

Wilderness Inventory Unit Index of Documents  
**Blue Mountain OR-036-039, 12 total pages**

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**Prepared by:**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
**Bureau of Land Management**  
**Vale District Office**  
**100 Oregon Street**  
**Vale, Oregon 97918**



## **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-036-039 -- Blue Mountain

**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  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**

- 1978 – BLM Wilderness Inventory Unit 3-163 Blue Mountain of OR-03-12-27 (unpublished BLM documents 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**

- 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).
- 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)
- 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 3-163 Blue Mountain of OR-03-12-27.

**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
- Intensive Wilderness Inventory Map, March 1980, Oregon
- 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 Office

Jordan Field Office

**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.

| <b>Unit#/Name</b>                  | <b>Size (historic acres)</b> | <b>Natural Condition? Y/N</b> | <b>Outstanding Solitude? Y/N</b> | <b>Outstanding Primitive &amp; Unconfined Recreation? Y/N</b> | <b>Supplemental Values? Y/N</b> |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 3-163 Blue Mountain of OR-03-12-27 | 61,980                       | N                             | N                                | N   | Y                               |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                       | 61,980                       |                               |                                  |   |                                 |

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## **FORM 2 -- DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS**

**Unit Number/Name:** OR-036-039 – Blue Mountain

**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 associated Map 1 for its location. This 71,533 acre unit possesses very similar boundaries to the late 1970's 3-163 inventory unit. The difference in acreage from BLM's late 1970's wilderness characteristics inventory is a combination of an area near Blue Mountain Pass not included in that inventory, improved methods available now for determining the size of an area, and, likely, a partial miscalculation when the 1970's inventory was conducted. Since the BLM late 1970's inventory, 7 vehicle routes (totaling approximately 26 miles) then identified as cherry-stem roads and distributed widely within the late 1970's 3-163 unit have since that time changed status from a road to a motorized primitive trail (MPT) due to no mechanical maintenance performed and BLM not intending to mechanically maintain the routes.

The boundary of OR-036-039 consists of US Highway 95, BLM 6310-0-00, 6325-0-00, and 6308-0-00 on its east side; County road 640 and BLM 6302-0-00 on its south and west sides; a private land parcel in its northwest sector, and County Road 1123 on its north boundary. A cherry-stem road (3.45 miles) to the Blue Mountain communication site, the site itself, and an associated utility right-of-way (single-pole transmission line and buried transmission line, not displayed on Map 1) are also features of the unit's boundary. The boundary roads receive mechanical maintenance as needed to keep them passable on a relatively regular and seasonally continuous basis.

### **2. Is the unit in a natural condition?**

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_ N/A \_\_\_\_\_

**Description:** The unit includes a north-south central ridgeline with rolling topography and relatively gentle slopes radiating out from Blue Mountain in the east-center of the unit. Rolling hills are a common topographic feature with the flat terrain and basins common towards the west boundary. Elevation ranges from 7,435 (summit of Blue Mountain) to 4,313 feet. The vegetation is sagebrush, salt desert shrubs, and both native and nonnative grasses. The very northern reach of the inventory unit is within the Coyote Lake Wild Horse Herd Management Area.

See this unit's associated Map 1 and Map 2 for human imprints. There are 3 systems of a total of 16.2 miles of buried water pipeline with 2 associated water storage tanks and 22 troughs; 18 earthen reservoirs, 5 developed springs, 4 wildlife guzzlers (one is not displayed on Map 1 or Map 2), 26.9 miles of rangeland fence, and 80.9 miles of 22 motorized primitive trails (MPTs). There is also a temporary electric fence splitting a fenced livestock pasture which is not displayed on the maps. Since the BLM late 1970's inventory, 7 vehicle routes (totaling approximately 26 miles) then identified as cherry-stem roads and distributed widely within the 3-163 unit have since that time changed status from a road to a motorized primitive trail (MPT) due to no mechanical maintenance performed and BLM not intending to mechanically maintain the routes. One of these routes led to an oil rig drilling site with surface scarring of the drill pad area still somewhat distinguishable. There is remnant visual evidence of 7 abandoned vehicle routes (5.0 miles). The 1980 wilderness characteristics determination for the late 1970's 3-163 inventory unit eliminated the unit due, in part, to a finding that mankind's work was substantially noticeable. Partial rationale for that finding was the presence then of substantially noticeable 4,260 acres of "brush control" projects (1962 – 1970) located on the lower slopes to the east and west of Blue Mountain. There also was a 1969 crested wheatgrass seeding of 680 acres located in the unit's northeast corner of the inventory unit. Presently, to the average visitor these dated (1962 – 1970) vegetation treatments no longer appear distinguishable as treatments within the unit – individually or collectively.

