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NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS REVIEW

INITIAL INVENTORY DECISION

FINAL DECISION ON PUBLIC LANDS OBVIOUSLY
LACKING WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

AND

ANNOUNCEMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS
TO BE INTENSIVELY INVENTORIED
FOR WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 1449
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

NEW MEXICO STATE OFFICE

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Dear Citizen:

We have reached another important point in the Bureau of Land Management's wilderness review process in New Mexico. The release of this booklet and associated maps marks the decision as to which lands in New Mexico are dropped from further wilderness consideration.

This decision is based upon recommendations presented for public review and comment on March 12, 1979. Presentation of these recommendations was followed by a 90-day public comment period in which 13 open houses and 12 public meetings were held throughout the state. The BLM invited public participation through news releases, public notices, radio and TV spots, and personal letters to anyone on our mailing list. This large effort to involve the public was well-worth the time and expense. By the end of the comment period, we received almost 900 public inputs, including personal letters, meeting testimonies, and detailed reports. We were pleased to find that most people addressed their comments to the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics in specific inventory units. Materials received by the BLM contained volumes of maps, reports, photos and other information pertaining to the units in question.

The information received was a great help in formulating this decision and will also greatly expedite our Intensive Wilderness Inventory. With it, we were able to confirm that the vast majority of public land in New Mexico obviously lacked wilderness characteristics, while remaining confident that any lands with wilderness characteristics may be found in those few acres remaining in Intensive Wilderness Inventory.

The lands identified as dropped from further wilderness consideration are now, or will soon be, released from the management limitations imposed by Section 603(c) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. It is important to remember these limitations still apply to all lands remaining in Intensive Inventory.

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These limitations do not normally impose a significant hardship to users of the public lands under consideration for wilderness. For example, working existing developed mines may continue in the same manner and degree as they were on October 1976 and grazing operations may continue uninterrupted. The main thing to remember is that no new significant surface disturbance may occur. If you have any questions on this, please contact the BLM. We will be happy to work with you on any actions proposed on the lands under consideration for wilderness.

During intensive inventory scheduled for this summer and fall (1979), we invite your participation through joint field inventories, meetings, workshops and personal contacts. If you have any questions or suggestions on how to participate, contact the wilderness coordinator in any of our districts or the State Office.

We will continue to rely heavily on public involvement in the wilderness review process. When you participate, we will let you know how we feel about what was said. For example, our explanation of how public comment affected this decision is contained in each unit narrative. Your inspection of these materials is invited.

I extend my sincere appreciation to those individuals and organizations who have already participated in this endeavor and request your continued help.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "William A. Zimmerman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "W".

State Director

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I. The Setting: BLM Wilderness Inventory Process

A. Introduction

In this booklet the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in New Mexico will present the final decisions concerning those public lands which lack wilderness characteristics. It also announces that Intensive Inventory will be conducted on certain identified lands. More detailed maps showing the public lands that will be intensively inventoried are available from BLM offices upon request.

The "Wilderness Inventory Handbook," which explains the policy, direction, procedures, and guidelines for conducting the wilderness inventory of the public lands, was published on September 27, 1978, by the Bureau of Land Management. This handbook is available at all BLM offices in the state.

B. Overview of BLM's Wilderness Review Process

The BLM's wilderness review process will be completed in three phases, as directed by Congress in Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). These are: Inventory, Study, and Reporting. The inventory phase has two parts, initial and intensive. This wilderness review process is described as follows:

Phase 1. - INVENTORY: This is a two-step process which is designed to identify those areas of the public lands containing specific wilderness characteristics under criteria established by Congress. Such areas are identified as Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's).

(a) INITIAL INVENTORY: At this stage those areas of the public lands which clearly and obviously do not have wilderness characteristics are determined. Information gained from public comments and existing information are used in making this decision.

Those areas identified not to contain wilderness characteristics are no longer considered for further inventory, and management restrictions of Section 603(c) of FLPMA no longer apply. The remaining lands continue into the next step: Intensive Inventory.

(b) INTENSIVE INVENTORY: Intensive field surveys will be made on those lands which may possibly have wilderness characteristics. When these surveys have been completed, those areas which have wilderness characteristics are identified as WSA's.

Once identified as WSA's, management restrictions imposed by Section 603(c) of FLPMA will continue to apply until a final determination or selection as wilderness is made by Congress. Those areas which do not have the required wilderness characteristics are removed from further inventory and wilderness-related management restrictions are lifted.

Phase 2. - STUDY: Once WSA's are identified, they will be "studied" through the BLM land-use planning system. When this occurs, all possible use of the WSA's (e.g., grazing, wildlife habitat, mineral development, and wilderness) are evaluated to determine the highest and best use of the area. This "study" is done with a great deal of public input.

The result of the study phase will be a recommendation by the BLM for each WSA as to whether the area is suitable or unsuitable to be designated as "Wilderness." Management restrictions imposed by Section 603(c) of FLPMA still apply to both areas recommended as suitable or unsuitable.

Phase 3. - REPORTING: Recommendations concerning suitability made during the study phase will be submitted through the Secretary of the Interior and the President to Congress. Mineral survey reports, environmental statements, and other data are submitted with these recommendations. All reports must be submitted to the President no later than October 21, 1991. Only Congress can designate an area as part of the Wilderness Preservation System.

C. Definitions

As the BLM wilderness program evolves numerous words and phrases must be defined so the public and BLM personnel can communicate more effectively. Thus far definitions have appeared in the "BLM Wilderness Inventory Handbook," "Draft Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Wilderness Study Areas," and the proposed "Exploration and Mining Regulations for the Wilderness Review Program." New definitions have been added to facilitate understanding of this booklet.

Contiguous Lands: Lands or legal subdivisions having a common boundary. Lands having only a common corner are not contiguous.

Initial Inventory: The first step in the BLM wilderness review process. Inventory units or roadless areas which are obviously unsuitable for wilderness are separated from those which warrant intensive inventory for wilderness characteristics.

Intensive Inventory: The second major step in the BLM wilderness review process. Roadless areas are carefully inventoried for wilderness characteristics. The result of the intensive inventory is the identification of wilderness study areas.

Instant Study Areas: Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act mandated that all primitive or natural areas formally identified prior to November 1, 1975, will be studied for wilderness suitability and recommended to the President by July 1, 1980. There are three such areas in New Mexico

Inventory Unit: Areas or islands of public lands indexed for easy reference at the start of the wilderness inventory. These units may or may not be roadless. A roadless determination requires more detailed field work.

Public Lands: Any land and interest in land owned by the United States and administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Land Management, without regard to how the United States acquired ownership, except:

- lands located on the Outer Continental Shelf
- lands held for the benefit of Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos
- lands in which the United States retains the minerals, but surface is private.

RARE II: The wilderness inventory on lands administered by the Secretary of Agriculture through the United States Forest Service. The acronym stands for Roadless Area Review and Evaluation, and the "II" signifies that it is the second time the Forest Service has inventoried and evaluated the lands it administers.

Road: For the purposes of the BLM's wilderness inventory, the following definition is adopted: "The word 'roadless' refers to the absence of roads which have been improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use. A way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles does not constitute a road."

Unfortunately, that definition is subject to a variety of somewhat contradictory interpretations, all of which were pointed out during the public review period.

Therefore, the BLM will use the following subdefinitions of certain words and phrases in the BLM road definition:

"Improved and maintained"--Actions taken physically by man to keep the road open to vehicular traffic. "Improved" does not necessarily mean formal construction. "Maintained" does not necessarily mean annual maintenance.

"Mechanical means"--Use of hand or power machinery or tools.

"Relatively regular and continuous use"--Vehicular use which has occurred and will continue to occur on a relatively regular basis. Examples are: access roads for equipment to maintain a stock water tank or other established water sources; access roads to maintain recreation sites or facilities; or access roads to mining claims.

Roadless: Refers to the absence of roads which have been improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use. A way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles does not constitute a road.

Roadless Area: That area bounded by a road using the edge of the physical change that creates the road or the adjacent edge of the right-of-way, other ownership, or water, as a boundary.

Situation Summaries: A brief summary of the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics on each inventory unit or roadless area.

Wilderness: The definition contained in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 is as follows: "A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. Wilderness is an area of undeveloped federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

Wilderness Area: An area formally designated by Congress as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Wilderness Characteristics: Those characteristics of wilderness as described in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act. These include size, naturalness, solitude, primitive or unconfined type of recreation, supplemental values, and possibility of returning to a natural condition.

Wilderness Inventory: An evaluation of the public lands in the form of a written description and a map showing those lands that meet the wilderness criteria as established under Section 603(a) of FLPMA and Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act. The lands meeting the criteria will be referred to as Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's).

Wilderness Review: The term used to cover the entire wilderness inventory, study, and reporting phases of the wilderness program of the BLM.

Wilderness Study: The process of analyzing and planning wilderness preservation opportunities along with other resource opportunities within the BLM's planning system.

D. Where Are We Now?

1. Statewide Inventory

The release of this booklet and other forms of public notification marks the end of the "initial" step of the wilderness inventory process. The purpose of the "Initial Inventory" was to identify areas of the public lands which clearly and obviously did not have wilderness characteristics. Those areas of public land which will be further inventoried may contain wilderness characteristics. Areas which have been identified as lacking wilderness characteristics will be dropped from further wilderness consideration.

Detailed descriptions of the areas identified for intensive wilderness inventory and listings of areas obviously lacking wilderness characteristics begin in Part II of this booklet.

2. Instant Study Areas

Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (see Appendix 2) requires the BLM to make accelerated recommendations as to the suitability or unsuitability of certain areas of the public lands for designation as wilderness. All natural and primitive areas which were formally designated prior to November 1, 1975, will be reported to the President by July 1, 1980. These areas were not identified through the BLM inventory process. They were declared Wilderness Study Areas by an act of Congress. Therefore, the BLM has described them as wilderness "Instant Study Areas," or ISA's.

Each ISA must be reported as either suitable for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System or as unsuitable. BLM must still determine, subject to public review, if each ISA actually has those wilderness characteristics defined in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act (see Appendix 2). ISA's which do not have the necessary wilderness characteristics may be recommended as unsuitable. However, if an ISA does have wilderness characteristics, then a detailed study, including an environmental statement, must be completed. Based on the findings of this study, the environmental statement, and public review, recommendations will be made to the President as to the suitability or unsuitability of the area in question. Wilderness-related management restrictions which are required by law will apply to all ISA's until a decision has been made by Congress.

There are three ISA's in New Mexico: El Malpais, Guadalupe Canyon, and Mathers Natural Areas. These areas are currently being studied. The proposed wilderness study recommendations for these areas are briefly described in the following sections.

a. El Malpais Natural Area - Socorro District

Acreage: 115,000 acres. This includes the designated Natural Area and contiguous roadless lands.

Description: Situated southeast of Grants and south of State Highway 53, this unit contains some of the youngest topographic features in the United States. It possesses a wide variety of wildlife and several different and unique successions of plants. It has received onstant public and scientific interest and study over several decades. The rugged and remote topography and landscape offer outstanding opportunities for solitude and for geological, ecological, and cultural research.

Recommendation: The area is proposed as suitable for wilderness designation. This proposed recommendation will be finalized upon completion of the Wilderness Study and Environmental Statement, which will more clearly identify conflicts with wilderness designation.

b. Guadalupe Canyon Outstanding Natural Area - Las Cruces District

Acreage:	Instant Wilderness Study Area	<u>Acres</u>
	(Guadalupe Canyon Outstanding Natural Area)...	3,692
	BLM New Mexico contiguous lands.....	454
	BLM Arizona contiguous lands.....	4,814*
	Forest Service RARE II contiguous area.....	15,850
		<u>24,810</u>

*Dependent upon results of the Safford, Arizona BLM District intensive inventory study.

Description: This area is located in the extreme southwest corner of New Mexico and is contiguous both with land administered by the Bureau of Land Management in Arizona and to a Forest Service RARE II area (Bunk Robinson Peak #3200) which has been recommended for further planning.

The area's principle feature is a long, narrow canyon which extends into Mexico. Striking scenic values, together with unique species of both plants and wildlife living at the extreme northern protion of their range, are enclosed within the high walls of the Guadalupe Canyon Outstanding Natural Area.

Recommendation: The wilderness Instant Study Area (ISA) (3,692 acres) by itself does not meet the suitability criteria. However, when evaluated with all contiguous federal lands, the area may meet this criteria. Therefore, the Las Cruces District recommends that the ISA be studied with all contiguous federal lands as one unit. This would be done to determine the wilderness suitability or nonsuitability prior to a recommendation to Congress.

A firm wilderness study schedule has not been developed because of the following required items:

1. A joint agreement to be finalized between the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management as to who will do the study.
2. Inventory criteria and procedures will have to be consistent for the entire area.
3. An Environmental Impact Statement is needed prior to suitability determination.
4. Planning schedules need integration between Forest Service and BLM.

All of these items must be resolved prior to initiation of the study.

c. Mathers Natural Area - Roswell District

Acreage: 360 acres. This acreage includes only the designated Natural Area.

Description: Mathers is a small flat grassland located east of Roswell. It has been excluded from grazing for many years. However, it is not of sufficient size for wilderness designation, and opportunities for solitude or a primitive unconfined type of recreation is lacking.

Recommendation: This area is recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation, even with contiguous roadless lands considered.

The public comment period on these wilderness suitability recommendations began on March 12 and extended for 45 days, except for Guadalupe Canyon, which extended for 90 days.

3. Special Projects and Accelerated Inventories

The Star Lake-Bisti Coal Environmental Statement (ES) explains the impact of coal strip mining on certain lands in the San Juan Basin near Farmington, New Mexico. These lands contain several wilderness inventory units which are being inventoried in advance of the rest of the state. This is to clarify which lands will conflict with potential coal operations at the earliest possible date. The decision as to which lands in the ES area were obviously without wilderness characteristics was made on May 3, 1979. (A written decision and report on the public comment received is available from Albuquerque District Office). Lands remaining (26,980 acres) are currently being intensively inventoried for wilderness characteristics. The BLM's recommendation as to which of these lands should become Wilderness Study Areas will be made in late July, 1979. This recommendation will initiate a 90-day public comment period.

Roswell District has had several special project inventories. These were conducted to avoid delay in oil and gas exploration on already heavily impacted by oil and gas activities. The results of the accelerated inventories were made available for public review and comment in reduced comment periods.

E. What's Next?

The next step in the wilderness review program is an intensive inventory, which requires a detailed inspection of each identified unit. This will determine the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics. The presence of these characteristics will be the only basis for identifying wilderness study areas. Supplemental wilderness values ("... ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, education, scenic, or historical value") will be identified during this inventory step. However, the presence or lack of supplemental values is not mandatory for wilderness areas and will probably not cause an inventory unit to be dropped from or added to further wilderness considerations.

In the next stage, as in all future stages of the wilderness review process, the Bureau of Land Management will continue to rely on public participation and involvement. Public comment obtained in the initial inventory has been extremely helpful in making the decisions presented in this booklet.

During the public review period for proposed initial inventory decisions many comments were received which will be pertinent to later phases of the wilderness review program. Comments concerning present and proposed land uses which conflict with wilderness designation, and general statements for or against the need for wilderness areas, cannot be used during the inventory phase. The purpose of the inventory phase is only to identify public lands with wilderness characteristics. However, these comments will be valuable during the wilderness study phase, which is scheduled to start after October 1, 1980. All comments received during the wilderness review program will be retained and considered during the appropriate study or reporting phases.

During the inventory phase inventory units will be closely inspected to determine the physical impacts of man's use on wilderness characteristics, e.g.: size, naturalness, solitude, primitive or unconfined type of recreation, and the possibility of the area being returned to a natural condition. When the study phase begins, during the latter part of 1980, we will give full consideration to all multiple-use values of the land and resolve the conflicts as to whether the best use would be inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Although wilderness characteristics have been defined in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964, and further defined in the BLM Wilderness Inventory Handbook, judgements required will often be subjective in nature. Broad public involvement during the intensive inventory will assist us in determining the presence or lack of wilderness characteristics.

II. The Decisions: Initial Inventory

A. Description of Initial Inventory Decisions

Written descriptions in this booklet should be considered with inventory unit boundaries which are shown on the accompanying map. Inventory units are identified by reference numbers on the map and in the narratives by reference number. All inventory units in New Mexico are indicated by the prefix "NM". BLM Districts are identified by the first three numbers as follows:

010 = Albuquerque District;
020 = Socorro District;
030 = Las Cruces District;
060 = Roswell District

The last three number refer to a specific inventory unit within each district. For example, NM-030-065 is in the Las Cruces District (030) and is the Las Uvas Mountain unit (065).

Initial inventory units, which were described in BLM's previous publications and maps (Situation Summaries, April 1979), have been arranged into four categories in this booklet. These categories are:

(1) Inventory Units selected for intensive inventory to determine if they do or don't have roadless and wilderness characteristics.

(2) Inventory units and lands which were not recommended for intensive inventory and for which there was unanimous public agreement to this recommendation. These units and lands have been dropped from the Wilderness Review Process. (These units are not listed or described in this booklet, because it includes all the remaining public land in New Mexico, both outside of roadless areas and within roadless areas not recommended for further inventory.)

(3) Inventory units which were initially recommended by BLM to be intensively inventoried. Public comment was received which indicated the presence of roads or substantially noticeable imprints of man's work. These conditions were verified on-the-ground by BLM personnel. These units have also been dropped from the wilderness review process.

(4) Inventory units which were not recommended for intensive inventory. Public comments were received which favored intensive inventory of these units. Basis upon analysis and evaluation of the public comments and existing information, it was determined that intensive inventory of these units was not warranted. The initial recommendation has not changed, and these units have been dropped from the wilderness review process.

Management limitations imposed by Section 603(c) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act will continue to apply to inventory unit categories 3 and 4 for a period of 30 days following publication of this decision in the Federal Register. Any amendment to this decision by the BLM State Director will become final 30 days following publication in the Federal Register. If an amendment results in the State Director's identification of a new study area for intensive inventory, Section 603(c) management limitations will take effect immediately on the new area.

