

# Form 1: Document Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Findings on Record

Is there existing BLM wilderness characteristics inventory information on all or part of this area?

NO  (If no, go to Form 2)  
 YES  If yes, and if the area has subunits within the broader area, list the unique identifiers for each of those subunits:

Inventory Source: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Inventory Area Unique Identifier(s): 070 246  
 Map Name(s)/Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 BLM District(s)/Field Office(s): Front Range District/ Royal Gorge Field Office

BLM Inventory findings on record: Document existing inventory information regarding wilderness characteristics (if more than one BLM inventory area is associated with the area, list each area and answer each question individually for each inventory area):

Document BLM Wilderness Characteristics Findings on Record (Historic Findings)					
Inventory Source Document:					
Area Unique Identifier	Sufficient Size? (YES/NO & acres)	Naturalness (YES/NO)	Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude (YES/NO)	Outstanding opportunities for primitive & unconfined recreation (YES/NO)	Supplemental Values? (YES/NO)

(add rows as needed)

## Form 2: Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

Area Unique Identifier: COF-020-042, Cucharas Canyon

Acreage: 6,061.2

1. Is the area of sufficient size? :

Yes  No

Description:

This area is of sufficient size, totaling 6,061.2 acres.

The Cucharas Canyon unit, COF-020-042, is bounded by:

- property lines other than BLM management;
- Two wilderness inventory roads Sheep Crossing, CO-020-042-D, and Kenner Ranch Road, CO-020-042-G, form cherry-stems within the unit. They meet the wilderness inventory road definition as defined by FLPMA (94-1163) (see form 3).

2. Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes  No  NA

Description:

The Cucharas unit, CO-020-042, is located less than 15 miles east of Walsenburg, CO (pop. 2,980 in 2011) (measured to the nearest point). The closest major metropolitan city is Pueblo (pop. 107,577 in 2011), located north of the unit and is less than 25 miles away (measured to the nearest point). Other communities nearby include Colorado City, Rye, Apache City, Cuchara Junction and Cedar Crest, Colorado. The Cucharas land was acquired in 1998 after being identified for acquisition in the Resource Management Plan (1996), due to its unique natural values and cultural resources.

Topography consists of a deep rocky canyon on the west side of the unit while the rest of the unit is generally flat. The Cucharas River flows through the sandstone canyon while side canyons such as Emma Paul Canyon and Keystone Canyon provide ephemeral flows. The vegetation primarily consists of a piñon-juniper forest with ponderosa pines found within the Cucharas canyon. Along Cucharas River cottonwoods and salt cedar are frequently present. Ground cover includes a variety of grasses, rabbit brush, prickly pear, yucca, and sage brush.

Historic uses within the unit were mainly range use. The majority of the man-made features found within the unit are located near the homesteads found on the eastern side of the unit. The Kenner Ranch homestead located at the end Kenner Ranch Road

has many recent human made features present. Kenner Ranch consists of historic buildings, fences and corral. Several of these structures qualify for the historic register, and will be included as supplemental value to the unit.

Near the homestead site of Kenner Ranch, other man made features are present and include livestock improvement projects such as stock tanks, developed springs, and multiple routes used to access tanks and fence lines. The man-made uses affect the landscape and are a visual impact to the naturalness of the unit.

Another historic homestead is located south of Kenner Ranch at the end of route CO-020-042-F. Multiple historic buildings are found within the area, the buildings have historical significance and add supplemental value to the unit. Noticeable man-made features within the area are two cisterns located along route "F". The cisterns are large, and have recently been filled with cement for safety concerns. The cisterns are a visual disturbance and affect the unit's natural character.

Route CO-020-042-C, Sheep Crossing, has been historically used as a stock drive. The route was used as a four wheel drive (4WD) route until BLM acquired the land in 1998 and only allowed access for horse and foot. The route is becoming overgrown with vegetation.

