

Wilderness Inventory Unit Index of Documents
Dry Creek Buttes Contiguous OR-034-117, 10 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-034-117 — Dry Creek Buttes Contiguous

**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.):

NOTE: Relative to the present OR-034-117 wilderness characteristics inventory unit, only its west parcel was within the below documented inventory units of the late 1970's. Late in the 1970's inventory process – that is, at the time of WSA designation in November, 1980 – this west parcel was excluded from what was designated the Dry Creek Buttes WSA. OR-034-117's east parcel was never recognized as being administered by the BLM during the late 1970's BLM inventory.

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) 1978-1980 – BLM Wilderness Inventory Unit partially of 3-56 Dry Creek Buttes of OR-03-04-11 (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 partially of 3-56 Dry Creek Buttes of OR-03-04-11

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 / 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 |
|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Partially of 3-56 Dry Creek Buttes of OR- 03-04-11 | 53,720* | Y* | Y* | Y* | Y* |
| TOTAL | 53,720 | | | | |

* -- Only a portion of this acreage constitutes the present OR-034-117 unit; and, of the present OR-034-117 unit, only its west parcel (2,427 acres) was included in this late 1970's unit. Also see "NOTE" under "1.", above.

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-034-117 — Dry Creek Buttes Contiguous

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. The unit has two separate parcels. The east parcel is 77 acres, and the west parcel is 2,427 acres, for a total of 2,504 acres of public lands. The east parcel of OR-034-117 is a BLM parcel which apparently was identified as a federal parcel administered by other than the BLM when BLM's late 1970's wilderness characteristics (WC) inventory was conducted. Present land ownership records indicate the parcel is administered by the BLM. The east boundary of this present east parcel of OR-034-117 is the conservation pool level of Owyhee Reservoir (administered by the Bureau of Reclamation). The rest of the parcel's boundary is section lines; thus, the parcel is contiguous with the Dry Creek Buttes WSA.

At the time of the BLM late 1970's WC inventory, the north, east and south boundary of the present west parcel of OR-034-117 was a series of connected short road segments (at the time, partially associated with a water pipeline/trough system) which served as boundary features for the Dry Creek Buttes WSA. The pipeline/troughs in this location have not been in functioning condition for many years, now. Since the late 1970's, these road segments have changed status to motorized primitive trail (MPT) due to no mechanical maintenance conducted and with no BLM intention of conducting such maintenance on the routes in the future (including that portion of the same routes which were – in 1980 -- recognized as cherry-stem roads with the OR-3-56 Dry Creek WSA). Thus, this west parcel is now contiguous with the Dry Creek Buttes WSA. The west boundary of this west parcel of OR-034-117 is a road crossing BLM which generally parallels BLM road 7320-0-00 located just to the west of it. This west boundary road of the west parcel is mechanically maintained as needed to provide for relatively regular and seasonally continuous use. In summary, both parcels of OR-034-117 are contiguous to the same WSA; respectively, each of the parcels meets size criteria for wilderness characteristics.

NOTE: Both the east and west parcels of OR-034-116 are presently associated with Dry Creek Buttes WSA, with the entire designated WSA determined by BLM in 1991 as not being suitable and/or manageable for designation as Wilderness by Congress. However, matters of suitability and manageability are not factors of consideration for wilderness characteristic inventory.

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

Description: Vegetation of both parcels is predominately a mix of sagebrush with native and nonnative grasses. The west parcel consists of the upper shallow, east-flowing drainages of Acton Gulch with terrain of very low profile. Elevations of this west parcel range from 3,640 to 3,800 feet. The east parcel is characterized by moderate to very steep slopes from the conservation pool level of Owyhee Reservoir to its west and north boundary against the WSA; elevations range from approximately 2,740 to 2,960 feet.

The east parcel is within the Owyhee Views Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). A relevant and important value of the ACEC associated with this parcel is the high scenic values associated with the ACEC's virtually unaltered landscape. The west parcel of this OR-034-117 inventory unit is partially within the Hammond Hills Sand Hills ACEC/Research Natural Area (RNA). The ACEC/RNA's relevant and important values are the big sagebrush-antelope bitterbrush/Indian ricegrass and big sagebrush-greasewood/Indian ricegrass vegetation cells identified by the Oregon Natural Heritage Program.

