

**Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Report:
NE Phantom Canyon
COF-020-063**

Section 201 of FLPMA requires the BLM to maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of all public lands and their resources and other values, which includes wilderness characteristics. It also provides that the preparation and maintenance of the inventory shall not, of itself, change or prevent change of the management or use of public lands. Regardless of past inventory, the BLM must maintain and update as necessary, its inventory of wilderness resources on public lands. In some circumstances conditions relating to wilderness characteristics may have changed over time, and an area that was once determined to lack wilderness characteristics may now possess them. BLM Manual 6310 ‘Conducting Wilderness Characteristics Inventory on BLM Lands’ provides the guidance on conducting this inventory process.

Following BLM guidance the Royal Gorge Field Office conducted an inventory in 2013 and found the 1,265.5 acre unit did not meet the criteria for having wilderness characteristics. Per policy, the public has the opportunity to provide new information regarding wilderness characteristics that the BLM must evaluate and consider. New information that meets the minimum standard for further review was submitted by Wild Connections on May 6, 2015 contending that the unit did in fact meet the criteria. This report reflects an updated inventory that combines BLM’s 2013 findings and an evaluation of the data submitted by Wild Connections.

| Inventory Effort | Acreage Inventoried | Wilderness Characteristics Acreage |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| BLM 2013 Inventory | 1,265 | 0 |
| Wild Connections Inventory | 1,367 | 1,367 |
| BLM 2015 Evaluation Conclusions | 1,265.5 | 1,161.9 |

**Form 1: Document Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Findings on Record
(Refers to Original 1980's Inventory Effort)**

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:

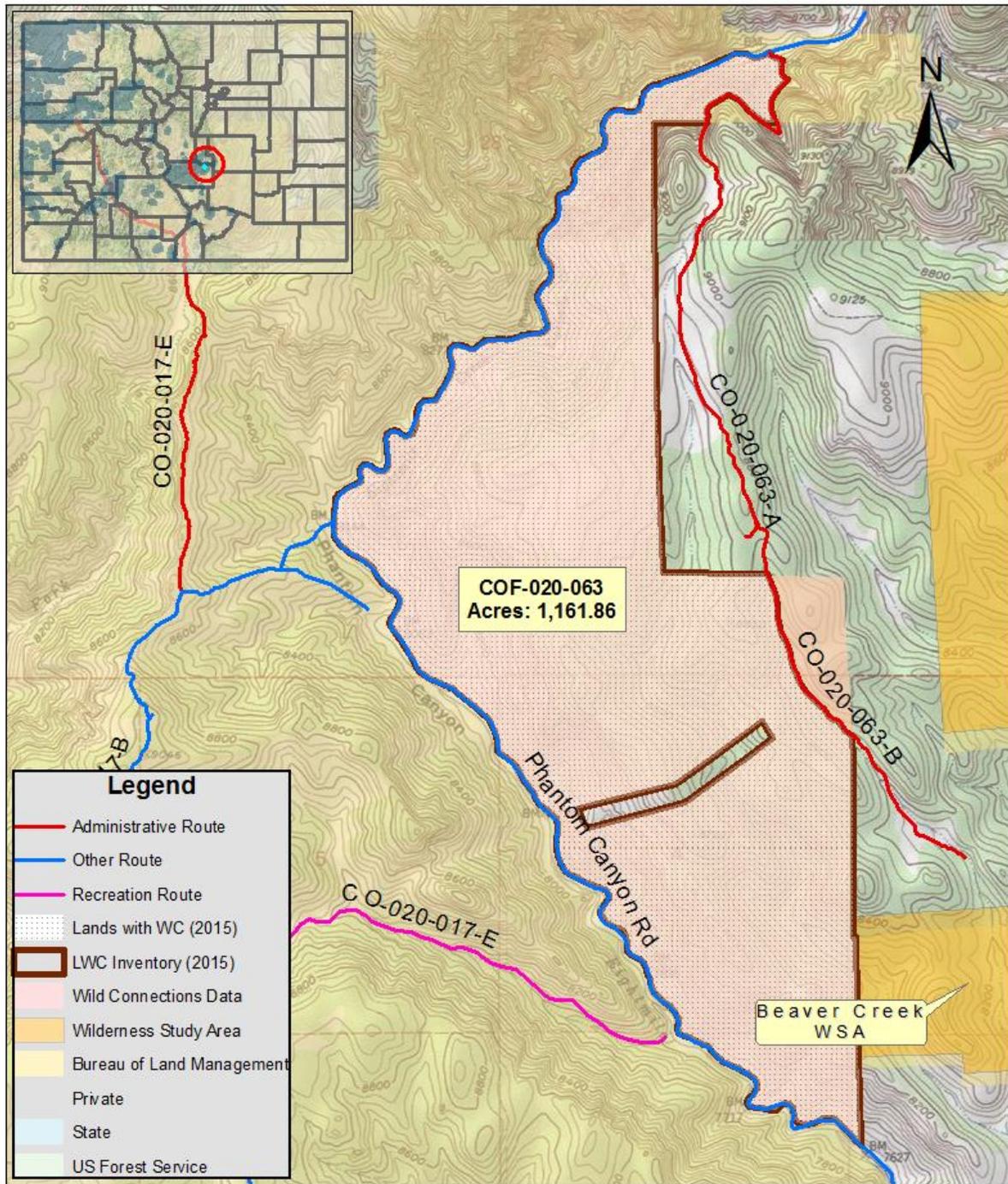
Inventory Source: _____
 Inventory Area Unique Identifier(s): 069 437
 Map Name(s)/Number(s): _____
 BLM District(s)/Field Office(s): Front Range District/ Royal Gorge Field Office

