

Wilderness Inventory Unit Index of Documents
Grassey OR-036-068, 22 total pages

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**Prepared by:
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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, photos). 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: 2011 **Unit Number/Name:** OR-036-068--Grassy

**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

- (X) 1978 – BLM Wilderness Inventory Unit 3-139 of OR-03-10-27 Grassy (unpublished BLM documents stored in Vale District case files)
- (X) 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).
- () 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 3-139 of OR-03-10-27 Grassy

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.

Unit#/Name	Size (historic acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
3-139 of OR-03-10-27 Grassy	10,280	N	*	*	*
TOTAL	10,280				

*-- These criteria were not addressed during the inventory of this unit.

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

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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, and photos). 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 Number/Name: OR-036-068 — Grassey

Note: In February, 2004, the Vale District received from Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA) its evaluation of wilderness characteristics for the Association's 13,157 acre "Dry Creek Rim proposed WSA Addition". For reference, a hard copy of ONDA's proposal is retained in this unit's file. Information provided by ONDA's proposal was considered and incorporated as appropriate for this BLM Wilderness Characteristics Inventory maintenance.

The boundaries of BLM Grassey Unit OR-036-068 and ONDA's proposed WSA addition are slightly different. ONDA's proposal consists of this BLM inventory unit plus about 1037 acres of which about 146 acres are within the utility corridor right-of-way associated with a Malheur County unnumbered road that BLM has excluded, a 310 acre area at the extreme south western corner of the unit between the Grassey Unit and the Owyhee Canyon WSA, a 333 acre Little Grassey Reservoir right-of-way, and a 248 acre area between the reservoir right-of-way and the utility corridor right-of-way. Taking these slight boundary changes into account, BLM Unit OR-036-078 contains 12,120 acres. BLM has also determined that BLM Unit OR-036-068 is not contiguous with the Owyhee Canyon WSA but is separated by BLM Road 036-RT18.

Within ONDA's narrative BLM Road 036-RT18 is referred to by ONDA as a "way" with information contained in their GIS and Road Logs for a portion of to BLM Road 036-RT18 as route GH05c. This presents a question of whether ONDA's section of BLM Road 036-RT18 is an actual road or a way. Please refer to BLM's Road analysis for BLM Road 036-RT18 where BLM has provided information about this section of road and has determined that it meets the definition of a road for inventory purposes.

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 BLM's Unit OR-036-068 location. The boundary of the 12,120 acre unit includes original 1970's inventory unit 3-139 was excluded from further intensive inventory because of it not meeting the natural condition criteria. Acreage for Unit OR-036-068 in Form 2 is calculated from BLM GIS information.

BLM Unit OR-036-068 is bounded on its north and northwest sides by BLM Road 6367-00, on its south side by an unnumbered BLM road, state land parcels, BLM Road 036-RT18, and private land parcels, and on its east side by a reservoir right-of-way for Little Grassy Reservoir and 0.47 miles of an irrigation canal right-of-way that are west of an utility corridor right-of-way for an unnumbered Malheur County Road. The natural-surfaced boundary roads receive mechanical maintenance as needed to keep them passable on a regular and continuous (seasonal) basis.

2. Is the unit in a natural condition?

Yes No N/A

Description: Given BLM's Unit OR-036-068 size relative to the evidence of man-made developments the unit appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature. The eastern two-thirds of the unit are dominated by a relatively flat plateau with small hills in the northern area and Little Grassy Mountain located in the west central area. Most drainages located in this area flow into Spring Creek located along the eastern boundary of the unit with a few drainages in the southern portion of this area that flow into an unnamed tributary to the Owyhee River. The remaining area of the unit is dissected by numerous drainages that emanate from Dry Creek Rim that forms the edge of the plateau and flow to the west into Dry Creek. The elevated east and central area of the unit slopes mostly to the east and south where the landscape transitions to drainage channels dissecting the relatively lower sloping terrain. Elevation within the unit ranges from 4,110 feet to 4,840 feet, with the upper elevations located mostly in the unit's east and central area while the unit's lower elevations are located along the west boundary. Sparsely populated vegetation throughout the unit consists predominately of big and low sagebrush with both native and non-native grass species.

