

FORM 1

Dripping Springs Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Area

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 Yes

a) Inventory Source: The area in question (Dripping Springs) was evaluated as part of a much larger area (110,900 acres) in the 1979 Initial Wilderness Inventory (UT-060-143). Most of the discussion in that document concentrated on areas on the Hatch Point uplands managed by the Moab Field Office (MFO), with relatively little discussion of lands in Lockhart Basin managed by the Monticello Field Office (MtFO). The entire area was found to be unnatural due to existing roads, seismic lines and some evidence of past minerals activities and range improvements. The area was not recommended for intensive inventory.

Management of the area in the current proposal is shared by the Moab and Monticello Field Offices, both of which have conducted separate Wilderness Characteristics Inventories subsequent to the 1979 inventory.

Moab Field Office (MFO)

From August 15, 2001, through September 19, 2003, BLM undertook 11 field trips to areas on within the Canyon Rims Recreation Area which included the current proposal (Dripping Springs), and took 281 photos. The primary purpose of these field trips was to verify the San Juan County road inventory as input into drafting alternatives for the MFO Travel Plan being prepared in conjunction with the 2008 Resource Management Plan (RMP) revision. As part of this review, BLM undertook an on-the-ground verification of every route submitted by San Juan County east of Hatch Wash itself, and was able to verify the existence of each route. Additionally, BLM was able to verify all routes east of Hatch Wash through a combination of field trips and aerial photography review. The road inventory was an important source of information in conducting the Wilderness Characteristics reviews described below.

As part of its 2008 RMP effort, Moab BLM reexamined all areas then proposed by external groups for wilderness. On December 30, 2003, the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA) presented a letter with the name of the proposed unit (a much larger unit known as Hatch Wash), and reference to America's Redrock Wilderness Act, proposed in Congress. No other information was presented; SUWA's submission said that specific information, including maps, photographs and analysis would be

forthcoming. Until November, 2013, the MFO had not received any of this information, and nothing in time for the 2008 RMP. A GIS-based map of the proposed unit was submitted to the Utah BLM State Office (UTSO), and provided the basis for the area reviewed. (It should be noted that at the time of the 2007 review done as part of the 2008 RMP effort, BLM had no formal handbook or manual describing the procedure or documentation that should be included in a wilderness characteristics review).

In late 2006 and early 2007, BLM used Geographical Information System (GIS) data to identify potential impacts on naturalness including county road data (previously verified as part of travel plan formulation), and local GIS data on range improvements, oil and gas wells, vegetative manipulations (especially chainings), and community pits. Master Title Plat data available from the State Office GIS was examined for rights-of-way.

The MFO next undertook a detailed review of high resolution aerial photos from 2006 to both verify information from the GIS review, as well as to look for additional impacts not incorporated in GIS. These impacts could include such things as seismic exploration lines not included in the county road inventory and other disturbances from past minerals activities.

The above steps enabled the MFO to prepare a map showing what remaining areas were likely to possess naturalness. As described in the narrative contained in the RMP's Administrative Record, much of the new acreage was cut off from the larger otherwise adjoining lands with wilderness characteristics by roads, other impacts and/or state lands. This acreage, regardless of naturalness, failed to meet the size criteria and was dropped from further consideration. Several small parcels adjoin lands found by the MtFO likely to possess wilderness characteristics, enabling these parcels to possess wilderness characteristics only in association with the larger MtFO unit.

The MFO convened an interdisciplinary review team meeting on January 11, 2007, to review the findings from the above steps. Team members were asked to provide information which either supported or refuted these findings, based both on their specialized resource expertise and their field knowledge. Based on input from this review, the MFO incorporated any necessary changes into its analysis.

The following specific documents and files were utilized:

1. San Juan County road inventory (GIS)
2. Hatch Wash, Windwhistle, and Kane Springs range allotment files
3. NAIP 2006 aerial photos (GIS)
4. Vegetative treatments (local GIS)
5. Range improvements (local GIS)
6. 1999 Utah Wilderness Inventory file (Hatch Wash)
7. 2003 Wilderness Inventory revision document

Based on all of the above, the MFO determined that 2,679 acres of the acres examined possessed wilderness characteristics in conjunction with a larger area found to possess such by the MtFO. The remaining lands managed by the MFO and contained in the

current proposal were found in their entirety to lack wilderness characteristics.

