

Wilderness Inventory Unit Index of Documents
Coyote Wells OR-036-015, 20 total pages

Page 1: Index Cover Sheet

[Page 2: Form 1 – Documentation of BLM Wilderness Inventory: Findings on Record](#)

[Page 5: Form 2 – Documentation of Current Wilderness Inventory Conditions](#)

[Page 11: Form 2 – Summary of Findings and Conclusion](#)

[Page 12: Wilderness Characteristics Overview – Coyote Wells OR-036-015 Map](#)

[Page 13: Wilderness Characteristics–BLM Photo Points–Coyote Wells OR-036-015 Map & Log](#)

[Page 14: OR-036-015 Coyote Well BLM Photos](#)

[Page 16: H-6300-1-Wilderness Inventory Maintenance in BLM Oregon Washington
Appendix C – Road* Analysis: BLM 6357-0-C0](#)

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: 2007**Unit Name/Number:** Coyote Wells OR-036-015**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 **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)** 1978 - *BLM Wilderness Inventory Units OR-03-13-12* (unpublished BLM documents stored in 6-way case files).
- **(X)** April 1979 - *Proposed Initial Inventory – Roadless Areas and Islands Which Do Not Have Wilderness Characteristics* (yellow book).

Wilderness Decision Documents

- **(X)** August 1979 - *Wilderness Review – Initial Inventory: Final Decision on Public Lands Obviously Lacking Wilderness Characteristics, Oregon and Washington* (green book).
- **()** October 1979 - *Wilderness Review – Intensive Inventory: Oregon, Proposed Decision on the Intensive Wilderness Inventory of Selected Areas* (grey book).
- **()** 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 book).
- **()** November 1980 - *Wilderness Inventory – Oregon and Washington, Final Intensive Inventory Decisions* (brown book).
- **()** November 1981 - *Stateline Intensive Wilderness Inventory Final Decision, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, Utah* (tan pamphlet).

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

- BLM unpublished file OR-03-13-12 (1978); Steer Canyon 3-202 (August 1979 – *Wilderness Review – Initial Inventory, Final Decisions on Public Lands Obviously Lacking Characteristics, Oregon and Washington* [green book]).

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

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

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

- Vale District/Jordan Resource Area

2) BLM Inventory Findings on Record:

Unit#/Name	Size (acres)	Natural Condition	Outstanding Solitude	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation	Supplemental Values
Coyote Wells OR-3-202	6,240	NA*	N	N	NA*
Total acres>>	6,240				

* No mention of Natural Conditions or Supplemental Values was made in the original inventories.

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.*

FORM 2 -- DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS:

Unit Name/Number: Coyote Wells OR-036-015

For this exercise BLM refers to the unit as 2007 Coyote Wells OR-036-015. A citizen wilderness proposal provided by Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA) received February 2004 identified BLM unit OR-036-015 as a portion of their proposal known as the “Mouse Trap Butte proposed WSA Addition.” ONDA feels that the citizen proposal presents new information that documents wilderness criteria and therefore qualifies the area for interim protection as a Wilderness Study Area. The Mouse Trap Butte proposed WSA Addition also includes BLM unit Hanson Canyon OR-036-016.

1) Is the unit of sufficient size?

Yes X No ___

Unit OR-036-015 is comprised of 7,146 acres, meeting the size criteria. The 7,146 total acres that comprise the OR-036-015 unit as shown in Form 2 differ slightly from the 6,240 total acres for this unit listed in Form 1. Acreage for unit OR-036-015 in Form 2 is calculated from BLM GIS information. The 906-acre difference from Form 1 was either a result of the acreage not being calculated properly or from a rounding error from methods and maps used in the initial 1978 inventory. The citizen wilderness proposal identified 23,565 acres in their Mouse Trap Butte proposed WSA Addition that includes BLM unit Hanson Canyon OR-036-016 and Coyote Wells unit OR-036-015 within its boundaries.

Description: The boundaries of unit OR-036-015 are identified as BLM road 6357-0-00 on the west, and BLM road 6357-0-C0 on the north, east, and south. The unit is surrounded by 13.9 miles of boundary roads. Periodic maintenance of the boundary roads has occurred in the past (no confirmed dates available) and they are used regularly by ranchers (as observed by current BLM staff) and BLM employees for livestock management. Refer to map 2007_Coyote_Wells_OR_036_015.pdf for the unit boundary.

The citizen wilderness proposal boundaries for the Mouse Trap Butte proposed WSA Addition unit differs from BLM’s unit OR-036-015 boundaries because ONDA claims the northeast boundary BLM road 6357-0-C0 does not meet the road definition, therefore BLM unit Hanson Canyon OR-036-016 is part of their proposed unit. BLM does not agree with their road determination and has explained why BLM road 6357-0-C0 meets the definition of a road and why it separates the two BLM units, in BLM road 6357-0-C0 analysis form (attached).

