

6L00705007

### Feedback On Public Comments

During the past comment period, the Bureau received more than 2,500 letters, coupons, petitions and form letters, urging that we adopt the "Wyoming Conservationist WSA Proposal," which, in its modified version, is to designate 50 areas as WSA's totaling 696,249 acres.

While most of these comments provided little specific information or detail on why a particular unit or units met the criteria for WSA status, they expressed several public concerns which BLM has been aware of and which we would like to restate here.

**First**, the public lands are owned by all citizens collectively, and all citizens have a right to express their desires for the management of those areas.

**Second**, that through increasing development of the public lands, those areas still in a natural condition are steadily being reduced.

**Third**, that a potential Wilderness area is, theoretically, available if at some future time it is determined that the land is needed for a more urgent use; an area rendered unnatural by development is essentially lost to future consideration as wilderness.

**Fourth**, that in our increasingly urbanized society, the need for areas where a person can be removed from the pressures of everyday living has become very important.

**Fifth**, that we have an obligation to future generations of Americans to leave some areas of the nation in a natural state.

**Sixth**, that we need to preserve representative areas of the many and diverse ecosystems that make up this land; and

**Seventh**, that because Wyoming is a high energy potential state and because we have a boom economy, we need to move quickly to protect the remaining wild areas of the state. We at BLM have had these same concerns.

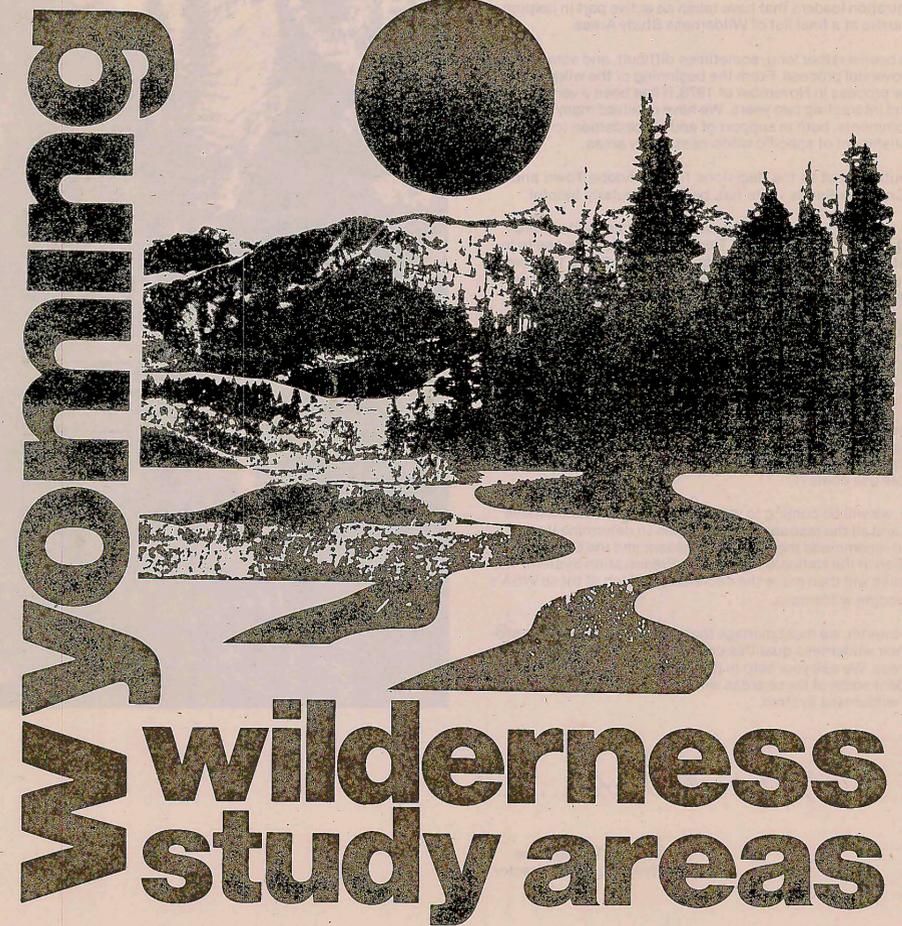
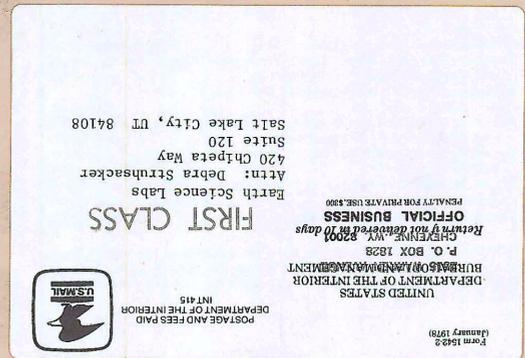
We have also received more than 150 comment sheets, letters and petitions from citizens who are concerned with the potential loss of natural resources and attendant livelihoods if certain lands are "locked up" by a Wilderness Study Area status. The concerns of these respondents are also of concern to BLM. Most of the concerns expressed by those against wilderness, such as loss of resource uses, loss of vehicle access, loss of access by the handicapped, limitations on fire control, and threat of more rigid control by government agencies are concerns which are certainly legitimate, and which will be properly addressed in the next phase of the Wilderness Review process.

During the phase just completed, the Bureau has identified areas that most people agree possess wilderness characteristics as set forth in the Wilderness Act. This

does not say that these areas will or should automatically become wilderness. Now that we have completed the inventory phase, these Wilderness Study Areas will be evaluated in terms of other resource values such as timber, minerals, oil and gas and vehicle access for other uses as well as recreation use, and again, public involvement will be sought to help decide if any particular WSA should be recommended for designation as wilderness by the Congress. Over the next several years, as the land use planning areas where these WSA's are located become due for updating and revision, the public will be called upon again and again to help decide the best use of the natural resources these areas contain.

Land use planning is a dynamic, ongoing process which requires active involvement by the public, state and local governments, and other federal agencies.

PO-123  
SRE110M1180



Supplement to  
Casper Star-Tribune, Cheyenne Tribune-Eagle, Rawlins Daily Times, Rock Springs Rocket-Miner, Sheridan Press, Northern Wyoming Daily News, Gillette News Record, Riverton Ranger, Laramie Boomerang, Billings Gazette

U. S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management Wyoming State Office November, 1980

## Wyoming Identifies Wilderness Study Areas

I would like to express my appreciation to all of the public and organization leaders that have taken an active part in helping BLM arrive at a final list of Wilderness Study Areas.

It has been a rather long, sometimes difficult, and sometimes controversial process. From the beginning of the wilderness review process in November of 1978, it has been a very stimulating and interesting two years. We have received many outstanding comments, both in support of and in opposition to the establishment of specific wilderness study areas.

The public input to the decisions for the Adobe Town and the Red Creek Badlands units has been particularly helpful.

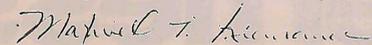
There are several instances where we have reversed our proposed decisions of last April. This was done in response to information and support provided by the public during the comment period. The public participation process works, and works well in Wyoming. Thank you for your help.

The Bureau has identified 43 acres totaling 525,504 acres as Wilderness Study Areas. This is in addition to the three areas totaling 48,005 acres identified in the accelerated inventory of the Overthrust Belt, and the Instant Study Area (Scab Creek) which contains 7,636 acres.

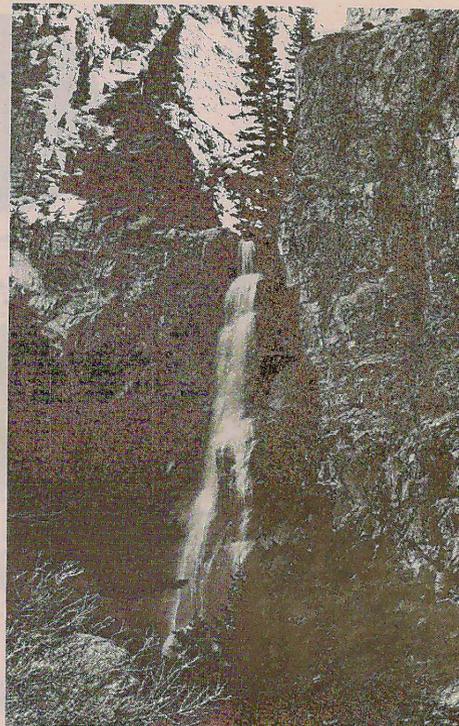
This now completes the inventory phase. Each one of these WSA's will be evaluated over the next several years as the land use planning for that particular section of the state is done in a multiple-use context.

Again, we will be coming to you for help as we evaluate these areas and all the resources they contain to determine if we should recommend them to the President and the Congress for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. The Congress will then make the decision on which of these WSA's will become wilderness.

In the interim, we must manage these areas in a manner to protect their wilderness qualities until they can be reviewed by the Congress. We ask your help in protecting these areas. We are confident some of these areas will make a quality contribution to the wilderness system.



Maxwell T. Lieurance  
Wyoming State Director



## Introduction

This supplement presents the final results of the wilderness inventory conducted by BLM in Wyoming over the past two years.

The final decisions are based on the intensive inventory findings, public comment and documented information submitted during the comment period.

Eleven open houses and nine public meetings were held throughout the state during April, May and June of this year. The formal and informal statements

submitted at the public meetings were especially helpful in arriving at these decisions.

Anyone taking issue with any of the decisions announced in this publication and in the Federal register on November 14, 1980, may protest that decision to the State Director (931), Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 1828, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001. Protests must be filed with the State Director by 4:30 p.m., December 15, 1980. No specific form need be used in filing a protest; however,

protests must be specifically identified as follows:

"Protest to Wyoming State Director's Wilderness Intensive Inventory Decision."

Should any protests be filed on any inventory unit, the State Director will consider such protests and issue a decision which will be subject to appeal on that inventory unit(s) to the Department of the Interior, Board of Land Appeals (IBLA). If the decision on the protest remains consistent with the decision in this publication, only

the protester may appeal to the IBLA. If such decision reflects changes from the decision based on information submitted by the protestant, any adversely affected party may appeal to the IBLA.

This decision will become effective as of 4:30 p.m., December 15, 1980 (close of protest period), for all inventory units on which no protest was filed. A Federal Register Notice and press release will be issued announcing this fact.

## Wilderness Review Summary Initial Inventory

Acres Lacking Wilderness Characteristics ..... 16,606,698  
Acres Going Into Intensive Inventory ..... 1,186,400

### Accelerated Inventory (Overthrust Belt)

Acres Lacking Wilderness Characteristics ..... 68,406

Wilderness Study Areas	Units	Acres
	3	48,005

Units Under Protest/Appeal	3	60,000
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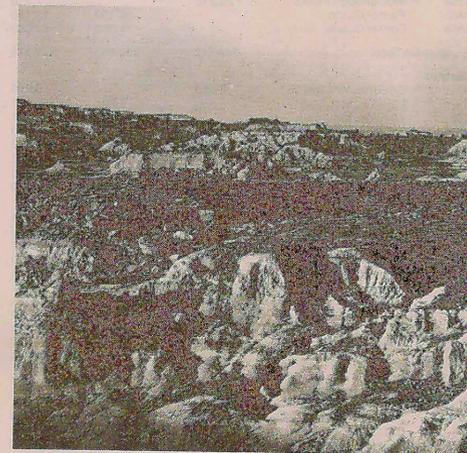
Raymond Mountain (WY-040-221)	(32,936)
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Lake Mountain (WY-040-110)	(13,970)
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Coal Creek (WY-040-223)	(13,174)
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### Instant Study Area

Scab Creek (WY-040-101)	7,636
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## Wilderness Review Process

The identification of Wilderness Study Areas completes the inventory phase of the overall Wilderness Review process. The second phase, called the study phase, will now begin. Over the next several years the BLM will evaluate each of these WSA's in a multiple-use context. All other resources that may be present in a WSA will now be taken into consideration.

The study phase is the Bureau's land use planning process. Regional socio-economic values such as local or regional economies, need for certain natural resources, contribution of public lands to employment opportunities in the region, and repre-

sentation of ecosystems in the national wilderness preservation system, now come into play.

Out of the study phase will come a recommendation for each WSA as to whether it should be designated wilderness or not. This recommendation, along with other required reports, will be forwarded to the President through the Secretary of the Interior.

The President then forwards his recommendation to the Congress who makes the final determination. Until congress makes the final determination, each WSA will be managed under the guidance set forth in the Bureau's Interim Management Policy.

In order to more clearly identify these Wilderness Study Areas, the BLM will mark the main access points with a distinctive sign. Anyone entering a WSA to engage in any type of surface disturbing activity must first contact the BLM district manager to obtain clearance and be informed of stipulations that may apply.

BLM will publish a statewide map at 1:500,000 scale in color which will depict all Wilderness Study Areas in Wyoming as well as other agency wilderness areas or proposals. This map will be available in early April 1981. A booklet describing the wilderness characteristics of each WSA and providing a large scale 1/2" = 1 mile map of each WSA will also be available at that time.

Under the provisions of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the Bureau has until 1991 to complete the study and reporting phases. However, due to potential conflicts with other resource values, primarily energy minerals, the BLM plans to complete the study and reporting on an accelerated schedule. Those WSA's located on the Overthrust Belt or in other high potential energy production areas will be reported to the President by 1984. Other WSA's will be reported as quickly as funding and planning schedules permit.

### Summary of Wilderness Study Areas

Inventory Unit #	Unit Name	Wilderness Study Area (WSA's) (Acres)	Lacking Wilderness Characteristics (Acres)	Total
<b>World District</b>				
WY-010-104a,b,c	Owl Creek	710		710
WY-010-126	Bopcat Draw		17,150	17,150
WY-010-130	Sheep Mountain		23,250	23,250
WY-010-131	Red Butte		11,350	11,350
WY-010-220a	Bud Kimball Creek		27,300	27,300
WY-010-221a	Honeycombs	21,000	43,000	64,000
WY-010-222a	Cedar Mountain	21,570	5,265	26,835
WY-010-222b	Cedar Mountain		10,660	10,660
WY-010-236a	South Paint Rock	660		660
WY-010-239a	Paint Rock	2,770		2,770
WY-010-240a	Medicine Lodge	7,740		7,740
WY-010-241a	Potato Ridge		21,480	21,480
WY-010-241b	Potato Ridge		18,100	18,100
WY-010-241c	Alkali Creek	10,100	6,910	17,010
WY-010-242a	Trapper Creek	7,200		7,200
WY-010-334a	Emblem Draw		46,800	46,800
WY-010-335a	McCullough Peaks	25,210		25,210
WY-010-346a	Foster Gulch		16,150	16,150
WY-010-346b	Foster Gulch		14,060	14,060
<b>District Total</b>		<b>148,710</b>	<b>230,865</b>	<b>379,575</b>
<b>Rawlins District</b>				
WY-030-101	Sweetwater Canyon	9,056		9,056
WY-030-106	Whiskey Mountain		1,707	1,707
WY-030-107	Whiskey Mountain		421	421
WY-030-108	Whiskey Mountain		350	350
WY-030-109	Dubois Badlands	4,520		4,520
WY-030-110	Whiskey Mountain		487	487
WY-030-111	Copper Mountain	6,858		6,858
WY-030-113	Lysite Mountain		7,330	7,330
WY-030-115	Lysite Badlands		14,831	14,831
WY-030-120	Sweetwater Rocks	6,316		6,316
WY-030-121	Sweetwater Rocks		8,506	8,506
WY-030-122	Sweetwater Rocks	12,789	596	13,385
WY-030-123a	Sweetwater Rocks	7,041	7,747	14,788
WY-030-123b	Sweetwater Rocks	6,429	885	7,314
WY-030-301	Encampment River Canyon	3,380	2,460	5,840
WY-030-304	Bennett Mountains	5,722	1,358	7,080
WY-030-305	Pedro Mountains	5,990		5,990
WY-030-401	Adobe Town	33,000	22,000	55,000
WY-030-407	Ferris Mountains	20,495	2,660	23,155
<b>District Total</b>		<b>122,083</b>	<b>70,851</b>	<b>192,934</b>
<b>Rock Springs District</b>				
WY-040-104	South Soda Lake		70	70
WY-040-105	Cottonwood Creek		3,540	3,540
WY-040-106	East Fork	1,415	4,085	5,500
WY-040-114, 115, 116	LaBarge Islands		180	180
WY-040-125	New Fork Islands		72	72
WY-040-306	Buffalo Hump	10,300		10,300
WY-040-307	Sand Dunes	27,200	3,816	31,016
WY-040-311	Alkali Draw	16,990		16,990
WY-040-313	South Pinnacles	10,826	560	11,386
WY-040-314,315	Pinnacles - Big Empty		13,797	13,797
WY-040-316,317	Alkali Basin - East San Dunes	12,800	33,690	46,490
WY-040-318	Red Lake	9,515	1,087	10,602
WY-040-319	Bush Creek		15,186	15,186
WY-040-323	Honeycomb Buttes	41,620	31,161	72,781
WY-040-324	Oregon Buttes	5,700	1,456	7,156
WY-040-325	Whitehorse Creek	4,028	2,662	6,690
WY-040-326	Harris Slough		13,225	13,225
WY-040-327	Eik Mountain		7,795	7,795
WY-040-328	Hill Creek	1,300	614	1,914
WY-040-335	Devils Playground	15,648	1,058	16,706
WY-040-401	Twin Buttes	8,630	1,271	9,901
WY-040-403,404	Anvil Wash-Butte Creek		22,560	22,560
WY-040-405	Wildhorse Basin		4,753	4,753
WY-040-406, 407, 410	Red Creek Badlands	7,100	26,945	34,045
WY-040-408	Adobe Town	52,710	8,970	61,680
<b>District Total</b>		<b>225,780</b>	<b>198,553</b>	<b>424,333</b>
<b>Casper District</b>				
WY-060-101	LaBonte		3,800	3,800
WY-060-201a	Gardner Mountain	6,423	12,017	18,440
WY-060-202	North Fork Powder River	10,089	5,082	15,171
WY-060-204	Fortification Creek	12,419	15,681	28,100
<b>District Total</b>		<b>28,931</b>	<b>36,580</b>	<b>65,511</b>
<b>State Total</b>		<b>525,504</b>	<b>536,849</b>	<b>1,062,353</b>

### How To Locate An Inventory Unit

Each inventory unit has a number consisting of two letters and six digits. An example is WY-040-307. The letters refer to the state. Inventory units in Wyoming have two letters WY.

The three digits in the middle of the identification number refer to the BLM district. The four district identification numbers are:

- 010 World District
- 030 Rawlins District
- 040 Rock Springs District
- 060 Casper District

For example, WY-040-307 is in the Rock Springs District. The last three numbers identify the Resource Area and the specific unit. The first number tells the Resource Area in which the unit is located; the last two refer to a specific unit. The numbers for the Resource Areas are:

- World District**
- 1—Grass Creek Resource Area
- 2—Washakie Resource Area
- 3—Cody Resource Area

- Rawlins District**
- 1—Lander Resource Area
- 3—Medicine Bow Resource Area
- 4—Divide Resource Area

- Rock Springs District**
- 1—Pinedale Resource Area
- 2—Kemmerer Resource Area
- 3—Big Sandy Resource Area
- 4—Salt Wells Resource Area

- Casper District**
- 1—Platte Resource Area
- 2—Buffalo Resource Area

Again referring to the example WY-040-307, the inventory unit is in the Big Sandy Resource Area (307) and is the Sand Dunes unit. By using these numbers you can easily locate a specific inventory unit either in the narrative or on the map.

### Interim Management Policy

From the beginning of the Wilderness inventory, it has been the Bureau's intent to complete the review as quickly as possible while conducting a thorough inventory that would be technically adequate. In compliance with FLPMA, the Bureau is attempting to protect wilderness qualities and at the same time minimize delay or interference with ongoing projects and uses on the public lands.

The BLM's Interim Management Policy stresses continued existing uses as long as those uses are nonimpairing or are exempted from the policy constraints.

Mineral and grazing uses which existed before October 21, 1976, can continue in the same manner and degree as long as they do not cause unnecessary or undue degradation.

Recreational uses such as off-road vehicles can continue as long as they do not impair wilderness values.

The basic philosophy of the IMP is that the particular use, existing or proposed, is not the main concern, but rather, the effect of that use on the wilderness characteristics. Uses not normally thought of as being compatible with wilderness may be authorized if they can be done in a way that will not degrade wilderness qualities.

### Accelerated Inventory Results

Wyoming, along with several other western states, completed an accelerated inventory of public lands on the Overthrust Belt in November, 1979.

This advance inventory was requested by the Secretary of the Interior for all public lands on the Overthrust Belt, a geologic formation with high oil and gas potential.

Wyoming BLM identified two Wilderness Study Areas and published the final decision on

December 14, 1979. These two Wilderness Study Areas are the Raymond Mountain area with 32,936 acres, and the Lake Mountain area with 13,970 acres.

The final decision on these two areas, as well as the decision to drop the Coal Creek unit (13,175 acres) was appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA). As of October 1, 1980, a judgment had not been announced on these appeals.

### Wilderness Study Areas

**WORLD DISTRICT**  
Owl Creek  
WY-010-104 a,b,c

#### Unit Description

The unit is composed of three separate tracts located in the southeastern portion of the Absaroka Mountains near the Washakie Needles. The landscape is dominated by a major ridge line that divides the main drainages of Rock Creek and the South Fork of Owl Creek. Several steep, rugged spur ridges extend laterally from the main ridge, and are sharply separated by a number of deep side draws that drain into the relatively wide, flat bottoms of the main drainages.

Tracts 104a and 104c are composed of moderately vegetated spur ridges that drop sharply from about mid-slope down to the wide bottoms of the South Fork of Owl Creek and Rock Creek. The steep slopes are covered with irregular, dense patches of mixed conifers interspersed with exposed areas of bare, rocky soil. Conifers mingle with linear patches and isolated pockets of aspen along the steeper draw bottoms. Tract 104b is a long, narrow strip located above the timber line along the crest and upper western slopes of the main ridge line dividing the South Fork of Owl Creek and Rock Creek. Severe weathering and erosion on the steep rocky slopes and cliffs are accentuated by the complete lack of vegetation along the ridge line.

Elevations in the unit range from almost 9,000 feet along the bare ridge crest in tract 104b, to 9,200 feet in the southeast corner of tract 104c along the Rock Creek bottom, and 9,000 feet along the South Fork of Owl Creek in the southern tip of tract 104a.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The three parcels total 710 acres. The tracts are contiguous with the formally designated Washakie Wilderness Area in the Shoshone National Forest and are exempt from meeting the minimum 5,000 acre size criterion.

**Naturalness.** The tracts appear to be almost completely untouched by the imprints of man. An improved jeep trail running along the South fork of Owl Creek and fenced study enclosure in the Rock Creek drainage bottom are the only intrusions documented during the intensive inventory. The impact of these intrusions is insignificant.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The unit provides outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive and unconfined recreation only because it is a contiguous portion of the Washakie Wilderness Area.

**Supplemental Values.** The unit provides important habitat for deer, elk, bighorn sheep and a variety of raptors and small upland game animals. The geology of the area is largely unexplored and offers excellent opportunities for study of tertiary volcanics in the area.

#### Public Comment

Nine comments were received on this unit. Two comments disagreed with the proposed decision to designate the unit as a Wilderness Study Area but cited other resource values and philosophical arguments for their rationales. Five of the comments in favor of the proposed decision addressed issues other than wilderness characteristics in their rationales.

Two comments cited the unit's wilderness characteristics in their support of the proposed designation. Based on this input, the final decision on this unit is to establish it as a Wilderness Study Area.

**Sheep Mountain**  
WY-010-130

#### Unit Description

The unit is dominated by the rugged badlands formed by irregular erosion and drainage patterns. Sheep Mountain and the easternmost portion of Tatman Mountain are the dominant topographic features. Sharply incised drainages radiate from these mountains and combine to form moderately broad, flat, grassy bottoms separated by rounded badland ridges along the perimeter of the unit. Elevations range from 5800 feet on Tatman Mountain to 4500 feet in the drainage bottoms.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The size of the area following the initial inventory was 28,300 acres. This acreage was revised to 28,250 acres as a result of more accurate location of roads and a more precise area measurement. Field investigations identified several roads and a concentration of man-made intrusions that resulted in another reduction of 6,000 acres. That left a total size of 22,250 acres.

**Naturalness.** The area appears to retain a substantially natural character in spite of the presence of intrusions such as bladed trails, reservoirs and a few short fence segments. The impacts of these intrusions do not substantially detract from the natural character of the unit because they are widely distributed, well screened and generally in close proximity to the unit's boundaries. The central portion of the unit is almost completely untouched by man's activities.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The rugged badland topography in the unit provides excellent opportunity for solitude. The unit is large size, compact configuration and substantially unimpaired character combine to make it an opportunity outstanding within the Big Horn Basin.

The unit provides a resource base for a variety of primitive recreation activities, such as geologic sightseeing, collecting, photography, hiking, and backpacking. The unit's large size and unimpaired natural character enhance these activities to provide an opportunity for an outstanding primitive recreation experience.

**Supplemental Values.** Supplemental values in the unit include scientifically important geologic and paleontologic resources and habitat for mule deer, wild horses, sage grouse and a variety of raptors and small mammals.

#### Public Comment

Eleven comments were received on this unit. Only two comments were opposed to the proposed decision; these comments cited other resource values and rationales other than wilderness characteristics in their opposition. Six of the comments in favor of the proposed decision were generally philosophical in nature or cited other resource values such as wildlife as rationales for agreement with the decision. Three comments specifically cited the unit's natural character and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude in their support for the proposed designation. As a result of analysis of public comment, the final decision is to retain this unit, as described in the proposed decision, as a Wilderness Study Area.