Monticello Field Office (MtFO)

The MtFO Dripping Springs proposed wilderness characteristics area lies below the rim in the area generally known as Lockhart Basin. As discussed above, that area was evaluated as part of the 1979 initial Utah Wilderness Inventory (UT-060-143). Most of the discussion in that document concentrated on areas on the Hatch Point uplands managed by the MFO, with relatively little discussion of lands in Lockhart Basin managed by the MtFO. The entire area was found to be unnatural due to existing roads, seismic lines and some evidence of past minerals activities and range improvements. The area was not recommended for intensive inventory.

On December 30, 2003, SUWA presented a letter with the name of the proposed unit (a larger unit known as Hatch – Lockhart – Hart 2), and reference to America’s Redrock Wilderness Act, proposed in Congress. No other information was presented; SUWA’s submission said that specific information, including maps, photographs and analysis would be forthcoming. Until November, 2013, the MtFO had not received any of this information. A GIS-based map of the proposed unit was submitted to UTSO, and provided the basis for the area reviewed. (It should be noted that at the time of this review, BLM had no formal handbook or manual describing the procedure or documentation that should be included in a wilderness characteristics review).

In early 2007 in preparation for the 2008 RMP, MtFO staff reviewed the area using GIS data layers, which included recent aerial photography (August 2006), San Juan County Road Data, oil and gas wells GIS data, range allotment files, and Reasonable Foreseeable Development (RFD) Data. The ID Team undertook a detailed review of the unit, via high resolution aerial photos from 2006 to both verify information from the GIS review, as well as to look for additional impacts not incorporated in GIS. These impacts could include such things as seismic exploration lines not included in the county road inventory and other disturbances from past minerals activities.

MtFO staff had visited this areas over several years while administering their respective resources, and noted that in addition to some of the intrusions identified in the 1979 inventory, there were substantially noticeable human impacts within the unit, such as bighorn sheep guzzlers, a significant mining site, a permanent cow camp (including a cabin), and multiple range improvements including stock ponds. Therefore, MtFO determined that the area did not possess natural character. The area reviewed in 2007 is larger (within MtFO boundaries) than the current proposal. The 2007 review did not indicate specifically where the observed impacts to naturalness occurred.

b) Inventory Area Unique Identifier(s):

UT-060-143C (from initial inventory); (“C” added to distinguish from other proposals within the larger 143 area)

Hatch/Harts/Lockhart (from Moab 2007 review)

Hatch – Lockhart – Hart 2 (from Monticello 2007 review)

c) Map Name(s)/Number(s): Dripping Spring/Lockhart WC additions; Lockhart Additions WC final

d) BLM District(s)/Field Office(s): Canyon Country District/Moab Field Office

2. BLM Inventory Findings on Record: see discussion under 1 (a), above

Area Unique Identifier	Sufficient Size?	Naturalness?	Outstanding Solitude?	Outstanding Primitive and Unconfined Recreation?	Supplemental Values?
UT-060-143 1979	Yes	No	N/A	N/A	N/A
UT-060-143 2007	Yes	No	N/A	N/A	N/A

FORM 2: Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

Area Unique Identifier: Dripping Springs (UT-060-143C)

Total Acreage: 11452

(1) Is the area of sufficient size?

Yes X No

Description: On November 6, 2013, SUWA submitted new information to the MFO on 11,533 acres encompassed in their original Dripping Springs proposal. The information consisted of a narrative, map photographic documentation and GIS data in sufficient detail to meet the requirements of Manual 6310 (March, 2012). This acreage generally used designated travel plan routes and State Lands boundaries to define the unit. Since BLM cannot manage non-BLM lands for any resource, including wilderness characteristics, these state lands have been excluded from the analysis.

MFO staff travelled to the subunit in question on March 10, 12 and 26, 2014. Staff from the MFO made additional visits on June 9 and 10, 2014. Based on these field trips, and a thorough review of all available GIS data and Google Earth imagery, BLM eliminated 81 acres which had lost their naturalness, reducing the unit size to 11,452 acres. The affected acreage lacking naturalness is discussed further below.

(2) Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes X No N/A (after exclusions described below)

The Dripping Springs proposal consists of relatively small acreage of mesa tops, and large acreages of canyon basins. Several developed viewpoints along the mesa tops (Minor and Anticline Overlooks, and the less developed Canyonlands Overlook) provide dramatic views of the landscape below. Dripping Springs and Lockhart basins dominate the view. Steep cliffs descend 1500 feet to the canyon floors below, with intermediate ridges separating the two major basins. Although there are some impacts to both apparent naturalness and natural integrity, discussed below, the overall impression is similar to what the average visitor experiences from the rims of Canyonlands National Park or Dead Horse Point State Park.