B. Statistical Summary

Summary Table I shows the acreage totals for all the public land in New Mexico to be intensively inventoried and all the land dropped from further inventory. An additional breakdown of the four categories of decisions is given on Summary Table II. Summary Table III shows a breakdown of Inventory Units to be inventoried by County.

SUMMARY TABLE I

	<u>Albuquerque</u>	<u>Socorro</u>	<u>Las Cruces</u>	<u>Roswell</u>	<u>State Total</u>
Acreage to be Intensively Inventoried	210,310	490,000	1,497,613	43,846	2,241,769
Acreage Dropped from Further Inventory	2,487,017	1,196,097	3,442,492	3,472,784	10,598,390
Instant Study Areas	0	115,000	4,146	360	119,506
Total Acreage	2,697,327	1,801,097	4,944,251	3,516,990	12,959,665

Total Public Lands in New Mexico 12,959,665

SUMMARY TABLE II
INITIAL INVENTORY DECISIONS

Category	District									
	Total		Albuquerque		Socorro		Las Cruces		Roswell	
	Units	Acres	Units	Acres	Units	Acres	Units	Acres	Units	Acres
Category 1 Inventory Units Selected for Intensive Inventory	104	2,241,769	21	210,310	28	490,000	44	1,497,613	11	43,846
Category 2* Inventory Units Not Recommended Intensive Inventory and Unanimous Public Agreement to Drop	207	10,083,987	25	2,396,857	35	1,136,497	103	3,127,481	49	3,423,152
Category 3** Inventory Units Initially Recommended but Dropped	2	31,010	1	800	0	14,600	1	8,050	0	7,560
Category 4 Inventory Units Not Recommended but Public Comment Wanted Inventory, But Units Dropped After Re-evaluation	27	483,393	9	89,360	5	45,000	10	306,961	3	42,072

*This category includes all public lands inside of inventory units and all public land outside of inventory units.

**This category includes both entire units and lands dropped due to boundary adjustments.

SUMMARY TABLE III
SUMMARY BY COUNTY OF
INVENTORY UNITS TO BE
INTENSIVELY INVENTORIED
FOR WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

<u>County</u>	<u>BLM District</u>	<u>Inventory Unit Name</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
McKinley	Albuquerque	Chaco	010-003	9,280
	Albuquerque	Ignacio Chavez	010-020	<u>21,020</u>
				30,300
Torrance	Albuquerque	Manzano	010-92	1,000
Taos	Albuquerque	Windmill	010-33	9,600
	Albuquerque	La Olla	010-36	<u>12,160</u>
				21,760
Sandoval	Albuquerque	Ignacio Chavez	010-020	8,320
	Albuquerque	Chamisa	010-021	10,560
	Albuquerque	Cabazon	010-022	8,320
	Albuquerque	Empedrado	010-063	7,350
	Albuquerque	San Ysidro	010-013	7,680
	Albuquerque	Penististuja	010-012	7,680
	Albuquerque	Chijuilla	010-15	11,500
	Albuquerque	Ojito	010-24	<u>7,680</u>
				69,090
San Juan	Albuquerque	Bisti	010-57	3,520
	Albuquerque	As-shi-sle-pah	010-09	7,040
	Albuquerque	De-na-zin	010-04	24,680
	Albuquerque	Rattlesnake	010-90	4,500
	Albuquerque	Simon	010-91	<u>3,500</u>
				43,240
San Miguel	Albuquerque	Sabinosa	010-055	15,360
Rio Arriba	Albuquerque	Navajo Peak	010-059	4,600
	Albuquerque	San Antonio	010-35	<u>16,000</u>
				20,600

SUMMARY TABLE III
SUMMARY BY COUNTY OF
INVENTORY UNITS TO BE
INTENSIVELY INVENTORIED
FOR WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

<u>County</u>	<u>BLM District</u>	<u>Inventory Unit Name</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
Santa Fe	Albuquerque	Seco	010-056	8.960
Socorro	Socorro	Coyote	020-036	9,600
	Socorro	Presilla	020-037	12,600
	Socorro	Jornada Lava Flow	020-055	21,000
	Socorro	Canyon	020-061	8,300
	Socorro	Devil's Backbone	020-047A	9,200
	Socorro	Devil's Reach	020-047B	1,140
	Socorro	Magdalena	020-048A	8,800
	Socorro	Add on to Magdalena	020-048B	320
	Socorro	Add on to Magdalena	020-048C	400
	Socorro	Ladrones	020-016	47,400
	Socorro	Stallion	020-040	42,700
	Socorro	Las Canas	020-038	19,000
	Socorro	Veranito	020-035	7,100
	Socorro	Padillo	020-051	24,800
	Socorro	Little Yucca	020-053	20,800
	Socorro	Big Yucca	020-064	5,900
	Socorro	Lumbre	020-056A	10,700
	Socorro	Crawford Hollow	020-056B	12,240
Socorro	Las Cruces	Jornada Lava Flow	030-081	16,430
	Las Cruces	Potter	030-086	8,535
				286,965
Catron	Socorro	Eagle Peak	020-019	45,200
	Socorro	Mesita Blanca	020-018	27,000
	Socorro	Pelona	020-044	53,000
	Socorro	Divide	020-045	18,000
				148,240
Valencia	Socorro	Offspring	020-065	3,600
	Socorro	Shoemaker	020-27B	7,760
	Socorro	Cebolla Canyon	020-007	24,700
	Socorro	Sand Canyon	020-008	28,900
	Socorro	Petaca Pinta	020-014	14,800
				79,760

SUMMARY TABLE III
SUMMARY BY COUNTY OF
INVENTORY UNITS TO BE
INTENSIVELY INVENTORIED
FOR WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

<u>County</u>	<u>BLM District</u>	<u>Inventory Unit Name</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
Luna	Las Cruces	Cooks Peak	030-031	28,000
	Las Cruces	Florida Mountains	030-034	75,310
	Las Cruces	Cedar Mountains	030-042	<u>8,440</u>
				111,750
Dona Ana	Las Cruces	East Potrillo Mountains	030-051	26,300
	Las Cruces	West Potrillo Mountains	030-052	280,200
	Las Cruces	Aden Lava Flow	030-053	33,010
	Las Cruces	Robledo Mountains	030-063	38,670
	Las Cruces	Las Uvas Mountains	030-065	37,760
	Las Cruces	Magdalena Mountains	030-066	82,247
	Las Cruces	Mine House Spring	030-074	<u>7,710</u>
				505,897
Sierra	Las Cruces	Jornada Lava Flow	030-081	16,430
	Las Cruces	Potter	030-086	8,535
Lincoln	Las Cruces	Little Black Peak	030-109	18,800
	Las Cruces	Carrizozo Lava Flow	030-110A	<u>33,080</u>
				51,880
Otero	Las Cruces	Sacramento Escarpment	030-104B	5,320
	Las Cruces	Brokeoff Mountains	030-112	58,200
	Las Cruces	Little Dog Canyon	030-114	16,455
	Las Cruces	Pup Canyon	030-115	3,040
	Las Cruces	Rim	030-124	6,050
	Las Cruces	Wind Mountains	030-135	7,720
	Las Cruces	Flat Top	030-136	5,340
	Las Cruces	Alamo Mountains	030-137	5,090
	Las Cruces	Culp	030-152	11,080
	Las Cruces	West Garden	030-155	11,760
	Las Cruces	Bug Scuffle Canyon	030-165	<u>5,720</u>
				135,775

SUMMARY TABLE III
SUMMARY BY COUNTY OF
INVENTORY UNITS TO BE
INTENSIVELY INVENTORIED
FOR WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

<u>County</u>	<u>BLM District</u>	<u>Inventory Unit Name</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
Hidalgo	Las Cruces	Rodeo	030-001	5,600
	Las Cruces	Black Mountains	030-003	6,560
	Las Cruces	Granite Gap (South)	030-006	25,860
	Las Cruces	Cowboy Spring	030-007	6,880
	Las Cruces	Millsite Creek	030-008	9,720
	Las Cruces	Beacon Hill	030-009	52,860
	Las Cruces	UHI Draw	030-012	30,660
	Las Cruces	Gila Box	030-023	16,000
	Las Cruces	Blue Creek	030-026	14,880
	Las Cruces	Mud Springs Peak	030-027	10,500
	Las Cruces	Big Hatchet Mountains	030-035	120,170
	Las Cruces	Sierra Rica	030-036	28,760
	Las Cruces	Alamo Hueco	030-038	12,540
				<u>378,650</u>
Grant	Las Cruces	Gila Box	030-023	800
	Las Cruces	Red Rock	030-025	14,460
	Las Cruces	Blue Creek	030-026	31,700
	Las Cruces	Mud Springs	030-027	2,400
	Las Cruces	Grapevine Spring	030-028	5,560
	Las Cruces	High Lonesome	030-029	12,640
	Las Cruces	Cedar Mountains	030-042	205,216
				<u>272,776</u>
Chavez	Roswell	Mescalero Sands	060-501	10,800
Eddy	Roswell	Lonesome Ridge	060-801	1,763
	Roswell	Jurnigan-West	060-802	4,480
	Roswell	Lechuguilla Canyon-South	060-803	3,200
	Roswell	Texas Hill-West	060-810A	7,520
	Roswell	Texas Hill-West	060-810B	5,205
	Roswell	Texas Hill-West	060-810E	5,740
	Roswell	Calamity Cove	060-814	680
	Roswell	Mudgetts	060-819A	3,520
	Roswell	Mudgetts	060-819B	213
Eddy	Roswell	Fawn Valley	060-820	725
	Las Cruces	Devil's Den Canyon	030-145	320
	Las Cruces	McKittrick Canyon	030-146	200
				<u>33,566</u>

C. Category 1 - Public Lands to be Intensively Inventoried

Approximately 2,241,769 acres and 104 inventory units of the public lands in New Mexico will be intensively inventoried for wilderness characteristics. Inventory of these lands is in progress and the public is encouraged to participate. Management limitations imposed by Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act will continue to apply to these lands until they are officially dropped from further wilderness consideration.

These lands are shown on both the statewide wilderness maps and the $\frac{1}{2}$ inch = 1 mile wilderness maps which are available upon request from the District Offices.

Unit Description

Chaco Mesa Inventory Unit lies immediately west of Torreon Trading Post, New Mexico. It contains high mesa plateaus crossed by two major canyons. Mesas and ridges are underlaid by caps of sandstone, forming rough and steep canyon walls. Vegetation is primarily pinyon-juniper with a good understory of shrubs and grasses.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received one letter supporting intensive inventory. This letter stated that more information was needed before a decision on its wilderness character could be made.

Six comments were received objecting to wilderness designation or inventory for this unit. Supporting rationale included the following: contains roads, an energy resource conflict with oil and gas and uranium, conflicts with grazing use and wood and herb gathering, contains parcels of public land identified for the Navajo Exchange, the existence of a pipeline, the fact it is surrounded by a populated area and the potential negative economic impact on the surrounding population. In addition, it was stated that existing activity, lack of appropriate tree cover and its muddy nature would preclude outstanding opportunities for either solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation.

The routes identified on the map submitted by Teton Exploration have been examined by BLM personnel and do not qualify as roads under the wilderness inventory definition. Energy, grazing, economic and occupancy conflicts are wilderness study considerations and have no part in determining the existence of or lack of wilderness character. These statements cannot be utilized to support the assumption that this unit clearly and obviously lacks wilderness characteristics. Lack of tree cover and muddy topography in wet weather do not necessarily destroy the opportunity for outstanding solitude and/or recreation. Chaco Mesa will be subjected to an intensive inventory so that the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics can be fully documented.

Unit Description

Penistaja Inventory Unit lies approximately twelve air miles southwest of Cuba, New Mexico. It is characterized by rolling topography with big sage and some pinyon-juniper cover. It is interspersed with some portions of steep and rocky terrain.

The area contains evidence of previous grazing and hunting activities.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Twenty-eight public inputs were received supporting Intensive Inventory. Reasons given stated the north portion of the unit in particular contains rugged mesas and badland topography which would afford a high degree of solitude and potential for primitive and unconfined recreation. Additional comments suggested that a boundary adjustment to delete the less interesting sections in the southern portion of the area would improve the unit's possibilities. Consequently, a boundary adjustment has been effected to ensure that those portions of the unit which may possess wilderness characteristics are inventoried jointly with NM-010-13, and those portions which clearly and obviously do not qualify are deleted from further wilderness consideration. The following sections within the original inventory unit are deleted: T. 20 N., R. 4 W., Sections 11, 12, 13, 14; T. 20 N., R. 3 W., Sections 7, 8, 9, 17, 18. The remaining sections, adjacent to NM-010-13, will undergo an intensive wilderness inventory.

Unit Description

San Ysidro Inventory Unit lies approximately twelve air miles west of Cuba, New Mexico. It is characterized by broken mesas and valleys with sage and pinyon-juniper cover. The dominant use has thus far been grazing. All impacts documented to date have been affiliated with grazing.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Seven letters supporting intensive inventory were received.

Nine public inputs objecting to wilderness designation or wilderness inventory for this unit were received. Supporting rationale for these nine included the following: the existence of man-made impacts, seismographic evidence, a water pipeline, old line shacks, fences, brush chaining, wells, and powerlines. Both energy and range resource conflicts were given as rationale. Routes identified and man-made impacts must be verified by BLM personnel. If the routes are confirmed as roads and if the remaining inventory unit is not of sufficient size to make practicable its management as wilderness, the area will be recommended to be dropped from further wilderness consideration. Resource conflicts are a wilderness study factor, and are not to be considered during the inventory. The inventory unit will remain in intensive inventory pending the confirmation of the public comments.

Unit Description

Chijuilla Inventory Unit lies approximately two air miles southwest of Cuba, New Mexico. It is characterized by a broad, grassy valley, bordered by high mesas to the north and northwest. Vegetative cover consists primarily of pinyon-juniper, big sagebrush and ponderosa pine stands.

Evidence of previous vegetative manipulations, grazing activities, stock water tanks, fences, mineral exploration and old wood cutting sites exist.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Twenty-eight public inputs were received supporting intensive inventory for the area. Reasons given by the respondents included that the area meets all the basic wilderness requirements of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude and/or primitive and unconfined recreation. It was also stated that portions of the area were very scenic and contained both petrified wood and obsidian.

A field verification of these comments by BLM personnel was accomplished on June 21, 1979. Based upon this verification, the previous northern boundary of the unit was found not to qualify as a road. Consequently, the unit has been expanded to include the following lands: T. 21 N., R. 2 W., Sections or portions of Sections 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34.

Also the public lands in T. 20 N., R. 2 W., Sections 1, 11, 12 have been deleted from the unit. These sections were deleted because the BLM believes that while they are scenic in quality and natural in appearance, their extreme topographic relief, in this instance, creates a physical barrier which render useless all but the exceedingly flat and sparsely vegetated surrounding lands. These flat portions which are extremely small do not offer opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation and consequently contribute very little to the remaining unit. The remaining area within this unit will be intensively inventoried to determine if they possess wilderness characteristics.

Medio

NM-010-16

8,000 acres

Unit Description

Medio Inventory Unit lies approximately twenty air miles northwest of San Ysidro, New Mexico. It is characterized by shallow canyons and broken mesas with big sage, shortgrass and some pinyon-juniper cover.

The unit contains evidence of grazing use, with affiliated grazing improvements.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

One comment was received which supported the BLM's recommendation that the unit clearly and obviously did not qualify as wilderness.

Unit Description

Ignacio Chavez Inventory Unit lies approximately thirty-nine miles due west of San Ysidro. It has a highly diverse topography. The unit progresses from rolling hills and arroyos to steep and rocky terrain in its eastern and northern sections. As its elevation progresses, the unit culminates in a broad mesa cut by deep canyons along its western and southern boundaries. The unit's vegetation varies as the elevation increases, progressing from shortgrass and shrubs to pinyon-juniper and ponderosa pine cover.

The area has traditionally been utilized for grazing, woodcutting and hunting.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received three letters favoring intensive inventory for the unit. Supporting rationale stated that additional data was required before a determination on its qualifications for wilderness study area status could be assessed. Six public inputs were received objecting wilderness designation or inventory for this unit.

A potential conflict with uranium exploration was mentioned as rationale for not including this inventory unit into intensive inventory. This is a wilderness study consideration, and has no bearing on the existence or lack of wilderness character within the area.

Additional rationale given included the existence of roads (not supported by specific data), uranium and oil and gas drill holes, water wells, an old airport, windmills, and stocktanks.

The verification of this data by BLM personnel is required. Should the access routes mentioned be within the boundaries of the unit and qualify as roads utilizing the BLM's road definition, the remaining roadless areas within the original boundary will be evaluated to determine whether or not they are 5,000 acres in size and possess wilderness characteristics. Should the access routes mentioned not qualify as roads, this unit will be subjected to an intensive inventory in its entirety to determine if it qualifies for wilderness study area status.

Unit Description

Chamisa Inventory Unit lies approximately twenty-one air miles southwest of San Ysidro, New Mexico. It contains rugged mesa-canyon country in the east portion. As the unit progresses west, it climbs in elevation and culminates in a broad mesa top. Vegetative cover consists of shortgrass and shrubs, with an increase in pinyon-juniper and ponderosa pine in the western part of Chamisa.

This unit has traditionally been used for grazing and contains a minimal number of grazing developments. The west portion located on the mesa top has been utilized for woodcutting. It has been closed from further cutting until a determination of wilderness character has been made.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Four letters were received supporting intensive inventory for the unit. Reasons included the presence of outstanding scenic quality and wildlife values. The existing forestry impacts were not felt to be of a sufficient magnitude to impair the naturalness of the area.

Three letters were received objecting to wilderness designation or wilderness inventory for this unit based on a potential conflict with uranium exploration and development.

Resource conflicts are a wilderness study factor and are not used to determine the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics. Chamisa will be intensively inventoried to make this determination.

Cabazon

NM-010-22

8,320 acres

Unit Description

Cabazon Inventory Unit located twenty-five miles west of San Ysidro, New Mexico, consists of a volcanic plug rising from 6,300' to 7,785', surrounded by rolling hills. Vegetation consists primarily of shortgrass and scattered pinyon-juniper. It is primarily utilized for grazing.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received five letters objecting to wilderness designation or inventory for this unit.

