

**Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Report:
Eightmile Mountain
COF-020-050**

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 that the unit did not have 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 entire 19,200 acre unit meets 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	18,477	0
Wild Connections Inventory (Thompson, Gribble, Twin Mountains)	19,200	19,200
BLM 2015 Evaluation Conclusions	19,292.4	17,854.92

**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): 008-001

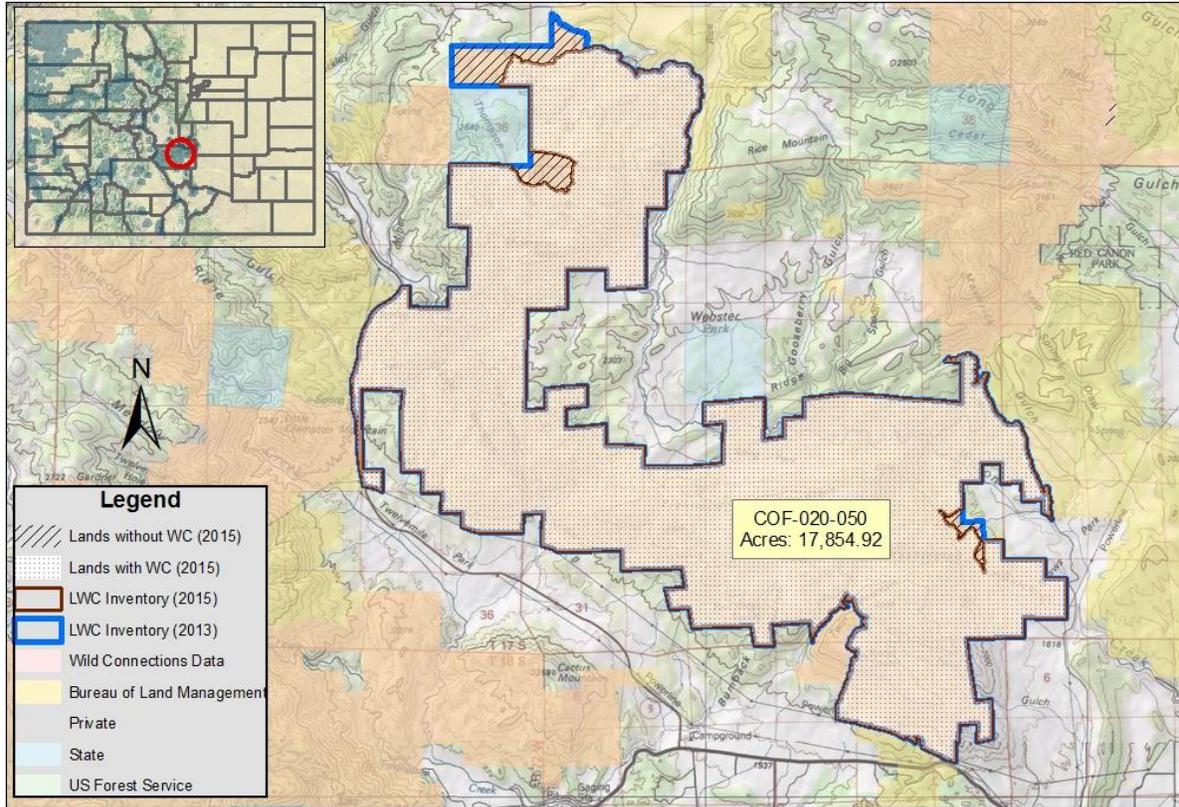
Map Name(s)/Number(s): _____

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)
CO-050-008-A	Y	N	N	N	N
CO-050-008-B	Y	N	N	N	N

Map 1 2013 inventory did not find area to have LWC, 2015 inventory map below shows area with LWC with exclusions from new information (see map 2, 3 for details)



0 0.5 1 2 Miles

COF-020-050, Eightmile
Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Map

NOTE TO MAP USERS
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Prepared by P Chapman 01/12/2016

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

Area Unique Identifier: COF-020-050, Eight-mile Mountain

Acreage: 19,292.4 acres

1. Is the area of sufficient size? :

Yes No

The land meets the size criteria, totaling 19,292.4 acres.