**Red Butte**  
WY-010-131

#### Unit Description

The unit exhibits an interesting diversity of landforms and vegetation types. The central portion of the unit consists predominantly of bare, rugged, colorful badland ridges and peaks broken by irregular, sharply cut drainages. Red Butte dominates this central terrain at an elevation of 5185 feet. The northeastern portion exhibits less rugged badlands intermixed with a series of small bench-like terraces overlooking the flat drainage bottom of Fivemile Creek. This area exhibits a moderately dense cover of sagebrush-grass vegetation in contrast with the bare, red-hued badland ridges. In the western portion of the unit, the badlands open up to broad, shallow drainages and flat to rolling plains along the drainages of Reservoir Creek and the North Fork of Fifteenmile Creek. Vegetation in this portion of the unit is predominantly a sabbat-sagebrush-grass association.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** Field investigations have substantiated three roads within the unit: two short cherry-stem roads intruding from the western boundary, and a one mile segment in the northwest corner extending from the western to the northern boundary roads. The two cherry stem routes and a 150-acre tract in the northwest corner have been deleted by boundary revision along these roads, reducing the unit to 11,350 acres.

**Naturalness.** The unit retains a substantially natural character. Minor intrusions consist of a number of short bladed trails along the eastern boundary, five miles of fence line extending through the eastern half, and eleven small reservoirs scattered throughout the unit.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The unit offers an outstanding opportunity for solitude. The rugged badland topography of the unit, combined with its unimpaired natural character, provide an opportunity to avoid the evidence of man's presence that is uncommon in more intruded badland areas.

A variety of primitive recreation activities are available in the unit. Some activities, such as geologic sight-seeing and photography, are excellent throughout the entire badlands area. Opportunities for backpacking, hiking and other activities that are enhanced by areas exhibiting a high degree of natural character are especially good. The variety and quality of activities available combine to offer an outstanding recreation experience in the unit.

**Supplemental Values.** Scientifically significant geological and paleontological values, habitat for wild horses, mule deer, antelope and numerous small mammals, and Class A scenic quality are among supplemental values possessed by the unit.

#### Public Comment

Eleven comments were received on this unit. Two comments, which addressed issues other than wilderness characteristics, disagreed with the proposed Wilderness Study Area designation. Seven of the nine comments in favor of the proposed decision stated other resource values or did not give a rationale for their agreement. Two comments addressed the specific characteristics of the unit in their support of the proposed designation. Based on this public input, the decision to identify the unit as a Wilderness Study Area is final.

**Honeycombs**  
WY-010-221a

#### Unit Description

This unit is an extensive area which encompasses thousands of acres of badland topography, known locally as the Honeycombs. In a general sense, this unit consists of two land forms. A central or core area consists of sharply eroded, strongly dissected badland topography. The remainder of the unit is rolling to steep hills. Elevations range from about 4,400 feet to 5,500 feet. The rolling areas of the unit support fairly dense stands of sagebrush and grasses. The density of vegetation decreases as the badland topography becomes more prevalent. Sagebrush and grasses are still the most common vegetation. However, the majority of vegetation is found in the drainages, leaving most hillsides and ridge tops sparsely vegetated.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The recommendation at the end of the initial inventory was to retain 60,000 acres for intensive inventory. Public comment resulted in an increase in the size of the area retained for intensive inventory to 68,400 acres (64,000 BLM and 4,400 state). Identification of two-track roads and other intrusions during intensive inventory resulted in a division of the inventory unit into two segments. Segment 1 is that portion recommended for WSA status at the end of the intensive inventory period and is 21,000 acres in size. Segment 2 is the remainder of the unit and contains 43,000 acres of public land and 4,400 acres of state land.

**Naturalness.** On the basis of the intensive inventory, segment 1 appeared to be essentially natural with the works of man substantially unnoticeable. Segment 2 appeared sufficiently impacted by intrusions that it cannot be considered in a natural condition. Bladed trails in varying conditions and reservoirs are the two major groups of intrusions identified during the intensive inventory. These intrusions occurred largely in segment 2. That, combined with rolling topography and the regular use of many of the intrusions significantly altered the natural character of the segment. The impact of intrusions on segment 1 was slight. These intrusions are substantially unnoticeable due to their dispersal, size, topographic screening and natural healing of scars through non-use, erosion and revegetation.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Solitude exists in unit 221a because of its size and because its use is limited. Outstanding opportunities are thought to exist in segment 1 primarily because of the suitability of the terrain for screening. The rugged terrain, steep-sided hills and winding drainages limit sight distances. Additional factors which lead to an outstanding opportunity are the dispersal of use due to size and configuration of segment 1 and the relative lack of man-made features in the segment. Segment 2 lacks an outstanding opportunity for solitude due to an overall lack of topographic and vegetative screening and the density and visibility of man-made features.

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are found in both segments. The entire unit seems to possess these opportunities because of its size, the varied character of the landscape, the natural resources available and the diverse activities which can occur there.

**Supplemental Values.** Unit 221a is yearlong range for deer and antelope. East Fork Nowater Creek is classified as deer winter range. The southern portion of the unit is utilized by elk for winter range. Golden eagles also inhabit the unit. Unit 221a is known to have deposits of large mammalian fossils from the Tertiary Period. The possibility exists for locating reptilian fossils in the vicinity of the unit's east boundary.

#### Public Comment

Of the twenty-eight comments on this unit, more than half were from wilderness advocates in Ohio. Four local comments were among those received; eight comments came from elsewhere in Wyoming. Eight comments specified the proposed decision. Only one comment specifically addresses wilderness character. This respondent feels naturalness and solitude are lacking due to an absence of visual screening.

The remaining opposing comments offer no new information that would affect the proposed decision. Thirteen of the nineteen comments supporting the proposed decision include some discussion of wilderness characteristics. However, a majority of those comments are machine copies of an original opinion which have been submitted by various individuals. Overall, there is nothing in the comments that would cause a change in the proposed decision. Therefore, the unit is identified as a Wilderness Study Area.

**Cedar Mountain**  
WY-010-222a

#### Unit Description

This unit is an area of rugged topography characterized by deep, steep-sided drainages flowing north or west toward the Bighorn River. Cedar Mountain is the dominant visual feature of the unit. It is unusual in the vicinity because of its elevation, the vegetation growing on it and the imposing rock escarpment which forms its southern side. Vegetation consists mainly of sagebrush and grasses. Rabbitbrush is common in drainages, around reservoirs and along vehicle routes. A belt of junipers is found on Cedar Mountain. Elevation in the unit varies from 4,200 feet to 5,500 feet.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The area recommended for intensive inventory totaled 20,940 acres. The unit has state inholdings amounting to 560 acres. Public comment resulted in boundary adjustments which put the unit's size at 27,200 acres, including 365 acres of state land. During inventory, a series of two-track roads were identified which caused the unit to be divided into three segments. Segments 1, 2, and 3 total 11,200 acres, 10,370 acres and 5,265 acres, respectively. Additionally, a "cherry-stem" road was identified.

**Naturalness.** Man-made features have had a definite effect on the naturalness of the unit. Segment 3 has suffered most. The density of intrusions and their visibility due to a general lack of suitable topographic or vegetation screening as affected the naturalness of segment 3 to the extent that it cannot be considered natural. The naturalness of segment 1 is affected by the presence of old bladed trails. The presence of these trails is unmistakable and they influence the apparent naturalness of the segment. However, that presence, is mitigated by topographic screening, by lack of use and by natural ongoing rehabilitation. Segment 1 has marginal apparent naturalness, with good potential for a return to a higher degree of naturalness. Segment 2 has moderate apparent naturalness. The main feature that affects naturalness character is, again, the bladed trail. The presence of bladed trails in this segment is obvious. However, this presence is more strongly mitigated than in segments 1 and 3 due to substantial topographic screening and the small number of trails in comparison with the other segments. Trails in segment 2 seem frequently to be located toward the bottoms of hills rather than on the more visible ridges. Finally, erosion and natural revegetation are reducing the visibility of the bladed trails.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Segments 1 and 2 seem to have outstanding opportunities for solitude. Segment 3 does not. Factors influencing solitude in segments 1 and 2 are size, and screening ability of topography and vegetation. The rugged, steep-sided, badland character of segments 1 and 2 enhance the opportunities for solitude. Segment 3 is largely a gentle to rolling landscape. Segment 3 has limited vegetative and topographic diversity which could provide screening. The size of segment 3 also affects solitude.

All three segments of the unit have opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The diversity of the activities possible, the size of the unit, and the lack of man-made confinements, in combination, provide an outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation.

**Supplemental Values.** This unit provides both winter range and year-long habitat for mule deer. Bald and golden eagles have been sighted in the unit. The geologic formations of the unit are storehouses for reptilian and mammalian fossils and petrified wood.

**Cedar Mountain (cont.)**  
**Public Comment**

Nineteen comments were submitted on this unit. Eleven comments were local, five originated elsewhere in Wyoming, and three came from out-of-state. Eight of the comments support the proposed decision. Only two of those comments enhanced their support with discussions of wilderness characteristics. The comments opposing the proposed decision are varied. One respondent discusses the wilderness character of the unit relative to his use of the area. At least four other opposing comments discuss factors or values that are to be reviewed during the study phase, such as oil and gas development and sights and sounds of the unit. None of the comments offered specific information which would necessitate a change in the proposed decision. Therefore, the unit is established as a Wilderness Study Area.

**South Paint Rock**  
**WY-010-236a**

**Unit Description**

Most of the lands in the unit, formerly called the Luman Creek unit, fall within a mile-long segment of South Paint Rock Canyon. The canyon is about one-half mile wide from rim to rim and 600-700 feet deep. Conifers constitute most of the vegetation on north-facing slopes. Stands of aspen are also found on north slopes. Grasses and sagebrush are the main forms of vegetation on south-facing slopes. A narrow band of riparian vegetation along the creek is dominated by aspen.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

Size: The unit contains 660 acres of public land. It is bordered on the north and east by National Forest lands which are included in a unit classified for further planning following the Forest Service RARE II evaluation. It is the continuity of the forest lands which causes this unit to be recommended for Wilderness Study Area status.

**Naturalness.** The only evidence of man's activity is a section of barbed wire fence extending a short distance into the canyon near the north-west corner of the unit, and two segments of vehicle trail on the bench in the northeast corner. These two routes are strictly two-track trails created and maintained by the occasional passage of vehicles. These intrusions do not have a significant impact on the natural character of the unit.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Because of its small size, the unit could not by itself provide the kind of outstanding opportunity for solitude expected of wilderness. However, if the adjacent national forest roadless area is found to have outstanding solitude and to warrant designation as wilderness, then this unit would make a logical extension of such a designation and could be considered to have outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Similarly, the difference between an outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation and merely an opportunity depends on the adjacent National Forest lands.

**Supplemental Values.** This unit falls in an area of critical winter habitat for elk and mule deer.

**Public Comment**

Thirteen individuals or groups commented on this unit. All but two comments originated in Wyoming. Of those, six are local in nature. None of the comments addressed this unit alone, all were general comments on several units. Nine of the comments seemed to support the proposed decision. Because the status of this unit is tied to a decision by the Forest Service on an adjacent RARE II unit, and because most of the comments were supportive, the proposed decision to establish this unit as a WSA is now final.

**Paint Rock**  
**WY-010-239a**

**Unit Description**

The northern half of this unit lies within Paint Rock Basin, the broad U-shaped canyon of North Paint Rock Creek. The southern half of the unit contains portions of the Middle and South Fork canyons which exhibit a V-shaped cross section. A riparian community along the creek is dominated by aspen and narrowleaf cottonwood. Vegetation on south-facing slopes and in Paint Rock Basin is a sagebrush community with some mountain mahogany occurring on steeper slopes. Dense stands of conifers, mainly Douglas fir, are found on the north-facing slopes.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** The size of this unit is 2,770 acres. It remains under consideration for designation as a Wilderness Study Area by virtue of its proximity to an area classified for "further planning" under the Forest Service's RARE II evaluation.

**Naturalness.** The evidence of man's activity in the unit is relatively insignificant. The Paint Rock road, the feature having the greatest impact on natural character, is a cherry-stem road, from the west boundary of the intensive inventory unit to the bridge over Paint Rock Creek. Two two-track trails, an abandoned cabin, two foot bridges and some fence are the other man-made features in the unit but are not considered significant in the natural landscape.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Because of its small size, the unit could not by itself provide an outstanding opportunity for solitude. In conjunction with adjacent National Forest lands, however, the unit would make a significant contribution to opportunities for outstanding solitude, if that characteristic is determined to exist on the National Forest.

The fish and wildlife resources in this unit represent outstanding opportunities for stream fishing and hunting. If the unit was combined with adjacent National Forest lands into a single management unit, outstanding opportunities would exist for most of the recreational activities usually associated with a mountain wilderness setting.

**Supplemental Values.** The unit is included in critical winter habitat for mule deer, elk and big horn sheep. The unit is of geologic interest as the point of furthest advance of the Paint Rock Glacier.

**Public Comment**

This unit received 18 comments, nine from the local area and seven from other Wyoming locations. Eleven of the comments, both pro and con, discussed wilderness philosophy, multi-use or other factors not specifically related to wilderness characteristics. Of the comments related to wilderness characteristics, about twice as many were opposed to the proposed decision to identify the unit as a Wilderness Study Area. However, since the status of this unit is tied to a decision by the Forest Service on an adjacent RARE II unit, that decision is final to make this unit a Wilderness Study Area.

**Medicine Lodge**  
**WY-010-240a**

**Unit Description**

This unit is located on the west slope of the Big Horn Mountains. It is a steeply sloping unit ranging in elevation from 8,200 feet to 9,100 feet. The average elevation difference between the canyon's rims and Medicine Lodge Creek is about 1,000 feet. The unit consists of Medicine Lodge Canyon, steeply sloping shrubsteppe, and broken, rugged areas with shallow canyons and unusual rocky rock outcrops. Medicine Lodge Canyon is the unit's dominant feature.

Vegetation in the unit is diverse. A band of riparian growth exists along Medicine Lodge Creek. Warm ledges and slopes in Medicine Lodge Canyon support grasses and mountain mahogany. The cool slopes in the canyon are forested with Douglas fir and, in open areas, with sagebrush, mountain mahogany and grasses. The shrubsteppe areas and rims of the canyon are vegetated with sagebrush and grasses. The rough, broken areas are dominated by juniper with grasses and sagebrush occurring in more open areas.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** The unit originally contained 10,700 acres, including 890 acres of state land. Identification of a two-track road during inventory produced two segments in the unit. Segment 1 contains 7,740 acres of public land with no state or private inholdings. Segment 2 is 3,280 acres in two separate parcels, including 990 acres of state lands.

**Naturalness.** Intrusions in the unit are minimal in terms of density, visual impact and extent. Two-track trails, three spring developments, three small reservoirs, short segments of fences, a small timber sale and cabin ruins are major intrusions noted during the inventory. The impact of these intrusions is limited by topographic and vegetative screening. Some of them are located on state land or are located in segment 2, which does not meet the size criteria. Medicine Lodge Canyon has no intrusions and is essentially pristine. The intrusions on the rims and flats above the canyon do not significantly affect the apparent naturalness of the unit. Overall, the intrusions present, individually or as a group, are not of a magnitude to cause the exclusion of portions of the unit.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Outstanding opportunities for solitude exist in the major portion of segment 1. Topographic and vegetative screening, in general, coupled with the attributes of Medicine Lodge Canyon provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. Segment 2, due to a narrow configuration and a relatively large area of shrubsteppe, does not have an outstanding opportunity for solitude.

The unit, as a whole, has outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Opportunities in segment 1 differ from those in segment 2 largely due to the presence of Medicine Lodge Canyon in segment 1. Nevertheless, opportunities in both segments are considered outstanding due to the variety of activities available and quality of the resources on which those activities rely.

**Supplemental Values.** Nearly the entire unit is classed as critical elk winter range. Portions of the unit serve as critical deer winter range for elk traveling to calving areas on the National Forest. Medicine Lodge Canyon is essentially unaffected by man and therefore, is important in the study of natural processes. The exposed geologic features in the canyon provide the opportunity for study of the geologic history of the area. The canyon is also a storehouse for fossils from the lower Mississippian age. Medicine Lodge Canyon rates extremely high under BLM's system of rating scenic value.

**Public Comment**

The twenty public comments on this unit include three from out-of-state. Nine local responses were received with seven coming from other Wyoming locations. Responses were about three to one in support of the proposed decision. None of the five responses opposing the proposed decision provided elaboration on wilderness character or other information which would affect the proposed decision. Several of those comments supporting the decision suggested that this unit could (and should) stand alone, irrespective of the decision on the adjacent Forest Service RARE II unit. Since none of the comments received provided information to change the proposed decision, this unit is established as a Wilderness Study Area.

**Alkali Creek**  
**WY-010-241c**

**Unit Description**

This unit, formerly called Potato Ridge, is located in a transition zone between the lower west slopes of the Big Horn Mountains and the floor of the Big Horn Basin. The eastern end of the unit is an extension of the juniper covered slopes and canyons which characterize the lower west slopes of the Big Horns. The unit ranges in elevation from about 4,850 to 7,000 feet. In the western segment, sagebrush and grasses are the dominant vegetation. A few scattered junipers are found in the western portion of the unit. Two major land forms are found in the western half of the unit. About 35% of the area is flat or nearly flat. The remainder consists of deep, step-sided drainages and escarpments. The eastern half of the unit is vegetated by junipers, sagebrush and grasses. The topography is characterized by small canyons and rock outcrops. Soil and rock color is a dominant visual feature throughout the unit.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** At the beginning of the intensive inventory period, the unit totaled 17,000 acres. Included within the boundaries of the unit are 111 acres of private land and 645 acres of state land. During inventory, a two-track road was identified which divided the unit into a western segment of 6,910 acres of public land (plus 645 acres of state land) and an eastern segment totaling 10,100 acres of public land (plus 711 acres of private land).

**Naturalness.** Both segments of the unit are essentially natural with few man-made intrusions. Vehicle routes and fences are the most common intrusions. A corridor of intrusions was identified which included a two-track road, a pipeline, and water storage facilities. This corridor was used as a division between the east and west segments. Only this corridor was considered a substantial impact on the character of the unit. The other intrusions are visually insignificant, are few in number and are sufficiently dispersed so as not to be a major impact on the naturalness of the unit.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The opportunity for solitude in this unit is limited in extent and is not of outstanding quality. Lack of diversity of vegetation and topography and the configuration of the segment influence the opportunity. Vegetative and topographic screening are major features of the eastern segment's character. Additionally, the configuration of the segment is not conducive to solitude in the western segment. When the constraint of minimal use is coupled with these factors, the eastern segment has outstanding opportunities for solitude.

The eastern segment of the unit is considered to have an outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation. The numerous forms of activity possible in the eastern segment are enhanced by landscape character, topographic and vegetative diversity and lack of man-made confinements. The western segment provides opportunities for solitude. However, the number of activities possible and their quality are limited. The lack of topographic and vegetative diversity and the unit's configuration are additional limiting factors. Opportunities in the western segment are not outstanding.

**Supplemental Values.** The eastern portion of the unit falls within critical winter range for mule deer. The entire unit falls within the elk wintering area. The unit encompasses at least two game refuge strutting grounds. Golden eagles inhabit the unit.

**Public Comment**

Twelve of the sixteen individuals or groups submitting comments were opposed to the proposed decision to drop this unit from further review. Two of those respondents specifically addressed the "Suicide Road" which was the primary factor on which the proposed decision was based. They maintain that the "Suicide Road" was incorrectly identified as a road and as a result, the unit should receive additional review. Many of the other responses in opposition offered specific comments about wilderness character. However, these were machine copies of an original opinion. The four comments supporting the proposed decision offered no specific comments and were philosophical in nature. Ten of the comments were from out-of-state, three were local, and three were from other areas in Wyoming. As a result of specific comments, a subsequent on-the-ground review was undertaken. It was determined that the "Suicide Road" was constructed in 1952-1953 and maintained and used until the advent of the Alkali Road. It has continued to be used to some degree in conjunction with livestock management. The bulk of the present use occurring on a regular basis is associated with hunting use each fall.

However, since there has not been regular maintenance of this route, and since the route has been kept passable by vehicles, BLM has determined that the "Suicide Road" is in fact a way and not a road. Because of the interest expressed in this unit and because the eastern segment meets all of the criteria with the exception of the "Suicide Road", and because the status of this "road" is determined to be a way, BLM has decided to retain the 10,100 acres in the eastern segment as a Wilderness Study Area so all resource values can be considered in the study phase.

**Trapper Creek**  
**WY-010-242a**

**Unit Description**

Trapper Canyon is one of the most spectacular of the canyons on the west slope of the Big Horn Mountains. The canyon is characterized by nearly vertical sides ranging from 500 feet to 1,200 feet in height. The rims are approximately 800 feet apart. A riparian vegetative community is found along the length of Trapper Creek. A conifer zone dominated by Douglas fir is located on higher elevation, north facing slopes in the canyon. The canyon's south-facing slopes support mountain mahogany and juniper, as do lower elevation north-facing slopes. Sagebrush and grasses are the dominant vegetation on the canyon's rims. Elevation of the unit ranges from 4,700 feet at the west end to 8,400 feet at the east end.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** This unit was 7,800 acres in size during the initial inventory period. A slight boundary modification and more accurate measurement resulted in an intensive inventory unit of 7,200 acres.

**Naturalness.** Evidence of man's activity in the unit is very limited. Within the confines of the canyon itself, man-made intrusions are virtually non-existent. A small water pump and short plastic pipeline in a tributary to the canyon were the only man-made features noted. Several intrusions were identified in the canyon. Livestock grazing was noted but was limited to a small area at the east and west ends of the unit. Intrusions above the canyon rims are limited mainly to two-track trails extending to the canyon's edges from more major roads in the area. Overall, intrusions were few in number and not significant enough to affect the unit's naturalness.

A variety of primitive recreation activities are available throughout the unit. Some activities such as hiking, hunting, horseback riding and rappelling are excellent. Opportunities for other activities such as backpacking, nature

**Trapper Creek (cont.)**

**Outstanding Opportunities.** This unit provides outstanding opportunity for solitude. As a result of the excellent screening characteristics and the difficulty of access, one can expect to have an experience in Trapper Canyon untroubled by the sights and sounds of man or his activities. The quality of this solitude experience and the perception of the experience are enhanced by the outstanding natural setting and by the difficulty of access and the effort required to travel in the unit.

The Trapper Creek unit provides outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The types of activities that could be engaged in in this unit and the setting of the unit are essentially similar to the activities and the setting traditionally associated with a "typical" wilderness setting and experience.

**Supplemental Values.** Supplemental values relate to geology (study of formations and paleontological values), wildlife (populations less affected by man than in surrounding areas), ecology (a natural ecosystem not affected by domestic livestock), and high quality scenic values.

**Public Comment**

The thirty-two comments received on this unit were fairly equally divided between local, other Wyoming and out-of-state respondents. Only five of the comments voiced opposition to the proposed decision. A main concern of those in opposition was that wilderness designation would destroy the values inherent in the unit by causing overuse. Approximately 50% of those comments favoring the proposed decision favored some discussion of the wilderness characteristics of the unit. Since none of the comments provided information or rationale which would alter the proposed decision, the unit is established as a Wilderness Study Area.

**McCullough Peaks**  
**WY-010-335-A**

**Unit Description**

This unit is located in the northern portion of the Big Horn Basin, a few miles northeast of Cody.

The unit consists of the badlands which form the north slope of the McCullough Peaks. The terrain is characterized by sharp ridges and deeply eroded drainages. The five major drainages are: Deer Creek, Willow Draw, Roan Wash, and the north and west branches of Whistle Creek. Elevations vary from 6,400 feet at the McCullough Peaks to a low of 4,400 feet in the northeast corner of the unit. There are no perennial streams or live springs.

Vegetation in this badlands unit is a sparse sagebrush, saltbush, grass association. Riparian vegetation (cottonwoods, willows, etc.) does occur along some of the major drainages.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** Field investigation resulted in a major boundary change in the unit. The Deer Creek trail was found not to meet criteria for classification as a road and the area west to Badland Peak road and south to Sage Creek Road was found to meet the wilderness roadless criteria.

The original size of this unit as defined in the initial inventory decision was approximately 11,000 acres. The boundary change returned 14,210 acres to the unit, resulting in a total size of 25,210 acres. A State section falls within the area returned to review.

**Naturalness.** The unit retains a substantially natural character. Intrusions consist of the Deer Creek trail, numerous vehicle trails in the northwest portion of the unit and a small number of seismicograph exploration trails. Several reservoirs are scattered through the unit but are a minor intrusion.

The drainage patterns and extreme terrain variation within the unit provide ample natural screening throughout. This topographic diversity enhances the naturalness of the unit and provides many interesting views and scenic vistas.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The unit offers outstanding opportunity for solitude. The rugged badland topography of the unit combined with its size, configuration, and substantially natural character provide opportunity to avoid evidence of man's presence. The fact that there are five separate drainages within the unit and each drainage branches into a maze of small, winding, badland canyons, ensures both excellent dispersal of use and an exceptionally high degree of visual screening.

A variety of primitive recreation activities are available throughout the unit. Some activities such as hiking, hunting, horseback riding and rappelling are excellent. Opportunities for other activities such as backpacking, nature

study, etc., are enhanced by areas within the unit exhibiting a high degree of natural character. A large number of smaller bird species may be found within the unit.

**Supplemental Values.** During field inventory, paleontological values were frequently noted. One of the sites was found. The geological site was also identified. These values show a potential for being of definite scientific and educational interest.

Wild horse bands frequent the unit. It has been estimated that 200 to 250 wild horses populate the McCullough Peaks vicinity. Perhaps one-quarter of this total herd uses the lands within the unit boundaries on a regular basis.

**Public Comment**

A total of 51 comments were received on the proposed decision to identify the McCullough Peak unit as a Wilderness Study Area. Approximately two-thirds of these comments came from residents of the northwestern Big Horn basin. Only seven were from outside the state of Wyoming.

A total of 34 respondents (including 22 from the Big Horn Basin and six from other areas of Wyoming) expressed support for the proposed decision. While a number of these responses appeared to be based on a general support for wilderness, several indicated a specific knowledge of the unit and agreement with the evaluation that it is substantially natural and offers outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

Of the 16 responses expressing disagreement with the proposed decision, 11 based their position on a general opposition to wilderness designation or on concerns regarding resource use conflicts. These issues will be addressed during the study phase. The five responses expressing disagreement with the proposed decision focused on wilderness character. Several expressed the opinion that the unit lacks naturalness or outstanding opportunities. Three of these, however, obviously believed that the unit contains developments which actually lie outside the proposed unit boundaries. One response was received for which a position could not be determined. Taken as a whole, the comment received on the McCullough Peak unit supports identifying the unit as a Wilderness Study Area. Therefore, the proposed decision is now final.

