

## WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS REVIEW

Date of Submission: *December 30, 2003*

Date(s) of Field Office Review: *December, 2006- February, 2007*

Submitter: *SUWA*

Name of Area to be Reviewed: *Arches Adjacent*

BLM Field Office(s) Affected: *Moab*

### EVALUATION

1.) Was new information submitted by a member of the public for this area?

YES \_\_\_\_ NO X

2.) If new information was submitted, describe the submission. For example, did the submission include a map that identifies the specific boundaries of the area(s) in question; a narrative that describes the wilderness characteristics of the area and documents how that information differs from the information gathered and reviewed in prior BLM inventories; photographic documentation; etc?

*The area reviewed was derived from a GIS Data Layer provided by the proponent. New information such as maps, photographs, or narratives were not included.*

3. As a result of interdisciplinary review of relevant information (which may include aerial photographs, state and county road information, road maintenance agreements, documentation from prior BLM inventories, field observations, maps, master title plats, evidence presented as new information by a proponent, etc.), do you conclude:

\_\_\_\_\_ a) the decision reached in previous BLM inventories that the area lacks wilderness characteristics is still valid.

(or)

X b) some or all of the area has wilderness characteristics as shown on the attached map.

4. Describe your findings regarding specific wilderness characteristics and provide detailed rationale.

*See attached narrative*

5. Document all information considered during the interdisciplinary team review (e.g. aerial photographs, state and county road information, road maintenance agreements, documentation from prior BLM inventories, field observations, maps, master title plats, evidence presented as new information by a proponent, etc.)

*During the course of the interdisciplinary team review, Moab BLM undertook the following steps:*

*In late 2006 and early 2007, BLM used GIS information to identify potential impacts on naturalness including county road data (previously verified as part of travel plan formulation), county-provided intrusion data, and local GIS data on range improvements, oil and gas wells, vegetative manipulations (especially chainings), and community pits. Master Title Plat data available from the State Office GIS was examined for rights-of-way.*

*BLM Moab next undertook a detailed review of high resolution aerial photos from 2006 to both verify information from the GIS review, as well as to look for additional impacts not incorporated in GIS. These impacts could include such things as seismic exploration lines not included in the county road inventory and other disturbances from past minerals activities.*

*The above steps enabled Moab BLM to prepare a map showing which remaining areas were likely to possess naturalness. As described in the attached narrative, much of the new acreage is cut off from the NPS areas by roads, other impacts, and/or state lands. This acreage, regardless of naturalness, failed to meet the size criteria and was dropped from further consideration. The remaining acreage was judged generally natural in appearance, but possessed wilderness characteristics only in association with the NPS lands administratively endorsed for wilderness.*

*Moab BLM convened an interdisciplinary review team meeting on January 11, 2007, to review the findings from the above steps. Team members were asked to provide information, including knowledge gained in the field, which either supported or refuted these findings. Based on input from this review, Moab BLM incorporated any necessary changes into its analysis.*

*The following specific documents and files were utilized:*

1. *Grand County road inventory (GIS)*
2. *Grand County intrusion data (GIS)*
3. *Monument Wash, Dalton Wells, Arths Pasture, and Little Grand range allotment files*
4. *NAIP 2006 aerial photos (GIS)*
5. *Vegetative treatments (local GIS)*
6. *Range improvements (local GIS)*
7. *Arches National Park wilderness recommendation (GIS)*
8. *UWC GIS Wilderness Proposal Data Layer (2005)*
9. *Analysis of Management Situation (Moab BLM, 2007)*

6. List the members of the interdisciplinary team and resource specialties represented.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Resource(s) Represented</i>
<i>Bill Stevens</i>	<i>Wilderness, GIS, Recreation</i>
<i>Ann Marie Aubry</i>	<i>Hydrology, Soils</i>
<i>Brent Northrup</i>	<i>Minerals, RMP Team Lead</i>
<i>Chad Niehaus</i>	<i>Recreation</i>
<i>Daryl Trotter</i>	<i>Botany, NEPA coordinator</i>
<i>Donna Turnipseed</i>	<i>Cultural, paleontology</i>
<i>Katie Stevens</i>	<i>Recreation, Planning</i>
<i>Lynn Jackson</i>	<i>Geology, Minerals, Associate FO Manager</i>
<i>Pam Riddle</i>	<i>Wildlife</i>
<i>David Williams</i>	<i>Range</i>
<i>Maggie Wyatt</i>	<i>Field Office Manager</i>

Field Office Manager /s/ Maggie Wyatt

Date 3/9/07

This determination is part of an interim step in BLM's internal decision-making process and does not constitute a decision that can be appealed.