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) |
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(add rows as needed)

Map 1 2015 inventory agrees with new information



0 0.125 0.25 Miles

COF-020-063,
NE Phantom Canyon
Wilderness Characteristics
Inventory Map

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 provider should be checked for current status on any specific tract of land.

Prepared by P Chapman 01/21/2016

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

Area Unique Identifier: COF-020-063, NE Phantom Canyon Road Acreage: 1,265.5 acres

1. Is the area of sufficient size? :

Yes No

BLM originally found that this unit was not contiguous with the Beaver Creek WSA. This finding was contested by Wild Connections stating that approximately ¼ mile boundary was in fact shared and met the contiguous definition. Since BLM policy does not define contiguous the BLM concurs with Wild Connections in that the ¼ mile shared boundary is in fact contiguous.

The land is smaller than 5,000 acres. The land shares a ¼ mile contiguous boundary with Beaver Creek Wilderness Study Area (WSA) The lands are contiguous and do meet the size exception 2.a.i.

The unit is bounded as follows:

- The south and west edge is bordered by Phantom Canyon Road;
- The north edge is bounded by wilderness inventory road Fremont County Road 67 (Phantom Canyon Road) and wilderness inventory road CO-020-063-A.
- The east edge boundary consists of property lines other than BLM management, wilderness inventory road CO-020-063-B, and Beaver Creek WSA;

2. Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes No NA

Description:

To assess naturalness the BLM primarily relied on staff knowledge and aerial imagery including google earth. Based on this, the area primarily appears to be natural. A linear disturbance that appears to be a highly used and recently constructed road is present on the eastern edge of the parcel. This was used as a unit boundary. The remainder of the parcel appears to be natural.

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

The parcel is contiguous with Beaver Creek WSA which offers outstanding opportunities for solitude. This parcel shares these characteristics. The steep and rugged drainages of the unit also provide solitude opportunities.

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 X No _____ NA _____

The parcel is contiguous with Beaver Creek WSA which offers outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. This parcel shares these characteristics. The steep rugged drainages and ridges would offer outstanding opportunities for exploration and challenge.

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

Yes X No _____ NA _____

- The unit contains Mexican spotted owl critical habitat.
- The unit is located within elk severe winter range and mule deer winter range as mapped by Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

Summary of Analysis:

Unique identifier: COF-020-063, NE Phantom Canyon Road

Acreage: 1,161.9 acres

Results of Analysis:

Inventory concluded that the 1,161.9 acre unit does meet the size exception; the unit shares a ¼ mile contiguous boundary with Beaver Creek WSA. The parcel offers outstanding opportunities for solitude along with primitive and unconfined recreation. The parcel meets the criteria for having wilderness characteristics.