Reasons for this position were that a potential conflict with uranium development existed and that the inventory unit was too large and, therefore, should be confined to the actual peak itself, deleting the surrounding rolling hills.

Both of these factors, i.e., resource conflicts and management considerations, are issues which must be resolved during the BLM's wilderness study. Neither factor can be considered by the BLM during the wilderness inventory. This unit will be subjected to an intensive wilderness inventory as previously recommended.

Alamo

NM-010-23

12,160 acres

Unit Description

Alamo Inventory Unit lies approximately twelve air miles northwest of San Ysidro, New Mexico. It is characterized by a rolling grassland predominately covered by shortgrass.

The unit contains several oil and gas and water pipelines and numerous grazing improvements.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received one comment stating the area clearly and obviously does not qualify. This comment concurs with the Bureau's present recommendation.

Ojito

NM-010-24

7,680 acres

Unit Description

Ojito Inventory Unit lies approximately five air miles south of San Ysidro, New Mexico. It is characterized by steep and rocky terrain, interspersed with rugged canyons. Vegetative cover consists of shortgrass, pinyon-juniper, a variety of shrubs and scattered ponderosa pine. This unit contains some range developments and vegetative manipulation.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Thirty public inputs were received favoring intensive inventory for this unit. Reasons stated were that the area meets all the basic criteria and because of the topography and vegetation it offers both an outstanding opportunity for solitude and primitive and unconfined types of recreation. Many people felt the area was in a natural condition. In addition to these, the supplemental values of a scenic, geologic, archeological and biological nature were stated to exist within the unit.

Public comment has raised sufficient doubt concerning the BLM's original recommendation. Therefore, Ojito will be intensively inventoried to determine the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics.

Portales

NM-010-28

8,960

Unit Description

Portales Inventory Unit lies approximately nine air miles southwest of Cuba, New Mexico. It contains mesa tops and canyons with pinyon-juniper and big sagebrush cover, with a small amount of ponderosa pine.

It also contains several grazing developments, as well as a community highway pit. The area has been chained and reseeded.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

One letter was received stating the area clearly and obviously does not qualify. Rationale given was evidence of mining, mineral exploration and roads. It was stated that an outstanding opportunity for solitude did not exist.

The comment concurred with the Bureau's existing recommendation on the area.

Unit Description

Pinebetoso lies approximately fifteen air miles due north of Tres Piedras. It contains rolling plains, with winterfat, broom snakeweed and shortgrass cover.

The unit has traditionally been utilized for grazing and hunting.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received one comment stating the area clearly and obviously did not qualify as wilderness. No rationale was given. This comment concurs with the BLM's current recommendation to delete the unit from further wilderness consideration.

Unit Description

Windmill Inventory Unit lies approximately fifteen air miles north of Tres Piedras, New Mexico. It is characterized by a rolling plain, with shortgrass and brush vegetative cover.

Windmill is presently used for grazing.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received thirty public inputs supporting Windmill for intensive inventory. Reasons included that the area is important biologically and contains wildlife values. In addition, it was contended the area meets the basic criteria of naturalness and exhibits both an opportunity for solitude and primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

The existence of a certain biological community is not a sufficient reason in itself to retain a unit in wilderness inventory. However, the area is contiguous to Inventory Unit, CO-050-142, under consideration in Colorado, and must be studied jointly as mandated in the Wilderness Inventory Handbook. Until a joint determination is made during the intensive inventory as to whether both areas possess wilderness characteristics, Windmill will remain under consideration.

Unit Description

San Antonio Inventory Unit lies approximately eighteen air miles northwest of Tres Piedras, New Mexico.

It contains rolling shrub and grassland cut by San Antonio Creek at the base of a canyon. The canyon area supports ponderosa pine and douglas fir as well as a variety of shrubs and shortgrass.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Thirty-six public inputs were received favoring intensive inventory for San Antonio. Reasons given included that the unit meets all the basic criteria for wilderness. The area appears natural and offers a good opportunity for solitude and primitive and unconfined types of recreation. It was noted that the area's scenic qualities, wildlife values and the existence of water greatly enhance the area's wilderness characteristics. In addition, one letter said that San Antonio should remain in intensive inventory to protect the wheat grass-needle grass biological community.

Protection of a specific biological community is not sufficient reason to retain an inventory unit in intensive inventory. However because many people indicated the area had wilderness characteristics, sufficient doubt has been expressed concerning the BLM's original recommendation. Therefore, this unit will be subjected to an intensive wilderness inventory to determine whether or not the unit possesses wilderness characteristics.

Sabinosa

NM-010-55

15,360 acres

Unit Description

Sabinosa Inventory Unit lies approximately forty miles due east of Las Vegas, New Mexico. It is characterized by rugged canyons and mesa tops. Vegetative cover consists of ponderosa pine, scrub oak, and shortgrass.

Grazing has been the predominant use of Sabinosa.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received three letters objecting to wilderness designation or wilderness inventory for this unit because of potential conflicts with uranium exploration and development.

Resource conflicts are wilderness study considerations and cannot be utilized as rationale to delete an area from wilderness inventory. Sabinosa will remain in intensive inventory in order to accurately assess and document its wilderness character.

Seco

NM-010-56

8,960 acres

Unit Description

Seco Inventory Unit lies approximately six air miles due east of Espanola, New Mexico. It is extremely rough, has broken topography, and contains frequent, deep arroyos. Vegetative cover is sparse and consists of some shortgrass and scattered pinyon-juniper.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

One comment was received concurring with the BLM's recommendation that this unit remain in Intensive Inventory.

Unit Description

Navajo Peak Inventory Unit lies approximately thirty air miles south of Chama, New Mexico. It is characterized by hilly terrain bordering the Chama Canyon and contains ponderosa pine and pinyon-juniper.

The area has traditionally been utilized for grazing and recreation.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Seventeen public inputs were received supporting intensive inventory for this unit.

Two letters were received stating the area clearly and obviously does not qualify based on a potential for conflict with uranium exploration and development.

Resource conflicts are a wilderness study consideration and not considered valid criteria on which to determine wilderness characteristics. In addition, Navajo Peak is contiguous to the Forest Service Roadless Area 3-097, which requires a joint study effort by the BLM and USFS, as required by the Wilderness Inventory Handbook. Pending the outcome of this joint study effort, this unit will be retained for further wilderness consideration.

Unit Description

Empedrado lies approximately twenty-five air miles northwest of San Ysidro, New Mexico. The area is characterized by steep sided areas bisected by a major arroyo. Vegetation consists of shortgrass, shrubs, and pinyon-juniper. The area contains several springs and other grazing improvements.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received four letters stating this unit clearly and obviously does not qualify as wilderness. The principle reason given was that wilderness was a potential conflict with uranium exploration or development within the area. Resource conflicts are a wilderness study consideration and are not used to determine an area's wilderness characteristics. This unit will be subjected to an intensive wilderness inventory to determine whether the unit does or does not qualify as a wilderness study area.

Navajo Peak Contiguous

Approximately 4,600 acres

Unit Description

These lands are contiguous to the BLM Inventory Navajo Peak Unit (NM-010-59). This unit contains hilly terrain with some pinyon and juniper trees.

Public Comments Evaluation and Conclusion

Five public inputs were received supporting intensive inventory for this area. The reasons stated were that the additional lands would protect areas of Chama Canyon north of the Chama Wilderness and strengthen a state Wild and Scenic River proposal.

This rationale involves wilderness study considerations which cannot be utilized at this point in the BLM's wilderness process. However, those lands identified are of a contiguous nature with the present unit, NM-010-59, and were not identified as such in the initial inventory. Because of their contiguous nature, these lands will be intensively inventoried along with Navajo Peak Inventory Unit.

Rattlesnake Canyon

NM-010-90

Approximately 4,500 acres

Unit Analysis

Rattlesnake Canyon is located in the San Juan Planning Unit, northeast of Farmington, New Mexico. The area contains steep canyon walls with a rocky valley floor covered in pinyon-juniper, scattered ponderosa pine and sage.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Seven letters were received supporting Rattlesnake Canyon for intensive inventory. No supporting rationale was given.

Based upon a cursory examination, Rattlesnake Canyon appears to be a manageable unit even though it is less than 5,000 acres in size. Rattlesnake Canyon will be intensively inventoried to determine if it possesses wilderness characteristics.

Simon Canyon

NM-010-91

Approximately 3,500 acres

Unit Analysis

Simon Canyon is located in the San Juan Planning Unit, north of Farmington, New Mexico.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Twenty-nine public inputs, (mostly letters) were received supporting intensive inventory for Simon Canyon. It was stated the area has remained relatively unspoiled, and although less than 5,000 acres, should be intensively inventoried. ACEC designation was also suggested as an alternative for Simon Canyon.

ACEC designation is part of the BLM planning system. The only association the wilderness inventory has with the ACEC program is to provide resource data during the regular course of its inventory. The wilderness program has no ACEC designation powers.

After a brief examination of Simon Canyon, the BLM believes that the area constitutes a manageable unit. Simon Canyon will be intensively inventoried in order to accurately document its wilderness character.

Manzano Wilderness Contiguous NM-010-92
Lands

Approximately 1,000
acres

Unit Description

This unit is located about twenty-three miles west of Estancia, New Mexico. It lies in the foothills of the Manzano Mountains adjacent to lands administered by the U.S. Forest Service. This tract is composed of three half sections in Section 31, T. 7 N., R. 5 E.; Sections 6 and 7, T. 6 N., R. 5 E., NMPM.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received twenty letters supporting intensive wilderness inventory for this unit. These respondents cited the BLM's own wilderness inventory procedures which require inventory of all public lands contiguous with existing wilderness areas.

This unit was overlooked in the initial inventory and, indeed, the BLM wilderness inventory procedures require intensive inventory of this unit.

Unit Description

Cebolla Canyon Inventory Unit lies 20 air miles south of Grants, New Mexico, and just south and west of the Acoma Indian Reservation. The western portion is basically flat grassland, the rest of the unit is hilly to mountainous, with mostly pinyon-juniper and ponderosa pine. The elevation is much higher and steeper to the northeast, east, and southeast, with numerous canyons and draws running south and west.

The area contains an old windmill, earthen stock tank, and a few miles of fence.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Several comments were received, including a New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee report, favoring intensive inventory for this unit because of the presence of archaeological sites and wilderness characteristics.

There were no comments protesting intensive inventory for this unit. An extensive field check, showed the area to be substantially natural and containing good opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation. The boundary has been readjusted to exclude major intrusions and impacts of man, and the unit will undergo intensive inventory for determination of wilderness characteristics.

Unit Description

The Sand Canyon Unit lies about 28 air miles southwest of Grants, New Mexico near the Acoma Indian Reservation. This unit is composed of what was previously thought to be three separate units. They were combined when field checks showed the roads thought to separate them did not meet the Bureau of Land Management road definition. The elevation ranges over 1200 feet, with narrow and steep canyons, rocky hills, rimrock mesas, escarpments, and numerous draws and canyons. Thick stands of pinyon-juniper and oak are along the slopes, and thin stands of ponderosa pine on the higher elevations. The larger drainages run south to north between areas NM-020-008 and 009, and east to west between NM-020-008 and 010.

The unit contains a windmill to the west, several old homesteads and fences, some "ways", and a few widely scattered earthen stock tanks.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

A report by the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee and other written comments from individuals support intensive inventory of these areas. They felt the areas met wilderness criteria and had unique physical features.

Other public comments opposed intensive inventory. Principle reason given was the unit was roaded and contained substantially noticeable impacts of man. These roads and impacts have yet to be confirmed. However an adjustment has been made in the northwestern boundary of the unit through confirmation of a road. The unit will undergo intensive inventory to properly assess any wilderness characteristics.

Unit Description

The Petaca Pinta Inventory Unit lies southeast of the Laguna Indian Reservation and approximately 17 air miles south of Casa Blanca, New Mexico. It includes Gunn Mesa to the southeast, Bluewater Canyon with sandstone bluffs to the southwest, rough lava areas to the north, Petaca Pinta Mesa near the center, and sloping country throughout the rest of the area. Primary vegetation includes mixed grassland, pinyon-juniper, chaparral, oak and winterfat.

The unit contains a large detention dam near the eastern boundary in Sec. 9 and some grazing developments throughout the lower elevations.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Numerous individual letters and oral comments, were received by BLM giving strong support for intensive inventory of the unit. They generally expressed that the unit met basic wilderness criteria and contained unique physical features.

Unit boundaries were readjusted, after another field check, to exclude major impacts of man. An intensive inventory will be conducted to adequately assess any wilderness characteristics.

Unit Description

Ladrones unit is about 25 air miles northwest of Socorro, New Mexico. This unit is composed of what was previously thought to be three separate units. These units were combined when field checks showed the "roads" separating them did not meet the BLM road definition. The mountain complex rises from desert plains for about 3,600 feet to its highest peak. It runs primarily north to south, with the northern end giving way to steep foothills, and the southern end tapering down to the Rio Salado River Basin. Many ravines and canyons divide the area. The sharp rise in elevation has created several plant communities within one inventory unit, composed of woodland, chaparral, grassland, and Great Basin Desert shrub. The terrain around the complex is rolling with small canyons in a semi-desert environment.

The unit contains evidences of past grazing, mining, and wood cutting. Old homesteads and range developments are evident on the lower slopes.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

A report by the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee and numerous public comments have shown very strong support for making the area a wilderness. The majority felt that the Ladrones Mountains posses wilderness characteristics.

Also, numerous comments have opposed intensive inventory for all or part of the unit due to what they felt to be major intrusions of man. Several field checks have shown that man's impact is very widely scattered and substantially unnoticeable. An adjustment has been made in the boundary to the south because of a maintained road, an intensive inventory will be conducted to adequately assess other impacts or intrusions.

Unit Description

Mesita Blanca Inventory Unit lies 20 air miles west of Quemado, and just west of the Eagle Peak Inventory Unit. This unit is mostly flat mesas in the northwest portion changing to hilly and steep in the southeast portion, which also contains the Red Cone Lava Flow. Shortgrass, rabbit brush, broom snakeweed and some sagebrush can be found throughout, with pinyon-juniper scattered along the slopes, drainages, and higher elevations.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Several comments have been received favoring intensive inventory, due mainly to scenery, naturalness, solitude, and primitive recreation opportunities.

An extensive field check confirmed that the unit was primarily natural. No roads were found which met the BLM road definition. This field check also refined the southern boundary, resulting in the addition of the Red Cone Lava Flow to the unit. An intensive inventory is required to properly evaluate the area's naturalness or its man-made impacts.

Unit Description

Eagle Peak Inventory Unit lies around 8 air miles west of Quemado, New Mexico. This unit is composed of what was previously thought to be three separate units. These units were combined when field checks showed the "road" separating them did not meet the BLM road definition. The terrain is composed of flat to rough and mountainous topography, with scenic geologic features such as numerous draws, canyons, steep bluffs, mesas, and rock formations. There is also a large lava cone. The elevation varies over 1000 feet and creates noticeable changes in vegetative subtypes. Shortgrass, rabbit brush, broom snakeweed, and sagebrush can be found throughout, with moderate stands of pinyon-juniper along the slopes and higher elevations.

The unit contains earthen stock tanks and range developments.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

A New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee Report and numerous individual comments have strongly supported intensive inventory for this unit. They generally felt it met wilderness criteria, and had good varieties of scenic coloration.

Many people opposed wilderness designation or inventory for this unit. Reasons given were the presence of range developments, roads, and resource conflicts. The BLM has yet to confirm this information. If confirmed, and if the remaining roadless areas are not of sufficient size to make practicable their management as wilderness, the unit will be dropped from further wilderness consideration. However, the area will remain in intensive inventory pending confirmation of public comments.

Shoemaker

NM-020-027B

7,760 acres

Unit Description

Shoemaker Canyon Inventory Unit lies 50 air miles southwest of Grants, New Mexico. It contains rolling hills covered with pinyon-juniper to the east and south. In the northwest portion the unit contains mesas and steep canyons, with moderate stands of pinyon-juniper on the slopes and higher elevations. Shortgrass and rabbit brush can be found throughout the area.

The unit contains evidences of past grazing including two earthen reservoirs and a fenceline.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received several comments favoring intensive inventory for this area because they felt the unit contained wilderness characteristics.

One comment protested intensive inventory for this unit because of the potential for uranium resources. However, conflicting uses are not used in determining wilderness characteristics so the area will remain in intensive inventory.

Veranito

NM-020-035

7100 acres

Unit Description

Veranito Inventory Unit lies 5 air miles northeast of Socorro. It consists of hilly and rough country, with numerous arroyos running east to west into the Rio Grande Basin. The vegetation is dense in the drainages, with sparse grass, creosote and sagebrush found elsewhere.

A fence runs east to west in the northern half of the unit, and an underground gas pipeline runs north to south to the extreme southeast.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Comments were received by BLM favoring intensive inventory for this unit. Reasons cited were mainly that naturalness, solitude and primitive recreation opportunities could be found in the unit.

An intensive inventory will be done to more fully assess any wilderness characteristics and any impacts on naturalness.

Unit Description

The Coyote Inventory Unit is 4 air miles northeast of Socorro, New Mexico. From west to east, the topography changes from rolling to mountainous, with numerous drainages and washes throughout. A deep, steep and scenic arroyo runs west to east in the northern half the unit. Large trees and dense vegetation is found in the lower elevations and grassland and creosote is found over most of the surface.

The unit has an underground gas pipeline running northeast to southwest through its center. Some mining and grazing impacts are evident to the east of the pipeline.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

A New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee Report and a number of individual oral and written comments have supported intensive inventory for this unit. They generally felt it meets wilderness criteria and that it has unique scenery.

A letter was received by BLM protesting intensive inventory of this unit because it was not unique and that it would be a major resource conflict to mining, adversely affecting the local economy.

This unit will be intensively inventoried to identify the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics. Conflicts with mining have no bearing on an area's wilderness characteristics but are considered during the study of a units wilderness suitability. A recent field check has shown the need for a boundary adjustment due to a road being located inside the unit.

