

Year: 2018

Inventory Unit Number/Name: OR-026-084F/Basque Hills
Northwest Addition

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?

No _____ Yes X (if more than one unit is within the area, list the names/numbers of those units):

a) **Inventory Source:** Wilderness Inventory – Final Intensive Inventory Decisions; USDI BLM - Oregon and Washington, November 1980.

b) **Inventory Unit Name(s)/Number(s):** 2-84A/ Basque Hills

c) **Map Name(s)/Number(s):** Intensive Wilderness Inventory - Final Decisions; USDI BLM - Oregon, November 1980.

d) **BLM District(s)/Field Office(s):** Lakeview District, Lakeview 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):

Ownership	Size (historic acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
2-84A	139,720	Y	Y	N	Y
OR-026-084F*	370	Y	Y	N	N

* The inventory of this unit was updated in 2009. However, due to a State Office-sponsored Wilderness Inventory Consistency Evaluation and subsequent guidance, the 2009 inventory analysis and findings are being replaced by this current 2018 inventory review. Documentation of the 2009 inventory can be found in the wilderness inventory project record.

Summarize any known primary reasons for prior inventory findings listed in this table:

Historic Unit 2-84A was described as a plateau with scattered foothills and areas of rim rock scattered through the area. The northeastern portion of the subunit was made up of the south end of the Catlow Valley which was flat and contained several shallow lakebeds. West of the valley and throughout the central portion of the subunit (north to south), rim rock areas marked the edges of flat-topped plateaus. Several major rims were scattered throughout this area including Fish Fin Rim. The western portion of the subunit was flat to gently rolling with a few scattered areas of rim rock. The vegetation included sagebrush, rabbitbrush, and grasses, with some salt desert shrubs in the northeast.

The subunit contained approximately 29 miles of fence, 54 miles of vehicle “ways” (these figures included eight miles of heavily graded fenceline), 13 reservoirs, three wells, two guzzlers, a one-half mile ditch and approximately 1,300 acres of the Hawk Valley Seeding. These developments were well dispersed throughout the area, and, with the exception of the graded fenceline and the seeding, were not substantially noticeable imprints of man. The subunit appeared to be in a generally natural condition.

Because of its size, this subunit offered outstanding opportunities for achieving a sense of solitude. The rolling hills and buttes in the center of the area offered the best opportunities, but the broad distances between these features and the lack of vegetative screening would limit opportunities for solitude if this central portion were considered by itself. The remainder of the subunit, with its basically flat terrain and low vegetation offered limited opportunities for solitude. However, because this subunit was so large it is not possible to conclude that a visitor to this area would not have outstanding opportunities for solitude.

The subunit provided opportunities for hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, viewing wildlife, viewing wild horses, and hunting. However, the opportunities for these activities were not outstanding. With the exception of Fish Fin Rim, this subunit had no unique features or attractions which added to the recreational value of the subunit.

Supplemental values included winter range for antelope and off-site views of Steens Mountain, the Pueblo Mountains, Hawk Mountain, Beaty Butte, Hart Mountain, and the Catlow Valley.

The final decision dropped the 1,300 acre seeding in Hawk Valley from the unit boundary to eliminate this unnatural feature.

FORM 2

**DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY
CONDITIONS**

Unit Number/Name: OR-026-084F/Basque Hills Northwest Addition

(1) Is the unit of sufficient size? Yes X No _____

In 2005, the BLM received a citizen proposal from the Oregon Natural Desert Association (ONDA) for the 82,532-acre Spaulding Addition 2 proposed Wilderness Study Area (WSA). ONDA included in their information a narrative report, maps, photos, photo and route logs, and GIS data. All of these materials were considered during the BLM's wilderness inventory update for this area. The photos submitted by ONDA were taken in 2004. They identified this large area as having no interior routes, which meet the BLM wilderness inventory definition of a road (see Map, p. 216 of ONDA 2005). Additional photos were taken in the area in 2007 and provided to the BLM.

