



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
222 North 32nd Street
P.O. Box 30157
Billings, Montana 59107

March 11, 1981

BLM ANNOUNCES FINAL WILDERNESS STUDY DECISIONS FOR
MILES CITY AND LEWISTOWN DISTRICTS

The Montana State BLM Director released his decisions for the intensive wilderness inventory of BLM lands in the Miles City and Lewistown Districts on November 14, 1980. These decisions were subject to a 45 day protest period which ended December 31, 1980. Nineteen inventory units out of a total of 136 units inventoried were protested. After careful consideration of the protests received and a field evaluation of most of the affected units, the State Director has modified his decisions for four of the units in the Lewistown District while the other eleven remain unchanged. The decisions which were announced for the four protested units in the Miles City District in November will also remain unchanged.

The four changes by unit in the Lewistown District are described as follows:

1. Two Calf Creek - MT-068-231.

The unit is dropped from further study. This decision was based on several factors. A road not identified in the inventory phase was located in T. 22 N., R. 22 E., Sections 27, 28, 29, 33, 34, and 35. This road bisected the 8,500 acre unit leaving only 2,790 acres north of the road which does not meet the size criteria. The southern segment contains 5,710 acres and meets the size criteria. The elimination of the northern portion, however, narrows the remainder of the unit significantly and leads to the final decision that the southern portion no longer possesses the outstanding opportunities for solitude necessary to study the area for wilderness suitability.

2. Burnt Timber Canyon - MT-067-205.

This unit was dropped in the Final Inventory Decision of November 1980. Protests were received insisting that, although roads divided the unit into several parcels of less than 5,000 acres the area contiguous with the Forest Service RARE II Area

1-362, Lost Water Canyon, still possessed outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation when considered in conjunction with the Lost Water Canyon Unit. The Wilderness Inventory Handbook provides for study of tack-on areas of less than 5,000 acres. Therefore a 3,955 acre tack-on identified on the enclosed map supplement will be studied for wilderness suitability.

3. Woodhawk - MT-068-246.

The unit was dropped in the Final Inventory Decision of November 1980. Protests were received indicating that a large portion of the unit contained apparently natural areas where outstanding opportunities for solitude are available. Further field investigation revealed that a large portion of the area protested was apparently natural and did possess an outstanding opportunity for solitude. Therefore, the 7,855 acre area indicated on the enclosed map supplement will be studied for wilderness suitability.

4. Antelope Creek - MT-065-266.

The 2,340 acre eastern portion of the Antelope Creek Unit will remain unchanged from the Final Decision of the Montana Wilderness Inventory. It will be studied as a tack-on to the Antelope Creek Study Area of the C.M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge.