**RAWLINS DISTRICT**  
**Sweetwater Canyon**  
**WY-030-101**

**Unit Description**

The topography of the area consists of two varieties. The majority of the unit is made up of flat to gently rolling terrain. The area's rock outcrops may be found but are not extensive. Vegetation on the flats consists of sparse, low-growing sagebrush and grasses.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

The second variety of landform is the canyon itself along with its tributary draws. Roughly nine miles long, the canyon is a water-carved trough about 350 feet deep. The western and eastern portions of the canyon are not nearly as abrupt as the center section. Vegetation in the canyon consists primarily of willows, conifer and dense aspens on the canyon floor and sagebrush and grasses on the canyon walls.

The original size of this unit as defined in the initial inventory decision was approximately 11,000 acres. The boundary change returned 14,210 acres to the unit, resulting in a total size of 25,210 acres. A State section falls within the area returned to review.

**Naturalness.** The unit is in essentially natural condition with, for most of the area, man's works substantially unnoticeable. The majority of the area is devoid of any man-made features. Intrusions consist of two-track ways which provide access to the canyon rim, and in one case, to the canyon floor. The visual effect of these ways is minimal and they have no effect on apparent naturalness of the unit as a whole.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The Bureau had originally concluded that the opportunities for primitive, unconfined recreation and solitude were high quality but not outstanding. The recommendation was therefore made to drop the unit from further wilderness study. During the public comment period, a large number of comments indicated that the canyon did, in fact, provide outstanding opportunities for primitive, unconfined recreation and solitude.

Opportunities considered outstanding are fishing, backpacking, hiking and camping. The comments were few in number but more than ample vegetative and topographic screening existed to protect the visitor with an outstanding opportunity for solitude.

**Supplemental Values.** A number of other values are possessed by the unit. Most notable are wildlife and historical values, as well as scenic values. The area is used by deer year-round, and

as a critical winter habitat for moose and elk. Raptors and a number of smaller bird species may be found within the unit.

The two-track road forming part of the northern boundary is the route of the Oregon Trail, and the aspen grove used by Jediah Smith and his band of trappers in the winter of 1823-1824 is within the unit. A portion of the Pony Express route also passes through the canyon within the unit.

The canyon is very scenic in nature and contrasts significantly with the surrounding high plateau area of low growing sagebrush.

**Public Comment**

Sweetwater Canyon received 34 comments, with about 90% from Wyoming and half of those from Fremont County. About two-thirds of the comments indicated that the area does indeed possess wilderness characteristics and should be retained as a Wilderness Study Area. The comments focused on the wilderness inventory conclusion concerning outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive, unconfined recreation. Many indicated that outstanding solitude could be obtained along the unit rim and in the side canyons. Several mentioned supplemental values of importance.

Only 15% of the comments indicated that the area did not possess wilderness characteristics. Twenty percent of the comments dealt with resources other than wilderness.

The comments almost overwhelmingly disagreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit from further wilderness consideration. The proposal was not in agreement with overall public sentiment. Sufficient rationale was provided to compel BLM to change the proposed decision. Therefore, the unit is retained as a Wilderness Study Area.

**Dubois Badlands**  
**WY-030-109**

**Unit Description**

The topography of the unit consists of the "badlands" variety. Flat topped hills which are extensively broken by erosion patterns and drainages. The colors of the sedimentary banding are reds and tans and are quite striking. Eroded pinnacles and spires abound. Clearly, the area's topography is its most outstanding and scenic quality. Total relief in the unit is about 400 feet.

Vegetation is slightly variable. The upper slopes have widely scattered limber pines, while the lower slopes have widely scattered sagebrush. The flat tops of some of the ridges have low-growing grass as the dominant plant life.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** The size of the unit is 4,520 acres, which is less than the minimum size guideline of 5,000 acres.

**Naturalness.** The area is in essentially a natural condition. The only intrusions identified were a fence, some minor two-track roads and a material site (rock site). In general, the area appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The unit is long and linear. Large amounts of the area provide limited, if any, vegetative screening. Topographic screening would only be available in the eroded draws which dissect the unit. While secluded spots can be found, the area in general does not provide seclusion. Visitor overlap would occur if just a few people were in the unit at any one time.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are not only extremely limited in scope but also lack any outstanding characteristics. Hiking, while possible, would be possible on a daily basis, however, lack of good campsites, coupled with the lack of water in the area, would not serve to draw the backpacker or recreationist.

Hunting is possible and is the area's current main recreation activity, along with Off V. Use. Other possibilities include sightseeing or possibly nature study.

While some primitive recreation activities are clearly possible within the unit, the limited number of comments that were received, along with the low potential to serve as an outstanding recreation area, make such opportunities not outstanding.

**Supplemental Values.** Several supplemental characteristics exist within the unit, and it is the proposed decision to identify this unit as a Wilderness Study Area, therefore, that decision is final.

The area is extremely scenic and geologically study of the area is a definite possibility. A herd of bighorn sheep live within the unit, and the area is winter range for elk.

**Public Comment**

The Dubois Badlands Unit received considerable comment. Over half of the 45 comments received came from within Fremont County. Another 40% of the comment came from elsewhere in Wyoming. Just over 5% came from other western states.

Two-thirds of the comment indicated that the area possessed wilderness characteristics and ought to be designated as a Wilderness Study Area. The comment indicated that the area clearly would provide outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive, unconfined recreation. Persons commenting mentioned, in some cases, years of personal experience using the unit for primitive recreation activities. Supplemental values were mentioned as being very high in the area.

The comment agreed with the intensive inventory conclusion that the area does meet the naturalness criterion. It also indicated that while less than 5,000 acres in size, it is clearly of sufficient size and configuration to manage as wilderness.

The comment received provides strong rationale to change the proposed decision. Therefore the Dubois Badlands Unit is retained as a Wilderness Study Area.

**Whiskey Mountain**  
**WY-030-110**

**Unit Description**

The unit is a small area on the north-facing slope of Whiskey Mountain in the Wind River Mountains. Terrain is rough and mountainous. Vegetation is limber pine and spruce-fir. A forest fire blackened most of the trees on the south end of the unit.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** This unit has 487 acres. It is bounded by the Ross Lake jeep trail on the east, the Fitzpatrick Wildlife Area on the south and west, and private lands to the north. It is inventoried for wilderness because it shares a common boundary with an established wilderness area managed by the U.S. Forest Service.

**Naturalness.** There are two very faint ways within the area. An early fire blackened most of the timber on the south end of the area. Snags are still standing with some new regeneration coming in. The fire scar is considered a natural occurrence, although some trespass firewood cutting has taken some of the snags and left stumps behind in isolated areas.

All in all, the area is in a natural condition with the works of man substantially unnoticeable.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Solitude is possible and is outstanding in conjunction with the Fitzpatrick Wilderness Area. The topography drops off into Jakey's Fork Canyon which affords spectacular views, peace and tree cover. There is some influence of motor vehicle traffic on the Ross Lake road. It receives little traffic and its influence is only audible and visual in close proximity to the road.

The unit makes a conspicuous extension of the established Fitzpatrick Wilderness area and would complement outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

There is a trail head where the Ross Lake jeep trail meets the forest boundary. The OH pack trail runs up the bottom of Jakey's Fork Creek also. There is some guide and outfitter use on these trails. Whiskey Mountain area, including the BLM lands, is an exceptional hunting area for the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep.

**Supplemental Values.** Whiskey Mountain is the primary winter range for the largest herd of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep in the continental United States. This sheep population and their habitat are of national significance. The views and scenery from all directions are spectacular.

**Public Comment**

All of the 10 comments on this unit came from Wyoming, with eight of them from Fremont County. All of the comments stated that the unit possessed wilderness characteristics or was a logical addition to the Fitzpatrick Wilderness Area. Four of the comments indicated that it did not have wilderness characteristics.

Little concrete rationale was given for a change in the proposed decision to identify this unit as a Wilderness Study Area, therefore, that decision is final.

#### Adobe Town (cont.)

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The combined Rock Springs and Rawlins District Adobe Town Wilderness Inventory units contain 116,880 acres of public land. The unit contains 1,280 acres of state land and 5,470 acres of state mineral estate. A total of 29,970 acres were dropped from the unit because of man-made intrusions and lack of outstanding opportunities for recreation of solitude. This left 87,710 acres which possess wilderness qualities. This tract is divided by what BLM has referred to as the Monument Valley road. Into two tracts, the north and south Adobe Town units. The north unit contains 24,540 acres while the south contains 61,170 acres.

**Naturalness.** Field investigation identified approximately 80 man-made "intrusions" within the inventory unit. The severity of many of them resulted in boundary adjustments to eliminate unnatural areas from further wilderness consideration.

Not only was there a substantial decrease in acreage but the unit was also divided into two separate subunits by a roadway (Monument Valley Road) which runs along the upper third of the remaining unit area. Both of these subunits are of sufficient size and possess similar qualities to be further studied under the wilderness review process.

Within these two subunits, North Adobe Town and South Adobe Town, are scattered minimal evidences of man's activities. Visual distances, topography and vegetation obscure these imprints of man and the units retain their natural character.

Although the arid climate slows natural processes of reclamation, they are ongoing and altering the evidence of man and his activities.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Outstanding opportunities to experience solitude are provided in the badlands and rim areas within the unit. These areas in particular are: Adobe Town Rim, the Monument Valley area, the upper frontaries of Sand Creek, and Skull Creek Rim. These areas make up the bulk of the lands in the Rock Springs unit (WY 040-408) and a sizeable part of the Rawlins District unit (WY 030-401).

These features provide abundant opportunities to avoid the sights and sounds of other users. The rugged rock formations in the badlands, canyons and rims provide exceptional natural screening. The quality and diversity of colors, shapes, and forms provide a scenic grandeur and a feeling of remoteness. This scenery provides the visitor with outstanding qualities of solitude.

Public comments indicate that outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation do exist. The area would probably not attract large numbers of people which Alpine Wilderness areas attract. Similarly, the area would not support large numbers of people without suffering resource damage. Most people would probably not care to experience such an area by primitive means (i.e., backpacking, hiking) but some people would conclude that the experience was outstanding. Public input has supported this statement.

**Supplemental Values.** Vertebrate and invertebrate fossils are widely distributed throughout the unit. Fossils and petrified wood can be found most commonly along the rims in the badland areas but have been found throughout the unit.

The Adobe Town units are known to contain large amounts of cultural resources. They are widely distributed throughout the units and represent a lengthy continuum of occupation of the area by Native Americans. The location of special sites is not published to protect them from vandalism.

The units and the surrounding area provide important winter range for antelope and is home for one of the largest feral (wild) horse herds in Wyoming. The use of the area by antelope and wild horses is facilitated in large part by the existence of a number of small man-made stock water reservoirs. They provide nearly the only reliable water during the summer and fall months of the year.

The unit could serve as a desert classroom, providing the opportunity to study high desert ecosystems in south-central Wyoming. The area, as such, could serve as an ecological benchmark in a rapidly developing and changing western United States.

#### Public Comment

Adobe Town received 42 comments and conveyed lands in the Rock Springs District (WY 040-408) and the Rawlins District (WY 030-401). About one-fourth of the comments were from the local area, with 50% from other Wyoming communities and 25% from other states.

**Over half** the comments stated that the area possessed wilderness values, while 45% offered arguments as to why the area did not meet the criteria for wilderness. Several inventories were conducted by oil and gas firms to help document intrusions in the area. Those were helpful to confirm the intrusions noted in the field by the BLM inventory team.

Public opinion as to whether or not the area possesses outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation has been divided. Some opinion has indicated that a lack of adequate shelter and water indicates no opportunities for primitive recreation are outstanding. Others indicate that excessive heat in the summer and mud in the spring precludes recreation use. Others indicate that these would not deter use and may only serve to add an element of challenge to the area. Challenge is clearly a characteristic of wilderness.

The information provided by public comments, while extensive, provides no rationale for changing the proposed decision, either to add acreage which was dropped previously (as suggested by some comment) or to drop the entire area from further study. Therefore, the proposed decision to establish this area as a WSA is now final.

Forty-two comments were received for the Ferris Mountains. About twelve percent were from the local area, while nearly two-thirds were from other Wyoming Communities. Fifteen percent were from other western states and five percent from the eastern United States.

Three quarters of the comment stated that the area had wilderness value and possessed the requisite wilderness characteristics. Just over 10% thought the area lacked one or more of the wilderness characteristics.

The proposed decision to identify the unit as a Wilderness Study Area is final.

#### ROCK SPRINGS DISTRICT

##### East Fork WY 040-106

#### Unit Description

The Ferris Mountains have a semi-arid, temperate climate with prevailing westerly, southwest winds. Topography is generally rugged, characterized by steep slopes, narrow drainages, and high meadows. Elevation varies from 6,580' near Winsky Gap to 10,037' at the summit of Ferris Peak.

Sagebrush-grassland vegetation covers the lower plains with Willow-Cottonwood zones in the lower drainages. Douglas Fir predominates below 8,000' in the southwest and west while Lodgepole Pine has moved to revegetate two areas which burned between 1939-40 after lightning started fires there. Upper slopes and exposed areas contain scattered patches of Limber and Ponderosa Pine, Englemann Spruce and Subalpine Fir. Aspen-Lodgepole communities are found throughout the unit.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The unit was initially reported to contain approximately 4,600 acres of public land. Redetermination of these figures added approximately 900 additional acres. The current acreage of the unit is 5,500 acres. There are two parcels of private land totaling 440 acres within the unit boundary.

**Naturalness.** Of the 5,500 acres inventoried, approximately 1,415 acres were determined to meet the naturalness criteria. This area along the Forest Service boundary is steep and rugged, with the only evidence of man being a pack trail. The remainder of the area contains significant man-made intrusions, including road, ways, fences, a water gauging station and an irrigation ditch.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** A small portion of this unit possesses the inherent capability to offer an outstanding opportunity for solitude. This area comprises the eastern one-third of the unit and contains approximately 1,415 acres. This borders on a portion of the Bridger-Teton National Forest that has been recommended for wilderness designation. The terrain varies from river bottom to bare granitic outcrops, with vegetation ranging from open sagebrush slopes to dense forest cover. This topographic variance and widespread vegetative cover supplies opportunities for isolation from the sights and sounds of other users. The unit includes male deer, raptors, birds, jack-rabbits, cottontails, small rodents, lizards, frogs, salamanders, antelope and wild horses.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Extreme local relief and abundant vegetative cover combine to provide an outstanding opportunity to experience solitude. Substantial vegetation and topographic screening is provided by the areas steep mountain slopes, its deep, secluded drainages, and its abundant forest cover. Scattered open meadows in the central part of the unit mix with the densely forested stands to provide a diverse and quality experience without compromising the feeling of isolation. The opportunity to avoid the sights and sounds of other users predominates.

**Outstanding Opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation** are provided by the diversity of terrain and vegetation within the unit. Steep slopes, deep drainages (many of which contain water), unusual rock formations, forested areas and open meadows supply a diversity in environment capable of offering a broad base for a variety of recreation activities. Activities for which outstanding opportunities exist include hiking, camping, backpacking, horseback riding, rock climbing, skiing, snowshoeing, photography, wildlife observation, and sightseeing for botanical, zoological, and geological features. Hunting within the unit is considered exceptional and the scenic values are unique to the region.

**Supplemental Values.** The unit provides excellent antelope, sage grouse, elk and fish habitat. It also provides access to Forest Service lands, portions of which have been recommended for wilderness designation.

#### Public Comment

A total of 48 comments were received, with 30 of them from not as extensive or as organized. The majority of comments supported the unit as a Wilderness Study Area. Since no rationale was given to change the proposed decision, the final decision is to identify 1,415 acres as a Wilderness Study Area and to drop 4,085 acres from further study.

**Supplemental Values.** The Ferris Mountains provide habitat for a great diversity of wildlife species including mountain lion, mule deer, antelope, elk, coyote, bobcat, sage grouse, blue grouse, and desert cottontail as well as an abundance of non-game species. Earlier studies have identified the value of the area for wildlife habitat and have recommended preservation and enhancement of its qualities as such. The Wyoming Game and Fish Department notes evidence of a remnant population of bighorn sheep and is currently studying the possibility of a transplant of approximately 100 bighorns into the area.

#### Public Comment

Forty-two comments were received for the Ferris Mountains. About twelve percent were from the local area, while nearly two-thirds were from other Wyoming Communities. Fifteen percent were from other western states and five percent from the eastern United States.

Three quarters of the comment stated that the area had wilderness value and possessed the requisite wilderness characteristics. Just over 10% thought the area lacked one or more of the wilderness characteristics.

The proposed decision to identify the unit as a Wilderness Study Area is final.

#### ROCK SPRINGS DISTRICT

##### East Fork WY 040-106

#### Unit Description

The unit is located within the foothills of the Wind River Mountain Range. Elevation within the unit varies from 7,200 feet on the west to 9,000 feet at the forest boundary. Topographic and vegetative characteristics divide this unit into two distinct areas. The western portion of the unit is a uniform in nature and characterized by rolling, sagebrush-covered hills. No significant drainages or features exist to break up the uniformity of this terrain. The eastern portion of the unit possesses more diversity of landform. Here, steep forested slopes are interspersed with massive granitic outcroppings.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The unit was initially reported to contain approximately 4,600 acres of public land. Redetermination of these figures added approximately 900 additional acres. The current acreage of the unit is 5,500 acres. There are two parcels of private land totaling 440 acres within the unit boundary.

**Naturalness.** Of the 5,500 acres inventoried, approximately 1,415 acres were determined to meet the naturalness criteria. This area along the Forest Service boundary is steep and rugged, with the only evidence of man being a pack trail. The remainder of the area contains significant man-made intrusions, including road, ways, fences, a water gauging station and an irrigation ditch.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** A small portion of this unit possesses the inherent capability to offer an outstanding opportunity for solitude. This area comprises the eastern one-third of the unit and contains approximately 1,415 acres. This borders on a portion of the Bridger-Teton National Forest that has been recommended for wilderness designation. The terrain varies from river bottom to bare granitic outcrops, with vegetation ranging from open sagebrush slopes to dense forest cover. This topographic variance and widespread vegetative cover supplies opportunities for isolation from the sights and sounds of other users. The unit includes male deer, raptors, birds, jack-rabbits, cottontails, small rodents, lizards, frogs, salamanders, antelope and wild horses.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Extreme local relief and abundant vegetative cover combine to provide an outstanding opportunity to experience solitude. Substantial vegetation and topographic screening is provided by the areas steep mountain slopes, its deep, secluded drainages, and its abundant forest cover. Scattered open meadows in the central part of the unit mix with the densely forested stands to provide a diverse and quality experience without compromising the feeling of isolation. The opportunity to avoid the sights and sounds of other users predominates.

**Outstanding Opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation** are provided by the diversity of terrain and vegetation within the unit. Steep slopes, deep drainages (many of which contain water), unusual rock formations, forested areas and open meadows supply a diversity in environment capable of offering a broad base for a variety of recreation activities. Activities for which outstanding opportunities exist include hiking, camping, backpacking, horseback riding, rock climbing, skiing, snowshoeing, photography, wildlife observation, and sightseeing for botanical, zoological, and geological features. Hunting within the unit is considered exceptional and the scenic values are unique to the region.

**Supplemental Values.** The unit provides excellent antelope, sage grouse, elk and fish habitat. It also provides access to Forest Service lands, portions of which have been recommended for wilderness designation.

#### Public Comment

A total of 48 comments were received, with 30 of them from not as extensive or as organized. The majority of comments supported the unit as a Wilderness Study Area. Since no rationale was given to change the proposed decision, the final decision is to identify 1,415 acres as a Wilderness Study Area and to drop 4,085 acres from further study.

#### Buffalo Hump WY 040-306

#### Unit Description

This unit is located in north central Sweetwater County about 30 miles north of Rock Springs. The unit ranges from climax stands of big sagebrush and greasewood on the north and west, to active sand dunes and meadows on the east and south. The main topographic relief, which consists of many sand valleys, blowouts, dunes and hills, occurs in the southern and eastern portions of the unit.

The unit's boundaries consist of a railroad spur and edges of state and private land on the east side, and roads to the north, west and south. Washington's Place, a local historic site, is located just outside the west boundary.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The unit totals 10,300 acres of public land, of which 907 acres is withdrawn to the Bureau of Reclamation (Flow Water and Power Resources Service). This acreage total is an increase over the original acreage because during the initial inventory the northern boundary road was incorrectly plotted from aerial photos. After state land (120 acres) and private land (180 acres) were dropped during intensive inventory and this road correction made, 400 acres of public land was added to the original acreage.

**Naturalness.** This unit is essentially in a natural condition exhibiting an undisturbed sagebrush grassland ecosystem intermingled with some active sand dunes. Intrusions consist of five two-track ways and one seismograph line for a total of 5.5 miles, one tract of sand fence and two recently dug livestock pits. All the ways are faint, overgrown boundary roads. The livestock pits are located along the southern boundary road. All these intrusions are considered to have only minor impact on the integrity of the area.

#### Outstanding Opportunities.

The general remoteness and isolation of the area make solitude easily found and felt in the unit especially in the southern and eastern portions of the unit due to their topographic relief.

The best opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation can also be found in the southern and eastern portions of the unit. These include hiking, backpacking, camping, bird watching, wildlife photography, horseback riding and hunting.

**Supplemental Values.** Ecological, historic and cultural values occur in the unit. Ecologically, this area typifies a sagebrush-bunchgrass ecosystem featuring gently rolling sagebrush covered sand hills, with some active barren sand dunes. Rabbitbrush and greasewood are also common throughout this unspoiled remnant. This area attracts wild horses, mule deer, and unique herd of desert elk and large numbers of pronghorn antelope. Signs were found that indicate raptors and coyotes are frequent visitors to the area, plus cougar settlements and an irrigation ditch.

**Historically,** the first homestead report of Eden Valley, known as Washington's Place, is located on the northwestern fringe of the unit. Graves of the Washington family and a few remnant sections of fence remain to mark this historic location.

Of cultural interest, two very important archaeological sites have been found in and within one mile of the unit. These are the Finley site and the Eden-Farson site where a distinctive projectile point gave evidence of one of man's earliest inhabited sites in North America. Therefore, it is highly probable that other notable sites may exist in or around Buffalo Hump.

#### Public Comment

Comment on this unit was mostly from Wyoming (18 comments) with one comment coming from Illinois. Seven comments favored the proposed decision while eleven opposed it. One comment was in between and concerned noxious weed control on proposed wilderness areas from the Wyoming Department of Agriculture. None of these comments could be used to evaluate wilderness criteria. Some alluded to intrusions but failed to give specific details. Other comments were a general vote for/against wilderness. Finally some others addressed recreational concerns which would be covered in the study phase.

The decision is to retain this unit as a Wilderness Study Area.

#### Sand Dunes WY 040-307

#### Unit Description

Killepecker Sand Dunes comprises a large part of this unit. Ox-yoke Spring Creek drains out of this unit in the north and Killepecker Creek runs through the southwest portion. Boar's Trunk is a prominent landmark along the southern edge of the unit. Besides the barren active dunes which offer superb draws and valleys, this area contains wet meadows, greasewood, big sagebrush and rabbitbrush communities. The Sand Dunes inventory unit is located in north central Sweetwater County about 13 miles southeast of Farson.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The original Sand Dunes unit totaled 31,016 acres of public land. Numerous seismic trails and two-track ways, mainly in eastern and northeastern edges, justified altering unit boundaries. The acreage recommended as a WSA is 27,200 acres of public lands. A total of 3,816 acres were dropped during the intensive inventory.

**Naturalness.** A portion in the eastern edge of the unit, which contained 26 jeep trails and 10 seismic lines for a total of 36.33 miles, was dropped. The remaining intrusions were considered fairly minor and do not detract from the apparent naturalness in the remainder of the unit. These remaining intrusions are two old drill pads occurring within 50 feet of the unit boundary, an old corral in the southwest part, and a crumbling decaying barbed wire fence located in the northern part of the unit. These slight intrusions can easily be rehabilitated. The spectacular northern dunes show no signs at all of man's presence.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** A person can easily imagine being lost in a sea of sand simply by hiking into one of the many sand blown basins.

The numerous draws, valleys and ridges in the north and eastern sections also provide outstanding opportunities for solitude, due to the screening effect they offer. The relatively large size of this unit with its correspondingly large amount of active sand dunes creates further opportunities for solitude.

Splendid opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are available within this unit. These include horseback riding, hiking, camping, photography and sightseeing for botanical, zoological and geological features. Some small caves are also available for recreational opportunity. Hiking in the sand dunes is a strenuous but rewarding experience. Other activities include nature photography — both scenic and wildlife, bird watching (raptors), hunting and sightseeing.

**Supplemental Values.** The Sand Dunes contain several supplemental values which qualify this area for wilderness study. Ecologically, the most unique feature of the Sand Dunes is the Eolian ice-cells that feed pools at the base of the many large dunes. These are formed as snow and ice accumulate on the leeward side of the dunes and then are carried by blowing sand. These pools, or ponds, range in depth from 6 inches to 18 feet, some being crystal clear and almost void of life, while others are muddy, murky and alive with tadpoles, insects, waterfowl and various grasses and algae. A very unique wildlife feature to this region is that the dunes presently help support the only herd of desert elk in Wyoming. Other wildlife found in the unit include mule deer, raptors, birds, jack-rabbits, cottontails, small rodents, lizards, frogs, salamanders, antelope and wild horses.

The scenic beauty of the sand dunes is awesome. The endless combination of shapes, patterns and forms created by wind blown sand in itself is amazing. Other features which combine to paint a truly beautiful landscape include the heights of some dunes (up to 150 feet from their base), the diversified textures playing up the slopes and the clear blue ponds surrounded by deep green grasses.