Between 2007 and 2016, BLM staff conducted field inventory in the area as part of a process to update its road and wilderness inventories and to gather additional information to supplement ONDA's wilderness information. This fieldwork included photo documentation of the boundary and interior routes and a re-evaluation of wilderness characteristics for this area. Using both ONDA and BLM photos, field logs, and staff field knowledge, the BLM completed route analysis within the area in 2017.

The BLM determined that several of the routes ONDA identified as "ways" are boundary roads. The Spaulding Addition 2 proposed WSA is not one large roadless unit, but is comprised of several smaller inventory units, which must be evaluated individually.

The BLM determined that the inventory unit is bounded by BLM Road 6176-00 to the west; private lands to the north; and is contiguous with the Basque Hills WSA to the east as BLM interim numbered route 61-U0 no longer meets the wilderness definition of a road.

Thus, based on these boundary and road determinations, the BLM found the Basque Hills Northwest Addition does not meet the minimum size criteria at approximately 370 acres of BLM-administered lands. However, it does meet one of the exceptions to the size criteria; namely, that it is contiguous with BLM's 137,220-acre Basque Hills WSA to the east.

Additional background on the process that the BLM followed during this evaluation is contained in the document, *Wilderness Inventory Maintenance Process for the Lakeview Resource Area, BLM* and in the *Route Analysis Forms*. Both documents can be found in the wilderness inventory file.

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS:

The unit is located approximately 36 miles northeast of Adel, Oregon. The unit is approximately 2 miles long by 0.5 miles wide. The unit has relatively flat terrain sloping to the east near Fish Fin Rim. Vegetation consists of sagebrush, rabbit brush, and native grasses.

(2) Is the unit in a natural condition? Yes No N/A

In 1980, the much larger historic Unit 2-84A (which became Basque Hills WSA) contained approximately 29 miles of fence, 54 miles of vehicle “ways” (these figures included eight miles of heavily graded fenceline), 13 reservoirs, three wells, two guzzlers, and one-half mile ditch. These developments were well dispersed throughout the area, and, with the exception of the graded fenceline, were not substantially noticeable imprints of man. The subunit appeared to be in a generally natural condition.

ONDA’s 2005 inventory stated that their Spaulding Addition 2 proposed WSA appeared in a natural condition, primarily affected by the forces of nature. Overall, ONDA concluded that because their proposed unit is part of a large contiguous unit, manmade features do not have cumulative impact on the area. However, as noted above, the BLM found that this proposed WSA is not one large roadless unit, but is comprised of several smaller inventory units, within which the natural character must be evaluated individually.

The unit currently contains the following man-made developments/ disturbances: 12 acres of chemical treatments; and 1 rehabbed mineral pit.

Presently, these developments are weathered and grown over with herbaceous grasses, sagebrush, and rabbit brush. As a result, developments now fade into the background of the unit and are largely only noticeable at a close distance (1/4th mile or less) and are thus substantially unnoticeable from further distances. Furthermore, these disturbances are located near the perimeter of the unit and, as such, have a small area of influence.

Based on a review of all the available information including photos, staff knowledge, and field review, the BLM concluded, based on its own merits, that the Basque Hills Northwest Addition appears in a natural condition where the imprint of man are substantially unnoticeable. Furthermore, since the unit is now contiguous with the Basque Hills WSA, the Basque Hills Northwest Addition must be analyzed in the context of these now shared wilderness values. After considering wilderness values offered by both units, the BLM determined that the Basque Hills Northwest Addition and the WSA contribute mutually additive effects to the natural condition of both units as a whole. Thus, the area was found to be in a natural condition primarily affected by the forces of nature.

(3) Does the unit (or the remainder of the unit if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) **have outstanding opportunities for solitude?** Yes No N/A

In 1980, the much larger historic Unit 2-84A (which became Basque Hills WSA) was found to possess outstanding opportunities for solitude due to topographic screening from rolling hills and buttes in the center of the area, as well as, the large scale (distance and size) of the unit.