On August 21, 2006 a lightning-caused wildfire burnt approximately 905 acres near the Twin Springs area within the unit. In an effort to suppress this wildfire BLM road 6357-0-C0 was bladed with a roadgrader. The road was bladed to create a mineral soil fire break to help reduce chance of the fire spreading across BLM road 6357-0-C0 into the Owyhee Canyon WSA and Hanson Canyon unit. Because the wildfire suppression made necessary the use of BLM road 6357-0-C0 as a fire containment boundary, maintenance was applied to the road, creating roadside soil berms and a bladed roadbed along most of its length bounding the Coyote Wells unit.

2) Is the unit in a natural condition?Yes X No ___

Description: Human imprints within the Coyote Wells OR-036-015 unit include one earthen reservoir, and 1.65 miles of motorized primitive trails. The reservoir and interior motorized primitive trails are substantially unnoticeable because of the vegetative screening provided by sagebrush on the relatively flat terrain. Overall, the area appears to be primarily affected by the forces of nature with the imprint of human activity substantially unnoticeable. Refer to map 2007_Coyote_Wells_OR_036_015A.pdf for human imprints.

3) Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for solitude?Yes ___ No X

Description: Unit OR-036-015 is an irregular triangular shape approximately 3.5 miles across at its widest point. The majority of the unit consists of a flat to rolling, open sagebrush plateau. Deadman Butte provides the only variation in topographic relief in the unit. The butte rises about 100 feet above its surrounding area in the southwestern portion of the unit, so all remaining area in the unit is not much lower than the butte. Topographic relief is minimal within the unit with elevations ranging from about 4,890 feet mean sea level (msl) along the north boundary, rising to 5,132 feet msl at the top of Deadman Butte. Elevation changes in most of the unit traversing from north to south or from east to west are very gradual, averaging about 20-30 feet per mile. The headwaters of Twin Springs Gorge provide the only other topographic relief in the unit, although the gorge covers less than 1 mile before leaving the southeastern boundary of the unit. Twin Springs Gorge drains to the southeast through an open sagebrush flat with a uniform gentle gradient containing no deep depressions or vegetation which would provide locations for solitude. The unit provides limited vegetative screening consisting of broad expanses of low and big sagebrush with little opportunity for solitude. Because of the absence of vegetative screening and topographic relief, BLM unit OR-036-015 does not provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.

A citizen's wilderness proposal (ONDA, February 2004) includes unit OR-036-015 as a contiguous area with three other BLM-identified inventory units, Hanson Flat - BLM unit OR-036-016, and the Owyhee Canyon WSA, for their proposed wilderness area. The proposal's larger size, configuration, and diversity of natural features has led ONDA to conclude that the area has outstanding opportunities for solitude. Because of the existing network of BLM roads surrounding this small unit, and the absence of vegetative or topographic screening, BLM unit OR-036-015 does not provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. BLM has concluded that BLM unit OR-036-015 is not contiguous with the Hanson Canyon unit and Owyhee Canyon WSA because they are separated by an existing route that meets the road definition, as described in BLM road 6357-0-C0 analysis form. The Coyote Wells unit is also not contiguous with the Owyhee Canyon WSA because these units are separated by the continuation of BLM road 6357-0-C0 along the southeast boundary of unit OR-036-015.

4) Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?Yes No

Description: Opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation are available in the unit. However, opportunities for activities such as hiking, backpacking, hunting, wildlife viewing, horseback riding, and photography are not outstanding because the unit lacks scenic quality, diversity of landforms, and challenging terrain. Deadman Butte is the only topographic feature in the unit that alters the flatness of the terrain. The present inventory agrees with the 1978 inventory that determined the unit lacks exceptional scenery and the diversity of landforms that would result in a strong attraction to the unit for persons seeking primitive recreational activity. Backpacking across the unit could be a monotonous experience with no change in hiking conditions or scenery. There are no unique photographic opportunities in the unit because of the vast acres of homogeneous topography and vegetation that lack significant points of interest or attractive sites. Despite the unit's size, the lack of scenic quality and lack of diversity of landforms render the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation less than outstanding. Although wildlife viewing opportunities have been identified as a recreational value within this unit, they are not considered to be outstanding by the inventory team.

