

Year: 2018

Inventory Unit Number/Name: OR-015-117D/ Fish Creek North

**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):** 1-117A/ Monument Flat

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):

Unit #	Size (historic acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
1-117A	16,240	N	N	N	Unknown
1-117D*	2,207	N	N/A	N/A	N/A

\* The inventory of this unit was updated in 2010. However, due to a State Office-sponsored Wilderness Inventory Consistency Evaluation and subsequent guidance, the 2010 inventory analysis and findings are being replaced by this current 2018 inventory review. Documentation of the 2010 inventory can be found in the wilderness inventory project record.

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

The majority of the unit was described as a high sage flat with minor depressions and drainages. The vegetation was sage and grasses with scattered juniper trees on the

east and at several spring locations in the unit. The 500-KV powerline defining the west boundary was found to have substantial impact on naturalness in that area. The unit contained fence line, 14 miles of “ways,” and 9 reservoirs, which cumulatively detracted considerably from the natural appearance of the area. The broad expanse of sage flats offered minimal solitude. The unit was not found to provide outstanding opportunities to avoid the sights and sounds of others in the unit. The unit was found to offer limited potential for primitive recreation. Scenic views of the Warner Mountains were noted outside of the unit, but lacked scenic views within the area. The unit was found to offer some potential for hunting and wildlife observation. However, overall, the unit was not considered to offer outstanding potential for primitive and unconfined recreation. Some archeological values were expected to be present, but none were documented.

**FORM 2**

**DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY  
CONDITIONS**

**Unit Number/Name:** OR-015-117D/ Fish Creek North

**(1) Is the unit of sufficient size?** Yes  X  No \_\_\_\_\_

Between 2006 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 Roads 7105-00 on the west; private lands on the north and east; and contiguous with the Fish Creek Rim WSA to the southeast.

Thus, based on these boundary and road determinations, the BLM found the Fish Creek North inventory unit does not meet the minimum size criteria at approximately 2,207 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 16,690-acre Fish Creek Rim WSA (OR-1-117) located to the southeast.

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 inventory unit is located approximately 5 miles southwest of Plush, Oregon. The unit is approximately 2.75 miles long by 2.5 miles wide. The unit is dominated by a sagebrush covered flat with approximately 1,000 acres of moderate to high density juniper adjacent to a steep rim (400 ft. high). Additionally the unit is comprised of a 0.3 miles of Fish Creek (75 ft. deep), two minor drainages (totaling 3.5 miles, 25 - 50 ft. deep), a few small rims (40 - 80 ft. high), a depressed lakebed (Buff Lake, 10 -25 ft. deep) and Lynch Spring.

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

Historic Unit 1-117A was found to contain fence line, 14 miles of “ways,” and 9 reservoirs, which cumulatively detracted considerably from the natural appearance of the area. Additionally, the 500-KV power line, defining the west boundary, was found to have substantial impact on naturalness in that area.

The 1991 Wilderness Study Report described the Fish Creek Rim WSA as possessing minor spring developments, several miles of fence line, waterholes, reservoirs, “ways,” TV antennae/ microwave facility, and a 750-KV power line just outside the western boundary. However, all disturbances were noted as extremely localized and screened by topography and vegetation. Overall, the unit was found to be in an essentially natural condition primarily influenced by the forces of nature.

The unit currently contains the following man-made developments/disturbances: 125 acres chemical treatments, 16 acres of wildfire, 4 acres of seeding, 4 miles of fence lines, 2.5 miles of motorized routes, 175 feet of pipeline, 7 waterholes, 1 reservoir, 1 develop spring, and 1 trough.

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 (1/4<sup>th</sup> 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, the Fish Creek North unit appears in natural condition where the imprint of man is substantially unnoticeable. Furthermore, since the unit is now contiguous with the Fish Creek Rim WSA, the Fish Creek North 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

Fish Creek North 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

Historic Unit 1-117A was found to be a broad expanse of sage flats and thus offered minimal solitude. Overall, the unit was found to lack outstanding opportunities to avoid the sights and sounds of others in the unit.

The 1991 Wilderness Study Report found opportunities for solitude within the Fish Creek Rim WSA to be outstanding due to the large size of the unit and wooded areas containing mountain mahogany or juniper below the rim.

The BLM determined that there are several opportunities for solitude across the unit due to topographic and vegetative screening. Topographically the unit contains a steep rim (400 ft. high), 0.3 miles of Fish Creek (75 ft. deep), two drainages (totaling 3.5 miles, 25 - 50 ft. deep), a few rims (40 - 80 ft. high), and a depressed lakebed (Buff Lake, 10 -25 ft. deep). Vegetatively, once marginal western juniper stands have greatly expanded in acreage, height, width, and density. Approximately 1,000 acres of moderate to high density juniper stands can be found along the western and eastern portions of the unit. 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 16,690-acre Fish Creek Rim WSA to the southeast 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 Fish Creek North inventory unit due to the contiguous values of the Fish Creek Rim 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

Historic Unit 1-117A was found to offer limited potential for primitive recreation. Scenic views of the Warner Mountains were noted outside of the unit, but lacked scenic views within the area. The unit was found to offer some potential for hunting

and wildlife observation. However, overall, the unit was not considered to offer outstanding potential for primitive and unconfined recreation.

