

Year: 2018

Inventory Unit Number/Name: OR-015-013/ Elk 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 X (if more than one unit is within the area, list the names/numbers of those units):

a) **Inventory Source:** BLM Wilderness Inventory files for Pacific Power and Light Company (PP&L) Transmission Line: PP&L Roadless Area Inventory Files (1977).

b) **Inventory Unit Number(s)/ Name(s):** 1-13 and PP&L# OR-010-01-3/Elk Mountain; 1-16 and PP&L# OR-010-01-13/Dragon Tail

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

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 #	Size (historic acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
1-13	52,400	Y	Y	N	Y
1-13A*	21,406	Y	N	N	N/A
1-13B*	24,801	Y	Y	N	Y
1-16	11,000	Y	N	N	N
1-16*	14,900	Y	N	N	N/A

* The inventory of this unit was updated in 2015. However, due to a State Office-sponsored Wilderness Inventory Consistency Evaluation and subsequent guidance, the 2015 inventory analysis and findings are being replaced by this current 2018

inventory review. Documentation of the 2015 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 1-13 was described as flat to gently rolling with small playas and low rims throughout the area (tallest rims 200-300 ft. high). Elk Butte, a low rounded hill, was located in the southeast corner of the unit. Vegetation consisted of desert shrubs, with junipers throughout the north half and scattered junipers along rims and hills in the south. The unit contained a few “ways” and several lakebed waterholes. The unit was found to be pristine or nearly so as evidence of man’s activities were minimal. The unit was found to have a feeling of spaciousness, with topography, size, and or shape of the area providing seemingly complete isolation. Primitive recreation present at the time included: backpacking, hiking, horseback riding, low to medium quality deer and antelope hunting, low quality scenic rating, medium quality sightseeing for historic Jacksonville-Boise Wagon Road (currently known as Emigrant Road/6121-B0) was noted as traversing the center of the unit. Overall, the unit was found to lack outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The inventory team found the unit to possess the minimum characteristics required of a wilderness study area. However, the unit was ultimately dropped from wilderness consideration when a pipeline was found to extend into the northern portion of the unit, a Military Operation Area was discovered above the unit for low flying aircraft, and it was deemed that the because of the shape and size the parcel would be most difficult to manage or control access.

Historic Unit 1-16 was described as flat to gently rolling plateau with low rims and small lake basins. Vegetation consisted of desert shrubs and scattered juniper. The unit contained a few lakebed waterholes and “ways” and was found to be pristine or nearly so as evidence of man’s activities were minimal. Medium quality deer and low quality antelope hunting were noted within the unit, along with hiking and horseback riding. Overall, the unit was found to lack both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

FORM 2

**DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY
CONDITIONS**

Unit Number/Name: OR-015-013/ Elk Mountain

(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 196,015-acre Lonesome Lakes 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. They identified this large area as having no interior routes, which met the BLM wilderness inventory definition of a road (see Map, p. 141 of ONDA 2005).

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 several of the routes ONDA identified as "ways" are boundary roads. Lonesome Lakes 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 6101-00 and private lands to the north and east; 6121-00, 6121-C0, and private lands to the west; right-of-way for County Road 5-14, BLM Road 6111-00, BLM interim numbered roads 6111-H0 and 6111-G0, and private lands to the south. A segment of BLM Road 6111-A0, used for access to private property from the south boundary of the unit, was cherry stemmed. Approximately 3 acres of concentrated areas of unnatural features were removed from the unit including a pipeline, water tank, propane tank, well, and troughs. Portions of BLM Roads 6121-B0, 6111-A0, 6101-B0 and BLM interim numbered roads 6121-BC and 6121-CB were found to no longer meet the wilderness definition of a road. Due to findings that sections of BLM Roads no longer meet the wilderness definition of a road, two original inventory units (1-13, 1-16) and a few parcels originally found to be less than 5,000 acres have been combined to form the new unit boundary. This evaluation will focus on these combined units and will hereby be referred to as the Elk Mountain inventory unit.

Thus, based on these boundary and road determinations, the BLM found the Elk Mountain inventory unit to exceed the minimum size criteria at approximately 67,955 acres of BLM-administered lands.