Refer to this inventory unit's associated Map 1 and Map 2 for its human developments in BLM's Unit OR-036-068. Developments within the unit include 13.7 miles of 8 MPTs, one pipeline system with 5.22 miles of pipelines, one storage tank, one well, and 5 troughs, 6 earthen reservoirs, 2.85 miles of irrigation canals, one well enclosure, one reservoir enclosure, 18.6 miles of fence line, and 23 vegetation manipulation treatments conducted from 1959 through 2003. The vegetation treatments were conducted on approximately thirty-seven percent of the unit over a forty-four year period. A large portion of the sagebrush component in the western portion of the unit has been reduced by a non-native seedings in 1959 and 1975, a chemical vegetation treatment in 1962, and by a wild fire in 2002. To the average visitor, the vegetation treatments conducted in the unit presently appear as a whole, individually and collectively, mostly indistinguishable across the landscape. Because the numerous man-made-developments are scattered throughout the unit and the location of the only two MPTs that dissect the landscape are substantially unnoticeable the unit appears affected primarily by the forces of nature.

ONDA states in their Dry Creek Rim proposed WSA Addition: "The Dry Creek Rim proposed WSA Addition was eliminated from further wilderness review because the

imprint of man’s work was substantially noticeable throughout the area. However, the two inventory trips recently taken in the area did not find the unnatural features described in the BLM’s April 1979 *Wilderness Proposed Initial Inventory*, including “three miles of pipeline, two miles of canals, 2,440 acres of seeding, and 1,300 acres of brush control” (p. 35). This inventory found that time has erased much of the impact of man, leaving an area primarily natural in appearance (photos AA44, AA46, AA54, DC33, DC35).

BLM does not dispute that the impact of vegetation treatments have diminished over the decades since implemented but calls attention to the complete list of man-made projects addressed above in this section. Also ONDA pictures DC33 and DC35 are of the Owyhee River Canyon were taken from a point outside of and approximately 0.65 miles south of BLM Unit OR-036-068 southern boundary. The view presented in these pictures cannot be seen from the unit’s southern boundary.

3. Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes No N/A

Description: BLM concludes that BLM Unit OR-036-068 provides outstanding opportunities for solitude. Unit OR-036-068 possesses an irregular shape narrowest at the western portion and expands eastward to its greatest width in the central portion of the area, then tapers but maintains a more uniform width to the eastern boundary. The area’s western area is approximately 1.0 to 2.5 miles in width, with the central and east central area ranging from 3.5 to 4.5 miles in width while the remaining portion narrowing eastward to about 1.25 to 2.0 miles in width. The unit in the northern area has a length of about 4.0 to 5.0 miles, the central area 5.0 to 6.1 miles in length, and the southern area ranges from 2.0 to 3.5 miles in length. The eastern two-thirds of the unit consists of a relatively flat bench with its western edge ending at the Dry Creek Rim 200 - 250 feet above the remaining portion of the western third of the unit. The winding rim contains numerous small stream channel ravines cutting through the rim face. These drainage features vary in depth and length over the entire length of the rim that runs from the northern boundary to the southern boundary then roughly follows the southern boundary to the east before terminating at the Swisher Ranch in the Spring Creek drainage. The vast majority of the unit contains a diversity of pronounced relief features and secluded sites, such as various drainages, small hills and Little Grassy Mountain. Extensive vegetative screening that would provide seclusion from others is limited throughout the unit because of the type of low natural vegetation heights occurring throughout the area, the vegetation treatments performed in the western portion, and the natural wild fire that occurred in the west central portion in 2002. As a result of the area’s size relative to its shape, in spite of the area’s limited quality of vegetative screening, the diversity in relief over the entire terrain allows the unit to contain outstanding opportunities for solitude.

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

Description: BLM concludes that BLM Unit OR-036-068 provides outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation because of California Bighorn sheep presence. The most dominate dispersed recreation activities within the unit would be hiking along the Dry Creek Rim, Little Grassy Mountain, and the northern central rolling hills or the hunting of game species (primarily deer, chukar and antelope but also California Bighorn sheep). These are the main unique or special features associated with the unit that would attract a visitor who is seeking a primitive and unconfined recreational experience. Most recreational pursuits within the area, individually or collectively, are not outstanding in character or nature for the unit but California bighorn sheep habitat is identified in the unit, a species dependent upon wildlands habitat for survival. Existing bighorn habitat within the unit provides opportunities to hunt Bighorn sheep due to the area containing some quality bighorn sheep habitat and being adjacent to terrain in the surrounding area of the Owyhee River that Bighorn sheep occupy and utilize on a regular basis (e.g., rugged, rocky, cliffy or steep-sloped terrain) and a local sheep herd is known to inhabit and move through the area. While opportunities for other types of primitive and unconfined recreation primitive and unconfined recreation exist, they are not considered outstanding; yet the opportunity for a quality big horn sheep hunt exists and therefore the unit presently provides for outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