The present inventory for this unit recognizes other changes from the original inventory which influence natural condition. Seven routes totaling approximately 26 miles which were cherry-stem roads in the original inventory are presently reclassified as MPTs, and with they now being less visually contrasting to the average visitor. The communication site facilities on Blue Mountain continue to detract from the apparent naturalness of the unit as an influence outside of the inventory unit which is difficult to avoid. The present inventory also recognizes 4 additional developed springs than the original inventory, 10 additional miles of buried pipeline, 4 additional earthen reservoirs, and 2 additional wildlife guzzlers. Two of the 4 existing guzzlers are within very small enclosures (not displayed on maps). Lastly, 49 additional miles of MPTs (termed "ways" in the late 1970's inventory) are recognized in the present inventory.

Thus, in summary, certain developments and altered vegetative landscape of prior substantial collective size are now no longer substantially noticeable within OR-036-039, while other additional (or not accounted for) developments are documented with this inventory maintenance. Relative to the unit's size and the somewhat varied topography in some areas of the unit which provides some visual separation between developments, and accounting for a combination of several circumstances across the landscape of the unit -- such as about 26 miles of 7 vehicle routes changing from road to less visually contrasting MPT status, 7 abandoned vehicle routes (5 miles) of only remnant visual evidence of their existence, the vegetative treatments no longer visually distinguishable, and the types/nature, location, and spatial separation between many of the human developments within the unit -- the developments' presence when considered individually or collectively result in the unit, overall, appearing to be affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of humans substantially unnoticeable to the average visitor.

This is a different finding than in the late 1970's, but changed now due to the above identified factors.

### 3. Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes  No  N/A

**Description:** The unit varies between approximately 16 to 18 miles long and 7 to 9 miles wide. Vegetation within the unit is not sufficiently dense or tall enough to avail outstanding opportunities for solitude. A long primary north-south ridgeline of Blue Mountain rises nearly 3,000 feet above basins within the unit. Rolling hills with basins between them generally characterizes the unit's topography away from the mountain's associated long ridge system of moderate to very steep-sloped features. As a whole, drainage patterns are multidirectional within the unit.

The BLM finding in the late 1970's was that there are no outstanding opportunities for solitude because of the nature of the terrain and vegetation within the unit, with much of the terrain being near flat in appearance near and the audible disturbance of traffic on US Highway 95 not avoidable from within that portion of the eastern extent of the unit. Additionally, the late 1970's finding stated that if boundaries were adjusted to eliminate substantially noticeable intrusions, the remaining unit would be barbell shaped with approximately 18 square miles at one end, 10 square miles at the other, and a neck about 3 miles wide and 7 miles long following an open ridgeline; thus, visitors would find it difficult to avoid the presence of others in such an area. Finally, the finding then stated that, between the communication site facility and an oil rig platform site, the neck would be across a steep hillside and less than one mile wide; respectively, visitors would find it difficult to avoid the presence of others in the area. Presently, the absence of the oil rig and the remnant of its drill pad not substantially apparent, the neck area is not as restrictive for providing opportunities for feeling isolated.

The multidirectional patterns of the drainages relative to the size of unit combined with its extent of rolling terrain allows a visitor to find secluded locations from other visitors in various locations throughout most of the unit. Although the distribution and low-profiled knee-to-waist sagebrush steppe vegetation does not provide vegetative screening, the characteristics of the unit's diverse topography in combination with the unit's size and configuration does allow for outstanding opportunities for solitude where the spatial separation between developments is greater and distant from the audible influence of US Highway 95.

This finding of outstanding opportunities for solitude within the unit differs from BLM's late 1970's finding for the 3-163 inventory unit. The consensus of the current BLM interdisciplinary resource management team evaluating this OR-036-039 inventory unit concludes that with the added acreage of the prior land treatment areas and the type and distribution of other human developments within the unit -- relative to the unit's size, configuration and varied topographic features -- OR-036-039 does provide outstanding



opportunities for solitude, although not universally throughout the unit. This present finding does take into account the present circumstance of accounting for greater quantities of certain types of developments than were included in the late in the late 1970's inventory.

