

Wilderness Inventory Unit Index of Documents
Star Mountain OR-034-062, 14 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: 2010 Unit Number/Name: OR-034-062—Star Mountain

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

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

Yes 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) 1978-1980 – BLM Wilderness Inventory Unit 3-44 Star Mountain of OR-03-03-17 (unpublished BLM documents in case files)
- () April 1979 – *Wilderness -- Proposed Initial Inventory – Roadless Areas and Islands Which Clearly Do Not have Wilderness Characteristics, Oregon and Washington*

Wilderness Decision Documents

- (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 Unit 3-44 Star Mountain of OR-03-03-17

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
3-44 Star Mountain of OR-03-03-17	14,360	Y	N	N	Y
TOTAL	14,360				

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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-034-062 – Star Mountain**

Note: In February, 2004, the Vale District received from Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA) its evaluation of wilderness characteristics for what ONDA names its 17,949 acre “Star Mountain Proposed WSA”. 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.

Unit OR-034-062 has nearly identical boundaries as ONDA’s proposal. For BLM unit OR-034-062, differences between BLM and ONDA regarding inventory unit boundary features are that, unlike ONDA’s proposal, BLM concludes that a route traversing public land in section 26, T. 25S., R. 39E. (ONDA’s “StM5” road) is a motorized primitive trail (MPT) within the BLM inventory unit, and not a road. Also, for reference, for another identified route (034-RT20) BLM has a Photo Point Map/Log and associated photos which confirm that the route is a MPT.

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 boundaries of the 18,046 acre unit are nearly the same public lands as in the BLM inventory unit identified in the late 1970’s. The approximate 3,700-acre variance of BLM-determined acreage of the late 1970’s and the current OR-034-062 inventory unit is partially due to added acreage for OR-034-062 in its northwest sector (that is, beyond the MPT 034-RT20), and apparently also partially due to an acreage miscalculation in the late 1970’s. While not specifically known why, the approximate 100 acres variance in between ONDA’s proposed WSA and BLM’s OR-034-062 may be due to differed means of measuring map acreage.

Boundaries of the unit are a combination of private lands and various road segments located on the four sides of the unit. The roads are County roads 3644 and 513, and BLM road 7318-00. Three 40-acre inholdings are also features of the unit’s boundary. Boundary roads are mechanically maintained as needed to provide for relatively regular and continuous use.

2. Is the unit in a natural condition?

Yes X No N/A

Description: The elevation range within the unit is between approximately 3,380 and 6,037 feet, including the summit of Star Mountain and the southeast and southwest ridgelines that fall away from it. The elevation change from the south boundary to the mountaintop is about 1,700 feet. Eleven hilltops and four drainages are located on the ridges. Crowley and Little Crowley creeks pass through the unit. Some juniper grows on the slopes of the mountain and some willow and aspen grow in the draws. Sagebrush, bunchgrass and non-native grasses are the dominate species found on the hillsides.

Refer to the associated Map 1 and Map 2 of this inventory unit for human imprints. They include 8.3 miles of 9 MPTs, 16.9 miles of rangeland fence, 3 developed springs and a 1.2 mile buried pipeline with 3 troughs associated with the developed spring in section 29. There remains no visual contrast of 3 apparently abandoned – if ever present -- vehicular routes within the unit. There presently are no unnatural visual contrasts to the average visitor from 2003 aerial seedings applied following a wildfire which affected portions of the unit. Due to the type of developments, their locations and wide distribution within the unit, the inventory unit appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of humans substantially unnoticeable to the average visitor.

3. Does the unit have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes _____ No X N/A _____

Description: The southwest slope of Star Mountain is sparsely covered with juniper trees. The remainder of the unit has little vegetative screening. Since the late 1970's BLM wilderness characteristics inventory, there have been wildfires, including one in August 2006, which affected the areas throughout the inventory unit. The fires result in a lesser ability for the current vegetation to provide screening than when BLM conducted its late 1970's inventory because recovering woody vegetation of 2001 and 2006 burned wildfire terrain – which the 2006 fire, alone, affected over approximately 90% of the inventory unit -- is of lesser density and lesser height than in the late 1970's.