The unit, Eight-mile Mountain, is bounded as follows:

- The north, west, and south edges are property lines other than BLM management;
- The northern most corner is bounded by wilderness inventory road BLM 5828;
- The central western edge is bounded by wilderness inventory road, Colorado State highway (Hwy) 9;
- The eastern edge by wilderness inventory road, Fremont County 69;
- The south east edge is bounded by wilderness inventory road CO-020-050-D and CO-020-050-E;
- The south boundary is defined by a utility transmission line corridor, CO-020-050-A;

Wild Connections report contends that the approximately 484.69 acre block of BLM land in the Northwest corner of the unit is contiguous since corners of public lands are shared. The BLM however does not view a shared corner as contiguous.

2. Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes No NA

The Eight-mile unit, CO-020-050, is located less than 10 miles northwest of Cañon City, Colorado (driving miles). The topography of the unit is mountainous, with rough and rocky terrain. Prominent features found within the unit include Thompson Mountain, Thompson Point, Gribble Mountain, Eight-mile Mountain and Twin Mountain. The elevation within the unit ranges from 6,400 feet in the south section of the unit, to 8,700 feet in the northwestern part of the unit. Multiple drainages can be found throughout the unit, such as Current Creek, Wilson Creek, City Creek, Twin Gulch and Washington Gulch. The topography around Current creek is rugged canyon lands, with steep rocky canyon walls. The vegetation consists of mainly piñon- juniper woodland with ponderosa pine and Douglas fir found in the higher elevations and north facing slopes.

The unit has several minor impacts to the natural character from man-made features. The man-made features that exist within the unit include contouring of the landscape along Eight-mile Mountain. It is assumed the contouring was to improve water sources for range land management within the unit. The contouring is not readily noticeable to the casual observer. The contours drain into earthen dams that have been mechanically

built. The dams are numerous and have obviously been built by mechanical means but have largely grown over with vegetation and casual observer would not directly identify these as man-made features.

The Eight-mile Mountain has many routes located in the area. It is assumed the routes were originally constructed to access timber harvesting, prospecting, and homesteads. The routes appear to have been mechanically constructed or mechanically improved for vegetation treatment projects. These routes are not open to the public per the Gold Belt Travel Management Plan. While they are considered available for administrative purposes, they are largely growing over with vegetation due to a lack of use.

Lands around Eight-mile Mountain have recently been treated for fuels reduction. The treatment included hydro axe, a chipper, hand thinning, and prescribed burns. The area treated covered approximately 1,600 acres. The treatment area is still visible, old burn scars, slash piles and tree stumps are visible throughout the 1,600 acre treatment area. The vegetation is beginning to grow around the disturbances and disguise the treated area making it not readily noticeable.

On the northwest corner of the unit, near Thompson Mountain, many historic routes exist. Most of the route were closed or designated as foot/horse trails through the Gold Belt Travel Management Plan (2003). It is assumed the routes were originally constructed for prospecting and timber harvest. The routes have recently been mechanically maintained for a timber sale within the area (2013). The sale was ongoing during the intensive inventory and was a significant visual impact to the area. Following BLM policy this 166.79 acre area was excluded from the unit.

In the east edge of the unit, a gravel mine is located in Section 25 of T. 17 S. R. 71 W. The recent activity has occurred at the mine site and is visible in many locations throughout the unit. The mine has maintained routes accessing the site. The mine is a significant imprint of man and affects the natural character of the unit. Following BLM policy this 73.32 acre area was excluded from the unit.

Other man made uses within the area include range use. Stock ponds, spring developments, and fencing are located throughout the unit. The impacts are insignificant disturbances and do not affect the natural character of the unit.

The BLM concurs with Wild Connections findings that the BLM originally took an overly strict approach when assessing naturalness and that the majority of the unit does appear natural. The BLM did however remove approximately 1437.46 acres from the unit due to noticeable man-made disturbances from mining and commercial timber harvests. The remaining 17,854.92 acre unit does possess wilderness characteristics.

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

This large area of public land offers outstanding opportunities for solitude. The few entry points makes access difficult, especially to the interior of the unit. Very few people travel in this area offering an abundance of solitude.

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

The unit offers ample opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The area has a large variety of topography and vegetation providing excellent opportunities for exploration. There is a primitive trail system on the northern end of the unit providing outstanding opportunities for hiking, horseback riding and mountain biking. Backcountry angling opportunities exist along Currant Creek. The area also offers outstanding backcountry hunting.