**Public Comment**

Sixty-six comments were received on this unit with 59 of the total coming from Wyoming. The other seven came from Colorado, Utah and Missouri. Thirty-six of the total consisted of a general vote for or against wilderness status. Only three of the total were specific enough to help determine wilderness qualities and intrusions. Two objected to the proposed decision. The other comment dealt with oil and gas exploration and was not included in the final decision. Seven comments favored the proposed decision while eleven opposed it. One comment was in between and concerned noxious weed control on proposed wilderness areas from the Wyoming Department of Agriculture. None of these comments could be used to evaluate wilderness criteria. Some alluded to intrusions but failed to give specific details. Other comments were a general vote for/against wilderness. Finally some others addressed recreational concerns which would be covered in the study phase.

The final decision is to establish 27,200 acres as a Wilderness Study Area.

#### Alkali Draw WY 040-311

#### Unit Description

The Alkali Draw Inventory Unit contains a remnant of the Great Divide Basin-Red Desert Area. This area offers the possibility of scientific investigation and educational opportunity to study a unique biological community. Despite several man-made intrusions, this unit appears to have retained its natural character.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The original Sand Dunes unit totaled 31,016 acres of public land. Numerous seismic trails and two-track ways, mainly in eastern and northeastern edges, justified altering unit boundaries. The acreage recommended as a WSA is 27,200 acres of public lands. A total of 3,816 acres were dropped during the intensive inventory.

**Naturalness.** A portion in the eastern edge of the unit, which contained 26 jeep trails and 10 seismic lines for a total of 36.33 miles, was dropped. The remaining intrusions were considered fairly minor and do not detract from the apparent naturalness in the remainder of the unit. These remaining intrusions are two old drill pads occurring within 50 feet of the unit boundary, an old corral in the southwest part, and a crumbling decaying barbed wire fence located in the northern part of the unit. These slight intrusions can easily be rehabilitated. The spectacular northern dunes show no signs at all of man's presence.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** A person can easily imagine being lost in a sea of sand simply by hiking into one of the many sand blown basins.

The numerous draws, valleys and ridges in the north and eastern sections also provide outstanding opportunities for solitude, due to the screening effect they offer. The relatively large size of this unit with its correspondingly large amount of active sand dunes creates further opportunities for solitude.

Splendid opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are available within this unit. These include horseback riding, hiking, camping, photography and sightseeing for botanical, zoological and geological features. Some small caves are also available for recreational opportunity. Hiking in the sand dunes is a strenuous but rewarding experience. Other activities include nature photography — both scenic and wildlife, bird watching (raptors), hunting and sightseeing.

**Supplemental Values.** The Sand Dunes contain several supplemental values which qualify this area for wilderness study. Ecologically, the most unique feature of the Sand Dunes is the Eolian ice-cells that feed pools at the base of the many large dunes. These are formed as snow and ice accumulate on the leeward side of the dunes and then are carried by blowing sand. These pools, or ponds, range in depth from 6 inches to 18 feet, some being crystal clear and almost void of life, while others are muddy, murky and alive with tadpoles, insects, waterfowl and various grasses and algae. A very unique wildlife feature to this region is that the dunes presently help support the only herd of desert elk in Wyoming. Other wildlife found in the unit include mule deer, raptors, birds, jack-rabbits, cottontails, small rodents, lizards, frogs, salamanders, antelope and wild horses.

The scenic beauty of the sand dunes is awesome. The endless combination of shapes, patterns and forms created by wind blown sand in itself is amazing. Other features which combine to paint a truly beautiful landscape include the heights of some dunes (up to 150 feet from their base), the diversified textures playing up the slopes and the clear blue ponds surrounded by deep green grasses.

**Public Comment**

Sixty-six comments were received on this unit with 59 of the total coming from Wyoming. The other seven came from Colorado, Utah and Missouri. Thirty-six of the total consisted of a general vote for or against wilderness status. Only three of the total were specific enough to help determine wilderness qualities and intrusions. Two objected to the proposed decision. The other comment dealt with oil and gas exploration and was not included in the final decision. Seven comments favored the proposed decision while eleven opposed it. One comment was in between and concerned noxious weed control on proposed wilderness areas from the Wyoming Department of Agriculture. None of these comments could be used to evaluate wilderness criteria. Some alluded to intrusions but failed to give specific details. Other comments were a general vote for/against wilderness. Finally some others addressed recreational concerns which would be covered in the study phase.

The final decision is to establish 27,200 acres as a Wilderness Study Area.

#### Alkali Draw WY 040-311

#### Unit Description

The Alkali Draw Inventory Unit contains a remnant of the Great Divide Basin-Red Desert Area. This area offers the possibility of scientific investigation and educational opportunity to study a unique biological community. Despite several man-made intrusions, this unit appears to have retained its natural character.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The original Sand Dunes unit totaled 31,016 acres of public land. Numerous seismic trails and two-track ways, mainly in eastern and northeastern edges, justified altering unit boundaries. The acreage recommended as a WSA is 27,200 acres of public lands. A total of 3,816 acres were dropped during the intensive inventory.

**Naturalness.** A portion in the eastern edge of the unit, which contained 26 jeep trails and 10 seismic lines for a total of 36.33 miles, was dropped. The remaining intrusions were considered fairly minor and do not detract from the apparent naturalness in the remainder of the unit. These remaining intrusions are two old drill pads occurring within 50 feet of the unit boundary, an old corral in the southwest part, and a crumbling decaying barbed wire fence located in the northern part of the unit. These slight intrusions can easily be rehabilitated. The spectacular northern dunes show no signs at all of man's presence.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** A person can easily imagine being lost in a sea of sand simply by hiking into one of the many sand blown basins.

The numerous draws, valleys and ridges in the north and eastern sections also provide outstanding opportunities for solitude, due to the screening effect they offer. The relatively large size of this unit with its correspondingly large amount of active sand dunes creates further opportunities for solitude.

Splendid opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are available within this unit. These include horseback riding, hiking, camping, photography and sightseeing for botanical, zoological and geological features. Some small caves are also available for recreational opportunity. Hiking in the sand dunes is a strenuous but rewarding experience. Other activities include nature photography — both scenic and wildlife, bird watching (raptors), hunting and sightseeing.

**Supplemental Values.** The Sand Dunes contain several supplemental values which qualify this area for wilderness study. Ecologically, the most unique feature of the Sand Dunes is the Eolian ice-cells that feed pools at the base of the many large dunes. These are formed as snow and ice accumulate on the leeward side of the dunes and then are carried by blowing sand. These pools, or ponds, range in depth from 6 inches to 18 feet, some being crystal clear and almost void of life, while others are muddy, murky and alive with tadpoles, insects, waterfowl and various grasses and algae. A very unique wildlife feature to this region is that the dunes presently help support the only herd of desert elk in Wyoming. Other wildlife found in the unit include mule deer, raptors, birds, jack-rabbits, cottontails, small rodents, lizards, frogs, salamanders, antelope and wild horses.

The scenic beauty of the sand dunes is awesome. The endless combination of shapes, patterns and forms created by wind blown sand in itself is amazing. Other features which combine to paint a truly beautiful landscape include the heights of some dunes (up to 150 feet from their base), the diversified textures playing up the slopes and the clear blue ponds surrounded by deep green grasses.

**Public Comment**

Sixty-six comments were received on this unit with 59 of the total coming from Wyoming. The other seven came from Colorado, Utah and Missouri. Thirty-six of the total consisted of a general vote for or against wilderness status. Only three of the total were specific enough to help determine wilderness qualities and intrusions. Two objected to the proposed decision. The other comment dealt with oil and gas exploration and was not included in the final decision. Seven comments favored the proposed decision while eleven opposed it. One comment was in between and concerned noxious weed control on proposed wilderness areas from the Wyoming Department of Agriculture. None of these comments could be used to evaluate wilderness criteria. Some alluded to intrusions but failed to give specific details. Other comments were a general vote for/against wilderness. Finally some others addressed recreational concerns which would be covered in the study phase.

The final decision is to establish 27,200 acres as a Wilderness Study Area.

#### Alkali Basin-East Sand Dunes WY 040-316, 317

#### Unit Description

This combined unit is located in east central Sweetwater County about 21 miles northeast of Rock Spings. The area proposed as a WSA includes a portion of the Killepecker Sand Dunes. These dunes tranverse this unit from west to east. Also, this area comprises an unspoiled remnant of the Red Desert within the Great Divide Basin. The sand dunes themselves impart a rolling topography to this unit and draws and ridges of Alkali Creek provide topographic relief to the unit. Vegetation is limited to big sagebrush and bunchgrass covered plains between sand dunes.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The proposed acreage for this unit is 12,800. Originally the size was 47,130 acres in two separate units divided by a road. The intensive inventory found that this road did not exist. Boundary adjustments combined the two units into one proposed wilderness study area.

**Naturalness.** The Red Lake Unit, in its present status of 9,515 acres, is clearly and obviously in an apparent natural state. During the intensive inventory one minor two-track way originating off the western boundary was found. Other intrusions are a well and accompanying water trough just inside the northern boundary road, a few random vehicle tracks from 4-wheel drive and dunebuggies and a jeep trail turning north and south through the unit. This jeep trail is shown on a topographic map but was not located during the intensive inventory — apparently it has been obliterated by drifting sand.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Solitude opportunities within Red Lake are excellent. Size of the unit combined with the hilly, broken topography provide the visitor excellent natural screening from other visitors and/or outside influences. Topography, vegetative patterns and sand dunes characteristics give the wilderness user a sense of isolation. Even from atop the larger dunes, it would be difficult and unlikely to notice another or several visitors who were traveling along the bottoms of the draws.

This area is very conducive to primitive and unconfined recreation. The large dunes rising abruptly from the surrounding vegetation make for a striking and scenic backdrop, as well as pure scenic beauty. Raptors, wild horses, antelope, coyotes and a variety of small mammals challenge the wildlife photographer. Hiking, backpacking, camping water may be carried in) horseback riding, hunting and sightseeing for botanical, zoological, geological and archeological features are other experiences available to the recreationist. In addition, the sand dunes offer a special type of unconfined recreation which is not available in any established wilderness area.

**Supplemental Values.** Of ecological significance, a portion of the Killepecker Sand Dunes transferred this unit from west to east. Additionally, the dunes help support a unique herd of desert elk, as well as a variety of wildlife species. Lastly, this region comprises an unspoiled remnant of the Red Desert within the Great Divide Basin. This remnant was recommended for primitive area designation in the Sandy/Pilot Butte MFP of 1976. These dunes help support a unique herd of desert elk, as well as a variety of active sand dunes; their movements and how they are stabilized. Although this is not an important archeological site, lithic materials found during the inventory bear evidence that early day native Americans inhabited this region.

Public Comment

Forty-two comments were received on this unit: 13 from Wyoming and one from Colorado. Six comments favored the proposed decision, seven opposed it, and one was in between. Only three comments, which gave specific details about intrusions, could be used to evaluate wilderness criteria. All other comments favored the proposed decision while 44 opposed it. Five of the total were in between. Only one of the total gave enough specific information (locations of oil and gas wells) to evaluate intrusions. All the rest gave a general vote for or against wilderness, addressed supplemental values, or determined by BLM to be of minor importance on the naturalness and solitude criteria for this unit. Other comments addressed topics to be covered in the study phase.

The final decision therefore, is to establish 9,515 acres as a Wilderness Study Area.

**Public Comment**

Forty-two comments were received on this unit: 13 from Wyoming and one from Colorado. Six comments favored the proposed decision, seven opposed it, and one was in between. Only three comments, which gave specific details about intrusions, could be used to evaluate wilderness criteria. All other comments favored the proposed decision while 44 opposed it. Five of the total were in between. Only one of the total gave enough specific information (locations of oil and gas wells) to evaluate intrusions. All the rest gave a general vote for or against wilderness, addressed supplemental values, or determined by BLM to be of minor importance on the naturalness and solitude criteria for this unit. Other comments addressed topics to be covered in the study phase.

#### Public Comment

Forty-two comments were received on this unit: 13 from Wyoming and one from Colorado. Six comments favored the proposed decision, seven opposed it, and one was in between. Only three comments, which gave specific details about intrusions, could be used to evaluate wilderness criteria. All other comments favored the proposed decision while 44 opposed it. Five of the total were in between. Only one of the total gave enough specific information (locations of oil and gas wells) to evaluate intrusions. All the rest gave a general vote for or against wilderness, addressed supplemental values, or determined by BLM to be of minor importance on the naturalness and solitude criteria for this unit. Other comments addressed topics to be covered in the study phase.

The final decision therefore, is to establish 9,5

## Copper Mountain WY-030-111

### Unit Description

The topography of the entire unit is mountainous. Steep-sided canyons and rocky slopes dominate the unit and give rise to rough peaks of about 8,400 feet elevation. Elevations at the mouths of the drainages are about 5,000 feet. Thus, total relief in the unit is about 1,400 feet.

Vegetation throughout this and unit is fairly constant and consists of sparse growing sagebrush and grass, with a healthy growth of juniper throughout. The juniper becomes quite thick along the drainages and contrasts with the surrounding reddish rock.

### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The unit has 6,859 acres of contiguous public land. The area is bordered on the north by private and state lands, on the west by the Wind River Indian Reservation, on the east by a fence line running just west of a road, on the west by a road, and on the south by U.S. Highway 20 and private lands.

**Naturalness.** No significant impacts exist within the unit's boundary. A small fence line is located in the extreme northeast corner of the unit but has no effect on the area's naturalness because of topographic screening. Several small cedar post drift fences may be located in the mountains' passes, but they do not affect naturalness because of the overall blending of colors and topographic screening.

The small quarry of the southeast has been eliminated from the unit in that it is a work of man that is substantially noticable. It has no effect on the remainder of the area because of the topography.

This area is in natural condition throughout with no roads, ways or other noticeable improvements present.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Solitude is easily obtained in the unit. The rough topography of drainages, peaks and outcrops, as well as the thickness of the juniper cover in some areas, quickly allow the visitor to be free from the sights and sound of others. Secluded spots where a visitor can feel removed from man and his works abound and are easily found. Because of the numerous places where solitude may be found, as well as the interesting topographic features, such solitude is truly outstanding in its scope.

The potential for primitive recreation is outstanding. Opportunities exist for hiking, backpacking, hunting, trapping, rock scrambling and sightseeing for zoological and geological features.

The topographic features would offer a challenge and present a strenuous walk for the day-hiker or backpacker. Both large and small game are located in the area providing a reward for the hunter. Several topographic features would present challenges to the nontechnical climber. Spectacular views of the Wind River Basin and Boyson Reservoir to the south and west could serve to entice the sight-seer into the area.

**Supplemental Values.** Views from 10 to 50 miles from the peaks are outstanding, and encompass such sights as the Wind River Range, Beaver Rim and Boyson Reservoir. Good opportunities exist for the educational and/or scientific study of the unimpacted ecological communities found within the area. Numerous interesting geological formations abound in the unit.

### Public Comment

The unit received 25 comments. Less than 10% came from the local area. Nearly half of the comments were from other Wyoming communities and about 40% were from the eastern United States. More than two-thirds of the comments indicated that the area possessed wilderness characteristics. Less than one-third said that the area did not possess wilderness characteristics. About 12% of the comments addressed resource values other than wilderness such as mineral potential. These values will be considered during the study phase. The proposed decision to establish this unit as a Wilderness Study Area is final.

## Sweetwater Rocks WY-030-120

### Unit Description

The topography of the area is of two basic forms. First, are the uplifted mountains of reddish granite rocks, slabs and exfoliating domes. Second are the flats of Nolan Pocket in the

north, and in the west, the flat alluvial surfaces between the base of the rocks and the boundary roads. Larkin Dome is a particularly impressive feature. Elevations in the area range from about 6,200 at the western boundary road, to about 7,700 feet on Larkin Dome. Total relief then is about 1,500 feet.

Vegetation varies directly with the two land forms. The rocks support little vegetation, however, the drainages among them support fairly dense "pockets" of limber pine, juniper and aspen forest. These green areas contrast sharply with the reddish granite and are quite scenic in nature. Understory vegetation is primarily sagebrush. The flats offer little variation in vegetation from the surrounding area. Moderate growths of low growing sagebrush and grasses are the consistent vegetation throughout the area.

### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The unit has 6,316 acres of contiguous public land; however, 360 acres are public surface only. The unit is bordered on the north by private lands and a road, on the west by a road, on the south by private lands, and on the east by state and private lands and a road.

**Naturalness.** Four ways and two fences penetrate the unit. Both fences penetrate from the west and run to the base of the rocks. This does not appreciably change the acreage figure. The southernmost fence has no road with it, and is substantially unnoticeable in front of it. A primitive way also runs in from the west to a small pocket. Due to topography, it has minimal effect upon the remainder of the area. Three ways penetrate Nolan Pocket in the north. All of these ways are two-tracked in nature, and while noticeable from within the area, do not significantly compromise the area's overall naturalness, and could be rehabilitated with the use of hand tools and time.

The area is in essentially natural condition. Man's works, while moderately noticeable in a small area, could quickly be rehabilitated to be unnoticeable.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Due to topography and vegetation, solitude is clearly available in the unit. The area which would provide solitude is fairly small, being only about 2/3 of the unit or approximately 4,000 acres. The remaining 2,000+ acres is flat and would not provide seclusion from other users.

The draws in the unit are generally small as are the pockets along its perimeter. Campsites and hiking routes, while scenic, are not secluded from the surroundings. A large degree of visitor overlap would occur.

The Bureau concludes that the opportunity for solitude exists but that it is not outstanding. Since the area which provides topographic and vegetative screening to the visitor is small and would be somewhat confining, the pockets along the base do not provide the seclusion necessary to make the area outstanding.

**Outstanding Opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation clearly exist in the unit.** Principal examples are rock climbing, hiking, backpacking and hunting.

Larkin Dome, the most prominent feature of the unit, has long been an attraction to rock climbers. It has a rock climbing history which dates back to the 1950's and it has been featured in national magazines such as "Summit". It attracts visitors from outside the region. Certain views of the dome, particularly those available from the east, are very spectacular. Larkin Dome, as seen from the east, is somewhat reminiscent of Devil's Tower, a national monument in northeast Wyoming. Climbing in the area is on very high quality rock. It ranges in difficulty from easy to extremely difficult, providing a challenge to the most competent rock climber.

Backpacking to one of the wooded "pockets" could entice recreational use. Hunting for solitude is outstanding on the flats due to the abundance of game and short packing distances in characteristics. About 12% of the comments addressed resource values other than wilderness such as mineral potential. These values will be considered during the study phase. The proposed decision to establish this unit as a Wilderness Study Area is final.

With such a variety of possible recreational pursuits, as well as an exceptionally fine rock climbing attributes, outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation clearly exist within the unit.

**Supplemental Values.** Antelope abound in the flats of this unit. Other animals seen are raptors, coyotes, and a wide variety of other birds. The area is exceptionally scenic with reddish granite boulders, slabs and exfoliating domes contrasting significantly with the greens of the wooded pockets.

### Public Comment

This unit received 16 comments. Nearly three-fourths were from Wyoming, with 20% coming from the local area. The remainder came from the eastern United States. About three-fourths supported the proposed decision to identify the unit as a Wilderness Study Area. Twenty percent indicated that the area did not possess wilderness characteristics. There was not sufficient rationale to warrant changing the proposed decision; therefore, the unit is now a Wilderness Study Area.

## Sweetwater Rocks WY-030-122

### Unit Description

The majority of the topography of the unit is rugged and mountainous. Large expanses of bare rock predominate throughout. Vegetation is generally sparse, but some dense stands of Douglas fir, limber pine, aspen and cottonwood are found in canyon draws. Juniper can be found scattered throughout the unit. Sagebrush, rabbit brush, and grasses are found along the base of the rocks and on surrounding plains.

### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** As a result of the intensive inventory, 7,747 acres in two tracts were not recommended for wilderness study. The northern tract was dropped because of being severed by non-public land ownership. The second tract is located in the southeast part of the unit. It was dropped because it is attached to the main part of the unit by a narrow strip of land approximately one-half mile wide and because it does not possess wilderness characteristics. The remaining acreage which was proposed as a Wilderness Study Area totals 7,041 acres and is concentrated in one block of land near Savage Peak.

**Naturalness.** A number of intrusions are found in the northern tract; they are confined to fences and ways.

This block of less than 3,000 acres is attached to the main body of the unit by a narrow strip of stagebrush 1/4 mile wide. It contains two track ways and fences. A large part of the rocks are in state or private ownership and nearly 30% of the unit is a sagebrush grassland vegetative type.

The southeast tract has several ways which penetrate the "pockets" which surround the rocks themselves. Martin's Cove and the southern part of Savage Pocket have ways traversing them as well as the pockets on the east near the Dumbell Ranch headquarters and on the south near the Sun Ranch at Devil's Gate. Devil's Gate has a diversion dam and concrete irrigation ditch in it which resulted in its exclusion from further study during the initial inventory.

The central or core area is penetrated by three ways. All are faint and generally overgrown with grasses. None detracts from the apparent naturalness of the area.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The Savage Peak segment does possess opportunities for solitude. The topography is rough and broken and the area is incised by numerous draws and small canyons. The large pocket on the west provides excellent opportunities for camping below Savage Peak itself. It is well secluded from the surroundings and contains excellent scenery which enhances the feeling of solitude. The size of the area, 7,041 acres, contributes to the feeling of solitude. Vegetation is dense in places, providing seclusion or screening for the visitor.

Clearly, numerous outstanding opportunities for solitude exist within the unit.

The unit provides a variety of opportunities for primitive unconfined recreation including: primitive camping, backpacking, rock climbing, hiking, hunting and a host of related activities, such as nature study, photography, environmental education and bird watching.

**Supplemental Values.** The area contains a wide base of supplemental characters to draw visitors. The historical aspects of the area include Miller's Cabin (used by an old trapper), numerous sites of arrowhead and thumb-scraper chip-pings and fragments, and a series of Indian rock cairns. The area is exceptionally scenic and coyote, deer, bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, and a number of raptor species have been seen in the area. Split rock, a historic landmark and natural feature, is located in the central Wyoming Trail corridor on the Sweetwater River, is just south of this area.

### Public Comment

This unit received 21 comments. Eight were from the eastern United States, five from the local area and the remainder from other communities in Wyoming.

**Supplemental Values.** The unit consists of land forms which, while not unique to Wyoming, are certainly unusual. Large expanses of bare granite are not found elsewhere in central Wyoming. They form a natural and highly scenic backdrop for the Sweetwater River Valley which has a long history related to the exploration and early settlement of the west. Numerous digitized sand dunes sites are found in or immediately adjacent to

### Sweetwater Rocks 123a (cont.)

the unit. Devil's Gate and Martin's Cove are two such examples which, along with the Oregon Trail, are historical resources of national significance.

The unit provides habitat for bighorn sheep. A peregrine falcon was reported to be in the unit by BLM biologists in the early summer of 1979.

### Public Comment

This unit received twenty comments. Forty percent of the comments came from the local area, thirty percent from other Wyoming communities and the remaining thirty percent were from the eastern United States. Other comments were received during the initial inventory from persons who elected not to comment again on the intensive inventory but who wanted their comment considered throughout the inventory process.

Nearly three-fourths of the comments indicated that the area did possess wilderness characteristics and agreed with the proposed decision. One-third of the comments indicated that the area did not possess wilderness characteristics.

Some of the comment supporting the decision thought that the southeast corner and north end of the unit should not be dropped as proposed. Other comment felt that those tracts should be dropped for the reasons listed in the intensive inventory findings. The comment did not provide sufficient rationale to change the proposed decision. Therefore, the proposed decision is final.

## Sweetwater Rocks WY-030-123b

### Unit Description

Topography consists almost entirely of rough, broken granite domes and outcrops. Sagebrush flats make up about 10-15% of the unit. The name Sweetwater Rocks or Granite Mountains is very descriptive of the topography. Parts of the unit resemble a pile of huge monolithic rock masses. Although not unique to Wyoming or the west, the Sweetwater Rocks are unusual and provide a very scenic backdrop to the historic Sweetwater Valley.

Juniper and scattered limber pine are found on the rocky slopes. Aspen can be found along the base of the rocks, while sagebrush and grasses are found on the surrounding plains. Large expanses of bare granite characterize the unit.

### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** This unit is the western portion of initial inventory unit WY-030-123 which contained an estimated 19,900 acres. The area was split into two units by a road identified by the public which crosses private state and public lands as it traverses the unit in a north-south direction. Other roads and intrusions were identified during the initial inventory. Some narrow fingers of land extending from the unit were dropped. A total of 885 acres was dropped because of these intrusions and "fingers." Considering adjustments which correct original calculation errors, the size of the unit is 8,429 acres.

**Naturalness.** The unit is largely free of man-made intrusions. Those that exist are confined to two-track ways, one bladed section of road, and about 3/4 of a mile of fence. The ways and bladed road are all located on the east and northeast ends of the unit. All are found in the open sagebrush areas. The fence ends at the edge of the rocks themselves. The rough, rocky area is devoid of the works of man.

The ways and bladed road are quite noticeable if you are on or near them. The visible impact is confined to the level, sage covered areas around the base of the rocks. As a whole, the unit meets the naturalness criterion.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The unit is long and linear. In three places it is only a mile wide or less. The typical maximum width is about 1.5 miles. The linear shape would limit opportunities for the visitor to find any isolation from others in the unit.

The north side has a constraint on use because of the land ownership pattern. Analysis of topographic maps and field inspection reveals that the base and lower slopes of the rocks for a distance of 234 miles is in private and state ownership. This leaves bald ridges in public ownership and the lower slopes and ridges unavailable for consideration for wilderness. This would further have the effect of concentrating use in areas with ability to provide solitude.

The BLM has concluded that the degree of solitude available to the visitor would be a function of the number of visitors rather than terrain vegetation or size. The opportunity for solitude exists in the unit but is limited.

Primitive recreation opportunities include hiking, camping, rock climbing, hunting, and related activities such as photography, nature study, sightseeing and bird watching.

BLM concludes that the area would provide outstanding opportunities for a primitive, unconfined type of recreation; however, the opportunity is limited.

