

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: *Big Triangle*

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), 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 a map showing what remaining areas were likely to possess naturalness. As described in the attached narrative, much of this unit's acreage is cut off from the larger unit by roads, other impacts or State lands. These areas so cut off are of insufficient size to possess wilderness characteristics. The only lands in the unit appearing generally natural and of sufficient size are located in the center of the unit.

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, based on both field and file knowledge, 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. *Big Triangle, Sharf Mesa, Sand Flats, Buckhorn range allotment files*
4. *NAIP 2006 aerial photos (GIS)*
5. *Vegetative treatments (local GIS)*
6. *Range improvements (local GIS)*
7. *UWC GIS Wilderness Proposal Data Layer (2005)*
8. *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

Big Triangle

The Citizens' Proposal is a stand-alone unit just south of Westwater Canyon WSA.

To possess wilderness characteristics, lands must possess naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude 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. In the case of Big Triangle, the proposed area does not adjoin any other area evaluated as possessing wilderness characteristics. As such, it must possess such characteristics on its own.

The proposed acreage can be divided into four units, separated from one another by substantially noticeable routes or other substantially noticeable impacts on naturalness (see accompanying map). Much of Unit 1 is natural in appearance, but is not large enough to meet the size requirement for stand-alone units. Two substantially noticeable routes which almost completely separate Units 1 and 2 lie within 1075 meters of each other at their closest point. (The two routes at this point are separated by a shallow canyon). In addition, lands in the eastern portion of Unit 1 are bisected by a combination of substantially noticeable routes and state lands, resulting in several smaller areas of insufficient size to possess wilderness characteristics as stand-alone units. The location of substantially noticeable routes and state lands in Unit 1 affect negatively opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation.

Unit 2 is largely natural in appearance, and at 5200 acres is of sufficient size to be managed for wilderness characteristics. There are a few short segments of range fence just within the west and south boundary of Unit 2, but these do not detract from the overall naturalness of Unit 2.

Unit 3 is cut off from Unit 2 by a substantially noticeable route, and is almost completely bisected by several other substantially noticeable routes. The southeast corner of the unit has been chained. The combination of these impacts renders the unit as a whole unnatural in character, so the unit does not have wilderness characteristics.

Unit 4 is separated from the rest of the proposed area by substantially noticeable routes and state lands, and is not large enough to meet the size requirement for stand-alone units.

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

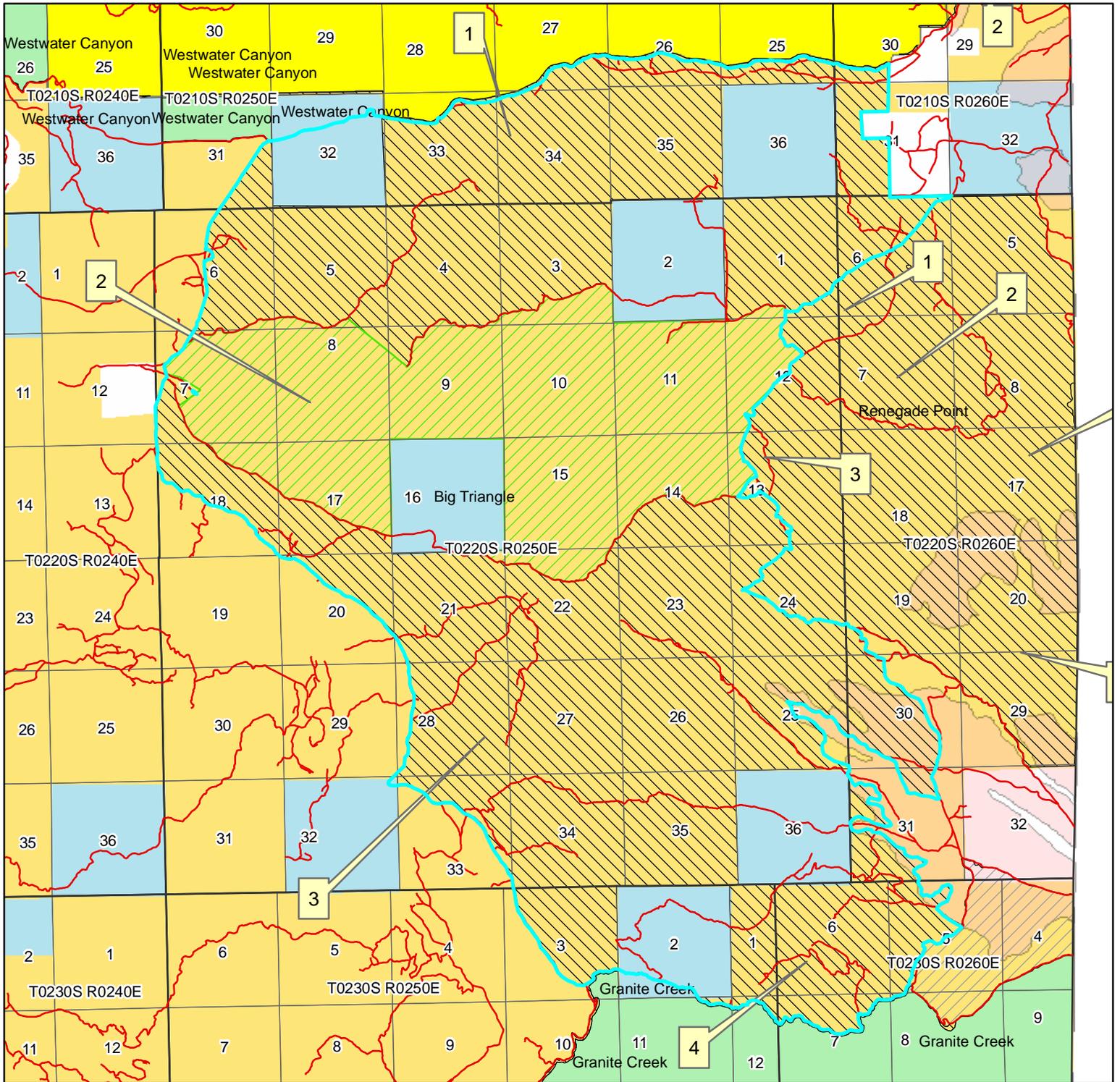
Unit 1: 0 acres

Unit 2: 5200 acres

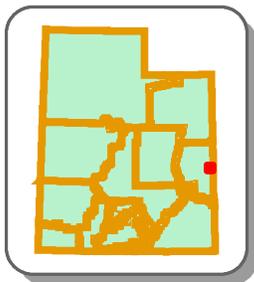
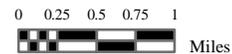
Unit 3: 0 acres

Unit 4: 0 acres

Total: 5200 acres



1:77,627



Legend

- Grand Co Identified Routes
- Wilderness Study Area
- Vegetative Treatment
 - chaining
- 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.