Following the guidelines of Manual 6310, SUWA has cherry-stemmed several routes which would qualify as wilderness roads, and therefore excluded from the unit. Along the boundaries of the unit, including portions of the Anticline and Dripping Springs roads, SUWA has removed several areas from their original proposal. These are areas which have suffered damage due to past OHV or minerals activities. Based on field checks and review of GIS data and aerial photo imagery, the BLM has made several additional eliminations due to lack of naturalness:

- Approximately 59 acres beyond the end of the Dripping Springs basin cheery-stem showed significant signs of past mining disturbances. These are clearly visible from the end of the cherry-stem, and are very visible from 2013 Google Earth imagery. The 7.5 minute USGS topo map indicates the presence of adits

and a prospect. Although this area is no longer used for mining purposes, the visibility of past operations has caused the acreage in question to lose its naturalness (point 1 on map).

- Two routes (in addition to SUWA's) have been cherry-stemmed due to their meeting Manual 6310's definition of a Wilderness Road. These are routes 2 and 5 on the accompanying map. Acreage of these two cherry-stems is approximately eight acres (points 2a and 2b on map).
- An area (11 acres) of mining activities to the west and north of Canyonlands Overlook constitutes an impact on apparent naturalness and has been excluded from the unit (point 3 on map).
- An area (12 acres) of mining activities to the west of the Dripping Springs road constitutes an impact on apparent naturalness and has been excluded from the unit. Additionally, the former access route, although faint has been cherry-stemmed to the impact area to avoid creating an unconnected "hole" in the unit (point 4 on map).
- An area (1 acre) adjacent to the Lockhart Basin road along the western boundary of the unit has been excluded to accommodate a stock pond and access route (point 5 on map).
- There are other impacts to natural integrity within the unit, but these do not constitute impacts to apparent naturalness from the perspective of the average visitor not necessarily familiar with natural ecosystems. These include barely visible linear features such as old seismic exploration lines, a few small stock ponds, other range improvements such as fences, and largely unnoticeable past mining activities. Given the scale of the surrounding landscape, the average visitor's eyes are unlikely to be drawn to these minor impacts.
- From certain places in the unit, the visitor's eye may be drawn to the large potash evaporative ponds on the north side of the Colorado River. These ponds, however, are not visible from the majority of the unit. As such, they do not constitute "omnipresent and pervasive" outside sights and sounds in the context of Manual 6310.

(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 No N/A

The proposed area possesses these opportunities principally in the side canyons of the Dripping Springs basin lying below the rim. In most of the unit, a visitor is surrounded by towering canyon walls, providing ample opportunity for solitude. These opportunities are particularly available in the upper arms of the Dripping Springs basin. For example, a visitor can travel more than two miles (straight-line distance) from the closest road access to the eastern upper arm of Dripping Springs Canyon. To visit the upper arm on the west of Dripping Springs Canyon, a visitor would need to travel almost three miles over rough terrain. The upper arms of the canyons themselves lie over 1000 feet below near vertical cliffs. The chances of encountering other visitors in these conditions are slight,

especially given the distance necessary to travel to where one would even begin to hike. These opportunities are less on the mesa tops managed by the MFO.

(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 _____

The proposed area possesses these opportunities principally in the side canyons of the Dripping Springs basin lying below the rim. The opportunities are basically the same as those described under (3), above. These opportunities are less on the mesa tops managed by the MFO.

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

Yes X No _____ N/A _____

The unit possesses supplemental values for wildlife and scenic resources. Desert big horn sheep occupy the areas both on the mesa top and below the rim. Scenic vistas, especially from Anticline, Minor and Canyonlands Overlooks of the lands below the rim are outstanding, and are major visitor attractions.

Summary of Analysis

Area Unique Identifier: Dripping Springs
(UT-060-143C)

Summary

Results of analysis:

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 lands with wilderness characteristics.