Crowley Creek is the only significant drainage providing topographic screening; approximately two miles of it, near the southwest boundary, dissects the unit. Little Crowley and the other drainages consist of open, exposed, more rounded slopes. Many of the slopes of the predominately northwest-southeast oriented Star Mountain are open, predominately gently rolling and exposed to full view from within the unit. The mountain diagonally dissects the unit's narrow width (1.75 miles) associated with sections 19 and 20, T. 25S., R.39E.. Thus, slopes of the mountain in this area are close to -- within a mile -- boundary features of the unit (and are also proximate to two of the three 40-acre private inholdings associated with the unit). The unit has an irregular shape to it, due to the disjointed orientation of abutting private lands along all sides of it. For both the length and width of the unit, it measures up to nearly 6 miles within a limited area of the unit, while much of the unit frequently ranges from less than one mile to 2-3 miles in dimensions of continuous public lands.

While the nature of the topography can provide a general sense of being isolated, topographic features and settings do not provide for outstanding opportunities for solitude for reasons described above. In summary, due to the combined effects of the unit's configuration, its limited extent of vegetation of sufficient size and/or density to provide sufficient screening, and the predominately rolling nature of the topographic properties of unit and substantial portions of the unit's higher terrain being located fairly close to boundary features of the unit, it would be difficult for an individual to find locations where the presence of other users could be avoided to an extent to provide for outstanding opportunities for solitude. Thus, the unit does not possess outstanding opportunities for solitude. This conclusion is the same as BLM's November 1980 final finding for this area (although effects of wildfire to vegetative screening were a factor in 1980).

In its report for its Star Mountain Proposed WSA, ONDA reiterates BLM's progression of wilderness characteristics findings for the agency's 3-44 unit of the late 1970's/1980, including that BLM's re-evaluation of this wilderness characteristics (WC) element between the agency's March 1980 proposed finding (the unit possesses outstanding opportunities for solitude) and the agency's November 1980 final finding (the unit does not possess outstanding opportunities for solitude). ONDA, stating that conditions have basically not changed in the unit since March 1980, opines that BLM's March 1980 proposed finding should have been BLM's final finding in November 1980 for reasons which BLM states in its March 1980 inventory of the unit. ONDA concludes that due to no changes within the area since March 1980, the area possesses outstanding opportunities for solitude. ONDA further states the "proposed WSA is a relatively large area and access is limited, outstanding opportunities for solitude are also available simply because there will not be many people there." Conjecture of future visitation is not an element for determining outstanding opportunities for solitude. For the current OR-034-062 unit, the BLM has not determined any reasoned conclusions for changing its findings from the agency's November 1980 final finding, for reasons provided herein.

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

Yes _____ No X N/A _____

Description: As was identified by BLM in its November 1980 final finding, the area continues to provide opportunities for hiking, backpacking, hunting of common game species (primarily deer, elk, pronghorn, and Chukar), horseback riding, photography and sightseeing. As stated in November 1980, these activities are not outstanding because there is only a moderate diversity of terrain and vegetation, the slopes are open and exposed to view, there are few secluded locations, and wildlife populations are only moderate (at best and further hampered presently due to the present early stages of vegetation recovery following recent wildfire). Additionally, the unit does not possess any unique or special features which would draw the recreating public to it for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation experience. Individually, collectively or in combinations the activities do not provide outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. This is the same finding -- and for much the same reasons -- as drawn in BLM's final finding of the area in November, 1980.

In its report for its Star Mountain Proposed WSA, ONDA reiterates BLM’s progression of wilderness characteristics findings for the agency’s 3-44 unit of the late 1970’s/1980, including that BLM’s re-evaluation of this criteria between the agency’s March 1980 proposed finding (the unit possesses outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation) and the agency’s November 1980 final finding (the unit does not possess outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation). ONDA, stating that conditions have basically not changed in the unit since the late 1970’s, opines that BLM’s March 1980 proposed finding should have also been BLM’s final finding in November 1980 for reasons BLM states in its March 1980 inventory of the unit. The agency’s change between March and November 1980 was a result of BLM recognizing that the topography and vegetation are less diverse than originally identified, resulting in a determination that the opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation are not outstanding. For the current OR-034-062 unit, the BLM has not determined any reasoned conclusions for changing its findings from the agency’s November 1980 final finding, for reasons as described in the above paragraph.

