

## 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: Upper Red Canyon (A-B)

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 Upper Red Canyon area proposed by the UWC for wilderness consideration totals approximately 25,076 acres, collectively. This area was previously examined during the 1979 Initial Wilderness Inventory as part of a larger Red Canyon Unit (UT-060-180). While it is not inclusive of the entire original Red Canyon Unit, the area as proposed does meet the size requirements for wilderness management. Because the unit contains a parcel that is isolated from the rest of the unit, each of the two areas will be analyzed separately.*

*Unit A is approximately 24,918 acres in size. Unit B, a small parcel, approximately 158 acres in size, is located along the Red House Cliffs has been isolated from the main body of the unit by state lands. While this area is somewhat natural in character, it is not of sufficient size to allow for the management of wilderness characteristics, and thus it has been determined not to possess wilderness characteristics for planning purposes.*

**Appearance of Naturalness:**

*During the 1979 inventory, the entire Red Canyon Unit (UT-060-180) was determined to be substantially impacted by intensive mining exploration and production. This was characterized as producing a severe loss of natural character, and thus the area was not carried forward for further intensive field inventory. The ID team reviewed the remaining area within Unit A 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. ID Team members have visited this area over several years while administering their respective resources, and have noted that many of the surface disturbances noted in the 1979 inventory have naturally rehabilitated. While much of the mining activity in the area is still visible in the form of adits or waste dumps, it is not considered to be a substantial impact to the naturalness of the area. The Reasonable Foreseeable Development (RFD) Scenario indicates minimal oil and gas activity in the area. Law enforcement patrol logs indicate limited Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) activity in the area. Therefore, with minimal human impacts, 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:**

*With minimal evidence of continued human disturbances, opportunities for solitude can be found throughout the area, primarily along Red Canyon and other interior points throughout the unit. Opportunities for primitive recreation uses such as hiking, photography and rockhounding 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)*
- Lake Canyon and White Canyon Allotment File*
- Master Title Plats*
- Law Enforcement Patrol Logs: Cedar Mesa and Southwest Canyons 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 Upper Red Canyon Units (1-2)*

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

<b>NAME</b>	<b>RESOURCE (S) REPRESENTED</b>
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.