

Name: **East Flat Top Central WY-030-14N92W19-2012, a subunit of Wild Horse Basin WYO-030-408**

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 (if yes, and if more than one area is within the area, list the names of those areas):

a) **Inventory Source:** _____ Wild Horse Basin _____

b) **Inventory Area Name(s)/Number(s):** _____ Wild Horse Initial Inventory _____

c) **Map Name(s)/Number(s):** _____ Wild Horse Basin; WY-030-048 _____

d) **BLM District (s)/Field Office(s):** _____ 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):

Inventory Source:

M:\gis_workareas\Pionke\CCSM\Chris LWC Shapefile\LandWildCharc1979(1)

Area #/Name	Sufficient Size? Yes/No (acres)	Naturalness? Yes/No	Outstanding Solitude? Yes/No	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Yes/No	Supplemental Values? Yes/No
Wild Horse Basin WYW-030-408	Yes (375,000 acres)	No	No	No	No

FORM 2

Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

a. Area Number/Name **East Flat Top Central WY-030-14N92W19-2012, a subunit of Wild Horse Basin WYO-030-408** Acreage 6123.74

(1) Is the area of sufficient size?

Yes 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 irregularly shaped. The unit is bound to the northwest by BLM Road 3316, a.k.a. Robbers Gulch Road. The unit is bound to the west by private land and a 50 foot wide pipeline disturbance, with Rawlins Field Office right-of-way number WYW-160253, and a Class 3 Light Duty Road with aggregate surface maintained by industry with Rawlins Field Office right-of-way number WYW-158822. The unit is bound to the south by a 50 foot wide pipeline disturbance with Rawlins Field Office right-of-way number WYW-78695 and a Class 3 Light Duty Road with aggregate surface maintained by industry with Rawlins Field Office right-of-way number WYW-123033, WYW-154261, and WYW-75984. The unit is bound to the east by a Class 3 Light Duty Road with aggregate surface maintained by industry with Rawlins Field Office right-of-way number WYW-156022 and WYW-129347, as well as a 50 foot wide pipeline disturbance with Rawlins Field Office rights-of-way number WYW-161345, WYW-133335 and WYW-64970. The unit is bound to the northeast by a Class 3 Light Duty Road of aggregate surface maintained by industry with Rawlins Field Office right-of-way number WYW-129827 and WYW-77686. Various subunits have been cut out of the boundaries and center of the unit based on the existence of Class 3 Light Duty Roads of aggregate surface maintained by industry as well as the 50 foot wide pipeline disturbance.

See East Flat Top Outlier WY-030-14N93W18-2012, a subunit of Wild Horse Basin WYO-030-408 and East Flat Top Hang-Out WY-030-13N93W4-2012, a subunit of Wild Horse Basin WYO-030-408 and East Flat Top Stock Trail WY-030-13N92W7-2012, a subunit of Wild Horse Basin WYO-030-408.

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS: The East Flat Top Central area under consideration is 6,123.74 acres of BLM public land. It is located within the following townships: 6th P.M., T. 14 N., R. 92 W., Sections 7-8, 17-18, 19-20, 28-32; and T. 14 N., R 93 W., Sections 12-15 and 22-26. The terrain consists mainly of drainages leading away from the summit of East Flat Top towards the North Prong of Red Creek, Robbers Gulch, and North Fork of Cottonwood Creek. The elevation ranges from 7,660 feet at the summit of East Flat Top, to 6,640 feet where Robbers Gulch leaves the unit in T. 15 N., R. 94 W., Section 20. The dominant vegetation cover is sagebrush-grassland. The primary land uses are for oil & gas exploration and livestock

grazing. There are 12 natural gas well pads within the unit and seven access roads, maintained by mechanized equipment, which extend into the unit. Most of the oil & gas development is in the northeast section of the unit, up to the summit of East Flat Top, and in the southeast section of the unit near the North Fork of Cottonwood Creek. Among range improvements, there are four fences, one of which crosses the area, and five small ponds. The area also contains a number of unimproved two-track trails accessible only by 4wd vehicles. The primary, dispersed recreational activity in the area is hunting.

(2) Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes No N/A

Description: The 27.12 miles of primitive routes (i.e., unimproved roads and two-track trails) and 19.87 miles of wilderness roads (i.e., well-roads) detract from the unit's naturalness. Examples of these primitive routes are demonstrated in photos 16-23, and 25. When hiking across the East Flat Top Central Unit, the casual observer cannot escape the constant view of primitive routes. 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 24 oil and gas wells throughout the East Flat Top Central Unit (see example in Photo 24). 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, six of these wells have expired permits, 14 wells are flowing, two wells are permanently abandoned, one has been shut-in, and one well 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 East Flat Top Central Unit also contains six man-made reservoirs which are impounded and constructed as borrow pits (see examples in photos 4-5 and 8-9). When the casual observer encounters these man-made borrow pits and impounded reservoirs, the linear and textual contrast on the landscape attracts the attention of the observer to this 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 any of the six reservoirs, the casual observer would notice that it is not a natural lake 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

numerous range improvements, including the six reservoirs and two fences, were constructed for commercial grazing operations. These improvements give 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 numerous grazing-related developments in this unit is not.

In sum, the cumulative impacts on naturalness including the numerous oil and gas wells, primitive routes and permanent range improvements have impaired the naturalness in the East Flat Top Central 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: East Flat Top Central WY-030-14N92W19-2012

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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