Citizens promoting the Oregon Butte proposed Addition have presented a number of scenic photographs (DB 17, 19, 26, 33, 51, 53, and 56) as evidence of outstanding opportunity for solitude and for recreational activities such as hiking, photography, and sightseeing in the Oregon Butte OR-036-004 unit. All photographs except DB51 are points of interest within the Hanson Canyon unit or of the Owyhee Canyon WSA. Photograph DB33 that is referenced in the Mouse Trap Butte proposed Addition document is not listed in their wilderness inventory photo log nor contained with the photos submitted with their document. Photograph DB51 is taken inside the Owyhee Canyon WSA and depicts the Twin Springs Reservoir and its southeastward flowing drainage, south of the Coyote Wells boundary. By definition, "An area may possess outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation either through the diversity in the number of primitive and unconfined recreational activities possible in the unit, or the outstanding quality of one opportunity." The inventory team has determined that unit OR-036-015 does not contain outstanding opportunities or outstanding qualities for primitive and unconfined recreation because of the extremely limited extent of diverse landforms.

5) Does the unit have supplemental values?Yes No

Description: With some minor exceptions, the ecological integrity of rangeland in this unit has been largely unaffected by the combined impacts of wildfire and invasive, non-native plants such as cheatgrass. This means the area possesses wildlife habitat supplemental values for sagebrush-dependent species of BLM management importance including pygmy rabbit, sagebrush vole, greater sage-grouse, Brewer's sparrow, black-throated sparrow, sage sparrow, loggerhead shrike, and sage thrasher. Observed rangeland conditions within this unit can be expected to contribute towards the existence of healthy sagebrush-dependent wildlife populations over a large area and in the long term because: (1) native plant functional and structural groups are well represented within the unit, and (2) wildlife forage, cover, and structure is available for use by species of management importance.

In contrast to conditions described above, rangeland at similar elevations and in similar ecological sites within Malheur County, Oregon has been highly disturbed due to the combined effects of improper historical grazing use, loss of biological crust integrity, invasive plant establishment, and catastrophic wildfire impacts over the last few decades. Cheatgrass presence is known to accelerate and aggravate wildfire spread because it is a highly flammable fine fuel, and wildfire often reduces or completely eliminates critical shrub-based forage, cover, and habitat structure values for many species of wildlife. Literally millions of acres of Wyoming big sagebrush habitat types, similar to those within this unit, have been burned over the last few decades and recovery of these losses will take multiple decades if not centuries to occur.

Finally, the land considered within this unit is also recognized as part of the Owyhee Uplands Physiographic Province, a region incorporating rangeland in Oregon, Idaho, and Nevada which supports some of the largest contiguous blocks of intact sagebrush steppe remaining west of the Continental Divide.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION:

Unit Name/Number: Coyote Wells OR-036-015

Summary Results of Analysis:

- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 1) Does the area meet any of the size requirements? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> [Yes] | No |
| 2) Does the area appear to be natural? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> [Yes] | No |
| 3) Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation? | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> [No] | NA |
| 4) Does the area have supplemental values? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> [Yes] | No NA |

Conclusion --Check One:

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

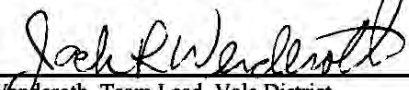
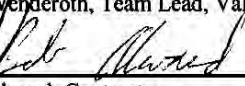
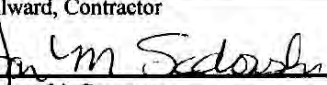
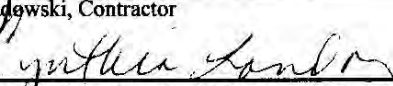
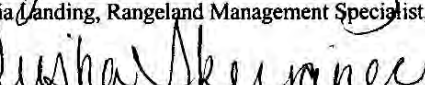
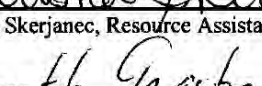
The ID team has reviewed the findings summarized in the original Statewide Wilderness Inventory as well as in the published decision documents and maps identified on Form 1. Current conditions relative to the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics have been considered including citizen wilderness proposals. Based on all the best available information and staff field visits to the area since 2000, the ID team has found compelling reasons, described in sections above, to change existing 1979 BLM inventory decisions for naturalness and supplemental values wilderness characteristics. BLM finds that the naturalness of the area is primarily affected by the forces of nature and there are supplemental values present. Opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation are limited for reasons already described above and BLM concludes that these wilderness characteristics are not present in the Coyote Wells OR-036-015 unit.

