

Year: 2018

Inventory Unit Number/Name: OR-015-220/ Cougar 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?

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

a) Inventory Source:

- a. Wilderness – Proposed Initial Inventory: Roadless Areas and Islands Which Clearly Do Not Have Wilderness Characteristics; USDI BLM - Oregon and Washington, April 1979.
- b. 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; USDI BLM - Oregon and Washington, August 1979.
- c. Wilderness Review – Intensive Inventory: Final Decisions On 30 Selected Units in Southeast Oregon and Proposed Decisions On Other Intensively Inventoried Units; USDI BLM - Oregon and Washington, March 1980.
- d. Wilderness Inventory – Final Intensive Inventory Decisions; USDI BLM - Oregon and Washington, November 1980.

b) Inventory Unit Number(s)/ Name(s): NA

c) Map Name(s)/Number(s):

- a. Proposed Initial Inventory: Roadless Areas and Islands Which Do Not Have Wilderness Characteristics; USDI BLM - Oregon, April 1979.
- b. Final Decision - Initial Wilderness Inventory: Public Lands and Islands Which Do Not Have Wilderness Characteristics and Units To Be Intensively Inventoried; USDI BLM - Oregon, August 1979.
- c. Intensive Wilderness Inventory: Final Decisions For 30 Selected Inventory Units and Proposed Decisions For Other Intensive Inventory Units; USDI BLM - Oregon, March 1980.
- d. 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):

Unit#/Name	Size (historic acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
NW Resource Area Units < 5,000 Acres*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

* The inventory of this unit was updated in 2011. However, due to a State Office-sponsored Wilderness Inventory Consistency Evaluation and subsequent guidance, the 2011 inventory analysis and findings are being replaced by this current 2018 inventory review. Documentation of the 2011 inventory can be found in the wilderness inventory project record.

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

Between 2008 to 2011 the BLM conducted field inventory of the area to update its road and wilderness inventories.

There were a total of 32 inventory units within the Northwest Resource Inventory Area. On the south, the units were bounded by a combination of private lands, Lake County Roads, and a short segment of State Highway 31. On the north, the units were bounded by a combination of private lands, Devils Garden Lava Bed WSA, and the Fremont-Winema National Forest. On the east, the units were bounded by Devils Garden Lava Bed WSA and private lands. On the west, the units were bounded primarily by the Deschutes National Forest.

All of the inventory units within this area failed to meet the minimum size criteria. Thus, wilderness characteristics including: natural condition, outstanding opportunities for solitude and/or primitive and unconfined recreation, or supplemental values were not evaluated.

FORM 2

DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY CONDITIONS

Unit Number/Name: OR-015-220/ Cougar Mountain

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

Between 2008 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 the inventory unit is bounded by BLM interim numbered roads 6129-EB to the north; 6129-EA, 6129-E0, and private lands to the south. Due to changes in boundary determinations and cutout of unnatural features (pipeline, well, corrals, and troughs), approximately 11 acres were removed from this unit.

Thus, based on these boundary and road determinations, the BLM found the Cougar Mountain inventory unit does not meet the minimum size criteria at approximately 914 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 29,680-acre Devils Garden Lava Bed WSA (OR-1-2) located to the north.

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:

This unit is located approximately 9 miles northeast of Fort Rock, Oregon. The unit is approximately 2 miles long by 1 mile wide. Topographically the unit is comprised entirely of the Cougar Mountain formation, which ranges in elevation from 4,487 – 5,154 feet. The southwest corner of the unit is comprised of a 2-mile rim (125 to 350 feet high). The unit also contains 3 drainages running to the north, southwest, and southeast (approx. 1.5 miles in total across; 50 to 275 ft. deep). Vegetatively, approximately 350 acres of the unit is covered in moderate to high-density western juniper stands, with old-growth characteristics, arranged in a central band across the unit from the northwest to the southwest. The remaining vegetation is scattered juniper, sagebrush, rabbit brush, and grass. A Wildfire burned approximately 286 acres in the western third of the unit in 1986.

