

Year: 2018

Inventory Unit Number/Name: OR-015-025/ Juniper Island

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:

- a. BLM Wilderness Inventory files for Pacific Power and Light Company (PP&L) Transmission Line: PP&L Roadless Area Inventory Files (1977).
- b. Wilderness Inventory – Final Intensive Inventory Decisions; USDI BLM - Oregon and Washington, November 1980.

b) Inventory Unit Number(s)/ Name(s): 1-25 and PP&L #OR-01-05/ Juniper Island; 1-12 and PP&L #OR-010-01-09/ Lost Forest-Sand Dunes.

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. 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
1-12	6,240	N	N	N	Y
1-12*	6,472	N	N/A	N/A	N/A

1-25	21,120	Y	N	N	N
1-25*	23,003	Y	N	N	N/A

* 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:

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act directed the Secretary of the Interior to report by July 1980 on the wilderness suitability of all natural and primitive areas designated prior to November 1, 1975. Therefore, BLM accelerated the wilderness review schedule of the five RNAs in Oregon. The preliminary finding, announced in April 1979, was that the Lost Forest RNA did not have wilderness characteristics. The final determination, announced in August 1979, was that the RNA did not have wilderness characteristics in areas where it stands alone, but contiguous portions would be re-evaluated as portions of inventory units.

Historic Unit 1-12 was found to be contiguous with and included portions of the Lost Forest Research Natural Area (RNA) and Wilderness Instant Study Area. The unit was described as having two ephemeral lakes on the east and northeast. A ridgeline ran north to south, with flats to the east and slightly rolling country to the west. The portions outside the RNA are primarily flat to gently rolling. The land inside the RNA contains sand dunes and rolling hills with juniper and ponderosa pine. The unit had been disturbed by numerous human activities and in general did not appear to be in a natural condition. A major portion of the unit was logged in 1954 and still bore the scars of that action. The unit contained four miles of fence line and several "ways," which were substantially noticeable because of the limited size of the unit and exposed these impacts to the visitor in the majority of the area. The limited size of the unit, the topography, and general exposure throughout the unit combined to prevent one from achieving any substantial degree of solitude in the unit. A person would not be able to avoid the sights and sounds of others within the unit. The unit offered marginal opportunities for day use of the area. The uniqueness of the isolated ponderosa pine stands was of interest. However, the unit did not offer outstanding recreation potential. Supplemental values noted included ponderosa pine in the Lost Forest, which is unique in that they are growing in an area with an average annual precipitation that is generally considered too little to sustain the species.

Historic Unit 1-25 was found to be flat to gentle rolling topography, with some low north-south trending rims and draws, with rocky hills in the northern section. This unit was vegetated with desert shrub and patches of juniper along rims and hills, with Ponderosa pine in the northern portion of the unit. Internally, a few livestock waterholes were noted, as well as, one dirt road leading to an old horse trap in the

middle of the unit. Externally, a large power line crossed 2 miles to the west of the unit, a county gravel road one mile outside of the southwest corner, and a large scale well developed on private lands to the south. Overall, the unit was found to be natural where the evidence of man's activities was minimal. The inventory was uncertain in regards to solitude and concluded the unit's topography, size, or shape of the area provided limited opportunities for solitude and needed to be studied further. The inventory determined the unit offered some low quality deer hunting, hiking, horseback riding, and dry camping opportunities, but these opportunities were not outstanding. Supplemental values included the Lost Forest RNA in the north portion of the unit as potentially having some scientific/educational values and the historic Jacksonville-Boise Stage Road (BLM Road 6151-B0) formed the northern boundary of the unit. The unit was ultimately dropped citing very poor recreation and no documented evidence to indicate the area had any potential for primitive recreation; low quality scenery, limited scientific and educational values within the unit, perceived difficulty of managing/controlling access. Intrusions were also reassessed and concluded: internal private inholdings were likely to be developed; dust from county and BLM roads; an access road was discovered that bisected the area; the BPA power line was deemed visible from most any point in the unit; and the entire area was in the Juniper Military Operations Area, which was used 7 days a week.

FORM 2

**DOCUMENTATION OF CURRENT WILDERNESS INVENTORY
CONDITIONS**

Unit Number/Name: OR-015-025/ Juniper Island

(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 37,873-acre Sand Dunes proposed Wilderness Study Area (WSA). ONDA concluded that their Sand Dunes proposal is also contiguous with the existing Sand Dunes 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 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 a few of the routes ONDA identified as “ways” are boundary roads and a few of the routes ONDA identified as boundary roads are “ways.” The Sand Dunes proposed WSA is not one large roadless unit, but is comprised of two inventory units, which must be evaluated individually.