In 2005, ONDA's inventory identified the larger Spaulding Addition 2 proposed WSA as having outstanding opportunities for solitude based on sheer size as their proposal is contiguous with other inventory units and therefore no longer stands alone. ONDA noted the diverse topography of the area would easily allow visitors to avoid the sights and sounds of others (p. 213 of ONDA 2005). However, the BLM did not find this proposal to be one large roadless area, but is comprised of a number of smaller inventory units that must be evaluated individually.

The BLM determined that there are several outstanding opportunities for solitude across the area due to topographic screening. Topographically, the unit is dominated by the eastern foothills and drainages of Beaty's Butte. The unit ranges in elevation from 5,200 feet on the northern flats to over 7,000 feet on the central peaks. Overall, the unit is very topographically diverse with little flat ground. The unit is comprised of numerous points, peaks, buttes, rims, ravines, and drainages. Due to the above-described compartmentalized topography, one would easily be able to avoid the sights and sounds of others.

The BLM determined that the Basque Hills Northwest Addition on its own merit, provides limited opportunities for solitude and ultimately lacks adequate size or screening to provide outstanding opportunities. However, opportunities would be enhanced by the additive effect of outstanding opportunities for solitude present within the 137,220-acre Basque Hills WSA to the east and must be analyzed in the context of these now shared wilderness values.

Thus, for the reasons specified above and based on a review of all the available information including (BLM and citizen provided) photos, staff knowledge, and field review, the BLM concluded that one would be able to avoid the sights and sounds of others within the Basque Hills Northwest Addition due to the contiguous values of the Basque Hills WSA.

(4) Does the unit (or the remainder of the unit if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) **have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?** Yes No N/A

In 1980, the much larger historic Unit 2-84A (which became Basque Hills WSA) was found to possess opportunities for hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, viewing

wildlife, viewing wild horses, and hunting. However, the opportunities for these activities (with exception of Fish Fin Rim) were found to be less than outstanding.

In 2005, ONDA's inventory identified the larger Spaulding Addition 2 proposed WSA as having outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation based on sheer size as their proposal is contiguous with other inventory units and therefore no longer stands alone. ONDA noted the unit offered outstanding opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, photography, sightseeing, wildlife viewing, hunting, and camping (ONDA 2005; p. 213). However, the BLM did not find this proposal to be one large roadless area, but is comprised of a number of smaller inventory units that must be evaluated individually.

The BLM determined that the Basque Hills Northwest Addition on its own merit, provides limited opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and ultimately lacks adequate size and unique features to provide outstanding opportunities. Furthermore, even in the context of shared recreation values with the contiguous Basque Hills WSA to the east, combined values would not substantially alter opportunities to the point of being outstanding.

Thus, for the reasons specified above and based on a review of all the available information including (BLM and citizen provided) photos, staff knowledge, and field review, the BLM concluded that Basque Hills Northwest Addition lacks outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

(5) Does the unit have supplemental values? Yes No N/A

The BLM found the unit to possess archaeological and geological values as well as the presence of mule deer, golden eagle, and sage-grouse habitat.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Number and Name: OR-026-084F/Basque Hills Northwest Addition

Summary Results of Analysis:

- 1. Does the area meet 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: *(items 1, 2 and 3 must be checked "yes")*.
- The area does not have wilderness character: *(any of items 1, 2 and 3 are checked "no")*.

Prepared by (Member Names and Titles):