**Supplemental Values.** Geological study, as well as scenic attributes, are also found in the unit. The Sweetwater Rocks contain historical and archeological sites.

### Public Comment

Ten comments were received, with about one-third from the local area and two-thirds from other parts of Wyoming. One comment was received from the eastern United States. About 60% of the comments disagreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit from further study. Most of these comments dealt with outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

Following a review of the comments and the rationale provided in those comments, BLM has determined that there is sufficient cause to believe that a substantial segment of the public feels that this unit meets the criteria for solitude and therefore the final decision is to retain the unit as a Wilderness Study Area.

## Encampment River Canyon WY-030-301

### Unit Description

The unit lies in the foothills of the Sierra Madre Mountains of southern Wyoming. The town of Encampment is two miles to the north. The unit includes the Encampment River and Miner Creek canyons, both of which are deep, spectacular gorges. Vegetation is diverse, ranging from sagebrush on open slopes to scattered stands of limber pine, aspen, cottonwood and lodgepole pine.

Rock outcrops are abundant, giving the unit a very rough, wild appearance. Steep talus slopes are also common.

The area has undergone intense mineral exploration in the past. The mining activity has left numerous exploration and validation pits throughout the unit; almost every view of the canyon shows some evidence of past mineral exploration.

### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The unit contains 5,840 acres. Field investigation resulted in numerous man-made intrusions being identified and mapped. The area which could be considered natural was reduced to 4,460 acres. This leaves 3,380 acres, a figure considerably less than the 5,000 acre minimum guideline for wilderness.

**Naturalness.** Field investigation has identified several roads, mineral exploration pits, two-track ways, cabins, fences and a powerline. As a result of these man-made intrusions, 2,480 acres clearly fail to meet the criterion for naturalness. The remaining 3,380 acres do meet the naturalness criterion.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The 3,380 acres, consisting largely of the Miner Creek and Encampment River canyons, does possess an outstanding opportunity for solitude. Both canyons are deep, steep walled and rugged. Both contain dense vegetation along the streams and themselves which would effectively screen the visitor from others. Further, the great relief of the area completely shields visitors to the canyons from sights and sounds from the O. O. F. camp and the town of Encampment as well, in spite of their close proximity. The scattered mining pits and other intrusions in the 3,380 acre canyon area do not adversely affect solitude.

Although a foot trail follows the Encampment River, sufficient campsites would be available so that visitors would not be concentrated in certain areas.

The area has long been identified by the general public as a scenic area. Analysis of topographic maps and field inspection reveals that the base and lower slopes of the rocks for a distance of 234 miles is in private and state ownership. This leaves bald ridges in public ownership and the lower slopes and ridges unavailable for consideration for wilderness. This would further have the effect of concentrating use in areas with ability to provide solitude.

The BLM has concluded that the degree of solitude available to the visitor would be a function of the number of visitors rather than terrain vegetation or size. The opportunity for solitude exists in the unit but is limited.

### Public Comment

The Encampment River Canyon Unit received a great deal of comment. Of the 58 comments, about half were from the local area, 40% came from other communities in Wyoming, and the remainder came from other western states.

It has been pointed out by public comment during the inventory that although the BLM wilderness inventory unit and the U.S. Forest Service RARE II unit are not contiguous, they are connected by physical features of the canyon and by a legal permanent foot trail easement. The units are used as one unit. This effectively increases the size of the unit.

Public comment has also pointed out that the narrow, deep canyons of the Encampment River and Miner Creek provide outstanding opportunities for solitude, in spite of their small size, and that their size (3,380 acres) is sufficient to manage as wilderness.

Over half of the comments said that the area possessed wilderness characteristics. While forty percent of the comments said that the area did not possess wilderness characteristics, less than 10% of the comments were concerned with other resource values such as minerals or water development potential.

The comment supporting wilderness study indicated that the area provided outstanding opportunities for a primitive, unconfined type of recreation. It pointed out supplemental values such as wildlife.

Other comment concerned the intrusions in the unit, including ways that are used as access to private and state lands.

The rationale provided in the public comment is sufficient to warrant retaining a portion of the unit totaling 3,380 acres as a Wilderness Study Area.

## Bennett Mountains WY-030-304

### Unit Description

The Bennett Mountains are a small mountain range lying east of Seminoe Dam and west of the Shirley Mountains. They consist of an abruptly rising mountain wall on the south and a series of small canyons or gulches on the north. Overall, the terrain is very rugged. Rock outcrops, the prominent feature, travel by any means would be quite scenic in nature.

Vegetation is diverse. Ponderosa Pine is found along the southern crest of the range throughout its entire length. Limber Pine and aspen are common, the former being scattered throughout the unit. Fairly large expanses of sagebrush are found in the unit.

### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The unit originally contained approximately 7,080 acres. This figure was reduced by 1,358 acres because of roads and other intrusions, leaving 5,722 acres in the unit.

**Naturalness.** BLM located a series of man-made intrusions which detracted from apparent naturalness. They were all located on the perimeter of the unit and were dropped, reducing the unit to its present size.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The high topographic variability coupled with the vegetative cover provides an outstanding opportunity for solitude. The deep canyons on the east and south of the unit includes many secluded sites for visitors. The topography and vegetation shield visitors from sights and sounds of other visitors in the unit.

Number 2 and Number 3 gulches along with mining pits and other intrusions in the 3,380 acre canyon area do not adversely affect solitude.

The Bennett Mountains contain outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. Examples would be hunting, hiking, sightseeing, wildlife observation, backpacking and some rock climbing.

**Supplemental Values.** Other than the wildlife habitat that the area provides, there are no supplemental values.

### Public Comment

The unit received 21 comments, with 10% from the local area, 80% from other Wyoming communities and 5% from other states. Three-fourths of the comments said the area had wilderness values and characteristics. The remainder stated that the unit did not possess wilderness characteristics and that there were other resource values that would conflict with wilderness. These values will be addressed in the study phase. The rationale in the comments provided reasonable justification to retain the unit as a Wilderness Study Area.

## Pedro Mountains WY-030-305

### Unit Description

The unit is characterized by rugged topography and an open type vegetative cover consisting of sagebrush, scattered conifer and some aspen pockets in wet draws. Several dense stands of conifers are found in the unit. Rugged ridges and mountain peaks rise abruptly over 1000 feet above the plains. The area within the unit boundary by no means includes all of the Pedro Mountains. This area is natural in appearance and quite scenic.

### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The original size of this unit was 10,460 acres of public land. Field investigation identified roads which cut out of 4,476 acres. The remaining area consists of 5,984 acres.

**Naturalness.** Despite the presence of several man-made intrusions, the unit appears to retain an essentially natural character. The cumulative effect of all intrusions compromises naturalness to a minor degree. Three ways and a bladed road located within the area, and an enclosure fence constitute the major intrusions upon naturalness. However, sign can be seen in some areas and visual obstructions exist between all of these intrusions, lessening their impact.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The unit is narrow and linear. The only "blocked" parts lie around Pyramid Peak, the mountainous topography and the isolation possible in the area between Pyramid Peak and the peak to the north provides an area in the unit where someone could experience outstanding solitude. Since Bureau directives do not require outstanding opportunities for solitude in each portion of the unit, it is determined that this unit does possess outstanding opportunities for solitude in some portions of the unit.

The Pedro Mountains provide opportunities for several types of primitive, unconfined recreation. Deer and elk hunting, hiking, primitive camping and backpacking are the principal examples. However, none of these are outstanding.

**Supplemental Values.** The unit provides wildlife habitat for a variety of species. They also provide winter roosting areas for approximately 20 bird species, making the Pedro Mountains an ideal place for research observation.

### Public Comment

The unit received 27 comments, with 70% being from the local area. About two-thirds of the comments were from Wyoming and the remainder were from other western states. The comments addressed wilderness characteristics, scenic character and should be designated a Wilderness Study Area. The remaining comments were evenly split over the question of wilderness characteristics. Since size and adjacent land ownership should not influence the determination of outstanding opportunity, the BLM has reviewed the proposed decision to drop the unit from further study. Therefore, the final decision is to retain the unit as a Wilderness Study Area.

## Adobe Town WY-030-401 WY-040-408

### Unit Description

Adobe Town itself is a large expanse of high desert. It consists of a high plateau deeply carved by the forces of water and wind into an area of outstandingly scenic geological formations. Rim areas within the two subunits contain outstanding badland features characterized by colorful rims, buttes and escarpments virtually untouched by man's activities.

Two major drainages, Sand Creek and Skull Creek, flow through the unit and along with other erosion features have carved a maze of canyons, spires and buttes in a variety of pastel shades. It is of exceptional geologic and scenic quality.

The two subunits contain great topographic diversity. In addition to the prominent badland features mentioned above, the area contains expanses of desert pavement and large areas of rolling hills made up of stabilized sand dunes. Elevation ranges from 6,500 to 7,000 feet with local relief in the rim and badland areas often exceeding 300 feet. The climate is arid with 7 to 9 inches of rainfall per year.

**WILDERNESS STUDY AREA NUMBER**

- WY-010-100  
Refer to Unit within District
- Refer to District within State
- Refer to State

100  
Wilderness study area.

Other Federal Agencies

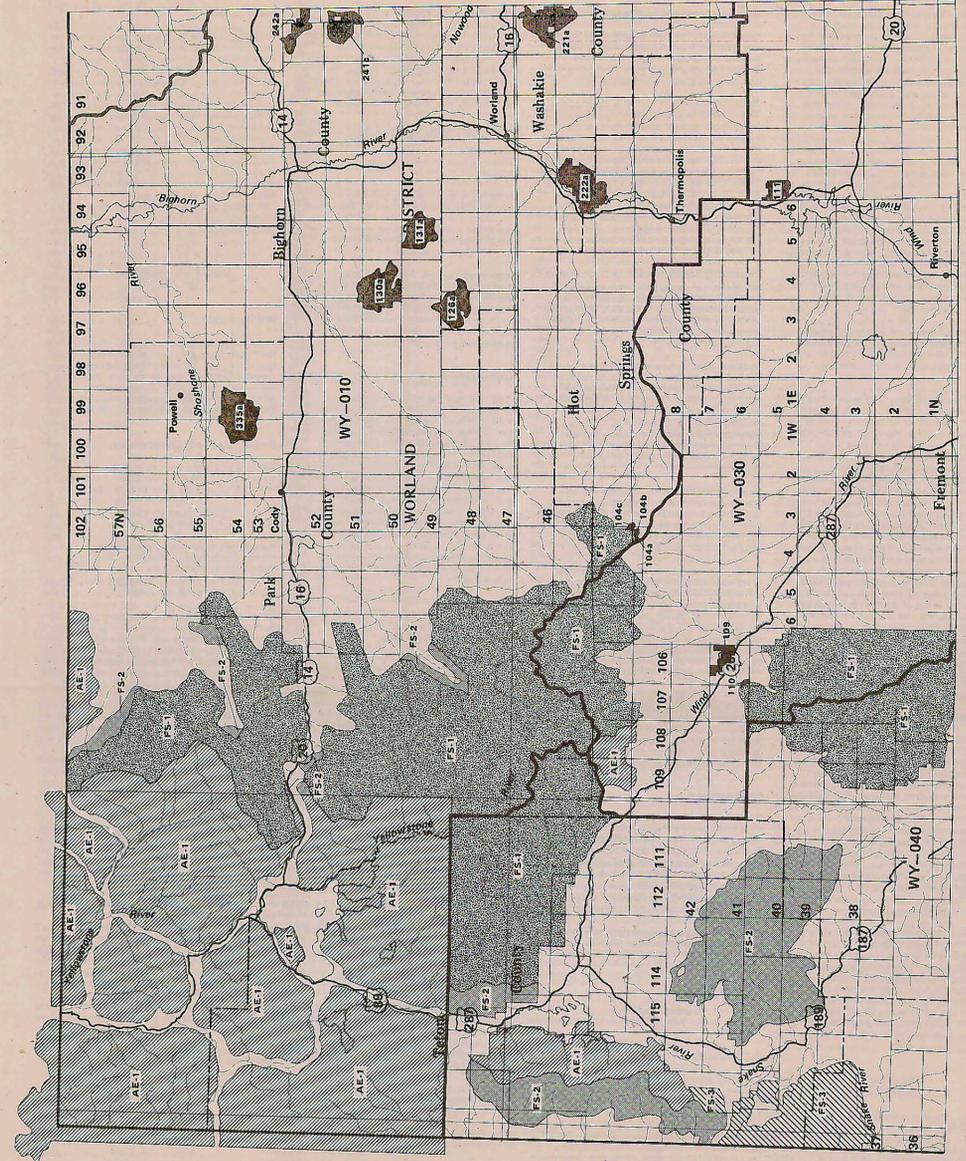
FS-1  
Designated wilderness (USFS)

FS-2  
Proposed for wilderness (USFS)

Further planning (USFS)

Administratively endorsed wilderness area

Revised as of November, 1980.



Scale 1:1,000,000



**Northwest Wyoming**

**WILDERNESS STUDY AREA NUMBER**

- WY-010-100  
Refer to Unit within District
- Refer to District within State
- Refer to State

100  
Wilderness study area.

Other Federal Agencies

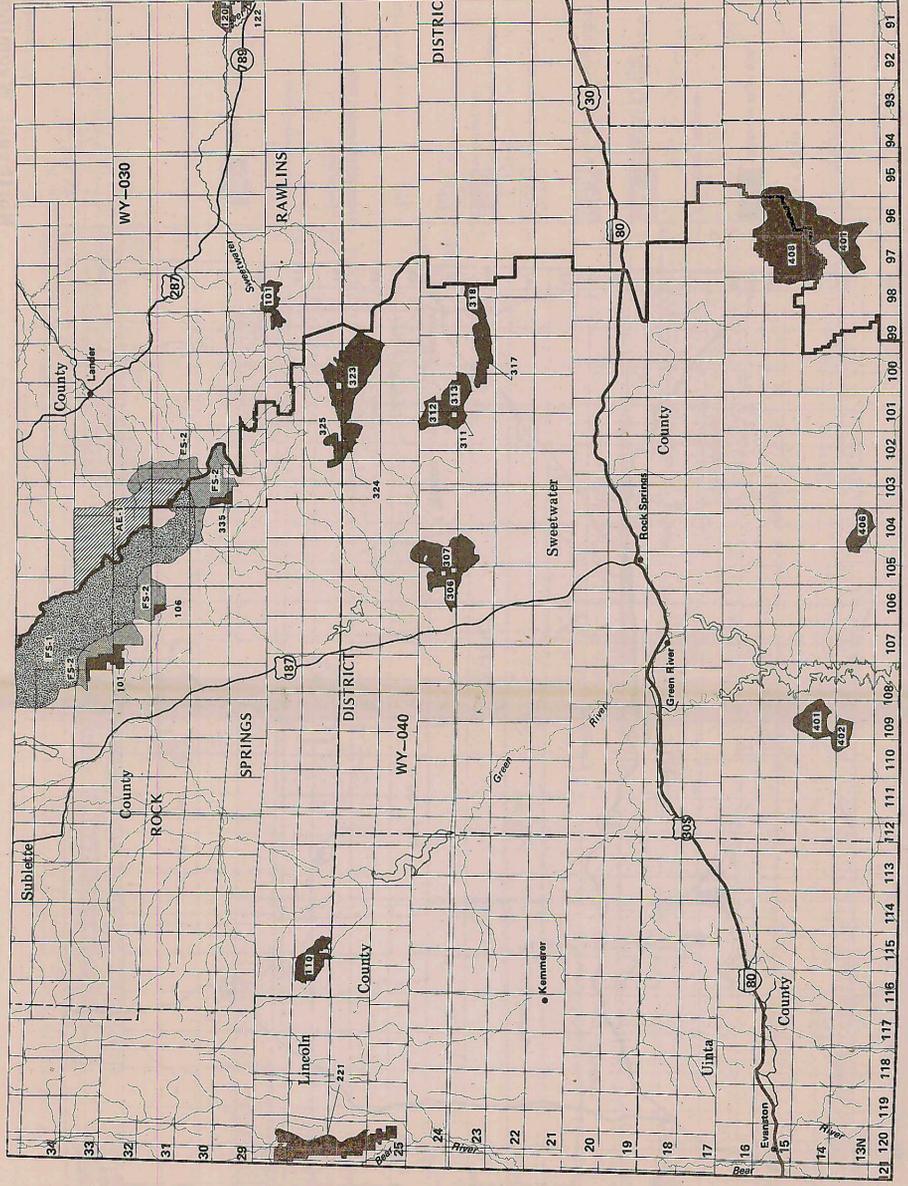
FS-1  
Designated wilderness (USFS)

FS-2  
Proposed for wilderness (USFS)

Further planning (USFS)

Administratively endorsed wilderness area

Revised as of November, 1980.



Scale 1:1,000,000



**Southwest Wyoming**

### Honeycomb Buttes (cont.)

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The original unit totaled 75,123 acres. Of this total 42,480 acres were found to meet all wilderness criteria.

**Naturalness.** The northern hill section of the unit as well as the southern flatlands contain many intrusions resulting from human activity in the area. These areas contain such intrusions as jeep trails, seismograph lines, old oil and gas well sites and uranium access ways. Due to the frequency, extent, and number of intrusions in these areas (50 roads, trails and ways totaling 117.6 miles), these areas were found not to be in a relatively natural condition and were dropped from the unit.

The Honeycomb Buttes proper contained only two intrusions (2.8 miles of illegal uranium access trails) which are in the process of rehabilitation and are considered insignificant. The rest of the unit has a few old jeep trails and two big washed out reservoirs, all of which are fairly minor and have deteriorated to a point where they no longer affect the naturalness of the area to any substantial degree.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The Honeycomb Buttes area has many cliffs, ridges, caves, canyons, secluded valleys and grottos. These items all combine to make for very effective visitor screening. The spectacular wild setting and rugged remoteness of the Buttes, when combined with the awesome power of nature on display, serve to dramatically sever man's ties with civilization and evoke an outstanding sense of solitude.

Recreation opportunities in the unit include hiking, horseback riding, desert camping, wildlife and wild horse and nature observation and photography, non-technical rock climbing, caving in the "mud" or erosion type caves found in the Buttes, as well as rockhounding for agates, jades, fossils and fossil casts and petrified wood. When these varied and high quality activities are carried out in the wild and unspoiled shapes and beauty of the Buttes, they do indeed qualify as "outstanding opportunities."

**Supplemental Values.** The area is used by pronghorn, wild horses, mule deer, coyotes, badgers, raptors, prairie dogs and ground squirrels. Due to the wild, isolated nature of the country such relatively rare or shy animals as mountain lions, bobcats and elk also use the unit. Little brown bats and various raptors use the caves for nesting, and raptors (mainly golden eagle and prairie falcons) use the cliffs for nests and the valley bottoms for hunting.

The erosive geology of the area provides sculptured buttes and bluffs in a wide variety of colors. Fossils, fossil casts and scattered semi-precious stones may be found here also.

The northern rim of the unit is the Continental Divide. The Divide splits just west of the unit and encloses the Great Divide Basin, of which Honeycomb Buttes are a part. This basin has no external surface drainage.

The area has a few known archeological sites but their significance is unknown. A portion of the old Point of Rocks-South Pass City State Route runs through a part of the west side of the unit also.

#### Public Comment

Twenty four public comments were received for this specific unit. Of those, 14 were in favor of WSA status and 9 were against, with one in between. Only one comment was specific enough to help determine wilderness qualities and intrusions.

Since no comments provided information that would change the proposed decision, the final decision is to establish 41,850 acres as a Wilderness Study Area.

### Devil's Playground-Twin Buttes WY-040-401, 402

#### Unit Description

The Devil's Playground-Twin Buttes Unit is characterized by highly eroded badland areas largely devoid of vegetation and by high outcrops with scattered patches of juniper and sparse grasses. The most prominent points are Black Mountain and Twin Buttes, both large mesas which are located in the west-central and southern portions of the unit.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The size was originally reported as 26,805 acres. This is a combination of two units - Devil's Playground (WY-040-401) which was 18,704 acres and Twin Buttes (WY-040-402) which was 9,901 acres. No changes in acreage were made during the intensive inventory. However, due to public comment and review, 2,329 acres were dropped due to numerous intrusions, leaving the size at 24,276 acres.

**Naturalness.** During the Salt Wells Area Manager's supplemental evaluation of the intensive inventory unit, 17 reservoirs, over 23 routes, a dry hole well and a fence were found scattered over the unit. The condition of the reservoirs varied from disrepair to functional and operative. The routes varied from faint and obscure to bladed scars and substantially noticeable. Some comments were received from the public on the numerous intrusions in the unit. Upon review it was felt that a portion of the unit was essentially unnatural. This 2,329-acre portion was dropped.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** BLM felt that the abundant topographic diversity created by the numerous drainages provides substantial topographic screening for outstanding opportunities for solitude.

The area has outstanding opportunities for hiking, camping, horseback riding, photography and sightseeing.

**Supplemental Values.** The unit has interesting and unusual geologic features. Fossil deposits and evidence of early man can be found throughout the unit.

#### Public Comment

A total of six public comments were received; four were from within state and two were out-of-state. Four of the comments agree with the proposed decision to make the area a WSA, although only two comments provided reasons why they agree and none of the four provided any new information that supports the proposed decision. Two of the comments disagree with the BLM's report which found the area having naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive, unconfined recreation. Both disagreeing comments provide reasons why they disagree, and one provided new information concerning the presence of a dry hole well which was not discovered in the intensive inventory.

A supplemental evaluation was made during the public review and comment period by the Salt Wells Area Manager because a special review team had found several mapping errors and omissions as well as a gross understatement of man's work in the area in the intensive inventory report. The supplemental evaluation verified the findings of the special review team and recommended that 2,329 acres of heavily intruded lands be deleted from further wilderness review and that the area be divided into two WSAs because they are split by a road.

Therefore, the final decision is to delete the 2,329 acres which are heavily intruded and divide the combined unit into two WSAs: Devil's Playground (15,646 acres) and Twin Buttes (8,630 acres).

### Red Creek Badlands-Teepe Mountain WY-040-406, 407, 410

#### Unit Description

The Red Creek Unit consists of a generally scenic area varying from sagebrush flats above the northern rim and changing abruptly to rugged eroded juniper badlands which blend to sagebrush and grass, low bluffs, and draws along Red Creek. South of Red Creek the long draws slope steeply upward to Teepe Mountain which is capped with a small stand of limber pine and Douglas-fir. Elevations vary from 6,490 feet at Richards Gap where Red Creek leaves the unit and enters Utah to 8,700 feet at the top of Teepe Mountain. This 2,300-foot variation allows for an interesting diversity of vegetation and related animal species. Plant species vary from greasewood and sagebrush to juniper and bitterbrush, with pockets of cottonwoods, chokecherry, piñon pine, and finally, at the higher elevations and in the cooler canyons, Douglas-fir and limber pine.

During review of the intensive inventory, numerous mapping errors were found together with improper application of intrusions under which the inventory was conducted. Numerous mapping omissions of man-made intrusions, a failure to adequately analyze routes, and overstatement of supplemental values. The proposed decision was to make the unit a WSA pending reinventory. The unit was subsequently reinvented during the summer of 1980, and a public field tour with local citizens was conducted to get public input.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The size of the unit, as given to the reinventory team, was 25,194 acres. The reinventory expanded this acreage to approximately 34,045 acres because portions of the boundary were not located properly. The reinventory team felt that inventory criteria may have been misinterpreted in establishing portions of the boundaries, and had some question as to the status of some of the "roads" used as boundaries. Therefore, boundaries were established about which there could be no doubt.

**Naturalness.** The natural character of the unit has been severely impaired by the numerous intrusions in the unit, including seismic lines, ways, roads, reservoirs, gravel pits, drill sites and fenced enclosures. The majority of these intrusions are significant, highly visible and active. The routes varied from faint and obscure to bladed scars and substantially noticeable. Some comments were received from the public on the numerous intrusions in the unit. Upon review it was felt that a portion of the unit was essentially unnatural. This 2,329-acre portion was dropped.

Approximately 7,100 acres were identified in the Red Creek Badlands as meeting the criteria for naturalness.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** This same 7,100 acres in the Badlands was determined to meet the criteria for outstanding opportunities for solitude, mainly due to the rugged terrain and vegetative screening. The remaining 26,945 acres do not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude due to the lack of vegetative screening and a high concentration of visible intrusions. It is difficult to travel more than one mile in any direction without encountering some evidence of man's activities.

There are several opportunities available in the unit for primitive and unconfined recreation such as hiking, sightseeing, hunting and horseback riding; however, these were not considered outstanding when compared to others of their kind.

**Supplemental Values.** Supplemental values were found offering proof that ancient Native Americans once roamed in this area. Archeologically, several old Indian chipmunks were found offering proof that ancient Native Americans once roamed in this area.

#### Public Comment

Ten of the fourteen comments were local and four were from out-of-state. Ten of the comments agreed with the proposed decision to make the unit a WSA, and five gave reasons why they agreed. Three of the comments disagreed with the BLM's first intensive inventory report which found the unit to have naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive, unconfined recreation. Two of these comments gave reasons why they disagree.

One comment from a rancher provided new information concerning use and maintenance of one of the routes in the unit. After analyzing all the comments, the final decision is to retain 7,100 acres in the Red Creek Badlands as a Wilderness Study Area and drop the remaining acreage.

### Whitehorse Creek WY-040-325

#### Unit Description

Whitehorse Creek lies mostly in south-eastern Fremont county with some of the area extending into Sweetwater County. This unit is about 30 miles to the northeast of Farson. The unit contains a multitude of habitats and landscapes, such as lush aspen and pine groves, high, sheer sandstone cliffs, and an area of magnificent badland topography. A major portion of this unit is made up of a group of eroding red, green and gray buttes. Topography in the central and western sections consists of a flat, sage covered basin, rimmed by sheer mud and clay escarpments rising to 100 feet above the valley floor.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The Whitehorse Creek unit originally totaled 690 acres of public land. Based on public comment and field inspection, a road leading to a reservoir reduced 75 acres from the original acreage. A large number of jeep trail intrusions reduced the acreage further to 4,028 acres.

