

APPENDIX P.

IDENTIFICATION OF WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS ON NON-WSA LANDS MANAGED BY MOAB BLM

P1. BACKGROUND

The BLM's manual for wilderness inventory, "Wilderness Inventory and Study Procedures Handbook" (H-1630-1), was rescinded on September 29, 2003 by Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Instruction Memorandum 2003-274, "BLM Implementation of the Settlement of Utah v. Norton Regarding Wilderness Study". On October 23, 2003, Instruction Memorandum 2003-275, Change 1, "Consideration of Wilderness Characteristics in Land Use Plans," was issued and became the sole guidance for the consideration of non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics in the land use planning process until the revised Land Use Planning Handbook was published in 2005. Instruction Memorandum 2003-275, Change 1 states that "the BLM may consider information on wilderness characteristics, along with information on other uses and values, when preparing land use plans." The guidance also states that the consideration of non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics in the land use planning process has the potential for three distinct outcomes:

- 1) to give priority to other uses over the protection of wilderness characteristics;
- 2) to give priority to other uses but applying management restrictions to protect some or all of the wilderness characteristics; or
- 3) to give priority to the protection of wilderness characteristics.

The current BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1, 2005) states that land use plans must:

Identify decisions to protect or preserve wilderness characteristics (naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation). Include goals and objectives to protect the resource and management actions necessary to achieve these goals and objectives. For authorized activities, include conditions of use that would avoid or minimize impacts to wilderness characteristics.

The Land Use Planning Handbook also authorizes the BLM to consider wilderness proposals from the public during the land use planning process.

Prior to scoping for the Moab RMP, the BLM had received new information from the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA) concerning several areas, using guidelines from the now rescinded "Wilderness Inventory and Study Procedures Handbook". In response to this information, Moab BLM's Interdisciplinary Team reviewed the new information in conjunction with other available information, and made findings regarding the existence of non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics. For three areas (Mexico Point, Hideout Canyon, Hells Hole), BLM concluded that there was a reasonable probability that these areas contained at least 5000

acres of non-WSA lands possessing wilderness characteristics. The areas were not reviewed in total – just the portions of the areas potentially affected by the actions proposed at the time of the interdisciplinary review. For two other areas, BLM found that the relatively small portions potentially affected by the specific actions proposed at the time of the interdisciplinary review lacked wilderness characteristics. The remainder of these areas were not considered.

During scoping for the Moab RMP Revision, SUWA provided information to Moab BLM concerning that organization's wilderness proposals. In a document received December 30, 2003, SUWA identified all the areas encompassed in the proposed Redrock Wilderness Act as possessing wilderness characteristics, with the promise that additional information would be provided for areas not already established by BLM as wilderness study areas (WSAs) or as wilderness inventory areas (WIAs) with wilderness characteristics (*1999 Utah Wilderness Inventory*). In the December 30, 2003 communication, no information other than a list of the names of the proposed areas was provided. This list remains the only information on these areas received by BLM from SUWA specific to wilderness characteristics. However, SUWA did provide Moab BLM with proposals for creation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), in which SUWA suggested wilderness characteristics as one of the values needing protection. All of the areas in the Moab Field Office that were identified by SUWA as being in the proposed America's Redrock Wilderness Act were included in these ACEC proposals.

P.2.2. OVERVIEW OF WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS IDENTIFICATION PROCESS SUBSEQUENT TO RECEIVING SCOPING COMMENTS ON THE RMP REVISION

Moab BLM used an interdisciplinary team to review all the SUWA-proposed wilderness areas that had not been already established as WSAs or inventoried in the *1999 Utah Wilderness Inventory*. All five of the areas that had previously been reviewed in part were now reviewed in total.

In addition to reviewing digital aerial photos from 2006, BLM used other GIS information including county road data (previously verified as part of travel plan formulation), county intrusion data, and BLM files for such resource uses as range improvements and community pits. The review identified impacted areas, as well as those areas that appeared relatively free of impacts on naturalness. Moab BLM also made field trips to many of the areas. For these areas, the GIS review was used to confirm the field data.