Refer to this unit's associated Map 1 for human imprints. There are no human developments within the east parcel and the parcel is contiguous with the natural conditions of the adjoining Dry Creek Buttes WSA.

In the west parcel there is 9.8 miles of 7 MPTs (including the routes which were originally – in 1980 -- determined cherry-stem roads associated with Dry Creek Buttes WSA), one earthen reservoir, and 4.3 miles of two buried water pipeline systems with 3 trough locations (the system has been abandoned for several years). Both parcels are – and in consideration of the minimal presence and type of developments associated with the west parcel -- affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of humans being substantially unnoticeable to the average visitor. This natural condition is further enhanced by the continuing natural condition of the contiguous WSA.

3. Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for solitude?Yes X No N/A

Description: Both parcels -- being of small acreage, themselves and collectively -- do not provide for outstanding opportunities for solitude. However, being contiguous with the WSA which does possess outstanding opportunities for solitude, the unit in combination with the WSA takes on a continuum of landscape area which, overall, provides for outstanding opportunities for solitude. Within each parcel, themselves, this is occasionally somewhat dampened by the unavoidable occasional outside sight and sounds of motorized boating on Owyhee Reservoir (east parcel), and by outside motorized vehicle travel on the road on the west parcel's west boundary road.

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

Description: Being contiguous with the WSA, certain outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation associated with the WSA are also available within the two parcels of this inventory unit in combination with the WSA. The most noted example is a continuum of outstanding hiking opportunities. Although within a much larger area utilized by bighorn sheep – a prized trophy hunting game species in Oregon – there have been no recorded sightings of the species in either parcel of this inventory unit. Other activities available but not outstanding associated with the 2 parcels include hunting of common game species (primarily deer and chukar), nature photography, horseback riding, and wildlife viewing.

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

Description: Both parcels are within a much larger bighorn sheep habitat area; the sheep is a BLM special status animal species in Oregon. However, the west parcel is barely within the sheep's identified habitat area, and with no recorded sightings of the sheep within the parcel. The location and terrain within in the west parcel is not as conducive or preferred by what very few sheep –if any – which presently may get this far north and west within the sheep's identified habitat area. (The few sheep in the larger habitat area have and continue presently to occupy public lands substantially south [of the west parcel of OR-034-117] and within the Dry Creek Buttes WSA [in the WSA's Red Butte area].) Northern bald eagles pass through the area on their annual spring and fall migrations. The species was delisted in June 2007 from under the federal Endangered Species Act; however, per current (since 12/12/2008) BLM management direction, BLM identifies delisted species to be conserved as BLM sensitive species for 5 years following delisting by the federal Fish and Wildlife Service.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Name and Number: OR-034-117 — Dry Creek Buttes Contiguous

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>Steve Christensen</u> | <u>2-25-2010</u> |
| Steve Christensen, Rangeland Management Specialist | Date |
| <u>Gillian Wigglesworth</u> | <u>2/5/10</u> |
| Gillian Wigglesworth, Botanist | Date |
| <u>Shaney Rockefeller</u> | <u>3/10/10</u> |
| Shaney Rockefeller, Soil Scientist | Date |
| <u>Michelle Caviness</u> | <u>2/23/10</u> |
| Michelle Caviness, Wildlife Biologist | 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 |