Unit Description

The Presilla Inventory Unit is 2 air miles east of Socorro, New Mexico. From west to east the topography changes from rolling to mountainous, with numerous washes, several arroyos and a steep, narrow canyon. Dense vegetation and large trees are found to the west and lower elevations, and primarily grassland and creosote bush are found throughout the rest of the unit.

An underground gas pipeline runs north to south near the Eastern boundary.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Numerous comments received by BLM and a report by the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee gave strong support for intensive inventory of this unit. Major reasons were the respondents felt the unit contained unique physical features and wilderness characteristics.

An intensive inventory will be done to study any man-made impacts and their effects on naturalness. Also, solitude and primitive opportunities will be more fully assessed.

Unit Description

Las Canas Inventory Unit lies 7 air miles east of Socorro, New Mexico. It is characterized by mountainous terrain with steep escarpments. Three ridges rapidly rise several hundred feet above the surrounding terrain from north to south. The vegetation, which is very thin on walls and slopes, consists primarily of grassland, creosote bush and brush with scattered clumps of pinyon and juniper trees. There are three principle drainages with intermittent streams.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received several comments favoring intensive inventory due to the unit's varied and interesting topographic features. Several others favored further inventory of this unit due to its excellent opportunities for solitude and primitive types of recreation, its ease of accessibility from Socorro, and the presence of archeological sites.

Most public comment protesting intensive inventory of this unit cited the presence of roads and range developments as reasons for the area being obviously unsuitable. Some of the other reasons for opposing intensive inventory included the irregular boundary of the unit, its proximity to Socorro, and the lack of water and trees. At this time, the intrusions of man have not been found to be substantially noticeable. Furthermore, boundary configurations and nearness to population centers are not factors which have a bearing on the units presence or absence of wilderness characteristics. This unit will remain in intensive inventory in order to gather more information of man-made impacts.

Unit Description

Stallion and Sierra Larga Inventory Units lie 14 miles east of Socorro, New Mexico. This unit is composed of what was previously thought to be two separate units. These units were combined when field checks showed the "roads" separating them did not meet the BLM road definition. This unit contains the Sierra Larga Mountain Range running north to south; and are characterized by hilly and rough terrain to the east and mountainous terrain to the north and southwest. The vegetative cover consists primarily of grassland on lower elevations, and pinyon and juniper trees on higher elevations, with some sagebrush and desert shrub throughout.

Past uses include grazing, prospecting, minor wood cutting and some off road vehicle use. A corral, radar tower, numerous jeep trails and several range developments have been found.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

A great deal of comment was received favoring intensive inventory for these two units, including a report from the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee. Several individuals favored these areas because of spectacular scenery and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined types of recreation.

Several comments opposing intensive inventory for these units mentioned a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined types of recreation and that there were substantially noticeable developments which make the area unnatural. Since NM-020-040 and 041 have so far been found to be contiguous, wilderness characteristics of each unit are enhanced. Intrusions and impacts of man will need to be assessed through an intensive inventory.

Unit Description

Horse Mountain Inventory Unit lies 15 air miles west of Datil, New Mexico. It is characterized by mountainous and sloping terrain with a pinyon-juniper, ponderosa pine and scrub oak cover. The area consists of two main ridges running parallel and joining near the eastern end of the unit.

Existing uses include grazing, hunting, hiking and camping.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received many comments favoring intensive inventory for this unit. These respondents felt this unit has scenic qualities and outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation.

No comments protesting intensive inventory for this unit were received. An extensive field check, conducted in response to public comment, showed this area to possess a substantial degree of naturalness. In addition, what was believed to be a road was found to be a "way", creating contiguous acres which added to over 5000 acres. For these reasons, this unit will be included in intensive inventory for further assessment of wilderness characteristics.

Unit Description

Pelona Inventory Unit lies 27 miles South of Datil, New Mexico. To the east. This unit contains rolling grassland with some brush and pinyon-juniper trees. The rest of the unit is more hilly and mountainous with numerous canyons and draws and more woodland. Ponderosa pine and douglas fir are present on the higher slopes.

The unit contains evidences of wood cutting and grazing. Grazing impacts include several stock tanks, fences, and numerous jeep trails.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

A report by the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee and several individual comments were received favoring intensive inventory of this unit. These respondents felt it was natural and contained outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive types of recreation. Others cited the need to protect archaeological sites.

Most of the public comments opposing intensive inventory for this unit felt the unit lacked naturalness by the presence of roads and various range developments. Several others addressed conflicts between wilderness and other resource uses. However, conflicts between resource uses have no bearing on the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics and will be considered during the later "study" phase of the wilderness review process. Intensive Inventory will be conducted to determine whether or not the area contains wilderness characteristics.

Unit Description

The Devil's Backbone Inventory Unit is less than three air miles west of the Pedro Armendariz Grant No. 34 and 17 air miles southwest of Socorro, New Mexico. The unit is rolling and hilly to the southwest, and rough and mountainous in the rest of the unit. It is mostly a narrow mountain range running north to south; and covered primarily with thin stands of pinyon and juniper trees, (except on the lower flats), and with grassland and sagebrush throughout.

Several earthen stock tanks, jeep trails, and a metal holding tank are present.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Several individual comments have cited that the northern boundary of this unit is contiguous with a U. S. Forest Service RARE II area recommended for further wilderness study. These and other comments, and a report by the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee, support intensive inventory of this unit due to unique scenery and other wilderness characteristics.

An intensive inventory will be done to more fully assess the area's naturalness or the extent of manmade impacts. Opportunities for solitude and primitive types of recreation will also be further evaluated.

Divide

NM-020-045

18,000 acres

Unit Description

Divide Inventory Unit lies 25 miles south of Datil, New Mexico. It consists of flat to hilly grassland and numerous draws and drainages throughout. Other types of existing vegetation are scattered rabbit brush, Apache Plume and pinyon and juniper trees.

Existing uses include grazing, hunting, hiking and some off road vehicle use.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received several comments favoring intensive inventory for the unit because of archeological resources, scenic beauty, and outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Most public comment protested intensive inventory for this unit due to the unit's lack of naturalness. The respondents felt the unit contained roads and substantially noticeable range developments. These have yet to be confirmed by BLM, and the unit will remain in intensive inventory pending confirmation. If confirmed, and the unit does not meet wilderness criteria, it will be dropped from further wilderness consideration.

Devil's Reach

NM-020-047B

1,140 acres

Unit Description

Devil's Reach Inventory Unit is located 22 air miles southwest of Socorro and just to the west of Devil's Backbone Inventory Unit. It has one mountain to the west, with flat to rolling terrain and several washes over most of the area. It is covered primarily with grassland and sagebrush.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Several comments and a report by the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee supported intensive inventory for this unit because of its natural condition and its contiguity with the Ryan Hill U. S. Forest Service RARE II area.

A BLM field check confirmed public comment, and an intensive inventory will be done.

Unit Description

Magdalena Inventory Unit lies 10 miles southwest of Socorro, New Mexico. The unit is generally rolling to the east, with mountains running north to south along the western boundary. There are numerous draws to the west and two canyons near the center. The vegetative cover consists primarily of grasslands and sagebrush, with some pinyon and juniper trees in the higher elevations.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Several comments favoring intensive inventory were received. These respondents felt the unit should be intensively inventoried because it is contiguous with the Ryan Hill RARE II Area, it contains archeological resources, and it has good opportunities for solitude and primitive types of recreation.

A great deal of comment protested intensive inventory for this unit due to what they felt was the unit's lack of naturalness. These respondents cited the presence of a powerline, some abandoned mines, and other impacts of man. However, most of the unit appears to have been affected primarily by natural processes. After adjusting the boundary, the powerline has been excluded. Other impacts will be properly assessed by an intensive inventory.

Unit Description

Add-On Inventory Unit is 9 air miles southwest of Socorro, New Mexico, less than 3 air miles south of State 60, and just north of Magdalena Inventory Unit. It is primarily steep, mountainous terrain, with a major drainage running northeast and another one running southeast. The vegetation is basically pinyon and juniper trees, grassland, and sagebrush throughout.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Several comments felt the unit should be intensively inventoried since it is contiguous to Ryan Hill, a U. S. Forest Service RARE II area undergoing further wilderness study.

An intensive inventory will be done to properly assess any wilderness characteristics.

Unit Description

Add-On II Inventory Unit is approximately 9 air miles west of Socorro, New Mexico, and around a mile west of State 60. From northeast to southwest, the terrain changes from flat to rolling. It is covered primarily with grassland and sagebrush.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Several respondents felt the unit should be studied since it is contiguous to Ryan Hill, a U. S. Forest Service RARE II area undergoing further wilderness study.

An intensive inventory will be done to properly assess any wilderness characteristics.

Padilla

NM-020-051

24,800 acres

Unit Description

Padilla Inventory Unit lies 10 air miles southeast of Socorro, New Mexico. It is characterized by flat terrain to the west and mountainous country to the southeast. There are many arroyos, washes and canyons running east to west. (The main vegetative subtypes are grassland, creosote and bosque.)

An underground powerline runs east to west near the center, and an underground gas pipeline runs north to south near the western boundary. A windmill and several watering troughs also exist.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received several comments favoring intensive inventory for this unit. These respondents felt the cultural resources needed protection and the unit had wilderness characteristics in many parts.

No comments protesting intensive inventory for this unit were received. The results of a preliminary field check show that the area seems to possess a substantial degree of naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation. For these reasons, the unit will undergo intensive inventory to gather more information of it's wilderness characteristics.

Unit Description

Little Yucca Inventory Unit is located 8 air miles southeast of San Antonio, and is contiguous with the eastern boundary Bosque Del Apache National Wildlife Refuge. It is flat to rolling country, covered primarily with soaptree yucca, mesquite, grassland, and sand sage.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Many public comments and a report by the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee supported intensive inventory for this unit. They felt the unit had the necessary size and naturalness. They also felt it required inventory because it was adjacent to the Little San Pasqual Wilderness Area of the FWS.

No public comments were received by BLM opposing intensive inventory. Such inventory will be done to better assess any of the unit's wilderness characteristics. The original boundaries have already been changed, due to the area's contiguity with the existing wilderness and more precise information on roads in the area.

Unit Description

The Jornada Lava Flow is 20 air miles southeast of San Antonio and just west of the White Sands Missile Range. It is composed of rolling and rough topography, covered with grasses and some mesquite and weeds. It is contiguous with the same lava flow in an inventory unit in the Las Cruces District. A joint study will be done on both of these areas.

Several jeep trails, windmills, and stock watering troughs are within the area. Also, debris from military air activity has been found.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Many public comments supported intensive inventory of this unit. These respondents felt it meets basic wilderness criteria and it is geologically unique.

Many public comments were also received opposing intensive inventory. These respondents cited the area's lack of naturalness due to the Pope Road, range developments, and other impacts of man. A field check confirmed most of these comments; and thus, the northeastern boundary was moved south. An intensive inventory will be done to further assess any wilderness characteristics.

Unit Description

Lumbre Inventory Unit is 23 air miles southwest of San Antonio, just east of U. S. 85, and just north of Crawford Hollow Inventory Unit. The area is rolling to flat from west to east, with numerous shallow canyons and washes which drain along the same direction. Major vegetative subtypes are creosote and bosque in the drainages and flats, and pinyon and juniper trees and sagebrush in the higher elevations.

A windmill and several jeep trails exist in the area.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Several comments supported intensive inventory. These respondents felt the unit had critical watershed and wildlife qualities, and wilderness characteristics.

This unit, formally a part of NM-020-056, Crawford Hollow Inventory Unit, was separated from Unit 056 due to a recently confirmed county road. Since it is still over 5,000 acres and public support has been received, it will undergo intensive inventory to further assess any wilderness characteristics.

Unit Description

Crawford Hollow Inventory Unit is 26 air miles southwest of San Antonio, just east of U. S. 85, and just south of Lumbre Inventory Unit. The area is rolling to flat from west to east, with numerous shallow canyons and washes which drain along the same direction. Major vegetative subtypes are creosote and bosque in the drainages and flats, and pinyon and juniper trees and sagebrush in the higher elevations.

A windmill and several jeep trails exist in the area.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Several comments supported intensive inventory. These respondents felt the unit had critical watershed and wildlife qualities and wilderness characteristics.

This unit, formally a part of the NM-020-056 unit, was separated from 056 due to a recently confirmed county road. Since it is still over 5,000 acres and public support has been received, it will undergo intensive inventory to further assess any wilderness characteristics.

Unit Description

Canyon Inventory Unit is located about 55 air miles southwest of Socorro, New Mexico and 25 air miles west of U. S. 85. It is composed of several canyons and draws in rough and hilly topography, with drainages running basically west to east. The vegetation is primarily pinyon and juniper trees, grassland, and shrub throughout. The Gila National Forest is contiguous with the area to the west and south.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received one public comment which supported Intensive Wilderness Inventory. This person felt the unit met the basic wilderness criteria. A closer field check by BLM has confirmed that this area is in primarily a natural condition.

An intensive inventory will be done to further assess any wilderness characteristics. More in-depth information is needed about an area that is not well known.

Unit Description

Big Yucca Inventory Unit is located 20 air miles southwest of San Antonio and just northeast of the Jornada Lava Flow. It is flat to rolling country and composed primarily of thick, tall soaptree yucca, with some mesquite, grassland, and sand sage.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Most public comment about NM-020-054 (Yucca) centered on preserving the heart of unique soaptree yucca, which is actually south of 054 in this (Big Yucca) Unit. The comments also mentioned the existence of wilderness characteristics, which appear to exist in Big Yucca.

This unit will undergo intensive inventory to further assess its solitude and primitive recreation opportunities, and also any man-made impacts.

Unit Description

Offspring Inventory Unit is located 22 air miles southeast of Albuquerque. It is contiguous with public lands in the Albuquerque District which are contiguous with the Manzano Wilderness in the Cibola National Forest. The summary herein is only for the portion of the unit within the Socorro District. It is basically rolling country with several shallow drainages running east to west. The vegetation is mainly grassland and brush.

Several jeep trails and earthen stock tanks can be found throughout the area.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Since these lands are contiguous with a unit adjacent to an existing Wilderness, the BLM inventory procedures require the unit be intensively inventoried for wilderness characteristics.

Unit Description

This area is a part of the southern Peloncillo Mountains and is located approximately 4 miles northeast of Rodeo, New Mexico. The Peloncillos are a long narrow range of mountains composed mainly of tertiary volcanic rocks. Predominant vegetation consists of shortgrass and desert shrub at lower elevations, and mixed mountain shrub with pinon-juniper associations at higher elevations.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received nine comments pertaining to this area. Eight of these inputs objected to the inclusion of this area in Intensive Inventory. Reasons cited were resource conflicts, shape and size of the unit, roads, external sights and sounds, lack of naturalness, lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation. One comment stated that parts of the unit are inaccessible and possibly suited for wilderness. However, the western portion of the unit is flat and unsuitable. The Bureau of Land Management will consider resource conflicts during the Wilderness study. While major influences of external sights and sounds will be noted during the Intensive Inventory phase, imprints of man outside the area will not be considered until WSA phase. The Bureau of Land Management has yet to confirm the information regarding naturalness or opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation. If the information is confirmed in intensive inventory, the area may be recommended dropped from further wilderness consideration. However, the area will remain in Intensive Inventory pending confirmation of public comment.

Granite Gap (South)

NM-030-006

25,860 acres

Unit Description

This unit is located in the northern half of the Peloncillo Mountains approximately five miles northeast of Animas, New Mexico, and approximately 25 air miles southwest of Lordsburg, New Mexico. Terrain is typified by uplifted volcanic mountains, associated drainages, and a portion of the Animas Valley. Predominant vegetation consists of desert shrub and shortgrass.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Twenty public inputs were received objecting to wilderness designation or inventory. Supporting reasons included: no outstanding geologic features, lack of nature study, inadequate buffer zones, state and private inholdings, hard rock minerals, geothermal and oil and gas potential, grazing conflict, and outside sights and sounds. These comments are to be addressed in Intensive Inventory and Wilderness study phases and are not criteria in Initial Inventory. Other comments included: no outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation are to be found in the unit and there is evidence of mining. Imprints of man within the unit such as range developments and powerlines were also noted. The unit will remain in Intensive Inventory and the Bureau of Land Management will confirm these comments during this phase.

Unit Description

This unit is located in the southern Animas Mountains approximately 20 air miles southwest of Hachita, New Mexico. It is typified by north-south igneous mountains, associated drainages, foothills and flats which occur in the eastern portion of the unit. Typical desert mountain vegetation (yucca, sotol, creosote, etc.) and some juniper and oak brush are common to the area.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Thirteen letters were received objecting to wilderness designation or inventory and reasons included: resource conflicts, external sights, sounds and smells from a local smelter, presence of creosote, biological community change, contrived boundaries, state inholdings, lack of water, deer hunting and nothing outstanding as far as wilderness. These reasons are considerations which will be addressed in the Wilderness study and have no bearing on initial inventory. Other information included: the presence of roads, range improvements and other imprints of man's work, lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and lack of scenic value. These latter factors will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management during Intensive Inventory.

Unit Description

Located approximately four miles southeast of Animas, New Mexico, the unit consists of a portion of the northern Animas Mountains, and igneous mountain chain, and a portion of the Playas Valley. Vegetation consists of pinon-juniper, mixed mountain shrub, desert shrub and shortgrass.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Nineteen public inputs were received, seventeen of which, stated that the unit clearly and obviously does not qualify for Intensive Inventory. Reasons listed were: presence of roads, imprints of man's activities and lack of naturalness, no solitude or primitive recreation, no supplemental values, poor rehabilitation potential, irregular boundary and no buffer zone. The first five of these inputs will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management in Intensive Inventory, the latter two are Wilderness study considerations. Two letters supported Intensive Inventory for the unit. Naturalness and roadlessness were listed as supportive reasons. One comment suggested a boundary change to include a roadless area east of the unit and a change to exclude the road to Playas Flat. These, likewise, will be verified by the Bureau of Land Management in Intensive Inventory.

