portion of this unit, south of Hayes Spring where the juniper trees were more isolated and gradually gave way to low and big sagebrush. Big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, Idaho fescue, and other associated plant species dominated the understory in the northern and central portions. The 700-acre dry lakebed (Cracker Lake) in the southeastern portion of this unit was dominated by silver sage. A variety of reddish brown Columbia River Basalt formations added to the scenic quality of this landscape. Ram Lake was noted as a large lake that often contained water and was partly

surrounded by a small basaltic wall. Several other smaller dry lakebeds were located in the unit.

There were 25 miles of primitive ways within the unit that were in various stages of reclamation. There were eight constructed cattle ponds; all but two blended into the surrounding environment. There were also fifteen miles of fence within this unit. A north-south running utility power line cut across the center of the unit. Despite these disturbances, the unit was found to be in a basically natural condition.

Outstanding opportunities for solitude were not available within this unit, because of the lack of topographic relief, the shape of the unit, and the lack of vegetative screening made it difficult for a visitor to avoid the sights and sounds of other people. There were opportunities for hiking, camping, horseback riding, hunting, and other types of primitive and unconfined recreation noted within this unit. None of these opportunities were found to be outstanding because there was no significant point of interest to attract visitors, and was only a limited amount diversity of vegetation and topography.

FORM 2 - DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS¹

a. Unit Number/Name: Waterhole Unit A2/OR-054-007-A2

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

Citizen Information Received: In 2005, the BLM received a citizen proposal from the Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA) for the 49,942-acre Yreka Butte proposed Wilderness Study Area (WSA). ONDA included in their information a narrative report, maps, photos, photo and route logs, and GIS data with their route and photo point data. All of these materials were considered during the BLM's wilderness inventory evaluation. The photos submitted by ONDA were taken between 2004 and 2013. They identified this large area as having no interior routes which they felt met BLM's definition of a wilderness inventory unit boundary road (see Yreka Butte Proposed WSA Map, in inventory file).

Boundary Determination: BLM staff reviewed its own historic wilderness inventory information and ONDA's information to identify potential data gaps. BLM staff conducted their own field inventory of the area between 2008 and 2015 to gather additional information to supplement the existing inventory information and the information provided by ONDA. This included taking numerous additional route photos throughout the area. Using both ONDA and BLM photos, field logs, and staff field knowledge, BLM staff from both the Prineville and Lakeview Districts completed an inter-disciplinary (ID) analysis of most of the existing routes within the western half of this proposal in 2015. The results of the route analysis are documented in the route analysis forms and team meeting notes contained in the wilderness evaluation files.

The BLM team determined that several of the internal routes that ONDA identified as "ways," in fact, meet the wilderness inventory definition of a boundary road. For this reason, the BLM found that the Yreka Butte proposal is not one large roadless unit, but rather is comprised of several smaller inventory units. For purposes of this inventory update, 3 units met the size criteria and 2 did not. Those that met the size criteria were evaluated individually (see Map 2). (*Note:* the eastern half of ONDA's Yreka Butte proposal was evaluated separately by the Prineville District BLM staff in 2008, and generally is not addressed further herein).

The BLM ID teams found that the boundary for historic unit OR-5-059 has changed since the previous inventory was completed in 1980. The current inventory unit is somewhat larger and is bounded on the west by a power line ROW and a short segment of the Fredrick's Butte county road; on the north by a combination of a fence line with an adjacent fuelbreak and state lands; on the east by BLM Roads 6538-00, 6538-A0, the southern portion of 6537-00, and private lands; and on the south by BLM Road 6121-D0 and interim numbered roads 6121-DE and 6101-E1. The central portion of BLM Road 6137-00 (from Ram Lake south to the junction with BLM Road 6538-A0) serves as a cherry-stem boundary extending into the central part of the unit (Map 2). Refer to the

route analysis forms, photos, photo logs, and BLM ID team minutes in the wilderness inventory files for additional supporting information regarding these boundary determinations.

Following the boundary determination, BLM staff evaluated the wilderness characteristics within this unit. The results are contained in the following section. Additional background on the process that the BLM staff followed during this evaluation is contained in the document, *Wilderness Inventory Maintenance Process for the Lakeview Resource Area, BLM*, correspondence, and the ID team meeting notes contained in the wilderness inventory files.

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS: This inventory unit is located about 4.7 miles southwest of Hampton, Oregon (Map 1), is roughly shaped like the state of Texas, and contains approximately 22,500 acres of BLM-administered lands.