Route, CO-020-042-I is another route historical route used for stock drives. The route was eventually maintained mechanically to allow for 4WD access. Currently, the route is only foot or horse access for the public. The route remains open to motorized travel for administrative purposes. The linear disturbances have a minimal impact compared to the overall size of the unit.

The man-made features found within the unit have a significant impact on the natural character of the unit. The unit may eventually have wilderness characteristics if man-made features are removed and routes have possibly decades to revert to natural appearance. The unit does not possess wilderness characteristics due to the present imprints of man.

3. Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ NA X

Description:

N/A

4. Does the area (or the remainder of the area 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 \_\_\_ NA X

Description:

N/A

5. Does the area have supplemental values (ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value)?

Yes X No \_\_\_ NA \_\_\_

Description:

- The Cucharas Canyon unit is within the Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Potential Conservation Area, Vigil and St. Vrain. A B3 site, having high biodiversity significance.
- Transplant of Bighorn sheep in 2003.
- Superb scenic viewing from the Cucharas Canyon rim, rare in the plains.
- Historic homestead buildings and coral on the eastern side of the unit.
- Evidence of inhabitation by indigenous peoples.

## Summary of Analysis:

Unique Identifier: COF-020-042, Cucharas Canyon

Acreage; 6,061.2 acres

### Results of Analysis:

Inventory concluded that the 6,061.2 acre unit does not possess wilderness characteristics. Evidence of man-made features such as multiple routes, developed springs, and large cisterns impact the overall naturalness to the unit. The man-made disturbances are prevalent in the landscape due to the sparse vegetation and flat topography which allows for vast visibility.

The 6,061.2 acre unit is bounded as follows:

- Wilderness inventory road CO-020-042, D, cherry stemmed;
- Wilderness inventory road CO-020-042-G, cherry stemmed;
- Property lines other than BLM management;
- The unit is found in parts of the sections listed in the following townships;
  - o T. 25 S. R. 64 W. Sections. 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 32, 33, and 34;
  - o T. 26 S. R. 64 W. Sections. 3, 4, 5, 8, 17.

- Does the area meet size requirements or exceptions? Yes   X   No
- Does the area appear natural? Yes        No   X   NA
- Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation? Yes        No        NA   X
- Does the area have supplemental value? Yes   X   No        NA

Check one:

- The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as land with wilderness characteristics.
- X   The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

This does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision, and does not represent a decision in regard to how the area will be managed or address impacts of management decisions.

Prepared by:

Evaluator: Kalem Lenard/ Outdoor Recreation Planner

Date: July 27, 2013

Evaluator: Linda Skinner/ Outdoor Recreation Planner

Date: May 30, 2013

Evaluator: Janine Prout/ Recreation Technician

Date: May 30, 2013

Evaluator: John Lamman/ Rangeland Management Specialist

Date: Sept. 10, 2013

Evaluator: Matt Rustand/Wildlife Biologist

Date: Sept 11, 2013

### **Form 3: Route Analysis:**

The Route Analysis includes factors to consider when determining whether a route is a road for wilderness characteristics inventory purposes. For the purposes of this analysis, use the following definition of a “road”. This definition is drawn from and the FLPMA legislative history and historic BLM inventory direction.

Road: An access route which has been improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use. A way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles does not constitute a road.

- a. Improved and maintained – Actions taken physically by people to keep the road open to vehicle traffic. “Improved” does not necessarily mean formal construction. “Maintained” does not necessarily mean annual maintenance.
- b. Mechanical means – Use of hand or power machinery or tools.
- c. Relatively regular and continuous use – Vehicular use that has occurred and will continue to occur on a relatively regular basis. Examples are: access roads for equipment to maintain a stock water tank or other established water sources, access roads to maintained recreation sites or facilities, or access roads to mining claims.

If a portion of a route is found to meet the wilderness inventory road criteria (see Part III) and the remainder does not meet these criteria (e.g., a cherrystem road with a primitive route continuing beyond a certain point), identify each segment and explain the rationale for the separate findings.

Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Area Unique Identifier: COF-020-042, Cucharas Canyon Route or Route Segment Name and/or Identifier: CO-020-042-D (Kenner Ranch Road), CO-020-042-G

#### **I. LOCATION:**

Refer to attached map and BLM corporate data (GIS). List photo point references (where applicable) or reference attached photo log:

Map Title: Unit, COF-020-042, Cucharas Canyon Wilderness Inventory Map

Map Date: 2013

Describe:

The map shows the parcel inventoried for wilderness characteristics, and routes and photo points collected by GPS

#### **II. ROUTE CONTEXT**

The purpose of a route is not a deciding factor in determining whether a route is a road for wilderness characteristics inventory purposes. The purpose of a route does provide context for factors on which such a determination may be based, particularly the question of whether maintenance of the route ensures relatively regular and continuous

use. The purpose also helps to determine whether maintenance that may so far have been unnecessary to ensure such use would be approved by BLM when the need arises.

- A. Current Purpose of Route: (Examples: rangeland/livestock improvements (stock tank, developed spring, reservoir, fence, corral), inholdings (ranch, farmhouse), mine site, concentrated use site (camp site), recreation, utilities (transmission line, telephone, pipeline), administrative (project maintenance, communication site, vegetation treatment)).

Describe:

- CO-020-042-D, Kenner Ranch Road, is used as a recreational access to BLM land; it is also a Custer county maintained route.
- CO-020-042-G is used as a recreational access to BLM lands. The route is also used as administrative access for the BLM.

B. Right-of-Way (ROW):

B.1. Is there a ROW associated with this route?

Yes  No  Unknown

If yes, what is the stated purpose of the ROW?

- CO-020-042-D does not have a ROW associated with it.
- CO-020-042-G does not have a ROW associated with it.

B.2. Is the ROW still being used for this purpose?

Yes  No  Unknown or N/A

Explain:

N/A

### III. WILDERNESS INVENTORY ROAD CRITERIA

A. Is there evidence of construction or improvement using mechanical means?

Yes, if either III.A.1 *or* III.A.2 is checked "yes" below

No, if both III.A.1 *and* III.A.2 are checked "no" below

A.1. Construction: Is there evidence that the route or route segment was originally constructed using mechanical means?

Yes  No

Examples (partial list):

Paved  Bladed  Graveled  Roadside Berms  Cut/Fill  Other

Describe:

- Route, CO-020-042-D, Kenner Ranch Road, has evidence of mechanical construction, most likely bladed and at one time graveled.

- Route, CO-020-042-G has evidence of being mechanically constructed, evidence of bladed construction exists.

A.2. Improvements: Is there evidence of improvements using mechanical means to facilitate access?

Yes  If "yes", improvements by? Hand Tools  by Machine   
 No

Examples (partial list):

Culverts  Built Stream Crossings  Bridges  Drainage  Barriers

Describe:

- Route, CO-020-042-D, Kenner Ranch Road has been recently improved by mechanical means, drainages and roadside berms exist.
- Route, CO-020-042-G, has been recently maintained by the BLM.

B. Maintenance: Is there evidence of maintenance that would ensure *relatively* regular and continuous use?

Yes, if either III.B.1 *or* III.B.2 is checked "yes" below   
 No, if both III.B.1 *and* III.B.2 are checked "no" below

B.1. Is there evidence or documentation of maintenance using hand tools or machinery?

Yes  If "yes", maintenance by? Hand Tools  by Machine   
 No

Explain:

- Route, CO-020-042-D, Kenner Ranch Road, has evidence of regular maintenance; it is assumed Custer County maintains the route.
- Route, CO-020-042-G has evidence of recent mechanical maintenance.

B.2. If the route or route segment is in good condition, but there is no evidence of maintenance, would mechanical maintenance with hand tools or machines be approved by BLM to meet the purpose(s) of the route in the event this route became impassable? "Good condition" would be a condition that ensures regular and continuous use relative to the purposes of the route. Consider whether the route can be clearly followed in the field over its entire course and whether all or any portion of the route contains any impediments to travel.