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 6/4/18
Date


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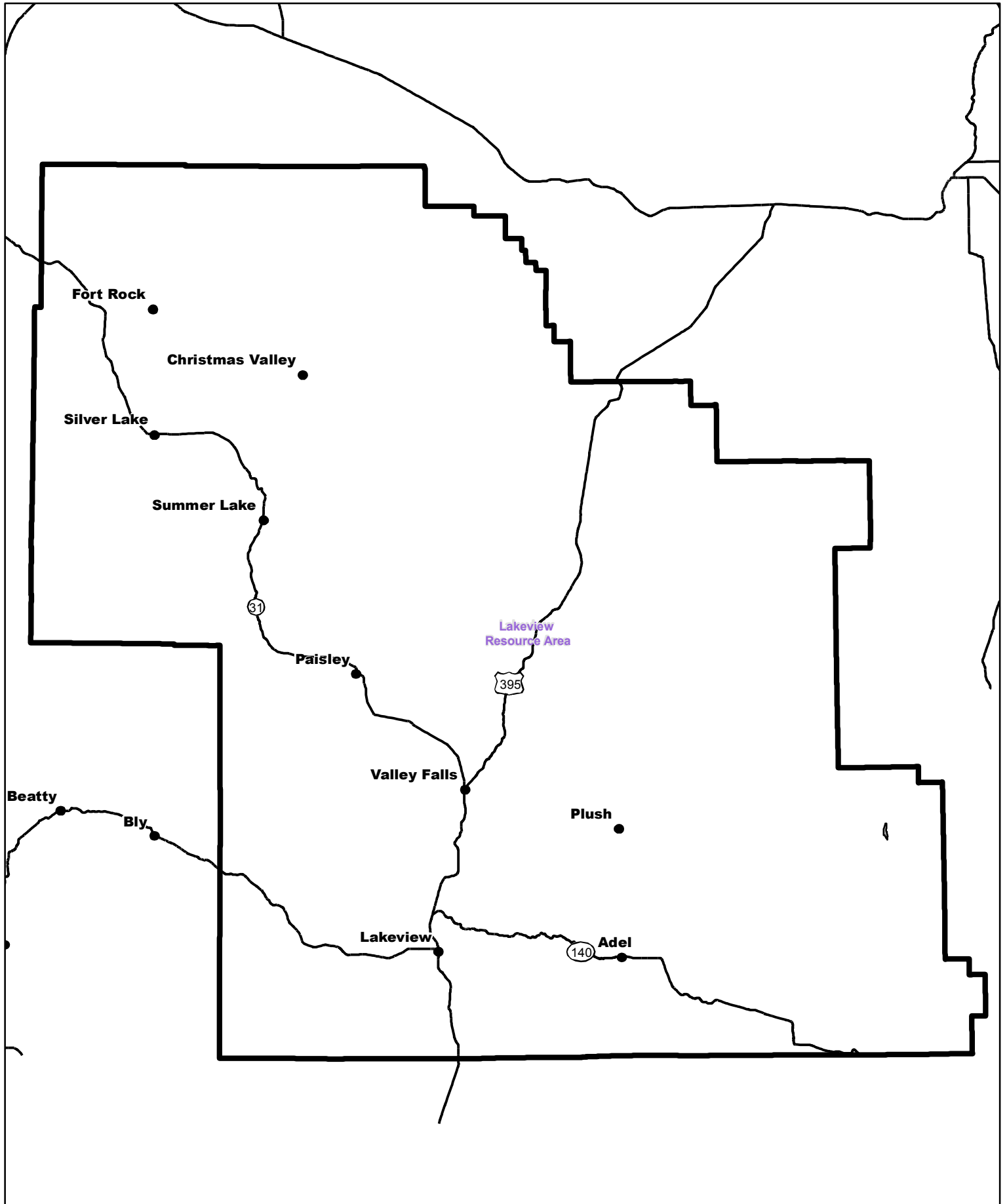
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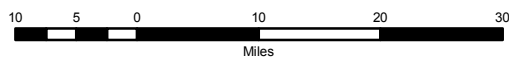