With exception of Indian Butte, Bronco Butte, Yreka Butte, and a couple of small draws, the current unit has a generally flat topographic relief. Yreka Butte is the most prominent geographic feature and sits along the eastern central portion of the unit. The Brothers Fault Zone passes through the area and the landscape is the Horst/Graben topography. There are several dry, playa lakebeds scattered throughout the unit. The largest is approximately 700 acres in the southern end. Ram Lake, in the central region of the unit, is rimmed on the south by an irregular low wall of basalt.

The predominant vegetation in the northern and central portions of the unit includes sagebrush and stands of juniper trees. In the southern region these juniper trees give way to more of sagebrush community, composed mostly of low and big sagebrush, rabbit bush, Idaho Fescue and other associated understory plants. However, juniper tree cover and density have increased substantially across the most of the unit since 1980. The dry lakebeds are dominated by silver sage. Most wildlife species common to the Northern Basin and Range ecosystem are found here.

These public lands are commercially grazed under BLM grazing permit(s) issued by the Prineville District of the BLM. There is also a commercial recreation operation conducting wilderness therapy activities. The lands are not identified as having high or sensitive visual character.

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

In 2005, ONDA found their larger Yreka Butte proposal to be in a natural condition, primarily affected by the forces of nature (p. 3). However, for the reasons described above, the BLM ID team determined that this proposal was not one large, contiguous roadless area, but is comprised of several smaller inventory units that must be evaluated individually.

In 1980, evaluators found a number of existing human disturbances within historic units 5-57 and 5-59, but overall the units were in a predominantly natural condition.

There is currently a 20-foot wide, 6.2-mile long power line ROW (OR 14618) which serves as the western boundary of the unit. There is an underlying or adjacent primitive vehicle route associated with this ROW. This power line, though just outside the unit boundary, is visible from some locations within the unit. In other locations, relatively dense juniper trees tend to obscure the power line and associated access route from view.

There are numerous human intrusions within the unit. Many of these were identified in the previous wilderness inventory effort and are still in use today. The unit currently contains approximately 28.3 miles of open, primitive motorized routes, 0.7 miles of reclaiming routes, 25.1 miles of fence, 0.8 miles of constructed collection ditch, 14 waterholes, 1 water trough, 1 developed spring, and 5 designated primitive wilderness therapy school campsites (Map 2). These human disturbances are generally noticeable within close proximity (0.25 miles), but are less noticeable when viewed from longer distances. None of these disturbances were found to dominate a large portion of the unit's landscape and many are generally screened by existing topography and vegetation.

Initially, an additional 2,500 acres of BLM-administered lands were considered for inclusion in the unit boundary along the north central edge of the unit. However, a relatively high density of primitive motorized routes currently exist in this area which were found to negatively affect the overall natural character of the surrounding area. Since there was no road or property line to use as a logical unit boundary, BLM selected an existing fenceline with an adjacent fuelbreak as the unit boundary. Using this definable boundary effectively eliminated this unnatural area from the unit.

Based on a review of all of the available information, including that provided by outside parties, the BLM ID team concluded that, even though the unit was more developed today than in 1980, the features are widely scattered and the overall natural character has not changed substantially since the previous inventory was completed. Human-caused disturbances are substantially unnoticeable throughout most of the current unit and it is in a predominantly natural condition.

(3) Does the unit have outstanding² opportunities for solitude?

Yes X No ___ N/A ___

In 2005, ONDA found their Yreka Butte proposal had outstanding opportunities for solitude, primarily due to its large size and some topographic and vegetative screening (p. 4). However, for the reasons described above, the BLM ID team determined that this proposal was not one large, contiguous roadless area, but is comprised of several smaller inventory units that must be evaluated individually.

In 1980, evaluators found that historic units 5-57 and 5-59 offered some opportunities for solitude, but they were not outstanding due to limited topographic relief, limited vegetative screening, and the size/configuration of the units. Since the previous inventory was completed, these two units have been consolidated, along with some additional previously un-inventoried acres, into a single, larger inventory unit.

As noted in the description section above, the current inventory unit contains a few widely scattered buttes, draws, and low basalt ridges that provide some topographic relief/screening. While the current unit is larger, the topographic features have not changed since 1980 and much of the unit is relatively flat. However, the inventory unit now contains Yreka Butte, a prominent juniper covered butte located along the eastern central edge. The butte provides some additional topographic diversity, as well as a dense pocket of juniper that contributes to the overall solitude opportunities (see photos IMG_0950.Eastside Yreka B.w, IMG_0951.South.SWside.Yreka B.w, IMG_0950.Eastside Yreka B.w, and IMG_0951.South.SWside.Yreka B.w).