Sources of Reference for Evaluation:

- All BLM documents listed in Form 1; existing BLM wilderness inventory information.
- Wilderness Inventory Recommendations: Vale District, Submitted by Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA), February 6, 2004.
- Current geographic information system (GIS) data on existing projects, vehicle routes/roads, land ownership, etc.
- BLM Job Documentation Record (JDR) files.
- National Agriculture Imagery Project digital images (2005).
- Official BLM Transportation Plan Map.
- BLM staff has obtained first-hand field knowledge about this unit's plant communities, road conditions, and other attributes as a result of rangeland health investigations conducted between July and October of the year 2000. BLM gathered quantitative rangeland data from trend plots in support of the assessment and evaluation process for Louse Canyon Geographic Management Area, but most other data collected for rangeland health evaluation purposes were either estimated or qualitative in nature. BLM staff has also visited this and adjoining units annually and on multiple occasions after 2000 in the process of establishing and reading

riparian monitoring locations, performing layout and design work for rangeland development projects, conducting rangeland supervision duties, collecting livestock utilization data, and documenting current road conditions. Field observations were made during Rangeland Standards and Guides assessment work in 2000.

Wilderness Characteristics Interdisciplinary Team:

	10/26/07
Jack Wenderoth, Team Lead, Vale District	Date
	10/26/07
Bob Alward, Contractor	Date
	10/26/2007
Jon Sadowski, Contractor	Date
	10-26-07
Cynthia Landing, Rangeland Management Specialist, Vale District	Date
	10/26/07
Trisha Skerjanec, Resource Assistant – GIS, Vale District	Date
	10/26/07
Brent Grasty, Natural Resource Specialist – GIS, Vale District	Date

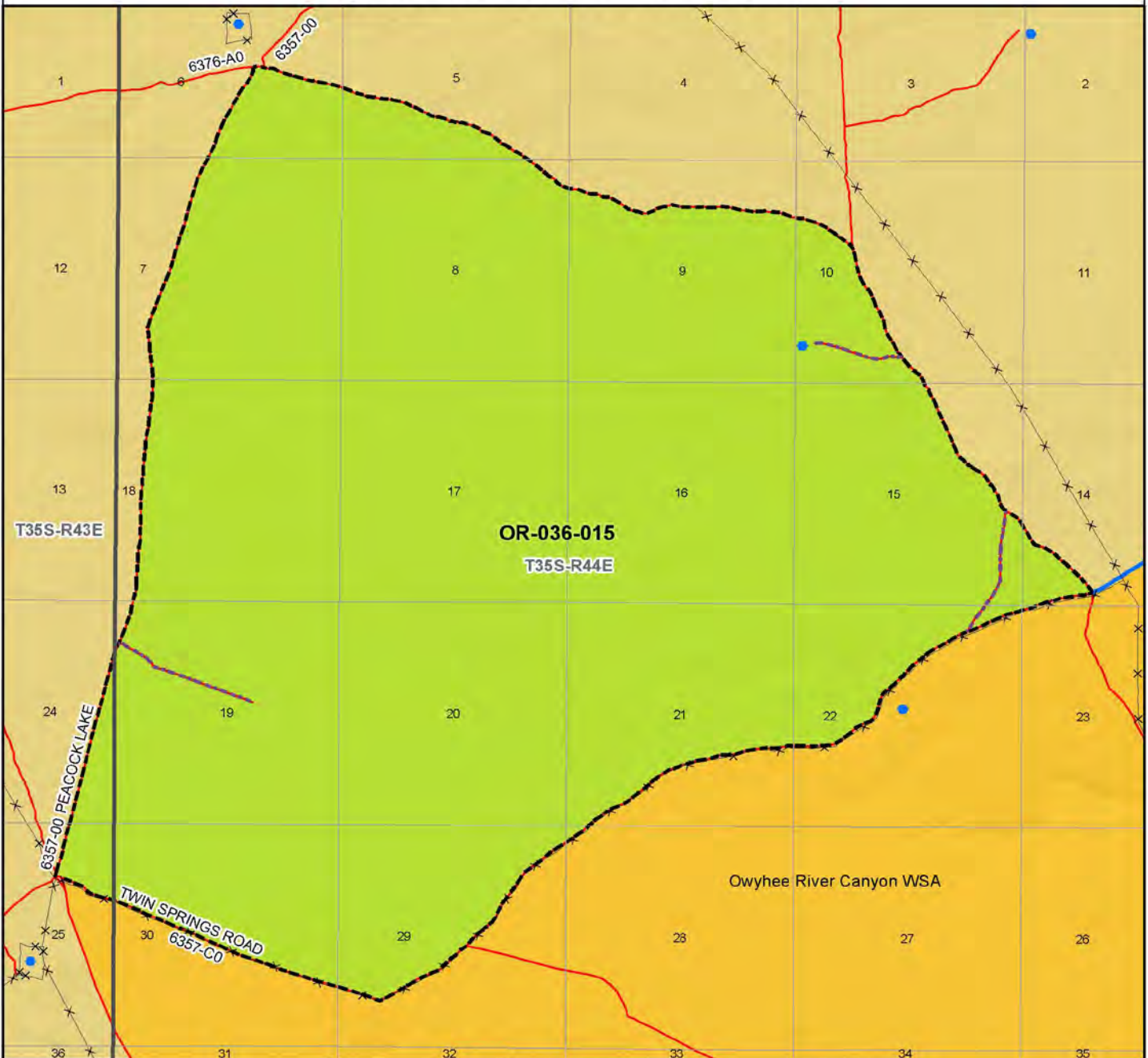
Concurrence:

	10/26/07
Carolyn R. Freeborn	Date
Field Manager, Jordan R. A.	

