

WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS INVENTORY
APPENDIX B – INVENTORY AREA EVALUATION

Evaluation of Current Conditions:

1) Document and review any existing BLM wilderness characteristics inventory findings on file regarding the presence or absence of individual wilderness characteristics, using Form 1, below.

2) Consider relevant information regarding current conditions available in the office. Identify and describe any changes to the existing inventory information. Use interdisciplinary team knowledge, aerial photographs, field observations, maps, etc. and document the findings on Form 2, below. Document current conditions regarding wilderness characteristics, as opposed to potential future conditions.

Conduct field reviews as necessary to verify information and to ascertain current conditions. Reach conclusions on current conditions including boundaries, size of areas, and presence or absence of wilderness characteristics. Fully explain the basis for each conclusion on Form 2, including any critical differences between BLM and citizen information.

Document the findings regarding current conditions for each inventoried area. Describe how the present conditions are similar to, or have changed from, the conditions documented in the original wilderness characteristics inventory. Document the findings on Form 2 for each inventory area. Cite to or attach data considered, including photographs, maps, GIS layers, field trip notes, project files, etc.

SOUTH BLITZEN INVENTORY UNIT: OR-02-86 A and B

INVENTORY AREA EVALUATION

WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS INVENTORY

FORM 1

**Documentation of BLM Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Findings
from Previous Inventory on Record**

1. Is there existing BLM wilderness characteristics inventory information on all or part of this area?

No _____ (Go to Form 2) Yes x (If yes, and if more than one area is within the area, list the unique identifiers for those areas.):

- a) **Inventory Source:** Wilderness Review Intensive Inventory - March 1980
- b) **Inventory Area Unique Identifier(s):** OR-02-86 A and B
- c) **Map Name(s)/Number(s):** Blitzen River South OR-02-86 A and B
- d) **BLM District(s)/Field Office(s):** Burns District, Andrews Resource Area

2. BLM inventory findings on record:

Existing inventory information regarding wilderness characteristics (if more than one BLM inventory area is associated with the area, list each area and answer each question individually for each inventory area):

Inventory Source: March 1980 Wilderness Review Inventory. The original review did not analyze OR-02-86 A and B for wilderness characteristics, as they were determined to be bisected by a road, which made them both of insufficient size to be eligible for analysis.

Area Unique Identifier	Sufficient Size? Yes/No (acres)	Naturalness? Yes/No	Outstanding Solitude? Yes/No	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Yes/No	Supplemental Values? Yes/No
OR-02-86 A	No 1,230 acres.	Not analyzed	Not analyzed	Not analyzed	Not analyzed
OR-02-86 B	No 4,920 acres	Not analyzed	Not analyzed	Not analyzed	Not analyzed

Inventory Source: September 2002 Citizen Proposal Evaluation. The eastern portion (B), encompasses approximately 5200 acres of public land. This is a change from the initial inventory, which did not include 280 acres of State land. The additional State land now makes the unit over 5,000 acres, thus eligible for the size criteria. Citizen proposals state that the route separating parts A and B does not qualify as a road, so the two units should be analyzed contiguously. 2002 BLM inventory stated that there was a road (8244-0-KO) but does not state that it has been mechanically maintained. Inventory states opportunities for solitude are present but not outstanding. It does not elaborate on this finding. The inventory also states that opportunities for outstanding primitive and unconfined recreation are not outstanding because of its small size. 2002 inventory stated that 86 B was natural.

Area Unique Identifier	Sufficient Size? Yes/No (acres)	Naturalness? Yes/No	Outstanding Solitude? Yes/No	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Yes/No	Supplemental Values? Yes/No
OR-02-86 A	No 1,230 acres	Not analyzed	Not analyzed	Not analyzed	Not analyzed
OR-02-86 B	Yes 5,200 acres	Yes	No	No	Not analyzed

FORM 2**Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics**Area Unique Identifier **OR-02-86 A** Acreage 1,230

(If the inventory area consists of subunits, list the acreage of each and evaluate each separately).

In completing steps (1)–(5), use additional space as necessary.

(1) Is the area of sufficient size? (If the area meets one of the exceptions to the size criterion, check “Yes” and describe the exception in the space provided below).

Yes X No

Note: If “No” is checked the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check “NA” for the remaining questions below.