ONDA states in their Dry Creek Rim proposed WSA Addition: “Dry Creek Rim proposed WSA Addition also provides outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation in the form of hiking, botany, bird-watching, hunting, photography, butterfly-watching, and wildlife study. The vegetation in the area consists of phlox, rabbitbrush, sage, tansy-leaved evening primrose, lupine, balsamroot, prairie star flower, cushion desert buckwheat, death camas, bugle lungwort, spurred lupine, largeheaded clover, desert paintbrush, and fiddleneck. Birds noted include Western Meadowlark, Gray Flycatcher, Horned Lark, Red-tailed Hawk on a nest with chick (photo DC30), Cliff Swallows, Brewers Blackbird, Western Kingbird, Chukar, American Kestrel, and Willet. Butterflies include ladies and swallowtail, and animals include groundhogs and pronghorn”.

BLM concurs that these plant and animal species may be observed and photographed within the unit but it of its self does not provide “outstanding” opportunities for primitive recreation because the plant and animal species listed above are common to the area.

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

Description: ONDA states in its Dry Creek Rim proposed WSA Addition: “The proliferation of wildflowers and plants found in Dry Creek Rim proposed WSA Addition is an important scientific and ecological supplemental value. Dry Creek Rim may also be home to Spotted Frog, Ferruginous Hawk, Townsend’s Big-eared Bat, Pygmy Rabbit, and White-tailed Antelope Squirrel, which are all sensitive species in Oregon.

BLM recognizes – at this point in time-- the Pygmy Rabbit as a BLM special status animal species and acknowledges that habitat requirements may exist for the Spotted Frog, Townsend’s Big-eared Bat, Ferruginous Hawk and the White-tailed Antelope Squirrel; however, neither ONDA nor any other entity has provided BLM official documentation of the presence of these mentioned species, or of the Pygmy Rabbit, in this inventory unit. The remaining plants and animals that ONDA refers to were addressed within the Primitive and unconfined recreation section above.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Name and Number: OR-036-068 -- Grassey

Summary Results of Analysis:

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

Conclusion -- check one:

The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness character.

The area does not have wilderness character.

Prepared by: Jack Wenderoth 11-16-11
Jack Wenderoth, Planning Contractor

Team Members:

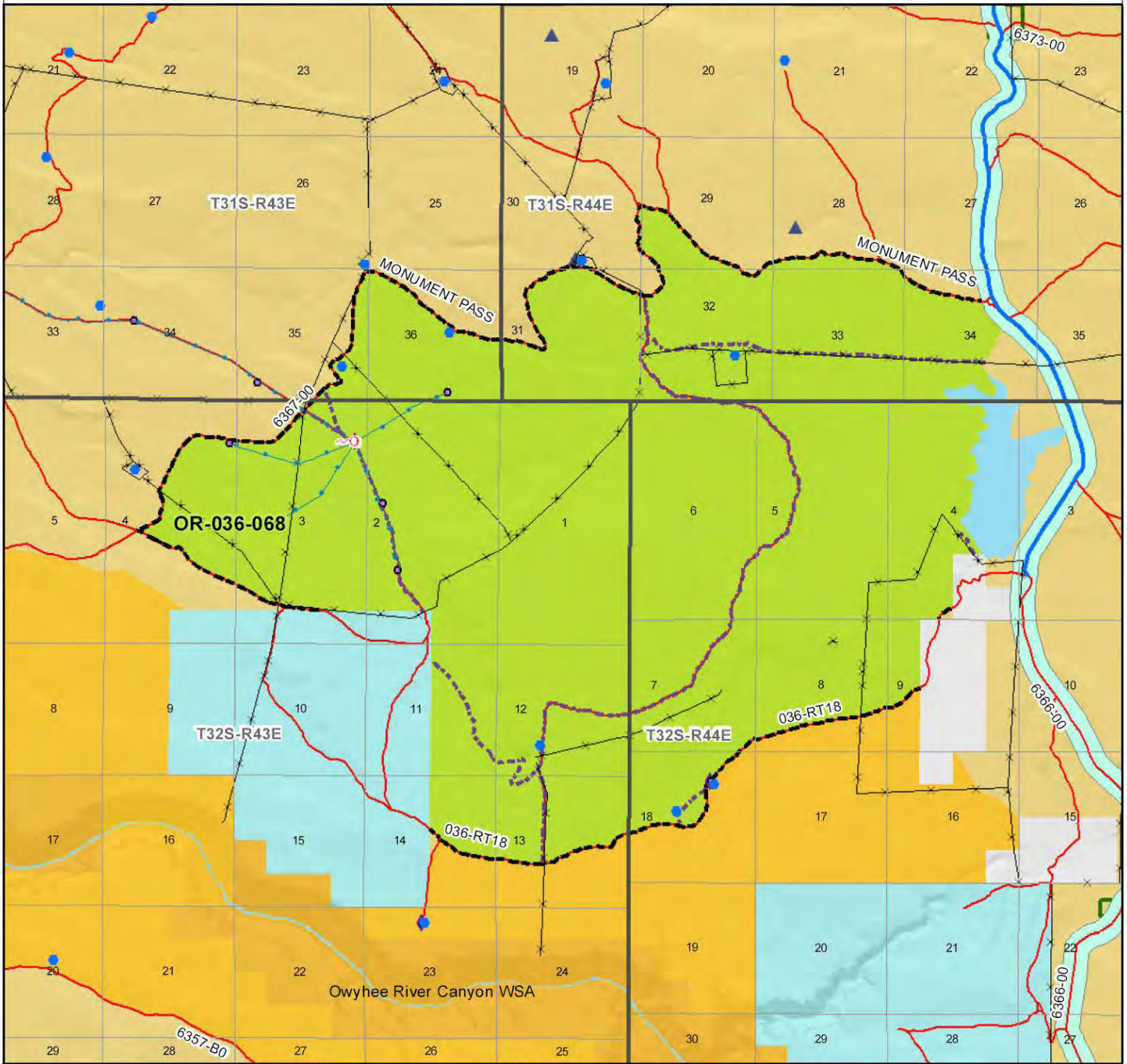
<u>Keri Fredrick</u>	11-16-11
Keri Fredrick, Outdoor Recreation Planner	Date
<u>Aimee Huff</u>	11/16/2011
Aimee Huff, Rangeland Management Specialist	Date
<u>Eian Ray</u>	11-16-11
Eian Ray, GIS Specialist, Contractor	Date
<u>Garth Ross</u>	11/16/2011
Garth Ross, Wildlife Biologist	Date
<u>Brent Grasty</u>	11/16/11
Brent Grasty, GIS Coordinator	Date

Approved by:

Carolyn R. Chad 11/28/2011
Carolyn Freeborn, Jordan Resource Area Field Manager Date

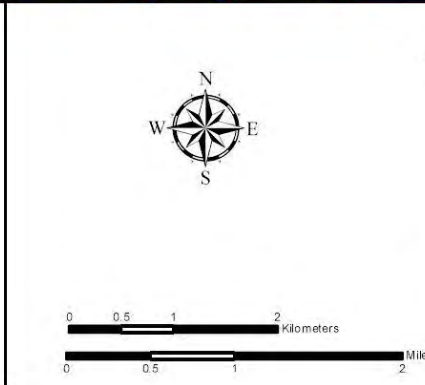
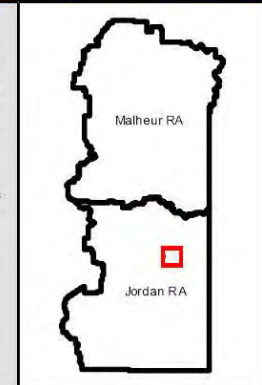
This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR parts 4 or 1610.5-2.

Wilderness Characteristics - Overview Grassey - OR-036-068 - Map 1 of 2



Legend

Developed Spring	Boundary Road
Wildlife Guzzler	Motorized Primitive Trail (MPT)
Earthen Reservoir	Discontinued Use
Pipeline	Routes - Outside Wild Char Unit
Trough	County
Fence	Major Highway
Storage Tank	BLM Numbered & Other Routes
Surface Mining Disturbance	Land Ownership
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	