**4. Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?**

Yes   X        No             N/A       

**Description:** There are opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, photography, general sightseeing, and hunting of common game species (primarily deer and chukar). There are no special or unique features within the unit which would more so attract visitors to participate in these activities. Individually or in combination, these recreation opportunities are not outstanding within the unit. While Blue Mountain and the primary north-south ridgeline do provide an attraction for activities such as hiking and hunting, the attraction is not so unique or special as to consider the opportunities to be outstanding. Wildlife viewing of and hunting for bighorn sheep occurs within this unit. Hunting of this prized trophy game species is an outstanding primitive and unconfined recreation opportunity. The amount of MPTs in the unit does to an extent detract from the opportunities for primitive recreation as vehicular routes access notable portions of the terrain which may otherwise provide challenge. In summary, unlike the finding of late 1970 -- due to now present bighorn sheep hunting opportunities -- portions of this unit provides for outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

**5. Does the unit have supplemental values?**

Yes   X        No             N/A       

**Description:** BLM has documented 7 sage grouse leks within the unit. The bird is a BLM special status animal species. About two-thirds of the unit includes the eastern-most extent of a substantially larger area of identified bighorn sheep habitat. The sheep is a BLM special status animal species in Oregon.

**Summary of Findings and Conclusion**

**Unit Name and Number:** OR-036-039 --- Blue Mountain

**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>Richard White</u>                           | <u>4/29/10</u>   |
| Richard White, Rangeland Management Specialist | Date             |
| <u>Marcy Egger</u>                             | <u>5/12/10</u>   |
| Marcy Egger, Range Management Specialist       | Date             |
| <u>David Draheim</u>                           | <u>2/10/10</u>   |
| David Draheim, Outdoor Recreation Planner      | Date             |
| <u>Garth Ross</u>                              | <u>5/13/2010</u> |
| Garth Ross, Wildlife Biologist                 | Date             |
| <u>Jack Wenderoth</u>                          | <u>5/17/10</u>   |
| Jack Wenderoth, Planning Contractor            | Date             |
| <u>Jon Sadowski</u>                            | <u>4-28-2010</u> |
| Jon Sadowski, Environmental Contractor         | Date             |
| <u>Eian Ray</u>                                | <u>5-14-10</u>   |
| Eian Ray, GIS Specialist, contractor           | Date             |
| <u>Brent Grasty</u>                            | <u>5/18/10</u>   |
| Brent Grasty, GIS Coordinator                  | Date             |

**Approved by:**

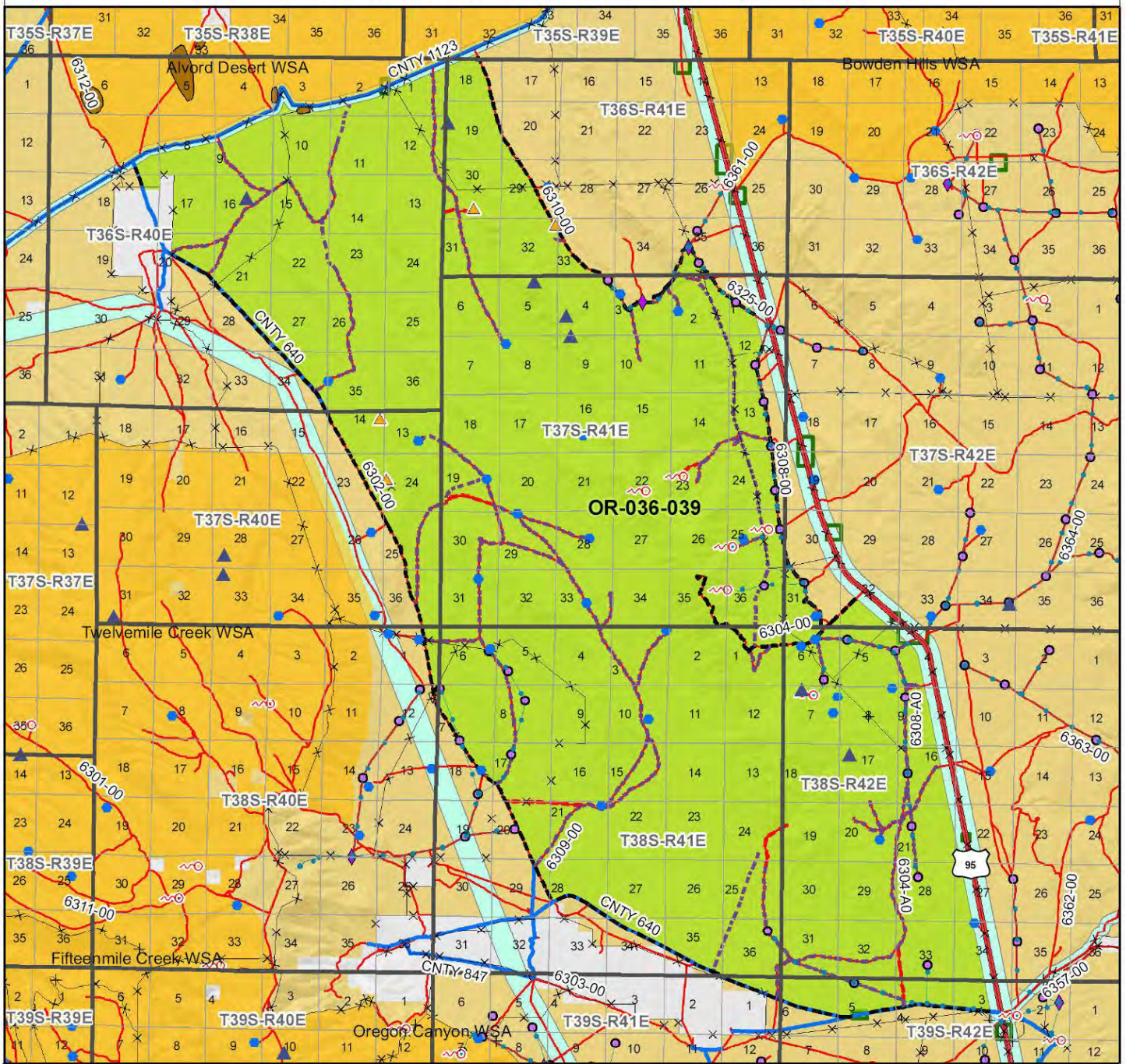
Carolyn R. Freeborn 7/19/2010  
Carolyn Freeborn, Jordan Resource Area Field Manager Date

