

Richfield Field Office

The following WSAs are managed by the Richfield Field Office:

- Bull Mountain
- Dirty Devil
- Fiddler Butte
- Fremont Gorge
- French Spring/Happy Canyon
- Horseshoe Canyon (North) – Management shared with the Price Office.
- Horseshoe Canyon (South)
- Little Rockies
- Mount Ellen/Blue Hills
- Mount Hillers
- Mount Pennell

Note: Acreage was taken from the Utah State Wilderness Report.

Bull Mountain

Size: 13, 620 acres

Location: Eastern Garfield County, about 13 miles south of Hanksville, UT.

Vegetation: Vegetation consists of shrubs and grasses in the lower portions of the area and pinyon-juniper woodland in the higher elevations with scattered stands of aspen, fir, and pine.

General Description: The WSA is in the Henry Mountains, well known since the late 1870's for classical studies in American geology. Like other places in the range, Bull Mountain is an igneous intrusion flanked by sedimentary rocks deformed by the emplacement of the igneous material. Subsequent erosion exposed the structure, leaving a dome-shaped mountain rising nearly 3,000 feet above the surrounding plains and benches to an elevation of 9,187 feet.

Special Features:

- The summit of Bull Mountain provides excellent opportunities for geologic study.
- Excellent views of the desert canyon country and the other peaks in the Henry Mountains are visible from the summit.
- Portions of the WSA are range for the Henry Mountains bison herd and a mule deer herd.
- Cougar, which is a wildlife species associated with wilderness, inhabit the WSA.
- A small population of bristlecone pine is found mixed with conifers in the southwestern portion of the WSA.

- One plant species, *Sclerocactus wrightii*, is listed as endangered and may occur in the WSA.

Dirty Devil

Size: 61,000 acres

Location: eastern Wayne County, about 5 miles east of Hanksville, UT.

Vegetation: About 70 percent of the study area is barren sand and rock, with sparse black-brush and other desert shrubs, some pinyon-juniper, saltbrush, and scrub oak.

General Description: The study area includes a portion of the canyon of the Dirty Devil River along the western side of the WSA and several tributary canyons as much as 500 feet deep. Some of the canyons are more than 10 miles long, and are bounded by sheer cliffs with large overhangs in several places. The upper parts of the benches between canyons are mostly undulating bare rock surfaces.

Special Features:

- Approximately 30 miles of the Dirty Devil River run through the WSA.
- Petrified wood occurs in several canyons.
- Prehistoric rock art is found in Robbers Roost Canyon.
- Generally spectacular canyon scenery including ephemeral waterfalls in places is present throughout the WSA.
- Robbers Roost Canyon is reputed to have been one of the major hideouts of the famous outlaw Butch Cassidy.
- Approximately 96 percent (58,440 acres) of the WSA is rated outstanding for scenic quality.
- The peregrine falcon may occur in the WSA, along with bald and golden eagles.
- The WSA may have desert bighorn sheep, which is a species associated with wilderness.

Fiddler Butte

Size: 73,100 acres

Location: Northwestern Garfield County, about 25 miles east of Hanksville, UT and directly north of the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area.

Vegetation: Vegetation throughout the area is predominantly blackbrush-shadscale with scattered pinyon-juniper woodland, but almost one-fifth of the WSA is bare rock and sand.

General Description: The portion of the WSA recommended for wilderness designation consists of two parts: a prominent mesa of about 5,700 acres in the eastern portion of the WSA, known as The Block, where elevations range from about 5,600 feet near the base of the mesa to 7,100 feet of North Block; and the western portion of the WSA, about 27,000 acres, consisting of narrow ridges that separate eight

essentially parallel canyons 5 to 8 miles long, that slope southwest into North Wash, a tributary of the Colorado River.

Special Features:

- Scenery along the canyons of the Dirty Devil River
- Views from The Block
- Approximately 26,000 acres or 36 percent of the WSA is rated as outstanding for scenic quality.
- The WSA includes a 4 mile segment of the Dirty Devil River.
- The WSA may have Desert bighorn sheep, which is a species associated with wilderness.
- Peregrine falcons and golden eagles may inhabit or frequent the WSA.
- *Sclerocactus wrightii*, an endangered cactus, may occur in the WSA.

Fremont Gorge

Size: 2,540 acres

Location: Wayne County, about 3 miles east of Torrey, UT.

Vegetation: Vegetation is predominantly pinyon-juniper with associated grasses.

General Description: The study area is on a broad plateau that slopes gently north-northeast, and is intricately dissected by deep, narrow, meandering canyons that drain eastward into the Fremont River. Narrow, relatively flat-topped ridges separate the canyons.