The BLM determined that the inventory unit is bounded by BLM Road 6141-00 to the north; 6121-00 to the east; 6111-00, County Road 5-14 right-of-way, and private lands to the south, 6141-A0, portions of 6151-00, BLM interim numbered roads 6151-J0 and 6151-C0, and private lands to the west. Portions of BLM Roads 6151-00 and 6141-A0 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 (1-12, 1-25) and a few parcels, originally found to be less than 5,000 acres, have been combined to form the new unit boundary. This evaluation focuses on these combined units and will hereby be referred to as the Juniper Island inventory unit.

Thus, based on these boundary and road determinations, the BLM found the Juniper Island inventory unit to not only exceed the minimum size criteria at approximately 34,963 acres of BLM-administered lands, but that is also contiguous with the Sand Dunes WSA (16,440 acres).

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 18 miles east of Christmas Valley, Oregon. The unit is approximately 12 miles long by 10 miles wide and contains one private inholding (641 acres) in the southern corner of the unit. Topographically, the unit is quite diverse. The unit is dominated a ridge (150-400 ft. high) running 12 miles north to south, with rims, buttes, and drainages. The northern third of the unit is comprised of largely of an ancient, rolling hills dune system among rock buttes (Sand Rock, 200 ft. high) and rims. Hilly, non-vegetated, shifting dunes (20 to 150 ft. high) can be found in north central and northwest portions of the unit. The central portion of the unit contains several small to moderate rims running north to south with numerous points, knobs, and buttes (100 to 300 ft. high). The southwest corner of the unit contains a 3-mile long drainage (150 ft. deep), a 5-mile long rim (225 ft. high), and Wildcat Butte (450 ft. high). While the southeast portion of the unit is relatively flat. The unit also contains two large ephemeral lakebeds along the eastern boundary (20-40 ft. deep). Overall, the unit ranges in elevation from 4,280 to 4,973 feet. Vegetatively, approximately 9,500 acres of the northern half of the unit is covered in moderate to high-density ponderosa pine and western juniper stands, with old-growth characteristics. The remaining vegetation is scattered juniper, sagebrush, rabbit brush, and grass.

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

The original inventory for Unit 1-12 determined the unit did not appear in a natural condition due to logging scars from the 1950's, four miles of fence lines, several "ways,"

The original inventory for Unit 1-25 found the unit contained a few livestock waterholes, and one dirt road leading to an old horse trap in the middle of the unit. The unit was initially found to be natural where the evidence of man's activities was minimal. However, the unit was ultimately dropped citing mostly "outside" intrusions (major power lines, an aerial Military Operations Area, and likely future developments on private inholdings).

In 2005, ONDA found the much larger 37,873-acre Sand Dunes proposed WSA to be in a natural condition, primarily affected by the forces of nature (p. 183-184). ONDA noted that although the impacts of logging may have been prevalent during BLM's inventory, they have become un-noticeable over the past 25 years. "Ways" are now overgrown and the cumulative effect of fence lines is negligible. Furthermore, ONDA stated that unit is part of a continuous area with an existing WSA and as such, the area should be analyzed as a whole. ONDA acknowledged that there are a few manmade developments found within the area; though they are so small that they would not have a cumulative effect on the area. However, as noted above, the BLM found that this proposed WSA is not one large roadless unit, but is comprised of two smaller inventory units, within which the natural character of the unit must be evaluated individually.

The unit currently contains the following man-made developments/disturbances: 251 acres of mow strips (fuel breaks), 5 acres of seeding, 18.5 miles of motorized routes, 19 miles of closed/ reclaimed routes, 18 miles of reclaiming routes, 5 miles of fence lines, 3 wildlife guzzlers, 2 waterholes, 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 (1/4th 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.

Since the unit was found to be contiguous with Sand Dunes WSA, the area must be analyzed in the context of these now shared wilderness values. As such, after considering values offered by both areas, the BLM determined that the Juniper Island unit and the WSA contribute mutually additive effects to the natural condition of both units. 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 inventory for Unit 1-12 found the limited size of the unit, the topography, and general exposure throughout the unit combined to prevent one from achieving any substantial degree of solitude in the unit as one would not be able to avoid the sights and sounds of others.

