

Wilderness Inventory Unit Index of Documents
Bannock Ridge OR-034-095, 12 total pages

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H-6300-1-WILDERNESS INVENTORY MAINTENANCE IN BLM OREGON/WASHINGTON

APPENDIX B – INVENTORY AREA EVALUATION

Evaluation of Current Conditions:

- 1) Document and review the existing BLM wilderness inventory findings on file, if available, regarding the presence or absence of individual wilderness characteristics, using Form 1, below.
- 2) Consider relevant information regarding current conditions available in the office to identify and describe any changes to the existing information (use interdisciplinary (ID) team knowledge, aerial photographs, field observations, maps, etc.), and document your findings on Form 2, below.

When Citizen Information has been submitted regarding wilderness characteristics, document the submitted materials including: date of Submission; Name of District(s) and Field Office(s) Affected; Type of material Submitted (e.g. narrative, map, photo). Evaluate any submitted citizen information regarding the validity of proposed boundaries of the unit(s), the existence of roads and other boundary features, the size of the unit(s), and the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics based on relevant information available in the office (prior BLM inventories, ID team knowledge, aerial photographs, field observations, maps, etc.)

Conduct field reviews as necessary to verify information and to ascertain current conditions. Reach conclusions on current conditions including boundaries, size of areas and presence or absence of wilderness characteristics. Fully explain the basis for each conclusion on form 2, including any critical differences between BLM and citizen information.

Document your findings regarding current conditions for each inventoried area. Describe how the present conditions are similar to, or have changed from, the conditions documented in the original wilderness inventory. Document your findings on Form 2 for each inventory area. Cite to or attach data considered, including photographs, maps, GIS layers, field trip notes, project files, *etc.*

Year: 2009 Unit Number/Name: OR-034-095 — Bannock Ridge

**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?

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

A.) Inventory Source(s) -- (X) Denotes all applicable BLM Inventory files, printed maps, or published BLM Decision documents with information pertaining to this unit.

Wilderness Inventories

- (X) 1979 – 1980 -- BLM Wilderness Inventory Unit 3-74A of OR-03-05-27 Mahogany Mountain (unpublished BLM document in case files)
- () April 1979 – *Wilderness -- Proposed Initial Inventory – Roadless Areas and Islands Which Clearly Do Not have Wilderness Characteristics, Oregon and Washington*

Wilderness Decision Documents

- (X) August 1979 – *Wilderness Review – Initial Inventory, Final Decision on Public Lands Obviously Lacking Wilderness Characteristics and Announcement of Public Lands to be Intensively Inventoried for Wilderness Characteristics, Oregon and Washington* (green document)
- () October 1979 – *Wilderness Review – Intensive Inventory - Oregon, Proposed Decision on the Intensive Wilderness Inventory of Selected Areas* (grey document)
- (X) March 1980 – *Wilderness Review – Intensive Inventory; Final Decisions on 30 Selected Units in Southeast Oregon and Proposed Decisions on Other Intensively Inventoried Units in Oregon and Washington* (orange document)
- (X) November 1980 - *Wilderness Inventory – Oregon and Washington, Final Intensive Inventory Decisions* (brown document)
- () November 1981 *Stateline Intensive Wilderness Inventory Final Decision, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, Utah* (tan document)

B.) Inventory Unit Name(s)/Number(s)

BLM 3-74A of OR-03-05-27 Mahogany Mountain

C.) Map Name(s)/Number(s)

- () Final Decision – Initial Wilderness Inventory Map, August 1979, Oregon
- () Proposed Decision -- Intensive Wilderness Inventory of Selected Areas Map, October 1979, Oregon
- (X) Intensive Wilderness Inventory Map, March 1980, Oregon
- (X) Intensive Wilderness Inventory --Final Decisions Map, November 1980, Oregon
- () November, 1981 *Stateline Intensive Wilderness Inventory Final Decision, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, Utah* (tan document)

D.) BLM District(s)/Field Office(s)

Vale District/ Malheur Resource Area

2. BLM Inventory Findings on Record

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

Inventory Source: See above.