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

Coyote Wells - OR-036-015 - Map 1 of 1



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

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

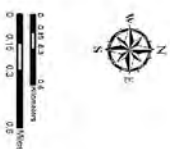
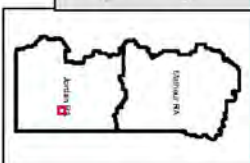
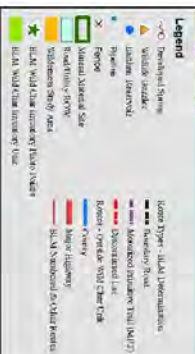
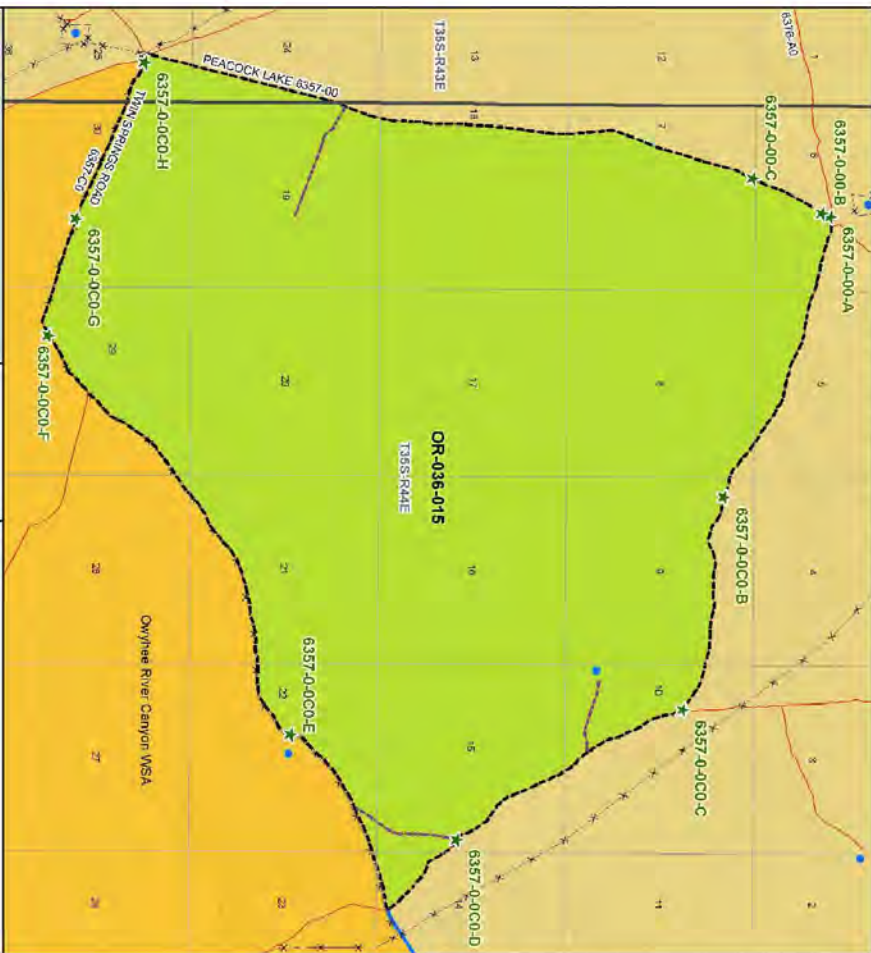
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

VALE DISTRICT
March 30, 2010

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data were compiled from various sources. This information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated without notification.