Yes  No

Explain:

- Route, CO-020-042-D, Kenner Ranch Road would be maintained by the BLM or Cucharas County for access if it became impassable.

- Route, CO-020-042-G would be maintained by the BLM for access if became impassable. The route is used for administrative access, and is on the BLM road maintenance schedule.

C. Relatively regular and continuous use: Does the route or route segment ensure relatively regular and continuous use?

Yes  X  No  \_\_\_\_\_

Explain: Describe evidence (e.g., direct: vehicles or vehicle tracks observed; or indirect: evidence of use associated with purpose of the route such as maintenance of facility that route accesses) and other rationale for whether use has occurred and will continue to occur on a *relatively* regular basis (regular and continuous use relative to the purpose(s) of the route). Include estimate of travel rates for the stated purposes (e.g., trips per day, week, month, season, year, or even multiple years in some facility maintenance cases).

- Route, CO-020-042-D, Kenner Ranch Road is available for continuous use; an estimated amount of use is 20-30 times per month.
- Route, CO-020-042-G is available for continuous use; an estimated amount of use is 20-30 times a month.

#### IV. CONCLUSION:

Does the route or route segment meet the definition of a wilderness inventory road (i.e., are items III.A and III.B and III.C all checked yes)? If part of the route meets the wilderness inventory road definition and the remainder does not, describe the segment meeting the definition and any remaining portion not meeting the definition and why. Also, describe and explain rationale for any discrepancies with citizen proposals.

Yes  X  = Wilderness Inventory Road

No  \_\_\_\_\_  = Not a road for wilderness inventory purposes

Explain:

- Route, CO-020-042-D, Kenner Ranch Road does meet the definition of being a wilderness inventory road. The road meets the definition, due to the mechanically constructed means of the route, and maintenance to allow for continuous use.
- Route, CO-020-042-G, meets the definition of a wilderness inventory road. The road meets the "road" criteria due to the intension of the BLM to maintain the route for regular use.

Evaluator: Kalem Lenard/ Outdoor Recreation Planner  
 Evaluator: Linda Skinner/ Outdoor Recreation Planner  
 Evaluator: Janine Prout/ Recreation Technician

Date: July 27, 2013  
 Date: May 30, 2013  
 Date: May 30, 2013

## PHOTO LOG

Photographer(s): **Linda Skinner/ Outdoor Recreation Planner**

Inventory Area Unique Identifier: **COF-020-042, Cucharas Canyon**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Frame #</b>	<b>Camera Direc.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>UTM Zone 13</b>	<b>Town- ship</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Sec.</b>	<b>Photo Point #</b>
6/1/2013	DSC01381	N	Trail sign	N 4,188,753.24041 E 537,125.034776	25 S	64 W	29	1
6/1/2013	DSC01382	E	Property corner, fence	N 4,191,002.20324 E 537,614.514922	25 S	64 W	23	2
6/1/2013	DSC01383	E	Closed route	N 4,190,975.74486 E 537,627.744115	25 S	64 W	23	3
6/1/2013	DSC01384	E	Scenic	N 4,190,949.28647 E 537,773.265239	25 S	64 W	23	4
6/1/2013	DSC01385	W	Route condition	N 4,190,949.28647 E 537,773.265239	25 S	64 W	23	5
6/1/2013	DSC01391	E	Beginning of Sheep Crossing	N 4,184,374.37749 E 535,974.094974	26 S	64 W	8	6
6/1/2013	DSC01392	S	Route off sheep crossing	N 4,184,268.54394 E 536,331.283189	26 S	64 W	8	7
6/1/2013	DSC01393	W	End of route, sheep crossing	N 4,184,308.23152 E 536,767.846562	26 S	64 W	8	8
6/1/2013	DSC01394	NE	Metal gate, no motor vehicle sign	N 4,184,334.68991 E 536,794.304948	26 S	64 W	8	9
6/1/2013	DSC01395	SE	Administrative route, Route Condition	N 4,184,295.00233 E 536,860.450914	26 S	64 W	8	10
6/1/2013	DSC01397	S	Route Condition	N 4,184,136.25201 E 536,992.742845	26 S	64 W	8	11
6/2/2013	DSC01400	W	Route past closed gate	N 4,185,869.27631 E 540,868.89643	26 S	64 W	3	12