The original inventory for Unit 1-25 concluded that the unit's topography, size, and shape provided opportunities for solitude. However, the inventory team was uncertain if the unit provided outstanding opportunities for solitude and thus decided further study was needed, though none was documented.

In 1991, the Sand Dunes WSA, to the west of the Juniper Island wilderness characteristics inventory unit, was found to have outstanding opportunities for solitude in the central core where the largest sand dunes occur and was aided by juniper cover and ponderosa pines on the northern and western fringe of the WSA (Wilderness Study Report, 1991; p. 35).

In 2005, ONDA's inventory identified the larger 37,873-acre Sand Dunes 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. When looking at their proposed addition as a whole, ONDA asserts one can easily find outstanding opportunities for solitude. Furthermore, ONDA found the unit to also be contiguous with the existing Sand Dunes WSA; and because the Sand Dunes WSA already has outstanding opportunities for solitude, these values will be further enhanced by the outstanding opportunities present within the Sand Dunes WSA proposed Addition (p. 184 of ONDA 2005). However, as noted above, the BLM found that this proposed WSA is not one large roadless unit, but is comprised of two smaller inventory units, within which the natural character of the unit 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 quite diverse. The unit is dominated a ridge (150-400 ft. high) running 12 miles north to south, with rims, buttes, and drainages. The northern third of the unit is comprised of largely of an ancient, rolling hills dune system among rock buttes (Sand Rock, 200 ft. high) and rims. Hilly, non-vegetated, shifting dunes (20 to 150 ft. high) can be found in north central and northwest portions of the unit. The central portion of the unit contains several small to moderate rims running north to south with numerous points, knobs, and buttes (100 to 300 ft. high). The southwest corner of the unit contains a 3-mile long drainage (150 ft. deep), a 5-mile long rim (225 ft. high),

and Wildcat Butte (450 ft. high). While the southeast portion of the unit is relatively, flat. The unit also contains two large ephemeral lakebeds along the eastern boundary (20-40 ft. deep). Overall, the unit ranges in elevation from 4,280 to 4,973 feet. Vegetatively, western juniper stands have greatly expanded in height, width, and density. Approximately 9,500 acres of the northern half of the unit is covered in moderate to high-density ponderosa pine and western juniper stands, with old-growth characteristics. 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.

Since the unit was found to be contiguous with Sand Dunes WSA, the area must be analyzed in the context of these now shared wilderness values. As such, after considering values offered by both areas, the BLM determined that the Juniper Island unit and the Sand Dunes WSA contribute mutually additive effects to the solitude of both units.

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 Juniper Island 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 X No N/A

The original inventory for Unit 1-12 found the unit offered marginal opportunities for day use and noted the uniqueness of the isolated ponderosa pine stands was of interest to those recreating in the area. However, the unit was found to lack outstanding recreation.

The original inventory for Unit 1-25 determined the unit offered some low quality deer hunting, hiking, horseback riding, and dry camping opportunities, but these opportunities were found to be less than outstanding.

In 1991, the Sand Dunes WSA was found to have outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation. Activities included photography, hiking, camping, nature study, and sightseeing. Opportunities to recreate in such a unique ecosystem were described as being unmatched anywhere else in Oregon (Wilderness Study Report, 1991; p. 35).

In 2005, ONDA's inventory identified the larger 37,873-acre Sand Dunes 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. When looking at their proposed addition as a whole, ONDA asserts one can easily find outstanding opportunities for recreation including hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, photography, wildlife viewing, and hunting. Furthermore, ONDA found the unit to also be contiguous with the existing Sand Dunes WSA; and because the Sand Dunes WSA already has outstanding opportunities for recreation, these

values will be further enhanced by the outstanding opportunities present within the Sand Dunes WSA proposed Addition (p. 184 of ONDA 2005). However, as noted above, the BLM found that this proposed WSA is not one large roadless unit, but is comprised of two smaller inventory units, within which the natural character of the unit 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.

Since the unit was found to be contiguous with Sand Dunes WSA, the area must be analyzed in the context of these now shared wilderness values. As such, after considering values offered by both areas, the BLM determined that the Juniper Island unit and the Sand Dunes WSA contribute mutually additive effects to opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation of both units.

The BLM determined that options for exploration and route finding through the unit's diverse topography, sand dunes, and unique ponderosa/ juniper stands, while hiking/ horseback riding either the 12-mile length or 10-mile width 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 various bats, pronghorn antelope, mule deer, elk, pigmy rabbit, red-tailed hawk, and sage-grouse habitat.