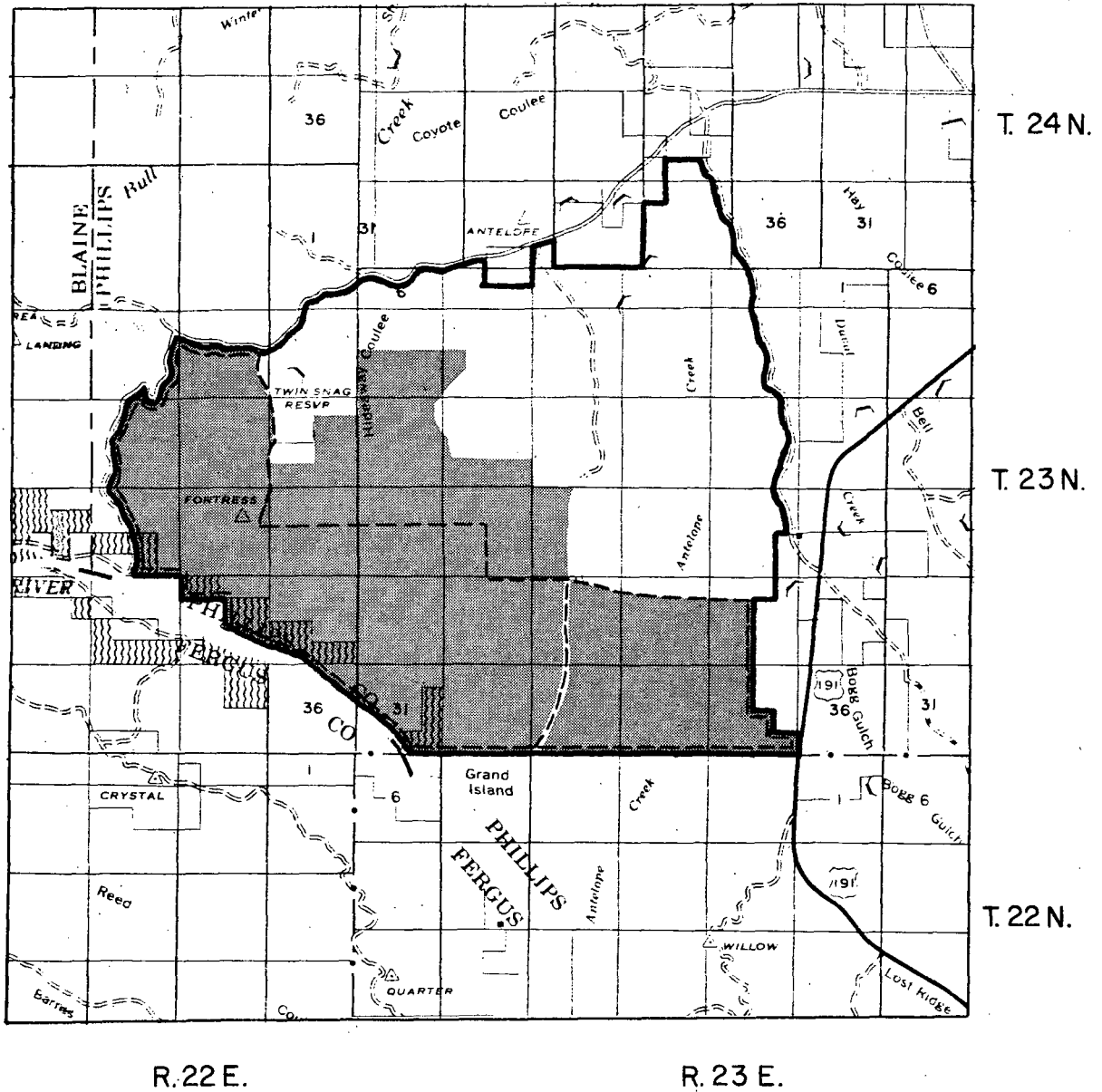
The 7,060 acre western portion of Antelope Creek as defined in the November 1980, State Director's final decision will be enlarged by 2,940 acres. The additional acreage appears natural and includes the upper reaches of several rugged drainages that enhance the original unit's opportunities for solitude.

The final decision for the Lewistown and Miles City Districts has identified 18 units containing 173,626 acres as areas which will be studied further for wilderness. The Montana BLM has previously identified, through accelerated inventories, 26 units containing 260,304 acres which will be studied for possible wilderness designation. The Montana BLM wilderness study area total is 43 areas containing 433,930 acres. The agency has eliminated 7,661,458 acres from further wilderness consideration in Montana.

Any person adversely affected by this decision has the right to appeal the decision to the Interior Board of Land Appeals in Washington, D.C. Information on appeals may be obtained by writing:

Bureau of Land Management
222 North 32nd Street
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ANTELOPE CREEK
MT-065-266



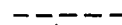
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1/2 INCH = 1 MILE SERIES