--FINAL--

Wilderness Characteristics - BLM Photo Points Coyote Wells - OR-036-015



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
VALE DISTRICT
 March 30, 2010
 -FINAL-

Wilderness Characteristics - BLM Photo Points Coyote Wells - OR-036-015

PHOTO_LOCATION*	DIRECTION	PHOTO_TYPE	PHOTO_DATE	COMMENTS
6357-0-00-A	SE	Route	20070416	Coyote Holes Pass
6357-0-00-A	SW	Route	20070416	Good Road
6357-0-00-C	N	Route	20060416	Visible Road
6357-0-00-H	NE	Route	20070621	Beginn Hanson Canyon Rd
6357-0-00-G	NE	Route	20070621	Visible Tracks
6357-0-00-F	NE	Route	20070621	Visible Road
6357-0-00-E	NE	Project	20070621	OR-036-015-E-NETw In Springs Corral
6357-0-00-D	N	Route	20070621	Blade Marks
6357-0-00-C	W	Route	20070621	Blade Marks
6357-0-00-B	W	Route	20070621	Blade Marks
6357-0-00-B	E	Route	20070621	Looking Back East

Note: The BLM Wild Char PhotoPoints displayed on the map are labeled with their Photo Locations. The BLM Photo Log table shown above lists the photos taken at their respective Photo Locations. Multiple photos may be taken at each Photo Location. Scenery and Project Photo Type pictures have their photo names provided in the Comments field.



6357-0-00-A-SE.JPG



6357-0-00-C-N.JPG



6357-0-00-D-N.JPG



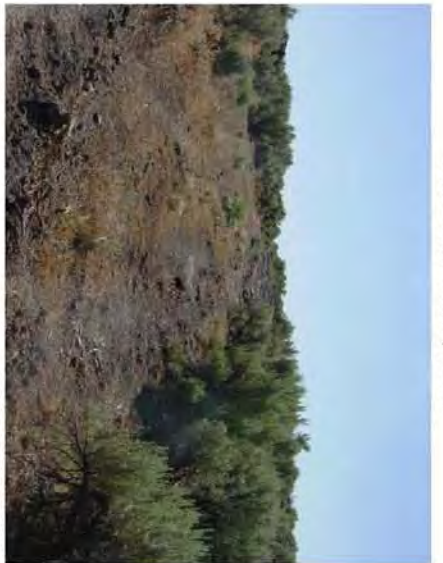
6357-0-00-A-SW.JPG



6357-0-00-B-W.JPG



6357-0-00-F-NE.JPG



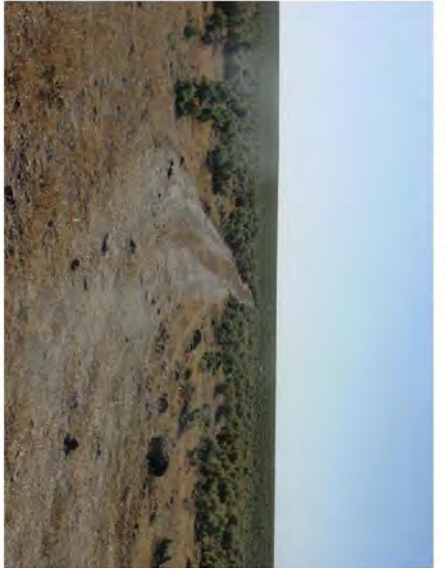
6357-0-00-B-E.JPG



6357-0-00-C-W.JPG



6357-0-00-G-NE.JPG



6357-0-0C0-H-NE.JPG



OR-036-015-E-NE.JPG

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

APPENDIX C – ROADⁱ ANALYSIS

Wilderness Inventory Area Name and Number (Unit ID): Boundary road between BLM Coyote Wells OR-036-015, Hanson Canyon OR-036-016, and Owyhee Canyon WSA

Route Name and/or Identifier: Twin Springs Road/6357-0-C0; Mouse Trap Butte proposed WSA Addition TF17c,TF21a,TF21d,TF24

I. LOCATION

Refer to attached map: 2007_Coyote_Wells_OR_036_015.pdf and BLM corporate data (GIS).

List photo point references (if applicable): BLM, DSC02429-DSC02430, DSC02432-DSC02438, DSC02259-DSC02260; Mouse Trap Butte proposed WSA Addition DB044-DB045, DB48-DB50, DB52

II. CURRENT PURPOSE OF ROUTE

Describe: BLM road 6357-0-C0 is utilized mainly by ranchers (as observed by current BLM staff) and by BLM staff for the administration of rangeland resources, livestock grazing, and the maintenance of livestock improvements (fences, springs, and reservoirs) in two pastures. The road is also used on a seasonal basis by hunters and recreation enthusiasts. BLM road 6357-0-C0 forms the boundary road between the Coyote Wells and Hanson Canyon units, and between the Owyhee Canyon WSA and the Coyote Wells unit.

III. ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY

Is a road right-of-way associated with this route? Yes ____ No X Unknown ____

IV. CONSTRUCTION

Yes X No ____

Examples: Paved _____ Bladed X Graveled _____
Roadside Berms X Cut/Fill _____ Other _____

Describe: Local information about the Louse Canyon area points to the origin of BLM road 6357-0-C0 as a military wagon road and, along with later off-road vehicle use, as the source of a two-track trail. This road was used as a wagon route in the late 1800s. Sometime in the late 1960s to early 1970s the road surface was bladed and berms added on the roadsides, using a road-grader. The bladed road with berms can be clearly seen in

BLM photographs DSC02432, DSC02435, and DSC02436. Road 6357-0-C0 consists of natural materials and is one of the BLM roads in the Vale District Transportation Plan.