*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.*



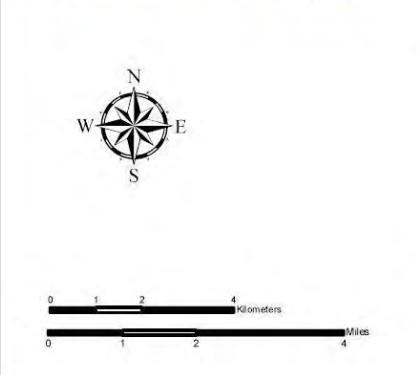
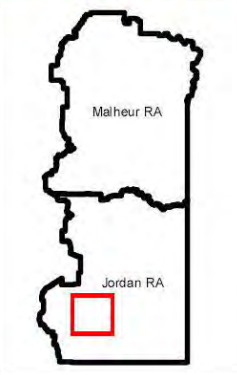
# Wilderness Characteristics - Overview

## Blue Mountain - OR-036-039 - Map 1 of 2



**Legend**

|                              |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Developed Spring             | Route Types - BLM Determination |
| Wildlife Guzzler             | Boundary Road                   |
| Earthen Reservoir            | Motorized Primitive Trail (MPT) |
| Pipeline                     | Discontinued Use                |
| Trough                       | Routes - Outside Wild Char Unit |
| Fence                        | Major Highway                   |
| Storage Tank                 | BLM Numbered & Other Routes     |
| Surface Mining Disturbance   | <b>Land Ownership</b>           |
| Sage Grouse Lek              | Bureau of Land Management       |
| Special Status Plant         | State                           |
| BLM Wild Char Inventory Unit | Private                         |
| Wilderness Study Area        | Other Federal Land              |
| Mineral Material Site        |                                 |
| Road/Utility Right-of-Way    |                                 |
| Major Water Body             |                                 |



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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