The unit is bounded as follows:

- The south and west edge is bordered by Phantom Canyon Road;
- The north edge is bounded by Phantom Canyon Road and a ROW road.
- The east edge boundary consists of property lines other than BLM management, a unnamed road and Beaver Creek WSA;
- It is found in parts of the sections listed in the following townships;
 - o T. 16 S. R. 69 W. Sections 27, 28, 29, 32, and 33
 - o T. 17 S. R. 69 W. Section 4

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

Check one:

- X The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as land with wilderness characteristics.
- ____ 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: Janine Prout/ Recreation Technician
Evaluator: Kalem Lenard/ Outdoor Recreation Planner
Evaluator: Matt Rustand/Wildlife Biologist

Date: July 2, 2013
Date: December 21,, 2015
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 cherry system 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-020-063

Route or Route Segment Name and/or Identifier: Phantom Canyon Road, COF-020-063-A, COF-020-063-B

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-020-063 Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Map

Map Date: 2015

Describe:

The map shows the parcel inventoried for wilderness characteristics, aerial imagery and routes collected by aerial imagery.

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:

Describe:

- Phantom Canyon Road: County Road
- COF-020-063-A: ROW 73171 for an access road.
- COF-020-063-B: Unknown appears to be a continuation of COF-020-063-A however master title plats do not reflect a ROW in this area.

B. Right-of-Way (ROW):

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

Phantom Canyon Road: Yes No Unknown
COF-020-063-A: Yes No Unknown
COF-020-063-B: Yes No Unknown

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

- Phantom Canyon Road is a county road.
- COF-020-063-A is a ROW, casefile 73171, for an access road.
- COF-020-063-B appears to be an extension of this road however a ROW is not on file and could potentially be a trespass road.

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

Phantom Canyon Road: Yes No Unknown
COF-020-063-A: Yes No Unknown
COF-020-063-B: N/A

Explain:

Phantom Canyon Road is still a county road. COF-020-063-A appears to be regularly used. COF-020-063-B appears to be a continuation of route A after it leaves private lands and travels back onto BLM. A ROW is not on file.

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?

Phantom Canyon Road: Yes No
COF-020-063-A: Yes No
COF-020-063-B: Yes No

Describe:

- Phantom Canyon is a county road. COF-020-063-A is a ROW for an access road and has been constructed. COF-020-063-B appears to be a continuation of COF-020-063-A and according to remote sensing data has similar characteristics as the route extends further south back onto BLM managed lands. Where it re-enters private land there appears to be several large switchbacks indicative of construction.

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

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

Describe:

N/A

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 X
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 X If "yes", maintenance by? Hand Tools _____ by Machine _____
No _____

Explain:

- Phantom Canyon Road is regularly maintained by Fremont County.
- COF-020-063-A is regularly maintained by the ROW holder
- COF-020-063-B appears to be an extension of Route #063-A and is maintained by the private land owner.

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:

- N/A

- 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).

- All of the routes appear to receive regular and continuous use. CO-020-063-B appears similar to 063-A when viewed using remote sensing data. Since Route #063A is known to receive regular and continuous use it is assumed that route # 063-B does as well.

IV. CONCLUSION:

Does the route or route segment meet the definition of a wilderness inventory road? 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

- Phantom Canyon Road
- CO-020-063-A
- CO-020-063-B

Evaluator: Kalem Lenard/Recreation Planner

Date: December 21, 2015

PHOTO LOG

Photographer(s):

Inventory Area Unique Identifier: **COF-020-063**

| Date | Frame # | Camera Direc. | Description | GPS/UTM Location | Township | Range | Sec. | Photo Point # |
|-------------|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------|
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Royal Gorge Field Office Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Inventory, 2015: Evaluation of new information

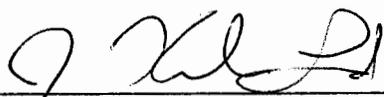
Assessment and Determination

The BLM Royal Gorge Field Office followed manual 6310 in the performance of inventory for lands with wilderness characteristics. In response to new information submitted in May, 2015 by Wild Connections, the 2013 inventory was re-evaluated. A final review was made by comparing existing data and when needed additional field trips were taken to collect data by GPS, inventory forms, and photo points. Resource specialists were also consulted to determine if the conclusion reached in the 2013 inventory remains valid, or whether changes should occur. The above report documents those findings for the following area(s):

| Unit ID | Unit Name | Total BLM acreage inventoried | Acreage with Wilderness Characteristics | Acreage without Wilderness Characteristics |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|---|--|
| COF-020-063 | Phantom Canyon NE | 1,265.5 | 1,161.9 | 103.6 |
| | | | | |

Review:

I have reviewed the inventory results, reports, photos, and maps for the above Lands with Wilderness Characteristics and concur with the findings as submitted.



James Kalem Lenard
Outdoor Recreation Planner, Royal Gorge Field Office

Date: 2/22/16



Keith E. Berger
Field Manager
Royal Gorge Field Office

Date: 2/24/16