The 2004 citizen proposal “Mouse Trap Butte proposed WSA Addition” addressed BLM road 6357-0C0 between the Coyote Wells and Hanson Canyon units. ONDA refers to two road sections in their inventory for that section of BLM road 6357-0-0C0, as TF21a and TF21d. In ONDA’s document they state about TF21a and TF21d, “Neither appears to have been mechanically constructed, nor are they maintained.” ONDA refers to the northern portion of road 6357-0-C0 as TF21a (photos DB44, DB45) and the southern portion as TF21d (photo DB52). ONDA’s photographs cover only the starting and end points of this road and no other portion of the road’s approximate 3.5-mile length. Further, in their 2004 document ONDA’s information about roads includes a short narrative about their road segments of BLM road 6357-0-C0, stating, “TF21a is very rocky and overgrown (photo DB45), and TF21d is nothing more than a two track (photo DB52).” Based on these two photographs, ONDA determined that BLM road 6357-0-C0 was not a road but a way between the two BLM units.

BLM does not support ONDA’s conclusion and, based on BLM photographs (DSC02434-DSC02438) and field reconnaissance in April 2007, has determined that BLM road 6357-0-C0 does meet the definition of a road. BLM’s photographs clearly show sections of the road, throughout the entire 3.5 miles, where the road has been bladed and has berms on the side. Vegetation has reclaimed some of the ditches and berms but the road base is clear of vegetation with bare mineral soil across much of the roadbed. BLM photographs for the starting point (photos DSC02437 and DSC02438) and end points (photo DSC02434) of road 6357-0-C0 are basically the same as ONDA’s because the photos were taken from nearly identical points. Both sets of photos taken at the northern entrance to road 6357-0-C0 show a rocky area with some brush in the road. This entrance is located in a drainage bottom and contains outcrops of bedrock in the roadbed. BLM does not blade a road for maintenance simply because of the presence of bedrock, and blading the drainage would only create unneeded disturbance to a firm roadbase. In addition, when grading rock outcrops with road-graders they tend to roll large chunks of rock from the roadbase creating large depressions that then need to be filled with natural material which erodes over time, leaving large holes in the road.

On August 21, 2006 a lightning-caused wildfire burned approximately 905 acres near the Twin Springs area within the unit. In an effort to suppress this wildfire BLM road 6357-0-C0 was bladed with a road-grader. The road was bladed to create a mineral-soil fire break to help reduce chance of the fire spreading across BLM road 6357-0-C0 into the Owyhee Canyon WSA and the Hanson Canyon unit. Because the wildfire suppression made necessary the use of BLM road 6357-0-C0 as a fire containment boundary, maintenance was applied to the road, creating roadside soil berms and a bladed roadbed along most of its length where it is the boundary between the Coyote Wells unit and the Hanson Canyon unit (BLM photos DSC02435 and 436).

ONDA submitted similar information on their road segments TF17b and TF24 that cover the boundary between BLM Coyote Wells OR-036-015 unit and the Owyhee Canyon WSA. Because the wildfire suppression made necessary the use of BLM road 6357-0-C0

as a fire containment boundary, maintenance was applied to this section of road, creating roadside soil berms and a bladed roadbed along most of its length where it is the boundary between the Coyote Wells unit (BLM photos DSC02430 and 432) and the Owyhee Canyon WSA.

Since wildfire occurred 2 years after ONDA submitted their document and photographs covering BLM road 6457-0-C0, and because this road was graded after ONDA submitted their document, BLM now possesses new supporting information that road 6357-0-C0 has been maintained and does meet the definition of a road.

V. IMPROVEMENTS

Yes ___ No X

Yes or No for each: By hand tools ___ No ___ By machine ___ No ___

Examples: Culverts ___ Stream Crossings ___ Bridges ___ Drainage ___
Barriers ___ Other ___

Describe: _____

VI. MAINTENANCE

A. Is there Evidence or Documentation of Maintenance using hand tools or machinery?

Yes X No ___

By hand tools ___ By machine X

Explain: Recent maintenance to BLM road 6357-0-C0 is evidenced by earthen berms left on the edge of the road, as shown in pictures DSC02430, DSC02432, DSC02435, and DSC02436. The mounded berm in picture DSC02435 clearly indicates recent grading and also shows no perennial native vegetation in the disturbance spoils. Picture DSC02435, taken in July 2007, also indicates lug tracks still in the road from the grader which bladed the road in late summer of 2006 in support of a wildfire. The series of photos taken along this road also shows that it was maintained only to the extent that was necessary for vehicle travel, which in some places left the middle of the road between wheel tracks untouched. This is consistent with Best Management Practices BLM has incorporated into the Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan for Vale District.