6/2/2013	DSC01403	W	Route, Kenner Ranch Road Condition	N 4,188,396.0522 E 540,855.667237	25 S	64 W	27	13
6/2/2013	DSC01404	S	Kenner Ranch road facing south	N 4,188,396.0522 E 540,855.667237	25 S	64W	27	14
6/2/2013	DSC01406	N	Beginning of route	N 4,188,713.55283 E 539,598.89389	25 S	64 W	27	15
6/2/2013	DSC01407	N	Non maintained route	N 4,188,779.6988 E 539,559.206311	25 S	64 W	27	16
6/2/2013	DSC01409	W	Route Condition	N 4,188,713.55283 E 539,585.664697	25 S	64 W	27	17
6/2/2013	DSC01410	S	Facing ranch, CR ends at parking lot	N 4,188,713.55283 E 539,585.664697	25 S	64 W	27	18
6/2/2013	DSC01411	S	Stock ponds	N 4,188,607.71929 E 539,612.123084	25 S	24 W	27	19
6/2/2013	DSC01412	W	Route with tank in	N 4,188,396.0522 E 539,532.747925	25 S	64 W	27	20
6/2/2013	DSC01413	S	Route Condition	N, 187,602.30061 E 539,162.330517	26 S	64 W	33	21
6/2/2013	DSC01414	W	Route traveling to rim	N, 187,602.30061 E 539,162.330517	26 S	64 W	33	22
6/2/2013	DSC01415	W	End of route	N 4,187,562.61303 E 538,871.288269	25 S	64 W	33	23
6/2/2013	DSC01416	S	End of route, CO-020-042-E, facing south	N 4,187,112.82046 E 539,598.89389	25 S	64 W	34	24
6/2/2013	DSC01417	N	End of route, CO-020-042-E, facing north	N 4,187,112.82046 E 539,598.89389	25 S	64 W	34	25
6/2/2013	DSC01423	E	At Kenner Ranch, facing E	N 4,188,660.63606 E 539,294.622449	25 S	64 W	27	26
6/2/2013	DSC01424	W	Facing west of Kenner Ranch	N 4,188,660.63606 E 539,294.622449	25 S	64 W	27	27
6/2/2013	DSC01425	W	Kenner Ranch view inside Gate	N 4,188,660.63606 E 539,294.622449	25 S	64 W	27	28