Special Features:

- Ecological and botanical features are related to high quality riparian habitat along Sulfur Creek.
- Peregrine falcons, bald eagles, and golden eagles may frequent the WSA.

French Spring/Happy Canyon

Size: 25,000 acres

Location: Eastern Wayne and Garfield Counties, about 25 miles southeast of Hanksville.

Vegetation: Pinyon-juniper, grasses and blackbrush are the characteristic vegetative types in the portion of the WSA with plant cover.

General Description: The study area consists of high, narrow ridges and a mesa cut by narrow, sheer-walled, meandering canyons 600 to 1,000 feet deep. More than half of the surface of the WSA is bare rock and sand.

Special Features:

- The WSA's exceptional scenic values on 13,480 acres (54 percent of the WSA) were identified as a special feature.
- Desert bighorn sheep, which is a wilderness associated species, may inhabit the WSA.
- The peregrine falcon, bald eagle and golden eagle may inhabit or visit the WSA.

Horseshoe Canyon (North)

Size: 20,500 acres

Location: Southwestern Emery County and Northeastern Wayne County, about 30 miles south of Green River, UT.

Vegetation: Desert shrub and sagebrush are the dominant forms of vegetation in about half of the WSA. Scattered desert shrub, small areas of grassland, and riparian vegetation are found in the remainder of the WSA.

General Description: The area is elongated in a general curve around lower Horseshoe Canyon. The terrain in the study area consists of sandy flats and hilly areas between the canyons which are 1,000 feet deep where they join the Green River. The bottoms of the canyons are inaccessible in several places.

Special Features:

The WSA includes approximately 20 miles of perennial streams, the majority of which is the Green River along the eastern boundary of the WSA.

- The entire WSA is rated as outstanding for scenic quality.
- The canyons in the WSA expose many geologic strata. The upper reaches provide dramatic views of the twisted and carved character of the area including cliffs, knolls, alcoves, caves, and arches.
- Bowknot Bend is a perfect example of the present creation of a Rincon. The Green River has carved a large deeply entrenched meander, leaving only a narrow neck to be eroded away before its course takes a shortcut.
- A completed Rincon can be found nearby at the mouth of Horseshoe Canyon.
- Adjacent to the southwestern border and an extension of the Horseshoe Canyon drainage, are notable pictographs in the detached Horseshoe Canyon Unit of Canyonlands National Park.
- Within the Labyrinth Canyon drainage and WSA along the Green River is evidence of the early river explorers. A river register at Bowknot Bend records the passage of both famous and unknown river runners.
- Several rock inscriptions can be found in the WSA along the river course, adding a distinctly historic flavor to any recreational trip.
- Riparian vegetation along the Green River and within the major canyon drainages provides some diversity of habitat for many species of waterfowl, reptiles, mammals and neotropical migratory birds.
- Habitat diversity and riparian vegetation of the WSA are emphasized by the arid character of the surrounding region.

- Several isolated tracts of land in the WSA provide a unique relic vegetation habitat. These areas are inaccessible and remain undisturbed by grazing or browsing animals.
- Desert bighorn sheep, a wildlife species associated with wilderness, may frequent the WSA.
- Several species including Colorado Pikeminnow, humpback chub, bonytail chub are listed as endangered species and several other animal and plant species that are considered sensitive are within or may be within the WSA.

Horseshoe Canyon (South)

Size: 38,800 acres

Location: Northeastern Wayne County, UT.

Vegetation: Pinyon-juniper, desert grass, and black-brush are the dominant vegetative types, but about a third of the total surface area is bare rock or sand.

General Description: The tributaries of three canyons are in the WSA. The canyons are from a few feet to a half-mile wide and are characterized by a wide range of colors, sheer walls, and many large overhangs. The canyons converge in the northern portion of the WSA to form Horseshoe Canyon. Weathered sandstone benches, covered in places by grassy parks, separate the canyons. Buttes, domes and sand dunes are also found in the WSA.

Special Features:

- Approximately 94 percent (36,500 acres) of the WSA is rated outstanding for scenic quality.
- Cowboy Cave, one of the most significant archaeological excavation sites in Utah, is in the WSA.
- The WSA was frequented by Butch Cassidy and the Wild Bunch. Several cabins used by the outlaws are on the edge of the WSA.

Little Rockies

Size: 38,700 acres

Location: Eastern Garfield County, about 75 miles south of Hanksville, UT.

Vegetation: Almost half the WSA is bare rock outcrop. Blackbrush and other shrubs are the dominant vegetative type in the remainder of the area.