The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

Prepared by:

William P. Stevens, Outdoor Recreation Planner
Jed J. Carling, Rangeland Management Specialist
Amanda M. Scott, Wildlife Biologist
Paul R. Plemons, Range Technician (Fire)
October 2, 2014

Reviewed by (District or Field Manager):

Name: Donald K Hoffheins Title: Field Manager, Monticello Field Office
Don Hoffheins

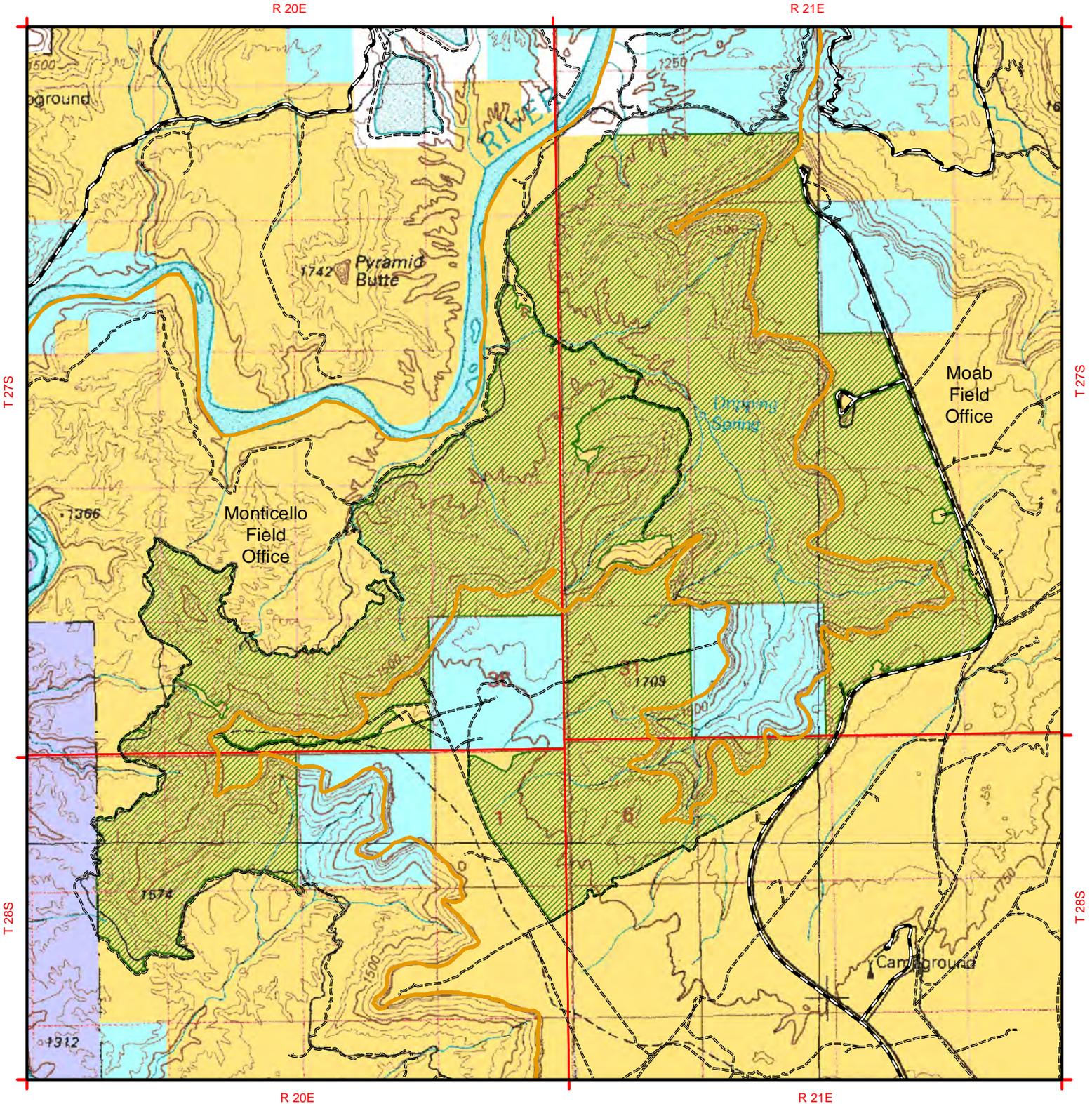
Date: 10/31/14

Reviewed by (District or Field Manager):

Name: Beth Ransel Title: Field Manager, Moab Field Office
Beth Ransel

Date: 10/21/14

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. BLM MANUAL Rel. No. 6-129 Supersedes Rel. 6-126 Date: 03/15/2012



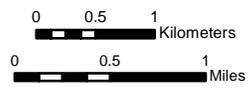
Location Map
Utah BLM Field Office Boundaries



Date: 1/29/2015

2014 Wilderness Character Review Findings

Wilderness Characteristics



- B Roads (Maintained)
- D Roads (Unmaintained)
- Township and Range
- Field Office Boundary

Land Status

- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- National Park Service (NPS)
- Private
- State



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