

WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS REVIEW

Date of Submission: N/A

Date(s) of Field Office Review: 02/07/2007

Submitter: N/A

Name of Area to be reviewed: Indian Creek (A – B – C)

BLM Field Office(s) Affected: Monticello

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 Utah Wilderness Coalition (UWC). Additional Materials 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.

Size:

The Indian Creek areas (A-B-C) proposed by the UWC for wilderness consideration total approximately 4309 acres, collectively. Unit A (3,916 Acres) is bounded on the south by State Highway 211, on the northeast by vehicle route S1B and northwest by vehicle route S2B, which form the boundaries for Unit 4 of the Indian Creek Wilderness Inventory Area (WIA). Unit B (100 acres) and Unit C (293 acres) are bounded on the south and west by Canyonlands National Park (CNP), and on the north and east by vehicle route S2D, which forms the boundary for Unit 4 of the Indian Creek WIA. All three units are contiguous to lands found to have Wilderness Characteristics. Unit A is contiguous to lands found to possess Wilderness Character in the Indian Creek Wilderness Inventory Area, Units B and C are both contiguous to lands Administratively Endorsed for Wilderness Management in Canyonlands National Park, and thus all three units do not have to meet the 5,000 acre size requirement for wilderness management.

Appearance of Naturalness:

The ID team reviewed the areas using GIS data layers, which included recent aerial photography (August 2006), San Juan County Road Data, oil-wells GIS Layer, range allotment files, and Reasonable Foreseeable Development (RFD) Data. The ID Team 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. ID Team members have visited these areas over several years while administering their respective resources, and have noted that the areas contain minimal range improvements such as a fenceline, but contain no other known landscape scale surface disturbances. The Reasonable Foreseeable Development (RFD) Scenario indicates minimal oil and gas activity in these areas. Law enforcement patrol logs indicate that vehicle use occurs on route S2D to access trailheads, which lead into CNP. Any other vehicle use within these areas is minimal to non-existent. Therefore, with minimal human impacts, the areas appear to be affected primarily by the forces of nature and are natural in character.

Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude or Primitive and Unconfined Recreation:

These areas contain minimal vegetative cover, and consist primarily of sandy terrain. Because of their size, opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation is limited, but exists when considered with the contiguous WIA and the AE lands within CNP. Because of the sandy terrain, primitive recreation uses such as dispersed camping, hiking and photography are available and are not impacted by OHV use, which is restricted to the boundaries.

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.)

Utah Wilderness Coalition (UWC) GIS Data Layer Proposal (2005)

Indian Creek Allotment File

Master Title Plats

Law Enforcement Patrol Logs: Dry Valley Summit and Indian Creek Sectors

GIS Aerial Photography (NAIP 2006: San Juan County north and south)

GIS Oil and Gas Data (og-wells)

Reasonable Foreseeable Development Scenario for Oil and Gas (2005)

Mineral Potential Report (2005)

BLM 1999 Utah Wilderness Inventory (Indian Creek WIA File)

San Juan Resource Area Management Plan (1991)

Analysis of the Management Situation (2005)

Attachments:

- *Map of Indian Creek Units (A-B-C)*

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

NAME	RESOURCE (S) REPRESENTED
Gary Torres	Planner, NEPA Coordinator
Brad Colin	Recreation, OHV, Wilderness
Jed Carling	Range
Maxine Deeter	Lands, VRM
Marie Tuxhorn	Law Enforcement
Doug Paul	Fire, Fuels
Nick Sandberg	Range, Assistant Field Manager
Sandra Meyers	Field Manager
Brian Quigley	Recreation
Tammy Wallace	Wildlife
Nancy Shearin	Cultural, Paleontology
Jeff Brown	Oil and Gas, Hazardous Materials
Ted McDougall	Minerals
Paul Curtis	Range, Riparian, Soils, Vegetation
Dave Mermejo	BLM Utah State Office
Paul Leatherbury	GIS

Field Office Manager _____

Date _____.

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.