## Analysis of Citizens' Proposals for Wilderness Characteristics

### Arches Adjacent

The Citizens' Proposal for this area consists of seven separate units bordering Arches National Park

To possess wilderness characteristics, lands must possess naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation. According to the 1964 Wilderness Act, lands with wilderness characteristics generally require a land mass of 5000 acres or more. An exception to this are those lands which adjoin other lands already judged to possess wilderness characteristics, as the opportunities need be present *somewhere* in the larger unit. In the case of Arches Adjacent, only Unit 1 is large enough to potentially qualify as a stand-alone unit. All other units could possess wilderness characteristics only by association with an adjoining portion of NPS lands "administratively endorsed" by NPS for wilderness.

To assist the analysis, BLM subdivided the seven new proposed areas into numerous subunits, based on intervening, substantially noticeable impacts such as substantially noticeable routes (see accompanying map). Many of these sub-units are separated from the Park by substantially noticeable routes, state lands or other impacts, and are not large enough to meet the size requirement as stand alone areas potentially managed for wilderness characteristics.

The remaining subunits, not separated from the Park by the aforementioned impacts, were evaluated for naturalness alone. Outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation are already associated with the contiguous Park Lands. Within these subunits, areas of naturalness were delineated. In most cases, the presence of substantially noticeable routes and other impacts resulted in a reduction of acreage possessing wilderness characteristics.

#### Discussion by Unit

Arches Adjacent 1 is the largest unit. The northern portions of unit 1 lack wilderness characteristics because they are impacted by substantially noticeable routes and seismic lines, with some lands cut off from the larger unit by substantially noticeable routes, other disturbances, or state lands. The southern portions of unit 1 are largely natural, and therefore have wilderness characteristics in association with the contiguous Park.

The southern portion of Arches Adjacent 2 appears natural and has wilderness characteristics in association with the contiguous Park. The northern portion is separated from the Park by a substantially noticeable route, and lacks wilderness characteristics because it does not have the size to stand alone. A boundary range fence extends along the Park boundary in the north of the unit, but this fence does not detract from overall naturalness.

Most of the northern portion of Arches Adjacent 3 appears natural, and has wilderness characteristics in association with the contiguous Park. The southern portion, however, lacks wilderness characteristics because it is separated from the bulk of the Park by state lands, and by a substantially noticeable route which is a permitted Jeep Safari route (also permitted by the Park Service), and does not have the size to stand alone.

Arches Adjacent 4 is a very small unit. Only the western part appears natural and has wilderness characteristics in association with the contiguous Park. A boundary range fence extends along the Park boundary in this part, but does not detract from overall naturalness. Although natural in appearance, the middle portion is cut off from the Park by a substantially noticeable route, and does not have the size to stand alone. The eastern portion is heavily impacted by past mineral exploration activities, and does not have the appearance of naturalness.

Most of Arches Adjacent 5 is natural in appearance, and has wilderness characteristics in association with the contiguous Park. A boundary range fence extends along the Park boundary in the east of the unit, but does not detract from overall naturalness. The westernmost portion, however, has been impacted by mineral exploration routes.