In addition, the amount of vegetative screening provided by the increase in juniper density and cover has increased substantially across portions of the unit (see photos 791LL_SE_992015, 791LL_NE_992015, IMG_0962.Ram Lake.n, IMG_0966, IMG_0967, IMG_0971, IMG_0972, IMG_1000, IMG_1001, IMG_1002, IMG_1034, IMG_1035, IMG_1038, IMG_1039, IMG_1040, IMG_1042, IMG_1044, IMG_1045, IMG_1046, IMG_1047, 799LL_N_992015, 800LL_S_992015, 801LL_NW_992015, 801LL_SW_992015, 802LL_SW_992015, 803LL_S_992015, 804LL_SW_992015, 804LL_NW_992015, 807LL_W_992015, 823LL_SW_7172015, 823LL_W_7172015, YRKA20130920_3665, and YRKA20130920_3665) and is capable of screening visitors from one another.

Based on a review of all of the available information, including that provided by outside parties, the BLM ID team concluded that the increase in unit size, change in unit configuration/shape, and the increase in screening provided by increased juniper cover currently provides an outstanding opportunity for solitude.

(4) Does the unit have outstanding² opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation? Yes X No ___ NA ___

In 2005, ONDA found their Yreka Butte proposal had outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined, including hiking, horseback riding, backpacking, and hunting. They found these opportunities to be outstanding primarily due to their unit's larger size and ample screening (p. 4). However, for the reasons described above, the BLM ID team determined that this proposal was not one large, contiguous roadless area, but is comprised of several smaller inventory units that must be evaluated individually.

In 1980, evaluators found that historic units 5-57 and 5-59 offered some opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, including hiking, camping, horseback riding, and hunting, but they were not outstanding because there was only a limited diversity of vegetation and topography and there was no significant point of interest to attract visitors.

The current inventory unit is larger and has areas with scattered to dense juniper cover and when combined with the existing topography, continues to provide primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities. The BLM ID team noted the current inventory unit provides opportunities for hiking, back-country exploration/primitive camping treks,

horseback riding, and big game hunting. Generally, these same opportunities exist on other surrounding public lands in the region. However, Yreka Butte is the most prominent feature in the unit and provides outstanding opportunities for hiking, exploring, and scenic viewing.

Based on a review of all of the available information, including that provided by outside parties, the BLM ID team concluded that primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities within the unit have increased since the previous inventory was completed, primarily due to the inclusion of Yreka Butte into the unit boundary. While much of the unit currently continues to lack an outstanding diversity of primitive recreation opportunities, the unit does currently offer an outstanding primitive recreation opportunity in and around Yreka Butte. For these reasons, the current unit offers an outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation.

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

In 2005, ONDA found their Yreka Butte proposal had ephemeral lakes with ecological and wildlife values, potential for archeological sites, and sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit, bighorn sheep, burrowing owl, and peregrine falcon habitats within their larger unit's boundary (p. 4).

About 637 acres of lands in T. 23 S., R. 20 E., Section 7, have been recognized in the Brothers/LaPine RMP as having an important native plant assemblage and have been designated as the Benjamin Research Natural Area (RNA; see Map 2). The RNA was established as a High Lava Plains/Columbia Basin province containing a Western Juniper/Idaho Fescue plant community.

BLM staff also noted the presence of a sage-grouse general habitat management area (GHMA), and pygmy rabbit and burrowing owl habitat, as well as the potential presence of some cultural/historic sites within the unit.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Name and Number: Waterhole Unit A2/OR-054-007-A2

Results of Analysis:

1. Does the area meet the size requirements? Yes No
2. Does the area appear to be natural? Yes No
3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation? Yes No NA
4. Does the area have supplemental values? Yes No NA

Conclusion (Check One):

The area-or a portion of the area-has wilderness character.

The area does not have wilderness character.

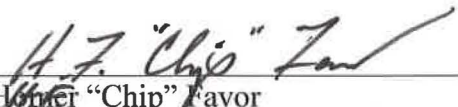
Prepared by/Team Members:**Prineville BLM District:**

Berry Phelps (Recreation/Wilderness Specialist)
 Dana Cork (Engineering Specialist)
 Cari Johnson (Range Management Specialist)
 John Zancanalla (Cultural Specialist; retired)
 Teal Purrington (NEPA Specialist)
 Claudia Campbell (GIS Specialist; OSO)
 Greg Daniels (GIS; moved)
 Gavin Hoban (GIS)
 Penni Borghi (Assistant Field Manager; Detail)
 Arthur (Kent) Koeller (Recreation/Wilderness Specialist; Detail)
 Homer "Chip" Favor (Field Manager)

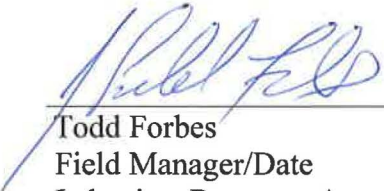
Lakeview BLM District:

Chris Bishop (Recreation/Wilderness Specialist)
 Todd Forbes (Field Manager)
 Paul Whitman (Planner/GIS)
 Jami Ludwig (Assistant Field Manager)
 John Owens (Wildlife Biologist)

Approved by:



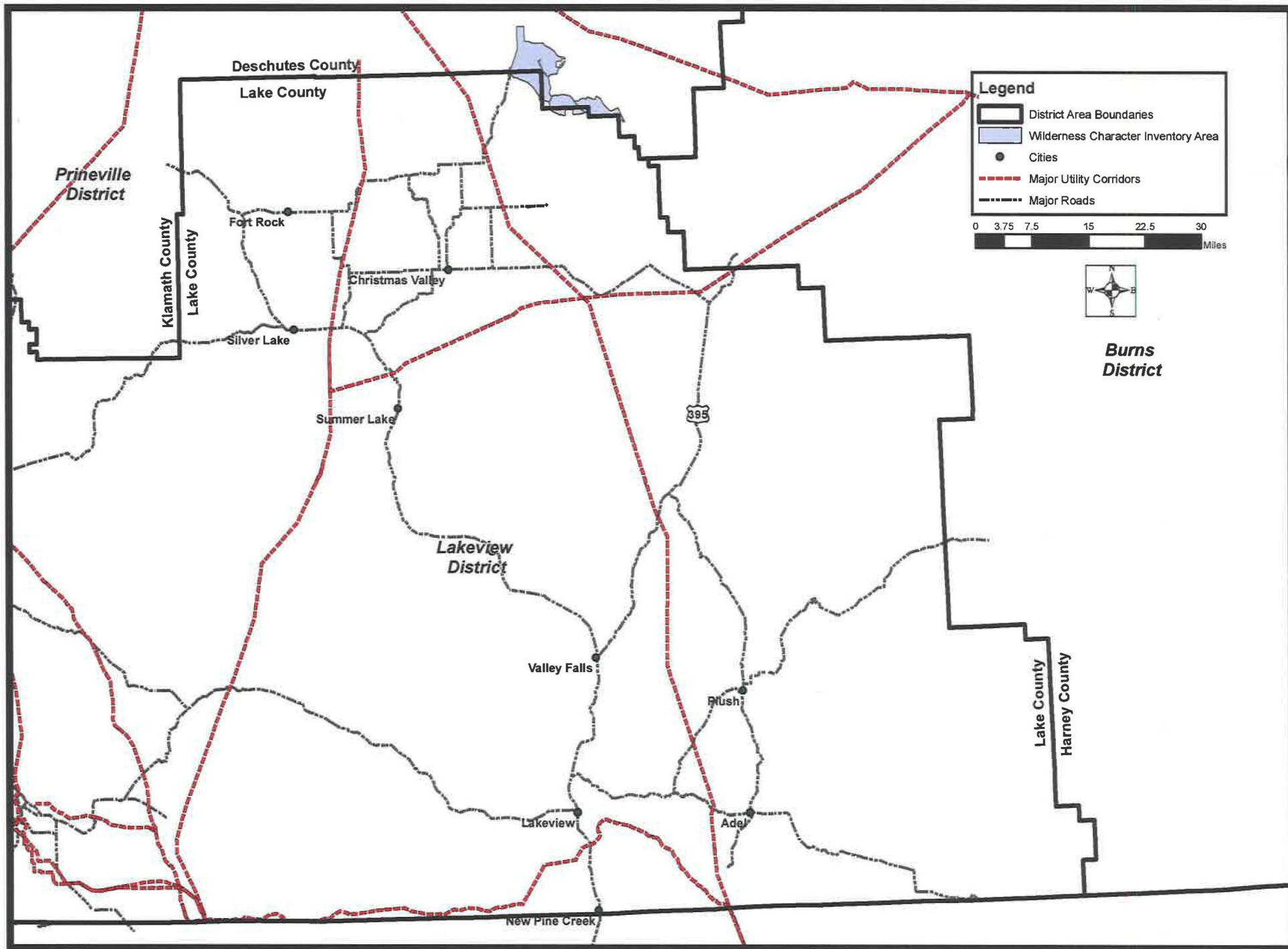
 Homer "Chip" Favor
 Field Manager/Date
 Central Oregon Resource Area



 Todd Forbes
 Field Manager/Date
 Lakeview Resource Area

¹ 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.

² Definition of Outstanding: 1) Standing out among others of its kind; conspicuous; prominent; 2) Superior to others of its kind; distinguished; excellent (BLM Manual 6310, 2012; p. 12). See also 62 IBLA 319, 326 and 64 IBLA 50.



Map 1 - Wilderness Character Evaluation Area

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. The information was not used National Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be subject to minor distortions.



Map 3 - Screening in Yreka Butte Area