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

The unit currently contains the following man-made developments/disturbances: 330 acres of seeding, 286 acres of wildfire, 67 acres chemical treatments, 16 acres of mechanical treatments (chaining), 1 mile of fence lines, 1.5 miles of motorized routes, 0.5 miles of reclaiming routes, and 2 wildlife guzzlers.

Presently, almost 4 decades after the original inventory, these developments are weathered and grown over with herbaceous grasses, sagebrush, and juniper. 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. The topography and vegetation of the area also plays a large role in screening disturbances and man-made developments. Furthermore, many of the disturbances are located near the perimeter of the unit and, as such, have a small area of influence. Areas that were seeded or allowed to revegetate naturally after fire have been invaded by rabbit brush, sagebrush, and grasses and have returned to a natural, post fire, appearing condition.

Based on a review of all the available information including photos, staff knowledge, and field review, the BLM concluded, based on its own merits, the Cougar Mountain unit appears in natural condition where the imprint of man is substantially unnoticeable. Furthermore, since the unit is now contiguous with the Devils Garden Lava Bed WSA, the Cougar Mountain unit 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 Cougar Mountain unit 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, Devils Garden Lava Bed WSA, to the south, was found to provide extremely rugged terrain that provided outstanding opportunities to experience solitude. One could readily separate oneself from others in the unit, even though they may be in close proximity.

The BLM determined that the Cougar Mountain inventory unit on its own merit, provides opportunities for solitude. Topographically the unit is comprised entirely of the Cougar Mountain formation, which ranges in elevation from 4,487 – 5,154 feet. The southwest corner of the unit is comprised of a 2-mile rim (125 to 350 feet high). The unit also contains 3 drainages running to the north, southwest, and southeast (approx. 1.5 miles in total across; 50 to 275 ft. deep). Vegetatively, western juniper stands have greatly expanded in height, width, and density. Approximately 350 acres of the unit is covered in moderate to high-density western juniper stands, with old-growth characteristics, arranged in a central band across the unit from the northwest to the southwest. Due to the above-described compartmentalized topography and vegetative conditions within the unit, one would be able to avoid the sights and sounds of others within the unit to some degree.

Additionally, these opportunities for solitude would be enhanced by the additive effect of outstanding solitude present within the 29,680-acre Devils Garden Lava Bed WSA to the north 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 Cougar Mountain inventory unit due to the contiguous values of the Devils Garden Lava Bed 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, Devils Garden Lava Bed WSA, to the south, was found to provide outstanding recreation through very rugged hiking opportunities. The area provided abundant opportunities for wildlife observation, photography, and study of geologic features.

The BLM determined that the Cougar Mountain inventory unit on its own merit, provides opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation through the combination an diversity of hiking, horseback riding, backpacking, camping, wildlife observation, exploration, scenery, photography, stargazing, trapping, and hunting are exceptional. The BLM determined that options for hiking/horseback riding to the top of Cougar Peak or along the rim in the southwest corner of the unit represent unique opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

Additionally, opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be enhanced by the additive effect of outstanding opportunities present within the 29,680-acre Devils Garden Lava Bed WSA to the north 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 outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are present within Cougar Mountain inventory unit due to the contiguous values of the Devils Garden Lava Bed WSA.

(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, elk, California bighorn sheep, golden eagle, kestrel, and sage-grouse habitat.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Number and Name: OR-015-220/ Cougar Mountain

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):