The 1991 Wilderness Study Report found opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation within the Fish Creek Rim WSA to be outstanding. The following recreation opportunities were described: easy to extremely rugged hiking, with the most challenging opportunities on the east-facing scarp; good camping areas above the rim in mountain mahogany and aspen groves; excellent deer and antelope hunting; observation and photography of mammals, birds, plants, geologic features and rock art; sightseeing from Lynchs Rim with spectacular views of the Warner Lakes, Hart Mountain, the Warner Mountains, Drakes Peak, the Fremont National Forest, and Deep Creek.

The BLM determined that the Fish Creek North inventory unit provides opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation through the combination and diversity of hiking, horseback riding, backpacking, camping, wildlife observation, exploration, scenery, photography, stargazing, trapping, and hunting.

Additionally, opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be enhanced by the additive effect of outstanding opportunities present within the 16,690-acre Fish Creek Rim WSA to the southeast 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 Fish Creek North inventory unit due to the contiguous values of the Fish Creek Rim WSA.

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

The BLM found the unit to possess archaeological and geological values as well as the presence of various bats, pronghorn antelope, mule deer, California bighorn sheep, golden eagle, and sage-grouse habitat.

**Summary of Findings and Conclusion**

**Unit Number and Name:** OR-015-117D/ Fish Creek North

**Summary Results of Analysis:**

- 1. Does the area meet 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: *(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

  
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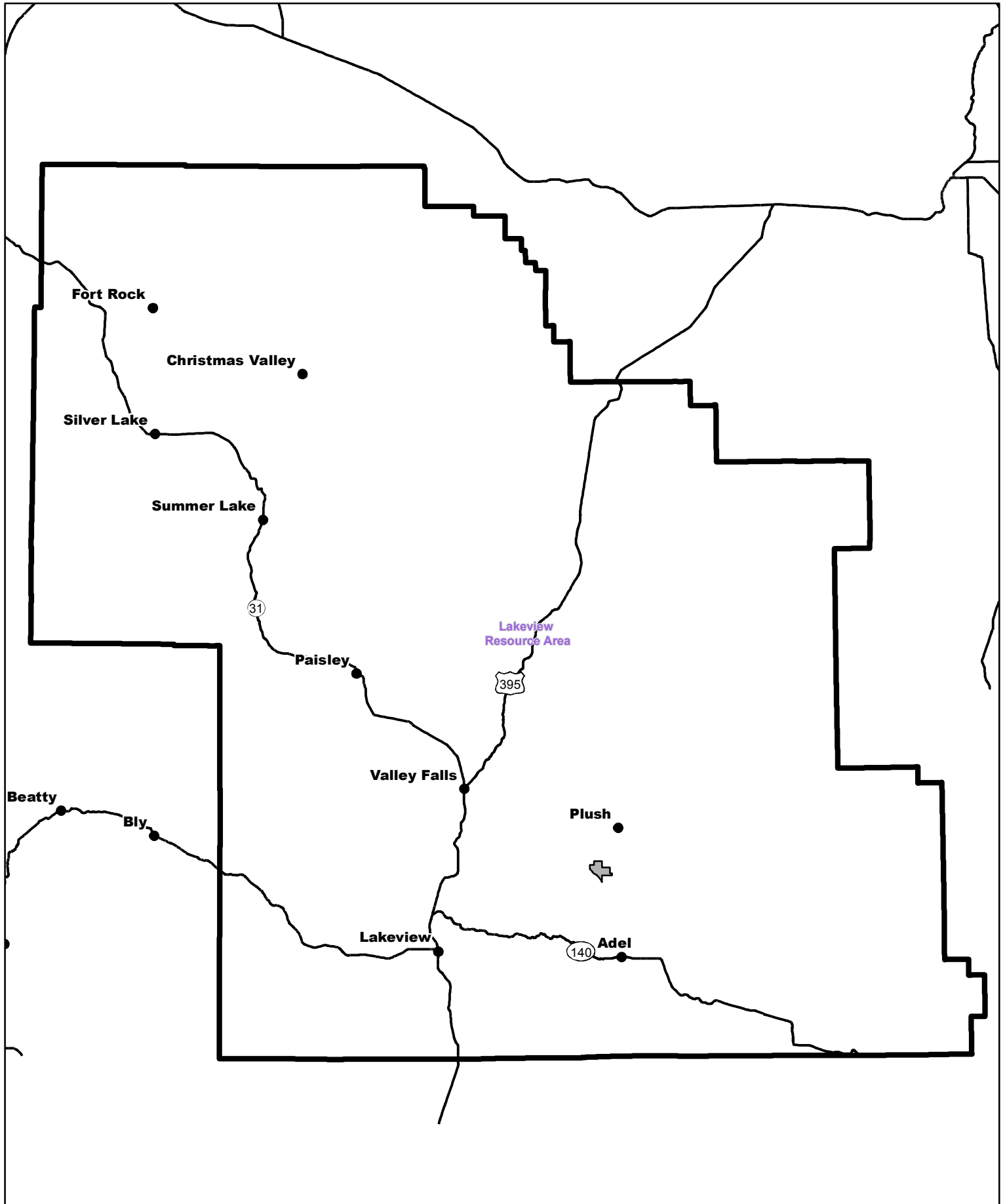
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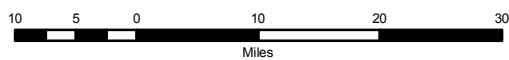
  
**J. Todd Forbes**  
**Field Manager**


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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