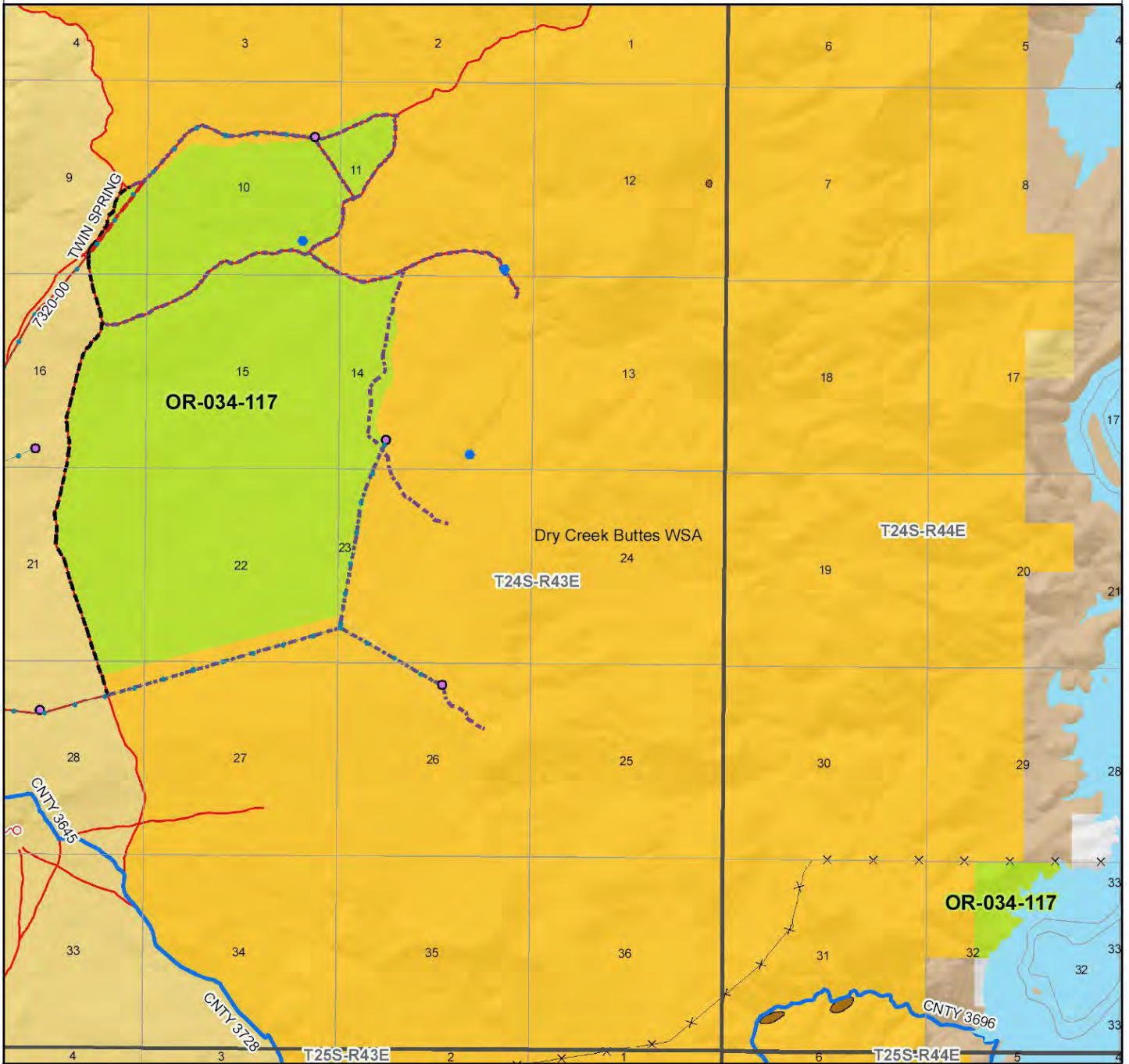
Approved by:

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.

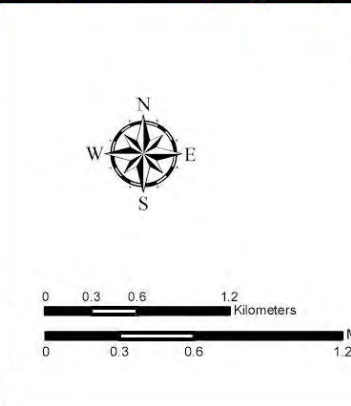
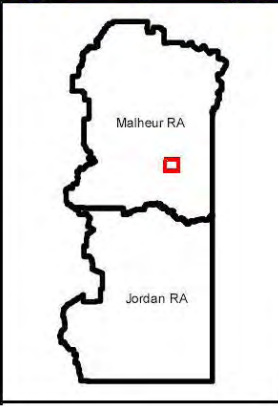
Wilderness Characteristics - Overview

Dry Creek Buttes Contiguous - OR-034-117 - Map 1 of 1



Legend

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 15, 2009

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