**Naturalness.** Several intrusions extend into the unit, such as two-track ways, a seismograph line and an old, abandoned reservoir, but they are faint, washed out in parts, or get infrequent use. The Bureau felt that the portion retained in the unit is in an essentially natural condition.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Opportunity for solitude is particularly high in areas west of the Continental Divide, north of Oregon Buttes and south of Pastel Butte. From atop the largest Butte in the area, which rises 850 feet above the basin floor and 7,915 feet above sea level, a keen sense of isolation and solitude is felt as one looks down into the maze-like setting created by the eroded escarpment lining the Whitehorse Creek Basin.

Particularly outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation include rock climbing and studying the unique badland type topography of Whitehorse Creek. Other excellent recreational opportunities of Whitehorse Creek are nature and wildlife photography taken along with bird watching. Other recreation includes hiking, horseback riding, backpacking and sightseeing of geological and archeological features.

**Supplemental Values.** A great number of supplemental values can be found in this unit. The badlands are laced with petrified wood, algae beds and fossils of snails and clams.

The Whitehorse Creek Unit is important raptor habitat: marsh hawks, golden eagles, prairie falcons, red-tailed hawks and various owls occur here. Other wildlife include ducks, which inhabit the few wet meadows within the unit, wild horses, mule deer, antelope and coyotes.

The northeast-southwestern trending escarpment is the predominate geologic and scenic feature of the unit. These rugged, deeply eroded green, gray, and red clay Buttes offer an unsurpassed visual experience. For example, Pastel Cathedral, is draped in a rainbow of soft pastel hues: reds, oranges, lavender, purple, pinks, greens, browns, greys and white.

Archeologically, several old Indian chipmunks were found offering proof that ancient Native Americans once roamed in this area.

#### Public Comment

Only two comments were received on the intensive inventory. One comment was local and the other from within Wyoming. Both comments felt the unit should be retained for study. It should be pointed out that the BLM inventory findings stated that this unit possessed outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive recreation but that, because of intrusions in the eastern portion of the unit, the remaining 4,028 acres fell below the 5,000 minimum. The boundary used to divide this unit from the adjacent Oregon Buttes Unit is a jeep trail deemed to be noticeable enough to serve as a boundary.

After reviewing the comments on the Oregon Buttes and recognizing that the Whitehorse Creek Unit is truly an extension of the topography surrounding the Buttes, the BLM has decided the 4,028-acre unit should be included as a WSA and study the area in conjunction with the Oregon Buttes Unit. Therefore, the 4,028 acres which fully meets all criteria is established as a Wilderness Study Area.

### Oregon Buttes WY-040-324

#### Unit Description

This unit is located in north-central Sweetwater County about 30 miles northeast of Farson. The Oregon Buttes are a prominent landmark rising out the northwestern part of the Red Desert to a height of 8,612 above sea level and 1,200 feet above the desert floor. The Continental Divide also occurs within this vicinity. The Buttes possess a wide variety of vegetative types, most notably limber pine stands, but small, isolated stands of aspen are also present. Sagebrush dominates the flat tops of the Buttes, and both big sage and nuttall saltbush communities dominate the lower slopes along with some perennial forb communities. Numerous springs display lush, green wet meadows. A panoramic view of the desert occurs to the south, the ruggedly eroded and beautifully colorful escarpments of Whitehorse Creek Badlands. The Wind River Range, with its majestic snow-covered peaks, lies far off to the north.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The original Oregon Buttes inventory unit totaled 5,738 acres which included 422 acres of state land. Due to public comment, a road running through Sections 12, 13, 23 and 24 was identified which dropped 1,456 acres from the southeastern portion of the unit. During intensive inventory, all state land (422 acres) was considered extraneous to the unit so it was dropped. Thus the size of this unit is 5,700 acres of federally owned land.

**Naturalness.** At first glance and from a distance, the Oregon Buttes appear to be in a mostly natural condition. However, closer inspection reveals two seismograph trails and 13 two-track trails which reduce the naturalness of the boundaries, and had some question as to the status of some of the "roads" used as boundaries. These intrusions all fade into obscurity, some to die as haphazard tire tracks across the hills and dry claylike soil; others ending abruptly at the top of a bench or saddle ridge; and others overgrown with sage and grass.

### Oregon Buttes (cont.)

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Opportunity for solitude in the unit is good even though it is relatively small (5,700 acres); however, much of this is due to the undeveloped nature of the surrounding countryside. Outstanding opportunities can be found in the tiny pocket forests scattered around the Buttes. Also, if no motorized vehicles are using the ways and trails in and around the unit, the dominating character of the Buttes upon the landscape and wide vistas provide a readily apparent sense of isolation.

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are outstanding in the Oregon Buttes. Being prime raptor habitat, the Buttes provide bird watchers with a variety of species and hours upon hours of observation time. Also, this is a prime area for scenic and wildlife photography offering a unique variety of settings and subjects. Other opportunities include hiking, rock climbing, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding and sightseeing. Finally, this area is a rockhoulder's paradise with petrified wood, agates, agatized wood, tortilla shells, fossil casts, chert and many other types of collectible rocks and minerals.

**Supplemental Values.** The Oregon Buttes are rich in supplemental values. Under geologic values, petrified wood is abundant varying in size from chips and remnants to petrified stumps.

The historical significance of Oregon Buttes has been well documented. The Buttes were an important landmark for fur trappers, missionaries, Oregon settlers, Mormons and California gold seekers traveling the Emigrant Trail, located just 6 1/2 miles to the north. Robert Stuart of the Pacific Fur Company 1811; General W. H. Ashley in 1824; Captain B. L. E. Bonnell in 1832; Reverend Samuel Parker, Narcissa Prentiss Whitman and Eliza Hart Spalding the first white woman to cross South Pass; and John C. Fremont led by Kit Carson in 1842, transversed the famous South Pass and traveled the Emigrant Trail past Oregon Buttes. Journals of some early travelers speak of the psychological and spiritual lift inspired by Oregon Buttes. Of archeological significance, remains of old Indian Teepee rings can be found in the shadow of one of the main Buttes. Under wildlife values, this area is important for marsh hawks, golden eagle, prairie falcons, red-tailed hawks, various owls and possibly peregrine falcons. This area is also significant elk and deer winter range. Finally, cougars and coyotes may be seen along with numerous antelope and sage grouse.

#### Public Comment

Of the nine comments received on the intensive inventory findings, six were local, two were within Wyoming and one was from out-of-state. Several comments stated the area has outstanding scenery, wildlife and historical values and should be studied. Some felt the intrusions documented were minor and that the unit offers an outstanding wilderness experience. One person expressed concern that wilderness excludes the very young and the aged. One other comment stated that although the area has some intrusions, they would rapidly heal if the area were protected. The out-of-state comment stated that the area is visited every year by people from Texas who feel the incomparable beauty of the unit should be protected.

The general thread that runs through all nine comments is that although the unit does have some intrusions, they did not agree they were as significant as the BLM had stated and they felt the unit should be studied. Therefore, because of the public comments and after careful reassessment of the unit, 5,700 acres in the area is established as a Wilderness Study Area to be further evaluated in the context of multiple use in the study phase.

### Milk Creek WY-040-335

#### Unit Description

This unit is located in northwestern Fremont County about 30 miles north-northeast of Farson.

The predominate topographical feature within this area is a north-south trending canyon through which the Sweetwater River flows. The canyon is heavily forested with lodgepole and limber pine intermingled with quaking aspens. Interspersed between the stands of tree species are big sagebrush parks. Also, quiet streamside glens and nooks are interspersed with rumbling cascades. Finally, high jagged canyon cliffs give one a panoramic view of an unspoiled setting. Milk Creek and Blair Creek are the connecting side drainages.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The size of this unit is 1,300 acres, but the size criteria of 5,000 minimum acres is waived because this unit is contiguous with the Bridger-Teton National Forest RARE II Unit 4901 which is greater than 5,000 acres.

**Naturalness.** A total of 614 acres was dropped from the original size (1,914 acres) of this unit because two roads and seven short ways were located during the intensive inventory. These intrusions, released in area in the northwest corner of the unit. The remaining acreage (1,300) has some minor intrusions (old cabins), but these do not detract from the naturalness of the area. The majority of the unit is in a near pristine condition. The northern part of the unit (about 500 acres) burned in the Blair Creek Fire of 1978 and has hand-dug fire lines around the fire's perimeter. Portions of the burn area have been replanted by BLM to native tree species.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** In spite of the small size of this unit, topographic and vegetative features provide an outstanding opportunity to experience solitude. A combination of a narrow, winding, steeply sloped river canyon with heavy forest provides an excellent setting for this experience.

Many forms of primitive and unconfined recreation can be experienced within the Milk Creek Unit. Outstanding opportunities exist in big game hunting, trout fishing, rock climbing on jagged granite cliffs, nature and wildlife photography, plus hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding and cross country skiing. Lush mountain meadows perched beside rippling water lend themselves to scenic campfires.

**Supplemental Values.** The large number of plant associations within the unit support great numbers and varieties of wildlife. This area is prime elk calving range as well as summer and fall range for elk, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, black bear, cougar and other animals.

Of historical interest to this area are a number of old sites and artifacts showing past habitation and use by man. An old logging camp lies on a small bench a few feet above the Sweetwater River. Two old cabins, their roofs caved in but their walls still standing, endure along the River. This site is known as Madril's Camp and was supposedly built by a dentist from Rock Springs who was hunting and trapping animals the turn of the century. It has been abandoned for over 50 years.

An old Forest Service campground lies on the northern boundary of the unit and a BLM Campground lies on the southern boundary. Both sites are well maintained and provide excellent access points to the unit. Both receive about 6,000 visitor use days annually.

#### Public Comment

This unit received considerable public comment from several states: Wyoming (7 comments), Ohio (12), Texas (1), Washington D.C. (1). Fourteen of the twenty-one comments favored BLM's findings that the unit does possess outstanding characteristics while six comments disagreed with the BLM's finding. All comments relate with supplemental values or topics to be addressed in the study phase.

No information was provided which would change the proposed decision, the final decision is to establish 1,300 acres as a Wilderness Study Area.

### CASPER DISTRICT Gardner Mountain WY-060-201

#### Unit Description

The topography varies from gentle grass covered slopes to steep forested ridges and sheer deep canyons. The two major perennial streams, Beartrap Creek and North Fork of the Red Fork and the canyons they formed, traverse the state land. Due to public comment, a road running through Sections 12, 13, 23 and 24 was identified which dropped 1,456 acres from the southeastern portion of the unit. During intensive inventory, all state land (422 acres) was considered extraneous to the unit so it was dropped. Thus the size of this unit is 5,700 acres of federally owned land.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The size of the unit is approximately 6,423 acres. Numerous intrusions in the unit, which were removed through boundary adjustment, reduced the size of the unit from the 18,440 acres originally identified in the initial inventory.

**Naturalness.** A large portion of the unit has been affected by the imprints of man's work. Evidence of logging activities, multiple site range improvements and log cabins which clearly impact the naturalness of the area resulted in a large amount of acreage being dropped from further study. The remaining acreage has been primarily affected by the forces of nature and man's work is substantially unnoticeable.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Within the unit are two major canyons, rugged topography and heavily forested terrain which provides an abundance of natural screening so that solitude can be found.

The variety in terrain and vegetative cover, along with the presence of many different types of wildlife creates a broad-base for a variety of recreational activities. The area would offer an outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

**Supplemental Values.** The unit provides critical winter habitat for elk and is yearlong range for mule deer. Opportunities to view many types of wildlife are excellent. Both rivers in the unit provide excellent fishing opportunities and opportunities to view geological formations in the deep canyons are also present.

#### Public Comment

A total of 27 comments were received, most from the local area with two from other communities in Wyoming and one from Utah. Seven of the comments agreed with the BLM's decision to identify the unit as a Wilderness Study Area and 20 disagreed with the proposal. Those against WSA identification cited non-wilderness characteristics such as land ownership, economy of local ranches, impassable canyons, access and past management. These concerns will be addressed in the study phase. Several comments discussed range improvements. Four comments discussed wilderness screening and boundary requirements. One comment requested that the BLM change the proposed decision; therefore, the decision to identify the unit as a Wilderness Study Area is final.

### Fortification Creek WY-060-204

#### Unit Description

The topography of the unit is broken and rough. The landscape is steeply sloping and highly dissected and gullied. There is very little flat terrain. Narrow ridges and numerous valleys caused by the many drainages dominate the unit. The area is very dry. Elevation varies from 4,000 to 4,700 feet.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The size of the unit was initially 28,100 acres. Included within the unit were two blocks of private land and two state sections. Field investigations have resulted in boundary adjustments which freed all private land and one state section. The size of the unit is now 12,419 acres.

**Naturalness.** Field investigations for the unit identified seven additional roads and four oil drilling locations not originally identified in the initial inventory. As a result, 15,681 acres are deleted from the unit. A large amount of fence line and numerous routes exist, but do not appear to substantially affect its natural character.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The rough terrain intersected by many narrow ridges and valleys offers limited visibility into surrounding areas. Along with the scattered juniper these features combine to offer an opportunity to experience outstanding solitude.

The broken landscape, along with a variety of wildlife, provides a resource base for a variety of primitive recreation activities. Deer hunting is considered excellent in the area. Elk are present in the area, but hunting has been temporarily prohibited to build up the resident herd.

**Supplemental Values.** Critical elk calving and winter range has been identified within the unit. Mule deer use the area throughout the year. Two sharp-tail strutting grouse grounds and a sage grouse strutting ground have been identified.

#### Public Comment

The majority of the 19 comments on this unit were from the local area with two from other communities in Wyoming. Eight of the comments agreed with the proposed decision to retain the unit as a Wilderness Study Area, nine disagreed and two were not clear on their position. Most of the comments against WSA identification stated there were many roads, fences and oil wells in the unit. However, all roads and oil wells have been removed from the unit by boundary adjustments. Several comments discussed non-wilderness criteria such as lack of water, outside noises, land ownership and access. Other comments favored multiple use and opening the area to the public. Since no information was provided to change the proposed decision, the unit is retained as a Wilderness Study Area.

### North Fork Powder River WY-060-202

#### Unit Description

Two major canyons and rivers, the North Fork of the Powder River and Pass Creek, traverse much of the unit. The canyons are deep and rugged, offering spectacular scenery. The remaining passive section of the unit contains grasslands and heavily forested rolling terrain. Elevation varies from 5,800 feet to 8,000 feet.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The size of the unit was originally estimated to be 15,000 acres. During the intensive inventory the acreage was recalculated and two parcels of private land within the unit were removed through boundary requirements. The size of the unit is now 10,089 acres.

**Naturalness.** Field investigations resulted in the documentation of additional roads and stock watering pipeline within the unit. After removing these intrusions, the remaining acreage retains its natural character.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The unit is divided by two major and minor canyons. Along with rolling forested topography, the unit offers outstanding opportunities for solitude. It also provides a diversity of terrain and vegetative cover. This combines with its natural character to offer outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

**Supplemental Values.** The area provides critical winter elk range and is also summer range for mule deer. Fishing is considered excellent in both Pass Creek and North Fork. Opportunities to view geological formations within the canyons are numerous.

#### Public Comment

A total of 43 comments were received. More than 50% (25) were against the proposed decision to identify the unit as a Wilderness Study Area. Most of the comments were from the local area with two from other Wyoming communities. Of those agreeing with the proposed decision, nine addressed wilderness criteria. Others in agreement gave no reason for their support or commented on the need for wilderness and proper management for the area. The majority of comments against WSA identification did not discuss wilderness characteristics, but rather discussed problems associated with a possible wilderness designation such as access, environmental concerns and impacts on local ranching. The other resource values will be discussed in the study phase. Several comments stated that the area had numerous range improvements, roads and trails and trash. These intrusions were previously documented and have either been considered to be minor or have been excluded from the unit. Since no new information or rationale was provided to change the proposed decision, the unit is established as a Wilderness Study Area.

**WORLDWIDE DISTRICT**

**Bud Kimball Creek**  
WY-010-220a

**Unit Description**

This unit is characteristic of sagebrush/grassland plant communities along the west flank of the Bighorn Mountains. Elevations range from about 4,770 feet to 5,200 feet. Topography is typically rolling hills and wide open drainages. The area is drained by tributaries to Nowood Creek, notably Buffalo Creek, Shaw Creek, Buffalo Spring Creek and Bluebank Draw.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** An area of 27,300 acres of public land underwent intensive inventory. The configuration of the unit is irregular because of existing roads and private property lines which form the unit's boundary. Included in the unit are 640 acres of state lands and 60 acres of private lands.

**Naturalness.** Field investigation revealed two major types of intrusions: vehicle routes and reservoirs. Three major travel routes were identified. All three run parallel to each other and essentially divide the unit into four long, narrow segments. Twenty-one reservoirs were cataloged during the intensive inventory. Visibility of reservoirs, differences in vegetation around reservoirs and access routes to reservoirs are factors which affect the naturalness of the unit.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The lack of vegetative screening, the rolling hills, moderately steep to shallow slopes, the wide drainages, and long parallel ridges of most of the unit are not conducive to outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation are limited by the lack of vegetative and topographic diversity. Opportunities for several varied activities exist but are not considered outstanding.

**Supplemental Values.** Supplemental values in the unit are related to wildlife. The unit provides winter habitat for antelope. Wildlife inventories indicate the presence of bald and golden eagles and other raptors in the unit.

**Public Comment**

Six comments were received on this unit. Three were from the Big Horn Basin; the other three were from other parts of Wyoming. Two comments opposed the proposed decision to drop the unit from further consideration. These comments were somewhat philosophical and discussed resource values such as wildlife habitat rather than the actual wilderness characteristics. Three comments supported the proposed decision but provided no specific data relating to the character of the unit. The fifth response was a letter signing with the proposed decision. Since none of the comments provided information or rationale to change the proposed decision, the unit is dropped from further review.

**Cedar Mountain**  
WY-010-222b

**Unit Description**

The unit is dominated by a ridge line running east and west through the center of the unit. North of this ridge line a series of small drainages are separated by long, low, finger-like ridges. South of the ridge line the terrain drops off into Sand Draw. Elevation varies from 4,400 feet to 5,100 feet. Vegetation in the unit consists almost entirely of sagebrush and grass. A few junipers are scattered along some bluffs in the southwestern part of the unit.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** The original intensive inventory unit was 10,860 acres in size. A road was identified during field investigation. As a result an area of 1,930 acres in the southeastern part of the unit was dropped because it was not of sufficient size. The remaining 8,730 acres underwent intensive inventory.

**Naturalness.** The unit has marginal natural character due to the presence of man-made features, including several vehicle trails, five small reservoirs and several miles of fence. Observed from any one spot, the unit gives the impression of a landscape affected primarily by the forces of nature. However, as soon as one begins to move about in the unit, small man-made features are encountered with a frequency that does alter the impression of natural character.

# Units Dropped From Further Wilderness Review

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** This unit is comprised of 18,100 acres. A two-track road bisects the unit into two smaller segments of 9,100 acres and 9,000 acres.

**Naturalness.** Vehicle routes, reservoirs and fences are the major intrusions in the unit. There are approximately 30 miles of identifiable interior vehicle trails in the unit. Many of these routes exhibit old blade and crown tire tracks. Access to reservoirs, dry holes and fence lines. There are more than 20 reservoirs in the unit, varying in size, utility and condition. Other man-made features include dry holes, a canal, a water well and a corral. The lack of vegetative and topographic screening, coupled with the proliferation of intrusions, cause the naturalness of the unit to be significantly affected.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Outstanding opportunities for solitude cannot be expected in this unit due to the relatively narrow breadth of the unit, and the overall scarcity of vegetative and topographic screening.

The unit seems to have no outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The storage of lack of features which result in recreational opportunities—wildlife populations, geological formations, topographic and vegetative diversity, screening—severely limit opportunity and certainly do not provide outstanding opportunity.

**Supplemental Values.** Paleontological resources (vertebrate fossils) provide a valuable opportunity for scientific study. Because of the presence of colonies of white-tailed prairie dogs, the possibility exists for the presence of the rare and endangered black-footed ferret.

**Public Comment**

Four of the five comments received on this unit were philosophical in nature but could be construed as supporting the proposed decision to drop the unit from the review process. The fifth comment also indicated support for the proposed decision. Four comments were from residents of the area near the unit; the fifth was from another area in Wyoming. Having received no comments against the proposed decision, the unit is dropped from further review.

**Emblem Draw**  
WY-010-334a

**Unit Description**

This unit is located in the northeastern portion of the Big Horn Basin, a few miles northwest of Greybull. It has two major drainages, Emblem Draw and Little Dry Creek. The eastern half of the unit (Little Dry Creek drainage) consists mainly of broad, open flats and rolling hills with low breaks. There is a lack of terrain variation. Emblem Draw and the drainages just west of it are more broken and rugged. The Emblem Draw near the north end is open and rolling; this changes to a broken badlands character in the center and south end. Vegetation is predominantly a sparse saltbush-grass type.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** This unit contains approximately 46,800 acres of public land. This is a correction from the 48,300 acre figure previously announced. There are three State section inholdings. The intensive field review resulted in the identification of two chert-water roads, each penetrating about six miles into the unit.

**Naturalness.** Field investigation has identified extensive man-made features throughout the unit. These features consist of ways, reservoirs, livestock facilities, sheds, fences, a dump and other intrusions.

Vehicle routes are more numerous than any other type of man-made feature. These ways are either once-bladed trails or are strictly two tracks developed by passage of vehicles. Many of the ways are in passable condition but require a four-wheel drive. Some of the ways have revegetated naturally but most are still very visible. At least a dozen seismicity trails are located in the eastern half of the unit. These were all bladed at one time but most do not appear to have received any continued use.

The unit contains 32 livestock watering reservoir structures scattered throughout the unit. Most are in poor condition with only seven containing water.

# Foeler Gulch

WY-010-346b  
There are six sheep shed/corrals within the unit. Some of the other man-made features found in the unit were of well drill sites, a livestock enclosure, a garbage dump and an experimental enclosure in the northeast portion of the unit which takes up an entire section.

As a result of the presence of man-made features, this unit lacks natural character. The intrusions individually have a minor impact but their combined number, density, and extensive distribution have a substantial impact on natural character throughout the entire unit.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** This unit does not offer an outstanding opportunity to experience solitude. The inventory unit is large but lack of screening severely limits opportunities to avoid the sight, sound, and evidence of other users.

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are not present. The area within the unit lacks features such as varied topography or vegetation, water, or natural color which would attract users to the unit for sightseeing. It would be possible to engage in some recreation activities but these opportunities are limited and in no sense outstanding.

**Supplemental Values.** No supplemental values were documented in this unit during the field investigation.

**Public Comment**

No comments were received on this unit. Therefore, the proposed decision to drop the unit is now final.

**Foster Gulch**  
WY-010-346a

**Unit Description**

This unit is located near the northern end of the Big Horn Basin, a few miles south of the town of Byron. The topography of the unit is that of a wide shallow valley drained by the north-running Coon Creek. This creek carries water during the spring, but is generally dry during the remainder of the year. Small side drainages enter the main drainage from the east and west and are generally shallow so that much of the unit appears as a big open bowl, while the remainder has a rolling aspect. Vegetation consists of a sagebrush-saltbush-grass association with a few cottonwoods along Coon Creek.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** Field investigation documented a road which resulted in a boundary change and the deletion of two noncontiguous parcels of public land (6,780 acres). This reduced the size to 10,370 acres.

**Naturalness.** There are relatively minor imprints of man, such as stock reservoirs and seismicity trails, present in the unit. However, the absence of vegetative or topographic screening results in some intrusions being visible from virtually any point within the unit. These intrusions do not dominate the scene but they do make the natural character of the unit quite marginal.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The unit is large enough to meet minimum size criteria, but it is not large enough to provide an outstanding opportunity for solitude given the unit landscape. The unit's shallow bowl terrain does not provide visual screening. On the contrary, it does provide visual screening. The topography and nature of the sagebrush-grass vegetation promote high visibility. An individual might find a secluded spot in a few of the side drainages but the opportunity clearly would not be "outstanding."

It would be possible to engage in some forms of primitive recreation such as horseback riding, hiking, backpacking, hunting, or nature photography in this unit but the experience provided would be considerably less than outstanding.

**Supplemental Values.** There are no supplemental values known to be present in this unit.

**Public Comment**

No comments were received on this unit. Therefore, the proposed decision to drop the unit is now final.

**Foeler Gulch**  
WY-010-346b

**Unit Description**

The lands in this unit display the characteristics common to the cold desert ecosystems of northern Wyoming. Bench lands and shallow drainages form most of the unit except for a small area displaying eroded badland characteristics. The bench lands are located just north of the southern unit boundary. These drop off within less than a mile of the boundary into the north-running Sand Draw and Coon Creek drainages. The Sand Draw and Coon Creek drainages are wide, open bowls with only slight terrain variations resulting from small side drainages. Vegetation in the unit is a characteristic sagebrush, saltbrush grass association. The only trees are a scattering of cottonwoods in the Coon Creek drainage, and adjacent to the older reservoirs.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** The area of this unit is approximately 14,700 acres including a section of State land.

**Naturalness.** Imprints of man, consisting of stock reservoirs and vehicle ways, are distributed throughout the unit. Given the lack of visual screening, they are often quite visible. However, these imprints of man's activity are not the type that creates a major impact. Individually, nor is their density such that the combined impact dominates the scene. As a result, the unit appears to be primarily affected by the forces of nature and man's works are a subordinate factor in the landscape.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The topography of the unit, consisting of a high bench near the southern boundary with most of the unit occupied by two open drainage basins, contributes to long range vistas and high visibility for any activities occurring within the unit. In this setting, it would be impossible for a person to avoid the sights, sounds, and evidence of other people.

Recreation opportunities would be similar to, and no better than, the opportunities that would be available on virtually any public land in northern Wyoming.

**Supplemental Values.** No supplemental values became apparent during the intensive inventory of this unit, and none have been identified by previously conducted resource inventories in the vicinity.

**Public Comment**

No comments were received on the proposal to drop this unit from the review process, therefore, that decision is now final.

