

**Lands with Wilderness Characteristics Report:  
North Hondo  
COF-020-002**

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' is the policy that provides 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 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 agreeing with the BLM findings that 950 acres meet the criteria. The data was submitted by Wild Connections in their Badito Cone Contiguous Units LWC report.

Although BLM and Wild Connections are in agreement that North Hondo fits the criteria, the 2013 BLM inventory incorrectly stated that the area meets the criteria for LWC because it is contiguous with USFS road-less recommended wilderness area. Further clarification is needed so the 2015 inventory for North Hondo was updated to reflect new information.

<b>Inventory Effort</b>	<b>Acreage Inventoried</b>	<b>Wilderness Characteristics Acreage</b>
BLM 2013 Inventory	521.9	521.9
Wild Connections Inventory	521.9	521.9
BLM 2015 Evaluation Conclusions	521.9	521.9

## 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): CO-020-044

Map Name(s)/Number(s): BLM 100 K Blanca Peak

BLM District(s)/Field Office(s): Front Range District/ Royal Gorge Filed 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: CO-020-002, North Hondo (Arroyo Hondo) Acreage: 521.9 acres

1. Is the area of sufficient size? :

Yes  No

Unit, CO-020-002, North Hondo is 521.9 acres. It is smaller than 5,000 acres in size but is contiguous with the United States Forest Service (USFS) Greenhorn Mountain Wilderness Area (managed by the Pike/ San Isabel National Forest) meeting size exception 2.a.i.

The unit is bounded as follows:

- The eastern edge and part of the northern edge is defined by the USFS Greenhorn Mountain Wilderness area and USFS public land;
- The south, east, and north edges are defined by property lines other than BLM management;
- No wilderness inventory roads were identified during inventory.

2. Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes  No  NA

Description:

The North Hondo unit, CO-020-002 is located on the south west end of the Wet Mountain range. The closest large town, Walsenburg, Colorado is located 25 miles southeast of the unit. The unit is located along the foothills of the Greenhorn Mountains and incorporates grassland and plains ecosystems to the west. The unit consists of rock outcroppings, cliff bands, and wide canyons. The parcel primarily consists of a piñon-juniper forest.

A few minor human impacts exist on the ground that represents the range and mining activity in the area. A two track road to an old stock tank is located in the southwest corner. It is not open to the public and is rarely used; it does not affect the naturalness to the area. An abandoned two track bisects the center of the unit. It is assumed the route was originally built for prospecting. The route is not open to the public and has not been recently used or maintained. It does not affect the overall naturalness to the area. As a result of the inventory conducted, The North Hondo unit generally appears to have been affected primarily by forces of nature.

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

Description:

Due to the units' unique topographic features, and thick vegetation, the average visitor can seek solitude within the unit. The unit's outstanding opportunities for solitude exist due to the difficulty of accessing the unit and excellent screening that the vegetation and landscape provide.

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

Description:

Primitive recreation opportunities exist within the unit, no developed facilities and lack of trails and roads allow for a primitive experience. Opportunities become outstanding due to the challenging overland travel opportunities and the vast amount of primitive lands available including the adjacent USFS lands.

5. Does the area have supplemental values?

Yes  No  NA

Description:

- The unit is located within the Wet Mountain Lynx Analysis unit although very little lynx habitat is present.
- The unit contains mule deer winter range and elk severe winter range as mapped by Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

## Summary of Analysis

Area Unique Identifier: COF-020-002, North Hondo

Acreage: 521.9

### Results of Analysis:

The unit, COF-020-002 is 521.9 acres. It meets the size criteria due to contiguous lands with USFS Greenhorn Mountain Wilderness area. Limited man-made features found within the unit allow for natural characteristics to exist. Outstanding opportunities exist for solitude and unconfined recreation due to the lack of motorized access, no established facilities, and adequate topography and vegetative cover to provide screening from other users.

The unit is bounded as follows:

- The eastern edge and part of the northern edge is defined by the USFS Greenhorn Mountain Wilderness area and USFS public land;
  - The south, west, and north edges are defined by property lines other than BLM management;
  - It is found in parts of the sections listed in the following townships;
    - o T. 26 S. R. 69 W. Sec 1 SW ½ and 12 NE 1/8.
    - o T. 26 S. R. 68 W. Sec 7 N ½.
- 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 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

Date: May 21, 2013

Evaluator: Kalem Lenard/ Outdoor Recreation Planner

Date: July 30, 2013

Evaluator: John Lamman/ Rangeland Management Specialist

Date: Sept. 10, 2013

Evaluator: Monica Mohr/ Rangeland Technician

Date: May 21, 2013

Evaluator: Matt Rustand/ Wildlife Biologist

Date: Sept. 10, 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: CO-020-002, North Hondo Route or Route Segment Name and/or Identifier: CO-020-002-A

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

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

Map Title: North Hondo Wilderness Characteristics Map

Map Date: 2013

Describe:

The map shows the parcel inventoried for wilderness characteristics along with GPS inventory of a route.

#### **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 (if any) 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:

Route, CO-020-002-A is a route that is created by range use. It is used to access an old stock tank that is no longer in use.