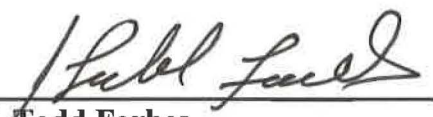

Chris Bishop: Outdoor Recreation Planner

6/4/18
Date


Jami Ludwig: Assistant Field Manager

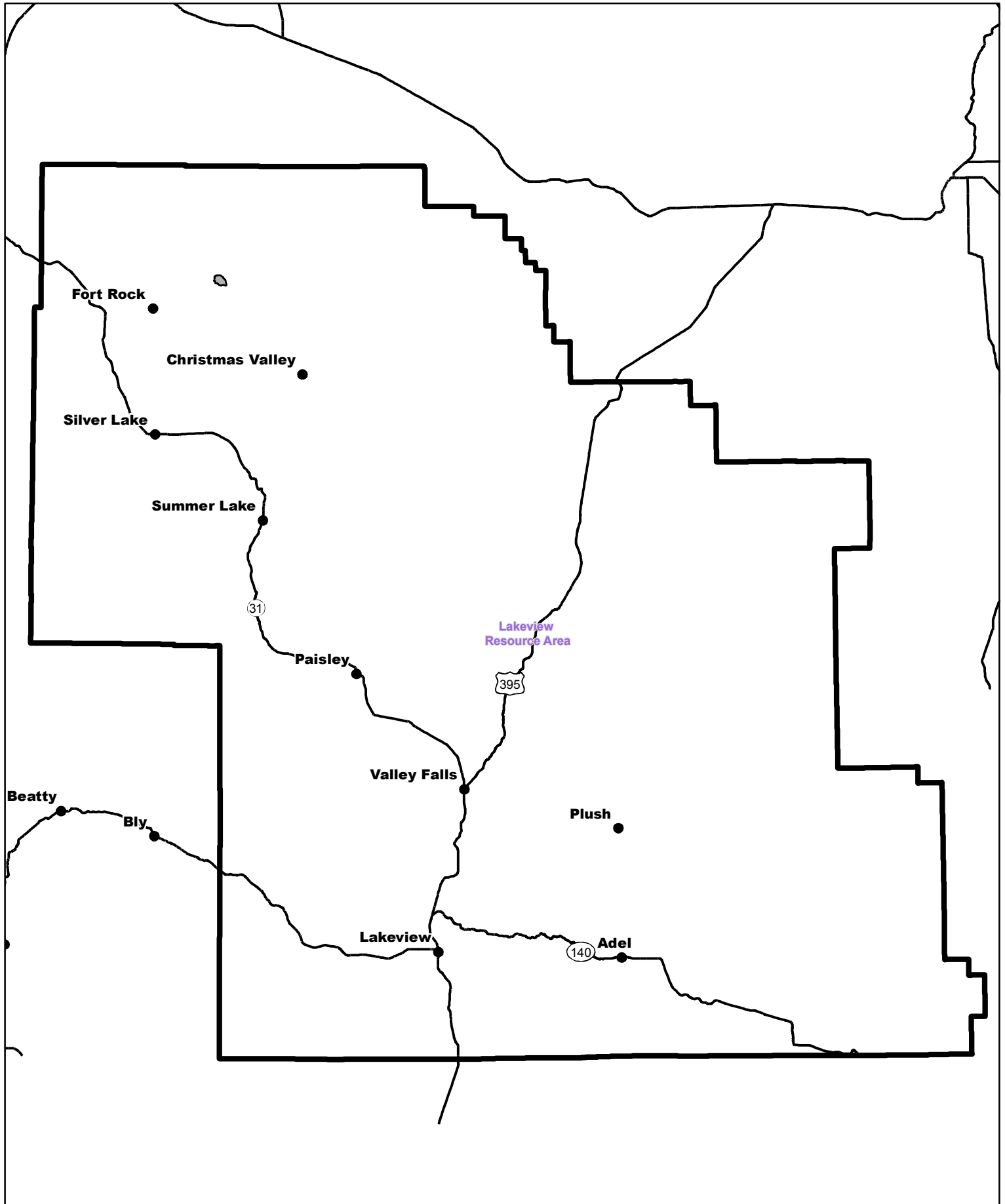
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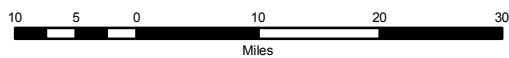