5. Does the unit have supplemental values?

Yes X No N/A

Description: BLM has documented a site of *Collomia renacta*, Barren Valley Mountain Trumpet, a BLM special status plant species.

ONDA states its proposed Star Mountain proposed WSA “may provide habitat for Mojave Black-collared Lizard, Desert Horned Lizard, Ground Snake, Ferruginous Hawk, Pygmy Rabbit, and White-tailed Antelope Squirrel” which ONDA’s February 2004 submission to the Vale District declares are listed as “sensitive species” in Oregon”. As of 2009, the Ground Snake and White-tailed Antelope Squirrel were not considered sensitive by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, BLM, or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. BLM acknowledges that habitat requirements may exist for Mojave Black-collared Lizard, Desert Horned Lizard, Ground Snake, Ferruginous Hawk, Pygmy Rabbit, and White-tailed Antelope Squirrel; however, neither ONDA nor any other entity has provided BLM official documentation confirming the presence of these species within this inventory unit.

ONDA notes that in 1980 BLM stated “geological and ecological features that are of scientific, educational, and scenic value” are present within the 3-44 unit. Intact ecological natural properties are found within the unit, even following the wildfires noted above. While the quality of scenery within the unit is variable, with some locations perhaps of higher quality than others, the BLM’s 2002 Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan has the inventory unit within a designated visual resource management (VRM) Class IV area. The management objective for VRM Class IV is to provide for management activities that require major modification of the landscape. These management activities may dominate the view and become the focus of viewer attention. However, every effort should be made to minimize the impact of these projects by carefully locating activities, minimizing disturbance, and designing the projects to conform to the characteristic landscape.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Name and Number: OR-034-062 — Star Mountain

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: Robert Alward
Robert Alward, Wilderness Planner, contractor

Team Members:

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

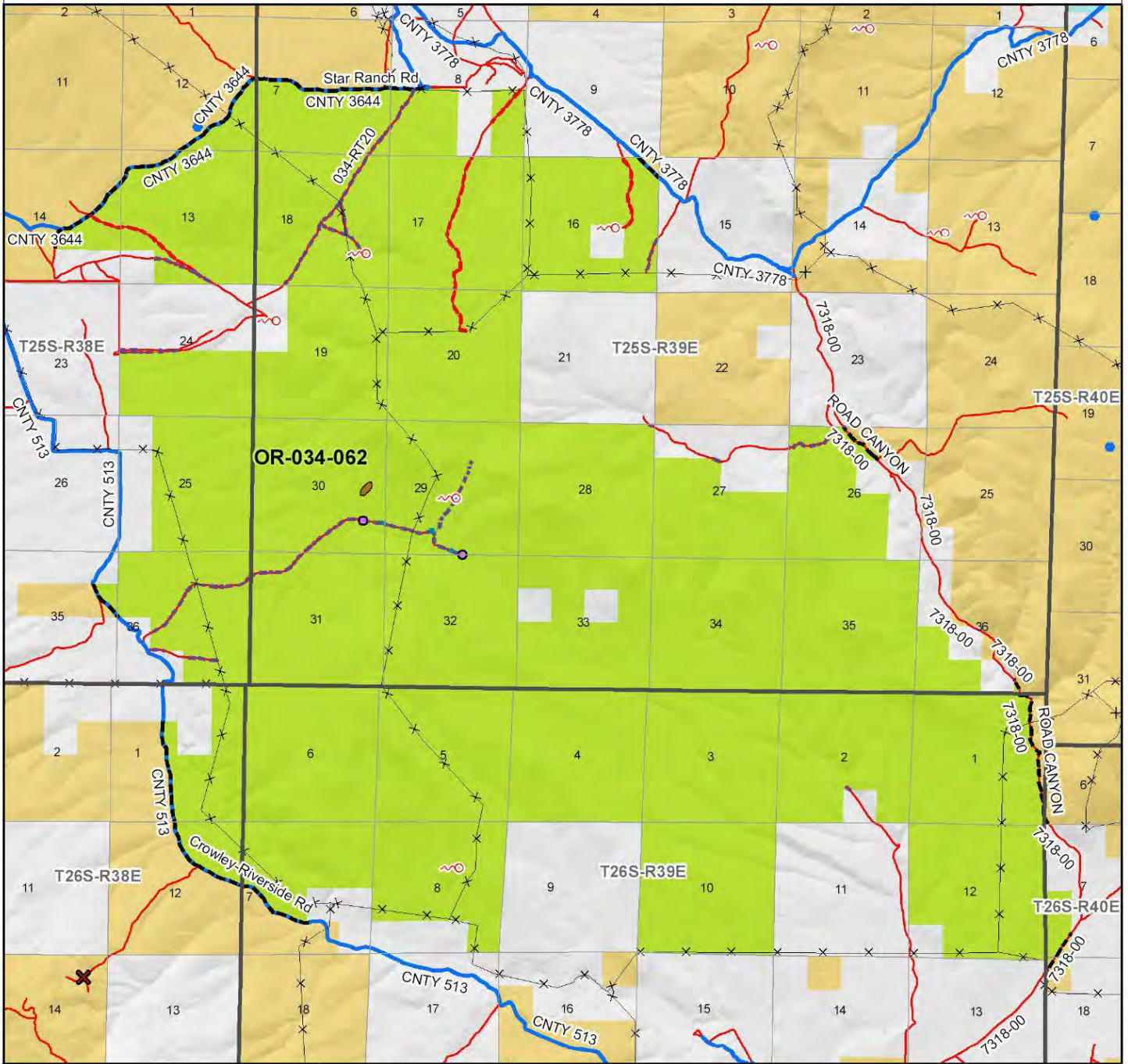
Approved by:

Pat Ryan 12/13/10
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.

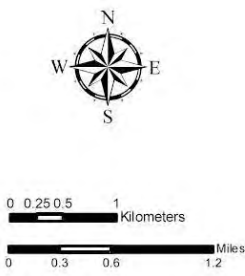
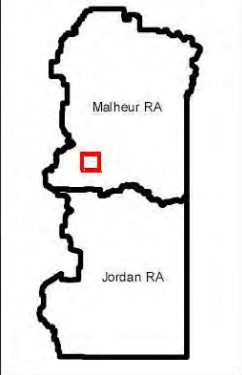
Wilderness Characteristics - Overview

