

Wilderness Inventory Unit Index of Documents
Slaughter Gulch OR-034-073, 11 total pages

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



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

APPENDIX B – INVENTORY AREA EVALUATION

Evaluation of Current Conditions:

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

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

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

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

Year: 2010 Unit Number/Name: OR-034-073 — Slaughter Gulch

**FORM 1 -- DOCUMENTATION OF BLM WILDERNESS INVENTORY
FINDINGS ON RECORD**

1. Is there existing BLM wilderness inventory information on all or part of this area?

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

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

Wilderness Inventories

- **(X)** 1977-1980 – BLM Wilderness Inventory Units Part of 3-30 of OR-03-03-03 Slaughter Gulch; 3-302 of OR-03-03-05 Meeker Mountain (unpublished BLM documents, partially in case files)
- **()** April 1979 – *Wilderness -- Proposed Initial Inventory – Roadless Areas and Islands Which Clearly Do Not have Wilderness Characteristics, Oregon and Washington*

Wilderness Decision Documents

- **()** August 1979 – *Wilderness Review – Initial Inventory, Final Decision on Public Lands Obviously Lacking Wilderness Characteristics and Announcement of Public Lands to be Intensively Inventoried for Wilderness Characteristics, Oregon and Washington* (green document)
- **()** October 1979 – *Wilderness Review – Intensive Inventory - Oregon, Proposed Decision on the Intensive Wilderness Inventory of Selected Areas* (grey document)
- **(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 Part of 3-30 of OR-03-03-03 Slaughter Gulch; 3-302 of OR-03-03-05 Meeker Mountain

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

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

D.) BLM District(s)/Field Office(s)
 Vale District/Malheur Resource Area

2. BLM Inventory Findings on Record

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

Inventory Source: See above.

Unit#/Name	Size (historic acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
Part of 3-30 of OR-03-03-03 Slaughter Gulch	15,400	N	N	Y	N
3-302 of OR-03-03-05 Meeker Mountain	19,200	*	*	*	*
TOTAL	34,600				

* -- Specific determinations for these criteria for 3-302 could not be found in district inventory records. The files refer the reader to the “PPL Conclusion”, which cannot be located in the district office. All 3-300 series wilderness characteristics units of the Vale District were part of an accelerated, separate inventory effort, related to a PP & L 500 kV transmission line proposal of 1977-78. The statewide decision map of the August 1979 document, *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*, identifies the unit as previously not meeting wilderness characteristics, thus not subject to further review.

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-034-073 — Slaughter Gulch

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 44,550 acres of public land. The unit's boundaries result in an area larger than the two late 1970's inventory units combined. This is due, in part, to a then functioning railroad line along the Malheur River which has since been abandoned, its tracks removed, and the associated right-of way (ROW) across public lands vacated. The present route of the abandoned railroad on public land along the river is managed in cooperation with the State of Oregon and its lands in the river corridor, with the vacated federal ROW no longer a motorized vehicle route of any type on BLM, and the same abandoned railroad route abutting public lands on State lands not open to motorized vehicle use per current State statute governing the State's corridor along the river. Thus, public lands on either side of the river (of BLM original inventory units OR-03-03 and OR-03-05) are now contiguously roadless as part of this OR-034-073 inventory unit. Additionally, in the late 1970's the original unit OR-03-03-05 Slaughter Gulch on the east side of the river was split into two parts by BLM (north and south), separated by an east-west township line with the north part to be further inventoried for wilderness character, and the public land south of the line was determined in 1977 to not possess wilderness character (the determination was made relative to an accelerated wilderness characteristics inventory effort for a Pacific Power and Light transmission line right-of-way application). However, a legal descriptive is not a qualifying unit boundary in this wilderness characteristics inventory maintenance.