UHL Draw

NM-030-012

30,660 acres

Unit Description

This unit, located approximately five miles south of Lordsburg, New Mexico, is situated partially in the Pyramid Mountains and includes rolling hills and flats to the east. Vegetation includes desert shrub, shortgrass, cacti and creosote.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Ten public inputs, (mostly letters) were received opposing Intensive Inventory for this unit. Reasons included: presence of roads, lack of solitude and primitive recreation, not primarily natural, resource conflicts, irregular boundaries, outside sights and sounds, inholdings, poor rehabilitation potential, and little scenic value. The first three of these reasons will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management in Intensive Inventory, the latter six are Wilderness study considerations. One comment was received supporting Intensive Inventory, and stated the area was roadless, natural and met other requirements. These factors will also be confirmed in Intensive Inventory. Due to confirmation of the road splitting the unit, the boundary was adjusted. This caused a separate unit of 7,680 acres. Field checks confirm this new unit contains powerlines, jeep trails and other impacts of man which make the new unit obviously lacking wilderness characteristics.

Pyramids

NM-030-011

52,860 acres

Unit Description

This area is located approximately 10 air miles south of Lordsburg, New Mexico, and consists of the Pyramid Mountains and surrounding hills, flats and drainages. Vegetation consists of mixed mountain shrub, desert shrub, and shortgrass.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received twenty-one public inputs which contained reasons for not including the Pyramids in Intensive Inventory. Reasons included: potential mining resource conflicts, irregular boundaries, outside sights and sounds, lack of supplemental values, non-public land inholdings, lack of beauty, possible discrimination against some potential users of the area, and management difficulties as wilderness. The Bureau of Land Management will consider manageability, resource conflicts, and inholdings during the Wilderness study. The other reasons listed above were not inventory criteria. Also cited was a lack of naturalness or opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation. Once the Bureau of Land Management confirms these basic wilderness characteristics are lacking in the area, it will be recommended dropped from further consideration. However, the unit will remain in Intensive Inventory pending confirmation of public comment.

Golf Club

NM-030-020

6,320 acres

Unit Description

This area is located southwest of the Burro Mountains approximately four miles northeast of Lordsburg. The unit is characterized by rolling hills and creosote flats.

Roads dissect the area in such a manner that it cannot meet the size criteria of 5,000 acres.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Two comments were received pertaining to the area. One comment opposed intensive inventory of the unit and stated that the unit fails to meet the size criteria of 5,000 acres and lacks outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. One comment favored intensive inventory of the unit because it has unique vegetation for a flat area. Unique vegetation is not a criteria considered in the wilderness inventory. The presence of roads and the units inability to meet the size criteria was confirmed in initial inventory, therefore, the unit will not be intensively inventoried.

Unit Description

Located approximately 23 miles northwest of Lordsburg, New Mexico, this unit includes the steep sided canyon of the "Lower Box" portion of the Gila River, canyons and rolling hills in the remainder of the area. Yucca, creosote, cacti and shortgrass characterize the vegetation in the majority of the unit and river willow and cottonwood are found along the river.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Twenty-four public inputs were received, twenty-two of which recommended that the unit not be intensively inventoried. Reasons included: need of vehicle access for recreation, resource conflicts, presence of roads, and imprints of man's activities. The first two of these reasons are considerations to be addressed by the Bureau of Land Management during the Wilderness study. The latter two will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management in Intensive Inventory.

Two comments supporting Intensive Inventory for the unit cited it as roadless and natural. This information will likewise be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management Intensive Inventory of the area.

Unit Description

This unit, located two miles northeast of Redrock, New Mexico, is characterized by rolling desert hills underlain by the Gila Conglomerate formation and includes Black Mountain. The southern edge of the unit is bound by the Gila River and accompanying canyon. Typical vegetation is desert shrub, cacti, shortgrass, riparian types along the drainages and river, and pinon-juniper associations at higher altitudes.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Twenty-seven public inputs were received, of which twenty-three were opposed to Intensive Inventory for the Unit. Rationale included: presence of roads, lack of naturalness, lack of opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation, state and private inholdings, no distinctive features, poor configuration for management, resource conflicts, no water, inhospitable, presence of enough wilderness already, discrimination by wilderness against the handicapped, wilderness meaning more federal control, wilderness benefitting only a few, and that the unit is not wilderness. The first three of these comments will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management in Intensive Inventory. Other comments will be addressed in the wilderness study and have no bearing on the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics.

One comment favoring Intensive Inventory for the unit listed lack of roads and existence of naturalness as the rationale. Another favored Intensive Inventory and suggested a boundary change to exclude a road to inholdings in the eastern portion of the unit. The Bureau of Land Management will confirm this data in Intensive Inventory.

Two additional comments were received which did not specifically agree or disagree with the recommendation to intensively inventory the unit.

Unit Description

This unit, located approximately fifteen air miles northwest of Redrock, New Mexico, includes the southern foothills of the Mogollen Mountains. Vegetation consists of desert shrub and short grass with pinon-juniper associations at higher elevations.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Fifteen public inputs were received which opposed Intensive Inventory. Reasons were: presence of roads, lack of solitude or primitive recreation, imprints of man's work, resource conflicts, presence of enough wilderness, wilderness discriminates against the handicapped and aged, opposition to further federal intervention, private inholdings, presence of outside sights and sounds, lack of uniqueness, creosote vegetation lowers the value of area as a potential wilderness, lack of water, and not enough rugged country. One comment stated that the steeple rock portion of the unit may have wilderness characteristics but does not meet the size criteria. The first three of these reasons will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management in Intensive Inventory. The other eight reasons were not valid considerations in Initial Inventory.

Unit Description

This area is located approximately seventeen air miles northeast of Deming, New Mexico. The area includes the Cooke Range and surrounding hills, flats, and drainages. Elevation varies from approximately 4,800 feet to 8,408 feet. Desert mountain vegetation includes pinonjuniper, an isolated stand of Arizona Cypress, mixed mountain shrub, desert shrub, and shortgrass.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received nineteen letters regarding this area. Seven favored the inclusion of the unit in Intensive Inventory and cited the following reasons: the existence of basic wilderness criteria (size, naturalness, opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation), interesting terrain, and unique vegetation in a portion of the unit which had not been recommended. There was a question concerning the presence or absence of a defined road which separated the portion.

Interesting terrain is not a criterion considered in Initial Inventory. A boundary change to include the northern portion of the unit, which was not recommended, will be made because of reasonable doubt concerning the presence or absence of a road.

Twelve letters opposed the inclusion of this area in Intensive Inventory and cited the following reasons: potential mineral conflicts, lack of naturalness, non-public land inholdings, irregular boundary, and jet plane fly-overs.

The Bureau of Land Management will consider resource conflicts and inholdings during Wilderness study. External sights and sounds are not Initial Inventory criteria, nor are irregular boundaries. These inputs had no influence on the Initial Inventory decision. If the Bureau of Land Management confirms the information concerning the lack of naturalness, the area will be recommended dropped from further wilderness consideration. However, the area with a boundary change at the northern end will remain in Intensive Inventory pending confirmation of public comment.

Unit Description

This area is located approximately ten air miles southeast of Deming, New Mexico, and contains the mountain range along with surrounding foothills and creosote flats. Vegetation includes Pinon-juniper grassland, mixed mountain shrub, desert shrub, and shortgrass.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received fifty-seven public inputs regarding this area. The fifty-three favoring the inclusion of the Floridas in Intensive Inventory cited the following reasons: proximity to a population center, study area for exotic species, supplemental values (historical, geological), the existence of basic wilderness criteria (size, naturalness, opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation), potential for rehabilitation and minimal conflict with existing use. The unit's proximity to population centers was not an Initial Inventory criterion. Supplemental values and rehabilitation may be considered.

The four comments which stated opposition to the inclusion of this area in Intensive Inventory cited the lack of naturalness and lack of opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation, mineral resource conflicts and lack of supplemental values.

The Bureau of Land Management will consider resource conflicts during Wilderness study. Lack of supplemental values does not disqualify an area from Intensive Inventory.

Because of the comments received, a reasonable doubt exists that all or a portion of the area may contain wilderness characteristics and the area will be intensively inventoried to confirm public comment. If minimum wilderness criteria are confirmed to be lacking, then the area will not be recommended for study.

Unit Description

This area is located approximately 15 air miles south of Hachita, New Mexico, and includes the Big Hatchet Mountains and surrounding foothills and drainages. Vegetation consists of pinon-juniper associations, mixed mountain shrub, desert shrub, and shortgrass. Elevation in the unit varies from approximately 4,300 feet to 8,366 feet.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received seventeen public comments regarding this area. Four comments supported the inclusion of this area in Intensive Inventory and cited the following reasons: the area is unique and scenic, and is an outstanding area for ornithological study. These supplemental values may be considered during Intensive Inventory, but are not a basic requirement for Inventory.

The thirteen comments which stated opposition to the inclusion of this area in Intensive Inventory cited the following reasons: potential mining resource conflicts, non-public land inholdings, dull topography, undesirable vegetation, low potential for rehabilitation, and lack of basic wilderness criteria (naturalness, opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation).

The Bureau of Land Management will consider resource conflicts and non-public inholdings during the wilderness study area phase. Dull topography and type of vegetation were not Initial Inventory criteria. Once the Bureau of Land Management confirms the lack of naturalness and opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation, the unit will be recommended dropped from further consideration. However, the unit will remain in Intensive Inventory pending confirmation of public comment.

Unit Description

This area is located approximately 25 air miles south of Hachita, New Mexico, and includes a portion of the Alamo Hueco Mountains and surrounding flats and drainages. Elevation varies from approximately 4,800 feet to 6,400 feet. Vegetation includes pinon-juniper associations, mountain shrub, desert shrub, and shortgrass.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received eleven comments from the public regarding this area which were opposed to inclusion of the area in Intensive Inventory. Reasons cited were energy and mining resource conflicts, the irregular shape of the unit, creosote vegetation, non-public land inholdings, lack of basic wilderness criteria (naturalness, opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation).

Resource conflicts and non-public inholdings will be considered during wilderness study. The shape or type of vegetation in ^{the} unit were not Initial Inventory considerations. Once the Bureau of Land Management confirms the lack of basic wilderness criteria, the unit will be recommended dropped from further consideration. However, the unit will remain in Intensive Inventory pending confirmation of public comment.

Unit Description

The area is located approximately ten air miles southeast of Hachita, New Mexico, and contains Sierra Rica Mountain and surrounding flats and drainages to the south. Predominant vegetation consists of desert shrub, cacti, and shortgrass.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received fourteen letters opposed to the inclusion of the area in Intensive Inventory. Reasons given were potential energy and mining resource conflicts, non-public land inholdings, creosote vegetation, no scenic values, lack of naturalness, and lack of opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation.

The Bureau of Land Management will consider resource conflicts and non-public land inholdings during wilderness study. Type of vegetation and scenic values were not initial inventory criteria.

If the Bureau of Land Management confirms the lack of naturalness or outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation, the area will be dropped from further consideration. However, the unit will remain in Intensive Inventory pending confirmation of public comment.

Unit Description

This unit, located approximately twenty miles southwest of Deming, New Mexico, is made up of the Cedar Mountains and surrounding rolling hills and flats. Vegetation types include desert shrub, cacti, cedars (juniper) and shortgrass.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Twenty-six public inputs were received, twenty-four objected to wilderness designation or inventory for the unit. Reasons included: resource conflicts, state and private inholdings, creosote vegetation inadequate buffer zone, poor rehabilitation potential, poor scenic value, unmanageability, acreage error, presence of roads, imprints of man's activities (lack of naturalness), and lack of solitude. The first seven of these reasons were not addressed by the Bureau of Land Management in the Initial Inventory. The latter four will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management during Intensive Inventory.

Two comments stating that the unit should be placed in Intensive Inventory were received, but listed no supportive rationale.

Phillip's Hole

NM-030-049

60,210 acres

Unit Description

This unit is located approximately twenty air miles northwest of El Paso, Texas. The vegetation consists of mesquite dunes and creosote flats. The terrain, in general, is very flat.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received one letter regarding favoring inclusion of Phillip's Hole in Intensive Inventory because it was believed to meet the basic requirements of size, naturalness, and having outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. A special interest in the area was cited because of its mesquite dune ecosystem. A unique ecosystem was not a determining factor during Initial Inventory.

A field check of this unit confirmed the BLM's previous recommendation that the area was obviously lacking wilderness characteristics. This area is now dropped from further wilderness consideration.

East Potrillo Mountains

NM-030-051

26,300 acres

Unit Description

This unit includes the sedimentary fault-block East Potrillo Mountains associated drainages and surrounding creosote flats and is located approximately 30 air miles southwest of Las Cruces, New Mexico. Vegetation is sparse and consists of yucca, sotol, cholla, and other desert mountain species.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Fifteen public inputs were received, thirteen of which were in favor of this unit receiving Intensive Inventory. Reasons for this support included: the unit contains interesting terrain, excellent opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation exist, and few imprints of civilization impair naturalness. Two comments stated that the area clearly and obviously does not qualify for Intensive Inventory because of the numerous intrusions which impact naturalness, private inholdings, roads, grazing, hunting and trapping conflicts, conflicts with other forms of recreation, loss of county revenue, and increased use in open areas. Due to the comments received, a reasonable doubt exists that all or a portion of this area may contain minimal wilderness characteristics, therefore this area will be Intensively Inventoried.

Aden Lava Flow

NM-030-053

33,010 acres

Unit Description

Located approximately thirty miles southwest of Las Cruces, this unit consists of the rugged basaltic extrusive flow in the northern three quarters and level sandy terrain in the south quarter. Vegetation consists of apache plume, shortgrasses, yucca and other Upper Sonoran types.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Five comments were received, four of which stated the unit clearly and obviously does not qualify for Intensive Inventory. Reasons for this position include: presence of roads, a railroad on the boundary, imprints of man's activities and a ranching conflict. One comment was in favor of Intensive Inventory citing the central portion appears natural, contains at least 12,000 acres, and may offer outstanding opportunities for solitude. Both positions and the supportive reasons listed for them will be considered and confirmed during Intensive Inventory.

Unit Description

The area consists of volcanic structures of the West Potrillo Mountains and the conspicuous Mts. Riley and Cox. It is located approximately 20 to 30 air miles southwest of Las Cruces, New Mexico. Vegetation consists of shortgrass, creosote and other Upper Sonoran types such as yucca and cholla.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Seventeen public inputs were received. Fourteen of these objected to wilderness designation or inventory. Reasons included: state and private inholdings, presence of oil wells, a trapping and ranching conflict, external sights, and sounds, dull vegetation and topography, enforcement difficulties, loss of county revenue, wildlife management conflicts, conflicts with other forms of recreation, and increased use in open areas. These factors will be considered in wilderness study and are not to be addressed in Initial Inventory. Other reasons included the presence of roads and other imprints of man's activity. These are considerations that were perhaps overlooked during initial inventory and will be confirmed in Intensive Inventory. There were three comments in favor of intensive inventory and the rationale used were: existing improvements not significant, unit has outstanding recreation and solitude, roads are not maintained by mechanical means, portions of the area may have outstanding solitude, and portions may be natural. These statements will be confirmed during the Intensive Inventory phase.

Unit Description

Consisting of uplifted sedimentary and extrusive igneous strata, dissected by deep canyons and arroyos, the Robledo Mountains are located approximately three miles northwest of Las Cruces, New Mexico. Vegetation consists of Upper Sonoran types such as sotol, creosote, yucca and shortgrasses and juniper at higher elevations.

Public Comment Elevation and Conclusion

Of nine inputs, seven stated that the area clearly and obviously does not qualify for Intensive Inventory. Reasons for this position included: close proximity to Las Cruces, desolate conditions-no trees, no interest for hikers, resource conflicts, fair scenic value and good to poor rehabilitation potential. These factors are to be considered in wilderness study and cannot be considered in Initial Inventory. Other rational included: the presence of roads, lack of naturalness, lack of solitude and recreation, and intrusions. These are considerations to be further examined and confirmed in Intensive Inventory. The two comments supporting Intensive Inventory for the unit listed wildlife values, scenic vistas, fragile desert flora, historic value, easy control access, no resource conflicts, close proximity to residential areas, existence of Chihuahua Desert habitat, and diverse ecotypes. These are, again, considerations to be examined in wilderness study. Other reasons listed, such as excellent solitude and recreation and the presence of jeep trails concentrated in the southern part will be confirmed in Intensive Inventory. This area will remain in Intensive Inventory.

Unit Description

This unit is located approximately two miles from Hatch, New Mexico. It contains a canyon, dissected volcanic dome, and some sedimentary strata. Vegetation varies from desert shrubs, yucca, and creosote at lower elevations to juniper and grasses at upper levels.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Fifteen public inputs were received, twelve of which objected to wilderness designation or inventory. Reasons listed included: unsuitable configuration, naturalness and solitude/recreation reduced by adjacent impacts, inholdings, and range conflicts. Also noted were hunting and trapping conflicts, loss of county revenue, conflicts with other forms of recreation and increased use in open areas. These are considerations addressed in wilderness study. Other reasons listed, which will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management in Intensive Inventory, included: presence of roads, lack of naturalness and solitude, and imprints of man's activities. Three comments favoring Intensive Inventory for the unit listed the following as rationale: interesting terrain, demand for wilderness close to population center, excellent for solitude and primitive recreation, few imprints of civilization. The last two observations will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management during Intensive Inventory, while the first two are not valid considerations in wilderness inventory.

Magdalena Peak

NM-030-066

82,247 acres

Unit Description

Located approximately twenty miles northeast of Las Cruces, New Mexico, the unit consists of the volcanic ridges and canyons of the southern and western Uvas Mountains. Vegetation varies from desert shrub and shortgrass in lower areas to juniper and grasses in higher elevations.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Eight comments were received, six of which stated that the unit clearly and obviously does not qualify for Intensive Inventory. Reasons cited included: presence of roads, lack of naturalness (imprints of man's activities), lack of outstanding solitude or primitive recreation, irregular boundary, outside sights and sounds, inholdings, resource conflicts, and poor rehabilitation potential. The first three of these reasons will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management during Intensive Inventory. The latter four reasons will be addressed during wilderness study.