Unit#/ Name	Size (historic acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
3-74A * of OR- 03-05-27 Mahogany Mountain	8,940	N	N	N	Y
TOTAL	8,940				

* -- 3-74A – for purposes of this documentation -- represents a subpart of a larger (11,940 acre) 3-74 unit (Upper Leslie Gulch) of the late 1970’s (and which originally was named the Bannock Ridge unit). Eventually, 3,000 acres of the larger unit was designated as Upper Leslie Gulch WSA 3-74, leaving the 8,940 acres which is within the current unit OR-034-095 (see Form 2).

H-6300-1-WILDERNESS INVENTORY MAINTENANCE IN BLM OREGON/WASHINGTON

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FORM 2 -- DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS

Unit Number/Name: OR-034-095 — Bannock Ridge

Note: In February, 2004, the Vale District received from Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA) its evaluation of wilderness characteristics for Vale District. The official written ONDA submission to Vale District did not include any specific ONDA proposal which affects this OR-034-095 BLM unit. The only ONDA-related information reference which Vale District has from ONDA which covers (in part) the same area as OR-034-095 is an ONDA GIS-generated electronic map titled “Bannock Ridge Addition”. Unlike for other ONDA written submissions of its various WSA proposals, for the “Bannock Ridge Addition” Vale District did not receive any electronic or written submission which supported this general electronic map, including no text narrative describing the Addition relative to wilderness characteristics, no road log, no photos, no photo log, and no specific map of the Addition with such information displayed on it.

Description of Current Conditions: [Include land ownership, location, topography, vegetation features and summary of major human uses/activities.]

1. Is the unit of sufficient size?

Yes X No

Description: Refer to this inventory unit’s Map 1 for the unit’s location. The 10,184 acre unit has nearly the same boundaries as BLM’s late 1970’s unit. The difference in described acreage from the 1970’s is due, in part, to improved methods of deriving more accurate data since that time. Boundaries of OR-034-095 include BLM Leslie Gulch road 7301-0-00 to its north, private lands and a very short segment of the Succor Creek county road on its east side, and a combination of private land and county roads 3786 and 3130 on its south/southeast side. This unit’s west boundary is substantially a ridgeline (Grassy Ridge), which delineates this unit from the adjacent Upper Leslie Gulch WSA (OR-3-74). The WSA is delineated with the same ridgeline for most of its east boundary, with the remainder of the WSA boundary identified at the time as a now abandoned vehicle route extending westward into the canyon of Runaway Creek. Under this current wilderness characteristics inventory maintenance, neither a ridgeline nor an abandoned vehicle route can serve as a valid boundary feature for an inventory unit. Therefore, this OR-034-095 inventory unit and the Upper Leslie Gulch WSA are contiguous to each other, and are, indeed, contiguous the entire length of this respective boundary side for both of them. The BLM and county roads receive mechanical maintenance as needed to ensure their ability to provide for relatively regular and continuous use.

2. Is the unit in a natural condition?Yes X No N/A

Description: Within this unit, itself, elevations range from 3,975 to 5,391 feet. The dominant Bannock Ridge runs through the central portion of this unit; Grassy Ridge is associated with the unit's west boundary area. The two ridges are separated by Bannock Gulch within the unit. Drainages off of the ridges flow predominately north and east depending on where within the unit. The drainages vary with possessing steep (commonly in the upper elevations closer to a ridge or butte) to low gradient slopes, depending on where within the unit. Along its southern boundary is Rocky Butte. Scattered rocky features of tuff ash are associated more commonly with ridges' uppermost slopes. The westernmost portion of the unit contains the head of Leslie Gulch (the upper reaches of the Runaway Creek drainage), notable for its interesting geologic formations. The southern slopes drain into those portions of Carter Creek and Whitenburg Creek located within the unit. Bannock Ridge and Grassy Ridge have some very small patches of juniper; individual juniper are remotely scattered within the unit. The most common vegetation is bunchgrass and sagebrush. The northwest corner of the unit is within the 11,673 acre Leslie Gulch Area of Environmental Concern (ACEC). This inventory unit significantly possesses one of the several ACEC's relevant and important values – the globally rare plant species *Ivesia rypara* var. *rypara* (grimy mousetail).