5. Does the area have supplemental values?

Yes No NA

- The unit contains elk and mule deer severe winter range as mapped by Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

Summary of Analysis:

Unique Identifier: COF-020-050

Acreage Inventoried: 19,213.93

Acreage with Wilderness Characteristics: 17,854.92

Results of Analysis:

Inventory concluded that 17,854.92 acres of the 19,292.4 acre unit does possess wilderness characteristics. Readily noticeable man-made features associated with timber harvesting and mining were excluded.

The unit, Eight-mile Mountain, is bounded as follows:

- The north boundary of the unit is bounded by man-made features associated with commercial timber harvesting and BLM Road 5828.
- The west and south edges are property lines other than BLM management;
- The central western edge is bounded by wilderness inventory road, Colorado State Highway (Hwy) 9;
- The eastern edge by wilderness inventory road, Fremont County 69;
- The south east edge is bounded by wilderness inventory road CO-020-050-D and CO-020-050-E;
- The south boundary is defined by a utility corridor, CO-020-050-A;
- The unit is found in parts of the sections listed in the following townships;
 - o T. 16. S. R. 71 W. Sections: 29, 30, 31, 32
 - o T. 17 S R. 71 W. Sections: 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36
 - o T. 17 S. R. 73 W. Sections: 1, 11, 12, 13, 14, 23, 24, 25

The BLM concurs, for the most part, with Wild Connections assessment that the BLM's 2013 inventory took too strict of an approach when assessing naturalness. The majority of the man-made features have largely grown-over with vegetation and are not-readily noticeable. This includes multiple roads that are no longer open to the public and do not see regular vehicle use. The boundary was delineated to exclude 952.8 acres of substantially noticeable human-caused impacts. A 484.7 acre area was not included in the inventory since a shared corner is not viewed as contiguous.

- 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 X No _____ 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 characteristic.

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

Date: May 30, 2013

Evaluator: Kalem Lenard/ Outdoor Recreation Planner

Date: December 18, 2015

Evaluator: Ken Reed/ Forrester

Date: August 28, 2013

Evaluator: Chris Cloninger/ Rangeland Management Specialist

Date: May 30, 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-020-050, Eight-mile Mountain Route or Route Segment Name and/or Identifier: BLM 5828, Colorado State Hwy 9, Fremont CR 69, Utility Transmission line (CO-020-0050-A), CO-020-050-D, CO-020-050-E.

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-020-050 Eight-mile Mountain Wilderness Inventory Map

Map Date: 2013

Describe:

The map shows the parcel inventoried for wilderness characteristics and routes 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:

Describe:

- BLM 5828: Is used mainly for recreational and range land purposes.
- Colorado State Hwy 9: Used for general transportation.
- Fremont CR 69: Used for general transportation.
- Utility Transmission line (CO-020-0050-A): Transmission line.
- CO-020-050-D: Is used as an access route for a radio tower.
- CO-020-050-E: Is a transmission line for the radio tower.

B. Right-of-Way (ROW):

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

Yes No Unknown

- Colorado State Hwy 9: Has a ROW association, serial # C 0125393.
- Fremont CR 69: Has a ROW association, serial # COC 44142.
- Utility Transmission line (CO-020-0050-A): Has a ROW association, serial # C 0128242.
- CO-020-050-D: has a ROW association, serial # C 071616.
- CO-020-050-E: has a ROW association, serial # C 071615

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

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

Yes No Unknown or N/A

Explain:

All ROW associations are still in use.

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

Describe:

- BLM 5828: Is originally mechanically constructed, cut/ fill construction is evident.
- Colorado State Hwy 9: Is originally mechanically constructed, paved.

- Fremont CR 69: Is originally mechanically constructed, graveled
- Utility Transmission line (CO-020-0050-A): Is originally mechanically constructed.
- CO-020-050-D: Was mechanically constructed, evidence of cut/fill.
 - CO-020-050-E: Was mechanically constructed to install towers.

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:

- BLM 5828: has mechanical improvements, drainage added to the route.
- Colorado State Hwy 9: Has regular mechanical improvements, bridges.
- Fremont CR 69: Has mechanical maintenance.
- Utility Transmission line (CO-020-0050-A): Is maintained by mechanical means.
- CO-020-050-D: has evidence of mechanical improvements, drainage added to the route.
- CO-020-050-E has no evidence of mechanical improvements.