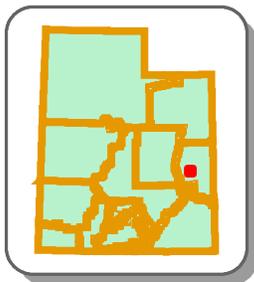
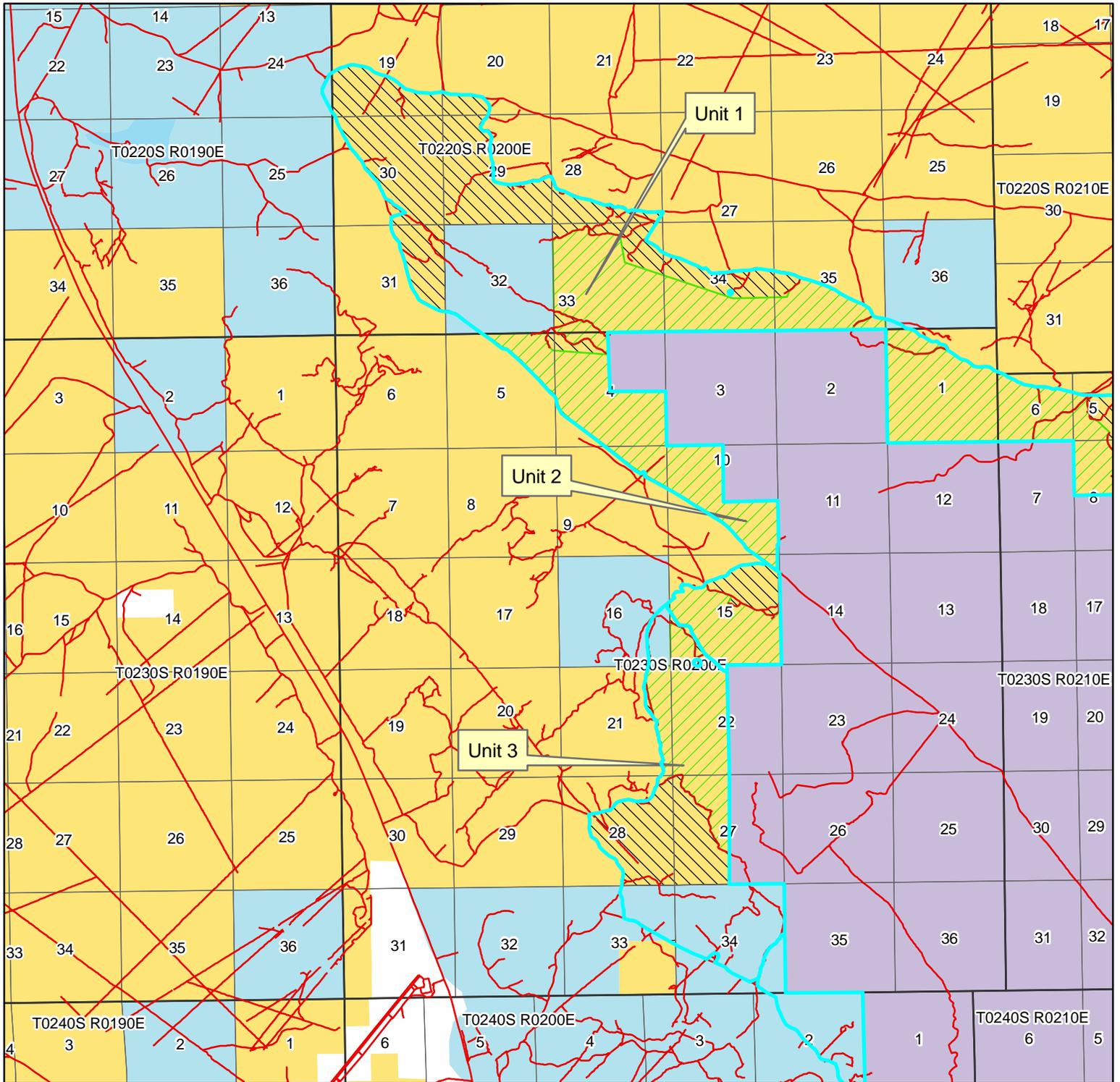
Arches Adjacent 6 itself is split into two subunits by state lands. The eastern part of the northern subunit appears natural, and has wilderness characteristics in association with the contiguous Park. The western portion is cut off from the Park by substantially noticeable routes, including a permitted Jeep Safari route, and lacks the size to stand alone. A similar situation is present in the southern subunit. A boundary range fence extends between the Park boundary and the eastern boundary of the unit, but does not detract from overall naturalness. This portion of the unit has wilderness characteristics in association with the contiguous Park.

Arches Adjacent 7 is cut off from the Park by a substantially noticeable route which falls short of connecting with the old (paved) highway by approximately 250 meters. For all intents and purposes, this area is cut off from the Park by the route, and is too small to stand on its own.