**RAWLINS DISTRICT**

**Whiskey Mountain (Red Creek)**  
WY-030-108

**Unit Description**

The unit is primarily on a northeast-facing slope. Vegetation consists of low growing grass with some sagebrush. A few scattered pockets of trees exist along the drainages.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** This area is contiguous with land managed by the U.S. Forest Service which is designated as the Fitzpatrick Wilderness Area. The initial inventory showed the area as having 1,570 acres which were derived from land status maps. The intensive inventory found a discrepancy with these maps and were checked against the BLM Master Title Plats. This added 137 acres, making the total intensive inventory 1,707 acres.

**Naturalness.** There is a newly constructed Forest boundary fence which runs the entire length of this area. Several mining claim posts for hematite have been located. There was also a BLM material sale for building stone.

Several bladed roads and ways are found in the unit. All are highly visible and detract from the apparent naturalness of the area.

These uses, although noticeable, are not substantial. The cumulative effect of these minor impacts does not mar the area's overall naturalness. After all impacts are considered, the area appears natural.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The bare, open slopes of this area would not complement the existing wilderness area and would not enhance opportunities for solitude in the Fitzpatrick. The area is not remote and does not provide isolation.

The area does not contain any significant recreational attractions. Any recreational use would be incidental to crossing the area to reach the existing wilderness. Such use would be transitory in nature and cannot be considered outstanding.

**Supplemental Values.** The open benches are important winter habitat for deer, elk, moose and bighorn sheep.

**Public Comment**

Nine comments were received, with most of them from the local area. The rest came from other communities in Wyoming. The comments were evenly split, with half saying that the unit possessed wilderness characteristics and half saying it did not. There was not sufficient reason given to justify changing the proposed decision to drop the area from further review. Therefore, that decision is final.

**Whiskey Mountain (Torry Rim)**  
WY-030-107

**Unit Description**

This unit consists of a bare, rocky east-facing slope known as Torrey Rim. The open slopes are littered with rocks and boulders giving the overall appearance of a rocky slope. The area consists of scattered coniferous trees, grasses and sagebrush.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** This unit contains 421 acres adjacent to the U.S. Forest Service's Fitzpatrick Wilderness Area. It meets the criterion for size because it adjoins another agency's lands, in this case a designated wilderness area.

The unit consists of intersecting one-fourth-mile wide strips of public land.

**Naturalness.** The area is enclosed with a 4-strand barb wire fence on all sides except the west end. Very faint two-way roads run up the west and through the east ends of the area.

This area is in a natural condition except for influence of an overhead telephone line. Topography limits the impact of this intrusion to a small area of about 19-20 acres.

The fences, ways and telephone line are readily visible inside the unit.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** This area would not add solitude to the Fitzpatrick Wilderness Area. It sits on the edge of a long rim with a few scattered trees and north facing bare slopes.

Solitude would be unattainable in the unit itself because it is merely a series of strips attached together. At 421 acres, it warrants no consideration by itself.

The unit, combined with the Fitzpatrick Wilderness area, forms a long linear area with a small nook on the end. This would confine use and remove the freedom of movement normally associated with wilderness. No campsites are found in the unit. Hunting would be marginal and, in fact, the quality would be more dependent on adjacent private lands than the public lands.

**Supplemental Values.** The vistas from the top of this rim are spectacular. The glacial moraine valley with Torrey, Ring and Trail Lakes is prominent. This ridge is an important migration route and winter habitat for mule deer, moose, elk and probably some bighorn sheep.

**General Summary of Characteristics**  
**Size.** This area is contiguous with land managed by the U.S. Forest Service which is designated as the Fitzpatrick Wilderness Area. The initial inventory showed the area as having 1,570 acres which were derived from land status maps. The intensive inventory found a discrepancy with these maps and were checked against the BLM Master Title Plats. This added 137 acres, making the total intensive inventory 1,707 acres.

**Naturalness.** There is a newly constructed Forest boundary fence which runs the entire length of this area. Several mining claim posts for hematite have been located. There was also a BLM material sale for building stone.

Several bladed roads and ways are found in the unit. All are highly visible and detract from the apparent naturalness of the area.

These uses, although noticeable, are not substantial. The cumulative effect of these minor impacts does not mar the area's overall naturalness. After all impacts are considered, the area appears natural.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The bare, open slopes of this area would not complement the existing wilderness area and would not enhance opportunities for solitude in the Fitzpatrick. The area is not remote and does not provide isolation.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** This unit contains 350 acres of public land. It adjoins the U.S. Forest Service's Fitzpatrick Wilderness Area along its southern boundary. The area was intensively inventoried, in part, because of its small size, because it adjoins a designated wilderness area.

**Naturalness.** A small segment of the old Glacier Park Trail is in the area. Part of it has been obliterated by the land slide. A new trail has been built up Bomber Basin outside of the unit to avoid the landslide area. No other man-made features can be found in the area, thus, it appears to have been primarily affected by forces of nature.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The unit represents a finger of land jutting out from the wilderness. This fact, coupled with the restrictions caused by active land slides and the similarities to multiple use land (and not wilderness lands) leads the Bureau to conclude that it does not possess an outstanding opportunity for solitude.

Recreation opportunities are severely limited by the active land slide on the west side of the unit. The landslide has obliterated a portion of the Glacier Trail. It is not to be considered a challenge but a barrier which threatens recreational uses of the area.

Limestone cliffs on the south restrict movement and access to the Fitzpatrick Wilderness. The cliffs do not provide rock climbing opportunities since they are loose, friable, unconsolidated rock.

These factors lead to the conclusion that outstanding opportunities for a primitive, unconfined type of recreation do not exist in the unit.

**Supplemental Values.** The area is of marginal importance for bighorn sheep, deer and elk winter range.

This area is an important visual resource to the spectacular views in Torrey Creek and contributes to the natural surrounding of Arrow Mountain and Bomber Basin.

**Public Comment**

Four local comments were received. Three of the comments stated that the unit did not possess wilderness characteristics. The fourth comment did not provide any reason why the proposed decision should be changed. Therefore, the proposed decision to drop the unit from further study becomes final.

**Lysite Mountain**  
WY-030-113

**Unit Description**

The topography of the area consists of hilly and mountainous terrain. In the southern and eastern section the mountains tend to be steep sided and grassy, while the mountains of the central and northwest sections tend to be of gentler slopes. Lysite Creek cuts through the area in a north-south orientation producing a locally deep drainage along its course.

Vegetation tends to be consistent throughout the unit, and consists of low-growing sagebrush and grasses. The sagebrush can, at places, grow up to height of 3 to 4 feet, but these areas are few. The upper slopes and flat tops of the mountains support a widely scattered growth of juniper. In a few places along the drainages, cottonwoods and/or aspen grow in small pockets.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** The unit consists of 7,330 acres. The area is bordered on the north, south, east, and west by state and private land.

**Naturalness.** A road penetrates the unit from the eastern boundary. It has been built within the past 10 years. The impact from this road is substantially noticeable, and has the effect of showing the presence of man throughout the area in which it runs.

In the northwest sections, ways, fences, and a maintained sheep and/or cattle corral all exist. Neither topography nor vegetation is sufficient to screen the corral or fence lines from the view of the visitor. These permanent improvements are substantially noticeable throughout this area. For the most part, the ways are of sufficient primitive nature to have only a local impact on the area's naturalness. All these features combine to substantially show that man is not a casual visitor to the area.

In the extreme northeast corner of the unit, spraying for sagebrush control has taken place. This is the visual effect of long rows of dead sagebrush that contrast significantly with the surrounding area. These lines clearly are not natural in origin, and again shows man's presence in the area.

Other fences and ways exist within the unit, and their effects vary from none to severe depending on the area and the visitors relative position to the impact.

The cumulative effect of all these permanent improvements and impacts is that roughly only half the area or approximately 3,400 acres is in natural condition with man's works substantially unnoticeable.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Solitude would be difficult to obtain in most of the unit. The lack of topographic or vegetative screening would not allow the visitor to be free of the sights and sounds of others within the unit, or to find a secluded spot.

Only in small areas in the south and west parts of the unit could the visitor find a secluded spot; however the small size of these areas would not allow the solitude to be outstanding in nature.

The potential for outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation does not exist within the unit.

Hunting is possible within the unit, but by virtue of the small abundance of game in the area, it is severely limited in nature. This is the current recreational use of the area.

**Supplemental Values.** No unique scenic, ecological or geological attributes exist within the unit. Extensive grazing (particularly in the northern sections) precludes any study of unimpacted areas representing the surrounding geographic area.

**Public Comment**

Of the total of seven comments, four were from Ohio. The remaining were from Wyoming. Six comments indicated that the area possessed wilderness characteristics. However, no information was received to refute the intensive inventory conclusions concerning the lack of naturalness in the area. Therefore, the decision to drop this unit from further study is final.

**Lysite Badlands**  
WY-030-115

**Unit Description**

The unit is composed of flat and hilly terrain with an average elevation of about 5,500 feet above sea level. The flat areas are marked by draws, which, in parts of the unit, form badlands type topography from which the unit takes its name. Flat to very gently rolling areas occupy the southwest, west and eastern parts of the unit with the badlands in between extending from the northern to the southern boundary. Flat to gently rolling terrain occupies nearly half the unit.

The topography of the area consists of hilly and mountainous terrain. In the southern and eastern section the mountains tend to be steep sided and grassy, while the mountains of the central and northwest sections tend to be of gentler slopes. Lysite Creek cuts through the area in a north-south orientation producing a locally deep drainage along its course.

Vegetation consists predominantly of grasses and sagebrush. The flats support a moderately dense cover of low growing (1 to 2 feet) sagebrush and grass, while the badlands support a very sparse growth of the same vegetative cover. The steeper, heavily eroded slopes of the badland draws support no vegetation, and the sedimentary banding of the soil is quite pronounced. Geologically, the badlands are moderately unusual to the surrounding geographic area by virtue of their extent. The flats exhibit vegetation and topography which are common to the surrounding area.

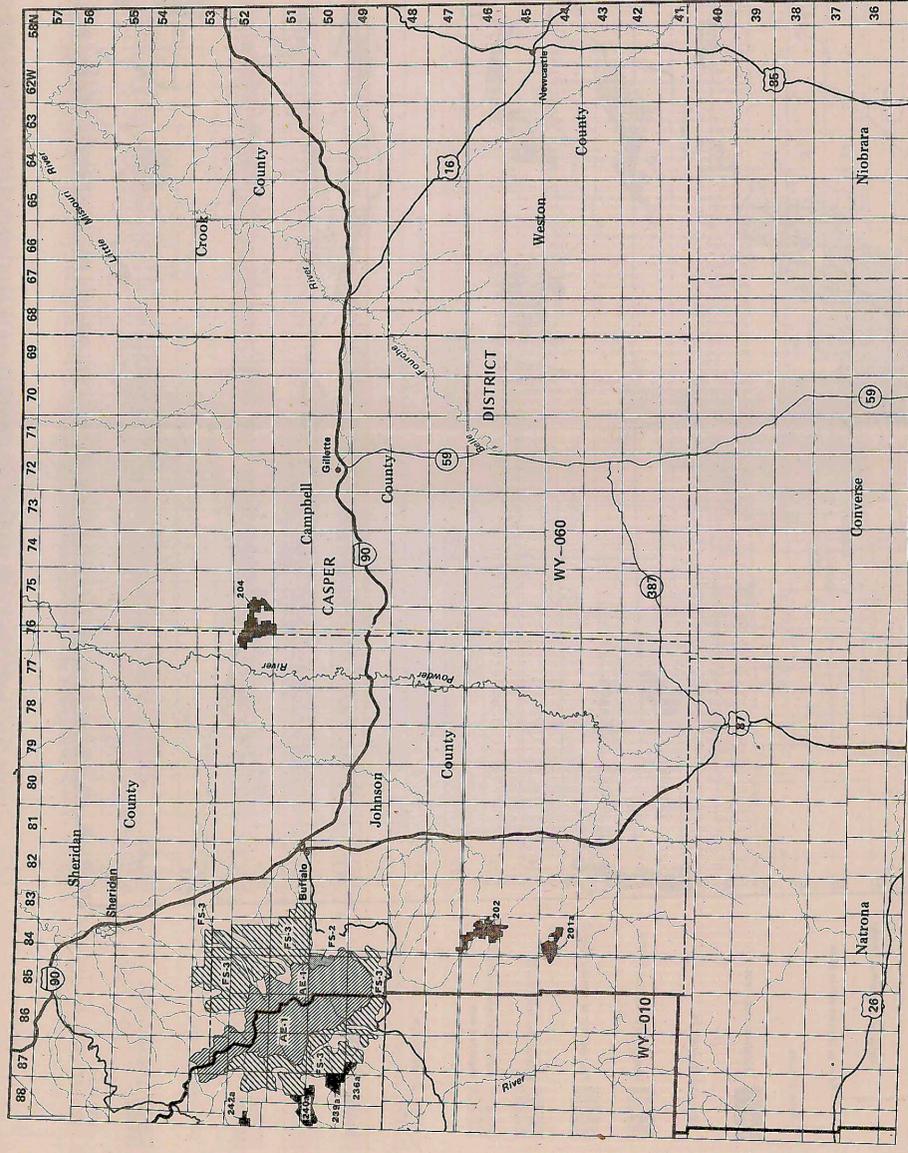
**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** The unit consists of 14,831 acres. The discrepancy between this figure and that reported previously for the initial inventory resulted from an error in the land status map used to calculate acreage. The unit is a "block" of land in that it is not long and linear in shape.

**Naturalness.** Man-made intrusions throughout the unit include water wells, fences, 15 miles of ways, reservoirs, drill holes and a powerline. Each of these intrusions is, by itself, minor. However, the great number of these intrusions does have a large effect on naturalness when looked at cumulatively.

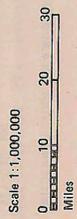
**Outstanding Opportunities.** Outstanding opportunities for solitude are not available in the unit. There is no vegetation which would provide screening for visitors from the sights and sounds of others in the unit. Similarly, no vegetation exists to provide seclusion for campsites. Topography is rough in places but generally speaking, visitors would be able to see most other visitors within a mile or two. In spite of some rugged areas, the unit, in general, is wide open. The visitor can be seen from great distances.

The potential for outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation does not exist within the unit.

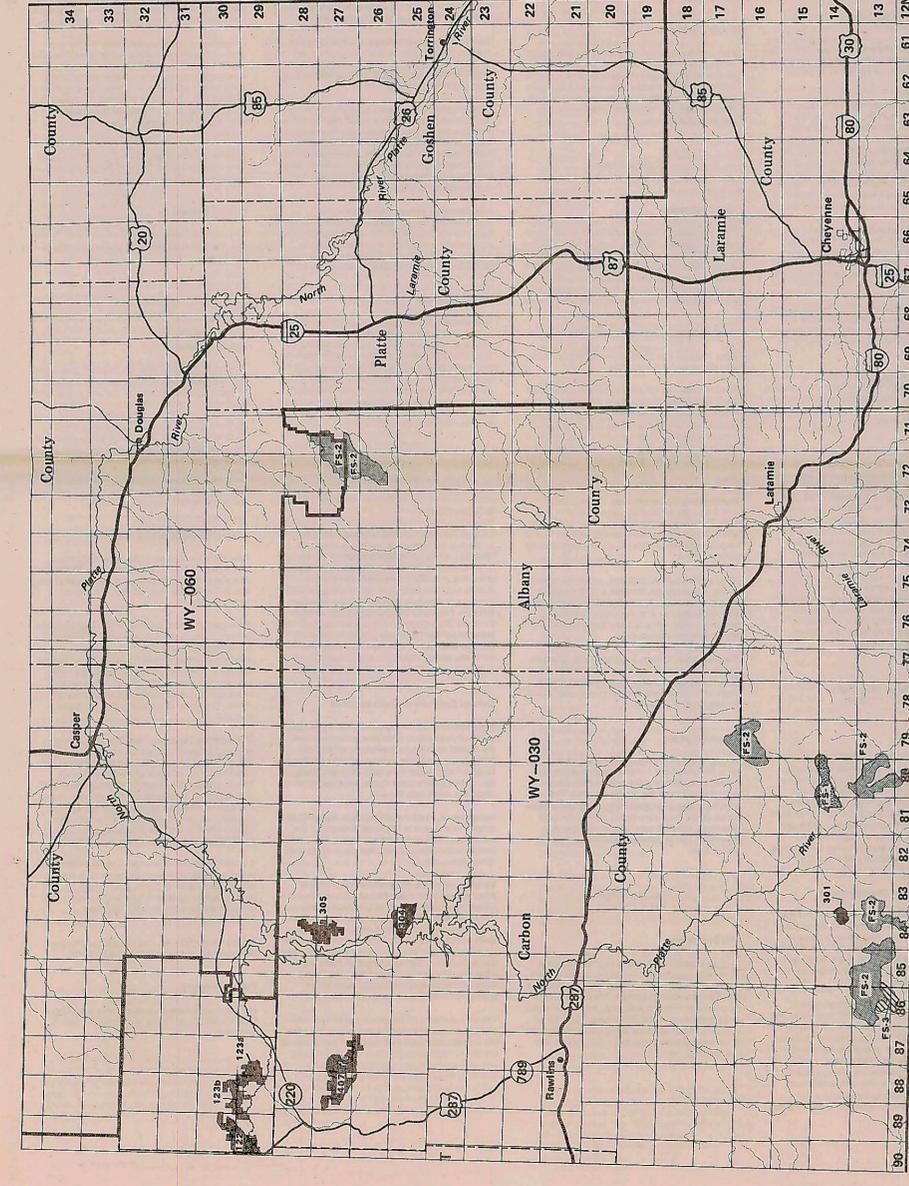


- WILDERNESS STUDY AREA NUMBER  
WY-010-100
- Refer to Unit within District
  - Refer to District within State
  - Refer to State
  - USFS Wilderness study area
  - Other Federal Agencies
  - Designated wilderness (USFS)
  - Proposed for wilderness (USFS)
  - Further planning (USFS)
  - Administratively endorsed wilderness area

Revised as of November, 1980.

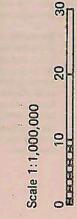


Northeast Wyoming



- WILDERNESS STUDY AREA NUMBER  
WY-010-100
- Refer to Unit within District
  - Refer to District within State
  - Refer to State
  - USFS Wilderness study area
  - Other Federal Agencies
  - Designated wilderness (USFS)
  - Proposed for wilderness (USFS)
  - Further planning (USFS)
  - Administratively endorsed wilderness area

Revised as of November, 1980.



Southeast Wyoming

**Wildhorse Basin**  
WY-040-405

**Unit Description**

The Wildhorse Basin unit is characterized by rough mountainous terrain covered by pinon-juniper vegetation and numerous sagebrush parks. A steep ridge line extends through the center of the unit. This ridge rises about 1,000 feet above the canyon to the south.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** When first inventoried the unit was stated to have 5,480 acres. Upon review it was found that a Forest Service road was not properly plotted on the map. When the road was properly located, the size was reduced to 4,753 acres.

**Naturalness.** Numerous intrusions were identified in the intensive inventory. These intrusions included once-bladed seismograph lines and two-track trails. Due to the rough topography, these bladed intrusions are quite visible. The area does not possess the naturalness character necessary for wilderness.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The rugged topography of this unit, combined with the heavy pinon-juniper stands, provide screening which would serve to conceal other visitors in the unit. This would offer outstanding solitude.

The Wildhorse Basin unit provides opportunities for hiking, hunting, horseback riding, bird watching, photography and sightseeing. It was felt that these opportunities are limited and not outstanding.

**Supplemental Values.** The area is the northern range of pinon pine which is of ecological significance. There is some evidence of use of the area by American Indians. The area provides habitat for a limited number of antelope, golden eagles and is also winter range for mule deer.

**Public Comment**

Of the four comments received, three were from within state and one was out-of-state. All four comments disagreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit, and three provided reasons why they disagreed. The primary reason for disagreeing with the decision to drop this unit was that adjoining Forest Service lands in the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area should be included to make the acreage over 5,000 acres.

Since the Forest Service Wilderness Inventory (RARE II) was completed two years ago, and since it was concluded at that time the lands were not eligible, the proposal to combine lands now is not feasible. No new information was provided that justifies retention of the unit as a WSA. Therefore, the proposed decision to drop this unit is now final.

**CASPER DISTRICT**

**LaBonte**  
WY-050-101

**Unit Description**

The LaBonte unit is located in the Laramie Range adjacent to a small detached unit of the Medicine Bow National Forest. Topography is mountainous with several granite ridges and drainages running through the unit. Portions of two canyons are contained within the unit. LaBonte Creek flows through the unit. The primary vegetation is small patches of ponderosa pine interspersed with brush and open grass parks.

**General Summary of Characteristics**

**Size.** The unit contains 3,800 acres of public land laid out in a very irregular pattern. This acreage is not sufficient to meet the minimum required for a Wilderness Study Area.

**Naturalness.** Two jeep trails were identified during the intensive inventory. Both of these trails have been established by the passage of vehicles and are therefore not roads. Their effect on the apparent naturalness of the unit is minor due to the screening effect of the topography and vegetation.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** This unit is adjacent to a Forest Service RARE I unit and in combination with the adjacent Forest Service lands could have provided outstanding opportunity for solitude. The Forest Service lands were determined to be non-wilderness and dropped from the RARE II process. This 3,800 acres does not have the capacity to provide an outstanding opportunity for solitude on its own.

The area does have the potential to provide for participation in a variety of primitive and unconfined recreation activities such as hiking, backpacking, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, mountain or rock climbing and bird watching. The unit contains topographic and vegetative features such as canyons, rocky outcrops, open meadows and timbered drainages which would provide diverse settings for primitive and unconfined recreation activities to occur. However, the unit's total size and boundary configuration preclude the opportunity for an outstanding recreation experience.

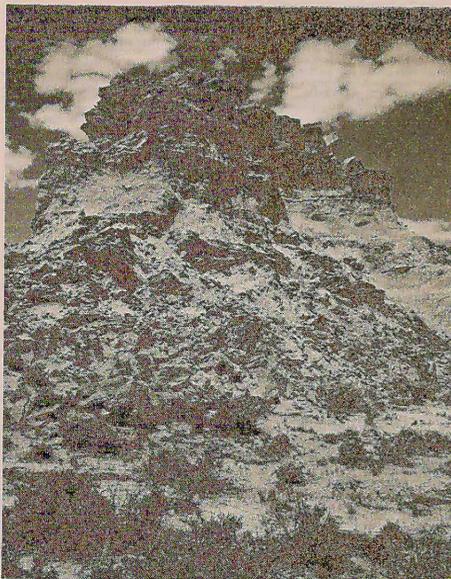
**Supplemental Values.** The LaBonte unit is at the north end of bighorn sheep summer range. The unit provides habitat for a portion of the Laramie Peak herd of about 100 animals during some years.

Elk and deer also use the area during summer. The important features are grassy meadows and sagebrush slopes for elk and deciduous shrubs and forbs for deer. Excellent cover is provided by the rough terrain and ponderosa stands.

LaBonte Creek contains good populations of rainbow and brook trout. Due to lack of public access Wyoming Game and Fish Department does not have information available on quantity and size of fish or fishing pressure.

**Public Comment**

Nine comments were received on this unit. Seven were from the local area and two were from elsewhere in Wyoming. Three of the local comments agreed with the proposed decision due to the inadequate size. The other four local comments disagreed that the small size of the unit precludes opportunity for solitude or primitive recreation. However, none of these comments stated the unit provides outstanding opportunity for solitude or primitive recreation. The other two non-local comments recognized that the unit lacks adequate size but felt that the unit possesses exceptional scenic and wildlife values that should be preserved. These values have been recognized through the Bureau's land use planning process. The lack of size and the fact that the adjacent Forest Service lands were dropped compel the Bureau to proceed with the proposed decision to drop the unit.



**Who to Contact**

These Wyoming BLM managers are available to answer questions about BLM's wilderness review process.

**STATE DIRECTOR,** Bureau of Land Management, 2515 Warren Avenue, P.O. Box 1828, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001.

**WORLAND DISTRICT MANAGER,** P.O. Box 119, 1700 Robertson Avenue, Worland, Wyoming 82401.

**AREA MANAGER,** Washakie Resource Area, P.O. Box 119, 1700 Roberston Avenue, Worland Wyoming 82401.

**AREA MANAGER,** Cody Resource Area, P.O. Box 528, Federal Building, 1131-13th, Cody, Wyoming 82414.

**RAWLINS DISTRICT MANAGER,** P.O. Box 670, 1300 Third Street, Rawlins, Wyoming 82301.

**AREA MANAGER,** Divide Resource Area, P.O. Box 670, 1300 Third Street, Rawlins, Wyoming 82301.

**AREA MANAGER,** Medicine Bow Resource Area, P.O. Box 670, 1300 Third Street, Rawlins, Wyoming 82301.

**AREA MANAGER,** Lander Resource Area, P.O. Box 589, Lander, Wyoming 82520.

**ROCK SPRINGS DISTRICT MANAGER,** P.O. Box 1869, Highway 187 North, Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901

**AREA MANAGER,** Green River Resource Area, P.O. Box 1869, Highway 187 North, Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901.

**AREA MANAGER,** Salt Wells Resource Area, P.O. Box 1869, Highway 187 North, Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901.

**AREA MANAGER,** Pinedale Resource Area, P.O. Box 768, Molyneux Building, Pinedale, Wyoming 82941

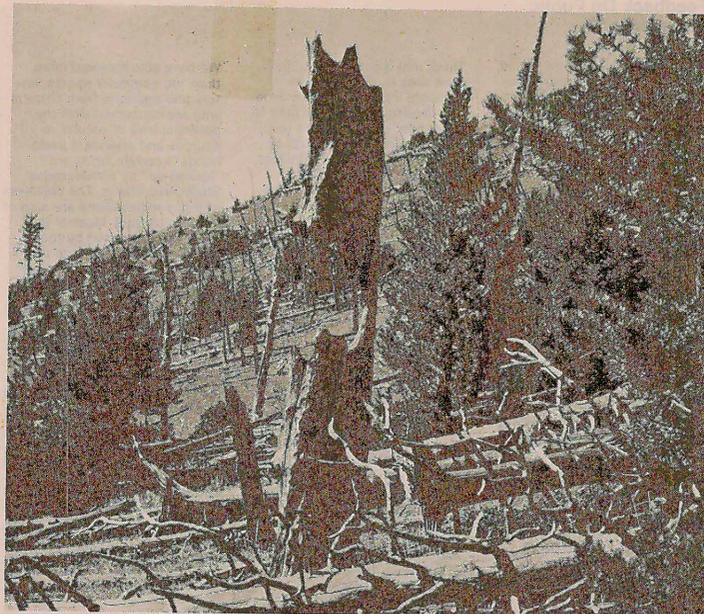
**AREA MANAGER,** Kemmerer Resource Area, P.O. Box 632, Kemmerer Wyoming 83101.