Two comments in favor of Intensive Inventory for the unit include the following reasons: unit appears natural, outstanding solitude, good selection of trees, a water source, has scenic values, and that an area is needed close to Las Cruces. The first two of these reasons will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management during Intensive Inventory. The latter four reasons are not valid criteria to be addressed in the inventory process.

Unit Description

Located approximately twelve miles from Las Cruces, New Mexico, the area lies in the northern portion of the Organ Mountains and consists of rugged, uplifted igneous and sedimentary formations. Vegetation includes pinon-juniper and Ponderosa pine on the east slope and short-grass, desert shrub and cacti on the western slope.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Eleven public inputs were received, five of which opposed wilderness designation or inventory for the unit. Reasons for this position were: imprints of man's activities, lacks outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation, presence of roads, and resource conflicts. The first four of these reasons are valid criteria and will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management in Intensive Inventory. Resource conflicts will be addressed during wilderness study. Supporting reasons listed in favor of Intensive Inventory included: lack of roads, few imprints of civilization, excellent recreation and solitude, interesting terrain, unit needs protection, need of areas close to population centers. The first three of these reasons will be confirmed in Intensive Inventory, while the last three are wilderness study concerns.

Jornada Lava Flow

NM-030-081

26,750 acres

Unit Description

This lava flow is located approximately 32 air miles northeast of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico. The flow is a relatively old extrusive formation with typically rugged terrain. The southern part of the unit consists of gently sloping creosote and shortgrass. This area is contiguous with the Socorro District Jornada Lava Flow roadless area (NM-020-055).

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received six letters pertaining to this area. All of these inputs disputed the recommendation to include Jornada Lava Flow in Intensive Inventory. Reasons cited were the potential for reduced county tax revenues, ranching conflicts, non-public land inholdings, lack of naturalness and lack of solitude because of the shape of the unit. The Bureau of Land Management will consider resource conflicts during wilderness study. Non-public land inholdings will also be considered during this phase. The Bureau of Land Management has yet to confirm the information regarding naturalness or opportunities for solitude. Once the information is confirmed the area will be recommended dropped from further wilderness consideration. However, the area will remain in Intensive Inventory until confirmation of the public comment.

Unit Description

This area is located approximately 30 miles east of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico on the western slope of the San Andres Mountains. It is characterized by limestone strata hills deeply cut by two major east-west trending canyons. Vegetation consists of Upper Sonoran desert types such as yucca and cholla, grasses and pinon and juniper on the upper slopes.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Two letters were received stating the unit clearly and obviously lacks wilderness characteristics. The rationale for this was listed as a combination of grazing conflicts, a threat to the security of White Sands Missile Range, inaccessibility, sparse scrub cedar and pinon, and the presence of roads. Resource conflicts will be addressed during wilderness study. The security of White Sands Missile Range, inaccessibility, and sparse vegetation are not inventory criteria. The presence of roads other than those located in initial inventory will be confirmed in intensive inventory.

Sacramento Escarpment

NM-030-104(B)

5,320 acres

Unit Description

This unit, located approximately two miles south of Alamogordo, New Mexico, lies on the steep escarpment of the Sacramento Mountains and is heavily dissected by east-west running drainages. Vegetation consists of desert shrub, cacti, and shortgrass at lower elevations, and pinon-juniper at higher levels.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Eight public inputs were received, seven of which stated that the unit clearly and obviously does not qualify for Intensive Inventory. Reasons included: the unit being a "hotbed of rabies," wilderness inventory would limit growth of Alamogordo, external sights and sounds, presence of roads, lack of solitude, and imprints of man's activities are present. The first three of the reasons are non-valid criteria to be addressed by the Bureau of Land Management in Initial Inventory. The latter three will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management in Intensive Inventory.

One comment favored Intensive Inventory for this unit because it contained wilderness characteristics. This statement will also be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management in Intensive Inventory.

Unit Description

This area consists of the portion of the Carrizozo Lava Flow north of Highway 380, approximately three miles northwest of Carrizozo. Vegetation consists of pinon, juniper, cacti, and grass associations. The lava flow is one of the youngest flows in the State, and is noted for its zoological and botanical uniqueness.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received one comment favoring Intensive Inventory for the unit. No specific supporting reasons were given.

Two comments were received protesting Intensive Inventory for the unit. The inclusion of roads which reduce the area's naturalness was cited as well as the general comment that "wilderness is waste, this area is productive and beautiful."

The Bureau of Land Management has yet to confirm the presence of roads in the unit. The area will remain in Intensive Inventory pending confirmation of public comment.

Carrizozo Lava Flow

NM-030-110(A)

38,160 acres

Unit Description

This area lies four miles west of Carrizozo. The unit consists of the portion of the Carrizozo Lava Flow south of Highway 380 and flat, desert grasslands on the west. The White Sands Military Withdrawal forms the western boundary of the unit. Vegetation consists of pinon, juniper, cacti, and grass associations. The lava flow is one of the youngest flows in the state and is noted for its zoological and botanical uniqueness.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received two comments favoring Intensive Inventory of the unit because of the naturalness of the area, the absence of roads, and opportunities for camping and exploring.

Four letters were received protesting Intensive Inventory for the unit due to the presence of roads and private and state inholdings. One general comment addressing the unit stated that "wilderness is a waste, this area is productive and beautiful."

Private and state inholdings within an inventory unit will be addressed during wilderness study. The Bureau of Land Management has yet to confirm the presence of roads in the unit. The area will remain in Intensive Inventory pending confirmation of public comment.

Unit Description

This unit, located thirty-five miles southwest of Carlsbad, New Mexico, is characterized by a rugged uplifted limestone formation. Vegetation consists of desert shrub, cacti and shortgrasses at the lower elevations and pinon-juniper associations at upper levels.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Thirty-three public inputs were received, thirty-two of which opposed wilderness designation or inventory for the unit. Reasons included: the unit is too large to be used, state and private inholdings, resource conflicts, lack of geological, historical and ecological features, presence of roads, lack of naturalness (imprint of man's activities) and lack of solitude and primitive recreation opportunities. The first four of these reasons were not considered by the Bureau of Land Management in Initial Inventory. The latter three reasons will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management in Intensive Inventory.

The one comment favoring Intensive Inventory for the area listed naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation and the uniqueness of the mountains as reasons for this position. The Bureau of Land Management will confirm this input during Intensive Inventory.

Unit Description

This area lies approximately 25 air miles southeast of Pinon and 20 miles north of the New Mexico/Texas border. The unit is continuous with the U.S. Forest Service RARE II Area #3-074 designated for further planning. The western portion of the unit consists of creosote flats. On the east, Little Dog Canyon and its branch canyons cut into the Guadalupe Rim. Vegetation consists of creosote, cacti, and grass associations in the lower elevations and cacti/grass associations in the higher elevations.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received 3 letters favoring Intensive Inventory for the unit. No specific supporting reasons were given. Twenty-nine public inputs opposing Intensive Inventory were received. Most often cited supporting reasons were the presence of roads and range development. Other comments noted hunting/camping influences, powerlines, and lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation. The Bureau of Land Management has yet to confirm and document this information.

Three of the twenty-nine inputs opposing Intensive Inventory referred to resource conflicts with grazing or fire control. Lack of accessibility and unsuitability for wilderness were also given as supporting reasons for opposition for Intensive Inventory. Resource conflicts and manageability will be evaluated during wilderness study.

The unit will remain in Intensive Inventory pending confirmation of public comment.

Unit Description

This area lies approximately 23 air miles southeast of Pinon and 24 miles north of the New Mexico/Texas border. The unit is contiguous with the Forest Service RARE II Area #3-074 designated for further planning.

The major physiographic feature of this area is Pup Canyon, a box canyon that cuts into Guadalupe Rim in the northeast portion of the unit. A number of arroyos cut through the unit running southwest from the Rim. Vegetation consists primarily of creosote, cacti, and grass associations in the lower elevations and cacti/grass associations as the elevation increases.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received three public inputs favoring Intensive Inventory of the area. No specific supporting reasons were given. Twenty-seven public inputs opposing Intensive Inventory for the unit were received. The presence of range developments and roads were most often given as supporting reasons. Other comments noted-- hunting/camping influences, powerlines, and lack of outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The Bureau of Land Management has yet to confirm this information.

One comment cited lack of supplemental values as a supporting reason for opposition to Intensive Inventory. The Wilderness Act states a wilderness "may also contain" supplemental values. These are not required for wilderness.

One comment opposing Intensive Inventory noted that the unit is less than 5,000 acres in size. This unit is continuous with public lands managed by the Forest Service that have been formally determined to have potential wilderness values, (RARE II Area #3-074 designated for further planning). Therefore, the unit meets the size criteria. The unit will remain in Intensive Inventory pending confirmation of public comment.

Unit Description

Located approximately 50 air miles west of Carlsbad, New Mexico, this unit lies along the northern portion of Guadalupe Escarpment, an uplifted limestone formation. Vegetation consists of desert shrub and shortgrass on the eastern lowlands and pinon-juniper associations on the upper slopes of eastern section.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Twenty-nine public inputs were received which objected to wilderness designations or inventory for the unit. Reasons listed included: resource conflicts, lack of supplemental values, presence of roads, imprints of man's activities (lack of naturalness), and a lack of primitive recreation opportunities. The first two of these reasons are not criteria used by the Bureau of Land Management in Initial Inventory. The latter three reasons will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management during Intensive Inventory.

Flat Top

NM-030-136

5,340 acres

Unit Description

This unit, located approximately sixty air miles southeast of Alamogordo, New Mexico, is characterized by a mesa-like eroded intrusive igneous mountain and surrounding hills and flats. Vegetation consists of desert shrub, cacti, and shortgrass.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Twelve letters were received objecting to wilderness designation or inventory for the unit. Reasons cited were: resource conflicts, presence of roads, imprints of man's activities (lack of naturalness), lack of solitude or opportunities for primitive recreation and lack of supplemental values. The first of these reasons are criterion not addressed by the Bureau of Land Management during Initial Inventory. Due to confirmation of a road in the northern portion of this area, a boundary adjustment was made. The remaining portion of this unit will be intensively inventoried. The latter four reasons will be confirmed by the Bureau of Land Management during Intensive Inventory.

Wind Mountain

NM-030-135

7,720 acres

Unit Description

This inventory unit lies approximately 25 air miles east of McGregor Range in the Cornudas Mountains. The New Mexico/Taos border forms the southern boundary. The major physiographic feature of the unit is Wind Mountain, an isolated peak in the western portion of the unit with an elevation of 7280 feet. Vegetation consists of grass/cacti associations in the higher elevations. The eastern portion of the unit consists of the desert grasslands and creosote flats.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Twelve letters were received opposing Intensive Inventory for the unit. Lack of naturalness, presence of range developments, powerlines, roads, and shacks were given as supporting reasons. Other supporting reasons were the lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation. The Bureau of Land Management has yet to confirm and document this information. One comment expressed opposition due to a resource conflict with grazing. Resource conflicts will be addressed during the wilderness study. Due to field confirmation of two roads, boundary adjustments have been made on the east and west of Wind Mountain. Due to the imprints of man, naturalness is lacking on the west portion cut off by the road. The unit will remain in Intensive Inventory pending confirmation of public comment.

Alamo Mountain

NM-030-137

5,090 acres

Unit Description

This inventory unit lies approximately 20 air miles east of McGregor Range in the Cornudas Mountains. The unit is bound on the south by the New Mexico/Texas border.

Alamo Mountain dominates the entire unit (elevation 6670 feet). The north and west boundaries lie along the base of the mountain. The eastern and southern portions of the unit consists of gently sloping to flat terrain. Vegetation consists of grass associations in the higher elevations and grass/cacti associations in the lower elevations.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Eleven public inputs were received opposing Intensive Inventory of the unit. Most of these comments referred to the lack of naturalness in the area. Range developments and roads were given as supporting reasons. Other comments noted the lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation. The Bureau of Land Management has yet to confirm this information. Six letters opposing Intensive Inventory stated that the size of the unit is less than 5000 acres. The Bureau of Land Management personnel determined the size of the unit to be 5090 acres and therefore, meeting the size criteria. One comment cited a resource conflict with grazing. The problem of manageability due to the configuration of the area was also given as a supporting reason in opposition to Intensive Inventory. Resource conflicts and manageability will be evaluated in the wilderness study. The unit will remain in Intensive Inventory pending confirmation of public comment.

Devil's Den Canyon

NM-030-145

320 acres

Unit Description

Devil's Den Canyon is 3 miles south of El Paso Gap on the western edge of Guadalupe National Forest. The unit is contiguous to the Forest Service area #3-077 recommended for wilderness in the Guadalupe Escarpment Wilderness Proposal. Devil's Den is a narrow, deep canyon cut into the Guadalupe Rim which rises 1400 feet from the bottomland. Drainage is to the west. The Guadalupe Mountains area is a unique transition zone for vegetation.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Two public comments were received pertaining to the Devil's Den Canyon inventory unit. Both opposed Intensive Inventory. Supporting reasons given were the presence of range developments, lack of naturalness, and lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude. The Bureau of Land Management has yet to confirm this information. One supporting reason cited referred to the area's small size. The area is less than 5000 acres. However, the size criteria will be satisfied for inventory units of less than 5000 acres if they are contiguous with lands managed by another agency which have been formally determined to have potential wilderness values. The unit meets this criteria. The unit will remain in Intensive Inventory pending confirmation of public comment.

McKittrick Canyon

NM-030-146

200 acres

Unit Description

This area is located approximately 90 miles southeast of Alamogordo, New Mexico, and is contiguous to Forest Service RARE II #3-077 which was recommended for wilderness designation.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received two public comments regarding this area which stated opposition to the inclusion of this area in Intensive Inventory. Reasons given were potential for resource conflicts and that the area is too small to be considered.

The Bureau of Land Management will consider resource conflicts during the Wilderness study. An area of less than 5,000 acres contiguous to land administered by another Federal agency with authority to study and preserve wilderness lands, may be included in Intensive Inventory if the combined total is 5,000 acres or more. This area will remain in Intensive Inventory.

Unit Description

This area is located in the northeast corner of the McGregor Military Reservation. Part of the Nike Ajax Safety Limit impact area covers the southern portion of the unit. The northern portion is unaffected by military use.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received three public comments which opposed the inclusion of this area in Intensive Inventory. Reasons cited were potential resource conflicts and potential problems with livestock predators. The Bureau of Land Management will consider resource conflicts during the Wilderness study. The possible existence of livestock predators was not an Inventory criterion. The unit will remain in Intensive Inventory.

Big Scuffle Canyon

NM-030-165

5,720 acres

Unit Description

This unit is located approximately 10 miles south of Alamogordo, New Mexico in the northern portion of the McGregor Military Reservation. It is contiguous with U.S. Forest Service RARE II area #3-072 which is recommended for further planning. This unit is now composed of what was previously identified as two units. Escondido Canyon (NM-030-150) is now included in this unit. The previous separation was due to a boundary being drawn using an administrative land withdrawal boundary. This separation was removed so the area will be inventoried as one unit.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received five public inputs objecting to wilderness designation or inventory for this unit (including comments which pertained to Escondido Canyon). Reasons given included potential resource conflicts, the possible loss of tax base, the area may contain water important to Alamogordo, the area lacked opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and wilderness would increase rabies potential for the unit.

The Bureau of Land Management will consider resource conflicts during the Wilderness Study Areas phase. Once the Bureau of Land Management confirms the lack of opportunities for primitive and confined recreation, the unit will be recommended dropped from further consideration. However, the unit will remain in Intensive Inventory pending confirmation of public comment.

Unit Description

Mescalero Sands is located 35 miles east of Roswell, New Mexico. U. S. Highway 380 forms this unit's northern boundary. The area is composed of rolling sand dunes stabilized by mixed desert shrubs and grasses. Some portions of the area contain shifting sands and are barren of vegetation. (This unit has little topographic relief.) The shifting dunes are the most prominent physiographic feature.

This area shows evidence of grazing and mineral developments.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM previously recommended this unit as obviously lacking wilderness characteristics. However, several letters were received commenting on this area which felt the unit, or a portion, should be intensively inventoried. These letters stated that the area had scientific, recreational, and wildlife values which should be protected and biological and geomorphological features which should be preserved. They also stated there were opportunities for solitude in this area and that the impact of grazing and oil and gas development does not impair its suitability for intensive inventory. Letters were also received endorsing the proposed BLM recommendation of no further inventory. These comments stated that this area "clearly does not have potential for wilderness" due to the presence of roads identified by BLM as two track ways and the area shows the imprint of man.

In order to substantiate the BLM initial inventory and to verify public comments, field checks were done with parties who endorsed no further inventory and the area representative of the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee. Both field trips were beneficial in gaining information used to revise the BLM unit recommendation. The revision will take approximately 10,800 acres of the original unit into the intensive inventory stage of the wilderness review. Boundaries for this intensive inventory unit were based on newly identified water pipeline roads, existing roadless area boundaries, and on suggestions extracted from public comments. The remaining 20,560 acres will be dropped from further wilderness consideration, and are included in the acreage figures of Category 4 of this booklet.

Unit Description

Lonesome Ridge is located on the Texas border two air miles west of Carlsbad Caverns National Park. The northern boundary of this unit is contiguous with a RARE II proposed wilderness area in Lincoln National Forest. The most prominent feature of this unit is the cliff faces of the Guadalupe Escarpment which is an uplifted Permian age limestone reef. The topography of the area is very rugged, grading from the 1,700 foot escarpment, with its deep canyons, to the lower talus slopes and desert floor. Vegetational communities change with elevation. The desert floor consists of southwestern desert shrub of the Chihuahuan Desert. The reef slopes are covered by mountain shrub and the ridge tops are covered by coniferous woodlands.

The lower slopes and desert floor of this unit contain evidence of previous grazing and hunting in the form of fences, two track ways, and livestock waters.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Nine letters were received favoring intensive inventory of this unit which agreed with the proposed initial inventory decision made by BLM on March 12, 1979.

Negative comments (2) objected to wilderness consideration due to adverse impacts to other resource uses or due to imprints of man located outside the unit. These comments did not cite appropriate criteria or reasons for dropping the area. Impacts to other resource uses are a factor to be considered during the wilderness study phase. Imprints of man located outside of the unit are not a factor to be considered during the wilderness inventory. This area will be intensively inventoried to determine the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics.