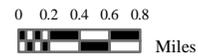
The following is a list by unit and acres of lands with wilderness characteristics:

Unit 1: 3444 acres  
Unit 2: 318 acres  
Unit 3: 592 acres  
Unit 4: 21 acres  
Unit 5: 625 acres  
Unit 6: 1396 acres

Total: 6396 acres



1:79,724



**Legend**

- Grand Co Identified Routes
- 1999 Utah Wilderness Inventory**
  - WC
  - WC isolated by State
  - NWC
- Wilderness Characteristics Review**
  - NWC
  - WC

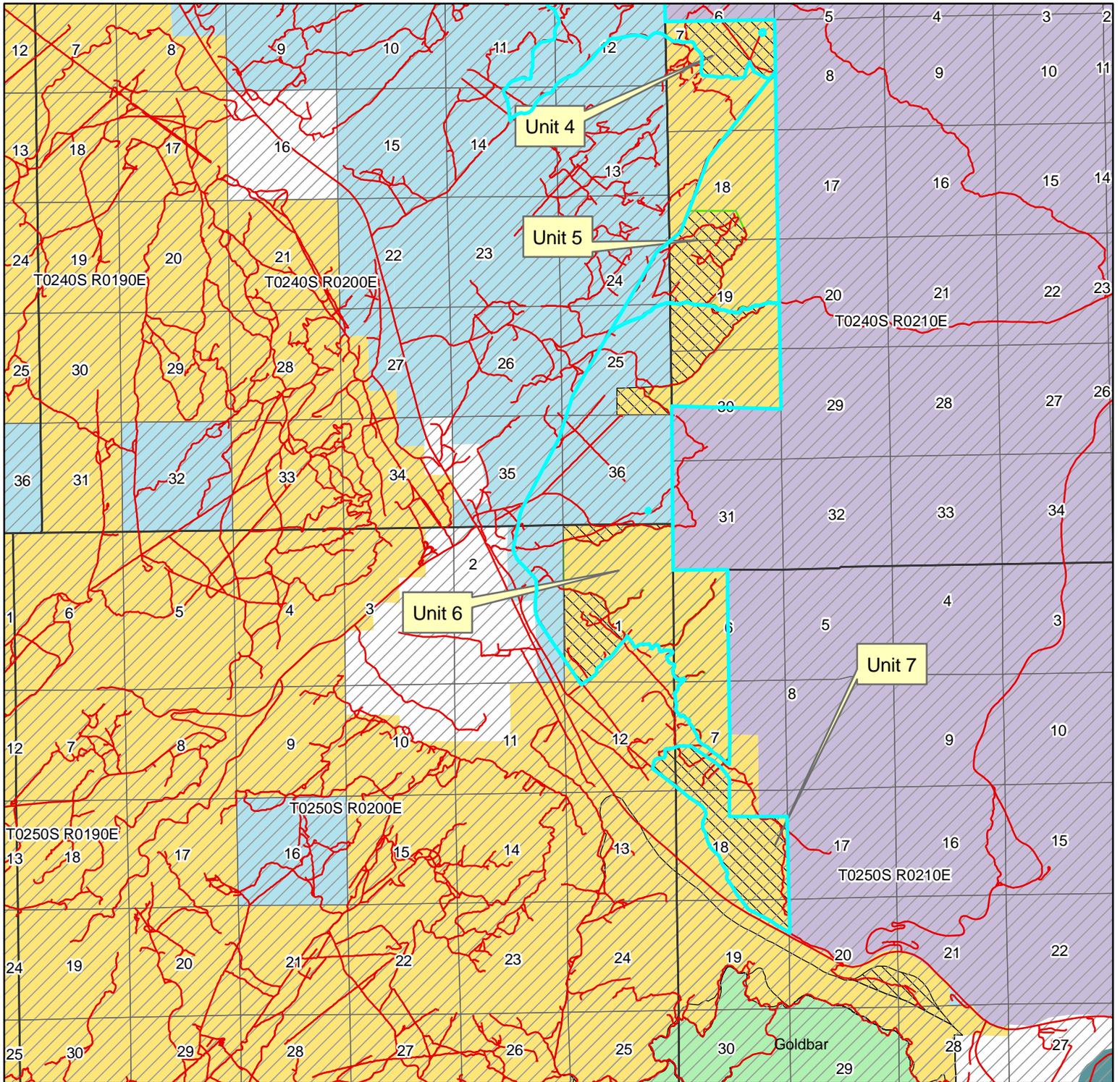
**Land Status**

- Bureau of Land Management
- BLM Wilderness Area
- National Forest
- National Park Service
- Indian Lands
- Military Reservations
- State Lands
- Private Lands
- Water

**CAUTION:**  
 Land ownership data is derived from less accurate data than the 1:24000 scale base map. Therefore, land ownership may not be shown for parcels smaller than 40 acres, and land ownership lines may have plotting errors due to source data.

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management for the use of the data for purposes not intended by the BLM.





1:79,724



**Legend**

— Grand Co Identified Routes

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