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 24 miles northeast of Christmas Valley, Oregon. The unit is approximately 19 miles long by 7.5 miles wide and contains two private inholdings (649-acres) in the northeast and southern portions of the unit. Topographically, the unit is very diverse. Overall, the unit ranges in elevation from

4,550 ft. to 5,238 feet. The northern half of the unit (approx. 30,000 acres) is dominated by numerous moderate buttes (100-350 ft. high), rims (50-250 ft. high), drainages (50-100 ft. deep), and small-compartmentalized valleys and lakebeds. The southern portion of the unit (approx. 7,500 acres) is dominated by the multiple peaks of Elk Butte (650 ft. high) and associated rim (400 ft. high) running four miles roughly east to west along the southern border. The southeastern portion of the unit (approx. 6,500 acres) is dominated by Black Rim and a large unnamed, horseshoe shaped, rim. Together these features run 9 miles north to south and are 150-300 ft. higher than land to the east. The southwestern area of the unit (approx. 24,000 acres) is comprised of a large plateau with small rolling hills multiple pock marked lakebed depressions (approx. 10 to 30 ft. deep). Vegetatively, approximately 24,000 acres of the unit is covered in moderate to high-density western juniper stands, with old-growth characteristics. Juniper stands include 15,000 acres in the northeast corner, 7,000 acres in the central portion of the unit, and two 1,000-acre pocket in the southwest corner. The remaining vegetation is scattered juniper, sagebrush, rabbit brush, and grass. Wildfires burned approximately 395 acres in the southeastern-most corner of the unit in 1968, 1980, and 1987.

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

The original inventories for Units 1-13 and 1-16 determined the units were relatively pristine or nearly so as evidence of man's activities were minimal. Historic developments/disturbances included a few "ways," several lakebed waterholes, and a pipeline.

In 2005, ONDA found the much larger 196,015-acre Lonesome Lakes proposed WSA to be in a natural condition, primarily affected by the forces of nature (p. 137-138). 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: 395 acres of wildfire, 338 acres of mow strips (fuel breaks), 300 acres of chemical treatments/seeding, 8 miles of fence lines, 65 miles of motorized routes, 6 miles of reclaiming routes, 2.5 miles of cat line, 5 wilderness therapy group primitive campsites, 445 square feet of mining disturbances, 21 waterholes, 1 trough, and 1 wildlife guzzler.

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/ sagebrush 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 that the unit appears in a natural condition where the imprints of man are substantially unnoticeable.

(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 X No N/A

The original inventories evaluated opportunities for solitude within each unit. Unit 1-13 was found to have a feeling of spaciousness, with topography, size, and or shape of the area providing seemingly complete isolation. Unit 1-16 was found to lack outstanding opportunities for solitude.

In 2005, ONDA's inventory identified the larger 196,015-acre Lonesome Lakes 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 that Units 1-13 and 1-16 consisted of sagebrush-covered hills, some topped by rim rock, and stands of juniper. ONDA determined that this type of topography and vegetation present within the unit would allow hikers, horseback riders, campers, and hunters to experience outstanding opportunities for solitude (p. 138 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 unit due to topographic and vegetative screening. Topographically, the unit is very diverse. Overall, the unit ranges in elevation from 4,550 ft. to 5,238 feet. The northern half of the unit (aprx. 30,000 acres) is dominated by numerous moderate buttes (100-350 ft. high), rims (50-250 ft. high), drainages (50-100 ft. deep), and small-compartmentalized valleys and lakebeds. The southern portion of the unit (aprx. 7,500 acres) is dominated by the multiple peaks of Elk Butte (650 ft. high) and associated rim (400 ft. high) running four miles roughly east to west along the southern border. The southeastern portion of the unit (aprx. 6,500 acres) is dominated by Black Rim and a large unnamed, horseshoe shaped, rim. Together these rims run 9 miles north to south and are 150-300 ft. higher than land to the east. The southwestern area of the unit (apx. 24,000 acres) is comprised of a large plateau with small rolling hills multiple pock marked lakebed depressions (aprx. 10 to 30 ft. deep). Vegetatively, western juniper stands have greatly expanded in height, width, and density. Approximately 24,000 acres of the unit is covered in moderate to high-density western juniper stands, with old-growth characteristics. Juniper stands include 15,000 acres in the northeast corner, 7,000 acres in the central portion of the unit, and two 1,000-acre pocket in the southwest corner. Due to the above-described

topographic and vegetative screening throughout the unit, one would easily be able to avoid the sights and sounds of others.

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 the Elk Mountain inventory unit possesses outstanding opportunities for solitude.

(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

The original inventories evaluated opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation within each unit. Unit 1-13 was found to offer backpacking, hiking, horseback riding, low to medium quality deer and antelope hunting, and medium quality sightseeing for historic Jacksonville-Boise Wagon Road. However, overall, the unit was found to lack outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Unit 1-16 was found to offer medium quality deer and low quality antelope hunting along with hiking and horseback riding. However, overall, the unit was found to lack both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

In 2005, ONDA's inventory identified the larger 196,015-acre Lonesome Lakes proposed WSA as having outstanding opportunities for recreation based on sheer size as their proposal is contiguous with other inventory units and therefore no longer stands alone. ONDA noted that Units 1-13 and 1-16 consisted of sagebrush-covered hills, some topped by rim rock, and stands of juniper. ONDA determined that this type of topography and vegetation present within the unit would allow hikers, horseback riders, campers, and hunters to experience outstanding opportunities to practice a variety of forms of primitive and unconfined of recreation. The report also mentioned Elk Mountain as a great hiking and horseback riding destination (p. 139 of ONDA 2005). However, the BLM did not find this proposal to be one large roadless area, but is in fact comprised of a number of smaller inventory units that must be evaluated individually.