J. Todd Forbes
Field Manager


6/4/18
Date

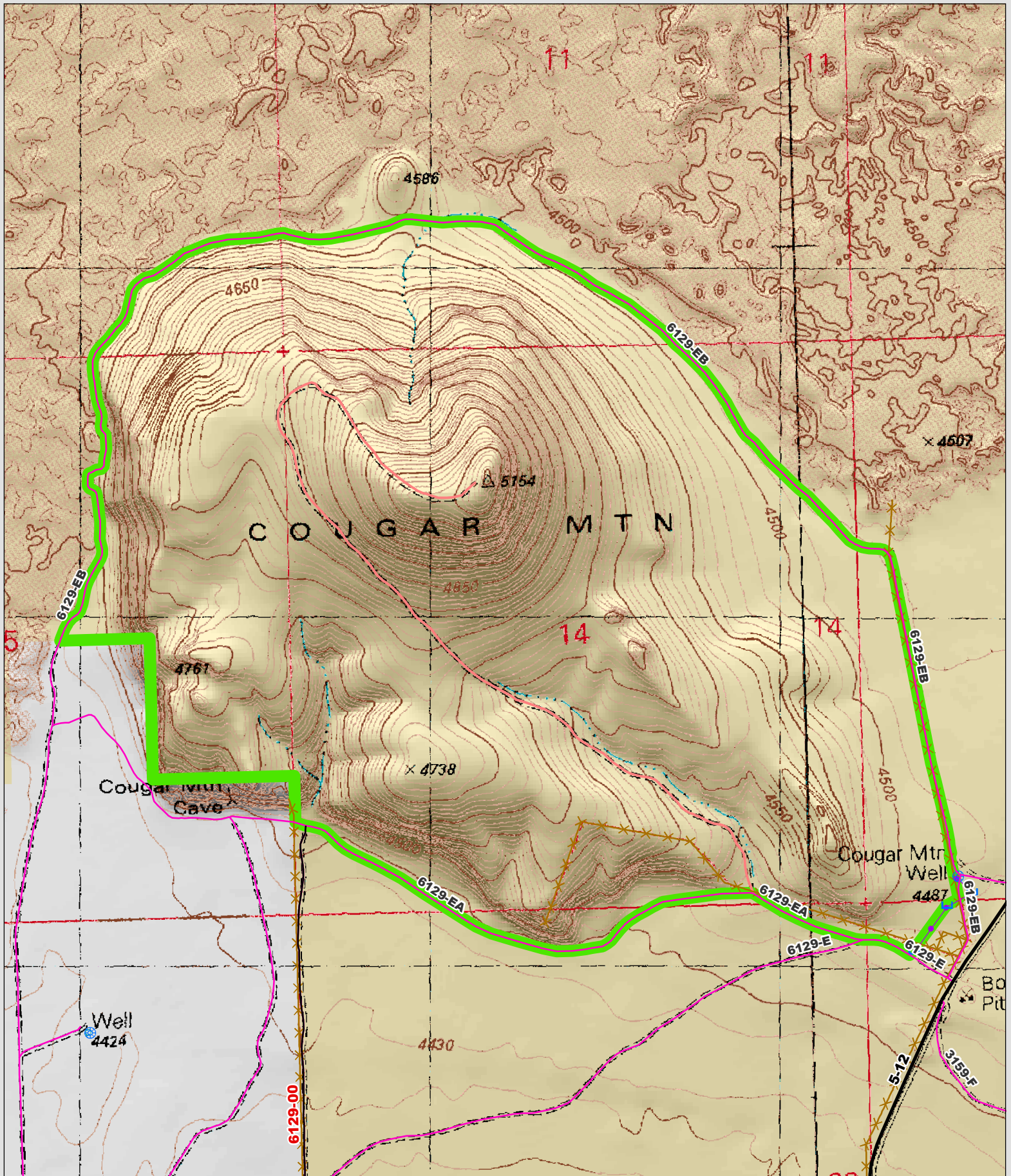
This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under 43 CFR parts either 4 or 1610.5-2.



 Wilderness Character Inventory Unit



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Wilderness Character Inventory Unit
 Ownership

- Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Forest Service
- 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

0.25 0.125 0 0.25 Miles

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