

WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS REVIEW

Dates of Submissions: *December 30, 2003*

Date(s) of Field Office Review: *March, 2003; December, 2006- February, 2007*

Submitter: *SUWA*

Name of Area to be Reviewed: *Horsethief Point*

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:

BLM undertook a field trip to this area on March 25, 2003, anticipating that this area would be part of a SUWA wilderness proposal. That trip produced 48 photos documenting roads within the proposed unit. The photos and additional map documentation are part of the administrative record.

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), and local BLM 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 an updated map showing what remaining areas were likely to possess naturalness. As described in the attached narrative, some lands were cut off from the larger unit by roads, other impacts or state lands, and lacked sufficient size as stand-alone units to possess wilderness characteristics. Other areas appeared generally natural in appearance, but possessed wilderness characteristics only in association with the NPS unit 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 which either supported or refuted these findings, based on both their specialized resource expertise and field experience. 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. Horsethief Point, Big Flat-Ten Mile range allotment files*
- 4. NAIP 2006 aerial photos (GIS)*
- 5. Vegetative treatments (local GIS)*
- 6. Range improvements (local GIS)*
- 7. Canyonlands NP Administrative Endorsement for Wilderness (GIS)*

8. *UWC Proposed Wilderness GIS Data Layer (2005)*

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 4/3/07

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

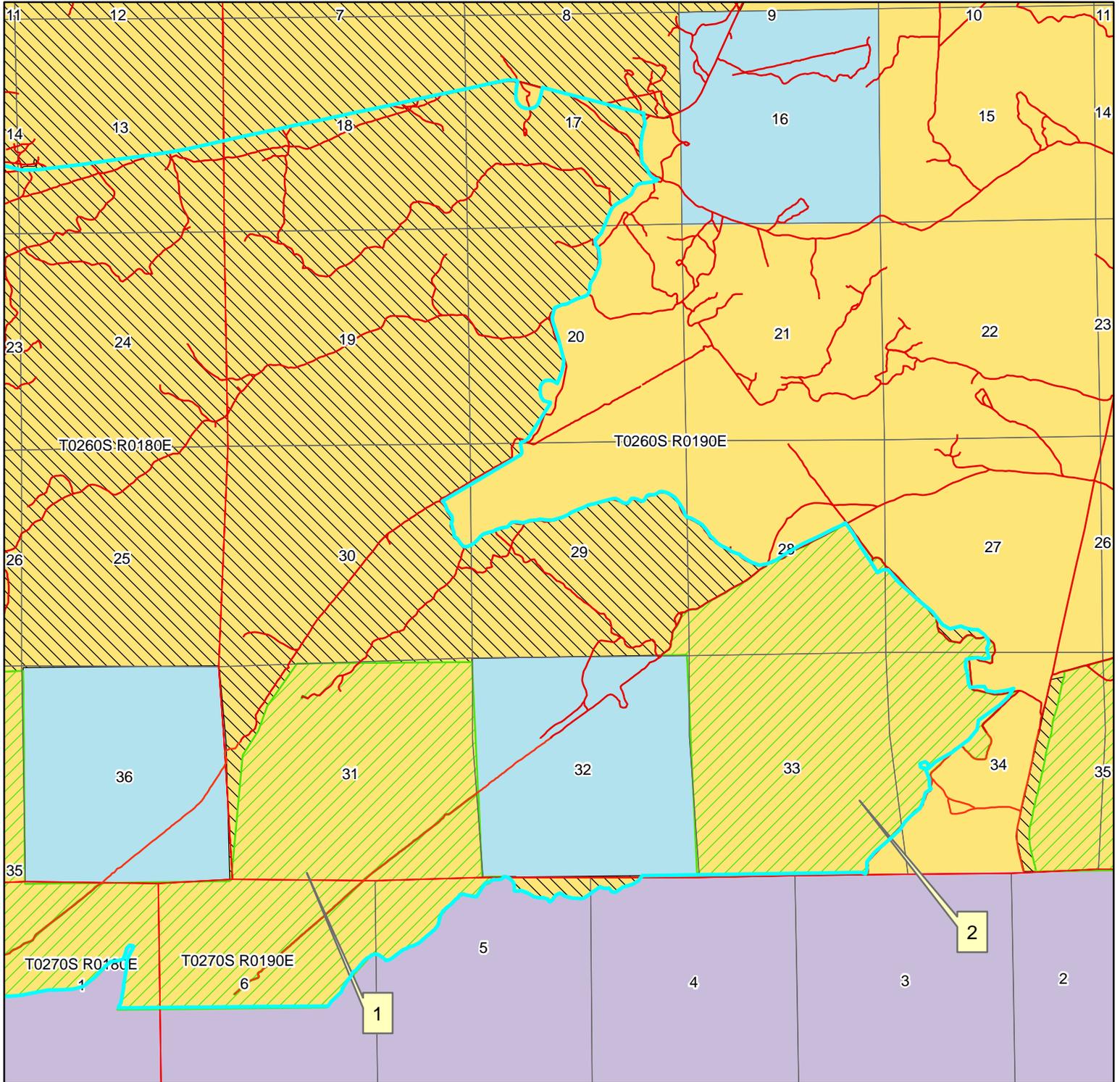
Horsethief Point

To possess wilderness characteristics, lands must possess naturalness and either outstanding opportunities for solitude and/or primitive and unconfined recreation. According to the 1964 Wilderness Act, these outstanding opportunities 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. The Horsethief Point area can be divided into non-contiguous units, based on intervening, substantially noticeable impacts such as routes or by state lands.(see accompanying map). No unit would be large enough to potentially qualify as a stand-alone unit; it could possess outstanding opportunities only by association with an adjoining portion of National Park Service (NPS) lands “administratively endorsed” by NPS for wilderness.