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:

- BLM 5828: is maintained by machinery.
- Colorado State Hwy 9: Is maintained by machinery.
- Fremont CR 69: Is maintained by machinery.
- Utility Transmission line (CO-020-0050-A): Is maintained by machinery.
- CO-020-050-D is maintained mechanically
- CO-020-050-E is maintained by mechanical means.

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:

- BLM 5828: Route is on BLM maintenance schedule.
- Colorado State Hwy 9: Route would be maintained by Colorado Department of Transportation.
- Fremont CR 69: Would be maintained by Fremont County.
- Utility Transmission line (CO-020-0050-A): Would be maintained by WAPPA Power Company.
- CO-020-050-D would be maintained by the ROW holder.
- CO-020-050-E would be maintained by the ROW holder.

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

Yes 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).

- BLM 5828: Is maintained for access by full size vehicles.
- Colorado State Hwy 9: Is maintained for regular and continuous use.
- Fremont CR 69: Is maintained for regular and continuous use.

- Utility Transmission line (CO-020-0050-A): Is not maintained for public use.
- CO-020-050-D is not maintained for public use.
- CO-020-050-E is not maintained for public use.

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 = Wilderness Inventory Road
No = Not a road for wilderness inventory purposes

Explain:

- BLM 5828: Is a wilderness inventory road.
- Colorado State Hwy 9: Is a wilderness inventory road.
- Fremont CR 69: Is a wilderness inventory road.
- Utility Transmission line (CO-020-0050-A): Is a wilderness inventory road due to the ROW association.
- CO-020-050-D is a wilderness inventory road due to the ROW association.
- CO-020-050-E is a wilderness inventory road due to the ROW association.

Evaluator: Janine Prout/ Recreation Technician

Date: August 27, 2013

PHOTO LOG

Photographer(s): CCloninger/Rangeland Management Specialist

Inventory Area Unique Identifier: **COF-020-050**

Date	Frame #	Camera Direction	Description	GPS/UTM Location	Town-ship	Range	Sec.	Photo Point #
7/9/2013	P7090584	NE	Beginning of route, Gate	See Map	17 S.	71 W.	34	1
7/9/2013	P7090586	SE	Route Condition	See Map	17 S.	71 W.	34	2
7/9/2013	P7090587	NW	Route Condition	See Map	18 S.	71 W.	2	3
7/9/2013	P7090588	S	Radio tower	See Map	18 S.	71 W.	2	4
7/9/2013	P7090589	W	Radio tower	See Map	17 S.	71 W.	28	5
7/9/2013	P7090592	SE	Route condition	See Map	17 S.	71 W.	28	6
7/9/2013	P7090594	N	Route condition	See Map	17 S.	71 W.	21	7



