

WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS REVIEW

Date of Submission: N/A

Date(s) of Field Office Review: 02/06/2007

Submitter: N/A

Name of Area to be Reviewed: Hammond Canyon

BLM Field Office(s) Affected: Monticello

EVALUATION

1.) Was new information submitted by a member of the public for this area?

YES _____. NO X .

2.) If new information was submitted, describe the submission. For example, did the submission include a map that identifies the specific boundaries of the area(s) in question; a narrative that describes the wilderness characteristics of the area and documents how that information differs from the information gathered and reviewed in prior BLM inventories; photographic documentation; etc?

The area reviewed was derived from a GIS Data Layer provided by the Utah Wilderness Coalition (UWC). Additional materials such as maps, photographs, or narratives were not included.

3. As a result of interdisciplinary review of relevant information (which may include aerial photographs, state and county road information, road maintenance agreements, documentation from prior BLM inventories, field observations, maps, master title plats, evidence presented as new information by a proponent, etc.), do you conclude:

_____ a) the decision reached in previous BLM inventories, that the area lacks wilderness characteristics, is still valid.

(or)

X b) some or all of the area has wilderness characteristics as shown on the attached map.

4. Describe your findings regarding specific wilderness characteristics and provide detailed rationale.

Size:

The Hammond Canyon area proposed by the UWC for wilderness consideration is approximately 4,702 acres. Although the unit does not officially meet the 5,000 acre size requirement, and is not contiguous to lands with that possess Wilderness Characteristics, it is bordered on the east side by Ute Tribal Lands and on the west by United States Forest Service (USFS) Roadless Lands, which significantly limits motorized access. The 4,702 Acres identified in the Hammond Canyon Unit consists only of public lands administered by the BLM and does not include USFS Roadless Lands. The Hammond Canyon area was inventoried during the initial inventory in 1979. Because the area was inventoried and no documentation has been received in addition to the GIS data layer, this is not considered to be new information.

Appearance of Naturalness:

The ID team reviewed the area using GIS data layers, which included recent aerial photography (August 2006), San Juan County Road Data, oil-wells GIS Layer, range allotment files, and Reasonable Foreseeable Development (RFD) Data. The ID Team 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. ID Team members have visited this area over multiple years while administering their respective resources, and have noted that the area contains minimal range improvements such as fencelines and stock reservoirs, and contains no known landscape scale surface disturbances, such as major highways, significant recreation development, etc. The Reasonable Foreseeable Development (RFD) Scenario indicates minimal oil and gas activity in the area. Law enforcement patrol logs indicate minimal Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) activity in the area. Therefore, the area appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature and is natural in character.

Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude or Primitive and Unconfined Recreation:

The area is bounded on the east by Ute Tribal Lands and on the west by USFS Roadless Lands, and thus public access is minimal. With minimal human activity, opportunities for solitude can be found throughout the area. Because of its border with Ute Tribal Lands and the rugged topography of the area, which eliminates motorized uses, outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation uses such as hiking and photography are available.

5. Document all information considered during the interdisciplinary team review (e.g. aerial photographs, state and county road information, road maintenance agreements, documentation from prior BLM inventories, field observations, maps, master title plats, evidence presented as new information by a proponent, etc.)

Utah Wilderness Coalition (UWC) GIS Data Layer Proposal (2005)

Cottonwood Allotment File

Master Title Plats

Law Enforcement Patrol Logs: Butler - Comb Sector

GIS Aerial Photography (NAIP 2006: San Juan County north and south)

GIS Oil and Gas Data (og-wells)

Reasonable Foreseeable Development Scenario for Oil and Gas (2005)

Mineral Potential Report (2005)

BLM 1999 Utah Wilderness Inventory Revision (May 2003)

San Juan Resource Area Management Plan (1991)

Analysis of the Management Situation (2005)

Attachments:

- *Map of Hammond Canyon Unit*

6. List the members of the interdisciplinary team and resource specialties represented.

NAME	RESOURCE (S) REPRESENTED
Gary Torres	Planner, NEPA Coordinator
Brad Colin	Recreation, OHV, Wilderness
Jed Carling	Range
Maxine Deeter	Lands, VRM
Marie Tuxhorn	Law Enforcement
Doug Paul	Fire, Fuels
Nick Sandberg	Range, Assistant Field Manager
Sandra Meyers	Field Manager
Brian Quigley	Recreation
Tammy Wallace	Wildlife
Nancy Shearin	Cultural, Paleontology
Jeff Brown	Oil and Gas, Hazardous Materials
Ted McDougall	Minerals
Paul Curtis	Range, Riparian, Soils, Vegetation
Dave Mermejo	BLM Utah State Office
Paul Leatherbury	GIS

Field Office Manager _____

Date _____.

This determination is part of an interim step in BLM's internal decision-making process and does not constitute a decision that can be appealed.