Original Unit Boundary



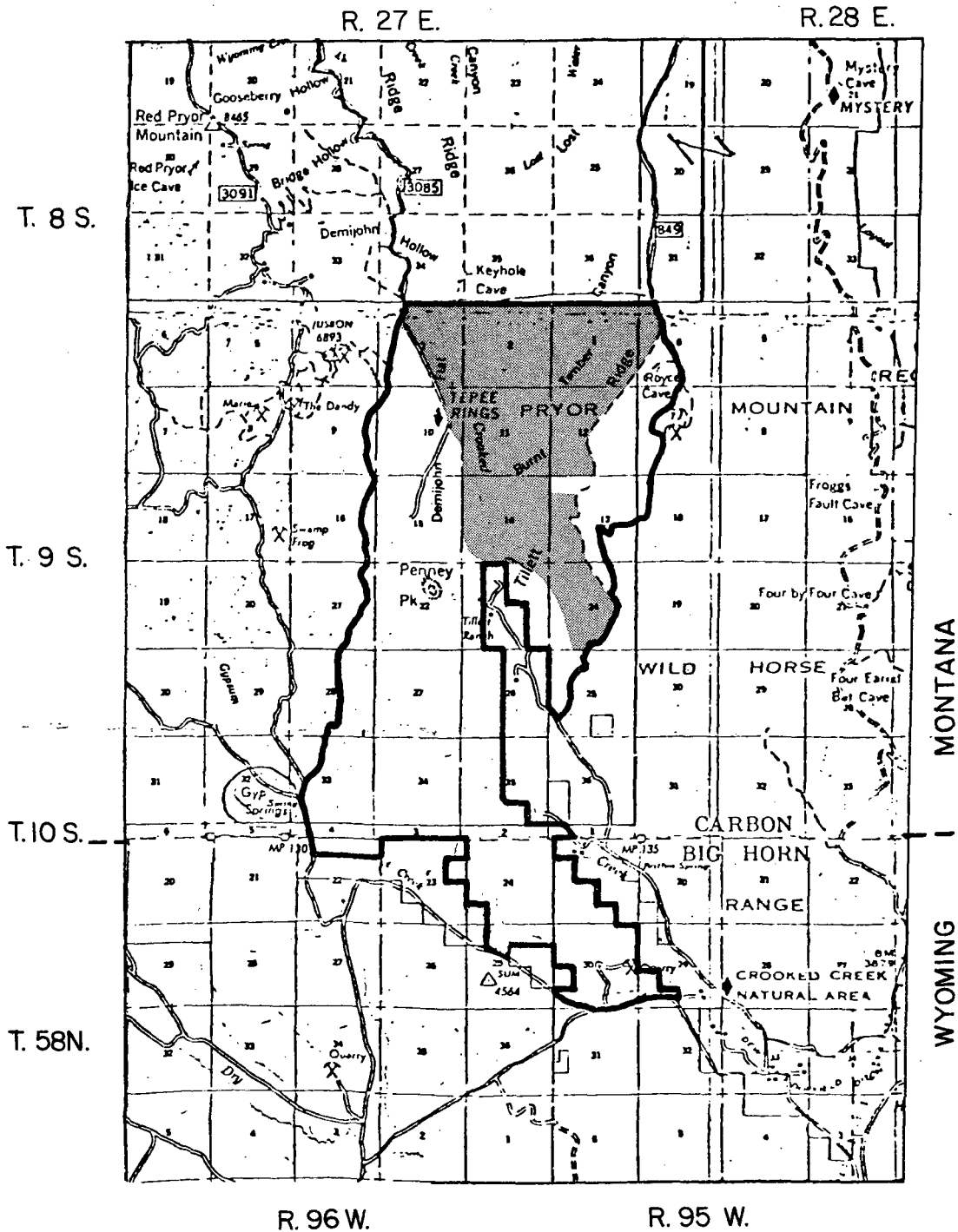
Intensive Inventory Decision



Final Decision Area
Based on Protest



BURNT TIMBER CANYON MT-067-205



SCALE 1:126,720
1/2 INCH = 1 MILE SERIES

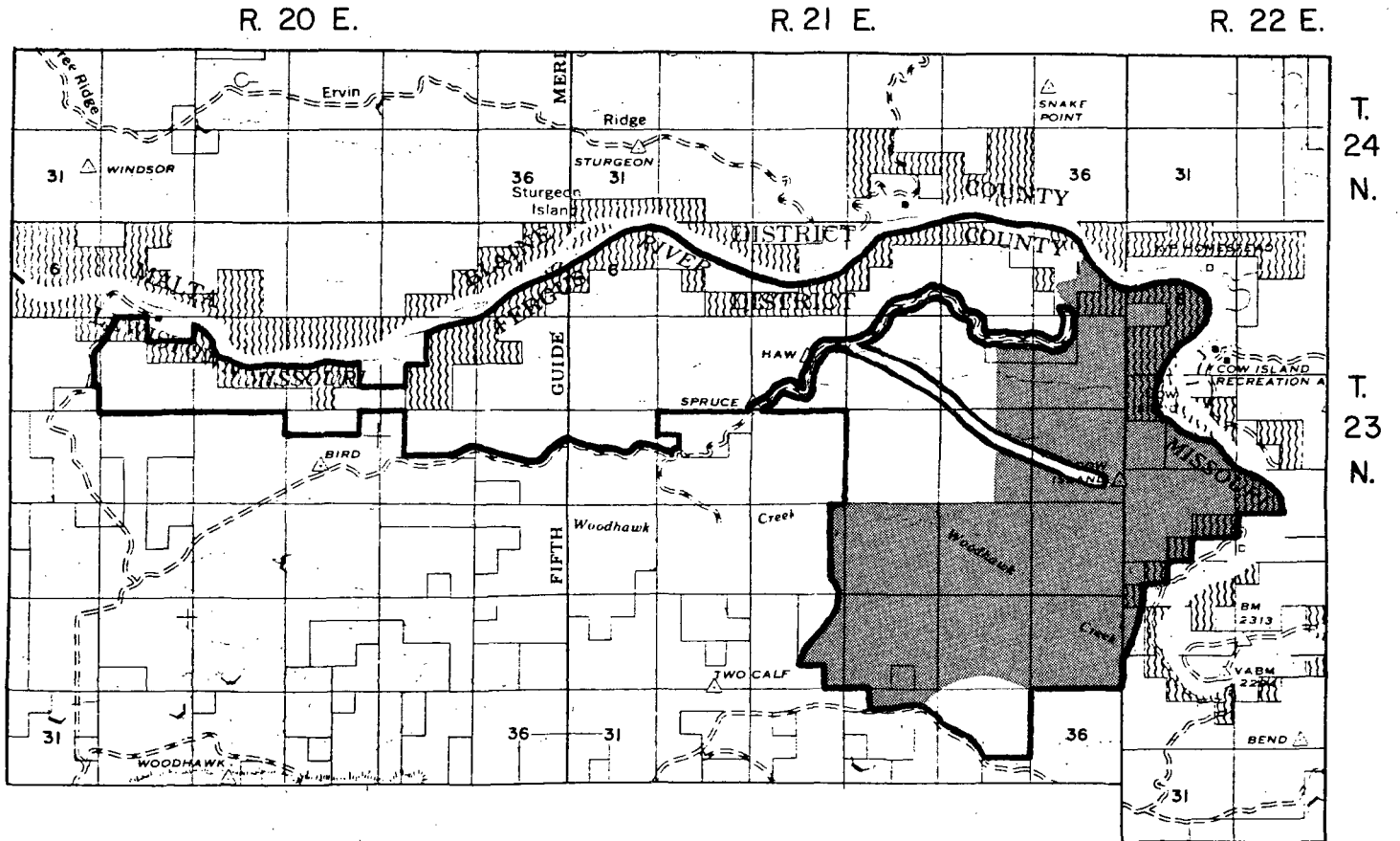
Original Unit Boundary

Intensive Inventory Decision · Unit Dropped

Final Decision Area
Based on Protest






WOODHAWK
MT-068-246



SCALE 1:126,720
1/2 INCH = 1 MILE SERIES



- Original Unit Boundary · 
- Intensive Inventory Decision · unit dropped · 
- Final Decision Area Based on Protest · 

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Form 1543-3
(January 1978)

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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Analysis of the
Accelerated Wilderness Inventory