B. Right-of-Way (ROW):

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

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

### 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 X

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

Yes \_\_\_ No X

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

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ If "yes", improvements by? Hand Tools \_\_\_\_\_ by Machine \_\_\_\_\_

No X

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 X

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

Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No X

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:

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).

No recent use observed

#### 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:

Route, CO-020-002-A does not meet the criteria for being a wilderness inventory road. The road is not maintained for regular and continuous use.

Evaluator: Janine Prout / Recreation Technician

Date: May 14, 2013

## PHOTO LOG

Photographer(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Inventory Area Unique Identifier: **CO-020-002, North Hondo**

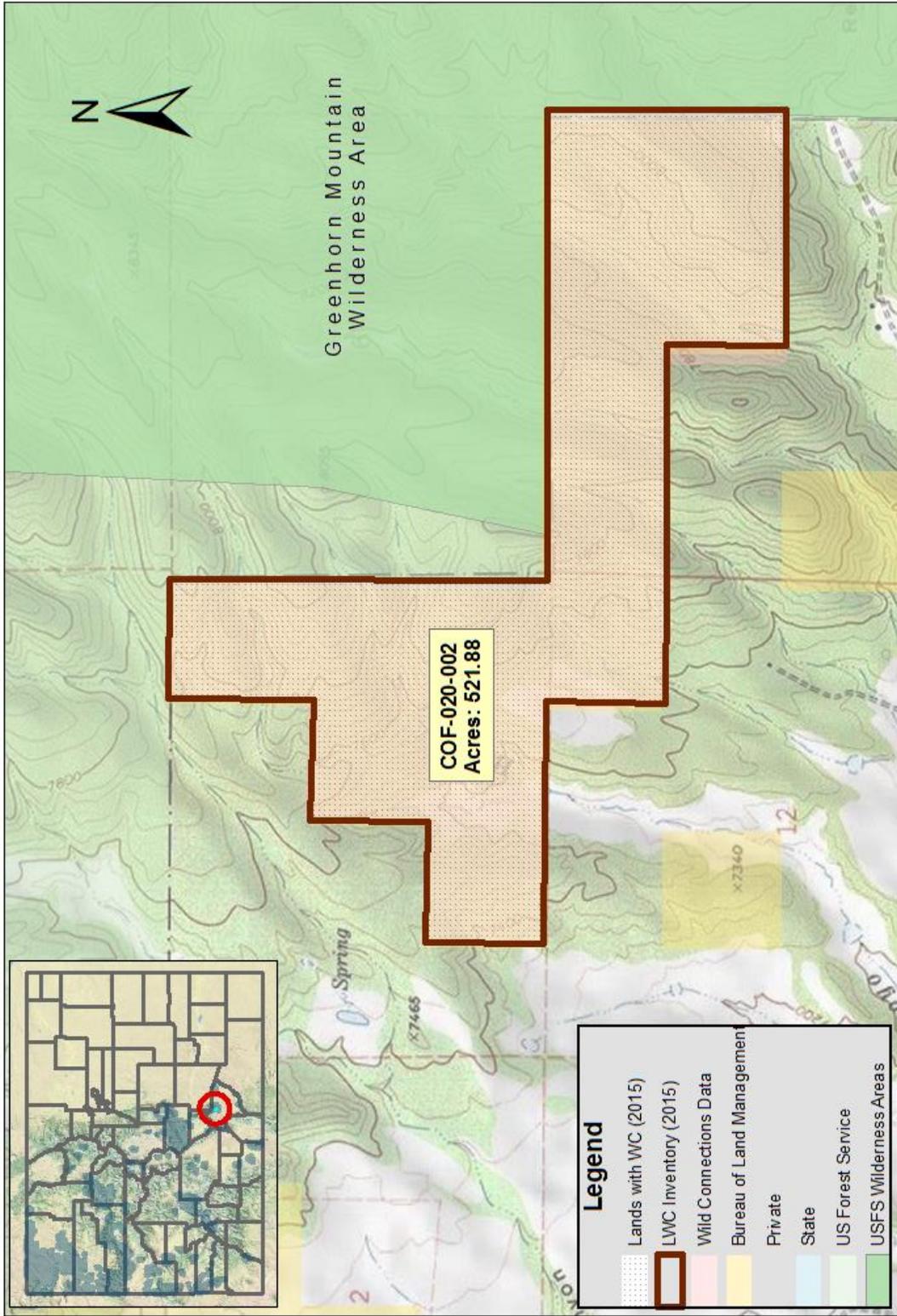
<b>Date</b>	<b>Frame #</b>	<b>Camera Direc.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>GPS/UTM Location</b>	<b>Town -ship</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Sec.</b>	<b>Photo Point #</b>

(add rows as needed)

None Provided



Imagery provided by Esri Arc Map, photo taken: July 19, 2013



## COF-020-002, North Hondo Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Map

**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-020-002	North Hondo	521.9	521.9	0.0

**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: 2/25/16

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Keith E. Berger  
Field Manager  
Royal Gorge Field Office

Date: 2/25/16