

WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS REVIEW

Date of Submission: 02/20/2005

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

Submitter: N/A

Name of Area to be Reviewed: Monument 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:

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

(or)

_____ 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 Monument Canyon area proposed by the UWC for wilderness consideration is approximately 18,178 acres. The Monument Canyon area was inventoried during the initial inventory in 1979 and was not carried forward into the intensive inventory because the area was determined not to be natural in character. 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. The area as proposed does meet the 5,000 acre size requirement for wilderness management.

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, og-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. The Monument Canyon area was inventoried in 1979 as part of initial inventory units UT-060-225 and UT-060-226. During this initial phase of the inventory, it was noted that this area contained numerous surface disturbances associated with uranium mining and bladed seismic lines. Since that time, ID Team members have visited this area while administering their respective resources, and have noted that the intrusions identified in the 1979 inventory have not naturally rehabilitated significantly. The recent renewed interest in oil and gas exploration has resulted in additional surface intrusions in the area. The extensive use of Off-Highway Vehicles, which was minimal in 1979, has increased exponentially since that time, and many of the old mining routes and some of the seismic lines are now substantially noticeable. Therefore, it has been determined that the area does not possess Natural Character.

Because the area was found to not possess Natural Character, further analysis for Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude or Primitive and Unconfined Recreation was not required.

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)
Bug Squaw, Montezuma Canyon, and Monument Canyon Allotment Files
Master Title Plats
Law Enforcement Patrol Logs: Montezuma – Recapture Drainages
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 Utah Final Initial Wilderness Inventory (1979)
San Juan Resource Area Management Plan (1991)
Analysis of the Management Situation (2005)*

Attachments:

- *Map of Monument 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.