

**FORM 1**

**Documentation of BLM Wilderness Inventory Findings on Record**

**1. Is there existing BLM wilderness inventory information on all or part of this area?**  
 No (Go to Form 2) \_\_\_\_\_ Yes  X  (If yes, and if more than one area is within the area, list the names of those areas.):

a) **Inventory Source:** Montana BLM's Initial Inventory (November 1978 – August 1979)

b) **Inventory Area Name(s)/Number(s):** Grant Coulee/MT-064-337

c) **Map Name(s)/Number(s):** BLM Montana Wilderness Inventory Maps:  
 Final Initial Inventory Map (August 1979)  
 Proposed Wilderness Study Decision Map Lewistown & Miles City Districts (March 1980)  
 Final Inventory Decision Map Lewistown & Miles City Districts (November 1980)

d) **BLM District(s)/Field Office(s):** Lewistown/Valley Resource Area

**2. BLM Inventory Findings on Record:**

*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):*

Inventory source: Montana BLM's Initial Inventory (November 1978 – August 1979)					
Area Unique Identifier	Sufficient Size? (acres)	Naturalness?	Outstanding Solitude?	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation?	Supplemental Values?
MT-064-337	YES (68,560) (BLM)	YES	--	--	YES
<b>Comments</b>	This unit is compromised by some Bentonite mining, but the 'apparent' naturalness of the area is superb. The unit may also possess several various supplemental values, (archaeological) which should be considered for wilderness value. The size of this unit 70, 000+ acres along with the above mentioned values warrants the recommendation for intensive inventory.				
Inventory source: Montana BLM's Intensive Inventory (August 1979 - November 1980)					
MT-064-337	YES (68,560) (BLM)	YES	NO	NO	NO
<b>Comments</b>	The unit is not considered suitable for future wilderness study. Although the area appears natural, the lack of topographic diversity allows for neither an outstanding opportunity for solitude nor a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.				

FORM 2

Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

a. Area Unique Identifier Lower Grant Coulee Acreage 52,172  
(If the inventory area consists of subunits, list the acreage of each and evaluate each separately).

(1) Is the area of sufficient size? (If the area meets one of the exceptions to the size criterion, check "Yes" and describe the exception in the space provided below), Yes x No \_\_\_\_\_  
(Note: If "No" is checked the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "NA" for the remaining questions below.)

This area contains over 5,000 acres of contiguous BLM-administered lands.

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

The original unit is approximately 15 miles long (north to south) by 7 miles wide. The western boundary of the unit is defined by the Larb Creek Road and some interspersed private lands. The south boundary is formed by the Triple Crossing Access Road, the east boundary is formed by the Ridge Road and the north boundary by the Fisher Road. The shape is mostly regular and continuous block of BLM administered lands with 4 State sections within the boundary.

During the inventory update, route analysis showed that the Hammond Coulee Road, which runs through the northern portion of the area, qualifies as a wilderness inventory road. The portion of the unit north of the road was eliminated due to the number of visible fences and large reservoirs. The new unit consists of 39,913 acres with the Hammond Coulee Road as the north boundary. The following descriptions include the entire, original unit.

(2) Does the area appear to be natural? Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_ N/A \_\_\_\_\_  
(Note: If "No" is checked the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "NA" for the remaining questions below.)

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

There are 3 plugged and abandoned wells within the unit and 1 that has been spud but not completed. There are 155 mine claims within the northern half of the unit.

There are portions of 11 grazing allotments within the unit, and approximately 50 miles of interior fences and many reservoirs. These features are more concentrated and more apparent in the northern half of the unit where several miles of linear fence can be seen from most vantage points. Fisher Coulee, in the northern part of the unit, is lined by several large, noticeable reservoirs. The more dispersed nature of the fences and reservoirs in the southern portion of the inventory unit make them less apparent from any vantage point as they are "absorbed" by the size and rolling topography of the area.

There are many miles of vehicular routes within the unit including a 5-mile section of Valley County fuel tax road in the northern end. Most of these routes were not apparent and, in some cases, not visible at all during the field visit.

This unit consists of gently rolling hills interspersed with deep, broad coulees and vegetated with sagebrush, prairie grasses, and isolated stands of cottonwood and willows.

(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  N/A

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

The size and remoteness of the unit combined with its rolling topography provides outstanding opportunities for solitude. Most lands directly adjacent to the unit are public lands consisting of native range. The limited acreage of private lands with farm developments adjacent to the unit are not visible or are substantially unnoticeable from most of the unit. With the possible exception of big game hunting season vehicle use of routes in the unit and on adjacent lands is infrequent.

(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  N/A   
(Note: If "No" is checked for both 3 and 4 the areas does not have wilderness characteristics; check "NA" for question 5.)

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

Big game and upland bird hunting are currently the most popular recreational pursuits in the unit. It's possible to participate in a variety of primitive and unconfined recreation activities in the Lower Grant Coulee including hiking, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, photography and sightseeing for botanical, zoological and geological features.

(5) Does the area have supplemental values (ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value)? Yes  No  N/A

Description:

Mule deer winter range (southern tip)  
Pronghorn winter range  
Grassland bird nesting  
Sharp-tailed grouse dancing grounds  
Greater sage-grouse strutting grounds  
Important waterfowl nesting

### Summary of Analysis\*

Area Unique Identifier: Lower Grant Coulee - Area 55

#### Summary

Results of analysis: (Note: explain the inventory findings for the entirety of the inventory unit. When wilderness characteristics have been identified in an area that is smaller than the size of the total inventory unit, explain why certain portions of the inventory unit are not included within the lands with wilderness characteristics (e.g. the inventory found that certain parts lacked naturalness).)

1. Does the area meet any of the size requirements? Yes  No
2. Does the area appear to be natural? Yes  No  N/A
3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation? Yes  No  N/A
4. Does the area have supplemental values? Yes  No  N/A

Check one:

The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics.

The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

Prepared by (team members):

Name	Title	Date
Kathy Tribby	Outdoor Recreation Planner	7/12/2011
Brian Hockett	Planning & Environmental Coordinator	7/12/2011
Fritz Prellwitz	Wildlife Biologist	3/22/2011
Jordan Thompson	Rangeland Management Specialist	7/12/2011
Ray Neumiller	Rangeland Management Specialist	7/12/2011

Reviewed by (District or Field Manager):

Name: Steve Hasso Title: Adm. PM  
Date: 6-28-2012

\*This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR parts 4 or 1610.5-3.