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Date

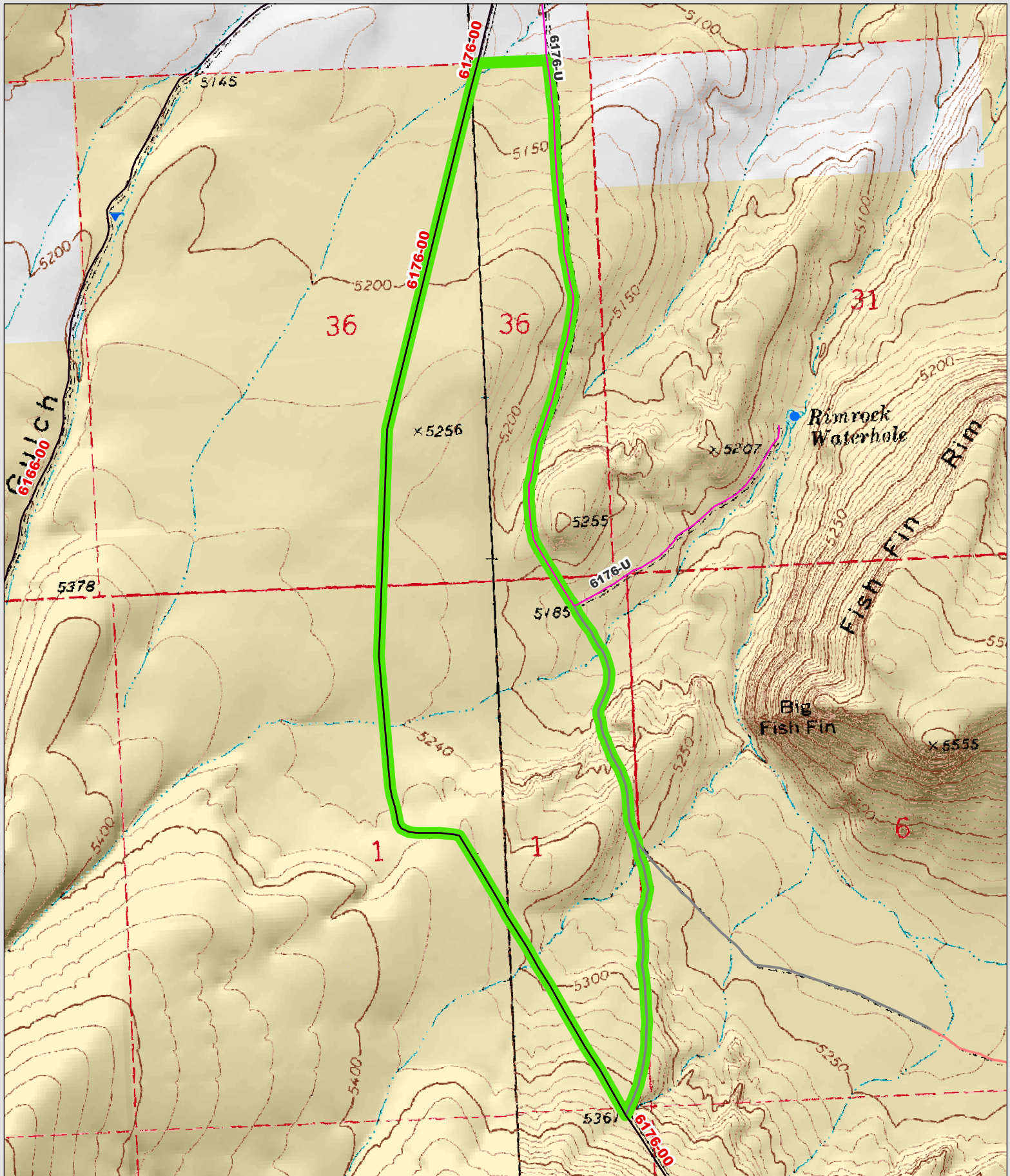
This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under 43 CFR parts either 4 or 1610.5-2.



Wilderness Character Inventory Unit



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



Wilderness Character Inventory Unit

Ownership

- Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Forest Service
- State
- Private/Unknown

Roads/Trails

- Motorized Routes
- Highways
- Reclaiming Routes
- Interim Routes

Pipelines and Ditches

- Ditch
- Water Pipeline
- Guzzler
- Fences

Water Developments

- Dam
- Reservoir
- Spring Development
- Trough
- Water Diversion

- Water Tank
- Waterhole
- Well - Water

0.3 0.15 0 0.3 Miles

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