Description (describe the boundaries of the area—wilderness inventory roads, property lines, etc.): The area is bound on the north by Burnt Car Road. Subunits A and B are separated by a north/south route, referred to as E2A or 8244-0-KO south, and by the short E2B way. Route E2A is not a road under the wilderness definition (see route inventory Appendix C E2A) and is thus contiguous with section B. Route E2B is also not a road, under the wilderness inventory definition (see Appendix C E2B). Consequently, it meets the size criterion. The remainder of the boundary, on the southern portion, is formed by South Steens Road. The unit is surrounded mostly by wilderness study area (WSA). There are two small private parcels within the unit, but there are no range developments or fences. Fifteen photo points were established on the parcel, over several site visits by BLM staff, in the summer of 2023. A site visit from BLM professional staff on 8/14/2023 by Dory Seeley, Kyle Wanner, Dean Reese, and Don Rotell was conducted, wherein the unit was assessed using the protocols described in Manual 6310 (Conducting Wilderness Characteristics on BLM Lands).

(2) Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes X No N/A

Note: If “No” is checked the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check “NA” for the remaining questions below.

Description (include land ownership, location, topography, vegetation, and summary of major human uses/activities): The unit is located in the foothills of Steens Mountain, with excellent views of the mountain to the east. Terrain is gently sloped, with varied topography, ranging from open grasslands in the southeast to broken rimrock interspersed with shallow canyons in the remainder. Vegetation type ranges from grassland, dominated by sagebrush, perennial bunchgrasses and forbs, to juniper woodland in the western portion. There are two small private inholdings. There is a long history of cattle grazing in this unit by the permittee Roaring Springs Ranch. Other popular human activities include wildlife viewing, wild horse viewing, wildflower

viewing, photography, hunting, hiking, stargazing, birdwatching, and camping. The unit falls entirely within the Steens Priority Area of Conservation (PAC) for Greater Sage-Grouse and is designated as sage-grouse priority habitat management area (PHMA). Approximately 99% of the unit is designated as mule deer winter range. The unit is part of the South Steens Herd Management Area (HMA). The area appears natural, with little to no impact by humans evident in the area.

(3) Does the area (or the remainder of the area 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

Description (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for solitude): The area is surrounded on the north by the Blitzen River WSA. The route that bisects the two subunits does not substantially affect opportunities for solitude, as it gets virtually no use. The entire portion of the unit has vegetative screening from tree cover, and there are numerous small ravines and rimrock areas where the opportunity for solitude is outstanding. It would be very easy to find solitude within just a few steps of the road.

(4) Does the area (or the remainder of the area 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

Note: If "No" is checked for both 3 and 4 the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "NA" for question 5.

Description (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation): The unit has outstanding opportunities for hunting, including deer and antelope. Permits for these hunting opportunities are highly sought after and are considered prime hunting tags. This is an iconic landscape, with outstanding views of Steens Mountain and the surrounding wilderness.

(5) Does the area have supplemental values (ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value)?

Yes X No N/A

Description: There are excellent opportunities for wild horse viewing in the South Steens HMA. It is also valuable habitat for the protected sage-grouse, with one active lek site.

Summary of Analysis*

Area Unique Identifier: OR-02-86-A

Summary

Results of analysis:

(Note: explain the inventory findings for the entirety of the inventory unit. When wilderness characteristics have been identified in an area that is smaller than the size of the total inventory unit, explain why certain portions of the inventory unit are not included within the lands with wilderness characteristics (e.g., the inventory found that certain parts lacked naturalness)).

- 1. Does the area meet any of the size requirements? Yes No
- 2. Does the area appear to be natural? Yes No N/A
- 3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation? Yes No N/A
- 4. Does the area have supplemental values? Yes No N/A

Check one:

The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as land with wilderness characteristics.

The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

Prepared by (team members):

Dean Reese - Outdoor Recreation Planner (Wilderness) WILLIAM REESE Digitally signed by WILLIAM REESE
Date: 2023.10.16 11:20:58 -07'00'

Dory Seeley - Outdoor Recreation Planner DORY SEELEY Digitally signed by DORY SEELEY
Date: 2023.10.16 14:39:36 -07'00'

Kyle Wanner - Outdoor Recreation Planner KYLE WANNER Digitally signed by KYLE WANNER
Date: 2023.10.16 12:56:22 -07'00'

Reviewed by (district or field manager):

Name: Donald Rotell Digitally signed by DONALD ROTELL
Date: 2023.10.18 11:19:14 -07'00' **Title:** _____ **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 either 43 CFR parts 4 or 1610.5-3.