Refer to this unit's associated Map 1 and Map 2 for human imprints. The unit, itself, has 19.8 miles of rangeland fence, 9.3 miles of 6 MPTs which either hug the northwest boundary or branch from the unit's east boundary, one earthen reservoir, 10 developed springs, and 0.7 mile of buried water pipeline. There is a substantially unnoticeable short stone wall abutting some rimrock of Rocky Butte. A dated and abandoned approximate 20 acre bentonite surface mining area abutting the unit's east boundary which – as it did during the BLM's late 1970's wilderness characteristics inventory – still display visually apparent surface excavation workings located along the unit's east boundary. There are 8.3 miles of 9 abandoned routes proximate to the unit's north and east boundaries. There remains no visual evidence of a 1971 1,291-acre Sulphur Springs disc drill seeding. There remains no visual evidence of a 2003 aerial seeding along the unit's northwest boundary (in the upper [east] reaches of Runaway Gulch).

Unlike as identified with the BLM's late 1970's inventory (in the March 1980 document *Wilderness Review – Intensive Inventory; Final Decisions on 30 Selected Units in Southeast Oregon and Proposed Decisions on Other Intensively Inventoried Units in Oregon and Washington*, and in the November 1980 document *Wilderness Inventory – Oregon and Washington, Final Intensive Inventory Decisions*), a recent check of BLM records reveals that the 1967 2,460 acre Spring Creek disc-drilled seeding actually never affected any of the late 1970's 3-74 inventory unit. However, the late 1970's BLM finding states that the (mistaken location of the) 1967 seeding was substantially noticeable during the late 1970's inventory, which contributed to adversely affecting the extent of natural condition of 3-74 and, thus, then led 3-74 to not meeting natural condition criteria (except for the 3,000 acres which eventually became the Upper Leslie Gulch WSA 3-74).

Thus, in summary, with no longer any current visual evidence of historic disc seeding activities, this OR-034-095 unit -- with its current collective visually evidenced human developments – is affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of humans being substantially unnoticeable to the average visitor. This is a different finding than in the late 1970's which is largely due to the mistaken location (but at the time visually contrasting appearance) of the 1967 2,460 acre Spring Creek disc-drilled seeding.

Presently, being contiguous to each other, the natural condition of this OR-034-095 unit and of the Upper Leslie Gulch WSA mutually effect the overall extent of natural condition of the two areas combined. For this combined larger area (10,184 acres plus the 3,000 acre WSA), there is a net increase in the number, types and distribution of human imprints. However, the WSA's presently existing human developments are only some permanently installed climbing anchor hardware devices on certain vertical rock wall faces (which were not present in the late 1970's), and the then remnants of an abandoned fence with cedar posts which have since been removed from the WSA. Also, there presently is no visual evidence of any land treatments within OR-034-095. With consideration of the imprints present in OR-034-095 the end result is that the combined area of the WSA and OR-034-095 remains affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of humans being substantially unnoticeable to the average visitor.

3. Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes X No _____ N/A _____

Description: The OR-034-095 unit, itself, is a generally oblong shape, about 1.5 to 4 miles wide and approximately 4 miles long. While the eastern sector of the unit (that is, basically east Moss Gulch's east ridgeline and east of that portion of the Bannock Ridge located south of the Ridge's confluence with this Moss Gulch's east ridgeline) does provide some settings to experience a sense of being isolated, the opportunities are not outstanding in this eastern sector of the unit for collective reasons. There is insufficient vegetative size and distributive density to provide adequate vegetative screening; and, the more so rolling nature of the terrain of this eastern sector combined with the extent of MPT's traversing that area does not provide for outstanding opportunities for solitude.

The remainder of the unit (western sector) possesses a diversity of multidirectional drainages and has elevated terrain with moderate to steep slopes with few human imprints (except for the nearly paralleling MPT located close to the unit's north boundary road). This terrain -- though lacking sufficient vegetative size and density to provide vegetative screening – does possess, in combination with its contiguous WSA, an area of increased size and a configuration conducive to provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.

4. Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?Yes _____ No X N/A _____

Description: Dispersed recreation activities within the unit, itself, include hiking, horseback riding, and general photography and sightseeing. There are no unique or special features associated with the unit which would specifically more so draw recreating visitors to it. Although located along the far eastern edge of habitat for bighorn sheep -- a prized trophy hunt species in Oregon -- hunting of the species within the unit, if it occurs at all, is likely rare due to less desirable habitat characteristics for the species. Hunting of common game species occurs (primarily chukar, deer and antelope), but hunting opportunities for these species is not outstanding. Thus, this OR-034-095 inventory unit, itself, does not possess outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, which is the same conclusion as BLM's late 1970's intensive wilderness characteristic inventory for the same area.

As concluded in the late 1970's by BLM, the contiguous WSA continues to provide outstanding opportunities for photography, geologic sightseeing, day hiking, and hunting of bighorn sheep. Since the mid-1990's, within this WSA (which as part of a larger BLM administrative management area, the Leslie Gulch Area of Environmental Concern) BLM has precluded horseback riding. Backpacking opportunities, while available, are limited because of the WSA's small size. With inclusion of the OR-034-095 unit, the combined two areas provides a larger area to hike and backpack -- and provides area for horseback riding -- but the area composing OR-034-095 -- as concluded in the late 1970's -- does not possess values or features sufficient to result in these activity opportunities being outstanding in character.

5. Does the unit have supplemental values?Yes X No _____ N/A _____

Description: BLM has record within the unit of one lek of sage grouse, a BLM special status animal species. There are 4 known sites of Owyhee clover, 2 of grimy mousetail, and 7 of soft blazingstar -- each a BLM special status plant species. BLM identifies a portion of the unit as suitable bighorn sheep habit; the sheep is a BLM special status animal species in Oregon.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Number/Name: OR-034-095 — Bannock Ridge

Summary Results of Analysis:

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

Conclusion -- check one:

- X The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness character.
- The area does not have wilderness character.

Prepared by: Robert Alward
 Robert Alward, Wilderness Planner Contractor

Team Members:

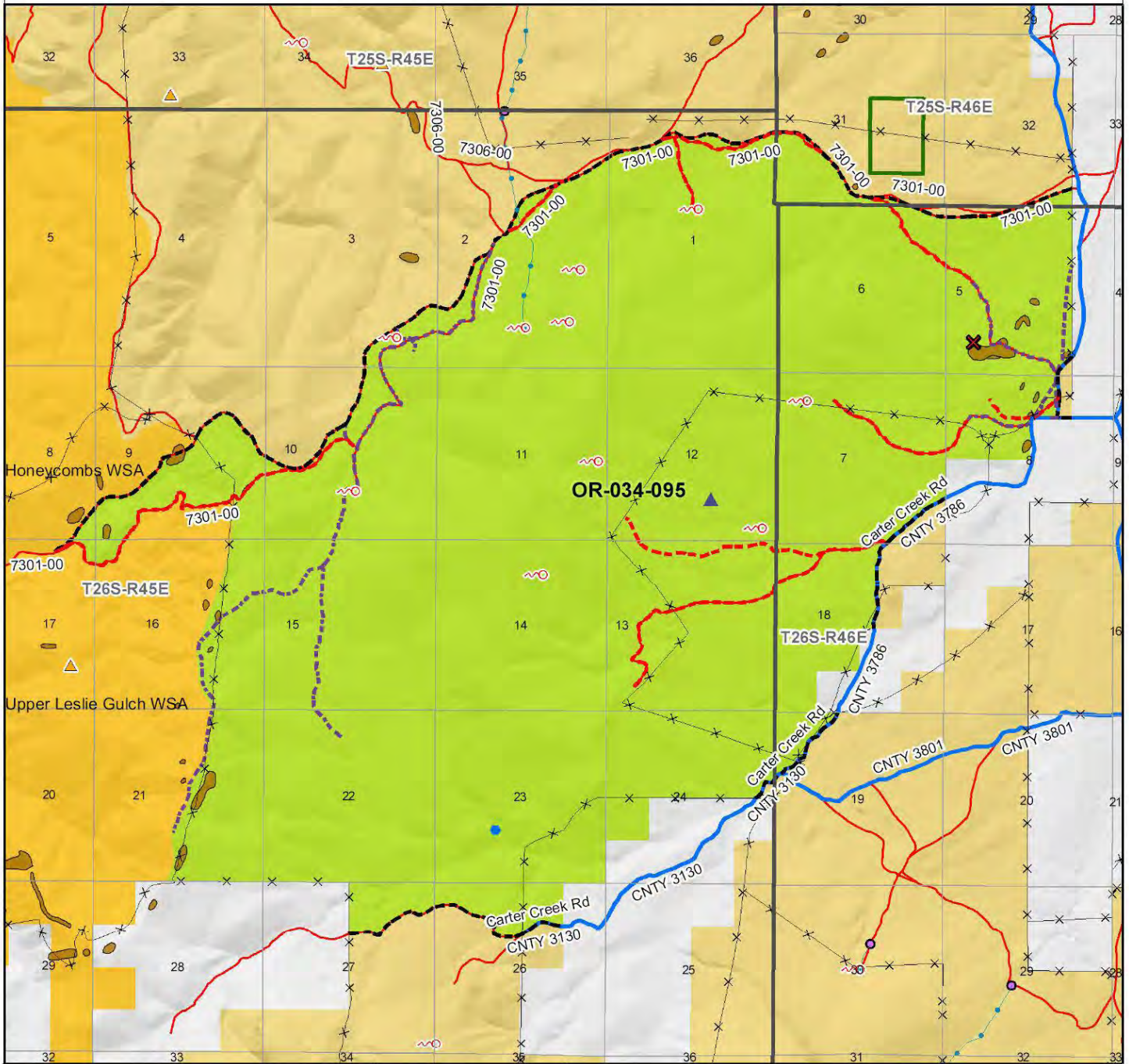
<u>Mitch Thomas</u>	<u>2/4/10</u>
Mitch Thomas, Rangeland Management Specialist	Date
<u>Gillian Wigglesworth</u>	<u>2/5/10</u>
Gillian Wigglesworth, Botanist	Date
<u>Michelle Caviness</u>	<u>2/25/10</u>
Michelle Caviness, Wildlife Biologist	Date
<u>Shaney Rockefeller</u>	<u>3/10/10</u>
Shaney Rockefeller, Soil Scientist	Date
<u>Jonathan Westfall</u>	<u>02/08/2010</u>
Jon Westfall, Geologist	Date
<u>Eian Ray</u>	<u>02/09/10</u>
Eian Ray, GIS Specialist, contractor	Date
<u>Brent Grasty</u>	<u>2/9/10</u>
Brent Grasty, GIS Coordinator	Date

Approved by:

Pat Ryan 7/11/10
 Pat Ryan, Malheur Resource Area Field Manager Date

This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR parts 4 or 1610.5-2.

Wilderness Characteristics - Overview Bannock Ridge - OR-034-095 - Map 1 of 2



Legend

- Developed Spring
- Wildlife Guzzler
- Earthen Reservoir
- Pipeline
- Trough
- Fence
- Storage Tank
- Surface Mining Disturbance
- Sage Grouse Lek
- Special Status Plant
- BLM Wild Char Inventory Unit
- Wilderness Study Area
- Mineral Material Site
- Road/Utility Right-of-Way
- Major Water Body

Wilderness Inventory BLM Routes

Route Types - BLM Determination

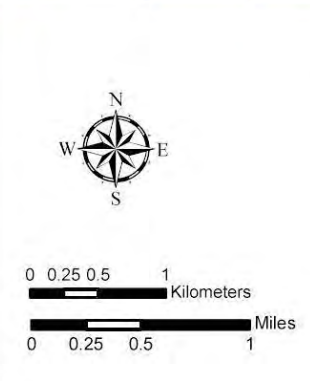
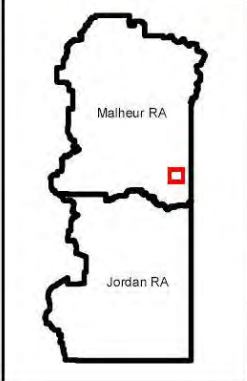
- Boundary Road
- Motorized Primitive Trail (MPT)
- Discontinued Use

Routes - Outside Wild Char Unit

- County
- Major Highway
- BLM Numbered & Other Routes

Land Ownership

- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- Private
- Other Federal Land



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

VALE DISTRICT
December 16, 2009

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