

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: Shay Mountain (A-B-C)

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 Shay Mountain area proposed by the UWC for wilderness consideration is approximately 14,830 acres, collectively. This area was examined during the 1979 Initial Wilderness Inventory, and was identified as Titus Canyon (UT-060-168), and was not carried forward for intensive field inventory. The area as proposed does meet the size requirements for wilderness management. However, upon further review, it has been determined that because of significant human disturbances in specific areas and isolation by state lands, the area should be analyzed in three separate units.

The north-central area (Unit A) is approximately 6,708 acres, and the southern area (Unit B) is approximately 7,149 acres, and thus both units meet the size requirement for wilderness management. The extreme northern area (Unit C) is approximately 973 acres, and is isolated by state lands. Because Unit C is not contiguous to a WSA, lands with Wilderness Characteristics, or lands administratively endorsed for wilderness management, it does not meet the 5,000 acre size requirement, and thus will not be analyzed further.

Appearance of Naturalness:

These areas, when inventoried in 1979, were characterized by steep sided canyons and pinyon-juniper woodlands. That inventory also identified several substantial intrusions, such as vehicle routes and several thousand acres of vegetative manipulation (area of chaining), and thus was found not to possess natural character.

Unit B, which consists of the area south of Shay Mountain that extends to the U.S. Forest Service boundary, contains significant human disturbances, such as multiple access roads and landscape treatments (chaining area), which are substantially noticeable. This area has been determined to not possess natural character.

The ID team reviewed the area (Unit A) 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 the area over several years while administering their respective resources, and have noted that it does not contain substantially noticeable human impacts, and contain no other known landscape scale surface disturbances, such as significant recreation development, etc. The Reasonable Foreseeable Development (RFD) Scenario indicates minimal oil and gas activity in the areas. Law enforcement patrol logs indicate limited Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) activity in the area.

The area within Unit A, which consists of the area north of Shay Mountain, including all of Titus Canyon and the lower portion of Shay Canyon, appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature and is natural in character.

Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude or Primitive and Unconfined Recreation:

With minimal evidence of human disturbances in Unit A of the Shay Mountain area, outstanding opportunities for solitude can be found, primarily in Titus and Shay Canyons. Opportunities for primitive recreation uses such as hiking, photography, backpacking and archery/black powder hunting are available.

Supplemental Values

The area also contains significant cultural, paleontological, and wildlife resources, which are considered to be significant supplemental values.

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)

Hart Draw and Indian Creek Allotment Files

Master Title Plats

Law Enforcement Patrol Logs: Dry Valley Summit and Indian Creek Sectors

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 Shay Mountain Units (A-B-C)*

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.