Unit Description

The area is located 1.5 miles north of White City and its southeast border is U. S. Highway 180. The southwest boundary is contiguous with an area being studied by Carlsbad Caverns National Park for a possible addition to their existing wilderness.

The area is composed of steeply rolling limestone hills. There is one major ridge which curves from the northern boundary to the western boundary. The mean elevation is 4,150 feet. The primary canyon lies to the southeast of this ridge and has a maximum depth of approximately 300 feet. Canyon bottoms are narrow with little soil or flat areas. Vertical limestone outcrops are dispersed throughout the area. Vegetation is extremely sparse, particularly on the slopes and ridge tops. A Chihuahuan desert plant community is prevalent throughout most of the unit.

The area contains evidence of grazing in the form of two track ways, fences, and feeders.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Most public comments received on this area opposed intensive inventory (23). The primary reasons for this objection consisted of potential conflicts with other resource uses and decreased public access. Many commentors indicated that roads and physical imprints of man were within the unit and that the area recommended for intensive inventory was less than 5,000 acres in size. Two general comments were received which endorsed the proposed BLM decision to conduct an intensive inventory of this unit.

The eastern segment of this unit, 3,680 acres, was recommended as not qualifying for further inventory due to a clear and obvious lack of wilderness characteristics. Based on existing information, there was substantial doubt as to the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics in the western segment, 4,480 acres. Although the western segment is less than 5,000 acres, it is contiguous with other Federal lands in Carlsbad Caverns National Park which will be reviewed for wilderness potential as mandated by Public Law 95-265. This unit will receive intensive inventory to verify public comments which indicated the area does not have wilderness characteristics.

Unit Description

The unit is located on the northern boundary of Carlsbad Caverns National Park six miles west and one mile north of the visitor center. It is contiguous with an area being studied by the N.P.S. for a possible addition to their existing wilderness. The area is largely made up of rolling limestone hills broken by shallow drainage and vertically exposed limestone outcrops. The most predominant feature in the area is Dark Canyon. The portion of this canyon which crosses the study area is called Serpentine Bends. This major canyon has a vertical relief of 440 feet. Its broad flood plain is dry most of the time; however, it carries a majority of the run off from the southern Guadalupe Mountains during periods of heavy rain. Vegetation within the area ranges from the typical Chihuahuan Desert plant communities in the limestone hills to larger mixed desert shrubs and trees in the bottom of Dark Canyon.

Evidence of man consists of grazing and associated physical improvements.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Lechuguilla Canyon received many comments stating that the area should not be intensively inventoried (24). Major points addressed were:

- Area is less than 5,000 acres
- Area contains physical imprints of man, in the form of range improvements
- Potential conflicts with other resources uses: oil and gas, ranching, hunting, etc.
- Enough existing wilderness in New Mexico
- Presence of a road crossing the unit in Dark Canyon

Four letters were received endorsing the BLM proposal to conduct an intensive inventory of this area.

Although this unit is less than 5,000 acres, it is contiguous with both an existing N.P.S. wilderness area and an area under wilderness review in Carlsbad Caverns National Park. The reported road running through Dark Canyon was originally identified as a two track way. The BLM has yet to confirm that this way meets the BLM "road" definition. If confirmed, the area north of this "road" would drop out of the wilderness inventory for it would no longer be contiguous with N.P.S. wilderness study areas and would not be of sufficient size to make practicable its management as wilderness. The area south of this "road" still would undergo an intensive inventory in order to determine if it has wilderness characteristics. This area would still be contiguous with N.P.S. wilderness and wilderness review units.

Conflicts potential wilderness areas may have with other resource uses: oil and gas, ranching, etc., will not be considered until the wilderness study phase of our review.

Unit Description

The Texas Hill unit is located 34 miles due west of Carlsbad, New Mexico. Lincoln National Forest forms the southern and western borders of this area. The topography of the area ranges from flat lands on the eastern edge to steeply rolling limestone hills cut by deep drainages bordering Lincoln National Forest. Vegetation is composed of the Chihuahuan desert plant community with pinon-juniper along the western edge of the higher elevations.

Area contains evidence of grazing and hunting. This evidence is in the form of livestock waters, feeders, a windmill and two truck ways.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

This unit received many letters (20) opposing Intensive Inventory. Comments were directed at conflicts wilderness designation would have with other resource uses and decreased public access. Input on these topics will not be used until a later stage of the wilderness review. Pertinent comment addressed roads, fences, and other range improvements which commentators felt physically impact the unit to a point where it does not have obvious wilderness characteristics.

Four letters were received endorsing the BLM recommendation of further study.

A field check was done on this area to verify information on the presence of roads in this unit which met the BLM road definition. Roads were found in this unit which segmented the unit into 5 parts. Two of these parts, 810 C & D, are smaller than 5,000 acres and are not contiguous with lands under wilderness review by another agency. These segments no longer meet the size requirement for further inventory and will be dropped from further wilderness consideration. The other three segments, 810 A (7,520 acres), 810 B (5,205 acres), and 810 E (5,740 acres), will undergo an Intensive Inventory to determine the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics and to determine the effects of man's imprints as reported in comments from the public.

Unit Description

The Calamity Cove unit is located one mile north of the Texas border and one mile west of Carlsbad Caverns National Park. This unit's northern boundary is contiguous with a RARE II proposed wilderness area in Lincoln National Forest. This area is also contiguous with Roadless Area NM-060-801. This unit contains a small part of the Guadalupe Escarpment, which is an uplifted Permian age limestone reef. The Calamity Cove unit is largely composed of the talus slopes below the cliff faces of the escarpment. Vegetation changes from southwestern desert shrub of the Chihuahuan Desert to mixed mountain shrub on the higher slopes.

The lower slopes and desert floor of this unit contain evidence of previous grazing and hunting. This evidence is in the form of two track ways, fences and hunting camps.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Most public comment (9) did not favor intensive inventory of this unit due to the small size, visibility of imprints of man outside the boundary, and the presence of roads. Two comments were received which favored the BLM recommendation for intensive inventory.

The unit is contiguous with a proposed wilderness area in Lincoln National Forest. This area is less than 5,000 acres in size but still meets the size requirements because of its location to the U.S.F.S. proposal.

This area will be intensively inventoried to determine the effect of man's imprints and verify the presence of roads.

Mudgetts

NM-060-819 &
NM-060-819A

3,520 acres
213 acres

Unit Description

These areas are located on the northern boundary of Carlsbad Caverns National Park 1.5 miles northwest of the visitor center. Both units are contiguous with the existing Carlsbad Caverns Wilderness Area.

The area is made up of steeply rolling rough limestone hills incised by five main drainages, the average depth of which is 150 feet. The southwest end of the unit is cut by a meander of the Serpentine Bends portion of Dark Canyon and has a vertical relief of 600 feet. Parts of this contain sheer limestone cliffs. The majority of the vegetation is typical of the Chihuahuan Desert plant community and contains a number of pinon and juniper and other larger desert shrubs in the arroyo bottoms.

The area is used for grazing and shows evidence of these ranching activities in the form of stock waters, feeders, etc.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Public comment protested intensive inventory for this unit due to the presence of ranching developments that substantially affect the naturalness of the area (56). A large number of comments indicated that there were roads in the unit which met the BLM Road definition. A few letters were concerned with impacts to other resource use of the unit. Two referred to imprints of man outside the unit. Two letters were received supporting Intensive Inventory of the unit.

A field examination has identified two roads within this area, dividing the area into three parts, 819A, 819B, and 819C. Areas 819A and 819B both contain less than 5,000 acres but are contiguous with an area under wilderness review in Carlsbad Caverns National Park. Area 819C is less than 5,000 acres and is not contiguous with any other Federal agency lands under wilderness review or a designated wilderness area.

Since area 819C no longer meets the size requirements of the Wilderness Inventory Handbook, it will be dropped from any future study. However, areas 819A and 819B will undergo an Intensive Inventory in order to confirm information on reported existing roads within the area and to inventory the unit for wilderness characteristics.

Unit Description

Fawn Valley is located on the northern boundary of Carlsbad Caverns National Park 8 miles west of the park visitor center. This unit is contiguous with an area being studied by the Park Service for possible addition to their existing designated Wilderness Roadless Area. NM-060-820 is sharply cut by the two major drainages of Fawn Valley and Dark Canyon. Predominant land features are the sheer limestone cliffs and steep rugged hillsides. Vertical relief reaches 850 feet. Vegetation consists of numerous species of cactus, yucca and mixed desert shrubs and grasses of the Chihuahuan desert with scattered pinons and junipers.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

This area was not an identified inventory unit because it was less than 5,000 acres and, at that time, was not contiguous with an area being studied for wilderness characteristics by another agency. Since that time, Carlsbad Caverns National Park has been mandated to do a wilderness review on lands within the Park which are not part of the existing wilderness. Fawn Valley #820 is contiguous with Park lands which are to be reviewed.

This unit now meets the size requirements as determined in the Wilderness Inventory Handbook and will undergo an Intensive Inventory to determine if the area has wilderness characteristics.

One letter was received favoring Intensive Inventory of the BLM lands in the Fawn Valley area.

D. Category 2 - Lands and Units Dropped with Unanimous Public Agreement

This group includes dispersed tracts of public lands, and 207 wilderness inventory units, comprising approximately 10,083,987 acres. The BLM previously recommended these lands be dropped from further wilderness consideration. There was unanimous agreement that these lands should be dropped. Lands in this group are released from further wilderness consideration and the limitations imposed by Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act no longer apply upon publication of this notice. Narratives for this category are unnecessary because there was unanimous public agreement that these lands lacked wilderness characteristics.

These lands and inventory units do not appear on the statewide wilderness map or the $\frac{1}{2}$ inch = 1 mile wilderness maps. However, maps are available upon request from the District Office having jurisdiction over the lands in question.

E. Category 3 - Lands and Units Previously Recommended for
Intensive Inventory Which are Now Dropped

This category includes 2 units and 31,010 acres. These lands were previously recommended for intensive inventory, but are now dropped from further wilderness consideration.

These lands were dropped because the BLM received and confirmed information during the public comment period which showed these lands to be obviously lacking wilderness characteristics.

This portion of the State Director's decision will become effective August 10, 1979. Limitations imposed by Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act will no longer apply after this decision becomes effective.

These lands are not shown on the statewide wilderness maps but are shown on the ½ inch = 1 mile wilderness maps which are available from the District Offices.

Unit Description

Banco de la Casa Inventory Unit lies approximately twenty-four air miles southwest of San Ysidro, New Mexico. It contains broken canyon land with pinyon-juniper, shortgrass, and shrub vegetative cover.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

One comment was received supporting intensive inventory for this unit, stating the U.S. Forest Service RARE II area, formerly contiguous with Banco de la Casa, may possibly be placed back into further planning status.

This unit was included in intensive inventory only because of its contiguous nature with the former RARE II roadless area 3-004. When the RARE II unit was dropped from further planning, it terminated any obligation that the BLM had to consider Banco de la Casa. Based on present Bureau information, the USFS area will remain in its present status.

Three comments were received stating the area clearly and obviously does not qualify as wilderness because of potential conflict with uranium development. This is a wilderness study consideration and not to be utilized as rationale to drop an area at this stage of the inventory.

This unit is deleted from further wilderness consideration because it is less than 5,000 acres in size and not a manageable unit.

Dona Ana Peak

NM-030-076

8,050 acres

Unit Description

The Dona Ana Mountains, containing Dona Ana Peak, lie approximately five miles northeast of Las Cruces, New Mexico. The unit contains the southern half of the volcanic mountains, drainages and creosote flats of the immediate surrounding. The Dona Ana's have been noted for their ruggedness. A total elevation change of 1600 feet exists between the flats and Dona Ana Peak.

The Bureau of Land Management received two letters supporting Intensive Inventory for the unit citing that naturalness is not impaired by intrusions and that it contains opportunities for solitude and unconfined types of recreation. Nine letters were received stating that the unit clearly and obviously does not qualify for Intensive Inventory. Reasons for this included imprints of man's work such as powerlines and roads, a lack of solitude, lack of water and wildlife, adjacent private land, and the future use of the area for a garbage dump and as a housing development site to cope with city expansion. Conflicts such as those of the proposed garbage dump and possible future acquisition of lands were not considered in the initial inventory. Due to the cumulative imprints and impacts of man, (i.e., jeep trails and a powerline in this area), naturalness is obviously lacking. The unit is dropped from further wilderness consideration.

F. Category 4 - Inventory Units Dropped Which Recieved Some Support for Intensive Inventory

This group includes 27 units and 483,393 acres. The BLM previously recommended these units to be dropped from further wilderness consideration because they obviously lacked wilderness characteristics. Some public objection was received to this recommendation. However, the State Director judged these comments to be invalid or not sufficient to raise a question as to the units wilderness characteristics.

This portion of the State Director's decision will become effective August 10, 1979. Limitations imposed by Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act will no longer apply after this decision becomes effective.

These lands are not shown on the current wilderness maps. However, maps showing these lands are available upon request from the District Office having jurisdiction over the lands in question.

Unit Description

Chama Inventory Unit lies approximately twenty-five air miles south of Chama, New Mexico. It is characterized by rolling hills, and pinyon-juniper and shortgrass cover.

This unit is predominately utilized for grazing and exhibits evidence of an extensive chaining and reseeding program. Grazing developments such as corrals, fences and line sheds are located within the unit.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received one comment favoring the unit for intensive inventory because it is adjacent to NM-010-59.

Chama Inventory Unit is not contiguous to inventory unit NM-010-59 and must, therefore, be evaluated entirely on its own merit.

Field checks by the BLM show extensive chaining and reseeding have obviously impaired the unit's naturalness. This unit clearly and obviously does not qualify for further wilderness consideration.

Punche

NM-010-34

12,160 acres

Unit Description

Punche Inventory Unit lies approximately nine air miles south of Tres Piedras, New Mexico. It is characterized by rolling grasslands cut by shallow washes. Vegetative cover consists primarily of shortgrass and shrubs with scattered pinyon-juniper.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Twenty-nine public inputs, mostly letters, were received which supported intensive inventory for Punche. Reasons stated by the public included that the unit is natural and contains sufficient opportunities for solitude.

Field checks by the BLM showed the area obviously lacks outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive type of recreation. The relationship between the unit's size, shallow topography and limited vegetative screening does not provide an outstanding opportunity for solitude since a wilderness user would find it extremely difficult to avoid the sights and sounds of other users while within the area's boundaries. Consequently, this unit clearly and obviously does not contain wilderness characteristics and is thus deleted from further wilderness consideration.

Unit Description

Sunshine Inventory Unit lies approximately fifteen air miles northeast of Tres Piedras, New Mexico. The majority of the unit is characterized by gently rolling plains, with shortgrass and sage cover. Sunshine has traditionally been utilized for grazing.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received twenty-nine letters supporting intensive inventory for this unit. Reasons given include that the unit meets the basic criteria, has retained its naturalness, provides both an opportunity for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Through field checks, the BLM has found this unit does not possess outstanding opportunities for solitude. The relationship between the unit's size, shallow topography and limited vegetative screening does not provide an outstanding opportunity for solitude since a wilderness user would find it extremely difficult to avoid the sights and sounds of other users while within the area's boundaries. Consequently, this unit clearly and obviously does not contain wilderness characteristics and is thus deleted from further wilderness consideration.

Unit Description

Frijoles Inventory Unit lies approximately three air miles north of Dixon, New Mexico. It has a broad sparsely vegetated mesa on the west and progresses into rough broken terrain in the east portion. The mesa is covered primarily by shortgrass with some shrubs. The east portion exhibits shortgrass, shrubs and pinyon-juniper cover. Permanent developments located within the area include a major electrical transmission line, a pipeline, several windmills, corrals, fences, a water storage tank, water troughs and an abandoned narrow gauge railroad. The entire mesa top of the unit has undergone brush cutting and reseeding with non-native vegetative species.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Twenty-eight public inputs, including letters and meeting testimony, were received supporting intensive inventory for Frijoles Inventory Unit. Reasons given were the area presently meets the criteria for intensive inventory including adequate size, naturalness (regardless of the existence of the powerline), and offers an opportunity for solitude.

Field check by the BLM showed the permanent developments located within the boundaries, the brush cutting, and reseeding program have all contributed to an impairment of the area's naturalness.

This area obviously lacks the apparent naturalness required for wilderness characteristics. Therefore, the area is dropped from further wilderness consideration.

Unit Description

Chimayo Inventory Unit lies approximately four air miles northeast of Espanola, New Mexico. It is characterized by gently rolling hills cut by shallow arroyos. Vegetation consists primarily of scattered pinyon-juniper and shortgrass. Permanent improvements located within the inventory unit are a water pipeline, water wells, a water storage tank, a gravel pit, two major landfills, four large flood control dams, fences, corrals and a line shack.

The unit has been utilized for grazing, gravel extraction, landfills, and extensive ORV activity.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received twenty-eight public inputs (mostly letters) supporting intensive inventory for the unit. Reasons stated were that it meets the basic criteria for wilderness and offers an opportunity for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Through field verification, the BLM has found the impact of the permanent manmade developments located within Chimayo have significantly impaired the unit's naturalness. Therefore the unit obviously lacks wilderness characteristics and will be deleted from further wilderness consideration.

Unit Description

White Rock Inventory Unit lies approximately twelve air miles northwest of Santa Fe, New Mexico. It is characterized by rolling grassland and by shallow arroyos, with pinyon-juniper, sagebrush and shortgrass cover.

Grazing is the dominant use of White Rock.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received thirty public inputs favoring intensive inventory for White Rock Inventory Unit. The principle reason given was the superb view of the Rio Grande and Alama-White Rock area available from within the unit which gave a feeling of vastness and solitude to the inventory unit. In addition, it was considered an attractive area.

It has been made very clear throughout the BLM wilderness inventory that sights and sounds outside of the boundaries of the inventory unit will not be utilized. This applies to both impacts and attractions outside the unit.