#1



#2



#3



#4



#5

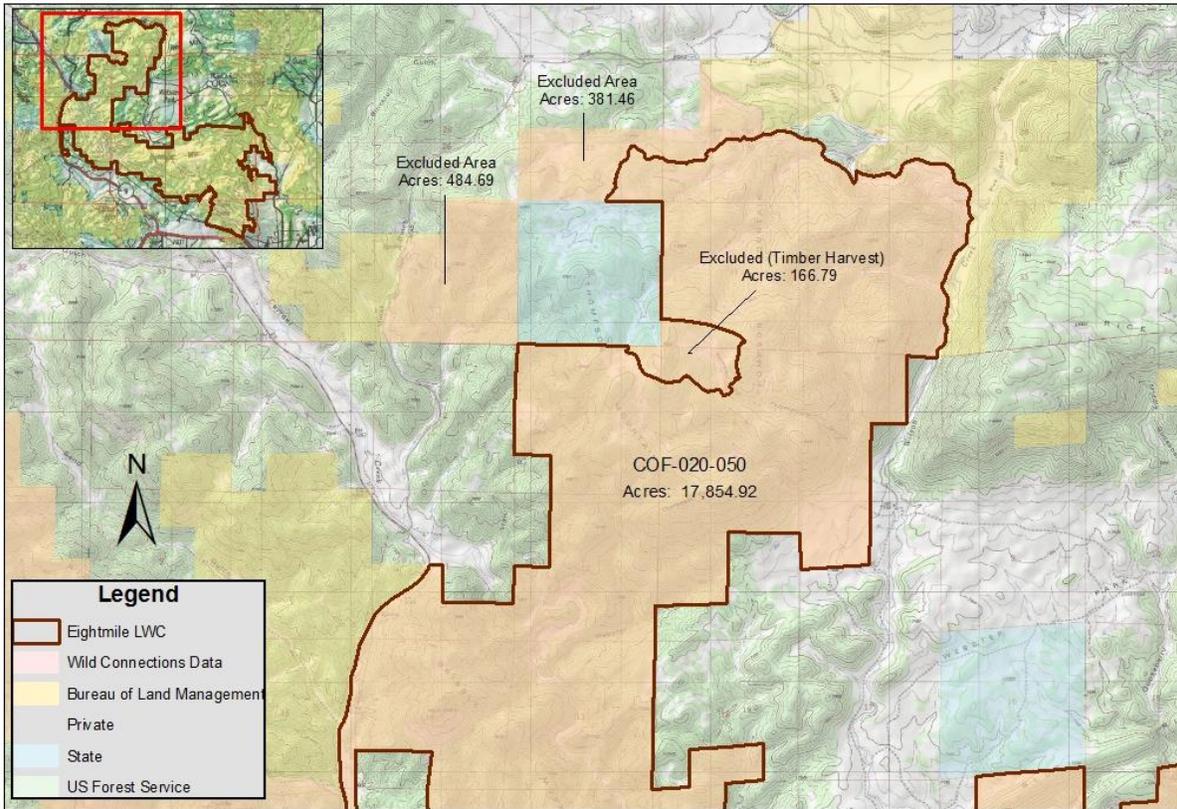


#6



#7

Map 2 Northern half of Eightmile Mountain with exclusions



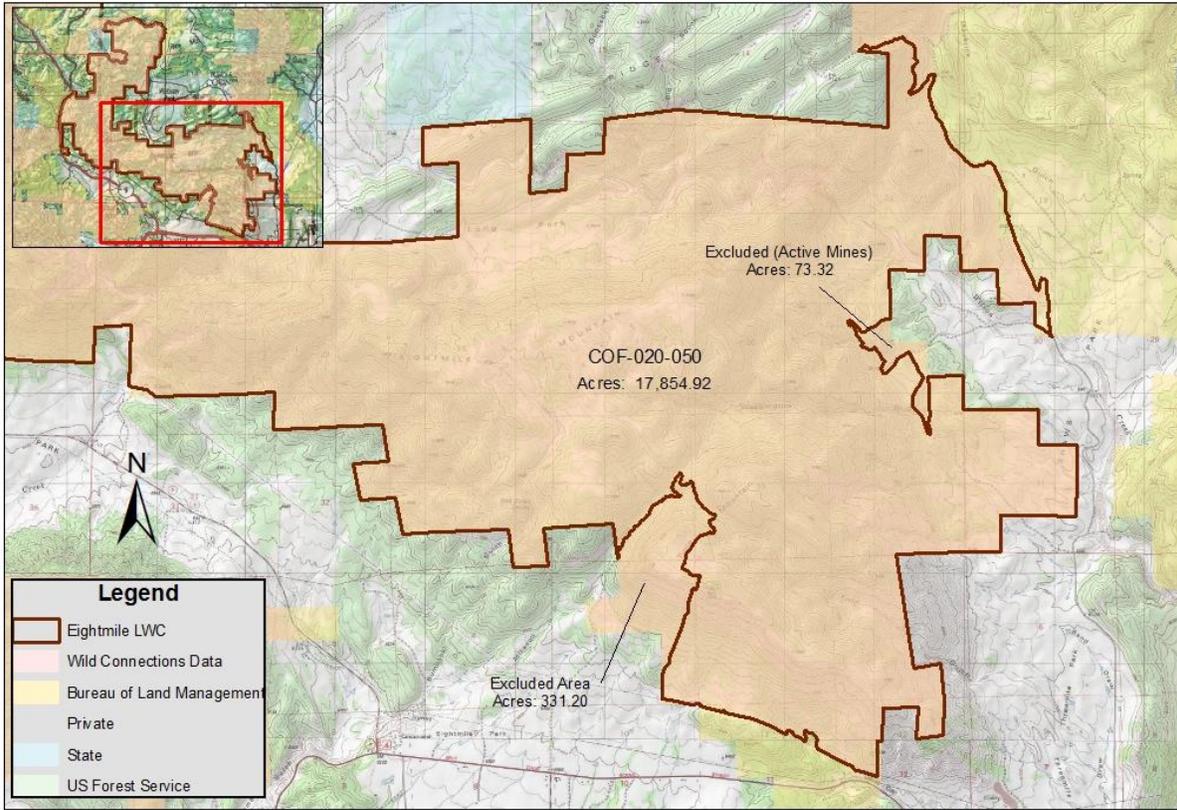
0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