The unit's boundaries consist of County road 514 on its east side, non-BLM lands abutting its northwest sector, County road 587 on its west side, and the Pacific Power and Light transmission line corridor right-of-way on its south side. The boundary roads are mechanically maintained as needed to provide for relatively regular and continuous use. A nearly contiguous vein of State inholdings along the Malheur River extend from just north of the unit's south boundary to about the middle of the unit. A public land segment approximately 1.5 miles long then separates the fingered State land before abutting additional State land again along the river near the unit's northwest boundary. Four private land inholdings totaling 280 acres are also features of the unit's boundaries.

2. Is the unit in a natural condition?

Yes X No X N/A

Description: Elevations of the unit range from about 3,000 to 5,020 feet, with the most pronounced change associated with the Malheur River canyon that dissects the unit north-south through its approximate middle. In the northern portion of the unit west of the river, more so gradual gradients eastward from the unit's west boundary road peak along the main ridge of Meeker Mountain; the mountain's eastern slopes drop steeply to the river. The southern portion of the unit east of the river (that is, south of Juniper Basin Creek) has multidirectional drainages separated by ridges and hills from a generally centrally located 4,445 foot high mountain promontory. Vegetation west of the river is predominately sagebrush, native and non-native grasses; juniper is found in some of the higher elevations in the southern portion of this west half of the unit. East of the river, a north-south series of high points and ridges, including Table Top and Mosquito Mountains, are separated by some steep to very steep smaller drainages (including Bull, Basque and Mosquito creeks) which flow west to the river. Additionally, further to the east about a third to half of this east half of the unit possesses some relatively flat relief. Vegetation within this east half of the unit is predominately sagebrush and both native grasses and non-native grasses. Juniper is found on some slopes of the larger Malheur River canyon environment, especially in the southern portion of this area.

Refer to this inventory unit's associated Map 1 and Map 2 for human imprints. There remains no visual contrast of disc-plow seedings and chemical vegetation treatments which occurred during the 1960's within the unit. Within the entire unit, there are 6 developed springs, 61.4 miles of 33 motorized primitive trails (MPTs), 6.8 miles of one buried pipeline system with a surface storage tank, 5 trough sites, cinder block pump house in T23S-R38E, Section 13 (pump house not displayed on Map 1 or Map 2), 43.6 miles of rangeland fences, and 31 earthen reservoirs. The bed of the vacated railroad within the unit, with its associated cut and fill, two concrete buttressed steel bridges and remnants of some steel trusses and discarded railroad lumber beams remain visually evident.

The unit's southeast area – with its extent of substantially nearly flat to low profiled terrain -- has a dense combination of 18 motorized primitive trails (MPTs), 11 earthen reservoirs, 6.8 miles of a buried pipeline system with an associated storage tank, 5 water trough sites, a cinder block pump house in T23S-R38E, Section 13, a developed spring, and rangeland fences. Collectively, these developments result in the area (as depicted on Map 1) not appearing to be substantially natural in appearance to the average visitor. The unit's northeast —thumb" area (see Map 1) has a collective close spatial separation between 9 earthen reservoirs, affiliated MPTs and a rangeland fence which creates an approximate 4-5 square mile area from appearing substantially natural to the average visitor. These two unnatural appearing areas total approximately 15,560 acres.

The remainder of the unit has approximately 28,990 contiguous acres. The type, extent and locations of most of this remaining area's associated developments – relative to the diverse nature of its terrain -- results in it, overall, appearing to be affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprints of humans substantially unnoticeable to the average visitor. This different finding than in the BLM's 1980 inventory conclusions is due (A) partially to combining the two historic units plus additional public lands south of the late 1970's 3-30 unit which results—even with exclusion of the unnatural locations – in an

overall larger area being in a natural condition; and, (B) partially to the now absence of the railroad along the river canyon.

3. Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes X No N/A

Description: Only that portion of the unit which appears natural is subject to review for outstanding opportunities for solitude. Vegetation within the area is not of sufficient height or density to provide for or enhance outstanding opportunities for solitude. The location, size and distribution of the four private inholdings do not significantly adversely affect opportunities for solitude. The dissecting thread of State land parcels through the central portion of the unit – by their mere presence within the inner reaches of the river’s canyon setting, itself – are a partial break in the contiguousness of public lands within the unit for providing outstanding opportunities for solitude. However, beyond this narrow corridor, the area’s highly diverse topography over an area that is 8 to 9 miles long and between 2.5 and 6.5 mile wide provides sufficient screening between visitors for outstanding opportunities for solitude. This finding differs from the BLM’s 1980 inventory due to the substantially increased size, configuration and its associated diverse topography within this evaluated area of OR-034-073.