Additional designations within the unit include approximately 7,964 acres of the Lost Forest Research Natural Area (RNA)/ Instant Study Area and 14,818 acres of the Lost Forest/Fossil Lake/Sand Dunes Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) complex.

The RNA/ ISA was established as an early inventory for wilderness suitability of natural and primitive areas.

The RNA and ACEC were designated to protect and study the presence of two unique plant associations:

- 1) Ponderosa pine, big sagebrush-bitterbrush and,
- 2) Ponderosa pine-western juniper, big sagebrush, needle-and-thread grass communities.

Lastly, approximately 13 miles of ONDA's 750-mile Oregon Desert Trail ("virtual"/ GPS track) crosses the inventory unit.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Number and Name: OR-015-025/ Juniper Island

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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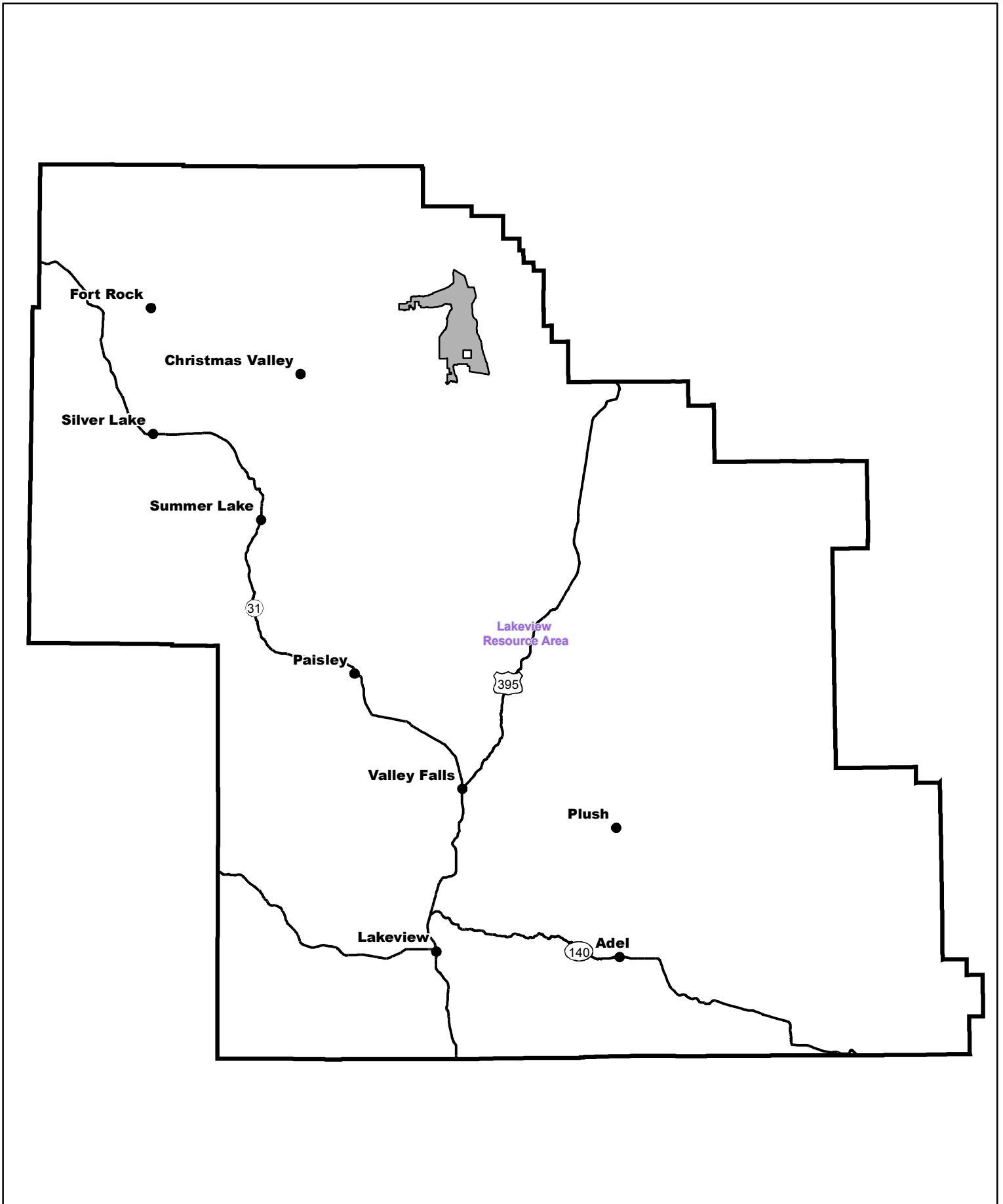
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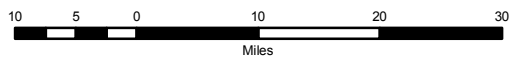