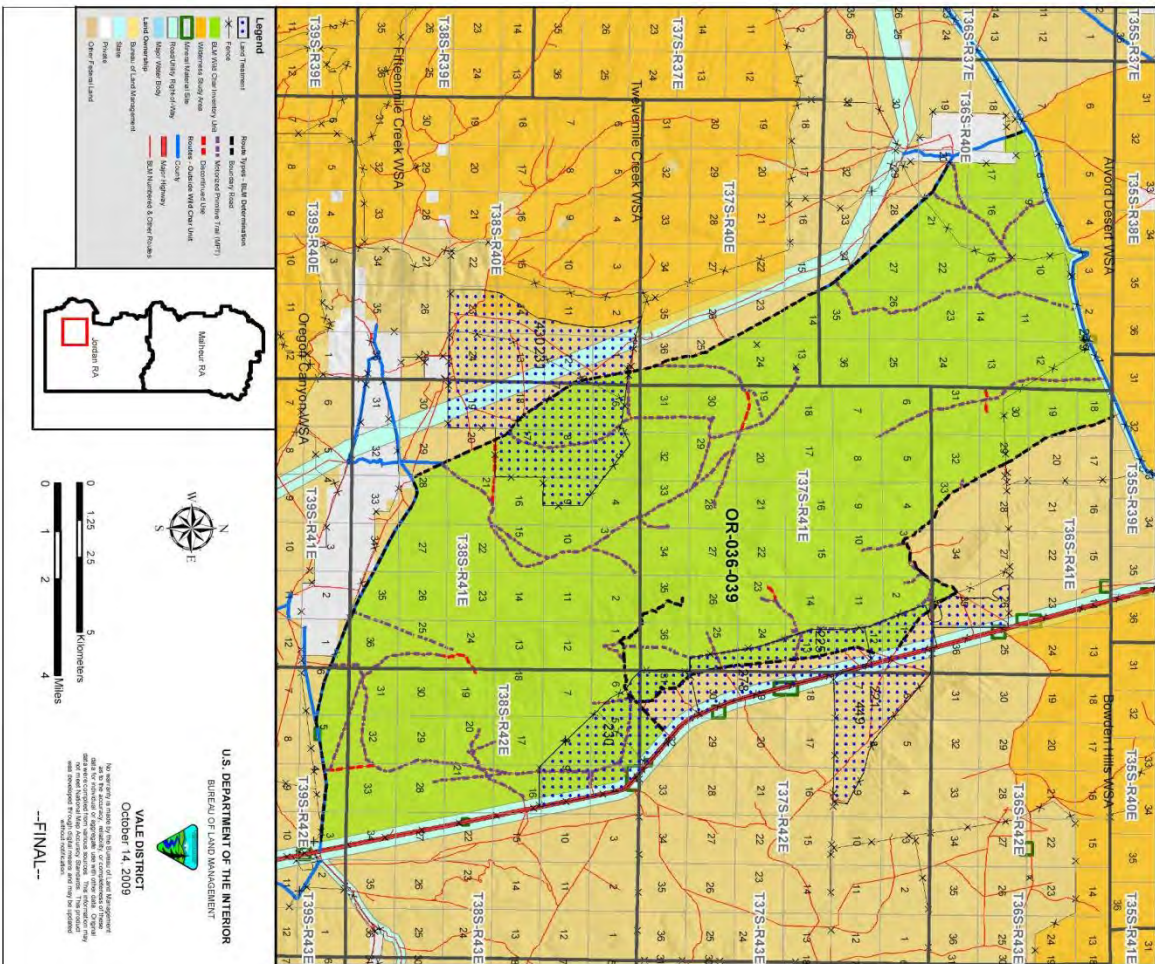
**VALE DISTRICT**  
October 14, 2009

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--FINAL--



**Wilderness Characteristics - Land Treatments**  
**Blue Mountain - OR-036-039 - Map 2 of 2**



**Wilderness Characteristics - Land Treatments**  
**Blue Mountain - OR-036-039 - Map 2 of 2**

| OBJECTID* | NAME                     | TREATMENT TYPE     | SEED GROUP         | DATE |
|-----------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------|
| 219       | THREEMAN BUTTE TEST PLOT | Plow/Disc          | Not Applicable     | 1962 |
| 221       | BASQUE SDG               | Chemical Treatment | Not Applicable     | 1989 |
| 225       | SHEEP CORRAL B.C.        | Chemical Treatment | Not Applicable     | 1970 |
| 230       | SUMMIT B.C.              | Chemical Treatment | Not Applicable     | 1970 |
| 231       | OREGON CANYON B.C. & SDG | Chemical Treatment | Not Applicable     | 1965 |
| 278       | SHEEP CORRAL B.C.        | Chemical Treatment | Not Applicable     | 1968 |
| 402       | THREEMAN BUTTE TEST PLOT | Drill Seeding      | Unknown            | 1962 |
| 430       | OREGON CANYON B.C. & SDG | Drill Seeding      | Non-native Grasses | 1965 |
| 449       | BASQUE SDG               | Drill Seeding      | Non-native Grasses | 1969 |

Note: The Land Treatments represented by navy blue dots on the map to the left are labeled with the treatments' ObjectIDs listed in the first field of the Land Treatments table shown above. Multiple types of treatments may have been applied to the same area. For example, one treatment area may have been plowed and drill seeded - a record is shown in the table for each type of treatment.