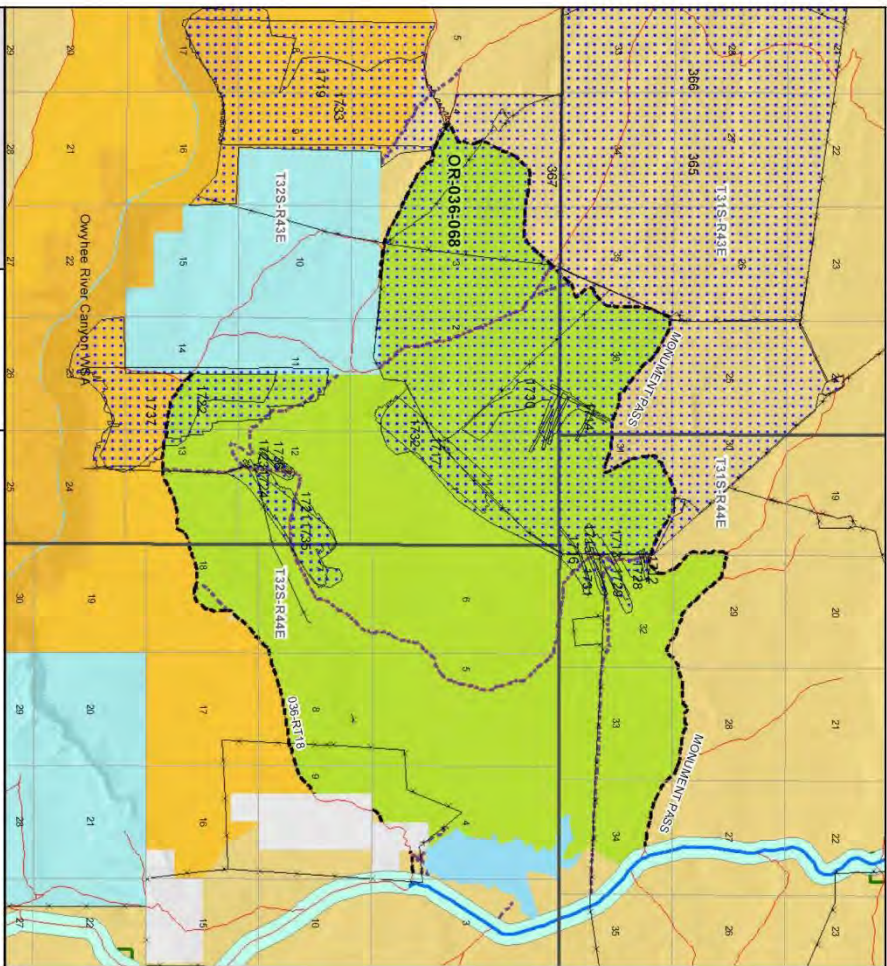
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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

VALE DISTRICT
October 20, 2011

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--FINAL--

Wilderness Characteristics - Land Treatments
Grassey - OR-036-068 - Map 2 of 2



Wilderness Characteristics - Land Treatments
Grassey - OR-036-068 - Map 2 of 2

OBJECTID*	NAME	TREATMENT TYPE	SEED GROUP	DATE
366	DRY CR PASTURE SDG	Drill Seeding	Non-native Grasses	1975
367	MONUMENT B.G.	Drill Seeding	Non-native Grasses	1959
1712	PINTO HORSE ESR	Chemical Treatment	Not Applicable	1962
1713	PINTO HORSE ESR	Aerial Seeding	Shrubs	2003/01/1
1714	PINTO HORSE ESR	Aerial Seeding	Shrubs	2003/01/1
1715	PINTO HORSE ESR	Aerial Seeding	Shrubs	2003/01/1
1716	PINTO HORSE ESR	Aerial Seeding	Shrubs	2003/01/1
1717	PINTO HORSE ESR	Aerial Seeding	Shrubs	2003/01/1
1719	PINTO HORSE ESR	Aerial Seeding	Shrubs	2003/01/1
1721	PINTO HORSE ESR	Aerial Seeding	Shrubs	2003/01/1
1722	PINTO HORSE ESR	Aerial Seeding	Shrubs	2003/01/1
1723	PINTO HORSE ESR	Aerial Seeding	Shrubs	2003/01/1
1724	PINTO HORSE ESR	Aerial Seeding	Shrubs	2003/01/1
1728	PINTO HORSE ESR	Drill Seeding	Native Grasses	2002/09/6
1729	PINTO HORSE ESR	Drill Seeding	Native Grasses	2002/09/6
1730	PINTO HORSE ESR	Drill Seeding	Native Grasses	2002/09/6
1731	PINTO HORSE ESR	Drill Seeding	Native Grasses	2002/09/6
1732	PINTO HORSE ESR	Drill Seeding	Native Grasses	2002/09/6
1733	PINTO HORSE ESR	Drill Seeding	Native Grasses	2002/09/6
1735	PINTO HORSE ESR	Drill Seeding	Native Grasses	2002/09/6
1736	PINTO HORSE ESR	Drill Seeding	Native Grasses	2002/09/6
1737	PINTO HORSE ESR	Drill Seeding	Native Grasses	2002/09/6

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.