The BLM finds the combination and diversity of hiking, horseback riding, backpacking, camping, wildlife observation, exploration, scenery, photography, stargazing, trapping, and hunting are exceptional. The BLM determined that options for exploration and route finding through the unit's diverse topography and juniper stands, while hiking/ horseback riding butte to butte in the northern half of the unit, along Black Rim, and around Elk Butte (while traversing the 19-mile length of the unit), represent unique 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 pronghorn antelope, mule deer, elk, golden eagle, and sage-grouse habitat.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Number and Name: OR-015-010/ Benjamin Lake – East Butte

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

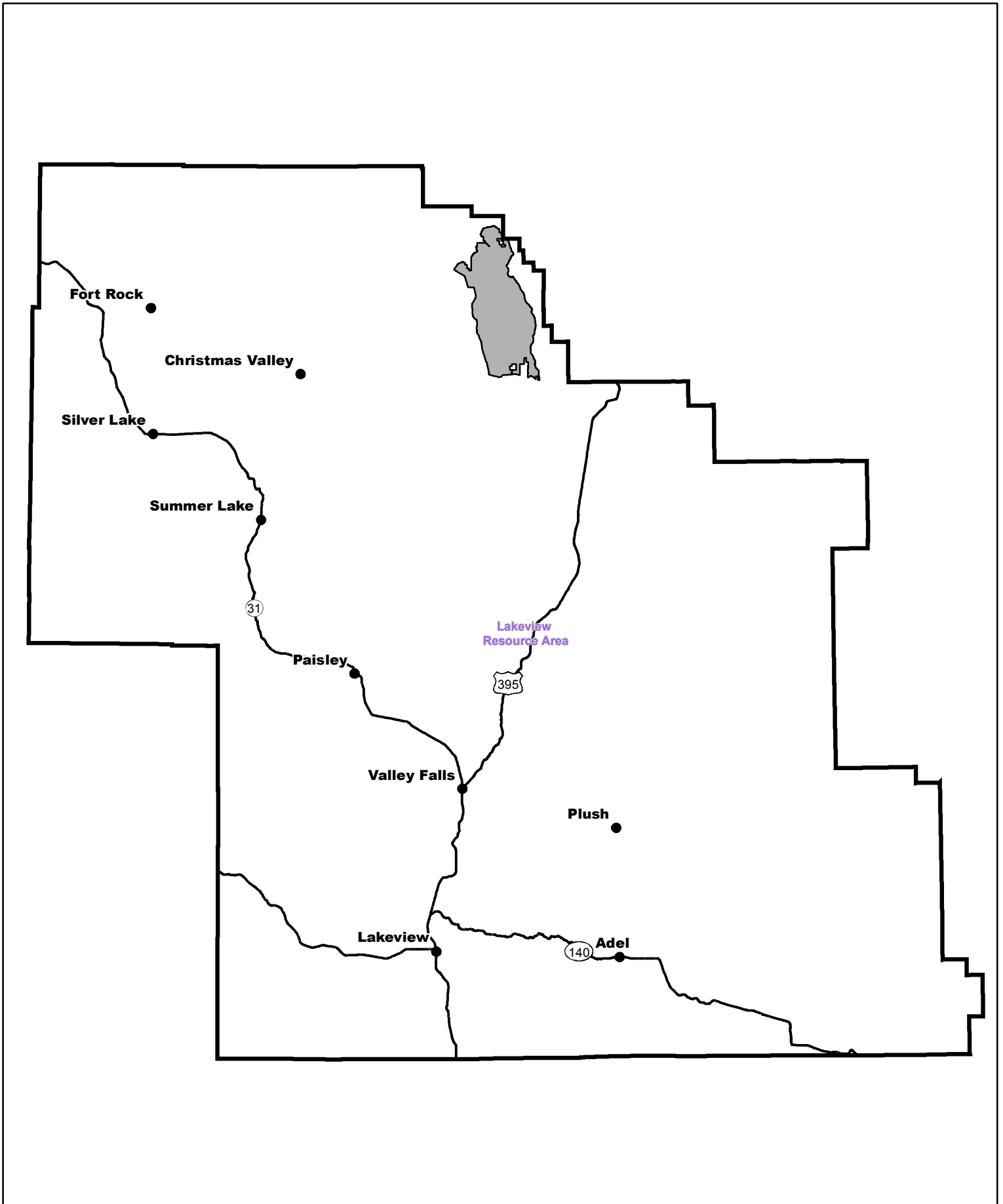
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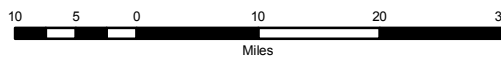