IM 275-Change 1, unlike the revoked *Wilderness Inventory and Study Procedures Handbook*, does not mention size as an essential wilderness characteristic. However, Moab BLM took into consideration the language of the 1964 Wilderness Act, and concluded that a size criterion is an important indicator of whether or not outstanding opportunities for solitude and/or primitive recreation exist. Areas of less than 5,000 acres are generally not large enough to provide for these opportunities. Also, because the size criterion had been used for all previous wilderness inventories, applying it here allowed for consistency in both application and findings. BLM used the same criteria for determining Wilderness Characteristics as in the 1979 wilderness inventory. The 5,000-acre value was helpful to BLM in making preliminary judgments but it was not considered a limiting factor.

The size criterion of 5,000 acres was applied only to "stand-alone" units; that is, units not contiguous with other federal lands previously determined to possess wilderness characteristics (including designated wilderness, WSAs, WIAs with wilderness characteristics, and National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service lands that are administratively endorsed for wilderness). Units that are contiguous to federal lands with wilderness characteristics as identified above were evaluated for naturalness alone. Opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation were assumed to be present in association with the larger contiguous area.

The acreage described in the following tables, when added to acreage within Wilderness Study Areas, encompasses the totality of acreage included in external wilderness proposals as of September 30, 2003.

Table P1 presents the lands inventoried in the *1999 Utah Wilderness Inventory (revised 2003)*, and BLM findings regarding wilderness characteristics.

**Table P1. Non-WSA Lands Inventoried in the *1999 Wilderness Inventory (revised 2003)*,
Total Acreage, and Acreage with and without Wilderness Characteristics**

Name (areas marked with an asterisk are contiguous with a WSA of the same name)	Total Acreage of Inventoried Unit	Acreage with Wilderness Characteristics (WC)	Total BLM ¹ Acres not Brought Forward (NWC)	Acres Lacking Naturalness ²	Acres Not Practicable to Manage for Wilderness Characteristics. ³
Beaver Creek	33,357	25,722	7,635	5,539	2,096
*Behind the Rocks	7,961	3,381	4,580	4,578	2
*Coal Canyon	15,229	13,951	1,278	1,269	9
*Desolation Canyon	10,690	10,498	192	0	192
Fisher Towers	17,095	16,668	427	414	13
*Floy Canyon	12,228	9,983	2,245	0	2,245
*Flume Canyon	5,344	3,520	1,824	500	1,281
Goldbar	12,876	6,106	6,770	6,602	168
Gooseneck	5,540	805	4,735	4,735	0
Granite Creek	5,328	4,528	800	800	0
Harts Point (MFO)	5404	1,465	3,939	3,939	0
Hatch Wash	24,096	10,983	13,113	12570	543
Hunter Canyon	4,492	4,465	27	27	0
Labyrinth Canyon	68,717	24,832	43,885	43,885	0
*Lost Spring Canyon	12,661	11,456	1,205	1,160	45
Mary Jane Canyon	25,158	24,748	410	410	0
*Mill Creek Canyon	6,684	3,388	3,296	3,296	0

¹ Although the 1999 inventory evaluated State lands for wilderness character, BLM has no authority to manage such areas for wilderness characteristics. Therefore, no State lands are being carried forward into the DEIS.

² Acreage found lacking naturalness either as part of the 1999 inventory findings, or by post-inventory field checks and reported in the 2003 revision document.

³ Most of this acreage consists of public lands found to possess naturalness, but cut off from the larger unit (usually a WSA) by State lands, resulting in a lack of size as a stand-alone unit sufficient to provide these opportunities.