Field checks, using the BLM inventory criteria, show the unit does not possess outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive unconfined type of recreation. The relationship between the unit's size, shallow topography and limited vegetative screening does not provide an outstanding opportunity for solitude since a wilderness user would find it extremely difficult to avoid the sights and sounds of other users while within the area's boundaries. Consequently, this unit is deleted from further wilderness consideration.

Unit Description

Plaza Largo Inventory Unit lies approximately twelve air miles northeast of Los Alamos, New Mexico. It is characterized by hilly terrain with intermittent, steep arroyos. Vegetation consists of heavy pinyon-juniper and shortgrass cover.

The unit has been utilized for grazing and exhibits a water pipeline and several associated wells, as well as other grazing developments. A large earth excavation site is located within the unit's boundaries.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Twenty-eight public inputs were received supporting intensive inventory for this unit. Reasons given were that the area generally appears to be natural, meets the existing criteria, and contains spectacular vistas located outside of the inventory unit.

Sights and sounds outside the boundaries of the unit cannot be utilized during wilderness inventory. This policy has been made very clear throughout the BLM Wilderness Inventory.

As documented in the situation evaluation, the existing water pipeline, wells, and the excavation site have significantly impaired the area's naturalness. These manmade impacts cannot be rehabilitated by hand tools.

The inventory unit clearly and obviously does not qualify for intensive inventory, based on a lack of naturalness.

Negro Canyon

Approximately 1,600 acres

Unit Description

Negro Canyon is located in the San Juan Planning Unit, north of Farmington, New Mexico.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Twenty-six letters were received by the BLM desiring Negro Canyon be intensively inventoried. The reasons given were that although it was less than 5,000 acres in size, it should be inventoried because of its scenic, rugged qualities and its potential solitude. It was also suggested that ACEC designation be an alternate consideration for the area.

Negro Canyon is less than 5,000 acres and does not constitute a manageable wilderness unit. ACEC designation is part of the Bureau's planning system and is not associated with the wilderness program. No ACEC designation responsibilities are inherent within the BLM's wilderness program. Negro Canyon will not be intensively inventoried for wilderness characteristics.

Embudo Box

Approximately 2,000 acres

Unit Description

Embudo Box is located approximately three air miles southeast of Dixon, New Mexico. It consists of a steep canyon with Embudo Creek running through its center. Embudo Box has traditionally been utilized for recreation and grazing.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Nine letters were received favoring the Embudo Box for intensive inventory. Reasons given were its beautiful and unspoiled nature which are presently threatened by development.

The Embudo Box is less than 5,000 acres interspersed with numerous state inholdings, and is presently not considered a manageable unit. It, therefore, will not be given further wilderness consideration.

NM-010-54

One comment was received supporting intensive inventory for inventory unit NM-010-54 in the Albuquerque District. This unit does not exist.

Unit Description

The Mariano Draw Inventory Unit lies 28 air miles north of Socorro, New Mexico. It is flat to rolling throughout, with Mariano Draw running west to east and divided by numerous washes. The vegetation is primarily grassland with some desert shrub and chaparral.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received one comment favoring intensive inventory; however, no supporting reasons were given.

A field check of this unit showed the area to be heavily impacted by man and obviously lacking wilderness characteristics. The single comment received did not raise a sufficient question about the area's lack of wilderness characteristics. Because of this and BLM field inspection, the area is dropped from further wilderness consideration.

Red Hill

NM-020-022

4,600 acres

The Red Hill Inventory Unit lies 21 miles west of Quemado and just south of the Mesita Blanca Inventory Unit. It consists of a portion of Cimarron Mesa to the southeast, and rolling country with shallow draws throughout the rest of the area. The vegetation is primarily shortgrass, rabbit bush, broom snakeweed, and some scattered sagebrush and pinyon and juniper trees.

The unit contains some earthen stock tanks, roads and other range developments.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Several public comments were received by BLM favoring intensive inventory. The principle reason was that the area contained a unique geologic feature (Red Hill). A geologic feature does not, in itself, constitute sufficient reason to consider a unit for wilderness.

An extensive field check, due to public comment, was conducted to assess the area's naturalness. It has been confirmed that roads do exist in the unit and intrusions of man are substantially noticeable. Readjustment of the boundaries showed the actual roadless area to be less than 5000 acres. This remaining roadless area is not considered to be a manageable unit. Therefore the area is dropped from further wilderness consideration.

Yucca

NM-020-054

8,400 acres

Unit Description

The Yucca Inventory Unit is located 14 air miles southeast of San Antonio, and just east of the Little Yucca Inventory Unit. It is flat and covered with soaptree yucca, mesquite, grassland, and sand sage.

Roads, jeep trails, stock watering troughs, and other signs of grazing have been found.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Many public comments supported intensive inventory of this unit; but, because of misleading initial inventory maps and information, it seems most comments assumed that the most scenic cover of soaptree yucca was in this area. Protecting this yucca was the main reason for support.

The heart of the most scenic area of soaptree yucca is south of this unit and will go into intensive inventory as NM-020-064 (Big Yucca) because of its naturalness and size. The Yucca Unit will be dropped from intensive inventory due to the presence of roads and impacts of man.

Chupadera Mesa

NM-020-060

9,400 acres

Unit Description

Chupadera Mesa Inventory Unit lies 8 air miles east of Bingham, New Mexico, and just north of U. S. 380. It contains rolling hills with grasses and shrubs to the southeast, and mountainous terrain with pinyon and juniper trees to the northwest. There are two principle drainages flowing from northwest to southeast, which appear to flow intermittently.

The unit contains evidences of past grazing, woodcutting, and range developments.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

One individual felt this area met basic wilderness criteria, but offered no supporting reasons.

No other comments were received concerning this area. Field checks showed intrusions of man to be substantially noticeable, and that the unit lacked outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation. This unit is therefore dropped from further wilderness consideration.

Unit Description

Shaw Mountain Inventory Unit lies 23 air miles south of Datil, New Mexico. It consists primarily of Shaw Mountain which rises several hundred feet above the St. Augustine Plains. A ridge runs from north to south with several draws running down its eastern and western slopes. The vegetation is primarily grass with some rabbit brush and an occasional pinyon tree.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The BLM received one comment favoring intensive inventory for this unit. However, no supporting reasons were given by the writer.

No other comments were received concerning this area. Since field checks have shown that it does not contain any outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined types of recreation, due to the nature of the terrain, it will not undergo intensive inventory.

Unit Description

This unit includes the northern portion of the Good sight Mountains and surrounding grasslands, and is located approximately twenty air miles west southwest of Hatch, New Mexico.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received one letter favoring Intensive Inventory for this unit due to existence of relatively natural grassland within the area. This input also stated that the unit met the size requirement, could provide solitude, and should be relatively natural. Bureau of Land Management inventory personnel, determined that the unit clearly and obviously did not qualify for further wilderness consideration during the Initial Inventory phase. The letter received did not raise sufficient question regarding the unit's wilderness characteristics. Therefore, it is now dropped from further wilderness consideration.

Caballo Mountains (South) NM-030-098

145,485 acres

Unit Description

This area is located approximately 5 miles north of Hatch, New Mexico. The area consists of the Caballo Mountains south of Brushy Mountain, the Hogue Hills, and a segment of the Jornada Basin. Vegetation varies from creosote in the Basin, to pinon-juniper at higher elevations.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received one letter favoring Intensive Inventory for this unit. The reason cited was a suspicion that some area of at least 5,000 acres within the unit could qualify. Bureau of Land Management inventory personnel, using readily available information, determined that the entire unit clearly and obviously did not qualify for further consideration during the Initial Inventory phase. The letter received was not sufficient to raise a question as to the areas wilderness characteristics. Therefore this unit is dropped from further wilderness consideration.

Sawyer's Peak

NM-030-089

516 acres

Unit Description

The area is located approximately 8 air miles west of Lake Valley, New Mexico, and is contiguous with Gila National Forest land at the southern end of the Mimbres Mountains. Vegetation includes pinon-juniper associations, mixed mountain shrubs, and transition forest.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received on letter regarding this area. The letter was in favor of including Sawyer's Peak in the Intensive Inventory. Supporting reasons were that the area provides an opportunity for solitude and that the imprints of man are substantially unnoticeable. While these are valid criteria to consider for Intensive Inventory recommendations, the area is not of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. This unit is now dropped from further wilderness consideration.

Unit Description

This area is located approximately 25 air miles north of Hatch, New Mexico. The area consists of the Caballo Mountains north of Brushy Mountain and east of the Caballo Reservoir. Portions of the Jornada Basin are included in the unit. Vegetation includes shortgrass, desert shrub, mountain shrub, and pinon-juniper.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received one letter favoring Intensive Inventory for this unit. The reason cited was a suspicion that some area of at least 5,000 acres within the unit could qualify. The Bureau of Land Management inventory personnel, determined that the entire unit clearly and obviously did not qualify for further consideration during the Initial Inventory phase. This unit will remain not recommended for Intensive Inventory.

Beeman Canyon

NM-030-104A

1,160 acres

Unit Description

This unit is a part of the Sacramento Escarpment and lies five miles east of Alamogordo, New Mexico. The unit is characterized by a steep, sparsely vegetated mountain face. It is contiguous with U. S. Forest Service RARE II unit 3-071, which is recommended for nonwilderness.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

The Bureau of Land Management received three letters on this unit. One favored Intensive Inventory because the unit is contiguous with a U. S. Forest Service RARE II area. The other two stated that the unit does not qualify for Intensive Inventory because it was "bordered by a road" and that the U. S. Forest Service recommended nonwilderness for the contiguous area.

BLM inventory procedures require any public lands adjacent to RARE II nonwilderness designation must be inventoried on their own merit. That is, the adjacent National Forest cannot be a factor in the inventory. Since this unit is less than 5,000 acres, it must be judged to be manageable by the BLM in order to be considered further during inventory. Beeman Canyon is not a manageable unit and, therefore, will not be considered further.

Alkali Flats (North)

NM-030-116

7,920 acres

Unit Description

This unit is located approximately 50 air miles southwest of Carlsbad, New Mexico, and contains a flat playa lake, a part of the Crow Flats Bolson. Vegetation is lacking except for limited low standing brush.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

One comment was received which favored Intensive Inventory for this unit. Reasons listed for this position include: the unit meets size and naturalness requirements, has solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities and has supplemental values. The BLM previously recommended this area be dropped from further wilderness consideration because it obviously lacked wilderness characteristics. Wilderness characteristics lacking were outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. Public comments received were not sufficient to raise a question about the unit's lack of wilderness characteristics. The unit is therefore dropped from further wilderness consideration.

Alkali Flats (South)

NM-030-117

5,580 acres

Unit Description

This unit is located approximately fifty air miles southwest of Carlsbad, New Mexico and is characterized by a flat playa lake, a part of the Crow Flats Bolson. Vegetation, other than low, standing brush, is lacking.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

One comment was received that favors this unit being included in Intensive Inventory. Reasons cited included: the unit meets size and naturalness requirements, has solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities and has supplemental values. The BLM previously recommended this area be dropped from further wilderness consideration because it obviously lacked wilderness characteristics. Wilderness characteristics lacking were outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. Public comments received were not sufficient to raise a question about the unit's lack of wilderness characteristics. The unit is therefore dropped from further wilderness consideration.

Unit Description

This unit is located approximately three miles west of Carrizozo, New Mexico. It contains the west and south portion of the geologically recent basaltic flow. Vegetation includes brush species such as apache plume, yucca, cacti and various grasses.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Two letters were received, one of which favored Intensive Inventory for the unit. It states that the addition of this unit to NM-030-110A would make it more feasibly sized unit for wilderness management. This consideration was not used by the Bureau of Land Management in Initial Inventory and cannot be used as a factor in qualifying the unit for Intensive Inventory.

Another letter stated that the unit should not be Intensively Inventoried because "wilderness is a waste and this area is productive and beautiful." This comment has no bearing on wilderness characteristics and was not considered by Bureau of Land Management in Initial Inventory.

This unit was previously recommended as obviously lacking wilderness characteristics. Public input received was not sufficient to raise a question about the areas lack of wilderness characteristics. This unit, therefore, will not be intensively inventoried and is dropped from further wilderness consideration.

Cornudas Mountain

NM-030-134

14,470 acres

Unit Description

This unit is located approximately sixty-five air miles southeast of Alamogordo, New Mexico, and contains an exposed intrusive igneous mountain and surrounding flat terrain. Vegetation consists of desert shrub, cacti and shortgrasses.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

One comment was received which stated that the unit should be placed in Intensive Inventory. Rationale cited for this position included: opportunities for recreation and solitude, naturalness, the unit is geologically interesting, it is "great" for climbing and presents "breathtaking views."

The BLM previously recommended the area obviously lacked wilderness characteristics due to man's impact on the naturalness of the unit. Reasons cited for intensive inventory (i.e., climbing and scenery) are supplemental characteristics and are not sufficient of themselves to cause an area to contain wilderness characteristics.

Military Road

NM-060-310

10,152 acres

Unit Description

This unit is located on the Chavez - Lincoln county line, 40 miles north of Highway 70-380.

It is characterized by gently to moderately steep rolling hills cut by moderately steep draws and drainages. The area's vegetation type is short grass, with broom snakeweed predominant.

This area shows evidence of heavy previous grazing and associated man-made range developments.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

One letter was received favoring intensive inventory for this unit. The individual stated that although the area is "very badly overgrazed, it does not show much of man's effects". They felt it was eligible but probably wouldn't become a wilderness study area.

BLM initial inventory of this unit indicates that it is developed for grazing with fences, water tanks, two track trails, feeders, etc. The area also shows signs of previous heavy grazing. The cumulative impact of grazing developments and related activities make the imprint of man's work substantially noticeable.

The comment did not raise a valid doubt as to the clear and obvious lack of wilderness characteristics in this unit. Therefore, our recommendation of no further inventory will not change.

Mescalero Point

NM-060-503

9,600 acres

Unit Description

Mescalero Point roadless area is located approximately 40 miles east of Roswell, New Mexico. Vertical elevation varies from approximately 4,150 feet in the extreme southeast corner to 4,060 feet along the western boundary, or a drop of 90 feet in four miles. The unit lies entirely within the Mescalero Sands and consists of semi-stabilized dunes covered with shinnery oak, other low-growing shrubs, and mixed grass species.

Primary impacts of man in this unit consist of caliche roads, grazing facilities, and gas and oil facilities.

Public Comment Evaluation and Conclusion

Three letters were received concerning this unit. One letter recommended intensive inventory and that the unit should at least survive the first cut in the roadless inventory. Another commentor expressed doubt as to wilderness potential for the unit. One commentor recommended the area should not be considered for further inventory due to numerous imprints of man, lack of solitude, and unconfined recreation opportunities and emphasized wilderness conflicts with other resource uses such as grazing and mineral development.

Comments received did not establish valid doubts concerning the presence of wilderness characteristics in this unit, or indicate that erroneous rationale was present in the situation evaluation. Determinations and conclusions made during the initial inventory are deemed adequate and this unit is dropped from further wilderness consideration.

Mescalero Sands

NM-060-501

20,560 Acres

This unit is discussed in Catagory 1 of this booklet because about 10,800 acres of it will be intensively inventories. About 2/3 of this unit is dropped because of an obvious lack of wilderness characteristics.

Refer to catagory 1 for a description of the unit and the nature of public comment.

Appendix 1

NEW MEXICO WILDERNESS INVENTORY SCHEDULE

Intensive Inventory with Public Involvement

July 9, 1979-January 15, 1980 Intensive inventory to determine wilderness study areas.

Public Review of Wilderness Study Area Recommendations

February 29, 1980 State Director issues proposed decision on intensive inventory. This initiates a 90-day public comment period.

March 3-March 7, 1980 District open house to display intensive inventory recommendations and respond to public inquiry.

May 5-May 9, 1980 District public meetings to accept public comments on intensive inventory.

May 30, 1980 End of 90-day public comment period for intensive inventory.

September 30, 1980 State Director issues decision on Wilderness Study Areas identified during intensive inventory. Decision will become final 30 days following publication in the Federal Register.

FEDERAL LAWS DIRECTING THE BLM WILDERNESS REVIEW

There are two laws directing the BLM's wilderness review program: the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and the Wilderness Act of 1964.

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act directs the BLM to review all roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more for wilderness values and report, through the Secretary and the President, its recommendations to Congress. During this review the BLM is directed to manage these areas so that wilderness values are not impaired. The exact Congressional wording is quoted below:

"Sec. 603.(a) Within fifteen years after the date of approval of this Act, the Secretary shall review those roadless areas of five thousand acres or more and roadless islands of the public lands, identified during the inventory required by Section 201(a) of this Act as having wilderness characteristics described in the Wilderness Act of September 3, 1964 . . . and shall from time to time report to the President his recommendation as to the suitability or unsuitability of each such area or island for preservation as wilderness: Provided, That prior to any recommendations for the designation of an area as wilderness the Secretary shall cause mineral surveys to be conducted by the Geological Survey and the Bureau of Mines to determine the mineral values, if any, that may be present in such areas

(c) During the period of review of such areas and until Congress has determined otherwise, the Secretary shall continue to manage such lands according to his authority under this Act and other applicable law in a manner so as not to impair the suitability of such areas for preservation as wilderness, subject, however, to the continuation of existing mining and grazing uses and mineral leasing in the manner and degree in which the same was being conducted on the date of approval of this Act: Provided, That in managing the public lands the Secretary shall by regulation or otherwise take any action required to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the lands and their resources or to afford environmental protection."

The Wilderness Act of 1964 outlined Congress' policy concerning what a wilderness is. The BLM will be reviewing the public lands to see if these values do or do not exist. Congress' exact wording follows:

"Sec. 2.

(c) A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practical its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological or other features of scientific educational, scenic, or historical values."

These two laws, and these provisions in particular, are the basis for the BLM's wilderness program.

..... AREAS OF ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY
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JULY 1979

I would like to receive copies of the following publications:

- ☐ Wilderness Inventory Handbook
- ☐ Draft Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for
Wilderness Study Areas
- ☐ Proposed Exploration and Mining Regulations for the
Wilderness Review Program
- ☐ Summary - Wilderness Review - New Mexico
(Proposed Initial Inventory Decisions - 2 booklets)
- ☐ Other (Please Specify): _____

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