General Description: The WSA is dominated by Mt. Ellsworth and Mt. Holmes, two mountain peaks which are bodies of igneous rocks that intruded and deformed overlying sedimentary layers. In the northern and eastern portions of the area there are high, narrow mesas cut by deep canyons.

Special Features:

- Approximately 98 percent of the WSA is rated as outstanding for scenic quality.
- Because of the remote and isolated nature of portions of this WSA, there is high quality habitat for desert bighorn sheep.
- Bald eagles and peregrine falcons may occur in the WSA.
- *Sclerocactus wrightii*, an endangered plant species, may occur in the WSA.

Mount Ellen/Blue Hills

Size: 81,363 acres

Location: South-central Wayne and northeastern Garfield Counties, about 10 miles southwest of Hanksville, UT.

Vegetation: Predominant vegetation at the lower elevations is pinyon-juniper and saltbrush. Ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, and alpine fir grow at the higher elevations.

General Description: The Blue Hills, in the northern and western portion of the WSA, are low mesas and barren badlands carved by erosion from blue-gray marine shales. The Mt. Ellen portion of the WSA consists of steep slopes and rounded peaks, including Mt. Ellen, with large basins and wide canyons. Mt. Ellen is part of the Henry Mountains, well-known in American geology for classical studies of intrusive mountain structures, upturned sedimentary rocks, and stream gradients. Mt. Ellen is the largest structural dome in the Henry Mountains, with a diameter of 12 to 15 miles.

Special Features:

- Mt. Ellen is the highest peak in the Henry Mountains.
- The higher elevations of Mt. Ellen offer outstanding vistas of the geology of central Utah and the entire Waterpocket Fold.
- The shale badlands at the lower elevations contain fossilized sharks teeth.
- The four life zones found in this WSA (the Upper Sonoran, Transition, Canadian, and Hudsonian Life Zones are of ecologic interest.
- Portions of Mt. Ellen are summer range for the free-roaming Henry Mountain bison herd.
- The isolated, rugged terrain is habitat for cougar and mule deer, wildlife species frequently associated with wilderness.
- Peregrine falcons and bald eagles may inhabit or use the WSA.
- Bristlecone pine was discovered in the WSA in 1973. The Henry Mountains are considered to be the southeastern limit for the Great Basin variety of bristlecone pine in the U.S.
- One plant species, *Sclerocactus wrightii*, is listed as endangered and may occur in the WSA.

Mount Hillers

Size: 20,000 acres

Location: Northeastern Garfield County, about 30 miles south of Hanksville, UT.

Vegetation: Vegetation is predominantly sagebrush and pinyon-juniper woodlands on the southern slopes. Ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, and bristlecone pine grow on the northern and the higher slopes.

General Description: Mt. Hillers is a rugged peak with steep slopes carved by narrow canyons. Mt. Hillers is 5 to 6 miles across, and is cut by several radial narrow, steep, v-shaped valleys separated by elongated, jagged ridges. Hogbacks formed from upturned sedimentary rocks flank the mountain, and are vertical in the Pink Cliffs area.

Special Features:

- The WSA has geological and scenic special features, including scenic views and geologic formations of stocks and laccoliths.
- Approximately 83 percent (16,608 acres) of the WSA has outstanding scenic values.
- Portions of the WSA are used by the Henry Mountains bison herd.
- Bald eagles and peregrine falcons may occur in the WSA.
- One plant species that is listed as endangered or threatened, *Sclerocactus wrightii*, may be in the WSA.

Mount Pennell

Size: 77,137 acres

Location: Eastern Garfield County, just east of Capitol Reef National Park and about 30 miles southwest of Hanksville, UT.

Vegetation: The higher slopes support oak, Ponderosa pine, subalpine fir, spruce, Douglas fir, and aspen.

General Description: Mt. Pennell is the second highest peak in the Henry Mountains. Several deep canyons cut the sides of the mountain, which on the higher slopes supports oak, Ponderosa pine, subalpine fir, spruce, Douglas fir, and aspen.

Special Features:

- Four distinct biological life zones are within the WSA due to nearly 5,000 feet of change in elevation.
- Portions of the WSA are summer range for the Henry Mountain bison herd, and bison are frequently seen in the vicinity of The Horn.
- Cougar, a wildlife species associated with wilderness, inhabit the WSA.
- Peregrine falcons and bald eagles, and five animal species that are considered sensitive may inhabit the WSA.
- One plant species that is listed as endangered or threatened, *Sclerocactus wrightii*, may be in the WSA.