B. If the route is in good condition, but there is no evidence of maintenance, would mechanical maintenance with hand tools or machines be approved by BLM in the event this route became impassable?

Yes No

Comments: BLM road 6357-0-C0 receives annual use as evidence by the lack of brush in the most road segments and by the well-used bare ground where vehicles travel (DSC02432 and DSC02436). To reduce the potential for erosion and the establishment of invasive plant and weed species, BLM emphasizes minimal ground disturbance for road construction and maintenance through Best Management Practices (BMPs) as described in the SEORMP, Appendix O. BMPs are designed to assist in achieving land use objectives for maintaining or improving water quality, soil productivity, and the protection of watershed resources from ground disturbing activities. Therefore, BLM does not grade many roads unless obstruction to vehicle passage is evident. To further reduce ground disturbance and to minimize disruption of natural drainage patterns, roads are kept to the minimal width necessary. Additional precautions are taken to reduce erosion and vegetation removal by retention of vegetation on cut slopes, unless it poses a safety hazard or restricts maintenance activities, and by conducting roadside brushing of vegetation in a way that prevents disturbance to plant root systems and does not create visual intrusions.

VII. REGULAR AND CONTINUOUS USE

Yes No

BLM road 6357-0-C0 has annual use as evidence by the lack of brush in most road segments and by well-used bare ground where vehicle tires track (DSC02430, DSC02432, DSC02434-DSC02436). The road is well traveled, wide along most of its length, and is clearly defined on the landscape. The road is also used on a seasonal basis by hunters and recreation enthusiasts.

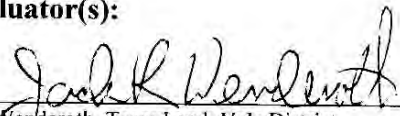
VIII. CONCLUSION

To meet the definition of a road, items IV or V, *and* VI-A or B, *and* VII must be checked yes.

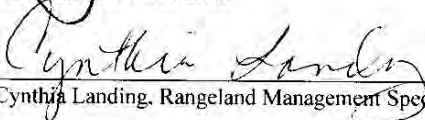
Road: Yes No

Explanation: BLM has determined that road 6357-0-C0 meets the definition of a road as stated in sections IV, VI-A and VI-B, and VII above. BLM road 6357-0-C0 was constructed by mechanical equipment, has been maintained since being constructed, would be approved to be maintained by management as needed, if the road base became impassable, and has regular and continuous use.

Evaluator(s):


 Jack Wenderoth, Team Lead, Vale District Date 10-26-2007


 Jon Sadowski, Contractor Date 10-26-2007


 Cynthia Landing, Rangeland Management Specialist, Vale District Date 10-26-2007

ⁱ Note: The following definition of road is quoted from OSO Draft (4/19/07) H-6300-1, Wilderness Inventory Maintenance in BLM Oregon/Washington:

road: The BLM will continue to base the definition of what constitutes a “road” from the FLPMA’s legislative history. The language below is from the House of Representatives Committee Report 94-1163, page 17, dated May 15, 1976, on what became the FLPMA. It is the only statement regarding the definition of a road in the law or legislative history.

“The word ‘roadless’ refers to the absence of roads which have been improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use. A way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles does not constitute a road.”

The BLM previously adopted and will continue to use the following sub-definitions of certain words and phrases in the BLM road definition stated above:

a. **“Improved and maintained”** – Actions taken physically by people to keep the road open to vehicle traffic. “Improved” does not necessarily mean formal construction. “Maintained” does not necessarily mean annual maintenance.

b. **“Mechanical means”** – Use of hand or power machinery or tools.

c. **“Relatively regular and continuous use”** – Vehicular use that has occurred and will continue to occur on a relatively regular basis. Examples are: access roads for equipment to maintain a stock water tank or other established water sources; access roads to maintained recreation sites or facilities; or access roads to mining claims.

A road that was established or has been maintained solely by the passage of vehicles would not be considered a road, even if it is used on a relatively regular and continuous basis. Vehicle roads constructed by mechanical means but that are no longer being maintained by mechanical methods are not roads. Sole use of hands and feet to move rocks or dirt without the use of tools or machinery does not meet the definition of “mechanical means.” Roads need not be “maintained” on a regular basis but rather “maintained” when road conditions warrant actions to keep it in a usable condition. A dead-end (cherry-stem) road can form the boundary of an inventory area and does not by itself disqualify an area from being considered “roadless.”