Bitter Creek Unit (MT-064-356)
Lewistown BLM District

The wilderness inventory of the Bitter Creek Unit was begun in November 1978. The results of the initial inventory were released to the public on April 1, 1979. This release was followed by a 90-day public comment period. An intensive inventory (field review) utilizing public comments received was conducted during the summer of 1979. The results of the intensive inventory were released to the public on October 22, 1979. This release was followed by a 60-day public comment period which ended December 20, 1979. During the course of the inventory, the Bureau has looked at 80,145 acres which at one time or another were considered to be a part of the Unit. Based on consideration of public comments and re-evaluation of inventory data, three travel routes previously classed as vehicular ways are now classed as roads by the definition given in the Bureau's Wilderness Inventory Handbook (September 27, 1978). Based on these roads and information gathered from the public about evidences of man, the Bitter Creek Unit has been divided into five parcels labeled A through E on the accompanying map. Parcel A (16,882 acres) and Parcel E (4,150 acres) because of the inescapable imprint of man and his works are hereby dropped from any further consideration for wilderness. The remaining parcels B (8,615 acres), C (11,091 acres), and D (39,406 acres) will be further studied for wilderness potential and constitute the Bitter Creek Wilderness Study Area (WSA). This results in an aggregate of 21,032 acres being dropped from further consideration and 59,112 acres being included in the WSA.

The Bitter Creek WSA is located in Valley County, Montana, approximately 25 miles northwest of Glasgow. The Unit consists of a variety of land-forms ranging from grassland plateaus to riparian zones to a combination of badlands and juniper covered hillsides. It encompasses portions of The Bitter Creek and Eagles Nest coulee drainages. Vegetation within the Unit varies from short grass prairie types through sagebrush to horizontal juniper and buffaloberry with stands of cottonwood and aspen in the drainage courses.

Subunits B, C, and D, all exhibit the elements of naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude which qualify them for WSA status. Based on comments from the public about roads, vehicle ways, fences, stock watering facilities and evidence of previous cultivation, subunits A and E have been determined not to meet the naturalness requirements. In addition to the specific comments received which led to the modification of the proposed WSA, many general comments were received which were either for or against wilderness study, or were based on perceived social or economic effect. These comments will be considered prior to the decision to recommend the Bitter Creek Unit as suitable or unsuitable for preservation as wilderness but they had no effect on this decision to designate a part of the Unit as a WSA.

The inventory of the Bitter Creek Unit was accelerated to enable the Bureau to determine whether or not there would be any irreconcilable conflicts between wilderness study of the Unit and the proposed Northern Border leg of the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System. The pipeline will be permitted to follow the road corridor dividing subunits B and D. (Road II on accompanying map.)

The pipeline will be constructed within the visual zone influenced by the road and will be contingent upon environmental constraints.

Maps showing the wilderness study area boundaries in greater detail are available for public inspection at the Montana State Bureau of Land Management Office, 222 North 32nd Street, Billings, Montana 59101, the Lewistown District Office, Airport Road, Lewistown, Montana 59457 and the Valley Resource Area Office, 626 Third Avenue North, Glasgow, Montana 59230.



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March 1980

Dear Reader:

This packet contains two wilderness inventory decisions.

The booklet and map dealing with the Butte District Overthrust Belt inventory is a final decision document. This decision was preceded by a 90-day public comment period. Additional public comments will not be solicited. The decision is followed, however, by a 30-day protest period. Additional information concerning protests is provided in the enclosed Overthrust Belt Inventory Booklet.

The map and booklet depicting the Miles City and Lewistown District inventory results is a proposed final decision. This proposal is followed by a 90-day public comment period beginning March 30 and ending June 30. Your comments will be carefully considered before a final decision is reached. The final decision affecting these lands will be announced by September 1, 1980.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest and participation to date in the Montana Bureau of Land Management wilderness inventory. Your continued participation is encouraged and very much appreciated. As a matter of fact, it is critical to the success of this effort.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Penfold
State Director



United States Department of the Interior

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20 APR 1981

BLM TO CONDUCT STUDIES FOR EIGHT WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS (WSAs) IN DILLON RESOURCE AREA

The Bureau of Land Management has decided to complete the final stages of wilderness study for eight WSAs in the Dillon Resource Area, Butte District. The wilderness study decisions on the eight WSAs have been appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals. Contacts with individuals who have appealed the wilderness inventory decisions have revealed that they are not opposed to beginning wilderness study work this fiscal year.

