

Name: Eagle's Nest West WY-030-25N95W19-2012

FORM 1

Documentation of BLM Wilderness Inventory Findings on Record

1. Is there existing BLM wilderness inventory information on all or part of this area?

No _____ Yes X _____ (if yes, and if more than one area is within the area, list the names of those areas):

a) Inventory Source: BLM Rawlins FO 1979 Wilderness Inventory Hard Copy Files _____

b) Inventory Area Name(s)/Number(s): _ Seven Lakes Initial Inventory WY-030-409 _____

c) Map Name(s)/Number(s): ___ _ Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming Wilderness Review Serial No. 66700 _____

d) BLM District (s)/Field Office(s): ___ High Desert District/Rawlins Field Office

2. BLM Inventory Finds on Record:

Existing inventory information regarding wilderness characteristics (if more than one BLM inventory area is associated with the area, list each area and answer each question individually for each inventory area):

The unit consists of approximately 400,000 acres north of the checkerboard and west of U.S. Highway 287. Man's activities are noticeable almost everywhere. Many roads, pipelines, power lines and telephone lines crisscross the area. In spite of the fact that many roadless tracts of 5,000 acres are found in the area, none have wilderness potential.

Inventory Source: M:\gis_workareas\Recreation\WSA\LandWilderCharc1979.shp

Area #/Name	Sufficient Size? Yes/No (acres)	Naturalness? Yes/No	Outstanding Solitude? Yes/No	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Yes/No	Supplemental Values? Yes/No
Seven Lakes Initial Inventory WY-030-409	Yes (400,000 acres)	No	No	No	No

FORM 2

Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

a. Area Number/Name: **Eagle’s Nest West WY-030-25N95W19-2012** Acreage: **15,186.54 acres**

(1) Is the area of sufficient size?

Yes ___ X ___ No ___ ___

Describe the boundaries of the area (roads, property lines, etc.). If the area meets one of the exceptions to the size criterion, check “Yes” and describe the exception. If more than one inventory area is involved, list the acres in each and evaluate each area/sub-area separately. In completing steps (1) – (5), use additional space as necessary.

The unit is bound on the west by Red Creek Rd, a.k.a. BLM Road 3219. The unit is bound on the north and east by BLM Road 3214, a.k.a. Rocky Crossing Rd. The unit is bound on the south by the Mustang - Sally 23-16 Well Access Road which is currently in use.

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS: (Include acreage, land ownership, location, topography, vegetation and summary of the major human uses/activities)

The Eagle’s Nest West unit under consideration is 15,186.54 acres of BLM public land. It is located within the following townships:

TOWNSHIP	RANGE	SECTION	TOWNSHIP	RANGE	SECTION
t25n	r96w	35	t25n	r95w	17
t25n	r96w	34	t25n	r95w	18
t25n	r96w	33	t25n	r96w	13
t25n	r96w	32	t25n	r96w	14
t25n	r96w	31	t25n	r96w	15
t25n	r95w	30	t25n	r96w	16
t25n	r96w	25	t25n	r96w	17
t25n	r96w	26	t25n	r96w	18
t25n	r96w	27	t25n	r97w	13
t25n	r96w	28	t25n	r95w	9
t25n	r96w	29	t25n	r95w	8
t25n	r96w	30	t25n	r95w	7
t25n	r95w	20	t25n	r96w	12
t25n	r95w	19	t25n	r96w	11
t25n	r96w	24	t25n	r96w	10
t25n	r96w	23	t25n	r95w	4
t25n	r96w	22	t25n	r95w	5
t25n	r96w	21	t25n	r95w	6

t25n	r96w	20	t25n	r96w	1
t25n	r96w	19	t25n	r96w	2
t25n	r97w	24			

The topography consists, primarily, of rolling prairie, buttes, hills, and drainages that lead into Mud Springs and Niland Spring. Elevation ranges from, approximately, 6741 feet on the hilltops above the drainages to 6,600 feet at the bottom of the drainages. The dominant vegetation cover is mountain big sagebrush on the slopes and uplands of the unit and wet meadow cover along creeks and draws. The primary land use is livestock grazing. The primary, dispersed recreational activity in the area is hunting.