**CASPER DISTRICT MANAGER,** 951 Union Boulevard, Casper, Wyoming 82601.

**AREA MANAGER,** Platte River Resource Area, 951 Union Boulevard Casper, Wyoming 82601.

**AREA MANAGER,** Buffalo Resource Area, P.O. Box 670, Buffalo, Wyoming 82834.

**AREA MANAGER,** Newcastle Resource Area, Highway 16 Bypass, Newcastle, Wyoming 82701.



**Other Publications**

The following maps are available for purchase from the Wyoming State Office of BLM.

1:500,000 scale colored status map .....	\$5.00 each copy
Transparent overlay No. 6 dated April, 1980 .....	\$4.00 each copy
Paper copy of overlay No. 6 .....	Free

The following publications are available free of charge from the Wyoming State Office.

<b>Wilderness Inventory Handbook</b> .....	September, 1978
<b>Summary and Facts About BLM's Wilderness Program in Wyoming</b> (Proposed Initial Inventory Decisions) .....	February, 1979
<b>Wilderness Program in Wyoming</b> (BLM's Initial Inventory Decisions) .....	July 1979
<b>Proposed Decisions for Wilderness Inventory Units in the Overthrust Belt and Certain Other Units</b> .....	August, 1979
<b>Decisions for Wilderness Inventory Units in the Overthrust Belt and Certain Other Units</b> .....	December, 1979
<b>Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review</b> .....	December, 1979
<b>Proposed Wilderness Study Areas</b> .....	April, 1980

BLM will publish a booklet describing the wilderness characteristics of each Wilderness Study Area next spring. The booklet will include a large scale map of each WSA. To request a copy of this publication, mail this form to BLM.

Mail to:  
**Bureau of Land Management (912)**  
Box 1828  
Cheyenne, WY 82001

Please send me a copy of the booklet describing each Wilderness Study Area in Wyoming when it is published in April, 1981.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

#### Lysite Badlands (cont.)

The Lysite Badlands Unit would provide some types of primitive unconfined recreation such as hiking, backpacking, hunting and general sightseeing. However, the Bureau feels that none of these opportunities are outstanding or that for that matter, any different than similar opportunities in surrounding "roaded" areas.

**Supplemental Values.** The area would provide opportunities for enjoyment of a grassland-sagebrush area in a relatively natural condition.

#### Public Comment

A total of 14 comments were received. Ten of the comments were from Wyoming with three from the local area. Four comments were received from the eastern United States. Most of the comments indicated that the area does possess wilderness characteristics. Few of the comments addressed the large number of intrusions in the unit. The comments did not provide sufficient reason for BLM to believe that the initial inventory findings are not valid at the right decision. Many of the comments indicated that the writer had no personal knowledge of the area. A number of comments were received during the initial inventory which supported dropping this unit from further consideration. Those individuals chose not to comment again on the intensive inventory. Based on an analysis of the comment and a review of the inventory materials, the proposed decision to drop the unit from further study is now final.

#### Sweetwater Rocks WY-030-121

#### Unit Description

The topography and vegetation of the area consists of two basic forms. Roughly 60% of the unit consists of the long sloping plain in the north, descending from about 6,700 feet to about 6,400 feet along Sage Hen Creek. Its vegetation consists of relatively low-growing (1 to 2 feet) sagebrush and scattered grasses.

The remaining 40% of the unit consists of a northeast-southwest oriented ridge and an area of slightly broken hills to the southeast of the area. These hills and the ridge attain heights to about 6,800 feet. Vegetation in the area consists of low-growing sparse sagebrush and grasses, with scattered junipers dotting the slopes.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The size of the unit is 8,506 acres. It is bordered on all sides by private and state lands.

**Naturalness.** This area is essentially natural condition. Five ways penetrate the unit but, by virtue of either their primitive nature or their ability to topographically screened, have a minimal effect on the area's naturalness except for a valley in the extreme southern end. Here, the presence of two of the ways, a wrecked house trailer, an old windmill and a fence line all illustrate man is not a casual visitor to this small area.

Four fences cut across the area. Except for the valley mentioned above, the fences in the area are substantially unnoticeable in relation to the entire unit, and their influence is quickly lost as one moves away from them.

While man's works are present in the area, their cumulative effects are minimal. The majority of the area is in essentially natural condition.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The majority of this unit lacks topographic and vegetative screening to provide the visitor with solitude. There are some isolated secluded spots; however, such spots are rare. These places offer solitude but because of its limited nature, such solitude cannot be considered outstanding.

Outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined recreation do not exist in the unit. Camping, hiking, or hunting could be accommodated by the area, but the lack of unique, unusual, or outstanding features provides little incentive for visitors to use the area. Little exists in the unit to entice recreation or to provide for an outstanding experience. Present recreational uses in the area are rockhounding using motorized access, and hunting, likewise using motorized access.

**Supplemental Values.** Pronghorn antelope, sage grouse, deer and prairie falcons have been seen within the unit. Such wildlife is not, however, unique or unusual to the surrounding geographic area. The area is recognized as potential big-horn sheep range.

#### Public Comment

This unit received 26 comments, 19 of which came from the eastern United States. The remainder came from Wyoming.

The local comment was evenly split on the question of wilderness characteristics with half feeling the area qualified and half feeling it did not. The non-local comment indicated that the area possessed wilderness qualities and should be designated as a wilderness study area.

Analysis of the comment indicates that it is largely inconclusive. The comment provides general information about wilderness characteristics, but does not address any of the specific intensive inventory findings concerning naturalness or outstanding opportunities. Although the comment in favor of study area designation outnumbered that in favor of the proposed decision, insufficient rationale was provided to change the proposed decision. Therefore, the proposed decision to drop the unit, is now final.

#### ROCK SPRINGS DISTRICT

#### South Soda Lake WY-040-104

#### Unit Description

The unit is located in the foothills of the Wind River Mountain Range. The entire unit consists of a portion of a massive granite slope bordering South Soda Lake. The topography is steep, rugged, and broken by the erosion patterns of the granite. Sparse vegetation is found where there is ample soil. Engelmann spruce and lodgepole pine dominate the area, with aspen, sagebrush, and grasses also present. Isolated coniferous stands are found throughout most of the unit. A flat along the shoreline contains sand, grasses, and herbaceous species. Elevation ranges from 7,400 feet at the shoreline to 7,800 feet at the forest boundary.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** This unit, containing approximately 70 acres, borders Forest Service RARE II lands.

**Naturalness.** The unit remains in its natural condition, unaffected by the presence of man. The steep, rugged nature of the area precludes use of vehicles and most man-made structures.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The rugged and broken nature of the terrain and the screening offered by vegetation could offer an outstanding opportunity for solitude. However, the small size of the unit negates this opportunity.

Opportunities for recreation within this small, narrow unit are also limited. The size of the unit serves to confine movement in all directions. Some opportunity exists along the lake shore, though again, this is confined to a very small area (less than 1 mile). The lake does not support fish, which may lessen recreation appeal. The unit appears to offer some opportunity for camping and limited rock climbing.

**Supplemental Values.** The unit does provide good habitat for raptor and waterfowl nesting. It also borders Forest Service RARE II lands on the north and the proposed BLM Scab Creek Wilderness Area across the lake.

#### Public Comment

This unit received six comments, five from Wyoming and one from Colorado. Of these six comments, four agreed with the proposed decision to drop the area from further study. The other two comments were opposed to the proposal but did not offer any adequate information to change the recommendation. The Forest Service comment identified no benefit by adding this unit to their adjoining RARE II lands. The final decision is to drop the unit from the inventory.

#### Cottonwood Creek WY-040-105

#### Unit Description

The unit is located within the lower foothills of the Wind River Mountain Range. Elevation ranges from 7,100 feet on the west to 6,600 feet at the forest boundary. This area is typified by an undulating to fairly steep, short-sloped terrain. The soil is extremely rocky and supports predominantly sage and other low shrubs. Throughout this area several intermittent drainages occur. These drainages are shallow and serve to break the uniformity of the terrain to some degree. A few small stands of aspen offer the only departure from the sagebrush-dominated landscape.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The unit contains approximately 3,540 acres. The Bridger Teton National Forest serves the eastern boundary. A part of this area of the forest has been recommended for wilderness classification through the RARE II process.

**Naturalness.** The unit has lost its original character due to the extensive nature of man's work within its boundaries. The number and placement of these intrusions within this small, narrow unit make it difficult to travel any significant distance without encountering evidence of man's presence. Approximately nine miles of way, four miles of fence, and several miles of irrigation ditches are found within the unit. The cumulative effect of numerous intrusions within a small and narrow unit which lacks effective screening is to create a feeling of an unnatural condition where man's works are substantially noticeable.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The narrow and irregular configuration and lack of effective topographic or vegetative screening precludes the realization of an outstanding opportunity for solitude.

While opportunities do exist for recreation, they cannot be considered to be outstanding.

**Supplemental Values.** The unit provides good antelope, deer and sage grouse habitat. It also provides access to Forest Service lands, portions of which have been recommended for designation as wilderness.

#### Public Comments

The Cottonwood Creek area received 29 comments. There were 25 comments from a mid-western state and only 3 from Wyoming. The majority (26) of the comments disagreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit from further study. However, 25 comments from one mid-western state, identical in content, were submitted several times by the same individuals, associated with the same organization. Although the majority of the comments were opposed to the Bureau's proposed decision, none offered adequate information to change the recommendation. The Forest Service supports the BLM decision to drop the unit from further study.

#### LaBarge Islands WY-040-114, 115, 116

#### Unit Description

These three units consist of three adjacent islands in the Green River. They were combined into one narrative. These islands appear to be stable and well established. The vegetation ranges from large stands of mature cottonwoods to meadows of native grasses. Between these are found willows and other water associated species. There is no significant topographic relief on any of the islands.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** These three islands contain 55 acres, 25 acres and 100 acres respectively, for a total of 180 acres. Field investigation has shown that these islands are, in fact, only intermittent in nature. By the end of summer months, scattered areas of standing water are all that remain to separate the "islands" from the mainland. These three pieces of land cannot be considered as true islands. Due to this and the fact that their combined acreage is far less than 5,000 acres, they will be dropped from further consideration in the Wilderness Review.

**Naturalness.** These three islands show only limited evidence of man's activities. There are signs of use by cattle, horses, ORVs, picnickers and fishermen. This use is not intensive and has not significantly impaired the natural condition of the islands. There is significant evidence of use by a variety of wildlife.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The opportunity for solitude is limited by the small size of the unit and the lack of diversity of landform to provide effective screening. The Town of LaBarge is located on a bluff across the river only a few hundred yards west of the main island. These factors combine to severely limit any outstanding opportunity to experience solitude.

The LaBarge Islands do offer some outstanding recreation opportunities, including fishing, boating, picnicking, camping and limited hunting. The unconfined nature of these activities, however, is limited somewhat by the small size and lack of diversity of the unit.

**Supplemental Values.** The most significant supplemental value that these islands offer is in the form of wildlife habitat for waterfowl nesting, raptor nesting, moose and deer wintering areas, and fisheries habitat. The islands also provide a valuable "green belt" area for the Town of LaBarge.

#### Public Comments

The five comments received on the LaBarge Islands were all from Wyoming. There were three comments in opposition to the proposed action of dropping the islands from further study. These comments offered no information to change the proposed decisions. The other two comments agreed with the proposal on the basis of size. The final decision is to drop these three units from the inventory.

#### New Fork Islands WY-040-125

#### Unit Description

This unit consists of two adjacent islands in the New Fork River, located approximately 10 miles from Boulder, Wyoming. Both islands appear to be stable and well established. The vegetation ranges from large stands of mature cottonwoods to meadows of native grasses. Between these are willows and other water associated species. There is no significant topographic relief on either of the islands.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The two islands total 72 acres. The largest contains 54 acres and the second island contains approximately 18 acres, of which one or two acres in the northeast corner are private land.

**Naturalness.** The naturalness of the island has been impaired by intensive grazing. Due to the relatively small area involved, cattle grazing has resulted in concentrated and widespread impacts on the island's natural character. Approximately one-half mile of fence runs across the southwestern end of the area. At the northwest projection of the island, vehicles cross a low water. In this area, two-track ways are evident.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** Because of their size, outstanding opportunity to experience solitude does not exist on the islands. Additionally, no topographic relief is available to provide screening. Screening is available from vegetation, but this is not sufficient to overcome the limitations of size.

A good opportunity does exist for a few activities (e.g., fishing, camping, hunting, birdwatching, and picnicking), but these opportunities are only slightly better than those available in adjacent or nearby areas.

**Supplemental Values.** The New Fork Island Unit provides significant habitat for waterfowl and raptor nesting. A variety of duck species, Canada geese and raptors were observed during field investigations. The islands are heavily used by moose during the winter.

#### Public Comment

This unit received three comments, all of which were from Wyoming. Two agreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit from further study. The one comment which disagreed with the proposal failed to provide a rationale for their disagreement. Therefore, the final decision is to drop the unit from further study.

#### The Pinnacles - Big Empty WY-040-314, 315

#### Unit Description

This combined unit is located in northeastern Sweetwater County about 32 miles northeast of Rock Springs. Geologically, the Pinnacles are formations which are unique to this area due to their pyramic-like structure. The many small geologic microsites found within this unit consist of small sandstone sculptures, volcanic dikes and badland and windblown type features. Apatite nodules and many types of fossils are available on Alkali Firm and the Pinnacles.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** Originally, this unit consisted of two units: the Pinnacles unit with 8,055 acres and the Big Empty unit with 6,160 acres. During intensive inventory, the boundary "road" between the north and south unit was found not to meet the definition of a road, but instead was a rather faint jeep trail. The boundary line was therefore redrawn to combine the two units and to exclude state and private lands within the units. The combined size is 13,797 acres.

**Naturalness.** The Pinnacles-Big Empty unit has been scarred by man's intrusions at a number of places. Twelve jeep trails and old access ways run for a total of 17.1 miles. Three are either very faint and overgrown or are now impassable. The others vary from noticeable to faint but are more evident than the first three. Eight seismicograph trails cut through this unit for a total of just over 22 miles. Three seismicograph trails are quite noticeable and portions of them are being used for vehicular traffic. There are three ditches with their associated access ways. While none of these intrusions can be seen from the top of the Pinnacles due to the angle and vegetation screening, they are quite noticeable when hiking in the unit. Only 2,960 acres, an area that surrounds the Pinnacles, meets the naturalness criteria.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** For most of the unit, one person or group using the area would find the solitude remarkable high. However, gentle topography and a number of other visitors would break the feeling of solitude. The most outstanding opportunity for solitude would be in the extremely unique geologic formations of the Pinnacles themselves. The rim country on the north side of Alkali Creek does possess some high values of solitude, but similar country to the west and south makes its outstanding character questionable.

Camping among the Pinnacles is a unique and stimulating desert experience. The many microsites of unequal geologic formations and phenomena provide for outstanding sightseeing opportunities. Pinnacle climbing, backpacking, photography and hiking are all outstanding. Other recreational opportunities include wildlife photography and observation of wild horse herds, horseback riding, big game hunting, small game and game bird hunting and rockhounding, but these are not outstanding.

**Supplemental Values.** The Pinnacles are a well-known natural landmark of the Red Desert. They are nesting grounds for the ferocious Hawk. The entire area is pronghorn antelope summer range and year-round wild horse range. Elk and deer also use the area to some extent. Many types of raptors and other predators use the area for their hunting grounds.

#### Public Comment

This unit received 57 comments, 53 of which were from Wyoming. Most of the comments (42) favored the proposed decision to drop the unit from further review, while 12 opposed it and three were in-between. Only one comment provided enough specific information to evaluate intrusions. The remaining comments were a general vote for or against wilderness, addressed supplemental values, or addressed livestock, recreational use or energy developments. These topics would be covered in the study phase. Because of a lack of naturalness, the proposed decision to drop this unit is now final.

#### Bush Creek WY-040-319

#### Unit Description

This unit is one of extremely flat topography and one can look from one end of this unit to the other. This topography is typified by an open, flat, grass covered plain, broken in the extreme southern end by the Bush Creek drainage. This drainage and a small ridge afford the main topographic relief.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** This unit is located in northeastern Sweetwater County about 38 miles northeast of Rock Springs. The unit contains 15,196 acres.

**Naturalness.** Eight seismic lines and eight two-track ways have a significant impact upon the naturalness of the unit. A deteriorating structure is also present. Finally, an airstrip located just north of the Fremont Energy Base Camp poses into the unit across the eastern boundary road. All of these intrusions are very visible from anywhere in the unit, thus reducing the naturalness of the area to unacceptable levels for wilderness consideration.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The extremely flat and open topography prevents one from enjoying outstanding opportunities for solitude unless totally alone. The best opportunities are within the Bush Creek drainage and a small ridge at the extreme southern end of this unit. However, these opportunities are by no means outstanding.

Though not considered outstanding, primitive and unconfined recreational activities are available within this unit. They include horseback riding, hiking, camping, wildlife photography, bird watching, rockhounding and general sightseeing. These same activities could be available from similar or more varied terrain in this portion of Wyoming.

**Supplemental Values.** Pronghorn antelope, wild horses, deer, coyotes, raptors and small mammals use this area.

Of ecological significance is the fact that this region is a portion of the Red Desert of the Great Divide Basin. Local and national conservation groups have identified this general area as deserving special protection.

The area appears rich in petrified wood and some fossils — this is probably an extension of the extensive fossil and petrified wood beds found to the north in Oregon Buttes and Honeycomb Buttes Wilderness Inventory Units.

#### Public Comment

Fifty-three of the 57 total comments on this unit were local. One comment each came from four other states, Colorado, Utah, Missouri and Massachusetts. One-fourth of the total favored the proposed decision, but only one provided specific information to evaluate wilderness criteria. Another 13 comments favored this area as a WSA. If it was combined with other units of the Red Desert.

After careful review of all public comments, the final decision is that the Bush Creek unit does not meet the criteria for Wilderness Study Area status and the unit is therefore dropped from the inventory.

#### Harris Slough WY-040-326

#### Unit Description

This unit is located in southeastern Fremont County about 33 miles south of Lander.

The area is characterized by gently rolling bunch grass and big sagebrush covered hills created by sage filled draws and washes interrupted with vast open expanses of flat range dotted with sage, pebbles, slate and shale. The Wind River Mountain Range lies to the north, Harris Slough cuts to the east, and the Snake, Snake and Continental Divide rivers west to east across the center of the unit.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The unit totals 13,225 acres of federal land.

**Naturalness.** At first glance, the Harris Slough appears to be in a natural state, but closer inspection reveals ten seismicograph trails totaling over 23 miles, two major two-tracks totaling seven miles and five other jeep trails which total 4.5 miles. Other intrusions include nine separate pits, drill site or pads apparently associated with uranium prospecting, two sheep camps, three oil and gas well sites and numerous uranium claim stakes. Individually, these man-made intrusions have only a moderate impact upon the level of naturalness within this unit. However, when combined, these intrusions made man's work in a relatively small area quite noticeable.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** If only one party of people are in this unit at a time, solitude is a strong quality within the unit. However, the relatively flat topography, wide open vistas and comparatively low acreage combine to limit outstanding opportunities for solitude to two to three or more parties were in the unit.

Due to a large amount of acreage which surrounds Harris Slough that is relatively similar in characteristics to this unit, the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation which do exist are not confined to this unit. Types of opportunities which are available include horseback riding, backpacking, hunting, bird watching, nature and wildlife photography and possibly cross country skiing.

**Supplemental Values.** Harris Slough does contain several outstanding supplemental values, including ecological, wildlife, scenic and historical and cultural values. This unit is a remote region lying just north of Honeycomb Buttes and is a remnant sample of what once was the great western range. Wide, vast expanses of open range supporting a bunchgrass community are characteristic of this unit. The ecological community here is sagebrush, bunch grass and perennial forbs in a near natural state.

Wildlife within this area include pronghorn antelope, raptors, wild horses, deer and an occasional coyote. The Wyoming Game and Fish Department has stated that this area is an important pronghorn summer range and wilderness management would enhance antelope herds as well as mule deer in the area.

While not termed spectacular, the landscape does have subtle features which make it scenically attractive. The gold, velvety covered hills with their silver-grey spired ridges contrasted against the dark green creases of the draws make a pleasing sight.

Of historical and cultural significance is that Oregon Trail passes Harris Slough in 114 miles to the north. Thus in all likelihood, early pioneers and immigrants roamed and camped throughout this unit. American Indians also inhabited this region. Five old teepee rings and some stone chippings were found.

#### Public Comment

Public comment on this unit was all local (nine comments) and three comments were of value in helping to determine intrusions. Seven of the total favored the proposed decision to drop this unit while five comments were against the proposal. Six addressed supplemental values, areas usually covered in the study phase, or were too general to be used to evaluate wilderness criteria. The final decision is to drop the unit from the inventory.

#### Elk Mountain WY-040-327

#### Unit Description

This unit is located in south central Sublette County about 22 miles north of Faison.

The topography of this unit consists of a large U-shaped ridge which comprises Elk Mountain which is surrounded by flat to gentle slopes which edge up to the sharp rock ridge. There are a few small draws that run up to the ridge top. The topography of the flat areas is topographically surrounded by steep cliffs which then grade out to rolling hills and flatlands. Vegetation ranges from near climax big sagebrush and greasewood draws to sparse grass, saltbrush and rabbitbrush on the ridges and slopes. The tall grasswood and big sage exist mostly on the lower and middle slopes. Some scattered juniper and limber pine may be found on the east side, as well as some aspen and mountain mahogany stands in small scattered areas. Elevations are 7,000 feet at the base of Elk Mountain to 7,882 feet at the summit.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The unit has 7,795 acres of public land. It is bounded on the west, south and east by roads and state land, and to the north by private land, state land and roads.

**Naturalness.** The Elk Mountain area has been rather severely scarred by man's activities except for the main rocky spine of the mountain. Intrusions include 26 two-track trails ranging in length from 1/4 to two miles and total 16.7 miles, six seismicograph lines cutting across the mountain for a total of five miles, a cherry stem road 1.1 miles long, a 3/4 mile long fence line, ten man-made reservoirs within the unit and a gravel pit. About one quarter of the reservoirs still hold water. From anywhere along the ridge, one can look down the various slopes, draws and lesser ridges and see the imprint of man on the area. For these reasons, it is determined that this unit does not meet the standards needed for further wilderness consideration.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** The topography of Elk Mountain and the number and types of man-made intrusions make obtaining outstanding opportunities for solitude either difficult to three or more parties were in the unit.

Due to a large amount of acreage which surrounds Harris Slough that is relatively similar in characteristics to this unit, the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation which do exist are not confined to this unit. Types of opportunities which are available include horseback riding, backpacking, hunting, bird watching, nature and wildlife photography and possibly cross country skiing.

**Supplemental Values.** Harris Slough does contain several outstanding supplemental values, including ecological, wildlife, scenic and historical and cultural values. This unit is a remote region lying just north of Honeycomb Buttes and is a remnant sample of what once was the great western range. Wide, vast expanses of open range supporting a bunchgrass community are characteristic of this unit. The ecological community here is sagebrush, bunch grass and perennial forbs in a near natural state.

**Supplemental Values.** Elk Mountain is critical mule deer winter range for much of the herd which ranges north to the Prospect Mountain and Wind River foothills in the summer. Elk also use the area in winter. During bad winters, Elk Mountain is about the best range that deer and elk have in this area and even then it is often not enough.

The mountain is also used for nesting golden eagles and prairie falcons. Undoubtedly, it is also used as a hunting ground by many other raptor species.

Other wildlife include sagegrouse, jackrabbits, prairie dogs, ground squirrels, cottontail rabbits, badgers, weasels and coyotes. Also, it is very possible that one or more cougars inhabit the area during winter when deer are concentrated within the area.

Agatized fossil wood, small fossils and petrified wood make rockhounding popular.

#### Public Comment

A total of seven comments were received, with six of these from Wyoming. One of the comments came from Ohio. Only two comments favored the proposed decision to drop this unit while five comments were against the proposal. Six addressed supplemental values, areas usually covered in the study phase, or were too general to be used to evaluate wilderness criteria. The final decision is to drop the unit from the inventory.

#### Anvil Wash-Butte Creek WY-040-403, 404

#### Unit Description

The Butte Creek unit is basically typical of the cool desert which is common throughout south-west Wyoming. The plains area is partially broken by dry drainages running to the southeast. There are few trees and no prominent landmarks.

#### General Summary of Characteristics

**Size.** The size of the area recommended for intensive inventory as a result of the initial inventory Decision was originally reported as 22,560 acres. This is a combination of two inventory units — Anvil Wash (WY-040-403) which was 10,157 acres and Butte Creek (WY-040-404) which was 12,403 acres.

**Naturalness.** During the intensive inventory ten reservoirs, a contour furrowing, two fences and five roads were left to substantially impact the naturalness of the entire unit.

**Outstanding Opportunities.** With the limited screening provided by the scattered junipers the only moderate screening provided by the drainages, it was felt the area did not offer opportunities to avoid the sight or sounds of others who might be visiting the unit.

The opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, photography, bird watching and some sightseeing are available within this unit. It was felt that while available, these opportunities were not outstanding.

**Supplemental Values.** The area provides habitat for antelope. The windward side of the stable sand dunes located throughout the unit contain evidence of early man.

#### Public Comment

No public comments were received. The proposed decision to drop the unit, therefore, is now final.