J. Todd Forbes
Field Manager


 6/4/18
Date

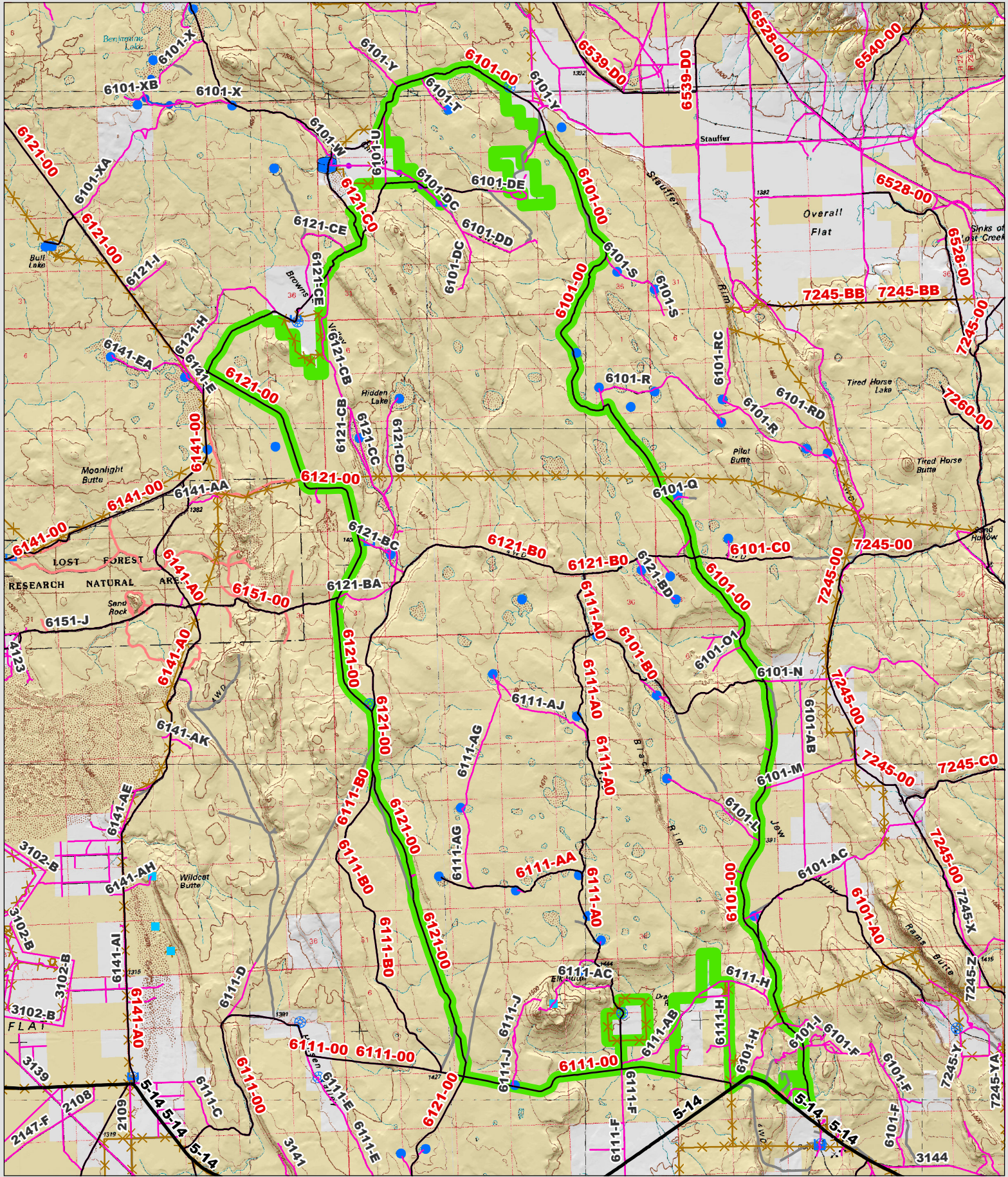
This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under 43 CFR parts either 4 or 1610.5-2.




 Wilderness Character Inventory Unit



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<p>Wilderness Character Inventory Unit</p> <p>Ownership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bureau of Land Management U.S. Forest Service State Private/Unknown 	<p>Roads/Trails</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motorized Routes Highways Reclaiming Routes Interim Routes 	<p>Pipelines and Ditches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ditch Water Pipeline Guzzler Fences 	<p>Water Developments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dam Reservoir Spring Development Trough Water Diversion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Tank Waterhole Well - Water 	<p>3 1.5 0 3 Miles</p>  <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; font-size: 8px;"> <p>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.</p> </div>
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