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

Yes X No N/A

Description: Only that portion of the unit which appears natural is subject to review for outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Hunting occurs for common game species (primarily deer, pronghorn and chukar), and for bighorn sheep -- a prized and highly sought trophy game species in Oregon. When stocked by the State, trout fishing occurs on the Malheur River; float boating (non-motorized due to low water flow levels) on the Class I and II waterway in its notably scenic canyon occurs when sufficient water is seasonally released from Warm Springs Dam (upstream of the unit). Other primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, camping, photography, and sightseeing. The opportunity to hunt for bighorn sheep is an outstanding primitive and unconfined recreation activity. Although with the presently increased size and associated increased natural diversity within the unit, the other activities collectively or in combinations do not provide outstanding opportunities, but they do offer notable opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

5. Does the unit have supplemental values?

Yes X No N/A

Description: One sage grouse lek -- a BLM special status animal species – has been documented within the unit. Bighorn sheep, a BLM special status animal species, resides within the unit.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Name and Number: OR-034-073 — Slaughter Gulch

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 X 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> Steve Christensen, Rangeland Management Specialist	<u>12-6-2010</u> Date
<u>Dan Thomas</u> Dan Thomas, Range Technician	<u>12/6/10</u> Date
<u>Gillian Wigglesworth</u> Gillian Wigglesworth, Botanist	<u>12/6/10</u> Date
<u>Michelle Caviness</u> Michelle Caviness, Wildlife Biologist	<u>12/10/10</u> Date
<u>Eian Ray</u> Eian Ray, GIS Specialist, contractor	<u>12-6-10</u> Date
<u>Brent Grasty</u> Brent Grasty, GIS Coordinator	<u>12/9/10</u> Date

