Lands with Wilderness Characteristics: Polygon 31

June 2013

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 **X** (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):_____
Map Name(s)/Number(s):_____
BLM District(s)/Field Office(s):_____

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 **LWC Polygon 31** Acreage**11,948**
(If the inventory area consists of subunits, list the acreage of each and evaluate each separately).

1. Is the area of sufficient size? (If area meets an exception to the size criterion, check "Yes" and describe the exception):

   Yes **X** No_____ (If "no" is checked, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "NA" for the remaining questions)

   Description (boundaries of the area--wilderness inventory roads, property lines, etc.):

Beginning at the intersection of Rio Blanco County(RBC) Road 23 and BLM 1070 (Cottonwood Creek), the border follows BLM 1070 Southwest to the intersection with BLM 1070B. From BLM 1070B the border travels south. BLM 1070B then turns south and continues as the border until point 031-014 is reached. From that point, the border turns northeast and follows an unnamed road north and east until and intersection with BLM 1070A is reached. At BLM 1070 the border travels northwest to the intersection with BLM 1070C. At the intersection the border follows BLM 1070C north to point 031-026. This point is at the intersection of BLM 1070C and BLM 1070 (Cottonwood Creek). BLM 1070 then serves as the northern boundary until it ends at point 03-029. From there the valley just to the east is followed south until a tributary valley turning west is followed up just south of an oil or gas site that is located south of point 031-031. At that oil or gas site the access road is followed south until it reaches the intersection at point 031-033. At that point a hydro axe vegetation treatment path serves as the southern border until intersecting with RBC Road 14. The hydro axe treatment and RBC Road 14 then cross back and forth serving as the south western border until private property cuts into the area to form the boundary. After following the private property boundary the hydro axe treatment serves as the southern boundary until private property is reached again. This serves as the southern boundary until BLM 7070A (Cottonwood Jeep Trail) is reached and fallowed to its intersection with County Road 23. County Road 23 then serves as the eastern boundary with a short cherry stem at point GHP-039 for an oil or gas site.

2. Does the area appear to be natural?

   Yes **X** No_____ NA_____ (If "no" is checked, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "NA" for the remaining questions)

   Description (land ownership, location, topography, vegetation, and summary of major human uses and activities):

LWC Polygon 31 has plateaus, shallow draws and canyons, grass and shrub lands as well as pinion juniper stands at higher elevations. Exposed rock features create unique

features and cliffs. The area appears to be influenced primarily by the forces of nature with few exceptions around the border that have been excluded from the LWC Polygon.

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 **X** No_____ NA_____ (If "no" is checked, the area may still have wilderness characteristics – see question 4)

   Description (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for solitude):

   Many of the bordering roads of LWC 31 are in place to serve oil or gas operations. Once off of these roads the forces of nature become the dominating force that shapes the landscape. From the north end of the area deep draws can be followed into secluded areas. From the south end of the area high ridges can be hiked to, from these ridges, plateaus and shallow canyons can be viewed. The plateaus that can be seen are found on the western portion of the area. All of these areas can be accessed by horse or on foot and are outstanding opportunities to find 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 **X** No_____ NA_____ (If "no" is checked, the area may still have wilderness characteristics; if "No" is checked for both questions 3 and 4 the area does not have wilderness characteristics, check "NA" for question 5)

Description (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation):

LWC Polygon 31 has plateaus, shallow draws and canyons, grass and sage brush lands as well as pinion juniper stands at higher elevations. Exposed rock features create unique features and cliffs. Many cliffs have caves and ledges that have been inhabited by birds and create a unique area where the avian population can be viewed from low areas vegetated with sage brush. From the top raptors could be observed in flight. The area would be a good area to hike cross country and study rock formations and is an outstanding location for horseback riding and primitive camping.

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

Yes_____ No **X** NA_____

Description:

6. Summary of Analysis to document information that constitutes the inventory finding on 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. Explain the inventory findings for the entirety of the inventory unit. When an LWC has been identified that is smaller than the size of the total inventory unit, explain why certain portions of the inventory unit are not included in the LWC (e.g. the inventory found that certain parts lacked naturalness).
   - 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_____

   Check one:

   X The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as land with wilderness characteristics (*all 3 bullets must be answered "yes"*).

   ___ The area does not have wilderness characteristics (*one or more of the bullets is answered "no"*).

7. Prepared by (list team members, titles, date, signatures; add lines as needed):

Evaluator (name/title): **Brendan M. Grady, Recreation Intern** Date: **06/13/2013**
Evaluator (name/title): **Clint Mitchell, Recreation Intern** Date: **06/13/2013**
Evaluator (name/title): _____ Date: _____

8. Reviewed by (District or Field Manager):
   Name: Kent T. Walter
   Title: FIELD MANAGER
   Date: 06/19/13

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: **LWC Polygon 31**
Route or Route Segment Name and/or Identifier: **031-001; Route 1. BLM 1070A**

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

Map Title: _____ Map Date: _____

Describe:
Route 1 runs through the western portion of LWC Polygon 31, starting at point 031-016 and ending at point 031-022.

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:

There was no apparent purpose for the route at time of inventory.

B. Right-of-Way (ROW):
B.1. Is there a ROW associated with this route?