**Table P1. Non-WSA Lands Inventoried in the 1999 Wilderness Inventory (revised 2003),
Total Acreage, and Acreage with and without Wilderness Characteristics**

Name (areas marked with an asterisk are contiguous with a WSA of the same name)	Total Acreage of Inventoried Unit	Acreage with Wilderness Characteristics (WC)	Total BLM ¹ Acres not Brought Forward (NWC)	Acres Lacking Naturalness ²	Acres Not Practicable to Manage for Wilderness Characteristics. ³
*Negro Bill Canyon	13,724	2,324	11,400	11,400	0
Shafer Canyon	3,045	1,842	1,203	1,203	0
*Spruce Canyon	2,213	1,131	1,082	0	1,082
*Westwater Canyon	2,328	2,328	0	0	0
Westwater Creek	9,100	7,188	1,912	1,912	0
Totals	303,270	191,312	111,958	104,239	7676

Table P2 displays all other non-WSA lands currently proposed for wilderness, and findings by the BLM Interdisciplinary review team.

Table P.2 Other Non-WSA Lands Proposed for Wilderness; Total Acreage, and Acreage with and without Wilderness Characteristics

External Proposal Area (Name)	Total Acres ⁴	Acres possessing Wilderness Characteristics (WC) ⁵	Acres not having Wilderness Characteristics (NWC)	Comments
Arches Adjacent	11,650	6,396	5,254	Adjacent to NPS/AE or WIA with WC
Beaver Creek	9,294	0	9,294	Adjacent to WIA with WC
Behind the Rocks	286	262	24	Adjacent to WIA with WC or WSA
Big Triangle	20,542	5200	15,342	Stand-alone unit
Coyote Wash	28,069	0	28,069	Heavily impacted by past mining activities, especially uranium.
Dead Horse Cliffs	2,346	797	1549	Adjacent to WIA with WC and NPS unit
Diamond Canyon	15,467	7,681	7,783	Adjacent to WIA with WC and WSA
Dome Plateau	25,818	14,207	11,611	Adjacent to WIA with WC or WSA or NPS unit;

⁴ Public lands managed by Moab Field Office. Excludes acreage encompassed by State lands, Wilderness Study Areas, and lands inventoried in 1999 and found by BLM to lack wilderness character.

⁵ Acres judged by BLM as likely to possess wilderness characteristics.

Table P.2 Other Non-WSA Lands Proposed for Wilderness; Total Acreage, and Acreage with and without Wilderness Characteristics

External Proposal Area (Name)	Total Acres ⁴	Acres possessing Wilderness Characteristics (WC) ⁵	Acres not having Wilderness Characteristics (NWC)	Comments
Duma Point	14,698	0	14,698	Stand-alone unit; heavily impacted by roads, past mining activities, and OHV routes.
Fisher Towers	1,740	567	1173	Adjacent to WIA with WC
Goldbar Canyon	435	331	104	Adjacent to WIA with WC
Gooseneck	53	38	15	Adjacent to WIA with WC
Hatch/Lockhart/Hart	46,729	2,670	44,059	Shared boundary with BLM Monticello Field Office
Hells Hole	2,540	2,538	2	Stand-alone unit; proposal shared by 4 BLM offices
Hideout Canyon	12,269	11,607	662	Stand-alone unit; RPD completed addressing entire unit
Horsethief Point	14,172	8,358	5,814	Adjacent to NPS unit with AE
Labyrinth Canyon	21,189	529	20660	Adjacent to WIA with WC
Mary Jane Canyon	86	31	55	Adjacent to WIA with WC
Mexico Point	13,597	12,837	760	Stand-alone unit; RPD completed addressing entire unit
Mill Creek Canyon	1,028	0	1,028	
Morning Glory	96	6	90	Adjacent to WIA with WC or WSA
Porcupine Rim	67	3	64	Adjacent to WIA with WC or WSA
Renegade Point	6,635	0	6,635	Stand-alone unit
Survey Point	10	0	10	
Westwater	4,509	758	3751	
Yellow Bird	2,212	357	1855	Adjacent to WIA with WC or NPS unit
Totals	255,537	75,173	180,361	

A complete record of findings regarding non-WSA lands with wilderness characteristics can be found in the Administrative Record accompanying the Moab RMP Revision.

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