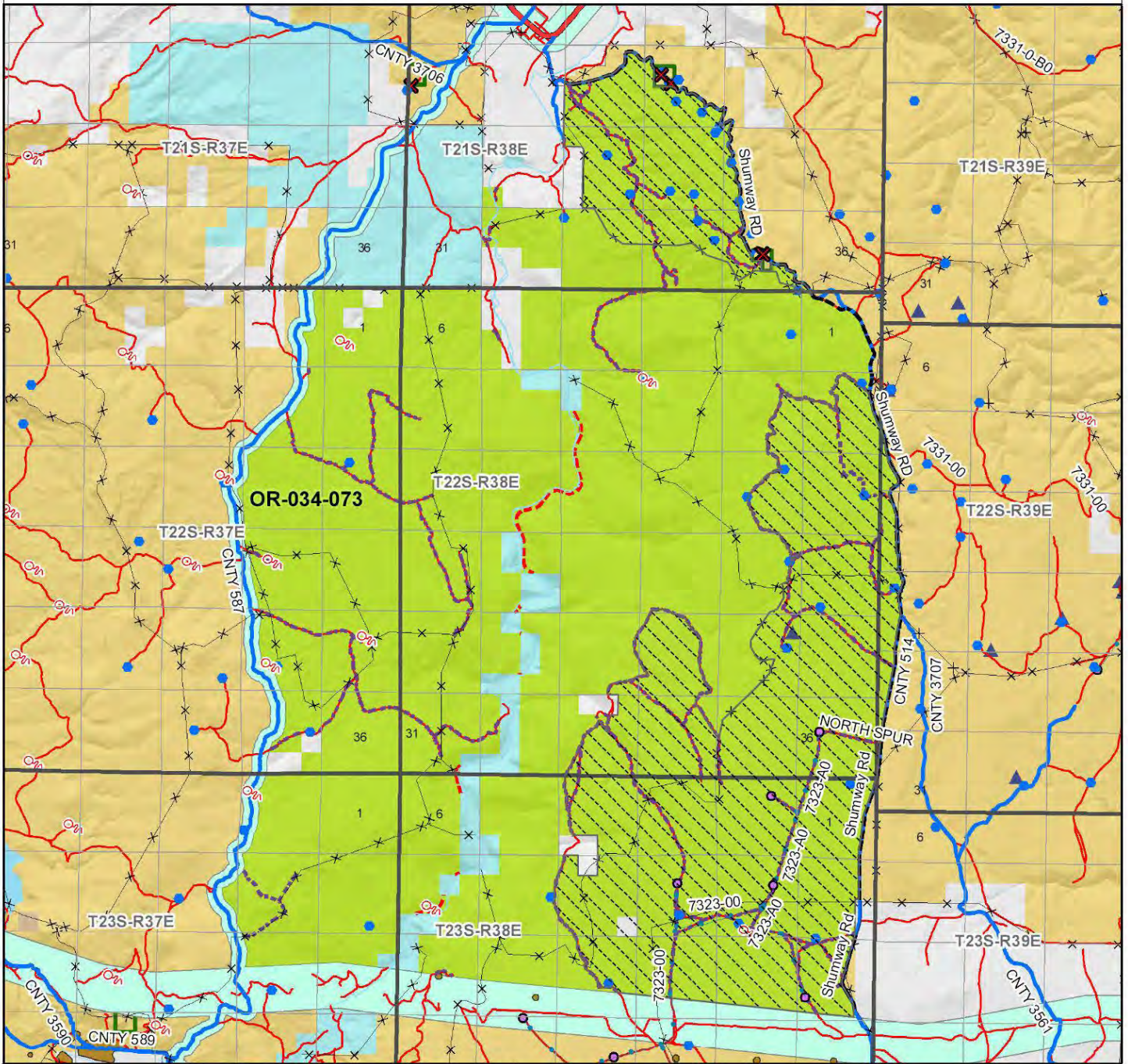
Approved by:

Pat Ryan
Pat Ryan, Malheur Resource Area Field Manager 12/13/10
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.

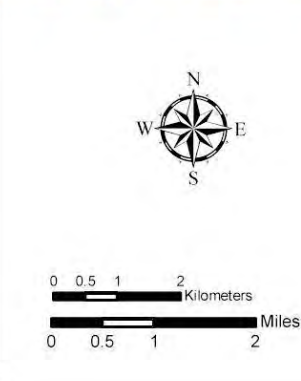
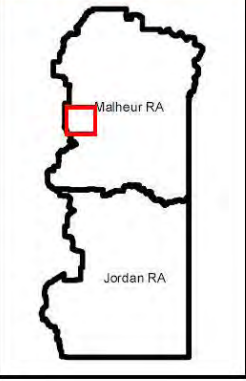
Wilderness Characteristics - Overview

Slaughter Gulch - OR-034-073 - Map 1 of 2



Legend

Developed Spring	Route Types - BLM Determination
Wildlife Guzzler	Boundary Road
Earthen Reservoir	Motorized Primitive Trail (MPT)
Pipeline	Discontinued Use
Trough	Routes - Outside Wild Char Unit
Fence	Major Highway
Storage Tank	BLM Numbered & Other Routes
Surface Mining Disturbance	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	Unnatural Areas
Road/Utility Right-of-Way	
Major Water Body	