#1



#2



#3



#4



#5



#6



#7



#8



#9



#10



#11



#12



#13



#14



#15



#16



#17



#18



#19



#20



#21



#22



#23



#24



#25



#26



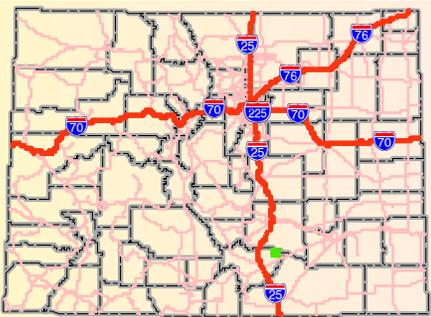
#27



#28



#29



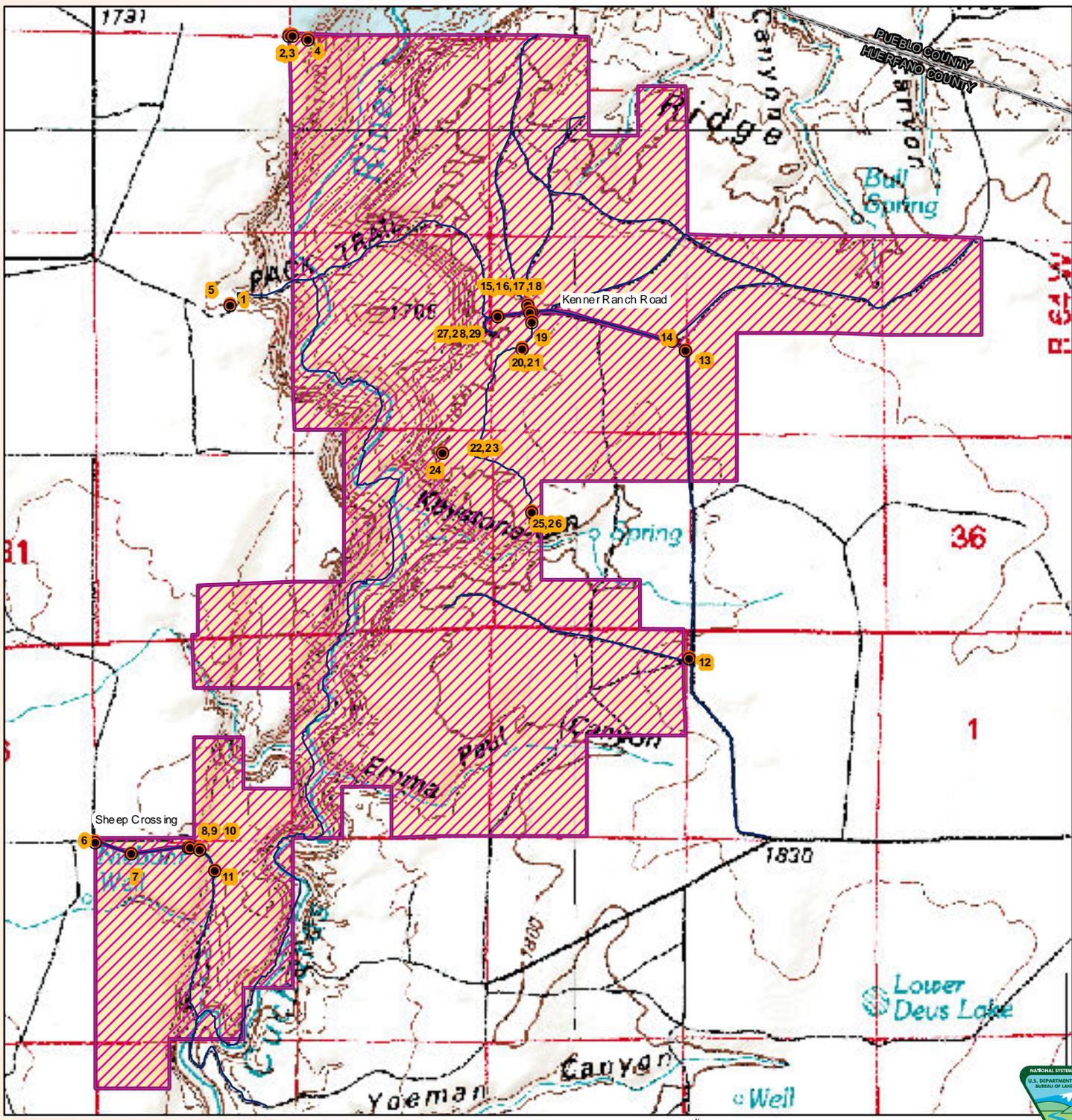
Map Extent Indicator

**Map Features**

- Photo points
- Inventoried Routes
- Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Parcels
- Counties

*Surface Land Ownership*

- Bureau of Land Management
- Private
- State



**COF-020-042**

Acreage: 6061

NOTE TO MAP USERS: No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of the data layers shown on this map. The official land records of the data providers should be checked for current status on any specific tract of land.

BLM - Royal Gorge Field Office  
03/14/2013