(2) Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes No N/A

Description: The 48.8 miles of primitive routes (i.e., unimproved roads and two-track trails) and 6.74 miles of wilderness inventory roads (i.e., well access roads) detract from the unit's naturalness. Examples of these primitive routes and wilderness inventory roads are demonstrated in photo 7. When hiking across the Eagle's Nest West Unit, the casual observer cannot escape the constant view of primitive routes and well access roads. These primitive routes create noticeable linear intrusions and disturbances that interrupt the experience of any wilderness character briefly encountered in areas untrammled by the works of man.

The area contains 15 oil and gas wells throughout the Eagle's Nest West Unit. Evidence of oil and gas development is demonstrated in photos 3-6 and 8. These oil and gas installations within the unit represent permanent improvements and loss of primeval character. When examining the status of the oil and gas wells, five are permanently abandoned, one is flowing, seven have expired permits, one is shut-in, and one has a subsequent report of abandonment. Despite the variation in status, these wells remain as existing installations that detract from the naturalness and are substantially noticeable to the casual observer while hiking through the unit. All wells, which are not abandoned, are managed as active wells and receive commercial vehicle traffic for periodic maintenance. This traffic would interrupt the casual observer's experience of wilderness character due to road dust plumes and the contrast between the white coloration of these vehicles moving across the tan, brown, and olive landscape. Well pads do not receive final reclamation approval until they have been plugged and abandoned. Visual contrasts created by surface disturbances, including well pad turn-arounds, soil exposure around the facilities, and a rectangular area of wheat grass, remain until final reclamation is established.

The Eagle's Nest West Unit also contains one substantially noticeable, man-made, reservoir which covers 0.15 surface acres in T 25, R 96, Section 32. This reservoir is impounded with a dike constructed from a borrow pit. When the casual observer encounters this borrow pit, the linear and textual contrast on the landscape attracts the attention of the observer to this obvious man-made modification constructed with mechanized equipment.

The casual observer is often attracted to bodies of water while hiking. Water adds interest and diversity to the landscape. When arriving at the reservoir within the unit, the casual observer

would notice that this is not a natural lake or pond and that they have encountered an impounded, muddy borrow pit. The hiker seeking refreshment from clean water, would quickly notice that this “reservoir” is designed for cattle operations where the water is unfit for human consumption or swimming. The reservoir is impacted by commercial grazing operations giving the casual observer a perception that they are visitors to a cattle range rather than a wilderness untrammelled by the works of man. While the presence of cattle is compatible with a natural landscape for wilderness inventory purposes, the noticeable presence of this grazing-related development in this unit is not.

In sum, the cumulative impacts on naturalness including the numerous oil and gas wells, primitive routes, wilderness inventory roads, and permanent range improvements have impaired the naturalness in the Eagle’s Nest West Unit to a level that is incompatible with the definitions of wilderness provided in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 (incorporated in FLPMA 1976):

A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man’s work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

(3) Does the area or the remainder of the area (if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes No N/A

Description:

(4) Does the area or the remainder of the area (if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?

Yes No N/A

Description:

(5) Does the area have supplemental values (ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational scenic or historical value)?

Yes No N/A

Description:

Summary of Analysis

Area Name and/or Number: Eagle's Nest West WY-030-25N95W19-2012

Summary

Results of analysis:

1. Does the area meet any of the size requirements? Yes No
2. Does the area appear to be natural? Yes No N/A
3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities of solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation? Yes No N/A
4. Does the area have supplemental values? Yes No N/A

Check one:

_____ The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as Land with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC).

___X___ The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

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Team members:

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Date: _____