Star Mountain - OR-034-062 - Map 1 of 2



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 |
|---|--|



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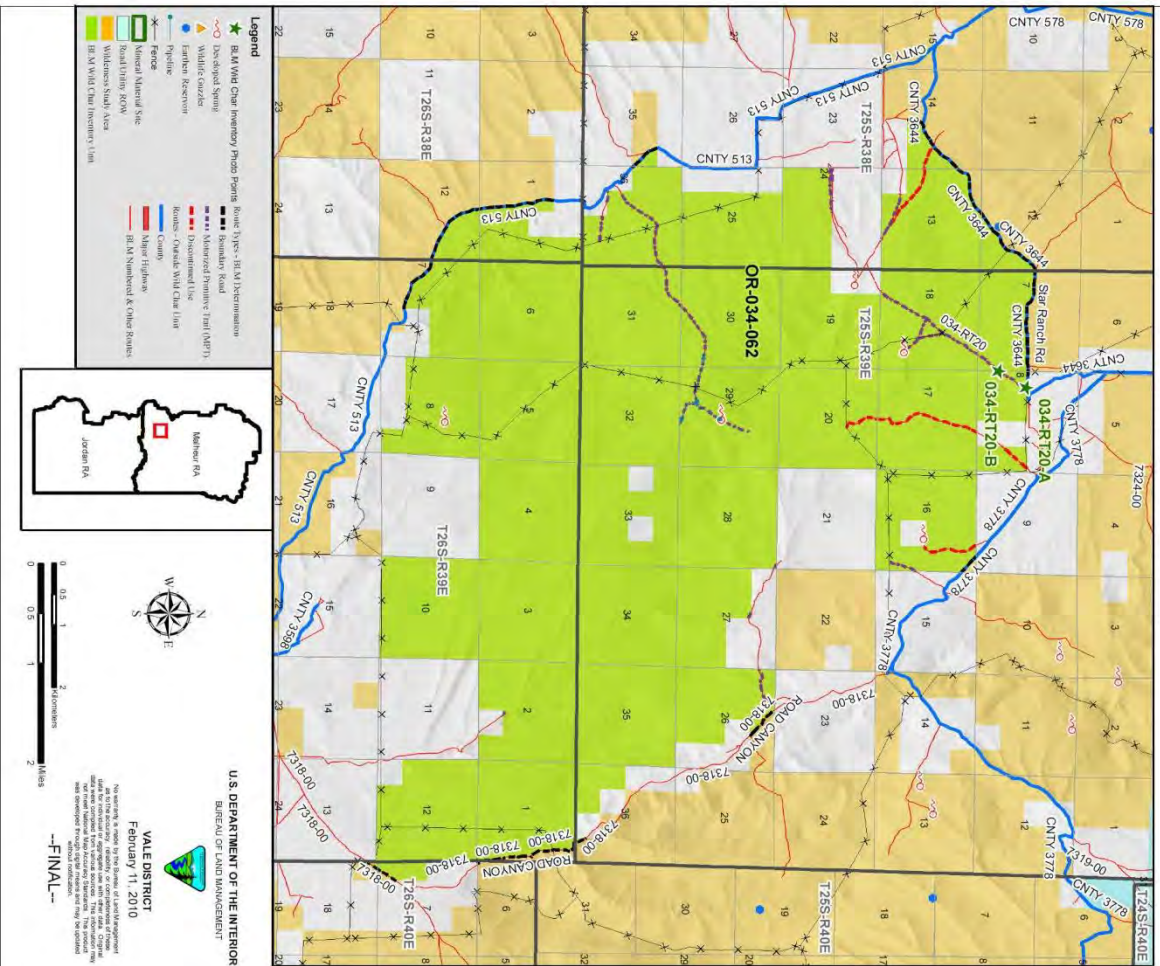


VALE DISTRICT
February 11, 2010

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--FINAL--

**Wilderness Characteristics - BLM Photo Points
Star Mountain - OR-034-062**



**Wilderness Characteristics - BLM Photo Points
Star Mountain - OR-034-062**

PHOTO_LOCATION*	DIRECTION	PHOTO_TYPE	PHOTO_DATE	COMMENTS
034-RT20-A	S	Route	20080826	Start of route, no sign of maintenance
034-RT20-A	N	Route	20080826	Start of route, no sign of maintenance
034-RT20-B	S	Route	20080826	Too rough to drive, no sign of maintenance
034-RT20-B	N	Route	20080826	Too rough to drive, no sign of maintenance

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.

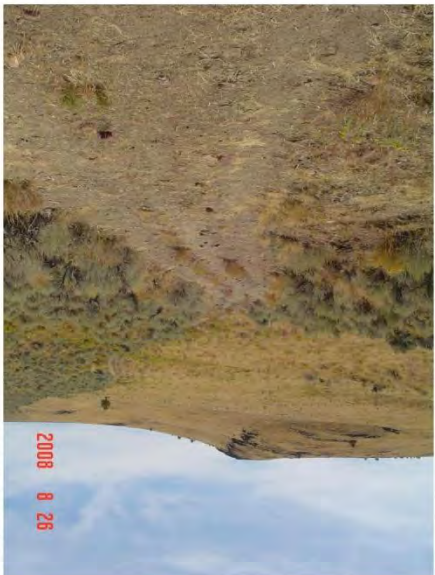


034-RT20-A-N.JPG



034-RT20-B-S.JPG

OR-034-062 Star Mountain Page 1



034-RT20-A-S.JPG



034-RT20-B-N.JPG