J. Todd Forbes
Field Manager


6/4/18
Date

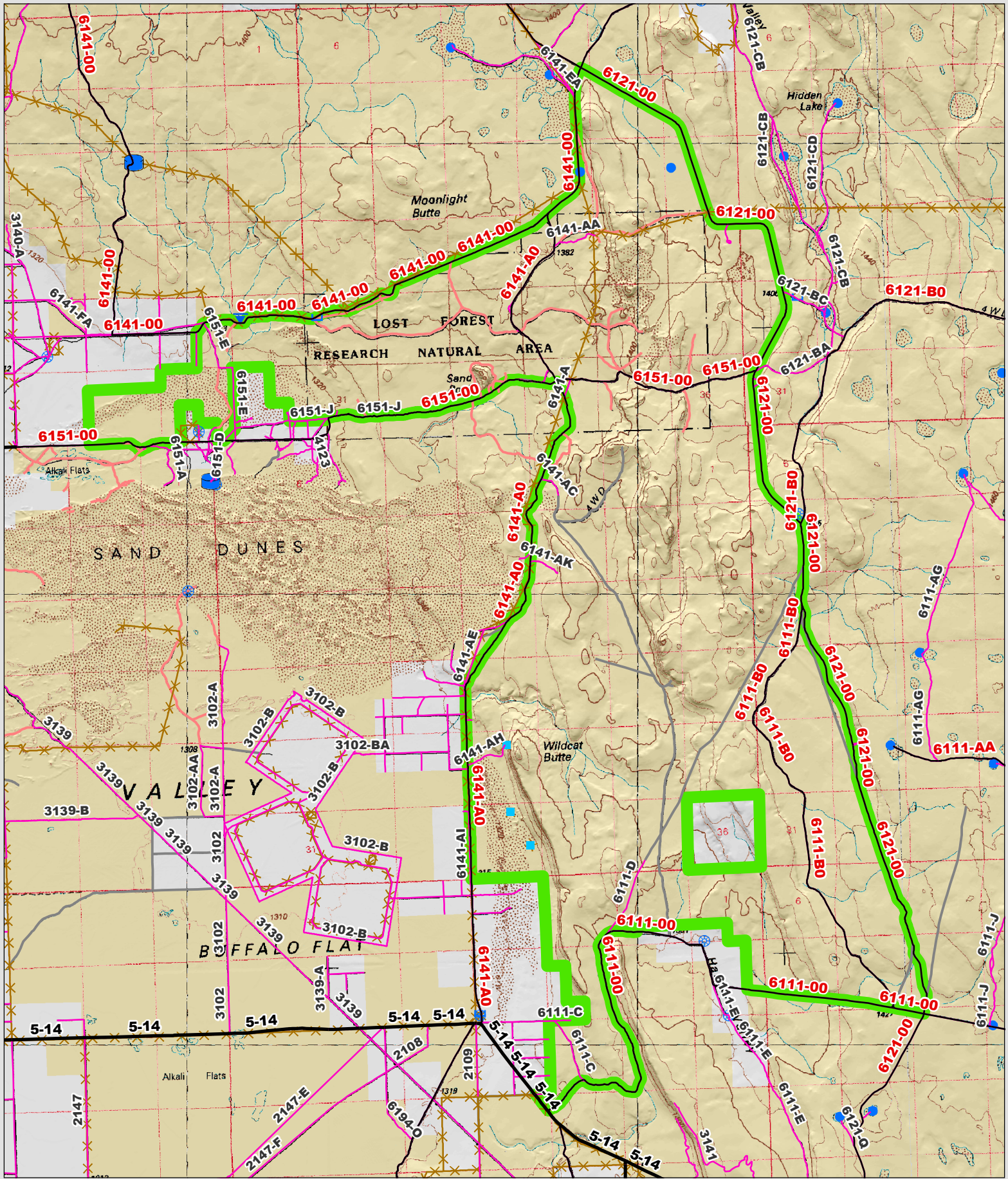
This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under 43 CFR parts either 4 or 1610.5-2.



 Wilderness Character Inventory Unit



 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
- 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 Features

- Water Tank
- Waterhole
- Well - Water

2 1 0 2 Miles

W N E S

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