Considered as a whole, the Horsethief Point proposed area would not possess wilderness characteristics, due to the presence of a large number of roads, seismic lines and other impacts. To assist the analysis, BLM first divided the area into two units separated by these substantially noticeable impacts. Units 1 and 2 appear natural in character and adjoin NPS lands administratively endorsed for wilderness. Although Unit 1 exceeds 5000 acres, it is divided into smaller portions by substantially noticeable routes, which fall just short of intersecting the NPS boundary. As such, only those portions of Units 1 and 2 that are contiguous with NPS lands can meet the size requirement, as they meet it in conjunction with the NPS lands. These same portions of Units 1 and 2 also possess outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation or solitude only in association with the adjoining NPS lands. The remainder of SUWA’s proposed area is separated from those lands adjoining NPS by roads, state lands or other substantially noticeable impacts, with no one unimpacted part large enough by itself to possess wilderness characteristics.

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

Unit 1:	7295 acres
Unit 2:	1063 acres
Total:	8358 acres



Legend

- Grand Co Identified Routes
- San Juan Co Identified Routes
- wcr_ut24wiinv99r polygon**

BASELINE	
	State
	WC
	WC isolated by State
	NWC

wcr_ut24wiinv99rFINAL FINDINGS	
	NWC
	WC

1:40,487



0.00826



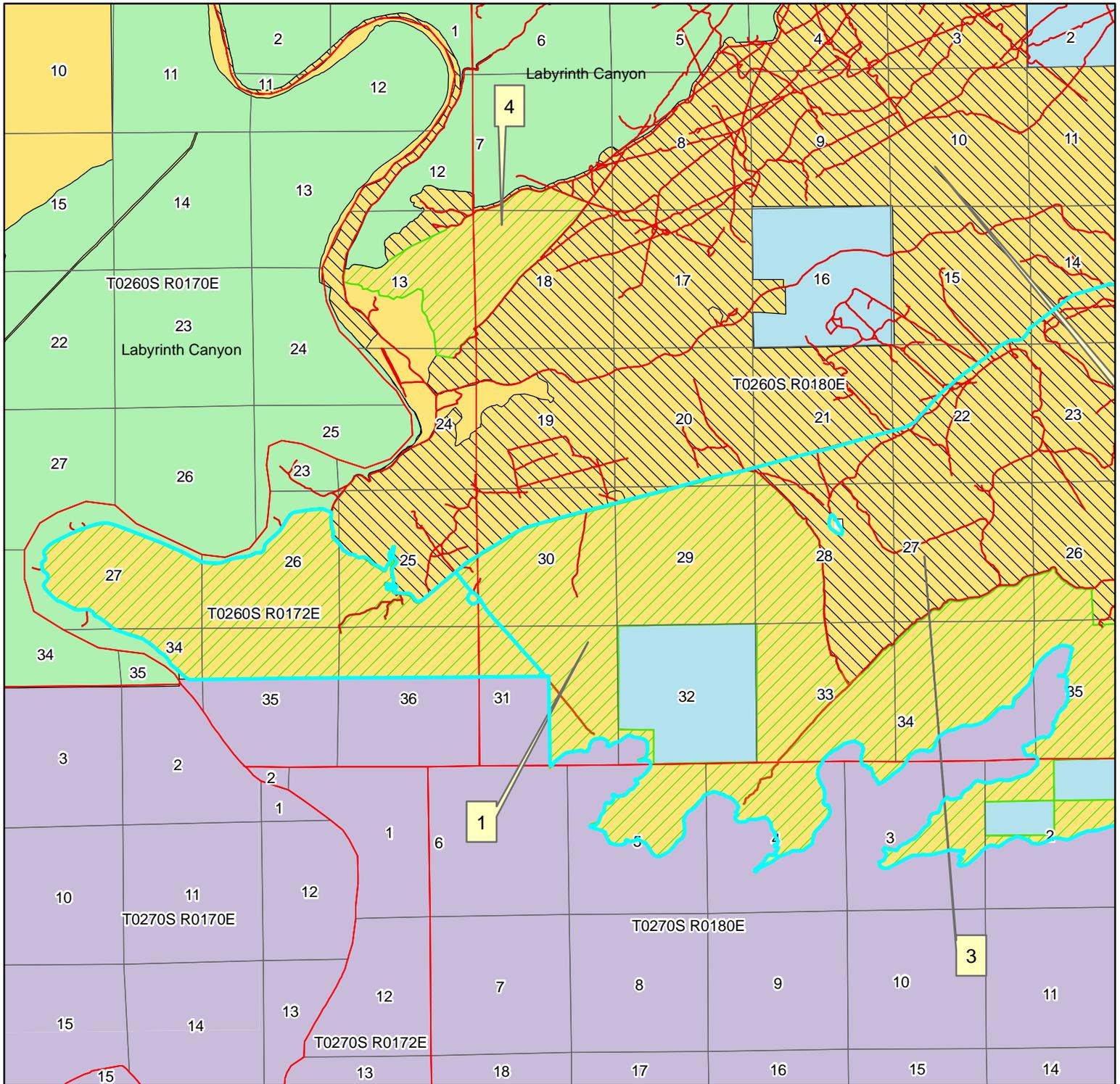
Land Status

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

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.





Legend

Grand Co Identified Routes	BASELINE
San Juan Co Identified Routes	State
wiiinv99r_ut24 polygon	WC
	WC isolated by State
	NWC
	wcr_ut24wiiinv99rFINAL FINDINGS
	NWC
	WC

1:63,246



0.000024 Miles

Land Status

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

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