COF-020-050, Eightmile LWC Exclusion Areas: Map 1

NOTE TO MAP USERS
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Prepared by P Chapman 01/12/2016

Map 3 South portion of Eightmile area showing exclusions



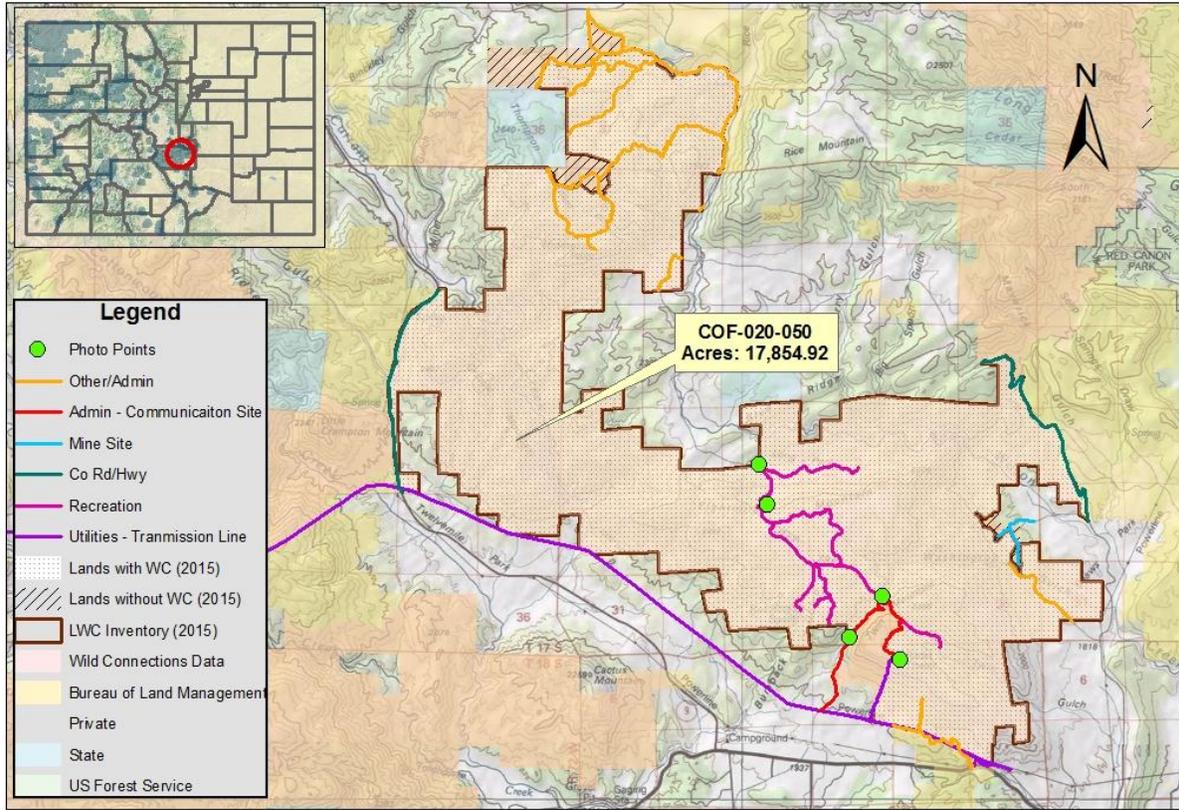
0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

COF-020-050, Eightmile LWC Exclusion Areas: Map 2

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Prepared by P Chapman 01/12/2016

Map 4 Routes and photo points



**COF-020-050, Eightmile
Wilderness Characteristics
Inventory Map**

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Prepared by P Chapman 01/12/2016

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-020-050	Eightmile Mountain Deer Haven	19,292.4	17,854.9	1,437.5

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