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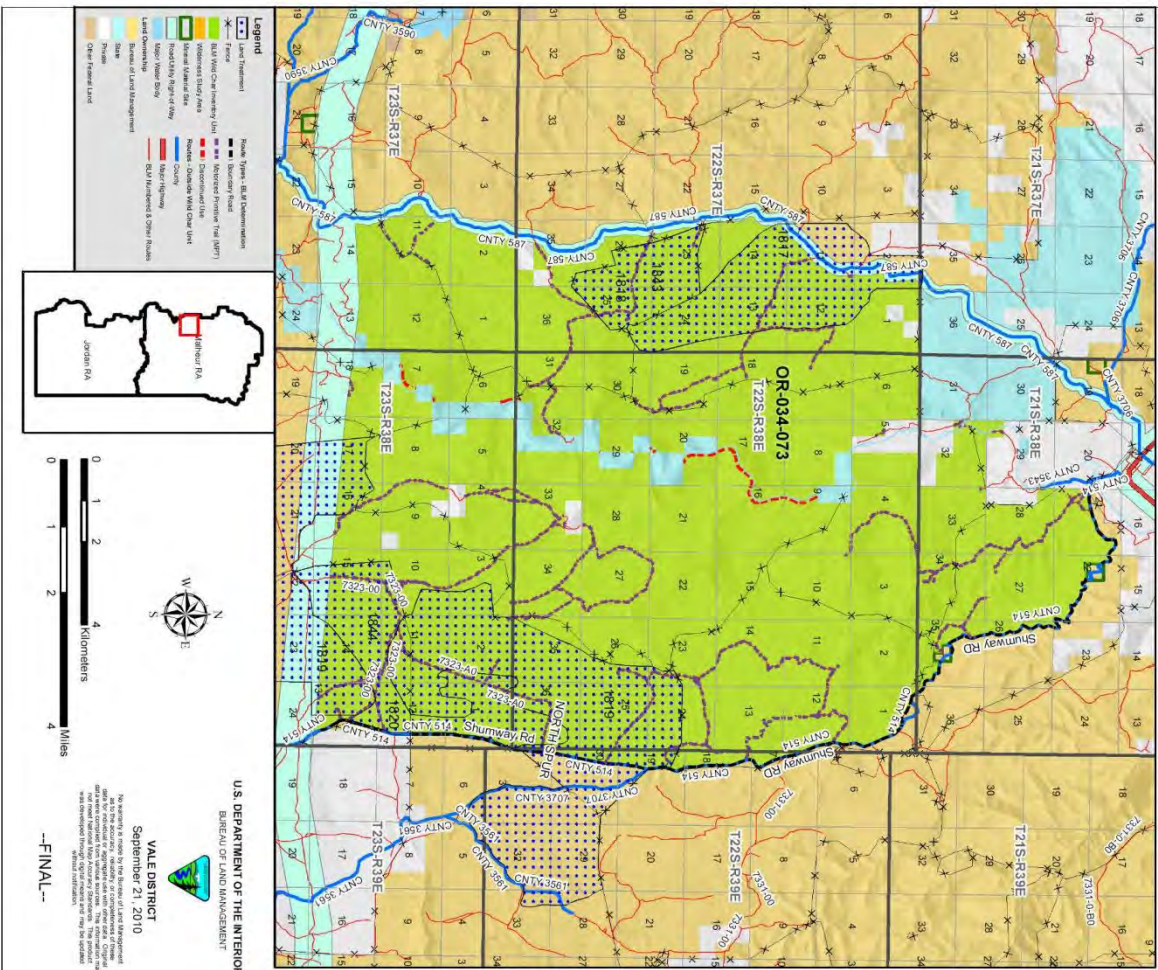


VALE DISTRICT
September 21, 2010

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--FINAL--

Wilderness Characteristics - Land Treatments
Slaughter Gulch - OR-034-073 - Map 2 of 2



Wilderness Characteristics - Land Treatments
Slaughter Gulch - OR-034-073 - Map 2 of 2

OBJECTID*	PROJ_NAME	PROJ_TYPE	SEED_GROUP	DATE_COMPLETED
438	"GREEN EV" "g" SDG"	Drill Seeding	Non-native Grass	1967
1808	AGENCY RIDGE SEEDING	Plow/Disc	Not Applicable	1965
1834	AGENCY RIDGE SEEDING	Drill Seeding	Unknown	1965
2049	ALLIALL PASTURE	Drill Seeding	Unknown	1973
2161	ALLOTMENT 2 BRUSH BEATING	Brushbeat	Not Applicable	2003
2162	ALLOTMENT 2 BRUSH BEATING	Drill Seeding	Unknown	2003

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.