Legend

- Land Treatment
 - 1712-1737 PINTO HORSE ESR
 - 1728-1737 PINTO HORSE ESR
 - 1732-1737 PINTO HORSE ESR
 - 1733-1737 PINTO HORSE ESR
 - 1735-1737 PINTO HORSE ESR
 - 1736-1737 PINTO HORSE ESR
 - 1737 PINTO HORSE ESR
- Other Treatments
 - 366 DRY CR PASTURE SDG
 - 367 MONUMENT B.G.
- Other Features
 - Boundary
 - Water
 - Highway
 - Road
 - Trail
 - Power Line
 - Other Feature

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

VALE DISTRICT
 October 20, 2011

0 0.5 1 2 Miles
 0 0.5 1 2 Kilometers

Map prepared by: [Name]
 Date: [Date]
 Scale: [Scale]
 Projection: [Projection]



036-RT18-A-NE.jpg



036-RT18-B-W.jpg



036-RT18-D-E.jpg

OR-036-068 Grassey Page 1



036-RT18-A-SW.jpg



036-RT18-C-NE.jpg



036-RT18-D-W.jpg



036-RT18-B-E.jpg



036-RT18-C-SW.jpg



036-RT18-E-E.jpg



036-RT18-E-W.jpg

OR-036-068 Grassey Page 2



036-RT18-F-NW.jpg



036-RT18-F-SE.jpg

WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS INVENTORY

APPENDIX C – ROUTE ANALYSISⁱ

(Factors to consider when determining whether a route is a roadⁱⁱ for wilderness characteristics inventory purposes.)

Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Area Unique Identifier: OR-036-068 Grassey

Route or Route Segmentⁱⁱⁱ Name and/or Identifier: BLM OR-036-RT18 and Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA) GH05b and 5c

(Include Transportation Plan Identifier, if known, and include route number supplied by citizen information, when available.)

I. LOCATION:

Refer to attached map Grassey Photo Pts and BLM corporate data (GIS). List photo point references (where applicable) or reference attached photo log:

Describe: BLM Road 036-RT18 and ONDA Routes GH05b and 05c form the southern boundary of the BLM Grassey Unit OR-036-068 and the major extent of the southern boundary of ONDA's Dry Creek Rim proposed WSA Addition. Photo points for BLM Road OR-036-RT18 are A through F (12 photos, 2 photos at each site) and ONDA photos DC031, 038, and 039. ONDA also lists photos DC040 and 041 as part of their documentation for Route GH05c but the two photographs are located on state lands and are not part of the BLM Grassey Unit and are not within the Dry Creek Rim addition submitted by ONDA. Therefore, photos 040 and 041 will not be reference further in this analysis.

II. ROUTE CONTEXT

A. **Current Purpose^{iv} (if any) of Route:** (Examples: Rangeland/Livestock Improvements (stock tank, developed spring, reservoir, fence, corral), Inholdings (ranch, farmhouse), Mine Site, Concentrated Use Site (camp site), Recreation, Utilities (transmission line, telephone, pipeline), Administrative (project maintenance, communication site, vegetation treatment)).

Describe: BLM Road 036-RT18 is utilized mainly by ranchers (as observed by current BLM staff) and BLM staff for the administration of rangeland resources, livestock grazing, and the maintenance of livestock improvements (fences, springs, and reservoirs) in three allotments and by recreationist to access the Owyhee Canyon WSA and Owyhee Canyon rim above the Owyhee River. The road is also used on a seasonal basis during the fall months by hunters. BLM Road OR036-RT18 photographs RT18-A through E (12 photos) indicate that BLM Road 036-RT18 receives a level of use and most probable by those people described above.

ONDA describes BLM Road 036-RT18 as two sections of “ways,” GH05b and GH05c.

ONDA states that the southern boundary Route GH5c of their Dry Creek Rim proposed WSA Addition is not a road and has not “been improved and maintained by mechanical means” leading to its deterioration over time to the classification of a “way.” GH5c had not been maintained recently, was rocky in several places, rutted and overgrown (see photos DC31, DC38, DC39).

BLM disagrees with ONDA’s description of use for BLM Road 036-RT18 because of the information BLM has presented above stating who and why the road is traveled in addition to the photographs indicating that the road is traveled on a regular and continuous basis.