The study will be accomplished through the development of a wilderness planning amendment/environmental impact statement (WPA/EIS), which will serve to amend the Dillon Resource Area Management Framework Plan (MFP) completed in 1979.

The purpose of the amendment is to determine the suitability or non-suitability for wilderness designation of eight WSAs in the Dillon Resource Area. The process will result in recommendations by the Secretary of the Interior to the President, as to which areas or portions of areas should be designated as wilderness. The final decision as to whether the WSAs should be designated wilderness will be made by Congress. The amendment will not determine how the WSAs will be managed if they are not recommended as wilderness; these nonwilderness allocation decisions already exist in the Dillon MFP.

The WPA/EIS will deal with the following eight WSAs in the Dillon Resource Area:

1. Ruby Mountains, MT-076-001
2. Blacktail Mountains, MT-076-002
3. E. Fk. of Blacktail Deer Crk, MT-076-007
4. Hidden Pasture Creek, MT-076-022
5. Bell/Limekiln Canyons, MT-076-026
6. Henneberry Ridge, MT-076-028

7. Farlin Creek, MT-076-034

8. Axolotl Lakes, MT-076-69.

The first public meetings for this study effort will be held at the following locations and times:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
May 12, 1981	7-10 p.m.	Lima, Montana, High School
May 13, 1981	7-10 p.m.	Sheridan, Montana, Elementary School
May 14, 1981	1-10 p.m.	Dillon Resource Area Office, Dillon, Montana

These meetings will be conducted as informal, open house sessions for the purpose of obtaining public comment on the issues which should be addressed in the study.



United States Department of the Interior

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IN REPLY REFER TO:

8500 (912)

20 APR 1981

The inventory phase of the Bureau of Land Management's Wilderness Program in Montana was recently completed. Forty-two units totaling 421,655 acres were found to contain wilderness characteristics. These areas will be studied to analyze all current resource values before recommendations are submitted to Congress and the President. Some areas in which you are interested may have been dropped from further wilderness consideration.

The following areas were found to be suitable for further study. Please consult the maps and booklets that were sent to you for specific locations. After reviewing the list of study areas, please return the enclosed reply card if you wish to remain on our wilderness mailing list. If we do not receive your card by May 11, we will remove your name from the mailing list.

Areas Designated for Wilderness Study

Butte District:

MT-076-001	Ruby Mountains
MT-076-002	Blacktail Mountains
MT-076-007	E. Fork, Blacktail Deer Creek
MT-076-022	Hidden Pasture Creek
MT-076-026	Bell/Limekiln Canyons
MT-076-028	Henneberry Ridge
MT-076-034	Farlin Creek
MT-076-063	Tobacco Root Tack Ons
MT-076-069	Axolotl Lake
MT-076-079	Madison Tack Ons
MT-075-102	Blind Horse Creek
MT-075-105	Chute Mountain
MT-075-106	Deep Creek/Battle Creek
MT-075-107	N. Fork of Sun River
MT-075-110	Beaver Meadows
MT-075-114	Elkhorn
MT-075-115	Black Sage
MT-075-133	Yellowstone R. Island
MT-074-150	Wales Creek
MT-074-151A	Hoodoo Mountain
MT-074-151B	Gallagher Creek
MT-074-155	Quigg West

Lewistown District:

MT-067-205	Burnt Timber Canyon
MT-067-206	Pryor Mountain
MT-067-207	Big Horn Tack On
MT-067-212	Twin Coulee
MT-068-244	Dog Creek South
MT-068-246	Woodhawk
MT-060-250	Stafford
MT-060-253	Ervin Ridge
MT-060-256	Cow Creek
MT-065-266	Antelope Creek
MT-065-278	Burnt Lodge
MT-064-356	Bitter Creek

Miles City District:

MT-024-633	Billy Creek
MT-024-657	Seven Blackfoot
MT-024-675	Bridge Coulee
MT-024-677	Musselshell Breaks
MT-024-684	Terry Badlands
MT-027-701	Zook Creek
MT-027-702	Buffalo Creek
MT-027-736	Tongue River Breaks

Not Yet Inventoried:

Centennial Mountains

Thank you for your interest in BLM wilderness activities.