B. Right-of-Way (ROW):

1. Is there a ROW associated with this route?

Yes ___ No X Unknown ___

2. If yes, what is the stated purpose of the ROW?

3. Is the ROW still being used for this purpose?

Yes ___ No ___ Unknown or N/A ___

Explain:

III. WILDERNESS INVENTORY ROAD CRITERIA

A. Evidence of construction or improvement using mechanical means:

Yes X (if either A.1 or A.2 is checked “yes” below)

No ___ (if both A.1 and A.2 are checked “no” below)

1. Construction: (Is there evidence that the route or route segment was originally constructed using mechanical means?)

Yes X No ___

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

Describe: BLM Road 036-RT18 was constructed by BLM sometime during the 1960s-1970s, with heavy equipment, consists of natural on-site material, and is part of the BLM Vale District Transportation Plan. No exact date for road construction can be found.

The existing road contains berms along the majority of both sides of the bladed roadbed. Also this section of BLM Road 036-RT18 in many areas vegetated berms still contain remnants of ditches to drain water from the road. The majority of the berms along the roadbed are now covered mostly by annual and perennial plants since the berms have

not been bladed for many years. Currently in an effort to reduce weed establishment along roads on public land the BLM blades only the roadbed when performing maintenance and not the entire width of the road that included berms and ditches when the road was originally constructed. Small mounds of roadbed natural material can be observed in BLM photos 036-RT18-A-SW, C-SW, E-E, and E-W where the edge of the roadbed transitions into the original constructed berms that now support various quantities of vegetation.

Existing roadside berms are not particularly pronounced in some segments of BLM Road 036-RT18, especially in areas where the roadway travels over small hill tops (BLM photos 036-RT18-A-NE) or in relatively flat topography (BLM photos 036-RT18-A-SW) since these areas require little maintenance to remain passable by vehicles. In other areas along BLM Road 036-RT18 some of the ditches and berms are covered with brush as well as sediment filling in the some of the remaining depth of ditches (BLM photos 036-RT18-C-SW and E-W).

ONDA's information about roads in their 2004 document for the Dry Creek Rim proposed WSA Addition referred to their routes GH05b and GH05c and photos DC 031, 038, and 039 that cover sections of BLM Road 036-RT18. Based on these photographs and field information, ONDA determined that BLM Road 036-RT18 is not a road but a way. BLM does not support ONDA's conclusion based on BLM photographs and on field reconnaissance. ONDA's photographs and information for BLM Road 036-RT18 was recorded in 2003 during the spring months when roads are not as well traveled as they are in the summer and fall. ONDA's photographs (DC031, 038, and 039) record large amounts of annual plants that cover the roadway and make it appear that BLM Road 036-RT18 is not well used, has not received maintenance, and contains plants that restrict travel by vehicles. BLM has observed that the vast majority of annual plants covering the roadbed die off by early summer and disappear once vehicle use increases (BLM photos sets 036-RT18-A-SW, and C-SW) by recreationist, ranchers, BLM staff, and then by hunters during the fall period of use.

2. Improvements:

(Is there evidence of improvements using mechanical means to facilitate access?)

Yes No If — "yes": by Hand Tools by Machine

Examples: Culverts Hardened Stream Crossings Bridges
Drainage Barriers Other

Describe: Many sections of BLM Road 036-RT18, photos 036-RT18-C-SW and E-W contain ditches along the roadbed to drain water from the road and are usually part of the original construction. Therefore, the drainage ditches are considered an improvement even though many areas along the road no long contain this feature because of sediment filing in drainage depressions..

B. **Maintenance:** (Is there evidence of maintenance that would ensure *relatively* regular and continuous use?):

Yes X (if either B.1 *or* B.2 is checked “yes” below)
 No (if both B.1 *and* B.2 are checked “no” below)

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

Yes X No If — “yes”: by Hand Tools by Machine X

Explain: Up until now BLM has been unable to locate a written record of when maintenance was last performed on this section of BLM Road 036-RT18. The roadway has received maintenance as needed throughout the past 10 years as evident by BLM photographs of the road width and the vast majority of the roadbed and berms being void of perennial vegetation.

BLM has conducted maintenance to BLM Road 036-RT18 over time as needed to keep this route passable. Earthen berms on the edge of the road in photographs 036-RT18-A-SW, C-SW, and E-E show maintenance work that has been performed on BLM Road 036-RT18 in the past since the road was constructed. Although it has been many years since maintenance has been performed on the entire length of BLM Road 036-RT18, it is evident from photographs BLM has taken, that little to no maintenance is needed to keep the roadbed in good operational condition.

2. If the route or route segment is in good^v condition, but there is no evidence of maintenance, would mechanical maintenance with hand tools or machines be approved by BLM to meet the purpose(s) of the route in the event this route became impassable?

Yes X No

Explain: Although there is no recent (1-3 years) evidence of maintenance on BLM Road 036-RT18, BLM will approve maintenance with hand tools or machine as needed when road conditions warrant actions to keep it in a usable condition. Maintenance will be conducted in this road because it is a well-used east-west route between and for accessing state and private lands, Owyhee Canyon WSA, the Owyhee River Rim as well as access to ranchers and BLM staff for administration purposes for numerous allotments.

BLM Road 036-RT18 receives annual use, as evidence by the lack of brush in the roadway and by well-used bare ground where vehicles travel. It should be noted that various amounts of brush occur sporadically throughout the length of the road along berms and ditches. Vale District has reduced road maintenance needs on roads to only the roadbed and does not blade originally constructed berms unless vegetation encroachment on berms tend to restrict vehicular travel or blade ditches unless drainage from roadways is impeded (as evident in all photos for BLM Road 036-RT18). 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 vegetation removal by retention of vegetation on cut-slopes unless it proposes 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.

C. Relatively regular and continuous use: (Does the route or route segment ensure relatively regular and continuous use?)

Yes No

Describe evidence (e.g., direct, vehicles or vehicle tracks observed, or indirect, evidence of use associated with purpose of the route such as maintenance of facility that route accesses) and other rationale for whether use has occurred and will continue to occur on a *relatively* regular basis (i.e., regular and continuous use relative to the purpose(s) of the route).^{vi}

BLM Road section 036-RT18 has received regular use each year and will continue to receive use by ranchers (as observed by current BLM staff) for the administration and project maintenance of three livestock grazing allotments, by BLM staff for administration of allotments and WSA monitoring, by hunters during the fall months and by recreationist to access WSAs as evident from the roadway and tire disturbance indicating continual use.

This road is well traveled as indicted by all the photographs listed above and the minimal quantity of perennial plants that inhabit any of the roadbed of BLM Road 036-RT18. BLM Road 036-RT18 is wide along most of its length, and is clearly defined on the landscape.

IV. CONCLUSION:

Does the route or route segment^{vii} meet the definition of a wilderness inventory road (i.e., are items III.A and III.B and III.C all checked yes)?

Yes (Wilderness Inventory Road for inventory purposes)

No (Not a road for wilderness inventory purposes)

Explanation^{viii}: BLM has determined that BLM Road 036-RT18 meets the definition of a road as stated in Sections IV, V, VI-A, VI-B, and VII above. BLM Road 036-RT18 was constructed by mechanical equipment, receives continuous seasonal use, and has been maintained since being constructed. BLM Road 036-RT18 would be approved by

management for maintenance as needed if the road base became impassable to allow for future and continuous use on a regular basis.

Evaluator(s): 
 _____ **Date:** 11-16-11
 Jack Wenderoth, Planning Contractor


 _____ **Date:** 11/30/2011
 Aimee Huff, Rangeland Management Specialist


 _____ **Date:** 11/16/11
 Keri Fredrick, Outdoor Recreation Planner


 _____ **Date:** 11-16-11
 Eian Ray, GIS Specialist, Contractor

ⁱ 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 1610.5-3.

ⁱⁱ Road: An access route which has 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.

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.

ⁱⁱⁱ If a portion of a route is found to meet the wilderness inventory road criteria (see Part III) and the remainder does not meet these criteria (e.g., a cherrystem road with a primitive route continuing beyond a certain point), identify each segment and explain the rationale for the separate findings under pertinent criteria.

^{iv} The purpose of a route is not a deciding factor in determining whether a route is a road for wilderness characteristics inventory purposes. The purpose of a route does provide context for factors on which such a determination may be based, particularly the question of whether maintenance of the route ensures relatively regular and continuous use. The purpose also helps to determine whether maintenance that may so far have been unnecessary to ensure such use would be approved by BLM when the need arises.

^v Good condition would be a condition that ensures regular and continuous use relative to the purposes of the route. Consider whether the route can be clearly followed in the field over its entire course and whether all or any portion of the route contains any impediments to travel.

^{vi} Include estimate of travel rates for the stated purposes, e.g., trips/day or week or month or season or year or even multiple years in some facility maintenance cases.

^{vii} If part of the route meets the wilderness inventory road definition and the remainder does not, describe the segment meeting the definition and any remaining portion not meeting the definition and why.

^{viii} Describe and explain rationale for any discrepancies with citizen proposals.